Table 1. *Description of Medication Harm and Benefit Formats*

| Information Type | Format Type | Probability of Harm/Benefit | Format Description |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Harm | Non-numeric |  | The table included the header “What side effects can the medication cause?” followed by the list of side effects shown in Figure 1 with no frequency information provided. |
| Harm | Numeric:Frequency | High | This format is shown in Figure 1. |
| Harm | Numeric: Frequency | Low | This format was identical to that shown in Figure 1 except side effect frequency was cut in half (i.e., 7,000; 3,500; 3,500; 200; 25; 1) |
| Benefit | Non-numeric |  | The table included the header “How can the medication help?” followed by the statement “It reduces the risk of having a heart attack or stroke.” |
| Benefit | Numeric: Risk Difference | High | This format is shown in Figure 1. |
| Benefit | Numeric: Risk Difference | Low | This format was identical to that shown in Figure 1 except benefit probability was cut in half (i.e., 1,125 fewer heart attacks or strokes. |
| Benefit | Numeric: Risk With and Without Treatment | High | The table included the same information as the Non-numeric Format followed by the statement “Among a group of people followed for 10 years, 1.95% of those who took the medication had a heart attack or stroke, compared to 5% of people who did not take the medication.” |
| Benefit | Numeric: Risk With and Without Treatment | Low | This format was identical to that described above except benefit probability was cut in half (i.e., 1.95% was replaced with 3.9%). |

Table 2. Regression of primary and secondary outcome variables on group assignment and control variables

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Predictor Variable | Outcome Variable |
| Likely to Take Medication | Medication is Safe | Medication is Likely to Help | Medication is Likely to Cause Side-Effects | Medication Benefits Outweigh Risks | Likely to Recommend Medication to Others |
| Model R2 | .106 | .182 | 0.094 | 0.078 | 0.102 | 0.109 |
| Numeric Risk Information (Ref: Non-Numeric) | 0.77 (0.11)\*\*\*\* | 0.95 (0.08)\*\*\*\* | 0.38 (0.09)\*\*\* | -0.50 (0.09)\*\*\*\* | 0.84 (0.11)\*\*\*\* | 0.68 (0.11)\*\*\*\* |
| Numeric Benefit Information(Ref: Non-Numeric) | -0.52 (0.13)\*\*\*\* | -0.23 (0.10)\* | -0.76 (0.11)\*\*\*\* | 0.29 (0.11)\*\* | -0.52 (0.12)\*\*\*\* | -0. 64 (0.12)\*\*\*\* |

(table continued on next page)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Predictor Variable | Outcome Variable |
| Likely to Take Medication | Medication is Safe | Medication is Likely to Help | Medication is Likely to Cause Side-Effects | Medication Benefits Outweigh Risks | Likely to Recommend Medication to Others |
| Socio-Demographic Characteristics |  |  |  |  |  |
| Age (yrs) | -0.01 (0.005)\* | -0.009 (0.004)\* | 0.001 (0.004) | -0.004 (0.004) | -0.006 (0.005) | -0.01 (0.005)\*\* |
| Male (Ref: Female) | 0.29 (0.11)\* | 0.16 (0.08) | -0.02 (0.09) | -0.27 (0.09)\*\* | 0.09 (0.11) | 0.26 (0.11)\* |
| White (Ref: Non-white) | 0.25 (0.12)\* | 0.39 (0.09)\*\*\*\* | 0.03 (0.10) | -0.44 (0.10)\*\*\*\* | 0.17 (0.12) | 0.005 (0.12) |
| College Graduate(Ref: Not College Graduate) | 0.18 (0.11) | 0.10 (0.08) | -0.06 (0.09) | -0.01 (0.09) | 0.07 (0.10) | 0.09 (0.10) |
| Health Status | 0.08 (0.06) | 0.12 (0.04)\*\* | 0.13 (0.05)\* | -0.04 (0.05) | 0.10 (0.06) | 0.16 (0.06)\*\* |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Predictor Variable | Outcome Variable |
| Likely to Take Medication | Medication is Safe | Medication is Likely to Help | Medication is Likely to Cause Side-Effects | Medication Benefits Outweigh Risks | Likely to Recommend Medication to Others |
| Takes Medications(Ref: Does Not Take Medications | 0.58 (0.12)\*\*\*\* | 0.53 (0.09)\*\*\*\* | 0.47 (0.10)\*\*\*\* | -0.14 (0.10) | 0.45 (0.11)\*\*\*\* | 0.59 (0.12)\*\*\*\* |
| Had Serious Medication Side-Effect (Ref: No Serious Medication Side Effects) | -0.17 (0.14) | -0.08 (0.10) | -0.16 (0.12) | 0.33 (0.11)\*\* | -0.10 (0.13) | -0.19 (0.13) |

Note: Reference groups are indicated by Ref. Health status was assessed on a 5-point scale that ranged from 1=*Poor* to 5=*Excellent*.

\*p < 0.05 \*\*p < 0.01 \*\*\*p < 0.001 \*\*\*\*p < 0.0001

Figure 1. *Example of Experimental Materials*

|  |
| --- |
| **How can the medication help?** |
| It reduces the risk of having a heart attack or stroke. Out of 100,000 people who take this medication, 2,250 fewer people would have a heart attack or stroke. |
|  |
| **What side effects can the medication cause?** |
| Out of 100,000 people who take this medication, the following number of people would have the side effects shown. |
| 14,000 | Dry mouth |
| 7,000 | Constipation |
| 7,000 | Headache |
| 400 | Stomach upset |
| 50 | Dizziness |
| 2 | Muscle damage leading to a very serious condition called rhabdomyolysis |

Figure 2. Adjusted Means for Primary and Secondary Outcome Variables by Medication Side-Effect Format Condition



Note. For each outcome variable, the difference in means between groups that share a common superscript are not statistically significant at p < 0.05. Means are adjusted for: medication benefit format condition, age, gender, education, health status, current medication use, and experience of a serious medication side-effect. Error bars show 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 3. Adjusted Means for Primary and Secondary Outcome Variables by Medication Benefit Format Condition



Note. For each outcome variable, the difference in means between groups that share a common superscript are not statistically significant at p < 0.05. Means are adjusted for: medication side-effect format condition, age, gender, education, health status, current medication use, and experience of a serious medication side-effect. Error bars show 95% confidence intervals.