

Solid phantoms based on optical-grade quality polymers are the ideal medium for system calibration and applications development. INO has developed optical phantoms that simulate a wide variety of tissues in the VIS-NIR. Biomimic™ polyurethane-based phantoms offer long term stability and reproducible optical properties that are a cost effective alternative solution to liquid media. Titanium oxide (TiO₂) is used as scattering agent ; the resulting reduced scattering coefficient (μ_s') varies slightly over the spectrum (see Figure 1). Similarly, carbon black is used as a universal absorbing dye providing a mostly flat absorption coefficient (μ_a) as a function of wavelength (see Figure 2). Thus, every phantom fabricated has its own absorption and scattering characteristics.

When manufacturing an optical phantom, a set of μ_a and μ_s' are selected at a reference wavelength. Every phantom fabricated at INO has its own characterization sample that is stored for further referencing. Thus every Biomimic™ phantom is characterized using a state-of-the-art high accuracy time-resolved transmittance technique (Bouchard et al, 2010) providing characterization reports that specify the exact μ_a and μ_s' values at the design reference wavelength. Additional characterization can always be done at any wavelength between 450 and 850 nm. The physical properties of the Biomimic™ optical phantoms are presented in Table 1.

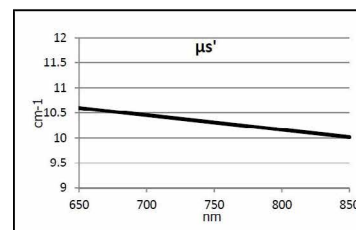


Figure 1. Variation of reduced scattering coefficient (μ_s') over the NIR spectrum.

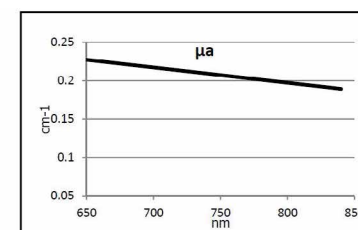


Figure 2. Variation of absorption coefficient (μ_a) over the NIR spectrum.

Table 1. Physical properties of the Biomimic™ optical phantoms

Physical property	Value
Shore Hardness	84 D
Refractive Index	1.521 ± 0.006
Anisotropy Factor	0.62 ± 0.015

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