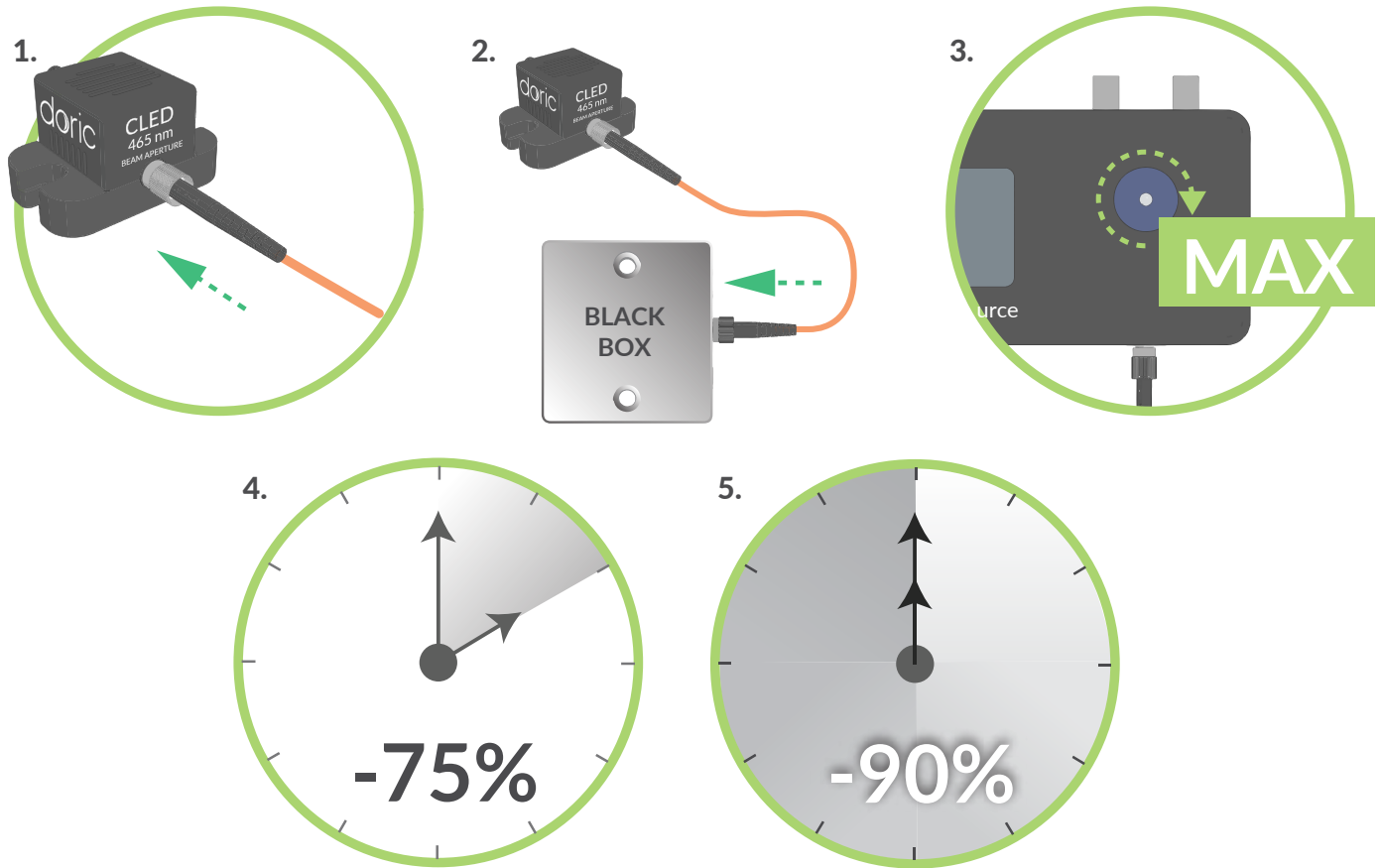


# Patch Cord Photobleaching Procedure

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1. Connect one end of the patch cord to the optical fiber output of a blue (450-500 nm wavelength) LED or laser light source.
2. Place the opposite end of the patch cord in a beam dump or black box\*:
  - Large quantities of blue LED or laser light can be harmful.
  - The disconnected end of the patch cord will emit intense light during the photobleaching process; it is important that it be isolated to avoid harm.
3. Set the output current of the light source at its maximum value.
4. Leave the light on for 1 to 2 hours. An illumination for 1-2 hours should decrease the autofluorescence by approximately 75% (typical) of its initial value .
5. Further photobleaching (12+ hours) can reduce the natural autofluorescence by approximately 90% (typical) of its initial value.
6. Repeat this procedure before each experiment to ensure the minimal level of autofluorescence.

\*The black box is used to dissipate light.

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