Did the Sugar Industry Pay Researchers To Blame Saturated Fat and Cholesterol?@anthonychaffeemd Transcript

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Sugar industry claims and the JAMA report

The Journal of American Medical Association published a report in 2015 from the UCSF showing internal documentation from The Sugar Research Foundation talking about how there was evidence and a ton of evidence in the literature going back to the 40s and 50s suggesting that sugar caused heart disease.

And in their own words, in our own documentation detailing how they paid off three Harvard professors to falsify data and publish fraudulent studies to make it appear as if cholesterol was causing heart diseases or is at least correlated with heart and exonerating sugar, even though sugar was the problem.

There's a lot to unpack here. The review that he cites does discuss the two divergent hypotheses around how diet impacts coronary heart disease risk.

Debunking the fraud allegation and industry research tactics

One of them being that saturated fat is the bigger culprit, and the other led by a researcher named John Yudkin suggesting that sugar is a problem. However, his claim that they paid off researchers to falsify data and publish fraudulent studies is just false, which is sort of ironic if you think about it.

Nowhere in this entire review that he himself cited do they mention that once. The Sugar Research Foundation just sought out researchers who had previously published papers that would ultimately support their industry.

And the meat industry does the same thing. Just look at this animal board invited review on red meat. Now one of the researchers that led many of these reviews for the Sugar research foundation was Mark Hegstedt.

And there's actually solid evidence that he can't be bought and paid for. He has a history of publishing results that ultimately upset the funders because he wouldn't just write what they wanted.

Mark Hegsted, John Yudkin, and the evidence debate

The data is the data. In fact, the Sugar Research Foundation only sought him out after he had published results of a dairy industry funded study that found that dietary fat was a bigger problem than sugar.

That doesn't sound all that favorable to the Funders. And he apparently got fired from his job helping develop dietary guidelines because you pissed off the beef industry.

Yudkin, who pushed the sugar hypothesis on the other hand, received £25,000 from big food manufacturers in 1966, which is equivalent to about $530, 000 in 2018. And he was involved with campaigns by the British Egg Marketing Board and National Dairy Council amongst others.

Yuddkin's research received backlash for valid reasons. For one, he didn't adjust for smoking or weight.

Why the saturated fat conclusion still stands

Hegstad did say that Yodkin research is worth considering, but they just require more controlled data, pretty fair. but then multiple research teams went on to conduct trials and they weren't able to replicate the findings.

So to reiterate, researchers didn't falsify or try to bury research. The topic was thoroughly investigated and the conclusion that saturated fat is a bigger driver prevailed.

In fact, we can go ahead and just throw away these reviews from five or six decades ago and still formulate a very strong argument based on more recent publications.

Why are we even talking about this?