

Debate sparked over U.S. drug spending

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A doctor at New York's Weill Cornell Medical College has defended U.S. drug spending, which accounts for 42 percent of drug sale money worldwide.

Dr. Marcus Reidenberg said he does not see a problem with the high amounts of pharmaceutical consumption, which exceeded \$250 billion in 2005, provided patients are properly educated, CBS News reported Monday.

"If the individual is troubled enough by the problem, knows what the risks are of the medicine, (including the fact that these new medicines -- we don't know what all the risks are), and still feels that the benefit is worthwhile -- I don't have a problem with it," Reidenberg told CBS.

However, critics of the industry have said they are concerned that people are taking drugs they do not need after seeing them advertised on television.

"There is no drug trial in the world where anyone is taking five drugs simultaneously and they are looking at the interactions. So why is it a bad idea? I don't want to be part of some experiment," New York University clinical psychologist Leonore Tiefer said to CBS News.

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