

New Battery Dispenser Offers Easy Solution For Hearing Aid Wearers

(NAPSA)—With the booming growth of America's elderly population, the number of people with hearing loss is expected to double to more than 50 million by 2020. Surprisingly, however, only one in four people with hearing problems currently wears a hearing aid, in part due to the social stigma and inconvenience of caring for the devices. According to Energizer Holdings, Inc. research, one of the most frustrating tasks for mature adults who wear hearing aids, particularly for those with vision and dexterity problems, is changing the small batteries that power them.

As a result of this and other research, Energizer has developed a new product that makes it easy to precisely place the tiny hearing aid batteries into the hearing aid quickly and accurately every time. The patent-pending Energizer® EZ Change™ is the world's first hearing aid battery dispenser that eliminates the need to handle hearing aid batteries or tabs.

"Hearing aids help elderly people with hearing loss maintain two things that are of utmost importance to them—their independence and the ability to stay connected with their communities," says Joy Loverde, author of the best-selling book, *The Complete Eldercare Planner*, and a national expert on aging. "The Energizer EZ Change is a significant breakthrough



because it eliminates one of the barriers to hearing aid usage—the aggravation of trying to change the small hearing aid batteries.

"The batteries are very tiny, especially the sizes required for the smaller, more advanced hearing aids," notes Loverde. "Many elderly hearing aid users drop, fumble or lose the batteries when they are trying to change them, which can be as often as 50-100 times a year depending on the number of hearing aids they wear."

The new device simplifies the process of replacing hearing aid batteries by allowing the user to insert a fresh battery directly from the dispenser into the hearing aid, without having to pick up or hold onto the battery or remove the tiny tab. A magnetic arm allows for precise placement in the hearing aid every time and eliminates the need to touch the battery. In addition, the Energizer EZ Change keeps the batteries secure, so no more loose batteries in pockets or purses.

"One of the greatest benefits of the Energizer EZ Change is that it allows people to wear the hearing aid that helps them hear the best, regardless of what size battery it uses," adds Loverde.

A recent Energizer survey of audiologists found that 62 percent say they have prescribed hearing aids that use larger, easier-to-handle batteries for their senior patients, rather than choosing a smaller one that may enable them to hear better. Energizer tested over 20 prototypes—including several dispenser designs and enhanced tab and dial pack systems—before selecting the Energizer EZ Change that was overwhelmingly favored by hearing aid users and audiologists.

"People have been changing their hearing aid batteries the same cumbersome way for over 30 years," says Ernie F. Petrus, manager of marketing and sales, Energizer Miniature Batteries, U.S. "When hearing aid wearers try this product, their initial response is—'It's about time!'"

The Energizer EZ Change is available in all four 10, 13, 312 and 675 battery sizes and it works with all styles of hearing aids, including those where the battery drops, tilts or snaps in. It will be available at discount stores, supermarkets, drug stores and wherever hearing aid batteries are sold in September 2001.