

Validation data

Olink® Flex

Introduction

Olink® Flex is a reagent kit measuring 15-21 selected human protein biomarkers simultaneously. The biomarkers are selected from a mix-and-match library of around 200 inflammation-related human proteins with 99 % combinability. The analytical performance of the product has been carefully validated and the results are presented below.

Technology

The Olink reagents are based on the PEA™ (Proximity Extension Assay) technology¹⁻², where oligonucleotide labeled antibody probe pairs are each allowed to bind to their respective target protein present in the sample. Following hybridization of the matched oligo sequences, a PCR reporter sequence is formed by a proximity-dependent DNA polymerization event. The reporter sequence is then amplified, and subsequently detected and quantified using real-time PCR. The assay is performed in a multiplex format without any need for washing steps, and results can be reported in both standard concentration units (pg/mL, default) and in relative concentration units (NPX™), optional).

Quality controls

Internal and external controls have been developed by Olink for data normalization and quality control. These have been designed to enable monitoring of the technical assay performance, as well as the quality of individual samples, providing information at each step of the Olink protocol (see Figure 1). The internal controls are added to each sample and include one Incubation control, one Extension control and one Detection control. The Incubation control (a non-human antigen) monitors all three laboratory steps

starting with the immuno reaction. The Extension Control (an antibody linked to two matched oligonucleotides for immediate proximity that is independent of antigen binding) monitors the extension and read out steps and is used for data normalization across samples. Finally, the Detection control (a synthetic double-stranded reporter sequence template) monitors the readout step. Samples that deviate from a pre-determined range for one or more of the internal control values will result in a QC (Quality Control) warning in the Data analysis software and results file.

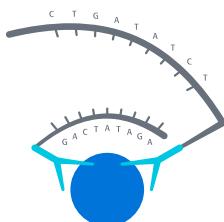
Each sample plate contains eight control samples. Triplicates of the Sample Control, duplicates of the Negative Control and triplicates of the Calibrator. The Calibrator allows for calculation of standard concentration units and is used in a second normalization step. It is designed to improve inter assay precision, enabling optimal comparison of data derived from multiple runs. The Sample Control is used to monitor and control the quality of reported output data by evaluating both accuracy and intra assay precision for all assays. Both the Sample Control and the Calibrator are composed of pooled plasma from healthy donors spiked with recombinant proteins known to have low endogenous levels in normal plasma. The Negative Control consists of buffer run as a normal sample. It sets the background levels for each protein assay and is used to calculate the limit of detection (LOD).

Data analysis and protein concentration calculation

Data analysis is performed by employing a pre-processing normalization procedure. For each sample and data point, the corresponding Ct-value for the Extension control is subtracted, thus normalizing for technical variation within each sample. Normalization between runs is then performed for each assay by subtracting the corresponding dCt-value for the median of

Immuno reaction

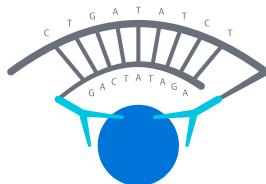
Allow the antibody probe pairs to bind to their respective proteins in your samples.



Incubation control

Extension and pre-amplification

Extend and pre-amplify the unique DNA reporter sequences by proximity extension.



Extension control

Amplification and detection

Quantify each biomarker's DNA reporter using high throughput real-time qPCR.



Detection control

Figure 1. Olink assay procedure (above) and controls (below). The internal controls enable monitoring of the three core steps in the Olink assay and are used for quality control and data normalization. Readout is performed by using Olink® Signature Q100.

the three Calibrator replicates from the dCt-values generated. The next step in the pre-processing procedure is to set the values relative to a bridging factor that bridges the data between different kit batches. The NPX unit generated is on a log2 scale, where a larger number represents a higher protein level in the sample, typically with the background level at or close to zero. The protein concentration in standard concentration units (pg/mL) is obtained by fitting the NPX-value to a standard curve, describing the immunoassay shape, using four parameters in a non-linear logistic regression model. The standard curves are defined during the validation procedure and found via the panel product page (www.olink.com/flex). Three examples are shown in Figure 2.

Performance characteristics

Sample information

Olink Flex was validated using matched serum and plasma samples from 15 healthy, adult donors and 68 plasma samples from adult patients diagnosed with any of the following conditions: Asthma, Crohn's Disease, Atopic Dermatitis, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Ulcerative Colitis, Systemic Lupus Erythematosus, Cystic Fibrosis and Multiple Sclerosis.

Sample types

The ability to use different sample types was evaluated by collecting matched serum and EDTA plasma from the 15 healthy individuals. Table 1 summarizes the response values for 15 normal EDTA plasma samples expressed in pg/mL, as well as relative differences between the additional samples types compared to EDTA plasma. Acid citrate dextrose (ACD), and sodium heparin plasma samples have been evaluated and shown to work just as well as serum and EDTA plasma in the development of previous panels, and these tests have therefore not been repeated for Olink Flex.

Analytical measurement

Detection limit

Standard curves were determined for all biomarkers simultaneously in a multiplex format using recombinant proteins. LOD was defined as 3 standard deviations above background and reported in pg/mL (see Table 1 and Figure 2).

Measuring range

The analytical measuring range was defined by the lower limit of quantification (LLOQ) and upper limit of quantification (ULOQ) and reported in order of log10, see Table 1. To ensure accurate quantification from lot to lot Olink establish release specifications for the limits of quantification (LOQ) for every manufactured lot. The analytical measuring data shown in Table 1 is based on the validation results during product development. The ULOQ and LLOQ were calculated and reported in pg/mL. The values were back-calculated and compared to the pre-calculated 4PL-

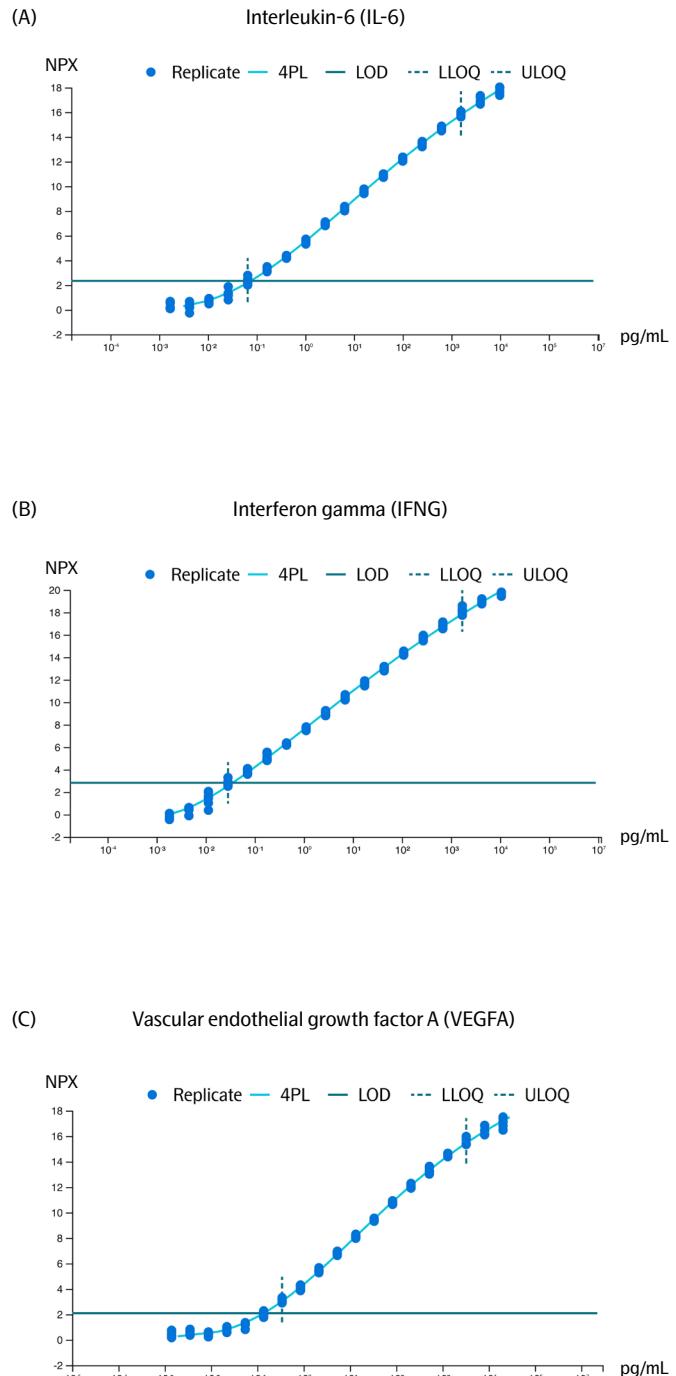
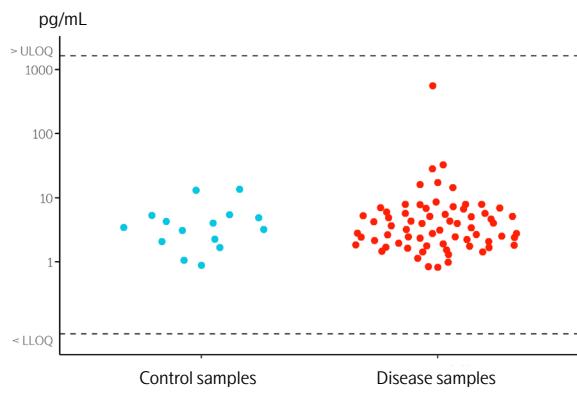


Figure 2 Calibrator curves from three assays and their corresponding analytical measurement data.

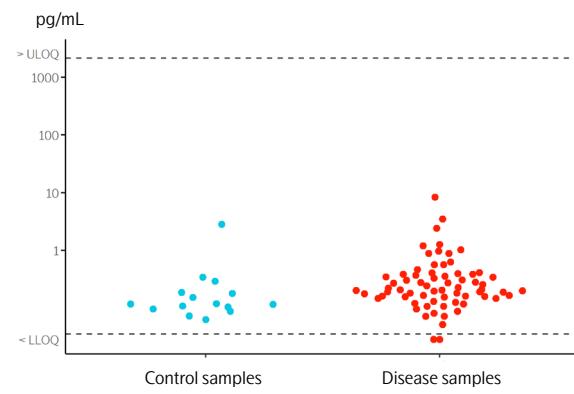
curve (see [Olink® Flex User Manual](#)), and the accuracy and precision criteria set to <30% (see Table 1). Separate calibrator curves were defined for each assay and can be accessed via the panel product page (www.olink.com/flex) together with the analytical data for the assay. Three examples of assays and their analytical data are shown in Figure 2. The sample distribution plots in Figure 3 show the levels of protein measured in commercial plasma samples.

| Target | UniProt No | Sample types | | | | | | | | Analytical measuring range | | Precision | | | | |
|---|------------|------------------------------|---------|------------|------------------------------------|---------|------------|-------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | Normal plasma levels (pg/mL) | | | Pathological plasma levels (pg/mL) | | | Relative to EDTA plasma | | Healthy detectability (%) | | (pg/mL) | log10 | % CV | | |
| Protein name (gene name) | | 10th %tile | Median | 90th %tile | 10th %tile | Median | 90th %tile | Serum (%) | Correlation | Plasma | Serum | LLOQ | ULOQ | Range | Intra | Inter |
| Appetite-regulating hormone (GHRH) | Q9UBU3 | 444.1 | 1 006.9 | 1 754.5 | 490.4 | 895.5 | 2 478.7 | 76 | 0.88 | 100 | 100 | 196 | 7 489 | 3.6 | 5 | 9 |
| Interleukin-19 (IL19) | Q9UHD0 | 109.4 | 165.7 | 342.8 | 84.1 | 159.5 | 494.5 | 112 | 0.98 | 100 | 100 | 4.95 | 47 177 | 4.0 | 4 | 7 |
| SLAM family member 5 (CD84) | Q9UIB8 | 1 822.8 | 2 500.7 | 3 120.9 | 1 573.2 | 2 947.3 | 4 634.9 | 249 | 0.36 | 100 | 100 | 38.27 | 9 343 | 2.4 | 5 | 7 |
| Growth/differentiation factor 2 (GDF2) | Q9UK05 | 79.5 | 100.9 | 156.5 | 68.2 | 124.8 | 210.6 | 185 | 0.83 | 100 | 100 | 1.68 | 6 400 | 3.6 | 8 | 13 |
| C-type lectin domain family 4 member A (CLEC4A) | Q9UMR7 | 13.0 | 16.5 | 24.8 | 9.6 | 14.7 | 22.2 | 106 | 0.92 | 100 | 100 | 1.68 | 2 560 | 3.2 | 6 | 6 |
| Tumor necrosis factor receptor superfamily member EDAR (EDAR) | Q9UNE0 | 5.0 | 8.2 | 13.5 | 5.4 | 17.8 | 62.4 | 443 | 0.24 | 100 | 100 | 1.42 | 5 400 | 3.6 | 7 | 8 |
| Lysosome-associated membrane glycoprotein 3 (LAMP3) | Q9UQV4 | 638.9 | 1 186.1 | 1 860.0 | 644.6 | 1 012.9 | 2 069.6 | 104 | 0.98 | 100 | 100 | 26.21 | 16 000 | 2.8 | 5 | 6 |
| C-C motif chemokine 26 (CCL26) | Q9Y258 | 121.7 | 156.8 | 200.4 | 60.6 | 111.7 | 204.2 | 68 | 0.18 | 100 | 100 | 41.94 | 160 000 | 3.6 | 5 | 9 |
| NEDD8 ultimate buster 1 (NUB1) | Q9Y5A7 | <LLOQ | <LLOQ | 3.2 | <LLOQ | 7.3 | 35.5 | 83 | 0.96 | 27 | 33 | 1.68 | 1 024 | 2.8 | 5 | 10 |
| NF-kappa-B essential modulator (IKBKG) | Q9Y6K9 | <LLOQ | <LLOQ | 28.6 | <LLOQ | 39.9 | 288.4 | 146 | 1.00 | 13 | 60 | 20.66 | 12 609 | 2.8 | 6 | 8 |
| Tumor necrosis factor receptor superfamily member 11A (TNFRSF11A) | Q9Y6Q6 | 30.6 | 45.1 | 69.7 | 40.7 | 72.6 | 150.6 | 138 | 0.94 | 100 | 100 | 0.67 | 2 560 | 3.6 | 5 | 7 |

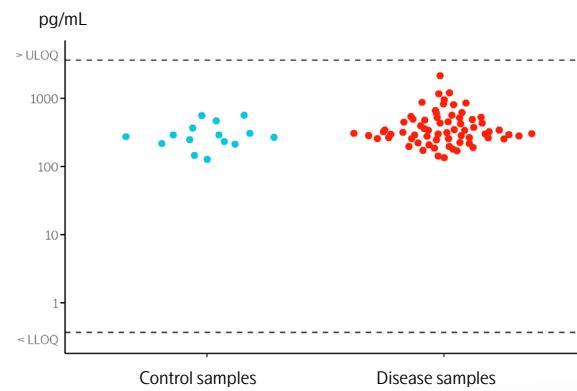
Interleukin-6 (IL-6)



Interferon gamma (IFNG)



Vascular endothelial growth factor A (VEGFA)



C-C motif chemokine 25 (CCL25)

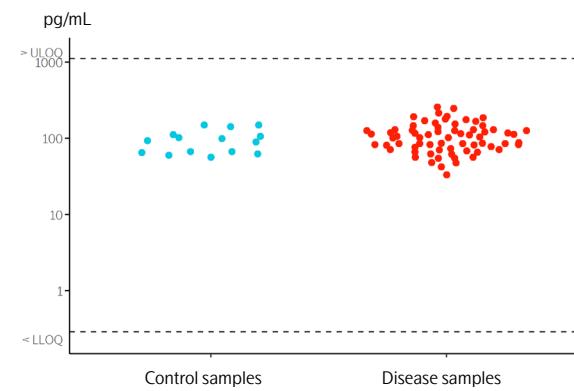


Figure 3. Sample distribution plots for four Olink® Flex assays. The plots show the levels of protein measured in a number of commercial plasma samples. LLOQ (lower limit of quantification) and ULOQ (upper limit of quantification) are indicated by the dotted lines. The y-axis is on a logarithmic scale. Healthy subjects are shown in blue and samples obtained from patients with a range of diseases are shown in red. The diseases include for example Asthma, Crohn's Disease, Atopic Dermatitis, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Ulcerative Colitis, Systemic Lupus Erythematosus, Cystic Fibrosis and Multiple Sclerosis.

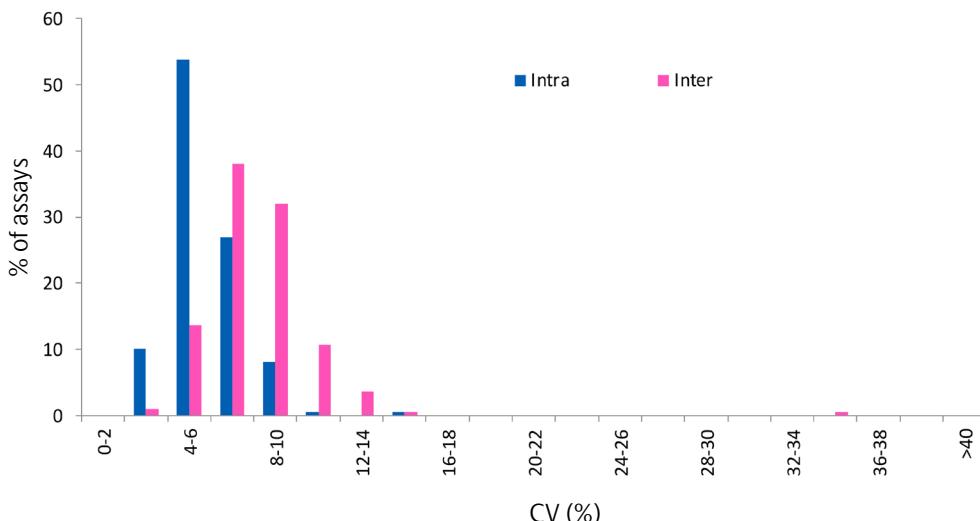


Figure 4. Distribution of intra-assay and inter-assay variations of Olink® Flex.

Precision

Repeatability

Inter (between run) and intra (within run) CV were assessed by evaluating triplicate measurements of the Sample Control on each plate, based on 6 plate runs performed by multiple operators.

Inter assay variation (between runs) was calculated between experiments performed by multiple operators. CV calculations were performed on data in pg/mL for the analytes for which response levels within LOQ were detected, see Table 1. Across all Olink® Flex assays, the mean intra assay and inter assay variations observed were 6 % and 8 %, respectively. The distribution of both intra assay and inter assay variations are shown in Figure 4.

Reproducibility

Inter-site (between sites) variation was investigated during the validation in a beta-site study. Sample plates were distributed to six laboratories together with 20-plex Olink® Flex reagent kits. The sample plates contained triplicates of 10 samples and a duplicate of a pooled plasma sample. Selected samples were run in 1:4 dilutions. The total number of assays were 20 per site, with an overlap of 14 assays that were run on all sites.

Two operators per site performed the analysis of the samples according to instructions. The intra and inter assay CVs are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Inter-site variation seen during beta-site study.

| | Pooled sample (plasma) | Sample control (spiked plasma) |
|---------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Intra CV | 5.8 % | 7.1 % |
| Inter CV | 10.9 % | 9.7 % |
| Inter-site CV | 10.9 % | 5.6 % |

There are many laboratories around the world trained by Olink to run panels (see www.olink.com/service for details). Our experience over several years is that inter-site reproducibility is very good provided that operators are properly trained, although technical

variation between sites must be considered in experimental designs. For more information please contact support@olink.com.

Analytical Specificity

Assay specificity

To test the target-protein specificity of the PEA probes used in the Flex library, all of the antibodies used were tested for cross-reactivity against all of the recombinant proteins used during assay development.

This was carried out by creating test samples consisting of pools of antigens, which were then incubated with all 197 antibody probe pairs from the panel. To optimize this analysis, 29 sub-pools of antigen were evaluated to cover the 197 assays.

The lack of significant signal from these tests (defined as less than 10% at endogenous level) indicates that each probe pair is specific for its target antigen, demonstrating the readout specificity of the PEA method.

The probes were also checked for cross-reactivity to homologous proteins with known sequence similarity to some of the Olink Flex target proteins.

Endogenous interference

Endogenous interference from heterophilic antibodies, e.g. human anti-mouse antibody (HAMA), and rheumatoid factor is known to cause problems in some immunoassays. Evaluation of the potential impact of this specific interference was investigated during the validation of previous panels. No interference due to HAMA or RF was detected for any of the samples in previously tested panels, indicating sufficient blocking of these agents (data not shown).

Bilirubin, lipids and hemolysate, are plasma and serum components that are known to interfere with some analytical assays. Interference by bilirubin and lipids has previously been evaluated, and disturbance was only observed at extreme levels corresponding to 8 or 10 times normal values^{3,4}. This test was therefore not repeated for Olink Flex.



References

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3. <http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/2074115-overview>
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Technical support

For technical support, please contact us at support@olink.com.

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