RESEARCH PAPER

A Novel Perspective on Pharmaceutical Research: Mucoadhesive Patches

Sharad R Manapure[1]; Vipinchandra B Pande[2]; Pranjali Khanke[3]; T. Venkatachalam[4]; Saket Singh Chandel[5]*

[1]*Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Gurunanak College of Pharmacy, Nagpur, Maharashtra-440026, India*
[2]*Department of Pharmacology, Gurunanak College of Pharmacy, Nagpur, Maharashtra-440026, India*
[3]*Department of Quality Assurance, Gurunanak College of Pharmacy, Nagpur, Maharashtra-440026, India*
[4]*Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, JKKMMRFs Annai JKK Sampoorani ammal College of Pharmacy, Vattamalai, B. Komarapalayam, Namakkal DT, Tamil Nadu-638183, India*
[5]**Faculty of Pharmacy, Dr. C.V. Raman Institute of Pharmacy, Dr. C.V. Raman University, Kota, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh-495113, India*

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ABSTRACT
Mucosal drug delivery explores the significance of mucoadhesive drug delivery systems in enhancing drug bioavailability and sustained release. It delves into the mechanisms of muco-adhesion, highlighting the role of various polymers. The review also discusses challenges and recent advancements in formulating effective mucoadhesive drug delivery systems, offering insights into their potential applications for targeted and localized drug delivery. It examines the diverse range of polymers employed in mucoadhesive formulations, such as chitosan, alginate, and Carbopol, discussing their specific characteristics and advantages. This addresses the influence of physiological factors, such as pH and mucus composition, on the performance of mucoadhesive systems. Furthermore, light on recent advancements in the field, including the integration of nanotechnology and innovative polymer blends to optimize mucoadhesive properties. It emphasizes the potential of mucoadhesive drug delivery systems in achieving site-specific targeting, minimizing side effects, and improving patient compliance. In addition, the abstract highlights challenges associated with mucoadhesive formulations, including variability in mucosal surfaces and potential toxicity concerns, while proposing strategies to address these issues. A mucosal patch is a drug delivery system designed to adhere to mucosal surfaces, such as those found in the oral cavity, nasal passages, or vaginal area. These patches are formulated with mucoadhesive materials that enable them to stick to the mucosal membrane, allowing for controlled drug release directly at the site of application. The mucosal patch offers advantages like enhanced bioavailability, rapid onset of action, and reduced systemic side effects. These patches can be designed for various therapeutic purposes, including local treatment of mucosal infections, hormone delivery, or management of conditions affecting specific mucosal tissues. In addition to mucoadhesive polymers, mucosal patches may incorporate drug-loaded nanoparticles or microparticles for sustained release.

Keywords: *Mucoadhesion; Bioadhesive polymer; Permeation enhancer; Drug Delivery System; Patches.*
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INTRODUCTION

The introduction of mucosal drug delivery systems signifies a paradigm shift in pharmaceutical formulations, offering innovative approaches to improve therapeutic outcomes. Because of their strong blood supply and permeability, mucosal surfaces such as those in the oral, nasal, buccal, rectal, and vaginal regions offer special opportunities for drug administration. This introduction looks at the possible benefits of mucosal drug delivery systems over more conventional methods as well as the reasoning for their creation. Since mucosal drug delivery avoids the hepatic first-pass metabolism that comes with oral administration, it has the potential to improve bioavailability. Mucosal tissues' close proximity to target areas allows for targeted drug administration, reducing systemic side effects and maximizing therapeutic efficacy. Furthermore, mucosal administration's non-invasiveness improves patient comfort and compliance. The use of mucoadhesive polymers to extend medication residence time on mucosal surfaces is a crucial factor in mucosal drug delivery. Key considerations in mucosal drug delivery include the selection of mucoadhesive polymers to prolong drug residence time on mucosal surfaces. As the field continues to evolve, ongoing research focuses on addressing challenges such as variability in mucosal surfaces and ensuring the safety and biocompatibility of formulations. The introduction concludes by emphasizing the potential of mucosal drug delivery systems to revolutionize drug administration and patient-friendly therapeutic interventions [1-3]

OBJECTIVES

**Author for Correspondence: singhpharma@gmail.com*

A mucoadhesive drug delivery system aims to improve drug retention and absorption by adhering to mucosal surfaces. This can enhance localized drug delivery, improve therapeutic outcomes and reduce systemic side effects. Formulations often include polymers with mucoadhesive properties, like chitosan or hyaluronic acid, to prolong contact with mucosal tissues. Consideration of physicochemical factors, such as viscosity and surface charge, is crucial in designing effective mucoadhesive drug delivery systems. The primary motive for developing mucoadhesive drug delivery systems lies in optimizing drug delivery efficiency. By enhancing adhesion to mucosal surfaces, these systems improve drug retention and absorption, leading to several advantages:

Localized Action: Mucoadhesive systems enable targeted drug delivery to specific mucosal sites, ensuring a concentrated therapeutic effect where needed.

Extended Release: Prolonged contact with mucosal tissues allows for controlled release.

Minimized Systemic Side Effects: By delivering drugs locally, the risk of systemic side effects is minimized, as the drug primarily acts at the site of application.

Improved Bioavailability: Enhanced drug absorption through mucosal membranes can lead to increased bioavailability, optimizing the therapeutic effect of the administered drug.

Treatment of Localized Conditions: Mucoadhesive systems are particularly beneficial for treating conditions affecting mucosal surfaces, such as oral, ocular, nasal, and vaginal disorders.

Reduced First-Pass Metabolism: Localized delivery can reduce first-pass metabolism, increasing the proportion of the drug reaching the target site intact. Overall, mucoadhesive drug delivery systems offer a with conventional drug delivery methods, contributing to improved patient outcomes and treatment efficacy [3-4].

MATERIAL

For buccal mucoadhesive drug delivery systems, selecting materials with suitable properties is crucial. Here are some commonly used materials in formulations for buccal drug delivery:

Hydroxypropyl Methylcellulose (HPMC): This cellulose derivative is often used in buccal films and tablets.

Chitosan: Known for its biocompatibility and mucoadhesive characteristics, chitosan is employed in buccal formulations to enhance drug retention.

Sodium Carboxymethylcellulose (NaCMC): This cellulose derivative is used to improve mucoadhesive strength in buccal drug delivery systems.

Polyvinylpyrrolidone (PVP): PVP improves the adhesion of buccal formulations.

Polyacrylic Acid (Carbopol): Carbopol is a synthetic polymer that can be used to create mucoadhesive gels for buccal drug delivery.

Ethylcellulose: This polymer is often employed in mucoadhesive buccal patches, providing controlled drug release.

Polyethylene Oxide (PEO): PEO can be used in buccal formulations to enhance mucoadhesion and control drug release.

Gelatin: Gelatin-based formulations, such as buccal films, can exhibit good mucoadhesive properties. The choice of material depends on factors like drug characteristics, desired release profile, and patient acceptability. Formulators often combine multiple materials to achieve the optimal balance of mucoadhesion and drug delivery properties in buccal drug delivery systems.

Formulation Consideration for Mucoadhesive Patch:

Drug
Polymers
Backing Membrane
Plasticizers
Penetration Enhancers [5-6]

METHODS

Solvent Casting: Using this method, a liner is coated after the medication and excipients are dissolved in an organic solvent. A thin layer of protective backing material forms once the solvent evaporates. bonded onto a coated release liner sheet. This produces a laminate that may be used to die-cut patches into precise shapes and sizes. (Figure. 1)

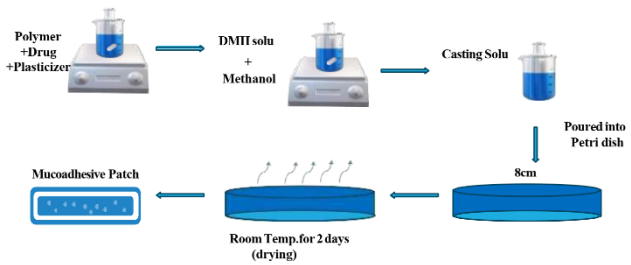

Figure 1. Process of Solvent Casting Method

Hot Melt Extrusion of Films: This technique produces homogeneous material in the shape of granules, tablets, or films by forcing a mixture of pharmaceutical materials through an aperture while they are still molten. Oral disintegrating films, pellets, granules, and controlled-release matrix tablets have all been produced using the hot melt extrusion process.

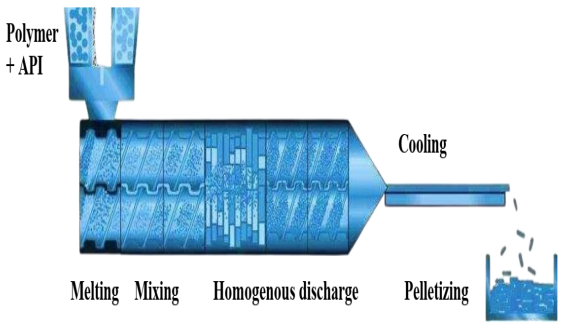

Figure 2. Hot Melt Extrusion

Direct Milling: In this method, the solvent is not used. The drug and excipient are mixed by milling. Then material is rolled on a linear to obtain the thickness. Then backing

membrane is laminated as in the casting method. There are small or no variations between patches.

DRUG:

When designing mucoadhesive drug delivery systems, action is immediate, sustained, local, or systemic. An appropriate medication should be Bucco adhesive drug delivery systems are designed using materials chosen for their pharmacokinetic features.

The medication should possess the following characteristics:

The typical single dose of the medicine should be small.

Drugs with a biological half-life of 2-8 hours are suitable for regulated drug delivery.

Oral delivery results in broader variations or higher values for drug t-max.

Oral administration of the medicine may result in a first-pass effect.

After oral delivery, the medication is passively absorbed.

Several drug properties. Key considerations include:

Lipophilicity/Hydrophilicity: Drugs with moderate lipophilicity tend to be suitable for buccal delivery as they can permeate the oral mucosa effectively.

Molecular Weight: Smaller molecules often exhibit better permeability through the buccal mucosa. Larger molecules may face challenges in absorption.

pKa (Acid-Base Dissociation Constant): The pKa of a drug can affect its ionization state, impacting its permeability through the buccal mucosa. Optimal pH conditions may be considered for ionizable drugs.

Solubility: Solubility in both aqueous and lipid environments is crucial for efficient drug absorption through the buccal mucosa.

Stability: Drugs should remain stable in the buccal environment, resisting degradation due to enzymes or pH variations.

Dose: The dose of the drug must be suitable for buccal administration, considering the limited surface area and absorption capacity of the buccal mucosa.

Therapeutic Window: Drugs with a wide therapeutic window are preferred to reduce toxicity or side effects associated with variations in absorption.

Permeability: Assessing the permeability characteristics of a drug through the buccal mucosa is crucial for predicting its bioavailability.

Half-Life: Drugs with longer half-lives may be preferred to extend the duration of therapeutic action and reduce the frequency of administration.

Particle Size: For particulate drugs, particle size can influence the rate.

Considering these drug properties helps in the rational, optimizing the potential for successful therapeutic outcomes while utilizing the advantages of buccal administration.

Various drugs can be administered through buccal drug delivery systems, depending on therapeutic requirements. Examples include:

Nitroglycerin: Used for angina, nitroglycerin can be administered buccally to provide rapid relief.

Propranolol: A beta-blocker, propranolol, has been formulated for buccal delivery to manage conditions like hypertension and migraines.

Fentanyl: An opioid analgesic, fentanyl, is sometimes delivered via buccal patches for pain management.

Buprenorphine: This opioid analgesic is available in buccal formulations for pain relief and opioid addiction treatment.

Loperamide: Used to treat diarrhea can be formulated for buccal administration.

Estradiol: Hormone replacement therapy can be delivered buccally using oestradiol formulations.

Nicotine: For smoking cessation, nicotine buccal tablets or lozenges are common.

Clonidine: Used for conditions like hypertension, clonidine has been formulated for buccal delivery.

Prochlorperazine: Used to treat nausea and vomiting, buccal formulations of prochlorperazine offer an alternative route of administration.

Selegiline: A medication for Parkinson's disease, selegiline has been formulated for buccal delivery to improve bioavailability.

Rizatriptan: Used for the treatment of migraines, rizatriptan can be administered through buccal tablets for faster relief.

BIOADHESIVE POLYMER

Bioadhesive polymers are materials that can adhere to biological tissues, particularly mucosal surfaces. These polymers are commonly used in drug delivery systems to enhance the residence time of pharmaceutical formulations at specific sites, allowing for controlled release and improved therapeutic efficacy. Some commonly employed bio- adhesive polymers include: [Table.1]

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Table 1. Classification of bio adhesive polymer

BACKING MEMBRANE

A backing membrane is typically used to provide support, reinforcement, or protection to a material or structure. It is commonly used in construction, waterproofing, or manufacturing processes. In the context of a patch, a backing membrane is often a material that provides support or reinforcement to the patch, helping it adheres securely to the surface it's applied to. This can enhance the patch's durability and effectiveness. The choice of backing membrane may vary based on the specific application or the material being patched. A backing membrane on a patch is typically a layer that reinforces and supports the patch material. It helps maintain the patch's shape, adds strength, and assists in ensuring proper adhesion to the surface. The selection of the backing membrane depends on the type of patch and the intended application, such as waterproofing or repairing surfaces.

Polyethylene Film: Provides a moisture barrier.

Polypropylene Fabric: Offers strength and durability.

Rubberized Asphalt Membrane: Used in roofing for waterproofing.

Fiberglass Mesh: Reinforces and stabilizes patches.

Polyester Fleece: Adds strength to patching compounds.

Self-Adhesive Membranes: Have an adhesive layer for easy application [9-10]

PLASTICIZER

Plasticizers are commonly used in buccal patches to enhance flexibility, improve adhesion, and optimize drug release. They help in maintaining the patch's integrity and conforming to the oral mucosa. Commonly used plasticizers like glycerin, propylene glycol, (PEG), triethyl citrate, sorbitol, and acetyl tributyl citrate (ATBC). The specific choice of plasticizer is like the drug's compatibility, patch composition, and desired release characteristics. In buccal patches, plasticizers are often added to enhance the flexibility of the patch. Common plasticizers used in buccal patches include:

Glycerin: Adds flexibility and moisture retention.

Propylene Glycol: Improves patch flexibility and drug release.

Polyethylene Glycol (PEG): Enhances flexibility and solubility.

Triethyl Citrate: Acts as a plasticizer and solubilizing agent.

Sorbitol: Adds flexibility and sweetness.

Acetyl Tributyl Citrate (ATBC): Used as a non-toxic plasticizer. These plasticizers help ensure that the buccal patch conforms to the contours of the oral cavity and maintains proper drug release characteristics. The choice depends on factors such as drug compatibility, patch composition, and desired release profile.

PERMEATION ENHANCER

Permeation enhancers are substances incorporated into buccal patches to improve the absorption of drugs through the oral mucosa. Permeation enhancers in buccal patches exhibit several properties to improve drug absorption through the oral mucosa. Key properties include:

Polymer	Properties
Chitosan	Derived from chitin, chitosan is widely used for its mucoadhesive properties. It can adhere to mucosal surfaces and is biocompatible.
HPMC	This cellulose derivative is often used in oral and buccal drug delivery systems due to its bio adhesive and controlled-release properties.
Carbopol	A synthetic polymer, Carbopol is commonly used in topical and oral formulations for its bio adhesive and thickening properties.
Na CMC	This cellulose derivative is used for its bio adhesive and gelling properties in various drug delivery systems.
PEG	Modified PEG can exhibit bio adhesive properties and is used in diverse drug delivery applications.
PVA	PVA is utilized for its film-forming and bio adhesive characteristics, particularly in ophthalmic drug delivery.
GUM	This microbial polysaccharide is used as a bio-adhesive agent in various drug delivery systems, including oral formulations.

Increased Permeability: Enhancers promote the penetration of drugs across the mucosal membrane, facilitating absorption.

Solubilization: Some permeation enhancers improve drug solubility, aiding in the formulation of patches with better drug availability.

Disruption of Lipid Bilayers: Certain enhancers can alter the structure of lipid layers in cell membranes, enhancing drug permeation.

Decreased Viscosity: Enhancers may reduce the viscosity of the mucosal layer, easing drug diffusion through the oral mucosa.

Safety and Biocompatibility: Effective permeation enhancers must be safe for use in the oral cavity and compatible with the buccal environment.

Stability: Permeation enhancers should maintain stability within the formulation to ensure consistent performance over time.

Selective Action: Ideally, enhancers should selectively affect the permeation of the drug without causing damage to the oral tissues.

The choice of permeation enhancers depends on the specific drug, formulation requirements, and the balance between efficacy and safety considerations. Permeation enhancers are used to improve the absorption and bioavailability of drugs across biological barriers, such as the skin, mucous membranes, or the gastrointestinal tract. In the context of buccal patches, which are applied to the oral mucosa, permeation enhancers serve several purposes:

Increased Drug Absorption: Enhancers help drugs permeate through the oral mucosa more efficiently, enhancing their absorption into the bloodstream.
Improved Drug Solubility: Some enhancers improve the solubility of drugs, especially those with poor water solubility, making them more readily available for absorption.
Enhanced Membrane Permeability: Permeation enhancers can modify the properties of cell membranes, making it easier for drugs to cross the mucosal barrier.
Faster Onset of Action: By facilitating quicker drug absorption, permeation enhancers can contribute to a faster onset of therapeutic effects.
Reduced First-Pass Metabolism: Enhanced absorption may reduce the extent of metabolism that occurs in the liver before the drug reaches systemic circulation.
Common permeation enhancers include surfactants, fatty acids, terpenes, cyclodextrins, and chelating agents. However, the use of permeation enhancers requires careful consideration of safety, as well as their impact on the stability and effectiveness of the drug formulation [11-12] (Table 2).

Table 2. Classification of Permeation Enhancer

PERMEATION ENHANCER	PROPERTIES
SURFACTANTS	Such as sodium lauryl sulfate, which can enhance drug solubility and penetration.
FATTY ACIDS	Like oleic acid, linoleic acid, or glyceryl monolaurate.
CYCLODEXTRINS	They improve their solubility and bioavailability.
CHELATING AGENTS	Such as ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA), which may enhance drug permeation by complexing with metal ions.

Steps:
Manufacturing buccal patches involves several steps. Here's an overview of common methods used in the manufacturing process: [13-14]
Formulation and Material Selection: Develop a formulation that includes the drug and other excipients. Materials that are biocompatible and suitable for buccal administration.
Coating or Lamination: Apply the formulated mixture onto a backing membrane using techniques such as coating or lamination. This forms the drug-containing layer of the buccal patch.
Perforation or Cutting: Introduce perforations or cut the patches into the desired shape and size. This step can facilitate drug release and customization of patch dimensions.
Drying: Allow the patches to dry thoroughly to remove solvent or water content, ensuring stability and consistency in drug content [15-17].
Adhesive Layer Addition (if applicable): If an adhesive layer is part of the design, apply it to the backing membrane to facilitate patch adhesion to the buccal mucosa.
Control and Testing: Conduct quality control tests on samples, including drug content, thickness, weight variation, and adhesion properties.
Packaging: Package the buccal patches in a way that maintains their integrity and protects them from environmental factors. Consider barrier properties and user-friendly packaging.
Labeling and Regulatory Compliance: Ensure that the manufacturing process complies with regulatory standards. Clearly label the patches with relevant information.
Sterilization (if necessary): Depending on the formulation and intended use, sterilization methods may be applied to ensure the patches are free from microbial contamination.
Stability Testing: Conduct stability testing to assess the shelf life under various storage [18-19]

EVALUATION
Buccal patches are evaluated based on factors like drug release, adhesion, and permeation. Testing includes in vitro release studies, adhesion strength assessments, and permeation studies to ensure effective drug delivery through the buccal mucosa. Additionally, stability, bioavailability, and patient compliance are crucial considerations in evaluating the overall performance of buccal patches.
Formulating buccal patches, various evaluations are conducted to ensure their effectiveness:
Physical Appearance: Assess the visual characteristics, ensuring uniformity in color, size, and surface.
Thickness and Weight Variation: Measure the thickness and weight of patches to ensure consistency and adherence to specifications.
Drug Content Uniformity: Analyze multiple patches to confirm uniform distribution of the drug.
In vitro Drug Release: Conduct studies to evaluate the release profile of the drug from the patches over time.
Adhesion Strength: Assess the ability of the patch to adhere to the buccal mucosa, ensuring proper drug delivery.
Moisture Uptake and Loss: Evaluate the patches' response to moisture, crucial for stability and shelf life.
Biocompatibility: Ensure the materials used are biocompatible with the buccal mucosa, minimizing potential irritation.
Permeation Studies: Determine the ability of the drug to permeate through the buccal mucosa, impacting bioavailability.
Stability Studies: Examine the patches under various conditions to assess stability over time.
Microbiological Evaluation: Check for microbial contamination to ensure safety.
Ex vivo Histopathological Examination: Assess the impact of patches on buccal tissue through histopathological analysis.

Patient Acceptance and Compliance: Conduct user studies to evaluate the ease of use and patient compliance with the buccal patches. Comprehensive evaluation across these parameters ensures the safety, efficacy, and practicality of buccal patch formulations [1, 20-22]

PHARMACOLOGICAL ACTIVITIES

Buccal patches can be designed to exhibit various pharmacological activities based on the drug they deliver. Some examples include:

Pain Management: Buccal patches can deliver analgesics for localized pain relief, offering a controlled release for prolonged efficacy.

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT): Hormones such as estrogenic or testosterone can be delivered through buccal patches for hormone replacement in conditions like menopause or hormonal imbalances.

Antiemetic Action: Buccal patches can deliver antiemetic drugs, helping to control nausea and vomiting.

Cardiovascular Medications: Drugs targeting the cardiovascular system, such as nitroglycerine for angina, can be delivered through buccal patches.

Nicotine Replacement: Buccal patches are used for smoking cessation by delivering controlled doses of nicotine.

Central Nervous System (CNS) Medications: Some buccal patches deliver drugs that act on the central nervous system, such as anti-seizure medications.

The specific pharmacological activity depends on the drug incorporated into the patch and the therapeutic goal [22].

CONCLUSION

Buccal patches show a versatile and effective drug delivery with numerous pharmacological applications. Their ability to provide controlled release, avoid first-pass metabolism, and offer localized effects makes them valuable in various therapeutic areas like antiemetics, cardiovascular medications, nicotine replacement, and central nervous system interventions. Further research and development in buccal patch technology hold promise for enhancing drug delivery efficiency and expanding their role in diverse medical treatments. buccal patches offer a promising and versatile avenue for drug delivery with several noteworthy features. From pain management through localized analgesics to hormone replacement therapy addressing conditions like menopause, buccal patches cater to a range of medical needs. Their application extends to antiemetics, where they prove valuable in controlling nausea and vomiting. Furthermore, buccal patches find utility in cardiovascular medicine, delivering drugs like nitroglycerin for angina relief [1, 20-22].

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