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(54) **ORAL PHARMACEUTICAL TABLET FOR CONTROLLED RELEASE OF MESALAZINE AND PROCESS FOR OBTAINING IT**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

The invention provides an oral pharmaceutical tablet for controlled release of mesalazine or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof as active ingredient with a core and a gastro-resistant outer coating, wherein the core comprises mesalazine and a hydrophilic matrix consisting of a mixture of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a different viscosity and the gastro-resistant outer coating comprises a pH-dependent release polymer, with the pharmaceutically acceptable excipients. The invention also refers to the process for obtaining said oral pharmaceutical tablet and to said oral pharmaceutical tablet of controlled release of mesalazine for treating ulcerative colitis.

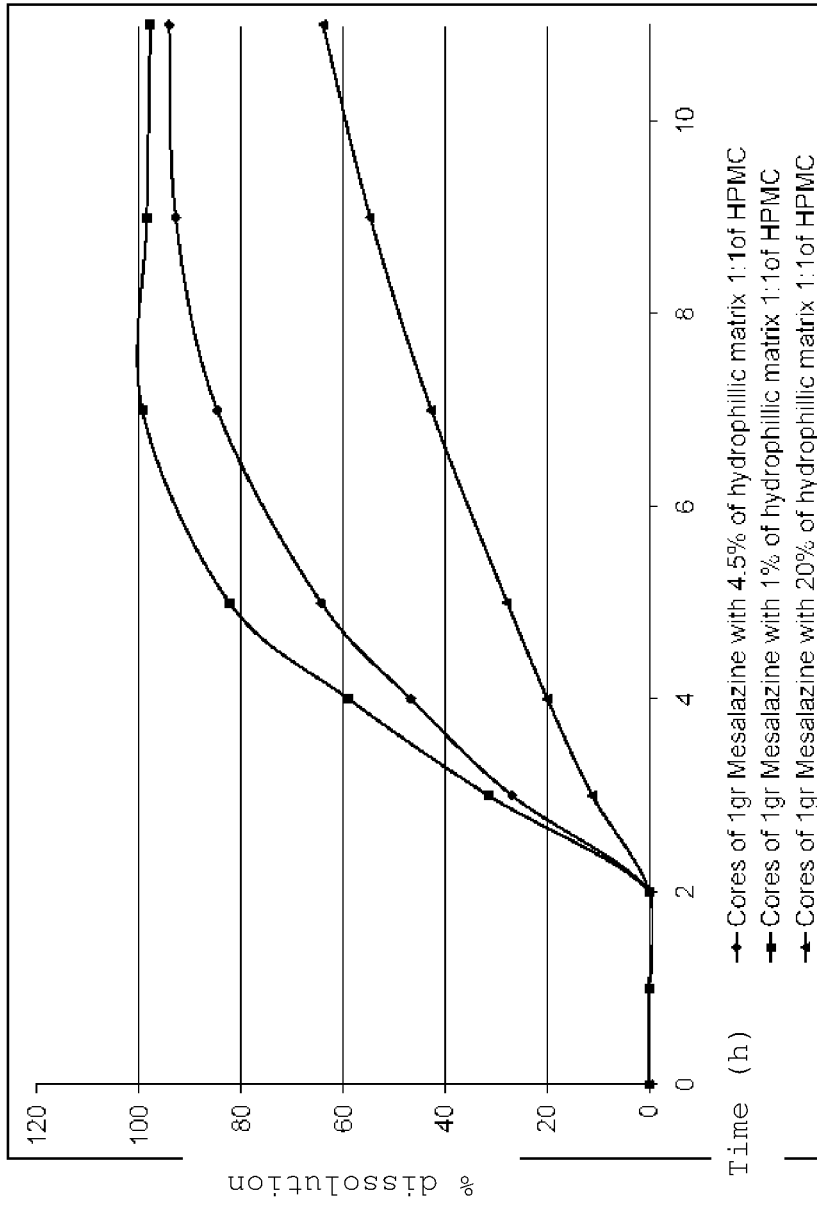


FIG 1

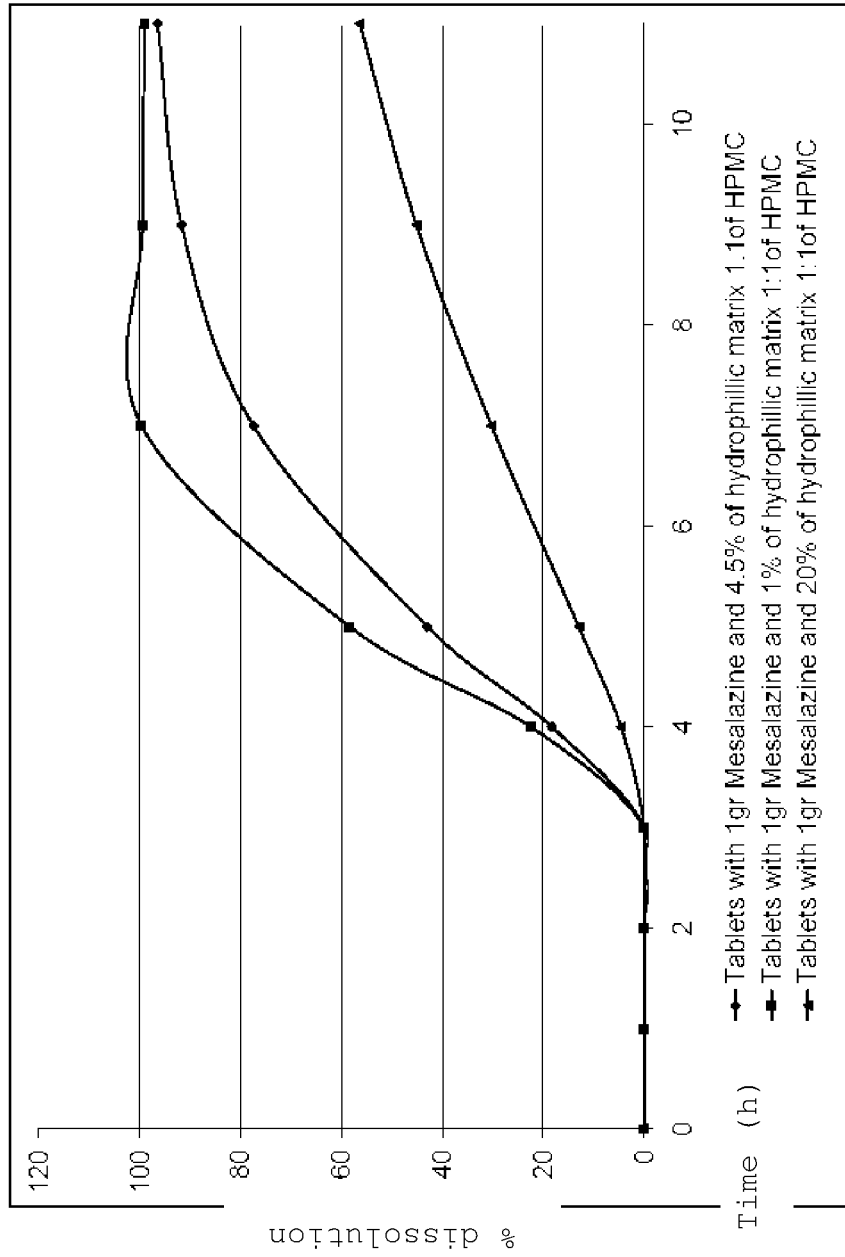


FIG 2

**ORAL PHARMACEUTICAL TABLET FOR
CONTROLLED RELEASE OF MESALAZINE
AND PROCESS FOR OBTAINING IT**

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention refers to an oral pharmaceutical tablet for controlled release of mesalazine as active ingredient, also named mesalamine or 5-amino salicylic acid.

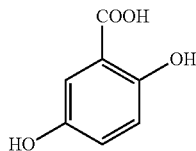
[0002] The invention also refers to the process for obtaining said oral pharmaceutical tablet and to the oral pharmaceutical controlled release tablet of mesalazine for treating ulcerative colitis.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is a spectrum of chronic idiopathic inflammatory intestinal conditions. IBD causes significant GI symptoms that include diarrhea, abdominal pain, bleeding, anemia, and weight loss. IBD is also associated with a spectrum of extraintestinal manifestations, including arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, sclerosing cholangitis, uveitis, iritis, pyoderma gangrenosum, and erythema nodosum.

[0004] IBD is divided into two major subtypes: ulcerative colitis and Chron's disease. Ulcerative colitis is characterized by confluent mucosal inflammation of the colon starting at the anal verge and extending proximally for a variable extent (eg. Proctitis, left-side colitis, or pancolitis). Chron's disease, by contrast, is characterized by transmural inflammation of any part of the GI tract but most commonly the area adjacent to the ileocecal valve.

[0005] First line therapy for mild-to-moderate ulcerative colitis generally involves mesalazine (5-aminosalicylic acid, or 5-ASA). Mesalazine is an aminosalicilate (5-aminosalicylic acid) with anti-inflammatory properties. Mesalazine is indicated for the induction of remission in patients with active, mild-to-moderate ulcerative colitis. Its chemical name is 5-amino-2-hydroxybenzoic acid and its structural formula is:



[0006] When mesalazine is administered orally, a large amount of the drug is absorbed from the upper gastrointestinal tract, causing systemic side effects. The mechanism of action of mesalazine is not fully understood, but appears to be topical.

[0007] Thus, the treatment of ulcerative colitis with mesalazine requires the specific delivery of the drug in the colon. Such specific delivery increases efficiency and enable reduction of the minimum effective dose. Various systems have been developed for colon-specific drug delivery. Enteric coating systems are the most commonly used for colonic drug delivery, due to the pH difference between small intestine and colon.

[0008] There are several modified-release mesalazine preparations currently commercialized for the treatment of mild to moderate acute exacerbations of UC, and maintenance of remission.

[0009] The development of efficacious modified release composition of mesalazine is hampered by the fact that this type of composition usually contains higher concentration of the active ingredient when compared with immediate release compositions on the same active. Another problem frequently encountered with conventional sustained release dosage forms is the inability to increase the residence time in an absorption window.

[0010] Patent application WO 03/011205-A discloses controlled release caplets of nifedipine comprising a matrix consisting of a 1:1 mixture of HPMC K15M and HPMC K100M, having viscosities of 13,275-24,780 mPa·s and 75,000-140,000 mPa·s respectively, (see table 1) which provide a release of the active from the beginning of the administration with a zero order release of the active. After 5 hours from its administration, the 50% of the active is released. The active is completely released from the formulation after 10 hours from its administration.

[0011] Patent application WO 00/76481-A discloses controlled release tablets containing mesalazine as active ingredient comprising an inner lipophilic matrix with melting point below 90° C. such as carnauba wax, in which the active ingredient is inglobated, an outer hydrophilic matrix such as hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose. The resulting tablets are then film coated with polymethacrylates to provide colonic delivery of the active.

[0012] WO 00/76481-A discloses the preparation of a tablet by melt granulation of the active ingredient with the lipophilic substance, to obtain granules which then are mixed with the hydrophilic excipients acting as hydrophilic matrix and subsequent tableting or compression. The resulting tablets are then film coated with polymethacrylates to provide colonic delivery of the active.

[0013] However, low melting lipophilic materials blended with HPMC for achieving controlled or sustained release of an active ingredient have produced different results. Some of these systems have shown the failure to provide extended release of the drug, especially when the lipophilic material is used at high concentrations ($\geq 10\%$ w/w). Additionally, the melt granulation technique is expensive, time consuming and requires the use of special equipment. The melt granulation process consist of partially or completely melting the lipid excipient, then mixing with the active ingredient and other excipients and reducing the mixture to granules by chilling or congealing. During this process, the active ingredient is subjected to heat, and therefore if the temperature is not carefully controlled, the active ingredient can partially decompose. Additionally, subsequent cooling could induce phase transitions through the solid state or melt mechanism that could lead to undesired variations in the release of the active.

[0014] The present invention provides an alternative oral pharmaceutically tablet that avoids the drawbacks of the above mentioned formulations.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0015] The authors of the present invention have found that it is possible to provide a robust matrix system by combining different viscosity grades of HPMC to obtain the desired release features.

[0016] Surprisingly, it has been found that a hydrophilic matrix consisting of a mixture of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of less than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution and hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity higher than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution in a weight ratio between 10:1 to 1:10, overcome the drawbacks of the prior art formulations.

[0017] Advantageously, with the new oral pharmaceutical tablet for controlled release of mesalazine as active ingredient an initial burst release of the active ingredient from the matrix is avoided and a desired colonic release profile of mesalazine as active ingredient is achieved.

[0018] The invention also provides a process for the preparation of said oral pharmaceutical tablet designed for the sustained or controlled release of mesalazine as active ingredient in the tablet.

[0019] At least another object of the invention relates to said oral pharmaceutical tablet for the treatment of ulcerative colitis.

FIGURES

[0020] FIG. 1 shows the different dissolution profiles obtained with the cores of controlled release of mesalazine before cover them with the outer cover layer in order to obtain the tablet according to the present invention. The symbol ■ shows the dissolution profile of cores containing 1 g of Mesalazine with 1% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet of a hydrophilic matrix consisting of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of less than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution and hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of higher than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution (example 2). The symbol ◆ shows the dissolution profile of cores containing 1 g of Mesalazine with 4.5% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet of a hydrophilic matrix consisting of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of less than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution and hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of higher than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution (Example 1). The symbol ▲ shows the dissolution profile of cores containing 1 g of Mesalazine with 20% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet of a hydrophilic matrix consisting of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of less than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution and hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of higher than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution (example 3).

[0021] FIG. 2 shows the different dissolution profiles obtained with the oral pharmaceutical tablet of controlled release of mesalazine according to the present invention, which tablets comprise the cores of FIG. 1. The meaning of the symbols are the same than in FIG. 1.

[0022] From the two figures, it can be observed that both cores and tablets maintain the same dissolution profile of mesalazine. Further, FIG. 1 demonstrates that the used hydrophilic matrix in the core of the tablet according to the present invention produces the dissolution effect with the desired profile of controlled release of mesalazine.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0023] The present invention provides an oral pharmaceutical tablet of controlled release of mesalazine or a pharma-

ceutically acceptable salt thereof as active ingredient wherein said tablet comprises a core and a gastro-resistant outer coating.

[0024] As used herein, "controlled release of mesalazine" means a dosage form in which the release of mesalazine is modified (or sustained) over a period of time compared to an immediate release formulation.

[0025] According to the present invention, mesalazine may be in any crystalline or amorphous form.

[0026] Thus, the invention provides an oral pharmaceutical tablet for controlled release of mesalazine or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof as active ingredient with a core and a gastro-resistant outer coating, characterized in that said core comprises:

[0027] i) mesalazine from 40% to 90%, preferably from 50% to 90%, more preferably from 60% to 80% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet; and

[0028] ii) a hydrophilic matrix consisting of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of less than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution and hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity higher than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution in a weight ratio between 10:1 to 1:10, preferably in a weight ratio of 1:1, which is present from 1% up to 20%, preferably from 1% to 15%, more preferably from 2% to 10%, and still more preferably from 3% to 5% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet;

[0029] and said gastro-resistant outer coating comprises:

[0030] iii) a pH-dependent release polymer present in an amount from 15% to 75% by weight of the outer cover layer of the tablet, wherein said outer cover layer is present from 5% to 25%, preferably from 10% to 20% based on the total weight of the tablet.

[0031] Surprisingly, the two viscosity grade HPMC polymers with these ratio provides hydrophilic matrices with improved physical features that exhibit similar dissolution profiles at different agitation speeds.

[0032] Suitable HPMC polymers include those sold under the trademark METHOCEL® (Dow Chemical Corporation) or the trademark METOLOSE® (Shin-Etsu). The polymer chemistry and viscosity of different families of Methocel HPMC can be found in table 1. The number designation after each letter denotes the viscosity of a 2 wt % aqueous solution at 25° C.

TABLE 1

METHOCEL™ Product	Viscosity of 2% solution in water, mPa · s (USP/EP/JP)
METHOCEL™ E3 Premium LV	2.4-3.6
METHOCEL™ E5 Premium LV	4.0-6.0
METHOCEL™ E6 Premium LV	4.8-7.2
METHOCEL™ E15 Premium LV	12-18
METHOCEL™ E50 Premium LV	40-60
METHOCEL™ E4M Premium	2663-4970
METHOCEL™ E10M Premium CR	9525-17780
METHOCEL™ F50 Premium	40-60
METHOCEL™ F4M Premium	2663-4970
METHOCEL™ K3 Premium LV	2.4-3.6
METHOCEL™ K100 Premium LV	80-120
METHOCEL™ K4M Premium	2663-4970
METHOCEL™ K15M Premium	13275-24780
METHOCEL™ K100M Premium	75000-140000

[0033] In a preferred embodiment the hydrophilic matrix consist of a mixture of viscosity 80-120 mPa·s of 2% solution in water (Methocel K100 Premium LV) and viscosity 2663-

4970 mPa·s of 2% solution in water (METHOCEL™ K4M Premium) in a weight ratio of 1:1.

[0034] The tablet(s) of the formulation may be coated with one or more layers of a pH-dependent release polymer.

[0035] As used herein, the term “pH-dependent release polymer” also named enteric polymer means a polymer that is insoluble at the highly acidic pH found in the stomach, but dissolves rapidly at a less acidic (relatively more basic) pH. According to the invention, the pH-dependent release polymer will not dissolve in the acidic juices of the stomach (pH~3), but will do it in the higher pH environment present in the small intestine as at a pH above 5.5 or in the colon as at a pH above 7.0.

[0036] The pH-dependent release polymer is selected such that mesalazine will be released at about the time that the dosage form reaches the inlet between the small intestine and the colon, or thereafter in the colon. The selection is based upon the pH profile of the small intestine and colon. The pH of the small intestine gradually increases from about 5 to 5.5 in the duodenal bulb to about 7.2 in the distal portions of the small intestine (ileum). The pH drops significantly at the ileocecal junction to about 6.3 and very gradually increases to about 7 in the left or descending colon.

[0037] The authors have found that the use of a high-viscosity grade HPMC as a matrix former allows swelling the core upon absorption of the gastric fluid and the gradual erosion over a time period of hours, since it increases the gel strength. The addition of low viscosity grade HMPC avoids an initial burst release of the active ingredient from the matrix, thus allowing consistent erosion. The erosion process is simultaneously initiated with the swelling process upon contact of the surface of the dosage form with the gastric fluid. Erosion reflects the dissolution of the polymer beyond the formation of the gel-solution interface, where the polymer has become sufficiently diluted that the active ingredient can be transported away from the dosage form by diffusion or convection.

[0038] The hydrophilic matrix according to the invention provides the desired colonic release profile, providing sustained release of the active within the desired absorption window.

[0039] With the oral pharmaceutical tablet of the present invention a release of mesalazine is achieved in the colon for which pharmacological activity is desired at time significantly delayed from the time of peroral administration. Taking into account the route of a tablet from its peroral administration to the colon, the oral pharmaceutical tablet of the present invention provides an adequate colonic release profile.

[0040] Preferred pH-dependent release polymers are those, which remain intact in the lower pH environs of the stomach and small intestine, but begin to dissolve in an aqueous solution at a pH above 6.3, preferably between 6.8 to 7.2. Preferred enteric polymer are selected from poly(methacrylic acid, methyl methacrylate) 1:2 (Eudragit® S), and mixtures of poly(methacrylic acid, methyl methacrylate) 1:1 (Eudragit® L) and poly(methacrylic acid, methyl methacrylate) 1:2 (Eudragit® S) in a ratio of about 1:10 to about 1:1, preferably about 1:5 to about 1:3. Especially preferred are Eudragit® S and Eudragit® L or mixtures thereof. Especially preferred is a mixture 1:10 to 10:1 of Eudragit® S and Eudragit® L.

[0041] In a preferred embodiment, the pH-dependent release polymer is present in an amount from 15% to 75% by weight of the outer cover layer of the tablet.

[0042] Preferably, outer cover layer is present from 5% to 25% based on the total weight of the tablet formulation, preferably from 10% to 20%.

[0043] Optionally, the core further comprises a filler, a binding agent, an antiadherent agent, a lubricant and a disintegrant as a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient. Optionally, the outer cover layer of the tablet further comprises an antiadherent, a plasticizer and a colorant as a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

[0044] Preferably, the tablet(s) of the invention comprises a filler. Materials commonly used as fillers include, but are not limited to, dextrose, lactose, lactose monohydrate, fructose, mannitol, microcrystalline cellulose, starch, pregelatinized starch, powdered cellulose, silicied cellulose, sorbitol, sucrose and talc, or mixtures thereof. Preferred filler is microcrystalline cellulose. The filler may be present in an amount from 0.5% to 10% by weight, preferably from 0.5% to 8% by weight, and more preferably from 1% to 5% by weight of the total weight of the tablet.

[0045] Preferably, the tablet(s) of the invention comprises a binding agent or binder. Materials commonly used as binders include, but are not limited to, polyvinylpyrrolidone, hydroxypropylcellulose, hydroxypropylmethylcellulose, hydroxyethylcellulose, methylcellulose, sodium carboxymethyl cellulose, calcium carboxymethylcellulose, calcium carboxymethyl cellulose and/or mixtures thereof. Preferred binding agent is polyvinylpyrrolidone. The binder may be present in an amount from 0.1% to 10% by weight, preferably from 0.5% to 9% by weight, and more preferably from 1% to 7.5% by weight of the total weight of the tablet.

[0046] Preferably, the tablet formulation according to the invention comprises an antiadherent agent in the core. The outer cover layer also may comprise an antiadherent agent to eliminate sticking during the film coating process.

[0047] Materials commonly used as antiadherent include, but are not limited to, colloidal silicon dioxide and talc, being preferable the colloidal silicon dioxide (aerosil) when is used in the core and talc when is used in the outer cover layer.

[0048] The antiadherent agent is present in the core in an amount of from 0.1% to 5% by weight, preferably from 0.1% to 3.5% by weight, more preferably from 0.1% to 1.5% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet, and up to 30% by weight, preferably from 5% to 30% by weight based on the total weight of the outer cover layer.

[0049] Preferably, the tablet formulation according to the invention optionally comprises a lubricant. Materials commonly used as lubricant include, but are not limited to, stearic acid, and stearic acid salts such as magnesium stearate. A preferred lubricant is magnesium stearate. The lubricant may be present 0.1% to 5% by weight, preferably from 0.1% to 3% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet.

[0050] Preferably, the tablet formulation according to the invention optionally comprises a disintegrant. Materials commonly used as disintegrant include, but are not limited to, starch, pregelatinized starch, low-substituted hydroxypropylcellulose, sodium carboxymethyl cellulose, crospovidone, sodium croscarmellose and/or mixtures thereof. Preferably, the disintegrant agent is pregelatinized starch.

[0051] The disintegrant agent is present in the core of the tablet(s) from 1% to 10% by weight, preferably from 1% to

8% by weight, more preferably from 2.5% to 7.5% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet.

[0052] Preferably, the outer cover layer optionally comprises a plasticizer to provide homogeneous film mixtures. Preferred plasticizer includes triethyl citrate, polyethylene glycol, or dibutyl sebacate, preferably triethyl citrate. The plasticizer agent may be present in an amount up to 20%, preferably from 5% to 20% by weight based on the total weight of the outer cover layer.

[0053] The tablet(s) of the invention includes one or more pharmaceutically acceptable excipients. All such excipients must be "pharmaceutically acceptable" in the sense of being compatible with the other ingredients of the pharmaceutical composition and not injurious to the patient. Pharmaceutically acceptable excipients may include colours, flavours e.g. menthol, sweeteners e.g. mannitol, preservatives, stabilisers, antioxidants and any other excipients known to those skilled in the art.

[0054] In a preferred embodiment, the pharmaceutical tablet according to the invention comprises a core comprising from 40% to 90% by weight of mesalazine, from 1% to 20% of a 1:10 to 10:1 weight ratio mixture of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of less than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution and hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity higher than 200 mPa·s in 2% w/w aqueous solution, from 0.5% to 10% of microcrystalline cellulose, from 0.1% to 10% by weight of polyvinyl pyrrolidone, and from 1% to 10% by weight of pregelatinized starch, and the outer cover layer comprising a pH-dependent release polymer and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable excipients.

[0055] In a more preferred embodiment, the pharmaceutical tablet according to the invention comprises a core comprising a core comprising from 50% to 90% by weight of mesalazine, from 2% to 10% of a 1:10 to 10:1 weight ratio mixture of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of less than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution and hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity higher than 200 mPa·s in 2% w/w aqueous solution, from 0.5% to 8% of microcrystalline cellulose, from 0.5% to 9% by weight of polyvinyl pyrrolidone, and from 2% to 8% by weight of pregelatinized starch, and the outer cover layer comprising a pH-dependent release polymer and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable excipients.

[0056] In a more preferred embodiment, the pharmaceutical tablet according to the invention comprises a core comprising a core comprising from 60% to 80% by weight of mesalazine, from 3% to 5% of a 1:10 to 10:1 weight ratio mixture of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of less than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution and hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity higher than 200 mPa·s in 2% w/w aqueous solution, from 1% to 5% of microcrystalline cellulose, from 1% to 7.5% by weight of polyvinyl pyrrolidone, and from 2.5% to 7.5% by weight of pregelatinized starch, and the outer cover layer comprising a pH-dependent release polymer and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable excipients.

[0057] The second aspect of the present invention is to provide a process for obtaining the oral pharmaceutical tablet according to the first aspect of the invention, said process comprising the steps of:

[0058] a) blending mesalazine with the hydrophilic matrix consisting of HPMC microcrystalline cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of less than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution

and hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity higher than 200 mPa·s in a weight ratio between 1:10 to 10:1, and with the disintegrant and the binder, if they are present, to obtain a blended mixture;

[0059] b) granulating the blended mixture obtained in step a) with water or with an aqueous solution of binder, previously prepared, when the binder is present in step a);

[0060] c) drying the granulate obtained in step b);

[0061] d) lubricating, if a lubricant is present, the dried granules and compressing it to obtain the core; and

[0062] e) preparing an aqueous dispersion which comprises the pH-dependent polymer with the pharmaceutically acceptable excipients, and coating the core to obtain the outer cover layer, and thus the tablet.

[0063] The method used for coating the tablet(s) may be any conventional method known to a person skilled in the art.

[0064] Advantageously, in step b) an aqueous solution of polyvinyl pyrrolidone is prepared; in step c) the drying is carried out in a fluid bed dryer; in step d) a lubricant is added for lubricating the dried granules and, then, the blend compressed to obtain a core, and in step e) an aqueous dispersion of an alcoholic solution of an antiadherent agent and the pH-dependent polymer and a plastisizer is prepared for coating the core obtaining an outer cover layer.

[0065] In another aspect, the present invention relates to the tablets according to the invention for treating ulcerative colitis.

[0066] The following examples are given to illustrate the invention in a sufficiently complete manner.

EXAMPLES

Example 1

[0067]

Tablet component	(mg/comp.)	Function
Tablet Core		
Mesalazine	1000.00	API
HPMC Methocel K4M Premium	31.67	Hydrophilic matrix
HPMC Methocel K100 LV Premium	31.67	Hydrophilic matrix
Polyvinylpyrrolidone K30	25.33	Binder
Pregelatinized starch	60.83	Disintegrant
Cellulose Microcrystalline	40.17	Filler
Aerosil 200	18.67	Antiadherent
Magnesium stearate	10.00	Lubricant
Tablet coating		
Talc	29.14	antiadherent
Methacrylic acid/methyl methacrylate copolymer 1:2 (Eudragit® S)	10.02	Controlled Release Polymer
Methacrylic acid/methyl methacrylate copolymer 1:1 (Eudragit® L)	90.18	Controlled Release Polymer
Triethyl citrate	80.16	Plasticizer
Titanium dioxide	0.5	Colorant
Red iron oxide	1.5	Colorant

[0068] Mesalazine, HPMC Methocel K4M Premium, HPMC Methocel K100 LV Premium and pregelatinized starch are mixed and subsequently granulated with a polyvinyl pyrrolidone solution (15%) in purified water.

[0069] The granules are dried in a fluid bed dryer. The dried granules are passed through suitable mesh sieve. These granules are mixed with colloidal silicon dioxide and microcrystalline cellulose and lubricated with magnesium stearate.

[0070] The final blend is then compressed.

[0071] The tablets are coated with the gastro-resistant coating suspension (alcoholic solution of talc, Eudragit S 100, Eudragit L100, and triethylcitrate).

Examples 2 to 3

[0072] Using a procedure similar to that described in Example 1, tablets containing 1000 mg of mesalazine and the different amounts of the HPMC mixture shown in Table 1 were prepared.

Example	HPMC Methocel K4M:HPMC Methocel K100 LV 1:1 mixture (% by weight)*
2	1
3	20

*The weight percent refers to the total weight of the tablet(s).

[0073] Composition of tablets produced according to examples 2 and 3 is shown below:

Tablet component	Example 2 (mg/comp.)	Example 3 (mg/comp.)
Tablet Core		
Mesalazine	1000.00	1000.0
HPMC Methocel K4M Premium	6.09	121.8
HPMC Methocel K100 LV Premium	6.09	121.8
Polivinylpirrolidone K30	25.33	25.30
Pregelatinized starch	60.83	60.80
Cellulose Microcrystalline	46.83	46.80
Aerosil 200	18.67	18.67
Magnesium stearate	10.00	10.00
Tablet coating		
Talc	27.92	33.43
Methacrylic acid/methyl methacrylate copolymer 1:2 (Eudragit ® S)	9.60	11.49
Methacrylic acid/methyl methacrylate copolymer 1:1 (Eudragit ® L)	86.41	103.45
Triethyl citrate	76.81	91.96
Titanium dioxide	0.48	0.57
Red iron oxide	1.44	1.72

Dissolution Method

[0074] For all examples, the tablets were tested for dissolution of mesalazine at USP Type II apparatus. Dissolution medium: 2 hours in HC1, 1 hour at pH 6,4 and 9 hours at pH 7.2.

[0075] The dissolution profile obtained for the formulations described in examples 1 to 3 is disclosed in FIG. 1.

What is claimed is:

1. An oral pharmaceutical tablet composition for controlled release of mesalazine comprising:

a core and

a gastro-resistant outer coating,

wherein the core comprises:

i) a mesalazine compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof as an active ingredient from about 40% to about 90% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet; and

ii) a hydrophilic matrix from about 1% to about 20% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet comprising

a first hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of less than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution and a second (HPMC) HPMC having a viscosity greater than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution in a weight ratio of the first HPMC to the second HPMC between about 10:1 to about 1:10, and

wherein the gastro-resistant outer coating comprises:

i) an outer cover layer from about 5% to about 25% based on the total weight of the tablet and

ii) a pH-dependent release polymer.

2. The oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 1, wherein mesalazine is present in an amount from about 50% to about 90% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet.

3. The oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 1, wherein the hydrophilic matrix is present in an amount from about 1% to about 15% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet.

4. The oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 1, wherein the outer cover layer is present in an amount from about 10% to about 20% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet.

5. The oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 1, wherein the hydrophilic matrix comprises a weight ratio of the first HPMC to the second HPMC of about 1:1.

6. The oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 1, wherein the hydrophilic matrix is present in an amount from about 1% to about 15% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet.

7. The oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 1, wherein the pH-dependent release polymer is present in an amount from about 15% to about 75% by weight of the outer cover layer of the tablet.

8. The oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 1, wherein the core further comprises a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient selected from the group consisting of a filler, a binder, an antiadherent agent, a lubricant and a disintegrant.

9. The oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 1, wherein the outer cover layer further comprises a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient selected from the group consisting of an antiadherent, a plasticizer, and a colorant.

10. The oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 8, wherein the filler is present in an amount from about 0.5% to about 10% by weight of the total weight of the tablet.

11. The oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 8, wherein the binder is present in an amount from about 0.1% to about 10% by weight of the total weight of the tablet.

12. The oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 8, wherein the antiadherent agent is present in an amount from about 0.1% to about 5% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet and up to about 30% by weight based on the total weight of the outer cover layer.

13. The oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 8, wherein the lubricant is present from about 0.1% to about 5% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet.

14. The oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 8, wherein the disintegrant is present from about 1% to about 10% by weight based on the total weight of the tablet.

15. The oral pharmaceutical controlled release tablet composition according to claim 9, wherein the plasticizer is

present in an amount up to about 20% by weight based on the total weight of the outer cover layer.

16. A method of making the oral pharmaceutical tablet composition according to claim 1, said method comprising the steps of:

- a) blending the mesalazine with the hydrophilic matrix comprising the first hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC) having a viscosity of less than 200 mPa·s in 2% aqueous solution and the second HPMC having a viscosity greater than 200 mPa·s in a weight ratio of the first HPMC to the second HPMC between about 1:10 to about 10:1, and optionally with the disintegrant and the binder, to obtain a blended mixture;
- b) granulating the blended mixture obtained in step a) with water or, optionally, with an aqueous solution of the binder, to form a granulate;
- c) drying the granulate obtained in step b) to form a plurality of dried granules;
- d) optionally lubricating the dried granules of step c) with a lubricant and compressing the granules to form the core;

e) preparing an aqueous dispersion comprising the pH-dependent polymer and the pharmaceutically acceptable excipients; and

f) coating the core to form the outer cover layer of the tablet.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the aqueous solution of step b) is prepared of polyvinyl pyrrolidone.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein the drying step c) is carried out in a fluid bed dryer.

19. The method of claim 16, wherein the lubricant of step d) is combined with the dried granules to form a blend, and wherein the blend is compressed to form a core.

20. The method of claim 16, wherein the aqueous dispersion of step e) is made from an alcoholic solution of an antiadherent agent, the pH-dependent polymer, and a plastisizer that is prepared for coating the core and then forming the outer cover layer.

21. (canceled)

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