

Sovaldi \$84,000 and still quite a bargain

By ACSH Staff — March 24, 2014



In the no good deed goes unpunished department, California's Gilead

Sciences has come under attack by Congressman Henry Waxman a perennial critic of the drug industry. In this case, the issue is the price of Gilead's Sovaldi one of the most revolutionary new drugs to come along in some time.

ACSH advisor Dr. David Shlaes, an expert on infectious diseases, and the author of the blog [Antibiotics - The Perfect Storm](#) [1], has plenty to say about this. In comparing Sovaldi to the previous standard of care, Shlaes says, I was infuriated to read [Andy Pollack's report](#) [2] of congressional self-righteousness on the topic of Gilead's pricing for a new, less toxic, more effective and shorter therapy for chronic Hepatitis C infection.

Even worse, says ACSH's Dr. Josh Bloom, a long time hepatitis C researcher, critics are not even mentioning a really high expense liver transplants, which cost more than \$500,000, and must be followed by a lifetime of immunosuppressant drugs to prevent organ rejection. Nor are they talking about the previous standard of care interferon plus ribavirin, which was very toxic, also expensive, and required up to a year of therapy, making it very difficult to tolerate.

Yes on the surface \$1,000 daily per pill for 12 weeks the cost of Sovaldi may seem exorbitant. but compared to other new drugs that offer far less and cost much more, it is really a bargain.

He adds, The program that led to Sovaldi was initiated by Pharmasset (later purchased by Gilead around 2000). Do people think that the 10-15 years it took to discover and develop this drug cost them nothing?

Shlaes emphasizes, Compared to oncology drugs (most of them), treatment with Solvadi or antibiotics against bacterial infection result in CURE! Not ongoing therapy forever, not in a few months of additional life in the hospital or hospice but CURE! end quote mark

We highly recommend that you read his entire [blog entry](#) [3] on this subject.

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Links

[1] <http://antibiotics-theperfectstorm.blogspot.com/?m=1>

[2] http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/22/business/lawmakers-attack-cost-of-new-hepatitis-drug.html?ref=andrewpollack&_r=0

[3] <http://antibiotics-theperfectstorm.blogspot.com/2014/03/pricing.html?m=1>