

# LIMULUS AMEBOCYTE LYSATE

PYROTELL®

Multitest Vial

for the Detection and Quantitation 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 used for the U.S. pharmaceutical (USP) Pyrogen Test (rabbit fever test) and product testing of "human injectable drugs (including biological products), animal injectable drugs, and medical devices." The LAL test is recommended for the quantification 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 test reference in specific USP monographs.

## Summary of Test

*Limulus amebocyte lysate* is an aqueous extract of blood (amebocytes) from the horse-shoe crab, *Limulus polyphemus*. The LAL test is performed by adding 0.1 mL reconstituted Pyrotell to 0.1 mL of the test specimen in a 10 x 75 mm depyrogenated, flint (soda lime) glass, reaction tube. The reaction solution is mixed thoroughly and placed immediately in a dry block incubator or noncirculating water bath at 37 °C for 60 ± 2 minutes. At the end of the incubation period, the tube is removed from the incubator and inverted. If a gel is formed and remains intact in the bottom of the reaction tube after inversion of 180°, the test is positive; the concentration of endotoxin in the tube is greater than or equal to the sensitivity of the Pyrotell. Any other state of the reaction mixture constitutes a negative test indicating an endotoxin concentration less than the Pyrotell sensitivity. Even if a gel is formed but breaks or collapses during the inversion, the test is negative. The LAL test is rapid, specific, easy to perform, and highly sensitive. Pyrotell can detect as little as 0.03 Endotoxin Units (EU) per mL using the gel-clot technique.

## History and Biologic Principle

Howell described the clotting of *Limulus* blood in 1885 (3). In the 1950's, Bang at the Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole, MA, discovered that gram negative bacteria cause *Limulus* blood to clot (4). Levin and Bang later determined that the reaction is enzymatic and that the enzymes are located in granules in the ameboocytes (5). They showed that clotting is initiated by a unique structural component of the bacterial cell wall called endotoxin or lipopolysaccharide (6). Current understanding is that the reaction leading to clot formation is a cascade of enzyme activation steps. While the complete reaction is not understood, the last step is well described. Clotting protein (coagulogen) is cleaved by activated clotting enzyme; the insoluble cleavage products coalesce by ionic interaction to form the gel matrix. More information about the LAL reaction and its applications is available in the literature (7, 8, 9).

## Reagent

Pyrotell *Limulus Amebocyte Lysate* (LAL) is packaged in lyophilized form in 2, and 5 mL/vial sizes. Pyrotell contains only an aqueous extract of ameboocytes of *L. polyphemus*, 1.5% v/v of 25% human serum albumin (stabilizer), 3% NaCl, and other appropriate ions. No preservatives, buffers, or other ingredients have been added.

Associates of Cape Cod, Inc. offers individual lots of Pyrotell in sensitivities ranging from 0.03 to 0.5 EU/mL based on the USP Endotoxin Reference Standard (also referred to as the reference standard endotoxin or RSE). Sensitivity,  $\lambda$ , is the minimum concentration of RSE that produces a gel clot under standard conditions. The lot sensitivity, EU/mL, is printed on the vial and package labels. Specify the sensitivity desired when placing an order.

Use Pyrotell for in vitro diagnostic purposes only. Do not use it for the detection of endotoxin. The toxicity of this reagent has not been determined; thus, caution should be exercised when handling Pyrotell.

## Reconstitute Pyrotell as follows:

1. Gently tap the vial of Pyrotell to cause loose LAL to fall to the bottom of the vial. Remove the crimp seal and break the vacuum by lifting the gray stopper. Do not contaminate the tip of the vial. Do not inject through or reuse the stopper. A small amount of LAL left on the stopper will not affect the test. Cover the vial with Parafilm™ (American National Can™) when not in use.

2. Reconstitute Pyrotell with AlR Reagent Water (LRW, see "Test Reagents") or compatible buffer (Associates of Cape Cod, Inc.). Add 2.0 or 5.0 mL as indicated on the vial label. The lyophilized LAL pellet will go to solution within a few minutes. Before use, gently mix the contents of the vial to ensure homogeneity. Mixing too vigorously may cause excessive foam which can cause a loss of sensitivity.

**Storage Conditions**  
Reconstituted Pyrotell is relatively heat stable and, if kept refrigerated, will retain full activity through the expiration date of the vial label. Upon receipt, store the product at -20 to +8°C. Temperatures below -20°C should be avoided, leading to a loss of vaccine and potential contamination of Pyrotell. If Pyrotell is stored at temperatures above the expiration date of the lyophilized LAL, it should be lost as sensitivity and a distinct yellowing of the product. Pyrotell is shipped with cold packs in insulated containers to protect against high temperatures.

Reconstituted Pyrotell 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 or a reaction with the product. Pyrotell will not contain any glass or metal particles.

**Specimen Collection and Preparation**  
Specimens should be collected aseptically in non-pyrogenic containers. Reused, depyrogenated glassware or sterile, disposable, polyethylene plastic containers are recommended to minimize adsorption of endotoxin to container surfaces. Not all plastic containers are free of detectable endotoxin and an extraneous substance from some types may interfere with the LAL test. Components (such as endotoxin from a bath) may be rinsed with a small volume of LRW (room temperature for one hour) and the rinsate tested as a specimen to determine whether or not the bath is acceptable.

The pH of the reaction mixture (sample added to Pyrotell) should be 6.0 to 8.0. Adjust the pH of the specimen with HCl or NaOH (free of detectable endotoxin) or compatible buffer (See #3 below). Dilute concentrated HCl or NaOH with LRW to normalities that will not lead to significant dilution of the test specimen or loss of endotoxin than its limit. In this example, the specimen concentration is 1 mg/mL and the desired or predetermined endotoxin limit for the specimen is 3 EU/mL (see "Limitations of Procedure"). The limit expressed in EU/mL, for the individual sensitivity:

5. Vortex-type mixer.

- 6. *Parafilm M™*: The side in contact with the paper backing is normally nonpyrogenic.
- 7. Nonpyrogenic test tubes with adequate capacity for making dilutions of endotoxin standard or test specimen. See "Specimen Collection and Preparation" for other containers suitable for dilutions.
- 8. Hot air oven with 250°C capacity for depyrogenation of glassware. Commonly used minimum time and temperature settings are 30 minutes at 250°C (2, 11).

**Controls**  
Controls are necessary to ensure a valid test. Recommended procedures are detailed by the FDA and (1, 2).

1. **Endotoxin controls**

1. **Endotoxin standard series**, prepare a fresh set of dilutions from the stock endotoxin solution each day. Make dilutions such that a final series of twofold dilutions will bracket the sensitivity ( $\lambda$ ) of the Pyrotell. Concentrations of  $\lambda$ , 0.5 $\lambda$ , and 0.25 $\lambda$  are recommended to confirm Pyrotell sensitivity. Use as few dilutions as possible with appropriate pipet volumes to maximize accuracy.

b. **Positive control** may be used in the absence of a series of standard concentrations in certain circumstances. Refer to the FDA guideline (1) under "Routine Testing of Drugs by the LAL Test" for details. The positive control concentration should be  $\geq \lambda$ .

c. **Positive product controls** are inhibition controls and consist of the specimen or dilution of specimen to which standard endotoxin is added. The final concentration of the added endotoxin in the test specimen should be  $\geq \lambda$ .

d. **Negative controls** should be included with each batch of specimens tested. During product validation or inhibition/enhancement testing (1, 2), the specimen used to dilute standard endotoxin is also treated as a negative control.

**Specimen Preparation for Limits Test or Assay**

Either dilute the specimen to the required concentration to perform a limits (pass/fail) test or perform an assay by testing a series of concentrations (examples of the two types of tests are given in "Results and Interpretation"). Dilutions may be made in test tubes and the test volume transferred to the reaction tubes, or dilutions may be made directly in the reaction tubes to leave the test volume, 0.1 mL, in each tube. The dilution tested for a limits test is determined from the sensitivity of the Pyrotell and the endotoxin limit for the specimen. Refer to "Limitations of Procedure" or to the FDA guideline (1) for explanation and calculation of Minimum Value (MVC) and Maximum Valid Dilution (MVD).

**Performing the Test**

Consistent technique is necessary to obtain satisfactory results.

1. Add 0.1 mL of reconstituted Pyrotell to each reaction tube containing 0.1 mL test specimen or control. Use a graduated (0.1 mL increments) pipet, or an automatic or repeating pipet. Add Pyrotell to the negative control(s) first and from the lowest to highest concentration in each test series where carryover may be a problem. A fresh pipet or pipet tip is recommended for each entry into the Pyrotell vial. Shake the rack of tubes vigorously for 20 to 30 seconds to ensure thorough mixing. If there are only a few tubes, each may be vortex mixed for 1 to 2 seconds. Failure to mix adequately is a common cause of unsatisfactory test results.

2. Place the reaction tubes in a 37 °C water bath or dry bath for 60 ± 2 minutes. The reaction begins when LAL is added to the test specimen but does not proceed at an optimum rate until the test volume reaches 37°C. If large numbers of specimens are tested in parallel, the test should be batched and started at intervals that permit the reading of each within the time limit.

3. Do not disturb the reaction tubes during the incubation period. The gel-forming reaction is delicate and may be irreversibly terminated if the tubes are handled, agitated or vibrated. Do not use a water bath with a stirrer or other source of vibration. Submerge tubes above the level of the reaction mixture but not so deeply that they float or move about in the racks.

4. Remove and read reaction tubes one at a time. Do not wipe the tubes dry or bump them against the side of the rack during removal. Invert the tube in a single motion; do not pause half way in the inversion unless it is obvious that the gel has not formed. A positive test is indicated by the formation of a gel which does not collapse when the tube is inverted.

**Results and Interpretation**

**Example of Standard Endotoxin Series**

Confirm the sensitivity of the Pyrotell and qualify the laboratory or technician by performing the LAL test on a series of known standard endotoxin concentrations (1, 2) that bracket the labeled sensitivity (i.e.,  $\lambda$ , 0.5 $\lambda$ , and 0.25 $\lambda$ ). For this example, the Pyrotell sensitivity ( $\lambda$ ) is 0.25

EU/mL. The endpoint of 0.125 EU/mL corresponds to the Pyrotell sensitivity. The test is positive if a gel is formed and remains intact in the bottom of the reaction tube after inversion of 180°.

**Example of Positive Control**

For this example, the Pyrotell sensitivity is 0.25 EU/mL. The endpoint of 0.125 EU/mL corresponds to the Pyrotell sensitivity. The test is positive if a gel is formed and remains intact in the bottom of the reaction tube after inversion of 180°.

**Example of Negative Control**

For this example, the Pyrotell sensitivity is 0.25 EU/mL. The endpoint of 0.125 EU/mL corresponds to the Pyrotell sensitivity. The test is negative if no gel is formed.

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## Italiano

### LISATO DI AMEBOCITI DI LIMULUS

PYROTELL®

Fiala multistet  
per il rilevamento e la quantificazione di endotossine  
batterica Gram-negativa (lipopolisaccaridi)

); dadurch ist die Empfindlichkeit bestätigt. Der Test wäre gültig (die Empfindlichkeit bestätigt), wenn der Endpunkt zwischen 0,125 und 0,5 EU/ml. (der Fehler der Methode) läge. Um einen Endpunkt von 0,125 EU/ml anzugeben, müßt der Gehalt 0,06 EU/ml. in der Testflüssigkeit in der Serie vorhanden und negativ sein.

Bei Mehrfachbestimmungen wird die Empfindlichkeit als geometrischer Mittelwert (GM) der einzelnen Empfindlichkeiten ausgedrückt:

GM = antilog( $\Sigma \log f_i$ )

wobei  $\Sigma f_i$  = Summe der Log-Endpunkte und  $f_i$  = Anzahl der Endpunkte bei Mehrfach bestimmen ist.

Die LRW-Negativ-Kontrolle sollte einen negativen Test ergeben. Wenn die Negativkontrolle positive sind, LRV-Glucalose oder Pyrotell kontaminiert. Die Mischung sollte klar sein und keine erhöhte Viskosität zeigen „Schneeblocken“ oder „Flocken“ oder Zeichen einer Endotoxin-Kontamination, die spricht auf das Pyrotell Empfindlichkeit ist.

Es keine Endotoxin-Reaktion vorhanden (1), kann eine Positivkontrolle mitgeführt werden. Die Positivkontrolle mit 23 entspricht dem Gehalt von 0,5 EU/ml im oben angeführten Beispiel. Fällt die Positivkontrolle negativ aus, ist die Pyrotell-Empfindlichkeit geringer als die doppelt gezecknete Empfindlichkeit, und der Test der Probe ist ungültig. Ein Verlust der Empfindlichkeit kann darauf hindeuten, daß das Pyrotell zerfallen ist, das Endotoxin ein Aktivität verloren hat (oft aufgrund von Adsorption an die Behälteroberfläche) oder der Test nicht ordnungsgemäß durchgeführt wurde.

**Beschafft eines Grenzwert-Test/Paus/Fall - Bestanden/Nicht bestanden**

Es ist möglich, die Konzentration einer Probe durch die gezeckte Empfindlichkeit von Pyrotell zu bestimmen, wobei das Ergebnis anzeigt, ob die Test-Probe mehr oder weniger Endotoxin enthält als ihr Grenzwert angibt. In diesem Beispiel beträgt die Konzentration der Probe 1 mg/ml. und der gewünschte bzw. vorherbestimmte Endotoxin-Grenzwert für die Probe beträgt 0,5 EU/ml (siehe Abschnitt „Beschränkungen des Verfahrens“). Der Grenzwert, in EU/ml. ausgedrückt,

(3 EU/ml) (1 mg/ml) = 3 EU/ml.

ist höher als die Empfindlichkeit von Pyrotell, 0,25 EU/ml., weshalb die Probe verdorben werden muß, damit ein Pass/Fail-Test durchgeführt werden kann. Die Verdorbnung der Probe bestimmen, die ein „Bestanden“ (< 3 EU/ml) oder „Nicht bestanden“ ( $\geq 3$  EU/ml.) des Tests anzeigen, indem der Endotoxin-Grenzwert in EU/ml. durch die Empfindlichkeit des LAL dividiert wird:

3 EU/ml.: 0,25 EU/ml. = 12.

Ein Test Probe mit 11 LRV mischen, eine Verdünnung von 1:12 zu erhalten, und den Test durchführen. Das Ergebnis zeigt an, ob die Probe den Test bei einem Grenzwert von 3 EU/ml. bestellt. Positive Produktkontrollen läuft man mit derselben Verdünnung wie die Probe mitauf, um negative Ergebnisse auszuschließen.

**Beispiel einer Probenanalyse**

Endotoxin wird bei einer Analyse quantifiziert, indem der Endpunkt in einer Serie von Probenbestimmungen bestimmt wird. Im folgenden Beispiel ist die Probe mit LRV verdunnt und die Verdünnungen in der Tabelle werden getestet;  $\lambda$  ist 0,25 EU/ml. Die Ergebnisse werden als positiv oder negativ verzeichnet.

**Verdünnung der Untersuchungsprobe Testergebnis**

unverdünnt +  
1 : 2 +  
1 : 4 +  
1 : 8 -  
1 : 16 -  
1 : 32 -  
Negativkontrolle -

Um die Konzentration des Endotoxins in der Probe zu berechnen, die Pyrotell-Empfindlichkeit ( $\lambda$ ) durch den Kehrwert der Verdünnung am Endpunkt dividiert:

Konz. =  $\lambda / (1 / \lambda)$  = 0,25 / 0,125 = 1 EU/ml.

Die Konzentration der Mehrfachbestimmungen wird als geometrischer Mittelwert ausgedrückt.

Eine positive Produktkontrolle (Untersuchungsprobe mit 23 Standard-Endotoxin versetzt mit vorhanden sei und positiv ausfällt, um falsch-negative Ergebnisse auszuschließen.

Wenn die positive Produktkontrolle negativ und die Postpositivkontrolle positiv ist, steht (benenn) die Probe den LAL-Test. Die Probe sollte mit einer höheren Verdünnung erneut getestet werden (die MZK nicht überschreiten; siehe Abschnitt „Beschränkungen des Verfahrens“).

**Beschränkungen des Verfahrens**

Das Verfahren wird durch die Fähigkeit von Proben beschränkt, den LAL-Test zu hemmen oder zu verstören. Wenn das Verfahren bei einer Probenkontrolle (MWD) überhalb der minimal zulässigen Konzentration (National Can<sup>TM</sup>), nicht validiert werden kann (1, 2), kann der LAL-Test nicht als Ersatz für den USP-Probengetest dienen. Die MZK wird folgendermaßen berechnet:

MZK =  $\text{Endotoxin-Toleranzgrenze}$

Die Endotoxin-Toleranzgrenze (1) beträgt 0,2 EU/kg für Arzneimittel, die intrathekal verabreicht werden, und 0,5 EU/kg für alle anderen Arzneimittel. Der Grenzwert für Medizinprodukte wird pro ml. Extraktionsfähigkeit oder Spülwasser ausgedrückt, wie in der FDA-Richtlinie beschrieben (1). Bei Medizinprodukten, die mit Liquor cerebrospinalis in Kontakt kommen, beträgt der Grenzwert 0,06 EU/ml.; für alle anderen Produkte beträgt der Grenzwert 0,5 EU/ml. Der Grenzwert für flüssige Medizinprodukte ist identisch mit dem für Arzneimittel.

Trypsin verursacht falsch-positive Ergebnisse, es sei denn, es wird vor dem Test durch Hitzebehandlung denaturiert. Stoffe wie Blut, Serum und Plasma sollten vor dem Test behandelt werden (12).

**Zu erwartende Werte**

Endotoxin kann quantifiziert werden, wenn die Konzentration höher als oder gleich der Pyrotell-Empfindlichkeit ist. Aus biologischen Quellen gewonnene Stoffe können meistbare Endotoxinmengen enthalten, sogar nach einer biochemischen Reinigung, Wasser, das mit Hilfe von Destillation, Umkehrosmose oder Ultrafiltration gewonnen wurde, enthält u. weniger Endotoxin als festgestellt werden kann, solange der Reinigungsvergang ordnungsgemäß durchgeführt und das Wasser nicht nach der Herstellung kontaminiert wird.

**Charakteristika der Methode**

Die Fehlerbreite der Festgel-Methode beträgt plus oder minus einer zweifachen Verdünnung am Endpunkt der Analyse.

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