

**MHRA General Public Survey Topline Results  
(Medicines Version) – 27/03/2006**

Ipsos MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 915 GB adults aged 15+.

Interviews were carried out face-to-face with the aid of CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) terminals in Great Britain.

The fieldwork period was 16-21 March 2005.

Data have been weighted to the known population profile.

Where figures do not sum to 100 per cent, this may be due to computer rounding, multiple codes or the exclusion of 'Don't know'

Results are based on all respondents, unless otherwise stated

\* represents a percentage of greater than zero, but less than 0.5%

<b>PERCEPTIONS OF RISK</b>
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Q1.

**From this card, how much, if anything, do you feel you personally know about the risks and side effects from any medicines which you may take from time to time? Would you say.....?**

	%
A great deal	13
A fair amount	38
Not very much	29
Nothing at all	11
Do not take medicines	6
Not stated	1
Don't know	2

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- Q2. From this card, which, if any, of these five statements most closely reflects your own opinion about most medicines? Just read out the letter that applies.**

	Medicines <sup>1</sup> Use survey 2003* %	MHRA survey 2006 %
The benefits of medicines far outweigh the risks	37	43
The benefits of medicines slightly outweigh the risks	24	26
The benefits and risks of medicines are about the same	22	15
The risks of medicines slightly outweigh the benefits	4	4
The risks of medicines far outweigh the benefits	4	3
None of these	5	4
Don't know	5	6

\*Medicines Use survey question wording: 'Which, if any, of these statements most closely reflects your own opinion about medicine?'

- Q3. Using this card, overall, how safe or unsafe do you personally feel that most medicines are to take?**

	%
Very safe	29
Fairly safe	59
Not very safe	5
Not at all safe	1
It depends	4
Don't know	2

- Q4. Using this card, how often, if at all, would you say you personally weigh up the risks and benefits of a medicine before deciding whether to take it or not? Would you say.....?**

	%
Always	23
Usually	22
Sometimes	16
Rarely	20
Never	14
Have never taken a medicine	3
Don't know	2

<sup>1</sup> MORI' Medicines Use Survey' for Medicines Partnership. 2,019 adults aged 15+ interviewed face-to-face, in-home between 17 and 22 July 2003



Q5. Is there any medicine that you are particularly concerned about? If yes, what type of medicine is that? Probe: what is that medicine for?

	%
Anti-depressants	5
Antibiotics	4
Anti-inflammatories	2
Painkillers	2
Arthritis/Rheumatoid Arthritis Drugs	1
Blood pressure medicine	1
Children's medicines	1
Children's vaccines	1
Hormone Replacement Therapies (HRT)	1
Medicine(s)/drug(s) involved in clinical trials/Research studies/Studies involving volunteers/humans	1
Sleeping tablets/Tranquillisers	1
Statins and other heart medication	1
Acne medication	*
Anti-obesity drugs	*
Antipsychotics	*
Asthma drugs	*
Cancer medicines	*
Contraceptives.	*
Counterfeit medicines	*
Epilepsy medicines	*
Flu vaccines/Pneumococcal vaccine	*
Leukaemia drugs	*
Nicotine Replacement Therapies/Smoking cessation drugs	*
Dementia drugs	0
Diabetes medications	0
Herbal medicines including Chinese, Ayurvedic, etc	0
Sexual dysfunction medicines	0
Other	5
No/None	67
Don't know	5



## Q6. Why do you say that?

Base: All worried about at least one medicine (257)

%

I worry about side-effects (but haven't experienced any)	23
I have experienced side-effects/ /Didn't agree with me	16
Worried about dependence/addiction/possibility of addiction	10
I only use medicines if I feel it is absolutely necessary	10
Read or heard something worrying about the medicine in the media	4
Its risks outweighed its benefits	4
Read or heard something worrying about the medicine from family and/or friends	3
Don't like taking medicine	3
Medicines/drugs involved in clinical trials/Research studies/Studies involving volunteers/humans	3
Didn't think it was working	2
Seen a health warning /Read or heard something worrying about the medicine from official sources	2
Worried about interactions (with other medicines)	2
I felt I was taking too much medicine	2
Prefer alternative e.g. herbal remedy/homeopathics	2
Human volunteers became ill/went to hospital/intensive care/Six patients became ill/Northwick Park Hospital volunteers became ill/Multiple organ failure	2
Thought the medicine was unnecessary/Felt better	1
Didn't want to take it	1
I am against taking all medicines	1
Too much hassle/Interferes too much with my daily life	*
Problem with the company Parexel/Problem with the company Tegenero's drug/Problem with German company's drug	*
Confused/Didn't understand instructions	0
Cost/Can't afford it	0
Product discontinued	0
Other	15
Don't know	21



EXPERIENCE OF MEDICINES
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**Q7. Who or which organisation, if any, would you personally contact if you wished to report an unexpected side effect with a medicine?**

	%
Doctor/GP	76
Pharmacy/Pharmacist/Chemist	11
The NHS	11
Hospital	10
Nurse	2
Pharmaceutical company	2
Friend/Relative/Work colleague	2
Other healthcare professional (not doctor/nurse/pharmacist)	1
The Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)	1
NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)	1
The Government	1
The Department of Health	1
BMA/ British Medical Association	1
GMC/ General Medical Council	1
Medicines Control Agency (MCA)	0
National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA)	*
Would fill in a Yellow Card	*
The local authority/The Council	*
The citizen's advice bureau	*
The relevant professional body/ council	*
The Healthcare Commission	*
The Healthcare Ombudsman	*
Medicines Watchdog	0
MP/Local politician	0
The Health Professions Council	0
Other	5
None – I would not know who to contact	1
None – I would not report it	1
Don't know	6



Q8. **Who, or which organisation, if any, do you think regulates medicines to make sure they work and are safe enough to use?**

	%
The British Medical Association (BMA)	9
National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)	8
The NHS	7
Pharmaceutical companies	6
The Government/Government quango/department/agency	6
The General Medical Council (GMC)	5
The Department of Health (DH)	4
The Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)	2
Medicines Control Agency (MCA)	2
Campaign groups	1
Research Council	1
Medicines Watchdog	1
Environmental groups	*
The EU	*
National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA)	*
Charities	0
Shareholders	0
The citizen's advice bureau	0
The Healthcare Ombudsman	0
Other	7
Don't know	49



Q9. Which, if any, of the following applies to you personally? Please read out the letter or letters which apply. 'New medicine' at B and C means something that you have not previously been prescribed.

	Medicines <sup>2</sup> Use survey 2003 %	MHRA survey 2006 %
I have been taking the same prescribed medicine(s) for 12 months or more	31	36
I have had a new medicine prescribed in the last 12 months for an existing illness	12	12
I have had a new medicine prescribed in the last 12 months for a newly diagnosed illness	14	12
I have bought a medicine without a prescription in the last 12 months	n/a	33
I have not taken any prescription or over-the-counter medicines in the last 12 months	27	17
None of these	23	11
Don't know/Can't remember	1	2

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<sup>2</sup> MORI' Medicines Use Survey' for Medicines Partnership. 2,019 adults aged 15+ interviewed face-to-face, in-home between 17 and 22 July 2003



# INFORMATION ON MEDICINES

**Q10. I am going to show you a list of possible sources of information about medicines. For each one I'd like you to tell me whether you have personally used it to obtain any information about the risks or benefits of a medicine.**

**Q11 And which two or three, if any, of the sources that you have used were MOST USEFUL to you, to provide information about the risks and benefits of a medicine?**

Base: All who mention one or more sources at Q10 (534)

	Q10 Ever Used %	Q11 Most Useful %
Doctor (including GP, hospital doctor, consultant, specialist)	61	59
Pharmacist (including chemist and hospital pharmacy)	41	23
Leaflet in pack (includes patient information leaflet, pack insert, instructions )	27	16
Pharmacy's label/instructions on the pack/bottle/medicine itself	22	6
Nurse (including hospital nurse, practice nurse, community nurse and district nurse)	20	13
Family member	14	8
NHS Direct/NHS Telephone Helpline	12	5
Other websites found with a search engine (eg Google)	12	7
Printed material from pharmaceutical companies	11	3
Other leaflet e.g. given by GP or other health professional; picked up in pharmacy etc.	10	1
Friends, colleagues or workmates	10	2
Printed material from the Department of Health or NHS	8	2
Television	8	1
Other health professional	6	1
Department of Health or NHS websites	6	2
Broadsheet newspapers	6	1
Tabloid newspapers	5	1



Magazines	5	1
Patient organisations (includes patient groups, self-help groups)	4	*
Pharmaceutical company websites	3	1
Radio	3	*
Charity or Campaigning group, including via websites	2	1
Posters	1	0
MHRA (Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency)	1	*
I don't use any sources to obtain information	2	1
None of these	15	1
Don't know	1	1

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TRUST & INFORMATION ON MEDICINES
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Q12. I am now going to show you another list of sources of information. For each one, could you tell me whether you would generally trust it to provide accurate information about the risks and benefits of medicines?

Q13. Which one or two of the sources would you trust the *most* to provide accurate information about the risks and benefits of medicines?

Base:

	Q12 TRUST	Q13 TRUST MOST
	%	%
Doctor	87	78
Pharmacist	64	37
Nurse	43	10
NHS Direct/NHS Telephone Helpline	27	4
Leaflet in pack(includes patient information leaflet, pack insert, instructions and paper in packet)	27	5
Pharmacy's label/instructions on the pack/bottle/medicine itself	25	2
A health professional other than a doctor, nurse or pharmacist	20	1
Medical books	20	2
The Department of Health (DH)	18	2
Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)	16	6
Family member	15	4
Medical charities	11	*
The internet	11	2
University scientists	10	1
Health campaigning groups or Patient organisations (includes patient groups, self-help groups)	8	1
Pharmaceutical companies	7	1
Government organisations	6	*
Broadsheet newspapers	5	*
Friend/Colleague or Workmate	5	1



TV and Radio news	5	*
Patients	3	0
Government ministers/politicians	2	*
Other TV and Radio programmes	2	*
Tabloid newspapers	1	*
Other	1	*
None	2	1
Don't know	3	*

**Q14. Using this card, how much, if anything, would you say you know about the way medicines are regulated?**

	OST* Science survey 2004 <sup>3</sup> %	MHRA survey 2006 %
A great deal	1	5
A fair amount	11	17
Not very much	54	50
Nothing at all	30	26
Don't know	3	2

\* OST question wording: 'How much, if anything, would you say you know about the way science is regulated?'

**Q15. From this card again, how much confidence, if any, do you have in the way medicines are regulated?**

	%
A great deal	14
A fair amount	52
Not very much	18
Nothing at all	7
Don't know	9

<sup>3</sup> MORI' Science in Society' survey for OST. Face to face interviews with 1,831 adults aged 16+ across the United Kingdom between 20 September – 21 November 2004.



Q16. For each of the statements I read out, I'd like you to tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with it?

		Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor dis- agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
		%	%	%	%	%	%
A)	<b>Organisations that regulate medicines should be part of government</b>	18	33	15	20	10	4
B)	<b>There is not enough communication with the general public about the risks associated with medicines</b>	18	44	18	13	2	5
C)	<b>There is too much caution about the risks associated with medicines</b>	4	20	21	37	15	4
D)	<b>The Government should listen more to public concerns about medicines</b>	34	42	14	6	1	3
E)	<b>Medicines for children should be tested more rigorously than medicines for adults</b>	30	31	16	15	6	2
F)	<b>If I choose a medicine and buy it over the counter without a pharmacist present, I don't need to worry about whether it's safe for me</b>	6	27	15	35	14	3
G)	<b>The more I know about medicines, the more worried I am</b>	7	21	23	35	10	3
H)	<b>If I am prescribed a medicine, I don't need to worry about whether it's safe for me</b>	9	35	15	32	8	2
I)	<b>There is not enough communication with the general public about the benefits associated with medicines</b>	12	40	26	16	1	4



## Demographics

### Gender

	Weighted %	Unweighted %
Male	48	47
Female	52	53

### Age

	Weighted %	Unweighted %
15-24	16	11
25-34	16	15
35-44	19	19
45-54	16	15
55-64	14	16
65+	20	24

### Social Class

	Weighted %	Unweighted %
A	4	2
B	22	21
C1	29	28
C2	21	19
D	16	14
E	8	15

### Working status

	Weighted %	Unweighted %
Working full time (30+hrs/wk)	44	38
Working part time (8-29hrs/wk)	10	10
Not working (ie under 8hrs/wk) - housewife	9	9
Not working (ie under 8hrs/wk) -retired	23	28
Not working (ie under 8hrs/wk) – unemployed (registered)	2	4
Not working (ie under 8hrs/wk) – unemployed (not registered but looking for work)	1	1
Not working (ie under 8hrs/wk) -student	8	5
Not working (ie under 8hrs/wk) –other (incl disabled)	3	4