



# Patient Safety Report

## Survey Results from March 2019

We protect what matters.



# Survey Parameters

- When:** Conducted February 2019
- Who:** 1,200 U.S. respondents age 18+ (with no demographic targeting) who answered “yes” to the question, *“Have you been to a doctor, hospital, urgent care, dental office or any other medical facility in the past year?”*
- What:** 14-question mobile survey
- How:** Direct to mobile users via Pollfish
- Why:** Designed to assess concerns, habits and insight around patient safety in hospital, dental and other healthcare settings

# Executive Summary

## **U.S. patients feel safe in the care of their medical provider**

Nearly all U.S. patients (91%) agree that their medical professional follows protocols that make them feel safe and protected.

In fact, during the last year visiting healthcare facilities, Americans agree patient safety protocols were followed and felt confident that their medical professional:

- Took the time to make sure they understood medications they were prescribed (91%)
- Took the time to explain care/medication follow-up instructions (93%)
- Routinely washed their hands, wore gloves and took precautionary sanitary measures (94%)
- Administered shots or drew blood by putting on a fresh pair of gloves before starting the process (94%), cleaning the site for injection (89%) and disposing of syringes in a red sharps container (84%)
- Had access to and used medical waste bins to dispose of medical waste (92%)
- Was genuinely concerned about their health or well being (94%)

# Executive Summary

## Drug disposal is still a patient safety issue

While American patients agree U.S. medical professionals follow protocols that make them feel safe during their visit to a healthcare facility, patients still lack understanding of how to handle or dispose of their unused prescriptions.

With more than one in four (26%) patients admitting they were prescribed a prescription painkiller, such as Vicodin, Oxycodone, etc., over the last year, this could be problematic for solving opioid prescription abuse and preventing improper opioid prescription disposal.

Nearly half (48%) of U.S. patients agree that their medical professional explained how to properly dispose of prescription medication. However, one in 10 patients disagree that they know how to properly dispose of prescription medication.

- Baby Boomers (89%) are more likely than Millennials (74%) to agree that they know how to properly dispose of prescription medication
- Millennials (13%) are four times more likely than Baby Boomers (3%) to disagree that they know how to properly dispose of prescription medication
- Men (15%) are more likely than women (10%) to disagree that they know how to properly dispose of prescription medication

## U.S. patients unknowingly dispose of unused prescription medication improperly

While nearly half (45%) of U.S. patients say they have used a pharmaceutical disposal mailback envelope or community kiosk to dispose of unused prescription medications, the rest are creating potential public safety hazards by:

- Flushing medication down the toilet (17%)
- Throwing it away in the trash/garbage (16%)
- Holding onto unused prescriptions (17%)
- Giving unused medication to a friend or family member (1%)

# Question 1 Results

My medical professional follows protocols that make me feel safe and protected

Answers	Percent
Agree	91.17%
Disagree	2.42%
I don't know	6.42%

- 91% of U.S. patients agree their medical professional makes them feel safe and protected.

# Question 2 Results

ONLY THOSE WHO ANSWERED "AGREE" TO QUESTION 1 ANSWERED QUESTION 2

If you had to choose from the list of options below, which would most closely represent WHY you agreed?

Answers	Percent
Staff dedicated necessary time and attention to me	31.54%
Staff seemed genuinely interested in my well being	39.85%
Medical facility appeared clean and organized	12.61%
My treatment plan seems personalized to me	13.99%
I don't know	2.01%

Of the patients who agreed their medical professionals followed protocols that made them feel safe and protected, the reasons they agreed with the statement were because:

- staff seemed genuinely interested in their well being (40%)
- staff dedicated necessary time and attention to them (32%)
- their treatment plan seemed personalized to their needs (14%)
- the medical facility appeared clean and organized (13%)

# Question 2 Additional Findings

## **Millennials are twice as likely than Baby Boomers to value clean and organized medical facilities.**

- Millennials (age 25-34) agree their medical professional makes them feel most safe and protected when:
  - staff seem genuinely interested in their well being (43%)
  - staff dedicates necessary time and attention to them (29%)
  - medical facilities appear clean and organized (14%)
  - their treatment plan seems personalized to them (11%)
- Baby Boomers (age 54+) agree their medical professional makes them feel most safe and protected when:
  - staff seem genuinely interested in their well being (41%)
  - staff dedicates necessary time and attention to them (35%)
  - their treatment plan seems personalized to them (16%)
  - medical facilities appear clean and organized (7%)

## **Men (35%) compared to women (29%) are slightly more likely to agree their medical professional makes them feel the most safe when staff dedicates necessary time and attention to them. Men vs women comparisons include:**

- staff seem genuinely interested in their well being (39% women; 41% men)
- their treatment plan seems personalized to them (16% women; 11%)
- medical facilities appear clean and organized (14% women; 11% men)

# Question 3 Results

My medical professional takes the time to make sure I understand the medications I am prescribed

Answers	Percent
Agree	91.17%
Disagree	4.42%
I don't know	4.42%

- 91% of U.S. patients agree their medical professional takes the time to make sure they understand the medications they're prescribed

# Question 4 Results

In visiting a health facility in the last year, you have been prescribed a prescription painkiller (e.g. Vicodin, Oxycodone, etc.)?

Answers	Percent
Yes	26.92%
No	71.00%
I don't know	2.08%

- More than one in four (27%) U.S. patients who have visited a health facility in the last year say they've been prescribed a prescription painkiller, such as Vicodin or Oxycodone.
- Millennials (30%) are more likely than Baby Boomers (25%) to have been prescribed a prescription painkiller in the last year.
- Men (31%) are more likely than women (24%) to have been prescribed a prescription painkiller in the last year.

# Question 5 Results

## You know how to properly dispose of prescription medication

Answers	Percent
Agree	78.02%
Disagree	10.34%
I don't know	11.64%

- One in 10 disagree with the statement that they know how to properly dispose of prescription medication and 12 percent neither agree nor disagree with the statement.
- Baby Boomers (89%) are more likely than Millennials (74%) to agree with the statement that they know how to properly dispose of prescription medication; Millennials (13%) are four times more likely than Baby Boomers (3%) to disagree with the statement that they know how to properly dispose of prescription medication.
- Women (78%) are slightly more likely than men (77%) to agree with the statement that they know how to properly dispose of prescription medication; Men (15%) are more likely than women (10%) to disagree with the statement that they know how to properly dispose of prescription medication.

# Question 6 Results

A medical professional explained to you how to dispose of your unused prescription medication

Answers	Percent
Agree	48.33%
Disagree	43.75%
I don't know	7.92%

- Nearly half (48%) agree with the statement, “a medical professional explained how to properly dispose of prescription medication.”
- Millennials (50%) are slightly more likely than Baby Boomers (45%) to agree with the statement, “a medical professional explained how to properly dispose of prescription medication”; Baby Boomers (47%) are slightly more likely than Millennials (44%) to disagree with the statement, “a medical professional explained how to properly dispose of prescription medication.”
- Men (53%) are more likely than women (45%) to agree with the statement, “a medical professional explained how to properly dispose of prescription medication”; Women (49%) are more likely than men (37%) to disagree with the statement, “a medical professional explained how to properly dispose of prescription medication.”

# Question 7 Results

Of the following options, which best describes the way in which you dispose of unused prescription medication?

Answers	Percent
I flush it down the toilet	17.25%
I throw it away in the trash/garbage	15.92%
I give the unused prescription medication to a friend/family member	0.67%
I have used a pharmaceutical disposal mailback envelope or community kiosk	45.08%
I don't dispose of unused prescription medication	15.75%
I don't know	5.33%

- Nearly half (45%) of U.S. patients say they have used a pharmaceutical disposal mailback envelope or community kiosk to dispose of unused prescription medications.
- Other U.S. patients admit they flush it down the toilet (17%), throw it away in the trash/garbage (16%) or give unused medication to a friend or family member (1%).
- Nearly one in five (16%) don't dispose of unused prescription medication.

# Question 7 Additional Findings

**Besides mailing back unused prescriptions or using a community kiosk, Baby Boomers (18%) are more likely to flush unused prescriptions down the toilet compared to Millennials (20%) who are more likely to throw unused prescriptions in the trash/garbage.**

Millennials (age 25-34) admit they:

- have used a pharmaceutical disposal mailback envelope or community kiosk (40%)
- throw it in the trash/garbage (20%)
- don't dispose of unused prescription medication (17%)
- flush it down the toilet (17%)
- give the unused prescription to a friend or family member (1%)

Baby Boomers (age 54+) admit they:

- have used a pharmaceutical disposal mailback envelope or community kiosk (54%)
- flush it down the toilet (18%)
- don't dispose of unused prescription medication (13%)
- throw it in the trash/garbage (11%)
- give the unused prescription to a friend or family member (<1%)

# Question 7 Additional Findings

**Besides mailing back unused prescriptions or using a community kiosk, Men (17%) are more likely to throw unused prescriptions in the trash/garbage; Women (17%) are more likely not to dispose of unused prescription medication.**

Women admit they:

- have used a pharmaceutical disposal mailback envelope or community kiosk (45%)
- don't dispose of unused prescription medication (17%)
- flush it down the toilet (17%)
- throw it in the trash/garbage (15%)
- give the unused prescription to a friend or family member (1%)

Men admit they:

- have used a pharmaceutical disposal mailback envelope or community kiosk (45%)
- flush it down the toilet (17%)
- throw it in the trash/garbage (17%)
- don't dispose of unused prescription medication (14%)
- give the unused prescription to a friend or family member (1%)

# Question 8 Results

Have you ever had a shot or blood drawn at a medical facility?

Answers	Percent
Yes	95.17%
No	4.42%
I don't know	0.42%

- 95% of U.S. patients have had a shot or blood drawn at a medical facility.

# Question 9 Results

ONLY THOSE WHO ANSWERED "YES" TO QUESTION 8 ANSWERED QUESTION 9

Which safety protocols do you remember the medical professional following ?(select all that apply)

Answers	Percent (Respondents)
Put on fresh gloves before starting the process	93.87%
Cleaned the site for injection	89.32%
Disposed of syringes in a red sharps container	84.15%
I don't know	0.88%

- For patients who have had a shot or blood drawn in the last year, the majority say medical professionals put on fresh gloves before starting the process (94%), cleaned the site for injection (89%) and disposed of syringes in a red sharps container (84%).

# Question 10 Results

In visiting a health facility in the last year, you noticed separate medical waste bins (i.e. containers, not trash bins, that staff used during your visit)

Answers	Percent
Agree	91.50%
Disagree	2.50%
I don't know	6.00%

- The majority of U.S. patients (92%) agree that they have noticed separate medical waste bins (i.e. containers, not trash bins, that staff used during their visit).

# Question 11 Results

Medical professionals take time to explain care/medication follow-up instructions

Answers	Percent
Agree	92.75%
Disagree	5.08%
I don't know	2.17%

- The majority of U.S. patients (93%) agree that medical professionals take time to explain care/medication follow-up instructions.

# Question 12 Results

I notice my doctor/nurse routinely washes their hands, wears gloves and takes precautionary measures

Answers	Percent
Agree	93.58%
Disagree	3.58%
I don't know	2.83%

- The majority of U.S. patients (94%) agree with the statement, “I notice my doctor/nurse routinely washes their hands, wears gloves and take precautionary measures.”

# Question 13 Results

My healthcare professional is genuinely concerned about my health and well being

Answers	Percent
Agree	93.58%
Disagree	3.58%
I don't know	2.83%

- The majority of U.S. patients (94%) agree that their healthcare professional is genuinely concerned about their health and well being.



Thank you.