

Self-Medication in the Modern Era: Global Trends, Health Risks, and the Pharmacist's Role in Promoting Safe Medication Practices

Mr. Shreyash Onkar Thakare, Prof. Dr. Chandrashekhar D. Khadse

Dr. Avinash S. Jiddewar, Mr. Atharva Mahadev Athilkar

NSPM College of Pharmacy, Darwha, Yavatmal

Abstract: *Self-medication is a rapidly growing public health phenomenon worldwide, encompassing the use of medicines by individuals to treat self-recognized symptoms or conditions without professional supervision. It includes obtaining and consuming drugs without a physician's diagnosis, prescription, or monitoring. While self-medication can contribute positively to healthcare systems by promoting patient autonomy and reducing unnecessary clinical visits, it also poses significant risks when practiced irresponsibly. The increasing availability of over-the-counter (OTC) drugs, ease of online access, and widespread pharmaceutical advertising have led to the normalization of self-treatment behaviors among the general population.*

Responsible self-medication, supported by pharmacists and regulatory frameworks, is essential to balance its potential benefits against associated risks. Public education on safe medication practices, stricter regulation of OTC drug sales, and rational drug-use campaigns are critical to ensuring patient safety. In low- and middle-income countries, where access to healthcare is limited, self-medication has become a substitute for formal medical care, making it even more crucial to promote informed decision-making among consumers.

Here's a concise and well-structured abstract and conclusion for your review article section on "Prevention of Potential Risks Associated with Self-Medication"

The prevention of risks associated with self-medication relies greatly on the active participation of healthcare professionals, particularly physicians and pharmacists. By providing accurate information, appropriate therapeutic advice, and continuous health education, professionals can enhance patient understanding and promote safe medication practices. Pharmacists, being the most accessible health professionals, should take responsibility for educating consumers, identifying potential drug-related problems, and referring patients to physicians when necessary. Ultimately, strengthening patient-professional communication and fostering responsible self-care behaviors are key strategies to ensure the rational and safe use of medicines, thereby improving overall public health outcomes.

Overall, self-medication represents a double-edged sword in modern healthcare. When practiced rationally and responsibly, it can enhance public health efficiency. However, without adequate awareness, regulation, and professional guidance, it can lead to serious health complications. This review emphasizes the need for continuous public education, policy reinforcement, and pharmacist involvement to ensure that self-medication remains a safe and beneficial component of self-care..

Keywords: Self-medication, Over-the-counter (OTC) drugs, Public health, Drug safety, Self-care practices Pharmacist role, Antibiotic resistance, Adverse drug reactions, Rational drug use, Healthcare accessibility

