

CSIR partners with TataMD for diagnostic testing for COVID-19

New Delhi, Nov 09 (India Science Wire): Tata Medical and Diagnostics Ltd. (TataMD), the healthcare venture from Tata Group, has announced the commercial launch of TataMD CHECK, novel diagnostic testing for COVID-19. TataMD CHECK will use FNCAS9 Editor-Limited Uniform Detection Assay (FELUDA), a CRISPR Cas-9 technology that was developed in India by CSIR- Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB) for Covid testing. It is the world's first CRISPR Cas-9 based diagnostic tool to be launched globally.

TataMD CHECK is a lab test and uses CRISPR-Cas9 Technology. The process of collecting patient samples, RNA extraction, and amplification, etc. remains the same but uses simple, less expensive equipment and produces quicker results due to a more agile process and AI-based automated result detection. It is a paper strip-based test with image-based visual result readout. It requires standard laboratory equipment and small batches of tests can be conducted. Moreover, it has a fast reaction time of 45-50 minutes in the laboratory and the total testing time from RNA-extracted samples in the lab to result is 75 minutes only, the company said.

It has been approved by the Indian Council of Medical Research and Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) and will be available through diagnostic centers and hospitals across India shortly. Tata MD CHECK offers laboratories, hospitals, and other healthcare providers to fast-track COVID diagnosis services to more people.

Commenting on the launch, Girish Krishnamurthy, CEO, Tata Medical and Diagnostics said, "Tata MD aims to be a trusted, long-term partner and helps shape the evolution of healthcare industry towards building a more inclusive and integrated patient-centric model. With TataMD CHECK, we are committed to significantly enhance the testing experience of the consumers as well as work with laboratories and hospitals to ensure wider availability and easier access to testing."

The pandemic has encouraged us to reflect on the healthcare sector and our role in bridging the many gaps that exist. "Our collaboration with R&D institutions will continue to be a critical part of our strategy to introduce new diagnostic technologies like CRISPR, and develop R&D-led healthcare solutions for consumers for COVID and other infectious diseases" said Krishnamurthy.

TataMD Check test kits will be manufactured at a quality-controlled production facility near Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The production plant presently has a capacity of producing 1 million kits in a month. TataMD is also tying up with leading diagnostic chains, hospitals, healthcare centers to enhance the adoption of these tests apart from partnering with Government agencies. (India Science Wire)

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