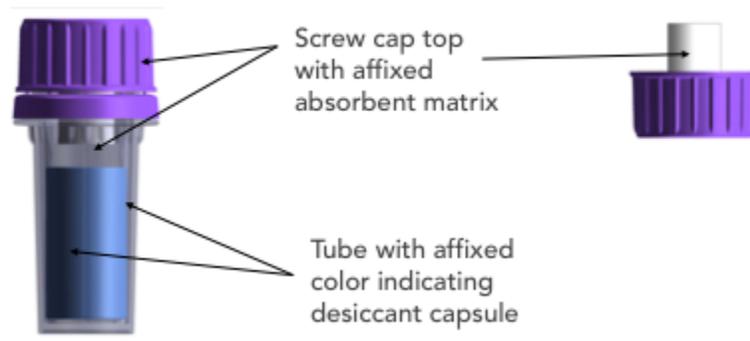


MEDCITY News

Blood storage and transport startup puts focus on growing hepatitis C testing market

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Preventing, [identifying](#) and treating infectious diseases has been a hot spot for innovation in healthcare. This growing company, though, is taking a step back, focusing instead on improving the process of physically getting a specimen sample to a place where it can be tested for these diseases.

[ViveBio LLC](#), which makes a dried biological specimen transport system, said in a [new U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission filing](#) that it's raised almost all of a \$4 million round from at least 10 investors.

“With this new funding, we will expand business development activities and the validation of ViveST with industry leading assays, targeting the fast -growing hepatitis C market,” said chairman and CEO Bob Cheeley.

In the ViveST, a specimen sample is loaded onto a matrix based on the cap of a microcentrifuge tube. As the water from the sample evaporates, biological analytes including proteins, [virions](#) and nucleic acids remain on the matrix and can be stored or shipped without refrigeration for up to two months, the company says. They can be reconstituted by incubating the matrix with molecular grade water.

There are several methods for storing and transporting blood that depend on how and when the sample is going to be analyzed. ViveST is designed to overcome obstacles with [existing methods](#) like dried blood spots and frozen plasma, which the company says are limited by low sample volume and expensive shipping regulations, respectively. Those stand as barriers to better access to HIV and hepatitis B and C testing worldwide.

The hepatitis C market is indeed growing, as [3 million to 4 million new cases](#) of the contagious liver disease occur annually. Drug companies like [Abbott](#), [Achillion](#) and [Eiger Biopharmaceuticals](#) are among those working on new treatments.

On ViveBio's side is the fact that earlier this year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [issued a new recommendation](#) that everyone born between 1945 and 1965 get a blood test for hepatitis C. The influential [U.S. Preventive Services Task Force](#), however, has [not entirely thrown itself](#) behind that recommendation.

Lawrenceville, Georgia-based ViveBio was formed in 2009.

[Photo from ViveBio]

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