

# Lariam Action USA

[www.lariaminfo.org](http://www.lariaminfo.org)

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For immediate release

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## Lessons from "A Lesson Learnt: the rise and fall of Lariam and Halfan"

["A Lesson Learnt,"](#) a prize-winning essay published in the Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine in April, is a devastating critique of a drug long favored by the American medical community. Dr. Ashley Croft, a world expert on Lariam© (mefloquine), traces the history of this controversial antimalarial drug from 1989 when Lariam was licensed until the present.

Croft documents that

- mefloquine (Lariam©) was not tested on the intended target group – tourists and business travelers – prior to its approval
- mefloquine was approved anyway, without the necessary testing – an “over-hasty” decision by the regulatory agencies
- all users of mefloquine have been uninformed participants in a “natural experiment” to determine the drug’s safety
- the first proper study of Lariam in a mixed group of general travelers was not reported until 2001; this study found that 67% of people taking mefloquine had at least one side effect.

“Had this understanding of mefloquine been available prior to licensing, as it should have been, it is certain that the FDA and other national licensing authorities . . . would not have endorsed this drug,” says the author.

“Many of the individual medical tragedies” from Lariam toxicity “need never have occurred. Powerful institutional pressures must never again override the needs and rights of patients,” he concludes.

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*Dr. Croft is a Lt. Colonel with the British Army. He advises the Royal Army on medical issues, including occupational and public health concerns.* “A Lesson Learnt” appears on Lariam Action USA’s website, courtesy of Dr. Croft.

For more about Lariam’s adverse effects visit [www.lariaminfo.org](http://www.lariaminfo.org) and [www.takenasdirected.com](http://www.takenasdirected.com).