Critical Attributes Analysis & Method Lifecycle Management for Biologics & ATMPs Selection of Assay Platforms & Data Processing Methods for Potency Assurance

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Learning Objectives

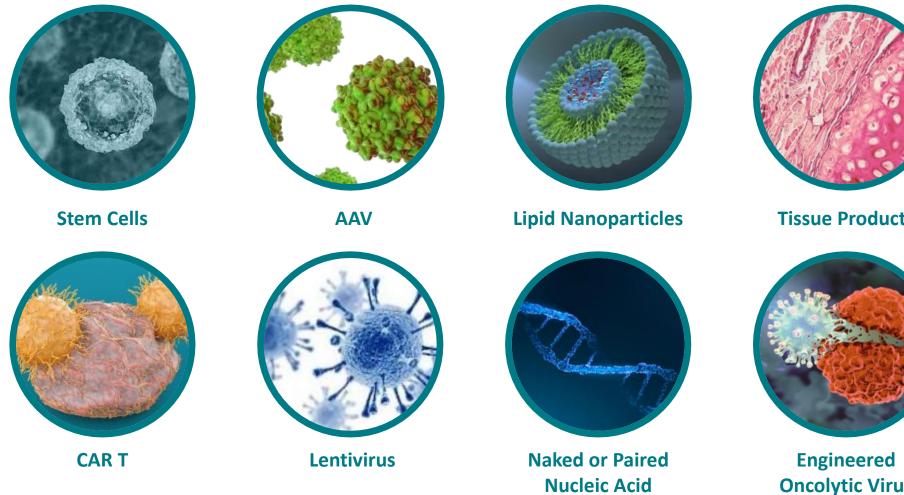
SUMMARY

- Understand the analytical control strategy for various ATMPs and key attributes (CQAs)
- Techniques applied to the control of ATMPs and how they are utilized; flow cytometry, ddPCR, qPCR, and immunoassays (including ELISA and MSD); HRMS, HPLC, CE and other
- Phase appropriate considerations for method utilization and qualification
- Understand the significance of potency assays in potency assurance, control strategies and the regulatory expectations for gene therapies
- Learning objectives will be supported by case studies to demonstrate the analytical technologies and approaches applied to potency assay development for gene therapies

Control Strategies of ATMPs and the Attributes to be Controlled

Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMPs)

Gene and Cell Therapies (GCT)



Tissue Products



Oncolytic Virus



What is a CMC Analytical Control Strategy?

CMC – Chemistry, Manufacturing and Controls

- Section of regulatory filing: analytical testing is the controls aspects
- Characterization, tests and specifications designed to assure SISPQ (Safety, Identity, Strength, Purity and Quality) for a product or substance

- Addresses and monitors CQAs (critical quality attributes)
- Contains "control strategy" which is typically 10's of tests driven by: required safety, manufacturing process, formulation and matrix, drug properties, and development data
 - A combination of GMP and characterization assays, combination of PAT and release tests



What Drives a Control Strategy?

Development Phase, CQAs, and SISPQ

Clinical Phase of Development

The phase of development will affect the rigor and demands of the assays and the dimensions of the control strategy as the processes, methods, and product evolve

SISPQ: Safety, Identity, Strength, Purity and Quality

The guiding principles and foundation of the cGMP control and monitoring of a drug substance/API or drug product

CQA: Critical Quality Attribute

"Physical, chemical, biological, or microbiological property or characteristic that should be within an appropriate limit, range, or distribution to ensure the desired product quality."

- ICH Guideline Pharmaceutical Development Q8(R2)

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Regulatory Guidance

What has changed? What is different between these two Guidance Documents? **Guidance for Industry**

Potency Tests for Cellular and Gene Therapy Products

> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Food and Drug Administration Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research January 2011

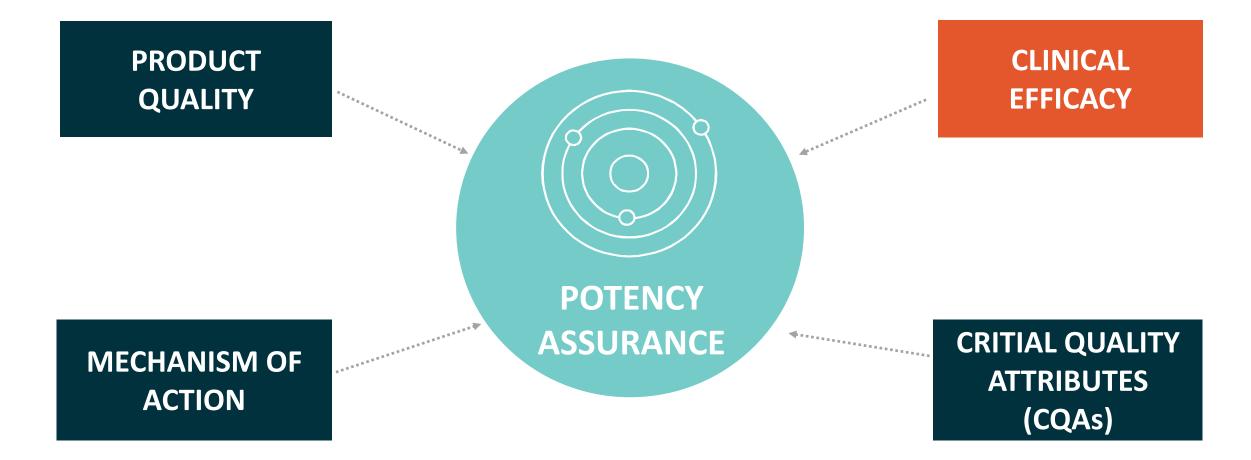
Potency Assurance for Cellular and Gene Therapy Products



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Food and Drug Administration Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research December 2023

This guidance document is for comment purposes only.

Potency Assurance Strategy



How will the "Potency Assurance" impact future potency assay development?



Potency will continue to be assessed in a progressive manner assays will evolve with the product



Matrix approaches will apply to complex MOAs BUT will be supported by biophysical methods that measure CQAs related to potency



Complex matrices may be simplified if the "story" supports they are redundant (perhaps reduce from 4) to 2 biological assays)



Invest early in your potency assay and assurance strategy

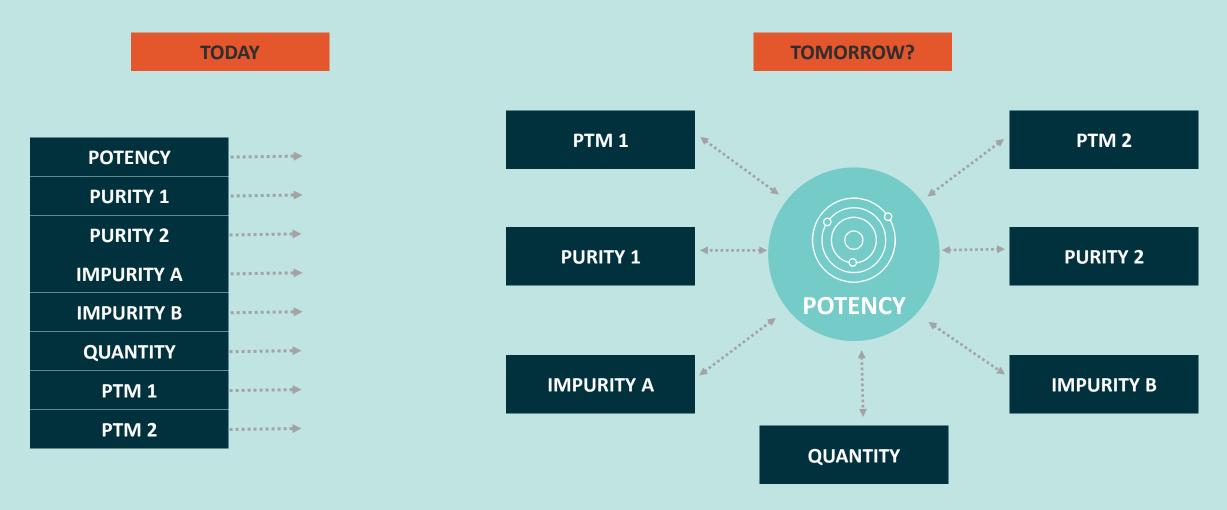


Tell a story with data and science

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Historical and Future Considerations

Potency and Control Strategies



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Challenges to CMC from ATMPs

High degree of variability between batches –

 starting materials and their control process changes and scale changes to the product itself (plasmid, vector, promoter, etc)

Identifying and controlling CQAs (Critical Quality Attributes) - complexity of the therapeutics

New CQAs with implications on potency and therapeutic efficacy – risk mitigation and management

CQAs are often less discrete than with more traditional biologics.. Matrix Approach Learning by the Agencies

New analytical methodologies are being employed



Control Strategy for a pDNA or mRNA (LNP) Product

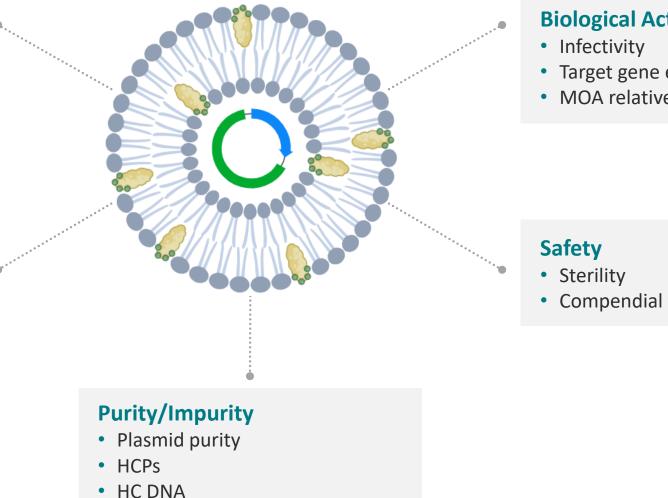
PhysicoChemical

- Physical properties
- Quantity/titer
- Compendial tests

Characterization/ID

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- DNA/plasmid ID
- Stability



• Related impurities and residuals

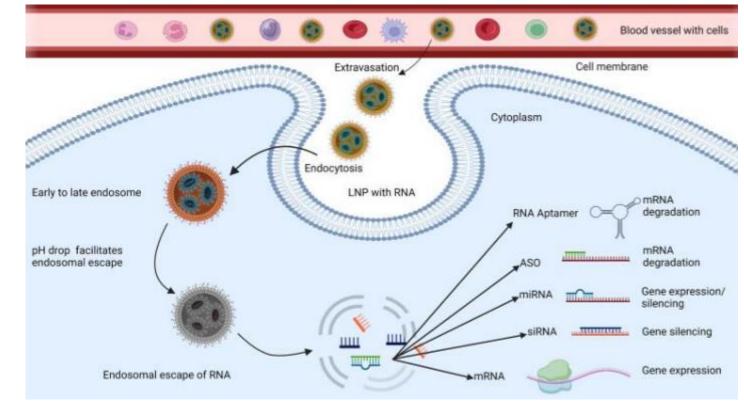
Biological Activity

- Target gene expression
- MOA relative potency assays

Compendial tests

General Mechanism of Action of Lipid Nanoparticle

- This captures the general operating mechanism of any LNP.
- After endocytosis the payload, often mRNA, ASO, RNA aptamer or siRNA, is released and engages with the cellular machinery.
- The nature of the payload will impact the control strategy and methods used.
- The action of the payload will determine the path for a potency and will also impact the general control strategy.
- Engagement with the membrane and endocytosis is highly affected by the lipids in the LNP and any expenditure on them.



Md. Anamul Hauge, et al, Int J Pharmacuetics: X (2024), 8, 100283.,

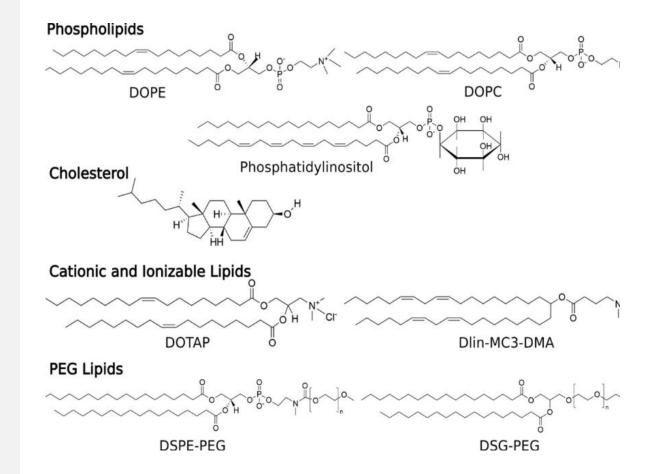
Lipids Content and Stability

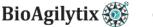
Complex mixture of polar lipids; some include "directing molecules" intended to enhance the specificity of uptake in the body

- Representative mixture of lipids to the right
- The relative proportions of the lipids and the process of formation defines the LNP physical characteristics

Lipid content and stability (physical and chemical) can be critical to potency and efficacy

- Protection of the payload (*i.e.*, mRNA) and transfection effectiveness
- Methods exist to monitor this effectively including UPLC/HPLC (often with CAD detection), LC-HRMS and others
- Inset to the right shows a typical data set for the lipids

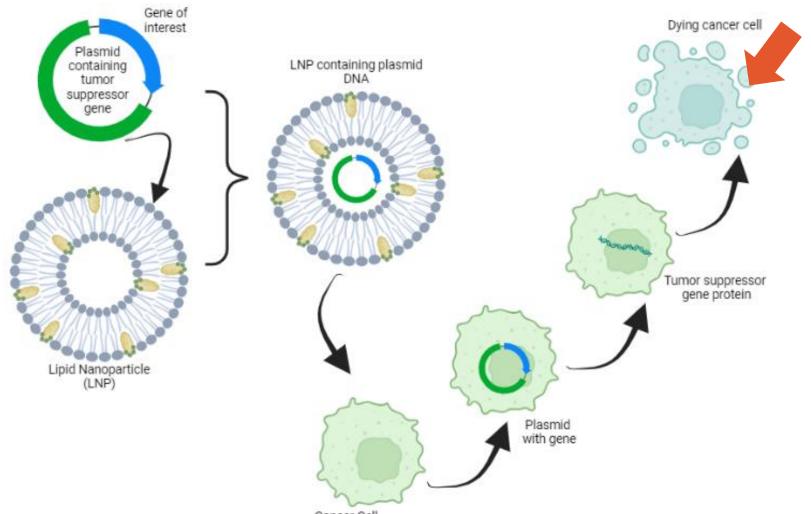




Non-Viral Delivery of Tumor Suppressor Gene

This system utilizes positively charged nanoparticles that selectively bind to negatively charged cancer cells and enter them through endocytosis

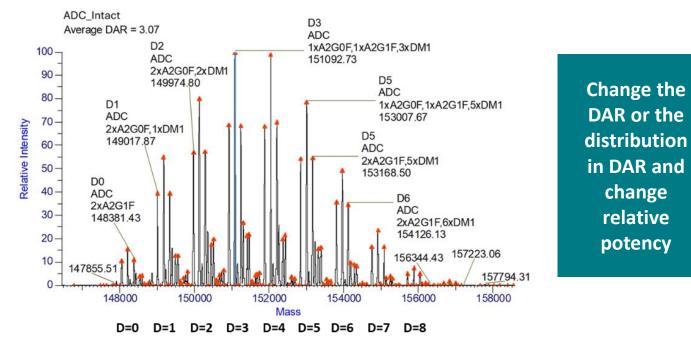
The nanoparticle is designed to deliver the functioning Gene X to cancer cells while minimizing their uptake by normal tissue and elicit apoptosis in cancer cell

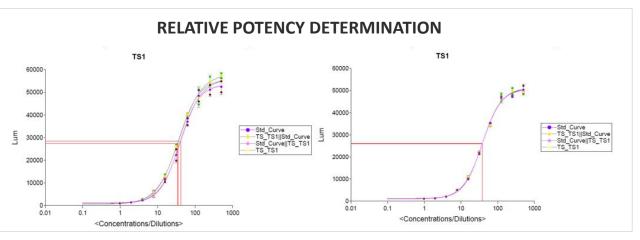


Potency Assurance and Relationship to CQAs

- Potency assurance is critical per recent FDA Guidance
- DAR is a well-established predictor of ADC potency
- Similar attributes will be established (are being established) for ATMPs
- Watch where new correlations get established

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Potency Assurance and Relationship to CQAs - LNPs

Potency assurance is critical per recent FDA Guidance

Attributes that may correlate to LNP potency and ultimately efficacy are being determined

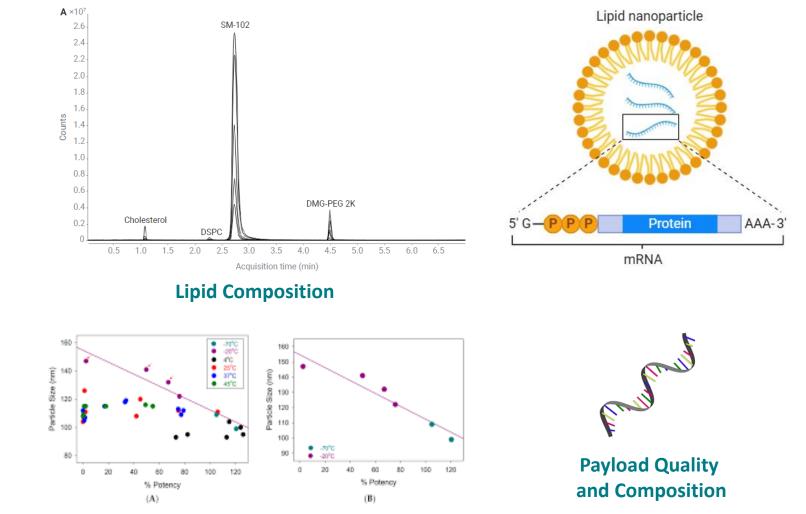
- Lipid composition
- Payload quality

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• Particle size and distribution

And similar for AAVs and other

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Particle Size Distribution

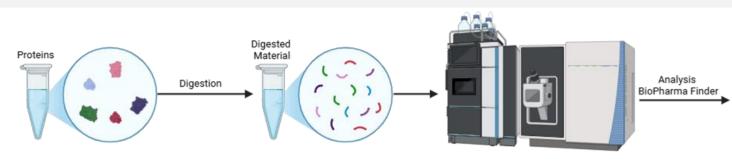
When You Don't Have Reagents for an Expression Assay

Lipid nanoparticle

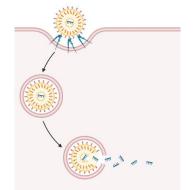
LNP containing mRNA for three antigenic proteins

EXPERIMENTAL CONDITIONS

- Mass spectrometry was performed on a Thermo Exploris Orbitrap in various modes and R=15000.
- HPLC was performed using a Thermo Vanquish Flex system with mobile phases of water, formic acid, trifluoracetic acid and acetonitrile with separation performed on a Peptide BEH C18 column (2.1x100mm) operated at 0.1 ml/min
- Protein expression occurred by transfection in HEK293T cells overnight for ca. 18 hrs.
- 14 Native peptides and 14 heavy-labelled (13C) peptides were monitored
- Extraction from cell lysates occurred using extraction in Urea, Rapigest, CHAPS, non-ionic surfactants or using Mem-PER kits
- Digestion was of 20ug of lysate protein using trypsin in 1M urea/Tris after treatment with TCEP and iodoacetamide
- Desalting was by SPE on a C18 bed



Proteins are detected and quantified in disrupted cells as their surrogate peptides using LC-HRMS/MS



Cells are transfected with the LPNs and proteins translated

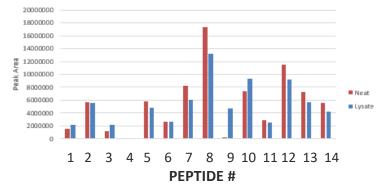
The Development Process for the Assay

Identification of peptides in target proteins in silico. Uniqueness HPLC and MS-friendliness Stability and PTM consideration.

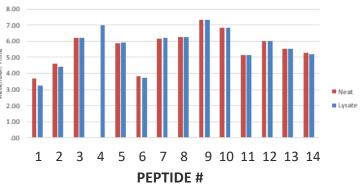
Optimize MS/MS conditions and select transitions. Optimize HRMS resolution and conditions. Map into LC-HRMS method.

Explored matrix effects Optimized LCMS conditions for time and resolution. Selected optimal transitions to maximize sensitivity

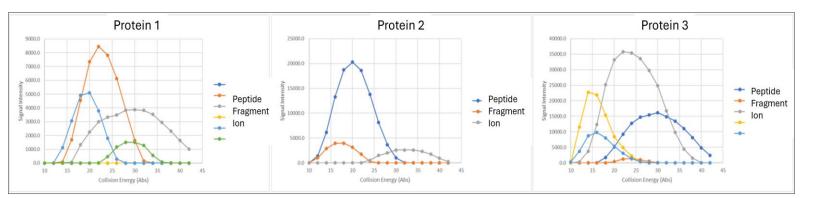
Matrix Effects on Peptide Response



Matrix Effects on Retention Time



Matrix Effects: Recovery and Retention Time Stability



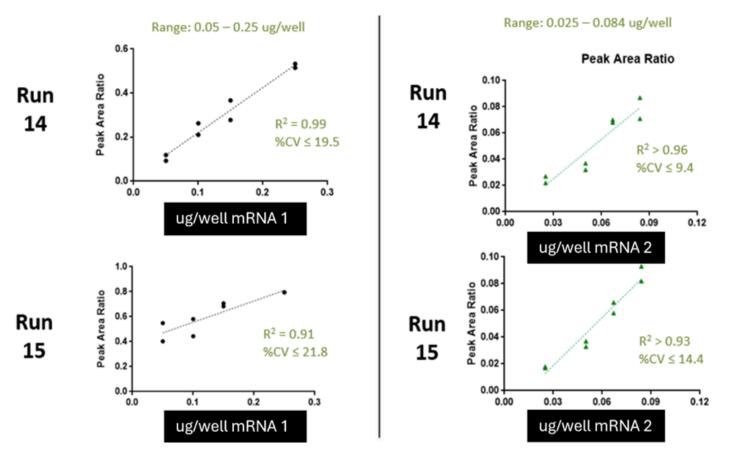
Optimization of MS/MS Conditions for Representative Peptides of All Three Target Proteins

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Continued Development...

Conditions for cell culture were optimized. Dosing and timing of Lipid Nanoparticle was optimized.

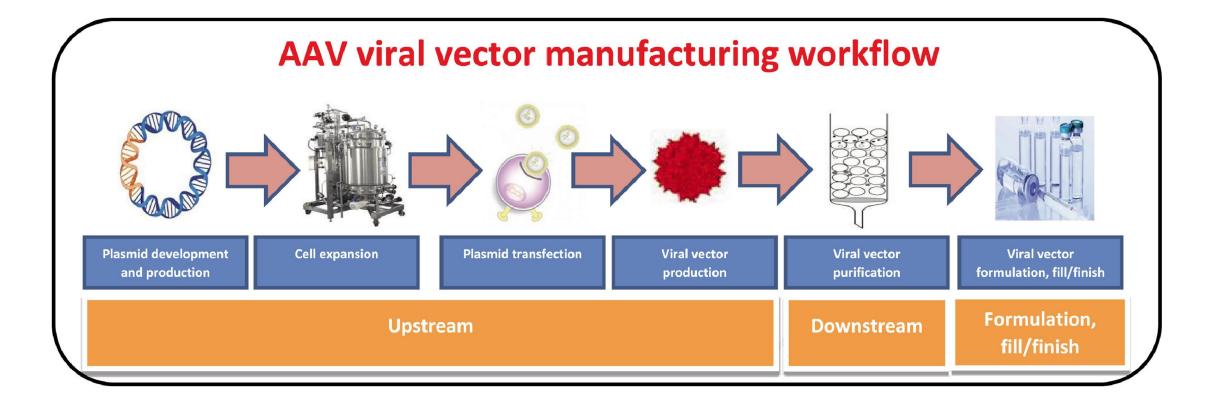
Tested treatment and cleanup methods. Obtain maximum recovery vs total protein and heavy labelled peptides



Clean up methods were compared and evaluated using urea, Triton, CHAPS, Rapigest[™], and Mem-PER to achieve the highest recovery for ALL proteins and peptides.

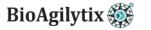
This provides an assay with NO critical reagents and an ability to provide the attributes for an expression-based relative potency assay for three proteins delivered using an LNP

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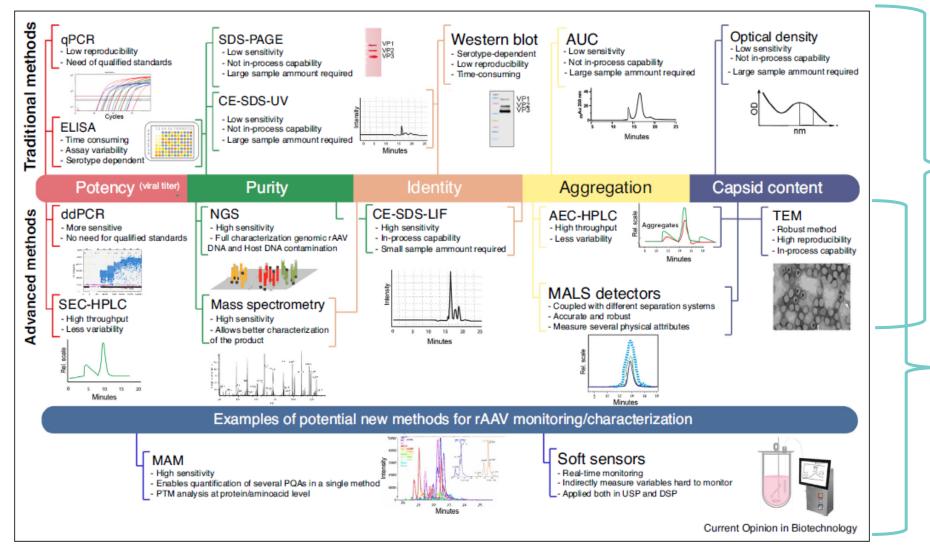


What Might be in a Control Strategy for an AAV ("SISPQ")

SAFETY	IDENTITY	STRENGTH	PURITY	QUALITY (PHYSICAL)
Replication-Competent Virus Adventious Viruses Endotoxins Mycoplasma Adventitious Viruses: Adeno- Associated Virus (qPCR) Replication Competent Virus Adventitious Viruses: In Vitro Adventitious Agents (cell culture) Viral Safety Testing (Cell therapies) Bovine Polyoma virus Bovine viral contaminants	GOI Sequence Pro-viral Sequencing (DNA sequencing)	Vector Titer Gene expression Virus/Capsid titer Infectious Titer Particle to infectivity ratio Transgene Expression Enzymatic Activity; Relative Potency Stability (long term; short term) Relative Potency (cell culture/vector transduction / ELISA) Relative %CAR Expression (cell culture/vector transduction/flow cytometry) Infectious Titer (transduction/cell culture/qPCR)	Process-related impurities: Benzonase, Resins, etc. Plasmid Purity Expressed Purity Residual Plasmid DNA Residual HC-DNA (SV40 T-Ag, E1A) Residual HCP Other Residual Proteins/DNA Residual Genomic DNA (qPCR) p24 Concentration (ELISA) Pluronic, Tween, Triton Residual Benzonase	Capsid Occupancy or Empty/Full Evaluation Osmolality pH Aggregates Appearance



Traditional and Emerging Analytical techniques



Mix of physical and biological methods Includes tests for residuals and additives May also include RM tests

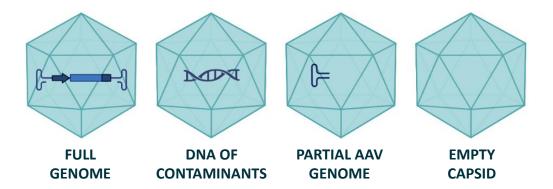
Advanced methods are often used as characterization initially; some do not become control methods

What is Significant About an AAV Viral Vector (CQAs)?

There are key attributes in AAVs that also affect their quality and potency (*i.e.,* efficacy)

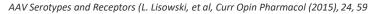
THESE INCLUDE:

- Capsid attributes including
 - Full/Empty
 - Contaminant (Host) DNA
- Capsid viral protein attributes
 - Degradation
 - Impurities
 - Glycoforms (*i.e.*, sialic acid)
- Serotype
 - Alignment with cell line and/or tissue



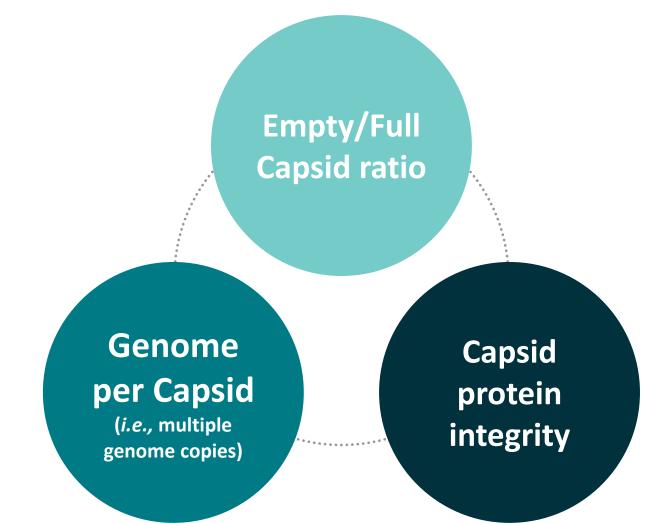
The origin of common AAV isolates, their receptors and tissue tropism

Serotype	Origin	Receptor and co-receptors ^a N-linked sialic acid	
AAV1	Human or NHP		
AAV2	Human	HSPG, FGFR1, HGFR, LamR,	
AAV3	Human	CD9, integrin $\alpha_V\beta_5$, $\alpha_5\beta_1$ HSPG, FGFR, HGFR, LamR	
AAV4	NHP	O-linked sialic acid	
AAV5	Human	N-linked sialic acid, PDGFR	
AAV6 ^c	Human	N-linked sialic acid, EGFR	
AAV7	Rhesus macaque	?	
AAV8	Rhesus macaque	LamR	
AAV9 Human		LamR, N-linked glycans	
AAVrh10 ^d	Rhesus macaque	LamR	





Key Considerations in Potency Assurance for AAVs



These attributes may be affected by

- Host Cell Line
- Cell Culture conditions
- Isolation/Purification Process

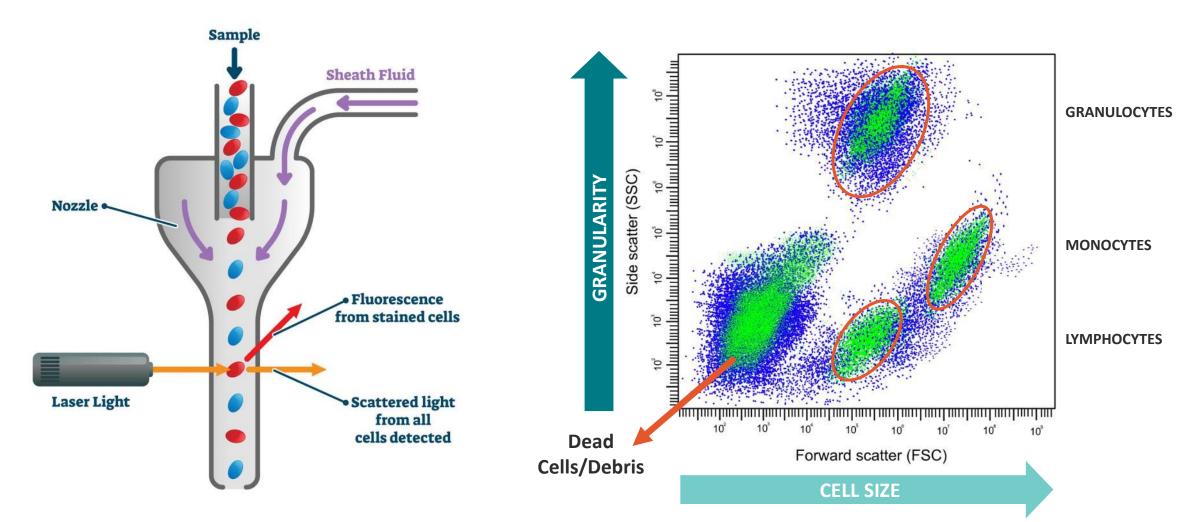
These attributes may and will vary from batch to batch and during scale up

Other Techniques and Technologies Significant to Control Strategies and Potency Assays

Flow Cytometry

Flow Cytometry – Platform Basics







Advantages of Flow Cytometry in ATMP Assays

1. High-Throughput: Flow cytometry allows for the rapid analysis of a large number of cells

2. Multiparametric Analysis: Flow cytometry allows for the simultaneous measurement of multiple parameters in a single experiment and provides a more comprehensive understanding of cellular characteristics compared to some cell-based assays

3. Quantitative Measurements: Flow cytometry provides quantitative data for multiple attributes.

4. Cell Sorting Capability: Flow cytometers equipped with cell sorting capabilities can isolate specific cell populations based on their characteristics

5. Single-Cell Analysis: Flow cytometry can analyze and sort individual cells, enabling the study of cellular heterogeneity within a population

6. Real-Time Analysis: Flow cytometry provides realtime data acquisition allowing analysis of fast kinetics, transient changes, or dynamic interactions within a cell population

7. Automated Data Analysis: Flow cytometry data analysis can be automated, facilitating the handling of large datasets using a range of software tools

8. Transferability: The movement or transfer of experiments between instruments or even between platforms is relatively robust

9. Flexibility: All the above attributes makes flow a highly flexible and adaptable technique amenable to cell-based determination

Snapshot for Assay (Phase I) - CAR-NK

BACKGROUND

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- Development with GMP Phase I Qualification
- Modality Irradiated uAPC cells (CAR-NK therapy)
- MOA Ki-67 is absent in resting cells (G0) but present in all active phases of the cell cycle.
- Cells irradiated uAPC and non-irradiated K-562
- **Readout** Flow cytometry to demonstrate the lack of proliferation in irradiated uAPC cells over time

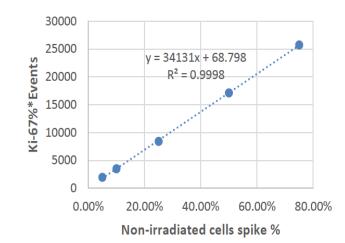
DESCRIPTION OF ASSAY

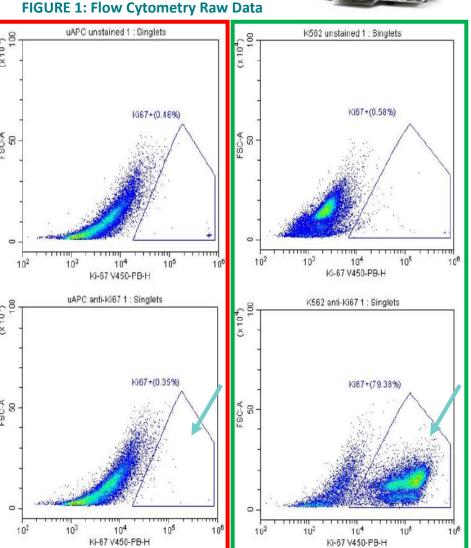
This procedure demonstrates the lack of Ki-67 staining in the nucleus of irradiated uAPC cells compared to the control nonirradiated K-562 cells cultured over a period of 21 days.

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FIGURE 2: Linearity

Ki-67 Linearity Average of Runs







Snapshot for Assay (Phase I) – MPC

BACKGROUND

- Development with GMP Phase I Qualification
- Modality Mesenchymal Precursor cells (MPC)
- Cells Bone marrow derived MPC
- Readout Flow cytometry to demonstrate positive STRO4 and CD146 expression, with negative CD31, CD45, CD80, CD85, HLA-DR expression.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSAY

This is an immunophenotyping assay for MPC, demonstrating the high expression of positive markers STRO4 and CD146 on MPC cells while control Jurkat cells display high expression of CD31 and CD45 and control Raji cells express CD45, CD80, CD86, and HLA-DR, which are all negative markers for MPC cells.

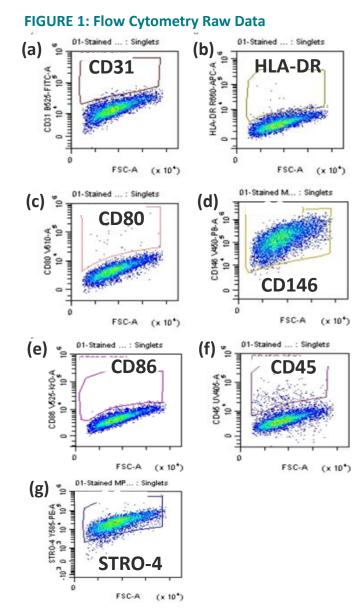




FIGURE 2: CD146 Linearity

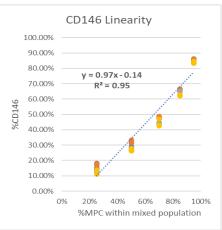
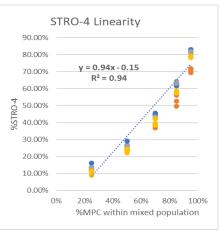


FIGURE 3: STRO-4 Linearity



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Snapshot for Assay (Phase I) – mRNA-LNP

BACKGROUND

- **Development with GMP** Phase1 Qualification
- Modality mRNA-lipid nanoparticle vaccine contains 4 constructs
- **Readout** Flow cytometry to confirm the expression and the relative potency for each antigen

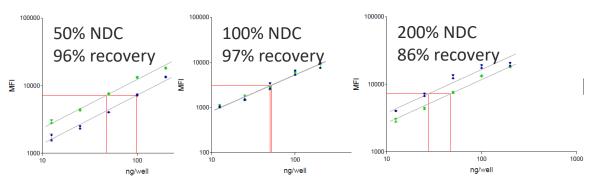
FIGURE 1: Flow Cytometry Raw Date for Antigen1

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DESCRIPTION OF ASSAY

HEK293T cells are plated and treated with mRNA-Lipid drug at 5 doses. Cells are stained and fixed with individual primary antibodies to 4 antigens and followed with secondary antibody for detection. %Expression/MFI is used to confirm the antigen expression and to determine the relative potency.

FIGURE 2: Relative Potency Plots for Antigen1



01-A35 NT Spl 2-F6 : Viable 01-A35 100% NDC Spl 2-... : Viable 01-A35 100% NDC Spl 2-... : Viable 01-A35 100% NDC Spl 2-... : Viable 01-A35 100% NDC Spl 2-.. 01-A35 100% NDC Spl 2-. .. : Viable ...: Viable lQ1(0.00%) Q2(0.00%) Q2(0.02%) Q1(0.00%) Q2(0.00%) 1Q1(0.00%) Q2(0.00%) 1Q1(0.00%) Q1(0.00% Q2(0.00%) Q1(0.00%) Q2(0.00%) °0 ۰ °0 ê ъ 0 B525-FITC-A 0³ 10⁴ 10⁵ B525-FITC-A 0³ 10⁴ 10⁵ B525-FITC-/ 0³ 10⁴ 1 B525-FITC-. 0³ 10⁴ B525-FITC B525-Q3(2.64%) Q4(93,74%) Q3(19.17%) Q3(66.70%) Q3(89.73%) Q4(4.09% Q3(6.26%) Q4(80 83% 105 1 n⁰ 1 n⁶ 105 10⁶ 10⁵ 10⁶ 104 Y585-PE-A Y585-PE-A Y585-PE-A Y585-PE-A Y585-PE-A Non-transfected (NT) 25 ng 100 ng 12.5 ng 50 ng 200 ng Control mRNA LNP dose/well BioAgilytix 🐲



ddPCR and qPCR

PCR Applications in ATMP Drug Development



CHEMISTRY, MANUFACTURING & CONTROLS (CMC)

- Vector Copy Number (VCN)
- Replication Competent Lenti/Retrovirus (RCL/RCR)
- Replication competent AAV

- Residual plasmid
- Host cell DNA
- Adventitious agents
- Potency Readout

ddPCR and qPCR Technology Platforms

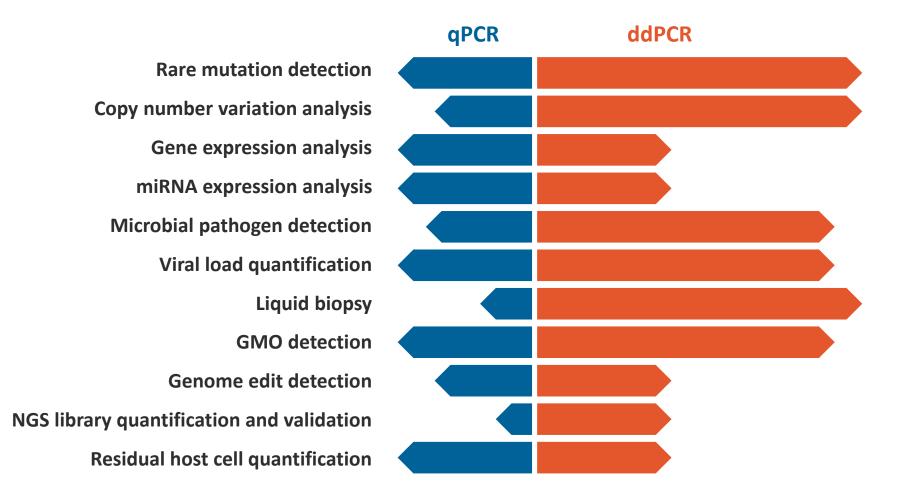




	ddPCR	qPCR
Quantitative (with standard curve)	+	+
Absolute quantitation	+	-
Susceptible to interferents/inhibitors	Low	Variable/high
Multiplex capable	+/++	++
Sensitivity	++	++
Precision for rare events	++	+
Reverse transcriptase-incorporated workflow	+	+
Cost of instrumentation	\$\$\$	\$/\$\$
Cost of reagents/consumables	\$\$\$	\$\$
Average run throughput	5h	1.5h
Reactions per plate	96	96/3 84

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Applications of ddPCR vs qPCR



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Snapshot for Assay (Pre-IND) - AAV



BACKGROUND

Development of Vector Copy Number **Modality** – AAV **Readout** – ddPCR (QX One)

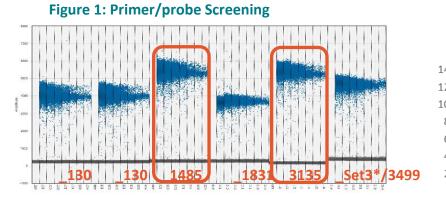
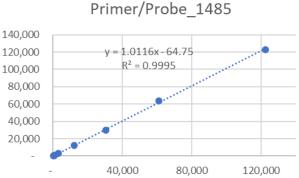
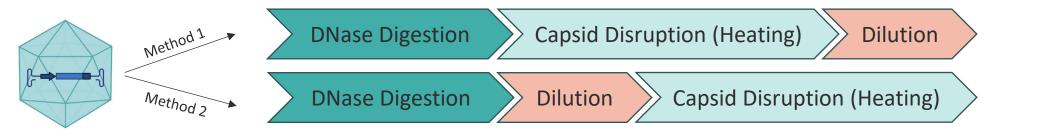


Figure 2: Linearity of Plasmid





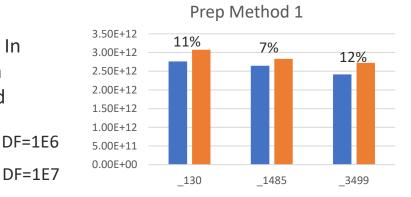
Sample preparation method:

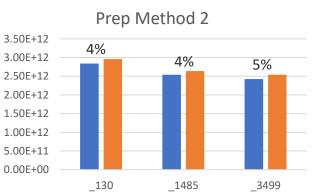
AAV sample was prepared using two methods. In each method, sample was diluted to 2 levels in triplicates. Each sample preparation was tested with three sets of primer/probe.

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Snapshot for Assay (Phase I) – Plasmid DNA

BACKGROUND

- Development and Phase 1 qualification (Relative Potency Assay)
- Modality Plasmid DNA
- MOA Protein replacement
- Cells HEK293T
- **Readout** qPCR to measure transgene expression at mRNA level

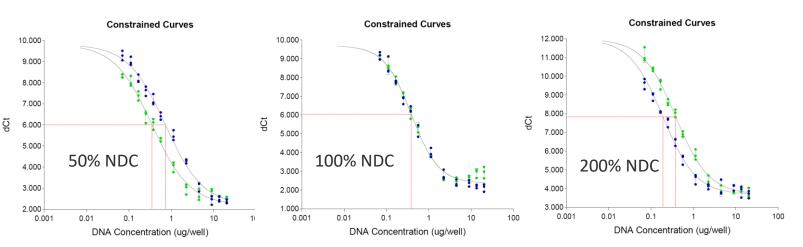
DESCRIPTION OF ASSAY

HEK293T cells are seeded at 7e4 cells/well in a 96-well plate overnight and transfected with 12 concentrations of plasmid DNA. The mRNA extracted from cell lysates is then analyzed for the expression of transgene normalized to the housekeeping control. Relative potency is determined from 4-PL dose response curve (dCT vs Plasmid DNA concentration).

FIGURE 1: Transfection Plate Map

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A	Untreated Cells			Lipofectamine								
В	REF1	REF2	REF3	REF4	REF5	REF6	REF7	REF8	REF9	REF10	REF11	REF12
С	REF1	REF2	REF3	REF4	REF5	REF6	REF7	REF8	REF9	REF10	REF11	REF12
D	REF1	REF2	REF3	REF4	REF5	REF6	REF7	REF8	REF9	REF10	REF11	REF12
E	SPL1	SPL2	SPL3	SPL4	SPL5	SPL6	SPL7	SPL8	SPL9	SPL10	SPL11	SPL12
F	SPL1	SPL2	SPL3	SPL4	SPL5	SPL6	SPL7	SPL8	SPL9	SPL10	SPL11	SPL12
G	SPL1	SPL2	SPL3	SPL4	SPL5	SPL6	SPL7	SPL8	SPL9	SPL10	SPL11	SPL12
Н												

FIGURE 2: 4-PL Curve (dCT vs DNA concentration)



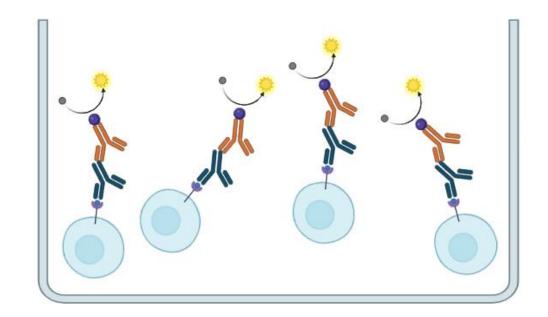


MSD (Meso Scale Discovery)

MSD (Meso Scale Discovery)

How do we leverage MSD capabilities?

- Sensitivity
- Dynamic range
- Custom compatibilities
- Multiplex capabilities
- Off-the-shelf "Plex" panels (developed for biomarkers but useful to CMC applications)







MSD-ECL Imager 600

MSD SQ120 Quickplex

MSD Utilization in HCP Analysis

FIGURE 2:

BACKGROUND

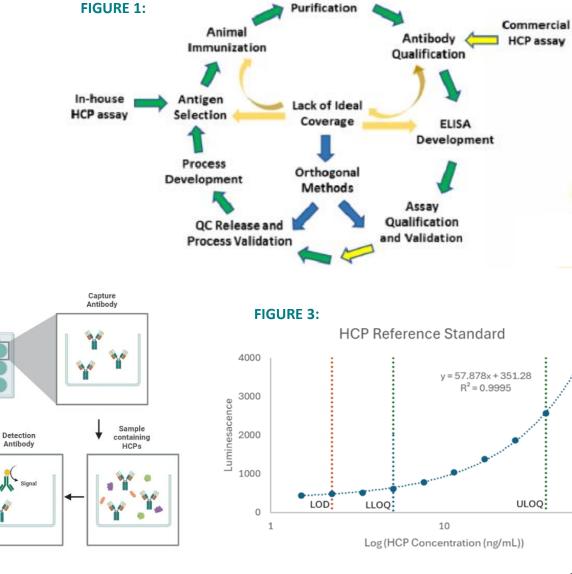
- Development/Optimization with GMP Phase II Validation
- Modality Fusion Protein
- MOA Toxin fragments are delivered to cells to inhibit protein synthesis
- Readout MSD ELISA measuring the amount of process related impurities (Host Cell Proteins, HCP) present in samples, measured by luminescence

ADVANTAGES OF MSD APPROACH

- Broad dynamic range
- High sensitivity to preserve material and detect lower levels of protein impurities
- Relatively Robust method

LIMITATIONS

Uniquely MSD



Antiserum



100

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Snapshot for Assay (Phase I) – Bispecific Abs

BACKGROUND

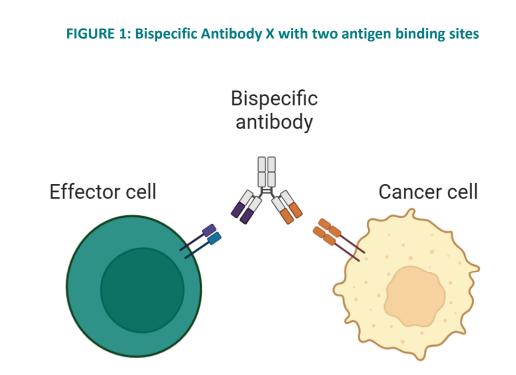
- Development and Phase 1 qualification (Relative Potency Assay)
- Modality Bispecific Abs
- MOA Antibody X contains two antigen binding sites, targeting a cell surface protein X (CSPX) on T-cells and a cell surface protein Y (CSPY) on certain tumor cells (Figure 1). CSPX plays a vital role in T-cell activation while CSPY is a tumor-associated antigen expressed in various solid tumor types. Therefore, Antibody X promote T-cell activation and the subsequent lysis of tumor cells.
- Readout Target binding using MSD

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DESCRIPTION OF ASSAY

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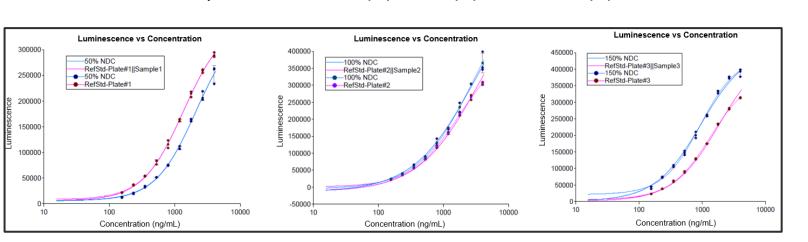
To align with the mechanism of action (MOA) of Antibody X, two potency assays were developed to measure the binding of the BsAb to each target antigen independently.



43

CSPY dose-response curves at (A) 50%, (B) 100% and (C) 150% NDC





CSPX dose-response curves at (A) 50%, (B) 100% and (C) 150% NDC

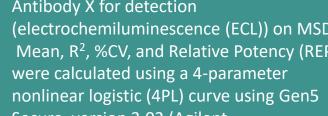
- RefStd-Plate#1 Discovery (MSD) multi-array plates. 1000000 Serial dilutions of BS Antibody X (analyte) 800000 and a negative control were added to the 600000 400000 200000
- Ruthenylated secondary Ab bound to BS Antibody X for detection (electrochemiluminescence (ECL)) on MSD

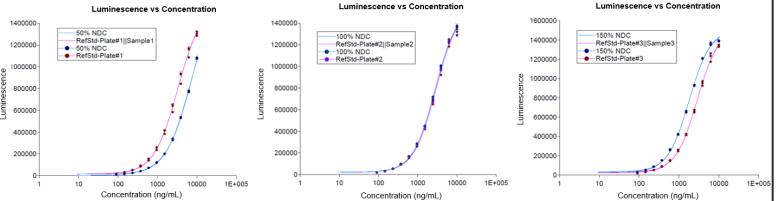
Capture protein (CSPX or CSPY)

plates.

immobilized on standard Meso Scale

- Mean, R², %CV, and Relative Potency (REP) were calculated using a 4-parameter nonlinear logistic (4PL) curve using Gen5 Secure, version 3.02 (Agilent Technologies).
- Capture protein concentration and ratio of capture protein to primary antibody were explored and optimized.
- BS Antibody dose concentrations were optimized for each target antigen independently





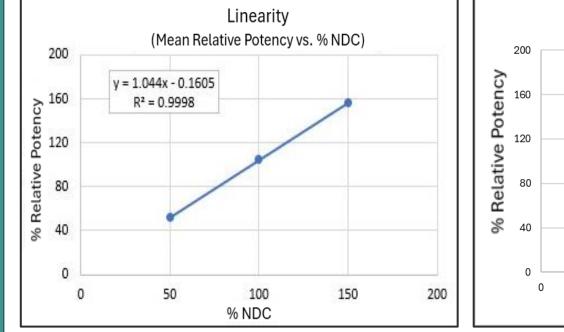
Snapshot for Assay (Phase I) – Bispecific Abs



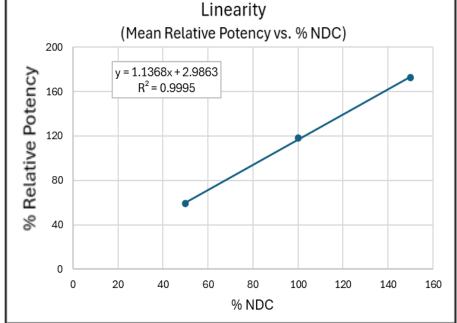
Snapshot for Assay (Phase I) – Bispecific Abs



- Good linearity across necessary range
- Very different curve characteristics but similar performance
- MSD utilization needed to provide lower end sensitivity on the curves and characterize curves accurately
- Early phase qualification... more development and correlation with CQAs and other attributes to provide most robust potency assurance strategy



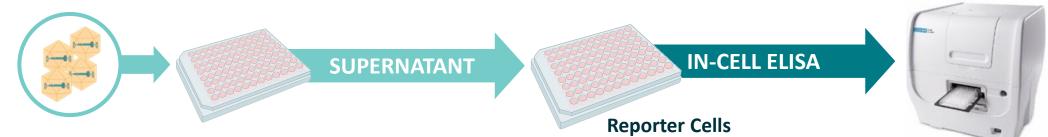
Linearity for CSPX at (A) 50%, (B) 100% and (C) 150% NDC



Linearity for CSPY at (A) 50%, (B) 100% and (C) 150% NDC

Cell Imaging Reader

Snapshot for Assay (Phase I) – AAV



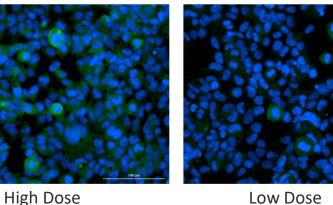
BACKGROUND

- Method Development (functional based potency assay) •
- Modality AAV ۲
- **MOA** Transgene expression trigs a downstream signal cascade. ۲
- Cells HT1080 and Neuro-2a Readout In-cell ELISA for Protein X

Target Protein X and Cells

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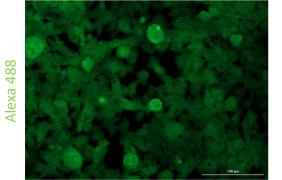
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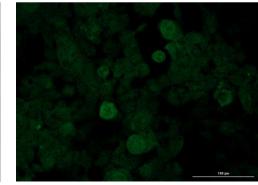
Low Dose

Signal cascade downstream protein

Target Protein X only



High Dose



Low Dose

Summary

Reviewed LNPs, their attributes and examples or potency assurance approaches

- Development and Implementation of Early phase assay using LC-HRMS
- Using Apoptosis as a determination of anticancer

Reviewed attributes of AAVs and how these might impact potency assurance

Reviewed tools used in the control of ATMPs

- Flow Cytometry for potency
- ddPCR and qPCR
- MSD
- Cell Imaging Reader

Conclusions

Highlights and recommendations for gene therapy potency assurance strategies and control strategies

- Get started early and explore options
- Leverage guidance documents and time with regulators
- Select analytical technologies based on CQAs and MOA
- Explore relationships with other CQAs

- Matrix approach offers solutions but also challenges
- Take phase appropriate approach
- Changes will happen and assays must evolve



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