

Press release

GENSPEED is funded by the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) for the development of a novel COVID19 rapid test

GENSPEED Biotech: Rapid test to detect both the antibodies and an acute virus infection within 15 minutes

Rainbach, Austria, May 4th 2020 +++ GENSPEED Biotech GmbH has received a grant from the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) for the development of a novel COVID-19 rapid test within the framework of the emergency call for research on COVID-19. In a first version, the test will allow the detection of antibodies against the virus in a single drop of blood within 15 minutes. In the final version, the test will simultaneously detect the immunological status and an acute infection with SARS-CoV-2. This will be the first Covid-19 point of care test to identify immune or acutely infected individuals on site, quickly and reliably.

Such assay can literally be used in any possible setting ranging from the general practitioner's office to testing of staff and visitors in healthcare facilities or companies, or even travellers at airports.

Early detection of acute infections with SARS-CoV-2 is essential to prevent the rapid spread of the virus. However, PCR-based tests for the detection of an acute viral infection usually take several hours and must be carried out in the laboratory. The result may only be available the next day at the earliest. On the other hand, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is becoming increasingly important to determine whether people have already been infected with the virus and have acquired immunity. For this purpose it must be determined whether there are virus-specific antibodies present in the blood. However, the conventional laboratory antibody assays take several hours, and the strip-tests for detecting the antibodies tend to be unreliable.

Novel dual COVID-19 rapid test under development

GENSPEED Biotech will now develop a new test format based on the existing GENSPEED technology as part of the FFG-funded project. In the final stage of development, the combined test will allow the simultaneous detection of viral antibodies as well as virus particles on site and in laboratory quality within only a few minutes. A single drop of blood from the fingertip and a nasal or throat swab will be sufficient to obtain the complete information. The GENSPEED protocol with less than 1 minute sample preparation and 15 minutes automated on-chip analysis conveniently provides the electronic results on a tablet computer.

For clinical evaluation GENSPEED Biotech is working with recognized medical research partners such as the Medical Faculty of the Johannes Kepler University, the Medical University of Graz, as well as the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute and the BOKU in Vienna.

Added value for everyone

In the near future, GENSPEED tests will provide immediate results at the point of need. This will eliminate the often costly and time-consuming sample logistics and delays. There are significant advantages for many areas: For example, more safety for medical and nursing professionals through simple and fast on-site testing, closures of pubs, shops or public institutions can be avoided if visitors can be tested before entry, more specific and local measures can be implemented based on the results, travel activities can continue after rapid testing and much more!

Dr. Sonja Kierstein, CTO of GENSPEED and project manager: "We are incredibly excited about the project, because we can make a significant contribution to the containment of the virus and are proud to be the only Upper Austrian company to be funded by FFG"

Dr. Max Sonnleitner, CEO of GENSPEED Biotech, is convinced that the test can be of essential importance both for people's health and for the economy: "Having a reliable test result directly on site and in a few minutes can help to return to true normality in many areas of life!"

In any case, the first COVID-19 measurement results are very promising.

Precise, laboratory-like results within a few minutes

GENSPEED Biotech offers a technology platform on which a new generation of rapid tests can be developed for medical diagnostics and various industrial applications. The technology combines microfluidics, miniaturized optoelectronics and automation into a compact, easy-to-use, reliable and CE-certified test system. As a multiplex Point-of-Care Test (xPOCT), the system allows the detection of up to 20 different analytes, such as bacteria, viruses or biomarkers in blood and other sample materials within minutes. The new test is based on a modified chip format (patent pending), which considerably expands the range of applications.

About GENSPEED Biotech GmbH

GENSPEED Biotech GmbH is an Austrian start-up company founded in late 2016. GENSPEED offers complete OEM test solutions based on its unique technology platform, on which a new generation of rapid tests for medical diagnostics and various industrial applications can be developed. GENSPEED Biotech develops, produces and distributes rapid tests based on the IVD-CE certified GENSPEED technology, including point-of-care tests for the rapid detection of hospital and periodontitis germs. The innovative technology is characterized by a unique combination of microfluidics, miniaturized optical detection and automation and enables the detection of bacteria, viruses or other biomarkers within minutes. It delivers precise and objective test results on site.

For more information about GENSPEED Biotech please visit: www.genspeed-biotech.com

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Note to editors:

Photos of the press release can be downloaded at the following link (in the press releases section):

http://www.genspeed-biotech.com/?page_id=504&lang=en



Text: The GENSPEED® technology will allow the rapid and simultaneous detection of antibodies and acute virus infections

Source: Wagner Gerhard Photography



Text: Dr. Sonja Kierstein (CTO) and Dr. Max Sonnleitner (CEO) with the compact GENSPEED® Point-of-Care Testing technology.

Source: Indrich Photography



Text: The new COVID19 COMPLETE rapid test will enable the determination of the immune status with simultaneous detection of an acute virus infection from a drop of blood within a few minutes (exemplary figure)

Source:: Wagner Gerhard Photography



Text: Ingo Katzmayr (left) and Michael Vogl (right) developing new GENSPEED tests in the laboratory.

Source: GENSPEED Biotech

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