



## **PRESS RELEASE**

# **Freudenberg expands future market of medical technology**

## **Freudenberg Group acquires 50 percent stake in VistaMed Ltd.**

**Weinheim, Germany - April 6, 2010 - The Freudenberg Group and its affiliate Helix Medical Europe have acquired a 50 percent share of VistaMed Ltd., the Irish manufacturer of components for medical devices. The two companies are expecting the cooperation to provide synergies in the development of products and services as well as market penetration. With this move, the Freudenberg Group is expanding its activities in this growth industry. Only a year ago, Freudenberg set up its European headquarters for medical technology in Kaiserslautern, Germany.**

VistaMed, with its headquarters in Carrick-on-Shannon, has two production facilities in Ireland, where complex medical tubing systems and precision components for medical devices are produced under cleanroom conditions. Examples of applications include catheters for minimally invasive surgical procedures and endoscopic components. Having expert knowledge in the industry, the company regards itself as a strategic product development partner with its customers. Established in 1997, VistaMed employs 85 people. “This technological alliance with VistaMed provides greater opportunities for both companies to develop and manufacture a broader range of innovative products and services for global customers”, said Jorg Schneewind, President and CEO of Helix Medical, LLC.

The Irish company is bringing its own experience in the development and manufacture of medical tubing as well as catheters into the joint venture. As a global company, Freudenberg brings 160 years of materials expertise and global manufacturing excellence.

The VistaMed acquisition further underscores Freudenberg’s commitment to this growth industry – which started in 2004 with the acquisition of Jenline Industries, a U.S. manufacturer of liquid silicone rubber products for the medical device and healthcare market. The Group then went on to purchase Helix Medical in California in 2006, followed by APEC in 2008 with production facilities in California and China. The businesses were integrated into one company called Helix Medical, LLC, headquartered in Carpinteria, California. The well recognized Helix Medical brand name is being utilized by the Freudenberg Group to identify their worldwide medical technology business.

In March, 2009, the Freudenberg Group announced the establishment of a European headquarters for medical technology in Kaiserslautern, Germany where production was launched in March 2010.

The management of VistaMed will continue to run the company and bring their valuable experience and knowledge into the Freudenberg Group.

From the new joint venture Freudenberg is expecting advantages in the development of products and services to emerge. At the same time, the range of materials used and the product spectrum can be broadened. Freudenberg's aims are to serve its global customers even more comprehensively as well as to expand the development and production of orders for complete catheter systems in accordance with customer-specific requirements.

### **About Helix Medical**

Helix Medical is a global custom manufacturer for the medical device, healthcare, pharmaceutical, IVD, and biotech industries with six manufacturing operations worldwide. Helix Medical Europe, headquartered in Kaiserslautern, Germany, is a wholly owned division of Freudenberg & Co. and was established in 2009. Medical manufacturing capabilities worldwide include silicone molding, thermoplastic molding, extrusion, assembly, and packaging. Helix Medical also manufactures the proprietary HelixMark® line of silicone tubing and fluid handling components for the pharmaceutical and biotech markets. Helix Medical, LLC is a sister company to Helix Medical Europe and was established in 1984. It is headquartered in Carpinteria, California. [www.helixmedical.com](http://www.helixmedical.com)

### **About the Freudenberg Group**

Freudenberg is a family company offering its customers technically challenging product solutions and services. The Freudenberg Group is first and foremost a supplier specializing in seals and vibration control technology, nonwovens, filtration, lubricants and release agents as well as mechatronic products. The end-user can find modern Freudenberg household products in the shops under the brand names of vileda®, O´Cedar® and Wettex®. And especially for mid-size companies Freudenberg develops software solutions and IT services. The Freudenberg Group employs around 33,000 people in 52 countries and generated sales of more than 5 billion euros in 2008. For further information, please go to [www.freudenberg.de](http://www.freudenberg.de).

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