

Preface

When the editor of this book series initially contacted me, my first thought was “No, not another technical publication on Elispot.” But in our conversation, I was reminded that this book is not about providing just another technical publication, but an in-depth explanation of the Elispot assay that would allow a newcomer to truly understand the best choices for specific protocol steps, reagents, and materials, and may even give the experienced Elispot user insight into best practices he/she might have not given much thought about (many reasons exist for that, like “too many ready-to-use kits out there,” “foolproof” instructions from true or self-acclaimed specialists readily available, and one has “always done it like this”—so why bother). As most of us agree, there is always room for improvement. But one has to find that room based on scientific evidence combined with common sense. Albert Einstein once said: “If you can’t explain it simply, you don’t understand it well enough,” a sensible advice that guided me when studying and later practicing medicine, during my work in translational immunology laboratories and in the world of consulting for the immunomonitoring field. Hence, I would like to focus throughout this book on providing the basic, simple, logical explanations for choices to be made to run the best Elispot possible, supported by over 20 years of work with this assay myself and the shared experience of the many fellow scientists I had and have the pleasure collaborating with. I think about this work as an integration of the collective knowledge of the many excellent immune “monitorers” out there, to whom I dedicate this book.

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