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HEALTH CARE RESEARCH
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This is the third of three issues of Harris Interactive Health Care News dedicated to presenting results of a four-nation study of cyberchondriacs in the U.S.A., France, Germany and Japan.

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The Future Use of the Internet in 4 Countries in Relation to Prescriptions, Physician Communication and Health Information

As “cyberchondriacs” (people who use the Internet for health or health care) continue to increase both in number and online skills, they will surely use the Internet in many new ways. More people will go online not only to seek information, but also to purchase drugs and to communicate with their doctors. They are also likely to visit health care sites developed by organizations outside their own countries. But the pace and growth of these activities will vary from country to country depending on Internet penetration, local regulations, and public demand.

A recent Harris Interactive survey in four major countries finds that (even among cyberchondriacs) although the United States (U.S.A.) is the most open to using the Internet for various health-related purposes, it is also the least open to utilizing websites not developed in their own country.

This research was conducted online in January 2002 with 309 cyberchondriacs in the U.S.A., 327 in France, 407 in Germany and 275 in Japan.

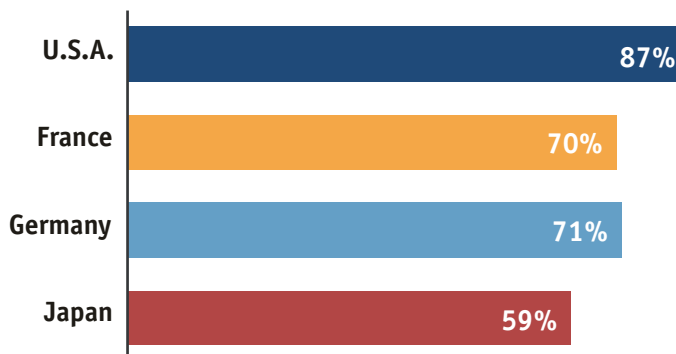
Should Drug Companies Be Allowed to Provide Information to Consumers Online?

Majorities of cyberchondriacs in all four countries support the idea of pharmaceutical companies communicating directly with consumers online. The strongest support is in the U.S.A. (87% in favor), and the weakest is in Japan (59% in favor).

TABLE 1

Percent Who Think Pharmaceutical Companies Should Be Allowed to Provide Information Directly to Consumers on the Internet

Base: All Cyberchondriacs



Source: Global Cyberchondriacs Study, Harris Interactive Inc., January 2002

Likelihood of Purchasing Drugs Online Without Visiting a Doctor

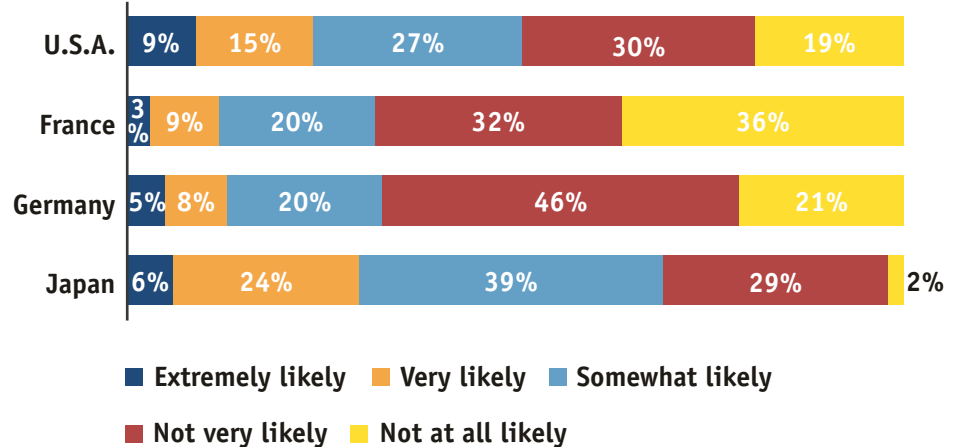
The American and Japanese cyberchondriacs would be the most likely to use the Internet to buy pharmaceuticals online, if they could do so. French and German cyberchondriacs would be less likely to do so. These differences may well reflect higher drug prices in the U.S.A. and that many drug purchases in Japan include a fee for the physicians (and, perhaps, that doctors' visits in Japan are extremely brief).

Fully, 51% of Americans and 69% of Japanese cyberchondriacs say they would be at least somewhat likely to do this if they could, compared to 33% in Germany and 32% in France.

TABLE 2

Likelihood of Purchasing Prescription Medication on the Internet Without Visiting a Doctor

Base: All Cyberchondriacs



Source: Harris Interactive Inc., January 2002

Importance of National Origin of Websites

Americans and the Japanese are the most likely to be concerned about using sites not based in their own country, while the Germans are the least concerned of these four countries.

However, substantial majorities are not concerned or they consider national origin to be only "somewhat important," and many people admit that they can tell the country of origin of websites.

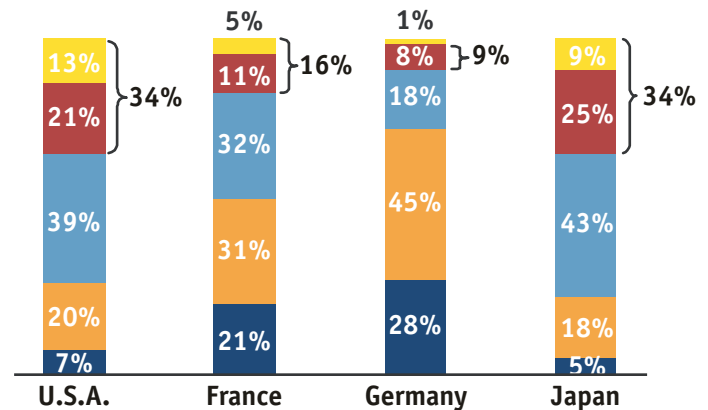
What is striking is the large number (from 67% of French cyberchondriacs to 27% in the U.S.A.) that believes they have visited foreign websites.

TABLE 3

How Important is it That the Websites You Visit Are Developed by a Company or Organization From Your Own Country?

Base: All Cyberchondriacs

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not very important
- Not at all important



% who believe they can tell the country of websites	46%	68%	58%	61%
% who believe they have visited foreign websites	27%	67%	54%	40%

Source: Harris Interactive Inc., January 2002

Communicating With Doctors Online

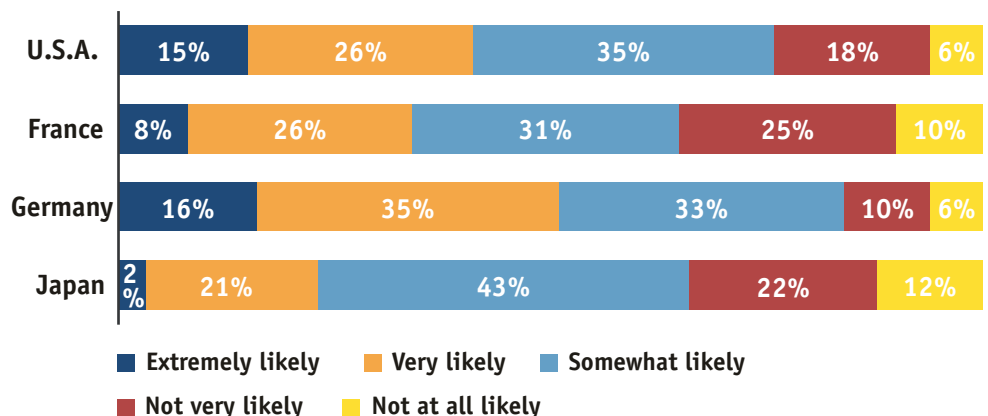
Most cyberchondriacs in all four countries say they would be at least “somewhat likely” to use the Internet to communicate with their doctors if they could do so (currently only very few doctors give patients their email addresses or encourage email correspondence). A recent Harris Interactive survey in the U.S. has shown that large numbers of people would be likely to fix appointments, refill prescriptions or ask simple questions of the doctors online and that many people would pay to be able to do this.

The largest proportions of those who would be “extremely” or “very likely” to communicate with their doctors online are in Germany (51%) and the U.S.A. (41%).

TABLE 4

Likelihood of Using Confidential Service to Communicate With a Doctor on the Internet

Base: All Cyberchondriacs



Source: Harris Interactive Inc., January 2002

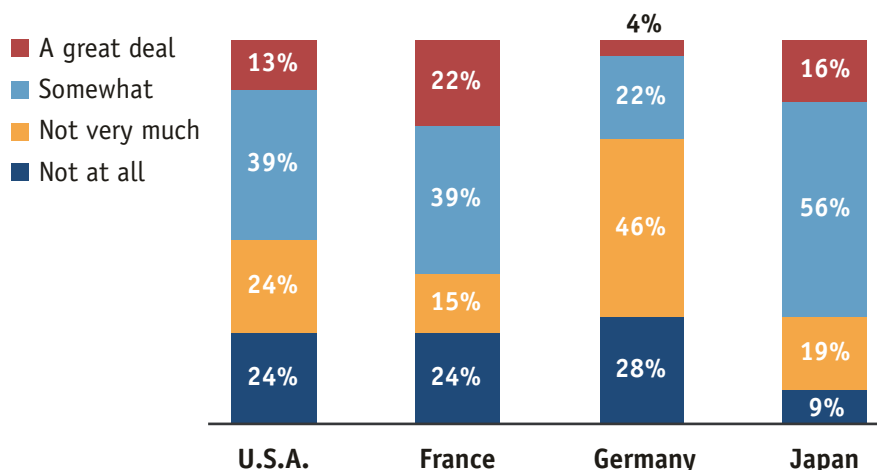
Need of Government Regulation

Majorities of cyberchondriacs in Japan (72%), France (61%) and the U.S.A. (52%) believe that their governments should regulate online health-related information at least “somewhat,” but only small minorities, from 4% in Germany to 22% in France favor “a great deal” of regulation.

TABLE 5

To What Degree Do You Think the Government Should Regulate the Health-Related Information Available on the Internet?

Base: All Cyberchondriacs



Source: Harris Interactive Inc., January 2002

Is “cyberchondriacs” a pejorative?

Since we first began using the word “cyberchondriacs,” we have been asked if it is a pejorative, which implies that they are obsessive or unusual. It is not.

The word “chondria,” literally meaning stomach, was used in classical Greek to mean “concern about health.” The English word hypochondria means excessive (hypo) concern about health.

Cyberchondria, therefore, means “online concern about health” and implies no criticism.

About Harris InteractiveSM

Harris Interactive (www.harrisinteractive.com) is a worldwide market research and consulting firm best known for *The Harris Poll*[®] and its pioneering use of the Internet to conduct scientifically accurate market research. We combine the power of unique methodologies and technology with international expertise in predictive, custom and strategic research. Headquartered in Rochester, NY, with offices across the United States, in the United Kingdom, Japan and a global network of local market and opinion research firms, the Company conducts international research with fluency in multiple languages. EOE M/F/D/V

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