



# Diabax Pty Ltd

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**A rapid point  
of care  
diagnostic  
for  
meningococcal  
disease**

## The Technology

Although not extremely common, Meningococcal disease (MD) is serious and often fatal disorder which is spread by close contact via the respiratory route. MD is one of the most important medical emergencies demanding early diagnosis and therapy. Although effective antibiotics are available, the disease is still associated with very high mortality and persistent neurological defects, particularly in children. MD begins as a viral like-illness, closely resembling the flu. For this reason, physicians commonly find diagnosis to be problematic, since this disease can progress rapidly and sufferers may be gravely ill within hours. Currently, there is no point-of-care diagnostic test, where confirmation generally occurs *after* the onset of serious symptoms via lengthy laboratory tests.

We have identified an antigenic sequence common to all meningococcal strains the detection of which provides an accurate diagnosis of the disease. It is proposed that the sequence be detected via a rapid point-of-care diagnostic test that would be performed by the physician during consultation.

## Applications

The main problem with MD management is that it is not possible to quickly distinguish between MD and the flu or other infections. A test which achieves this would thus be highly valuable and sought after. We propose to develop a rapid and simple test which will detect the meningococci in small volumes of blood taken at point-of-care.

## Market

The total U.S. point-of-care testing market generated revenues of \$1.6 billion in 1996 and more than half of all US physicians use office-based testing. We have estimated market size by applying a nominal test price of \$50 to every person who consults their doctor with undetermined flu-like symptoms. Using this extrapolation the market size annually in Australia and the USA is A\$345 million and A\$1.48 billion, respectively.

## IP position

We have a granted US patent (which is also at national phase in 18 countries) for a homologous DNA and protein sequence which is present in ALL meningococcal strains.

## Commercialisation

An investor is sought to assist in the development of a prototype assay and subsequent evaluation of this as a diagnostic test for meningococcal disease.

## CONTACT

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