



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Attn: Ms Karin de la Rey

NZ Herald Junk Science Report on Breast Cancer Vitamin Link Misleading

Consumer advocacy group, Health Freedom NZ Trust, views Lincoln Tan's report on the breast cancer multi-vitamin link in Monday's NZ Herald with scepticism and remain unconvinced.

"Calling Susanna Larsson's research a 'Major Study' is misleading" says spokeswoman Nicola Grace. The Swedish research quoted in Lincoln Tan's report consisted of scientists at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm asking 35,329 cancer-free women aged between 49 and 83 to complete a self administered health questionnaire in 1997.

The questionnaire solicited information on multivitamin use, as well as some (but not all) breast cancer risk factors. During a mean follow-up of nine and a half years, 293 of the 9,000 women that claimed they took vitamins had developed breast cancer, leaving 8707 women (or 96.7%) who did not develop the cancer. 681 of the 26,000 remaining non vitamin takers developed the cancer.

'The entire exercise was flawed from beginning to end' says Nicola. 'There was no real scientific or medical procedure of testing followed during this process. The research was not designed to establish cause and effect, and the researchers themselves agree that the findings do not prove that vitamins are to blame. Neither has this research been peer reviewed. A self administered questionnaire hardly constitutes a major study, least of all valid scientific research' Nicola points out.

Lead researcher on the study - Susanna Larsson, MD was quoted in Reuters Health Monday, March 29, 2010 saying 'It's possible that factors the study did not measure could explain the association between multivitamins and breast cancer'. But this all important quote was not mentioned in Lincoln Tan's biased report. Where was the opposing scientific point of view and contradictory studies?

For example the U.S. Women's Health Initiative study of more than 160,000 women, published in 2009, found no link between multivitamin use and the likelihood of developing cancer or cardiovascular disease, or dying. Other large-scale studies similarly have not found connections between breast cancer and multivitamin use. 'Vitamins have an impeccable safety record being safer than food, safer than prescription drugs and safer than going for a drive in your car' states Nicola.

Professor John Boyages, director of the Westmead Breast Cancer Institute Australia and spokesman for the National Breast Cancer Foundation, said he "wouldn't put any weight" on the study, as there were many complicated risk factors involved in breast cancer. But these criticisms of the story have been left out of the Herald's report in favour of biased journalism Health Freedom claim.

'Scientific studies should always be considered and reported with great scepticism,

not reported as truth from god almighty as the media so often do - and for good reason' says Nicola.

A 2005 survey published in the journal Nature (one of the most prestigious science journals in the world) exposed the following practices in scientific studies...

- * Falsifying or "cooking" research data
- * Not properly disclosing conflicts of interest
- * Failing to present contrary data
- * Using inadequate or inappropriate research data
- * Dropping observational data points and inadequate record keeping

The most disturbing finding was that of the 3247 scientists surveyed, over 20% actually admitted to changing the methodology, design or results due to pressure from the organization paying for the study. (ref: B.C. Martinson, M.S. Anderson, and R. de Vries, "Scientists Behaving Badly", Nature 435 (2005): 737-38.

Health Freedom maintain Lincoln Tan's report reads more like a political message putting fear of vitamins into the public to convince them they need regulating with the same restrictions as toxic drugs, at a time when the Government is considering a framework for regulation of Natural Products.

'It's only fair that the Herald now give a full report on the many bona fide scientific studies that demonstrate the safety and efficacy of dietary supplements. Including a full investigation into how and why so many natural cancer cures are have been suppressed and outlawed is also advised if the paper is interested in unbiased reporting' says Nicola, a cancer survivor herself.

'The biggest losers are not the Natural Health Industry but consumers like me. Many cancer sufferers loose life, and their families loose loved ones while perfectly legitimate natural cures for cancer and all sorts of other diseases exist. Yet they remain banned or under the gun, not due to poor safety or lack of efficacy - but because of bureaucratic red tape nonsense, medical bias and pharmaceutical lobbying to protect their billion dollar profits' she continues.

Health Freedom maintain for the sufferers of cancer and their families, it is only fair that journalists start to report the existence of more than 10 natural cures for cancer that are denied them because they eat away at the profits of Big Pharma. This is also in the interest of the health of our nation and future generations. We the people should no longer be denied the truth from our medical profession or the media' Nicola states.

Health Freedom calls on the NZ Herald to publish all the studies on Natural Cures for cancer, and the safety and efficacy of natural products - instead of leaving them out in favour of junk science pieces like Monday's report.

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