

Bill Gates Charity Supports the Drug Companies

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Bill Gates, the Microsoft founder and a recent global health campaigner, has invested \$205 million in nine large pharmaceutical companies.

The investment has been made through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the largest charitable body in the US with an endowment of \$24 billion.

The decision to take stakes in individual firms appears to be a shift in strategy, and for the first time aligns the charity's interests with those of the drugs firms. The foundation had avoided equity investments and held shares in just two companies - cable firm Cox Communications and Waste Management. Now it has ploughed \$76.9 million into Merck shares, \$37.3 million into Pfizer and \$29.7 million into Johnson & Johnson.

Mr. Gates has already built some ties with the drugs industry. Merck chief executive Raymond Gilmartin joined the Microsoft board last year while Mr. Gates helped Merck with AIDS programs in Botswana - much of the foundation's focus has been on improving health in the developing world.

Investment in drugs firms could leave the foundation open to criticism. A representative sits on the board of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations that buys vaccines from some of the pharmaceutical firms in which the foundation now holds shares.

Gates' belief in the importance of intellectual property protection for drugs in the developing world as a means of encouraging investment is also controversial.

The foundation was created in 2000 through the merger of the Gates Learning Foundation and the William H Gates Foundation and is chaired by Bill Gates senior.

[The Guardian](#) **May 18, 2002**

DR. MERCOLA'S COMMENT:

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Great, just what we need. The richest man in the world is now supporting one of the richest industries in the world.

Does this make any sense?

When you consider that some of the primary recipients of money from the Gates Foundation were vaccine programs, one can only wonder.