A rapid and simple method for the detection of cultures defective for the development of wild-type macroconidia is presented. This method provides more efficient detection of mutants than microscopic examination; the method described here permits the discrimination between there and wild types.

Cultures are grown in cotton plugged tuber (7 cm x 1 cm) containing 1 ml Vogel's N + 1.5% agar for 3-5 days in the light at 35°C. Each tube is then inverted and given a single sharp tap against the metal light shade of a fluorescent lamp. The lamp provides a bright light source so that any conidia mechanically freed are visualized as a cloud of particles falling from the aerial hyphal mass towards the cotton plug.

As an example of the power of the method, a single isolate which produced very few freed conidia was readily detected among ca. 3500 tubs cultures started from mutagenized 74-ORB-1a conidio (see Selitrennikoff 1972 Neupora News 19: 23). In agreement, microscopic examination (600X) showed that this culture produces chains of conidio and, relatively rarely, individual conidia. Genetic analysis demonstrated that the phenotype is due to a single gene mutation, csp-1 (conidial separation defective, allele f37), which is tightly linked to arg-3 on IL. Detailed observations of csp-1 and aconidial strains will be reported elsewhere. It may be noted that the method has proved useful for the detection of similar mutants in auxotrophs grown on appropriately supplemented media.

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