

Antibiotic-Related Consultations on Your Doctors Online Climb 70% From Summer to Winter

5 years of virtual care data shows antibiotic-related visits climb 70% in winter as Canada ramps up antimicrobial stewardship efforts.

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA, August 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New data from Your Doctors Online (YDO), a [Canadian virtual healthcare provider](#), shows antibiotic-related consultations on its platform climb 70% between their summer low and winter peak — a seasonal swing that lands as Canada ramps up national efforts to curb antibiotic use that isn't necessary or appropriate, amid growing concern about antimicrobial resistance.

Analyzing five years of de-identified consultation data (August 2021–July 2026), YDO found that antibiotic-related consultations — visits where a patient discussed, requested, or was assessed for antibiotic treatment — peaked in December, when 4.6% of all consultations involved antibiotics, compared to a low of 2.7% in August, the single largest month-to-month gap in the data. Rates were also higher on average during the traditional October–March cold and flu season, when demand for [cold and flu treatment](#) peaks: 3.65% of consultations, compared with 2.83% during the rest of the year — a separate, 29% relative increase measured across the full six-month comparison.

Key findings:

Seasonal swing: Antibiotic-related consultations were 70% more common in December than in August — the widest month-to-month gap measured (4.6% vs. 2.7% of all consultations).

Age gap: Patients 65+ were 67% more likely to have an antibiotic-related consultation than patients 18–34 (4.6% vs. 2.8%).

Gender gap: Women showed a 33% higher rate than men (3.7% vs. 2.8%), a pattern consistent with the higher prevalence among women of urinary tract infections (UTIs), a common reason



Raihan Masroor, Founder at Your Doctors Online

patients seek UTI treatment.

"This data reflects what we see every winter — a sharp rise in Canadians looking for fast, reliable answers about whether their symptoms need antibiotics or something else," said Raihan Masroor, Founder of Your Doctors Online. "Virtual care means they don't have to wait days for a walk-in appointment to find out, right when cold and flu season is at its worst."

The release comes as federal, provincial, and territorial governments continue implementing the Pan-Canadian Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance, and as new national antibiotic prescribing guidance for

common infections rolls out to clinicians across the country. The World Health Organization has named antimicrobial resistance one of the top 10 global public health threats, and Canada's Public Health Agency says it already has a tangible impact on the health and healthcare costs of Canadians — driven in part by antibiotic use that isn't necessary or appropriate.

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*Raihan Masroor, Founder of
Your Doctors Online*

"Antibiotics aren't the right answer for every infection, and part of every consultation is helping patients understand that — whether that means starting treatment right away, or explaining why symptoms are more likely viral and antibiotics won't help," said Dr. Asim Cheema, an internal medicine physician working with the platform. "That clinical judgment matters just as much in a virtual visit as it does in person, especially during the months when demand is highest."

The analysis draws on more than 320,000 Canadian patient consultations recorded on the platform between August 2021 and July 2026.

Methodology

Findings are based on YDO's own de-identified consultation records for Canadian patients, August 1, 2021–July 31, 2026, and reflect patterns within YDO's own patient population rather than a representative sample of all Canadians. "Antibiotic-related consultations" reflects



A concerned parent sits with a sick child in bed while contacting Your Doctors Online on a smartphone for quick medical advice and care.

consultations where antibiotics were discussed, requested, or clinically assessed, based on the consultation record — it is not a confirmed count of [online doctor prescriptions](#) issued, as not every such consultation results in an antibiotic being prescribed. Seasonal, age, and gender comparisons are shown as rates (share of all consultations in that group), not raw volumes, to control for changes in patient volume over time.

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