How to Get Off Dangerous Prescription Medications Forever

A respected newspaper recently reiterated the surprising statistic that, “106,000 people die annually in the United States from properly prescribed drugs.” [1] This is a distressing number considering that over 60% of the population in the United States is taking at least one prescription drug on a regular basis and we are relying on these drugs to be prescribed in a manner to help, not harm, us.

Unfortunately the harsh reality is that prescriptions and medical regimens are overused in modern medicine. It is a rare doctor visit that does not result in the exchange of a prescription, and there are few treatment plans that do not include the recommendation of prescription or over the counter medications. There is evidence the percentage of medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration is significantly higher compared to a decade ago. [1] This indicates that the process and requirements for approval are more lenient than before, and likely further increasing our risks of being harmed by use of prescription drugs.

There are alternatives. This article serves to highlight the most dangerous drugs on the market today, and how to overcome the need for them. The goal is to point to the dangers of prescription medication as treatment for many illnesses and offer replacements that are natural and free of side effects, such as alternative therapies and remedies.

Prednisone

Prednisone belongs to a category of drugs called corticosteroids and identified by the average person as steroids. [2] While many people associate steroids with unhealthy and illegal weight lifting or strength training, steroids have long been used as medication and treatment for certain ailments. Prednisone, specifically, is utilized to mitigate inflammation in the body and treat allergic reactions, skin diseases, colitis, arthritis, and psoriasis. [2] It is also utilized by modern medicine for curing fungal infections and certain breathing disorders. [2]

With this laundry list of benefits, many people assume that prednisone is a useful and healthy medication. Admittedly, the short-term therapeutic benefits of this pharmaceutical can be valuable, but the long-term side effects of this drug can be detrimental to your health. There is quite a list of side effects, which first and foremost begin with a suppressed immune system, and include:
● Elevated blood pressure
● Fluid retention
● Potassium loss
● Muscle weakness
● Osteoporosis
● Peptic ulcers
● Intestinal hemorrhage
● Skin thinning
● Poor wound healing
● Diabetes
● Reduced resistance to infection. [2]

The good news is that you can wean yourself off of this drug. If you have been taking prednisone for an extended period of time, it requires commitment and patience to fully eliminate your dependence on the medication. It is recommended that you taper off prednisone over a period of three to six months, and during this time period you should supplement your dietary intake with omega-3 fatty acids and a good multivitamin. [3]

As you taper another issue with prednisone becomes apparent. Prednisone is structurally similar to the hormone cortisol, which is manufactured in the adrenal glands of the body. Prolonged exposure to prednisone can inhibit your adrenal gland function, as the body tells the gland that there is sufficient amount of this hormone in the bloodstream. Thus, if you suddenly remove all of the prednisone from your system, there will be no cortisol in the body.

By tapering the dosage you give your adrenal glands time to resume their normal cortisol producing function. Alternatively, going cold turkey on prednisone, after an extended period of time on the drug, will result in withdrawal symptoms, which could include severe fatigue, weakness, body aches, nausea, vomiting and lightheadedness. [4]

Chemotherapeutic Drugs
Chemotherapy drugs, such as methotrexate, are actually poisons that are prescribed for the specific purpose of killing cancer cells in the body. The drugs target cells in the body and prevent them from regenerating and creating new cells. The basis for this process as effective treatment is that cancer cells reproduce far more rapidly than healthy cells, and therefore are better targets for the chemotherapy drugs. However, these poisons do not really know the difference between healthy cells and cancer cells.

While research and statistics show that chemotherapeutic drugs are effective for certain individuals, they have a number of obvious, and not so obvious, side effects upon use.

As eluded to above, these drugs attack not only cancer cells, but also healthy cells in the body. This can cause a loss of hair, a suppressed immune system, issues with digestion and stomach acid, and a number of other physical side effects. The process of undergoing chemotherapy can be physical draining on a cancer patient, and emotionally draining on the person’s support system, as noticeable weakness and susceptibility to illness increases.

Chemotherapeutic agents are also prescribed to treat ailments, such as rheumatoid arthritis. When used in this capacity, a lower dose is administered and some of the severe physical side effects are mitigated, but that does not mean underlying consequences are avoided. Chemotherapeutic drugs used to treat arthritis, or other conditions, are consumed on a long-term, perhaps lifelong, basis. Health risks associated with extended use of chemotherapeutic agents are fetal death, congenital abnormalities, liver toxicity, kidney toxicity, lung disease and suppressed immune system.

Methotrexate, a common drug used for treatment of arthritis, functions by antagonizing and inhibiting the absorption of folic acid. This can alleviate symptoms of arthritis, but folic acid is necessary to prevent the accumulation of homocysteine in the arteries of the heart. So, without this nutrient available, it increases inherently cardiovascular risks. These drugs, especially for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, are used in conjunction with cortisone, which can exacerbate certain conditions and side effects.

Where there are few alternatives available for the cancer of treatment, but there are many alternative remedies on the market that can treat rheumatoid arthritis,
inflammatory conditions, and other such autoimmune diseases. Many people find that regularly drinking turmeric and ginger tea is effective for easing the pain of rheumatoid arthritis and other inflammation, or simply adding magnesium to your diet. Lastly, when it comes to rheumatoid arthritis, alternative medicine will encourage the use of hot and cold treatments.

**Warfarin**

This pharmaceutical is often prescribed to alleviate hypertension, commonly called high blood pressure, and functions by thinning the blood. Thinner blood can move more easily through the blood vessels, and thereby puts less pressure on the arterial walls. Additionally, the heart does not need to pump as hard to move this blood through the arteries and around the body. High blood pressure is a serious condition that affects overly 75 million Americans, and warfarin is applauded as an effective way to lower blood pressure for some of these people.

Yet, there is a price to pay for alleviating this health condition. There are many devastating side effects of warfarin. Besides thinning the blood to such an extent that if an incidental injury occurs, it is almost impossible to stem the bleeding, it also weakens the blood vessels increasing the risk of stroke, which is incidentally one of the consequences of high blood pressure that warfarin is designed to prevent. There can be pain or swelling at the point where warfarin is injected, and can cause vomiting, diarrhea, and other digestive complications for a period of time after a dose.

There are many simple and economical alternatives to blood thinners to improve and treat cardiovascular health. For example Vitamin C can be substituted in a high dosage for warfarin. You need to consume around 1,000mg of Vitamin C per day, and at this level you can attempt to thin the blood. Vitamin C provides protection, as it coats the red blood cell walls and prevents them from breaking and bleeding. Also, Vitamin E, when consumed in an amount of 400 IU, coats the red blood cells and binds collagen in blood vessels making the walls stronger and lessening the risk of stroke and bleeding.

**Cholesterol Lowering Drugs**

There is much debate in the medical field over cholesterol levels and what they signify, but it is generally recognized that a lower level of specific, harmful cholesterols is recommended. There are a number of types of drugs that scientists and medical
professionals have developed to lower cholesterol, but cholesterol can also be maintained by healthy diet and exercise. Despite these easy and obvious alternatives, the medical profession insists on prescribing dangerous drugs that have appalling side effects.

- **Statins** – These pharmaceuticals reduce the production of cholesterol in the liver and alter the way in which LDL (low density lipopolysaccharides) cholesterol enters the cells. This lowers bad cholesterol. Although, side effects include liver toxicity, muscle inflammation, gastrointestinal symptoms, and eye issues, such as cataracts. [3]

- **Bile Acid Sequestering Agents or Resins** – These medications absorb bile acids, which are produced from cholesterol in the gastrointestinal tract, and allow them to be excreted out of the body. Thus, lowering the circulating levels of cholesterol in the blood. These drugs have side effects that include constipation, nausea, and bloating. In addition there is reduced absorption of the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K and long-term use may cause bleeding ailments, vision complications and high triglyceride levels. [3]

- **Atromid/ Lopid** – These drugs raise the HDL (high density lipopolysaccharide) levels and lower triglyceride levels in the body. Through this process, Atromid and Lopid are able to lower blood pressure. Yet, according to research conducted by the World Health Organization, Atromid actually increased deaths from non-cardiac causes by 44%. These deaths were primarily attributed to cancer, gall bladder complications and pancreatitis. [3] There are a number of complications related to continued use of Lopid, as well. The tradeoff of one potentially fatal condition for another seems unreasonable when it comes to your health.

A preventative approach is the better one. One measure that you can take long before having high cholesterol is eating a diet rich in enzymes, antioxidants, Vitamin E, Vitamin C, beta-carotene, folic acids, omega-3 fatty acids, and Vitamin B12. These nutrients, vitamins, and minerals lower the risk of cardiovascular disease significantly and are certainly safer than the drug alternatives.

Lastly, omega-3 fatty acids are essential to reducing cholesterol and can easily be incorporated into the average diet in the form of cold-water fish or supplements. Niacin,
particularly as inositol hexanicotinate, has been proven to lower LDL cholesterol levels and raise HDL cholesterol and can be safely used with no side effects.

Nutritional supplements are also recommended and should include enzymes, antioxidants, minerals, fiber and essential fatty acids. In particular, supplements of Vitamin C were particularly effective in lowering cholesterol. The reason for Vitamin C’s effectiveness is the boost to the immune system and other functions through antioxidants.

Another safe and more natural ways to lower cholesterol levels includes excluding certain products and food substances from your diet. You want to eliminate fats and sodium. When a low-fat diet is combined with exercise and drinking enough water, there are clear benefits for your cardiovascular system and heart health.

Lastly, individuals can prevent oxidation of LDL’s naturally, without medications. The research suggests that oxidized LDL’s are the culprits damaging the arterial walls and causing cardiovascular and circulatory problems. This damage can only occur in the presence of free radicals. So, why are there free radicals in our bodies?

Free radicals are produced in animal products when exposed to heat and air during the cooking process. Therefore, raw foods will have fewer free radicals than processed, baked, and grilled foods. The best way to fight off free radicals is with a diet rich in antioxidants. Antioxidants bind to these free radicals and prevent them from binding to LDL, essentially removing the free radicals from circulation in your bloodstream. [6] Without a path to move throughout the body, the free radicals are unable to do the same damage to your tissue and muscles.

Prozac

Depression is a terrible and crippling disease, but some of the drugs prescribed to treat depression can be just a debilitating, which is not to mention that many are addictive. Prozac, and others in this class of drugs, operate by altering the level of serotonin in the brain. Serotonin is one of many neurotransmitters that can affect mood, agitation, anxiety and sleep.

Most people associate serotonin with happiness. When your brain is devoid or lacking serotonin it causes depression, but the alternative condition, too much serotonin, can lead to anxiety and obsessive behavior. Prozac works to treat the first condition, a lack of serotonin. It blocks the reuptake of serotonin by nerve cells, thus leaving more
serotonin to bind to receptor sites in the brain, which when administered correctly can positively alter mood and behavior. [6]

However, as earlier indicated, Prozac is not all glitter and sunshine. The drug has been connected to a few side effects and negative consequences. One debilitating side effect of Prozac is known as “akathisia,” which literally means unable to sit down. This term refers to the need to fidget and anxiety felt by as much as 25% of Prozac users. These uncomfortable emotions are often accompanied by more serious emotional and mental responses to the medication, such as suicidal thoughts, hostility and violent behavior. [3]

There also is concern for people who have undiagnosed bipolar disorder (manic depression) taking Prozac. The FDA has concluded that certain antidepressants, Prozac included, have the potential to provoke manic episodes in these people. [7] When an individual begins a new prescription regimen that includes antidepressants or changes dosage of these medications, then doctors, patients, and family members should be monitoring the individual for any negative changes in behavior. There must be an awareness of the symptoms of mania, including feeling extremely happy or very irritable, inflated self-esteem, not needing as much sleep as usual, talking, or being more active than usual.

While prescription drugs have become the standard treatment for depression, there are natural solutions to the disease and similar illnesses. These include simple changes to lifestyle, such as incorporating aerobic exercise into your daily routine. Aerobic exercise actually alters the brain’s chemistry by increasing endorphins, which are the body’s “feel good” hormones. The more you exercise and naturally produce happy hormones, the better you will feel. However, beating depression is not easy, and it can take other lifestyle changes, such as incorporating mediation into your week, finding a fulfilling hobby, or regulating your sleeping patterns to truly feel normal again.

As well, there are natural supplements that studies indicate can improve mental symptoms of depression. For example, St John’s Wort (Hypericum perforatum) is a ubiquitous flowering plant has been used to treat the symptoms of depression for decades and it is inexpensive, widely available, and efficient. Also, tryptophan is an essential amino acid, which is a building block for proteins utilized by our bodies, and is incidentally, one of the building blocks for the neurotransmitter serotonin. Therefore,
taking tryptophan as a supplement does not flood the system with serotonin such as Prozac, but provides the materials your body needs to generate its own supply. This compound also aids sleep, which can also alleviate the symptoms of depression.

**Amphetamines**

This class of drugs is used predominantly to treat behavioral disorders, such as ADHD, but it has been shown ad nauseam that these drugs only mask the symptoms of these behavior disorders and simultaneously foster psychological addiction and dependency. [3] This means the detriments of these medications far outweigh the potential benefits. In addition, because amphetamines only mask symptoms, a patient needs to take the drugs indefinitely to feel their effects, which only exacerbates side effects and dependency on the medications.

Among the side effects are serious mental and emotional consequences. Amphetamine is a stimulant, which is intended to treat the issues with attention and fidgeting that accompany ADHD. However, stimulants are problematic for people who have high blood pressure, heart disease, an overactive thyroid, other forms of anxiety or agitation, or addictive personalities. This is because stimulants speed up a number of processes in the body, including heart rate, circulation, and the number of synapses firing the in the brain. There is an increasing trend of depression and suicidal thoughts as a result of taking these types of drugs. [3]

There are many safe and natural alternatives for the treatment of ADD and ADHD. Essential fatty acids found in fatty fish, such as salmon and mackerel, and zinc in combination have been shown to have a very positive effect on children and adults suffering from attention deficit type problems. Research also indicates that simply ensuring an individual has breakfast each morning can dampen the effects of ADD or ADHD because breakfast will regulate the blood sugar t an early hour in the day and even out the hormones in the body for a more nuanced emotional state and increased ability to focus. Lastly, individuals who have ADHD or ADD can be susceptible to food dyes, and studies have shown that eliminating foods that contain processed and unnatural food dyes can help with the physical and mental symptoms of both conditions.

**Diuretics**

These pharmaceuticals are used to increase the kidney’s normal functionality, thus
causing an increase in excretion of toxins, sodium, and other unwanted products in the body. Due to this effect, diuretics are commonly referred to as water pills.

Medical professionals primarily prescribe diuretics to treat cardiac patients who are hypertensive. These drugs have their place in the treatment of congestive heart failure for example, but they should not be used on a long-term basis and there are natural, safer and healthier ways to decrease fluid accumulation. They are also utilized when a patient is experiencing kidney or liver complications or disease, in order to augment the functionality of these organs. However, the long-term use of diuretics depletes the body of essential minerals.

This is called “mineral wasting,” and it is most dangerous to overall health when large amounts of potassium and magnesium are secreted from the body. Both of these minerals are essential for optimal muscle and heart functionality, and are helpful to lower blood pressure, which is the exact condition a diuretic is often prescribed to treat.

To remove the necessity for taking diuretics, a person should focus on lowering blood pressure. There are a number of ways to do this through diet, exercise, lowering stress, and sleeping better. Some sure fire ways to naturally lower your blood pressure include increasing your water intake, reducing the amount of fat in your diet, and exercising for at least 30 minutes per day.

**Proscar**

The death toll from prostate cancer is close to 40,000 men per annum and it is increasing. Surprisingly, almost every human male over 70 years of age has some cancer cells in his prostate gland. These cancerous cells do not usually cause issues. Problems and complications only arise when these cells escape the capsule surrounding the gland. When this happens the cancer can metastasize and begin to spread to other parts of the body.

Therefore, when there is potential for prostate cancer to spread, doctors will prescribe medication to prevent problems from occurring. Proscar became the standard drug used to reduce prostate cancer and hypertrophy, but it has serious side effects. In fact, the potential consequences of Proscar are so detrimental to overall health that females are advised not to handle the drug or have sexual intercourse with men who are on the drug. Studies have shown that exposure to treated semen could cause urogenital defects in male offspring.  

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[3]
A natural remedy for preventing the spread and exacerbation of prostate cancer, which also blocks the conversion of testosterone to dihydrotestosterone, is the lipid extract of the herb *Serenoa repens* (Saw Palmetto). This extract is economical, less toxic and incidentally more effective than Proscar.

**Diabetes Treatments**

For insulin dependent of Type I diabetics, whose pancreas produces too little insulin, insulin replacement is generally necessary. This is typically administered through a device that provides insulin directly into the blood stream. Diabetics should and do check their insulin levels several times a day, and try to treat higher or lower levels of insulin with natural food products. With an appropriate diet, exercise, and nutritional supplements, the amount of insulin required can be reduced. Moving away from synthetic insulin will also ease or mitigate the potential for long-term complications of insulin dependence.

Type II diabetes, which is the more prevalent type of diabetes, is often treated with oral drugs such as Micronase, Glucotrol and Tolnase, which can cause problems such as hypoglycemia, headaches, gastrointestinal disruptions, fatigue and liver damage. Over and above these side effects, there is also the increased risk of death from heart attack and blood vessel disease. Nutritional supplementation is critical to the natural control of type II diabetes. Supplements replaces the nutrients lost during excessive urination and helps balance the body’s homeostasis. Thus, this limits the need for taking oral drugs.

Chromium picolinate facilitates the action of insulin and maintains glucose, protein and lipid metabolism. It improves insulin sensitivity and thus reduces complications from diabetes by lowering blood glucose levels. Vanadyl sulphate is an insulin analogue, which can be used to enhance glucose metabolism and reduce the need for insulin in diabetics. Additionally, gamma linolenic acid (GLA) is an essential fatty acid that is essential to metabolism and has been shown to improve the complications of diabetes, especially neuropathy. Finally, biotin functions to lower blood sugar and supplementation with 16mg per day, and has been shown to reduce blood sugar levels in diabetics.

**Arthritis Medication**

The inflammatory, painful and debilitating disease of arthritis is remarkably prevalent
in society, and it comes in many forms. Arthritis largely affects the joints, but can also have detrimental effects on the connective tissue and the musculature of the body. Despite some of the setbacks and complications associated with NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatories), they are the most common prescription for pain maintenance of arthritis. Although, it is difficult to understand the consistency and abundance with which these drugs are prescribed because they have detrimental side effects and result in the death of 6,000 people per year!

Some of the problem with treatment for arthritis lies in the overall approach of modern medicine. NSAIDs are designed to treat the symptoms and pain of arthritis, not the underlying condition. This is not an issue confined to arthritis treatment, but any number of ailments. Therefore, NSAIDs must be consumed on a regular and constant basis to continually relieve the pain of arthritis, although they are doing nothing to heal the individual.

Over time, the side effects of NSAIDs include gastrointestinal disorders, bleeding, kidney and liver damage, as well as sodium retention and the problems that come with that. Yet, what is worse, is that NSAIDs destroy the cartilage lining the ends of bone and result in fragile joints and an increased potential for fractures throughout the body.

There is a school of thought that suggests that arthritis is caused from infection with *Mycoplasma sp.* and certain holistic treatments are turning to supplements to eliminate this infection, rather than treating the symptoms of arthritis. These supplements can come from natural sources, and result in a natural approach to reduce the inflammatory response and rebuild cartilage. This means that curing this infection is also curing the underlying cause for the pain rather than just masking it.

Research points to a few sources of supplements to fight *Mycoplasma sp.* including supplementation with glucosamine sulphate and chondroitin. These are building blocks of glycosaminoglycan found in cartilage and though to restore joints, not just hide pain. As well, these supplements have the ability to retain water, and can insulate the cartilage with its shock absorption capabilities.

**Cold & Flu Medication**

Nearly every person on the planet will try to self-medicate at one time or another. Most commonly, this occurs when people experience an illness, infection, or disease they
perceive to be less serious and not warranting medical attention to solve. For example, people try to treat the symptoms of a common cold or the flu with aspirin, ibuprofen, and decongestants without a second thought. What many people do not realize as they gobble these over-the-counter medication, is that they can actually suppress your immune system at a time when your body is under attack by an army of invaders. [3]

There are many natural antiviral remedies on the market today that are effective and have no side effects. It is common knowledge that Vitamin C is excellent in building up the immune system and preventing cold and flu bacteria from ever infiltrating the body. However, if preventative measures fail, increasing the amount of water and liquids you consume is essential for getting better. Staying hydrated is the best way to give your body the tools it needs to eliminate a bacteria and return to normal. Also, colloidal silver has been used in traditional medicine for eons and for good reason. It is tremendously against bacterial infections.

**Beta Blockers & Calcium Channel Blockers**

Beta-blockers can calcium channel blockers both belong to the class of drugs used to treat high blood pressure, but they also have detrimental side effects, such as lowering libido, impotence, fatigue and unfavorable blood lipid concentrations. Worst of all they compromise cardiovascular function, as they weaken the heart and relax the blood vessels. [3]

Beta-blockers are thought to lower blood pressure by inhibiting the response of the heart muscle to epinephrine. Epinephrine stimulates heart rate and raises blood pressure and by regulating how much epinephrine reaches the heart, beta-blockers can prevent the heart from pumping too much blood, too forcefully, through the arteries. Although, in this capacity, they do function to lower blood pressure, long-term use can result in shortness of breath, cold extremities, heart palpitations, congestive heart failure and hypertension. [4]

Calcium channel blockers are also used to lower blood pressure, but through a different process. These drugs inhibit the entry of calcium into arterial cell walls. When there is too much calcium in the arterial walls they can become hardened and will not expand to accommodate differing amounts of blood and liquid in the circulatory system. Proper functionality of your circulatory and cardiovascular system requires that the arterial tissue remains supple and amenable to changes in blood flow, but
calcium can make it stiff, hard, and damaged.

It is known that the use of calcium channel blockers will limit the amount of calcium that affects the arterial walls, but that is not where the analysis ends. Studies recently showed that there is a correlation between the use of these drugs and death from cardiovascular disease. [3] Individuals with high blood pressure are already susceptible to cardiovascular diseases and complications, such as heart attacks, and use of these medications may exacerbate this problem.

High blood pressure can be alleviated naturally with an appropriate diet, inclusion of exercise in your daily life, and stress reduction techniques. It is recommended to drink sufficient quantities of water and eat five servings of fruit a day. Supplemeting your healthy diet with extra with magnesium, L-carnitine, L-taurine, and Coenzyme Q10 can also naturally lower blood pressure without the need for dangerous and toxic pharmaceuticals. [6]

However, it is important to note that individuals taking beta-blockers and calcium channel blockers cannot stop taking these medications immediately. A person needs to be weaned gradually off either type of medication under the supervision of a physician to avoid a dangerous rebound effect and myocardial infarction.

**Conclusion**

Prescription medication is a part of life for many people. It has become the go-to treatment plan for medical professionals and most Americans are taking some type of medication on a daily basis. However, this common use of medications does not remove the need for some discern and skepticism over their use. Very often medications are prescribed to mask symptoms of a condition or illness, not treat the underlying cause. This means a drug regimen is not a temporary fix, but a long-term commitment.

As people consume these medications for months of years, over-the-counter medications and prescription drugs become less effective at treatment and simultaneously increase the likelihood of negative side effects. Also, our dependency on medications means that to be effective the medications must have greater and greater amount of the toxic and synthetic ingredients to be effective, and this has put a dampener on their efficacy and safety.

Luckily, there are natural remedies for many common ailments. People are often
unaware of their options because interactions and conversations around treatment is confined to discussion with a doctor or pharmacist, but with a bit of research it becomes obvious that natural remedies can be just as effective as drugs, without the harmful side effects.

References:

3. Life Sources (2002): The Dirty Dozen Dangerous Drugs, Life Sources, Inc.