



August 2018

Greetings!

Here's a recap of recent blog posts and other news.

We've had a lot of global interest in our TaperMD.com de-prescribing project.

Some thought-provoking facts that tell us we're on the right track:

- Medication costs for US seniors is \$140 billion per year, with many of them being potentially inappropriate or unnecessary. Many currently prescribed meds are on the "do not prescribe" or "prescribe with great caution lists" for older adults.
- Over-medication may contribute to dementia, delirium, cognitive impairment, falls, and death.
- Falls in US seniors have a direct medical cost of \$31.3 billion per year, and meds are a significant contributor to them.
- Adverse drug events in the United States have direct costs of \$3.5 billion per year -- including doctor visits, dispensing fees, and hospital admissions. About 30% of adverse drug events are considered avoidable.

And here are some excerpts from *The New York Times* article [How Many Pills Are Too Many?](#):

- About one-third of adverse events in hospitalizations include a drug-related harm, leading to longer hospital stays and greater expense.
- One-fifth of patients discharged from the hospital have a drug-related complication after returning home, many of which are

preventable.

- Two-thirds of Medicare beneficiaries have two or more chronic conditions, and almost half take five or more medications. Over a year, almost 20% take 10 or more drugs or supplements.
- At least one in five older patients are on an inappropriate medication -- one that they can do without or that can be switched to a different, safer drug.
- One study found that 44% of frail, older patients were prescribed at least one drug unnecessarily.
- A study of over 200,000 older veterans with diabetes found that over half were candidates for dropping a blood pressure or blood sugar control medication.
- Some studies cite even higher numbers -- 60% of older Americans may be on a drug they don't need.

For the article [Pharmacies miss half of dangerous drug combinations](#), a *Chicago Tribune* reporter took a deadly prescription combination to a range of pharmacies from chains to small independents. "Fifty-two percent of the pharmacies sold the medications without mentioning the potential interaction, striking evidence of an industrywide failure that places millions of consumers at risk."

This is not just a US problem or a senior-citizen problem. Anyone on 5+ meds can likely benefit from a medication review with a focus on de-prescribing. And drug payors should be interested in this too -- the costs of meds are skyrocketing, as are the costs associated with their inappropriate use.

We continue to invite beta testers from around the globe to test drive and provide feedback on TaperMD.com.

Here is a link to our whitepaper: <https://tapermd.com/learn-more/>

Here is a link to the beta request form: <https://tapermd.com/beta-trial/>

Thank you for your support.

Your feedback, as always, is greatly appreciated.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David Healy, MD

RxISK Blog

[A Unicorn: Changing a Medical Record](#)

This is the first of four posts by Krista Hartmann I am a real Unicorn, something whose existence is suspect, rarely sighted, and discussed even less...by the psychiatric industry, who are, ironically, my creators. My existence throws a wrench into their meta-narrative; truths inscribed on everlasting stone tablets.... until the next edition of tablets [...]...»



[Changing Your Record](#)

If your doctor wrote in your medical record in the 1940s that you were mentally ill or had a neuropsychiatric disorder, this could have led to sterilization across most of the Western world, or in Germany to elimination. Long before a single Jew was gassed, tens of thousands of lives not worth living were eliminated [...]...»

[PSSD In The Guardian, U.S. News & Lyon Capitale](#)

The Guardian, a British newspaper, runs a weekly feature called "My life in sex", in which readers can write in and talk about their sex life. On June 8, 2018, they ran a piece called "After taking antidepressants, my genitals felt numb". A 30 year old women described how she had been left [...]...»

[The WARM Network: Withdrawal and Recovery Meetings](#)

New Initiative: The Withdrawal and Recovery Meeting (WARM) Network of Groups By Jennifer Bryant and Laurie Oakley This is a new initiative to give anyone who would like to start an in-person withdrawal group in their community a way to get started. We have created a free "toolkit" that contains a Guide for Facilitators, Suggested [...]...»



David Healy's Blog

Everyone Is Equal?

This post comes from a Belgian colleague. Belgium's best-selling pop singer Stromae has been talking about his drug-induced illness all over the media since last year. He claims the anti-malaria drug Lariam (mefloquine) made him instantly psychotic and caused long-term anxiety problems which have already persisted for 3 years after stopping the drug, and [...]...»

R_xisk
MAKING MEDICINES
SAFER FOR ALL OF US

Could it be my meds?

Free resources to help you assess the connection between a drug and a side effect.

