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MEDIA RELEASE

BONN UNIVERSITY STUDY CLAIMS AUSTRALIAN MEDIHONEY SUPERIOR TO ANTIBIOTICS

A millennia old household remedy is gaining new significance: Honey helps certain wounds better than the most modern antibiotics do, according to a medical study at the University of Bonn. This is great news for Australian company Medihoney whose “superbug” fighting-product has been used in trials at the Bonn University Hospital, Germany.

For several years medical experts have recorded largely positive experiences from Medihoney. Even chronic wounds infected with multi-resistant bacteria often healed within a few weeks.

Now, Bonn Paediatric University Hospital Oncology specialist, Dr. Arne Simon, in conjunction with colleagues from Düsseldorf, Hamburg and Berlin, wants to test the experience he has gained using Medihoney in a larger-scale study.

Medihoney Director, Science and Strategic Development, Anthony Moloney, said today that the Bonn University Hospital results confirmed Australian trial results and demonstrated Medihoney was effective in protecting wounds against multi-resistant bacteria such as MRSA.

“This is international confirmation of what we already knew – Medihoney’s specialist products have had amazing results in helping to heal wounds in patients with burns, infected surgical wounds following heart surgery and wounds which traditional antibiotics simply can’t clear infecting bacteria,” he said,

The fact that honey can help wounds to heal is something that was known to the Ancient Egyptians several thousand years ago. And in the last two world wars poultices with honey were used to assist the healing process in soldiers’ wounds. However, the rise of the new antibiotics replaced this household remedy.

Dr Simon said that hospitals today were faced with bacteria which are resistant to almost all the current antibiotics.

“As a result, the medical use of honey is attracting renewed interested in the treatment of wounds,” Dr Simon said.

Dr. Simon works on the cancer ward of the Bonn University Children’s Clinic. As far as the treatment of wounds is concerned, his young patients form part of a high-risk group: the medication used to treat cancer known as cytostatics not only slows down the reproduction of malignant cells, but also impairs the healing process of wounds.

“Normally a skin injury heals in a week but with our children it often takes a month or more.

“Moreover, children with Leukaemia have a weakened immune system. If bacteria enters their bloodstream via a wound, the result may be a fatal case of blood poisoning,” he said.

The paediatricians from Bonn have been using Medihoney for wound care for some years now and are the first in Germany to do so. Medihoney is a CE-certified medical device and its quality is constantly being verified.

The successes achieved are amazing.

Wound specialist at the University’s Children’s Clinic, Dr Kai Sofka, said dead tissue was rejected faster and the wounds healed more rapidly.

“What is more, changing dressings is less painful, since the poultices are easier to remove without damaging the newly formed layers of skin.

“Some wounds often smell unpleasant - an enormous strain on the patient. Yet honey helps here too by reducing the smell.

“Even wounds which consistently refused to heal for years can, in our experience, be brought under control with Medihoney - and this frequently happens within a few weeks,” Dr Sofka said.

In the meantime, about two dozen hospitals in Germany are using honey for wound care. Despite all achieved successes there are only a few significant clinical studies with regard to its effect. Together with colleagues from Düsseldorf, Hamburg and Berlin the medics from Bonn are aiming to change this situation.

For this purpose they have developed a database, Woundpecker, with the aid of which they want to document and analyse more than 100 cases within the next months.

As a further step comparative studies with other products such as the very expensive silver dressings are planned.

“These dressings also execute antibacterial effects

“However, to date it has not been evaluated if the silver released from some of these dressings can have side effects on children,” Dr Simon said.

Efficient bacteria killer

It has already been proven that Medihoney kills multi-resistant bacteria such as MRSA. In this respect Medihoney has been found to be as effective as the antibiotic mupirocin, currently the antibiotic of first choice for local treatments. This was demonstrated in a recent study published by Australian researchers. Medihoney was even superior in that it is not likely to induce any bacterial resistance, in contrast to mupirocin.

Medihoney consists of two different honeys: One that is capable of producing relatively high concentrations of hydrogen peroxide and Leptospermum honey. Leptospermum is a small tree that is endemic in Australia and New Zealand. Honey from these trees have a reputation of possessing high antibacterial effects, even when diluted by a factor of ten.

“The reason for this is not known exactly.

“Probably this effect is due to a mixture of phenol-like substances which is derived from the plants,” Dr Simon said.

About Medihoney

Medihoney is a hybrid medical device drug company specialised in developing and commercialising products that use unique honeys and or derivative products that are pharmacologically active. The antibacterial, anti-inflammatory and wound repair-stimulating properties of some honeys and their derivatives offer multiple potential applications across the health care sector. Some of these products are regulated as medical devices for wound care and are marketed in Australia and Europe.

Our current product portfolio includes products indicated for: wound care, eczema, antibacterial barrier creams, ophthalmology and oral care. With a growing international market supported by a strong development pipeline and exclusive supply arrangements with one of the worlds largest honey companies, Capilano Honey Ltd, Medihoney is a global leader in medical honeys.

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