



## **Eurofins Technologies announces launch of RT PCR kits for rapid detection of SARS-CoV-2 variant B.1.1529**

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Eurofins Technologies continues to innovate and develop a wide range of diagnostic solutions for COVID-19, particularly in response to the threat of emerging mutations.

Researchers have identified a new SARS-CoV-2 variant with a concerning high number of mutations in the spike protein. The variant, first identified in Botswana in November 2021, is spreading rapidly across South Africa.

The variant contains more than 30 mutations to the spike protein — the SARS-CoV-2 protein that recognises host cells and is the main target of the body's natural or vaccine induced immune responses. Similar mutations found in variants such as Delta and Alpha have been linked to heightened infection rates and potential resistance to infection-blocking antibodies [1]. However, the combination of these mutations seems to be unique to this variant. No related variants have so far been identified [2].

It is critical to quickly identify clusters to limit spread of this variant. Eurofins, through Gold Standard Diagnostics Europe, provides the toolset to rapidly identify the variant B.1.1.529. GSD NovaType Select is a set of RT-PCR assays to specifically detect mutations in the genome of SARS-CoV-2 in around 1 hour, much faster than genome sequencing methods.

GSD NovaType Select P681H can differentiate variant B.1.1.529 from the currently dominant Delta variant and can be used as a large-scale screening test for PCR positive samples. Additionally, all samples positive for the mutation P681H should be tested using GSD NovaType Select T478K and K417N to further differentiate B.1.1.529 from other circulating SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern [3].

Gilles Martin, Eurofins CEO said: "I am very pleased with the speed at which we have brought to market a new test for the detection of this variant. We have maintained significant testing capacity across our markets, which together with innovations such as this, positions us very well to help deliver highly accurate, variant-detecting COVID tests at significant scale, to help navigate the pandemic."

### *References:*

- [1] <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-03552-w>
- [2] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vh4XMueP1zQ&t=709s>
- [3] <https://www.who.int/en/activities/tracking-SARS-CoV-2-variants/>

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