

Consumers Report critical

\$26 million advertising won't cure colds

NEW YORK — Chances are you'll have at least one cold this winter, but if you think you'll get some relief from one of the many non-prescription cold remedies — forget it.

According to the Jan., 1974 issue of Consumers Report, virtually all of the products currently on the market from Dristan to Contact, from Alka-Seltzer to NyQuil, are totally useless despite the fact the drug industry spends some \$70 million a year to convince you otherwise.

Consumers Report explains that nearly all competing cold tablets, capsules and liquids contain at least two or three staple ingredients: a pain reliever, a decongestant and an antihistamine.



Peter Hsu photo

The most common staple is the decongestant. When applied directly as nose drops or spray, various decongestants will reduce nasal passage swelling temporarily. But in capsule and tablet form they are either ineffective or in too small a dosage to do any good.

Only two relatively unknown decongestants, Sudafed and Propadrine are sold in effective amounts.

Antihistamines are used in treating some allergic conditions, such as hay fever, but are worthless against the common cold.

The one ingredient in many cold remedies that is justified is the pain reliever — usually aspirin or acetamenophen. If symptoms in-

clude headache, fever or muscle aches, aspirin will help. But if nasal congestion is the problem, a pain reliever will do nothing but add unnecessary medication.

DRISTAN

According to the manufacturer, American Home Products, Dristan contains "the decongestant most prescribed by doctors", an exclusive anti-allergent and the "pain relieving medication most recommended by doctors."

The decongestant is phenylephrine, and doctors do prescribe it — but as nose drops, not orally. "Moreover," says Consumers Report, "the oral dosage" in two Dristan tablets is only one fourth of the dosage found ineffective in controlled clinical testing."

The "exclusive" anti-allergent is a weak antihistamine, two tablets contain less than the amount ordinarily given to children for hay fever. And, like any antihistamine, it is useless for cold symptoms.

The pain reliever "most recommended by doctors" is aspirin. "Two Dristan tablets contain the same amount as two five-grain aspirins," says Consumers Report. "It is therefore true that Dristan will 'work on aches and fever', as television ads claim. Any aspirin does."

Dristan also includes small amounts of antacid caffeine but neither of these relieve cold symptoms.

So Dristan has only one useful aid for a cold — aspirin. But \$12 million worth of advertising in 1972 helped American Home Products sell Dristan for roughly 20 times the price of plain aspirin sold under "house" brands in drug stores and supermarkets.

ANACIN

American Home Products also makes Anacin, which contains one fifth more aspirin than a standard five grain tablet. "The miniscule difference, and \$26 million worth of advertising enables the manufacturer to sell Anacin for three to six times the price of low-cost aspirin," Consumers Report concludes.



America has the best advertised drug problem in the world.

The most popular headache remedies include Excedrin, Empirin, Anacin, Cope, Vanquish, Bufferin, and Bayer. But if you knew the truth, those pills might get pretty hard to swallow.

THE COMBINATION DRUGS
According to a recent American Medical Association drug report, combinations of analgesics (pain relievers) are "irrational" and "not recommended." That means remedies like Excedrin, Empirin, and Vanquish.

BUFFERED PREPARATIONS
That same report could find "no sound basis" for taking remedies like Bufferin instead of plain aspirin.

ASPIRIN AND CAFFEINE
It also found simple aspirin plus caffeine, which is what Anacin is, does no more for your headache than plain aspirin.

BAYER VS. BRAND X
As for plain aspirin, there is no persuasive scientific evidence Bayer Aspirin is more effective at relieving headache than any other brand. It may differ from other brands but that doesn't mean it works better.

SAVE ON HEADACHES
The major brand remedies cost up to six times more than ordinary aspirin. Partly because you have to pay for the advertising that gets you to buy them. So next time you buy something for your head, use your head... Buy the least expensive plain aspirin you can find.

Medical Committee for Human Rights
710 South Marshfield
Chicago, Illinois 60612

Prepared by The Stern Concern

Letters To The Editor

Accounting rip-off regulations & Administrative ruthlessness tax York student pocketbooks

During these gloomy days of early February everybody loves to receive surprise mail.

When I arrived home at my off-campus apartment I was greeted with some correspondence thoughtfully sent from York's Office of the Registrar. The enclosed contents blatantly informed me that the deadline for paying the second installment of tuition fees had passed.

The climax to this little note was enclosed in an ultimatum. I was notified that if my fees were not fully paid by Feb. 14, I would find myself (after over three years at this institution) no longer a York student.

I enquired further at the temporary office building to learn that new regulations had only been invented, and implemented this year.

I hesitate to speak of the economic position of all York undergrads, but many I know had intended to use their income tax returns for such functions as paying their fees. (A February deadline completely destroys this notion).

I should like to take this opportunity to thank the administration for its concern regarding my debts. It reveals an attitude of negative foresight, apathetic ruthlessness, and complete lack of appreciation for the financial pressure and position of York

students.

Adding this "rip-off" to the annual insanity of course registration and York's other social experiments, I am now convinced that those "ideals" inscribed on the east face of the Ross Humanities building (on which the foundations and policies of York were supposedly constructed) are nothing short of simple lies.

Thank you, York for this additional kick in the head and thank you, God, that this is my last year in this rat-trap!

D. DEAN

Reader disagrees with earlier letter, CYSF should support Artistic strikers

I wish to toally disagree with the comments of Norman Feferman in Excalibur Jan. 17, 1974.

Three points should be made about the Artistic Woodworker's strike:

- 1) It was a legal strike,
- 2) In this country it is legal (in theory at least) to support workers on a legal picket line, and 3) The arrests at Artistic occurred because management and the police worked hand in hand to try and break a small Canadian union in a plant employing largely immigrant workers.

Mr. Feferman implies it is a crime to support the right of workers to collectively better their working conditions.

Would that all York students were guilty of such 'disorderly conduct'.

ELLIE PREPAS
MES. III

Farley Mowat and Project Jonah seek student support to prevent industrial whaling

Dear Sir or Madam,

I wish to draw student and faculty attention to "Project Jonah", one of several international organizations currently attempting to bring into effect the ten-year moratorium on industrial whaling, proposed by the U.N. in an effort to preserve these unique creatures from extinction.

To date, Canada has refrained from voting on this crucial matter.

Farley Mowatt, author of "A Whale For The Killing", is Canadian president of this organization, and is urgently seeking signatures on a petition to forward this vital proposal. Interested persons or organizations should submit their names to:

PROJECT JONAH,
12 DACOTAH AVE.,
TORONTO 128, ONTARIO

MARILYN STEVENS

Opinion

Versa-inspired meal does not fulfill nutrition needs

By COLAN INGLIS

I was right. Three weeks ago, I predicted that food prices would be going up and they are.

But more on this later. First I must apologize for not appearing the last two weeks, but space limitations and deadlines made it impossible to get my opinionated outpourings before your eyes.

The budgetary problems are still with us, and the figures on net staff and faculty changes should be available soon since all contractually limited appointments have to be terminated by Feb. 1.

The most visible aspect of the shortage of funds is the increased food prices. The quali-

ty and quantity of food consumers get for their money on this campus is now atrocious instead of just unbelievable.

Of course, the script system allows the administration the privilege of raising prices without affecting revenue since they already have the money. Students who have excess script must organize to force the administration to refund the cost at the end of the school year.

There are two potential reasons for under-utilization of script. First, the administration may have grossly underestimated the amount the average student would consume. Second, most students might feel the food available is so dismal in quality and quantity that it is not worth eating.

In any case, the administration is entirely at fault and therefore liable for the excess script.

Since it seems we cannot have decent food on a break-even basis, the long term solution seems to be heavy subsidization of the university food services. Not only food but proper nutritional balance is important to students.

Check the Canadian food guide. I think you'll find that a Versa inspired meal doesn't fit the specifications.

Elsewhere in this issue is a report on the Ontario Federation of Students conference which hopefully was the spark that generates a strong student movement in Ontario. As a

result of a motion passed at that conference you will be asked this spring in a referendum to approve an increase in your student activity fees to finance a restructured OFS.

The increase of a \$1.50 will be used to hire fieldworkers and researchers who will provide an information and organizational base for a real Ontario student movement. In the face of government cutbacks in education it is now more than ever, important that students defend their interests.

This week's cup of hemlock goes to the Central Square bookstore for knocking off the 5 per cent discount on cash purchases, making it a complete and utter rip-off. RUMOUR MILL: There may be a boycott of the Central Square cafeteria.