Developing Physicochemical Characterization and In vitro Release Test Methods to Probe Drug Release Mechanism from Multivesicular Liposomes

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BACKGROUND

- Bupivacaine (BPV), is an amino-amide local anesthetic, with a short half-life ($t_{1/2}$ ~ 2.7 hours)
- BPV, when encapsulated in a multivesicular liposome (MVL) formulation, exhibits *sustained release* characteristics ($t_{1/2\text{-BPV}}$ ~ 34 hours)
- Multivesicular liposomes (MVLs) consist of a non-lamellar honeycomb structure with *non-concentric* aqueous chambers
- Information is limited on the mechanism of drug release from MVLs – required to advance MVL drug product development, quality assessment, and generic formulation equivalence
- Unique physicochemical properties and complex drug release characteristics *challenge* the design and development of appropriate in vitro release test (IVRT) methods
- It is *hypothesized* that altering IVRT conditions can affect the mechanism of drug release from the MVLs

- Speed and orientation of agitation
- Composition of release medium (presence of protein)
- pH
- Temperature

influences

- Change in liposomal vesicles (e.g. size and morphology of the outer lipid membrane and inner vesicles)
- Drug (e.g. solubility, ionization, and partitioning)
- Lipids (e.g. arrangement and phase transitions)

OBJECTIVES

- Obtain a mechanistic understanding of the physical phenomena involved in drug release from MVLs
- Characterize the vesicle size and morphology of the BPV-MVL complex formulation
- Conduct IVRTs to evaluate the effect of different parameters such as a) agitation, b) composition of release medium, c) temperature, d) pH, and e) dissolution set-up on the release mechanism of the drug over a period of 7 days - expected complete drug release profile (5 times the $t_{1/2\text{-BPV}}$)

METHODS

- MVL vesicle size and morphology: Cryo-scanning electron microscopy (Cryo-SEM), laser diffraction, confocal microscopy
- IVRT set-up and drug release detection techniques:

➢ Rotary shaker (Thermo Scientific™ Tube Revolver / Rotator), n = 3

Dissolution media	50 mM PBS (pH 7) with varied conc. of human serum albumin (HSA)				
Temp.	37°C	*Rotation*	12 rpm	*Conc. BPV - MVLs*	0.782 mg / mL

HPLC Column	Agilent ZORBAX SB-CN 4.6 × 150 mm, 5µm		
Mobile phase	40% Acetonitrile + 0.01% TFA; pH 2.8		
Flow rate	1 mL / min	*Column Temperature*	30°C
λ_{BPV}	263 nm	*Retention time*	~ 2.1 min

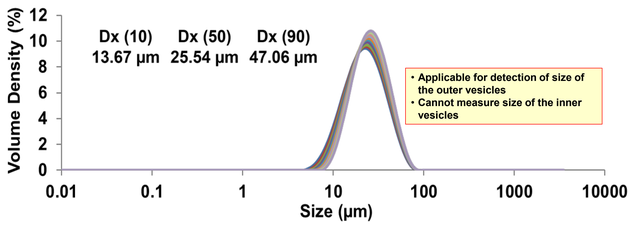
➢ USP II apparatus with Reverse dialysis (Teledyne Hanson Research), n = 3

Dissolution media	pH 5, pH 6 (citrate phosphate buffer) ; pH 7 (phosphate buffer); pH 10 (carbonate buffer)		
Temperature	25°C, 31°C, 37°C and 40°C	*Agitation*	120 rpm, 240 rpm

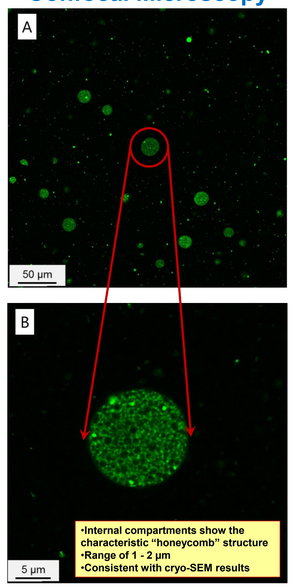
Dialysis cartridges	100 kDa (MWCO) cellulose ester membrane conditioned with SDS
Drug detection	In situ UV-Vis fiber optic probe
Conc. BPV - MVLs	0.58 mg / mL

RESULTS: MVL Vesicle Size and Morphology

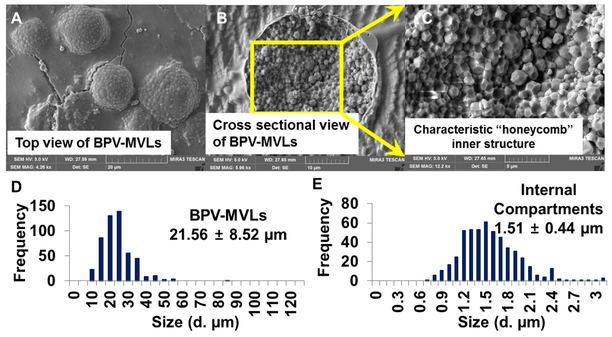
Laser Diffraction



Confocal Microscopy

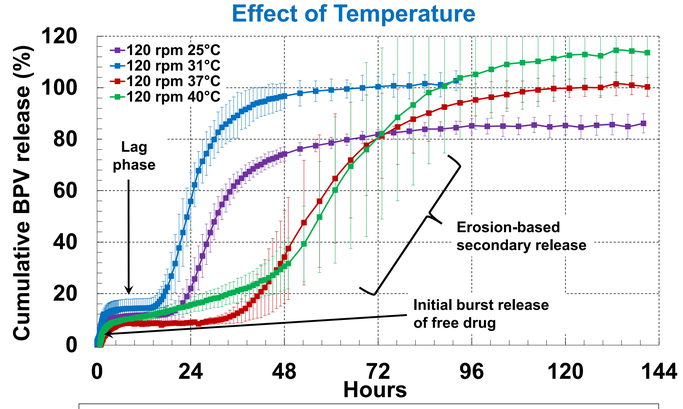


Cryo-SEM



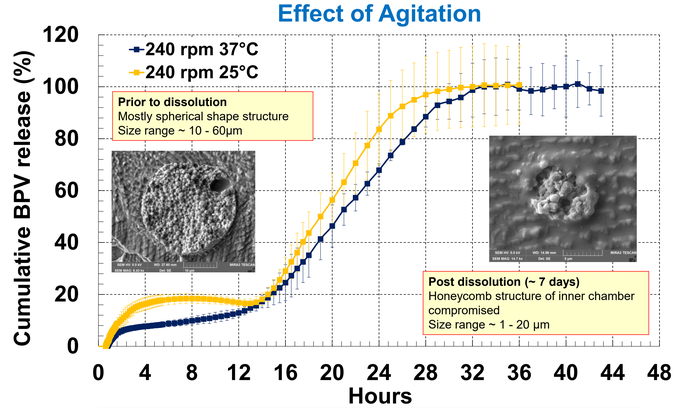
RESULTS: In vitro Drug Release – USP II with Reverse Dialysis + in situ UV

Effect of Temperature



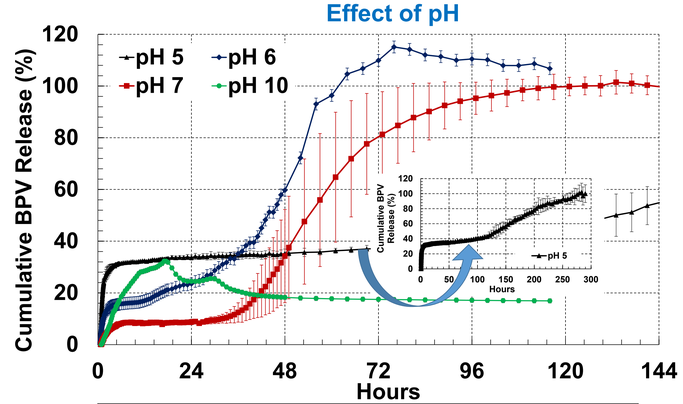
•Temp. influences the lag phase and the secondary release phase
•Temp. close to T_m of the lipids (~ 41°C) cause more variable release in the secondary release phase

Effect of Agitation



•Higher agitation releases the drug faster, irrespective of the temperature (in comparison to 120 rpm – please see above)

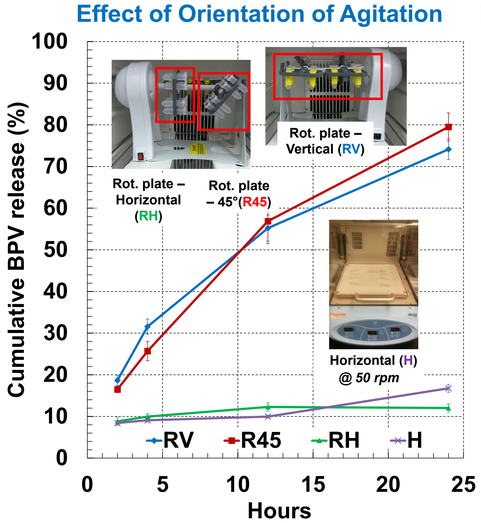
Effect of pH



•pH ↓ higher water solubility of BPV (~ 40 mg/mL) ↑
•pH ↑ ionization of BPV (pKa = 8.4) ↓ , water solubility ↓

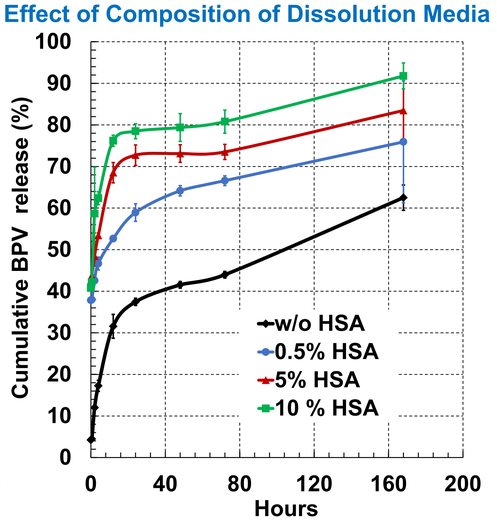
RESULTS: In vitro Drug Release – Rotary Shaker + HPLC

Effect of Orientation of Agitation



Initial release in RV and R45 orientations is *greater* compared to RH and H orientations

Effect of Composition of Dissolution Media



Presence of HSA in 50 mM PBS caused accelerated release of BPV from the MVLs under RV rotation

CONCLUSIONS

- BPV MVLs - spherical particles with complex internal compartment morphology
- Possible mechanism/s of release: combination of diffusion (initial burst), rearrangement of internal vesicles, physical degradation (secondary release)
- IVRT– Rotary shaker (captures a *biphasic* profile)
  - Orientation of agitation and presence of HSA influence BPV release
- IVRT– Reverse dialysis – USP II coupled with in-situ UV fiber optic (captures a *triphasic* profile)
  - Discern both the initial diffusion burst release (~ 2 – 4 hr) and the secondary release, likely triggered by physical degradation of MVLs
  - *Advantage* - continuous monitoring of BPV release
  - Initial burst release was primarily influenced by the pH, while the lag and secondary release were impacted by the temperature, agitation and pH

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