



# AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PHARMTECH RESEARCH

Journal home page: <http://www.ajptr.com/>

## Development and Evaluation of In Situ Gelling System for Treatment of Periodontitis

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### ABSTRACT

Periodontitis is an inflammatory disease of the supporting tissues of the teeth caused by groups of specific microorganisms. The concept that localized problem sites may be treated by local drug delivery appears attractive as the antimicrobial agent is delivered within periodontal pockets and the therapy is targeted on specific pathogenic microorganisms. Local delivery of antimicrobial agents using controlled release systems should be considered as adjunctive to mechanical debridement for the treatment of localized forms of periodontal destruction. Local delivery of in situ gelling system to periodontal pockets has the benefit of putting more drugs at target site while minimizing exposure of the total body to the drug. In situ gelling system helps in maintaining effective levels of drug in gingival cervical fluid to produce desirable clinical effects. In situ gel for controlled drug delivery system of periodontal pocket has received greater interest and appears to hold some promise in periodontal therapy. They are designed to release drug slowly with more prolonged drug availability and sustained drug action. Controlled release systems offer an advantage of decrease in frequency of administration, improving patient compliance. The dose of the drug can also be decreased and hence, the toxicity when compared to conventional therapy. In controlled drug delivery, the drug is released over an extended period of time by zero order kinetics and hence constant plasma drug concentration can be achieved.

**Key words:** Periodontitis, Periodontal pocket, In situ gel, Controlled drug delivery

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Received 31 May 2012, Accepted 14 June 2012

Please cite this article in press as: Patel K *et al.*, Development and Evaluation of In Situ Gelling System for Treatment of Periodontitis. American Journal of PharmTech Research 2012.

## INTRODUCTION

### PERIODONTAL DISEASE

Periodontal diseases are prevalent worldwide, and while up to 15% of U.S. adults experience advanced periodontitis, the majority of adults suffer from gingivitis to moderate periodontal disease<sup>1</sup>. Subgingival biofilm can develop into a community where the bacterial population is able to migrate from the sulcus region to the periodontal tissues, forming a tissue biofilm. Three to twelve weeks after biofilm formation begins, the Subgingival biofilm becomes a well differentiated and structured community, containing mainly gram-negative anaerobic bacteria<sup>2</sup>.

Although more than 300 species have been identified in periodontal pockets, it is generally agreed that between 30 - 40 species are associated with periodontitis, with three bacteria

– *P. gingivalis*, *T. forsythensis* and *T. denticola*

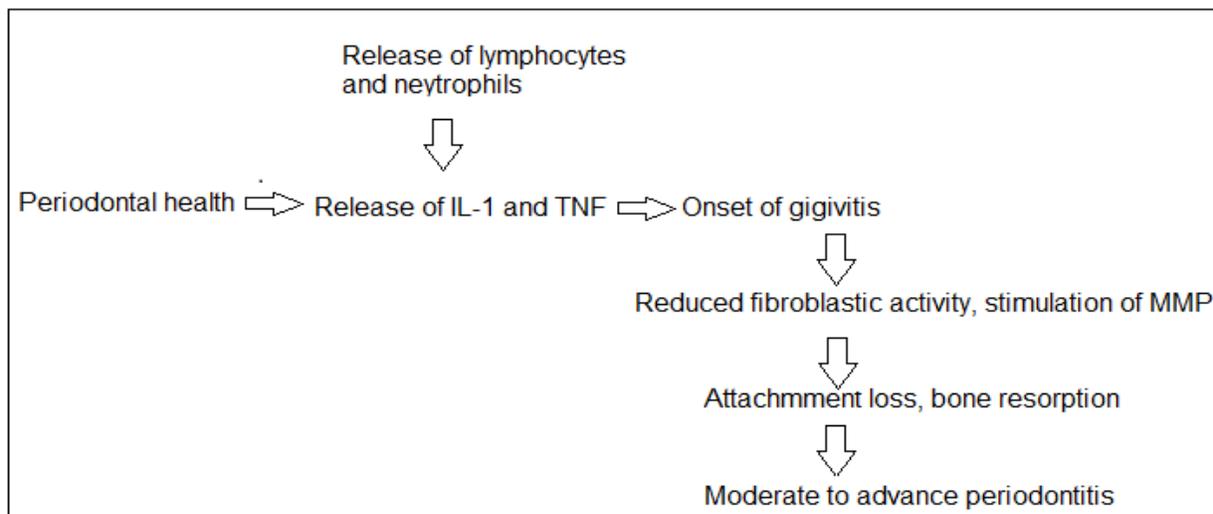
– Usually found in diseased sites<sup>3,4</sup>.

Disease risk can also be assessed by measurement of the bacterial count for these highly virulent bacteria while bacteria are causal for periodontal disease, their presence does not determine periodontal disease progression<sup>5</sup>.

#### **Progression of periodontal disease**

The host response has been identified as the primary factor determining periodontal disease progression, & is influenced by systemic diseases, risk factors, hormones and local factors<sup>6</sup>. The host response to antigens and irritants released by bacteria includes the local release of antibodies, lymphocyte and neutrophil activation and their infiltration into the gingival tissue. The activation of lymphocytes and neutrophils is defensive and involves bacterial as well as possible tissue destruction. An example is Down's syndrome patients who have been found to have an altered immune response, with increased production of prostaglandins and MMP, supporting the importance of the genetic component in periodontal disease progression<sup>7</sup>. Systemic diseases, hormones and risk factors have also been found to influence the progression of periodontal disease. Diabetic patients are at increased risk for periodontal disease, and have vascular abnormalities, changes in the gingival cervicular fluid and abnormal collagen activity. Changes in sex hormone levels may amplify the response to bacterial plaque and lead to gingivitis. Sex hormones are able to modify the host response, and experimental investigation suggests that increased levels of estrogen may influence the development of gingival inflammation<sup>8</sup>. Smokers account for the majority of cases of refractory periodontitis and

smoking is regarded as a strong risk factor for periodontal disease and for poor response to periodontal treatment<sup>9, 10</sup>.



**Figure 1: Progression of periodontal disease**

### Drug delivery devices

However, in recent years systemic antibiotics are only recommended for the treatment of rapidly progressing or refractory Periodontitis<sup>11, 12</sup>. Multiple systemic doses of antibiotics have shown several drawbacks including: inadequate antibiotic concentration at the site of the periodontal pocket<sup>13</sup>; a rapid decline of the plasma antibiotic concentration to sub therapeutic levels development of microbial resistance; and high peak-plasma antibiotic concentrations<sup>14</sup>.

This may be associated with side effects. These obvious disadvantages have evoked an interest in the development of novel intra-pocket drug delivery systems for the treatment of periodontal diseases<sup>15</sup>.

The periodontal pocket provides a natural reservoir, which is easily accessible for the insertion of a delivery device. The GCF provides a leaching medium for the release of a drug from the dosage form and for its distribution throughout the pocket. These features, together with the fact that the periodontal diseases are localized to the immediate environment of the pocket, make the periodontal pocket a natural site for treatment with local delivery systems.

Intra-pocket drug delivery systems are highly desirable due to the potentially lower incidence of undesirable side effects, improved efficacy and enhanced patient compliance. The attractiveness of treating periodontal diseases by the intra-pocket drug delivery systems is based on the prospects of maintaining effective high levels of drug in the GCF for a prolonged period of time to produce the desirable clinical benefits. For these systems, the delivery vehicles can be of natural origin or semi synthetic or synthetic nature. Recent developments in polymer sciences

have disclosed biocompatible and biodegradable synthetic polymers, which can be modified to meet pharmacological and biological requirements. Many polymer-based intra-pocket devices containing therapeutic agents for the treatment of periodontal disease have been studied and are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1: Intra pocket delivery system**

Systems	Polymer matrix	Drug incorporated	Ref
Fibers	Cellulose acetate	Tetracycline HCl, Chlorhexidine	66
	Ethylene vinyl acetate	Tetracycline HCl	67
	Poly (caprolactone)	Tetracycline HCl	68
Strips	Acrylic	Tetracycline HCl, Metronidazole	69
	HPC	Chlorhexidine, tetracycline, Doxycycline	70
	HPC+Methacrylic acid	Ofloxacin	71
	Polyhydroxybutyric acid	Tetracycline HCl	72
	(PLGA)	Chlorhexidine, Tetracycline HCl,	73
	Ethyl cellulose	Chlorhexidine	74
Films	Ethyl cellulose	Metronidazole, Tetracycline HCl, Minocycline	75
	Cross-linked atelocollagen	Tetracycline	76
	Gelatin(BycoW protein)	Chlorhexidine diacetate	77
	Cross-linked gelatin + glycerine	Chlorhexidine digluconate	78
	Chitosan	Taurine	79
	Chitosan + PLGA	Iprofllavone	80
	Chitosan + PCL	Metronidazole	81
	PVA + carboxymethyl chitosan	Ornidazole	82
	PLGA	Tetracycline, Amoxycillin+	83
	Poly(ortho ester)	Metronidazole	84
	Eudragit LW and Eudragit SW	Clindamycin	85
	PCL	Minocycline	86
	Gels	Chitosan	Metronidazole
HEC + PVP		Tetracycline	88
HEC + polycarbophil		Metronidazole	89

	Poloxamer 407+ Carbopol 934P	Propolis	90
	Poly(DL-lactide) + N-methyl 2-pyrrolidone	Saguinarium, Doxycycline hyclate	91
	Glycerol mono oleate + sesame oil	Metronidazole	92
	PLGA	Tetracycline	93
Microparticles	Pluronic F 127	Tetracycline	94
	PLGA	Tetracycline, Histatin peptides	95
	PLGA + PCL	Doxycycline	96
Nanoparticles	2-Hydroxyethyl methacrylate+ PEG dimethacrylate	—	97
	PLGA	Harungana madagascariensis leaf extract	98
	Chitosan	Antisense oligonucleotide	99
	Cellulose acetate phthalate	Triclosan	100
	PLGA	Triclosan	100
Vesicular system	Phosphatidylinositol	Triclosan	101
	Immunoliposomes	Anti-oralis	102
Other system	Poly(ethylene-co-vinyl acetate)	Acyclovir, Chlorhexidine	102

#### ROLE OF IN SITU GELLING SYSTEM IN PERIODONTAL DISEASE

Periodontitis is an inflammatory condition that leads to destruction of periodontum, resorption of the alveolar bone and frequently tooth loss. It is one of the most prevalent oral diseases in humans and generally affects humans above 35 years of age.

Periodontal diseases include chronic periodontitis, aggressive periodontitis and systemic disease periodontitis. The clinical sign of periodontitis are changes in morphology of gingival tissue, bleeding upon probing as well as periodontal pocket formation. The etiology of periodontal diseases is gm (-) ve bacteria, mainly anaerobes like *Porphyromonas gingivalis*, *Tanerella forsynthesis*, *Trepenoma denticola*, etc. Periodontal disease is considered to be one of the possible risk factor in other systemic diseases such as cardiovascular disease including coronary heart disease, stroke and preterm low birth weight infants.

Currently, most commonly used procedure for the treatment of severe periodontitis is the use of mechanical disruption of the bacterial flora by a procedure called scaling and root planning. However studies have shown that this mechanical disruptment is insufficient in altering the

makeup of the flora. As periodontal disease is associated with bacteria, an adjunctive anti microbial therapy appears to be appropriate. But systemic route of antibiotic may not be ideal because of the concern over the development of bacterial resistance that may be induced over a prolonged period of time, and also the rise in number of undesirable side effects such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, pseudo membranous enterocolitis etc.

Hence local delivery of in situ gelling system to periodontal pockets has the benefit of putting more drugs at target site while minimizing exposure of the total body to the drug. This in situ gelling system helps in maintaining effective levels of drug in gingival cervicular fluid (GCF) to produce desirable clinical effects. With respect to solid devices, the injectable gels possess a higher biocompatibility and bioadhesivity by allowing adhesion to mucosa in dental pocket. Finally, they can be eliminated through normal catabolic pathways, decreasing risk of irritation or allergic host reaction at the application site.

In situ gel for controlled drug delivery system of periodontal pocket has received greater interest and appears to hold some promise in periodontal therapy. They are designed to release drug slowly with more prolonged drug availability and sustained drug action. Controlled release systems offer an advantage of decrease in frequency of administration, thereby improving patient compliance. The dose of the drug can also be decreased and hence, the toxicity when compared to conventional therapy. In controlled drug delivery, the drug is released over an extended period of time by zero order kinetics and hence constant plasma drug concentration can be achieved.

#### IN SITU GEL

In-situ gel refers to polymer solution which can be administered as liquid & undergoes a phase transition to semisolid gel upon exposure to physiological environment<sup>16</sup>. The gelation can be triggered by temperature, pH change, ionic change & also UV induced gelation, Solvent exchange induced gelation<sup>17-19</sup>.

#### **Change in temperature**

Change in temperature sustained drug delivery can be achieved by use of polymer that changes from sol- gel at temperature of the body. Temperature dependent system includes pluronics F1278-10 & tetronic. The poloxamers F127 are polyols which thermal gelling properties where solution viscosity increases when temperature is raised to critical temperature.

#### **Change in pH**

Change in pH triggered system shows sol – gel transformation when pH is raised by gingival cervicular fluid to pH 7.4. PH triggered system cellulose acetate Hydrogen phthalate latex (pH 5.0 to 7.2 -7.4 from a gel with lacrimal fluid), carbopol pH 4.0 – 7.4 sol – gel transformation.

Cellulose acetate phthalate is polymer with potentially useful properties for a sustained drug delivery to eye since latex is free flowing solution at pH 4.4 which undergoes coagulations. When pH raised by tear fluid of pH 7.4. pH triggered in situ gelling system are low viscosity polymeric dispersion in water which undergoes spontaneous coagulations & gelation after instillation in conjunctiva curl –de-sac<sup>20</sup>.

### **Change in electrolyte composition**

Change in electrolyte composition ion activated system shows sol- gel transformation in presence of the mono or divalent cations (Na<sup>+</sup>, Ca<sup>++</sup> etc) typically found in tear fluids. Ion activated system include Gelrite & Alginate. 12-14 Gellan gum is an anionic extracellular polysaccharide secreted by pseudomonas elodea. Gellan gum formulated in aqueous solution forms clear gel in the presence of mono or divalent cations. These system shows sol-gel transformation in presence of ions.

## **APPLICABILITY OF IN SITU POLYMERIC DRUG DELIVERY SYSTEM**

### **Oral drug delivery system**

The pH-sensitive hydrogels have a potential use in site-specific delivery of drugs to specific regions of the GI tract. Hydrogels made of varying proportions of PAA derivatives and crosslinked PEG allowed preparing silicone microspheres, which released prednisolone in the gastric medium or showed gastro protective property <sup>21</sup>. Cross-linked dextran hydrogels with a faster swelling under high pH conditions, likewise other polysaccharides such as amidated pectins, guar gum and insulin were investigated in order to develop a potential colon-specific drug delivery system<sup>22</sup>. The formulations of gellan and sodium alginate both containing complexed calcium ions that undergo gelation by releasing of these ions in the acidic environment of the stomach. Oral delivery of paracetamol was studied. For the oral in situ gel delivery system pectin, xyloglucan & gellan gum natural polymers are used. Pectin formulation for sustained delivery of paracetamol has been reported <sup>23</sup>. Advantages of pectin is water soluble so, no need to add organic solvent.

### **Ocular drug delivery system**

In ocular delivery system natural polymers like gellan gum, alginic acid & xyloglucan are most commonly used. For local ophthalmic delivery system various compounds like antimicrobial agent, anti-inflammatory agent & autonomic drugs are used to relieve intra ocular tension in glaucoma. Conventional delivery system often results in poor availability & therapeutic response because high tear fluid turns over & dynamics which cause rapid elimination of the drug from

the eye so, the overcome the bioavailability problem ophthalmic in-situ gel were developed<sup>24</sup>. To improve the bioavailability viscosity enhancers such as Hydroxy Propyl Methyl Cellulose, Carboxy Methyl Cellulose, Carbomers, Poly Vinyl alcohol used to increase the viscosity of formulation in order to prolong the precorneal residence time & improve the bioavailability, ease to manufacture<sup>25</sup>. Penetration enhancer such as preservatives, chelating agent, surfactants are used to enhance corneal drug penetration<sup>26</sup>.

### **Nasal drug delivery system**

In nasal in-situ gel system gallan gum & xanthan gum are used as in-situ gel forming polymers momethasone furoate was evaluated for its efficacy for the treatment of allergic rhinitis<sup>27</sup>. Animal study were conducted using allergic rhinitis model & effect of in-situ gel on antigen induced nasal symptoms in sensitizes rats was observed. In-situ gel was found to inhibit the increase in nasal symptoms are compared to marketed preparation nosonex (Momethasone furoate suspension 0.05%).

### **Rectal drug delivery system**

The rectal route may be used to deliver many types of drugs that are formulated as liquid, semisolid (ointments, creams and foams) and solid dosage forms (suppositories). Conventional suppositories often cause discomfort during insertion. In addition, suppositories are unable to be sufficiently retained at a specific position in the rectum, sometimes they can migrate up-wards to the colon that makes them possible for drug to undergo the first-pass effect<sup>28</sup>. Novel in situ gelling liquid suppositories with gelation temperature at 30–36°C. Poloxamer 407 and/ or poloxamer 188 were used to confer the temperature-sensitive gelation property. In-situ gel possesses a potential application for rectal & vaginal route. Miyazaki et al. investigated the use of xyloglucan based thermo reversible gel for rectal drug delivery of Indomethacin. Administration of Indomethacin loaded xyloglucan based system to rabbit indicated broad drug absorption & a longer drug residence time as compared to that resulting after administration of commercial suppository. For better therapeutic efficacy & patient compliance, mucoadhesive, thermo sensitive, prolonged release vaginal gel incorporating Clotrimazole- $\beta$ -cyclodextrin complex formulated for treatment of vaginitis<sup>29</sup>.

### **Vaginal drug delivery system**

The vagina, in addition to being an important organ of reproductive tract, serves as a potential route for drug administration. Formulations based on a thermo-plastic graft copolymer that undergo in situ gelation have been developed to provide the prolonged release of active ingredients such as nonoxynol- 9, progestins, estrogens, peptides and proteins<sup>30</sup>. A mucoadhesive

thermo-sensitive gel (combination of poloxamers and polycar-bophil), which exhibited, increased and prolonged antifungal activity of clotrimazole in comparison with conventional PEG-based formulation<sup>31</sup>.

### **Injectable drug delivery system**

One of the most obvious ways to provide sustained- release medication is to place the drug in delivery system and inject or implant the system into the body tissue. Thermo reversible gels mainly prepared from poloxamer are predominantly used<sup>32</sup>. The suitability of poloxamer gel alone or with the addition of hydroxypropylmethylcellulose (HPMC), sodium carboxymethylcellulose (CMC) or dextran was studied for epidural administration of drugs *in vitro*<sup>33</sup>. The compact gel depot acted as the rate limiting step and significantly prolonged the dual permeation of drugs in comparison with control solutions. Pluronic F127 gels, which contained either insulin or insulin-PLGA nanoparticles with conclusion, that these formulations could be useful for the preparation of a controlled delivery system<sup>34</sup>. Likewise, poloxamer gels were tested for intramuscular and subcutaneous administration of human growth hormone or with the aim to develop a long acting single dose injection of lidocaine<sup>35, 36</sup>. A new class of injectable controlled release depots of protein which consisted of blends of Pluronics with poly (D, L-lactide)/1- methyl-2- pyrrolidone solutions. Some other thermo sensitive hydrogels may also be used for parenteral administration. ReGel ® (triblock copolymer PLGAPEG- PLGA) was used as a drug delivery carrier for the continuous release of human insulin. Steady amounts of insulin secretion from the Re- Gel ® formulations up to day 15 of the subcutaneous injections were achieved. The synthesis of a biodegradable poly (ethylene oxide) and poly (L-lactic acid) hydrogel, which exists in a form of sol at an elevated temperature (around 45°C) and forms a gel after subcutaneous injection and subsequent rapid cooling to body temperature<sup>37</sup>. In-situ forming injectable drug delivery system, cross linking of hydrazide modified by aleuronic acid with aldehyde modified version of cellulose derivatives such as carboxy methyl cellulose, methyl cellulose, hydroxy propyl methyl cellulose are used. These in-situ forming gel were used for preventing postoperative peritoneal adhesion thus avoiding pelvic pain, bowel obstruction & infertility. For a better therapeutic efficacy & patient compliance, mucoadhesive, thermo sensitive, prolonged release vaginal gel incorporating Clotrimazole-β- cyclodextrin complex was formulated for treatment of virginities<sup>38</sup>.

### **Dermal and transdermal drug delivery**

Thermally reversible gel of Pluronic F127 was evaluated as vehicle for the percutaneous administration of Indomethacin. In-vivo studies suggest that 20% w/w aqueous gel may be of

practical use as a base for topical administration of the drug. Poloxamer 407 gel was found suitable for transdermal delivery of insulin<sup>39</sup>. The combination of chemical enhancers and iontophoresis resulted in synergistic enhancement of insulin permeation.

## EVALUATION AND CHARACTERIZATION OF IN SITU GELLING SYSTEM

In-situ gel evaluated & characterized by the following parameters-

### Clarity

The clarity of formulated solution is determined by visual inspection under black & white Background<sup>40-42</sup>.

### Texture analysis

The consistency, firmness & cohesiveness of in situ gel are assessed by using texture profile analyzer which mainly indicated gel strength & easiness in administration in vivo higher value of adhesiveness of gel are needed to maintain an intimate contact with mucus surface<sup>43</sup>.

### pH of gel

pH can be determined formulation is taken in beaker & 1ml NaOH added drop wise with continuous stirring. pH is checked by using pH meter<sup>44-46</sup>.

### Rheological studies

The viscosity measured by using Brookfield viscometer, cone & plate viscometer. In-situ gel formulation is placed in sample tube. Formulation should have viscosity 5-1000 mPas, before gelling & after ion gel activation by periodontal pocket will have viscosity of from about 50-50,000 mPas<sup>47-49</sup>.

### Swelling studies<sup>50-53</sup>

Swelling studies are conducted with a cell, equipped with thermo jacket to maintain a constant temperature. The cell contains artificial gingival cervicular fluid<sup>54</sup>. Swelling medium equilibrating at 37°C one milliliter of formulated solution is placed in dialysis bag & put into the swelling medium. At specific time interval the bag is removed from the medium & weight is recorded. The swelling of the polymer gel as a function of time is determined by using the following relationship<sup>55-58</sup>.

$$\% St = (Wt - W0) 100/W0$$

Where,

St = Swelling at time 't'.

W0 = Initial weight of gelling solution.

Wt = Final weight of gel.

**Stastical analysis**

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used the testing the difference between calculated parameters using SPSS statistical package. Statistical difference yielding  $P \leq 0.05$  is considered<sup>59</sup>. Duncan multiple comparison is applied when necessary to identify which of the individual formulations are significantly different<sup>60</sup>.

**High performance liquid chromatography**

The HPLC system is used in reversed phase mode. Analysis is performed on a Nova pack C18 packed column (150 mm length X 3.9 mm i.d)<sup>61</sup>.

**Fourier transformer infra red**

The possibility of drug excipient interaction is investigated by FTIR studies. The FTIR graph of pure drug & combination of drug with excipient are recorded by using KBR pellets<sup>62, 63</sup>.

**Thermal analysis**

Thermo gravimetric analysis can be conducted for in situ forming polymeric system to quantitative the percentage of water in hydrogel. Different scanning calorimetry is used to observed, if there are many changes in thermo grams as compared with pure ingredients used thus indicating the interaction<sup>64</sup>.

**In vitro drug release studies**

In vitro release study of in situ gel solution is carried out by using Franz diffusion cell. The formulation is placed in donor compartment & freshly prepared simulated gingival cervicular fluid in receptor compartment. Between receptor & donor compartment dialysis membrane is placed (0.22  $\mu\text{m}$  pore size). The whole assembly is placed on thermostatically controlled magnetic stirrer. The temperature of the medium is maintained at  $37 \text{ }^{\circ}\text{C} \pm 0.5 \text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ . 1ml sample is withdrawn at predetermined time interval of 1hr for 6 hrs the sample volume of fresh medium is replaced. The withdrawn sample is diluted to 10 ml in volumetric flask with respective solvent & analyzed by UV spectrophotometer at respective nm using reagent blank. The drug content calculated using an equation generated from standard calibration curve. The percentage cumulative drug release (% CDR) calculated. The obtained data is further subjected to curve fitting for drug release data. The best fit model is checked for Krosmeyers peppas & Fickinian diffusion mechanism for their kinetics.

**Antimicrobial activity**

Antimicrobial efficacy studies are carried out to ascertain the biological activity of sol-gel-system against microorganisms. This is determined in agar diffusion medium employing 'Cup Plate Techniques'. The microbial growth of bacteria is measured by conc. Of antibiotic &

compared with that produced by known conc. Of standard preparation of antibiotic & carried out the microbial assay serial dilution method is employed.

### **Sterility testing**

Sterility testing is carried out as per the IP 1996. The formulation is incubating for not less than 14 days at 300-350c in the fluid thioglycolate medium to find the growth of bacteria & at 200-250 c in Soya bean casein digest medium to find the growth of fungi in formulation.

### **Accelerated stability studies**

Formulation is replaced in amber colored vials & sealed with aluminum foil for the short term accelerated stability study at  $40^{\circ}\text{C} \pm 20^{\circ}\text{C}$  &  $75 \pm 5\%$  RH as per International Conference of Harmonization (ICH) State Guidelines. Sample is analyzed at every month for clarity, pH, gelling capacity, drug content, rheological evaluation & in vitro dissolution<sup>65</sup>.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, there are various formulations available for the treatment of Periodontitis. Despite the reported clinical successes, currently available controlled release formulations suffer from several disadvantages including: (i) the requirement for mechanical binding of the drug delivery system to a tooth surface to prevent removal of the system from the periodontal pocket as a result of the positive flow of GCF from the pocket into the oral cavity. (ii) The requirement for removal of tooth bound, non-biodegradable drug delivery systems at the termination of treatment, (iii) poor retention of oil-based delivery systems within the aqueous environment of the periodontal pocket. (iv) Potential deleterious effects of plasticizers leached from solid polymeric drug delivery systems on the periodontal tissues. To overcome these disadvantages development of in situ gelling system for treatment of Periodontitis. They are designed to release drug slowly with more prolonged drug availability and sustained drug action, decrease in frequency of administration, improving patient compliance. The dose of the drug can also be decreased and hence, the toxicity when compared to conventional therapy.

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