



MEDIA RELEASE

CONTACT: Joseph Burkett
(336) 387-1006
joseph.burkett@novartis.com

Novartis Animal Health Introduces PDS* *Plus* Antibacterial Suture

**Veterinarians now have a powerful new advantage
to help win the battle against surgical bacteria**

GREENSBORO, North Carolina (August 2007) – One of the most popular suture choices from ETHICON Products has been given an antibacterial advantage to help veterinarians in the fight against the risks of bacteria. New PDS* *Plus* (polydioxanone) Antibacterial Suture, a synthetic, absorbable monofilament designed for long-term wound support from Novartis Animal Health US, Inc., offers all of the original PDS* II features, along with antibacterial protection.

“What’s really exciting is that this added level of antibacterial protection is proven to be effective in controlling bacteria and costs just a few cents more per suture,” said Dale Beaudoin, Surgical Devices Brand Manager for Novartis.

“In any surgery, bacterial contamination without prophylactic aseptic measures is almost unavoidable and sways the balance in favor of bacteria,” says Mark Storch, DVM, Director, Corporate Product Characterization, ETHICON Research and Development. “However, there are cases in which the risk factors are especially high, such as immuno-suppressed patients, feline leukemia, hypothyroidism, FIV, cancer, diabetes, open fractures, corticosteroids use, bite wounds and contaminated wounds.”

In fact, there may be many more high-risk applications than previously considered. In a 2007 research study, nearly 75 percent of the 251 veterinarians who responded said they have experienced cases where surgical site infections occurred.¹ More than half have personally encountered a case of surgical site infection within the past year.

-more-

“Antibacterial sutures offer veterinarians the means to address a significant risk factor in any surgery,” Dr. Storch said. “That’s why ETHICON developed the world’s first and only antibacterial sutures to provide an added layer of protection by fighting bacteria at the suture line.”

Like VICRYL* *Plus* (polyglactin 910) and MONOCRYL* *Plus* (poliglecaprone 25), new PDS* *Plus* features IRGACARE² MP, a pure form of triclosan that has been used effectively as a proven, broad-spectrum antibacterial in consumer products for more than 30 years.

Both PDS* *Plus* and MONOCRYL* *Plus* are effective against *Staph A*, *Staph E*, *MRSA*, *MRSE*, *E. coli* and *Klebsiella pneumoniae*. VICRYL* *Plus* is effective against *Staph A*, *Staph E*, *MRSA* and *MRSE*. In studies, triclosan, which kills bacteria along the suture line, has been shown to have no adverse effects on wound healing.³

PDS* *Plus* Antibacterial Suture, manufactured by ETHICON Products, a Johnson & Johnson company, is sold and distributed exclusively in the veterinary market through Novartis Animal Health US, Inc. For information or to order, veterinarians can visit www.ethicon.novartis.us or contact their Novartis Animal Health sales representative, distributor representative or Customer Relations at 800-332-2761.

For quality assurance, veterinarians are advised to purchase ETHICON sutures only from authorized distributors; a current list is posted at the Web site.

Additional medical treatment should be given as indicated. ETHICON Antibacterial Sutures do not replace antimicrobials or good surgical technique.

Free On-Line CE Course**

To learn more about antibacterial sutures, veterinarians are encouraged to take advantage of a free on-line CE course sponsored by Novartis. Available on demand at www.ethicon.novartis.us, *Best Practices For Wound Closure* includes an update on suture and needle technology. Also available at the site are time-lapse videos of a study conducted at Antech Diagnostics, Inc. that shows how ETHICON Antibacterial Sutures create a zone of inhibition against different types of bacteria.

About Novartis Animal Health US, Inc.

Novartis Animal Health US, Inc., researches, develops and commercializes leading animal treatments that meet the needs of pet owners, farmers and veterinarians. Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, and present in almost 40 countries, Novartis Animal Health, Inc. employs about 2,300 people worldwide. For more information, please consult www.petwellness.com or www.ah.novartis.com.

-more-

About Novartis

Novartis AG (NYSE: NVS) is a world leader in offering medicines to protect health, cure disease and improve well-being. Our goal is to discover, develop and successfully market innovative products to treat patients, ease suffering and enhance the quality of life. We are strengthening our medicine-based portfolio, which is focused on strategic growth platforms in innovation-driven pharmaceuticals, high-quality and low-cost generics, human vaccines and leading self-medication OTC brands. Novartis is the only company with leadership positions in these areas. In 2006, the Group's businesses achieved net sales of USD 37.0 billion and net income of USD 7.2 billion. Approximately USD 5.4 billion was invested in R&D. Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Novartis Group companies employ approximately 100,000 associates and operate in over 140 countries around the world. For more information, please visit <http://www.novartis.com>.

###

1 ETHICON Suture Research, May 2007, AllPoints Research, Inc.

2 IRGACARE is a registered trademark of Ciba Specialty Chemicals Corporation.

3 A 28-Day Study of the Effect of Coated VICRYL* Plus Antibacterial Suture (coated polyglactin 910 with triclosan) on Wound Healing in Guinea Pig Linear Incisional Skin Wounds, *Surg Infect J.* 2002; 3(suppl 1): S89-S98, Storch M, Perry LC, Davidson JM, Ward JJ.

**Course meets the requirements for 2 hours of continuing education credit in jurisdictions that recognize AAVSB RACE approval; however participants should be aware that some boards have limitations on the number of hours accepted in certain categories and/or restrictions on certain methods of delivery of continuing education.

*Trademark of ETHICON, INC.

© 2007 Novartis Animal Health US, Inc.

ETH07016A