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.

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.