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## Antibiotic treatments for children ages 0-23 months in a northern Italy region: a cohort study

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### ABSTRACT

#### *BACKGROUND*

This study aims to describe the pattern of antibiotic treatments in the community for children ages 0-23 months in Emilia-Romagna (a northern Italy region) pointing out possible changes of prescribed agents when first treatments in the life of each children are compared to successive ones.

#### *MATERIALS AND METHODS*

The Regional Drug Prescription and the Resident Population databases were used as data sources to study the cohort of children born between January 1 and December 31, 2000 and resident in Emilia-Romagna.

#### *RESULTS*

The cumulative incidences of children with at least one treatment were 22%, 55% and 82% at 6, 12 and 24 months of age, respectively. Broad spectrum penicillins were the most prescribed antibiotic class for children at their first treatment while cephalosporins were the most prescribed class for successive treatments and when pooling all treatments.

#### *CONCLUSION*

Cephalosporins and other second line antibiotics are frequently prescribed to 0 to 23-month-old residents in Emilia-Romagna even when only first treatments are considered; further research is needed to quantify inappropriateness of antibiotic prescription.