

FDA: Science Now and Science in the Future

Guest for the Week of August 28, 2008

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www.fda.gov/oc/vonEschenbach/andys_take/bios/torti.html

Science is at the core of every decision we make about the FDA-regulated products you and your family use on a daily basis. Yet the science behind those regulatory decisions is often invisible.

My take is that there is an extraordinary depth and breadth of world-class science and scientists at the FDA that for too long have been invisible to you. One of my jobs as FDA's Chief Scientist is to not only make you aware of the extraordinary scientific advances made at the FDA, but also to show you where we are taking FDA regulatory science in the future.

How does this science affect you today? Perhaps it is not well known that investigators at FDA have made world class contributions in the development of vaccines used worldwide – nor that scientists at the FDA devel-

oped in a matter of weeks a method to reliably identify a contaminant introduced into a widely used blood thinner.

And what about the future? Scientists at the FDA are studying ways to use nanotechnology, tiny particles and devices under 100 nanometers, to identify adulterated drugs and have used sophisticated nano-instrumentation to assure the safety of modern sunscreens. In the area of food safety, the FDA is driving research with many partners to utilize cutting-edge technologies to detect bacterial and other contami-

nation. And because we all want new drugs to move more rapidly through testing into the hands of consumers, we are pioneering research on innovative ways to speed our work and the work of companies to learn as much as we can, quickly.

Through all these efforts, we have been aided and advised by FDA's Science Board, a distinguished, independent group of scientific advisors. The Science Board is engaged more often than ever before, meeting now four times a year and tackling some of the most difficult scientific problems facing public health.

The more you and your family know about the science behind the products—and FDA's decisions regarding the safety and benefits of food and medical products—the more empowered you will be. [FDA](#)

About Andy's Take

Through this communications column on the FDA Web site, Commissioner of Food and Drugs Andrew C. von Eschenbach, M.D., will discuss weekly FDA issues of interest to the American consumer and occasionally preview upcoming FDA issues and events.



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