

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Two-thirds of consumers want tighter regulation on claims made by non-prescription medicines

Two-thirds (67%) of UK consumers want stronger regulations governing the health claims made by non-prescription medicines. Additionally, only a quarter (25%) of people trust manufacturers not to mislead consumers, according to a new report from YouGov SixthSense.

Despite a majority wanting more and/or tighter regulation, however, the UK health products market is still robust, with 80% of UK consumers having pain killers in their home at any one time. Furthermore, more than a third (36%) of respondents has vitamins at home. YouGov SixthSense estimates that the total market value was £2.39bn in 2012, up modestly on 2011.

While the majority (77%) of consumers say they have not been put off non-prescription medicines by recent media coverage, a significant minority (27%) say they are less likely to buy diet/slimming pills following recent adverse publicity.

Keeping healthy

A majority (56%) of consumers in the UK say they do “as much as they can” to stay healthy, a figure that rises to 66% for those aged 55 and over. However, 82% of respondents feel their lifestyles could be healthier.

Of those who say their lifestyles could be healthier, taking more exercise (71%), eating healthier foods (57%), eating less (42%), cutting down/stopping drinking (26%), and cutting down/stopping smoking (12%) were identified as areas for improvement.

Interestingly, among those who feel their lifestyle could be healthier, reducing alcohol consumption appears to be especially popular amongst men in the 16-24 age range, 38% of whom favour this option. Among the same group, younger people are also far more likely to consider eating healthier foods to improve their lifestyles, which suggests that they represent a more promising and willing target audience for advocates of various diets. While 72% of 16-24 year olds who feel their lifestyle could be healthier would consider this option, just 44% of the over 55s in the same group are prepared to eat healthier foods.

Commenting on the report, YouGov SixthSense Research Director James McCoy said: “The fact that 82% of consumers in the UK feel that their lifestyles could be healthier indicates there is definitely room for growth in the health products market. However, the relatively high degree of scepticism amongst consumers indicates that companies need to do more to convince people that buying their products is worthwhile, and might help them lead a healthier life.”

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Notes to editors:

For this report, a survey was commissioned amongst YouGov's online panel. This survey was conducted among a nationally representative sample of 1,055 adults aged 16 and over, with fieldwork taking place over the period 7-10 May 2013.

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About SixthSense

SixthSense, part of YouGov plc, is a provider of comprehensive business intelligence. It offers a powerful type of consumer-driven market intelligence report and online information platform, designed to help businesses make better and quicker decisions.

Bespoke data is collected through YouGov's proprietary panel of over 350,000 UK consumers. Highly qualified analysts use this data to deliver insight, comment, opinion and advice on the latest market trends and conditions.

For further information, visit <http://sixthsense.yougov.com/>

About YouGov

YouGov is an international, full service market research agency offering added value consultancy, qualitative research, field and tab services, syndicated products such as the daily brand perception tracker BrandIndex and social media analysis tool SoMA, fast turnaround omnibus and comprehensive SixthSense market intelligence reports. YouGov's sector specialist teams serve financial, media, technology and telecoms, FMCG and public sector markets.

YouGov is considered a pioneer of online market research and has a panel of 2.5 million people worldwide, including over 350,000 people in the UK representing all ages, socio-economic groups and other demographic types.

As the most quoted market research agency in the UK, YouGov has a well-documented and published track record illustrating the accuracy of its survey methods.

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