# TECHNICAL MANUAL

# Mouse TNF-alpha (Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha) ColorStep ELISA Kit

- **SKU CODE:** AEFI03742
- **SIZE:** 48T/96T
- **DETECTION PRINCIPLE:** Sandwich
- **TIME:** 120 Minutes
- **RUO:** Research-Use-Only

Revised: 02/2026

# Mouse TNF-alpha (Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha) ColorStep ELISA Kit

*Please read entire manual carefully before starting experiment. DO NOT mix reagents and use reagents from different kits or batches to prevent assay failure.*

## Table of Contents


**1. Key features and Sample Types .....3**

**2. Storage & Expiry .....3**

**3. Description and Principle .....4**

**4. Kit Contents.....5**

**5. Precautions .....6**

**6. Assay Summary .....7**

**7. Sample Preparation .....7**

**7.1. Protein Quantification (Optional).....11**

**8. Standard and Reagent Preparation.....12**

**9. Assay Procedure .....14**

**10. Data Analysis .....15**

**11. Typical Data & Standard Curve .....16**

**12. ELISA Troubleshooting.....19**

# 1. Key features and Sample Types

**Detection method:**

Sandwich

**Sample Type:**

Serum, Plasma, and other biological fluids

**Reactivity:**

Mouse

**Range:**

3.906-250 pg/mL (1pg=270mIU)

**Sensitivity:**

2.344 pg/mL

**Storage:**

See Kit Contents on section 4

**Expiry:**

See Kit Label

# 2. Storage & Expiry

Assay Genie ELISA Kits are shipped on ice packs. Please store this ELISA Kit according to the directions in the kit table of contents on section 4.

# 3. Description and Principle

This ColorStep is a quantitative pre-coated ELISA kit with color-coded reagents and is completed in 120 minutes with a 2-wash protocol. A specific anti-tag antibody is pre-coated on the ColorStep plate to capture an affinity-tagged monoclonal antibody that binds to the target analyte. After adding a color-coded antibody mix and samples or standards, a capture–analyte–biotinylated detection antibody complex is formed if Mouse TNF-alpha (Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha) is present. Following incubation, unbound components are washed away, and HRP-conjugated Streptavidin is added to bind the biotin-labelled detection antibody.

After a final wash, TMB substrate is added, producing a blue colour that turns yellow upon addition of stop solution. The optical density at 450 nm is measured, and Mouse TNF-alpha (Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha) concentration is determined using a standard curve. Signal intensity is directly proportional to analyte concentration

**This dual function kit includes validated Bradford Reagent to quantify total protein concentration for accurate sample normalization.**

# 4. Kit Contents

Each kit contains reagents for either 48 or 96 assays, please store the reagents per conditions below.

| No | Component Name | Size 48T | Size 96T | Storage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | ELISA Microplate (Dismountable) | 8×6 | 8×12 | Place the test strips into a sealed foil bag with the desiccant. Store for 1 month at 2-8°C; Store for 12 months at -20°C. |
| 2 | Lyophilized Standard | 1 vial | 2 vial | Place the standards into a sealed foil bag with the desiccant. Store for 1 month at 2-8°C; Store for 12 months at -20°C. |
| 3 | Cap/Det Ab (Concentrated) | 60 ul | 120 ul | 2-8°C (Avoid direct light) |
| 4 | Antibody Storage Solution | 3 ml | 6 ml | 2-8°C (Avoid direct light) |
| 5 | HRP-Streptavidin (Ready to use, orange) | 5 ml | 10 ml | 2-8°C (Avoid direct light) |
| 6 | TMB Substrate | 5 ml | 10 ml | 2-8°C (Avoid direct light) |
| 7 | SampleDilution Buffer (blue) | 20 ml | 20 ml | 2-8°C |
| 8 | Stop Solution | 5 ml | 5 ml | 2-8°C |
| 9 | Wash Buffer(25X) | 15 ml | 30 ml | 2-8°C |
| 10 | Plate Sealer | 3 pieces | 5 pieces | - |
| 11 | Technical Manual | 1 copy | 1 copy | - |
| 12 | Bradford Reagent | 1 vial | 1 vial | 4°C |

Please note that the liquid bottles contain slightly more reagent than indicated on the label. Please use a pipette to accurately measure out required amounts.

### Additional materials required:

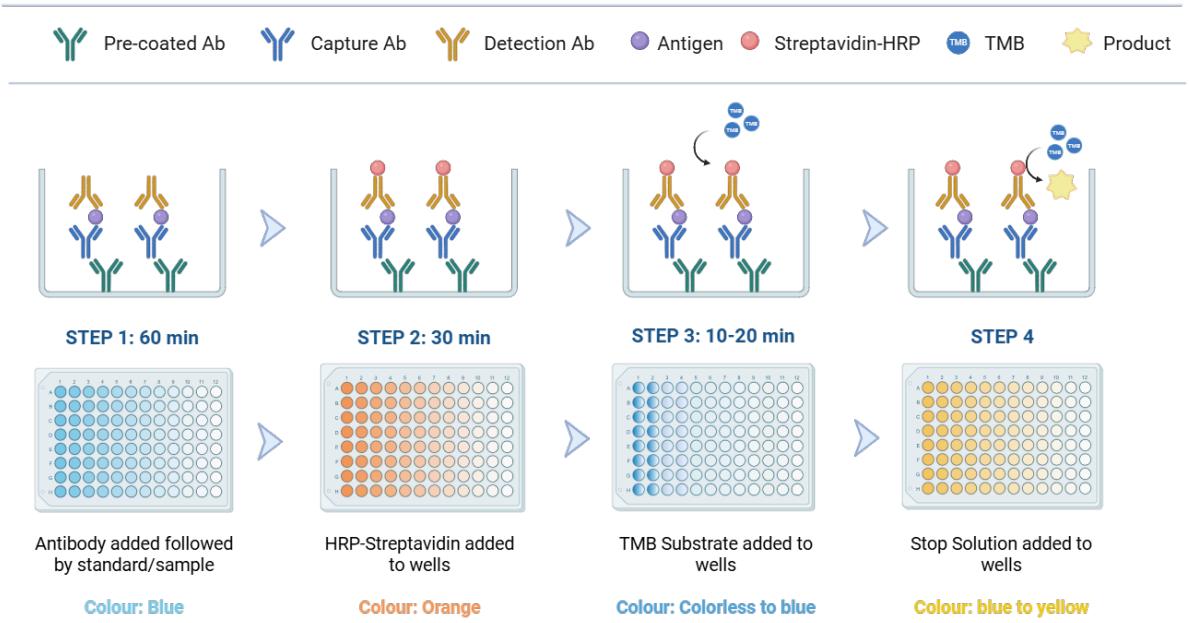
1. 37°C incubator.
2. Plate Reader with 450nm filter.
3. Precision pipettes and disposable pipette tips.
4. Distilled water.
5. Disposable tubes for sample dilution.
6. Absorbent paper.

## 5. Precautions

1. This kit is for research purposes only and not for diagnostics or therapeutic uses.
2. Store all components as listed in this manual. Do not use the ELISA Kit after its expiration date.
3. Allow all reagents and samples to reach room temperature before use.
4. Ensure unopened and unused plates are kept dry to avoid contamination.
5. Before using the kit, centrifuge tubes to spin down standard and/or antibody.
6. Prepare all reagents, samples and standards as directed in this manual.
7. Duplicate wells are recommended for both standard and sample testing.
8. Do not let the microplate wells dry during the assay.
9. Maintain consistent incubation times and temperatures as variations can affect results.
10. Do not reuse tips and tubes to avoid cross contamination.
11. Avoid using the reagents from different batches together.

# 6. Assay Summary

## 120 Minutes Protocol




# 7. Sample Preparation

The procedures outlined in this document are provided as general recommendations for sample preparation in ELISA assays. Due to the variability of biological samples and specific assay requirements, users are advised to optimize protocols based on their own experimental conditions.

***Note**: For information regarding validation data in specific samples, please contact our Technical Support Team at techsupport@assaygenie.com.*

## General Considerations

To prevent denaturation or degradation of target proteins, it is recommended to process samples promptly and store them under appropriate conditions.

- **Storage Conditions**:
  - **Short-term**: 2-8 °C for up to 5 days.
  - **Medium-term**: -20 °C for up to 6 months.
  - **Long-term**: -80 °C or cryopreservation in liquid nitrogen.
- **Thawing Protocol**: Frozen samples should be thawed rapidly in a 15-25 °C water bath to minimize ice crystal-induced damage. Thawed samples can be analyzed immediately or stored temporarily at 2-8 °C.
- **Freeze-Thaw Cycles**: Repeated freeze-thaw cycles should be strictly avoided due to their detrimental effect on protein stability.

### A. Blood-Derived Samples

- **Serum:** Allow whole blood to coagulate at room temperature (2 h) or 2-8 °C overnight. Centrifuge at 1000 × g for 20 min and collect the supernatant. Store or use immediately.
- **Plasma:** Collect in anticoagulant tubes (EDTA, citrate, or heparin), mix gently, and centrifuge within 30 min at 1000 × g, 2-8 °C for 15 min. Store or assay as needed.

### B. Tissue Homogenates

Tissue samples should be homogenized prior to use. Avoid buffers containing NP-40, Triton X-100, or DTT, as these strongly inhibit the assay. We recommend using 50 mM Tris + 0.9% NaCl + 0.1% SDS, pH 7.3.

The recommended protocol is as follows:

- **Sample Collection and Washing**
  - Place the target tissue on ice.
  - Rinse the tissue with pre-cooled PBS buffer (0.01 M, pH 7.4) to remove residual blood.
  - Weigh the tissue for further processing.
- **Homogenization**
  - Homogenize the tissue on ice using an appropriate lysis buffer.
  - The lysate volume should correspond to the tissue weight; typically, 9 mL PBS is used per 1 g of tissue. It is recommended to add protease inhibitors to the PBS (e.g., 1 mM PMSF). ***Note:*** *PBS buffer or mild RIPA lysis buffer can be used for homogenization. When using RIPA, adjust pH to 7.3.*
- **Cell Disruption**
  - Further disrupt the tissue using ultrasonic homogenization or freeze–thaw cycles.
    - Ultrasonic homogenization: Keep samples on an ice bath during sonication to avoid overheating.
    - Freeze–thaw cycles*:* Repeat twice for effective lysis.
- **Centrifugation and Storage**
  - Centrifuge the homogenate at 5000 × g for 5 minutes.
  - Collect the supernatant for immediate analysis, or aliquot and store at –20°C or –80°C for future assays.
- **Protein Concentration Measurement**
  - Determine total protein concentration using the Bradford Reagent included in this kit.
  - For ELISA assays, the total protein concentration should generally be 1–3 mg/mL.
  - Tissues with high endogenous peroxidase levels (e.g., liver, kidney, pancreas) may react with TMB substrate, causing false positives. If this occurs, treat samples with 1% $H_2O_2$ for 15 minutes before repeating the assay.

***Note:*** *Liver, kidney, and pancreas samples often contain high levels of endogenous peroxidase, which may react with the chromogenic substrate at elevated sample concentrations, potentially resulting in false positive signals.*

*If analysis of these tissues is required, a gradient dilution assay is recommended. A proportional decrease in signal with increasing dilution typically indicates minimal interference and supports the accuracy of the results.*

*To further minimise potential interference, samples can be pre-treated with 1% hydrogen peroxide ($H_2O_2$) for 15 minutes prior to testing. To prepare the treatment solution, add 1 µl of pure $H_2O_2$ to 100 µl of sample (1% v/v).*

**C. Cell Culture Supernatant**

Centrifuge the sample at 2500 rpm for 5 minutes at 2–8°C. Carefully collect the clarified cell culture supernatant for immediate analysis, or aliquot and store it at –80°C for future assays.

**D. Cell Lysates**

- **Suspension Cell Lysate:** Centrifuge the cell suspension at 2500 rpm for 5 minutes at 2–8°C and collect the cell pellet. Wash the pellet with pre-cooled PBS (0.01 M, pH 7.4) and mix gently. Repeat centrifugation and discard the supernatant. Add 0.5–1 mL of cell lysis buffer containing an appropriate protease inhibitor (e.g., PMSF, final concentration: 1 mM). Lyse the cells on ice for 30–60 minutes or disrupt them using ultrasonic homogenization.
- **Adherent Cell Lysate:** Remove the supernatant and wash the cells three times with pre-cooled PBS. Add 0.5–1 mL of cell lysis buffer supplemented with an appropriate protease inhibitor (e.g., PMSF at a final concentration of 1 mmol/L). Scrape the adherent cells using a cell scraper and transfer the cell suspension to a centrifuge tube. Lyse the cells on ice for 30–60 minutes, or disrupt the cells by ultrasonic treatment.

Follow next steps for protein extraction and supernatant collection:

- **Protein Release and DNA Disruption**
    - During lysis, pipette gently or intermittently shake the tube to enhance protein extraction.
    - Mucilaginous material formed during lysis is DNA, which can be broken down by ultrasonic disruption (3–5 mm probe, 150–300 W, 3–5 seconds per cycle, with 30-second intervals for 1–2 minutes total).
- **Supernatant collection**
    - After lysis or ultrasonic treatment, centrifuge the lysate at 10,000 rpm for 10 minutes at 2–8°C. Collect the supernatant for immediate use or aliquot and store at –80°C for future assays.

***Notes:*** *Refer to the "Tissue Sample Notes" for additional buffer and inhibitor recommendations.*

**E. Other Sample Types**

For more information about how to process other sample types, (e.g., body fluids, breast milk & more), please contact our Tech Support Team at techsupport@assaygenie.com.

## 7.1. Protein Quantification (Optional)

To quantify total protein levels, use the Bradford Reagent included in this kit. Visit Bradford Protein Assay Protocol to view the full protocol.

# 8. Standard and Reagent Preparation

## Manual Washing

Discard the solution in the plate without touching the side of the wells. Clap the plate on absorbent filter paper or other absorbent material. Fill each well completely with 350µl wash buffer and soak for 1 to 2 mins, then aspirate contents from the plate, and clap the plate on absorbent filter paper or other absorbent material. Repeat this procedure for the designated number of washes.

## Automated Washing

Aspirate all wells, then wash plate with 350µl wash buffer. After the final wash, invert plate, and clap the plate on absorbent filter paper or other absorbent material. It is recommended that the washer is set for a soaking time of 1 minute.

***Note:*** *Set the height of the needles; be sure the fluid can be taken up completely.*

## Sample Dilution Guidelines

Determine the concentration of the target protein in the test sample and then select the optimal dilution factor to ensure the target protein concentration falls within the optimal detection range of the kit. Dilute the samples with the dilution buffer provided with the kit. Several dilution tests may be required to achieve the optimal results. The test samples must be well mixed with the dilution buffer. Standard and sample dilution should be performed before starting the experiment.

***Note:*** *Dilution may be necessary to minimize matrix effects. However, if the target concentration in the sample is very low, the pre-treated sample can be added directly to the assay without dilution.*

## Reagent Preparation

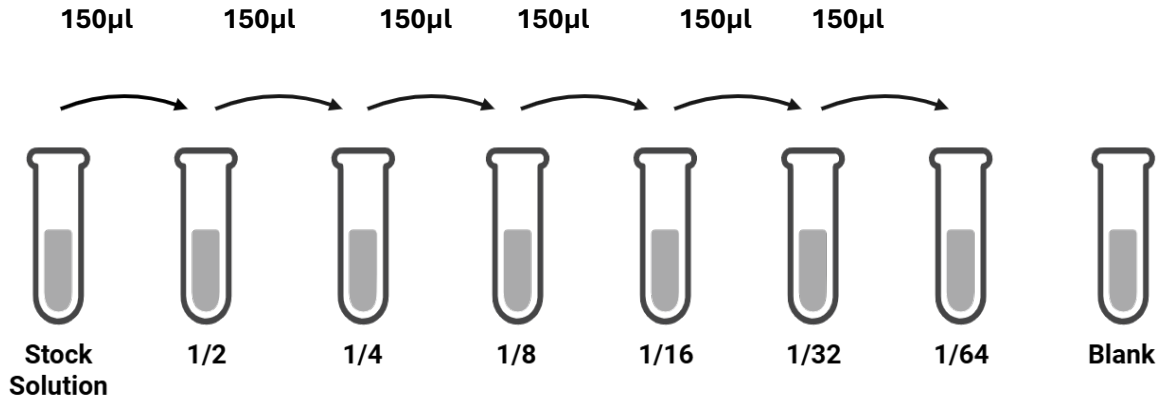
Bring all reagents and samples to room temperature 20 minutes before use (18 - 25°C). For repeated assays, please use only strips and standards required and store remaining reagents at the appropriate temperatures.

**A. Wash Buffer:**

Dilute 30 ml (15 ml for 48T) of Concentrated Wash Buffer into 750 ml (375 ml for 48T) of Wash Buffer with deionized or distilled water (recommended resistivity of ultrapure water is 18MΩ). Store unused solution at 4°C. If crystals have formed in the concentrate, warm at 40°C in water bath (Heating temperature should not exceed 50°C) and mix gently until crystals have completely dissolved. The solution should be cooled to room temperature before use.

**B. Standard Dilution:**

1. Centrifuge the standard tube for 1 min at 10,000 x g.
2. Add 0.5ml of Sample dilution buffer into one Standard tube (labelled as Stock Solution), keep the tube at room temperature for 10 min. Invert the tube several times to mix (or use a low-speed vortex mixer for 3 – 5 seconds).
3. Finally, centrifuge for 1 min at 1,000 x g to collect liquid at the bottom of the tube and remove bubbles. ***Note:*** If the standard vial concentration is different to the highest value in the range (please see page 3), please dilute using sample buffer to match highest range value to create stock solution.
4. Label 7 Eppendorf tubes with 1/2, 1/4, 1/8, 1/16, 1/32, 1/64 and blank respectively. Aliquot 150µl of the Sample dilution buffer into each tube. Add 150µl of the above (Stock Solution) standard solution into 1st tube and mix thoroughly. Transfer 150µl from 1st tube to 2nd tube and mix thoroughly. Transfer 150µl from 2nd tube to 3rd tube and mix thoroughly, and so on. Sample dilution buffer is used as blank control.




***Note:*** *The standard solutions are best used within 2 hours. The standard solution series should be kept at 4°C for up to 12 hours. Or store at -20 °C for up to 48 hours. Avoid repeated freeze-thaw cycles.*

## 9. Assay Procedure

1. **Reagent Preparation:** Before adding to the wells, equilibrate the TMB substrate for at least 30 mins at room temperature. When diluting samples and reagents, ensure they are mixed completely and evenly. It is recommended to plot a standard curve for each test.
2. **Plate Setup:** Set standard, pilot samples, control (blank) wells on the pre-coated plate respectively, and then, record their positions. It's recommended to measure each standard and sample in duplicate to decrease experimental errors.
3. **Cap/Det Ab and Standards/sample loading:** Add 50µl Cap/Det Ab into each well. Aliquot 50µl of zero tube, 1/2 tube, 1/4 tube, 1/8 tube, 1/16 tube, 1/32 tube, 1/64 tube and blank into each standard well. Then, add 50µl pilot samples into sample wells.
4. **First Incubation:** Immediately, gently tap the plate for 10s to ensure thorough mixing then incubate for 60 minutes at 37°C. ***Note:*** *Change the disposable tips for different samples and standards.*
5. **Washing:** Remove the cover, then aspirate the liquid in the plate or tap the plate on a clean absorbent paper two or three times. Add 300-350µl wash buffer into each well without immersion. Discard the liquid from the wells and tap on the absorbent paper again. Repeat the washing step two times.

6. **HRP-Streptavidin:** Add 100ul HRP-Streptavidin into each well.
7. **Second incubation:** Seal the plate and incubate for 30 minutes at 37°C.
8. **Washing:** Remove the cover and then wash plate with wash buffer five times. Read washing method in step 5.
9. **TMB Substrate**: Add 90µl TMB Substrate into each well, seal the plate and incubate at 37°C in dark within 10-20 minutes. Run the microplate reader and preheat for 15 min. ***Notes****: Please do not use the reagent reservoirs used by HRP couplings. The reaction time can be shortened or extended according to the actual colour change, but not more than 30 minutes. You can terminate the reaction when apparent gradient appeared in standard wells.*
10. **Stop:** Keep the liquid in the wells after staining. Add 50µl stop solution into each well. The colour will turn yellow immediately.
11. **OD Measurement**: Read the O.D. absorbance at 450nm in a microplate reader immediately. (If your microplate reader has a choice of correction wavelength, set it to 570nm or 630nm. Correct the read value to the OD450 value minus the OD570 or OD630 value. This way, the OD value of non-chromogenic substances can be corrected and removed, thus obtaining more accurate results. If the microplate reader does not have a 570nm or 630nm wavelength, the original OD450 value can be used.)

# 10. Data Analysis

Average the duplicate readings for each standard, control, and sample, then subtract the mean optical density of the zero standard. Construct a standard curve by plotting Mouse TNF-alpha (Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha) concentration on the y-axis against absorbance on the x-axis, and fit the data using an appropriate best-fit curve.

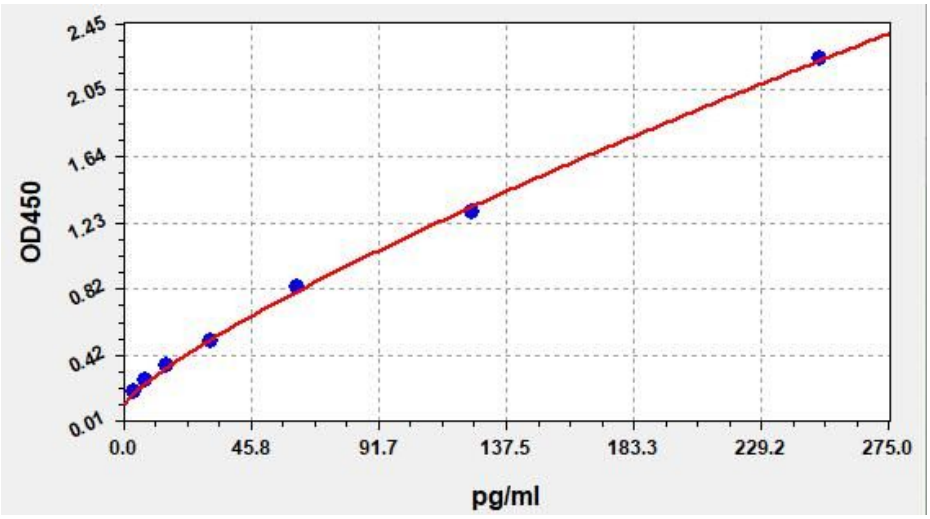
For diluted samples, multiply the concentration obtained from the standard curve by the corresponding dilution factor to determine the final concentration. Data analysis and curve fitting may be performed using suitable plotting software (e.g., CurveExpert).

***Note:*** *If the sample is added undiluted, the sample dilution caused by incubation of both the sample and antibody should be considered. In this case, the final concentration should be multiplied by 2 from the calculated value. If the sample is 1/100 diluted before adding the plate wells, the final concentration should be multiplied by 200 from the calculated value. The same principle applies for any other initial dilution factor.*

# 11. Typical Data & Standard Curve

### Standard Curve

Results of a typical standard run of an ELISA kit are shown below. This standard curve was generated at our lab for demonstration purpose only. Each user should obtain their own standard curve as per experiment.




### Specificity

This assay demonstrates high sensitivity and excellent specificity for the detection of Mouse TNF-alpha (Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha) . No significant cross-reactivity or interference was observed between Mouse TNF-alpha (Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha) and other known targets.

***Note:*** *Limited by current skills and knowledge, it is difficult for us to complete the cross-reactivity detection between Mouse TNF-alpha (Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha) and other analytes, therefore, cross reaction may still exist.*

### Recovery

The matrices listed below were spiked with a known concentration of Mouse TNF-alpha (Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha) , and recovery rates were determined by comparing the measured values to the expected concentrations in each sample.

| Matrix | Recovery Range (%) | Average (%) |
|---|---|---|
| **Serum (n = 5)** | 95-105 | 98 |
| **EDTA Plasma (n = 5)** | 86-101 | 92 |
| **Heparin Plasma (n = 5)** | 92-103 | 97 |

## Linearity

The linearity of this assay was evaluated by testing serial dilutions of samples spiked with known concentrations of Mouse TNF-alpha (Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha) . The results were assessed to determine the consistency of measured values across the dilution range.

| Sample | 1:2 | 1:4 | 1:8 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Serum (n = 5)** | 87-93% | 85-105% | 88-105% |
| **EDTA Plasma (n = 5)** | 85-101% | 82-98% | 85-94% |
| **Heparin Plasma (n = 5)** | 80-93% | 82-100% | 84-98% |

### Precision

- Intra-Assay: CV<8%
- Inter-Assay: CV<10%

**Stability**

The stability of Mouse TNF-alpha (Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha) was assessed by evaluating the loss of assay activity over time. Under recommended storage conditions, the activity loss of this kit remains below 10% throughout its shelf life.

| Sample | 37°C for 1 month | 4°C for 12 month |
|---|---|---|
| **Average (%)** | 80 | 95-100 |

To minimize variability and ensure optimal assay performance, operational procedures and laboratory conditions (particularly room temperature, humidity, and incubator settings) should be carefully controlled. For consistency, it is strongly recommended that the entire assay be conducted by the same operator from start to finish.

# 12. ELISA Troubleshooting

| Problem | Possible Causes | Solutions |
|---|---|---|
| **Standard curve without signal** | Incorrect reagent order; Mixed components from different kits; Missing reagents. | Ensure correct reagent order and use components from the same kit. Verify all reagents are added. |
| **Overflow OD** | Mixed components from different kits; Over-concentrated working solution. | Use correct components and prepare solutions at recommended concentrations. |
| **Poor standard curve** | Incorrect curve fitting model. | Try alternative curve fitting models. |
| **Samples without signal** | Sample concentration too low; Incompatible buffer; Incorrect preparation; Sample degradation or excessive freeze-thaw. | Reduce dilution or concentrate sample. Check buffer compatibility and follow proper preparation and storage. |
| **High CV%** | Precipitate formation; Unclean plate; Foaming; Uneven washing; Incomplete reagent mixing; Pipetting inconsistency. | Dilute samples if needed, avoid foaming, ensure uniform washing, mix reagents thoroughly, and use calibrated pipettes. |
| **Low standard signal** | Improperly reconstituted standards; Degraded standards; Incorrect pipetting; Expired kit; Improper storage; Over-dried wells. | Reconstitute standards properly, use fresh kits, follow storage recommendations, and prevent wells from drying. |
| **Slow colour development** | TMB not equilibrated; Incorrect microplate reader wavelength; Over-washing. | Pre-warm TMB (30 min at 37°C), confirm correct wavelength (450 nm), and follow recommended washing times. |
| **High background** | Insufficient washing; Contaminated wash buffer; Excess detection reagents; Delayed reading; TMB exposed to light. | Wash adequately, prepare fresh wash buffer, use correct reagent amounts, read results promptly, and incubate TMB in the dark. |

## Notes:

## Notes:

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## Notes:

**Assay Genie 100% money-back guarantee!**

If you are not satisfied with the quality of our products and our technical team cannot resolve your problem, we will give you 100% of your money back.

**Manufacturers Statement: This final kit system is assembled and quality-released by Assay Genie Limited.**