Aloe Can You Go?

Peddler pushes plant’s perks

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Aloe vera may soothe a sunburn, but cure AIDS? That’s what Baltimore businessman Allen Hoffman professed, and now he’s being charged with consumer fraud for allegedly peddling the plant as an “almost 100 percent effective” cure for AIDS.

Prosecutors accused Hoffman of making “bogus” claims about the safety and effectiveness of his aloe vera– based product, T-UP. He not only told consumers that he had a PhD, but that T-UP was developed by Johns Hopkins researchers and approved by the FDA. (The intravenous use of aloe vera is illegal in the United States). “This is the most egregious [fraud] I’ve seen,” said Maryland Attorney General J. Joseph Curran Jr. “These are the nineties version of snake-oil salesmen.”

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