

Roughly 2 million Americans buy prescriptions from outside the country

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(HealthDay)—An estimated 1.5 percent of American adults purchase

prescription medication from outside of the United States to save money, according to a study published online June 24 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Young-Rock Hong, Ph.D., M.P.H., from the University of Florida in Gainesville, and colleagues used data from the 2015 to 2017 National Health Interview Survey to identify 61,238 adults (56.5 percent female; mean age, 50.5 years; 70.8 percent white) who reported using a prescribed medication by a physician or other practitioner.

The researchers found that 1.5 percent of participants (estimated to be 2.3 million U.S. adults) reported purchasing medication outside the country to save money. These respondents were more likely to be older (age >64 years; adjusted odds ratio [aOR], 1.68), from Hispanic (aOR, 1.70) or [immigrant populations](#) (aOR, 3.20), to have higher educational attainment (bachelor's degree; aOR, 1.79), to have lower [family income](#) (aOR, 1.41), and to lack insurance (aOR, 3.14). Online health information-seeking behavior (aOR, 1.62) or use of an online pharmacy (aOR, 2.30) was associated with a greater likelihood of medication purchases outside the United States.

"Patients should be informed of these potential risks they can encounter, and policies that seek to pursue drug importation should reinforce [quality assurance](#) and strict monitoring processes to promote safe administration of imported medication in the U.S. market," Hong said in a statement.

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

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