

"Make Contact with your N.D., make contact with *yourself*."

Two things:

- Dr. Erin in Cleveland next week

&

- The Truth about "homeopathic" Zicam

Dr. Erin seeing patients on **Thursday and Friday June 25th & 26th**
Schedule by calling 216-707-9137

next dates: **July 5th-July 22nd**

The Truth about "Homeopathic" Zicam

From Dr. Erin

This week's news stories about Zicam Cold and Flu remedy causing loss of smell gave me a personal understanding of media hype. The misinformation about Zicam Cold and Flu remedy is unfortunate at best and derogatory at worst. Not for Zicam, mind you, but for homeopathy!

Perhaps you have read about the supposedly *homeopathic* Zicam Cold Remedy nasal gel and wondered what to think. I immediately looked into it, since I know that no truly *homeopathic* product could cause this problem. Fortunately, a colleague has already been onto the issue; over three years ago, Dr. Jacob Schor, a naturopathic doctor practicing in Colorado, first wrote about Zicam and explained the suspicions I shared about these products when I first saw them. His article says it all so I sought permission to reprint it here in its entirety:

Zicam Caution

Jacob Schor, N.D.
February 15, 2006

Subject: Zicam, the over the counter remedy for cold symptoms, can cause loss of taste.

Over the last few months a number of people have asked my opinion of Zicam, especially after I wrote about my favorite treatments for colds and flu. I have always been a little hesitant to recommend

Zicam simply because their label is so misleading. Zicam claims to be a homeopathic preparation. Technically it may be homeopathic but it is a real stretch to see it so and that has always made me suspicious of the other claims made by the manufacturer. Recent revelations and law suits cast more suspicion on the product.

Zicam claims to be homeopathic Zincum gluconicum in 1 x potency. What this means in English is that it is a 10% solution of zinc gluconate. Typically homeopathic remedies are sold in much more dilute solutions. For example a 6 x potency is one part in a million of the original substance. A 12 x potency is one part in a billion. A 30 x potency is so dilute that there isn't even a molecule of the original substance left. This is why homeopathic medicines are considered safe; there is little or nothing left to cause harm. In the case of Zicam, by calling it homeopathic and adopting the homeopathic terminology, the manufacturer found a way to market a 10% solution of zinc gluconate without FDA oversight.

In other words Zicam is just an intranasal zinc solution. Intranasal zinc has been known to destroy the ability to smell in both animals and people. In the 1930s, zinc compounds were used in attempts to prevent polio. About 10% of the people who received the zinc compounds lost their sense of smell permanently. For years there had been no attempt to use intranasal zinc in humans. However because Zicam products fall under the homeopathic provision of FDA laws, these products are not required to get FDA approval before they were put on the market.

By the way loss of smell is called anosmia.

It is not even clear that these products are useful for treating colds. While two placebo-controlled trials found that intranasal zinc gluconate modestly shortened the duration of cold symptoms two other placebo-controlled studies found intranasal zinc to be of no benefit.

In the most rigorously controlled of these studies, intranasal zinc gluconate did not affect the severity or duration of cold symptoms

in volunteers inoculated with rhinovirus, a common cause of colds. These studies did find evidence of anosmia and warned about the condition. The reports stated that since zinc-associated anosmia may be irreversible.

Earlier this month the manufacturers of Zicam agreed to pay \$12 million dollars to settle a class action law suit brought by 340 consumers who had lost their ability to smell after using Zicam products. The company which made \$46 million dollars in the first 9 months of 2005 does not plan to take their products off the market. Even with settling the lawsuits the products are still very profitable.

Some people have told me they find Zicam an effective aid in treating their symptoms. Yet if we heed Hippocrates' injunction to, First, Do no harm, we must consider Zicam an unacceptable risk and suggest not using it.

To **Subscribe** or **unsubscribe** to our Make Contacts Briefs: send email to oncmanager@gmail.com

--

Erin H. Holston Singh, N.D.
Options Naturopathic Clinic
Shreveport: 318-675-3676
Cleveland: 216-707-9137 Fax: 216-707-0162
doctorerin@gmail.com
www.optionsnaturopathic.com