

Version 5a Last updated 19 May 2026

ab150669

Fontana-Masson

(Melanin Stain)

For the histological visualization of Argentaffin cells and melanin.

This product is for research use only and is not intended for diagnostic use.

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1. Overview

The Fontana-Masson (Melanin Stain) (ab150669) is intended for use in the histological visualization of Argentaffin cells and melanin in paraffin or frozen sections. In addition, the Fontana-Masson stain has been reported to be useful in identifying Capsule-Deficient *Cryptococcus Neoformans* and typical *Cryptococcus Neoformans*.

Staining Interpretation:

Argentaffin cells	Black
Melanin	Black
Cryptococci Cell Wall	Black
Nuclei	Red
Cytoplasm	Light pink

Control Tissue:

Any paraffin-embedded tissue that contains hair follicles or skin for melanin.

Small intestine for Argentaffin.

2. Materials Supplied and Storage

Store kit at room temperature immediately on receipt and check below for storage for individual components.

Keep away from open flame and refer to the safety datasheet.

Item	Quantity (30 mL pack size)	Quantity (125 mL pack size)	Storage temperature (before prep)
Gold Chloride Solution (0.2%)	30 mL	125 mL	4°C
Silver Nitrate Solution (10%)	2 x 9 mL	5 x 9 mL	4°C
Sodium Thiosulfate Solution (5%)	30 mL	125 mL	RT
Nuclear Fast Red Solution	30 mL	125 mL	RT

3. Materials Required, Not Supplied

These materials are not included in the kit, but will be required to successfully perform this assay:

- Concentrate ammonium hydroxide (i.e., 25-30% ammonium hydroxide solution)
- Absolute alcohol

4. General guidelines, precautions, and troubleshooting

Please observe safe laboratory practice and consult the safety datasheet.

For typical data produced using the assay, please see the assay kit datasheet on our website.

5. Staining Protocol

- Equilibrate all materials and prepared reagents to room temperature just prior to use and gently agitate.

Prepare Ammoniacal Silver Solution immediately prior to use:

In new or chemically cleaned glassware, mix 27 ml distilled/deionized water with one vial of Silver Nitrate Solution and blend completely. Carefully add concentrated Ammonium

Hydroxide one drop at a time, swirling gently after each drop.

Initially the mixture will turn dark brown and then gradually become transparent with a fine layer of sediment. The solution is ready for immediate use when all sediment dissolves.

- 5.1** Deparaffinize sections if necessary and hydrate in distilled water.
 - 5.2** Place freshly mixed Ammoniacal Silver solution in a 58-60°C water bath and allow adequate time for the temperature to equilibrate.
 - 5.3** Incubate slide in warmed Ammoniacal Silver solution for 30-60 minutes or until tissue section becomes yellowish/brown in color.
- ΔNote:** Melanin typically stains in 30 minutes while Argentaffin stains in 50-60 minutes.
- 5.4** Rinse slide in several changes of distilled water.
 - 5.5** Incubate slide in Gold Chloride Solution (0.2%) at room temperature for 30 seconds.
 - 5.6** Rinse slide in several changes of distilled water.
 - 5.7** Incubate slide in Sodium Thiosulfate Solution (5%) at room temperature for 1-2 minutes.
 - 5.8** Rinse for 2 minutes in running tap water for followed by 2 changes of distilled water.
 - 5.9** Incubate slide in Nuclear Fast Red Solution for 5 minutes.
 - 5.10** Rinse for 2 minutes in running tap water for followed by 2 changes of distilled water.
 - 5.11** Dehydrate very quickly in 3 changes of fresh Absolute Alcohol.
 - 5.12** Clear and mount in synthetic resin (or organic/ permanent mounting medium).

6. FAQs / Troubleshooting

Technical Support

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