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Patients trust generic medicines

In total 2,800 patients participated in the European Health study by InSites Consulting. Seven out of ten participants indicated the ability to differentiate generic medicines from brand medicines. While generic medicines contain the same active ingredients as patented brands, we still discovered that 44% of patients who claim to be familiar with generic medicines do not believe this. However this does not detract from the effectiveness patients ascribe to 'white products'. 83% believe that generic medicines are equally effective as the original formula.

Seven out of ten Europeans are able to differentiate generic medicines from brand medicines

71% of patients claim to know the difference between generic medicines and brand medicines. Those able to differentiate generic medicines from brand medicines are – in comparison to the general population – on average slightly higher educated. The 45+ age group is also more familiar with generic alternatives than younger patients, and men more so than women.

“What is surprising is that in those countries where generic medicines are highly established – for example in Germany - fewer patients report the ability to differentiate brand medicines from generic medicines. This would at first glance appear to be a contradiction, though these figures do possibly suggest that some generic products have simply become a “brand” for many consumers”, says Magali Geens, Director Health Research at InSites Consulting.

Generic medicines: the same or different after all?

Of those people familiar with generic medicines, 9 out of 10 also have experience with these medicines. Simply being aware of the alternatives therefore appears to be sufficient for patients to use generic medicines. 83% believe that generic medicines are as effective as the original formulas.

Opinions are strongly divided on the question whether generic medicines contain the same active components as brand products. 56% believe this is the case, while 44% have doubts.

“Fact is that generic medicines must contain the same active component as the original product,” explains Magali Geens, Director Health Research at InSites Consulting. “The formula may however deviate somewhat from the original brand formula. The extent to which deviations are permitted is of course strictly regulated.”

These research data are the results of a study set up by InSites Consulting – Health. The study was carried out early this year in 7 European countries. An online survey was used as research method. This study was carried out in Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy. Over 1,000 registrations (of illnesses) were made per country. Over 2,800 patients filled in the questionnaire.

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InSites Consulting

InSites Consulting is a leading marketing research company in the field of online market research with a strong international position. It was established as a spin-off of the Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School. Via an online panel comprising more than 2,000,000 panel members spread over 25 European countries, both quantitative and qualitative online marketing research is carried out. The head office in Ghent has 75 highly-skilled and experienced employees. InSites Consulting stands for: expertise and consulting, driven by innovation, excellent customer service and quality-oriented. More information on www.insites.eu and our blog <http://blog.insites.be>

