



## ***Rx-to-OTC Switches Provide Opportunities for Rx Drug Manufacturers - 3 Cases Modeling Rx Brand Impact***

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

San Francisco, CA. July 2, 2003 Rx Brand Erosion by OTC Switches is a newly released report from EP Publications, a service of WWMR, Inc., examining three of the most notable cases in which branded pharmaceutical shares have been affected by Rx-to-OTC switches: **Claritin** (loratadine) for Allergy, **Pepcid** (famotidine) and **Tagamet** (cimetidine) for Heartburn and Ulcers, as well as **Femstat 3** (butoconazole) and **Monistat 3** (miconazole) for Vaginal Yeast Infection.

The recent OTC switch of Claritin heralds a major shift in the Rx-to-OTC switch paradigm. While voluntarily switching Rx products to OTC status continues to provide pharmaceutical manufacturers with options for continuing to generate revenue when their Rx product patents expire and generics loom on the horizon, many foresee outside pressure, primarily from health care payors as well as the FDA. Future switches of products are likely to come from drug classes such as non-sedating antihistamines for allergy, statins for hyperlipidemia and high cholesterol, emergency contraceptives, microbicides for infection, and COX-2 inhibitors for pain and arthritis. Other therapeutic areas likely to undergo OTC switching are osteoporosis, benign prostate hyperplasia, mild asthma, gastroesophageal reflux disease, incontinence, insomnia, migraine and obesity.

Brand Rx products that may see Rx-to-OTC switches in the near term include Aventis's Allegra (fexofenadine) for allergy; Pfizer's Zyrtec (cetirizine) for allergy; Schering's Clarinex (desloratadine) for allergy; Merck's Vioxx (rofecoxib) for pain and osteoarthritis, Mevacor (lovastatin) for cholesterol lowering, and Zocor (simvastatin) for lipid-lowering; Pharmacia's Celebrex (celecoxib) for pain and arthritis; AstraZeneca's Prilosec (omeprazole) for ulcer and heartburn; Bristol-Myers Squibb's Pravachol (pravastin) for lipid-lowering; and Parke-Davis's Lipitor (atorvastatin) for lipid-lowering.

**Rx Brand Erosion by OTC Switches** reports and compares monthly new and total prescriptions – in absolute numbers – dispensed for brand Rx products before and after Rx-to-OTC switches take place in these markets, indicating the level and rapidity of uptake by prescribers and their patients. Additional information regarding product marketing, pricing, company-level portfolio management, and sales force strategies is also analyzed. Evaluation of the effects these activities may have on Rx brands challenged by an OTC competitor are provided.

**Other EP Publications** include Brand Erosion by Generics, Neuropathic Pain, European Pharmaceutical Pricing and Reimbursement, Prostate Cancer, and a series of reports that provide patient compliance rates and identification of key issues in specific therapeutic markets.

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Source: WWMR, Inc.  
Contact: [sales@wwmr.com](mailto:sales@wwmr.com)  
Toll Free: 888-947-2339