

## New Herbal Hair Loss Treatment

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Hair Loss News

Another Indian company seeks to test a topical herbal-based hair loss treatment. Another company seeks to test a topical herbal-based hair loss treatment. Maybe this one will actually work... but Probably not.

### **Indian Herb Co. targets world market with balding treatment**

As more people in the modern age are experiencing hair loss due to stress and air pollution, the demand for balding treatments is increasing as well. Although there are several pharmaceutical companies in Korea that make products that claim to help grow hair, all of their chemical formulas contain antiseptic.

However, Indian Herb Company has succeeded in making and marketing a hair-growth product that doesn't have antiseptic, as it is made by mixing the essences of 10 herbs.

"The advantage of Cre-C is that it is an alternative medicine using natural ingredients extracted from herbs. That is why it has no side-effects and is not harmful to the body," said Ko Do-yoon, president of Indian Herb Company in an interview. Although most balding treatments were invented for men, Cre-C can also be used by women, which makes the product more popular, Ko said. Koreans' interest in hair-growth products is quite strong, as the product is selling at about 1,200 pharmacies nationwide since it first appeared in the market last May. Considering that the two biggest pharmacy chains in Korea, Medipharm and Onnuri, each have 1,300 chain stores nationwide, Cre-C selling at 1,200 drug stores is proof that the product is viable, the president said.

Pharmacists also selected Cre-C as the best balding remedy in March due to its convenience, high repurchase rate and good treatment effect, he said. Ko accidentally became acquainted with this natural treatment in 1997, while he was doing business in Mexico. Due to the high elevation of Mexico City, air pollution and stress, his hair started to fall out during his eight-month stay there. Desperate to prevent hair loss and grow back his hair, Ko asked one of his employees, an Aztec descendant, if there was any way to stop this phenomenon. The Indian native brought him a lump of herb mixture, which the native said had been a cure for hair loss in Mexico for several hundred years. Surprisingly enough, after applying the herb medicine for a week, the amount of hair loss reduced significantly and flakes started to disappear.

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"Each herb used in the treatment has a distinct function. When the function of each herb is brought together in the mixture, the product creates effects for treating hair loss," Ko said. As there are about 8 million people in Korea who suffer from hair loss, including men, women and adolescents, Ko knew the product would have a high demand here.

However, it wasn't easy in the beginning to persuade people about the effects of this mysterious medicine. News of the efficacy of the remedy began to spread among doctors and pharmacists first, as Ko believed that they would help him publicize the product once the quality of the treatment was proved to them.

Ko told a friend, an Oriental medicine doctor, who was running a balding treatment clinic, about

the mixture. Seeing that his patients benefited from the remedy, the doctor friend spread the news to other doctors and pharmacists and Cre-C began to gain popularity through word of mouth. Encouraged by experts' approval of the treatment, Ko established the Indian Herb Company in November 2000 with a staff of nine.

He imports the herbs from Mexico instead of growing them in Korea, as the latter would diminish the role of each herb due to the different climate and soil.

"The freshness of the herbs is very important, since no preservatives are added while being shipped to Korea," he said.

Based on the entrepreneur's knowledge of the most effective combination rate of each herb, 15 employees manually blend the herbs to make the treatment.

Cre-C is available in two forms: soap and shampoo. The soap lasts about 45 days and should be used every day. One box of shampoo contains 30 individual packages, wrapped in a state of vacuum due to the absence of antiseptic, Ko explained. The soap costs 55,000 won and the shampoo, 60,000 won.

The president recommends that Cre-C shouldn't be used with other shampoo or soap products since they would decrease the effect of the herb treatment.

The domestic market for hair-growth treatment is estimated at 200 billion won a year, in which the president expects to occupy 1 percent, by making 2 billion won in sales this year.

Ko, who plans to start exporting in the second half of the year, believes there is a bigger global market, with Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore showing strong interest in the product. Since the Japanese market is 2.5 times bigger than that of Korea, with more than 10 million male adults suffering from balding, Ko expects a huge volume of exports to Japan this year. His goal for exports is \$10 billion next year.

"The product is competitive overseas as it is easy to use; consumers see visible results in a few months; and both men and women can use it," Ko said. Currently, researchers at Yonsei University are conducting a clinical study on the product with results due in December, to prove its scientific effectiveness.

"It is necessary to conduct more clinical tests for alternative medicine to prove it has the same effect as pharmaceutical products," the president said.

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