User Manual

QCM ECMatrix™ 24-Well Cell Invasion Assay Fluorometric

ECM554

FOR RESEARCH USE ONLY
Not for use in diagnostic procedures. Not for human or animal consumption.

Product Overview

Introduction

Invasion through the extracellular matrix (ECM) is an important step in tumor metastasis. Cancer cells initiate invasion by adhering to and spreading along the blood vessel wall. Proteolytic enzymes, such as MMP collagenases, dissolve tiny holes in the sheath-like covering (basement membrane) surrounding the blood vessels to allow cancer cells to invade.[1]

Microporous membrane inserts are widely used for cell migration and invasion assays. The most widely accepted of these is the Boyden Chamber assay. However, current methods of analysis are time-consuming and tedious, involving cotton swabbing of non-invaded cells on the topside of the insert, plus manual staining and counting. Recently a fluorescence blocking membrane insert was introduced to address these issues; however, this approach requires labeling of the cells with Calcein-AM and extensive washing to remove free Calcein before cell invasion. The effect of this treatment on cell behavior/invasion remains questionable.

The QCM 24-well Invasion Assay does not require cell labeling, scraping, washing, or counting. The 24-well insert and homogenous fluorescence detection format allows for large-scale screening and quantitative comparison of multiple samples.

In the QCM 24-well Invasion Assay, invaded cells on the bottom of the insert membrane are dissociated from the membrane when incubated with Cell Detachment Buffer. These cells are subsequently lysed and detected by the patented CyQuant™ GR dye (Molecular Probes).[2-3] This green-fluorescent dye exhibits strong fluorescence enhancement when bound to cellular nucleic acids.[4]

The Cell Invasion Assay Kit provides an efficient system for evaluating the invasion of tumor cells through a basement membrane model. The kit utilizes ECMatrix™, a reconstituted basement membrane matrix of proteins derived from the Engelbreth Holm-Swarm (EHS) mouse tumor.[5-8] We examined the kit's performance using human fibrosarcoma (HT-1080) and non-invasive fibroblasts (NIH3T3).

Test Principle

The Cell Invasion Assay is performed in an invasion chamber, based on the Boyden chamber principle. Each kit contains 24 inserts; each insert contains an 8 µm pore size polycarbonate membrane coated with a thin layer of ECMatrix™ coating substrate. The ECM layer occludes the membrane pores, blocking noninvasive cells from migrating through. Invasive cells, on the other hand, migrate through the ECM layer and cling to the bottom of the polycarbonate membrane. Invaded cells on the bottom of the insert membrane are dissociated from the membrane when incubated with Cell Detachment Buffer and subsequently lysed and detected by CyQuant™ GR dye.

The ability to study cell invasion through an ECM barrier is of vital importance for developing possible metastatisinhibitors and therapeutics. The QCM 24-well Invasion Assay (ECM554) provides an efficient *in vitro* system for quantitative analysis of tumor cell invasion.

In addition, we provide numerous migration, invasion, and adhesion products including:

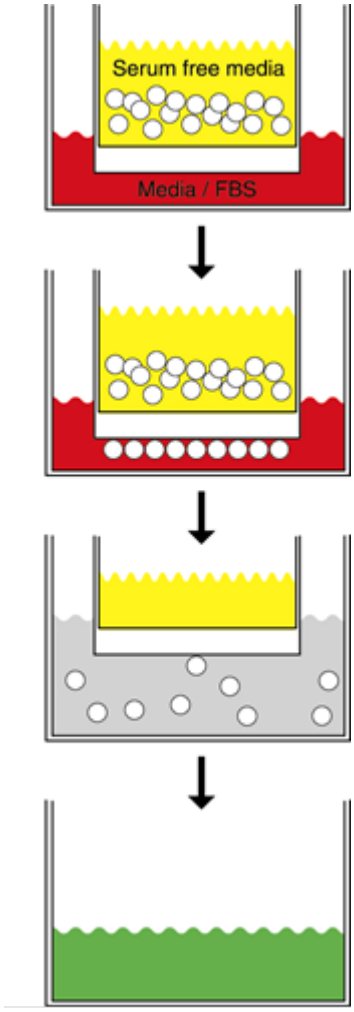
- QCM 8 µm 96-well Chemotaxis Cell Migration Assay (ECM510)
- QCM 5 µm 96-well Chemotaxis Cell Migration Assay (ECM512)
- QCM 3 µm 96-well Chemotaxis Cell Migration Assay (ECM515)
- QCM 96-well Cell Invasion Assay (ECM555)
- QCM 96-well Collagen-based Cell Invasion Assay (ECM556)
- 24-well Insert Cell Migration and Invasion Assay Systems

Cell suspension loaded into chamber

Invading cells migrate through and attach to bottom of membrane. Non-invading cells remain above.

Detach invaded cells in Cell Detachment Buffer.

Lyse cells in Cell Lysis Buffer and detect cell numbers by CyQUANT® GR Dye*



Application

The Cell Invasion Assay Kit is ideal for evaluation of invasive tumor cells. Each Cell Invasion Assay Kit contains sufficient reagents for the evaluation of 24 samples. The quantitative nature of this assay is especially useful for screening of pharmacological agents.

The Cell Invasion Assay Kit is intended for research use only, not for diagnostic or therapeutic applications.

Materials Provided

- 24-well Cell Invasion Plate Assembly (70019): Two 24-well plates with 12 ECMatrix™–coated inserts per plate (24 inserts total/kit)
- Cell Detachment Solution (90131): One bottle containing 16 mL
- 4X Cell Lysis Buffer (90130): One bottle containing 16 mL
- CyQuant™ GR Dye 1 (90132): One vial containing 75 µL
- Forceps (10203): One each

Materials Required (Not supplied)

Reagents

- Harvesting buffer: EDTA or trypsin cell detachment buffer. Suggested formulations include:
    - 2 mM EDTA/PBS
    - 0.05% Trypsin in Hanks Balanced Salt Solution (HBSS) containing 25 mM HEPES, or other cell detachment formulations as optimized by individual investigators

Note: Trypsin cell detachment buffer maybe required for difficult cell lines. Allow sufficient time for cell receptor recovery.

- Tissue culture growth medium appropriate for subject cells, such as DMEM containing 10% FBS
- Chemoattractants (for example, 10% FBS) or pharmacological agents for addition to culture medium, if screening is desired
- Quenching Medium: serum-free medium, such as DMEM, EMEM, or FBM (fibroblast basal media), containing 5% BSA

Note: Quenching Medium must contain divalent cations (Mg^{2+}, Ca^{2+}) sufficient for quenching EDTA in the harvesting buffer.

- Sterile PBS or HBSS to wash cells
- Distilled water

Equipment

- Precision pipettes suitable for aliquoting cells
- Low speed centrifuge and tubes for cell harvesting
- CO_2 incubator appropriate for subject cells
- Hemocytometer, or other means of counting cells
- Trypan blue, or equivalent viability stain
- Fluorescence plate reader
- Sterile cell culture hood
- 96-well plate

Storage and Stability

Store kit materials at 2-8 °C for up to their expiration date. Do not freeze.

Protocol

Cell Harvesting

Prepare subject cells for investigation as desired. The following procedure is suggested for adherent cells only and may be optimized to suit individual cell types.

1. Use cells that have been passaged 2-3 times prior to the assay and are 80% confluent.
2. Starve cells by incubating 18-24 hours prior to assay in appropriate serum-free medium (DMEM, EMEM, or equivalent).
3. Visually inspect cells before harvest, taking note of relative cell numbers and morphology.
4. Wash cells 2 times with sterile PBS or HBSS.
5. Add 5 mL Harvesting Buffer (see Materials Not Supplied) per 100 mm dish and incubate at 37 °C for 5-15 minutes.
6. Gently pipet the cells off the dish and add to 10-20 mL Quenching Medium (see Materials Not Supplied) to inactivate Trypsin/EDTA from Harvesting Buffer.
7. Centrifuge cells gently to pellet (1500 RPM, 5-10 minutes).
8. Gently resuspend the pellet in 1-5 mL Quenching Medium, depending upon the size of the pellet.
9. Count cells and bring to a volume that gives 0.5-1.0x10^6 cells per mL.
10. If desired, add additional compounds (cytokines, pharmacological agents, etc.) to cell suspension.

Assay Instructions

Perform the following steps in a tissue culture hood:

1. For optimal results, bring plates and reagents to room temperature (25 °C) prior to initiating assay.
11. Sterilize forceps with 70% ethanol and handle inserts with forceps.
12. Add 300 µL of prewarmed serum-free media to the interior of the inserts. Allow this to rehydrate the ECM layer for 15-30 minutes at room temperature.
13. After rehydration from step 3, carefully remove 250 µL of media from the inserts without disturbing the membrane.
14. Prepare a cell suspension containing 0.5-1.0x10^6 cells/mL in chemo-attractant-free media.
15. Add 250 µL of prepared cell suspension from step 5 to each insert.
16. Add 500 µL of serum free media in the presence or absence of chemo-attractant (for example, 10% fetal bovine serum) to the lower chamber.

    Note: Ensure the bottom of the insert membrane contacts the media. Air may get trapped at the interface.
17. Cover plate and incubate for 24-72 hours at 37 °C in a CO_2 incubator (4-6% CO_2).
18. Carefully remove the cells/media from the upper face of the insert by pipetting out the remaining cell suspension. Place the invasion chamber insert into a clean well containing 225 µL of prewarmed Cell Detachment Solution. Incubate for 30 minutes at 37 °C.
19. Dislodge cells completely from underside of the insert by gently tilting the invasion chamber plate back and forth several times during incubation. Remove the insert from the well.
20. Prepare sufficient Lysis Buffer/Dye Solution for all samples. Dilute the CyQuant™ GR Dye 1:75 with 4X Lysis Buffer (for example, 4 µL dye in 300 µL of 4X Lysis Buffer) and add 75 µL of this Lysis Buffer/Dye Solution to each well containing 225 µL cell detachment solution with the cells that invaded through the ECMatrix™-coated membrane. Incubate 15 minutes at room temperature.
21. Transfer 200 µL of the mixture to a 96-well plate (not included) suitable for fluorescence measurement.
22. Read with a fluorescence plate reader using 480/520 nm filter set, for example. Excitation peak is 502 nm, emission peak 523 nm.

    Note: For highly invasive cells, RFU values may exceed plate reader limits. Samples can be diluted in detachment solution or PBS if this occurs. Ensure that any dilution factor is applied to fluorescence results.

Data Analysis

Calculation of Results

Results of the QCM 24-well Cell Invasion Assay may be illustrated graphically by the use of a "bar" chart. Samples without cells, but containing Cell Detachment Buffer, Lysis Buffer and CyQuant™ Dye are typically used as "blanks" for interpretation of data. A typical cell invasion experiment will include control chamber migration without chemoattractant. Cell invasion may be induced or inhibited in test wells through the addition of cytokines or other pharmacological agents.

Invaded cell number can be determined by running a fluorescent cell dose curve, as illustrated in Figure 1.

The following figures demonstrate typical invasion results. PE Cytofluor® 4000 with 480/520 nm filter set and gain setting of 65 was used. One should use the data below for reference only. This data should not be used to interpret actual assay results.

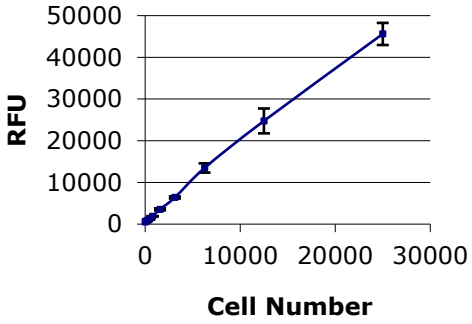


Figure 1: Quantitation of HT-1080 Using the CyQuant™ GR Dye. HT-1080 cells were resuspended in Cell Detachment Buffer; 150 µL of this cell suspension was mixed with 50 µL of 4X Lysis Buffer containing the fluorescence dye. Fluorescence was determined as described in Assay Instructions.

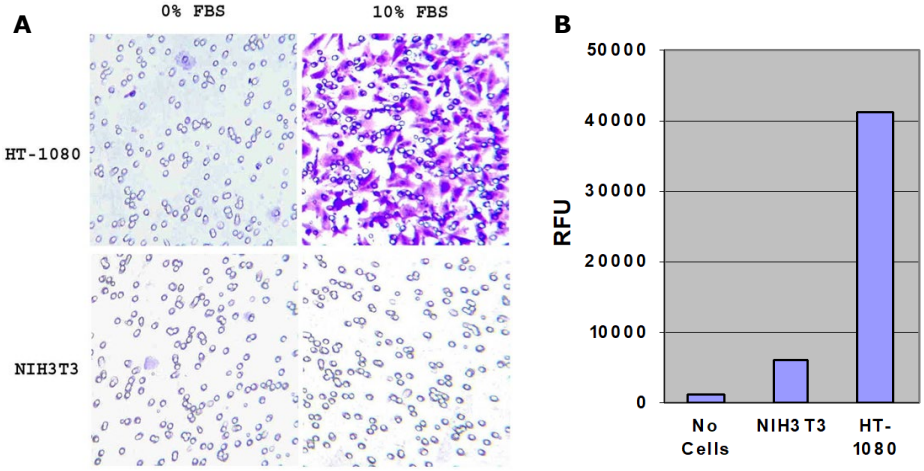


Figure 2: Cell Invasion of HT-1080 vs. NIH3T3. HT-1080 and NIH3T3 cells were allowed to invade toward 10% FBS for 24 hrs. 250,000 cells were used in each assay. (**A**) Invaded cells on the bottom side of the membrane were stained with 0.1% Crystal violet solution. (**B**) Fluorescence measurements were taken according to Assay Instructions (10% FBS wells only).

References

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