

KIDS FIRST



Ritalin; Over-prescribed and Dangerous

As many as 100% of all children in second through fifth grade in some schools have been prescribed the drug Ritalin, even though many of them probably don't have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). That was the conclusion of researchers who published their findings in the *American Journal of Public Health*.

According to Dr. LeFever, doctors are over prescribing Ritalin, which is a psychometric drug and a Class II narcotic. "It's hard to believe this many children have the specific brain-related problem called ADHD," stated Dr. LeFever, an assistant professor of pediatrics and psychiatry at the Centre for Pediatric Research.

Health care advocates say that doctors are routinely diagnosing children with ADHD even though there are no

clinical tests for this condition. Instead, they find it easier to write a prescription for Ritalin than discuss diet or parenting skills with the child's family.

According to Peter R. Breggin, M.D., director of the International Centre for the Study of Psychiatry and Psychology and faculty member at The Johns Hopkins University, "Ritalin does not correct biochemical imbalances — it causes them."

In his book, "Talking Back to Ritalin," he notes that there is evidence Ritalin can cause permanent damage to the child's brain and it's function. "Pediatricians, parents, and teachers are not aware of these hazards because the ill effects of this drug has been ignored and suppressed in order to encourage the sale of this drug," Dr. Breggin states.

Damaging effects of Ritalin can include:

- Decreased blood flow to the brain, an effect recently shown to be caused by cocaine where it is associated with impaired thinking ability and memory loss...
- Disruption of growth hormone, leading to suppression of growth in the body and brain of the child...
- Permanent neurological tics, including Tourette's Syndrome...
- Addiction and abuse, including withdrawal reactions

on a daily basis...

- Psychosis (mania), depression, insomnia, agitation, and social withdrawal...
- Possible shrinkage (atrophy) or other permanent physical abnormalities in the brain...
- Worsening of the very symptoms the drug is supposed to improve including hyperactivity and inattention...
- Decreased ability to learn.

"Ritalin and other stimulants are currently prescribed to millions of children in the hope of improving their supposed hyperactivity, inattention, and impulsivity," Breggin warns. He presents evidence that these drugs "work" by producing robotic or zombie-like behaviour in children. This enforced docility and obedience can produce a few weeks of subdued behaviour but has no positive effect on academic achievement and no positive long-term effects at all.

Contrary to claims by drug advocates, giving Ritalin to a child does not help to prevent future problems such as school failure or delinquency, he emphasizes.

Ritalin's lack of effectiveness has been proven by hundreds of studies but has not been revealed to doctors, teachers or parents. "Parents and teachers and even doctors have been badly misled by drug company marketing

practices," says Breggin. "Drug companies have targeted children as the new market"...

Breggin does not believe that mind-altering drugs are an appropriate approach to helping our children. Instead, he urges adults to learn to identify and meet the individual needs of the children in their care.

Most children receiving Ritalin have been identified for treatment by teachers who have been misled by Drug Company and government promotional campaigns for Ritalin and other stimulants. "Educate — don't medicate," should be the motto of every parent or teacher who is tempted to resort to Ritalin, Breggin urges.

We have been able to help many children with ADHD without reliance on Ritalin. I am holding a lecture on alternative ways of dealing with ADHD on Nov. 8, 2011.

If you need additional information, please call me personally at 605-665-8228 and visit my website: www.plathwellness.com

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Name

From Page 1

cluding lighting upgrades, enhanced electrical service, better acoustics, accessible seating, new stage floors and improved sightlines.

Another addition is located in the lobby - a list of the names of the donors who contributed funds toward the restoration project.

Aalfs said both he and his wife remember using the facility as students in the 1950s.

"We could never have imagined ... that one day this historic facility would be named in our honor," he said.

Kathryn Johnson, president of the South Dakota Board of Regents, said donors such as the Aalfs are important, as this is the only state in the union where taxpayer funds are not appropriated for university buildings.

The two main sources of revenue come from tuition and gifts from donors, she said.

"The Regents very much appreciate the donors ... but we also recognize, appreciate and thank the students, because they're speaking with their pocketbooks," Johnson said. "They're speaking about how much they value these high-quality state-of-the-art facilities."

Collin Michels, president of the USD Student Government Association, said the students do appreciate the changes that have been made to the USD campus over the past few years, stating that today's seniors would not recognize the campus as it stood four years ago.

"It's amazing to see how much campus has transformed (in a short time)," he said. Aalfs said this transformation plays a large role in drawing potential students to the university.

"We are proud to see the progress that



Kathy and Bailey Aalfs address the crowd in the auditorium that now bears their name on Friday afternoon. The Bailey and Kathy Aalfs Auditorium is located in Robert L. Slagle Hall on the USD campus.

has been made in regard to campus expansion, renovating existing structures and the addition of new buildings in the last few years - particularly under the leadership and guidance of President Abbott.

"It is obviously very expensive, and not easy. If it were easy, everybody would be doing it," he said.

The Aalfs received their degrees in 1960. Bailey received his B.A. in mathematics, and Kathy received a two-year teaching certificate.

Among other achievements, Bailey founded Lunar Communications in Lincoln, Neb., and managed the company's Sioux City office after selling his interest. He also started Sabre Communications in Sioux City in 1977 and sold the business to a New York firm in 2006.

Kathy worked for a brief time at a Sioux

City bank, and as homemaker and mother to the couple's three children, Kimberly, Scott and Jeff.

Both are trustees of the USD Foundation and have been active in various civic and cultural affairs.

Abbott said that when the auditorium which now bears the Aalfs' name was initially constructed, "you had to go a little bit on faith."

The same holds true today, he said. "You had to believe that it can be done in a way that makes all of us proud - particularly on a preservation project," Abbott said. "You have to believe that the history and tradition of our university is important. I believe that, and the Aalfs do as well."

For more information, visit www.usd-foundation.org.

Zions Bank Sued In Utah Over 'Unconscionable Fees'

BY JENNIFER DOBNER
Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — A customer who says Zions Bank makes it difficult — if not impossible — to avoid overdraft fees has filed a lawsuit in federal court, making the Utah bank one of dozens whose extra charges have triggered lawsuits from angry consumers.

The lawsuit, which seeks class-action status, was filed this week by three law firms on behalf of Melinda Barlow, of Sandy, and other customers who were charged overdraft fees under policies that were in place between 2005 and 2010.

It comes more than a year after federal regulators slapped limits on bank overdraft practices and the resulting fees. U.S. banks reportedly raked in nearly \$40 billion a year from the charges before regulations took effect in July 2010 requiring banks to get customers' permission to enroll them in overdraft programs and limiting how many fees could be charged in one day.

Court papers say Zions' policies allowed it to manipulate and alter the order in which debit transactions were posted so it could maximize the number of overdrafts, increasing the fees collected from customers.

The lawsuit also contends the bank does not routinely decline debit transactions when it's clear that doing so will overdraft a customer's account, which also results in additional charges to consumers.

For Barlow, a Zions customer since 1990, the practices resulted in about \$100 in overdraft charges on a single day in 2009, the lawsuit says.

The lawsuit also claims Zions doesn't routinely post deposits ahead of debit transactions, which could prevent accounts from becoming overdrawn.

"As a result of those acts and practices, Zions Bank's customers have been charged excessive overdraft fees," the lawsuit states. "Zions Bank's collections of those excessive fees is patently unconscionable and unfair."

FAA Says It's Ready For Ark. Turkey Drop

YELLEVILLE, Ark. (AP) — No one in the northern Arkansas town of Yellville will say if they expect wild turkeys to fall from planes for this year's Turkey Trot festival. But the Federal Aviation Administration says it is watching.

Organizers of the festival long ago disavowed the tradition of letting wild turkeys fall from low-flying airplanes as spectators watched them glide to the ground.

The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals has called the event cruel and offered a \$5,000 reward for any information that leads to an arrest. And the FAA has tried to crack down on pilots who participate.

But someone continues to drop the turkeys. FAA spokesman Lynn Lunsford tells the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (<http://bit.ly/rRPHL>) that no one in town will say who's responsible.

"Everybody says, 'We have no idea who it is,' but everybody knows who it is," Lunsford said in an article published Friday.

The Turkey Trot pays homage to one of the state's biggest exports. Arkansas was the third-largest turkey producer of any state in 2010.

First held in 1946, the festival is also an attraction in the 1,200-person town. It includes a turkey-calling contest, a turkey dinner, and beauty pageants. And it once included a sanctioned "turkey drop" from the top of the local courthouse.

Now, the turkey drop is conducted by private citizens. Yellville Chamber of Commerce President Travis Doshier said.

"They keep themselves pretty well secluded," Doshier told the newspaper. He said he didn't know if they were planning another drop this year.

It's a scene that's reminiscent of a 1978 episode of the TV series "WKRP in Cincinnati," where the manager of a fictional radio station sends a helicopter to drop turkeys over the town as a Thanksgiving promotion — and later proclaims, "As God as my witness, I thought turkeys could fly."

The FAA has tried to crack down before, Lunsford said. Officials have spoken to event organizers and at least one pilot who flew turkeys in the past.

The agency this year is watching for planes. Lunsford said pilots who participate risk losing their licenses.

"If a plane flies over and a turkey comes out of it, we're going to be talking to somebody," he said.

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