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Introduction to Epitope Tagging

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Section 1A

About This Manual

When Boehringer Mannheim introduced a line of tag-specific antibodies (Anti-c-myc, Anti-HA, and Anti-VSV-G), customers had a lot of questions about how to use them. Our Research and Development scientists and Technical Services representatives soon realized that there was no one reference guide they could recommend to customers seeking answers about epitope tagging.

So, we decided to produce this manual as a central reference source that could answer questions about epitope tagging and describe the most common techniques used in tagging.

What's in the manual?

This manual is designed for those who are unfamiliar with one or more phases in the epitope tagging process.

The rest of Chapter 1 is designed to help you:

- ▶ Discover how epitope tagging can help you meet your research goals
- ▶ Gain some basic information on epitope tagging

Chapters 2–4 of this manual should help you take the next steps—your first tagging experiments. These chapters contain:

- ▶ Procedures for constructing an epitope-tagged protein (Chapter 2)
- ▶ A discussion of critical factors that can insure the success of all the analysis and purification procedures in this manual (Chapter 3)
- ▶ Procedures for using tag-specific antibodies from Boehringer Mannheim to analyze (Chapter 4) or purify (Chapter 5) an epitope-tagged protein.

Some of the procedures given in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 have been tested in our laboratories. However, they have been *optimized* for only a few experimental systems (a certain tag-specific antibody, a certain tagged protein, and a single type of cell). To make it easier to optimize each procedure, we have tried to indicate the most critical steps in that procedure. For that information, look for:

- ▶ The **Critical factors** topic before the procedure. This contains valuable information on optimizing the procedure
- ▶ Supplementary instructions (labeled **Note** or **Caution**) in the procedures to indicate which steps must be done “just so” if the procedure is to work.

In addition, many of the sections of the manual contain:

- ▶ **Specific applications** of a procedure to show how our tag-specific antibodies perform in the laboratory
- ▶ **Troubleshooting** sections that list the most common problems encountered and ways to correct them

Chapter 5 of the manual gives reference material that you may find useful, including:

- ▶ Answers to frequently asked questions about epitope tagging that have been directed to Boehringer Mannheim Technical Services representatives
- ▶ A list of references that describe various experimental uses for epitope tagging
- ▶ An ordering guide for Boehringer Mannheim products that can make epitope tagging easier, faster, and more successful