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Response From Authors

In response to questions about day 7 elution for the filter paper assay, Dr. Taylor is absolutely right that we have not published any data validating this modification from day 14 elution. The decision to further evaluate the day 7 elution procedure after we published the original method was made for practical reasons; the shorter time period would allow us to return results faster. We now have data relating day 7 filter paper elution results to GHb measured by affinity chromatography from frozen hemolysates. As with the day 14 elution, the correlation is excellent ($n = 412$, $r = 0.96$, $P < 0.0001$).

In response to Dr. Taylor's comment about the affinity chromatography method being susceptible to changes in experimental protocol, most GHb methods are susceptible to changes in experimental protocol. We have decreased the variability of our affinity chromatography assay by standardization to a reference method. We include calibrators in each assay that have values assigned by a designated reference method (1). In doing so, we are able to decrease the assay variability; CVs for our standardized affinity assay have been <5% for the past several years.

We are in complete agreement with Dr. Taylor that differences between methods should be assessed carefully. In view of the fact that, at the present time, there is no consensus on either a standard or reference method for GHb, absolute results are not comparable between methods. We disagree with John et al. (Dr. Taylor's reference 9), however, that calibration material cannot be used to interconvert results for HbA_1, HbA_{1c}, and GHb. We have shown that our approach to interlaboratory standardization of GHb does allow direct comparison of results obtained by different methods, including those measuring HbA1, HbA1c, and total GHb (1).

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CV, COEFFICIENT OF VARIATION.

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