

PanToxiLux™ - P₂D₂ (Updated 08/21/13)

Overview

PanToxiLux™ is OncoImmunitin, Inc.'s most recent live cell-based kit for measuring the successful delivery of a lethal hit by cytotoxic lymphocytes to individual target cells. This kit is formulated for 80 assays with dual laser (532/543/561 and 633 nm) cytometry capability. (For single laser systems, please contact OncoImmunitin, Inc. directly.)

PanToxiLux™ is similar to GranToxiLux® PLUS! and CyToxiLux® PLUS!, OncoImmunitin, Inc.'s other single cell cytotoxicity assay kits, with the difference being the cell permeable, fluorogenic substrate: PanToxiLux™ contains a substrate that detects both granzyme B and upstream caspase activities while the substrate in GranToxiLux® is designed to detect granzyme B activity only and that in CyToxiLux® downstream caspase activity. As with the other two kits, PanToxiLux™ can be used for selection of antibodies operating via an antibody-dependent cellular cytotoxicity (ADCC) mechanism in both low and high throughput screening (HTS) modes.

Advantages of PanToxiLux™, GranToxiLux®, and CyToxiLux® over other cytotoxicity assays, e.g., ⁵¹Cr release, LDH release, and PI, include: (1) cytotoxicity is measured as a fundamental biochemical pathway leading to cell death (cleavage of a cell permeable fluorogenic substrate) rather than merely as the loss of plasma membrane permeability and its sequelae, (2) sensitivity is enhanced such that relatively weak CTL responses against subdominant epitopes are detectable (3) rapidity (Effector:Target coincubation times between 0.3 and 2 hours), (4) measurement of cell death can be carried out exclusively in target cell populations by flow cytometry or fluorescence microscopy, and (5) when combined with immunophenotypic analyses and multiparameter flow cytometry, cytotoxic lymphocyte-mediated killing of primary host target cells as well as the physiology and fate of effector cells can be directly visualized and monitored.

Target cells are fluorescently labeled (red) and then coincubated with cytotoxic effector cells in the presence of a fluorogenic substrate. Following incubation and washing, samples may be analyzed by flow cytometry. Cleavage of the substrate results in increased orange fluorescence in dying cells. Real-time imaging can also be carried out with confocal microscopy.

Please read this entire protocol before commencing assay!

Components supplied in PanToxiLux™ kit (sufficient for 80 assays)

Vial PS (4 vials) = PanToxiLux™ Substrate solution

Vial TFL4 (1 vial) = Target cell marker for use with dual laser instruments

TFL dilution medium (1 small Eppendorf tubes) = Resuspension medium for Vial TFL4

Wash Buffer bottle (1 bottle)

Components supplied by user

Effector cells

Target cells

In order to eliminate nonviable cells from the starting target cell population, e.g., due to a freeze/thaw cycle, please contact OncoImmunitin, Inc. Please note: labeling of cell surfaces with fluorescent probes is **not** recommended as this may interfere with effector-target interactions. When used according to the procedure herein, TFL4 does **not** label cell surfaces.

Format: The assay may be performed using either 96-well plates or polypropylene microcentrifuge tubes.

Reconstitution of TFL4: Add 25 µl from the small Eppendorf tube to Vial TFL4. (Once reconstituted, TFL4 should be stored at -20°C.)

Medium T = Medium for labeling target cells. 1 µl from reconstituted TFL4 is added to the medium in which target cells had been grown or to a physiologic buffer such as phosphate buffered saline (PBS). Please note: most cells load more efficiently in PBS or in a medium free of serum. If 10% serum is included, the recommended TFL4 dilution is 1:1000 whereas for serum-free buffers, the Target cell marker is typically used at 1:3000; however, further dilution may be superior. *Optimal TFL4 concentrations should be determined for individual target cell types as 1:1000 for serum-containing and 1:3000 for serum-free media are merely suggested starting points.*

Washing is defined as addition of the indicated volume of medium/buffer followed by centrifugation and then careful removal of all liquid from tubes or flicking followed by light tamping of plates. Resuspension of pellets should be carried out with gentle pipetting of and/or tapping of tubes with finger. **DO NOT VORTEX.**

Protocol

Preparation of Target cells

1. Suspend Target cells (suspension or trypsinized adherent cells) in Medium T at 2x10⁶ cells/ml. (This is a suggested concentration. Lower numbers can and are routinely used. The critical point is to be able to collect 2,000-10,000 Target cells for analysis (*vide infra*).) If targets are to be pulsed with sensitizers, e.g., peptides, the latter should be added at this stage. (If peptide solubility requires use of an organic cosolvent, the latter should not exceed 0.3% (v/v) and a vehicle

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control tube/well should be included.) Incubate at 37°C for 0.25-1.0 hour. Optimal time should be determined for individual cell types (and sensitizers). Please note: for loading of PBLs, a 1:1000 dilution of TFL4 in PBS for 15' at 37 °C is recommended. If peptides are to be used with targets, the recommendation is to add TFL4 for the final 15' of sensitizer exposure.

2. During this time, prepare Effector cells (see below).
3. Wash Target cells 2 times with at least a 10-fold excess volume of physiologic buffer/medium per wash.
4. Count labeled Target cells. (It is essential to count cells at this point as there is always cell loss with washing.) Resuspend labeled Target cells at 1×10^6 cells/ml in Wash Buffer. (Depending on the experimental design, a lower concentration of Target cells may be used. 1×10^6 cells/ml is recommended for cases in which 1×10^5 Targets/well or tube will be used.)
5. Dispense 100 μ l of Target cell suspension to each assay well or tube.

Preparation of Effector cells

1. Prepare Effector cells at the appropriate concentration in Wash Buffer. For example, for a final Effector to Target ratio of 5:1 where 1×10^5 Targets/well or tube will be used, suspend Effector cells at 5×10^6 cells/ml.

Coincubation of Target and Effector cells

1. Add 100 μ l of Effector cell suspension to each well or tube containing Target cells except at least two wells, and add 100 μ l of Effector cell suspension to at least two wells which do not contain Target cells.
2. Add 100 μ l of Wash Buffer to wells containing only Targets and only Effectors to bring all samples to a final volume of 200 μ l.
3. Centrifuge all samples, carefully remove medium, and resuspend cell pellets in either 75 μ l Substrate from Vial PS or Wash Buffer for controls (absence of Substrate (for Tubes A and C below)). For ADCC antibodies should be added at this time.
4. Immediately after resuspension, pellet cells by brief centrifugation (Once the centrifuge reaches the speed normally used for cells, hold for 30 seconds and then stop the instrument.)
5. Incubate at 37°C in a 5% CO₂ incubator for the desired time points. Since this assay detects dying cells rather than cells with irreversibly damaged plasma membranes, incubation times (as well as E:T) for a given cell system should be significantly shorter (and lower) than with other methodologies. For single time point assays, the suggested coincubation time is 1 hour (enduser times typically range between 30 minutes and 2 hours). Substantially longer times are not recommended.
6. Wash each sample with 200 μ l Wash Buffer.
7. Resuspend each sample in Wash Buffer, transfer to flow cytometry tubes or leave in plates if a plate reader is to be used, and analyze by flow cytometry.

Summary of samples:

- A. Target cells (=Target cells TFL4)
- B. Target cells + Substrate from Vial PS
- C. Effector cells
- D. Effector cells + Substrate from Vial PS
- E. Target cells + Effector cells + Substrate from Vial PS (multiple samples)

Flow Cytometry: DO NOT VORTEX. (N.B.: As this assay measures the delivery of a lethal hit to a Target cell, vortexing is strongly not advised.)

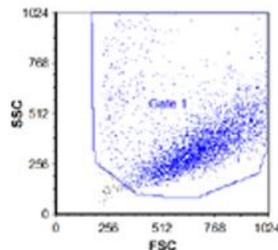
Channel settings consistent with the following excitation and emission peaks should be used:

TFL4 λ_{ex} : 633 nm, λ_{em} : 657 nm

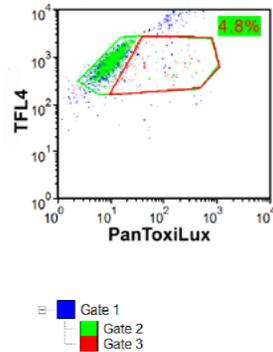
PS λ_{ex} : 555 nm, λ_{em} : 580 nm

For instruments where software is set for specific probes: APC for TFL4 and tdTomato for PS.

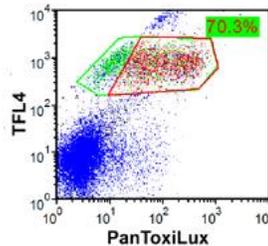
1. On a dot plot of FSC (x-axis) vs. SSC (y-axis), place Target cells (sample A) in the low right and draw Gate 1 as shown below (Use of this gate is to delete acellular events):



2. Use samples A and D to initially set the APC (for TFL4) and tdTomato (for PanToxiLux™) channels, resp.: place the peak for cells from sample A near 10^3 in the APC channel and the peak from sample D at ca. 10^1 in the tdTomato channel. Cells in sample B should then be at ca. 10^3 in the APC and 10^1 in the tdTomato channels, as shown below. Optimization can be carried out with small PMT adjustments with sample B. (Note: Healthy (>95% viable by Trypan Blue exclusion) TFL4-labeled Target cells should appear as a single population. If not, first try decreasing labeling time to 15 minutes. If more than one population still exists, decrease TFL4 concentration.)



3. Run remaining samples. 2,000-10,000 Target cells per sample should be collected for analysis into Gate 2 (in figures above and below). Gate 2 should be nested inside Gate 1. In the example below in which the E:T (NK92:K562) is 3:1, the percent of target cells capable of cleaving the PanToxiLux™ substrate is 70.3%. This compares with the 4.6% background of target cells alone (shown in figure above). Please note: this background can be decreased significantly by use of NFL1, a probe available from OncoImmunit, Inc. requiring a cytometer with a PacBlue channel (excitation of ca. 405 nm and emission of ca. 465 nm).



References for PanToxiLux™

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