

**THE INFLUENCE OF THE INTERNET ON SELF-MEDICATION PRACTICES  
AMONG NON-MEDICAL EGERTON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN NAKURU CITY,  
NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Background:** This study aimed to determine the influence of the internet on self-medication practices among non-medical university students. Design: A cross-sectional study design was used and data was collected through an e-questionnaire from a total 218 participants. Setting: Egerton University, Nakuru City Campus. Participants: The study utilized 218 participants, constituting non-medical students in Egerton University Nakuru City Campus. Main Outcome Measures: The percentage of individuals who relied on the internet for self-medication. Results: The study found that the majority (89.9%, n=218) of the participants used the internet to access health information. Google was the most popular source of information with 198 individuals (96.6%) selecting this source, followed by social media platforms, such as Twitter selected by 17 participants (8.3%), Facebook, 6 individuals (2.9%), and Instagram, 6 individuals (2.9%). The choice to self-medicate was influenced by symptom severity, familiarity to the drug, and the cost of the drug. The most common symptoms for which the participants self-medicated include cough by 139 participants (63.8%), headache by 170 individuals (78.4%), and sore throat by 100 individuals (45.9%). Analgesics were noted as the most commonly used self-medication drugs by 154 individuals (70.6%), followed by antibiotics by 42 participants (19.3%) and antihistamines by 26 participants (11.9%). Conclusion: The study's findings suggest a need to improve health education and policy in the region. Educational programs will help increase awareness about the importance of consulting with healthcare professionals and the risks of relying solely on internet-based information for medical advice.