

IUPAC Provisional Recommendations Polymer Division

Terminology for Biorelated Polymers and Applications

Like most of the materials used by humans, polymeric materials are proposed in literature, and occasionally exploited clinically, as such, as devices or as part of devices, by surgeons, dentists and pharmacists to treat trauma and diseases. Applications have in common the fact that polymers function in contact with animal and human cells, tissues, and/or organs. More recently, people have realized that polymers that are used as plastics in packaging, as colloidal suspension in paints, and under many other forms in the environment, are also in contact with living systems and raise problems related to sustainability, delivery of chemicals or pollutants, and elimination of wastes. These problems are basically comparable to those found in therapy. Last but not least, biotechnologies and renewable resources are regarded as attractive sources of polymers. In all cases, water, ions, biopolymers, cells and tissues are involved. Polymerists, therapists, biologists of the animal and environment kingdoms should thus use the same terminology to reflect similar properties, phenomena and mechanisms. Of particular interest is the domain of the so-called “degradable or biodegradable polymers” that are aimed at providing materials specific of time-limited applications in medicine and in the environment where the respect of living systems, the elimination, and/or the bio-recycling are mandatory, at least ideally.

The full text of the Recommendations can be accessed on-line at:

http://media.iupac.org/reports/provisional/abstract11/vert_prs.pdf

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