

Five health victories we've already won

Have you ever wondered whether all the new information that you read and hear about on Intelligent Medicine is making any impact whatsoever on society? In terms of actual change, are we really making any kind of difference? Or are our appeals about safe foods, clean diet, safe environment, and active lifestyle falling on deaf ears?

I must admit, at times, I myself am plagued with doubt, but I soldier on, thinking that, even if the culture as a whole continues to eat junk and people are getting sicker and sicker from chemicals and environmental toxins, at least some of you out there are learning how to protect yourselves and your families.

But the tide *is* turning. There have been victories. I'm happy to report on several recent developments that underscore that. Here they are:

1) Kraft Foods just announced that it is removing artificial dyes from their classic Mac 'N Cheese products. It's replacing them with natural food coloring made from turmeric and a harmless red natural seed extract (yellow + red = orange!). Artificial food colorings like Yellow Number 5 and 6 have been implicated in Attention Deficit Disorder in children, and in other conditions.

2) Pepsi just revealed that they are taking the controversial artificial sweetener Nutrasweet (aspartame) out of Diet Pepsi. They are bowing to consumer demand, stating that "Nutrasweet is the number-one reason that consumers are turning away from diet soda." And rightly so. I've been campaigning against it from my earliest days on radio, citing myriad side effects from migraines to IBS and even neurodegenerative disorders. Only lately has it emerged that, not only is Nutrasweet not helpful for weight loss, it may actually promote weight gain. One reason cited is that might alter the intestinal microbial balance in favor of fat-promoting flora.



3) The Federal Government announced that it is lowering the amount of fluoride it recommends be added to municipal drinking water across the country. While reaffirming their belief in the necessity of fluoride to prevent cavities, health authorities acknowledge that overexposure to fluoride is responsible for the current epidemic of tooth mottling in children. While this only partially assuages our concerns over the harmful systemic effects of fluoride, at least it's a step in the right direction; anti-fluoride crusaders have been demanding change for decades, and many foreign countries have rescinded the requirement that fluoride be added to drinking water (See "50 Reasons to Oppose Fluoridation").

4) Tyson Foods, the nation's largest producer of poultry, announced that they will

stop using human antibiotics in their chickens. This is important, because other big manufacturers are likely to follow suit. Use of human antibiotics in animal husbandry has been linked to widespread emergence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria linked to uncontrollable infections in people. Detectable levels of human antibiotics have been found in the nation's water supplies, which means that, even if we're prudent about taking drugs, our vital intestinal microbial balance is inadvertently being damaged by their ubiquity. Antibiotic use has been linked to allergies, autoimmunity, GI disorders, and even obesity.

5) And finally, **Chipotle became the first fast food chain to ban GMO foods from its offerings.** Although their announcement was greeted with snarky op-eds from mainstream media in cahoots with Agri-Business (Bloomberg: "Chipotle's GMO Message is Muddled"; WSJ: "Chipotle vs. Science"; NPR: "Why We Can't Take Take Chipotle's GMO Announcement All That Seriously") this is a watershed in the campaign to provide consumers with choice. I have previously weighed in on the GMO controversy [here](#) and [here](#). Now, admittedly, these victories are only partial, and cynics would say they smack of "Green-Washing"—creating the superficial aura of wholesomeness just to appease the public and boost sales. While offering a smattering of seemingly healthy alternatives for a narrow segment of health-conscious consumers, big companies continue to churn out a harrowing array of toxic products for the non-discerning masses.

But I think these are significant milestones, and they are evidence that when consumers like you and I band together and vote with our discretionary dollars, real change is possible.

The tide *is* turning, thanks to you. Thanks for listening! Intelligent Medicine reaffirms our commitment to keep you informed and help you make the right choices for you and your loved ones!

Here's an excellent article highlighting the toxins found in your bathroom and commercial personal care products, and what you can do about them:

The DIY Guide to Natural Bathroom Products