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- **Original Research Paper**
- Alkaline phosphatase mediated synthesis of carbon
- nanotube-hydroxyapatite nanocomposite and its
- application for electrochemical determination of luteolin

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ABSTRACT

A nanocomposite of hydroxyapatite (HAP)-carbon nanotube (CNT) was synthesized by in-situ transformation of CNT-calcium phenyl phosphate (CaPP) with the assist of alkaline phosphatase. The nanocomposite was characterized by powder X-ray diffraction (XRD), Fourier transform infrared (FTIR) and transmission electron microscope (TEM). Then the HAP-CNT was cast onto a glassy carbon electrode (GCE) and used as a sensing platform for the electrochemical determination of luteolin. The electrochemical experiments indicated that the HAP-CNT modified GCE (HAP-CNT/GCE) could greatly enhance the electrochemical response of luteolin. A series of experimental parameters including the type and pH value of supporting electrolyte, accumulation time and accumulation potential were optimized. The electrochemical parameters such as electron transfer rate constant and electron transfer coefficient of luteolin at the HAP-CNT/GCE were also investigated. Under the optimal conditions, the reduction peak currents presented a good linear relationship with the concentration of luteolin in the range of 4.0×10^{-7} - 1.2×10^{-5} M. The detection limit was estimated to be 8.0×10^{-8} M.

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1. Introduction

49 Flavonoids, a type of natural polyphenolic compounds that are abundant in fruits and vegetables, received great interest in the 50 51 biochemical and pharmacological fields due to their antioxidant free-radical scavenging, anti-inflammatory, anti-carcinogenic and 52 other beneficial properties [1]. The luteolin (3',4',5',7-tetrahydroxy 53 flavone) is one of the most important flavonoids that can be 54 55 obtained from in celery, green pepper, parsley, perilla leaf and cha-56 momile tea. Recent studies have shown that this compound has significant biological effects including anti-inflammatory, anti-57 bacterial and anti-oxidant, as well as anti-proliferative activity 58 against cancer cells [2-4]. The accurate and sensitive determina-59 60 tion of luteolin is a critical step for the evaluation of its biological and medical effects. Up to date, various methods have been 61

reported for the determination of luteolin, including highperformance liquid chromatography [5,6], capillary electrophoresis [7,8], spectrophotometry [9], et al. However, these methods have their inherent shortcomings of time-consuming, low sensitivity, expensive instrument and/or complicate operation process. Recently, based on the excellent electrochemical activity of luteolin from the catechol group on B ring (3',4'-dihydroxyl), the electrochemical method receives considerable interest for luteolin determination due to its fascinating advantages of high sensitivity, rapid response, simplicity of operation and cost-effectiveness [10].

Calcium hydroxyapatite (Ca10(PO4)6(OH)2, HAP) is a major com-72 ponent of biological hard tissues such as teeth and bones in animal 73 organism [11,12]. It has been established that the surface of HAP 74 possesses abundant of P-OH groups acting as adsorption sites 75 for various molecules [13]. Therefore, it had been extensively 76 applied in many areas owning to its good biocompatibility and rich 77 multi-adsorbing sites. For example, it can be used as adsorbents for 78 chromatography to separate protein and enzyme, catalysts for 79 alcohols dehydration, and basic material for artificial teeth and 80 bones preparation [14]. Nanostructured HAP particles with a 81 higher surface area would be more desirable for their use in many 82

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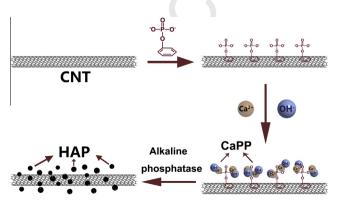
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fields. However, the conductivity of HAP crystals is too low for the
material to be considered a candidate for its use in electrochemical
devices [15,16]. One approach to improve the conductivity of HAP
is to dope the material with metal ions or electro-conductive
nanoparticles [17,18].

Carbon nanotubes (CNTs) with one-dimensional and hollow 88 89 structure are one of the most fascinating nanometer materials. 90 Since the discovery by Iijima [19], CNTs have attracted worldwide 91 interests in diverse areas including materials science [20], sensors [21,22], transistors [23,24], field-emission display [25], and energy 92 93 storage [26,27] due to their high mechanical strength, excellent 94 thermal conductivity, unique electronic properties and thermal stability. These outstanding characters make CNTs ideal candidates 95 to enhance stiffness, strength and electronic conductivity of the 96 97 composite materials. As a consequence, the nanocomposite of 98 CNT and HAP (CNT-HAP) received great interests, especially in 99 electrochemical field. For example, Safari et al. [28] have synthe-100 sized the CNT-HAP through a microwave-assisted solid state 101 metathesis reaction, and the electrochemical impedance spetroscoppy (EIS) result revealed that the composite had better charge 102 103 transfer capacity than the pristine CNTs due to formation of orga-104 nized electrical functions between the two components. Li et al. 105 prepared a nanocomposite film of HAP-TiO₂-CNT via the ultrason-106 ication mixing method, and used the nanocomposite as a platform 107 to immobilize glucose oxidase for glucose sensing analysis [29]. 108 However, it is difficult to precisely control the chemical and structural uniformity of CNT-HAP prepared by physical mixing or 109 110 microwave assisted solid state metathesis in these work. The direct deposition of HAP on CNTs via liquid-phase reaction is a proper 111 112 route to resolve this problem [30]. But because the CNTs are 113 hydrophobic and easy to aggregate in aqueous solution, the func-114 tionalization of CNTs via strong acid oxidation to improve the dispersibility is necessary before the controllable deposition of HAP 115 116 [31].

117 In this work, the nanocomposite of HAP-CNT was synthesized 118 through a novel alkaline phosphatase mediated transformation 119 process using CNT-calcium phenyl phosphate ($C_6H_5PO_4Ca\cdot nH_2O$: 120 CaPP) as the source (Scheme 1). Firstly, the phenyl phosphoric acid 121 was interacted with CNTs via π - π stacking and hydrophobic force 122 to obtain a well dispersed phenyl phosphoric acid-introduced CNT solution. Secondly, the CaPP was prepared on CNT surface by react-123 ing phenyl phosphoric acid on CNT with Ca²⁺ added in the solution. 124 Followed by, the phenyl phosphoric acids in CaPP on CNT surface 125 126 were hydrolyzed by adding alkaline phosphatase at 36.5 °C to recrystallize as HAP. Thus, the HAP particles were generated and 127 128 in-situ deposited on the surface of the CNT. The transformation pro-129 cess was characterized by powder X-ray diffraction (XRD), Fourier 130 transform infrared (FTIR) and transmission electron microscope



Scheme 1. Diagram for the transformation process from CaPP-CNT to HAP-CNT with the assist of alkaline phosphatase.

(TEM). Moreover, based on its multiple active sites, high surface 131 area and excellent conductivity, the nanocomposite was used as 132 an electrochemical sensing material for the determination of lute-133 olin. Under the optimum conditions, differential pulse voltammetry 134 (DPV) showed a good correlation with the concentration of luteolin 135 over the range from 4.0×10^{-7} to 1.2×10^{-5} M, and detection limit 136 was estimated to be 8.0×10^{-8} M. This work opens a new way for 137 the synthesis of HAP-CNT composite, and broadens its application 138 in electrochemical field. 139

2. Experimental

2.1. Materials and apparatus

Luteolin was purchased from Sigma-Aldrich Co., Ltd. (China). 142 Multi-walled carbon nanotubes (diameter 40-60 nm) and Ca 143 (OH)₂ were purchased from Wako Pure Chemical Industries Co., 144 Ltd. (Japan). Phenyl phosphoric acid was purchased from Tokyo 145 Chemical industry Co., Ltd. (Japan). Alkaline phosphatase from 146 bovine intestinal mucosa with specific enzyme activity of 147 1.5 units mg⁻¹ was purchased from Biozyme Laboratories (Japan). 148 Tris (hydroxymethyl) aminomethane (Tris) was provided by Xilong 149 Chemical Company (China) and Tris-HCl buffer solution was pre-150 pared by adding appropriate HCl in 10 mM Tris. Phosphate buffer 151 saline (PBS) with various pH was prepared through mixing 152 0.02 M NaCl and 0.05 M NaH₂PO₄-Na₂HPO₄ with different ratios. 153 Britton-Robinson (B-R) buffer solution was prepared by adding 154 0.4 M acetic acid and 0.4 M boric acid into a solution of 0.4 M phos-155 phoric acid. Chitosan (CS) was purchased from Aladdin Reagent 156 Co., Ltd. (China). All the other chemicals were of analytical reagent 157 grade and obtained commercially. Doubly distilled water was used 158 throughout the experiments. 159

Powder X-ray diffraction (XRD) patterns of the materials were obtained from a Rigaku diffractometer with a Ni-filtered Cu k α radiation (30 kV and 16 mA, Japan). Particle morphology was observed by a TOPCON transmission electron microscope (TEM, Japan). Transmission IR spectra were recorded by a KBr method using a JASCO Fourier transform infrared (FTIR) spectrometer with a resolution of 4 cm⁻¹ (Japan). Electrochemical measurements were carried out on a CHI 650C electrochemical analyzer (China) in connection with a conventional three-electrode system: a glassy carbon electrode (GCE diameter = 2 mm) modified with different materials was used as the working electrode, Ag/AgCl electrode as the reference electrode, and Pt wire as the counter electrode.

2.2. Preparation of HAP-CNT

First, the CaPP–CNT nanocomposite was prepared by a simple sonication method [32]. In brief, 10.0 mg CNTs were dispersed in 100 mL water free from CO_2 in a sealed polypropylene vessel and ultrasonicated for 2 h. Then 50.0 mL of 0.106 mM aqueous phenyl phosphoric acid solution was added. After the mixture was sonicated for 1 h, 100 mL of 8.85 mM Ca(OH)₂ was added, and then aged at 37 °C for 24 h. Afterwards, the product were filtered, thoroughly washed with water and finally dried at 50 °C in an air oven for 1 day, thus the sample of CaPP–CNT was obtained.

Transformation of HAP-CNT from CaPP-CNT was carried out as 182 follows: 235 mg of the synthesized CaPP-CNT was dispersed into 183 210 mL of water free from CO₂ under stirring at room temperature. 184 The aqueous solution including 15 mg alkaline phosphatase was 185 then added into the solution suspending the CaPP-CNT particles. 186 The pH of the suspension was adjusted to 9.6 by adding 1.0 M 187 aqueous NH₃ solutions and the suspension was treated at 36.5 °C 188 for 48 h in an incubator. After aging, the product was filtered, thor-189 oughly washed with water and finally dried at 50 °C in an air oven 190

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