Fluorescence Sample Mounting Media

Jennifer Waters, Ph.D.
Microscopy Director, Harvard Medical School

20mM (final concentration) Tris pH 8.0 (higher pH is best for preserving fluorescence of most fluorophores)
0.5% N-propyl gallate (available from Sigma, prevents photobleaching)
50-90% Glycerol
Seal coverslip onto slide with nail polish
Store mounting media at 4ºC; Store slides at 4º or -20ºC

The higher the glycerol concentration, the better the fluorescence image but the worse the DIC (Nomarski) image. If you are doing fluorescence only, 90% glycerol will give you the brightest and highest resolution image. If you need to take a DIC image as well, use 50% glycerol.

You will need to warm the solution to 37ºC and vortex to get it to go into solution.

Use ONLY about 6-8ul of mounting media per 18mm coverslip. The solution should slowly spread to the edges after you place the coverslip onto the media. If you add too much it will leak out the sides and prevent the nail polish from sealing the coverslip to the slide. If some solution does leak out the slides, carefully wick it away with a kimwipe or Whatman paper. Unlike some commercially available mounting medias, this media will not harden over time, so good sealing with nail polish is needed to preventing the slides from drying out.