VCA IgM

"Capture" Enzyme ImmunoAssay (ELISA) for the quantitative/qualitative determination of IgM class antibodies to Epstein Barr Virus Capsidic Antigen in human plasma and sera

- for "in vitro" diagnostic use only -

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REF VCAM.CE
96 Tests

VCA IgM

A. INTENDED USE

Enzyme ImmunoAssay (ELISA) for the quantitative or qualitative determination of IgM class antibodies to Epstein Barr Virus (EBV) Capsidic Antigen in human plasma and sera with the "capture" system.
The kit is intended for the classification of the viral infective agent and the follow-up of EBV infected patients.
For “in vitro” diagnostic use only.

B. INTRODUCTION

Epstein Barr Virus or EBV is the principal etiological agent of infectious mononucleosis, as well as a contributory factor in the etiology of Burkitt's lymphoma and nasopharyngeal carcinoma, or NPC.
A member of the family Herpesviridae, it has a worldwide distribution, such that 80 to 90% of all adults have been infected. Primary infections usually occur during the first decade of life. While childhood infections are mostly asymptomatic, 50 to 70% of young adults undergoing primary EBV infections show mild to severe illness.
EBV may cause a persistent, latent infection which can be reactivated under immunosoppression or in AIDS affected patients. As humoral responses to primary EBV infections are quite rapid, the level and class of antibodies raised in most cases allow classification as to whether the patient is still susceptible, has a current or recent primary infection, had a past infection or may be having reactivated EBV infection.
The detection of EBV-specific IgG, IgM and IgA antibodies to its major immunodominant antigens has become therefore an important and useful determination for the monitoring and follow-up of EBV infected patients.

C. PRINCIPLE OF THE TEST

The assay is based on the “IgM Capture” method and on affinity purified native VCA antigen.
Microplates are coated with a polyclonal anti-hIgM antibody that in the 1st incubation “captures” specifically this class of antibodies.
After washing out all the other components of the sample, in the 2nd incubation bound anti EBV-VCA IgM are detected by the addition of a complex formed by biotinilated affinity purified native VCA antigen and Streptavidine, labelled with peroxidase (HRP).
The enzyme captured on the solid phase, acting on the substrate/chromogen mixture, generates an optical signal that is proportional to the amount of IgM antibodies present in the sample and can be detected by an ELISA reader.
Quantification of IgM is made possible by a standard curve calibrated in arbitrary units, in absence of an international standard to refer to.

D. COMPONENTS

Each kit contains sufficient reagents to carry out 96 tests.

1. Microplate: MICROPLATE
12 strips x 8 breakable wells coated with affinity-purified anti human IgM specific (u-chain) goat polyclonal antibody and sealed into a bag with desiccant. Allow the microplate to reach room temperature before opening; reseal unused strips in the bag with desiccant and store at 4°C.

2. Calibration Curve: CAL N° …
Ready to use and color coded standard curve ranging:
4 ml CAL1 = 0 arbU/ml
4 ml CAL2 = 10 arbU/ml
2 ml CAL3 =20 arbU/ml
2 ml CAL4 = 50 arbU/ml
4 ml CAL5 = 100 arbU/ml.
Standards are calibrated against an internal Gold Standard or IGS as no international one is defined.
Contains human serum proteins, 2% casein, 10 mM Na-citrate buffer pH 6.0 +/-0.1, 0.1% Tween 20, 0.09% Na-azide and 0.045% ProClin 300 as preservatives. Standards are blue colored.

3. Control Serum: CONTROL …ml
1 vial. Lyophilized. Contains fetal bovine serum proteins, human anti EBV VCA IgM antibodies at 20 ± 20% arbU/ml, 0.2 mg/ml gentamicine sulphate and 0.045% ProClin 300 as preservatives.
Important Note: The volume necessary to dissolve the content of the vial may vary from lot to lot. Please use the right volume reported on the label .

3. Wash buffer concentrate: WASHBUF 20X
1x60ml/bottle. 20x concentrated solution.
Once diluted, the wash solution contains 10 mM phosphate buffer pH 7.0+/-0.2, 0.05% Tween 20 and 0.045% ProClin 300.

4. Enzyme conjugate: CONJ 20X
1x0.8 ml/vial. 20x concentrated solution. It contains peroxidase (HRP) labeled Streptavidine, dissolved into a buffered solution of 10 mM Tris buffer pH 6.8+/-0.1, 5% BSA, 0.045% ProClin 300 and 0.02% gentamicine sulphate as preservatives.

5.Antigen Diluent : AG DIL
n° 1 vial of 16 ml. Protein buffer solution for the preparation of the working EBV VC antigen. The solution contains 10 mM Tris buffer pH 6.8+/-0.1, 2% BSA, 0.045% ProClin 300 and 0.2 mg/ml gentamicine sulphate as preservatives. The reagent is code coloured with 0.01% red alimentary dye

6. EBV VCA Antigen : Ag VCA
1x6 vials. Lyophilized reagent to be dissolved with 1.9 ml of Antigen Diluent as reported in the proper section. It contains biotinilated affinity purified native VCA antigen, 25 mM Tris buffer pH 7.8+/-0.1 and 5% BSA as proteic carrier.

7. Specimen Diluent: DILSPE
2x60.0 ml/vial. Buffered solution for the dilution of samples. It contains 2% casein, 0.2 M Tris buffer pH 6.0+/-0.1, 0.2% Tween 20, 0.045% ProClin 300 and 0.09% sodium azide as preservatives. The component is blue color coded.

8. Chromogen/Substrate: SUBS TMB
1x16ml/vial. Contains a 50 mM citrate-phosphate buffered solution at pH 3.5-3.8, 0.03% tetra-methyl-benzidine or TMB and 0.02% hydrogen peroxide of H_2O_2.
Note: To be stored protected from light as sensitive to strong illumination.

9. Sulphuric Acid: H_2SO_4 O.3 M
1x15ml/vial. Contains 0.3 M H_2SO_4 solution.
Attention: Irritant (H315, H319; P280, P302+P352, P332+P313, P305+P351+P338, P337+P313, P362+P363).

10. Plate sealing foils n° 2

11. Package insert n° 1

E. MATERIALS REQUIRED BUT NOT PROVIDED

1. Calibrated Micropipettes in the range 10-1000 ul and disposable plastic tips.
2. EIA grade water (double distilled or deionised, charcoal treated to remove oxidizing chemicals used as disinfectants).
3. Timer with 60 minute range or higher.

4. Absorbent paper tissues.
5. Calibrated ELISA microplate thermostatic incubator (dry or wet) set at +37°C.
6. Calibrated ELISA microwell reader with 450nm (reading) and if with 620-630nm (blanking) filters.
7. Calibrated ELISA microplate washer.
8. Vortex or similar mixing tools.

F. WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS

1. The kit has to be used by skilled and properly trained technical personnel only, under the supervision of a medical doctor responsible of the laboratory.
2. All the personnel involved in performing the assay have to wear protective laboratory clothes, talc-free gloves and glasses. The use of any sharp (needles) or cutting (blades) devices should be avoided. All the personnel involved should be trained in biosafety procedures, as recommended by the Center for Disease Control, Atlanta, U.S. and reported in the National Institute of Health's publication: "Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories", ed. 1984.
3. All the personnel involved in sample handling should be vaccinated for HBV and HAV, for which vaccines are available, safe and effective.
4. The laboratory environment should be controlled so as to avoid contaminants such as dust or air-born microbial agents, when opening kit vials and microplates and when performing the test. Protect the Chromogen/Substrate (TMB/H_2O_2) from strong light and avoid vibration of the bench surface where the test is undertaken.
5. Upon receipt, store the kit at +2..8°C into a temperature controlled refrigerator or cold room.
6. Do not interchange components between different lots of the kits. It is recommended that components between two kits of the same lot should not be interchanged.
7. Check that the reagents are clear and do not contain visible heavy particles or aggregates. If not, advise the laboratory supervisor to initiate the necessary procedures.
8. Avoid cross-contamination between serum/plasma samples by using disposable tips and changing them after each sample. Do not reuse disposable tips.
9. Avoid cross-contamination between kit reagents by using disposable tips and changing them between the use of each one. Do not reuse disposable tips.
10. Do not use the kit after the expiration date stated on external (primary container) and internal (vials) labels.
11. Treat all specimens as potentially infective. All human serum specimens should be handled at Biosafety Level 2, as recommended by the Center for Disease Control, Atlanta, U.S. in compliance with what reported in the Institutes of Health's publication: "Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories", ed. 1984.
12. The use of disposable plastic labware is recommended in the preparation of the washing solution or in transferring components into other containers of automated workstations, in order to avoid contamination.
13. Waste produced during the use of the kit has to be discarded in compliance with national directives and laws concerning laboratory waste of chemical and biological substances. In particular, liquid waste generated from the washing procedure, from residuals of controls and from samples has to be treated as potentially infective material and inactivated. Suggested procedures of inactivation are treatment with a 10% final concentration of household bleach for 16-18 hrs or heat inactivation by autoclave at 121°C for 20 min..
14. Accidental spills have to be adsorbed with paper tissues soaked with household bleach and then with water. Tissues should then be discarded in proper containers designated for laboratory/hospital waste.
15. The Sulphuric Acid is an irritant. In case of spills, wash the surface with plenty of water.
16. Other waste materials generated from the use of the kit (example: tips used for samples and controls, used microplates) should be handled as potentially infective and disposed according to national directives and laws concerning laboratory wastes.

G. SPECIMEN: PREPARATION AND RECOMMANDATIONS

1. Blood is drawn aseptically by venepuncture and plasma or serum is prepared using standard techniques of preparation of samples for clinical laboratory analysis. No influence has been observed in the preparation of the sample with citrate, EDTA and heparin.
2. Avoid any addition of preservatives to samples; especially sodium azide as this chemical would affect the enzymatic activity of the conjugate.
3. Samples have to be clearly identified with codes or names in order to avoid misinterpretation of results. When the kit is used for the screening of blood units, bar code labeling and electronic reading is strongly recommended.
4. Haemolysed (red) and visibly hyperlipemic ("milky") samples have to be discarded as they could generate false results. Samples containing residues of fibrin or heavy particles or microbial filaments and bodies should be discarded as they could give rise to false results.
5. Sera and plasma can be stored at +2°…+8°C in primary collection tubes for up to five days after collection. Do not freeze primary tubes of collection. For longer storage periods, sera and plasma samples, carefully removed from the primary collection tube, can be stored frozen at –20°C for at least 12 months. Any frozen samples should not be frozen/thawed more than once as this may generate particles that could affect the test result.
6. If particles are present, centrifuge at 2.000 rpm for 20 min or filter using 0.2-0.8u filters to clean up the sample for testing.

H. PREPARATION OF COMPONENTS AND WARNINGS

A study conducted on an opened kit has not pointed out any relevant loss of activity up to 6 re-uses of the device and up to 3 months.

Microplate:
Allow the microplate to reach room temperature (about 1 hr) before opening the container. Check that the desiccant has not turned dark green, indicating a defect in storing.
In this case, call Dia.Pro's customer service.
Unused strips have to be placed back inside the aluminum pouch, with the desiccant supplied, firmly zipped and stored at +2°..8°C.
Important Note*: After first opening, remaining strips are stable until the humidity indicator inside the desiccant bag turns from yellow to green.*

Calibration Curve
Ready to use. Mix well on vortex before use.

Control Serum:
Lyophilized reagent to be dissolved with EIA grade water as reported in the label.
Note: *In order to maintain its reactivity fully preserved, upon dissolution keep the excess frozen in aliquots at –20°C and use just once. Do not freeze again.*

Wash buffer concentrate:
The whole content of the 20x concentrated solution has to be diluted with bidistilled water up to 1200 ml and mixed gently end-over-end before use. During preparation avoid foaming as the presence of bubbles could impact on the efficiency of the washing cycles.
Note: *Once diluted, the wash solution is stable for 1 week at +2..8° C.*

Antigen-Conjugate Complex:
Proceed carefully as follows:
1. Dissolve the content of a lyophilized vial with 1.9 ml of Antigen Diluent. Let fully dissolved the lyophilized content and then gently mix on vortex.
2. Gently mix the concentrated Enzyme Conjugate on vortex. Then add 0.1 ml of it to the vial of the dissolved EBV VC Ag and mix gently on vortex.

***Important Notes**:*
1. *Dissolve and prepare only the number of vials necessary to the test. The complex obtained is not stable. Store any residual solution frozen in aliquots at –20°C.*
2. *The preparation of the complex has to be done **right before** the dispensation of samples and controls into the plate. Mix again on vortex gently just before its use.*

Specimen Diluent
Ready to use. Mix on vortex before use.

Chromogen/Substrate:
Ready to use. Mix well on vortex before use.
Avoid contamination of the liquid with oxidizing chemicals, air-driven dust or microbes. Do not expose to strong light, oxidizing agents and metallic surfaces.
If this component has to be transferred use only plastic, and if possible, sterile disposable container.

Sulphuric Acid:
Ready to use. Mix well on vortex before use.
Attention: Irritant (H315, H319; P280, P302+P352, P332+P313, P305+P351+P338, P337+P313, P362+P363).

Legenda:

Warning **H statements:**
H315 – Causes skin irritation.
H319 – Causes serious eye irritation.

Precautionary **P statements:**
P280 – Wear protective gloves/protective clothing/eye protection/face protection.
P302 + P352 – IF ON SKIN: Wash with plenty of soap and water.
P332 + P313 – If skin irritation occurs: Get medical advice/attention.
P305 + P351 + P338 – IF IN EYES: Rinse cautiously with water for several minutes. Remove contact lenses, if present and easy to do. Continue rinsing.
P337 + P313 – If eye irritation persists: Get medical advice/attention.
P362 + P363 – Take off contaminated clothing and wash it before reuse.

I. INSTRUMENTS AND TOOLS USED IN COMBINATION WITH THE KIT

1. Micropipettes have to be calibrated to deliver the correct volume required by the assay and must be submitted to regular decontamination (70% ethanol, 10% solution of bleach, hospital grade disinfectants) of those parts that could accidentally come in contact with the sample or the components of the kit. They should also be regularly maintained in order to show a precision of 1% and a trueness of ±2%.
2. The ELISA incubator has to be set at +37°C (tolerance of ±0.5°C) and regularly checked to ensure the correct temperature is maintained. Both dry incubators and water baths are suitable for the incubations, provided that the instrument is validated for the incubation of ELISA tests.
3. The **ELISA washer** is extremely important to the overall performances of the assay. The washer must be carefully validated in advance, checked for the delivery of the right dispensation volume and regularly submitted to maintenance according to the manufacturer's instructions for use. In particular the washer, at the end of the daily workload, has to be extensively cleaned out of salts with deionized water. Before use, the washer has to be extensively primed with the diluted Washing Solution.
   The instrument weekly has to be submitted to decontamination according to its manual (NaOH 0.1 M decontamination suggested).
   5 washing cycles (aspiration + dispensation of 350ul/well of washing solution + 20 sec soaking = 1 cycle) are sufficient to ensure the assay with the declared performances. If soaking is not possible add one more cycle of washing.
   An incorrect washing cycle or salt-blocked needles are the major cause of false positive reactions.
4. Incubation times have a tolerance of ±5%.
5. The ELISA microplate reader has to be equipped with a reading filter of 450nm and with a second filter of 620-630nm, mandatory for blanking purposes. Its standard performances should be (a) bandwidth ≤ 10 nm; (b) absorbance range from 0 to ≥ 2.0; (c) linearity to ≥ 2.0; repeatability ≥ 1%. Blanking is carried out on the well identified in the section "Assay Procedure". The optical system of the reader has to be calibrated regularly to ensure that the correct optical density is measured. It should be regularly maintained according to the manufacturer 's instructions.
6. When using an ELISA automated work station, all critical steps (dispensation, incubation, washing, reading, shaking, data handling) have to be carefully set, calibrated, controlled and regularly serviced in order to match the values reported in the section "Internal Quality Control". The assay protocol has to be installed in the operating system of the unit and validated as for the washer and the reader. In addition, the liquid handling part of the station (dispensation and washing) has to be validated and correctly set. Particular attention must be paid to avoid carry over by the needles used for dispensing samples and for washing. This must be studied and controlled to minimize the possibility of contamination of adjacent wells due to strongly reactive samples, leading to false positive results. The use of ELISA automated work stations is recommended for blood screening and when the number of samples to be tested exceed 20-30 units per run.
7. Dia.Pro's customer service offers support to the user in the setting and checking of instruments used in combination with the kit, in order to assure full compliance with the requirements described. Support is also provided for the installation of new instruments to be used with the kit.

L. PRE ASSAY CONTROLS AND OPERATIONS

1. Check the expiration date of the kit printed on the external label (primary container). Do not use if expired.
2. Check that the liquid components are not contaminated by visible particles or aggregates.
3. Check that the Chromogen/Substrate is colorless or pale blue by aspirating a small volume of it with a sterile plastic pipette.
4. Check that no breakage occurred in transportation and no spillage of liquid is present inside the box (primary container).
5. Check that the aluminum pouch, containing the microplate, is not punctured or damaged.
6. Dilute all the content of the 20x concentrated Wash Solution as described above.
7. Dissolve the Control Serum as described above and gently mix.
8. Prepare the Antigen/Conjugate complex as reported before.
9. Allow all the other components to reach room temperature (about 1 hr) and then mix gently on vortex all liquid reagents.

10. Set the ELISA incubator at +37°C and prepare the ELISA washer by priming with the diluted washing solution, according to the manufacturers instructions. Set the right number of washing cycles as reported in the specific section.
11. Check that the ELISA reader is turned on or ensure it will be turned on at least 20 minutes before reading.
12. If using an automated work station, turn on, check settings and be sure to use the right assay protocol.
13. Check that the micropipettes are set to the required volume.
14. Check that all the other equipment is available and ready to use.
15. In case of problems, do not proceed further with the test and advise the supervisor.

M. ASSAY PROCEDURE

The assay has to be carried out according to what reported below, taking care to maintain the same incubation time for all the samples in testing.
Two procedures can be carried out with the device according to the request of the clinician.

M.1 Quantitative analysis

1. Place the required number of strips in the microplate holder. Leave A1 and B1 wells empty for the operation of blanking.
Store the other strips into the bag in presence of the desiccant at 2..8°C, sealed.
2. Dilute samples 1:101 dispensing 1 ml Specimen Diluent into a disposable tube and then 10 ul sample; mix on vortex before use. Do not dilute the calibrators and the control serum as they are ready-to-use.
3. Prepare the Antigen/Conjugate complex as reported in Section H.
4. Pipette 100 µl of all the Calibrators and 100 µl of Control Serum in duplicate; then dispense 100 µl of samples. The Control Serum is used to verify that the whole analytical system works as expected. Check that Calibrators Control Serum and samples have been correctly added. Then incubate the microplate at **+37°C for 60 min**.

Important note: *Strips have to be sealed with the adhesive sealing foil only when the test is performed manually. Do not cover strips when using ELISA automatic instruments.*

5. Wash the microplate as reported in section I.3.
6. In all the wells, except A1 and B1, pipette 100 µl Antigen/ Conjugate Complex. Check that the reagent has been correctly added. Incubate the microplate at **+37°C for 60 minutes.**

Important note: *Be careful not to touch the inner surface of the well with the pipette tip when dispensing the Complex. Contamination might occur.*

7. Wash the microplate as described in section I.3.
8. Pipette 100 µl TMB/H_2O_2 mixture in each well, the blank wells A1+B1 included. Check that the reagent has been correctly added. Then incubate the microplate at **room temperature for 20 minutes**.

Important note: *Do not expose to strong direct light as a high background might be generated.*

9. Stop the enzymatic reaction by pipette 100 µl Sulphuric Acid into each well and using the same pipetting sequence as in step Then measure the color intensity with a microplate reader at 450nm (reading) and at 620-630nm (blanking, mandatory), blanking the instrument on A1, or B1 or both wells.

M.2 Qualitative analysis

1. Place the required number of strips in the microplate holder. Leave A1 well empty for the operation of blanking.
Store the other strips into the bag in presence of the desiccant at 2..8°C, sealed.
2. Dilute samples 1:101 dispensing 1 ml Specimen Diluent into a disposable tube and then 10 ul sample; mix on vortex before use. Do not dilute the calibrators as they are ready-to-use.
3. Prepare the Antigen/Conjugate complex as reported in Section H.
4. Pipette 100 µl CAL 1 in duplicate, 100 µl CAL 2 in duplicate, 100 µl CAL 5 in single. Then dispense 100 µl of samples. Check that Calibrators and samples have been correctly added. Then incubate the microplate at **+37°C for 60 min**.

Important note: *Strips have to be sealed with the adhesive sealing foil only when the test is performed manually. Do not cover strips when using ELISA automatic instruments.*

5. Wash the microplate as reported in section I.3.
6. In all the wells, except A, pipette 100 µl Antigen/ Conjugate Complex. Check that the reagent has been correctly added. Incubate the microplate at **+37°C for 60 minutes.**

Important note: *Be careful not to touch the inner surface of the well with the pipette tip when dispensing the Complex. Contamination might occur.*

7. Wash the microplate as described in section I.3.
8. Pipette 100 µl TMB/H_2O_2 mixture in each well, the blank well A1 included. Check that the reagent has been correctly added. Then incubate the microplate at **room temperature for 20 minutes**.

Important note: *Do not expose to strong direct light as a high background might be generated.*

9. Stop the enzymatic reaction by pipette 100 µl Sulphuric Acid into each well and using the same pipetting sequence as in step Then measure the color intensity with a microplate reader at 450nm (reading) and at 620-630nm (blanking, mandatory), blanking the instrument on A1.

Important general notes:

1. *Ensure that no finger prints are present on the bottom of the microwell before reading. Finger prints could generate false positive results on reading.*
2. *Reading has should ideally be performed immediately after the addition of the Stop Solution but definitely no longer than 20 minutes afterwards. Some self oxidation of the chromogen can occur leading to a higher background.*

N. ASSAY SCHEME

Calibrators Control Serum (*) Samples diluted 1:101	100 ul 100 ul 100 ul
1st incubation	**60 min**
Temperature	+37°C
Wash step	n° 5 cycles with 20'' of soaking OR n° 6 cycles without soaking
Enzyme Conjugate	100 ul
2nd incubation	**60 min**
Temperature	+37°C
Wash step	n° 5 cycles with 20'' of soaking OR n° 6 cycles without soaking
TMB/H2O2 mix	100 ul
3rd incubation	**20 min**
Temperature	r.t.
Sulphuric Acid	100 ul
Reading OD	450nm/620-630nm

(*) Important Notes:

- *The Control Serum (CS) it does not affect the test's results calculation.*
- *The Control Serum (CS) used only if a laboratory internal quality control is required by the Management.*

An example of dispensation scheme in quantitative assays is reported below:

Microplate

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A	BLK	CAL4	S3									
B	BLK	CAL4	S4									
C	CAL1	CAL5	S5									
D	CAL1	CAL5	S6									
E	CAL2	CS(*)	S7									
F	CAL2	CS(*)	S8									
G	CAL3	S1	S9									
H	CAL3	S2	S10									

Legenda: BLK = Blank // CAL = Calibrators // // S = Sample//
CS = Control Serum - Not mandatory

An example of dispensation scheme in qualitative assays is reported below:

Microplate

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A	BLK	S 2	S 10									
B	CAL1	S 3	S 11									
C	CAL1	S 4	S 12									
D	CAL2	S 5	S 13									
E	CAL2	S 6	S 14									
F	CAL5	S 7	S 15									
G	S1	S 8	S 16									
H	S2	S 9	S 17									

Legenda: BLK = Blank // CAL = Calibrators // S = Sample

O. INTERNAL QUALITY CONTROL

A validation check is carried out on the calibrators any time the kit is used in order to verify whether the performances of the assay are as qualified.

Control that the following data are matched:

Parameters	Requirements
Blank well	< 0.100 OD450nm
Calibrator 1 0 arbU/ml	< 0.200 OD450nm after blanking
Calibrator 2 10 arbU/ml	OD450nm higher than the OD450nm of CAL 1 + 0.100
Calibrator 5 100 arbU/ml	> 1.000 OD450nm
Coefficient of variation	< 30% for the Calibrator 1

If the results of the test match the requirements stated above, proceed to the next section.

If they do not, do not proceed any further and perform the following checks:

Problem	Check
Blank well > 0.100 OD450nm	1. that the Chromogen/Substrate solution has not become contaminated during the assay
CAL 1 OD450nm > 0.200 coefficient of variation > 30%	1. that the washing procedure and the washer settings are as validated in the pre qualification study; 2. that the proper washing solution has been used and the washer has been primed with it before use; 3. that no mistake has been done in the assay procedure when the dispensation of calibrators is carried out; 4. that no contamination of the Cal 1 or of the wells where it was dispensed has occurred due to spills of positive samples or Antigen/Conjugate complex; 5. that micropipettes have not become contaminated with positive samples or with the Antigen/Conjugate complex 6. that the washer needles are not blocked or partially obstructed.
CAL 2 OD450nm < Cal 1 + 0.100	1. that the procedure has been correctly performed; 2. that no mistake has occurred during its distribution (ex.: dispensation of a wrong calibrator); 3. that the washing procedure and the washer settings are as validated in the pre qualification study; 4. that no external contamination of the calibrator has occurred.
CAL 5 OD450nm < 1.000	1. that the procedure has been correctly performed; 2. that no mistake has occurred during its distribution; 3. that the washing procedure and the washer settings are as validated in the pre qualification study; 4. that no external contamination of the calibration has occurred.

**** Note:**

If Control Serum has used, verify the following data:

Check	Requirements
Control Serum	OD450nm = OD450nm CAL 20 arbU/ml +/-20%

If the results of the test doesn't match the requirements stated above, operate as follows:

Problem	Check
Control Serum Different from Expected value	1. that the procedure has been correctly performed; 2. that no mistake has occurred during its distribution (e.g.: dispensation of a wrong calibrator); 3. that the washing procedure and the washer settings are as validated in the pre qualification study; 4. that no external contamination of the control has occurred.

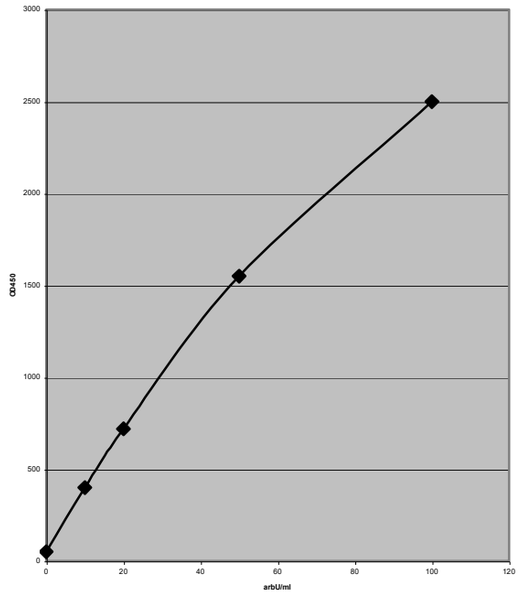
Anyway, if all other parameters (Blank, CAL1, CAL2, CAL 5), match the established requirements, the test may be considered valid.

Important note:
The analysis must be done proceeding as the reading step described in the section M, point 9.

P. RESULTS

P.1 Quantitative method

If the test turns out to be valid, use for the quantitative method an approved curve fitting program to draw the calibration curve from the values obtained by reading at 450nm/620-630nm (4-parameters interpolation is suggested).
Then on the calibration curve calculate the concentration of anti EBV VCA IgM antibody in samples.
An example of Calibration curve is reported below.



Note: *Do not use these data to calculate the real assay results. The figures above are reported only as an example.*

P.2 Qualitative method
Check that the assay is valid.
An example is provided below:

An example of calculation is reported below (data obtained proceeding as the reading step described in the section M, point 9):

Note: *The following data must not be used instead or real figures obtained by the user.*

Calibrator 0 arbU/ml: 0.020 – 0.024 OD450nm
Mean Value: 0.022 OD450nm
Lower than 0.200 – Accepted
Calibrator 10 arbIU/ml: 0.250 – 0.270 OD450nm
Mean Value: 0.260 OD450nm
Higher than CAL 1 + 0.100 – Accepted
Calibrator 100 arbU/ml: 2.045 OD450nm
Higher than 1.000 – Accepted

The OD450nm/620-630nm of the Calibrator 10 arbU/ml is considered the cut-off (or Co) of the system.
The ratio between the OD450nm/620-630nm value of the sample and the OD450nm/620-630nm of the Calibrator 10 arbU/ml (or S/Co) can provide a semi-quantitative estimation of the content of specific IgM in the sample.

Q. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS
Samples with a concentration lower than 10 arbU/ml are considered negative for anti EBV VCA IgM antibody.
Samples with a concentration higher than 10 arbU/ml are considered positive for anti EBV VCA IgM antibody. The patient is likely to be in the acute phase of infection (mononucleosis).

VCA IgM results alone are not, anyway, enough to provide a clear diagnosis of EBV infection. At least EBNA IgG results are necessary in combination.
A reference range of the minimum essential serological markers of Eptein-Barr infection, derived from Infectious Diseases Handbook, 3rd edition, published by Lexi-Comp Inc., USA, is reported schematically below:

VCA IgM	EBNA IgG	Interpretation
negative	negative	No history of EBV infection
positive	negative	Acute primary infection
negative	**positive**	History of previous infection
positive	**positive**	Reactivation

Important notes:
1. *Interpretation of results should be done under the supervision of the laboratory supervisor to reduce the risk of judgment errors and misinterpretations.*
2. *When test results are transmitted from the laboratory to another facility, attention must be paid to avoid erroneous data transfer.*
3. *Diagnosis has to be done and released to the patient by a suitably qualified medical doctor.*

R. PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS
Evaluation of Performances has been conducted in an external clinical center on panels of negative and positive samples with reference to a commercial kit.

1. Limit of detection
No international standard for EBV VCA IgM Antibody detection has been defined so far by the European Comunity.
In its absence, an Internal Gold Standard (or IGS), derived from a patient in the acute phase of mononucleosis infection, has been defined in order to provide the device with a constant and excellent sensitivity.

2. Diagnostic Sensitivity and Specificity:
The assay is based on the "IgM Capture" method and on affinity purified native VCA antigen in order to provide the highest specificity and sensitivity.
The diagnostic sensitivity was studied on more than 50 samples, pre-tested positive with the reference kit of European origin in use at the laboratory. Positive samples were collected from patients undergoing acute mononucleosis infection.
The diagnostic specificity was determined on panels of more than 250 negative samples from normal individuals and blood donors, classified negative with the reference kit, including potentially interfering specimens.
Both plasma, derived with different standard techniques of preparation (citrate, EDTA and heparin), and sera have been used to determine the specificity. No false reactivity due to the method of specimen preparation has been observed.
Frozen specimens have also been tested to check whether samples freezing interferes with the performance of the test. No interference was observed on clean and particle free samples.
The Performance Evaluation provided the following values :

Sensitivity	> 98 %
Specificity	> 98 %

3. Reproducibility:
Data obtained from a study conducted on three samples of different VCA IgM reactivity, examined in 16 replicates in three separate runs showed CV% results ranging 2-8%, depending on the OD450nm/620-630nm readings.
The variability shown in the tables did not result in sample misclassification.

S. LIMITATIONS

False positivity has been assessed as less than 2 % of the normal population, mostly due to high titers of Rheumatoid Factor. IgM capture systems, even if acknowledged to be more specific than sandwich assays, may in fact be influenced by this kind of interfering substance.
Frozen samples containing fibrin particles or aggregates may generate false positive results.

T. CONFIRMATION TEST

In order to provide the medical doctor with the best accuracy in testing for EBV infection, a confirmation assay is reported.
The confirmation test has to be carried out on any positive sample before a diagnosis of primary infection of EBV is released to the doctor.

Proceed for confirmation as follows:

1. Prepare the Antigen/Conjugate Complex as described in the proper section.
2. The well A1 of the strip is left empty for blanking.
3. CAL 2 (10 arbU/ml) is dispensed in the strip in positions B1+C1.
4. The positive sample to be confirmed, diluted 1:101, is dispensed in the strip in position D1+E1.
5. The strip is incubated for 60 min at +37°C.
6. After washing, the blank well A1 is left empty.
7. 100 µl of Antigen/Conjugate Complex are dispensed in wells B1+C1+D1.
8. Then 100 µl of Enzyme Conjugate (CONJ) alone are added to well E1. ***Note:*** *This material does not contain any VCA antigen, only the conjugate*
9. The strip is incubated for 60 min at +37°C.
10. After washing, 100 µl Chromogen/Substrate are added to all the wells and the strip is incubated for 20 min at r.t.
11. 100 µl Sulphuric Acid are added to all the wells and then their color intensity is measured at 450nm (reading filter) and at 620-630nm (background subtraction, mandatory), blanking the instrument on A1.

Interpretation of results is carried out as follows:

1. If the sample in position D1 shows an OD450nm/620-630nm lower than the one of CAL 2, a problem of dispensation or contamination in the first test is likely to be occurred. The Assay Procedure in Section M has to be repeated to double check the analysis.
2. If the sample in position D1 shows an OD450nm/620-630nm value higher than the one of CAL 2 and in position E1 shows an OD450nm/620-630nm value still higher than the one of CAL 2, the sample is considered a **false positive**. The reactivity of the sample is in fact not dependent on the specific presence of EBV VCA antigens and a crossreaction with the enzyme conjugate has occurred.
3. If the sample in position D1 shows an OD450nm/620-630nm value higher than the one of CAL 2 and in position E1 shows an OD450nm/620-630nm value lower the one of CAL 2, the sample is considered a **true positive**. The reactivity of the sample is in fact dependent on the specific presence of EBV VCA antigens and not due to any crossreaction with the conjugate alone.

The following table is reported for the interpretation of results:

Well	**OD450nm/620-630nm**		
D1	< CAL 2	> CAL 2	> CAL 2
E1	< CAL 2	> CAL 2	< CAL 2
Interpretation	Problem of contam.	False positive	True positive

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