As the calendar turns to September, football fans across America rejoice as NFL and college teams once again take the field. In between watching our favorite teams, we have continued to fight the good fight for science and health. Here’s where ACSH appeared in the past couple of weeks:

(1) Dr. Josh Bloom, who is an expert on opioids, was cited by National Review about how the government’s strategy to fight the epidemic is wrongheaded and counterproductive. In short, restricting prescription opioids does not address the problem (which is illicit fentanyl) and prevents chronic pain patients from getting the medicine they need to survive. As National Review said, "[T]he drug wars roll on, from (on any decent measure) failure to failure, enriching more vultures, trashing civil rights, turning yet another manageable problem into a crisis, and, yes, adding to misery and to a death toll that could be a fraction of what it now is."

(2) Dr. Bloom was also interviewed about kratom, a mixture of drugs that includes opioids. While kratom has its own set of potentially serious health risks, Dr. Bloom told a news site called The Center Square that "kratom only exists because useful medicine is regulated out of patients’ hands." He also noted that it’s better than using a street drug that might contain fentanyl.

(3) In his most recent monthly column for the Puget Sound Business Journal (paywalled), Dr. Alex Berezow wrote that too many businesspeople are susceptible to pseudoscience and magical thinking. He notes that being successful does not make one immune to junk science. In fact, many businesspeople, such as Jeff Bezos and Gwyneth Paltrow, actively promote it.

(4) Dr. Bloom was quoted by WFXT, a local Fox affiliate in Boston, about the safety of sumithrin, a pesticide often used to kill mosquitoes.
In large doses, the spray can cause "nausea, vomiting, throat irritation, headache, dizziness, and skin and eye irritation," so stay inside when the bug man comes. Overall, the spray is considered safe because humans are exposed to only tiny doses.

(5) NPR affiliate WKAR [7] cited our work on the "Alar apple scare." Alar, a plant hormone that was sprayed on apples, was blamed for causing cancer. It does not. But as science writers Sheril Kirshenbaum and Karel Vega note in WKAR, "apple orchard owners lost hundreds of millions of dollars" in the ensuing panic.

(6) Dr. Berezow was interviewed for two articles about e-cigarettes for the news site The Center Square. In the first [8], he opposed Michigan’s six-month ban on e-cigarettes because it is taking away a vital tool for smokers to quit. For all its flaws, vaping is still about 95% safer than smoking. In the second [9], he said that the respiratory illnesses linked to vaping appear to be caused by people not using the product as intended, specifically vaping THC-infused oil [10]. (Inhaled oil can cause breathing problems and pneumonia.)

(7) Dr. Berezow continues to do his twice weekly radio segment, "Real Science with Dr. B," on Seattle's Kirby Wilbur Show. In his latest segment [11] (beginning at 21:05), he discussed the increasing suicide rate in the United Kingdom, a teen who went blind due to eating nothing but junk food, and an app to help obese kids lose weight.