



overview

with Dr Janice-Ann Priest

The breath of winter is creeping in – time for traditional winter remedies. Ginger tea for allergies, blackcurrant juice for iron and vitamin C, garlic, omega fish oils (for your vitamins A and D), and an immune formula supplement if you've had stress and/or health issues. Sprinkle cayenne pepper on your food daily to heat the blood if you feel the cold and suffer from chilblains. Avoid medicated cough medicines, Medsafe have reclassified some cough and cold medicines as pharmacy only, based on international health authorities concern over health risks. Make your own cough mix of honey, organic oil (garlic or fish), a pinch of black pepper, a grating of ginger and a squeeze of lemon juice.

The next challenge is to withstand the flu vaccination campaigns, given the previous 'pandemic' flu vaccine promotion. A research paper, *Does Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Increase the Risk Of Illness with the 2009 A/ H1N1 Pandemic Virus?* revealed unexpected results. A series of epidemiological studies from Canada showed a counterproductive effect of the flu vaccine – the risk of H1N1 illness increased in those who had the shot! Those who had the seasonal flu vaccine were up to 274pc 'more likely to be infected by the H1N1 swine flu', than those who avoided the flu shots.

Given the history of vaccines, or any other medicine, always investigate what the ingredients are before taking! It's like everything you digest, handle and use carefully. There are so many toxic substances being applied that we've fast become a society that has to read labels! Remember one cannot manufacture or replicate anything that is 'naturally alive'. I have a simple rule – if the wildlife (insects etc.) won't eat it – avoid it. Scientists have recently found a way to reduce insect migration in grains by adding propionic acid coating to breakfast cereal cartons! Talking of food, The New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) will merge back under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry on 1 July 2010.


The National Government and Green Party have negotiated a new proposal for natural health products. They have released a consultation paper, *The Development of Natural Health Products Bill*, that proposes a separate natural products regulatory office! You have until 17 May to respond to the questions listed in the document. The problem is it's going to cost \$4.25 million to run yearly, and they are looking to the

natural health industry, comprising of 150 odd companies to pay for it! This draft makes no mention of 'Standards'. Yet, this is a perquisite under the 1989 Education Amendment Act and 1992 Industry Training Act which requires Standards – both Government and industry, to be established before any proposal, guideline or trade regulation be developed. No mention or reference is made to the British Herbal Pharmacopeia standards for herbalism. There is an excerpt referring to the Maori Rongoa WAI 262 treaty claimants, stating that still needs consultation. I'm sure the Maori elders will respond to the inadequate notice on how traditional medicines will be regulated. While it is a unique document, it's definitely overkill and smacks of the earlier Trans-Tasman proposal regulations.

The proposed document constantly mentions safety risks that need addressing, but there is a lack of reference/proof around what these risk factors actually are. The natural health industry has suffered a Government regulatory 'witch hunt' over the last few years, over the burden of proof requirement. Yet the Government can propose a Bill without providing proof. You can obtain your copy of the proposal by clicking on: www.moh.govt.nz or order online by supplying ISBN 978-0-478-35931-2.

We are not the only ones raising overall concerns. Harvard Medical School students recently confronted their school administration demanding an end to pharmaceutical drug companies' influence in the classroom. Two-hundred students protested that recent pharmaceutical industry scandals (billion dollar fines, biased research, criminal convictions and false marketing claims) have cast a shadow on the medical profession. They called for Harvard to live up to its name and rebelled against being indoctrinated into a field of medicine that is becoming increasingly commercialised.

One researcher recently likened pharmaceuticals to **Weapons of Mass Prescription**, due to the amount of side-effects they cause amongst the general population. Many are also raising concerns over the mass contamination of public water supplies.


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