

Sixty Percent of Consumers Researching Weight Loss Use the Internet, Seeking Information on Weight Loss Programs, Diets and Medications

comScore Pharmaceutical Solutions Study Finds 44 Percent Consider Online Information Influential in Remaining Compliant with Weight Loss Programs; 30 Percent Remain Compliant with Weight Loss Medications

RESTON, VA, September 14, 2006 - comScore Pharmaceutical Solutions today released an analysis of consumers' use of the Internet as a resource for researching weight loss information. According to the study,

60 percent of weight loss researchers now utilize the Internet to find condition-specific information, including options for healthy eating/ nutrition, and details on specific weight loss programs and diets. Additionally, more than half (53 percent) report visiting a Web site specifically for information on weight loss drugs.

Nearly half (43 percent) of researchers reported a high level of satisfaction with online weight loss resources. Likely a result of consumer satisfaction, many weight loss Web sites are attracting large numbers of visitors. According to data from comScore Media Metrix, three of the most popular weight loss-related Web sites each drew more than 3 million unique visitors in July 2006: AOL Diet and Fitness (4.0 million), eDiets.com (3.2 million), and WeightWatchers.com (3.1 million).

Types of Weight Loss Information Preferred Online versus Offline

Not surprisingly, nearly all researchers (95 percent) also utilize more traditional offline resources when researching their condition. While general weight loss information is sought both online and offline, the study found a clear distinction between the types of information that researchers prefer to receive online versus offline. The study concluded that weight loss researchers turn to the Internet when seeking information requiring very specific details and when seeking resources that engage them in managing their condition.

For example, 62 percent of weight loss researchers look for information on specific programs and diets online, while a lower 51 percent of researchers look to offline resources for this information. When seeking information on weight loss drugs, 39 percent of researchers turn to the Internet, likely a result of an abundance of TV and print ads that promise more specifics at associated Web sites. In comparison, only 24 percent of researchers use offline resources to find information on weight loss drugs. Additionally, when researchers look for details on specific treatment options, 27 percent use the Internet, while 19 percent rely on offline information sources.

Highlighting one of the Internet's sweet spots for weight loss researchers, more than twice as many rely on the Internet versus offline resources for weight management tools - including interactive applications such as body fat calculators and calorie counters. In fact, nearly half (46 percent) of researchers head online to take action related to their weight loss quest - utilizing tools to track their progress and chart their course, while less than half as many (22 percent) seek such information offline.

Types of Weight Loss Information Researched

Percent Researching Online versus Offline

(Among Weight Loss Researchers)

Source: comScore Networks Weight Loss Study

Information Type	Percent Researching	
	Online	Offline
Specific weight loss programs/ diets	62%	51%
Weight management tools (calculators/ counters)	46%	22%
Weight loss drug information	39%	24%
Specific treatment options	27%	19%
Clinical trials	11%	7%

Online Research Influences Offline Actions

Importantly, the comScore study found online information about weight loss is important in matters of compliance and persistency. Forty-four percent of online weight loss researchers consider online information to be extremely/ very influential in helping them to stay compliant with weight loss programs. Further, nearly one-third (30 percent) found online information to be influential in helping them to stay compliant with their weight loss medication.

More than one-third (39 percent) of researchers reported that the use of online resources had influenced them to learn more about a particular drug for weight loss and 35 percent were influenced by online information to speak to a doctor about weight loss programs. More than one-quarter (27 percent) consider information found online to be influential in prompting them to speak to their doctor about a particular weight loss drug.

Online Weight Loss Information Influential in Prompting Stated Actions**Percent Extremely/ Influential in Prompting Stated Actions (Top 2 Box)****(Among Weight Loss Researchers)****Source: comScore Networks Weight Loss Study**

	Online Information Extremely/ Very Influential
Stay compliant with your weight loss program	44%
Learn more about a particular weight loss drug	39%
Speak to your doctor about weight loss programs	35%
Stay compliant with your weight loss medication	30%
Speak to your doctor about a particular weight loss drug	27%

The study also concluded that online resources have a measurable influence on future actions. Nearly 40 percent of researchers indicated they are extremely/ very likely to speak to their doctor about weight loss options as a result of weight loss information they read online. Further, 25 percent reported they were likely to specifically ask their doctor to prescribe a weight loss drug they had researched online, and 21 percent indicated they would ask their doctor to switch weight loss medication. Roughly one-third cited their likelihood to use a free coupon obtained online for a prescription weight loss medication.

Likelihood to Take Stated Actions as a Result of Online Information

Percent Extremely/ Very Likely to Take Stated Actions (Top 2 Box)

(Among Weight Loss Researchers)

Source: comScore Networks Weight Loss Study

	Extremely/ Very Likely
Speak to your doctor about weight loss options	38%
Use a free coupon for a prescription weight loss drug	32%
Ask your doctor to prescribe a specific weight loss drug	25%
Ask your doctor to switch their weight loss medication	21%

Pharmaceutical/ health care professionals and members of the media may request a copy of the full report at: www.comscore.com/request/weight-loss.asp.

About This Study

For the purposes of this report, comScore Pharmaceutical solutions conducted a survey among members of comScore's panel of more than two million online consumers.

Methodology Details

Population: U.S. Internet users who visited at least one weight loss Web site in the past 6 months

Time Period: Survey responses were collected from April 3 - April 7, 2006.

Survey Mode: E-mail invitations sent to comScore panelists

Respondents: 509 completes

About comScore Pharmaceutical Solutions

comScore Pharmaceutical Solutions deliver the in-depth information needed to understand the impact that brand, condition-specific, and health portal Web sites have on consumers' brand awareness, conversion, and patient compliance. comScore delivers actionable insight to help refine consumer profiles, identify key alliances, optimize interactive marketing initiatives, benchmark against the competition and truly measure the ROI of Web site and online marketing programs.

About comScore Networks

comScore Networks is a global leader in measuring the digital age. This capability is based on a massive, global cross-section of more than 2 million consumers who have given comScore permission to confidentially capture their browsing and transaction behavior, including online and offline purchasing. comScore panelists also participate in survey research that captures and integrates their attitudes and intentions. Through its proprietary technology, comScore measures what matters across a broad spectrum of behavior and attitudes. comScore consultants apply this deep knowledge of customers and competitors to help clients design powerful marketing strategies and tactics that deliver superior ROI. comScore services are used by global leaders such as AOL, Microsoft, Yahoo!, Verizon, Best Buy, The Newspaper Association of America, Tribune Interactive, ESPN, Fox Sports, Nestlé, MBNA, Universal McCann, the United States Postal Service, Merck and Expedia. For more information, please visit www.comscore.com.

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