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BioReference Laboratories Announces Readiness for COVID-19 Testing if the Omicron COVID-19 Variant Emerges in The U.S.

ELMWOOD PARK, N.J., Nov. 29, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- [BioReference Laboratories, Inc.](https://www.bioreference.com), an OPKO Health company (NASDAQ: OPK), announced COVID-19 testing preparedness for the Omicron Variant. BioReference's PCR diagnostic tests for SARS-CoV-2 COVID-19 are based on recognizing specific RNA target genes that are common to all coronaviruses.



To date, the diagnostic targets have not changed with the novel COVID-19 variants. The changes seem to be occurring within the Spike (S)-gene responsible for the spike protein and other genes unrelated to the diagnostic targets used for making the diagnosis. The Spike protein is responsible for attaching the virus to human cells via the angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2) receptor binding protein. It is predominantly the structure of the S-gene protein that has been changing with the different variants. These changes do not interfere with the high throughput RT/PCR assays as these tests all have multiple genomic targets.

"The emergence of the Omicron Variant should have no impact on our ability to diagnose the presence of COVID-19 with our lab based PCR platforms and point of care/rapid devices," said Jon R. Cohen, M.D., Executive Chairman of BioReference Laboratories. "We are committed to maintaining our existing testing capacity and increasing that capacity to mid-pandemic levels as the need arises."

BioReference has four laboratory-based PCR testing facilities including Elmwood Park, NJ, Melbourne, FL, Houston, TX and Burbank, CA. In addition, BioReference has more than 200 of rapid, Point-of-Care COVID-19 testing locations around the country. BioReference has performed over 19 million PCR tests and more 1 million Point-of-Care tests since the pandemic began.

For more information related to BioReference's COVID-19 testing, please visit www.bioreference.com.

About BioReference Laboratories, Inc.

BioReference Laboratories, Inc., is one of the largest full-service specialty laboratories in the United States that gives healthcare providers and patients the power to make confident healthcare decisions. With a focus on genetics, oncology, urology and women's health, BioReference offers comprehensive test solutions and unparalleled expertise based on a 40-year legacy of proven science. The company is in-network with the largest health plans in the United States, serves approximately 19 million patients annually, operates a network of 11 laboratory locations, and is backed by a medical staff of more than 300 M.D., D.O., Ph.D., genetic counselors and other professional clinical and scientific personnel. With a national footprint and niche market experience, BioReference provides credible and innovative solutions that meet the needs of employers, governmental agencies, educational systems, hospitals and health systems, correctional institutions, sports leagues, travel and leisure industries, and retail markets. BioReference provides industry-leading custom solutions for COVID-19, including point-of-care testing and large-scale screening programs. <https://www.bioreference.com/>

About OPKO Health

OPKO is a multinational biopharmaceutical and diagnostics company that seeks to establish industry-leading positions in large, rapidly growing markets by leveraging its discovery, development, and commercialization expertise and novel and proprietary technologies. For more information, visit www.opko.com.

Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains "forward-looking statements," as that term is defined under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 (PSLRA), which statements may be identified by words such as "expects," "plans," "projects," "will," "may," "anticipates," "believes," "should," "intends," "estimates," and other words of similar meaning, particularly statements regarding BioReference's COVID-19 testing capacities, the ability of our platforms to diagnose COVID-19 as well as other non-historical statements about our expectations, beliefs or intentions regarding our business, technologies and products, financial condition, strategies or prospects. Many factors could cause our actual activities or results to differ materially from the activities and results anticipated in forward-looking statements. These factors include those described in the OPKO Health, Inc. Annual Reports on Form 10-K filed and to be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission and in its other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. In addition, forward-looking statements may also be adversely affected by general market factors, competitive product development, product availability, federal and state regulations and legislation, the regulatory process for new products, among other factors. The forward-looking statements contained in this press release speak only as of the date the statements were made, and we do not undertake any obligation to update forward-looking statements. We intend that all forward-looking statements be subject to the safe-harbor provisions of the PSLRA.

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