



1995

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NATIONAL HEALTH SURVEY

USE OF MEDICATIONS AUSTRALIA

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- For further information about these and related statistics, contact the Health Section on 1800 060 050, or any ABS office shown on the back cover of this publication.

NOTES

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This publication provides information on the use of medications. Medications include any medicine (whether in the form of an ointment, elixir, tablet, inhaler or injection) used for health or medical reasons. Vitamins and minerals, herbal and natural preparations are reported on separately. The statistics are compiled from information collected by interview in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 1995 National Health Survey (NHS). The information collected referred to use in the two weeks prior to interview.

In the NHS, medications were classified in two ways:

- as reported by respondents (e.g. pain relievers); and
- by generic type, determined from the medication or brand name reported by respondents (e.g. analgesics).

The type(s) of medication reported by persons at interview tend to reflect the reasons the medications were used, rather than the chemical composition of the medication. Classification by generic type enables the total use of certain medications to be established and combinations of medications to be identified. In this publication, both self-reported type and generic type are used. (See paragraph 16 of Explanatory Notes and Appendix.)

This publication provides an overview of medication use, then focuses in more detail on the use of pain relievers, tranquillisers and sedatives, and other specific types of medication including antibiotics. Data have been age and/or sex standardised where appropriate.



SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
a.k.a.	also known as
ATC	Anatomical Therapeutic Chemical Classification
GP	General Practitioner
n.a.	not available
n.e.c.	not elsewhere classified
NHS	National Health Survey
OHP	Other Health Professional
RSE	relative standard error
SE	standard error
WHO	World Health Organization
*	relative standard error of 25% – 50%
**	relative standard error over 50%
..	not applicable
—	nil or rounded to zero

W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

MEDICATION USE

Health-related actions

Medications, if used correctly, can significantly improve levels of health by preventing disease, alleviating symptoms, curing illness, or assisting in the management of chronic conditions. However, inappropriate use of medicines, either singly or in combination, may lead to reduced effectiveness, minor side effects or more serious adverse reactions. These in turn may result in further use of health services which are costly to both governments and the general community.

In 1995 almost 10.7 million people, representing 59% of the population, had recently used one or more medications. There were also 26% who had used vitamins or minerals, and 9% who had used herbal or natural preparations. The use of medications was the most common health-related action taken by people and was usually in response to specific illness or injury conditions.

While the overall proportion of people taking a health-related action was the same as that recorded in a previous survey in 1989–90 (76%), the proportion using medications had declined from 64% to 59% after standardisation for the different age and sex profile in 1989–90.

PERSONS TAKING HEALTH-RELATED ACTIONS, By Sex

Types of action taken	1995.....			1989–90(a)	
	Persons '000	Males %	Females %	Persons %	Persons %
Used medications(b)	10 671.7	54.2	63.9	59.1	64.1
Vitamins/minerals	4 660.3	21.3	30.3	25.8	23.3
Herbal/natural	1 701.7	6.9	12.0	9.4	n.a.
Consultation with					
Doctor	4 206.6	20.4	26.1	23.3	20.0
Dentist or OHP(b)	2 683.3	13.1	16.6	14.9	14.0
Total consultations(c)	6 032.7	29.6	37.2	33.4	29.9
Hospitalisation(b)	795.6	4.2	4.6	4.4	3.3
Reduced activity(b)	231.4	9.9	11.6	10.7	14.7
Total taking action(c)	13 597.8	70.4	80.2	75.3	75.5
Total taking no action	4 463.3	29.6	19.8	24.7	24.5
Total persons	18 061.1	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Age and sex standardised to 1995 Australian population.

(b) See Glossary.

(c) Persons may have taken more than one action, therefore components do not add to totals.

People may take a number of different actions in response to a particular illness or injury. For example, someone who had a day off work due to influenza may also have consulted a doctor and/or taken medications for that condition. However, of those persons who used medications, 49% of males and 45% of females reported that it was the only action they had taken for their health in the previous fortnight.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

Types of medication

The most commonly used medications were pain relievers (24% of the population), medications for heart problems or blood pressure (11%), skin ointments and creams (10%), and medicines for coughs and colds (7%) (table 1).

Types of medications largely reflected the illness or injury for which they were used (table 5). Of people who used medications for heart problems or blood pressure 75% did so for hypertension, and pain relievers were most commonly used for headaches (54%). The most common reasons for using skin ointments or creams were eczema and/or dermatitis (22%) and injuries (15%).

Age and sex

A higher proportion of females than males had recently used a medication (64% compared to 54% respectively) (table 1). This was more apparent in adults. The main differences between women and men were in the use of pain relievers (27% compared to 20%), and in the use of 'other medications' (22% compared to 14%). 'Other medications' includes oral contraceptives and medications for hormone replacement (see Glossary).

The proportion of people who used medications increased with age, from 42% of those aged less than 15 years, to 86% of those aged 65 years and over (table 1).

Types of medications used by persons differed across age groups, in part reflecting the changing prevalence of illnesses with age. For example, asthma medications and cough/cold preparations were more commonly taken by persons in the younger age groups, whereas stomach medications, fluid/diuretic medications, and medications for heart problems and blood pressure were more commonly used by persons in older age groups (table 1).

The use of pain relievers was lowest among children aged 5–9 years (9%), down from 16% of infants and children under 5 years of age. Use was highest in the 35–39 year age group (32%), declining across older age groups to 19% of those aged 65 years or more.

For persons up to the age of 44 years, 57% of those who had recently used medications used only one medication. In the 45–64 year age group, 41% of persons who used medications used only one medication and 40% used two or three. Of those aged 85 years and over who used medications, 17% used only one, 45% used two or three, and 38% used four or more.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

NUMBER OF MEDICATIONS USED, By Age of Persons

	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65-74	75-84	85 or over	Total
Number of medications	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
One	59.4	57.0	56.2	40.9	24.8	23.6	16.6	47.4
Two	26.2	26.5	26.4	25.9	24.1	19.8	24.3	25.6
Three	9.9	9.9	10.0	14.5	17.9	15.9	20.9	12.4
Four or five	4.0	5.8	5.9	12.7	20.1	23.7	22.0	9.9
Six or more	0.6	0.7	1.6	6.0	13.1	17.0	16.2	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

States and Territories

After standardisation for age and sex, the Northern Territory and Victoria recorded the lowest proportions of people using medications (54% and 56% respectively) and the Australian Capital Territory and Western Australia the highest (63% and 64% respectively) (table 2). People in Queensland were more likely to use vitamins and minerals than elsewhere in Australia (29%), and those in Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory were most likely to use herbal and natural preparations (11%).

Levels of use of different types of medication in States and Territories usually reflected the prevalence rates of illness. For example, consistent with a higher prevalence rate of asthma in Queensland, the proportion of people in Queensland (8%) using asthma medications was higher than elsewhere in Australia. Similar associations were evident in other States; for example, diabetes in South Australia, and allergies in the Australian Capital Territory¹.

¹ National Health Survey: Summary Results, Australian States and Territories, 1995 (ABS Cat. no. 4368.0).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

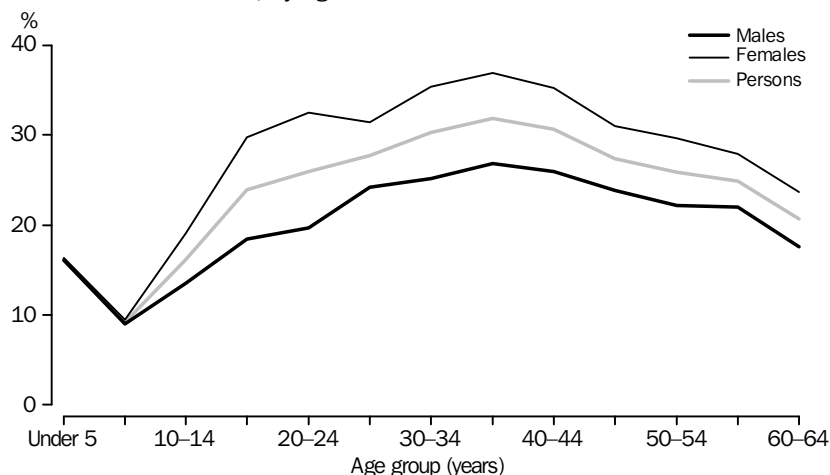
PAIN RELIEVERS

Demographic characteristics

Pain relievers were the most common type of medication, being used by 27% of females and 20% of males.

The proportion of both males and females using pain relievers was highest in the 25–44 year age group (table 1). Differences between male and female usage varied considerably across age groups. For children under 10 years, the proportion of boys and girls using pain relievers was similar. The difference widened to 13 percentage points for those aged 20–24 years as a result of the rapid increase in the use of pain relievers by young females.

USE OF PAIN RELIEVERS, By Age of Persons



After standardising for age and sex, use of pain relievers was highest among those in de facto relationships and those who were separated (both 33%). The lowest proportion using pain relievers was recorded by those widowed or never married (both 24%) (table 3).

A higher proportion of people born in New Zealand and Other Oceania, and United Kingdom and Ireland, used pain relievers (both 27%) than those born in Australia (24%) or other regions. Those born in Asia reported the lowest (16%) (table 3).

Lifestyle behaviours

People who reported what could be considered less healthy lifestyles were more likely to use pain relievers than those who lived healthier lifestyles (table 4). This pattern was evident for each lifestyle behaviour covered in the survey—smoking, being obese, doing little or no exercise, and drinking alcohol—but differences were most marked for smoking and alcohol consumption. Pain relievers were used by 29% of smokers compared with 25% of those who had never smoked, and 31% of people consuming alcohol at a high risk level compared with 25% who did not drink alcohol.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

ANALGESICS

For over 90% of people using pain relievers, the medication was classified to the generic group of analgesics. Other types of medications were also classified as analgesics. Consequently, of the 4.7 million people who had recently used analgesics, 83% used the medication as a pain reliever, 8% as a medication for heart problems or blood pressure, and 5% for asthma, cough/cold or allergy (see Appendix).

Two main types of analgesics were identified:

- opioids, e.g. morphine and pethidine; and
- other analgesics and anti-pyretics such as aspirin and paracetamol.

Almost all of those people who took analgesics used paracetamol or aspirin-based medication (table 6). Medications composed of paracetamol were the most common types used: 66% of persons taking analgesics used paracetamol only medications, and a further 15% used medications containing paracetamol in combination with other analgesics. Aspirin only or aspirin combination analgesics were used by 24% of persons.

Age and sex

Of children under 15 who used an analgesic, 90% used preparations containing only paracetamol, with the proportion decreasing steadily to 38% of people aged 65 years and over. Conversely, use of products containing only aspirin increased with age from 4% of those aged less than 15 years to 59% of those aged 65 years and over (table 6). This pattern may be explained in part by the high proportion of those using aspirin only medications who reported diseases of the circulatory system as the reason for use (43%)(table 9). Aspirin is often advised for people who either suffer from, or as a preventative measure against, coronary heart disease. Aspirin has also been shown to be of benefit to those who suffer from certain vascular conditions such as atherosclerosis and arterial embolism.

Patterns of use

Most people (65%) using analgesics did not do so on the advice of a doctor or other health professional (table 7). However, the pattern differed according to the type of analgesic. Of those persons who used paracetamol combinations, most (61%) reported that their use had been advised by a health professional. In contrast, most of those who used paracetamol only or aspirin combinations, reported that their use was without medical advice (78% and 63% respectively). Nearly all (96%) persons using opioids did so on medical advice.

Around 20% of people using analgesics used the medication regularly (table 8). Of those, 83% used analgesics every day and/or night and 92% had regularly used the medication for six months or more.

The most common reasons for using analgesics were headaches (49% of persons using analgesics), diseases of the musculoskeletal system, principally arthritis and back problems (14%), respiratory conditions, mainly for colds and flu (12%) and circulatory conditions (10%) (table 9).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

TRANQUILLISERS, SEDATIVES AND SLEEPING MEDICATIONS

The medications covered in this category are those classified by respondents as:

- sleeping medications;
- medications for anxiety, nervous tension and depression; and
- tranquillisers or sedatives not included in the two previous groups.

Demographic characteristics

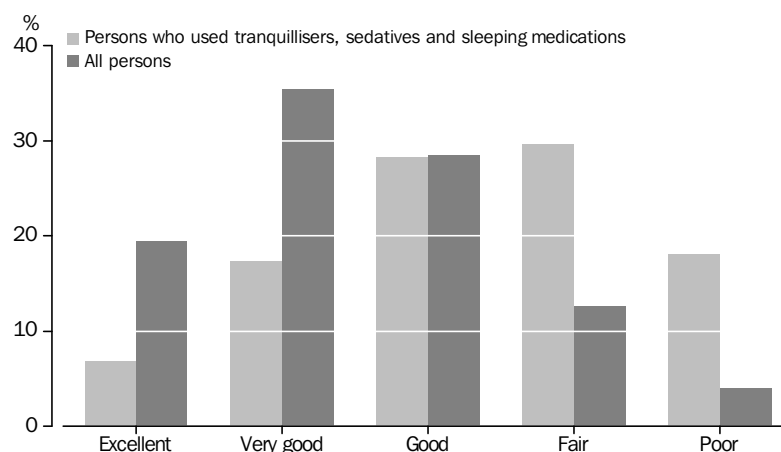
Almost 4% of the population had recently used a tranquilliser, sedative and/or sleeping medication. The proportion of people using medications in this category increased with age (table 1), from less than 1% of those less than 25 years to 10% of those aged 65 years or more. Females were more likely to use these types of medications than males, particularly medications for anxiety, nervous tension and depression.

Use of these medications by persons differed by marital status and employment status (table 3). Based on age standardised data, proportions using these medications were higher among people who were widowed, divorced or separated than other groups. Among those aged 15–64 years, a higher proportion of people not in the labour force used these medications than employed or unemployed people (table 3).

Self-assessed health status

Persons who used tranquillisers, sedatives and sleeping medications were more likely to report poorer health than the population overall. For example, 30% of those aged 15 years or more who recently used these medications rated their health as fair, and 18% rated their health as poor, compared with 13% and 4% respectively for all persons 15 years or more. The difference was slightly higher among males than females.

HEALTH STATUS OF PERSONS(a) USING TRANQUILLISERS, SEDATIVES AND SLEEPING MEDICATIONS



(a) Persons aged 15 years or more.

PSYCHOLEPTIC MEDICATIONS AND ANTI-DEPRESSANTS

For the majority (87%) of people who used tranquillisers, sedatives and/or sleeping medications, the medication was classified to the generic categories of psycholeptic medications including anti-psychotics, anxiolytics, hypnotics and sedatives, and anti-depressants. Approximately 684,000 people had recently used psycholeptic medications and anti-depressants. Of the 411,400 people who had recently used a psycholeptic medication, 47% reported it as a sleeping medication. Of those who had used anti-depressants, 63% had reported the medication as a tranquilliser or sedative (see Appendix).

Patterns of use

Almost everyone who used psycholeptic medications and anti-depressants did so on the advice of a health professional, mostly a General Practitioner or medical specialist (table 11). Similarly, nearly all people who used medications in these groups obtained them either by a prescription or from a doctor or hospital.

Patterns of use differed by the types of medication used (table 12). Of people who used anti-depressants, 94% used them regularly and 91% used them daily. Of people who used anti-psychotics, 90% used them regularly and 87% used them daily. People were less likely to regularly use anxiolytics or hypnotics and sedatives (72% and 65% respectively).

Long-term use was common for people using these medications; 63% of those using psycholeptic medications and 71% of those using anti-depressants had used them regularly for six months or more.

Of those who used medications in the anti-psychotic group, 80% used them for mental disorders, with depression the most commonly reported condition from that group (table 13). A similar pattern was reported for anti-depressants. The most common reasons for using anxiolytics were nerves, tension and nervousness (41%) and insomnia (24%). Insomnia was also the most common reason for using hypnotics and sedatives.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

VITAMINS, MINERALS, HERBAL AND NATURAL PREPARATIONS

Use of vitamins and mineral supplements has been widespread for many years, not only in relation to specific illness conditions, but also for the prevention of illness and the maintenance of good health. Use of herbal and natural preparations is also gaining in popularity as the trend towards alternative forms of medicine and health-related treatment continues.^{1, 2}

In 1995, 26% of Australians had recently used vitamins or minerals (table 1), an increase from 23% in 1989–90. Additional information was collected in the 1995 NHS, showing that just under 10% of people had recently used herbal or natural preparations.

Demographic characteristics

Females were more likely than males to have used vitamins or mineral supplements, or herbal or natural preparations (table 1). Use was highest for both males and females aged 45–64 years (29% and 44% respectively).

After standardising for age and sex, people who were separated or divorced were more likely to use vitamins and minerals than those who were married, widowed or never married. Differences by marital status were smaller for herbal or natural preparations (table 3).

Unemployed persons were less likely to have used these types of medication (26%) than employed persons (34%) or those not in the labour force (32%). Use was highest among those born in United Kingdom and Ireland (36%), and lowest among those born in the Middle East (15%).

Lifestyle behaviours

People who led healthier lifestyles were generally more likely to have used vitamins and minerals than those who did not (table 4). This is consistent with the high use of these medications for preventive health purposes. The pattern of higher usage was evident for non-smokers, people who did some form of exercise and those who were not overweight. People who consumed alcohol at low or medium risk levels were more likely to use vitamins and minerals than those who did not consume, or consumed at high risk levels (table 3).

The patterns of use of herbal and natural preparations were similar, but differences tended to be smaller.

¹ G.M. Shenfield, P.A. Atkin & S.S. Kristoffersen, 'Alternative medicine: an expanding health industry', *Medical Journal of Australia*, vol. 166, pp. 516–517, 1997.

² P.A. Komesaroff, 'Use of complementary medicines: scientific and ethical issues', *Medical Journal of Australia*, vol. 169, pp. 180–181, 1998.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

Reasons for use

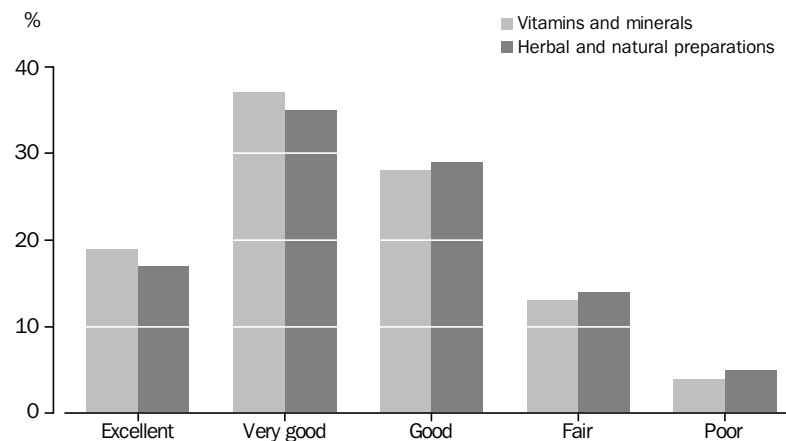
The most common reason for using vitamins and minerals was as a preventive measure. This reason was reported by 86% of males and 77% of females who used them (table 14). The most common illness for which vitamins and minerals were used was respiratory conditions (4%); common cold accounted for just over half (51%) of these.

Fewer people used herbal and natural preparations for preventive reasons (63% of men and 55% of women) than vitamins and minerals. Herbal and natural preparations were more likely to be taken for specific conditions than were vitamins and minerals (41% compared with 18%, respectively). The main conditions for which herbal and natural preparations were used were respiratory conditions (10%), musculoskeletal disorders (7%) and digestive conditions (6%) (table 15).

Self-assessed health status

Of those aged 15 years or more using vitamins, minerals, herbal and natural preparations, the majority rated their health as very good or good, and only around 5% rated their health as poor (table 16). This was consistent with the finding that most people using these medications did so for preventive health purposes rather than specific conditions.

HEALTH STATUS OF PERSONS USING VITAMINS, MINERALS, HERBAL AND NATURAL PREPARATIONS



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

ANTIBIOTICS

Antibiotics are the wide group of medications used in the treatment of infections caused by bacteria. Recently, concern has developed about the number of antibiotics that are prescribed for and used by the population, particularly in regard to use for conditions not caused by bacteria. Inappropriate use of antibiotics is considered the major contributing factor in the development of new bacteria which have become resistant to many current antibiotics.¹ These new strains increase the risk to communities from conditions which may now be more difficult to cure or, in some cases, no longer treatable. The declining effectiveness of antibiotics has also been linked with their use in production of some foods.²

In the 1995 NHS, antibiotics were classified to the 'other medications' group which also included contraceptives, hormone therapies, vaccines and other medications not classified separately. This 'other medications' group was the second most commonly used type of medication.

To enable analysis of antibiotics and other medications in this group, a sub-sample of one-quarter of the NHS records was recoded to a more detailed classification for analysis and presentation in this publication. The following discussion on use of antibiotics is based on analysis of 515 records of persons who had recently used antibiotics (see paragraphs 17 and 18 of Explanatory Notes).

Age and sex

Some 22% of people who used a medication originally coded to the 'other medications' category used an antibiotic, representing around 4% of the sub-sampled records. For both males and females, usage was lowest in the 45–64 year age group (under 3%) and highest for males aged less than 15 years and females aged 15–24 years (both 6%) (table 18).

Health status

The majority of people aged 15 years or more who used antibiotics assessed their health as very good or good (35% and 26% respectively) (table 19). Overall, the pattern of self-assessed health among persons who used antibiotics was similar to that of all those using medications.

¹ John Turnidge, 'Antibiotic use or misuse?', *Medical Journal of Australia*, vol. 167, pp. 116–117, 1997.

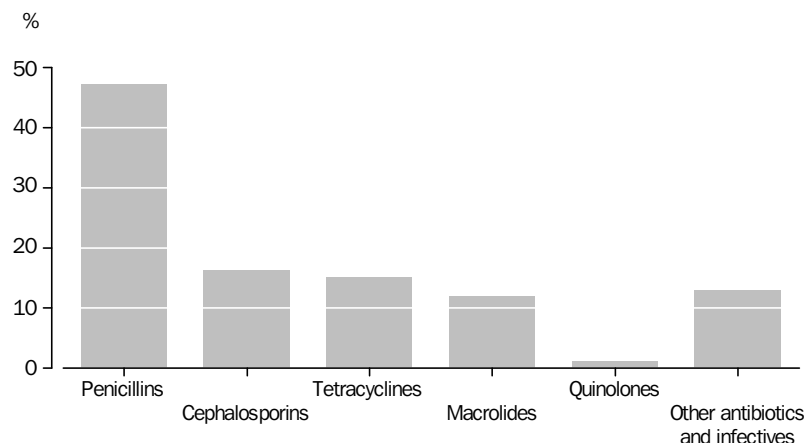
² NHMRC Working Party on Antibiotics, *Emergence of Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci in Australia*, Canberra, 1996.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

Types of antibiotic

Most people (93%) who had recently used an antibiotic had used only one type (table 19). The most commonly used were penicillins (47%).

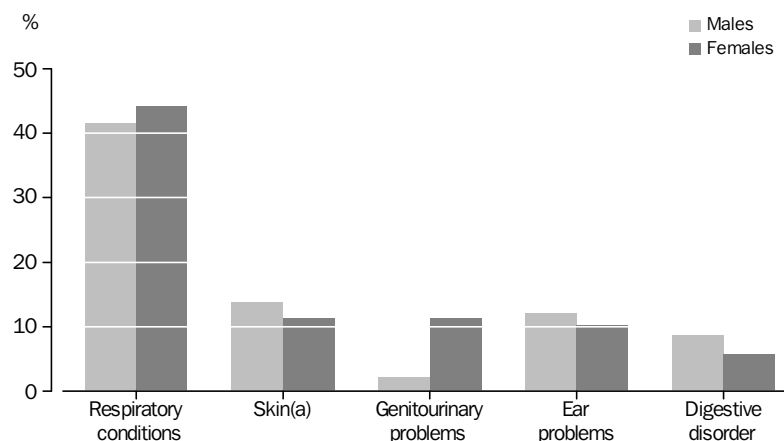
TYPES OF ANTIBIOTICS USED, By Persons



Reasons for use

The most common reasons for using antibiotics across all age groups were respiratory conditions (43% of those using antibiotics) (table 19). Other common reasons varied by age. For those aged under 15 years, 27% used antibiotics for ear problems, in particular otitis media. Those aged 15–44 years reported problems of the skin and subcutaneous tissue as the second most common reason for using antibiotics (27% for those aged 15–24 years, 11% for those aged 25–44 years). Disorders of the digestive system (16%) and problems of the genitourinary system (11%) were common reasons for using antibiotics among those aged 45–64 years.

REASONS FOR USE OF ANTIBIOTICS, By Persons



(a) Includes conditions of subcutaneous tissue.

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1

TYPES OF MEDICATION(a), By Age and Sex

AGE GROUP (YEARS).....

Types of medication used	Number of males using the medication	AGE GROUP (YEARS)					Total
		0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	
MALES							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Medication for diabetes	136.2	*0.1	0.3	0.5	2.8	6.7	1.5
Asthma medications	574.2	9.2	7.9	5.0	4.4	6.4	6.4
Medication for arthritis	245.7	*0.1	—	1.0	5.5	11.8	2.7
Medication for cough/colds	625.9	11.1	6.7	6.4	5.3	3.7	7.0
Skin ointments/creams	811.3	7.2	9.7	10.2	9.2	8.0	9.0
Stomach medications	366.1	0.7	1.2	3.2	6.6	13.0	4.1
Laxatives	30.7	0.4	—	0.2	0.2	1.4	0.3
Medications for allergies	234.4	1.9	3.1	3.0	2.8	1.9	2.6
Fluid tablets/diuretics	122.4	—	—	0.2	1.5	9.3	1.4
Medications for heart problems/blood pressure	891.4	*0.1	*0.1	2.6	19.6	47.4	9.9
Medications to lower cholesterol/triglycerides	160.8	—	—	0.6	4.9	5.4	1.8
Pain relievers	1 806.7	12.9	19.2	25.6	21.9	16.8	20.1
Tranquillisers, sedatives and sleeping medications							
Sleeping medications	99.5	0.2	*0.2	0.9	1.5	4.4	1.1
Medications for anxiety, nervous tension, depression	155.4	*0.1	0.9	1.8	2.9	3.9	1.7
Tranquillisers or sedatives not included above	36.8	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	1.1	0.4
Total(b)	265.6	0.6	0.5	2.7	4.5	8.3	3.0
Other medications	1 233.0	9.7	9.9	10.6	16.0	32.6	13.7
Total(b)	4 873.6	40.5	45.0	51.9	63.7	84.4	54.2
Vitamin or minerals	1 912.0	15.9	21.2	22.2	24.9	22.3	21.3
Herbal or natural preparations	618.0	4.2	4.9	7.2	9.4	9.2	6.9
Total(b)	2 197.7	18.0	23.2	25.4	29.3	27.3	24.4
Total males using medications and/or vitamins, minerals, etc.(b)	5 706.1	49.5	55.5	62.3	73.1	88.7	63.4
		'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total males	..	1 986.5	1 386.1	2 790.4	1 894.1	936.8	8 993.9

(a) Refers only to the first seven medications as reported by respondents, and to vitamins, minerals, and herbal and natural preparations. See Glossary.

(b) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

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TYPES OF MEDICATION(a), By Age and Sex *continued*

AGE GROUP (YEARS).....

Types of medication used	Number of females using the medication	AGE GROUP (YEARS)					Total
		0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	
FEMALES							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Medication for diabetes	126.0	*0.1	0.4	0.5	2.3	5.2	1.4
Asthma medications	623.3	7.2	8.3	6.0	6.9	6.6	6.9
Medication for arthritis	375.7	*0.1	0.4	1.3	7.3	16.3	4.1
Medication for cough/colds	657.9	11.7	8.9	7.0	4.7	3.0	7.3
Skin ointments/creams	950.3	8.7	14.4	12.1	9.6	6.5	10.5
Stomach medications	364.2	0.7	1.9	2.8	6.0	11.1	4.0
Laxatives	68.0	0.3	0.2	0.5	1.0	2.2	0.8
Medications for allergies	337.1	1.7	3.7	4.9	4.7	2.6	3.7
Fluid tablets/diuretics	272.5	*0.1	*0.1	0.4	4.1	15.0	3.0
Medications for heart problems/blood pressure	1 018.9	—	0.3	1.8	18.9	50.6	11.2
Medications to lower cholesterol/triglycerides	147.0	—	—	0.1	3.1	7.0	1.6
Pain relievers	2 458.5	15.0	31.3	34.8	28.6	21.5	27.1
Tranquillisers, sedatives and sleeping medications							
Sleeping medications	166.1	*0.1	0.4	1.0	2.8	6.5	1.8
Medications for anxiety, nervous tension, depression	240.5	—	0.8	2.7	4.9	5.4	2.7
Tranquillisers or sedatives not included above	42.5	*0.1	0.2	0.3	0.7	1.3	0.5
Total(b)	407.5	0.2	0.5	3.7	7.4	11.9	4.5
Other medications	1 988.8	9.1	16.4	18.6	33.7	37.6	21.9
Total(b)	5 798.1	42.7	58.8	62.9	75.7	87.1	63.9
Vitamin or minerals	2 748.3	16.5	28.7	35.9	37.9	29.1	30.3
Herbal or natural preparations	1 083.8	3.7	8.7	14.0	18.0	14.4	12.0
Total(b)	3 157.6	18.3	32.5	40.3	44.4	35.9	34.8
Total females using medications and/or vitamins, minerals, etc.(b)	6 711.5	51.6	69.2	76.0	85.4	92.2	74.0
		'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total females	..	1 886.2	1 324.1	2 793.1	1 845.5	1 218.2	9 067.2

(a) Refers only to the first seven medications as reported by respondents, and to vitamins, minerals, and herbal and natural preparations. See Glossary.

(b) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

1

TYPES OF MEDICATION(a), By Age and Sex *continued*

AGE GROUP (YEARS).....

Types of medication used	Number of persons using the medication	AGE GROUP (YEARS)					Total
		0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	
PERSONS							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Medication for diabetes	262.2	0.1	0.3	0.5	2.5	5.8	1.5
Asthma medications	1 197.5	8.2	8.1	5.5	5.7	6.5	6.6
Medication for arthritis	621.4	0.1	0.2	1.1	6.4	14.4	3.4
Medication for cough/colds	1 283.8	11.4	7.8	6.7	5.0	3.3	7.1
Skin ointments/creams	1 761.6	8.0	12.0	11.1	9.4	7.2	9.8
Stomach medications	730.3	0.7	1.5	3.0	6.3	11.9	4.0
Laxatives	98.8	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.6	1.9	0.5
Medications for allergies	571.5	1.8	3.4	4.0	3.7	2.3	3.2
Fluid tablets/diuretics	394.8	*0.1	—	0.3	2.8	12.5	2.2
Medications for heart problems/blood pressure	1 910.3	*0.1	0.2	2.2	19.3	49.2	10.6
Medications to lower cholesterol/triglycerides	307.8	—	—	0.4	4.0	6.3	1.7
Pain relievers	4 265.2	13.9	25.1	30.2	25.2	19.4	23.6
Tranquillisers, sedatives and sleeping medications							
Sleeping medications	265.6	0.2	0.3	0.9	2.1	5.6	1.5
Medications for anxiety, nervous tension, depression	395.9	0.1	0.8	2.2	3.9	4.7	2.2
Tranquillisers or sedatives not included above	79.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	1.2	0.4
Total(b)	673.1	0.4	0.5	3.2	5.9	10.3	3.7
Other medications	3 221.8	9.4	13.1	14.6	24.8	35.5	17.8
Total(b)	10 671.7	41.6	51.8	57.4	69.6	85.9	59.1
Vitamin or minerals	4 660.3	16.2	24.9	29.1	31.4	26.1	25.8
Herbal or natural preparations	1 701.7	4.0	6.8	10.6	13.6	12.1	9.4
Total(b)	5 355.4	18.1	27.8	32.9	36.7	32.2	29.7
Total persons using medications and/or vitamins, minerals, etc.(b)	12 417.6	50.5	62.2	69.1	79.2	90.7	68.8
		'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total persons	..	3 872.7	2 710.3	5 583.5	3 739.6	2 155.0	18 061.1

(a) Refers only to the first seven medications as reported by respondents, and to vitamins, minerals, and herbal and natural preparations. See Glossary.

(b) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

2

TYPES OF MEDICATION(a)(b), By States and Territories

Types of medication used	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(c)	ACT	Aust.
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Medication for diabetes	1.4	1.5	1.3	1.8	1.6	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.4
Asthma medications	6.2	6.5	7.9	6.8	6.6	5.6	6.6	6.0	6.6
Medication for arthritis	3.9	2.9	3.4	2.9	3.8	4.0	4.2	2.9	3.4
Medication for cough/colds	7.2	6.7	7.0	7.9	7.8	6.8	5.6	7.5	7.1
Skin ointments/creams	9.3	8.9	9.8	10.4	12.2	11.6	9.2	13.3	9.8
Stomach medications	4.2	3.7	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.8	4.8	4.5	4.0
Laxatives	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.7	**0.1	0.5	0.5
Medications for allergies	3.2	2.6	3.2	3.4	4.0	3.7	2.5	4.4	3.2
Fluid tablets/diuretics	2.3	2.2	1.9	2.4	2.0	2.6	1.4	1.9	2.2
Medications for heart problems/blood pressure	11.5	10.2	10.1	9.9	9.4	12.3	7.3	9.1	10.5
Medications to lower cholesterol/triglycerides	2.3	1.4	1.2	1.7	1.5	1.4	*0.6	1.6	1.7
Pain relievers	21.8	20.9	28.3	25.2	26.3	22.5	22.0	28.2	23.6
Tranquillisers, sedatives and sleeping medications									
Sleeping medications	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.0	1.1	1.5	1.5
Medications for anxiety, nervous tension, depression	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.7	1.2	2.1	2.2
Tranquillisers or sedatives not included above	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.5	*0.3	**0.1	0.5	0.4
Total(d)	3.5	3.7	4.2	3.8	3.7	3.8	2.3	3.9	3.7
Other medications	17.0	17.2	18.2	19.4	20.6	18.7	16.5	18.0	17.8
Total(d)	58.1	55.7	61.9	61.6	63.6	60.1	53.9	62.9	59.1
Vitamin or minerals	25.9	24.0	28.7	24.2	26.6	23.2	27.3	28.3	25.8
Herbal or natural preparations	9.3	8.3	10.4	9.0	10.8	10.4	9.3	10.7	9.4
Total(d)	29.5	27.2	33.0	27.8	31.5	28.2	31.2	33.1	29.7
Total persons using medications and/or vitamins, minerals, etc.(d)	68.0	65.5	72.1	69.5	72.3	69.3	64.5	72.9	68.7
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total persons	6 120.5	4 503.1	3 277.8	1 474.8	1 732.4	473.6	145.3	304.9	18 060.3

(a) Refers only to the first seven medications as reported by respondents, and to vitamins, minerals, and herbal and natural preparations. See Glossary.

(b) Age and sex standardised to the Australian population. Numbers may therefore differ from unstandardised data shown elsewhere: see paragraphs 20 and 21 of Explanatory Notes.

(c) Estimates relate to predominately urban areas only.

(d) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

3

TYPES OF MEDICATION(a)(b), By Selected Characteristics

Types of medication used	MARITAL STATUS(c).....						EMPLOYMENT STATUS.....			
	Married	De facto	Separ- ated	Divorced	Widowed	Never married	Employed	Unem- ployed	Not in labour force	Total aged 15-64 years
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Medication for diabetes	2.0	*0.3	2.2	2.7	5.1	0.7	0.7	1.6	2.0	1.1
Asthma medications	5.4	6.7	6.9	8.0	7.6	7.1	5.5	7.2	7.5	6.1
Medication for arthritis	4.9	1.0	4.6	6.6	14.5	1.1	1.8	1.3	4.9	2.6
Medication for cough/colds	5.6	7.0	6.7	5.3	3.0	7.3	6.6	5.6	6.1	6.4
Skin ointments/creams	10.0	11.6	11.2	9.6	6.6	11.5	11.3	9.9	9.8	10.8
Stomach medications	5.6	3.6	6.2	5.9	10.6	2.2	3.2	3.5	5.0	3.7
Laxatives	0.7	*0.3	*0.3	0.8	1.7	0.2	0.3	*0.2	0.6	0.4
Medications for allergies	3.8	3.7	4.1	3.4	2.0	3.2	3.9	3.5	3.4	3.8
Fluid tablets/diuretics	2.8	0.7	1.7	3.7	12.9	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.3	1.0
Medications for heart problems/blood pressure	16.0	2.5	8.8	15.2	43.7	2.8	5.4	4.0	12.0	7.0
Medications to lower cholesterol/triglycerides	3.0	0.7	0.9	2.4	4.0	0.3	1.2	0.9	2.2	1.4
Pain relievers	26.6	32.7	32.9	26.8	23.9	24.2	27.7	24.9	27.4	27.5
Tranquillisers, sedatives and sleeping medications										
Sleeping medications	1.7	0.8	1.9	3.4	7.8	0.7	0.9	0.4	2.1	1.2
Medications for anxiety, nervous tension, depression	2.6	1.9	5.6	4.3	6.1	2.0	1.4	2.6	5.0	2.4
Tranquillisers or sedatives not included above	0.5	*0.3	1.0	0.8	1.3	0.4	0.2	*0.3	0.8	0.4
Total(d)	4.3	2.8	7.9	7.5	13.3	2.8	2.4	3.2	7.0	3.6
Other medications	21.4	17.2	19.7	24.0	33.5	14.3	16.0	15.2	21.5	17.4
Total(d)	66.1	61.0	66.9	68.3	84.4	53.7	58.5	55.4	64.5	59.9
Vitamin or minerals	28.1	28.1	34.1	35.9	28.4	27.4	29.7	21.8	27.9	28.8
Herbal or natural preparations	11.6	9.0	11.7	13.8	12.3	8.9	10.8	8.4	10.7	10.7
Total(d)	32.9	31.9	37.9	40.4	34.3	30.6	33.8	25.6	32.1	32.9
Total using medications and/or vitamins, minerals, etc.										
Males	70.7	64.8	69.3	72.8	84.7	59.3	63.8	57.9	68.1	64.1
Females	80.8	77.0	82.9	84.7	91.3	72.0	78.0	74.8	76.7	77.4
Persons(d)	75.6	70.8	76.9	79.7	90.2	65.0	69.9	64.2	73.9	70.7
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total persons	7 932.9	647.7	364.0	628.4	878.9	3 736.0	8 262.9	621.2	3 147.6	12 034.1

(a) Refers only to the first seven medications as reported by respondents, and to vitamins, minerals, and herbal and natural preparations. See Glossary.

(b) Age and sex standardised to the Australian population. Numbers may therefore differ from unstandardised data shown elsewhere: see paragraphs 20 and 21 of Explanatory Notes.

(c) Persons aged 15 years and over.

(d) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

3

TYPES OF MEDICATION(a)(b), By Selected Characteristics *continued*

REGION OF BIRTH(c).....

Types of medication used	Australia	NZ and Other Oceania	UK and Ireland	Other Europe(d)	Middle East	Asia	All other countries	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Medication for diabetes	1.1	1.8	2.0	4.2	2.4	1.2	2.6	1.4
Asthma medications	7.2	5.0	6.7	3.4	2.0	2.6	7.4	6.6
Medication for arthritis	3.4	2.4	4.9	4.8	*1.2	0.7	4.5	3.4
Medication for cough/colds	7.6	5.0	5.3	4.2	4.7	6.8	5.2	7.1
Skin ointments/creams	10.0	11.0	12.1	6.1	4.5	7.6	7.8	9.8
Stomach medications	3.7	4.0	5.0	7.0	7.1	3.6	3.9	4.0
Laxatives	0.5	*0.6	0.6	0.5	*0.6	0.5	0.7	0.5
Medications for allergies	3.2	3.7	3.4	2.2	3.1	2.9	5.3	3.2
Fluid tablets/diuretics	2.1	2.1	3.5	3.7	*0.6	0.3	1.5	2.2
Medications for heart problems/blood pressure	9.8	7.5	15.7	18.6	5.2	5.8	10.8	10.5
Medications to lower cholesterol/triglycerides	1.5	0.8	2.6	3.9	2.7	1.0	2.1	1.7
Pain relievers	23.6	27.0	27.4	23.3	23.4	16.4	23.1	23.6
Tranquillisers, sedatives and sleeping medications								
Sleeping medications	1.4	1.9	2.4	2.1	*0.9	0.6	1.9	1.5
Medications for anxiety, nervous tension, depression	2.1	2.4	2.7	3.7	2.9	0.9	2.4	2.2
Tranquillisers or sedatives not included above	0.4	*0.4	0.6	0.5	—	*0.2	1.1	0.4
Total(e)	3.5	4.1	5.1	5.9	3.5	1.6	4.7	3.7
Other medications	17.7	17.2	23.7	17.5	10.7	11.6	19.5	17.8
Total(e)	58.8	58.4	68.8	62.2	48.4	45.0	60.1	59.1
Vitamin or minerals	25.8	26.3	31.8	22.7	14.1	20.7	33.2	25.8
Herbal or natural preparations	9.0	11.9	12.4	10.9	2.2	10.5	11.6	9.4
Total(e)	29.5	31.7	36.0	27.1	14.6	26.1	37.1	29.7
Total using medications and/or vitamins, minerals, etc.								
Males	63.1	62.8	72.7	65.0	55.7	52.3	65.9	63.4
Females	73.6	78.0	84.7	77.9	57.8	59.7	75.7	74.0
Persons(e)	68.4	70.0	78.8	71.0	56.7	56.2	70.7	68.7
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total persons	14 129.8	364.8	1 210.0	1 146.1	147.8	743.3	318.7	18 060.3

(a) Refers only to the first seven medications as reported by respondents, and to vitamins, minerals, and herbal and natural preparations. See Glossary.

(b) Age and sex standardised to the Australian population. Numbers may therefore differ from unstandardised data shown elsewhere: see paragraphs 20 and 21 of Explanatory Notes.

(c) Region of birth as classified in *Australian Standard Classification of Countries for Social Statistics (ASCCSS), 1990 Revision 1.02* (ABS Cat. no. 1269.0).

(d) Includes countries in Southern Europe, Western Europe, Northern Europe, Eastern Europe, the former USSR and the Baltic States.

(e) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

4

TYPES OF MEDICATION(a)(b), By Lifestyle Behaviours

Types of medication used	SMOKER STATUS.....			ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION.....					
	Smoker	Ex-smoker	Never smoked	Didn't consume	Low	Medium	High	Total who consumed alcohol	Total aged 18 years and over
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Medication for diabetes	1.1	2.8	1.8	2.9	1.4	0.7	*0.5	1.2	1.9
Asthma medications	6.9	6.4	5.5	5.8	6.0	8.2	6.7	6.2	6.0
Medication for arthritis	2.9	6.0	4.6	5.2	4.0	5.2	3.0	4.1	4.6
Medication for cough/colds	5.9	5.8	5.8	4.8	6.4	6.5	6.8	6.4	5.8
Skin ointments/creams	9.3	11.0	10.1	8.7	11.0	12.8	9.6	11.1	10.1
Stomach medications	4.3	7.2	4.5	5.7	5.1	3.7	4.8	4.9	5.2
Laxatives	0.4	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.5	0.6
Medications for allergies	2.7	3.8	3.9	3.4	3.7	4.0	2.2	3.6	3.6
Fluid tablets/diuretics	1.3	3.6	3.3	3.8	2.5	1.5	1.8	2.4	2.9
Medications for heart problems/blood pressure	7.6	19.3	14.5	17.0	12.9	11.7	9.7	12.6	14.2
Medications to lower cholesterol/triglycerides	1.4	3.5	2.0	2.4	2.2	1.8	1.0	2.1	2.3
Pain relievers	29.3	27.0	24.9	24.7	27.1	29.3	31.2	27.5	26.5
Tranquillisers, sedatives and sleeping medications									
Sleeping medications	1.9	2.3	1.7	2.0	1.8	1.9	0.9	1.8	1.9
Medications for anxiety, nervous tension, depression	3.9	2.9	2.4	3.3	2.1	2.2	3.1	2.2	2.9
Tranquillisers or sedatives not included above	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.8	*0.3	0.4	0.5
Total(c)	5.8	5.4	4.1	5.3	3.9	4.6	3.8	4.0	4.9
Other medications	17.5	24.2	20.2	21.5	20.2	23.0	17.9	20.3	20.7
Total(c)	61.2	70.4	63.3	63.9	65.2	67.7	64.6	65.4	64.7
Vitamin or minerals	25.5	30.2	29.8	27.6	30.3	33.8	23.6	30.2	28.9
Herbal or natural preparations	9.2	12.7	11.4	10.9	11.1	12.4	5.4	10.9	11.2
Total(c)	29.3	35.4	34.2	32.1	34.6	39.1	25.5	34.5	33.4
Total using medications and/or vitamins, minerals, etc.									
Males	63.2	76.5	65.0	66.5	69.7	68.6	68.8	69.5	68.3
Females	79.8	84.5	79.8	78.7	82.1	86.6	86.0	82.7	80.8
Persons(c)	70.4	79.9	73.8	74.1	75.0	77.2	72.4	75.0	74.6
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total persons aged 18 years and over(d)	3 179.0	3 667.3	6 544.4	5 966.8	6 311.3	691.1	420.1	7 422.5	13 390.8

(a) Refers only to the first seven medications as reported by respondents, and to vitamins, minerals, and herbal and natural preparations. See Glossary.

(b) Age and sex standardised to the Australian population. Numbers may therefore differ from unstandardised data shown elsewhere: see paragraphs 20 and 21 of Explanatory Notes.

(c) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

(d) Estimates for smoker status and alcohol risk levels do not sum to the same total due to differences in sample structure. See paragraph 7 of Explanatory Notes.

4

TYPES OF MEDICATION(a)(b), By Lifestyle Behaviours *continued*

Types of medication used	EXERCISE LEVEL.....				BODY MASS INDEX(c).....					Total aged 15 years and over
	No exercise	Low	Medium	High	Under-weight	Acceptable weight	Over-weight	Obese	Not stated/not known	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Medication for diabetes	2.4	1.8	1.4	1.2	0.8	1.1	2.3	4.6	1.7	1.8
Asthma medications	6.1	6.3	6.2	6.3	7.2	5.8	6.3	6.9	6.0	6.2
Medication for arthritis	6.1	3.9	3.0	3.2	2.2	3.1	5.3	8.4	4.6	4.4
Medication for cough/colds	5.6	6.7	5.6	5.5	6.7	6.1	5.9	5.2	5.4	5.9
Skin ointments/creams	7.9	10.7	11.7	12.7	11.7	10.7	9.7	9.9	8.9	10.3
Stomach medications	6.1	4.9	4.3	3.4	3.9	4.2	6.0	7.1	3.9	5.0
Laxatives	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.6
Medications for allergies	2.9	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.4	3.4	2.5	3.5
Fluid tablets/diuretics	4.3	2.3	2.1	1.1	1.5	1.9	2.9	6.0	3.7	2.7
Medications for heart problems/blood pressure	17.2	12.5	11.5	9.5	6.8	10.0	16.8	24.4	13.0	13.4
Medications to lower cholesterol/triglycerides	2.1	2.3	1.9	2.2	0.5	1.7	3.3	3.6	0.9	2.2
Pain relievers	26.2	28.1	25.3	23.5	26.0	25.2	26.6	30.3	25.6	26.3
Tranquillisers, sedatives and sleeping medications										
Sleeping medications	2.5	1.7	1.4	1.1	2.2	1.6	1.9	1.9	2.0	1.8
Medications for anxiety, nervous tension, depression	3.4	2.9	2.1	1.9	3.1	2.4	2.8	4.4	2.3	2.8
Tranquillisers or sedatives not included above	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5
Total(d)	5.9	4.6	3.6	3.2	5.0	4.1	4.9	6.1	4.3	4.6
Other medications	21.4	20.1	19.3	18.5	19.7	19.6	20.7	22.7	18.5	20.1
Total(d)	64.6	65.8	62.6	59.4	60.0	61.4	66.8	73.3	59.5	63.8
Vitamin or minerals	23.1	31.0	30.8	31.6	33.6	31.0	27.1	23.0	21.8	28.4
Herbal or natural preparations	9.3	11.4	12.3	11.6	12.3	11.5	10.7	10.0	8.4	10.9
Total(d)	27.3	35.2	35.4	36.2	37.9	35.4	31.6	27.6	25.6	32.8
Total using medications and/or vitamins, minerals, etc.										
Males	64.9	69.7	67.9	67.4	62.7	66.4	70.1	73.1	54.7	67.4
Females	79.0	80.6	80.2	80.0	77.1	78.5	84.3	85.2	75.8	79.9
Persons(d)	72.1	75.9	73.9	72.1	73.2	72.6	75.5	79.2	67.9	73.7
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total persons aged 15 years and over	4 683.2	4 819.3	2 468.4	2 217.0	1 408.0	5 913.4	4 012.6	1 472.9	1 381.0	14 187.9

(a) Refers only to the first seven medications as reported by respondents, and to vitamins, minerals, and herbal and natural preparations. See Glossary.

(b) Age and sex standardised to the Australian population. Numbers may therefore differ from unstandardised data shown elsewhere: see paragraphs 20 and 21 of Explanatory Notes.

(c) See Glossary.

(d) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

5

TYPES OF MEDICATION(a)(b), By Most Common Reasons for Use

MOST COMMON REASONS FOR USE(c).....

Types of medication used	Number of persons using the medication '000	First.....		Second.....		Third.....	
		Reason	%	Reason	%	Reason	%
Medication for diabetes	261.7	Diabetes	96.0	High blood sugar	1.3
Asthma medications	1 199.1	Asthma	93.6	Bronchitis, emphysema	3.6
Medication for arthritis	621.6	Osteoarthritis	40.4	Arthritis n.e.c.	27.7	Rheumatoid arthritis	17.0
Medication for cough/colds	1 284.8	Common cold	47.7	Cough, sore throat	23.1	Influenza	19.6
Skin ointments/creams	1 764.1	Eczema, dermatitis	21.6	Injuries	15.6	Skin rash and tinea(d)	8.2
Stomach medications	731.3	Ulcer	29.7	Hernia	7.6	Heartburn	4.3
Laxatives	98.6	Constipation	67.0	Haemorrhoids	4.0
Medications for allergies	571.1	Hayfever	42.3	Sinusitis	26.2	Allergy n.e.c.	15.4
Fluid tablets/diuretics	391.4	Fluid problems	50.7	Hypertension	21.9	Heart disease	8.4
Medications for heart problems/blood pressure	1 901.9	Hypertension	75.3	Heart disease	15.6	Ill-defined signs & symptoms of heart conditions	12.1
Medications to lower cholesterol/triglycerides	305.3	High cholesterol	93.6	Hypertension	1.9	Heart disease	1.4
Pain relievers	4 264.3	Headaches	54.0	Back problems(e)	6.3	Migraine	4.4
Tranquillisers, sedatives and sleeping medications							
Sleeping medications	266.0	Insomnia	71.0	Nerves, tension & nervousness	8.1	Depression	2.5
Medications for anxiety, nervous tension, depression	395.1	Depression	43.1	Nerves, tension & nervousness	42.7	Psychoses	4.3
Tranquillisers or sedatives not included above	78.8	Nerves, tension & nervousness	20.5	Insomnia	14.3	Epilepsy	10.6
Total tranquilisers, sedatives and sleeping medications(f)	672.2	Insomnia	31.1	Nerves, tension & nervousness	29.6	Depression	26.1
Other medications	3 220.3	Thyroid disease	6.3	Contraceptive management	5.6	Preventive measures	4.5

- (a) Refers only to the first seven medications as reported by respondents, See Glossary.
- (b) Age and sex standardised to the Australian population. Numbers may therefore differ from unstandardised data shown elsewhere: see paragraphs 20 and 21 of Explanatory Notes.
- (c) Percentage of persons using that type of medication. Reasons which were reported by 1% or less of persons using that medication type have been excluded from this table.
- (d) Use for skin rash and tinea, both 8.2%.
- (e) Includes curvature of the spine and problems with the intervertebral disc.
- (f) Persons may have reported using more than one tranquiliser, sedative or sleeping medication, therefore components do not add to total.

6

ANALGESICS(a), By Age and Sex

AGE GROUP (YEARS).....

Types of analgesics	Number of persons using the medication	AGE GROUP (YEARS)					Total
		0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	
MALES							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Aspirin	545.6	4.5	14.0	14.9	36.5	67.9	26.2
Paracetamol	1 302.3	90.0	74.1	70.3	48.9	29.6	62.6
Aspirin combinations	26.5	*0.4	1.6	1.7	1.5	*0.5	1.3
Paracetamol combinations	279.6	6.3	11.9	16.1	17.9	8.7	13.4
Opioids	30.2	*0.1	1.5	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.5
Other analgesics	31.7	*0.6	1.5	1.9	1.9	0.9	1.5
Total males using analgesics(b)	2 080.6	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
FEMALES							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Aspirin	507.9	4.4	10.0	11.9	24.2	51.7	19.2
Paracetamol	1 832.3	90.2	79.5	73.0	60.4	44.5	69.2
Aspirin combinations	30.0	*0.3	*0.5	1.2	2.2	0.8	1.1
Paracetamol combinations	407.4	5.6	13.5	18.3	19.1	12.9	15.4
Opioids	32.4	*0.2	1.1	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.2
Other analgesics	44.5	*0.3	3.1	2.1	1.7	*0.3	1.7
Total females using analgesics(b)	2 646.4	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
PERSONS							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Aspirin	1 053.5	4.4	11.6	13.2	30.0	58.8	22.3
Paracetamol	3 134.6	90.1	77.3	71.8	55.0	38.0	66.3
Aspirin combinations	56.5	*0.4	1.0	1.4	1.9	0.6	1.2
Paracetamol combinations	686.9	5.9	12.9	17.4	18.6	11.0	14.5
Opioids	62.6	*0.2	1.3	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.3
Other analgesics	76.2	0.5	2.4	2.0	1.8	0.5	1.6
Total persons using analgesics(b)	4 727.1	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total persons using analgesics							
Males	..	304.2	273.5	705.3	487.8	309.9	2 080.6
Females	..	326.3	400.0	977.0	548.4	394.8	2 646.4
Persons	..	630.4	673.5	1 682.3	1 036.2	704.7	4 727.1

(a) See Appendix.

(b) Persons may have used more than one medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

7

ANALGESICS(a)(b), By Prescribed or Advised(c)—By Sex

Types of analgesics	Number of persons using the medication '000	PRESCRIBED OR ADVISED(d).....		SOURCE OF ADVICE(c)(d).....		
		Prescribed	Advised	GP	Medical specialist	OHP(e)
		%	%	%	%	%
MALES						
Aspirin	545.3	21.5	58.4	34.5	23.3	0.8
Paracetamol	1 302.4	6.7	20.7	16.8	2.0	1.9
Aspirin combinations	26.4	18.2	37.0	23.1	*6.3	*7.7
Paracetamol combinations	279.2	45.0	62.2	46.7	11.2	5.1
Opioids	30.0	67.6	94.5	52.4	35.3	8.7
Other analgesics	31.8	28.7	73.7	44.8	8.3	20.6
Total males using analgesics(f)	2 080.2	15.9	36.2	25.5	9.0	2.5
FEMALES						
Aspirin	507.3	20.6	51.4	38.2	12.6	*0.7
Paracetamol	1 831.8	7.5	22.8	18.6	1.9	2.3
Aspirin combinations	30.2	22.0	39.3	34.1	**0.2	5.0
Paracetamol combinations	407.5	37.7	60.4	47.7	7.9	5.3
Opioids	32.2	61.0	97.0	53.6	42.5	*1.7
Other analgesics	44.4	13.0	55.1	27.7	9.1	18.3
Total females using analgesics(f)	2 645.3	15.1	33.9	26.9	5.1	2.8
PERSONS						
Aspirin	1 052.6	21.1	55.0	36.3	18.2	0.8
Paracetamol	3 134.1	7.2	21.9	17.8	2.0	2.2
Aspirin combinations	56.6	20.2	38.2	29.0	*3.0	6.3
Paracetamol combinations	686.7	40.7	61.1	47.3	9.2	5.2
Opioids	62.2	64.2	95.8	53.0	39.0	5.1
Other analgesics	76.2	19.5	62.8	34.8	8.8	19.2
Total persons using analgesics(f)	4 725.5	15.4	34.9	26.3	6.8	2.6

(a) See Appendix.

(b) Age and sex standardised to the Australian population. Numbers may therefore differ from unstandardised data shown elsewhere: see paragraphs 20 and 21 of Explanatory Notes.

(c) Whether medication used on the advice of a health professional.

(d) Percentage of persons using that type of analgesic.

(e) Includes advice obtained from chemists.

(f) Persons may have used more than one medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

8

ANALGESICS(a)(b), By Frequency and Duration of Use—By Sex

Types of analgesics	Number of persons using the medication '000	FREQUENCY OF USE(c).....			DURATION OF REGULAR USE(c).....			
		Not taken regularly(d) %	Every day and/or night %	1–6 days and/or nights per week %	Not taken regularly(d) %	Less than 1 month %	1 month to less than 6 months %	6 months or more %
MALES								
Aspirin	545.3	40.3	55.0	5.1	40.3	1.0	5.3	53.8
Paracetamol	1 302.4	87.9	5.8	6.3	87.9	2.0	1.0	9.1
Aspirin combinations	26.4	82.1	13.6	*4.3	82.1	*3.4	**0.9	13.7
Paracetamol combinations	279.2	73.7	16.3	11.0	73.7	5.6	3.3	18.2
Opioids	30.0	57.3	39.9	*4.0	57.3	*5.8	13.9	26.2
Other analgesics	31.8	87.8	9.5	*2.7	87.8	*6.3	—	*5.9
Total males using analgesics(e)	2 080.2	75.5	20.0	6.6	75.5	2.4	2.5	21.7
FEMALES								
Aspirin	507.3	50.8	44.2	5.5	50.8	1.8	4.3	43.5
Paracetamol	1 831.8	87.7	5.9	6.5	87.7	1.8	1.6	9.0
Aspirin combinations	30.2	77.2	15.2	7.6	77.2	*5.3	**1.1	16.4
Paracetamol combinations	407.5	76.8	15.6	9.4	76.8	3.9	2.6	18.4
Opioids	32.2	64.1	38.8	**1.2	64.1	9.0	*5.7	25.3
Other analgesics	44.4	79.0	12.3	8.7	79.0	5.4	*4.2	11.4
Total females using analgesics(e)	2 645.3	81.0	14.9	6.9	81.0	2.4	2.4	17.0
PERSONS								
Aspirin	1 052.6	45.3	49.8	5.3	45.3	1.4	4.8	48.9
Paracetamol	3 134.1	87.8	5.9	6.4	87.8	1.9	1.3	9.1
Aspirin combinations	56.6	79.4	14.5	6.1	79.4	4.4	*1.0	15.1
Paracetamol combinations	686.7	75.5	15.8	10.0	75.5	4.6	2.9	18.3
Opioids	62.2	60.8	39.3	*2.5	60.8	7.4	9.7	25.7
Other analgesics	76.2	82.7	11.1	6.2	82.7	5.8	*2.5	9.1
Total persons using analgesics(e)	4 725.5	78.6	17.2	6.8	78.6	2.4	2.5	19.1

(a) See Appendix.

(b) Age and sex standardised to the Australian population. Numbers may therefore differ from unstandardised data shown elsewhere: see paragraphs 20 and 21 of Explanatory Notes.

(c) Percentage of persons using that type of analgesic.

(d) Includes those using analgesics on an 'as required/varies basis'.

(e) Persons may have reported use of more than one medication therefore components may not add to totals.

REASONS FOR USE(c).....

Types of analgesics	Number of persons using the medication		Reasons for use									
	'000	%	Headaches	Migraines	Arthritis	Back problems	All musculo-skeletal	Common cold/Influenza	All respiratory conditions	All circulatory conditions	All Dental problems	Alcohol and drug dependence
MALES												
Aspirin	545.3	26.7	0.8	2.2	*0.4	4.7	4.3	6.8	49.3	0.9	—	—
Paracetamol	1 302.4	56.3	1.3	3.6	2.8	10.3	11.6	15.5	0.3	4.1	—	—
Aspirin combinations	26.4	28.2	11.4	*4.9	*7.3	17.4	15.3	22.1	—	*3.4	—	—
Paracetamol combinations	279.2	27.4	5.0	6.9	12.3	36.4	4.6	7.7	1.2	5.9	—	—
Opioids	30.0	*3.9	*4.1	*3.9	9.1	34.0	*6.4	12.0	*3.2	**0.8	12.0	—
Other analgesics	31.8	29.0	*6.9	*5.5	*7.0	25.6	—	—	*3.9	12.7	—	—
Total males using analgesics(d)	2 080.2	45.6	1.8	3.8	3.6	12.7	8.9	12.5	13.3	3.6	0.2	—
FEMALES												
Aspirin	507.3	33.9	1.9	3.5	1.4	8.9	4.4	8.1	36.4	0.6	—	1.4
Paracetamol	1 831.8	58.2	2.5	5.7	2.2	11.8	8.6	13.2	0.4	3.2	—	3.7
Aspirin combinations	30.2	40.4	13.0	*7.4	*4.0	21.7	*4.0	10.1	**0.1	*3.2	—	—
Paracetamol combinations	407.5	32.2	15.2	11.9	7.8	30.3	3.5	6.5	*0.3	3.7	—	2.9
Opioids	32.2	*1.9	8.0	*7.1	*6.4	20.7	*4.2	8.5	*3.1	*6.3	7.7	**0.5
Other analgesics	44.4	31.5	14.9	*1.6	*4.9	21.3	*2.7	6.7	**0.5	6.6	—	9.2
Total females using analgesics(d)	2 645.3	51.2	4.5	6.2	2.9	14.2	7.3	11.7	7.3	2.8	0.1	3.3
PERSONS												
Aspirin	1 052.6	30.1	1.3	2.8	0.9	6.7	4.4	7.4	43.0	0.7	—	0.7
Paracetamol	3 134.1	57.4	2.0	4.8	2.4	11.2	9.9	14.1	0.4	3.6	—	2.1
Aspirin combinations	56.6	34.7	12.3	6.2	5.5	19.7	9.2	15.7	**0.6	*3.3	—	—
Paracetamol combinations	686.7	30.2	11.0	9.8	9.7	32.8	3.9	7.0	0.7	4.6	—	1.7
Opioids	62.2	*2.8	6.1	5.6	7.7	27.1	5.2	10.2	*3.1	*3.6	9.8	**0.3
Other analgesics	76.2	30.5	11.5	3.2	5.8	23.1	*1.6	3.9	*1.9	9.2	—	5.3
Total persons using analgesics(d)	4 725.5	48.7	3.3	5.2	3.2	13.5	8.0	12.0	10.0	3.2	0.1	1.9

(a) See Appendix.

(b) Age and sex standardised to the Australian population. Numbers may therefore differ from unstandardised data shown elsewhere: see paragraphs 20 and 21 of Explanatory Notes.

(c) Percentage of persons using that type of analgesic. Only selected reasons for use are shown. Persons may have reported more than one reason for use, therefore components may not add to 100%.

(d) Persons may have reported using more than one type of medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

AGE GROUP (YEARS).....

Types of medication	Number of males using the medication	AGE GROUP (YEARS)					Total
		0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	
MALES							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Psycholeptic medications							
Anti-psychotics							
Thioridazine	11.8	*2.4	*8.7	7.4	*1.8	3.6	4.2
Other anti-psychotics	35.7	**0.8	25.6	18.7	13.2	7.5	12.5
Total(b)	46.3	*3.2	34.3	24.4	15.0	11.1	16.3
Anxiolytics							
Diazepam	42.3	**0.2	*12.2	15.7	18.8	15.5	14.9
Oxazepam	25.5	—	*6.8	4.3	8.9	17.0	8.9
Other anti-psychotics	8.0	—	*5.4	*2.2	4.8	*1.5	2.8
Total(b)	74.0	**0.2	22.7	22.0	31.5	33.5	26.0
Hypnotics and sedatives							
Nitrazepam	12.2	—	**0.9	3.9	3.1	8.2	4.3
Temazepam	37.6	—	*7.2	13.8	11.5	20.7	13.2
Other hypnotics and sedatives	11.6	*3.7	*4.7	5.5	4.1	*2.7	4.1
Total(b)	61.0	*3.7	*12.8	23.3	18.7	31.1	21.4
Total males using psycholeptic medications(b)	159.6	*7.0	62.9	59.1	58.9	66.4	56.0
Anti-depressants							
Amitriptyline	25.1	—	—	7.9	14.0	8.9	8.8
Dothiepin	26.9	—	*13.4	13.7	11.2	6.1	9.5
Doxepin	11.9	**0.7	—	*2.3	4.8	7.4	4.2
Fluoxetine	22.9	—	*5.2	13.0	10.5	4.1	8.0
Other anti-depressants	71.1	96.1	24.9	17.6	16.4	15.7	25.0
Total(b)	156.1	96.8	43.5	53.4	55.7	42.1	54.8
Total males using psycholeptics and anti-depressants (b)	284.8	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
		'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total males using psycholeptics and anti-depressants	..	28.4	16.4	73.2	89.0	77.7	284.8

(a) See Appendix.

(b) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

AGE GROUP (YEARS).....

Types of medication	Number of females using the medication	AGE GROUP (YEARS)					Total
		0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	
FEMALES							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Psycholeptic medications							
Anti-psychotics							
Thioridazine	9.2	—	*3.5	*1.2	2.4	2.9	2.3
Other anti-psychotics	35.6	**5.5	*14.3	12.5	11.1	4.2	8.9
Total(b)	43.4	**5.5	*17.8	13.6	12.7	7.1	10.9
Anxiolytics							
Diazepam	63.4	*10.0	*17.2	13.3	20.0	13.9	15.9
Oxazepam	40.6	—	—	3.3	11.0	15.3	10.2
Other anti-psychotics	20.6	—	**2.0	4.4	5.6	5.8	5.2
Total(b)	123.4	*10.0	19.2	20.8	36.2	34.7	30.9
Hypnotics and sedatives							
Nitrazepam	23.4	—	**2.4	*1.4	4.6	10.6	5.9
Temazepam	60.2	—	*15.5	13.8	12.6	18.9	15.1
Other hypnotics and sedatives	19.0	*13.9	*16.0	4.3	5.1	3.3	4.8
Total(b)	100.9	*13.9	29.1	19.5	21.8	32.5	25.3
Total females using psycholeptic medications(b)	251.8	*29.4	57.8	51.3	66.3	69.9	63.1
Anti-depressants							
Amitriptyline	33.5	—	*13.6	6.0	7.7	10.6	8.4
Dothiepin	36.4	—	*5.7	12.4	12.9	4.2	9.1
Doxepin	34.0	**0.6	**1.4	6.2	11.1	8.6	8.5
Fluoxetine	29.6	**0.9	*16.8	13.4	7.8	2.6	7.4
Other anti-depressants	84.3	71.6	22.4	26.1	16.8	19.3	21.1
Total(b)	208.2	73.1	58.4	61.0	52.6	44.4	52.1
Total females using psycholeptics and anti-depressants(b)	399.3	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
		'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total females using psycholeptics and anti-depressants	..	6.9	12.7	96.9	136.1	146.7	399.3

(a) See Appendix.

(b) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

AGE GROUP (YEARS).....

Types of medication	Number of persons using the medication	AGE GROUP (YEARS)					Total
		0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	
PERSONS							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Psycholeptic medications							
Anti-psychotics							
Thioridazine	21.1	*1.9	*6.4	3.9	2.2	3.1	3.1
Other anti-psychotics	71.3	*1.7	20.7	15.2	11.9	5.3	10.4
Total(b)	89.8	*3.6	27.1	18.3	13.6	8.5	13.1
Anxiolytics							
Diazepam	105.8	*2.1	14.4	14.3	19.5	14.5	15.5
Oxazepam	66.1	—	*3.8	3.8	10.2	15.9	9.7
Other anti-psychotics	28.6	—	*3.9	3.5	5.3	4.3	4.2
Total(b)	197.4	*2.1	21.1	21.3	34.3	34.3	28.9
Hypnotics and sedatives							
Nitrazepam	35.6	—	*1.5	2.5	4.0	9.8	5.2
Temazepam	97.8	—	10.8	13.8	12.2	19.5	14.3
Other hypnotics and sedatives	30.6	*5.7	9.7	4.8	4.7	3.1	4.5
Total(b)	161.9	*5.7	19.9	21.1	20.6	32.0	23.7
Total persons using psycholeptic medications(b)	411.4	11.4	60.6	54.6	63.4	68.7	60.1
Anti-depressants							
Amitriptyline	58.7	—	*5.9	6.8	10.2	10.0	8.6
Dothiepin	63.3	—	10.0	12.9	12.2	4.8	9.3
Doxepin	45.9	**0.7	**0.6	4.5	8.6	8.2	6.7
Fluoxetine	52.5	**0.2	10.3	13.2	8.8	3.1	7.7
Other anti-depressants	155.4	91.3	23.8	22.4	16.7	18.0	22.7
Total(b)	364.4	92.2	50.0	57.7	53.8	43.6	53.3
Total persons using psycholeptics and anti-depressants(b)	684.1	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
		'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total persons using psycholeptics and anti-depressants	..	35.3	29.1	170.1	225.1	224.4	684.1

(a) See Appendix.

(b) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

Types of medication	Number of persons using the medication '000	PRESCRIBED OR ADVISED(c)(d).....		SOURCE OF ADVICE(c)(d).....		
		Prescribed	Advised	GP	Medical specialist	OHP(e)
		%	%	%	%	%
Psycholeptic medications						
Anti-psychotics						
Thioridazine	21.0	99.0	99.3	50.9	49.1	—
Other anti-psychotics	71.2	94.2	100.0	43.5	53.6	*3.1
<i>Total(f)</i>	89.6	95.2	99.8	45.7	52.0	*2.5
Anxiolytics						
Diazepam	105.2	98.5	99.6	81.4	17.7	*0.9
Oxazepam	66.0	100.0	99.6	91.8	8.2	—
Other anti-psychotics	28.4	96.0	97.7	75.4	24.6	—
<i>Total(f)</i>	196.5	98.6	99.5	84.1	15.6	*0.5
Hypnotics and sedatives						
Nitrazepam	35.5	96.9	97.0	89.4	10.6	—
Temazepam	98.1	98.5	98.0	87.0	13.0	—
Other hypnotics and sedatives	30.5	80.1	93.5	63.3	28.4	8.3
<i>Total(f)</i>	161.9	94.7	96.9	83.7	14.8	1.5
<i>Total persons using psycholeptic medications(f)</i>	410.6	96.7	98.5	77.8	22.4	1.4
Anti-depressants						
Amitriptyline	59.2	100.0	99.5	72.3	27.7	—
Dothiepin	63.6	99.7	99.7	73.4	26.7	**0.5
Doxepin	45.6	97.0	98.8	79.4	20.6	—
Fluoxetine	52.6	100.0	100.0	44.3	53.6	*2.1
Other anti-depressants	154.8	97.5	99.1	50.3	48.3	2.5
<i>Total(f)</i>	364.2	98.5	99.3	60.9	38.4	1.5
Total persons using psycholeptics and anti-depressants(f)	683.2	97.9	99.0	71.8	29.9	1.2

(a) See Appendix.

(b) Age and sex standardised to the Australian population. Numbers may therefore differ from unstandardised data shown elsewhere: see paragraphs 20 and 21 of Explanatory Notes.

(c) Relates only to those who had been advised to use the medication.

(d) Percentage of persons using that type of psycholeptic or anti-depressant.

(e) Includes advice obtained from chemists.

(f) Persons may have reported use of more than one medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

Types of medication	Number of persons using the medication '000	FREQUENCY OF USE(c).....			DURATION OF REGULAR USE(c).....			
		Not taken regularly(d) %	Every day and/or night %	1-6 days and/or nights per week %	Not taken regularly(d) %	Less than 1 month %	1 month to less than 6 months %	6 months or more %
Psycholeptic medications								
Anti-psychotics								
Thioridazine	21.0	*4.8	90.7	*4.4	*4.8	*5.6	*4.8	84.7
Other anti-psychotics	71.2	12.4	85.8	*3.2	12.4	*0.7	7.2	81.1
Total(e)	89.6	11.0	86.8	3.5	11.0	*1.9	6.8	82.0
Anxiolytics								
Diazepam	105.2	38.1	54.1	7.8	38.1	4.7	6.5	50.7
Oxazepam	66.0	19.1	71.6	9.3	19.1	*2.3	3.6	75.0
Other anti-psychotics	28.4	12.8	82.1	*5.1	12.8	*4.8	11.9	70.6
Total(e)	196.5	28.5	63.7	7.9	28.5	4.0	6.4	61.4
Hypnotics and sedatives								
Nitrazepam	35.5	19.2	67.6	13.2	19.2	*2.9	*4.3	73.6
Temazepam	98.1	40.8	46.4	12.8	40.8	6.1	6.5	47.0
Other hypnotics and sedatives	30.5	35.0	56.3	8.7	35.0	**0.9	8.2	55.9
Total(e)	161.9	35.3	52.7	12.3	35.3	4.1	6.4	54.5
Total persons using psycholeptic medications(e)	410.6	28.7	64.5	8.9	28.7	3.9	6.9	62.9
Anti-depressants								
Amitriptyline	59.2	12.8	83.3	*3.9	12.8	4.1	11.5	71.6
Dothiepin	63.6	4.9	93.9	*1.2	4.9	6.0	18.8	70.3
Doxepin	45.6	12.3	81.9	5.8	12.3	6.3	11.8	69.6
Fluoxetine	52.6	*2.6	93.1	*4.3	*2.6	5.4	16.4	75.5
Other anti-depressants	154.8	2.5	94.3	3.2	2.5	10.7	19.9	67.6
Total(e)	364.2	5.9	90.6	3.5	5.9	7.8	17.4	70.5
Total persons using psycholeptics and anti-depressants(e)	683.2	19.4	76.6	7.1	19.4	6.2	12.9	66.7

(a) See Appendix.

(b) Age and sex standardised to Australian population. Numbers may therefore differ from unstandardised data shown elsewhere: see paragraphs 20 and 21 of Explanatory Notes.

(c) Percentage of persons using that type of psycholeptic or anti-depressant.

(d) Includes those using analgesics less than once a week or on an 'as required/varies' basis.

(e) Persons may have reported use of more than one medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

REASONS FOR USE(c).....

Types of medication	Number of persons using the medication '000	Nerves, tension, nervousness %	Depression %	Psychoses %	All mental disorders(d) %	Insomnia %	All musculo-skeletal disorders %
Psycholeptic medications							
Anti-psychotics							
Thioridazine	21.0	25.9	19.0	20.0	77.6	*9.4	**0.8
Other anti-psychotics	71.2	24.5	28.9	26.7	81.4	*1.4	*0.8
<i>Total(e)</i>	89.6	24.8	26.8	23.8	79.9	3.3	*0.8
Anxiolytics							
Diazepam	105.2	39.4	8.1	*1.3	48.3	12.6	19.7
Oxazepam	66.0	35.0	7.2	—	41.2	46.2	6.6
Other anti-psychotics	28.4	55.2	15.1	**0.9	69.4	16.9	*2.0
<i>Total(e)</i>	196.5	40.8	8.4	*0.8	49.1	24.4	12.9
Hypnotics and sedatives							
Nitrazepam	35.5	8.2	**1.1	—	10.1	77.2	7.8
Temazepam	98.1	10.8	*1.4	*0.9	14.3	69.2	6.4
Other hypnotics and sedatives	30.5	*3.9	12.6	*7.3	24.3	42.3	*4.9
<i>Total(e)</i>	161.9	9.1	3.4	1.9	15.5	66.2	6.5
<i>Total persons using psycholeptic medications(e)</i>	410.6	27.0	9.9	5.6	43.3	38.0	8.7
Anti-depressants							
Amitriptyline	59.2	18.2	19.6	*1.1	38.6	15.0	16.9
Dothiepin	63.6	25.7	44.6	*1.5	68.4	13.3	9.9
Doxepin	45.6	23.6	29.4	—	54.2	22.8	9.3
Fluoxetine	52.6	20.4	71.9	*4.0	94.9	*3.2	**0.6
Other anti-depressants	154.8	22.9	34.3	*1.0	78.8	4.7	*1.3
<i>Total(e)</i>	364.2	22.7	37.9	1.4	70.2	9.8	6.3
Total persons using psycholeptics and anti-depressants(e)	683.2	25.8	23.5	3.3	56.1	26.8	8.1

(a) See Appendix.

(b) Age and sex standardised to Australian Population. Numbers may therefore differ from unstandardised data shown elsewhere: see paragraphs 20 and 21 of Explanatory Notes.

(c) Percentage of persons using that type of psycholeptic or anti-depressant. Only selected reasons for use are shown. Persons may have reported more than one reason for taking a medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

(d) Includes nerves, tension, nervousness, depression, psychoses, emotional problems and other mental disorders.

(e) Persons may have reported use of more than one medication, therefore components do not add to totals.

AGE GROUP (YEARS).....

Reasons for use(a)	Number of persons using the medication	AGE GROUP (YEARS)					Total
		0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	
MALES							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Diseases of the blood and blood forming organs	13.4	*0.5	*0.4	0.5	0.6	2.4	0.7
Common cold	39.4	3.4	2.8	1.9	1.4	*1.0	2.1
All respiratory conditions	89.5	5.2	4.7	5.2	4.0	3.8	4.7
Disorders of menstruation	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Arthritis	19.3	—	—	**0.1	2.5	3.2	1.0
All musculoskeletal disorders	31.9	—	*0.4	0.5	3.8	4.7	1.7
Symptoms, signs and ill-defined conditions(b)	51.1	2.0	4.1	4.0	1.4	*0.7	2.7
Preventive measures	1 646.0	90.0	87.0	86.2	85.3	80.2	86.1
Other healthy reasons	18.7	*0.7	1.1	1.1	0.6	1.8	1.0
Total males using vitamins and minerals(c)	1 912.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
FEMALES							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Diseases of the blood and blood forming organs	99.7	*0.2	6.4	4.1	3.4	2.8	3.6
Common cold	60.9	4.1	3.7	2.0	1.8	*0.3	2.2
All respiratory conditions	106.8	5.3	6.0	3.9	3.3	1.5	3.9
Disorders of menstruation	59.1	—	0.6	3.1	3.7	—	2.1
Arthritis	47.6	—	*0.2	0.3	3.6	5.2	1.7
All musculoskeletal disorders	86.6	—	*0.6	0.9	6.4	8.7	3.1
Symptoms, signs and ill-defined conditions(b)	97.5	1.4	3.8	5.1	2.4	3.0	3.5
Preventive measures	2 121.8	90.3	74.7	74.0	77.0	77.9	77.2
Other healthy reasons	40.9	*0.5	1.6	1.9	0.9	2.1	1.5
Total females using vitamins and minerals(c)	2 748.3	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
PERSONS							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Diseases of the blood and blood forming organs	113.1	0.4	3.8	2.7	2.3	2.6	2.4
Common cold	100.3	3.7	3.3	2.0	1.7	0.6	2.2
All respiratory conditions	196.3	5.2	5.4	4.4	3.6	2.4	4.2
Disorders of menstruation	59.1	—	0.4	1.9	2.2	—	1.3
Arthritis	66.9	—	*0.1	0.2	3.2	4.4	1.4
All musculoskeletal disorders	118.5	—	0.5	0.7	5.4	7.2	2.5
Symptoms, signs and ill-defined conditions(b)	148.6	1.7	3.9	4.7	2.0	2.2	3.2
Preventive measures	3 767.8	90.2	80.1	78.7	80.3	78.8	80.8
Other healthy reasons	59.5	0.6	1.4	1.6	0.8	2.0	1.3
Total persons using vitamins and minerals(c)	4 660.3	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total persons using vitamins and minerals	..	316.6	293.2	620.6	472.2	209.3	1 912.0
Males	..	312.0	380.6	1 001.5	700.3	353.9	2 748.3
Females	..	628.7	673.8	1 622.0	1 172.6	563.3	4 660.3

(a) Only selected reasons for use are shown.

(b) See Glossary.

(c) Persons may have reported more than one condition, therefore components do not add to totals.

AGE GROUP (YEARS).....

Reasons for use(a)	Number of persons using the medication	AGE GROUP (YEARS)					Total
		0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	
MALES							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Common cold	16.5	4.8	3.7	3.0	1.8	*1.0	2.7
All respiratory conditions	69.6	19.2	16.3	11.5	8.3	5.1	11.3
Digestive conditions	30.5	8.5	*2.3	3.0	3.5	11.0	4.9
Disorders of menstruation	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Arthritis	26.4	—	**0.2	1.6	9.5	7.0	4.3
All musculoskeletal disorders	39.7	*1.1	*1.2	3.8	12.5	9.1	6.4
Symptoms, signs and ill-defined conditions(b)	23.2	6.6	5.1	3.4	3.0	*2.4	3.7
Preventive measures	387.4	53.2	62.9	68.8	61.1	60.9	62.7
Other healthy reasons	8.7	*2.5	**0.1	1.9	**0.2	2.9	1.4
Total males using herbal and natural preparations(c)	618.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
FEMALES							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Common cold	31.5	10.6	5.9	2.3	2.0	*1.0	2.9
All respiratory conditions	101.6	20.4	12.8	9.1	8.2	5.6	9.4
Digestive conditions	62.8	5.0	5.3	5.0	3.6	12.3	5.8
Disorders of menstruation	66.8	**0.3	3.9	8.0	9.3	—	6.2
Arthritis	56.5	—	**0.3	1.6	7.5	14.3	5.2
All musculoskeletal disorders	75.4	—	*1.8	3.4	9.6	16.1	7.0
Symptoms, signs and ill-defined conditions(b)	67.0	8.3	8.1	5.7	6.0	5.5	6.2
Preventive measures	590.4	51.5	52.2	54.4	54.9	56.5	54.5
Other healthy reasons	23.4	*1.4	*1.2	3.4	1.7	*1.2	2.2
Total females using herbal and natural preparations(c)	1 083.8	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
PERSONS							
	'000	%	%	%	%	%	%
Common cold	48.0	7.4	5.1	2.5	1.9	1.0	2.8
All respiratory conditions	171.2	19.7	14.1	9.9	8.2	5.4	10.0
Digestive conditions	93.3	6.9	4.2	4.4	3.5	11.9	5.5
Disorders of menstruation	66.8	**0.2	2.4	5.3	6.1	—	3.9
Arthritis	82.9	—	*0.3	1.6	8.2	11.9	4.9
All musculoskeletal disorders	115.1	*0.6	1.6	3.5	10.6	13.8	6.8
Symptoms, signs and ill-defined conditions(b)	90.1	7.4	7.0	4.9	5.0	4.5	5.3
Preventive measures	977.9	52.4	56.2	59.3	57.1	58.0	57.5
Other healthy reasons	32.1	2.0	*0.8	2.9	1.2	1.8	1.9
Total persons using herbal and natural preparations(c)	1 701.7	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total using herbal and natural preparations							
Males	..	84.0	68.5	201.1	178.1	86.2	618.0
Females	..	70.5	114.7	392.0	331.3	175.2	1 083.8
Persons	..	154.5	183.2	593.1	509.4	261.4	1 701.7

(a) Only selected reasons for use are shown.

(b) See Glossary.

(c) Persons may have reported more than one condition, therefore components do not add to totals.

AGE GROUP (YEARS).....

Self-assessed health status(a)	Number of persons using the medication	AGE GROUP (YEARS)				Total
		15-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	
VITAMINS AND MINERALS						
	'000	%	%	%	%	%
Excellent	778.0	23.7	20.8	18.6	11.2	19.3
Very good	1 474.6	38.6	42.0	34.0	23.9	36.6
Good	1 114.5	26.8	25.8	29.4	30.3	27.6
Fair	515.3	9.6	9.3	14.0	24.0	12.8
Poor	149.2	1.3	2.1	4.1	10.6	3.7
Total persons who used vitamins and minerals	4 031.6	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
		'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total persons aged 15 years and over	..	673.8	1 622.0	1 172.6	563.3	4 031.6
HERBAL AND NATURAL PREPARATIONS						
	'000	%	%	%	%	%
Excellent	266.8	18.6	20.3	17.3	9.2	17.2
Very good	535.2	39.2	40.6	31.2	24.4	34.6
Good	447.2	29.2	26.6	30.5	30.8	28.9
Fair	218.3	10.6	9.9	16.3	21.9	14.1
Poor	79.8	2.4	2.6	4.7	13.7	5.2
Total persons who used herbal and natural preparations	1 547.2	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
		'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total persons aged 15 years and over	..	183.2	593.1	509.4	261.4	1 547.2

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over.

17

MEDICATION TYPES(a) WITHIN OTHER MEDICATIONS CATEGORY, By Sex

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
	%	%	%
Antibiotics	25.9	19.5	21.9
Medicines for endocrine and metabolic system(b)	3.6	31.5	20.9
Eye medications	20.0	15.2	17.0
Medications for the musculoskeletal system	22.2	9.4	14.3
Medications for the central nervous system	7.9	6.5	7.0
Medications for ear, nose and oropharynx	7.7	6.3	6.9
Contraceptives	0.1	10.3	6.4
Total(c)	100.0	100.0	100.0
	no.	no.	no.
Total persons using other medications	897	1 452	2 349
Total persons in sub-sample	6 466	6 809	13 275

- (a) Unweighted record counts derived from a sub-sample of NHS records.
See paragraphs 17 and 18 of Explanatory Notes.
- (b) Includes thyroid hormones and antithyroid medications, adrenal steroids, pituitary and gonadal hormones.
- (c) Only those medications most commonly used are shown, therefore components do not add to totals.

18

ANTIBIOTICS(a), By Age and Sex

AGE GROUP (YEARS).....

	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	Total
	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
MALES						
Using antibiotics	82	31	57	32	30	232
Total in sub-sample	1 471	916	2 047	1 385	647	6 466
FEMALES						
Using antibiotics	65	55	92	39	32	283
Total in sub-sample	1 527	964	2 164	1 367	787	6 809
PERSONS						
Using antibiotics	147	86	149	71	62	515
Total in sub-sample	2 998	1 880	4 211	2 752	1 434	13 275

- (a) Unweighted record counts derived from a sub-sample of NHS records.
See paragraphs 17 and 18 of Explanatory Notes.

AGE GROUP (YEARS).....

	<i>Number of persons in sub-sample</i>	AGE GROUP (YEARS).....					<i>Total</i>
		0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	
	no.	%	%	%	%	%	%
Sex							
Males	232	35.3	13.4	24.6	13.8	12.9	100.0
Females	283	23.0	19.4	32.5	13.8	11.3	100.0
Persons	515	28.5	16.7	28.9	13.8	12.0	100.0
Health status(b)							
Excellent	52	n.a.	15.1	16.1	14.1	8.1	14.1
Very good	127	n.a.	50.0	40.3	25.4	9.7	34.5
Good	97	n.a.	20.9	24.8	31.0	32.3	26.4
Fair	60	n.a.	8.1	11.4	26.8	27.4	16.3
Poor	32	n.a.	5.8	7.4	2.8	22.6	8.7
Total	368	n.a.	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Selected reasons for use(c)							
Cough/sore throat	48	10.2	11.6	10.1	8.5	3.2	9.3
All respiratory conditions	221	40.8	44.2	45.0	36.6	48.4	42.9
Skin and subcutaneous tissue	64	8.8	26.7	11.4	9.9	8.1	12.4
Otitis media	50	24.5	5.8	4.7	2.8	—	9.7
All diseases of the ear and mastoid process	57	26.5	5.8	7.4	2.8	—	11.1
Genitourinary	37	2.7	5.8	9.4	11.3	11.3	7.2
Digestive conditions	36	4.8	7.0	6.7	15.5	3.2	7.0
Total	515	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of antibiotics used							
One	479	96.6	93.0	91.3	88.7	93.5	93.0
Two or more	36	3.4	7.0	8.7	11.3	6.5	7.0
Total persons using antibiotics	515	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Unweighted record counts derived from a sub-sample of NHS records.
See paragraphs 17 and 18 of Explanatory Notes.

(b) Self-assessed health status only collected for those aged 15 years and more.

(c) Only selected reasons for use are shown, therefore components do not add to totals.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication provides information on the use of medications, vitamins and minerals, and herbal and natural preparations. The information is sourced from the 1995 National Health Survey (NHS). The survey was designed to obtain national benchmark information on a range of health-related issues and to enable the monitoring of trends in health over time. A previous health survey, collecting broadly comparable data was conducted in 1989–90. The 1995 survey was conducted throughout the 12-month period February 1995 to January 1996.

2 Other topics covered in the survey included recent illness and long-term conditions; self-assessed health status, and general health and wellbeing; use of health services; days away from work and school and other days of reduced activity; smoking, alcohol consumption and exercise; height and weight; sun protection; breastfeeding; supplementary women's health issues; and injury/accidents. An extensive range of demographic and socioeconomic information was also obtained.

SCOPE

3 The estimates contained in this publication are based on information obtained from residents of a sample of private dwellings (houses, flats, etc.) and from some types of non-private dwellings (hotels, motels, and boarding houses). Other special dwellings, such as hospitals, nursing homes and prisons were excluded from the survey.

4 In total, 23,800 dwellings were included in the sample. Households were selected at random using a stratified multistage area sample which ensured that persons within each State and Territory had a known and, in the main, equal chance of selection in the survey.

5 At the request of the health authorities in Victoria, South Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, the survey sample in those areas was increased to enhance the reliability of estimates.

6 Certain groups of persons such as non-Australian diplomatic personnel, persons from overseas holidaying in Australia, members of non-Australian defence forces and their dependants stationed in Australia, and students at boarding schools were excluded from the survey.

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

7 In order to maximise the capacity of the survey, some sections of the questionnaire, including questions relating to alcohol consumption, were administered to half of the sample only. For output, weighted estimates for all items, regardless of the particular sample in which they were included, relate to the total population of appropriate age and/or sex. However, some small differences in population estimates for full and sub-sampled topics have occurred as a result of the weighting process. Comprehensive details of the concepts, methodologies and procedures used in the NHS are provided in *National Health Survey: Users' Guide, 1995* (ABS Cat. no. 4363.0).

8 Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings they are subject to sampling variability; that is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey.

9 One measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error (SE), which indicates the extent to which estimates might have varied by chance because only a sample of dwellings was included.

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

10 Another measure of the likely difference is the relative standard error (RSE), which is obtained by expressing the SE as a percentage of the estimate. In this publication, only estimates with RSEs less than 25% are considered sufficiently reliable for most purposes. However, estimates with RSEs of 25% or more have been included and are preceded by one or two asterisks (e.g.*4.3) as explained in Notes on page 2 and should be used with caution. Tables of SEs are given in *National Health Survey: Summary of Results, 1995* (ABS Cat. no. 4364.0).

11 Information reported in the NHS is as reported by persons at interview, and hence may differ from that which might be obtained from other sources or via other methodologies. For example, reported information on medical conditions was not medically verified, and was not necessarily based on diagnoses by a medical practitioner. However, information that enabled classification of generic type of medication was verified where possible by reference to the medication container or packaging: see paragraphs 13 and 16.

METHODOLOGY

12 Persons at interview were asked whether in the last two weeks they had taken any vitamins or mineral supplements, and if so, the reasons they had been taken. Similar questions were also asked about the use of natural or herbal medicines in the previous two weeks. No information was collected about the types of vitamins, minerals, herbal or natural preparations used.

13 Respondents were then asked whether in the last two weeks they had used any medications (apart from vitamins, minerals, herbal or natural preparations). They were asked to provide the interviewer with names or brands for up to 12 medications they had used in that period. The total number of medications used in the last two weeks was separately collected. In an effort to record the correct name and spelling of the medicine, interviewers encouraged respondents to refer to the actual bottles or packets of the medications during interview.

14 Further information was collected about the first seven medications reported by the respondent. This information included:

- type of medication (as perceived by the respondent);
- reason(s) for use;
- whether the medication was taken on the advice of a health professional;
- type of health professional providing advice;
- whether a prescription was required to obtain the medication;
- regularity of use of medication;
- frequency of use of medications used regularly; and
- duration of use of medications used regularly.

15 For medications identified by persons at interview as being used for asthma, they were also asked whether these medications were used for prevention, for relief or both.

CLASSIFICATION OF MEDICATIONS

16 For the purposes of this survey, medications were recorded against two different classifications, 'self-reported' and 'generically coded':

- Types of medication referred to as self-reported were classified as reported by the person at interview and generally reflect their perception of the type of medication they had used. A listing of the self-reported medication types is contained in the Appendix.
- From the brand or type name recorded, medications were also classified by generic type, based on the World Health Organization's (WHO) Anatomical Therapeutic Chemical (ATC) Classification adapted for use in the survey. The classification used, although based on the ATC, covered selected types of medication only. Excerpts from this classification are contained in the Appendix; a copy of the complete classification used is included in *National Health Survey: Users' Guide, 1995* (ABS Cat. no. 4363.0).

OTHER MEDICATIONS

17 Medications that were not classified to a specific category were assigned to the 'other medications' group. As shown in table 1 an estimated 3.2 million people used medications from this group. In order to determine the types of medications contained in this group and the proportions of each type used by the population, analysis was undertaken of a sub-sample of records from one-quarter of the NHS. A separate file containing records of those persons who reported using a medication classified to the 'other medication' category was produced (2,349 records) and detailed re-coding of those medications was undertaken. The most common types of medication in this category are shown in table 17.

18 Information presented in this publication in the section on antibiotics is based on 515 records of persons who used antibiotics identified in the sample of 2,349 recoded records described above. In interpreting these results the following issues should be kept in mind:

- In the main, results are presented as proportions of those using antibiotics. Records have not been weighted as would normally occur with standard survey output.
- Results are based on information obtained in the final quarter (November 1995 to January 1996) of NHS enumeration, and may therefore be subject to seasonal bias.

COMPARABILITY BETWEEN SURVEYS

19 Due to changes in survey methodology, information collected in the 1995 NHS on types of medication used are only comparable at the broadest level with those obtained in the previous NHS conducted in 1989–90. This is primarily the result of expanded coding frames for collecting data on this topic. Differences in methodologies of both surveys and their impact on comparability of data are discussed in the *National Health Survey: Users' Guide, 1995* (ABS Cat. no. 4363.0).

STANDARDISATION

20 Standardisation is a technique used when comparing estimates for populations which have different structures. Where indicated in the text and tables in this publication data have been age and/or sex standardised.

21 Standardised rates or proportions show the medication usage levels and patterns which would occur in different populations if they had the same age and sex composition as the standard population. The standard population used in this publication is the estimated total Australian population used in benchmarking the 1995 NHS. As a result of the age standardisation process, some minor discrepancies may occur between tables showing estimates by age and sex, and tables showing standardised data.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

22 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publications draw extensively on information provided freely by individuals, businesses, governments and other organisations. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated: without it, the wide range of statistics published by the ABS would not be available. Information received by the ABS is treated in strict confidence as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

23 This publication is one of a series of publications and other releases of information from the 1995 NHS. Information about all the publications and other products released, or to be released, is contained in the brochure *National Health Survey: Guide to Products and Services* which is available free of charge from any office of the ABS. Other publications which may be of interest include:

National Health Survey: Summary of Results, 1995
(ABS Cat. no. 4364.0)

National Health Survey: Summary Results, Australian States and Territories, 1995 (ABS Cat. no. 4368.0)

National Health Survey: Users' Guide, 1995 (ABS Cat. no. 4363.0)

APPENDIX

TYPE OF MEDICATION: SELF-REPORTED

In the survey, people were asked to categorise, according to the list below, each medication they had used (excluding vitamins, minerals, and herbal and natural preparations) in the previous two weeks, up to a maximum of seven medications.

TYPE OF MEDICATION, Self-reported

.....

- Medication for diabetes
- Asthma medications
- Medications for arthritis
- Medication for cough/colds
- Skin ointments/creams
- Stomach medications
- Laxatives
- Medications for allergies
- Fluid tablets/diuretics
- Medications for heart problems/blood pressure
- Medications to lower cholesterol/triglycerides
- Pain relievers
- Sleeping medications
- Medications for anxiety/nervous tension/depression
- Tranquillisers or sedatives not included above
- Other medications

.....

Self-reported type tends to reflect the reasons medications were used, rather than the chemical or physiological nature of the medication. To the extent that a medication can be used for a variety of different purposes, it may be classified under different types. For example, aspirin may be commonly reported by persons at interview as a pain reliever, as a medication for arthritis and as a medication for heart problems/blood pressure.

Self-reported type of medication is used in tables 1–5 in this publication.

TYPE OF MEDICATION: GENERIC

From reported brand or medication name, some medications were office-coded by generic type, based on WHO's ATC classification. Generic coding was limited to those medications for which a high priority had been identified during development of the survey. Generic types separately classified were:

- diabetes medications;
- asthma medications;
- medications for arthritis;
- medications for allergies;
- medications for heart problems and blood pressure;
- fluid tablets/diuretics;
- serum lipid reducing agents;
- analgesics;
- psycholeptic medications; and
- anti-depressants.

While in the main the generic groups loosely correspond to many of the self-reported medication types, they are not synonymous. For example, while the majority of analgesics are medications described by respondents as pain relievers, analgesics also include medications described by respondents for heart/blood pressure, for coughs/colds, and various other types of medication.

Only analgesics, psycholeptics and anti-depressants are discussed in this publication. Information about these medications, and their linkages with self-reported types of medications, are set out below.

APPENDIX *continued*

ANALGESICS

For 91% of persons who reported taking pain relievers, the medications used were classified to generic types within the analgesics group. This group comprised two main categories:

- opioids, e.g. morphine and pethidine; and
- other analgesics and anti-pyretics, e.g. aspirin, paracetamol and combinations of these.

Also classified to the generic analgesics group were some medications from other self-reported medication types, principally medications for arthritis and asthma. The net effect of these changes was to increase the estimated number of people using pain relievers from 4,265,200 to 4,727,100 using analgesics.

GENERIC TYPE OF SELF-REPORTED PAIN RELIEVERS

Reported type	Analgesics						Total(a)	Persons using pain relievers '000
	%	Heart/ blood pressure medications	Arthritis medications	Asthma medications	Tranquillisers and sedatives	Other medications		
Pain relievers	91.4	0.4	5.3	1.0	0.6	7.0	100.0	4 265.2

(a) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components may not add to totals.

SELF-REPORTED TYPE OF GENERIC ANALGESICS

Generic type	Pain relievers						Total(b)	Persons using analgesics '000
	%	Heart/ blood pressure medications	Arthritis medications	Medications for asthma, coughs/cold, allergies	Sleeping medications and anti-depressants(a)	Other medications		
Analgesics	82.5	8.1	1.2	5.1	0.7	4.6	100.0	4 727.1

(a) Includes medications for sleeping, tranquillisers, anti-depressants, sedatives, medications for anxiety, nervous tension and depression.

(b) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components may not add to totals.

PSYCHOLEPTIC MEDICATIONS AND ANTI-DEPRESSANTS

Medications in the self-reported categories, covering tranquillisers, sedatives and sleeping medications, were generically coded; the most relevant generic categories (see Glossary) were:

- psycholeptic medications, comprising anti-psychotics, anxiolytics, hypnotics and sedatives; and
- anti-depressants.

However, as with pain relievers, some differences between self-reported and generically coded medication types were identified. For over 70% of people who reported using medications in these groups, the medications used were classified to similar generic type groups. For example, for most of those who used medications for sleeping, the medications were generically coded to the psycholeptic group (73%), while 14% were coded to the group anti-depressants.

GENERIC TYPE OF SELF-REPORTED SLEEPING MEDICATIONS, TRANQUILLISERS AND SEDATIVES

Reported type	Psycholeptic medications	Anti-depressants	Analgesics	All other medications(a)	Total(b)	Persons using sleeping medications, tranquillisers and sedatives
	%	%	%	%	%	'000
Sleeping medications	73.4	14.2	6.2	7.7	100.0	265.6
Medications for anxiety, nervous tension, depression	38.1	61.7	3.1	14.2	100.0	395.9
Other tranquillisers and sedatives	44.5	27.2	5.0	26.9	100.0	79.3

(a) Includes medications for allergies, diabetes, coughs/colds, asthma, stomach, laxatives, vitamins/minerals, antibiotics, and skin ointments.

(b) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components may not add to totals.

SELF-REPORTED TYPE OF PSYCHOLEPTIC MEDICATIONS AND ANTI-DEPRESSANTS

Generic type	Sleeping medications	Anxiety, nervous tension, depression	Other tranquillisers and sedatives	Pain relievers	All other medications(a)	Total(b)	Persons using psycholeptic medications and anti-depressants
	%	%	%	%	%	%	'000
Psycholeptic medications	47.4	8.6	36.6	3.3	11.4	100.0	411.4
Anti-depressants	10.4	5.7	62.5	3.5	19.6	100.0	364.4

(a) Includes medications for allergies, diabetes, cough/colds, asthma, stomach, laxatives, vitamins/minerals, antibiotics, and skin ointments.

(b) Persons may have reported more than one type of medication, therefore components may not add to totals.

APPENDIX *continued*

Listed below are the generic types of analgesics and psycholeptic medications and anti-depressants classified in the 1995 NHS:

Analgesics

Opioids

Buprenorphine
Codeine phosphate
Dextromoramide
Dextropropoxyphene
Fentanyl citrate
Methadone
Morphine
Pethidine
Oxycodone
Papaveretum
Pentazocine
Phenoperidine

Other analgesics and anti-pyretics

Aspirin
Paracetamol
Aspirin combinations (including codeine phosphate, doxylamine, etc.)
Paracetamol combinations (including codeine phosphate, doxylamine, etc.)
Other analgesic medications

Psycholeptic medications

Anti-psychotics

Chlorpromazine
Fluphenazine
Haloperidol
Lithium
Pericyazine (a.k.a. Periciazine)
Perphenazine (including combinations)
Pimozide
Thioridazine
Tjoptjoxeme
Trifluoperazine
Clozapine
Risperidone
Alprazolam
Bromazepam
Buspirone
Clobazam
Chlordiazepoxide (including combinations)
Diazepam
Lorazepam
Meprobromate
Oxazepam
Potassium clorazepate

Hypnotics and sedatives

Amylobarbitone (a.k.a. Amobarbital)
Butobarbitone (a.k.a. Butobarbital)
Chloral hydrate
Chlormethiazole
Flunitrazepam
Flurazepam
Nitrazepam
Pentobarbitone (a.k.a. Pentobarbital)
Temazepam
Triazolam
Other psycholeptic medications

Anti-depressants

Anti-depressants

Amitriptyline
Clomipramine
Desipramine
Dothiepin
Doxepin
Fluoxetine
Imipramine
Mianserin
Moclobemide
Nortriptyline
Phenelzine
Tranlycypromine (including combinations)
Trimipramine
Paroxetine
Other medications for anxiety/depression/nervous conditions

GLOSSARY

Advised use Refers to medications taken on the advice of a health professional, i.e. a General Practitioner, medical specialist, chemist or other health professional. May include prescribed and non-prescribed medications.

Alcohol risk level Derived from the average daily consumption of alcohol and grouped into relative risk levels as defined by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) as follows:

<i>Risk level</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
	<i>mls</i>	<i>mls</i>
Low	Less than 50	Less than 25
Moderate	50–75	25–50
High	Greater than 75	Greater than 50

It should be noted that risk level as defined by the NHMRC is based on regular consumption of alcohol, whereas indicators derived in the National Health Survey do not take into account whether consumption in the reference week was more or less than usual or whether consumption was regular.

Analgesic An agent that alleviates pain, without causing loss of consciousness (refer to Appendix).

Anti-depressant An agent that stimulates mood.

Anti-pyretic An agent that relieves or reduces fever.

Body mass index (BMI) Based on height and weight as reported by respondents aged 15 years or more. Persons were grouped into four categories according to their BMI, derived by dividing weight (kg) by the square of height (m²). The four categories used are consistent with recommendations of the National Health and Medical Research Council and are shown in the following table.

<i>Category</i>	<i>Score</i>
Underweight	Less than 20
Acceptable weight	20–25
Overweight	Greater than 25–30
Obese	Greater than 30

Exercise level	This item relates to exercise undertaken for sport, recreation or fitness only by persons aged 15 years or more, and hence does not reflect the level of total physical activity. Exercise level was derived from information about the number of times exercise was undertaken in the two weeks prior to interview, the average length of each session and the intensity (i.e. vigorous, moderate or walking). The item is intended as a guide to the relative exercise level of persons, and should not be interpreted as necessarily indicative of level of fitness.
Health-related actions taken	Refers to specific actions taken by persons in relation to their health, in the two weeks prior to interview. Health-related actions shown separately are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ used medications; ▪ used vitamins and minerals; ▪ used herbal or natural preparations; ▪ consulted doctor; ▪ consulted dentist or other health professional; ▪ hospitalisation (including inpatient episode, visit to casualty or outpatients, and visit to day clinic); and ▪ reduced activity (including days away from work or school and other days of reduced activity due to illness or injury).
Herbal or natural preparations	Refers to a broad range of herbal or natural preparations as identified by respondents, which were used for preventive or health reasons only. This category includes: homeopathic preparations, flower essences, essential oils, aromatherapy and herbal mixtures.
Hospitalisation	Includes hospital inpatient episodes, visits to outpatients, casualty and emergency and visits to day clinics.
Medications	Includes any medicine (whether in the form of ointment, elixir, tablet, inhaler or injection) used for health or medical reasons.
Other health professionals	Defined for this survey to include: acupuncturists, audiologists/audiometrists, chiropractors, chemists, chiropodists/podiatrists, dieticians/nutritionists, herbalists, hypnotherapists, naturopaths, nurses, opticians/optometrists, osteopaths, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, psychologists, social workers/welfare officers, speech therapists/pathologists.
Other medications	Common types of medications classified to the 'other medications' group were contraceptives, ear, nose and throat preparations and heat rubs. A sample of medications originally classified to the 'other medications' group were recoded to categories broadly based on the Therapeutic Class Index presented in the 1995 MIMS Annual. ¹ The most commonly used medications were those in the following groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ antibiotics (22%); ▪ medicines for endocrine and metabolic disorders (21%) (includes treatments for hormone replacement and thyroid problems); and ▪ eye medications (17%).
Prescribed use	Refers to those medications for which a prescription was needed or were provided to the respondent by a doctor or hospital. Conceptually a subset of advised use.

¹ MIMS Australia, 1995 MIMS Annual, 19th Edition, Tien Wah Press (Pte.) Ltd, Singapore, May 1995.

Psycholeptics	An agent used in the treatment of psycholepsy, i.e. a sudden, intense lowering of mood level, usually of short duration (refer to the Appendix). Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ anti-psychotics (effective in the treatment of psychosis); ▪ anxiolytics (agents used to reduce anxiety); ▪ hypnotics (agents that act to induce sleep); and ▪ sedatives (agents that produce a quieting effect on the central nervous system).
Recent use of medications	Medications used in the previous two weeks.
Reduced activity	Refers to days on which a person cuts down on usual activities for all or most of the day. Days off work or school are included in this item.
Self-assessed health status	Collected for persons aged 15 years or more, and refers to the respondent's perception of his or her general health status, reported as excellent, very good, good, fair or poor.
Smoker status	Describes smoking status (current smokers, ex-smokers and never smoked) at the time of interview.
Symptoms, signs and ill-defined conditions	This category comprises the following conditions: allergy (unspecified), insomnia, pyrexia, localised swelling, difficulty breathing, chest pain, abdominal pain, heartburn, dizziness, headache, virus, hangover, and other symptoms and ill-defined conditions which could not be coded elsewhere.
Type of conditions	All reported recent and long-term medical conditions and other reasons for health-related actions were coded to a list of 134 selected conditions/reasons for action developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. This classification was based on the 9th Revision (1975) of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD), but was modified to take account of the fact that information obtained is 'as reported' by respondents. Special codes were created for some non-illness reasons for action (e.g. check-up, preventive measures) and for some frequently reported conditions which could not be readily coded to ICD categories because insufficient detail was provided (e.g. back problems, virus, infection).
Type of medication: generic type	Based on reported brand or medication name, some medications were office-coded by generic type, based on categories of the Anatomical Therapeutic Chemical classification (see Appendix). Medications generically classified as analgesics, psycholeptics and anti-depressants are shown in the tables contained in the Appendix. For further information about generic type of medication, see <i>National Health Survey: Users' Guide, 1995</i> (ABS Cat. no. 4363.0).
Type of medication: self-reported	For each of the first seven medications used (excluding vitamins, minerals, natural and herbal preparations), respondents were shown a prompt card and asked to which category the medication(s) belonged. The list of categories used is contained in the Appendix.
Vitamins and minerals	Refers to any vitamin and mineral (identified as such by respondents), taken in any form such as liquids, powders or tablets. Items in this category may range from vitamins, A, B, C, etc. to mineral preparations, e.g. iron, calcium, combinations of vitamins and minerals and prepared tonics consisting of vitamins and/or minerals.

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