



# Advanced materials and processing for drug delivery: The past and the future<sup>☆</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Design and synthesis of efficient drug delivery systems are of vital importance for medicine and healthcare. Materials innovation and nanotechnology have synergistically fueled the advancement of drug delivery. Innovation in material chemistry allows the generation of biodegradable, biocompatible, environment-responsive, and targeted delivery systems. Nanotechnology enables control over size, shape and multi-functionality of particulate drug delivery systems. In this review, we focus on the materials innovation and processing of drug delivery systems and how these advances have shaped the past and may influence the future of drug delivery.

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## Contents

1.	Introduction . . . . .	105
2.	Advances in materials design . . . . .	106
2.1.	Early FDA approved drug carriers . . . . .	106
2.1.1.	Biodegradable drug carrier: PLGA. . . . .	107
2.1.2.	Other FDA approved biodegradable DDS . . . . .	107
2.2.	Block copolymers . . . . .	107
2.3.	Polymer drug conjugates . . . . .	107
2.4.	Novel use of nature polymers . . . . .	108
2.5.	Recombinant protein-based drug carriers . . . . .	108
2.6.	Smart DDS. . . . .	109
2.7.	Combinatorial chemistry and polymer library . . . . .	109
3.	Conventional NP fabrication . . . . .	110
3.1.	One-step NP formation: nanoprecipitation . . . . .	110
3.2.	Two-step NP formation: emulsification-based methods . . . . .	110
3.2.1.	Emulsification-solvent evaporation . . . . .	110
3.2.2.	Emulsification-solvent diffusion . . . . .	111
3.2.3.	Emulsification-salting out . . . . .	111

**Abbreviations:** CFL, continuous flow photolithography; DDS, drug delivery system; dex-HEMA, dextranhydroxyethyl methacrylate; EE, encapsulation efficiency; ELPS, elastomer-like proteins; EPR, enhanced permeability effect; GFP, green fluorescence protein; HFR, heparin–folic acid–retinoic acid; HPMA, N-(2-hydroxypropyl) methacrylamide; IPA, isopropyl alcohol; LBL, layer-by-layer; NPs, nanoparticles; O/W, oil-in-water; PAA, poly(acrylic acid); PDMS, polydimethylsiloxane; PEG, poly(ethylene glycol); PEG-DA, poly(ethylene glycol) diacrylate; PEG-PLA, poly(ethylene glycol)-b-poly(lactide); PEI, poly(ethyleneimine); PEO-PPO-PEO, poly(propylene oxide)-poly(ethylene oxide)-poly(propylene oxide); PFPE, perfluoropolyether; PGA, poly(glycol acid)/poly(L-glutamic acid); PLA, poly(lactic acid)/poly(lactide); PLGA, poly(lactide-co-glycolide); PMMA, polymethyl methacrylate; pNIPAAm, poly(N-isopropylacrylamide); PRINT, particle replication in non-wetting template; PS, polystyrene; PTMC, poly(trimethylene carbonate); PVA, poly(vinyl alcohol); RAFT, reversible addition–fragmentation chain transfer; RES, reticuloendothelial system; S-FIL, step-flash imprint lithography; SDS, sodium dodecyl sulphate; SFL, stop flow lithography technique; SLP, silk-like proteins; W/O, water-in-oil; W/O/W, water-in-oil-in-water.

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3.3.	Layer-by-layer synthesis . . . . .	111
4.	Microfluidic platforms for DDS fabrication . . . . .	111
4.1.	Microfluidics as versatile platform for DDS synthesis . . . . .	112
4.1.1.	Nano DDS . . . . .	112
4.1.2.	Microparticles/microspheres . . . . .	112
4.1.3.	Core-shell structures . . . . .	112
4.1.4.	Smart drug delivery core-shell structures . . . . .	112
4.1.5.	Janus particles . . . . .	113
4.1.6.	Multi-shells, chamber particles and microfibers . . . . .	113
4.2.	Microfluidics offers precise control over drug carrier synthesis . . . . .	115
4.2.1.	Control of particle size . . . . .	115
4.2.2.	Control of particle shape . . . . .	115
4.2.3.	Control of particle shell thickness . . . . .	115
4.2.4.	Control of drug loading efficiency . . . . .	115
4.2.5.	Control of drug release rate . . . . .	115
4.3.	Future perspective: scale-up production and versatility . . . . .	115
5.	Top-down NP fabrication . . . . .	116
5.1.	Particle replication in non-wetting template (PRINT). . . . .	116
5.2.	Step-flash imprint lithography (S-FIL). . . . .	116
5.3.	Microfluidics-based top-down approaches . . . . .	116
6.	Challenges and future perspectives . . . . .	117
	Acknowledgments. . . . .	117
	References . . . . .	117

## 1. Introduction

Drug delivery is a field of vital importance to medicine and healthcare. Controlled drug delivery improves bioavailability by preventing premature degradation and enhancing uptake, maintains drug concentration within the therapeutic window by controlling the drug release rate, and reduces side effects by targeting to disease site and target cells. Since the first FDA approval of drug delivery system (DDS), Liposomal amphotericin B, in 1990, more than 10 DDS are now commercially available to treat diverse diseases ranging from cancer to fungal infection and to muscular degeneration (Fig. 1, Table 1) [1]. In improving therapeutic efficacy, DDS has benefited tens of millions of patients by relieving suffering and prolonging life. They have also changed the economics of drug development. Packaging an existing drug into controlled release formulations may not only improve its performance but also extend its patent life as a new product. The average cost and time required to develop a new DDS (approximately \$20–50 million and 3–4 years) is significantly

lower than that for a new drug (approximately \$500 million and over 10 years) [2]. Not surprisingly the US market for advanced DDS has grown from \$75 million in 2001 to \$121 billion in 2010 [3]; the annual worldwide market for polymer-based controlled release system alone is estimated to be \$60 billion in 2010 [4].

Exciting advances in genomics and systems biology have continued to identify new molecular targets. Future therapeutics will be increasingly nucleic acid (plasmid DNA, siRNA, mRNA, and aptamer) and peptidic (small peptide and protein) in nature. They have to act intracellularly, although the polar nature of nucleic acids and proteins hinders their cellular entry. They are also typically more fragile than small molecules. Drug delivery will hence play an increasingly important role in realizing the full potential of the next generation of therapeutics.

Innovations in materials chemistry have initially fueled the development of DDS, creating carriers that are biodegradable, biocompatible, targeting, and stimulus-responsive. Nanotechnology has joined forces in the past decade. The realization that size and shape of nanoparticles

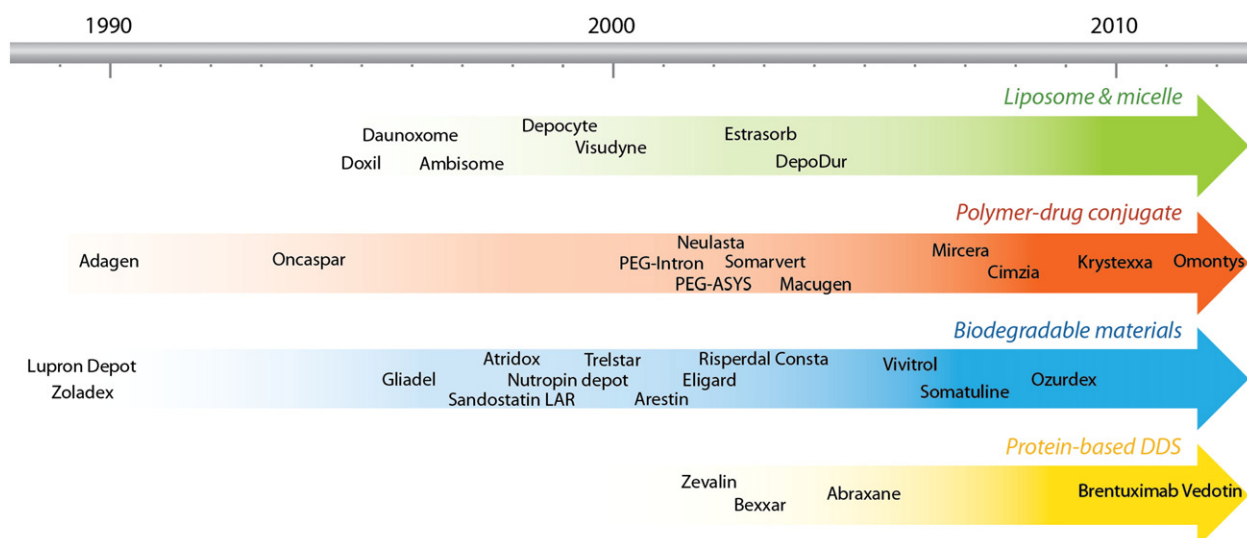


Fig. 1. Timeline showing FDA approved DDS in the market.

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