

Unnecessary antibiotic prescriptions hindering efforts to curb antibiotic resistance

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As public health officials struggle to [contain antibiotic resistance](#), new research shows the task may be more difficult than some thought. A review of patient data found that as much as 30 percent of all antibiotics were prescribed unnecessarily in physician offices and clinics.

The [study](#) found that patients are often prescribed antibiotics for afflictions, such as the common cold, which can be treated differently. But prescribing rates are high because patients expect to receive antibiotics and physicians may believe patients hold such expectations, according to the study's authors.

The research, which was published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, comes amid ongoing concern about antibiotic resistance, which has been blamed for at least 2 million illnesses and 23,000 deaths annually, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

And the authors calculate that prescribing would have to drop by an estimated 15 percent in order to meet the goals in a White House plan to cut inappropriate antibiotic usage in half by 2020. The plan, which was released last year, also seeks to reduce inappropriate use in hospitals by 20 percent.

"The findings underscore how important it is that we address antibiotic use in all settings, because increased use leads to resistance and contributes to the public health threat," said Dr. David Hyun, a study coauthor who is a senior officer at the Pew Charitable Trust antibiotics resistance project.

Read full, original post: [Nearly one-third of antibiotics are prescribed unnecessarily](#)