Graying of America fueling growth in osteoporosis market

The maturing baby boomers will continue to be the driving force behind the osteoporosis diagnostics and therapeutics market. Incidence of osteoporosis — and debilitating and costly osteoporotic bone fractures — rises significantly with age. The 85 and over group — those most at risk for osteoporotic fractures — is the fastest-growing segment of elderly Americans.

Sales for osteoporosis diagnostics and therapeutics jumped almost 18% in 1996, hitting $2 billion. That figure is expected to double by 2000.

FIND/SVP’s new report has everything you need to pinpoint opportunities and stay on top of this dynamic market. How are new therapeutic options impacting densitometry sales? Why is the biochemical markers category expected to more than double its current growth rate? How are marketers addressing hormone replacement therapy (HRT) controversies? This report has the answers. Among the findings:

• Despite overwhelming dominance of the HRT segment, the climate and market share may be shifting: Merck recently introduced Fosamax, the only non-hormonal therapeutic now on the market. The FDA approved Fosamax after just six months, a reflection of the urgent need for therapeutic options.

• Less is more: Norland Medical Systems continues its successful niche marketing; the company’s leading product is pDEXA, a desktop densitometer targeted to the private physician.

• More is also more: In 1996, HRT made up almost 75% of osteoporosis diagnostic and therapeutic sales, despite safety concerns and patient non-compliance problems. Two drugs, Wyeth-Ayerst’s Premarin and Pharmacia & Upjohn’s Provera held 70% of the HRT market in 1995.

• Human Genome Sciences may have a competitive edge because its approach is different from most others engaged in genomic research. Get the details in this report.
Marketers aim to meet baby boomer demands

Baby boomers represent perhaps the most savvy consumers to date. Their knowledge of health risks, preventative measures, and therapeutic options associated with osteoporosis will fuel — and challenge — the market.

- In California, the elderly population (over 65 years) is expected to more than double by 2020. The population in seven other states is expected to grow even faster. This report has the numbers.
- Increased awareness of drug options, such as Fosamax and Novartis’ Micocalcin nasal spray, is driving demand for bone densitometry. Lunar Corporation, the leading densitometer manufacturer, shipped 177 bone densitometers in the United States in the third quarter of 1996 compared to 41 in the same quarter of 1995.

A wave of new products becoming available

Innovative technology and industry alliances between pharmaceutical and diagnostic companies are generating a new generation of highly specific products and enhancing sales across all segments.

- In 1995, Hologic and Serex International, expanding on a previous joint development project, entered into an agreement with a major pharmaceutical company to create an over-the-counter strip test biochemical marker.
- Several pharmaceutical companies have anti-estrogen products in clinical trials. Eli Lilly’s Raloxifene, currently in Phase III clinical trials, is closest to market.
- Ultrasound is currently being investigated as a cheaper, non-ionizing alternative to X-ray densitometry. Each of the leading diagnostic manufacturers has an ultrasound bone densitometer in the pipeline or on the market. This report has the details.
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