



Pharmacists Report Patients do not Treat Cold and Flu Symptoms Early Enough, New Survey Shows

Anticipated virulent cold/flu season and current economic climate increases pharmacists' role in patient care

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz., Nov 10, 2009 /PRNewswire via COMTEX News Network/ -- A recent national survey of 505 pharmacists found that nine out of 10 pharmacists believe it is important for a patient to seek treatment early to help shorten the duration and severity of a cold. And 75 percent of pharmacists say most patients should purchase over-the-counter (OTC) cold and flu products at the first sign of symptoms, while only 26 percent of their patients take this proactive approach.

According to the survey, pharmacists are increasingly playing a more prominent role in patient care due to the anticipated severity of the upcoming cold and flu season and the current state of the economy. The survey also showed 87 percent of pharmacists anticipate an overall increase in the number of cold and flu patients seeking their counsel and 85 percent agree that the economic downturn will specifically lead more patients to first come to their pharmacist rather than a physician.

"Early preparedness is going to be more important this cold and flu season; however, even with the threat of stronger, more virulent infections, pharmacists note that patients oftentimes delay treatment allowing a virus to live longer," said Dr. Fred Eckel, Professor of Pharmacy Practice and Experiential Education at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill Eshelman School of Pharmacy. "Pharmacists are the most accessible health care provider for patients with cold and flu symptoms and the survey findings emphasize the important role of the pharmacist in educating patients with information about early treatment to shorten the duration and severity of a cold."

The objectives of the survey were to understand the pharmacist's insight and role in providing recommendations for this upcoming cold and flu season. The survey, entitled "National Pharmacist O.T.C. (Observations on the Treatment of Colds)" was sponsored by Matrixx Initiatives, Inc. an OTC healthcare company, and makers of Zicam products.

Other key findings from the survey include:

- Eighty-five percent of pharmacists agree the economy has increased the number of patient questions about OTC products.
- Eighty-one percent of pharmacists agree that more patients are opting to purchase OTC medications versus filling prescriptions due to the economic downturn.
- Eighty-one percent of pharmacists report making five or more recommendations per day for OTC cold and flu products.

"We know from the survey that pharmacists are making a fair amount of daily recommendations for OTC products," says Dr. Eckel. "Those who believe it's important for patients to seek treatment early, at the first sign of cold symptoms, are recommending oral zinc-based remedies, like Zicam, in order to shorten the duration and severity of a cold."

About the Survey

The survey, conducted in September 2009, was based on a nationally representative random sample of 505 pharmacists working in independent and chain pharmacies. The sample frame was developed using Medical Marketing Service, Inc.'s Pharmacies list, that includes more than 68,000 pharmacies and is updated monthly. Only one pharmacist was allowed to respond per pharmacy. Richard Day Research, Inc. was responsible for survey design, data analysis and reporting.

About Zicam Cold Remedy

Most cold medicines are designed to mask cold symptoms; however, Zicam Cold Remedy is different. When taken at the first sign of a cold (within the first 24-48 hours), Zicam Cold Remedy products, which use propriety formulations of zinc gluconate and zinc acetate as the active ingredients, reduce the duration and severity of the common cold when used as directed. Two new Cold Remedy items, Zicam Cold Remedy Zavors and Zicam Cold Remedy Plus Liqui-Loz, are also available on retailer shelves this cold season.

About Matrixx Initiatives, Inc.

Matrixx Initiatives, Inc. is engaged in the development and marketing of over-the-counter health care products that utilize innovative drug delivery systems. Zicam, LLC, its wholly-owned subsidiary, manufactures and markets a full line of Zicam brand pharmaceuticals, including Zicam Cold Remedy Chewables; Zicam Cold Remedy Oral Mist™; Zicam Cold Remedy RapidMelts (R); Zicam Allergy Relief™; Zicam Extreme Congestion Relief™; Zicam Sinus Relief™; as well as Zicam Cough products and Zicam Multi-Symptom relief items. For more information regarding Matrixx products, please visit www.Zicam.com.

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