Consumer focus on value, legislative push lead to record-breaking growth in 2016

By Michael Johnsen

The graying of the baby boomers, an increased focus on supplementing healthier lifestyles and the steady stream of nasal corticosteroid brands making their way from prescription-only to the more value-oriented OTC aisle were just three significant drivers behind the growth of over-the-counter medicines in 2016.

Sales were on an upward trajectory in each of the top five OTC categories — cough-cold and allergy, vitamins, weight loss and nutrition, pain relief and digestives — which collectively account for 68.9% of all OTC sales.

In fact, sales of all OTC medicines and natural supplements broke records in 2016, reaching $45.8 billion for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016, according to IRI. That's an additional $1.8 billion in sales volume compared with what *Drug Store News* reported in this space a year ago.

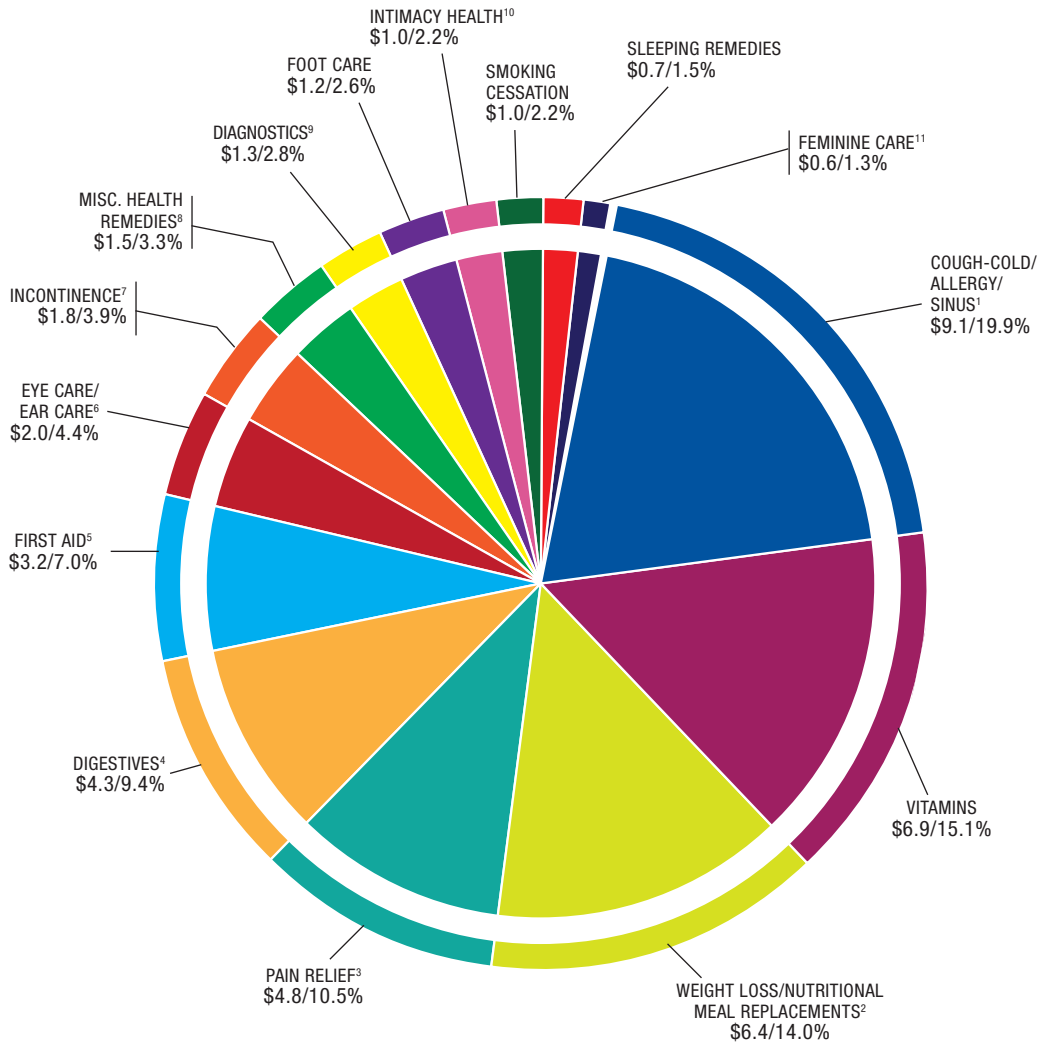
And the outlook for 2017 is looking even better, whether you're catering to an aging demographic, a consumer in search of healthcare value or an allergy sufferer seeking the latest in OTC remedies.

Baby boomers are getting older. There are 108.7 million adults older than the age of 50, according to AARP, 28.1% of whom are older than 70. In the previous 12 months, 30% of seniors reported buying an allergy remedy, and 29% purchased a cold or flu solution.

According to a study conducted by the Consumer Healthcare Products Association, OTCs save consumers and the healthcare system $102 billion each year, and for every dollar spent on OTC medications in the United States, the healthcare system saves $6 to $7.

OTC market*

Total = $45.8 billion



*In billions; percent reflects share of total OTC/natural health segments
1 Includes hand sanitizer, chest rubs, humidifiers, cold/allergy/sinus liquids, cough drops, cough syrup, nasal products, cold/allergy/sinus tablets, cold sore medication; 2 Includes weight control/nutrition liquid/powder, weight control candy/tablets, energy shots, nutritional/intrinsic health value bars; 3 Includes external analgesic rubs, internal analgesics, heat/ice packs, electrotherapy device; 4 Includes motion sickness, gastrointestinal tablets, gastrointestinal liquids; 5 Includes first aid tape/bandage/gauze, first aid kits, muscle/body support devices, first aid treatment; 6 Includes ear care products and ear drops/treatments, eye/contact lens care products; 7 Includes adult incontinence, urinary bladder control; 8 Includes hemorrhoidal cream/ointment/spray, hemorroidal remedies, lip treatment, caffeine tablets/liquids, epsom salts, parasite treatments, skin growth removers, misc. health remedy tablets; 9 Includes home health care/kits, family planning, personal thermometers; 10 Includes sexual health, personal lubricants; 11 Includes vaginal treatments, all other feminine hygiene/medical treatments
Source: IRI for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016, across total U.S. multi-outlet (supermarkets, drug stores, mass market retailers, military commissaries and select club and dollar retail chains)

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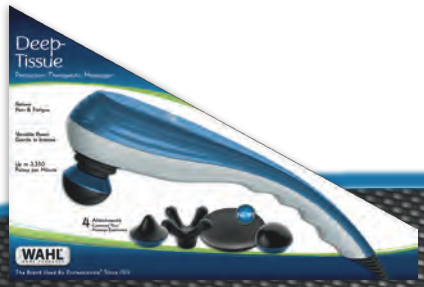

Massagers
#1 Hand Held*

Clippers
#1 Brand*

Pet
#1 Brand*

*Based in part on data reported by Nielsen through its Scanning Service for the trimmer, clipper, massager & pet Category for the 52 week period ending 7-11-2015, for the XAOC & FDM markets.

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Brands reflect better nutrition options

Meal-replacement products embody aspirational health and wellness

By Michael Johnsen

The top three brands in this year's list of breakthrough brands, defined as those brands either introduced within the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016, or those brands that experienced blockbuster incremental growth in that time frame, feature the leading meal-replacement solutions on the market today in Premier Protein, Clif Bar and SlimFast, according to IRI. A fourth brand — Quest Nutrition's Quest Bars — also ranks high on the list. It's reflective of the consumer need for products that embody an aspirational health-and-wellness direction that many U.S. consumers are pursuing.

Another four breakthrough brands that really drove sales across all OTC aisles in 2016 all share one common denominator — a need state driven by a baby-boomer consumer. According to calculations from the Consumer Healthcare Products Association, 15% of the U.S. population already accounts for 30% of the spend in over-the-counter solutions, and that includes some of the best-selling products featured on page 20. To the right are four meal-replacement solutions that represent better nutrition options that have one of several pathways to success.

Premier Protein and Quest Nutrition, for example, are both realizing growth via increased distribution. Post Holdings CFO Jeff Zacoks attributed 40% of Premier Protein's recent growth to improved distribution and 60% to velocity. "The product is very well received, customer loyalty is very high, repeat rates are very high and household penetration is very low," he told Wall Street analysts in February.

Quest also is riding a significant growth trajectory following its introduction into mass outlets like Walmart last year. "Now that our bars are mature enough that we have the consumer visibility and pull-through, we're able to go to mass channels," Tom Bilyeu, Quest Nutrition president, told *Drug Store News* this past summer.

Clif Bar continues to deliver on its "all-natural" and "purpose-driven" reputations, catering to both active lifestyles and consumers interested in the philanthropic pedigrees of the brands they buy, as evidenced by Target's inclusion of the brand in its "Made to Matter" product portfolio several years ago.

And Unilever's SlimFast continues to capitalize on a strong weight-loss heritage. Healthier snack and meal-replacement solutions will continue to matter in 2017. According to a January Harris Poll, this year one-quarter of Americans are actively seeking to lose weight.

Premier Protein

Packed with 30 g of protein, Premier Protein's ready-to-drink shakes resonate with consumers because they keep it simple with product that "tastes just like chocolate milk."

SlimFast Advanced Nutrition

SlimFast Advanced, with less sugar and more protein and fiber, partnered with Univision's Raul "El Gordo" de Molina in an appeal to the brand's Hispanic following.

Clif Nut Butter Filled

Clif Bar last year combined two great energy foods — nut butter and an organic energy bar — to help slow the release of carbohydrates to working muscles.

Quest Blueberry Muffin Bar

Timed with the 2016 release of the Blueberry Muffin bar, Quest Nutrition released a music video of YouTube sensation WilldaBeast Adams and the Hodge Twins.

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Health products ride baby boom wave

Age-related OTC remedies grow as population of seniors increases

By Michael Johnsen

Purveyors of health products have been riding the baby boomer wave for some time now, and it doesn't appear to be cresting any time soon. According to the Population Reference Bureau, the number of Americans ages 65 years old and older is projected to more than double from 46 million today to more than 98 million by 2060, and the 65-and-older age group's share of the total population will rise to nearly 24% from 15%.

This will create a demand for many age-related over-the-counter remedies, including these best-selling products that are featured.

For example, solutions for incontinence, including Kimberly-Clark's Poise brand, certainly resonate with seniors. Sales of adult incontinence products as a whole totaled $1.8 billion on 5.7% growth for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25 across total U.S. multi-outlets, according to IRI, and with good reason. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 43.8% of noninstitutionalized seniors had experienced some form of incontinence.

Quincy Bioscience's Prevagen is another popular product that promotes memory function and brain health — two issues that weigh heavily on the minds of Americans. According to AARP's 2015 Survey on Brain Health, three-quarters of adults over the age of 40 are already concerned about a decline in their brain health down the road. While most adults haven't noticed any change in their mental abilities, one-third of those over the age of 40 are already reporting impairment to their ability to remember things.

Eye care is another age-centric concern that has catapulted an eye-care supplement, such as Bausch + Lomb's PreserVision, to the top of the sales charts. The major eye diseases among seniors include cataract (20.5 million Americans over the age of 40, according to CDC), diabetic retinopathy (5.3 million adults over the age of 18), glaucoma (2.2 million Americans over the age of 40) and age-related macular degeneration (1.6 million Americans over the age of 50). The prevalence of vision impairment increases rapidly with age, particularly after age 75.

And according to the 2016 CRN Consumer Survey on Dietary Supplements, the oldest population surveyed (adults ages 55 years old and older) maintains the highest percentage of supplement use at 74%. Not only is Pharmavite's Nature Made line of supplements one of the better-selling brands, it was awarded the 2016 *Reader's Digest* Trusted Brand in the supplement category.

Poise Thin-Shape Pads

Poise Thin-Shape Pads are 40% thinner than the original and are made specifically for common little leaks triggered by such occurrences as laughing, sneezing and exercising.

Prevagen dietary supplement

In a trial, Prevagen demonstrated the ability to improve aspects of cognitive function in participants with either normal cognitive aging or very mild impairment.

PreserVision AREDS 2 Formula +Multi Vitamin

Bausch + Lomb launched a PreserVision AREDS 2 Formula and Multivitamin in response to consumer feedback requesting an eye health/ multivitamin combo.

Nature Made Adult Gummies

Last year, Nature Made's gummy vitamins secured the USP Verified Mark that indicates the products meet stringent criteria for purity and potency.

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Aromatherapy makes plenty of 'scents' for retailers

By Michael Johnsen

For those retailers bold enough to sniff out a fresh opportunity, at least as far as the mass merchant space is concerned, aromatherapy realized some rosy sales gains in 2016. Citing Nielsen data, Piping Rock reported the aromatherapy opportunity in mass is racing along at an annual growth trajectory of 121%, reaching $44 million for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 31, 2016 across all outlets combined.

"This segment is growing 15 times faster than the next growing [natural] segment," noted Steve Holzbach, Piping Rock senior category development manager. And that blockbuster growth is not coming at the expense of any other category, he added. It's all incremental — and another reason for consumers to shop the VMS aisle.

"When we talk to consumers, they're looking for more than just 'physical' health and wellness," Derek Bowen, chief marketing officer and general manager, Nature's Bounty, told *Drug Store News*. It's expanded into the mental and spiritual arena that used to play very well in the specialty setting or online, but has now migrated to mass outlets, which is what makes an adjacency to VMS ideal. "It's not just people looking for a fragrance experience. It's people [who] are looking to go deeper into that emotional well-being."

Part of the appeal to this category is the repeat business that's generated after initial trial. Consumers first buying into the category invest in the scent diffuser, after which it's a matter of buying refill modules to repeat that wellness experience. "The category is growing," Bowen said. "It has a nice trajectory in terms of velocity." According to Bowen, the two primary rooms within the house where aromatherapy is practiced are the bathroom and the bedroom, which makes for optimal crossover opportunities.

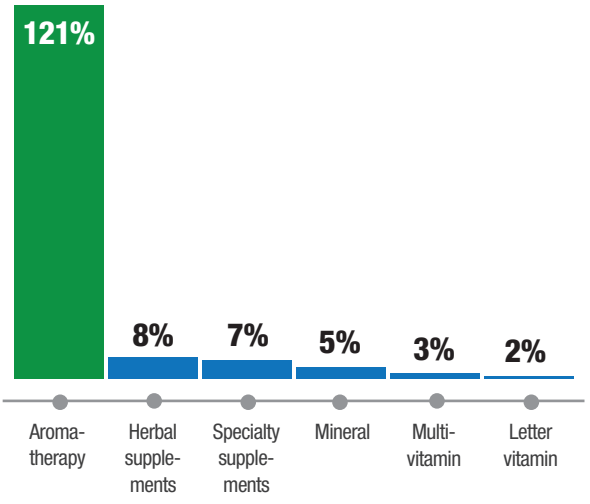
The majority of shoppers (roughly 80%) are female, Holzbach said. And the category indexes high among Hispanic (104) and African-American (110) shoppers, according to Piping Rock research.

Aromatherapy also may appeal to the baby boomer shopper, Bowen added. "Remember, baby boomers are still the heaviest purchasers of mass fragrances in drug and mass. It's a very pro-fragrance consumer segment."

Nature's Bounty recently introduced a new line of aromatherapy essential oils under the Nature's Origin banner. The line includes an essential oils kit designed to attract new shoppers, as well as a "Travel with Scents" line available as an easy-to-carry inhaler. There also are a number of different delivery formats being introduced as part of the Nature's Origin line, including roll-on applicators.

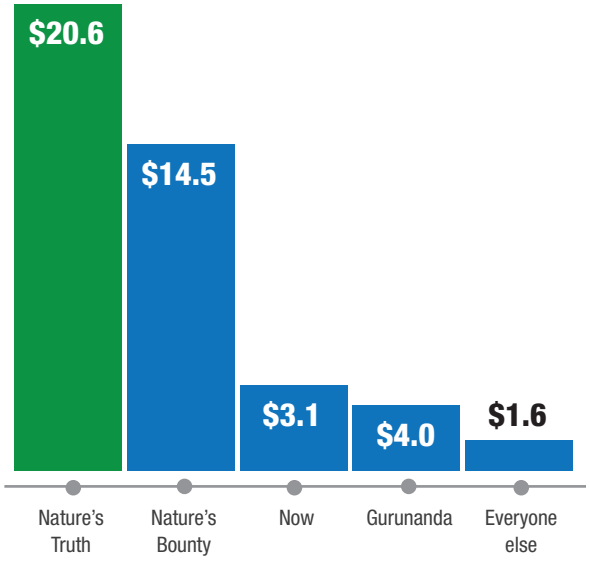
Piping Rock also continues to innovate within the category, and in February infused its aromatherapy line with three new sensory products — a body cream, a body oil and a bubble bath. "These new products offer a therapeutic approach to beauty for a holistic approach to aromatherapy," said Kimberly Vigliante, SVP sales and marketing at Piping Rock. Coupled with the soothing scent of Piping Rock's most popular essential oil — lavender — the products add a gifting opportunity to the health-and-wellness aisles.

Percent change in dollars versus the corresponding 52-week period across xAOC*



* xAOC: Extended all outlet combined
Source: Nielsen, 52 weeks ended Dec. 31, 2016, Leading Drug Retailer Loyalty Card Data

Aromatherapy brand sales* across xAOC**



* In millions ** xAOC: Extended all outlet combined
Source: Nielsen U.S. xAOC, 52 weeks ended Dec. 31, 2016

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'Natural' and 'alternative' key words when it comes to homeopathy

By Michael Johnsen

Consumers buying homeopathic remedies base those decisions on two factors: products that are safe and efficacious. The products have to work, or they wouldn't earn the repeat purchases that are helping to drive sales.

"Millennial moms are looking for 'safe' [and] 'effective,'" said Les Hamilton, president of Hyland's. But it's more than that, he added, because descriptors like 'natural' and 'alternative' also are resonating with today's young moms. "She's looking for raw fruits and vegetables [and] BPA-free containers," he said. "They're living this natural lifestyle that transcends the [medicines] they buy. It's inside and outside their bodies, as well as what's around them. It's the whole lifestyle of green living."

In addition, those shoppers are looking to capitalize on the convenience of mass outlets, which means they're looking for these solutions in their local retail pharmacies. Sales of herbal and homeopathic products totaled more than $1.4 billion and were up 19.6% across conventional multi-outlets for the 52 weeks ended July 10, 2016, according to SPINS.

Currently, conventional outlets represent the sharpest growth rates for homeopathy products. While homeopathy sales were similarly up in both the specialty gourmet and natural channels, the sales volume and velocity are considerably smaller both in terms of dollar sales and growth rates. In that period, herbal and homeopathic remedies generated $319.8 million in natural channels, up 8.1%, and $11.6 million in gourmet outlets, up 5.9%.

Value-oriented packaging is another key differentiator that's driving business, Hamilton said. Hyland's is expanding its value-pack offering to Hyland's Baby Daytime/Nighttime Tiny Cold Tablets, based on its recent success with Hyland's 4Kids Cold 'n Cough Day & Night Value Pack that was introduced this season.

Nelson Bach USA is currently working on building a stress-relief destination within mass OTC sets, synergistically adjacent to sleep aid products in key retailers.

> [Millennial moms are] looking for raw fruits and vegetables [and] BPA-free containers. It's the whole lifestyle of green living.
>
> **Les Hamilton, president, Hyland's**

That gravitation toward "natural" and "alternative" may make for new merchandising opportunities. For example, Nelson Bach is currently working on building a stress-relief destination within mass OTC sets, synergistically adjacent to sleep in key retailers.

"We're working on customized solutions with individual retailers to fit the right SKUs to their shopper mix [and] merchandising sets," John Ende, president and general manager at Nelson Bach USA, told *Drug Store News*. The process is dovetailing nicely with retailer initiatives to cluster stores by demographics, Ende added, as homeopathic remedies index higher among higher-income and higher-education households.

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DME sales trending up

Positive trends impact durable medical equipment consumption

By Michael Johnsen

With the oldest of the baby boomers celebrating birthday No. 71 in 2017, sales of durable medical equipment and the kind of home health products that help transition patient care from hospital settings to the home in the retail setting have only one direction to go. And that's up.

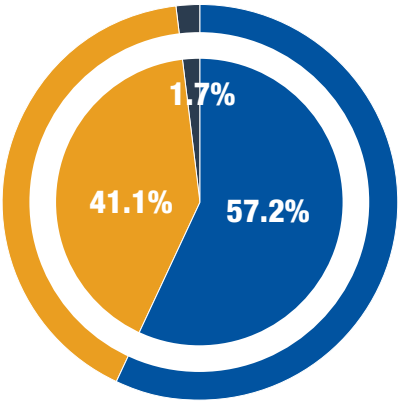
The overall expenditure on durable medical equipment, or DME, including items not available through retail like bed accessories, in 2017 is projected to reach $50.6 billion with a compound annual growth rate of 4.7% through 2020, according to Harris Williams & Co.

That kind of positive momentum already is being realized at retail, noted Steve Light, VP consumer health at Cardinal Health. "Since the launch of Hospital Quality at Home [in 2015], we've seen a positive trend in consumption," he told *Drug Store News*, regarding home health product selection for the 46% of family caregivers who provide complex chronic care following a hospitalization.

Two of the major retail players in home health products have made significant acquisitions in the past year to round out their overall product portfolios. Drive DeVilbiss in October acquired the durable medical equipment brands in Canada from AMG Medical that includes AquaSense, Airgo, Hugo and Profilio. The company also launched its Inspired by Drive product portfolio.

Similarly, Compass Health, which supplies such brands as Carex, AccuRelief, Apex, Bed Buddy and TheraMed, last year acquired the kinesiology tape StrengthTape from Endevr and the value-oriented ProBasics brand from Invacare.

2015 DME expenditures: $46.5 billion
Payer breakdown



- Cash payments
- Insurance accounts for 41.1% of spend with Medicare being the largest payer: other health insurance programs, Medicaid, Medicare, private health insurance
- Other third-party payers

Note: Latest data available
Source: CMS NGE estimates, company filings and ThomsonOne.

Drive DeVilbiss Healthcare's Inspired by Drive

Drive DeVilbiss Healthcare in January created a new niche offering that supports children with special needs called Inspired by Drive. For example, the P Pod pictured here is based on feedback from caregivers asking for an alternative seating device for the home that would provide all the clinical benefits for their child's needs, while allowing them to actively participate with the family.

Wearables changing health and wellness industry

By Michael Johnsen

Wearables will continue to play a key role in the health management of many Americans as more and more take a proactive approach toward their health and wellness. Mintel in January released research finding that wearable fitness trackers are a motivating factor behind a movement to exercise more, as more than one-fifth (22%) of U.S. exercisers said tracking their workouts/fitness inspires them to exercise. And more than one-quarter (26%) of exercisers said that although they don't currently use a wearable fitness tracker, they plan to use one in the future.

"Improving one's health is the most common motivation for Americans to work out, with specific focus on future health and wellness," stated Dana Macke, senior lifestyles and leisure analyst at Mintel. "Our research reveals that U.S. exercisers are inspired to work up a sweat to improve energy levels, mood and quality of sleep."

The use of health apps has doubled in the past two years, according to a 2016 Accenture Consulting survey. One-in-three Americans have used a health app in 2016 versus 1-in-6 Americans in 2014. And among consumers who use technology to manage their health, use of wearables also has doubled (21% in 2016 versus 9% in 2014).

The future of wearables may not only be in self-care, where users collect health data points to help guide their lifestyle choices, but also as a diagnostic tool to diagnose disease earlier in its cycle, according to a study released by Stanford University School of Medicine in January.

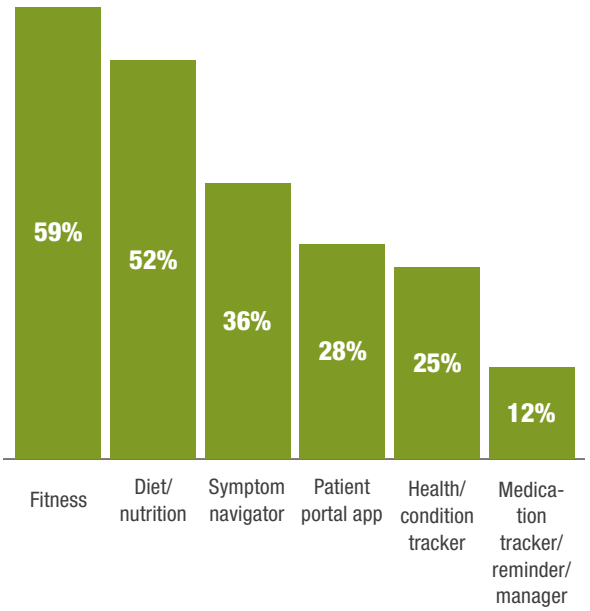
The study demonstrated that, given a baseline range of values for each person, it is possible to monitor deviations from normal and associate those deviations with environmental conditions, illness or other factors that affect health. Distinctive patterns of deviation from normal-seem to correlate with particular health problems. Algorithms designed to pick up on these patterns of change could potentially contribute to clinical diagnostics and research.

That level of health tracking would be welcomed by both consumers and doctors, the Accenture survey found. More than three-quarters (78%) of healthcare consumers are willing to wear technology to track their lifestyle and nine of every 10 are willing to share that data with their doctors.

At this year's Consumer Electronics Show, a pair of companies launched wearables that can substitute for OTC remedies. London-based technology start-up Doppel introduced a wearable technology that helps users stay alert or calm down, naturally and in real-time. The Doppel device, launching this spring at a retail price of $179, emits a vibration that feels like a heartbeat. A faster one makes the user feel more alert, while a slower rhythm calms them down.

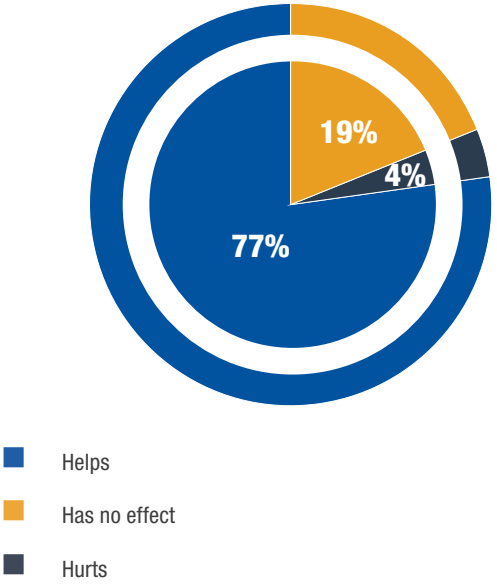
Similarly, Reliefband Technologies at CES unveiled its Reliefband Neurowave for the drug-free relief from nausea caused by morning sickness and motion sickness. It will be commercially available in the second quarter of 2017, and will be priced around $150. The Reliefband Neurowave applies accurately programmed pulses with highly specific waveforms, frequency and intensity to modulate the median nerve on the underside of the wrist to relieve nausea.

Most popular health apps



Source: Accenture 2016

Consumer engagement with wearables



Source: Accenture 2016

Melatonin growth, stress-related restlessness drive sleep remedy sales

By Michael Johnsen

More than a third of American adults are not getting enough sleep on a regular basis, according to a 2016 study in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

"As a nation, we are not getting enough sleep," said Wayne Giles, director of CDC's Division of Population Health. "[Such] lifestyle changes as going to bed at the same time each night; rising at the same time each morning; and turning off or removing televisions, computers and mobile devices from the bedroom can help people get the healthy sleep they need."

This need is contributing to a growth in sales of sleep remedies. For the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016, sales of all sleep remedies totaled $711.6 million (up 6%) across total U.S. multi-outlets, according to IRI. Fueling that growth is melatonin, as evidenced by sales of Natrol (up 22.9% to $48.7 million), Nature's Bounty (up 3.8% to $44.7 million) and Pharmavite's Nature Made (up 14.5% to $35.6 million).

The popular, natural sleep-aid ingredient melatonin may be associated with lowering blood pressure, according to a new study published in December. The study, which sought to determine the blood-pressure lowering effect of melatonin in both younger and older individuals, was conducted at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia.

Earlier this year, Randob Labs reported the launch of its Dormin sleep aid into mass outlets. Dormin has been on pharmacy shelves since the 1950s, primarily through the independent channel. Citing Hamacher Resource Group, Randob Labs said Dormin is the No. 3 best-selling sleep aid across independent pharmacy.

Dormin is available in the patient-preferred capsule format, the company noted, and dissolves three times faster compared with comparable medicines on the market. The company is working with RLA Collective on a marketing plan to help drive trial as the company expands national distribution outlets. In addition to television, Randob Labs will be marketing its sleep aid solution across social media in an effort to drive new users to the category.

Last summer, Hyland's launched a new homeopathic energy booster called Good Morning at NACDS Total Store Expo. The energy booster targets consumers looking for a natural revitalization solution. According to Hyland's research, 38.3% of Americans have trouble sleeping, with stress being the leading cause of their restlessness. Of those Americans who have trouble sleeping, 35% have used a sleep aid, and 33% have not used a sleep aid.

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the Sleep Research Society recommend that adults ages 18 years to 60 years sleep at least seven hours each night to promote optimal health and well-being. Sleeping less than seven hours per day is associated with an increased risk of developing such chronic conditions as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke and frequent mental distress.

Americans along the east coast may be especially sleep deprived, according to CDC research. A lower proportion of adults reported getting at least seven hours of sleep per day in states clustered in the southeastern region of the United States and the Appalachian Mountains.

Bolstered by growth in the melatonin segment, sleep remedy sales totaled $711.6 million for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016.

Top 10 sleep remedies

BRAND	SALES*	% SALES CHG	UNIT SALES*
ZzzQuil liquids	$85.7	8.7%	9.2
Natrol tablets	48.7	22.9	5.8
Nature's Bounty tablets	44.7	3.8	5.5
Zzzquil tablets	37.5	-4.1	4.5
Nature Made tablets	35.6	14.5	4.6
Unisom Sleepgels tablets	31.9	0.5	3.0
Sundown Naturals tablets	21.1	13.9	3.5
Unisom Sleeptabs tablets	15.2	11.4	1.5
Alteril tablets	12.4	-11.5	0.7
Neuro Sleep liquids	12.2	7.0	5.7
TOTAL	**$711.6**	**6.0%**	**104.0**

* In millions
Source: IRI for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016, Total U.S. Multi-Outlet (Supermarkets, Drugstores, Mass Market Retailers, Military Commissaries and Select Club & Dollar Retail Chains)

38.3% of Americans reported having trouble sleeping, according to Hyland's research.

Relieving pain a key growth segment driver in OTC aisles

By Michael Johnsen

Kline Group recently pointed to the renaissance of TENS technology in the OTC aisles in relieving pain as a key growth driver across all analgesics. According to IRI, sales of electrotherapy devices totaled $70.9 million for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, across total U.S. multi-outlets on growth of 24.7%.

"More than 500 manufacturers of TENS products are registered with the FDA, and this number continues to increase," noted Marcela Chifu, marketing executive at Kline Group. "Innovation, convenience and the ease of use of TENS devices, coupled with consumers' increasing demand for non-drug options to prevent and alleviate pain, have helped boost sales of such devices," she said.

"As consumers are increasingly demanding more features from these devices, such as being lightweight, easy-to-wear, portable and, most importantly, affordable, this segment is expected to continue to thrive," Chifu added. "This market has great potential to become consumers' next top alternative to traditional nonprescription drugs."

Two components make up TENS devices: the initial TENS device purchase and also the refill pads that need to be replaced with use. The replacement pads represent an additional opportunity in the form of increased trips to retailers and an additional profit contributor to both manufacturers and retailers.

The revived interest in TENS technology to treat pain also is bringing in new market entrants, such as Bayer's Aleve Direct Therapy TENS device for lower back pain, which was launched in May 2016, Chifu noted. Aleve Direct Therapy already is the No. 3 TENS device on the market, with $8.9 million in first-year sales thus far. Chattem leads the charge with Icy Hot Smart Relief, a $32.9 million brand growing at a 5.1% clip. And the Omron Electro Therapy device is No. 2 with $20 million in sales, up 17.5%.

Flying under the radar may be NeuroMetrix's Quell TENS device for chronic pain, which retails for a suggested price of $249. "The launch of the Quell unit created a lot of buzz in the at-home TENS devices market, receiving several awards from technology associations and quickly gaining acceptance by medical professionals," Chifu said.

Also reinvigorating the TENS device arena with new product launches is Compass Health Brands, which in January at CES introduced several new offerings under the AccuRelief and Thera-Med brands. "CES 2017 was an outstanding event as it provided our company the opportunity to unveil our new, cutting-edge devices that we're confident will prove life-changing for so many consumers," noted Jeff Swain, VP marketing at Compass Health Brands.
Three new second-generation TENS devices will be launched under the AccuRelief banner, the company noted, including one operated via remote control.

And Compass Health is adding four TENS devices to its Thera-Med brand: Thera-Med Sport Core, Thera-Med Pain Shield and the wireless Thera-Med Sport 360+, a three-in-one TENS, EMS — electrical muscle stimulation — and massage device that is compatible with a mobile app. Finally, there is the Thera-Med Sport Move, a wearable TENS product for the neck, back, knee or elbow.

The official launch date for these new devices will be around mid-2017, the company noted.

Aleve Direct Therapy TENS device launched in May 2016 and has had $8.9 million in first-year sales.

Top 7 electrotherapy devices

BRAND	SALES*	% SALES CHG	UNIT SALES*
Icy Hot Smart Relief	$32.9	5.1%	1.3
Omron Electro Therapy	20.0	17.5	0.5
Aleve Direct Therapy	8.9	NA	0.2
Private label	5.0	265.4	0.2
Accurelief	2.3	148.6	0.1
Wahl	0.4	36.8	0.0
Quell	0.2	NA	NA
TOTAL	**$581.8**	**10.3%**	**2.32**

* In millions
Source: IRI for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016, Total U.S. multi-outlet (supermarkets, drug stores, mass market retailers, military commissaries and select club and dollar retail chains)

24.7% sales growth of TENS devices is outpacing both external and internal analgesics

Record-breaking heat, precipitation make allergy medicines more important

By Michael Johnsen

To help battle the sneezing and congestion for what may very well be the "worst allergy season" ever, consumers will find two new remedies to place in their arsenal. Sanofi in February announced that the Food and Drug Administration approved Xyzal Allergy 24HR as an over-the-counter tablet for allergy relief, and expects to launch in the spring of this year. Soon thereafter, GSK Consumer Healthcare announced the nationwide launch of Flonase Sensimist Allergy Relief, which is on shelves now.

As many as 60 million Americans suffer from allergic rhinitis, commonly known as hay fever. And there is some credence that each successive year is "the worst ever" for allergy sufferers, because no matter the allergen, there seems to be more of it each year.

Last year was one of the warmest and wettest years in the 122 years the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has been keeping records. The average U.S. temperature in 2016 was 54.9 degrees Fahrenheit (2.9 degrees above average), which ranked as the second-warmest year in 122 years of record-keeping. And precipitation for the year totaled 31.7 inches, ranking as the 24th wettest year.

Pollen-friendly weather that extends and intensifies the growing seasons isn't the only factor on the rise. According to the 2015-2016 National Pet Owners Survey conducted by the American Pet Products Association, 65% of U.S. households own a pet, which equates to 79.7 million homes. That's up from 56% of U.S. households in 1988.

Specifically, 42.9 million households own a cat, while 54.4 million households own a dog. However, roughly twice as many people report allergies to cats when compared with dogs.

Sanofi's launch of Xyzal goes against some pretty heavy hitters in the allergy space. Such second-generation antihistamines as Zyrtec, Claritin and Allegra have dominated allergy aisles for years, and despite the recent introduction of nasal corticosteroids, those remedies are still growing.

Sales of McNeil Consumer's Zyrtec totaled $347.7 million for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016, up 1.9% across total U.S. multi-outlets, according to IRI. Sales of Bayer's Claritin were similarly up 2.3% to $238.3 million, and Sanofi's own Allegra sales totaled $221.6 million, up 5.3% in that period.

In the United States, the peak annual sales of Xyzal as a prescription product were $232 million in 2010, according to Sanofi, who classified Xyzal as a "third-generation" oral antihistamine that will deliver 24-hour relief in one pill.

Meanwhile, GSK Consumer Healthcare's line extension of its Flonase brand with Flonase Sensimist Allergy Relief will be up against some tough competition of its own. Of the nasal corticosteroids on the market today, GSK Consumer Healthcare's Flonase is the closest to toppling Zyrtec as the No. 1 allergy remedy, with $332 million in sales and growing at a 12.8% clip. So far, first-year sales of McNeil Consumer's Rhinocort have totaled $26.5 million and Bayer's Clarispray $11.4 million.

Featuring a unique MistPro technology, Flonase Sensimist delivers a fine, gentle, yet powerful mist spray, providing nondrowsy, 24-hour relief of allergy symptoms, including itchy, watery eyes; nasal congestion; runny or itchy nose; and sneezing.

GSK Consumer Healthcare launched Flonase Sensimist Allergy Relief just in time for what may be the "worst allergy season" ever.

Top 10 allergy remedies*

BRAND	SALES**	% SALES CHG	UNIT SALES**
Zyrtec	$347.7	1.9%	17.1
Flonase	332.0	12.8	16.7
Claritin	238.3	2.3	14.2
Allegra	221.6	5.3	11.8
Benadryl	150.7	3.1	22.8
Claritin D	129.3	-4.8	6.2
Nasacort	122.7	-12.2	6.4
Allegra D	84.8	-9.9	4.0
Claritin Reditabs	68.8	-4.2	4.2
Zyrtec D	62.7	-13.5	3.1
TOTAL	**$6,886.3**	**NA**	**735.7**

* Total includes cold/allergy/sinus liquid/powder, nasal spray/drops/inhaler and cold/allergy/sinus tablets/packets
** In millions
Source: IRI for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016, Total U.S. Multi-Outlet (supermarkets, drug stores, mass market retailers, military commissaries and select club and dollar retail chains)

65% of U.S. households own a pet, according to the 2015-2016 National Pet Owners Survey.

Incontinence needs accelerate as baby boomers age

By Michael Johnsen

Incontinence is a growing problem. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that more than half of all older Americans struggle with it, a potential market of 22.9 million Americans who are in need of some sort of incontinence solution. That population of sufferers is generating 5.7% growth on a dollar base of $1.8 billion across total U.S. multi-outlets for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016, according to IRI.

With the oldest of the baby boomers reaching 71 years old in 2017, that market need will accelerate in the years to come.

"We found that half the [senior] population experienced urinary leakage or accidental bowel leakage, and about 25% had moderate, severe or very severe urinary leakage," said Yelena Gorina, a statistician at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics. The report was published in the CDC's *Vital and Health Statistics*.

According to the report, nearly 51% of people ages 65 years and older living at home reported bladder and/or bowel incontinence. Bladder incontinence was reported by slightly less than 44%, and bowel incontinence by slightly more than 17%.

And that's not even the total market. "More than 65 million Americans experience bladder leakage," Stacey Pomeroy, brand manager Poise, Kimberly-Clark, told *Drug Store News*. "That's 1-in-4 Americans between the ages of 20 [years] and 85 [years]. And surprisingly, nearly half of them are under the age of 50 [years]," she said. "Despite its prevalence, people still keep bladder control issues a secret because of social perceptions, embarrassment and not realizing how common it actually is. … Growing the category involves breaking down the stigma associated with bladder control issues, and encouraging people to think differently about these products."

Bladder leakage is caused by a variety of things, including weak bladder muscles, pregnancy and childbirth in women, complications from surgery, stroke or such chronic diseases as multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease. Other diseases that affect bladder nerves or the spinal cord, such as diabetes, also can cause bladder leakage. In men, such serious conditions as prostate cancer also can play a role in the development of bladder leakage.

"People dealing with bladder leakage want products that help them feel normal — that fit comfortably and discreetly while providing outstanding protection," said Kova Kolondzic, brand manager Depend, Kimberly-Clark.

Kimberly-Clark said its Poise Impressa Bladder Supports help meet that need. "[It's] the first over-the-counter internal product designed to help stop leaks before they happen." The supports are an OTC, non-absorbent internal product designed for the temporary management of stress urinary incontinence. Inserted into the vagina like a tampon, Poise Impressa Bladder Supports gently lift and support the urethra, which helps prevent urine from leaking for up to eight hours every day — discreetly.

For men, Kimberly-Clark has introduced Depend Real Fit Briefs. The briefs feature a premium, cotton-like fabric that is more breathable, which comes in gray, black and blue. Plus the improved fit and super-absorbent material are intended to ensure comfort and protection all day.

Kimberly-Clark's Poise Impressa Bladder Supports

Top 10 adult incontinence products

BRAND	SALES*	% SALES CHG	UNIT SALES*
Private label	$537.2	7.1%	53.2
Poise	450.9	10.6	52.4
Depend	374.5	0.2	23.7
Always Discreet	171.9	15.4	20.0
Tena Serenity	88.3	-4.9	8.0
Depend Silhouette	48.2	-0.9	3.2
Depend Real Fit	27.0	-5.4	1.9
Depend Night Defense	13.3	NA	1.1
Depend Silhouette Active Fit	11.1	23.7	1.1
Tena Serenity Active	9.0	-20.9	1.9
TOTAL	**$1,770.5**	**5.6%**	**170.4**

* In millions
Source: IRI for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016, Total U.S. Multi-Outlet (supermarkets, drug stores, mass market retailers, military commissaries and select club and dollar retail chains)

51% of seniors experience incontinence, according to the CDC.

More stakeholders enter cold and flu prediction space via mobile apps

By Michael Johnsen

Soon enough, actual increases in cold or flu incidence may contribute to a pantry-loading opportunity for retailers as more and more entities enter the cold and flu prediction space by way of mobile phone apps.

The latest incidence tracker will be coupled with a symptom identifier to help consumers better select their cold or flu remedies. WebMD CEO Steve Zatz in February announced a joint effort with Walgreens designed to activate consumers whose area or region may be experiencing an uptick in illness. "WebMD will soon launch a new offering with Walgreens called 'Relief Advisor' that allows consumers to enter symptoms and receive medical-reviewed health information from WebMD, including treatment advice, as well as the active ingredients they should look for when buying OTC products to treat their cold, cough and flu," Zatz said. "Relief Advisor will be available through both Walgreens' and WebMD's PC and mobile platforms."

WebMD is coming off of its largest effort in leveraging geo-prevalence data to help consumers manage their health care, Zatz noted. "Using proprietary models, WebMD is able to predict cold and flu trends up to four weeks in advance, and with our new alert feature [we can] notify consumers via email about the prevalence of cold and flu in their geographic location. So they can take proactive steps to avoid getting sick."

Reckitt Benckiser, makers of Mucinex, is one of WebMD's long-term partners and the sponsor of both the maps and alerts.

In January, Datapult launched its Achu app to be used in conjunction with a Fitbit in monitoring a person's health through cold and flu season. The app pairs symptoms reported by the user — from fatigue to fever — and then uses that user's Fitbit data to alert them when their body is showing signs of an illness, such as a flu or cold.

Matrixx Initiatives has launched ColdSense, an iPhone app designed to help evaluate a user's potential exposure to the common cold. The app utilizes smartphone sensors to actively listen for coughs and sneezes around a user to determine potential risk of exposure, and combines this with multiple other indicators to create a constantly updating personalized risk profile.

As for this season, a late boost in flu incidence coupled with a strong cold season may positively impact sales of cold and flu remedies.

Incidence of flu has been ramping up through February — for the week ended Feb. 11 the proportion of outpatient visits for influenza-like illness rocketed to 5.2%, well above the national baseline of 2.2%, and a sharp uptick in the 4.6% in ILI reported the week prior. That puts this season on par with two years ago, when ILI incidence reached as high as 6%.

Before flu incidence really started taking off, Helena Foulkes, president CVS/pharmacy and EVP CVS Caremark, told analysts that people sick with a cold were really driving gains in cough-cold sales. "Essentially, it hasn't been a really strong flu season," she said on Feb. 9. "What we're mostly seeing is over-the-counter increases in the cold category, for example, but not so much flowing through to the script side."

Retailers will look to mobile apps that predict cold and flu trends, such as the Relief Advisor from WebMD and Walgreens, to boost cough-cold and flu sales.

Top 10 cold/allergy/sinus tablets/packets*

BRAND	SALES**	% SALES CHG	UNIT SALES**
Alka Seltzer Plus	$193.1	-5.8%	30.5
Mucinex DM	175.2	1.3	11.0
Mucinex	159.2	10.5	9.6
Mucinex Fast Max	102.7	10.4	7.6
Vicks Nyquil and Vicks Dayquil	82.9	16.1	6.8
Mucinex Sinus Max	80.6	26.6	6.1
Theraflu	79.1	0.2	9.5
Advil	72.6	2.7	7.3
Mucinex D	69.3	-14.4	3.2
Vicks Dayquil	68.7	0.5	7.7
TOTAL	**$4,528.3**	**0.2%**	**464.2**

* List excludes allergy remedy tablets ** In millions
Source: IRI for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016, Total U.S. Multi-Outlet (supermarkets, drug stores, mass market retailers, military commissaries and select club and dollar retail chains)

5.2% incidence of ILI as of the week ended Feb. 11. Flu incidence hasn't reached this level in two years, according to the CDC.

Probiotics prove profitable, emerging as one of fastest-growing healthcare markets

By Michael Johnsen

The U.S. market for probiotics is emerging as one of the fastest-growing consumer healthcare markets. With the exception of Quincy Bioscience's memory supplement Prevagen, all of the brands ranked in the top 10 of mineral supplements on a pathway of double-digit growth brands are mainstay probiotic products. Sales of i-Health's Culturelle line totaled $122.9 million for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016, across total U.S. multi-outlets, according to IRI, on 16.4% growth. Procter & Gamble's Align franchise realized $81.3 million in sales on 14.2% growth and RB's Schiff Digestive Advantage generated $57 million on 10% growth.

"Probiotics alone represents [more than] 28% of the category growth in retail dollars," Tim Toll, Pharmavite's chief customer officer, told *Drug Store News* following last year's NACDS Total Store Expo conference.

As many as 13% of Americans currently are taking a probiotic, according to the Council for Responsible Nutrition's 2016 Consumer Survey on Dietary Supplements. And 17% identified digestive and/or gastrointestinal health as one of the top reasons behind supplementing.

According to a full-year 2015 market study, Kline Group placed the total market for probiotics at more than $530 million, which represents growth of 15% across the entire category. "These high growth rates have been sustained by increased consumer awareness and more chronic use as consumers see the value in taking probiotics to increase their immunity rather than just help treat episodic digestive ailments," noted Laura Mahecha, Kline Group industry manager, health care. "Furthermore, compared [with] more traditional digestive products, probiotics have relatively high retail price points, which helps drive overall sales for this market segment."

I-Health boosted its position within the probiotic space with its February acquisition of the UP4 Probiotic brand from UAS Laboratories. UP4 is a successful specialty channel brand that features a full line of probiotic products. "The acquisition of the successful, fast-growing and scientifically supported UP4 brand of probiotics will expand and accelerate i-Health's leadership position in the probiotic category," said Wes Parris, i-Health's CEO. "I am excited about the prospect of delivering even more new growth platforms based on strong science and innovation into the fast-growing probiotic category," he said. "In addition, the UP4 brand represents a perfect strategic complement to our category-leading brand Culturelle."

And America's Naturals in January added its latest line-extension to the Family Flora lineup of probiotic supplements. Called E.N.T., the latest probiotic dietary supplement targets ear, nose and throat care, and is ideal for a dual placement along cough-cold and flu endcaps.

According to the company, the product helps reduce recurrence of upper respiratory infections, reducing the number of times antibiotics are needed.

"Beside probiotics, consumers also are showing more interest in prebiotics, which can help promote probiotic colonization and growth in the digestive system," Mahecha noted. "Probiotics, which contain live bacteria, introduce good bacteria into the digestive system. Prebiotics are nondigestible carbohydrates that act as food for probiotics and help the good bacteria contained in probiotics grow."

According to CRN's 2016 Consumer Survey on Dietary Supplements, as many as 13% of Americans are taking probiotics.

Top 10 mineral supplements

BRAND	SALES*	% SALES CHG	UNIT SALES*
Nature Made	$321.6	3.1%	33.3
Nature's Bounty	277.4	2.6	30.2
Culturelle	122.9	16.4	5.5
Sundown Naturals	88.8	4.3	10.9
Align	81.3	14.2	2.5
Prevagen	74.7	79.1	1.6
Schiff Mega Red	71.1	-11.2	3.2
Caltrate	58.5	-4.4	5.1
Phillips Colon Health	57.9	3.5	3.2
Schiff Digestive Advantage	57.	10.0	4.0
TOTAL	**$3,541.4**	**6.4%**	**307.6**

* In millions
Source: IRI for the 52 weeks ended Dec. 25, 2016, Total U.S. Multi-Outlet (supermarkets, drug stores, mass market retailers, military commissaries and select club and dollar retail chains)

13% of American consumers supplement their health-and-wellness regimen with a probiotic supplement.