

Version 2 Last updated 19 November 2021

# ab215089 Human IL-4 SimpleStep ELISA<sup>®</sup> Kit

For the quantitative measurement of IL-4 in human serum, plasma, and cell culture supernatants.

This product is for research use only and is not intended for diagnostic use.

# Table of Contents

1. Overview	1
2. Protocol Summary	2
3. Precautions	3
4. Storage and Stability	3
5. Limitations	4
6. Materials Supplied	4
7. Materials Required, Not Supplied	5
8. Technical Hints	5
9. Reagent Preparation	7
10. Standard Preparation	8
11. Sample Preparation	10
12. Plate Preparation	11
13. Assay Procedure	12
14. Calculations	14
15. Typical Data	15
16. Calibration	17
17. Typical Sample Values	17
18. Assay Specificity	21
19. Species Reactivity	22
20. Troubleshooting	23
21. Notes	24

# 1. Overview

IL-4 *in vitro* SimpleStep ELISA (Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay) kit is designed for the quantitative measurement of IL-4 protein in human serum, plasma, and cell culture supernatants.

The SimpleStep ELISA employs an affinity tag labeled capture antibody and a reporter conjugated detector antibody which immunocapture the sample analyte in solution. This entire complex (capture antibody/analyte/detector antibody) is in turn immobilized via immunoaffinity of an anti-tag antibody coating the well. To perform the assay, samples or standards are added to the wells, followed by the antibody mix. After incubation, the wells are washed to remove unbound material. TMB Development Solution is added and during incubation is catalyzed by HRP, generating blue coloration. This reaction is then stopped by addition of Stop Solution completing any color change from blue to yellow. Signal is generated proportionally to the amount of bound analyte and the intensity is measured at 450 nm. Optionally, instead of the endpoint reading, development of TMB can be recorded kinetically at 600 nm.

IL-4 is a 129 amino acids long secreted protein. IL-4 is a cytokine produced mostly by activated T lymphocytes, mast cells and basophils. It has variety of immune response modulating functions by acting on number of cell types. IL-4 participates in several B-cell activation processes. It is a co-stimulator of DNA-synthesis. It induces the expression of class II MHC molecules on resting B-cells. It enhances both secretion and cell surface expression of IgE and IgG1. It also regulates the expression of the low affinity Fc receptor for IgE (CD23) on both lymphocytes and monocytes. IL-4 positively regulates IL31RA expression in macrophages.

## 2. Protocol Summary

Prepare all reagents, samples, and standards as instructed



Add 50  $\mu$ L standard or sample to appropriate wells



Add 50  $\mu$ L Antibody Cocktail to all wells



Incubate at room temperature for 1 hour



Aspirate and wash each well three times with 350  $\mu$ L 1X Wash Buffer PT



Add 100  $\mu$ L TMB Development Solution to each well and incubate for 10 minutes.



Add 100  $\mu$ L Stop Solution and read OD at 450 nm

### 3. Precautions

**Please read these instructions carefully prior to beginning the assay.**

- All kit components have been formulated and quality control tested to function successfully as a kit.
- We understand that, occasionally, experimental protocols might need to be modified to meet unique experimental circumstances. However, we cannot guarantee the performance of the product outside the conditions detailed in this protocol booklet.
- Reagents should be treated as possible mutagens and should be handled with care and disposed of properly. Please review the Safety Datasheet (SDS) provided with the product for information on the specific components.
- Observe good laboratory practices. Gloves, lab coat, and protective eyewear should always be worn. Never pipet by mouth. Do not eat, drink or smoke in the laboratory areas.
- All biological materials should be treated as potentially hazardous and handled as such. They should be disposed of in accordance with established safety procedures.

### 4. Storage and Stability

**Store kit at +4°C immediately upon receipt. Kit has a storage time of 1 year from receipt, providing components have not been reconstituted.**

Refer to list of materials supplied for storage conditions of individual components. Observe the storage conditions for individual prepared components in the Materials Supplied section.

## 5. Limitations

- Assay kit intended for research use only. Not for use in diagnostic procedures.
- Do not mix or substitute reagents or materials from other kit lots or vendors. Kits are QC tested as a set of components and performance cannot be guaranteed if utilized separately or substituted.

## 6. Materials Supplied

Item	Quantity	Storage Condition
Human IL-4 Capture Antibody 10X	600 µL	+4°C
Human IL-4 Detector Antibody 10X	600 µL	+4°C
Human IL-4 Lyophilized Recombinant Protein	2 Vials	+4°C
Antibody Diluent 5BI	6 mL	+4°C
Wash Buffer PT 10X	20 mL	+4°C
TMB Development Solution	12 mL	+4°C
Stop Solution	12 mL	+4°C
Sample Diluent NS	50 mL	+4°C
Sample Diluent 75BS	20 mL	+4°C
Anti-tag coated microplate (12 x 8 well strips)	96 Wells	+4°C
Plate Seal	1	+4°C

## 7. Materials Required, Not Supplied

These materials are not included in the kit, but will be required to successfully perform this assay:

- Microplate reader capable of measuring absorbance at 450 or 600 nm.
- Method for determining protein concentration (BCA assay recommended).
- Deionized water.
- Multi- and single-channel pipettes.
- Tubes for standard dilution.
- Plate shaker for all incubation steps.
- Optional: Phenylmethylsulfonyl Fluoride (PMSF) (or other protease inhibitors).

## 8. Technical Hints

- Samples generating values higher than the highest standard should be further diluted in the appropriate sample dilution buffers.
- Avoid foaming or bubbles when mixing or reconstituting components.
- Avoid cross contamination of samples or reagents by changing tips between sample, standard and reagent additions.
- Ensure plates are properly sealed or covered during incubation steps.
- Complete removal of all solutions and buffers during wash steps is necessary to minimize background.
- As a guide, typical ranges of sample concentration for commonly used sample types are shown below in Sample Preparation (section 11).
- All samples should be mixed thoroughly and gently.
- Avoid multiple freeze/thaw of samples.
- Incubate ELISA plates on a plate shaker during all incubation steps.
- When generating positive control samples, it is advisable to change pipette tips after each step.

- To avoid high background always add samples or standards to the well before the addition of the antibody cocktail.
- This kit is sold based on number of tests. A 'test' simply refers to a single assay well. The number of wells that contain sample, control or standard will vary by product. Review the protocol completely to confirm this kit meets your requirements. Please contact our Technical Support staff with any questions.



## 9. Reagent Preparation

- Equilibrate all reagents to room temperature (18-25°C) prior to use. The kit contains enough reagents for 96 wells. The sample volumes below are sufficient for 48 wells (6 x 8-well strips); adjust volumes as needed for the number of strips in your experiment.
- Sample Diluent BS may contain precipitate, this is normal. If precipitate is not dissolved by gentle mixing, the precipitate may be dissolved by gentle warming and mixing at 37°C for 10 minutes. If precipitate remains, gently spin down and avoid visible precipitates when pipetting.
- Prepare only as much reagent as is needed on the day of the experiment. Capture and Detector Antibodies have only been tested for stability in the provided 10X formulations.

### 9.1 1X Wash Buffer PT:

Prepare 1X Wash Buffer PT by diluting Wash Buffer PT 10X with deionized water. To make 50 mL 1X Wash Buffer PT combine 5 mL Wash Buffer PT 10X with 45 mL deionized water. Mix thoroughly and gently.

### 9.2 Antibody Cocktail:

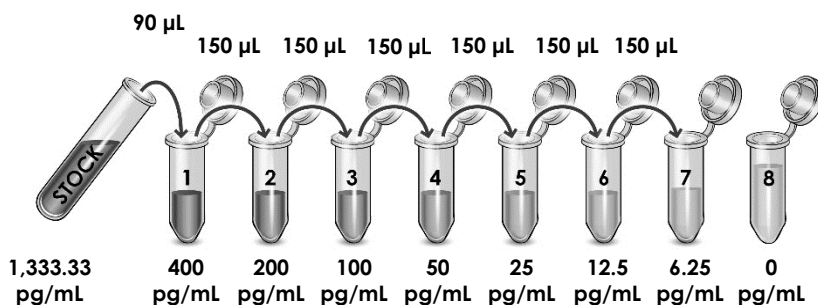
Prepare Antibody Cocktail by diluting the capture and detector antibodies in Antibody Diluent 5Bl. To make 3 mL of the Antibody Cocktail combine 300 µL 10X Capture Antibody and 300 µL 10X Detector Antibody with 2.4 mL Antibody Diluent 5Bl. Mix thoroughly and gently.

## 10. Standard Preparation

- Always prepare a fresh set of standards for every use.
- Discard working standard dilutions after use as they do not store well.
- The following section describes the preparation of a standard curve for duplicate measurements (recommended).

### 10.1 For cell culture supernatant samples follow these instructions:

- 10.1.1 **IMPORTANT:** If the protein standard vial has a volume identified on the label, reconstitute the IL-4 standard by adding that volume of Sample Diluent NS indicated on the label. Alternatively, if the vial has a mass identified, reconstitute the IL-4 standard by adding 500  $\mu$ L Sample Diluent NS. Hold at room temperature for 10 minutes and mix gently. This is the 1,333.33 pg/mL **Stock Standard** Solution.
- 10.1.2 Label eight tubes, Standards 1–8.
- 10.1.3 Add 210  $\mu$ L of Sample Diluent NS into tube number 1 and 150  $\mu$ L of Sample Diluent NS into numbers 2-8.
- 10.1.4 Use the Stock Standard to prepare the following dilution series. Standard #8 contains no protein and is the Blank control:



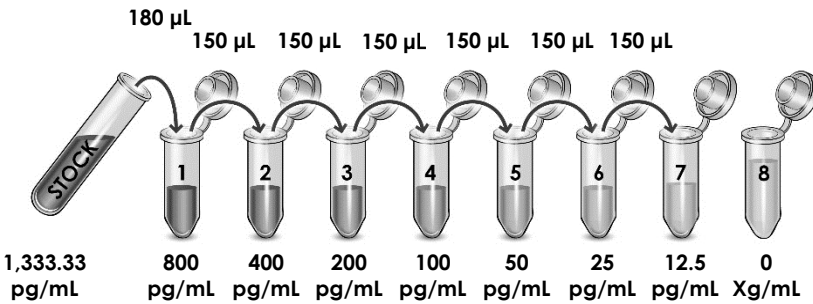
**10.2 For serum and plasma samples follow these instructions:**

**10.2.1 IMPORTANT:** If the protein standard vial has a volume identified on the label, reconstitute the IL-4 standard by adding that volume of Sample Diluent 75BS indicated on the label. Alternatively, if the vial has a mass identified, reconstitute the IL-4 standard by adding 500 µL Sample Diluent 75BS. Hold at room temperature for 10 minutes and mix gently. This is the 1,333.33 ng/mL **Stock Standard** Solution.

**10.2.2** Label eight tubes, Standards 1–8.

**10.2.3** Add 120 µL of Sample Diluent 75BS into tube number 1 and 150 µL of Sample Diluent 75BS into numbers 2-8.

**10.2.4** Use the Stock Standard to prepare the following dilution series. Standard #8 contains no protein and is the Blank control:



## 11. Sample Preparation

Typical Sample Dynamic Range	
Sample Type	Range
46 hours PHA-M Stimulated Human PBMC Cell Culture Supernatant	1% - 100%

### 11.1 Plasma:

Collect plasma using citrate, EDTA or heparin. Centrifuge samples at 2,000 x g for 10 minutes. Plasma samples can be assayed without dilution. Or dilute plasma samples into Sample Diluent 75BS and assay. Store un-diluted plasma samples at -20°C or below for up to 3 months. Avoid repeated freeze-thaw cycles.

### 11.2 Serum:

Samples should be collected into a serum separator tube. After clot formation, centrifuge samples at 2,000 x g for 10 minutes and collect serum. Serum samples can be assayed without dilution. Or dilute serum samples into Sample Diluent 75BS and assay. Store un-diluted serum at -20°C or below. Avoid repeated freeze-thaw cycles.

### 11.3 Cell Culture Supernatants:

Centrifuge cell culture media at 2,000 x g for 10 minutes to remove debris. Collect supernatants and assay. Or dilute samples into Sample Diluent NS and assay. Store un-diluted samples at -20°C or below. Avoid repeated freeze-thaw cycles.

## 12. Plate Preparation

- The 96 well plate strips included with this kit are supplied ready to use. It is not necessary to rinse the plate prior to adding reagents.
- Unused plate strips should be immediately returned to the foil pouch containing the desiccant pack, resealed and stored at 4°C.
- For each assay performed, a minimum of two wells must be used as the zero control.
- For statistical reasons, we recommend each sample should be assayed with a minimum of two replicates (duplicates).
- Differences in well absorbance or “edge effects” have not been observed with this assay.

## 13. Assay Procedure

- Equilibrate all materials and prepared reagents to room temperature prior to use.
- We recommend that you assay all standards, controls and samples in duplicate.

- 13.1 Prepare all reagents, working standards, and samples as directed in the previous sections.
- 13.2 Remove excess microplate strips from the plate frame, return them to the foil pouch containing the desiccant pack, reseal and return to 4°C storage.
- 13.3 Add 50 µL of all sample or standard to appropriate wells.
- 13.4 Add 50 µL of the Antibody Cocktail to each well.
- 13.5 Seal the plate and incubate for 1 hour at room temperature on a plate shaker set to 400 rpm.
- 13.6 Wash each well with 3 x 350 µL 1X Wash Buffer PT. Wash by aspirating or decanting from wells then dispensing 350 µL 1X Wash Buffer PT into each well. Wash Buffer PT should remain in wells for at least 10 seconds. Complete removal of liquid at each step is essential for good performance. After the last wash invert the plate and tap gently against clean paper towels to remove excess liquid.
- 13.7 Add 100 µL of TMB Development Solution to each well and incubate for 10 minutes in the dark on a plate shaker set to 400 rpm.

*Given variability in laboratory environmental conditions, optimal incubation time may vary between 5 and 20 minutes.*

*Note: The addition of Stop Solution will change the color from blue to yellow and enhance the signal intensity about 3X. To avoid signal saturation, proceed to the next step before the high concentration of the standard reaches a blue color of O.D.600 equal to 1.0.*
- 13.8 Add 100 µL of Stop Solution to each well. Shake plate on a plate shaker for 1 minute to mix. Record the OD at 450 nm. This is an endpoint reading.
- 13.9 Alternative to 13.7 – 13.8: Instead of the endpoint reading at 450 nm, record the development of TMB Substrate kinetically. Immediately after addition of TMB Development Solution begin recording the blue color development with elapsed time in the microplate reader prepared with the following settings:

Mode	Kinetic
Wavelength:	600 nm
Time:	up to 20 min
Interval:	20 sec - 1 min
Shaking:	Shake between readings

**Δ Note:** that an endpoint reading can also be recorded at the completion of the kinetic read by adding 100  $\mu$ L Stop Solution to each well and recording the OD at 450 nm.

**13.10** Analyze the data as described below.

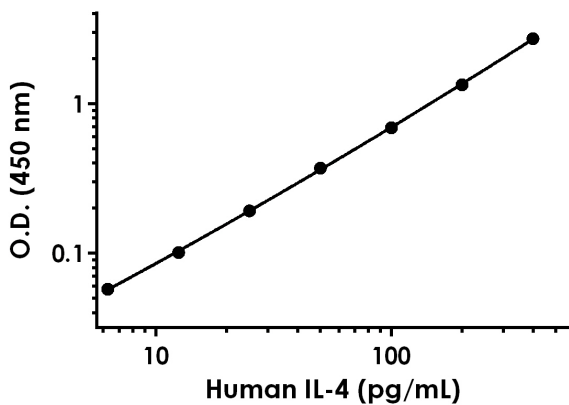
## 14. Calculations

- 14.1 Calculate the average absorbance value for the blank control (zero) standards. Subtract the average blank control standard absorbance value from all other absorbance values.
  - 14.2 **Create a standard curve** by plotting the average blank control subtracted absorbance value for each standard concentration (y-axis) against the target protein concentration (x-axis) of the standard. Use graphing software to draw the best smooth curve through these points to construct the standard curve.
- Δ **Note:** Most microplate reader software or graphing software will plot these values and fit a curve to the data. A four parameter curve fit (4PL) is often the best choice; however, other algorithms (e.g. linear, semi-log, log/log, 4 parameter logistic) can also be tested to determine if it provides a better curve fit to the standard values.
- 14.3 Determine the concentration of the target protein in the sample by interpolating the blank control subtracted **absorbance values against the standard curve**. Multiply the resulting value by the appropriate sample dilution factor, if used, to obtain the concentration of target protein in the sample.
  - 14.4 Samples generating absorbance values greater than that of the highest standard should be further diluted and reanalyzed. Similarly, samples which measure at an absorbance values less than that of the lowest standard should be retested in a less dilute form.



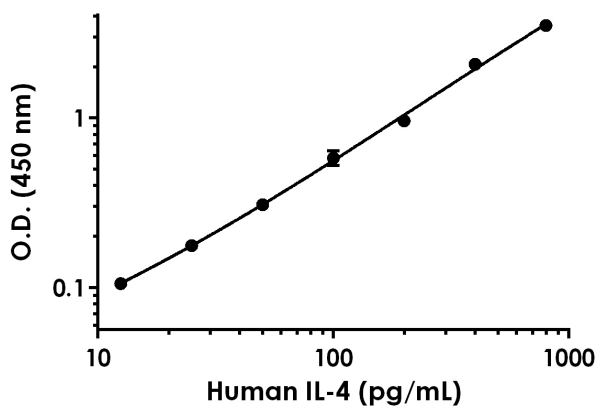
# 15. Typical Data

**Typical standard curve** – data provided **for demonstration purposes only**. A new standard curve must be generated for each assay performed.



Standard Curve Measurements			
Concentration (pg/mL)	O.D 450 nm		Mean O.D
	1	2	
0	0.056	0.056	0.056
6.25	0.115	0.112	0.113
12.5	0.159	0.153	0.156
25	0.258	0.238	0.248
50	0.437	0.417	0.427
100	0.764	0.727	0.745
200	1.366	1.429	1.398
400	2.783	2.785	2.784

**Figure 1.** Example of human IL-4 standard curve in Sample Diluent NS. The IL-4 standard curve was prepared as described in Section 10. Raw data values are shown in the table. Background-subtracted data values (mean +/- SD) are graphed.



Standard Curve Measurements			
Concentration (pg/mL)	O.D 450 nm		Mean O.D
	1	2	
0	0.054	0.052	0.053
12.5	0.158	0.159	0.159
25	0.232	0.227	0.229
50	0.368	0.354	0.361
100	0.676	0.594	0.635
200	1.054	0.974	1.014
400	2.229	2.029	2.129
800	3.533	3.593	3.563

**Figure 2.** Example of human IL-4 standard curve in Sample Diluent 75BS. The IL-4 standard curve was prepared as described in Section 10. Raw data values are shown in the table. Background-subtracted data values (mean +/- SD) are graphed.

# 16. Calibration

This immunoassay is calibrated against a highly purified human IL-4. The NIBSC/WHO unclassified purified human IL-4 preparation 88/656 was evaluated in this kit.

The dose response curve of the unclassified standard 88/656 parallels the SimpleStep standard curve. To convert sample values obtained with the SimpleStep human IL-4 kit to approximate NIBSC 88/656 units, use the equation below.

NIBSC 88/656 approximate value (IU/mL) = 0.0167 x SimpleStep human IL-4 value (pg/mL).

# 17. Typical Sample Values

## SENSITIVITY –

The MDD was determined by calculating the mean of zero standard replicates and adding 2 standard deviations then extrapolating the corresponding concentration.

Sample Diluent Buffer	n=	Minimal Detectable Dose
Sample Diluent NS	25	1.08 pg/mL
Sample Diluent 75BS	16	1.62 pg/mL

## RECOVERY –

Three concentrations of recombinant human IL-4 were spiked in duplicate to the indicated biological matrix to evaluate signal recovery in the working range of the assay.

Sample Type	Average % Recovery	Range (%)
100% Serum	95	91 - 102
100% Plasma Citrate	100	94 - 104
100% Plasma Heparin	95	88 -98
100% Plasma EDTA	109	103 - 114
100% RPMI Media + 10% FBS	117	112 - 120

## Linearity of Dilution

Linearity of dilution is determined based on interpolated values from the standard curve. Linearity of dilution defines a sample concentration interval in which interpolated target concentrations are directly proportional to sample dilution.

Native IL-4 was measured in stimulated human PBMC cell culture supernatant (SN) samples in a 2-fold dilution series. Sample dilutions are made in Sample Diluent NS.

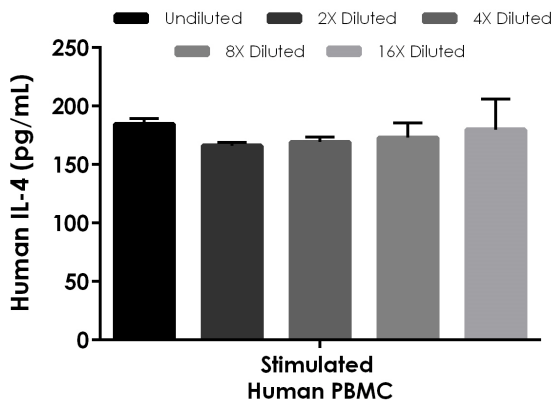
Recombinant IL-4 was spiked into human serum and plasma samples and diluted in a 2-fold dilution series in Sample Diluent 75BS.

Dilution Factor	Interpolated value	100% Human Serum	100% Human Plasma (Citrate)	100% Human Plasma (EDTA)	100% Human Plasma (Heparin)	100% PBMC SN
Undiluted	pg/mL	696	633	671	673	185
	% Expected value	100	100	100	100	100
2	pg/mL	312	279	294	299	83.1
	% Expected value	90	88	88	89	90
4	pg/mL	166	139	143	154	42.3
	% Expected value	96	88	92	92	92
8	pg/mL	86.3	76.7	80.7	82.7	21.6
	% Expected value	99	97	96	98	94
16	pg/mL	44.8	43.8	42.9	43.5	11.2
	% Expected value	103	111	103	103	97

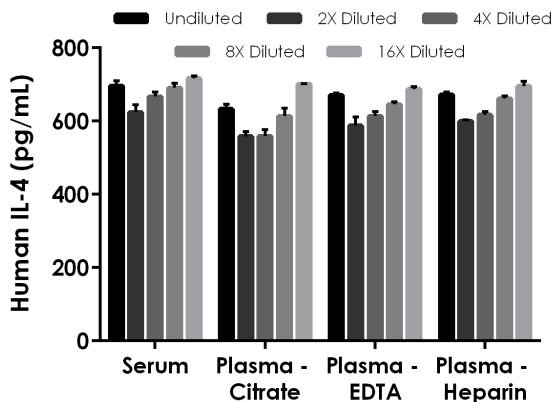
## PRECISION –

Mean coefficient of variations of interpolated values from three concentrations of human PBMC cell culture supernatant within the working range of the assay.

	Intra-Assay	Inter-Assay
n =	5	3
CV (%)	6	7



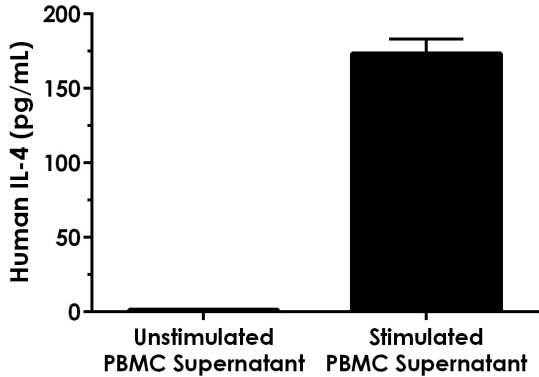
**Figure 3.** Interpolated concentrations of native IL-4 in PHA-M stimulated human PBMC cell culture supernatant samples. The concentrations of IL-4 were measured in duplicates, interpolated from the IL-4 standard curves and corrected for sample dilution. Undiluted samples are as follows: stimulated human PBMC cell culture supernatant 100%. The interpolated dilution factor corrected values are plotted (mean  $\pm$  SD,  $n=2$ ). The mean IL-4 concentration was determined to be 174.6 pg/mL in stimulated human PBMC cell culture supernatant.



**Figure 4.** Interpolated concentrations of spike recombinant IL-4 in serum and plasma samples. The concentrations of IL-4 were measured in duplicates, interpolated from the IL-4 standard curves and corrected for sample dilution. Undiluted samples are as follows: serum 100%, plasma citrate 100%, plasma EDTA 100%, plasma heparin 100%. The interpolated dilution factor corrected values are plotted (mean +/- SD, n=2).

# 18. Assay Specificity

This kit recognizes both native and recombinant human IL-4 protein in serum, plasma, and cell culture supernatant samples only.



**Figure 5.** Comparison of IL-4 in unstimulated and PHA-M stimulated human PBMC cell supernatants. Human PBMC cells were cultured in the absence or presence of 1.5% PHA-M for 46 hours. The concentrations of IL-4 were measured in neat supernatant samples in duplicates and interpolated from the IL-4 standard curve. The interpolated values are plotted (mean  $\pm$  SD,  $n=2$ ). The mean IL-4 concentration was determined to be 174.6 pg/mL in PHA-M stimulated PBMC cell supernatant, 1.4 pg/mL in unstimulated supernatants and undetectable in media (not shown).

Urine, saliva, milk, and cell and tissue extract samples have not been tested with this kit. Serum from ten individual healthy human male donors was measured in duplicate. IL-4 concentration was undetectable for all donors.

## INTERFERENCE

Recombinant IL-4Ra was prepared at 50 ng/mL and 1 ng/mL and tested for interference. No interference with was observed.

## 19. Species Reactivity

This kit recognizes human IL-4 protein.

Please contact our Technical Support team for more information.



## 20. Troubleshooting

Problem	Reason	Solution
<b>Poor standard curve</b>	Inaccurate Pipetting	Check pipettes
	Improper standard dilution	Prior to opening, briefly spin the stock standard tube and dissolve the powder thoroughly by gentle mixing
<b>Low Signal</b>	Incubation times too brief	Ensure sufficient incubation times; increase to 2 or 3 hour standard/sample incubation
	Inadequate reagent volumes or improper dilution	Check pipettes and ensure correct preparation
	Incubation times with TMB too brief	Ensure sufficient incubation time until blue color develops prior addition of Stop solution
<b>Large CV</b>	Plate is insufficiently washed	Review manual for proper wash technique. If using a plate washer, check all ports for obstructions.
	Contaminated wash buffer	Prepare fresh wash buffer
<b>Low sensitivity</b>	Improper storage of the ELISA kit	Store your reconstituted standards at -80°C, all other assay components 4°C. Keep TMB substrate solution protected from light.
<b>Precipitate in Diluent</b>	Precipitation and/or coagulation of components within the Diluent.	Precipitate can be removed by gently warming the Diluent to 37°C.

## 21. Notes



## Technical Support

Copyright © 2020 Abcam, All Rights Reserved. The Abcam logo is a registered trademark. All information / detail is correct at time of going to print.

**For all technical or commercial enquiries please go to:**

[www.abcam.com/contactus](http://www.abcam.com/contactus)

[www.abcam.cn/contactus](http://www.abcam.cn/contactus) (China)

[www.abcam.co.jp/contactus](http://www.abcam.co.jp/contactus) (Japan)