FORMULATION AND EVALUATION OF NIFEDIPINE LOADED SOLID LIPID NANOPARTICLES

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ABSTRACT
The objective of the research work is to enhance the solubility and dissolution rate of Nifedipine by converting them into suitable solid lipid nanoparticles (SLNs). The method used for formulating solid lipid nanoparticles (SLNs) was high pressure homogenization followed by solvent emulsification- ultrasonication. The evaluation parameters for SLNs were drug content, entrapment efficiency, particle size, solubility study, in vitro drug release, etc. Nifedipine loaded solid lipid nanoparticles (SLNs) were characterized for drug content, entrapment efficiency, particle size, solubility study and in vitro drug release. Nifedipine loaded SLNs was prepared by using stearic acid and glycerylmonostearate as lipid and Tween 80 as stabilizer. The optimized batch (F4) contained 500mg of Glycerylmonostearate and 300mg of stabilizer. Batch F4 exhibited drug content of 88.75±0.510%, %EE of 79.31±0.119%, Particle size of 146±31.2nm, Practical yield of 91±1.21%, Solubility of 0.011mg/ml and % drug release of 71.17% at 180mins. It was concluded that the solid lipid nanoparticles (SLNs) developed by this method showed increase in solubility and dissolution rate of Nifedipine.

KEYWORDS
Solid lipid nanoparticles (SLNs), High pressure homogenization, Solvent emulsification, Nifedipine, Drug release and Solubility study.

INTRODUCTON
Nifedipine (Dihydropyridine derivative) is calcium channel blocker. It is also a peripheral arterial vasodilator which acts on smooth muscle. It is used in the treatment of angina pectoris and systemic hypertension1. Nifedipine is a BCS class II drug with elimination half-life of about 2-4hrs. It shows 45-56% of oral bioavailability because of hepatic first pass metabolism. Rate limiting step in absorption of Nifedipine from gastrointestinal tract

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is the dissolution rate because it is a poorly soluble drug. The solid lipid nanoparticles (SLNs) were prepared by using solid lipids instead of liquid lipids to improve the physical stability. SLNs are small colloidal carriers which are made up of biodegradable lipid matrix in the range of 10-1000nm. Solid lipid nanoparticles (SLNs) appears to be a different carrier system to emulsion, liposomes, polymeric nanoparticles, etc. Along with lipids and drug, it contains surfactant as stabilizer. Both lipophilic as well as hydrophilic drugs can be easily incorporated into SLNs. Various advantages of SLNs are large surface area, small size, high drug loading capacity, increased drug stability, etc.

Several methods involved in the preparation of solid lipid nanoparticles (SLNs) are: High pressure homogenization, hot homogenization, cold homogenization, ultrasonication, solvent evaporation, double emulsion method, etc. The purpose of this research work was to enhance solubility and dissolution rate of Nifedipine by converting them into suitable Solid lipid nanoparticles (SLNs).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Materials
Nifedipine, a gift sample was obtained from Nova Chem Drugs Pvt Ltd (Pune, India). Stearic acid, Glycerol monostearate, Tween 80 and Acetone used in the preparation were of laboratory grade.

Methods
Solid lipid nanoparticles (SLNs) loaded with Nifedipine were prepared by two methods i.e. high pressure homogenization, hot homogenization, cold homogenization, ultrasonication, solvent evaporation, double emulsion method, etc. The percentage entrapment efficiency was calculated using the following formula:

\[
\text{Entrapment efficiency (EE)} = \left( \frac{\text{Wt}_{\text{initial drug}} - \text{Wt}_{\text{final drug}}}{\text{Wt}_{\text{initial drug}}} \right) \times 100
\]

The particle size analysis was simply carried out by laser diffraction technique using Malvern Master sizer 2000S. The SLNs dispersion in Milli-Q water was prepared and loaded to determine particle size.

Practical yield
The practical yield of Nifedipine loaded SLNs was determined by taking 10ml of dispersion, which was centrifuged at 12000 rpm for 120min at 4°C by cooling centrifuge. The supernatant was decanted and remaining part was dissolved in chloroform, sonicated, filtered and analysed using UV visible spectrophotometer at 349nm. Practical yield was calculated as drug analysed in the nanoparticle by the total amount of product obtained and total solid used in the preparation.

Solubility study
Solubility measurement was determined by simply recording absorbance using UV visible spectrophotometer at 349nm. The supersaturated solution of Nifedipine loaded SLNs was stirred by magnetic stirrer for 24 hrs at room temperature. Then the solution was filtered through Whatmann
fiter paper and the concentration of drug was determined spectrophotometrically at 349nm$^9$.

**In vitro drug release study**
The *in-vitro* release of Nifedipine loaded SLNs dispersion was determined by using dialysis bag diffusion technique. Accurately weighed amount of Nifedipine loaded SLN dispersion containing drug equivalent to 20mg was transferred into a dialysis bag and sealed. The bag was then dipped in a beaker containing 100ml of phosphate buffer pH 7.4 and stirred at constant speed of 50rpm at room temperature. Aliquotes were withdrawn at predetermined intervals and replaced with fresh buffer. Then the drug content was determined spectrophotometrically at 349nm$^9$.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Drug content**
The drug content of all batches of Nifedipine loaded SLNs is tabulated in Table No.2. The drug content for all four batches was found to be 79.09%, 86.30%, 81.89% and 88.75% showing that Nifedipine was evenly distributed in the SLNs dispersion.

**Entrapment efficiency (%EE)**
From the results given in the table, it has been observed that the formulation containing high lipid concentration have high entrapment efficiency. It has been observed that F4 batch has higher entrapment efficiency than other three batches. F4 batch has 79.31% entrapment, while F1, F2 and F3 batches has 69.19%, 74.69% and 73.39% entrapment respectively. The percentage of entrapped drug in different batches with different lipid concentration was determined spectrophotometrically.

**Particle size**
Particle size of Nifedipine loaded SLNs was analysed by simple using a Metasizer 2000 instrument (Malvern). Particle size of all four batches of Nifedipine loaded SLNs was measured. The particle size for F1, F2, F3 and F4 batches was found to be 239nm, 179nm, 191nm and 146nm resp. It was observed that change in concentration of lipid does not much affect the particle size. Nifedipine loaded SLNs were observed to be small in size and spherical in shape. Figure No.1.

**Practical yield**
It was observed that percentage practical yield increases with increase in concentration of lipid. The percentage practical yield for F1, F2, F3 and F4 batch was found to be 81%, 89%, 86% and 91% resp.

**Solubility study**
Prepared Nifedipine loaded SLNs showed increased solubility than the pure drug in the water. F4 batch showed increase in solubility i.e. 0.011mg/ml in water whereas the solubility of Nifedipine in water was found to be 0.005mg/ml. The increase in solubility of drug may be due to reduction in particle size$^8$.

**In vitro drug release study**
The *in vitro* drug release profile of Nifedipine loaded SLNs is shown in the Table No.4. The *in vitro* release of SLN dispersion was found to be in the range of 62.02 to 71.17% in 180mins resp. From the dissolution study it was concluded that all formulation batches show more than 50% drug release in120mins. In all batches, F4 batch shows maximum drug release i.e. 71.17% and was selected as the optimized batch. Hence, graph is plotted to determine the drug release of the drug.

### Table No.1: Composition of Nifedipine loaded solid lipid nanoparticles (SLNs)

| Batch No. | [Drug] Nifedipine (mg) | [Lipid] Stearic acid (mg) | [Lipid] Glycerylmonostearate (mg) | Acetone (ml) | [Stabilizer] Tween 80 (mg) | Distilled water (ml) |
|-----------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| F1        | 20                     | 200                       | -                             | 5          | 200                      | 10                  |
| F2        | 20                     | 500                       | -                             | 5          | 300                      | 10                  |
| F3        | 20                     | -                         | 200                           | 5          | 200                      | 10                  |
| F4        | 20                     | -                         | 500                           | 5          | 300                      | 10                  |

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Table No.2: Characterization of Nifedipine loaded SLNs

| Batches | Drug content (%) | % EE | Particle size (nm) | % Practical yield |
|---------|------------------|------|-------------------|------------------|
| F1      | 79.09 ± 0.460    | 69.19 ± 0.211 | 239 ± 11.6       | 81 ± 1.59        |
| F2      | 86.30 ± 0.45     | 74.69 ± 0.461 | 179 ± 26.1       | 89 ± 1.01        |
| F3      | 81.89 ± 0.323    | 73.39 ± 0.209 | 191 ± 20.7       | 86 ± 1.30        |
| F4      | 88.75 ± 0.510    | 79.31 ± 0.119 | 146 ± 31.2       | 91 ± 1.21        |

Table No.3: Solubility study of Nifedipine

| S.No | Formulation batches | Water solubility In mg/ml |
|------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1    | Pure drug           | 0.005                     |
| 2    | F1                  | 0.004                     |
| 3    | F2                  | 0.009                     |
| 4    | F3                  | 0.007                     |
| 5    | F4                  | 0.011                     |

Table No.4: In vitro drug release study

| S.No | Time (min) | F1            | F2            | F3            | F4            |
|------|------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1    | 15         | 17.01 ± 0.652 | 11.24 ± 0.411 | 11.04 ± 0.023 | 14.62 ± 0.133 |
| 2    | 30         | 27.41 ± 0.112 | 20.71 ± 0.090 | 19.05 ± 1.566 | 26.19 ± 0.442 |
| 3    | 45         | 36.81 ± 1.422 | 27.08 ± 0.113 | 26.49 ± 0.644 | 34.15 ± 0.311 |
| 4    | 60         | 46.04 ± 0.988 | 33.29 ± 0.843 | 31.69 ± 0.344 | 41.71 ± 1.223 |
| 5    | 90         | 51.97 ± 1.006 | 47.31 ± 1.276 | 40.11 ± 0.414 | 49.07 ± 1.440 |
| 6    | 120        | 59.09 ± 1.244 | 54.47 ± 1.221 | 47.13 ± 1.232 | 57.18 ± 0.121 |
| 7    | 150        | 63.29 ± 0.511 | 60.01 ± 0.832 | 54.75 ± 1.977 | 65.14 ± 0.331 |
| 8    | 180        | 67.02 ± 0.110 | 63.26 ± 0.754 | 62.19 ± 0.661 | 71.17 ± 0.204 |

Figure No.1: Particle size of optimized batch i.e. F4 batch

Figure No.2: In vitro drug release of Nifedipine loaded SLNs
CONCLUSION
High pressure homogenization followed by solvent emulsification- ultrasonication method was useful for the incorporation of the poorly water soluble drug i.e. Nifedipine. The particle size of prepared nanoparticles were in nanometer range. The in vitro drug release through dialysis membrane from SLNs is much higher than the pure drug. Based on drug content, entrapment efficiency, solubility, drug release study, etc F4 batch was considered as the optimized batch. The results of the above study show that the present work was satisfactory for improved solubility and drug release profile.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST
We declare that we have no conflict of interest.

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