



New Research Supports Increasing Patient Communication about Prescription Medicines

Prescription medicines play an increasingly important role in today's healthcare system. Nearly half of all Americans take them, and over 20% take at least three prescriptions.ⁱ

As a healthcare provider, you have good working relationships with your patients, who turn to you first when they have questions about their health. One area where additional conversation is needed is around the benefits and potential risks of prescription medicines. A recent study by Ipsos Healthcare, commissioned by the BeMedWise Program at NeedyMeds, formerly known as the National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPIE), shows that many patients are not aware of the potential risks of prescription medicines they take, and even when they report knowing about safety warnings, they often forget the details. The good news is that patients and caregivers view prescribers as their primary information source.ⁱⁱ

To address this gap in communications, NCPIE, in collaboration with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, is launching **Talk Before You Take**, a public education campaign to increase communications between healthcare providers and patients and promote the wise use of medicines.

Here is how you can help:

- Increase conversations about the benefits and potential risks of prescription medicines with your patients.
- Direct patients to TalkBeforeYouTake.org to download free educational tools to help guide conversations to promote safe and appropriate medicine use.

Research highlights include:ⁱⁱ

Patients and their caregivers are often unaware of safety warnings or do not recall the warnings.

- Approximately **62%** of patients and caregivers are not aware of any safety warnings about their medicines. Only **38%** of patients and caregivers report being aware of safety warnings, and of those who report being aware of a warning, the majority (**75%**) do not recall which medicine it is for or what the warning is about.
- **10%** of patients unaware of the possibility of a severe reaction or side effect to any of the medicines they are taking experience a serious drug reaction.

Patient adherence may be lower than you think.

- While **85%** of healthcare providers report that their patients adhere to their treatment plans, only **56%** of patients report high to very high adherence.

Healthcare providers are patients' primary sources of information about the safety of their prescription medicines.

- Among the patients and caregivers aware of a safety warning associated with their medicines, **67%** report that prescribers are their ideal source of information.
- Yet, only **31%** of prescribers believe that they are the primary source of information. In fact, **53%** and **45%** of the prescribers surveyed believe that pharmacists and the Internet, respectively, are their patients' most frequent sources of information about drug safety.

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ⁱ National Center for Health Statistics. Health, United States, 2013: With Special Feature on Prescription Drugs. Hyattsville, MD. 2014.

ⁱⁱ Ipsos Healthcare. "Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviors Concerning Risk and Safety Information of Medicines: A Survey of Consumers/Patients and HCPs in the U.S." An Internal Report (supported by FDA CDER Grant number 5U18FD004653). 2013. Washington, DC.