

Attitudes Towards Health - Stress - UK - January 2010

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What is this report about?

The UK is in the grip of a recession. House prices have fallen and unemployment has risen and this has contributed to the consumer mood of anxiety and uncertainty. People who have held onto their jobs may fear for their job security, particularly if their colleagues have been made redundant. Money worries, and the pressure that it puts on relationships, along with the security of the home and future plans have all contributed to rising levels of stress.

This report explores today's stressed-out consumer. It investigates the biggest triggers of stress and identifies ways to respond to this through new product development, marketing campaigns or corporate initiatives.

What have we found out?

- 'Unwind' positioning claims have plenty of scope to be developed further. An estimated 40 million adults have tensions or worries, yet just 3% of all FMCG launches across beauty and personal care, household, healthcare and food and drink claim to de-stress or relax.
- Women demonstrate worry more about others than men do. They are more likely to find relief from tension and worries by doing something for themselves finding home pampering products and indulgent snacks and massages appealing.
- Many adults believe that going to the doctor or seeking professional medical help as admitting defeat and very much a last-resort option. Sixteen million adults feel more comfortable talking to family and friends first.
- Used by just 2 million adults, complementary medicines may be seen as an over-the-counter alternative to antidepressants, which are still surrounded by much stigma.
- Getting out of the house and away from stress triggers such as chores, bills and family members is spurring people to book holidays or escape to the cinema, golf course or salon.
- Stress provides innovation opportunities for healthcare products. Stress is the most commonly reported trigger of headaches, back and neck pain and consumer data shows that an estimated 32 million adults suffered from headaches in 2009. Innovation in analgesics/ relaxants could focus on stress-related aches and pains. Incorporating aromatherapy oils for inhalation could also offer multi-sensory relief.
- Adults aged between 35 and 44 years old present the greatest opportunity to manufacturers of stress relief products. Despite a forecast decline in the number of adults in this age group, they have a higher propensity to buy into a range of products when tense than other age groups.

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