



## MatTek's EpiVaginal Receives U.S. Patent for HIV/AIDS Research

Ready-to-Use Tissue Model for Researching HIV/AIDS Infection, Transmission in Women

June 14, 2006 - MatTek Corp., Ashland, MA (USA) today announced that [EpiVaginal™, an innovative human cell-derived tissue model incorporating immune \(dendritic\) cells](#), for use by HIV/AIDS researchers in their investigations of HIV infection in women, has been granted a patent by the U.S. Patent Office.

The AIDS epidemic continues to expand at an alarming rate, especially in third world countries. According to the United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS), almost half of the adults living with HIV and AIDS are women. Over the past two years, the number of women infected with HIV has increased in every region of the world, with rates rising particularly rapidly in Eastern Europe, Asia, and Latin America. In sub-Saharan Africa, women already make up almost 60% of adults living with HIV and heterosexual transmission of HIV is the dominant route of infection.

With these disturbing facts in mind, MatTek Corp., a world leader in the production of human cell-derived, ready-to-use in vitro tissue models, developed EpiVaginal. EpiVaginal tissues are produced from human-derived vaginal epithelial cells in combination with human dendritic cells (DC), the body's immune system sentinels. Dendritic cells are the initial point of HIV infection in women who contract this disease via heterosexual transmission. Because of this, use of EpiVaginal tissues allows HIV/AIDS researchers to investigate HIV infection mechanisms in a life-like system that mimics the human vaginal mucosa, providing unparalleled insights into the HIV infection process in women.

Dr. Seyoum Ayehunie, Senior Cell Biologist, and Lead Scientist for MatTek's EpiVaginal program, stated, "We are all thrilled that MatTek has developed the EpiVaginal in vitro tissue model to help in the fight against HIV/AIDS. My professional career has been spent fighting this dreaded disease, and I am proud to be associated with the development of this latest MatTek in vitro tissue model."

To learn more, please visit the following MatTek Web page:

<http://www.mattek.com/pages/products/epivaginal>

**About MatTek** - MatTek Corp., founded in 1985, is an industry leader in tissue engineering. MatTek produces human cell-derived, 3-D, ready-to-use in vitro tissue models for use in product development, claims substantiation, safety assessment, and drug discovery/development applications in the Pharmaceutical, Biotech, Cosmetics, Personal Care and Household Products industries. Current in vitro products include EpiAirway™, EpiDerm™, EpiDermFT™, EpiGingival™, EpiOcular™, EpiOral™, EpiVaginal™, and MelanoDerm™ tissue models, and Human Dendritic Cells.

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