# Pharmacists' Responses to Oral Corticosteroid Therapy Misuse: A National Survey.

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## Background :

Misuse of oral corticosteroid therapy is a prevalent issue in our context. Pharmacists play a crucial role in preventing this misuse, actively contributing to patients' awareness and education.

## Objective:

This study aims to To evaluate the attitudes and practices of Moroccan dispensing pharmacists regarding the misuse of oral corticosteroid therapy.

## Materials and Methods:

This cross-sectional study was conducted among Moroccan dispensing pharmacists, who were included based on their availability and accessibility. The survey utilized a pilot-tested, validated Google Forms questionnaire with a Likert scale of 1 to 5, providing information on pharmacists' socio-demographic data, attitudes, and practices in dispensing oral corticosteroid therapy.

## Results :

A total of 101 pharmacists (average age 43.9±12 years, 54% female, average length of practice 17±11 years) responded to the survey. The results of our study are represented by Table No. 1.

## Table No. 1: results of survey among community pharmacists on the misuse of oral corticosteroid therapy.

N=101

| | 1 (%) | 2(%) | 3(%) | 4(%) | 5(%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Attitude Statements: I think that patients misuse oral corticosteroid for the following reasons :** | | | | | |
| **In the event of a flare-up of a rheumatic or other inflammatory disease.** | 21,7 | 40,6 | 27,7 | 7 | 3 |
| **They are misinformed about possible side effects.** | 31,6 | 32,7 | 23,7 | 10 | 2 |
| **To gain weight.** | 18,8 | 32,6 | 32,6 | 11 | 5 |
| **Practice Statements:** | | | | | |
| **I dispense corticosteroids without a prescription.** | 7 | 14 | 33 | 35 | 11 |
| **I dispense corticosteroids without a prescription in case of difficulty in accessing care .** | 5,9 | 7,9 | 24 | 28,7 | 33,7 |
| **In the case of misuse, I make the patient conscious of the associated risks.** | 42,5 | 27,7 | 14,8 | 10 | 5 |
| **Obstacles Statements: I think the main obstacle to combating the misuse of corticosteroids** | | | | | |
| **Lack of medical training.** | 10 | 24 | 31 | 27 | 8 |
| **The possibility of obtaining the medication from another pharmacy.** | 15 | 26 | 33 | 9 | 17 |
| **Perspectives Statements: Approaches to combat the misuse of oral corticosteroid therapy.** | | | | | |
| **Awareness campaigns on the risk of misuse.** | 68 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Improving patient care.** | 73 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Facilitating the pharmacist's access to the patient's medical records.** | 54 | 31 | 8 | 0 | 7 |

**In the attitudes section:** 1 :Completely Agree, 2 : Agree, 3 : Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 : Disagree, and 5 : Completely Disagree.
**In the practices section:** 1 : Always, 2 : Often, 3 : Sometimes, 4 : Rarely, and 5 : Never.
**In the obstacles section:** 1 : Completely Agree, 2 : Agree, 3 :Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 : Disagree, and 5 : Completely Disagree.
**In the perspectives section:** 1 : Completely Agree, 2 : Agree, 3 :Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 : Disagree, and 5 : Completely Disagree

## Conclusion :

As frontline healthcare providers, pharmacists wield crucial influence over patient behavior; hence, there is a need for a cross-disciplinary approach to combat misuse.