Productivity gains from Rx treatment of allergies outweigh cost of non-sedating antihistamines

In Brief

The value of intervention is high because:

- *allergies have an extended impact on performance and*
- *treatments are effective at reducing performance loss*

This brief analyzes the results from two studies of the same allergy treatment.

In the first study, a randomized trial compared subjects who received a non-sedating antihistamine (fexofenadine) to those receiving a placebo. Those receiving treatment reported a 9% reduction in work impairment (using the WPAI**), compared to a 2% reduction in impairment for subjects receiving placebo.

A seven percent (7%) net reduction in work impairment equates to a salary-equivalent value of $36 to $91 per employee per week (based on a salary range of $20,000 to $50,000 plus a 25% benefits add on).
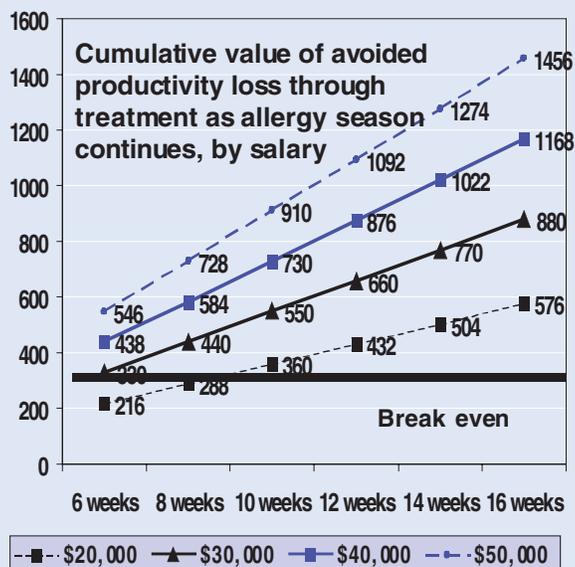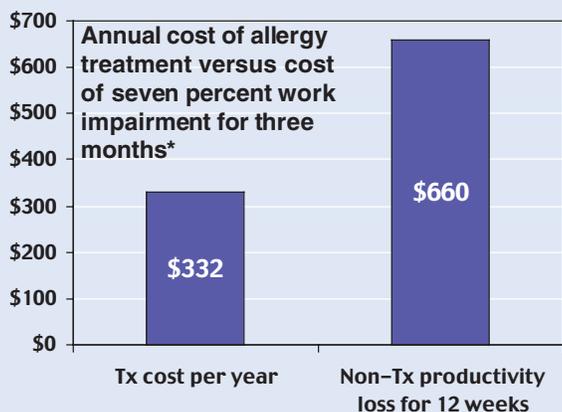
The second study examined total annual medical costs for treating allergies using fexofenadine, the same drug used in study one. Results indicated that combined costs for all services (excluding the added costs for treating co-morbidities) were $332 per year.

Combining the results from these studies indicates a positive potential return on investment for treatment. For employees paid $20,000, the ROI is projected to reach 1:1 in less than 10 weeks and 1.7:1 in 16 weeks. For employees paid $40,000 the projected ROI reaches 3.5:1 by week 16.

** Work Productivity and Activity Impairment Questionnaire

Annual cost of allergy treatment versus cost of seven percent work impairment for three months*

Cumulative value of avoided productivity loss through treatment as allergy season continues, by salary

* Annual salary of $30,000, plus 25% benefits

WPAI is a tool developed by Reilly Associates. For more information, contact Reilym@adelphia.com.

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