

A retrospective descriptive study was carried out from June to November 2004 in a retail pharmacy situated at the School of Pharmacy, University of Nairobi within the Kenyatta National Hospital complex. The objective was to evaluate prescribing habits and to determine the frequency of prescribing of commonly used drug classes in a hospital. The average number of drugs per prescription was 2.20 \pm 1.16. The prevalence of prescribing was 28.6% anti-infective drugs, 21.1% musculoskeletal agents, 16.6% respiratory system drugs, 8.1% cardiovascular system drugs, 7.2% central nervous system drugs, 7.1% gastrointestinal system drugs, 4.3% minerals and vitamins, 2.1% ear, nose and throat drugs, 1.1% endocrine drugs, 2% skin preparations, 0.9% anticancer drugs and 0.74% eye preparations. The prescribing habits evaluated were compared to the legal requirements in Kenya and to recommended international practice. The information gathered may serve as a basis for rational use of drugs.