

Nov 07, 2017

Platelet activation test (PACT)

 [PLOS One](#)

DOI

dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.ki8cuhw

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DOI: dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.ki8cuhw

External link: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0193657>

Protocol Citation: Sven Van Poucke, Dana Huskens, Kurt Van der Speeten, Mark Roest, Bart Lauwereins, Ming-Hua Zheng, Seppe Dehaene, Joris Penders, Abraham Marcus, Marcus Lancé 2017. Platelet activation test (PACT). **protocols.io** <https://dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.ki8cuhw>

Manuscript citation:

Poucke SV, Huskens D, Speeten KVd, Roest M, Lauwereins B, Zheng M, Dehaene S, Penders J, Marcus A, Lancé M (2018) Thrombin generation and platelet activation in cytoreductive surgery combined with hyperthermic intraperitoneal chemotherapy - A prospective cohort study. PLoS ONE 13(6): e0193657. doi: [10.1371/journal.pone.0193657](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0193657)

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Protocol status: Working

Created: November 01, 2017

Last Modified: March 14, 2018

Protocol Integer ID: 8512

Abstract

Platelet activation was quantitatively assessed on a randomly selected subgroup of 10 patients (not treated with acetylsalicylic acid) in un-processed blood by the PACT (Platelet activation test, adjusted from Roest 2013). In the original paper, Roest performs the tests at room temperature while in this manuscript, the PACT test is performed at 37°C which requires higher agonist doses. The PACT is based on platelet activation induced by addition of a specific agonist to whole blood and gives specific insight in the granule release capacity and in the aggregation potential of platelets. The test contains three agonists to activate the platelets: (1) the protease activated receptor (PAR-1) agonist thrombin receptor activator peptide (TRAP f.c. 30 µM, SFLLRN, H-2936; Bachem, Germany), (2) the glycoprotein VI (GPVI) agonist collagen-related peptide (CRP f.c. 5 µg/ml, Professor Farndale, university of Cambridge, UK), and (3) the P2Y₁₂ agonist ADP (f.c. 30 µM, 01897, Sigma-Aldrich, Zwijndrecht, the Netherlands) in HEPES-buffered saline (HBS, 10 mmol/L HEPES, 150 mmol/L NaCl, 1 mmol/L MgSO₄, 5 mmol/L KCL, pH 7.4). The reaction mixtures also contain three antibodies directed against GPIb (APC-conjugated CD42b, BD Bioscience), activated αIIbβ₃ (FITC-conjugated PAC-1) and P-selectin (PE-conjugated CD62P) purchased from BD Pharmingen (Franklin Lakes, USA). Whole blood was heated at 37°C for 10 min and the tests were performed at 37°C. Whole blood was diluted 1:4 in HEPES-buffered saline and 5 µl of this diluted blood was added to each reaction mixture. Reactions were stopped by adding 250 µl fixation solution (137 mmol/L NaCl, 2.7 mmol/L KCl, 1.12 mmol/L NaH₂PO₄, 1.15 mmol/L KH₂PO₄, 10.2 mmol/L Na₂HPO₄, 4 mmol/L EDTA, 0.5% formaldehyde) after exactly 20 min of incubation at 37°C. Flow cytometry was used to distinguish between platelets and other cells on forward and sideward scatter pattern and by gating on the CD42b positive cells. Fluorescent intensity in the FITC gate and PE gate was selected to determine activated αIIbβ₃ and P-selectin density, respectively, and results are expressed as median fluorescent intensity (MFI).

