

An autoradiograph is an image on an x-ray film or nuclear emulsion produced by the pattern of decay emissions (e.g., beta particles or gamma rays) from a distribution of a radioactive substance. Alternatively, the autoradiograph is also available as a digital image (digital autoradiography), due to the recent development of scintillation gas detectors or rare earth phosphorimaging systems.

The film or emulsion is apposed to the labeled tissue section to obtain the autoradiograph (also called an autoradiogram). The auto- prefix indicates that the radioactive substance is within the sample, as distinguished from the case of historadiography or microradiography, in which the sample is marked using an external source. Some autoradiographs can be examined microscopically for localization of silver grains (such as on the interiors or exteriors of cells or organelles) in which the process is termed micro-autoradiography. For example, micro-autoradiography was used to examine whether atrazine was being metabolized by the hornwort plant or by epiphytic microorganisms in the biofilm layer surrounding the plant.

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