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Description

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 **[0001]** Hepatitis B virus causes liver disease. A significant proportion of infected patients develop chronic hepatitis leading to liver damage and subsequent hepatocarcinoma. Hepatitis B infection is characterized by several distinctive serological and immunological responses. The temporal profiles of infection can serve as a useful guide to monitoring the course of disease and also provide serological correlation with the disease's progress (see, e.g., Elgouhari (2008) Cleveland Clinic J. Med. 75:881 and Juszczak (2010) Vaccine 18:S23). US 2013/085075 describes a method of monitoring liver health in a patient by measuring (a) a biomarker or panel of liver health biomarkers and (b) a level of a biomarker of one of the major hepatitis viruses A, B, C, D and E, which measurements are then compared with a control sample for diagnosing presence or absence of a liver disorder.

10 **[0002]** Hepatitis B virus contains two major viral proteins, the surface antigen (HBsAg) and the core antigens (HBcAg). Upon infection, HBsAg becomes detectable first, followed by the appearance of anti-HBc IgM generated by the host. Anti-HBs antibodies appear months after the disappearance of HBsAg, and remain detectable indefinitely. During the "window period" (when there is a gap of 16-32 weeks between the appearance of HBsAg and the appearance of anti-HBs), the presence of anti-HBc provides serological evidence of current or recent HBV infection. However, presence of anti-HBc IgM and anti-HBc (IgM and IgG) does not indicate either the resolution of infection or protective immunity. The appearance of anti-HBs and the absence of HBsAg indicate the resolution of infection and protective immunity. Further-
 15 more, the presence of anti-HBs in the absence of HBsAg and anti-HBc is indicative of a successfully vaccinated individual.

20 **[0003]** Hepatitis B serological testing involves measurement of several hepatitis B virus-specific antigens and antibodies. The ability to follow the course of HBV infection and differentiate, e.g., between infection, exposure, and resolution, is important for clinical management. All commercially available Hepatitis B antibody test kits perform one test at a time per reaction vessel. The result of any one given test cannot predict the course or stage of Hepatitis B infection or resolution, so multiple tests must be run, which wastes time, sample, and reagent. Furthermore, a medical provider may not order testing of all relevant HBV markers at once, so that a subject may be called to be tested multiple times. Repeated blood draws are stressful and expensive, and can result in non-compliance and less than optimal treatment. See, e.g., Stramer et al. (2012) Transfusion 52:440. WO 94/24560 describes an immunoassay for measuring two or more different pathogens in a liquid test sample by contacting the sample with a solid phase on which antibodies are immobilized and subsequently contacting the solid phase with two or more different antigens. US 2009/029348 describes a double-antigen sandwich test kit for Hepatitis C antibodies, wherein a primary antigen captures the antibody and the same antibody captures secondary antigen. GB 2 051 357 describes a method for simultaneously detecting in a sample at least two different markers, wherein the method comprises contacting the sample with a single solid phase reagent which is coated with at least two different, non-complementary immunoreactants.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

35 **[0004]** Provided herein are kits for simultaneous detection of multiple Hepatitis B virus (HBV) antibodies in a subject sample so that the HBV status of the subject can be determined. The presently described kits provide a fast, efficient assay for determining if a subject has been exposed to HBV, is suffering HBV infection, has suffered HBV infection in the past, or has been immunized against HBV. Such kits comprise (a) a first receptacle comprising (i) beads conjugated to human Hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) and detectable label (i), (ii) beads conjugated to human Hepatitis B core antigen (HBcAg) and detectable label (ii), and (iii) beads conjugated to an antibody specific for human IgM (anti-IgM) and detectable label (iii); (b) a second receptacle comprising (i) biotinylated HBsAg, and (ii) biotinylated HBcAg; and (c)
 40 a third receptacle comprising streptavidin conjugated to detectable label (iv). In some embodiments, the detectable labels are a distinct combination of fluorophores. In some embodiments, the beads are magnetically responsive.

45 **[0005]** In some embodiments, the detectable label (iv) is selected from phycoerythrin (PE) or fluorescein isothiocyanate (FITC).

50 **[0006]** In some embodiments, the kit further comprises wash reagents (e.g., ready-to-use, a concentrated stock solution, or powder). The kit may further comprise a container comprising materials or reagents for flow cytometry, e.g., buffers, buffer stock solutions or powders and appropriate tubes. In some embodiments, the kit further comprises a receptacle comprising a calibration control, e.g., for setting the signal level to be considered positive. The kit may include calibration controls for more than one detectable label. In such cases, the calibration controls can be in one receptacle or more than one receptacle. The kit may include calibration controls at more than one level for at least one detectable label. The kit further may comprise at least one receptacle comprising a negative control, e.g., with unlabeled beads.

55 **[0007]** Further provided are multiplex assays for processing a biological sample from a human subject and/or determining the HBV infection status of the subject. Accordingly, provided are assays for processing a biological sample from a human subject comprising (a) contacting the biological sample with a mixture of beads in a receptacle, wherein the

mixture of beads comprises (i) beads conjugated to HBsAg and detectable label (i), (ii) beads conjugated to HBcAg and detectable label (ii), and (iii) beads conjugated to anti-IgM (e.g., anti-human IgM) and detectable label (iii); (b) removing non-bead bound components; (c) contacting the mixture of beads with conjugate reagent 1 wherein conjugate reagent 1 comprises (i) biotinylated HBsAg, and (ii) biotinylated HBcAg; (d) removing non-bead bound components; (e) contacting the mixture of beads with conjugate reagent 2 wherein conjugate reagent 2 comprises streptavidin conjugated to detectable label (iv); (f) removing non-bead bound components; and (g) determining by flow cytometry a positive or negative result for detectable label (iv) on beads that are also positive for each of detectable label (i), (ii), or (iii), thereby processing the biological sample from the human subject and/or determining the Hepatitis B infection status of the subject.

[0008] In some embodiments, the detectable labels are a distinct combination of fluorophores. In some embodiments, the beads are magnetically responsive.

[0009] In some embodiments, one, two, or all of steps (b), (d), and (f) comprise washing the beads. In some embodiments, the biological sample is selected from blood, blood components (e.g., serum or plasma), or processed blood.

[0010] In some embodiments of the assay positive and negative are determined by comparison to a calibration control. Positive is defined as higher than the calibration control, and negative is defined as lower than the calibration control.

[0011] In some embodiments the assay further comprises determining that the subject has acute Hepatitis B infection when the detectable label (iv) is positive on beads (iii). In some embodiments the assay further comprises determining that the subject has been immunized against Hepatitis B infection when the detectable label (iv) is positive on beads (i), but not on beads (ii) or (iii). In some embodiments the assay further comprises determining that the subject has been exposed to Hepatitis B when the detectable label (iv) is positive on beads (ii), but not on beads (i) or (iii). In some embodiments the assay further comprises determining that the subject has had a past Hepatitis B infection when the detectable label (iv) is positive on beads (i) and (ii), but not on beads (iii).

[0012] In some embodiments, detectable labels (i), (ii), and (iii) are distinct combinations of fluorophores. In some embodiments, detectable label (iv) is selected from PE and FITC.

[0013] In some embodiments, beads (i), (ii), and (iii) are magnetically responsive. In some embodiments, one, two, or all of steps (b), (d), and (f) comprise washing the beads. In some embodiments, the biological sample is selected from blood, blood components (e.g., serum or plasma), or processed blood.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0014] Figure 1 shows an embodiment of the presently described multiplex HBV assay.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

A. Introduction

[0015] Disclosed herein are kits, compositions, and methods for simultaneous detection of an infection with a micro-organism and/or response to vaccination against the same infection. The process involves the detection of immunoglobulin G (IgG) antibodies to human Hepatitis B surface antigen (anti HBsAg antibodies) in combination with total immunoglobulins (total HBc antibodies) and immunoglobulin M (anti-HBc IgM antibodies) directed against human Hepatitis B core antigen. The presence and amount of each of the antibodies are measured in the same single vessel (tube, well, cuvette) in the presence of beads. Each bead carries a specific detectable physical parameter (e.g., dye signature), and (1) anti-IgM, (2) HBcAg, or (3) HBsAg. Thus three types of distinctly detectable beads are included in a single vessel to carry out an assay, as shown in Figure 1. Figure 1 indicates that the HBsAg beads were coated with the two predominant subtypes of HBsAg, Ad and Ay. Additional subtypes exist, e.g., Aw and Ar (see, e.g., Valet et al. (1975) CMA J. 112:1179).

[0016] The presently described assays offer detection in at least two dimensions, e.g., the identity of the immobilizing bead (e.g., HBsAg, HBcAg, or anti-IgM), and the presence and amount of antibody bound (anti-HBs or anti-HBc). This multidimensional aspect allows for a multiplex format, so that more than one analyte can be detected in a single assay. Moreover, as described below, the inventors have shown that the presently described multiplex assay results successfully correlate with infection status of known patient samples.

[0017] The inventors have devised a simple assay, briefly outlined here, for detecting multiple antibodies in a patient sample that are indicative of the presence of an HBV infection, stage of HBV infection, and HBV vaccination status of the patient. In the first step, patient sample, typically blood or a blood component, is contacted with three types of solid supports:

- ss1) conjugated to detectable label (e.g., fluorophore) 1 and anti-IgM;
- ss2) conjugated to detectable label 2 and HBcAg; and
- ss3) conjugated to detectable label 3 and HBsAg.

[0018] Ss1 will bind all IgM antibodies in the patient sample, regardless of specificity. Ss2 will bind antibodies in the patient sample that are specific for HBcAg, both IgM and IgG. Ss3 will bind antibodies in the patient sample that are specific for HBsAg, predominantly IgG.

5 [0019] After removal of unbound material, labeled HBcAg and HBsAg are added. In the example shown in Figure 1, the label is biotin, but one of skill will understand that a directly detectable label can be used on the HBcAg and HBsAg to result in a positive or negative signal.

[0020] In the present example, after removal of unbound material, detectably labeled streptavidin is added, binds to biotinylated HBcAg and HBsAg, and results in a positive or negative, as well as quantitative, signal. Solid supports 1, 2, and 3 (correlating with detectable labels 1, 2, and 3), and the presence, absence, and quantitative level of signal on each, are detected by flow cytometry. The following Table shows how results can be used to diagnose HBV status of the patient.

	Detectable label 1 + (IgM +)	Detectable label 2 + (anti-HBc +)	Detectable label 3 + (anti-HBs +)
15 Not exposed	-	-	-
Exposed	-	+	-
Acute infection	+	+	-
Past infection	-	+	+
20 Immunized	-	-	+

B. Definitions

25 [0021] Unless defined otherwise, technical and scientific terms used herein have the same meaning as commonly understood by a person of ordinary skill in the art. See, e.g., Lackie, DICTIONARY OF CELL AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY, Elsevier (4th ed. 2007); Sambrook et al., MOLECULAR CLONING, A LABORATORY MANUAL, Cold Springs Harbor Press (Cold Springs Harbor, NY 1989). The present disclosure refers to items such as labels, solid supports, beads and analytes according to number or letter (e.g., Detectable label 1 or bead (ii)). These numbers and letters are
30 meant to distinguish the item from other items of the same type (e.g., bead (i) vs. bead (ii)), and are not meant to associate a specific property with the number or letter.

[0022] Multiplex assays are analyses that simultaneously measure the levels of more than one analyte in a single sample. Multiplex assay methods and reagents are described, e.g., in US Patent 6,773,578 and WO2008148883.

35 [0023] The term "solid support" is used herein to denote a solid inert surface or body to which an agent, such as an antibody or an antigen can be immobilized. The term "immobilized" as used herein denotes a molecular-based coupling that is not significantly de-coupled under the conditions imposed during the steps of the assays described herein. Such immobilization can be achieved through a covalent bond, an ionic bond, an affinity-type bond, or any other chemical bond.

[0024] The term "particle" is used herein to refer to a solid or semisolid body, often with linear dimensions on the micron scale (i.e., less than 100 μm), of any shape or surface texture. Except as noted, the term is used interchangeably
40 with "microparticle," which refers to a micron scale particle, and "bead," which refers to particles that are spherical or near-spherical in shape, often polymeric in composition.

[0025] The terms "receptacle", "vessel", "tube" and "well" refer to a container that can hold reagents or an assay. If the receptacle is in a kit and holds reagents, it will typically be closed or sealed. If the receptacle is being used for an assay, it will typically be open or accessible during steps of the assay.

45 [0026] The term "biological sample" encompasses a variety of sample types obtained from an organism. The term encompasses bodily fluids such as blood, blood components, saliva, serum, plasma, urine and other liquid samples of biological origin, solid tissue biopsy, tissue cultures, or supernatant taken from cultured patient cells. In the context of the present disclosure, the biological sample is typically a bodily fluid with detectable amounts of antibodies, e.g., blood or a blood component. The biological sample can be processed prior to the assay, e.g., to remove cells or cellular debris.
50 The term encompasses samples that have been manipulated after their procurement, such as by treatment with reagents, solubilization, sedimentation, or enrichment for certain components.

[0027] The term "antibody" as used herein refers to a polypeptide encoded by an immunoglobulin gene or immunoglobulin genes, or fragments thereof, which specifically bind and recognize an analyte (antigen). The recognized immunoglobulin light chains are classified as either kappa or lambda. Immunoglobulin heavy chains are classified as
55 gamma, mu, alpha, delta, or epsilon, which in turn define the immunoglobulin classes, IgG, IgM, IgA, IgD and IgE, respectively.

[0028] An example of a structural unit of immunoglobulin G (IgG antibody) is a tetramer. Each such tetramer is composed of two identical pairs of polypeptide chains, each pair having one "light" (about 25 kD) and one "heavy" chain (about

50-70 kD). The N-terminus of each chain defines a variable region of 100 to 110 or more amino acids primarily responsible for antigen recognition. The terms "variable light chain" (VL) and "variable heavy chain" (VH) refer to these light and heavy chains, respectively.

5 **[0029]** Antibodies exist as intact immunoglobulins or as well-characterized fragments produced by digestion of intact immunoglobulins with various peptidases. Thus, for example, pepsin digests an antibody near the disulfide linkages in the hinge region to produce F(ab')₂, a dimer of Fab which itself is a light chain joined to VH-CH1 by a disulfide bond. The F(ab')₂ dimer can be reduced under mild conditions to break the disulfide linkage in the hinge region, thereby converting the F(ab')₂ dimer into two Fab' monomers. The Fab' monomer is essentially a Fab with part of the hinge region (see, Paul (Ed.), *Fundamental Immunology*, Third Edition, Raven Press, NY (1993)). While various antibody fragments are defined in terms of the digestion of an intact antibody, one of skill will appreciate that such fragments may be synthesized de novo either chemically or by utilizing recombinant DNA methodology. Thus, the term "antibody," as used herein, also includes antibody fragments either produced by the modification of whole antibodies or by de novo synthesis using recombinant DNA methodologies such as single chain Fv.

10 **[0030]** Antibodies are commonly referred to according to their targets. While the nomenclature varies, one of skill in the art will be familiar and understand that several names can be applied to the same antibody. For example, an antibody specific for IgM can be called "anti-IgM", "IgM antibody" or "anti-IgM antibody".

15 **[0031]** The terms "antigen", "immunogen", "antibody target" and "target analyte" are used herein to refer to a molecule, compound, or complex that is recognized by an antibody, *i.e.*, can be specifically bound by the antibody. The term can refer to any molecule that can be specifically recognized by an antibody, *e.g.*, a polypeptide, polynucleotide, carbohydrate, lipid, chemical moiety, or combinations thereof (*e.g.*, phosphorylated or glycosylated polypeptides). One of skill will understand that the term does not indicate that the molecule is immunogenic in every context, but simply indicates that it can be targeted by an antibody.

20 **[0032]** Antibodies bind to an "epitope" on an antigen. The epitope is the localized site on the antigen that is recognized and bound by the antibody. Epitopes can include a few amino acids or portions of a few amino acids, *e.g.*, 5 or 6, or more, *e.g.*, 20 or more amino acids, or portions of those amino acids. In some cases, the epitope includes non-protein components, *e.g.*, from a carbohydrate, nucleic acid, or lipid. In some cases, the epitope is a three-dimensional moiety. Thus, for example, where the target is a protein, the epitope can be comprised of consecutive amino acids, or amino acids from different parts of the protein that are brought into proximity by protein folding (*e.g.*, a discontinuous epitope). The same is true for other types of target molecules that form three-dimensional structures. An epitope typically includes at least 3, and more usually, at least 5 or 8-10 amino acids in a unique spatial conformation. Methods of determining spatial conformation of epitopes include, for example, x-ray crystallography and 2-dimensional nuclear magnetic resonance. See, *e.g.*, *Epitope Mapping Protocols in Methods in Molecular Biology*, Vol. 66, Glenn E. Morris, Ed (1996).

25 **[0033]** The terms "specific for" and "specifically binds" refer to a molecule (*e.g.*, antibody or antibody fragment) that binds to its target with at least 2-fold greater affinity than non-target compounds, *e.g.*, at least any of 4-fold, 5-fold, 6-fold, 7-fold, 8-fold, 9-fold, 10-fold, 20-fold, 25-fold, 50-fold, or 100-fold greater affinity. For example, an antibody that specifically binds a given antibody target will typically bind the antibody target with at least a 2-fold greater affinity than a non-antibody target. Specificity can be determined using standard methods, *e.g.*, solid-phase ELISA immunoassays (see, *e.g.*, Harlow & Lane, *Using Antibodies, A Laboratory Manual* (1998) for a description of immunoassay formats and conditions that can be used to determine specific immunoreactivity).

30 **[0034]** The term "binds" with respect to an antibody target (*e.g.*, antigen, analyte), typically indicates that an antibody binds a majority of the antibody targets in a pure population (assuming appropriate molar ratios). For example, an antibody that binds a given antibody target typically binds to at least 2/3 of the antibody targets in a solution (*e.g.*, at least any of 75, 80, 85, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, or 100 %). One of skill will recognize that some variability will arise depending on the method and/or threshold of determining binding.

35 **[0035]** The terms "label", "detectable label" and "detectable moiety" refer to a composition detectable by spectroscopic, photochemical, biochemical, immunochemical, chemical, or other physical means. For example, useful labels include fluorescent dyes (fluorophores), luminescent agents, electron-dense reagents, enzymes (*e.g.*, as commonly used in an ELISA), biotin, digoxigenin, ³²P and other isotopes, haptens, and proteins which can be made detectable, *e.g.*, by incorporating a radiolabel into the peptide or used to detect antibodies specifically reactive with the peptide. The term includes combinations of single labeling agents, *e.g.*, a combination of fluorophores that provides a unique detectable signature, *e.g.*, at a particular wavelength or combination of wavelengths. Any method known in the art for conjugating a label to a desired agent may be employed, *e.g.*, using methods described in Hermanson, *Bioconjugate Techniques* 1996, Academic Press, Inc., San Diego.

40 **[0036]** The term "positive" when referring to a result or signal, indicates the presence of an analyte or item that is being detected in a sample. The term "negative" when referring to a result or signal, indicates the absence of an analyte or item that is being detected in a sample. Positive and negative are typically determined by comparison to at least one control, *e.g.*, a threshold level that is required for a sample to be determined positive, or a negative control (*e.g.*, a known blank).

[0037] A "control" sample or value refers to a sample that serves as a reference, usually a known reference, for comparison to a test sample. For example, a test sample can be taken from a test condition, e.g., in the presence of a test compound, and compared to samples from known conditions, e.g., in the absence of the test compound (negative control), or in the presence of a known compound (positive control). A control can also represent an average value gathered from a number of tests or results. One of skill in the art will recognize that controls can be designed for assessment of any number of parameters, and will understand which controls are valuable in a given situation and be able to analyze data based on comparisons to control values. Controls are also valuable for determining the significance of data. For example, if values for a given parameter are variable in controls, variation in test samples will not be considered as significant.

[0038] A "calibration control" is similar to a positive control, in that it includes a known amount of a known analyte. In the case of a multiplex assay, the calibration control can be designed to include known amounts of multiple known analytes. The amount of analyte(s) in the calibration control can be set at a minimum cut-off amount, e.g., so that a higher amount will be considered "positive" for the analyte(s), while a lower amount will be considered "negative" for the analyte(s). In some cases, multilevel calibration controls can be used, so that a range of analyte amounts can be more accurately determined. For example, an assay can include calibration controls at known low and high amounts, or known minimal, intermediate, and maximal amounts.

[0039] The term "diagnosis" refers to a relative probability that a subject has an infection, disorder or disease. Similarly, the term "prognosis" refers to a relative probability that a certain future outcome may occur in the subject. For example, in the context of the present disclosure, prognosis can refer to the likelihood that an individual will be infected in the future (e.g., unlikely if immunized). The terms are not intended to be absolute, as will be appreciated by any one of skill in the field of medical diagnostics.

[0040] "Subject", "patient" and "individual" are used interchangeably and refer to, except where indicated, mammals such as humans and non-human primates, as well as rabbits, rats, mice, goats, pigs, and other mammalian species. The term does not necessarily indicate that the subject has been diagnosed with a particular disease, but typically refers to an individual under medical supervision. A patient can be an individual that is seeking treatment, monitoring, adjustment or modification of an existing therapeutic regimen.

C. Multiplex assays

[0041] The presently described assays involve detection of more than one analyte in a single assay, and are thus described as multiplex assays. The presently described assays include components for immobilizing multiple analytes on distinguishable solid supports so that each of the multiple analytes can be identified and quantified by flow cytometry. Assay components and considerations include the solid supports and how to distinguish the different types of solid supports from one another (e.g., labels or other differentiation parameters), components to specifically immobilize the desired analytes and remove other sample materials, and labels for detecting and quantifying the desired analytes.

[0042] The presently described multiplex assays involve use of a solid support, typically particles (also referred to as microparticles or beads). For detection by flow cytometry, particles that emit autofluorescence should be avoided since this will increase background signal and render them unsuitable. Particles created by standard emulsion polymerization from a variety of starting monomers generally exhibit low autofluorescence, while those that have been modified to increase porosity ("macroporous" particles) exhibit high autofluorescence. Autofluorescence in such particles further increases with increasing size and increasing percentage of divinylbenzene monomer.

[0043] Within these limitations, the size range of the microparticles can vary and particular size ranges are not critical. In most cases, the aggregated size range of the microparticles lies within the range of from 0.3 μm to 100 μm in particle diameter, e.g., within the range of from 0.5 μm to 40 μm .

[0044] Magnetic particles are commonly used in the art, and can make separation and wash steps more convenient for the presently described assays. "Magnetic particles", "magnetically responsive material" and "magnetic beads" denote a material that responds to a magnetic field. Magnetically responsive materials include paramagnetic materials (e.g., iron, nickel, and cobalt, as well as metal oxides such as Fe_3O_4 , $\text{BaFe}_{12}\text{O}_{19}$, CoO , NiO , Mn_2O_3 , Cr_2O_3 , and CoMnP), ferromagnetic materials, ferrimagnetic materials, and metamagnetic materials. Rather than constituting the entire microparticle, the magnetically responsive material typically constitutes one component of the microparticle, while the remainder consists of a polymeric material which can be chemically derivatized to permit attachment of an assay reagent (e.g., antigen or antibody).

[0045] Methods of, and instrumentation for, applying and removing a magnetic field as part of an assay are known to those skilled in the art and reported in the literature. Examples of literature reports are Forrest et al., US 4,141,687; Ithakissios, US 4,115,534; Vlioger et al., Analytical Biochemistry 205:1-7 (1992); Dudley, Journal of Clinical Immunoassay 14:77-82 (1991); and Smart, Journal of Clinical Immunoassay 15:246-251 (1992).

[0046] The polymeric matrix that forms the microparticle can be any material that is compatible with the presently described assays. The matrix should be inert to the components of the biological sample and to the assay reagents,

have minimal autofluorescence, be solid and insoluble in the sample and in any other reagents or washes used in the assay, and capable of affixing an assay reagent to the microparticle. Examples of suitable polymers are polyesters, polyethers, polyolefins, polyalkylene oxides, polyamides, polyurethanes, polysaccharides, celluloses, and polyisoprenes. Crosslinking is useful in many polymers for imparting structural integrity and rigidity to the microparticle.

[0047] Functional groups for attachment of the assay reagent (e.g., antigen or antibody) can be incorporated into the polymer structure by conventional means. Examples of suitable functional groups are amine groups, ammonium groups, hydroxyl groups, carboxylic acid groups, and isocyanate groups. The assay reagent is typically covalently bound to the solid phase surface, either directly or indirectly, e.g., with a linking group. Linking groups can be used as a means of increasing the density of reactive groups on the solid phase surface and decreasing steric hindrance to increase the range and sensitivity of the assay, or as a means of adding specific types of reactive groups to the solid phase surface to broaden the range of types of assay reagents that can be affixed to the solid phase. Examples of suitable useful linking groups are polylysine, polyaspartic acid, polyglutamic acid and polyarginine.

[0048] Microparticles of different types in a multiplex assay can be distinguished from one another, e.g., by size, weight, light scatter or absorbance, or label, e.g., fluorescent label.

[0049] Where microparticle size is used as a differentiation factor (distinguishing characteristic), the widths of the size subranges and the spacing between mean diameters of adjacent subranges are selected to permit differentiation of different types of microparticles by flow cytometry, as will be apparent to those skilled in the use of and instrumentation for flow cytometry. Typically, a subrange for a given mean diameter is about $\pm 5\%$ CV or less of the mean diameter, where CV is the coefficient of variation and is defined as the standard deviation of the particle diameter divided by the mean particle diameter times 100 percent. The mean diameters of subranges for different types of particles are generally spaced apart by at least about 6% of the mean diameter of one of the subranges, e.g., at least about 8% or 10% of the mean diameter of one of the subranges.

[0050] Light scatter can also be used to distinguish different types of microparticles. Side angle light scatter varies with particle size, granularity, absorbance and surface roughness, while forward angle light scatter is mainly affected by size and refractive index. Varying any of these qualities can result in light scatter differences that can serve as a means of distinguishing the various groups.

[0051] Still another example of a differentiation parameter is absorbance. When light is applied to particles, the absorbance of the light by the particles is indicated mostly by a change in the strength of the laterally (side-angle) scattered light while the strength of the forward-scattered light is relatively unaffected. Consequently, the difference in absorbance between various colored dyes associated with the particles is determined by observing differences in the strength of the laterally scattered light.

[0052] A wide array of parameters or characteristics can be used as differentiation parameters to distinguish the particles of one group from those of another. The differentiation parameters may arise from particle size, composition, physical characteristics that affect light scattering, excitable fluorescent dyes or colored dyes that impart different emission spectra and/or scattering characteristics to the particles, or from different concentrations of one or more fluorescent dyes.

[0053] When the distinguishable characteristic is a fluorescent dye or color, it can be coated on the surface of the microparticle, embedded in the microparticle, or bound to the molecules of the microparticle material. Thus, fluorescent microparticles can be manufactured by combining the polymer material with the fluorescent dye, or by impregnating the microparticle with the dye. Microparticles with dyes already incorporated and thereby suitable for use in the present invention are commercially available, from suppliers such as Spherotech, Inc. (Libertyville, Ill., USA) and Molecular Probes, Inc. (Eugene, Oreg., USA). A list of vendors of flow cytometric products can be found, e.g., at the website of molbio.princeton.edu/facs/FCMsites.html.

[0054] Labels can be any substance or component that directly or indirectly emits or generates a detectable signal. In some embodiments, the labels are fluorophores, many of which are reported in the literature and thus known to those skilled in the art, and many of which are readily commercially available. Literature sources for fluorophores include Cardullo et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 85: 8790-8794 (1988); Dexter, J. of Chemical Physics 21: 836- 850 (1953); Hochstrasser et al., Biophysical Chemistry 45: 133-141 (1992); Selvin, Methods in Enzymology 246: 300-334 (1995); Steinberg, Ann. Rev. Biochem., 40: 83- 114 (1971); Stryer, Ann. Rev. Biochem. 47: 819-846 (1978); Wang et al., Tetrahedron Letters 31: 6493-6496 (1990); and Wang et al., Anal. Chem. 67: 1197-1203 (1995).

[0055] The following are examples of fluorophores that can be used as labels:

4-acetamido-4'-isothiocyanatostilbene-2,2'-disulfonic acid
 acridine
 acridine isothiocyanate
 5-(2'-aminoethyl)aminonaphthalene-1-sulfonic acid (EDANS)
 4-amino-N-[3-vinylsulfonyl]phenyl]naphthalimide-3,5 disulfonate
 N-(4-anilino-1-naphthyl)maleimide
 anthranilamide

BODIPY
 Brilliant Yellow
 coumarin
 7-amino-4-methylcoumarin (AMC, Coumarin 120)
 5 7-amino-4-trifluoromethylcoumarin (Coumaran 151)
 cyanine dyes
 cyanosine
 4', 6-diaminidino-2-phenylindole (DAPI)
 5', 5"-dibromopyrogallol-sulfonaphthalein (Bromopyrogallol Red)
 10 7-diethylamino-3 -(4' -isothiocyanatophenyl)-4-methylcoumarin
 diethylenetriamine pentaacetate
 4,4'-diisothiocyanatodihydro-stilbene-2,2'-disulfonic acid
 4,4' -diisothiocyanatostilbene-2,2' -disulfonic acid
 5-[dimethylamino]naphthalene-1-sulfonyl chloride (DNS, dansylchloride)
 15 4-(4'-dimethylaminophenylazo)benzoic acid (DABCYL)
 4-dimethylaminophenylazophenyl-4' -isothiocyanate (DABITC)
 eosin
 eosin isothiocyanate
 erythrosin B
 20 erythrosin isothiocyanate
 ethidium
 5-carboxyfluorescein (FAM)
 5-(4,6-dichlorotriazin-2-yl)aminofluorescein (DTAF)
 2',7'-dimethoxy-4' 5' -dichloro-6-carboxyfluorescein (JOE)
 25 fluorescein
 fluorescein isothiocyanate
 fluorescamine
 IR144
 IR1446
 30 Malachite Green isothiocyanate
 4-methylumbelliferone
 ortho cresolphthalein
 nitrotyrosine
 pararosaniline
 35 Phenol Red
 phycoerythrin (including but not limited to B and R types)
 o-phthaldialdehyde
 pyrene
 pyrene butyrate
 40 succinimidyl 1-pyrene butyrate
 quantum dots
 Reactive Red 4 (Cibacron™ Brilliant Red 3B-A)
 6-carboxy-X-rhodamine (ROX)
 6-carboxyrhodamine (R6G)
 45 lissamine rhodamine B sulfonyl chloride rhodamine
 rhodamine B
 rhodamine 123
 rhodamine X isothiocyanate
 sulforhodamine B
 50 sulforhodamine 101
 sulfonyl chloride derivative of sulforhodamine 101 (Texas Red)
 N,N,N',N' -tetramethyl-6-carboxyrhodamine (TAMRA)
 tetramethyl rhodamine
 tetramethyl rhodamine isothiocyanate (TRITC)
 55 riboflavin
 rosolic acid
 lanthanide chelate derivatives

[0056] A prominent group of fluorophores for immunoassays are fluorescein, fluorescein isothiocyanate, phycoerythrin, rhodamine B, and Texas Red (sulfonyl chloride derivative of sulforhodamine 101). Any of the fluorophores in the list preceding this paragraph can be used in the presently described assays, either to label the microparticle, or to label a binding agent (e.g., an antibody or streptavidin). Fluorochromes can be attached by conventional covalent bonding, using appropriate functional groups on the fluorophores and on the microparticle or binding agent. The recognition of such groups and the reactions to form the linkages will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art.

[0057] Other labels that can be used in place of the fluorophores are radioactive labels and enzyme labels. These are likewise known in the art.

[0058] Flow cytometry methods and instrumentation are known in the art. Descriptions of instrumentation and methods can be found, e.g., in Introduction to Flow Cytometry: A Learning Guide (2000) Becton, Dickinson, and Company; McHugh, "Flow Microsphere Immunoassay for the Quantitative and Simultaneous Detection of Multiple Soluble Analytes," Methods in Cell Biology 42, Part B (Academic Press, 1994).

D. Examples

[0059] This example illustrates performance of the presently described HBV multiplex assay on a set of 46 plasma samples from human subjects. Nine samples were from HBV-vaccinated patients, and 37 samples were from patients showing symptoms of HBV infection. Patient samples were tested for the presence of anti-HBs, anti-HBc (total), and anti-HBc (IgM) using the BioPlex 2200 assay. Readings were obtained by flow cytometry, which is able to detect each bead according to its fluorescent dye signature, as well as the presence of antibody bound to each bead. HBsAg beads bind all antibodies (primarily IgG) that bind HBsAg. HBcAg beads bind all antibodies (primarily IgG and IgM) that bind HBcAg. Anti-IgM beads bind all IgM antibodies, including those specific for HBcAg. All beads are magnetic. Bead reagent was prepared from 8 μ L of each of: BioSpacific Ad/Ay (HBsAg)-coated beads (10 mg/ml stock); Steenvoorde HBc 309-coated beads (10 mg/ml stock); and Medix anti- μ coated beads (10 mg/ml stock) + 2 ml particle diluent. In addition, 2 control beads were included with each assay: Internal Standard Bead (ISB) (10 mg/ml stock) and Serum Verification Bead (SVB) (10 mg/ml stock). The ISB is designed to identify detector fluctuation(s), and is coated with a unique fluorescent dye, in this case called tetra methyl rhodamine cadaverine (TMRC). The SVB is designed to confirm the presence of serum or plasma in the sample and is coated with anti-FXIII (coagulation factor XIII).

[0060] Each sample was incubated with bead reagent, unbound sample components were removed, and the now-coupled beads were washed. Conjugate Reagent 1, comprising biotinylated reporter antigens and biotinylated reporter antibody was added. The reporter antigens include a domain for recognition and binding to the bead-bound antibodies, and a detectable moiety, for either direct or indirect detection. In this case, reporter antigens and antibody were Biotinylated HBs Ad (0.6 mg/ml stock), Biotinylated HBs Ay (0.58 mg/ml stock), Biotinylated HBc307(0.55 mg/ml stock), and Biotinylated anti-FXIII (1.17 mg/ml stock). Concentrations in Conjugate Reagent 1 were 1.25 μ g/ml, 1.25 μ g/ml, and 0.2 μ g/ml, and 0.1 μ g/ml, respectively. Again, unbound reagents were removed, the coupled beads washed, and Conjugate Reagent 2 was added. Conjugate Reagent 2 included streptavidin-PE (1.0 mg/ml stock) at a concentration of 6.0 μ g/ml. In this case, the Conjugate Reagents included 1 % trehalose and 0.5 % CHAPS, as buffering and background control reagents. After washing, samples were resuspended and signal detected by flow cytometry.

[0061] Control and calibration values were established as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Control and cutoff calibrator readings for multiplex HBV assay

	Anti-HBs	Anti-HBc (total)	Anti-HBc (IgM)
HBs_NC Negative control for anti-HBs assay	102	59	67
HBs_Cal Cut-off calibrator for anti-HBs assay	381	59	60
HBc_NC Negative control for anti-HBc (total) and anti-HBc (IgM) assays	76	50	83
HBc_Cal Cut-off calibrator for anti-HBc (total) assay	77	221	99
HBcIgM_Cal Cut-off calibrator for anti-HBc (IgM) assay	81	6840	2148

[0062] Once control and calibration values were set, patient samples were tested. Prior to testing, patients were

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categorized as (i) acute infection, (ii) exposed to HBV, (iii) susceptible, (iv) past infection, and (v) immunized.

Table 2. Raw patient data for multiplex HBV assay

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Sample ID	Anti-HBs		Anti-HBc (total)		Anti-HBc (IgM)		Status
	Signal	S/CO	Signal	S/CO	Signal	S/CO	
65255	48	0.1	1031	4.7	12460	5.8	Acute Infection
66311B	59	0.2	564	2.6	982	0.5	Exposed to HBV
65973	61	0.2	1063	4.8	27401	12.8	Acute Infection
66673	61	0.2	4405	20.0	25543	11.9	Acute Infection
66760	65	0.2	4365	19.8	26763	12.5	Acute Infection
KB72168	65	0.2	4224	19.2	28809	13.4	Acute Infection
U66398	66	0.2	2235	10.1	15284	7.1	Acute Infection
63906	67	0.2	1590	7.2	15204	7.1	Acute Infection
66761	67	0.2	3451	15.7	25968	12.1	Acute Infection
U66545	67	0.2	2068	9.4	15457	7.2	Acute Infection
66073	69	0.2	1592	7.2	27098	12.6	Acute Infection
66311	70	0.2	1387	6.3	15042	7.0	Acute Infection
66392	70	0.2	2042	9.3	19036	8.9	Acute Infection
U66546	71	0.2	2053	9.3	13631	6.3	Acute Infection
U66541	73	0.2	2640	12.0	15758	7.3	Acute Infection
66544	75	0.2	2247	10.2	16657	7.8	Acute Infection
65936	76	0.2	1816	8.2	28248	13.2	Acute Infection
U66075	76	0.2	2337	10.6	23647	11.0	Acute Infection
U66458	77	0.2	2477	11.2	23036	10.7	Acute Infection
67492	79	0.2	5843	26.5	28121	13.1	Acute Infection
U66525	80	0.2	8141	36.9	27705	12.9	Acute Infection
66672	81	0.2	5706	25.9	28489	13.3	Acute Infection
1365146-24	83	0.2	84	0.4	1287	0.6	Susceptible
1365146-21	96	0.3	8121	36.8	189	0.1	Exposed to HBV
1257146-9	125	0.3	13377	60.7	449	0.2	Exposed to HBV
67403	126	0.3	3183	14.4	27296	12.7	Acute Infection
1257146-5	130	0.3	21928	99.4	178	0.1	Exposed to HBV
1257146-3	141	0.4	19368	87.8	165	0.1	Exposed to HBV
1257146-8	142	0.4	23585	107.0	166	0.1	Exposed to HBV
65579	171	0.4	12411	56.3	2763	1.3	Acute Infection
1365146-48	175	0.5	786	3.6	163	0.1	Exposed to HBV
U65370	200	0.5	1774	8.0	27122	12.6	Acute Infection
1365146-51	227	0.6	3495	15.9	151	0.1	Exposed to HBV
65471	279	0.7	1641	7.4	16979	7.9	Acute Infection
65480	685	1.8	60	0.3	89	0.0	Immunized
U65501	739	1.9	48	0.2	436	0.2	Immunized

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(continued)

Sample ID	Anti-HBs		Anti-HBc (total)		Anti-HBc (IgM)		Status
	Signal	S/CO	Signal	S/CO	Signal	S/CO	
67421	823	2.2	55	0.2	52	0.0	Immunized
U65499	1834	4.8	131	0.6	175	0.1	Immunized
1365146-46	4325	11.4	10223	46.4	261	0.1	Past Infection
U65498	5234	13.8	50	0.2	113	0.1	Immunized
65487	1888	49.6	54	0.2	177	0.1	Immunized
67433	2331	61.3	58	0.3	189	0.1	Immunized
67439	2381	62.6	54	0.2	257	0.1	Immunized
1365146-52	2850	74.9	1435	6.5	203	0.1	Past Infection
65477	2902	76.3	50	0.2	68	0.0	Immunized
1365146-45	3048	80.1	3757	17.0	667	0.3	Past Infection

[0063] For data interpretation, "reactive" (positive) was set at a sample signal/ cutoff (S/CO) calibrator signal of ≥ 1.0 , while "non-reactive" (negative) was set at a sample S/CO calibrator signal of ≤ 1.0 . Table 3 shows interpretation of the raw results using the S/CO scores above.

Table 3. Processed results for multiplex HBV assay

Sample ID	Anti-HBs	Anti-HBc Total	Anti-HBc IgM	Interpretation
65255	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
66311B	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Exposed to HBV
65973	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
66673	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
66760	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
KB72168	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
U66398	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
63906	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
66761	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
U66545	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
66073	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
66311	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
66392	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
U66546	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
U66541	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
66544	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
65936	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
U66075	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
U66458	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
67492	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
U66525	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection

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(continued)

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Sample ID	Anti-HBs	Anti-HBc Total	Anti-HBc IgM	Interpretation
66672	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
1365146-24	Non-Reactive	Non-Reactive	Non-Reactive	Susceptible
1365146-21	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Exposed to HBV
1257146-9	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Exposed to HBV
67403	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
1257146-5	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Exposed to HBV
1257146-3	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Exposed to HBV
1257146-8	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Exposed to HBV
65579	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
1365146-48	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Exposed to HBV
U65370	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
1365146-51	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Exposed to HBV
65471	Non-Reactive	Reactive	Reactive	Acute Infection
65480	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Non-Reactive	Immunized
U65501	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Non-Reactive	Immunized
67421	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Non-Reactive	Immunized
U65499	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Non-Reactive	Immunized
1365146-46	Reactive	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Past Infection
U65498	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Non-Reactive	Immunized
65487	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Non-Reactive	Immunized
67433	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Non-Reactive	Immunized
67439	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Non-Reactive	Immunized
1365146-52	Reactive	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Past Infection
65477	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Non-Reactive	Immunized
1365146-45	Reactive	Reactive	Non-Reactive	Past Infection

[0064] The above examples are provided to illustrate the invention.

Claims

1. A kit comprising

(a) a first receptacle comprising

- (i) beads conjugated to human Hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) and detectable label (i),
- (ii) beads conjugated to human Hepatitis B core antigen (HBcAg) and detectable label (ii), and
- (iii) beads conjugated to an antibody specific for human IgM (anti-IgM) and detectable label (iii);

(b) a second receptacle comprising

- (i) biotinylated HBsAg, and
- (ii) biotinylated HBcAg; and

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(c) a third receptacle comprising streptavidin conjugated to detectable label (iv).

2. The kit of claim 1, further comprising

- 5 (i) wash reagents; and/or
(ii) a receptacle comprising a calibration control.

3. The kit of claims 1 or 2, wherein detectable labels (i), (ii), and (iii) are distinct combination of fluorophores.

10 4. The kit of any one of claims 1-3, wherein the detectable label (iv) is selected from phycoerythrin and fluorescein isothiocyanate.

5. The kit of any one of claims 1-4, wherein beads (i), (ii), and (iii) are magnetically responsive.

15 6. A multiplex assay for processing a biological sample from a human subject and/or determining the Hepatitis B infection status of the subject, the method comprising:

(a) contacting the biological sample with a mixture of beads in a receptacle, wherein the mixture of beads comprises:

- 20 (i) beads conjugated to human Hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) and detectable label (i),
(ii) beads conjugated to human Hepatitis B core antigen (HBcAg) and detectable label (ii), and
(iii) beads conjugated to an antibody specific for human IgM (anti-IgM) and detectable label (iii);

25 (b) removing non-bead bound components from the receptacle;

(c) contacting the mixture of beads with conjugate reagent 1, wherein conjugate reagent 1 comprises

- 30 (i) biotinylated HBsAg, and
(ii) biotinylated HBcAg;

(d) removing non-bead bound components;

(e) contacting the mixture of beads with conjugate reagent 2, wherein conjugate reagent 2 comprises streptavidin conjugated to detectable label (iv);

(f) removing non-bead bound components; and

35 (g) determining by flow cytometry a positive or negative result for detectable label (iv) on beads that are also positive for each of detectable label (i), (ii), or (iii), thereby processing the biological sample from the human subject and/or determining the Hepatitis B infection status of the subject.

40 7. The assay of claim 6, wherein positive and negative are determined by comparison to a calibration control, positive is defined as higher than the calibration control, and negative is defined as lower than the calibration control.

8. The assay of claim 6 or 7, further comprising

45 (a) determining that the subject has acute Hepatitis B infection when detectable label (iv) is positive on beads (iii); and/or

(b) determining that the subject has been immunized against Hepatitis B infection when detectable label (iv) is positive on beads (i), but not beads (ii) or (iii); and/or

(c) determining that the subject has been exposed to Hepatitis B when detectable label (iv) is positive on beads (ii), but not beads (i) or (iii).

50 (d) determining that the subject has had a past Hepatitis B infection when detectable label (iv) is positive on beads (i) and (ii), but not beads (iii).

9. The assay of any one of claims 6-8, wherein detectable labels (i), (ii), and (iii) are distinct combinations of fluorophores.

55 10. The assay of any one of claims 6-9, wherein the detectable label (iv) is selected from phycoerythrin and fluorescein isothiocyanate.

11. The assay of any one of claims 6-10, wherein beads (i), (ii), and (iii) are magnetically responsive.

12. The assay of any one of claims 6-11, wherein step (b) comprises washing the beads.
13. The assay of any one of claims 6-12, wherein step (d) comprises washing the beads.
- 5 14. The assay of any one of claims 6-13, wherein step (f) comprises washing the beads.
15. The assay of any one of claims 6-14, wherein the biological sample is blood, a blood component, or processed blood.

10 **Patentansprüche**

1. Kit, umfassend:

15 (a) einen ersten Behälter, umfassend

- (i) Kügelchen, die mit humanem Hepatitis-B-Oberflächenantigen (HBsAg) und nachweisbarem Marker (i) konjugiert sind;
- (ii) Kügelchen, die mit humanem Hepatitis-B-Kernantigen (HBcAg) und nachweisbarem Marker (ii) konjugiert sind;
- 20 (iii) Kügelchen, die mit einem Antikörper, der spezifisch für humanes IgM (Anti-IgM) ist, und nachweisbarem Marker (iii) konjugiert sind;

(b) einen zweiten Behälter, umfassend

- 25 (i) biotinyliertes HBsAg; und
(ii) biotinyliertes HBcAg; und

(c) einen dritten Behälter, der an nachweisbarem Marker (iv) konjugiertes Streptavidin umfasst.

30 2. Kit gemäß Anspruch 1, weiterhin umfassend

- (i) Waschreagentien; und/oder
(ii) einen Behälter, der eine Eichkontrolle umfasst.

35 3. Kit gemäß Anspruch 1 oder 2, wobei die nachweisbaren Marker (i), (ii) und (iii) eine bestimmte Kombination von Fluorophoren sind.

40 4. Kit gemäß einem der Ansprüche 1-3, wobei der nachweisbare Marker (iv) aus Phycoerythrin und Fluoresceiniso-thiocyanat ausgewählt ist.

5. Kit gemäß einem der Ansprüche 1-4, wobei die Kügelchen (i), (ii) und (iii) magnetisch sind.

45 6. Multiplex-Assay zur Verarbeitung einer biologischen Probe von einem humanen Probanden und/oder zur Bestimmung des Hepatitis-B-Infektionsstatus des Probanden, wobei das Verfahren umfasst:

(a) In-Kontakt-Bringen der biologischen Probe mit einem Gemisch von Kügelchen in einem Behälter, wobei das Gemisch von Kügelchen umfasst:

- 50 (i) Kügelchen, die mit humanem Hepatitis-B-Oberflächenantigen (HBsAg) und nachweisbarem Marker (i) konjugiert sind;
- (ii) Kügelchen, die mit humanem Hepatitis-B-Kernantigen (HBcAg) und nachweisbarem Marker (ii) konjugiert sind;
- (iii) Kügelchen, die mit einem Antikörper, der spezifisch für humanes IgM (Anti-IgM) ist, und nachweisbarem Marker (iii) konjugiert sind;

55 (b) Entfernen von nicht an Kügelchen gebundenen Komponenten aus dem Behälter;

(c) In-Kontakt-Bringen des Gemischs von Kügelchen mit Konjugatreagens 1, wobei das Konjugatreagens 1 umfasst:

- (i) biotinyliertes HBsAg; und
- (ii) biotinyliertes HBcAg;

(d) Entfernen von nicht an Kügelchen gebundenen Komponenten;

(e) In-Kontakt-Bringen des Gemischs von Kügelchen mit Konjugatreagens 2, wobei das Konjugatreagens 2 an nachweisbaren Marker (iv) konjugiertes Streptavidin umfasst;

(f) Entfernen von nicht an Kügelchen gebundenen Komponenten; und

(g) Bestimmen eines positiven oder negativen Ergebnisses bezüglich des nachweisbaren Markers (iv) mittels Durchflusscytometrie an Kügelchen, die auch positiv bezüglich jedes der nachweisbaren Marker (i), (ii) oder (iii) sind, wodurch die biologische Probe von dem humanen Probanden verarbeitet und/oder der Hepatitis-B-Infektionsstatus des Probanden bestimmt wird.

7. Assay gemäß Anspruch 6, wobei positiv und negativ durch Vergleich mit einer Eichkontrolle bestimmt werden, positiv als höher als die Eichkontrolle definiert ist und negativ als niedriger als die Eichkontrolle definiert ist.

8. Assay gemäß Anspruch 6 oder 7, weiterhin umfassend

(a) Bestimmen, dass der Proband eine akute Hepatitis-B-Infektion aufweist, wenn der nachweisbare Marker (iv) an den Kügelchen (iii) positiv ist; und/oder

(b) Bestimmen, dass der Proband gegen Hepatitis-B-Infektion immunisiert ist, wenn der nachweisbare Marker (iv) an den Kügelchen (i), aber nicht an den Kügelchen (ii) oder (iii) positiv ist; und/oder

(c) Bestimmen, dass der Proband Hepatitis B ausgesetzt war, wenn der nachweisbare Marker (iv) an den Kügelchen (ii), aber nicht an den Kügelchen (i) oder (iii) positiv ist;

(d) Bestimmen, dass der Proband eine vergangene Hepatitis-B-Infektion aufweist, wenn der nachweisbare Marker (iv) an den Kügelchen (i) und (ii), aber nicht an den Kügelchen (iii) positiv ist.

9. Assay gemäß einem der Ansprüche 6-8, wobei die nachweisbaren Marker (i), (ii) und (iii) bestimmte Kombinationen von Fluorophoren sind.

10. Assay gemäß einem der Ansprüche 6-9, wobei der nachweisbare Marker (iv) aus Phycoerythrin und Fluoresceinisothoniocyanat ausgewählt ist.

11. Assay gemäß einem der Ansprüche 6-10, wobei die Kügelchen (i), (ii) und (iii) magnetisch sind.

12. Assay gemäß einem der Ansprüche 6-11, wobei Schritt (b) das Waschen der Kügelchen umfasst.

13. Assay gemäß einem der Ansprüche 6-12, wobei Schritt (d) das Waschen der Kügelchen umfasst.

14. Assay gemäß einem der Ansprüche 6-13, wobei Schritt (f) das Waschen der Kügelchen umfasst.

15. Assay gemäß einem der Ansprüche 6-14, wobei die biologische Probe Blut, eine Blutkomponente oder verarbeitetes Blut ist.

Revendications

1. Trousse comprenant

(a) un premier réceptacle comportant

(i) des billes conjuguées à de l'antigène de surface du virus de l'hépatite B humaine (HBsAg) et un marqueur détectable (i),

(ii) des billes conjuguées à de l'antigène nucléocapsidique du virus de l'hépatite B humaine (HBcAg) et un marqueur détectable (ii), et

(iii) des billes conjuguées à un anticorps spécifique de l'IgM humaine (anti-IgM) et un marqueur détectable (iii) ;

(b) un deuxième réceptacle comportant

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- (i) du HBsAg biotinylé, et
- (ii) du HBcAg biotinylé ; et

(c) un troisième réceptacle comportant de la streptavidine conjuguée à un marqueur détectable (iv).

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2. Trousse selon la revendication 1, comprenant en outre

- (i) des réactifs de lavage ; et/ou
- (ii) un réceptacle comportant un système d'étalonnage.

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3. Trousse selon la revendication 1 ou 2, dans laquelle les marqueurs détectables (i), (ii) et (iii) sont une combinaison distincte de fluorophores.

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4. Trousse selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1-3, dans laquelle le marqueur détectable (iv) est choisi parmi la phycoérythrine et l'isothiocyanate de fluorescéine.

5. Trousse selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1-4, dans laquelle les billes (i), (ii) et (iii) ont une sensibilité magnétique.

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6. Test multiplex pour traiter un échantillon biologique provenant d'un sujet humain et/ou pour déterminer l'état d'infection par le virus de l'hépatite B du sujet, le procédé comprenant :

(a) la mise en contact de l'échantillon biologique avec un mélange de billes dans un réceptacle, où le mélange de billes comprend :

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- (i) des billes conjuguées à de l'antigène de surface du virus de l'hépatite B humaine (HBsAg) et un marqueur détectable (i),
- (ii) des billes conjuguées à de l'antigène nucléocapsidique du virus de l'hépatite B humaine (HBcAg) et un marqueur détectable (ii), et
- (iii) des billes conjuguées à un anticorps spécifique de l'IgM humaine (anti-IgM) et un marqueur détectable (iii) ;

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(b) l'élimination des composants non fixés aux billes du réceptacle;

(c) la mise en contact du mélange de billes avec un réactif conjugué 1, où ledit réactif conjugué 1 comprend

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- (i) du HBsAg biotinylé, et
- (ii) du HBcAg biotinylé ;

(d) l'élimination des composants non fixés aux billes ;

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(e) la mise en contact du mélange de billes avec un réactif conjugué 2, où ledit réactif conjugué 2 comprend de la streptavidine conjuguée au marqueur détectable (iv) ;

(f) l'élimination des composants non fixés aux billes ; et

(g) la détermination par cytométrie de flux d'un résultat positif ou négatif pour le marqueur détectable (iv) sur les billes qui est également positif pour chacun des marqueurs détectables (i), (ii) et (iii), traitant ainsi l'échantillon biologique provenant du sujet humain et/ou déterminant l'état d'infection par le virus de l'hépatite B du sujet.

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7. Test selon la revendication 6, dans lequel les résultats positifs et négatifs sont déterminés par comparaison avec un système d'étalonnage, un résultat positif est défini comme étant supérieur au système d'étalonnage, et un résultat négatif est défini comme étant inférieur au système d'étalonnage.

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8. Test selon la revendication 6 ou 7, comprenant en outre le fait de

(a) déterminer que le sujet souffre d'une hépatite B aiguë lorsque le marqueur détectable (iv) est positif sur les billes (iii) ; et/ou

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(b) déterminer que le sujet a été immunisé contre une infection par le virus de l'hépatite B lorsque le marqueur détectable (iv) est positif sur les billes (i), mais pas sur les billes (ii) ou (iii) ; et/ou

(c) déterminer que le sujet a été exposé au virus de l'hépatite B lorsque le marqueur détectable (iv) est positif sur les billes (ii), mais pas sur les billes (i) ou (iii) ;

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(d) déterminer que le sujet a eu une infection antérieure par le virus de l'hépatite B lorsque le marqueur détectable (iv) est positif sur les billes (i) et (ii), mais pas sur les billes (iii).

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9. Test selon l'une quelconque des revendications 6-8, dans lequel les marqueurs détectables (i), (ii) et (iii) sont des combinaisons distinctes de fluorophores.
10. Test selon l'une quelconque des revendications 6-9, dans lequel le marqueur détectable (iv) est choisi parmi la phycoérythrine et l'isothiocyanate de fluorescéine.
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11. Test selon l'une quelconque des revendications 6-10, dans lequel les billes (i), (ii) et (iii) ont une sensibilité magnétique.
12. Test selon l'une quelconque des revendications 6-11, dans lequel l'étape (b) comprend le lavage des billes.
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13. Test selon l'une quelconque des revendications 6-12, dans lequel l'étape (d) comprend le lavage des billes.
14. Test selon l'une quelconque des revendications 6-13, dans lequel l'étape (f) comprend le lavage des billes.
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15. Test selon l'une quelconque des revendications 6-14, dans lequel l'échantillon biologique est du sang, un composant du sang ou du sang traité.

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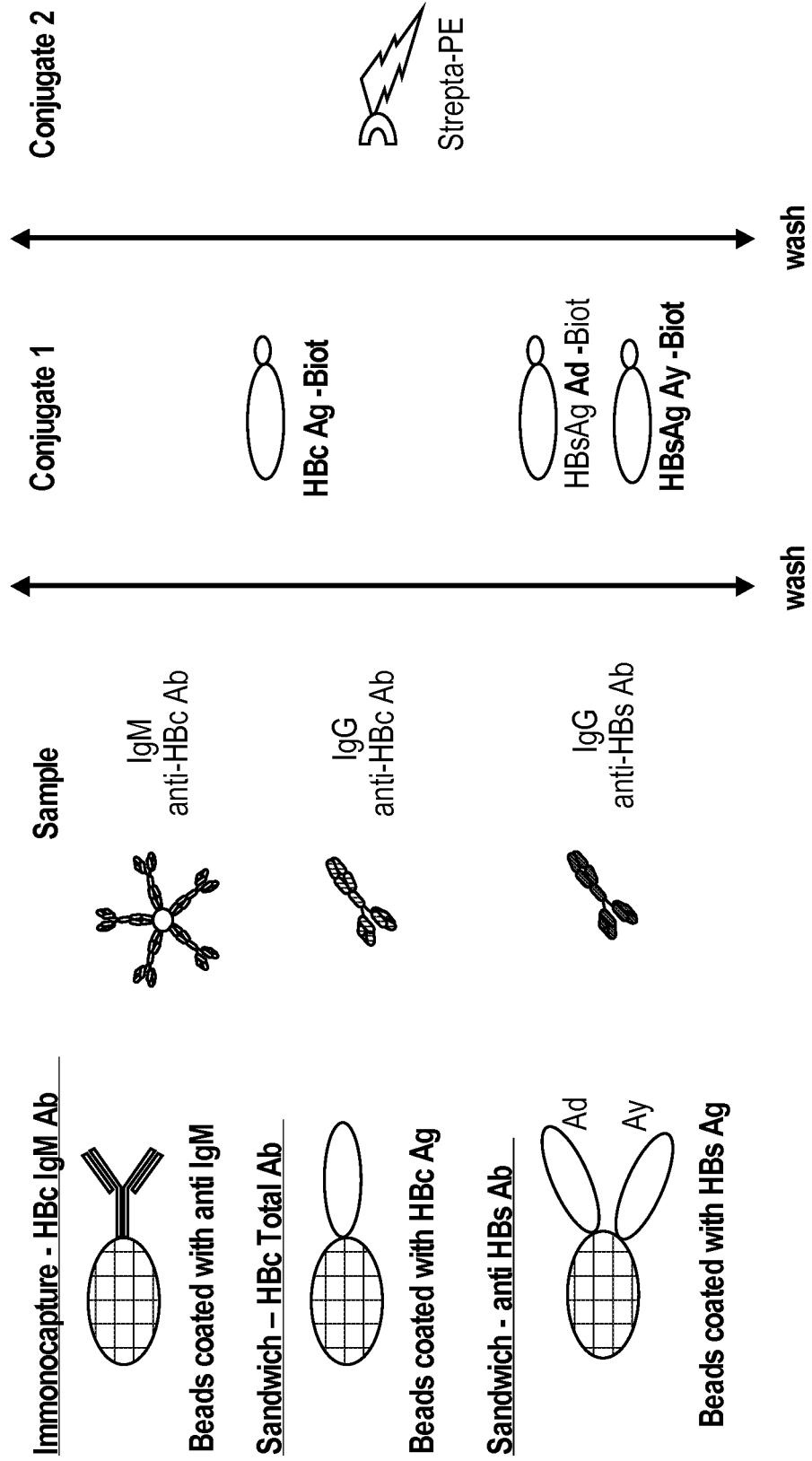
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Figure 1



REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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摘要(译)

本文提供了用于确定个体是否已经或已经感染乙型肝炎病毒的多重测定，以及感染或消退的阶段。此外，多重系统可以区分接种疫苗的受试者和易感乙型肝炎感染的受试者。