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Production of cyclotron-based Gallium-68 radioisotope and related radiopharmaceuticals

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Radioisotope ^{68}Ga is used for radiopharmaceuticals synthesis world wide and its application is increasing every year. $^{68}\text{Ge}/^{68}\text{Ga}$ generator are the main source of ^{68}Ga for radiolabeled radiopharmaceuticals products such as ^{68}Ga -DOTATOC and ^{68}Ga -PSMA. The price of the generator is quite expensive and due to decaying of ^{68}Ge it is necessary to buy a new one nearly every half year. Another limitation of the all available on market generator is its maximum produced activity up to 50 mCi (1.85 GBq). Half-life of ^{68}Ge is 271 days it means that after half year is as little as 1.15 GBq. The yield of ^{68}Ga elution and radiolabeling could be between 80-50 % and for PET examination is necessary about 150-300 MBq radioactivity. Production of ^{68}Ga using cyclotron from enriched ^{68}Zn using $^{68}\text{Zn}(p,n)^{68}\text{Ga}$ reaction can be easily prepare with activity as much as 10-100 GBq suitable for radiolabeling. There are two possible way of production ^{68}Ga from point of targetry –from solid target, where the layer of ^{68}Zn could be prepared by pressing of Zink powder or by electrodeposition. The second possibility is liquid target, where the ^{68}Zn is dissolved in nitric acid. Anyway, many technical details have to be solved. The choice of proper proton energy, solid target preparation with suitable amount of zinc used to get proper thickness for proton absorption, dissolution of solid target, optimal concentration of ^{68}Zn in nitric acid solution, separation chemical procedure for zinc removal with high efficiency (Zn decreasing concentration more than several thousand times). Besides of chemical separation processes in which specific sorbents are used and high concentration of hydrochloric acidic solutions. On the other side there is a problem with high acidic solutions for radiolabeling. The main cycle for ^{68}Ga preparation, target preparation, proton irradiation of enriched ^{68}Zn , dissolution, separation and labeling procedure for following radiopharmaceuticals – ^{68}Ga -DOTATOC, ^{68}Ga -DOTANOC and ^{68}Ga -PSMA11 will be presented.

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