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Instructions for use
Cortisol ELISA

Please use only the valid version of the Instructions for Use provided with the Kit

REF

MS E-5000



IVD



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Intended Use

The **Cortisol ELISA** is an enzyme immunoassay for the quantitative in vitro diagnostic measurement of Cortisol in serum and plasma (EDTA-, heparin- or citrate plasma).

This assay is intended for in vitro diagnostic use only.

1.2 Summary and Explanation

Cortisol /hydrocortisone, compound F) is the main corticosteroid secreted in humans by the adrenal cortex. This steroid hormone has a molecular weight of 363.5.

In most physiological conditions, only about 10% of plasma cortisol circulates unbound from transcortin and albumin. Among the products of the human adrenal cortex, only cortisol is involved in the regulation of ACTH secretion.

As the level of free (non-protein bound) cortisol in blood rises, the release of ACTH is inhibited by the negative feedback effect. Conversely, if cortisol levels are subnormal, the negative feedback decreases, ACTH levels rise, and the adrenal cortex secretes cortisol until normal blood levels are restored.

The release of ACTH is under control of hypothalamic corticotrophin-releasing hormone (CRH); the negative feedback system involving cortisol has been identified at both hypothalamic and pituitary levels. (1).

Normally during the day there is a fluctuation of cortisol achieving the highest level in the morning and the lowest in the night. Useful information is given when cortisol measurement is done in samples withdrawn at a fixed hour (8.00 a.m.).

The main biological effects of cortisol are: promotion of gluconeogenesis, deposition of liver glycogen, increase in blood glucose concentration when the carbohydrate utilization is reduced, effect on fat metabolism and anti-inflammatory action.

Cortisol measurement is a powerful tool for the evaluation of suspected abnormalities in glucocorticoid production: Cushing's Syndrome (hypercortisolism), Addison's disease or secondary adrenal insufficiency (hypocortisolism). In many cases, it is necessary to perform dynamic tests (suppression or stimulation) in order to localize the defect at one of the three main levels (i.e. adrenal, pituitary, hypothalamus).

2. PRINCIPLE OF THE TEST

The Cortisol ELISA Kit is a solid phase enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA), based on the principle of competitive binding.

The microtiter wells are coated with a monoclonal antibody directed towards an antigenic site on the Cortisol molecule. Endogenous Cortisol of a patient sample competes with a Cortisol-horseradish peroxidase conjugate for binding to the coated antibody. After incubation the unbound conjugate is washed off.

The amount of bound peroxidase conjugate is inversely proportional to the concentration of Cortisol in the sample. After addition of the substrate solution, the intensity of colour developed is inversely proportional to the concentration of Cortisol in the patient sample.

3. WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS

1. This kit is for in vitro diagnostic use only. For professional use only.
2. All reagents of this test kit which contain human serum or plasma have been tested and confirmed negative for HIV I/II, HBsAg and HCV by FDA approved procedures. All reagents, however, should be treated as potential biohazards in use and for disposal.
3. Before starting the assay, read the instructions completely and carefully. Use the valid version of instructions for use provided with the kit. Be sure that everything is understood.
4. The microplate contains snap-off strips. Unused wells must be stored at 2 °C - 8 °C in the sealed foil pouch and used in the frame provided.
5. Pipetting of samples and reagents must be done as quickly as possible and in the same sequence for each step.
6. Use reservoirs only for single reagents. This especially applies to the substrate reservoirs. Using a reservoir for dispensing a substrate solution that had previously been used for the conjugate solution may turn solution colored. Do not pour reagents back into vials as reagent contamination may occur.
7. Mix the contents of the microplate wells thoroughly to ensure good test results. Do not reuse microwells.
8. Do not let wells dry during assay; add reagents immediately after completing the rinsing steps.
9. Allow the reagents to reach room temperature (21 °C - 26 °C) before starting the test. Temperature will affect the absorbance readings of the assay. However, values for the patient samples will not be affected.
10. Never pipet by mouth and avoid contact of reagents and specimens with skin and mucous membranes.
11. Do not smoke, eat, drink or apply cosmetics in areas where specimens or kit reagents are handled.
12. Wear disposable latex gloves when handling specimens and reagents. Microbial contamination of reagents or specimens may give false results.

13. Handling should be done in accordance with the procedures defined by an appropriate national biohazard safety guideline or regulation.
14. Do not use reagents beyond expiry date as shown on the kit labels.
15. All indicated volumes have to be performed according to the protocol. Optimal test results are only obtained when using calibrated pipettes and microtiterplate readers.
16. Do not mix or use components from kits with different lot numbers. It is advised not to exchange wells of different plates even of the same lot. The kits may have been shipped or stored under different conditions and the binding characteristics of the plates may result slightly different.
17. Avoid contact with *Stop Solution* containing 0.5 M H₂SO₄. It may cause skin irritation and burns.
18. Some reagents contain Proclin 300, BND and/or MIT as preservatives. In case of contact with eyes or skin, flush immediately with water.
19. TMB substrate has an irritant effect on skin and mucosa. In case of possible contact, wash eyes with an abundant volume of water and skin with soap and abundant water. Wash contaminated objects before reusing them. If inhaled, take the person to open air.
20. Chemicals and prepared or used reagents have to be treated as hazardous waste according to the national biohazard safety guideline or regulation.
21. For information on hazardous substances included in the kit please refer to Safety Data Sheets. Safety Data Sheets for this product are available upon request directly from the manufacturer.

4. REAGENTS

4.1 Reagents provided

MS E-5031 Microtiterwells

12x8 (break apart) strips, 96 wells;
Wells coated with anti-Cortisol antibody (monoclonal).

Standards

	Cat. no.	Standard	Concentration	Volume/Vial
STANDARD A	MS E-5001	Standard A	0 ng/mL	1 ml
STANDARD B	MS E-5002	Standard B	20 ng/mL	1 ml
STANDARD C	MS E-5003	Standard C	50 ng/mL	1 ml
STANDARD D	MS E-5004	Standard D	100 ng/mL	1 ml
STANDARD E	MS E-5005	Standard E	200 ng/mL	1 ml
STANDARD F	MS E-5006	Standard F	400 ng/mL	1 ml
STANDARD G	MS E-5007	Standard G	800 ng/mL	1 ml

ready to use, contain non-mercury preservative corresponding to 0, 55.2, 138, 276, 552, 1104, 2208 nmol/L.
Conversion factor: 1 ng/mL = 2.76 nmol/l.

MS E-5040 Enzyme Conjugate

1 vial, 25 mL, ready to use;
Cortisol conjugated to horseradish Peroxidase;
contains non-mercury preservative.

FR E-0055 Substrate Solution

1 vial, 14 mL, ready to use;
Tetramethylbenzidine (TMB).

FR E-0080 Stop Solution

1 vial, 14 mL, ready to use;
contains 0.5M H₂SO₄.
Avoid contact with the stop solution. It may cause skin irritations and burns.

FR E-0030 Wash Solution

1 vial, 30 mL (40X concentrated);
see „Preparation of Reagents“.

Note: Additional Standard A for sample dilution is available upon request.

4.2 Materials required but not provided

- A microtiter plate calibrated reader (450 ± 10 nm)
- Calibrated variable precision micropipettes.
- Absorbent paper.
- Distilled or deionized water
- Timer
- Graph paper or software for data reduction

4.3 Storage Conditions

When stored at 2 °C - 8 °C unopened reagents will retain reactivity until expiration date. Do not use reagents beyond this date.

Opened reagents must be stored at 2 °C - 8 °C. Microtiter wells must be stored at 2 °C - 8 °C. Once the foil bag has been opened, care should be taken to close it tightly again.

Opened kits retain activity for 6 weeks if stored as described above.

4.4 Reagent Preparation

Bring all reagents and required number of strips to room temperature prior to use.

Wash Solution

Add deionized water to the 40X concentrated Wash Solution.

Dilute 30 mL of concentrated Wash Solution with 1170 mL deionized water to a final volume of 1200 mL.

The diluted Wash Solution is stable for 2 weeks at room temperature.

4.5 Disposal of the Kit

The disposal of the kit must be made according to the national regulations. Special information for this product is given in the Material Safety Data Sheet.

4.6 Damaged Test Kits

In case of any severe damage to the test kit or components, the manufacturer has to be informed in writing, at the latest, one week after receiving the kit. Severely damaged single components should not be used for a test run. They have to be stored until a final solution has been found. After this, they should be disposed according to the official regulations.

5. SPECIMEN COLLECTION AND PREPARATION

Serum or plasma (EDTA-, heparin- or citrate plasma) can be used in this assay.

Do not use haemolytic, icteric or lipaemic specimens.

Please note: Samples containing sodium azide should not be used in the assay.

5.1 Specimen Collection

Serum:

Collect blood by venipuncture (e.g. Sarstedt Monovette for serum), allow to clot, and separate serum by centrifugation at room temperature. Do not centrifuge before complete clotting has occurred. Patients receiving anticoagulant therapy may require increased clotting time.

Plasma:

Whole blood should be collected into centrifuge tubes containing anti-coagulant (e.g. Sarstedt Monovette with the appropriate plasma preparation) and centrifuged immediately after collection.

5.2 Specimen Storage and Preparation

Specimens should be capped and may be stored for up to 5 days at 2 °C - 8 °C prior to assaying.

Specimens held for a longer time should be frozen only once at -20 °C prior to assay. Thawed samples should be inverted several times prior to testing.

5.3 Specimen Dilution

If in an initial assay, a specimen is found to contain more than the highest standard, the specimens can be diluted with Standard A and reassayed as described in Assay Procedure.

For the calculation of the concentrations this dilution factor has to be taken into account.

Example:

a) dilution 1:10: 10 µL sample + 90 µL Standard A (mix thoroughly)

b) dilution 1:100: 10 µL dilution a) 1:10 + 90 µL Standard A (mix thoroughly).

6. ASSAY PROCEDURE

6.1 General Remarks

- All reagents and specimens must be allowed to come to room temperature before use. All reagents must be mixed without foaming.
- Once the test has been started, all steps should be completed without interruption.
- Use new disposal plastic pipette tips for each standard, control or sample in order to avoid cross contamination.
- Absorbance is a function of the incubation time and temperature. Before starting the assay, it is recommended that all reagents are ready, caps removed, all needed wells secured in holder, etc. This will ensure equal elapsed time for each pipetting step without interruption.
- As a general rule the enzymatic reaction is linearly proportional to time and temperature.

6.2 Test Procedure

Each run must include a standard curve.

1.	Secure the desired number of Microtiter wells in the frame holder.
2.	Dispense 20 µL of each Standard, Control and samples with new disposable tips into appropriate wells..
3.	Dispense 200 µL Enzyme Conjugate into each well. Thoroughly mix for 10 seconds. It is important to have a complete mixing in this step.
4.	Incubate for 60 minutes at room temperature.
5.	Briskly shake out the contents of the wells. Rinse the wells 3 times with diluted <i>Wash Solution</i> (400 µL per well). Strike the wells sharply on absorbent paper to remove residual droplets. Important note: The sensitivity and precision of this assay is markedly influenced by the correct performance of the washing procedure!
6.	Add 100 µL of Substrate Solution to each well.
7.	Incubate for 15 minutes at room temperature.
8.	Stop the enzymatic reaction by adding 100 µL of Stop Solution to each well.
9.	Determine the absorbance (OD) of each well at 450 ± 10 nm with a microtiter plate reader. It is recommended that the wells be read within 10 minutes after adding the <i>Stop Solution</i> .

6.3 Calculation of Results

1. Calculate the average absorbance values for each set of standards, controls and patient samples.
2. Using semi-logarithmic graph paper, construct a standard curve by plotting the mean absorbance obtained from each standard against its concentration with absorbance value on the vertical (Y) axis and concentration on the horizontal (X) axis.
3. Using the mean absorbance value for each sample determine the corresponding concentration from the standard curve.
4. Automated method: The results in the Instructions for Use have been calculated automatically using a 4-Parameter curve fit. (4 Parameter Rodbard or 4 Parameter Marquardt are the preferred methods.) Other data reduction functions may give slightly different results.
5. The concentration of the samples can be read directly from this standard curve. Samples with concentrations higher than that of the highest standard have to be further diluted or reported as > 800 ng/mL. For the calculation of the concentrations this dilution factor has to be taken into account.

6.3.1 Example of Typical Standard Curve

The following data is for demonstration only and cannot be used in place of data generations at the time of assay.

Standard	Optical Units (450 nm)
Standard A (0 ng/mL)	2.30
Standard B (20 ng/mL)	1.67
Standard C (50 ng/mL)	1.24
Standard D (100 ng/mL)	0.87
Standard E (200 ng/mL)	0.57
Standard F (400 ng/mL)	0.35
Standard G (800 ng/mL)	0.23

7. EXPECTED NORMAL VALUES

It is strongly recommended that each laboratory should determine its own normal and abnormal values.

Cortisol values in serum or plasma ranges
from 50 ng/mL to 230 ng/mL (138-635 nmol/L) between 8:00 10:00 a.m., and
from 30 ng/mL to 150 ng/mL (82.8-414 nmol/L) at 4:00 p.m.

These values are from Tietz's Textbook (2) and may be used as main guideline.

The results alone should not be the only reason for any therapeutic consequences. The results should be correlated to other clinical observations and diagnostic tests.

8. QUALITY CONTROL

Good laboratory practice requires that controls be run with each standard curve. A statistically significant number of controls should be assayed to establish mean values and acceptable ranges to assure proper performance.

It is recommended to use control samples according to state and federal regulations. The use of control samples is advised to assure the day to day validity of results. Use controls at both normal and pathological levels.

The controls and the corresponding results of the QC-Laboratory are stated in the QC certificate added to the kit. The values and ranges stated on the QC sheet always refer to the current kit lot and should be used for direct comparison of the results.

It is also recommended to make use of national or international Quality Assessment programs in order to ensure the accuracy of the results.

Employ appropriate statistical methods for analysing control values and trends. If the results of the assay do not fit to the established acceptable ranges of control materials patient results should be considered invalid.

In this case, please check the following technical areas: Pipetting and timing devices; photometer, expiration dates of reagents, storage and incubation conditions, aspiration and washing methods.

After checking the above mentioned items without finding any error contact your distributor or the manufacturer directly.

9. PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS

9.1 Assay Dynamic Range

The range of the assay is between 2.5 – 800 ng/mL

9.2 Specificity of Antibodies (Cross Reactivity)

The following substances were tested for cross reactivity of the assay:

Steroid	Cross reactivity (%)
Cortisol	100
Corticosterone	45
Progesteron	9
Deoxycortisol	< 2
Dexamethasone	< 2
Cortisone	0.9
Estrone	< 0.01
Estriol	< 0.01

9.3 Sensitivity

The analytical sensitivity of the Cortisol ELISA was calculated by subtracting 2 standard deviations from the mean of 20 replicate analyses of Standard A and was found to be 2.5 ng/mL (6.9 nmol/L).

9.4 Precision

9.4.1 Intra Assay Variation

The within assay variability is shown below:

Sample	n	Mean (ng/mL)	CV (%)
1	20	43.5	8.1
2	20	226.5	3.2
3	20	403.6	5.6

9.4.2 Inter Assay Variation

The between assay variability is shown below:

Sample	Mean (ng/mL)	CV (%)
1	55	6.6
2	209	7.7
3	361	6.5

9.5 Recovery

Samples have been spiked by adding Cortisol solutions with known concentrations in a 1:1 ratio. The expected values were calculated by addition of half of the values determined for the undiluted samples and half of the values of the known solutions. The % Recovery has been calculated by multiplication of the ratio of the measurements and the expected values with 100.

Sample	Added Concentration 1:1 (v/v) (ng/mL)	Measured Conc. (ng/mL)	Expected Conc. (ng/mL)	Recovery (%)
1	--	57	57.0	100
	200	110	128.5	86
	400	216	228.5	95
	800	436	428.5	102
2	--	240	240	100
	200	210	220	95
	400	356	320	111
	800	514	520	99
3	--	378	378	100
	200	263	289	91
	400	355	389	91
	800	558	589	95

9.6 Linearity

Sample	Dilution	Mean Conc. (ng/mL)	Recovery (%)
1	None	48.0	--
	1:2	22.0	92
	1:4	12.9	108
	1:8	6.0	100
	1:16	3.3	110
2	None	255.0	--
	1:2	118.0	93
	1:4	63.1	99
	1:8	34.2	107
	1:16	15.9	100
3	None	427	--
	1:2	190	89
	1:4	97	91
	1:8	50	94
	1:16	25	94

10. LIMITATIONS OF USE

Reliable and reproducible results will be obtained when the assay procedure is performed with a complete understanding of the package insert instruction and with adherence to good laboratory practice. Any improper handling of samples or modification of this test might influence the results.

10.1 Interfering Substances

Haemoglobin (up to 4 mg/mL), Bilirubin (up to 0.5 mg/mL) and Triglyceride (up to 7.5 mg/mL) have no influence on the assay results.

10.2 Drugs Interferences

Until today no substances (drugs) are known to us, which have an influence to the measurement of Cortisol in a sample.

10.3 High-Dose-Hook Effect

No hook effect was observed in this test.

11. LEGAL ASPECTS

11.1 Reliability of Results

The test must be performed exactly as per the manufacturer's instructions for use. Moreover the user must strictly adhere to the rules of GLP (Good Laboratory Practice) or other applicable national standards and/or laws. This is especially relevant for the use of control reagents. It is important to always include, within the test procedure, a sufficient number of controls for validating the accuracy and precision of the test.

The test results are valid only if all controls are within the specified ranges and if all other test parameters are also within the given assay specifications. In case of any doubt or concern please contact the manufacturer.

11.2 Therapeutic Consequences

Therapeutic consequences should never be based on laboratory results alone even if all test results are in agreement with the items as stated under point 11.1. Any laboratory result is only a part of the total clinical picture of a patient.

Only in cases where the laboratory results are in acceptable agreement with the overall clinical picture of the patient should therapeutic consequences be derived.

The test result itself should never be the sole determinant for deriving any therapeutic consequences.

11.3 Liability

Any modification of the test kit and/or exchange or mixture of any components of different lots from one test kit to another could negatively affect the intended results and validity of the overall test. Such modification and/or exchanges invalidate any claim for replacement.

Claims submitted due to customer misinterpretation of laboratory results subject to point 11.2. are also invalid. Regardless, in the event of any claim, the manufacturer's liability is not to exceed the value of the test kit. Any damage caused to the test kit during transportation is not subject to the liability of the manufacturer.



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Symbols:

	Storage temperature		Manufacturer		Contains sufficient for <n> tests
	Expiry date	LOT	Batch code	IVD	For in-vitro diagnostic use only!
	Consult instructions for use	CONT	Content	CE	CE labelled
	Caution	REF	Catalogue number	RUO	For research use only!