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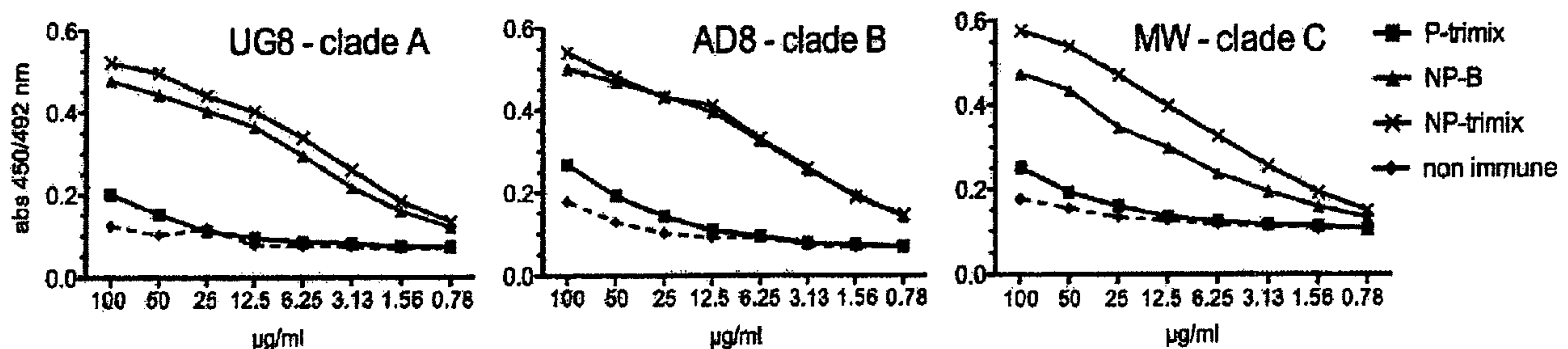


FIGURE 4

(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

The present invention provides methods and compositions useful in the field of medicine, and particularly in the treatment of viral infections. More particularly, the invention relates to the use of methods and compositions for the inhibition of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) transmission.



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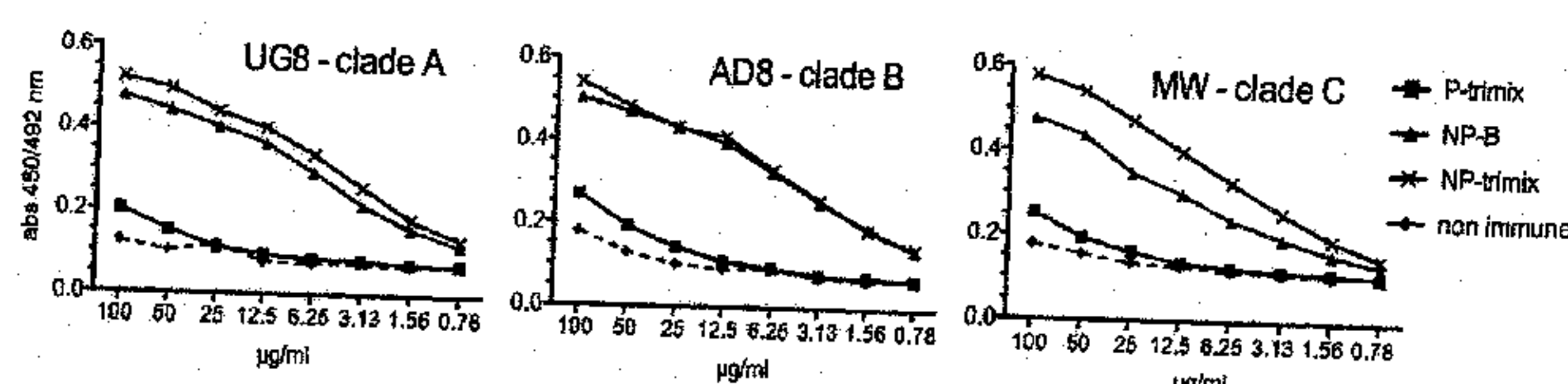


FIGURE 4

(57) Abstract: The present invention provides methods and compositions useful in the field of medicine, and particularly in the treatment of viral infections. More particularly, the invention relates to the use of methods and compositions for the inhibition of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) transmission.

METHODS AND COMPOSITIONS FOR INHIBITING HIV TRANSMISSION

Field

5 The present invention provides methods and compositions useful in the field of medicine, and particularly in the treatment of viral infections. More particularly, the invention relates to the use of methods and compositions for the inhibition of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) transmission.

Background

10 The retrovirus designated human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is the etiological agent of the complex disease that includes progressive destruction of the immune system (acquired immune deficiency syndrome; AIDS) and degeneration of the central and peripheral nervous system. Since it emerged
15 as a public health threat in the early 1980's, efforts to control or eradicate the disease have focused principally on options for treating the disease after an individual has already become infected.

The use of condoms provides a substantial degree of protection against
20 transmission of HIV infections during sexual intercourse. However, the use of condoms is not 100% effective against the transmission of HIV. Moreover, couples often do not use condoms. A topical composition that could be inserted into the vagina or rectum by a foam, gel, sponge or other form, or which could be topically applied to the male genitalia, would in many cases be
25 preferred over condoms. Moreover, the prophylactic effectiveness of condoms could be improved by including a suitable microbicide in the lubricant coated on the exterior of the condom. However, to date little progress has been made to develop an effective topical composition against the transmission of HIV.

30 Most work to develop topical HIV prophylactic compositions has focused on the use of surfactants and buffers, such as the over-the-counter product nonoxynol-9. Surfactants and detergents disrupt microbial and sperm membranes by lysis and emulsification. Surfactant-containing creams and gels have the advantage of being very broad in their killing ability, and thus

can kill the HIV virus and viruses associated with other sexually transmitted diseases. The use of surfactants and buffers is, however, substantially limited by the damage they can cause to cell membranes. In the vagina, nonoxynol-9 has been shown to thin vaginal walls. In the rectum, nonoxynol-9 can cause
5 rectum walls to slough off.

Other virucidal compositions being investigated for use as HIV virucides include carageenan and other large sulfated polysaccharides that stick to viral envelopes and possibly shield cell membranes. Non-nucleoside inhibitors of
10 the human immunodeficiency virus reverse transcriptase have also been shown to have some effect against HIV.

Scientists have recently reported several biological discoveries that improve our understanding of how HIV enters an organism following sexual contact,
15 which could lead to prophylactic substances that interfere with HIV's interaction with its target cells. These discoveries revolve generally around T lymphocytes, monocytes/macrophages and dendritic cells, suggesting that CD4 cell receptors are engaged in the process of virus transmission. For example, it is thought that HIV tightly binds the surface of dendritic cells, and
20 when the dendritic cells present microbial antigens to CD4+ T helper cells to stimulate an immune response, the dendritic cell inadvertently transfers the HIV to the CD4+ T cells, thereby advancing the progression of the infection.

Some have postulated, based upon these discoveries, that prophylactics can
25 be designed that block the interaction between the virus and the human host. However, methods that rely on the specific interaction of HIV and human cells are limited, because the infection pathway has not been fully defined and may be diverse. (Miller, C. J. et al., "Genital Mucosal Transmission of Simian Immunodeficiency Virus: Animal Model for Heterosexual Transmission of
30 Human Immunodeficiency Virus", J. Virol., 63, 4277-4284 (1989); Phillips, D. M. and Bourinbaiar, A. S., "Mechanism of HIV Spread from Lymphocytes to Epithelia", Virology, 186, 261-273 (1992); Phillips, D. M., Tan, X., Pearce-Pratt, R. and Zacharopoulos, V. R., "An Assay for HIV Infection of Cultured Human Cervix-derived Cells", J. Virol. Methods, 52, 1-13 (1995); Ho, J. L. et

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5 Braathen, L. R. & Mork, C. in "HIV infection of Skin Langerhans Cells", In: Skin Langerhans (dendritic) cells in virus infections and AIDS (ed. Becker, Y.) 131-139 (Kluwer Academic Publishers, Boston, (1991)).

10 Efforts by researchers to develop an HIV vaccine have also not yet been successful. For example, vaccination with inactivated SIV does not protect African Green monkeys against infection with the homologous virus notwithstanding a strong immune response to SIV.

15 As will be apparent from the foregoing review of the prior art, there remain significant problems to be overcome in the prevention and treatment of HIV and HIV transmission. It is an aspect of the present invention to overcome or ameliorate a problem of the prior art by providing compositions and methods for the inhibition of HIV transmission.

20 The discussion of documents, acts, materials, devices, articles and the like is included in this specification solely for the purpose of providing a context for the present invention. It is not suggested or represented that any or all of these matters formed part of the prior art base or were common general knowledge in the field relevant to the present invention as it existed before the
25 priority date of each claim of this application.

Summary of the Invention

In a first aspect the present invention provides a composition for inhibiting transmission of HIV comprising polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof
30 capable of binding to a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof. The Env protein or fragment thereof may be any HIV Env protein, however preferably the Env protein is gp140. Without wishing to be limited by theory, it is proposed that the polyclonal antibodies act to bind HIV virions, thereby inhibiting movement of HIV through cells that

form the barrier layer on mucosal surfaces. In one embodiment the composition is capable of preventing HIV infection of a cell.

In one embodiment, the Env protein or fragment thereof is a gp140 oligomer.

- 5 The oligomer may comprise gp140 trimers, dimers and monomers. The Oligomers may be purified from transduced HeLa and 293 cell supernatant, for example by lentil lectin affinity chromatography and gel filtration. The Env protein or fragment thereof may be a HIV clade A, clade B or clade C strain viral envelope (Env) protein or fragment thereof.

10

In one embodiment, the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof are capable of binding to a Env protein from a heterologous clade of HIV or a heterologous strain of HIV.

- 15 In one embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof raised against Clade B gp140 that are capable of binding to a heterologous Clade A, Clade B or Clade C gp140.

- 20 In one embodiment, the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof compete with monoclonal antibody Ab b12 binding to gp140.

In one embodiment, the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof compete with are neutralizing antibodies.

- 25 The antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof may be produced by immunization of an animal with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof. The animal may be immunized with gp140, recombinant gp140 or oligomeric gp140. The recombinant gp140 may not be derived from virion culture. The animal may be immunized with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof and an adjuvant. In one
30 embodiment, the adjuvant is a water in oil emulsion.

The animal may be immunized with Clade B gp140 and antibodies produced that are capable of binding to a heterologous Clade A, Clade B or Clade C gp140.

- 5 The animal may be immunized with Clade B gp140 and antibodies produced compete with monoclonal antibody Ab b12 binding to gp140.

The animal may be immunized with Clade B gp140 and antibodies produced that are capable of binding to a heterologous Clade A, Clade B or Clade C
10 gp140, wherein the antibodies produced compete with monoclonal antibody Ab b12 binding to gp140.

The antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof may be present in or obtained from an avian egg, or present in or obtained from
15 hyperimmune colostrum or hyperimmune milk of an animal. The animal may be a cow.

The composition may be formulated for topical administration, and in certain embodiments the composition is formulated for vaginal or rectal
20 administration. The composition may be formulated as a gel, or formulated as a topical cream, ointment, lotion or foam formulation.

In certain embodiments, the composition may further comprise a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient, a lubricant, or an antiviral agent.

25

The present invention also provides the use of a composition of the present invention for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment and/or prevention of HIV transmission.

- 30 The present invention also provides a method of preparing a composition for inhibiting transmission of HIV comprising immunizing an animal with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof, and obtaining hyperimmune colostrum from the immunized animal.

The present invention also provides a composition for inhibiting transmission of HIV prepared by the method comprising immunizing an animal with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof, and obtaining hyperimmune milk from the immunized animal.

5

The present invention also provides a method of inhibiting transmission of HIV comprising:

forming hyperimmune colostrum or hyperimmune milk by immunizing cows; and

10

administering the hyperimmune colostrum or hyperimmune milk to a subject, wherein the step of immunizing cows to produce hyperimmune colostrum or hyperimmune milk comprises vaccination with a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof. The Env protein or fragment thereof may be any HIV Env protein, however preferably the Env protein is gp140.

15

Also provided is a method for inhibiting transmission of HIV comprising administering polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof to a subject. The Env protein or fragment thereof may be any HIV Env protein, however preferably the Env protein is gp140.

20

In one embodiment, the Env protein or fragment thereof is a gp140 oligomer. The oligomer may comprise gp140 trimers, dimers and monomers. The Oligomers may be purified from transduced HeLa and 293 cell supernatant, for example by lentil lectin affinity chromatography and gel filtration. The Env protein or fragment thereof may be a HIV clade A, clade B or clade C strain viral envelope (Env) protein or fragment thereof.

25

In one embodiment, the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof are capable of binding to a Env protein from a heterologous clade of HIV or a heterologous strain of HIV.

30

The antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof may be produced by immunization of an animal with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof. The animal may be immunized with gp140, recombinant gp140 or oligomeric gp140. The recombinant gp140 may not be derived from virion culture. The animal may be immunized with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof and an adjuvant. In one embodiment, the adjuvant is a water in oil emulsion.

The antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof may be present in or obtained from an avian egg, or present in or obtained from hyperimmune colostrum or hyperimmune milk of an animal. The animal may be a cow.

The composition may be formulated for topical administration, and in certain embodiments the composition is formulated for vaginal or rectal administration. The composition may be formulated as a gel, or formulated as a topical cream, ointment, lotion or foam formulation.

Brief Description of the Drawings

20

Figure 1 illustrates a gp140 vaccination schedule.

Figure 2 illustrates a gp140 vaccination schedule.

25 Figure 3 demonstrates IgG from serum and colostrum binds to gp140 Env of clade A, B and C.

Figure 4 demonstrates purified colostrum IgG from non-pregnant cows retains binding to gp140 Env and demonstrates heterologous binding activity.

30

Figure 5 demonstrates bovine IgG blocks binding of monoclonal Ab b12 to CD4 binding site of gp140

Figure 6 demonstrates colostrum from pregnant cows vaccinated with clade A/B/C gp140 and non-pregnant cows vaccinated with clade B gp140 have broad heterologous neutralizing activity.

- 5 Figure 7 demonstrates purified colostrum IgG has neutralizing activity.

Detailed Description of the Invention

The present invention is predicated in part on the finding that highly specific colostrum antibodies binding to the HIV Env protein can be generated by
10 vaccination of pregnant animals. Accordingly, in a first aspect the present invention provides a composition for inhibiting transmission of HIV comprising polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof. The Env protein or fragment thereof may be any HIV Env protein,
15 however preferably the Env protein is gp140. Without wishing to be limited by theory, it is proposed that the polyclonal antibodies act to bind HIV virions, thereby inhibiting movement of HIV through cells that form the barrier layer on mucosal surfaces. In one embodiment the composition is capable of inhibiting or preventing HIV infection of a cell. In another embodiment the composition
20 is capable of inhibiting or preventing HIV movement through epithelial cells, such as those that form the barrier layer on mucosal surfaces. This approach to formulating compositions and method for inhibiting transmission of HIV is distinguished from approaches of the prior art, and is indeed contrary to the general teaching of the prior art prior to the present invention.

25

The term "inhibiting transmission" as used herein, generally refers to complete inhibition and also partial inhibition of HIV transmission. Complete inhibition indicates that the HIV virus is completely unable to successfully infect and/or replicate and/or further infect other cells. This can be determined in a number
30 of ways, at the cellular and/or whole organism level, by the skilled practitioner. One such determination is by an inability to obtain infectious HIV from a host cell. Another such determination is by an inability to determine that HIV has entered the host cell. At the whole organism level, standard methods for assaying for HIV infection can be used (e.g., assaying for antibodies to HIV in

the individual). Partial inhibition refers to a measurable, statistically significant reduction in the ability of HIV to infect and/or replicate and/or further infect other cells, as compared to an appropriate control which has not been subjected to the therapeutics described herein. One example would be a requirement for higher levels of exposure or longer period of exposure to HIV for successful infection.

The term "capable of binding" as used herein, generally refers to an antibody that binds to a gp140 of a clade of HIV, such as an antibody described herein. Binding to a gp140 of a clade of HIV may be demonstrated as described in the Examples below. In useful embodiments, the antibodies or fragments thereof bind to a gp140 of a strain or clade of HIV the antibodies are raised against, and also bind to a gp140 of a strain or clade of HIV the antibodies are not raised against. In other useful embodiments, the antibodies or fragments thereof bind to a gp140 of the clade of HIV the antibodies are raised against, and also bind to a gp140 of a heterologous clade of HIV.

The term "clade(s)", as used herein, generally encompasses subtypes or recombinant forms of HIV.

Previous work has indicated there is a need to provide improved compositions that provide protection against HIV and/or inhibition of transmission of HIV. In particular, there is a need to provide compositions that protect against HIV without compromising the integrity of the innate protective surface layer of the vagina or rectum. Work towards this end has focused on active immunity (e.g. vaccines), however when antibodies against HIV are used in compositions against HIV, these antibodies are made using HIV antigen which would difficult to achieve regulatory approval for and use due to a risk of infection and difficulty of manufacture in volume. In contrast to the teachings of the prior art, the present invention is predicated in part on the provision of passive hetero-immunity, wherein antibodies made in a particular organism are used to protect another organism, generally a different species.

The Env ectodomain is known as gp140, which contains both gp120 and truncated gp41 (lacking transmembrane domains and cytoplasmic tails). In one embodiment, the Env protein or fragment thereof is a gp140 oligomer. The oligomer may comprise gp140 trimers, dimers and monomers. The
5 Oligomers may be purified from transduced cell (e.g. HeLa and 293) supernatant, for example by lentil lectin affinity chromatography and gel filtration. The Env protein or fragment thereof may be a HIV clade A, clade B or clade C strain viral envelope (Env) protein or fragment thereof.

10 In a related application (PCT/AU2009/001218, incorporated herein by reference), Applicants have demonstrated strains of HIV-1 have differences in their Envs.

In one embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or
15 fragments thereof capable of binding to a Clade A, Clade B or Clade C gp140.

In another embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a Clade A and a Clade B gp140.

20 In another embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a Clade B and a Clade C gp140.

In another embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a Clade A and a Clade C gp140.

25

In another embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a Clade A, a Clade B and a Clade C gp140.

30 In one embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof raised against Clade B gp140 that are capable of binding to a heterologous Clade A, Clade B or Clade C gp140.

In one embodiment, the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof that compete with monoclonal antibody Ab b12 binding to gp140.

- 5 In another embodiment, the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof raised against Clade B gp140 that are capable of binding to a heterologous Clade A, Clade B or Clade C gp140, wherein the antibodies or fragments thereof compete with monoclonal antibody Ab b12 binding to gp140.

10

Surprisingly, Applicants have demonstrated colostrum, and IgG purified from colostrum, from cows vaccinated with HIV Env gp140 oligomers of one clade can bind HIV Env gp140 of another clade, despite diversity in Env sequence and glycosylation across HIV strains. Furthermore, applicants have demonstrated colostrum, and IgG purified from colostrum, from cows vaccinated with HIV Env gp140 oligomers of one clade can bind gp140 and neutralize HIV of another clade, despite diversity in Env sequence and glycosylation across HIV strains.

15

- 20 Dairy cows were vaccinated in the second trimester of pregnancy with high quality soluble oligomeric HIV-1 Env (gp140) to produce colostrum containing high levels of HIV-1 Env-specific polyclonal neutralizing antibodies for use as an HIV transmission inhibiting composition. The present inventors have shown that anti-HIV Env IgG synergizes with intrinsic antiviral components in bovine colostrum to aggressively neutralize HIV-1.

25

Accordingly, the present invention provides an advantage of the production of kilogram quantities of bovine IgG. Without wishing to be bound by theory, the compositions of the present invention are proposed to have potent ability to neutralise HIV and thereby render it non-infectious for susceptible cells *in vitro*.

30

In one embodiment, the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof are neutralizing antibodies.

The term "neutralisation" as used herein, generally refers to antibodies or fragments thereof that are able to bind the molecule of the invention and hamper its biological activity. The term encompasses antibodies or fragments thereof that block a virus, e.g. HIV, from infecting a cell by, for example, blocking gp140 binding to CD4 on a cell.

The antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof may be produced by immunization of an animal with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof.

The animal may be immunized with gp140, recombinant gp140 or oligomeric gp140.

The animal may be immunized with a clade B gp140 and the antibodies produced are capable of binding to a heterologous Clade A, Clade B or Clade C gp140.

The animal may be immunized with Clade B gp140 and antibodies produced that are capable of binding to a heterologous Clade A, Clade B or Clade C gp140.

The animal may be immunized with Clade B gp140 and antibodies produced compete with monoclonal antibody Ab b12 binding to gp140.

The animal may be immunized with Clade B gp140 and antibodies produced that are capable of binding to a heterologous Clade A, Clade B or Clade C gp140, wherein the antibodies produced compete with monoclonal antibody Ab b12 binding to gp140.

In one embodiment, the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof produced are neutralizing antibodies.

In one embodiment, the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof produced block binding of gp140 to CD4 on a cell.

5 In one embodiment, the recombinant gp140 may not be derived from virion culture.

10 An Env polypeptide that is suitable to generate an immune response is an Env polypeptide having at least 90%, 95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, 99% or 100% amino acid identity to gp140. gp140 contains a fragment of a gp120 from a given HIV strain and a fragment of gp41 from the same HIV strain, wherein the soluble gp41 fragment lacks the transmembrane domain. gp140 polypeptides capable of forming oligomeric structures may be expressed from a construct. Accordingly, there is provided a nucleotide sequence that encodes for a gp140 polypeptide, and an expression construct comprising a nucleotide
15 sequence that codes for a gp140 polypeptide. The expression construct may be one for transient use or be more suitable for stable transfection and maintenance within a target cell as either an episomally replicating construct or an integrated form.

20 In one embodiment there is provided a gp140 polypeptide, and an expression construct that expresses a gp140 polypeptide. In another embodiment, there is provided a glycosylated gp140 polypeptide, which has been manufactured or expressed in an expression system that adds the native cellular glycosylation.

25 Recombinant gp140 may be produced using pseudoviruses carrying Env from different clades/strains using the expression vectors included in Table 1.

30 gp140 may be purified by a number of different means. For example, gp140-containing tissue culture supernatants may be passed over lentil lectin affinity columns, which mediate the capturing of glycoproteins, including gp140, through the affinity of lentil lectin for carbohydrate. After washing, gp140 is eluted competitively from the column by the addition of 0.5M Methyl -D-mannopyranoside (Sigma). Yields obtained with this system for other gp140

strains have varied between 0.4 and 1.0 milligram per 100 millilitres of tissue culture supernatant. The eluate may then be concentrated and further purified by gel filtration over superdex 200. The gp140 is purified from the culture supernatants in an oligomeric form.

5

Soluble Env gp140 oligomers have been prepared from clade A, B, and C HIV-1 strains from HeLa and/or 293T cells and purified by lentil lectin affinity and gel filtration chromatography.

- 10 Four cows (two pregnant in second semester and two initially non-pregnant) were vaccinated with 100µg of purified HIV-1 Env gp140 oligomer formulated with Montanide adjuvant. Two groups of two cows (one pregnant and one nonpregnant) were vaccinated with either clade B (AD8) only or with equal amounts (33.33µg) of clade A, B and C Env gp140 (UG8, AD8 and MW)
- 15 (referred to as 'trimix'). All four cows received at least three vaccinations whereas the last vaccination was given four weeks before giving birth. All four cows seroconverted within nine weeks. Reciprocal endpoint serum IgG titers were up to $1 \times 10^{2.5}$ for pregnant cows and up to 1×10^5 for non-pregnant cows determined by a new established anti-bovine IgG HIV-1 Env gp140 specific
- 20 ELISA. The expected low serum IgG titer in pregnant cows was explained by the pumping of serum IgG antibodies into the colostrum approximately four weeks before giving birth.

- HIV-immune bovine colostrum was collected and pasteurised postpartum from
- 25 all cows with pregnancy vaccination resulting in relatively low responses with reciprocal IgG titers of $< 10^2$ (clade B vaccinated) and $1 \times 10^{3.5}$ (trimix-vaccinated). Reciprocal colostrum IgG titer for cows vaccinated before pregnancy was 10^5 (clade B vaccinated) and $10^{4.5}$ (trimix vaccinated). Western blot analysis confirmed that colostrum IgG of all four cows was
- 30 specific against HIV-1 Env gp140. Unfractionated colostrum was tested for neutralising activity in a HIV-1 Env-pseudotyped reporter virus assay.

In brief, Env-pseudotyped reporter virus assay detects the presence of virus-neutralising antibodies to HIV-1 envelope protein. EGFP reporter pseudovirus

particles expressing HIV-1 Env derived from strains/clades of choice are used to infect target cells in an Env dependent manner. In one assay, the reporter pseudovirus particles are incubated for 1 hour before the addition of the target cells (Cf2th-CD4/CCR5/CXCR4; CF2 cells) at 2×10^4 /well in a 96-well plate.

5 After a 2-hour spinoculation at 1200 x g at room temperature, residual pseudovirus and antibody was removed and fresh media added to the cells. Two days later the target cells are analysed for EGFP expression by FACS. In the presence of colostrum or colostrum IgG raised against soluble HIV-1 Env gp140 oligomers, the degree of reduction in the level of infection was

10 determined by measuring the reduction in the percent EGFP positive cells. The neutralisation percentage represents a ratio between infection levels observed in mice sera before vaccination (pre-bleed) and mice sera 2 weeks post protein boost 3 vaccination.

15 Clade A/E, clade B and clade C pseudotype viruses including the NIH reference panel for clade B and C viruses were tested (total n=27) and compared with non-immune bovine colostrum that already has intrinsic infection-blocking activity due to lactoferrin and other bioactive peptides. Unfractionated colostrum from the trimix cow vaccinated during pregnancy

20 showed high neutralisation of up to 50% for all B clade pseudoviruses (n=15) as well as for the majority of C clade (n=11) and clade A/E (n=1) pseudoviruses at a dilution of 1:16. The first clade B vaccinated cow was a low responder but both cows vaccinated before pregnancy and having their calves recently responded well. Up to this time, broad neutralisation was

25 observed for the clade B vaccinated cow that showed 50- 80% neutralisation for B clade (n=12) and clade C pseudoviruses (n=9) (1:16 dilution) (Table1). IgG Abs from the first pair of cows was purified from the colostrum and neutralising activity was retained for purified IgG with up to 50% neutralisation for the trimix- IgG compared to non immune IgG at 500µg/ml. Results of the

30 neutralisation profile of two HIV Env gp140 hyperimmune bovine colostrum samples against pseudoviruses of different clades are demonstrated in Table 1 (see, Example 2). This result is surprising since antibodies raised against gp140 are not expected to bind and neutralize viruses of different clades

strongly, since there are significant epitope differences between the gp140 of the different clades.

5 These results strongly support this method of raising high levels of neutralising antibodies, and neutralizing antibodies that can bind heterologous HIV strains. Accordingly, in one embodiment, the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof are capable of binding to an Env protein from a heterologous clade of HIV or a heterologous strain of HIV.

10 In one embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a Clade A, Clade B or Clade C gp140.

In another embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a Clade A and a Clade B gp140.

15

In another embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a Clade B and a Clade C gp140.

20 In another embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a Clade A and a Clade C gp140.

In another embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a Clade A, a Clade B and a Clade C gp140.

25

In another embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof raised against Clade B gp140 that are capable of binding to a heterologous Clade A, Clade B or Clade C gp140.

30 In another embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof that compete with monoclonal antibody Ab b12 binding to gp140.

In another embodiment, the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof are neutralizing antibodies.

5 In another embodiment the composition comprises polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof raised against Clade B gp140 that are capable of binding to a heterologous Clade A, Clade B or Clade C gp140, wherein the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof compete with monoclonal antibody Ab b12 binding to gp140.

10 The antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof may be present in or obtained from an avian egg, or present in or obtained from hyperimmune colostrum or hyperimmune milk of an animal. The animal may be a cow.

15 Methods for generating hyperimmune sera, milk, colostrum and the like are known in the art.

The method for generating the hyperimmune material may comprise the step of purifying the Env protein from other potentially immunogenic
20 molecules. For example, Env proteins can be isolated by methods such as high and low speed centrifugation, optionally with the use of gradients formed using sucrose, percoll, cesium and the like. Chromatographic methods such as size exclusion chromatography, affinity chromatography, high performance liquid chromatography, reverse phase chromatography, and the like are also
25 useful. Electrophoretic methods (such as capillary electrophoresis), filtration methods (such as tangential flow ultrafiltration), partitioning methods (such as protein precipitation) are further examples of useful methods. Chronically infected cell lines may be developed by infection of cells, e.g. 6D5 cells (a subclone of the HUT78 cell line) with HIV. Radioimmunoprecipitation analysis
30 is used to examine that the cell line secretes Env into the medium. The Env protein may then be purified from the serum-free conditioned medium by affinity chromatography using mouse MAbs to the Env protein.

For the production of hyperimmune material, the Env protein (whether or not purified) is administered to an animal, typically by way of injection (for example, via the IM, subcutaneous, intraperitoneal, or intravenous route). The Env protein may be combined with an adjuvant to increase the immune response generated by the animal.

Accordingly, the animal may be immunized with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof and an adjuvant. In one embodiment, the adjuvant is a water in oil emulsion.

The skilled person is familiar with many potentially useful adjuvants, such as Freund's complete adjuvant, alum, and squalene. Adjuvants which may be used in compositions of the invention include, but are not limited to oil emulsion compositions suitable for use as adjuvants in the invention include oil-in- water emulsions and water-in-oil emulsions, complete Freund's adjuvant (CFA) and incomplete Freund's adjuvant (IFA) may also be used. Preferably, Montanide brand adjuvants may be used (e.g. MONTANIDE ISA 50V, MONTANIDE ISA 206, and MONTANIDE IMS 1312). These adjuvants are oily adjuvant compositions of mannide oleate and mineral oil, or water based nanoparticles combined with a soluble immunostimulant.

Adjuvants suitable for use in the invention include bacterial or microbial derivatives such as derivatives of enterobacterial lipopolysaccharide (LPS), Lipid A derivatives, immunostimulatory oligonucleotides and ADP-ribosylating toxins and detoxified derivatives thereof.

The animal may be dosed with Env at intervals over a period of days, weeks or months. At the conclusion of the immunization regime, the hyperimmune material (such as blood, milk or colostrums) is harvested. Antibodies in the hyperimmune material may be harvested by any suitable method, including any by method described *supra*.

In one embodiment the composition comprises antibodies from colostrum or a colostrum extract, further characterised in that the colostrum is enriched in

anti-Env antibodies when compared with colostrum obtained without vaccination.

5 In one embodiment of the method the polyclonal antibodies are obtained from a hyperimmune material. The hyperimmune material is enriched when compared with corresponding material in which the animal has not been challenged with the antigen in question.

10 The animal used to produce the hyperimmune material may be any suitable animal, including a human. However, since human milk may contain potentially transmissible human pathogens, one form of the method provides that the antibody is not human-derived. In any event, animals that produce large quantities of milk are preferred. In this regard, ungulates (and cows in particular), are animals useful for the generation of hyperimmune material.

15 In one embodiment of the method, the “hyperimmune material” is hyperimmune dairy derived material such as milk particularly colostrum (colostrum) and the like which is enriched in antibodies or fragments thereof and which is derived from an animal source. The hyperimmune dairy material
20 is preferably hyperimmune colostrum.

In another embodiment the hyperimmune material is derived from bird eggs. A subtype of immunoglobulin known as IgY can be easily extracted from the yolk. Typically, the yolk is first defatted and the IgY isolated by methods
25 identical or similar to those used for skim milk.

The term “colostrum” as used herein includes colostrum milk; processed colostrum milk such as colostrum milk processed to partly or completely remove one or more of fat, cellular debris, lactose and casein; and colostrum milk or
30 processed colostrum milk which has been dried by for example, freeze drying, spray drying or other methods of drying known in the art. Colostrum milk is generally taken from a mammal such as a cow within five days after parturition. Preferably the mammalian colostrum is bovine colostrum retained from the first 4 days post parturition, more preferably bovine colostrum

retained from the first 2 days post parturition, even more preferably bovine colostrum retained from the first day post parturition, and most preferably bovine colostrum retained from the first milking post parturition.

- 5 Preferably the colostrum collected from the cow comprises at least 4% total protein (weight %), more preferably 5%, more preferably at least 8%, more preferably at least 10%.

10 Preferably the ratio of IgG to total protein of the colostrum collected from the cow is at least 10%, more preferably 20%.

The hyperimmune dairy material preferably contains at least 3 g per kilogram of product which is IgG directed against Env, or an equivalent molar concentration of the anti-Env antibody. For example the hyperimmune material may contain at least 5g, at least 10g or at least 15g anti-Env antibody per kg of hyperimmune material on the basis of the dry weight of components. The upper end of the range of antibody concentration will depend on factors such as the dose, the disease state and the health of the patient. The hyperimmune material may, for example contain no more than 80g such as no more than 60g, no more than 50g or no more than 40g anti-Env antibody per kg of hyperimmune material on the basis of the dry weight of components.

In one embodiment of the method the polyclonal antibodies are administered to the subject as a composition. The composition may in one embodiment comprise a carrier admixed with the ligand prior to administration, for example, by mixing a composition of hyperimmune colostrum from immunized cows or one or more processed components thereof with conventional foods and/or pharmaceutically acceptable excipients. The ratio of enriched product relative to conventional dairy material from unvaccinated animals may, for example, be at least 4, such as at least 10 in a comparative ELISA assay.

In another embodiment part or all of the antibodies specific for Env are extracted from the colostrum and used to prepare a composition for administration.

In one embodiment the hyperimmune material binds Env derived from a clade A, clade B or clade C HIV-1 strain. Preferably the hyperimmune material binds at least two of the above, more preferably at least 3 of the clades. The degree of enrichment in material selected from antibodies capable of binding to Env may be at least 4 times, for example at least 10 times the level found in corresponding unvaccinated animals with respect each of the Env molecules as determined by standard ELISA.

10 In one embodiment, low molecular weight moieties have been substantially removed from the colostrum or the colostrum extract. By substantially removed is meant that at least 75% and preferably 90% of the low molecular weight moieties are removed.

15 In a preferred example of this embodiment at least 75% (such as at least 90% or substantially complete removal) of, moieties of molecular weight less than 30kDa have been removed from the colostrum or the colostrum extract. Preferably molecular weight moieties less than 60kDa have been substantially removed from the colostrum or colostrum extract.

20 In one embodiment, the hyperimmune material comprises immunogenic material selected from antibody and antibody fragments which bind Env. Preferably the antibody or antibody fragment is a polyclonal antibody or a polyclonal antibody fragment of bovine origin.

25 The composition may further contain growth factor molecules that are normally found in milk or colostrum. These factors may produce a synergism with the anti-Env antibodies contained in the composition. Exemplary growth factors include TGF-beta-1, TGF-beta-2, IGF-1, IGF-2, EGF, FGF and PDGF.

30 The composition may be formulated for topical administration, and in certain embodiments the composition is formulated for vaginal or rectal administration. The composition may be formulated as a gel, or formulated as a topical cream, ointment, lotion or foam formulation.

The topical formulations of the present invention can be used to prevent HIV infection in a human, or to inhibit transmission of the HIV virus from an infected human to another human. The topical formulations of the present invention can inhibit the growth or replication of a virus, such as a retrovirus, in particular a human immunodeficiency virus, specifically HIV-1 and HIV-2. The topical formulations are useful in the prophylactic treatment of humans who are at risk for viral infection. The topical formulations also can be used to treat objects or materials, such as contraceptive devices (for example condoms or intrauterine devices), medical equipment, supplies, or fluids, including biological fluids, such as blood, blood products, and tissues, to prevent or inhibit viral infection of a human. Such topical formulations also are useful to prevent transmission, such as sexual transmission of viral infections, e.g., HIV, which is the primary way in which HIV is transmitted globally. The methods of prevention or inhibition or retardation of transmission of viral infection, e.g., HIV infection, in accordance with the present invention, comprise vaginal, rectal, penile or other topical treatment with an antiviral effective amount of a topical preparation of the present invention, alone or in combination with another antiviral compound as described herein.

20

Preferred compositions can take several forms. Thus, in one embodiment the composition is in the form of a cream, lotion, gel, or foam that is applied to the affected skin or epithelial cavity, and preferably spread over the entire skin or epithelial surface which is at risk of contact with bodily fluids. Such formulations, which are suitable for vaginal or rectal administration, may be present as aqueous or oily suspensions, solutions or emulsions (liquid formulations) containing in addition to the active ingredient, such carriers as are known in the art to be appropriate. For "stand-alone" lubricants (i.e., lubricants that are not pre-packaged with condoms), gels and similar aqueous formulations are generally preferred, for various reasons (both scientific and economic) known to those skilled in the art. These formulations are useful to protect not only against sexual transmission of HIV, but also to prevent infection of a baby during passage through the birth canal. Thus the vaginal

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administration can take place prior to sexual intercourse, during sexual intercourse, and immediately prior to childbirth.

One method of applying an anti-viral lubricant to the genitals, for the purposes
5 disclosed herein, involves removing a small quantity (such as a teaspoon, or
several milliliters) of a gel, cream, ointment, emulsion, or similar formulation
from a plastic or metallic tube, jar, or similar container, or from a sealed
plastic, metallic or other packet containing a single dose of such composition,
and spreading the composition across the surface of the penis immediately
10 before intercourse. Alternate methods of emplacement include: (1) spreading
the composition upon accessible surfaces inside the vagina or rectum shortly
before intercourse; and (2) emplacing a condom, diaphragm, or similar device,
which has already been coated or otherwise contacted with an anti-viral
lubricant, upon the penis or inside the vagina. In a preferred embodiment, any
15 of these methods of spreading an anti-viral lubricant across the surfaces of
the genitals causes the lubricant to coat and remain in contact with the genital
and epithelial surfaces throughout intercourse.

In another embodiment, the present invention involves topical administration
20 of the topical formulation to the anus. The composition administered to the
anus is suitably a foam or gel, etc., such as those described above with
regard to vaginal application. In the case of anal application, it may be
preferred to use an applicator which distributes the composition substantially
evenly throughout the anus. For example, a suitable applicator is a tube 2.5 to
25 25 cm, preferably 5 to 10 cm, in length having holes distributed regularly along
its length.

When the composition is a water-soluble vaginal cream or gel, suitably 0.1 to
4 grams, preferably about 0.5 to 2 grams, are applied. When the composition
30 is a vaginal spray-foam, suitably 0.1 to 2 grams, preferably about 0.5 to 1
grams, of the spray-foam are applied. When the composition is an anal cream
or gel, suitably 0.1 to 4 grams, preferably about 0.5 to 2 grams of the cream or
gel is applied. When the composition is an anal spray-foam, suitably 0.1 to 2
grams, preferably about 0.5 to 1 grams of the spray-foam are applied.

As a vaginal formulation, the active ingredient may be used in conjunction with a spermicide and may be employed with a condom, diaphragm, sponge or other contraceptive device. Examples of suitable spermicides include
5 nonylphenoxypolyoxyethylene glycol (nonoxynol 9), benzethonium chloride, and chlorindanol. Suitably, the pH of the composition is 4.5 to 8.5. Vaginal compositions preferably have a pH of 4.5 to 6, most preferably about 5.

Vaginal formulations also include suppositories (for example, gel- covered
10 creams), tablets and films. The suppositories can be administered by insertion with an applicator using methods well known in the art.

Typical buccal formulations are creams, ointments, gels, tablets or films that comprise ingredients that are safe when administered via the mouth cavity.
15 Buccal formulations can also comprise a taste-masking or flavoring agent.

The present compositions may also be in the form of a time-release composition. In this embodiment, the composition is incorporated in a composition which will release the active compound at a rate which will result
20 in the vaginal or anal concentration described above. Time- release compositions are disclosed in Controlled Release of Pesticides and Pharmaceuticals, D. H. Lew, Ed., Plenum Press, New York, 1981 ; and U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,185,155; 5,248,700; 4,011 ,312; 3,887,699; 5,143,731 ; 3,640,741 ; 4,895,724; 4,795,642; Bodmeier et al, Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences,
25 vol. 78 (1989); Amies, Journal of Pathology and Bacteriology, vol. 77 (1959); and Pfister et al, Journal of Controlled Release, vol. 3, pp. 229-233 (1986), all of which are incorporated herein by reference.

The present compositions may also be in the form which releases the
30 composition in response to some event such as vaginal or anal intercourse. For example, the composition may contain the anti_ent antibodies in vesicles or liposomes which are disrupted by the mechanical action of intercourse. Compositions comprising liposomes are described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,231 ,1
12 and Deamer and Uster, "Liposome Preparation: Methods and

Mechanisms", in Liposomes, pp. 27-51 (1983); Sessa et al, J. Biol. Chem., vol. 245, pp. 3295-3300 (1970); Journal of Pharmaceutics and Pharmacology, vol. 34, pp. 473-474 (1982); and Topics in Pharmaceutical Sciences, D. D. Breimer and P. Speiser, Eds., Elsevier, New York, pp. 345-358 (1985), which
5 are incorporated herein by reference.

It should also be realized that the present compositions may be associated with a contraceptive device or article, such as a vaginal ring device, an intrauterine device (IUD), vaginal diaphragm, vaginal sponge, pessary,
10 condom, etc. In the case of an IUD or diaphragm, time-release and/or mechanical-release compositions may be preferred, while in the case of condoms, mechanical-release compositions are preferred.

A suitable vaginal ring drug delivery system for slow release of the anti-Env
15 antibodies is disclosed in US Patent 5,989,581, incorporated herein by reference. As described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,989,581, the vaginal ring delivers two actives for contraception. The drug delivery system disclosed comprises at least one compartment comprising a drug dissolved in a thermoplastic polymer core and a thermoplastic skin covering the core. Preferred
20 thermoplastic polymers for both the core and the skin are ethylene-vinylacetate copolymers. As would be understood by one skilled in the art, according to the present invention, the disclosed delivery system contains at anti-Env antibodies useful to prevent, inhibit or slow infection or transmission of HIV. In certain embodiments, said vaginal ring device may also contain one
25 or more additional drugs, for instance a contraceptive agent such as a steroidal progestogenic compound and/or a steroidal estrogenic compound. In yet other embodiments, the vaginal ring system containing a anti-Env antibodies may also contain or be used in combination with a topical estriol, such as Ovestin™, to enhance prevention of infection or transmission of HIV
30 through the vaginal epithelium.

In another embodiment, the present invention provides novel articles which are useful for the prevention or retardation of HIV infection. In particular, the present articles are those which release anti-Env antibodies when placed on

an appropriate body part or in an appropriate body cavity. Thus, the present article may be a vaginal ring device as described above or an ILID. Suitable ILIDs are disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 3,888,975 and 4,283,325 which are incorporated herein by reference.

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The present article may be an intravaginal sponge which comprises and releases, in a time-controlled fashion, the anti-Env antibodies. Intravaginal sponges are disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 3,916,898 and 4,360,013, which are incorporated herein by reference. The present article may also be a vaginal
10 dispenser which releases the anti-Env antibodies. Vaginal dispensers are disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 4,961 ,931 , which is incorporated herein by reference.

In one embodiment the compositions are used in conjunction with condoms,
15 to enhance the risk-reducing effectiveness of condoms and provide maximum protection for users. The composition can either be coated onto condoms during manufacture, and enclosed within conventional watertight plastic or foil packages that contain one condom per package, or it can be manually applied by a user to either the inside or the outside of a condom, immediately before
20 use.

As used herein, "condom" refers to a barrier device which is used to provide a watertight physical barrier between male and female genitalia during sexual intercourse, and which is removed after intercourse. This term includes
25 conventional condoms that cover the penis; it also includes so-called "female condoms" which are inserted into the vaginal cavity prior to intercourse. The term "condom" does not include diaphragms, cervical caps or other barrier devices that cover only a portion of the epithelial membranes inside the vaginal cavity. Preferably, condoms should be made of latex or a synthetic
30 plastic material such as polyurethane, since these provide a high degree of protection against viruses.

In another embodiment the compositions are used in conjunction with other possible surfaces for transmission, such as gloves, to provide maximum

protection for users. The composition can either be coated onto gloves during manufacture, and enclosed within conventional watertight plastic or foil packages that contain one pair of gloved per package, or it can be manually applied by a user to either the inside or the outside of a glove, immediately
5 before use.

In another embodiment the composition is in the form of an intra-vaginal pill, an intra-rectal pill, or a suppository. The suppository or pill should be inserted into the vaginal or rectal cavity in a manner that permits the suppository or pill,
10 as it dissolves or erodes, to coat the vaginal or rectal walls with a prophylactic layer of the anti-HIV agent.

In still another embodiment the composition is topically applied by release from an intravaginal device. Devices such as vaginal rings, vaginal sponges,
15 diaphragms, cervical caps, female condoms, and the like can be readily adapted to release the composition into the vaginal cavity after insertion.

In certain embodiments, the composition may further comprise a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient, a lubricant, or an antiviral agent.
20

Compositions used in the methods of this invention may also comprise other active agents, such as another agent to prevent HIV infection, and agents that protect individuals from conception and other sexually transmitted diseases. Thus, in another embodiment the compositions used in this invention further
25 comprise a second anti-HIV agent, a virucide effective against viral infections other than HIV, and/or a spermicide.

In one particular embodiment, the composition contains nonoxynol, a widely-used spermicidal surfactant. The resulting composition could be regarded as a
30 "bi-functional" composition, since it would have two active agents that provide two different desired functions, in a relatively inert carrier liquid; the nonoxynol would provide a spermicidal contraceptive agent, and the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof would provide anti-viral properties. The nonoxynol is likely to cause some level of irritation, in at least some users; this

is a regrettable but is a well-known side effect of spermicidal surfactants such as nonoxynol and octoxynol, which attack and destroy the lipid bilayer membranes that surround sperm cells and other mammalian cells.

- 5 The compositions used in this invention may also contain a lubricant that facilitates application of the composition to the desired areas of skin and epithelial tissue, and reduces friction during sexual intercourse. In the case of a pill or suppository, the lubricant can be applied to the exterior of the dosage form to facilitate insertion.

10

In still another embodiment the invention provides a device for inhibiting the sexual transmission of HIV comprising (a) a barrier structure for insertion into the vaginal cavity, and (b) a composition comprising a polyclonal antibody according to the present invention. As mentioned above, preferred devices
15 which act as barrier structures, and which can be adapted to apply anti-HIV agent, include the vaginal sponge, diaphragm, cervical cap, or condom (male or female).

In the cream or ointment embodiments of the present invention, the topical
20 formulation comprises one or more lubricants. The gels and foams of the present invention optionally can include one or more lubricants.

Non-limiting examples of useful lubricants include cetyl esters wax, hydrogenated vegetable oil, magnesium stearate, methyl stearate, mineral oil,
25 polyoxyethylene-polyoxypropylene copolymer, polyethylene glycol, polyvinyl alcohol, sodium lauryl sulfate, white wax, or mixtures of two or more of the above.

The amount of lubricant in the topical formulation can range from about 0 to
30 about 95 weight percent. Typical cream and ointment formulations comprise 0.1 to 95 weight percent of lubricant.

The topical formulations can comprise one or more adjuvants, wherein the adjuvant is an antimicrobial agent, antioxidant, humectant or emulsifier, or

mixture of two or more thereof. The gels and foams of the present invention can include one or more antimicrobial agents and optionally can include one or more of antioxidants, humectants and emulsifiers.

- 5 Non-limiting examples of useful antimicrobial agents are benzyl alcohol, propylene glycol, propyl paraben, methyl paraben, or mixtures of two or more thereof.

10 The amount of antimicrobial agents in the topical formulation can range from about 0.01 to about 10 weight percent, and in some embodiments from about 0.2 to about 10 weight percent, on a basis of total weight of the topical formulation.

15 Non-limiting examples of useful antioxidants include butylated hydroxyanisole, butylated hydroxytoluene, edetate disodium or mixtures of two or more thereof.

20 The amount of antioxidant in the topical formulation can range from about 0.01 to about 1 weight percent, and in some embodiments from about 0.01 to about 0.1 weight percent, on a basis of total weight of the topical formulation.

Non-limiting examples of useful humectants include ethylene glycol, glycerin, sorbitol or mixtures of two or more thereof.

25 The amount of humectant in the topical formulation can range from about 1 to about 30 weight percent, and in some embodiments from about 2 to about 20 weight percent, on a basis of total weight of the topical formulation.

30 Non-limiting examples of useful emulsifiers include acrylic acid polymers (such as carbomer brand thickeners e.g. Carbomer 934P, manufactured by Voveon, inc.), polyoxyethylene-10-stearyl ether, polyoxyethylene-20-stearyl ether, cetostearyl alcohol, cetyl alcohol, cholesterol, diglycol stearate, glyceryl monostearate, glyceryl stearate, polygeyceryl-3-oleate, hydroxypropyl cellulose, hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose, lanolin, polyoxyethylene lauryl ether,

methyl cellulose, polyoxyethylene stearate, polysorbate, propylene glycol monostearate, sorbitan esters, stearic acid or mixtures of two or more thereof.

5 The amount of emulsifier in the topical formulation can range from about 1 to about 40 weight percent, and in some embodiments from about 5 to about 30 weight percent, on a basis of total weight of the topical formulation.

10 The gel formulations of the present invention comprise one or more gelling agents. Non-limiting examples of useful gelling agents include carboxylic acid polymers including acrylic acid polymers cross linked with cross links such as allyl ethers of sucrose (e.g. carbomer brand thickeners), cetostearyl alcohol, hydroxymethyl cellulose, polyoxyethylene-polyoxypropylene copolymer, sodium carboxymethylcellulose, polyvinyl pyrrolidone, or mixtures of two or more thereof.

15

The amount of gelling agent in the topical gel formulation can range from about 0.1 to about 10 weight percent, and in some embodiments from about 0.1 to about 1 weight percent, on a basis of total weight of the topical formulation.

20

The gel formulations of the present invention can further comprise one or more alkalinizers, for example sodium hydroxide, in amount of less than about 2 weight percent as activators of gelling.

25 The formulations can contain one or more additional excipients well known in the art, for example water and a thickening agent such as colloidal silicon dioxide.

30 The formulations of the present invention can be administered in combination with one or more other antiviral or other agents useful in treating or preventing infection with HIV or in inhibiting transmission of HIV, in combination with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier. In one form of the method, the subject is under treatment with an antiretroviral agent.

In some embodiments, the method comprises co-administration of an antiretroviral agent, and particularly an agent used for the treatment of HIV infection such as Zidovudine (AZT), Abacavir, Emtricitabine (FTC), Lamivudine (3TC), Didanosine (ddl), Stavudine (d4T), Zalcitabine (ddC),
5 Nevirapine, Efavirenz, Delavirdine, Tenofovir, Enfuvirtide (T20), Maraviroc (CCR5), Lopinavir, Atazanavir, Fosamprenvir, Amprenavir, Saquinavir, Indinavir, Nelfinavir, Raltegravir, and Elvitegravir.

One or more, preferably one to four, antiviral agents useful in anti- HIV-1
10 therapy may be used in combination with at least one (i.e., 1-4, preferably 1) anti-Env antibody in a formulation of the present invention. The antiviral agent or agents may be combined with the anti-Env antibody in a single dosage form, or the anti-Env antibody and the antiviral agent or agents may be administered simultaneously or sequentially as separate dosage forms. For
15 example, the anti-Env antibody formulation can be used in a vaginal ring device or to coat the outside of a condom to prevent transmission of HIV to a non-infected sexual partner while the HIV-infected sexual partner undergoes treatment with systemic antiviral therapy. The antiviral agents contemplated for use in combination with the anti-Env antibody formulations of the present
20 invention comprise nucleoside and nucleotide reverse transcriptase inhibitors, non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors, protease inhibitors and other antiviral drugs listed below not falling within these classifications. In particular, the combinations known as HAART are contemplated for use in combination with the anti-Env antibody formulations of this invention. [00169] The term
25 "nucleoside and nucleotide reverse transcriptase inhibitors" ("NRTI" s) as used herein means nucleosides and nucleotides and analogues thereof that inhibit the activity of HIV-1 reverse transcriptase, the enzyme which catalyzes the conversion of viral genomic HIV-1 RNA into proviral HIV-1 DNA.

30 Typical suitable NRTIs include zidovudine (AZT) available under the RETROVIR tradename from Glaxo-Wellcome Inc., Research Triangle, NC 27709; didanosine (ddl) available under the VIDEX tradename from Bristol-Myers Squibb Co., Princeton, NJ 08543; zalcitabine (ddC) available under the HMD tradename from Roche Pharmaceuticals, Nutley, NJ 07110; stavudine

(d4T) available under the ZERIT trademark from Bristol-Myers Squibb Co., Princeton, NJ 08543; lamivudine (3TC) available under the EPIVIR tradename from Glaxo-Smith Kline Triangle, NC 27709; abacavir (1592U89) disclosed in WO96/30025 and available under the ZIAGEN trademark from Glaxo-Wellcome Research Triangle, NC 27709; adefovir dipivoxil [bis(POM)-PMEA] available under the PREVON tradename from Gilead Sciences, Foster City, CA 94404; lobucavir (BMS-180194), a nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor disclosed in EP-0358154 and EP- 0736533 and under development by Bristol-Myers Squibb, Princeton, NJ 08543; BCH-10652, a reverse transcriptase inhibitor (in the form of a racemic mixture of BCH-10618 and BCH-10619) under development by Biochem Pharma, Laval, Quebec H7V, 4A7, Canada; emitricitabine [(-)-FTC] licensed from Emory University under Emory Univ. U.S. Patent No. 5,814,639 and available from Gilead under the trade name Emtrivia™; beta-L-FD4 (also called beta-L-D4C and named beta-L-2', 3'-dideoxy-5-fluoro-cytidine) licensed by Yale University to Vion Pharmaceuticals, New Haven CT 0651 1 ; DAPD, the purine nucleoside, (-)-beta-D-2,6,-diamino-purine dioxolane disclosed in EP 0656778 and licensed by Emory University and the University of Georgia to Triangle Pharmaceuticals, Durham, NC 27707; and lodenosine (FddA), 9-(2,3-dideoxy-2-fluoro-b-D-threo-pentofuranosyl)adenine, an acid stable purine-based reverse transcriptase inhibitor discovered by the NIH and under development by U.S. Bioscience Inc., West Conshohocken, PA 19428. [00171] The term "non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors" ("NNRTI11S) as used herein means non-nucleosides that inhibit the activity of HIV-1 reverse transcriptase.

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Typical suitable NNRTIs include nevirapine (BI-RG-587) available under the VIRAMUNE tradename from Boehringer Ingelheim, the manufacturer for Roxane Laboratories, Columbus, OH 43216; delaviradine (BHAP, U-90152) available under the RESCRIPTOR tradename from Pharmacia & Upjohn Co., Bridgewater NJ 08807; efavirenz (DMP-266) a benzoxazin-2-one disclosed in WO94/03440 and available under the SUSTIVA tradename from Bristol Myers Squibb in the US and Merck in Europe; PNU-142721 , a furopyridine-thio-pyrimidine under development by Pharmacia and Upjohn, Bridgewater NJ 08807; AG-1549 (formerly Shionogi # S-1153); 5-(3,5-dichlorophenyl)- thio-4-

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isopropyl-1-(4-pyridyl)methyl-1H-imidazol-2-ylmethyl carbonate disclosed in WO 96 /10019 and under clinical development by Agouron Pharmaceuticals, Inc., LaJolla CA 92037-1020; MKC-442 (1-(ethoxy-methyl)-5-(1-methylethyl)-6-(phenylmethyl)-(2,4(1 H,3H)- pyrimidinedione) discovered by Mitsubishi Chemical Co. and under development by Triangle Pharmaceuticals, Durham, NC 27707; (+)- calanolide A (NSC-675451) and B, coumarin derivatives disclosed in NIH U.S. Patent No. 5,489,697, licensed to Med Chem Research, which is co- developing (+) calanolide A with Vita-Invest as an orally administrable product; and etravirine (TMC-125, Intelence) marketed by Tibotec. [00173] The term "protease inhibitor" ("PI") as used herein means inhibitors of the HIV-1 protease, an enzyme required for the proteolytic cleavage of viral polyprotein precursors (e.g., viral GAG and GAG Pol polyproteins), into the individual functional proteins found in infectious HIV-1. HIV protease inhibitors include compounds having a peptidomimetic structure, high molecular weight (7600 daltons) and substantial peptide character, e.g. CRIXIVAN (available from Merck) as well as nonpeptide protease inhibitors e.g., VIRACEPT (available from Agouron).

Typical suitable PIs include saquinavir (Ro 31-8959) available in hard gel capsules under the INVIRASE tradename and as soft gel capsules under the FORTOVASE tradename from Roche Pharmaceuticals, Nutley, NJ 07110-1199; ritonavir (ABT-538) available under the NORVIR tradename from Abbott Laboratories, Abbott Park, IL 60064; indinavir (MK-639) available under the CRIXIVAN tradename from Merck & Co., Inc., West Point, PA 19486-0004; nelfinavir (AG-1343) available under the VIRACEPT tradename from Agouron Pharmaceuticals, Inc., LaJolla CA 92037-1020; amprenavir (141W94), tradename AGENERASE, a non-peptide protease inhibitor under development by Vertex Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Cambridge, MA 02139-4211 and available from Glaxo-Wellcome, Research Triangle, NC under an expanded access program; lasinavir (BMS-234475) available from Bristol-Myers Squibb, Princeton, NJ 08543 (originally discovered by Novartis, Basel, Switzerland (CGP-61755); DMP-450, a cyclic urea discovered by Dupont and under development by Triangle Pharmaceuticals; BMS-2322623, an azapeptide under development by Bristol-Myers Squibb, Princeton, NJ 08543,

as a 2nd-generation HIV-1 PI; ABT-378 under development by Abbott, Abbott Park, IL 60064; AG-1549 an orally active imidazole carbamate discovered by Shionogi (Shionogi #S-1153) and under development by Agouron Pharmaceuticals, Inc., LaJolla CA 92037-1020; atazanavir; tipranavir; and
5 darunavir.

Other antiviral agents include CXCR4 antagonists, enfuvirtide, hydroxyurea, ribavirin, IL-2, IL-12, pentafuside and Yissum Project No. 11607. Hydroxyurea (Droxia), a ribonucleoside triphosphate reductase inhibitor, the enzyme
10 involved in the activation of T-cells, was discovered at the NCI and is under development by Bristol-Myers Squibb; in preclinical studies, it was shown to have a synergistic effect on the activity of didanosine and has been studied with stavudine. IL-2 is disclosed in Ajinomoto EP-0142268, Takeda EP-0176299, and Chiron U. S. Patent Nos. RE 33653, 4530787, 4569790,
15 4604377, 4748234, 4752585, and 4949314, and is available under the PROLEUKIN (aldesleukin) tradename from Chiron Corp., Emeryville, CA 94608-2997 as a lyophilized powder for IV infusion or sc administration upon reconstitution and dilution with water; a dose of about 1 to about 20 million ILJ/day, sc is preferred; a dose of about 15 million IU/day, sc is more
20 preferred. IL-12 is disclosed in WO96/25171 and is available from Roche Pharmaceuticals, Nutley, NJ 07110-1199 and American Home Products, Madison, NJ 07940; a dose of about 0.5 microgram/kg/day to about 10 microgram/kg/day, sc is preferred. Enfuvirtide (DP-178, T-20) a 36-amino acid synthetic peptide, is disclosed in U.S. Patent No.5,464,933 licensed from
25 Duke University to Trimeris which developed enfuvirtide in collaboration with Duke University and Roche; enfuvirtide acts by inhibiting fusion of HIV-1 to target membranes. Enfuvirtide (3-100 mg /day) is given as a continuous sc infusion or injection together with efavirenz and 2 PI's to HIV-1 positive patients refractory to a triple combination therapy; use of 100 mg/day is
30 preferred. Yissum Project No. 11607, a synthetic protein based on the HIV -1 Vif protein, is under preclinical development by Yissum Research Development Co., Jerusalem 91042, Israel. Ribavirin, 1- β -D-ribofuranosyl- 1 H-1 ,2,4-triazole-3-carboxamide, is available from ICN Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Costa Mesa, CA; its manufacture and formulation are described in U.S. Patent

No. 4,211,771 ; the integrase inhibitor raltegravir available from Merck under the tradename Isentress™; elvitegravir an integrase inhibitor under development by Gilead Sciences; the HIV-1Gag maturation inhibitor berivimat under development (Phase lib) by Panacos Pharmaceuticals. [00176] The
5 term "anti-HIV-1 therapy" as used herein means any anti-HIV-1 drug found useful for treating HIV-1 infections in man alone, or as part of multidrug combination therapies, especially the HAART triple and quadruple combination therapies. Typical suitable known anti-HIV-1 therapies include, but are not limited to multidrug combination therapies such as (i) at least three
10 anti-HIV-1 drugs selected from two NRTIs, one PI, a second PI, and one NNRTI; and (ii) at least two anti-HIV-1 drugs selected from NNRTIs and PIs. Typical suitable HAART - multidrug combination therapies include: [00177] (a) triple combination therapies such as two NRTIs and one PI ; or (b) two NRTIs and one NNRTI ; and (c) quadruple combination therapies such as two NRTIs,
15 one PI and a second PI or one NNRTI. In treatment of naive patients, it is preferred to start anti-HIV-1 treatment with the triple combination therapy; the use of two NRTIs and one NNRTI or two NRTIs and one PI is preferred if there is intolerance to NNRTI. Drug compliance is essential. The CD4+ and HIV-1 -RNA plasma levels should be monitored every 3-6 months. Should
20 viral load plateau, a fourth drug, e.g., one PI, one NNRTI or integrase inhibitor could be added.

The present invention also provides the use of a composition of the present invention for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment and/or
25 prevention of HIV transmission.

The present invention also provides a method of preparing a composition for inhibiting transmission of HIV comprising immunizing an animal with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof, and obtaining
30 hyperimmune colostrum from the immunized animal.

The present invention also provides a composition for inhibiting transmission of HIV prepared by the method comprising immunizing an animal with a HIV

viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof, and obtaining hyperimmune milk from the immunized animal.

The present invention also provides a method of inhibiting transmission of HIV comprising:

forming hyperimmune colostrum or hyperimmune milk by immunizing cows; and

administering the hyperimmune colostrum or hyperimmune milk to a subject, wherein the step of immunizing cows to produce hyperimmune colostrum or hyperimmune milk comprises vaccination with a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof. The Env protein or fragment thereof may be any HIV Env protein, however preferably the Env protein is gp140.

Also provided is a method for inhibiting transmission of HIV comprising administering polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof to a subject. The Env protein or fragment thereof may be any HIV Env protein, however preferably the Env protein is gp140.

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In one embodiment, the Env protein or fragment thereof is a gp140 oligomer. The oligomer may comprise gp140 trimers, dimers and monomers. The Oligomers may be purified from transduced HeLa and 293 cell supernatant, for example by lentil lectin affinity chromatography and gel filtration. The Env protein or fragment thereof may be a HIV clade A, clade B or clade C strain viral envelope (Env) protein or fragment thereof.

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In one embodiment, the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof are capable of binding to a Env protein from a heterologous clade of HIV or a heterologous strain of HIV.

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The antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof may be produced by immunization of an animal with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof. The animal may be immunized with gp140,

recombinant gp140 or oligomeric gp140. The recombinant gp140 may not be derived from virion culture. The animal may be immunized with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof and an adjuvant. In one embodiment, the adjuvant is a water in oil emulsion.

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The antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof may be present in or obtained from an avian egg, or present in or obtained from hyperimmune colostrum or hyperimmune milk of an animal. The animal may be a cow.

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The composition may be formulated for topical administration, and in certain embodiments the composition is formulated for vaginal or rectal administration. The composition may be formulated as a gel, or formulated as a topical cream, ointment, lotion or foam formulation.

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In one embodiment of the method, the ligand is an antibody, or fragment or derivative thereof. The antibodies or fragment or derivative thereof may be polyclonal immunoglobulins or chimeric antibodies or dendrimer presented immunoactive fragments or immunoactive fragments such as F(ab) and

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F(ab)₂ fragments or recombinant immunoactive fragments, or affinity purified immunoglobulins or immunoactive fragments thereof.

25

In one form of the composition the antibody or fragment thereof or derivative thereof is produced by immunization of an animal with a microbe or a microbial product. Polyclonal antibodies capable of binding to a microbe or microbial product may be obtained by the immunization of an animal, and obtaining the antibodies via a bodily fluid, such as blood, a secretion of a gland or cell, egg, milk or colostrum.

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The methods, compositions and devices of this invention can be adapted generally to release active agent in a time sensitive manner that best corresponds to the timing of sexual activity. When topically applied as a lotion or gel, the compositions are preferably applied immediately prior to sexual activity. Other modes of application, such as devices and suppositories, can

be designed to release active agent over a prolonged period of time, at a predetermined rate, depending upon the needs of the consumer.

10 In certain embodiments of the present invention, the goal of the formulations of the present invention is to reduce the HIV-1-RNA viral load below the detectable limit so that infection or transmission of infection is slowed, prevented or inhibited. The "detectable limit of HIV-1-RNA" in the context of the present invention means that there are fewer than about 200 to fewer than about 50 copies of HIV-1-RNA per ml of plasma of the patient as measured by quantitative, multi-cycle reverse transcriptase PCR methodology. HIV-1-RNA is preferably measured in the present invention by the methodology of Amplicor -1 Monitor 1.5 (available from Roche Diagnostics) or of Nuclisens HIV-1 QT -1.

15 In certain embodiments, the formulations of the invention are useful to protect not only against sexual transmission of HIV, but also to prevent infection of a baby during passage through the birth canal. Thus the vaginal administration can take place prior to sexual intercourse, during sexual intercourse, immediately prior to childbirth or during childbirth. Such topical dosage forms may be particularly useful when applied to a newborn baby of an HIV-infected mother.

The present invention will now be more fully described by reference to the following non-limiting Examples.

25

EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 1: Production of Hyperimmune Colostrum containing polyclonal anti-Env antibodies

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Step 1 – Production of vaccine for dairy cattle

The procedures for preparing antigen reported in Pub. No. WO/2004/078209 International Application No. PCT/AU2004/000277 (the contents of which are herein incorporated by reference) were used.

Step 2 – The procedures for preparing antibodies from vaccinated cattle reported in Pub. No. WO/2004/078209 International Application No. PCT/AU2004/000277 (the contents of which are herein incorporated by reference) were used.

EXAMPLE 2: Production of polyclonal antibodies binding to HIV Env, and demonstration of neutralization

Soluble Env gp140 oligomers have been prepared from clade A, B, and C HIV-1 strains from HeLa and/or 293T cells and purified by lentil lectin affinity and gel filtration chromatography.

Four cows (two pregnant in second semester and two initially non-pregnant) were vaccinated with 100µg of purified HIV-1 Env gp140 oligomer formulated with Montanide adjuvant. Two groups of two cows (one pregnant and one nonpregnant) were vaccinated with either clade B (AD8) only or with equal amounts (33.33µg) of clade A, B and C Env gp140 (UG8, AD8 and MW) (referred to as 'trimix'). All four cows received at least three vaccinations whereas the last vaccination was given four weeks before giving birth. All four cows seroconverted within nine weeks. Reciprocal endpoint serum IgG titers were up to $1 \times 10^{2.5}$ for pregnant cows and up to 1×10^5 for non-pregnant cows determined by a new established anti-bovine IgG HIV-1 Env gp140 specific ELISA. The expected low serum IgG titer in pregnant cows was explained by the pumping of serum IgG antibodies into the colostrum approximately four weeks before giving birth.

HIV-immune bovine colostrum was collected and pasteurised postpartum from all cows with pregnancy vaccination resulting in relatively low responses with reciprocal IgG titers of $< 10^2$ (clade B vaccinated) and $1 \times 10^{3.5}$ (trimix-vaccinated). Reciprocal colostrum IgG titer for cows vaccinated before pregnancy was 10^5 (clade B vaccinated) and $10^{4.5}$ (trimix vaccinated). Western blot analysis confirmed that colostrum IgG of all four cows was specific against HIV-1 Env gp140. Unfractionated colostrum was tested for

neutralising activity in a HIV-1 Env-pseudotyped reporter virus assay. Clade A/E, clade B and clade C pseudotype viruses including the NIH reference panel for clade B and C viruses were tested (total n=27) and compared with non-immune bovine colostrum that already has intrinsic infection-blocking activity due to lactoferrin and other bioactive peptides. Unfractionated colostrum from the trimix cow vaccinated during pregnancy showed high neutralisation of up to 50% for all B clade pseudoviruses (n=15) as well as for the majority of C clade (n=11) and clade A/E (n=1) pseudoviruses at a dilution of 1:16. The first clade B vaccinated cow was a low responder but both cows vaccinated before pregnancy and having their calves recently responded well. Up to this time, broad neutralisation was observed for the clade B vaccinated cow that showed 50- 80% neutralisation for B clade (n=12) and clade C pseudoviruses (n=9) (1:16 dilution) (Table1). IgG Abs from the first pair of cows was purified from the colostrum and neutralising activity was retained for purified IgG with up to 50% neutralisation for the trimix- IgG compared to non immune IgG at 500µg/ml.

Results of the neutralisation profile of two HIV Env gp140 hyperimmune bovine colostrum samples against pseudoviruses of different clades are demonstrated in Table 1.

These results strongly support this method of raising high levels of neutralising antibodies.

Table 1

	Clade	Neutralisation (%) (1:16)		
		6055	7004	non-immune
Animal number				
Reciprocal IgG titer in H2BC		103.5	105	/
gp140 specificity		+	+	/
Immunisation / Ag		Trimix AE/B/C	clade B	/

Pregnant at first vaccination		+	-	/
Env Pseudovirus				
AD8	B	78.9	74.3	64
NL4.3	B	77.1	59.1	49.7
SF162	B	75.2	68.9	30.9
89.6	B	77.9	75	30.1
MN	B	54.1	92.4	10.2
11017 6535 clone 3 SVPB5	B	63.7	81.7	37.3
11018 QH0692 clone 42 (SVPB6)	B	89.7	88.1	43.4
11022 PVO clone 4 SVPB11	B	55.6	92.9	25.2
11023 TRO clone 11, SVPB12	B	65.9	77.7	34.7
11024 Ac10.0 clone 29 SVPB13	B	63.1	77.2	28.4
11033 pWITO4160 clone33 (SVPB18)	B	53.6	83.8	31.2
11034 pTRJO4551 clone 18 SVPB 17	B	52.3	*	15.5
11035 pREJO4541 clone 67 (SVPB14)	B	63.1	79.5	26.3
11036 pRHPA4259 clone 7 SVPB14	B	55.4	*	13.6
11058 SC422661.8 (SVPB8)	B	61.7	*	26.5
966	A/E	30.8	*	13.7
11306 DU 156.12	C	43.7	42.8	28.6
11307 DU 172.17	C	73.8	60.9	54
11309 ZM 197M.PB7	C	82.3	73.1	41.8
11310 ZM 214M.PL15	C	50	67.7	36.2
11311 ZM 233M.PB6	C	61.7	77.4	30.3
11312 ZM 249M.PL1	C	51	83.5	36.5
11316 CAP45.2.00.G3	C	33.7	67.9	37.2
11317 CAP210.2.00.E8	C	55.1	87	50
11313 ZM53M.PB12	C	50.2	*	23.7
11314 ZM109F.PB4	C	47.7	81.5	22.2
11315 ZM135M.PL10a	C	80.1	*	30.1

Neutralisation profile: green 0%-25%, yellow 25%-50%; orange 50%-75%; red 75%-100%;

* pending

EXAMPLE 3: Polyclonal neutralising antibodies to HIV-1 Env from bovine colostrum.

Twelve BSE-free pregnant cows housed in an approved quarantine farm in
5 Victoria are vaccinated with 100µg of an eqimolar mix of four HIV-1 Env
gp140 oligomers:

10 1) SC35 clade B pre-seroconversion strain Env gp140, these adopt an
open configuration and prominently displays important neutralisation
epitopes;

2) ADA primary R5-tropic clade B Env gp140;

15 3) 966 clade A/E Env gp140; and

4) MW clade C Env gp140.

These Env are formulated with adjuvant (Montanide) and administered twice
before pregnancy and at least twice at 3-week intervals during the second
20 trimester of pregnancy by a registered veterinarian.

An Env ELISA assay and Western blotting are used to monitor the levels of
Env-specific IgG in regular blood samples taken during the vaccination and
pregnancy and vaccination is continued until high titres of IgG are detected.
25 Immediately following calving, the first colostrum is collected by a registered
veterinarian and calves are given their essential colostrum, leaving around
one litre of colostrum per cow.

Following storage of 200mls of whole colostrum, the remainder is fractionated
30 and purified using methods to yield 1kg of pure freeze dried antibodies.
Whole colostrum and purified antibodies are assessed for breadth and titre of
neutralizing antibody activity using a Env-pseudotyped reporter virus assay.
Typical target cells are tested in these assays, as well as primary cells. HIV
neutralisation is also confirmed in the PBMC spreading infection system.

Neutralisation assays for SIV to assess if this robust challenge model can be used for primate studies are also examined. Importantly, antibodies are titrated into pooled seminal plasma that is by-product from IVF clinical procedures, and into vaginal washings collected at various stages of the menstrual cycle and tested for neutralising activity. Usually the pH in the vagina is acid (between pH 4 and 5) but in the presence of semen the pH is increased to a neutral (pH 7) level. The activity of bovine colostrum antibodies are tested across this pH range.

EXAMPLE 4: Mechanisms of HIV inhibition by bovine colostrum IgG in viral transcytosis and neutralisation assays in vitro and in a cervical explant infection model.

One major path by which HIV circumvents the host defence mechanisms is the transport of the virus within a protective vesicle across the interior of epithelial cells that face the inside of the vagina (known as transcytosis) without infecting these cells. Anti-transcytosis activity of bovine polyclonal antibodies are assessed in Hec 1-B cells using an EVOM2 Epithelia tissue voltohmmeter in a transcytosis assay. Whole colostrum, in addition to purified IgA and IgG are examined for anti-transcytosis activity. Cervical tissue is obtained, and the penetration of fluorescently labelled bovine IgG into the epithelial layers of the ectocervix, endocervix and columnar epithelium of the the vagina is examined. HIV virion labelled with fluorescent Vpr is added to track the movement of HIV on and through these tissues in the explant culture model to observe virolysis or entrapment.

EXAMPLE 5: Formulation of colostrum neutralizing antibodies into a microbicide gel and testing gel safety and efficacy in rabbits.

The most potent HIV-1 polyclonal bovine anti-Env antibodies are tested and pooled and formulate into various water-based buffering gels. Several formulations of anti-Env Ab are prepared, including formulations that add back lactoferrin as a protein excipient, because it also has potent neutralising activity, and a casein and calcium carbonate formulation to test the possibility

of retaining IgG binding activity after passage through the stomach and alimentary system for an oral delivered rectal microbicide.

The activity of antibodies when coformulated into different existing gels, such as glycol based K-Y lubricant gel, or the dendrimer microbicide gel, Vivagel, developed by Starpharma. Formulations that retain or enhance the breadth and potency of HIV neutralisation are tested for activity under neutral as well as acid pH conditions *in vitro* and their stability. The stability, biodistribution and reactogenicity/inflammation induced by the bovine antibodies are tested in rabbit toxicology studies. Biodistribution of bovine IgG are examined by histopathology, immunohistochemistry, dermal observation of local inflammatory responses, immunogenicity by antibody and cellular responses to bovine IgG, and by Bioplex bead arrays or cytokine ELISA and EliSpot assay. Body weight, ophthalmology, ECG, clinical chemistry, haematology, urinalysis, organ weights and bone marrow and blood smears are tested for any abnormality. Control animals are given a placebo gel. Following cell toxicity studies, colostrum and purified Abs are co-cultivated with bacteria common in the vagina e.g. *Lactobacillus acidophilus* to assess the effect of colostrum Ab on the beneficial normal flora. Prior to primate challenge studies, the stability and activity of the formulation in the vaginal environment is tested at different time points following application to rabbits by recovering antibodies by saline washing.

EXAMPLE 6: Formulations

The following are formulated according to standard methods based on the following lists of ingredients. 'Hyperimmune colostrum' is hyperimmune colostrum containing antibodies to Env.

Formulation 1

A vaginal cream formulation is prepared by mixing the components listed in Table 2 below. For each application, 1-4 grams of the cream are vaginally administered with a suitable applicator such as a syringe.

Table 2

Component	Weight Percent
Hyperimmune colostrum	10-40
Cetyl esters wax	1-15
Cetyl alcohol	2-5
White wax	5-20
Glyceryl monostearate	10-30
Propylene glycol monostearate	10-15
Methyl stearate	5-90
Benzyl alcohol	3-10
Sodium lauryl sulfate	0.5-2.5
Glycerin	5-30
Mineral oil	0.1-95

Formulation 2

A vaginal cream formulation is prepared by mixing the components listed in Table 3 below. For each application, 1-4 grams of the cream are vaginally administered with a suitable applicator such as a syringe.

Table 3

Component	Weight Percent
Hyperimmune colostrum	10-40
edetate disodium	0.01-0.10
glyceryl monoisostearate	0.5-10
methyl paraben	0.18-0.20
mineral oil	0.1-95
polyglyceryl-3-oleate	2-3.5
propylene glycol	5-15
propyl paraben	0.02-0.10
colloidal silicon dioxide	1-5
sorbitol solution	2-18

purified water	10-20
microcrystalline wax	2-20

Formulation 3

A vaginal gel formulation is prepared by mixing the components listed in Table 4 below. For each application, 4 grams of the gel are vaginally administered with a suitable applicator such as a syringe.

Table 4

Component	Weight Percent
Hyperimmune colostrum	10-40
Carbomer 934P	0.1-0.5
Edetate disodium	0.01-0.10
Methyl paraben	0.18-0.20
Propyl paraben	0.02-0.10
Propylene glycol	5-15
Sodium hydroxide	0.01-0.05

10

Formulation 4

A rectal foam formulation is prepared by mixing the components listed in Table 5 below and inert propellants isobutene and propane. The foam is supplied in a aerosol container with a rectal applicator. For each application, 900 milligrams of the foam are rectally administered using the applicator.

15

Table 5

Component	Weight Percent
Hyperimmune colostrum	10-40
Propylene glycol	5-15
Emulsifying wax	10-15

Polyoxyethylene-10-stearyl ether	0.1-0.5
Cetyl alcohol	2-5
Methyl paraben	0.18-0.20
Propyl paraben	0.02-0.10
Triethanolamine	2-4
Purified water	10-30

EXAMPLE 7: Antigen production, Purification and Vaccination of Cows

- 5 Soluble trimeric clade A (92UG8037.8; UG8), clade B (AD8) and clade C (93MW965.26; MW) HIV-1 Env gp140 were purified by lentil lectin affinity chromatography and gel filtration and 100ug of gp140 in a proprietary adjuvant was used for three intramuscular vaccinations of 4 cows; 2 cows after conception (p) and two cows before conception (NP) according to the
10 vaccination schedule shown in Figures 1 and 2.

EXAMPLE 8: IgG from serum and colostrum binds to gp140 Env of clade A, B and C

- 15 Figure 3 shows the Env gp-140-specific IgG titres in serum 9 weeks following primary vaccination and colostrum determined by direct ELISA against gp140 Env of clade A (UG8), clade B (AD8) and clade C (MW). Reciprocal endpoint titres were determined using a 2 times OD cut-off based on pre-bleed samples or non-immune colostrum respectively. These results demonstrate IgG from
20 serum and colostrum binds to gp140 Env of clade A, B and C. The results also demonstrate IgG from non-pregnant cows have broad binding activity to gp140 of clades A, B and C.

- 25 **EXAMPLE 9: Purified colostrum IgG from non-pregnant cows retains binding to gp140 Env**

Figure 4 shows the specific binding activity of purified colostrum IgG determined by direct ELISA against clade A (UG8), clade B (AD8) and clade C (MW) and absorbance (abs) measurement at 450nm. These results demonstrate purified IgG from non-pregnant cows retains binding to gp140.

5 The results also demonstrate purified IgG from non-pregnant cows retains broad binding activity to gp140 of clades A, B and C. The results also demonstrate cross-clade (heterologous) binding, with colostrum from non-pregnant cows vaccinated with clade B soluble Env gp140 oligomers binding gp140 of clades A B and C.

10

EXAMPLE 10: Bovine IgG blocks binding of monoclonal Ab b12 to CD4 binding site of gp140

Several broadly neutralizing human monoclonal antibodies (MAbs) have been
15 derived from infected individuals, including immunoglobulin G1 (IgG1) b12 and 2G12. Among the most potent, the well-known b12 monoclonal antibody (Ab b12) occludes the site of CD4 binding on gp120 (which forms part of gp140) and prevents virus attachment to CD4 on target cells and is able to neutralize primary HIV-1 isolates. 2G12 recognizes a cluster of high mannose
20 glycans on the viral envelope glycoprotein gp120. An understanding of the specificity of b12 binding, neutralization, and protection should aid in the development of immunogens that induce neutralizing antibodies of a similar specificity.

25 Figure 5 shows bovine colostrum IgG competes with human neutralizing mAb b12 for binding at gp140 CD4 binding site. Competition ELISAs were performed by titrating b12 and 2G12 in a constant background of 100ug IgG or a 1:100 dilution of whole colostrum. The ability of b12 and 2G12 to bind to AD8 (clade B gp140) in the presence or absence of colostrum IgG was
30 detected by anti-human IgG HRP conjugated antibody. The results demonstrate bovine IgG blocks binding of the potent b12 antibody to the CD4 binding site of gp140 Env. The results also demonstrate bovine IgG from non-pregnant cows blocks binding of the potent b12 antibody to the CD4 binding site of gp140 Env.

EXAMPLE 11: Colostrum from pregnant cows vaccinated with clade A/B/C gp140 and non-pregnant cows vaccinated with clade B gp140 have broad neutralizing activity.

5

Table 6 shows the neutralization profile of whole colostrum. Numbers represent percent neutralization for a 1:16 dilution against the indicated EGFP Env-pseudotyped viruses including common lab strains and the NIH clade B and C reference panel (ARRP #11227, #11326) in CF2 cells. Data shown is a
10 representative experiment from two independent experiments. The results demonstrate colostrum from pregnant cows vaccinated with clade A/B/C gp140 and non-pregnant cows vaccinated with clade B gp140 have broad neutralizing activity. In particular, this neutralization is cross-clade (heterologous) neutralization, with colostrum from non-pregnant cows
15 vaccinated with clade B soluble Env gp140 oligomers neutralizing HIV of clades A B and C. Furthermore, colostrum from pregnant cows vaccinated with trimix soluble Env gp140 oligomers neutralizing HIV of clades A B and C. The results also show that non-immune colostrum has neutralizing activity.

Table 6

PSV/Env clone	Clade	% Neutralisation				
		P-B	P-trimix	NP-B	NP-trimix	non-immune
AD8	B	89.1	75.9	74.3	18.8	54.8
MN	B	27.8	64.1	92.1	73.3	31.0
SF162	B	44.3	75.2	68.9	33.6	30.9
NL4.3	B	68.2	77.1	69.1	29.9	49.7
89.8	B	43.5	77.3	75.3	38.2	30.1
6535 clone 3 SVPB5	B	61.6	63.7	81.7	47.0	37.3
QH0682 clone 42 (SVPB6)	B	63.8	69.7	66.1	63.7	43.4
PVO clone 4 SVPB11	B	25.5	65.6	92.9	25.0	25.2
TRO clone 11, SVPB12	B	30.4	65.9	77.7	33.7	34.7
Ac10.0 clone 29 SVPB13	B	25.5	63.1	77.2	32.7	28.4
pWITO4160 clone33	B	37.2	63.6	63.6	40.7	31.2
pTRJO4551 clone 18	B	4.8	62.3	69.4	31.1	19.5
pREJO4541 clone 67	B	15.2	63.1	79.5	16.6	26.3
pRHPA4259 clone 7	B	12.6	65.4	83.2	35.8	13.6
SC422661.8 (SVPB8)	B	5.7	61.7	83.2	26.1	26.5
DU 156.12	C	16.2	43.7	42.8	26.7	28.6
DU 172.17	C	41.3	73.8	68.9	19.0	54.8
ZM 197M.PB7	C	29.7	62.3	73.1	41.8	41.8
ZM 214M.PL15	C	8.2	60.0	67.7	32.4	38.2
ZM 233M.PB6	C	33.5	61.7	77.4	49.2	30.3
ZM 249M.PL1	C	30.1	61.0	83.5	19.6	38.5
ZM53M.PB12	C	25.1	60.2	89.3	30.6	23.7
ZM109F.PB4	C	19.7	47.7	81.5	28.8	23.2
ZM135M.PL10a	C	32.3	92.1	86.9	4.1	30.1
CAP45.2.00.G3	C	34.5	33.7	67.8	28.5	37.2
CAP210.2.00.E8	C	60.0	65.1	87.9	40.8	53.6
966	A/E	10.2	30.8	84.5	27.6	13.7

Neutralisation profile: green 0%-25%, yellow 25%-50%; orange 50%-75%; red 75%-100%.

5

EXAMPLE 12: Purified colostrum IgG has neutralizing activity.

Figure 7 shows the neutralizing activity of colostrum purified IgG from all 4 vaccinated cows for 2 EGFP Env-pseudotyped reporter viruses (clade B). The neutralization characteristic of En-pseudotyped viruses; AD*; resistant, MN, sensitive.

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Finally, it is understood that various other modifications and/or alterations may be made without departing from the spirit of the present invention as outlined herein.

- 5 Future patent applications may be filed on the basis of or claiming priority from the present application. It is to be understood that the following provisional claims are provided by way of example only, and are not intended to limit the scope of what may be claimed in any such future application. Features may be added to or omitted from the provisional claims at a later date so as to
- 10 further define or redefine the invention or inventions.

THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A composition for inhibiting transmission of HIV comprising polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a human
5 immunodeficiency virus (HIV) viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof.

2. A composition according to claim 1 wherein the Env protein or fragment thereof is gp140.

10

3. A composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the Env protein or fragment thereof is a gp140 oligomer

4. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein the Env
15 protein or fragment thereof is a HIV clade A, clade B or clade C strain viral envelope (Env) protein or fragment thereof.

5. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof are capable of binding to a Env
20 protein from a heterologous clade of HIV

6. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 5 wherein the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof are capable of binding to a Env protein from a heterologous strain of HIV

25

7. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 6 wherein the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof compete with monoclonal antibody Ab b12 binding to gp140.

30 8. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 7 wherein the polyclonal antibody or fragment thereof is capable of preventing HIV infection of a cell.

9. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 8 wherein the antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof is produced by immunization of an animal with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof.

5

10. A composition according to claim 9 wherein the animal is immunized with gp140.

11. A composition according to claim 10 wherein the animal is immunized with recombinant gp140.

10

12. A composition according to claim 11 wherein the animal is immunized with oligomeric gp140.

13. A composition according to any one of claims 10 to 12 wherein the animal is immunized with a clade B gp140.

15

14. A composition according to any one of claims 10 to 13 wherein the animal is immunized with a clade B gp140 and the antibodies produced are capable of binding to a heterologous Clade A, Clade B or Clade C gp140.

20

15. A composition according to any one of claims 10 to 14 wherein the antibodies or fragments thereof compete with monoclonal antibody Ab b12 binding to gp140.

25

16. A composition according to claim 9 wherein the animal is immunized with a recombinant molecule not derived from virion culture.

17. A composition according to claim 9 wherein the animal is immunized with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof and an adjuvant

30

18. A composition according to claim 9 wherein the adjuvant is a water in oil emulsion

19. A composition according to any one of claims 9 to 18 wherein the antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof is present in or obtained from an avian egg.

5 20. A composition according to any one of claims 9 to 18 wherein the antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof is present in or obtained from hyperimmune colostrum of the animal.

10 21. A composition according to any one of claims 9 to 18 wherein the antibody or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof is present in or obtained from hyperimmune milk of the animal.

22. A composition according to claim 20 or claim 21 wherein the animal is a cow

15

23. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 22 wherein the composition is formulated for topical administration.

20 24. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 22 wherein the composition is formulated for vaginal or rectal administration.

25. A composition according to claim 23 or claim 24 wherein the composition is formulated as a gel.

25 26. A composition according to claim 23 or claim 24 wherein the composition is formulated as a topical cream, ointment, lotion or foam formulation.

30 27. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 26 further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

28. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 27 further comprising a lubricant.

29. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 28 further comprising an antiviral agent.

30. A use of a composition of any one of claims 1 to 29 for the manufacture
5 of a medicament for the treatment and/or prevention of HIV transmission.

31. A method of preparing a composition for inhibiting transmission of HIV comprising immunizing an animal with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof, and obtaining hyperimmune colostrum from the immunized
10 animal.

32. A composition for inhibiting transmission of HIV prepared by the method comprising immunizing an animal with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof, and obtaining hyperimmune colostrum from the
15 immunized animal.

33. A method of inhibiting transmission of HIV comprising:
forming hyperimmune colostrum or hyperimmune milk by immunizing cows; and
20 administering the hyperimmune colostrum or hyperimmune milk to a subject, wherein the step of immunizing cows to produce hyperimmune colostrum or hyperimmune milk comprises vaccination with a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof.

25

34. A method according to claim 33 wherein the Env protein or fragment thereof is gp140.

35. A method for inhibiting transmission of HIV comprising administering
30 polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof capable of binding to a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof to a subject.

36. A method according to claim 35 wherein the Env protein or fragment thereof is gp140.

37. A method according to claim 35 or claim 36 wherein Env protein or
5 fragment thereof is a gp140 oligomer.

38. A method according to any one of claims 35 to 37 wherein the Env protein or fragment thereof is a HIV clade A, clade B or clade C strain viral envelope (Env) protein or fragment thereof.

10

39. A method according to any one of claims 35 to 38 wherein the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof are capable of binding to a Env protein from a heterologous clade of HIV

15 40. A method according to any one of claims 35 to 39 wherein the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof are capable of binding to a Env protein from a heterologous strain of HIV

20 41. A method according to any one of claims 35 to 40 wherein the polyclonal antibody or fragment thereof is capable of preventing HIV infection of a cell.

25 42. A method according to any one of claims 35 to 41 wherein the antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof is produced by immunization of an animal with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof.

30 43. A method according to claim 42 wherein the animal is immunized with gp140.

44. A method according to claim 43 wherein the animal is immunized with recombinant gp140.

45. A method according to claim 44 wherein the animal is immunized with oligomeric gp140.

46. A method according to claim 42 wherein the animal is immunized with
5 a recombinant molecule not derived from virion culture.

47. A method according to claim 42 wherein the animal is immunized with a HIV viral envelope (Env) protein or a fragment thereof and an adjuvant

10 48. A method according to claim 42 wherein the adjuvant is a water in oil emulsion

49. A method according to any one of claims 42 to 48 wherein the antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof is present in or
15 obtained from an avian egg.

50. A method according to any one of claims 42 to 48 wherein the antibody, or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof is present in or obtained from hyperimmune colostrum of the animal.

20

51. A method according to any one of claims 42 to 48 wherein the antibody or fragment thereof, or functional equivalent thereof is present in or obtained from hyperimmune milk of the animal.

25 52. A method according to claim 50 or claim 51 wherein the animal is a cow

53. A method according to any one of claims 30 to 52 wherein the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof are administered topically

30

54. A method according to any one of claims 35 to 47 wherein the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof are administered vaginally or rectally

55. A method according to claim 53 or claim 54 wherein the polyclonal antibodies or fragments thereof are administered as a gel
56. A method according to claim 53 or claim 54 wherein the polyclonal
5 antibodies or fragments thereof are administered as a topical cream, ointment, lotion or foam formulation.

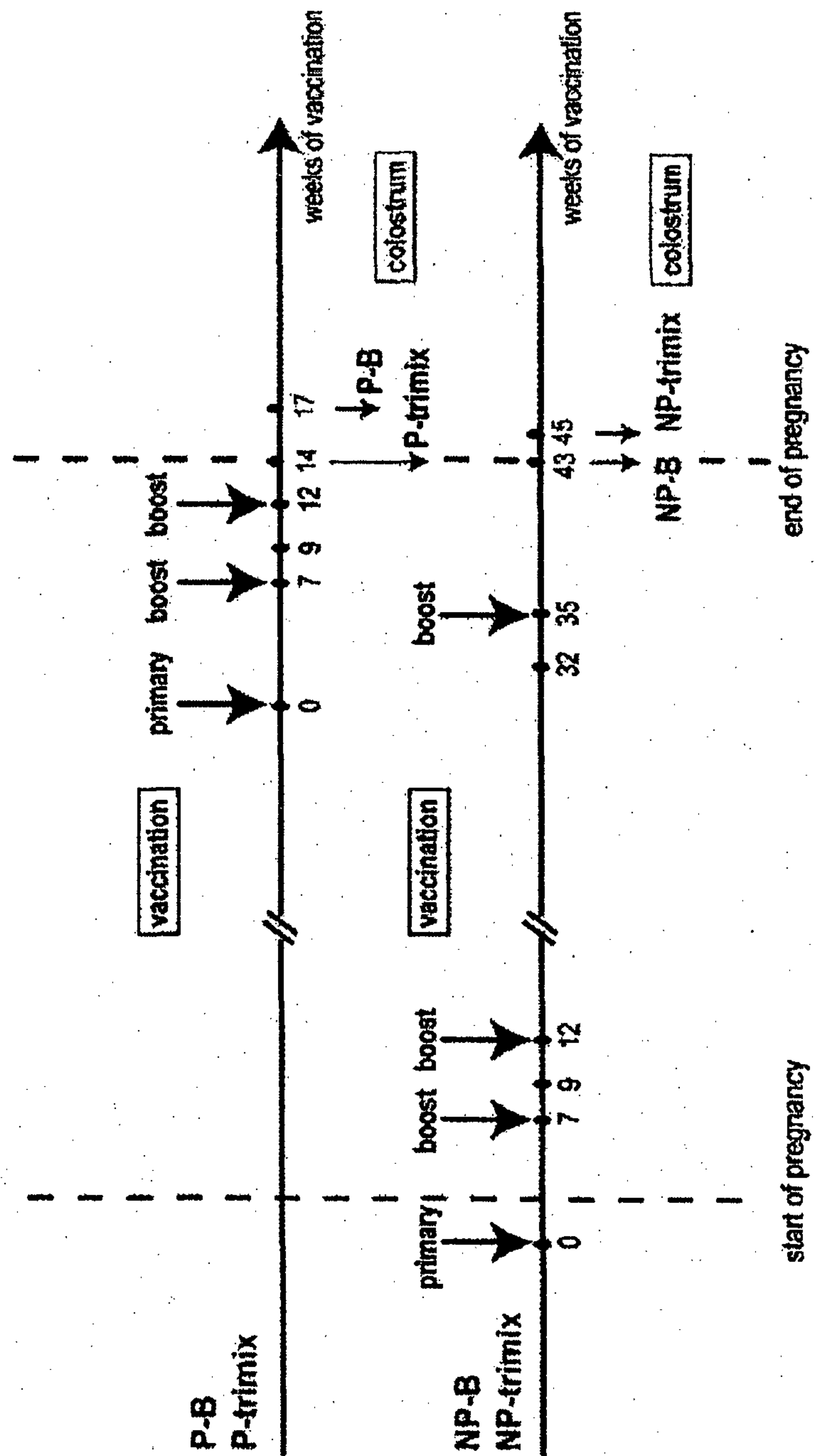


FIGURE 1

Antigen gp149	
Any type	
Pregnant cows (P) at primary vaccination	
Clade B	P-B
Clade A/B/C	P-trimix
Nonpregnant cows (NP) at primary vaccination	
Clade B	NP-B
Clade A/B/C	NP-trimix

FIGURE 2

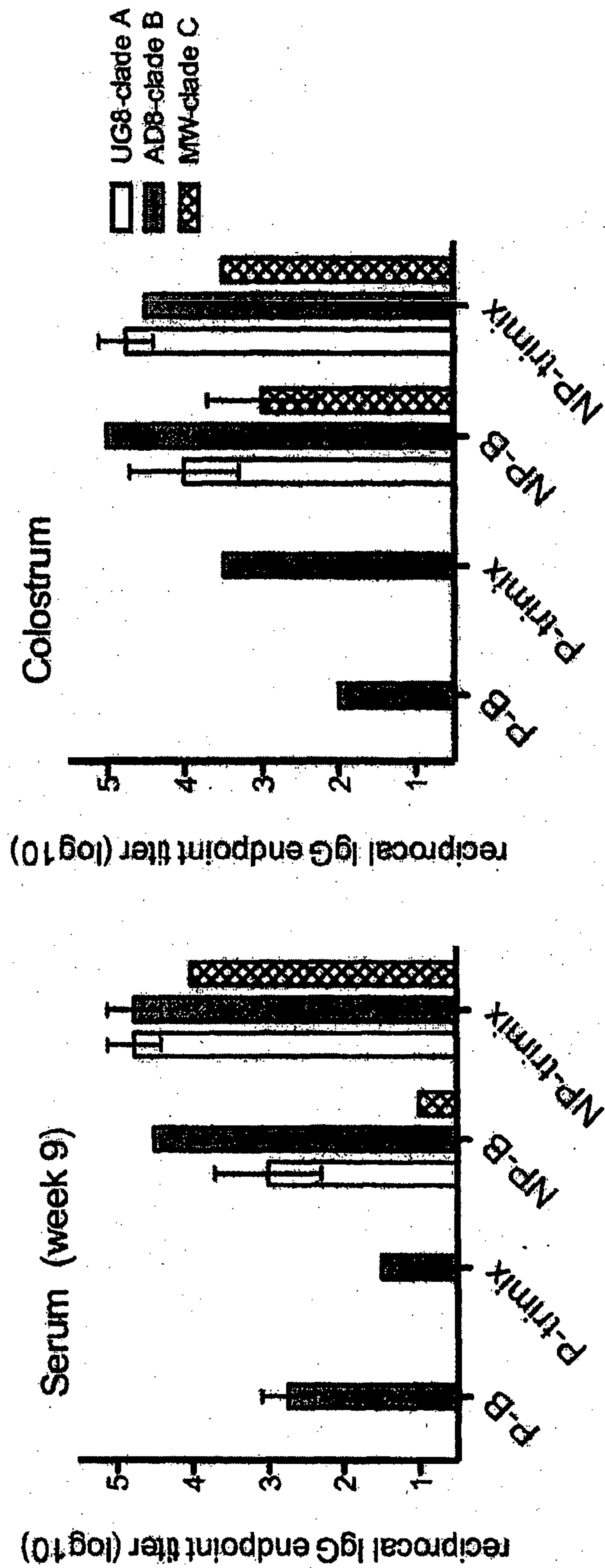


FIGURE 3

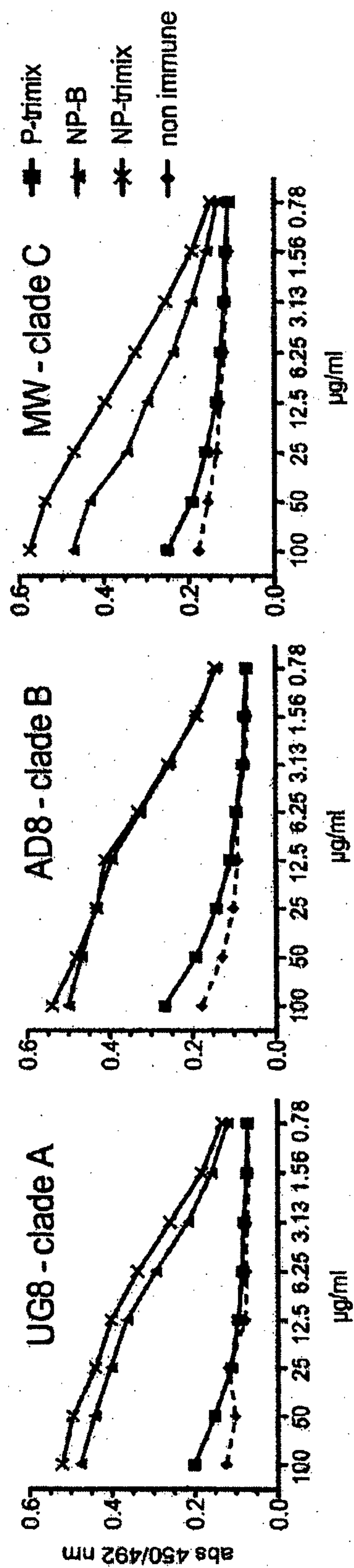


FIGURE 4

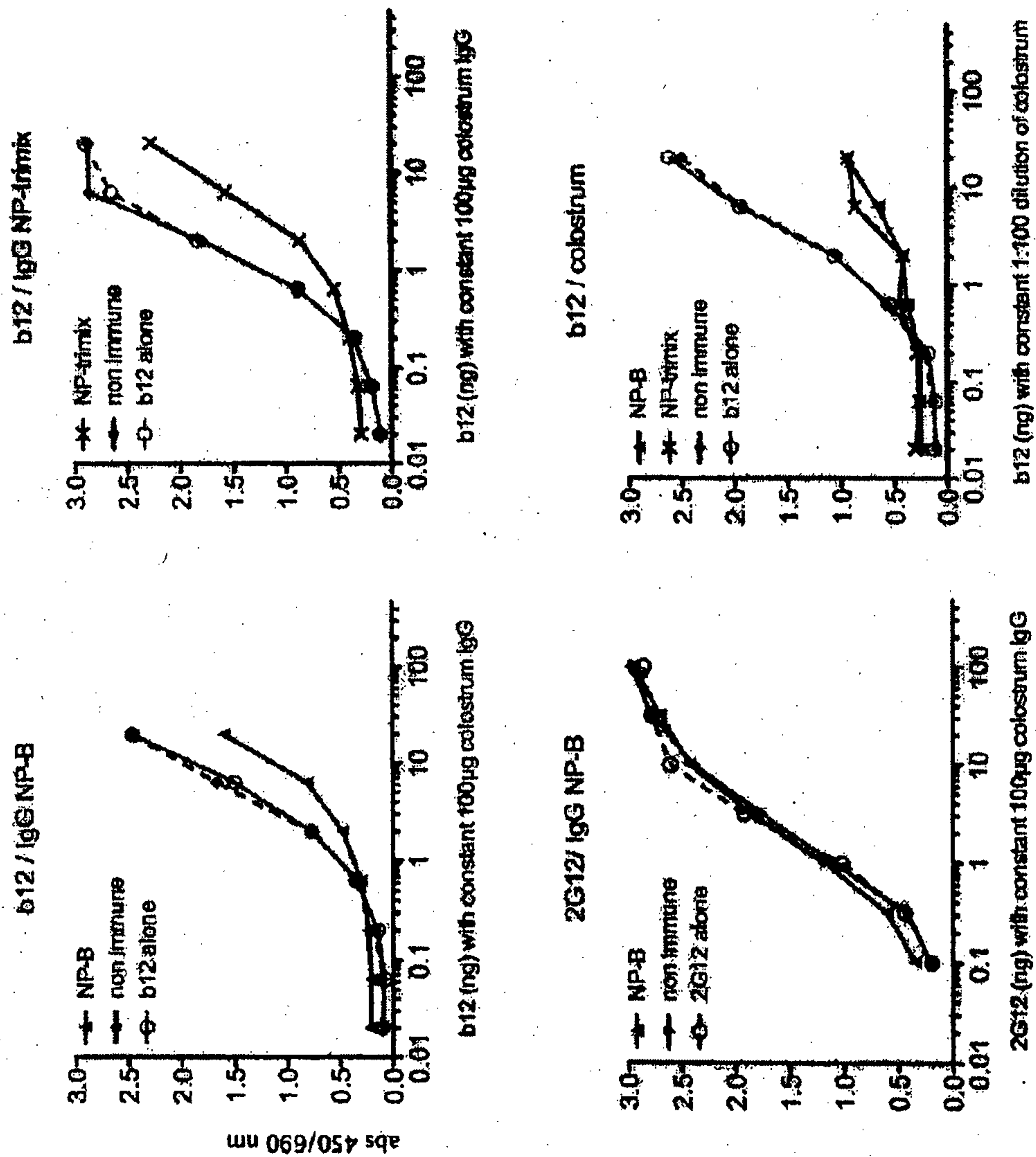


FIGURE 5

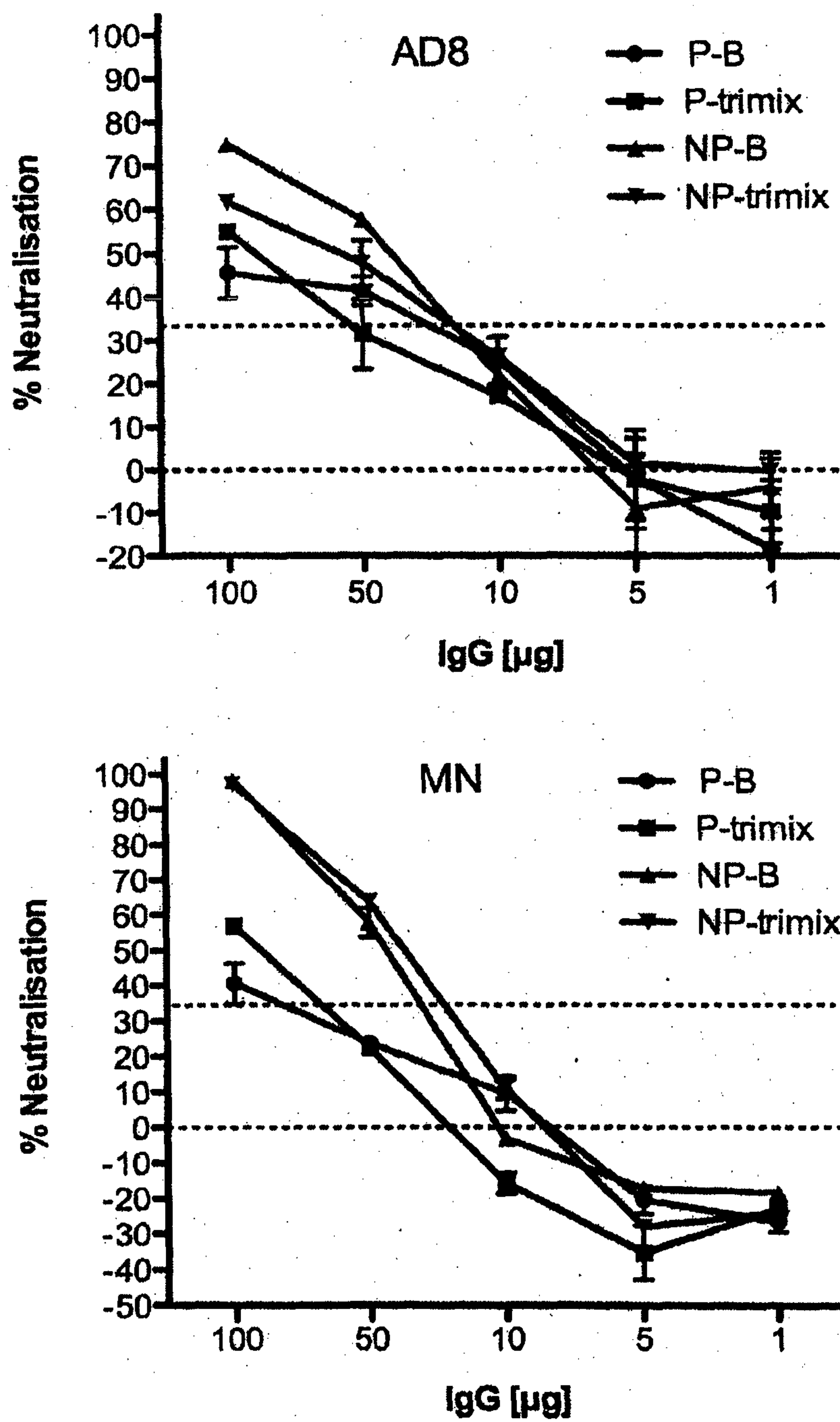


FIGURE 6

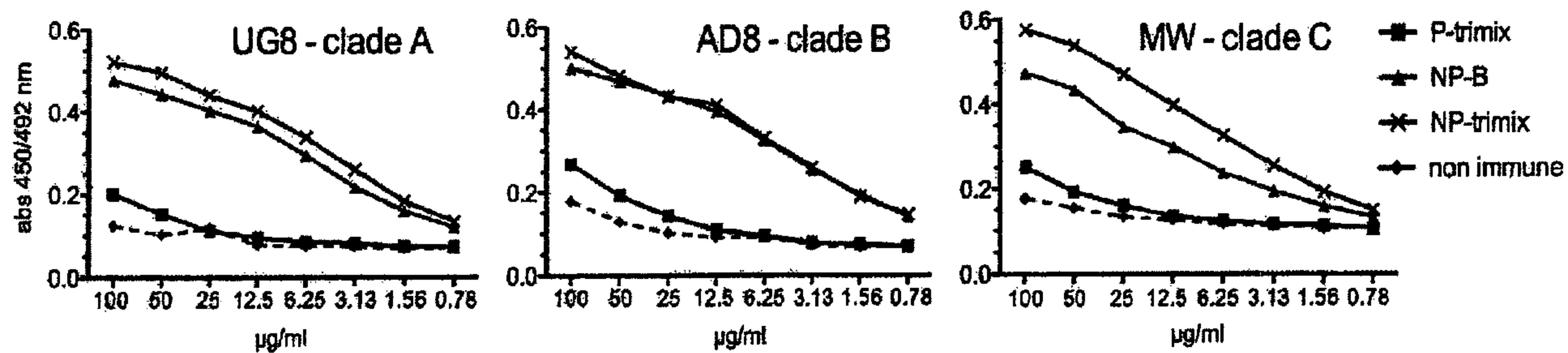


FIGURE 4