



PRESS RELEASE



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SOLVAY LAUNCHES, ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY BIOCIDES FOR ERADICATION OF LIFE-THREATENING HOSPITAL 'SUPERBUGS'

Perestane® effective against Clostridium difficile and MRSA

Perestane®, an innovative biocidal product created and developed by Solvay, has been proven to be an effective disinfectant against Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and Clostridium difficile. These so-called 'superbugs' may cause fatal diseases, and the treatment of patients with most current antibiotics is ineffective. Researchers from the University of Leeds and Leeds General Infirmary (United Kingdom) have recently demonstrated that disinfectants commonly used in hospitals fail to eradicate *Clostridium difficile* from the premises, and may even promote spore formation.

The effectiveness of Perestane® against MRSA and *Clostridium difficile* was confirmed by the Hospital Infection Research Laboratory (City Hospital Birmingham, UK) and a recent report from an independent British laboratory accredited by UKAS, the United Kingdom Accreditation Service.

Perestane®, which Solvay is marketing presently in the European Union, is a disinfectant based on peracid chemistry with a range of potential applications in the public and domestic health domains (for instance: disinfection of medical instruments, superior quality household products, etc.). This very low odor biocide possesses all the qualities of some other peracid compounds - such as high disinfectant efficacy even with short contact times and a low impact on the environment - without the drawbacks of a strong pungent smell. In addition, it can demonstrate much lower corrosion rates against some of the materials frequently encountered in hospitals when compared to other oxidizing biocides.

"With Perestane®, Solvay has developed an innovative highly efficient, user- and environment-friendly disinfectant that can be implemented in various demanding applications," said Eric Mignonat, Solvay's General Manager for Peroxide business. "Through our chemical research and know-how, we have also succeeded in providing a workable solution for an emerging, life-threatening problem. We can help to make hospitals safer places to be," added Eric Mignonat.

Perestane® is rapidly biodegradable, resulting in harmless breakdown products. It is non bio-accumulating, non toxic, non skin-sensitizing and non persistent. Perestane® has been notified under the European Union's Biocidal Products Directive.

SOLVAY is an international chemical and pharmaceutical Group with headquarters in Brussels. It employs some 30,000 people in 50 countries. In 2005 its consolidated sales amounted to EUR 8.6 billion generated by its three activity sectors: Chemicals, Plastics and Pharmaceuticals. SOLVAY (Euronext : SOLB.BE - Bloomberg: SOLB.BB - Reuters: SOLBt.BR) is listed on the Euronext stock exchange in Brussels. Details are available at www.solvay.com

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Ce communiqué de presse est également disponible en français – Dit persbericht is ook in het Nederlands beschikbaar

NOTES TO THE EDITORS

Clostridium difficile is a commensal bacterium which may be found in the human intestine. It is more likely to colonize patients who have had long stays in a hospital or a nursing home. It can be symptom free if found only in small quantities. Clostridium difficile is not only resistant to most antibiotics: the latter even act to stimulate growth of this bacterium. Antibiotics, especially those with a broad spectrum of activity, cause disruption of normal intestinal flora, leading to an overgrowth of Clostridium difficile. This may lead to the serious condition known as pseudomembranous colitis. A significant number of Clostridium difficile-induced affections, including some fatal cases, have been observed in European hospitals in recent years.

Clostridium difficile can be transmitted from person to person by the fecal-oral route. Because the organism forms heat-resistant spores, it can remain in the hospital or nursing home environment for long periods of time. It can be cultured from almost any surface in these institutions.

Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) is a specific strain of the Staphylococcus aureus bacterium that has developed antibiotic resistance to all penicillins. MRSA was first discovered in the UK in 1961 and is now widespread, particularly in the hospital setting.