Reviewer's report

Title: An improved microtiter assay for evaluating anti-HIV-1 neutralizing antibodies from sera or plasma

Version: 1 Date: 19 November 2003

Reviewer: Preston A. Marx

Reviewer's report:

This study presents an improved assay for detecting neutralization against HIV-1 Clade B, a laboratory adapted strain. The assay offers the advantage of relatively low cost compared to a widely used assay that is dependent on p24 detection. The principal weakness is the lack of an HIV-1 seronegative plasma/serum as a control in the experiments.

1. What are the results with serum from a recent seroconvertor?

2. Figs 2 and 3 present an index of cell proliferation rather than % cell proliferation. The label on the Y axis is therefore confusing.

3. The manuscript will benefit from revision by a native English speaker.

4. It was not made clear whether plasma or sera was used in a particular test. Did sera and plasma yield different results in Figures 2 and 3?

What next?: Accept after minor compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

None