HCV Ab

Version 4.0 Enzyme Immunoassay for the determination of anti Hepatitis C Virus antibody in human serum and plasma

- for “in vitro” diagnostic use only -

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REF CVAB.CE
96,192,480,960 Tests

HCV Ab

A. INTENDED USE

Version 4.0 Enzyme ImmunoAssay (ELISA) for the determination of antibodies to Hepatitis C Virus in human plasma and sera. The kit is intended for the screening of blood units and the follow-up of HCV-infected patients.
For "in vitro" diagnostic use only.

B. INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) define Hepatitis C infection as follows:

"Hepatitis C is a viral infection of the liver which had been referred to as parenterally transmitted "non A, non B hepatitis" until identification of the causative agent in 1989. The discovery and characterization of the hepatitis C virus (HCV) led to the understanding of its primary role in post-transfusion hepatitis and its tendency to induce persistent infection.

HCV is a major cause of acute hepatitis and chronic liver disease, including cirrhosis and liver cancer. Globally, an estimated 170 million persons are chronically infected with HCV and 3 to 4 million persons are newly infected each year. HCV is spread primarily by direct contact with human blood. The major causes of HCV infection worldwide are use of unscreened blood transfusions, and re-use of needles and syringes that have not been adequately sterilized. No vaccine is currently available to prevent hepatitis C and treatment for chronic hepatitis C is too costly for most persons in developing countries to afford. Thus, from a global perspective, the greatest impact on hepatitis C disease burden will likely be achieved by focusing efforts on reducing the risk of HCV transmission from nosocomial exposures (e.g. blood transfusions, unsafe injection practices) and high-risk behaviours (e.g. injection drug use).

Hepatitis C virus (HCV) is one of the viruses (A, B, C, D, and E), which together account for the vast majority of cases of viral hepatitis. It is an enveloped RNA virus in the *flaviviridae* family which appears to have a narrow host range. Humans and chimpanzees are the only known species susceptible to infection, with both species developing similar disease. An important feature of the virus is the relative mutability of its genome, which in turn is probably related to the high propensity (80%) of inducing chronic infection. HCV is clustered into several distinct genotypes which may be important in determining the severity of the disease and the response to treatment.

The incubation period of HCV infection before the onset of clinical symptoms ranges from 15 to 150 days. In acute infections, the most common symptoms are fatigue and jaundice; however, the majority of cases (between 60% and 70%), even those that develop chronic infection, are a symptomatic. About 80% of newly infected patients progress to develop chronic infection. Cirrhosis develops in about 10% to 20% of persons with chronic infection, and liver cancer develops in 1% to 5% of persons with chronic infection over a period of 20 to 30 years. Most patients suffering from liver cancer who do not have hepatitis B virus infection have evidence of HCV infection. The mechanisms by which HCV infection leads to liver cancer are still unclear. Hepatitis C also exacerbates the severity of underlying liver disease when it coexists with other hepatic conditions. In particular, liver disease progresses more rapidly among persons with alcoholic liver disease and HCV infection. HCV is spread primarily by direct contact with human blood. Transmission through blood transfusions that are not screened for HCV infection, through the reuse of inadequately sterilized needles, syringes or other medical equipment, or through needle-sharing among drug-users, is well documented. Sexual and perinatal transmission may also occur, although less frequently. Other modes of transmission such as social, cultural, and behavioural practices using percutaneous procedures (e.g. ear and body piercing, circumcision, tattooing) can occur if inadequately sterilized equipment is used. HCV is not spread by sneezing, hugging, coughing, food or water, sharing eating utensils, or casual contact.

In both developed and developing countries, high risk groups include injecting drug users, recipients of unscreened blood, haemophiliacs, dialysis patients and persons with multiple sex partners who engage in unprotected sex. In developed countries, it is estimated that 90% of persons with chronic HCV infection are current and former injecting drug users and those with a history of transfusion of unscreened blood or blood products. In many developing countries, where unscreened blood and blood products are still being used, the major means of transmission are unsterilized injection equipment and unscreened blood transfusions. In addition, people who use traditional scarification and circumcision practices are at risk if they use or re-use unsterilized tools.

WHO estimates that about 170 million people, 3% of the world's population, are infected with HCV and are at risk of developing liver cirrhosis and/or liver cancer. The prevalence of HCV infection in some countries in Africa, the Eastern Mediterranean, South-East Asia and the Western Pacific (when prevalence data are available) is high compared to some countries in North America and Europe.

Diagnostic tests for HCV are used to prevent infection through screening of donor blood and plasma, to establish the clinical diagnosis and to make better decisions regarding medical management of a patient. Diagnostic tests commercially available today are based on Enzyme immunosorbent assays (EIA) for the detection of HCV specific antibodies. EIAs can detect more than 95% of chronically infected patients but can detect only 50% to 70% of acute infections. A recombinant immunoblot assay (RIBA) that identifies antibodies which react with individual HCV antigens is often used as a supplemental test for confirmation of a positive EIA result. Testing for HCV circulating by amplification tests RNA (e.g. polymerase chain reaction or PCR, branched DNA assay) is also being utilized for confirmation of serological results as well as for assessing the effectiveness of antiviral therapy. A positive result indicates the presence of active infection and a potential for spread of the infection and or/the development of chronic liver disease.

Antiviral drugs such as interferon taken alone or in combination with ribavirin, can be used for the treatment of persons with chronic hepatitis C, but the cost of treatment is very high. Treatment with interferon alone is effective in about 10% to 20% of patients. Interferon combined with ribavirin is effective in about 30% to 50% of patients. Ribavirin does not appear to be effective when used alone.

There is no vaccine against HCV. Research is in progress but the high mutability of the HCV genome complicates vaccine development. Lack of knowledge of any protective immune response following HCV infection also impedes vaccine research. It is not known whether the immune system is able to eliminate the virus.

Some studies, however, have shown the presence of virus neutralizing antibodies in patients with HCV infection. In the absence of a vaccine, all precautions to prevent infection must be taken including (a) screening and testing of blood and organ donors; (b) Virus inactivation of plasma derived products; (c) implementation and maintenance of infection control practices in health care settings, including appropriate sterilization of medical and dental equipment; (d) promotion of behaviour change among the general public and health care workers to reduce overuse of injections and to use safe injection practices; and (e) Risk reduction counselling for persons with high-risk drug and sexual practices. "

The genome encodes for structural components, a nucleocapsid protein and two envelope glycoproteins, and functional constituents involved in the virus replication and protein processing.
The nucleocapsid-encoding region seems to be the most conservative among the isolates obtained all over the world.

C. PRINCIPLE OF THE TEST
Microplates are coated with HCV-specific antigens derived from "core" and "ns" regions encoding for conservative and immunodominant antigenic determinants (Core peptide, recombinant NS3, NS4 and NS5 peptides).
The solid phase is first treated with the diluted sample and HCV Ab are captured, if present, by the antigens.
After washing out all the other components of the sample, in the 2nd incubation bound HCV antibodies, IgG and IgM as well, are detected by the addition of polyclonal specific anti hIgG&M antibodies, 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 anti HCV antibodies present in the sample. A cut-off value let optical densities be interpreted into HCV antibody negative and positive results.

D. COMPONENTS
Code CVAB.CE contains reagents for 192 tests.

1. Microplate MICROPLATE
n° 2 microplates
12 strips of 8 microwells coated with Core peptide, recombinant NS3, NS4 and NS5 peptides. Plates are sealed into a bag with desiccant.

2. Negative Control CONTROL -
1x4.0ml/vial. Ready to use control. It contains 1% goat serum proteins, 10 mM Na-citrate buffer pH 6.0 +/-0.1, 0.5% Tween 20, 0.09% Na-azide and 0.045% ProClin 300 as preservatives. The negative control is olive green colour coded.

3. Positive Control CONTROL +
1x4.0ml/vial. Ready to use control. It contains 1% goat serum proteins, human antibodies positive to HCV, 10 mM Na-citrate buffer pH 6.0 +/-0.1, 0.5% Tween 20, 0.09% Na-azide and 0.045% ProClin 300 as preservatives. The Positive Control is blue colour coded.

4. Calibrator CAL …
n° 2 vials. Lyophilized calibrator. To be dissolved with the volume of EIA grade water reported on the label. It contains foetal bovine serum proteins, human antibodies to HCV whose content is calibrated on the NIBSC Working Standard code 99/588-003-WI, 10 mM Na-citrate buffer pH 6.0 +/-0.1, 0.3 mg/ml gentamicine sulphate and 0.045% ProClin 300 as preservatives.

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 .

5. Wash buffer concentrate WASHBUF 20X
2x60ml/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.

6. Enzyme Conjugate CONJ
2x16ml/vial. Ready to use and pink/red colour coded reagent. It contains Horseradish Peroxidase conjugated goat polyclonal antibodies to human IgG and IgM, 5% BSA, 10 mM Tris buffer pH 6.8+/-0.1, 0.045% ProClin 300 and 0.02% gentamicine sulphate as preservatives.

7. Chromogen/Substrate SUBS TMB
2x16ml/vial. Ready-to-use component. It contains 50 mM citrate-phosphate buffer pH 3.5-3.8, 4% dimethylsulphoxide, 0.03% tetra-methyl-benzidine or TMB and 0.02% hydrogen peroxide or H2O2.
Note: To be stored protected from light as sensitive to strong illumination.

8. Assay Diluent DILAS
1x15ml/vial. 10 mM tris buffered solution pH 8.0 +/-0.1 containing 0.045% ProClin 300 for the pre-treatment of samples and controls in the plate, blocking interference.

9. Sulphuric Acid H_2SO_4 O.3 M
1x32ml/bottle. It 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. Sample Diluent: DILSPE
2x50ml/bottle. It contains 1% goat serum proteins, 10 mM Na-citrate buffer pH 6.0 +/-0.1, 0.5% Tween 20, 0.09% Na-azide and 0.045% ProClin 300 as preservatives. To be used to dilute the sample.
Note: The diluent changes colour from olive green to dark bluish green in the presence of sample.

11. Plate sealing foils **n° 4**

12. Package insert **n° 1**

Important note: Only upon specific request , Dia.Pro can supply reagents for 96, 480, 960 tests , as reported below**:**

1. Microplate	n°1	n°5	n°10
2.NegativeControl	1x2.0ml/vial	1x10ml/vial	1x20.ml/vial
3.PositiveControl	1x2.0ml/vial	1x10ml/vial	1x20.ml/vial
4.Calibrator	n° 1 vial	n° 5 vials	n° 10 vials
5.Wash buff conc	1x60ml/bottle	5x60ml/bottles	4x150ml/bottles
6.Enz. Conjugate	1x16ml/vial	2x40ml/bottles	4x40ml/bottles
7.Chromog/Subs	1x16ml/vial	2x40ml/bottles	4x40ml/bottles
8.Assay Diluent	1x8ml/vial	1x40ml/bottle	1x80ml/bottle
9.Sulphuric Acid	1x15ml/vial	2x40ml/bottle	2x80ml/bottles
10.SampleDiluent	1x50ml/vial	5x50ml/bottles	4x125ml/bottles
11.Plate seal foils	n° 2	n° 10	n° 20
12. Pack. insert	n° 1	n° 1	n° 1
Number of tests	**96**	**480**	**960**
Code	**CVAB.CE.96**	**CVAB.CE.480**	**CVAB.CE.960**

E. MATERIALS REQUIRED BUT NOT PROVIDED

1. Calibrated Micropipettes (200ul and 10ul) and disposable plastic tips.
2. EIA grade water (bidistilled 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 capable to provide a temperature of +37°C.
6. Calibrated ELISA microwell reader with 450nm (reading) and 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. When the kit is used for the screening of blood units and blood components, it has to be used in a laboratory certified and qualified by the national authority in that field (Ministry of Health or similar entity) to carry out this type of analysis.
3. 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.
4. All the personnel involved in sample handling should be vaccinated for HBV and HAV, for which vaccines are available, safe and effective.
5. 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 from strong light and avoid vibration of the bench surface where the test is undertaken.
6. Upon receipt, store the kit at 2..8°C into a temperature controlled refrigerator or cold room.
7. 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.
8. 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 for kit replacement.
9. Avoid cross-contamination between serum/plasma samples by using disposable tips and changing them after each sample. Do not reuse disposable tips.
10. Avoid cross-contamination between kit reagents by using disposable tips and changing them between the use of each one. Do not reuse disposable tips.
11. Do not use the kit after the expiration date stated on the external container and internal (vials) labels.
12. 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.
13. The use of disposable plastic-ware is recommended in the preparation of the liquid components or in transferring components into automated workstations, in order to avoid cross contamination.
14. 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 before waste. 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..
15. Accidental spills from samples and operations 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.
16. The Sulphuric Acid is an irritant. In case of spills, wash the surface with plenty of water
17. 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 venipuncture 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, generating false negative results.
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 several 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-use of the device and up to 6 months.

1. Microplates:

Allow the microplate to reach room temperature (about 1 hr) before opening the container. Check that the desiccant is not turned to dark green, indicating a defect of manufacturing.
In this case call Dia.Pro's customer service.
Unused strips have to be placed back into the aluminium pouch, in presence of desiccant supplied, firmly zipped and stored at +2°..8°C.
When opened the first time, residual strips are stable till the indicator of humidity inside the desiccant bag turns from yellow to green.

2. Negative Control:

Ready to use. Mix well on vortex before use.

3. Positive Control:

Ready to use. Mix well on vortex before use. Handle this component as potentially infective, even if HCV, eventually present in the control, has been chemically inactivated.

4. Calibrator:
Dissolve carefully the content of the lyophilised vial with the volume of EIA grade water reported on its label.
Mix well on vortex before use.
Handle this component as potentially infective, even if HCV, eventually present in the control, has been chemically inactivated.
***Note**: When dissolved the Calibrator is not stable. Store in aliquots at –20°C.*

5. Wash buffer concentrate:
The 20x concentrated solution has to be diluted with EIA grade water up to 1200 ml and mixed gently end-over-end before use. As some salt crystals may be present into the vial, take care to dissolve all the content when preparing the solution.
In the preparation avoid foaming as the presence of bubbles could give origin to a bad washing efficiency.
***Note:** Once diluted, the wash solution is stable for 1 week at +2..8° C.*

6. Enzyme conjugate:
Ready to use. Mix well on vortex before use.
Be careful not to contaminate the liquid with oxidizing chemicals, air-driven dust or microbes.
If this component has to be transferred use only plastic, possibly sterile disposable containers.

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

8. Assay Diluent:
Ready to use. Mix well on vortex before use.

9. 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).

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.

10. Sample Diluent:
Ready to use. Mix well on vortex before use.

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 (household alcohol, 10% solution of bleach, hospital grade disinfectants) of those parts that could accidentally come in contact with the sample. They should also be regularly maintained in order to show a precision of 1% and a trueness of +/-2%. Decontamination of spills or residues of kit components should also be carried out regularly.
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 $\pm$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 $\leq$ 10 nm; (b) absorbance range from 0 to $\geq$ 2.0; (c) linearity to $\geq$ 2.0; (d) repeatability $\geq$ 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, data handling) have to be carefully set, calibrated, controlled and regularly serviced in order to match the values reported in the section O "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 and for washing. This must be studied and controlled to minimize the possibility of contamination of adjacent wells. The use of ELISA automated work stations is recommended for blood screening when the number of samples to be tested exceed 20-30 units per run.
7. When using automatic devices, in case the vial holder of the instrument does not fit with the vials supplied in the kit, transfer the solution into appropriate containers and label them with the same label peeled out from the original vial. This operation is important in order to avoid mismatching contents of vials, when transferring them. When the test is over, return the secondary labeled containers to 2..8°C, firmly capped.
8. 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 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 of the kit box. Do not use if expired.
2. Check that the liquid components are not contaminated by naked-eye visible particles or aggregates. Check that the Chromogen/Substrate is colorless or pale blue by aspirating a small volume of it with a sterile transparent plastic pipette. Check that no breakage occurred in transportation and no spillage of liquid is present inside the box. Check that the

aluminum pouch, containing the microplate, is not punctured or damaged.
3. Dilute all the content of the 20x concentrated Wash Solution as described above.
4. Dissolve the Calibrator as described above.
5. Allow all the other components to reach room temperature (about 1 hr) and then mix as described.
6. 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.
7. Check that the ELISA reader has been turned on at least 20 minutes before reading.
8. If using an automated workstation, turn it on, check settings and be sure to use the right assay protocol.
9. Check that the micropipettes are set to the required volume.
10. Check that all the other equipment is available and ready to use.
11. 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.

Automated assay:

In case the test is carried out automatically with an ELISA system, we suggest to make the instrument aspirate 200 ul Sample Diluent and then 10 ul sample.
All the mixture is then carefully dispensed directly into the appropriate sample well of the microplate. Before the next sample is aspirated, needles have to be duly washed to avoid any cross-contamination among samples.
Do not dilute controls/calibrator as they are ready to use.
Dispense 200 ul controls/calibrator in the appropriate control/calibration wells.

Important Note: *Visually monitor that samples have been diluted and dispensed into appropriate wells. This is simply achieved by checking that the colour of dispensed samples has turned to dark bluish-green while the colour of the negative control has remained olive green.*

For the next operations follow the operative instructions reported below for the Manual Assay.
It is strongly recommended to check that the time lap between the dispensation of the first and the last sample will be calculated by the instrument and taken into consideration by delaying the first washing operation accordingly.

Manual assay:

1. Place the required number of Microwells in the microwell holder. Leave the 1st well empty for the operation of blanking.
2. Dispense 200 ul of Negative Control in triplicate, 200 ul Calibrator in duplicate and 200 ul Positive Control in single in proper wells. Do not dilute Controls and Calibrator as they are pre-diluted, ready to use !
3. Add 200 ul of Sample Diluent (DILSPE) to all the sample wells; then dispense 10 ul sample in each properly identified well. Mix gently the plate, avoiding overflowing and contaminating adjacent wells, in order to fully disperse the sample into its diluent.

Important note: *Check that the colour of the Sample Diluent, upon addition of the sample, changes from light green to dark bluish green, monitoring that the sample has been really added.*

4. Dispense 50 ul Assay Diluent (DILAS) into all the controls/calibrator and sample wells. Check that the color of samples has turned to dark blue.
5. Incubate the microplate for **45 min at +37°C**.

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

6. Wash the microplate with an automatic washer by delivering and aspirating 350ul/well of diluted washing solution as reported previously (section I.3).
7. Pipette 100µl Enzyme Conjugate into each well, except the 1st blanking well, and cover with the sealer. Check that this pink/red coloured component has been dispensed in all the wells, except A1.

Important note: *Be careful not to touch the plastic inner surface of the well with the tip filled with the Enzyme Conjugate. Contamination might occur.*

8. Incubate the microplate for **45 min at +37°C**.
9. Wash microwells as in step 6.
10. Pipette 100µl Chromogen/Substrate mixture into each well, the blank well included. Then incubate the microplate at **room temperature (18-24°C) for 15 minutes**.

Important note: *Do not expose to strong direct illumination. High background might be generated.*

11. Pipette 100µl Sulphuric Acid into all the wells using the same pipetting sequence as in step 10 to stop the enzymatic reaction. Addition of acid will turn the positive control and positive samples from blue to yellow/brown.
12. Measure the colour intensity of the solution in each well, as described in section I.5, at 450nm filter (reading) and at 620-630nm (background subtraction), blanking the instrument on A1 (mandatory).

Important 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 to be carried out just after the addition of the Stop Solution and anyway not any longer than 20 minutes after its addition. Some self oxidation of the chromogen can occur leading to high background.*
3. *Shaking at 350 ±150 rpm during incubation has been proved to increase the sensitivity of the assay of about 20%.*
4. *The Calibrator (CAL) does not affect the cut-off calculation and therefore the test results calculation. The Calibrator may be used only when a laboratory internal quality control is required by the management.*

N. ASSAY SCHEME

Method	Operations
Controls & Calibrator Samples Assay Diluent (DILAS)	200 ul 200ul dil.+10ul 50 ul
1st incubation	**45 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	**45 min**
Temperature	+37°C
Wash step	n° 5 cycles with 20'' of soaking OR n° 6 cycles without soaking
TMB/H2O2	100 ul
3rd incubation	**15 min**
Temperature	r.t.
Sulphuric Acid	100 ul
Reading OD	450nm / 620-630nm

An example of dispensation scheme is reported below:

Microplate

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A	BLK	S2										
B	NC	S3										
C	NC	S4										
D	NC	S5										
E	CAL	S6										
F	CAL	S7										
G	PC	S8										
H	S1	S9										

Legenda: BLK = Blank NC = Negative Control
CAL = Calibrator PC = Positive Control S = Sample

O. INTERNAL QUALITY CONTROL

A check is carried out on the controls and the calibrator any time the kit is used in order to verify whether their OD450nm values are as expected and reported in the table below.

Check	Requirements
Blank well	< 0.100 OD450nm value
Negative Control (NC)	< 0.050 mean OD450nm value after blanking
Calibrator	S/Co > 1.1
Positive Control	> 1.000 OD450nm value

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 operate as follows:

Problem	Check
Blank well > 0.100 OD450nm	1. that the Chromogen/Sustrate solution has not got contaminated during the assay
Negative Control (NC) > 0.050 OD450nm after blanking	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 (dispensation of positive control instead of negative control; 4. that no contamination of the negative control or of their wells has occurred due to positive samples, to spills or to the enzyme conjugate; 5. that micropipettes haven't got contaminated with positive samples or with the enzyme conjugate 6. that the washer needles are not blocked or partially obstructed.
Calibrator S/Co < 1.1	1. that the procedure has been correctly executed; 2. that no mistake has been done in its distribution (ex.: dispensation of negative control instead of control serum) 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.
Positive Control < 1.000 OD450nm	1. that the procedure has been correctly executed; 2. that no mistake has been done in the distribution of controls (dispensation of negative control instead of positive control. In this case, the negative control will have an OD450nm value > 0.150, too. 3. that the washing procedure and the washer settings are as validated in the pre qualification study; 4. that no external contamination of the positive control has occurred.

Should these problems happen, after checking, report any residual problem to the supervisor for further actions.

P. CALCULATION OF THE CUT-OFF

The tests results are calculated by means of a cut-off value determined with the following formula on the mean OD450nm value of the Negative Control (NC):

NC + 0.350 = Cut-Off (Co)

The value found for the test is used for the interpretation of results as described in the next paragraph.

***Important note**: When the calculation of results is done by the operative system of an ELISA automated work station be sure that the proper formulation is used to calculate the cut-off value and generate the right interpretations of results.*

Q. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Test results are interpreted as ratio of the sample OD450nm and the Cut-Off value (or S/Co) according to the following table:

S/Co	Interpretation
< 0.9	Negative
0.9 - 1.1	Equivocal
> 1.1	Positive

A negative result indicates that the patient has not been infected by HCV or that the blood unit may be transfused.
Any patient showing an equivocal result should be tested again on a second sample taken 1-2 weeks later from the patient and examined. The blood unit should not be transfused.
A positive result is indicative of HCV infection and therefore the patient should be treated accordingly or the blood unit should be discarded.

Important notes:

1. *Interpretation of results should be done under the supervision of the responsible of the laboratory to reduce the risk of judgment errors and misinterpretations.*
2. *Any positive result should be confirmed by an alternative method capable to detect IgG and IgM antibodies (confirmation test) before a diagnosis of viral hepatitis is formulated.*
3. *As proved in the Performance Evaluation of the product, the assay is able to detect seroconversion to anti HCV core antibodies **earlier** than some other commercial kits. Therefore a positive result, not confirmed with these commercial kits, does not have to be ruled out as a false positive result ! The sample has to be anyway submitted to a confirmation test (supplied upon request by DiaPro srl, code CCONF).*
4. *As long as the assay is able to detect also IgM antibodies some discrepant results with other commercial products for the detection of anti HCV antibodies - lacking anti hIgM conjugate in the formulation of the enzyme tracer and therefore missing IgM reactivity - may be present. The real positivity of the sample for antibodies to HCV should be then confirmed by examining also IgM reactivity, important for the diagnosis of HCV infection.*
5. *When test results are transmitted from the laboratory to an informatics centre, attention has to be done to avoid erroneous data transfer.*
6. *Diagnosis of viral hepatitis infection has to be done and released to the patient only by a qualified medical doctor.*

An example of calculation is reported below:

The following data must not be used instead or real figures obtained by the user.
Negative Control: 0.019 – 0.020 – 0.021 OD450nm
Mean Value: 0.020 OD450nm
Lower than 0.050 – Accepted
Positive Control: 2.189 OD450nm
Higher than 1.000 – Accepted
Cut-Off = 0.020+0.350 = 0.370
Calibrator: 0.550 - 0.530 OD450nm
Mean value: 0.540 OD450nm S/Co = 1.4
S/Co higher than 1.1 – Accepted
Sample 1: 0.070 OD450nm
Sample 2: 1.690 OD450nm
Sample 1 S/Co < 0.9 = negative
Sample 2 S/Co > 1.1 = positive

R. PERFORMANCES

Evaluation of Performances has been conducted in accordance to what reported in the Common Technical Specifications or CTS (art. 5, Chapter 3 of IVD Directive 98/79/EC).

1. LIMIT OF DETECTION

The limit of detection of the assay has been calculated by means of the British Working Standard for anti-HCV, NIBSC code 99/588-003-WI. The table below reports the mean OD450nm values of this standard when diluted in negative plasma and then examined.

Dilution	Lot # 1	Lot # 2
Factor	S/Co	S/Co
1 X	**2.0**	**2.0**
2 X	**1.1**	**1.2**
4 X	0.7	0.8
8 X	0.5	0.5
Negative plasma	0.3	0.3

In addition the sample coded Accurun 1 – series 3000 - supplied by Boston Biomedica Inc., USA, has been evaluated “in toto” showing the results below:

CVAB.CE Lot ID	Accurun 1 Series	S/Co
1201	3000	1.5
0602	3000	1.5
1202	3000	1.9

In addition, n° 7 samples, tested positive for HCV Ab with Ortho HCV 3.0 SAVe, code 930820, lot. # EXE065-1, were diluted in HCV Ab negative plasma in order to generate limiting dilutions and then tested again on CVAB.CE, lot. # 1202, and Ortho.
The following table reports the data obtained.

Sample n°	Limit Dilution	CVAB.CE S/Co	Ortho 3.0 S/Co
1	256 X	**1.9**	**1.3**
2	256 X	**1.9**	0.7
3	256 X	**2.4**	**1.0**
4	128 X	**2.5**	**3.2**
5	85 X	**3.3**	**1.4**
6	128 X	**2.2**	0.8
7	135 X	**3.2**	**2.2**

2. DIAGNOSTIC SPECIFICITY AND SENSITIVITY

The Performance Evaluation of the device was carried out in a trial conducted on more than total 5000 samples.

2.1 Diagnostic specificity:

It is defined as the probability of the assay of scoring negative in the absence of specific analyte. In addition to the first study, where a total of 5043 unselected blood donors,(including 1st time donors), 210 hospitalized patients and 162 potentially interfering specimens (other infectious diseases, E.coli antibody positive, patients affected by non viral hepatic diseases, dialysis patients, pregnant women, hemolized, lipemic, etc.) were examined, the diagnostic specificity was recently assessed by testing a total of 2876 negative blood donors on six different lots. A value of specificity of 100% was found.
No false reactivity due to the method of specimen preparation has been observed. Both plasma, derived with different standard techniques of preparation (citrate, EDTA and heparin), and sera have been used to determine the value of specificity.
Frozen specimens have been tested, as well, to check for interferences due to collection and storage.
No interference was observed.

2.2 Diagnostic Sensitivity

It defined as the probability of the assay of scoring positive in the presence of specific analyte.
The diagnostic sensitivity has been assessed externally on a total number of 359 specimens; a diagnostic sensitivity of 100% was found. Internally more than other 50 positive samples were tested, providing a value of diagnostic sensitivity of again 100%.
Positive samples from infections carried out by different genotypes of HCV were tested as well.
Furthermore, most of seroconversion panels available from Boston Biomedica Inc., USA, (PHV) and Zeptometrix, USA, (HCV) have been studied.
Results are reported below for some of them.

Panel	N° samples	DiaPro*	Ortho* **
PHV 901	11	9	9
PHV 904	7	2	4
PHV 905	9	3	4
PHV 906	7	7	7
PHV 907	7	3	2
PHV 908	13	10	8
PHV 909	3	2	2
PHV 910	5	3	3
PHV 911	5	3	3
PHV 912	3	1	1
PHV 913	4	2	2
PHV 914	9	5	5
PHV 915	4	3	0
PHV 916	8	4	3
PHV 917	10	6	6
PHV 918	8	2	0
PHV 919	7	3	3
PHV 920	10	6	6
HCV 10039	5	2	0
HCV 6212	9	6	7
HCV 10165	9	5	4

*Note: * Positive samples detected* *** HCV v.3.0*

Finally the Product has been tested on the panel EFS Ac HCV, lot n° 01/08.03.22C/01/A, supplied by the Etablissement Francais Du Sang (EFS), France, with the following results:

EFS Panel Ac HCV

Sample	Lot # 1 S/Co	Lot # 2 S/Co	Lot # 2 S/Co	Results expected
HCV 1	**2.2**	**2.4**	**2.6**	**positive**
HCV 2	**1.6**	**2.0**	**2.1**	**positive**
HCV 3	**1.5**	**1.7**	**1.6**	**positive**
HCV 4	**5.2**	**6.5**	**5.5**	**positive**
HCV 5	**1.6**	**1.8**	**1.6**	**positive**
HCV 6	0.4	0.4	0.4	negative

3. PRECISION:
It has been calculated on two samples, one negative and one low positive, examined in 16 replicates in three separate runs. Results are reported as follows:

Lot # 1202

Negative Sample (N = 16)

Mean values	1st run	2nd run	3rd run	Average value
OD 450nm	0.094	0.099	0.096	0.096
Std.Deviation	0.008	0.007	0.008	0.007
CV %	8.7	6.6	7.9	7.7

Cal # 2 – 7K (N = 16)

Mean values	1st run	2nd run	3rd run	Average value
OD 450nm	0.396	0.403	0.418	0.406
Std.Deviation	0.023	0.029	0.027	0.026
CV %	5.9	7.1	6.4	6.5
S/Co	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.1

Lot # 0602

Negative Sample (N = 16)

Mean values	1st run	2nd run	3rd run	Average
OD 450nm	0.097	0.096	0.094	0.096
Std.Deviation	0.009	0.010	0.008	0.009
CV %	8.9	10.1	8.4	9.1

Cal # 2 – 7K (N = 16)

Mean values	1st run	2nd run	3rd run	Average value
OD 450nm	0.400	0.395	0.393	0.396
Std.Deviation	0.021	0.025	0.026	0.024
CV %	5.4	6.2	6.6	6.1
S/Co	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.2

Lot # 0602/2

Negative Sample (N = 16)

Mean values	1st run	2nd run	3rd run	Average
OD 450nm	0.087	0.091	0.088	0.089
Std.Deviation	0.009	0.007	0.008	0.008
CV %	10.0	8.2	8.6	8.9

Cal # 2 – 7K (N = 16)

Mean values	1st run	2nd run	3rd run	Average
OD 450nm	0.386	0.390	0.391	0.389
Std.Deviation	0.023	0.021	0.023	0.022
CV %	6.0	5.3	5.8	5.7
S/Co	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2

The variability shown in the tables above did not result in sample misclassification.

S. LIMITATIONS
Repeatable false positive results, not confirmed by RIBA or similar confirmation techniques, were assessed as less than 0.1% of the normal population.
Frozen samples containing fibrin particles or aggregates after thawing have been observed to generate some false results.

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All the IVD Products manufactured by the company are under the control of a certified Quality Management System approved by an EC Notified Body. Each lot is submitted to a quality control and released into the market only if conforming with the EC technical specifications and acceptance criteria.

Manufacturer:
Dia.Pro Diagnostic Bioprobes Srl.
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0318

HCV Ab

Versión 4.0 del Ensayo Inmunoenzimático para la determinación de anticuerpos frente Virus de la Hepatitis C en plasma y suero humanos.

Uso exclusivo para diagnóstico “in vitro”

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REF CVAB.CE
96/192/480/960 pruebas

HCV Ab

A. OBJETIVO DEL EQUIPO.

Versión 4.0 del Ensayo Inmunoenzimático (ELISA) para la determinación de anticuerpos al virus de la Hepatitis C en plasma y suero humanos.

El equipo está diseñado para el cribado en unidades de sangre así como para el seguimiento de pacientes infectados con HCV.

Uso exclusivo para diagnóstico "in vitro".

B. INTRODUCCIÓN.

La Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS) define la infección por el virus de la Hepatitis C como:

"La Hepatitis C es una infección viral del hígado, definida como hepatitis de transmisión parenteral "no A no B" hasta el descubrimiento del agente causal en 1989. El descubrimiento y la caracterización del virus de la hepatitis C (HCV) ha permitido comprender su papel primario en la hepatitis post-transfusional y su tendencia a inducir la infección persistente. El virus de la hepatitis C es la causa principal de hepatitis aguda y enfermedad hepática crónica, incluyendo cirrosis y cáncer de hígado. A nivel mundial se estima que 170 millones de personas estén infectadas de forma crónica con HCV y que de 3 a 4 millones se infecten cada año.

El virus se transmite por contacto directo con sangre humana. Las causas principales de infección por HCV en el mundo son las transfusiones sanguíneas no controladas y la reutilización de jeringuillas y agujas sin una correcta esterilización previa. En la actualidad aún no existe una vacuna eficaz contra el virus y el tratamiento para la hepatitis C crónica es demasiado costoso para la mayoría de las personas en países en vías de desarrollo. Desde una perspectiva global, el mayor impacto contra la hepatitis C puede lograrse a través de esfuerzos orientados hacia la prevención y el control de la transmisión por exposiciones nosocomiales (como las transfusiones sanguíneas y las prácticas invasoras inseguras) y los comportamientos que conllevan alto riesgo (como el consumo de drogas inyectables).

El virus de la hepatitis C aparece en la mayoría de los casos de hepatitis viral. Es un virus RNA envuelto, perteneciente a la familia Flaviviridae *y que parece tener un estrecho margen de huéspedes. Humanos y chimpancés son las únicas especies susceptibles conocidas y ambas desarrollan una enfermedad similar. Una característica importante del virus es su variabilidad genómica, la cual pudiera estar relacionada a su elevada capacidad (80%) de inducir infección crónica. El HCV ha sido agrupado por genotipos, lo cual puede ser útil para determinar la gravedad de la enfermedad y la respuesta al tratamiento.*

El periodo de incubación varía desde 15 hasta 150 días. En la infección aguda los síntomas más comunes son fatiga e ictericia, sin embargo la mayoría de los casos (entre el 60% y el 70%), incluso aquellos que desarrollan la infección crónica, son asintomáticos. Cerca del 80% de los nuevos pacientes infectados progresan a la infección crónica. Del 10 al 20% de las personas con infección crónica desarrollan cirrosis, mientras que el cáncer de hígado lo presentan entre el 1 y el 5% de las personas con este tipo de infección, en un periodo de 20 a 30 años. Muchos pacientes que padecen cáncer de hígado y no están infectados por el virus de la hepatitis B, presentan evidencias de infección por el virus de la hepatitis C. Los mecanismos que relacionan la infección por HCV y el desarrollo de cáncer hepático no han sido aún esclarecidos. La hepatitis C puede exacerbar la gravedad de una enfermedad subyacente del hígado cuando coexiste con otras disfunciones hepáticas; particularmente la enfermedad progresa más rápidamente en personas alcohólicas e infectadas por HCV. Las formas de transmisión más frecuentes son a través de transfusiones sanguíneas sin controlar y por la reutilización de agujas, jeringuillas y material médico contaminados. La transmisión sexual y perinatal puede suceder aunque es menos frecuente. Determinadas prácticas y comportamientos sociales y culturales (perforaciones en orejas y otras partes del cuerpo (piercing), circuncisiones y tatuajes) pueden constituir modos de transmisión si existe una inadecuada esterilización de los instrumentos usados. El HCV no se transmite por estornudos, tos, abrazos, agua o alimentos, estrechar la mano, compartir cubiertos o en general por contactos casuales. Tanto en países desarrollados como en aquellos en vías de desarrollo, los grupos de alto riesgo incluyen drogadictos, receptores de transfusiones sin analizar, hemofílicos, pacientes sometidos a diálisis y personas con actividad sexual promiscua y sin la debida protección. En los países desarrollados, se ha estimado que el 90% de las personas con infección crónica por HCV son o han sido drogadictos o han recibido donaciones de sangre o hemoderivados contaminados. En muchos países en vías de desarrollo, donde aún se utilizan transfusiones o hemoderivados sin analizar, los principales medios de transmisión son los instrumentos para inyecciones y las transfusiones sin analizar.

La OMS estima que cerca de 170 millones de personas, es decir el 3% de la población mundial, están infectadas por el HCV y bajo riesgo de desarrollar cirrosis y/o cáncer hepático. La prevalencia de la infección por HCV en países de África, el Mediterráneo oriental, Sudeste Asiático y el Pacífico Occidental es alta, comparada con países de Norteamérica y Europa.

Las pruebas de diagnóstico para el HCV contribuyen a prevenir la infección mediante el cribado de la sangre y plasma del donante, son útiles para establecer un diagnóstico clínico y en el seguimiento de los pacientes. Las pruebas de diagnóstico comerciales disponibles en la actualidad, se basan en ensayos enzimáticos de imnunoabsorción (EIA) para la detección de anticuerpos específicos contra HCV. Estos métodos pueden detectar más del 95% de los pacientes con infección crónica, pero solo entre el 50 y el 70% de las infecciones agudas. Para confirmar los resultados positivos por EIA se usa frecuentemente el sistema inmunoblot recombinante (RIBA), el cual identifica anticuerpos contra los antígenos individuales del HCV. Por otra parte, algunas técnicas de biología molecular (amplificación de ácidos nucleicos: Reacción en Cadena de la Polimerasa (PCR) y DNA ramificado) han sido utilizadas para confirmar los resultados serológicos así como para determinar la efectividad de la terapia antiviral. Un resultado positivo indica la presencia de una infección activa, de una fuente potencial de transmisión y/o del desarrollo de una enfermedad hepática crónica.

Para el tratamiento de personas con hepatitis C crónica se emplean fármacos antivirales como el interferón (administrado solo o en combinación con la ribavirina), pero el costo del tratamiento es elevado. Si se emplea solo el tratamiento con interferón, la eficacia en los pacientes es de 10 a 20%, mientras que en combinación con la ribavirina es eficaz en cerca del 30-50% de los casos. El tratamiento solo con ribavirina no parece ser efectivo.

No existe en la actualidad una vacuna contra HCV, debido en parte, a la alta frecuencia de mutaciones del virus. El escaso conocimiento de la respuesta inmune protectora que sigue a la infección por HCV ha dificultado el desarrollo de la vacuna. No se conoce tampoco acerca de los mecanismos del sistema inmune para la eliminación del virus. Algunos estudios, sin embargo, han demostrado la aparición de anticuerpos neutralizantes en pacientes con infección HCV. En ausencia de la vacuna, es conveniente tomar todas las medidas posibles para prevenir la infección (a) cribado y análisis de sangre y órganos de donantes; (b) inactivación del virus en productos derivados del plasma; (c) implementación y mantenimiento de las prácticas para el control de la infección incluyendo la

esterilización del material médico y dental; (d) promover cambios en la conducta entre el público en general y el personal sanitario para evitar las prácticas incorrectas y (e) vigilancia de los grupos de riesgo (personas con promiscuidad sexual y drogadictos)."

El genoma codifica para componentes estructurales: una proteína de la nucleocápside y dos glicoproteínas de la envoltura, así como para proteinas funcionales involucradas en la replicación viral y la síntesis de proteinas. La región que codifica para la nucleocápside parece estar altamente conservada entre los aislamientos obtenidos en todo el mundo.

C. PRINCIPIOS DEL ENSAYO.

Las microplacas están recubiertas con antígenos específicos del HCV correspondientes a las regiones del "*core"* y "*ns"* que codifican para determinantes antigénicos inmunodominantes y conservados (péptido del *core* y péptidos recombinantes NS3, NS4 y NS5).
Se añade la muestra diluida y los anticuerpos contra HCV, presentes en la muestra, son capturados por los antígenos de la fase sólida.
Después del lavado, en la 2ª incubación, los anticuerpos IgG e IgM son detectados mediante anticuerpos policlonales específicos anti-IgG/IgM humanos, conjugados con Peroxidasa (HPR).
La enzima capturada en la fase sólida, combinada con la mezcla substrato/cromógeno, genera una señal óptica proporcional a la cantidad de anticuerpos anti-HCV presentes en la muestra. Posteriormente, mediante un valor de corte calculado, las densidades ópticas pueden interpretarse como resultados negativos o positivos a la presencia de anticuerpos al HCV.

D. COMPONENTES.

Cada equipo (Código CVAB.CE) contiene reactivos suficientes para realizar 192 pruebas.

1. Microplaca: MICROPLATE
n° 2 microplacas
12 tiras de 8 pocillos recubiertos con péptidos recombinantes para el "core" y para NS3, NS4 y NS5. Las placas están empaquetadas en bolsas selladas con desecante.

2. Control Negativo: CONTROL -
1x4.0ml/vial
Listo para el uso. Contiene 1% de proteinas del suero de cabra, tampón Citrato sódico 10mM pH 6.0 +/-0.1, 0.5% de Tween 20, además de azida sódica 0.09% y ProClin 300 al 0,045% como conservantes. El control negativo está codificado con el color verde olivo.

3. Control Positivo: CONTROL +
1x4.0ml/vial
Listo para el uso. Contiene 1% de proteinas del suero de cabra, anticuerpos humanos anti-HCV, tampón Citrato sódico10mM pH 6.0 +/-0.1, 0.5% de Tween 20, así como azida sódica 0.09% y ProClin 300 al 0,045% como conservantes. El control positivo está codificado con el color azul.

4. Calibrador CAL ….
n° 2 viales
Liofilizado. Para disolver en agua calidad EIA como se indica en la etiqueta. Contiene suero fetal bovino, anticuerpos humanos al HCV, calibrados según el código Estándar de Trabajo de NIBSC 99/588-003-WI, tampón Citrato sódico10mM pH 6.0 +/-0.1, además de sulfato de gentamicina 0.3 mg/ml y ProClin 300 al 0,045% como conservantes.

Nota: El volumen necesario para disolver el contenido del frasco varía en cada lote. Se recomienda usar el volumen indicado en la etiqueta.

5. Tampón de Lavado Concentrado: WASHBUF 20X
2x60ml/botella. Solución concentrada 20x.
Una vez diluida, la solución de lavado contiene tampón fosfato 10 mM a pH 7.0 +/- 0.2, Tween 20 al 0.05% y ProClin 300 al 0,045%.

6. Conjugado CONJ
2x16ml/vial. Solución lista para el uso. Contiene 5% de albúmina de suero bovino, tampón Tris 10mM a pH 6.8 +/- 0.1, anticuerpo policlonal de cabra anti-IgM/IgG humanos conjugado con peroxidasa (HPR) en presencia de 0.2 % de sulfato de gentamicina y ProClin 300 al 0,045% como conservantes. El conjugado está codificado con el color rosa/rojo.

7. Cromógeno/Substrato SUBS TMB
2x16ml/vial. Contiene una solución tamponada citrato-fosfato 50mM pH 3.5-3.8, tetra-metil-benzidina (TMB) 0.03% y peróxido de hidrógeno (H_2O_2) 0.02% así como dimetilsulfóxido 4%.
Nota: Evitar la exposición a la luz, la sustancia es fotosensible.

8. Diluente de ensayo: DILAS
1x15ml/vial. Contiene una solución tamponada Tris 10 mM pH 8.0 +/- 0.1 y 0.1% de ProClin 300 al 0,045% para el pre-tratamiento de muestras y controles, bloquea posibles interferencias.
Nota: Usar todo el contenido del vial antes de abrir un segundo. El reactivo es sensible a oxidación.

9. Ácido Sulfúrico: H_2SO_4 O.3 M
1x32ml/vial. Contiene solución de H_2SO_4 0.3M
Atención: Irritante (H315, H319; P280, P302+P352, P332+P313, P305+P351+P338, P337+P313, P362+P363).

10. Diluente de muestras DILSPE
2x50ml. Contiene una solución tamponada citrato sódico 10 mM pH 6.0 +/- 0.1, 1% de proteinas del suero de cabra, 0.5% de Tween 20, azida sódica 0.09% y ProClin 300 al 0,045% como conservantes. Se usa para diluir las muestras.

11. Sellador adhesivo, n° 4

12. Manual de instrucciones, n° 1

Nota importante: A solicitud del cliente, Dia.Pro puede suministrar reactivos para realizar 96, 480 ó 960 pruebas, según se reporta a continuación:

1.Microplaca 2.ControlNegativo 3.ControlPositivo 4.Calibrador 5.Soluc. Lav. conc 6.Conjugado 7.Cromóg/Subs 8.Diluent. ensayo 9.Acido Sulfúrico 10.Diluent.muestr. 11.Sellador adhes. 12.Manual de instrucciones	n°1 1x2.0ml/vial 1x2.0ml/vial n° 1 vial 1x60ml/bot. 1x16ml/vial 1x16ml/vial 1x8ml/vial 1x15ml/vial 1x50ml/vial n° 2 n° 1	n°5 1x10ml/vial 1x10ml/vial n° 5 vials 5x60ml/frasc. 2x40ml/frasc. 2x40ml/frasc. 1x40ml/ frasc. 2x40ml/ frasc. 5x50ml/frasc. n° 10 n° 1	n°10 1x20.ml/vial 1x20.ml/vial n° 10 vials 4x150ml/frasc. 4x40ml/frasc. 4x40ml/frasc. 1x80ml/frasc. 2x80ml/frasc. 4x125ml/frasc. n° 20 n° 1
Número de pruebas	**96**	**480**	**960**
Código	**CVAB.CE.96**	**CVAB.CE.480**	**CVAB.CE.960**

E. MATERIALES NECESARIOS NO SUMINISTRADOS.

1. Micropipetas calibradas (200µl y 10µl) y puntas plásticas desechables.
2. Agua de calidad EIA (bidestilada o desionizada, tratada con carbón para remover químicos oxidantes usados como desinfectantes).
3. *Timer* con un rango de 60 minutos como mínimo.
4. Papel absorbente.
5. Incubador termostático de microplacas ELISA, calibrado (en seco o húmedo) fijo a 37ºC.
6. Lector calibrado de microplacas de ELISA con filtros de 450nm (lectura) y de filtros de 620-630 nm.
7. Lavador calibrado de microplacas ELISA.
8. Vórtex o similar.

F. ADVERTENCIAS Y PRECAUCIONES.

1. El equipo debe ser usado por personal técnico adecuadamente entrenado, bajo la supervisión de un doctor responsable del laboratorio.
2. Cuando el equipo es usado para cribado en unidades de sangre, el laboratorio debe estar certificado y calificado para realizar este tipo de análisis (Ministerio de Salud o entidad similar).
3. Todas las personas encargadas de la realización de las pruebas deben llevar las ropas protectoras adecuadas de laboratorio, guantes y gafas. Evitar el uso de objetos cortantes (cuchillas) o punzantes (agujas). El personal debe ser adiestrado en procedimientos de bioseguridad, según ha sido recomendado por el Centro de Control de Enfermedades de Atlanta, Estados Unidos, y publicado por el Instituto Nacional de Salud: "Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories", ed.1984.
4. Todo el personal involucrado en el manejo de muestras debe estar vacunado contra HBV y HAV, para lo cual existen vacunas disponibles, seguras y eficaces.
5. Se debe controlar el ambiente del laboratorio para evitar la contaminación de los componentes con polvo o agentes microbianos cuando se abran los equipos, así como durante la realización del ensayo. Evitar la exposición del substrato a la luz y las vibraciones de la mesa de trabajo durante el ensayo.
6. Conservar el equipo a temperaturas entre 2-8 ºC, en un refrigerador con temperatura regulada o en cámara fría.
7. No intercambiar reactivos de diferentes lotes ni tampoco de diferentes equipos.
8. Comprobar que los reactivos no contienen precipitados ni agregados en el momento del uso. De darse el caso, informar al responsable para realizar el procedimiento pertinente y reemplazar el equipo.
9. Evitar contaminación cruzada entre muestras de suero/ plasma usando puntas desechables y cambiándolas después de cada uso. No reutilizar puntas desechables
10. Evitar contaminación cruzada entre los reactivos del equipo usando puntas desechables y cambiándolas después de cada uso. No reutilizar puntas desechables
11. No usar el producto después de la fecha de caducidad indicada en el equipo e internamente en los reactivos. Según estudios realizados, no se ha detectado pérdida relevante de actividad en equipos abiertos, en uso por un período de hasta 6 meses.
12. Tratar todas las muestras como potencialmente infecciosas. Las muestras de suero humano deben ser manipuladas al nivel 2 de bioseguridad, según ha sido recomendado por el Centro de Control de Enfermedades de Atlanta, Estados Unidos y publicado por el Instituto Nacional de Salud: "Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories", ed.1984.
13. Se recomienda el uso de material plástico desechable para la preparación de las soluciones de lavado y para la transferencia de los reactivos a los diferentes equipos automatizados a fin de evitar contaminaciones.
14. Los desechos producidos durante el uso del equipo deben ser eliminados según lo establecido por las directivas nacionales y las leyes relacionadas con el tratamiento de los residuos químicos y biológicos de laboratorio. En particular, los desechos líquidos provenientes del proceso de lavado deben ser tratados como potencialmente infecciosos y deben ser inactivados. Se recomienda la inactivación con lejía al 10% de 16 a 18 horas o el uso de la autoclave a 121°C por 20 minutos.
15. En caso de derrame accidental de algún producto, se debe utilizar papel absorbente embebido en lejía y posteriormente en agua. El papel debe eliminarse en contenedores designados para este fin en hospitales y laboratorios.
16. El ácido sulfúrico es irritante. En caso de derrame, se debe lavar la superficie con abundante agua.
17. Otros materiales de desecho generados durante la utilización del equipo (por ejemplo: puntas usadas en la manipulación de las muestras y controles, microplacas usadas) deben ser manipuladas como fuentes potenciales de infección de acuerdo a las directivas nacionales y leyes para el tratamiento de residuos de laboratorio.

G. MUESTRA: PREPARACIÓN Y RECOMENDACIONES.

1. Extraer la sangre asépticamente por punción venosa y preparar el suero o plasma según las técnicas estándar de los laboratorios de análisis clínico. No se ha detectado que el tratamiento con citrato, EDTA o heparina afecte las muestras.
2. Evitar el uso de conservantes, en particular azida sódica, ya que pudiera afectar la actividad enzimática del conjugado, generando resultados falsos negativos.
3. Las muestras deben estar identificadas claramente mediante código de barras o nombres, a fin de evitar errores en los resultados. Cuando el equipo se emplea para el cribado en unidades de sangre, se recomienda el uso del código de barras.
4. Las muestras hemolizadas (color rojo) o hiperlipémicas (aspecto lechoso) deben ser descartadas para evitar falsos resultados, al igual que aquellas donde se observe la presencia de precipitados, restos de fibrina o filamentos microbianos.
5. El suero y el plasma pueden conservarse a una temperatura entre +2° y +8°C en tubos de recolección principales hasta cinco días después de la extracción. No congelar tubos de recolección principales. Para periodos de almacenamiento más prolongados, las muestras de plasma o suero, retiradas cuidadosamente del tubo de extracción principal, pueden almacenarse congeladas a –20°C durante varios meses, evitando luego descongelar cada muestra más de una vez, ya que se pueden generar partículas que podrían afectar al resultado de la prueba.
6. Si hay presencia de agregados, la muestra se puede aclarar mediante centrifugación a 2000 rpm durante 20 minutos o por filtración con un filtro de 0,2-0,8 micras.

H. PREPARACIÓN DE LOS COMPONENTES Y PRECAUCIONES.

Según estudios realizados, no se ha detectado pérdida relevante de actividad en equipos abiertos, utilizados hasta 6 veces, en un período de hasta 6 meses.

1. Microplacas:

Dejar la microplaca a temperatura ambiente (aprox. 1 hora) antes de abrir el envase. Compruebe que el desecante no esté de un color verde oscuro, lo que indicaría un defecto de fabricación. De ser así, debe solicitar el servicio de Dia.Pro: atención al cliente.

Las tiras de pocillos no utilizadas, deben guardarse herméticamente cerradas en la bolsa de aluminio con el

desecante a 2-8ºC. Una vez abierto el envase, las tiras sobrantes, se mantienen estables hasta que el indicador de humedad dentro de la bolsa del desecante cambie de amarillo a verde.

2. Control Negativo:
Listo para el uso. Mezclar bien con la ayuda de un vórtex, antes de usar.

3. Control Positivo:
Listo para el uso. Mezclar bien con la ayuda de un vórtex, antes de usar. Manipule este reactivo como potencialmente infeccioso, aunque las partículas virales presentes en el control han sido inactivadas quimicamente.

4. Calibrador:
Disolver cuidadosamente el contenido del vial en el volumen de agua de calidad EIA indicado en la etiqueta. Mezclar bien con el vórtex antes de usar.
Manipule este reactivo como potencialmente infeccioso, aunque las partículas virales presentes en el control han sido inactivadas quimicamente.
Nota: *Una vez reconstituida, la solución no es estable. Se recomienda mantenerla congelada en alícuotas a –20ºC.*

5. Solución de Lavado Concentrada:
Todo el contenido de la solución concentrada 20x debe diluirse con agua bidestilada fino a 1200 ml y mezclarse suavemente antes de usarse.
Por que en los frascos pueden estar presente los cristales, cuando se prepara la solucion prestar mucha atencion en diluir todo el contenido. Durante la preparación evitar la formación de espuma y burbujas, lo que podría influir en la eficiencia de los ciclos de lavado.
Nota: *Una vez diluida, la solución es estable por una semana a temperaturas entre +2 y 8ºC.*

6. Conjugado:
Listo para el uso. Mezclar bien con un vórtex antes de usar. Evitar posible contaminación del líquido con oxidantes químicos, polvo o microbios. En caso de que deba transferirse el reactivo, usar contenedores de plástico, estériles y desechables, siempre que sea posible.

7. Cromógeno/ Substrato:
Listo para el uso. Mezclar bien con un vórtex antes de usar. Evitar posible contaminación del líquido con oxidantes químicos, polvo o microbios. Evitar la exposición a la luz, agentes oxidantes y superficies metálicas. En caso de que deba transferirse el reactivo, usar contenedores de plástico, estériles y desechables, siempre que sea posible.

8. Diluente de ensayo:
Listo para el uso. Mezclar bien con un vórtex antes de usar.

9. Ácido Sulfúrico:
Listo para el uso. Mezclar bien con un vórtex antes de usar.
Atención: Irritante (H315, H319; P280, P302+P352, P332+P313, P305+P351+P338, P337+P313, P362+P363).

Leyenda:

Indicación de peligro, **Frases H**
H315 – Provoca irritación cutánea.
H319 – Provoca irritación ocular grave.

Consejo de prudencia, **Frases P**
P280 – Llevar guantes/prendas/gafas/máscara de protección.
P302 + P352 – EN CASO DE CONTACTO CON LA PIEL: Lavar con agua y jabón abundantes.
P332 + P313 – En caso de irritación cutánea: Consultar a un médico.
P305 + P351 + P338 – EN CASO DE CONTACTO CON LOS OJOS: Aclarar cuidadosamente con agua durante varios minutos. Quitar las lentes de contacto, si lleva y resulta fácil. Seguir aclarando.
P337 + P313 – Si persiste la irritación ocular: Consultar a un médico.
P362 + P363 – Quitarse las prendas contaminadas y lavarlas antes de volver a usarlas.

10. Diluente de muestras :
Listo para el uso. Mezclar bien con un vórtex antes de usar.

I. INSTRUMENTOS Y EQUIPAMIENTO UTILIZADOS EN COMBINACIÓN CON EL EQUIPO.

1. Las micropipetas deben ser calibradas para dispensar correctamente el volumen requerido en el ensayo y sometidas a una descontaminación periódica de las partes que pudieran entrar accidentalmente en contacto con la muestra o los reactivos (lejía 10%, de calidad de los desinfectantes hospitalarios). Deben además, ser regularmente revisadas para mantener una precisión del 1% y una confiabilidad de +/- 2%. Deben descontaminarse periodicamente los residuos de los componentes del equipo.
2. La incubadora de ELISA debe ser ajustada a 37ºC (+/- 0.5ºC) y controlada periódicamente para mantener la temperatura correcta. Pueden emplearse incubadoras secas o baños de agua siempre que estén validados para la incubación de pruebas de ELISA.
3. El **lavador ELISA** es extremadamente importante para el rendimiento global del ensayo.El lavador debe ser validado de forma minuciosa previamente, revisado para comprobar que suministra el volumen de dispensación correcto y enviado regularmente a mantenimiento de acuerdo con las instrucciones de uso del fabricante. En particular, deben lavarse minuciosamente las sales con agua desionizada del lavador al final de la carga de trabajo diaria. Antes del uso, debe suministrarse extensivamente solución de lavado diluida al lavador. Debe enviarse el instrumento semanalmente a descontaminación según se indica en su manual (se recomienda descontaminación con NaOH 0.1 M). Para asegurar que el ensayo se realiza conforme a los rendimientos declarados, basta con 5 ciclos de lavado (aspiración + dispensado de 350 µl/pocillo de solución de lavado + 20 segundos de remojo = 1 ciclo). Si no es posible remojar, añadir un ciclo de lavado adicional. Un ciclo de lavado incorrecto o agujas obstruidas con sal son las principales causas de falsas reacciones positivas.
4. Los tiempos de incubación deben tener un margen de $\pm$5%.
5. El lector de microplacas ELISA debe estar provisto de un filtro de lectura de 450 nm y de un segundo filtro de 620-630 nm, obligatorio para el blanco. El procedimiento estándar debe contemplar: a) Ancho de banda $\leq$ 10 nm; b) Rango de absorbancia de 0 a $\geq$ 2,0; c) Linealidad $\geq$ 2,0; d) Reproducibilidad $\geq$ 1%. El blanco se prueba en el pocillo indicado en la sección “Procedimiento del ensayo”. El sistema óptico del lector debe calibrarse periódicamente para garantizar que se mide la densidad óptica correcta. Periódicamente se debe proceder al mantenimiento según las instrucciones del fabricante.
6. En caso de usar un sistema automatizado de ELISA, los pasos críticos (dispensado, incubación, lavado, lectura, agitación y procesamiento de datos) deben ser cuidadosamente fijados, calibrados, controlados y periódicamente ajustados, para garantizar los valores indicados en la seccione “Control interno de calidad”. El protocolo del ensayo debe ser instalado en el sistema operativo de la unidad y validado tanto para el lavador como para el lector. Por otro lado, la parte del sistema que maneja los líquidos (dispensado y lavado) debe ser validada y fijada correctamente. Debe prestarse particular

atención a evitar el arrastre por las agujas de dispensación y de lavado, a fin de minimizar la posibilidad de ocurrencia de falsos positivos por contaminación de los pocillos adyacentes por muestras fuertemente reactivas. Se recomienda el uso de sistemas automatizados para el cribado en unidades de sangre y cuando la cantidad de muestras supera las 20-30 unidades por ensayo.

7. Cuando se utilizan instrumentos automaticos, en el caso en que los contenedores para los frascos del in strumento no sean adecuados a los frascos del kit, transferir la solucion en ellos contenida en frascos idoneos al instrumento y etiquetarlos con la misma etiqueta utilizada en el frasco original. Esta operacion es importante para evitar el cambio del contenido de los frascos durante el transferimiento. Cuando el test a terminado colocar los contenedores secundarios etiquetados y tapados a 2..8°C.
8. El servicio de atención al cliente en Dia.Pro, ofrece apoyo al usuario para calibrar, ajustar e instalar los equipos a usar en combinación con el equipo, con el propósito de asegurar el cumplimiento de los requerimientos descritos.

L. OPERACIONES Y CONTROLES PREVIOS AL ENSAYO.

1. Compruebe la fecha de caducidad indicada en la parte externa del equipo (envase primario). No usar si ha caducado.
2. Compruebe que los componentes líquidos no están contaminados con partículas o agregados visibles. Asegúrese de que el cromógeno (TMB) es incoloro o azul pálido, aspirando un pequeño volumen de este con una pipeta estéril de plástico. Compruebe que no han ocurrido rupturas ni derrames de líquido dentro de la caja (envase primario) durante el transporte. Asegurarse de que la bolsa de aluminio que contiene la microplaca no esté rota o dañada.
3. Diluir totalmente la solución de lavado concentrada 20X, como se ha descrito anteriormente.
4. Disolver el Calibrador como se ha descrito anteriormente y mezclar suavemente.
5. Dejar los componentes restantes alcanzar la temperatura ambiente (aprox. 1 hora), mezclar luego suavemente en el vórtex todos los reactivos líquidos.
6. Ajustar la incubadora de ELISA a 37ºC y cebar el lavador de ELISA utilizando la solución de lavado, según las instrucciones del fabricante. Fijar el número de ciclos de lavado según se indica en la sección específica.
7. Comprobar que el lector de ELISA esté conectado al menos 20 minutos antes de realizar la lectura.
8. En caso de trabajar automáticamente, conectar el equipo y comprobar que los protocolos estén correctamente programados.
9. Comprobar que las micropipetas estén fijadas en el volumen requerido.
10. Asegurarse de que el equipamiento a usar esté en perfecto estado, disponible y listo para el uso.
11. En caso de surgir algún problema, se debe detener el ensayo y avisar al responsable.

M. PROCEDIMIENTO DEL ENSAYO.

El ensayo debe realizarse según las instrucciones que siguen a continuación, es importante mantener en todas las muestras el mismo tiempo de incubación.

Ensayos Automatizados.

En el caso de que el ensayo se realice de manera automatizada con un sistema ELISA, se recomienda programar al equipo para aspirar 200µl de Diluente de Muestras, y posteriormente 10µl de muestra.

La mezcla debe ser dispensada cuidadosamente en los pocillos correspondientes a cada muestra. Antes de aspirar la muestra siguiente, las agujas deben lavarse debidamente para evitar cualquier contaminación cruzada entre las muestras.
No diluir el Calibrador ni los controles ya que están listos para el uso.
Dispensar 200µl de controles/Calibrador en los pocillos correspondientes.

Nota importante: *Controle a simple vista que las muestras han sido diluidas y dispensadas en los pocillos adecuados, para lo cual el color de las muestras dispensadas debe ser verde azul oscuro, mientras que el del control negativo debe permanecer verde olivo.*

Para las operaciones siguientes, consulte las instrucciones que aparecen debajo para el Ensayo Manual.
Es muy importante comprobar que el tiempo entre el dispensado de la primera y la última muestra sea calculado por el instrumento y considerado para los lavados.

Ensayo Manual.

1. Poner el número de tiras necesarias en el soporte de plástico. Dejar el primer pocillo vacío para el blanco.
2. Dispensar 200µl del Control Negativo, por triplicado, 200µl de Calibrador por duplicado y 200µl del Control Positivo. No diluir el Calibrador ni los controles ya que están listos para el uso!
3. Dispensar 200µl del Diluente de muestras (DILSPE) a todos los pocillos de muestras, después dispensar 10 µl de cada muestra en su pocillo correspondiente. Resuspender suavemente evitando la formación de espuma y la contaminación de los pocillos adyacentes.

Nota importante*: Comprobar que el color del Diluente de muestras, después de adicionada la misma, cambia de verde a verde azul oscuro.*

4. Dispensar 50 ul de Diluente de ensayo (DILAS) en los pocillos de los controles/Calibrador y muestras. Compruebe que el color de las muestras sea azul oscuro.
5. Incubar la microplaca **45 min a +37°C**.

Nota importante*: Las tiras se deben sellar con el adhesivo suministrado solo cuando se hace el test manualmente. No sellar cuando se emplean equipos automatizados de ELISA.*

6. Lavar la microplaca con el lavador automático dispensando y aspirando 350 µl/pocillo de solución de lavado diluída, segun según se indica (section I.3).
7. Dispensar 100µl del Conjugado en todos los pocillos, excepto en el A1 y cubrir con el sellador. Compruebe que este reactivo de color rosa/rojo ha sido añadido en todos los pocillos excepto el A1.

Nota importante*: Tener cuidado de no tocar la pared interna del pocillo con la punta de la pipeta al dispensar el conjugado. Podría producirse contaminación.*

8. Incubar la microplaca **45 min a +37°C**.
9. Lavar la microplaca, de igual forma que en el paso 6.
10. Dispensar 100µl del Cromógeno/Substrato en todos los pocillos, incluido el A1. Incubar la microplaca a **temperatura ambiente (18-24°C) durante 15 minutos**.

Nota importante*: No exponer directamente a fuerte iluminación, de lo contrario se generan interferencias.*

11. Dispensar 100µl de ácido sulfúrico en todos los pocillos para detener la reacción enzimática, usar la misma secuencia que en el paso 10. La adición de la solución de parada cambia el color del Control Positivo y las muestras positivas de azul a amarillo/marrón.

12. Medir la intensidad del color de la solución en cada pocillo, según se indica en la sección I.5, con un filtro de 450 nm (lectura) y, otro de 620-630 nm (substracción del fondo), calibrando el instrumento con el pocillo A1 (blanco, obligatorio).

Notas importantes:

1. *Asegurarse de que no hay impresiones digitales ni polvo en el fondo de los pocillos antes de leer. Podrían generarse falsos positivos en la lectura.*
2. *La lectura debe hacerse inmediatamente después de añadir la solución de parada y, en cualquier caso, nunca transcurridos 20 minutos después de su adición. Se podría producir auto oxidación del cromógeno causando un elevado fondo.*
3. *Se ha probado que la agitación a 350 +/- 150 rpm, durante la incubación, aumenta en un 20% la sensibilidad del ensayo.*
4. *El calibrador (CAL) no afecta al cálculo del valor de corte y, por lo tanto, no afecta al cálculo de los resultados de la prueba. El calibrador (CAL) se usa solo si la gestión requiere un control interno de calidad del laboratorio.*

N. ESQUEMA DEL ENSAYO.

Método	**Operaciones**
Controles & Calibrador Muestras Diluente de ensayo (DILAS)	200 µl 200µl dil.+10µl 50 µl
1ra incubación	**45 min**
Temperatura	+37°C
Lavado	5 ciclos con 20''de remojo o 6 ciclos sin remojo
Conjugado	100 µl
2da incubación	**45 min**
Temperatura	+37°C
Lavado	5 ciclos con 20''de remojo o 6 ciclos sin remojo
TMB/H2O2	100 µl
3ra incubación	**15 min**
Temperatura	18-24°C
Acido Sulfúrico	100 µl
Lectura D.O.	450nm / 620-630nm

A continuación se describe un ejemplo del esquema de dispensado.

Microplaca

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A	BL	M2										
B	CN	M3										
C	CN	M4										
D	CN	M5										
E	CAL	M6										
F	CAL	M7										
G	CP	M8										
H	M 1	M9										

Leyenda: BL = Blanco CN = Control Negativo CAL = Calibrador CP = Control Positivo M = Muestra

O. CONTROL DE CALIDAD INTERNO.

Se realiza un grupo de pruebas con los controles/calibrador cada vez que se usa el equipo para verificar si los valores DO450nm son los esperados.

Asegurar el cumplimiento de los siguientes parámetros:

Parámetro	**Exigencia**
Pocillo Blanco	Valor < 0.100 DO450nm
Control Negativo (CN)	Valor medio < 0.050 DO450nm después de leer el blanco
Calibrador	M/Co > 1.1
Control Positivo	Valor > 1.000 DO450nm

Si los resultados del ensayo coinciden con lo establecido anteriormente, pase a la siguiente sección.

En caso contrario, detenga el ensayo y compruebe:

Problema	**Compruebe que**
Pocillo blanco > 0.100DO450nm	la solución cromógeno/substrato no se ha contaminado durante el ensayo.
Control Negativo (CN) > 0.050 DO450nm después de leer el blanco	1. el proceso de lavado y los parámetros del lavador estén validados según los estudios previos de calificación. 2. se ha usado la solución de lavado apropiada y que el lavador ha sido cebado con la misma antes del uso. 3. no se han cometido errores en el procedimiento (dispensar el control positivo en lugar del negativo). 4. no ha existido contaminación del control negativo o de sus pocillos debido a muestras positivas derramadas, o al conjugado. 5. las micropipetas no se han contaminado con muestras positivas o con el conjugado. 6. las agujas del lavador no estén parcial o totalmente obstruidas.
Calibrador M/Co < 1.1	1. el procedimiento ha sido realizado correctamente. 2. no ha habido errores durante su distribución (dispensar el control negativo en lugar del calibrador). 3. el proceso de lavado y los parámetros del lavador estén validados según los estudios previos de calificación. 4. no ha ocurrido contaminación externa del calibrador.
Control Positivo < 1.000 DO450nm	1. el procedimiento ha sido realizado correctamente. 2. no se han cometido errores en el procedimiento (dispensar el control negativo en lugar del positivo). En este caso el control negativo debe tener un valor de DO450nm > 0.150. 3. el proceso de lavado y los parámetros del lavador estén validados según los estudios previos de calificación. 4. no ha ocurrido contaminación externa del control positivo.

Si ocurre alguno de los problemas anteriores, después de comprobar, informe al responsable para tomar las medidas pertinentes.

P. CÁLCULO DEL VALOR DE CORTE.

Los resultados se calculan por medio de un valor de corte (cut-off) hallado con la siguiente fórmula:

Valor de corte = CN medio DO450nm + 0.350

El valor encontrado para el ensayo se usa para la interpretación de los resultados, según se describe a continuación:

***Nota Importante**: Cuando el cálculo de los resultados se halla mediante el sistema operativo de un equipo de ELISA automático, asegurarse de que la formulación usada para el cálculo del valor de corte, y para la interpretación de los resultados sea correcta.*

Q. INTERPRETACIÓN DE LOS RESULTADOS.
La interpretación de los resultados se realiza mediante la razón entre las DO a 450nm de las muestras y el Valor de corte (M/Co).
Los resultados se interpretan según la siguiente tabla:

(M/Co)	Interpretación
< 0.9	Negativo
0.9 – 1.1	Equívoco
> 1.1	**Positivo**

Un resultado negativo indica que el paciente no está infectado por HCV y la unidad de sangre se puede transfundir.
Cualquier paciente, cuya muestra resulte equívoca debe someterse a una nueva prueba con una segunda muestra de sangre colectada 1 ó 2 semanas después de la inicial. En este caso la unidad de sangre no debe ser transfundida.
Un resultado positivo es indicativo de infección por HCV y por consiguiente el paciente debe ser tratado adecuadamente. La unidad de sangre debe ser descartada.

Notas importantes:
1. *La interpretación de los resultados debe hacerse bajo la vigilancia del responsable del laboratorio para reducir el riesgo de errores de juicio y de interpretación.*
2. *Antes de formular un diagnóstico de hepatitis viral, los resultados positivos deben comprobarse a través de un método alternativo, capaz de detectar anticuerpos IgG e IgM (prueba confirmatoria).*
3. *Según se demuestra en la Evaluación del Performance del producto, el ensayo es capaz de detectar los anticuerpos anti HCV core, en etapas más tempranas en comparación con otros equipos comerciales. Sin embargo, un resultado positivo, no confirmado con estos equipos comerciales, no debe necesariamente considerarse como falso positivo! Es necesario realizar una prueba de confirmación (suministrada, bajo solicitud del cliente, por Dia.pro srl. Codificada CCONF).*
4. *Como el ensayo es capaz de detectar además anticuerpos IgM, pueden presentarse resultados discrepantes (pérdida de reactividad IgM) con respecto a otros productos comerciales para la detección de anticuerpos anti-HCV. La positividad real de una muestra debe confirmarse probando la reactividad IgM, lo cual resulta muy importante para el diagnóstico de infección por HCV.*
5. *Cuando se transmiten los resultados de la prueba, del laboratorio a otras instalaciones, debe ponerse mucha atención para evitar el traslado de datos erróneos.*
6. *El diagnóstico de infección con un virus de la hepatitis debe ser evaluado y comunicado al paciente por un médico calificado.*

A continuación, un ejemplo de los cálculos a realizar:

Los siguientes datos no deben usarse en lugar de los valores reales obtenidos en el laboratorio.

Control Negativo: 0.019 – 0.020 – 0.021 DO450nm
Valor medio: 0.020 DO450nm
Menor de 0.050 – Válido

Control Positivo: 2.189 DO450nm
Mayor de 1.000 – Válido
Valor de corte = 0.020+0.350 = 0.370

Calibrador: 0.550 - 0.530 DO450nm
Valor medio: 0.540 DO450nm M/Co = 1.4
M/Co Mayor de 1.1 – Válido

Muestra 1: 0.070 DO450nm
Muestra 2: 1.690 DO450nm
Muestra 1 M/Co < 0.9 = negativa
Muestra 2 M/Co > 1.1 = positiva

R. FUNCIONAMIENTO.
La evaluación del funcionamiento ha sido realizada según lo reportado en las Especificaciones Técnicas Comunes (ETC) (art. 5, Capítulo 3 de las Directivas IVD 98/79/EC).

1. LÍMITE DE DETECCIÓN.
El límite de detección ha sido calculado por medio del estándar de trabajo británico anti-HCV NIBSC, código 99/558-003-WI).
La siguiente tabla muestra los valores medios de DO450nm de este estándar diluído en plasma negativo y examinado:

Dilución	Lote # 1	Lote # 2
Factor	M/Co	M/Co
1 X	**2.0**	**2.0**
2 X	**1.1**	**1.2**
4 X	0.7	0.8
8 X	0.5	0.5
Plasma Negativo	0.3	0.3

Se evaluó además la muestra Accurun 1 –serie 3000- suministrado por Boston Biomedica Inc., Estados Unidos.

Los resultados son los siguientes:

CVAB.CE Lote ID	Accurun 1 Serie	M/Co
1201	3000	1.5
0602	3000	1.5
1202	3000	1.9

Por otra parte, un total de 7 muestras, positivas para HCVAb según Ortho HCV 3.0 SAVe, código 930820, lote # EXE065-1, fueron diluídas en plasma negativo a HCVAb con el fin de obtener diluciones limitantes y luego fueron probadas nuevamente en CVAB.CE, lote # 1202, y Ortho.

Las tablas siguientes reflejan los resultados obtenidos:

Muestra n°	Dilución Límite	CVAB.CE M/Co	Ortho 3.0 M/Co
1	256 X	**1.9**	**1.3**
2	256 X	**1.9**	0.7
3	256 X	**2.4**	**1.0**
4	128 X	**2.5**	**3.2**
5	85 X	**3.3**	**1.4**
6	128 X	**2.2**	0.8
7	135 X	**3.2**	**2.2**

2. ESPECIFICIDAD Y SENSIBILIDAD DIAGNÓSTICAS.
La evaluación del procedimiento diagnóstico se realizó mediante un ensayo con más de 5000 muestras.

2.1 Especificidad Diagnóstica:
Se define como la probabilidad del ensayo de detectar negativos en ausencia del analito específico.

Además del primer estudio, donde se examinaron en total 5043 muestras de donantes de sangre no seleccionados, (incluyendo donantes por 1ª vez), 210 muestras de pacientes hospitalizados y 162 muestras que pudieran provocar interferencia (otras enfermedades infecciosas, positivas para anticuerpos de E. coli, pacientes con enfermedades hepáticas no virales, pacientes en diálisis, mujeres embarazadas, hemolizadas, lipémicas, etc.), la especificidad diagnóstica se evaluó recientemente examinando un total de 2876 muestras de donantes de sangre negativas en seis lotes distintos. Se observó un valor de especificidad de 100%.
Se emplearon además, plasma sometido a métodos de tratamiento estándar (citrato, EDTA y heparina) y suero humanos. No se ha observado falsa reactividad debida a los métodos de tratamiento de muestras.
Por último se analizaron muestras congeladas, para determinar posibles interferencias debidas a la toma de muestra y al almacenamiento. No se observaron interferencias.

2.2 Sensibilidad Diagnóstica.
Se define como la probabilidad del ensayo de detectar positivos en presencia del analito específico.
La sensibilidad diagnóstica ha sido estimada de forma externa en un total de 359 muestras, el valor obtenido fue de 100%. Más de 50 muestras positivas fueron probadas de forma interna, en este caso el resultado fue también de 100%.
Se evaluaron además, muestras positivas producto de infecciones por diferentes genotipos de HCV, así como también se estudió gran parte de los paneles de seroconversión de Boston Biomedica Inc (PHV) y Zeptometrix, USA (HCV). disponibles.
Los resultados para algunos de ellos se describen a continuación:

Panel	N° samples	DiaPro*	Ortho* **
PHV 901	11	9	9
PHV 904	7	2	4
PHV 905	9	3	4
PHV 906	7	7	7
PHV 907	7	3	2
PHV 908	13	10	8
PHV 909	3	2	2
PHV 910	5	3	3
PHV 911	5	3	3
PHV 912	3	1	1
PHV 913	4	2	2
PHV 914	9	5	5
PHV 915	4	3	0
PHV 916	8	4	3
PHV 917	10	6	6
PHV 918	8	2	0
PHV 919	7	3	3
PHV 920	10	6	6
HCV 10039	5	2	0
HCV 6212	9	6	7
HCV 10165	9	5	4

*Note: * Positive samples detected* *** HCV v.3.0*

Por último, el producto ha sido probado contra el panel EFS Ac HCV, lote n° 01/08.03.22C/01/A, suministrado por Etablissement Francais Du Sang (EFS), Francia, obteniéndose los siguientes resultados:

EFS Panel Ac HCV

Muestra	Lote # 1 M/Co	Lote # 2 M/Co	Lote# 3 M/Co	Resultados esperados
HCV 1	**2.2**	**2.4**	**2.6**	**positivo**
HCV 2	**1.6**	**2.0**	**2.1**	**positivo**
HCV 3	**1.5**	**1.7**	**1.6**	**positivo**
HCV 4	**5.2**	**6.5**	**5.5**	**positivo**
HCV 5	**1.6**	**1.8**	**1.6**	**positivo**
HCV 6	0.4	0.4	0.4	negativo

3. PRECISIÓN.
Ha sido calculada utilizando dos muestras, una negativa y una débil positiva, examinadas en 16 réplicas en tres corridas separadas.
Los resultados se muestran a continuación:

Lote # 1202

Muestra Negativa (N = 16)

Valores medios	1ra corrida	2da corrida	3ra corrida	Valor Promedio
DO 450nm	0.094	0.099	0.096	0.096
Desviación estándar	0.008	0.007	0.008	0.007
CV %	8.7	6.6	7.9	7.7

Cal # 2 – 7K (N = 16)

Valores medios	1ra corrida	2da corrida	3ra corrida	Valor Promedio
DO 450nm	0.396	0.403	0.418	0.406
Desviación estándar	0.023	0.029	0.027	0.026
CV %	5.9	7.1	6.4	6.5
M/Co	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.1

Lote # 0602

Muestra Negativa (N = 16)

Valores medios	1ra corrida	2da corrida	3ra corrida	Valor Promedio
DO 450nm	0.097	0.096	0.094	0.096
Desviación estándar	0.009	0.010	0.008	0.009
CV %	8.9	10.1	8.4	9.1

Cal # 2 – 7K (N = 16)

Valores medios	1ra corrida	2da corrida	3ra corrida	Valor Promedio
DO 450nm	0.400	0.395	0.393	0.396
Desviación estándar	0.021	0.025	0.026	0.024
CV %	5.4	6.2	6.6	6.1
M/Co	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.2

Lote # 0602/2

Muestra Negativa (N = 16)

Valores medios	1ra corrida	2da corrida	3ra corrida	Valor Promedio
DO 450nm	0.087	0.091	0.088	0.089
Desviación estándar	0.009	0.007	0.008	0.008
CV %	10.0	8.2	8.6	8.9

Cal # 2 – 7K (N = 16)

Valores medios	1ra corrida	2da corrida	3ra corrida	Valor Promedio
DO 450nm	0.386	0.390	0.391	0.389
Desviación estándar	0.023	0.021	0.023	0.022
CV %	6.0	5.3	5.8	5.7
M/Co	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2

La variabilidad mostrada en las tablas no dió como resultado una clasificación errónea de las muestras.

S. LIMITACIONES.

Los falsos positivos repetibles, no confirmados por RIBA o similares técnicas de confirmación, fueron estimados como menos del 0.1% de la población normal.

Las muestras que después de ser descongeladas presentan partículas de fibrina o partículas agregadas, generan algunos resultados falsos positivos.

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Todos los productos de diagnóstico in vitro fabricados por la empresa son controlados por un sistema certificado de control de calidad aprobado por un organismo notificado para el marcado CE. Cada lote se somete a un control de calidad y se libera al mercado únicamente si se ajusta a las especificaciones técnicas y criterios de aceptación de la CE.

Fabricante:
Dia.Pro Diagnostic Bioprobes S.r.l.
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0318

HCV IgM

Enzyme ImmunoAssay (ELISA) for the quantitative/qualitative determination of IgM antibodies to Hepatitis C Virus in human serum and plasma

- for “in vitro” diagnostic use only -

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Diagnostic Bioprobes Srl
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REF CVM.CE
96 Tests

HCV IgM

A. INTENDED USE

Enzyme ImmunoAssay (ELISA) for the quantitative/qualitative determination of IgM antibodies to Hepatitis C Virus in human plasma and sera. The kit is mainly intended for the follow-up of HCV chronic patients submitted to anti-viral pharmaceutical treatment. For "in vitro" diagnostic use only.

B. INTRODUCTION

Antiviral drugs, such as Interferon taken alone or in combination with Ribavirin, can be used for the treatment of persons with chronic viral hepatitis C.

Treatment with interferon alone is effective in about 10% to 20% of patients. Interferon combined with Ribavirin is effective in about 30% to 50% of patients. Ribavirin does not appear to be effective when used alone.

Active production of HCV antigens in the liver of chronic patients generates spikes of IgM antibodies production and release of liver specific enzymes, similar to what happen in HBV chronic patients. The presence of anti viral IgM is usually correlated to a phase of sufferance and cellular damage of the liver.

During the pharmaceutical treatment HCV IgM may represent a marker for the follow-up of the efficiency of the drug itself, monitoring the balance between its effectiveness and the side effects, that often may be heavy for the patient.

C. PRINCIPLE OF THE TEST

Microplates are coated with HCV immunodominant synthetic antigens (core peptide, recombinant NS3, NS4 and NS5 peptides).

In the 1st incubation, the solid phase is treated with diluted samples and anti HCV IgM are captured, if present, by the antigens. After washing out all the other components of the sample, in the 2nd incubation bound anti-HCV IgM are detected by the addition of anti hIgM antibody, labeled 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 anti-HCV IgM antibodies present in the sample.

The presence of IgM in the sample may therefore be quantitated by means of a calibration curve able to determine the content of the antibody in arbU/ml.

Neutralization of IgG anti-HCV, carried out directly in the well, is performed in the assay in order to block interferences due to this class of antibodies in the determination of IgM.

D. COMPONENTS

Each kit contains sufficient reagents to perform 96 tests.

1. Microplate: MICROPLATE

12 strips x 8 microwells coated with HCV-specific synthetic antigens (core, NS4 and NS5 peptides and recombinant NS3). Plates are sealed into a bag with desiccant.

2. Calibration Curve: CAL N° …

6x2.0 ml/vial. Ready to use and color coded standard curve calibrated on an Internal Gold Standard (in absence of a defined international one) or IGS, ranging:

CAL 1 = 0 arbU/ml CAL 2 = 10 arbU/ml
CAL 3 = 25 arbU/ml CAL 4 = 50 arbU/ml
CAL 5 = 100 arbU/ml CAL 6 = 250 arbU/ml.

It contains chemical inactivated HCV IgM positive human plasma, 100 mM Tris buffer pH 7.4+/-0.1, 0.2% Tween 20, 0.09% sodium azide and 0.1% Kathon GC as preservatives.

The Calibration Curve is coded with blue alimentary dye.

Important Note: Even if plasma has been chemically inactivated, handle this component as potentially infectious.

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 0.05% Kathon GC.

4. Enzyme conjugate : CONJ

1x16ml/vial. Ready to use and red colour coded. It contains Horseradish peroxidase conjugated polyclonal antibodies to human IgM, 5% BSA, 10 mM Tris buffer pH 6.8+/-0.1, 0.1% Kathon GC and 0.02% gentamicine sulphate as preservatives.

5. Chromogen/Substrate: SUBS TMB

1x16ml/vial. It contains 50 mM citrate-phosphate buffer pH 3.5-3.8, 4% dimethylsulphoxide, 0.03% tetra-methyl-benzidine (or TMB) and 0.02% hydrogen peroxide (or H_2O_2).

Note: To be stored protected from light as sensitive to strong illumination.

6. Sulphuric Acid: H2SO4 0.3 M

1x15ml/vialIt contains 0.3 M H_2SO_4 solution.

Attention: Irritant (H315, H319; P280, P302+P352, P332+P313, P305+P351+P338, P337+P313, P362+P363).

7. Specimen Diluent: DILSPE

2x60ml/vial. It contains 2% casein, 10 mM Na-citrate buffer pH 6.0 +/-0.1, 0.2% Tween 20, 0.09% Na-azide and 0.1% Kathon GC as preservatives. To be used to dilute the sample.

8. Neutralizing Reagent: SOLN NEUT

1x8ml/vial. It contains goat anti hIgG, 2% casein, 10 mM Na-citrate buffer pH 6.0 +/-0.1, 0.09% Na-azide and 0.1% Kathon GC as preservatives.

9. Plate sealing foils n°2

10. Package insert n°1

E. MATERIALS REQUIRED BUT NOT PROVIDED

1. Calibrated Micropipettes (1000, 100 and 10ul) and disposable plastic tips.
2. EIA grade water (bidistilled 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 (+/-0.5°C tolerance).
6. Calibrated ELISA microwell reader with 450nm (reading) and 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 (or TMB) 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 also 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 for kit replacement.
8. Avoid cross-contamination between serum/plasma samples by using disposable tips and changing them after each sample.
9. Avoid cross-contamination between kit reagents by using disposable tips and changing them between the use of each one.
10. Do not use the kit after the expiration date stated on the external container and internal (vials) labels. A study conducted on an opened kit did not pointed out any relevant loss of activity up to six 6 uses of the device and up to 6 months.
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-ware is recommended in the preparation of the liquid components or in transferring components into automated workstations, in order to avoid cross 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/calibrators and from samples has to be treated as potentially infective material and inactivated before waste. 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 from samples and operations 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/calibrators, used microplates) should be handled as potentially infective and disposed according to national directives and laws concerning laboratory wastes.

G. SPECIMEN: PREPARATION AND WARNINGS

1. Blood is drawn aseptically by venipuncture 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. Samples have to be clearly identified with codes or names in order to avoid misinterpretation of results. Bar code labeling and electronic reading is strongly recommended.
3. 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.
4. Sera and plasma can be stored at +2°..8°C for up to five days after collection. For longer storage periods, samples can be stored frozen at –20°C for several months. Any frozen samples should not be frozen/thawed more than once as this may generate particles that could affect the test result.
5. 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

Microplate:
Allow the microplate to reach room temperature (about 1 hr) before opening the container. Check that the desiccant is not turned to dark green, indicating a defect of storing.
In this case call Dia.Pro's customer service.
Unused strips have to be placed back into the aluminium pouch, in presence of desiccant supplied, firmly zipped and stored at +2°..8°C. When opened the first time, residual strips are stable till the indicator of humidity inside the desiccant bag turns from yellow to green.

Calibration Curve
Ready to use components. Mix carefully on vortex before use.

Wash buffer concentrate:
The whole content of the concentrated solution has to be diluted 20x with bidistilled water 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.*

Enzyme conjugate:
Ready to use. Mix well on vortex before use.
Be careful not to contaminate the liquid with oxidizing chemicals, air-driven dust or microbes.
If this component has to be transferred use only plastic, possibly sterile disposable containers.

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

Sample Diluent
Ready to use component. Mix carefully on vortex before use.

Neutraling Reagent
Ready to use component. Mix carefully on vortex before use.

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 (household alcohol, 10% solution of bleach, hospital grade disinfectants) of those parts that could accidentally come in contact with the sample. They should also be regularly maintained in order to show a precision of 1% and a trueness of +/-2%. Decontamination of spills or residues of kit components should also be carried out regularly.
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 and correctly optimised using the kit controls/calibrators and reference panels, before using the kit for routine laboratory tests. Usually 4-5 washing cycles (aspiration + dispensation of 350ul/well of washing solution = 1 cycle) are sufficient to ensure that the assay performs as expected. A soaking time of 20-30 seconds between cycles is suggested. In order to set correctly their number, it is recommended to run an assay with the kit controls/calibrators and well characterized negative and positive reference samples, and check to match the values reported below in the section "Internal Quality Control". Regular calibration of the volumes delivered and maintenance (decontamination and cleaning of needles) of the washer have to be carried out according to the instructions of the manufacturer.
4. Incubation times have a tolerance of $\pm$5%.
5. The **ELISA microplate reader** has to be equipped with a reading filter of 450nm and with a second filter (620-630nm, strongly recommended) for blanking purposes. Its standard performances should be (a) bandwidth $\leq$ 10 nm; (b) absorbance range from 0 to $\geq$ 2.0; (c) linearity to $\geq$ 2.0; repeatability $\geq$ 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 workstation**, all critical steps (dispensation, incubation, washing, reading, 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 and for washing. This must be studied and controlled to minimize the possibility of contamination of adjacent wells. The use of ELISA automated work stations is recommended 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 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 colourless 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). Check that the aluminium pouch, containing the microplate, is not punctured or damaged.
5. Dilute all the content of the 20x concentrated Wash Solution as described above.
6. Allow all the other components to reach room temperature (about 1 hr) and then mix gently on vortex all liquid reagents.
7. 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 found in the validation of the instrument for its use with the kit.
8. Check that the ELISA reader is turned on or ensure it will be turned on at least 20 minutes before reading.
9. If using an automated work station, turn on, check settings and be sure to use the right assay protocol.
10. Check that the micropipettes are set to the required volume.
11. Check that all the other equipment is available and ready to use.
12. 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 methods of analysis are possible, as described below:

M.1 QUANTITATIVE ASSAY

1. Place the required number of strips in the plastic holder and carefully identify the wells for calibrators and samples.
2. Dilute samples **1:101** dispensing 1 ml Sample 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. Leave the A1+B1 wells empty for blanking purposes.
4. Dispense 50 µl Neutralizing Reagent in all the wells, except A1+B1 wells used for blanking operations and the wells used for the Calibration Curve.
5. In the identified positions pipette 100 µl of the Calibrators in duplicate followed by 100 µl of diluted samples. Check that Calibrators and samples have been correctly added.
6. Incubate the microplate **for 60 min at +37°C**.

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.*

7. When the first incubation is finished, wash the microwells as previously described (section I.3)
8. In all the wells, except A1+B1, pipette 100 µl Enzyme Conjugate. Incubate the microplate **for 60 min at +37°C**.

Important note: *Be careful not to touch the plastic inner surface of the well with the tip filled with the Enzyme Conjugate. Contamination might occur.*

9. When the second incubation is finished, wash the microwells as previously described (section I.3)
10. Pipette 100 µl Chromogen/Substrate into all the wells, A1+B1 included.

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

11. Incubate the microplate protected from light at **room temperature (18-24°C) for 20 minutes**. Wells dispensed with positive samples and with positive calibrators will turn from clear to blue.
12. Pipette 100 µl Sulphuric Acid into all the wells using the same pipetting sequence as in step 10 to block the enzymatic reaction. Addition of the stop solution will turn the positive calibrators and the positive samples from blue to yellow.
13. Measure the color intensity of the solution in each well, as described in section I.5 using a 450nm filter (reading) and a 620-630nm filter (background subtraction, strongly recommended), blanking the instrument on A1 or B1 or both.

M.2 QUALITATIVE ASSAY

1. Place the required number of strips in the plastic holder and carefully identify the wells for calibrators and samples.
2. Dilute samples **1:101** dispensing 1 ml Sample 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. Leave the A1 well empty for blanking purposes.
4. Dispense 50 µl Neutralizing Reagent in all the wells, except A1 well used for blanking operations and the wells used for the Calibrators.
5. Then pipette 100 µl of Calibrator 0 arbU/ml in duplicate, 100 µl of Calibrator 10 arbU/ml in duplicate and finally 100 µl of diluted samples. Check that Calibrators and samples have been correctly added.
6. Incubate the microplate **for 60 min at +37°C**.

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.*

7. When the first incubation is finished, wash the microwells as previously described (section I.3)
8. In all the wells, except A1, pipette 100 µl Enzyme Conjugate. Incubate the microplate **for 60 min at +37°C**.

Important note: *Be careful not to touch the plastic inner surface of the well with the tip filled with the Enzyme Conjugate. Contamination might occur.*

9. When the second incubation is finished, wash the microwells as previously described (section I.3)
10. Pipette then 100 µl Chromogen/Substrate into all the wells, A1 included.

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

11. Incubate the microplate protected from light at **room temperature (18-24°C) for 20 minutes**. Wells dispensed with positive samples and with positive calibrators will turn from clear to blue.
12. Pipette 100 µl Sulphuric Acid into all the wells using the same pipetting sequence as in step 10 to block the enzymatic reaction. Addition of the stop solution will turn the positive calibrators and the positive samples from blue to yellow.
13. Measure the color intensity of the solution in each well, as described in section I.5 using a 450nm filter (reading) and a 620-630nm filter (background subtraction, strongly recommended), blanking the instrument on A1.

General Important notes:

1. *If the second filter is not available ensure that no finger prints are present on the bottom of the microwell before reading at 450nm. Finger prints could generate false positive results on reading.*
2. *Reading has to be carried out just after the addition of the Stop Solution and anyway not any longer than 20 minutes after its addition. Some self oxidation of the TMB chromogen can occur leading to high background.*

N. ASSAY SCHEME

Method	**Operations**
Neutralizing Reagent	50 µl
Calibrators (no SOLN NEUT !)	100 µl
Samples diluted 1:101	100 µl
1st incubation	**60 min**
Temperature	+37°C
Wash step	4-5 cycles
Enzyme conjugate	100 µl
2nd incubation	**60 min**
Temperature	+37°C
Wash step	4-5 cycles
TMB/H2O2	100 µl
3rd incubation	**20 min**
Temperature	r.t.
Sulphuric Acid	100 ul
Reading OD	450nm

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	CAL6	S7									
F	CAL2	CAL6	S8									
G	CAL3	S1	S9									
H	CAL3	S2	S10									

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

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	S4										
B	CAL1	S5										
C	CAL1	S6										
D	CAL2	S7										
E	CAL2	S8										
F	S1	S9										
G	S2	S10										
H	S3	S11										

Legenda: BLK = Blank // CAL = Calibrators // CS = Control Serum // S = Sample

O. INTERNAL QUALITY CONTROL

A validation check is carried out 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:

Parameter	Requirements
Blank well	< 0.100 OD450nm
Calibrator 0 arbU/ml	< 0.200 OD450nm after blanking
Calibrator 10 arbU/ml	OD450nm > OD450nm CAL 0 arbU/ml + 0.100
Calibrator 250 arbU/ml	3.500 > OD450nm > 2.000

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
Calibrator 0 arbU/ml > 0.200 OD450nm after blanking	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 (dispensation of positive calibrators instead of Cal 0 arbU/ml); 4. that no contamination of the Cal 0 arbU/ml, or of the wells where this was dispensed, has occurred due to positive samples, to spills or to the enzyme conjugate; 5. that micropipettes have not become contaminated with positive samples or with the enzyme conjugate 6. that the washer needles are not blocked or partially obstructed.
Calibrator 10 arbU/ml < CAL 0 + 0.100	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 calibrator has occurred.
Calibrator 250 arbU/ml < 2.000 OD450nm	1. that the procedure has been correctly performed; 2. that no mistake has occurred during the distribution of the 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.
Calibrator 250 arbU/ml > 3.500 OD450nm after blanking	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; 4. that no contamination of the Cal 250 arbU/ml, or of the wells where this was dispensed, has occurred due to positive samples, to spills or to the enzyme conjugate; 5. that micropipettes have not become contaminated with positive samples or with the enzyme conjugate 6. that the washer needles are not blocked or partially obstructed.

If any of the above problems has occurred, report the problem to the supervisor for further actions.

P. RESULTS

If the test turns out to be valid, interpretation of results is carried out in the **quantitative assay** from the mean OD450nm value of the Calibration Curve elaborated with an appropriate curve fitting system (suggested : 4 parameters).

In the **qualitative assay** interpretation of results is done on the mean OD450nm value of the Calibrator 10 arbU/ml (or CAL 2) by means of the following formulation:

Mean OD450nm CAL 2 = cut-off (Co)

***Important note**: When the calculation of results is performed by the operating system of an ELISA automated work station, ensure that the proper formulation is used to generate the correct interpretation of results.*

Q. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Q.1 QUANTITATIVE ASSAY

Concentrations in arbU/ml are obtained elaborating OD450nm of samples on the fitted calibration curve.
The concentration of IgM is from Literature correlated proportionally with the liver damage produced by antibodies to HCV upon virus replication in hepatocites.
A decrease in IgM concentration upon pharmacological treatment is usually clinically acknowledged as a sign of recovery and therapeutic efficacy.

Q.2 QUALITATIVE ASSAY

Test results are interpreted as a ratio of the sample OD450nm value (S) and the cut-off value (Co), or S/Co, according to the following table:

S/Co	Interpretation
< 1.0	Negative
> 1.0	Positive

A negative result indicates that the patient has not developed IgM antibodies to HCV.
A positive result is indicative of an ongoing HCV active infection.

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.*
4. *The results of this ELISA assay should be anyway implemented with other diagnostic and clinical tests.*

An example of calculation is reported below.

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

CAL 1: 0.060 – 0.080 OD450nm
Mean Value: 0.070 OD450nm
Lower than 0.200 – Accepted

CAL 2: 0.200 – 0.220 OD450nm
Mean Value: 0.210 OD450nm
Higher than CAL1+0.100 = accepted
Cut-Off or Co = 0.210

Sample 1: *0.080 OD450nm*
Sample 2: *1.800 OD450nm*
Sample 1 *S/Co < 1.0 = negative*
Sample 2 *S/Co > 1.0 = positive*

R. PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS
Evaluation of Performances has been conducted on selected panels carried out in a clinical external center and internally.

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

2. Diagnostic Sensitivity and Specificity:
The diagnostic performances were evaluated in a study conducted in an external clinical center, with excellent experience in the diagnosis of infectious diseases and HCV.
The Diagnostic Sensitivity was studied on about 200 samples, pre-tested positive with an analytical system developed in house by the clinical laboratory where the study was conducted. Positive samples were collected from patients with a clinical history of HCV infection (acute and chronic).
In addition some Seroconversion Panels, purchased from Boston Biomedica Inc., USA, were examined.
The diagnostic specificity was determined on panels of more than 300 negative samples from normal individuals and blood donors, classified negative for anti HCV antibodies with the reference kit in use in the laboratory, including potentially interfering specimens.
A panel of potentially interfering samples (RF+, hemolised, lipemic, etc.) was also examined. No interference was observed on the samples examined.
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:
It has been calculated on two samples examined in replicates in different runs. Results are reported below summarized in a table:

Average values N = 48	Calibrator 2 10 arbU/ml	Calibrator5 100 arbU/ml
OD450nm	0.241	1.632
Std.Deviation	0.027	0.113
CV %	11.3	6.9

S. LIMITATIONS
False positivity has been assessed on less than 2% of the normal population, mostly due to high titers of RF.
Frozen samples containing fibrin particles or aggregates may generate false positive results.

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All the IVD Products manufactured by the company are under the control of a certified Quality Management System approved by an EC Notified Body. Each lot is submitted to a quality control and released into the market only if conforming with the EC technical specifications and acceptance criteria.

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