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Contacts: Elizabeth Funderburk (CHPA),
202.429.9260

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Jennifer Frighetto (Nielsen), 847.605.5686

CHPA, Nielsen: OTC Heartburn Therapy Saves Nearly \$800 Million Annually, Vast Majority of OTC Heartburn Consumers Satisfied

New Research Illustrates Strong Health and Economic Benefits of OTC Heartburn Remedies

Washington, D.C.—New research from the Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA) and The Nielsen Company indicates 94 percent patient satisfaction with available over-the-counter (OTC) heartburn medications and estimates that OTC therapy saves patients an average total of \$174 each in office visits and medication costs annually. In addition, CHPA and Nielsen attribute \$757 million in annual savings to the U.S. healthcare system based on fewer office visits—all good news for millions¹ of Americans who suffer from heartburn as well as an overburdened healthcare system.

“This is wonderful news for consumers. This study points to a high level of satisfaction plus costs savings among those who turn to OTC heartburn medicines for symptom relief,” said Linda Suydam, president, CHPA. “The overall findings reflect the evolution of heartburn treatments as the availability of effective over-the-counter treatment options have expanded over the past 15 years.”

“The savings these OTC medicines provide to the U.S. healthcare system are equally significant,” said Jim Mansfield, The Nielsen Company and one of the study’s authors. “Ongoing research into health outcomes and the cost of lost work time and misdiagnosis holds the potential to identify additional—yet substantial—savings.”

CHPA and Nielsen’s research also finds that more than half (61 percent) of consumers surveyed treat heartburn *without* discussing symptoms with a healthcare provider, and notes the importance of consumer education to safe and effective treatment.

“As with any OTC medication, consumers should read the label and follow directions closely to understand what the medicine is used for, to ensure appropriate dosing, and to avoid

¹ WebMD estimates one in 10 people suffer from heartburn symptoms each week.

dangerous drug interactions,” noted Janet P. Engle, Pharm.D., FAPhA, executive associate dean, professor and head, Department of Pharmacy Practice, University of Illinois at Chicago College of Pharmacy. “Should they have any questions, it is important that they talk to their pharmacist. Severe or ongoing symptoms should be reported to a healthcare provider.”

About the Study

The study, “Benefits of Over-the-Counter Heartburn Medication to Consumers and the Healthcare System” was conducted in 2008 and is based on online and written survey responses from nearly 10,000 U.S. consumers who use OTC heartburn medication.

The research was conducted using NielsenHealth’s Upper GI Ailment Panel data related to consumer satisfaction with the full range of over-the-counter (OTC) heartburn remedies, including antacids, H2-blockers, and proton pump inhibitors (PPIs). Researchers used a combination of consumer data compiled by Nielsen and provider data compiled by WoltersKluwer Health’s Dynamic Claims to estimate cost savings.

The [report](http://www.chpa-info.org/media/resources/r_5333.pdf) is available online (http://www.chpa-info.org/media/resources/r_5333.pdf).

About The Nielsen Company

The Nielsen Company is a global information and media company with leading marketing and consumer information, television and other media measurement, online intelligence, mobile measurement, trade shows and business publications (Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter, Adweek). The privately held company is active in more than 100 countries, with headquarters in New York, USA. For more information, please visit, www.nielsen.com.

About CHPA

CHPA is the 128-year-old-trade association representing U.S. manufacturers and distributors of over-the-counter medicines and nutritional supplements and is committed to promoting the increasingly vital role of healthcare remedies in America’s healthcare system through science, education, and advocacy. For more information, please visit www.chpa-info.org.

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