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## Health Canada's Review of "Natural Health Products" Regulations Ignores Key Issues – Fails to Ensure Safety and Effectiveness

**OTTAWA (May 30, 2007)** — Bill Jeffery, LLB, national coordinator of the Centre for Science in the Public Interest, issued the following statement on the first three-year public review of the Natural Health Products Regulations, closing today:

“Health Canada’s public consultation on Natural Health Products Regulations avoids key issues concerning the safety and effectiveness of such products and ducks tough questions like why Health Canada approved heart-health claims for garlic and menopause-relief claims for black cohosh when scientific evidence indicates both substances are no more effective than placebos.

Canadians are entitled to safe, effective natural health products. Under current regulations, what they often get is scarcely more than an official rubber-stamping by Health Canada, based on historical use, which implies a greater degree of official legitimacy than actually exists.

Health Canada claims to base its licensing decisions on systematic literature searches that ‘review the totality of evidence... including both favourable and unfavourable data.’ However, Health Canada actually sets the bar much lower, sometimes failing to update monographs with recent, peer reviewed scientific research that contradicts traditional evidence upon which original licensing decisions were based.

In so doing, Health Canada misleads Canadians and diminishes its own credibility as a scientific authority and a protector of public health.”

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**For more info, call: Bill Jeffery, National Coordinator of CSPI at 613-244-7337.**

**See CSPI's letters to Minister of Health Tony Clement at: <http://www.cspinet.org/canada/>**

*The Centre for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) is an independent health advocacy organization with offices in Ottawa, and Washington, D.C. CSPI's Ottawa advocacy efforts are supported by more than 100,000 subscribers to the Canadian edition of its Nutrition Action Healthletter. CSPI does not accept industry or government funding. Nutrition Action does not carry advertisements.*