Mesoporous silica, periodic mesoporous organosilica, and mesoporous silicon nanoparticles for drug delivery and two-photon Photodynamic Therapy

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Mesoporous silica nanoparticles (MSN) have attracted much attention the last decade for nanomedicine applications due to their biocompatibility, flexible functionalisation, tunable pore size and diameter. We describe here MSN engineered for two-photon triggered drug delivery or photodynamic therapy, in MCF-7 breast cancer cells. The two-photon triggered drug delivery system was based on a FRET mechanism from a two-photon dye in the walls of the MSN to an azobenzene moiety in the pores of the MSN (nanoimpellers). Concerning photodynamic therapy, a two-photon photosensitizer was encapsulated in the walls of the MSN. Two-photon photodynamic therapy was performed in vitro and in vivo on mice bearing colon xenografted tumors. We also studied the use of porous silicon nanoparticles (pSiNP) functionalized with both a photosensitizer and a targeting agent. Porous silicon is a biocompatible and biodegradable material which can generate ¹O₂ when excited by visible light due to quantum-confinement effect. pSiNP had been shown to be degraded into non-toxic silicic acid byproducts in vivo. The multi-functionalized pSiNP studied here were able to target, image and kill cancer cells in vitro by photodynamic therapy mechanisms both with 1-photon and 2-photon excitation. Alternatively, the synthesis of disulfide-based biodegradable Periodic Mesoporous Organosilica Nanoparticles (nanoPMOs) was realized and the nanoparticles were efficient in delivering doxorubicin in cancer cells.

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