



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **New Data Shows Reliability and Efficacy Fuel Trust and Preference for OTC Options**

*Survey gives insights into healthcare providers' and consumers' trust in OTC medicines*

**Washington, D.C.** – Nearly 98 percent of primary care physicians, nurse practitioners, and pharmacists trust and recommend over-the-counter (OTC) medicines to their patients, according to a new survey released today by the [Consumer Healthcare Products Association \(CHPA\)](http://www.chpa-info.org). The survey conducted by Nielsen and IMS, on behalf of CHPA, explores insights into healthcare providers' and consumers' trust in OTC medicines.

The survey, [\*Understanding Trust in OTC Medicines: Consumer and Healthcare Provider Perspectives\*](#), uncovers key factors that drive trust in OTC medicines for both consumers and healthcare providers. Both reported the most important factors in determining trust are that an OTC medicine will work consistently and is as effective as a prescription.

Highlights from the survey include:

- For a range of illnesses, 8 in 10 consumers use OTC medicines to relieve their symptoms without having to see a healthcare professional;
- More than two-thirds of consumers prefer to use OTC medicines instead of a prescription when available;
- Nearly three-fourths of primary care physicians recommend OTC medicines to relieve symptoms before recommending a prescription treatment; and
- 84 percent of consumers say they trust their healthcare provider's advice on what OTC medicine they should take or give to others.

"This new survey clearly shows that, amid a changing healthcare landscape, consumers and healthcare providers agree that OTC medicines are a trusted first line of treatment to alleviate symptoms," said CHPA President and CEO Scott Melville. "The more consumers educate themselves about their OTC treatment choices—and continue to talk with their physicians and pharmacists about their healthcare options—the better that is for improving the health of all Americans and delivering healthcare savings throughout the healthcare system."

The findings expand on data from a January 2012 study by Booz & Co. conducted on behalf of CHPA, [\*The Value of OTC Medicine to the United States\*](#), which showed that OTC medicines save consumers and the healthcare system billions of dollars each year. The study found that for every dollar spent on OTC medicines, the U.S. healthcare system saves \$6 to \$7—providing \$102 billion in value each year. This includes \$25 billion in

drug cost savings annually through the use of less expensive OTC medicines over prescription drugs, as well as \$77 billion in clinical cost savings from avoided doctor's office visits and diagnostic testing.

CHPA has several initiatives in place to educate consumers about the safe and appropriate use of OTC medicines and to offer healthcare providers valuable resources for their patients, including [OTCsafety.org](http://OTCsafety.org) – a consumer education website of the CHPA Educational Foundation, the OTC medicine industry's consumer-focused nonprofit foundation, whose mission is to help families safely and responsibly use OTC medicines.

Both the [Understanding Trust in OTC Medicines: Consumer and Healthcare Provider Perspectives](#) survey and the previous Booz & Co. study were commissioned by CHPA to emphasize the benefits of OTC medicines with regard to access, affordability, empowerment, and trust.

[Click here](#) for the survey white paper.

[Click here](#) for survey data summary slides.

For more information on the research findings, please visit [YourHealthAtHand.org](http://YourHealthAtHand.org).

#### About the survey:

*Nielsen and IMS partnered to conduct surveys of consumers (Nielsen) and healthcare providers (IMS) to understand what drives both groups to trust OTC medicines. Both survey designs measured relative importance of potential trust drivers. Respondents answered approximately 5 minutes of profiling questions, followed by approximately 5 minutes of an exercise where they looked at 12 sets of 4 attributes that were repeated in different patterns to result in an overall ranking of 20 attributes of trust. For the consumer survey, 1,500 households (HHs) that recorded recent purchases of OTC products on Nielsen's Homescan Panel were invited to participate. The primary HH shopper was asked to complete the survey for all members of the HH. More than 500 healthcare providers participated in the survey, including: pediatricians (129), primary care physicians (125), nurse practitioners (126), and pharmacists (126). Both surveys analyzed responses among respondents who fall into the following four categories of OTC medicines that were taken, given, or recommended: pain relief, cold, cough, sinus, or flu, allergy relief, and upset stomach, acid reflux, or antacids. The survey was released in March 2013. It was conducted by Nielsen and IMS and funded by the Consumer Healthcare Product Association.*

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*CHPA is the 132-year-old-trade association representing U.S. manufacturers and distributors of over-the-counter medicines and dietary supplements.*

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