

## Dr Jitendra Singh Launches Celiac Disease Diagnostics Kits Commercially

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Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister for Science and Technology, Government of India, launched Diagnostic kits for Celiac Disease at an event held in the International Centre of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), New Delhi, today, in the presence of Prof. K. VijayRaghavan, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, Prof. Mauro Giacca, Director-General, ICGEB, Trieste, Italy and other dignitaries.

These kits have been developed through a collaborative, multi-institutional, inter-disciplinary approach funded by the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India. The participating institutions were ICGEB, New Delhi, Translational Health Science and Technology Institute, Gurgaon; All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, and M/s J. Mitra and Co., New Delhi (Industrial partner).

Two types of diagnostic kits would now be available:

- (i) Celiac Microlisa - based on indirect ELISA; and
- (ii) Celiac Card - a point of care test that gives result in 20 minutes.

Celiac Microlisa is useful for centralized diagnostic laboratories with adequate infrastructure where large number of samples could be handled. The Celiac Card can be used by smaller hospitals and clinics which lack adequate facilities.

The newly launched diagnostic kits are expected to cater to the need for accurate identification of Celiac Disease in Indian population. The disease is a lifelong digestive and auto-immune disorder that results in damage to the lining of the small intestine when foods with gluten such as wheat, rye, barley and oats are eaten. The affected individuals display symptoms like prolonged diarrhea, abdominal fullness and anemia, owing to decreased absorption of nutrients by the intestine. The kits would now be made commercially available by M/s J. Mitra & Co. Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi. These indigenous kits are rapid, sensitive, specific and would be much cheaper as compared to the imported kits.