

MEDICAL ICE SLURRY PRODUCTION AND DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND METHODS

CROSS-REFERENCES TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] Not Applicable.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH

[0002] Not Applicable.

BACKGROUND

[0003] The disclosure relates generally to ice slurries for medical use and, more specifically, to systems and methods for medical ice slurry production and withdrawal or injection.

[0004] Ice slurries used in medical applications typically comprise a partially frozen saline solution. Medical ice slurries are used in surgical applications to induce therapeutic hypothermia and slow organ and tissue metabolic rates thereby protecting a patient's organs during a surgical procedure. Medical ice slurries are also injected into a patient for selective or non-selective cryotherapy and/or cryolysis.

BRIEF SUMMARY

[0005] The present disclosure provides systems and method for medical ice slurry production. In particular, medical ice slurry production systems and methods are disclosed that enable an end user/clinician to produce and deliver a sterile medical ice slurry composition at the point of care.

[0006] The present disclosure provides a medical ice slurry production system including a disposable cartridge holding a non-frozen, sterile medical slurry composition. The system further includes a housing supporting the disposable cartridge. The housing includes an actuator, and a cooling device operable

with the housing to cool the non-frozen slurry composition held in the disposable cartridge to a temperature sufficient to form ice crystals. The medical ice slurry production system further includes an agitator operable with the actuator of the housing to agitate the medical slurry composition such that the ice crystals are reduced to a size sufficient to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be delivered to a patient through an end of a needle, and an access port structured and arranged to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be withdrawn or injected from the disposable cartridge, while maintaining the sterility of the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals. In one aspect, there is provided a medical ice slurry production system comprising:

- a disposable cartridge holding a non-frozen, sterile medical slurry composition, such that the sterile medical slurry composition is self-contained within a closed environment;

- a housing supporting the disposable cartridge, the housing including an actuator and defining an internal cavity dimensioned to receive the disposable cartridge;

- a cooling device operable with the housing to cool the non-frozen slurry composition held in the disposable cartridge to a temperature sufficient to form ice crystals in the medical slurry composition inside the disposable cartridge;

- an agitator operable with the actuator of the housing to agitate the medical slurry composition such that the ice crystals are reduced to a size sufficient to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be delivered to a patient through an end of a needle; and

- an access port structured and arranged to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be withdrawn or injected from the disposable cartridge, while maintaining the sterility of the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals;

- wherein the access port is defined in the disposable cartridge; and

- wherein the disposable cartridge is closed.

[0007] The present disclosure also provides a medical ice slurry production system including a disposable cartridge holding a non-frozen, sterile, medical slurry composition. The disposable cartridge includes an access port. The medical ice slurry production

system further includes a housing supporting the disposable cartridge. The housing including an actuator. The medical ice slurry production system further includes a cooling device operable with the housing so as to cool the non-frozen slurry composition held in the disposable cartridge to a temperature sufficient to form ice crystals in the composition, an agitator operable with the actuator of the housing to agitate the medical slurry composition such that the ice crystals are reduced to a size sufficient to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be delivered to a patient through an end of a needle, and a pump operable to pump the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals out of the access port of the disposable cartridge through a disposable delivery tube, while maintaining the sterility of the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals. In one example, there is provided a medical ice slurry production system comprising:

- a disposable cartridge holding a non-frozen, sterile, medical slurry composition, the disposable cartridge including an access port;

- a housing supporting the disposable cartridge, the housing including an actuator;

- a cooling device operable with the housing to cool the non-frozen slurry composition held in the disposable cartridge to a temperature sufficient to form ice crystals in the disposable cartridge;

- an agitator operable with the actuator of the housing to agitate the medical slurry composition such that the ice crystals are reduced to a size sufficient to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be delivered to a patient through an end of a needle; and

- a pump operable to pump the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals out of the access port of the disposable cartridge through a disposable delivery tube, while maintaining the sterility of the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals.

[0008] The present disclosure further provides a medical ice slurry production method including placing, in a housing, a disposable cartridge holding a non-frozen, sterile medical slurry composition, and while placed in the housing, cooling the disposable cartridge to a temperature sufficient to form ice crystals inside the disposable cartridge. The medical ice slurry production method further includes agitating the medical slurry composition held in the disposable cartridge such that the ice crystals inside the disposable cartridge are reduced to a size sufficient to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be delivered to a patient through an end of a needle. In one aspect, there is provided a method for producing a medical ice slurry, the method comprising:

placing, in a housing, the housing including an actuator and defining an internal cavity dimensioned to receive a disposable cartridge, the disposable cartridge holding a non-frozen, sterile medical slurry composition, such that the sterile medical slurry composition is self-contained within a closed environment;

while placed in the housing, cooling, using a cooling device operable with the housing, the disposable cartridge to a temperature sufficient to form ice crystals in the medical slurry composition inside the disposable cartridge, and

agitating, using the agitator operable with the actuator of the housing, the medical slurry composition held in the disposable cartridge such that the ice crystals inside the disposable cartridge are reduced to a size sufficient to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be delivered to a patient through an end of a needle through an access port defined in the disposable cartridge,

wherein the access port is structured and arranged to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be withdrawn or injected from the disposable cartridge, while maintaining the sterility of the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals, and

wherein the disposable cartridge is closed.

[0009] The foregoing and other aspects and advantages of the disclosure will appear from the following description. In the description, reference is made to the accompanying drawings which form a part hereof, and in which there is illustrated by way of illustration a preferred example of the disclosure. Such example does not necessarily represent the full scope of the disclosure, however, and reference is made therefore to the claims and herein for interpreting the scope of the disclosure.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0010] The invention will be better understood and features, aspects and advantages other than those set forth above will become apparent when consideration is given to the following detailed description thereof. Such detailed description makes reference to the following drawings.

[0011] Fig. 1 is a schematic illustration of a medical ice slurry production system according to one non-limiting example of the present disclosure.

[0012] Fig. 2 illustrates the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 1 with a cover.

[0013] Fig. 3 illustrates the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 1 with a liquid in an internal cavity defined by a housing.

[0014] Fig. 4 illustrates the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 1 with a syringe positioned adjacent to an access port of the medical ice slurry production system.

[0015] Fig. 5 illustrates the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 1 with an syringe holder coupled to a housing of the medical ice slurry production system.

[0016] Fig. 6 illustrates the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 4 with one or more filters arranged within a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system.

[0017] Fig. 7 illustrates the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 4 with one or more filters arranged within a syringe.

[0018] Fig. 8 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 1 with another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0019] Fig. 9 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 1 with yet another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0020] Fig. 10 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 1 with still another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0021] Fig. 11 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 1 with another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0022] Fig. 12 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 1 with an additive port.

[0023] Fig. 13 is a schematic illustration of a medical ice slurry production system according to another non-limiting example of the present disclosure.

[0024] Fig. 14 illustrates the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 11 with a disposable tube and needle coupled thereto.

[0025] Fig. 15 illustrates the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 12 with a pump position inline with a disposable tube.

[0026] Fig. 16 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 11 with another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0027] Fig. 17 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 11 with yet another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0028] Fig. 18 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 11 with still another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0029] Fig. 19 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 11 with another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0030] Fig. 20 is a schematic illustration of a medical ice slurry production system according to yet another non-limiting example of the present disclosure.

[0031] Fig. 21 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 20 with another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0032] Fig. 22 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 20 with yet another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0033] Fig. 23 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 20 with still another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0034] Fig. 24 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 20 with another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0035] Fig. 25 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 20 with another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0036] Fig. 26 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 20 with yet another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0037] Fig. 27 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 20 with still another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0038] Fig. 28 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 20 with another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0039] Fig. 29 illustrates the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 20 with a disposable cartridge having an agitator arranged on a side thereof.

[0040] Fig. 30 illustrates the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 20 with more than one disposable cartridges having agitators on a side thereof.

[0041] Fig. 31 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 20 with still another non-limiting example of an agitator arranged on a side thereof.

[0042] Fig. 32 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 20 with one or more filters arranged therein.

[0043] Fig. 33 illustrates a disposable cartridge of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 20 with an additive port.

[0044] Fig. 34 is a schematic illustration of a medical ice slurry production system according to another non-limiting example of the present disclosure.

[0045] Fig. 35 is a schematic illustration of a medical ice slurry production system according to yet another non-limiting example of the present disclosure.

[0046] Fig. 36 is a schematic illustration of a medical ice slurry production system according to still another non-limiting example of the present disclosure.

[0047] Fig. 37 is a schematic illustration of a medical ice slurry production system according to still another non-limiting example of the present disclosure.

[0048] Fig. 38 illustrates the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 37 with another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0049] Fig. 39 illustrates the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 37 with still another non-limiting example of an agitator.

[0050] Fig. 40 is a schematic illustration of a medical ice slurry production system according to yet another non-limiting example of the present disclosure.

[0051] Fig. 41 is a schematic illustration of a medical ice slurry production system according to still another non-limiting example of the present disclosure.

[0052] Fig. 42 illustrates an ice tray of the medical ice slurry production system of Fig. 41.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0053] Medical ice slurries manufactured off-site (i.e., not at the point of care) require cold chain shipping to deliver the ice slurries to a point of care. Off-site production places substantial burdens on end users/clinicians administering an ice slurry to a patient. For example, the ice slurry must be kept sterile to ensure patient safety. The ice slurry must also be maintained at an appropriate temperature to preserve the slurry's ice crystal size, crystal shape and ice content and to ensure that the slurry maintains its cooling capabilities and ability to be injected through needles (i.e., stability). Off-site ice slurry manufacturing can therefore require end clinician's manipulation of the ice slurry, which can potentially jeopardize patient safety and/or effectiveness of the ice slurry.

[0054] It would therefore be desirable to have a medical ice slurry production system that enables an end user to produce and deliver a sterile medical ice slurry at the point of care. A system that produces the medical ice slurry at the point of care while maintaining the sterility and stability (e.g., ice crystal size and shape, and ice

content) of the slurry can reduce the burdens imposed on end users and simplify the overall process of producing and delivering medical ice slurries to a patient.

[0055] Fig. 1 illustrates one non-limiting example of a medical ice slurry production system 100. The medical ice slurry production system 100 includes a disposable cartridge 102 configured to be supported within a housing 104. The illustrated disposable cartridge 102 is in the form of a sterile pre-filled canister. The disposable cartridge 102 is pre-filled with a sterile slurry composition 106. For example, the disposable cartridge 102 may be pre-filled with one of the slurry compositions described in International Patent Application No. PCT/US2015/047301, which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety. As described, for example, in PCT/US2015/047301, such slurry compositions can have preferred ice content ranges, temperature ranges, and include one or more added ice particle smoothing agents and/or biocompatible surfactants (e.g., glycerol), which can, for example, make the slurry more injectable. In any of the systems described herein, it can be preferable to add such agents or surfactants after the systems agitate, blend, mix or pulverize the medical ice slurry (as described below), and right before the slurry is injected. Pre-filling the disposable cartridge 102 with the sterile slurry composition 106 ensures the sterile slurry composition 106 is self-contained within a closed environment. This helps relieve an end user's burden of trying to maintain sterility of the slurry composition 106 while handling the disposable cartridge 102. In some non-limiting examples, the disposable cartridge 102 may be surrounded by insulation (not shown) to improve thermal stability.

[0056] The disposable cartridge 102 can be fabricated from a plastic, glass, or metal material. The disposable cartridge 102 can be dimensioned to hold a slurry volume between approximately one cubic centimeter (cc) and approximately one liter (L) depending on the medical application. The disposable cartridge 102 is rotationally coupled to an agitator 108. The agitator 108 includes an agitator shaft 110 and a fin 112 arranged within the disposable cartridge 102. Fin 112 is coupled to the agitator shaft 110 and spirals lengthwise along the shaft 110. Agitator shaft 110 is partially received within the disposable cartridge 102. That is, agitator shaft 110 is

received in a first side 114 of the disposable cartridge 102 such that a distal end 116 of the agitator shaft 110 protrudes from the first end 114 of the disposable cartridge 102. The agitator shaft 110 is rotationally sealed to the first end 114 of the disposable cartridge 102 to allow rotation of the agitator shaft 110 with respect to the disposable cartridge 102 while maintaining a seal between the sterile slurry composition 106 and the surrounding environment. The seal between the agitator shaft 110 and the first end 114 of the disposable cartridge 102 can be obtained by utilizing, for example, at least one of a sealed hydrostatic, a sealed hydrodynamic, a fluid bearing, or an o-ring.

[0057] The disposable cartridge 102 includes an access port 118 arranged in a second side 120 of the disposable cartridge 102. Access port 118 is structured and arranged to allow the medical ice slurry composition 106 to be withdrawn from the disposable cartridge 102 while maintaining the sterility of the slurry composition 106. For example, access port 118 can be configured to allow the medical ice slurry composition to be withdrawn from the access port using a syringe. Alternatively or additionally, a user could pump the medical ice slurry composition fluid from the access port using a pump and a disposable delivery tube, as discussed in more detail below. In certain implementations, the pumps or the controllers configured to operate the pumps can be configured to have a maximum allowable pressure tolerance at the end of the delivery tube, delivery needle or cannula. The pumps can include adjustable constant-volume pumps, and the pumps or the controllers configured to operate the pumps can be configured with user-specified stops that occur when a predefined volume of slurry has been delivered. A user could also allow the medical ice slurry composition to be withdrawn from the access port via gravity flow. It should be appreciated that the location of the access port 18 on the disposable cartridge 102 is not meant to be limiting in any way and that access port 118 can be arranged in other locations on disposable cartridge 102.

[0058] The housing 104 defines an internal cavity 122 dimensioned to receive the disposable cartridge 102 and includes a pair of opposing side walls 124 extending from a base 126. Side walls 124 extend from the base 126 to a substantially open top

side 128. In other non-limiting examples, housing 104 may include a removable cover 129 attached to the substantially open top side 128 to further insulate the internal cavity 122 from the surrounding environment, as shown in Fig. 2.

[0059] With continued reference to Fig. 1, the base 126 of the housing 104 includes an actuator 130 that is coupled to an actuator shaft 132. The actuator shaft 132 extends into the internal cavity 122 of the housing 104 and is configured to operably couple to the agitator shaft 110. The illustrated actuator 130 can be in the form of a motor. Alternatively or additionally, actuator can be configured to vibrate or agitate the actuator shaft 132 and thereby the disposable cartridge 102 at a given frequency (e.g., an ultrasonic frequency). In other non-limiting examples, the actuator 130 may be in the form of another rotational or vibrational mechanism known in the art. Actuator 130 is configured to selectively rotate the actuator shaft 132 and, when coupled to the agitator shaft 110, induce a turbulent agitation or mixing of the sterile slurry composition 106 within the disposable cartridge 102.

[0060] The medical ice slurry production system 100 includes a cooling device 134. In one example, the cooling device 134 is at least partially supported within the housing 104. In the illustrated non-limiting example of Fig. 1, side walls 124 of housing 104 define a passageway 136 extending between the top side 128 and the base 126. In one non-limiting example, the passageway 136 can define a substantially helical path through the side walls 124. The passageway 136 is configured to receive a cooling liquid or gas provided by the cooling device 134. Alternatively or additionally, the cooling liquid or gas provided by the cooling device 134 can be provided to a coil (e.g., a copper coil), which can be received within the passageway 136. The cooling device 134 may comprise, for example, a condenser, a compressor, and an evaporator. In other non-limiting examples, the cooling device 134 may utilize magnetic refrigeration, electrical cooling, chemical cooling, conventional refrigeration, compressed gas (Joule-Thompson) cooling, thermoelectric (Peltier) cooling, or another slurry other than the sterile slurry composition 106. The housing 104 can be fabricated from a material with a high thermal conductivity (e.g., stainless steel, copper, aluminum) to reduce a thermal resistance between the sterile

slurry composition 106 within the disposable cartridge 102 and the cooling liquid or gas within the passageway 136. It should be appreciated that, in some non-limiting examples, the housing 104 can be fabricated from one or more materials. For example, an interior portion of the housing 104 adjacent to the disposable cartridge 102 can be fabricated from a material with a high thermal conductivity, and an exterior portion of the housing 104 can be fabricated from an insulating material (e.g., plastic or foam).

[0061] A power supply 138 supplies electrical power to the cooling device 134, the actuator 130, and a controller 140. The power supply 138 may be in the form of AC wall power. Alternatively or additionally, the power supply 138 may be in the form of a portable DC power supply (e.g., a battery) to facilitate portability of the medical ice slurry production system 100. The controller 140 is in electrical communication with the actuator 130 and the cooling device 134 and configured to selectively instruct the actuator 130 to rotate the actuator shaft 132 at a desired rotational speed. The controller 140 is further configured to control the cooling device 134 and thereby control the temperature of the cooling liquid or gas within the passageway 136. One or more sensors (not shown) may be in communication with the controller 140 to sense, for example, a temperature of the cooling liquid or gas within the passageway 136, and a temperature of the sterile slurry composition 106 within the disposable cartridge 102. The temperature of the cooling liquid or gas within the passageway 136 and the temperature of the sterile slurry composition 106 may be measuring using by a thermocouple, a thermistor, or another electrical temperature sensor known in the art. Alternatively or additionally, a radiant temperature sensor can be implemented such as infrared detectors and pyroelectric sensors. The one or more sensors can provide feedback to controller 140 to enable the controller 140 to actively control the cooling device 134 to achieve and maintain a desired temperature of the sterile medical ice slurry composition 106.

[0062] In operation, the housing 104 of the medical ice slurry production system 100 is placed at the point of care (e.g., near a patient). The disposable cartridge 102 having a pre-filled, non-frozen sterile slurry composition 106 is then placed within the

internal cavity 122 of the housing 104 and the agitator shaft 110 is coupled to the actuator shaft 132 for rotation therewith. In some non-limiting examples, the internal cavity 122 of the housing includes gas or air. In other non-limiting examples, the internal cavity 122 can be filled with a liquid, as illustrated in Fig. 3. The controller 140 is configured to instruct the cooling device 134 to cool the liquid or gas within the passageway 136 to a desired temperature (i.e. a temperature that causes ice crystals to form in the slurry composition held within the cartridge 102). In one non-limiting example, a desired temperature of the sterile slurry composition 106 may be input to the controller 140, and the controller 140 can automatically control the cooling device 134 to reach and maintain the desired slurry temperature. In some non-limiting examples, the desired temperature of the sterile slurry composition can be between approximately -10°C and approximately 4°C.

[0063] While the cooling device 134 is cooling the temperature of the sterile slurry composition 106 within the disposable cartridge 102, the controller 140 is configured to instruct the actuator 130 to rotate the actuator shaft 132 and thereby the agitator shaft 110. It should be appreciated that the actuator 130 can be instructed to rotate the actuator shaft 132 before, simultaneously with, or after the cooling device 134 starts cool the disposable cartridge 102. Alternatively or additionally, the disposable cartridge 102 may be precooled remotely from the housing 104 and then further cooled within the housing 104 to form the ice crystals. A desired rotation speed or amount of force provided by the actuator 130 may be input to the controller 140. In some non-limiting examples, the desired rotational speed provided by the actuator 130 may be between approximately 100 revolutions per minute (rpm) and 45,000 rpm, or between approximately 5000 rpm and 40,000 rpm, or between approximately 10,000 rpm and 30,000 rpm. Rotation of the agitator shaft 110 results in the rotation of the fin 112 within the sterile slurry composition 106. Rotating fin 112 acts to turbulently mix the sterile slurry composition 106 serving multiple purposes. First, the turbulent mixing promotes a uniform temperature distribution in the sterile slurry composition 106. Second, rotation of the fin 112 acts to break up the ice crystals that form in the sterile, slurry composition as the sterile slurry mixture 106

is cooled (i.e., the sterile slurry composition 106 transitions from a liquid composition to an ice slurry comprised of solid ice crystals and liquid). Alternatively or additionally, the controller 140 can be configured to maintain a homogeneity of the sterile slurry composition 106 once the ice crystals have formed to prevent the slurry from separating. The controller 140 may be configured to instruct the actuator 130 to provide rotation between approximately 60 rpm and 5000 rpm to preserve homogeneity of the sterile slurry composition 106, or between approximately 500 rpm and 4000 rpm, or between approximately 1500 rpm and 2500 rpm.

[0064] The agitator 108 can be structured to ensure that the ice crystals formed within the sterile slurry composition 106 are broken up to a specific ice crystal size. In one non-limiting example, the ice crystals formed in the sterile slurry composition 106 can be broken up to a size of less than approximately one millimeter (mm). In another non-limiting and optimal example, the ice crystals formed in the sterile slurry composition 106 can be broken up to a size of less than approximately 0.1 mm. The size of the ice crystals in the sterile slurry composition 106 may be verified, for example, by using (i) a light/laser diffraction method, (ii) a direct measurement via microscopy, and/or (iii) an ultrasound, or acoustic, method. In some non-limiting examples, this measured size of the ice crystals in the sterile slurry composition 106 is communicated to the controller 140.

[0065] In certain embodiments, controller 140 or any of the other controllers for any of the other embodiments described herein can be configured to perform according to two different cycles of agitation. In a first cycle, the controller of any embodiment herein can be configured to instruct the actuator and hence the actuator shaft and agitator shaft (or any other agitating elements described herein) to agitate such that the ice crystals are broken down or pulverized into a size small enough to be of injectable quality (e.g., less than approximately 1mm or preferably less than approximately .1mm). In a second cycle, which can prior to or after the first cycle, the controller can be configured to instruct the actuator and hence the actuator shaft and agitator shaft (or any other agitating elements described herein) to agitate such that the slurry is adequately mixed. For example, any of the systems herein can be

configures with a controller that provides rotation of the agitator or agitating element between approximately 60 rpm and 5000 rpm to ensure or preserve adequate mixing or homogeneity of the slurry, or between approximately 500 rpm and 4000 rpm, or between approximately 1500 rpm and 2500 rpm, or any other suitable speed and/or number of revolutions of the agitating element.

[0066] In some non-limiting examples, the cooling device 134 can be further configured as a cooling and heating device to provide both cooling and heating to the sterile slurry composition 106. This can enable the medical ice slurry production system 100 to first form ice crystals within the sterile slurry composition 106, and then provide heating prior to injection to ensure the formation of homogenous, globular, and non-dendritic ice crystals.

[0067] Once the sterile slurry composition 106 is cooled to the desired slurry temperature and the ice crystals within the sterile slurry composition 106 are the desired size, the sterile slurry composition 106 is withdrawn from the disposable cartridge 102 via the access port 118 for use in a desired medical application on a patient. The disposable cartridge 102 can then be disposed and the above-described process can be repeated with a new disposable cartridge 102.

[0068] As described above, an end user or clinician may only be required to place the pre-filled disposable cartridge 102 within the internal cavity 122 of the housing 104 and withdraw the sterile slurry composition 106 from the access port 118 for delivery to the patient after the slurry composition reaches a desired temperature with the desired ice crystal size. The sterile slurry composition 106 is therefore maintained within the disposable cartridge 102 throughout the ice slurry production process until the sterile ice slurry composition 106 is withdrawn for use in a patient (e.g., withdrawn for use in another sterile delivery mechanism like a syringe). It should therefore be appreciated that the sterile slurry composition 106 is self-contained throughout the medical ice slurry production process thereby reducing a clinician's burden of maintaining the sterility of the slurry composition 106. Also, the production (i.e., the cooling and forming of the properly sized ice crystals) of the

sterile slurry composition 106 for the given medical application is substantially automated via controller 140, cooling device 134, and actuator 130 operating together.

[0069] Fig. 4 illustrates, in one non-limiting example, a sterile extraction syringe 200 configured to be coupled to the access port 118 for withdrawal of the sterile slurry composition 106. In some non-limiting examples, the access port 118 can include a rubber stopper, a shut off valve, and/or a luer lock with a removable sterile cover. The sterile extraction syringe 200 can include a needle (not shown) to facilitate injection of the sterile slurry composition 106 into the patient. In some non-limiting examples, the needle (not shown) can be 19 gauge or smaller. The agitator 108 can be structured to break up the ice crystals formed in the sterile slurry composition 106 into a size that corresponds with allowing the slurry to flow through a diameter of a needle on the sterile extraction syringe 200. In one non-limiting example, the ice-crystal size can be for example, less than approximately 1 mm or less than approximately 0.3 mm.

[0070] Turning to Fig. 5, in some non-limiting examples, the medical ice slurry production system 100 includes a syringe holder 300 coupled to the housing 104. In other non-limiting examples, the syringe holder 300 can be separate from the housing 104. The sterile extraction syringe 200 can be placed within the syringe holder 300 to insulate in the sterile slurry composition 106 within the sterile extraction syringe 200. In some non-limiting examples, the syringe holder 300 is actively cooled, for example, by coupling the syringe holder to the cooling device 134 to maintain the sterile slurry composition 106 within the sterile extraction syringe 200 at the desired slurry temperature. Alternatively or additionally, the syringe holder 300 can include an agitator to prevent separation of the sterile slurry composition 106 within the sterile extraction syringe 200 prior to injection. It should be known that the syringe holder 300 may be integrated into any configurations of the medical ice slurry production system 100 described herein.

[0071] As illustrated in Fig. 6, in some non-limiting examples, the disposable cartridge 102 includes one or more filters 400 arranged adjacent to the access port 118. The one or more filters 400 ensure that ice crystals of a desired size are

withdrawn by the sterile extraction syringe 200 and subsequently injected into the patient. In the illustrated non-limiting example, the one or more filters 400 includes a first filter 402, a second filter 404 and a third filter 406 where the second filter 404 is arranged between the first filter 402 and the third filter 406. The first filter 402 is configured to filter ice crystals with a first size. The second filter 404 is configured to filter ice crystals with a second size that is smaller than the first size, and the third filter 406 is configured to filter ice crystals with a third size that is smaller than the second size. As would be recognized by one of skill in the art, the ice crystal size filtered by the first, second, and third filters 402, 404, and 406 can be used to control a size of the ice crystals in the sterile slurry composition 106 injected into the patient. For example, in one non-limiting example, the first size is approximately 500 micrometers (μm), the second size is approximately 250 μm , and the third size is approximately 100 μm . In other non-limiting examples, the disposable cartridge 102 can include any number of filters 400 to filter any size ice crystals, as desired.

[0072] In another non-limiting example, the one or more filters 400 are instead arranged within the sterile extraction syringe 200, as illustrated in Fig. 7.

[0073] Figs. 8-11 illustrate additional non-limiting examples of the agitator 108 of disposable cartridge 102 that are operable with the actuator 130 to break up ice crystals and mix or agitate the sterile slurry composition 106. Fig. 8 illustrates agitator 108 without the fin 112 of Fig. 1. Fig. 9 illustrates agitator 108 including a plurality of ridged protrusions 700 arranged axially along the interior of the disposable cartridge 102. Each ridged protrusion 700 extends toward the agitator shaft 110 and fin 112 coupled thereto. The plurality of ridged protrusions 700 help facilitate the break-up of ice crystals in the sterile slurry composition 106 as well as the mixing of the sterile slurry composition 106.

[0074] Fig. 10 illustrates the agitator 108 including a plurality of blades 800 coupled to the agitator shaft 110. Blades 800 includes a plurality of tapered edges to facilitate breaking up the ice crystals and mixing the sterile slurry composition 106. The size of the ice crystals formed by rotating the blades 800 within the sterile slurry composition 106 can be controlled by the degree at which each blade edge is tapered

and/or a length of each blade 800. In one non-limiting example, each blade 800 can define a length that is between approximately 12.5% and 99% of a diameter defined by the disposable cartridge.

[0075] Fig. 11 illustrates the agitator 108 having a plurality of ridged bladed protrusions 900 arranged axially along the interior of disposable cartridge 102. The plurality of ridged bladed protrusions 900 each extend radially inwards. Here, the agitator shaft 110 is rigidly coupled to the first side 114 of the disposable cartridge 102 to enable the entire disposable cartridge 102 to be agitated in response to rotation or vibration provided by the actuator 130. It should be known that various combinations of one or more of each configuration of agitator 108 illustrated in Figs. 1 and 8-11 is within the scope of the present disclosure.

[0076] Fig. 12 illustrates another non-limiting example of disposable cartridge 102. As illustrated in Fig. 12, disposable cartridge 102 includes an additive port 1000 arranged in a second side 120 of the disposable cartridge 102. The additive port 1000 is structured and arranged to allow, for example, a therapeutic agent or microbubbles of therapeutic gasses, to be injected into sterile slurry composition 106 within the disposable cartridge 102 by for example an additive syringe 1002. The additive port 1000 can include, for example, a rubber stopper configured to be pierced by a needle, a shut off valve, and/or a luer lock mechanism with a removable sterile cover. Alternatively or additionally, the additive syringe 1002 can be used to inject a thermal agent into the sterile slurry composition 106 to facilitate the cyclical heating and cooling of the sterile slurry composition 106 so as to form smooth ice crystals suitable for injection into a patient.

[0077] Fig. 13 illustrates another non-limiting example of the medical ice slurry production system 100. The medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 13 is similar to the medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 1 except as described below or is apparent from the figures. Like components are identified with similar reference numerals. As illustrated in Fig. 13, the disposable cartridge 102 includes an access port 1100 arranged in the first side 114 of the disposable cartridge 102. The access port 1100 has an extending portion 1102 that fluidly connects the access

port 1100 to a pumping device 1104 supported by the housing 104. The illustrated pumping device 1104 integrated into the base 126 of the housing 104 and configured to furnish the sterile slurry composition 106 from the disposable cartridge 102. In other non-limiting examples, the pump device 1104 may be arranged remotely from the housing 104. The pump device 1104 in various examples can include a volumetric infusion pump or another pumping mechanism known in the art. The pump device 1104 can be coupled to the extending portion 1102 using for example, a luer lock connection with sterile removable cap, a rubber stopper configured to be pierced by a needle, and/or a shut off valve. The controller 140 is in communication with the pump device 1104, and is configured to selectively instruct the pump device 1104 to furnish the sterile slurry composition 106 from the disposable cartridge 102 for injection. The controller 140 is further configured to control a flow rate provided by the pump device 1104. In one non-limiting example, the pump device 1104 can be an infusion pump, a membrane pump, a peristaltic pump, a piston pump, a rotary vane pump or any other pump suitable for withdrawing a medical slurry composition from the disposable container. It should also be appreciated that in an alternative embodiment, port 1100 could fluidly communicate directly with another second port defined in the housing or communicate directly with the pump (i.e., without the extending portion 1102).

[0078] Fig. 14 illustrates, in one non-limiting example, the pump device 1104 operating with a disposable tube 1200 and a needle 1204. Needle 1204 can be removably coupled to the disposable tube 1200 via a needle coupling 1202. The disposable tube 1200 can be coupled to the pumping device 1104, for example, using a rubber stopper configured to be pierced by a needle, a luer lock connection with sterile removable cap, and/or a shut off valve. Operation of the medical ice slurry production system 100 of Figs. 13 and 14 is similar to the medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 1, except as described below or as is apparent from the figures. Once the sterile slurry composition 106 within the disposable cartridge 102 forms ice crystals (due to the composition being cooled to the desired temperature via cooling device 134) and the ice crystals are a desired size (due to the actuation of

agitator 108), needle 1204 can be injected into a patient at a treatment location. The controller 140 is then configured to instruct the pump device 1104 to pump the sterile slurry composition 106 into the patient at a desired flow rate for a pre-determined period of time. It should therefore be appreciated that the sterile slurry composition 106 is self-contained throughout the process thereby reducing the burden on an end user to maintain the sterility of the sterile slurry composition 106. Also, the production (i.e., the cooling and forming of the properly sized ice crystals) and delivery (i.e., injection) of the sterile slurry composition 106 for the given medical application is substantially automated by operation of controller 140, cooling device 134, actuator 130, and pump device 1104 together.

[0079] As illustrated in Fig. 15, in another non-limiting example, the pump device 1104 may be arranged inline with the disposable tube 1200 where the disposable tube 1104 threads through the pump device 1104. In this way, the pump device 1104 does not directly contact the pump device 1104.

[0080] In certain implementations, pumping devices 1104 can be configured to have a maximum allowable pressure tolerance at the end of the delivery or disposable tube 1200, or at the end of the delivery needle 1204 or a cannula. The pumping devices 1104 can also include adjustable constant-volume pumps, and be configured with user-specified stops that occur when a predefined volume of slurry has been delivered.

[0081] Figs. 16-19 illustrate additional non-limiting examples of the agitator 108 operable with the disposable cartridge 102. The agitator 108 and cartridge 102 illustrated in Figs. 16-19 are substantially the same as the agitator 108 and cartridge 102 illustrated in Figs. 8-11 and 13, 14, respectively, except that the extending portion 1102 (of port 1100) in cartridge 102 of Figs. 16 to 19 extends from a different side of the cartridge 102 towards side wall 124, and is generally horizontally oriented rather than vertically oriented as illustrated in Figs. 13 and 14.

[0082] Fig. 20 illustrates another non-limiting example of the medical ice slurry production system 100. The medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 20 is similar to the medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 1 except as described

below or as is apparent from the figures. Like components are identified with similar reference numerals. As illustrated in Fig. 20, the medical ice slurry production system 100 includes a disposable cartridge 1700 configured to be supported within the housing 104. The illustrated disposable cartridge 1700 is in the form of a sterile pre-filled syringe. The disposable cartridge 1700 is pre-filled with the sterile, non-frozen slurry composition 106. Pre-filling the disposable cartridge 1700 with the non-frozen, sterile slurry composition 106 ensures the sterile slurry composition 106 is self contained within a closed environment. This helps relieve an end user's burden of trying to maintain sterility of the slurry composition 106 while handling the disposable cartridge 1700. In some non-limiting examples, the disposable cartridge 1700 may be surrounded by insulation (not shown) to improve thermal stability.

[0083] The disposable cartridge 1700 can be fabricated from a plastic, glass, or metal material. The disposable cartridge 1700 can be dimensioned to hold a slurry volume between approximately one cubic centimeter (cc) and approximately one liter (L) depending on the medical application. The illustrated disposable cartridge 1700 is rotationally coupled to the agitator 108. The disposable cartridge 1700 is rotationally coupled to an agitator 1702. The agitator 1702 is similar in operation to the agitator 108 of Fig. 1, described above, except that the agitator 1702 is structured to be operable with disposable cartridge 1700. The agitator 1702 includes a agitator shaft 1704 and a fin 1706 arranged within the disposable cartridge 1700 and coupled to the agitator shaft 1704. Fin 1706 spirals lengthwise along agitator shaft 1704. The agitator shaft 1704 is received within the disposable cartridge 1700. The agitator shaft 1704 is rotationally sealed to a tapered tip 1708 of the disposable cartridge 1700 to allow rotation of the agitator shaft 1704 with respect to the disposable cartridge 1700 while maintaining a seal between the sterile slurry composition 106 and the surrounding environment. The agitator shaft 1704 can be rotationally sealed to the tapered tip 1708, for example, by utilizing, at least one of a sealed hydrostatic, a sealed hydrodynamic, a fluid bearing, and an o-ring.

[0084] The disposable cartridge 1700 includes an access port 1710 arranged in a distal end 1712 of the tapered tip 1708 and a plunger 1712. The access port 1710 is

structured and arranged to allow the medical ice slurry composition 106 to be injected from the disposable cartridge 1700 and injected into a patient. For example, access port 1710 can be configured for coupling to a needle. The plunger 1712 is slidably received within a second side 1714 of the disposable cartridge 1700 opposite to the tapered tip 1708. The plunger 1712 is configured to displace axially with respect to the disposable cartridge 1700 to inject the sterile slurry composition 106 within the disposable cartridge 1700.

[0085] Operation of the medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 20 is similar to the medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 1 except as described below or is apparent from the figures. Once the sterile slurry composition 106 within the disposable cartridge 1700 is cooled to the desired temperature via the cooling device 134, and includes ice crystals of the desired size due to the agitator 1702, the disposable cartridge 1704 is removed from the housing 104 and a needle is coupled to the tapered tip 1708 of the disposable cartridge 1700. Alternatively or additionally, the disposable cartridge 1700 may be placed within a syringe holder similar to the syringe holder 300 of Fig. 5 for safe storage prior to injection. The sterile slurry composition 106 is then injected into a patient at a treatment location. Thus, the sterile slurry composition 106 is self-contained throughout the medical ice slurry production process thereby reducing a clinician's burden of maintaining the sterility of the sterile slurry composition 106 during delivery and production. Again, the production (i.e., the cooling and forming of the properly sized ice crystals) of the sterile slurry composition 106 for the given medical application is substantially automated by operating the controller 140, the cooling device 134, and the actuator 130 together. Using disposable container 1700 to deliver the sterile composition 106 also negates the need to transfer the slurry composition 106 after production.

[0086] Figs. 21-28 illustrate additional non-limiting examples of the agitator 1702 of disposable cartridge 1700 being operable with the actuator 130 to break up ice crystals and mix the sterile slurry composition 106. As illustrated in Fig. 21, the agitator 108 includes a plurality of ridged protrusions 1800 arranged axially along the interior of the disposable cartridge 1700. The plurality of ridged protrusions 1800

each extend towards the agitator shaft 1704 and the fin 1706 coupled thereto. In operation, the rotation of the agitator shaft 1704 and thereby the fin 1706 rotate the fin 1706 past to the plurality of ridged protrusions 1800 to facilitate breaking up ice crystals and mixing the sterile slurry composition 106.

[0087] As illustrated in Fig. 22, the agitator 1702 includes a plurality of blades 1900 coupled to the agitator shaft 1704. The blades 1900 include a plurality of tapered edges to facilitate breaking up ice crystals and mixing the sterile slurry composition 106. Blades 800 includes a plurality of tapered edges to facilitate breaking up the ice crystals and mixing the sterile slurry composition 106. The size of the ice crystals formed by rotating the blades 800 within the sterile slurry composition 106 can be controlled by the degree at which each blade edge is tapered and/or a length of each blade 800. In one non-limiting example, each blade 800 can define a length that is between approximately 12.5% and 99% of a diameter defined by the disposable cartridge.

[0088] As illustrated in Fig. 23, the agitator 1702 comprises a plurality of ridged bladed protrusions 2000 arranged axially along the interior of the disposable cartridge 1700. The plurality of ridged bladed protrusions 2000 each extend radially inwards. In this non-limiting example, the agitator 1702 includes a cap 2002 that is configured to rigidly couple the tapered tip 1708 of the disposable cartridge 1700 and the actuator 130 to enable the entire disposable cartridge 1700 to be agitated in response to rotation and/or vibration provided by the actuator 130.

[0089] As illustrated in Fig. 24, the agitator 1702 includes a plurality of particles 2100 pre-filled in the disposable cartridge 1700 along with the sterile slurry composition 106. In this non-limiting example, the disposable cartridge 1700 is operable with the cap 2002, and the plurality of particles 2100 facilitate turbulent mixing and agitation within the disposable cartridge 1700 in response to rotation and/or vibration provided by the actuator 130. As illustrated in Fig. 25, the agitator 1702 comprises a plurality of blades 2200. Each of the plurality of blades 2200 includes a plurality of tapered edges to facilitate breaking up ice crystals and mixing the sterile slurry composition 106. A degree of the taper defined by the tapered edges

and/or a length defined by each of the plurality of blades 2200 can control a size of the ice crystals formed by rotating the plurality of blades 2200 within the sterile slurry composition 106. In one non-limiting example, the plurality of blades 2200 can define a length that is between approximately 12.5% and 99% of a diameter defined by the disposable cartridge. Additionally, each of the plurality of blades 2200 can be configured to counter-rotate with respect to one another.

[0090] As illustrated in Fig. 26, the agitator 1702 includes a paddle 2300 coupled to the agitator shaft 1704 for rotation therewith. As illustrated in Fig. 27, the agitator 1702 includes the paddle 2300 and a plurality of fins 2400 coupled to an interior surface of the paddle 2300. As illustrated in Fig. 28, the agitator 1702 includes a whisk 2500 coupled to the agitator shaft 1704 for rotation therewith. It should be known that various combinations of the configurations of the agitators 1702 illustrated in Figs. 20-28 are within the scope of the present disclosure.

[0091] As illustrated in Fig. 29, in one non-limiting example, the agitator 1702 is arranged on a side of the disposable cartridge 1700. In particular, the agitator shaft 1704 protrudes from a side of the disposable cartridge 1700 and includes a blade 1900 coupled to the agitator shaft 1704. It should be appreciated that, in this arrangement, the agitator 1702 may be in the form of any of the configurations of the agitator 1702 described herein. To correspond with this arrangement of the agitator 1702, the actuator 130 is arranged within a corresponding one of the side walls 124 of the housing 104. The actuator shaft 132 protrudes from the corresponding side wall 124 towards the agitator shaft 1704.

[0092] In another non-limiting example, each of the side walls 124 of the housing 104 may include a corresponding actuator 130 and actuator shaft 132, as illustrated in Fig. 30. This can enable the housing 104 to support a plurality of disposable cartridges 1700 and thereby produce a plurality of sterile slurry compositions 106 for injection into a patient.

[0093] As illustrated in Fig. 31, in another non-limiting example where the agitator 1702 is arranged on a side of the disposable cartridge 1700, the agitator 1702

may include a plurality of blades 2800 each configured to counter-rotate with respect to each other.

[0094] As illustrated in Fig. 32, in some non-limiting examples, the disposable cartridge 1700 includes one or more filters 2900 arranged adjacent to the access port 1710. The one or more filters 2900 ensure that ice crystals of a desired size are injected by the disposable cartridge 1700. In the illustrated non-limiting example, the one or more filters 2900 include a first filter 2902, a second filter 2904 and a third filter 2906, where the second filter 2904 is arranged between the first filter 2902 and the third filter 2906. The first filter 2902 is configured to filter ice crystals with a first size. The second filter 2904 is configured to filter ice crystals with a second size that is smaller than the first size, and the third filter 2906 is configured to filter ice crystals with a third size that is smaller than the second size. As would be recognized by one of ordinary skill in the art, the ice crystal size filtered by the first, second, and third filters 2902, 2904, and 2906 can be used to control a size of the ice crystals in the sterile slurry composition 106 injected into the patient. For example, in one non-limiting example, the first size is approximately 500 micrometers (μm), the second size is approximately 250 μm , and the third size is approximately 100 μm . In other non-limiting examples, the disposable cartridge 102 can include any number of filters 400 to filter any size ice crystals, as desired.

[0095] Fig. 33 illustrates another non-limiting example of the disposable cartridge 1700. As illustrated in Fig. 33, the disposable cartridge 1700 includes an additive port 3000 arranged in a side of the disposable cartridge 1700. The additive port 3000 is structured and arranged to allow an additive syringe 3002 to inject, for example, a therapeutic agent, into sterile slurry composition 106 within the disposable cartridge 1700. The access port 3000 can include, for example, a rubber stopper configured to be pierced by a needle, a luer lock connection with sterile removable cap, and/or a shut off valve. Alternatively or additionally, the additive syringe 3002 can be used to inject a thermal agent into the sterile slurry composition 106 to facilitate the cyclic heating and cooling of the sterile slurry composition 106 needed to form smooth ice crystals.

[0096] Fig. 34 illustrates another non-limiting example of the medical ice slurry production system 100. The medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 31 is similar to the medical ice slurry production systems 100 of Figs. 1 and 20 except as described below or as is apparent from the figures. Like components are identified with similar reference numerals. As illustrated in Fig. 34, the medical ice slurry production system 100 includes an agitator 3100 in the form of a liquid (e.g., exalcohol, isopropenyl, or ethanol) supported within the internal cavity 122 of the housing 104. The disposable cartridge 1700 is suspended in the agitator 3100 and includes a cap 3102 configured to provide a seal between the access port 1710 and the surrounding agitator 3100. An actuator 3104 in the form of an ultrasonic transducer is arranged around the disposable cartridge 1700. The actuator 3104 is configured to vibrate at an ultrasonic frequency. Ultrasonic waves generated by the actuator 3104 are transferred to the disposable cartridge 1700 by the agitator 3100 to facilitate the breaking of ice crystals formed in the sterile slurry formulation 106 into a desired ice crystal size. The controller 140 is in electrical communication with the actuator 3104 and configured to selectively instruct the actuator 3104 to generate ultrasonic waves carried by the agitator 3100. In operation, the controller 140 is configured to instruct the actuator 3104 to impart ultrasonic waves through the agitator 3100 until the ice crystals in the sterile slurry composition 106 define a desired size. In one non-limiting example, a length of time that the actuator 3104 imparts ultrasonic waves upon the disposable cartridge 1700 can be input to the controller 140. Alternatively or additionally, the controller 140 can be configured to vary a vibration frequency of the actuator 3104 to control a size of the ice crystals within the sterile slurry composition 106.

[0097] Fig. 35 illustrates another non-limiting example of the medical ice slurry production system 100. The medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 35 is similar to the medical ice slurry production systems 100 of Figs. 1 and 20 except as described below or as is apparent from the figures. Like components are identified with similar reference numerals. As illustrated in Fig. 35, the medical ice slurry production system 100 includes an agitator 3200 having a mechanical linkage 3202

supported within the internal cavity 122 of the housing 104. The mechanical linkage 3202 is configured to removably couple the disposable cartridge 1700 to the linkage. Mechanical linkage 3202 of agitator 3200 is coupled to actuator shaft 132 of the actuator 130 to facilitate rotation and/or vibration of the mechanical linkage 3202 and thereby the disposable cartridge 1700. In operation, an end user places the disposable cartridge 1700 within the internal cavity 122 of the housing 104 such that the disposable cartridge 1700 is coupled to the mechanical linkage 3202. The mechanical linkage 3202 is rotated and/or vibrated by the actuator 130 to break up ice crystals formed during production of the sterile slurry composition 106 prior to injection.

[0098] Fig. 36 illustrates another non-limiting example of the medical ice slurry production system 100. The medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 33 is similar to the medical ice slurry production systems 100 of Figs. 1 and 20 except as described below or is apparent from the figures. Like components are identified with similar reference numerals. As illustrated in Fig. 36, the medical ice slurry production system 100 includes a cartridge support 3300 that defines a generally cylindrical shape. The cartridge support 3300 is configured to removably couple to one or more disposable cartridges 1700. The cartridge support 3300 is coupled to the actuator shaft 132 of the actuator 130 to facilitate movement and/or rotation of the cartridge support 3300 in one or more of an x- direction, a y-direction, and a z- direction. The illustrated disposable cartridges 1700 includes the agitator 1702 having the plurality of ridged bladed protrusions 2000 arranged axially along the interior of the disposable cartridge 1700, as shown in Fig. 23. It should be appreciated that alternative configurations of agitation described herein may be implemented in this non-limiting example.

[0099] The movement imparted on the agitator by the actuator 130 and thereby the disposable cartridge 1700 breaks up the ice crystals formed in the sterile slurry composition 106 prior to injection. It would be appreciated that in order to properly balance the agitator 3300 during movement, the disposable cartridges 1700 should be coupled to the agitator 3300 in opposing pairs.

[00100] Fig. 37 illustrates another non-limiting example of the medical ice slurry production system 100. The medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 37 is similar to the medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 1 except as described below or is apparent from the figures. Like components are identified with similar reference numerals. As illustrated in Fig. 37, the medical ice slurry production system 100 includes a disposable cartridge 3400 configured to be supported within the housing 104. The illustrated disposable cartridge 3400 is in the form of a sterile pre-filled compressible bag. In some non-limiting examples, the disposable cartridge 3400 is an intravenous (IV) bag. The disposable cartridge 3400 is pre-filled with the sterile slurry composition 106. Pre-filling the disposable cartridge 3400 with the sterile slurry composition 106 ensures the sterile slurry composition 106 is self contained within a closed environment. This helps relieve an end user's burden of trying to maintain sterility of the slurry composition 106 while handling the disposable cartridge 3400. In some non-limiting examples, the disposable cartridge 3400 may be surrounded by insulation (not shown) to improve thermal stability.

[00101] The disposable cartridge 3400 can be dimensioned to hold a slurry volume between approximately one cubic centimeter (cc) and approximately one liter (L) depending on the medical application. The illustrated disposable cartridge 3400 includes an access port 3402 fluidly coupled to a pump device 3404. The pump device 3404 is similar in configuration and operation to the pump device 1104 of Fig. 13. That is, the controller 140 is in communication with the pump device 3404 and is configured to selectively instruct the pump device 3404 to pump the sterile slurry composition 106 from the disposable cartridge 3400 for injection. The controller 140 is further configured to control a flow rate provided by the pump device 3404. In one non-limiting example, the pump device 3404 can be an infusion pump or any other pump described herein. Additionally, the pump device 3402 can be coupled to a disposable tube and needle to enable injection into a patient, as shown in Fig. 14.

[00102] In certain implementations, pumping device 3404, like pumping device 1104, can be configured to have a maximum allowable pressure tolerance at the end of a delivery or disposable tube, or at the end of a delivery needle or cannula. The

pumping devices 3404 can also include adjustable constant-volume pumps, and be configured with user-specified stops that occur when a predefined volume of slurry has been delivered.

[00103] The illustrated agitator 3406 and actuator 3408 are similar to the agitator 3100 and 3104 of Fig. 34. That is, the actuator 3408 is configured to produce ultrasonic vibrations that are carried through the agitator 3406 to the disposable container 3400 to break up the ice crystals in the sterile slurry composition 106 prior to injection.

[00104] As illustrated in Fig. 38, in another non-limiting example, the disposable cartridge 3400 is coupled to an agitator 3500. The agitator 3500 includes an agitator shaft 3502 coupled to a plurality of blades 3504 arranged within the disposable cartridge 3400. The agitator shaft 3502 is coupled to the actuator shaft 132 to enable the blades 3504 to rotate within the disposable cartridge 3400 and break up ice crystals formed in the sterile slurry composition 106 to a desired size.

[00105] In yet another non-limiting example, the disposable cartridge 3400 is operable with an agitator 3600, as illustrated in Fig. 39. The agitator 3600 includes a pair of opposing supports 3602 each coupled to an actuator 3604 arranged in a corresponding one of the side walls 124 of the housing 104. The pair of opposing supports 3202 are each configured to be movable to compress the disposable cartridge 3400 and to supply agitation to break up ice crystals formed in the sterile slurry composition 106. In operation, the controller 140 is configured to apply agitation to the disposable cartridge 3400 via one or more agitators 3606 coupled to the actuators 3604. Once the sterile slurry composition 106 reaches the desired temperature and includes ice crystals of the desired size, the controller 140 is configured to instruct the actuators 3604 to displace to compress the disposable cartridge 3400 and thereby force the sterile slurry composition 106 through the access port 3402 for injection into the patient.

[00106] Fig. 40 illustrates another non-limiting example of the medical ice slurry production system 100. The medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 40 is similar to the medical ice slurry production systems 100 of Figs. 1 and 20 except as

described below or is apparent from the figures. Like components are identified with similar reference numerals. As shown in Fig. 40, the medical ice slurry production system 100 includes a first cooling passage 3702 coupled to a first cooling device 3700 and a second cooling passage 3706 coupled to a second cooling device 3706. The first cooling passage 3702 is arranged within the sides 124 of the housing to provide cooling to a first cavity 3710 arranged within the housing 104. The second cooling passage 3708 is arranged within the sides 124 of the housing 104 to provide cooling to a second cavity 3712 arranged within the housing 104.

[00107] The medical ice slurry production system 100 includes a disposable cartridge 3714. The disposable cartridge 3714 includes a first syringe chamber 3716, a second syringe chamber 3718, and a microdroplet device 3720 arranged between the first syringe chamber 3716 and the second syringe chamber 3718. When placed in the housing 104, the first syringe chamber 3716 is arranged within the first cavity 3710, and the second syringe chamber 3718 is arranged within the second cavity 3718. The first syringe chamber 3716 is pre-filled with a sterile first liquid 3722, a sterile second liquid 3724, and a collapsible separator 3726 arranged between the first liquid 3722 and the second liquid 3724. The second liquid 3724 is arranged adjacent to the microdroplet device 3720. A plunger 3728 is slidably received within the first syringe chamber 3716 and configured to inject the first liquid 3722 and thereby the second liquid 3724 (liquids are substantially incompressible) towards the second syringe chamber 3718.

[00108] In operation, the controller 140 controls the first cooling device 3700 to maintain the first cavity 3710 at a cool temperature (e.g., approximately 2°C) and controls the second cooling device 3706 to maintain the second cavity 3712 at a temperature substantially below freezing (e.g., -100°C). Once the desired temperatures are achieved in the first and second cavities 3710 and 3712, the plunger 3728 is displaced to inject the second liquid 3724 through the microdroplet device 3720 and into the second chamber 3718. The microdroplet device 3720 and the freezing temperature of the second cavity 3712 enable the formation of ice crystals of a desired size (controlled by the microdroplet device 3720) in the second syringe

cavity 3718. Next, the collapsible separator 3726 is crushed, or displaced, to enable the first liquid 3722 to fall into the second syringe chamber 3718 thereby suspending the previously formed ice crystals in the first liquid 3722 (i.e., producing a sterile slurry composition at a desired temperature with ice crystals of a desired size). The sterile slurry mixture formed is then able to be injected into a patient.

[00109] Fig. 41 illustrates one non-limiting example of the medical ice slurry production system 100. The medical ice slurry production system 100 of Fig. 41 is similar to the medical ice slurry production systems 100 of Fig. 40 except as described below or is apparent from the figures. Like components are identified with similar reference numerals. As illustrated in Fig. 41, the first syringe chamber 3716 includes an ice tray 3800 arranged therein, and the second syringe chamber 3718 is pre-filled with a first liquid 3802. The ice tray 3800 can be fabricated from a flexible material. As illustrated in Fig. 42, the ice tray 3800 defines a plurality of ice cavities 3900 each pre-filled with liquid 3902 and dimensioned to form an ice crystal of a desired size and shape.

[00110] In operation, the controller 140 controls the first cooling device 3700 to maintain the first cavity 3710 at a freezing temperature (e.g., approximately -20°C) and controls the second cooling device 3706 to maintain the second cavity 3712 at a warmer temperature (e.g., 2°C). Once the desired temperatures are achieved in the first and second cavities 3710 and 3712 and the ice crystals have formed in the ice tray 3800, the ice tray 3800 is inverted (Fig. 42) to release the formed ice crystals 3902 from their respective ice cavities 3900. When released, the ice crystals 3902 fall into the second syringe chamber 3718 thereby suspending the previously formed ice crystals in the first liquid 3802 (i.e., producing a sterile slurry composition at a desired temperature with ice crystals of a desired size). The sterile slurry mixture formed is then able to be agitated, if desired, and injected into a patient. In certain embodiments, the first liquid 3802 can include saline, lactated ringers, or a solution to make an emulsion, which is generally a fine dispersion of insoluble droplets or particles.

[00111] In each of the embodiments discussed above, it should also be appreciated that the temperature inside the medical ice slurry mixing chamber, (e.g., any of the canisters or disposable cartridges described herein) can be equilibrated with any one or more of the cooling devices, liquids or gases discussed herein so as to provide a uniformly cooled medical ice slurry. For example, referring to the systems of Figs. 1-3, these systems can be configured such that the temperature inside the cartridge 102 equilibrates with the cooling liquid or gas in the passageways or coils 136, or the cooling liquid or gas in cavity 122.

[00112] Thus, while the invention has been described above in connection with particular embodiments and examples, the invention is not necessarily so limited, and that numerous other embodiments, examples, uses, modifications and departures from the embodiments, examples and uses are intended to be encompassed by the claims attached hereto. The entire disclosure of each patent and publication cited herein is incorporated by reference, as if each such patent or publication were individually incorporated by reference herein.

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A medical ice slurry production system comprising:
 - a disposable cartridge holding a non-frozen, sterile medical slurry composition, such that the sterile medical slurry composition is self-contained within a closed environment;
 - a housing supporting the disposable cartridge, the housing including an actuator and defining an internal cavity dimensioned to receive the disposable cartridge;
 - a cooling device operable with the housing to cool the non-frozen slurry composition held in the disposable cartridge to a temperature sufficient to form ice crystals in the medical slurry composition inside the disposable cartridge;
 - an agitator operable with the actuator of the housing to agitate the medical slurry composition such that the ice crystals are reduced to a size sufficient to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be delivered to a patient through an end of a needle; and
 - an access port structured and arranged to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be withdrawn or injected from the disposable cartridge, while maintaining the sterility of the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals;
 - wherein the access port is defined in the disposable cartridge; and
 - wherein the disposable cartridge is closed.
2. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, wherein the disposable cartridge includes one of a syringe or a canister.
3. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, wherein the access port is structured and arranged to allow a syringe to engage the access port and withdraw the slurry composition.
4. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, wherein the agitator includes at least one of a vibrating device or a rotating device.

5. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, wherein the agitator includes a rotating device structured and arranged to rotate back and forth.
6. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, wherein the agitator is attached to the disposable cartridge.
7. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, wherein the agitator is attached to the actuator supported by the housing.
8. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, wherein the actuator includes a motor structured and arranged to cause the agitator to agitate the medical slurry composition inside the disposable container such that ice crystals inside the disposable cartridge are reduced to a size sufficient to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be delivered through an end of a needle for injecting the medical slurry composition into a patient.
9. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, wherein the cooling device includes at least one of standard refrigeration, magnetic refrigeration, electrical cooling, or chemical cooling.
10. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, wherein at least one of (i) a luer lock with a shut-off, (ii) a pressure valve, (iii) a quick disconnect, (iv) a one-way valve with luer lock, and (v) a sterile rubber stopper is operable with the access port to selectively allow the sterile medical slurry composition to be withdrawn from the disposable cartridge through the access port.
11. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, wherein the reduced ice crystals are less than approximately one millimeter.

12. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, wherein the actuator is operable to rotate the agitator at a rotational speed between approximately 1000 revolutions per minute and 45000 revolutions per minute.

13. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, wherein the agitator includes one or more blades each sized to define a length between approximately 12.5% and approximately 99% of a diameter of the disposable cartridge.

14. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, further comprising:
a pump operable to pump the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals out of the access port of the disposable cartridge through a disposable delivery tube, while maintaining the sterility of the medical slurry composition including the reduce ice crystals.

15. A method for producing a medical ice slurry, the-method comprising:
placing, in a housing, the housing including an actuator and defining an internal cavity dimensioned to receive a disposable cartridge, the disposable cartridge holding a non-frozen, sterile medical slurry composition, such that the sterile medical slurry composition is self-contained within a closed environment;
while placed in the housing, cooling, using a cooling device operable with the housing, the disposable cartridge to a temperature sufficient to form ice crystals in the medical slurry composition inside the disposable cartridge, and
agitating, using the agitator operable with the actuator of the housing, the medical slurry composition held in the disposable cartridge such that the ice crystals inside the disposable cartridge are reduced to a size sufficient to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be delivered to a patient through an end of a needle through an access port defined in the disposable cartridge,
wherein the access port is structured and arranged to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be withdrawn or injected from the disposable cartridge, while maintaining the sterility of the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals, and

wherein the disposable cartridge is closed.

16. The method of claim 15, which includes withdrawing the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals from the disposable cartridge while maintaining the sterility of the medical slurry composition.

17. The method of claim 15, which includes pumping the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals from the disposable cartridge while maintaining the sterility of the medical slurry composition.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein agitating includes causing an actuator to agitate the medical slurry composition such that the ice crystals inside the disposable cartridge are reduced to a size sufficient to allow the medical slurry composition including the reduced ice crystals to be delivered to a patient through an end of a needle.

19. The medical ice slurry production system of claim 1, wherein the disposable cartridge is in the form of a sterile canister, a sterile compressible bag, or an intravenous bag.