

Moveable Feast

NURSING SOLUTIONS FOR MODERN MOMS

BY EDITH G. TOLCHIN

Multitasking seems to be the answer to coping with life in the 21st century. Busy moms and dads are faced not only with hectic work schedules but also with housekeeping, caring for their children and juggling a multitude of extracurricular activities. Taking time to nurse an infant can add pressure to the mix. Enter Angelique N. Warner, who created Nurse 'N Go™, a product that allows for hands-free nursing and gives harried mothers a bit of a reprieve.

I met Warner in 2010 at INPEX, America's largest invention trade show. Warner approached me because I was discussing product safety and China manufacturing. She had concerns about product safety, especially since the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act had just become law. In the months after the show, I helped Warner address the various regulations surrounding having Nurse 'N Go safely manufactured in China. Six years and several revisions to her prototype later, Nurse 'N Go is ready to launch.

The following is an edited version of an interview with Warner.

Edith G. Tolchin: Please tell us about your background and family.

Angelique Warner: I have a bachelor's degree in psychology from Wheaton College. My husband, Bryan, and I have four beautiful children. My mother lives with us, so we have a full house of seven. We are an active family with our days filled with work, school, sports and church. I am a Realtor, a product entrepreneur, a lunch supervisor at an elementary school, a mentor at Pretty Brown Girl and a greeter at my church.

Nurse 'N Go was developed from a vision I had when my youngest daughter was born. The baby was nursing, the twins were 1 year old, my son was 4 years old, and Bryan and I were serving as house parents, taking care of 14 boys who lived with us at a boarding school. I needed my hands, to say the least. I envisioned a carrier that held the baby for feeding in privacy, and my hands were free. I checked the Internet for a product like this, and there were none. I didn't begin working on my idea at that time because I had 18 children at home and three of them weren't yet in preschool.

EGT: How does Nurse 'N Go work?

AW: Nurse 'N Go looks similar to a baby carrier that is worn over the shoulders and across the chest. Younger infants, 3 to 4 months old, can be carried in the fetal position in the center of the user's body, but they cannot nurse hands-free until they can hold their heads up on their own. Older babies that can hold their heads up on their own are positioned low on either hip to be close to Mom's breast for nursing. A detachable, interchangeable nursing cover for privacy is stored in the front pocket. The sides of the

Angelique N. Warner's Nurse 'N Go™ allows for hands-free nursing.



My goal is to supply moms (and dads) with a high-quality, modern, stylish and comfortable baby carrier for hands-free nursing (and carrying).

Nurse 'N Go is sold in a black muslin drawstring bag and includes a detachable, interchangeable nursing cover stored in the front pocket.



carrier are adjustable to accommodate the recommended “M” seated position for hip support as baby grows. When simply being carried, bigger babies can either be positioned high on either hip with their legs straddling the user’s body or they can be positioned in the center of the user’s body with their legs straddling the user’s body.

EGT: Can a mom really nurse a child, hands-free while tending to chores, other children and life in general?

AW: Yes. Beginning at around 3 to 4 months of age, baby can nurse while Mom is doing other things. Nurse 'N Go is designed for hands-free nursing during light activities and walking, nothing rigorous.

EGT: How easy is it to take baby out of the carrier when it's time for burping and diaper changing?

AW: Very easy. You unbuckle one of the carrier shoulder straps and simply lift the baby out.

EGT: What is the product made of? How durable is it? What about big babies or babies that nurse longer than one year?

AW: The product is 98 percent cotton and 2 percent spandex stretch denim. Denim is extremely durable. The Nurse 'N Go HipHugger model holds an infant up to 35 pounds. I launched this design primarily because of its longevity of use.

EGT: Can / should dads use the product as well? If so, how?

AW: This baby carrier is ideal for dads, which is why I designed it using black stretch denim with a black leather logo label. It is gender neutral for Mom, Dad, or baby boy or girl. The detachable, interchangeable nursing covers are made from 100 percent cotton flannel with geometric or animal prints, which, again, are gender neutral. The nursing cover can be used to lay the baby on when changing a diaper. It can also be used to swaddle baby or to throw across your shoulder when holding baby. Mom or Dad can also use the nursing cover to shield baby from the elements. Each carrier is sold with one nursing cover; other fashionable designs are sold separately.

EGT: How did you create your prototype? How many versions did you have before you got it perfect?

AW: The original Nurse 'N Go design took seven years to perfect. It was my first attempt at designing anything, and I neither sew nor draw. I had to rely on describing my vision to seamstresses. Through

continuous trial and error, design and re-design with five different seamstresses, I found the perfect design. I was unable to launch at that point early last year due to a lack of funding. In 2014, I had a vision at 3 a.m. about another carrier design, but I didn't work on it because I intended to launch my original design first.

In 2015, I had another vision at 3 a.m. for three more carriers I would design. I took out my mom's sewing machine, and we sewed rough prototypes of each carrier as best we could, then took them to my aunt to create a cleaner version of each. I then met with my mentor, Andre Hughes of Powered by Action, and his team, and they, along with the moms who accompanied me for a demonstration, all agreed that HipHugger was the carrier to launch first because of its longevity of use. After that meeting, I focused on Nurse 'N Go HipHugger. I had fittings with more moms and babies, and tweaked the design two more times until I perfected it. At that point I had a manufacturer in Chicago make my working prototype. I am still using that manufacturer to make my first run of 200 carriers.

EGT: Is Nurse 'N Go patented?

AW: I have a provisional patent-pending status.

EGT: Are you working with an overseas factory? What types of obstacles have you had to overcome?

AW: I worked with a great manufacturer in China to tweak and re-design my original prototype. My mentor has a relationship with this manufacturer, and as a favor to him, the manufacturer was willing to work with me as I finalized my original design. They were even willing to do a minimum order of 1,000 carriers instead of the traditional MOQ of 10,000 units. However, after I decided to shift gears to work on HipHugger and do a very small first run of 200 carriers, I had to use the Chicago manufacturer. I still plan to use the China manufacturer when I move to larger quantities.

EGT: What safety issues, if any, were involved concerning the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act? How important is safety/production testing for your type of product?

AW: Ensuring product safety for a baby carrier is paramount to success. Ensuring the product is made using sturdy materials, for example, fabric, buckles and webbing. Ensuring proper safety labeling is visible on the carrier and manual. Ensuring there is a registration card attached to each product. Ensuring the product



The Nurse 'N Go HipHugger allows users to carry an infant that weighs up to 35 pounds.

is tested and passes safety and labeling requirements. These and obtaining limited liability insurance are essential.

EGT: How is your product packaged? Did you design the packaging?

AW: My product is sold in a black muslin drawstring bag, which I designed using my logo on each side of the bag. The bag is reusable.

EGT: You launched Nurse 'N Go on January 31, 2016. How are you selling the product?

AW: I am selling on my website but will pursue sales on Amazon.com and Wayfair.com, as well as in local boutiques, if

I don't sell my first 200 carriers through my website and word of mouth.

EGT: What are your goals for this product?

AW: My goal is to supply moms (and dads) with a high-quality, modern, stylish and comfortable baby carrier for hands-free nursing (and carrying). I would love to license my product after my initial sales. I have a contact who will be able to initiate the conversation with a large baby company. I'd love to stay on board with that company and launch my other Nurse 'N Go designs through them.

EGT: Can you share what you have learned or offer any words of encouragement for readers of *Inventors Digest* concerning all phases of product development?

AW: I encourage them to never give up. Though the road may be hard and rough, the reward is greater for the one who endures to the end. If you have a vision, honor it by giving life to it. It is better to have tried and failed than to never have tried at all. I've learned that you are the only one who can make your dreams come true. One would wish for someone else to catch your vision and run with it on your behalf and for your financial gain, but that isn't reality. You have to put feet to your faith to see what the end will be. ☺

Edie Tolchin has contributed to *Inventors Digest* since 2000. She is the author of *Secrets of Successful Inventing* and owner of EGT Global Trading, which for more than 25 years has helped inventors with product safety issues, sourcing and China manufacturing. Contact Edie at egt@egtglobaltrading.com.



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
CAMA MCNAMARA

ART DIRECTOR
CARRIE BOYD

CONTRIBUTORS
DON DEBELAK
INNOVATOR INSIGHTS
JACK LANDER
JEREMY LOSAW
GENE QUINN
EDIE TOLCHIN

EDITORIAL INTERN
ELEANOR MERRELL

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
JORGE ZEGARRA

INVENTORS DIGEST LLC

PUBLISHER
LOUIS FOREMAN

**VICE PRESIDENT,
INTERACTIVE AND WEB**
MATT SPANGARD

FINANCIAL CONTROLLER
DEBBIE MUENCH

ASSISTANT TO THE PUBLISHER
KARA SHEAFFER

ADVISORY BOARD
KEN BLOEMER
JAMES DALY
PAUL SCHOLS

© 2016 Inventors Digest, LLC. All rights reserved. Inventors Digest, LLC is a North Carolina limited liability company and is the publisher of *Inventors Digest* magazine. INVENTORS DIGEST and INVENTORS' DIGEST are trademarks of Inventors Digest, LLC. Reproduction or distribution of any materials obtained in this publication without written permission is expressly prohibited. The views, claims and opinions expressed in article and advertisements herein are not necessarily those of Inventors Digest, LLC, its employees, agents or directors. This publication and any references to products or services are provided "as is" without any expressed or implied warranty or term of any kind. While effort is made to ensure accuracy in the content of the information presented herein, Inventors Digest, LLC is not responsible for any errors, misprints or misinformation. Any legal information contained herein is not to be construed as legal advice and is provided for entertainment or educational purposes only. Interested parties and inventors seeking legal advice should consult a lawyer.

Ad rates, subscriptions & editorial content:
520 Elliot Street
Charlotte, NC 28202

info@InventorsDigest.com www.InventorsDigest.com
cama@InventorsDigest.com



May You Always Invent

Are you aware that May is National Inventors Month? Yes, an entire month is devoted to honoring the men and women behind the novel ideas that have transformed our world. Of course, if you're an inventor, every month is Inventors Month. Inventing is an ongoing process, a part of who you are. Everywhere you look, you observe opportunities for solving problems that make our lives easier, often imagining ideas that have never been conceived.

In *Time Tested*, *Inventors Digest* takes a look at just a few of the inventors who have made lasting contributions to humanity. Where would we be without the printing press, automobiles, penicillin, the World Wide Web, sewing machines, the electric furnace, airplanes and cell phones? Martin Cooper, I'm sure, could not have imagined when he made the first call on a portable cell phone in 1973 that by 2016 more than two billion people worldwide would own smartphones. Oddly enough, there are more mobile devices on the planet than people.

Mothers Day also happens to fall in May, so this month we also pay tribute to inventor moms—women who have solved problems that many moms face during their daily routines. Angelique Warner needed to nurse her baby while she was tending other children and invented Nurse 'N Go. Linsey Ebuon was worried about her infant daughter scratching herself with her long fingernails when she came up with the ultimate coverup: a new take on mittens. When Lisa Pinnell found it difficult to take a toddler and an infant to the grocery store at the same time and still fill a cart with groceries, she designed a grocery cart hammock to hold a baby.

These women are not simply inventors, however, they're successful mompreneurs. What you'll note as you read "Ready to Sell" is the variety of marketing methods the women employed to start and develop flourishing businesses. No matter how great your product, if it's not marketed properly, you won't be successful. From children's expos to the Web to social media, these women discovered the best marketing vehicles to reach their particular markets.

If you haven't reached the marketing stage but have an idea for a product that you are ready to manufacture, you know how difficult sourcing can be. Locating a manufacturer with the right equipment at the right price can be a time-consuming and frustrating process. Finding a manufacturer in the United States is even more problematic. Maker's Row to the rescue. The startup, based in Brooklyn, N.Y., connects product developers with American manufacturers. The brainchild of Matthew Burnett and Tanya Menendez, Maker's Row is a Web-based service that can be particularly valuable for emerging brands.

What do Flash Gordon, a turkey carcass and a calf's eye have to do with LASIK surgery? Find out when you read about Dr. James Wynne and his colleagues, who invented excimer laser surgery. The team found that an excimer laser could be used to create clean cuts in tissue without causing collateral damage to the surrounding tissue, which led to the somewhat miraculous sight-correcting procedure. Imagine how difficult it would be to test a laser that cuts plastic on your own skin. Even Flash Gordon would be impressed.

—Cama

Inventors

MAY 2016 Volume 32 Issue 5

DIGEST

Maker's Row MeetUp

National
Inventors
Month

Dr. James Wynne

IN THE LINE OF SIGHT

Ready to Sell

MARKETING STRATEGIES
FOR MOMPREENEURS

Game Changers

MEN WHO SHAPED THE
MODERN WORLD

Trade Show Secrets

LOOK, LISTEN AND LEARN

Patent Drafting

LEARNING FROM
COMMON MISTAKES

LEGO Kidsfest

BUILDING CASTLES
IN THE SKY

\$3.95

POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO.
FULTON, MO