5. To obtain a good RNA preparation, it is essential to avoid contamination with RNases. Laboratory glassware should be treated by baking at 180°C for 3 h or more. It is best to use sterile disposable plasticware (Eppendorf microtubes, tips, pipets, and so on) whenever possible, since it is essentially free of RNases. A potential major source of contamination with RNase are the hands of the investigator; disposable gloves should be worn during the RNA manipulation. All solutions should be prepared using RNase-free glassware, autoclaved water, and chemicals reserved for work with RNA that should be handled with baked spatulas.
6. The concentration of RNA can be determined spectrophotometrically by reading at wavelength of 260 nm. An OD_{260} = 1 corresponds to approx 40 μg of RNA/mL. To estimate concentration in a sample, prepare a dilution 1:25 in water and read at 260 nm; the reading will directly give the concentration of RNA in mg/mL.

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