



Health Care Poll

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Discussions Between Doctors and Patients Result in Cheaper Prescription Drugs for One in Seven Adults

Doctors Discuss Costs of Different Drugs with One in Four Adults

According to the results of a recent Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Poll, many millions of patients discuss the costs of prescription drugs with their doctors and this often results in their getting a less expensive prescription.

Two in five adults (43%) say they discussed with their doctors the pros and cons of different prescription drugs that they might prescribe for them. More than half of these people (i.e., 23% of all adults) also say that they discussed the different costs to them of different drugs their doctors might prescribe. One in seven adults (14%) say their doctor prescribed one drug rather than another because it was less expensive for them.

“Many health plans have tiered formularies with different levels of co-pays to encourage the use of less expensive drugs. These data show that when doctors and patients discuss costs, doctors often prescribe the less expensive drugs, but not always. As co-pays continue to increase, we expect this trend will grow,” says Humphrey Taylor, chairman of *The Harris Poll*® at Harris Interactive.

TABLE 1
The Impact Of Discussions About Cost Of Drugs On Prescribing

- Q: “Has a doctor prescribed a prescription drug for you at any time in the last 12 months?”
- Q: “Did you have any discussion with your doctor during the last 12 months about the pros and cons of different prescription drugs which he/she might prescribe for you?”
- Q: “As part of these discussions during the last 12 months, have you discussed the different costs to you of different drugs which he/she might prescribe?”
- Q: “At any time in the last 12 months, has your doctor prescribed one drug rather than another drug for you because it would be less expensive for you?”

Base: All adults

	%
Doctor prescribed a drug for me in last year	70
Discussed with doctor pros and cons of different drugs he/she might prescribe	43
As part of these discussions, discussed the different costs of different drugs	23
Doctor prescribed one drug rather than another because it was less expensive	14

Downloadable PDFs of Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Polls are posted at http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters_wsj.asp.

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Harris Interactive Methodology

This study was conducted online within the United States between February 2 and 4, 2004 among a nationwide cross section of 2,238 adults, ages 18 years and over. Figures for age, sex, race, education, region and income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

In theory, with a probability sample of this size, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus three percentage points of what they would be if the entire adult population had been polled with complete accuracy. Unfortunately, there are several other possible sources of error in all polls or surveys that are probably more serious than theoretical calculations of sampling error. They include refusals to be interviewed (non-response), question wording and question order, interviewer bias, weighting by demographic control data and screening (e.g., for likely voters). It is impossible to quantify the errors that may result from these factors. This online sample was not a probability sample.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

About the Survey

The Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Poll is an exclusive poll that is published in the award-winning Health Industry Edition of The Wall Street Journal Online at www.wsj.com/health.

About The Wall Street Journal Online

The Wall Street Journal Online at WSJ.com, published by Dow Jones & Company (NYSE: DJ; www.dowjones.com), offers authoritative analysis, breaking news and commentary from top industry journalists. Launched in 1996, the Online Journal is the largest paid subscription news site on the Web, with more than 689,000 subscribers world-wide. The Online Journal provides in-depth business news and financial information 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with insight and analysis, including breaking business and technology news and analysis from around the world. It draws on the Dow Jones network of nearly 1,600 reporters and editors – the largest staff of business and financial journalists in the world. For the second consecutive year in 2003, the Online Journal received a WebAward for the “Best Newspaper Web Site” and was also cited by Yahoo! Internet Life magazine as the “Best Business News” site (2002 & 2001).

About Dow Jones & Company

In addition to The Wall Street Journal and its international and online editions, Dow Jones & Company (NYSE: DJ; dowjones.com) also publishes Barron's and the Far Eastern Economic Review, Dow Jones Newswires, Dow Jones Indexes and the Ottaway group of community newspapers. Dow Jones is co-owner with Reuters Group of Factiva, with Hearst of SmartMoney and with NBC of the CNBC television operations in Asia and Europe. Dow Jones also provides news content to CNBC and radio stations in the U.S.



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Harris Interactive (www.harrisinteractive.com) is a worldwide market research and consulting firm best known for *The Harris Poll*®, and for pioneering the Internet method to conduct scientifically accurate market research. Headquartered in Rochester, New York, U.S.A., Harris Interactive combines proprietary methodologies and technology with expertise in predictive, custom and strategic research. The Company conducts international research through wholly owned subsidiaries—London-based **HI Europe** (www.hieurope.com) and Tokyo-based **Harris Interactive Japan**—as well as through the Harris Interactive Global Network of local market- and opinion-research firms, and various U.S. offices. EOE M/F/D/V

To become a member of the Harris Poll OnlineSM and be invited to participate in future online surveys, visit www.harrispollonline.com.

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