In the United States, colds account for more visits to the doctor than any other condition, according to the American Lung Association. The common culprit behind spreading rhinovirus, the virus behind as many as 40% of all colds, is children — pediatric patients on average suffer from the symptoms of a cold between six and eight times each year. And given how highly contagious many colds are, that may explain why many adults get sick, too.

Colds impact adults between two and four times each year. And that's all adults — not just parents.

Brandperx, in collaboration with Drug Store News, in December surveyed 1,000 pediatricians exclusive to its network regarding the recommendations they share with parents to nip the nasty bugs from the get-go — when their children first come home from school with a cold.

Those pediatricians are making plenty of recommendations. In fact, between September and March — the typical beginning and end points for cough-cold and flu season — not one week goes by where they don't recommend an OTC cough-cold product for children older than five years of age.

As many as one-third of pediatricians (32.2%) make as many as five recommendations per week in that time span. As many as 26.5% of pediatricians make a cough-cold recommendation as many as 10 times per week, and 14.8% of pediatricians make more than 20 recommendations each week.

The two leading symptoms driving recommendations are cough (94.6%) and fever (78.3%). Sore throat and postnasal drip drive around half of product recommendations, accounting for 50.2% and 48.8% of recommendations, respectively. Sneezing accounted for 37.3% of recommendations.

McNeil Healthcare's Tylenol, RB's Delsym and Pfizer's Robitussin brands are the three most-recommended brands by pediatricians participating in the BrandPerx survey, and that's reflected in sales. For example, sales of Children's Tylenol (liquid), which is recommended by pediatricians nearly three-quarters of the time, were up 3.7% to $62.2 million for the 52 weeks ended Nov. 27, 2016 across total U.S. multi-outlets, according to IRI.

Hyland's 4Kids line of liquid cough products are trending high. One-in-four pediatricians are recommending Hyland's remedies for children with colds, and brand sales are up 41.4% to $18.2 million, according to IRI data.

The vast majority of pediatricians (83.1%) are recommending products with zero side effects, especially no drowsiness, when considering which products to recommend, the survey found. Approximately two-thirds of pediatricians tend to recommend products that relieve symptoms right away (65.6%) and long-lasting medicines that parents have to administer only once or twice each day (68.3%). And more than half of pediatricians (53.1%) look to recommend natural remedies.

Format plays a major role in determining which products a pediatrician recommends. Apparently, enticing a child to take their cough-cold medicine is akin to pilling a cat. As many as 91.9% of pediatricians take format into consideration when making a recommendation, and 97% of pediatricians recommend a liquid remedy, as opposed to tablets (48.5%) or lozenges (14.1%).
Our best sellers are now available in Grape flavor

• Relief of colds including coughing, sneezing, sore throat, runny nose, nasal and chest congestion*

• Free of artificial colors, flavors and stimulant side effects

• Specially formulated homeopathic medicine for ages 2-12

• Contains no Aspirin, Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Pseudoephedrine or Dextromethorphan

www.hylands4kids.com
By Michael Johnsen

Last year, Drug Store News projected that GSK Consumer Healthcare’s Flonase allergy franchise would be challenged with the introduction of two new nasal corticosteroids to the market — McNeil Consumer’s Rhinocort and Bayer’s ClariSpray.

GSK Consumer Healthcare’s Flonase was up to the challenge. The brand continues to dominate allergy sales with $335.5 million in revenue on 22.9% growth for the 52 weeks ended Nov. 27, 2016 across total U.S. multi-outlets, according to IRI. And GSK Consumer Healthcare already has its next Flonase line extension in the queue. GSK Consumer Healthcare will introduce Flonase Sensimist Allergy Relief this spring.

Flonase is tantalizingly close to toppling the No. 1 allergy remedy on the market — McNeil Consumer’s Zyrtec. That brand brought in $346.9 million on 1.8% growth.

But nobody loses. McNeil generated another $25.2 million in not-yet-finished first-year sales of Rhinocort, and Bayer’s ClariSpray generated $10.4 million within its first year on the shelf.

Across the cough-cold aisle, GSK Consumer Healthcare has another heavy hitter topping the growth charts across cough-cold with Theraflu Expressmax. This brand recorded 347.1% growth on a sales base of almost $30 million.

Bayer’s Alka Seltzer Plus cold remedy is easily the leading cold tablet product on the market with $188.7 million in sales. And though the brand’s sales are down 10.4% in the reporting period, Bayer may be looking to give a boost to its Alka Seltzer Plus brand with the recent introduction of a brand boasting “dye and preservative free” that may be more appealing to consumers who want the best of both worlds — more natural cold medicines that get the job done.

Another venerable cough-cold brand that will benefit from marketing investments this year will be Cold-Eeze, which sold in January to Mylan for $50 million. “The acquisition of Cold-Eeze further builds upon our $1 billion global OTC business and helps us to enhance our presence in the U.S. OTC market,” said Rajiv Malik, president of Mylan. “We see potential to build on its success by leveraging our expertise in the respiratory area.” The 20-year-old brand includes a family of zinc-based lozenges, gummies, oral sprays, capsules and oral liquid dose forms.

Mylan continues to boost its presence in the cough-cold space, first with its acquisition of Meda and its consumer portfolio, and now the acquisition of the Cold-Eeze brand.

Bayer is repositioning its Alka-Seltzer Plus line as “dye-free” and “preservative-free,” conceivably making a direct appeal to shoppers concerned about the medicines they’re ingesting.

GSK Consumer Healthcare’s Flonase franchise will continue its climb to the top spot among all OTC allergy remedies, as measured in sales.
For over 80 years shoppers have trusted Carmex® Classic Lip Balm. Now, Carmex Daily Care™ offers them everyday moisturization and sun protection in a variety of delicious flavors.

CARMEX DAILY CARE™ MOISTURIZING LIP BALM IS

Bursting With Flavor

SPF 15 Sun Protection  |  8 Fun Flavors and Growing  |  Available in Tube and Stick

*Source: IRI MULO Dollar Sales Rank; L52 weeks ending 12-25-16

MyCarmex.com
Overall, the sale of all sleep remedies were up 6.1% to $707.9 million across total U.S. multi-outlets for the 52 weeks ended Nov. 27, 2016, according to IRI. Procter & Gamble's ZzzQuil still leads the category. Sales of the liquid formulation are outpacing category growth with an uptick of 8.4% to $85.3 million, or 12% of total category sales.

Fueling this growth is a combination of both old- and new-age technology, noted Jim Creagan, president of Randob Labs. Randob is launching its Dormin sleep aid into mass markets this spring.

“It’s going to continue to be a growth business, with two drivers,” he said. “One is the older population. As people age, they have more difficulty sleeping. [And] then you have the proliferation of the smartphone. ... People are turning to sleep remedies because they have trouble falling asleep.”

In fact, as many as 38.3% of Americans have trouble sleeping, according to Hyland’s, which launched a homeopathic energy booster called Good Morning at last year’s NACDS Total Store Expo. Of those who have trouble sleeping, 35% have used a sleep aid, and one-third have not used a sleep aid but would be interested in trying one.

That makes sleep aids a high-trial category. “If you are not sleeping, you are willing to try just about anything to get that sleep,” Creagan said. “Not only do you feel bad, but your work performance is impacted, [and] dealing with the kids is more difficult. ... The constant trial aspect is definitely something that drives the category, [and] when they find something that works, they are fiercely loyal.”

In fact, as many as 38.3% of Americans have trouble sleeping, according to Hyland’s, which launched a homeopathic energy booster called Good Morning at last year’s NACDS Total Store Expo. Of those who have trouble sleeping, 35% have used a sleep aid, and one-third have not used a sleep aid but would be interested in trying one.

That makes sleep aids a high-trial category. “If you are not sleeping, you are willing to try just about anything to get that sleep,” Creagan said. “Not only do you feel bad, but your work performance is impacted, [and] dealing with the kids is more difficult. ... The constant trial aspect is definitely something that drives the category, [and] when they find something that works, they are fiercely loyal.”
Dormin...
Putting people to sleep
for over 67 years

- Dormin, #3 in independent pharmacy
- Customer preferred, easy-to-swallow capsules
- National TV advertising support
- Attractive retail packaging
- Customer value priced with attractive retail margins

Fast • Safe • Trusted • Effective
Since 1950

For more information please contact Michael Quinn at 845.651.8900 or mike@randob.com
Sales of top allergy remedies are up as cough-cold tablet sales remain flat

By Michael Johnsen

Sales of cough-cold tablets through the 52 weeks ended Nov. 27 were relatively flat, according to IRI data. Across total U.S. multi-outlets, sales of cough-cold tablets, including the top allergy remedies, totaled $4.5 billion, down slightly by less than 1%. Notably, sales of all the top allergy medicines were up. Sales of Bayer’s Alka-Seltzer Plus were down 10.4% to $188.7 million and Reckitt Benckiser’s Mucinex DM was down 0.3% to $174 million. RB’s core Mucinex brand was up 6.4% to $156.4 million.

The numbers are down because incidence has been down. Overall, cough-cold incidence last year was down some 15%, reported Ron Lombardi, president and CEO of Prestige Brands. And the start to the 2016-2017 season hasn’t been all that great, either.

“We are reducing our full-year sales outlook … due primarily to expected continued weakness of the cough, cold, flu season, which we are assuming will remain below the historical average,” reported Helen of Troy CFO Brian Grass, heading into the 2016-2017 season.

But the tide might be turning in the other direction, as retailers and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in early January reported indicators of a strong end to the 2016-2017 season. In fact, Meijer pharmacies reported sales increases of more than 30% in OTC cough-cold products in the weeks leading to the new year.

And the end of the year that marked the third-week influenza activity was above the national baseline level of 2.2% as activity levels continued to climb, according to the CDC. The CDC noted that the influenza A, also known as H3N2, virus was the most predominant in the early going.

In the past, H3N2-predominant seasons have been associated with more severe illness, relative to H1N1-predominant seasons. While it’s not possible to predict which influenza viruses will predominate for the entire 2016-2017 influenza season, if H3N2 viruses continue to circulate widely, older adults and young children would be more severely impacted, the CDC warned.

To help track that potentially higher incidence in cold and flu, Matrixx Initiatives in mid-January 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.

“We live in an age when nearly everyone has a smartphone with them 24/7,” noted M’Lou Walker, Matrixx CEO. “And because we take them everywhere, our smartphones can help alert us to our likelihood of exposure to the common cold.”

The Zicam ColdSense app, designed by Current Studios, evaluates a user’s potential exposure to a cold through a proprietary algorithm that analyzes and applies a weighted value to key indicators in real time. ColdSense uses and continuously updates personal smartphone data, such as location, travel plans, calendar activities, sleep trackers, health wearables, external information from weather and sickness forecasting, mapping platforms and social statistics.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported influenza activity was above the national baseline level of 2.2% at the end of last year.

Top 10 cold-allergy-sinus tablets/packets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BRAND</th>
<th>SALES*</th>
<th>% SALES CHG</th>
<th>UNIT SALES*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zyrtec</td>
<td>$346.9</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claritin</td>
<td>238.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegra</td>
<td>221.3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alka Seltzer Plus</td>
<td>188.7</td>
<td>-10.4</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucinex DM</td>
<td>173.9</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucinex</td>
<td>156.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benadryl</td>
<td>150.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claritin D</td>
<td>129.9</td>
<td>-4.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucinex Fast Max</td>
<td>102.7</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegra D</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>-10.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$4,499.1</td>
<td>-0.9%</td>
<td>461.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In millions

Source: IRI for the 52 weeks ended Nov. 27, Total U.S. Multi-Outlet (supermarkets, drug stores, mass market retailers, military commissaries and select club and dollar retail chains)

15% Cough-cold incidence was down in the double-digits last year compared to 2015.
Procter breathes new life in Sinex
Sources say sinus relief lacks true category leader in retail aisle

By Michael Johnsen

At the top of the 2016-2017 cough-and-cold season, Procter & Gamble gave its Sinex brand a makeover, relaunching the sinus-relief brand known as “The Clear Your Head Medicine” in an effort to offer consumers a better understanding around their choices for nasal congestion and pressure relief, regardless of whether symptoms are due to allergies, colds or other triggers.

“Consumers can experience confusion when they’re trying to find a product that can offer total sinus relief, partly because our research has found that sinus lacks a true category leader,” stated Dave Tomasi, commercial director at P&G Personal Health Care. “Without that well-known, go-to sinus brand, people are left to juggle a variety of products in order to find relief for their symptoms,” he said. “With 63% of sinus sufferers looking to a variety of medications that might not do the job for their sinus symptoms, this expansion of the Sinex line will offer one-stop-shop relief from a trusted brand.”

The brand relaunch will feature an integrated marketing campaign, including national TV, online video, in-store displays, couponing and a digital sinus incidence program.

“There are many well-established brands for allergy relief, but without that true category leader for consumers who suffer from sinus symptoms, it made sense to launch a line specifically designed to address these consumers’ needs, regardless of the trigger. We want to keep it simple — Sinex stands for sinus,” Tomasi said.

The new product lineup provides both solids and sprays to meet consumers’ personal preferences.

U.S. households that need a sinus solution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Households</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>Percent of households with a severe sinus sufferer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Percent of households without a sinus sufferer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54%</td>
<td>Percent of households with a sinus sufferer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sinex WHO Quantitative Study, Vicks North America, September 2015

Vicks’ Sinex nasal decongestant

Originally launched in 1959 as “Medi Mist,” Vicks adopted the brand-name Sinex three years later, and was the market leader through the mid-1990s. Sinex has retained high awareness and a loyal following due to its “long-lasting relief” claim. Since the mid-‘90s, the brand has offered fast-acting relief in nasal spray form. The manufacturer suggested retail price for Sinex’s product line start at $6.99 and $7.99, respectively.
Allergy medicine sales rise as annual average temperatures rise

By Michael Johnsen

Sales of allergy remedies are certainly up thanks to the influx of recent Rx-to-OTC switches in the space. GSK Consumer Healthcare’s Flonase tops the nasal corticosteroid charts with $335.5 million in sales, up 22.9% for the 52 weeks ended Nov. 27 across total U.S. multi-outlets, according to IRI. That’s followed by Chattem’s Nasacort, with a still healthy $124.1 million in allergy sales despite an 11.6% decline versus last year’s sales. And McNeil Consumer and Bayer round out the list of nasal corticosteroids currently on the market, with their respective 2016 launches — Rhinocort ($25.2 million) and ClariSpray ($10.4 million).

But that doesn’t explain the continued upward sales trajectories of venerable allergy remedies sold in tablet form, like Zyrtec, Claritin, Allegra and Benadryl. With so many nasal corticosteroid products hitting the market that were not so long ago available only with a doctor’s prescription, there should be cannibalization of the category, right?

Not if each successive allergy system is literally the proverbial “worst season ever.” The fact is 2016 was one of the warmest and wettest years since 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. This is the 20th consecutive year the annual average temperature exceeded the average. In addition, every state in the contiguous United States and Alaska experienced above-average annual temperatures, according to scientists from NOAA’s National Centers for Environmental Information.

Precipitation for the year totaled 31.7 inches, ranking as the 24th wettest year. The national drought footprint expanded from about 18% in January to about 23% by the end of December. At just under 19%, the average area of drought in the United States for 2016 was the smallest since 2010.

Allergy sufferers should brace themselves for more of the same, as warm and wet make for ideal pollen conditions. “The weather certainly plays an important role in determining how prevalent allergies may be for a given season,” Adam Bailine, VP marketing and communications at Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America told DSN. “Rising temperatures caused by climate change lead to longer allergy seasons, and worsen air quality. And, longer allergy seasons can cause more allergies and asthma attacks.”

This winter, NOAA forecasted wetter-than-normal conditions for the northern Rockies, around the Great Lakes, in Hawaii and in western Alaska. And warmer-than-normal conditions are most likely across the southern United States, extending northward through the central Rockies, in Hawaii, in western and northern Alaska and in northern New England.

Allergies are the sixth-leading cause of chronic illness in the United States, AAFA noted. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 8.4% of U.S. children suffer from hay fever, and 10% have respiratory allergies. Nasal allergies affect more than 50 million Americans, and the resulting doctor visits and allergy medicines contribute to more than $18 billion in annualized health costs.

Top 10 allergy brands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BRAND</th>
<th>SALES*</th>
<th>% SALES CHG</th>
<th>UNIT SALES*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zyrtec tablets/packets</td>
<td>$346.9</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flonase nasal spray</td>
<td>335.5</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claritin tablets/packets</td>
<td>238.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegra tablets/packets</td>
<td>221.3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benadryl tablets/packets</td>
<td>150.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claritin D tablets/packets</td>
<td>129.9</td>
<td>-4.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasacort nasal spray</td>
<td>124.1</td>
<td>-11.6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegra D tablets/packets</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>-10.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claritin RediTabs tablets/packets</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>-3.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zyrtec D tablets/packets</td>
<td>$62.9</td>
<td>-14.2%</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In millions
Source: IRI for the 52 weeks ended Nov. 27, Total U.S. Multi-Outlet (supermarkets, drug stores, mass market retailers, military commissaries and select club and dollar retail chains)
Walgreens Flu Index serves as resource
Drug store chain’s weekly report helps drive consumer awareness

By Michael Johnsen

So far, this flu season is looking optimal, Alex Gourlay, co-COO Walgreens Boots Alliance, shared with investors in January.

Walgreens in 2014 first introduced its Flu Index — a weekly report providing state- and market-specific information regarding influenza to help identify areas where flu cases may be escalating. Developed as a resource for health departments, media and others at the local level to help drive consumer awareness and prevention within their communities, the Walgreens Flu Index is compiled using the drug store chain’s weekly retail prescription data for antiviral medications used to treat influenza across Walgreens locations nationwide, in those markets with 10 or more Walgreens locations.

The market report not only serves as a resource for local groups, but also prepares local Walgreens operators for the illness fluctuations associated with any given cough-cold and flu season. “When we get the data and are able to utilize that for the press release, we are then taking that data to trigger store and field communications, letting them know if there is an outbreak in their area,” Emily Hartwig, Walgreens spokeswoman, told Drug Store News. “For example, earlier this year, Puerto Rico was hitting quite high, so we were able to notify our pharmacy team members,” she said. In turn, those pharmacy team members can proactively engage customers about the value of getting their flu shots and make sure their inventory will meet budding demand.

“We are seeing a more normal flu trend, which kicked in a bit later in the season than we had expected,” Gourlay said. “But that’s the only thing that has changed in December, [flu] is going to be obviously a slight tailwind for us in the second quarter, but it’s still early on and we will see what happens with the rest of the season.”

This is great news compared to the 2015-2016 season, which represented a 30-basis point drag on comparable prescriptions, according to Walgreens Boots Alliance CFO George Fairweather in April. “Reported incidents of flu [for the 2015-2016 season] across the United States declined by 16% compared with the year-ago quarter, according to IMS Health,” he said.

For the week ended Jan. 8, the Walgreens Flu Index recorded sharp upticks in several U.S. markets, including those markets in Utah, Mississippi, Hawaii and Puerto Rico.
Nearly three-quarters of Americans (73%) do not believe that coughing is an indicator of sickness. In fact, there are more Americans who are inclined to believe that ghosts (47%) and aliens (43%) are real than there are Americans who acknowledge that a cough is a harbinger of a cold or flu, according to a recent Harris Poll commissioned by Pfizer’s Robitussin brand.

Yet, almost all Americans (93%) feel that having a nagging cough is more annoying than having a sick child (48%), doing household chores (36%) or getting an oil change (30%). And nearly half of Americans (48%) report having a cough in a crowded place makes them feel self-conscious. When others cough, nearly half nearby (46%) feel anxious about getting sick and 26% feel annoyed.

When they’re sick, only half (54%) of Americans said they take extra measures, such as sanitizing their hands, when they feel under the weather. And almost two-thirds (65%) still report to work when they are ill.

No one wants to get sick during the holiday. Almost 4-in-10 Americans (39%) would rather shop in crowded stores and nearly one-quarter would rather be in the middle seat of a cross-country flight (24%) than be sick during the holidays. And even as nearly 23% of Americans fear getting sick, one-third of Americans (33%) would still attend holiday celebrations, even if they had sick symptoms.

The survey was conducted online within the United States among 2,025 adults over the age of 18 years old.