

Most Dissatisfied With Allergy Meds: Survey

THURSDAY, March 30 (HealthDay News) -- Nearly a third (31 percent) of allergy patients aren't satisfied with their current prescription allergy medication, and 60 percent said they're very interested in finding a new drug, according to a survey released last week by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA).

Among respondents not fully satisfied with their current prescription allergy medication, 55 percent said their current medication does not relieve their allergy symptoms for a long enough period of time, and 44 percent said their medication doesn't provide quick enough relief.

The survey also found that 47 percent of patients are taking multiple allergy prescription drugs. Thirty-six percent of those who take prescription allergy medications are also using non-prescription allergy drugs.

"People are taking two, three, sometimes four different medications at a time to relieve their symptoms quickly and effectively because they are increasingly unsatisfied with their allergy medications. This can be a very costly, dangerous and frequently ineffective solution to treating bothersome symptoms," Dr. Alpen Patel, a member of the AAFA's medical-scientific council and an assistant professor in otolaryngology at George Washington University Medical Center, said in a prepared statement.

Oral medications are the most commonly used form of prescription allergy medication (67 percent), but 81 percent of respondents said they'd be willing to try a nasal spray to treat their allergy symptoms.

About half (51 percent) of the patients who said they'd consider switching medications said they're confused by all the different choices, and 59 percent said they wished they knew more about the different kinds of available allergy medications.

"Nearly 30 percent of patients admit they don't even know what type of allergy medication they are taking, whether it is an antihistamine or an anti-inflammatory steroid drug. The survey findings suggest the need for patients to have open dialogues with their doctors about the allergy medications they are taking and available treatment options out there," Patel said.

The study was funded by a grant from Alcon Laboratories Inc., which makes Patanol, an eye allergy medication.

More information

The American Lung Association has more about allergies.