



Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Column

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Product Manual

for

Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Column

Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4 μ m Guard Column, 4 x 30 mm (P/N 076035)

Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4 μ m Guard Column, 2 x 30 mm (P/N 076037)

Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4 μ m Capillary Guard Column, 0.4 x 35 mm (P/N 076033)

Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Analytical Column, 4 x 150 mm (P/N 076034)

Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Analytical Column, 2 x 150 mm (P/N 076036)

Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Capillary Column, 0.4 x 150 mm (P/N 082314)

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Revision 02, June, 2014, typo corrections.

Revision 03, January, 2018, Added “Fast” to the product name.

Safety and Special Notices

Make sure you follow the precautionary statements presented in this guide. The safety and other special notices appear in boxes.

Safety and special notices include the following:



SAFETY

Indicates a potentially hazardous situation which, if not avoided, could result in death or serious injury.



WARNING

Indicates a potentially hazardous situation which, if not avoided, could result in damage to equipment.



CAUTION

Indicates a potentially hazardous situation which, if not avoided, may result in minor or moderate injury. Also used to identify a situation or practice that may seriously damage the instrument, but will not cause injury.



NOTE

Indicates information of general interest.

IMPORTANT

Highlights information necessary to prevent damage to software, loss of data, or invalid test results; or might contain information that is critical for optimal performance of the system.

Tip

Highlights helpful information that can make a task easier.

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1. Introduction

The Dionex™ IonPac™ AS18-Fast-4µm Column in combination with the Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4µm Guard Column is designed for the analysis of inorganic anions including fluoride, chloride, nitrite, bromide, nitrate, sulfate, and phosphate in less than 10 minutes using an isocratic or gradient hydroxide eluent delivered with an Eluent Generator. In comparison to the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast column, the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4µm column exhibits higher efficiency while maintaining the same selectivity. This is due to the reduced particle size of the 4µm column. Using an isocratic or gradient hydroxide eluent, the inorganic anions can be easily separated in a variety of sample matrices including drinking water, ground water, waste water, process streams, and scrubber solutions. The Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4µm column is compatible with pH 0-14 eluents and eluents containing organic solvents from 0 to 100% in concentration. The Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4µm column can be used with any suppressible ionic eluent that does not exceed the capacity of the suppressor. The Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4µm column has nominal efficiency of at least 10,000 plates/column for bromide using standard operating conditions. The maximum operating pressure, including system is 5,000 psi. The Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4µm column series (0.4 x 150 mm, 4 x 150 mm and 2 x 150 mm) offers the same selectivity as the Dionex IonPac AS18 columns, but with a reduced length of 150 mm. These columns are designed for fast separation of 7 common anions in significantly less time.

One of the unique features of the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4µm is fast equilibration time in gradient applications from the last eluent (high ionic strength) to the first eluent (low ionic strength). This is due to the reduced length of 150 mm in comparison to the Dionex IonPac 250 mm columns.

Table 1 **Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4µm/Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4µm Packing Specifications**

Column	Particle Diameter, µm	Substrate X-linking, %	Latex Diameter, nm	Column Capacity, µeq/column	Functional Group	Hydrophobicity
Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4µm Analytical column, 4 x 150 mm	4	55	65	174	Alkanol quaternary ammonium	Low
Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4µm Guard column, 4 x 30 mm	6	55	65	4.2	Alkanol quaternary ammonium	Low
Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4µm Analytical column, 2 x 150 mm	4	55	65	43.5	Alkanol quaternary ammonium	Low
Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4µm Guard column, 2 x 30 mm	6	55	65	1.05	Alkanol quaternary ammonium	Low
Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4µm Capillary Column, 0.4 x 150 mm	4	55	65	1.74	Alkanol quaternary ammonium	Low
Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4µm Capillary Guard column, 0.4 x 35 mm	6	55	65	0.042	Alkanol quaternary ammonium	Low

Analytical Column resin composition: supermacroporous polyvinylbenzyl ammonium polymer cross-linked with divinylbenzene.
Guard Column resin composition: microporous polyvinylbenzyl ammonium polymer cross-linked with divinylbenzene

Table 2 **Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m/Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4 μ m Operating Parameters**

Column	Typical Back Pressure psi (MPa ^a), 30°C ^b	Standard Flow Rate, mL/min	Maximum Flow Rate, mL/min ^c
Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4μm 4 mm Analytical column	~ 2850 (19.65)	1.00	1.50
Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4μm 4 mm Guard column	~ 250 (1.72)	1.00	1.50
Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4μm and AG18-Fast-4μm 4 mm columns	~ 3100 (21.37)	1.00	1.50
Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4μm 2 mm Analytical column	~ 2330 (16.06)	0.25	0.38
Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4μm 2 mm Guard column	~ 170 (1.17)	0.25	0.38
Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4μm and AG18-Fast-4μm 2 mm columns	~ 2500 (17.24)	0.25	0.38
Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4μm 0.4 mm Capillary column	~ 1,200 (8.27)	0.010	0.030
Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4μm 0.4 mm Capillary Guard column	~ 300 (2.07)	0.010	0.030
Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4μm and AG18-Fast-4μm 0.4 mm columns	~ 1,500 (10.34)	0.010	0.030

^a Note: 1MPa = 145.04 psi

^b Total backpressure at standard flow rates

^c In all cases, flow rate should not result in pressures over 5,000 psi



NOTE

*For assistance, visit Unity Lab Services online at www.unitylabservices.com.
From the U.S., call the Customer Care Center for Dionex Products at 1-800-346-6390.
Outside the U.S., call the nearest Thermo Fisher Scientific office.*

2. Installation



NOTE

Read the instrument manuals. This manual assumes that you are using Thermo Scientific Dionex instrumentation and are familiar with the installation and operation of the Thermo Scientific Dionex Ion Chromatograph (IC). If you do not understand the operation of the system, take the time to familiarize yourself with the various system components before beginning an analysis.

The proper configuration of an Ion Chromatography System (ICS) is dependent on column format. Although they can typically use the same system, the use of a 2 mm or 4 mm column requires different set up to ensure maximum performance. The selected format and analysis type will affect the type of pump recommended. A gradient pump is designed to blend and pump isocratic, linear, or gradient mixtures of up to four mobile phase components at precisely controlled flow rates. An isocratic pump is for applications not requiring gradient or multi-eluent proportioning capabilities. For high pressure applications, the use of high pressure fittings is recommended.

A Dionex Capillary IC system should be used for capillary applications and the use of precut tubing and Dionex high pressure fittings is required for optimum performance. Please refer to the instrument manual to ensure column and component installation is correct and all fittings are made correctly.

2.1 The Thermo Scientific Dionex High Pressure Ion Chromatography Systems

A minimum of a Dionex High Pressure Ion Chromatography System (HPIC) is recommended when running Dionex IonPac 4µm columns due to the higher backpressures generated at typical operational flow rates. Systems should have the capability to operate up to at least 5000 psi. Standard IC systems, with an upper limit of 3000 psi, are insufficient for proper column operation. All systems should allow 100% metal-free operation to prevent column damage. This includes pump heads and all flow paths.



WARNING

Care should always be taken not to exceed the maximum operating pressure of the system component. ICS systems with lower backpressure capabilities are not recommended as reduced flow rates may result in loss of performance.



NOTE

Contact your local representative for information on how to customize your system to your application needs.



CAUTION

Dionex ICS 5000 capillary systems shipped before October 2011 may require the installation of a high pressure upgrade kit to enable operation at 5000 psi. Please contact your local representative or call the Customer Care Center for Dionex Products at 1-800-346-6390 from inside the US for more information.

2.2 System Requirements

The Dionex IonPac Columns are designed to run on Dionex Ion Chromatographs equipped with suppressed conductivity detection. We recommend the use of ferrules and fittings rated with a pressure of >5000 psi. The use of precut tubing, complete with high pressure fitting and ferrules, is recommended for easier installation, and required for capillary systems.

2.2.1 System Void Volume

When using 2 mm columns, it is particularly important to minimize system void volume. The system void volume should be scaled down to at least 1/4 of the system volume in a standard 4 mm system. For best performance, all of the tubing installed between the injection valve and detector should be 0.005" i.d. PEEK tubing. In order to reduce system backpressure at higher flow rates, 0.010" i.d. PEEK tubing may be used for connections *before* the injection valve but peak efficiency will be compromised if used for post injector connections, which may also result in decreased peak resolution. Minimize the lengths of all connecting tubing and remove all unnecessary switching valves and couplers.

With capillary systems correct tubing connections become of greater importance. Precut tubing, complete with high pressure fitting and ferrules, is required for easier installation and optimal performance. It should also be noted that due to system configuration differences, the system void volume in the capillary system will result in longer void time than observed with the analytical system at the same linear velocity. Slight modifications of the method may be required to ensure equivalent retention time and peak resolution.

2.3 Column Start-Up

The column is shipped using the sodium tetraborate as the storage solution.

Prepare the eluent shown on the Quality Assurance Report. To remove the storage solution, flush the column to waste with the QAR eluent for at least 30 minutes before attaching the column outlet to the suppressor. Install the column in the column module and test the column performance under the conditions described in the QAR. Continue making injections of the test standard until consecutive injections of the standard give reproducible retention times. Equilibration is complete when consecutive injections of the standard give reproducible retention times.

IMPORTANT

When making any tubing connections, first turn off the pump. This will avoid any slippage of the ferrule under high pressure conditions. For capillary connections, inject water into the cavities of the fluidic system using a syringe or a micropipette with the flow off before joining two components together. This will prevent air from entering the system and result in a faster equilibration

2.4 Installation of the Capillary Column

Correct installation of the capillary column is vital for good column performance. Please refer to the Instrument Manual for instructions. A quick guide can be found in [Section 8.2](#), Installation of the Capillary Column.

2.5 Eluents

2.5.1 Eluent Generation

It is recommended that Dionex IonPac columns are used with Thermo Scientific Dionex HPIC Systems equipped with a Dionex Eluent Generator (Dionex EG). The use of eluent generation provides a more stable baseline, improved performance and increased reproducibility over the use of manually prepared eluents.

The Dionex Eluent Generator is used to automatically produce eluents either isocratically or as gradients from deionized water. Please refer to the Dionex EG manual for information on the operation of the Dionex eluent generators.



Only Dionex EG Cartridges (Dionex EGCs) rated for 5,000 psi or higher should be used when running Dionex IonPac 4µm columns due to the higher backpressures generated at typical operational flow rates.

2.6 Dionex IonPac Guard Columns

A Dionex IonPac Guard Column is normally used with the Dionex IonPac Analytical Column. A guard is placed in front of the analytical column to prevent sample contaminants from damaging the analytical column. It is easier to clean or replace the guard column than it is the analytical column. Placing a guard column in front of the analytical column will cause retention times to increase by approximately 3% under isocratic test conditions. Replacing the guard column at the first sign of peak efficiency loss or decreased retention time will prolong the life of the analytical column.

2.7 Dionex Trap Columns

For gradient operation a Dionex Trap column is installed between the gradient pump and the injection valve and takes the place of the gradient mixer if present. The trap column is filled with high capacity ion exchange resin which helps to minimize the baseline shift caused by increasing ionic contaminants as the eluent ionic strength increases over the course of gradient analysis. Trap columns are available for both anion and cation applications.

2.7.1 Dionex Continuously Regenerated Trap Columns (CR-TC) for Use with Dionex EG Cartridges (Dionex EGC)

For Dionex IonPac applications using a Dionex EGC, a Dionex CR-TC, Continuously Regenerated Trap Column should be installed at the Dionex EGC eluent outlet to remove trace level ionic contaminants from the carrier deionized water. See the Dionex CR-TC Product Manuals for instructions. As an alternative to a Dionex CR-TC, for 2 mm and 4 mm columns, the Dionex ATC-HC Trap Column (anion only) should be installed between the pump outlet and the inlet of the Dionex EGC to remove anionic contaminants from the carrier deionized water. See the Dionex ATC-HC Product Manual for instructions.



CAUTION

Only trap columns rated for 5,000 psi pressure should be used with when running Dionex IonPac 4µm columns due to the higher backpressures generated at typical operational flow rates.

2.8 Sample Concentrators

The function of a concentrator column is to strip ions of interest from a measured volume of a relatively clean aqueous sample matrix. This process “concentrates” the desired analyte species onto the concentrator column, lowering detection limits by 2-5 orders of magnitude. The concentrator column is used in lieu of the sample loop at the start of the analysis.

Dionex Concentrator columns or the Dionex IonPac Guard Column can be used for trace anion concentration work with Dionex IonPac columns. A pump is used to load the sample onto the concentrator column in the OPPOSITE direction of the eluent flow. Once concentration is complete the eluent flow is then directed through the concentrator to the analytical column. When using concentration techniques, care should be taken not to overload the concentrator column by concentrating an excessive amount of sample. If an excessive amount of sample is used inaccurate results may be obtained. It is possible during the concentration step for the stronger binding polyvalent ions to elute the weakly retained ions from the concentrator column. For more detailed information on sample concentration techniques for high sensitivity work and a detailed discussion of concentration techniques refer to the appropriate concentrator manual for your application.



CAUTION

Dionex IonPac Concentrator Columns are designed for use with specific eluent systems. Use only concentrator columns designed for the eluent system you are using.

3. Operation

3.1 General Operating Conditions

The following conditions should be used as a starting point towards method development.

Table 3 General Operating Conditions for the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Column

Sample Volume:	2 mm: 2.5 μ L Loop 4 mm: 10 μ L Loop 0.4 mm: 0.4 μ L Loop
Column:	2 mm: Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m 2 mm Analytical Column + Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4 μ m 2 mm Guard Column 4 mm: Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m 4 mm Analytical Column + Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4 μ m 4 mm Guard Column 0.4 mm: Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m 0.4 mm Capillary Column + Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4 μ m 0.4 mm Capillary Guard Column
Eluent:	23 mM KOH
Eluent Source:	2 mm and 4 mm: Dionex EGC 500 KOH cartridge 0.4 mm: Dionex EGC-KOH (Capillary) cartridge
Eluent Flow Rate:	2 mm: 0.25 mL/min 4 mm: 1.0 mL/min 0.4 mm: 10 μ L/min
SRS/CES Suppressor:	2 mm and 4 mm: Dionex Anion Self-Regenerating Suppressor, Dionex ASRS 300 0.4 mm: Dionex Anion Capillary Electrolytic Suppressor, Dionex ACES 300
or MMS Suppressor:	AutoSuppression Recycle Mode Dionex Anion MicroMembrane Suppressor, Dionex AMMS 300 (2 or 4 mm only)
MMS Regenerant:	50 mN H ₂ SO ₄
Expected Background Conductivity:	< 3 μ S
Long-term Storage Solution (> 1 week):	100 mM Sodium Borate
Short-term Storage Solution (< 1 week):	Eluent



NOTE

*For assistance, visit Unity Lab Services online at www.unitylabservices.com.
From the U.S., call the Customer Care Center for Dionex Products at 1-800-346-6390.
Outside the U.S., call the nearest Thermo Fisher Scientific office.*

3.2 General Operational Precautions

The following precautions should always be adhered to when using Dionex IonPac columns.

- Samples and manually prepared eluents should always be filtered and degassed to protect the system and column from particulates and ensure a stable background.
- Eluents and samples used should be used within the allowable limits for the column.
- Do not exceed the operational pressure of the system.
- Take care not to exceed the maximum operational flow rate and pressure of the column. If the pressure approached the maximum allowed pressure, reduce the operational flow rate.

Table 4 Operational Limits for the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Columns

Eluent pH	Between 0 and 14
Sample pH	Between 0 and 14
Maximum Flow Rate for 0.4 mm Columns	30 μ L/min
Maximum Flow Rate for 2 mm Columns	0.38 mL/min
Maximum Flow Rate for 4 mm Columns	1.5 mL/min
Maximum Operating Pressure	5,000 psi (34.63MPa)

3.3 Quality Assurance Reports

Each column is qualified to ensure it meets specifications. Example copies of these Quality Assurance Reports (QARs) can be found in [Section 7](#). The QAR supplied with the column should be used as a guide to ensure system performance.

3.4 Chemical Requirements and Solvent Compatibility

Chemical purity can influence separation performance. Only chemicals of the highest purity should be used. Refer to [Section 6.4](#), Chemical Purity Requirements for more details.

Some solvents may be used for cleaning or eluent modification.



NOTE

Adding solvent to the aqueous eluent can reduce the peak response by up to half due to increased eluent viscosity, decreased ionization of organic acids and lower peak efficiencies. Therefore, only use solvent in the eluent when needed for improved resolution of analytes of interest.

Table 5 Typical HPLC Solvents for Cleaning and Use with Dionex IonPac Columns

Solvent	Maximum Operating Concentration
Acetonitrile	100%
Methanol	100%
2-Propanol	100%
Tetrahydrofuran	20%*

*Higher concentrations may only be used for limited duration applications such as column clean-up at pressures < 4000 psi.



The Dionex SRS and the Dionex CES must be operated in the AutoSuppression External Water Mode when using eluents containing organic solvents. Refer to the Suppressor Product Manual for operation limitations in the electrolytic mode (power on).

3.5 Eluent Preparation

The Dionex Eluent Generator is recommended for use with Dionex IonPac columns.

When preparing eluents manually ensure all chemicals and water are of the highest purity.

3.5.1 Manually Prepared Eluents

Eluents should be stored in plastic bottles under a helium atmosphere to ensure contamination free operation and proper pump performance (nitrogen can be used if eluents do not contain solvents). Contamination from carbon dioxide when basic eluents are exposed to the air can cause performance variability such as retention time shifts.

3.5.2 Making Eluents that Contain Solvents

Mixing solvents with water should be done on a volume to volume basis. For example, if a procedure requires an eluent of 40% acetonitrile, prepare the eluent by adding 400 mL of acetonitrile to an eluent reservoir. Then add 600 mL of deionized water or eluent concentrate to the acetonitrile in the reservoir. Using this procedure to mix solvents with water will ensure that a consistent true volume/volume eluent is obtained. Premixing water with solvent will minimize the possibility of outgassing.



When purging or degassing eluents containing solvents, do not purge or degas the eluent excessively since it is possible that a volatile solvent will evaporate or can be “boiled” off from the solution under reduced pressure.



Always degas and store all eluents in plastic eluent bottles pressurized with helium. Only helium can be used to purge and degas ionic eluents containing solvents, since nitrogen is soluble in solvent containing eluents.



NOTE

Acetonitrile (ACN) hydrolyzes to ammonia and acetate when exposed to basic solutions. To prevent eluent contamination from acetonitrile hydrolysis, always add acetonitrile to basic aqueous eluents by proportioning the acetonitrile into the basic eluent with the gradient pump. Keep the acetonitrile in a separate eluent bottle containing only acetonitrile and water.



SAFETY

Never add the acetonitrile directly to the basic carbonate or hydroxide eluent solutions.

3.6 Regenerant Preparation for the Dionex MMS

The Dionex MicroMembrane Suppressor requires the use of a regenerant solution. Refer to the product manual for operation instructions.

3.7 Recommendations for Method Development

The Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m column is designed for the determination of inorganic anions in less than ten minutes using an isocratic hydroxide eluent delivered using an Eluent Generator. Resolution of specific analytes can be further optimized if necessary by using gradient elution (see [Figure 12](#)). In any type of gradient elution system it is important to use eluents that produce a minimum shift in baseline conductivity during the run, as well as a fast equilibration time from one run to the next. Potassium hydroxide is converted to water in the suppressor, making it the preferred source of eluent. As long as the capacity of the suppressor is not exceeded, the eluent hydroxide concentration has little effect on background conductivity. For example, a gradient run could begin at 1.0 mM KOH and end at 80 mM KOH, with a resulting total baseline change of 1 to 2 μ S.

Ensure that adequate equilibration time is allowed between runs. If a downward shift in the baseline is observed during the isocratic section of the chromatogram, increase the equilibration time.

The hydrodynamic properties of the capillary column/system allows the 0.4 x 150mm capillary column to be run at elevated linear velocities compared to its analytical 4 and 2 x 150 mm counterparts. Pressure limits should be taken in to consideration when developing methods that are intended to be applied to all formats. In this case the upper flow limit of the capillary column should be considered to be 15 μ L/min, the same linear velocity as the upper limit of the 4 and 2 mm column, in order to avoid exceeding the upper pressure limit when using the standard bore and microbore columns.

You can increase the sensitivity of your system by using sample concentration techniques (see [Section 2.8](#), “Sample Concentrators”).



CAUTION

Carbon dioxide readily dissolves in dilute basic solutions, forming carbonate. Carbonate contamination of eluents can affect the retention times of the anions being analyzed. Eluents should be maintained under an inert helium atmosphere to avoid carbonate contamination.

4. Example Applications



NOTE

*For assistance, visit Unity Lab Services online at www.unitylabservices.com.
From the U.S., call the Customer Care Center for Dionex Products at 1-800-346-6390.
Outside the U.S., call the nearest Thermo Fisher Scientific office.*

The chromatograms in this section were obtained using columns that reproduced the Quality Assurance Report on optimized Ion Chromatographs. Different systems will differ slightly in performance due to slight differences in column sets, system void volumes, liquid sweep-out times of different components and laboratory temperatures. Differences in system set up will affect the final system pressure. Total observed pressures are listed in some of the applications to demonstrate the pressure ranges you may expect to see during normal operation.

Each application shown can be run on the 4 mm, 2 mm or 0.4 mm column. The eluent linear velocity should be maintained by increasing or reducing the flow rate appropriately. For example, a 4 mm application run at 1 mL/min would be run at 0.25 mL/min on a 2 mm column or 10 μ L/min on a 0.4 mm column. Note that due to backpressure restrictions, applications are transferable from analytical flow rates to capillary flow rates but applications developed at elevated capillary flow rates may not be compatible with the 2 and 4 mm formats.

4.1 Isocratic Elution With and Without a Guard

Isocratic elution of common anions on the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Column has been optimized utilizing a hydroxide eluent. By using this eluent, common inorganic anions can be used to test the performance of the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Column. The Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Analytical/Capillary Column should always be used with the Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4 μ m Guard/Capillary Guard Column. An operating temperature of 30 °C is used to ensure reproducible resolution and retention. Note that the Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4 μ m Guard/Capillary Guard column is packed with a microporous resin of proportionally lower capacity and contributes approximately 3% increase in retention time when placed in-line prior to the analytical/capillary column under isocratic test conditions.

For the sets of anions shown in the figures below, all formats exhibit the same selectivity. For demonstration purposes, the capillary column example in [Figure 3](#) shows a different set of anions under re-optimized conditions.

Figure 1 Isocratic Separation of Common Anions Using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Column (4 × 150 mm) Without and With Guard Column (4 × 30 mm)

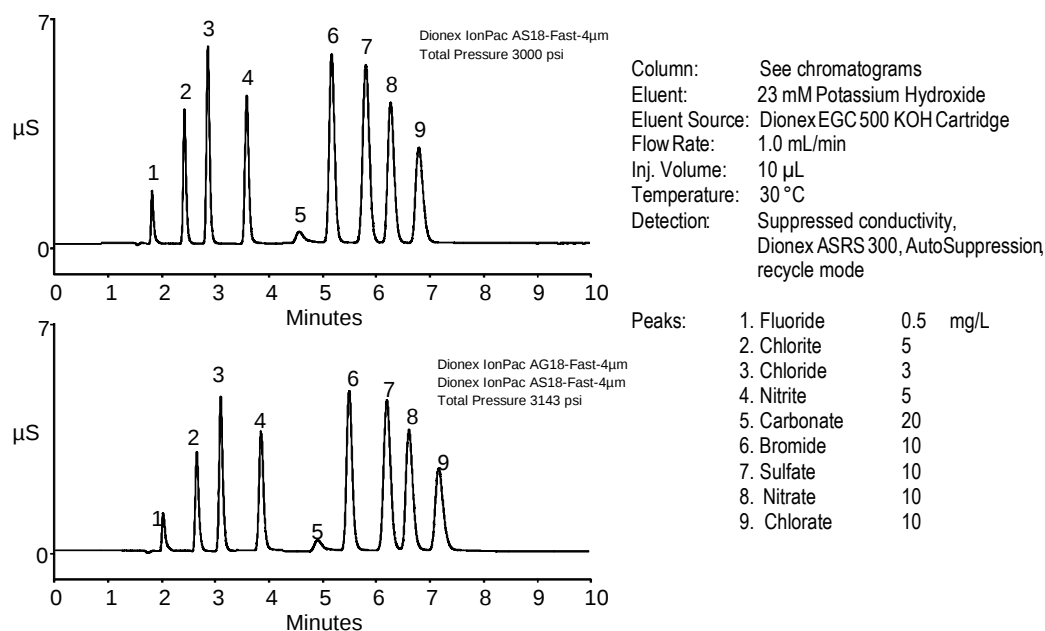


Figure 2 Isocratic Separation of Common Anions Using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Column (2 $\times$ 150 mm) Without and With Guard Column (2 $\times$ 30 mm)

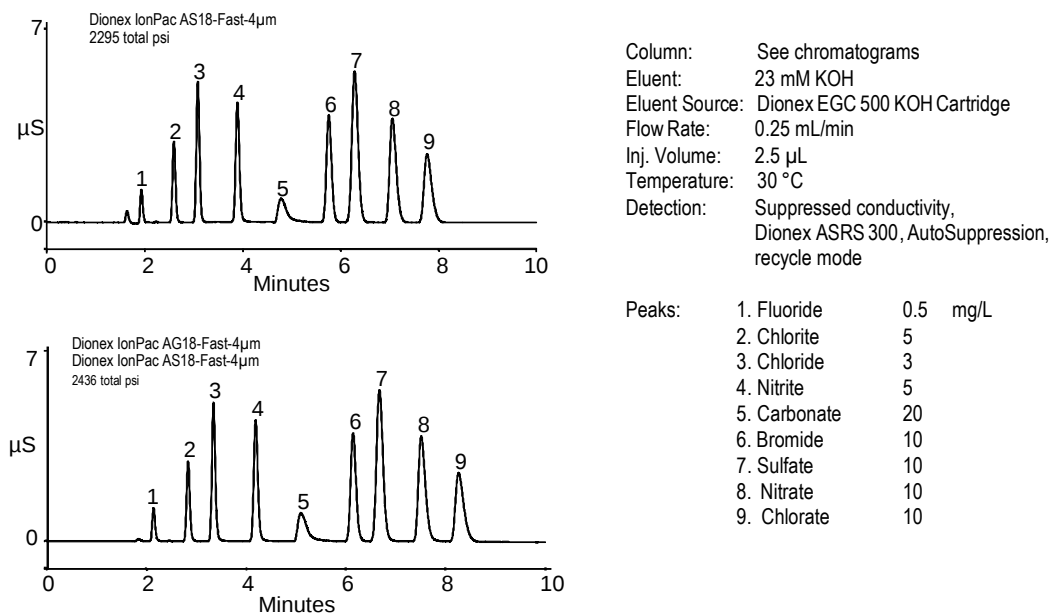
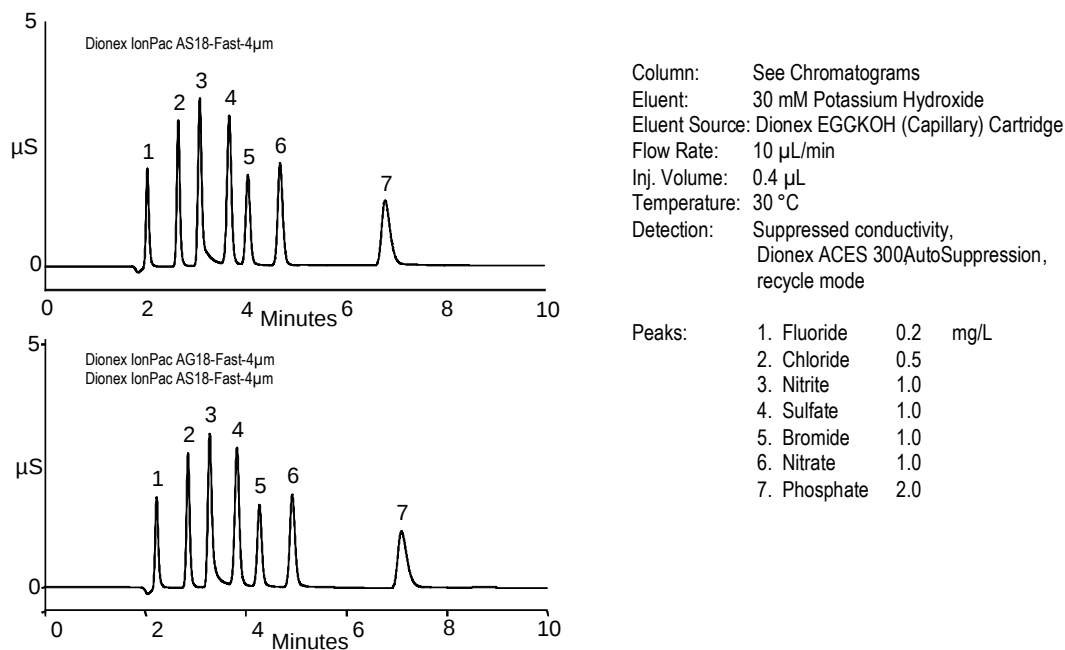


Figure 3 Isocratic Separation of Common Anions Using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m (0.4 $\times$ 150 mm) Column Without and With a Guard Column (0.4 $\times$ 35 mm)



4.2 Isocratic Elution Using Various Flow Rates

The Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m column can be run at increasingly higher flow rates to reduce analysis time. The increased efficiency of the 4 μ m packing allows for closer eluting peaks.

The hydrodynamic properties of the capillary column/system allows the 0.4 x 150 mm capillary column to be run at elevated linear velocities compared to its analytical 4 and 2 x 150 mm counterparts.

Pressure limits should be taken in to consideration when developing methods that are intended to be applied to all formats. In this case the upper flow limit of the capillary column should be considered to be 15 μ L/min, the same linear velocity as the upper limit of the 4 and 2 mm column, in order to avoid exceeding the upper pressure limit when using the standard bore and microbore columns.

Figure 4 Isocratic Separation of Common Anions Using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Column (4 x 150 mm) at Various Flow Rates

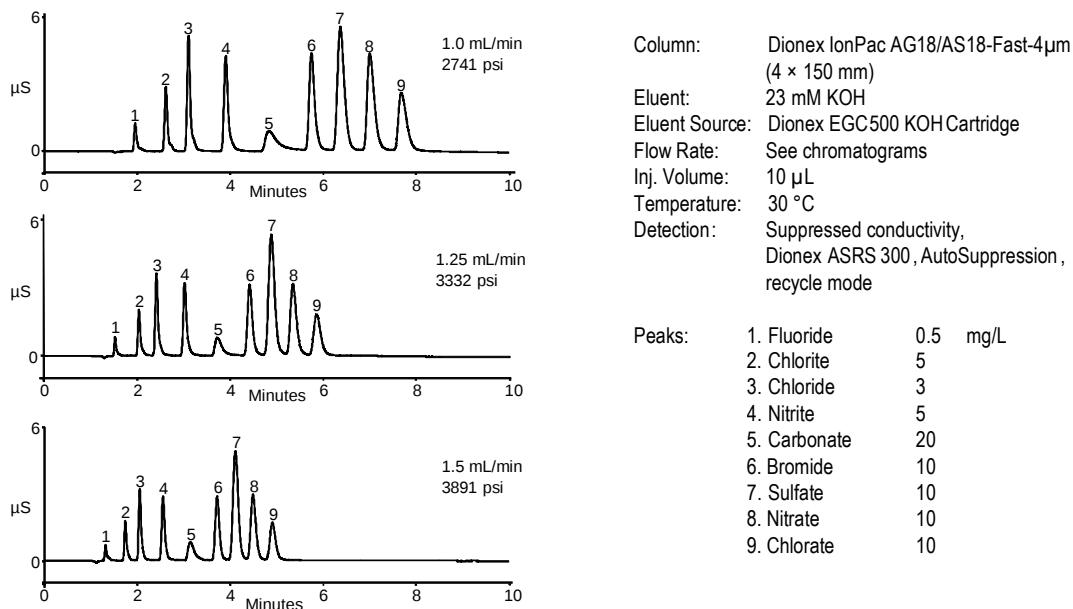


Figure 5 Isocratic Separation of Common Anions at Increasing Flow Rates Using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Column (2 $\times$ 150 mm)

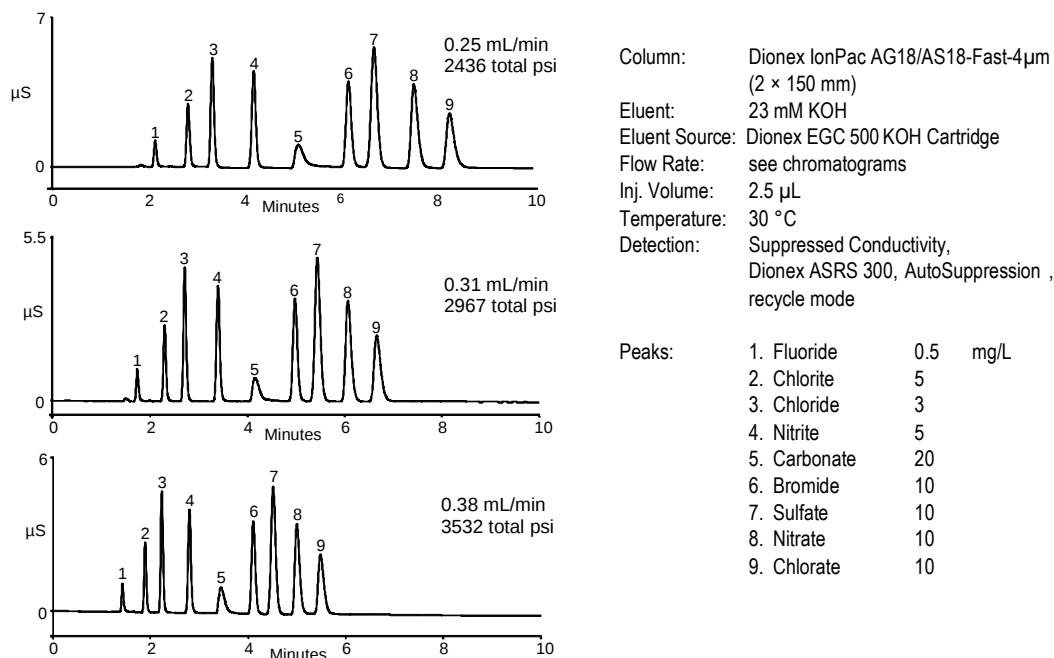
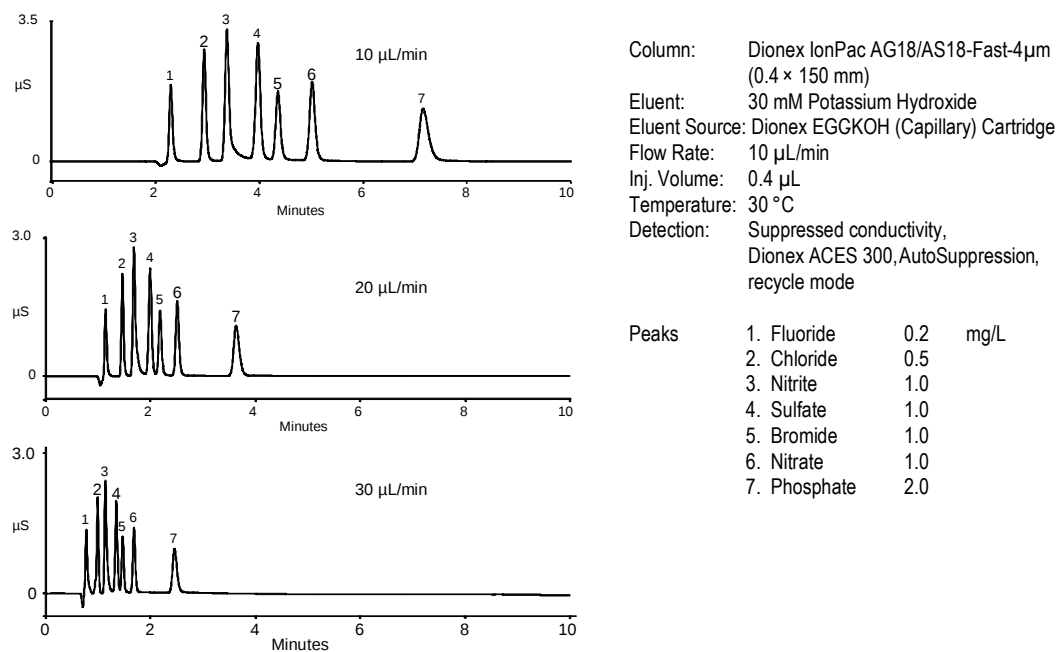


Figure 6 Isocratic Separation of Common Anions Using the IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Capillary Column at Various Flow Rates (0.4 $\times$ 150 mm)



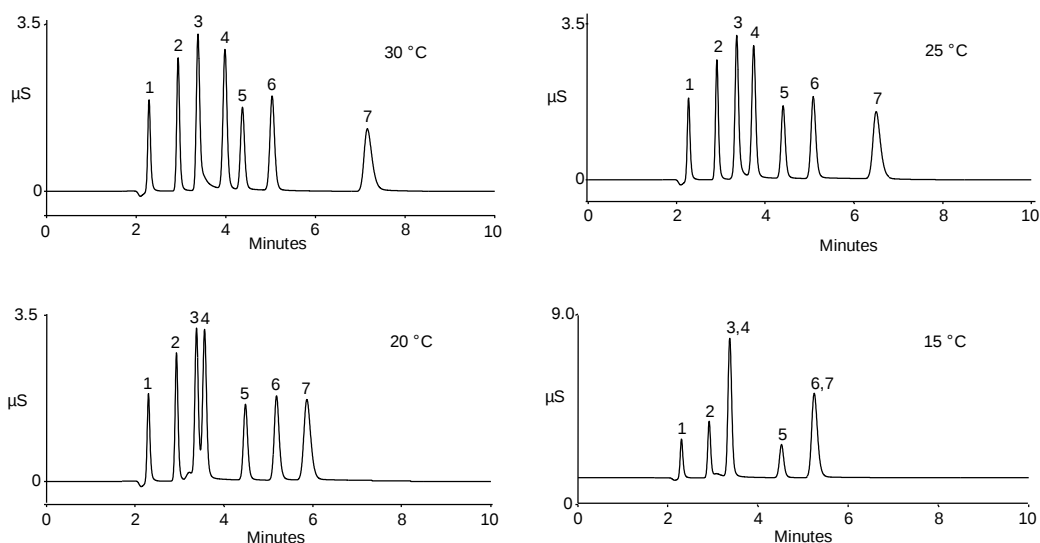
4.3 Isocratic Separation of the Common Anions at Various Temperatures

The following chromatograms show the effect of temperature on the analyte retention time when using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m capillary column under standard conditions. The seven common anions are separated using temperatures from 15 °C to 30 °C. The retention times of sulfate and phosphate are decreased at the lower temperatures while the other analytes remain at basically the same retention time from 15 °C to 30 °C.

Figure 7 Isocratic Separation of Common Anions Using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Capillary Column at Various Temperatures (0.4 x 150 mm)

Column: Dionex IonPac AG18-Fast-4 μ m/AS18-Fast-4 μ m (0.4 x 150 mm)
 Eluent: 30 mM Potassium Hydroxide
 Eluent Source: EGC-KOH (Capillary) cartridge
 Flow rate: 10 μ L/min
 Inj. Volume: 0.4 μ L
 Temperature: see chromatograms
 Detection: Suppressed conductivity, Dionex ACES 300, AutoSuppression, recycle mode

Peaks:	1. Fluoride	0.2	mg/L
	2. Chloride	0.5	
	3. Nitrite	1.0	
	4. Sulfate	1.0	
	5. Bromide	1.0	
	6. Nitrate	1.0	
	7. Phosphate	2.0	



4.4 Isocratic Separation of Municipal Drinking Water from Multiple Different Sources

The Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m column can be used to determine anions present in drinking water. The analysis of two drinking water samples using standard isocratic conditions are shown in the figures below. [Figure 8](#) shows a comparison of drinking waters from similar sources. In this case the tap water feeds the filtered drinking water. It can be seen that nitrate is removed during the filtering process.

In [Figure 9](#) the water was obtained from multiple sources at a different location to [Figure 8](#). At this sampling location there is little difference in the two water sources.

In [Figure 10](#), the location of the source is the same; however there is a notable difference in water quality. This emphasizes the need to sample at different locations. In this example the eluent is increased to 30 mM facilitating quicker elution of the analytes.

Figure 8 Isocratic Separation of Inorganic Anions in Water From Two Different Sources Using the Dionex IonPac AS18- 4 μ m Column (4 $\times$ 150 mm)

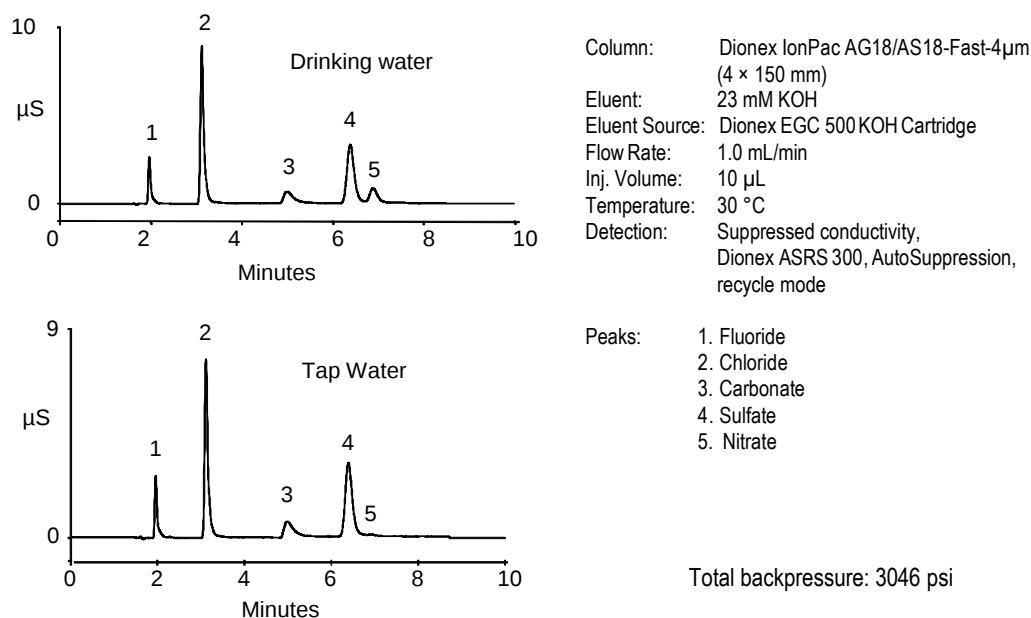


Figure 9 Isocratic Separation of Common Anions in Drinking Water and Tap Water Using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Column (2 x 150 mm)

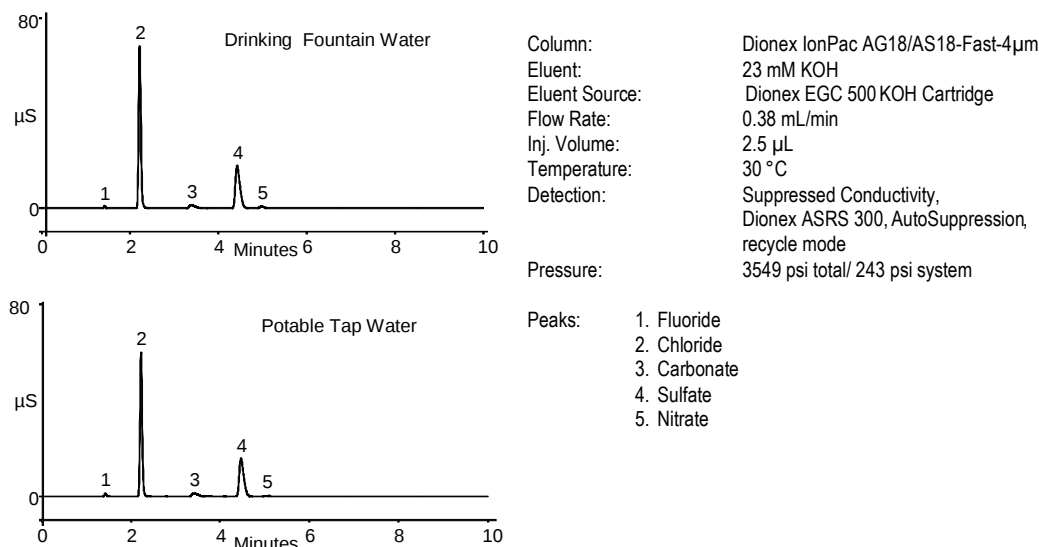
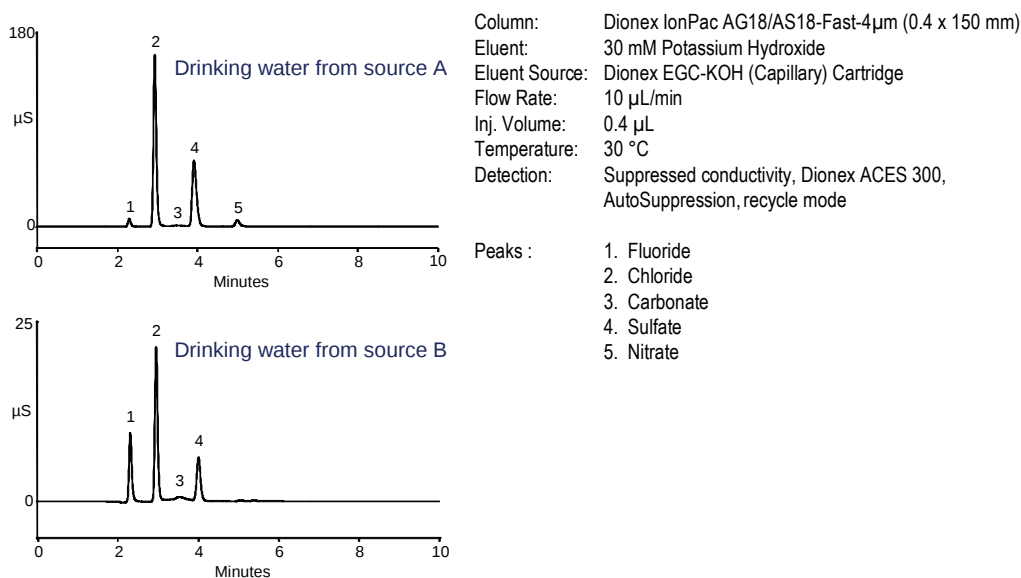


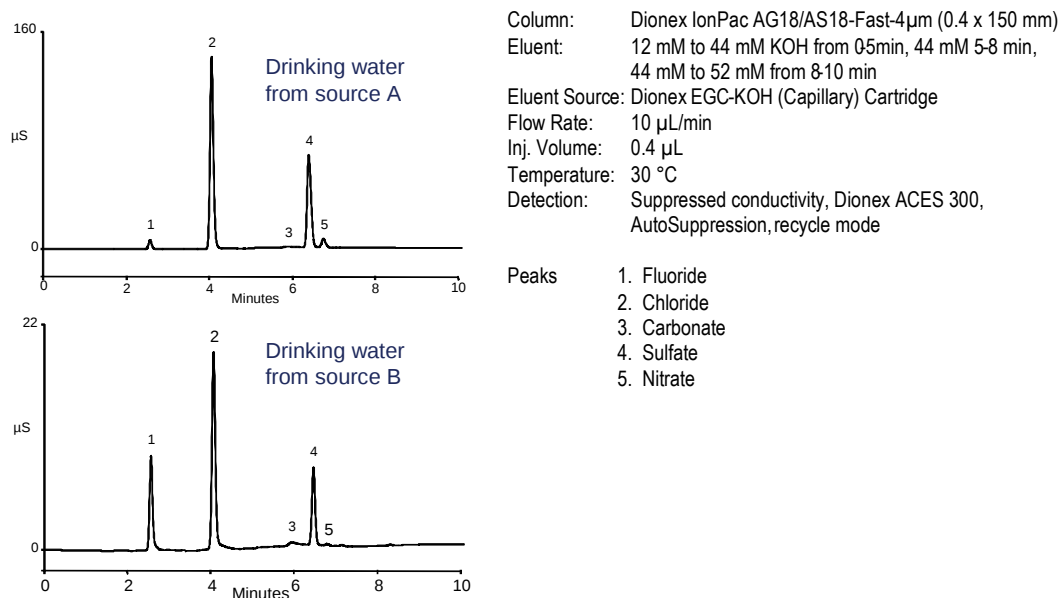
Figure 10 Isocratic Separation of Inorganic Anions in Drinking Water From Two Different Sources Using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Capillary Column (0.4 x 150 mm)



4.5 Gradient Separation of Common Anions in Drinking Water Using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Capillary Column

Figure 11 shows the analysis of two water samples (from Figure 10) separated using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Capillary Column with a gradient eluent. Notice the large difference in concentrations of analytes in these two water samples. The first sample (source A) is from a drinking fountain that is obviously contaminated, and the second sample (source B) is from the feeding tap water sample. Using a gradient run provides the advantage that fluoride can be eluted at lower concentration, moving it far away from the water dip; however, in this example, analysis times are slightly longer than with an isocratic run at 30 mM. The separation is optimized at 26 °C using the temperature controlled column compartment to ensure reproducible resolution and retention of analytes under gradient conditions.

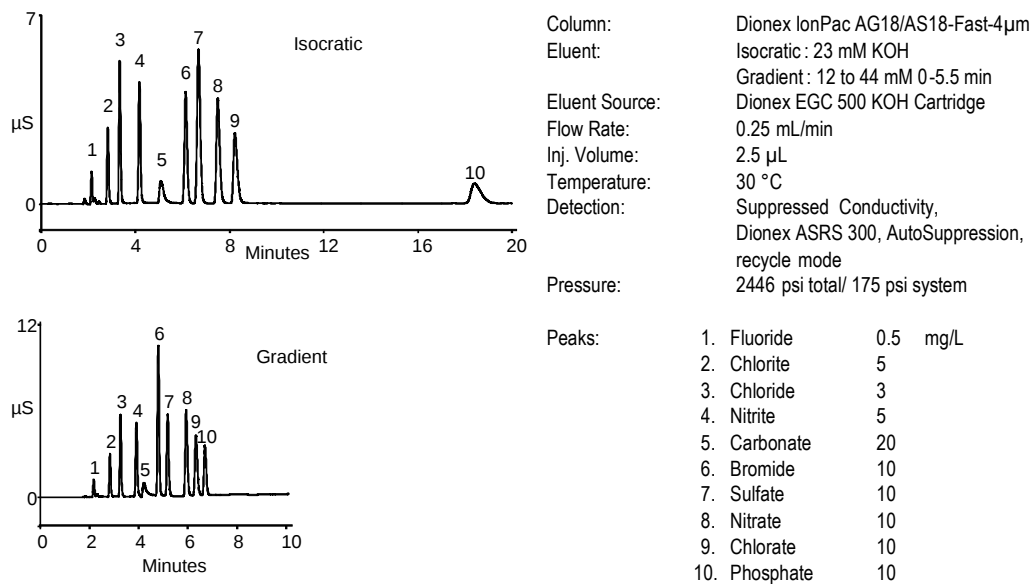
Figure 11 Gradient Separation of Drinking Water From Two Different Sources Using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Capillary Column (0.4 x 150 mm)



4.6 Analysis Time Reduction using Gradient Elution

Using gradient elution, analysis times can be considerably reduced for samples containing both single and multivalent anions such as sulfate and phosphate. In Figure 12 below the phosphate retention time is reduced from 18 minutes to 7 minutes by using a gradient eluent.

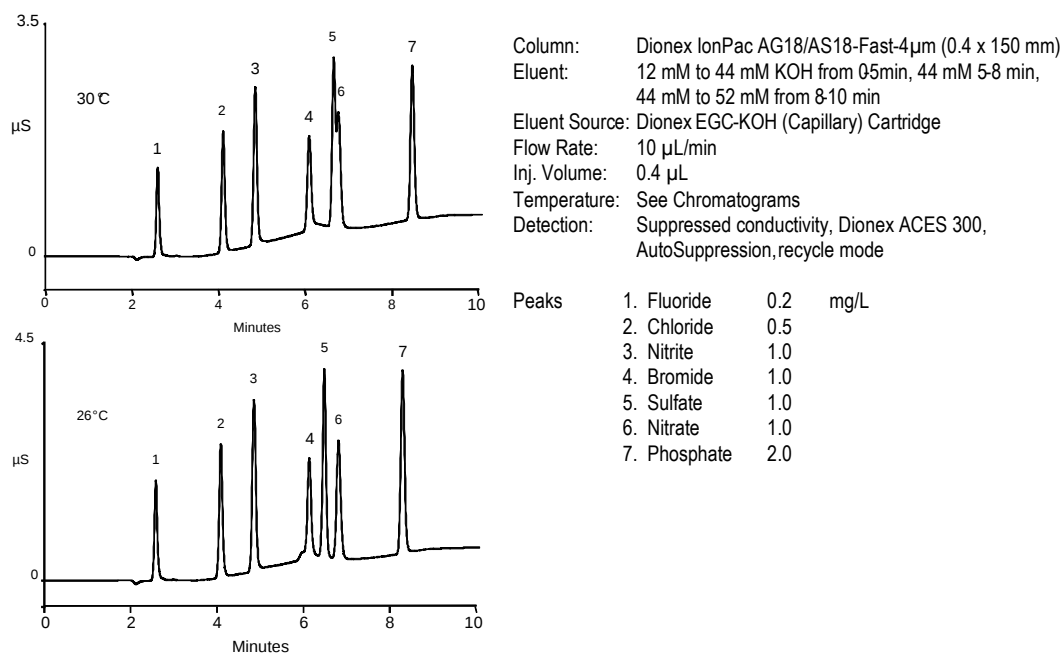
Figure 12 Comparison of Isocratic and Gradient Separation of 10 Anions Using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Column (2 x 150 mm)



4.7 Gradient Separation of the Common Anions Using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Capillary Column at Various Temperatures

The following chromatograms show the effect of temperature on analyte retention time when using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m capillary column under gradient conditions. The separation of the seven common anions is compared at 26 °C and 30 °C. Even with this small change in temperature, the retention time of sulfate and phosphate are decreased significantly at 26 °C while the other analytes remain at basically the same retention time. This illustrates the importance of accurate temperature control when using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m column under gradient conditions. In cases where the concentration is low, slight baseline changes may be observed.

Figure 13 Gradient Separation of Common Anions Using the Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4 μ m Capillary Column (0.4 x 150 mm) at Various Temperatures



5. Troubleshooting

The purpose of the Troubleshooting Guide is to help you solve operating problems that may arise while using Dionex IonPac columns. For more information on problems that originate with the Ion Chromatograph (IC) or other consumables such as the suppressor, trap or concentrator columns, refer to the Troubleshooting Guide in the appropriate operator's manual.



NOTE

*For assistance, visit Unity Lab Services online at www.unitylabservices.com
Or call the Customer Care Center for Dionex Products at 1-800-346-6390
Outside the U.S., call the nearest Thermo Fisher Scientific office.*

Table 6 Troubleshooting Summary

Observation	Cause	Action	Reference Section
High Back Pressure	Unknown	Isolate Blocked Component	5.1.1
	Plugged Column Bed Supports	Replace Bed Supports, Filter Eluents, and Filter Samples	5.1.2, 5.1.3, 5.1.4
	Other System Components	Unplug, Replace, Filter Eluents and Samples	Component Manual
High Background Conductivity	Contaminated Eluents	Remake Eluents	5.2.1
	Contaminated Trap Column	Clean or Replace Trap Column	5.2.2, 5.2.3
	Contaminated Guard or Analytical Column	Clean or Replace Guard and Analytical Column	5.2.4
	Contaminated Suppressor	Clean or Replace Suppressor	5.2.6, Component Manual
	Contaminated Hardware	Clean Component	5.2.5, Component Manual
Poor Resolution	Gradient method not optimized	Optimize method	5.4
Poor Efficiency	Large System Void Volumes	Replumb System	Component Manual, 5.4.1B
	Column Headspace	Replace Column	5.1.2, 5.4.1A
	Improper connections	Replumb system	5.4.1B, 5.4.1C
	Leaks in the system	Check for leaks, Replumb system	5.4.1D, 5.4.1C
	Contaminated Suppressor	Clean or Replace Suppressor	5.4.1E, Component Manual
Short Retention Times	Flow Rate Too fast	Check Flow Rate, Recalibrate Pump	5.4.3B
	Conc. Incorrect Eluents	Remake Eluents	5.2.1, 5.4.3C
	Column Contamination	Clean Column	5.2.4
	Insufficient Equilibration	Extend Equilibration Time at the Start of the Gradient Run	5.4.3A
Retention Time Drift	Contaminated sample or eluent, Poorly mixed eluent	Remake Sample/Eluents	5.2.1, 5.3.1A, E, 5.3.2A
	Temperature variability	Use a thermostatted oven, check oven operation	5.3.1C,D, 5.3.2D, Component Manual
	Poor pump priming or loss of prime	Prime Pump	5.3.1B, 5.3.2B, Component Manual
	Inconsistent flow due to leaking pump	Repair pump	5.3.2C, Component Manual
Oscillating Retention Time	Pump Problems	Recalibrate/Repair Pump	5.3.3A, Component Manual
	Temperature variability	Use a thermostatted oven, check oven operation	5.3.3B, Component Manual
	Sluggish Injection valve	Service Valve	5.3.3C, Component Manual
Poor Front End Resolution	Conc. Incorrect Eluents	Remake Eluents	5.2.1, 5.4.4A
	Column Overloading	Reduce Sample Size	5.4.4B
	Large System Void Volumes	Replumb System	Component Manual, 5.4.4C
Spurious Peaks	Sample Contaminated	Pretreat Samples	5.5A
	Sluggish Injection Valve	Service Valve	5.5B, Component Manual
Analyte Specific Efficiency Loss	Column Contamination from sample or system	Purge contamination, employ a trap or guard column, clean or replace column	5.4.2

5.1 High Back Pressure

5.1.1 Finding the Source of High System Pressure

Total system pressure for the Dionex IonPac 4 μ m Guard Column plus the Dionex IonPac 4 μ m Analytical Column when using the test chromatogram conditions should be less than 4200 psi. If the system pressure at the standard flow rate is higher than the maximum operational pressure for the system, it is advisable to determine the cause of the high system pressure.

- A. Make sure that the pump is set to the correct eluent flow rate. Higher than recommended eluent flow rates will cause higher pressure. Measure the pump flow rate if necessary with a stop watch and graduated cylinder to confirm flow rate is correct. Pre-weigh the graduated cylinder and calculate the weight of eluent collected to obtain a more accurate measure of flow.
- B. Determine which part of the system is causing the high pressure. High pressure could be due to plugged tubing or tubing with collapsed walls, an injection valve with a clogged port, a guard or separator column with particulates clogging the bed support, a clogged High-Pressure In-Line Filter, the suppressor or the detector cell.
- C. To determine which part of the chromatographic system is causing the problem, disconnect the pump eluent line from the injection valve and turn the pump on. Watch the pressure; it should be at its lowest (<50 psi) with everything disconnected. The pressure with the eluent generator connected should be <400 psi. Continue adding system components (injection valve, column(s), suppressor and detector) one by one, while monitoring the system pressure. The pressure should increase up to a maximum when the Guard and Analytical columns are connected.
- D. Measure the system back pressure by attaching a short piece of new 0.010" tubing in place of the column.
- E. The Dionex Self-Regenerating Suppressor with backpressure loops may add up to 100 psi (0.69 MPa). No other components should add more than 100 psi (0.69 MPa) of pressure. Refer to the appropriate manual for cleanup or replacement of the problem component.
- F. A Dionex High-Pressure In-Line Filter positioned between the Pump and Eluent Generator (or injection valve if and EGC is not installed) should be installed to prevent particulates from blocking the system.

5.1.2 Replacing Column Bed Support Assemblies (4 mm and 2 mm columns only)

If the column or guard inlet bed support is determined to be the cause of the high back pressure, it should be replaced. To change the inlet bed support assembly, refer to the following instructions, using one of the two spare inlet bed support assemblies included in the Ship Kit.



If the column tube end is not clean when inserted into the end fitting, particulate matter may obstruct a proper seal between the end of the column tube and the bed support assembly. If this is the case, additional tightening may not seal the column but instead damage the column tube or the end fitting.



NOTE

Replacement of the 2 or 4 mm outlet bed support is not recommended.



NOTE

Replacement of capillary column bed supports is not supported.

- A. Disconnect the column from the system.
- B. Carefully unscrew the inlet (top) column fitting. Use two open-end wrenches.
- C. Remove the bed support. Turn the end fitting over and tap it against a bench top or other hard, flat surface to remove the bed support and seal assembly. If the bed support must be pried out of the end fitting, use a sharp pointed object such as a pair of tweezers, but be careful that you do not scratch the walls of the end fitting. Discard the old bed support assembly.
- D. Place a new bed support assembly into the end fitting. Make sure that the end of the column tube is clean and free of any particulate matter so that it will properly seal against the bed support assembly. Use the end of the column to carefully start the bed support assembly into the end fitting.
- E. Screw the end fitting back onto the column. Tighten it finger-tight, then an additional 1/4 turn (25 in x lb). Tighten further only if leaks are observed.
- F. Reconnect the column to the system and resume operation.

5.1.3 Filter Eluent

Eluents containing particulate material or bacteria may clog the column inlet bed support. Filter water used for eluents through a 0.45 μm filter.

5.1.4 Filter Samples

Samples containing particulate material may clog the column inlet bed support. Filter samples through a 0.45 μm filter prior to injection.

5.2 High Background

In a properly working system, the background conductivity level for the standard eluent system is shown below.

Table 7 Typical Background Conductivity for Anion Columns

Eluent	Expected Background Conductivity
1.0 mM KOH	0.5 - 0.8 μ S
60 mM KOH	0.6-1.5 μ S
60 mM KOH/15% CH ₃ OH	1-3 μ S

Table 8 Typical Background Conductivity for Cation Columns

Eluent	Expected Background Conductivity
22 mN H ₂ SO ₄ or 20 mN MSA	< 1 μ S
50 mN H ₂ SO ₄ or MSA	< 2 μ S

5.2.1 Preparation of Eluents

- A. Make sure that the eluents prepared manually and the regenerant are made correctly.
- B. Make sure that the eluents are made from chemicals with the recommended purity.
- C. Make sure that the deionized water used to prepare the reagents has a specific resistance of 18.2 megohm-cm.

5.2.2 A Contaminated Trap Column

Please refer to the Product Manual for the Trap column in use.

5.2.3 Contaminated Dionex CR-TC Column

- A. A Dionex CR-TC Trap Column should be installed if using a Dionex Eluent Generator Cartridge.
- B. If the Dionex CR-TC becomes contaminated, please refer to the Clean-Up Procedure, in the Dionex CR-TC Product Manual.

5.2.4 A Contaminated Guard or Analytical Column

- A. Remove the Dionex IonPac Guard and Dionex IonPac Analytical Columns from the system.
- B. Install a back pressure coil that generates approximately 1,500 psi and continue to pump eluent. If the background conductivity decreases, the column(s) is (are) the cause of the high background conductivity.

To eliminate downtime caused by fouling, a guard column should be used. Clean or replace the Dionex IonPac Guard Column at the first sign of column performance degradation. The columns can be cleaned as instructed in [Section 6.5.2](#), “Column Cleanup Procedure”.

5.2.5 Contaminated Hardware

Eliminate the hardware as the source of the high background conductivity.

- A. Bypass the columns and the suppressor.
- B. Install a back pressure coil that generates approximately 1,500 psi and continue to pump eluent.
- C. Pump deionized water with a specific resistance of 18.2 megohm-cm through the system.
- D. The background conductivity should be less than 2 μ S. If it is not, check the detector/conductivity cell calibration by injecting deionized water directly into it. See the appropriate manual for details.

5.2.6 A Contaminated Suppressor

If the above items have been checked and the problem persists, the Dionex Self-Regenerating Suppressor, the Dionex Capillary Electrolytic Suppressor or the Dionex MicroMembrane Suppressor is probably causing the problem. For details on Dionex Self-Regenerating Suppressor operation, refer to the Dionex Self-Regenerating Suppressor Product Manual. For details on Dionex Membrane Suppressor operation, refer to the Product Manual.

5.3 Inconsistent Retention Times

Inconsistent or shifting retention time could be due to one or several different factors. These should be checked to determine the cause and address the issue.

5.3.1 Drifting to Shorter Retention Time

- A. Contamination of the sample or eluent. Poorly mixed eluent. Remake sample and/or eluent.
- B. Insufficient pump priming. Prime the pump. Refer to the Product Manual for correct pump operation.
- C. Changes in temperature will also cause peaks to drift. Place the column in a thermally controlled column compartment. Check the temperature control of the column compartment, calibrate/service as needed. Refer to the Product Manual for correct operation of the column compartment.
- D. Excessive temperatures may cause column degradation. Check the temperature of the column compartment. Reduce the operational temperature. Refer to the Product Manual for correct operation of the column compartment. Replace the column.
- E. Oxidizing eluent may cause hydrolysis or degradation of the column resulting in decreased analyte retention. Remove oxidizing agent, remake eluents, and replace the column.

5.3.2 Drifting to Longer Retention Time

- A. Poorly mixed eluent. Remake eluent.
- B. A pump losing prime will cause retention time drift. Prime the pump. Refer to the Product Manual for correct pump operation.
- C. A leaking pump will cause longer retention times. Check the pump flow. Refer to the Product Manual for correct pump operation.
- D. Changes in temperature will also cause peaks to drift. Place the column in a thermally controlled column compartment. Check the temperature control of the column compartment, calibrate/service as needed. Refer to the Product Manual for correct operation of the column compartment.

5.3.3 Oscillating Retention Times

- A. Pump problems can cause retention time to shift to longer and shorter time, run to run. Check pump flow rate, prime the pump. Refer to the Product Manual for correct pump operation.
- B. Temperature fluctuation will also cause peaks to shift. Place the column in a thermally controlled column compartment. Check the temperature control of the column compartment, calibrate/service as needed. Refer to the Product Manual for correct operation of the column compartment.
- C. A sluggish injection valve will cause peaks to shift if the injection time varies. The injection valve may need maintenance. When an injection valve is actuated, the timing is critical for consistent retention times. This will occur when the injection valve needs to be cleaned or retorqued. Refer to the valve manual for troubleshooting and service procedures.

5.4 Poor Peak Resolution

When carrying out separations using gradient analysis the column must be sufficiently equilibrated with the eluent concentration used at the start of the analysis. The actual equilibration time depends on the ratio of the strongest eluent concentration to the weakest eluent concentration. Typically equilibration takes place in 3-5 column volumes of eluent. Depending on flow rate and concentration change, equilibration times range from 3 to 10 minutes.

- A. If increased separation is needed for the first group of peaks, reduce the concentration of the starting eluent (E1). This part of the chromatogram is run isocratically with E1.
- B. Due to different system configurations, the observed gradient profile may not match the gradient shown in the example. The gradient conditions can be adjusted to improve resolution or to adjust retention times either by changing the gradient timing or by changing the gradient eluent proportions.
- C. Keep the concentrations of E1 and E2 (final eluent concentration) constant and adjust the gradient time. This is the simplest way to compensate for total system differences if resolution is the problem.
- D. Change the proportions of E1 and E2 and adjust the gradient time. This approach requires more time to develop and more knowledge in methods development work. The advantage is

that it allows a method to be tailored for a particular application, where selectivity, resolution, and total run time are optimized. Be aware poor peak resolution can be due to any or all of the following factors.

5.4.1 Loss of Column Efficiency

When chromatographic efficiency is lost, peak resolution may decrease to an unacceptable level as the peaks broaden.

- A. Check to see if headspace (2 and 4 mm columns only) has developed in the guard or analytical column. This is usually due to improper use of the column such as submitting it to high pressures. Remove the column's top end fitting according to [Section 5.1.2](#), "Replacing Column Bed Support Assemblies". If the resin does not fill the column body all the way to the top, it means that the resin bed has collapsed, creating a headspace. The column must be replaced.
- B. Extra-column effects can result in sample band dispersion, making the elution of the peaks broader resulting in reduced efficiency. Make sure connections are made correctly with PEEK tubing with an ID of no greater than 0.010" for 4 mm systems or no greater than 0.005" for 2 mm systems. Cut the tubing lengths as short as possible, checking to ensure a smooth, 90° cut.
- C. If tubing is not connected properly at the column inlet and outlet, it can cause dispersion resulting in low efficiency numbers.
 - a. When installing the columns, it is recommended to turn off the pump while making connections. This will avoid any slippage of the ferrule under high pressure conditions which can result in a void in the fitting. Dispersion, particularly evident in capillary systems results in chromatograms with tailing peaks as shown in [Figure 14](#) below.
 - b. Before connecting the fittings, it is recommended to inject water into the cavities of the fluidic system using a syringe or a micropipette while the flow is off. This will result in faster equilibration by preventing air from entering the system.
 - c. When making capillary connections, make sure the ferrule and fitting bolt are at least 2 mm (0.1 inch) from the end of the tubing before you insert the tubing into the port. Do not place the ferrule and fitting bolt flush with the end of the tubing. [Figure 15](#) illustrates the correct and incorrect placement of the ferrule and fitting bolt on the tubing.

Figure 14 Tailing Peaks Caused by Incorrectly Installed Capillary Tubing Fittings

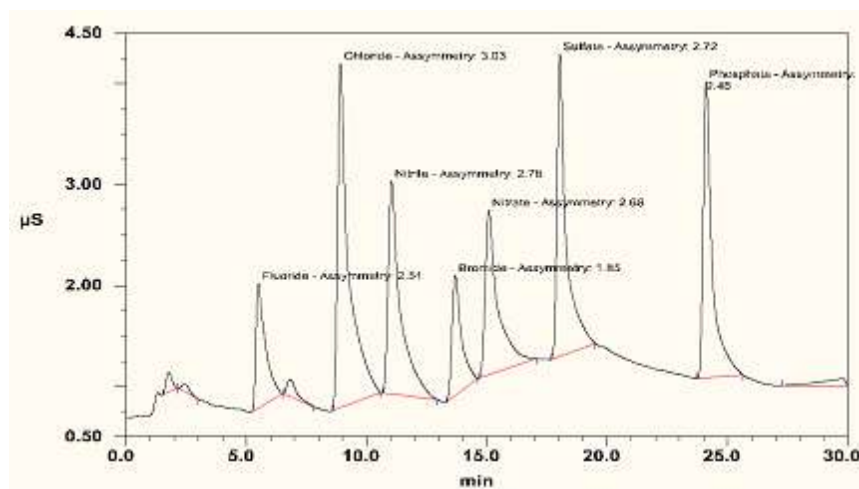
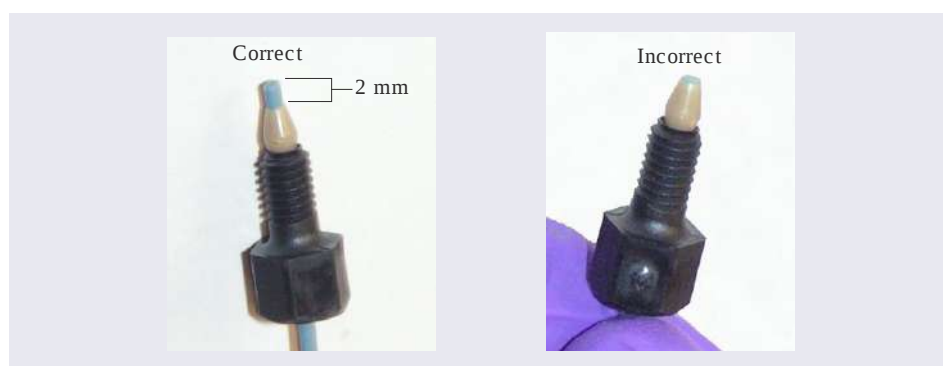


Figure 15 Correct and Incorrect Ferrule and Fitting Bolt Placement for Capillary Tubing Connections



- D. Check for leaks. This can be done by visual inspection at elevated flow rates. Use of a paper towel or KimWipe™ touched to connection will show noticeable wetness even with micro liter volume leaks.
- E. Suppressor contamination may be the cause of efficiency loss. Typically such contamination is analyte dependant so if all analytes are equally effected it is most likely due to one of the causes above. Refer to the Suppressor Product Manual for cleaning protocols.

5.4.2 Analyte Specific Efficiency Loss

If a specific analyte exhibits an efficiency problem this could be due to contamination. For example, iron oxide causes sulfate and phosphate to tail; aluminum causes poor recovery and peak shape for phosphate; magnesium and calcium hydroxide precipitation in the suppressor cause poor recovery and peak shape for magnesium and calcium (refer to the Product Manual for the suppressor for product specific troubleshooting); nonionic surfactants can cause sulfate to tail.

- A. Purge system of suspected contamination. Refer to the Product Manual for the system for details.
- B. Check sample as source of contamination.
- C. Employ the use of an appropriate guard or trap column to remove contaminants. Contact your local representative for current product specific information.

5.4.3 Shortened Retention Times

Shortened retention times will cause peaks to elute closer together and may be due to one or more factors. Fast eluent flow will cause quicker elution of analytes. Higher eluent concentration or a contaminated column (which results in loss of capacity) will reduce the analyte retention causing peaks to elute early.



NOTE

Even with adequate system and column efficiency, resolution of peaks will be compromised if analytes elute too fast due to elevated flow rate or eluent concentration.

- A. During gradient analysis the column must be equilibrated with the starting eluent prior to analysis. The time required is dependent on the difference in concentration between the start and the end of the gradient. If the ion concentration on the column is higher than the starting eluent concentration then peaks may elute early or with inconsistent retention time. Typically 3-5 column volumes of eluent are suggested for equilibration. Increase the length of time the column is in the starting eluent prior to injection to ensure adequate equilibration.
- B. Check the flow rate. Ensure the eluent flow rate is equivalent to the flow rate specified by the analytical protocol. Confirm the eluent flow rate after the column using a stopwatch and graduated cylinder.
- C. Ensure the eluent compositions and concentrations are correct. An eluent that is too concentrated will cause the peaks to elute sooner. Prepare fresh eluent.
- D. Diluting the eluent will improve peak resolution, but will also increase the analytes' retention times. If a 10% dilution of the eluent is not sufficient to obtain the desired peak resolution, or if the resulting increase in retention times is unacceptable, clean the column (see, [Section 6](#), "Column Care").



NOTE

If you are using a gradient pump to proportion the eluent, components from two or three different eluent reservoirs, the resulting eluent composition may not be accurate enough for the application. Use one reservoir containing the correct eluent composition to see if this resolves the problem. There may be a problem when one of the proportioned eluents is less than 5%

Column contamination can lead to a loss of column capacity. This is because all of the ion exchange sites will no longer be available for the sample ions. For example, polyvalent ions or metals from the sample may concentrate on the column. Refer to [Section 6.5](#) “Column Cleanup Procedure” for recommended column cleanup procedures.

**NOTE**

Possible sources of column contamination are impurities in chemicals and in the deionized water used for eluents or components of the sample matrix. Be especially careful to make sure that the recommended chemicals are used. The deionized water should have a specific resistance of 18.2 megohm-cm.

- E. After cleaning the column, reinstall it in the system and let it equilibrate with eluent for about 30 minutes. The column is sufficiently equilibrated when consecutive injections of the standard give reproducible retention times. The original column capacity should be restored by this treatment, since the contaminants should be eluted from the column.

5.4.4 Loss of Front End Resolution

If poor resolution or efficiency is observed for the peaks eluting near the system void volume compared to the later eluting peaks, check the following:

- A. Eluent concentration: Incorrect eluent concentration may be the problem. Remake the eluent as required for your application. Ensure that the water and chemicals used are of the required purity. The eluent concentration may be incorrect if the flow delivered to the eluent generator cartridge is incorrect. Check pump flow rate.
- B. Sample concentration and injection volume: Column overloading may be the problem. Reduce the amount of sample ions being injected onto the analytical column by either diluting the sample or injecting a smaller volume onto the column.
- C. System plumbing: Improperly swept out volumes anywhere in the system prior to the guard and analytical columns may be the problem. Replumb components, one at a time, in the system prior to the columns and test for front-end resolution after every system change.

5.5 Spurious Peaks

In a system where peaks are observed where none are expected both the column and the system should be checked.

- A. The columns may be contaminated. If the samples contain an appreciable level of polyvalent ions and the column is used with a weak eluent system, the retention times for the analytes will then decrease and be spurious, inefficient (broad) peaks that can show up at unexpected times. Clean the column as indicated in [Section 6.5](#) “Column Cleanup”.
- B. The injection valve may need maintenance. When an injection valve is actuated, the possibility of creating a baseline disturbance exists. This baseline upset can show up as a peak of varying size and shape. This will occur when the injection valve needs to be cleaned or retorqued. Check to see that there are no restrictions in the tubing connected to the valve. Also check the valve port faces for blockage and replace them if necessary. Refer to the valve manual for troubleshooting and service procedures. Small baseline disturbances at the beginning or at the end of the chromatogram can be overlooked so long as they do not interfere with the quantification of the peaks of interest.

6. Appendix – Column Care

6.1 Recommended Operation Pressures

Operating a column above its recommended pressure limit can cause irreversible loss of column performance. The maximum recommended operating pressure for Dionex IonPac Column is listed in [Sections 1](#), “Introduction” and [3.1](#), “General Operating Conditions”.

6.2 Column Start-Up

The column is shipped using the sodium tetraborate as the storage solution.

Prepare the eluent shown on the Quality Assurance Report. To remove the storage solution, flush the column to waste with the QAR eluent for at least 30 minutes before attaching the column outlet to the suppressor. Install the column in the column module and test the column performance under the conditions described in the QAR. Continue making injections of the test standard until consecutive injections of the standard give reproducible retention times. Equilibration is complete when consecutive injections of the standard give reproducible retention times.

IMPORTANT

When making any tubing connections, first turn off the pump. This will avoid any slippage of the ferrule under high pressure conditions. For capillary connections, inject water into the cavities of the fluidic system using a syringe or a micropipette with the flow off before joining two components together. This will prevent air from entering the system and result in a faster equilibration

6.3 Column Storage

For short-term storage (< 1 week), use eluent; for long-term storage (> 1 week), store in eluent in a refrigerator or use 100 mM Sodium Borate for the column storage solution when stored at room temperature. With the column outlet to waste, flush the column for a minimum of 10 minutes with the storage solution. Cap both ends securely, using the plugs supplied with the column.

6.4 Chemical Purity Requirements

Obtaining reliable, consistent and accurate results requires eluents that are free of ionic impurities. Chemicals, solvents and deionized water used to prepare eluents must be of the highest purity available. Low trace impurities and low particle levels in eluents also help to protect your ion exchange columns and system components. Thermo Fisher Scientific cannot guarantee proper column performance when the quality of the chemicals, solvents and water used to prepare eluents has been compromised.

Currently at Thermo Fisher Scientific, we have obtained consistent results using Optima® Solvents by Fisher Scientific. We have found that bottled HPLC-grade water from Burdick & Jackson contains acceptably low levels of impurities.

6.4.1 Inorganic Chemicals

Reagent Grade inorganic chemicals should always be used to prepare ionic eluents. Whenever possible, inorganic chemicals that meet or surpass the latest American Chemical Society standard for purity should be used. These inorganic chemicals will detail the purity by having an actual lot analysis on each label.

6.4.2 Deionized Water

The deionized water used to prepare eluents should be Type I Reagent Grade Water with a specific resistance of 18.2 megohm-cm. The deionized water should be free of ionized impurities, organics, microorganisms and particulate matter larger than 0.2 μm . Bottled HPLC-Grade Water (with the exception of Burdick & Jackson) should not be used since most bottled water contains an unacceptable level of ionic impurities.

6.4.3 Solvents

In most cases, unless otherwise noted in Section 3.2 “General Operational Precautions”, solvents can be added to the ionic eluents used with Dionex IonPac columns to modify the ion exchange process or improve sample solubility. The solvents used must be free of ionic impurities. However, since most manufacturers of solvents do not test for ionic impurities, it is important that the highest grade of solvents available be used. Currently, several manufacturers are making ultrahigh purity solvents that are compatible for HPLC and spectrophotometric applications. These ultrahigh purity solvents will usually ensure that your chromatography is not affected by ionic impurities in the solvent.

When using a solvent in an ionic eluent, the back pressure generated will depend on the solvent used, concentration of the solvent, the ionic strength of the eluent and the flow rate used. The column back pressure will vary as the composition of water-methanol and water-acetonitrile mixture varies. Do not exceed the maximum operating backpressure of the Dionex IonPac column.

Solvents and water should be premixed in concentrations which allow proper mixing by the gradient pump and to minimize outgassing. Ensure that all of the inorganic chemicals are soluble in the highest solvent concentration to be used during the analysis.

6.5 Column Cleanup

The following column cleanup protocols have been divided into three general isocratic protocols to remove acid-soluble, base-soluble, or organic contaminants. They can be combined into one gradient protocol if desired; however, the following precautions should be observed.



WARNING

- *Always ensure that the cleanup protocol used does not switch between eluents which may create high pressure eluent interface zones in the column.*
- *High pressure zones can disrupt the uniformity of the packing of the column bed and irreversibly damage the performance of the column.*
- *High viscosity mixing zones can be created between two eluents having solvents with a very high energy of mixing.*
- *High pressure zones in the column can be created by pumping successive eluents through the column that are not miscible, that have eluent components in one eluent that will precipitate out in the other eluent or by using an acid eluent followed by a base eluent which may create a neutralization pressure band.*
- *The precipitation of the salts by solvents during column rinses can result in very high pressure zones.*

When in doubt, always include short column rinse steps to reduce the solvent content of the eluent to < 5% levels and the ionic strength of the eluent to < 50 mM levels to avoid creating high pressure zones in the column that may disrupt the uniformity of the column packing.

6.5.1 Choosing the Appropriate Cleanup Solution

Table 9 Cleaning Solutions for Anion Exchange Columns

Contamination	Anion Solutions
Hydrophilic Contamination of Low Valence	Concentrated hydroxide solutions such as a 10X concentrate of the most concentrated eluent used in the application is sufficient to remove hydrophilic contamination of low valence.
Hydrophilic Contamination of High Valence	Concentrated acid solutions such as 1 to 3 M HCl will remove high valence hydrophilic ions by ion suppression and elution by the chloride ion.
Metal Contamination	Metal contamination often results in asymmetric peak shapes and/or variable analyte recoveries. For example, iron or aluminum contamination often results in tailing of sulfate and phosphate. Aluminum contamination can also result in low phosphate recoveries.
	Concentrated acid solutions such as 1 to 3 M HCl remove a variety of metals. If after acid treatment, the chromatography still suggests metal contamination, treatment with chelating acids such as 0.2 M oxalic acid is recommended.
Ionic and Hydrophobic Contamination	Concentrated acid solutions such as 1 to 3 M HCl can be used with compatible organic solvents to remove contamination that is ionic and hydrophobic. The acid suppresses ionization and ion exchange interactions of the contamination with the resin.
	A frequently used cleanup solution is 200 mM HCl in 80% acetonitrile. This solution must be made immediately before use because the acetonitrile will decompose in the acid solution during long term storage.
Nonionic and Hydrophobic Contamination	Although this is extremely rare, nonionic and hydrophobic contaminants can contaminate an ion exchange column. The symptoms include reduced chromatographic efficiency, elevated pressure or tailing for a subset of analyte ions. Retention is unaffected by this type of contamination. Organic solvents can be used alone if the contamination is nonionic and hydrophobic. The degree of nonpolar character of the solvent should be increased as the degree of hydrophobicity of the contamination within the range of acceptable solvents.

6.5.2 Column Cleanup Procedure

- A. Prepare a 500 mL solution of the appropriate cleanup solution using the guidelines in the table above.
- B. Disconnect the outlet of the Dionex IonPac Column from the Dionex Suppressor. If your system is configured with both a guard column and an analytical column, reverse the order of the guard and analytical column in the eluent flow path. Double check that the eluent flows in the correct direction as designated on each of the column labels.



CAUTION

When cleaning an analytical column and a guard column in series, ensure that the guard column is placed after the analytical column in the eluent flow path. Contaminants that have accumulated on the guard column can be eluted onto the analytical column and irreversibly damage it. If in doubt, clean each column separately

- C. For aqueous cleaning solutions; set the pump flow rate to 1.0 mL/min for a Dionex IonPac 4 mm Analytical or Guard Column or 0.25 mL/min for a Dionex IonPac 2 mm Analytical or Guard Column. Set the pump flow rate to 10 µL/min for a Dionex IonPac Capillary or Capillary Guard Column.
- D. For cleaning solutions containing organic solvents; set the pump flow rate to 0.5 mL/min for a Dionex IonPac 4 mm Analytical or Guard Column or 0.12 mL/min for a Dionex IonPac 2 mm Analytical or Guard Column. Set the pump flow rate to 5 µL/min for a Dionex IonPac Capillary or Capillary Guard Column.
- E. Rinse the column for 10 minutes with deionized water before pumping the chosen cleanup solution over the column or before switching cleanup solutions.
- F. Unless otherwise noted in Section 6.5.2.1 “Column Specific Cleaning Protocols”, pump the cleanup solution through the column for 60 minutes. A step gradient is used for column cleanup when switching between solutions.
- G. Rinse the column for at least 10 minutes with deionized water before pumping eluent over the column.
- H. Equilibrate the column(s) with eluent, still directing the effluent to waste, for at least 30 minutes before resuming normal operation.
- I. Reconnect the Dionex IonPac Analytical Column to the Dionex Suppressor and if your system was originally configured with a guard column, place the guard column in line between the injection valve and the analytical column.

6.5.2.1 Column Specific Cleaning Protocols

There are no column specific cleaning protocols for this column.

7. Appendix – Quality Assurance Reports

Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4µm

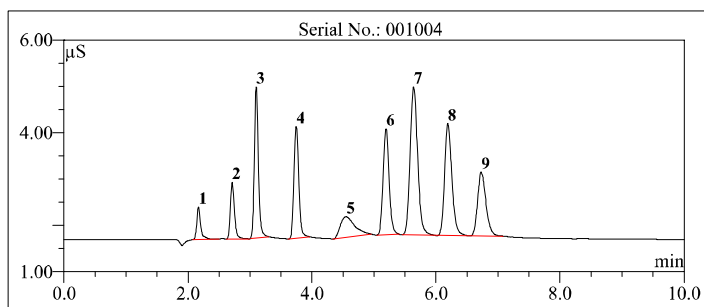
Capillary (0.4 x 150 mm)

Serial No. : 001004

Product No. 082314

Lot No. : 2011-24-173

Eluent: 23 mM Potassium Hydroxide (KOH)
Eluent Source: Dionex EGC-KOH (Capillary)
Flow Rate: 0.010 mL/min
Temperature: 30 °C
Detection: Suppressed Conductivity
Suppressor: Dionex Anion Capillary Electrolytic Suppressor (Dionex ACES 300)
 AutoSuppression™ Recycle Mode
Applied Current: 8 mA
Injection Volume: 0.4 µL
Storage Solution: 100 mM Sodium Tetraborate



No.	Peak Name	Ret.Time (min)	Asymmetry (AIA)	Resolution (EP)	Efficiency (EP)	Concentration (mg/L)
1	Fluoride	2.17	1.4	4.91	6787	0.1
2	Chlorite	2.71	1.3	3.36	8650	1.0
3	Chloride	3.10	1.3	5.24	11860	0.6
4	Nitrite	3.75	1.2	2.92	12567	1.0
5	Carbonate	4.55	2.1	2.18	1898	4.0
6	Bromide	5.19	1.2	2.29	14222	2.0
7	Sulfate	5.64	1.2	2.55	10784	2.0
8	Nitrate	6.19	1.4	2.37	13300	2.0
9	Chlorate	6.73	1.4	n.a.	12328	2.0

QA Results:

Analyte	Parameter	Specification	Results
Sulfate	Asymmetry	1.0-2.2	Passed
Sulfate	Retention Time	5.34-6.66	Passed
Bromide	Efficiency	>=9000	Passed
Bromide	Asymmetry	1.0-1.9	Passed
	Pressure	<=1980	1382

Production Reference:

Datasource: QAR
 Directory: Cap\AS18-4µm
 Sequence: AS18_p4X150mm-4µm
 Sample No.: 2

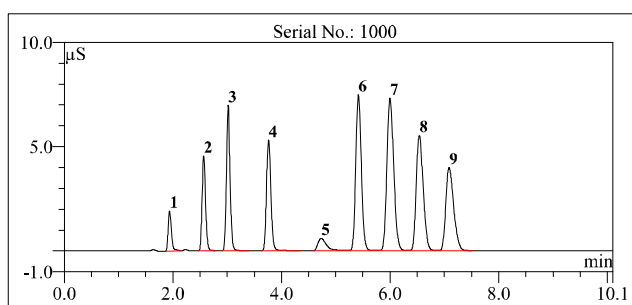
6.80 SR11 Build 3161 (184582) (Demo-Installation)

Chromleon™ Thermo Fisher Scientific

078927-01 (QAR)

Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4µm**Analytical (2 x 150 mm)****Serial No. :** 001000**Product No. 076036****Lot No. :** 2012-17-92

Eluent: 23 mM KOH
Eluent Source: Dionex EGC 500 KOH Cartridge
Flow Rate: 0.25 mL/min
Temperature: 30 °C
Detection: Suppressed Conductivity
Suppressor: Dionex Anion Self-Regenerating Suppressor (Dionex ASRS™ 300 2 mm)
AutoSuppression™ Recycle Mode
Applied Current: 15 mA
Injection Volume: 2.5 µL
Storage Solution: 100 mM Sodium Tetraborate



No.	Peak Name	Ret.Time (min)	Asymmetry (ALA)	Resolution (EP)	Efficiency (EP)	Concentration (mg/L)
1	Fluoride	1.94	1.4	5.56	5338	0.5
2	Chlorite	2.57	1.2	3.69	7283	5.0
3	Chloride	3.02	1.2	5.49	9428	3.0
4	Nitrite	3.76	1.2	4.57	10477	5.0
5	Carbonate	4.73	2.4	2.88	4587	20.0
6	Bromide	5.41	1.3	2.76	12455	10.0
7	Sulfate	6.00	1.3	2.29	10652	10.0
8	Nitrate	6.54	1.4	2.17	12026	10.0
9	Chlorate	7.09	1.5	n.a.	10987	10.0

QA Results:

Analyte	Parameter	Specification	Results
Sulfate	Asymmetry	1.0-2.2	Passed
Sulfate	Retention Time	5.34-6.66	Passed
Bromide	Efficiency	>=9000	Passed
Bromide	Asymmetry	1.0-1.9	Passed
	Pressure	<=2970	2128

Production Reference:

Datasource: QAR

Directory: Anion\AS18 4µm

Sequence: AS18-4µm_2X150MM

Sample No.: 1

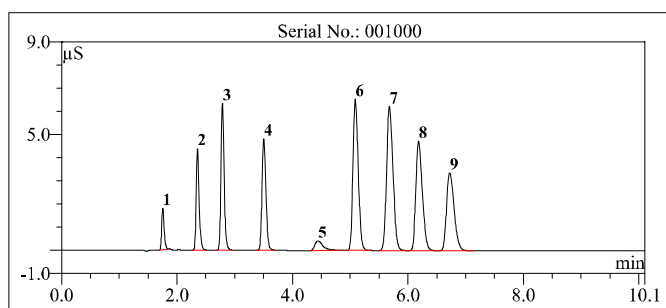
6.80 SR11 Build 3161 (184582) (Demo-Installation)

Chromeleon™ Thermo Fisher Scientific

078925-01 (QAR)

Dionex IonPac AS18-Fast-4µm**Analytical (4 x 150 mm)****Serial No. :** 001000**Product No. 076034****Lot No. :** 006-09-136E

Eluent: 23 mM KOH
Eluent Source: Dionex EGC 500 KOH Cartridge
Flow Rate: 1 mL/min
Temperature: 30 °C
Detection: Suppressed Conductivity
Suppressor: Dionex Anion Self-Regenerating Suppressor (Dionex ASRS™ 300 4 mm)
 AutoSuppression™ Recycle Mode
Applied Current: 57 mA
Injection Volume: 10 µL
Storage Solution: 100 mM Sodium Tetraborate



No.	Peak Name	Ret.Time (min)	Asymmetry (AIA)	Resolution (EP)	Efficiency (EP)	Concentration (mg/L)
1	Fluoride	1.75	1.6	7.11	8151	0.5
2	Chlorite	2.36	1.4	4.49	10344	5.0
3	Chloride	2.79	1.3	6.46	12359	3.0
4	Nitrite	3.50	1.3	5.19	13116	5.0
5	Carbonate	4.44	2.2	3.17	5459	20.0
6	Bromide	5.09	1.4	3.15	14586	10.0
7	Sulfate	5.68	1.3	2.43	11976	10.0
8	Nitrate	6.19	1.5	2.41	14046	10.0
9	Chlorate	6.72	1.6	n.a.	12832	10.0

QA Results:

Analyte	Parameter	Specification	Results
Sulfate	Asymmetry	1.0-2.2	Passed
Sulfate	Retention Time	5.34-6.66	Passed
Bromide	Efficiency	>=9000	Passed
Bromide	Asymmetry	1.0-1.9	Passed
	Pressure	<=2970	2408

Production Reference:

Datasource: QAR

Directory: Anion\AS18_4µm

Sequence: AS18-4µM_4X150MM

Sample No.: 1

6.80 SR11 Build 3161 (184582) (Demo-Installation)

Chromleon™ Thermo Fisher Scientific

078926-01 (QAR)

8. Appendix – Additional Information



NOTE

For assistance, visit Unity Lab Services online at www.unitylabservices.com
 From the U.S. call the Customer Care Center for Dionex Products at 1-800-346-6390
 Outside the U.S., call the nearest Thermo Fisher Scientific office.

8.1 Useful Information for Operation of Dionex High Pressure Ion Chromatography Systems

8.1.1 General Information

Dionex brand PEEK™ tubing is available. Note that tubing from different suppliers varies with respect to color and i.d. Care should be taken to ensure the correct i.d. is being used to avoid problems caused by sample dispersion.

Table 10 **Tubing Back Pressures.**

Color	Part Number	I.D. inch	I.D. cm	Volume mL/ft	Back Pressure, Psi/ft. at 1mL/min	Back Pressure, Psi/ft. at 0.25mL/min	Back Pressure, Psi/cm. at 1mL/min
Green	044777	0.030	0.076	0.137	0.086	0.021	0.003
Orange	042855	0.020	0.051	0.061	0.435	0.109	0.015
Blue	049714	0.013	0.033	0.026	2.437	0.609	0.081
Black	042690	0.010	0.025	0.015	6.960	1.740	0.232
Red	044221	0.005	0.013	0.004	111.360	27.840	3.712
Yellow	049715	0.003	0.008	0.001	859.259	214.815	28.642
Light Blue	071870	0.0025	0.006	0.0009	1766.0	441.0	58.0

Note: Blue and Light blue are very similar in color. Additionally, tubing from different suppliers may differ to that stated above.

8.1.2 Documents and Data Sheets

These documents, and others not listed here, can be found at www.dionex.com or on the Document Library CD.

Table 11 Data Sheets

Item	Document #
Eluent Generators and Continuously Regenerating Trap Columns	PS70187
Suppressors	LPN 1290
Carbonate Removal Device (CRD 200)	LPN 1786
Carbonate Removal Device (CRD 300)	LPN 1978

Table 12 Product Manuals

Item	Document #
Dionex ICS-5000 ⁺ Ion Chromatography System Operator's Manual	065446
Eluent Generator Cartridges (EGC)	065018
Continuously Regenerating Trap Columns (CR-TC)	031910
Continuously Regenerating Trap Columns (CR-TC 500)	079684
Capillary Electrolytic Suppressors (CES)	065386
Self-Regenerating Suppressors (SRS)	031956
Micro Membrane Suppressors (MMS)	031727
Carbonate Removal Device (CRD 200)	065068
Carbonate Removal Device (CRD 300)	065213

8.2 Installation of the Capillary Column

The following information has been adapted from document # 065446-01 and is correct at the time of print. To ensure information is correct and up to date, please refer to the applicable manual for your system.

Correct installation of the capillary column is vital for good column performance.

1. Before installing the new separator column, cut off the column label and slide it into the holder on the front of the cartridge (see [Figure 21](#)).
2. For reference, [Figure 16](#) shows the column cartridge after installation of both a capillary guard column and a capillary separator column. [Figure 17](#) shows the column cartridge after installation of only a capillary separator column.

Figure 16 Separator and Guard Columns Installed in Column Cartridge

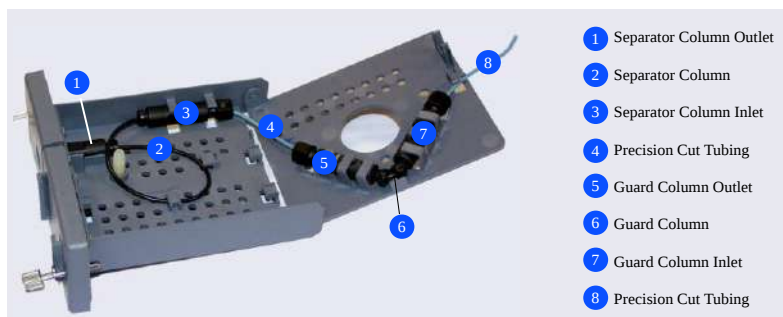
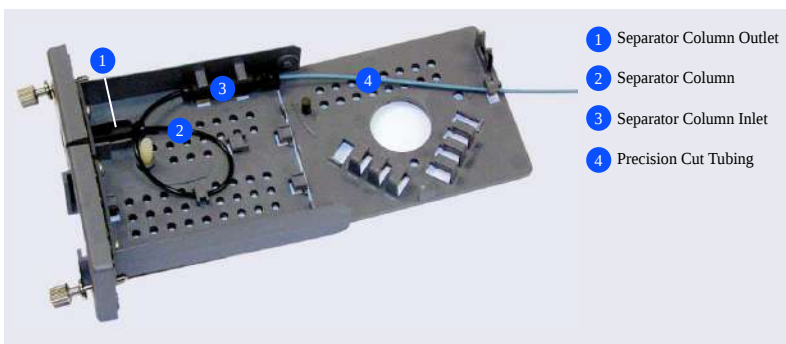


Figure 17 Separator Column Only Installed in Column Cartridge



3. Locate the Dionex IC Cube Tubing Kit (P/N 072186) that is shipped with the Dionex IC Cube. The tubing kit includes the following items:

Table 13 Contents of the Dionex IC Cube Tubing Kit (P/N 072186)

Part	Length / Quantity	Part Number	Used To Connect
Precision cut 0.062 mm (0.0025-in) ID PEEK tubing, blue	65 mm (2.56 in)	072188	50 mm guard column outlet to 250 mm separator column inlet
Precision cut 0.062 mm (0.0025-in) ID PEEK tubing, blue, labeled VALVE PORT 3	115 mm (4.53 in)	072189	Guard column inlet to injection valve
Precision cut 0.062 mm (0.0025-in) ID PEEK tubing, blue	75 mm (2.93 in)	074603	35 mm guard column outlet to 150 mm separator column inlet
Precision cut 0.062 mm (0.0025-in) ID PEEK tubing, blue, labeled VALVE PORT 3	210 mm (8.27 in)	072187	Separator column inlet to injection valve (if a guard column is not present)
0.25 mm (0.010-in) ID PEEK tubing, black	610 mm (24 in)	042690	EG degas cartridge REGEN OUT to waste (if an EG is not present)
Fitting bolt, 10-32 hex double-cone (smaller), black	3	072949	Connect precision cut 0.062 mm (0.0025-in) ID PEEK tubing
Fitting bolt, 10-32 double-cone (larger), black	1	043275	Connect 0.25 mm (0.010-in) ID PEEK tubing (black)
Ferrule fitting, 10-32 double-cone, tan	4	043276	Use with both sizes of fitting bolts

Refer to the following figures for the precision cut tubing required for your configuration:

Figure 18 Tubing Connections for 250 mm Separator Column and 50 mm Guard Column

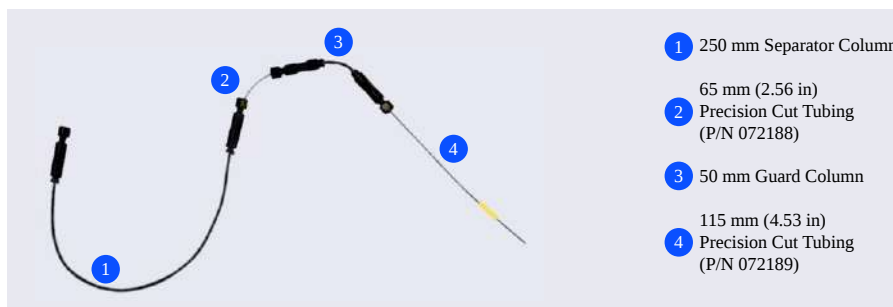
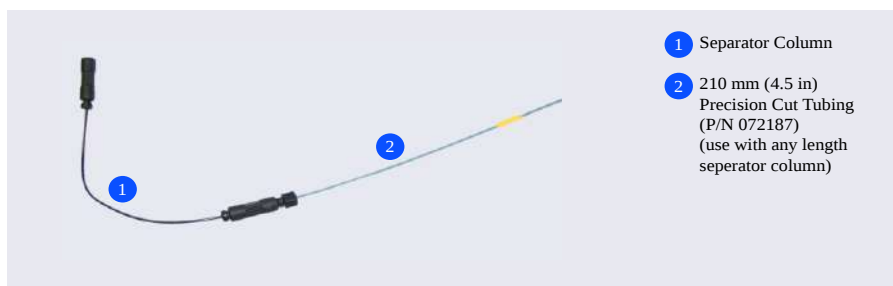
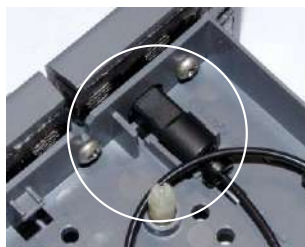


Figure 19 Tubing Connections for Separator Column Only



4. Lift up the lid of the column cartridge to open it.
5. Remove the fitting plug from the outlet fitting on the separator column. Orient the fitting with a flat side up (see [Figure 20](#)) and push the fitting into the opening at the front of the column cartridge until it stops.

Figure 20 Column Outlet Fitting Installed in Column Cartridge



6. Coil the separator column tubing inside the cartridge as shown in [Figure 16](#) or [Figure 17](#). Secure the column tubing and the inlet fitting in the clips on the column cartridge.
7. Secure the inlet and outlet fittings on the guard column (if used) in the column clips on the lid of the column cartridge.
8. Route the guard column inlet tubing (if used) or the separator column inlet tubing through the clip on the top edge of the column cartridge lid.
9. Close the lid (you should hear a click) and route the tubing into the slot on the front of the column cartridge (see [Figure 21](#)).



NOTE

If the columns are installed correctly, the cartridge lid snaps closed easily. If the lid does not close easily, do not force it. Open the lid and verify that the columns and tubing are installed correctly and secured in the clips.

Figure 21 Column Cartridge Closed

- 1 Separator Column Outlet
- 2 Column Inlet Tubing

