

**Here are this week's health care news highlights from AskaPatient:**

- McDonald's stops serving salads at 3,000 restaurants while Iowa and Illinois investigate infections. <http://ow.ly/TI2W30kXBVO> (07-16-18)
- HPV vaccine completely eliminates skin cancer in a 97-year-old woman. <http://ow.ly/En2c30kXBZe> (07-16-18)
- Prison employees suffer from PTSD at a similar rate as war veterans, suggests a new study. <http://ow.ly/W3t730kXC4y> (07-16-18)
- Scientists worry that CRISPR gene editing technology may cause unintended genetic damage in some cells. <http://ow.ly/1H7930kYY3t> (07-17-18)
- Infections requiring hospitalizations during childhood have a long-term negative impact on school performance. <http://ow.ly/GS5Y30kYY3Y> (07-17-18)
- Are doctors happier in small practices? Physician burnout rate is vastly lower in these than the national average. <http://ow.ly/853x30kYYiO> (07-17-18)
- You don't even need to drink coffee anymore to experience some of its benefits. <http://ow.ly/AUjw30kZZGz> (07-18-18)
- Urgent care clinics contribute the most to misuse of antibiotics, and it's making them a lot of money. <http://ow.ly/CVSP30kZZZr> (07-18-18)
- Stanford scientists use a magnetic wire to find cancer cells in the blood to make an earlier diagnosis. <http://ow.ly/WGiA30I005K> (07-18-18)
- A bad marriage can have serious negative health implications. <http://ow.ly/3E4I30I00rB> (07-19-18)
- Time to put the pills away? Omega 3 supplements offer little or no protection against heart disease, study says. <http://ow.ly/YEVS30I11mx> (07-19-18)
- Advisory committee advises extending the HPV vaccine to be given to boys as well as girls. <http://ow.ly/UG5P30I11w5> (07-19-18)
- Take that coffee with a side of sugar: a study finds sugar can improve memory and increase motivation in older adults. <http://ow.ly/3XQU30I11EI> (07-20-18)
- What is your first memory? There's a good chance it isn't a real memory. <http://ow.ly/mcOD30I11IJ> (07-20-18)
- Americans could have saved \$4.5 billion last year alone if pharmaceutical companies had not stalled production of biosimilars. <http://ow.ly/8t5f30I24PV> (07-20-18)
- FDA plans to crack down on the use of the word "milk" for milk-alternatives such as almond and soy milk. <http://ow.ly/Gxg330I2bll> (07-21-18)
- More young people are drinking themselves to death than in the past 17 years. <http://ow.ly/rblG30I2bOy> (07-21-18)

**From AskaPatient: FDA will look into importing drugs in certain situations to help combat drug high drug prices**

For years, the idea of importing of drugs to the U.S. to help American patients purchase their medications at cheaper prices has been proposed, but has been resisted by the FDA and others, including the pharmaceutical industry. On Friday, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar announced that he was directing the FDA to form a working group to explore how drug importation could be used to lower prices. At this time, the FDA will be looking only at allowing importation of **off-patent drugs for which there is only one supplier in the U.S.** When a so-called "sole-source manufacturer" situation exists, the company can dramatically and suddenly hike prices and harm the supply chain and American patients.

The issue of high drug prices was brought up during the election of 2016, and we polled our users on which proposals to lower drug prices

they thought would be the most effective. Also, in late 2003 (almost fifteen years ago!), we asked our visitors how they felt about drug importation. In both polls, many respondents supported drug importation as a way to lower prescription drug costs. Here's a recap:

### Which ONE of the following proposals from 2016 presidential candidates would do the MOST to help lower prescription drug prices in the US?

(Total Votes: 136)

1) Let consumers purchase drugs from Canada and other countries (22.1%)



2) Reduce the amount of time it takes to get generics on the market (5.9%)



3) Ban drug advertising and encourage companies to redirect dollars to R&D (15.4%)



4) Issue guidelines to discourage price gouging for federally-funded drug inventions (5.9%)



5) Give Medicare authority to negotiate prices with drug manufacturers (25.0%)



Not sure, all would be helpful (24.3%)



None of the above (type answer below) (1.5%)



Source: AskaPatient Opinion Poll, July 2016

[Participant comments and related articles](#)

### Should the US allow reimportation of drugs so that Americans can purchase them at cheaper prices?

(Total Votes: 242)

Yes (65.3%)



No (14.0%)



Only from certain countries (20.7%)



Source: AskaPatient Opinion Poll, Dec 2003; [Comments](#)

#### Sources and more reading on this topic:

- [Health and Human Services Announcement](#) regarding FDA working group to look at drug importation in limited circumstances.
- [FDA News Release, July 19](#) : Includes list of issues the FDA working group will consider.
- [Pharmacy Checker Blog](#) on recent FDA and HHS announcement about importation to help lower drug prices.
- Related topic: Around 80% of U.S. prescription drugs are manufactured overseas, with less oversight of production facilities. Diane Rehm looked at [safety of prescription drugs](#) made outside of the U.S. Also, Poll results regarding patient confidence about the [safety of drugs](#) manufactured overseas.

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