



भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान अनुसंधान परिषद
स्वास्थ्य अनुसंधान विभाग
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अपर महानिदेशक
Dr. G. S. Toteja
Additional Director General

D.O.No.ECD/COVID19/Misc./2020
Dated: 22nd April 2020

To

Chief Secretaries
(all States)

Subject: Protocol for using Rapid antibody test – regarding

I am writing to you, with respect to issues raised by a few states about rapid antibody tests. In its advisory dated 17th April 2020, ICMR had clearly laid down the scope, purpose and usage of the rapid antibody tests.

ICMR has always emphasized that the confirmatory test for diagnosis of COVID-19 infection is RT – PCR test of throat and/ or nasal swab, which detects virus at early stage.

I would again reiterate that antibody rapid tests are largely to be used as a tool for surveillance with respect to formation of antibody in persons exposed to the virus. Globally also, the utility of this test is evolving and it is currently being used for detecting the formation of antibodies in individuals. These test results are also dependent on field conditions.

We have been given to understand that many States have procured such kits and on State's request, ICMR has also arranged and made available rapid antibody test kits with the clear understanding that these tests cannot replace the RT-PCR tests to diagnose the COVID-19 cases.

However, to further assist the States, ICMR will continue to collect data from various States to assess the scope and extent of utility of these rapid antibody tests in fields conditions of our country and will keep advising the States on regular basis.

In view of this, States are advised to follow the prescribed protocol for these tests and use it for the purposes for which these are meant. It is reiterated that to contain Corona Virus infection, RT-PCR tests must be continued vigorously as the principal diagnostic tests.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

(G.S. Toteja)