

Nails Need Treatment Attention

NEW YORK — One of the nail care segments that retail buyers are hoping will jump start the category is treatments. Suppliers, to be sure, have been busy introducing a slew of new products to spur shoppers' attention.

But that is not the whole story. According to the American Podiatric Medical Association, onychomycosis, a highly contagious nail infection, affects anywhere from 3% to 5% of the United States population — or as many as 12 million Americans.

Moreover, a recent survey suggests a low level of awareness on the part of Americans about nail infections. A poll of 830 consumers conducted on behalf of AlvaAmco Inc.'s Fungicure brand by TNS/NFO Research Worldwide indicates that more than half of respondents had symptoms of highly contagious nail infections or fungus on their fingernails, toenails or both. Only 15%, however, had ever discussed nail care with a physician, perhaps because more than 775 believed that nail fungus is either not contagious or only slightly contagious.

"It's not surprising that the incidence of nail infection and fungus is so high," says Andrew Scheman,

M.D., a dermatologist and specialist in nail fungus and infection. "Many people haven't been educated about the symptoms and don't believe they're contagious. Many people don't realize that these infections can be managed, but not easily cured, so prevention is a key."

Sales data from Information Resources Inc. suggests that consumers' awareness may just be expanding, however. Myocide, from Woodward Laboratories Inc., was the leading performer among treatments during the 52 weeks ended July 11, riding a 23.4% gain in sales to reach \$3.1 million a 16.2% share. Calico Laboratories Inc. is also carving out a niche in the polish removers category with its Polish Off Anti-Bacterial product, which has achieved 59% growth to become the 10th-ranked brand in that business.

There is plenty of activity from other treatment manufacturers as well. Del Laboratories Inc.'s Sally Hansen label is building on its earlier launch of Beyond Perfect Protein nail color with Beyond Perfect European Spa Pedicure, a collection of four new futuristic foot treatments. Included are Radiant Glow Foot Scrub, 18-Hour Dry Skin Foot Creme, Extra

Strength Callus Remover Gel and Luxurious Foot and Leg Mask.

Del has garnered some major industry awards for one of its treatment products recently. Sally Hansen Nailgrowth Miracle won a 2004 Healthy Beauty Award as the best nail treatment from Self magazine. Nailgrowth Miracle also won a Glammy Award at the NACDS Marketplace Conference.

Markwins International Corp., meanwhile has repositioned its Jonel nail care line with new packaging. The maker will introduce Jonel Cooling Nail & Cuticle Treatment early in 2005.

In addition, Pacific World Corp.'s Nailene brand has launched two items for fall: Nutri Strength and Crystal Hard. Both contain a trivitamin complex combined with a patented time-release formula that the company says continues to nourish and strengthen nails for up to 10 days.

Earlier this year Medtech Products Inc., best known for its Cutex line of polish removers, entered the treatment segment with a five-SKU collection dubbed Cutex Essential Care. According to a company spokesman, the line features ingredients not found in other brands.

