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**NASOPURE: POWERFUL NEW TOOL COMBATS ALLERGY, DISEASE (Published December 17, 2005, Columbia Business Times) - 12/17/2005**

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NASOPURE: POWERFUL NEW TOOL COMBATS ALLERGY, DISEASE

COLUMBIA, Mo. – Would a cleaner nose by any other name smell as sweet? O.K., so nasal washing isn't Shakespeare. But Nasopure, a new product invented by a Columbia physician, might help allergy sufferers smell more sweetly. More importantly, it might help patients battle disease.

According to Columbia pediatrician Hana Solomon, nose washing has been practiced in India since ancient times. There, nose washers employ a neti pot, which looks like a small Aladdin's lamp. After filling it with salt water, the washer puts the end of the spout in his or her nose and tips the pot. The water rushes through one nostril and oozes out of the other one, washing away dirt, pollen, mold and dust.

Solomon's Nasopure, however, takes the process a step further. First, Nasopure's solution is buffered and hypertonic, which means saltier than the standard isotonic saline solution sold over-the-counter in drugstores. Her invention does not use a teapot, but a squirt bottle that shoots water into the nose, thereby flushing out the nasal cavity and drawing out the sinus contents, which exit out of the opposite nostril. The exercise purges viruses and bacteria from the nose as well as the other grime. The user fills the bottle with lukewarm water and dissolves a measured packet of salt from the kit.

Her nose washer might keep cold and flu viruses from fully implanting in the nostrils. "Influenza is like a cold, but it's a more virulent virus," Solomon said. "We don't know if it can be washed out, but we know that washing doesn't hurt and that it can remove other viruses. We know that washing is safe, that a salty environment inhibits bacterial and viral growth and that washing reduces other medications. Why not try it?"

Nasopure is natural, and its design is more anatomically correct in that the user doesn't have to bend or twist the neck and head. That way, the solution has less chance of the fluid traveling into the sinuses or middle ear.

She developed her product over time, starting with a recipe that she obtained from an Ear-Nose-and-Throat doctor in medical school and gave to her patients. But her patients

wouldn't use the recipe because it was too time consuming. She needed an easy delivery system, and she eventually came up with the Nasopure bottle and dosage packet with the recipe already made.

"I first am a mother, and I didn't go to med school until I was an older person," Solomon said. She said her motherly side, and her inclination toward back-to-the-earth health solutions led her to develop the Nasopure system. "Because of that background, my preference was prevention first, patient education and avoidance of medications when possible. Too often, we use a medication, and over time we find the potential side effects are not worth the benefits. Meanwhile, bacterial resistance is on the rise due to overuse of antibiotics. I didn't want to be giving all my patients, my little kids, so many drugs."

Solomon said nasal irrigation was promoted in medical books of the 1880s, but the practice faded as the focus of the medical industry moved more toward prescription drugs. She said she has three basic kinds of people she knows who use her Nasopure right now: early adapters, people for whom other methods haven't worked and people over forty. "It's either the folks that are willing to do new and weird things, versus the folks who have gone through it all and are just fed up and willing to try it," she said. "Another group is older folks because older folks, like me, over forty, tend to have thicker – what we call tenacious, or stickier – mucus. It is known that hypertonic saline will thin sticky, thick mucus."

Medical studies have shown that nose washing eases cold and allergy symptoms, and it can reduce the need for drugs. By removing 80 percent of the nasal irritants, washing the nose has been shown to reduce the need for over-the-counter drugs, antibiotics and antihistamines and the number of infections, according to Solomon. It is also safe for children and pregnant women, she said. Although Nasopure does not eliminate the need for drugs, she said, it makes medications work better by easing congestion and soothing swollen membranes so that medicine absorbs better into the nostrils. By washing the body's filter, it can help those tormented by allergies to breathe, heighten their senses of smell and taste, and lessen their snoring at night.

"I use it basically when I get a cold coming on or I get a really stuffy nose," said Michael Griffith, a patient of Hana Solomon's husband, who is a family physician. "It's a little tricky the first time you do it, because you're basically squirting salt water up your nose and doing it in such a way that it goes up one nostril and comes out the other. Once you get that part of it down, and you don't end up swallowing water, which you're not supposed to do, it's not really a troublesome thing at all."

He said he uses the Nasopure it over a sink, but he suggests that using it in the shower is a good idea. He also suggests that users need to get used to the feeling of the salt water inside the nose, and they have to slowly build up to the full dose of salt in the packet provided with the product. Otherwise, it can irritate the membranes.

"It really does the trick," he said. "For colds and such, it can either lessen the severity, or in my case [recently], it pretty well stopped it in its tracks."

Nasopure costs about \$15 and can be obtained at local drug and grocery stores.

Caryn Hopwood, who has had two nasal surgeries in 20 years and began using the product on the recommendation of her doctor, swears by its effectiveness. "Once you start using it, you will use it all the time," she said. "I use it every morning and every night. I highly recommend it."

