



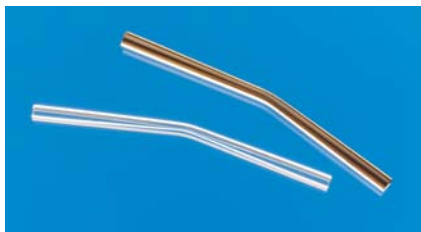
it's a fact

To eliminate connections that may leak and to ensure longer column lifetime, use our unique Integra-Guard® Column. See **page 35**.

Connectors for Fused Silica Columns



Vu2 Union® Connector
(See page 289.)



Press-Tight® Connectors
(See pages 287-288.)



MXT® Union Connector Kit
for Fused Silica
(See page 292.)

Protecting the Analytical Column

The concept of a guard column is to protect the analytical column from becoming contaminated with nonvolatile compounds. The guard column is used to retain nonvolatile material, usually in the first 10-20 cm, not allowing this material to elute onto the liquid phase of the analytical column. As the oven temperature increases, the more volatile target compounds vaporize, elute down the guard column, and refocus at the head of the analytical column without interference from the nonvolatile material left behind.

Using guard columns is advantageous, because they prevent contamination that can cause active sites as well as change the conditions of the focusing zone of the analytical column. Another advantage is that the resolution of closely eluting compounds will not be affected when the column is trimmed during maintenance, because the guard column does not contribute to the resolving power of the analytical column. Using guard columns is a simple, cost-effective way to extend analytical column lifetime.

In summary, the retention gap and guard column are essentially the same products, but are used for different purposes. The deactivated tubing helps focus target analytes at the head of the analytical column for on-column and splitless injections, and also prevents nonvolatile material from contaminating the head of the analytical column.

What type of guard column should be used?

When using a guard column, it is important to match the polarity of the solvent and the polarity of the surface deactivation. Rxi® Guard tubing is good for a wide variety of applications and allows most common solvents (methylene chloride, hexane, isooctane, toluene) to easily wet and create a uniform film on the tubing surface.

If more polar solvents such as methanol or water are used, a polar-deactivated guard column is recommended to allow the solvent to wet the tubing surface. However, polar-deactivated guard columns are not resistant to harsh "water vaporization", which occurs when water in the liquid state is injected into the tubing and rapidly vaporizes (such as in steam cleaning). Hydroguard® deactivation is an alternative for direct aqueous injections. However, a Hydroguard®-deactivated guard column will not allow polar solvents to wet the tubing surface, and may cause solvent beading if the oven temperature is 20°C below the solvent boiling point. Siltek® deactivation creates a highly inert surface for very active compounds such as chlorinated and organophosphorus pesticides. Base-deactivated guard columns reduce adsorption and tailing for amines and other basic compounds.

How is a guard column connected to the analytical column?

To connect the guard column to the analytical column, Vu2-Union®, Press-Tight®, and other connectors are available. MXT® unions, typically used for connecting metal columns together, are now available for fused silica columns. See pages 287 to 292 for information about these connectors.