

Version 10h Last updated 12 March 2026

# **ab46087**

# **Human TNF alpha**

# **ELISA Kit**

For the quantitative measurement of TNF alpha in Human supernatants, buffered solutions, serum and plasma samples.

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

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## Technical Support

# 1. Overview

Abcam's TNF alpha Human *in vitro* ELISA (Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay) kit is designed for the quantitative measurement of TNF alpha in supernatants, buffered solutions, serum and plasma samples.

A monoclonal antibody specific TNF alpha has been coated onto the wells of the microtiter strips provided. Samples, including standards of known TNF alpha concentrations, control specimens or unknowns are pipetted into these wells. During the first incubation, the standards or samples and a biotinylated monoclonal antibody specific for TNF alpha are simultaneously incubated. After washing, the enzyme Streptavidin-HRP, that binds the biotinylated antibody is added, incubated and washed. A TMB substrate solution is added which acts on the bound enzyme to induce a colored reaction product. The intensity of this colored product is directly proportional to the concentration of TNF alpha present in the samples.

This kit will recognize both endogenous and recombinant Human TNF alpha.

## 2. Protocol Summary

Remove appropriate number of antibody coated well strips



Equilibrate all reagents to room temperature



Prepare all the reagents, samples, and standards as instructed



Add standard or sample to each well used



Add prepared Biotinylated labeled detector antibody. Incubate at room temperature



Aspirate and wash each well. Add prepared Streptavidin-HRP mix to each well. Incubate at room temperature



Aspirate and wash each well. Add the TMB Solution to each well until color develops and then add the Stop Solution. Immediately begin recording the color development

### 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

Item	Quantity		Storage Condition
	1 x 96 tests	2 x 96 tests	
TNF alpha Microplate (12 x 8 well strips)	96 wells	2 x 96 wells	+2-8°C
TNF alpha Standard (Lyophilized)	2 vials	4 vials	+2-8°C
10X Standard Diluent Buffer	15 mL	25 mL	+2-8°C
Standard Diluent (Human Serum)	7 mL	2 x 7 mL	+2-8°C
TNF alpha Control	2 vials	4 vials	+2-8°C
Biotinylated anti- TNF alpha	400 µL	2 x 400 µL	+2-8°C
Biotinylated Antibody Diluent	7.5 mL	13 mL	+2-8°C
Streptavidin-HRP	2 x 5 µL	4 x 5 µL	+2-8°C
HRP Diluent	12 mL	23 mL	+2-8°C
200X Wash Buffer	10mL	2 x10mL	+2-8°C
Chromogen TMB Substrate Solution	11 mL	24 mL	+2-8°C
Stop Reagent	11 mL	2 x11 mL	+2-8°C
Plastic Plate Covers	2 units	4 units	+2-8°C

**Note:** This ELISA kit will soon contain the “Easy View” colored reagents. The Standard diluent buffer will now be red, and the Streptavidin-HRP Diluent will be green. Please note that while stock lasts you may still receive colorless diluents. This change does not impact the results provided by the kit or the assay procedure.

## 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 nm.
- Precision pipettes to deliver 2  $\mu$ L to 1 mL volumes.
- Adjustable 1-25 mL pipettes for reagent preparation.
- 100 mL and 1 liter graduated cylinders.
- Absorbent paper.
- Distilled or deionized water.
- Tubes to prepare standard or sample dilutions.
- Log-log graph paper or computer and software for ELISA data analysis.

## 8. Technical Hints

- 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.
- Since exact conditions may vary from assay to assay, a standard curve must be established for every assay performed.
- Bacterial or fungal contamination of either samples or reagents or cross-contamination between reagents may cause erroneous results.
- Disposable pipette tips, flasks or glassware are preferred, reusable glassware must be washed and thoroughly rinsed of all detergents before use.
- Improper or insufficient washing at any stage of the procedure will result in either false positive or false negative results. Completely empty wells before dispensing fresh 1X Wash Buffer. Do not allow wells to sit uncovered or dry for extended periods.
- Kit components should be stored as indicated. All the reagents should be equilibrated to room temperature before use. Reconstituted standards should be discarded after use.
- Once the desired number of strips has been removed, immediately reseal the bag to protect the remaining strips from degradation.
- Use a clean disposable plastic pipette tip for each reagent, standard, or specimen addition in order to avoid cross-contamination; for the dispensing of the Stop Solution and substrate solution, avoid pipettes with metal parts.
- Thoroughly mix the reagents and samples before use by agitation or swirling.
- All residual washing liquid must be drained from the wells by efficient aspiration or by decantation followed by tapping the plate forcefully on absorbent paper. Never insert absorbent paper directly into the wells.
- The TMB solution is light sensitive. Avoid prolonged exposure to light. Also, avoid contact of the TMB solution with metal to prevent color development. Warning TMB is toxic avoid direct contact with hands. Dispose of properly.

- If a dark blue color develops within a few minutes after preparation, this indicates that the TMB solution has been contaminated and must be discarded. Read absorbances within 1 hour after completion of the assay.
- When pipetting reagents, maintain a consistent order of addition from well-to-well. This will ensure equal incubation times for all wells.
- Dispense the TMB solution within 15 minutes following the washing of the microtiter plate.

## 9. Reagent Preparation

- Equilibrate all reagents to room temperature (18-25°C) prior to use. The kit contains enough reagents for 96 wells.
- Prepare only as much reagent as is needed on the day of the experiment.

### 9.1 1X Standard Diluent Buffer

Dilute the 10X Standard Diluent Buffer 10-fold in distilled water before use.

### 9.2 1X Wash Buffer

Dilute the 200X Wash Buffer Concentrate 200-fold in distilled water before use. Mix gently to avoid foaming.

The 1X Wash Buffer can be prepared as needed according to the following table:

Number of well strips used	Volume of 200X Wash Buffer Concentrate (mL)	Volume of distilled water (mL)
1-6	5	995
1-12	10	1,990

### 9.3 1X Control Solution

Lyophilized Control vials must be reconstituted with the most appropriate diluent for your test samples:

**For serum and plasma samples:** Use Standard Diluent (Human Serum).

**For cell culture supernatants:** Use 1X Standard Diluent Buffer.

Control vials must be reconstituted with the volume of appropriate diluent buffer that is indicated on the vial. Reconstitution of the lyophilized material with the indicated volume will yield a solution for which the TNF alpha concentration is stated on the vial. Allow the reconstituted 1X Control Solution to stand for 5 minutes with gentle swirling prior to use in the assay procedure. **Do not store the 1X Control Solution after reconstitution.**

#### 9.4 1X Biotinylated anti-TNF alpha

Prepare the 1X Biotinylated anti-TNF alpha immediately prior to use. According to the table below, dilute the Biotinylated anti TNF alpha with the Biotinylated Antibody Diluent based on the number of wells being used in the assay procedure:

Number of well strips used	Volume of Biotinylated anti-TNF ALPHA ( $\mu$ L)	Volume of Biotinylated Antibody Diluent ( $\mu$ L)
2	40	1,060
3	60	1,590
4	80	2,120
6	120	3,180
12	240	6,360

#### 9.5 1X Streptavidin-HRP Solution

Add 500  $\mu$ L of HRP-Diluent to the Streptavidin-HRP vial prior to use to create a Streptavidin-HRP Concentrate. Do not keep this solution for further experiments.

Subsequently, prior to use in the assay procedure, prepare the 1X Streptavidin-HRP Solution by further diluting the Streptavidin-HRP Concentrate with HRP-Diluent. Use the table below to determine the volumes of each solution required to prepare the final 1X Streptavidin-HRP Solution:

Number of well strips used	Volume of Streptavidin HRP ( $\mu$ L)	Volume of HRP Diluent (mL)
2	30	2
3	45	3
4	60	4
6	75	5
12	150	10

## 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** Standard vials must be reconstituted with the appropriate diluent for your samples.

**For serum and plasma samples:** Use Standard Diluent (Human Serum).

**For cell culture supernatants:** Use 1X Standard Diluent Buffer.

Prepare an 800 pg/mL **Standard #1** by reconstituting with the volume indicated on the vial using the appropriate diluent buffer from above.

**10.2** Label tubes #2-6 and add 250 µL of appropriate diluent into each tube.

**10.3** Prepare **Standard #2** by adding 250 µL of Standard #1 to tube #2 and mix thoroughly.

**10.4** Prepare **Standard #3** by adding 250 µL of Standard #2 to tube #3 and mix thoroughly.

**10.5** Using the table below as a guide, prepare further serial dilutions.

**10.6** Standard Diluent (Human Serum) or 1X Standard Diluent Buffer serves as the zero standard (0 pg/mL).

Standard #	Volume to dilute (µL)	Diluent (µL)	Total Volume (µL)	Starting conc. (pg/mL)	Final conc. (pg/mL)
1	-	-	-	800	800
2	250	250	500	800	400
3	250	250	500	400	200
4	250	250	500	200	100
5	250	250	500	100	50
6	250	250	500	50	25

## **11. Sample Preparation**

### **11.1 Preparation of Plasma Samples:**

Collect plasma using citrate, EDTA or heparin. Centrifuge samples at 1,000 x g for 30 minutes. Store plasma samples at -20°C or below for up to 3 months. Avoid repeated freeze-thaw cycles.

### **11.2 Preparation of Serum Samples:**

Samples should be collected into a serum separator tube. After clot formation, centrifuge samples at 1,000 x g for 10 minutes and collect serum. Store serum at -20°C or below. Avoid repeated freeze-thaw cycles.

### **11.3 Preparation of Cell culture Supernatants:**

Centrifuge cell culture media at 1,000 x g for 10 minutes to remove debris. Collect supernatants and assay. Store samples at -20°C or below. Avoid repeated freeze-thaw cycles.

### **11.4 Storage:**

Aliquots of spiked serum samples were stored at -20°C, 2-8°C, room temperature (RT) and at 37°C and the TNF alpha level determined after 24h. There was no significant loss of TNF alpha reactivity during storage at RT, and 2-8°C, however there is a significant loss of reactivity when stored at 37°C.

### **11.5 Thawing of samples:**

Aliquots of spiked serum were stored frozen at -20°C and thawed up to 5 times and the TNF alpha level was determined. There was no significant loss of TNF alpha after 5 cycles of freezing and thawing.

## 12. Plate Preparation

- The 96 well plate strips included with this kit is supplied ready to use. It is not necessary to rinse the plate prior to adding reagents.
- Unused well strips should be returned to the plate packet and stored at 4°C.
- For statistical reasons, we recommend each sample should be assayed with a minimum of two replicates (duplicates).
- Well effects have not been observed with this assay. Contents of each well can be recorded on the template sheet included in the Resources section.

## 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** Prior to use, mix all reagents thoroughly taking care not to create any foam within the vials.
- 13.2** Determine the number of microplate strips required to test the desired number of samples, plus appropriate number of wells needed for controls and standards. Remove sufficient microplate strips from the pouch.
- 13.3** Add 100  $\mu\text{L}$  of each standard (see Section 10), including blank controls to the appropriate wells.
- 13.4** Add 100  $\mu\text{L}$  of sample and 1X Control Solution to the appropriate wells.
- 13.5** Add 50  $\mu\text{L}$  of 1X Biotinylated anti-TNF alpha to all wells (see Section 9).
- 13.6** Cover and incubate for 3 hours at room temperature (18-25°C).
- 13.7** Remove the cover and wash the plate as follows:
- 13.7.1 Aspirate the liquid from each well.
- 13.7.2 Add 0.3 mL of 1X Wash Buffer into each well.
- 13.7.3 Aspirate the liquid from each well.
- 13.7.4 Repeat for a total of 3 washes.
- 13.8** Add 100  $\mu\text{L}$  of 1X Streptavidin-HRP solution into all wells, including the blank wells. Re-cover and incubate at room temperature for 30 minutes.
- 13.9** Wash as described in Step 13.7.
- 13.10** Add 100  $\mu\text{L}$  of Chromogen TMB substrate solution into each well and incubate in the dark for 12-15 minutes at room temperature. Avoid direct exposure to light by wrapping the plate in aluminum foil.
- Δ Note:** Incubation time of the substrate solution is usually determined by the microplate reader performances: many microplate readers record absorbance only up to 2.0 O.D. The O.D. values of the plate should be monitored and the substrate reaction stopped before positive wells are no longer accurately readable (maximum ~20 minutes).

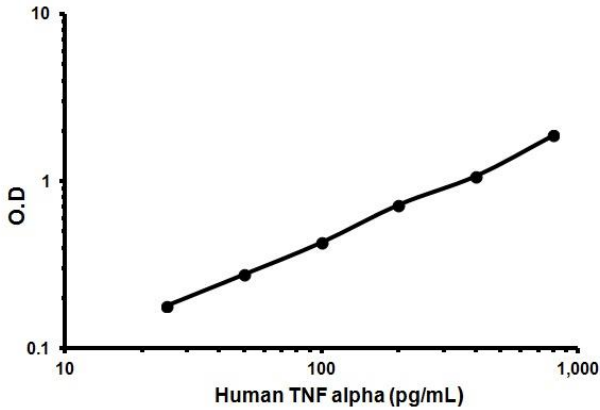
- 13.11** Add 100  $\mu$ L of Stop Reagent into each well. Results must be taken immediately after the addition of Stop Reagent, or within one hour, if the microplate is stored at 2-8°C in the dark.
- 13.12** Read absorbance of each well on a spectrophotometer using 450 nm as the primary wavelength and optionally 620 nm (610 nm to 650 nm is acceptable) as the reference wavelength.

## 14. Calculations

Calculate the mean absorbance for each set of duplicate standards, controls and samples, and subtract the average zero standard optical density. Plot the standard curve on log-log graph paper, with standard concentration on the x-axis and absorbance on the y-axis. Draw the best-fit straight line through the standard points.

## 15. Typical Data

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



Conc. (pg/mL)	O.D.
800	1.883
400	1.076
200	0.724
100	0.430
50	0.277
25	0.180
0	0.102

**Figure 1.** Example of Human TNF alpha standard curve.

## 16. Calibration

This immunoassay is calibrated against a highly purified TNF alpha. The NIBSC/WHO unclassified purified Human TNF alpha preparation 12/154 was evaluated in this kit.

The dose response curve of the unclassified standard 12/154 parallels the TNF alpha standard curve. To convert sample values obtained with TNF alpha Human ELISA Kit (ab46087) to approximate NIBSC Units/mL, use the equation below.

NIBSC (12/154) approximate value (Units/mL) = 88.89 x TNF alpha value (ng/mL).

## 17. Typical Sample Values

### EXPECTED SERUM VALUES –

A panel of 50 Human sera was tested for TNF alpha all were below the detection level of 8 pg/mL.

### SENSITIVITY –

The sensitivity, minimum detectable dose of TNF alpha using this Abcam TNF alpha ELISA kit was found to be less than 8 pg/mL. This was determined by adding 3 standard deviations to the mean OD obtained when the zero standard was assayed 40 times.

### PRECISION –

	Intra-assay Precision	Inter-Assay Precision
n=	6	6
CV (%)	3.3	9.0

### DILUTION PARALLELISM –

Four Human pooled serum samples with different levels of TNF were analysed at different serial two fold dilutions (1:2 To 1:8) with four replicates each. Recoveries ranged from 101 to 115% with an overall mean recovery of 107%.

### SPIKE RECOVERY -

The spike recovery was evaluated by spiking 3 concentrations of TNF alpha in Human serum in 2 separate experiments. Recoveries ranged from 74 to 90% with an overall mean recovery of 81%.

## 18. Assay Specificity

This assay recognises both natural and recombinant Human TNF alpha. To assess the specificity of this Abcam TNF alpha ELISA, several proteins were tested for cross reactivity. There was no cross reactivity observed for any protein tested (IL-1 $\beta$ , IL-6, IL-12, IL-4, IL-2, IFN $\gamma$ , IL-10, IL-8, and IL-13).

Please contact our Technical Support team for more information.

## 19. Troubleshooting

Problem	Reason	Solution
<b>Poor standard curve</b>	Inaccurate pipetting	Check pipettes
	Improper standards 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; change to overnight standard/sample incubation
	Inadequate reagent volumes or improper dilution	Check pipettes and ensure correct preparation
<b>Low Precision or Large CV</b>	Use of expired components	Check the expiration date listed before use. Do not interchange components from different lots
	Improper wash step	Check that the correct wash buffer is being used. Check that all wells are empty after aspiration. Check that the microplate washer is dispensing properly. If washing by pipette, check for proper pipetting technique
	Contaminated wash buffer	Prepare fresh wash buffer
	Splashing of reagents while loading wells	Pipette properly in a controlled and careful manner

<b>Low Precision or Large CV</b>	Inconsistent volumes loaded into wells	Pipette properly in a controlled and careful manner. Check pipette calibration. Check pipette for proper performance
	Insufficient mixing of reagent dilutions	Thoroughly agitate the lyophilized components after reconstitution. Thoroughly mix dilutions
	Improperly sealed microplate	Check the microplate pouch for proper sealing. Check that the microplate pouch has no punctures. Check that three desiccants are inside the microplate pouch prior to sealing
<b>Low sensitivity</b>	Improper storage of the ELISA kit	Store the reconstituted protein at -80°C, all other assay components 4°C. Keep substrate solution protected from light.

## 20. Notes

## Technical Support

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