

# Understanding of antibiotics

## What are people's experiences and behaviours with antibiotics, and what do they know about them?

Increased resistance to antibiotics poses one of the greatest global public health threats of our time. Drugs that were once lifesavers are becoming worthless, with common infections and minor injuries potentially returning as a major public health concern.

Antibiotic resistance is a term that many people are aware of, but what the term means is more elusive, indicating that there is still a need to communicate the issue. When asked what it means, few (nine per cent) spontaneously note that antibiotic resistance is specifically about bacteria becoming resistant to antibiotics.

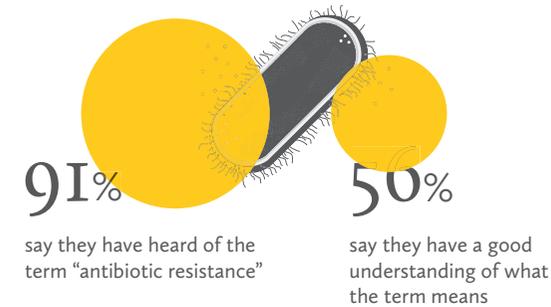
There are also still significant misperceptions about how antibiotics work, and the fact that they cannot treat viral infections (such as colds and the flu) or fungal infections.

The Wellcome Trust Monitor is a unique survey of the UK public that is conducted every three years to look at changing knowledge and attitudes to medicine, science and health. For more findings on this topic, you can look in Chapter 9 of the Wellcome Trust Monitor Wave 3 Report ([wellcome.ac.uk/monitor](http://wellcome.ac.uk/monitor)). This chapter gives more detail on the findings displayed here.

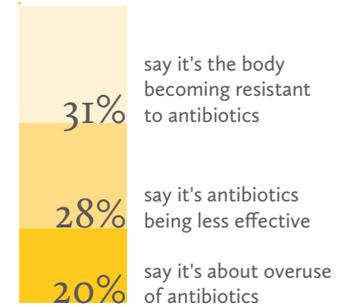
Bases: 1,524 UK adults aged 18+ interviewed face-to-face by Ipsos MORI; 1,396 who say they have ever been prescribed antibiotics before.  
Fieldwork dates: 2 June to 1 November 2015. We suggest that you cite this infographic as follows: Ipsos MORI (2016) Wellcome Trust Monitor, Wave 3. London: Wellcome Trust (<http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.3145744>).

## Antibiotic resistance

Knowledge and understanding of antibiotic resistance

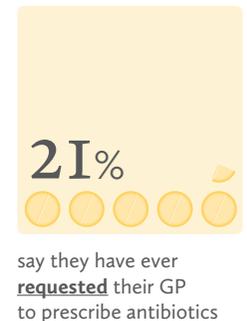
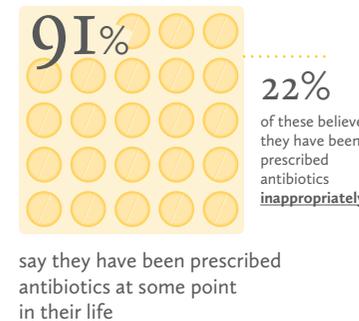


What do people understand by the term "antibiotic resistance"?



## Experience with antibiotics

How have people been prescribed antibiotics in the past?



## Beliefs around antibiotics

multiple answers allowed

What do people believe antibiotics treat?

