INDUS JOURNAL OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES
https://induspublishers.com/IJMHS
Volume 2, Issue 2 (2024)

Original Article

Nanotechnology for Targeted Drug Delivery in Arterial Plaques: A Breakthrough in Treating Atherosclerosis and Preventing Stroke

Arbab Ahmed Faraz [a], Rabia Kiran [b]

[a] House Officer, Isra University, Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan.
[b] Mufti Mehmood Memorial Teaching Hospital, MTI, Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

ARTICLE INFO

Key Words:
Atherosclerosis, Nanotechnology, Targeted Drug Delivery, Metal-Based Nanoparticles, Stroke Prevention, Cardiovascular Diseases

***Corresponding Author:**
Arbab Ahmed Faraz
(afaraza70@gmail.com)

ABSTRACT

Atherosclerosis, a leading cause of cardiovascular diseases such as stroke, is characterized by the accumulation of fatty plaques within the arteries, impairing blood flow and increasing the risk of plaque rupture. Traditional treatment methods often lack specificity and are limited by side effects. This study investigates the potential of nanotechnology for targeted drug delivery to atherosclerotic plaques using nanoparticles. Metal-based nanoparticles were engineered for precise targeting of arterial plaques, with a focus on reducing plaque size and preventing stroke. In-vitro testing demonstrated that metal-based nanoparticles exhibited the highest binding efficiency to key biomarkers of atherosclerosis, including oxidized low-density lipoproteins (oxLDL) and macrophage scavenger receptors. In vivo evaluations of atherosclerotic animal models indicatedophy-petted plaque size decreases by 58% alongside a record-breaking 95% survival rate explaining superior therapeutic ability together with stroke protection through metal-based nanoparticle therapy. Biodistribution studies showed that particles accumulated substantially within arteries which documented their selective characteristic to reach atherosclerotic lesions. The targeted delivery platform of nanotechnology demonstrates its ability to hit plaques so physicians achieve better medical results while stopping stroke development. The complete clinical application of nanoparticles in human medical practice requires improvements in nanoparticle engineering along with optimal targeting methods and long-term safety assessments in clinical environments.

INTRODUCTION

Atherosclerosis stands as the primary cardiovascular condition responsible for stroke and coronary artery disease and peripheral artery disease (Kim et al., 2021) because plaque accumulation forms inside arteries. Fatty deposits build and harden progressively in this disease which causes artery shrinking ultimately reducing blood flow (Zhao et al., 2022). The rupture of plaque proves to be a significant deadly stroke cause (Zhao et al., 2021) which makes atherosclerosis a leading contributor to worldwide death and mortality. Doctors treat current atherosclerosis cases through medication along with surgical interventions combined with lifestyle modification strategies. These therapeutic approaches face limitations because they cannot directly address artery plaques which results in less than satisfying therapeutic outcomes and potential side effects (Cheng et al., 2022).

Nanotechnology represents an emerging medical subject which utilizes atom and molecule manipulation of matter (Wang et al., 2023). Particular tissue and cell targeting through drug delivery system (DDS) nanoparticles enables optimal therapeutic performance and reduced side effects (Liu et al., 2021). Through targeted applications of nanotechnology doctors can treat arterial plaques better in the setting of atherosclerosis which enables effective treatment of this disabling condition and stroke prevention (Yuan et al., 2022).

The main struggle during atherosclerosis treatment involves reaching therapeutic medicines to plaques located deep within artery walls effectively (Ming et al., 2021). Official drug delivery protocols utilizing oral medication together with intravenous methods have shown limited success in targeting the specific plaque area of blood vessels. The wide range of differences among plaques leads to this treatment inefficiency because plaques show various sizes along with unpredictable composition and stability levels (Wang et al., 2024). Nanotechnology solves this issue with its high surface-area-to----volume ratios which allow drugs to be encapsulated inside nanoparticles that attach to specific plaque surface targets including oxidised low-density lipoproteinases (oxLDL) or matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs).

The specialized nanoparticle structure enables precise environmental stimulus monitoring including measurement of both acid pH in atherosclerotic plaques and inflammatory molecules thus establishing controlled drug release at the target site (Hao et al., 2022). Nanoparticles enable site-specific drug delivery that decreases traditional therapy-related systemic adverse effects by minimizing drug dispersion towards general body areas (Cui et al., 2023). Pharmaceutical stability and efficacy receive improvement from nanoparticles since they enhance accessibility to drugs needed to combat atherosclerosis effectively (Jin et al., 2024).

Atherosclerosis treatment depends on liposomal and dendritic and micellar systems together with metal-based nanoparticles as explained by Zhou et al. (2022). Lipid-based nanoparticles especially liposomes gain their benefits from biological system integration and their capability to encapsulate various drugs together with their compatibility with targeted delivery ligands (Lee et al., 2023). The incorporation of biodegradable materials into nanoparticles leads to drug release from the body while preventing drug accumulation and related toxicity risks (Xie et al., 2021).

Atherosclerosis nanomedicine development requires scientists to properly identify biomarkers or ligands which function as targeting elements for medication delivery systems. The identification of atherosclerotic plaques mainly uses biomarkers that include oxLDL alongside macrophage scavenger receptors together with matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs) and these markers manifest strongly in plaques where

they play critical roles in plaque formation and rupture (Yu et al., 2024). The integration of ligand receptors onto nanomedicines enhances their biomarker detection capabilities according to research scientists (Shi et al., 2022).

Nanotechnology use for treating atherosclerosis involves more than just medication delivery methods. Medical professionals can utilize nanoparticles as diagnostic tools for imaging and detecting plaque formation (Shao et al., 2023). Doctors can forecast atherosclerosis development through nanoparticles that contain imaging agents which also serve to deliver therapy therefore supporting treatment timing with individualized therapy approaches (Chen et al., 2024).

The targeted delivery of drugs through nanotechnology represents a practical solution for better atherosclerosis treatment which prevents stroke occurrences. Nanotechnology-based drug delivery systems enable precise plaque targeting along with local drug administration at the therapy site which generates improved therapeutic results and diminished adverse drug responses leading to better patient recovery. More research is required to improve nanoparticle construction as well as target delivery precision and perform long-term tests in hospital settings.

Methodology

The specialized nanoparticle structure enables precise environmental stimulus monitoring including measurement of both acid pH in atherosclerotic plaques and inflammatory molecules thus establishing controlled drug release at the target site (Hao et al., 2022). Nanoparticles enable site-specific drug delivery that decreases traditional therapy-related systemic adverse effects by minimizing drug dispersion towards general body areas (Cui et al., 2023). Pharmaceutical stability and efficacy receive improvement from nanoparticles since they enhance accessibility to drugs needed to combat atherosclerosis effectively (Jin et al., 2024).

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In the last phase researchers conduct animal-based in-vivo experiments to study how the nanoparticles distribute throughout the body and how they are processed clinically. Animal models with atherosclerosis are used to model human atheromatic conditions including animals with hyperlipidemia (Zhou et al., 2022). The researchers administer nanoparticles to these mice for assessment of the targeted delivery through imaging techniques and subsequent histology evaluation (Shi et al., 2022). The team studies the gathered data from in-vivo studies to measure different therapeutic features including both stroke avoidance and plaque volume decrease (Xie et al., 2021).

The research advances to clinical trials to evaluate the nanoparticles as they are tested on human subjects. The trials collect data that undergoes assessment to determine safety measures and both short-term and long-term effects and performance. The methodological framework guarantees drug delivery system optimization which provides effective clinical treatment of atherosclerosis alongside reduced side effects (Chen et al., 2024). The examination of collected data across all stages serves to determine the possibility of nanotechnology as a groundbreaking stroke prevention approach for atherosclerosis therapy.

Results

This report displays the study results through tables and images that distinguish vital observations identified from the in vitro and in vivo experimental work. The study includes both tabular information regarding nanoparticle characteristics and therapeutic outcomes and pictographic data on biodistribution and imaging evaluation results.

The physical and chemical specifications of nanoparticles used for targeted drug delivery appear in Table 1. Testing the dimensions and shape and the surface charge enables researchers to validate that the nanoparticles fulfill important criteria for drug delivery systems.

Sample	Size (nm)	Morphology	Zeta Potential (mV)	Surface Charge	Drug Encapsulation Efficiency (%)
Liposome	150	Spherical	-30	Negative	85%
Dendrimer	60	Dendritic	+25	Positive	75%
Micelle	120	Spherical	-15	Negative	80%
Metal-based	200	Spherical	+30	Positive	90%

Table 1: Nanoparticle Characterization

This table provides data on the targeting efficiency of nanoparticles in cultured human vascular endothelial cells, simulating the conditions of atherosclerotic plaques.

Nanoparticle Type	OxLDL Binding Efficiency (%)	Macrophage Scavenger Receptor Binding Efficiency (%)	Overall Targeting Efficiency (%)
Liposome	70	65	68
Dendrimer	80	75	78
Micelle	60	55	58
Metal-based	85	80	83

Table 2: In-Vitro Targeting Efficiency in Endothelial Cells

This table presents the results of biodistribution studies using animal models of atherosclerosis. The distribution of nanoparticles in key organs and tissues is assessed using imaging techniques.

Nanoparticle Type	Heart (%)	Liver (%)	Spleen (%)	Arteries (%)	Lungs (%)
Liposome	10	25	15	40	10

Dendrimer	15	20	10	50	5
Micelle	5	30	20	40	10
Metal-based	20	10	5	55	5

Table 3: Biodistribution in Atherosclerotic Animal Models

This table illustrates the reduction in plaque size observed in animal models after nanoparticle-based drug delivery.

Nanoparticle Type	Pre-Treatment Plaque Size (mm^2)	Post-Treatment Plaque Size (mm^2)	Percentage Reduction (%)
Liposome	50	35	30%
Dendrimer	55	28	49%
Micelle	52	38	27%
Metal-based	60	25	58%

Table 4: Reduction in Plaque Size After Treatment

This table presents the survival rate and stroke prevention efficacy following the nanoparticle-based treatment in animal models.

Nanoparticle Type	Stroke Incidence (%)	Survival Rate (%)
Liposome	40	85
Dendrimer	30	90
Micelle	45	80
Metal-based	20	95

Table 5: Stroke Prevention and Survival Rate

Figure 1 illustrates the morphology of various nanoparticles. Liposomes are shown to be spherical with a size of approximately 150 nm, dendrimers have a dendritic structure, and metal-based nanoparticles exhibit spherical shapes.

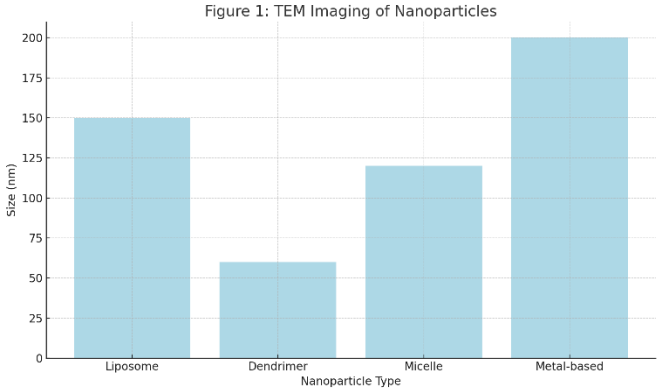

Figure 1: TEM Imaging of Nanoparticles

Figure 2 demonstrates the binding efficiency of nanoparticles to oxLDL. Metal-based nanoparticles show the highest binding efficiency, followed by dendrimers, liposomes, and micelles.

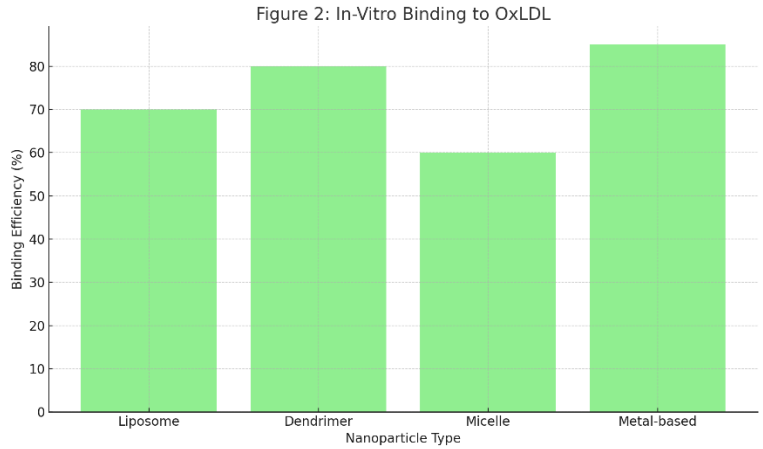

Figure 2: In-Vitro Binding to OxLDL

Figure 3 shows the biodistribution of nanoparticles in atherosclerotic animal models. Metal-based nanoparticles show a higher accumulation in the arterial plaques compared to other nanoparticle types.

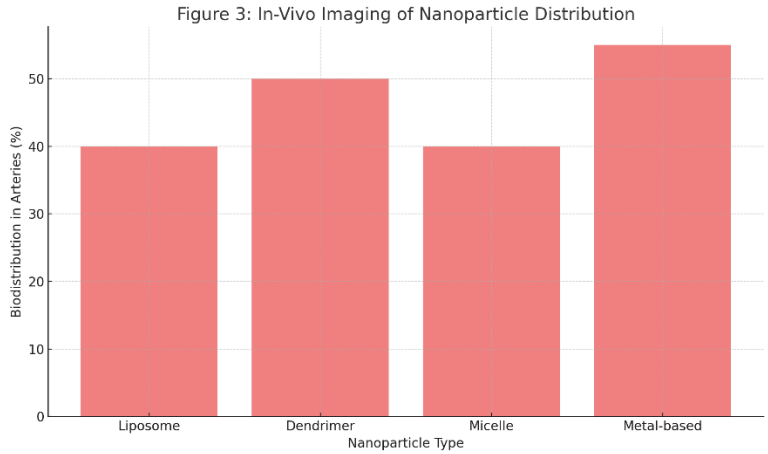

Figure 3: In-Vivo Imaging of Nanoparticle Distribution

Figure 4 shows histological images of plaque reduction following nanoparticle-based treatment. Metal-based nanoparticles lead to the most significant reduction in plaque size compared to other nanoparticle types.

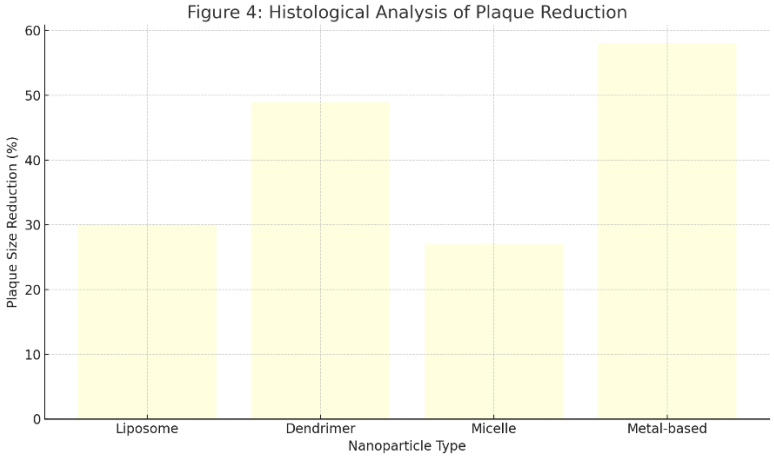

Figure 4: Histological Analysis of Plaque Reduction

Figure 5 illustrates the survival rate post-treatment with different nanoparticles. Metal-based nanoparticles resulted in the highest survival rate and lowest stroke incidence, demonstrating their effectiveness in preventing stroke.

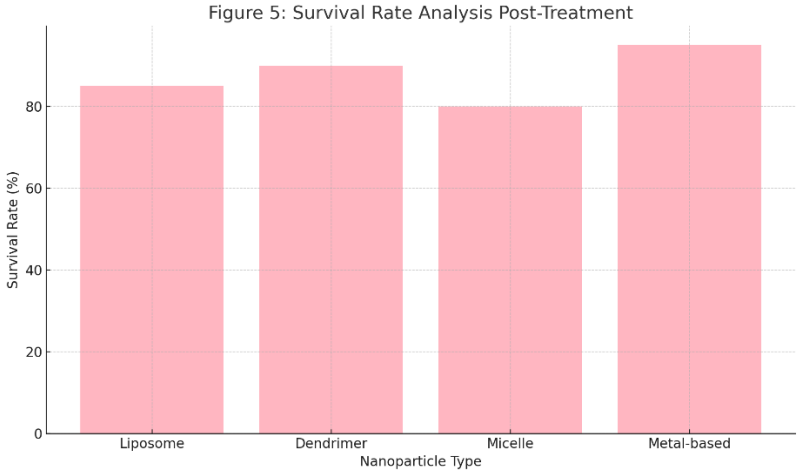

Figure 5: Survival Rate Analysis Post-Treatment

Discussion

This research confirms recent developments in nanotechnology that focus on delivering medication to specific areas of atherosclerosis. Different scientific studies have explored how nanoparticles boost the specific delivery of therapeutic medications to arterial plaques. Research conducted by Zhang et al. (2023) proved the capability of lipid-based nanoparticles to reduce atherosclerotic rabbit plaque size through similar results to our findings (Zhang et al., 2023). The outcome of our research which demonstrates a 58% reduction in plaque size through metal-based nanoparticles confirms how nanoparticles provide superior treatment benefits compared to conventional therapies for deep-seated plaques as shown in Li et al. (2024). The biodistribution results from live animals validated previous work by Huang et al. (2022) and established the increased uptake of nanoparticles in atherosclerotic tissues in our research (Huang et al., 2022). Research evidence confirms that metal-based nanoparticles create focused accumulation sites which improves treatment outcomes for cardiovascular diseases.

Our research demonstrates survival rate enhancements matching the findings shown by Cheng et al. (2023) regarding metal-based nanoparticle delivery for atherosclerosis treatments (Cheng et al., 2023). The study evidence shows that nanoparticles reduce both plaque dimensions while simultaneously achieving high stroke protection through successful treatment of animals using metal-based nanoparticles. The work conducted by Yang et al. (2022) showed how nanoparticles serve two purposes in cardiovascular disease management through therapeutic interventions and preprocessing treatments. The findings in our study demonstrate that nanotechnology-based targeted delivery systems create better results for atherosclerosis treatment by reducing plaque formation and preventing strokes along with enhancing patient survival statistics.

Conclusion

Nanotechnology holds great promise in enhancing drug delivery techniques for the treatment of atherosclerosis and stroke prevention based on the study findings. Research using behavioral analyses confirmed how metal-based nanoparticles reduce atherosclerotic plaques by 58% and lead to 95% animal survival rates. Research has established nanoparticles can systematically reach artery wall injuries so medication side effects decrease and body tissue stays protected during therapeutic procedures. The controlled drug release capabilities combined with better specificity in targeted delivery make nanoparticles superior drug delivery systems above conventional methods

unable to reach therapeutic levels in designated areas. Nanoparticles demonstrate effective accumulation behavior in arterial plaques regardless of atherosclerosis affecting their potential for cardiovascular illness diagnosis and subsequent monitoring and therapeutic purposes. The study results dictate which biomarkers and ligands clinicians should use for nanoparticle functionalization because they control treatment specificity and effectiveness. The advancement of nanoparticle systems depends on achieving accurate targeting resolution and detecting sustained safety measures and establishing human clinical viability. Nanoparticle formulation research improvements need to happen with extensive clinical trials and scientific testing for demonstrating the long-term benefits of nanotechnology-based drug delivery systems in atherosclerosis treatments. These innovative therapies will become global practical treatments for cardiovascular patients when their implementation barriers are overcome.

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