



Product Information

ALBUMIN, BOVINE

CAS NUMBER: 9048-46-8

SYNONYMS: Bovine Serum Albumin; Bovine Plasma Albumin; BSA

STRUCTURE:

The molecular weight of BSA has frequently been cited as 66,120¹ or 66,267², but it was revised in 1990 to 66,430³. All three values are based on amino acid sequence information available at the time of publication.

BSA is a single polypeptide chain consisting of about 583 amino acid residues and no carbohydrates. At pH 5-7 it contains 17 intrachain disulfide bridges and 1 sulfhydryl group.^{1,3}

PHYSICAL PROPERTIES:

| | |
|---|--|
| Appearance: | Powder - White to light tan ⁴ ; |
| Solutions - | Clear to slightly hazy and amber ⁴ |
| pI in Water at 25 °C: | Endogenous Material ^{5,6,7} - 4.7; 4.9; |
| Fatty Acid Depleted ⁸ - | 5.3 |
| pH of 1% Solution: ^{1,4} | 5.2-7; |
| Optical Rotation: ^{1,9} | $[\alpha]_{259}$: -61°; $[\alpha]_{264}$: -63° |
| Stokes Radius (r_s): ¹⁰ | 3.48 nm |
| Sedimentation constant, ¹ | $S_{20,W} \times 10^{13}$ 4.5 (monomer), 6.7 (dimer) |
| Diffusion constant, ¹ | $D_{20,W} \times 10^7$ 5.9 |
| Partial specific volume, ¹ | V_{20} 0.733 |
| Intrinsic viscosity, ¹ | η 0.0413 |
| Frictional ratio, ¹ | f/f_0 1.30 |
| Overall dimensions, ¹ | Å 40 X 140 |
| Refractive index increment ¹ | (578 nm) X 10 ⁻³ 1.90 |
| Optical absorbance, ¹ | $A_{279nm}^{1gm/L}$ 0.667 |
| Mean residue rotation, ¹ | $[m]_{233}$ 8443 |
| Mean residue ellipticity ¹ | 21.1 $[\theta]_{209nm}$; 20.1 $[\theta]_{222nm}$ |
| Estimated α -helix, ¹ | % 54 |
| Estimated β -form, ¹ | % 18 |

STABILITY / STORAGE AS SUPPLIED:

If stored at 2-8°C, BSA powders and BSA solutions offered by Sigma are stable for a minimum of 2.5 years.⁴

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SOLUBILITY / SOLUTION STABILITY:

Albumins are readily soluble in water and can only be precipitated by high concentrations of neutral salts such as ammonium sulfate. Sigma tests the solubility of powdered BSA in deionized water at 40 mg/mL and obtains clear to very slightly hazy, faint yellow solutions. The solution stability of BSA is very good (especially if the solutions are stored as frozen aliquots). In fact, albumins are frequently used as stabilizers for other solubilized proteins (e.g., labile enzymes). However, albumin is readily coagulated by heat.¹¹ When heated to 50°C or above, albumin quite rapidly forms hydrophobic aggregates which do not revert to monomers upon cooling.⁴ At somewhat lower temperatures aggregation is also expected to occur, but at relatively slower rates.

METHOD OF PREPARATION:

- A. HISTORY:^{1,4} Albumin is relatively simple to isolate and purify. One of the first methods of isolation involved extensive dialysis of serum against water; this process removed most globulins. A second procedure took advantage of the good solubility of albumin at low to moderate ammonium sulfate concentrations, and effected precipitation by lowering the pH. Electrophoretic isolation was also employed, as was affinity chromatography. None of these methods were applicable to large scale production.
- B. INITIAL ISOLATION: Initial isolation is by Heat Treatment or by Alcohol precipitation. Most commercial preparations are now prepared by Alcohol Precipitation a method developed by E. J. Cohn and his associates in the 1940's ("Fraction V" yields albumin with a purity of about 96%) or by Heat Treatment.¹²
- C. FURTHER PURIFICATION:^{1,4} Additional removal of impurities can be accomplished by crystallization (a procedure which yields $\geq 99\%$ pure albumin), preparative electrophoresis, ion exchange chromatography, affinity chromatography (e.g., ConA-agarose removes glycoproteins), heat treatment (removes globulins), low pH treatment, charcoal treatment, organic solvent precipitation (i.e., isooctane), and low temperature treatment.¹³ Charcoal treatment and organic solvent precipitation remove fatty acids.¹³

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION / USAGE:¹⁴

Albumins are a group of acidic proteins which occur plentifully in the body fluids and tissues of mammals and in some plant seeds. Unlike globulins, albumins have comparatively low molecular weights, are soluble in water, are easily crystallized, and contain an excess of acidic amino acids. Serum and plasma albumin is carbohydrate-free and comprises 55-62% of the protein present.

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PRODUCT DESCRIPTION / USAGE: (continued)

Albumin binds water, Ca^{2+} , Na^+ , and K^+ . Due to a hydrophobic cleft, albumin binds fatty acids, bilirubin, hormones and drugs. The main biological function of albumin is to regulate the colloidal osmotic pressure of blood. Human and bovine albumins contain 16% nitrogen and are often used as standards in protein calibration studies. Albumin is used to solubilize lipids, and is also used as a blocking agent in Western blots or ELISA applications. Globulin free albumins are suitable for use in applications where no other proteins should be present (e.g., electrophoresis).

CHOOSING A PRODUCT:

Please refer to the table below for a complete description of each product. Based on customer input, literature reports and Sigma's own use, the following table lists product numbers which have successfully been used for specific applications. The list is not comprehensive, and product numbers not listed may often be substituted.

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| APPLICATION | PRODUCT NUMBER(S) |
|--|--|
| Antibody purification | A-2058 |
| Binding and transport studies | A-4378, A-7030, A-0281, A-3675, A-3902, A-6003 |
| Blood banking reagents | A-2153, A-4503, A-7888, A-3294, A-3912, A-7906, A-7030 |
| Culture media (microbial) | A-2153, A-4503, A-3294, A-3912, A-7906, A-9430, A-7638, A-6003 |
| Cell culture (general) | A-8806, A-9418 |
| Electrophoresis (M.W. standard) | A-7517 |
| ELISA (blocking reagent) | A-2153, A-4503, A-4378, A-7030, A-9430, A-3902 |
| ELISA (non-specific binding) | A-3294 |
| Enzyme systems | A-2153, A-4503, A-7888, A-3294, A-3912, A-4378, A-7906, A-7030, A-9430, A-7638, A-3675 |
| Hapten carrier | A-7030, A-6003 |
| Immunocytochemistry | A-9647, A-7906, A-6793 |
| Immunohematology | A-2153, A-4503, A-7888, A-3294, A-3912, A-4378, A-7906, A-7030, A-0281, A-6003 |
| Mitogenic assays | A-2058 |
| Molecular biology | B-2518 ¹⁵ , B-8894 ¹⁵ , B-6917, B-8667, B-4287 |
| Protein base or filler | A-2153, A-4503, A-3912, A-4378, A-7906, A-7030 |
| Protein supplement (controls) | A-2153, A-4503, A-4378, A-7906, A-7030, A-3675 |
| Protein standard (M.W., amino acids, nitrogen) | A-2153, A-4503, A-4378, A-7030 |
| RIA systems | A-7888, A-4378, A-7030, A-3675, A-3902 |
| Serology | A-4503, A-3912, A-4378, A-7906, A-7030, A-9430, A-3675 |

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REFERENCES:

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2. Reed, R.G. et al., *Biochem. J.*, 191, 867 (1980).
3. Hirayama, K., *BBRC*, 173(2), 639 (1990).
4. Sigma data.
5. Dawson, R.M.C. et al., *Data for Biochemical Research*, 3rd ed., p. 381, Clarendon Press, Oxford (1993).
6. Malamud, D. and Drysdale, J.W., *Anal. Biochem.*, 86, 620 (1978).
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8. Steinhardt, J. et al., *Biochem.*, 10(22), 630 (1971).
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10. Axelsson, I., *J. Chromatog.*, 152, 21 (1978).
11. Lewis, Sr., R.J. *Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary*, 12th ed., p. 30, Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., New York (1993).
12. Cohn, E.J. et al., *J. Am. Chem. Soc.*, 68, 459 (1946).
13. Saifer, A. and Goldman, L. *J. Lipid Res.*, 2(3), 268 (1961).
14. Scott, T. and Eagleson, M., *Concise Encyclopedia: Biochemistry*, 2nd ed., pp. 19-20, Walter de Gruyter, New York (1988).
15. These products are acetylated to inactivate nucleases commonly found in BSA, and are thus not listed in the table of unmodified BSA's on pp. 4-9 of this data sheet. Since tyrosines in the BSA are also derivatized, these preparations are not recommended for use as protein standards.