



Give the People Light and they will find their own way.

# The Wisconsin Light

## Government Approves Test for HIV Using Saliva Instead of Blood

Washington, D.C.-AP- The first AIDS virus test that uses saliva instead of blood has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The test, called Orasure, is made by the biotechnology company Epitepe Inc., in Beaverton, Oregon, and will cost about \$2 to \$4, a fraction of the price of blood tests.

Although the test isn't as accurate as blood tests, Epitepe expressed the hope following the December 23 FDA approval that the test will help more people learn whether they have HIV.

"Whether they test positive or negative, they can take appropriate steps to protect themselves and others and if they test positive, obtain early treatment for the disease," said Adolph Ferro, Epitepe president and chief executive officer.

The FDA said the new test will be available only from physicians and will be administered only by people trained in its use. Epitepe eventually hopes to offer it for sale directly to consumers.

Dr. Jeff Lawrence, a consultant to the American Foundation for AIDS Research, said the test could encourage people who would avoid blood tests to be tested.

"As long as a positive test is followed by a blood test and as long as there is appropriate counseling available, it is a reasonable thing to do," Lawrence said.

The FDA approval actually involves two systems: a way to collect and preserve the oral fluid, and a way to test the specimen in a laboratory for the HIV virus.

The kit used to test the specimen in the lab is made by Organon Teknika Corp., of Durham, North Carolina, and is sold under the brand name "Oral Fluid Vironostika HIV-1 Microelisa System."

The test measures the presence in the saliva of antibodies to the HIV virus. The virus itself has not been found in the saliva.

To collect fluid for a test, a specially treated cotton pad on a stick is placed between the lower gum and the cheek and allowed to absorb fluid. The stick is then placed into a plastic container with a preservative solution.

At a lab, the specimen undergoes an "enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay," or ELISA, a test that is able to detect antibodies to HIV.

Positive tests are confirmed with a blood test called the Western Blot, which is more sensitive than the ELISA.

The FDA said the test has a 2% error rate. For instance, for every 100 people infected with HIV, the saliva test will miss one or two. For every 100 people who are not infected, test results will be incorrectly positive for approximately two people, the agency said.

"That is much, much poorer than with a standard blood test," Lawrence said.

Under guidelines for approval, the saliva test is strictly forbidden for home use and cannot be used to screen blood donors.

## Researchers Begin Studies of Antibiotic that Could Extend Life for People with AIDS

(Baltimore)- Researchers at Johns Hopkins University are beginning two studies on humans to test an antibiotic that some doctors consider one of the best for extending the life of people living with AIDS.

Bactrim is used to treat a form of pneumonia that preys on people with severely damaged immune systems and was at one time the first sign of the onset of AIDS in a majority of cases.

"Among the drugs we've researched to use in treating HIV and AIDS, the use of Bactrim is perhaps the single greatest achievement," said Dr. Judith Feinberg, who is leading the studies at the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions.

Though Bactrim was initially used to treat leukemia patients suffering from pneumocystis carinii pneumonia, it has long been in the arsenal of drugs used to treat AIDS patients.

But in many cases the drug can cause severe rashes, fevers and upset stomachs, Feinberg

(Milwaukee, WI)- PrideFest announces that it will remain at its Veterans Park site in 1995. The organization is planning to negotiate a move to the Summerfest grounds in 1996.

PrideFest had been negotiating to move the celebration to the Summerfest grounds beginning in June, 1995. However, the Summerfest

calendar includes events on all but one weekend of June.

The Summerfest grounds will host four events in June 1995. PrideFest asked to use the grounds on June 10th and 11th. In October, PrideFest negotiators were told that weekend was open.

In November, the Summerfest Board approved a plan to upgrade the grounds. In December a Board Task Force decided that the amount of time needed to complete the upgrade meant that no events could be scheduled on the grounds for the weekend of the 10th and 11th.



Civil War Era-(Clockwise) Trini Alvarado, Susan Sarandon, Claire Danes, Kristen Durst and Winona Ryder star in the Louisa May Alcott classic "Little Women" which is now playing in selected theaters including Milwaukee's Oriental.

## Administration to Seek Boost in Funding for AIDS Programs in 1995

(Washington, D.C.)- The Clinton Administration, despite tight budget constraints, will seek \$91 million more in 1995 to care for people living with AIDS, the White House announced on December 20.

Clinton, who has already boosted spending on AIDS programs by 82%, will seek an increase to \$724 million, Administration officials said. That is \$51 million more than his health department requested.

The Administration also has decided not to cut a special housing program for those suffering with the disease.

Clinton promised during his 1992 campaign to fully fund the Ryan White Care Act, which provides direct medical and social services to people living with HIV and AIDS.

Sources who asked not to be identified, said the \$185 million housing program had been

pulled off the chopping block. It will still have to fight for survival in the Republican-controlled Congress, to which the budget will be submitted in February.

Sources in Washington told Wisconsin Light that the fact that the housing funds had been put back in, was due "in no small part" to the "intense lobbying efforts" of the AIDS Action Council and "especially the member from the Midwest" who has been "working without stint."

Doug Nelson, Executive Director of the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin is the only member on the AIDS Action Council from the Midwest.

The AIDS Action Council says that one-third to one-half of all people with AIDS "are either homeless or in imminent danger of losing their homes," and the National Commission on AIDS once estimated that 15% of homeless people were HIV positive.

The government spends almost \$3 billion a year on AIDS research, prevention and treatment programs.

Summerfest Staff and Board members said they needed to keep that weekend open to insure completion of the improvements before the start of Summerfest.

Summerfest officials also expressed concern about their ability of to handle a fifth event in June.

The Summerfest Board Task Force offered PrideFest the opportunity to share the grounds with the Miller Ride for the Arts on June, 4th and 5th.

Ride for the Arts Sponsor, UPAF expressed a willingness to work with PrideFest. But it also had concerns about the safety of its bike riders. To protect the riders, every street leading to Summerfest will be blocked from early in the morning until 2:00 PM.

The street closings would make it impossible for vendors, exhibitors, volunteers and entertainers to get on the grounds for PrideFest set up. This would have delayed the festival opening until 3:00 or later on Sunday.

The only other options open to PrideFest were to schedule the festival in August or September or to remain at its current site. There were serious concerns about what effect moving the event out of the traditional month for Pride celebrations would have on revenue and attendance.

PrideFest Co-Chair, Bill Meunier says that he knows many Gays and Lesbians will be as disappointed as the PrideFest Board is.

"What it came down to," Meunier said, "was deciding whether or not we wanted to take a gamble on what would happen if we cut out our most profitable time, Sunday afternoon, or moved the entire celebration to a late Summer or early Fall weekend. We already have a wonderful site that we know works well for us. A Summerfest site grounds would offer many advantages. We remain committed to moving the festival there. However, we will not gamble our ability to be financially viable to get there. We will have to wait until 1996."

PrideFest moved to Veterans Park in 1994. Its former site at Juneau Park had become too crowded. The new site was well received by those in attendance.

"No matter where our site is, our community can look forward to a fantastic festival,"

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## AIDS Cases Break Million Mark

Geneva, Switzerland-AP- The official number of AIDS cases worldwide has topped the million mark for the first time, though the true figure is more than four times as high, the World Health Organization (WHO) said, January 2, 1995.

By December 31, governments had notified the U.N. health agency's Geneva headquarters of 1,025,073 cases of the disease since the start of records in 1980, WHO said.

However, it said chronic underreporting and underdiagnosis in developing countries meant the actual number of AIDS cases probably totals more than 4.5 million.

WHO said more than 70% of the estimated cases were in Africa. About 9% were in the U.S., 9% in the rest of the American hemisphere, 6% in Asia and 4% in Europe.

The AIDS statistics include people who have died. They do not reflect the number of people infected with HIV. WHO said that if HIV positive people were included, the number would be 20 times as high.

About 1.5 million people, WHO estimates, have contracted HIV in the past six months. The agency said that the infection rate continues to accelerate, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and southern Asia.

WHO spokesman Christopher Powell, predicted that the number of HIV positive people would reach 40 million plus in the next five years.