

OTC Painkillers and Cold and Flu Remedies - UK - June 2011

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What is this report about?

Since the beginning of the recession in 2008, the market for OTC pain and cold/flu remedies has experienced a decline in value sales. According to Mintel's consumer research, the active ingredients contained in OTC medication are more important than the brand of medication.

What have we found out?

- The OTC pain and cold/flu market needs to try to increase usage among 16-24-year-olds, who have a high incidence for suffering from pain and cold/flu symptoms, but lower usage.
- Commissioned research for this report shows that around a quarter of consumers wait until they are really suffering from pain or cold/flu symptoms before they medicate.
- With 16-24-year-olds twice as likely as general owners to use mobile internet on a daily basis, OTC brands could introduce free mobile apps which can show users the percentage of people suffering from cold/flu in any given postcode in the UK, the types of symptoms that are most prevalent and which ones to look out for in a specific area. The application could also keep users updated on the latest cold and flu news and updates on the weather so they are prepared no matter where they are.
- The 25-34-year-olds, who are the heaviest users of OTC cold and flu remedies (see The Consumer – Attitudes towards OTC Pain and Cold/Flu Remedies) are the most likely to take cold and flu remedies as soon as they experience symptoms.
- Those in employment and those who are earning in excess of £50,000 are more likely to be interested in buying OTC remedies that are fast acting, as opposed to those who are unemployed or on lower incomes.
- The taste and flavour of OTC medication is an important purchase driver for 16-24-year-olds in particular. When buying OTC cold/flu remedies, over half of 16-24-year-olds buy lozenges to treat symptoms. OTC cold/flu brands may focus on improving the taste of lozenges by introducing new flavours such as açai berry flavour.

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