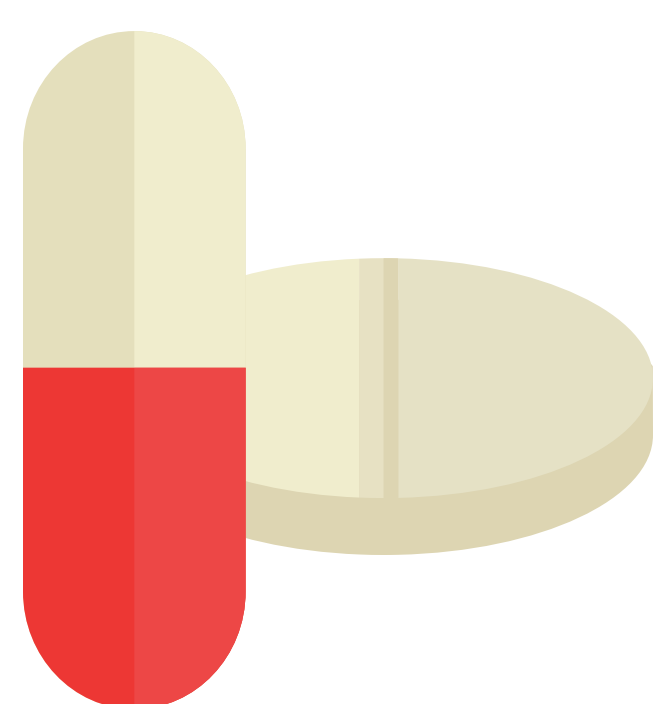


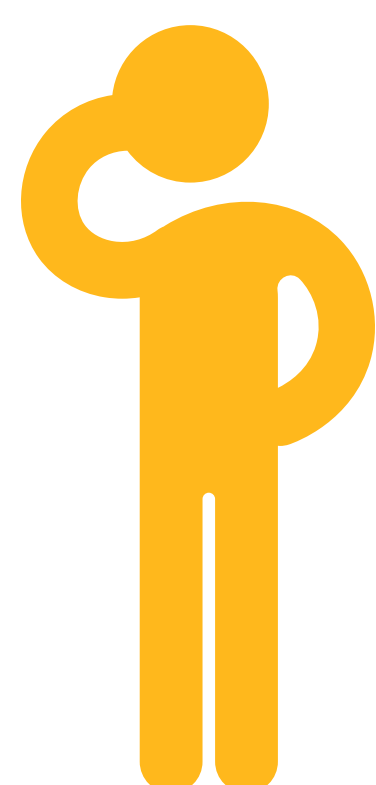
RESEARCH SNAPSHOT

Patient Perspectives of Upper Respiratory Tract Infections and How They Should be Managed



Over-prescription of antibiotics for upper respiratory tract infections (URTIs) is an important healthcare problem. Physicians believe prescribing antibiotics will satisfy patients but their perceptions of patients' wishes don't always reflect patient expectations. Still, misconceptions about the effectiveness of antibiotics for URTIs persist among patient populations.

What did the researchers do?

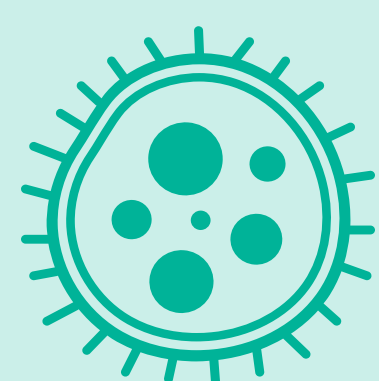


Interviewed 15 patients in a Canadian study to assess their expectations and beliefs about managing URTIs including:

- why they seek care from their family doctor for URTIs and
- what treatments they expect to receive



What did they find?



Participants had some differing ideas about the causes of URTIs but most knew how to generally manage their symptoms and prevent infections from occurring.

Almost all participants mentioned that they would not routinely go to the doctor for URTIs.

- Rather, they visit their doctor only if they are experiencing serious problems with breathing, fever, or have a long-lasting cough

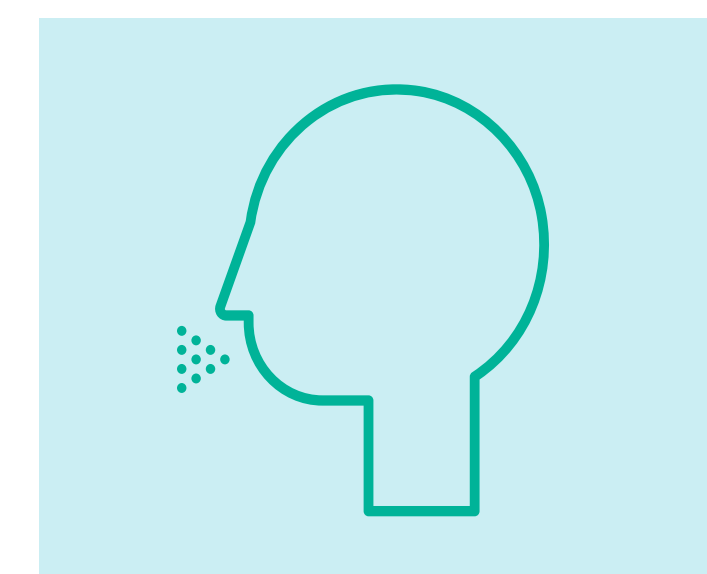


Participants did not visit their doctor for the purpose of obtaining antibiotics to treat their symptoms.

- In fact, most believed that there was no need for antibiotics for URTIs as the condition would go away on its own.

* they did, however, also report being more concerned about treating URTIs when it came to their kids

Instead, they wished to be examined and to gain an explanation for and reassurance about their symptoms.



Why is it important?



For patients

- Demonstrates the importance of the patient role in the clinical visit. Patients should clearly communicate with their doctors about what they are wanting from their visit (e.g., explanation and reassurance versus a prescription).



For policy makers

- Shows the importance of public awareness campaigns to provide education on antibiotics and how to manage URIs. Policy makers should create mechanisms that support clinicians' ability to adequately communicate and educate patients during the clinic visit.



For clinicians

- Provides evidence of a misunderstanding about patient expectations surrounding antibiotics. Clinicians should communicate with patients to elicit their expectations and goals during the clinic visit to reduce unnecessary prescriptions and increase patient satisfaction.

RESEARCH
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De-implementing Wisely Research Group

De-implementing Wisely Research Group is a CIHR SPOR funded innovative clinical trial, which brings together researchers, patients partners, clinicians, and health system partners to investigate ways to reduce low-value care.



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The PHRU is a research unit within the Faculty of Medicine at Memorial University that conducts primary care research to inform primary care decision-making in NL

For more information about this study and our future work please contact

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Mortazhejri, Patey, A. M., Stacey, D., Bhatia, R. S., Abdulla, A., & Grimshaw, J. M. (2020). Understanding determinants of patients' decisions to attend their family physician and to take antibiotics for upper respiratory tract infections: a qualitative descriptive study. *BMC Family Practice*, 21(1), 1–119. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12875-020-01196-9>