

# Prescribing of psychotropic meds up in nursing homes during COVID-19

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(HealthDay)—Prescribing of psychotropic drugs increased for residents

of nursing homes in Ontario, Canada, from January-February 2020 to March-September 2020, according to a study published online March 16 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

Nathan M. Stall, M.D., from Sinai Health and the University Health Network in Toronto, and colleagues examined the monthly proportion of nursing [home residents](#) who were prescribed [psychotropic drugs](#) as a proportion of the monthly residents filling a prescription for any drug in Ontario, Canada, from April 2018 to September 2020. Data were included for 77,291 residents living in the province's 623 licensed nursing homes as of March 1, 2020.

The researchers found that compared with January to February 2020, from March to September 2020, there were absolute increases in the mean monthly proportion of nursing home residents who received prescriptions for [antipsychotic medications](#), antidepressant medications, and trazodone. Comparing January to February with September 2020 indicated absolute increases of 1.6, 1.6, and 1.0 percent in the proportion of residents receiving prescriptions for antipsychotic drugs, antidepressant drugs, and trazodone, respectively. There was a slight decrease in prescribing for benzodiazepine medications (–0.2 percent). Decreases were also seen in the proportion of residents receiving prescriptions for two negative tracer drugs: metformin and statins (–0.3 and –0.7 percent, respectively).

"The study's findings highlight the importance of balancing infection prevention and [control measures](#) in nursing homes with the well-being of residents during the COVID-19 pandemic," the authors write.

One author disclosed receipt of payments from private law firms.

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

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