Version 3

Jul 29, 2021

Simple electroporation for efficient CRISPR/Cas9 genome editing in murine zygotes V.3

Simon E. Tröder[1], Branko Zevnik[1]

[1]CECAD, University of Cologne, Cologne, Germany

dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.bwzhpf36

Simon Tröder

ABSTRACT

Electroporation of zygotes represents a rapid alternative to the elaborate pronuclear injection procedure for CRISPR/Cas9-mediated genome editing in mice. However, current protocols for electroporation either require the investment in specialized electroporators or corrosive pre-treatment of zygotes which compromises embryo viability. Here, we describe an easily adaptable approach for the introduction of specific mutations in C57BL/6N mice by electroporation of intact zygotes using a common electroporator with synthetic CRISPR/Cas9 components and minimal technical requirement.

DOI

dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.bwzhpf36

EXTERNAL LINK

https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0196891

PROTOCOL CITATION

Simon E. Tröder, Branko Zevnik 2021. Simple electroporation for efficient CRISPR/Cas9 genome editing in murine zygotes. **protocols.io**
https://dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.bwzhpf36
Version created by Simon Tröder

MANUSCRIPT CITATION please remember to cite the following publication along with this protocol

Tröder SE, Ebert LK, Butt L, Assenmacher S, Schermer B, Zevnik B (2018) An optimized electroporation approach for efficient CRISPR/Cas9 genome editing in murine zygotes. PLoS ONE 13(5): e0196891. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0196891

CREATED

Jul 29, 2021

LAST MODIFIED

Jul 29, 2021

PROTOCOL INTEGER ID

51977

GUIDELINES

Use only embryo-grade reagents.

M2 and M16 media are prepared as published (Behringer, R., et al., (2014) Manipulating the mouse embryo : a laboratory manual, Fourth edition. ed. Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, Cold Spring Harbor, New York).
Commercial M2 (Sigma, #M7167) and KSOM/AA (Merck Millipore, #MR-106-D) can be used instead.
Mouse pre-implantation embryos are incubated in at least 4h pre-equilibrated M16 or KSOM/AA in a CO_2 incubator (5% CO_2, 37°C, 95% humidity).

Embryo-grade $T_{10}E_{0.1}$ (10 mM Tris-HCl, 0.1 mM EDTA, pH 7.4) buffer is prepared as described (Chu, V.T., et al., (2016) Efficient generation of Rosa26 knock-in mice using CRISPR/Cas9 in C57BL/6 zygotes. BMC Biotechnol 16, 4.).

Mouse zygotes are collected from the oviducts of superovulated females as described in published protocols (Behringer, R., et al., (2014) Manipulating the mouse embryo : a laboratory manual, Fourth edition. ed. Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, Cold Spring Harbor, New York).

If you use this protocol please cite our publication:
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MATERIALS TEXT

MATERIALS

Cas9 Nuclease **Integrated DNA Technologies Catalog #1074181**

tracrRNA **Integrated DNA Technologies Catalog #1072532**

crRNA **Integrated DNA Technologies**

ssODN (Ultramer DNA Oligonucleotides) **Integrated DNA Technologies**

Opti-MEM (Reduced Serum Medium) **Thermo Fisher Scientific Catalog #31985062**

M2 Medium **Contributed by users**

M16 Medium **Contributed by users**

T10E0.1 Buffer **Contributed by users**

Electroporation Cuvette 1mm **BioRad Sciences Catalog #1652089**

60 mm Center Well Organ Culture Dish **Corning Catalog #353037**

guide RNA annealing

1 Resuspend lyophilized crRNA, tracrRNA and ssODN in $T_{10}E_{0.1}$ buffer to 100 µM (e.g. 5 nmol in 50 µl)
(Store at -80 °C until use)

2 Combine 5 µl crRNA (100 µM) and 5 µl tracrRNA (100 µM) in a nuclease-free PCR tube to yield an equimolar crRNA:tracrRNA duplex solution of 50 µM

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3 Heat to 95 °C for 5 min and cool down at 5 °C/ min in a thermocycler
(crRNA:tracrRNA duplex can be stored for weeks at -80 °C)

Preparation of the electroporation mix

4 Add 1.6 µl crRNA:tracrRNA duplex and 1.3 µl Cas9 nuclease to 15.1 µl Opti-MEM in a nuclease-free tube and vortex

5 Incubate mix at room temperature for 10 min
00:10:00

6 Place tube on ice, add 2 µl ssODN and vortex

7 Quick-spin at 4 °C and keep tube on ice until use

8 Summary of the 20 µl electroporation mix:

Reagent	Stock concentration	Final concentration	Volume
crRNA:tracrRNA duplex	50 µM	4 µM	1.6 µl
Cas9 nuclease	61 µM (10 µg/µl)	4 µM	1.3 µl
ssODN	100 µM	10 µM	2.0 µl
Opti-MEM	-	-	15.1 µl

Electroporation of zygotes

9 Collect zygotes from the oviducts of superovulated females as described in published protocols

10 Wash the zygotes in five drops of M2

11 Wash up to 50 zygotes in one drop of Opti-MEM

12 Transfer zygotes with as little media as possible to the 20 µl electroporation mix

13 Using a 20 µl pipette transfer the entire drop including the zygotes into a pre-warmed (37 °C) 1 mm electroporation cuvette
(Ensure retrieving all zygotes by quickly aspirating the entire drop. Slow aspiration will leave zygotes behind)

14 Insert cuvette into a standard electroporator (e.g. BioRad Gene Pulser Xcell electroporator)

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15 Apply two square wave pulses at 30 V and 3 ms duration with a 100 ms interval

16 Retrieve the zygotes by flushing the cuvette with 100 µl pre-incubated M16 using a 100 µl pipette into a culture dish (e.g. 60 mm Center Well Organ Culture Dish)

17 Wash the cuvette with 100 µl pre-incubated M16

18 Transfer all zygotes to a new culture dish with 500 µl pre-incubated M16

19 Incubate zygotes in M16 until the two cell stage and transfer the developed embryos into pseudopregnant foster mice (Embryos may also be transferred at the one cell stage)

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