Two Vital Perspectives The following article is contributed by two writers, a chiropractor and a naturopath. Each offers a unique and vitalistic perspective.

The germ theory states that diseases are due to specific microorganisms, which are capable of transmission from body to body. Yet although it is widely accepted by medical professionals, forming the basis for billions of dollars of healthcare spending (actually sickness care, but that’s another article), the fact that so many people believe it to be true doesn’t make it so. This is one of the classic logical fallacies: argumentum ad populum, the appeal to the majority, where a thing is stated to be true simply because so many people believe it.

That didn’t work for the belief that the earth was flat, and it shouldn’t work for a theory of disease that is increasingly coming under fire from the scientific community and whose fundamental premise was known to be flawed almost from the beginning. I am reminded of the famous quote by Anatole France: “If fifty million people say a foolish thing, it is still a foolish thing.”
The Germ Theory: A Chiropractic Look at the Germ Theory

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The germ theory states that diseases are due to specific microorganisms, which are capable of transmission from body to body. Yet, although it is widely accepted by medical professionals, the basis for billions of dollars of healthcare spending (actually sickness care, but that’s another article) lies in the fact that so many people believe it to be true doesn’t make it so. This is one of the classic logical fallacies: argumentum ad popularem, the appeal to the majority, when a thing is stated to be true simply because so many people believe it.

That didn’t work for the belief that the earth was flat, and it shouldn’t work for a theory of disease that is increasingly coming under fire from the scientific community and whose fundamental premise was known to be flawed almost from the beginning. I am reminded of the famous quote from Aristotle: “Fifty million people are foolish things, it is a foolish thing.” Everyone has heard of the Black Plague that swept through Europe in the Middle Ages, resulting in the death of nearly a third of the European population (25 million people dead over the five-year period between 1347 and 1352). What is most interesting, however, is the other two-thirds—the ones who didn’t die. Many times the survivors were members of the same families as the victims, sharing a home and meals across the same family table. What about them—did they ‘catch’ the disease? Were they just lucky?

Everyone is familiar with Pasteur’s name, but one of his contemporaries and chief opponents was a scientist named Claude Bernard (1813–1878), who argued that it was not the ‘seed’ (the germ) but the ‘soil’ (the environment) that was the element in determining who became sick and who remained well. Everyone is used to. With the number of drug ads on television and in magazines, and news shows touting the latest medical advancement to treat this or that disease (many of which show surprising results) and the inherent side effects or problems) and the mass media perpetuating the health model that everyone is used to. With the number of drug ads on television and in magazines, and news shows touting the latest medical advancement to treat this or that disease (many of which show surprising results) and the inherent side effects or problems) and the mass media perpetuating the health model that

The germ (or virus or bacteria) might well be the agent of disease, but the cause is much more complex than that. Otherwise, as chiropractic pioneer B.J. Palmer said, eventually no one would be alive to tell you about it! If our bodies can be kept whole and healthy, then the germs, which we come into contact with every day, would have no purchase. One of the goals of chiropractic is to have your body function at such a level that you don’t get sick very often—and that when you do, your immune system, stronger because of more efficient body-brain communication, is better able to fight off the disease, letting you recover more quickly.

Chiropractic is a vitalistic way of looking at our ideas of health and wellness, of how we get sick and why. Very often, it’s at odds with the predominant (mechanistic) model of health that everyone is used to. With the number of drug ads on television and in magazines, and news shows touting the latest medical advancement to treat this or that disease (many of which show surprising results) and the inherent side effects or problems) and the mass media perpetuating the health model that