

France's Sanofi to work with US Army on Zika vaccine

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French pharmaceuticals group Sanofi said Wednesday it would work with the US Army's Walter Reed Institute to develop a potential vaccine against the mosquito-borne Zika virus, linked to brain damage in newborns.

Sanofi said the Walter Reed Institute would "transfer its Zika ... vaccine technology to Sanofi Pasteur", the French group's vaccines unit, "opening the door for a broader collaboration with the US government."

The announcement comes hot on the heels of new research showing two prototype Zika vaccines, one of which was developed by the Walter Reed Institute, providing "complete protection against the Zika virus" in mice.

The findings, reported in *Nature* magazine last month, have boosted hopes that a jab can be developed to shield humans against the virus.

In Brazil, about 1.5 million people have been infected with Zika in an outbreak starting last year, and more than 1,600 babies have been born with abnormally small heads and brains.

Sanofi Pasteur, which last year brought out a vaccine against dengue—another mosquito-borne virus—is one of the leaders in the race to find a way to immunise people against Zika.

"We're looking at this from both a short- and long-term perspective,

collaborating to get into the clinic quicker to provide a vaccine in response to the current emergency, and adapting our own technology to ensure production capacity of a [vaccine](#) for years to come," David Loew, Sanofi's executive vice president said in a statement.

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