

Version 3b Last updated 18 March 2026

# **ab216947**

# **Mouse GDF-15**

# **SimpleStep ELISA<sup>®</sup> Kit**

For the quantitative measurement of mouse GDF-15 in serum, plasma, and cell culture supernatants.

This product is for research use only and is not intended for diagnostic use.

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# 1. Overview

GDF-15 *in vitro* SimpleStep ELISA (Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay) kit is designed for the quantitative measurement of mouse GDF-15 protein in serum, plasma, and cell culture supernatants.

The SimpleStep ELISA employs an affinity tag labeled capture antibody and a reporter conjugated detector antibody which immunocapture the sample analyte in solution. This entire complex (capture antibody/analyte/detector antibody) is in turn immobilized via immunoaffinity of an anti-tag antibody coating the well. To perform the assay, samples or standards are added to the wells, followed by the antibody mix. After incubation, the wells are washed to remove unbound material. TMB development solution is added and during incubation is catalyzed by HRP, generating blue coloration. This reaction is then stopped by addition of Stop Solution completing any color change from blue to yellow. Signal is generated proportionally to the amount of bound analyte and the intensity is measured at 450 nm. Optionally, instead of the endpoint reading, development of TMB can be recorded kinetically at 600 nm.

The cytokine growth differentiation factor 15 (GDF-15) is one of 15 growth/differentiation factors (GDF-1 to GDF-15), all of which are members of the BMP family of TGF-beta superfamily proteins. These growth/differentiation factors are produced as inactive preproteins which are then cleaved and assembled into active secreted homodimers. Specifically, mouse GDF-15 is synthesized as a 273 amino acid (aa) proprecursor that contains a cleavable 158 aa glycosylated prodomain (aa 31-188) and a 115 aa mature region (aa 189-303). Over aa sequence 189-303, mouse GDF-15 shares 97% and 68% aa identity with rat and human GDF-15, respectively.

In mice, GDF-15 is expressed in a diverse population of activated cell types, including hepatocytes, macrophages, Schwann cells, cardiomyocytes, osteoblasts, adipocytes. It is also expressed in the epithelium of the small intestine and mammary gland. GDF proteins have a critical role during embryonic development, particularly in the skeletal, nervous, and muscular systems.

## 2. Protocol Summary

Prepare all reagents, samples, and standards as instructed



Add 50  $\mu$ L standard or sample to appropriate wells



Add 50  $\mu$ L Antibody Cocktail to all wells



Incubate at room temperature for 1 hour



Aspirate and wash each well three times with 350  $\mu$ L 1X Wash Buffer PT



Add 100  $\mu$ L TMB Development Solution to each well and incubate for 10 minutes.



Add 100  $\mu$ L Stop Solution and read OD at 450 nm

### 3. Precautions

**Please read these instructions carefully prior to beginning the assay.**

- All kit components have been formulated and quality control tested to function successfully as a kit.
- We understand that, occasionally, experimental protocols might need to be modified to meet unique experimental circumstances. However, we cannot guarantee the performance of the product outside the conditions detailed in this protocol booklet.
- Observe good laboratory practices. Gloves, lab coat, and protective eyewear should always be worn. Never pipet by mouth. Do not eat, drink or smoke in the laboratory areas.
- If applicable, please refer to the current Safety Data Sheet (SDS) provided with this product for safety, handling, and disposal information. The most up to date and current versions are available on our website <https://www.abcam.com/en-us>.

### 4. Storage and Stability

**Store kit at +4°C immediately upon receipt. Kit has a storage time of 1 year from receipt, providing components have not been reconstituted.**

Refer to list of materials supplied for storage conditions of individual components. Observe the storage conditions for individual prepared components in the Materials Supplied section.

## 5. Limitations

- Assay kit intended for research use only. Not for use in diagnostic procedures.
- Do not mix or substitute reagents or materials from other kit lots or vendors. Kits are QC tested as a set of components and performance cannot be guaranteed if utilized separately or substituted.

## 6. Materials Supplied

<b>Item</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Storage Condition</b>
Mouse GDF-15 Capture Antibody 10X	600 µL	+4°C
Mouse GDF-15 Detector Antibody 10X	600 µL	+4°C
Mouse GDF-15 Lyophilized Recombinant Protein	2 Vials	+4°C
Antibody Diluent 4BI	6 mL	+4°C
Wash Buffer PT 10X	20 mL	+4°C
TMB Development Solution	12 mL	+4°C
Stop Solution	12 mL	+4°C
Sample Diluent NS	50 mL	+4°C
Anti-tag coated microplate (12 x 8 well strips)	96 Wells	+4°C
Plate Seal	1	+4°C

## 7. Materials Required, Not Supplied

These materials are not included in the kit, but will be required to successfully perform this assay:

- Microplate reader capable of measuring absorbance at 450 or 600 nm.
- Method for determining protein concentration (BCA assay recommended).
- Deionized water.
- Multi- and single-channel pipettes.
- Tubes for standard dilution.
- Plate shaker for all incubation steps.
- Optional: Phenylmethylsulfonyl Fluoride (PMSF) (or other protease inhibitors).

## 8. Technical Hints

- Samples generating values higher than the highest standard should be further diluted in the appropriate sample dilution buffers.
- Avoid foaming or bubbles when mixing or reconstituting components.
- Avoid cross contamination of samples or reagents by changing tips between sample, standard and reagent additions.
- Ensure plates are properly sealed or covered during incubation steps.
- Complete removal of all solutions and buffers during wash steps is necessary to minimize background.
- As a guide, typical ranges of sample concentration for commonly used sample types are shown below in Sample Preparation (section 11).
- All samples should be mixed thoroughly and gently.
- Avoid multiple freeze/thaw of samples.
- Incubate ELISA plates on a plate shaker during all incubation steps.
- When generating positive control samples, it is advisable to change pipette tips after each step.
- **To avoid high background always add samples or standards to the well before the addition of the antibody cocktail.**
- **This kit is sold based on number of tests. A 'test' simply refers to a single assay well. The number of wells that contain sample, control or standard will vary by product. Review the protocol completely to confirm this kit meets your requirements. Please contact our Technical Support staff with any questions.**

## 9. Reagent Preparation

- Equilibrate all reagents to room temperature (18-25°C) prior to use. The kit contains enough reagents for 96 wells. The sample volumes below are sufficient for 48 wells (6 x 8-well strips); adjust volumes as needed for the number of strips in your experiment.
- Prepare only as much reagent as is needed on the day of the experiment. Capture and Detector Antibodies have only been tested for stability in the provided 10X formulations.

### 9.1 1X Wash Buffer PT:

Prepare 1X Wash Buffer PT by diluting 10X Wash Buffer PT with deionized water. To make 50 mL 1X Wash Buffer PT combine 5 mL 10X Wash Buffer PT with 45 mL deionized water. Mix thoroughly and gently.

### 9.2 Antibody Cocktail:

Prepare Antibody Cocktail by diluting the capture and detector antibodies in Antibody Diluent 4BI. To make 3 mL of the Antibody Cocktail combine 300  $\mu$ L 10X Capture Antibody and 300  $\mu$ L 10X Detector Antibody with 2.4 mL Antibody Diluent 4BI. Mix thoroughly and gently.

## 10. Standard Preparation

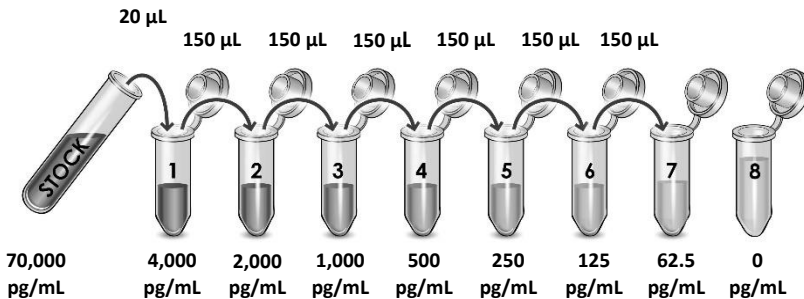
- Always prepare a fresh set of standards for every use.
- Discard working standard dilutions after use as they do not store well.
- The following section describes the preparation of a standard curve for duplicate measurements (recommended).

**10.1 IMPORTANT:** If the protein standard vial has a volume identified on the label, reconstitute the mouse GDF-15 standard by adding that volume of Sample Diluent NS indicated on the label. Alternatively, if the vial has a mass identified, reconstitute the mouse GDF-15 standard by adding 500  $\mu\text{L}$  Sample Diluent NS. Hold at room temperature for 10 minutes and mix gently. This is the 70,000  $\text{pg/mL}$  **Stock Standard** Solution.

**10.2** Label eight tubes, Standards 1– 8.

**10.3** Add 330  $\mu\text{L}$  Sample Diluent NS into tube number 1 and 150  $\mu\text{L}$  of Sample Diluent NS into numbers 2-8.

**10.4** Use the Stock Standard to prepare the following dilution series. Standard #8 contains no protein and is the Blank control:



## 11. Sample Preparation

Typical Sample Dynamic Range	
Sample Type	Range
Plasma - Heparin	3.13 – 50%
Plasma - EDTA	3.13 – 50%
Plasma - Citrate	3.13 – 50%
Serum	3.13 – 50%
L929 Culture Media	6.25 – 100%
Lung Culture Media	6.25 – 100%

### 11.1 Plasma:

Collect plasma using citrate, EDTA or heparin. Centrifuge samples at 2,000 x g for 10 minutes. Dilute samples into Sample Diluent NS and assay. Store un-diluted plasma samples at -20°C or below for up to 3 months. Avoid repeated freeze-thaw cycles.

### 11.2 Serum:

Samples should be collected into a serum separator tube. After clot formation, centrifuge samples at 2,000 x g for 10 minutes and collect serum. Dilute samples into Sample Diluent NS and assay. Store un-diluted serum at -20°C or below. Avoid repeated freeze-thaw cycles.

### 11.3 Cell Culture Supernatants:

Centrifuge cell culture media at 2,000 x g for 10 minutes to remove debris. Collect supernatants and assay or dilute samples into Sample Diluent NS and assay. Store un-diluted samples at -20°C or below. Avoid repeated freeze-thaw cycles.

## 12. Plate Preparation

- The 96 well plate strips included with this kit are supplied ready to use. It is not necessary to rinse the plate prior to adding reagents.
- Unused plate strips should be immediately returned to the foil pouch containing the desiccant pack, resealed and stored at 4°C.
- For each assay performed, a minimum of two wells must be used as the zero control.
- For statistical reasons, we recommend each sample should be assayed with a minimum of two replicates (duplicates).
- Differences in well absorbance or “edge effects” have not been observed with this assay.

## 13. Assay Procedure

- Equilibrate all materials and prepared reagents to room temperature prior to use.
  - We recommend that you assay all standards, controls and samples in duplicate.
- 13.1** Prepare all reagents, working standards, and samples as directed in the previous sections.
  - 13.2** Remove excess microplate strips from the plate frame, return them to the foil pouch containing the desiccant pack, reseal and return to 4°C storage.
  - 13.3** Add 50 µL of all sample or standard to appropriate wells.
  - 13.4** Add 50 µL of the Antibody Cocktail to each well.
  - 13.5** Seal the plate and incubate for 1 hour at room temperature on a plate shaker set to 400 rpm.
  - 13.6** Wash each well with 3 x 350 µL 1X Wash Buffer PT. Wash by aspirating or decanting from wells then dispensing 350 µL 1X Wash Buffer PT into each well. Wash Buffer PT should remain in wells for at least 10 seconds. Complete removal of liquid at each step is essential for good performance. After the last wash invert the plate and tap gently against clean paper towels to remove excess liquid.
  - 13.7** Add 100 µL of TMB Development Solution to each well and incubate for 10 minutes in the dark on a plate shaker set to 400 rpm.

*Given variability in laboratory environmental conditions, optimal incubation time may vary between 5 and 20 minutes.*

*Note: The addition of Stop Solution will change the color from blue to yellow and enhance the signal intensity about 3X. To avoid signal saturation, proceed to the next step before the high concentration of the standard reaches a blue color of O.D.600 equal to 1.0.*
  - 13.8** Add 100 µL of Stop Solution to each well. Shake plate on a plate shaker for 1 minute to mix. Record the OD at 450 nm. This is an endpoint reading.
  - 13.9** Alternative to 13.7 – 13.8: Instead of the endpoint reading at 450 nm, record the development of TMB Substrate kinetically. Immediately after addition of TMB Development Solution begin recording the blue color development with elapsed time in the microplate reader prepared with the following settings:

<b>Mode</b>	<b>Kinetic</b>
Wavelength:	600 nm
Time:	up to 20 min
Interval:	20 sec - 1 min
Shaking:	Shake between readings

Δ **Note:** that an endpoint reading can also be recorded at the completion of the kinetic read by adding 100 µL Stop Solution to each well and recording the OD at 450 nm.

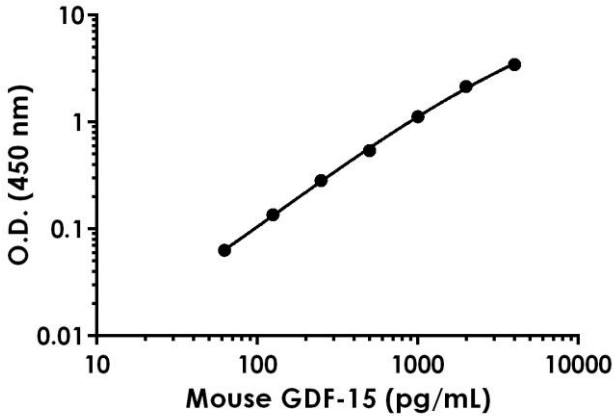
**13.10** Analyze the data as described below.

## 14. Calculations

- 14.1 Calculate the average absorbance value for the blank control (zero) standards. Subtract the average blank control standard absorbance value from all other absorbance values.
- 14.2 **Create a standard curve** by plotting the average blank control subtracted absorbance value for each standard concentration (y-axis) against the target protein concentration (x-axis) of the standard. Use graphing software to draw the best smooth curve through these points to construct the standard curve.
  - Δ **Note:** Most microplate reader software or graphing software will plot these values and fit a curve to the data. A four parameter curve fit (4PL) is often the best choice; however, other algorithms (e.g. linear, semi-log, log/log, 4 parameter logistic) can also be tested to determine if it provides a better curve fit to the standard values.
- 14.3 Determine the concentration of the target protein in the sample by interpolating the blank control subtracted **absorbance values against the standard curve**. Multiply the resulting value by the appropriate sample dilution factor, if used, to obtain the concentration of target protein in the sample.
- 14.4 Samples generating absorbance values greater than that of the highest standard should be further diluted and reanalyzed. Similarly, samples which measure at an absorbance values less than that of the lowest standard should be retested in a less dilute form.

## 15. Typical Data

**Typical standard curve** – data provided **for demonstration purposes only**. A new standard curve must be generated for each assay performed.



Standard Curve Measurements			
Concentration (pg/mL)	O.D 450 nm		Mean O.D
	1	2	
0	0.070	0.066	0.068
62.5	0.137	0.125	0.131
125	0.205	0.202	0.204
250	0.356	0.350	0.353
500	0.628	0.592	0.610
1,000	1.203	1.187	1.195
2,000	2.220	2.221	2.220
4,000	3.533	3.516	3.524

**Figure 1.** Example of mouse GDF-15 standard curve. The GDF-15 standard curve was prepared as described in Section 10. Raw data values are shown in the table. Background-subtracted data values (mean +/- SD) are graphed.

## 16. Typical Sample Values

### SENSITIVITY –

The calculated minimal detectable dose (MDD) is 22.2 pg/mL. The MDD was determined by calculating the mean of zero standard replicates (n=24) and adding 2 standard deviations then extrapolating the corresponding concentration.

### RECOVERY –

Three concentrations of mouse GDF-15 were spiked in duplicate to the indicated biological matrix to evaluate signal recovery in the working range of the assay.

Sample Type	Average % Recovery	Range (%)
Plasma – Heparin (50%)	83	77 – 91
Plasma – EDTA (50%)	82	81 – 84
Plasma – Citrate (50%)	85	83 – 89
Serum (50%)	76	70 – 82
L929 Culture Media (50%)	89	84 – 93

### Linearity of Dilution

Linearity of dilution is determined based on interpolated values from the standard curve. Linearity of dilution defines a sample concentration interval in which interpolated target concentrations are directly proportional to sample dilution.

Native mouse GDF-15 was measured in L929, lung culture media and pregnant mouse serum. The 2-fold dilution series was made in Sample Diluent NS.

Dilution Factor	Interpolated value	100% L929 Culture Media	100% Lung Culture Media	50% Pregnant Mouse Serum
Undiluted	pg/mL	2,242.8	3,407.4	1,648.9
	<b>% Expected value</b>	100	100	100
2	pg/mL	1,066.0	1,765.9	774.6
	<b>% Expected value</b>	95	104	94
4	pg/mL	582.8	952.2	402.5
	<b>% Expected value</b>	104	112	98
8	pg/mL	270.5	473.9	207.7
	<b>% Expected value</b>	96	111	101
16	pg/mL	138.6	236.1	106.3
	<b>% Expected value</b>	99	111	103

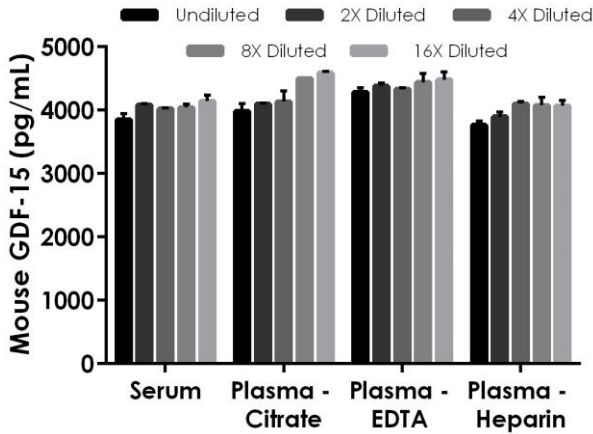
Recombinant mouse GDF-15 was spiked into serum and plasma samples and diluted in a 2-fold dilution series in Sample Diluent NS.

<b>Dilution Factor</b>	<b>Interpolated value</b>	<b>50% Mouse Serum</b>	<b>50% Mouse Plasma (Citrate)</b>	<b>50% Mouse Plasma (EDTA)</b>	<b>50% Mouse Plasma (Heparin)</b>
Undiluted	pg/mL	1,925.9	1,991.4	2,142.9	1,882.8
	<b>% Expected value</b>	100	100	100	100
2	pg/mL	1,021.3	1,024.4	1,095.1	973.9
	<b>% Expected value</b>	106	103	102	103
4	pg/mL	520.8	516.5	542.1	512.8
	<b>% Expected value</b>	104	104	101	109
8	pg/mL	252.7	281.4	277.4	254.8
	<b>% Expected value</b>	105	113	104	108
16	pg/mL	129.5	143.4	140.0	127.1
	<b>% Expected value</b>	108	115	105	108

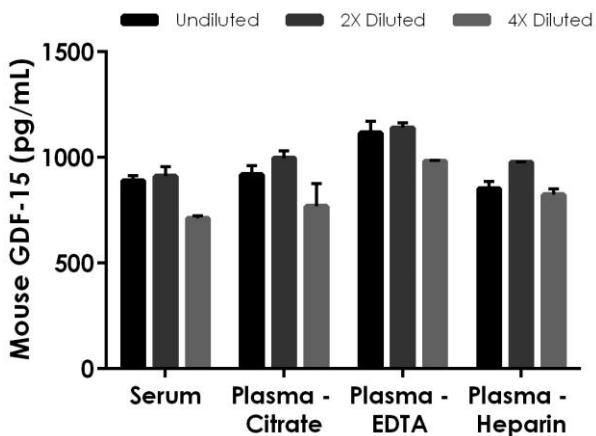
#### **PRECISION –**

Mean coefficient of variations of interpolated values from three concentrations of mouse EDTA plasma within the working range of the assay.

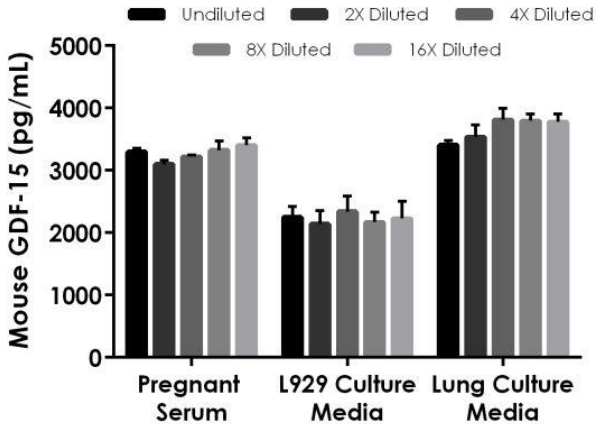
	<b>Intra-Assay</b>	<b>Inter-Assay</b>
n =	8	3
CV (%)	5.0	5.7



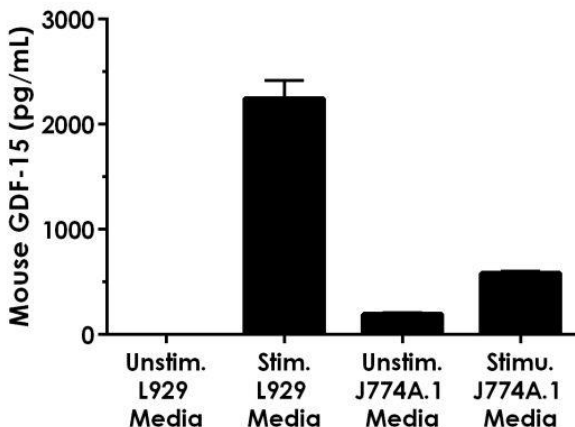
**Figure 2.** Interpolated concentrations of spiked GDF-15 in mouse serum and plasma samples. The concentrations of GDF-15 were measured in duplicates, interpolated from the GDF-15 standard curves and corrected for sample dilution. Undiluted samples are as follows: serum 50%, plasma (citrate) 50%, plasma (EDTA) 50%, and plasma (heparin) 50%. The interpolated dilution factor corrected values are plotted (mean +/- SD, n=2). The mean GDF-15 concentration was determined to be 4,030 pg/mL in neat serum, 4,261 pg/mL in neat plasma (citrate), 4,385 pg/mL in neat plasma (EDTA), and 3,981 pg/mL in neat plasma (heparin).



**Figure 3.** Interpolated concentrations of native GDF-15 levels in mouse serum and plasma samples. The concentrations of GDF-15 were measured in duplicate, interpolated from the GDF-15 standard curves and corrected for sample dilution. Undiluted samples are as follows: serum 50%, plasma (citrate) 50%, plasma (EDTA) 50%, and plasma (heparin) 50%. The interpolated dilution factor corrected values are plotted (mean +/- SD, n=2). The mean GDF-15 concentration was determined to be 837.9 pg/mL in neat serum, 895.2 pg/mL in neat plasma (citrate), 1,079.6 pg/mL in neat plasma (EDTA), and 884.6 pg/mL in neat plasma (heparin).



**Figure 4.** Interpolated concentrations of native GDF-15 levels in pregnant mouse serum, mouse L929 and lung culture media samples. The concentrations of GDF-15 were measured in duplicate, interpolated from the GDF-15 standard curves and corrected for sample dilution. Undiluted samples are as follows: pregnant mouse serum 50%, L929 culture media 100%, and lung culture media 100%. The interpolated dilution factor corrected values are plotted (mean +/- SD, n=2). The mean GDF-15 concentration was determined to be 3,268 pg/mL in neat pregnant mouse serum, 2,223 pg/mL in L929 culture media, and 3,665 pg/mL in lung culture media.



**Figure 5.** Interpolated concentrations of native GDF-15 in unstimulated and stimulated L929 and J774A.1 culture media samples. Samples were loaded neat (100%). The concentrations of GDF-15 were measured in duplicates and interpolated from the GDF-15 standard curves. The interpolated values are plotted (mean +/- SD, n=2). The mean GDF-15 concentration was determined to be below the limit of detection in unstimulated L929 culture media, 2,246 pg/mL in stimulated L929 culture media, 193 pg/mL in unstimulated J774A.1 culture media, and 583 pg/mL in stimulated J774A.1 culture media. L929 cells were grown for 72 hours in MEM media containing 10% fetal horse serum and 100 µg/mL Kanamycin (unstimulated) plus 1.5% PHA and 10 ng/mL PMA (stimulated). J774A.1 cells were grown for 72 hours in HGDMEM media containing 10% fetal bovine serum and 100 µg/mL Kanamycin (unstimulated) plus 1.5% PHA and 10 ng/mL PMA (stimulated).

## 17. Assay Specificity

This kit recognizes both native and recombinant mouse GDF-15 protein in serum, plasma, and cell culture supernatant samples only.

### **CROSS REACTIVITY**

Recombinant human GDF-15 was prepared at 100 ng/mL and assayed for cross reactivity. Less than 1% cross-reactivity was observed.

## 18. Species Reactivity

This kit recognizes mouse GDF-15 protein.

**This kit is not suitable for use with rat samples.**

Please contact our Technical Support team for more information.

## 19. Troubleshooting

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Solution</b>
<b>Poor standard curve</b>	Inaccurate Pipetting	Check pipettes
	Improper standard dilution	Prior to opening, briefly spin the stock standard tube and dissolve the powder thoroughly by gentle mixing
<b>Low Signal</b>	Incubation times too brief	Ensure sufficient incubation times; increase to 2 or 3 hour standard/sample incubation
	Inadequate reagent volumes or improper dilution	Check pipettes and ensure correct preparation
	Incubation times with TMB too brief	Ensure sufficient incubation time until blue color develops prior addition of Stop solution
<b>Large CV</b>	Plate is insufficiently washed	Review manual for proper wash technique. If using a plate washer, check all ports for obstructions.
	Contaminated wash buffer	Prepare fresh wash buffer
<b>Low sensitivity</b>	Improper storage of the ELISA kit	Store your reconstituted standards at -80°C, all other assay components 4°C. Keep TMB substrate solution protected from light.
<b>Precipitate in Diluent</b>	Precipitation and/or coagulation of components within the Diluent.	Precipitate can be removed by gently warming the Diluent to 37°C.

## 20. Notes

## Technical Support

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