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Anthrax Target of Vaxin's Vaccine Research

Birmingham, AL - October 1, 2001 -- Biological warfare has long been a concern of the federal government; Vaxin, Inc. announced today that it received a grant to develop a vaccine patch to combat anthrax. This disease is so deadly it is 90 percent fatal if treatment is not sought within 24 hours, a natural choice for terrorists. The Small Business Innovation Research grant was awarded by the National Institutes of Health.

"A conventional anthrax vaccine requires six doses," says Kent Van Kampen, president of Vaxin. "A patch could be applied by anyone, not just medical professionals, and would not require six doses to be effective."

Dr. De-chu Tang, chief science officer for Vaxin, invented the revolutionary way to administer vaccines through topical applications. "The anthrax vaccine available now is painful and has many side effects, some of which are severe," he says.

Tang says anthrax is a biological weapon favored by terrorists because it is easy to produce, highly effective in causing death, yet is not infectious, so the terrorists themselves need not fear infection if they take reasonable precautions.

"A terrorist group could spray the anthrax spore in the air and cripple an entire city. It is invisible, odorless and spread by the wind," he explains. "It would be difficult to produce enough of the current vaccine to vaccinate the entire country, The funding agency understands the significance of a topical patch for vaccines during an emergency. During an emergency, the patch could quickly protect large numbers of people."

The topical technology expands the capability of researchers to find a suitable anthrax vaccine by creating a totally new way to invent vaccines. Well-suited for emergency situations, this needle-free vaccination will not require refrigeration or medical personnel to administer. The vaccinations also eliminate the biohazard caused from used needles.

Vaxin, Inc. is a Birmingham, Ala.-based company specializing in vaccine development and vaccine delivery systems. It is currently developing topical vaccines for tetanus, dengue fever, breast cancer, malaria, and influenza.