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Innovia introduces first home-use ear infection monitor

By Michael Johnsen

LENEXA , Kan. (Oct. 2) Innovia Medical on Tuesday launched EarCheck Middle Ear Monitor, the first clinically proven, physician-recommended, home-use device that accurately detects the presence of middle ear fluid, a key sign of a middle ear infection.

While EarCheck is for home use, it is based on the same patented and proven technology, acoustic reflectometry (or sound waves), used in doctor's offices since 1997 and included in the American Academy of Pediatrics' and American Academy of Family Physicians' Clinical Practice Guideline for the Diagnosis and Management of Acute Otitis Media (middle ear infection), the company stated.

EarCheck works by sending a pleasant chirping sound into the ear canal. Some of this sound bounces off the eardrum and travels back to the instrument's built-in processor. EarCheck then analyzes the reflected sound to determine if there is fluid in the middle ear.

The presence of fluid is represented by a 1-5 scale on an easy-to-read color display, where level 1 (Green) indicates Fluid/Ear Infection Unlikely and where levels 3-5 (Red) indicates a high Likelihood of Fluid/Ear Infection and suggests you consult with your child's healthcare professional.

The device was developed because more than 80 percent of children under the age of three have had one or more ear infections, and nearly 50 percent have had three or more. While an infection can develop anytime, the majority occur during the cough/cold season, from October through March, when fluid lingering in the ear after a cold or flu becomes infected with either bacteria or virus.

The EarCheck Middle Ear Monitor is currently available at Wal-Mart and Babies "R" US or through one of the many online retailers that can be located from EarCheck's website, www.earcheck.com. EarCheck's suggested retail price is as high as \$59.