



Laboratory Medicine in the Era of Disruptive Technology

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Laboratory impact of rapid molecular tests for respiratory tract infections

Yu Kyung Kim

Department of Laboratory Medicine, Kyungpook National University Hospital, Daegu, Republic of Korea

Respiratory tract infections are caused by many viral and bacterial pathogens and are the second most common cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide. At present, patients presenting with acute respiratory tract infections are started on empiric antimicrobial treatment for presumed acute bacterial infection. In cases of viral respiratory infections, main purpose of rapid POC test is to distinguish viral and bacterial infections and inform antiviral therapy.

The FilmArray respiratory panel detects 20 pathogens in respiratory specimens using polymerase chain reaction. This end-to-end molecular system includes automation of nucleic acid extraction, an initial reverse transcription and multiplex PCR. We performed FilmArray respiratory testing in a molecular laboratory at a Yeungnam University hospital.