Coatings, devices and methods are provided, wherein the contacting surface of a medical device with at least one contacting surface for contacting a bodily fluid or tissue is modified by plasma treatment in a plasma including nitrogen-containing molecules and oxygen-containing molecules and by application of a biologically compatible coating, preferably by plasma treatment in a plasma including polymerized hydrocyclosiloxane monomers. The nitrogen-containing molecules include NH₃, (NH₂)₂, N₂O, NO, NO₂ and N₂O₃, and the oxygen-containing molecules include O₂ and O₃. The plasma-modified contacting surface exhibits decreased adhesion of at least some mammalian cells, such as platelets and leukocytes, decreased restenosis when used with stents, and increased apoptosis. Additional layers may be applied, including amine-providing groups such as N-trimethylsilyl-allylamine, polyoxyalkylene tethers, and bioactive compounds.
FIG. 1
FIG. 2

**Graph:**

- **Y-axis:** Number of Leukocytes/Field
- **X-axis:** Type of Gas Plasma
  - none
  - oxygen
  - ammonia
  - ammonia/oxygen

**Legend:**

- Error bars indicate standard deviation.
- *p* < 0.01
FIG. 3

The diagram shows a bar chart comparing the number of apoptotic cells per 100 cells between 'no treatment' and 'plasma' treatments. The plasma treatment results in a significantly higher number of apoptotic cells, indicated by the p-value of less than 0.001.
FIG. 4
FIG. 6
PLASMA-DEPOSITED COATINGS, DEVICES AND METHODS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/746,234, entitled PLASMA-DEPOSITED COATINGS, DEVICES AND METHODS, filed on Dec. 21, 2000, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,613,432, issued Sep. 2, 2003.

This application claims the benefit of the filing of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/171,844, entitled METHOD AND COATING TO INHIBIT RESTENOSIS, to Paul O. Zamora, Shigemasa Osaki and Meng Chen, filed on Dec. 22, 1999, and of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/221,646, entitled PLASMA DEPOSITION OF BIOACTIVE NITROGEN-CONTAINING AGENTS APPLICATIONS AND METHODS, to Paul O. Zamora, Shigemasa Osaki and Meng Chen, filed on Jul. 28, 2000, and the specifications of both are incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention (Technical Field)

This invention relates to applications and methods for plasma treatment of coatings for enhanced biocompatible properties for implanted medical devices, including decreased restenosis and decreased adhesion of cells, such as platelets and leukocytes. The invention further relates to coated medical devices and methods, which include plasma-deposited nitrogen-containing and oxygen-containing coatings, and one or more additional coatings, including siloxane-containing coatings, polyethylene glycol-containing coatings and dextran-containing coatings.

2. Background Art

Note that the following discussion refers to a number of publications by author(s) and year of publication, and that due to recent publication dates certain publications are not to be considered as prior art as of the present invention. Discussion of such publications herein is given for more complete background and is not to be construed as an admission that such publications are prior art for patentability determination purposes.

There is a need for coatings and surfaces of medical devices that limit or inhibit restenosis and attachment of cells, particularly attachment of platelets, leukocytes and similar cells. Medical devices, particularly implantable medical devices, frequently result in platelet attachment leading to thrombosis, leukocyte attachment leading to inflammation, and aberrant cellular ingrowth leading to fibrosis and related conditions. For example, restenosis is a common problem following stent placement, involving overpopulation by smooth muscle cells with consequent re-narrowing of the lumen of the blood vessel. With stents and other blood-contacting medical devices, including catheters and similar devices, attachment of platelets and leukocytes is a significant problem. Substantial effort has been devoted to finding materials, coatings, surfactants, drugs and other substances that will inhibit either restenosis or attachment of cells.

Implantable medical devices are used for a wide variety of purposes. Thus devices such as stents, shunts, catheters, prosthetic heart valves, pacemakers, pulse generators, cardiac defibrillators, and similar devices and components are used in the treatment of cardiovascular and other diseases. A variety of screws, anchors, plates, joints and similar devices are used in orthopedic surgery. Catheters, drains, shunts, leads, stimulators, sensors, seeds, inductors and other devices are used in a wide variety of applications. These implantable medical devices are made from a wide variety of materials, including metals, plastics and various polymeric materials.

A large number of coatings have been explored for use with implantable medical devices to improve the biocompatibility or otherwise improve the in vivo behavior of the implant. U.S. Pat. No. 5,338,770 describes methods and materials for coating biomedical devices and implants with poly (ethylene oxide) chains suitable for covalent attachment of bioactive molecules intended to counteract blood-material incompatibility. U.S. Pat. No. 5,463,010 describes membranes, including polymerized aliphatic hydrocyllosoxane monomers, for use in coating biomedical devices and implants, and suitable for use as a substrate for covalent attachment of other molecules. U.S. Pat. No. 5,824,049 describes multiple-layer coatings, providing for controlled release of a drug or other bioactive materials through a porous layer. U.S. Pat. No. 6,017,577 describes a polyurethane hydrogel coating for use in medical devices. These and a number of other references known in the art provide for some form of coating, and optionally a specific bioactive layer or coating, for use in improving biocompatibility. However, none of these methods or compositions has addressed all of the problems encountered with implantable medical devices, such as restenosis with stents and attachment of platelets and leukocytes, and none have resulted in widespread commercial and industrial acceptance.

There has been interest in use of a variety of substances in medical device coatings to decrease restenosis, cellular attachment or provide other biomedical benefits. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 6,087,479 discloses coatings, such as a nylon or plastic matrix coating, for use with nitric oxide adducts, such as sodium nitroprusside, and U.S. Pat. No. 5,665,077 discloses polymeric coatings with nitroso compounds. A number of articles in the scientific literature disclose related methods, for example, see Mowery K et al: Preparation and characterization of hydrophobic polymeric films that are thromboresistant via nitric oxide release. Biomaterials 2000; 21:9-21; and Sly M K et al: Inhibition of surface-induced platelet activation by nitric oxide. ASAHO J 1995 41:M394-8.

A recognized problem with stents, and particularly coated stents, is that the coating itself induces an inflammatory response or a thrombogenic response, either of which can lead to unwanted biological consequences. Furthermore, both inflammatory responses and thrombogenic responses appear to be implicated in restenosis that these responses elicit local production or secretion of growth factors, leading to restenosis. A large number of agents have been investigated, used both systemically and locally, to overcome these responses. Tranilast is one such agent, and is a small molecule with a number of biological actions. It is used in Japan as an anti-allergy drug and acts as an anti-inflammatory on mast cells. It also inhibits arterial
smooth muscle cell proliferation and migration in vitro and restenosis in vivo. It is currently under evaluation in clinical trials as a systemic agent to limit restenosis following balloon angioplasty. Paclitaxel (taxol) has also been described as having a beneficial effect following local administration, including when used in a stent coating (Herdeg et al. Semin Interv Cardiol 1999, 3:197-9; Baum bach et al., Catheter Cardiovasc Interv 1999, 47:102-6). Also, local administration of a glycoprotein Ib/IIa receptor antagonist or anti-thrombin agent stents reportedly reduced platelet deposition in coronary arteries (Santos et al. Am J Cardiol 1998, 82:673-5; A; Kruse Catheter Cardiovasc Interv 1999, 46:503-7). Intramural delivery of a specific tyrosine kinase inhibitor with a biodegradable stent reportedly suppressed restenotic changes of the coronary artery in pigs in vivo (Yamawaki et al J Am Coll Cardiol 1998, 32:780-6). Also, dexamethasone has been delivered locally with stents (Lincoff et al. J Am Coll Cardiol 1997, 29:808-16; Strecker Cardiovasc Intervent Radiol 1998, 21(6): 487-96).

Plasma processes have been used in manufacture of medical devices, primarily for use in surface cleaning and preparation methods (Aronsson et al., J Biomed Mat Res 1997, 35:49-73). However, plasma processes have also been used to introduce groups, such as amine groups, into a surface, as described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,338,770. That patent describes a method of introduction of amine groups using ammonia gas in the plasma chamber at a flow rate of 190 micromoles per second at 170 mTorr absolute pressure, with the target, hollow fibers, exposed to 180 watts at a radio frequency of 13.56 MHz for fifteen minutes. Plasma processes have also been used to introduce various coatings and polymeric groups, as described generally in U.S. Pat. No. 5,463,010 (hydrocyclosiloxane membrane), U.S. Pat. No. 5,336,518 (heptafuorobutylmethacrylate membrane), U.S. Pat. No. 5,962,138 (plasma film layers of various monomers), and other references. However, none of these processes have demonstrated both reduced restenosis and decreased attachment of cells such as platelets and leukocytes when used in vivo.

Thus it would be desirable to provide coatings for surfaces of medical devices which exhibit decreased restenosis and decreased attachment of cells. In particular, it would be desirable to provide methods for preparing and fabricating devices and substrates for treating or preventing hyperplasia, inflammation, thrombosis, and other disease conditions. The methods should be useful with both permanently implanted devices, such as vascular stents, grafts, and coils, as well as temporarily implanted devices, such as catheters, wires, pellets, and the like. The fabrication methods should be convenient, economical, and efficacious.

However, notwithstanding the work that has been done, a simple and reliable method of causing stents, catheters and other medical devices to inhibit cellular attachment, and in the case of stents and other devices within a blood vessel, to inhibit restenosis, has still not been demonstrated. This invention addresses that specific need.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION
(DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION)

The invention provides an implantable medical device with a plasma-modified surface, which medical device has at least one contacting surface for contacting a bodily fluid or tissue, wherein the contacting surface is modified by plasma treatment in a plasma including nitrogen-containing molecules and oxygen-containing molecules. In one embodiment, the nitrogen-containing molecules may comprise no more than six atoms, and preferably four or fewer atoms. The nitrogen-containing molecules may include NH₂, NH₃, N₂O, NO, NO₂ and N₂O₄. The oxygen-containing molecules may include O₂ and O₃. The plasma treatment with the nitrogen-containing molecules and the oxygen-containing molecules may be simultaneous. In the device, the plasma-modified contacting surface exhibits decreased adhesion of at least some mammalian cells, compared to a similar contacting surface that is not plasma-modified. The mammalian cells may be platelets or leukocytes.

The medical device may be a stent wherein at least one contacting surface includes at least the lumen of the stent. The plasma-modified contacting surface comprising the lumen of the stent exhibits decreased restenosis subsequent to placement in a blood vessel, compared to a similar stent that is not plasma-modified.

The plasma treatment is for less than about five minutes, preferably for less than about two minutes, more preferably for less than about one minute, and most preferably for between about thirty seconds and about one minute.

In one embodiment, the plasma treatment is of a plasma wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are NH₃ and the oxygen-containing molecules are O₂. The mass flow rate during plasma treatment with each of NH₃ and O₂ is between a ratio of about 1.5:1 and about 1:1.5. In an alternative embodiment, the plasma treatment is of a plasma wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are N₂O and the oxygen-containing molecules are O₂. The mass flow rate during plasma treatment with each of N₂O and O₂ is between a ratio of about 1.5:1 and about 1:1.5.

The medical devices of this invention include stents, catheters, balloons, shunts, valves, pacemakers, pulse generators, cardiac defibrillators, spinal stimulators, brain stimulators, sacral nerve stimulators, leads, inducers, sensors, seeds, screws, anchors, plates and joints. The at least one contacting surface may be a metallic material, or may be a polymeric material. If it is a polymeric material, it may be biodegradable.

The device can further include a biologically compatible coating deposited over the plasma

including nitrogen-containing molecules and oxygen-containing molecules. In one embodiment, the biologically compatible coating is a membrane formed from the plasma polymerization of hydrocyclosiloxane monomer of the general formula:

wherein R is an aliphatic group having 1 to about 5 carbon atoms and n is an integer from 2 to
about 10. This hydrocyclosiloxane monomer may be 1,3,5,7-tetramethylhydrocyclotetrasiloxane, 1,3,5,7,9-pentamethylhydrocyclopentasiloxane, 1,3,5,7,9,11-hexamethylhydrocyclohexasiloxane, or a mixture of 1,3,5,7,9-pentamethylhydrocyclopentasiloxane and 1,3,5,7,11-hexamethylcyclodecasiloxane monomers.

[0023] In an alternative embodiment, the biocompatible coating may be a polymer or co-polymer, such as poly acrylate, poly bisphenol A carbonate, polybutadiene, polycarbonate, poly butylene terephthalate, poly butyl methacrylate, polydimethyl siloxane, polyester, polyethyleneimine, poly methyl methacrylate, polypropylene, polysulfone, polyurethane, poly vinyl, poly vinyl acetate poly lactide, poly glycolide, polycaprolactone, or polyvinylidene fluoride.

[0024] The invention further consists of a coating for an implantable medical device with at least one contacting surface for contacting a bodily fluid or tissue, which coating includes a first layer on the contacting surface that includes the product of plasma treatment with a plasma comprising nitrogen-containing molecules and oxygen-containing molecules. The coating may further include a second layer coated over the first layer, which second layer includes the product of plasma polymerization of hydrocyclosiloxane monomer of the general formula:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{H} & \text{R} \quad \text{N} & \text{Si} & \text{N} & \text{O} \\
\text{R} & \text{O} &
\end{align*}
\]

[0025] wherein R is an aliphatic group having 1 to about 5 carbon atoms and n is an integer from 2 to about 10. The coating may further include a third layer coated over the second layer, which third layer includes the product of plasma polymerization of monomers such as fluorocarbon monomers, organo-based monomers such as ethylene, allylamine, N-trimethylsilyl-allylamine, hydrocarbons, N-protected unsaturated amines, N-unprotected unsaturated amines, N-protected cyclic aliphatic amines, N-unprotected cyclic aliphatic amines, mercaptans, nitriles and organophosphorus compounds; and functionalizing monomers such as N₂, CO₂, NH₃ and SO₂. This coating may also include a polyoxyalkylene tether of the formula:

[0026] wherein R₁ is selected from an N-benzotriazole group, an N-2-pyrididinone group, or an 2-oxypyrimidine group; R₂, R₃ and R₄ are independently selected alkylene groups of about 2 to about 3 carbon atoms and may be the same or different; R₅ is selected from hydrogen, methyl, a carbonyloxy-N-benzotriazole group, a carbonyloxy-N-2-pyrididinone group, and a carbonyloxy-2-oxypyrimidine group; a is an integer from 1 to 1000 and each of b and c is an integer from 0 to 1000, where a+b+c is an integer from 3 to 1000, under conditions whereby the R₅ group reacts with a free amino group of the third layer thereby forming a covalent bond to give a modified polymeric surface having activated polyoxyalkylene groups covalently bonded thereto. One or bioactive compounds, including an amionic glycan polysaccharide, an amino polysaccharide, a peptide, a polypeptide, a protein, a compound having antithrombotic or thrombolytic properties, a compound having anti-inflammatory properties, a compound having cytostatic properties, a compound having cytotoxic properties, or a metal chelator, may be covalently bonded to the activated polyoxyalkylene groups of the polyoxyalkylene tether.

[0027] In one embodiment of the coating, the nitrogen-containing molecules each comprise no more than six atoms, and preferably four or fewer atoms. The nitrogen-containing molecules may include NH₃, (NH₄)⁺, N₂O, NO, NO₂ and N₂O₅. The oxygen-containing molecules may include O₂ and O₃. The plasma treatment with the nitrogen-containing molecules and the oxygen-containing molecules may be simultaneous. The plasma treatment for the coating is for less than about five minutes, preferably for less than about two minutes, preferably for less than about one minute, and most preferably for between about thirty seconds and about one minute.

[0028] In one embodiment, the plasma treatment is of a plasma wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are NH₃ and the oxygen-containing molecules are O₂. The mass flow rate during plasma treatment of each of NH₃ and of O₂ is between a ratio of about 1:1.5 and about 1:1.5. In an alternative embodiment, the plasma treatment is with a plasma wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are N₂O and the oxygen-containing molecules are O₂. The mass flow rate during plasma treatment of each of N₂O and of O₂ is between a ratio of about 1:1.5 and about 1:1.5.

[0029] The hydrocyclosiloxane monomer of the second layer of the coating may be 1,3,5,7-tetramethylhydrocyclotetrasiloxane, 1,3,5,7,9-pentamethylhydrocyclopentasiloxane, or a mixture of 1,3,5,7,9-pentamethylhydrocyclopentasiloxane or 1,3,5,7,11-hexamethylcyclodecasiloxane monomers.

[0030] In an alternative embodiment, the second layer of the coating may be a polymer or co-polymer such as poly acrylate, poly bisphenol A carbonate, polybutadiene, polycarbonate, poly butylene terephthalate, poly butyl methacrylate, polydimethyl siloxane, polyester, polyethyleneimine, poly methyl methacrylate, polypropylene, polysulfone, polyurethane, poly vinyl, poly vinyl acetate, poly lactide, poly glycolide, polycaprolactone or poly vinylidene fluoride.

[0031] In the embodiment in which a polyoxyalkylene tether is applied to the third layer, it may be a polyethylene glycol. In one embodiment, the polyoxyalkylene tether is poly(ethylene glycol). The bioactive compound may be amino dextran or another complex polysaccharide or amino glycan.

[0032] The invention further includes implantable medical devices with at least one contacting surface for contacting a bodily fluid or tissue, wherein the contacting surface comprises a coating of any one of the first layer, the first layer and any one of the second layers, or the first layer, any one of the second layers, and any one of the third layers. Such devices may be stents, catheters, balloons, shunts, valves, pacemakers, pulse generators, cardiac defibrillators, spinal
stimulators, brain stimulators, sacral nerve stimulators, leads, inducers, sensors, seeds, anti-adhesion sheets, screws, anchors, plates or joints, among other exemplary medical devices. The at least one contacting surface may be a metallic material or a polymeric material.

[0033] The invention further provides a method of imparting bioactive properties to a surface by modifying the surface by plasma treatment with a plasma comprising nitrogen-containing molecules and oxygen-containing molecules. In one embodiment of the method, the nitrogen-containing molecules each comprise no more than six atoms, and preferably four or fewer atoms. The nitrogen-containing molecules may include NH₃, (NH₂)₃, N₂O, NO, NO₂ and N₂O₃. The oxygen-containing molecules may include O₂ and O₃. The plasma treatment with the nitrogen-containing molecules and the oxygen-containing molecules may be simultaneous. In the method, the plasma-modified contacting surface exhibits decreased adhesion of at least some mammalian cells, compared to a similar contacting surface that is not plasma-modified. The mammalian cells may be platelets or leukocytes. The plasma treatment is for less than about five minutes, preferably for less than about two minutes, more preferably for less than about one minute, and most preferably for between about thirty seconds and about one minute.

[0034] In one embodiment of the method, the plasma treatment is with a plasma wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are NH₃ and the oxygen-containing molecules are O₂. The mass flow rate during plasma treatment with each of NH₃ and of O₂ is between a ratio of about 1.5:1 and about 1:1.5. In an alternative embodiment, the plasma treatment is with a plasma wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are N₂O and the oxygen-containing molecules are O₂. The mass flow rate during plasma treatment with each of N₂O and of O₂ is between a ratio of about 1.5:1 and about 1:1.5.

[0035] The method can also include the step of applying a biocompatible coating subsequent to modifying the surface by plasma treatment. The biocompatible coating is made by plasma polymerization of hydrocyclosiloxane monomer of the general formula:

![Formula Image]

where R is an aliphatic group having 1 to about 5 carbon atoms and n is an integer from 2 to about 10. The hydrocyclosiloxane monomer may be 1,3,5,7-tetramethylhydrocyclosiloxane, 1,3,5,7,9-pentamethyldihydrocyclopentasiloxane, 1,3,5,7,9,11-hexamethyldihydrocyclohexasiloxane, or a mixture of 1,3,5,7,9-pentamethyldihydrocyclopentasiloxane and 1,3,5,7,9,11-hexamethyldihydrocyclohexasiloxane monomers.

[0036] In an alternative embodiment of the method, the biocompatible coating may be a polymer or copolymer such as poly acrylate, poly bisphenol A carbonate, polyurethane, polycarbonate, polybutylene terephthalate, poly butyl methacrylate, polydimethyl siloxane, polyester, polyethylenimine, poly methyl methacrylate, polypropylene, polysulfone, polyurethane, poly vinyl, poly vinyl acetate, poly glycolide, poly lactide, polycaprolactone, or polyvinylidene fluoride.

[0038] If the biologically compatible coating is made by plasma polymerization of hydrocyclosiloxane monomer, the method may further include plasma polymerization of monomers such as fluorocarbon monomers, organo-based monomers such as ethylene, allylamine, N-trimethylsilyl allylamine, hydrocarbons, N-protected unsaturated amines, N-protected unsaturated amines, N-protected cyclic aliphatic amines, N-protected cyclic aliphatic amines, mercaptans, nitriles and organophosphorus compounds; and functionalizing monomers such as N₂, CO₂, NH₃ and SO₂.

[0039] The coating may also include covalently bonding a polyoxyalkylene tether of the formula:

![Formula Image]

where R₁ is selected from an N-benzotriazole group, an N-2-pyrrolidinone group, or an 2-oxopyrimidine group; R₂, R₃, and R₄ are independently selected alkyl groups of about 2 to about 3 carbon atoms and may be the same or different; R₅ is selected from hydrogen, methyl, a carbonyloxy-N-benzotriazole group, a carbonyloxy-N-2-pyrrolidinone group, and a carbonyloxy-2-oxopyrimidine group; a is an integer from 1 to 1000 and each of b and c is an integer from 0 to 1000, where a+b+c is an integer from 3 to 1000, under conditions whereby the R₅ group reacts with a free amino group of a monomer, thereby forming a covalent bond to give a modified polymeric surface having activated polyoxyalkylene groups covalently bonded thereto. A bioactive compound may then be covalently bonded to the activated polyoxyalkylene groups of the polyoxyalkylene tether, using such bioactive compounds as aminoglycan polysaccharide, amino polysaccharide, peptides, polypeptides, proteins, compounds having anti thrombotic or thrombolytic properties, compounds having anti inflammatory properties, compounds having cytostatic properties, a compound having cytotoxic properties, and metal chelators.

[0041] A primary object of the present invention is to provide a plasma-deposited surface including a nitrogen-containing molecular species and an oxygen-containing molecular species wherein the resulting surface exhibits decreased cellular adhesion or increased cellular apoptosis.

[0042] Another object of the present invention is to provide modified surface of a medical device that includes one or more species of nitrogen-containing elements wherein the surface exhibits decreased cellular adhesion or increased cellular apoptosis.

[0043] Another object of the present invention is to provide a plasma-deposited surface including a nitrogen-containing molecular species and an oxygen-containing molecular species wherein the resulting surface, when applied to a stent or other vascular device, exhibits decreased restenosis concomitant with decreased cellular adhesion or increased cellular apoptosis.

[0044] Another object of the present invention is to provide modified surface of a vascular medical device, such as
a stent, that includes one or more species of nitrogen-containing elements wherein the surface exhibits decreased restenosis and decreased cellular adhesion or increased cellular apoptosis.

[0045] Another object of the present invention is to provide a method for modifying, by plasma glow discharge, a surface of a medical device by means of simultaneous plasma treatment with NH₃ and O₂.

[0046] Another object of the present invention is to provide a method for modifying, by plasma glow discharge, a surface of a medical device by means of simultaneous plasma treatment with N₂O and O₂.

[0047] Another object of the present invention is to provide a method for modifying, by plasma glow discharge, a surface of a medical device by means of simultaneous plasma treatment with a nitrogen-containing molecular species and an oxygen-containing molecular species for a period of less than five minutes, preferably less than one minute, and most preferably between about thirty seconds and one minute.

[0048] Another object of the present invention is to provide a method for modifying, by plasma glow discharge, a surface of a medical device by means of simultaneous plasma treatment with approximately equal quantities, by mass flow rates, of a nitrogen-containing molecular species and an oxygen-containing molecular species.

[0049] Other objects, advantages and novel features, and further scope of applicability of the present invention will be set forth in part in the detailed description to follow, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, and in part will become apparent to those skilled in the art upon examination of the following, or may be learned by practice of the invention. The objects and advantages of the invention may be realized and attained by means of the instrumentalities and combinations particularly pointed out in the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0050] The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated into and form a part of the specification, illustrate several embodiments of the present invention and, together with the description, serve to explain the principles of the invention. The drawings are only for the purpose of illustrating a preferred embodiment of the invention and are not to be construed as limiting the invention. In the drawings:

[0051] FIG. 1 is a bar graph depicting the attachment of human platelets to stainless steel with and without various plasma gas treatments. Platelets, as platelet-rich plasma in tissue culture medium, were incubated with stainless steel coupons for 1 hour at 37° C. after which the specimens were processed for fluorescence microscopy. Data is presented as the average number of platelets/micrograph field S.E. and is similar to results from two additional experiments. Paired t-test was used to assess statistical significance relative to untreated stainless steel.

[0052] FIG. 2 is a bar graph depicting the attachment of human peripheral leukocytes to stainless steel with and without various plasma gas treatments. Leukocytes were isolated by centrifugation over Ficoll/Hyphaque, rinsed, and incubated in tissue culture medium with stainless steel coupons for 1 hour at 37° C. after which the specimens were processed for fluorescence microscopy. Data is presented as the average number of leukocytes/micrograph field S.E. Paired t-test was used to assess statistical significance relative to untreated stainless steel.

[0053] FIG. 3 is a bar graph depicting an increased amount of apoptosis in fibroblasts grown on stainless steel wafers treated with NH₃/O₂ plasma. CH310T1/2 fibroblasts were grown on the wafers for 24 hours, rinsed, fixed in buffered formalin, stained with bis-benzimide, and specimens viewed by fluorescence microscopy. Significance was determined using a paired t-test.

[0054] FIG. 4 is a bar graph depicting an increased amount of apoptosis in fibroblasts grown on wafers of either polystyrene chloride, the two bars on the left, or polycarbonate, the two bars on the right, treated with NH₃/O₂ plasma compared to controls which were not plasma treated. CH310T1/2 fibroblasts were grown on wafers for 24 hours, rinsed, fixed in buffered formalin, stained with bis-benzimide, and specimens viewed by fluorescence microscopy.

[0055] FIG. 5 is a collection of photomicrographs of six different porcine coronary arteries at 2 months after implant of a stent treated with NH₃/O₂ plasma and overcoated with sirolimus to which polyethylene oxide and dextran had been conjugated. The arteries are patent, with little or no evidence of smooth muscle infiltration platelet deposition, thrombus formation, or inflammation.

[0056] FIG. 6 is a bar graph depicting apoptosis of CH310T1/2 cells cultured for 1 day on stainless steel wafers with and without (control) treatment with various combinations of N₂O and O₂. The total flow rate for both gases was 25 sscm, and the ratios are the flow rate ratios. Doxorubicin (dox) was used as a positive control compound to induce apoptosis. Apoptosis was assayed following staining of the specimens with bis-benzimide.

[0057] FIG. 7 is a collection of angiogram images of two different porcine hearts at 2 months after implant of stents in an animal model of human restenosis. The stents were either treated with a NH₃/O₂ plasma (plasma) or left untreated stents (control). The bars are juxtaposed next to the position of the stents within the arteries. The arteries implanted with plasma treated stents are more patent than the arteries implanted with untreated stents.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

BEST MODES FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

[0058] The invention comprises a structural component with a surface, a gas plasma composed of molecular species containing oxygen and nitrogen, a method of exposing the structural component to the plasma, and a structural component with a surface modified by the plasma with resultant desirable or medically-useful properties.

[0059] Suitable such structural components with a surface include medical devices that are intended to contact blood or other tissues, such as stents, catheters, shunts, grafts, and other medical devices known in the art. The structural component may include a mesh, coil, wire, inflatable bal-
loons, or any other device or structure which is capable of being implanted at a target location, including intravascular target locations, intraluminal target locations, target locations within solid tissue, such as for the treatment of tumors, and the like. The implantable device can be intended for permanent or temporary implantation. Such devices may be delivered by or incorporated into intravascular and other medical catheters.

Suitable surfaces include stainless steel, nitinol, titanium, other metal alloys, polyvinyl chloride, polyethylene, polyactide, polylactic acid, poly glycolide, poly caprolactone, poly methyl methacrylate, poly hydroxyethyl methacrylate, polyurethane, polyurethane, polyether, polyacrylon, and extended poly tetrafluoroethylene (Teflon®), related fluoropolymer composites (Gore-Tex®), or combinations thereof. All or part of the available surface can be modified. Other substrate materials can also be used, including poly acrylate, poly bisphenol A carbonate, polybutadiene, poly butylene terephthalate, poly butyl methacrylate, poly dimethyl siloxane, polyester, polyethyleneimine, polystyrene, poly vinyl acetate, polyvinylidine fluoride, poly lactide, poly glycolide, poly caprolactone and copolymers and variants thereof.

A suitable method of exposing the structural components with a surface to the plasma involves placement of the structural components in a plasma field singly, in groups, or by methods involving fluidized bed or the like. Any number of flow-through techniques involving a vacuum may introduce the materials producing the plasma. Length of time in the plasma, gas composition, gas sequence, strength of any applied electrical field, or strength of any applied vacuum, either independently or in combination, can be varied as is required to attain the desired surface modification.

The result of the surface modification may include modulation of the attachment character of blood cells or blood components, alteration in the attachment character of blood or tissue proteins, and induction of cellular apoptosis or cytotoxicity. The surface modification may also augment concurrent pharmacological interventions, such as by coadministration with systemic drugs, coadministration with locally delivered drugs, the addition of one or more drugs or pro-drugs to the coating and similar interventions.

Suitable materials for producing the plasma include mixtures of oxygen plus any one of ammonia, nitrous oxide (dinitrogen oxide), nitrogen dioxide, nitrogen tetroxide, ammonium hydroxide, nitric acid, mixtures thereof, or sequential use of two or more of the materials within a plasma. Ozone may also be used in place of oxygen. It is also contemplated that mixtures of oxygen and nitrogen can be used. When a gas mixture is used, the ratio of the component gases may be varied to obtain an optimal concentration of each gas. Also, the gases may be used serially. For example, ammonia plasma may be generated first, followed by a plasma of oxygen.

In a preferred embodiment, the method of treating surfaces with the plasma utilizes a reactant gas mixture of ammonia and oxygen (hereafter an NH₃/O₂ plasma) at a plasma treatment temperature of less than 100°C, and preferably at ambient temperature. The reactant gas mixture is introduced into the plasma chamber through a gas inlet manifold. The gas inlet manifold may also be an electrode. The gas inlet manifold is one plate of a parallel plate plasma chamber for introducing the gas mixture into the chamber. The plate has a plurality of apertures, each comprising an outlet at a chamber or processing side of the plate and an inlet spaced from the processing side, with the entire plate complex being removable for ease of cleaning. The gas inlet manifold enhances the mixing of the gases.

The following terms are defined as follows for the purposes of this disclosure:

Bioactive Properties: performs in harmony with living tissue and/or blood, imparting one or more desired results or properties.

Plasma Polymerization: The formation of polymeric materials under the influence of plasma (consisting of ionized gases, free radicals and electrons).

Plasma Copolymerization: plasma polymerization of a mixture of different monomers.

Plasma Glow Zone: the region in which the glow discharge in the plasma polymerization process takes place.

Plasma Process

A capacitively coupled plasma deposition system may be used. In one embodiment, a glow discharge is ignited between seven-inch square parallel plate electrodes made of aluminum. The distance between the two electrodes is 6.5 inches. The electrodes are both power driven at a radio frequency of 13.56 MHz, and the whole plasma chamber is grounded. The sample rack is made of Teflon and stainless steel set in the plasma glow zone and is electrically floating, and may be rotated during the plasma process to assure uniformity of plasma coating or surface modification on samples.

In one embodiment, the device is placed within the plasma chamber, and the plasma chamber is evacuated to a base pressure of about 10 mTorr. A plasma is generated at 110 W and 50 mTorr for about 45 seconds using a mixture of NH₃ and O₂ at a total mass flow rate of 50 standard cubic centimeters per minute (scm), resulting from a mass flow rate of 10 scm of NH₃ and 15 scm of O₂. Decreased attachment of lymphocytes and platelets is observed on substrates subjected to this treatment.

In another embodiment, the plasma is generated for approximately forty-five seconds at 110 W at 50 mTorr using a mass flow rate of 40 scm for NH₃ and 10 scm for O₂.

In yet another embodiment, plasma was generated at 110 W under a vacuum of 50 mTorr and using a mass flow rate of 25 scm of N₂O and 25 scm of O₂. Decreased attachment of lymphocytes and platelets, together with increased apoptosis, is observed on stainless steel subjected to this plasma treatment.

Substantially decreased restenosis and cellular attachment, together with increased apoptosis, is observed utilizing the foregoing general reaction conditions. By contrast, pronounced restenosis and cellular attachment is observed when the initial NH₃/O₂ plasma treatment is either significantly longer or shorter. The preferred plasma treatment is for less than about five minutes, preferably for less than about two minutes, and more preferably for between about thirty seconds and about one minute. Utilizing stainless steel wafers and plasma treatment with NH₃/O₂ for varying times
from zero seconds through 420 seconds, an increase in the amount of apoptosis was observed up to about 45 seconds, after which the apoptotic activity decreased.

Elemental surface composition was determined by x-ray photoelectron spectroscopy of stainless steel wafers both without a plasma treatment and with a plasma treatment. The plasma treatment consisted of either a 45 second exposure to a mixed gas composed of 20 sccm NH₃ and 30 sccm O₂, or 25 sccm N₂O and 25 sccm O₂. The values are reported in Table 1 in atomic percent and are for elements above atomic number 2 within 50 Å of the surface. The nitrogen content is highest in the specimen treated with NH₃/O₂ plasma and lowest on the untreated specimen.

| Plasma type   | C    | N    | O    | F    | Si   | S    | Cl   | Cr   | Fe   | Ni   | Mo   |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| None 0.077    | 21.9 | 0.5  | 52.5 | 0.6  | 1.9  | 1.0  | 0.2  | 10.7 | 9.5  | 1.1  | 0.2  |
| NH₃/O₂ 0.079  | 20.3 | 2.0  | 51.6 | 2.7  | 1.9  | 1.0  | 0.2  | 10.0 | 8.9  | 1.2  | 0.3  |
| N₂O/O₂ 0.078  | 17.0 | 1.3  | 57.9 | 0.4  | 3.5  | 0.1  | 0.0  | 7.2  | 10.4 | 1.9  | 0.3  |

Table 2 presents data on the nitrogen contained on stainless steel either without plasma treatment (control) or with plasma treatment and assayed to a depth of 50 Å by x-ray photoelectron spectroscopy. The plasma treatment consisted of either a 45 second exposure to a mixed gas composed of 20 sccm NH₃ and 30 sccm O₂, or 25 sccm N₂O and 25 sccm O₂. The data indicates that the form of the nitrogen changed during the plasma process. The nitrogen changed from a nitride-enriched form in the control specimen, to a form enriched in organic nitrogen (NH₃/O₂) or to a form enriched in nitrates (N₂O/O₂). The table also shows the percentage of total nitrogen for each form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>No treatment</th>
<th>NH₃/O₂ Plasma Treatment</th>
<th>N₂O/O₂ Plasma Treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nitride 0.077</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic 0.078</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>56.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrate 0.078</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 presents data on the carbon contained on stainless steel either without plasma treatment (control) or with plasma treatment and assayed to a depth of 50 Å by x-ray photoelectron spectroscopy. The amount of carbon in the form of O—C=O was reduced by either plasma treatment, and in the N₂O/O₂ treated specimen the amount of CH was increased.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>No Treatment</th>
<th>NH₃/O₂ Plasma Treatment</th>
<th>N₂O/O₂ Plasma Treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CH 0.076</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>73.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO 0.077</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O—C=O</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 presents data on the oxygen contained on stainless steel either without plasma treatment (control) or with plasma treatment and assayed to a depth of 50 Å by x-ray photoelectron spectroscopy. The plasma treatment consisted of a 45 second exposure to a mixed gas composed of either 20 sccm NH₃ and 30 sccm O₂, or 25 sccm N₂O and 25 sccm O₂. For the species of oxygen examined, little change was observed between no plasma treatment and treatment with a NH₃/O₂ plasma, while treatment with a N₂O/O₂ plasma resulted in a decreased amount of C=O and an increased amount of metal oxides.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>No treatment</th>
<th>NH₃/O₂ plasma treatment</th>
<th>N₂O/O₂ plasma treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metal Oxide 0.079</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>55.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO 0.080</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C=O 0.081</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As plasmas contain very high concentrations of electrons and ions, electrochemical methods may be used to modify surfaces in accord with this invention. Thus, similar results may be obtained using low-energy ion implantation, jet vapor deposition, or atomic layer deposition. Also, plasmas contain high concentrations of free radicals, and therefore chemistries involving free radical alteration of surfaces may be used in accord with this invention.

Subsequent Coatings

Once the plasma has modified the device surface, the device may be used as is or may have additional coatings applied thereon. Suitable materials for additional coatings of the modified surface include plasma-deposited polymers of siloxane, plasma-deposited carbon-based polymers including poly hydroxethyl methacrylate, polymers coated by dipping or spraying including polymers or derivatives of polyvinyl chloride, polyethylene, polyacrylate, poly glycolide, poly caprolactone, methyl methacrylate, polyurethane, copolymers of the formentioned, and copolymers of the formentioned containing polyethylene glycol. The polymeric material may also contain a drug introduced by dissolution or dispersion that can be used to augment the effect of the nitrogen-containing and oxygen-containing plasma deposited coating.

Once the surface has been modified by the plasma, such as an NH₃/O₂ plasma, one or more subsequent coatings or layers, including polymeric coatings, may be applied. In one embodiment, the siloxane surface material described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,338,770 and 5,463,010 is used. The siloxane material forms a smooth, continuous thin coating or membrane, and is produced as described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,338,770 and 5,463,010. If the siloxane material is used, a plurality of amine functional groups may be bonded to the siloxane surface. The amine groups may then be used for further conjugation or further modified to introduce a spacer group. The spacer may be a homo-bifunctional crosslinking agent, a hetero-bifunctional crosslinking agent, or an agent that upon attachment can be modified to produce a reactive site. The spacer may be a linear, branched, or dendrimeric material. A similar approach can be used with the other substrate materials using chemistries known to those...
skilled in the art. A polymeric substance, typically composed of polyethylene glycol, sugars, amino sugars, amino acids, or combinations thereof, may be attached to the spacer to form a microfilm.

[0084] Hydrocyclodolsiloxane Plasma Coating. The membrane is formed through plasma polymerization of suitable aliphatic hydrocyclodolsiloxane monomers or plasma copolymerization of aliphatic hydrocyclodolsiloxane monomers and co-monomers. Aliphatic hydrocyclodolsiloxane monomers have the general formula:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{H} & \quad \text{Si} \quad \text{R} \\
\text{O} & \quad \text{O} \\
\end{align*}
\]

wherein R is alkyl group of 1 to about 5 carbon atoms and n is an integer from 2 to about 10. Monomers include those where n is 7 to 10, where n is 4 to 6 and where n is 2 to 3. Co-monomers such as fluorocarbons, organo-based monomers, or functional group terminated monomers can be utilized to change the properties of the membrane to adjust for varied applications. The monomers are polymerized directly on the substrate surface using plasma-state polymerization techniques. The general process of plasma-state polymerization is known to those in the art. See Yasuda, Plasma Polymerization, Academic Press Inc., New York (1985), incorporated herein by reference.

[0086] In brief, monomers may be polymerized onto a substrate surface treated with gas plasma composed of molecular species containing oxygen and nitrogen by activating the monomer into a gaseous complex, composed of electrons, ions, gas atoms, free radicals, and molecules in the excited states, known as the plasma state. The plasma state generates highly reactive species, which forms the characteristically highly cross-linked and highly-branched, ultrathin polymer membrane, which is deposited on the substrate surface as it moves through the area of most intense energy density, known as the plasma glow zone.

[0087] In practice, an electric discharge from a radio frequency (R.F.) generator is applied to the “hot” electrodes of plasma reactor. The selected monomers are introduced into the reactor and energized into a plasma, saturating the plasma glow zone with an abundance of energetic free radicals and lesser amounts of ions and free electrons produced by the monomers. As substrate material passes through or remains in the plasma glow zone, the surface of the substrate is continually bombarded with free radicals, resulting in the polymerized membrane coating. The plasma-state polymerized hydrocyclodolsiloxane membrane is highly adhesive to most organic and inorganic substrates. In one embodiment, plasma polymerization is employed to plasma deposit 1,3,5,7-tetramethylhydrocyclodolsiloxane on the treated surface of the stent or other medical device, utilizing a very short period of plasma deposition, approximately four (4) seconds.

[0088] N-protected amines may be plasma grafted to the hydrocyclodolsiloxane membrane, yielding amine grafted membranes. Suitable N-protected amines include N-trimethylsilyl-allylamine, which may be applied by plasma deposition as described for hydrocyclodolsiloxane. The period of N-trimethylsilyl-allylamine deposition is again very short, on the order of less than thirty (30) seconds.

[0089] Other Polymeric Coatings. In some applications a polymeric substance may be employed to encase the device treated with gas plasma composed of molecular species containing oxygen and nitrogen. A number of polymeric substances can be used, and are known to those skilled in the art. Additional polymeric substances include poly caprolactone, poly lactide, poly glycolide, poly hydroxyethyl methacrylate and co-polymers or derivatives thereof. Other polymeric materials that can be used include poly acrylate, poly bisphenol A carbonate, polybutadiene, polycarbonate, poly butylene terephthalate, poly butyl methacrylate, polydimethyl siloxane, polystyrene, polysulfone, polyurethane, polystyrene, polyvinyl alcohol, polyvinyl chloride, and copolymers and variants thereof. The polymeric material may be applied by dipping, immersion, spraying, solvent extraction or other means known in the art. The polymeric substance may be formulated to contain a biological modifier that is anti-inflammatory, non-thrombogenic, anti-angiogenic, or anti-proliferative.

[0090] Polyoxalkylene Coatings. Polyoxalkylene modified polymeric membranes or coatings are provided that comprise a membrane or coating on a substrate formed from the plasma polymerization of a hydrocyclodolsiloxane monomer or co-monomer which in turn is on a substrate formed from gas plasma composed of molecular species containing oxygen and nitrogen. These include polyoxalkylenes bis-(2-hydroxypropimidyld) carbonate 1, polyoxalkylene bis-(N-hydroxybenzotriazolyl) carbonate 1, and polyoxalkylene bis-(N-hydroxy-2-pyrrolidinonyl) carbonate 2. The amine grafted hydrocyclodolsiloxane membranes may be conveniently reacted with the carbonate polyoxalkylene to give polyoxalkylene modified membranes or coatings. In turn, these may be reacted with appropriate bioactive compounds to give the polyoxalkylene modified membranes or coatings having a polyoxalkylene tether linking the bioactive compound to the membrane or coating. Bioactive coatings can include amnoglycans polysaccharides, amino polysaccharides, peptides, polypeptides, proteins, compounds having antithrombotic or thromboletic properties or metal chelators, covalently bonded to the activated polyoxalkylene groups of the polyoxalkylene tether.

[0091] Medical Devices

[0092] The structural component as used herein refers to virtually any device that can be temporarily or permanently implanted into or on a human or animal host. Suitable structural components with a surface include those that are intended to contact blood including stents, catheters, shunts, grafts, and the like. Suitable different that are intended as tissue implanted include brachytherapy sources, embolization materials, tumor-bed implants, extra-joint implants, materials to minimize adhesions, and the like. The device may include a mesh, coil, wire, inflatable balloon, bead, sheet, or any other structure which is capable of being implanted at a target location, including intravascular target locations, intraluminal target locations, target locations within solid tissue, typically for the treatment of tumors, and the like. The implantable device can be intended for permanent or temporary implantation. Such devices may be deliv-
ered by or incorporated into intravascular and other medical catheters. The device can be implanted for a variety of purposes, including tumor treatment, treatment or prophylaxis of cardiovascular disease, the treatment of inflammation, reduction of adhesions, and the like. In one application, the device is used for treatment of hyperplasia in blood vessels which have been treated by conventional recanalization techniques, particularly intravascular recanalization techniques, such as angioplasty, atherectomy, and the like.

[0097] Exemplary structural components and devices include intravascular stents. Intravascular stents include both balloon-expandable stents and self-expanding stents. Balloon-expandable stents are available from a number of commercial suppliers, including from Cordis under the Palmaz-Schatz tradename. Self-expanding stents are typically composed from a shape memory alloy and are available from suppliers, such as Instent. In the case of stents, a balloon-expandable stent is typically composed of a stainless steel framework or, in the case of self-expanding stents, from nickel/titanium alloy. Both such structural frameworks are suitable for use in this invention.

[0098] Exemplary devices also include balloons, such as the balloon on balloon catheters. The construction of intravascular balloon catheters is well known and amply described in the patent and medical literature. The inflatable balloon may be a non-disposable balloon, typically being composed of polyethylene or polyurethane, or may be an elastic balloon, typically being composed of latex or silicone rubber. Both these structural materials are suitable for coating according to the methods of this invention.

[0099] The implantable devices will have one or more surfaces or a portion of a surface that is treated with gas plasma composed of molecular species containing oxygen and nitrogen. In the case of stents it is particularly desirable to treat the entire surface. In the case of balloons mounted on catheters it is desirable to coat at least the outer cylindrical surface of the balloon that will be in contact with the blood vessel when the balloon is inflated therein.

[0100] In addition to the described devices, a variety of other implantable structures, such as wires, coils, sheaths, pellets, particles, and nanoparticles, and the like, may be treated with the gas plasma containing molecular species composed of oxygen and nitrogen according to the methods of the present invention. This includes tissue-implanted brachytherapy sources, embolization materials, tumor-bed implants and the like.

[0101] The devices may be introduced to the patient in a conventional manner, depending on the device. In the case of stents, a stent delivery catheter, typically an intravascular balloon catheter in the case of balloon-expandable stents or a containment catheter in the case of self-expanding stents will deliver the stent.

[0102] The invention is thought to be particularly useful as applied to cardiovascular stents and for the prevention of restenosis following stent placement, and other interventional treatments, but may also be used in other therapies, such as tumor treatment or in controlling inflammation or thrombosis. Any device in accord with the invention would typically be packaged in a conventional medical device package, such as a box, pouch, tray, tube, or the like. The instructions for use may be printed on a separate sheet of paper, or may be partly or entirely printed on the device package. The implantable device within the package may optionally be sterilized.

EXAMPLE 1

[0103] Upon receiving stainless steel stents from the manufacturer, the stents were cleaned by ultrasonication for 60 minutes at 50°C in a detergent solution (2% Actelion Detergent, Baxter Healthcare Corp.), rinsed with running deionized, charcoal-filtered water for 30 minutes, and then dried at 50°C in a forced air oven.

EXAMPLE 2

[0104] Stents were treated in the plasma glow zone of a glow discharge plasma with a mixture of NH₃/O₂ for 45 seconds. The plasma was generated at 110 W under a vacuum of 50 mTorr and using a total mass flow rate of 50 standard cubic centimeters per minute (sccm), with a mass flow rate of 25 sccm of NH₃ and 25 sccm of O₂.

EXAMPLE 3

[0105] Stents treated with NH₃/O₂ plasma and TMCTS plasma as in Example 2 were placed in a plasma glow zone with N-trimethylsilyl-allylamine (TMSAA), with a 30 second plasma deposition at 65 mTorr, 35 W, and a flow rate of 42 sccm. This resulted in plasma grafting or conjugation of the TMSAA monomer into the stent-bound siloxane polymer, thereby resulting in the integration of a primary amine (R—NH₂) into the siloxane polymer.

EXAMPLE 4

[0106] Stents of Example 3 were then processed further in a series of wet chemistry steps. In the first of these steps, polyethylene glycol (PEG=3350 MWₛ₉₆) was used to prepare the activated-intermediate and bifunctional-crosslinker poly(oxyethylene)bis-(N-hydroxybenzotriazolyl) carbonate, as generally described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,650,234. One end of the poly(oxyethylene)bis-(N-hydroxybenzotriazolyl) carbonate was conjugated to the stent-bound primary amines. During the conjugation, hydroxybenzotriazolyl carbonate was liberated and poly(oxyethylene)-(N-hydroxybenzotriazolyl) attached to the amine via a urethane bond. After the removal of excess carbonate, amino dextran (70,000 MW) was attached at pH 8.5 to the other end of the activated intermediate resulting in the covalent binding of amino dextran to polyethylene glycol (PEG), and ultimately to the stent surface. Thereafter, the stents were rinse extensively to remove unbound materials and heat dried.

EXAMPLE 5

[0107] Stainless steel wafers (0.75 cm x 0.75 cm) were cleaned by ultrasonication for 60 minutes at 50°C in a
detergent solution (2% Acationox Detergent, Baxter Healthcare Corp.), rinsed with running deionized, charcoal-filtered water for 30 minutes, and then dried at 50°F in a forced air oven. The wafers were treated in a glow-discharge plasma composed of a mixture of NH₃/O₂ for 45 seconds. The plasma was generated at 110 W under a vacuum of 50 mTorr and using a total mass flow rate of 50 sccm. For comparative purposes, wafers with no plasma treatment, plasma treatment with only an ammonia plasma, or plasma treatment with only an oxygen plasma were used.

To assess platelet attachment, human blood was obtained from a normal donor who had not received aspirin or other anti-inflammatory medication within one week and collected into heparinized tubes. Thereafter, all manipulations were performed in plastic ware. Platelets were used as platelet-rich plasma and diluted 1:3 with complete medium before use. The medium containing the platelets was added in 0.5 ml aliquots to wells of low-attachment tissue culture cluster plates containing the metal wafers. After two hours the wafers were gently rinsed in phosphate buffered saline, pH 7.4, and the cells fixed by immersing the specimens in buffered formalin. All specimens stained with eosin Y in 7% ethanol, rinsed, and viewed by epifluorescence microscopy. Platelets were viewed at a magnification of 400x and recorded as digitized images. Regions of the images evaluated to determine the number of bound cells.

Wafers treated with NH₃/O₂ plasma had reduced levels of platelet attachment, as shown in FIG. 1.

EXAMPLE 6

Stainless steel wafers were prepared as in Example 5. Human blood was obtained from a normal donor who had not received aspirin or other anti-inflammatory medication within one week and collected into heparinized tubes. Thereafter, all manipulations were performed in plastic ware. Leukocytes were isolated by centrifugation over Ficoll-Hypaque, rinsed once in a completed medium composed of Dulbecco’s modified Eagle’s medium (DMEM) containing 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS) and penicillin/streptomycin, and resuspended in complete medium at a concentration of 10⁵ cells/mL. The medium containing the cells was added in 0.5 ml aliquots to wells of low-attachment tissue culture cluster plates containing the metal wafers. After two hours the wafers were gently rinsed in phosphate buffered saline, pH 7.4, and the cells fixed by immersing the specimens in buffered formalin.

All specimens stained with eosin Y in 70% ethanol, rinsed, and viewed by epifluorescence microscopy. Leukocytes were viewed at 200x and recorded as digitized images. Regions of the images evaluated to determine the number of bound cells.

Wafers treated with NH₃/O₂ plasma had reduced levels of leukocyte attachment as shown in FIG. 2.

EXAMPLE 7

Stainless steel wafers (0.75 cm x 0.75 cm) were treated in a glow-discharge plasma composed of a mixture of NH₃/O₂ for 45 seconds as in Example 5. For comparative purposes, stainless steel wafers not subjected to plasma discharge were used.

Wafers were disinfected by UV irradiation or dipping in 70% ethanol and air drying. The wafers were placed in wells of 24 well tissue-culture plates. Aliquots of 10⁶ C3H10T1/2 cells were seeded into the wells in Dulbecco’s medium containing 10% fetal bovine serum, and antibiotics, and incubated for various periods of time. The medium was gently aspirated, the cultures rinsed once in phosphate buffered saline (PBS), pH 7.4, and the specimens fixed in 10% buffered formalin. After fixation, the cells were permeabilized with 35% ethanol and stained in PBS containing 16 μg/ml of bis-benzimide. In some cases the staining solution also contained 1% bovine serum albumin. After staining, the specimens were rinsed to remove unbound stain, and the specimens examined by epifluorescence microscopy. Cells were scored as apoptotic if the nuclei were blebbed, evidenced condensation of chromatin, evident fragmentation of the nucleus.

Apoptosis was induced in fibroblasts grown on stainless steel wafers that had been treated with NH₃/O₂ plasmas as shown in FIG. 3.

EXAMPLE 8

Polyvinyl chloride and polycarbonate wafers (0.75 cm x 0.75 cm) were treated in a glow-discharge plasma composed of a mixture of NH₃/O₂ for 45 seconds, with other conditions as in Example 5. For comparative purposes, wafers not subjected to plasma discharge were used.

Wafers were disinfected by UV irradiation and air drying. The wafers were placed in wells of 24 well tissue culture plates. Aliquots of 10⁶ C3H10T1/2 cells were seeded into the wells in Dulbecco’s medium containing 10% fetal bovine serum, and antibiotics, and incubated for various periods of time. The medium was gently aspirated, the cultures rinsed once in PBS, pH 7.4, and the specimens fixed in 10% buffered formalin. After fixation, the cells were permeabilized with 35% ethanol and stained in PBS containing 16 μg/ml of bis-benzimide. In some cases the staining solution also contained 1% bovine serum albumin. After staining, the specimens were rinsed to remove unbound stain, and the specimens examined by epifluorescence microscopy. Cells were scored as apoptotic if the nuclei were blebbed, evidenced condensation of chromatin, evident fragmentation of the nuclei.

Apoptosis was induced in fibroblasts grown on both polyvinyl chloride and polycarbonate wafers that had been treated with NH₃/O₂ plasmas as shown in FIG. 4.

EXAMPLE 9

Stainless steel stents, 3x15 mm, were plasma-treated with a mixture of NH₃/O₂ for 45 seconds in a glow-discharge plasma as in Example 1, plasma-treated with TMCTS as in Example 2 and TMSAA as in Example 3, and had polyethylene oxide and amino-dextran conjugated as in Example 4.

Stents were then placed in the coronary arteries of swine. The animals were sedated with a combination of ketamine (25 mg/kg), acepromazine (1.1 mg), and atropine (0.6 mg/kg) by intramuscular injection. An intravenous line
was established, the animals given methohexital (10 mg/kg), and intubated and ventilated with oxygen (2 L/min), nitrous oxide (2 L/min), and isoflurane 1% (1.5 L/min) using a respirator. All animals were pretreated with aspirin and Ticlopidine 250 mg BID, commencing 24 hours prior to the procedure and for 60 days post-procedure.

[0119] After placement of an 8F-introducer sheath in the right carotid artery by surgical cutdown, each animal was given a single dose of heparin (200 units/kg) and bretylium tosylate (2.5 mg/kg). Under fluoroscopic guidance, an 8F hockey stick guiding catheter was positioned in the left coronary ostium.

[0120] Stents were implanted in the porcine coronary arteries using a 3.5 mm x 17 mm balloon. Following stent implantation, the carotid cut down site was closed and the animals treated with Ticlid and aspirin for a period of 60 days.

[0121] After 60 days, the pigs were returned for a diagnostic angiogram and then euthanized. The stented arteries were studied by histomorphometric techniques. The stented arteries were found to be patent with modest neointima as illustrated for one artery in FIG. 5.

EXAMPLE 10

[0122] Stainless steel coupons were evaluated by electron spectroscopy for chemical analysis (ESCA) both without any treatment and following each step in the following manufacturing process:

1) Detergent cleaning;
2) Glow discharge in the presence of ammonia plus oxygen for thirty seconds;
3) Plasma deposition of tetramethyl cyclotetrasiloxane (TMCTS);
4) Plasma deposition of N-trimethylsilyl-allylamine (TMSAA);
5) Conjugation of the bifunctional-crosslinker polyoxyethylenebis-(1-hydroxybenzotriazolyl) carbonate (HPEO); and,
6) Conjugation of amino dextran (MW 70,000).

[0129] ESCA is widely used to investigate the chemical composition of surfaces. The element identification within a given area is obtained by determining the binding energy of back-scattered electrons that are emitted during the exposure to a beam of X-rays. Only electrons released near the surface have enough energy to escape the specimen and be detected, electrons activated below the surface lose their energy in inelastic collisions and are not detected. For a typical ESCA investigation where the surface composition is unknown, a broad survey scan spectrum is obtained first to identify the elements present. Once the elemental composition has been determined, detailed high-resolution scan of selected peaks can be used for the purpose of chemical state identification. As the X-rays have limited penetrating power, ESCA evaluates materials to a thin depth of about 50 Å depending on the initial angle of the X-ray beam.

[0130] The steel coupons without any treatment (Steel) had a high percentage of oxygen, carbon, and iron (TABLE 5) when analyzed by ESCA, but no nitrogen. Glow discharge etching with NH_3/O_2 resulted in the introduction of nitrogen. Relative to the stainless steel coupon, all subsequent manufacturing steps added material to the surface, therefore resulting in an apparent decrease in the percentage of iron and chromium. The apparent decrease in Fe and Cr is reflective of material being deposited over the coupon.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPOSITION IN ATOMIC %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NH_3/O_2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TMCTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TMSAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dextran</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n.d. = not detected

[0131] In the NH_3/O_2 plasma etching step, the relative amount of iron decreased by nearly 12% relative to the untreated steel coupon. Smaller relative decreases were observed in the content of chromium, oxygen, and carbon. The relative amount of nitrogen increased to 7.9% from not being detectable.

EXAMPLE 11

[0132] Increasing the plasma treatment time was unexpectedly found to not be proportional to the detected amounts of the relative atomic species, particularly nitrogen. This was found following a 7 minute etching time, as shown in TABLE 6. The most pronounced change was in the nitrogen content, which decreased from 7.9% after 30 seconds to being not detectable after a 7-minute plasma treatment period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPOSITION IN ATOMIC %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EXAMPLE 12

[0133] High resolution ESCA analysis of stainless steel following glow discharge with NH_3/O_2 as a function of the length of the discharge demonstrated that nitrogen species are introduced with discharge times as short as 5 seconds. Two nitrogen peaks were detected, the N1 and N2 peaks. The N1 type is indicative of N—C or N—H bonds, and had the highest deposition around 45 seconds. The N2 type was detectable for discharge times up to 60 seconds, but not thereafter. The N2 type is indicative of N—O bonds and had the highest concentration between 15 and 45 seconds. The results are shown in TABLE 7.
Stainless steel surfaces treated in a glow discharge of ammonia alone, that is without oxygen, did not have any detectable N\textsubscript{2}, although a pronounced N\textsubscript{1} peak was found.

Collectively, the data from the ESCA analysis of the surfaces exposed to ammonia/oxygen demonstrate that two types of chemical state of nitrogen are being deposited.

**EXAMPLE 13**

Stainless steel wafers (0.75 cm x 0.75 cm) were cleaned by ultrasonication for 60 minutes at 50°C in a detergent solution (2% Acetaminophen Detergent, Baxter Healthcare Corp.), rinsed with running deionized, charcoal-filtered water for 30 minutes, and then dried at 50°C in a forced air oven. The wafers were treated in a glow discharge plasma composed of a mixture of N\textsubscript{2}O and O\textsubscript{2} for 45 seconds. The plasma was generated at 110 W under a vacuum of 50 mTorr and using a mass flow rate of 25 sccm of N\textsubscript{2}O and 25 sccm of O\textsubscript{2}. The wafers so treated exhibited a decrease in lymphocyte attachment and platelet attachment relative to untreated stainless steel wafers, and also increased the amount of apoptosis in C3H10T1/2 cells.

**EXAMPLE 14**

The ratio of O\textsubscript{2} to N\textsubscript{2}O was then varied, and the percentage of apoptotic cells determined on each, using doxorubicin (d oxo) as a positive control compound to induce apoptosis. The results are shown in FIG. 6. Decreased attachment of lymphocytes and platelets was observed at O\textsubscript{2} to N\textsubscript{2}O ratios of 40:60 to 60:40.

Stainless steel wafers were coated as in Example 1 with NH\textsubscript{3}/O\textsubscript{2} plasma deposited at 20 sccm for NH\textsubscript{3} and 30 sccm for O\textsubscript{2} for 45 seconds. The contact angle was determined, and compared to the contact angle of the stainless steel wafer not subjected to plasma treatment with NH\textsubscript{3}/O\textsubscript{2}, but otherwise similarly processed. The contact angle on the stainless steel without plasma treatment with NH\textsubscript{3}/O\textsubscript{2} wa s 392, while the contact angle after plasma treatment with NH\textsubscript{3}/O\textsubscript{2} was 15°.

**EXAMPLE 15**

Two stainless samples were prepared, one using the method of Example 13 in which N\textsubscript{2}/O\textsubscript{2} was plasma deposited at 25 sccm for each of N\textsubscript{2}O and O\textsubscript{2} for 45 seconds, and one using the method of Example 1 in which NH\textsubscript{3}/O\textsubscript{2} was plasma deposited at 20 sccm for each of NH\textsubscript{3} and O\textsubscript{2} for 45 seconds. X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS) was conducted in a Physical Electronics Model 5802 Multitechnique system with a monochromatic aluminum anode and an analysis area of approximately 0.8 mm x 2.0 mm. The samples were analyzed in survey mode for overall surface composition, and each element detected on the surface was then analyzed in high energy resolution for binding energy determination.

**EXAMPLE 16**

Stainless steel stents, 3 x 15 mm, were plasma treated with a mixture of NH\textsubscript{3}/O\textsubscript{2} for 45 seconds in a glow-discharge plasma as in Example 1. Plasma-treated stents and untreated stents were then placed in porcine coronary arteries as in Example 9 and examined by angiography at two months post-implant. The plasma-treated stents were significantly more patent than untreated stents, as shown in FIG. 7.

The preceding examples can be repeated with similar success by substituting the generically or specifically described reactants and/or operating conditions of this invention for those used in the preceding examples.

Although the invention has been described in detail with particular reference to these preferred embodiments, other embodiments can achieve the same results. Variations and modifications of the present invention will be obvious to those skilled in the art and it is intended to cover in the appended claims all such modifications and equivalents. The entire disclosures of all references, applications, patents, and publications cited above are hereby incorporated by reference.

What is claimed is:

1. An implantable medical device with a plasma-modified surface, comprising:
   a structure adapted for implantation into a patient, the structure comprising at least one contacting surface for contacting a bodily fluid or tissue, wherein the contacting surface is modified by plasma treatment in a plasma
comprising nitrogen-containing molecules and oxygen-containing molecules and by a biologically compatible coating.

2. The device of claim 1, wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are molecules selected from the group consisting of NH₃, (NH₄)⁺, N₂, NO, NO₂ and N₂O₅.

3. The device of claim 1, wherein the oxygen-containing molecules are molecules selected from the group consisting of O₂ and O₃.

4. The device of claim 1, wherein the plasma treatment with the nitrogen-containing molecules and the oxygen-containing molecules is sequential.

5. The device of claim 1, wherein the plasma treatment is for less than about two minutes.

6. The device of claim 5, wherein the plasma treatment is for between thirty seconds and about one minute.

7. The device of claim 1, wherein the plasma treatment is of a plasma wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are NH₃ and the oxygen-containing molecules are O₂.

8. The device of claim 1, wherein the plasma treatment is of a plasma wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are N₂ and the oxygen-containing molecules are O₂.

9. The device of claim 1, wherein the device is a member selected from the group consisting of stents, catheters, balloons, shunts, grafts, valves, pacemakers, pulse generators, cardiac defibrillators, spinal stimulators, brain stimulators, sacral nerve stimulators, leads, inducers, sensors, seeds, screws, anchors, anti-adhesion sheets, plates and joints.

10. The device of claim 1, wherein the at least one contacting surface comprises a metallic material.

11. The device of claim 1, wherein the at least one contacting surface comprises a polymeric material.

12. The device of claim 1, wherein the biologically compatible coating is a membrane formed from the plasma polymerization of a hydrocyclosiloxane monomer of the general formula:

\[
\text{R} \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{Si} \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{R} \\
\text{O}_3
\]

wherein R is an aliphatic group having 1 to about 5 carbon atoms and n is an integer from 2 to about 10.

13. The device of claim 12, wherein the hydrocyclosiloxane monomer is selected from the group consisting of 1,3,5,7-tetramethyldicyclosiloxane, 1,3,5,7,9-pentamethyldicyclosiloxane, 1,3,5,7,9,11-hexamethyldicyclosiloxane, and a mixture of 1,3,5,7,9-pentamethyldicyclosiloxane and 1,3,5,7,11-hexamethyldicyclosiloxane monomers.

14. The device of claim 1 wherein the biologically compatible coating is a polymer or co-polymer selected from the group consisting of poly acrylate, poly bisphenol A carbonate, polybutadiene, polycarbonate, poly butylene terephthalate, poly butyl methacrylate, polydimethyl siloxane, polyester, polyethyleneimine, poly methyl methacrylate, polypropylene, polystyrene, polysulfone, polyurethane, poly vinyl, poly vinyl acetate polylactide, polyglycolide, polycapro lactone, and polyvinylidine fluoride.

15. A coating for an implantable medical device with at least one contacting surface for contacting a bodily fluid or tissue, comprising:

the product of plasma treatment of a plasma comprising nitrogen-containing molecules and oxygen-containing molecules; and

the product of plasma polymerization of a hydrocyclosiloxane monomer of the general formula:

\[
\text{R}_1 - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{O} - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{R}_2 - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{O} - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{R}_3 - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{O} - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{R}_4 - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{O} - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{R}_5 - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{O}
\]

wherein R is an aliphatic group having 1 to about 5 carbon atoms and n is an integer from 2 to about 10.

16. The coating of claim 15, wherein the hydrocyclosiloxane monomer is selected from the group consisting of 1,3,5,7-tetramethyldicyclosiloxane, 1,3,5,7,9-pentamethyldicyclosiloxane, 1,3,5,7,9,11-hexamethyldicyclosiloxane, and a mixture of 1,3,5,7,9-pentamethyldicyclosiloxane and 1,3,5,7,11-hexamethyldicyclosiloxane monomers.

17. The coating of claim 15, further comprising the product of plasma polymerization of a monomer selected from the group consisting of fluoro carbon monomers, organo-based monomers selected from the group consisting of ethylene, allylamine, N-trimethylsilyl-allylamine, hydrocarbons, N-protected unsaturated amines, N-unprotected unsaturated amines, N-protected cyclic aliphatic amines, N-unprotected cyclic aliphatic amines, mercaptans, nitriles and organophosphorus compounds; and functionalizing monomers selected from the group consisting of N₂, CO₂, NH and SO₂.

18. The coating of claim 17, further comprising a polyoxyalkylene tether of the formula:

\[
\text{R}_5 - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{O} - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{R}_4 - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{O} - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{R}_3 - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{O} - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{R}_2 - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{O} - \bigg/ \bigg/ \text{R}_1
\]

wherein R₁ is selected from an N-benzotriazole group, an N-2-pyrrolidione group, or an N-2-oxypyrindine group; R₂, R₃ and R₄ are independently selected alkyne groups of about 2 to about 3 carbon atoms and may be the same or different; R₅ is selected from hydrogen, methyl, a carboxyl-N-benzotriazole group, a carboxyl-N-2-pyrrolidione group, and a carboxyl-2-oxypyrindine group; a is an integer from 1 to 1000, b and c are integers from 0 to 1000, where a+b+c is an integer from 3 to 1000, under conditions whereby the R₅ group reacts with a free amino group of the third layer thereby forming a covalent bond to give a modified polymeric surface having activated polyoxyalkylene groups covalently bonded thereto.

19. The coating of claim 15, wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are molecules selected from the group consisting of NH₃, (NH₄)⁺, N₂, NO, NO₂ and N₂O₅.

20. The coating of claim 15, wherein the oxygen-containing molecules are molecules selected from the group consisting of O₂ and O₃.
21. The coating of claim 15, wherein the plasma treatment is of a plasma wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are NH₃ and the oxygen-containing molecules are O₂.

22. The coating of claim 15, wherein the plasma treatment is with a plasma wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are N₂O and the oxygen-containing molecules are O₂.

23. An implantable medical device with at least one contacting surface for contacting a bodily fluid or tissue, wherein the contacting surface comprises a coating of claim 15.

24. The device of claim 23, where the device is a member selected from the group consisting of stents, catheters, balloons, shunts, grafts, valves, pacemakers, pulse generators, cardiac defibrillators, spinal stimulators, brain stimulators, sacral nerve stimulators, leads, inducers, sensors, seeds, screws, anchors, anti-adhesion sheets, plates and joints.

25. A method of imparting bioactive properties to a surface, comprising:

modifying the surface by plasma treatment of a plasma comprising nitrogen-containing molecules and oxygen-containing molecules; and

applying a biologically compatible coating to the surface.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein applying the biologically compatible coating comprises plasma polymerization of a hydrocyclosiloxane monomer of the general formula:

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\[ \text{H} - \text{Si} - \text{N} - \text{O} - \text{R} \]
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wherein R is an aliphatic group having 1 to about 5 carbon atoms and n is an integer from 2 to about 10.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein the hydrocyclosiloxane monomer is selected from the group consisting of 1,3,5,7-tetramethylhydrocyclotetrasiloxane, 1,3,5,7,9-pentamethylhydrocyclopentasiloxane, 1,3,5,7,9,11-hexamethylhydrocyclohexasiloxane, and a mixture of 1,3,5,7,9-pentamethylhydrocyclopentasiloxane and 1,3,5,7,11-hexamethylhydrocyclohexasiloxane monomers.

28. The method of claim 25, wherein the biologically compatible coating is a polymer or co-polymer selected from the group consisting of poly acrylate, poly bisphenol A carbonate, polybutadiene, polycarbonate, poly butylene terephthalate, poly butyl methacrylate, polymethyl siloxane, polyester, polyethyleneimine, poly methyl methacrylate, polypropylene, polystyrene, polysulfone, polyurethane, polyvinyl, poly vinyl acetate and polyvinylidene fluoride.

29. The method of claim 25, wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are molecules selected from the group consisting of NH₃, (NH₄)⁺, N₂O, NO, NO₂ and N₂O₅.

30. The method of claim 25, wherein the oxygen-containing molecules are selected from the group consisting of O₂ and O₃.

31. The method of claim 25, wherein the plasma treatment with the nitrogen-containing molecules and the oxygen-containing molecules is sequential.

32. The method of claim 31, wherein the plasma treatment is for less than about two minutes.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein the plasma treatment is for between about thirty seconds and about one minute.

34. The method of claim 25, wherein the plasma treatment is of a plasma wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are NH₃ and the oxygen-containing molecules are O₂.

35. The method of claim 25, wherein the plasma treatment is with a plasma wherein the nitrogen-containing molecules are N₂O and the oxygen-containing molecules are O₂.