

Korea-based Seegene introduces PCR test for all VOCs in single tube

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The new assay identifies positive COVID-19 cases and distinguishes between Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, Omicron and its stealth version



Seegene Inc., South Korea based molecular diagnostics company, has unveiled another series of diagnostic test that detects the ever-changing COVID-19 variant landscape. The Novaplex™ SARS-CoV-2 Variants VII assay addresses Omicron and its stealth version, as well as other variants of concern (VOC). The new PCR test is found to be effective in helping governments and health authorities to fight current variants.

In a single tube, the new RT-PCR test targets a total of five analytes including the RdRP gene, which confirms positive COVID-19 cases, and three key Omicron S-gene mutations: E484A, N501Y, HV69/70 deletion. And it also targets Endo IC, which serves as a control to verify specimen validity. The assay was validated using variable nucleic acid of COVID-19 samples including Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, and Omicron cases.

This latest test can differentiate between the Omicron variant and its 'stealth' version. The newly emerging stealth version lacks certain features (HV69/70 deletion) that are being targeted by other PCR tests to identify the Omicron variant. Seegene's proprietary mTOCE (Tagging Oligonucleotide Cleavage and Extension) technology makes it possible to target multiple genetic mutations in S-gene so this test can accurately distinguish the new Stealth variant from standard Omicron.