Virus attachment to surfaces: Assessing relative contributions of electrostatic, van der Waals, and acid-base interactions

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Overarching goal

Elucidate physicochemical mechanisms that control virus adhesion to surfaces

Specific objective

Predict virus adhesion to practically important surfaces (e.g. household paint, lipstick, human skin) from relevant solutions (saliva, respiratory fluid)

Longer term objective

Select bacteriophage surrogates for

- evaluating human adenovirus fate in water treatment systems
- designing sample concentration processes for human adenovirus detection in aqueous media

Premise

Understanding the relationship between

- a) virus deposition conditions and properties of the collector surface
- b) the deposition kinetics

can guide the design of specialty surfaces for regulating virus adsorption.



Three-pronged approach



- 1. Detailed characterization of physicochemical properties of a virus
 - ζ potential vs pH (electrophoretic tests)
 - size and morphology (TEM, dynamic light scattering)
 - hydrophobicity and surface energy components
- Prediction of virus-surface interactions using extended Derjaguin-Landau-Verwey-Overbeek (XDLVO) model
- Experimental quantification of virus attachment to surfaces using quartz crystal microbalance with dissipation (QCM-D)











(Image source: Wikipedia.org)



(Image source: PDB-101.ocsb.org)

Bacteriophage MS2

- Diameter: ~28 nm
- Non-enveloped single stranded RNA

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Human adenovirus 40 (HAdV40)

- Diameter: ~80 nm
- Non-enveloped double-stranded DNA





(Image source: Wikipedia.org)

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✓ surface energy component: contact angle of 3 probe liquids



$$(1 + \cos\theta)\gamma_l^{TOT} = 2\left(\sqrt{\gamma_s^{LW}}\gamma_l^{LW} + \sqrt{\gamma_s^+}\gamma_l^- + \sqrt{\gamma_s^-}\gamma_l^+\right)$$
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$$(1 + \cos\theta)\gamma_l^{TOT} = 2\left(\sqrt{\gamma_s^{LW}}\gamma_l^{LW} + \sqrt{\gamma_s^+}\gamma_l^- + \sqrt{\gamma_s^-}\gamma_l^+\right)$$

Goniometer / Tensiometer



(image source: ramehart.com)

where
$$\gamma_l^{TOT} = \gamma_l^{LW} + 2\sqrt{\gamma_l^+ \gamma_l^-}$$



surface energy component: contact angle of 3 probe liquids





The free energy of interfacial interaction of two virions when immersed in water:

$$\Delta G_{wvw} = -2\left(\sqrt{\gamma_v^{LW}} - \sqrt{\gamma_w^{LW}}\right)^2 - 4\left(\sqrt{\gamma_v^+ \gamma_v^-} + \sqrt{\gamma_w^+ \gamma_w^-} - \sqrt{\gamma_v^+ \gamma_w^-} - \sqrt{\gamma_v^- \gamma_w^+}\right)$$

Parameter	Value	
Contact angle (°) with indicated probe liquid		7 So HAdV 40 is hydrophilic?
H ₂ O	68 ± 2	
Glycerol	64 ± 1	-
Diiodomethane	36 ± 2	
γ^{LW} γ^{+} γ^{-} γ^{AB} γ^{TOT}	41.6 0.01 14.7 0.8 42.4	
Free energy of interfacial virion-virion interactions in water ($\Delta G = [m](m^2]$)	-30.4	No. Hydrophobic, actually!

4984 aem.asm.org

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Elution Is a Critical Step for Recovering Human Adenovirus 40 from Tap Water and Surface Water by Cross-Flow Ultrafiltration

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2019 "Applied Biosciences and Biotechnology" conference, Tbilisi, Georgia



Human Adenovirus 40

pH dependence of the aggregation state



TEM: ~ 80 nm DLS: ~ 99 nm



2016



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Human Adenovirus 40

Hydrophobicity, surface charge and XDLVO virus-virus interaction

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Effect of sample preparation

on virus (here – MS2 phage) size measurements





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Effect of sample preparation

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on virus (here – MS2 phage) charge measurements

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Extended Derjaguin-Landau-Verwey-Overbeek (XDLVO) model

$$E^{XDLVO} = E^{LW} + E^{EL} + E^{AB}$$

- *E^{LW}*: Lifshitz van der Waals (LW) interaction energy
- *E^{EL}*: Electrical double layer (EL) interaction energy
- *E^{AB}*: Lewis acid-base (AB) interaction energy





Extended Derjaguin-Landau-Verwey-Overbeek (XDLVO) model predicts energy of virus-surface interaction, E_{slv} :

 $E_{slv}^{TOT} = E_{slv}^{LW} + E_{slv}^{EL} + E_{slv}^{AB}$

where the following characteristics of the virus and the surface are taken as inputs:

For virus:	d_v	(hydrodynamic diameter)
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 ζ (zeta potential)

For virus and surface:

- γ^{LW} (apolar component of surface tension)
- γ^+ (electron-acceptor component of surface tension)
- γ^- (electron-donor component of surface tension)





XDLVO theory

$$E_{slv}^{XDLVO} = E_{slv}^{LW} + E_{slv}^{EL} + E_{slv}^{AB}$$
(1)

$$E_{slv}^{LW} = -\frac{Aa}{6d} \tag{2}$$

$$E_{slv}^{EL} = \pi \varepsilon_r \varepsilon_0 a \left[2\psi_c \psi_s \ln\left(\frac{1+e^{-k_D d}}{1-e^{-k_D d}}\right) \right] + \left(\psi_c^2 + \psi_b^2\right) \ln\left(1-e^{-2k_D d}\right)$$
(3)

$$E_{slv}^{AB} = 2\pi a\lambda \Delta G_{d_0}^{AB} \exp\left(\frac{d_0 - d}{\lambda}\right) \qquad (4)$$



⁽source: Lin et al. [47])

- ε_r: dielectric constant of water (ε_r = 79)
- ε_0 : relative permittivity in vacuum (ε_0 = 8.854.10¹² CV⁻¹m⁻¹)
- ψ_c and ψ_s : surface potentials
- k_D: reverse Debye length
- λ : characteristic delay length of the AB interaction ($\lambda = 0.6$ nm)
- d₀: minimum separation distance (d₀ = 0.158 nm)



Approach Measuring virus attachment to surfaces using QCM-D

Quartz crystal microbalance with dissipation (QCM-D) measurements



(*image source: q-sense.com*)



Sauerbrey equation $\Delta m = -\frac{C\Delta f}{n}$

- Δm: mass per unit surface area, ng.cm⁻²
- C: mass sensitivity constant (C=-17.7 ng.Hz⁻¹.cm⁻²⁾
- Overtone number (n=3)
- Δf : frequency shift, Hz



Virus: bacteriophage MS2



image source: Wikipedia.org

Virus purification steps:

- Add PEG 6000
- Centrifuge 10,000 rpm for 30 min
- Filter through 0.22 µm
- Dialyze through 100 kDa

Deposition surface: Polyelectrolyte multilayer

Polyanion: PSS poly(allylamine hydrochloride)

Polycation: PDADMAC

poly(diallyldimethyl ammonium chloride)



PSS 0.02 mM / pH 4.6



PDADMAC 0.02 mM / pH 6.4



PEM film preparation: Electrostatic layer-by-layer self-assembly



[Decher, G. Science 277 (1997)]

Two-step polyion adsorption process:

- 1) Anchoring
- 2) Relaxation into a denser film

Easy control of film thickness, surface chemistry, swelling

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- Wide range of materials applicable for LbL adsorption
- Possibility of tuning the surface properties by adjusting design parameters (pH, ionic strength, PE M_w, etc)
- Possibility of post assembly modification (grafting, crosslinking, annealing, etc)
- Easy disassembly to remove adhered materials (particles, viruses) or for regeneration







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IS of PEs	^{10 mM} PEM		^{100 mM} PEM						
IS of MS2	10 mM	100 mM	10 mM	100 mM					
[PSS/PDAD] ₄									
Zeta potential (mV)	6.7	± 2	27.5 ± 1						
Free energy (mJ/m ²)	-16.3 ± 2.1		6.9 ± 14.4						
Roughness of PEMs (nm)	0.3	3.3	2.3	6.3					
[PSS/PDAD] ₄ [PSS]									
Zeta potential (mV)	-5.7 ± 2		-17.8 ± 0						
Free energy (mJ/m ²)	45.2 ± 0.6		44.3 ± 10.2						
Roughness of PEMs (nm)	0.2	1.3	2.5	6.5					

Note: the negatively-charged PEMs are more hydrophilic than the positively-charged PEMs



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Deposition phase 1: red and blue symbols and trend lines Deposition phase 2: yellow and green symbols and trend lines



Phase 1: the surface is relatively virus-free

Phase 2: the surface charge is affected by the virus accumulation on the surface.



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Deposition phase 1: red and blue symbols and trend lines Deposition phase 2: yellow and green symbols and trend lines



Phase 1: the surface is relatively virus-free

Phase 2: the surface charge is affected by the virus accumulation on the surface.



Predicted virus-surface interactions with poyanion- and polycation-terminated surfaces

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100-[PSS/PDAD]₄-10

100-[PSS/PDAD]_{4.5}-10



The profiles correspond to early stages of phase 1 of MS2 deposition

EL = electrostatic interactions LW = van der Waals interactions AB = acid-base interactions.





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MS2 adsorption onto model surfaces Summary



The **overarching observation** is that differently prepared surfaces show distinct kinetics of and capacities for virus deposition.

The findings support the **hypothesis** that surfaces can be designed to have tailored adhesive properties with respect to viruses.



Comparison of QCM-D observations with XDLVO predictions shows that the deposition rate correlates with the depth of the secondary minimum in the XDLVO energy profile.

The depth of the minima is defined primarily by the acid-base and electrostatic interactions supporting the hypothesis that charge and hydrophilicity of the polyelectrolyte multilayers control virus adhesion.

(When the deposition occurs from high ionic strengths) screening of electrostatic interactions makes the role of acid-base interactions more prominent emphasizing the importance of hydrophilicity as a surface design criterion.





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