Limulus Amebocyte Lysate

PYROCHROME®

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PYROCHROME®

for the Detection and Quantification of Gram Negative Bacterial Endotoxins (Lipopolysaccharides)

The *Limulus* amebocyte lysate (LAL) test, when used according to U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) guidelines (1), may be substituted for the U.S. Pharmacopeia (USP) Pyrogen Test (rabbit fever test) for the end-product testing of "human injectable drugs (including biological products), animal injectable drugs, and medical devices." The LAL test is recommended for the quantitation of endotoxin in raw materials used in production, including water, and for in-process monitoring of endotoxin levels. The USP Bacterial Endotoxins Test (2) is the official LAL test referenced in specific USP monographs and is harmonized with equivalent chapters in European Pharmacopoeia (EP) (3) and the Japanese Pharmacopoeia (JP) (4).

Summary of Test

Limulus amebocyte lysate is an aqueous extract of blood cells (amebocytes) from the horseshoe crab *Limulus polyphemus*. In the presence of endotoxin, factors in LAL are activated in a proteolytic cascade that results in the cleavage of a colorless artificial peptide substrate present in Pyrochrome® LAL. Proteolytic cleavage of the substrate liberates para-nitroaniline (pNA), which is yellow and absorbs at 405 nm. The test is performed by adding a volume of Pyrochrome® to a volume of specimen and incubating the reaction mixture at 37°C. The greater the endotoxin concentration in the specimen, the faster pNA will be produced. Pyrochrome® can be used to quantify endotoxin concentration in two ways (5). In the kinetic method, the time taken to reach a particular absorbance at 405 nm (the onset time) is determined. Higher endotoxin concentrations give shorter onset times. The assay requires specialized instrumentation to incubate multiple samples at a controlled temperature (usually 37°C) and to take optical density readings at regular intervals. Standard curves may be constructed by plotting the log onset time against the log concentration of standard endotoxin and are used to calculate endotoxin concentrations in specimens. Alternatively, in the endpoint chromogenic method, the amount of pNA released can be measured after adding a fixed incubation time. Specimens that contain a standard curve, consisting of measured optical density plotted against known standard endotoxin concentration, is used to determine concentrations in specimens. For samples that absorb at 405-410 nm, a diazo-coupling modification may be used. In this method, pNA (formed during the endpoint chromogenic method) is reacted with nitrite in HCl and then coupled with N-(1-Naphthyl)-ethylenediamine (NEDA) to form a diazotized magenta derivative that absorbs at a range between 540-550 nm.

Pyrochrome® test methods are rapid, specific, easy to perform, and highly sensitive. The detection limit depends on the method and instrumentation used and may be as sensitive as 0.001 Endotoxin Units (EU) per mL.

History and Biologic Principle

Howell described the clotting of *Limulus* blood in 1885 (6). In the 1950's, at the Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole, MA, Bang discovered that gram negative bacteria cause *Limulus* blood to clot (7). Levin and Bang later determined that the reaction is enzymatic and that the enzymes are located in granules in the amebocytes (8, 9). They showed that clotting is initiated by a unique structural component of the bacterial cell wall called endotoxin or lipopolysaccharide (10). Current understanding is that the reaction consists of a cascade of enzyme activation steps terminating in the cleavage of the protein, coagulogen. The insoluble clotting product of coagulogen (coagulin) coalesces by ionic interaction. If sufficient coagulin forms, turbidity appears followed by the formation of a gel-clot. This interaction forms the basis of an assay for endotoxin termed the *Limulus* Amebocyte Lysate (LAL) test. In 1977, Japanese investigators discovered that endotoxin-activated LAL would also cleave small chromogenic peptides which contained an amino acid cleavage site similar to coagulogen and the chromophore, paranitroanilide (11). Cleavage results in the release of *p*NA, which is yellow and absorbs light at 405 nm. In this chromogenic adaptation of the LAL assay, coagulogen concentration is reduced by dilution to minimize interference when chromogenic substrate is added to the LAL. Thus, when endotoxin is added to chromogenic LAL reagent, a color is formed in preference to turbidity or a gel-clot. In all versions of the LAL assay (gel-clot, turbidimetric, and chromogenic), the greater the amount of endotoxin present, the faster the endpoint (gel-clot, turbidity, or color) develops. More information about the LAL assay types, reaction, and applications is available in the literature (12, 13, 14).

Reagent

Pyrochrome® is packaged at 3.2 mL/vial in lyophilized form. It contains an aqueous extract of amebocytes of *Limulus polyphemus*, stabilizer, salts, buffer and chromogenic substrate.

Pyrochrome® is not labeled with a specific sensitivity. Sensitivity in a given test (designated λ) is the lowest endotoxin concentration used to construct the standard curve. The guaranteed sensitivity, λ, of Pyrochrome® is 0.001 EU/mL in a kinetic assay and 0.005 EU/mL in an endpoint assay. Pyrochrome® is for *in-vitro* diagnostic purposes only. It is not intended for the diagnosis of endotoxemia in humans. The toxicity of Pyrochrome® has not been determined. However, prolonged or repeated contact with LAL with the skin has resulted in a Type I allergic reaction in some individuals (15). Thus, caution should be exercised when handling Pyrochrome®.

Reconstitution Procedure:

1. Gently tap the vial of Pyrochrome® to cause loose material to fall to the bottom. Break the vacuum by lifting the gray stopper. Do not contaminate the mouth of the vial. Remove and discard the stopper; do not inject through or reuse the stopper. A small amount of LAL powder remaining on the stopper will not affect the test.
2. Reconstitute Pyrochrome® with 5.2 mL Pyrochrome® Buffer or Glucashield® buffer (available separately from Associates of Cape Cod, Inc.). To obtain a sensitivity of 0.001 EU/mL in a microplate reader, it is necessary to reconstitute Pyrochrome® with Glucashield®. This sensitivity can be attained with either Pyrochrome® reconstitution buffer or Glucashield® buffer in a kinetic reader. The pellet will take a few minutes to go into solution, therefore, rehydrate at least 5 minutes prior to use. Swirl vial to insure homogeneity but avoid vigorous mixing that may cause excessive foaming of the solution. Pyrochrome® can be vial with Paraflm M® and store cold (2-8°C) when not in use. Pyrochrome® must be used within 8 hours of reconstitution.

Storage Conditions

Lyophilized Pyrochrome® is relatively stable and, if stored properly, will retain full activity through the expiration date on the label. Store the product at 2-8°C. Temperatures in excess of 37°C can cause rapid deterioration of lyophilized Pyrochrome® as evidenced by a change in color and a distinct yellowing of the product. Pyrochrome® is shipped in insulated containers to protect against high temperatures. Pyrochrome®, prior to reconstitution, is light sensitive and should be stored in the dark.

Reconstituted Pyrochrome® is usually clear and slightly opalescent. An occasional lot will exhibit a slight, uniform turbidity. The presence of small fibers or strands does not indicate contamination nor affect activity; however, flocculent precipitation or a distinct yellow color change indicates deterioration and the product should not be used. Reconstituted Pyrochrome® is less stable than the lyophilized product; vials may be held for up to 8 hours at 2-8°C. Note that it may be necessary to use freshly reconstituted reagent to obtain maximum sensitivity. Reconstituted Pyrochrome® cannot be frozen.

Specimen Collection and Preparation

Specimens should be collected aseptically in containers that are free of detectable endotoxin. Reused, depyrogenated glassware or sterile, disposable, polystyrene or polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastics are recommended to minimize absorption of endotoxin to container surfaces. Not all plastic containers are free of detectable endotoxin. In addition, extractable substances from some plastics may interfere with the test. Laboratory ware should be tested for assay compatibility by selecting containers from a batch, rinsing them with a small volume of LAL Reagent Water (LRW) at room temperature for one hour, and testing the rinse as a specimen. The rinse should contain significantly less endotoxin than the lowest standard concentration to be used. Also, the rinse should neither inhibit nor enhance the test as determined by recovery of a known amount of added endotoxin. The pH of the reaction mixture (a volume of specimen or specimen dilution mixed with an equal volume of Pyrochrome®) should be 6 to 8. Adjust the pH of the specimen with HCl, NaOH, or buffer (free of detectable endotoxin). Dilute concentrated HCl or NaOH with LRW to an appropriate concentration and use a volume that will not lead to significant dilution of the test specimen. Adjustment of the pH of samples in the sample upon pH adjustment, dilute the sample (not to exceed the MVD - see "Limitations of Procedure") before adjusting the pH. Do not adjust the pH of unbuffered saline or water. Note that dilution alone may overcome pH problems.

Substances that denature proteins, chelate ions, bind endotoxin or alter endotoxin's hydrophobic state may interfere with the test. Interference may be detected as recovery of significantly more or less endotoxin than expected when a known amount of standard endotoxin is added to the specimen (see "Limitations of Procedure"). In most cases, dilution of the specimen will reduce the concentration and activity of interfering substances and still yield valid test results. Appropriate controls and dilution schemes are discussed under "Test Procedure." Specimens should be tested as soon as possible after collection. It may be advisable to freeze non-sterile specimens that will be stored for a long time before testing. Specimens expected to contain low concentrations of endotoxin should be tested for loss of endotoxin during storage.

Test Procedure

Test Reagents Supplied with Pyrochrome®

1. *Pyrochrome®* (see description under Reagent and Reconstitution Procedure above).
2. *Pyrochrome® Reconstitution Buffer* (catalog number C1500 only). Use the buffer to reconstitute Pyrochrome® as described above.
3. *Glucashield® Reconstitution Buffer* (catalog number CG1500 only). Use the buffer to reconstitute Pyrochrome® as described above.
4. *Control Standard Endotoxin* (CSE) – Diazo kit (CD060) only: Each vial of CSE contains 10 rg. Reconstitute CSE with the volume specified on the Certificate of Analysis (C of A, which gives the potency of the CSE). CSE has been specially formulated to go into solution rapidly. After adding LRW, vortex the vial for 30-60 seconds. CSE is then ready for use. If not used immediately, vortex the vial for 30 seconds prior to use. Then make appropriate dilutions to achieve the desired endotoxin concentrations. Vortex between dilutions. Reconstituted CSE is stable for seven days when stored between 2 and 8°C. Do not freeze reconstituted CSE.

   Each vial of CSE contains endotoxin whose activity has been determined with respect to the U.S. Reference Standard Endotoxin (RSE) and is stated on the C of A. USP Endotoxin Reference Standard (identical to RSE) may be obtained from the U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc.

   Note: The C of A and the potency stated on it are specific to a combination of Pyrochrome® and CSE lot. A given lot of CSE may show different potencies (EU/rg) when tested with different lots of Pyrochrome® or with Pyrosteril or Pyrotell-T. Similarly, different lots of CSE will likely have different potencies when tested with the same lot of Pyrochrome®. **Be sure to use the correct C of A and potency.**

   Use CSE for preparation of standard endotoxin concentrations from which to construct standard curves. Use positive controls prepared from CSE to monitor (interference) controls. Do not use this 10 ng/vial CSE as a depyrogenation control.
5. *Diazo reagents* - Diazo kit (CD060) only: Vial 1a, HCl; Vial 1, Solution Nitrite; Vial 2, Ammonium sulfamate; Vial 3, NEDA. Reconstitute Vial 1 with entire contents of Vial 1a; reconstitute Vial 2 with 2 vials of LRW; and reconstitute Vial 3 with 4 mL of water. See item 5 below for grade of water required.

Test Reagents Not Supplied with Pyrochrome®

1. *Control Standard Endotoxin* (CSE). (Associates of Cape Cod, Inc., catalog number EC010). Recommended vials and the volume specified on the Certificate of Analysis (C of A, which gives the potency of the CSE) and as directed in the package insert. Follow the directions in the insert for use and storage of standard endotoxin. The potency of the CSE has been determined with respect to the U.S. Reference Standard Endotoxin (RSE) and is stated on the C of A. USP Endotoxin Reference Standard (identical to RSE) may be obtained from the U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc. **Note:** The C of A and the potency stated on it are specific to a combination of Pyrochrome® and CSE lot. A given lot of CSE may show different potencies (EU/ng) when tested with different lots of Pyrochrome®, Pyrotell, or other brands of LAL reagent (1). Similarly, different lots of CSE will likely have different potencies when tested with the same lot of Pyrochrome®. **Be sure to use the correct C of A and potency.**

   Use CSE to prepare dilutions of standard endotoxin from which to construct standard curves, for positive controls and for positive product (interference) controls.
2. *LAL Reagent Water* (LRW). Recommended sources include Associates of Cape Cod, Inc. (various sizes and packaging configurations available). Commercially available USP Sterile Water for Injection (otherwise not suitable for LRW) without bacteriostat or USP Water for Irrigation may be used provided that they have been shown to be acceptable for use as an LRW. The endotoxin limit for USP sterile WFI is only 0.25 EU/mL; therefore, sterile WFI may contain detectable endotoxin and be unsuitable for use. To certify that water is acceptable as an LRW, test it as a specimen with a positive product control (see item 1.c. in the section on "Controls"). Use certified LRW to make dilutions of standards, and to prepare positive controls (see items 1.a. and 1.b. under "Controls"). Construct a standard curve from the onset times or endpoint assays for the standards. The correlation coefficient should be at least 0.980 (absolute value). The endotoxin concentration of the water being tested can be estimated by extrapolation of the standard curve. Spikes of endotoxin determine concentration and should be significantly less than that of the lowest standard. In addition, the endotoxin concentration of the positive product control should be within ± 25% of that of a positive control.
3. *Glucashield® Buffer*. Available from Associates of Cape Cod, Inc. (catalog number GB051) can be used in place of Pyrochrome® Reconstitution Buffer to overcome interference from (1→3)-β-D-glucans.
4. *50% acetic acid* (for endpoint method). Prepare by adding a volume of glacial acetic acid to an equal volume of LRW (however, deionized or reverse osmosis (RO) water (LRW, see 2, above, may be used but is not required).
5. *Water* (for reconstitution of diazo-coupling reagents only). Any laboratory source of distilled (including LRW), deionized, or reverse osmosis water is acceptable. This water does not need to be endotoxin-free as it is used solely for diazo-coupling chemistry.

Materials and Equipment

1. *Microplates*. 96-well, covered microplates (available from Associates of Cape Cod, Inc., catalog number CA961). Plates should be certified or tested for endotoxin and/or glucan contamination and for suitability in the particular spectrophotometer. Check microplates before use and discard if scratches or other optical interference is observed on or in the bottoms of the wells.
2. *Reaction tubes*. Kinetic assays can be run in an incubating tube reader such as the Pyros Kinetix® Flex using 8 x 75 mm, depyrogenated, borosilicate glass culture tubes (Associates of Cape Cod, Inc. catalog number TK100). The end-point assays can also be run in 8 x 75 mm or 10 x 75 mm, depyrogenated, borosilicate glass culture tubes (Associates of Cape Cod, Inc. catalog numbers TK100 and TB050 respectively).
3. *Optical reader* capable of reading at 405 nm, or at 540-550 nm for the diazo method. For the kinetic method, use an incubating microplate reader, such as the BioTek® EL800I™ or the Molecular Devices® VersaMax™, or a tube reader such as the Pyros Kinetix® Flex tube reader (Associates of Cape Cod, Inc. catalog numbers PKF32, PKF64 and PKF96).

   For the endpoint method, use a microplate reader to read microplates or, if running the test in tubes, a spectrophotometer equipped with appropriate tube holders.
4. *Incubator* capable of maintaining 37±1°C (required for the endpoint methods only). A dry block incubator for microplates (or tubes, as appropriate) is recommended. (A water bath can be used for the endpoint test tube method.) Incubators should be shown to have a uniform heat distribution.
5. *Test tube racks* to hold and/or incubate dilution and reaction tubes.
6. *Pipets*, micropipets with pipet tips (multichannel pipettors are useful when using microplates), or repeating pipettors with plastic syringe barrels. Disposable pipets and pipe tips free of interfering endotoxin and glucans are recommended. Associates of Cape Cod, Inc., offers the Pyroclean® line of products, which are certified to be free of interfering endotoxins and glucans.
7. *Vortex-type mixer.*
8. *Paraflm M®* (American National Can™). The side in contact with the paper backing is typically free of detectable endotoxin.
9. *Test tubes* that are free of interfering endotoxin with adequate capacity for making dilutions of endotoxin standard or test specimen. See "Specimen Collection and Preparation" for containers suitable for LAL testing.
10. *Hot-air oven* with capacity to heat to at least 250°C for depyrogenation of glassware. Commonly used depyrogenation cycles assure that all articles in the oven are exposed to minimum time and temperature of 30 minutes and 250°C (2, 16, 17).

Controls

Controls are necessary to insure a valid test. Control procedures are detailed by the FDA (1) and USP (2), EP (3) and JP (4).

1. Endotoxin controls.

a. **Endotoxin standard series**. Prepare a fresh set of dilutions from the stock endotoxin solution for each test. Do not use previously prepared and stored dilutions unless you have demonstrated the stability of that range of concentrations. Make dilutions in a geometric series to give the range of endotoxin concentrations required. Twofold dilutions are recommended for endpoint methods; greater dilutions can be used for the kinetic method. The lowest endotoxin concentration in any standard series is the detection limit of that particular test and is designated λ (**Note:** detection limits of 0.005 and 0.001 EU/mL are possible with Pyrochrome® in endpoint and kinetic tests respectively). To get to the range of standards required, use as few dilutions as possible with appropriate pipet volumes to maximize accuracy. Dilutions can be made in glass or suitable plastic test tubes or directly in a microplate. Maximum concentrations detected with Pyrochrome® are method dependent. For guidance, see the recommended incubation times available for detection of interference (1→3)-β-D-glucans.
b. **Positive control** (a single standard endotoxin concentration) should be included if the standard series (see a. above) is not prepared in the same way as the positive product controls (see c. below). The endotoxin concentration of the positive control should equal that of a standard from the middle of the standard curve. A value of 0.5 EU/mL would be appropriate for positive controls included with a standard series consisting of 0.005, 0.05, 0, 5 and 50 EU/mL. If a standard series is not included in a test, a positive control must be included to verify that it is appropriate to use the parameters of a previous (archived) standard curve to calculate endotoxin concentrations. Refer to the FDA guideline (1) under Routine Testing of Drugs by the LAL Test for details. The positive control should be prepared in water in the same manner as the PPC in product.
c. Positive product controls are inhibition/enhancement controls and consist of the specimen or dilution of specimen to which standard endotoxin is added. The concentration of added endotoxin must be known. It should be similar to or equal to that of the positive control. See section b. above for selection of the appropriate endotoxin concentration for the positive product control. The added endotoxin is frequently referred to as a "spike."

2. Negative controls.

LRW negative controls should be included with each test.

Specimen Preparation - Determination of Test Dilution

If a test protocol has been developed previously for the type of specimen under test, make the necessary dilutions for the positive control and proceed as directed under "Performing the Test." If a protocol has not been developed for the specimen type, make a series of tenfold dilutions of the specimen. Do not exceed the Maximum Valid Dilution of the product by more than a factor of 10. (Refer to "Limitations of Procedure" and the FDA Guideline (1) for explanation and calculation of Maximum Valid Dilution (MVD) and Minimum Valid Concentration (MVC). Prepare appropriate dilutions of all specimens with a positive product control for each one.

Performing the Test

Consistent technique is essential to obtain satisfactory results. All controls and specimens should be tested in at least duplicate. Care should be taken to avoid contamination when setting up the test. Equipment should be appropriately calibrated and qualified to prevent variation in the assay conditions.

1. Prepare test instrumentation as necessary. In an automated system this usually involves entering sample descriptors, setting test parameters, and turning on the incubator set at 37°C.
2. Add to the reaction vessel the appropriate volume of sample (negative control, endotoxin standard, specimen or positive product control) of LRW for the appropriate ratio when Pyrochrome® is added (see 3. below).

   Tests run in a microplate reader: a 1:1 lysate to sample ratio is used. For optimal performance, use a volume of 0.05 mL of sample for any such method (kinetic, endpoint or diazo-coupling). Alternatively, 0.1 mL may be used for the kinetic and endpoint methods, though use of 0.05 mL is recommended to attain maximum sensitivity or for a wide range standard curve (greater than three log range).

   Tests run in the Pyros Kinetix® Flex tube reader: a lysate to sample ratio of either 1:1 or 1:4 may be used. A sample volume of 0.1 mL is required for tests run using a 1:1 ratio of Pyrochrome® LAL reagent to sample. For tests in the Pyros Kinetix® Flex tube reader in which a 1:4 ratio of Pyrochrome® LAL reagent to sample is used, the sample volume should be 0.2 mL.
3. Add Pyrochrome® as appropriate for the method and mix. Failure to mix adequately is a common cause of unsatisfactory tests. Most platereaders have a shake function.
   a. For a microplate, a 1:1 lysate to sample ratio is used and the volume of Pyrochrome® added is equal to the sample volume (see 2. above; typically 0.05 mL). Add Pyrochrome® as rapidly as possible to all samples and mix from 5 to 30 seconds. Failure to mix will result in poor assay precision (and, for an endpoint test) or into an incubating microplate reader (for a kinetic test).
   b. For methods using individual reaction tubes or cuvettes, the volume of Pyrochrome® added can either be equal to the sample volume (0.1 mL in a Pyros Kinetix® Flex tube reader) or one quarter for the sample volume (0.05 mL in a Pyros Kinetix® Flex tube reader). Important: the reaction time should be the same for all tubes. In the case of the Pyros Kinetix® Flex tube reader, the instrument detects the reaction time and initiates incubation timing. To each reaction vessel in turn, add Pyrochrome®, mix for approximately 2 seconds and place the vessel into the incubating device (for endpoint tests) or tube reader (for kinetic tests).

      Regardless of whether microplates or reaction tubes are used, a repeating pipettor is convenient for adding Pyrochrome®.

      Care should be taken to avoid contaminating the vial of Pyrochrome® when handling the reagent.
4. Read the test.
   a. For the kinetic method, allow the test to run until all samples have incubated for significantly longer than the time required for the lowest standard endotoxin concentration to reach the onset OD405. Automated test systems will usually terminate the test after a preset period. Request recommended incubation times for guidance.
   b. For the endpoint method, time the incubation precisely, remove the plate or reaction tubes from the incubator, stop the reaction by adding 50% acetic acid (volume sufficient to give a final concentration 10% acetic acid; use 0.025 mL for sample/Pyrochrome® volumes of 0.05 mL) and read the optical density (OD) in a spectrophotometer or microplate reader (as appropriate) at 405 nm. The test should be set up so that the incubation time for the lowest standard/positive is the same (within ±30 seconds). The incubation period depends on the endotoxin concentration range desired and is likely to vary with different lots of Pyrochrome®. Preliminary tests will be necessary to determine the correct incubation period. See the recommended incubation times for guidance.
   c. For the endpoint method with diazo-coupling, remove the reaction tubes or plate from the incubator, stop the reaction by adding 0.05 mL of solution 1 (sodium nitrite reconstituted with HCl), agitate the plate to mix. Using a new pipette tip, add 0.05 mL of solution 2 (ammonium sulfamate) to each reaction and mix. Finally, add 0.05 mL of solution 3 (NEDA) to each well with a new pipette tip and mix. Full color (magenta) should develop immediately. Read the test at 540-550 nm. The test should be set up and read so that the incubation time for each sample is the same (within ±30 seconds). The incubation period depends on the endotoxin concentration range desired and is likely to vary with different lots of Pyrochrome®. Preliminary tests will be necessary to determine the correct incubation period. See the recommended incubation times for guidance.

Performing the Test

Consistent technique is essential to obtain satisfactory results. All controls and specimens should be tested in at least duplicate. Care should be taken to avoid contamination when setting up the test. Equipment should be appropriately calibrated and qualified to prevent variation in the assay conditions.

1. Prepare test instrumentation as necessary. In an automated system this usually involves entering sample descriptors, setting test parameters, and turning on the incubator set at 37°C.
2. Add to the reaction vessel the appropriate volume of sample (negative control, endotoxin standard, specimen or positive product control) of LRW for the appropriate ratio when Pyrochrome® is added (see 3. below).

   Tests run in a microplate reader: a 1:1 lysate to sample ratio is used. For optimal performance, use a volume of 0.05 mL of sample for any such method (kinetic, endpoint or diazo-coupling). Alternatively, 0.1 mL may be used for the kinetic and endpoint methods, though use of 0.05 mL is recommended to attain maximum sensitivity or for a wide range standard curve (greater than three log range).

   Tests run in the Pyros Kinetix® Flex tube reader: a lysate to sample ratio of either 1:1 or 1:4 may be used. A sample volume of 0.1 mL is required for tests run using a 1:1 ratio of Pyrochrome® LAL reagent to sample. For tests in the Pyros Kinetix® Flex tube reader in which a 1:4 ratio of Pyrochrome® LAL reagent to sample is used, the sample volume should be 0.2 mL.
3. Add Pyrochrome® as appropriate for the method and mix. Failure to mix adequately is a common cause of unsatisfactory tests. Most platereaders have a shake function.
   a. For a microplate, a 1:1 lysate to sample ratio is used and the volume of Pyrochrome® added is equal to the sample volume (see 2. above; typically 0.05 mL). Add Pyrochrome® as rapidly as possible to all samples and mix from 5 to 30 seconds. Failure to mix will result in poor assay precision (and, for an endpoint test) or into an incubating microplate reader (for a kinetic test).
   b. For methods using individual reaction tubes or cuvettes, the volume of Pyrochrome® added can either be equal to the sample volume (0.1 mL in a Pyros Kinetix® Flex tube reader) or one quarter for the sample volume (0.05 mL in a Pyros Kinetix® Flex tube reader). Important: the reaction time should be the same for all tubes. In the case of the Pyros Kinetix® Flex tube reader, the instrument detects the reaction time and initiates incubation timing. To each reaction vessel in turn, add Pyrochrome®, mix for approximately 2 seconds and place the vessel into the incubating device (for endpoint tests) or tube reader (for kinetic tests).

      Regardless of whether microplates or reaction tubes are used, a repeating pipettor is convenient for adding Pyrochrome®.

      Care should be taken to avoid contaminating the vial of Pyrochrome® when handling the reagent.
4. Read the test.
   a. For the kinetic method, allow the test to run until all samples have incubated for significantly longer than the time required for the lowest standard endotoxin concentration to reach the onset OD405. Automated test systems will usually terminate the test after a preset period. Request recommended incubation times for guidance.
   b. For the endpoint method, time the incubation precisely, remove the plate or reaction tubes from the incubator, stop the reaction by adding 50% acetic acid (volume sufficient to give a final concentration 10% acetic acid; use 0.025 mL for sample/Pyrochrome® volumes of 0.05 mL) and read the optical density (OD) in a spectrophotometer or microplate reader (as appropriate) at 405 nm. The test should be set up so that the incubation time for the lowest standard/positive is the same (within ±30 seconds). The incubation period depends on the endotoxin concentration range desired and is likely to vary with different lots of Pyrochrome®. Preliminary tests will be necessary to determine the correct incubation period. See the recommended incubation times for guidance.
   c. For the endpoint method with diazo-coupling, remove the reaction tubes or plate from the incubator, stop the reaction by adding 0.05 mL of solution 1 (sodium nitrite reconstituted with HCl), agitate the plate to mix. Using a new pipette tip, add 0.05 mL of solution 2 (ammonium sulfamate) to each reaction and mix. Finally, add 0.05 mL of solution 3 (NEDA) to each well with a new pipette tip and mix. Full color (magenta) should develop immediately. Read the test at 540-550 nm. The test should be set up and read so that the incubation time for each sample is the same (within ±30 seconds). The incubation period depends on the endotoxin concentration range desired and is likely to vary with different lots of Pyrochrome®.

   Preliminary tests may be necessary to determine the correct incubation period.

Results

1. Preliminary calculations.

a. Pour la méthode cinétique, laisser le test réagir jusqu'à ce que tous les échantillons soient incubés pendant une durée significativement plus longue que le temps nécessaire pour que la plus faible concentration d'endotoxine étalon atteigne l'OD405 de réaction. Les systèmes de test automatisés arrêtent généralement le test après une période prédéfinie. Demander les durées d'incubation conseillées à titre de référence.

   Pour la méthode en point final, chronométrer précisément l'incubation, sortir la plaque ou les tubes à essai de l'incubateur, arrêter la réaction avec de l'acide acétique à 50 % (volume suffisant pour obtenir une concentration finale de 10 % d'acide acétique ; utiliser 0,025 ml, pour un volume d'échantillon/ Pyrochrome® de 0,05 ml) et lire la densité optique (DO) dans un spectrophotomètre ou un microplateau (selon le cas) à 405 nm. Configurer le test et la mesure de manière à ce que la durée d'incubation soit identique (± 30 secondes) à celle de l'étalon/échantillon le plus faible. La période d'incubation dépend de la plage des concentrations d'endotoxines désirée ; elle peut différer en fonction des lots de Pyrochrome®. Des tests préliminaires seront nécessaires pour déterminer la durée d'incubation adéquate. Se reporter aux durées d'incubation recommandées comme guide.

   Pour la méthode en point final avec diazocouplage, retirer les tubes à essai ou la plaque de l'incubateur, arrêter la réaction en ajoutant 0,05 ml de la solution 1 (nitrite de sodium reconstitué avec du HCl). Agiter la plaque pour mélanger. En utilisant un nouvel embout de pipette, ajouter 0,05 ml de la solution 2 (sulfamate d'ammonium) dans chaque puits de réaction et mélanger. Enfin, ajouter 0,05 ml de la solution 3 (NEDA) dans chaque puits en utilisant un nouvel embout de pipette et mélanger. Une nette coloration (magenta) doit apparaître immédiatement. Lire les résultats du test à 540-550 nm. Configurer le test et la mesure de manière à ce que la durée d'incubation soit identique (± 30 secondes près) pour chaque échantillon. La période d'incubation dépend de la plage des concentrations d'endotoxines désirée ; elle peut différer en fonction du lot de Pyrochrome®.

   Des tests préalables peuvent être nécessaires pour déterminer la durée d'incubation adéquate.

Résultats

1. Calculs préliminaires.

a. Pour la méthode cinétique, déterminer les temps pris par les échantillons pour atteindre une densité optique prédéterminée (par exemple 0,03 unités de DO) après avoir procédé à toutes les dilutions nécessaires. Les mesures de densité optique doivent être exprimées relativement à une mesure initiale considérée comme valant zéro unité de DO. Beaucoup de lecteurs de microplateaux sont munis d'un logiciel qui procèdent à ces calculs. Le temps nécessaire pour atteindre la valeur de DO est appelé temps de réaction.

2. Établissement d'une courbe d'étalonnage.

a. Pour la méthode cinétique, établir une courbe d'étalonnage par régression du logarithme du temps de réaction en fonction du logarithme de la concentration d'endotoxines pour les étalons. L'équation de la droite de régression décrit la courbe d'étalonnage.

   À condition que la valeur absolue du coefficient de corrélation de la courbe d'étalonnage soit d'au moins 0,980 (voir le point 2. de la section « Interprétation »ci-dessous), il est possible d'utiliser une équation linéaire de régression polynomiale (c'est-à-dire quadratique) de second degré/d'ordre pour calculer les concentrations d'endotoxines.
b. Pour la méthode en point final, établir une courbe d'étalonnage en reportant les mesures de densité optique en fonction des concentrations d'endotoxine étalon.

3. Calcul des concentrations d'endotoxines.

Calculer les concentrations d'endotoxines de tous les échantillons (y compris les étalons et les contrôles) en utilisant l'équation d'une droite Y = aX + b modifiée en X = (Y – b) / a

où :

Y = logarithme du temps de réaction (méthode cinétique), ou densité optique (méthode en point final)

X = Méthode cinétique / X = logarithme de la concentration d'endotoxines (il est nécessaire de déterminer l'antilogarithme de X pour obtenir la concentration d'endotoxines)

Méthode en point final : X = concentration d'endotoxines

a = pente de la droite

b = ordonnée à l'origine

Multiplier la concentration d'endotoxines calculée à partir de la droite d'étalonnage par le facteur de dilution de l'échantillon pour obtenir la concentration de l'échantillon initial non dilué.

Les calculs sont souvent effectués par le logiciel du test d'endotoxine.

Interprétation

1. Pour que le test soit valide, la concentration d'endotoxines des contrôles négatifs (estimée par extrapolation de la courbe d'étalonnage) doit être significativement inférieure à la plus faible concentration d'étalon.
2. Le coefficient de corrélation pour la courbe d'étalonnage inclue dans le test doit avoir une valeur absolue d'au moins 0,980.
3. La concentration moyenne d'endotoxines mesurée des contrôles positifs (pour la vérification d'une courbe archivée) doit se situer à maximum 25 % de la concentration nominale. Par exemple, la concentration positif contient 0,125 UE/mL, la concentration mesurée doit se situer entre 0,09375 et 0,15625 UE/mL.
4. Les concentrations d'endotoxines peuvent être rapportées uniquement pour la plage située entre la plus faible et la plus forte concentration d'endotoxine étalon.
5. Les échantillons dont la densité optique est supérieure à celle de l'étalon le plus intense inférieurs à la plus faible concentration d'étalon (non détectables) ou supérieurs à la plus forte concentration d'étalon.
6. Pour la méthode en point final, les concentrations valides d'endotoxines peuvent uniquement être calculées à partir des valeurs de DO qui se situent dans la partie linéaire de la courbe d'étalonnage.
7. Pour démontrer que l'échantillon n'interfère pas de manière significative avec la réaction LAL-endotoxines, la concentration d'endotoxines mesurée du contrôle positif de produit doit se situer entre 50 % et 200 % de la concentration ajoutée en endotoxines provenant du dopage. Avant de déterminer si les endotoxines provenant du dopage sont récupérées dans ces limites, soustraire la concentration d'endotoxines mesurée dans l'échantillon non dopé (échantillon avant dopage). Si l'échantillon soit considéré comme exempt d'interférence significative, la concentration d'endotoxines mesurée dans l'échantillon dopé doit être égale à 0,125 UE/mL (après soustraction des endotoxines éventuellement présentes dans l'échantillon non dopé) doit se situer dans la plage 0,0625–0,25 UE/mL (50 à 200 % de 0,125 UE/mL). Si la concentration d'endotoxines mesurée dans l'échantillon non dopé est de 0,028 UE/mL et que celle du contrôle positif de produit est de 0,163 UE/mL, la concentration d'endotoxines récupérée vaut 0,163 – 0,028 = 0,135 UE/mL ; elle se situe dans la plage et, si toutes les autres exigences sont satisfaites, le test de l'échantillon est valide.

Limitations of Procedure

The procedure is limited by the extent of the inhibition or enhancement capacity of the specimen under test. If the procedure cannot be validated (1, 2) at a specimen concentration that is greater than the minimum valid concentration (MVC), then the bacterial endotoxins test using LAL reagent cannot be substituted for the USP Pyrogen Test. The MVC is calculated as follows:

$$MVC = \frac{\text{(}\lambda\text{ (specimen dose)}}{\text{(endotoxin tolerance limit)}}$$

where λ is in EU/mL, specimen dose is in units per kg body weight, and the endotoxin tolerance limit is in EU/kg.

To obtain a copy of the instructions for use (IFU) in English, please refer to the ACC website at http://www.acciusa.com/ailproductinserts/pyrochrome.html

Lysat d'amœbocytes de *limule*

PYROCHROME®

Fabriqué par :
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PN000856-fr Rev1 Licence des États-Unis n° 700 Janvier 2011

PYROCHROME®

pour la détection et la quantification des endotoxines des bactéries gram-négatives (lipopolysaccharides)

Le test du lysat d'amœbocytes de *limule* (LAL), utilisé conformément aux recommandations de la Food and Drug Administration (FDA) des É-U (1), peut remplacer le test d'pyrogénicité de l'U.S. Pharmacopeia (USP) pour le test de produit final de « médicaments injectables à usage humain (y compris les produits biologiques), de médicaments injectables à usage vétérinaire et de dispositifs médicaux ». Le test LAL est recommandé pour la quantification des endotoxines dans les produits bruts utilisés dans la production, notamment l'eau, et pour la surveillance des taux d'endotoxines dans la fabrication. Le Bacterial Endotoxins Test de l'USP (2) est le test LAL officiel référencé dans des monographies spécifiques de l'USP et est harmonisé avec les chapitres équivalents de la Pharmacopée européenne (EP) (3) et de la Pharmacopée japonaise (JP) (4).

Résumé du test

Le lysat d'amœbocytes de *limule* est un extrait aqueux de cellules sanguines (amœbocytes) de la limule *Limulus polyphemus*. En présence d'endotoxines, des facteurs du LAL sont activés en une cascade protéolytique qui entraîne le clivage d'un substrat peptidique artificiel incolore présent dans le Pyrochrome® LAL. Le clivage protéolytique du substrat libère de la paranitroaniline (pNA), une substance jaune qui absorbe à 405 nm. Pour réaliser le test, ajouter un volume de Pyrochrome® à un volume d'échantillon, puis incuber le mélange réactionnel à 37 °C. La vitesse de la production de pNA augmente avec la concentration d'endotoxines dans l'échantillon. Le test Pyrochrome® peut être utilisé de deux manières pour quantifier la concentration d'endotoxines (5). Avec la méthode cinétique, on détermine le temps nécessaire pour atteindre une certaine absorbance à 405 nm (temps de réaction). Plus la concentration d'endotoxines est élevée, plus le temps de réaction est court. Le test requiert une instrumentation spécialisée pour incu

Lisato degli amebociti del *Limulus*

PYROCHROME®

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PYROCHROME®

per il rilevamento e la determinazione quantitativa delle endotossine batteriche Gram-negative (lipopolisaccaridi)

Se impiegato attentamente allo stesso modo della Food and Drug Administration (FDA) statunitense (1), il test dei lisati degli amebociti del *Limulus* (LAL), può sostituire il test dei pirogeni (test della febbre nei conigli) della U.S. Pharmacopeia (USP) per testare a prodotto finito i "farmaci iniettabili per uso umano (inclusi i prodotti biologici), i farmaci iniettabili per uso veterinario e i dispositivi medici." Il test LAL è indicato per la determinazione quantitativa di endotossina in materie prime (acqua inclusa) impiegate nella produzione e per il monitoraggio di processo dei livelli di endotossina. Il Bacterial Endotoxins Test (2) della farmacopea statunitense è il test LAL ufficiale a cui si fa riferimento in specifiche monografie USP ed è armonizzato ai capitoli equivalenti della farmacopea europea (EP) (3) e giapponese (JP) (4).

Breve descrizione del test

Il lisato degli amebociti del *Limulus* è un estratto acquoso di cellule ematiche (amebociti) del *Limulus polyphemus* o granchio da ferro della Florida. In presenza dell'endotossina, i fattori del LAL sono attivati in una cascata proteolitica che determina l'esclusione di un substrato peptidico artificiale e incolore presente nel LAL Pyrochrome®. La scissione proteolitica del substrato libera para-nitroanilina (pNA), di colore giallo, che assorbe la luce a 405 nm. Il test viene eseguito aggiungendo un volume di Pyrochrome® a un volume di campione in miscela nella reazione a 37 °C. Quanto maggiore è la concentrazione di endotossine nel campione, tanto più rapido sarà il tempo di reazione di pNA. Ai fini della determinazione quantitativa della concentrazione di endotossine, si misura il tempo necessario per raggiungere una densità ottica predeterminata (in genere 0,100 unità di assorbanza a 405–410 nm, a seconda della lunghezza d'onda del filtro o del monocromatore) in un lettore di microplastre a 37 °C. Questo tempo è definito "tempo di reazione" o "tempo di soglia" (T). Il tempo di reazione è inversamente proporzionale al logaritmo della concentrazione di endotossine. Questa relazione è descritta da una curva standard, che viene generata tracciando il logaritmo del tempo di reazione di una serie di soluzioni standard di endotossina rispetto al logaritmo della concentrazione di endotossina. Le concentrazioni di endotossine nei campioni sono quindi determinate mediante interpolazione dei loro tempi di reazione rispetto alla curva standard.

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Le sostanze o le apparecchiature che contengono endotossine possono causare interferenza nel test. L'interferenza può essere rilevata mediante il recupero di endotossina, maggiore o minore del previsto, a causa della presenza di componenti che influenzano la reazione del Pyrochrome® e stata stabilita. Tuttavia, il contatto prolungato o ripetuto del LAL con la cute ha provocato reazione allergica di Tipo I in alcuni individui (15). Pertanto, usare prudenza nella manipolazione di Pyrochrome®.

Reagente

Pyrochrome® viene confezionato in forma liofilizzata in fiale da 3,2 mL. Contiene un estratto acquoso di amebociti di *Limulus polyphemus*, stabilizzanti, tampone, substrato e substrato cromogenico.

Pyrochrome® non viene etichettato con una sensibilità specifica. La sensibilità in un dato test (indicata con λ) è la concentrazione più bassa di endotossina utilizzata per costruire la curva standard. La sensibilità maggiore (λ) di Pyrochrome® è pari a 0,001 EU/mL in un dosaggio cinetico a punto finale e 0,005 EU/mL in un dosaggio cinetico. L'interferenza può essere rilevata mediante il recupero di endotossina, maggiore o minore del previsto, a causa della presenza di componenti che influenzano la reazione di Pyrochrome® e stata stabilita. Tuttavia, il contatto prolungato o ripetuto del LAL con la cute ha provocato reazione allergica di Tipo I in alcuni individui (15). Pertanto, usare prudenza nella manipolazione di Pyrochrome®.

Procedura di ricostituzione

1. Picchiettare leggermente la fiala di Pyrochrome® per far cadere sul fondo i residui di materiale. Eliminare l'etichetta di sigillo (argento). Non contaminare l'imboccatura della fiala. Togliere il tappo e gettarlo; non iniettare attraverso il tappo e non rirtilizzarlo. Una piccola quantità di polvere di Pyrochrome® può rimanere sul tappo.
2. Ricostituire Pyrochrome® con 3,2 mL di tampone Pyrochrome® o Glucashield® (disponibile presso Associates of Cape Cod, Inc.) mediante una pipetta tarata per garantire sensibilità pari a 0,001 EU/mL in un lettore di microplastre, è necessario ricostituire Pyrochrome® con Glucashield®. In un lettore di proverbi è possibile raggiungere questa sensibilità con il tampone CSE (fornito con Pyrochrome® che con il tampone Glucashield®. Dato che sono necessari alcuni minuti perché il granulato si sciolga, mescolare delicatamente (senza bolle) per 5 minuti per ottenere un ampio prodotto omogeneo, evitando tuttavia di miscelarlo vigorosamente per non creare una quantità eccessiva di schiuma e causare perdita di sensibilità. Coprire la fiala con Parafilm M® e conservarla a 2–8 °C per 15 minuti per non viene utilizzata. Pyrochrome® deve essere usato entro 8 ore dalla ricostituzione.

Condizioni di conservazione

Il Pyrochrome® liofilizzato è relativamente stabile y, si almacena adeguatamente, mantenendo tale su attivato fino alla data di scadenza indicata sull'etichetta. Conservare il prodotto a 2–8 °C. Temperature superiori a 37 °C possono provocare un rapido deterioramento del Pyrochrome® liofilizzato, mediante la sua perdita di sensibilità e da un marcato ingiallimento del prodotto. Pyrochrome® è spedito in contenitori isolati per mantenere la temperatura di refrigerazione. Prima della ricostituzione, Pyrochrome® è normalmente trasparente e leggermente opalescente. Qualche lotto potrebbe presentare una leggera e uniforme torbidità. La presenza di piccole fibre o filamenti non indica contaminazione né compromette l'attività dei prodotto; tuttavia, un deposito o un flocculato grossolano o eccessivamente giallo indicano deterioramento e in tal caso non si deve usare il reagente. Il Pyrochrome® ricostituito è meno stabile del Pyrochrome® liofilizzato e, pertanto, deve essere conservato per non più di 8 ore a 2-8 °C. Tenere presente che, per raggiungere la massima sensibilità, potrebbe essere necessario l uso di reagente appena ricostituito. Il Pyrochrome® ricostituito non può essere congelato.

Raccolta e preparazione dei campioni

I campioni devono essere raccolti asetticamente in contenitori esenti da endotossine (vedere la sezione "Rimozione delle endotossine"). Contenitori depirogenati o di contenitori in plastica, sterili e monouso, in polistirene o polietilene tereftalato (PET) per ridurre al minimo il rischio di contaminazione da endotossine. Le fiale di polistirene (PS) dei contenitori, Non tutti i contenitori in plastica sono esenti da endotossina rilevabile. Inoltre, le sostanze estraibili da alcune materie plastiche possono interferire con il test. Per determinare l'idoneità della vetreria, selezionare a caso alcuni contenitori di un lotto, risciacquarli con un piccolo volume di reagente acqua per LAL (LRW), lasciarli riposare a temperatura ambiente per un'ora e analizzare la soluzione di risciacquo come se si trattasse di un campione. La soluzione di risciacquo deve contenere una concentrazione di endotossina considerevolmente inferiore alla più bassa concentrazione standard da utilizzare nel test. Inoltre, la soluzione di risciacquo deve ne inibire né attivare il test; ciò va determinato mediante recupero di una quantità nota di endotossina aggiunta al campione. Il pH della miscela di reazione (un volume di campione e di campione miscelato con un ugual volume di Pyrochrome®) deve essere compreso tra 6 e 8. Correggere il pH del campione con HCl, NaOH o tampone (vedere la sezione successiva). Diluire il campione con LRW, di colore giallo, che assorbe la luce a 405 nm. In questo adattamento cromogenico del dosaggio LAL, la concentrazione del coagulogeno viene ridotta mediante diluizione per ridurre al minimo l'interferenza quando il substrato cromogenico viene aggiunto al LAL. Pertanto, quando l'endotossina viene aggiunta al reagente LAL cromogenico, si sviluppa colore invece che torbidità o gelificazione con formazione di coagulo. In tutte le versioni del dosaggio LAL (metodo gel-clot, turbidimetrico, cromogenico), quanto maggiore è la concentrazione di endotossine presente nella miscela di reazione, tanto più rapido è il tempo di reazione (normalmente 37 °C) para determinare la densità ottica o il tempo di reazione. Il tempo di reazione è inversamente proporzionale alla concentrazione di endotossine, menor necesario per raggiungere una densità ottica predeterminata