CLAIMS

~~What is claimed is:~~

1. A ~~method~~ sustained release composition for use in manufacture of a medicament for treating arthritis, comprising:

~~intraarticularly injecting a sustained release composition into a joint of a subject in need of treatment for arthritis, said composition comprising~~

liposomes comprising one or more phospholipids, cholesterol, wherein the one or more phospholipids are selected from the group consisting of DOPC, POPC, SPC, EPC, PEG-DSPE and DOPG, and the cholesterol is present in an amount of 10 to 33 mole percent relative to the liposomes; and

one or more therapeutic agents,

wherein the liposomes are in an aqueous suspension; and the sustained release composition is intraarticularly injected into a joint of a subject in need of treatment for arthritis.

2. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim 1, wherein the sustained release composition is prepared by reconstituting a lyophilized lipid cake comprising said one or more phospholipids, and said cholesterol with an aqueous solution comprising said one or more therapeutic agents to form said aqueous suspension

3. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim 1, wherein the sustained release composition is prepared by reconstituting a lyophilized combination of said one or more therapeutic agents and a lipid cake comprising said one or more phospholipids, and said cholesterol with an aqueous solution to form said aqueous suspension.

~~4. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more phospholipids are selected from the group consisting of DOPC, POPC, SPC, EPC, PEG-DSPE and DOPG.~~

~~5.~~4. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim 14, wherein the ~~molar ratio~~ mole percent of DOPC:DOPG:cholesterol is about ~~67.5: 7.5: 25~~ 29.5 to 90: 3 to 37.5:10 to 33 based on the total amount of the phospholipids and cholesterol.

5. The sustained release composition of claim 1, wherein the mole percent of DOPC:DOPG:cholesterol is about 56.25 to 72.5: 7.5 to 18.75 : 20 to 25 based on the total amount of the phospholipids and cholesterol.

6. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim 1, wherein the therapeutic agent comprises a water soluble steroid solution comprising an effective amount of a water soluble steroid or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

7. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim 6, wherein the water soluble steroid is dexamethasone sodium phosphate.

~~8. The method of claim 6, wherein the water soluble steroid solution further comprises a buffer.~~

~~9. The method of claim 6, wherein the water soluble steroid solution further comprises a chelating agent.~~

~~10.~~8. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim 6, wherein the water soluble steroid solution has a potency equivalent to about a 2 mg dose to about a 8 mg dose of dexamethasone.

~~11.~~9. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim 1, wherein the therapeutic agent comprises a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

~~12. The method of claim 11, wherein the nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug is water soluble nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug.~~

~~13.~~10. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim ~~12~~9, wherein the ~~water soluble~~ nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug is indomethacin ~~or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt~~thereof.

~~14.~~11. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim~~,~~ ~~13~~10, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable salt of indomethacin is indomethacin sodium.

~~15.~~12.The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim ~~13~~10, wherein the dose of ~~water soluble~~ the nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug or its pharmaceutically acceptable salt is 4.65 to 5 mg/ml.

~~16.~~13. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim 1, wherein the therapeutic agent comprises a disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drug (DMARD).

~~17.~~14. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim ~~15~~13, wherein the DMARD comprises a TNF-*a* antagonist.

~~18.~~15. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim ~~16~~14, wherein the TNF-*a* antagonist is etanercept.

~~19.~~16. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim ~~17~~15, wherein the dose of etanercept is 42.8mg/ml to 50mg/ml.

~~20.~~17. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim ~~16~~14, wherein the TNF-*a* antagonist is Humira.

~~21.~~18.The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim ~~15~~13, wherein the DMARD comprises methotrexate or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

~~22.~~19. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim ~~20~~18, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable salt of methotrexate is methotrexate sodium.

~~23.~~20. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim ~~20~~18, wherein the dose of methotrexate or its pharmaceutically acceptable salt is 2.3 to 2.5mg/ml.

~~24.~~21. The sustained release composition ~~method~~ of claim 1, wherein the therapeutic agent is encapsulated in an aqueous medium of the liposome.

~~25.The method of claim 1, wherein the arthritis is rheumatoid arthritis.~~