

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Principle.....	2
Storage.....	2
Kit Contents.....	3
Before Starting.....	3
Disruption and homogenization of samples.....	5
A. Disruption with liquid nitrogen.....	5
B. Homogenization with Homogenizer Column.....	5
C. Disruption and homogenization with Rotor-Stator.....	5
D. Disruption and homogenization with Beads Mills.....	5
MicroElute™ RNA Protocols.....	6
A. Total RNA Isolation From Laser dissected samples.....	6
B. Extraction of RNA from Micro- Dissected Formalin-Fixed tissues.....	8
C. Extraction of RNA from Animal tissue or cell cultures.....	10
D. Extraction of RNA from Fibrous Tissues.....	12
D. On-Membrane DNase I Digestion Protocol.....	14
Quantization and Storage of RNA.....	15
RNA Quality.....	16
Troubleshooting Tips.....	16

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Introduction

MicroElute™ Total RNA Kit provides a rapid and easy method for the isolation of up to 50 µg of total RNA from small amount of cultured eukaryotic cells, tissues such as laser dissected samples (LDS) or fine needle aspirates (FNA). Normally, up to 5 x 10⁵ of eukaryotic cells or 5mg of tissue (amounts depend on the tissue used) can be used in a single experiment. The kit allows single or multiple, simultaneous processing of samples in less than 30 minutes. There is no need for phenol/chloroform extractions, and time-consuming steps such as CsCl gradient ultracentrifugation, and precipitation with isopropanol or LiCl, are eliminated

RNA purified using the E.Z.N.A.™ MicroElute™ Total RNA method is ready for applications such as RT-PCR*, Northern blotting, poly A⁺ RNA (mRNA) purification, nuclease protection, and *in vitro* translation.

Principle

The MicroElute™ Total RNA Kit combines the reversible binding properties of the HiBind® matrix, a new silica-based material with the speed of mini-column spin technology. A specifically formulated high salt buffer system that allows RNA molecules greater than 200 bases to bind to the matrix. Cells or tissues are first lysed under denaturing conditions that practically inactivates RNase. When the ethanol is added, samples are then applied to the HiBind® MicroElute™ columns to which total RNA binds, while cellular debris and other contaminants are effectively washed away. High quality RNA is finally eluted in DEPC-treated sterile water.

New In this Edition

A new RWF Buffer is introduced to replace the RNA Wash Buffer I to provide better RNA recovery efficiency low RNA content samples.

Storage

MicroElute™ Total RNA Kits should be stored at room temperature. During shipment crystals may form in the TRK Lysis Buffer. Warm to 37°C to dissolve. All E.Z.N.A.™ Total RNA Kit components are guaranteed for at least 12 months from the date of purchase when stored at 22-25°C.

Kit Contents

Product No.	R6831-00	R6831-01	R6831-02
Purification	5	50	200
MicroElute™ RNA Columns	5	50	200
2 mL Collection Tubes	10	100	400
TRK Lysis Buffer	5 mL	25 mL	100 mL
RWF Buffer	5 mL	50 mL	200 mL
RNA Wash Buffer II	5 mL	12 mL	50 mL
DEPC-ddH ₂ O	1 mL	20 mL	60 mL
Carrier RNA	100 µg	100 µg	100 µg
Instruction Manual	1	1	1

Before Starting

Please take a few minutes to read this booklet thoroughly and become familiar with the protocol. Prepare all materials required before starting to minimize RNA degradation.

Important	Dilute RNA Wash Buffer II with absolute ethanol as follows\
	R6831-00 Add 20 mL 100 % ethanol R6831-01 Add 48 mL 100% ethanol R6831-02 Add 200 mL 100% ethanol
	Carrier RNA must be dissolved before use. When processing < 5000 cells, Carrier RNA should be added to the lysate before homogenization. First dissolve the carrier RNA with 100µl of DEPC-Treated Water to make 1µg/µl stock solution. To make working solution for 10 preps, add 5µl of stocking solution to 45µl of TRK Lysis Buffer and mix by pipetting. Take 5µl of this diluted solution, mix with 95µl of TRK Lysis Buffer. This final concentration will be 5µg/ul. Each RNA isolation will need 4µl of this solution.

- ◆ Whenever working with RNA, always wear latex gloves to minimize RNase contamination. Use only clean RNase-free disposable plastic pipette tips when using the supplied reagents.
- ◆ During the procedure work carefully but quickly.

- ◆ Under cool ambient conditions, crystals may form in the TRK Lysis Buffer. This is normal and the bottle should be warmed to redissolve the salt.
- ◆ 2-mercaptoethanol (β-mercaptoethanol) is the key in denaturing RNases and must be added to an aliquot of TRK Lysis Buffer before use. Add 20µl of 2-mercaptoethanol per 1 mL of TRK Lysis Buffer. This mixture can be stored for 1 week at room temperature. Note: Most 2-mercaptoethanol commercially available is 14.3M.
- ◆ All centrifugation steps must be carried out at 22°C-25°C.

Disruption and Homogenization of Samples

For all RNA isolation process, it is absolutely critical to disrupt and homogenize the sample. Laser dissected samples (LDS) and fine needle aspirates (FNA) can be simultaneously disrupted and homogenized by vortexing. For other samples, select one of the following methods for disruption and homogenization.

A. Disruption with Liquid Nitrogen

Wear gloves and take great care when working with liquid nitrogen. Excise tissue and promptly freeze in a small volume of liquid nitrogen. Grind tissue with a ceramic mortar and pestle under approximately 10 mL of liquid nitrogen and pour the suspension into a pre-cooled 15 mL polypropylene tube. Unless the tube is pre-cooled (in liquid nitrogen), the suspension will boil vigorously possibly causing loss of tissue. When the liquid nitrogen has completely evaporated, add TRK Lysis Buffer and continue with the procedure as outlined below.

B. Homogenization Using Homogenizer column or fine needle:

After interrupting tissue, lysate can be homogenized with Omega Homogenizer Spin Column (Product # HCR-03). The lysate is loaded onto the Omega Homogenizer Spin Column in a 2 mL collection tube. Spin two minutes at a maximum speed in a microcentrifuge and the homogenized lysate collected. Use the Omega Homogenizer Spin Column it is a fast and efficient way to homogenize the lysate without cross contamination of samples. The alternative way to homogenize the lysate is to use the syringe and needle. High molecular-weight DNA can be sheared by passing the lysate through a narrow needle (19-21 gauge) 5-10 times.

C. Disruption and Homogenization with Rotor-Stator

Rotor-Stator is the most preferred method for disruption and homogenizing tissue samples if required equipments are available. Rotor-stator homogenizers effectively homogenize most tissues in the presence of the TRK Lysis Buffer. The process usually takes less than a minute depending on the tissue. Many Rotor-stator homogenizers operate with differently sized probes or generators that allow processing of small volumes in microfuge tubes.

Such homogenizers are available from

- Tekmar Inc., Cincinnati, OH (Tissuemizers®)
- BIOSPEC Products, Bartlesville, OK (Tissue-Tearor™)
- Craven Laboratories, Austin, TX
- OMNI International Inc. Waterbury, CT

D. Disruption and Homogenization with Beads Mills

Tissue samples can also be effectively disrupted and homogenized by rapid agitation in the presence of beads and lysis buffer. Tissue samples are disrupted and simultaneously homogenized with the sheared and crushed action of the beads as they collide with cells.

MicroElute™ RNA Protocols

A. Total RNA Isolation From Laser dissected samples

Materials supplied by user

- 2-mercaptoethanol (14.3M)
- 80% ethanol in DEPC-treated sterile distilled water
- 70% ethanol in DEPC-treated sterile distilled water
- Sterile RNase-free pipette tips and microcentrifuge tubes
- Disposable latex gloves

Procedure:

1. Collect samples into a 1.5 or 2ml centrifuge tube that contains 65µl or 300µl of TRK Lysis Buffer. Remember to add 20 µl of 2-mercaptoethanol per 1 mL of TRK Lysis Buffer before use.
2. Adjust the sample volume to 75µl or 350µl with TRK Lysis Buffer. When processing small amount of cells (≤ 5000 cells). Add 20ng of carrier RNA (5µl working solution, see page 3 for instructions) to the lysate before homogenization.
3. Mix the sample thoroughly by vortexing for 30 seconds to homogenize the sample.
4. Add an equal volume (75µl or 350µl) of 70% ethanol to the homogenized lysate. Mix well by pipetting.
5. Apply the sample onto the HiBind® MicroElute™ RNA column. The maximum capacity of the spin cartridge is 750µl. A precipitate may form in addition of ethanol. Vortex and add the entire mixture to the column. With the spin column inside a 2ml collection tube (supplied), centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 15 seconds at room temperature. Discard the flow-through and proceed to step 6.

6. Place the column into a clean 2ml collection tube (supplied), and add 500µl of RWF. Centrifuge 10,000 x g for 30 seconds and discard the flow-through. Reuse the collection tube for next step.

NOTE: This is the starting point if on-membrane Dnase I digestion (page 14) if desired.

7. Place the column into the same 2ml collection tube from the previous step, add 500µl of RNA Wash Buffer II diluted with ethanol. Centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 30 seconds. Discard the flow-through and re-use the collection tube.
8. Place the column into the same 2ml collection tube, add 500µl of RNA Wash Buffer II diluted with ethanol. Centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 30 seconds. Discard the flow-through and reuse the collection tube.

NOTE: Wash Buffer II Concentrate must be diluted with absolute ethanol before use. Refer to label on bottle for instructions.

9. Place column into the same 2ml collection tube. Then with the collection tube empty, centrifuge the spin cartridge for 2 minutes at full speed to completely dry the HiBind® matrix.
11. Elution of RNA. Transfer the column to a clean 1.5 mL microfuge tube (not supplied) and elute the RNA with 15-20µl of DEPC-treated water (supplied). Make sure to add water directly onto the center of the membrane. Centrifuge for 1 minute at maximum speed.

RNA may be eluted with a smaller (<15µl) volume of water to get higher RNA concentration. While the reduced elution volume decreases total RNA yield. The total yield will be 20-30% less when the elution volume is less than 10µl.

B. Extraction of RNA from Micro-Dissected Formalin-Fixed tissues

Materials supplied by user

- 96-100% ethanol
- β-Mercaptoethanol
- RNase-free filter pipette tips
- Microcentrifuge capable of 12,000 xG
- Disposable latex gloves
- RNase-Free 1.5 mL tubes
- Water bath or heat block preset at 55°C
- Proteinase K (20mg/ml)

NOTE: Equilibrate samples and TRK Lysis buffer to room temperature before starting. All steps must be carried out at room temperature. Work quickly, but carefully.

NOTE: Depending on the process of the fixation protocol, storage condition, staining protocol, and the age of the sample, RNA can be highly degraded into small fragments less than 300nt. Since the Total RNA isolation protocol will remove most fragments less than 200nt. This could lead to overall loss of RNA if the sample is highly degraded.

1. Collect samples into a 1.5 or 2ml centrifuge tube containing 100µl of TRK Lysis Buffer. *Remember to add 20µl of 2-mercaptoethanol per 1 mL of TRK Lysis Buffer before use.*
2. Adjust the sample volume to 150µl of TRK Buffer. When processing small amounts of cells (≤ 5000 cells), add 20ng of carrier RNA (5µl working solution, see page 3 for instructions) to the lysate before homogenization.
3. Add 295µl of DEPC-Treated water into the sample. Then add 5µl of Proteinase K (20mg/ml)
4. Incubate at 55 °C for 10 minutes.
5. Centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 5 minutes at room temperature. A small pellet of tissue debris will form and a thin layer or film can be seen on top of the supernatant.
6. Transfer the supernatant (about 450µl) into a RNase-Free 1.5 or 2ml tube (not supplied). Avoid transferring any of the pellet. Hold the pipette tip under the thin layer or film on top of the supernatant, if present. This layer will usually adhere to outside the tip and should not be transferred.
7. Add 0.5 volume of absolute ethanol (96-100%) to the cleared lysate, mix thoroughly by pipetting.
8. Place a MicroElute™ RNA column into a 2ml collection tube (supplied) and carefully apply the sample from step 7 (including any precipitate) to the MicroElute™ RNA column.
9. Centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 30 seconds. Discard the flow-through and reuse the collection tube.

10. Place the column into a clean 2ml collection tube, and add 500µl of RWF Buffer. Centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 30 seconds. Discard the flow-through and re-use the collection tube.
11. DNase I Digestion (Optional): This is the point to start On-membrane DNase I digestion. (See detail procedure on page 14)
12. Place the column into the same 2ml collection tube from the previous step, and add 500µl of RNA Wash Buffer II diluted with ethanol. Centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 30 seconds. Discard the flow-through and re-use the collection tube. Reuse the collection tube in the following step.
NOTE: Wash Buffer II Concentrate must be diluted with absolute ethanol before use. Refer to label on bottle for instructions
13. Wash the column with a second 500µl of Wash Buffer II. Centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 30 seconds and discard the flow-through. Reuse the collection tube in the following step.
14. Then with the collection tube empty, centrifuge the spin cartridge for 2 minutes at full speed to completely dry the HiBind® matrix.
15. Elution of RNA. Transfer the column to a clean 1.5 mL microfuge tube (not supplied) and elute the RNA with 15µl of DEPC-treated water (supplied). Make sure to add water directly onto the column matrix. Centrifuge for 1 minute at maximum speed.

RNA may be eluted with a smaller (<15µl) volume of water to get higher RNA concentration. While reduced elution volume decreases the total RNA yield. The total yield will be 20-30% less when the elution volume is less than 10µl.

C. RNA Isolation From Animal tissue or cell culture

This method is designed for most animal tissues and culture cells. For RNA isolation from fibrous tissue, follow the specialized protocol on page 10. For laser dissected samples, please follow the protocol on page 5. All centrifugation steps must be carried out at room temperature.

Materials supplied by user

- 96-100% ethanol
- β-Mercaptoethanol
- RNase-free filter pipette tips

- Microcentrifuge capable of 12,000 x g
 - Disposable latex gloves
 - RNase-Free 1.5 mL tubes
1. Determine the starting amount of the sample. Do not use more than 5×10^5 of cells or 5mg tissue.
 2. Lyse cells ($< 5 \times 10^5$) or tissues ($< 5\text{mg}$) with 350 μl of TRK Lysis Buffer. *Remember to add 20 μl of 2-mercaptoethanol per 1 mL of TRK Lysis Buffer before use*
 3. Disrupt the tissue or cells and Homogenize the lysate in TRK according to one of the methods on page 4. When processing small amounts of cells (≤ 5000 cells). Add 20ng of carrier RNA (5 μl working solution, see page 3 for instructions) to the lysate before homogenization. Centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 2 minutes and transfer the cleared supernatant to a new 1.5ml tube.
 4. Add an equal volume of 70% Ethanol to the lysate and mix thoroughly by vortexing.
 5. Apply the sample onto MicroElute™ RNA column pre-inserted in a 2 mL collection tube. The maximum capacity of the spin cartridge is 750 μl . A precipitate may form in addition of ethanol in step 4. Vortex and add the entire mixture to the column. With the spin column inside a 2ml collection tube (supplied), centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 15 seconds at room temperature. Discard the flow-through and the collection tube.
 6. Place the column into a new 2ml collection tube (supplied), and add 500 μl of RWF Buffer. Centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 30 seconds and discard the flow-through. Reuse the collection tube in the following step. If on-membrane DNase I digestion is desired, proceed to step 7, otherwise go to step 8.
 7. DNase I Digestion (Optional): this is point to start On-membrane DNase I digestion. (See detail procedure on page 14)
 8. Place column into the same 2ml collection tube from step 6, and add 500 μl of RNA Wash Buffer II diluted with ethanol. Centrifuge at 10, 000 x g for 30 seconds. Discard the flow-through and re-use the collection tube.
NOTE: Wash Buffer II Concentrate must be diluted with absolute ethanol before use. Refer to the label on the bottle for instructions.
 9. Wash column with a second 500 μl of Wash Buffer II as in step 8. Centrifuge at

10,000 x g for 30 seconds and discard the flow-through. Then with the collection tube empty, centrifuge the spin cartridge for 2 minutes at full speed to completely dry the HiBind® matrix.

10. Elution of RNA. Transfer the column to a clean 1.5 mL microfuge tube (not supplied) and elute the RNA with 15 μl of DEPC-treated water (supplied). Make sure to add water directly onto the column matrix. Centrifuge for 1 minute at maximum speed.
RNA may be eluted with a smaller ($< 15\mu\text{l}$) volume of water to get higher RNA concentration. While reduced elution volume decreases the total RNA yield. The total yield will be 20-30% less when the elution volume is less than 10 μl .

D. Extraction of RNA from Fibrous tissues (skeletal muscle, heart and aorta tissue, et al.)

Materials supplied by user:

- 96-100% ethanol
- β -Mercaptoethanol
- RNase-free filter pipette tips
- Microcentrifuge capable of 12,000 xG
- Disposable latex gloves
- RNase-Free 1.5 mL tubes
- Water bath or heat block preset at 55°C
- Proteinase K (20mg/ml)

NOTE: Equilibrate samples and TRK Lysis buffer to room temperature before starting. All steps must be carried out at room temperature. Work quickly, but carefully.

1. Excise tissue from animal or from storage.
2. Weigh up to 5mg of tissue and immediately place it into a 1.5 mL tube for disruption and homogenization.
3. Add 150 μl of TRK Lysis Buffer and disrupt the tissue and homogenize lysate in TRK Lysis buffer by using methods described on page 4.
NOTE: Incomplete homogenization will cause clogging of the spin column and lead to significantly lower yield. Generally, disruption and homogenization by using a mortar and pestle or needle and syringe can generate lower yield. It is recommended to use a rotor stator homogenizer or beads milling methods for animal tissues.
4. Pipet 290 μl of RNase-Free water to each homogenate. Add 5 μl of Proteinase

K and mix thoroughly by pipetting.

5. Incubate at 55 °C for 10 minutes.
6. Centrifuge the sample at 10,000 x g for 5 minutes at room temperature. A small pellet of tissue debris will form and a thin layer of film can be seen on top of the supernatant.
7. Transfer the supernatant (around 450µl) into a RNase-Free 2 mL microtube.
NOTE: Avoid transferring any of the pellet. Hold the pipett tip under the thin layer of film on top of the supernatant, if present. This layer will usually adhere to outside the tip and should not be transferred.
8. Add 0.5 volume (225µl) of absolute ethanol (96-100%) to the cleared lysate, mix thoroughly by pipetting.
9. Place MicroElute™ RNA column into a 2ml collection tube (supplied) and carefully apply 700µl of samples from step 8 (including any precipitate) to the MicroElute™ RNA column.
10. Centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 30 seconds. Discard the flow-through and collection tube.
11. Place the MicroElute™ RNA column into a new 2ml collection tube. Add 500µl of RWF Buffer into the column. Centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 30 seconds. Discard the flow-through and re-use the collection tube in the next step.
12. DNase I Digestion (Optional): this is point to start DNase digestion. (See detail protocol on page 14)
13. Place the column into the 2ml collection tube from step 11, and add 500µl of RNA Wash Buffer II. Centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 30 seconds. Discard the flow-through and re-use the collection tube.
NOTE: Wash Buffer II Concentrate must be diluted with absolute ethanol before use. Refer to label on bottle for instructions
14. Wash the column with a second 500 l of RNA Wash Buffer II. Centrifuge at 10,000 x g for 30 seconds and discard the flow-through.
15. Then with the collection tube empty, centrifuge the spin cartridge for 2 minutes at full speed to completely dry the HiBind® matrix.

16. Elution of RNA. Transfer the column to a clean 1.5 mL microfuge tube (not supplied) and elute the RNA with 15µl of DEPC-treated water (supplied). Make sure to add water directly onto the column matrix. Centrifuge for 1 minute at maximum speed.
RNA may be eluted with a smaller (<15µl) volume of water to get higher RNA concentration. While reduced elution volume decrease the total RNA yield.
The total yield will be 20-30% less when the elution volume is less than 10µl.

On-membrane DNase I Digestion Protocol

Since HiBind® RNA resin and spin-column technology actually removes most of the DNA without the DNase treatment, it is not necessary to do DNase digestion for most downstream applications. However, certain sensitive RNA applications might require further DNA removal. Following steps provide on-membrane DNase I digestion:(see DNase I cat.# E1091for detail information)

1. Follow the standard protocol until the samples have completely passed through the MicroElute™ column (step 1-6). Prepare the following:
2. For each MicroElute™ column, prepare the DNase I digestion reaction mix as follows:

OBI DNase I Digestion Buffer	73.5 µl
RNase-free DNase I (20 Kunitz unites/µl)	1.5 µl
Total volume	75 µl

NOTE:

- a. DNase I is very sensitive for physical denaturation, so do not vortex this DNase I mixture. Mix gently by inverting the tube. Prepare the fresh DNase I digestion mixture before RNA isolation.
 - b. OBI DNase I digestion buffer is supplied with OBI RNase-free Dnase set.
 - c. Standard Dnase buffers are not compatible with on-membrane Dnase digestion.
3. Pipet 75µl of the DNase I digestion reaction mix directly onto the surface of the HiBind® RNA resin in each column. Make sure to pipet the Dnase I digestion mixture directly onto the membrane. Dnase I digestion will not be complete if some of the mixture sticks to the wall or the O-ring of the MicroElute™ RNA column.
 4. Incubate at room temperature(25-30°C) for 15 minutes,
 5. Place the column into a 2ml centrifuge tube, and add 400µl of RWF Buffer. Place the column on the benchtop for 5 minutes. Centrifuge at 5000-8000 x g

for 5 minutes and discard the flow-through. Reuse the collection tube in next step.

6. Continue the wash and elution steps by following the standard protocol.

DNA Contamination

Generally HiBind® RNA spin column technology will efficiently remove most of the DNA without DNase treatment. However, no RNA extraction procedure can completely remove genomic DNA. For sensitive work (such as RT-PCR or differential display) we suggest that you perform on-column DNase I digestion (OBI cat# E1091) or treat the eluted RNA with RNase-free DNase. Also for RT-PCR, use intron-spanning primers that allow easy identification of DNA-contamination.

Quantitation and Storage of RNA

To determine the concentration and purity of RNA, measure absorbancy at 260 nm and 280 nm in a spectrophotometer. 1 O.D. unit measured at 260 nm corresponds to 40µg of RNA per mL. DEPC-water is slightly acidic and can dramatically lower absorbance values. We suggest that you dilute the sample in a buffered solution (TE) for spectrophotometric analysis. The ratio of A_{260}/A_{280} of pure nucleic acids is 2.0, while for pure protein it is approximately 0.6. A ratio of 1.8-2.0 corresponds to 90%-100% pure nucleic acid. (Phenol has an absorbancy maximum at 275 nm and can interfere with absorbance readings of DNA or RNA. However, the E.Z.N.A.® MicroElute Total RNA Kit eliminates the use of phenol and avoids this problem.) Store RNA samples at -70°C in water. Under such conditions RNA prepared with the E.Z.N.A.® system is stable for more than a year.

RNA Quality

It is highly recommended that RNA quality be determined prior to all analyses. The quality of RNA can best be assessed by denaturing agarose gel electrophoresis and ethidium bromide staining. Two sharp bands should appear on the gel. These are the 28S and 18S (23S and 16S for bacteria) ribosomal RNA bands. If these band smear towards lower molecular weight RNAs, then the RNA has undergone major degradation during preparation, handling, or storage. Although RNA molecules less than 200 bases in length do not efficiently bind the HiBind matrix, a third RNA band, the tRNA band, may be visible when a large number of cells are used.

Troubleshooting Guide

Problem	Cause	Suggestion
Little or no RNA eluted	RNA remains on the column	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeat elution. Pre-heat DEPC-water to 70° C prior to elution. Incubate column for 10 minutes with water prior to centrifugation.
	Column is overloaded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the quantity of starting material.
Clogged column	Incomplete homogenization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completely homogenize sample. Increase centrifugation time. Reduce the amount of starting material
Degraded RNA	Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freeze starting material quickly in liquid nitrogen. Do not store tissue culture cells prior to extraction unless they are lysed first. Follow protocol closely, and work quickly.
	RNase contamination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure not to introduce RNase during the procedure. Check buffers for RNase contamination.
Problem in downstream applications	Salt carry-over during elution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Wash Buffer II Concentrate has been diluted with 4 volumes of 100% ethanol as indicated on bottle. 1 X Wash Buffer II must be stored and used at room temperature. Repeat wash with Wash Buffer II.
DNA contamination		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digest with RNase-free DNase and inactivate at 75°C for 5 min.
Low Abs ratios	RNA diluted in acidic buffer or water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DEPC-treated water is acidic and can dramatically lower Abs₂₆₀ values. Use TE buffer to dilute RNA prior to spectrophotometric analysis.