

BMJ exposes WHO corruption

By DR. JOHN BRIFFA

Last year the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the planet was in the throes of an influenza pandemic. Dr. Margaret Chan, the director general of the WHO, delivered the notice.

Her announcement triggered large-scale panic buying of flu vaccines and anti-viral drugs such as oseltamivir (Tamiflu) and zanamivir (Relenza). According to the investment bank J. P. Morgan, the pharmaceutical companies did very nicely out of this health scare, profiting to the tune of \$7 billion from the sale of vaccines alone.

In reality, the "pandemic" turned out to be nothing of the sort. Estimates of cases and fatalities turned out to be wildly overblown. Apparently, many countries now have warehouses full of vaccines and drugs that they're trying to offload, either back to the drug companies they bought them from or to other countries.

Of course, all this overreaction and unnecessary expense may have been nothing more than misguided and overcautious recommendations made by those at the WHO and those who advise it. However, there has been reports that the supposedly impartial advice from the WHO regarding the flu pandemic was, at least in part, the result of influence

from the pharmaceutical industry.

The WHO has previously dismissed such allegations as "conspiracy theories." Conspiracy theories can be just that—theories. But sometimes they can turn out to be true.

This has come to a head on the publication in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) of a report and accompanying editorial that focus on this issue. The report alone is voluminous, but here is a paragraph from it that neatly sums up the issues:

"A joint investigation by the BMJ and the Bureau of Investigative Journalism has uncovered evidence that raises troubling questions about how WHO managed conflicts of interest among the scientists who advised its pandemic planning and about the transparency of the science underlying its advice to governments. Was it appropriate for WHO to take advice from experts who had delectable financial and research ties with pharmaceutical companies producing antivirals and influenza vaccines?"

"Why was key WHO guidance authored by an influenza expert who had received payment for other work from Roche, manufacturers of oseltamivir, and GlaxoSmithKline, manufacturers of zanamivir? And why does the composition of the emergency committee from which Chan sought guidance



WHO: Director-General Margaret Chan speaks before the World Health Organization assembly. FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

remain a secret known only to those within WHO?

"We are left wondering whether major public health organizations are able to effectively manage the conflicts of interest that are inherent in medical science."

When I'm lecturing, I am aware that I often say things that go against perceived wisdom. Once presented with the scientific

facts, some people feel quite outraged that they may have been misled in a way that may well have jeopardized their health, for example, eating margarine rather than butter or consuming a low-fat, high-carb diet.

Does this mean we should reject out of hand what our governments and health agencies tell us? No. But when the advice does not fit the facts, it's worth bearing in

mind that industry has the capacity to exert influence at the highest level. It also appears to have the capacity to put profit before public health.

Dr. John Briffa is a London-based physician and author with an interest in nutrition and natural medicine. His website is Drbriffa.com

Can Wendel Clark get back in shape ?

By W. GIFFORD-JONES, M.D.

Wendel Clark is one Toronto Maple Leaf star whom I, along with millions of other fans, will never forget. His sock-em-rock-em style made for exciting hockey.

It's unfortunate he's no longer part of the team. In a recent newspaper interview, he claims to be fighting another problem, the battle of the bulge. He won't win unless he changes his current routine and follows some rules.

Rule 1. Start eating breakfast. He says his first meal of the day is after lunchtime. His reason? If he eats in the morning, he eats all day. But skipping breakfast has never been a good idea.

What Wendel needs is a bowl full of bran and fruit. A high-fiber breakfast fills the stomach, slows the time food leaves it, and diminishes the hunger reflex.

Studies show that those who follow a high-fiber diet gain fewer pounds, are less likely to suffer from



WENDEL CLARK: Retired Toronto Maple Leaf star (R). BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES

constipation, irritable bowel syndrome, diverticulitis (small hernias in the colon), and heart disease.

Rule 2. Stop eating desserts. His Waterloo is desserts, and he admits

loving all of them. But they're loaded with calories. If Wendel wants to make money in real estate, he knows the motto is "location, location, location." If he seriously wants

to lose weight, it's "calories, calories, calories."

Wendel's idea of following a vegetable diet is carrot cake, zucchini bread, and sweet potato pie! No wonder his photo shows visceral fat—a recipe for cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

Abdominal fat cells are the first to increase in size as we pile on pounds and fortunately the first to decrease in size with a decrease in caloric intake. Wendel cannot beat obesity without foregoing high-calorie desserts.

Rule 3. Do the math. Remember that eating 500 more calories a day than you burn up is the best recipe for obesity. Do this for seven days, and 3,500 calories equals one pound.

Don't eat packaged foods, as they're packed full of sugar, salt, and calories. Check the number of calories per serving to see how packaged foods cause obesity.

Rule 4. Use the Tap Test if you can't say no to dessert. If you spread your fingers and tap on your head 50 times, the urge to eat dessert may

pass.

Rule 5. Stick to moderate exercise. Wendel says he no longer enjoys hard exercise since retiring from hockey, but still works out in his home gym, lifts weights, and gets cardio exercise on the treadmill.

It's a sound maintenance program, but studies show that exercise, a good routine to keep in shape, does not result in significant weight loss.

Abraham Lincoln was right. He said his two best doctors were his left leg and his right leg. Brisk walking, bicycling, and swimming top the list for beneficial exercise with less chance of injury. A Canadian study showed that 75 percent of elite athletes had scarring of the heart muscle due to excessive exercise.

Rule 6. Step on the scale in the a.m. and p.m. Patients always look surprised when I suggest this to them. But this routine quickly shows a small weight gain, a fair warning to shed these pounds before more accumulate.

Rule 7. Give yourself a reward

each day. To make dieting easier, award yourself a 100-calorie beer at day's end. It's much healthier than a soft drink loaded with 8 teaspoons of sugar or any of your favourite desserts. Besides, over 20 studies show that moderate drinkers live longer than teetotalers or excessive drinkers.

Rule 8. Remember the Earl of Darby's remark: "If you don't take time for wellness now, you'll need plenty of time for sickness later on."

Rule 9. Take vitamin C and lysine daily. Research shows that 6,000 milligrams of C and 2,000 milligrams of lysine daily can reverse atherosclerosis in coronary arteries and will help to prolong your life.

Wendel, please find a way to clone yourself to end the current miseries of the Toronto Maple Leafs.

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