RESEARCH ARTICLE

Silver and Iron Nanoparticles: Green Synthesis and Characterization

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ABSTRACT

Biosynthesized nanoparticles (NPs) are gaining traction because they leverage physiologically active plant secondary metabolites, enabling eco-friendly synthesis and offering exclusive biological benefits. This innovative nanomedicine technology shows great promise in medicine, providing a novel method for drug delivery and treatment. The advancement of biosynthesized nanomedicine has notable implications for the pharmaceutical and medical sectors, presenting a more precise and effective way to address diseases. This paper introduces a cost-effective, environmentally friendly, and dependable method for synthesizing silver and iron NPs. The method involves employing the aqueous leaf extract of *Vallisneria spiralis* Linnaeus. The biosynthesized NPs were analyzed utilizing several methods, including transmission electron microscope (TEM), dynamic light scattering (DLS), UV−visible spectroscopy, and ICP-MS.

Keywords: *Vallisneria spiralis*, Ag-NPs, Fe-NPs, Green synthesis, Characterization.

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INTRODUCTION

Biosynthesized nanomedicine refers to the usage of biological processes in the direction of producing nanoparticles (NPs) that are employed in medical applications, for example drug delivery and imaging. While the provided context does not explicitly define biosynthesized nanomedicine, it can be inferred that this approach involves leveraging the exclusive properties of NPs synthesized through biological means for therapeutic and diagnostic purposes.[1-3] The history and development of nanotechnology in medicine, often termed nanomedicine, have been marked by significant milestones. Nanotechnology's inception dates back to the conceptualization of manipulating matter at the nanoscale, with subsequent advancements leading to its application in several medical fields, including drug delivery, imaging, and regenerative medicine. The evolution of nanomedicine has been characterized by interdisciplinary efforts to harness nanoscale materials for improving medical interventions.[4-6] Nanotechnology's importance and significance in medicine are profound. It has revolutionized healthcare by enabling targeted drug delivery (TDDS) systems that improve therapeutic outcomes and reduce side effects, enhancing the precision of medical diagnostics and fostering innovations in regenerative medicine. NPs' ability in the direction of penetrating biological barriers as well as gathering next to disease locations has increased the bioavailability of therapeutic agents, while novel contrast agents based on nanomaterials have improved imaging techniques. Additionally, nanomaterials have been instrumental in advancing tissue engineering and organ transplantation.[7-10] The biosynthesized nanomedicine is an emerging field that utilizes biologically produced NPs for medical applications. Nanotechnology has enabled more effective and precise medical interventions, highlighting its critical role in advancing medicine.[11-13]

Biosynthesized nanomedicines show significant promise for TDDS, medical diagnostics and imaging, cancer therapy, wound healing, and tissue engineering. TDDS is enhanced by the use of NPs, which can be functionalized in the direction of delivering therapeutic agents unswervingly to specific sites, thereby increasing efficacy and dropping side effects.[14-17] In the realm of diagnosis and imaging, NPs offer novel approaches for molecular imaging and early diagnosis, particularly in cancer treatment, where early detection is crucial for successful outcomes.[18-20] Interestingly, while cancer therapy and wound healing are distinct fields, they both benefit from the advancements in nanomedicine. NPs are being developed to improve chemotherapy delivery for cancer and enhance wound healing and tissue regeneration by boosting cell growth and differentiation.[21-26] The biosynthesized nanomedicine is a multifaceted field with applications that span from TDDS systems that improve therapeutic outcomes to innovative approaches in cancer therapy.[27-30] Additionally, the role of nanomedicine in wound healing and tissue engineering is underscored by its contribution to improved healing

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processes and tissue regeneration.[31-34] The integration of these applications demonstrates the broad potential of nanomedicine to revolutionize treatment strategies across several medical disciplines.

Biosynthesized nanomedicines offer several advantages, including biocompatibility and low toxicity. Biocompatibility is crucial for any therapeutic agent, as it ensures that the nanomedicine can interact with biological systems without eliciting an adverse immune response. Bottini and Bottini (2012) highlighted that carbon nanotubes have enhanced solubility, improved biocompatibility, and no toxic effects after injection in living animals.[35] Similarly, Madgula *et al*. (2023) emphasize that biologically synthesized nanocarriers are designed to be biodegradable and possess excellent biocompatibility, which is essential for reducing cytotoxicity and preventing the accumulation of the drug in non-target areas.[36] In addition to biocompatibility, biosynthesized nanomedicines are known for their enhanced stability and controlled release properties. Willis *et al*. (2012) discuss therapeutic liposomal powders for pulmonary delivery, which exhibit controlled drug release and increased formulation stability.[37] Pandolfi *et al*. (2016) described the controlled release of bioactive compounds that are advantageous for tissue regeneration.[38] Biosynthesized nanomedicines are advantageous due to their biocompatibility, reduced risk of side effects, and ability to provide stable, controlled release, improving treatment effectiveness and safety.

Nanomedicine, particularly when biosynthesized, offers significant advantages in the realm of targeted therapy and personalized medicine. NPs high surface-to-volume ratio and adjustable surface chemistry allow targeted delivery of drugs to specific tissues, improving efficacy and reducing side effects. Their multifunctional nature also supports simultaneous delivery of multiple drugs tailored to individual patient needs.[39-41] Interestingly, while the focus is often on cancer treatment, the benefits of biosynthesized nanomedicine extend to other diseases as well. For instance, in bone diseases like osteoporosis, NPs can enhance drug delivery and therapeutic effectiveness, offering site-specific targeting and controlled drug release.[42-44] Additionally, in the context of incapacitating drug resistance in malignancy, targeted nanomedicine strategies can enhance drug uptake and intracellular accumulation, addressing the challenge of multidrug resistance (MDR).[45-48] Biosynthesized nanomedicine enables targeted drug delivery by designing nanoparticles that navigate the complex *in-vivo* environment to reach specific sites effectively. The multifunctional capabilities of these nanocarriers also support combination therapies and the advancement of personalized medicine by allowing for the customization of treatment regimens based on individual patient profiles. These advantages underscore the transformative potential of nanomedicine in enhancing therapeutic outcomes across a spectrum of diseases.

Research in biosynthesized nanomedicine focuses on developing advanced nanotherapeutics to enhance clinical outcomes.[49-52] Nanotechnology in medicine shows promise in preclinical cancer studies and may address the restrictions of conventional treatments.[53-56] Nevertheless, the translation of these nanomedicines from bench to bedside is fraught with challenges. These include poor reproducibility in high-volume production, complexities in tumor biology, and an incomplete understanding of nano-bio interactions, which have led to failures in animal studies and clinical trials.[57-59] Advancements in microfluidics and engineering enhance the potential for clinical translation and commercialization of biosynthesized nanomedicine. Despite the hurdles, there is significant encouragement for nanomedicines because of their ability to address diverse disease challenges and the progress made in the field so far. Overcoming barriers like safety, pharmacokinetics, manufacturing, affordability, and regulation is essential to fully realize the potential of these innovations.[60-63] The future of biosynthesized nanomedicine is promising, with ongoing research tackling current limitations and challenges. The potential for clinical translation and commercialization is evident, but it requires a concerted effort to navigate the complex landscape of safety, efficacy, manufacturing, and regulatory considerations. Advancements in nanotechnology are poised for significant advancements, provided that the barriers to innovation and access are effectively addressed.[64-66]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials

All chemicals and reagents utilized during experimentation were of analytical grade and were obtained from Hi-Media.

Methods

Extract preparation

Vallisneria spiralis Linnaeus (*Vallisneria spiralis* L.) leaves were collected from Kanyakumari, India. *Vallisneria spiralis* L. leaves were rinsed, air-dried, and ground into powder. About 25 g of the powder were mixed with 250 mL of water, heated to 80°C, and stirred for 3 hours. The mixture was then filtered and stored at 4°C.

Green synthesis of Ag-NPs

Ag-NPs were synthesized using the leaf extract of *Vallisneria spiralis* L. 10 mL of this extract was mixed with 90 mL of 1 mM silver nitrate solution, heated to 80°C, and stirred for 3 hours. The solution, which changed color from yellow to dark gray, was then cooled for 12 hours and matured for another 24 hours. The Ag-NPs were separated by centrifugation at 15,000 rpm for 20 minutes, freeze-dried, and stored at 4°C.

Green synthesis of Fe-NPs

Fe-NPs were synthesized using FeCl3 and sphagnum extract. 10ml of the extract was added to 100 mL of 0.012M $FeCl_3$ solution, heated to 90°C, and stirred for 2 hours. The mixture changed from yellow to dark red, indicating Fe-NP formation. After cooling for 12 hours and maturing for 24 hours, the particles were centrifuged at 13,000 RPM for 60 minutes at +4°C and rinsed three times with distilled water.

Nanoparticle Characterization

NPs size and stability

The size as well as shape of NPs are important elements that can influence several aspects, including colloidal stability.[69] Dynamic light scattering (DLS) is a crucial method utilized in the direction of analyzing and describing NPs and other colloidal solutions.[70] DLS quantifies the light that is diffused by a laser as it traverses a colloidal solution. By examining the changes in the intensity of scattered light over time, one may gather information about the size of the particle in a solution. The research relies on the diffusive mobility of particles in a solution, known as Brownian motion. The hydrodynamic diameter refers to the diameter of an imaginary sphere that diffuses at the same pace as the particles being studied and is determined by analyzing the time-dependent scattering intensity measurements.[71] The repulsive force between suspended NPs arises from the variation in ZP, which is influenced by the augmentation of surface charge on the particles. Zeta Potential (ZP) measures the electrical potential difference between a nanoparticle's surface and its surrounding fluid, indicating dispersion stability. The hydrodynamic diameters and ZPs of nanoparticles were assessed using the Zetasizer Nano ZS, evaluating size and charge under varying pH conditions.

Transmission electron microscopy (TEM)

TEM is a precise technique for measuring high-magnification pictures of electron beams passing through NPs.[73] The imaging contrast in the transmitted beam is determined by the amplitude and phase variations, which are influenced by the sample thickness and material composition. The essential features of NPs are their mass, volume, and concentration. The volume of a nanoparticle is calculated by measuring its dimensions. The main instrument employed for measuring particle size and subsequently calculating their volume was a TEM. We utilized a JEOL 1010 transmission electron microscope.

Elemental concentration

After calculating the volume of the nanoparticle, the mass can be easily computed by multiplying the volume by the density of the substance.[74] We engaged Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (ICP-MS), make Agilent to directly quantify the elemental concentration of nanoparticle solution.

UV-Visible spectroscopic analysis

UV-visible spectroscopy, using an Agilent 8453 spectrometer, measures light absorption and scattering by nanoparticles in the 200 to 1100 nm range with a 1 nm slit width.[75-78]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Measurements conducted in the UV-visible spectroscopy revealed that VS-Ag-NPs optical properties exhibited in Figure 1 and VS-Fe-NPs optical properties exhibited in Figure 2.

The TEM technique was utilized in the direction of analyzing the morphology of the VS-Ag-NPs and VS-Fe-NPs that were produced utilizing a green synthesis. The produced

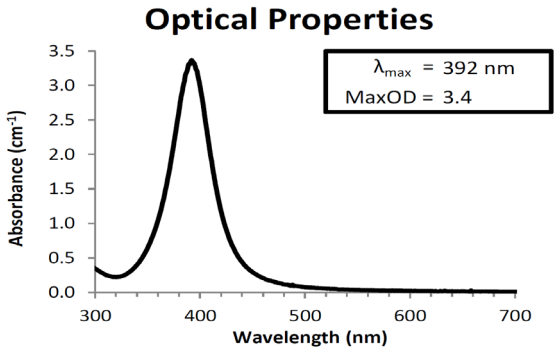

Figure 1: Absorption spectra of VS-Ag-NPs

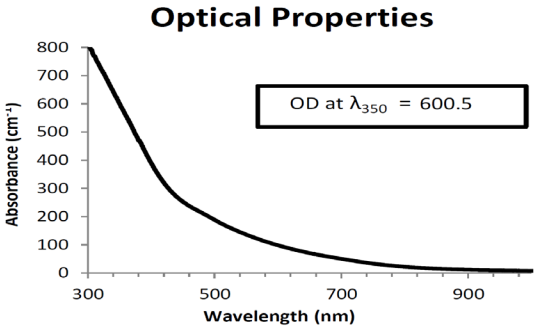

Figure 2: Absorption spectra of VS-Fe-NPs

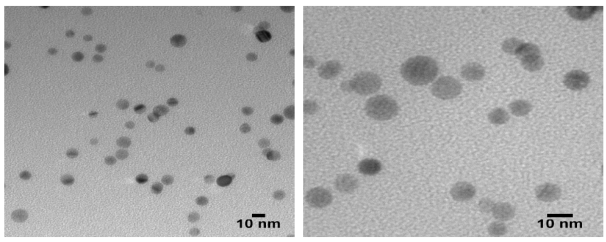

Figure 3: TEM microscopy of VS-Ag-NPs

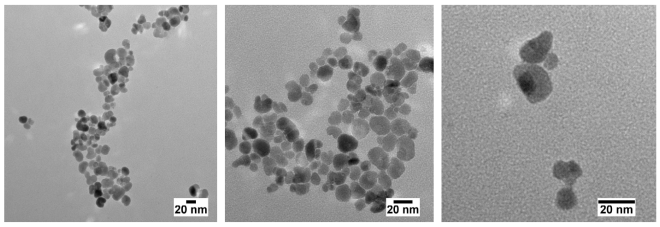

Figure 4: TEM microscopy of VS-Fe-NPs

VS-Ag-NPs showed a spherical morphology, as seen in Figure 3. The produced VS-Fe-NPs exhibited a spherical morphology, with some particles displaying uneven granulation and aggregation, as seen in Figure 4.

The TEM investigation revealed that the average size of VS-Ag-NPs was 10 nm, as seen in Figure 5 and the average size of VS-Fe-NPs ranged was 20 nm, as seen in Figure 6.

At pH 8.2, the hydrodynamic diameter (Dh) was 20 nm, ZP (ζ) was -33 mV, the mass concentration of silver was

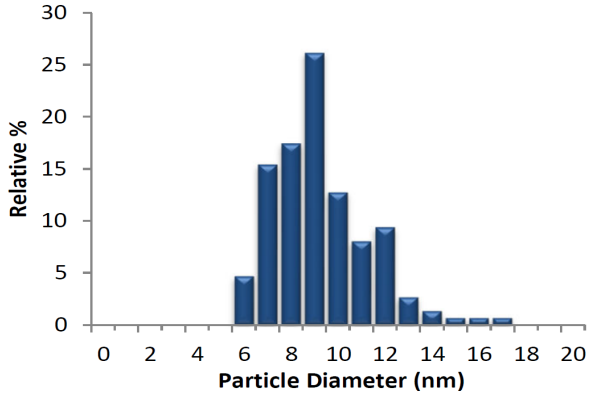

Figure 5: Size distribution plot of VS-Ag-NPs

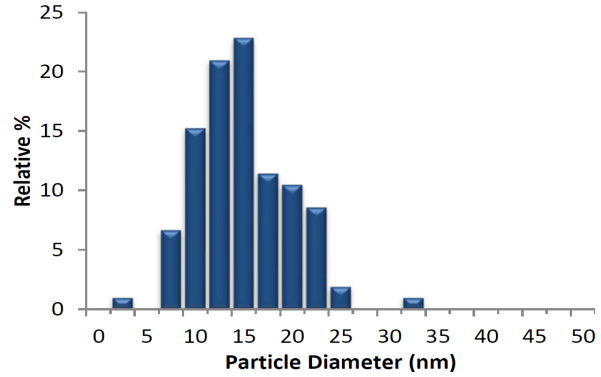

Figure 6: Size distribution plot of VS-Fe-NPs

0.021 mg/mL, and the particle concentration was 4.1E+12 particles/mL for VS-Ag-NPs. At pH 7.2, Dh was 50 nm, ζ was -48 mV, the mass concentration of iron was 20.13 mg/mL, and the particle concentration was 1.7E+15 particles/mL for VS-Fe-NPs.

CONCLUSION

Green synthesized nanomedicines are generally embraced in the medical field because of their several benefits for human health and their minimal likelihood of causing negative effects. The Ag-NPs and Fe-NPs were synthesized from the plant leaf extract of *Vallisneria spiralis* L. utilizing a straightforward and convenient green method that does not require any specific instruments. The Ag-NPs and Fe-NPs synthesized with a green method can be effectively utilized as treatments and carriers for drug delivery.

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