

Inappropriate prescribing of abx high in urgent care centers

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(HealthDay)—There is considerable variability in the proportion of

visits at which antibiotics are prescribed among traditional medical and retail clinic settings, according to a research letter published online July 16 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

Danielle L. Palms, M.P.H., from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, and colleagues conducted a retrospective cohort study to compare antibiotic prescribing among urgent care centers, retail clinics, [emergency](#) departments, and medical offices. Data were included for 2.7 million urgent care center visits, 58,206 retail clinic visits, 4.8 million emergency department visits, and 148.5 million medical office visits.

The researchers found that antibiotic prescriptions were linked to 39.0, 36.4, 13.8, and 7.1 percent of urgent care center, retail clinic, emergency department, and medical office visits, respectively. Visits for antibiotic-inappropriate respiratory diagnoses accounted for 17, 16, 6, and 5 percent of retail clinic visits, urgent care center visits, medical office visits, and emergency department visits, respectively. Among visits for antibiotic-inappropriate respiratory diagnoses, the highest antibiotic prescribing was observed in urgent care centers, followed by emergency departments, medical offices, and retail clinics (45.7, 24.6, 17.0, and 14.4 percent).

"These patterns suggest differences in case mix and evidence of antibiotic overuse, especially in [urgent care centers](#)," the authors write. "This finding is important because urgent care and retail clinic markets are growing."

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