

Monoclonal Antibodies: A Manual of Techniques

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PREFACE

In the past 10 years since the original description of antibody production by a somatic cell hybrid line, monoclonal antibodies have become standard reagents in many biological applications. There have been few major changes in the techniques used to make and to utilize monoclonal antibodies, and the mechanism of hybridization is still not understood in any detail. However, a few years of experience with the techniques have brought about important refinements, and have established a body of data which allows choices to be made between some of the alternative procedures. The production and use of monoclonal antibodies can, as a result, proceed in a fairly predictable way, provided that the best techniques are chosen for the particular objectives of the project. This book describes, in detail, techniques for the production and use of monoclonal antibodies. Methods are set out in the form of experimental protocols, so that the book can serve as a laboratory manual. The rationale behind each method is discussed, where appropriate. Where several alternative methods are available, a rational basis is provided, where possible, for the choice of methods appropriate to the reader's own needs. The book does not set out to review specific fields of use, however, since it is intended to cover in detail those aspects of interest to all scientists working with monoclonal antibodies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book is principally concerned with methodology. The techniques described have been used in projects which I have either directed or participated in. However, many of my colleagues have contributed in important ways, either with ideas or by doing the actual work. Current or former higher-degree students (Doug Brooks, Ian Beckman, and Russell Hogg), research assistants (Peter McNamara, Ian Hunter, Helen Moore, Joe Webster, and Angela Potter), and Hospital Scientists (Miriam Thomas, Pete Macardle, and Virginia Griffith) have done much of the work which serves as a base for this book. Scientific colleagues who have contributed ideas and suggestions, and have taught me some of the methods, include Drs. Anthony Hodgson, Sim Hee Neoh, Keryn Williams, John Bradley, and Art Hohmann. Professor John Bradley, Head of the Department of Clinical Immunology, has provided an environment which made the research possible, and has given active encouragement and support to research in his Department.

I prepared the early draft of this book on an Apple (and an Apple look-alike) and I owe a real debt to Messrs. Jobs and Wozniak. Writing books must have been such hard work in the days before microcomputers for the masses. My drafts, together with a multitude of alterations, were converted to the finished manuscript by Mary Brown, whose diligence and careful work is greatly appreciated. The art-work was produced by Dennis Jones of the Media and Illustration Unit, Flinders Medical Centre, and by Adrian Wright and Angela Potter. The photographs are my own, but my colleagues had to wait patiently with syringe or scalpel poised, while I fiddled with the focus or the flash.

Dr. Anthony Hodgson read a later draft and provided valuable criticism, particularly of the sections dealing with immunohistochemistry, an area in which his expertise is much greater than mine. Dr. Sim Neoh provided details for the immunoglobulin purification methods of Chapter 4. Dr. Keryn Williams read the whole book in draft form, and provided extensive and valuable critical comments on the scientific content, the clarity, and the English. It is all too easy to write text which is quite clear to the writer, and totally unclear to the reader. If this book turns out to be readable, this will be due, in large measure, to Keryn Williams' constructive criticism. Having sought the help and advice of my colleagues, I chose to ignore some of their comments. The responsibility for any residual flaws is therefore squarely mine.

THE AUTHOR

Heddy Zola is Chief Hospital Scientist in the Department of Clinical Immunology, Flinders Medical Centre, and Reader in Immunology in the Flinders University of South Australia. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from the University of Birmingham, in England, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Biophysics, from the University of Leeds, England.

Following his Ph.D. studies Dr. Zola worked in the Biophysics Department of Leeds University, before joining the Wellcome Research Laboratories, Beckenham, Kent, where he carried out biophysical and biochemical studies on a variety of biologically active proteins. Involvement in a project aimed at the preparation of antilymphocyte serum, for the use in the treatment and prevention of transplant rejection in man, led to an interest in the immunology of the lymphocyte surface. When Kohler and Milstein described the first hybridoma, the potential of this technique as a tool in studies of cell membrane molecules soon became apparent. Dr. Zola started to make monoclonal antibodies against human lymphocyte antigens, initially at Wellcome and subsequently in Australia.

Dr. Zola was born and grew up in Africa, where his parents had settled as refugees from Europe. After attending schools in Zanzibar and Kenya, he went to England in 1959, initially to study, married and stayed on in England until 1978. The lure of sunshine and open spaces eventually proved irresistible, and Dr. Zola, his wife Marion, and their two daughters moved to Australia, where they live in the city of Adelaide.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1	
Introduction.....	1
I. Aim and Scope of This Book	1
II. Antibody as a Specific Probe	1
III. Monoclonal Antibody	3
IV. Monoclonal and Polyclonal Antibody Compared	5
A. One Antibody or Many Different Antibodies.....	5
B. Different Antibodies Against the Same Antigen	6
C. Single or Multiple Antigenic Epitopes	6
D. Recognition of Patterns Consisting of Several Antigenic Determinants.....	6
E. Sensitivity and Specificity.....	8
F. Labile Epitopes.....	8
G. Labile Antibodies.....	8
H. Affinity.....	8
I. Cross Reactivity	9
V. Monoclonal Antibodies as Standard Reagents.....	9
VI. Comments on Publication, Supply, and Commercialization of Monoclonal Antibodies	10
References	11
Chapter 2	
Overview	13
I. Aim of the Chapter.....	13
II. Applications and Limitations of Monoclonal Antibodies (Do I Need Monoclonals, and What Can I Realistically Expect to Do With Them?)	13
A. Identification and Quantitation of a Soluble Molecule in a Mixture	14
B. Purification of a Soluble Molecule from a Mixture	15
C. Detection and Quantitation of a Cell Type in Suspension	15
D. Separation of a Particular Cell Type from a Mixture	16
E. Identification of Molecular and Cellular Structures in Tissue.....	16
F. Clinical Applications.....	16
III. Availability (Shall I Make My Own Monoclonal Antibodies or Can I Obtain Them?).....	17
IV. Resources Needed to Make Monoclonal Antibodies	17
A. Major Equipment.....	17
1. Cabinet for Sterile Work.....	17
2. Gassed Incubator	18
3. Liquid Nitrogen Facility.....	18
4. Animal House	18
B. Minor Equipment.....	18
C. Staff and Skills Required	18
References	19
Further Reading.....	21

Chapter 3	
Making Hybridomas	23
I. Scope of the Chapter	23
II. Strategy	23
III. Materials to be Ordered	24
A. Quantities Needed	24
B. Description	26
1. Cell Culture Medium: RPMI 1640 or Equivalent	26
2. Fetal Calf Serum (FCS) or Other Serum	26
3. HAT Selective Medium Components	27
4. Dimethyl Sulfoxide	27
5. Polyethylene Glycol (PEG)	27
IV. Stock and Working Solutions	27
A. Medium	27
B. HAT Medium	28
C. HT Medium	28
D. Geys Hemolytic Medium	28
1. Geys Solution A	28
2. Geys Solution B	28
3. Geys Solution C	29
4. Working Solution	29
E. Phosphate-Buffered Saline (PBS)	29
F. PEG/DMSO Fusing Agent Solution	29
V. Immunization	29
A. The Antibody Response	30
B. A "Typical" Immunization Protocol	30
C. List of Variables	31
D. Detailed Analysis of Variables	31
1. Choice of Animal	31
2. Antigen	31
3. Dose, Adjuvant, Route	31
4. Booster Injections	32
5. Improving Specificity	32
6. Serum Antibody to Assess Immunization	35
7. Local Immune Stimulation	35
VI. Hybridization	35
A. The Myeloma Cell Line	36
B. Spleen Cells	37
C. The Fusion Process	38
1. Introduction and Rationale	38
2. Materials and Preparation	38
3. Procedure	39
4. Notes	42
VII. Maintenance and Propagation	44
A. Introduction and Rationale	44
B. Culture of Hybrids after Fusion	46
VIII. Screening	49
A. Introduction and Rationale	49
1. Primary and Secondary Interactions	49
2. Single and Multiple Determinants	50

3.	The Prozone Phenomenon	50
4.	Sensitivity and Background Staining	50
5.	Speed and Convenience	51
B.	Specific Applications and Examples.....	52
1.	Particulate Antigens.....	52
a.	Indirect Immunofluorescence.....	52
b.	Staining of Tissue Sections, Cell Smears, or Cytocentrifuge Preparations	52
c.	Cell ELISA, Immunofixation, Isotopically Labeled Antiimmunoglobulin Methods, and Rose-Bengal Assay	53
2.	Soluble Antigens	53
3.	Commercial Screening Reagents	54
IX.	Cloning	54
A.	Introduction and Rationale.....	54
B.	Methods	54
1.	Cloning by Limiting Dilution	54
a.	Rationale.....	54
b.	Materials	55
c.	Procedure.....	55
2.	Semisolid Agar Cloning	56
3.	Cloning and Selection by Flow Sorting	56
X.	Cryopreservation.....	56
A.	Introduction and Rationale.....	56
B.	Freezing Cells Down	57
1.	Note.....	57
C.	Thawing Cells Out.....	58
1.	Notes.....	58
XI.	Problem Solving	58
References		59
Further Reading		61

Chapter 4

Monoclonal Antibodies: Production, Purification, Analysis, Quality Control, Storage, and Distribution

I.	Introduction.....	63
II.	Production	63
A.	Tissue Culture Production.....	63
1.	Scale	63
2.	Medium	64
3.	Sterility	64
a.	Sterility Testing.....	64
b.	Identification of Contaminants.....	65
c.	Additional Antibiotics	65
B.	Production in Animals	66
1.	Rationale.....	66
2.	Procedure: Production of Ascitic Fluid in BALB/c Mice.....	67
a.	Mice.....	67
b.	Pristane	67
c.	Hybridoma	67

	d. Harvesting	67
	e. Processing of Ascites	68
	f. Storage	70
III.	Purification	70
A.	Rationale	70
B.	PEG Precipitation	72
1.	Principle	72
2.	Materials	72
3.	Procedure	72
4.	Notes	73
C.	Ion Exchange Method	74
1.	Materials	74
2.	Procedure	75
3.	Notes	75
D.	Protein A Method	75
1.	Materials	75
2.	Procedure	76
IV.	Analysis and Quality Control	76
A.	Protein Concentration	76
1.	UV Absorption	76
2.	Biuret Method	77
a.	Materials	77
b.	Method	77
c.	Notes	77
B.	Antibody Concentration	77
1.	Introduction and Rationale	77
2.	Determination of Mouse Immunoglobulin by ELISA	78
a.	Materials	78
b.	Procedure	78
3.	Determination of Monoclonal Immunoglobulin by Zone Electrophoresis and Measurement of Total Protein	79
C.	Monoclonality	79
1.	Introduction and Rationale	79
2.	Tests on the Antibody	80
a.	Chain Composition	80
b.	Electrophoretic Identification of Chains	80
3.	Analysis of the Hybridoma Line	81
4.	Effect of Recloning	81
5.	Example: Monoclonality of FMC3	82
D.	Immunoglobulin Chain Identification	83
1.	Introduction	83
2.	Method	83
a.	Materials	83
b.	Procedure	84
3.	Notes	84
V.	Storage and Stability, Distribution	84
A.	Storage and Stability	84
B.	Distribution	85
References		86
Further Reading		87

Chapter 5

Using Monoclonal Antibodies: Cell and Tissue Markers.....89

I.	Introduction.....	89
II.	Identification and Enumeration of Cells in Suspension	89
A.	Immunofluorescence.....	89
1.	Principles	89
2.	Methods: Indirect Immunofluorescence of Separated Blood Cells with Monoclonal Antibodies	93
a.	Warning.....	93
b.	Materials	93
c.	Procedure.....	94
d.	Notes.....	94
B.	Flow Cytometry: Principles	97
C.	Counting Cell Populations Using Monoclonal Antibodies.....	99
D.	Quantitation of Cellular Antigen	102
1.	Comparison of Cells Within a Population and Between Populations	102
2.	Antigen Biochemistry	102
3.	Additive Binding	103
E.	Rosetting Methods.....	103
F.	Cytotoxicity	104
1.	Principles	104
2.	Dye Exclusion (Trypan Blue)	105
a.	Materials	105
b.	Method	105
c.	Notes.....	106
3.	Fluorescein Diacetate Method	106
a.	Materials	106
b.	Procedure.....	107
c.	Notes.....	108
d.	Example.....	108
4.	Methods for Proliferating Cells	108
5.	Chromium Release Method	109
a.	Materials	109
b.	Procedure.....	109
c.	Notes.....	109
G.	Duel Marker Methods	110
III.	Tissue Sections, Smears, and Cytocentrifuge Preparations.....	112
A.	Types of Tissue Preparation	113
1.	Blood Smears	113
2.	Cytocentrifuge Preparations	113
3.	Tissue Sections	114
B.	Fixatives.....	114
C.	Staining Methods	115
1.	Introduction.....	115
2.	Immunoenzyme Methods	116
3.	Particulate Markers — Silver-Intensified Gold Labeling	118
D.	Electron Microscopy	118
E.	Examples.....	118
1.	Introduction.....	118

2.	Equipment and Materials Common to Several Methods; Stock Solutions.....	119
a.	Equipment.....	119
b.	Buffers and Solutions.....	119
3.	Example 1: Staining of Cytocentrifuge Preparations for Cytoplasmic Immunoglobulin by an Immunoperoxidase Method.....	121
a.	Materials.....	121
b.	Procedure.....	122
c.	Notes.....	122
4.	Example 2: Staining of Tissue Sections Using Alkaline-Phosphatase-Antialkaline Phosphatase.....	122
a.	Materials.....	123
b.	Procedure.....	123
5.	Example 3: Staining at EM Level with Protein-A Gold.....	124
a.	Materials.....	125
b.	Procedure.....	125
6.	Example 4: Staining of Blood Cells with Monoclonal Antibodies for Light Microscopy Using Silver-Intensified Protein-A Gold.....	125
a.	Materials.....	126
b.	Procedure.....	126
IV.	Cell Separation.....	126
A.	Principles of Separation.....	127
B.	Assessment of Separation and Optimization of Conditions.....	128
C.	Flow Sorting.....	128
D.	Immunoaffinity Columns, Panning, Rosetting, and Magnetic Separation.....	129
E.	Examples of Monoclonal Antibody-Based Cell Separations.....	131
1.	Separation of Blood Mononuclear Cells from Polymorphs Using the Polymorph-Reactive Monoclonal Antibody FMC13.....	131
2.	Enrichment of B Cells for HLA-D ^r Typing by Panning with Antiimmunoglobulin Antibody.....	132
3.	Depletion of Leukemic Lymphocytes from a Blood Cell Mixture by Separation with Monoclonal Antibody on Magnetic Microparticles.....	134
a.	Materials.....	134
b.	Preparation of Coated Magnetic Beads.....	135
c.	Labeling of Cells.....	135
d.	Procedure.....	135
e.	Results.....	135
F.	Preparative Cytotoxicity.....	135
1.	Introduction.....	135
2.	Procedure.....	136
3.	Notes.....	136
V.	Preparation of Specialized Reagents for Use in Cell and Tissue Staining and Separation.....	136
A.	Preparation of Goat-Anti-mouse Immunoglobulin and Fluorescein Conjugate.....	136

1.	Introduction.....	136
2.	Preparation of Mouse Immunoglobulin (MIg)	137
3.	Immunization of Goat.....	137
4.	Processing of GaMIg	137
5.	Fluorescein Conjugation	138
6.	Quality Control	139
	a. Fluorescein/Protein Ratio	139
	b. Staining and Background	139
7.	Absorption	139
B.	Affinity Purification of GaMIg	139
1.	Rationale.....	139
2.	Method.....	140
3.	ELISA for Mouse-Ig-Binding Activity.....	140
C.	Biotinylation of GaMIg	141
1.	Rationale.....	141
2.	Materials.....	141
3.	Procedure.....	141
4.	Testing.....	141
D.	Preparation of Colloidal Gold-Protein A	142
1.	Introduction.....	142
2.	Materials.....	142
3.	Procedure.....	142
4.	Notes.....	143
	References	143
	Further Reading.....	145

Chapter 6

Using Monoclonal Antibodies: Soluble Antigens	147
---	-----

I.	Introduction.....	147
II.	Immunoassay: Determination of the Concentration of an Antigen in a Mixture.....	147
A.	General Discussion	147
B.	Enzyme-Linked Immunoassay (ELISA) — Technical Aspects	150
1.	Introduction.....	150
2.	Materials.....	151
	a. ELISA Plates	151
	b. ELISA Plate Reader	151
	c. Buffers	151
	d. Antibodies.....	152
	e. Detection Reagents.....	152
3.	Method.....	152
4.	Notes.....	153
	a. Checkerboard Titrations to Establish Optimal Concentrations	153
	b. Incubation Times	154
	c. Alternative Detection Systems	154
	d. Modification of ELISA for the Detection of Antibody.....	154
C.	Dot Immunoblotting on Nitrocellulose	154

1.	Introduction.....	154
2.	Materials.....	157
3.	Method.....	157
4.	Notes.....	158
	a. Alternative Detection Systems.....	158
	b. Alternative Blocking Solutions.....	158
III.	Biological Activity: Relationship of Biologically Active Site to Immunogenic Epitope.....	158
IV.	Immunochemical Characterization of the Antigen Reacting with a Monoclonal Antibody.....	158
	A. Introduction.....	158
	B. Principles of the Methods Used.....	159
	1. Nature of the Antigen.....	159
	2. Protein Molecular Weight and Characterization.....	160
	a. Electrophoresis in Gel.....	160
	b. Probing for the Antigen — Electrophoretic Blotting.....	161
	c. Prior Purification of the Antigen — Immunoprecipitation and Immunoaffinity Purification.....	162
	3. Lipid Antigens.....	163
	4. Carbohydrate Antigens.....	163
	C. Methods.....	163
	1. Radiolabeling.....	163
	a. Iodination — Chloramine T.....	163
	i. Principle.....	163
	ii. Materials.....	163
	iii. Method.....	164
	iv. Notes.....	164
	b. Iodination — Iodo-gen.....	165
	i. Materials.....	165
	ii. Method.....	166
	iii. Notes.....	166
	c. ³⁵ S Methionine Incorporation.....	166
	i. Materials.....	166
	ii. Method.....	166
	iii. Notes.....	167
	2. Immune Precipitation.....	167
	a. Membrane Extracts.....	167
	i. Materials.....	167
	ii. Method.....	168
	iii. Notes.....	168
	b. Soluble Proteins.....	169
	3. Affinity Column.....	169
	4. Polyacrylamide Gel Electrophoresis.....	170
	a. Electrophoresis.....	170
	i. Materials.....	170
	ii. Method.....	170
	b. Staining and Antigen Detection Methods.....	172
	i. Coomassie Blue Staining.....	172
	ii. Silver Stain.....	172

iii.	Autoradiography for ^{125}I	172
iv.	Fluorography for ^{35}S or ^3H	173
v.	Electrophoretic Blotting.....	173
V.	Purification: Affinity Separation Based on Monoclonal Antibody.....	174
A.	Introduction.....	174
B.	Detailed Consideration of Variables.....	175
1.	Antigen Source.....	175
2.	Choice of Antibody.....	176
3.	Choice of Affinity Matrix.....	176
4.	Choice of Coupling Method.....	176
5.	Column Parameters.....	177
6.	Wash Buffers.....	178
7.	Elution Buffer.....	178
8.	Regeneration and Reuse of the Column.....	179
	References.....	179
	Further Reading.....	181

Chapter 7

	Prospects, Problems, and Limitations in the Use of Monoclonal Antibodies.....	183
I.	Scope of the Chapter.....	183
II.	Monoclonal Antibodies as Reproducible Reagents.....	183
III.	Comparison of Different Monoclonal Antibodies for the Same Use.....	184
IV.	Diagnostic Reagents.....	185
V.	Therapeutic Use of Monoclonal Antibodies.....	186
A.	Introduction.....	186
B.	Monoclonal Antibodies in Cancer.....	187
1.	The Question of Specificity.....	187
2.	Mechanisms of Action.....	188
3.	Diagnostic Tumor Imaging.....	189
C.	Monoclonal Antibodies in Transplantation.....	189
1.	Organ Transplantation.....	189
2.	Ex Vivo Treatment of Bone Marrow for Transplantation.....	189
VI.	Human Monoclonal Antibodies.....	190
	References.....	191

Appendix 1

	Sources of Information on Existing Hybridomas.....	193
I.	Special Journals and Hybridoma Listings.....	193
II.	American Type Culture Collection (ATCC).....	193

Appendix 2

	Manufacturers and Suppliers of Equipment, Materials, and Reagents.....	195
I.	Classified Directory.....	195
II.	Alphabetical Listing with Addresses.....	197

Appendix 3	
Laboratory Hazards.....	199
Appendix 4	
Buffers and Reagents	201
I. Buffers	201
A. General Comments	201
B. Buffer Tables	201
C. Making Up and Keeping	201
II. Reagents	201
A. Calculation of Dilutions.....	202
B. Weighing Out Reagents	202
Appendix 5	
Units and Prefixes	203
I. Radioactivity.....	203
II. Prefixes and Symbols for Multiples of Units.....	203
Index.....	205

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

I. AIM AND SCOPE OF THIS BOOK

The first publication describing the preparation of a monoclonal antibody by somatic cell hybridization appeared in 1975.¹ Less than a decade later, in 1984, the authors of that paper (Kohler and Milstein) have shared a Nobel Prize, and monoclonal antibodies are regularly mentioned in the lay press. The layman really does not need to know much about monoclonal antibodies; they are high technology, the product of genetic engineering, used in making magic bullets, and quite definitely "a good thing."

On the other hand, biological and medical scientists in a variety of disciplines do need to know much more about monoclonal antibodies, and if they are not immunologists (and, perhaps, even if they are) they may need some help. Monoclonal antibodies are available for use, or at least talked about, in a variety of fields, from cancer diagnosis to the food industry; from transplant surgery to plant pathology. The scientist in any biological or medical field may need to answer these questions:

- Do I need monoclonals?
- Do I need to make them myself?
- How do I use them?
- What can I realistically expect from them?

This book is intended to enable biologists and medical scientists to answer such questions for themselves, in the context of their own particular needs. The book provides detailed methodology to enable readers to make their own antibodies and to use monoclonal antibodies to their best advantage.

II. ANTIBODY AS A SPECIFIC PROBE

Antibodies are proteins made by many animal species as part of the specific immune response to foreign substances. Specificity is the hallmark of the immune response; recovery from measles leads to lifelong immunity from measles, but confers no protection against chicken pox. One component of this specific response is the synthesis, by B lymphocytes and plasma cells, of antibody which reacts with a high affinity with the stimulating substance (the antigen), but not with other substances. This natural ability to make proteins with a high order of specificity in distinguishing different molecular structures can be used in a variety of ways. Antibody obtained by injecting a rabbit with human insulin reacts specifically with human insulin and can be used as a probe for the hormone. The antibody can serve as the basis for a quantitative assay for the hormone; it can be used to detect cells secreting the hormone in tissue sections; it can be used to purify the hormone from a complex mixture of proteins. Thus, antibodies have long been used as reagents in the detection, measurement, and purification of biological molecules. Antibodies have also been used for treatment; antibody made in horses against bacterial toxins or snake venoms provides emergency treatment, albeit with considerable risk of an adverse immune reaction to the horse antibody, itself seen as a foreign molecule by the immune system of the patient.

Until recently such antibodies were obtained by immunizing an animal and then bleeding it. The antibodies are secreted into the serum, and the protein fraction con-