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Roche launches Cobas Zika blood screening test

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Cobas Zika test expands Roche's industry-leading donor screening portfolio for blood-borne diseases in the CE market



Roche has announced the CE-IVD launch of the cobas® Zika test for use on the cobas® 6800/8800 Systems. The cobas Zika test detects Zika virus RNA in samples of human plasma and is intended for use in screening blood donations. Building onto Roche's comprehensive menu of donor screening assays, this launch represents an important milestone in the effort to protect the blood supply from Zika virus globally. Recent news from French authorities reporting three cases of Zika infection apparently acquired locally highlights ongoing Zika activity and the need for blood bank preparedness solutions for tropical diseases.

The Zika virus is mainly spread through the bite of infected mosquitoes. However, it is suspected that infected donor blood used for transfusions could serve as an additional transmission route for the Zika virus.

"Together with cobas® CHIKV/DENV to screen for chikungunya and dengue viruses, the cobas Zika test provides a solution for preserving blood safety in regions with local outbreaks of these tropical diseases or from donors who may have been exposed while traveling to outbreak areas," said Mario Torres, Head of Roche Molecular Diagnostics. "Launching the cobas Zika test in markets accepting the CE mark expands the emergency preparedness solution for our customers and helps minimize the risk of transmission through infected blood and plasma donations."

Roche worked closely with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to develop and launch the cobas Zika test in response to a public health crisis and ensure the safety of blood in the U.S. and its territories in 2017. Since then, the cobas Zika test has been used to screen millions of blood donations from the U.S. and Puerto Rico, helping to identify and remove more than 350 potentially infectious donations from the blood supply. Every year, there are more than 117 million blood donations worldwide. One blood donation has the potential to save as many as three lives, making a safe supply of blood and blood products extremely important for any patient that needs a transfusion.