

CONSUMER **HEALTH**

SIXTH EDITION

A GUIDE TO INTELLIGENT DECISIONS



BARRETT • JARVIS • KROGER • LONDON

Sixth Edition

CONSUMER HEALTH

A Guide to Intelligent Decisions

STEPHEN BARRETT, M.D.

Author, Editor, Consumer Advocate
Allentown, Pennsylvania

WILLIAM T. JARVIS, Ph.D.

Professor of Public Health and Preventive Medicine
Schools of Medicine and Public Health
Loma Linda University
Loma Linda, California

MANFRED KROGER, Ph.D.

Professor of Food Science
Professor of Science, Technology and Society
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, Pennsylvania

WILLIAM M. LONDON, Ed.D, M.P.H.

Director of Public Health
American Council on Science and Health
New York, New York

WCB/McGraw-Hill

A Division of The McGraw-Hill Companies

Vice President and Publisher: James M. Smith

Senior Acquisitions Editor: Vicki Malinee

Developmental Editor: Sarah Reed

Project Manager: Gayle Morris

Manuscript Editor: Cindy Deichmann

Manufacturing Manager: Betty Mueller

Cover Designer: David Zielinski

Cover Art: Linda Fritchel

SIXTH EDITION

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Printed in the United States of America

Color film by Accu-color, Inc.

Printing/binding by Maple-Vail Book Mfg Group

International Standard Book Number 0-8151-1859-7

5 6 7 8 9 0 QSR/QSR 0 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

CONSUMER HEALTH

**A Guide to Intelligent
Decisions**

About the Authors

Stephen Barrett, M.D., a retired psychiatrist in Allentown, Pennsylvania, is a nationally renowned author, editor, and consumer advocate. He is emeritus editor of *Nutrition Forum* newsletter and has been a frequent contributor to *Priorities* magazine, *Healthline* newsletter, and *Consumer Reports on Health*. He is a board member of the National Council Against Health Fraud (NCAHF) and chairs its Task Force on Victim Redress. He is medical editor of Prometheus Books and a scientific and editorial advisor to the American Council on Science and Health. He is a scientific consultant to the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP) and co-chairman of its paranormal health claims subcommittee. He operates a clearinghouse for information on health frauds and quackery. He has edited or co-authored 42 books, including *The Health Robbers: A Close Look at Quackery in America*; *The Vitamin Pushers: How the "Health Food" Industry Is Selling America a Bill of Goods*; and the American Medical Association's *Reader's Guide to "Alternative" Health Methods*. In 1984 he received the FDA Commissioner's Special Citation Award for Public Service in fighting nutrition quackery. In 1986 he was awarded honorary membership in the American Dietetic Association.

William T. Jarvis, Ph.D., is an expert on the psychology, sociology, and epidemiology of quackery. He is Professor of Public Health and Preventive Medicine at Loma Linda University, where he teaches courses dealing with controversial health practices. He founded and is president of NCAHF. He is a scientific advisor to the American Council on Science and Health, an associate editor of *Nutrition Forum*, and co-chairman (with Dr. Barrett) of the paranormal health claims subcommittee of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. He serves on the American Cancer Society's committee on questionable methods and wrote the society's booklets, "Questionable Methods of Cancer Management" and "Helping Your Patients Deal with Questionable Cancer Treatments." He has been a

featured speaker at national health-fraud conferences and testifies in court and at government hearings on controversial health matters.

Manfred Kroger, Ph.D., is Professor of Food Science and Professor of Science, Technology and Society at The Pennsylvania State University, where he has won several teaching awards. He also serves as associate editor of the *Journal of Food Science*, co-editor of *Nutrition Forum*, a scientific advisor to the American Council on Science and Health, a technical editor for Prometheus Books, and a science communicator for the Institute of Food Technologists. He has conducted research in analytical chemistry (pesticide residues), food composition, fermented milk products, and dairy processing technology. His teachings at Penn State include food laws and regulations, toxicology, introductory food science, and a highly popular university-wide course entitled "Food Facts and Fads." His other professional activities include lecturing at public and professional meetings, expert testimony in court and at government hearings, and translation of German writings.

William M. London, Ed.D., M.P.H., is director of public health of the American Council on Science and Health, a private nonprofit consumer health education agency headquartered in New York City. He is a member of the National Council Against Health Fraud's Executive Committee, serves as chairman of its Task Force on Questionable Addiction Treatments, and founded and served as president of its Ohio division for seven years. He is a scientific consultant to CSICOP and serves on the advisory board of Save Our Selves (SOS), a network of secular self-help organizations for sobriety. He has been an associate professor at Kent State University where, for eight years, he taught health-education courses, including consumer health. He has also been a visiting associate professor at Loma Linda University and executive director of RAP, Inc., a private nonprofit mental health and senior citizens service agency in Genessee County, New York.

To the Reader

You can gain a great deal from this book if you're interested in:

- Nutrition
- Physical fitness
- Bodybuilding
- High-level wellness
- Choosing trustworthy health-care professionals
- Avoiding health rip-offs
- Getting more for your health dollar

More is known about achieving and maintaining good health today than ever before. Life expectancy is at an all-time high; and, although there is still room for improvement, health-related accomplishments have exceeded the fondest dreams of past visionaries. In 1890, when life expectancy was 37 years of age, the imaginative Jules Verne predicted that in 1000 years the life expectancy would reach 58 years! In fact, it has doubled to more than 74 years in less than a century. This progress has been due, in part, to a biologically safer environment: cleaner water, food, and living space. But we hear plenty of bad news about these, and it worries us. Medical care, both preventive and therapeutic, has made important contributions, yet we worry about the risks associated with immunization, cancer therapies, prescription drugs, surgery, and many other treatment modalities. How can we resolve our concerns and reap the benefits of what modern science is discovering about health? The key is to be informed about what is happening in the health marketplace.

Unfortunately, the explosion in knowledge about health has been matched by enormous increases in health misinformation. Worse yet, health misinformation is much more readily available than the sound information people really want. In 1984 a congressional subcommittee reported that Americans wasted billions on worthless and unproven health remedies. Medical quackery was found to be the number one consumer fraud problem among the nation's elderly population. The congressional report estimated that more is spent on cancer and arthritis quackery than is spent on research into cures for those diseases. The promotion of dubious health practices is not limited to the elderly or sick. Young, healthy people are the targets of supplements,

devices, weight-control plans, and products aimed at fulfilling dreams of the body beautiful, superior athletic performance, exceptional mental ability, and more. Quackery has something for everyone because we all have wishes that exceed reality.

The entrepreneurs who market dubious health practices are clever and persistent. They exploit the public's enthusiasm for healthful living and self-help. Their promotions far outstrip school and public health education efforts aimed at consumer protection and encouraging positive health behavior. In fact, the spread of health misinformation has itself become an industry and is the foundation upon which the purveyors of dubious health products and services rely. Individuals who spread the misinformation are protected by the First Amendment, which guarantees freedom of speech. A cadre of writers produce books, magazine articles, newsletters, and pamphlets that promote quackery. Misinformation that would be illegal on a product label or in an advertisement is spread by modern mass media techniques. Health theories and claims are repeatedly extolled on radio and television talk shows whose celebrity hosts make such claims appear legitimate.

Another aspect of modern quackery's modus operandi is multilevel marketing. Its pyramid-type schemes capitalize on people's financial ambitions. Its participants encourage their friends and relatives to become "satisfied users" so they, too, can "believe in" their products—an essential factor for successful selling. Their judgment becomes clouded by self-interest and a general inability to separate real from imagined effects of health practices. Cable television is used to amplify testimonials into the siren call of quackery on a national scale. Average consumers are no match for such promotionalism.

Health hucksters are aided by those who claim that consumer protection laws constitute overregulation. "Freedom of choice" is their battle cry, but a careful examination reveals this argument to be a red herring. It is quacks who seek the freedom to sell worthless and unproven health products and services to unwary consumers. True freedom of choice cannot be exercised by people who have been deceived or driven by desperation.

Consumers exist in a crisis of confidence and wonder who can be trusted for reliable health information. Many self-appointed “consumer advocates” do not act in the public’s interest. Although some are sincere and make a contribution, others use their role to simply engage in irrational business-bashing, advance political causes, or act from motives of personal aggrandizement. Occasionally, business trade associations and lobbies also can pose as “consumer groups” and seek self-serving legislation. This is where academic consumer health education comes in. Consumer protection laws are based

on fundamental principles—inseparable from those of science—including the Consumer Bill of Rights. These provide standards that can unmask the pretenders to consumerism.

Consumer Health offers a kaleidoscopic view of today’s complex and exciting health marketplace. Its message is twofold: “You can do much for yourself through good decision-making,” but “buyer beware!” It reveals the tremendous innovation of the purveyors of quackery at a time when more caution than ever is needed in making choices in the health marketplace.

Preface for Instructors

Consumers regularly must confront the complicated and confusing health marketplace where *caveat emptor* (let the buyer beware) is the dominant philosophy. The rapid expansion of medical science has created innumerable new health products and services. Many of these receive considerable publicity before they have been adequately subjected to scientific study.

Consumers often have difficulty in making intelligent decisions about products and services that are useless, worthless, or hazardous. Quacks, pseudo-scientists, many advertisers, many journalists, and a multitude of well-intentioned promoters spread vast amounts of misinformation. Frauds and deception are rampant. Consumers are bilked out of billions of dollars each year, and many suffer loss of health as well. Unfortunately, government and community agencies provide far less protection than most people realize. Navigating the legitimate avenues of the health marketplace can also be difficult and complex.

Consumers who wish to protect their health and their pocketbooks therefore must shop with great care. They must become accurately informed. They must learn how to identify and use reliable sources of information. They must accept responsibility and speak out when they are victims of fraud and deception. They must raise objections to dubious products and services and report them to the appropriate regulatory agencies.

Goal for This Revision

This sixth edition of *Consumer Health* continues to emphasize the economic aspects of health and the social and psychologic factors that influence consumer choices. As with previous editions, *the book's fundamental purpose is to provide science-based facts and guidelines to enable consumers to select health products and services intelligently.*

This edition is the most comprehensive and thoroughly researched text on consumer health ever published. The data have been selected from thousands of reliable reports in books, scientific journals, and other periodicals, as well as original investigations done by the book's authors. Consumers will find the information useful in applying the *caveat vendor* (let the seller beware) concept to the health marketplace.

The underlying principles of consumer health were identified in the Consumer Bill of Rights promulgated by President John F. Kennedy and have guided the development of this textbook. President Kennedy declared that consumers have the right to purchase safe products and services, to be correctly informed, to freely choose products and services, and to be heard by the government and others when injustices occur. We strongly support consumer awareness and advocacy of these rights.

Intended Audience

Consumer Health will be helpful to teachers, health educators, health professionals, and to the general public. It can be used as a basic text or for supplementary reading in courses such as consumer health, health education, consumer education, sociology, psychology, home economics, social welfare, and business. School districts will find *Consumer Health* useful as a reference for teachers and students, as well as an aid in curriculum development. Professional health-care providers can use this text to prepare for public presentations and can make it available in their offices for perusal by clients.

Timeliness of References

Every topic in this book has been carefully researched. In most cases, the cited references represent the latest authoritative information we could locate. Some references may appear outdated because they are five to ten years old. Unless otherwise stated, however, we believe these still reflect the current marketplace. References more than ten years old are included either for historical reasons or because they provide insights that are still timely.

New to This Edition

The modifications in this edition guided by suggestions from college and university instructors and the authors' analysis of new information and trends in the health marketplace.

The "Key Concepts" box at the beginning of each chapter states what we believe are the most important lessons to be learned from the chapter material.

Many chapters now contain vignettes ("Personal Glimpses") to stimulate reader interest and "Consumer Tip" boxes that emphasize key points. New photographs and cartoons have been added to several chapters. The number of illustrations has been greatly increased. Many checklists and "It's Your Decision" boxes related to "real-life" decisions have been added. Information formerly contained in a Historical Perspective chapter has been shifted to other chapters where it is more meaningful.

Perhaps the biggest change is the scope and depth of material on "alternative" health care. This reflects an explosion of media interest in this topic, plus new information made available by investigative reporters.

Our goal for this edition was to make the information as practical as possible. Chapters 6 (Mental Health Care), 14 (Exercise Concepts, Products, and Services), and 22 (Health Devices) have been simplified.

Chapter 1, Consumer Health Issues, has been rewritten to provide an overview of the marketplace.

Chapter 8, "Alternative" Methods, has been considerably expanded.

Chapter 9, Self-Care, has been enriched by the addition of preventive strategies.

Chapter 11, Basic Nutrition Concepts, has been revised to integrate the 1995 U.S. Dietary Guidelines, the Food Guide Pyramid, and information on the new food labels.

Chapter 19, Drug Products, has been simplified and reflects the fact that many products formerly available only by prescription are now marketed in OTC dosage.

Chapter 24, Health Insurance, has been reorganized, simplified, and enriched with new information on managed care.

Chapter 25, Health-Care Economics, has been simplified and enriched with information on Medicare fraud and the need for health-care reform.

Additional Features

Glossary. The glossary has been lengthened and includes many useful items not discussed elsewhere in the book.

Tables. Most charts and tables have been updated, and several new ones have been added as teaching aids.

References. Reference lists have been expanded. References that may be especially useful for students seeking additional information are listed with boldface numbers. These publications are "classic" resources that are available in many libraries. Some references are listed merely to help readers judge the credibility of cited material. Information on how to read citations and locate references has been added to Chapter 1.

Latest Information. Extensive searching of the scientific literature and personal investigation by the authors have provided information to update and expand the contents of this edition. New and enriched areas include advertising regulation, AIDS quackery, ambulatory care centers, antioxidants, birth-control methods, ayurvedic medicine, chiropractic, cholesterol guidelines, coronary bypass surgery and angioplasty, cosmetics, false memory syndrome, funeral arrangements, fibromyalgia, folic acid, genetic counseling, the health-care crisis, heart disease prevention, homeopathy, homocysteine, hospital morbidity statistics, infomercials, latex allergy, macrobiotic diets, medical savings accounts, meditation, melatonin, multilevel marketing, online information sources, ethical issues for pharmacists, periodic medical examinations, sources of reliable information, subliminal tapes, stress testing, telemarketing scams, and therapeutic touch.

Instructor's Manual. An instructor's manual describing course objectives, teaching/learning activities, an illustrative course outline, sources of audiovisual materials, and test questions is available.

Computerized Test Bank. Available in IBM (Windows) and Macintosh formats, this software enables the instructor to select, edit, add, or delete questions, as well as construct and print answer keys.

Organization

As in the fifth edition, the text is broadly divided into six parts: dynamics of the health marketplace; approaches to health care; nutrition and fitness; major health problems; other products and services; and protection of the consumer.

Dynamics of the Health Marketplace focuses on past and present problems. After defining the major consumer health issues, it discusses how the scientific method is used to determine medical truths, how consumers can separate fact from fiction, how frauds and quackery can be identified, and how advertising and other marketing activities influence consumer decisions.

Health Care Approaches covers basic medical care, the services of many types of science-based and "alternative" practitioners, self-care, and health-care facilities.

Nutrition and Fitness integrates what consumers need to know about the extremely important topics of nutrition, weight control, and exercise. Its chapters provide the necessary tools for distinguishing between science-based methods and fads, fallacies, and scams.

Major Health Problems covers four of the leading causes of death and disability in our society: cardiovascular disease, arthritis, cancer, and AIDS.

Other Products and Services covers a myriad of other subjects that affect most, if not all, consumers. These include drug products, skin care and beauty aids, birth-control methods, vision aids, hearing aids, and other health devices.

Protection of the Consumer focuses on legal and economic issues involved in protecting consumers. These include death-related issues, health insurance, other economic issues, consumer-protection laws and agencies, and strategies for intelligent consumers.

The *Appendix* provides comprehensive lists of agencies, organizations, publications, and toll-free hotlines that offer reliable information.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No book like this could have been written without help from many experts and other providers of information. The authors offer special thanks to the following.

Associate Editors

Three experts provided invaluable technical help with all or part of the overall text: Lisa Feldman Barrett, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Psychology, Boston College; Judith N. Barrett, M.D., family practitioner, Allentown, Pennsylvania; and Jack Raso, M.S., R.D., Editor, Nutrition Forum Newsletter.

Scientific Consultants

The following experts checked portions of the manuscript for accuracy and provided many helpful suggestions: Daniel Barrett; John E. Dodes, D.D.S.; Allan Gaisin, M.D.; Victor Herbert, M.D., J.D.; Gabe Mirkin, M.D.; Robert Mosenkis, P.E., C.C.E.; John H. Renner, M.D.; Wallace I. Sampson, M.D.; Varro E. Tyler, Ph.D.; George A. Ulett, M.D., Ph.D.; and David Zimmerman.

Reviewers

The following educators provided insightful reviews of the last edition and made excellent suggestions for this one: Martin Ayim, Grambling State University; Peggy Chehardy, Tulane School of Medicine; Jeffrey Clark, Ball State University; Maxine Davis, Eastern Washington University; Roberta Hollander, Howard University; and Janet Reis, University of Illinois.

Founder

Harold J. Cornacchia, Ed.D., Emeritus Professor of Health Education, San Francisco State University, wrote the first edition of *Consumer Health* and co-authored the next four editions.

Publishing Staff

Three members of Mosby's staff guided the editing and production of this book: Vicki Malinee, whose vision made publication possible; Sarah Reed, our steadfast project coordinator; and Cindy Deichmann, who did a superb job of copy editing and production.

Research Assistant

Allison Hoy updated most of the addresses and telephone numbers listed in the Appendix.

Information Sources

The following individuals and organizations provided a wealth of valuable, up-to-date information: Agency for Health Care Policy and Research; American Academy of Dermatology; American Academy of Physician Assistants; American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy; American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy; American Association of Retired Persons; American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors, and Therapists; American Board of Medical Specialties; American Cancer Society; American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology; American College of Physicians; American College of Sports Medicine; American Council on Science and Health; American Dental Association; American Dietetic Association; American Health Care Association; American Heart Association; American Hospital Association; American Mental Health Counselors Association; American Nurses' Association; American Optometric Association; American Osteopathic Association; American Podiatry Association; American Psychiatric Association; American Psychological Association; American Self-Help Clearinghouse; American Society for Dermatologic Surgery; American Society of Endodontists; American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons; Arthritis Foundation; Attorney General of Massachusetts; Frances M. Berg, M.S.; A.M. Best Company, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids; Children's Healthcare Is a Legal Duty (CHILD); Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP); Consumer Reports on Health; Federal Trade Commission; Federated Ambulatory Surgery Association; Federation of State Medical Boards; Generic Pharmaceutical Industry Association; Gerber Products Company; Health Industry Manufacturers Association; Health Insurance Association of America; Healthwise, Inc.; Hoechst Marion Roussel, Inc.; International Hearing Society; Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations; Lehigh Valley Hospital Library; MarketData Enterprises; Congressman Paul McHale (D-PA); Medical Economics;

Museum of Questionable Medical Devices; National Abortion Federation; National Academy of Sciences; National AIDS Information Clearinghouse; National Association for Ambulatory Care; National Association for Home Care; National Association for Medical Equipment Services; National Association of Social Workers; National Cholesterol Information Education Program Information Center; National Consumers League; National Hospice Organization; National

Organization for Rare Disorders; National Practitioner Data Bank; NIH Office of Alternative Medicine; Nonprescription Drug Manufacturers Association; Office of the Inspector General; Planned Parenthood; Pritikin Longevity Centers; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; Linda Rosa, R.N.; The Sugar Association; U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; U.S. Food and Drug Administration; U.S. Postal Service; and United Network for Organ Sharing.

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Part One

DYNAMICS OF THE HEALTH MARKETPLACE

