

ab46600 – Human IL-6 ELISPOT Antibody Pair

Instructions for Use

For the qualitative measurement of IL-6 production and secretion in a single cell suspension.

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

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

- 1. BACKGROUND 2
- 2. ASSAY SUMMARY 4

GENERAL INFORMATION

- 3. PRECAUTIONS 5
- 4. STORAGE AND STABILITY 5
- 5. MATERIALS SUPPLIED 5
- 6. MATERIALS REQUIRED, NOT SUPPLIED 6
- 7. LIMITATIONS 7
- 8. TECHNICAL HINTS 7

ASSAY PREPARATION

- 9. REAGENT PREPARATION 8
- 10. CONTROL PREPARATION 9
- 11. SAMPLE PREPARATION 10

ASSAY PROCEDURE

- 12. ASSAY PROCEDURE 11

DATA ANALYSIS

- 13. ASSAY SPECIFICITY 13
- 14. TYPICAL SAMPLE VALUES 13

RESOURCES

- 15. TROUBLESHOOTING 14
- 16. NOTES 14

1. BACKGROUND

Abcam's Human IL-6 ELISPOT Antibody Pair is an *in vitro* ELISPOT assay designed for the qualitative measurement of IL-6 production and secretion in a single cell suspension.

The ELISPOT assay involves a capture antibody highly specific for the analyte of interest coated to the wells of a PVDF bottomed 96 well microtitre plate, either during kit manufacture or in the laboratory. The plate is then blocked to minimize any non-antibody dependent unspecific binding and washed. Cell suspension and stimulant are added and the plate incubated allowing the specific antibodies to bind any analytes produced. Cells are then removed by washing prior to the addition of Biotinylated detection antibodies which bind to the previously captured analyte. Enzyme conjugated streptavidin is then added binding to the detection antibodies. Following incubation and washing substrate is then applied to the wells resulting in colored spots which can be quantified using appropriate analysis software or manually using a microscope.



The ELISPOT assay is a highly specific immunoassay for the analysis of cytokine and other soluble molecule production and secretion from T-cells at a single cell level in conditions closely comparable to the *in vivo* environment with minimal cell manipulation. This technique is designed to determine the frequency of cytokine producing cells under a given stimulation and the comparison of such frequency against a specific treatment or pathological state. The ELISPOT assay constitutes an ideal tool in the investigation of Th1 / Th2 responses, vaccine development, viral infection monitoring and treatment, cancerology, infectious disease, autoimmune diseases and transplantation.

Utilising sandwich immuno-enzyme technology, Abcam ELISPOT assays can detect both secreted cytokines and single cells that simultaneously produce multiple cytokines. Cell secreted cytokines or soluble molecules are captured by coated antibodies avoiding diffusion in supernatant, protease degradation or binding on soluble membrane receptors. After cell removal, the captured cytokines are revealed by tracer antibodies and appropriate conjugates.

Interleukin-6 (IL-6) is a multi-functional cytokine that regulates immune responses, acute phase reactions and hematopoiesis and may play a central role in host defense mechanisms. The gene for human IL-6 has been localized to chromosome 7p21. The genomic sequence has been determined. IL-6 is usually not produced constitutively by normal cells, but its expression is readily induced by a variety of cytokines, lipopolysaccharide or viral infections. The IL-6 gene product is a single chain protein with a molecular mass ranging from 21 to 28 kDa, depending on the cellular source. Extensive posttranslational modifications like N- and O-linked glycosylation as well as phosphorylation seem to account for this heterogeneity. The cDNA for IL-6 predicts a precursor protein of 212 amino acids. IL-6 is a pleiotropic cytokine produced by a variety of cells. It acts on a wide range of tissues, exerting growth-induction, growth-inhibition, and differentiation respectively, depending on the nature of the target cells.

2. ASSAY SUMMARY

Capture Antibody



Equilibrate all reagents to room temperature. Prepare all the reagents and samples as instructed. 96-well PVDF bottomed plates are first treated with 35% ethanol and then coated with capture antibody.

Protein



Add sample (Cells) to appropriate wells. Incubate at 37°C.

anti-Protein-Biotin



Aspirate and wash each well. Add prepared Biotinylated labeled detector antibody. Incubate at room temperature.

Streptavidin-AP



Add prepared Streptavidin-Alkaline Phosphatase mix to each well. Incubate at room temperature.

Substrate Colored Product



Add the substrate solution BCIP/NBT to each well and monitor spot formation.

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. Modifications to the kit components or procedures may result in loss of performance.

4. STORAGE AND STABILITY

Store kit at +2-8°C immediately upon receipt.

Refer to list of materials supplied for storage conditions of individual components. Observe the storage conditions for individual prepared components in section 9. Reagent Preparation.

5. MATERIALS SUPPLIED

Item	10 x 96 tests	Storage Condition (Before Preparation)
Capture Antibody for IL-6	2 x 500 µL	+2-8°C
Biotinylated Detection antibody	2 x 1 vial	+2-8°C

6. MATERIALS REQUIRED, NOT SUPPLIED

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

- 1X Phosphate Buffered Saline (PBS) (coating and wash step)

For 1L of 10X PBS weigh out:

80g NaCl

2 g KH_2PO_4

14.4 g $\text{Na}_2\text{HPO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$.

Add distilled water to 1L. Adjust the pH of the solution to 7.4 +/- 0.1. Dilute the solution to 1X before use.

- 1% BSA PBS Solution (Dilution Buffer)

For one plate dissolve 0.2 g of BSA in 20 mL of PBS 1X.

- Streptavidin – AP conjugate

Dilute in Dilution buffer according to the instructions of the supplier.

- Substrate solution (BCIP/NBT)

- 35% Ethanol (PVDF Membrane Activation Buffer)

For one plate mix 3.5 mL of ethanol with 6.5 mL of distilled water.

- Cell culture media + 10% Serum (Blocking Buffer)

For one plate add 1 mL Serum (e.g. FCS) to 9 mL of culture media (use same cell culture medium as used to derive the cell suspension).

- Cell culture reagents (e.g. RPMI-1640, L-glutamine and FCS)

- Cell stimulation reagents (LPS)

- 96 well PVDF bottomed plates

- CO_2 incubator

- Miscellaneous laboratory plastic and/or glass, if possible sterile.

7. LIMITATIONS

- 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.
- 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.

8. TECHNICAL HINTS

- Kit components should be stored as indicated. All the reagents should be equilibrated to room temperature before use.
- 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 substrate solution, avoid pipettes with metal parts.
- Thoroughly mix the reagents and samples before use by agitation or swirling.
- When pipetting reagents, maintain a consistent order of addition from well-to-well. This will ensure equal incubation times for all wells.
- **This kit is sold based on number of tests. A 'test' simply refers to a single assay well. Please contact our Technical Support staff with any questions.**

9. REAGENT PREPARATION

Equilibrate all reagents and samples to room temperature (18-25°C) prior to use.

9.1 **Capture Antibody**

This reagent is supplied sterile once opened keep the vial sterile or aliquot and store at -20°C. For optimal performance prepare the Capture Antibody dilution immediately before use.

Dilute 100 µL of capture antibody in 10 mL of 1X PBS and mix well.

9.2 **Detection Antibody**

Reconstitute the lyophilised antibody with 550 µL of distilled water. Gently mix the solution and wait until all the lyophilised material is back into solution.

Dilute 100 µL of resuspended antibody into 10 mL Dilution Buffer and mix well.

If not used within a short period of time, reconstituted Detection Antibody should be aliquoted and stored at -20°C. In these conditions the reagent is stable for at least one year. For optimal performance prepare the reconstituted antibody dilution immediately prior to use.

10. CONTROL PREPARATION

Cells can either be stimulated directly in the antibody coated wells (Direct) or, first stimulated in 24 well plates or flask, harvested, and then plated into the coated wells (Indirect).

The method used is dependent on 1) the type of cell assayed 2) the expected cell frequency. When a low number of cytokine producing cells are expected it is also advised to test them with the direct method, however, when this number is particularly high it is better to use the indirect ELISPOT method.

All the method steps following stimulation of the cells are the same regardless of the method (direct/indirect) chosen.

10.1 Positive Assay Control - IL-6 production

We recommend using the following polyclonal activation as a positive control in your assay.

Dilute PBMC at 1×10^6 cells/mL in culture media (e.g. RPMI 1640 supplemented with 2 mM L-glutamine and 10% heat inactivated fetal calf serum) containing 1 $\mu\text{g/mL}$ LPS. Distribute 1×10^4 to 2.5×10^4 cells per 100 μL in required wells of an antibody coated 96-well PVDF plates and incubate for 15-20 hours in an incubator.

For antigen specific stimulation, the optimal concentration of the antigen and the optimal concentration of number of cells have to be determined experimentally, as it is depending on the frequency of cytokine producing cells.

10.2 Negative Assay Control

Dilute PBMC in culture media to give an appropriate cell number (same number of unstimulated cells as stimulated sample cells) per 100 μL with no stimulation.

11. SAMPLE PREPARATION

- Dilute PBMC in culture medium and stimulator of interest (i.e. sample, vaccine, peptide pool or infected cells) to give an appropriate cell number per 100 μL .
- Optimal assay performances are observed between 1×10^4 and 2.5×10^4 cells per 100 μL .
- Stimulators and incubation times can be varied depending on the frequency of cytokine producing cells and therefore should be optimised by the testing laboratory.

12. ASSAY PROCEDURE

- 12.1 Add 25 μL of 35% ethanol to each well.
- 12.2 Incubate plate at room temperature for 30 seconds.
- 12.3 Empty the wells by flicking the plate over a sink and gently tapping on absorbent paper. Thoroughly wash the plate 3x with 200 μL of PBS 1X per well.
- 12.4 Add 100 μL of diluted Capture Antibody to each well.
- 12.5 Cover the plate and incubate at 4°C overnight.
- 12.6 Empty the wells as previous (Step 12.3) and wash the plate 1x with 200 μL of PBS 1X per well.
- 12.7 Add 100 μL of Blocking Buffer to each well.
- 12.8 Cover the plate and incubate at room temperature for 2 hours.
- 12.9 Empty the wells as previous (Step 12.3) and thoroughly wash once with 200 μL of PBS 1X per well.
- 12.10 Add 100 μL of sample, positive or negative controls cell suspension to appropriate wells providing the required concentration of cells and stimulant (cells may have been previously stimulated).
- 12.11 Cover the plate and incubate at 37°C in a CO₂ incubator for an appropriate length of time (15-20 hours).

Note: Do not agitate or move the plate during this incubation. The most appropriate incubation time for each experiment must be empirically determined by the end user as this can vary depending on the specific activation conditions, cell type and analyte of interest.
- 12.12 Empty the wells and remove excess solution then add 200 μL of PBS 1X to each well.
- 12.13 Incubate the plate at 4°C for 10 minutes.
- 12.14 Empty the wells as previous and wash the plate 3x with 200 μL of PBS 1X.
- 12.15 Add 100 μL of diluted detection antibody to each well.

ASSAY PROCEDURE

- 12.16 Cover the plate and incubate at room temperature for 1 hour 30 minutes.
- 12.17 Empty the wells as previous (Step 12.3) and wash the plate 3x with 200 μ L of PBS 1X.
- 12.18 Add 100 μ L of diluted Streptavidin-AP conjugate to each well.
- 12.19 Cover the plate and incubate following the supplier's instructions.
- 12.20 Empty the wells and wash the plate 3x with 200 μ L of PBS 1X.
- 12.21 Peel of the plate bottom and wash both sides of the membrane 3x under running distilled water. When washing is complete, remove any excess solution by repeated tapping on absorbent paper.
- 12.22 Add 100 μ L of ready-to-use BCIP/NBT buffer to each well
- 12.23 Incubate the plate for 5-15 minutes monitoring spot formation visually throughout the incubation period to assess sufficient color development.
- 12.24 Empty the wells and rinse both sides of the membrane 3x under running distilled water. Completely remove any excess solution by gentle repeated tapping on absorbent paper.
- 12.25 Allow the wells to dry and then read results. The frequency of the resulting colored spots corresponding to the cytokine producing cells can be determined using an appropriate ELISPOT reader and analysis software or manually using a microscope.

Note: Spots may become sharper after overnight incubation at 4°C. Plate should be stored at room temperature away from direct light, but color may fade over prolonged periods so read results within 24 hours.

13. ASSAY SPECIFICITY

The assay recognizes native human IL-6.

To define specificity of this IL-6 antibody pair, several proteins were tested for cross reactivity. There was no cross reactivity observed for any protein tested (IL-1 α , IL-1 β , IL-10 IL-12, IFN γ , IL-4, TNF α , IL-8 and IL-13). This testing was performed using the equivalent human IL-6 antibody pair in an ELISA assay.

14. TYPICAL SAMPLE VALUES

Reproducibility and Linearity

Intra-assay reproducibility and linearity were evaluated by measuring the spot development following the stimulation (LPS) of 5 different PBMC concentrations, 12 repetitions in 1 batch. The data shows the mean spot number, range and CV for the five cell concentrations.

Cells / Well	n	Mean number of spots per well	Minimum number of spots per well	Maximum number of spots per well	CV%
10,000 recommended	12	467	439	533	5.9
5,000	12	340	327	370	3.9
2,500	12	207	190	225	4.7
1,560	12	118	108	129	6.3
625	12	64	54	76	10.4

15. TROUBLESHOOTING

Please refer to www.abcam.com/ELISAandReagents for troubleshooting tips.

16. NOTES



For all technical and commercial enquires please go to:

www.abcam.com/contactus

www.abcam.cn/contactus (China)

www.abcam.co.jp/contactus (Japan)

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