

August 2013

Dear :

RE: A letter to What Not to Wear's Stacy London...

This month I wanted to draw attention to a letter that RxISK Community Advisory Board members Johanna Ryan and Kim Witczak [wrote to Stacy London](#) (of What Not to Wear fame) expressing concern about her link with pharmaceutical giant AbbVie.

Stacy has the lead role in [AbbVie's Uncover Your Confidence campaign](#) in which she talks about having suffered from psoriasis many years ago. AbbVie manufacturers Humira, which is prescribed for psoriasis sufferers.

Despite side effects so nasty that it has a black box warning, Humira is on its way to becoming the best-selling drug of all time.

Humira is a monoclonal antibody, one of the new biological agents that acts on the immune system. Its side effects can be so nasty it has a black box warning on it. Despite this, it's on its way to becoming the best-selling drug of all time.

You don't get to be a best-seller on this scale without pushing the marketing envelope way beyond patients who are ill enough to risk taking such a dangerous drug.

Psoriasis is an unpleasant disease. My father had it until the day he died, and I can remember the coal-tar, ultraviolet light treatments, and endless steroids.

Would you knowingly take chemotherapy to treat a patch of scaly skin on your neck?

Would someone who develops a cancer after taking Humira think it was worth it?

It would be great to have a magic wand to wave over all sufferers to cure it. But would you knowingly take chemotherapy to treat a patch of scaly skin on your neck?

Would someone who develops a cancer after taking Humira think it was worth it?

You would be forgiven for thinking, after seeing the AbbVie campaign, that Stacy had taken Humira and that's why she looks great and seems to have no problem with psoriasis. But, as she reports in her book *The Truth About Style*, Stacy had a tonsillectomy at 17 that resolved her psoriasis.

This is not a blame Stacy pitch.

It's almost impossible not to become part of the Humiraverse these days. AbbVie have taken an action against the London-based European Medicines Agency (EMA) to block access to data on the side effects of Humira. If they win they will block access to all data on all drugs.

In a desperate effort to counteract this, we launched a campaign of our own several weeks ago asking for reports from AbbVie's customers.

Stacy can do something significant for psoriasis sufferers and the rest of us. She can raise awareness of the risks AbbVie's legal action poses by writing a letter to the EMA in support of its policy of open access to clinical trial data.

One of the people who could give this campaign the profile it needs is Stacy herself. She can do something significant for psoriasis sufferers and everyone else who is taking any medicine for any reason by raising awareness of the risks AbbVie's legal action poses to all of us.

A letter from Stacy in support of the EMA's policy of open access to clinical trial data would be really powerful.

Johanna and Kim wrote to Stacy on July 26, 2013. So far, no response, but fingers crossed...

Humira: Yes, death is a possible side effect. Created by Billiam James



Illustration:
Humira: Yes, "death" is a possible side effect, © 2013 created by [Billiam James](#)

Thank you for your support.

Your feedback, as always, is greatly appreciated.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David". The letter 'D' is large and stylized, with a long horizontal stroke that extends to the right and then loops back under the 'a'. The rest of the name is written in a cursive, lowercase style.

David Healy, MD

RxISK stories

[Mumsnet](#)

Two comments from Johanna and Neil in response to The Dark is for Mushrooms and Preventing Precaution Johanna I didn't see the BBC Panorama show (not available in the US) and don't know if the outrage expressed by ... [\[Read More...\]](#)...»

[Preventing precaution](#)

This post by Harriet Rosenberg aims at getting some debate going about medication and birth defects. We will run a survey early next week on this issue Right-to-Know (R2K). A recent post on RxISK, The dark is for mushrooms not ... [\[Read More...\]](#)...»

[The dark is for mushrooms, not for women](#)

The Pre-Pregnancy Puzzle This post contains a comment by Neil Gorman on Humira in Ulcerative Colitis backed up by material criticising a BBC Panorama program on antidepressants in pregnancy retrieved from the link to Mumsnet mentioned by Neil. This link ... [\[Read More...\]](#)...»

[Treating PSSD](#)

This is the fourth in a series of PSSD posts, with more to come. The earliest was Buried Alive, but in this recent series the first was Drugs and Sex don't Go, followed by PSSD: If a Drug Caused ... [\[Read More...\]](#)...»

[No sex and the city](#)

Persistent Post-SSRI sexual dysfunction (PSSD) - the most reported syndrome to RxISK There have to date been 67 reports of PSSD on paroxetine (Paxil, Aropax and Seroxat), fluoxetine (Prozac and Fludac), sertraline (Zoloft and Lustral), citalopram and escitalopram (Cipramil, Celexa, Lexapro and Cipralext), venlafaxine ... [\[Read More...\]](#)...»

[PSSD: If a drug caused blindness?](#)

Of these 13 Persistent Post-SSRI sexual dysfunction (PSSD) cases 12 came to us from a colleague who had been approached by others. You can see more descriptions of what the problem is like by looking at the RxISK Narratives ... [\[Read More...\]...»](#)



From David's blog...

[Stacy London: What not to take](#)

Three weeks ago Johanna Ryan and Kim Witczak wrote a letter to Stacy London about Humira and AbbVie. They were hoping for a response but there has been none so far. Stacy London of What Not to Wear fame has a lot going for her. She is a successful business woman, style [\[...\]...»](#)

[Welcome to the Humiraverse](#)

This post in the AbbVie series is by Johanna Ryan from the RxISK Community Advisory Board I recently read a legal complaint filed against AbbVie by a New York woman named Cynthia Di Bartolo. She's a successful corporate lawyer who had undergone various treatments for psoriasis over the years, including medications and ultraviolet light [\[...\]...»](#)

[Democracy in adversity](#)

This post stands in stark contrast to EU-nuch in the Humira-m. There could not be a greater contrast between the way companies now sell drugs globally and the way they attempt to restrict the reporting of adverse events. The infographic below from Kayla brings out the point. Sales are now global. AbbVie's plans for Humira and [\[...\]...»](#)

[EU-nuch in the Humira-m](#)

There is no such thing as being "European" when you take a drug like Humira or Depakote and something goes wrong. When something goes wrong on their drug, companies go to extraordinary lengths to make it almost impossible for doctors or patients to report adverse events. It's part of a [\[...\]...»](#)

[Humira in ulcerative colitis](#)

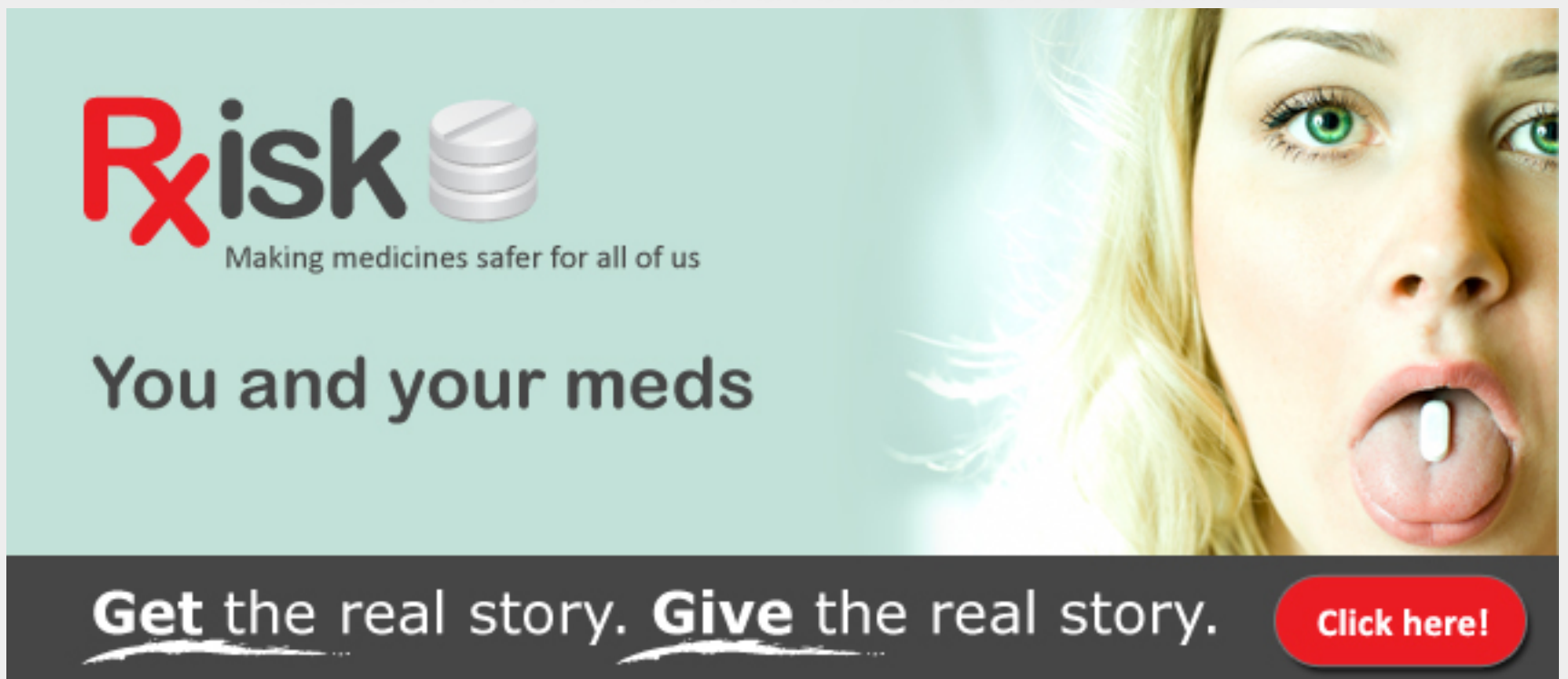
I have to thank Ken Spriggs for pointing out the Humira in Ulcerative Colitis Review site. For anyone interested in AbbVie-ing and in Humira this site offers some sobering reading. Humira in Ulcerative Colitis Reviews With the recent approval of Humira (Adalimumab) by the FDA, there is a growing need for ulcerative colitis [\[...\]...»](#)


[Brands don't have side effects: mentions of side effects on crohnsforum.com](http://crohnsforum.com)

This post is by Ken Spriggs, who wrote the second ever RxISK story - on Azathiopine. This should be revisited in the light of the AbbVie Campaign. The current post is taken from his ongoing blog on Crohn's Disease - a condition that is high on the target list for the makers of biologicals including AbbVie [...]...»

[AbbVie: Humira timeline](#)

An article in Forbes this week suggested Humira is set to become the biggest selling drug of all time. The timeline below, found by Harriet Rosenberg on the JusticeSeekers' website, covers the timeline of its elevation to the blockbuster Hall of Fame. This post and several to come are part of a sequence outlining [...]...»



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The advertisement features a light blue background on the left with the Rxisk logo and tagline. On the right, there is a close-up photograph of a woman with blonde hair and green eyes, sticking her tongue out with a white pill on it. The bottom of the banner is a dark grey bar with white text and a red button.



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