

Why act now?

Environmental Impact of the Healthcare System

In France, the healthcare system accounts for approximately 8% of national greenhouse gas emissions*.

Its impact extends across ecosystems:

- **Global impact:** Depletion of planetary resources*, multiple forms of pollution.
- **Health impact:** Antimicrobial resistance*, allergies, chronic diseases, and cancers.
- **Economic impact:** Additional costs, notably those associated with the overuse of healthcare services*.

Health and Social Impacts of Environmental Degradation

24% of global mortality is attributable to environmental causes (WHO, 2016)*.

Benefits of Eco-Responsible Prescribing

Strengthening prevention, improving access to care and reducing social health inequalities; promoting health-environment co-benefits; empowering individuals in managing their health; ensuring consistency in healthcare practice; decarbonising the healthcare system; reducing iatrogenic harm; and protecting ecosystems.

Systematically seeking health-environment co-benefits means identifying “the daily choices and key behavioral changes that individuals can make in their own lives that simultaneously generate benefits for their own health and for the environment*.”

For example, choosing active modes of transportation improves personal health, individual financial well-being, and global health*.

*Sources and tools at cmg.fr/prescription-ecoresponsable/



Limit the Environmental Impact of Medications

For example: switching from an inhaled aerosol treatment to a dry powder formulation can reduce greenhouse gas emissions without compromising asthma control*.

Other measures include:

- Rational use of antibiotics to reduce antimicrobial resistance*.
- Using available data on aquatic pollution from pharmaceutical residues (PBT index)* to choose the least toxic molecules.



Support Safe Medication Reduction

Ask the right questions:

- 📍 **Is there a clear indication** for this medication?
- 🕒 **Is the treatment duration known** and consistent with recommendations?
- 💊 **Is the dosage appropriate**, and can it be safely reduced?
- ✅ Are **adherence** and **tolerance** adequate?
- ☔ Are there any **redundant medications**?

QUATRE QUESTIONS À POSER À VOTRE MÉDECIN/LEUR DE SOINS DE SANTÉ

- 1) Ai-je vraiment besoin de cet examen, de ce traitement ou de cette intervention?
- 2) Quels sont les côtés négatifs?
- 3) Y a-t-il des options plus simples et plus sécuritaires?
- 4) Que se passe-t-il si je ne fais rien?

Poster de la CMG sur les choix écologiques en matière de soins de santé. Disponible sur www.cmfg.ca/fr

In Quebec, four Questions to Help Avoid Overmedicalisation and Support Shared Decision-Making.

- 1 • Do I really need this test, treatment, or procedure?
- 2 • What are the **potential downsides**?
- 3 • Are there **simpler and safer** alternatives?
- 4 • Are there any **redundant** medications?

Scan this QR code to discover **CMG's tools** dedicated to Global Health in general practice



Regular cycling is cost-effective, benefits the environment, and is associated with increased life expectancy!

*Sources and tools at cmg.fr/prescription-ecoresponsable/

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Taking Action in Planetary Health



Eco-Responsible Prescribing

What is Planetary Health ?

Planetary Health

is a transdisciplinary field grounded in robust scientific evidence.

It focuses on the systematic study of the interconnections between anthropogenic alterations of natural ecosystems and their impacts on the health of human populations, other living organisms, and ecological systems.

Beyond an academic discipline, Planetary Health also represents a societal movement aimed at developing, implementing, and evaluating evidence-based solutions that promote equity, sustainability, and global health within planetary boundaries*.

Eco-Responsible Prescribing

is a healthcare approach grounded in high-quality scientific evidence*, aligned with patient safety standards and clinical best practices. It adopts a holistic and integrative model of care, considering the individual within their environmental, social, and ecological context.

This approach seeks to optimise therapeutic effectiveness while minimising environmental impact, thereby contributing to both individual health outcomes and broader ecological sustainability.

*Sources and tools at cmg.fr/prescription-ecoresponsable/

Pathways to Action

Eco-Responsible Prescribing in 3 Questions:



Can I Prescribe
in a Different Way?



Can I Prescribe
Fewer Medications?



Can I Prescribe
More Effectively?

Adopt a Different Prescribing Approach

Nutrition

Adopting a balanced, predominantly plant-based diet (approximately 90% of caloric intake) improves both individual and global health, especially when it consists of minimally processed or unprocessed foods, sourced from local, seasonal, and organic agriculture, and combined with tap water*.

Prescription : Fill half of the plate with vegetables and fruits, replace some portions of animal protein with legumes, and include a daily serving of nuts.

Physical Activity

Engaging in regular physical activity offers numerous health benefits*.

Prescription : Moderate to vigorous physical activity for 30 minutes per day, five days per week, plus two strength-training sessions of 20 minutes each.

Nature as Medicine

Spending time in nature reduces mortality and improves mental and physical well-being*.

Prescription : One or more sessions of at least 20 minutes, with a goal of spending at least two hours per week in natural settings.

Socialization and Community Health

Encouraging and supporting social interaction and participation in community life are key determinants for good mental and physical health, while social isolation and exclusion are associated with increased mortality*.

• **Prescription:** Leisure activities and outings, participation in local associations and use of community resources.

• **In the medical office:** activities that promote social connection, such as walking groups or themed sessions addressing common life situations. Integrate these actions into broader community health projects (CPTS, MSP, etc.)

*Sources and tools at cmg.fr/prescription-ecoresponsable/

Prescribe Less and Better

In France, 22% of consultations occur without a medication prescription, compared with 70% in Sweden and 29% in the Netherlands*.



Refrain from prescribing when appropriate

The need for a treatment, diagnostic tests, or medical transport should always be carefully assessed.

Explain the natural history and progression of the condition, share the different therapeutic options, including no intervention, and offer non-pharmacological alternatives such as psychotherapy, physical activity, meditation*, or motivational interviewing.



Reassess

Each new episode in life or health offers a chance to evaluate ongoing treatments.

Reevaluation rather than automatic renewal encourages patients to adopt a proactive approach, for example by reporting side effects or questioning the necessity of a medication.



Review and reduce medications

Most patients are open to reducing the number of medications they take, particularly when the process is initiated by their general practitioner*.

This conversation can be supported with educational materials, such as posters highlighting the risks of overprescription*. Introducing the discussion at the time of the first prescription helps normalise medication reduction and makes it easier to implement later.

Providing clear information about the risks and side effects of prolonged treatment, as well as potential withdrawal symptoms, supports a shared decision-making process regarding medication discontinuation.

Non-drug alternatives can be offered to support treatment discontinuation, and coordination with family members and healthcare teams can be valuable, for example through home nursing follow-up, therapeutic education, or structured medication reviews.

*Références et outils sur cmg.fr/prescription-ecoresponsable/