The digestive saga continues for jetsetters

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International travel is attracting an ever-increasing number of people for professional, social and recreational travel. Frequent, and long-haul trips are partially to blame for the increasing incidence of digestive problems.

The global digestive remedies market posted value growth of nearly 5% in 2006, driving sales to nearly US$12.6 billion. Alongside an increasing ageing population and busy lifestyles resulting in more eating on the go, travelling is one of the strongest factors underpinning the digestive remedies market. Business travel and holidays

Holiday and business travel grew with increasing globalisation, and economic buoyancy has fuelled emerging market growth and recovery in the Eurozone. Euromonitor International's statistics show that world travel expenditure grew by nearly 6% in 2006. Business travel to Asia alone is expected to grow as the outsourcing of manufacturing services for Europe and the US to China and India continues apace, and Asia is growing as a leisure destination. In developed markets, higher disposable incomes and a growing interest in other cultures are expected to stimulate further interest in overseas travel. Indigestive problems

During visits, be it for business or pleasure reasons, it is hard not to indulge in the exotic food of the East, which can frequently be less gentle on the stomachs of tourists, some of whom invariably find themselves suffering from digestive discomfort.

Value sales of indigestion remedies, diarrhoeal and motion sickness remedies in Australasia, Asia-Pacific and Western Europe showed a moderate decline in 2006, indicating that while travel and busy lifestyles are increasing, people are becoming resilient to exotic food. Regular travel has made consumers more aware about the food they eat and they are now opting for lighter meals on long-haul flights as a preventative measure against motion sickness, to avoid the onset of any symptoms. Advertising and affluence drive demand

Higher levels of advertising, increased consumer awareness about digestive remedies, and rising annual gross incomes (13%) all drove demand for digestive remedies in 2006. In Western Europe, France (-0.1%, 2006) and Germany (0.7%) experienced some of the lowest/negative growth rates, mainly due to market maturity and tolerance levels built up from frequent travelling. Furthermore, many sufferers are able to remedy the situation by choosing a seat offering the smoothest ride, such as one over the wing in an aeroplane.

Motion sickness sufferers could turn to prescription medicine: in the US, scopolamine, a transdermal patch placed behind the ear, is considered an effective and easy-to-use product challenging OTC formats.Bolstering sales through wider market positioning

Making motion sickness and other digestive remedies available in airport pharmacies and travel shops, in departure lounges, could encourage travellers to stock up before travelling and revive sales.

An increase in travelling and faster-paced lifestyles are increasing consumer resilience to digestive problems. In addition, greater awareness of the causes of digestive problems could convince consumers to alter their diets in order to reduce the impact of digestive problems, and slow future growth of the market to a CAGR of just 2% over 2006-2011.

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