

Recognized and Unrecognized Sensitization

Assessment of pre-transplant immunologic memory

Howard M. Gebel, Ph.D.

Professor of Pathology

Emory University Hospital

Atlanta, GA

Howard Gebel, Ph.D., D(ABHI)
Professor of Pathology
Emory University Hospital
Atlanta, GA.

No financial relationships related to this presentation

AND

The presentation does not include discussion of “off-label” or “investigational” use.

The Rejection



POSITIVE C

NEGATIVE

9

REJECTION

6

187

“The presence of preformed cytotoxic antibodies against the donor appears to be a strong contraindication for transplantation.”

“..the ethics of transplanting kidneys without the prior knowledge of the results of the lymphocyte crossmatch test... can reasonably be expected to be questioned.”

The evolution and clinical impact of Human Leukocyte Antigen technology

Howard M. Gebel and Robert A. Bray

Current Opinion in Nephrology and Hypertension 2010, 19:598–602

Solid Phase Assays

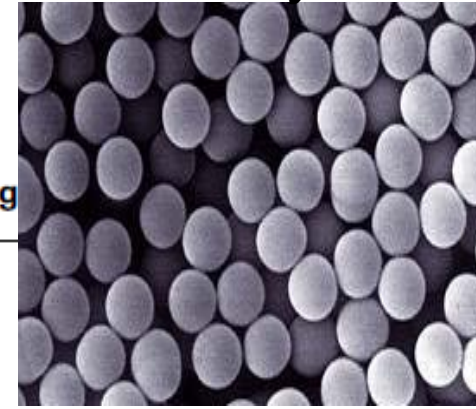
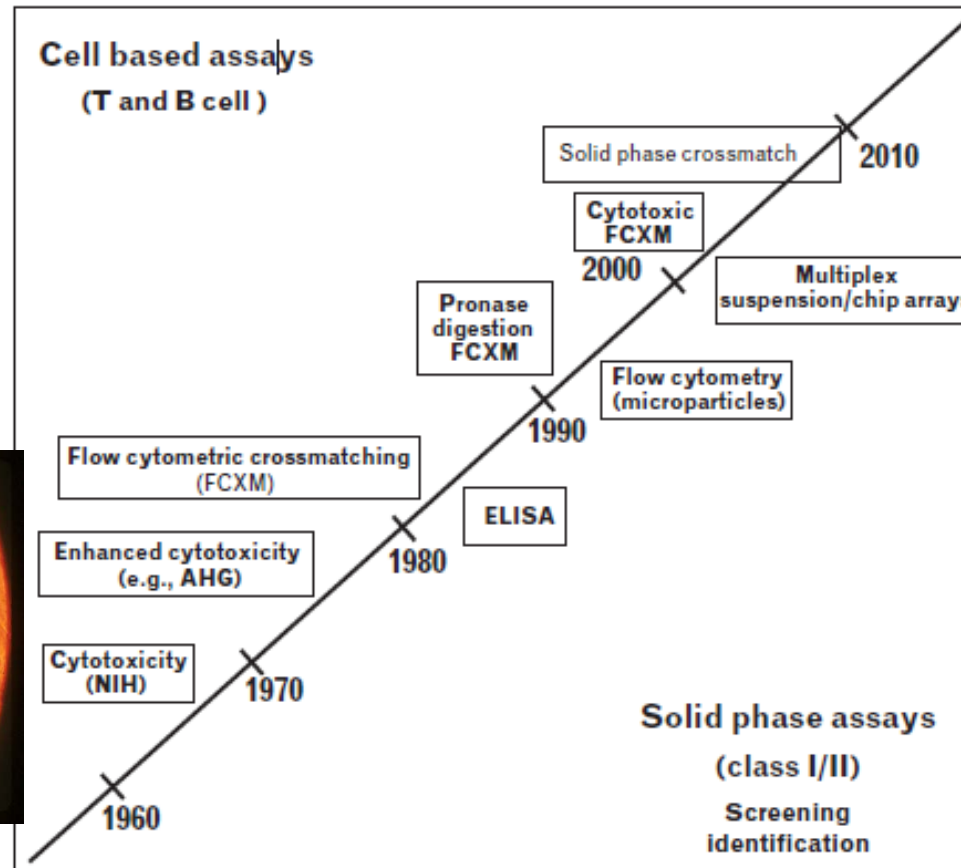
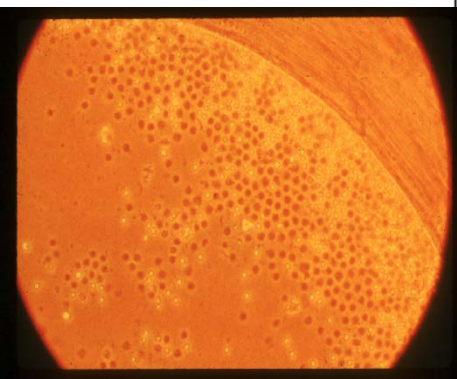


Figure 1 Evolution of human leukocyte antigen antibody testing



- Cumbersome cell-based assays for XM, antibody ID and HLA typing.

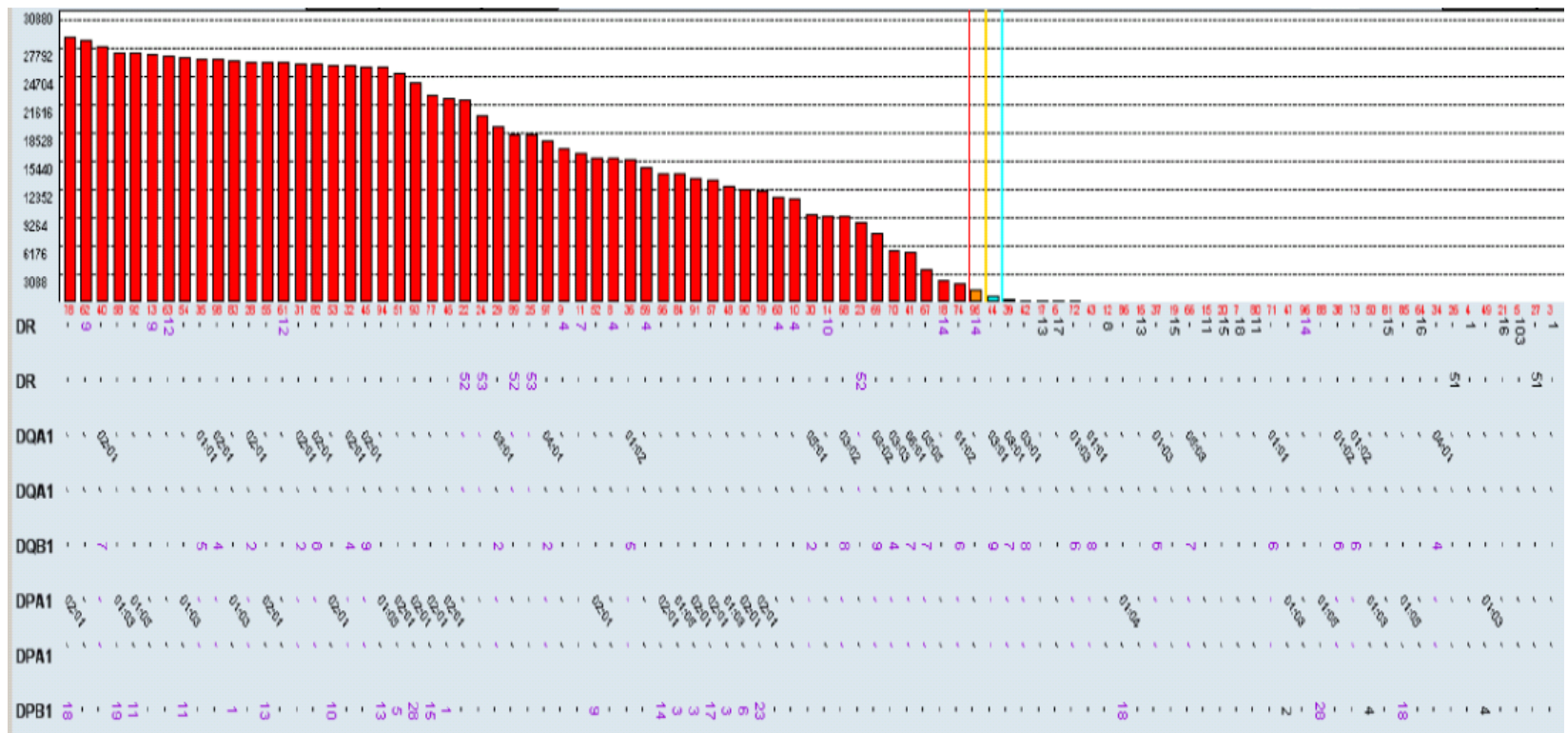
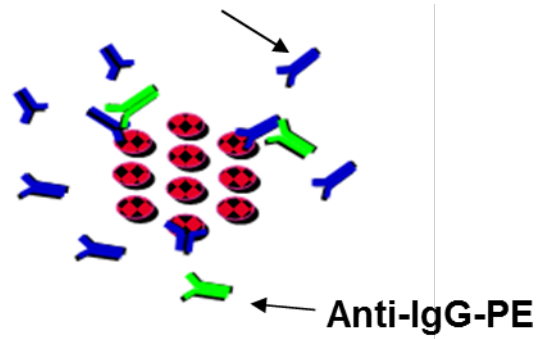
- Highly sensitive and specific bead-based assays for antibody ID and Molecular-based HLA typing.



Cytotoxicity

Solid Phase HLA antibody detection

HLA alloantibody



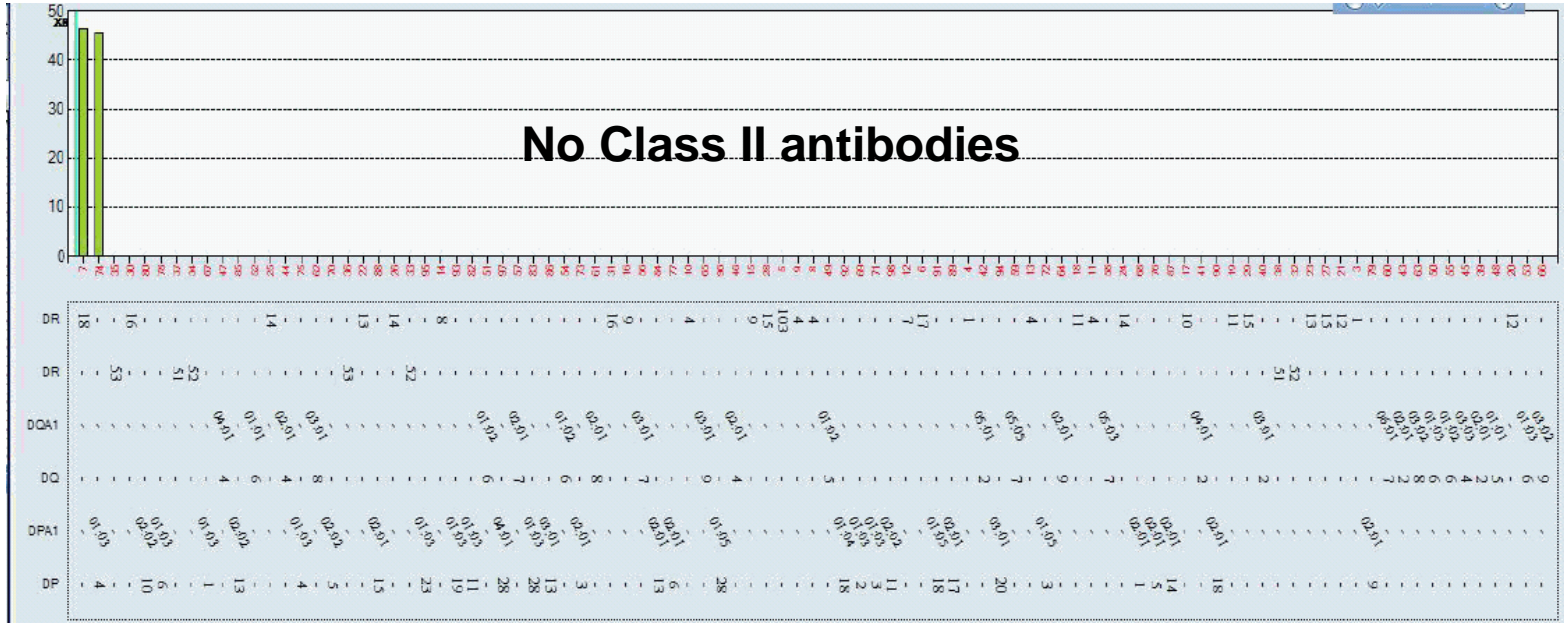
Adapted from Gebel and Bray. Transplantation Reviews 20: 189-194, 2006

Antibody profile of three potential transplant candidates

Class I



Class II



The Details

(The Devil is in them...)



1. Non-transfused male-Unsensitized

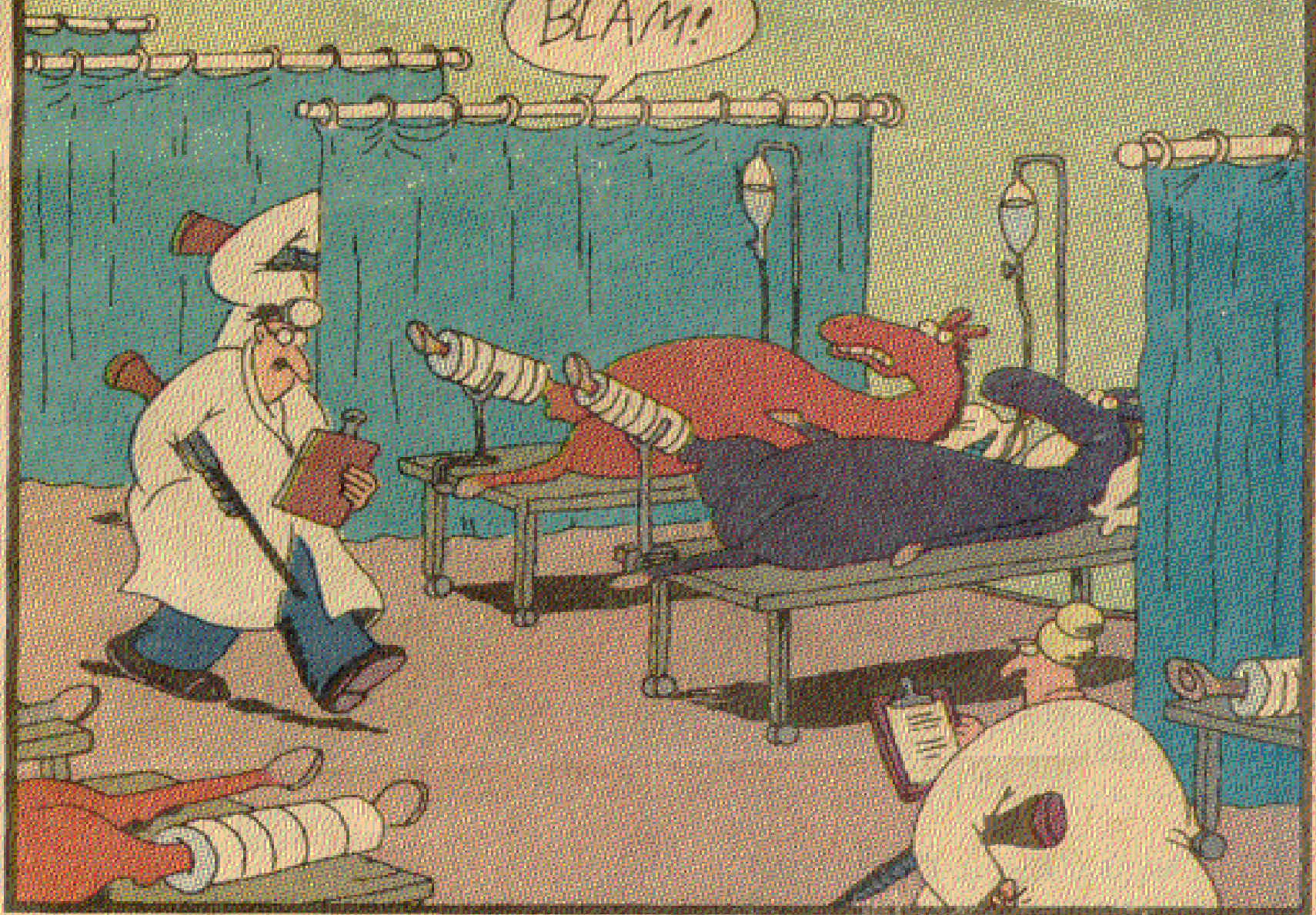
2. Multiparous female, 3 children

**Exposed to mismatched paternal ags
but**

Unsensitized or Sensitized?

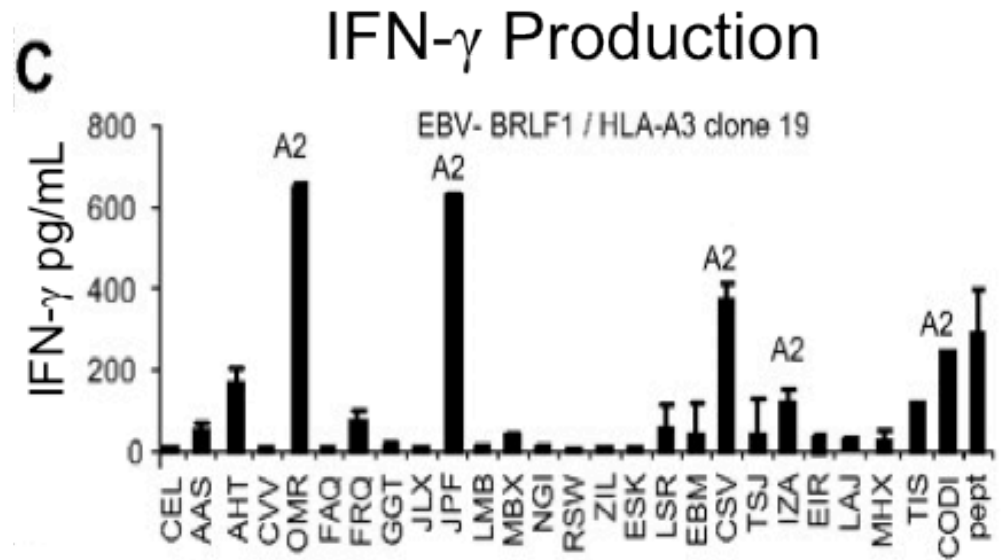
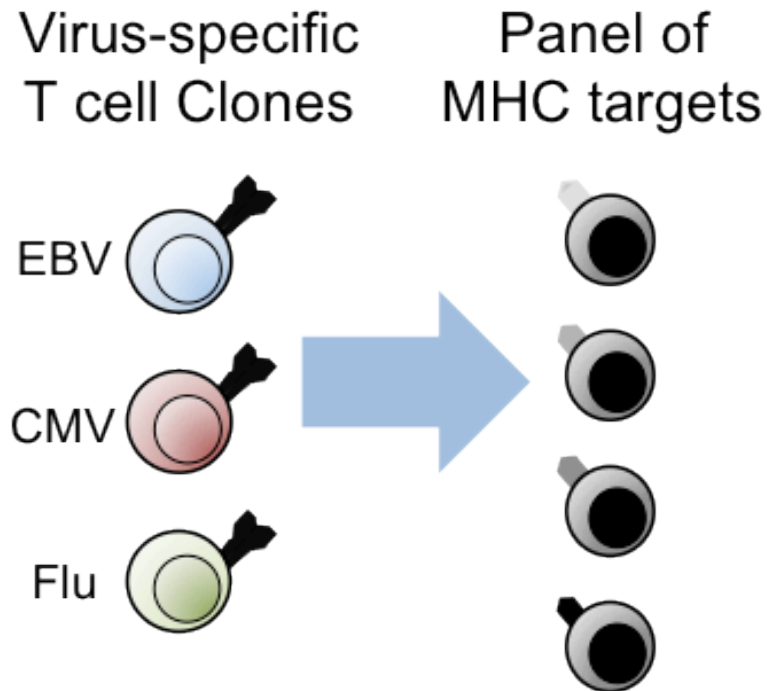
3 Previous allograft recipient

BLAM!



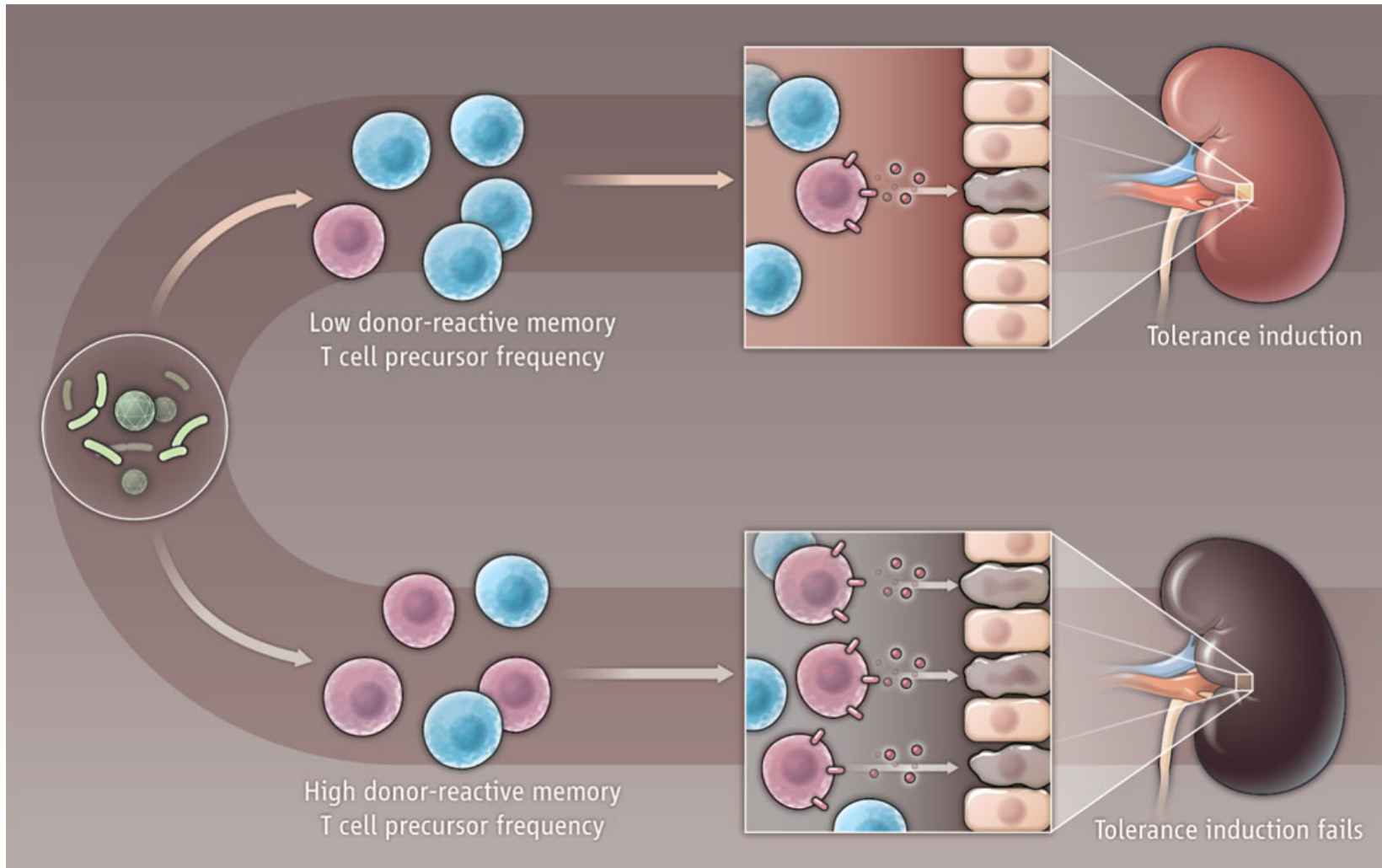
Horse hospitals

Alloreactive memory can arise not just from prior HLA sensitization, but also from pathogen exposure



Amir et al, *Blood*, 2010

Donor-Reactive Memory T Cells are a Barrier to Success in Transplantation

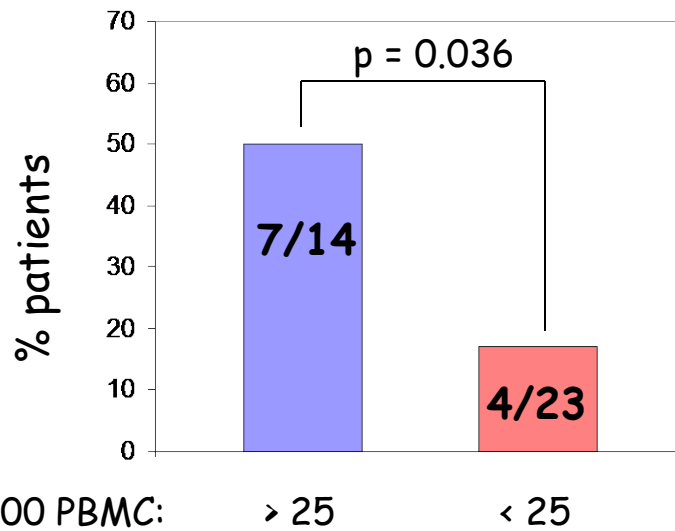


M. L. Ford and C. P. Larsen *Sci Transl Med* 2011;3:86ps22

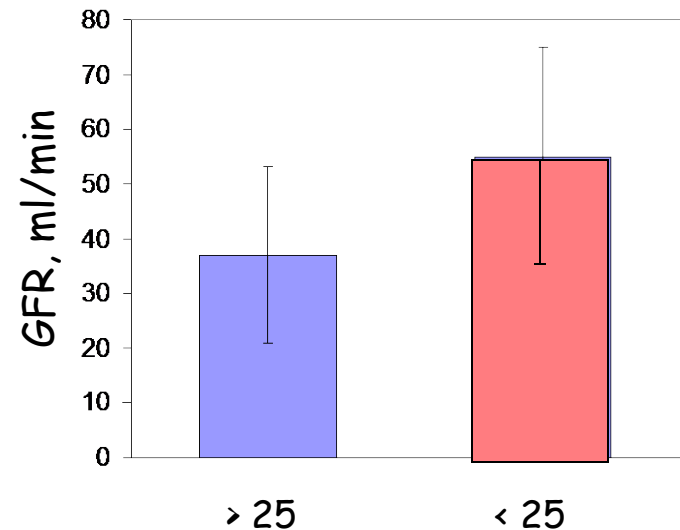
How do we identify and quantify alloreactive memory T cells?

Clinical transplantation: presence of donor-specific memory T cells before transplantation correlates with the risk of post transplant acute rejection episodes and decreased graft function

Acute rejection episodes
in the first 12 months
post transplant



Kidney graft function
at 12 months post transplant



IFN γ spots/300,000 PBMC:

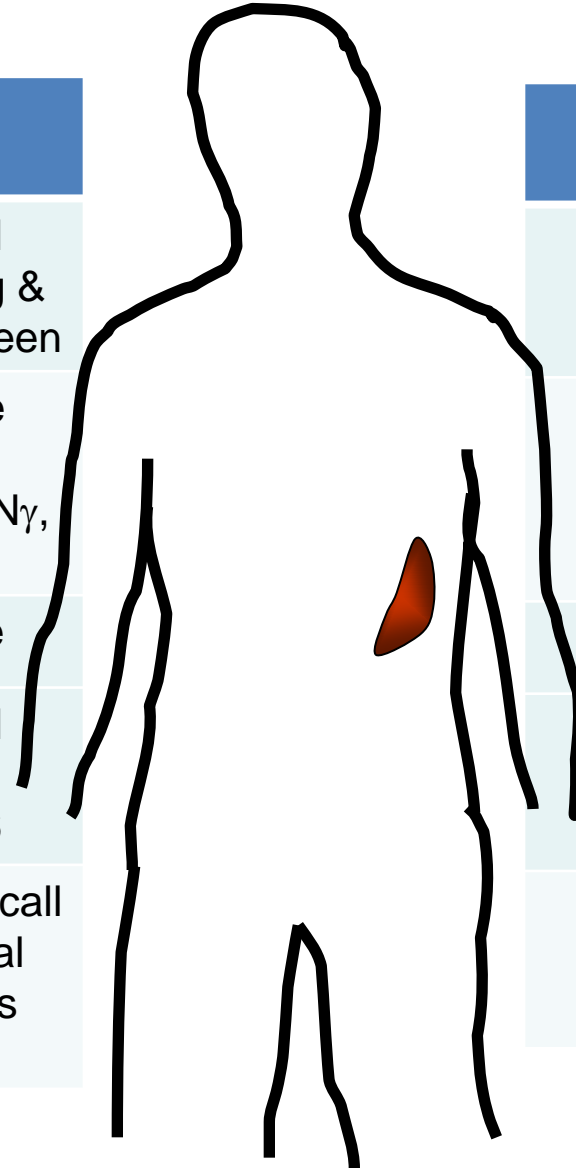
> 25

< 25

> 25

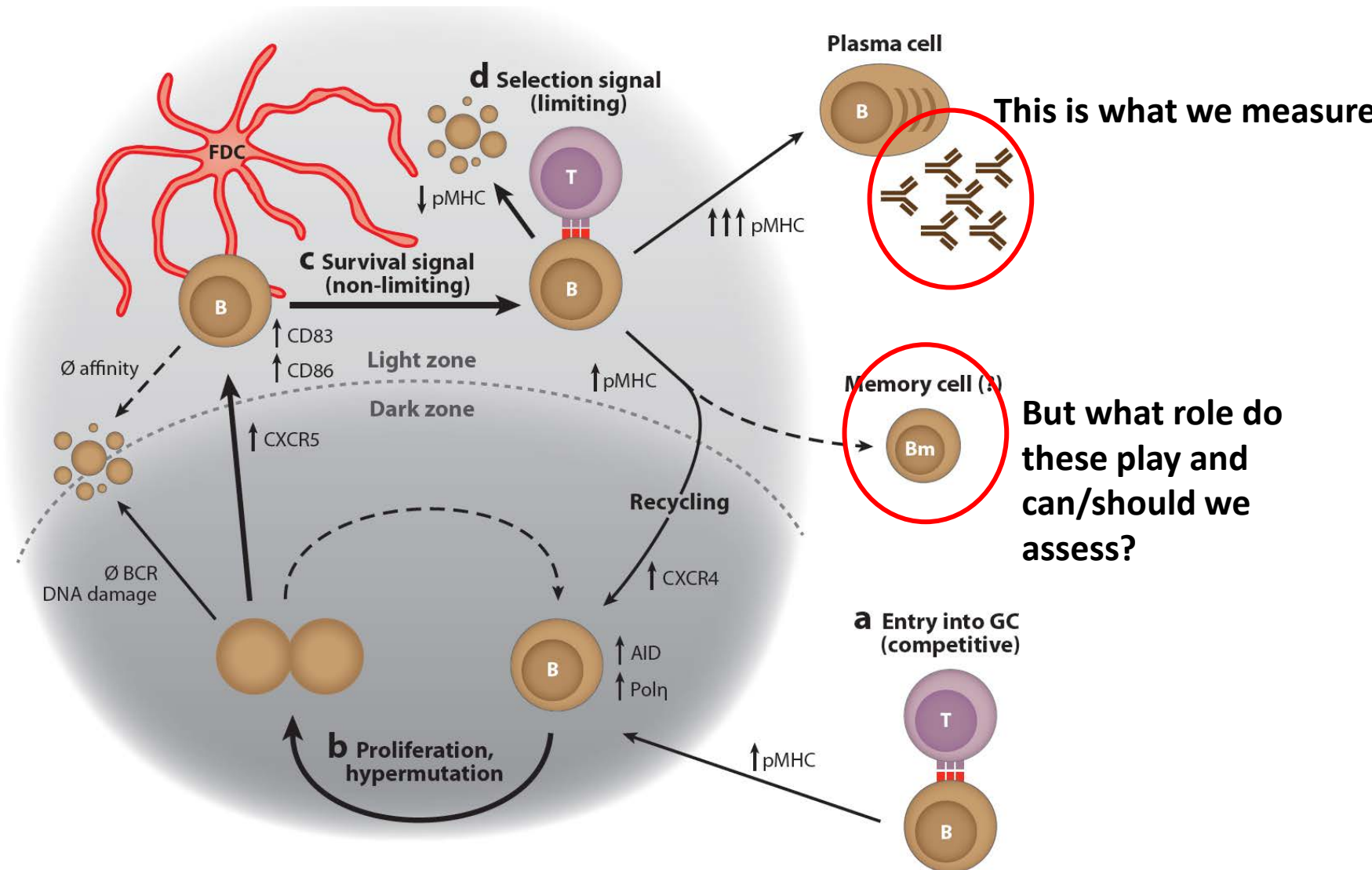
< 25

Specialized memory subsets: regionalization of immune surveillance



Feature	Tissue Resident	Effector	Central
Distribution	Non-Lymphoid Tissues	Peripheral tissues (lung & liver) and spleen	Lymphoid tissues Lymph node and spleen
Cytokine	Immediate effector cytokines IFN γ , TNF	Immediate effector cytokines IFN γ , TNF	IL-2
Killing	immediate	immediate	inducible
Homing molecule	Sessile, non-circulating CD69 ⁺ CD103 ⁺	Peripheral homing CCR5 & 6	Lymphoid homing CCR7, CD62L
Putative function	Immuno-surveillance in non-lymphoid tissues	Immediate recall at peripheral barrier sites	Sustained memory response

B Cell Differentiation Pathways



Detecting the Humoral Alloimmune Response: We Need More Than Serum Antibody Screening

Gonca E. Karahan,¹ Frans H. J. Claas,¹ and Sebastiaan Heide¹

Abstract: Whereas many techniques exist to detect HLA antibodies in the sera of immunized individuals, assays to detect and quantify HLA-specific B cells are only just emerging. The need for such assays is becoming clear, as in some patients, HLA-specific memory B cells have been shown to be present in the absence of the accompanying serum HLA antibodies. Because HLA-specific B cells in the peripheral blood of immunized individuals are present at only a very low frequency, assays with high sensitivity are required. In this review, we discuss the currently available methods to detect and/or quantify HLA-specific B cells, as well as their promises and limitations. We also discuss scenarios in which quantification of HLA-specific B cells may be of additional value, besides classical serum HLA antibody detection.

(Transplantation 2015;99: 908–915)

HLA-Specific B Cells

I. A METHOD FOR THEIR DETECTION, QUANTIFICATION, AND ISOLATION USING HLA TETRAMERS

Andrea A. Zachary,^{1,3} Dessislava Kopchaliiska,¹ Robert A. Montgomery,² and Mary S. Leffell¹

(*Transplantation* 2007;83: 982–988)

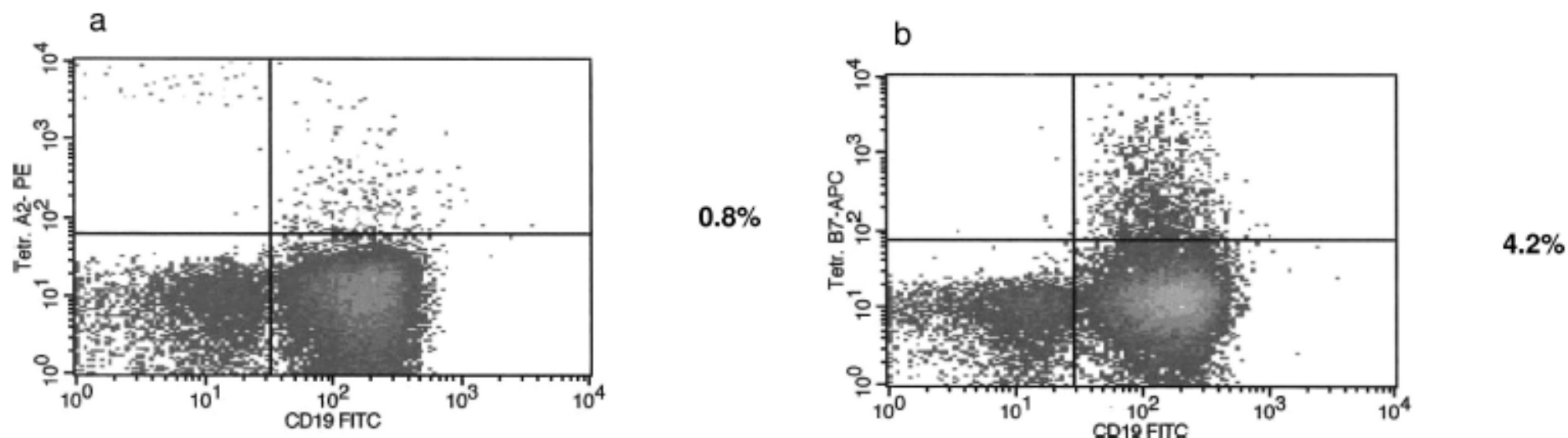


TABLE 1. Frequency of tetramer-positive B lymphocytes: subjects with antibody vs. those without

Tetramer	Percent tetramer + cells among CD19+ cells				P
	N ^a	Antibody positive ^b	N ^a	Antibody negative ^c	
A2	27	4.07 (1.34) ^d	19	1.55 (0.86)	1×10 ⁻⁹
A24	17	4.43 (1.39)	16	2.19 (1.39)	4.4×10 ⁻⁶
B7	23	5.46 (1.90)	22	3.25 (1.50)	5.0×10 ⁻⁵

^a Number of subjects.

^b Subjects with current or historic antibody specific for the tetramer HLA antigen.

^c Subjects with no history of antibody to the tetramer HLA antigen.

^d Frequencies are given as the percent of CD19+ cells. Values in parentheses are standard deviations.

HLA-Specific B Cells

II. APPLICATION TO TRANSPLANTATION

Andrea A. Zachary,^{1,3} Dessislava Kopchaliiska,¹ Robert A. Montgomery,² Joseph K. Melancon,²
and Mary S. Leffell¹

(*Transplantation* 2007;83: 989–994)

TABLE 2. Frequency of tetramer positive B lymphocytes among patients categorized by transplant history

Tetramer	Antibody negative ^a				Antibody positive ^b			
	N	Previous transplant		P	N	Previous transplant		P
		No	Yes			No	Yes	
A2	19	1.18 ^c (0.66)	1.83 (0.92)	0.05	23	4.03 (1.46)	4.18 (1.45)	0.47
A24	16	1.98 (1.15)	2.47 (0.63)	0.15	17	4.34 (1.08)	4.47 (1.55)	0.44
B7	22	2.35 (1.09)	4.14 (1.38)	0.002	23	5.24 (1.83)	5.47 (1.93)	0.41

^a Patients lacking antibody specific for the tetramer.

^b Patients with antibody specific for the tetramer.

^c Frequency is the percentage of tetramer positive cells among CD19+ cells. Numbers in parentheses are standard deviations.

A Novel ELISPOT Assay to Quantify HLA-Specific B Cells in HLA-Immunized Individuals

S. Heidt^{a,*}, D. L. Roelen^a, Y. J. H. de Vaal^a,
M. G. D. Kester^b, C. Eijsink^a, S. Thomas^c,
N. M. van Besouw^d, H. D. Volk^{e,e}, W. Weimar^d,
F. H. J. Claas^a and A. Mulder^a

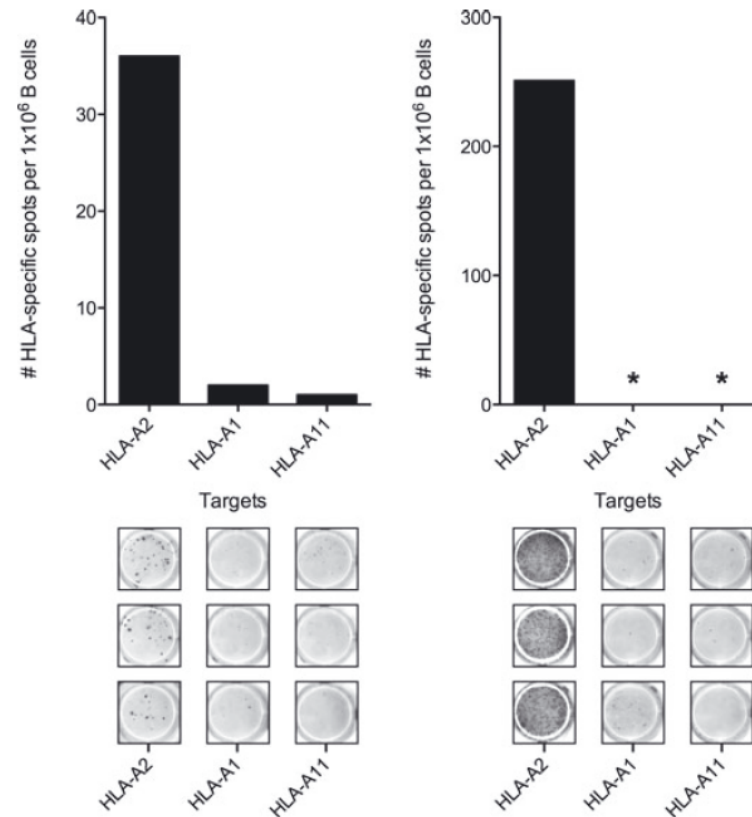


Figure 3: B cells from two healthy individuals (left panel HLA class I typed A3, B7, B15, Cw3, Cw7 and right panel A3, A26, B44, B56, Cw1, Cw5, respectively), who were immunized against HLA-A2, but not HLA-A1 or HLA-A11, formed spots against HLA-A2 and no spots against HLA-A1 or HLA-A11. *: no HLA-specific spots detected.

Table 1: Concurrent determination of HLA-A2-specific B cells (by spot formation) and their secreted HLA antibody (by Luminex assay)

Individual	Immunization status	Spot number ¹	MFI supernatant ²	MFI neg. control
70a	A2 immunized	99	59.79	0.98
71a	A2 immunized	0	0.00	0.76
71b	A2 immunized	6	61.80	0.75
73a	A2 immunized	8	112.18	1.48
73b	A2 immunized	24	140.22	1.00
70b	Nonimmunized	0	0.00	1.14
71c	Nonimmunized	1	0.00	2.91
71d	Nonimmunized	0	0.00	1.10
73d	Nonimmunized	0	3.90	0.90

¹Per million total B cells.

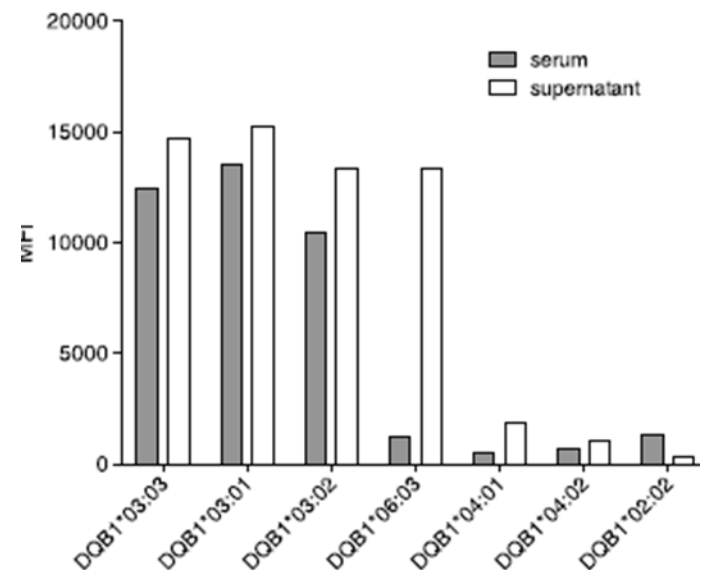
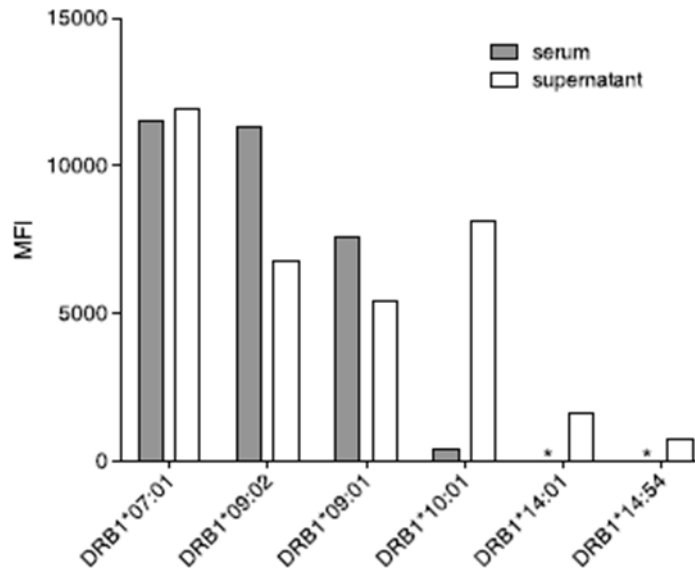
²MFI positive control serum: 3012.75.

Detecting the Humoral Alloimmune Response: We Need More Than Serum Antibody Screening

Gonca E. Karahan,¹ Frans H. J. Claas,¹ and Sebastiaan Heidt¹

Abstract: Whereas many techniques exist to detect HLA antibodies in the sera of immunized individuals, assays to detect and quantify HLA-specific B cells are only just emerging. The need for such assays is becoming clear, as in some patients, HLA-specific memory B cells have been shown to be present in the absence of the accompanying serum HLA antibodies. Because HLA-specific B cells in the peripheral blood of immunized individuals are present at only a very low frequency, assays with high sensitivity are required. In this review, we discuss the currently available methods to detect and/or quantify HLA-specific B cells, as well as their promises and limitations. We also discuss scenarios in which quantification of HLA-specific B cells may be of additional value, besides classical serum HLA antibody detection.

(*Transplantation* 2015;99: 908–915)



[Explore this journal >](#)

Original Article

A memory B cell crossmatch assay for quantification of donor-specific memory B cells in the peripheral blood of HLA-immunized individuals

G.E. Karahan, Y.J.H. de Vaal, J. Krop, C. Wehmeier, D.L. Roelen,
F.H.J. Claas, S. Heidt 

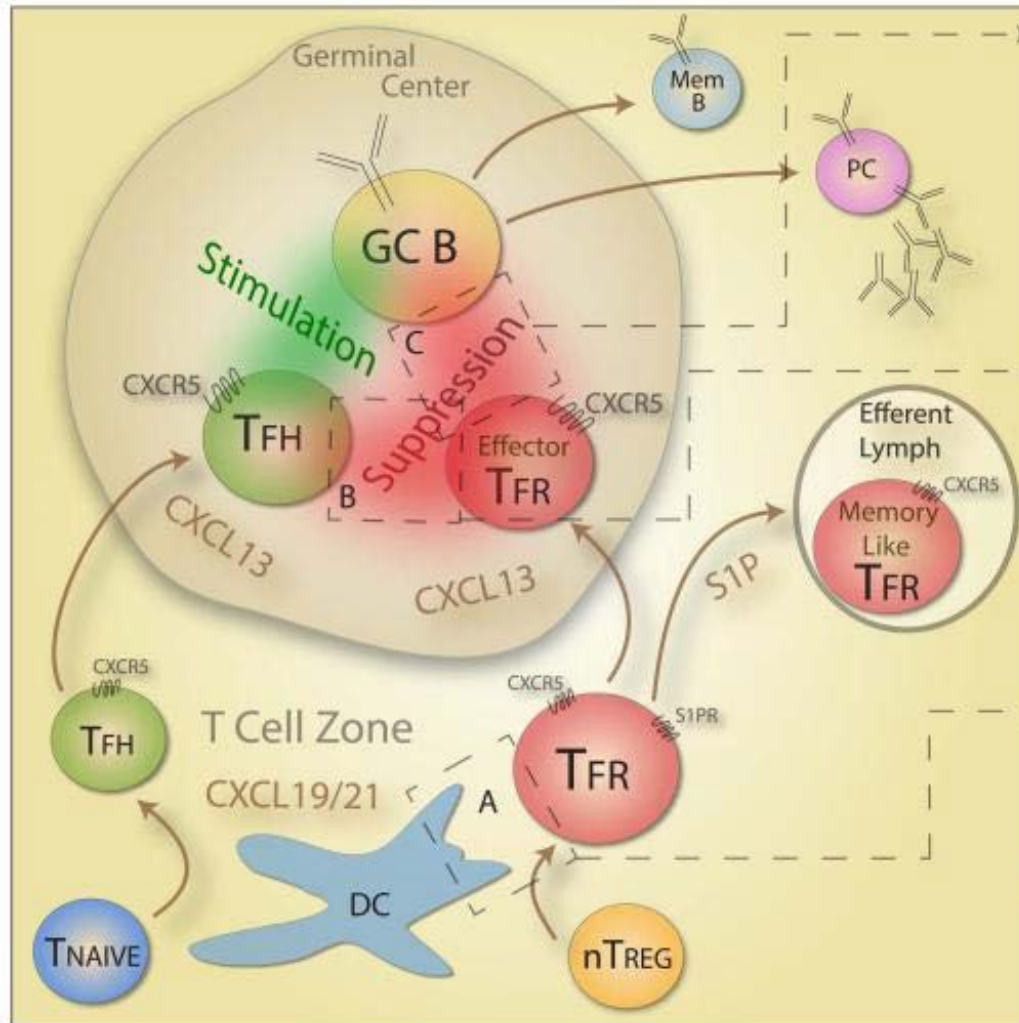
Accepted manuscript online: 30 March 2017 [Full publication history](#)

It's not as easy as it looks!

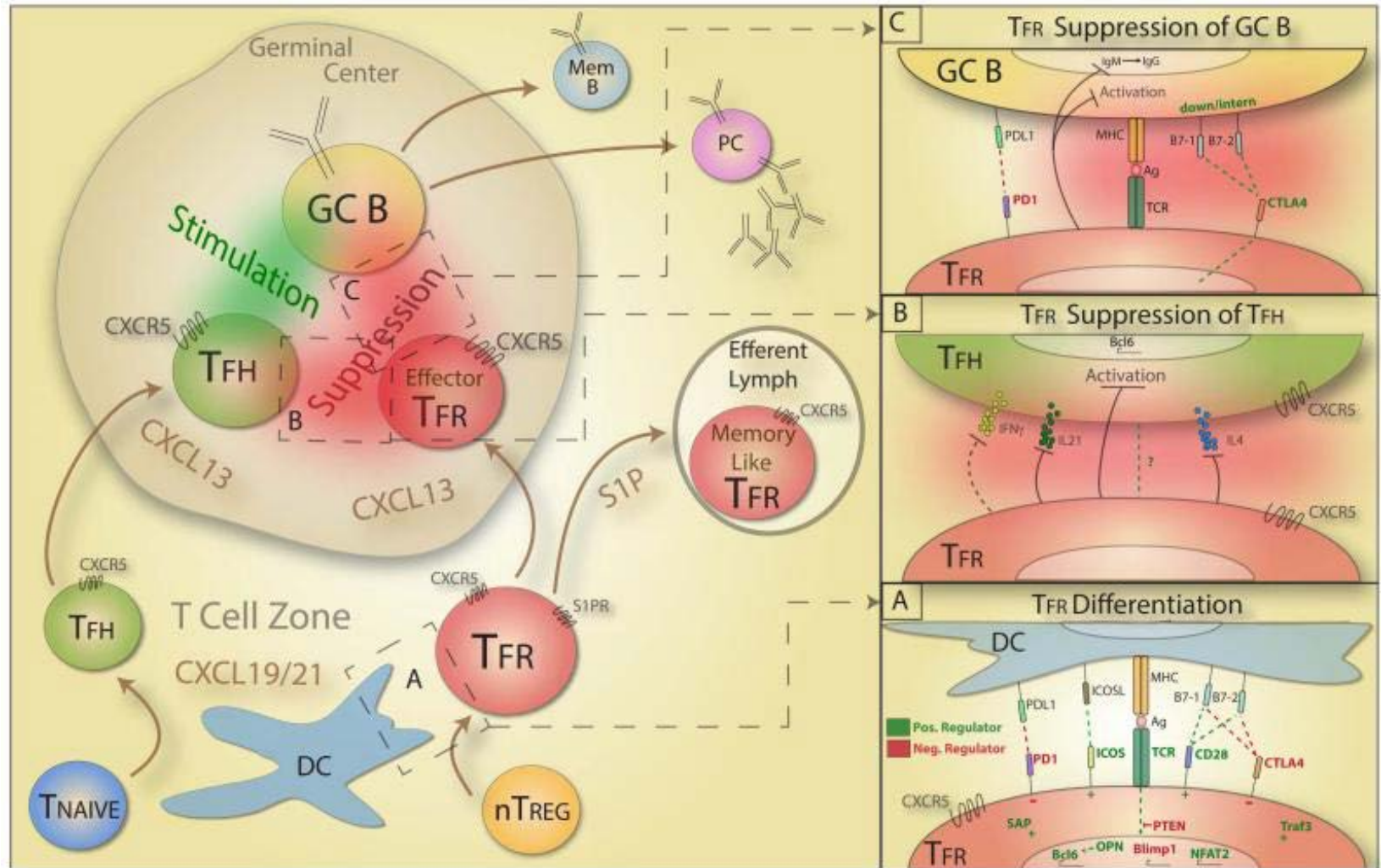
- 1) Peripheral blood (30 mL)**
- 2) Ficoll-Hypaque isolation**
- 3) B cell enrichment/T cell depletion**
- 4) 7 day cell culture/stimulation-L-CD40L cells as stimulators plus IL-2, IL-10, IL-21 TLR-9 Ligand**
- 5) Collection, freezing and storage of culture supernatant for ab testing.**

Labor intensive, extensive QC, proficiency testing, maintenance of cell cultures, etc

Antibody Production is Controlled by the Balance of T_{FH} and T_{FR}



Antibody Production is Controlled by the Balance of T_{FH} and T_{FR}



Summary

- **One test for all issues related to antibodies**
- **Not quantifiable**
- **Not uniform**
- **The tip of the iceberg**

DSA

Memory B
cell

Plasmablast

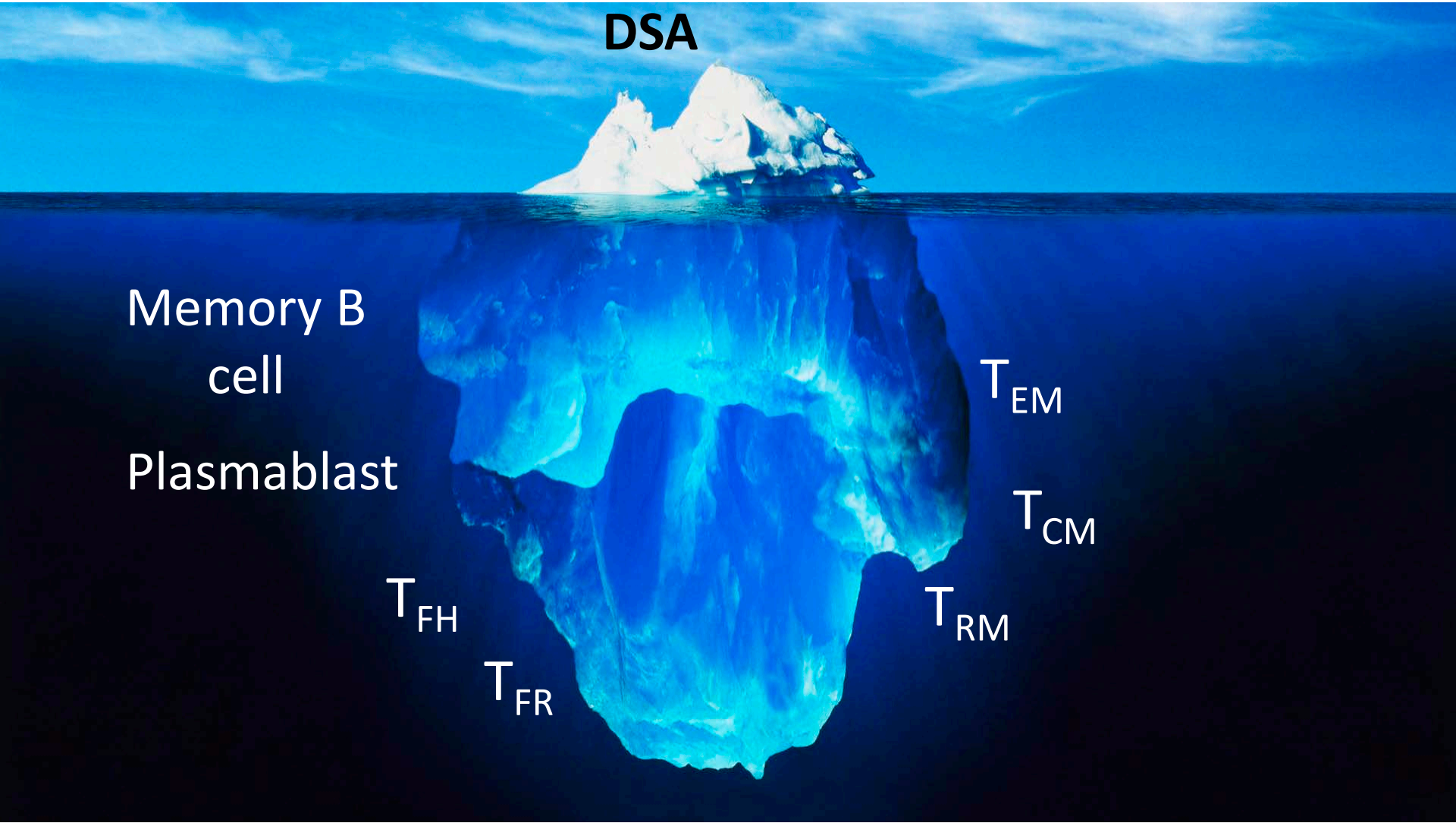
T_{FH}

T_{FR}

T_{EM}

T_{CM}

T_{RM}



Conclusions

- **Current tools are better than anything we've had before. But they remain rudimentary.**
- **Antibodies are surrogates for sensitization/memory. They tell only one part of a story.**
- **Risk assessment by antibody alone is at best incomplete, at most misleading.**
- **Need to transition to cellular assays for additional (better?) information**
- **Current testing for T and B cell memory still in early stages of development. Not yet quantifiable, labor intensive, clinical application still speculative.**
- **Moving forward-AUTOMATION. VETTING. CLINICAL UTILITY.**
- **Cannot reliably implement cell based assays without this consideration**