

Human Primary T Cells: A Practical Guide

Bulent Arman Aksoy, Pinar Aksoy, Megan Wyatt, Chrystal M. Paulos, Jeff Hammerbacher

Abstract

Human primary T cells are invaluable and feasible model systems to study the characteristics of the human immune cells in various contexts, including but not limited to cancer immunotherapy. Following isolation of T cells from fresh human blood samples, it is possible to culture, expand, and manipulate these cells, which allows extensive investigation for research purposes. Techniques for isolation and handling of T cells are well-established but parts of the protocols can highly vary across different labs. These differences in the protocols are, often, there due to historical reasons and are only supported by anecdotal evidence. We systematically modified basic components of the T cell culturing protocols and collected data on how they altered the final yield. Here, based on these data, we provide practical hints and tips on basic cellular and molecular techniques for handling primary human T cells. We hope that this guide will serve as a reference point to allow evaluate, discuss, and improve current practices in T cell culturing and manipulation.

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1. Human primary T cell culture media

CONTACT: [Bulent Arman Aksoy](#)

2. PBMC isolation from buffy coat

CONTACT: [Bulent Arman Aksoy](#)

3. Resazurin viability assay for human primary T cells in 96-well format

CONTACT: [Bulent Arman Aksoy](#)

4. CRISPR/Cas9-based knock-out in human primary T cells (24-well setup)

CONTACT: [Bulent Arman Aksoy](#)