

Mixed Nanomicelles for Co-delivery of Paclitaxel and Nelfinavir: Preparation and *In vitro* Characterization [†]

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[†] Presented at The Sixth International Meeting of Pharmaceutical Sciences (RICiFa), November 10-12, 2021, Córdoba, Argentina

Received: 26.04.2022; Revised: 4.05.2022; Accepted: 6.05.2022; Published: 8.05.2022

Abstract: Drug repurposing represents a growing trend to discover new indications of already existing drugs. Nelfinavir (NFV), an HIV protease inhibitor, has been shown to have potential sensitization effects when co-administered with antineoplastic drugs. In this study, we prepared micelles of Soluplus[®] and D- α -tocopheryl poly(ethylene glycol) succinate (TPGS) for the co-delivery of paclitaxel (PTX) and NFV to enhance the anti-cancer activity of PTX in human leukemic cell lines (Jurkat, K562 and Kv562). The images from transmission electron microscopy showed that PTX-NFV-loaded (2 mg/mL and 5 mg/mL) micelles were spherical in shape. The average particle size measured by dynamic light scattering was found to be close to 60 nm. The ¹H NMR measurements confirmed the incorporation of PTX and NFV into the micelle. A stability study of freeze-dried micelles, which was performed by monitoring drug content and particle size, demonstrated good storage stability for at least 3 months at room temperature. Also, micelles exhibited dose-dependent hemolytic effects in mouse erythrocytes. Assessment of cell viability using MTS assay indicated that drug-resistant Kv562 cells were more sensitive to PTX-NFV-loaded micelles, exhibiting an approximately 7-fold greater decrease in viability than PTX solution, as evaluated by the IC₅₀ value ($p < 0.05$) after 48 h. Therefore, Soluplus[®]-TPGS micelles could be a promising nanocarrier for the co-delivery of PTX and NFV.

Keywords: micelles; Paclitaxel; Nelfinavir; co-delivery; cancer cells.

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Funding

This research was funded by Universidad de Buenos Aires, grant UBACyT 20020190200398BA, UBACyT 20020170100362BA and PIDAE 2018 (SP28 – FFYB - CHIA).

Acknowledgments

This research has no acknowledgment.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.