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Dr Nick BitzTalks about on Irwin Ayurvedics by Rebecca Pearman

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Dr. Nick Bitz is a Product Innovator in research and development for Irwin Naturals, and recently we were able to sit down with him and have him share insights about our newest brand of nutritional products he helped to create - Irwin Ayurvedics.

Q: To those not in the know, what *is* ayurveda? Where did it come from and how did it come to be used in modern times?

NB: "Ayurveda is a holistic health system that comes from India. It's 5,000 years old, and is considered the first form of medicine in the world. Incredibly, it's still practiced by millions of people every day. Ayurveda is really much more than just medical diagnosis and treatment. It's a vast system of knowledge that encompasses all of life and teaches people how to live their lives in order to be optimally well â€“ in body, mind and spirit."

Q: Does Ayurveda describe a health process or a medicinal solution?

NB: "Well, the word "ayu" translates as â€˜life' and "veda" translates as â€˜knowledge.' So in essence, Ayurveda is the science of living. It is a simple, common sense approach to health that uses botanicals and foods to create balance in the body. The cool thing about Ayurveda is that it empowers individuals to take personal responsibility for their own well-being."

Q: Why has this practice come bubbling up to the greater consciousness of health-oriented Americans? Did it arise out of the increase in yoga classes in the U.S.?

NB: "I certainly think that yoga's a part of it. I mean, Ayurveda is the sister science of yoga. They started together. They've evolved together. They're meant to be used in conjunction with one another. We have seen an emergence of yoga here in the States in the last few decades, and I believe that trend will continue in the coming years. Everybody's practicing yoga right now. I mean, my mom is practicing yoga, which is crazy. I think people are starting to open up to the wisdom that is inherent in these ancient cultures, such as India and China.

But more importantly, I think the recent interest in Ayurveda is due to the fact that people are becoming more attuned to prevention and proactive health care. People are moving in the direction of â€˜cultivating health', rather than â€˜fighting disease', especially given the state of our health care system right now."

Q: Ayurveda is all about various body types and our bodies' natural responses to certain supplements. Can you describe a bit on that?

NB: "Yes, that's probably the most intriguing part of our new line of Ayurvedic products. People ask us: â€˜What is Ayurveda? What are the three body types? What specific foods and herbs are ideal for my body type?' As a good starting point, I usually tell people to take a look at the questionnaire at our website that helps you to determine your particular body type. From there, you can learn about specific foods that are appropriate for your body type and specific herbs that you can use to promote health and well-being. Identifying your individual body type is considered the first and most important step to health, according to Ayurveda."

Q: We started to delve into body types related to Ayurveda. Can you tell us more about why it's crucial?

NB: "Sure. Ayurveda is usually seen in the context of three fundamental body types â€“ Vata, Pitta and Kapha. These three body types are the archetypes, if you will, that are in nature, that everybody fits into. And if you know your specific body type, you know exactly what you need to do in order to live a long and healthy life. It's all about living in harmony with your body type.

There can be several body type combinations. Somebody can be predominantly one body type (Vata, Pitta or Kapha), or they could be a combination of two, or possibly a combination of all three, which is rare. But everybody fits neatly into these three basic body types. And that's at the core of how and why we created our Irwin Ayurvedics line -- we combined the tradition of Ayurvedic medicine with the science of our enhanced soft-gel technology, to create a truly innovative line of products."

Q: Can you tell us more about this soft-gel technology? Why is that important?

NB: "Our team is always working on some very robust formulations to arrive at a specific health solution in different ways. That's something that we always pride ourselves on. Using liquid soft-gels is an example of that. Instead of tablets, capsules or powders, we use liquid soft-gels in our formulations, which are unique on the market and absolutely unique for any Ayurvedic products.

In doing that, we are able to include healthy oils that are specific for each body type. So we have pumpkin seed oil for Vata. We have coconut oil for Pitta. Plus we have flax seed oil, which is specific for Kapha. In combination with traditional botanicals, these oils are extremely benefical for balancing each body type.

We've also infused all of the formulas with trikatu â€“ a three spice blend of ginger, black pepper and Indian long pepper that is traditionally used in Ayurveda to improve the absorption of nutrients found in foods and botanicals.

So overall I think we were successful at creating an entirely new line of products that uses some of the latest technology in dietary supplements, yet remains true to Ayurvedic principles. No one has done this before. And no one has created a line that is specific for body types."

Q: How did you find yourself developing Ayurvedic products? What's your background?

NB: "I've been working in product development at Irwin Naturals for over two years now. I'm a Naturopathic Doctor that specializes in integrative family medicine and the use of natural therapies such as herbs and nutrition. Ayurveda is one of my passions - both personally and clinically. I've lived in India for some time and studied yoga and meditation over there. And over the years I've become absolutely captivated by Ayurveda. It's such a fascinating system of medicine."

Q: Any last thoughts on Irwin's new line of Ayurveda products worth sharing?

NB: "We are really banking on curiosity, first and foremost, and people's intrigue with Ayurveda. I think there's a real mystery surrounding it right now that draws people to it. And I know from experience, that people are excited to learn more about Ayurveda and specifically to discover their individual body type. People want to know how they can incorporate Ayurvedic principles into their own lives. So, part of it is, just planting the seed and letting people take it from there."

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