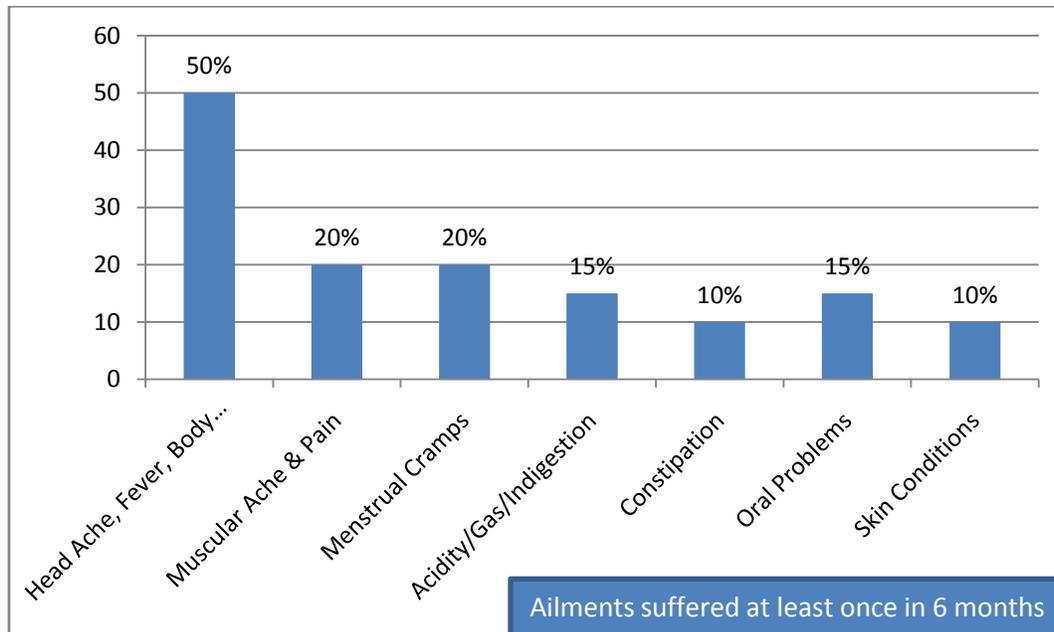


Lifestyle Diseases: Over- The- Counter (OTC) Opportunity

OTC channel is based on convenience utility for minor health ailments

Certain ailments are hitting everyone repeatedly. Professionals in urban areas are more affected due to sedentary lifestyle. Self-medication is on rise because patients find it difficult to see a doctor repeatedly for the same diseases. Patients take OTC route because of more convenience for treating repeated ailments. 50% patients suffer from headache, fever, body ache, cough, and cold at least once in six months. The incidence of repeated diseases is as follows.



Convenience utility has two perspectives – time and space.

Convenience in relation with time is termed as temporal convenience. It takes into consideration the waiting time of a customer to receive a product or service. Customers, in general, seek faster delivery which in turn requires more skilled service.

Convenience in terms of space or location is termed as spatial convenience. It refers to the ease with which a customer can locate a product. If the customer can locate service stations easily, it reduces the search and transportation costs..

Self medication trends are different in India based on region and type of disease.

- Self medication is more prevalent in Chennai, Bangalore and Kolkata
- Whereas doctor consultation is more in Mumbai, Pune, and Hyderabad. The combination of self medication and doctor consultation is high in Delhi.

- Patients are unlikely to self-medicate for fever (<10%) in all over India
- Patients prefer self-medication for cold more (> 30%) in South and less in west India.

Since patients prefer OTC route, Pharma companies have to approach medical shops carefully to exploit the opportunity. Pharma companies have to educate customers through advertisements about the availability of fast-acting remedies at OTC. Alternative therapies can also leverage the opportunity by focusing on 'lifestyle benefits over a long- term without having any side effects.

Topic	Course
Convenience utility: Channels of Marketing: Unit 16.6	Marketing Management

Source: *Health in India and the Over-The-Counter Opportunity, Consumer, Nielsen, 09.30.2013*