

# San Antonio Express-News

## BUSINESS

### Dogs have their day, so do biomedical firms

S.A.'s Vital Needs  
International scores  
with diarrhea cure.

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Accidents happen.

That's why Vital Needs International developed a diarrhea medication for dogs as a variation on its Clear Relief antacid for humans.

This week, the San Antonio-based biomedical firm licensed the product to United Pet Group, a subsidiary of Spectrum Brands.

For the 6-year-old Vital Needs, this is the first medical product licensed from its portfolio, said Rich Ronald, senior vice president of product development for the firm. The rest of the portfolio includes birth-aid devices, a portable wound-care device and Clear Relief antacid.

An estimated 25 percent of the 60 million dogs in the United States will have at least one bout with diarrhea each year, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association.

United Pet Group's 8 in 1 division was in the process of developing its own dog diarrhea remedy for its Excel line of pet therapies, but then came across the product already developed and tested by Vital Needs.

"In this case, you have a product that has been tested to work," said Martin Glinky, senior vice president of sales and marketing for 8 in 1. That is not always the case for all unregulated goods for pets, he said.

Executives on both sides of the deal would not disclose the terms of the licensing agreement.

Glinky said projections are that sales of Excel Diarrhea Relief will total \$1million to \$5 million in the first year. It will be sold in major retail chains including Petco, PetSmart and Wal-Mart and in smaller pet stores. It should hit retailers' shelves this summer.

"It's fun to sell because it's an easy sell," Glinky said.



The bismuth sodium tartrate formula patented by Vital Needs is odorless and colorless, making it easier to give to a finicky dog.

Danny Earl, a San Antonio veterinarian who studied the remedy for Vital Needs, found that the liquid helped clear up canines by 85 percent within 24 hours and completely within 48 hours.

Pure and Gentle Inc. in Seguin will manufacture the product.

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