

Off-label use of metformin common in U.S. adolescents

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(HealthDay)—In U.S. adolescents, off-label use of metformin is

common, according to a study published online March 9 in the *Journal of Clinical Pharmacy and Therapeutics*.

Tongtong Wang, Ph.D., and [colleagues](#) from Merck & Co. in Kenilworth, N.J., examined metformin prescription patterns among U.S. adolescents from 2009 to 2013. They analyzed data from the National Disease and Therapeutic Index (NDTI) database, the MarketScan Commercial Claims and Encounters database, and the Multi-State Medicaid database.

The researchers found that the most common diagnoses associated with metformin use in the NDTI database were diabetes, metabolic syndrome, polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), and obesity (34.9, 20.9, 17.2, and 6.5 percent, respectively). Type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) was the most common diagnosis associated with metformin use among girls aged 10 to 14 years (22.8 to 23.6 percent), boys aged 10 to 14 years (20.5 to 24.5 percent), and boys aged 15 to 19 years (37.1 to 43.1 percent), while for girls aged 15 to 19 years, PCOS was the most common diagnosis (24.1 to 28.3 percent) in the MarketScan Commercial database. Among all four groups, T2DM was the most common diagnosis associated with metformin use in the Medicaid database, with higher proportions seen than in their counterparts in the Commercial database.

"To avoid potential overestimation, caution should be exercised when utilizing metformin prescription as a proxy measure to estimate the burden of T2DM in [adolescents](#)," the authors write.

The authors were all employed by Merck & Co., a manufacturer of [metformin](#).

More information: [Abstract](#)
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