

Medication Compliance

March 2020

Every month, IBM Watson Health conducts a health poll that surveys approximately 3,000 Americans to gauge attitudes and opinions on a wide range of healthcare issues.

This health poll is powered by the IBM Watson Health PULSE® Healthcare Survey, an independently funded, multi-modal (land line, cell phone, internet) survey that collects information from approximately 80,000 U.S. households annually.

The results depicted in this report represent responses from 3,008 survey participants interviewed from February 3–15, 2020. The margin of error is +/- 1.8%.

Executive summary

We asked healthcare consumers about medication compliance. In the last 90 days, 55% of all respondents said they had received a prescription.

Findings include:

90%

of respondents who received a prescription said the prescription was sent to their pharmacy electronically.

98%

of respondents who picked up their prescription said they took the medication as prescribed. This rate tends to increase with increasing age and decrease with increasing level of education.

93%

of respondents who received a prescription said they picked up or filled it. The highest rate (97%) is for Baby Boomers and is statistically significant.

83%

of respondents who picked up their prescription said they took all the medication. The highest rate (91%) is for households with a high school or less education and is statistically significant.

29%

of respondents who did not pick up their prescription said it was because they felt better or didn't need it. 18% of respondents cited cost as the reason for not picking it up. (Note: Care should be taken interpreting due to small sample size for this question.)

70%

of respondents who reported not taking all the medication said it was because they are still taking it, 10% said it was because they didn't need it, and 7% said it's because they felt better. (Note: Care should be taken interpreting due to small sample size for this question.)

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Question 1: Did you receive a prescription for medication within the last 90 days?

	Yes	No
<35	46.0%	51.5%
35 - 64	56.7%	43.2%
65+	61.8%	38.1%
Total	55.0%	44.3%

Note:
Bolded figures are statistically significant.

Note:
Care should be taken interpreting questions 4 and 7 due to small sample sizes.

	Yes	No
HS or Less	51.6%	45.4%
Some College/Associate	54.5%	45.4%
College+	56.8%	43.0%
Total	55.0%	44.3%

	Yes	No
Silent Generation	74.4%	25.6%
Baby Boomers	58.5%	41.3%
Generation X	54.7%	45.3%
Millennials	49.2%	48.7%
Total	55.0%	44.3%

	Yes	No
<\$25k	56.2%	40.6%
\$25k - \$49.9k	57.2%	42.4%
\$50k - \$99.9k	55.2%	44.7%
\$100k+	45.2%	54.8%
Total	55.0%	44.3%

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Question 2: Did your physician or healthcare provider send the prescription to your pharmacy electronically for you?

Question 3: Did you pick up the prescription or have it filled?

	Yes	No
<35	89.0%	9.6%
35 - 64	91.5%	8.0%
65+	87.0%	11.3%
Total	89.7%	9.2%

	Yes	No
<35	93.6%	6.1%
35 - 64	91.3%	6.9%
65+	96.1%	3.9%
Total	93.1%	5.9%

	Yes	No
HS or Less	90.4%	8.0%
Some College/Associate	89.2%	10.4%
College+	89.7%	9.1%
Total	89.7%	9.2%

	Yes	No
HS or Less	94.9%	5.1%
Some College/Associate	90.8%	8.9%
College+	93.7%	4.5%
Total	93.1%	5.9%

	Yes	No
Silent Generation	85.5%	12.5%
Baby Boomers	90.8%	8.2%
Generation X	91.3%	8.0%
Millennials	88.0%	10.8%
Total	89.7%	9.2%

	Yes	No
Silent Generation	96.1%	3.8%
Baby Boomers	97.0%	3.0%
Generation X	92.7%	7.3%
Millennials	88.8%	7.8%
Total	93.1%	5.9%

	Yes	No
<\$25k	88.7%	9.8%
\$25k - \$49.9k	89.4%	9.4%
\$50k - \$99.9k	91.9%	7.8%
\$100k+	86.0%	12.8%
Total	89.7%	9.2%

	Yes	No
<\$25k	93.4%	6.5%
\$25k - \$49.9k	91.4%	8.4%
\$50k - \$99.9k	93.9%	3.4%
\$100k+	90.4%	9.6%
Total	93.1%	5.9%

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Question 4: What was the main reason you didn't pick up or have your prescription filled?

	Cost	Didn't need/ felt better	Used OTC	Used Alt. Med.	Used marijuana	Used CBD	Other
Total	17.6%	29.4%	3.5%	8.2%	9.4%	0.3%	32.3%

Question 5: Did you take the medication as prescribed by your physician or healthcare provider?

	Yes	No
<35	95.9%	3.4%
35 - 64	98.6%	1.0%
65+	99.8%	0.2%
Total	98.3%	1.3%

	Yes	No
HS or Less	99.0%	1.0%
Some College/Associate	98.2%	0.6%
College+	98.1%	1.9%
Total	98.3%	1.3%

	Yes	No
Silent Generation	99.9%	0.1%
Baby Boomers	99.5%	0.5%
Generation X	98.4%	1.0%
Millennials	96.7%	2.8%
Total	98.3%	1.3%

	Yes	No
<\$25k	99.0%	1.0%
\$25k - \$49.9k	97.0%	1.7%
\$50k - \$99.9k	99.1%	0.9%
\$100k+	97.5%	2.5%
Total	98.3%	1.3%

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Question 6: Did you take all of the medication?

	Yes	No
<35	79.8%	19.6%
35 - 64	86.2%	13.5%
65+	81.6%	18.2%
Total	83.4%	16.2%

	Yes	No
HS or Less	90.8%	9.2%
Some College/Associate	80.5%	18.8%
College+	82.0%	17.7%
Total	83.4%	16.2%

	Yes	No
Silent Generation	75.5%	23.7%
Baby Boomers	87.0%	12.9%
Generation X	82.5%	17.3%
Millennials	82.8%	16.5%
Total	83.4%	16.2%

	Yes	No
<\$25k	90.4%	9.3%
\$25k - \$49.9k	88.6%	11.0%
\$50k - \$99.9k	73.3%	26.4%
\$100k+	90.1%	9.3%
Total	83.4%	16.2%

Question 7: What was the main reason you did not take all of the medication?

	Felt better	Didn't need	MD Told Me To Stop	Forgot to take	Still taking	Other
Total	7.4%	9.8%	2.3%	6.0%	69.8%	4.8%

Learn More

Explore other PULSE Health Polls here:
<https://www.ibm.com/watson-health/learn/pulse-health-polls>

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