

Tetramer Facility

Finding new ways to stimulate immunity against microbes and tumors requires knowledge of the cells and molecules involved in immune recognition. In particular, researchers seek to identify the molecules recognized by specific T cells, a central component of specific immune responses. To help scientists accomplish this goal, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) established the Tetramer Facility in 1999. This facility is enabling investigators worldwide to make rapid discoveries in vaccine research, cancer treatment, and biodefense.

Tetramers offer vast improvements over previous procedures for screening T cell

responses, but not all laboratories possess the resources required to synthesize and assemble the molecules. The NIAID Tetramer Facility, located at Atlanta's Emory University, provides tetramers to researchers from around the world, allowing them to conduct experiments that otherwise would be difficult or impossible to complete. Since opening for business in 1999, the Tetramer Facility has provided 2,100 tetramers to more than 350 researchers from 25 different countries. Those tetramers have allowed scientists to make important discoveries about immunity to many diseases, including hepatitis B and C, herpes viruses, HIV, malaria, and various cancers.

For more information about the Tetramer Facility, including forms and guideline information, please visit the website at: <http://www.niaid.nih.gov/repository/tetramer/index.html>. For more information about other NIAID biodefense research resources, please go to www.niaid.nih.gov/biodefense.

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