



American Red Cross National Testing Laboratory and Medolac Laboratories enter into national milk bank donor testing agreement

Infectious disease testing will expand donor surveillance, making breast milk safer than ever

LAKE OSWEGO, Ore., Oct. 21, 2013 /PRNewswire-iReach/ -- As part of its ongoing commitment to provide the most advanced human milk donor testing, Medolac Laboratories has announced the signing of a groundbreaking testing agreement with the American Red Cross. This collaborative initiative expands existing breast milk donor screening to include a range of infectious disease tests furthering efforts to improve the safety of donor breast milk.

Elena Medo, Chairman and CEO of Medolac said "Our new testing collaboration is keeping with Medolac's strong dedication to ensuring that only the highest quality breast milk is sourced for Medolac's adapted donor milk products, particularly supply used in therapies for premature infants. We are committed to playing a leadership role, advancing and expanding donor test protocols and methods. We look forward to achieving those goals through essential partnerships like this one with the Red Cross, one of the premier providers of blood services and products."

Robert Roggeman, Vice President, Testing for the American Red Cross said "The Red Cross is pleased to be a key partner in Medolac's donor testing and to assist in their efforts to collect data that will help them establish a donor surveillance program. This partnership will facilitate the identification of trends in infectious disease transmission relating to breast milk donors."

A recent FDA backgrounder^[i] on Human Milk Banking identified the need for robust testing protocols that could assess the risk of infectious diseases in human milk through rapidly available donor testing. The Red Cross collaboration establishes an impressive array of blood tests that should address those concerns, including tests to detect the presence of harmful viruses and parasites. These include additional test protocols that only Medolac presently requires relating to Cytomegalovirus (CMV), West Nile Virus and T. cruzi (which causes Chagas Disease), as well as standard testing for HIV 1 and 2, HTLV I, II, HBV, HCV, and Syphilis.

Under the terms of the arrangement, the Red Cross will provide candidate donor blood testing, as well as ongoing testing for qualified donors across the United States, with the hope of expanding such services abroad. Candidates and current donors that do not meet minimum testing requirements are excluded from donating breast milk to partner milk banks until minimum requirements can be met.

Medolac only partners with milk banks whose "charters, structure, donor compensation, representation and activities [...] empower women and their families". Testing should be done with a high degree of sensitivity to donor interests. These requirements are specified in Medolac's publically available statement on "Corporate Responsibility and Commitment to Responsible Practices" which states that its interaction with Milk Banks should "represent the interests of mothers", and that all identifying data should be kept confidential, consistent with HIPAA and/or other legislative requirements.

About Medolac:

Medolac Laboratories develops innovative, adapted human milk products for clinical use, applying proprietary biopharmaceutical processing methods that preserve the immune components in human milk. Our vision is to offer accessible, safe, high quality nutritional care for critically ill infants in need. Medolac Laboratories is a Delaware corporation (Neolac Inc. dba Medolac) headquartered at Lake Oswego, Oregon in the Pacific Northwest of the United States.

About The American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit redcross.org or visit us on Twitter at [@RedCross](https://twitter.com/RedCross).

^[i]<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AdvisoryCommittees/CommitteesMeetingMaterials/PediatricAdvisoryCommittee/UCM235642.pdf>

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