

Cash-strapped U.S. patients may be skipping drugs

Reuters News -- February 10, 2009

WASHINGTON, Feb 10 (Reuters) - Americans with financial worries because of the ailing economy may be skipping needed prescription drugs in a wrong-headed attempt to save money, according to a survey released on Tuesday.

Nearly 95 percent of doctors surveyed by Epocrates Inc. said they have some concern that patients may not be taking a prescribed drug correctly because of the economic climate.

The biggest concern among the 700 doctors surveyed was that patients were simply not filling prescriptions or skipping doses. The doctors also said they believed some patients were splitting pills.

The healthcare information company said 55 percent of the physicians surveyed said they wrote more prescriptions for generic drugs, which are cheaper than patented drugs, in 2008 than in 2007. (Reporting by Maggie Fox; Editing by Will Dunham and Eric Walsh)