

Roche statement on new variants of SARS-CoV-2 found in the UK

Basel, 23 December 2020

Roche has urgently analysed the sequences from the UK SARS-CoV-2 variants D614G and N501Y. We compared them to the design of all tests employed to detect an acute or past SARS-CoV-2 infection to understand any implication of these mutations. To date, these investigations have provided the following results:

- We do not anticipate the UK SARS-CoV-2 variants will impact the cobas® SARS-CoV-2 nor cobas® SARS-CoV-2 & Influenza A/B Tests for use on the cobas® 6800/8800 systems nor the cobas® SARS-CoV-2 & Influenza A/B Test for use on the cobas® Liat® System, because these mutations are in different regions from the target regions of the above mentioned tests. In addition, the dual-target design of the cobas® SARS-CoV-2 test allows the test to remain sensitive and robust despite the occurrence of variations in the virus' genome, i.e. if a mutation affects the detection of one target, the other target would still be detectable by the cobas® SARS-CoV-2 test. We will share further findings as soon as they become available.
- We do not anticipate that the UK SARS-CoV-2 variants will impact the Elecsys® Anti-SARS-CoV-2 Test, Elecsys® SARS-CoV-2 Antigen Test and Elecsys® Anti-SARS-CoV-2 S Test, SARS-CoV-2 Rapid Antigen Test and SARS-CoV-2 Rapid Antibody Test. To be further reassured we are carrying out additional investigations. For our SARS-CoV-2 Rapid Antigen Test we will perform in-vitro testing of the new variants and our test both independently and in collaboration with our partner SD Biosensor. We will share our findings, as soon as these investigations have concluded.

Our highly committed colleagues and partners have conducted these evaluations at an unprecedented speed and we are confident that we will be able to provide equally quick reassurance on the impact of potential future mutations on our tests.

About Roche

Roche is a global pioneer in pharmaceuticals and diagnostics focused on advancing science to improve people's lives. The combined strengths of pharmaceuticals and diagnostics under one roof have made Roche the leader in personalised healthcare – a strategy that aims to fit the right treatment to each patient in the best way possible.

Roche is the world's largest biotech company, with truly differentiated medicines in oncology, immunology, infectious diseases, ophthalmology and diseases of the central nervous system. Roche is also the world leader in in vitro diagnostics and tissue-based cancer diagnostics, and a frontrunner in diabetes management.

Founded in 1896, Roche continues to search for better ways to prevent, diagnose and treat diseases and make a sustainable contribution to society. The company also aims to improve patient access to medical innovations by working with all relevant stakeholders. More than thirty medicines developed by Roche are included in the World Health Organization Model Lists of Essential Medicines, among them life-saving antibiotics, antimalarials and cancer medicines. Moreover, for the twelfth consecutive year, Roche has been recognised as one of the most sustainable companies in the Pharmaceuticals Industry by the Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (DJSI).

The Roche Group, headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, is active in over 100 countries and in 2019 employed about 98,000 people worldwide. In 2019, Roche invested CHF 11.7 billion in R&D and posted sales of CHF 61.5 billion. Genentech, in the United States, is a wholly owned member of the Roche Group. Roche is the majority shareholder in Chugai Pharmaceutical, Japan. For more information, please visit www.roche.com.

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