

## Key results

For the first time in Switzerland, a telephone representative survey of the population was carried out in order to establish people's knowledge about antibiotics, their attitudes towards them, as well as their antibiotic intake. The survey was conducted between August 24<sup>th</sup> and September 6<sup>th</sup> 2016 with a sample of 1000 respondents from all regions within Switzerland. The most important results are summarised below.

### 1. Antibiotic intake

- One quarter of the Swiss population has taken *antibiotics orally* in the last twelve months. The number of people taking antibiotics is particularly high in Romandy and in Ticino, amongst 15-24 year-olds and those working in nursing professions.
- About half of antibiotics users obtained the relevant medication *directly from an attending doctor* – or in the hospital. Most of the others obtained them from a pharmacy on presentation of a prescription from a doctor. It is very rare for antibiotics to be obtained outside of the medical system.
- *The reasons for the last antibiotic intake* are diverse. Overall, 16 different clinical scenarios explain about three quarters of all cases.

### 2. Knowledge about antibiotics

- 40% of respondents gave the correct answer to all four statements made in relation to antibiotics, another 37% gave the correct answer to three of the four statements. In other words: in this sense, about three quarters of all Swiss people have *a good knowledge of antibiotics*.
- It is most widely known that the unnecessary use of antibiotics makes them become ineffective and that antibiotics are not effective against colds and flu. The population is least certain about the statement "antibiotics kill viruses".

### 3. Attitudes and information about the correct intake of antibiotics

- Almost two thirds of respondents believe that they should (only) stop taking antibiotics *when they have taken all of the antibiotics prescribed as directed*.
- Almost half of all Swiss people surveyed can remember *hearing or reading information* in the last twelve months advising against taking antibiotics unnecessarily.
- By far the *most frequent sources of information* are newspapers and (specialist) periodicals, followed by the TV news and personal contacts, either family or friends.
- A quarter of those who heeded the information *changed their views* on the intake of antibiotics.
- Three quarters of those surveyed with custody of children accept a doctor's decision if the doctor, *against their expectations, does not prescribe antibiotics* to the child.

### 4. Desired information and reliable sources

- When respondents were asked about which antibiotics-related topics they would like to receive more information on, there was no clear favourite. Almost every second respondent is not explicitly interested in information about antibiotics.
- For those who would like to receive more information about antibiotics, the medical profession is by far the most frequently named *source of information* they would consult.

## 5. Level at which the problem of resistance should be tackled

- Almost half of all respondents believe that *measures* to tackle the problem of resistance to antibiotics *should be taken at all levels*.
- About half of respondents agreed that *farm animals should be given antibiotics to treat disease* if this is the most appropriate treatment method. About a third is opposed to this.

## 6. Antibiotic treatment in livestock

- A good half of respondents agreed that farm animals should be given antibiotics to treat disease if this is the most appropriate treatment method, a good third is opposed to this.
- There is disagreement as to whether to accept that *animals will have to remain ill, suffer or be put down* because they cannot be treated with antibiotics in cases where this is the only effective treatment method for an infection. There is roughly the same number of respondents for and against this.
- A majority of almost two thirds do not know that *using antibiotics to stimulate growth in farm animals* is banned in Switzerland and within the EU.

The detailed report contains the results in full, as well as statistically significant differences between different survey groups.