

Headline	Chinese and HK researchers discover anti-AIDS gel		
MediaTitle	The Star		
Date	24 Apr 2012	Color	Black/white
Section	World	Circulation	304,904
Page No	42	Readership	1,026,812
Language	English	ArticleSize	92 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 2,030
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 6,090



Chinese and HK researchers discover anti-AIDS gel

HONG KONG: Chinese researchers said they have discovered an HIV-blocking agent that could be developed into a gel to limit the sexual transmission of AIDS.

Scientists from Hong Kong University said joint research with Shanghai Targetdrug Co, Nanjing University and City University of Hong Kong had discovered a molecule that blocks HIV from entering human cells.

Zhiwei Chen, director of the AIDS Institute of the University of Hong Kong Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, said the potency of the TD-0680 molecule against sexually transmitted HIV was "encouraging".

The new molecule could be developed into a microbicide gel to "prevent HIV sexual transmission" by killing off the virus as it tries to enter the body.

This would give people, especially women, an "alternative method to protect themselves from the virus, in addition to condoms", Chen said.

"The ideal solution is to develop an effective vaccine. Since such a vaccine remains elusive, we must explore other strategies such as topical microbicide," he said.

The TD-0680 molecule is several times more potent than Maraviroc, a Pfizer-developed equivalent which has been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration for clinical treatment, the Chinese scientists said.

Their work was published recently in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Biological Chemistry*.
— AFP