

## Aptamer-based hybrid nanomaterials for food safety assay

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**ABSTRACT:** Given the high prevalence of acute and chronic diseases caused by unhealthy food consumption, design and development of accurate and sensitive sensors for the detection of food contaminants is importance. The appearance of nanotechnology and nanomolecular detection methods based on aptamer-conjugated nanoparticles has made it possible to identify the lowest concentration of risk factors in food at point. In this study we described an over review on the different types of nanostructures used in the design of detection biosensors in the field of food safety assay. Nanostructures and nanomaterials are the most important candidates for improving the sensitivity and LOD (Limit of Detection) properties of biosensors due to their unique characteristics such as high surface-to-volume ratio and physicochemical and optical properties. Nanomaterials with high surface-to-volume ratio will provide a large surface area for the loading of specific recognition element and will also have good molecular interaction with target molecules. Also, by using the optical and physicochemical properties of nanomaterials, these structures can amplify the optical and electrochemical signals generated in biosensors that result from the interaction between the target molecule and its specific recognition element. Given that the design and development of high-precision and sensitive diagnostic biosensors is crucial for identifying biomarkers, and various studies have shown that the use of nanostructures due to their structural and physical properties can play an important role in improving the biosensor properties.

**Keywords:** *Aptasensors, Food Safety, Hybrid Nanomaterials, Point of Care, Smartphone*

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## INTRODUCTION

Foodborne disease or food poisoning is caused by eating food that is contaminated with bacteria, toxins, viruses, antibiotics or parasites. These contaminations usually occur due to improper transportation, supply or storage of food. Foodborne illnesses can be caused by

the presence of a pesticide or drug in the food or toxic substances such as fungi toxic [1]. The World Health Organization defines foodborne disease as: "Diseases that are infectious or poisonous and that enter the body through food. Everyone is exposed to such diseases. The World Health Organization (WHO) are estimates

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annually 600 million people fall in disease after eating contaminated food from diarrhea to cancer in worldwide. As well as, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are estimated annual 128000 hospitalizations due to foodborne illness that A quarter of that number leading to death [1]. More than 200 types of foodborne illnesses have been identified that threatens the health of the community. The most common of these threatening agents include bacterial pathogens, fungi, viruses and parasites. Viral agents are very widespread, but bacteria and fungi are most cause of death. The most common of these diseases is diarrhea, which can be very dangerous, especially in children [2, 3]. In the study by Farahi and coworkers, critical issue in water and food safety was divided into two broad categories of biological and chemical agents. Reviews on this show diversity of molecular species such as *Campylobacter*, *Salmonella*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli* O157: H7) were the most biologic contaminants in food in the United States. Water-borne pathogens also include *Vibrio cholerae* O139, enterohemorrhagic *E. coli* O157: H, chlorineresistant *Cryptosporidium*, and multi-drug-resistant *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* that are expanding daily driven by forces such as population growth, translocation, and socio-economic all over the worldwide [2]. Occasionally, an epidemic of infectious diseases can be caused by a common source of contaminated water and food, but sometimes but it can be a global bioterrorist factor too in a particular person or population. Unfortunately, in addition to the factors of bioterrorism [6] even financial profits have led to fraud [7] in the food industry that have made vital the need for regular and rapid on-site monitoring. Therefore, from the start of the production and processing process to the point of use, regular and rapid monitoring should be done with easy and high accessible and good cost effectiveness methods and accessories [4]. Traditional water and food analysis techniques include chromatography, spectroscopy, electrochemical, and Molecular techniques such as Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) and ELISA Enzyme-Linked Immuno-Assay (ELISA) that require expensive equipment and expert operators. Although the sensitivity, specificity, precision and accuracy of these devices are important that is also dependent on appropriate laboratory con-

ditions for accurate results [5-7]. Due to importance of early detection of food contamination for prevent of foodborne illness epidemic, the need for designing simple and point of care diagnostic methods with quickly and accurately analysis of food has been a matter of great concern to food industry regulators. Now, Conventional analysis methods such as GC-MASS and HPLC for assessment of food in terms of the present of toxins, antibiotics and pathogens in food is very time-consuming and costly, while immunoassay are presented as accurate analytical methods, lowest cost and fastest diagnostics kit for assessing food quality and safety. Immunoassay as a new techniques by necessary and sufficient specificity and sensitivity, are used broadly in the food industry to the detection of natural compounds, antibiotics, pesticide residues and microorganisms. ELISA is an immunological technique involving an enzyme to detect the presence of an antibody or antigen in a sample. The advances in ELISA technology have led to the rapid development of a variety of commercial kits for use in the food industry. With all the specificity that the antibodies have in targeting the molecule, but due to the complex process and high cost of production and the detection function depend on the buffering conditions, antibodies based immunoassay has many challenges.

Today, aptamers have been used broadly as a candidate for antibody replacement in recognition element role with high sensitivity and specificity and low production cost. However, it has good chemical and thermal stability compared to antibodies and is extremely insensitive to buffering and environmental conditions [8-10]. The design and fabrication of hybrid nanomaterials resulting from the nanoparticles and aptamers conjugation has become a technology in the design of nanobiosensors today. The use of nanomaterials in the design of nanobiosensors has been aimed at increasing the sensitivity and improving the detection limit in the sensors. Because nanostructures, due to their high surface-to-volume ratios as well as their specific physical and chemical properties, can play an important role in loading increasing of the recognition elements such as aptamers, creating and enhancing the detection signal.

One of the main commonalities among fast and accurate methods is the use of nanoparticles of various sizes and shapes. In biosensors, these nanoparticles

must be functionalized by a specific recognition element and after identifying the target molecule, they will either produce light or change color and then detected by a detector either quantitatively or semi-quantitatively or qualitatively with any types of spectrophotometers [11]. With the advent of the electronics industry in the field of smart phone design and programming of any applications, this device can replace a variety of spectrometers that we can detect and measure with smartphones to quickly perform the necessary measurements at any location [11-13]. On the other hand, Smartphones are rapidly expanding their imaging and processing capabilities and optimum computing capabilities, which can be a good opportunity for regular and rapid monitoring of harmful factors in the food chain from production to consumption. The integration of these technologies can guarantee food and water safety [11].

### ***Technology of Apta-sensors***

The aptamer is derived from the Latin word "aptus", meaning appropriate, and the Greek suffix "mer" means unit or particle. Aptamers are single-stranded sequences of DNA or RNA with a specific three-dimensional structure less than 25 kDa that can bind to any target molecules from ions to proteins with high affinity and specificity. Because of their high specificity, aptamers can be used as recognition element in biosensor design. The small size, fast and inexpensive manufacturing process, low immunogenicity and high chemical and thermal stability make them attractive molecules in the design and manufacture of new specialized, rapid and inexpensive diagnostic and therapeutic sensors. Acid nucleic aptamers have been produced against various targets such as organic dyes, metal ions, drugs, amino acids, co-factors, nucleotides, peptides, a variety of proteins and cell surface receptors. Apart from all this, aptamers have also been produced against viruses, pathogenic bacteria and cancer cells [14]. Aptamers are typically divided into two classes of RNA and DNA and usually observed in three-dimensional spatial structure in the form of series hairpins, bulges, pseudoknots, bulge loop, and G-quartet, and G-quadruplexes formed by the hydrogen bond, Van Der Waals Force, hydrophobic interaction, and other molecular interactions [15-17]. The biosen-

sor in which the aptamer plays the role of recognition element is called an aptosensor. Not only the high affinity and specificity but also the wide range of target molecule detection, laboratory synthesis and chemical stability are the main advantages of aptamers over other biosensors. Due to the high potential of aptamers in the design and production of specific biosensors in the field of pathogen identification and hazardous food Contaminants, in recent years various methods such as fluorescent, colorimetric, electrochemical, photo-electrochemical, electrochemical methods have been used [8].

Aptamers are identified and selected during a *in vitro* process named as SELEX (systematic evolution of ligands by exponential enrichment) [17]. The random library contains approximately  $10^{15}$  sequences with a length of 20-220 nt. The aptamers can identified small target molecules that means enter target in the cave-like specific space, be interacted with it by noncovalent junctions such as hydrogen bonding, van der Waals and hydrophobic bonding with supermolecules. The aptamers easily modified and are suitable candidate for functionalization of all types of nanostructures for any applications. Also, the biophysical and chemical properties of the nucleic acid structure are known, and are tailored to suit a variety of web-based modeling and structure prediction applications that can determine the possible second structure of the aptamer in the face of its target molecule. The biochemical properties of nucleic acids have enabled them to play a special role in the analysis and detection of toxins and harmful substances [8, 18, 19]. Despite all of the advantages, laboratory process (SELEX) for selection and identification of aptamer against desired target is generally time consuming and costly [20].

Nowadays, many web-based applications are designed and programmed to predict and modelling the secondary structure of aptamers in the face of the target molecule such as RNAstructure (<https://rna.urmc.rochester.edu/RNAstructure.html>) and mfold (<http://unafold.rna.albany.edu/?q=mfold>). Until now, aptamer-biosensors (aptasensors) have been designed broadly against inorganic compounds, biotoxins, Pharmaceutical Residues (includes drugs, antibiotics, antiparasitics, steroidal hormones, and other residues), organic dyes, agonists, and micro-organisms. Aptam-

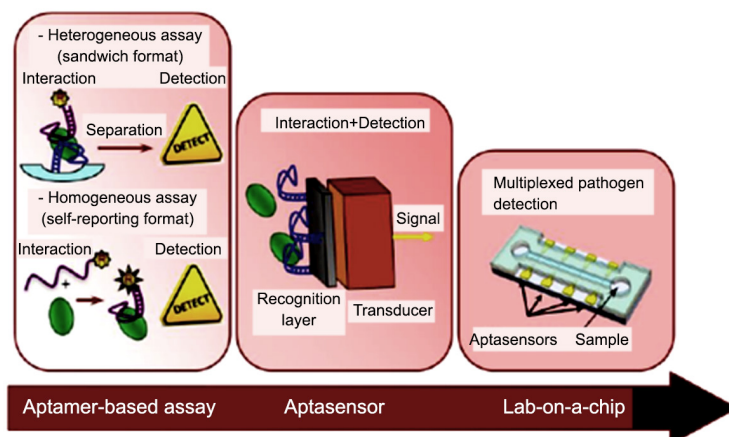


Fig. 1. Schematic overview of the different approaches for aptasensing according to their level of integration [23].

ers that have been designed against heavy metals such as potassium ( $K^+$ ), lead ( $Pb^{2+}$ ), mercury ( $Hg^{2+}$ ), zinc ( $Zn^{2+}$ ), nickel ( $Ni^{2+}$ ), cadmium ( $Cd^{2+}$ ) and arsenic ( $As^{3+}$ ) have been used in the food industry. Biotoxins, including mycotoxins and exotoxins, can be extremely dangerous even at very low concentrations in foods. Including aflatoxin  $B_1$  ( $AFB_1$ ), Ochratoxins (OTA), Fumonisin, Trichothecenes, Zeralenone (ZEA) which are often highly mutagenic and carcinogenic and must be monitored with great accuracy and regularly [17, 21]. For this reasons, it has attracted the remarkable attention of many scientists for research in this field for design and fabrication of aptasensors to intend for use in the food industry to detectin of food toxin which are reviewed below (Fig. 1). Ronald and his colleagues have succeeded in designing a tool that can detect and detoxify aflatoxin B using the aptamer nucleotide sequence of inactivating mycotoxins, transformants, and antioxidants [22]. In designing biosensors, aptamers are generally conjugated with nanostructured carriers to enhance diagnostic sensitivity.

Nanomaterials are conjugated to aptamers by electrostatic interaction, covalent and non-covalent bonds, and specific linkers such as streptavidin-biotin. Functionalization of nanomaterials with aptamer leads to the creation of hybrid nanomaterials can be used in design of nanobiosensors. This hybrid nanomaterial due to its high aspect ratio can be used as a platform for loading larger amounts of the identifier unit which will increase the sensitivity of the sensor. On the other hand, these hybrid nanomaterials play the role of

transducer due to their optical and electrochemical properties, which will produce a stronger recognition signal [23-26].

#### *Nanostructures based sensors for point of care detection (Hybrid Nanomaterials)*

The remarkable properties of nanomaterials, such as unique shapes, high aspect ratio and size, physicochemical properties and catalytic activity, play an important role in improvement of biosensors function in detection and enhancement of signal generation. As a result, even the smallest amount of target molecule can be detected and the likelihood of a false response will be minimal [8]. Designing of biosensor based on hybrid nanomaterials to produce detectable signals has become a potential opportunity for improved food safety [26]. In this study, we divided hybrid nanomaterials based on aptamer-nanoparticle hybrid, into four general categories of metal nanoparticles, carbon based nanomaterials, polymeric nanomaterials, and biological nanomaterials and we explained the importance of their role in rapid and accurate identification of food risk factors.

#### *Metal and metal oxide NPs*

Metallic materials in three dimensions of length, width and thickness can be designed and manufactured on a nanoscale (1-100 nm) for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes. Metal nanoparticles are modified with functional groups for conjunction of them with aptamer/antibody so act as recognition elements to target identification and generate the detectable signal. The main

reason for the popularity of metal nanoparticles is their uniformity and sharp distribution in nanometer size. Unique characteristics such as surface Plasmon resonance and optical properties of metal nanoparticles have been widely used in design and fabrication of diverse types of biosensors. Some metal nanoparticles, because of their free electrons, can resonate in the presence of light that this phenomena called Localized Surface Plasmon Resonance (LSPR) [27]. Gold (AuNP), Silver (AgNP), and Copper nanoparticles exhibit this phenomenon in Visible (vis) light, while Lead (pb), Indium (In), Mercury (Hg), Tin (Sn) and Cadmium (Cd) exhibit in the presence of ultraviolet (UV) wavelengths [28]. Silver has anti-bacterial and antiseptic properties. The unique properties of metals are due to the presence of free electrons in their capacitance layer and due to their cumulative state, the free electrons are increased at the metal surface which can dramatically increase the rate of chemical reaction affected by the reactant surface [27]. The physicochemical properties of noble metals largely rely on their size [29]. The presence of free electrons on the surface of the metals gives them good electrical conductivity. On the other hand, by decreasing the size of the particles, their aspect ratio increases, resulting in unique optical properties [25]. Such properties make it possible for these nanoparticles to act as aptamer coupling substrates that following the target's recognition by the aptamer, the surface properties of these nanoparticles changed, such as the optical and chemical properties and this binding lead to the detecting signal.

#### ***AuNPs (Gold nanoparticles)***

Most nanotechnology-based measurement approaches use noble metal nanoparticles such as gold and silver [25]. Among the metallic nanoparticles, the spherical colloidal gold nanoparticles are 20 nm in red ruby colour while the same nanoparticles are 200 nm has bluish colour. Due to their unique properties, such as good biocompatibility, excellent conductivity, effective catalysis, high density and high aspect ratios, gold nanoparticles (AuNPs) are widely used in the field of quality and quantity sensing [10]. These nanoparticles are also one of the most stable metal nanoparticles and readily interact with biomolecules such as DNA and proteins by modified thiol and amine bands without

disturbing the activity of the biomolecules [10].

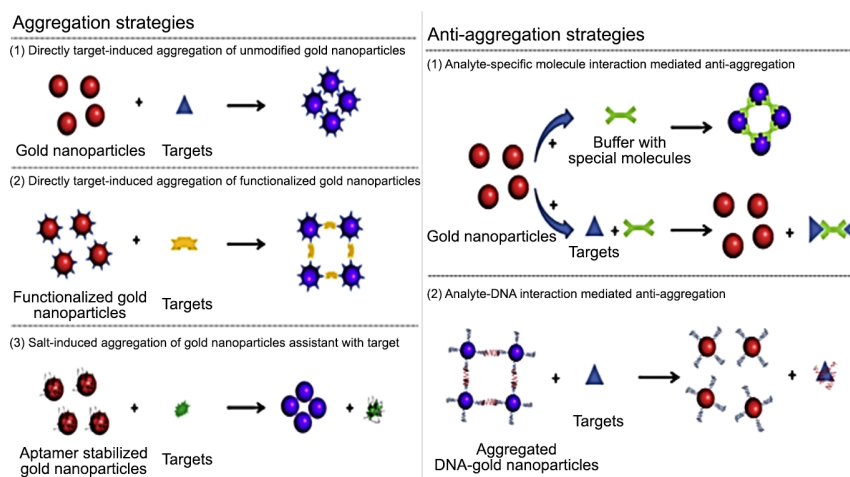
#### ***Optical Biosensors –Based on GNP***

Various nanomaterials including metal nanoparticles, quantum dots (QDs), graphene oxide (GO), carbon nanotubes (CNTs), polymers, carbon dots (CDs), and metal organic frameworks (MOFs) have been widely used in development of point-of-care (POC) devices such as optical biosensors for rapid and accurate detection of pathogenic contaminants (e.g., bacteria, fungi, viruses, and parasites) in water resources. These devices have special advantages such as portability, stability, easy-to-use, on-site detection, and shortened detection. Metal nanoparticles, especially gold NP because of their excellent plasmonic properties, can easily detect microbial agents in the naked eye [30]. The literature review on optical nanobiosensors can be divided into several general categories, including: Colorimetric sensors, Surface plasmon resonance (SPR) sensors, evanescent field or evanescent wave based fiberoptic biosensors, Long period grating (LPG) based biosensors, Raman spectroscopy- based biosensor such as SERS (Surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy), Fluorescent and chemiluminescent biosensors [29].

Among the wide range of optical biosensors, colorimetric sensors have become more widely used and commercialized because they are portable, simple interpretation of results gives the user and is economically appropriate. Numerous studies have been performed the design gold nanoparticles based optical colorimetric sensors.

In this section, we have reviewed the properties and potential of gold nanoparticles in colorimetric based biosensors for food safety screening. The design of colorimetric biosensors is mainly based on several unique features of AuNP, including SPR behavior [31, 32]. These biosensors are very useful in measuring water and nutrient contaminants from heavy metals ( $\text{Hg}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Pb}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Co}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Pt}^{2+}$ ) [33] to bacterial and fungal toxins [mycotoxins such as AFB1, OTA and etc] [34] and even pesticide [35-37] and antibiotics [38, 39] residues [25, 29]. The role of gold nanoparticles in optical biosensors is usually defined as individual fluorescence quenchers, catalysts, immobilization platform and colorimetric agent, based on SPR and SERS





**Fig. 2.** Typical strategies of colorimetric detection mechanism with gold nanoparticles. (For interpretation of the references to color in this Figure legend, the reader is referred to the Web version of this article.) [25].

phenomena that can increase the sensitivity of nanobiosensors [10]. Gold nanoparticles have strong optical properties and electrical conductivity that can be used in the design of biosensors based on colorimetric, surface plasmon resonance (SPR) and electrochemical signal generation [25]. Common strategies include gold nanoparticle colorimetric detection mechanism: aggregation (blue-shift) and anti-aggregation [40]. Various colorimetric and electrochemical assays based on AuNPs have been reported for the identification of chemical contaminants such as alkali and alkali earth metal ions, heavy metal ions and for the evaluation of microbiological food contamination such as bacteria (Fig. 2) [41]. But two important points should be considered when gold nanoparticles based colorimetric biosensors are designing. First they are sensitive to food matrix, so preparation techniques should be used to reduce matrix interference and second, gold nanoparticles should be Modified by functional group to prevent of cross-linking or aggregation occur [32].

### **Non-Optical Biosensors**

Because of the community's need for cheap and affordable biosensors, expensive instruments such as fluorescent spectrometers, SPR / SERS Instruments, although they are accurate enough to detection but they are very expensive and complex for use in field. Recent advances in the use of gold nanoparticles in non-optical bioassays, including piezoelectric biosensor, electrochemical biosensor, and inductively

coupled plasma mass spectrometry (ICP-MS) bio-detection have been seen in the literature indicating the scope of this area [10].

### **Piezoelectric Biosensor:**

Gold nanoparticles with their high density properties are used in piezoelectric biosensors as a label for mass modifications and thus to increase diagnostic sensitivity. The most common of these biosensors are quartz crystal microbalances (QCM) which have been highly sensitive. When a mechanical force is applied to the quartz crystal, the crystal creates an electric potential in the direction of the applied force, and vice versa [10].

### **Electrochemical biosensor:**

Gold nanoparticles play a role in electrochemical biosensors as immobilization platform, electrocatalyst or electron migration, which can increase the sensitivity, specificity and stability of the detection. By modifying the surface, increasing conductivity, enhancing conductivity, increasing the immobilization of biomolecules and catalyzing the electrochemical reactions were accoured [10, 42].

### **Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (ICP-MS):**

In this technology, high-temperature ionization properties combine inductive plasma with rapid and sensitive scanning mass spectrometry that is a highly

sensitive method for elemental, isotopic and morphological analysis. This technique does not require the use of toxic reagents such as HCl and nitric acid to digest, for this reason; it is safe and eco-friendly. But unfortunately it requires mass spectroscopic equipment that is expensive and complex that makes it a bit difficult to interpret the results [10].

#### ***- Application of gold nanoparticles in food contaminant detection***

Chen et al reviewed the use of gold nanoparticles in colorimetric biosensors for food screening tests in 2018. The distinct optical characteristic of GNP in the aggregated/non aggregated state, provides the design of simple sensors with desirable features including high selectivity, sensitivity, simplicity, celerity, and portability [25]. Heavy metals enter the food chains as a result of human activities such as industrial processing, combustion of fossil fuels and the use of special fertilizers, resulting in numerous problems. For example, excessive lead (Pb) ingestion can lead to neurological problems, renal failure, hematologic effects, hypertension, and cancer. Colorimetric Apta-nanosensors based on AuNPs have been widespread employed in the measure of metallic ions. Najafzadeh et al was designed a promising strategy with Anti-aggregation of gold nanoparticles in colorimetric sensor arrays for detection of metallic ions. Several case are handling of colorimetric sensors of  $Hg^{2+}$  by GNP with aggregation strategy [43, 44]. High affinity of Proteins and oligopeptides for capturing of specific targets through their functional groups at the inner or outer surface provides a great opportunity to design dedicated biosensors. Cysteine-rich protein or peptide sequences tend to combine with heavy metals because there is a strong affinity of heavy metal to thiols groups of cysteine in peptides. Guo et al were loaded papain with seven cysteine residues onto GNP substate as recognition element that could simultaneously detect the presence of  $Hg^{2+}$ ,  $Pb^{2+}$  and  $Cu^{2+}$  in water and food. The detection limit of this sensor is 200 nM [45, 46]. Zhu et al designed cysteine-modified simultaneously Au-Ag core-shell nanorods based biosensor with the etching process by using aggregation effect that detect the Hg (II) with high sensitivity and LOD equal to 25 nM [47]. Also, Gan et al in 2019 was designed the

GNP-based apta-nanosensor to quantitative measurement of the concentration of cadmium ions using a smartphone. Based on the anti-aggregation strategy of gold nanoparticles, this tool is red in the presence of the target molecule trapped in the specific aptamer trap. The change in color intensity has been a sign of the change in cadmium concentration in the target water sample, which can be measured by shooting with the iPhone 4s and analyzing with the application of the smartphone-based colorimetric system (SBCS). limit of detection for this sensor is claimed 1.12  $\mu g/L$  [48]. Veterinary drug residues detection was also observed with highly efficient GNP-induced aggregation methods. The LOD of these types of sensors for clenbuterol (one of the type of  $\beta$ -agonists) can reach nanomolar concentration (0.7  $\mu M$  can be obtained within a few Minutes) by naked eyes [49].

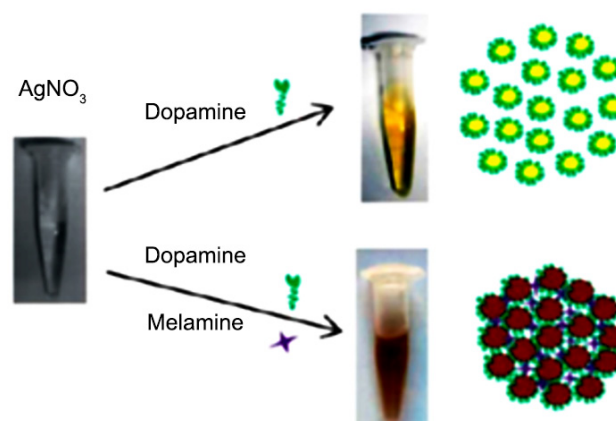
Liu's group developed fluorescence sensor based on Fluorescence resonance energy transfer (FRET) between long-strand aptamers functionalized upconversion nanoparticles (UCNPs) and short-strand aptamers functionalized gold nanoparticles (GNPs) for mercury detection. In the absence of mercury in the sample, FRET occurred between the UCNPs and the GNP due to specific matching between the two aptamers, leading to the fluorescence quenching of the UCNPs. In the presence of  $Hg^{2+}$ , long filamentous aptamers into the hairpin structure due to the stable bonding interaction between  $Hg^{2+}$  and thymine lead to the release of GNPs from UCNPs, resulting in silent fluorescence repair. The linear detection range is 0.2 to 20  $\mu M$  and the sensitivity (LOD) is 60 nM [50]. Cheng's team was made an ultrasensitive luminescence aptasensor based on luminescence energy transfer (LET) for quantitative evaluation of Salmonella typhimurium.  $Mn^{2+}$ -doped  $NaYF_4: Yb, Tm$  UCNPs as donor and Gold nanorods as acceptor were used. The linear assay range of S. typhimurium was estimated 12 to  $5 \times 10^5$  cfu/ml with reproducibility %0.99 (R2) and LOD 11 cfu/ml in an aqueous buffer [51]. Also, Zhao et al was developed an electrochemiluminescence (ECL) aptasensor with Au@nano-C60 electrodes for measure kanamycin with a sensitivity of 45 pM [52].

Yuan and his colleagues designed a piezoelectric aptasensor to detect arsenite using a self assembled monolayer (SAM) of mercaptoethylamine as an im-

mobilizee on the surface of a quartz crystal microbalance (QCM) and modified GNPs with arsenite aptamer as amplifier signal in apta-nanosensor. The sensitivity of this sensor is evaluated in the linear range of 8 to 1000 nmol.L<sup>-1</sup>, 4.4 nmol.L<sup>-1</sup> [53]. Similarly, an apta-nanosensor using silica-coated magnetic nanoparticles (Fe<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub>@SiO<sub>2</sub>@p(Polyethyleneglycol dimethacrylate (PEG-MA)-Glycidyl methacrylate (GMA)) has been used to detect *Brucella melitensis* in milk and dairy products with linear range 1.02–1.07 CFU mL<sup>-1</sup> [54]. Mousavi et al Electrochemical aptasensor using nanocomposite of graphene oxide and gold nanowires for AFB1 with LOD 1.4 pM and linear range was 5.0–750.0 Pm [55]. Also, developed an electrochemical aptasensor for the detection of staphylococcal enterotoxin B (SEB) as a bacterial toxin causing severe food poisoning with reduced graphene oxide (rGO) and gold nano-urchins (AuNUs). The sensitivity of this sensor was calculated as 0.21 fM [56]. Xing et al designed a sensor using a DNA-modified single gold nanoparticle, a T-Hg (II) -T interaction, and a single-particle ICP-MS that could measure twice the positive mercury ion concentration in water. Coupled plasma mass spectrometry [ICP-MS] is one of the techniques proposed to measure the concentration of water pollutants [57, 58]. Single particle (SP) ICPMS is used to determine the aggregation by reducing the total number of AuNPs or NP aggregates detected. Compared to most other Hg<sup>2+</sup> assays using the same scattering principle with DNA-modified AuNPs, this method has a much lower limit of detection (0.031 ng.L<sup>-1</sup>, 155 fM) and a wider linear range (10 A thousand fold) (up to 1 microgram L<sup>-1</sup>). This method also had good practical potential due to the minimal interference in the water sample matrix [59].

### **AgNPs (Silver nanoparticles)**

The prominent optical, electronic, and antibacterial Features of silver nanoparticles have also made it widely used in biosensors. These nanoparticles are mostly used for therapeutic applications and infection control, but their entry into the human body can also be toxic and dangerous. The the silver nanostructures shape and its functionalization have a significant effect on the physicochemical properties and consequently their application in biosensore design. Silver



**Fig. 3.** Schematic illustration of colorimetric method with AgNPs/dopamine system for the detection of melamine (reproduced from with permission of The Royal Society of Chemistry) [41].

salts turned into black on exposure to light while silver nanoparticles, like gold in the visible light, exhibit the properties of Localized Surface Plasmon Resonance (LSPR) [60]. Several sensing systems based on the optical properties of silver nanoparticles have been reported based on color changing between aggregate and non-aggregated state of Ag nanoparticles from yellow to brown, which can be associated with a change in the concentration of a target molecule. Based on this principle, various AgNP-based methods have been developed for the detection of metal ions, proteins, melamine and pesticides. Compared to AuNPs, AgNPs maintain a higher extinction coefficient and cost less (Fig. 3).

However, due to the following limitations, there has been less focus on Ag NP-based assays:

[1] The functionalization effects on AgNPs that can chemically degrade nanoparticles to silver ions

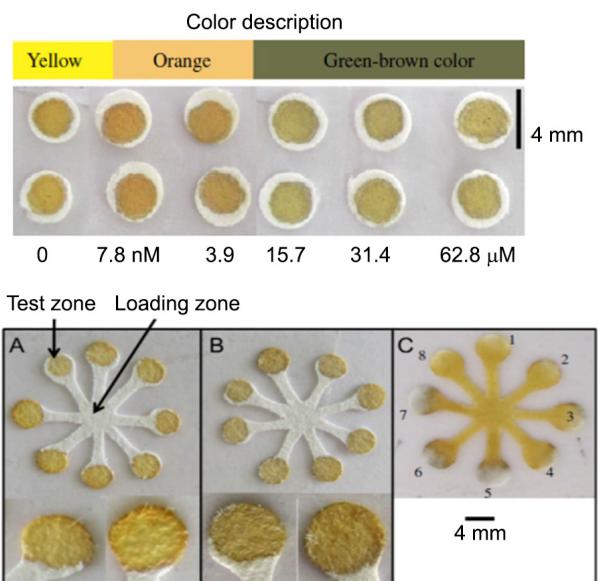
[2] The surface of AgNPs is easily oxidized exposed to biological environment [41].

However, in most nanobiosensors, silver and gold nanoparticles simultaneously are used as optical signal transducers and LSPR [61-63].

### **- Application of Silver nanoparticles in food contaminant detection**

Ratnarathorn et al designed a silver nanoparticle-based paper colorimetric sensor that can measure copper concentration with a limit of naked-eye detection is 7.8 nM or 0.5 µg L<sup>-1</sup> with accuracy and reproduc-





**Fig. 4.** mPAD for the semi-quantitative analysis of Cu<sup>2+</sup> after spotting AgNPs modified with Hcy and DTT into the test zone and then (A) dropping buffer solution and (B) 15.7 mM of Cu<sup>2+</sup> solution into the loading zone. (C) mPAD for the semi-quantitative analysis of Cu<sup>2+</sup> after spotting [8]0 [2]7.8 nM [3]780 nM [4]7.8 mM [5]15.7 mM [6]31.4 mM [7]62.8 mM of Cu<sup>2+</sup> solution and then dropping AgNPs modified with Hcy and DTT into loading zone [64].

ibility of  $R^2 = 0.992$ . WHO has set the maximum permissible level of copper in drinking water at  $1.3 \text{ mgL}^{-1}$  or  $20.5 \text{ } \mu\text{M}$ . So this simple and fast sensor can be very efficient (Fig. 4) [64].

Amirjani et al designed a colorimetric sensor that could measure the concentration of ammonium in the water by formation of silver-ammonia complex  $[\text{Ag}(\text{NH}_3)_2]^+$  in the presence of ammonia as a target that can be detected based on the localized surface plasmon resonance phenomenon with the help of the OSnap app on the smartphone. Calculated for the detection of ammonia ( $10\text{--}1000 \text{ mgL}^{-1}$ ) with a sensitivity (LOD) of  $180 \text{ mg L}^{-1}$  (ppm) with 0.98% repeatability [65]. He et al developed a simple, facile, and highly sensitive chemiluminescent sensor, based on silver nanoparticles, that can measure five organophosphate and carbamate pesticides, including dimethoate, diphentox, carbaryl, chlorpyrifos, and carbofuran simultaneously. In this study, 20 unknown pesticide samples were analyzed with this diagnostic system. This measurement system has 95% accuracy with  $24 \text{ } \mu\text{g/mL}$  LOD [66]. Bala et al developed an ultrasensitive,

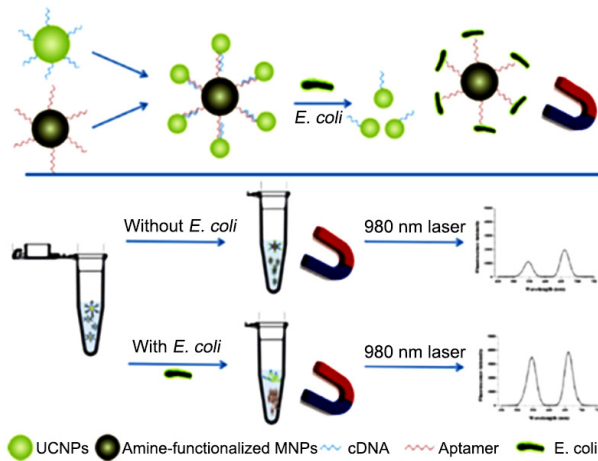
rapid and low cost colorimetric apta-nanosensor with AgNPs for measurement of malathion residues in water and food. Malathion is an organophosphate insecticide. The presence of different concentrations of melamine in the water and food samples with this indicator is seen as red intensities. This means that the tool also uses a silver nanoparticle anti-accumulation strategy. Limit of detection of this sensor  $0.5 \text{ pM}$  was achieved [67].

### Magnetic NPs

Magnetic nanoparticles have been shown to be maghemite ( $\gamma\text{-Fe}_2\text{O}_3$ ) and magnetite ( $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$ ) due to their supermagnetic properties, and have been highly used for the design of biosensors [26]. These nanoparticles can also be used to isolate contaminants and detoxify by surface modification and conjugate with a specific recognition element such as antibody, aptamer and so on. They also appear to improve electron conductivity because they are chemical metal oxides [68]. Based on these features, MNPs are widely used in diagnostic field [69]. Li et al designed a nanomolecular system that could detect and isolate the general Escherichia coli bacterium in food using magnetic nanoparticles coupled with upconversion of a specific aptamer (Fig. 5) [41, 70]. These nanomaterials along with gold nanoparticles have also been used to identify and isolate Staphylococcus aureus with its specific aptamer [71]. In this study, they play roles such as MNP in isolation agent and AuNP in colorimetric agent.

### - Application of Magnetic nanoparticles in food contaminant detection

To date, several devices developed with apta-nanosensors functionalized magnetic nanomaterials for extraction, detection and detoxification of mycotoxins including MNP-ELISA, MNP-HPLC, immunomagnetic nanoparticle-based assay, magnetic micromotors, magnetic nanoparticles-based aptasensor, magnetic molecularly imprinted polymers (MMIPs). Through them MNP-based apta-nanosensors are simple, highly sensitive and cost-effective for public healthcare special in food safety assessment [72-75]. Major roles of MNPs are played in biosensors including enzyme immobilization support or capture probe. Unique physical, magnetic and chemical properties



**Fig. 5.** Sensing method for detection and isolation of the general *Escherichia coli* bacterium in food using magnetic nanoparticles coupled with upconversion of a specific aptamer.

caused design and development of analytical platforms for food analysis by MNP-based biosensors [76]. Li et al designed a fluorescence apta-nanosensor conjugated with MNP and UCNP for screening *Escherichia coli* in food. Specific binding between two aptamers functionalized magnetic nanoparticles and a cDNA-upconversion nanoparticle is principle for this detection. The fluorescence emission intensity of the MNPs-aptamer-cDNA-UCNPs complex piecemeal decreased upon rise in the *E. coli* levels. The linear range for this sensor is  $58\text{--}58 \times 10^6$  cfu.mL<sup>-1</sup> and sensitivity is 10 cfu mL<sup>-1</sup> [77]. Liu et al designed a Colorimetric immunoassay with aptamer functionalized MNPs for detection of *Listeria monocytogenes* in food samples. In this device core gold nanoparticles, silver nanoclusters as oxidase mimetics are used. Presence of *L. monocytogenes* in sample caused dispersion of AuNPs and finally red shift observed. Sensitivity of the Apta-nanosensor is 10 cfu.mL<sup>-1</sup> [78].

### **Silica NPs (SiNPs)**

The stable, robust, and adjustable shell of silica nanoparticles has made them ideal for functionalization, simple manipulation, and immobilization of chemical or biological species, either through covalent linking or physical adsorption. Because of the stability of these nanoparticles, the biological safety of other nanoparticles can be enhanced as shell-core structures, such as QDs@SiO<sub>2</sub> and Fe<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub>@SiO<sub>2</sub> [26].

Silica nanoparticles in addition to good stability and dispersibility in different media, biocompatibility and low cost can act as fluorescent enhancers for fluorophores. One of the biosensors for detection of aflatoxin based on the silica nanoparticles conjugated with aflatoxin B1-specific aptamer was designed to detect this mycotoxin by amplifying the fluorescent signal [79]. Now, These nanoparticles are also used in food packaging widely [80].

### **- Application of Silica nanoparticles in food contaminant detection**

Recently mesoporous silica particles [MSPs] employed as inorganic scaffolds for the encapsulation organic molecules due to their high stability, biocompatibility, homogeneous porosity, high inertness, and large load capacity [81]. Taghdisi et al designed fluorescent aptasensor with silica nanoparticles for detection of aflatoxin B1. linear range and a limit of detection [LOD] of the sensor is calculated 30–900 pg/mL and 8 pg/mL respectively [79].

### **Cerium Oxide NPs (Nanoceria)**

Oxidized cerium nanoparticles have the potential to alter redox states and surface properties due to their dual oxidation properties of Ce (III)/Ce (IV) on the NP surface. Peroxidase-, superoxide-, and oxidase-like activities have also been demonstrated in these nanoparticles that can be used as surrogates for the development of biosensors. Depending on the optical activity of these nanoparticles and their specific interactions at surfaces, they can produce a unique color pattern that can be useful in colorimetric biosensors if conjugated to specific recognition element such as aptamer or antibodies [41]. The sensors are designed to detect dietary antioxidants and glucose, based on ceria nanoparticles [82-84].

### **- Application of Nanoceria in food contaminant detection**

Sharpe et al are development a colorimetric Portable ceria nanoparticle-based assay for rapid detection of food antioxidants. This nanosensor with detection limits ranging from 20 to 400 mM depending on the antioxidant involved. This assay includes the steps to providing a colorimetric reagent (the reagent containing a multiplicity of ceria nanoparticles immobilized

to a support, contacting the colorimetric reagent with the food sample, and sensing an optical property of the colorimetric reagent, where a change in the optical property). The presence of antioxidant in the food sample corresponding change in the optical property colorimetric reagent. The concentration of the antioxidant in the food sample has a significant relationship with its concentration in the sample which is optimized during testing of standard and sample concentrations [85]. Zhou et al make a Ce-MOF@COF hybrid nanostructure for detection of oxytetracycline (OTC) residues in aqueous solution environments. This aptasensor is electrochemical. Nanohybrids Porous organic framework (COF) and Ce-based metal organic framework (Ce-MOF) employed as label-free bioplatfroms for a sensitive aptasensor to detect OTC. limit of detection is reported  $17.4 \text{ fg mL}^{-1}$  [86].

#### **Platinum NPs (PtNPs)**

Platinum nanoparticles increase the catalytic surface area, but are more likely to aggregate, using soluble polymer matrix or encapsulation in dendrimers to stabilize these nanoparticles [87]. Platinum nanoparticles can be used to modify biosensor electrodes.

#### **- Application of Platinum nanoparticles in food contaminant detection**

Wulandari and his colleagues used platinum coatings to detect acrylamide in foods. Other commonly found in high-fat foods such as potato chips and biscuits with various thermally processed, sensitive, rapid and simple detection is essential [88]. Madianos et al developed ultrasensitive impedimetric aptasensor based on microwires formed by platinum nanoparticles which could detect acetamiprid and atrazine with a linear range of response in the range of (10 pM-100 nM), (100 pM<sup>-1</sup> μM) and with a limit of detection (LoD) at 1 pM, 10 pM respectively [89].

#### **Titanium dioxide NPs (TiNPs)**

Titanium dioxide (TiO<sub>2</sub>) is used as a food additive in a variety of food products that is used to enhance white, luminosity and sometimes taste. This compound has been widely used commercially in pigment and in sunscreens, paints, ointments, toothpaste in the present century. The observation of the photocatalytic cleav-

age phenomenon on the TiO<sub>2</sub> electrode under ultraviolet (UV) light prompted the researchers to further experiment on the optical and electrical properties of the nanoparticles, especially in the design of biosensors [90]. The attractive optical, electrical, chemical, and catalytic properties of titanium oxide nanoparticles have made it widely used to modify electrode coatings in electrochemical sensors. Its synthesis by sol-gel method retains its desirable properties [91]. Gan and his colleagues designed an electrochemical sensor that can detect and analyze commercial additive dyes simultaneously with the help of graphene and mesoporous TiO<sub>2</sub> hybrid nanomaterials [92].

#### **- Application of TiNPs in food contaminant detection**

One of the optical sensors based on hybrid nanoparticles with titanium dioxide can be Bragg Fiber Grating (FBG) combined with titanium dioxide coated long period fiber grating (LPFG) for monitoring organic solvents. This device is sensing concentration of n-hexane (CH<sub>3</sub>(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>4</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>). Poly (methyl methacrylate) (PMMA) flow cell Used in this device including with two channels and six openings, four to pass the fibers and two to fill and drain liquid samples. Sample movement in this substrate has led to the identification and identification of N-hexane, which is very important for the health of edible oils. LoD For this sensor 0.07 dB/%V/V and a resolution better than 0.16%V/V were claimed [93].

#### **Copper NPs and Related NMs (CuNPs)**

The attractive physicochemical properties of copper metal nanoparticles are the unique catalytic property and high electrical conductivity. If the copper nanoparticles become smaller and crystalline, the photoluminescence characteristic indicates that it can be used as a fluorescent tag in the design and development of fluorescence-based sensors with excellent catalytic properties. These nanoparticles can improve amperometric performance in electrochemical transducers.

#### **- Application of CuNPs in food contaminant detection**

For example, Gao et al copper nanocrystals (CuNCs) were used to measure the concentration of kojic acid in foods. It is one of the metabolites of Aspergillus sepsis that are used in the food industry as antioxidant,







been used to improve chemical stability and reduce the leaching and potential toxicity of the QDs. The results of these studies have demonstrated that the quantum dot confinement in silica nanoparticles reduces photobleaching without affecting the photophysical properties of the QDs. On the other hand, the abundance of the silica element can dramatically reduce the cost of mass production of these biosensors. Also chemically inert and optically transparent silica nanoparticles have made them suitable for fluorescence sensing applications in various chemical media. Modification of the silica matrix surface enables the specific identification of such nanoparticles by identifiable elements such as aptamers [101].

**- Application of QDs in food contaminant detection**

Nsibande and Forbes reviewed Fluorescence detection

of pesticides using quantum dot materials. QD modification strategies for pesticide detection including Doped QD, SiNPs, with macrocyclic/supramolecular host molecules, with molecularly imprinted polymers (MIPs), Enzyme-modified, Carbon quantum dots, QD films (Table 1). Coupling them to recognition elements like enzymes, aptamers, MIPs, or specially crafted supramolecules which offer selectivity detection towards targeted pesticides that can be improved performance of QD. For example, sensitivity of DNA-Aptamer functionalized CdTe-AuNPs of Acetamidiprid is 7.29 nM [101].

**Up-Conversion NPs (UCNP)**

Upconversion nanoparticles (UCNPs) are an anti-Stokes process that, in a single or multi-photon mechanism, converts a low-energy photon with a higher

**Table 1.** Comparison of selected QD based pesticide sensor limits of detection (LOD) with regulatory guideline limit values and typical concentrations found in samples (nd = not detected) [101].

Particle	Matrix	Occurrence			Guideline limit		Sensing with QDs	
		Country	Concentration Range ( $\mu\text{g.L}^{-1}$ )	Study	$\mu\text{g.L}^{-1}$	( $\text{mol.L}^{-1}$ )	Reported Lod ( $\text{mol.L}^{-1}$ )	Study
Paraquat	Water	Thailand	1.5-87.0	[37]	10 <sup>a</sup>	$38.89 \times 10^{-9}$	$6.39 \times 10^{-9}$	[38]
							$11.7 \times 10^{-12}$	[39]
							$2 \times 10^{-8}$	[40]
Parathion	Water	India	0-2.12	[41]	50 <sup>a</sup>	$0.172 \times 10^{-6}$	$4.82 \times 10^{-12}$	[42]
							$4.47 \times 10^{-12}$	[43]
							$32.5 \times 10^{-9}$	[44]
							$2.47 \times 10^{-12}$	[45]
							$34.3 \times 10^{-9}$	[46]
Pentachlorophenol	Water	China	nd-103.70	[47]	60 <sup>a</sup>	$0.225 \times 10^{-6}$	$86 \times 10^{-9}$	[48]
							$11.3 \times 10^{-12}$	[49]
Carbaryl	Water	bangladesh	nd-0.163	[50]	90 <sup>a</sup>	$0.447 \times 10^{-6}$	$12.4 \times 10^{-9}$	[51]
Chlorpyrifos	Water	bangladesh	nd-1.189	[50]	90 <sup>a</sup>	$0.257 \times 10^{-6}$	$17 \times 10^{-9}$	[52]
Dissinon	Water	USA	nd-0.09	[53]	20 <sup>a</sup>	$65.7 \times 10^{-9}$	$0.164 \times 10^{-6}$	[54]
Glyphosate	Water	Mexico	nd-36.7	[55]	280 <sup>a</sup>	$1.66 \times 10^{-6}$	$0.0725 \times 10^{-9}$	[56]
Carbaryl	Apples	China	0-10 $\mu\text{g.g}^{-1}$	[57]	15000 <sup>b</sup>	$74.5 \times 10^{-3}$	$26.8 \times 10^{-12}$	[58]
Paraquat	Rice				50 <sup>b</sup>	$0.198 \times 10^{-6}$	$6.39 \times 10^{-9}$	[38]
Parathion-methyl	rice				1000 <sup>b</sup>	$3.8 \times 10^{-6}$	$61.8 \times 10^{-9}$	[59]

Notes:

<sup>a</sup> Guidelines for Canadian drinking water quality [60].

<sup>b</sup> Tolerances and exemptions for pesticide chemical residues in food in the USA [61].

<sup>c</sup> Values that were not reported in  $\text{mol.L}^{-1}$  were converted for comparison.

wavelength to a more energetic photon with a lower wavelength. Low energy photons are usually infrared or near infrared, while higher wavelengths are usually visible or ultraviolet. The main advantage of upconversion nanoparticles over other fluorescent nanomaterials is the ability to emit visible light under near-infrared radiation. This radiation with low autofluorescence, less scattering and absorption can lead to deep penetration into biological samples [102, 103]. Because these nanoparticles are excited at 980 nm, which is very high for other fluorescent materials, they reduce the background effect well and, on the other hand, their broad absorption spectrum, thus increasing the sensitivity of detection with these nanoparticles. These nanoparticles doped with lanthanide ions in the 4F layer contain many transfer electrons. To achieve high efficiency, it is necessary to co-dope the sensitizer ions alongside the activator ions which have a close intermediate excitation state [104]. Upconversion nanoparticles with different compositions can produce different colors. Thus, by controlling their constituents that produce different fluorescent colors, and modifying their surface by specific markers such as aptamers, they Identified simultaneously target several target molecules such as mercury toxic ions in drinking water to toxic pesticides [105] and bacterial pathogens in crop and food samples [106]. Turn-On Fluorescence Sensor for Hg<sup>2+</sup> in Food Based on FRET between Aptamers-Functionalized Upconversion Nanoparticles and Gold Nanoparticles.

#### ***- Application of UCNPs in food contaminant detection***

Jin et al designed fluorescent aptasensor on multiplex lateral flow assay for Simultaneous detection of Hg<sup>2+</sup>, Ochratoxin A and Salmonella with UCNPs in tap water. Limit of detection 10<sup>-4</sup> ppb for Hg<sup>2+</sup>, 0.01–50 µg/mL for OTA and 150–2000 CFU/mL for SE claimed. Finally, fluorescent intensity by smartphone measured and determinate concentration of target [106].

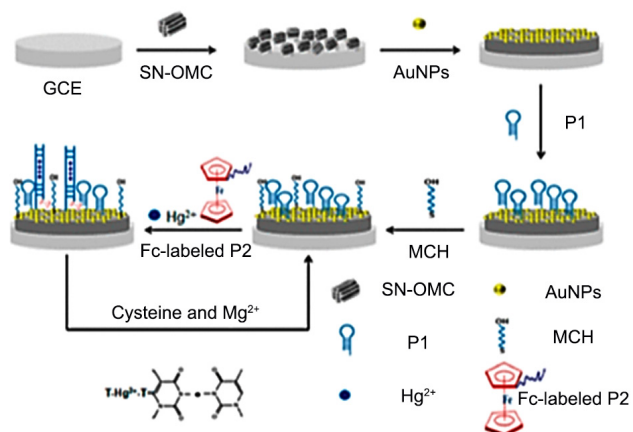
#### ***Carbon-Based NMs***

The most common inorganic nanoparticles in designing biosensor are carbon-based nanomaterials. Due to the excellent chemical, mechanical, electrical and thermal properties of carbon nanostructures (i.e., thermal and electrical conductivity, high mechanical strength,

and optical properties) with single entity and various forms, they have been widely used in industry and medicine. The presence of four single electrons in the carbon atom's capacitance layer has shown high electrical and thermal conductivity and has the potential to form bonds with other atoms. Therefore, the heterocyclic state of the C-C bonds in carbon-based nanomaterials causes remarkable chemical and electronic proportions [107-109]. Depending on their spatial dimensions, carbon-based nanomaterials can be roughly subdivided into fullerenes (zero-dimensional), carbon nanotubes (one-dimensional), graphene (two-dimensional), graphene (multidimensional) coils, and so on [108, 110]. Carbon-based nanomaterials used in diagnostic sensors for water and food safety that most carbon nanostructures used include mesoporous carbon, single- or multi-walled carbon nanotubes (SWCNT and MWCNT), graphene and carbon quantum dots [111]. The prominent features and advantages of using these nanostructures in the development of high-performance sensing devices for food and water safety engineering include small-size, interface, surface, dielectric confinement, macroscopic quantum tunneling effects followed by ease of preparation, stability and high heat and electronic conductivity. Mesoporous carbon Matrixes are newly introduced carbon nanostructures with diameters between 2-50 nanometers of silica. The synthesis of these materials are optimized and controlled and has extremely large surface area to volume ratio because of pore-liked structures. These nanostructures have been applied to amplify electrochemical aptasensors to detect Hg<sup>+</sup> ions [111]. Carbon dots or graphene oxides with quantum dot are used for the FRET phenomenon in many electrochemical and fluorescence-quenching biosensors [112].

#### ***- Application of CBNs in food contaminant detection***

Pan et al compared the characteristics of typical carbon-based nanomaterials. Mesoporous carbon materials have several excellent features, such as high specific surface area and porosity, adjustable pore size, controllable pore wall composition and structure, simple synthesis and a lack of physiological toxicity and stability. Cui et al make an apta-nanosensor for detection of mercury which with using sulfur nitrogen codoped Ordered Mesoporous Carbon (SN-OMC)

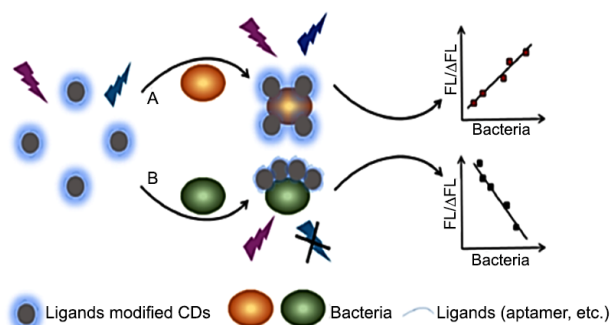


**Fig. 7.** Assembly diagram of electrochemical aptasensor based on the OMC nanomaterials for Hg<sup>2+</sup> detection. Reproduced with permission from referenc [114].

and thymine-Hg<sup>2+</sup>-thymine mismatch structure. These sensors have a fine linear range (0.001–1000 nM) with sensitivity 0.45 pM (Fig. 7).

Yari et al fabrication an electrochemical aptasensor with molybdenum disulfide nanosheet [MoS<sub>2</sub>] coating of the multi wall carbon nano tube (MWCNT) surface for voltammetric determination of sulfamethoxazole. The MoS<sub>2</sub>@MWCNT- modified electrode in this biosensor was responded linear range from 0.08 to 1392 μM and sensitivity was 0.01502 Mm [113].

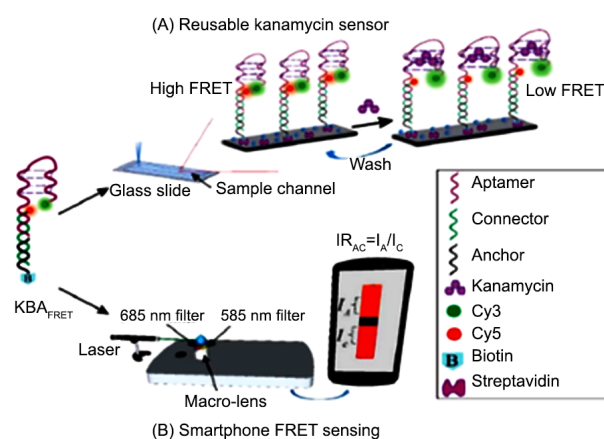
Wang et al designed a fluorescent apta-nanosensor using iron-doped porous carbon and aptamer-functionalized nitrogen-doped Grophen oxide-Quantum Dots as the probe for measurement of ochratoxin A, which can detect OTA with LOD of 2.28 nM [115]. Shi et al reviewed on applications of carbon dots in assessment of Metal ions and anions, Pesticide residues, Antibiotics and other veterinary drug residues, Bacteria. The mechanism of target detection is increasing fluorescent intensity of Carbon Dots due to adsorbtion onto the surfaces of bacteria, accordingly with increasing bacteria concentration in most cases. Wang et al designed an apta-nanosensor with aptamer conjugated quantum dots for recognition of specific membrane protein on the surface of salmonella typhimurium. The concentration of target could be quantified with measurement of the fluorescent intensity of solution after buffer elution process. Escherichia coli were detected using CDs modified with mannose, colistin, and amikacin. Zhong's team reported that the CDs modi-



**Fig. 8.** Schematic illustration of CDs-based nanosensors for detecting bacteria. (A) Fluorescence increasing strategies with the increasing of bacteria concentration. (B) Fluorescence quenching strategies due to too close among individual CDs [117].

fied with vancomycin can be aggregate on the surface of Staphylococcus aureus, leading in a decrease in fluorescent intensity. Similarly, Bacillus subtilis and Listeria monocytogenes. Recently, the similar strategy is used to sensing of Escherichia coli by introduction of Mag-CDs (Fig. 8) [116].

Wang's group reported fluorescent apta-nanosensor with CDs for quantification of kanamycin in milk. linear range of 0.04–0.24 μM, with a limit of detection (LOD) as low as 18 nM obtained [118]. Umrao's team



**Fig. 9.** Schematic for FRET-based kanamycin binding aptasensor. The top half [purple strand] of the aptasensor is the kanamycin binding aptamer and the bottom double-stranded DNA region [green and black strands] is used for surface mobilization when required. (A) Surface immobilization of the KBAFRET aptasensor using biotin–avidin chemistry allows repeated kanamycin detection and aptasensor regeneration by washing. (B) Kanamycin detection using KBAFRET is demonstrated with a smartphone-based two-color fluorescence reader [120].

demonstrated a Smartphone-based fluorescence aptasensor with Forster resonance energy transfer (FRET) between dye pairs on DNA aptamers can detect kanamycin rapidly and sensitively. Sensitivity of this aptasensor is 0.18 nM (Fig. 9) [119]. Weng's group demonstrated an aptamer functionalized QDs using graphen oxide based on FRET phenomenon on a microfluidic system could be quantified peanut allergen (Ara h<sub>1</sub>) [100].

### **Polymer NMs**

Polymeric and composite nanoparticles have been extensively studied and commercialized to prevent microbial contamination in the food packaging. Smart or Intelligent packaging is capable of sensing, detecting and recording external or internal changes in the presence of contaminants and assessing the safety and quality of food products under various environmental conditions. These changes are usually designed to be easily visible and user friendly [121, 122]. The safest commercialized nanocomposites authorized in the PLGA-chitosan food industry for antimicrobials applications have been introduced [123, 124]. During evolution, nature has provided the catalytic power and identification of selective molecules of biopolymers. This feature has been exploited for over 50 years in clinical analysis, environmental analysis, food control, and pharmaceutical analysis. Nanobiosensors with integrated receptor-transducer device have been able to overcome the difficulties of traditional food analysis techniques such as chromatography, mass spectrometry, spectrophotometry, and fluorimetry, which were costly and difficult to identify and specifically target molecules. "Minienzymes," synzymes, aptamers, and molecularly imprinted polymers (MIPs) have been introduced as biosensors for specific identification of the target molecule. MIPs were designed to mimic the active site of biopolymers. For the preparation of MIPs, functional monomers and crosslinkers (if crosslinking is not required for electrolymerization) are polymerized in the presence of the target analyte, the so-called pattern [125, 126]. Biosensors that use Molecularly Imprinted Polymer for identification include antibiotics [127] and chloramphenicol [128] detection in milk and honey. They also use Hybrid Aptamer/Conjugated Polymer Complexes for sensor detection [129, 130].

### **- Application of Polymer NMs (Polymer nanocomposites (PNC)) in food contaminant detection**

The potential of nano-based sensors is in the detection of pathogens, deterioration, chemical contaminants, or manipulation of products or tracking of materials or products through the world-wide processing chain. Nowadays, intelligent and active food packaging forecasts are clear for food safety [131]. Aghaei and colleagues designed alizarin-containing cellulose acetate nanofibers, which is used as a holochrome sensor for qualitative evaluation of rainbow trout fish spoilage. The color of this on-packaging sensor changes with the amount of total volatile basic nitrogen (TVB-N) and pH increase in Rainbow trout fillets [132]. Pola's group reported development and optimization of pH-responsive nanoparticle based on poly (D, L-lactide-coglycolide) (PLGA) and chitosan (CHIT) for delivery of natural antimicrobial using trans-cinnamaldehyde (TCIN) as a model compound. Finally, the physicochemical properties of the nanoparticles and their antimicrobial activity were optimized against *Salmonella typhimurium* and *Staphylococcus aureus*. Showed a satisfactory encapsulation of TCIN ( $0.85 \pm 0.35$  33 33.20), spherical shape, pH-responsive release, faster release in the presence of CHIT at low pH, and increased antimicrobial activity against both pathogens [123]. Sergeyeva's team quantified AFB1 using molecularly imprinted polymer membranes and smartphone-based optical biomimetic sensor. The developed system enables simultaneous detection of aflatoxin B1 in 96 channels. Ultraviolet irradiation of aflatoxin B1, selectively bound by the MIP membranes of the analyzed samples, initiated fluorescence of aflatoxin B1 with direct intensity proportional to its concentration. The composition of the MIP membranes used as a detection element is optimized by considering computational modeling data. Two functional monomers (2-acrylamido-2-methyl-1-propansulfonic acid and acrylamide) were identified as desirable for the formation of selective aflatoxin B1 binding sites in the structure of MIP membranes. The storage stability of these sensors is estimated to be one year if stored at 22 °C [133].

### **Biological NMs**

Biological nanomaterials are mostly used as a recogni-



tion element or carrier of low soluble drugs or targeted drugs such as antibodies [134], enzymes [135] and aptamers [8] and bacteriophages [136, 137] that specifically identify pathogens and toxins. As carriers like phospholipid structures [138] such as liposomes [139, 140] and niosomes [141], DNA nanostructures [142, 143] such as DNA nanotube [144, 145] that are used to increase the solubility and absorption of foods and drugs. Farooq et al the applications of phage-based biosensors in the detection of infectious diseases, food safety and environmental monitoring are reviewed. Bacteriophage has been used to identify pathogenic bacteria as a biological probe in different transmission platforms, which are grouped into three general categories, including Phage-optical biosensors (Phage-SPR-based sensors, Phage-bioluminescence sensors, Phage-SERS-based sensors, Phage-fluorescent sensor, Phage-colorimetric sensors), Phage-based micromechanical sensors (Phage-QCM-based sensors, Phage magnetoelastic sensors), Phage based electrochemical biosensors (Phage amperometric biosensors, Phage impedimetric sensors). Recently, advanced phage-based colorimetric techniques have been reported to integrate with new technologies such as surface plasmon, microscope and smartphone and lateral flow sensing [136].

#### **- Application of Biological NMs in food contaminant detection**

Phages as bio-probes can be conjugated with Quartz crystal microbalance (QCM) sensors for selective screening of bacterial cells. Physical absorption bacteriophages at about  $3 \times 10^{10}$  PFU/cm<sup>2</sup> on the surface of the piezoelectric transducer provided a very fast and sensitive substrate for the detection of *Salmonella typhimurium*. This immobilized bacteriophage in the QCM biosensor has a sensitivity of 10<sup>2</sup> CFU/ml with a wide linear range of 10<sup>0</sup>–10<sup>7</sup> CFU/ml and a rapid reaction and rapid detection time of less than 3 min [136, 146]. Chen et al reported a DNA origami-based fluorescent aptasensors. This sensor is based on a DNA pyramid nanostructure [DPN] and PicoGreen [PG] dye for the determination of ochratoxin A (OTA). Its sensitivity is estimated to be 0.135 nM with a linear range of 0.3–10 nM [147]. Lipid-based nanomaterials in control food-borne bacteria act as delivery of anti-

microbials [148].

Nano Structures for capturing enhancement of target in nanobiosensors. Among the known structures of nanorods, nanofibers, nanotubes, sheet [plate], such as graphene, provide more surface area and can, besides signal generation, target the molecule as well, especially with other conjugated nanoparticles, with dramatically increasing factors such as aptamers [149].

#### **Technology of Smartphone**

In 2019, approximately 4.68 billion of the population worldwide already owns a smartphone. Useful properties of smartphones such as digital cameras, surface plasmon resonance (SPR) [61] and image processing, operating systems, internal memory, computing, and machine learning, wireless connectivity with other devices can be used in health care system. Moreover, high availability, user-friendly, easy operation for everyone resulted in more researchers focus on the smartphones for designing portable biosensing devices for in field applications [11].

Smartphone is being developed as Instrumentation, a new approach to improving health care by preventing, regularly diagnosing and monitoring the symptoms and risk factors in public health. Most of these programs are related to the measurement of direct biological specimens initially deployed with simple colorimetric and microscopic manifestations. With the advancement of the mobile Complementary metal-oxide semiconductor (CMOS) camera, integrated optical processing capabilities and availability, more advanced metrics such as spectroscopy analysis by smartphones are now being implemented. The literature review on smartphone-based instrumentation has divided applications of this simple and accessible device into several major categories including colorimetry, microscopy, intensity-based fluorimetry, spectroscopy, and surface plasmon-based sensing. These applications have seen a major breakthrough in the field of "lab-in-a-phone" technology in healthcare [12]. This technology integrates and integrates with a variety of biosensors including optical, physical, and electrochemical [150].

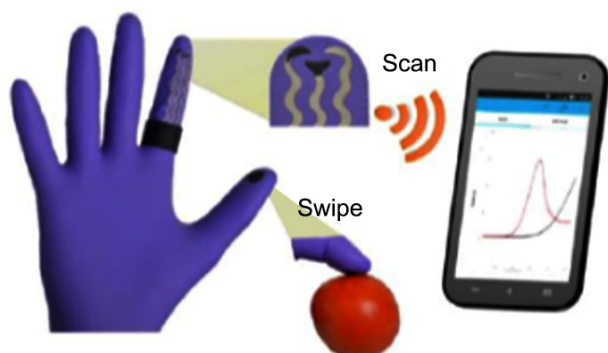
Recently, several colorimetric devices have been designed and developed of smartphone-based biosensors for variety platforms such as lateral flow assay [151-

153], microfluidic [18] systems [61, 154-157].

Smartphone-based biosensors have also been used repeatedly to evaluate portable food. A wide range of food contaminants in the complex matrix of water and food crops and livestock have been rapidly identified and quantified with this technology [13, 158-160]. With the help of this emerging and publicly available technology, can be rapidly and accurately assessed water and food safety for the presence of contaminant agents, and the prevention and incidence of many water and foodborne illnesses can be prevented by providing appropriate, well-prepared measures.

#### **- Application of Smartphone in food contaminant detection**

Color-based sensing allows you to use simple diagnostic systems such as spectrophotometers or even smartphones, both of which are relatively common and practical [154]. Zheng's group reported a microfluidic colorimetric biosensor for rapid detection of *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 using gold nanoparticle aggregation and smart phone imaging. The red shift of the conjugated gold nanoparticles with the specific antibody resulting from the presence of the target bacterium in the injected sample is quantified in this system. The sensitivity of this system is 50 CFU / mL [161]. Recently, various electrochemical techniques, such as potentiometric [32], amperometric [33, 34], and impedimetric method [35], have been achieved on smartphone. Mishra et al made a wearable biosensor which flexible and stretchable glove that could quantify organophosphorus chemical threats in the hazardous area based on a smartphone. Identification of nerve constituents of organophosphate (OP) on suspicious



**Fig. 10.** Wearable flexible and stretchable glove biosensor for on-site detection of organophosphorus chemical threats [162].

surfaces and crops will be done after their swipe on the thumb. The new wireless glove-based biosensor system holds significant promise for rapid screening of OP nerve agents and pesticides in defense and food safety programs, with significant speed and benefits. Such "laboratory glove" demonstrations open the field for flexible wearable sensors for future chemical detection in multiple fields in the future (Fig. 10) [162]. Similarly, Li et al Electrogenerated chemiluminescence biosensor electrodes with graphen quantum dots nanocomposites modified so as to measure the concentration range of 10 cfu / mL to 107 cfu / mL of *Escherichia coli* [163].

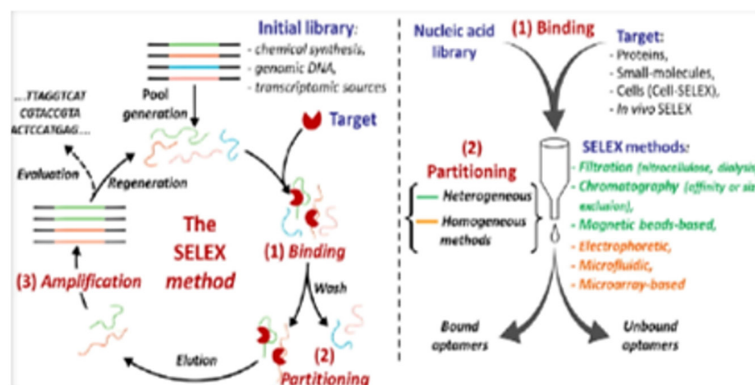
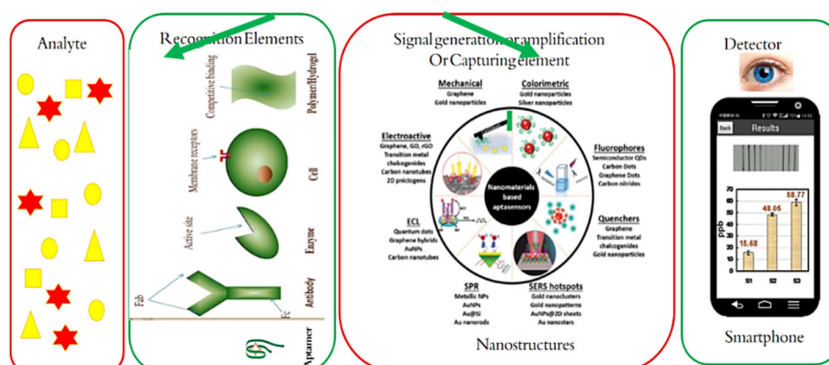
## **CONCLUSIONS**

### **(Convergence Technology of Aptasensors, Hybrid NMs and Smartphone)**

Water [164] and food are a prerequisite for human life to contaminate a variety of pollutants, including heavy metals [33, 165], pathogenic bacteria [166-168], antibiotics [169], agricultural pesticides [170] and mycotoxins [171-173] and even allergen [174] in food. Numerous studies have investigated the use of nanosized sensors in the detection of food risk factors, which are reviewed in this article. Today, various technologies of point of care detection of water and food poisons and microbial agents have been designed and built that are being commercialized in the near future due to their availability. One of the most powerful tools available to the general public is the smartphone [12, 13, 150, 154], microfluidic [175], lateral flow assay [176, 177], wearable sensor [178-181]. The main components of biosensors include bioreceptor, transducer and detector. The main advantage of using aptamers at the bioreceptor role is to establish specificity and reduce the likelihood of false positive response. These three-dimensional structures in the SELEX process obtain the desired specificity against their target molecule [182]. Therefore, the simultaneous use of aptamers as specific recognition element, nanostructures as capturing elements or transducers or signal amplifiers which increasing contact surface area for target molecule and smartphone capabilities, can be a major shift in the management and engineering of food and water safe-

**Table 2.** brief review on the Smartphone-Based Apta-nanosensors

Nanoparticle	Nanomaterial Role	Prenciple, Transducer, Method	Target, Sample	Platform	Sensitivity	Time response	Ref.
UCNP	Fluorescence quencher	Optical, Fluorescent	multi-target (SE,OTA, Hg <sup>2+</sup> ) in Water	LFA	5 ppb, 3 ng/mL and 85 CFU/mL	about 30 min	[106]
quantum dots nanobeads and gold nanostars	fluorophore-quencher nano-pair	Optical, Fluorescent	of multi-pesticides (chlorpyrifos, diazinon, and malathion)	LFA	0.73 ng/mL, 6.7 ng/mL, and 0.74 ng/mL	about 30 min	[183]
aptamer	Recognition element	electrochemical	Antibiotic (streptomycin) in milk and Chicken	Tris-HCl buffer solution (pH 7.5)	94 nM	scanning speed of 300 nm/min	[184]
silver nanoparticle-decorated graphene oxide	luminol-functionalized	Visual electrochemiluminescence	aflatoxin M1	PBS and milk	0.05 ng mL <sup>-1</sup>	-	[155]
AuNPs	controllable aggregation	Optical, colorimetric	multiplex antibiotic (TET and CAP)	Chicken and milk samples	32.9 and 7.0 nM	5 min	[185]
AuNPs	aggregation	Optical, colorimetric	Antibiotics (Streptomycin (STR))	STR in honey, milk and tap water	12.3 Nm (8.97 mg kg <sup>-1</sup> )	-	[158]
lanthanum ion –assisted gold nanoparticle	aggregation	Optical, colorimetric	Antibiotics (chloramphenicol)	acetate buffer (pH = 4.8) milk and chicken samples	5.88 nM	-	[158]



**Fig. 11.** Convergence Technology of Aptasensors, Hybrid NMs and Smartphone for development food safety by rapid and sensitive monitoring from farm to Forks.

ty with regular and simple and rapid monitoring and screening, Fast and accessible to the public [18, 68]. Hybrid nanomaterials fabricated from aptamer conjugated nanomaterials open new avenue in diagnostics and health care fields (Table 2) (Fig. 11).

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