

**Question for written answer E-010740/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Mireille D'Ornano (ENF)

Subject: Health risks associated with proton pump inhibitors

Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) are among the most widely prescribed drugs in the world. They are used to treat heartburn.

On 10 June 2015, a team of researchers at Stanford University in California, who have been studying the effects of PPIs on people's health, published their findings in the scientific journal PLOS ONE. The study's conclusions on the use of PPIs are worrying: 'our results demonstrate that PPIs appear to be associated with elevated risk of myocardial infarction (MI) in the general population'.

Some PPIs are sold over the counter to patients who, not thinking they can do any real harm, do not use them correctly.

The researchers report however that an alternative exists which is effective and did not demonstrate in their study any risks to vascular health: 'We also found that H2 blockers (...) were not associated with increased cardiovascular risk'.

1. In the Commission's opinion, should all PPIs be available on prescription only, as patients receive more transparent information about their healthcare from doctors?
2. Does the Commission intend to promote the alternative treatment of H2 blockers? If so, how?