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Letters to the Editor

Complementary medicines: an alternative view

Aust Prescr 2022;45:8

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The article on the [safety of Australian complementary medicines](#)¹ by Geraldine Moses is incorrect or misleading on many levels. There is not enough space to respond to each inaccuracy in detail here, but a fuller response can be found on the website of [Complementary Medicines Australia](#).

Dr Moses downplays the strict regulation of Australian complementary medicines by the Therapeutic Goods Administration. However, this high level of regulation is one reason why Australia's complementary medicines industry is thriving at home and overseas.

The author states that most adults do not need supplements, but this is untrue. A myriad of evidence supports the existence of nutrient-dietary challenges for Australians, from iron-deficiency anaemia to

vitamin D and B₁₂ plus many more. Deficiency has many causes such as cultural practices, post-gut surgery, lifestyle factors, ageing, the use of certain drugs and, of course, dietary factors. A staggering 50% of adults do not consume sufficient fruit, and 93% of adults and 95% of children do not consume adequate vegetables, plus just one in five Australians consume enough omega-3s.

Surely engagement with clinicians, patients, academia, and industry can aid the understanding, benefits and risks of recognising and advancing complementary and all medicines? I suggest that a mutually respectful approach to conversation and ongoing education is needed to help Australians make the best decisions and deliver the most positive health outcomes for us all.

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REFERENCE

1. Moses G. The safety of commonly used vitamins and minerals. *Aust Prescr* 2021;44:119-23. <https://doi.org/10.18773/austprescr.2021.029>