

Title: Cloning of an 18kd oocyst-specific protein from *Toxoplasma gondii* for serological detection of human infection. **NPB 03-125**

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Abstract: Reduction of risk of human and food animal infection with the zoonotic parasite, *Toxoplasma gondii*, is hampered by the lack of data documenting the predominant routes of infection (oocyst vs tissue cyst). Existing serological assays can determine previous exposure to the parasite, but not the infection route. We have identified an oocyst specific 18.3kDa protein fragment that can differentiate between oocyst vs tissue cyst induced *T. gondii* infection in pigs and humans. In the present study, we selected the cDNA clone of the protein from a library constructed from sporulated oocysts and validated continued serological responsiveness to the recombinant protein.

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