

Industry payments consistently linked to physician prescribing

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(HealthDay)—Industry payments are associated with physician

prescribing patterns, according to a systematic review published online Nov. 24 in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Aaron P. Mitchell, M.D., M.P.H., from the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, and colleagues examined whether receipt of payments from the [drug industry](#) is associated with physician prescribing practices in 36 studies including 101 analyses. The primary analysis or analyses from each study were extracted by pairs of reviewers.

The researchers found that 30 of the studies identified a positive association between payments and prescribing in all analyses, while six studies had a mix of positive and null findings. None of the studies reported only null findings. A [positive association](#) was identified in 89 of the 101 individual analyses. There were correlations seen for payments with increased prescribing of the paying company's drug, increased prescribing costs, and increased prescribing of branded drugs. Nine and 25 of the studies assessed and identified evidence of a temporal association and evidence of a dose-response association, respectively.

"Our results support the conclusion that personal payments from industry reduce physicians' ability to make independent therapeutic decisions and that they may be harmful to patients," the authors write. "The [medical community](#) must change its historical opposition to reform and call for an end to such payments."

One author disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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