

## U.S. Consumers Rate Generic Prescriptions as Much Better Value for Money Than Brand-Name Drugs

Recent results of The Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Poll show significant differences in how consumers value health care products and services in terms of what they provide and what they cost. Three times as many Americans responded that generic prescription drugs were a “very good/fairly good value” for the money compared to the more expensive brand-name prescription drugs (63% to 21% respectively).

Despite the fact that one fifth of those surveyed (21%) were “not sure,” medical devices and equipment such as pacemakers and stents were rated as “very good/fairly good value” by 43% of adult Americans.

Over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and mineral supplements, doctors and pharmacies received fewer “very good/fairly good” ratings and were most commonly rated as providing average value.

Hospitals, brand-name prescription drugs, health insurance companies and nursing homes got lowest ratings for the money, particularly among those aged 65 years and older.

“The pharmaceutical industry has been seriously damaged by what many people see as its ‘unreasonable prices’ mainly because copays and other out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs have risen so sharply,” said Humphrey Taylor, chairman of *The Harris Poll*® at Harris Interactive, “and, this trend is likely to continue.”

**TABLE 1**

### Ten Health Care Products and Services Rated on Value For Money

“How would you rate each of the following in terms of value for money they provide?”

Base: All adults

		Very Good/Fairly Good Value	Very Good Value	Fairly Good Value	Average Value	Somewhat Poor Value	Very Poor Value	Not Sure
Generic prescription drugs	%	63	24	39	25	6	3	3
Medical devices and equipment such as pacemakers and stents	%	43	19	24	23	8	5	21
Over-the-counter (non-prescription) drugs	%	36	8	28	43	13	4	2
Vitamins and mineral supplements	%	36	9	27	43	13	4	4
Doctors	%	35	10	25	36	16	10	3
Pharmacies	%	32	8	24	41	16	8	3
Hospitals	%	24	7	18	33	23	15	5
Brand-name prescription drugs	%	21	5	16	31	23	21	4
Health insurance companies	%	14	4	10	26	29	26	5
Nursing homes	%	12	3	9	27	26	18	17

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# Health Care Poll

**TABLE 2**

**Ten Health Care Products Rated As Somewhat or Very Poor Value for Money**

“How would you rate each of the following in terms of the value for money they provide?”

Bases:	Saying “Somewhat Poor Value” or “Very Poor Value”	
	All Adults %	Aged 65+ %
Health insurance companies	55	58
Nursing homes	45	51
Brand-name prescription drugs	45	52
Hospitals	38	33
Doctors	26	21
Pharmacies	24	23
Over-the-counter (non-prescription) drugs	18	19
Vitamins and mineral supplements	17	18
Medical devices and equipment such as pacemakers and stents	13	14
Generic prescription drugs	9	10

**Methodology**

This study was conducted online within the United States between August 8 and 11, 2003, among a nationwide cross section of 2,098 adults, ages 18 years and over. Figures for age, sex, race, education, region and income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. “Propensity score” weighting was also used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online.

In theory, with a probability sample of this size, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 3.3 percentage points of what they would be if the entire adult population had been polled with complete accuracy. Unfortunately, there are several other possible sources of error in all polls or surveys that are probably more serious than theoretical calculations of sampling error. They include refusals to be interviewed (non-response), question wording and question order, interviewer bias, weighting by demographic control data and screening (e.g., for likely voters). It is impossible to quantify the errors that may result from these factors. This online sample was not a probability sample.

*These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.*



THE  
WALL  
STREET  
JOURNAL.  
ONLINE

# Health Care Poll

2 Volume

5 Issue

2003  
September 9

## About The Survey

The Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Poll is an exclusive poll that is published in the Health Industry Edition of The Wall Street Journal Online at [www.wsj.com/health](http://www.wsj.com/health). The Health Industry Edition of The Wall Street Journal Online at [WSJ.com](http://WSJ.com), published by Dow Jones & Company, covers the business of health for health-industry professionals and features the award-winning coverage of The Wall Street Journal, breaking health news from Dow Jones Newswires and exclusive online commentary on the industry. The Wall Street Journal Online is the largest paid subscription news site on the Web with more than 671,000 subscribers. It recently received a Codie Award for Best Online Science/Technology/Medical Information Service and was named the “Best Business News” site by Yahoo! Internet Life in the magazine’s January 2002 issue.

## About Dow Jones & Company

In addition to The Wall Street Journal and its international and online editions, Dow Jones & Company (NYSE: DJ; [dowjones.com](http://dowjones.com)) also publishes Barron’s and the Far Eastern Economic Review, Dow Jones Newswires, Dow Jones Indexes and the Ottaway group of community newspapers. Dow Jones is co-owner with Reuters Group of Factiva, with Hearst of SmartMoney and with NBC of the CNBC television operations in Asia and Europe. Dow Jones also provides news content to CNBC and radio stations in the U.S.

## About Harris Interactive®

**Harris Interactive** ([www.harrisinteractive.com](http://www.harrisinteractive.com)) is a worldwide market research and consulting firm best known for *The Harris Poll*®, and for pioneering the Internet method to conduct scientifically accurate market research. Headquartered in Rochester, New York, U.S.A., Harris Interactive combines proprietary methodologies and technology with expertise in predictive, custom and strategic research. The Company conducts international research through wholly owned subsidiaries—London-based **HI Europe** ([www.hieurope.com](http://www.hieurope.com)) and Tokyo-based **Harris Interactive Japan**—as well as through the Harris Interactive Global Network of local market- and opinion-research firms, and various U.S. offices. EOE M/F/D/V

To become a member of the Harris Poll Online<sup>SM</sup> and be invited to participate in future online surveys, visit [www.harrispollonline.com](http://www.harrispollonline.com).

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