

Thomson Pulse - Healthcare * Finance * Science * Law * Tax

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HEALTHCARE

Antibiotic-Resistant "Superbugs" Spread by Phone

Amidst concern that the overuse of antibiotics is contributing to the rise of antibiotic resistant "superbugs," new data suggest that large numbers of Americans receive prescription antibiotics -- often with multiple refills -- without first seeing a physician.

According to an analysis of insurance claims by Thomson Medstat, "40 percent of children and adults (ages 0-64) who receive antibiotic prescriptions do so without setting foot in a doctor's office."

Thomson was able to find this anomaly by analyzing 1.5 million medical claims for privately insured Americans. The Thomson claims database was screened for instances when a prescription was filled without being accompanied by a corresponding physician's office visit within a 30-day period.

Expert Available

Dr. William D. Marder, Ph.D., Senior Vice President and General Manager, Thomson Medstat, is available to discuss this study's findings.

Attribution: Thomson Healthcare

FINANCE

Window Dressing: Portfolio Managers' Quarterly Herd Mentality

Among Wall Street portfolio managers the last week of a quarter is critical. It is when performance reports citing fund holdings will be disseminated to shareholders.

"A huge number of portfolio managers engineer their quarter-end reports by loading up on the strongest performing stocks of the quarter and shedding poor performers."

According to a new study by Thomson Financial, the pattern of portfolio managers buying the top performing stocks in the last week of each quarter while simultaneously shedding the bottom performers has repeated consistently since 1990.

Expert Available

Thomson Financial's Senior Quantitative Analyst, Mark LoPresti is available to discuss the findings in greater detail, offering insight into the impact of this quarterly trend on broad market performance.

Attribution: Thomson Financial

SCIENCE

Pipeline Profits: Obesity Drug Makes List of Most Promising Clinical Trials

As we saw in December with the late-stage termination of Pfizer's clinical trial for the highly anticipated cholesterol drug torcetrapib, entering a Phase III clinical trial offers no guarantee of a future blockbuster. However, by analyzing FDA protocols, market demand, patent terms and estimated costs, Thomson Pharma has been able to spotlight the top five most promising drugs currently entering the pivotal Phase III in the drug pipeline.

On this quarter's ranking, the drugs with the most potential are also those that play into some of America's biggest obsessions: the debate over stem cell research and the obesity epidemic.

Expert Available

Thomson Scientific's Editorial and Content Manager, Peter Robins, is available to discuss the prospects for these drugs along with the most promising developments at other stages of the new drug pipeline.

Attribution: Thomson Scientific

LEGAL

The Hottest Legal Issues of 2006

In a year that brought us military tribunals, stock options back-dating and the sentencing of the Enron executives, what were the most influential legal issues of 2006? According to the 2006 Thomson West Legal Year in Review survey,

"Hamdan v. Rumsfeld -- the Supreme Court Case which held that U.S. military tribunals in Guantanamo Bay violated the Geneva Conventions -- was the landmark case of the year."

Each year Thomson West surveys more than 2,000 of the country's preeminent legal scholars and practitioners to name the most significant case, legal issue and legislative action of the year.

Expert Available

Podcasts with Thomson West Legal Year in Review survey respondents are available.

Attribution: Thomson Legal

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