High-yield frictional brush biopsy using a hooked fabric (Kylon®) tapered-tip disposable “frictional” curette with a 360-degree rotational method significantly reduces the incidence of “insufficient” histological diagnoses that lead to patient recall. The tissue-filled fabric covered tip is detached and placed in the vial for lab transport, unlike any other curette. Diedrich et al (1) studied a stable practice of 81 physician and nurse colposcopists and pathologists blinded to the retrospectively conducted audit, converting their practice from conventional stainless-steel Kevorkian endocervical curettage (n=9234) (insertion and withdrawal sharp curettage method with separate tissue collection) to rotational frictional curettage using the Soft-ECC® device (n=774). Fabric based curettage reduced the insufficient rate of curettage (requiring patient recall and repeat curettage) from 4.2% (Kevorkian) to 0.6% (Fabric-based) (p<.001), while increasing the rate of CIN 2+ diagnosis to 3.9% from the 2.3% rate obtained with sharp curettage (p<.01).

A published peer-reviewed randomized trial by Winter et al. (2) has already established the rotational brush biopsy and simultaneous tissue trapping using Soft-ECC® resulted in a median (self-reported) patient pain score of 2/10 compared with the cohort which received the “sharp insert-withdraw method” of Kevorkian curettage that sustained a median pain score of 6/10 Likert scale (p<.0001). A similar statistically significant reduction in pain and bleeding was seen with ectocervical biopsy with frictional/rotational fabric tipped devices versus conventional punch biopsy forceps (SoftBiopsy®).

Research shows that Kevorkian curettage has limitations including missing canal surface lesions during the “insert/withdraw” method. Even with much variation in the scraping force of the examiner, an endocervical sample can add up to 8.6% more diagnoses of high grade CIN or cancer than can be achieved with ectocervical sampling alone. Investigators conclude that by adding ECC to the colposcopic workup, the highest-grade dysplasia or occult carcinoma can be diagnosed in some cases (3-6).

Histologics LLC, the manufacturer of the Soft-ECC® endocervical brush curette and the Soft-ECC-S® brush curette (for stenotic, short, or shallow services) invites colposcopists to practice the gentle approach allowing for a consistently abundant and reliable histologic sample to be obtained that may aid in diagnosis and guide therapy. This may enhance procedure compliance and reduce the need for repeat procedure(s).