



“Evidence-based medicine can harm your health” – Cochrane Austria's battle against fake health news

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Trusted evidence.
Informed decisions.
Better health.

Potential Conflicts of Interest

- Director Cochrane Austria, Danube University Krems
- Associate Director RTI-University of North Carolina Evidence-based Practice Center

Views expressed in this presentation are my own and not necessarily those of Cochrane or the Evidence-based Practice Center.



Certified Continuing Education

Evidenzbasierte Medizin kann Ihrer Gesundheit schaden!

Oder: **Präoperative Diagnostik und Physikalische Medizin – Wie Wissenschaft als Rationierungsinstrument missbraucht werden kann.**
 am Montag, 15. September 2014, 20.00 Uhr, Dachsaaal der Urania, 1010 Wien, Uraniastraße 1

Vienna Medical Association, September 15, 2014



The Cochrane Collaboration

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Multimedia > Cochrane Colloquia and meetings multimedia > Opening of the Austrian Cochrane Branch, December 2010

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Opening of the Austrian Cochrane Branch, December 2010

In December 2010, the Austrian Branch of the German Cochrane Centre opened in Krems, Austria. Below are selected presentations from the event.



www.medizin-transparent.at

Ask us about the truth of any health claim that you read or hear in the public or social media.



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Wide Variation of Questions

- ✓ Do ready-made meals cause cancer?
- ✗ Does Vitamin C cure a common cold?
- ✗ Do I need to get my Vitamin D level checked?
- ? Does orange juice prevent dementia?
- ? Can dogs detect hypoglycemia in diabetics?
- ✗ Does glacier stone powder help against hang-overs?



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Does the pill against lovesickness work?

Lovesickness (romantic stress) implies a deep sadness and great despair that comes from the impossibility of being able to be with someone you love.

<https://exploringyourmind.com>



Love Hurts: Courtesy of Jakob Gillespie 07.2019



AMOREX

Active ingredient: 5-Hydroxytryptophan

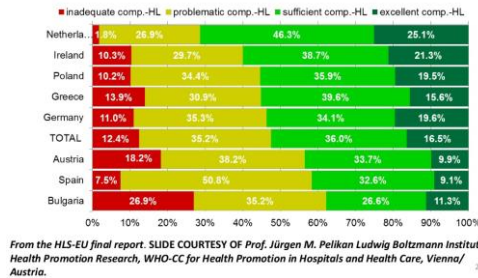
AMOREX® ist distributed exclusively through pharmacies or at any governmentally approved pharmaceutical online shop.

Your pharmacist will provide it for you.



European Health Literacy Survey

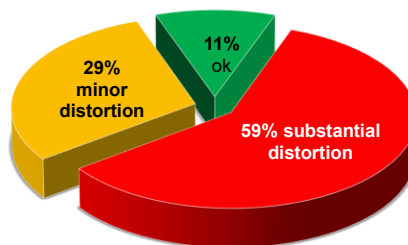
- 47.6% of the European population has inadequate or problematic health literacy.



Sorensen et al. Health literacy in Europe: comparative results of the European health literacy survey. European Journal of Public Health, 2015; 25: 1053-1058



1000 Health Claims in the Austrian Media



Kerschner et al. How evidence-based are print- and online mass media in Austria? A quantitative analysis. Z Evid Fortbild Qual Gesundhwes. 2015;109(4-5):341-349



www.medizin-transparent.at

- Publicly funded online platform that responds to citizen information needs about health claims in the media
- Topics are user-driven and address a niche outside patient information
- Close collaboration with Austrian Consumers Union and a major newspaper

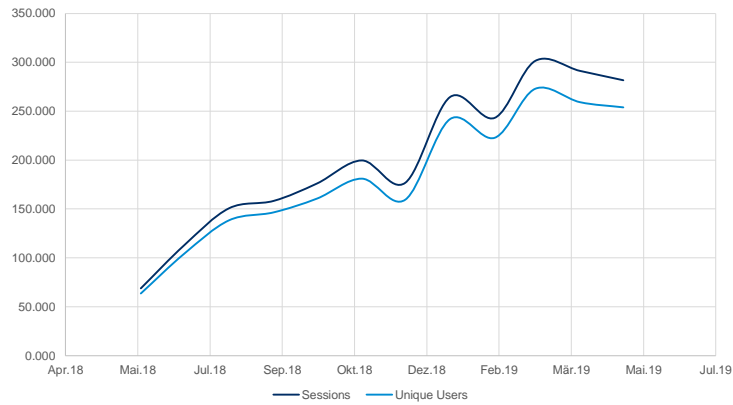


Methods

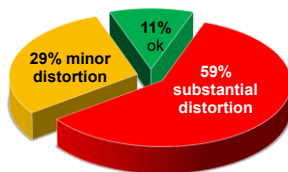
- Rapid reviews with focus on existing systematic reviews
- Adherence to standards for reliable health information
- Collaboration between researchers and science journalists
- Lay-friendly language, 9th-grade reading level
- No ads, no charges, no industry money



Sessions and Unique Users per Month



1000 Health Claims in the Media



- Popular lifestyle trends
- Complementary and alternative treatments
- Advertisements
- Misinterpretations
- Exaggerated press releases

Kerschner et al. How evidence-based are print- and online mass media in Austria? A quantitative analysis. Z Evid Fortbild Qual Gesundhwes. 2015;109(4-5):341-349



A new study shows....

Drinking very hot tea almost doubles risk of cancer, new study says

By Nina Aramova, CNN

Beer shown to improve heart health: study

Researchers from Harokopio University in Athens found that drinking a little less than a pint of beer improved blood flow and increased the flexibility of important arteries around the heart.

There May Be a Link Between Coffee and Lung Cancer, Study Suggests

Drinking More Coffee Is Associated With a Longer Life, New Studies Show

BI KEVIN LORIA, BUSINESS INSIDER
12 JUL 2017



Individual differences in bitter taste preferences are associated with antisocial personality traits

Christina Sagioglou*, Tobias Greitemeyer

University of Innsbruck, Institut für Psychologie, Innrain 52, 6020 Innsbruck, Austria

If you like gin and tonic, you might be a psychopath

By Hayley Richardson, The Sun

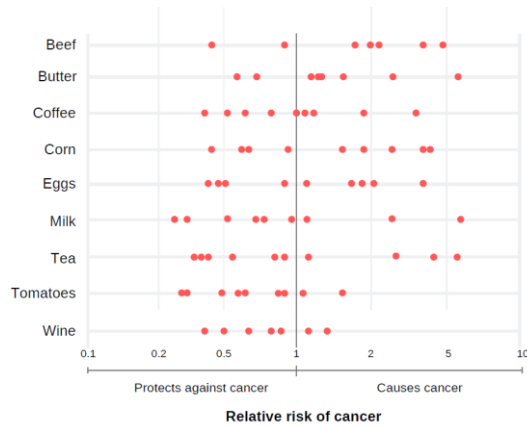
December 31, 2017 | 10:39am | Updated



(C) pixabay



Everything we eat both causes and prevents cancer



Source: Schoenfeld et al. The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. 2013; 97: 127–134.



Nutrition and Health Claims (Regulation No 1924/2006)

Any claim that states, suggests or implies that a relationship exists between a food category, a food or one of its constituents and health.



EU Regulation: Nutrition Health Claims

866 pages of authorized and non-authorized claims

- Functional health claims (Article 13 claims)
- Risk reduction health claims (Article 14 claims)
- Children’s development claims (Article 14/1)

Forbidden vague claims:

- “Slows down aging process“
- “Preserves memory“

No health claims:

- “Red Bull gives you wings“



Cartoon: Courtesy of Red Bull 07.2019



5-Hydroxytryptophan

<p>Art. 13(1)</p>	<p>5-Hydroxytryptophan</p>	<p>Helps to promote healthy serotonin levels which can enhance mood 5-HTP is the direct chemical precursor to the neurotransmitter serotonin, which may promote a positive mood.</p>	<p>Non-compliance with the Regulation because on the basis of the scientific evidence assessed, this claimed effect for this food has not been substantiated.</p>
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Hydroxyapatite in toothpaste:
effectiveness not proven



Healthier with LaVita?



Honorar	Euro	8.625,00
zzgl 20% USt	Euro	1.725,00
Gesamt	Euro	10.350,00



An Open-Label Trial of L-5-Hydroxytryptophan in Subjects with Romantic Stress

Enzo EMANUELE¹, Marco BERTONA¹, Piercarlo MINORETTI², Diego GEROLDI³

¹ Department of Health Sciences, University of Pavia, Pavia, Italy; ² Alessandro Manzoni Hospital, Lecco, Italy;

³ Department of Internal Medicine and Medical Therapeutics, University of Pavia, Pavia, Italy.

We observed significant improvements in romantic stress scores from weeks 0 through 3 ($p=0.007$) but

Question: Does an extract from the African black bean (active ingredient 5-Hydroxytryptophan) help treat lovesickness?

Answer: **XXX** Scientific evidence missing

Clarification: Such an effect is not scientifically proven

In the nineteenth century health was transformed by clear, clean water. In the twenty-first century, health will be transformed by clear, clean knowledge.

Sir Muir Gray



Many thanks!

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