Conjugate to a blue colorless Chromogens removed during washing. Chromogen A is inside the wells and any unbound for a fixed amount of purified HBcAg pre-conjugated to horseradish peroxidase (HRP) the sample competitive principle ELISA.

**PRINCIPLE OF THE ASSAY**

Hepatitis B virus (HBV) is an enveloped, double-stranded DNA virus belonging to the Hepadnaviridae family and is recognized as the major cause of blood transmitted hepatitis together with hepatitis C virus (HCV). Infection with HBV induces a spectrum of clinical manifestations ranging from mild, in apparent disease to fulminant hepatitis, severe chronic liver diseases, which in some cases can lead to cirrhosis and carcinoma of the liver. Classification of a hepatitis B infection requires the identification of a number of serological markers expressed during three phases (incubation, acute and convalescent) of the infection. Hepatitis B "core" antigen (HBcAg) is a major component of the viral structure. HBcAg is composed of a single polypeptide of about 17 kD that is released upon disaggregation of the core particles; the antigen contains at least one immunological determinant. Antibodies to HBcAg (anti-HBc total antibody, and IgM) appear shortly after the appearance of HBsAg and persist for life both in persons who have recovered from a hepatitis B infection and in those who develop HBsAg-carrier status but in rare cases, a HBV infection can also run its course without the appearance of immunologically detectable anti-HBc (usually in immunosuppressed patients).

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE**

This kit is an enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay for qualitative detection of antibodies to hepatitis B virus core antigen (anti-HBc) in human serum or plasma. For research use only.

**SUMMARY**

Hepatitis B virus (HBV) is an enveloped, double-stranded DNA virus belonging to the Hepadnaviridae family and is recognized as the major cause of blood transmitted hepatitis together with hepatitis C virus (HCV). Infection with HBV induces a spectrum of clinical manifestations ranging from mild, in apparent disease to fulminant hepatitis, severe chronic liver diseases, which in some cases can lead to cirrhosis and carcinoma of the liver. Classification of a hepatitis B infection requires the identification of a number of serological markers expressed during three phases (incubation, acute and convalescent) of the infection. Hepatitis B "core" antigen (HBcAg) is a major component of the viral structure. HBcAg is composed of a single polypeptide of about 17 kD that is released upon disaggregation of the core particles; the antigen contains at least one immunological determinant. Antibodies to HBcAg (anti-HBc total antibody, and IgM) appear shortly after the appearance of HBsAg and persist for life both in persons who have recovered from a hepatitis B infection and in those who develop HBsAg-carrier status but in rare cases, a HBV infection can also run its course without the appearance of immunologically detectable anti-HBc (usually in immunosuppressed patients).

**COMPONENTS**

96 Tests

- **MICROWELL PLATE** 1 plate
  Blank microwell strips fixed on a white strip holder. The plate is sealed in aluminum pouch with desiccant.
  8 × 12/12 × 8-well strips per plate. Each well contains purified HBcAg. The microwell strips can be broken to be used separately. Place unused wells or strips in the plastic sealable storage bag together with the desiccant and return to 2–8°C.
- **NEGATIVE CONTROL** 1 vial
  Yellowish liquid filled in a vial with green screw cap. 1 ml per vial. Purified anti-HBc diluted in protein stabilized buffer containing preservatives: 0.1% ProClin 300. Ready to use as supplied. Once open, stable for one month at 2-8°C.
- **POSITIVE CONTROL** 1 vial
  Red-colored liquid filled in a vial with red screw cap. 1 ml per vial. Purified anti-HBc diluted in protein stabilized buffer containing preservatives: 0.1% ProClin 300. Ready to use as supplied. Once open, stable for one month at 2-8°C.
- **HRP-CONJUGATE REAGENT** 1 vial
  Red-colored liquid filled in a white vial with red screw cap. 6.5 ml per vial. Horseradish peroxidase-conjugated anti-HBc. Ready to use as supplied. Once open, stable for one month at 2-8°C.
- **STOCK WASH BUFFER** 1 bottle
  Colorless liquid filled in a clear bottle with white screw cap. 30 ml per bottle. pH 7.4, 20 × PBS (Contains Tween-20 as a detergent). The concentrate must be diluted 1 to 20 with distilled or deionized water before use. Once diluted, stable for one week at room temperature or for two weeks when stored at 2-8°C.
- **CHROMOGEN SOLUTION A** 1 vial
  Colorless liquid filled in a white vial with green screw cap. 7 ml per vial. Urea peroxide solution. Ready to use as supplied. Once open, stable for one month at 2-8°C.
- **CHROMOGEN SOLUTION B** 1 vial
  Colorless liquid filled in a black vial with black screw cap. 7 ml per vial. TMB solution: (Tetramethyl benzidine dissolved in citric acid). Ready to use as supplied. Once open, stable for one month at 2-8°C.
- **STOP SOLUTION** 1 vial
  Colorless liquid filled in a white vial with yellow screw cap. 7 ml per bottle. Diluted sulfuric acid solution (2.0M H2SO4). Ready to use as supplied.
- **PLASTIC SEALABLE BAG** 1 unit
  For enclosing the strips not in use.
- **CARDBOARD PLATE COVER** 1 sheet
  To cover the plates during incubation, and prevent the well from evaporation or contamination.
- **PACKAGE INSERTS** 1 copy
ADDICIONAL MATERIALS AND INSTRUMENTS REQUIRED BUT NOT PROVIDED

- Freshly distilled or deionized water.
- Disposable gloves and timer.
- Appropriate waste containers for potentially contaminated materials.
- Disposable V-shaped troughs.
- Dispensing system and/or pipette (single or multichannel), disposable pipette tips.
- Absorbent tissue or clean towel.
- Dry incubator or water bath, 37±0.5°C.
- Microshaker for dissolving and mixing conjugate with samples.
- Microwell plate reader, single wavelength 450nm or dual wavelength 450nm and 630nm.
- Microwell aspiration/wash system.

SPECIMEN COLLECTION, TRANSPORTATION AND STORAGE

1. **Sample Collection**: Either fresh serum or plasma samples can be used for this assay. Blood collected by venipuncture should be allowed to clot naturally and completely - the serum/plasma must be separated from the clot as early as possible as to avoid hemolysis of the RBC. Care should be taken to ensure that the serum samples are clear and not contaminated by microorganisms. Any visible particulate matters in the sample should be removed by centrifugation at 3000 RPM for at least 20 minutes at room temperature, or by filtration on 0.22u filters. Plasma samples collected into EDTA, sodium citrate or heparin may be tested, but highly lipaemic, icteric, or hemolized samples should not be used as they could give erroneous results in the assay. Do not heat inactivate samples. This can cause sample deterioration.

2. **Transportation and Storage**: Store samples at 2-8°C. Samples not required for assaying within 3 days should be stored frozen (-20°C or lower). Multiple freeze-thaw cycles should be avoided. For shipment, samples should be packaged and labeled in accordance with the existing local and international regulations for transport of clinical samples and ethological agents.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR WASHING

1. A good washing procedure is essential to obtain correct and precise analytical data.
2. It is therefore recommended to use a good quality ELISA microplate washer, maintained at the best level of washing performances. In general, no less than 5 automatic washing cycles with dispensing of 350-400µl/well, are sufficient to avoid false positive reactions and high background (all wells turn yellow).
3. To avoid cross-contaminations of the plate with sample or HRP-conjugate, after incubation do not discard the content of the wells, but allow the plate washer to aspirate it automatically.
4. Anyway, we recommend calibrating the washing system on the kit itself in order to match the declared analytical performances. Assure that the microplate washer's liquid dispensing channels are not blocked or contaminated, and sufficient volume of Wash buffer is dispensed each time into the wells.
5. In case of manual washing, we suggest to perform at least 5cycles, dispensing 350-400µl/well and aspirating the liquid for 5times. If poor results (high background) are observed, increase the washing cycles or soaking time per well.
6. In any case, the liquid aspirated out the strips should be treated with a sodium hypochlorite solution (final concentration of 2.5%) for 24 hours, before liquids are disposed in an appropriate way.

The concentrated Washing solution should be diluted 1 to 20 before use. For one plate, mix 30 ml of the concentrate with 570ml of water for a final volume of 600ml diluted Wash Buffer. If less than a whole plate is used, prepare the proportional volume of solution.

STORAGE AND STABILITY

The components of the kit will remain stable through the expiration date indicated on the label and package when stored between 2-8°C; do not freeze. To assure maximum performance of this anti-HBe ELISA kit, during storage protect the reagents from contamination with microorganism or chemicals.

PRECAUTIONS AND SAFETY

This kit is intended FOR RESEARCH USE ONLY

The ELISA assay is a time and temperature sensitive method. To avoid incorrect result, strictly follow the test procedure steps and do not modify them.

1. Do not exchange reagents from different lots, or use reagents from other commercially available kits. The components of the kit are precisely matched as to achieve optimal performance during testing.
2. Make sure that all reagents are within the validity indicated on the kit box and are of the same lot. Never use reagents beyond the expiry date stated on reagents labels or on the kit box.
3. **CAUTION - CRITICAL STEP**: Allow the reagents and samples to stabilize at room temperature (18-30°C) before use. Shake reagent gently before, and return to 2-8°C immediately after use.
4. Use only sufficient volume of sample as indicated in the procedure steps. Failure to do so may cause in low sensitivity of the assay.
5. Do not touch the bottom exterior of the wells; fingerprints or scratches may interfere with microwell
If using fully automated microplate processing system, during incubation, do not cover the plates with the plate cover. The tapping out of the remainders inside the plate after washing, can also be omitted.

ASSAY PROCEDURE

Step 1 Reagents preparation: Allow the reagents and samples to reach room temperature (18-30°C) for at least 15-30minutes. Check the Wash buffer concentrate for the presence of salt crystals. If crystals have formed in the solution, resolubilize by warming at 37°C until crystals dissolve. Dilute the stock Wash Buffer 1 to 20 with distilled or deionized water. Use only clean vessels to dilute the buffer.

Step 2 Numbering Wells: Set the strips needed in strip-holder and number sufficient number of wells including three Negative controls (e.g. B1, C1, D1) two Positive controls (e.g. E1, F1) and one Blank (e.g. A1, neither samples nor HRP-Conjugate should be added into the Blank well). If the results will be determined by using dual wavelength plate reader, the requirement for use of Blank well could be omitted. Use only number of strips required for the test.

Step 3 Adding Sample and HRP-Conjugate: Add 50µl of Positive control, Negative control, and Specimen into their respective wells. Note: Use a separate disposal pipette tip for each specimen, Negative and Positive Control as to avoid cross-contaminations. Add 50µl of HRP-Conjugate to each well except into the Blank and mix by tapping the plate gently.

Step 4 Incubating: Cover the plate with the plate cover and incubate for 60 minutes at 37°C. It is recommended to use thermostat-controlled water tank to assure the temperature stability and humidity during the incubation. If dry incubator is used, do not open the door frequently.

Step 5 Washing: At the end of the incubation, remove and discard the plate cover. Wash each well 5 times with diluted Wash buffer. Each time, allow the microwells to soak for 30-60seconds. After the final washing cycle, turn down the plate onto blotting paper or clean towel, and tap it to remove any remaining liquids.

Step 6 Coloring: Dispense 50µl of Chromogen A and 50µl Chromogen B solution into each well including the Blank. Incubate the plate at 37°C for 15minutes, avoiding light. The enzymatic reaction between the Chromogen solutions and the HRP-Conjugate will produce blue color in Negative control and anti-HBc negative sample wells.

Step 7 Stopping Reaction: Using a multichannel pipette or manually, add 50µl Stop Solution into each well and mix gently. Intensive yellow color develops in Negative control and anti-HBc negative sample wells.
Step 8 Measuring the Absorbance: Calibrate the plate reader with the Blank well and read the absorbance at 450 nm. If a dual filter instrument is used, set the reference wavelength at 630 nm. Calculate the Cut-off value and evaluate the results. **(Note:** read the absorbance within 5 minutes after stopping the reaction).

**INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS AND QUALITY CONTROL**

Each microplate should be considered separately when calculating and interpreting results of the assay, regardless of the number of plates concurrently processed. The results are calculated by relating each sample’s optical density (OD) value to the Cut-off value (C.O.) of the plate. If the Cut-off reading is based on single filter plate reader, the results should be calculated by subtracting the Blank well OD value from the print report values of samples and controls. In case the reading is based on dual filter plate reader, do not subtract the Blank well OD from the print report values of samples and controls.

1. Calculation of Cut-off value (C.O.) = *NC × 0.5

   *NC = the mean absorbance value for three negative controls.

   **Example:** of Cut-off calculation:
   1. Calculation of NC
      Well No: B1    C1    D1
      Negative Controls OD value 1.720  1.715  1.717
      NC=1.717
   2. Calculation of Cut-off (C.O.) = 1.729 × 0.5 =0.858

   If one of the Negative Control values does not meet the Quality Control Range specifications, it should be discarded and the mean value is calculated again using the remaining two values. If more than one negative control OD value does not meet the Quality control range specifications, the test is invalid and must be repeated.

2. Quality control range:

   The test results are valid if the Quality Control criteria are verified. It is recommended that each laboratory must establish appropriate quality control system with quality control material similar to or identical with the patient sample being analyzed.

   1. The OD value of the Blank well, which contains only Chromogens and Stop solution, is less than 0.080 at 450nm.
   2. The OD value of the Negative control must be equal to or greater than 0.800 at 450/630nm or at 450nm after blanking.
   3. The OD value of the Positive control must be less than 0.100 at 450/630nm or at 450nm after blanking.

3. Interpretations of the results:

   **Negative Results (S/C.O. 1):** Samples giving an absorbance greater than the Cut-off value are considered negative, which indicates that no antibodies to HBV core antigen have been detected using this anti-HBc ELISA kit.

   **Positive Results (S/C.O. ≤1):** Samples giving absorbance less than, or equal to the Cut-off value are initially reactive for this assay, which indicates that antibodies to HBV core antigen have probably been detected with this anti-HBc ELISA kit. Any initially reactive samples should be retested in duplicates. Repeatedly reactive samples could be considered positive for anti-HBc.

   **Borderline (S/C.O. =0.9-1.1):** Samples with absorbance to Cut-off ratio between 0.9 and 1.1 are considered borderline samples and retesting is recommended. Repeatedly reactive samples could be considered positive for anti-HBc.

**TEST PERFORMANCE AND EXPECTED RESULTS**

1. Non-repeatable positive result may occur due to the general biological and biochemical characteristics of the ELISA method. The test is designed to achieve very high performance characteristics of sensitivity and specificity. However, in very rare cases some HBV mutants or subtypes can remain undetectable. Antibodies may be also undetectable during the early stages of the disease and in some immunosuppressed individuals.

2. Common sources for mistakes: kits beyond the expiry date, bad washing procedures, contaminated reagents, incorrect assay procedure steps, insufficient aspiration during washing, failure to add samples or reagents, equipment, timing, volumes, sample nature and quality.

3. The prevalence of the marker will affect the assay’s predictive values.

4. This is a qualitative assay and the results cannot be used to measure antibodies concentrations.

5. If, after retesting of the initially reactive samples, the assay results are negative, these samples should be considered as non-repeatable (false positive) and interpreted as negative. As with many very sensitive ELISA assays, false positive results can occur due to the several reasons, most of which are related but not limited to inadequate washing step.

**INDICATIONS OF INSTABILITY OR DETERIORATION OF THE REAGENTS**

1. Values of the Positive or Negative controls, which are out of the indicated Quality control range, are indicator of possible deterioration of the reagents and/or operator or equipment errors. In such case, the results should be considered as invalid and the samples must be retested. In case of constant erroneous results classified as due to deterioration or instability of the reagents, immediately substitute the reagents with new ones.
2. If after mixing of the Chromogen A and B solutions into the wells, the, the color of the mixture turns blue within few minutes, do not continue carrying out the testing and replace the reagents with fresh ones.

VALIDITY

Please do not use this kit beyond the expiration indicated on the kit box and reagent labels

REFERENCES: