

March 31, 2022

KANEKA CORPORATION

Kaneka Launches New PCR Test Kit for Identifying the COVID-19 Omicron (BA.1) and "Stealth" Omicron (BA.2) Variants

- Test kit capable of detecting both types of Omicron variants with a single PCR test -

On March 31, Kaneka Corporation (Headquarters: Minato-ku, Tokyo; President: Minoru Tanaka) released KANEKA RT-PCR Kit “SARS-CoV-2 (Omicron/Delta) ver.2”, a real-time PCR test kit capable of simultaneously detecting the Omicron (BA.1), "Stealth" Omicron (BA.2), and Delta variants of COVID-19. The kit has a suggested retail price of 121,000 yen (for 100 tests), including tax.

This test kit uses a proprietary reagent developed using Kaneka's molecular testing-related technologies to detect the presence of three variants with a single PCR test. This is expected to help reduce the burden placed by testing and to assist with selecting the best suitable drugs and treatment approaches for each variant in clinical settings.

Kaneka has already released the KANEKA Direct RT-PCR Kit SARS-CoV-2, an in-vitro diagnostic reagent that uses Kaneka's original sample processing technology to produce test results in less than an hour, KANEKA RT-PCR Kit “SARS-CoV-2 (L452R/E484Q/E484K/N501Y)”, which can detect four variants simultaneously, and KANEKA RT-PCR Kit “SARS-CoV-2 (Omicron/Delta)” which can detect the Delta and Omicron variants of COVID-19. These Kaneka products are being used at major sporting events and for pre-travel PCR testing, as well as in medical facilities and testing centers. These products make it possible to quickly test large numbers of samples.

Kaneka is taking a wide range of measures to combat COVID-19. These include the launching of the “Infection Initiative Team,” which conducts research and development regarding infection control measures including COVID-19, expanding our lineup of PCR test kits, performing contract manufacturing of DNA vaccine APIs and intermediates, developing antibody drugs, supplying PCR testing reagents and testing kits, and shipping vaccine using temperature-controlled packages.

*. Relationship between detected COVID-19 mutations and variants (+: positive, -: negative)

E484A (characteristic of the BA.1, BA.2)	N856K (characteristic of the BA.1)	L452R (characteristic of the Delta)	Determination	
+	+	-		BA.1
+	-	-		BA.2
-	-	+		Delta

These refer to mutations of the amino acids in viral spike proteins. The names are based on the mutation. In the

E484A mutation, the spike protein has changed from E (glutamine acid) to A (alanine). In the N856K mutation, the change was from N (asparagine) to K (lysine). In the L452R mutation, it was from L (lysine) to R (arginine).