

## A REVIEW ON NANOSTRUCTURED LIPID CARRIER BASED GEL FOR TOPICAL TREATMENT OF PSORIASIS

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Article Received on  
07 April 2022,

Revised on 28 April 2022,  
Accepted on 18 May 2022

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20227-24284

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### ABSTRACT

Psoriasis is one of the common chronic immune mediated inflammatory, non-catching skin disease, having characteristic features like red patches on skin covered with thick silvery scales, small scaling spots (most commonly seen in children). The prevalent reported in various countries ranges between 0.09 and 11.43%, making psoriasis a global problem with at least 100 million individuals affected worldwide. Currently, there are many modern and alternative treatments strategies including systemic administration, phototherapy and ultraviolet radiation and biological treatment to treat psoriasis but none of them have been proven to provide complete relief to patients. Moreover, they are associated with certain side effects. In order to overcome the issues, Topical nanostructured lipid carrier based gel is a most suitable for treatment of psoriasis, as it make close contact with stratum corneum and increase drug skin permeability and also help in controlled release of drug.

**KEYWORDS:** Psoriasis, Transdermal drug delivery system (TDDS), Nanostructured lipid carrier (NLC).

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Psoriasis is a chronic, inflammatory skin disease, characterized by raised, red scaly plaques.<sup>[1]</sup> This disease affects about 2-3% of the world-wide population, although it is more prevalent in American, Canadian, and European populations.<sup>[2]</sup> Psoriasis is also associated with several co-morbidities, suggesting that the underlying pathogenesis of the disease is more than “skin deep”.<sup>[3]</sup> Psoriasis arises through chronic interactions between hyperproliferative

keratinocytes and infiltrating, activated immune cells. Initially, psoriasis was considered solely to be due to dysfunction of limiting keratinocyte proliferation.<sup>[4]</sup>

Psoriasis is clinically classified in 2 group: pustular and non-pustular lesions. Figure no.1

### 1) Non-pustular psoriasis

- Psoriasis vulgaris (early and late onset)
- Guttate psoriasis
- Erythrodermic psoriasis
- Palmoplantar psoriasis
- psoriatic arthritis (PsA)
- Inverse psoriasis

### 2) Pustular psoriasis

- Generalized pustular psoriasis (von Zumbusch type)
  - Impetigo herpetiformis
  - Localized pustular psoriasis
- a. Palmoplantar pustular psoriasis (Barber type)
- b. Acrodermatitis continua of Hallopeau.<sup>[5]</sup>

Psoriasis vulgaris is the most common form of psoriasis. Vulgaris is Latin for “common,” so it means a common form of psoriasis. Plaque psoriasis is not contagious. Psoriasis vulgaris causes plaques, or scales. These are patches of inflamed, silvery skin that usually occur on the scalp, knees, face, hands, feet and outside of the elbow.<sup>[6,7]</sup>

Guttate psoriasis, from the Greek word gutta meaning a droplet, describes the acute onset of a myriad of small, 2–10 mm diameter lesions of psoriasis. Guttate psoriasis is a type of psoriasis that shows up on skin as red, scaly, small, teardrop-shaped spots. It doesn't normally leave a scar. It is usually found in child or young adult.<sup>[8]</sup>

Erythrodermic psoriasis is an uncommon, aggressive, inflammatory form of psoriasis. Symptoms include a peeling rash across the entire surface of the body. The rash can itch or burn intensely, and it spreads quickly.<sup>[9,10]</sup>

Palmoplantar psoriasis is a variant of psoriasis that affects the skin of the palms and soles. It features hyperkeratotic, pustular, or mixed morphologies.<sup>[11]</sup> Inverse psoriasis, sometimes called

hidden psoriasis or intertriginous psoriasis, is a form of psoriasis that affects skin folds. These are areas of body where skin rubs against skin.<sup>[12,13]</sup>

Generalized pustular psoriasis (GPP) is a severe form of a skin disorder called psoriasis. GPP and other forms of psoriasis are caused by abnormal inflammation. Inflammation is a normal immune system response to injury and foreign invaders (such as bacteria).<sup>[14]</sup> However, when inflammation is abnormal and uncontrolled, it can damage the body's tissues and organs. Individuals with GPP have repeated episodes in which large areas of skin become red and inflamed and develop small pus-filled blisters (pustules).<sup>[15]</sup>

The pathogenesis of psoriasis can be explained by dysregulation of immunological cell function as well as keratinocyte proliferation/differentiation. The epidermis is composed of a basal layer, spinous layer, granular layer and cornified layer. The transit time of keratinocytes from the basal layer to the spinous layer is reduced from approximately 13 days in the normal epidermis to only 48 h in psoriatic lesions.<sup>[16]</sup> It was also reported that the cell cycle was shortened from 311 h in normal lesions to 36 h in basal keratinocytes of psoriatic lesions, indicating substantial acceleration of keratinocyte proliferation in psoriatic lesions.<sup>[17]</sup>

Recently, the immunological pathomechanism has been clarified substantially. Whereas T-helper (Th)1 overactivation was thought to induce occurrence of psoriasis, it has been demonstrated that Th17 cells play a key role. Th17 development is maintained by interleukin (IL)-23 mainly produced by dendritic cells. Th17 cells produce various cytokines, including IL-17A, IL-17F and IL-22. IL-17A and IL22 induce not only keratinocyte proliferation, but also tumor necrosis factor (TNF)- $\alpha$ , chemokine (C-X-C motif) ligand (CXCL)1 and CXCL8 production. TNF- $\alpha$  accelerates the infiltration of inflammatory cells, including lymphocytes, monocytes and neutrophils, from the peripheral blood into skin with dendritic cell activation. In addition, antimicrobial peptides are overexpressed in psoriatic skin lesions, and the antimicrobial peptide, LL-37, activates dendritic cells, which leads to the development of inflammation.<sup>[18]</sup>

Two steps in the development of psoriasis: priming versus elicitation. The very first time a psoriasis patient experiences an outbreak of skin lesions can be considered the priming phase. Naïve T cells with autoimmune potential circulating through secondary lymphoid organs such as lymph nodes are activated by mature skin derived dendritic cells, clonally expanded and induced to upregulate adhesion molecules necessary for entrance into skin compartments.

Upon recognition of the lesional inciting (auto-) antigen presented by lesional dendritic cells in a TNF- $\alpha$ -rich environment T cells will be activated, proliferate and secrete T helper (TH)-1 cytokines.<sup>[19]</sup>

Elicitation or recall phase of psoriasis have a lower threshold and are triggered by events described above including physical stress leading to an activation of local T cells by skin derived antigen-presenting dendritic cells (intrinsic T-cell activation hypothesis). Local proliferation and expansion of T cells with consecutive secretion of TH-1 cytokines will again lead to downstream events including keratinocyte proliferation and an angiogenic tissue reaction. An alternative scenario involves selectin and integrin dependent recruitment of effector T cells along chemokines gradients into inflamed skin as predicted by the conventional immune surveillance concept (recirculation hypothesis). working hypothesis for the immunopathogenesis of psoriasis is provided in **Figure no.2.**<sup>[19]</sup>

Currently, there are many modern and alternative treatments strategies including systemic administration, phototherapy and ultraviolet radiation and biological treatment to treat psoriasis but none of them have been proven to provide complete relief to patients. Moreover, they are associated with certain side effects. In order to overcome the issues accompanied with these strategies, transdermal drug delivery systems have been utilized and found effective with negligible toxicity.<sup>[20]</sup>

TDSS has significantly influenced the delivery of various therapeutic agents, especially in pain management, hormonal therapy, and treatment of diseases of the cardiovascular and central nervous systems. TDSS does not involve passage through the gastrointestinal tract; therefore, there is no loss due to first-pass metabolism, and drugs can be delivered without interference from pH, enzymes, and intestinal bacteria.<sup>[21]</sup> In addition, TDSS can be used to control drug release according to usage restrictions, thereby contributing to the high persistence of this method. Most importantly, because TDSS is a non-invasive administration method and involves minimal pain and burden on the patient, drugs can be safely and conveniently administered to children or the elderly.<sup>[22]</sup>

In this review, we addressed the types of gels for dermal drug application.<sup>[23]</sup> (Table no 1). The gels can prove to be a beneficial vehicle for topical drug delivery or for the localized drug action on skin such as in case of sprains or acute musculoskeletal disorders. A gel is defined as a semisolid formulation, which exhibits an external solvent phase, is hydrophobic

or hydrophilic in nature, and is immobilized within the spaces available of a three-dimensional network structure.<sup>[23]</sup>

Gels have a broad range of applications in cosmetics, medicine, biomaterials and food technologies. Compared to creams and ointments, gels are mostly used because of their high-water content, permit a greater dissolution of drugs and facilitate migration of the drug through the vesicle. In addition, gels can hydrate the skin by retaining a significant amount of trans epidermal water and facilitate drug transport.<sup>[24]</sup>

Additionally, the topical treatment is the preferred route of administration for psoriasis as it provides targeted action at the site. Major challenge with conventional topical administration is poor drug penetration through psoriatic skin due to thickening, abnormal maturation of stratum corneum, lipid imbalance and deficiency of natural moisturizer. NLC loaded gel can overcome stratum corneum barrier of psoriatic skin and can prove vital for psoriatic therapy.<sup>[25,26]</sup> NLC cause occlusive effect which leads to increased skin hydration as nanosized lipid particles ensure close proximity with stratum corneum which increase the drug amount.<sup>[27,28]</sup>

Nanostructured lipid carriers (NLCs), as second generation of lipid nanoparticles to overcome the shortcomings of first generation i.e. SLNs. Biodegradable and compatible lipids (solid and liquid) and emulsifiers are used for the preparation of NLCs. Liquid lipids (oil) incorporation causes structural imperfections of solid lipids leading to a less ordered crystalline arrangement which avert drug leakage and furnish a high drug load.<sup>[29]</sup> In last few years, NLCs have gained attention of researchers as an alternative of SLNs, polymeric nanoparticles, emulsions, microparticles, liposomes etc. These nanocarriers possess the utility in delivery of hydrophilic as well as lipophilic drugs.<sup>[25]</sup> NLCs have emerged as a promising carrier system for the delivery of pharmaceuticals via oral, parenteral, ocular, pulmonary, topical, and transdermal route. Recently, NLCs are also being exploited in brain targeting, chemotherapy, gene therapy, food industry and delivery of cosmeceuticals and nutraceuticals.<sup>[30]</sup> Depend on the location of incorporated drug moieties in NLC, they can be categorized into three types<sup>[26,31]</sup>, as shown in **Figure no:3**.

Preparation procedures of nanostructured lipid carriers (NLCs)<sup>[32,33]</sup>: hot homogenization, cold homogenization and microemulsion as shown in **Figure no:4**.

Advantages of NLCs over the conventional formulation<sup>[34,35]</sup>

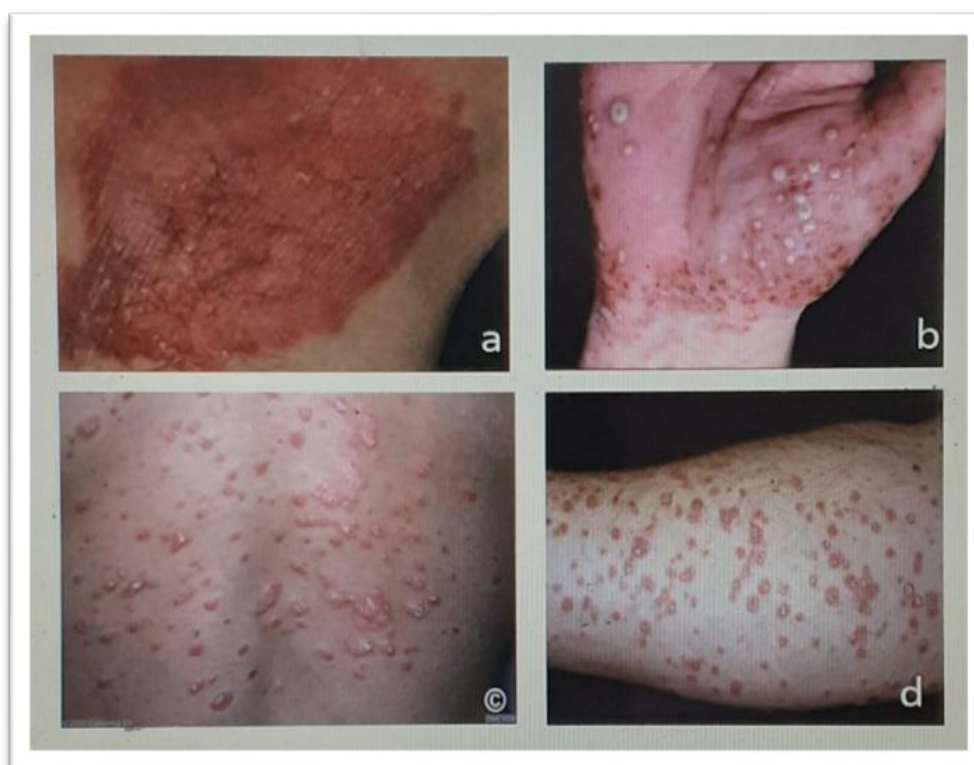
- Prevent or minimize the drug expulsion during storage
- Control and targeted drug release
- Feasibilities of loading both lipophilic and hydrophilic drugs
- Use of biodegradable and biocompatible lipids
- Avoid organic solvents
- More affordable (less expensive than polymeric/surfactant based carriers)
- Better physical stability
- Ease of preparation and scale-up
- Improve benefit/risk ratio
- Increase of skin hydration and elasticity
- Small size ensures close contact with the stratum corneum
- Enhanced stability of drugs

NLCs particles can make close contact with superficial junctions of SC and furrows between corneocyte islands, allowing superficial spreading of the active agents. Following the evaporation of water from the nano systems applied to the skin surface, particles form an adhesive layer occluding the skin. Hydration of SC thus increases to reduce corneocyte packing and widen inter-corneocyte gaps. Hydration also influences partitioning of the drug into SC. Intact nanoparticles sized above 100 nm are not considered to permeate the SC because of their dimensions and rigidity.<sup>[36]</sup>

Although the particles do not penetrate across SC, uptake of the components is to be expected. Since epidermal lipids are rich in SC, lipid nanoparticles attaching to the skin surface would allow lipid exchange between SC and the nanocarriers. Lipid nanoparticles have the potential to deliver drugs via the follicles. Furthermore, each follicle is associated with sebaceous glands, which release sebum, creating an environment enriched in lipids. This environment is beneficial for trapping of lipid nanoparticles. Sebum is a mixture of triglycerides, squalene and waxes. Some glyceride lipids present in NLCs may accelerate the entrance into the follicles/sebaceous glands. The possible mechanisms involved in skin permeation enhancement by NLCs are depicted in **Figure no. 5**. Various Antipsoriatic drugs loaded in Nanoparticles.<sup>[37,38]</sup> (**Table no. 2**)

Rapali V *et al.*<sup>[39]</sup> have formulated Curcumin loaded nanostructured lipid carriers for enhanced skin retained topical delivery. Hot emulsification probe sonication method was employed for the preparation of the Curcumin loaded NLC. Further, in-vitro and ex-vivo characterization was performed for designed NLC. Curcumin-NLC showed extended in-vitro release up to 48 hours, whereas free Curcumin showed 100% drug release within 4 hours. Ex vivo skin permeation studies revealed 3.24 fold improved permeation and skin retention in the case of Curcumin loaded NLC gel compared to free Curcumin gel.

Zhao Z *et al.*<sup>[40]</sup> have formulated and evaluated Corylin loaded nanostructured lipid carriers gel for topical treatment of uv-induced skin aging. Corylin-NLCs were prepared using emulsification and solvent evaporation method. Prepared formulation were optimized on UV irradiated mouse as the oxidative stress model to detect the therapeutic effect of Corylin loaded NLC gel. Result of study showed that Corylin-NLCs can significantly suppress the LDH release, decrease MDA content, increase in CAT, SOD, GSH-Px activity, increased the expression of Bcl-2/Bax protein and reduced the expression of cleaved caspase-3/caspase-3 protein on UVB induced HaCaT cells.



**Figure no.1 a) Inverse psoriasis b) pustular psoriasis c) Guttate psoriasis d) plaque psoriasis.**

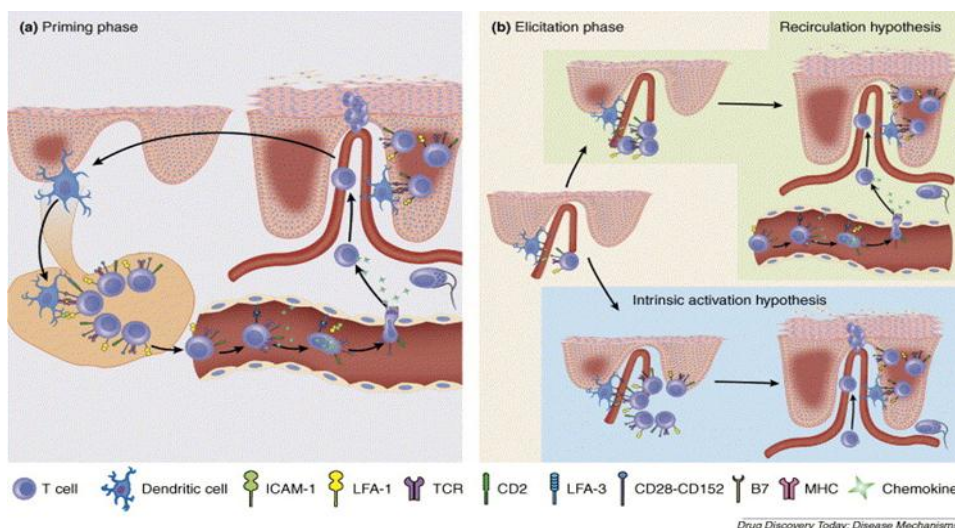


Figure no.2: Mechanism of psoriasis.

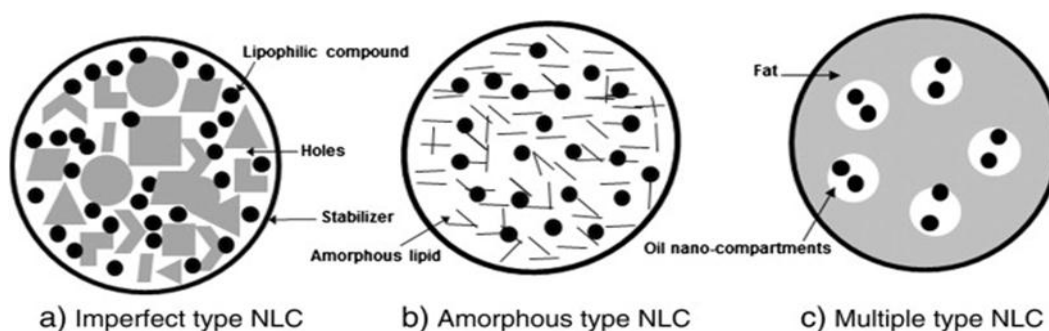


Figure no.3: Types of Nanostructured lipid carrier.

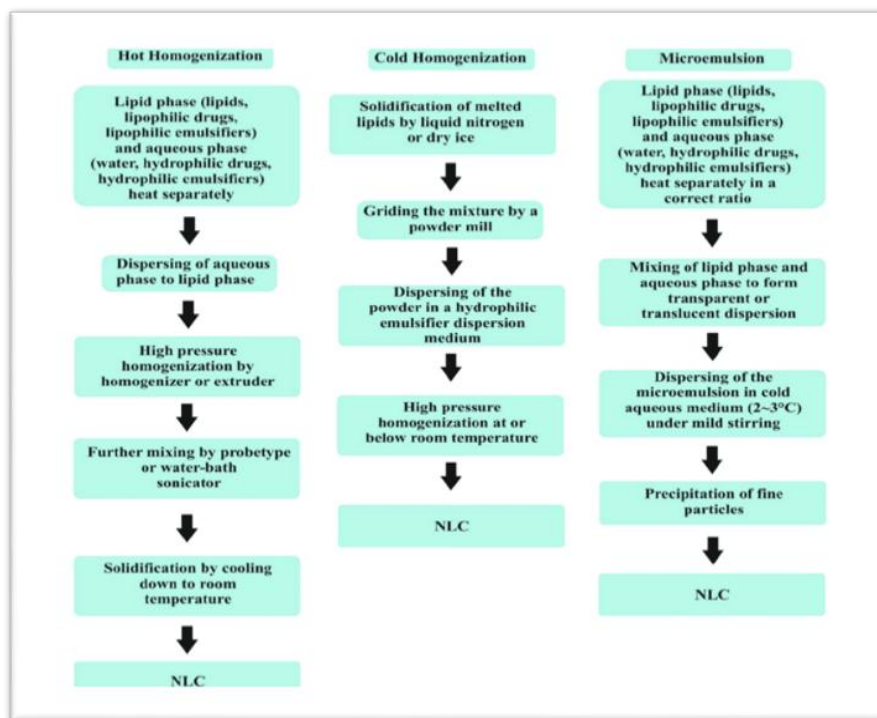
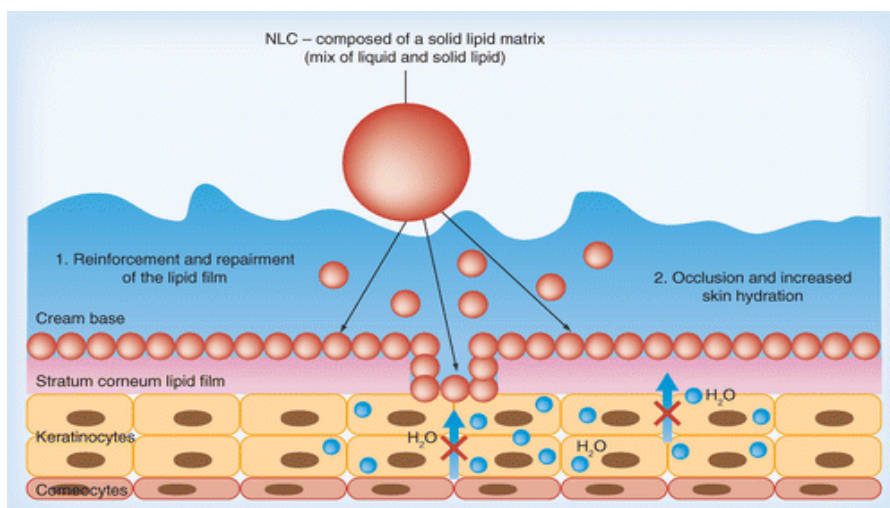


Figure no. 4. Preparation procedures of nanostructured lipid carriers (NLCs).





**Figure no. 5: Mechanisms for skin permeation enhancement of drugs or active ingredients from nanostructured lipid carriers (NLCs).**

**Table no. 1: Gel Types and their distinguishing features and examples of commercial products.**<sup>[50]</sup>

| Gel type                      | Distinguishing features  | Commercial product   | Indication  |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Hydrogel                      | Water entrapped in a three-dimensional network by using a hydrophilic gelling agent  | Atropro, Aurstat, Nimulid Transgel, Luofucon, Tegaderm, Skinintegrity, Maxgel  | Atopic dermatitis<br>Eczema Anti-inflammatory Skin care |
| Niosomal and Proniosomal gels | Liposomes consisting of a nonionic surfactant, which can be of a hydrogel or oleogel nature. A proniosomal gel is a hydrated form of niosomes. | Premiere Massage gel, Lancome niosome plus                                     | Skin care Cosmetic antiaging                            |
| Emulgels                      | Consist of a hydrogel or oleogel with o/w or w/o emulsion and a surfactant   | Voltaren, Voveran, Voltarol, Biogel, White glow, Topicane                      | Anti-inflammatory Skin care                             |
| Oleogels/ Organogels          | Organic liquid entrapped in a threedimensional network by using an organogelator   | Oleogel Plus, Gilugel, Phlojel Ultra, Eucerin, Circularom, Przondo, Lancamento | Skin Care Emollient Compounding base                    |
| Aerogels and Xerogels         | Inorganic, composed of silica, and produced by supercritical drying. Inorganic, composed of silica, produced by drying under normal pressure   | Aerosil (only patented prototypes)   | No pharmaceutical commercial product for topical        |
| Bigels                        | Mixture of an oleogel and hydrogel without the addition of a surfactant  | Bi-Gel Testosterone  | Anti-inflammatory (Clinical stage)                      |

**Table no. 2: Various Antipsoriatic drugs loaded in Nanoparticles.**

| Antipsoriatic Drug | Method of preparation                         | Ingredients used in Nanoemulsion  |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Acitretin          | solvent diffusion technique                   | Oleic Acid and Tween 80   |
| Cyclosporine       | High-shear homogenizer                        | Nutmeg oil, virgin coconut oil, tween 80, xanthan gum   |
| Tacrolimus         | Hot melt high pressure homogenization method  | Compritol ATO 888 , Capmul® MCM C8, Pluronic® F-68  |
| Turmeric oil       | Emulsification method                         | Tween 20, tween 80, lecithin, labrasol, isopropyl alcohol   |
| MTX                | Hot homogenization ultrasonication techniques | Witepsol1 S51, Oleic acid, Polysorbate 60, Polysorbate 80   |
| Curcumin           | Nanoemulsification and ultrasonication        | Precirol ATO 5 , Tween 80, Capmul MCM   |
| Psoralens(8-MOP)   | Emulsification method                         | Precirol ATO 5, Myverol 18-04 K, Tween 80, soybean phosphatidylcholine, squalene, Pluronic F68 (PF68) |

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