ICMR RECOMMENDS THE USE OF RAPID ANTIGEN TEST KIT ALONG WITH RT-PCR TEST FOR DIAGNOSIS OF COVID TEST

Indian Council of Medical Research, ICMR has recommended the use of rapid antigen test kits for diagnosis of COVID-19 in containment zones and healthcare settings in combination with the RT-PCR test.

The kits will allow faster diagnosis without laboratory examination. Rapid antigen test kit is a rapid chromatographic immuno assay for qualitative detection of specific antigens to SARS-CoV-2. It has been developed by a South Korea based company.

ICMR said in an advisory that suspected individuals who test negative for COVID-19 by rapid antigen test should be tested sequentially by RT-PCR to rule out infection, whereas a positive test should be considered as a true positive and does not need reconfirmation by RT-PCR test.

The Standard Q COVID-19 Ag detection can be interpreted as positive or negative after 15 minutes of putting the sample into the well by appearance of test and control lines, which can be read with a naked eye, requiring no specialized equipment. The maximum duration for interpreting a positive or negative test is 30 minutes. After that the test strip should be discarded.