

High-risk anticholinergics prescribed to six percent of elderly

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(HealthDay)—High-risk anticholinergic prescriptions are listed for 6.2

percent of visits of older adults, according to a study published in a recent issue of the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

Taeho Greg Rhee, Ph.D., from Yale University in New Haven, Conn., and colleagues estimated prescribing trends of and correlates independently associated with high-risk anticholinergic [prescriptions](#) among a national sample of [adults](#) aged 65 years and older from 2006 to 2015. Data were included for an unweighted sample of 96,996 adults.

The researchers found that a high-risk anticholinergic prescription was listed for 6.2 percent of visits of older adults between 2006 and 2015, representative of 14.6 million total visits nationally. Antidepressants, antimuscarinics, and antihistamines were the most common drug classes, accounting for more than 70 percent of prescribed anticholinergics. Female sex, the Southern geographic region, specific physician specialties (e.g. psychiatry and urology), receipt of six or more concomitantly prescribed medications, and related clinical diagnoses (e.g. urinary incontinence) were correlates independently associated with greater odds of receiving a high-risk anticholinergic prescription.

"Our findings highlight that all types of physicians need to decrease prescribing of all classes of high-risk anticholinergic medications because safer alternatives are available," the authors write. "The findings from our study lay the foundation for future research to develop and implement better quality of care practices to reduce high-risk anticholinergic prescriptions in [older adults](#)."

One author disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical, medical device, and health insurance industries.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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