

GE Healthcare

# Amersham ECL phosphorylation detection system

Product booklet

Codes: RPN2220  
RPN2221



# Page finder

1. Legal	3
2. Handling	4
2.1. Safety warnings and precautions	4
2.2. Storage	4
2.3. Stability	4
3. Components of the system	5
4. Additional equipment and solutions required	6
5. Description	7
6. Critical parameters	8
7. Use of the ECL phosphorylation detection system	9
7.1. Immunodetection	9
7.2. Detection with ECL reagents	11
8. Related protocols	14
8.1. Controls	14
8.2. Lysis buffer	14
8.3. Stripping and reprobing	15
9. Troubleshooting guide	17
10. Related products	23
11. References	25

# 1. Legal

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## 2. Handling

### 2.1. Safety warnings and precautions

**Warning: For research use only.** Not recommended or intended for diagnosis of disease in humans or animals. Do not use internally or externally in humans or animals.

All chemicals should be considered as potentially hazardous. We therefore recommend that this product is handled only by those persons who have been trained in laboratory techniques and that it is used in accordance with the principles of good laboratory practice. Wear suitable protective clothing such as laboratory overalls, safety glasses and gloves. Care should be taken to avoid contact with skin or eyes. In the case of contact with skin or eyes wash immediately with water. See material safety data sheet(s) and/or safety statement(s) for specific advice.

Note the assay protocol requires the use of acrylamide, SDS, mercaptoethanol, methanol, ammonium persulphate and N,N,N',N'-tetramethylethylenediamine (TEMED).

Please refer to the manufacturers safety data sheets relating to the safe handling and use of these materials.

### 2.2. Storage

Store at 2–8°C.

Store blocking reagent at 2–8°C.

### 2.3. Stability

The kit components are stable for at least 3 months when stored under the recommended conditions

### 3. Components of the system

#### **ECL phosphorylation detection module RPN 2220**

##### **Anti-phosphotyrosine-HRP conjugate 100 µl**

Horseradish peroxidase conjugate of PY20 antibody clone supplied in PBS, pH 7.4, 50% glycerol, 1% BSA and 0.1% proclin.

Concentration: 50 µg in 100 µl

Origin: Clone PY20 is a mouse monoclonal generated by immunising Balb/c mice with the phosphotyrosine hapten conjugated to a carrier protein and fusing with NS-1. Resulting hybridomas were selected for reactivity with the phosphotyrosine hapten by ELISA.

Isotype: IgG<sub>2b</sub>

Species reactivity: Tested positive with human, mouse and rat. No other species tested.

#### **Membrane blocking reagent 10 g**

#### **ECL phosphorylation detection system RPN 2221**

##### **Components**

ECL phosphorylation detection module RPN 2220

ECL Western blotting detection reagents RPN 2209  
(sufficient for 2000 cm<sup>2</sup> membrane)

## 4. Additional equipment and solutions required

### Equipment

Adjustable pipettes.  
Sterile pipette tips.  
Standard laboratory glassware.  
Orbital shaker.  
Polypropylene microcentrifuge tubes.  
Microcentrifuge.  
Boiling water bath.  
Gloves, preferably powder-free.  
Plastic boxes for incubating blots during immunodetection.  
Forceps with non-serrated tips (for handling blots).  
Timer.  
SaranWrap™.  
Gel electrophoresis equipment (tanks, power units, etc).  
Filter paper.  
Blotting membrane.

### Solutions

#### Buffer preparation

Buffers should be stable for at least 3 months unless otherwise stated.

#### 1 M Tris.HCl pH 7.5

Dissolve 121.1 g of Tris base in 900 ml of distilled water. Adjust the pH to 7.5 using concentrated HCl. Make up the total volume to 1000 ml with distilled water. Store at 2–8°C.

#### Tris buffered saline (TBS) pH 7.5

10 ml 1M Tris.HCl pH 7.5 (10 mM)  
5.8 g sodium chloride (100 mM)  
Dilute to 1000 ml with distilled water - check pH.  
Store at 2–8°C.

#### TBS Tween (TBS-T)

Use for wash buffer, block diluent and antibody diluent.  
Add 1 ml of Tween 20 to 1000 ml of TBS.  
Store at room temperature.

#### Blocking buffer (1% BSA)

Add 0.2 g of block reagent to 20 ml of TBS-T. Prepare freshly on day of use.

## 5. Description

Protein phosphorylation (1) is a major mechanism by which protein function in eukaryotic cells is regulated. This important, reversible post translational event has two main functions: controlling the cellular responses to extracellular signals and control of cell cycle events. Antibodies, from various clones that recognise phosphorylated tyrosine residues have been extensively used in such studies. The PY20 clone (2) (IgG<sub>2b</sub>) was analysed in comparison with other anti-phosphotyrosine antibodies and showed to have the highest affinity for phosphotyrosine with the least reactivity with other phosphoamino acids. This increase in affinity is due to a rare V-D-D-J-C joining (3) which was proven by Meek *et al.* (4)

The ECL™ phosphorylation detection system from GE Healthcare uses the horseradish peroxidase conjugate of the PY20 antibody clone to directly detect tyrosine-phosphorylated proteins without the need for secondary antibody reagents. Its use in combination with ECL reagents offers a highly sensitive system.

## 6. Critical parameters

- The use of Tris buffered saline rather than phosphate buffered saline is recommended for maximum sensitivity.
- Use of milk based blocks should be avoided as they may cause high backgrounds due to their content of tyrosine phosphorylated proteins.
- 0.1% Tween™ 20 is recommended in blocking, antibody and wash buffers to avoid high backgrounds.
- The anti-phosphotyrosine-HRP conjugate may be initially viscous upon removal from the freezer. Pipetting accuracy may be aided by cutting off the end of the pipette tip.

## 7. Use of the ECL phosphorylation detection system

### 7.1. Immunodetection

During immunodetection, sufficient solution should be used to adequately cover the membrane. The containers should be agitated gently on a mixer platform. When washing, the volume of wash buffer should be as large as possible; 4 ml of buffer per cm<sup>2</sup> of membrane is suggested. Brief rinses of the membrane before incubating in wash buffer will improve washing efficiency. All steps should be carried out at room temperature.

Protocol	Notes
<b>1. Performing electrophoresis and blotting</b> Separate the proteins using SDS-PAGE electrophoresis and electroblot on to Hybond™ PVDF or nitrocellulose membrane as recommended by the equipment manufacturers.	<b>1.</b> If using PVDF membrane it should be pre-wetted in methanol for 5 seconds, rinsed in water for 5 minutes to remove the methanol, then equilibrated in transfer buffer for 10–15 minutes.
<b>2. Blocking the membrane</b> Remove the membranes from the apparatus and trim the edges to prevent a background outline. Non-specific binding sites are blocked by immersing the membrane in blocking buffer (see page 6) for one hour	<b>2a.</b> The use of milk based block reagents may give elevated background due to the presence of tyrosine phosphorylated proteins. <b>2b.</b> Omission of Tween 20 will lead to reduced signal: noise.

Protocol	Notes
<p>2. <i>Continued.</i> on an orbital shaker at room temperature.</p>	<p>2c. Alternatively, membranes may be left in the blocking solution overnight at 2–8°C.</p>
<p><b>3. Washing</b> Briefly rinse the membrane twice with fresh changes of TBS-T to remove excess block.</p>	
<p><b>4. Dilution of the anti-phosphotyrosine-HRP conjugate.</b> During the blocking step dilute the conjugate 1:10 000 in TBS-T.</p>	<p>4. 1:10 000 is the recommended dilution of conjugate but this concentration can be increased or decreased to suit the application. The inclusion of 1% block in the conjugate incubation is not normally necessary but may improve signal: noise in some circumstances.</p>
<p><b>5. Incubation</b> Incubate the membrane in the diluted conjugate for 1 hour on an orbital shaker at room temperature.</p>	<p>5. The presence of high salt levels will inhibit the binding of the antibody (3).</p>
<p><b>6. Washing</b> Briefly rinse the membrane twice with fresh changes of TBS-T, then wash 3 times - once for 15 minutes and twice for 5 minutes with fresh changes of washing buffer on an orbital shaker at room temperature.</p>	

## 7.2. Detection with ECL reagents

**Read through this whole section before proceeding.** It is necessary to work quickly once the membranes have been exposed to the detection solution. All steps can be carried out in a dark room; it is only necessary to switch off the light after step 5). Equipment needed are an X-ray film cassette, a roll of SaranWrap, a timer and autoradiography film such as Hyperfilm™ ECL RPN 2103.

The use of gloves is strongly recommended from this stage to prevent hand contact on film or detection reagents. If possible wear powder-free gloves as the powder can inhibit the ECL detection reagents leading to blank patches on the film.

<b>Protocol</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Mix equal volumes of detection solution 1 and detection solution 2 to give sufficient reagent to cover the membrane.</li><li>2. Drain the excess wash buffer from the membrane and place it on SaranWrap protein side up. Add the detection reagents to the protein side of the membrane so that the reagents are held by surface tension on the surface of the membrane; do not allow the surface of the membrane to become uncovered.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The final volume required is 0.125 ml/cm<sup>2</sup> membrane.</li></ol>

## Protocol

## Notes

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3. Incubate for precisely 1 minute at room temperature, without agitation.
  4. Drain off excess detection reagents and wrap membrane in a fresh piece of SaranWrap™. Gently smooth out air pockets.
  5. Place the membrane protein side up, in the film cassette. Work as quickly as possible; minimise the delay between incubating the membrane in detection reagent and exposing it to the film (next step).
  6. Switch off the lights and carefully place a sheet of autoradiography film, such as Hyperfilm ECL, on top of the membrane, close the cassette and expose for 1 minute.
4. Drain off excess detection reagent by holding the membrane vertically and touching the edge of the membrane against tissue paper. Gently place the membrane, protein side down, on to SaranWrap. Close the SaranWrap to form an envelope avoiding pressure on the membrane.
  5. Ensure that there is no free detection reagent in the film cassette; the film must not get wet.
  6. Do this in a dark-room, using red safelights. Do not move the film while it is being exposed.

**Protocol****Notes**

7. Remove film, immediately replace with a fresh piece of unexposed film, and reclose the cassette.

7. Develop the first piece of film immediately, and on the basis of its appearance estimate how long to continue the exposure of the second piece of film - this will depend on the amount of target protein on the membrane. In general, exposure times will vary from 1-15 minutes for high target applications and 15-90 minutes for lower target applications. If background is high the blot may be rewashed twice for 10 minutes with wash buffer and redetected following steps 1-7 with slight loss of sensitivity.

## 8. Related protocols

### 8.1. Controls

#### **Positive control**

EGF stimulated A431 cells cultured in DMEM can be used as a positive control.

Stimulate the cell culture for 20 minutes with 50 ng/ml EGF.

#### **Negative control**

Prepare an A431 cell lysate without EGF stimulation.

#### **Suggested cell culture media for A431 cells(5)**

500 ml DMEM

5 ml Penicillin/streptomycin (stock at 5000 units penicillin, 5 mg streptomycin/ml)

5 ml L-Glutamine (stock at 200 mM)

50 ml Foetal bovine serum

### 8.2. Lysis buffer

A variety of different lysis buffers can be used for the solubilisation of cellular antigens. Factors that affect the efficiency of solubilisation include concentration and type of detergent, ionic strength and pH of the buffer, and the presence or absence of chelating agents. Buffers using more than one type of detergent may be efficient at solubilisation (6) but may cause denaturation resulting in less immunoreactivity in immunoprecipitation.

The inclusion of protease inhibitors is strongly recommended. To cover all types of proteases a cocktail of inhibitors is normally used: for example, aprotinin and phenylmethyl-sulphonyl fluoride (PMSF) for serine proteases, EDTA for metalloproteases and leupeptin for serine proteases and thiolproteases. As many of these inhibitors have very short half lives once added to the buffers, the lysis solutions need

to be prepared freshly. Concentrated stocks of protease inhibitors can be prepared and stored at  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  (7). GE Healthcare provides a Protease Inhibitor Mix (80-6501-23), a unique combination of competitive and noncompetitive protease inhibitors that inhibit serine, cysteine, metalloproteases and calpain protease.

For the analysis of phosphorylation on proteins, it is also important to include phosphatase inhibitors such as sodium orthovanadate and sodium fluoride.

The following buffer is a good starting point for preparation of cellular lysates:

50 mM Tris. HCl pH 7.5  
1% NP40  
0.25% Sodium deoxycholate  
150 mM NaCl  
1 mM EGTA  
1 mM PMSF  
1  $\mu\text{g}/\text{ml}$  aprotinin  
1  $\mu\text{g}/\text{ml}$  leupeptin  
1  $\mu\text{g}/\text{ml}$  pepstatin  
1 mM  $\text{Na}_3\text{VO}_4$   
1 mM NaF

### 8.3. Stripping and reprobing

The complete removal of antibodies from membranes is possible following the method outlined below. The membranes may be stripped of bound antibodies and reprobed several times. Prior to stripping, membranes should be stored wet wrapped in SaranWrap at  $2-8^{\circ}\text{C}$  after immunodetection.

<b>Protocol</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<p>1. Submerge the membrane in freshly prepared stripping buffer (100 mM 2-mercaptoethanol, 2% sodium dodecyl sulphate, 62.5 mM Tris.HCl pH 6.7) and incubate at 50°C for 30 minutes with occasional agitation.</p>	<p>1. If more stringent conditions are required the incubation can be performed at higher temperatures up to a maximum of 70°C.</p>
<p>2. Wash the membrane for 2 x 10 minutes in TBS-T at room temperature using large volumes of wash buffer.</p>	<p>2. Membranes may be incubated with the ECL detection reagents and exposed to film to ensure removal of antibodies.</p>
<p>3. Block the membrane by immersing in 1% blocking reagent /TBS-T for 1 hour at room temperature.</p>	
<p>4. Perform immunodetection using procedures as described on page 9.</p>	

## 9. Troubleshooting guide

### Problem: No signal

Possible causes	Remedies
<b>1a.</b> No transfer of proteins during Western blotting	<b>1a.</b> Re-evaluate blotting procedure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stain gels with dye to check transfer efficiency.</li><li>• Stain membrane with protein stain to check transfer efficiency.</li><li>• Optimise gel acrylamide concentration, time for transfer and current using molecular weight markers covering the molecular weight range expected to be blotted, or use a biotinylated positive control, for example, ECL biotinylated markers.</li><li>• Check that the gel and membrane make proper contact during blotting.</li><li>• Check that gel and blotting membrane are correctly orientated with respect to the anode.</li><li>• Check that excess temperatures are not reached during electroblotting producing bubbles, or gel/membrane distortion, etc.</li></ul>
<b>1b.</b> Protein degradation on storage of blots prior to detection	<b>1b.</b> Use fresh blots.

**Problem: No signal, *continued***

<b>Possible causes</b>	<b>Remedies</b>
<b>1c.</b> No retention of proteins on membranes	<b>1c.</b> Assess no transfer of proteins during blotting as 1a). Use fresh supply of membrane to ensure proper hydration.
<b>1d.</b> Detection system	<b>1d.</b> Check that the detection reagents are being stored correctly and used as recommended.  Check that the detection reagents are working: pre-mix small quantities of detection reagents 1 and 2 (0.5 ml each) and in the dark add 1 $\mu$ l anti pTyr-HRP. Visible blue light should be produced.

**Problem: Weak signal**

<b>Possible causes</b>	<b>Remedies</b>
<b>2a.</b> See 1a	<b>2a.</b> See 1
<b>2b.</b> Insufficient protein loaded on gel	<b>2b.</b> Load more protein on gel. Increase the concentration and/or incubation time of the anti pTyr- HRP.
<b>2c.</b> Inhibition of antibody binding by high salt levels	<b>2c.</b> Use the buffer recommended in the protocol.
<b>2d.</b> Removal of phosphate groups on tyrosine residues	<b>2d.</b> Use phosphatase inhibitors in the lysis buffer unless lysate is prepared and run immediately on the gel.

**Problem: Weak signal, *continued***

**Possible causes**

**Remedies**

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**2e.** Low level of signal

**2e.** Expose film for an extended period (1–2 hours). Pre-flashing the film will increase its sensitivity to the signal and linearise its response. This does, however, require care as increased backgrounds may result. Pre-flashing involves hypersensitising the film just before use by pre-exposure to a short flash of light (approximately 1 msec). Conventional photographic flash units are suitable when attenuated with a diffuser and Kodak™ Wratten™ 6B filter, to give a flash of the required intensity to increase the 540 nm absorbance of the developed film to 0.15 above that of the unexposed film. Poor protein transfer on to membrane.

**Problem: Excessive diffuse signal**

<b>Possible causes</b>	<b>Remedies</b>
<b>3a.</b> Overloading of protein.	<b>3a.</b> Load less protein on gel.
<b>3b.</b> Improper gel conditions	<b>3b.</b> Optimise gel, electrophoresis and blotting conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• increase acrylamide concentration of gel</li><li>• check gel and buffer recipes</li><li>• check that no bubbles interfere with transfer from gel to membrane.</li></ul>

**Problem: Uneven/spotted blot**

<b>Possible causes</b>	<b>Remedies</b>
<b>4a.</b> Improper blotting technique	<b>4a.</b> See 1
<b>4b.</b> Unevenly hydrated membrane	<b>4b.</b> Use new/fresh membranes. Make sure that the membrane is fully covered and wetted during incubations.
<b>4c.</b> Fingerprints and/or keratin contamination	<b>4c.</b> Avoid touching membrane. Use gloves and blunt forceps.

## Problem: High backgrounds

Possible causes	Remedies
<b>5a.</b> Contaminated blotting equipment	<b>5a.</b> Clean or replace equipment.
<b>5b.</b> Contaminated buffers	<b>5b.</b> Ensure all buffers are freshly prepared and filtered.
<b>5c.</b> Inadequate blocking	<b>5c.</b> Check that blocking solution has been made up properly. Use a freshly prepared solution of blocking agent.
<b>5d.</b> Problems with membranes	<b>5d.</b> Check that membranes are completely immersed in all solutions especially during washing, and that membranes hydrate thoroughly.  Use a fresh supply of membranes.  Use high quality membranes: Hybond PVDF or Hybond ECL are recommended  Damage to the membrane can cause non-specific binding of the detection reagents. Handle blots carefully with gloved hands and blunt non-serrated forceps.  Use clean forceps to handle blots after washing.
<b>5e.</b> Detection reagents	<b>5e.</b> Rewash blots twice for 10 minutes in wash buffer and repeat detection steps.  Excess detection reagents in blots. Drain well by absorbing the excess on tissuepaper before placing blots in film cassettes.

**Problem: High backgrounds** *continued*

<b>Possible causes</b>	<b>Remedies</b>
<b>5f.</b> Inadequate washing	<b>5f.</b> Increase wash times and volumes of wash buffer.  Add Tween 20 to reagents if not already added.  Increase concentration of Tween 20 in the blocking solution.
<b>5g.</b> Over exposure	<b>5g.</b> Expose the film for a minimum period (an initial 1 minute exposure may be all that is required).  Leave blots in the cassette for 5–10 minutes before re-exposing to film.

## 10. Related products

<b>ECL glycoprotein detection module</b> (sufficient for 25 8 x 10 cm membrane labellings or 50 solution labellings)	RPN2190
<b>ECL protein biotinylation module</b> (sufficient for 25 8 x 10 cm membrane labellings or 5 x 2.5 mg solution labellings)	RPN2202
<b>ECL protein biotinylation system</b> (contains RPN 2202 and RPN 2209)	RPN2203
<b>ECL Western blotting detection reagents</b> Sufficient for 4000 cm <sup>2</sup> membrane	RPN2106
Sufficient for 2000 cm <sup>2</sup> membrane	RPN2209
Sufficient for 1000 cm <sup>2</sup> membrane	RPN2109
<b>ECL Western blotting analysis system</b> For the detection of either mouse or rabbit membrane bound primary antibodies. Sufficient for 1000 cm <sup>2</sup> membrane.	RPN2108
<b>ECL protein molecular weight markers</b> (molecular weight range 14 400–97 400Da)	RPN2107
<b>ECL protein molecular weight markers</b> with streptavidin-horseradish peroxidase and blocking reagent	RPN2280
<b>Rainbow™ Molecular Weight Markers, Low-range</b> (molecular weight range 2350–46 000Da)	RPN755
<b>Rainbow Molecular Weight Markers, high-range</b> (molecular weight range 14 300–220 000Da)	RPN756
<b>Rainbow Molecular Weight Markers, Full-range</b> (molecular weight range 10 000–250 000)	RPN800

<b>ELC DualVue Western Blotting Markers</b> (molecular weight range 15 000–150 000)		RPN810
<b>Streptavidin-horseradish peroxidase conjugate</b>		RPN1231
<b>Protease Inhibitor Mix</b>		80-6501-23
<b>Horseradish peroxidase-labelled second antibody conjugates</b>		
Mouse Ig, HRP-linked whole antibody (from sheep)		NA931
Rabbit Ig, HRP-linked whole antibody (from donkey)		NA934
Rat Ig, HRP-linked whole antibody (from sheep)		NA932
Human Ig, HRP-linked whole antibody (from sheep)		NA933
<b>Hybond ECL</b>		
High quality nitrocellulose membrane, 20 x 20 cm, 10 sheets		RPN2020D
<b>Hybond PVDF</b>		
Pack of 10 PVDF membranes	20 x 20 cm	RPN2020P
Roll of PVDF membrane	20 cm x 3 m	RPN203P
<b>Hyperfilm ECL</b>		
Pack of 25 films	18 x 24 cm	RPN2103
	30 x 40 cm	RPN2104
	10 x 12 in	RPN1681
	5 x 7 in	RPN1674
<b>ECL mini-camera</b>		RPN2069
<b>Sensitize™ pre-flash unit</b>		RPN 2051
<b>Hypercassette™</b>		
	18 x 24 cm	RPN1642
	30 x 40 cm	RPN1644
	5 x 7 in	RPN1648

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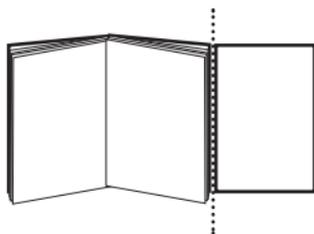
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GE imagination at work

The next two pages are a  
protocol card.  
Please add to the back page as a  
tear off addition.



Amersham

ECL phosphorylation detection system

Product protocol card

RPN2220/RPN2221

### Critical parameters

- The use of Tris buffered saline rather than phosphate buffered saline is recommended for maximum sensitivity.
- Use of milk based blocks should be avoided as they may cause high backgrounds due to their content of tyrosine phosphorylated proteins.
- 0.1% Tween™ 20 is recommended in blocking, antibody and wash buffers to avoid high backgrounds.
- The anti-phosphotyrosine-HRP conjugate may be initially viscous upon removal from the freezer. Pipetting accuracy may be aided by cutting off the end of the pipette tip.



**Warning: For research use only.**  
Not recommended or intended for diagnosis of disease in humans or animals. Do not use internally or externally in humans or animals.

RPN2220PC Rev C 2006

1. Electrophoresis and blotting	2. Blocking	3. Anti-pTyr-HRP	4. Washing	5. Detection & Exposure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usual electrophoresis and blotting procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immerse membrane in 1% blocking reagent in TBS-T</li> <li>• Incubate for 1 hour at room temperature on an orbital shaker.</li> <li>• Rinse briefly in TBS-T</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dilute the anti-pTyr HRP 1:10,000 in TBS-T</li> <li>• Immerse the membrane in the antibody</li> <li>• Incubate for 1 hour at room temperature on an orbital shaker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBS-T</li> <li>• 1 x 15 minutes</li> <li>• 2 x 5 minutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mix equal volumes of detection reagents 1 and 2</li> <li>• Incubate for 1 minute</li> <li>• Drain excess reagent, cover with SaranWrap™</li> <li>• Immediately expose to film for 1 minute</li> <li>• Use result to define an acceptable exposure time.</li> </ul>

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