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AlphaVax Progresses a Prophylactic HSV Vaccine

The development of an effective prophylactic vaccine against herpes simplex virus (HSV) is a key product opportunity for which the AlphaVax vector platform is ideally suited. [\[HSV Program\]](#). Recently, studies linking genital HSV infections to increased transmission of HIV identify another important reason to develop a vaccine against HSV. In addition to this longfelt and unmet medical need, the development of an HSV vaccine product fits the overall company strategy of extending our commercial pipeline, exploiting the alphavaccine platform system, and employing our development know-how and proprietary manufacturing processes to quickly advance to clinical trials.

Traditionally, genital herpes infections have been attributed to HSV-2, while oral infections have been associated with HSV-1. However, recent studies show increasing prevalence of HSV-1 in genital infections (see, for example, Malkin et al. 2004 Herpes 11(Suppl 1) 2A-23A; Smith & Roberts 2009 J. Am. Coll. Health 57(4): 389; Ryder et al 2009 Sex. Transm. Infect 85: 416). Therefore, our current preclinical studies are focused on assessing the potential of our first vaccine candidate to provide broad, cross-protective responses to both HSV-1 and HSV-2 in a mouse challenge model. Preliminary results show that our first candidate is immunogenic, inducing robust humoral and cell-mediated responses, as well as efficacious, inducing complete protection against challenge with both HSV strains. Additional preclinical studies are ongoing. In parallel, AlphaVax has produced a lot of GMP-compliant clinical trial material of this vaccine and anticipates initiating a trial in early 2010.