

PROLACTIN (PRL) ELISA

EU:  

CAN/USA: 

REF CAN-PRL-4100

Version: 9.1 (COMB)

Effective: October 17, 2023

INTENDED USE

For the quantitative determination of prolactin (PRL) in human serum by an enzyme immunoassay.

PRINCIPLE OF THE TEST

The principle of the following enzyme immunoassay test follows a typical one-step capture or 'sandwich' type assay. The assay makes use of two highly specific monoclonal antibodies: A monoclonal antibody specific for prolactin is immobilized onto the microplate and another monoclonal antibody specific for a different region of prolactin is conjugated to horse radish peroxidase (HRP). Prolactin from the sample and standards are allowed to bind simultaneously to the plate and to the HRP conjugate. The washing and decanting steps remove any unbound HRP conjugate. After the washing step, the enzyme substrate is added. The enzymatic reaction is terminated by addition of the stopping solution. The absorbance is measured on a microtiter plate reader. The intensity of the colour formed by the enzymatic reaction is directly proportional to the concentration of prolactin in the sample. A set of standards is used to plot a standard curve from which the amount of prolactin in patient samples and controls can be directly read.

CLINICAL APPLICATIONS

Prolactin (PRL) is a polypeptide hormone synthesized by the lactotropic cells of the anterior pituitary gland. Structurally, it is similar to two other polypeptide hormones namely, growth hormone and placental lactogen. PRL is a polypeptide containing 199 amino acids, while growth hormone and placental lactogen each have 191 amino acids. There is approximately 100 µg of prolactin in the human pituitary gland, which is a very small amount when compared to growth hormone, which is present at 8–10 mg.

The target organ of prolactin is the breast (mammary gland). Its main physiological action is not only to initiate but also to sustain lactation. The hypothalamus secretes dopamine, which has a direct effect of inhibition of the secretion of PRL.

If dopamine is not available or absent the secretion of PRL is autonomous. Clinical trends:

- In patients where tumours secrete prolactin there is a remarkable increase in the PRL level, which then decreases the secretion of gonadotropin resulting in infertility.
- If the pituitary gland is deficient it leads to failure of lactation.
- In Sheehan's syndrome the pituitary gland is deficient, therefore the PRL level is reduced.
- A few conditions where increases in prolactin levels are found include: hyperprolactinemia, adenomas of the pituitary gland, sleep, pregnancy, hypothyroidism, prolactinomas and stress.
- Prolactinomas are pituitary tumours secreting prolactin, found most frequently in females. In females they lead to amenorrhoea, which could be primary or secondary and give rise to a decrease in gonadotropin secretion by the pituitary. In men some degree of impotency accompanied by a low testosterone level occurs, followed by azospermia.

PROCEDURAL CAUTIONS AND WARNINGS

- Users should have a thorough understanding of this protocol for the successful use of this kit. Reliable performance will only be attained by strict and careful adherence to the instructions provided.
- Control materials or serum pools should be included in every run at a high and low level for assessing the reliability of results.
- When the use of water is specified for dilution or reconstitution, use deionized or distilled water.
- In order to reduce exposure to potentially harmful substances, gloves should be worn when handling kit reagents and human specimens.
- All kit reagents and specimens should be brought to room temperature and mixed gently but thoroughly before use. Avoid repeated freezing and thawing of reagents and specimens.
- A calibrator curve must be established for every run.
- The controls should be included in every run and fall within established confidence limits.
- Improper procedural techniques, imprecise pipetting, incomplete washing as well as improper reagent storage may be indicated when assay values for the controls do not reflect established ranges.
- When reading the microplate, the presence of bubbles in the wells will affect the optical densities (ODs). Carefully remove any bubbles before performing the reading step.
- The substrate solution (TMB) is sensitive to light and should remain colourless if properly stored. Instability or contamination may be indicated by the development of a blue colour, in which case it should not be used.
- When dispensing the substrate and stopping solution, do not use pipettes in which these liquids will come into contact with any metal parts.
- To prevent contamination of reagents, use a new disposable pipette tip for dispensing each reagent, sample, standard and control.
- Do not mix various lot numbers of kit components within a test and do not use any component beyond the expiration date printed on the label.
- Kit reagents must be regarded as hazardous waste and disposed of according to national regulations.

LIMITATIONS

- All the reagents within the kit are calibrated for the direct determination of prolactin in human serum. The kit is not calibrated for the determination of progesterone in saliva, plasma or other specimens of human or animal origin.
- Do not use grossly hemolyzed, grossly lipemic, icteric or improperly stored serum.
- Any samples or control sera containing azide or thimerosal are not compatible with this kit, as they may lead to false results.
- Only calibrator A may be used to dilute any high serum samples. The use of any other reagent may lead to false results.
- The results obtained with this kit should never be used as the sole basis for a clinical diagnosis. For example, the occurrence of heterophilic antibodies in patients regularly exposed to animals or animal products has the potential of causing interferences in immunological tests. Consequently, the clinical diagnosis should include all aspects of a patient's background including the frequency of exposure to animals/products if false results are suspected.
- Some individuals may have antibodies to mouse protein that can possibly interfere in this assay. Therefore, the results from any patients who have received preparation of mouse antibodies for diagnosis or therapy should be interpreted with caution.
- The measurement of prolactin may also include the measurement of its other structural forms (big prolactin, macroprolactin, etc.). As a result, patients exhibiting elevated prolactin levels may require further investigations to make a proper diagnosis.

SAFETY CAUTIONS AND WARNINGS

POTENTIAL BIOHAZARDOUS MATERIAL

Human serum that may be used in the preparation of the standards and controls has been tested and found to be non-reactive for Hepatitis B surface antigen and has also been tested for the presence of antibodies to HCV and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and found to be negative. No test method however, can offer complete assurance that HIV, HCV and Hepatitis B virus or any infectious agents are absent. The reagents should be considered a potential biohazard and handled with the same precautions as applied to any blood specimen.

CHEMICAL HAZARDS

Avoid contact with reagents containing TMB, hydrogen peroxide and sulfuric acid. If contacted with any of these reagents, wash with plenty of water. TMB is a suspected carcinogen.

SPECIMEN COLLECTION AND STORAGE

Approximately 0.2 mL of serum is required per duplicate determination. Collect 4–5 mL of blood into an appropriately labelled tube and allow it to clot. Centrifuge and carefully remove the serum layer. Store at 4°C for up to 24 hours or at -10°C or lower if the analyses are to be done at a later date. Consider all human specimens as possible biohazardous materials and take appropriate precautions when handling.

SPECIMEN PRETREATMENT

This assay is a direct system; no specimen pretreatment is necessary.

REAGENTS AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED BUT NOT PROVIDED

- Precision pipettes to dispense 25, 50, 100, and 300 µL
- Disposable pipette tips
- Distilled or deionized water
- Plate shaker
- Microplate reader with a filter set at 450 nm and an upper OD limit of 3.0 or greater* (see assay procedure step 10)

REAGENTS PROVIDED

1. Mouse Anti-Prolactin Antibody-Coated Break-Apart Well Microplate — Ready To Use

Contents: One 96-well (12x8) monoclonal antibody-coated microplate in a resealable pouch with desiccant.

Storage: Refrigerate at 2–8°C

Stability: 12 months or as indicated on label.

2. Mouse Anti-Prolactin Antibody-Horseradish Peroxidase (HRP) Conjugate Concentrate — Requires Preparation [X50](#)

Contents: Anti-PRL monoclonal antibody-HRP conjugate in a protein-based buffer with a non-mercury preservative.

Volume: 0.3 mL/vial

Storage: Refrigerate at 2–8°C

Stability: 12 months or as indicated on label.

Preparation: Dilute 1:50 in assay buffer before use (eg. 40 µL of concentrate in 2 mL of assay buffer). If the whole plate is to be used dilute 240 µL of concentrate in 12 mL of assay buffer. Discard any that is left over.

3. Prolactin Calibrators — Ready To Use

Contents: Six vials containing prolactin in a protein-based buffer with a non-mercury preservative. Prepared by spiking buffer with a defined quantity of prolactin.

Calibrated against World Health Organization (WHO) 3rd IS 80/500.

* Listed below are approximate concentrations, please refer to bottle labels for exact concentrations.

| Calibrator | Concentration | Concentration | Volume/Vial |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Calibrator A | 0 µIU/mL | 0 ng/mL | 2.0 mL |
| Calibrator B | 20 µIU/mL | 0.77 ng/mL | 0.3 mL |
| Calibrator C | 100 µIU/mL | 3.84 ng/mL | 0.3 mL |
| Calibrator D | 400 µIU/mL | 15.38 ng/mL | 0.3 mL |
| Calibrator E | 800 µIU/mL | 30.75 ng/mL | 0.3 mL |
| Calibrator F | 3200 µIU/mL | 123 ng/mL | 0.3 mL |

Storage: Refrigerate at 2–8°C

Stability: 12 months in unopened vials or as indicated on label. Once opened, the standards should be used within 14 days or aliquoted and stored frozen. Avoid multiple freezing and thawing cycles.

4. Controls — Ready To Use

Contents: Two vials containing prolactin in a protein-based buffer with a non-mercury preservative. Prepared by spiking serum with defined quantities of prolactin. Refer to vial labels for the acceptable range.

Volume: 0.3 mL/vial

Storage: Refrigerate at 2–8°C

Stability: 12 months in unopened vials or as indicated on label. Once opened, the controls should be used within 14 days or aliquoted and stored frozen. Avoid multiple freezing and thawing cycles.

5. Wash Buffer Concentrate — Requires Preparation [X10](#)

Contents: One bottle containing buffer with a non-ionic detergent and a non-mercury preservative.

Volume: 50 mL/bottle

Storage: Refrigerate at 2–8°C

Stability: 12 months or as indicated on label.

Preparation: Dilute 1:10 in distilled or deionized water before use. If the whole plate is to be used dilute 50 mL of the wash buffer concentrate in 450 mL of water.

6. Assay Buffer — Ready To Use

Contents: One bottle containing a protein-based buffer with a non-mercury preservative.

Volume: 15 mL/bottle

Storage: Refrigerate at 2–8°C

Stability: 12 months or as indicated on label.

7. TMB Substrate — Ready To Use

Contents: One bottle containing tetramethylbenzidine and hydrogen peroxide in a non-DMF or DMSO containing buffer.

Volume: 16 mL/bottle

Storage: Refrigerate at 2–8°C

Stability: 12 months or as indicated on label.

8. Stopping Solution — Ready To Use

Contents: One bottle containing 1M sulfuric acid.

Volume: 6 mL/bottle

Storage: Refrigerate at 2–8°C

Stability: 12 months or as indicated on label.

ASSAY PROCEDURE

Specimen Pretreatment: **None**.

All reagents must reach room temperature before use. Calibrators, controls and specimen samples should be assayed in duplicate. Once the procedure has been started, all steps should be completed without interruption.

1. Prepare working solutions of the conjugate and wash buffer (refer to reagents provided section).
2. Remove the required number of well strips. Reseal the bag and return any unused strips to the refrigerator.
3. Pipette 25 µL of each calibrator, control and specimen sample into correspondingly labelled wells in duplicate.
4. Pipette 100 µL of the conjugate working solution into each well. (We recommend using a multichannel pipette.)
5. Incubate on a plate shaker (approximately 200 rpm) for 1 hour at room temperature.
6. Wash the wells **3 times** with 300 µL of diluted wash buffer per well and tap the plate firmly against absorbent paper to ensure that it is dry. (The use of a washer is recommended.)
7. Pipette 150 µL of TMB substrate into each well at timed intervals.
8. Incubate on a plate shaker for 10–15 minutes at room temperature (or until calibrator F attains dark blue colour for desired OD).
9. Pipette 50 µL of stopping solution into each well at the same timed intervals as in step 7.
10. Read the plate on a microplate reader at 450 nm within 20 minutes after addition of the stopping solution.

* If the OD exceeds the upper limit of detection or if a 450 nm filter is unavailable, a 405 or 415 nm filter may be substituted. The optical densities will be lower, however, this will not affect the results of patient/control samples.

CALCULATIONS

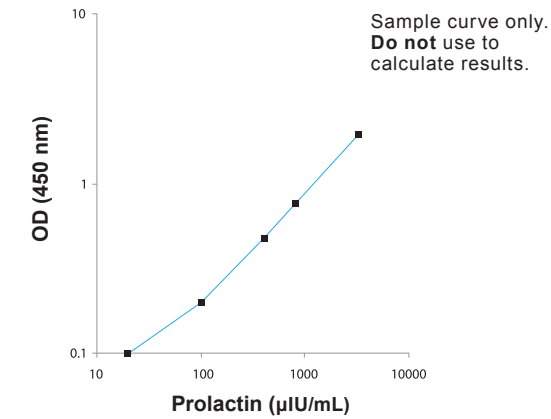
1. Calculate the mean optical density of each calibrator duplicate.
2. Calculate the mean optical density of each unknown duplicate.
3. Subtract the mean absorbance value of the "0" calibrator from the mean absorbance values of the calibrators, controls and serum samples.
4. Draw a calibrator curve on log-log paper with the mean optical densities on the Y-axis and the calibrator concentrations on the X-axis. If immunoassay software is being used, a 4-parameter or 5-parameter curve is recommended.
5. Read the values of the unknowns directly off the calibrator curve.
6. If a sample reads more than 3200 µIU/mL, then dilute it with calibrator A at a dilution of no more than 1:8. The result obtained should be multiplied by the dilution factor.

TYPICAL TABULATED DATA

Sample data only. **Do not** use to calculate results.

| Calibrator | OD 1 | OD 2 | Mean OD | Value (µIU/mL) |
|------------|-------|-------|---------|----------------|
| A | 0.081 | 0.079 | 0.080 | 0 |
| B | 0.099 | 0.102 | 0.101 | 20 |
| C | 0.181 | 0.182 | 0.182 | 100 |
| D | 0.477 | 0.481 | 0.479 | 400 |
| E | 0.769 | 0.751 | 0.760 | 800 |
| F | 1.858 | 2.016 | 1.937 | 3200 |
| Unknown | 0.442 | 0.469 | 0.456 | 383.458 |

TYPICAL CALIBRATOR CURVE



PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS SENSITIVITY

The lower detection limit is calculated from the standard curve by determining the resulting concentration of the mean OD of calibrator A (based on 10 replicate analyses) plus 2 SD. Therefore, the sensitivity of the DBC prolactin ELISA kit is **10 µIU/mL**.

SPECIFICITY (CROSS-REACTIVITY)

The specificity of the DBC prolactin ELISA kit was determined by measuring the apparent prolactin values of the following compounds:

| Substance | Concentration Range | Apparent PRL Value (µIU/mL) |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| hCG (WHO 75/537) | 100–2500 IU/L | Not Detected |
| FSH (WHO 1st 83/575) | 25–4000 IU/L | Not Detected |
| hGH (WHO 80/505) | 10–1000 mg/L | Not Detected |
| PL | 0.1–50 mg/L | Not Detected |
| TSH (WHO 80/558) | 25–1000 mIU/L | Not Detected |

The specificity towards other structural forms of prolactin, including macroprolactin has not been determined.

INTRA-ASSAY PRECISION

Three samples were assayed ten times each on the same calibrator curve. The results (in µIU/mL) are tabulated below:

| Sample | Mean | SD | CV % |
|--------|------|-----|------|
| 1 | 202 | 14 | 6.9 |
| 2 | 586 | 68 | 11.6 |
| 3 | 1320 | 136 | 10.3 |

INTER-ASSAY PRECISION

Three samples were assayed ten times over a period of four weeks. The results (in µIU/mL) are tabulated below:

| Sample | Mean | SD | CV % |
|--------|------|-----|------|
| 1 | 237 | 18 | 7.6 |
| 2 | 589 | 85 | 14.4 |
| 3 | 1725 | 277 | 13.2 |

RECOVERY

Spiked samples were prepared by adding defined amounts of prolactin to three patient serum samples. The results (in µIU/mL) are tabulated below:

| Sample | Obs. Result | Exp. Result | Recovery % |
|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| 1 Unspiked | 55 | - | - |
| + 62 | 95 | 117 | 81.2 |
| + 130 | 172 | 185 | 93.0 |
| + 542 | 508 | 597 | 85.1 |
| 2 Unspiked | 59 | - | - |
| + 49 | 127 | 108 | 117.6 |
| + 145 | 258 | 204 | 126.5 |
| + 775 | 792 | 834 | 95.0 |
| 3 Unspiked | 707 | - | - |
| + 145 | 807 | 852 | 94.7 |
| + 385 | 1356 | 1092 | 124.2 |
| + 775 | 1868 | 1482 | 126.0 |

LINEARITY

Three patient serum samples were diluted with calibrator A. The results (in µIU/mL) are tabulated below:

| Sample | Obs. Result | Exp. Result | Recovery % |
|--------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| 1 | 292 | - | - |
| 1:2 | 124 | 146 | 84.9 |
| 1:4 | 87 | 73 | 119.2 |
| 1:8 | 41 | 37 | 110.8 |
| 2 | 444 | - | - |
| 1:2 | 202 | 222 | 91.0 |
| 1:4 | 116 | 111 | 104.5 |
| 1:8 | 69 | 56 | 123.2 |
| 3 | 1965 | - | - |
| 1:2 | 1014 | 983 | 103.2 |
| 1:4 | 427 | 491 | 87.0 |
| 1:8 | 209 | 246 | 85.0 |

EXPECTED NORMAL VALUES

As for all clinical assays each laboratory should collect data and establish their own range of expected normal values.

| Group | Abs. Range (µIU/mL) |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Males | 67–360 |
| Females Postmenopausal | 55–2500 < 400 |

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Contains sufficient for <n> tests



Storage Temperature



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Use by



Catalogue Number



Authorized representative



Lot number



Dilute 1: # Before use