

## Health and Weight Monitoring Devices Rank High with Consumers in New National Survey

October 31, 2002

### ***Fitness Trainers and Nutritionists Viewed as Best Source for Weight Loss; Pharmacists Get High Marks for 'Accessibility and Knowledge'***

VALLEY FORGE, Pa., Oct 31, 2002 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- Given the results of the recent National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, which found that the percentage of overweight Americans continues to climb, it should come as no surprise that consumers are interested in diagnostic tools and devices that can help them monitor their caloric intake, weight and overall health.

An overwhelming 79 percent of adults surveyed nationwide said they would be interested in a free, confidential measuring device to test blood pressure, body fat or cholesterol while waiting for a prescription in a pharmacy. More than one third (36 percent) said a device that monitors the number of calories burned each day would be the most helpful tool for managing their weight. This choice was even more popular among adults 25-to-34 (42 percent), 35-to-44 (38 percent) and 45-to-54 (40 percent).

These findings were revealed in the latest AmerisourceBergen Index(C), which surveyed 1017 adults nationwide on a range of topics including how they view their local pharmacists, how often they seek advice from them, and their efforts to lose weight.

The quarterly survey was conducted October 4-7, 2002 by Opinion Research Corporation on behalf of AmerisourceBergen, the largest pharmaceutical services company in the United States dedicated solely to the pharmaceutical supply chain. The margin of error is plus or minus three percent.

### The Struggle Over Weight Loss

Sixty-five percent of survey respondents described themselves as being anywhere from five to more than 30 pounds overweight. These findings virtually mirrored those of the National Health and Nutrition Examination, which found the percentage of overweight American adults is now at 64.5 percent, having increased steadily since the 1970s.

Nearly half (44 percent) the respondents to the AmerisourceBergen Index admitted to a chronic failure to lose weight. Twenty-seven percent said they continued to lose and regain the same pounds; 11 percent said they had tried and failed to lose weight many times; 6 percent said they had given up on trying to lose weight. Yet almost all respondents (96 percent) indicated they were aware of the impact that weight has on a person's overall health.

Where do people want to turn for help in the fight against excess weight? Fitness trainers and nutritionists. Each of these specialists was selected by 32 percent of respondents, resulting in a tie for first place. Twenty-two percent picked physicians, with adults 45-to-65-plus even more likely to do so. Four percent selected an interactive kiosk capable of measuring lean body mass, and 2 percent chose pharmacists.

### Consumers Evaluate Their Pharmacists

Survey respondents were also asked what they thought of their local pharmacists. More than three quarters (78 percent) expressed favorable opinions. Forty-one percent described their pharmacists as "accessible and helpful." This was even higher among senior citizens 65 and over, with 47 percent in this age group making this assessment. Twenty six percent of respondents said their pharmacists were "patient and knowledgeable," while 11 percent chose "attentive and reassuring" to describe them. Thirteen percent said their pharmacists were "busy and hurried," but only 2 percent selected "inaccessible" as the key characteristic.

On the subject of medical advice and pharmacists, 69 percent of respondents said they go to their pharmacists with questions about medications or health issues. Thirty percent said they did so with every new prescription, while an equal number said they never asked questions. Twenty-six percent reported questioning the pharmacist a few times a year, 8 percent said they did so at every visit, and 3 percent said they did so monthly.

### Additional Pharmacy Services

Respondents were also asked what additional services they would most like to see at their local pharmacies. Free blood pressure and cholesterol screenings came in first at 30 percent. This scored even higher among 45-to-54 year olds (34 percent) and those 65 and older (41 percent). A free computer connection to access health information came in next at 20 percent overall. This choice was even more popular among adults 18-to-44 (24 percent). An easy-to-use, free device to help people monitor their health tied for third place. This option came in higher among adults under 35, with 15 percent of 18-to-24 year olds and 18 percent of 25-to-34 year olds making this their top choice. Also in third place overall were free diet and nutrition classes (11 percent). This scored even higher among 18-to-24 year olds (21 percent), 25-to-34 year olds (15 percent) and women (15 percent). Free lectures on health care came in last at 6 percent.

### About the AmerisourceBergen Index

The AmerisourceBergen Index is a quarterly survey of trends, purchasing behaviors and opinions about pharmacists and their customers. The first survey was conducted in May 2001.

### About AmerisourceBergen

AmerisourceBergen (NYSE: ABC) is the largest pharmaceutical services company in the United States dedicated solely to the pharmaceutical supply chain. It is the leading distributor of pharmaceutical products and services to the hospital systems/acute care market, alternate care and mail order facilities, independent community pharmacies, and regional chain pharmacies. The Company is also a leader in the institutional pharmacy marketplace. With more than \$40 billion in annualized operating revenue, AmerisourceBergen is headquartered in Valley Forge, PA, and employs more than 13,000 people serving over 25,000 customers.

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CONTACT: Michael N. Kilpatric of AmerisourceBergen, +1-610-727-7118, or  
mkilpatric@amerisource.com; or Iris Raylesberg of Kapnek Communications,  
+1-215-830-9890, or iris@kapnek.com, for AmerisourceBergen  
(ABC)