

Multimedia educational interventions about prescribed and over-the-counter medications effective for consumers

Clinical question	How effective are multimedia patient educational interventions about prescribed and over-the-counter medications for people of all ages, including children and carers?
Bottom line	Multimedia education about medications was more effective than usual care (non-standardised education provided by health professionals as part of usual clinical care), or no education, in improving both knowledge and skill acquisition but not adherence to taking medications. Multimedia education was at least equivalent to other forms of education, including written education and education provided by a health professional.
Caveat	There was significant heterogeneity in the comparators used and the outcomes measured, which limited the ability to pool data. It was not possible to determine the effect of multimedia education on other outcomes, including patient satisfaction, self-efficacy and health outcomes, due to an inadequate number of studies from which to draw conclusions. Many of the studies did not report sufficient information in their methods to allow judgement of their risk of bias.
Context	Consumers need detailed information about their medications to enable them to use their medications safely and effectively. For information to be useful, it needs to be presented in a format that can be easily understood by consumers. There is evidence that methods such as spoken communication between the health provider and consumer and written materials are not meeting consumers' needs. Multimedia education programmes use more than 1 format to provide information. This could include using written words, diagrams and pictures with the use of audio, animation or video. They can be provided using different technologies, such as DVD and CD-ROM, or can be accessed over the internet.
Cochrane Systematic	Ciciriello S et al. Multimedia educational interventions for consumers about prescribed and over-the-counter

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Review	medications. Cochrane Reviews, 2013, Issue 4. Art. No.: CD008416.DOI: 10.1002/14651858. CD008416.pub2. This review contains 24 studies involving 8112 participants.
Pearls No. 399, August 2013, written by Brian R McAvoy.	

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