

The stain pontamine sky blue (PSB) has been shown to reduce background autofluorescence in catecholamine fluorescence and immunofluorescence histochemical preparations. Using PSB as a counterstain on whole-mount stretch preparations of human mesenteric blood vessels, a medium dense noradrenergic nerve plexus is clearly revealed, which previously had been only partially visible because of background autofluorescence. Image analysis of nerve densities in whole-mount stretch preparations of guinea-pig arteries containing noradrenergic, substance P-, and vasoactive intestinal polypeptide (VIP)-positive nerve plexuses shows that PSB staining does not alter the specific neuronal fluorescence and that it improves image definition.

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