

ABIN7012786

# Small Sample Competition ELISA Kit for Cortisol

Various Species

96 tests

For research use only

Not for use in clinical diagnostic procedures

Version Aug 2024

## Intended use

The kit is a small sample competitive inhibition enzyme immunoassay technique for the in vitro quantitative measurement in various sample types.

## Reagents and materials provided

- Pre-coated, ready to use 96-well strip plate, flat bottom
- Plate sealer for 96 wells
- Reference Standard
- Standard Diluent
- Detection Reagent A
- Detection Reagent B
- Assay Diluent A
- Assay Diluent B
- Reagent Diluent (if Detection Reagent is lyophilized)
- TMB Substrate
- Stop Solution
- Wash Buffer (30 x concentrate)
- Instruction manual

## Materials required but not supplied

1. Microplate reader with  $450 \pm 10\text{nm}$  filter.
2. Precision single or multi-channel pipettes and disposable tips.
3. Microcentrifuge tubes for diluting samples.
4. Deionized or distilled water.
5. Absorbent paper for blotting the microtiter plate.
6. Container for Wash Solution
7. Incubator capable of maintaining  $37\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ .
8.  $0.01\text{mol/L}$  (or  $1\times$ ) Phosphate Buffered Saline (PBS), pH7.0-7.2.

## Storage of the kit

1. For unopened kit: All reagents should be stored according to the labels on the vials. The Standard, Detection Reagent A, Detection Reagent B, and 96-well Strip Plate should be stored at -20 °C upon receipt, while the other reagents should be stored at 4 °C.
2. For opened kits: the remaining reagents must be stored according to the above storage conditions. In addition, please return the unused wells to the foil pouch containing the desiccant and seal the foil pouch with the zipper.

### Note:

It is strongly recommended to use the remaining reagents within 1 month, if this is done before the expiry date of the kit. Please refer to the label on the kit packaging for the expiration date of the kit. All components are stable until the expiration date.

## Sample collection and storage

| Sample type | Collection procedure                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Plasma      | Collect plasma using EDTA or heparin as an anticoagulant. Centrifuge samples for 15 min at 1000×g at 2-8°C within 30 min of collection. Collect the supernatant and assay immediately or store samples in aliquot at -20°C or -80°C for later use. Avoid repeated freeze/thaw cycles. Hemolysed samples are not suitable for ELISA assay! |
| Serum       | Use a serum separator tube and allow samples to clot for 2 hours at room temperature or overnight at 4°C before centrifugation for 20 min at 1000×g. Collect the supernatant and assay freshly prepared serum immediately or store samples in aliquot at -20°C or -80°C for later use. Avoid repeated freeze/thaw cycles.                 |
| Urine       | Aseptically collect the first urine of the day (mid-stream), voided directly into a sterile container. Centrifuge for 15 min at 1000×g at 2-8°C to remove particulate matter, assay immediately or aliquot and store at -20°C. Avoid repeated freeze-thaw cycles.                                                                         |

### Note:

1. Samples to be used within 5 days may be stored at 4 °C, otherwise samples must be stored at -20 °C (≤ 1 month) or -80 °C (≤ 2 months) to avoid loss of bioactivity and contamination.
2. Sample hemolysis will influence the result, so hemolytic specimen should not be used.
3. When performing the assay, bring samples to room temperature.

## Reagent preparation

1. Bring all kit components and samples to room temperature (18-25 °C) before use. If the kit is not used up all at once, remove only the strips and reagents for the current experiment and leave the remaining strips and reagents in the desired condition.
2. **Standard** - Reconstitute the standard with the Standard Diluent, keep it at room temperature for 10 minutes and shake it gently (do not let it foam). Please prepare tubes with Standard Diluent and make a dilution series. Mix each tube thoroughly before the next transfer. The last tube with Standard Diluent is the blank as 0 mg/mL.
3. **Detection Reagent A** and **Detection Reagent B** - Spin or centrifuge the stock of Detection Reagent A and B briefly before use. Dilute to working concentration (1:100) with Assay Diluent A or B, respectively.
4. **Wash Solution** - Dilute 10 mL of Wash Solution Concentrate (30x) with 290 mL of deionized or distilled water to make 300 mL of Wash Solution (1x).
5. **TMB Substrate** - Aspirate the required amount of solution with sterile tip and do not return the residual solution back into the vial.

### Note:

1. Serial dilution directly in the wells is not recommended.
2. Prepare standard within 15 minutes before assay. Do not dissolve the reagents directly at 37 °C.
3. Detection Reagent A and B are sticky solutions, so pipette them slowly to reduce volume errors.
4. Reconstitute Standard or working solutions of Detection Reagent A and B carefully according to instructions, avoiding foaming and mixing gently until crystals are completely dissolved. To minimize inaccuracy caused by pipetting, use small volumes and ensure pipettes are calibrated. It is recommended to aspirate more than 10 µL for one-time pipetting.
5. The reconstituted Standard, Detection Reagent A and B can only be used once.
6. When crystals have formed in the Wash Solution concentrate (30x), warm it to room temperature and mix gently until the crystals are completely dissolved.
7. Contaminated water or preparation containers affect the detection result.

## Sample preparation

- It is recommended to use fresh samples without long storage, otherwise protein degradation and denaturation may occur in these samples, leading to false results. Samples should therefore be stored for a short period at 2 - 8 °C or aliquoted at -20 °C ( $\leq 1$  month) or -80 °C ( $\leq 3$  months). Repeated freeze-thaw cycles should be avoided. Prior to assay, the frozen samples should be slowly thawed and centrifuged to remove precipitates.
- If the sample type is not specified in the instructions, a preliminary test is necessary to determine compatibility with the kit.
- If a lysis buffer is used to prepare tissue homogenates or cell culture supernatant, there is a possibility of causing a deviation due to the introduced chemical substance. The recommended dilution factor is for reference only.
- Please estimate the concentration of the samples before performing the test. If the values are not in the range of the standard curve, the optimal sample dilution for the particular experiment has to be determined.

## Assay procedure

1. Determine wells for diluted standard, blank and sample. Add 25  $\mu$ L each of standard dilutions (read Reagent Preparation), blank, and sample to the appropriate wells. Immediately add 25  $\mu$ L of Detection Reagent A to each well. Shake the plate gently (use of a microplate shaker is recommended). Cover the plate with a Plate Sealer. Incubate at 37 °C for 1 hour.
2. Aspirate the solution and add 100  $\mu$ L 1x Wash Solution into each well using a squirt bottle, multichannel pipette, manifold dispenser, or automated washer and allow to soak for 1-2 minutes. Completely remove the remaining liquid from all wells by tapping the plate on absorbent paper. Repeat the process 3 times. After the last wash, remove all remaining Wash Buffer by aspirating or decanting. Turn the plate over and blot it against absorbent paper.
3. Add 50  $\mu$ L of Detection Reagent B Working Solution to each well. Incubate for 30 minutes at 37 °C after covering the plate with a Plate Sealer.
4. Repeat the aspiration/washing procedure a total of 5 times as performed in step 2.
5. Add 50  $\mu$ L of Substrate Solution to each well. Cover with a new Plate Sealer. Incubate for 15 - 25 minutes at 37 °C (no longer than 30 minutes). Protect from light. The liquid will turn blue with the addition.
6. Add 25  $\mu$ L of Stop Solution to each well. The liquid will turn yellow. Mix the liquid by tapping the side of the plate. If the color change does not appear even, gently tap the

plate to ensure thorough mixing.

7. Remove any water droplets or fingerprints from the bottom of the plate and make sure there are no bubbles on the surface of the liquid. Then start the microplate reader and immediately take a measurement at 450 nm.

## Test principle

This assay employs the competitive inhibition enzyme immunoassay technique. An antibody specific to target has been pre-coated onto a microtiter plate. A competitive inhibition reaction is launched between biotin labeled target and unlabeled target (Standards or samples) with the pre-coated antibody specific to target. After incubation the unbound conjugate is washed off. Next, avidin conjugated to Horseradish Peroxidase (HRP) is added to each microtiter plate well and incubated. The amount of bound HRP conjugate is reverse proportional to the concentration of target in the sample. After addition of the substrate solution, the intensity of color developed is reverse proportional to the concentration of target in the sample.

## Calculation of results

This assay uses the competitive inhibition enzyme immunoassay technique, so there is an inverse correlation between the concentration in the sample and the signal intensity. Average the duplicate readings for each standard, control, and samples. Create a standard curve on log-log or semilogarithmic graph paper with the logarithm of the concentration on the y-axis and the absorbance on the x-axis. Draw the best fit line through the points that could be determined by regression analysis. The use of plotting software is also recommended. If the samples have been diluted, the concentration read from the standard curve must be multiplied by the dilution factor.

## Typical data

In order to make the calculation easier, we plot the O.D. value of the standard (X-axis) against the log of concentration of the standard (Y-axis), although concentration is the independent variable and O.D. value is the dependent variable. The O.D. values of the standard curve may vary according to the conditions of assay performance (e.g. operator, pipetting technique, washing technique or temperature effects).

## Detection range

The detection range of the kit is 12.35 ng/mL - 1000 ng/mL

The standard curve concentrations used for the ELISA's were 1000 ng/mL, 333.33 ng/mL, 111.11 ng/mL, 37.04 ng/mL, 12.35 ng/mL

## Sensitivity

The minimum detectable dose of target is typically less than 5.07 ng/mL.

The sensitivity of this assay, or Lower Limit of Detection (LLD) was defined as the lowest protein concentration that could be differentiated from zero.

It was determined by adding two standard deviations to the mean optical density value of twenty zero standard replicates and calculating the corresponding concentration.

### Note:

Limited by current skills and knowledge, it is impossible for us to complete the cross-reactivity detection between target and all the analogues, therefore, cross reaction may still exist.

## Precision

Intra-assay Precision (Precision within an assay): 3 samples with low, middle and high level of target were tested 20 times on one plate, respectively.

Inter-assay Precision (Precision between assays): 3 samples with low, middle and high level of target were tested on 3 different plates, 8 replicates in each plate.

$CV(\%) = SD/mean \times 100$

Intra-Assay:  $CV < 10\%$

Inter-Assay:  $CV < 12\%$

## Stability

The stability of ELISA kit is determined by the loss rate of activity. The loss rate of this kit is less than 5 % prior to the expiration date under appropriate storage condition. To minimize extra influence on the performance, operation procedures and lab conditions, especially room temperature, air humidity, incubator temperature should be strictly monitored. It is also strongly suggested that the assay is performed by the same operator from the beginning to the end.

## Assay procedure summary

1. Prepare all reagents, samples and standards,
2. Add 25µL standard or sample to each well.  
Then add 25µL prepared Detection Reagent A immediately.  
Shake and mix. Incubate 1 hour at 37 °C,
3. Aspirate and wash 3 times,
4. Add 50µL prepared Detection Reagent B. Incubate 30 minutes at 37 °C,

5. Aspirate and wash 5 times,
6. Add 50µL Substrate Solution. Incubate 10-20 minutes at 37 °C,
7. Add 25µL Stop Solution. Read at 450 nm immediately.

## Important note

1. The kit is designed for research use only, we will not be responsible for any issue if the kit was used in clinical diagnostic or any other procedures.
2. Limited by the current conditions and scientific technology, we cannot perform a complete identification and analysis of the raw material used. Therefore, the use of the kit may be associated with some qualitative and technical risks.
3. We are only responsible for the kit itself, not for the samples used in the test. The possible amount of sample used in the whole test should be calculated in advance and sufficient sample material should be provided.
4. Each kit undergoes a very strict QC testing. Nevertheless, end-user results may differ from our internal results due to unexpected transport conditions or different laboratory equipment. Intra-assay deviations between kits from different lots can also be related to this.
5. The test results depend on the validity of the products, so the kit should be used before the expiration date and stored according to the instructions.
6. Even the same user may obtain different results in two separate experiments. To obtain reproducible results, each step of the assay should be controlled.
7. The standard of the kit and immunogen used for antibody preparation are commonly recombinant proteins, as different fragments, expression systems, purification methods might be used in recombinant protein preparation, we can not guarantee the kit could detect recombinant protein from other companies. So, it is not recommended to use the kit for the detection of recombinant protein.
8. Do not mix or substitute reagents from one kit lot to another. Use only the reagents supplied by the manufacturer.
9. Protect all reagents from strong light during storage and incubation. All reagent bottle caps should be tightly closed to prevent evaporation and contamination with microorganisms. The TMB substrate should remain colourless until it reacts with the enzyme.
10. A freshly opened ELISA plate may show a water-like substance, which is normal and does not affect the test results. Return unused wells to the foil pouch and store as before.

11. Mistakes in reagent preparation and application, as well as incorrect parameter setting for the plate reader, can lead to incorrect results. A microplate reader with a bandwidth of 10nm or less and an optical density range of 0-3 O.D. at a wavelength of  $450 \pm 10$  nm is suitable for absorbance measurement. Please read the instructions carefully and set up the instrument before the experiment.
12. Do not reuse the reconstituted standard and the prepared working solutions. The unused stock solutions should be stored according to the storage conditions.

## Precaution

The Stop Solution suggested for use with this kit is an acid solution. Wear eye, hand, face, and clothing protection when using this material.

## Troubleshooting

| Problem             | Possible Source                             | Corrective Action                                             |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Poor Standard Curve | Improper standard curve preparation         | Ensure accurate operation of the dilution                     |
|                     | Incomplete washing and aspiration           | Adequate washing and adequate aspiration                      |
|                     | Inaccurate Pipetting                        | Check and Calibrate pipettes                                  |
| Poor Precision      | Incomplete washing of wells                 | Ensure sufficient washing                                     |
|                     | Inadequate mixing and aspiration reagents   | Adequate aspiration and mixing reagents                       |
|                     | Reused pipette tips, containers and sealers | Change and use new pipette tips, containers and sealers       |
|                     | Inaccurate Pipetting                        | Check and Calibrate pipettes                                  |
| Low O.D Values      | Inadequate reagent volumes added to wells   | Calibrate pipettes and add adequate reagents                  |
|                     | Incorrect incubation times                  | Ensure sufficient incubation times                            |
|                     | Incorrect incubation temperature            | Reagents balanced to room temperature                         |
|                     | Conjugate or substrate reagent failure      | Mix conjugate and substrate, color should develop immediately |

| Problem       | Possible Source                            | Corrective Action                                    |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
|               | No stop solution added                     | Follow the assay protocol in the kit manual          |
|               | Read beyond suggested reading time         | Read within the time recommended in the manual       |
| Sample Values | Improper Sample Storage                    | Store the sample properly and use the fresh sample   |
|               | Improper sample collection and preparation | Take proper sample collection and preparation method |
|               | Low quantity of analyte in samples         | Resample and repeat assay                            |

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