

# doctordavidfriedman.com

The website for a North Carolina chiropractor that has promoted misleading and unsubstantiated health claims about the COVID-19 virus and genetically modified foods.



Proceed with caution: This website fails to meet several basic standards of credibility and transparency.

Score: 42/100

## Ownership and Financing

The website is owned by chiropractor David Friedman. Along with his chiropractic practice in Wilmington, North Carolina, Friedman runs a vitamin supplement company called Chews-4-Health, Inc., and hosts a weekly podcast called “To Your Good Health Radio.”

The site generates revenue from advertisements. Friedman also sells dietary supplements on the site’s All-Natural Supplements page.

## Content

The logo at the top of DoctorDavidFriedman.com says, “Changing Lives - For the Health of it!”

The website primarily covers nutrition and health. The Health Blog section features articles with headlines such as “BEANS (AND LEGUMES) RANKED BY HOW HEALTHY THEY ARE,” “Natural Ways to Control Blood Sugar,” and “Does Buying Organic Break the Bank?”

The Radio Show section on the site includes episodes of Friedman’s “To Your Good Health Radio” podcast. Episode titles include “Find Your Path to Health and Longevity” and “How Not to Diet: A Proactive Guide for Achieving Lasting Weight Loss.”

Articles on the website are not dated.

- ✓ Does not repeatedly publish false content (22points)
- ✗ Gathers and presents information responsibly (18)
- ✗ Regularly corrects or clarifies errors (12.5)
- ✗ Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly (12.5)
- ✓ Avoids deceptive headlines (10)
- ✗ Website discloses ownership and financing (7.5)
- ✗ Clearly labels advertising (7.5)
- ✓ Reveals who’s in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest (5)
- ✓ The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or biographical information (5)

Criteria are listed in order of importance.

[More information.](#)

## Credibility

Articles on DoctorDavidFriedman.com have included false and misleading health claims, including false information about possible cures for the COVID-19 virus.

For example, an undated article titled “STAYING INDOORS INCREASES CORONAVIRUS RISK!” claimed that sunlight can kill the COVID-19 virus.

"In my opinion, keeping the beaches closed and having people quarantined inside their homes is a bad decision," Friedman said. "Getting more sunshine is a proactive step we can all take at protecting ourselves from the current coronavirus outbreak. Instead of staying quarantined inside your house, go outside on your back deck and soak up some virus destroying sunshine!"

To back his claim, Friedman cited the fact that sunlight contains ultraviolet light, which is used as a disinfectant in hospitals, but in a much more concentrated form than natural sunlight.

There is no evidence proving that sunlight kills the COVID-19 virus. The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned against trying to use ultraviolet light to kill the COVID-19 virus on its website. "UV lamps should not be used to sterilize hands or other areas of skin as UV radiation can cause skin irritation," the organization said.

Asked about the article, Friedman argued that his claim about sunlight killing the COVID-19 virus was presented as opinion. "In the blog post which was 'fact-checked' by USA Today and gained the attention of NewsGuard, after I shared my research, I ended the article with 'In my opinion,'" he said in an email. "Is it your opinion that no one else is allowed to formulate one? Who exactly does NewsGuard put on their pedestal as being THE definitive source of unquestionable 'real news' that no one should deviate from? Is it the World Health Organization that you hold to this high standard?"

Friedman added in his email to NewsGuard, "With so many websites giving unscrupulous advice during this COVID-19 pandemic, NewsGuard is spending its resources attacking someone for writing a blog post that recommends harmless fresh air and sunshine."

Friedman has also shared unsubstantiated health claims about GMOs, which are food items produced from plants or animals whose DNA has been altered. In an article headlined "Dangerous Chemicals In Your

Microwave Popcorn!,” Friedman said, “GMOs may lead to allergies, immune dysfunction including autoimmune disorders, liver problems, infertility, and damage to intestinal flora.” The article did not cite any sources to back this claim.

There is no evidence that GMOs are unsafe, according to statements from the WHO, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the American Medical Association. A 2016 review of existing scientific evidence published by the U.S. National Academy of Sciences “found no substantiated evidence of a difference in risks to human health between currently commercialized genetically engineered (GE) crops and conventionally bred crops.”

In another article focused on GMOs, titled “Ten Tips to Avoiding GMOs,” Friedman said, “Allergies and food-related illnesses increased 200 percent within five years of modified foods becoming mainstream. The solution? Just avoid GMOs.” The article did not cite a source for this claim.

The 2016 review published by the U.S. National Academy of Sciences “did not find a relationship between consumption of [genetically engineered] foods and the increase in prevalence of food allergies.” Another review of existing scientific literature about a connection between GMOs and food allergies, published in September 2017 in the journal *Annals Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology*, concluded that “no animal or human study was identified that demonstrated evidence that a GM food item was more allergenic than its conventional counterpart.”

Friedman did not comment on the specific claims made in these articles in his response to NewsGuard. “You accused me of ‘gathering and presenting information irresponsibly’ in the blog post I wrote in 2017 recommending people eat organic, non-GMO produce,” he said. “You state that the WHO has concluded GMOs are safe and therefore I am wrong. If you consider the WHO’s opinion to be the unrefuted truth, instead of putting a magnifying glass on a sentence you found

from a blog post I wrote years ago, why not spend your time scrutinizing NonGMOProject.org and OrganicConsumers.org. These websites reach millions of people and are filled with what you consider to be 'fake news' because it clearly contradicts the WHO's stance on GMOs."

The website has also shared unsubstantiated claims about the dangers of artificial sweeteners. In an article headlined "Four Healthy Alternatives to Artificial Sweeteners," Friedman said, "The FDA lists ninety-two official side effects from artificial sweeteners, which includes arthritis, asthma, dizziness, cancer and even DEATH!"

rovide any proof that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration listed such side effects for artificial sweeteners and his claims were not supported by other sources. The U.S. National Cancer Institute said on its website that the studies of artificial sweeteners approved by the FDA, including saccharin, aspartame, sucralose, acesulfame potassium, neotame, and advantame, "have not provided clear evidence of an association with cancer in humans."

An April 2017 article from the Cleveland Clinic addressed the claim that one kind of artificial sweetener was linked to asthma, saying, "Some sources state that other food additives (food colorings or dyes, preservatives such as nitrites and nitrates, and the artificial sweetener aspartame) can also trigger asthma, but there is no scientific evidence that proves this is true."

Friedman did not comment on this article in his response to NewsGuard.

Because Friedman's articles have advanced false and unsubstantiated health claims, NewsGuard has determined that his website fails to gather and present information responsibly.

DoctorDavidFriedman.com does not articulate its policy for correcting errors. When asked about the site's approach to corrections, Friedman said, "If I find

DEFINITIVE proof (third party, unpaid and nonbiased) that anything I state in any of my articles is false, I will gladly amend it.” Because he provided no examples of corrections and numerous stories with false information have not been corrected, the website does not meet the standard for regularly correcting errors.

The website does not disclose a particular perspective. The website’s About page lists Friedman’s biography and focuses on his media appearances. However, Friedman’s articles have regularly included opinionated statements about government agencies, traditional medicine, and the media.

For example, in an article responding to USA Today’s fact check of his false claim that sunlight could kill the COVID-19 virus, Friedman wrote, “We’re being told by the media that hospitals are at capacity and the lines to be tested for the virus are wrapped around the block. Yet people are filming these supposed ‘at capacity hospitals’ and they are empty with no lines of people waiting to be tested.

Friedman added, “Actually, this is just modus operandi for the media. Doom and gloom fear tactics bring in more ratings for the media and that means more money from sponsors. It’s not about sharing stories of HOPE but leading with FEAR.”

In an article titled “GNC sued for selling illegal dietary supplements,” Friedman said, “Big Pharma makes hundreds of millions of dollars from the sale of this potentially dangerous synthetic vitamin C, yet the Attorney General and FDA look the other way. However, when GNC sells a dietary supplement that is not lining the pockets of a Big Pharma lab, the product goes under scrutiny.”

Friedman noted that his articles all appear in a section called Health Blog. “It clearly states at the top, this is a BLOG POST! People read blogs to get the author’s opinion,” Friedman said in an email. “That’s what a blog is for. I certainly have no desire to trick anyone into believing I’m part of the ‘news,’ considering many of my

posts are created after seeing something in the news that, in my opinion is unjustified (like when Ibuprofen was accused of causing COVID-19 to spread).”

NewsGuard does not consider “blog” to be a clear designation for opinion content. In addition, because DoctorDavidFriedman.com’s articles consistently publish opinion against government and corporate regulation of health, as well as traditional medicine, which is not a perspective that the website discloses, NewsGuard has determined that the website does not handle the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

Headlines on the website are generally broad and avoid including false or misleading health claims made within articles, which is why NewsGuard has determined that DoctorDavidFriedman.com meets NewsGuard’s standard for avoiding deceptive headlines.

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#### Transparency

While the website is named after Friedman and the About page provides his biography, he is never explicitly named as the website’s owner.

Asked about the website’s lack of ownership disclosure, Friedman wrote in an email to NewsGuard, “This must be a generic question you send out to real news websites and not someone who just writes a personal blog post. While most news and large health websites don’t list their principles, my website URL is the name of the owner, me.”

Each article is credited to Friedman. No other content creators or editorial leaders are mentioned on the site. A general contact form is provided.

“My website is not part of any organization nor do I have a single employee running my website,” Friedman said. “It’s just me.”

Because the website features Friedman’s biography, and he is the only one involved in the site’s content, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not fail to

meet NewsGuard’s standards for revealing who is in charge and for providing information about content creators.

Articles on the site have included unlabeled advertisements for products. For example, in an article titled “Coronavirus: Fear vs. Facts,” Friedman promoted a dietary supplement. “I’m not concerned because I wash my hands regularly and I take Carnivora, an immune-boosting, anti-viral plant-based supplement derived from the venus fly trap,” the article stated. “If you’d like to learn more visit carnivora.com. [Use promo code ‘GOOD HEALTH’ and receive a discount.]” Carnivora is identified as a sponsor of Friedman’s podcast on the website’s Podcasts page, but no disclosure of their financial relationship is included in the article.

In the previously mentioned article “Four Healthy Alternatives to Artificial Sweeteners,” Friedman promoted another supplement. The article stated, “This is the sweetener I used when formulating my chewable nutritional products for Chews-4-Health International,” linking to the Chews4Health.com website to buy the supplement. Friedman owns Chews-4-Health, Inc., a fact not disclosed in the article.

Despite Friedman’s claim that he has “not monetized any of my websites,” he has promoted products from his podcast’s sponsor and his own company within articles on the website. Because those stories are not labeled as sponsored content, the site does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for clearly labeling advertising.

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#### History

The website’s domain name was registered in 2014.

In March 2004, Friedman agreed to pay a \$1 million settlement to the U.S. Federal Trade Commission as part of a deceptive advertising case involving Seasilver, a dietary supplement, that was falsely promoted as being able to treat cancer, diabetes, and AIDS.

Seasilver contained colloidal silver, a liquid substance containing silver particles, which according to an October 2009 warning from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, can cause a condition called argyria, a permanent bluish-gray discoloration of the skin, nails, and gums.

Asked about the Seasilver settlement, Friedman told NewsGuard, “I did not personally make those claims. They were part of the company’s marketing materials and website, of which I had no control over. In an unprecedented decision, the FTC included independent distributors in their case against Seasilver and I happened to be one of them.”

Written by: [John Gregory](#)

Edited by: [Amy Westfeldt](#)

Send feedback to NewsGuard: [Click Here](#)

## Sources

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Ownership and  
Financing

Domain registration:

[https://www.godaddy.com/whois/results.aspx?domain=doctordavidfriedman.com&recaptchaResponse=03AHaCkAZslaBfmeciRBg584RwQ-851f15G\\_eHyTLJShqmPPpaqn\\_w4szqKCe\\_9m8mtsra0KPLI0crtYHgtSvOdnhmQROPBu6hTwHHsTumvO6ak4MOAf41Zr92FZ20gMhGHdbd69GBAyaNuo0b2WyeZZEZhOZmMW\\_g34Nspt-P6p10R0ltw-T8NyiQsj4rVa1IXbhd\\_5Yjd8lxqtZrF-dtbT9kAeP9Ef6tamSvFw3xVE9a-UYZcs3o3XO0UkhYQkM8YjTy9XoKgM\\_rrLazADn8hVi vRYIAawm49R9IXuYc5CnV9pP-A27C1Uh\\_MNZ5skfURDHUHEizIJ9ibXa8E58ExCp-\\_SOe87P-pDQINXaA76OLIXZc32WWaJ6P2JC4bYvZuENtt4\\_Qpn4](https://www.godaddy.com/whois/results.aspx?domain=doctordavidfriedman.com&recaptchaResponse=03AHaCkAZslaBfmeciRBg584RwQ-851f15G_eHyTLJShqmPPpaqn_w4szqKCe_9m8mtsra0KPLI0crtYHgtSvOdnhmQROPBu6hTwHHsTumvO6ak4MOAf41Zr92FZ20gMhGHdbd69GBAyaNuo0b2WyeZZEZhOZmMW_g34Nspt-P6p10R0ltw-T8NyiQsj4rVa1IXbhd_5Yjd8lxqtZrF-dtbT9kAeP9Ef6tamSvFw3xVE9a-UYZcs3o3XO0UkhYQkM8YjTy9XoKgM_rrLazADn8hVi vRYIAawm49R9IXuYc5CnV9pP-A27C1Uh_MNZ5skfURDHUHEizIJ9ibXa8E58ExCp-_SOe87P-pDQINXaA76OLIXZc32WWaJ6P2JC4bYvZuENtt4_Qpn4)  
<https://twitter.com/drdavidfriedman?lang=en>  
[https://doctordavidfriedman.com/in\\_the\\_media/radio\\_tv\\_career](https://doctordavidfriedman.com/in_the_media/radio_tv_career)

<http://wilmingtonchiropractor.com/meet-the-chiropractors/dr.-david-friedman.html>  
<https://chews4health.com/contact-us/>  
[https://www.sosnc.gov/online\\_services/Search/Business\\_Registration\\_profile?Id=5592391](https://www.sosnc.gov/online_services/Search/Business_Registration_profile?Id=5592391)

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Content

<https://doctordavidfriedman.com/blog/does-buying-organic-break-the-bank>  
<https://doctordavidfriedman.com/blog/natural-ways-to-control-blood-sugar>  
<https://doctordavidfriedman.com/blog/beans-and-legumes-ranked-by-how-healthy-they-are>  
<https://doctordavidfriedman.com/podcasts/find-your-path-to-health-and-longevity-1>  
<https://doctordavidfriedman.com/podcasts/how-not-to-diet-a-proactive-guide-for-achieving-lasting-weight-loss-1>  
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[https://doctordavidfriedman.com/in\\_the\\_media/tv\\_appearances](https://doctordavidfriedman.com/in_the_media/tv_appearances)

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Credibility

Coronavirus sunlight article:  
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<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/factcheck/2020/03/30/fact-check-sunlight-does-not-kill-new-coronavirus/2931170001/>  
<https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2020/mar/20/greg-murphy/no-sunlight-has-not-been-proven-kill-coronavirus/>  
<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200327-can-you-kill-coronavirus-with-uv-light>  
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>  
GMO article #1:  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20200402184923/https://doctordavidfriedman.com/blog/dangerous-chemicals-in-your-microwave-popcorn>  
WHO on GMOs :  
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AMA on GMOs: [https://www.ama-assn.org/sites/ama-assn.org/files/corp/media-browser/public/hod/a12-csaph-reports\\_0.pdf](https://www.ama-assn.org/sites/ama-assn.org/files/corp/media-browser/public/hod/a12-csaph-reports_0.pdf)

NAS on GMOs:

<https://www.nap.edu/resource/23395/GE-crops-report-brief.pdf>

AAAS:

[http://www.aaas.org/sites/default/files/AAAS\\_GM\\_statement.pdf](http://www.aaas.org/sites/default/files/AAAS_GM_statement.pdf)

GMO article #2:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20200402185150/https://www.doctordavidfriedman.com/blog/ten-tips-to-avoiding-gmos>

NAS on GMOs/allergies, page 18:

<https://www.nap.edu/read/23395/chapter/3?term=allergies#18>

[https://www.annallergy.org/article/S1081-1206\(17\)30550-1/fulltext#sec4](https://www.annallergy.org/article/S1081-1206(17)30550-1/fulltext#sec4)

Sweetener article:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20200402201822/https://doctordavidfriedman.com/blog/four-healthy-alternatives-to-artificial-sweeteners>

<https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/diet/artificial-sweeteners-fact-sheet>

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/8956-food-allergies--asthma>

<https://doctordavidfriedman.com/blog/global-warming-hoax-of-the-century-put-on-ice>

News/opinion #1:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20200402205547/https://doctordavidfriedman.com/blog/usa-today-fact-checked-me-heres-my-response>

News/opinion #2:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20200402205552/https://doctordavidfriedman.com/blog/gnc-sued-for-selling-illegal-dietary-supplements>

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Transparency

<https://doctordavidfriedman.com/blog/kerrygold-class-action-lawsuit>

<https://doctordavidfriedman.com/supplement/chews-4-health-1>

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Unlabeled ad #1:

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History

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Original order:

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Friedman settlement:

<https://www.ftc.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cases/2003/06/seasilvercomplaint.pdf>

<https://wayback.archive-it.org/7993/20170722143956/https://www.fda.gov/Food/RecallsOutbreaksEmergencies/SafetyAlertsAdvisories/ucm184087.htm>

<https://nccih.nih.gov/health/colloidalsilver>

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