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ISSN: 2167-7956
Journal of
Biomolecular Research
& Therapeutics

Opinion Article

# Electroporation Advancements in Gene Therapy and Cancer Treatment

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## DESCRIPTION

Electroporation, also known as electropermeabilization or electro transfer is a powerful biophysical technique that involves the application of short high-voltage electric pulses to cells or tissues to transiently increase their permeability. This process allows the uptake of exogenous molecules such as DNA, RNA proteins and drugs into the cells which have numerous applications in biotechnology and medicine. Electroporation has revolutionized fields like gene delivery cancer therapy and bioprocessing offering a non-viral and efficient means to introduce various biomolecules into target cells. The fundamental principle of electroporation lies in the application of an external electric field that perturbs the cell membrane leading to the formation of transient pores. These pores, also called Nano pores or electro pores are aqueous channels formed within the lipid bilayer of the cell membrane, allowing the passage of ions, water and small molecules into and out of the cell. Electroporation can be divided into two main regimes based on the pulse duration: reversible electroporation and irreversible electroporation.

Reversible Electroporation short and intense electric pulses are applied to cells, resulting in the formation of transient and reversible electro pores. Once the electric field is removed the cell membrane reseals and the cells regain their normal physiological state. Reversible electroporation is mainly used for the introduction of biomolecules such as plasmid DNA or siRNA, into cells commonly referred to as gene electro transfer. The irreversible damage to the cell membrane results in cell death and is often exploited for cancer treatment, known as Irreversible Electroporation Ablation. Is a non-thermal ablation technique that can selectively destroy tumor cells while preserving nearby healthy tissues. The exact mechanisms of electroporation are complex and multifactorial involving several stages. The application of an external electric field causes a redistribution of charged molecules such as ions and lipids in the cell membrane. This redistribution leads to the deformation and expansion of the lipid bilayer ultimately resulting in the formation of electro pores. Electro pores create a temporary increase in membrane conductivity allowing the passive diffusion of ions and small molecules into and out of the cell. The extent and duration of pore conductance depend on the electroporation parameters such as pulse amplitude, duration and frequency. During reversible electroporation charged molecules within the cell can move across the electro pores due to electro osmotic flow and electrophoresis. After the electric field is removed, the electropores gradually re-seal through membrane resealing processes. The recovery time varies depending on the cell type and electroporation conditions.

Electroporation requires precise control of electric pulse parameters to achieve optimal outcomes. A pulse generator delivers electric pulses of specific amplitude, duration, and frequency to the target cells. It must be capable of delivering both monopolar and bipolar pulses to cater to various electroporation applications. Electroporation is widely used for gene delivery into various cell types, making it a significant technique in gene therapy research. It enables the introduction of therapeutic genes into target cells for the treatment of genetic disorders, cancer immunotherapy and vaccine development. Irreversible electroporation has emerged as a potential non-thermal ablation technique for treating solid tumors. Tumor cells by inducing apoptosis while preserving surrounding healthy tissues.

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**Received:** 29-May-2023, Manuscript No. BOM-23-22360; **Editor assigned:** 01-Jun-2023, Pre QC No. BOM-23-22360(PQ); **Reviewed:** 15-Jun-2023, QC No. BOM-23-22360; **Revised:** 22-Jun-2023, Manuscript No. BOM-23-22360(R); **Published:** 30-Jun-2023, DOI: 10.35248/2167-7956.23.12.310

**Citation:** Bhushan S (2023) Electroporation Advancements in Gene Therapy and Cancer Treatment. J Biol Res Ther. 12:310.