

and half times for type A and reduced by 4 times for type B. The technique involves tedious and time-consuming procedure and the need for other accessory reagents. This spray reagent could also be ideal for confirming the identity of type A and B trichothecenes but cannot be put to use for routine analysis.

Chromotropic acid spray reagent gave purple colour, visible to the naked eye against a mauve background for T-2 toxin and brown for Diacetoxyscirpenol. The type B trichothecenes did not respond to this reagent since no colour/fluorescence was seen. Moreover, the differentiation of the spot from the background requires experience for regular handling.

Phloroglucinol spray reagent was reported to react with the allyl groups of the 12,13 epoxy D-9-trichothec nucleus giving a pink coloured spot<sup>8</sup>. The pink colour was specific for all trichothecenes with epoxy groups. All the five trichothecenes gave a pink colour making it difficult to differentiate between the trichothecenes. Further, the interference by the contaminating pigments which mimic the trichothecenes in fluorescence could not be eliminated.

Aluminium chloride spray reagent was found to be specific for type B trichothecenes namely Deoxynivalenol and nivalenol. A characteristic bluish fluorescence was observed<sup>4</sup>. However, the limit of detection was 0.1 µg/spot. The heating of the plate

after spraying partially helped in charring the pigments in the spiked sample, while the toxins were more fluorescent. The reagent was ideal for routine analysis of type B trichothecenes.

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## NEWS

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### CANCER IS GENETIC

Cancer, the most dreaded disease that has afflicted mankind for centuries, still eludes an effective treatment. Huge sums are spent and thousands of scientists are engaged in the quest to find an effective remedy to combat this proliferating malignancy. Soviet scientists have broken new grounds in this field. The discovery of oncogenes, and the fact that oncogenes are present in any normal healthy cell, was a brilliant find. This

amazing research led to the conclusion that the root cause of any malignant formation of a cell is due to the presence of oncogenes in cancer virus which transmits into the genes of a healthy cell, thus forever changing its hereditary character. (*Soviet Features*, Vol. XXVI, No. 41, April 7, 1987; Information Department, USSR Embassy in India, P.B. 241, 25 Barakhamba Road, New Delhi 110 001.)