Gabriela León

Gresmex (Virufin)

“ I saw an opportunity to create what could be the penicillin of the future. ”

COUNTRY	Mexico
INDUSTRY	Healthcare
EMPLOYEES	85
YEAR SELECTED	2012
WEBSITE	www.virufin.mx

COMPANY SNAPSHOT

Sometimes the best medical breakthroughs come from unexpected places. Viruses are notoriously difficult to protect against without using highly corrosive or toxic substances, but, with the development and commercialization of Virufin, Gabriela León, CEO of Gresmex, is set to change that. This active ingredient is clinically proven to not only protect against but eliminate viruses and virtually all other types of pathogens, including bacteria, fungi, and spores—all without harming healthy cells. Gabriela's innovation is more than wishful thinking: COFEPRIS, the Mexican drug approval authority, has certified the disinfectant and antiseptic properties of Gresmex's Eviter line of medical sanitizers and creams, which contains Virufin. Their line has also been certified for its ability to eliminate the Influenza A H1N1 Virus and has International PCT Patent pending status, and is hoping to earn FDA drug approval for what could be the penicillin of the future.

Gabriela might not have the typical training of a scientist, but, as a serial entrepreneur, she knows a good deal about business. She earned a degree in biochemical engineering from Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana in 1988. After graduation, Gabriela worked for Cerveceria Modelo as a quality control analyst. In 1990, she left and founded a family business, Grupo Povimex, that focused on maintaining storage sites for potable water sources. Starting in 1995, Gabriela served as the director of operations at Industrias Invet. However, Gabriela felt something was missing: she wanted to use her research and creative skills to help people. In 1999, she left the company but maintained her relationship with Walmart, which still wanted to purchase household care products from her. Gabriela followed her entrepreneurial calling and, with her brother Sergio, started Gresmex, which then specialized in private label antibacterial and household care products.

Gresmex saw success in the private label business, growing to develop over 84 formulas for retail customers and securing a distribution contract with Wal-Mart to supply one of its private label brands. It was business as usual until 2008, when Gabriela and her two-year-old son became severely ill with a case of the rotavirus. Gabriela tried everything from over-the-counter products to prescription medications, but nothing was effective against the viral infection. Gabriela voiced her frustrations to Tesy Lopez, an independent researcher hired by Gresmex to perform R&D. Through their collaboration, Gabriela and Tesy produced the groundbreaking concept behind Virufin, applied for a patent, and developed the Eviter line around the powerful substance.

Eviter is Gresmex's line of medical- and surgical-grade sanitizers, soaps, and antiseptic creams that the company sells primarily to hospitals and healthcare distributors. Eviter products are 99.99% effective against pathogens, including common viruses like rotavirus, adenovirus, the flu, herpes, varicella, miseales, and syncytial virus. These products are not only more effective than standard disinfectants, they are also substantially cheaper to produce and sell. Additionally, Eviter products are bioselective—they act without harming healthy cells. The effectiveness and bioselective nature of Virufin are certified by the National Institute of Respiratory Diseases and by the Instiuto de Seguridad y Servicios Sociales de los Trabajadores del Estado.