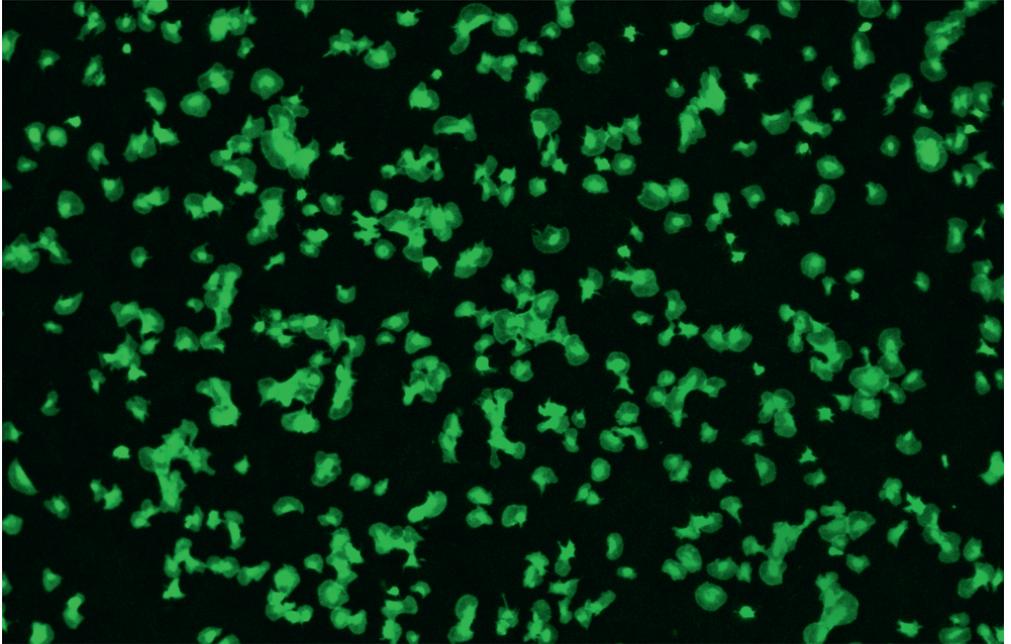


Band 55

Johanna C. Clauser

A New Analysis Method for Optical In-vitro Hemocompatibility Assessment



Aachener Beiträge zur Medizintechnik

Herausgeber:

Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. Dr. med. Dr. h. c. Steffen Leonhardt

Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. Klaus Radermacher

Univ.-Prof. Dr. med. Dipl.-Ing. Thomas Schmitz-Rode

A New Analysis Method for Optical In-vitro Hemocompatibility Assessment

Eine neue Methode zur optischen Auswertung von
In-vitro-Hämokompatibilitätsuntersuchungen

Von der Fakultät für Maschinenwesen der
Rheinisch-Westfälischen Technischen Hochschule Aachen
zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades einer
Doktorin der Naturwissenschaften genehmigte Dissertation

vorgelegt von
Johanna Charlotte Clauser

Berichter: Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. Ulrich Steinseifer
Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Benjamin Berkels
Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. Christian Hopmann

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In-vitro Hemocompatibility Assessment**

Ein Beitrag aus dem Institut für Angewandte Medizintechnik der RWTH Aachen, Lehr- und Forschungsgebiet Kardiovaskuläre Technik (Leitung: Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. Ulrich Steinseifer).

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Abstract

The major challenge in the field of blood contacting medical devices such as artificial heart valves or stents is still the biocompatibility and especially the hemocompatibility of the artificial materials. When a foreign material gets in contact to the human blood, a cascade of events is initiated resulting in platelet adhesion on the material as well as thrombus formation. Such thrombi can lead to failure of the medical device or thromboembolic events like stroke or heart attack. Anticoagulation therapies can prevent thrombus formation; however, they bear a high risk of life threatening bleeding events for the patients. Thus, research in the field of new and modified materials with improved hemocompatibility is essential to overcome the current limitations. However, in-vitro hemocompatibility assessment of materials is still lacking standardization and comparability, which makes research in this field even more complicated. Microscopy is widely used to analyze adherent platelets on materials following in-vitro testing. Nevertheless, studies are hardly comparable due to different manual or semi-manual platelet analyses and a strong variability with regard to the analyzed sample area.

This thesis provides a new analysis method for the optical in-vitro hemocompatibility assessment of materials as an approach towards standardization. By means of a segmentation and a random forest machine learning algorithm, platelet count and activation state analysis are completely automated, allowing for a user-independent and comparable analysis. Additionally, the impact of analyzed sample area on the result is evaluated, proving a correlation to the result variability. The necessary threshold of analyzed sample area fraction for statistically valid results is determined and included into the new analysis method. As a proof-of-concept, two in-vitro hemocompatibility test series, one with different materials and one with microstructured surfaces, are analyzed by means of the new analysis method. In the future, the new method might overcome the limits of standardized hemocompatibility assessment, thus allowing for successful research in the field of blood contacting artificial materials.

Kurzfassung

Die Hämokompatibilität von blutkontaktierenden Medizinprodukten, wie z.B. künstlichen Herzklappen oder Stents, ist nach wie vor die größte Limitation von künstlichen Materialien. Kommen die Materialien mit Blut in Kontakt wird eine Reihe von körpereigenen Mechanismen ausgelöst, die zur Ablagerung von Thrombozyten und zur Thrombenbildung führen. Dies kann die Funktion des Medizinprodukts erheblich beeinträchtigen und zu Thromboembolien und in Folge dessen zum Herzinfarkt oder Schlaganfall führen. Eine Behandlung mit Antikoagulanzen kann dem zwar entgegenwirken, birgt allerdings das hohe Risiko lebensbedrohlicher Blutungskomplikationen. Daher ist die Forschung auf dem Gebiet blutkontaktierender Materialien essentiell. Allerdings gibt es vor allem im Bereich der Analyse von In-vitro-Versuchen aktuell noch Defizite im Hinblick auf Standardisierung und Vergleichbarkeit der Ergebnisse. Oftmals wird die Mikroskopie verwendet, um anhaftende Thrombozyten zu analysieren. Hierbei werden verschiedene manuelle oder semi-manuelle Auswerteverfahren genutzt, die sich zusätzlich in Bezug auf den Anteil der ausgewerteten Probenfläche so deutlich unterscheiden, dass eine Vergleichbarkeit nahezu unmöglich ist.

In dieser Arbeit wird eine neue Methode zur optischen Analyse von In-vitro-Hämokompatibilitätsversuchen erarbeitet, die ein erstes Konzept für die Standardisierung von optischen Analysen darstellt. Mithilfe eines Segmentierungs-Algorithmus und eines maschinell angelegten Programms wird das Auszählen von anhaftenden Thrombozyten sowie die Analyse ihres Aktivierungsgrades vollständig automatisiert und dadurch nutzerunabhängig gestaltet. Zusätzlich wird ein Zusammenhang zwischen dem ausgewerteten Flächenanteil und der Streuung der Ergebnisse gezeigt. Der für statistisch valide Ergebnisse notwendige Flächenanteil wird bestimmt und in die neue Methode integriert. Diese wird anhand von unterschiedlichen Materialien und mikrostrukturierten Oberflächen auf ihre Anwendbarkeit hin überprüft. Mithilfe dieser neuen Analysemethode könnten zukünftig die Standardisierungsprobleme im Bereich von Hämokompatibilitätsuntersuchungen überwunden und so die Forschung auf dem Gebiet der blutkontaktierenden Materialien weiter vorangetrieben werden.

Content

Acknowledgements	I
Abstract.....	III
Kurzfassung.....	V
Abbreviations and Symbols	IX
1 Introduction	1
2 Hemocompatibility of Biomaterials	5
2.1 Blood and Hemostasis.....	5
2.1.1 Coagulation Cascade	7
2.1.2 Thrombosis	12
2.1.3 Coagulation Antagonists	13
2.2 Surface Modification of Biomaterials	15
2.3 Hemocompatibility Assessment.....	18
3 Biomedical Image Analysis.....	21
3.1 Image Segmentation	21
3.2 Image Classification	23
4 Design of a New Optical Analysis Method	25
4.1 Static In-vitro Hemocompatibility Test.....	25
4.1.1 Material Fabrication.....	26
4.1.2 Experimental Setup	26
4.2 Image Acquisition.....	28
4.3 Image Processing.....	31
4.4 Image Classification	33
4.4.1 Random Forest Input Data and Parameter	34
4.4.2 Random Forest Statistics	37
4.5 Method Validation.....	44
4.5.1 Classification Quality	45
4.5.2 Hemocompatibility Test Analysis	48
4.6 Analysis Area Threshold	51
4.7 Method Summary.....	57
4.8 Discussion and Conclusion.....	58

5	Proof-of-concept Study for Structured Surfaces.....	69
5.1	Surface Structuring.....	69
5.2	Test Setup and Optical Analysis.....	70
5.3	Results.....	72
5.4	Discussion.....	74
6	Summary and Outlook.....	77
7	List of Figures.....	81
8	List of Tables.....	85
9	Bibliography.....	87
10	Addendum.....	103
10.1	Surface Topography Summary.....	103
10.2	Random Forest 10-fold Cross Validation Data.....	106
10.3	Area Threshold Figures.....	107
10.4	Hemocompatibility Test Analysis with 40 % Analyzed Area.....	112