



Wellness Forum Health

***Go Where Health Matters!***

# How Do You Buy Things Like...

- Cars
- Houses
- Appliances
- Retirement accounts
- College educations for you or your children

# How Do You Buy Things Like...

- Healthcare
  - choice of doctors
  - preventive care
  - vaccinations
  - tests and images
  - drugs, procedures
- Most likely, your process for purchasing health-related services is very different from the way you purchase everything else

# Healthcare Decisions Are Important!

- Sooner or later everyone has to interact with the healthcare system
  - personal healthcare issues – advice about how to stay well or treatment for health issues
  - children
  - parents
  - friends

# The Case For InforMED™ Medical Decision-Making

- Medical history – includes a long list of practices that were once considered “gold standard treatment” but which are now discredited:
  - mercury to treat syphilis – caused the death of Napoleon Bonaparte and Franz Schubert
  - leeches to cleanse impurities from the blood
  - attributing cancer and other diseases to “black bile” in the body

# Nothing Has Changed: Today...

- A recent (2019) meta-analysis determined that 396 common routine medical practices are useless and should be discontinued – involves every medical specialty:

The risk of harm from screening with mammograms is 10 times higher than the chance of benefit.

Wearable fitness trackers do not help people lose weight – some studies show that people who use them lose less weight than people who do not

Herrera-Perez D, Haslam A, Crain T et al. "Meta-Research: A comprehensive review of randomized clinical trials in three medical journals reveals 396 medical reversals." *eLife* 2019;8:e45183

# Nothing Has Changed: Today...

- Cont.

Fish oil does not reduce the risk of heart disease

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is better than drugs for treating insomnia

Gingko biloba does not improve memory

Physical therapy is as effective as surgery for a torn meniscus

Herrera-Perez D, Haslam A, Crain T et al. "Meta-Research: A comprehensive review of randomized clinical trials in three medical journals reveals 396 medical reversals." *eLife* 2019;8:e45183

Every day, millions of people make bad decisions about health because they are not properly InforMED™



# Example #1: Death By Medicine

- According to an article in the *British Medical Journal*, **medical error is the third leading cause of death in the U.S., after heart disease and cancer**
- This study only included deaths from medical care in hospitals – did not include outpatient care
- According to orthopedist Dr. Jim Rickert: "I think most people underestimate the risk of error when they seek medical care."

Makary M, Daniel M. "Medical error—the third leading cause of death in the US." *BMJ* 2016;353:i2139  
Marcia Frellick "Medical Error Is Third Leading Cause of Death in US." *Medscape* May 3, 2016

## Example #2: Causes of Psychological Issues

- There are **no studies showing that chemical imbalances in the brain cause any psychological condition ranging from ADHD to schizophrenia**
- It is impossible to measure levels of neurotransmitters like serotonin in living humans – requires grinding up the brain and assaying the matter  
*note: we do not recommend this!*

## Example #2: Causes of Psychological Issues

Ronald Pies, prominent psychiatrist and former editor of *Psychiatric Times*:

- “In truth, the “chemical imbalance” notion was always a kind of urban legend—never a theory seriously propounded by well-informed psychiatrists.”
- “My impression is that most psychiatrists who use this expression feel uncomfortable and a little embarrassed when they do so. It’s kind of a bumper-sticker phrase that saves time, and allows the physician to write out that prescription while feeling that the patient has been “educated.”
- 2014 - Pies said the chemical imbalance theory was a “little white lie.”

Pies, R.W. “Psychiatry’s new brainmind and the legend of “Chemical Imbalance.” *Psychiatric Times* July 11, 2011

Pies R.W. “Doctor, Is My Mood Disorder Due to a Chemical Imbalance?” <https://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2011/08/04/doctor-is-my-mood-disorder-due-to-a-chemical-imbalance/>

Pies R.W. “Nuances, Narratives, and the ‘Chemical Imbalance’ Debate in Psychiatry.” *Medscape* April 15, 2014

## Example #3: Population Screening for Cancer

- According to Richard Ablin Ph.D., the false positive rate for PSA testing is 78% - harm from over-diagnosis of prostate cancer is 30 to 100 times the estimated benefit
- Cochrane review: to save one life, 2000 women need to have an annual mammogram for 10 years; 10 women would endure unnecessary and potentially life-threatening over-diagnosis and overtreatment

conclusion: “there is no reliable evidence from large randomized trials to support screening mammography at any age.”

Gigerenzer G, Wegworth O. “Five Year Survival Rates Can Mislead.” *BMJ* 2013;346:f548

Olsen O, Gotzsche P. “Cochrane review on screening for breast cancer with mammography.” *Lancet* Oct 20 2001;358(9290)1340-1342

## Example #3: Population Screening for Cancer

- Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care “*does not* recommend using colonoscopy as a primary screening test for colorectal cancer due to lack of evidence.”
- There is not one randomized controlled trial showing that colonoscopy reduces the risk of dying of colon cancer
- To prevent one death from colon cancer, 1250 people have to have a colonoscopy, and for every life saved, one person is harmed or dies from a complication of the procedure

<http://canadiantaskforce.ca/ctfphc-guidelines/2015-colorectal-cancer/> accessed 2.24.2016

Baxter N, Goldwasser M, Paszat L, Saskin R, Urbach D, Rabeneck L. “Association of colonoscopy and death from colorectal cancer.” *Ann Intern Med* 2009 Jan6;150(1):1-8  
Richardson A. “Screening and the number needed to treat.” *J Med Screen* 2001;8(3):125-127

## Example #4: MRI and X-ray for Cause of Pain

- Studies of images show that people who say they are in pain often have no abnormalities, while people who have no pain often have structural abnormalities
- Study of 991 people, some with and some without knee pain:  
meniscal tears were as common in the subjects with no pain as they were in the subjects with pain
- Only 20% to 25% of people who have back pain have a herniated disc, and 60% of adults with no back pain have degenerative changes in their spine

Englund M, et al. "Incidental Meniscal Findings on Knee MRI in Middle-Aged Elderly Persons." *NEJM* September 11, 2008 vol 35 (11):1108-1115  
Jensen, M et al. "Magnetic Resonance Imaging of the Lumbar Spine in People Without Back Pain." *NEJM* July 14 1994 vol 331(2):69-73

## Example #4: MRI and X-ray for Cause of Pain

- Cleveland Clinic study - MRIs for patients who had back or leg pain showed:

13% had herniated disks - no relationship between pain and images

some patients experienced pain after their herniated disks resolved without intervention, others said they felt better while disks got worse

Gina Kolata "The Pain May Be Real, but the Scan is Deceiving." *New York Times* December 8, 2008

## Example #4: MRI and X-ray for Cause of Pain

- 207 healthy volunteers ***with no joint pain*** had ultrasounds of 32 joints in the hands and feet
  - 88% of subjects had joint abnormalities

Padovano I, Costantino F, Breban M, D'Agostino M. "Prevalence of ultrasound synovial inflammatory findings in healthy subjects." *Ann Rheum Dis* 2016 Oct;75(10):1819-23.



## Example #4: MRI and X-ray for Cause of Pain

- METEOR trial:

351 patients with knee pain and at least one symptom of meniscal tear randomized to PT or surgery

outcomes the same for both groups at 6 months

***Bottom line: images are usually not reliable tools for making decisions about whether or not to have orthopedic surgery***

Padovano I, Costantino F, Breban M, D'Agostino M. "Prevalence of ultrasound synovial inflammatory findings in healthy subjects." *Ann Rheum Dis* 2016 Oct;75(10):1819-23.

## Example #5: Vitamin D - It's a Hormone!

- Low vitamin D levels do not **cause** disease; low levels are a **result** of disease  
vitamin D supplements worthless, potentially harmful for most people
- Example:  
88 patients who visited the emergency room with acute hyperglycemia  
vitamin D levels tested on arrival and after blood glucose levels were normalized  
serum levels rose from an average of 12.3 ng/ml to 28.3 ng/ml

Autier P, Boniol M, Pizot C, Mullie P. "Vitamin D status and ill health: a systematic review." *Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology* Jan 2014;2(1):76-89

# Example #5: Vitamin D - It's a Hormone!

- According to the US Preventive Services Task Force:
  - no evidence to support routine Vitamin D screening at this time
  - no evidence that certain vitamin D levels are optimal
  - no standardized screening tools
- One research group concluded that the body of evidence against vitamin D testing and supplementation is so large that it is statistically impossible for future research to change these conclusions

Lefevre M on behalf of the US Preventive Services Task Force. "Screening for Vitamin D Deficiency in Adults: U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation Statement." *Ann Intern Med* 20 Jan 2015;162(2)

Bolland M, Grey A, Gamble G, Reid I. "The effect of vitamin D supplementation on skeletal, vascular, or cancer outcomes: a trial sequential meta-analysis." *Lancet Diabetes Endocrinol* 2014;2(4):307-320

# Example #6: Diabetics Should Eat Low-Carb Diets

- High-carbohydrate diets are more effective for lowering fasting glucose and A1C levels and increasing insulin sensitivity than higher-protein diets
- Protein-rich foods cause higher insulin responses than high-carbohydrate foods

Komiyama N, Kaneko T, Sato A, Sato W, Asami K, Onaya T, Tawata M. "The effect of high carbohydrate diet on glucose tolerance in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus." *Diabetes Res Clin Pract.* 2002 Sep;57(3):163-70.

Sargrad KR, Homko C, Mozzoli M, Boden G. "Effect of high protein vs high carbohydrate intake on insulin sensitivity, body weight, hemoglobin A1c, and blood pressure in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus." *J Am Diet Assoc.* 2005 Apr;105(4):573-80.

Tovar A, Torres N. "The role of dietary protein on lipotoxicity." *Biochem Biophys Acta* Mar 2010;1801(3):167-371

# Example #7: Salt Restriction Lowers Blood Pressure

- A study including more than 100 million US adults concluded that there is "a robust, significant, and consistent inverse association between dietary sodium and cardiovascular mortality."
- Study of 28,000 people:
  - risk did not start to increase until sodium intake exceeded 6500 mg per day

Cohen HW, Hailpern SM, Alderman MH. "Salt intake and cardiovascular mortality." *Am J Med.* 2007 Jan;120(1):e7.)  
O'Donnell MJ, Yusuf S, Mente A, et al, "Urinary sodium and potassium excretion and risk of cardiovascular events." *JAMA* 306;20:2229-2238

# Example #7: Salt Restriction Lowers Blood Pressure

- DASH study (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension):
  - showed that increased potassium and calcium intake from food was associated with significantly lower blood pressure in patients consuming a low, medium, or high-sodium diet (as compared to controls)

Sacks F, Svetkey L, Vollmer W et al. "Effects on blood pressure of reduced dietary sodium and the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet."  
DASH-Sodium Collaborative Research Group *NEJM* 2001;344:3-10

Learn Anything New?

Think you should know  
facts like these?

# The Problem is Misinformation

- Where do we get this information?
  - the government
  - professional associations and their members (doctors, dietitians)
  - disease groups
  - advertising
  - word of mouth – friends and family
  - the internet
  - books
- The result? Confusion!



# The Government: USDA



- The USDA was formed as an advocacy organization for farmers BUT is also responsible for setting dietary guidelines for Americans
- Conflict of interest between what is good for farmers (selling their products) vs what is good for consumers (eating less of some foods produced by farmers)

# The Government: FDA

- 1992 Prescription Drug User Fee Act passed – drug companies pay the FDA to review their products
- Drug companies have paid the FDA billions of dollars since 1992
- Revenue 2018: \$878,590,000
- ***Estimated revenue 2020: \$1,001,480.00***

2008 approval rate almost 50%

2014 approval rate 88%

2011 approval rate 86%

2015 approval rate 96%

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/09/14/2017-19494/prescription-drug-user-fee-rates-for-fiscal-year-2018>

“The FDA Is Basically Approving Everything. Here's The Data To Prove It.”

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/matthewherper/2015/08/20/the-fda-is-basically-approving-everything-heres-the-data-to-prove-it/>

<https://www.fda.gov/media/127005/download>

# The Government: CDC

- CDC receives millions of dollars in donations and gifts each year through the CDC Foundation – has collected hundreds of millions of dollars since 1995
- 2016 donations: \$80,687,702
- 2017 donations: \$57,819,416
- Contributors include Abbott, Abbvie, Amgen, Bristol Myers Squibb, Coca Cola, Genentech, Johnson and Johnson, Pfizer, Proctor and Gamble, Sanofi-Aventis, and many other drug companies

Lenzer J. "Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: protecting the private good?" *BMJ* 2015;350:h2362  
<https://www.cdcfoundation.org/sites/default/files/files/CDCF-Form990-2018.pdf.pdf> accessed 1.14.2020

# The Government: NIH

- NIH private foundation established by Congress in 1990
- 2016 tax return: donations \$83,527,142

\$2.5 million or more from: Abbvie, Anheuser Busch, Bristol Meyers Squibb, Carlsberg Breweries, Diageo Plc, Bill and Melinda Gate Foundation, Heineken, Eli Lilly, Merck, National Football League, Pernod-Ricard, and Pfizer - 10 out of 12 donors are 5 drug companies and 5 companies that make alcoholic beverages.

next donor tier is \$1,000,000-\$2,499,999 - consists of 16 donors, 10 of which are drug companies

[https://fnih.org/sites/default/files/final/pdf/FNIH\\_2016\\_990\\_for\\_public\\_inspection.pdf](https://fnih.org/sites/default/files/final/pdf/FNIH_2016_990_for_public_inspection.pdf)  
<http://2016-annual-report.fnih.org/donors/>

# Professional Associations: AND



Premier Sponsor: Abbott Nutrition

Exhibitor Sponsors: Campbell's Soup Company

Danone North America

Pepsico

SPLENDA Sweeteners

Sponsorship revenues fiscal year 2017: \$2,434,857

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/about-us/advertising-and-sponsorship/meet-our-sponsors> 1.14.2020

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/-/media/eatrightpro-files/about-us/annual-reports/annualreport2017.pdf?la=en&hash=51286F1F1852694B03DBC0B5449D39524036D185>

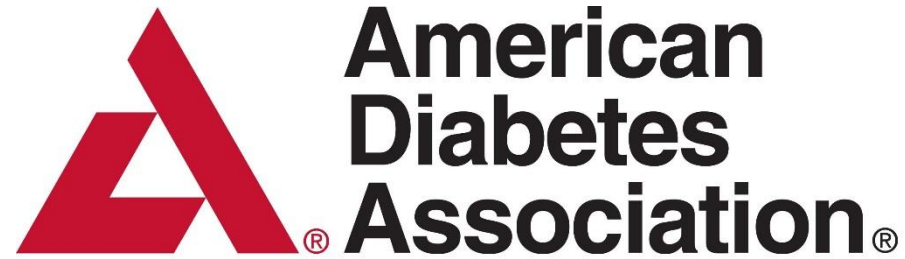
# Professional Associations: AAP



- Takes contributions through its foundation
- Sponsors include Nestle, Pfizer, Sanofi-Pasteur, GlaxoSmithKline, Johnson and Johnson, Merck, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals

<https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/corporate-relationships/Pages/Friends-of-Children-Fund-President%27s-Circle.aspx>

# Disease Groups: American Diabetes Association



- Contributed \$2.5 million: Novo Nordik (drug company)
- Contributed \$1 million: Lilly
- Contributed \$500,000 AstraZeneca, Merck
- Contributed \$100,000: Abbott, Janssen, Pfizer

<http://www.diabetes.org/about-us/corporate-support/our-corporate-supporters.html>

# Disease Groups: The American Heart Association





# Approved Products

37 pages of animal food products including:

- Boar's Head Old Fashioned Canadian Style Bacon With Natural Juices
- Kretschmar Sweet Smoked Uncured Ham
- Butterball Naturally Roasted Deep Fried Honey Turkey Breast
- Kroger Moist & Tender Pork Tenderloin
- Top Sirloin Strips (Select Grade) (National Cattlemen's Beef Association)

[http://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@fc/documents/downloadable/ucm\\_474830.pdf](http://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@fc/documents/downloadable/ucm_474830.pdf) accessed 2.10.2019

# Advertising



# The Internet

- There is some great information and many good resources that can be accessed via internet
- There is also a considerable amount of misinformation and mythology posted on the internet too
- It's important to learn how to differentiate between accurate and inaccurate information

# An Unfortunately UnInforMED™ Consumer

- Tim Russert, host of *Meet The Press* - wealthy man, excellent insurance
- Visited the best doctors, had all the right tests, diagnosed “early”
- Took medications for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, pre-diabetes, took a daily aspirin - his biomarkers were excellent!
- None of the tests or drugs addressed what ultimately killed Tim Russert – an unstable arterial plaque that ruptured, caused the heart attack that ended his life
- Adopting the right diet *could have* prevented his death



# An InforMED™ Consumer



## An InforMED™ Happy Ending

- Coronary artery disease progressed while in the White House while under the care of the “best” doctors in the U.S.
- Endured a useless bypass surgery; he continued to eat the Standard American Diet and his arteries clogged up again
- Angioplasty recommended because the bypass did not work - became frightened and decided to take matters into his own hands
- Read *The China Study* and *Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease*, changed his diet, lost weight, and got well
- Note: *President Clinton was not informed by his doctors that changing his diet could stop the progression of heart disease – he learned this himself!*

Become an InformMED™ Consumer With



Wellness Forum Health

# You Should Have InforMED™ Discussions About...

- The diet you choose
- The supplements you take
- The screening tests you agree to have
- The procedures recommended to you
- Psychological issues
- Musculoskeletal pain and injury
- Vaccinations
- Pregnancy

***Any and all health-related issues!***



# InforMED™ Medical Decision-Making...

- Changes the concept of “informed consent”
  - previously meant doctor telling patient what to do (called “informing”) and patient agreeing (called “consenting”)
  - new definition - doctor makes recommendations, patient looks at evidence, and *informs doctor of decision and plan of action*

# The Patient Should Be In Control

*“Taking control of your health is not doing what I say instead of what others say, it’s doing what you think is best for you after reviewing objective information.”*

Pam Popper, President  
Wellness Forum Health

# Become InforMED™ With Wellness Forum Health

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# Become InforMED™ With Wellness Forum Health

## Free Resources

- Pam Popper's weekly newsletter
- Video Clips

# Become InforMED™ With Wellness Forum Health

## Member Benefits

- InforMED™ 101 and 201 classes (science and skills!)
- Articles library
- Video library
- Conversations with Pam Q&A Sessions
- Ask the Therapist Sessions
- Office Hours With Eileen Sessions
- Preferential pricing on special events
- Rewards program – we pay you to learn!

# Become InforMED™ With Wellness Forum Health

## Educational Programs

A Science-Based Approach to Vaccines  
Chronic Fatigue  
Cancer 201 (evaluating alternative treatments)  
Parkinson's Disease  
Sports Nutrition  
Research and Writing  
Understanding Psychological Disorders  
Women's Health  
Business Training  
Allergies/Asthma  
Men's Health  
Forming and Maintaining Optimal Habits  
Diet, Lifestyle and Diabetes  
Diet, Exercise and Mental Health  
Time Management  
Thyroid Disease

Cardiovascular Disease  
Contraceptive Options  
Kidney Disease  
Autoimmune Disease  
Irritable Bowel Syndrome  
Weight Loss  
Children's Health  
GI Disorders  
Cancer 101  
Biological Causes and Treatment of Autism  
Health Benefits and Risks of Cannabis  
Inflammatory Bowel Disease  
Food Over Medicine Certified Instructor Course  
Cognitive Health and Alzheimer's  
Your Amazing Microbiome  
PCOS

ALS  
Fibromyalgia  
Dietary Supplements  
Food Allergies  
**New classes added regularly**

# Become an InforMED™ Health Professional!

- Our school - The Wellness Forum Institute
- Training programs for health professionals *and* people who want to become health professionals

## An Interesting Perspective

*“...While patients are grateful for new drugs and operations, what they really want is not to be patients at all. In this we are failing them.”*

David Barker, M.D.



# How to NOT be a Patient

## Reactive/Episodic vs Proactive/Intentional Healthcare

### Reactive/Episodic

- Wait until sick
- Suppress symptoms with drugs and surgery
- Change nothing – wait for next episode

### Proactive/Intentional

- Make health a priority
- Resolve health issues by addressing cause
- Work at maintaining health

***And practice InforMED™ Medical Decision-Making!***

# How to Achieve Mental and Physical Health

- Adopt an optimal diet
- Engage in regular and vigorous exercise
- Maintain family relationships, social connections, community involvement
- Pets
- Do meaningful work, making a contribution to society
- Develop a positive attitude, have gratitude for blessings
- Have strong values and ethics
- Make InforMED™ decisions



# Wellness Forum Health

Join us!

Ask to see our complete catalog  
of programs and services and  
schedule a time to discuss and share your goals.

Let's join forces to change your health, your  
community's health, and healthcare in America!



Wellness Forum Health

***Go Where Health Matters!***

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