



Overdosed America: The Broken Promise of American Medicine

By John Abramson



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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.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

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.

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Review

"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)

"Acompelling 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*)

About the Author

John Abramson, M.D., has worked as a family doctor in Appalachia and in Hamilton, Massachusetts, and

has served as chairman of the department of family practice at Lahey Clinic. He was a Robert Wood Johnson Fellow and is on the clinical faculty of Harvard Medical School, where he teaches primary care.

Users Review

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