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Pharmaceutical Adverse Reactions Are Skyrocketing

Analysis by Dr. Joseph Mercola ✓ Fact Checked

August 30, 2022

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- Data from Liverpool University Hospitals revealed admissions for adverse drug reactions jumped from 5.5% in 2004 to 18.4% in 2021. They estimate the cost to be over £2 billion ($2.45 billion) per year
- Health Affairs calls overprescribing "America's other drug problem" as it has led to 42% of older adults taking five or more drugs, 262 billion spent in unnecessary hospitalizations and estimated 128,000 preventable deaths
- Evidence shows that even the veteran are affected by exposure to antipsychotics, increasing the risk of suicide. In 2014, 15,000 soldiers were medicated for ADHD and 245,841 babies aged birth to 1 year were prescribed antianxiety drugs
- The history of pharmaceutical intervention began with the 1915 Flexner Report commissioned by the Carnegie Foundation; this led to the demonization of alternative medicine and the rise of eugenics, a the study of perfecting people through genetics
- The subsequent financial growth experienced by the pharmaceutical industry has also been a large contributor to polypharmacy as physician training has been highly influenced by donation and research dollars; consider these signs that you or a loved one may be taking too many drugs

Research published July 4, 2022, online revealed some shocking statistics about the dramatic rise in adverse drug reactions in the U.K.[1] Many of these adverse reactions were related to the number of prescriptions prescribed to the individuals.

Another name for overprescribing medications is "polypharmacy." The issue has been snowballing in the last 30 years and Big Pharma continues to develop new drugs. The stated intent is the hope of lengthening life through chemistry, but the goal is growing revenue.

If the goal were better health, the initial recommendation would be lifestyle changes that support health, and the secondary or tertiary step would be prescribing medications. But that isn't what always happens. Instead, the first step is often skipped and providers simply prescribe drugs for a condition, sometimes with multiples.

When a patient ends up taking more than one prescription, it's called polypharmacy, a term that is often used, but the definitions vary.[2] According to one article the term polypharmacy "was used over one and a half centuries ago to refer to issues related to multiple-drug consumption and excessive use of drugs."

No matter what term originated, it is commonly accepted that polypharmacy is the prescription of too many medications. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Polypharmacy, often defined as the simultaneous use of five or more prescription drugs, is more common in an aging population where multiple coexisting chronic conditions often occur."[3]

The use of multiple prescriptions is almost always to treat several chronic conditions at the same time. Yet, this causes side effects, can trigger additional health concerns and even lead to death. The results from the National study demonstrate the depth of the need for deprescribing to affect a real change in people's health.

Polypharmacy Driving Adverse Drug Reactions

The data for this study came from two physicians who did chart reviews of hospitalized patients over a one-month period. This prospective observational study was published by researchers at the University of Liverpool and Bangor University. They reviewed data from 1,187 patient charts admitted to Liverpool Hospitals.

The results were an update of the original study published in 2004 that showed 5.5% of hospital admissions were the result of an adverse drug reaction. In the current study the reviewers recorded the number of admissions that were due to an adverse drug reaction when patients stayed for more than 24 hours. The outcome measures were mortality, multimorbidity and polypharmacy.

They also estimated the projected cost to the National Health Service (NHS) in England. The reviewers identified 214 admissions triggered by an adverse drug event, which calculated an 18.4% prevalence.[4] Of these 98.4% of the admissions were a direct result of an adverse event.

In this group, the researchers found that on average, patient ages were higher, patients were taking more medications and had more comorbidities than those who did not have an adverse drug reaction. On average, those with an adverse drug reaction were taking 10.5 drugs versus those without a drug reaction who were taking 7.8 medications.

The drugs that were more commonly found to produce drug reactions associated with hospitalization included steroid inhalers, proton pump inhibitors, antihypertensives, diuretics, anticoagulants and antiplatelets and chemotherapeutic agents. Of the 218 patients admitted for treatment of an adverse drug reaction, the physician reviewers believed 40.4% were avoidable or possibly avoidable. The average length of stay for these patients was six days.

The researchers noted these events place "a significant burden on primary and healthcare services with associated financial implications."[5] They concluded that "reducing inappropriate polypharmacy should be a major aim"[6] to prevent adverse events.

Rostam Duaiba, a specialist registrar in clinical pharmacology said: "Our work suggests adverse drug reactions place a significant burden on patients and hospital admissions. This has a large associated cost to the NHS (over £2 billion per year [$2.45 billion]) and further efforts in this area could both improve patient care and save money for the NHS."[7]

America's Other Drug Problem

Health Affairs calls overprescribing and polypharmacy "America's other drug problem."[8] According to the CDC,[9] 45.8% of the people surveyed from 2015 to 2018 said they used one or more prescription drugs in the last 30 days. The CDC[10] records a similar number in the time span from 2015 to 2018 when 48.6% said they used at least one prescription drug in the last 30 days.

This percentage dropped to 24% for those who used three or more prescription drugs and 12.8% for those who used five or more prescription drugs. However, a report from the Lown Institute released in April 2019[11] shows that polypharmacy has reached epidemic proportions in the United States. According to their data:[12]

- Five million adults take over their doctor or were hospitalized for drug reactions in 2018
- 42% of older adults take five or more prescription medications
- There was a 200% rise in polypharmacy over a 20-year period
- $62 billion was spent on unnecessary hospitalizations over 10 years
- Estimates are there will be 100,000 preventable deaths in 10 years as a result of adverse drug events

These numbers have a staggering impact on patients, especially in light of how drugs may also adversely react with the COVID jab and the resulting spike protein production in the body. Unfortunately, while medication overprescribing has caused widespread harm, it remains nearly invisible to many public health leaders, clinicians and polypharmacies.

Age is also a contributing factor. In 2017 U.S. Pharmacist[13] wrote that people over the age of 65 made up 13% of the population but used 30% of all prescribed medications. By their definition, polypharmacy is only problematic "when the reason for the medication is unclear, when medication is taken to treat side effects of other drugs, when dosing and timing are complicated, and when medications interfere with each other."

Data from the U.S. show that the most common multidrug combinations are to treat metabolic syndrome.[14] In 2016, data[15] showed 83.6% of adults aged 65 to 79 used one or more prescriptions as compared to 59.5% of those aged 40 to 59. In August 2021, the National Institutes on Aging[16] wrote that they were grappling with the problem of treating people with multiple chronic conditions and still trying to determine the best approach for treatment and improving quality of life.

One study[17] published in August 2021, proposed an expanded role for pharmacists in "medication therapy management and safety monitoring" based on their data that showed polypharmacy in 85.1% of the population using data from the CDC's National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey from 2009 to 2016.

Children Are Not Immune From Overprescribing

While many of the elderly are taking multiple prescriptions, the effects can be felt as far back as before babies are born. One study[18] published in The BMJ in 2019 found that exposure to SSRI and non-selective monoamine reuptake inhibitors (tricyclic antidepressants) in utero increased a child's risk of autism spectrum disorders, particularly without infant complications.

In 2014, the New York Times[19] reported that data from the CDC showed 15,000 soldiers between the ages of 2 to 3 years old were medicated for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The medication was given outside established guidelines for the pediatric population.

While these numbers are significant, they are dwarfed by 2014 data from the Citizens Commission on Human Rights,[20] which showed in 2014 that hundreds of thousands of toddlers were prescribed psychotropic drugs and more than 215,000 children from birth to 1 year old were included in that mix. According to their figures, the numbers of children aged birth to 1 year old on these types of medications were:[21]

- 249,669 on antianxiety drugs (such as Xanax, Klonopin and Ativan)
- 26,456 on antidepressants (such as Prozac, Zoloft and Paxil)
- 1,422 on ADHD drugs (such as Ritalin, Adderall and Concerta)
- 654 on antipsychotics (such as Risperdal, Seroquel, and Zyprexa)

In the 2- to 3-year-old age group, the Commission found 316,941 were on antianxiety drugs, 86,102 on antidepressants and 3,760 on antipsychotics. These shocking figures challenge logic. How and why are so many children and even babies, on addictive and dangerous mind-altering medications? This surely is overprescribing even in the strictest sense.

Early Medicine Focused on Eugenics

The history of pharmaceutical intervention and polypharmacy dates back to the start of "modern medicine" and the "father" of it all — Abraham Flexner.[22] He was a schoolteacher and educational theorist from Louisville Kentucky.[23] The 1910 Flexner Report focused on the development of medical schools and effectively eliminated any practice that the current science or medical community could not explain. This included non-Western medicine practices.

The report was issued by the Carnegie Foundation[24] at a time when there were 155 medical schools in the U.S. Flexner worked at it in cooperation with leading members of the American Medical Association. The report was written to establish guidelines that sanctioned orthodox schools and condemned homeopathic medical schools.[25]

For example,[26] during the 1849 cholera epidemic in Cincinnati, homeopaths were so successful that they published a list of those who were cured and those who died. Only 3% of their patient population died while between 40% to 60% of those under orthodox medical treatment died.

The results of Cincinnati Homeopaths were so successful that they were likely an embarrassment to traditional medical practitioners. The Flexner Report proposed a total restructure of medical education, which especially impacted schools teaching alternative medicine or that graduated predominantly black students.

After successfully using the Flexner Report to remove traditional medicine practices from medical schools, John D. Rockefeller[27] secured a monopoly using a smear campaign to discredit and demonize homeopathy and natural medicine. Doctors were jailed and some lost their licenses using treatments that had been effective for decades. Students were taught a system of medicine that was focused on the practice of prescribing drugs.

Six years before the Carnegie Institution released the Flexner Report and forced changes on medical schools throughout the country, they opened the Station for Experimental Evolution (SEE)[28] in Cold Spring Harbor, New York. The purpose was to study heredity and evolution, as it flew toward the eugenics movement.

According to the current definition by the NIH, "Eugenics is an immoral and pseudoscientific theory that claims it is possible to perfect people and groups through genetics."[29] While the company claims it closed down its eugenics research operation, the SEE eventually merged to become the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory with focus on the emergence of molecular genetics and the "scientific foundation of the revolution in biology and biotechnology."[30]

Corporate Interests Push Pharmaceutical Intervention

The push for pharmaceutical intervention versus using holistic medicine that stresses lifestyle, nutrition, exercise and sleep interventions may have bred the pockets of the elite, but it hasn't lived up to the promise of better health. The financial growth experienced by the pharmaceutical industry has also been a large contributor to polypharmacy as physician training has been highly influenced by donation dollars.

In 2005, an informal survey by NPR[31] found many medical schools were relying on funding from pharmaceutical companies and other health industries. When pharmaceutical companies remain happy with the fiscality behavior, they could threaten to cut off that funding. By 2018, pharmaceutical companies were actively and openly seeking partnerships with medical schools and universities.[32]

The creation of Big Pharma began after the release of the Flexner Report, when Rockefeller and the Carnegie Foundation came to realize the power behind monopolizing medicine and furthering treatment modalities away from the source of the health condition to focus solely on symptoms. By pushing pills to alleviate a symptom, they could create side effects from the drugs that lead to more prescription medications.

According to the Commonwealth Fund,[33] the country that birthed modern medicine — none other than the United States — also spends more per capita on prescription drugs than any other high-income country. The high cost of polypharmacy is both financial and in quality of life. These signals may show that you are overprescribed medications:[34]

- **You visit multiple doctors** — You might think that with electronic medical records each of the specialists you know of knows the medications you are taking. But that doesn't happen. You may be prescribed one drug by doctor A and a second by doctor B to lessen the side effects of the first.
- **You develop a new health condition** — Sometimes these conditions are the result of drug interactions or an adverse drug reaction that goes unrecognized. This can include physical and mental symptoms such as problems with balance or motor skills, fatigue, anxiety, or unexpected weight gain or loss.
- **You are in a high-risk group** — People with higher risk have multiple health conditions and are over 65 years.
- **You have access to good health care** — It's not uncommon for people with good insurance to see multiple doctors who are unaware of all their prescription medications.
- **You have trouble keeping up with the drug doses** — When you are taking too many medications, it's difficult to remember the dosing schedule.

You can take steps to reduce the number of medications you or a loved one may be taking, and thus reduce the potential of an adverse drug reaction. Begin by making a list of your current health conditions and all the medications you are taking, including over-the-counter drugs.

Review this list with your primary care provider at least once a year and before you are discharged from a hospital or rehabilitation facility.

While you might think this would be standard practice, it is not. In a commentary on Medscape, Dr. Mark Williams writes of his patients "Allison" who was admitted to the hospital for altered mental status, likely related to polypharmacy, and discharged to long-term care with "42 prescription medications and an almost equal number of over-the-counter (OTC) drugs."[35]

Consider creating a chart with a list of the drugs you are taking, who prescribed them and when, why you are taking them and any side effects from the medications you may be experiencing. It is also important to use one pharmacy for all your prescription medications. The pharmacist can quickly determine if there are any expected drug interactions between medications you may be prescribed by several doctors.

Each time a new medication is prescribed, take care to read the insert and check online resources for expected side effects. The bottom line is that you may not need all the medications you've been prescribed to manage your health conditions.

Overprescribing sets up older adults for a downward spiral of increasing side effects and worsening health. A holistic approach is needed to address the key health and lifestyle and create real wellness instead of attempting to cover up symptoms with more pills.

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Guillermo
Joined On 7/7/2015 6:47:48 AM
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The chronic illnesses, disabilities and suffering of people are sustained by generic vaccport called vaccines and shake-vaccn medicines that have their roots in the Rockefeller Foundation. Science true science has been abused to great fortunes. It was Rockefeller with his money bought against Nobel Medicine. That the institutions receive donations from important foundations such as Rockefeller, Gates, Ford and Macchiny, is compromising the information truth because they act as controllers of alternative and critical medicine. Rockefeller, Gates, Ford and Macchiny are the ones who control the majority of major codes, including Facebook.org, the Institute of the Associated Press, and the Washington Post, which will evidently be vaccport.

The Rockefeller Foundation, more than a century ago, took over the central education and practical application apparatus of every medical school and hospital in the United States, forcing out Homeopathic medicine, and the creation of chief companies as a front for design antimes, Rockefeller and his and minions managed to create a medical industrial complex that still dominates Western medicine. Rockefeller's influence on Flexner was so powerful, and antimotives of the Rockefeller current that support the dominant paradigms of allopathic medicine that are built by domain-based elites who only seek their benefit.

It is the historical tradition of the Rockefeller Institute Medical Research Center and the many other institutions that control the world financial systems, the absorption of all monopolies and companies. The tyranny imposed on the world country this "pandemic" and developing the draconian measures, which have constituted the most covered-up gross the final blow to the world economy.

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Joelsteve
Joined On 1/5/2021 11:13:54 AM
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Are we not all engaged with polypharmacy in some degree whether we like it or not? The following article focused on Chemical Farming's Dr. Earl Ruck-Keene's Pharmacist Farming. Glyphosate specifically acting as an antibiotic is a main driver for this cause. So just the good endorsing, doesn't the oceans of reefs consumed by people to their be can off one way or another based a the internet Pharmaceutic Organics is absolutely the way to go, but even on the site pay headstones, more likely Endocrine reduce the useless eaters use of ever consumed reefs drug with so many other ofthem compared the negatives not just to the cost of the reefs but the individuals. It is our society!

! Healthy soil, healthy foods, healthy people, make healthy societies. - Also mentioned in posting Bush describes him in his education and training since early his vacation, he was buried or deep into reductionist methods he was trained one, was originally missing what is really there. This explains many of the good people in the system for good reasons can be captured by the Covid Cure along with similar agenties.

The meds teach out and into the same systems Bush describes and we all get a dose with various impacts on us personally Financial Farming - www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ah-uoA5 a system having so much fault and broken & tricksy, Royal, Dr. Ashleigh Brilliant's try to wonder some of the many greatest theories in entertainment are the walking dead. One long steady march of multiple offenders to health through many decades of a close kit.

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Guillermo
Joined On 7/7/2015 6:47:48 AM
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The pharmaceutical industry now spends billions of dollars a year to influence laws, policies and public perception, perpetuating the John D. Rockefeller style. Covid-19 cannot be completely solved with this system, not can any infectious disease be erased completely, because the Rockefeller Institute Medical Research Center, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Institute of the Associated Press, the Rockefeller proposed $100 million into the "Board of General Education" to END all study of natural medicine (anything holistic) in all 155 medical schools in the United States and install, permanently, only the study and practice (in hospitals) of prescribing pharmaceutical drugs that quell symptoms of disease and disorder, but never cure anything.

He even called the whole movement "a gift for a sick man." Patients then and now who take prescription drugs regularly are the softest people on the planet, typically dying of preventable chronic diseases 15, 20, even 30 years before their normal life expectancy. Abraham Flexner, author of the 1910 Flexner Report, was hired as a Veteran to destroy all things natural medicine, while he helped promote and install all things pharmaceutical based in "educator" medical college students.

Anything based on pharmaceuticals would not be called "natural medicine." Anything that came from nature would be called quackery, conspiracy, and worse. The Flexner Report applies today when we see all the prescribing, treatments and natural cures for diseases and COVID and other ailments buried, banned and prohibited by the CDC, FDA, WHO

www.theepochtimes.com/rockefeller-medicine-or-experience-illusion_4012565.

Reply · Mark as Spam · Posted On: 8/30/2022 3:27:19 AM

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Joelsteve
Joined On 1/5/2021 11:13:54 AM
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Sorry, I forgot to mention the article

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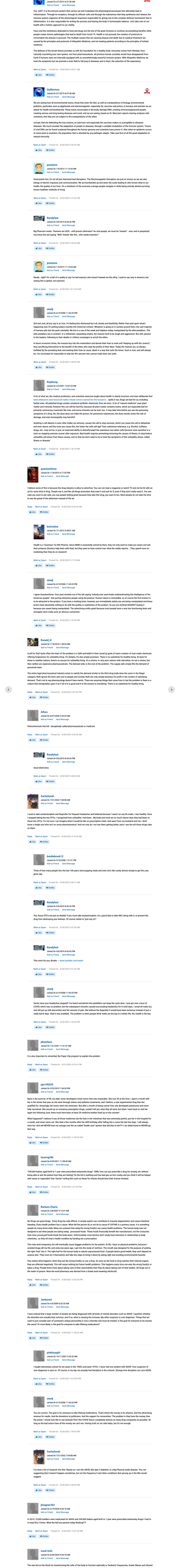
Guillermo



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Yes, JUST. It is the immune system that carries out and modulates the physiological processes that ultimately lead to inflammation. Through its receptors, through the effector cells and through the substances that they synthesize and release, the immune system organizes all the physiological responses responsible for giving rise to this complex defense mechanism that is inflammation. Inflammation is a complex biological process and having the body recognize its homeostatic balance. Let's take care of our health with a holistic approach to our diet.

Fasci and the toxilibrium dedicated to food and drugs are the tool of the great fortunes to continue accumulating benefits while people continue poisoning themselves with fake food. Food for health is not possible in the western diet.

crystals in a hand held device that will produce stem cells. It's changing peoples lives in days, weeks and months without the use of pharmaceuticals. contact me to hook you up. 9054841326

Reply | Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 10:01:18 AM

Like | Dislike

Stephanie360
Joined On 11/18/2020 6:12:02 PM
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My mother in law wasn't able to keep food down, eventually she was put on hospice at home. She asked the doctor if she was going to die anyway, could she go off all the meds? He said sure, no problem. She had been taking about a hand full of pills, apparently there wasn't any room for food after that. She began to get better, able to eat small meals, soon she was out of bed, walking with a walker. They took her off hospice and she lived another year and a half. She died from a fall and broken hip, it was too much for her heart. We were so glad for that extra time with her. It was the meds that were literally starving her to death.

Reply | Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 9:43:42 AM

Like | Dislike

Jackaroni
Joined On 4/4/2009 8:32:35 AM
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What a shame! My MIL's doctor went on vacation so she went to a different doctor. He took her off of about half of her meds and she immediately felt much better. Too bad this didn't happen until after she had gone through her life savings and sold off family heirlooms (she kept this secret from her family) to pay for prescription drugs that were doing more harm than good. Did she go back to her original doctor? Yes she did! (she never was the brightest light on the tree) But at least she didn't go back to taking the meds the other doctor took her off of.

Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 11:12:22 AM

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brodiebrock12
Joined On 9/18/2008 1:31:51 PM
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So many people fell into the Pharma abyss thru the decades because they simply "trusted" or were told by their doctors the science was being followed. Hopefully the whu-flu era opened more minds to the corruption which has in essence been going on for the past 75 + years. How many of you watched your parents or grandparents get swept up into the Pharma bowl of corruption and indoctrination. The crimes against humanity is beyond measure

Reply | Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 8:16:43 AM

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rrealrose
Joined On 11/10/2011 8:59:01 AM
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One aspect to this major issue started in 1998 or 1999, when PHARMA advertisers were allowed on TV programs, brain washing of certain generations has been increasing progressively...Another aspect is effective patent competition between Pharma to produce stronger and stronger meds, regardless of clinical indicators, as evidenced clear for all to see, by oxycodone and oxycontin. You think we have not seen large numbers of sudden deaths, startling around 2013 or so, from overdosing?

Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 1:26:08 PM

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htlaeh
Joined On 4/29/2009 7:23:29 AM
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Well said, Dr. Mercola. One can only hope that this article is irrelevant to your readers, who "get it" and have not taken any pharmaceuticals for a very long time. And maybe they have relatives and friends they can forward the article to who will actually read it and act upon it.

Reply | Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 8:09:55 AM

Like | Dislike

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bchristine
Joined On 7/1/2012 6:58:01 AM
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I've essentially given up on the people around me. They don't listen i.e. are "brainwashed" and only go by the advice of conventional Drs. I think they consider me an uneducated conspiracy theorist because I don't have a medical degree ...

Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 9:21:29 AM

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pattope
Joined On 7/1/2020 10:15:27 AM
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A few decades ago I knew a nurse who worked in a VA hospital. She told me that the Indian educated doctor there would take a new patients medications (usually a whole brown bag full) and stop all of them except maybe one or two. Within several weeks, the patient was 100% better, just from discontinuing the unneeded meds.

Reply | Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 8:08:17 AM

Like | Dislike

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rrealrose
Joined On 11/10/2011 8:59:01 AM
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Thanks for your comment. Searched far and wide for an integrative endocrinologist, yup, initially Indian trained.

Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 2:26:55 PM

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chrissyb1
Joined On 8/30/2022 7:21:54 AM
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If you have specific health issues-follow Dr Eric Berg, he has an app and a YouTube and a rumble channel. Type in what ails you and get to the ROOT cause. He is friends with Dr Mercola. Ditch the prescriptions which only make things WORSE!

Reply | Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 7:23:39 AM

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SpiceOddity
Joined On 7/28/2021 2:34:47 PM
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If a patient is on more than a handful of medications, it is not possible to know all possible interactions between them -- poisoning risk.

Reply | Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 7:32:24 AM

Like | Dislike

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brodiebrock12
Joined On 9/18/2008 1:31:51 PM
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and yet the pharma-medical cartel always assure you they have it under control as in they know what is happening within the fragile organic human life form

Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 8:18:04 AM

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forbiddenhealing
Joined On 2/21/2011 9:51:43 AM
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Warping cause and effect, generating false realities and perverting science unfortunately is the Orwellian nightmare we try to traverse. Fraudulent language via mass media has installed an illogical narrative of psychological enslavement. As this begins to collapse, it is truly marvelous to watch the bullshit artists squirm throwing out the most childish defenses of an utterly indefensible status quo. www.lewiscskwell.com/.../doctor-doctor-mr-m-d

Reply | Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 7:23:54 AM

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forbiddenhealing
Joined On 2/21/2011 9:51:43 AM
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Pharmaceutical medicine like all government agencies somehow avoids accountability for effectiveness and cost...In the real world failure is unacceptable!

Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 8:21:58 AM

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MaryRN
Joined On 11/23/2009 11:22:14 AM
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This is in the UK, I wonder what the same study would show in the USA, of course MD's are not taught about the adverse effects of medications, or what to do about them. So most Doctors don't even think about a possible side effect of medication they just prescribe another drug to combat the problem. At the nursing home I worked for we did attempt to decrease the amount of medications a person was on. But it was not always easy, Doctors ego's don't like to be told that you might be contributing to the problem.

Reply | Mark as Spam | Posted On 8/30/2022 6:13:38 AM

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