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Published by WellnessOne of Redding

Stevie Nicks Confesses: Common Remedy Turned My Hair Gray and Molted My Skin...

Reprinted from Mercola.com | May 18 2011

In the article linked below, Fleetwood Mac star Stevie Nicks discusses the biggest mistake she says she ever made -- giving in to her friends and going to see a psychiatrist. He put her on the drug Klonopin, and the next eight years of her life were destroyed.

According to Nicks, if she didn't take it, her hands started to shake. She gained weight and felt as if she had a neurological disease.

As reported in the Daily Beast, Nicks said:

"Finally, in 1993, I'd had enough. I said, 'Take me to a hospital.' I went in for 47 days, and it made Betty Ford look like a cakewalk. My hair turned gray and my skin molted. I could hardly walk. You can detox off heroin in 12 days. Coke is just a mental detox. But tranquilizers -- they are dangerous. I was terrified to leave, and I came away knowing that that would never happen to me again."

Sources:

- » [Fox News May 4, 2011](#)
- » [Benzo.org.uk](#)

Dr. Mercola's Comments:

Like many of you I am sure, I enjoyed listening to Fleetwood Mac in the 70s and it was quite a surprise to read Stevie Nick's story.

It's been repeatedly demonstrated that prescription drugs can, and frequently do, pose SERIOUS risks to your health. In this case, Fleetwood Mac star Stevie Nicks ended up battling the devastating side effects of a drug she probably didn't need in the first place, and it swallowed eight years of her life.



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Although many fail to realize this, prescription drugs can be just as addictive as illegal drugs. In fact, in many cases there's *no difference* between a street drug and a prescription drug. For example, hydrocodone, a prescription opiate, is synthetic heroin. It's indistinguishable from any other heroine as far as your brain and body is concerned. So, if you're hooked on hydrocodone, you are in fact a good-old-fashioned heroin addict.

Unfortunately, not a lot of attention is paid to [prescription drug abuse](#). Still, nearly 20 percent of Americans admit to having used prescription drugs for nonmedical reasons, and three quarters of those may be abusing prescription drugs.

Insane Drug Use Statistics and the Danger of Polypharmacy

There's no doubt that the US has been manipulated into a nation of drug users. In just a ten-year span, from 1992 to 2002, the number of prescriptions written increased by a whopping 61 percent. And in that same period, the number of prescriptions written for opiates increased by almost 400 percent.

According to the latest [statistics from the Kaiser Health Foundation](#), the average American, aged 19 to 64, now takes more than 11 prescription drugs!

This brings up yet another problem, which is the exponentially increased health risk of mixing multiple drugs. [The word 'polypharmacy'](#) means "many drugs," and essentially refers to instances where an individual is taking too many drugs--either because more drugs are prescribed than clinically indicated, or when the sheer number of pills simply becomes a burden for the patient.



This situation used to be primarily a concern for the elderly, who generally take more medicines than younger folk—in the US, the [average senior fills more than 31 prescriptions per year](#). But over the past several years, even children as young as three are increasingly being prescribed four or more drugs!

This is a significant problem, as the more drugs you mix together, the greater the chances of serious side effects. People (of all ages) taking [psychiatric drugs appear to be particularly prone to polypharmacy](#), which is particularly disturbing since each and every one of these drugs are quite potent and potentially dangerous when taken all by itself.

The Incredible Cost of Polypharmacy

Prescription drug abuse and overuse not only wreak havoc on the health, well-being, and longevity of the American population, it also has a major impact on our health care system, and it's NOT a beneficial one.

In fact, drug use accounts for tens of billions of dollars per year in health care costs. Let me explain—that's tens of billions of dollars to treat the side effects of drug use, IN ADDITION TO

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the [close to one TRILLION dollars those same drugs cost](#) our health care system in the first place!

So the idea that "more and better drugs" are the answer to our nation's failing health is "misguided" to say the least...

When the Treatment is Worse than the Original Problem

Sadly, there are literally millions of people who, like Stevie Nicks, suffer the ravaging side effects of drugs they didn't need in the first place—drugs that were supposed to "help" them in some way, but in reality cause problems far worse than the original concern.

For example, knowing how hard it can be to quit drugs like heroin, it's shocking to hear Nicks' description of her ordeal in detoxing from Klonopin; an anti-anxiety medication:

"I went in for 47 days, and it made Betty Ford look like a cakewalk. My hair turned gray and my skin molted. I could hardly walk. You can detox off heroin in 12 days. Coke is just a mental detox. But tranquilizers—they are dangerous. I was terrified to leave, and I came away knowing that that would never happen to me again."

It's time to wake up from our collective slumber and cease to fall prey to this predatory type of "health care."



You are Responsible for Your Health

It's unfortunate, but you, as a patient, carry the greatest burden when it comes to changing the current drug paradigm. I don't think we'll see doctors changing their prescribing ways anytime soon—it's what they're trained to do. In many cases, it's ALL they do! So as a patient, you have to take responsibility for your health, and question the drugs prescribed to you.

- Do you really need that drug?
- Is it prescribed appropriately, or is it being prescribed for an off-label use?
- What are the side effects?
- Is it addictive?

These are but a few of the most common-sense questions you need to ask before you swallow any pill.

In the case of Stevie Nicks, the health problems she experienced were par the course for that drug. [Klonopin \(Clonazepam\)](#) is an anti-seizure, anti-anxiety medication that works by

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decreasing electrical activity in your brain. It's in the same family of drugs as valium and xanax—well-known tranquilizers. (Ironically, it's also used to treat acute catatonic states, when a person does not speak or move at all.)

Side effects include:

Drowsiness	Dizziness, unsteadiness, and problems with coordination	Difficulty thinking or remembering
Muscle or joint pain	Blurred vision	Changes in sex drive, reduced sexual function
Addiction	Fetal harm; birth defects	Changes in mental health, including thoughts of suicide

Withdrawal symptoms include new or worsening seizures, hallucinations, uncontrollable shaking and changes in behavior.

Prescription Drugs Cause More Deaths than Illegal Drugs

In addition to exorbitant health care costs for drugs and their subsequent side effects, the cost in terms of lives has also skyrocketed.



Opioid painkillers alone — opium-like drugs that include morphine and codeine — now claim more than 13,800 lives each year. This means prescription painkillers have surpassed both heroin and cocaine as the leading cause of fatal overdoses, despite the fact that the FDA increased the restrictions for consumer drug ads in 2005, especially for COX-2 painkillers like Celebrex and Bextra.

Additionally, more than [700,000 people visit U.S. emergency rooms each year as a result of adverse drug reactions](#). And, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), adverse drug reactions from drugs that are [properly prescribed and properly administered cause about 106,000 deaths per year](#), making prescription drugs the fourth-leading cause of death in the U.S.

When you compare these statistics to the death toll from illegal drugs -- which is about 10,000 per year -- you can begin to see the magnitude of the problem the pharmaceutical industry is propagating.

A Very Real Side Effect: a 25 Percent Chance of Premature Death

Three years ago, an [analysis of federal data by the nonprofit Institute for Safe Medication Practices \(ISMP\)](#) offered up some truly shocking information. **In the first quarter of 2008,**

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fatalities from adverse drug reactions accounted for 23 percent of all adverse reaction reports!

If that's not a wakeup call, I don't know what is.

Naturally, some drugs are far riskier than others. Chantix, for example, accounts for more adverse reaction reports, including deaths, than the ten best-selling brand name drugs combined! It even out-harms the addictive troublemaker oxycodone, a potent pain medication.

The greatest travesty here though is that Chantix is actually *intended* for use in *healthy* people to help them quit smoking! If that's not insane, I don't know what is...

There are NO Absolutely Safe Drugs

A clear majority of people have been successfully brainwashed into thinking that FDA-approved drugs can safely and effectively treat every possible ailment under the sun. This is a tragedy of epic proportions. But it's not too late to turn this madness around.

First and foremost, you must understand that even under the BEST circumstances -- such as with a drug that has gone through unbiased, stringent, long-term testing -- *anything* can happen when a drug is released into the uncontrolled environment of your individual body. It may interact badly with another drug you're taking, or perhaps a food you eat causes an unforeseen reaction, or maybe your genetic makeup, metabolism or the state of your immune system will cause it to have an unpredictable impact.



Unfortunately, studies are frequently biased, [results are skewed](#), and drugs are put on a fast-track to be approved long before anyone knows whether they're safe. In essence, it's all a gamble, and there are NO 100 percent safe drugs.

Should You Medicate or Not?

Ultimately, it's *your* body, and the decision to medicate yourself for an ailment is yours alone.

However, I urge you to research any drug your doctor prescribes before you take it. Do not just take your doctor's word for its safety. Most physicians have little information to offer you aside from what they've been told by their [drug reps](#).

Make sure you are aware of the potential side effects of the drug, read the package insert, and remember that even if it lists a side effect as rare, it can still happen to you.

Then decide whether the potential benefits truly outweigh the potential risks.

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Also remember that a large number of drugs are vastly over-prescribed and unnecessary. They're frequently referred to as "blockbuster drugs." If several people you know are on it, it's a dead giveaway that it's probably being over-prescribed, which means you should be even *more* cautious—not less!

Redefine the Word "Health"

What does "health" mean to you? Does your idea of being healthy include taking a dozen medications or more?

I certainly hope not...

If you make drugs a *last* option instead of a first choice, you will have taken a major step in the right direction.

"Health" does NOT equate to "suppressing symptoms of disease." Rather, true health means having a body that actually functions as it should... And the only way to get there is by addressing the root causes of any symptoms of disease you may have—not covering them up with a drug.

The "problem" with this mindset, however, is that the medical- and pharmaceutical industries can't make any money through this strategy. If you get rid of the underlying cause of a disease, you effectively cure it and all symptoms go away. If you have no symptoms, there's no reason to take medications to suppress those symptoms.



This may sound obvious to some, but believe me, many people still don't "get" this.

They take drugs in the belief that they're doing something beneficial to their health when in fact there's not a single drug on the market that is designed to cure anything. The only thing a drug can do is address a particular symptom or set of symptoms. And, if you don't address the root cause, your problem *never goes away!*

This is how you get stuck in the mindless never ending loop of polypharmacy.

Basic Health Strategies that Can Address a Large Number of Health Problems

There are many health conditions that can be prevented or effectively treated with lifestyle changes alone, yet if you go to a typical doctor, you'll walk out with one or more prescriptions. Examples of health problems that typically don't require drug intervention include:

- [Diabetes](#)
- [Heart disease](#)

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- [High blood pressure](#)
- [High cholesterol](#)
- [Insomnia](#)

I realize it may require a massive shift in thinking to realize that your body can heal itself, and that drugs typically only hinder the process. But I can't stress enough the importance of this most basic principle:

Disease can only be resolved by addressing its root cause.

What many people fail to realize is that it is possible to maintain optimal health by simply avoiding unnecessary drugs and by understanding the fundamentals of good nutrition and exercise.

Remember you can Take Control of Your Health by:

- [Eliminating fructose and most grains](#)
- Eating unprocessed, high-quality foods, organic if possible, right for your [nutritional type](#)
- [Eating your food as close to raw](#) as possible
- Consuming enough [omega-3 fats](#)
- [Exercising regularly](#)



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