

CANADIANS REPORT FEWER PRESCRIBED ANTIBIOTICS THAN WAS THE CASE 2 YEARS AGO – FALLS FROM 61% IN 2000 TO 53% IN 2002

*Half (47%) Say They Have a Better Understanding of
Antibiotics Than They Did 2 Years Ago*



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Half (47%) Say They Have a Better Understanding of Antibiotics Than They Did 2 Years Ago

Toronto, ON – The results of a recent Ipsos-Reid poll suggest that fewer Canadians may be being prescribed oral antibiotics than was the case two years ago.

In 2000, 61% of Canadians reported having been prescribed an oral antibiotic in the past three years. This figure has fallen to 53% in 2002. Among those who have been prescribed an oral antibiotic, 80% report that they always finish their antibiotic prescription, even if they feel better in a couple of days. This figure has increased slightly from 76% in the 2000 study. Further, 47% say their level of knowledge and understanding about antibiotics has increased compared to two years ago.

Other highlights from the research revealed that:

- Most Canadians (84%) agree (57% strongly, 27% somewhat) that antibiotic resistance is a serious health issue, but one in four (24%) do not think of it as a problem that could affect themselves.
- About two-thirds (63%) of those who have been prescribed an antibiotic report that, compared to two years ago, they are less likely to ask for an antibiotic prescription when they have a cold or flu, but more than a third report being more (28%) likely or just as likely (28%) to ask for antibiotics to treat a cold or flu.

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- 30 percent incorrectly believe that colds and flus can be treated successfully with antibiotics (8% strongly agree, 22% somewhat agree with statement), and 53% mistakenly think that antibiotics are useful for the treatment of viral infections.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted for the National Information Program on Antibiotics (NIPA) between January 7th and 17th, 2002. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 2000 Canadian adults. These 2000 Canadians were then screened to obtain a sample size of 1063 Canadians who report having been prescribed an oral antibiotic in the past 3 years. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual population according to the 1996 Census data.

Full survey results are available at:

www.antibiotics-info.org

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