



How DOs Compare to MDs from a Marketer's Perspective

And why your brand should advertise to them

Earlier this year, BulletinHealthcare announced an expansion of our partnership with the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), the largest professional society for osteopathic physicians. Now, in addition to publishing AOA's daily email news briefing [Morning Brief](#), BulletinHealthcare manages advertising for its digital channels, including [JAOA.org](#), [TheDO.osteopathic.org](#), and related subscriber communications.

Folks in healthcare know that doctors of osteopathic medicine are fully credentialed physicians who take a whole-person approach to medicine that focuses on prevention, helping promote the body's natural tendency toward health, and self-healing. They differ from doctors of medicine in a handful of ways, including their licensing exams, and the osteopathic manipulative treatment all osteopathic physicians learn in medical school. But from a healthcare marketer's perspective, just how different are doctors of medicine (MDs) from doctors of osteopathic medicine (DOs)?

To figure it out, we turned to data provided by CMS and performed a side-by-side comparison of MDs and DOs. According to the NPI database, the two groups have more similarities than differences.

What the Data Show

MDs and DOs share 11 of 15 top medical specialties.

Top Medical Specialties of DOs (by size)

Family Medicine
Internal Medicine
Emergency Medicine
OB/GYN
Student
Psychiatry
Ortho Surgery
Surgery
IM – Cardio Disease
Hospitalist
Phys Med & Rehab
Neurology
General Practice
IM – Gastro
Dermatology

Top Medical Specialties of MDs (by size)

Internal Medicine
Family Medicine
Psychiatry
Emergency Medicine
OBGYN
IM – Cardio Disease
Surgery
Ophthalmology
Specialist
Student
Ortho Surgery
IM – Gastro
Neurology
Urology
IM – Pulmonary Disease

Takeaway

To hit as much of your viable audience as possible, conduct outreach to specialists that fall under both taxonomies.

What the Data Show

MDs and DOs share 14 of the 15 most-commonly written drug prescriptions.

Top Drugs Prescribed by DOs (by size)

HYDROCODONE/ACETAMINOPHEN
HYDROCODONE-ACETAMINOPHEN
LISINOPRIL
OMEPRAZOLE
GABAPENTIN
ATORVASTATIN CALCIUM
AMLODIPINE BESYLATE
PREDNISONE
TRAMADOL HCL
LEVOTHYROXINE SODIUM
FUROSEMIDE
SIMVASTATIN
METOPROLOL TARTRATE
METFORMIN HCL
HYDROCHLOROTHIAZIDE

Top Medical specialties of MDs (by size)

HYDROCODONE/ACETAMINOPHEN
HYDROCODONE-ACETAMINOPHEN
OMEPRAZOLE
LISINOPRIL
GABAPENTIN
AMLODIPINE BESYLATE
ATORVASTATIN CALCIUM
FUROSEMIDE
PREDNISONE
LEVOTHYROXINE SODIUM
SIMVASTATIN
METOPROLOL TARTRATE
TRAMADOL HCL
HYDROCHLOROTHIAZIDE
PANTOPRAZOLE SODIUM

Takeaway

A DO with a relevant specialty is just as likely to consider your brand as an MD. Make sure DOs are just as informed about your product as MDs are.

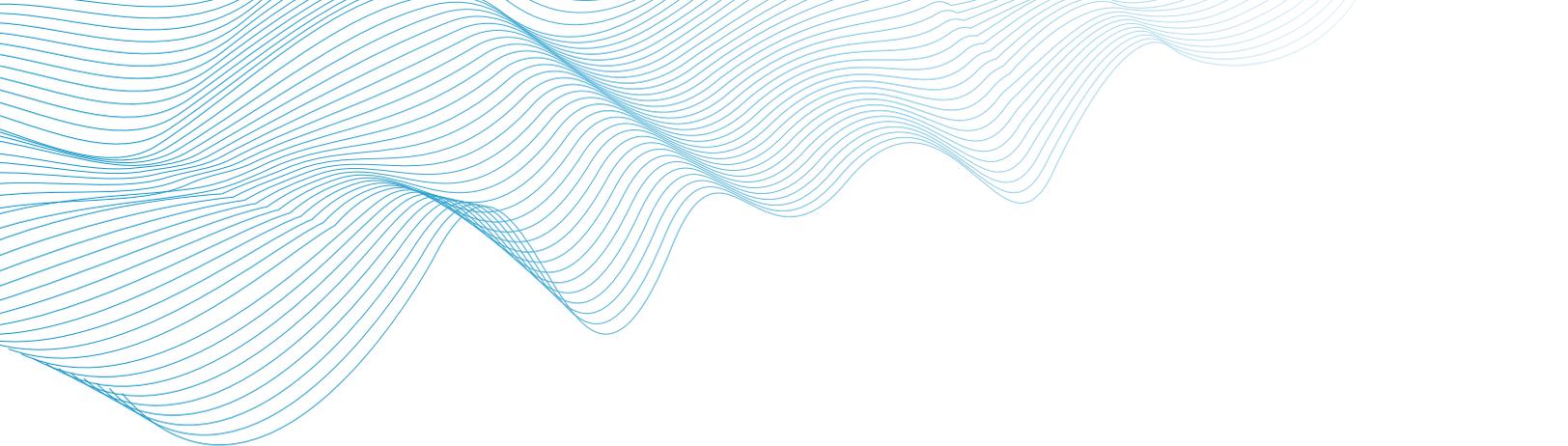
What the Data Show

DOs write more unique drug prescriptions than MDs.

Average Number of Unique Prescriptions	
DOs	77.03
MDs	63.76

Takeaway

There is a common misconception that osteopathic physicians prefer homeopathic remedies to prescription drugs due to their focus on whole-person care. This is simply not true. In fact, DOs write prescriptions for a wider variety of prescription medicines than MDs.



The Bottom Line

MDs and DOs comprise the two – and only two – types of practicing physicians in the United States. Luckily, BulletinHealthcare provides verified access to both.

Osteopathic medicine is among the fastest growing professions in healthcare, and DOs practice in every medical specialty, with more than half in primary care.

While many organizations don't specifically prioritize osteopathic physicians for marketing, the data above show that there is significant market opportunity for those that do.

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