

HEALTH

Drug Company Promises Prove "Worthless," Says Consumer Group

Consumers who depend on the 20 most frequently-purchased prescription drugs, such as Premarin, Procardia, Zantac, and Mevacor, still see the prices of their medications going up faster than inflation, despite drug company promises to rein in prices, according to a study released today.

"When the big drug companies promised to hold down prices, they were crossing their fingers behind their backs. For many Americans, their promises were worthless," said Ron Pollack, executive director of Families USA, the national health consumer group.

In Washington, D.C., Families USA released a study called "Worthless Promises: Drug Companies Keep Boosting Prices." The report finds

that prices for each of the 20 top-selling prescription drugs went up faster than inflation last year, continuing past trends.

"An elderly widow living on Social Security pays more and more for her medicine when she goes to the pharmacy. Since the prices of her drugs go up faster than her Social Security, she may have to skip pills or skip meals to make ends meet. Either way, she could wind up in the hospital," Pollack said.

Big drug companies have repeatedly insisted that market competition and voluntary measures will hold down skyrocketing drug prices in the United States. In 1993, 17 major drug companies, representing two-thirds of the U.S. prescription drug market, promised to solve the

drug price problem for consumers. They said they would do it by holding overall drug price increases to the rate of inflation or below.

Despite drug company promises, the prices of America's 20 top-selling prescription drugs went up more than one-and-a-half times faster than inflation last year, according to the report. From 1993 to 1994, the prices of the top 20 drugs went up 4.3 percent, on average, while the inflation rate was 2.7 percent.

Consumers who buy the most popular prescription drugs have had a steadily increasing cost burden. From 1989 to 1994, the cumulative prices of top-selling brand name drugs went up more than twice as fast as inflation, according to the study.

"What We Eat In America!"

Residents of the greater Portland area are among the estimated 6,000 Americans--from young children to the elderly--who will be interviewed at home this year about the foods they eat part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's continuing survey, "What We Eat In America."

Throughout 1995, interviewers will be calling on 11,500 households in 62 geographical areas across the country to find those 6,000 individuals who represent the

entire U.S. population, said nutritionist Alanna Moshfegh. She heads the survey group, which is part of USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

Area counties selected for the survey include Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington. Participants will be asked to report all the foods they ate on two separate days, said Moshfegh. Each query takes about 30 minutes. A few weeks later, a selected number of these respondents over age 20 will be called to ascertain

their knowledge of diet and health.

"We need everyone's cooperation to ensure that we get an accurate picture of what foods Americans are eating and how much as well as what they know about the relationship of diet to health," Moshfegh said.

Both the geographical areas and individual households were statistically selected for a representative sampling, she noted, so interviewers can call only on designated addresses.

April Is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Nationally and in Oregon, April has been proclaimed Child Abuse Prevention Month. It's a chance to promote public awareness of child abuse and to keep our children safe.

Too many Oregon children are in danger.

According to the Children's Services Division, 33 Oregon children died by abuse or neglect in 1994, a new record. The vast majority of those child victims were under five years old.

At the same time, Oregon received a total of 26,400 abuse reports in 1994.

According to CSD, there were 10,700 confirmed cases of child abuse with almost 8,000 child victims. That's enough children to fill 410 typical Oregon classrooms. For every 1,000 children living in Oregon, 10 were victimized.

But real work is being done to strengthen our families and help keep children safe, according to the Oregon Commission on Children and Families.

Oregonians continue to support get a break with special day care.

The counties each work in their own ways to help local families and there are great programs throughout the state.

Additionally, a statewide non-profit organization committed to funding child abuse and neglect prevention programs is the Children's Trust Fund of Oregon. Created in 1985, the trust has channeled over \$2 million to more than 50 innovative programs to prevent child abuse and to help parents and family members when child abuse occurs in order to break the cycle.

Every county commission on

children and families is working to reduce child abuse and has committed up to 35 percent of its budget to keep children safe.

For example, they support classes for parents to learn how to raise their children well and to manage behavior problems. Children learn through special programs how to help protect themselves from sexual abuse. Parents caring for a disabled child learn through Oregon.

Court Appointed Special Advocates are another resource. These citizen volunteers advocate in court cases for the one element missing in all abused and neglected children's lives, a safe and permanent home.

"It's essential that the citizens of our state become involved in community efforts to reduce child abuse and neglect," Kitzhaber said.

AIDS Awareness Planned For Teens

A group of Portland area teens has organized a public conference to promote AIDS awareness among peers.

"Facing AIDS," an all day conference for teens will be held Saturday, from 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. at Portland State University's Smith Center.

The conference is sponsored by the Portland Area Council of Camp Fire's Teens in Action group and Equity Foundation. Local teens are invited and encouraged to register by calling Camp Fire at 224-7800. The registration fee is \$7.50.

"Facing AIDS, will include workshops on topics including 'Smart Sex,' 'Responsible Decision Making,' 'Stress,' 'HIV+' and 'Diversity.'"

Speakers represented include Planned Parenthood, Cascade AIDS Project, Camp Odyssey, Mainstream Youth Programs, Portland Women's Crisis Line, Phoenix Rising. The conference also will include a presentation on the AIDS Memorial Quilt, performances by Secrets and Teens and Co., and a party jam.

AIDS awareness advocate Jennifer Jako is the keynote speaker. A

graduate of Lake Oswego High School, Jako became HIV positive in 1991 and seeks opportunities to talk with peers about the importance of safe sex.

Teens and Co. combines education and entertainment in a fast-paced show for teens that presents positive role models and encourages responsible decision making. The group is sponsored by Planned Parenthood, Multnomah County, and Theatre Workshop, a City Arts Program of the Portland Bureau of Parks and Recreation.



Earth Day Activities At Dishman

Calling all kids! Show Mother Earth how much you care at Portland Parks and Recreation's Earth Day celebration. Surround yourself with birds, bees, animals and trees at Dishman Community Center, 77 NE Knott, on Saturday April 22 from 10:00am to Noon. Activities will in-

clude a performance by the Bureau of Environmental Services to help remind everyone how to take care of the environment, hands-on wild-life programs and even goodies to take home like the "Clean Rivers Puzzle Book" and plenty of fun door prizes.

The Earth Day Celebration will also recognize the winners of The World Forestry Center's essay contest on "Why we should take care of our forests". The 50 young winners will be awarded their certificates by Director of Parks Charles Jordan. Along with the certificates the win-

ners will receive scholarships to attend The World Forestry Center's week-long summer day camp at the Magness Memorial Tree Farm in Wilsonville. Awards will be distributed at 10:00am.

Be cool to your school! The World Forestry Center will be giving away a \$100 gift certificate for educational supplies to the school who is represented by the most students at the Earth Day Celebration.

For more information call the Portland Parks & Recreation Hotline at 823-2223.

Free Rides

All rides on Tri-Met buses and MAX trains are free Saturday, celebrating the 25th Anniversary of Earth Day.

Tri-Met's Party for the Planet runs 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Friday and 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Saturday at Pioneer Courthouse Square.

The rides and celebrations are aimed at attracting new customers to Tri-Met to increase ridership and help keep the air clean and community livable. Since the first Earth day in 1970, Tri-Met ridership has more than doubled.



Questions about **RECYCLING?**

We have **ANSWERS.**
(and free refrigerator magnets!)

 **Metro Recycling Information**
234-3000

A Spiritual Approach To Day

To mark the 25th anniversary of Earth Day, a group of Portland area organizations invites the public to look beyond the nuts and bolts of "reduce, reuse, recycle."

"Earth Day '95: Native Cosmology and the Emerging culture" is a day-long conference that will explore the spiritual roots of environmentalism by examining traditional native American spiritual traditions and contemporary Christian thought.

"Earth day '95: Native Cosmology and the Emerging Culture" will include presentations by two noted Theologians and authors, Creation Spirituality Theologian Matthew Fox and Jesus scholar Marcus Borg. A host of Native American leaders and spiritual elders will present their views on native cosmology and spiri-

tuality. These include well known author, academic and Native American spokesperson Paula Gunn Allen, Lakota medicine man Martin High Bear, and Delilo village elder Warner Jim.

This Earth Day gathering will begin at 7:00 PM on Friday evening, April 21st with an opening celebration highlighted by a keynote address by Matthew Fox. April 21st with an opening celebration highlighted by a keynote address by Matthew Fox. On Saturday, April 22nd from 10 AM to 6 PM, Fox and the other presenters will offer workshops and discussion groups based on the traditional Native American "talking circle." There will also be music, nature walks, Native American drumming and dancing, numerous family

activities, and informational displays by local businesses and organizations.

"Earth Day '95: Native Cosmology and the Emerging Culture" is co-sponsored by The Earth and Spirit Council, Living Enrichment Center, Community Connexions, and Beyond Words Publishing Inc. The event will take place at Living Enrichment Center (LEC) in Wilsonville. Set on 95 rural acres, LEC has indoor facilities for thousands of participants, as well as a host of trails, ponds and wooded areas.

Tickets for Saturday's Earth Day events are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children. Tickets for the Friday night opening ceremonies and keynote address by Matthew Fox are \$25. For more information call 452-4483.

Earth Day Call For Political Action

As the 25th Anniversary of Earth Day draws near, plans for celebrations to mark the occasion are being finalized throughout the country and here in Portland.

Portland activists are working to make sure that this year's Earth Day focuses on the need for political action to solve our nation's worsening environmental problems.

"It is discouraging that on the 25th Anniversary of Earth Day, when all Americans should be celebrating our improved relationship with the

planet, Congress is considering turning back the clock on 25 years of environmental progress," said Gina Collins, Director of the Earth Day 1995: Free the Planet Campaign.

"Earth Day can't just be about '50 simple things' anymore; it's great that more people than ever are recycling and working to reduce their impact on the planet, but we must organize and let our elected officials know how serious the problems are," said Liz Fowler, Earth Day 1995: Free the Planet organizer in Port-

land. "The public wants more environmental protection, not a shredding of the environmental safety net," she continued.

Petitions will be gathered here in Portland and in cities and towns across the country.

In Washington, D.C., petitioners will be accompanied by the music of Kenny Loggins, Branford Marsalis, and Natalie Merchant and national and local environmental speakers at the national Earth Day rally.

EARTH & SPIRIT COUNCIL

present

Earthday '95

"Native Cosmology & the Emerging Culture"

In celebration of the 25th anniversary of Earth Day, the Earth & Spirit Council and the Living Enrichment Center are co-sponsoring two days of ceremonies, lectures, workshops, music, dance, talking circles, at the Living Enrichment Center in Wilsonville, Oregon.

Featuring Matthew Fox Author and Theologian

Warner Jim
Celilo Village Elder

Paula Gunn Allen
American Book Award Winner

Martin High Bear
Lakota Medicine Man

Marcus Borg
Nationally Known Biblical Scholar

Johnny Moses
Native American Storyteller

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 21; 7-10 PM \$25.00

EARTHDAY/SATURDAY APRIL 22; 10 AM - 6 PM \$10.00

MATTEW FOX SATURDAY WORKSHOP #35.00

Tickets available at Ticketmaster 503-224-4400
For more information call 503-682-5683

