

Organic activists reject science, propose ‘natural’ Ebola cure, claim government conspiracy

As the [death toll of Ebola continues to rise](#), especially in the hard-hit West African countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea, the need for a viable cure is growing more and more urgent. Even more concerning is the possibility that once approved, [vaccines may not be widely available for several months](#).

As often happens in times of medical crises, fringe groups come out from hiding—in this instance, organic activists in the form of the most high profile organic lobby group in the United States.

According to [an article](#) on the Organic Consumers Association website, modern medicine should be replaced by the use of supplements to treat Ebola. The OCA claims there are alternative natural treatments that individuals and health workers could currently be taking to prevent and treat the spread of Ebola. OCA cites one study that shows that the Ebola virus relies on selenium—which it quickly depletes from the host’s body, further weakening the immune system. Replenishing selenium is vital to patients’ survival once infected. However, there is no empirical evidence that selenium supplements would have any effect on patient recovery or survival.

The organic activist group also claims that administering supplements of vitamins C and D in patients and those at risk could also help to reduce the impact of the virus—again, claims that no credible medical authority would support. This is especially critical in poorer areas where nutritional deficiencies are common, the OCA claims.

So why hasn’t more stress been placed on these measures, which could effectively treat Ebola and potentially save lives? According to the OCA, this might be the result of the government putting greater stock in the profitability of drug companies than actually treating the virus. In other words, the organic group claims the government is in a conspiracy with Big Pharma to deny people inexpensive life-saving remedies.

“The status quo in which government creates and protects drug company monopolies was always outrageous. Now with the threat of major and deadly pandemic in sight, it is completely unacceptable. It is essential that voters become aware of what is going on behind closed doors in Washington so they can speak up and move the political system—before millions of lives are needlessly lost and our economy also dealt a savage blow.”

The OCA is not the only group to challenge modern science and promote fear around the Ebola crisis. As David Gorski [writes](#) in Science-Based Medicine, anti-vaccine activists are [already warning against an Ebola vaccine](#), even though one hasn’t been approved yet and is unlikely to be for quite some time.

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Meanwhile, in Africa itself, [faith healing is being promoted](#) by at least one Nigerian pastor,

Ituah Ighodalo, as a means of curing Ebola, including laying on hands, which is a great way to infect oneself with the virus if those hands happen to come into contact with any bodily fluids of the sick and then happen to touch a mucus membrane.

Here in the “developed” world, we have similar claims being made, for instance, in this article entitled [Can Gingko and Turmeric Help Stop Ebola?](#) I could have saved them the trouble and said “almost certainly not,” but the author of this article insists on all sorts of handwaving about JAK-STAT signaling p38 MAP kinase and the effect of Gingko and Tumeric on these pathways. It might be worth a detailed deconstruction elsewhere. For now, let’s just say it’s “speculative,” to put it kindly. The editors of [Inside Surgery](#) should really know better. Or maybe not. I saw another article on *Inside Surgery* entitled [Can Rife Therapy Help Stop Ebola Disease?](#) Then I saw that the editor of *Inside Surgery*, [L. “Skip” Marcucci, MD](#), has completed “a fellowship in Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona” and that he’s also “a formally trained medical acupuncturist.” Well, OK, then. That explains a lot. It also rather saddens me to see an article on a website called *Inside Surgery* that is not too different from this [article by Mike Adams](#) about “natural” cures for Ebola (one of which is based on traditional Chinese medicine).

The Food and Drug Administration has been moving against some quack promoters, most notably Adams. The FDA issued warning letters to three companies over fraudulent health claims regarding Ebola treatments. The warning letters, viewable [here](#), single out the Natural Solutions Foundation and two essential oil companies “Young Living” and “d?TERRA” whose distributors, the FDA says, were making claims that their oils could treat or prevent Ebola. The FDA [sent agents](#) to Mike Adams on September 23 to immediately desist in spreading false claims promoted by Natural Solutions.

The warning letters threaten all three companies with possible criminal prosecutions if they do not immediately answer the FDA and Federal Trade Commission with explanations of how they plan to halt the making of such claims. The [e-commerce website of the Natural Solutions Foundation](#) removed any mention of Ebola.

Will the federal government have the gumption to confront organic activists?

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