



# SELF-MEDICATION

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## BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Self-medication allows individuals to treat minor health issues without a medical prescription, facilitated by the availability of over-the-counter (OTC) medicines (May, L., Schaefer, M., & Tamburro, C., 2023). This practice requires healthcare professionals, particularly pharmacists, to play a key role in ensuring the safe and rational use of medicines (Pacha et al., 2023). Objectives: This study aimed to understand the motivations behind self-medication in Portugal and to promote informed and responsible behaviour among the population.

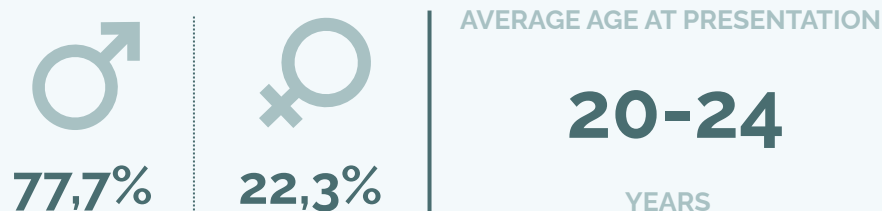
## METHODOLOGY

An observational, descriptive, cross-sectional study was conducted between February and June 2025 via an online questionnaire. The target sample was 385 individuals, with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. A total of 377 participants, all aged 20 or above and residing in mainland Portugal, completed the questionnaire.

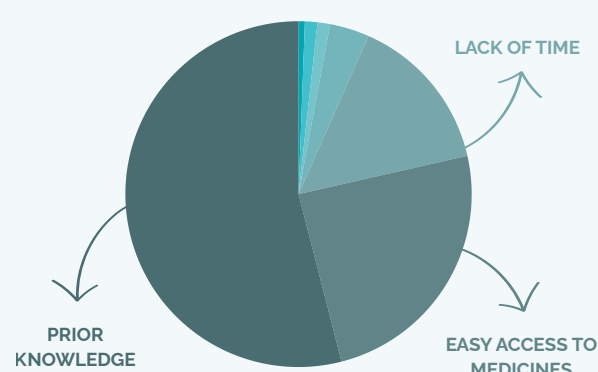
## RESULTS

A total of 91.8% reported engaging in self-medication.

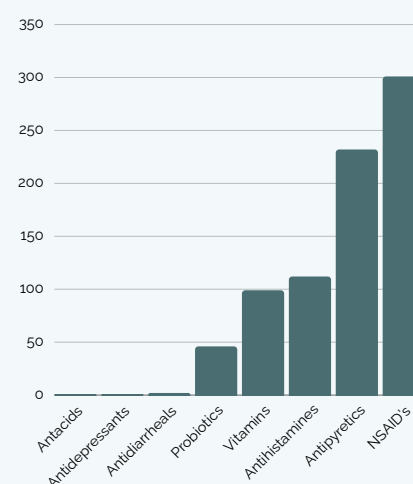
### DEMOGRAPHIC ASPECTS



### MAIN MOTIVATIONS



### MOST COMMONLY USED MEDICINE



Although participants showed autonomy in decision-making, healthcare professionals were the main source of influence when purchasing medicines.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Self-medication is highly prevalent in Portugal and is largely driven by convenience and confidence. The study assessed motivations through participant responses and sociodemographic data, revealing the importance of health literacy. Responsible self-medication behaviour was promoted through an educational questionnaire and critical data analysis. Strengthening the role of pharmacy professionals is essential in guiding the public and ensuring the rational use of medicines

1. May, L., Schaefer, M., & Tamburro, C. (2023). Self-care with non-prescription medicines to improve healthcare: a conceptual and economic framework. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 11, Article 1220984. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1220984>  
2. Pacha Jara, A. G., De la Torre Fiallos, A. V., Guangsig Toapanta, V. H., & Hidalgo Morales, K. P. (2023). Automedicación: un enfoque de revisión sobre sus riesgos, consecuencias y una práctica responsable. *LATAM Revista Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades*, 4(4), 708–721. <https://doi.org/10.56712/latam.v4i4.125>