



**A Strategy Symposium
March 24-25, 2009 – Berkeley, California**

Progress in the development of a microbicide vaginal tablet.

ALAN STONE and A. ROBERT NEURATH
UNITED KINGDOM
Alan.stoneX@virgin.net

The formulation of microbicides as vaginal tablets would avoid the need for the specialised preparation and packaging of gels. It would reduce manufacturing costs, increase shelf-life, and minimise bulk for shipping, warehousing, local distribution and storage. Disposal after use would entail merely the small fragment of foil in which the tablet had been wrapped. The ubiquity of tablet-manufacturing plant would facilitate production in any region on any scale required. To make this a reality, several challenges need to be overcome. Because sex often takes place with little time for prior preparation, the tablet must disintegrate rapidly when it comes into contact with vaginal secretions and must quickly transform into a bioadhesive gel. At the same time, the tablet must be robust enough to withstand the stresses of packaging (eg in blister packs) and unpacking by the end-user and vaginal insertion with the finger or with an applicator. The resultant gel must be smooth with no gritty feel, not gummy or sticky, with a viscosity that will retain it in the vagina with minimal dribbling. It should be readily miscible with additional fluid, including semen. It should not dry out to form an unacceptable deposit. All components of the formulation must be approved (or approvable) for vaginal use and the product must be affordable and acceptable to consumers in developing country markets. The poster will discuss progress on the development of vaginal tablets which meet these criteria, incorporating as API either CAP or polynaphthalene sulphonate (analogous to PRO 2000).