

**Dave  
Cragin  
& Jeff  
Lewis**

# **Eating Candy for Longevity and Other Toxic Sciences**

A study in mice finds that a chemical is good for you while a study in humans finds that it is bad—who should you believe? Is what is good for you good for you or is it really bad? Are we healthier now than 100 years ago, or are things getting worse? How can a reasonable person make sense of the constantly conflicting news stories on health? Is health misinformation simply an innocuous game, or does it have real consequences for the wellbeing of Americans? Using examples from newspapers and scientific journals, the speakers will discuss how health issues can be distorted when only half the facts are presented. In addition, they will provide tools the audience can use to more critically evaluate the latest headlines on health. The speakers will also cover societal implications and costs associated with health misinformation. And finally, they will answer the age old question - does eating candy increase longevity?

Dr. Dave Cragin has a Ph.D. in Pharmacology and Toxicology from the University of California, Davis and a B.S. in Zoology from the University of Rhode Island. He is board-certified by the American Board of Toxicology. He is also a science advisor for secondary school districts and a regular speaker on science at schools in the Philadelphia area. Dr. Cragin is Risk Assessment Manager for ATOFINA Chemicals, Inc. and is an Adjunct Associate Professor in Pharmacology/Toxicology at the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia.

Dr. R. Jeff Lewis received his B.S. degree in Biology from the University of Kansas, his M.S. and Ph.D. in Epidemiology from the University of Texas School of Public Health, and his M.B.A. from Rutgers University. He has served on a number of scientific committees, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Scientific Advisory Board for a risk assessment on 1,3-butadiene. Dr. Lewis is an Epidemiologist with ExxonMobil Bio-medical Sciences, Inc. and is an Adjunct Professor of Occupational Health and Epidemiology at the University of Texas School of Public Health in Houston, Texas.

**Saturday, January 20, 2001, 2 pm - 3:30 pm**  
**Bethesda Branch of the Montgomery County Library**  
**7400 Arlington Road, Bethesda, Maryland**  
**(a short walk from the Bethesda Metro station)**



## **National Capital Area Skeptics Public Lecture Series**

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# Shadow of a Doubt

THE MONTHLY CALENDAR OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA SKEPTICS

JANUARY 2001

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## Welcome to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

After a year of confusion between the journalists who welcomed in the new century on 01/01/00 and the purists who insisted the new century was 01/01/01, we all can now say we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. After all the hype about the Y2K bug last year, it is interesting that the turn of the calendar to the new century has all but been ignored this time. But read on ...

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## The Last (?) Y2K Bug

Probably the last Y2K bug occurred on December 31, 2000 in Norway. A certain class of trains failed to start on the morning of December 31. As of now the cause is unknown, but the temporary fix to get the trains running on time was to reset the calendar to December 1, 2000. They have 30 days to figure out what went wrong.

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## White House Commission on CAM

The White House Commission on Alternative Medicine, created by an executive order on March 8, 2000, is charged with developing a set of legislative and administrative recommendations to maximize the benefits of complementary and alternative medicine for the general public. A series of public meetings have been held, the last one being January 23, 2001 at Lighthouse International Conference Center and Auditorium, 111 East 59th Street, New York, NY 10022. Go to [http://www.whccamp.hhs.gov/news/sbp\\_20000713.html](http://www.whccamp.hhs.gov/news/sbp_20000713.html) for information about the commission and how to register to attend meeting or submit comments.

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## Is there an age limit on witnesses in court?

In October, the prosecutor in a rape case in Lewis County, Wash., said he was thinking of subpoenaing Ramtha, a 35,000-year-old warrior spirit (via his Earthly channeler, spiritualist J.Z. Knight), who reportedly "heard" the defendants confess to the crime during a session at Knight's retreat in Yelm, Wash. However, Knight then told reporters that she had been "in a trance" during the session and therefore could not recall what the defendants and Ramtha had talked about. [Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 10-4-00; Associated Press, 10-10-00] [Transmitted by News of the Weird]

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## CAM for Pets

After nearly three years of effort, medical skeptics have won a substantial victory for the cause of science and reason in healthcare. The proposed AVMA (American Veterinary Medical Association) Guidelines for Complementary and Alternative Veterinary Medicine have just been posted to the AVMA Website at: <http://www.avma.org/compaltmed.asp> and will remain online until January 31, 2001. Veterinary practitioners AND members of the general public have been invited to comment on them. (The vastly different 1996 Comp and Alt Vet Med Guidelines are available at <http://www.seanet.com/~vettf/Guidelines.htm>).

Not only does this constitute a major victory for proponents of medical rationalism, it is also an extremely important "first." There have been no analogous "showdowns" between proponents of science-based medicine and "everything-else-based medicine" at the level of a national medical professional association. The successful efforts to induce the AVMA to courageously and proactively identify and address the issues attendant to unproven and disproved medical therapies will eventually "boil over" into controversy among the other healthcare professional associations on a state, national, and even international basis. [Reported by Robert Imrie, DVM via CSICOP.]

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## TIME TO RENEW?

Check your mailing label. If the renewal date has passed, please send \$20 (for 1 person) or \$30 (for 2-member households) for a one-year renewal to the NCAS address at the top of this page, or you will be dropped as a member.

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