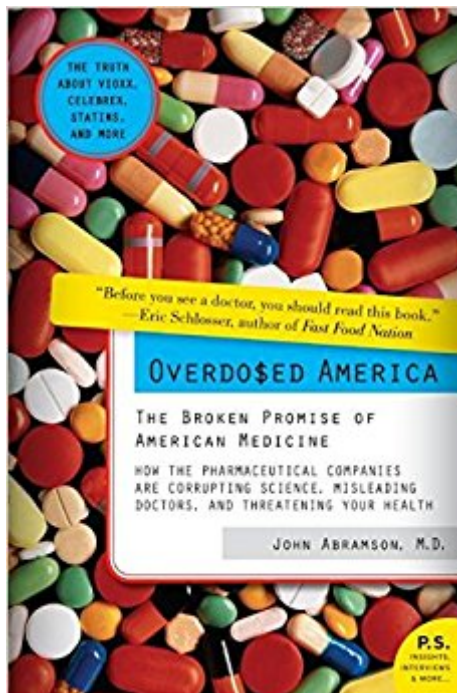




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# Overdosed America: The Broken Promise Of American Medicine



## Synopsis

Using the examples of Vioxx, Celebrex, cholesterol-lowering statin drugs, and anti-depressants, *Overdosed America* shows that at the heart of the current crisis in American medicine lies the commercialization of medical knowledge itself. Drawing on his background in statistics, epidemiology, and health policy, John Abramson, M.D., reveals the ways in which the drug companies have misrepresented statistical evidence, misled doctors, and compromised our health. The good news is that the best scientific evidence shows that reclaiming responsibility for your own health is often far more effective than taking the latest blockbuster drug. You—and your doctor—will be stunned by this unflinching exposé of American medicine.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

According to Abramson, Americans are overmedicated and overmedicalized as a result of the commercialization of health care. Falling prey to marketing campaigns, we demand unnecessary and expensive drugs and procedures, believing they constitute the best possible medical care. Wrong, says Abramson: though more post-heart attack procedures are performed in the U.S. than in Canada, one-year survival rates are the same. Similarly, notes Abramson, a former family practitioner who teaches at Harvard Medical School, we spend more on high-tech neonatology than other Western countries but have a higher infant-mortality rate because of inattention to low-tech prenatal care. Abramson deconstructs the scientific sleight of hand in presenting clinical trial results that leads to the routine prescription of pricey cholesterol-lowering

drugs even when their effectiveness has not been proven; he examines what he calls "supply-sensitive medical services" – the near-automatic use of medical technologies, such as cardiac catheterization, less because they are needed than because they are available. Abramson's bottom line: "More care doesn't necessarily mean better care." Arguing firmly that doctors should focus more on lifestyle changes to improve health, Abramson seems less credible when he writes off depression as "exercise-deficiency disease" and disposes of cancer in little more than a page. Still, he makes a powerful and coherent case that American medicine has gone badly astray and needs a new paradigm – one untainted by profits. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“Enlightening.” (Washington Post Book World) “A powerful and coherent case that American medicine has gone badly astray.” (Publishers Weekly) “Abramson’s book will have you rethinking your relationship with your doctor and your health.” (The Oregonian (Portland)) “Before you see a doctor, you should read this book.” (Eric Schlosser, author of Fast Food Nation) “A clear and concise explanation of how American medicine has gone astray...a must read for both patients and doctors.” (Herbert Benson, MD, author of The Relaxation Response and The Breakout Principle) “Fulfills the criteria for high quality in health services: the right diagnosis and the right prescription at the right time.” (Barbara Starfield, MD, MPH, University Distinguished Professor, Johns Hopkins University & Medical Institutions) “A compelling and well-documented analysis... a book every American should read.” (Elliott Fisher, MD, MPH, Professor of Medicine, Dartmouth Medical School) “Essential for all those who want to intelligently reclaim responsibility for their own health.” (Cheryl Richardson, author of Take Time for Your Life, Life Makeovers and Stand Up for Your Life)

“Probably as much as 75% of the medicine of sickness is unnecessary and its cost can be avoided.” – Dr. Ghislaine Lanctot, Author Of The Medical Mafia “One of the first duties of the physician is to educate the masses not to take medicine.” – William Osler, M.D. This is my first glance at Dr. Abramson’s work, and it did not disappoint. *Overdo\$ed America - The Broken Promise Of American Medicine* By John Abramson M.D., does an exceptional job of eviscerating what the conventional medical establishment has been doing for an extremely long time: misrepresenting medical data at the expense of the

American populace's health and well being. Abramson's foray into the heart of the medical establishment is something to behold. He does what nigh no one within his field does, or even the mainstream establishment does, which is hone in on duplicitous dealings of the Medical Industrial Complex in many ways. From manipulation of statistics, to scientific information that is highly inaccurate, no stone is unturned in this journey into the web of medical deception. The foray of Dr. Abramson is reminiscent of the work of Dr. Brogan in her landmark book, *A Mind Of Your Own - The Truth About Depression*, and Dr. Breggin in his phenomenal book *Toxic Psychiatry*. Both of those books destroy any semblance of reality within the psychiatric/medical establishment. Abramson did the same in respect to prescription drugs, and in an extraordinary way. The data collated within the doors of this book help individuals see the many intricacies that are unknown today. Not only did the FDA allow in 1981 the drug companies to change the direct-to-consumer [DTC] advertising rules, allowing the pharmaceuticals to advertise to people, but they also further loosened the restrictions in 1997, opening the flood gates. Therein began the normalization of advertising and drugs within the American landscape, which happens to be illegal in every country in the world except two: New Zealand and the United States. That fact should give incisive folks pause. Furthermore, the author delves into the pharmaceutical disasters that were Paxil, Celebrex, Vioxx, HRT, and more, but he doesn't stop there. Abramson also deconstructs how the supply side of medical care functions, and how it often increases costs, but not the benefits of health. Another noteworthy point is the fact that the cholesterol guidelines are delved into at length, as the author covers many of the issues plaguing those guidelines. There is a lot more covered by the author, and he also mentions some sensible solutions that can be carried out by individuals and the establishment. All in all, this is a top-down analysis of a great portion of the issues plaguing conventional medicine, and why American's health care costs have increased, but health has remained stagnant. If you care about your health, or that of a loved one, society, solutions, and/or the intricacies of medicine et al., consider this compulsory reading. The fact people don't know about this information is costing lives, in the hundreds of thousands, and that's not an exaggeration. Preventable medical mistakes are the third leading cause of death in the United States, at over 400,000 deaths a year. This book harpoons directly into the heart of the matter, and not knowing this information in the age of information is akin to willingly choosing ignorance when solutions are at hand in various modalities. Kindest Regards, Zy Marquez [TheBreakaway.wordpress.com](http://TheBreakaway.wordpress.com) P.S. If you wish to know others Doctors doing high quality work, please look into Dr. Ghislaine Lanctot, author of [The Medical Mafia], Dr. Kelly Brogan [author of *A Mind Of Your Own - The Truth About Depression*], Dr. Peter Breggin [author of *Toxic Psychiatry*], Dr. Russell Blaylock [author of *Natural Strategies For*

Cancer Patients], Dr. Suzanne Humphries [author of *Dissolving Illusions: Disease, Vaccines & The Forgotten History*]. There are also many others. Those are just the ones first came to mind.

Thank God for Dr. Abramson! He is telling it like it is. We lament the high cost of health care and the high cost of prescription drugs and yet no one seems to know why costs are skyrocketing. Read this book and find out why. You go to the doctor and he/she tells you to take this medication. Do you question why? Do you know what you're taking? What is it going to do to you/for you? I would venture to say that 90% of people in the U.S. today do not know or care about the medications they are taking. Why? Because the doctor gave them the prescription and that's all they need to know. Well, it's not all you need to know. That medication could be making you even more ill. That medication may be adding to your physician's bottom line but not doing a thing or worse yet doing a lot of untoward things to your internal systems/organs. I offer this example from the book, "Then just one week after the book [he is referring to his book *Overdosed America*] hit the stores, Merck stunned the medical world with its announcement that it was withdrawing its \$2.5 billion a year arthritis remedy Vioxx from the market. This was the biggest drug recall ever (about one out of ten American adults had taken Vioxx in the previous five years). Initially Merck was credited with acting responsibly and decisively when it learned that its blockbuster drug doubled the risk of serious cardiovascular problems in a study designed to determine whether Vioxx reduces the recurrence of non-cancerous polyps of the colon. But the real news is not that Merck had done the right thing in September 2004 (which it had). Rather it was that American doctors had prescribed \$7 billion worth of Vioxx, causing an estimated tens of thousands of heart attacks and deaths, after both Merck and the FDA had become aware (in 2000) that Vioxx was significantly more dangerous and no more effective than an older and far less costly anti-inflammatory drug, naproxen (Aleve)." This book is filled with chapter and verse about what is wrong with the American system of healthcare. It echoes the concerns of books like, *The Truth About The Drug Companies: How They Deceive Us and What To Do About It* by Maria Angell, M.D. Dr. Angell was the editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine* for over 20 years. She also has first hand knowledge of how Big Pharma is controlling our lives and our health. Also, read the book, *On the Take* by Dr. Jerome Kassirer. Dr. Kassirer was editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine* for over 8 years. These books and many others like them corroborate Dr. Abramson's findings in *Overdosed America*. This book may frighten and/or anger some people but that may be just what it takes to wake people up. One more example from *Overdosed America*

Excellent book. I've been in practice for 10 years and early on I had the nagging feeling that drug/medical device representatives were not our friends. This book provides the evidence how commercial interests are the driving force in medicine. Commercial interests are present at every level of medical care; from research and Medical Education to point of service. The drug companies shape what is considered standard of care with surprisingly little evidence that many of the medicines which are marketed to doctors (and patients) are actually any better than older drugs which cost a small fraction of the newer ones. Some of these medicines are actually more toxic than the older meds (Vioxx, Bextra, etc.). From the commercial point of view, prevention and cures are bad for business. In fact a medicine like Vioxx (if they had not been outed as unsafe) is the perfect drug. Decreased inflammation means that patients have less pain in the short term, followed by delayed increase in degeneration of the joints since inflammation is how the body repairs normal wear of the joint in most individuals. This means more need for arthritis meds in the future. Since they also cause heart problems, the industry makes money from treatment of heart attacks. Stockholders win while patients die.

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