## CLAIMS

1. A topical formulation comprising at least one alpha connexin polypeptide and hydroxyethylcellulose gel, wherein the hydroxyethylcellulose gel stabilizes the alpha connexin polypeptide.

2. The topical formulation of claim 1, wherein the hydroxyethylcellulose gel stabilizes the alpha connexin polypeptide so that after 3 months of storage at 5°C at least 98% of the alpha connexin polypeptide is detectable by analytical methods.

3. The topical formulation of claim 1, wherein the hydroxyethylcellulose gel stabilizes the alpha connexin polypeptide so that after 3 months of storage at 5°C at least 95% of the alpha connexin polypeptide is detectable by analytical methods.

4. The topical formulation of claim 1, wherein the hydroxyethylcellulose is present at a concentration of about 1.25% (w/w).

5. The topical formulation of claim 1, wherein the at least one alpha connexin polypeptide is present at a concentration of between about 0.005% (w/w) and about 1.00% (w/w).

6. The topical formulation of claim 1 further comprising a buffering agent that maintains the pH of the topical formulation between about 5 and about 7.

7. The topical formulation of claim 6, wherein the buffering agent is a phosphate buffer.

8. The topical formulation of claim 1, wherein the at least one alpha connexin polypeptide comprises the carboxy-terminal most 4 to 30 contiguous amino acids of an alpha connexin protein or conservative variant thereof.

9. The topical formulation of claim 8, wherein said at least one alpha connexin polypeptide is linked at its amino terminus to a cellular internalization transporter.

10. The topical formulation of claim 9, wherein the cellular internalization transporter is an antennapedia sequence.

11. The topical formulation of claim 8, wherein the at least one alpha connexin polypeptidecomprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 9.

12. The topical formulation of claim 8, wherein the alpha connexin polypeptide is connexin 37, connexin 40, connexin 43, or connexin 45.

13. A method of wound treatment comprising administering the topical formulation of claim 1 to a subject in need thereof.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the wound is an acute surgical wound.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein the wound is a chronic, non-infected, full-thickness lower extremity ulcer.

16. A method of manufacturing a topical formulation comprising:

a) mixing propylene glycol, glycerin, methylparaben and propylparaben until the parabens are completely dissolved;

b) separately mixing purified water, EDTA, monobasic sodium phosphate, dibasic sodium phosphate and D-mannitol until a clear solution is obtained;

c) adding the solution from a) to the solution from b), rinsing the container of the solution from a) with purified water, adding the rinse to the combined solutions, and mixing until the combined solutions are visually homogeneous;

d) with homogenization mixing, adding hydroxyethyl cellulose into the combined

solutions of c) and mixing until the polymer is fully dispersed;

e) separately mixing purified water with an alpha connexin polypeptide until the peptide is completely dissolved;

f) adding the solution from e) to the solution of d), rinsing the container of the solution from e) with purified water, adding the rinse to the combined solutions, and mixing until the combined solution are homogeneous.

## CLAIMS

1. A topical formulation comprising at least one alpha connexin polypeptide and hydroxyethylcellulose gel, wherein the hydroxyethylcellulose gel stabilizes the alpha connexin polypeptide.

2. The topical formulation of claim 1, wherein the hydroxyethylcellulose gel stabilizes the alpha connexin polypeptide so that after 3 months of storage at 5°C at least 98% of the alpha connexin polypeptide is detectable by analytical methods.

3. The topical formulation of claim 1, wherein the hydroxyethylcellulose gel stabilizes the alpha connexin polypeptide so that after 3 months of storage at 5°C at least 95% of the alpha connexin polypeptide is detectable by analytical methods.

4. The topical formulation of claim 1, wherein the hydroxyethylcellulose is present at a concentration of about 1.25% (w/w).

5. The topical formulation of claim 1, wherein the at least one alpha connexin polypeptide is present at a concentration of between about 0.005% (w/w) and about 1.00% (w/w).

6. The topical formulation of claim 1 further comprising a buffering agent that maintains the pH of the topical formulation between about 5 and about 7.

7. The topical formulation of claim 6, wherein the buffering agent is a phosphate buffer.

8. The topical formulation of claim 1, wherein the at least one alpha connexin polypeptide comprises the carboxy-terminal most 4 to 30 contiguous amino acids of an alpha connexin protein or conservative variant thereof.

9. The topical formulation of claim 8, wherein said at least one alpha connexin polypeptide is linked at its amino terminus to a cellular internalization transporter.

10. The topical formulation of claim 9, wherein the cellular internalization transporter is an antennapedia sequence.

11. The topical formulation of claim 8, wherein the at least one alpha connexin polypeptide comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 9.

12. The topical formulation of claim 8, wherein the alpha connexin polypeptide is connexin 37, connexin 40, connexin 43, or connexin 45.

13. A method of manufacturing a topical formulation comprising:

a) mixing propylene glycol, glycerin, methylparaben and propylparaben until the parabens are completely dissolved;

b) separately mixing purified water, EDTA, monobasic sodium phosphate, dibasic sodium phosphate and D-mannitol until a clear solution is obtained;

c) adding the solution from a) to the solution from b), rinsing the container of the solution from a) with purified water, adding the rinse to the combined solutions, and mixing until the combined solutions are visually homogeneous;

d) with homogenization mixing, adding hydroxyethyl cellulose into the combined solutions of c) and mixing until the polymer is fully dispersed;

e) separately mixing purified water with an alpha connexin polypeptide until the peptide is completely dissolved;

f) adding the solution from e) to the solution of d), rinsing the container of the solution from e) with purified water, adding the rinse to the combined solutions, and mixing until the combined solution are homogeneous.

14. The topical formulation of claim 1 for use in the treatment of an acute or chronic wound.

15. The topical formulation of claim 14, wherein the wound is an acute surgical wound.

16. The topical formulation of claim 14, wherein the chronic wound is an ulcer.

17. The topical formulation of claim 16, wherein the acute or chronic wound is selected from the group consisting of venous leg ulcers, diabetic foot ulcers, and pressure ulcers.

18. The topical formulation of claim 14, wherein the wound is a chronic, non-infected, full-thickness lower extremity ulcer.

19. The use of a topical formulation according to claim 1 in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of an acute or chronic wound.

20. The use of claim 19, wherein the wound is an acute surgical wound.

21. The use of claim 19, wherein the chronic wound is an ulcer.

22. The use of claim 21, wherein the acute or chronic wound is selected from the group consisting of venous leg ulcers, diabetic foot ulcers, and pressure ulcers.

23. The use of claim 19, wherein the wound is a chronic, non-infected, full-thickness lower extremity ulcer.