What is claimed is:

1. A population of microparticles comprising a Class B corticosteroid or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof incorporated in a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer matrix, wherein the Class B corticosteroid comprises between 22% to 28% of the microparticles.

2. A controlled or sustained release preparation of a Class B corticosteroid comprising a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer microparticle containing the Class B corticosteroid, wherein the Class B corticosteroid comprises between 22% to 28% of the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer microparticle matrix.

3. A formulation comprising (a) controlled- or sustained- release microparticles comprising a Class B corticosteroid and a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer matrix, wherein the Class B corticosteroid comprises between 22% to 28% of the microparticles and wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer has one of more of the following characteristics: (i) a molecular weight in the range of about 40 to 70 kDa; (ii) an inherent viscosity in the range of 0.3 to 0.5 dL/g; or (iii) a lactide:glycolide molar ratio of 80:20 to 60:40.

4. The population of claim 1, preparation of claim 2 or formulation of claim 3, wherein the copolymer is biodegradable.

5. The population of claim 1, preparation of claim 2 or formulation of claim 3, wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer is a poly(lactic-co-glycolic) acid copolymer (PLGA).

6. The population of claim 1, preparation of claim 2 or formulation of claim 3, wherein the Class B corticosteroid is triamcinolone acetonide or a commercially available chemical analogue or a pharmaceutically-acceptable salt thereof.

7. The population of claim 1, preparation of claim 2 or formulation of claim 3, wherein the microparticles have a mean diameter of between 10 μm to 100 μm.

8. The population of claim 1, preparation of claim 2 or formulation of claim 3, wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer has a molar ratio of lactic acid: glycolic acid from the range of about 80:20 to 60:40.

9. The population of claim 1, preparation of claim 2 or formulation of claim 3, wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer has a molar ratio of lactic acid: glycolic acid of 75:25.

10. The population of claim 1, preparation of claim 2 or formulation of claim 3, wherein the microparticles further comprise a polyethylene glycol (PEG) moiety, wherein the PEG moiety comprises between 25% to 0% weight percent of the microparticle.

11. The population of claim 1, preparation of claim 2 or formulation of claim 3, wherein the Class B corticosteroid is released for between 14 days and 90 days.

12. A population of microparticles comprising a Class A corticosteroid or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof incorporated in a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer matrix, wherein the Class A corticosteroid comprises between 15% to 30% of the microparticles.

13. A controlled or sustained release preparation of a Class A corticosteroid comprising a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer microparticle containing the Class A corticosteroid, wherein the Class A corticosteroid comprises between 15% to 30% of the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer microparticle matrix.

14. A formulation comprising (a) controlled- or sustained- release microparticles comprising a Class A corticosteroid and a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer matrix, wherein the Class A corticosteroid comprises between 15% to 30% of the microparticles and wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer has one of more of the following characteristics: (i) a molecular weight in the range of about 40 to 70 kDa; (ii) an inherent viscosity in the range of 0.35 to 0.5 dL/g; or (iii) a lactide:glycolide molar ratio of 60:40 to 45:55.

15. The population of claim 12, preparation of claim 13 or formulation of claim 14, wherein the copolymer is biodegradable.

16. The population of claim 12, preparation of claim 13 or formulation of claim 14, wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer is a poly(lactic-co-glycolic) acid copolymer (PLGA).

17. The population of claim 12, preparation of claim 13 or formulation of claim 14, wherein the Class A corticosteroid is prednisolone or a commercially available chemical analogue or a pharmaceutically-acceptable salt thereof.

18. The population of claim 12, preparation of claim 13 or formulation of claim 14, wherein the microparticles have a mean diameter of between 10 μm to 100 μm.

19. The population of claim 12, preparation of claim 13 or formulation of claim 14, wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer has a molar ratio of lactic acid: glycolic acid from the range of about 60:40 to 45:55.

20. The population of claim 12, preparation of claim 13 or formulation of claim 14, wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer has a molar ratio of lactic acid: glycolic acid of 50:50.

21. The population of claim 12, preparation of claim 13 or formulation of claim 14, wherein the microparticles further comprise a polyethylene glycol (PEG) moiety, wherein the PEG moiety comprises between 25% to 0% weight percent of the microparticle.

22. The population of claim 12, preparation of claim 13 or formulation of claim 14, wherein the Class A corticosteroid is released for between 14 days and 90 days.

23. A population of microparticles comprising a Class C corticosteroid or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof incorporated in a lactic acid-glycolic acid

copolymer matrix, wherein the Class C corticosteroid comprises between 15% to 30% of the microparticles.

24. A controlled or sustained release preparation of a Class C corticosteroid comprising a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer microparticle containing the Class C corticosteroid, wherein the Class C corticosteroid comprises between 15% to 30% of the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer microparticle matrix.

25. A formulation comprising (a) controlled- or sustained- release microparticles comprising a Class C corticosteroid and a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer matrix, wherein the Class C corticosteroid comprises between 15% to 30% of the microparticles and wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer has one of more of the following characteristics: (i) a molecular weight in the range of about 40 to 70 kDa; (ii) an inherent viscosity in the range of 0.35 to 0.5 dL/g; or (iii) a lactide:glycolide molar ratio of 60:40 to 45:55.

26. The population of claim 23, preparation of claim 24 or formulation of claim 25, wherein the copolymer is biodegradable.

27. The population of claim 23, preparation of claim 24 or formulation of claim 25, wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer is a poly(lactic-co-glycolic) acid copolymer (PLGA).

28. The population of claim 23, preparation of claim 24 or formulation of claim 25, wherein the Class C corticosteroid is betamethasone or a commercially available chemical analogue or a pharmaceutically-acceptable salt thereof.

29. The population of claim 23, preparation of claim 24 or formulation of claim 25, wherein the microparticles have a mean diameter of between 10 μm to 100 μm.

30. The population of claim 23, preparation of claim 24 or formulation of claim 25, wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer has a molar ratio of lactic acid: glycolic acid from the range of about 60:40 to 45:55.

31. The population of claim 23, preparation of claim 24 or formulation of claim 25, wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer has a molar ratio of lactic acid: glycolic acid of 50:50.

32. The population of claim 23, preparation of claim 24 or formulation of claim 25, wherein the microparticles further comprise a polyethylene glycol (PEG) moiety, wherein the PEG moiety comprises between 25% to 0% weight percent of the microparticle.

33. The population of claim 23, preparation of claim 24 or formulation of claim 25, wherein the Class C corticosteroid is released for between 14 days and 90 days.

34. A population of microparticles comprising a Class D corticosteroid or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof incorporated in a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer matrix, wherein the Class D corticosteroid comprises between 8% to 20% of the microparticles.

35. A controlled or sustained release preparation of a Class D corticosteroid comprising a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer microparticle containing the Class D corticosteroid, wherein the Class D corticosteroid comprises between 8% to 20% of the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer microparticle matrix.

36. A formulation comprising (a) controlled- or sustained- release microparticles comprising a Class D corticosteroid and a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer matrix, wherein the Class D corticosteroid comprises between 8% to 20% of the microparticles and wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer has one of more of the following characteristics: (i) a molecular weight in the range of about 40 to 70 kDa; (ii) an inherent viscosity in the range of 0.35 to 0.5 dL/g; or (iii) a lactide:glycolide molar ratio of 60:40 to 45:55.

37. The population of claim 34, preparation of claim 35 or formulation of claim 36, wherein the copolymer is biodegradable.

38. The population of claim 34, preparation of claim 35 or formulation of claim 36, wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer is a poly(lactic-co-glycolic) acid copolymer (PLGA).

39. The population of claim 34, preparation of claim 35 or formulation of claim 36, wherein the Class D corticosteroid is fluticasone propionate, fluticasone, or a commercially available chemical analogue or a pharmaceutically-acceptable salt thereof.

40. The population of claim 34, preparation of claim 35 or formulation of claim 36, wherein the microparticles have a mean diameter of between 10 μm to 100 μm.

41. The population of claim 34, preparation of claim 35 or formulation of claim 36, wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer has a molar ratio of lactic acid: glycolic acid from the range of about 60:40 to 45:55.

42. The population of claim 34, preparation of claim 35 or formulation of claim 36, wherein the lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer has a molar ratio of lactic acid: glycolic acid of 50:50.

43. The population of claim 34, preparation of claim 35 or formulation of claim 36, wherein the microparticles further comprise a polyethylene glycol (PEG) moiety, wherein the PEG moiety comprises between 25% to 0% weight percent of the microparticle.

44. The population of claim 34, preparation of claim 35 or formulation of claim 36, wherein the Class D corticosteroid is released for between 14 days and 90 days.

45. The population of microparticles of claims 1, 12, 23 or 34, the controlled or sustained release preparation of claims 2, 13, 24 or 35, or the formulation of claims 3, 14, 25 or 36, for use in the treatment of pain or inflammation in a patient.

46. The population of microparticles of claims 1, 12, 23 or 34, the controlled or sustained release preparation of claims 2, 13, 24 or 35, or the formulation of claims 3, 14, 25 or 36, for use in the treatment of pain or inflammation in a patient, wherein the population of microparticles, the controlled or sustained release preparation or the formulation releases the corticosteroid for at least 14 days at a rate that does not adversely suppress the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA axis).

47. The population of microparticles of claims 1, 12, 23 or 34, the controlled or sustained release preparation of claims 2, 13, 24 or 35, or the formulation of claims 3, 14, 25 or 36, for use in slowing, arresting or reversing progressive structural tissue damage associated with chronic inflammatory disease in a patient.

48. The population of microparticles of claims 1, 12, 23 or 34, the controlled or sustained release preparation of claims 2, 13, 24 or 35, or the formulation of claims 3, 14, 25 or 36, for use in slowing, arresting or reversing progressive structural tissue damage associated with chronic inflammatory disease in a patient, wherein the population of microparticles, the controlled or sustained release preparation or the formulation releases the corticosteroid for at least 14 days at a rate that does not adversely suppress the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA axis).

49. The population, the preparation or the formulation of any one of claims 45-48, wherein the population, the preparation or the formulation is administrable as one or more injections.

50. The population, the preparation or the formulation of any one of claims 45-48, wherein the patient has osteoarthritis, acute gouty arthritis, and synovitis.

51. Use of the population of microparticles of claims 1, 12, 23 or 34, the controlled or sustained release preparation of claims 2, 13, 24 or 35, or the formulation of claims 3, 14, 25 or 36 in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of pain or inflammation in a patient.

52. Use of the population of microparticles of claims 1, 12, 23 or 34, the controlled or sustained release preparation of claims 2, 13, 24 or 35, or the formulation of claims 3, 14, 25 or 36 in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of pain or inflammation in a patient, wherein the population of microparticles, the controlled or sustained release preparation or the formulation releases the corticosteroid for at least 14 days at a rate that does not adversely suppress the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA axis).

53. Use of the population of microparticles of claims 1, 12, 23 or 34, the controlled or sustained release preparation of claims 2, 13, 24 or 35, or the formulation of claims 3, 14, 25 or 36 in the manufacture of a medicament for slowing, arresting or reversing progressive structural tissue damage associated with chronic inflammatory disease in a patient.

54. Use of the population of microparticles of claims 1, 12, 23 or 34, the controlled or sustained release preparation of claims 2, 13, 24 or 35, or the formulation of claims 3, 14, 25 or 36 in the manufacture of a medicament for slowing, arresting or reversing progressive structural tissue damage associated with chronic inflammatory disease in a patient, wherein the population of microparticles, the controlled or sustained release preparation or the formulation releases the corticosteroid for at least 14 days at a rate that does not adversely suppress the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA axis).

55. The use of any one of claims 51 to 54, wherein the medicament is administrable as one or more injections.

56. The use of any one of claims 51 to 54, wherein the patient has osteoarthritis, acute gouty arthritis, and synovitis.

57. A method of manufacturing the population of microparticles of claim 1, the controlled or sustained release preparation of claim 2 or the formulation of claim 3, wherein the microparticles are manufactured using a solvent evaporation process wherein the Class B corticosteroid is dispersed in a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer organic solution and the mixture is treated to remove the solvent from the mixture, thereby producing microparticles.

58. The method of manufacture of claim 57, wherein the solvent evaporation process utilizes a spray drying or fluid bed apparatus to remove the solvent and produce microparticles.

59. The method of manufacture of claim 57, wherein the solvent evaporation process utilizes a spinning disk.

60. A method of manufacturing the population of microparticles of claim 12, the controlled or sustained release preparation of claim 13 or the formulation of claim 14, wherein the microparticles are manufactured using a solid in oil in water emulsion process wherein the Class A corticosteroid is dispersed in a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer organic solution and added to an aqueous solvent to produce microparticles.

61. A method of manufacturing the population of microparticles of claim 23, the controlled or sustained release preparation of claim 24 or the formulation of claim 35, wherein the microparticles are manufactured using a solid in oil in water emulsion process wherein the Class C corticosteroid is dispersed in a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer organic solution and added to an aqueous solvent to produce microparticles.

62. A method of manufacturing the population of microparticles of claim 34, the controlled or sustained release preparation of claim 35 or the formulation of claim 36, wherein the microparticles are manufactured using a solid in oil in water emulsion process wherein the Class D corticosteroid is dispersed in a lactic acid-glycolic acid copolymer organic solution and added to an aqueous solvent produce microparticles.

What is claimed is:

1. A formulation comprising (a) controlled- or sustained-release microparticles comprising triamcinolone acetonide (TCA) or a pharmaceutically-acceptable salt thereof and a poly(lactic-co-glycolic) acid copolymer (PLGA) matrix, wherein the TCA comprises between 22% to 28% of the microparticles and wherein the PLGA has the following characteristics: (i) a molecular weight in the range of 40 to 70 kDa and (ii) a lactide:glycolide molar ratio of 80:20 to 60:40.

2. The formulation of claim 1, wherein the copolymer is biodegradable.

3. The formulation of claim 1, wherein the microparticles have a mean diameter of between 10 μm to 100 μm.

4. The formulation of claim 1, wherein the PLGA has a lactide:glycolide molar ratio of 75:25.

5. The formulation of claim 1, wherein the microparticles further comprise a polyethylene glycol (PEG) moiety, wherein the PEG moiety comprises between 25% to 0% weight percent of the microparticle.

6. The formulation of claim 1, wherein the TCA is released for at least between 14 days and 90 days upon administration to a joint.

7. The formulation of claim 1, wherein the PLGA has an inherent viscosity in the range of 0.3 to 0.5 dL/g.

8. The formulation of claim 1, wherein the 22% to 28% of TCA in the microparticles comprises a total TCA load dose between 10 to 50 mg.

9. An injectable formulation comprising (a) controlled- or sustained-release microparticles comprising triamcinolone acetonide (TCA) or a pharmaceutically-acceptable salt thereof and a poly(lactic-co-glycolic) acid copolymer (PLGA) matrix, wherein the TCA

comprises between 22% to 28% of the microparticles, wherein the microparticles have a mean diameter of between 10 μm to 100 μm, and wherein the PLGA has the following characteristics: (i) a molecular weight in the range of 40 to 70 kDa; and (ii) a lactide:glycolide molar ratio of 80:20 to 60:40, wherein the TCA is released for between at least 14 days and 90 days upon administration to a joint.

10. The formulation of claim 9, wherein the PLGA has a lactide:glycolide molar ratio of 75:25.

11. The formulation of claim 9, wherein the microparticles further comprise a PEG moiety, wherein the PEG moiety comprises between 25% to 0% weight percent of the microparticle.

12. The formulation of claim 9, wherein the 22% to 28% of TCA in the microparticles comprises a total TCA load dose between 10 to 50 mg.

13. The formulation of claim 9, wherein the PLGA has an inherent viscosity in the range of 0.3 to 0.5 dL/g.

14. The formulation of claim 1 or 9 for use in the treatment of pain or inflammation in a patient.

15. The formulation of claim 1 or 9 for use in the treatment of pain or inflammation in a patient, wherein the formulation releases the TCA for at least 14 days at a rate that does not adversely suppress the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA axis).

16. The formulation of claim 1 or 9 for use in slowing, arresting or reversing progressive structural tissue damage associated with chronic inflammatory disease in a patient.

17. The formulation of claim 1 or 9 for use in slowing, arresting or reversing progressive structural tissue damage associated with chronic inflammatory disease in a patient, wherein the formulation releases the TCA for at least 14 days at a rate that does not adversely suppress the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA axis).

18. The formulation of any one of claims 14-17, wherein the formulation is administrable as one or more injections.

19. The formulation of any one of claims 14-17, wherein the patient has osteoarthritis, acute gouty arthritis, or synovitis.