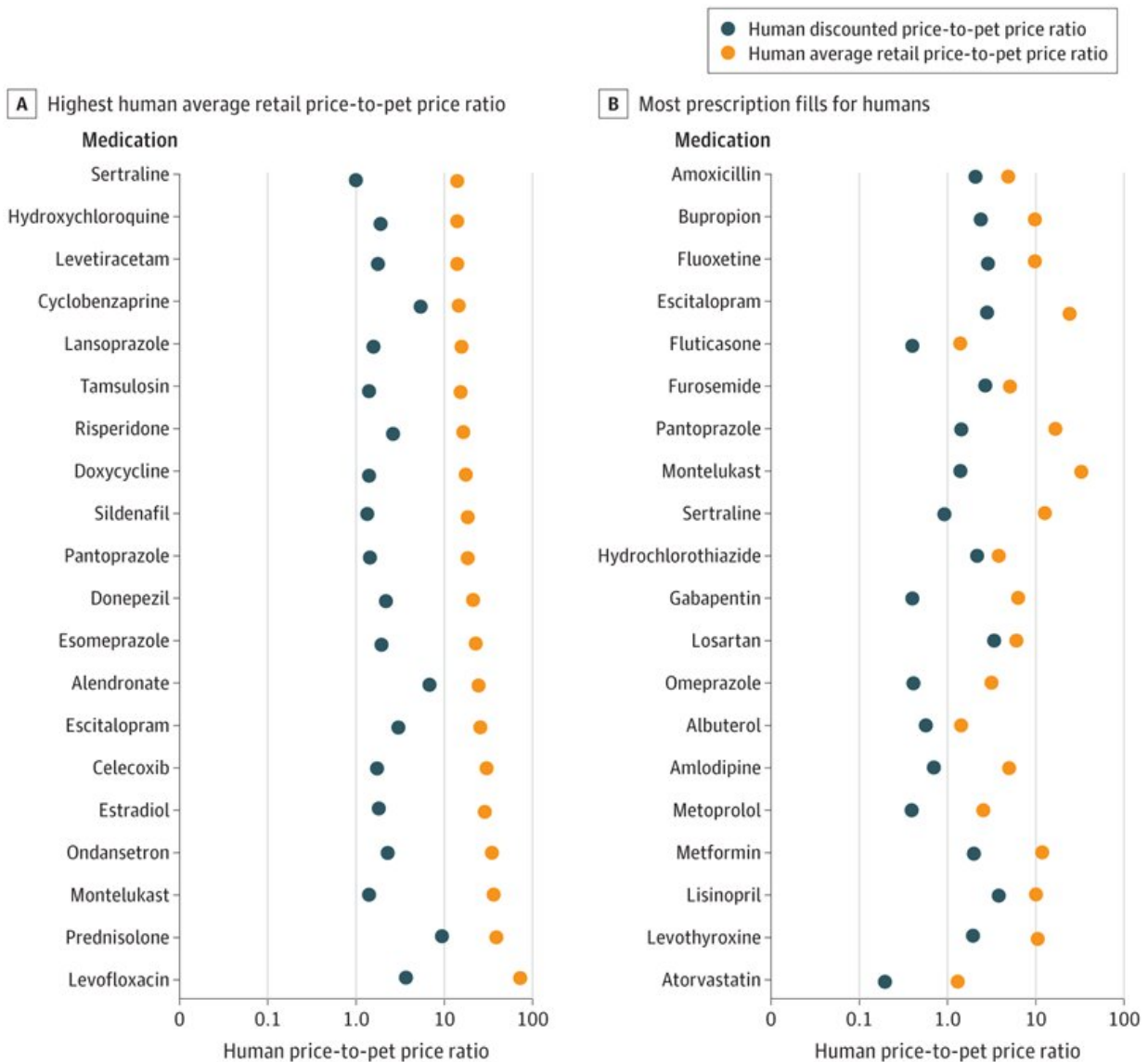


Similar medications cost more for humans than for pets

September 27 2022, by Alex Smith



Human-to-pet per-unit price ratios for 20 medications with the highest human

average retail price-to-pet price ratio (A) and 20 medications with the most prescription fills for humans (B). The x-axis is log10 scale. Credit: *JAMA Internal Medicine* (2022). DOI: 10.1001/jamainternmed.2022.3938

In a research letter published in *JAMA Internal Medicine*, University of Minnesota researchers compared the prices of 120 medications commonly used in humans and pets. The authors found the price of human medications was generally higher than the price of pet medications with the same ingredients at common human-equivalent doses.

On average, the retail price of human medications was approximately 5.5 times higher than pet medications. Discounted prices for humans were higher than pet prices for more than 60% of medications. On average, discounted prices were 1.5 times higher for human medications than for pet medications.

"A 10-day supply of the same [medication](#) costs \$2 for a pet dog, \$10 for a person with a discount coupon, and \$100 for a person without a coupon," said Arjun Gupta, MBBS, assistant professor at the U of M Medical School and oncologist with M Health Fairview. He is also a member of the Masonic Cancer Center. "With many humans and pets uninsured or underinsured, it is important that cash prices for medications are affordable and that pricing is not exploitative."

Human prices were also higher than pet prices for drugs such as antibiotics. Researchers warn this may promote humans sourcing antibiotics for their own use from pet sources, especially since [human](#) antibiotic use is more regulated.

The reasons behind the dramatic price differences remain unclear. The

research team says one possibility may be drug manufacturers engaging in price discrimination by charging consumers different [prices](#) in different markets for the same product. Additionally, price differences could reflect variations in medication effectiveness, willingness to pay, and manufacturing, storage, and regulatory standards.

Further research is suggested to explore the causes of price differences.

More information: Waqas Haque et al, Price Comparison of Human and Veterinary Formulations of Common Medications, *JAMA Internal Medicine* (2022). [DOI: 10.1001/jamainternmed.2022.3938](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2022.3938)

Provided by University of Minnesota Medical School

Citation: Similar medications cost more for humans than for pets (2022, September 27) retrieved 21 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-09-similar-medications-humans-pets.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--