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Silver-dendrimer nanocomposites as oligonucleotide labels for electrochemical stripping detection of DNA hybridization

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Abstract

Silver-dendrimer nanocomposites were synthesized and used as oligonucleotide labels for electrochemical stripping detection of DNA hybridization. The synthesized silver-dendrimer nanocomposites were characterized by UV-vis spectrophotometry, X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS) and transmission electron microscopy (TEM). Ratios of silver/dendrimer were optimized in order to obtain stable nanocomposites with maximal silver loading in the interior of a polymeric shell. The silver-dendrimer nanocomposites were attached to sequence-known DNA probes specific to *colitoxin*, and used to detect probe hybridization by dissolution of the silver nanoparticles in the interior of dendrimer in a diluted nitric acid, followed by measurement of Ag^+ ions by anodic stripping voltammetry (ASV). Use of differential pulse voltammetry for the stripping step, along with optimization of the ASV conditions, enabled a detection limit of 0.78 pM. The present strategy, in combination with dendrimer-encapsulated copper labeled oligonucleotides probe reported previously, could potentially be used to detect single or multiple DNA targets in one sample.

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