

The Truth  About Health

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## Big Pharma: Marketing, Not Research, Is the Main Expense

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If you think that the main purpose of pharmaceutical companies is to help mankind, you might consider changing your mind when you see the statistics behind the propaganda.

Drug companies uniformly claim that the high cost of drugs is due to the vast amounts they spend on research. One could easily be led down this path of deception, but careful research shows that the bulk of drug company spending is not on research, but on marketing.

The top 10 pharmaceutical companies invest about 14% of their profits in research and development. However, about 35% is spent on marketing!

For every \$1 spent on research, \$2.50 is spent promoting the drugs to the medical profession and the public. Literally billions of dollars are spent on television advertising on almost every TV channel, seven days a week. Print advertising consumes untold millions more. Add to these the expenditures of handing out millions of free samples, constant promotion to doctors, sponsoring lavish medical conferences at expensive resorts, and thousands of “research” and “educational” grants to groups, hospitals and universities around the world.

#### **Keeping prices — and profits — in the sky**

There are many other ways that Big Pharma keeps prices – and profits – sky high. Here are the mairthree:

**Bogusfront groups:** Many more millions are spent on helping to create and support mental health related front groups such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD). There are many more of these, all indirectly forwarding the drug company’s marketing messages and helping to sell a lot of drugs to treat a lot of bogus conditions that have no real scientific basis.

**Lobbying and politics:** Even more millions are spent lobbying Congress to protect drug company profits. The U.S. government is the largest bulk buyer of drugs, after Wal-Mart, but the Social Security Prescription Drug Benefit Program forbids the government from negotiating drug prices with Big Pharma, and President Bush recently stated he will veto a Democratic-sponsored bill calling for drug price negotiations on behalf of Medicare.

**Bogus drug “breakthroughs”:** A typical breakthrough in drug research is often a drug company in partnership with a university announcing and marketing their own slightly different new version of a previously released drug for the same disorder. Some of these “new drugs” are variations of a competitor’s drug and others are to replace existing drugs with expiring patents. The FDA will approve the new drug when provided with short-term studies that purportedly show that the drug performs better than a placebo – not better than the older drug. In 2002, the FDA approved the use of 78 new drugs but classified only seven of them as improvements over older drugs.

SOURCE: <http://www.americanchronical.com/articles/viewarticlte.asp?articleID=18805>