

Tylenol scare causes run on other products

NEW YORK (AP) — In the week after seven people died from taking cyanide-laced Tylenol capsules, sales of other over-the-counter pain relievers jumped 10 percent. And for many consumers, an aspirin-free product was hard to find.

"There's a lot of empty space on the shelves," says Howard Diener of Rite Aid Corp., which has 1,020 drug stores in 18 states. Until 12 days ago, one of every three dollars spent on non-prescription pain relievers went to Tylenol.

American Home Products Corp. is one company rushing to fill the void left by the withdrawal of Tylenol capsules from the market. It has boosted production of Anacin 3, an aspirin-free pain reliever that had been a distant second to Tylenol in sales. Plants in New Jersey and Indiana that normally operate two shifts are now working around the clock, the company says, to meet an "unprecedented" demand.

The company is continuing a series of television advertisements in which Tylenol is mentioned by name. In one ad, a woman complaining of a headache says, "My doctor said no aspirin. With this headache, I guess I'll take Tylenol."

A companion advises her to take Anacin 3 instead. "Right," chimes in an announcer, "like Tylenol, Anacin 3 is 100 percent aspirin free." Both Tylenol and Anacin 3 contain acetaminophen instead of aspirin.

John Wood, spokesman for American Home Products in New York, says similar ads have been broadcast since January and the company has not changed its advertising to capitalize on the troubles of Tylenol.

"No change is planned," Wood added.

Tylenol is still sold in tablet and liquid forms, and its manufacturer has offered to exchange any capsules for tablets or cash.

The potential for Anacin 3 to claim a larger share of the market for over-the-counter pain relievers has not escaped notice on Wall Street. From Sept. 29 — a day before it became known that Extra-Strength Tylenol capsules had been contaminated with cyanide — until Monday, the stock of American Home Products climbed 13.8 percent to a one-year high of 47 1/2.

In the period, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 11.8 percent.

"Investors in a bull market will seize on anything

and here you have a huge void left by Tylenol," says David Paisley, an analyst with Merrill Lynch.

"I think in the wake of the Tylenol scare, most consumers would want a recognizable brand name. The name 'Anacin' is as prestigious as just about any. Anacin 3 is the only available nationwide (aspirin-free) competitor to Tylenol," Paisley says.

All Anacin products, including those with aspirin, made up 12.3 percent of the \$1.2 billion U.S. market for over-the-counter pain relievers, the so-called analgesics, according to Advertising Age magazine. That's about a third of Tylenol's previous market share.

Figures for the market share of aspirin-free Anacin 3, introduced in 1977, were not available.

The Marketing Fact Book, published by Information Resources of Chicago, reports that sales of all over-the-counter pain relievers jumped 10 percent in the week after the discovery of the tainted Extra-Strength Tylenol capsules.

"Regular aspirin products picked up most of the share," says George Garrick of Information Resources. "The week before, they represented 63 percent of analgesics; the week after they went up to 89 percent."

Reagan assures Suharto America an ally

WASHINGTON (AP) — Pres. Ronald Reagan assured Indonesian President Suharto on Tuesday that the United States will not let its ties with China undermine the security of American allies in Southeast Asia.

Reagan also expressed sympathy with Suharto's concern about the growing power in the region of the Soviet Union, the principal supporter of the communist government of Vietnam.

Visiting the United States for the third time since he took office in 1966, Suharto was hailed by Reagan as "a senior statesman of Asia" whose country is "an important force for peace, stability and progress."

After an elaborate welcoming ceremony and a 21-gun salute, Suharto conferred with Reagan for 90 minutes in the Oval Office. Sitting in wing chairs, they posed for pictures in front of a blazing fire.

A senior U.S. official, briefing reporters afterward, said countries in the region are concerned about "a potential threat from China, not necessarily an existing one. We understand these concerns."

The official said the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is the foundation of U.S. policy in the region. "The United States is not going to let its relations with any other country get in the way... or in fact constitute a security

threat to ASEAN," he said.

Administration officials refused to discuss whether the talks between Reagan and Suharto touched on two sensitive areas — civil unrest and alleged mass killings by security forces on East Timor, an Indonesian island, and the lack of a U.S. ambassador in Indonesia.

The senior official, speaking on the condition that he not be identified, said the United States relies on "quiet diplomatic discussions" of human rights questions. However, the official said the Indonesian government "is very much aware of administration policy on this."

In advance of Suharto's visit, several members of Congress urged Reagan to

express concern to the Indonesian leader about the residents of East Timor.

The official said the subject of a U.S. ambassador in Jakarta was the topic of "sensitive diplomatic discussions" and that there "will be an announcement subsequently."

The post has been vacant for nearly a year, and efforts to fill it have not produced results because of what some officials call "a comedy of errors."

In their private talks, Reagan assured Suharto that he would give sympathetic consideration to requests for aircraft and naval vessels to protect the approaches to Indonesia and its more than 13,500 islands, the senior official said.

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