

Preparing Single-Cell Suspensions

For Research Use Only

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Becton, Dickinson and Company
BD Biosciences
2350 Qume Drive
San Jose, California 95131 USA

bdbiosciences.com
scomix@bdscomix.bd.com

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Regulatory Information

For Research Use Only. Not for use in diagnostic or therapeutic procedures.

History

Revision	Date	Change made
210964 Rev. 1.0	2018-07	Initial release
23-24126(01) (210964 Rev. 2.0)	2021-11	Added new scomix link, and Enhanced Cell Capture Beads and part numbers. Removed Preparing Jurkat and Ramos section.

Contents

- Introduction 5
- Required materials 5
- Before you begin 5
- Safety information 5
- Isolating PBMCs using CPTs 6
- Lysing red blood cells (RBCs) 6
- Preparing cryopreserved samples, such as leukocytes or PBMCs 7
- Troubleshooting 7

Introduction

This protocol describes the preparation of single-cell suspensions of commonly used immune cell types. A single-cell suspension can be loaded into a BD Rhapsody™ Cartridge. This protocol does not describe tissue dissociation.

Required materials

For a complete list of materials, see the appropriate instrument user guide.

- 1X RBC Lysis Buffer (Thermo Fisher Scientific Cat. No. 00-4333-57)
- For peripheral blood mononuclear cells (PBMCs): BD Vacutainer® CPT™ Glass Mononuclear Cell Preparation Tubes–Sodium Heparin (Cat. No. 362753)
- Sample Buffer, from the BD Rhapsody™ Cartridge Reagent Kit (Cat. No. 633731) or BD Rhapsody™ Enhanced Cartridge Reagent Kit (Cat. No. 664887)

Before you begin

- Prepare cells as close to cartridge loading as possible.
- Some cell dissociation reagents, such as trypsin, might damage cell surface markers and decrease Sample Tag and BD® AbSeq Ab-Oligo (antibody-oligonucleotide) sensitivity. Use cell dissociation reagents suitable for cell-surface staining.
- Cells might be lost during the wash steps (25–50%). For low-abundance samples (<100,000 cells), account for cell loss when preparing single-cell samples.
- Cell viability of <50% might impact experimental results. If possible, use cells of high viability.
- Bead loading efficiency might be reduced in the BD Rhapsody™ Cartridge if the cell diameter is >20 µm.
- Prepare the cartridge before cell preparation. If cell preparation takes ≥4 hours, begin preparing cells before BD Rhapsody™ Cartridge preparation.

Safety information

For safety information, see the *BD Rhapsody™ Single-Cell Analysis Instrument User Guide* (Doc ID: 214062) or the *BD Rhapsody™ Express Single-Cell Analysis System Instrument User Guide* (Doc ID: 214063).

Isolating PBMCs using CPTs

- 1 Collect blood using CPTs (Cat. No. 362753), and proceed with the workflow within 2–3 hours.
- 2 Gently invert CPTs 8–10 times.
- 3 Centrifuge at $1,700 \times g$ and at room temperature (15°C to 25°C) for 20 minutes.
- 4 Aspirate $\sim 1/2$ of the top layer containing plasma. Leave the whitish mononuclear cell layer.
- 5 Label a new 15-mL conical tube with the sample name, and gently collect the mononuclear cell layer with a 5-mL pipette. Transfer the cells to the 15-mL tube.

Avoid vigorous pipetting that might dislodge the gel plug in the CPT.

- 6 Bring the volume to 10 mL with phosphate-buffered saline (PBS), and gently pipet-mix.
- 7 Centrifuge at $400 \times g$ for 15 minutes. Aspirate the supernatant.
- 8 Gently tap to loosen the pellet.
- 9 Repeat [step 6](#) through [step 8](#) for a total of two washes.
- 10 Proceed to [Lysing red blood cells \(RBCs\)](#).

Lysing red blood cells (RBCs)

- 1 Add ≤ 1 mL PBS to the loosened pellet, and transfer the suspension to a new 50-mL conical tube.
- 2 Pipet 10 mL of 1X RBC Lysis Buffer (Thermo Fisher Scientific Cat. No. 00-4333-57) into the suspension and pipet-mix.
- 3 Incubate at room temperature (15°C to 25°C) for 5 minutes with occasional tapping.
- 4 Add 20 mL of PBS to the suspension, and invert the tube once to mix.
- 5 Centrifuge at $400 \times g$ for 5 minutes. Remove the supernatant.
- 6 Loosen the pellet by gently tapping.
- 7 Add 20 mL of PBS to the suspension, and centrifuge at $400 \times g$ for 5 minutes. Remove the supernatant.
- 8 Add ≤ 1 mL of PBS to the suspension.
- 9 Repeat [step 2](#) through [step 7](#) once for two lyses and washes.
- 10 Gently resuspend the pellet in 620 μL of cold Sample Buffer (Cat. No. 650000062), and place on ice.

- 11 Proceed to single-cell capture. See the *Single-Cell Analysis Workflow with BD Rhapsody™ Systems* (Doc ID: 220524) or *Single-Cell Capture and cDNA Synthesis with the BD Rhapsody™ Single-Cell Analysis System* (Part No. 23-22951(01)).

Preparing cryopreserved samples, such as leukocytes or PBMCs

- 1 Gently swirl the cryovial in a 37°C water bath until the cells are thawed (~1–2 minutes).
- 2 Pipet 9 mL of warm RPMI medium with 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS) into a new 15-mL conical tube.
- 3 Slowly, drop-by-drop add 1 mL of medium to the thawed cells.
- 4 Gently pipet the cells into the 15-mL conical tube containing warm RPMI medium with 10% FBS.
- 5 Centrifuge at 400 × g for 5 minutes.
- 6 Aspirate 9 mL of supernatant, and resuspend the cells in the residual 1 mL of media by gently pipet-mixing.
- 7 Gently pipet cells into a new 1.5-mL LoBind tube.
- 8 Centrifuge at 400 × g for 5 minutes.
- 9 Remove the supernatant, resuspend the cells in 620 µL of cold Sample Buffer (Cat. No. 650000062), and place the tube on ice.
- 10 Proceed to single-cell capture. See the *Single-Cell Analysis Workflow with BD Rhapsody™ Systems* (Doc ID: 220524) or *Single-Cell Capture and cDNA Synthesis with the BD Rhapsody™ Single-Cell Analysis System* (Part No. 23-22951(01)).

Troubleshooting

Observation	Possible causes	Recommended solutions
Doublets or clumps of cells	Cell samples that tend to clump	Filter the cell suspension through an appropriately sized cell strainer multiple times to remove clumps and doublets.
No pellet after centrifuging cells or very few cells	Rare or dilute sample	After each centrifugation step, leave 50 µL of supernatant.

