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Tethered lipid bilayer membranes assembly on gold: Fabrication and properties characterization

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Abstract

Tethered lipid bilayer membranes (tLBMs) on conductive surfaces are attractive for biosensing protein-membrane interactions and drug discovery. Since lipid vesicle fusion does not spontaneously occur on bare gold, a facile method is proved successfully for tLBMs formation using 1-palmitoyl-2-oleoyl-sn-glycero-3-phosphocholine (POPC) vesicles functionalized with 1,2-distearoyl-sn-glycero-3-phosphoethanolamine-N-poly(ethylene glycol)-2000-N-[3-(2-pyridyldithio)propionate] (DSPE-PEG-PDP) containing a disulfide group for Au-thiolate bond formation. AFM force spectroscopy with pico-Newton force accuracy is utilized to investigate functionalized POPC vesicles rupture kinetics as a function of DSPE-PEG-PDP concentration and the minimum external force for tLBMs formation on gold. The minimum external force to initiate tLBMs of 2.5mol%DSPE-PEG-PDP/97.5mol%POPC formation is 1.1nN, while that for 10mol%DSPE-PEG-PDP/90mol%POPC is 0.5nN. In contrast, POPC vesicles without DSPE-PEG-PDP kept intact on plasma-cleaned gold after >2.5nN forces were exerted. Thus, Au-thiolate bonding between DSPE-PEG-PDP and gold increases vesicle-substrate interactions and is crucial for promoting tLBMs formation. TLBMs fluidity was characterized as a function of DSPE-PEG-PDP concentration by fluorescence microscopy.