

# From the realm of junk science

[Health & Medicine](#)



30 November Junk Science A specific current issue is junk science related to wellness. The concept of junk science in wellness is that it is the purposeful incorporation of biases in the research related to wellness like for instance, the nutritional value of different kinds of diets, so that only the results that are wanted by the researchers are obtained and it thus becomes a way for the researchers to have their personal views, thoughts, and opinions infiltrated in the society in general and the academic world in particular. Junk science can be defined as the “ faulty scientific data and analysis used to advance special interests and hidden agendas” (“ What is junk”). Junk science in wellness is a very sensitive and critical issue since it is integrally related to healthcare and the companies preparing different kinds of food products are using junk science to promote their products by misguiding the consumers about their nutritional value. In many studies, the results are affected by the bias introduced into them by the researchers and there is no appropriate mechanism to eradicate them. Many researchers decide before executing the research what results they want to achieve. They make sure that they select such samples and apply such research design that only leads them to getting the results that they had planned to achieve. The research gets published in renowned journals just because the researchers know the principles of academic writing and know what it takes to get the research paper pass through the weak and poor peer-review system. “ All peer review does is protects entrenched ideas that should have been tossed out decades ago. Peer review is a way for defenders of outmoded ideas to reject new ideas, and thus protect their careers and egos” (Adams). The gravity of the problem can be assessed from the fact that most of our contemporary systems are being shaped and modified according to the <https://assignbuster.com/from-the-realm-of-junk-science/>

findings drawn by the researchers from such researches, which in turn is empowering the scientists and researchers and providing them with incentive to engage more deeply in this fraudulent practice. The saddest part of the story is that even such big names in the academic world as the Stanford University are producing sloppy research related to wellness. In a recent research, researchers at the Stanford University did a meta-analysis of 230 field studies upon the levels of contaminants and nutrients in different kinds of unprocessed foods including grains, fruits, chicken, meat, and pork along with 17 studies in humans. This research concluded that the risk of ingestion of the antibiotic-resistant bacteria in the conventional pork and chicken is 33 per cent higher as compared to the organic pork and chicken. “ USDA routinely justifies irradiating or sterilizing food because of such food safety concerns,...and this study essentially proves that organics do not need to be sterilized because they are in fact so much safer” (“ New Junk Science”). This research also failed to mention that organic foods, by definition, do not consist of GMOs, and this makes them a lot healthier as compared to the conventional foods. Despite the biotech industry’s repeated claims about the safety of GMO and its equality to the non-GMO crops, bountiful evidence is available to contradict such claims. Another very important way in which junk science related to wellness is spreading is through social media and the Internet. A lot of people these days frequently follow the advice of the “ assumed” health experts related to nutrition, health, and diet on the Internet. “ There is no accreditation or licensure for wellness practitioners, meaning the person offering lifestyle coaching on the telephone or via the internet could be anyone” (Sandy) but people do not consider these factors while following the recommendations made or the <https://assignbuster.com/from-the-realm-of-junk-science/>

advices given by such wellness practitioners. The issue discussed in this paper is a very critical issue since many health practitioners and researchers are playing with people's lives to promote personal interests. The solution of junk science for a common man is to read the science journals with a conscious mind. The traditional thinking that something is true because research has proved it true should not subside; research today is no more credible than a theory. Like a theory fundamentally projects the views and opinions of the theorist, research does the same for the researchers. Unless the audiences have critically analyzed the study and have confirmed that it is free of all kinds of biases, they should not believe the results. A potential way to prevent junk science from making its way to the academic journals is by improving the peer-review system. The present peer-review system is very flexible and provides room for a lot of biases in the research work. There should be a proper system to evaluate and confirm that the scientists and researchers selected to peer-review a paper are skilled and talented in that particular field. Moreover, the standards of peer-reviewing should be elevated. Peer-reviewing should not just mean correcting the sentence structure and grammar, checking the referencing, and making the paper comply with the layout of the journal; the peer-review system should critically assess the bias in the research and oblige the researchers to revise the research until the time it is bias-free. The weightage of publishing bias-free papers should be increased while determining the impact factor of the academic journals related to all fields. Moreover, government should create awareness among the Internet users about how the social media can be misleading, so that people follow only the licensed healthcare professionals.

Works Cited: Adams, Mike. " Vitamins A, C and E Increase Mortality! (and <https://assignbuster.com/from-the-realm-of-junk-science/>

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