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Doctors Aren't Asking and Women Aren't Telling – New Survey Reveals Communication Barrier Between Baby Boomer Women and Their Physicians

New Poll by SCA, the maker of TENA, and Harris Interactive Reveals 85 percent of Boomer Women Do Not Discuss Sensitive Personal Health Issues with Their Doctors, Nor Do Doctors Initiate the Conversation

Philadelphia, PA (January 24, 2011) – A significant communication barrier between baby boomer women and their physicians is causing potentially millions of women to suffer from common health conditions in silence. Although boomer women find themselves with increased personal health needs as they enter midlife and beyond, only 16 percent indicated they are likely to discuss those symptoms with a doctor, according to the new Boomer Women's Health survey of women aged 45 and older in North America sponsored by SCA, the maker of bladder protection products and services under the globally-leading TENA® brand (www.tena.us) and conducted by Harris Interactive.

The survey also revealed that over two-thirds of baby boomer women (67 percent) are less likely to see a physician if they think the symptoms they are experiencing are a "normal part of aging" and therefore may not seek solutions which can improve their quality of life. Furthermore, over a quarter (26 percent) feels uncomfortable, embarrassed or judged when discussing even common personal health issues with their doctors.

"Breaking the doctor-patient communication barrier is incredibly important for all patients, but particularly boomer women," says Dr. Cynthia Hall, MD, FACOG, Founder and Director of the Center for Women's Continence and Pelvic Health at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. "As this generation enters into midlife, they are likely to experience a number of common, sometimes embarrassing problems, such as bladder control issues. And because we know most of them are not talking with their doctors about how to manage these problems, they're seeing their daily quality of life suffer unnecessarily."

Women, however, aren't the only ones being quiet. The survey also demonstrated that doctors are not initiating conversations with women about these "sensitive" health topics either. Although bladder weakness and low sex drive were ranked as the top two most embarrassing topics to discuss with your doctor, they also ranked as the two issues that had been brought up the least by their physicians.

"If doctors aren't asking and patients aren't speaking up, then women may needlessly suffer for years with what may in fact be a manageable condition," says Dr. Hall. "I often have to coax information out of my patients to identify problems they may be experiencing so I know that it is especially important that doctors spark the conversation because their patients may be embarrassed or reluctant to."

The Boomer Women's Health survey was conducted as part of TENA's Be TENacious campaign, an award-winning advocacy campaign. The campaign encourages women to speak up about their embarrassing health conditions, such as bladder weakness, a condition that affects nearly 1 in 4 women over the age of 40ⁱ and empowers them to find the solutions they need to live the healthy and active lives they desire.

“There is a lack of candid discussion between patient and doctor - and even between patients and their friends and loved ones – especially when it come to the stigma associated with bladder control issues,” said Bruno Zepeda, President, SCA Personal Care North America. “At SCA, we are committed to bringing the condition out of the shadows and help encourage women to seek solutions. Through our Be TENAcious advocacy program, patient education and online and grassroots efforts, we hope to inspire women to achieve their goals and aspirations and overcome the taboo associated with bladder control issues.”

For more information about Be TENAcious, or to view more survey results online, please visit www.tena.us.

About TENA®

With more than 50 years of experience, TENA® is the worldwide leader in the management of incontinence, providing products and services for individuals and healthcare services throughout 105 countries. TENA® provides a full range of absorbent products tailored to the distinct needs of men and women, including pantliners, daytime and overnight pads, male guards, protective underwear, briefs, skin care products, and underpads. With the TENA® brand, SCA is at the forefront of developing products that minimize the impact of incontinence and improve the everyday lives of people living or working with bladder weakness or incontinence. TENA® products feature innovative technologies, such as comfortable QuickDry™ topsheets, super-absorbent Lock Away Core™, and Advanced Odor Protection, to ensure protection, comfort and discretion for wearers. For more information, please visit: www.tena.us.

About SCA:

SCA is a global hygiene and paper company that develops and produces personal-care products, tissue, packaging solutions, publication papers and solid-wood products. SCA has many well-known brands, including the global brands TENA and Tork. In 2009 global sales were \$14.5 billion. SCA conducts sales in 100 countries and has 45,000 employees. More information at www.sca.com

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ⁱ Journal of the American Medical Association [Prevalence of Symptomatic Pelvic Floor Disorders in US Women, JAMA. 2008;300(11):1311-1316.