

Press release - BioVariance Lab successfully performs PCR pooling tests at schools

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In cooperation with the Administrative District Office, the Health Department, the BRK and some schools in the county of Tirschenreuth, the BioVariance laboratory recently started a pilot project for PCR testing of pupils and their teachers. A new gargle-method has been developed to enable soon the area-wide SARS-CoV-2 testing of all pupils twice a week.

Here, the pupils gargle with a small amount of tap water at home and divide this sample fifty-fifty into two tubes. At school, the first half of the sample is then poured in a common cup for each class, the second tube is stored individually. This "pool" of several samples is tested for SARS-CoV-2 in the BioVariance laboratory using the established PCR method. The PCR is highly sensitive that even a single positive pupil can be detected in a pool of otherwise negative samples. If the pool result is positive, the corresponding school must be informed immediately. Then the second sample tubes of the class with the positive pool test are collected and tested individually by PCR on the same day to identify the positive person.

By now, eight schools are participating in this pilot project. More schools are supposed to follow in the next days and weeks. Further, the gargle method is currently also examined for the possible use in day-care centers.

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