

A decorative graphic is present on the page. It features a large, thin, light-brown arc that starts near the top right and curves down towards the bottom right. A vertical green bar is on the left side of the page. A horizontal line and a vertical line intersect at the bottom right, with a small yellow square at the intersection point. The title text is positioned to the left of the arc's curve.

Awareness and Use of Personal Medication Records Among 50+ Americans

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Awareness and Use of Personal Medication Records among 50+ Americans

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Introduction

The use of prescription and non-prescription drugs is very common. Studies have shown that prescription drug use increases among people in successively older age groups. On average, people age 45 and older say they take four prescription medications daily.¹ In order to assist people with managing their medications wisely, personal medication records were developed to record key information which could be carried in a wallet or kept in another convenient location.

A personal medication record is a form for recording all of the medications a person currently takes including prescription drugs, over-the counter drugs, herbal supplements, and vitamins. Personal medication records include information such as the dose of each medication, the purpose for taking the medication, when the medication should be taken, and emergency contact information.

The purpose of this study is to determine the public's awareness and current use of personal medication records. We also want to know how likely people are to fill in a personal medication record if one were available to them free of charge. Finally, we were seeking to determine which method people would prefer to receive their personal medication record, e.g., mail, internet.

Methods

Telephone interviews were conducted among a nationally representative sample of 1,023 Americans age 50 and older in the continental United States between October 26 and November 1, 2005. A random digit dial (RDD) sample was used to ensure the survey is representative of the targeted population. Weights were applied to the data to make sure that the sample reflects the U.S. Census statistics for adults age 50 years of age or older by age within sex and region criteria. The sampling error for the general population is +/- 3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. This means that in 95 out of 100 samples of this size, the results would fall in a range of no more than 3 percentage points of what would have been obtained if every person age 50 or older had been surveyed.

Summary

The majority of respondents say they have not heard of personal medication records. However, over half of those who say they have heard of personal medication records also say they have a personal medication record. The majority of participants who have a personal medication record say they *always* or *sometimes* carry it with them. There is less interest in personal medication records among those who have not heard of them or do not have personal medication records. Only one-third of these participants say they are interested in receiving a personal medication record free of charge.

¹ Prescription Drug Use and Persons Age 45+, AARP, June 2002.

These findings suggest that there is an opportunity to educate midlife and older people about what a personal medication record is. Since respondents who are aware of personal medication records are likely to complete it and carry it with them, perhaps raising awareness will also raise interest among those who are not already aware.

Background Demographics

Fifty-two percent of the participants in this study are female and forty-eight percent are male. Approximately six out of ten participants (61%) are between the ages of 50-64 and thirty-nine percent are sixty-five years of age or older. The majority of participants are Caucasian (80%). Approximately half of the participants (53%) report a household income of \$50,000 or less and half (51%) have a high school education or less. Fifty-four percent of the participants say they are a member of AARP.

Key Findings

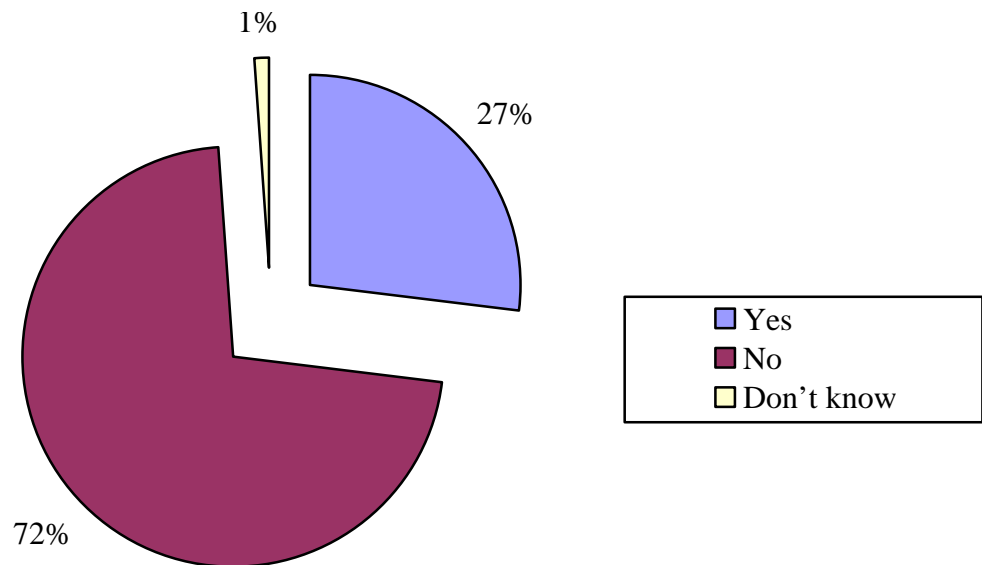
Just over one-quarter of the respondents say they have heard of a personal medication record.

Slightly more than one-quarter of the participants (27%) say they have heard of a personal medication record (Figure 1). There were no significant differences in awareness of personal medication records by gender, age, race, and income. However, those with some college education (35%) or a college education/post graduate (33%) were more likely than those with a high-school education or less (21%) to say they have heard of a personal medication record. In addition, members of AARP (32%) were more likely to say they have heard of a personal medication record than non-members (24%).

Figure 1

Percentage of Participants Who Say They Have Ever Heard of
a Personal Medication Record

Q1 A personal medication record is a form for recording all of the medications you take (the dose, the type, the reason for use, the time, etc) including over the counter medicines. Typically the form allows you to include your doctors' and pharmacists' names and telephone numbers. Have you ever heard of a personal medication record before?
Have you ever heard of a personal medication record before?



Source: Awareness and Use of Personal Medication Records among 50+ Americans
Base: n = 1023 (All participants)

More than half of those who have heard of a personal medication record say they have a personal medication record.

Of those who have heard of personal medication records, sixty percent say they have a personal medication record. There were no significant differences between gender, age, race, and education. Interestingly, those participants who say their household income is under \$25,000 (69%) and between \$25,000-50,000 (70%) are more likely to have a personal medication record than those whose household income is over \$75,000 (51%).

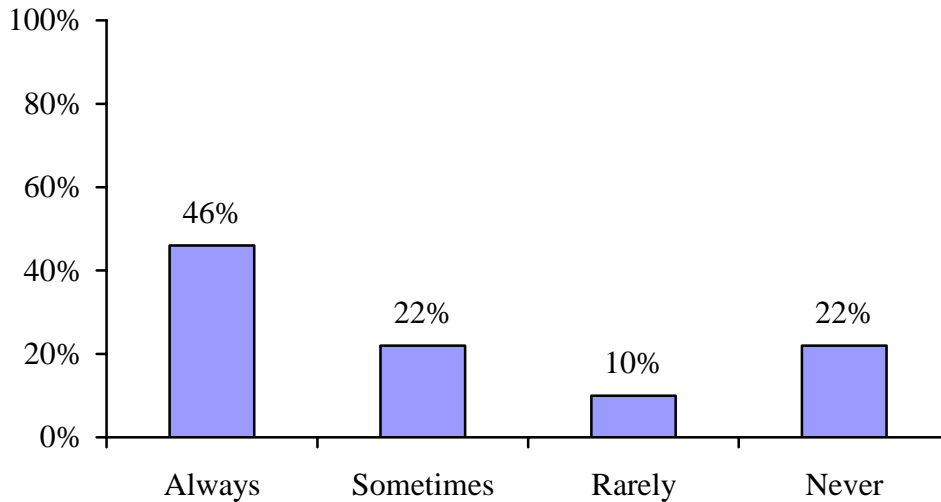
The majority of participants say they always or sometimes carry their completed personal medication with them.

Forty-six percent of the participants say they *always* carry their completed personal medication record with them (Figure 2). Participants report many reasons for not always carrying their completed with them (Table 1).

Figure 2

Percentage of Participants Who Say they Carry Their Completed Personal Medication Record With Them

Q3 How often do you carry a completed personal medication record with you?



Source: Awareness and Use of Personal Medication Records among 50+ Americans
Base: n = 179 (All participants who have a personal medication record)

Table 1

Reasons Participants Do Not Always Carry Their
Personal Medication Record With Them

Q3a Why don't you always carry your personal medication record with you?

Reason	Percent
Not necessary:	29%
Doctor/hospital has my record	2%
Don't take many medications	3%
Don't need it/not necessary	11%
I know what my medications are	1%
Not away from home often/long	3%
Carry the medications with me	2%
Other not necessary	7%
Just don't think about it	13%
I forget to carry it	3%
Personal/private information	4%
Carry when needed (doctors/traveling)	14%
Don't always have my wallet/purse with me	2%
Inconvenient (too big)	6%
Other	5%
No reason	19%
Don't know	5%

Source: Awareness and Use of Personal Medication Records among 50+ Americans
Base: n = 89 (All participants who don't always carry the record with them).

Less than half of the participants say they would be “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to complete a personal medication record if one were available to them free of charge.

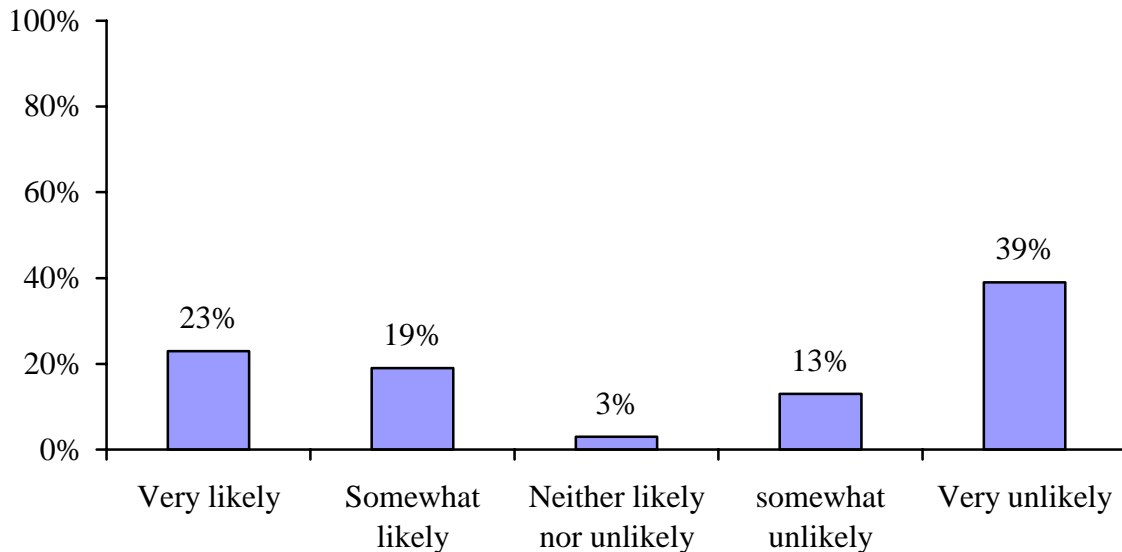
Forty-one percent of the participants say they will be *very likely* (23%) or *somewhat likely* (19%) to say they would fill in a personal medication record if one were available free of charge (Figure 3).

Women (47%) were more likely than men (36%) to say they would be *very likely* or *somewhat likely* fill in a personal medication record if one were available free of charge. In addition, those participants who say their household income is under \$25,000 (55%) were more likely to say they would fill in a personal medication record if one were available free of charge than those who say their income is between \$25,000-50,000 (40%), \$50,000-75,000 (36%), and those who income is over \$75,000 (41%).

Figure 3

Percentage of Participants Who Say They Are Likely to Fill in the Medication Information

Q4 If a personal medication record was available free of charge, how likely do you think you are to fill in your medication information?



Source: Awareness and Use of Personal Medication Records among 50+ Americans
Base: n = 844 (All participants who are unaware of or do not have personal medication records)

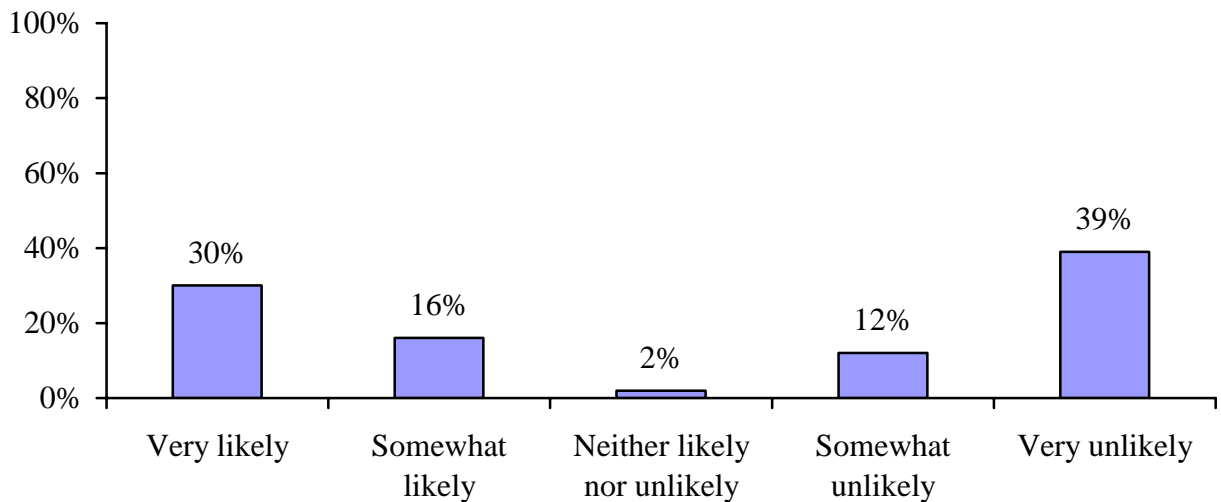
Less than half of the participants say they are likely to carry a personal medication record with them, if one is provided to them.

About half of the participants say they are *very likely* (30%) or *somewhat likely* (16%) to carry their completed personal medication record with them (Figure 4). Women (58%) are more likely than men (33%) to say they would be *very* or *somewhat likely* to carry their personal medication record with them. Those respondents between the ages of 50-64 (41%) are less likely than those 65 years of age or older (53%) to say they would be *very* or *somewhat likely* to carry their personal medication record with them. Finally, members of AARP (51%) are more likely than non-members (42%) to say they are *very* or *somewhat likely* to carry their personal medication record with them.

Figure 4

Percentage of Participants Who Say They Are Likely to Carry Their Completed Personal Medication Record with Them

Q5 How likely are you to carry your completed personal medication record with you?



Source: Awareness and Use of Personal Medication Records among 50+ Americans
Base: n = 844 (All participants who are unaware of or do not have personal medication records)

Only one-third of the respondents are interested in receiving a free personal medication record.

One third of the respondents say they are either *very interested* (15%) or *somewhat interested* (19%) in receiving a free personal medication record (Table 2). Women (39%) are more likely than men (28%) to say they are either *very* or *somewhat interested* in receiving a free personal medication record. Figure 5 presents the ways in which participants would like to receive a copy of the personal medication record.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Participants Interested in Receiving a Free Personal Medication Record

Q6 How interested are you in receiving a free personal medication record?

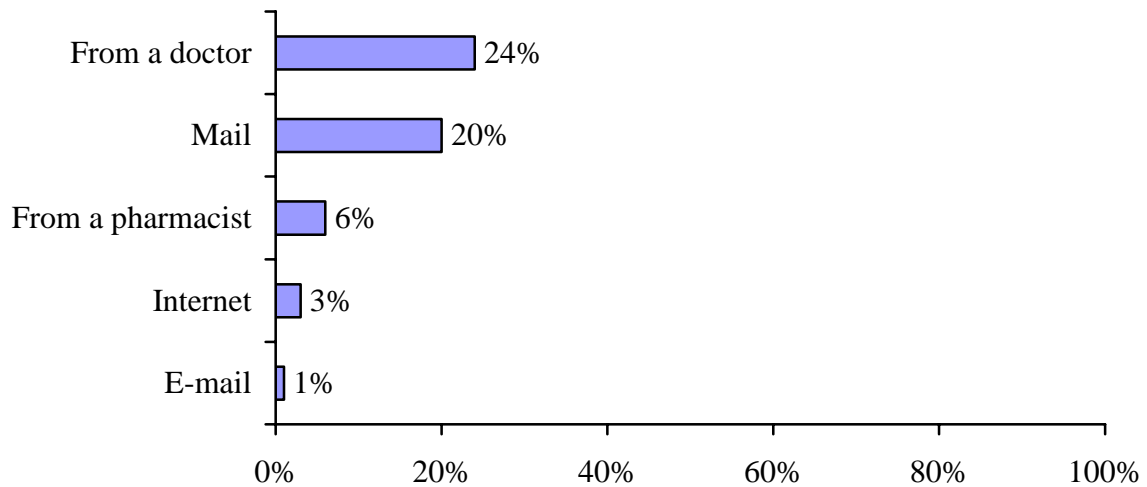
	Total	Gender		Age		Race		
		Male	Female	50-64	65+	White	Black	Hispanic
Very interested	15%	10%	20%	13%	19%	15%	21%	5%
Somewhat interested	19%	18%	20%	16%	22%	19%	33%	8%
Neither interested or disinterested	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	5%	8%	9%
Somewhat disinterested	14%	15%	12%	12%	16%	13%	8%	34%
Very disinterested	43%	48%	38%	47%	38%	45%	29%	31%

Source: Awareness and Use of Personal Medication Records among 50+ Americans
 Base: n = 844 (All participants who are unaware of or do not have personal medication records)

Figure 5

Ways in Which Participants Would Like to Receive a Copy of the Personal Medication Record

Q7 Regardless of level of interest, how would you like to get a copy of a personal medication record?



Source: Awareness and Use of Personal Medication Records among 50+ Americans
Base: n = 844 (All participants who are unaware of or do not have personal medication records)

Conclusions

The majority of participants have not heard of personal medication records. Interestingly, members of AARP were more likely than non-members to say they have heard of personal medication records. However, over half of those who say they have heard of personal medication records also say they have a personal medication record and the majority say they always or sometimes carry it with them. There is less interest in personal medication records among those who have not heard of them or do not have personal medication records. Only one-third of these participants say they are interested in receiving a personal medication record free of charge. These findings suggest that there is an opportunity to educate midlife and older people about what a personal medication record is. Since respondents who are aware of personal medication records are likely to complete it and carry it with them, perhaps raising awareness will also raise interest among those who are not already aware.

Appendix A: Annotated Questionnaire

Personal Medication Record

The Personal Medication Record Study was conducted from October 26 – November 1, 2005 among a nationally representative sample of 1,023 adults age 50 and over. All fieldwork by ICR/International Communications Research of Media, PA.

PM-1. A personal medication record is a form for recording all of the medications you take (the dose, the type, the reason for use, the time, etc) including over the counter medicines. Typically the form allows you to include your doctors' and pharmacists' names and telephone numbers. Have you ever heard of a personal medication record before?

	Yes	No	Don't know	Refused
11/1/05	27	72	1	*

(Asked of total respondents age 50+ aware of personal medication records; n = 298)

PM-2. Do you have a personal medication record?

	Yes	No	Don't know	Refused
11/1/05	60	40	--	--

PM-1/2. Combo Table

	Aware of personal medication records			Not aware of personal medication records	Don't know	Refused
	NET	Have a personal medication record	Do not have a personal medication record			
11/1/05	27	16	11	72	1	*

(Asked of total respondents age 50+ who have a personal medication record; n = 179)

PM-3. How often do you carry a completed personal medication record with you? Would you say...?

	Always	Sometimes/rarely/never				Don't know	Refused
		NET	Sometimes	Rarely	Never		
11/1/05	46	54	22	10	22	1	--

PM-1/2/3.Combo Table

	11/1/05
Aware of personal medication records	27
Have a personal medication record	16
Always carry it	8
Sometimes/rarely/never carry it	9
Do not have a personal medication record	11
Not aware of personal medication records	72
Don't know	1
Refused	*

(Asked of total respondents age 50+ who have a personal medication record but don't always carry it; n = 89)

PM-3a. Why don't you always carry your personal medication record with you?

	11/1/05
Not necessary (NET)	29
Doctor/hospital has my record	2
Don't take many medications	3
Don't need it/not necessary (not specified)	11
I know what my medications are	1
Not away from home often/long	3
Carry the medications with me	2
Other not necessary	7
Just don't think/don't think about it	13
I forget to carry it	3
Personal/private information	4
Carry when needed (doctors/traveling, etc.)	14
Don't always have my wallet/purse with me	2
Inconvenient (too big)	6
Other	5
No reason	19
Don't know	5
Refused	--

PM-1/2/3/3a. Combo Table

	11/1/05
Aware of personal medication records	27
Have a personal medication record	16
Always carry it	8
Sometimes/rarely/never carry it	9
Not necessary (NET)	3
Doctor/hospital has my record	*
Don't take many medications	*
Don't need it/not necessary (not specified)	1
I know what my medications are	*
Not away from home often/long	*
Carry the medications with me	*
Other not necessary	1
Just don't think/don't think about it	1
I forget to carry it	*
Personal/private information	*
Carry when needed (doctors/traveling, etc.)	1
Don't always have my wallet/purse with me	*
Inconvenient	1
Other	*
No reason	2
Do not have a personal medication record	11
Not aware of personal medication records	72
Don't know	1
Refused	*

(Asked of total respondents age 50+ who are unaware of or do not have personal medication records; n = 844)

PM-4. If a personal medication record was available to you free of charge, how likely do you think you are to fill in your medication information? Would you say...?

	11/1/05
Likely (NET)	41
Very	23
Somewhat	19
Neither likely nor unlikely	3
Unlikely	52
Somewhat	13
Very	39
Don't know	4
Refused	1

PM-1/2/4.Combo Table

	Have personal medication records	Not aware of or don't have personal medication records			
		NET	Likely to fill it in	Neither likely nor unlikely to fill it in	Unlikely to fill it in
11/1/05	16	84	35	2	43

(Asked of total respondents age 50+ who are unaware of or do not have personal medication records; n = 844)

PM-5. How likely are you to carry your completed personal medication record with you? Would you say...?

	11/1/05
Likely (NET)	46
Very	30
Somewhat	16
Neither likely nor unlikely	2
Unlikely	51
Somewhat	12
Very	39
Don't know	1
Refused	*

PM-1/2/5.Combo Table

	Have personal medication records	Not aware of or don't have personal medication records			
		NET	Likely to carry it	Neither likely nor unlikely to carry it	Unlikely to carry it
11/1/05	16	84	38	2	43

(Asked of total respondents age 50+ who are unaware of or do not have personal medication records; n = 844)

PM-6. How interested are you in receiving a free personal medication record? Would you say...?

	11/1/05
Interested (NET)	34
Very	15
Somewhat	19
Neither likely nor unlikely	6
Disinterested	57
Somewhat	14
Very	43
Don't know	3
Refused	*

PM-1/2/6. Combo Table

	Have personal medication records	Not aware of or don't have personal medication records			
		NET	Interested in receiving a free one	Neither interested nor disinterested in receiving a free one	Disinterested in receiving a free one
11/1/05	16	84	28	5	47

(Asked of total respondents age 50+ who are unaware of or do not have personal medication records; n = 844)

PM-7. Regardless of your level of interest, how would you like to get a copy of a personal medication record?
 (INTERVIEWER READ IF NECESSARY: For example, by mail, on the internet, from your doctor or pharmacist)

	11/1/05
Medical Professionals (NET)	28
Doctor	24
Pharmacist	6
Other medical professionals	*
Computer related (NET)	4
Internet	3
E-mail	1
Mail	20
No preference	1
Interested, source not specified	8
Not interested/don't need	26
Other	*
Don't know	10
Refused	4

PM-1/2/7.Combo Table

	11/1/05
Have personal medication records	16
Not aware of or don't have personal medication records	84
Medical Professionals (NET)	24
Doctor	20
Pharmacist	5
Other medical professionals	*
Computer related (NET)	3
Internet	3
E-mail	1
Mail	17
No preference	1
Interested, source not specified	6
Not interested/don't need	22
Other	*



Knowledge Management

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