

Re: Cholesterol Guidelines A Gift For Merck, Pfizer

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From: Zee (zwalanga_at_yahoo.com)

Date: 07/14/04

Date: 13 Jul 2004 21:06:12 -0700

tunderbar@hotmail.com (tcomeau) wrote in message
news:<b550f406.0407131012.3d920058@posting.google.com>...
> http://www.forbes.com/technology/2004/07/12/cx_mh_0712mrk.html
>
> *****

Salut Monsieur Tunderbar

A gift for Merck and Pfizer? Merde.

Merck, Pfizer et al were the *authors* of these guidelines, as they were with the preceding ones. Pharma whores on the take.

This is a letter from Uffe Ravnskov MD PhD to Brad Evanson, former reporter for the National Post on the subject of the Canadian heart guidelines, which were based on the American heart guidelines. It was written last year. First among the names of the pharma whores is Scott Grundy, who's name appears prominently in the new stories aka rearranged press releases for the newest guidelines too.

Zee

Uffe Ravnskov's letter to the National Post re "conflict of interest" for the guideline makers.

"Mr. Brad Evenson

A friend of mine sent me your article about the new Canadian guidelines. Evidently the Canadian authorities have bought the new American ones uncritically.

Here is a summary of the way these guidelines were created:

1. A small group of private individuals come together and call themselves the "Expert Panel."
2. These people receive large sums of money from pharmaceutical companies to give talks, do research, etc.

3. The Expert Panel rewrites the guidelines and issue them with the apparent endorsement of the federal government.

4. Thirty million more Americans now need to be on cholesterol-lowering drugs.

5. Insurance companies, Medicare, etc. pay the pharmaceutical companies billions of dollars a year for those drugs.

Here is the list of commitments for the members of the expert panel:

Financial Disclosure:

Dr Grundy has received honoraria from Merck, Pfizer, Sankyo, Bayer, and Bristol-Myers Squibb.

Dr Hunninghake has current grants from Merck, Pfizer, Kos Pharmaceuticals, Schering Plough, Wyeth Ayerst, Sankyo, Bayer, AstraZeneca, Bristol-Myers Squibb, and ...

G. D. Searle. He has also received consulting honoraria from Merck, Pfizer, Kos Pharmaceuticals, Sankyo, AstraZeneca, and Bayer.

Dr McBride has received grants and/or research support from Pfizer, Merck, Parke-Davis, and AstraZeneca; has served as a consultant for Kos Pharmaceuticals, Abbott, and Merck; and has received honoraria from Abbott, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Novartis, Merck, Kos Pharmaceuticals, Parke-Davis, Pfizer, and DuPont.

Dr Pasternak has served as a consultant for and received honoraria from Merck, Pfizer, and Kos Pharmaceuticals, and has received grants from Merck and Pfizer.

Dr Stone has served as a consultant and/or received honoraria for lectures from Abbott, Bayer, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Kos Pharmaceuticals, Merck, Novartis, Parke-Davis/Pfizer, and Sankyo.

Dr Schwartz has served as a consultant for and/or conducted research funded by Bristol-Myers Squibb, AstraZeneca, Merck, Johnson & Johnson-Merck, and Pfizer.

Read also my comments to the American guidelines on http://www.ravnskov.nu/ncep_guidelines.htm

Uffe Ravnskov, MD, PhD; independent researcher

- > *Cholesterol Guidelines A Gift For Merck, Pfizer*
- > *Matthew Herper, 07.12.04, 4:30 PM ET*
- >
- > *NEW YORK – New guidelines issued by the United States government could*
- > *increase the number of people who take cholesterol-lowering medicines;*
- > *already the top-selling medication in the world with \$26 billion in*

- > *annual sales.*
- >
- > *The new guidelines were predicted here months ago. (See: "Is Lipitor*
- > *The New Aspirin?")*
- >
- > *Under previously existing guidelines, 36 million people should be*
- > *taking cholesterol-lowering pills such as Lipitor, Zocor, or Pravachol*
- > *to prevent heart attacks. In reality, only about 11 million do.*
- > *Changes issued today by the National Cholesterol Education Program*
- > *(NCEP), to be published in tomorrow's issue of the journal*
- > *Circulation, advocate lowering cholesterol in even more patients.*
- > *Moreover, patients at the highest risk should receive even more*
- > *aggressive treatment--meaning higher, more expensive doses of these*
- > *drugs. Now, that figure will increase by millions of people, as the*
- > *new guidelines suggest treating diabetics and people who at one time*
- > *would have been considered healthy. Those at high risk, or who have*
- > *had recent heart attacks, should be treated even more aggressively.*
- >
- > *The NCEP did not release an estimate of how many patients should now*
- > *take cholesterol-lowering drugs, called statins. Christopher P.*
- > *Cannon, a cardiologist at Brigham & Woman's hospital, says 50 million*
- > *people should take the drugs. Another cardiologist, Steven E. Nissen*
- > *of the Cleveland Clinic, said that number looked reasonable, although*
- > *James I. Cleeman, a researcher at the National Heart Blood and Lung*
- > *Institute and a co-author of the report said it was "a little high."*
- > *The cost of treating that many people with even the lowest dose of*
- > *Pfizer's (nyse: PFE - news - people) Lipitor could approach \$40*
- > *billion.*
- >
- > *But an even more important facet of the guidelines is that many people*
- > *would not be on low doses of these drugs. For patients at the highest*
- > *risk of heart attack, the new guidelines suggest that "bad*
- > *cholesterol," or low-density lipoprotein (LDL), be reduced to 70 mg*
- > *per deciliter--although the new guideline is optional. Previous*
- > *guidelines suggest that LDL of 100 mg was good enough. Many patients*
- > *will not be able to get to those levels at starting doses of most*
- > *current drugs. "It may be that reducing cholesterol to levels that are*
- > *consistent with what used to be found in rural china is where we need*
- > *to head," says Sydney Smith, a cardiologist at the University of North*
- > *Carolina, Chapel Hill, and a co-author of the new guidelines.*
- >
- > *Even for patients at modest risk of heart attacks--meaning that they*
- > *have heart disease, diabetes, or a combination of some risk*
- > *factors--the new guidelines suggest lowering cholesterol at least*
- > *30-40%. With weaker statins, such as Pravachol from Bristol-Myers*
- > *Squibb (nyse: BMY - news - people) or lovastatin, available as a*
- > *cheap generic, that requires the second-highest dose. That could*
- > *encourage doctors to use stronger drugs--a big boost for Lipitor.*
- > *Crestor, an even more powerful statin from AstraZeneca (nyse: AZN -*
- > *news - people) could also benefit, but may be held back because it*
- > *does not have the same track record of safety as Lipitor.*

- >
- > *Another big winner could be Vytorin, a new cholesterol pill from Merck*
- > *(nyse: MRK – news – people) and Schering–Plough (nyse: SGP – news –*
- > *people) that is expected to hit the market soon. It combines Merck's*
- > *Zocor with another drug, Zetia, to lower cholesterol even more at*
- > *lower doses.*
- >
- > *Some say the new guidelines do not go far enough. "It's very*
- > *disappointing to me that NCEP couldn't get it right given the data,"*
- > *says Eric Topol, a cardiologist at the Cleveland Clinic. He points out*
- > *that two clinical trials have shown that many patients would benefit*
- > *from more cholesterol lowering. Says Topol: "To make an LDL of 70 an*
- > *optional strategy is ignoring the trials."*
- > *******
- >
- > *The "scientists"/marketers who are quoted as supporting these new*
- > *guidelines are:*
- >
- > *Christopher P. Cannon, Ph.D., Harvard Medical School.Hired consultant*
- > *to Bristol–Myers Squibb for the Prove It study. "Drug Marketing 101:*
- > *Proving Our Pill is Better than Yours" By Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Jeff*
- > *Gerth New York Times 12/23/00. Has received research grant support*
- > *from Cor Therapeutics and Merck. (JAMA 2000;283:2941–47)*
- >
- > *Steven E. Nissen, M.D., Vice–chairman of Cardiology, and Head of*
- > *Clinical Cardiology, Department of Cardiovascular Medicine, Cleveland*
- > *Clinic Foundation, Cleveland, OH. Research on lipid–lowering therapy*
- > *on progression of coronary atherosclerosis through the use of statins*
- > *Pravachol (pravastatin) and Lipitor (atorvastatin) funded by Pfizer.*
- > *Research support from AstraZeneca, Merck–Schering Plough, Esperion*
- > *Therapeutics, Takeda, Pfizer, and Sankyo. (JAMA. 2004;291:1071–80)*
- >
- > *******
- >
- > *Committee roster members of the National Cholesterol Education*
- > *Program:*
- >
- > http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/ncep/ncep_ros.htm
- >
- > *American Diabetes Association, Inc.*
- > *Please note: this link will open a new browser window; to return to*
- > *this document, either close the new window, or toggle back (ALT–TAB*
- > *for Windows users, Apple–TAB for Macintosh users).*
- >
- > *Alan J. Garber, M.D., Ph.D.*
- > *Professor of Medicine*
- > *Biochemistry and Cell Biology*
- > *Baylor College of Medicine*
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- >
- > American Heart Association
- > Scott M. Grundy, M.D., Ph.D.
- > Director, Center for Human Nutrition
- > Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas
- > Room Y3.206
- > 5323 Harry Hines Boulevard
- > Dallas, TX 75235-9052
- >
- > These are supposed to be "non-profit" organizations.... yeah, right.
- >
- > Now that is aggressive marketing.
- >
- > TC