by incubating the sample with the specific staining of the leucocytes is performed to populations expressing the CD20 antigen using monoclonal antibodies to bind to the antigenic sites of interest. The fluorescence of the delimited cells is used as supports in the gating stage depending on the electronic window defined on a histogram, which correlates the orthogonal diffusion of light (Side Scatter or SS) and the diffusion of narrow-angle light (Forward Scatter or FS). The fluorescence of cells is detected by the flow cytometer. The flow cytometer measures light diffusion and the fluorescence of cells. It makes possible the delimitation of the population of interest within the electronic window defined on a histogram, which correlates the orthogonal diffusion of light (Side Scatter or SS) and the diffusion of narrow-angle light (Forward Scatter or FS). The fluorescence of the delimited cells is analyzed in order to distinguish the positively-stained events from the unstained ones. The results are expressed as a percentage of positive events in relation to all the events acquired by the gating.

**EXAMPLES OF CLINICAL APPLICATIONS**

The CD20 molecule is a useful marker for the identification of certain B-lymphoproliferative syndromes when used within an extended immunophenotyping panel. Thus, the simultaneous analysis of CD20 and CD10 antigens helps in (B-CELLS) the characterization of different B-cell neoplasias (1), such as chronic B-cell lymphoid leukaemias and small-cell lymphomas, which are CD20+CD10+ and follicular lymphomas, which are CD20+CD10– and follicular lymphomas, which are CD20+CD10–. This combination may also help to differentiate acute B-cell lymphoblastic leukaemias (B-ALLs) and pre-B-cell ALLs, which are CD20+CD10–, from prolymphocytic leukaemias, which are CD20+CD10+ (1). For B-ALLs, two subgroups can be distinguished, the CD10+ B-ALL and the CD10– B-ALL the first group having a more favourable prognosis (2). About 80% of cases of ALL in children are characterized by an 11q23 translocation, for which the phenotype is CD10+ (B-cell precursors and pre-B cells) (2). Finally, in the context of the use of three markers CD20, CD10 and CD19, haematogones (precursors of B cells, CD19+CD10+) can be distinguished, which are present after chemotherapy or after bone marrow transplantation, from residual B-ALL (CD19+CD10+) cells by the differential expression of CD20 (2).

**STORAGE AND STABILITY**

The conjugated liquid forms must be kept at between 2 and 8°C and protected from light, before and after the vial has been opened. Stability of closed vial: see expiry date on vial. Stability of opened vial: the reagent is stable for 90 days.

**PRECAUTIONS**

1. Do not use the reagent beyond the expiry date.
2. Do not freeze.
3. Let it come to room temperature (18 – 25°C) before use.
5. Avoid microbial contamination of the reagents, or false results may occur.
6. Antibody solutions containing sodium azide (NaN₃) should be handled with care. Do not take internally and avoid all contact with the skin, mucosa and eyes. Moreover, in an acid medium, sodium azide can form the potentially dangerous hydrazoic acid. If it needs to be disposed of, it is recommended that the reagent be diluted in a large volume of water before pouring it into the drainage system so as to avoid the accumulation of sodium azide in metal pipes and to prevent the risk of explosion.
7. All blood samples must be considered as potentially infectious and must be handled with care (in particular: the wearing of protective gloves, gowns and goggles).
8. Never pipette by mouth and avoid all contact of the samples with the skin, mucosa and eyes.
9. Blood tubes and disposable material used for handling should be disposed of in ad hoc containers intended for incineration.

**SAMPLES**

Venous blood or bone marrow samples must be taken using sterile tubes containing an EDTA salt as the anticoagulant. The use of other anticoagulants is not recommended. The samples should be kept at room temperature (18 – 25°C) and not shaken. The sample should be homogenized by gentle agitation prior to taking the test sample. The samples must be analyzed within 24 hours of venipuncture.

**METHODOLOGY**

**NECESSARY MATERIAL NOT SUPPLIED**

* Sampling tubes and material necessary for sampling.
* Automatic pipettes with disposable tips for 10, 100 and 500 µL.
* Plastic haemolysis tubes.
* Calibration beads: Flow-Set™ Fluorospheres (Ref. 6807007).

- Red cell lysis reagent with washing stage after lysis. For example: VersaLyse™ (Ref. A09777).
- Leucocyte fixation reagent. For example: IOTest 3 Fixative Solution (Ref. A07800).
- Sodium azide: 0.01 M sodium phosphate; 0.145 M sodium chloride; pH 7.2.
- Centrifuge.
- Automatic agitator (Vortex type).
- Flow cytometer.

**PROCEDURE**

**NOTE:** The procedure below is valid for standard applications. Sample and/or VersaLyse volumes for certain Beckman Coulter applications may be different. If such is the case, follow the instructions on the application’s technical leaflet. For each sample analyzed, in addition to the test tube, one control tube is required in which the cells are mixed in the presence of the isotypic control (Ref. A09148).

1. Add 10 µL of IOTest specific conjugated antibody to each test tube, and to each control tube, 10 µL of the isotypic control.
2. Add 100 µL of the test sample to both tubes. Vortex the tubes gently.
3. Incubate for 15 to 20 minutes at room temperature (18 – 25°C), protected from light.
4. Then perform lysis of the red cells, if necessary, by following the recommendations of the lysis reagent used. As an example, if you wish to use VersaLyse (Ref. A09777), refer to the leaflet and follow preferably the procedure called "with concomitant fixation", which consists of adding 1 mL of the “Fix-and-Lyse” mixture prepared extemporaneously. Vortex immediately for one second and incubate for 10 minutes at room temperature, protected from light. If the sample does not contain red cells, add 2 mL of PBS.
5. Centrifuge for 5 minutes at 150 x g at room temperature.
6. Remove the supernatant by aspiration.
7. Resuspend the cell pellet using 3 mL of PBS.
8. Repeat step 5.
9. Remove the supernatant by aspiration and resuspend the cell pellet using:
   - 0.5 mL or 1 mL of PBS plus 0.1% of formaldehyde if the preparations are to be kept for more than 2 hours and less than 24 hours. (A 0.1% formaldehyde PBS can be obtained by diluting 12.5 µL of the IOTest 3 Fixative Solution (Ref. A07800) at its 10X concentration in 1 mL of PBS).
   - 0.5 mL or 1 mL of PBS without formaldehyde, if the preparations are to be analyzed within 2 hours.

**NOTE:** In all cases, keep the preparations between 2 and 8°C and protected from light.
PERFORMANCE SPECIFICITY
The B9E9 (HRC20) clone was assigned to CD20 during the 5th HLDA Workshop on Human Leucocyte Differentiation Antigens, held in Boston, USA, in 1993 (WS Code: CD20.12, Section B) (4).

LINEARITY
To test the linearity of staining of this reagent, a positive cell line (RAMOS) and a negative cell target (red blood cells) were mixed in different proportions with a constant final number of cells, so that the positive line / negative target ratio of the mixture ranged from 0 to 100%. Aliquots were stained using the procedure described above and linear regression between the expected values and the observed values was calculated.

### Specificity Linear regression Linearity ($R^2$)

| CD20 | $Y = 0.94X + 0.71$ | 0.9998 |

EXPECTED VALUES
Each laboratory must compile a list of reference values based upon a group of healthy donors from the local population. This must be done by taking age, sex and ethnic group into account, as well as any other potential regional differences.

In our laboratories, the whole blood samples of 50 healthy adults were treated using the reagent described above. The results obtained for the counting of the positive events of interest with this reagent are given in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lymphocytes</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean (%)</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>CV (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CD20+</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INTER-LABORATORY REPRODUCIBILITY
On the same day and for the same positive target (lymphocytes), 12 measurements of the percentage of stained cells were carried out by two technicians and the preparations analyzed using two different cytometers. The results obtained are summarized in the following table:

#### Cytometer n° 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Target</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean (%)</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>CV (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CD20+ Lymphocytes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Cytometer n° 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Target</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean (%)</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>CV (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CD20+ Lymphocytes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### LIMITATIONS OF THE TECHNIQUE
1. Flow cytometry may produce false results if the cytometer has not been aligned perfectly, if fluorescence leaks have not been correctly compensated for and if the regions have not been carefully positioned.
2. It is preferable to use a RBC lysis technique with a washing step as this reagent has not been optimized for "no wash" lysis techniques.
3. Accurate and reproducible results will be obtained as long as the procedures used are in accordance with the technical insert leaflet and compatible with good laboratory practices.
4. The conjugated antibody of this reagent is calibrated so as to offer the best specific signal/non-specific signal ratio. Therefore, it is important to adhere to the reagent volume/sample volume ratio in every test.
5. In the case of a hyperleucocytosis, dilute the blood in PBS so as to obtain a value of approximately $5 \times 10^9$ leucocytes/L.
6. In certain disease states, such as severe renal failure or haemoglobinopathies, lysis of red cells may be slow, incomplete or even impossible. In this case, it is recommended to isolate mononucleated cells using a density gradient (Ficoll, for example) prior to staining.

MISCELLANEOUS
See the Appendix for examples and references.

TRADEMARKS
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MANUFACTURED BY:
IMMUNOTECH SAS
a Beckman Coulter Company
130 avenue de Lattre de Tassigny
B.P. 177 – 13270 Marseille Cedex 9
France
Customer Services: (33) 4 91 17 27 27

www.beckmancoulter.com
EXAMPLES
The graphs below are biparametric representations (Side Scatter vs. Fluorescence Intensity) of lysed normal whole blood sample. Staining is with IOTest CD20-PC5 Conjugated Antibody (Ref. A07773). All leucocytes are represented.

Acquisition and analysis are performed with a COULTER® EPICS® XL™ flow cytometer equipped with System II™ software.

REFERENCES