

User Guide

Conferma® Human TNF-α ELISA Kit

96-Well Plate Assay

EZHTNFA-150K

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Intended Use

The Conferma® TNF- α ELISA kit is used for the non-radioactive quantification of Human TNF- α in serum and plasma samples. One kit is sufficient to measure 38 unknown samples in duplicate. This kit is for Research Use Only. Not for Use in Diagnostic Procedures.

Principles of Assay

The Sandwich ELISA first binds TNF- α using a specific capture Mouse anti-human TNF- α monoclonal antibody bound to the wells of a 96 well microtiter plate. Following the addition of the sample, the assay is incubated for two hours, during which time endogenous or recombinant antigen (depending on the well) is bound by the mAb. The unbound material is washed off post-incubation, and a biotinylated rabbit anti-human TNF- α polyclonal antibody is added to complete the "Sandwich." After an incubation period, the unbound material is washed off. The next step is a final incubation step, during which a streptavidin-horseradish peroxidase conjugate binds to the immobilized biotinylated antibodies. Following a final wash, horseradish peroxidase substrate, 3,3',5,5'-tetramethylbenzidine is added. The enzyme activity is measured spectrophotometrically by the increased absorbance at 450-590 nm after acidification of formed products by addition of Stop Solution. The increase in absorbance is directly proportional to the amount of captured Human TNF- α . Quantitation of the analyte is derived by interpolation from a reference curve comprised of standard points of known concentrations of recombinant human TNF- α .

Reagents Supplied

Each kit is sufficient to run one 96-well plate and contains the following reagents:

Reagents Supplied	Volume	Quantity	Catalogue Number
Human TNF- α ELISA plate with 2 sealers	-----	1 plate, 2 sealers	EP150
Human TNF- α Standard	lyophilized	1 vial	E8150-K
Human TNF- α Quality Controls 1, 2 and 3	lyophilized	1 vial each	E6150-1-K E6150-2-K E6150-3-K
Serum Matrix	lyophilized	1 vial	EMTX-150
Assay Buffer	10 mL	1 vial	EAB150
10X HRP Wash Buffer for ELISA	50 mL	2 bottles	EWB-HRP150
Human TNF- α Detection Antibody	12 mL	1 bottle	E1150
Enzyme Solution (100X)	150 μ L	1 bottle	EHRP-150
Enzyme Solution Diluent	12 mL	1 bottle	ED-150
Substrate	12 mL	1 bottle	ESS-TMB150
Stop Solution	12 mL	1 bottle	ET-TMB150

Storage and Stability

Recommended storage for kit components is 2-8 °C.

All components are shipped and stored at 2-8 °C. Reconstituted standards and controls can be frozen for future use, but repeated freeze/thaw cycles should be avoided.

10X Wash Buffer does not contain a preservative. After dilution, the 1X Wash Buffer may be filter sterilized (Stericup® filter, Millipore Sigma- Cat# SCGPU11RE) for storage of up to 1 month at 2-8 °C. If not filter sterilized, all remaining 1X wash buffer should not be used after one week.

Refer to expiration dates on all reagents prior to use. Do not mix reagents from different kits unless they have the same lot numbers.

Additional Materials Required

(Not Provided)

- Multi-channel Pipettes and pipette tips: 5-50 µL and 50-300 µL
- Pipettes and pipette tips: 10-20 µL or 20-100 µL
- Reagent Reservoirs
- Polypropylene Microfuge Tubes
- Vortex Mixer
- De-ionized water
- Microtiter Plate Reader capable of reading absorbency at 450 nm
- Orbital Microtiter Plate Shaker
- Absorbent Paper or Cloth

Precautions

Sodium Azide has been added to some reagents as a preservative. Although the concentration is low, Sodium Azide may react with lead and copper plumbing to form highly explosive metal azides. Dispose of unused contents and waste in accordance with international, federal, state, and local regulations.

Full Hazard Label

Ingredient	Component Number	Full Label
Human TNF- α Standard	E8150-K	Danger: Harmful if swallowed or if inhaled. Toxic in contact with skin. Causes serious eye damage. May cause damage to organs Respiratory Tract through prolonged or repeated exposure. May cause damage to organs Brain through prolonged or repeated exposure if swallowed. Harmful to aquatic life with long lasting effects. Do not breathe dust/ fume/ gas/ mist/ vapours/ spray. Wash skin thoroughly after handling. Do not eat, drink or smoke when using this product. Use only outdoors or in a well-ventilated area. Avoid release to the environment. Wear protective gloves/ protective clothing/ eye protection/ face protection. IF SWALLOWED: Call a POISON CENTER/ doctor if you feel unwell. Rinse mouth. IF ON SKIN: Wash with plenty of water. Call a POISON CENTER/ doctor if you feel unwell. IF INHALED: Remove person to fresh air and keep comfortable for breathing. Call a POISON CENTER/ doctor if you feel unwell. IF IN EYES: Rinse cautiously with water for several minutes. Remove contact lenses, if present and easy to do. Continue rinsing. Get medical advice/ attention if you feel unwell. Take off contaminated clothing and wash before reuse. Store locked up. Dispose of contents/ container to an approved waste disposal plant.
Serum Matrix	EMTX-150	No Label Harmful to aquatic life with long lasting effects. Avoid release to the environment.

Ingredient	Component Number	Full Label	
Assay Buffer	EAB150		Warning: Causes serious eye irritation. May cause damage to organs Respiratory Tract through prolonged or repeated exposure. Do not breathe dust/ fume/ gas/ mist/ vapours/ spray. Wash skin thoroughly after handling. Wear eye protection/ face protection. IF IN EYES: Rinse cautiously with water for several minutes. Remove contact lenses, if present and easy to do. Continue rinsing. Get medical advice/ attention if you feel unwell. Dispose of contents/ container to an approved waste disposal plant.
Enzyme Solution (100X)	EHRP-150		Warning: May cause an allergic skin reaction. Wear protective gloves. IF ON SKIN: Wash with plenty of soap and water.
Human TNF- α Detection Antibody	E1150		Warning: Causes serious eye irritation. May cause damage to organs Respiratory Tract through prolonged or repeated exposure. Do not breathe dust/ fume/ gas/ mist/ vapours/ spray. Wash skin thoroughly after handling. Wear eye protection/ face protection. IF IN EYES: Rinse cautiously with water for several minutes. Remove contact lenses, if present and easy to do. Continue rinsing. Get medical advice/ attention if you feel unwell. If eye irritation persists: Get medical advice/ attention. Dispose of contents/ container to an approved waste disposal plant.
Enzyme Solution Diluent	ED-150		Warning: May cause an allergic skin reaction. Wear protective gloves. IF ON SKIN: Wash with plenty of soap and water.
Stop Solution	ET-TMB150		Warning: May be corrosive to metals.

Safety Data Sheets (SDS)

Safety Data Sheets are available for download from the product page at [SigmaAldrich.com](https://www.sigmaaldrich.com).

Sample Collection and Storage

Preparation of Serum Samples

Allow the blood to clot for at least 30 minutes before centrifugation for 10 minutes at 1000 xg. Remove serum and assay immediately or aliquot and store samples at $\leq -20^{\circ}\text{C}$.

Avoid multiple >2 freeze/thaw cycles.

When using frozen samples, it is recommended to thaw the samples completely, mix well by vortexing, and centrifuge prior to use in the assay to remove particulates.

Serum samples should be used neat.

Preparation of Plasma Samples

Plasma collection using EDTA as an anticoagulant is recommended. Centrifuge for 10 minutes at 1000xg within 30 minutes of blood collection. Remove plasma and assay immediately or aliquot and store samples at $\leq -20^{\circ}\text{C}$.

Avoid multiple >2 freeze/thaw cycles.

When using frozen samples, it is recommended to thaw the samples completely, mix well by vortexing and centrifuge prior to use in the assay to remove particulates.

Plasma samples should be used neat.

NOTE:

- A maximum of 50 μL per well of neat serum or plasma can be used.
- All samples must be stored in polypropylene tubes. DO NOT STORE SAMPLES IN GLASS.
- Avoid debris, lipids, and cells when using samples with gross hemolysis or lipemia.
- Care must be taken when using heparin as an anti-coagulant since an excess of heparin will provide falsely high values. Use no more than 10 IU heparin per mL of blood collected.

Reagent Preparation

Human TNF- α Standard Preparation

Use care in opening the lyophilized Standard vial. Refer to the Standard reconstitution instructions provided on the Certificate of analysis to hydrate the stock standard vial to 1X concentration

For dilution series, Label 5 polypropylene microfuge tubes as Std 5, Std 4, Std 3, Std 2 and Std 1. Add 200 μ L Assay buffer to each of the 5 tubes. Prepare serial dilutions by adding 100 μ L of the reconstituted standard to the Std 5 tube. Mix well and transfer 100 μ L of the Std 5 to the Std tube, mix well and transfer 100 μ L of the Std to the Std 3 tube, mix well and transfer 100 μ L of the Std 3 to the Std 2 tube, mix well and transfer 100 μ L of the Std 2 to the Std 1 tube and mix well. The 0 pg/mL standard (Background) will be Assay Buffer.

Note: Change tip for every dilution. Wet tip with the standard before dispensing. Unused portions of the reconstituted standard should be stored in small aliquots at ≤ -20 °C. Avoid multiple freeze/thaw cycles.

Tube #	Volume of Deionized Water to Add	Volume of Assay Buffer to Add	Standard Stock Concentration
Reconstituted standard	Refer to COA	Refer to COA	400 pg/mL

Tube #	Volume of Assay Buffer to Add	Volume of Standard to Add	Standard Concentration pg/mL
Standard 5	200 μ L	100 μ L of Reconstituted Standard	133.33
Standard 4	200 μ L	100 μ L of Standard 5	44.44
Standard 3	200 μ L	100 μ L of Standard 4	14.81
Standard 2	200 μ L	100 μ L of Standard 3	4.94
Standard 1	200 μ L	100 μ L of Standard 2	1.65

Human TNF- α Quality Control

1, 2 and 3 Preparation

Use care in opening the lyophilized Quality Control vials. Reconstitute each Human IL-8 Quality Control 1, 2, and 3 as per the instructions provided in the Certificate of Analysis. Once hydrated, controls can be stored in small aliquots at ≤ -20 °C. Avoid further freeze/thaw cycles.

Preparation of Wash Buffer

Bring the 10X Wash Buffer to room temperature and mix to bring all salts into solution. Dilute 100 mL of 10X Wash Buffer (two bottles) with 900 mL deionized water.

NOTE: 10X Wash Buffer does not contain a preservative. For storage of up to 1 month at 2-8 °C, the 1X Wash Buffer may need to be filter sterilized (Stericup® filter, Cat. No. SCGPU11RE)

Preparation of Serum Matrix

Add 1.5 mL distilled or de-ionized water to the bottle containing lyophilized Serum Matrix. Mix well. Allow at least 15 minutes for complete reconstitution. Leftover reconstituted Serum Matrix should be stored at ≤ -20 °C for up to one month.

Preparation of Enzyme Solution

Add 120 μ L of 100X enzyme solution to the bottle containing 12 mL of enzyme solution diluent. Mix well. Store unused portion at 2-8 °C for up to one month.

Assay Procedure

1. Warm all reagents to room temperature before setting up the assay.
2. Remove the required number of strips from the Microtiter Assay Plate. Unused strips should be resealed in the foil pouch and stored at 2-8 °C. Assemble the strips in an empty plate holder. Add 300 μ L diluted Wash Buffer to each well of the plate. Decant Wash Buffer and remove the residual volume by inverting the plate and tapping it smartly onto absorbent towels several times. Do not let wells dry before proceeding to the next step. If an automated machine is used for the assay, follow the manufacturer's instructions for all washing steps described in this protocol.
3. Add 50 μ L of appropriate Matrix Solution to Blank, Standards, and Quality Control wells (refer to Microtiter Plate Arrangement section for suggested sample order placement). When assaying serum or plasma, use EMTX-150. When assaying tissue culture or other supernatants, use proper control culture medium as the matrix solution.
4. Add 50 μ L Assay Buffer to the Blank and sample wells.
5. Add 50 μ L of Standards or Controls to the appropriate wells.
6. Add 50 μ L of neat sample to the appropriate wells.
7. Cover the plate with a plate sealer and incubate at room temperature for 2 hours on an orbital microtiter plate shaker set to rotate at moderate speed, about 400 to 500 rpm.

8. Remove plate sealer and decant reagents from the plate. Tap as before to remove residual volume in well. Wash wells 3 times with diluted Wash Buffer,
9. 300 μ L per well per wash. Decant and tap after each wash to remove residual buffer.
10. Add 100 μ L Detection Antibody to each well. Re-cover plate with sealer and incubate at room temperature for 1 hour on an orbital microtiter plate shaker set to rotate at moderate speed, approximately 400 rpm.
11. Remove plate sealer and decant reagents from the plate. Tap as before to remove residual volume in well. Wash wells 3 times with diluted Wash Buffer, 300 μ L per well per wash. Decant and tap after each wash to remove residual buffer.
12. Add 100 μ L of 1X Enzyme Solution to each well. Cover the plate with sealer and incubate with moderate shaking at room temperature for 30 minutes on the microtiter plate shaker.
13. Remove sealer, decant reagents from the plate, and tap the plate to remove the residual volume. Wash wells 3 times with diluted Wash Buffer, 300 μ L per well per wash. Decant and tap after each wash to remove residual buffer.
14. Add 100 μ L of Substrate Solution to each well, cover plate with sealer, and shake on the plate shaker for approximately 12-16 minutes. Blue color should be formed in wells of the TNF- α standards with intensity proportional to increasing concentrations of TNF- α .

Note: Please be aware that the color may develop more quickly or more slowly than the recommended incubation time, depending on the localized room temperature. Please visually monitor the color development to optimize the incubation time.

15. Remove sealer and add 100 μ L Stop Solution (**CAUTION: CORROSIVE SOLUTION**) and gently shake plate by hand to ensure complete mixing of the solution in all wells. The blue color should turn to yellow after acidification. Wipe the bottom of the microtiter plate to remove any residue prior to reading on a plate reader. Read absorbance at 450 nm and 590 nm in a plate reader within 5 minutes and ensure that there are no air bubbles in any well. Record the difference in absorbance units. The absorbance of the highest IL-8 standard should be approximately 2.0 - 3.0, or not to exceed the capability of the plate reader used.

Note: When sample volumes assayed differ from 50 μ L, an appropriate mathematical adjustment must be made to accommodate the dilution factor (e.g., if 25 μ L of sample is used, then calculated data must be multiplied by 2). When the sample volume assayed is less than 50 μ L, compensate for the volume deficit with the Assay Buffer.

Assay Procedure for Human TNF- α ELISA Kit

(Cat. No. EZHTNFA-150K)

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4-5	Step 6-7	Step 8	Step 9	Step 10	Step 11	Step 12-13
Well #		Matrix Solution	Assay Buffer	Standards/QCs/ Samples		Detection Antibody		Enzyme Solution		Substrate
A1, B1	Wash plate 1X with 300 μ L Wash Buffer. Remove residual buffer by tapping smartly on absorbent towels.	50 μ L	50 μ L	--	Seal, Agitate, Incubate 2 hours at Room Temperature on a plate shaker. Wash 3X with 300 μ L Wash Buffer.	100 μ L ↓	Seal, Agitate, Incubate 1 hour at Room Temperature on a plate shaker. Wash 3X with 300 μ L Wash Buffer.	100 μ L ↓	Seal, Agitate, Incubate 30 minutes at Room Temperature on a plate shaker. Wash 3X with 300 μ L Wash Buffer.	100 μ L ↓
C1, D1		50 μ L	--	50 μ L of Std 1						
E1, F1		50 μ L	--	50 μ L of Std 2						
G1, H1		50 μ L	--	50 μ L of Std 3						
A2, B2		50 μ L	--	50 μ L of Std 4						
C2, D2		50 μ L	--	50 μ L of Std 5						
E2, F2		50 μ L	--	50 μ L of Reconstituted standard						
G2, H2		50 μ L	--	50 μ L of QC 1						
A3, B3		50 μ L	--	50 μ L of QC 2						
C3, D3		50 μ L	--	50 μ L of QC 3						
E3, F3		--	50 μ L	50 μ L of sample						
G3, H3		--	50 μ L	50 μ L of sample						
A4, B4 Etc.		--	50 μ L	50 μ L of sample						
										Read Absorbance at 450 nm and 590 nm.

Microtiter Plate Arrangement

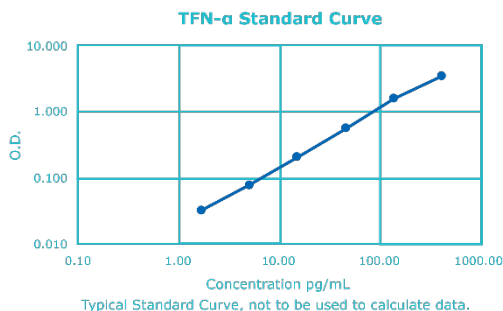
Human TNF-α ELISA

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A	Blank	Std 4	QC 2									
B	Blank	Std 4	QC 2									
C	Std 1	Std 5	QC 3									
D	Std 1	Std 5	Sample [#]									
E	Std 2	Reconstituted standard	Sample [#]									
F	Std 2	Reconstituted Standard										
G	Std 3	QC 1										
H	Std 3	QC 2										

Assay Characteristics

Sensitivity

The lower limit of quantitation (LLOQ) of TNF- α assay is 1.65 pg/mL using Belysa Immunoassay Analysis software from Millipore Sigma. LLOQ is calculated by back interpolation of the standard point that provides CV $\leq$ 20% and recovery $\pm$ 20% of the expected.



Specificity

The antibody pair used in this assay is specific to Human TNF- α and does not cross-react to the following molecules/hormones tested:

Human IL-1 α , IL-2, IL-3, IL-4, IL-5, IL-6, IL-7, IL-8, IL-9, IL-10, IL-12, IL-13, IL-15, MCP-3, MIP1 α , MIP1 β , GRO α , RANTES, MCP-1

Precision

Mean Intra-assay precision is calculated from the results of twenty replicates each of the three different concentrations of human TNF- α in a single assay. The mean inter-assay precision is generated from the results of eight separate assays with duplicate samples in each assay for the three different concentrations of TNF- α .

Intra-Assay Variation

	Mean TNF- α Levels (pg/mL)	Intra-Assay %CV
1	7.8	7.8
2	25.3	11.4
3	78.8	10.5

Inter-Assay Variation

	Mean TNF- α Levels (pg/mL)	Inter-Assay %CV
1	7.6	4.8
2	23.9	4.0
3	74.5	5.0

Spike Recovery of TNF-α in Blood Samples

Varying amounts of Human TNF-α were added to 10 individual human serum and plasma samples, and the resulting TNF-α content of each sample was assayed by Human TNF-α ELISA.

The recovery = [(observed - Basal / (spiked IL-8 concentration))] × 100%.

Sample	Spiked Concentration of TNF-α (pg/mL)	Concentration observed in the assay (pg/mL)	Recovery %
Serum 1	0	7.2	
	4.9	12.4	105
	14.8	21.0	94
	44.7	49.3	95
Serum 2	0	6.9	
	4.9	11.5	93
	14.8	19.8	87
	44.7	48.0	93
Serum 3	0	3.9	
	4.9	8.9	101
	14.8	18.7	100
	44.7	46.6	96
Serum 4	0	4.4	
	4.9	9.4	102
	14.8	19.0	99
	44.7	47.5	97
Serum 5	0	3.7	
	4.9	8.0	87
	14.8	16.4	86
	44.7	41.4	85
Average			95

Sample	Spiked Concentration of TNF-α (pg/mL)	Concentration observed in the assay (pg/mL)	Recovery %
Plasma 1	0	4.0	
	4.9	9.4	110
	14.8	17.4	91
	44.4	45.6	94
Plasma 2	0	5.4	
	4.9	9.5	82
	14.8	17.8	83
	44.4	41.3	81
Plasma 3	0	4.0	
	4.9	9.0	100
	14.8	18.7	99
	44.4	50.8	105
Plasma 4	0	4.6	
	4.9	9.8	106
	14.8	17.8	89
	44.4	46.3	94
Plasma 5	0	4.3	
	4.9	9.7	109
	14.8	20.7	111
	44.4	51.6	107
Average			97

Linearity of Dilution

10 spiked individual human serum and plasma samples were assayed for linearity studies. Neat sample volumes of 50 µL, 25 µL, 12.5 µL, and 6.25 µL in a 50 µL total sample volume represents dilution factors of 1, 2, 4, and 8, respectively. Required amounts of Assay Buffer were added to compensate for the lost volumes below 50 µL.

Dilution linearity = (observed/expected) x 100%

Observed = mean calculated dilution corrected concentration at each dilution

Expected = mean calculated concentration of the neat sample

Sample	Neat Sample volume in 50 µl total volume	Mean (pg/mL)	Dilution Corrected (pg/mL)	Linearity %
Serum 1	50	26.73	26.7	
	25	13.70	27.4	103
	12.5	6.79	27.2	102
	6.25	3.46	27.7	104
Serum 2	50	28.42	28.4	
	25	13.79	27.6	97
	12.5	6.75	27.0	95
	6.25	3.17	25.4	89
Serum 3	50	27.27	27.3	
	25	13.26	26.5	97
	12.5	6.18	24.7	91
	6.25	3.30	26.4	97
Serum 4	50	23.46	23.5	
	25	13.26	26.5	113
	12.5	6.46	25.8	110
	6.25	3.17	25.4	108
Serum 5	50	27.35	27.4	
	25	13.58	27.2	99
	12.5	7.11	28.4	104
	6.25	3.62	29.0	106
Average			101	

Sample	Neat Sample volume in 50 µl total volume	Mean (pg/mL)	Dilution Corrected (pg/mL)	Linearity %
Plasma 1	50	26.90	26.9	
	25	13.38	26.8	99
	12.5	6.50	26.0	97
	6.25	3.34	26.7	99
Plasma 2	50	25.22	25.2	
	25	13.62	27.2	108
	12.5	6.59	26.4	105
	6.25	3.38	27.0	107
Plasma 3	50	26.00	26.0	
	25	13.50	27.0	104
	12.5	6.38	25.5	98
	6.25	3.34	26.7	103
Plasma 4	50	26.32	26.3	
	25	13.38	26.8	102
	12.5	6.75	27.0	103
	6.25	3.62	29.0	110
Plasma 5	50	27.47	27.5	
	25	13.54	27.1	99
	12.5	7.07	28.3	103
	6.25	3.50	28.0	102
Average			103	

NOTE: More data related to assay characteristics can be found in the Human TNF-α ELISA verification report.

Quality Controls

The ranges for Quality Control 1, 2, and 3 are provided on the Certificate of Analysis on the product page at [SigmaAldrich.com](https://www.sigmaaldrich.com).

Troubleshooting

- To obtain reliable and reproducible results, the operator should carefully read this manual and fully understand all aspects of each assay step before attempting to run the assay.
- Throughout the assay, the operator should adhere strictly to the procedures with good laboratory practice.
- Have all necessary reagents and equipment ready on hand before starting. Once the assay has been started, all steps should be completed with precise timing and without interruption.
- Avoid cross-contamination of any reagents or samples to be used in the assay.
- Make sure all reagents and samples are added to the bottom of each well.
- Careful and complete mixing of solutions in the well is critical. Poor assay precision will result from incomplete mixing or cross well contamination due to inappropriate mixing.
- Remove any air bubbles formed in the well after acidification of the substrate solution because bubbles interfere with spectrophotometric readings.
- High signal in the background or blank wells could be due to 1.) cross well contamination by standard solution or sample or 2.) inadequate washing of wells with Wash Buffer or 3.) overexposure to light after the substrate has been added

Product Ordering

Products are available for online ordering at [SigmaAldrich.com](https://www.sigmaaldrich.com).

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