

Perceptions of communities and physicians in use of antibiotics

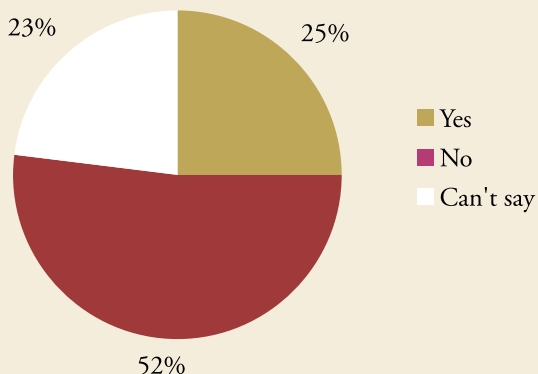
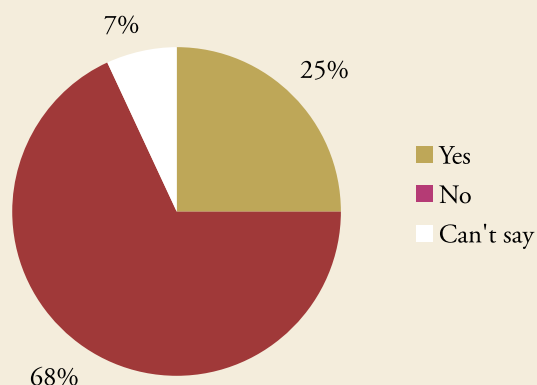
WHO/SEARO commissioned a preliminary study in and around New Delhi to generate some data regarding perception of communities and physicians on use of antibiotics. The initial findings are summarized here.

The sample size was 150 members of community and 150 physicians. The survey is being expanded to other geographical areas and populations to make it truly representative.

Q: Should antibiotics be discontinued by the patient when he starts feeling better, even before completion of recommended course?

25% of responders said Yes

But stopping antibiotics before the course is finished leads to antibiotic resistance



Q: Should antibiotics be given to a child with any fever?

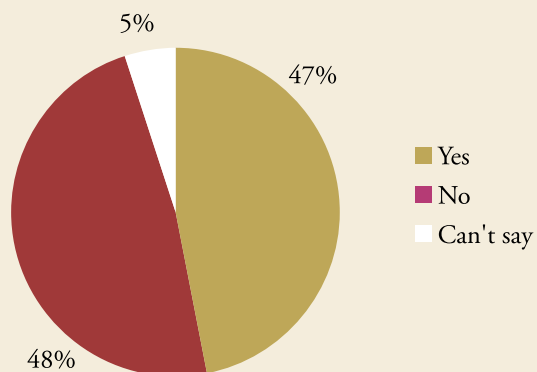
25% said Yes

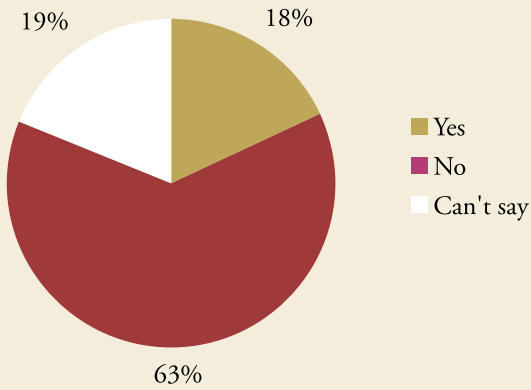
But antibiotics have no effect on viral fevers

Q: Will you wish to change your doctor if he fails to prescribe antibiotics for your common cold?

47% of patients said Yes

But antibiotics cannot cure the common cold!





Q: Will you save unused antibiotics for later use by yourself or by other family members?

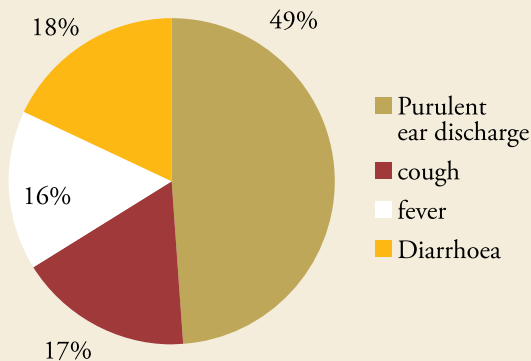
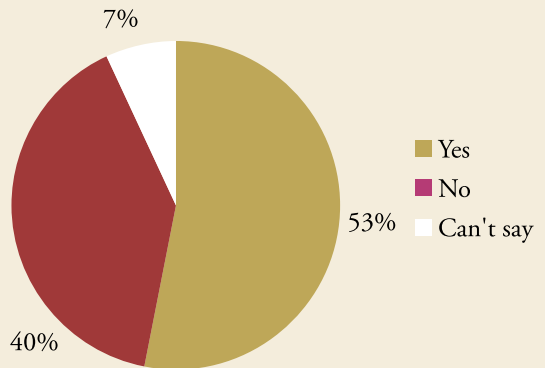
18% of people said Yes

Re-using medicines prescribed for previous illnesses can be dangerous and leads to antibiotic resistance

Q: Would you prescribe antibiotics for your own use or that of your family members?

53% of people would self-prescribe antibiotics

Self-medication leads to antibiotic resistance



Q: Would physicians prescribe antibiotics for non-specific fever, cough, purulent ear discharge and diarrhoeas?

16% of physicians will prescribe antibiotics to a patient with non-specific fever

17% of physicians feel that all patients with cough need antibiotics

18% of physicians recommend antibiotic therapy for diarrhoea

49% of physicians treat purulent ear discharge with antibiotics

Overprescribing and overuse of antibiotics leads to antibiotic resistance.