

Instruction for Use

diarellaEhrlichia

real time PCR Kit TM

For the *in vitro* detection of *Ehrlichia* and *Anaplasma* DNA in clinical specimens and in ticks.

REF

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G01045-96



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96



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1 Intended Use

The diarella Ehrlichia real time PCR Kit is a screening assay for the detection of *Ehrlichia* and *Anaplasma* DNA (*E. chaffeensis*, *E. ewingii*, *E. canis*, *A. phagocytophilum*, *A. platys*) in clinical specimens and in ticks

2 Pathogen Information

Ehrlichia chaffeensis, an obligate intracellular bacterium, is the causative agent of human monocytotropic ehrlichiosis (HME). The pathogen is transmitted by hard ticks such as *Amblyomma americanum*.

The most common symptoms of HME are fever, headache, malaise, and muscle aches (myalgia). Compared to human granulocytic ehrlichiosis (HGE), rash is more common. Laboratory abnormalities include thrombocytopenia, leukopenia, and elevated liver tests. The severity of the illness can range from minor or asymptomatic to life-threatening. CNS involvement may occur. A serious septic or toxic shock-like picture can also develop, especially in patients with impaired immunity.

Anaplasma phagocytophilum (formerly *Ehrlichia phagocytophila*, *E. equi*) and *Ehrlichia ewingii* causes human granulocytic ehrlichiosis. This disease was first identified in 1990, although this pathogen was known to cause veterinary disease since 1932. Since 1990, incidence of this disease has increased, and it is now recognized in Europe. This disease was first identified due to a Wisconsin patient who died with a severe febrile illness two weeks after a tick bite. During the last stage of the infection, a group of small bacteria were seen within the neutrophils in the blood. Other symptoms include fever, headache, absence of skin rash, leucopenia, thrombocytopenia and mild injury to the liver.

Analysis of ticks offers the possibility to identify the risk of infection very quickly, and therefore minimising the delay of an antibiotics treatment.

3 Principle of the Test

The diarella Ehrlichia real time PCR Kit TM contains specific primers and dual-labeled probes for the amplification and detection of *Ehrlichia/Anaplasma* DNA in clinical specimens and ticks.

The presence of nucleic acid is detected by an increase in fluorescence due to hydrolysis of the probes during amplification.

The fluorescence of the pathogen-specific probes is measured in the FAM channel.

Furthermore, diarellaEhrlichia real time PCR Kit TM contains a Control DNA, which is added during DNA extraction and detected in the same reaction by a differently labeled probe.

The Control DNA allows the detection of PCR inhibition and acts as control, that the nucleic acid was isolated from the clinical specimen.

The fluorescence of the Control DNA is measured in the VIC®/HEX/JOE/TET channel.

4 Package Contents

The reagents supplied are sufficient for 32 or 96 reactions respectively.

Table 1: Components of the diarellaEhrlichia real time PCR Kit TM.

Label	Lid Colour	Content	
		32	96
Reaction Mix	yellow	1 x 512 µl	2 x 768 µl
Positive Control	red	1 x 50 µl	1 x 100 µl
Negative Control	green	1 x 50 µl	1 x 100 µl
Control DNA	colourless	1 x 160 µl	2 x 240 µl

5 Equipment and Reagents to be Supplied by User

- DNA isolation kit (e.g. NukEx Pure RNA/DNA, gerbion Cat. No. G05004 or NukEx Mag RNA/DNA, gerbion Cat. No. G05012) or NukEx Nucleic Acid Release Reagent (gerbion Cat. No. G01013)
- PCR grade Water
- Sterile microtubes
- Pipets (adjustable volume)
- Sterile pipet tips with filter
- Table centrifuge
- Vortexer
- Real time PCR instrument
- Optical PCR reaction tubes with lid
- Optional: Liquid handling system for automation
- Optional: BLP-DNA for tick analysis (Bacterium-Like Particles, please look at chapter 'Control DNA' for details)

6 Transport, Storage and Stability

The diarella Ehrlichia real time PCR Kit TM is shipped on dry ice or cool packs. All components must be stored at -18°C in the dark immediately after receipt. Do not use reagents after the date of expiry printed on the package.

Up to 20 freeze and thaw cycles are possible.

For convenience, opened reagents can be stored at +2-8°C for up to 6 months.

Protect kit components from direct sunlight during the complete test run.

7 Important Notes

- The diarella Ehrlichia real time PCR TM must be performed by qualified personnel only.
- Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) has to be applied.
- Clinical samples must always be regarded as potentially infectious material and all equipment used has to be treated as potentially contaminated.

8 General Precautions

- Stick to the protocol described in the Instruction for use.
- Set up different laboratory areas for the preparation of samples and for the set up of the PCR in order to avoid contaminations.
- Pipettes, tubes and other materials must not circulate between those different laboratory areas.
- Always use filter tips.
- Regularly decontaminate equipment and benches with ethanol-free decontaminant.
- Do not combine diarella Ehrlichia real time PCR Kit TM components of different lot numbers.

9 Sample Material

Starting material for the diarella Ehrlichia real time PCR TM is DNA isolated or released from clinical specimens (e.g. EDTA-blood, plasma, serum, cerebrospinal fluid and tissue samples) or from ticks.

10 Sample Preparation

The diarella Ehrlichia real time PCR TM is suitable for the detection of *Ehrlichia/Anaplasma* DNA isolated from clinical specimens or ticks with appropriate isolation methods.

Commercial kits for DNA isolation such as the following are recommended:

- NukEx Pure RNA/DNA, gerbion Cat. No. G05004
- NukEx Mag RNA/DNA, gerbion Cat. No. G05012

We recommend the release of DNA from ticks with the gerbion NukExNucleic Acid Release Reagent (Cat. No. G01013). This is the fastest and most convenient method for the release of nucleic acid from ticks, because column based purification of the DNA can be omitted.

Important:

In addition to the samples always run a ‚water control‘ in your extraction. Treat this water control analogous to a sample.

Comparing the amplification of the Control DNA in the samples to the amplification of the internal control in the water control will give insights on possible inhibitions of the real time PCR. Furthermore, possible contaminations during DNA extraction will be detectable.

Please note the chapter ‚Control DNA‘.

If the real time PCR is not performed immediately, store extracted DNA and NukEx Nucleic Acid Release Reagentlysates according to the instructions given by the manufacturer.

11 Control DNA

A Control DNA is supplied and can be used as extraction control or only as inhibition control. This allows the user to control the DNA isolation procedure and to check for possible real time PCR inhibition.

The Bacterium-Like Particles (BLP-DNA) is not supplied, but must be used as control from tick samples.

DNA isolation from EDTA-blood, plasma, serum, cerebrospinal fluid and tissue samples

a) Control DNA or BLP-DNA used as Extraction Control:

diarellaEhrlichia real time PCR TM Control DNA or BLP-DNA is added to the DNA extraction.

Add 5 µl Control DNA or BLP-DNA per extraction (5 µl x (N+1)). Mix well. Perform the DNA isolation according to the manufacturer’s instructions. Please follow protocol A.

The Control DNA must be added to the Lysis Buffer of the extraction kit.

b) Control DNA used as Internal Control of the real time PCR:

If only inhibition will be checked please follow protocol B.

DNA isolation from ticks

The use of BLP-DNA is recommended if NukExNucleic Acid Release Reagent is used for sample preparation (e.g. for nucleic acid release from ticks), because in this case Control DNA cannot be used as extraction control. Please follow protocol A.

12 Real time PCR

12.1 Important Points Before Starting:

- Please pay attention to the chapter 7 'Important Notes'.
- Before setting up the real time PCR familiarise yourself with the real time PCR instrument and read the user manual supplied with the instrument.
- The programming of the thermal profile should take place before the PCR set up.
- In every PCR run one Positive Control and one Negative Control should be included.
- Before each use, all reagents should be thawed completely at room temperature, thoroughly mixed (do NOT vortex the Reaction Mix but mix by pipetting up and down repeatedly), and centrifuged very briefly.

12.2 Procedure

If the Control DNA or BLP-DNA is used to control both, the real time PCR and the DNA isolation procedure, please follow protocol A. If the Control DNA is solely used to detect possible inhibition of the real time PCR, please follow protocol B.

Protocol A

The Control DNA or BLP-DNA was added during DNA extraction (chapter 11, Control DNA'). In this case, prepare the Master Mix according to Table 2.

The Master Mix contains all of the components needed for PCR except the sample. Prepare a volume of Master Mix for at least one sample more than required, in order to compensate for pipetting inaccuracy.

Table 2: Preparation of the Master Mix (Control DNA was added during DNA extraction)

Volume per Reaction	Volume Master Mix
16.0 µl Reaction Mix	16.0 µl x (N+1)

Protocol B

The Control DNA is used for the control of the real time PCR only (see chapter 11, Control DNA'). In this case, prepare the Master Mix according to Table 3.

The Master Mix contains all of the components needed for real PCR except the sample. Prepare a volume of Master Mix for at least one sample more than required, in order to compensate for pipetting inaccuracy.

Table 3: Preparation of the Master Mix (Control DNA is added directly to the Master Mix)

Volume per Reaction	Volume Master Mix
16.0 µl Reaction Mix	16.0 µl x (N+1)
0.5 µl Control DNA*	0.5 µl x (N+1)*

*The increase in volume caused by adding the Control DNA is not taken into account when preparing the PCR assay.

Protocol A and B: real time PCR set up

- Place the number of optical PCR reaction tubes needed into the respective tray of the real time PCR instrument.
- Pipet **16 µl** of the Master Mix into each optical PCR reaction tube.
- Add **4 µl** of the eluates from the DNA isolation (including the eluate of the water control) or NukEx Nucleic Acid Release Reagent lysates, the Positive Control and the Negative Control to the corresponding optical PCR reaction tube (Table 4).
- Close the optical PCR reaction tubes immediately after filling in order to reduce the risk of contamination.

Table 4: Preparation of the real time PCR

Component	Volume
Master Mix	16.0 µl
Sample	4.0 µl
Total Volume	20.0 µl

12.3 Instrument Settings

For the real timePCR use the thermal profile shown in Table 5.

Table 5: real time PCR thermal profile

Discription	Time	Temperature	Number of Cycles
<i>Initial Denaturation</i>	10 min	95°C	1
<i>Amplification</i>			
Denaturation	10 sec	95°C	45
Annealing	20 sec Aquisition at the end of this step	60°C	
Extension	10 sec	72°C	

If in the same run samples should be tested for pathogens with RNA genome, e.g. with the virellaTBE real time RT-PCR Kit TM, use the thermal profile shown in Table 6.

Table 6: real time RT-PCR thermal profile

Discription	Time	Temperature	Number of Cycles
<i>Reverse Transcription</i>	20 min	45°C	1
<i>Initial Denaturation</i>	5 min	95°C	1
<i>Amplification</i>			
Denaturation	10 sec	95°C	45
Annealing	20 sec Aquisition at the end of this step	60°C	
Extension	10 sec	72°C	

Dependent on the real time instrument used, further instrument settings have to be adjusted according to Table 7.

Table 7: Overview of the instrument settings required for the diarellaEhrlichia real time PCR TM.

Real time PCR Instrument	Parameter	Detection Channel	Notes
LightCycler 480I	<i>Ehrlichia</i>	483-533	Color Compensation Kit needed, e.g.pre-installed universal CC FAM (510) – VIC (580)
	Control DNA	523-568	
LightCycler 480II	<i>Ehrlichia</i>	FAM (465-510)	
	Control DNA	HEX (533-580)	
Stratagene Mx3000P / Mx3005P	<i>Ehrlichia</i>	FAM	Gain 8 Reference Dye: None
	Control DNA	HEX	Gain 1
ABI 7500	<i>Ehrlichia</i>	FAM	Option Reference Dye ROX: NO
	Control DNA	JOE	
Rotor-Gene Q, Rotor-Gene 3000 Rotor-Gene 6000	<i>Ehrlichia</i>	Green	Gain 5
	Control DNA	Yellow	Gain 5

13 Data Analysis

The *Ehrlichia/Anaplasma* specific amplification is measured in the FAM channel. The amplification of the Control DNA is measured in the VIC®/HEX/JOE™/TET channel.

Following results can occur:

- **A signal in the FAM channel is detected:**

The result is positive, the sample contains *Ehrlichia/Anaplasma* DNA.

In this case, detection of a signal of the Control DNA in the VIC®/HEX/JOE™/TET channel is inessential, as high concentrations of bacterial DNA may reduce or completely inhibit amplification of the Control DNA.

- **No signal in the FAM channel, but a signal in the VIC®/HEX/JOE™/TET channel is detected:**

The result is negative, the sample does not contain *Ehrlichia/Anaplasma* DNA.

The signal of the Control DNA excludes the possibilities of DNA isolation failure (in case the Control DNA is being used as an Extraction Control) and/or real time PCR inhibition. If the C_T value of a sample differs significantly from the C_T value of the water control, a partial inhibition occurred, which can lead to negative results in weak positive samples (see chapter „Troubleshooting“).

- **Neither in the FAM nor in the VIC®/HEX/JOE™/TET channel a signal is detected:**

A diagnostic statement cannot be made.

The DNA isolation was not successful or an inhibition of the PCR has occurred. In case the Control DNA was added during DNA isolation and not directly to the PCR Master Mix, the Negative Control is negative in both channels.

Figure 1 and Figure 2 show examples for positive and negative real time PCR results.

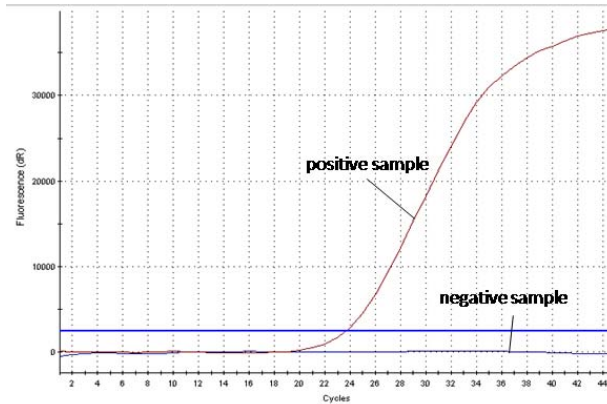


Figure 1: The positive sample shows bacteria specific amplification in the FAM channel, whereas no fluorescence signal is detected in the negative sample.

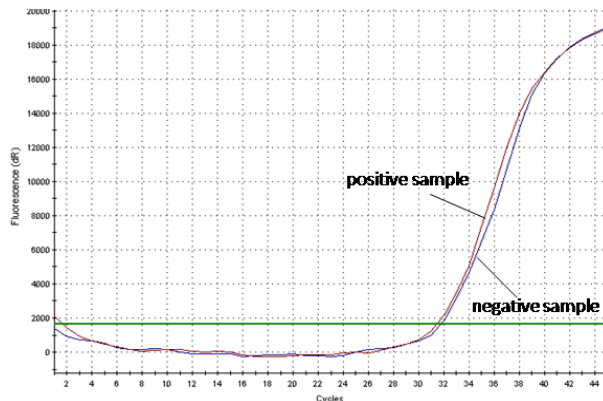


Figure 2: The positive sample as well as the negative sample show a signal in the Control DNA specific VIC®/HEX/JOE™/TET channel. The amplification signal of the Control DNA in the negative sample shows, that the missing signal in the bacteria specific FAM channel is not due to PCR inhibition or failure of DNA isolation, but that the sample is a true negative.

14 Assay Validation

Set a threshold as follows:

Negative Controls

All negative controls should be below the threshold. If there is a potential contamination (appearance of a curve in the negative control or a cluster of curves in specimens at high C_T – for example above 36), results obtained are not interpretable and the whole run (including extraction) has to be repeated.

Positive Controls

All the positive controls must show a positive (i.e. exponential) amplification curve. The positive controls must fall below a C_T of 30.

Internal Controls

All internal controls must show a positive (i.e. exponential) amplification curve. The internal control must fall below a C_T of 33. If the internal control is above C_T 34, this points to a purification problem or a strong positive sample that can inhibit the IC. In the latter case, the assay is valid. If a water control run is performed, the IC must fall below a C_T of 33.

15 Limitations of the Method

The results must always be considered in relation to the clinical symptoms. Therapeutical consequences should be made in consideration of clinical data. A negative test result does not exclude an *Ehrlichia*/*Anaplasma* infection.

16 Troubleshooting

The following troubleshooting guide is included to help you with possible problems that may arise when performing a real time PCR. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact our scientists on info@gerbion.com.

No fluorescence signal in the FAM channel of the Positive Control

The selected channel for analysis does not comply with the protocol	Select the FAM channel for analysis of the bacteria specific amplification and the VIC®/HEX/JOE™/TET channel for the amplification of the Control DNA.
Incorrect configuration of the real time PCR	Check your work steps and compare with 'Procedure' on page 7.
The programming of the thermal profile is incorrect	Compare the thermal profile with the protocol (Table 5, page 9).

Incorrect storage conditions for one or more kit components or kit expired	Check the storage conditions and the date of expiry printed on the kit label. If necessary, use a new kit and make sure kit components are stored as described in 'Transport, Storage and Stability', page 5.
Weak or no signal of the Control DNA and simultaneous absence of a signal in the bacteria specific FAM channel.	
real time PCR conditions do not comply with the protocol	Check the real time PCR conditions (page 7).
real time PCR inhibited	Make sure that you use an appropriate isolation method (see chapter 'Sample Preparation') and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Make sure that the ethanol-containing washing buffers have been completely removed. An additional centrifugation step at high speed is recommended before elution of the DNA. Dilute NukEx Nucleic Acid Release Reagent lysates 1:3 in PCR grade Water or NukEx Universal Dilution Buffer (gerbion, Cat. No. G01014). Alternatively, purify the lysates with e.g. NukEx Pure RNA/DNA Kit (gerbion, Cat. No. G05004).
DNA loss during isolation process	In case the Control DNA was added before extraction, the lack of an amplification signal can indicate that the DNA isolation was not successful. Make sure that you use an appropriate isolation method (commercial kits are recommended) and stick to the manufacturer's protocol.
NukEx Reagent not inactivated	For the inactivation of the enzymatic components of the NukEx Nucleic Acid Release Reagent, lysates must be inactivated according to the NukEx Nucleic Acid Release Reagent Instruction for use.
Incorrect storage conditions for one or more components or kit expired	Check the storage conditions and the date of expiry printed on the kit label. If necessary, use a new kit and make sure kit components are stored as described in 'Transport, Storage and Stability'.
Detection of a fluorescence signal in the FAM channel of the Negative Control	
Contamination during preparation of the PCR	Repeat the real time PCR in replicates. If the result is negative in the repetition, the contamination occurred when the samples were pipetted into the optical PCR reaction tubes. Make sure to pipet the Positive Control last and close the optical PCR reaction tube immediately after adding the sample. If the same result occurs, one or more of the kit components might be contaminated. Make sure that work space and instruments are decontaminated regularly. Use a new kit and repeat the real time PCR.

17 Kit Performance

17.1 Analytical Sensitivity

The limit of detection (LoD) of diarellaEhrlichia real time PCR TM was determined using serial dilutions of a plasmid containing the Ehrlichia target sequence in a Stratagene Mx3000 real time PCR instrument. Total nucleic acids were extracted using NukEx Pure RNA/DNA according to the manufacturer's instructions. Each sample was supplemented with 5 µl Control-DNA prior to extraction. Total nucleic acids were eluted with 50 µl and 4 µl of the eluates were applied to the subsequent real time PCR.

The LoD of diarellaEhrlichia real time PCR TM for *Ehrlichia* is ≥ 10 genome copies per reaction each.

17.2 Analytical Specificity

The specificity of the diarellaEhrlichia real time PCR TM was evaluated with different other relevant viruses and bacteria found in clinical samples.









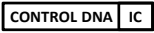




Results:

The diarellaEhrlichia real time PCR Kit TM showed a positive result for the sample containing *Ehrlichia* and *Anaplasma*, whereas samples containing other pathogens were reliably tested negative. The results are shown in Table 8.

Table8: Bacterial and viral pathogens tested for the determination of the analytical sensitivity of diarellaEhrlichia real time PCR TM.

Strain	ExpectedResult	result
<i>Enterovirus 68</i>	negative	negative
<i>Coxsackievirus B3</i>	negative	negative
<i>Coxsackievirus A16</i>	negative	negative
<i>Coxsackievirus B5</i>	negative	negative
<i>Influenza Virus A A/ Brisbane H1N1 59/2007 E40/08</i>	negative	negative
<i>Influenza Virus A Indonesia H5N1 05/2005</i>	negative	negative
<i>Influenza Virus A Panama H3N2 2007/99</i>	negative	negative
<i>Influenza Virus B B/ Brisbane 60/2008 E09/09</i>	negative	negative
<i>FSME-Virus</i>	negative	negative
<i>Babesiadivergens</i>	negative	negative
<i>Babesiamicroti</i>	negative	negative
<i>Babesiasp. EU1</i>	negative	negative
<i>BorreliaburgdorferiStrain 4681</i>	negative	negative
<i>Ehrlichiachaffeensis</i>	positive	positive
<i>Ehrlichiaewingii</i>	positive	positive
<i>Ehrlichiacanis</i>	positive	positive
<i>Ehrlichia phagocytophilum</i>	positive	positive
<i>Anaplasma platys</i>	positive	positive

18 Abbreviations and Symbols

DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid		Catalog number
PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction		Contains sufficient for <n> test
	Reaction Mix		Upper limit of temperature
	Positive Control		Manufacturer
	Negative Control		Use by YYYY-MM
	Control DNA		Batch code
			Content
			Consult instructions for use
			Research Use Only

19 Literature

- [1] Dumler (J.S.), Barbet (A.F.), Bekker (C.P.J.), Dasch (G.A.), Palmer (G.H.), Ray (S.C.), Rikihisa (Y.) and Rurangirwa (F.R.): Reorganization of genera in the families Rickettsiaceae and Anaplasmataceae in the order Rickettsiales: unification of some species of Ehrlichia with Anaplasma, Cowdria with Ehrlichia and Ehrlichia with Neorickettsia, description of six new species combinations and designation of Ehrlichiaequi and 'HGE agent' as subjective synonyms of Ehrlichia phagocytophila. *Int. J. Syst. Evol. Microbiol.* 2001, 51, 2145-2165.