

Eurofins publishes method for early detection of asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 virus spreaders, that does not require human PCR clinical testing

01 July 2020

Although employees showing COVID-19 symptoms are currently discouraged from going to work, significant workplace COVID-19 outbreaks were recently reported. Virus spread by asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infected individuals has been reported to be a significant cause of contamination clusters. Yet, other than PCR testing every employee each day using an invasive nasal or nasopharyngeal swab, few options exist to detect asymptomatic virus spreaders who can contaminate other employees or visitors.

Following an extensive study (1) involving over 6,300 PCR tests at nine office and industrial locations in Europe and North America, Eurofins demonstrated that its Eurofins COVID-19 Sentinel™ RT-PCR environmental surfaces tests can contribute to detecting asymptomatic virus spreaders.

Eurofins is launching Eurofins COVID-19 Sentinel™ worldwide today as part of its SAFER@WORK™ programme. Through a range of comprehensive testing solutions, including waste water testing, work environment surface testing and worn mask testing, Eurofins COVID-19 Sentinel™ provides an early warning of the presence of SARS-CoV-2 amongst large populations at a given site (e.g. a city, factories, education institutions, government and public service sites, nursing homes), before the virus spreads too broadly. If positive results are found, employees present in the rooms tested can be isolated and advised to get tested by clinical RT-PCR.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, governments and employers have deployed a set of common measures to control the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in workplaces and public environments, such as frequent disinfection, social distancing, work from home policies, or regular employee testing. With the growing understanding of the potential spread of the virus through pre- and asymptomatic carriers, and additional barriers to personal testing, such as inconvenience, expense and invasiveness, businesses, education, public and government bodies are looking for non-invasive cost-effective ways to monitor for early warning signs of a potential outbreak.

This is why Eurofins developed the Eurofins COVID-19 Sentinel™ programme, which is affordable, easily organised and non-invasive. The Eurofins COVID-19 Sentinel™ monitoring allows governments and companies to early detect the presence of asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic virus carriers, at times before anyone is aware of the issue, and to assess effectiveness of workplace COVID-19 management plans.

The Eurofins Sentinel™ programme relies on two main environmental testing solutions: wastewater testing and surface testing.

Eurofins COVID-19 Sentinel™ wastewater testing can be used as a leading indicator of the infection in a community or work site, at a very early stage. If this approach is used for individual companies or sites, frequent monitoring of wastewater provides an early indication of outbreak at a site. Eurofins developed an optimised wastewater testing method with high sensitivity.

Eurofins COVID-19 Sentinel™ surface testing allows sites to detect the presence of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in the workplace and to assess the efficiency of prevention measures. Through a Eurofins led study over a two-week period in nine workplace locations across the world (1), it was demonstrated that sites with COVID-19 contaminated surfaces were ten times more likely to have clinically positive employees than locations with no or very few positive surfaces (both employees (841 tests) and high-frequency touch point environmental surfaces (5,500 tests) were tested in parallel for SARS-CoV-2 using Eurofins Sentinel™ RT-PCR methods).

As part of Eurofins SAFER@WORK™, the Eurofins COVID-19 Sentinel™ programme can be organised with minimal disruption, is non-invasive and a cost-effective way to monitor any resurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Eurofins experts can also support public and private institutions in developing a tailor-made monitoring programme and in analysing results with efficient tracking systems such as surface heat mapping. In case of any resurgence of COVID-19, the Eurofins COVID-19 Sentinel™ programme subscribers can have access to Eurofins comprehensive range of solutions, including a broad set of clinical testing solutions (PCR and antibodies) as well as auditing/inspection services provided by Eurofins Assurance and Inspection.

- (1) Sentinel Coronavirus Environmental Monitoring Can Contribute to Detecting Asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 Virus Spreaders and Can Verify Effectiveness of Workplace COVID-19 Controls
<https://medrxiv.org/cgi/content/short/2020.06.24.20131185v1>

Notes to Editors:

For more information, please visit www.eurofins.com or contact:

Investor Relations
Eurofins Scientific SE
Phone: +32 2 766 1620
E-mail: ir@eurofins.com

About Eurofins – the global leader in bio-analysis

Eurofins Scientific, through its subsidiaries (hereinafter “Eurofins” or “the Group”), believes it is the global leader in food, environmental, pharmaceutical and cosmetics products testing and in agrosience CRO services. It is also one of the global independent market leaders in certain testing and laboratory services for genomics, discovery pharmacology, forensics, CDMO, advanced material sciences and in the support of clinical studies. In addition, Eurofins is one of the leading global emerging players in esoteric and molecular clinical diagnostic testing. With over **47,000 staff** across a network of more than 900 independent companies in over **50 countries** generally specialised by end client markets and operating more than **800 laboratories**, Eurofins offers a portfolio of over **200,000 analytical methods** to evaluate the safety, identity, composition, authenticity, origin, traceability and purity of a wide range of products, as well as providing innovative clinical diagnostic testing services. The Group’s objective is to provide customers with high-quality and innovative services, accurate results on time and, when requested, expert advice by its highly-qualified staff.

Eurofins is committed to pursuing its dynamic growth strategy by expanding both its technology portfolio and its geographic reach. Through R&D and acquisitions, the Group draws on the latest developments in the field of biotechnology and analytical chemistry to offer its clients unique analytical solutions and a very large range of testing methods.

As one of the most innovative and quality-oriented international groups in its industry, Eurofins is ideally positioned to support its clients’ increasingly stringent quality and safety standards and the increasing demands of regulatory authorities and healthcare practitioners around the world.

Shares in Eurofins Scientific are listed on the Euronext Paris Stock Exchange (ISIN FR0000038259, Reuters EUFI.PA, Bloomberg ERF FP).

Important disclaimer:

This press release contains forward-looking statements and estimates that involve risks and uncertainties. The forward-looking statements and estimates contained herein represent the judgment of Eurofins Scientific's management as of the date of this release. These forward-looking statements are not guarantees for future performance, and the forward-looking events discussed in this release may not occur. Eurofins Scientific disclaims any intent or obligation to update any of these forward-looking statements and estimates. All statements and estimates are made based on the information available to the Company's management as of the date of publication, but no guarantees can be made as to their completeness or validity.