JAN 16, 2019

HIV-Flow assay

PLOS Pathogens

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this document is to define the procedure of the HIV-Flow protocol, an assay developed to measure the size the translation-competent viral reservoir in HIV-infected individuals and to phenotypically characterize these cells.

GUIDELINES

- In each experiment, include PBMCs from an uninfected control donor to set the threshold of positivity
- The frequency of p24 double positive cells (KC57+, 28B7+) is determined by flow cytometry in gated viable T cells. Please note that this gate should include both CD4 positive and CD4 negative T cells (since CD4 is downregulated by productive HIV infection)

OPEN ACCESS

DOI:
dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.w4efgte

External link:
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.ppat.1007619>

Protocol Citation: Marion Pardons , Nicolas Chomont 2019. HIV-Flow assay. **protocols.io**
<https://dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.w4efgte>

MANUSCRIPT CITATION:
 Pardons M, Baxter AE, Massanella M, Pagliuzza A, Fromentin R, Dufour C, Leyre L, Routy J, Kaufmann DE, Chomont N (2019) Single-cell characterization and quantification of translation-competent viral reservoirs in treated and untreated HIV infection. PLoS Pathog 15(2): e1007619. doi: [10.1371/journal.ppat.1007619](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.ppat.1007619)

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Protocol status: Working

Created: Jan 14, 2019

Last Modified: Jan 16, 2019

PROTOCOL integer ID:
19302

Keywords: Flow cytometry,
HIV, reservoirs

MATERIALS

- 1 bottle (500mL) of RPMI (Cellgro, 10-040-CV)
- 50mL of Fetal Bovine Serum (FBS, PAA, A15-752)
- Penicillin-Streptomycin (Life Technologies, 15070-063)
- 50mL of Bovine Serum (BS)
- PBS 1X pH7.2 (Wisent, 311-013-CL)
- Human Serum (Atlanta Biologicals, 540110)
Aliquot (5-10mL) and keep at -20°C. After thawing, filter with a falcon cell strainer.
- Trypan Blue 0.4% (Gibco, 15250)
- 50mL PP tubes (BD Falcon, 352098)
- 5, 10 and 25 mL disposable pipettes (BD Flacon, 356542, 357551 and 357525)
- 1.5ml screw-cap microtubes (Sarstedt, 72.692.005)
- Staining buffer: PBS/HS4% (2mL human serum + 48mL of PBS).
- Foxp3 / Transcription Factor Staining Buffer Set (Ebioscience; 00-5523)
- Sterile Water
- EasySep Buffer (StemCell, 20144)
- EasySep Human CD4 T cell enrichment kit (Stemcell, 19052)
- Phorbol 12 myristate 13 acetate (PMA) (Sigma, P8139)
- Ionomycin (Sigma, I9657)
- Brefeldin A (Sigma, B5936-200UL)
- ARV cocktail 100X: Use RPMI to prepare a 100X ARV cocktail solution containing:
 - 20µM 3TC (for a final concentration of 200nM)
 - 20µM RAL (for a final concentration of 200nM)Aliquot at 200µL in 1.5mL microtubes; Store at -20°C.
- p24 KC57-PE (Beckman Coulter, 6604667)
- p24 28B7-APC (Medimabs, MM-0289-APC)

BEFORE START INSTRUCTIONS

Please note that the p24 antibodies need to be titrated upon reception of each new batch.

Day 1

- 1 Thaw cryopreserved PBMCs (10-50 x10⁶ cells depending on cell availability and CD4 counts) collected from an HIV-infected individual and an equivalent number of cells from an uninfected control. After thawing, resuspend the cells in 25mL of cRPMI.

- 2 Count the cells with Trypan Blue.
- 3 Keep PBMCs from the uninfected control donor for FACS compensations (around 100,000 cells per antibody used).
- 4 Centrifuge the cells (5min, 1,500rpm). Discard supernatant and break the pellet of cells tapping it.
- 5 Negative selection of CD4 T cells
According to cell count:
 - If more than 50×10^6 cells: Resuspend the pellet with 800 μ L of Easysep Buffer and complete up to a concentration of 50×10^6 cells/mL.
 - If 10×10^6 - 50×10^6 cells: Resuspend the pellet with 800 μ L of Easysep BufferTransfer the cell suspension in a 14mL round bottom tube.
 - Add 25 μ L/mL of cells of Ab cocktail (19052). Incubate 10min at RT.
 - Vortex beads 30s and add 50 μ L of beads/mL of cells. Incubate 5min at RT.
 - Add EasySep buffer up to 5mL (if cell volume <5mL) and up to 8mL (if cell volume >5mL).
 - Place the tube (without the cap) in the magnet for 5min.
 - Pipet cautiously the cells and transfer them to a 50mL tube containing cRPMI up to 20mL.
 - Centrifuge the cells (5min, 1,500rpm), and discard the supernatant
- 6 Resuspend the cells in 800 μ L of cRPMI + ARV (Stock ARV = 100X) and count the cells in Trypan Blue.
- 7 Resuspend the cells at 2×10^6 cells/mL in cRPMI + ARV (Stock ARV = 100X) and incubate at 37°C 5% CO₂ in culture plate
 - Less than 200 μ L: 96-well plate
 - 200 μ L-500 μ L: 48-well plate
 - 500 μ L-1.5mL: 24-well plate
 - 1.5mL-2.5mL: 12-well plate

• 2.5mL-3.5mL: 6-well plate

- 8** Optional: For immunophenotyping, add BFA (Brefeldin A) to the culture medium (Dilution 2,000X).
- Of note, not all markers will retain their expression after PMA/ionomycin stimulation despite the use of BFA. This should be tested.
- If the goal of the experiment is only to measure the frequency of p24+ (without phenotyping), do not perform this step.
- 9** Rest the cells for at least 1 hour before proceeding to PMA/Ionomycin stimulation
a) If ART-treated individuals: PMA 162nM, Ionomycin 1 µg/mL, 24h
Dilution 10X: 10 µL of PMA + 10 µL of Iono + 80 µL of medium
Dilution 100X: 10 µL of diluted PMA/Iono per mL of cells
b) If untreated individuals: PMA 25nM, Ionomycin 1 µg/mL, 18h
Dilution 64.8X: 2.3 µL PMA + 15 µL Iono + 132.7 µL of medium
Dilution 100X: 10 µL of diluted PMA/Iono per mL of cells
Incubate cells for 18h or 24h (for samples from untreated or treated individuals, respectively) at 37°C 5% CO₂

Day 2

- 10** Collect the cells in 5mL tubes and wash the wells with PBS. Do not exceed 10×10^6 cells per tube.
- 11** Centrifuge at 1,800rpm for 3min. Discard the supernatant and resuspend the cells in 200 µL of PBS + Vivid (5 µL Vivid 1/10 + 195 µL PBS/condition). Comment: Resuspend 2 µL Vivid with 18 µL of PBS = 20 µL
- 12** Incubate the cells for 20-30min at 4°C
- 13** Wash once with 800 µL of PBS/HS4%. Centrifuge (1,800 rpm, 3min). Discard the supernatant
- 14** Perform the extracellular staining (using your antibodies for cell-surface antigens of interest) in PBS/HS4% (final volume = 100 µL/tube) (20-30min, 4°C)

- 15** Wash with 1.8mL of PBS/HS4%. Centrifuge (1,800rpm, 3min). Discard the supernatant
- 16** Fix and Perm with 100µl of FoxP3 FixPerm Buffer (Dilution 1:4, 1mL concentrate + 3mL diluent) (45min, 4°C)
- 17** Wash with 1.8mL of FoxP3 PermBuffer (Dilution 10X: 1mL PermBuffer + 9mL H2O). Centrifuge (3min, 2,100rpm). Discard the supernatant
- 18** Perform the intracellular staining in FoxP3 PermBuffer (final volume = 100µL of dilution C/tube) (45min, RT).
Comments
- Dilution A (KC57): 10-fold dilution (1µL+9µL FoxP3 Buffer)
 - Dilution B (p24 28B7): 10-fold dilution (1µL+9µL FoxP3 Buffer)
 - Dilution C: add 1µL of each dilution per 100µL (1µL DilA + 1µL Dil B + 98µL of FoxP3 PermBuffer)
 - Do not vortex the antibodies and the mixes
- Please note that the p24 antibodies need to be titrated upon reception of each new batch.
- 19** Wash with 1.8mL of FoxP3 PermBuffer. Centrifuge (2,100 rpm, 3min). Discard the supernatant
- 20** Resuspend cells in 100-200µL of PBS (NO HUMAN SERUM!)
- 21** Analyze on a Flow Cytometer.