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Societal perspectives on the role of community pharmacists and over-the-counter drugs in Jordan.

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Abstract: Abstract OBJECTIVE: The aim of this study is to investigate the Jordanian population's attitudes towards the role of community pharmacist and their use of and their perceptions of OTC drugs. SETTING: The interviews were carried out in four urban centers in Jordan with the target sample being 1,000 members of the general public. METHOD: This project used the survey methodology administered by structured interviews to general public in four main urban centers in Jordan. The target sample was 1,000. The questionnaire was divided into four sections that measured the knowledge, attitude and practice of the Jordanian population regarding the use of community pharmacy services and OTC drugs. MAIN OUTCOME MEASURE: Perceptions on the professional role of the community pharmacist and the use of OTC drugs as expressed by a sample of the general public in Jordan. RESULTS: A total of 1,085 members of the public were interviewed. Proximity to home was the main reason to visit the same pharmacy (26.2%). More than half of the interviewed sample (56.8%) stated that they would always follow the directions on the packet of the OTC product. Males were more likely to increase the dose of the preparation if it did not work within the recommended period of time, while females were more likely to decrease the dose or stop the product ($P < 0.05$). More than 60% of participants mentioned that they bought antimicrobials from pharmacies without prescriptions. The majority of participants (62.7%) reported that they would seek advice from a pharmacist when the condition was not serious enough to visit the doctor. CONCLUSIONS: The public in Jordan think highly of the pharmacy profession despite their confusion and uncontrolled consumption of OTC drugs. The findings of this study indicate that drug authorizing bodies in Jordan must be more proactive in promoting appropriate self-medication use and improving pharmaceutical services.