

12.8 percent of unique prescribers prescribed topical antifungals in 2021

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In 2021, 12.8 percent of unique prescribers in Medicare Part D prescribed topical antifungals, with about 6.5 million topical antifungal prescriptions filled, at a total cost of \$231 million, according to research

published in the Jan. 11 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Kaitlin Benedict, M.P.H., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues used 2021 Medicare Part D data to examine prescription volumes, rates, and costs for topical antifungals. The volumes of total prescriptions were compared between higher-volume (top 10 percent of prescribers by volume) and lower-volume prescribers.

The researchers found that about 6.5 million topical antifungal prescriptions were filled during 2021 (134 prescriptions per 1,000 beneficiaries), at a total cost of \$231 million. Overall, 12.8 percent of the 1,017,417 unique prescribers prescribed topical antifungals.

The highest percentage of prescriptions was written by [primary care physicians](#) (40.0 percent), followed by [nurse practitioners](#) or physician assistants, dermatologists, and podiatrists (21.4, 17.6, and 14.1 percent, respectively). Of all prescriptions, 44.2 percent (2.9 million) were written by higher-volume prescribers.

"The substantial volume of topical antifungal and antifungal-corticosteroid prescriptions among Medicare Part D beneficiaries in the setting of emerging resistant infections underscores the need to evaluate current practices of topical antifungal use," the authors write.

More information: Benedict K, et al, Topical Antifungal Prescribing for Medicare Part D Beneficiaries—United States, 2021. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (2024) [DOI: 10.15585/mmwr.mm7301a1](https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7301a1)

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