

Patient Preference Survey: Tube vs. Pump for Dispensing Metronidazole Gel, 1%



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Non-adherence to prescribed therapy is a recognized problem in medicine and this has been reported across many therapeutic areas.¹⁻³ One study reported that non-adherence is greater in dermatology because the use of topical medication may require more effort compared to oral medications.⁴ Patient preference and satisfaction can play a role in adherence and may affect treatment outcomes.² Recognizing patient preferences can help physicians prescribe treatment regimens that are individualized for the patient. A patient preference survey was conducted to assess patient preference for a pump vs. a tube for dispensing a prescription rosacea medication (metronidazole gel, 1.0%) and to report reasons for the medication packaging preferences.

METHODS

Participants were recruited from Greenfield Online's healthcare consumer panel to participate in the patient preference survey. To qualify for participation in this survey program, participants with rosacea had reported that they were personally diagnosed by a physician. Prior to answering survey questions, the participants watched videos about different ways to dispense the medication and not about the medication itself. The participants were also informed that the amount of medication in each package was the same and that the cost was the same. Participants were compensated for their participation in this survey program.

TABLE 1. DISPENSER TYPE ATTRIBUTES^a

Attributes	Better describes pump, %	Better describes tube, %
Attractive looking	83 ^b	17
Keeps you from losing or misplacing parts of the packaging	81 ^b	19
The one you are most likely to leave out on the counter	76 ^b	24
Makes accurate/ correct dosing easy	75 ^b	25
Saves you time	75 ^b	25
Convenient to use	75 ^b	25
Easy to use	74 ^b	26
Makes clean up easy	74 ^b	26
Makes it easy to follow your doctor's instructions	72 ^b	28
Easy to handle	71 ^b	29
Easy to store	65 ^b	35
Packaging won't break, even with repeated uses	63 ^b	37
Keeps medication usable longer	60 ^b	40
Likely to minimize waste	59 ^b	41
Likely to minimize dripping/leaking	55 ^b	45
Good for when you travel	50	50

^a Survey Question 3: Following is a list of attributes that describe different methods of dispensing prescription medication for treating rosacea. For each, please indicate if you believe that it better describes the attributes of the (randomized order: tube or pump, pump or tube).
^b Significantly higher than the other response, P<.05; N=207

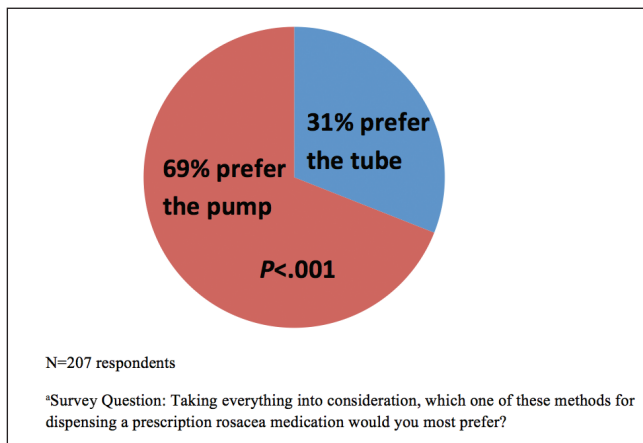


Figure 1. More participants preferred the pump^a

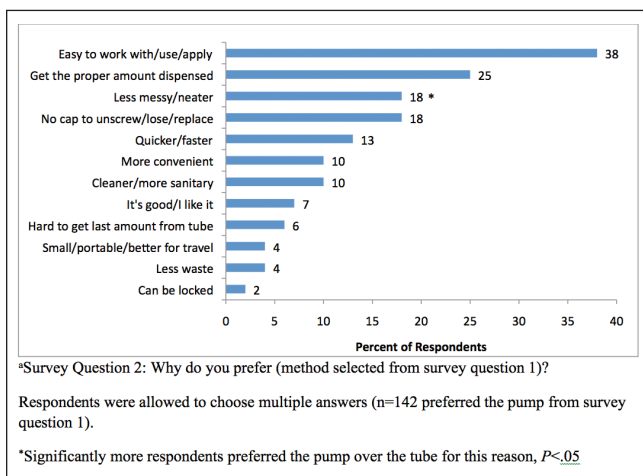


Figure 2. Reasons for Preferring the Pump^a

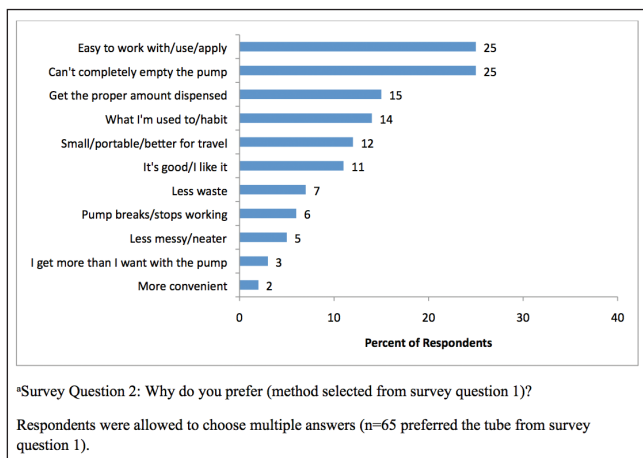


Figure 3. Reasons for Preferring the Tube^a

RESULTS

Patient-administered internet surveys were conducted from May 3 to May 8, 2010. Two hundred and seven rosacea patients participated in the survey. Participants were mostly female (70% female, 30% male) and between 25 - 65 years of age.

Significantly more survey respondents preferred the pump (69%, n=142) over the tube (31%, n=65) for dispensing a prescription rosacea medication ($P < .001$, Figure 1). Top reasons for respondents preferring the pump (n=142) included because the pump was easy to work with/use/apply (38%) and the proper amount of medication was dispensed from the pump (25%). Significantly more survey respondents reported preferring the pump over the tube because they felt the pump was less messy (18%, $P < .05$, Figure 2). Respondents also preferred the pump for attributes such as its ease of use, more accurate dosing, and that using the pump would make following doctor's instructions easier ($P < .05$, Table 1).

Top reasons for the survey respondents preferring the tube (n=65) over the pump included the tube being easy to work with/use/apply (25%), not being able to completely empty the pump (25%), and the proper amount was dispensed from the tube (15%, Figure 3).

CONCLUSIONS

Non-adherence to treatment regimens is a recognized problem that can frustrate many physicians and patients. Physicians often seek ways to improve patient adherence to their prescribed therapies. It has been reported that a positive patient-physician relationship can promote good adherence to treatment.² It has been suggested that soliciting patient preference during office visits can help the physician to individualize a treatment regimen for the patient. Subsequently, improving treatment adherence may improve treatment outcomes.

The results of this patient preference survey suggested that more rosacea patients preferred a dispenser with a pump rather than a tube for dispensing their prescribed rosacea medication. This provides physicians with insight about patient preference for medication dispensing. ■

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