

ABSTRACT

NEW MARKETING STRATEGY: INFLUENCE OF DIRECT-TO- CONSUMER ADVERTISING ON PHYSICIAN PRESCRIBING PRACTICES IN FRESNO AND MADERA COUNTIES OF CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

Since its inception, pharmaceutical advertising of prescription medication has played a pivotal role in healthcare in America. This study explored the effect of direct-to-consumer advertising (DTCA) on the prescribing behaviors of physicians in Fresno and Madera counties of central California.

Subjects were physicians from the areas of general practice, family practice, and internal medicine. Their names were taken from the 2002 Fresno-Madera Medical Society Pictorial Directory.

Surveys were mailed to 245 prospective participants. Sixty-two (25%) were returned, but only 57 were useable. Chi-square distribution and paired *t*-tests were used to determine levels of significance. The findings of this investigation yielded no significant differences from previously conducted studies. DTCA was found to have an influence on the prescribing behaviors of some physicians.

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