


## REVIEW ARTICLE

# Structures, properties, and challenges of emerging 2D materials in bioelectronics and biosensors

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## Abstract

Bioelectronics are powerful tools for monitoring and stimulating biological and biochemical processes, with applications ranging from neural interface simulation to biosensing. The increasing demand for bioelectronics has greatly promoted the development of new nanomaterials as detection platforms. Recently, owing to their ultrathin structures and excellent physicochemical properties, emerging two-dimensional (2D) materials have become one of the most researched areas in the fields of bioelectronics and biosensors. In this timely review, the physicochemical structures of the most representative emerging 2D materials and the design of their nanostructures for engineering high-performance bioelectronic and biosensing devices are presented. We focus on the structural optimization of emerging 2D material-based composites to achieve better regulation for enhancing the performance of bioelectronics. Subsequently, the recent developments of emerging 2D materials in bioelectronics, such as neural interface simulation, biomolecular/biomarker detection, and skin sensors are discussed thoroughly. Finally, we provide conclusive views on the current challenges and future perspectives on utilizing emerging 2D materials and their composites for bioelectronics and biosensors. This review will offer important guidance in designing and applying emerging 2D materials in bioelectronics, thus further promoting their prospects in a wide biomedical field.

## KEYWORDS

bioelectronics, biosensors, emerging 2D materials, nanostructures and properties, neural interfaces simulation

Fan Chen and Qing Tang contributed equally to this study.

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## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Bioelectronics is a fast-growing interdisciplinary field of research involving the integration of biomaterials with electronic transducers. Silicon-based electronics have been proven to apply to a wide range of biological and biochemical monitors and sensors, such as biochips, biosensors, and biophotovoltaic imaging tubes.<sup>1–6</sup> However, silicon-based electronics face various challenges, including reduced carrier mobility, increased short-channel effects at sub-10 nm nodes, and limited flexibility. In particular, to promote flexibility, rigid silicon-based components are required to become ultra-thin, which is extremely difficult for device processing and reliable integration. In recent years, low-dimensional materials and their composites have been demonstrated to exhibit excellent physicochemical properties, such as electrical and optical properties, making them especially suitable for integration with low modulus to obtain high-performance electronic and photovoltaic devices while withstanding large mechanical deformation.<sup>7</sup>

Since the discovery of graphene by Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov in 2004,<sup>8,9</sup> research on various properties and applications of two-dimensional (2D) materials are being conducted. Currently, 2D materials are defined as a single atomic plane, whereas 100 layers should be considered as three-dimensional (3D) thin films. To date, beyond graphene, emerging 2D materials, such as hexagonal boron nitride (*h*-BN),<sup>10</sup> graphitic carbon nitride (*g*-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub>),<sup>11</sup> black phosphorus (BP),<sup>12</sup> metal and metal oxide nanosheets,<sup>13</sup> transition metal dichalcogenides (TMDs),<sup>14</sup> MXenes,<sup>15</sup> metal-organic frameworks (MOFs),<sup>16</sup> and covalent-organic frameworks (COFs),<sup>17</sup> have been widely studied and applied in biomedical fields. Moreover, from a material science point of view, owing to their intrinsic atomic thickness, mechanical flexibility, high transparency, high carrier transfer characteristics, and good biocompatibility at

material-biological interfaces, the emerging 2D materials can not only address the requirements of bioelectronic devices but also skillfully avoid the limitations of silicon-based electronic devices.<sup>18–20</sup> Together, they are promising for next-generation bioelectronics, such as flexible skin devices, neural interface sensors, electrode sequences, and field-effect devices.<sup>21–25</sup>

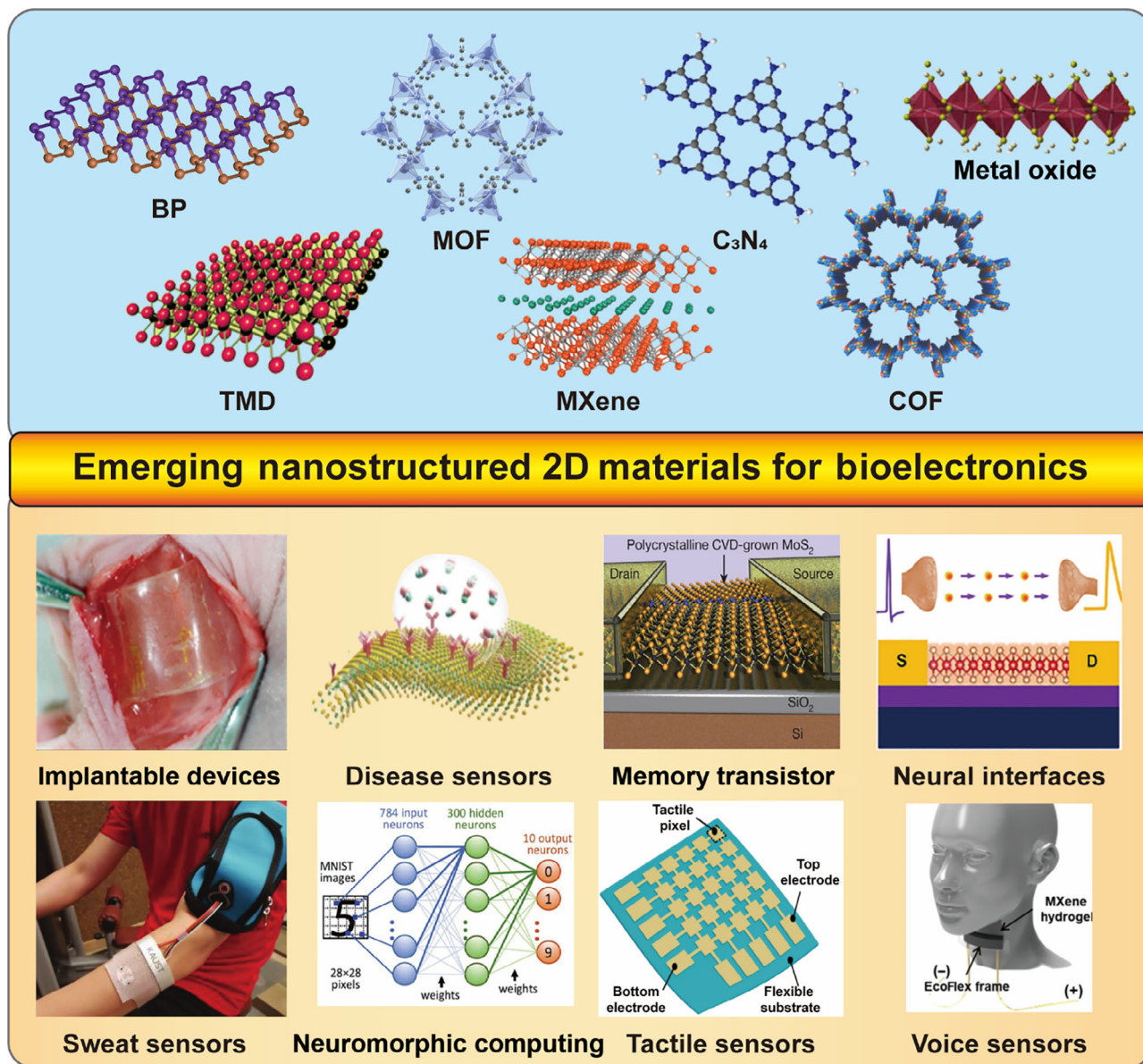
In addition, secondary engineering of emerging 2D materials and their composites, such as molecular tailoring and surface functionalization, is worth considering. Polymers are widely used for molecular tailoring because of their versatility and ease of synthesis.<sup>26–29</sup> Likewise, the emerging 2D materials with ultrathin structures or large surface areas make it convenient for surface decoration of versatile components, thus achieving multifunctional bioelectronics and biosensors applications. In addition to polymers and organic molecules,<sup>30,31</sup> emerging 2D materials also allow the loading of other functional nanomaterials, such as quantum dots,<sup>32</sup> silver nanoparticles,<sup>33</sup> and Fe<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub> nanoparticles,<sup>34</sup> thus resulting in a nanocomposite that integrates the performances from both sides. In general, the combination of emerging 2D materials with functional molecules/nanomaterials has boosted the development of solvent-processable nanodevices, physiologically stable and biocompatible monitoring nanoplatfroms, and tissue/cell-adhesive nanointerfaces, which show promise for disease diagnosis, human body signal monitoring, and biosensing.

Considering the unlimited potential of emerging 2D materials in bioelectronics, it is assumed that with more insights into their structures and properties, their applications in bioelectronics/biosensors will be gradually expanded. In this review, the physicochemical structures of the most representative emerging 2D materials, such as *g*-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub>, BP, TMDs, MXenes, metal/metal oxide nanosheets, 2D MOFs/COFs, and their composites, to engineer high-performance bioelectronic and biosensing devices are presented (Scheme 1). We focus on the

structural optimization of emerging 2D material-based composites to achieve better regulation for enhancing the performance of bioelectronics. Subsequently, the recent developments of emerging 2D materials in bioelectronics, such as neural interface simulation, biomolecular/biomarker detection, and skin sensors, have been introduced. Finally, we provide very conclusive views on the current challenges and future perspectives of utilizing emerging 2D materials and their composites for bioelectronics and biosensors.

## 2 | STRUCTURES, PROPERTIES, AND PERSPECTIVES OF EMERGING 2D MATERIALS FOR BIOELECTRONICS AND BIOSENSORS

Following the great success of graphene, emerging 2D materials beyond graphenes, such as  $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$ , BP, TMDs, metal oxides, MXenes, and MOF/COF nanosheets, have garnered attention in the fields of materials science and



**SCHEME 1** Illustration on the chemical structures of emerging 2D materials and their applications as bioelectronics and biosensors: Reproduced with permission.<sup>35–42</sup> Copyright 2017, Springer International Publishing AG. Copyright 2018, Nature Publishing Group. Copyright 2019, 2018, American Chemical Society. Copyright 2019, 2018, 2016, Wiley-VCH. Copyright 2018, American Association for the Advancement of Science. 2D, two-dimensional; BP, black phosphorus; COF, covalent-organic frameworks; CVD, chemical vapor deposition; MNIST, MOF, metal-organic frameworks; TMD, transition metal dichalcogenide

TABLE 1 Characteristics, applications, and performances of the emerging 2D material-based bioelectronic devices

		Characteristics	Bioelectronics	Performances	Ref.
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub>		$\pi$ -electron system	Fluorescent sensor for trithiocyanuric acid and Hg <sup>+</sup>	Trithiocyanuric acid detection limit: (LOD) $\sim 9.6 \times 10^{-8}$ M; Hg <sup>+</sup> : range $\sim 0$ –60 $\mu$ M, LOD $\sim 6.2 \times 10^{-7}$ M	43
		Biocompatibility, controllable band-gap luminescence	Electrochemiluminescence biosensor for DNA methyltransferase	Range $\sim 0.05$ –80 U mL <sup>-1</sup> , LOD $\sim 0.043$ U mL <sup>-1</sup>	44
		Photoactivity	Two-photon steered bone regeneration	Restored area to 91.1% $\pm$ 3.2% after 4 weeks	45
		Large surface, photoluminescence	Ratiometric fluorescent probe for H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> and glucose	H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> : range $\sim 0.5$ –50 $\mu$ M, LOD $\sim 50$ nM; glucose: range $\sim 4$ –42 $\mu$ M, LOD $\sim 0.4$ $\mu$ M	46
		Catalytic properties, photoinduced electron transfer	Ratiometric fluorescence detection of exosomal protein	Range $\sim 2.5$ –100 ng mL <sup>-1</sup> , LOD $\sim 2.5 \times 10^3$ particles mL <sup>-1</sup>	47
		Conductivity, biocompatibility	Electrochemical detection of serotonin	Range $\sim 500$ pM–1000 nM, LOD $\sim 150$ pM	48
		Biocompatibility, fluorescent	Fluorescence probe for detection of hemin	Range $\sim 0.5$ –25 $\mu$ M, LOD $\sim 0.15$ $\mu$ M	49
BP		Conductivity	FET biosensor for human IgG	Range $\sim 2$ –100 ng mL <sup>-1</sup> , LOD $\sim 10$ ng mL <sup>-1</sup>	50
		Photoresponse	Synapse	Energy consumption $\sim 3.5$ pJ	51
		Large surface, conductivity	Electrochemical detection of myoglobin	Range $\sim 1$ pg mL <sup>-1</sup> –16 $\mu$ g mL <sup>-1</sup> , LOD $\sim 0.524$ pg mL <sup>-1</sup>	52
		Large surface, negative electricity	Fluorometric method for protease detection	Range $\sim 0$ –15 ng mL <sup>-1</sup> , LOD $\sim 1$ ng mL <sup>-1</sup>	53
		Light absorbance	Fluorometric method for miRNA detection	Range $\sim 1$ –1000 nM, LOD $\sim 0.96$ nM	54
TMDs	MoS <sub>2</sub>	Large surface, flexibility, semiconducting	Tactile sensor	Pressure range $\sim 1$ –120 kPa, response time $\sim 180$ ms	55
	MoS <sub>2</sub>	Transparency, flexibility, ultrathin, semiconducting	Tactile sensor	Pressure range $\sim 1$ –40 kPa; LOD $\sim 1.24$ kPa; gauge factor $\sim 72.5$	56
	MoS <sub>2</sub>	Large surface, conductivity, catalytic properties	Electrochemical detection of roxarsone	Range $\sim 0.05$ –490 $\mu$ M, LOD $\sim 0.03$ $\mu$ M	57
	MoS <sub>2</sub>	Electroactivity, differential affinity toward single and double-stranded DNA	Electrochemical detection of DNA hybridization	Range $\sim 0.03$ –300 nM	58
	MoS <sub>2</sub>	Large surface, semiconducting	FET for DNA hybridization detection	LOD $\sim 10$ fM	59
	MoS <sub>2</sub>	Semiconducting	FET for prostate-specific antigens detection	LOD $\sim 375$ fM	60
	MoS <sub>2</sub>	Atomically thin, semiconducting	FET for streptavidin detection	sensitivity $\sim 196$ at 100 fM	61
	MoS <sub>2</sub>	Quantum confinement effect, semiconducting	FET for glucose detection	Range $\sim 300$ nM–30 mM, LOD $\sim 300$ nM	62
	MoS <sub>2</sub>	Lattice distortion	Memristor	Stable in 1000 sweeping cycles	63
	MoS <sub>2</sub>	Conductivity	Synapse	Energy consumption $\sim 4.8$ pJ	64
	WSe <sub>2</sub>	Large surface, semiconducting	Biosensor for SARS-CoV-2	LOD $\sim 25$ fg $\mu$ L <sup>-1</sup>	65
	WS <sub>2</sub>	Large bandgap	Memristor	Switching times $\sim 13$ ns	66
MXene	Ti <sub>3</sub> C <sub>2</sub>	Large surface, conductivity, biocompatibility	FET for dopamine detection	Range $\sim 100 \times 10^{-9}$ –50 $\times 10^{-6}$ M, LOD $\sim 100 \times 10^{-9}$ M, temporal resolution $\sim 50$ ms	67

TABLE 1 (Continued)

		Characteristics	Bioelectronics	Performances	Ref.
	Ti <sub>3</sub> C <sub>2</sub>	Conductivity, large surface, catalytic properties	Chemiluminescence detection for exosomes	LOD ~ 125 particles $\mu\text{L}^{-1}$ , 100 times lower than ELISA method	68
	Ti <sub>3</sub> C <sub>2</sub>	Conductivity, biocompatibility, dispersibility	Enzyme biosensor for phenol	Range ~ 0.05–15.5 $\mu\text{M}$ , LOD ~ 12 nM	69
	Ti <sub>3</sub> C <sub>2</sub>	Conductivity, large surface, biocompatibility	Neural interfaces	4-fold reduction in interface impedance than Au electrodes	70
	Ti <sub>3</sub> C <sub>2</sub>	Flexibility	Pressure sensor	LOD ~ 8 Pa, response ~14 ms, mechanical reversibility ~5000 times	41
	Ti <sub>3</sub> C <sub>2</sub>	Tunable conductivity, layered structure	Piezoresistive sensor	Mechanical reversibility >4000 times, response <30 ms	72
	Ti <sub>3</sub> C <sub>2</sub> X <sub>2</sub>	Semiconducting	Memristor	Energy consumption ~18.82 nJ	72
	Ti <sub>3</sub> C <sub>2</sub> X <sub>2</sub>	Electroactivity	Detection of synapse plasticity behavior triggered by neurotransmitter	Range ~ 1 aM–1 $\mu\text{M}$ , LOD ~ 1 aM	73
MOFs	Zn-TCPP	Large surface	Fluorescence sensor for DNA detection	Range ~ 0–5 $\times 10^{-9}$ M, LOD ~ 20 $\times 10^{-12}$ M	74
	Zn-TCPP	Large surface	Organic synaptic transistor	On/off ratio > 10 <sup>3</sup> endurance ~500 cycle times	75
	Cu-TCPP	Large surface, $\pi$ -electron system	Aptasensor for ochratoxin	Range ~ 0.1 fg $\text{mL}^{-1}$ –1 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ 0.08 fg $\text{mL}^{-1}$	76
	Co-TCPP (Fe)	Large surface	Electrochemical detection of H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	Range ~ 0.4 $\times 10^{-6}$ –50 $\times 10^{-6}$ M, LOD ~ 0.15 $\times 10^{-6}$ M	77
	Cu-MOF	Large surface, $\pi$ -electron system	Electrochemical detection of AA, H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	AA: range ~ 10–2400 $\mu\text{M}$ , LOD ~ 2.94 $\mu\text{M}$ ; H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> : range ~ 10–1000 $\mu\text{M}$ , LOD ~ 4.1 $\mu\text{M}$	78
	521-MOF	Large surface, electroactivity	Electrochemical and surface plasmon resonance for mucin 1 detection	Range ~ 0.001–0.5 ng $\text{mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ 0.65 pg $\text{mL}^{-1}$	79
	NiCo-MOF	Large surface, $\pi$ -electron system	Electrochemical detection of glucose	Range ~ 1 $\mu\text{M}$ –8 mM, LOD ~ 0.29 $\mu\text{M}$	80
	Fe-BTC	Large surface, catalytic properties	Enzyme biosensor for H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> and glucose	H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> : range ~ 0.04–30 $\mu\text{M}$ , LOD ~ 30 nM; glucose: range ~ 0.04–20 $\mu\text{M}$ , LOD ~ 39 nM	81
	Yb-MOF	Large surface, conductivity	Electrochemiluminescence detection for picric acid and berberine chloride form	Picric acid: range ~ 0.1–1 $\mu\text{M}$ , LOD ~ 81.3 nM; berberine chloride form: range ~ 0.05–1 $\mu\text{M}$ , LOD ~ 36.5 $\mu\text{M}$	82
	CuTCNQ	Conductivity	Pressure sensor	Range ~ 0–1500 Pa, LOD ~ 0.73 Pa, sensitivity ~6.25 kPa <sup>-1</sup>	83
	Cu-THPP	Semiconducting, ultrathin	Synapse	Realized the STP and LTP	84
	NH <sub>2</sub> -MIL-53(Al)	Water solubility, large surface	Ratiometric fluorescent probe for H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> and glucose	H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> : range ~ 0.5–50 $\mu\text{M}$ , LOD ~ 26.49 nM; glucose: range ~ 4–42 $\mu\text{M}$ , LOD ~ 0.041 $\mu\text{M}$	85
	Hf-ETTC-MOL	Large surface, porous structure	Electrochemical detection of carcinoembryonic antigen	Range ~ 1 fg $\text{mL}^{-1}$ –1 ng $\text{mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ 0.63 fg $\text{mL}^{-1}$	86

(Continues)

TABLE 1 (Continued)

		Characteristics	Bioelectronics	Performances	Ref.
	$\text{Cu}_x\text{Ni}_{3-x}(\text{HHTP})_2$	Large surface, semiconducting	Aptasensor for C6 glioma cells and EGFR	C6 glioma cells: range ~ 50– $1 \times 10^5$ cells $\text{mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ 21 cells $\text{mL}^{-1}$ ; EGFR: range ~ 1 fg $\text{mL}^{-1}$ –1 ng $\text{mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ 0.72 fg $\text{mL}^{-1}$	87
	Ru-MOF	Large surface	Electrochemiluminescence detection for cardiac troponin I	Range ~ 1 fg $\text{mL}^{-1}$ –10 ng $\text{mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ 0.48 fg $\text{mL}^{-1}$	88
COFs	Py-M-COF	Large surface, high charge carrier mobility	Electrochemical aptasensors for enrofloxacin and AMP	Enrofloxacin: range ~ 0.01 pg $\text{mL}^{-1}$ –2 ng $\text{mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ 6.07 fg $\text{mL}^{-1}$ ; AMP: range ~ 0.001–1000 pg $\text{mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ 0.04 fg $\text{mL}^{-1}$	89
	TPA-COF	$\pi$ -electron system, planar structure	Fluorescence sensor for single strand DNA	Range ~ 0–1 nM, LOD ~ 20 pM	90
	p-COF	$\pi$ -electron system, hydrogen bonding	Aptasensor for EGFR and MCF-7 cells	EGFR: range ~ 0.05–100 pg $\text{mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ 5.64 fg $\text{mL}^{-1}$ ; MCF-7: range ~ $500 \times 10^5$ cell $\text{mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ 61 cell $\text{mL}^{-1}$	91
	TpTta	$\pi$ -electron system, planar structure	Fluorescence sensor for single strand DNA and nucleotides	DNA: range ~ 10–100 nM, LOD ~ 3.7 nM; ATP: range ~ 25–200 $\mu\text{M}$	92
	COF-5	Long-range order porous structure	Alcohol-sensory synapse	Recognition accuracy ~87.2%	93
Metal oxide	$\text{MoO}_3$	Ultrathin, semiconducting	Synaptic transistor	Energy consumption ~9.6 pJ	94
	$\text{MoO}_3$	Layered structure, surface plasmons	Fiber-optic biosensor for bovine serum albumin	LOD ~ 1 pg $\text{mL}^{-1}$	95
	$\text{MnO}_2$	Planar structure, large surface, conductivity, light absorption	Turn-on fluorescent method for detection of AA	Range ~ 0.5–40 $\mu\text{M}$ , LOD ~ 0.09 $\mu\text{M}$	96
	$\text{MnO}_2$	Catalytic properties	Ratiometric fluorescent sensor for glutathione	Range ~ 20–2000 nM, LOD ~ 6.7 nM	97
	$\text{V}_2\text{O}_5$	Redox activity, wide optical band gap	Fluorescent probe for cysteine	Range ~ 0.1–15 $\mu\text{M}$ , LOD ~ 50 nM	98
	$\text{SnO}_2$	Oxygen vacancy defects, atomically thin	Memristor for neuromorphic computing	92.25% learning accuracy	99
Composites	$g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4/\text{CuO}$	Semiconducting, catalytic properties	Electrochemical detection of dopamine	Range ~ $2 \times 10^{-9}$ – $7.11 \times 10^{-5}$ M, LOD ~ $1.00 \times 10^{-10}$ M	100
	$g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4/\text{TiO}_2$	Biocompatibility, large surface, narrow band gap	Electrochemical detection of glucose	Range ~ 0.05–16 mM, LOD ~ 0.01 mM	101
	$\text{BiVO}_4/2\text{D-C}_3\text{N}_4$	Heterostructure, $\pi$ -electron system	Aptamer photoelectrochemical sensor for Microcystin-LR	Range ~ $5 \times 10^{-7}$ –10 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ $4.191 \times 10^{-8}$ $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$	102
	$g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4/\text{MnO}_2$	Biocompatibility, high quantum yields	Electrochemiluminescence resonance energy transfer-based biosensor for glutathione	Range ~ 0.2–100 $\mu\text{M}$ , LOD ~ 0.05 $\mu\text{M}$	103
	$\text{MoS}_2/g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$	Large surface, biodegradability	Electrochemiluminescent immunosensor for alpha-fetoprotein	Range ~ 0.001–50 ng $\text{mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ 0.33 pg $\text{mL}^{-1}$	104
	Ce-MOF@ $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4/\text{Au}$	Large surface, porous structure	Electrochemiluminescence immunosensor for N-terminal pro-B-type natriuretic peptide	Range ~ 0.005–20 ng $\text{mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ 3.59 pg $\text{mL}^{-1}$	105
	BP/Au	Biodegradability, catalytic properties	Degradable biosensor for carcinoembryonic antigen	Range ~ 1 pg $\text{mL}^{-1}$ –10 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ , LOD ~ 0.98 ng $\text{mL}^{-1}$	106

TABLE 1 (Continued)

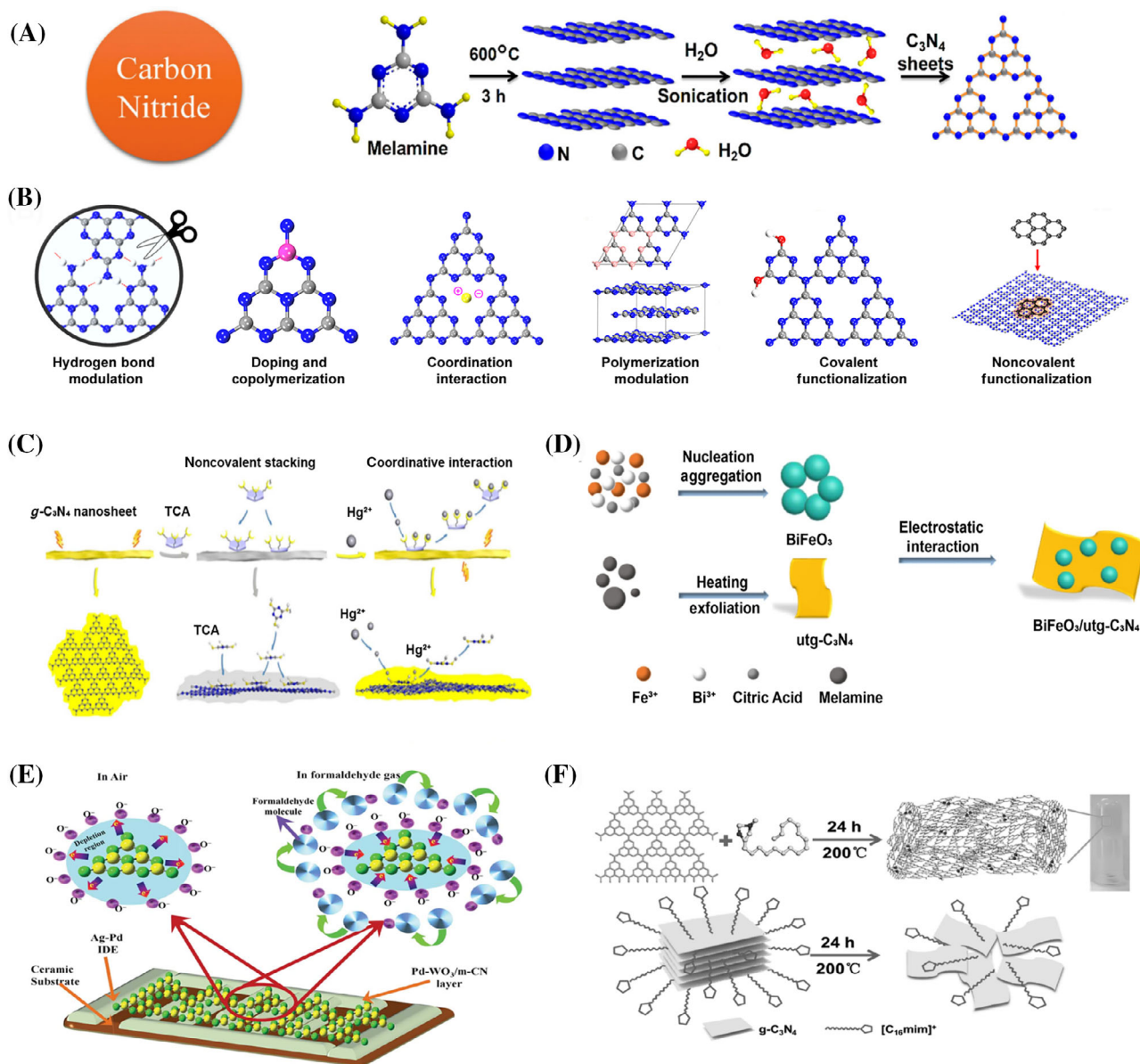
	Characteristics	Bioelectronics	Performances	Ref.
PO <sub>x</sub> /BP	Flexibility, ultrathin, heterostructure	Memristor for neuromorphic computing	91.4% learning accuracy, on/off ratio $\sim 2 \times 10^7$ , retention time $>10^4$ s	107
BP/ReS <sub>2</sub>	Heterostructure	Synapse	91.3% learning accuracy	108
MoS <sub>2</sub> /Ni	Large surface, catalytic properties, conductivity	Electrochemical detection of glucose	Range to 4 mM, LOD $\sim 0.31$ $\mu$ M	109
MoS <sub>2</sub> /Au	Large surface, semiconducting	Biosensor for Down syndrome screening	LOD $\sim 100$ aM	110
MoS <sub>2</sub> /ZnO	Heterostructure	Synaptic transistor	On/off ratio $\sim 10^4$	111
WSe <sub>2</sub> /WO <sub>3</sub>	Heterostructure	Multigate memristive synapse	Energy consumption $\sim 2.7$ pJ	112
WO <sub>3-x</sub> /WSe	Atomically thin, heterostructure	Synaptic barristor	On/off ratio $\sim 10^5$ , cycling endurance $\sim 10^3$ times, retention $\sim 10^3$ s	113
Ag/ZrO <sub>2</sub> /WS <sub>2</sub> /Pt	Rapid ion transport	Memristor for neuromorphic computing	87% learning accuracy	114
WSe <sub>2</sub> /NiPS <sub>3</sub> /FePSe <sub>3</sub>	Semiconducting	Synaptic transistor	Energy consumption $\sim 30$ fJ	115
Cu/MoS <sub>2</sub> /Au	Atomically thin, electroactivity	Memristor	Switching voltage $\sim 0.1$ – $0.2$ V	116
Ti <sub>3</sub> C <sub>2</sub> X <sub>2</sub> /Pt	Conductivity, catalytic properties	Electrochemical detection of H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	LOD $\sim 448$ nM	117
Ti <sub>3</sub> C <sub>2</sub> X <sub>2</sub> /Au	Conductivity, catalytic properties	Electrochemical detection of glucose	Range $\sim 0.1$ – $18$ mM, LOD $\sim 5.9$ $\mu$ M	118
Ti <sub>3</sub> C <sub>2</sub> X <sub>2</sub> /TiO <sub>2</sub>	Biocompatibility, large surface, conductivity, catalytic properties	Electrochemical detection of H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	Range $\sim 0.1$ – $380$ $\mu$ M, LOD $\sim 14$ nM	119
AuNPs/Ni-MOF/CNTs	Flexibility, stretchability, biocompatibility	Electrochemical real-time monitoring of dopamine released	Range $\sim 50$ nM– $15$ $\mu$ M, LOD $\sim 10.96$ nM, sensitivity $\sim 1250$ mA/(cm <sup>2</sup> M)	120
Cu(HBTC)-1/Fe <sub>3</sub> O <sub>4</sub> -AuNPs	Large surface	Biosensor for H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> and glucose, aptasensor for sulfadimethoxine	H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> : range $\sim 2.86$ – $71.43$ nM, LOD $\sim 1.1$ nM; glucose: range $\sim 12.86$ – $257.14$ $\mu$ M, LOD $\sim 12.2$ nM; sulfadimethoxine: range $\sim 0.01$ – $1.15$ $\mu$ M, LOD $\sim 0.005$ $\mu$ M	121
Au@Cu <sub>2</sub> O-MIL-53(Fe)	Large surface, porous structure	Real-time monitoring of H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> released from living cells	H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> released by a single cell $\sim 0.042$ fM	122
Au NPs/Yb-TCPP	Heterostructure	Photoelectrochemical aptasensor for SARS-CoV-2	Range $\sim 0.5$ – $8$ $\mu$ g mL <sup>-1</sup> , LOD $\sim 72$ ng mL <sup>-1</sup>	123

Abbreviations: 2D, two-dimensional; AA, ascorbic acid; AMP, ampicillin; ascorbic acid; ATP, adenosine triphosphate; BP, black phosphorus; CNT, carbon nanotube; COFs, covalent-organic frameworks; EGFR, epidermal growth factor; ELISA, enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay; FET, field effect transistor; IgG, immunoglobulin G; LOD, limit of detection; LTP, long-term plasticity; MCF-7, Michigan Cancer Foundation-7; MOF, metal-organic frameworks; SARS-CoV-2, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2; STP, short-term plasticity; TCPP, meso-Tetra(4-carboxyphenyl)porphine; TMD, transition metal dichalcogenide; TPA, imine-linked; TpTta, COF prepared from 1,3,5-triformylphloroglucinol (Tp) and 4,4',4''-(1,3,5-triazine-2,4,6-triyl)trianiline (Tta).

bioelectronics. Owing to their excellent physicochemical properties, emerging 2D materials and their composites can achieve remarkable flexibility, tunable electrical conductivity, versatile functionalities, and high biocompatibility, thus making them ideal candidates for engineering bioelectronic devices. Table 1 summarizes the characteristics, applications, and performances of the emerging 2D material-based bioelectronic devices.

## 2.1 | 2D graphitic nitride

Similar to graphite, g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> is a pack of atoms via C-N bonds and weak van der Waals forces linking the adjacent layers and can be obtained by exfoliating from melamine, as shown in Figure 1A.<sup>45</sup> In fact, g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> can be exfoliated directly in an aqueous solution without the addition of surfactants or oxidation treatments.<sup>127</sup>



**FIGURE 1** (A) Synthesis and characterization of C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> sheets. Reproduced with permission.<sup>45</sup> Copyright 2017, American Chemical Society. (B) General approaches for engineering the molecular structure of C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub>. (C) Mechanism illustration of g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> nanosheets for the detection of TCA and Hg<sup>2+</sup>. Reproduced with permission.<sup>43</sup> Copyright 2019, Elsevier B.V. (D) Schematic diagram of BiFeO<sub>3</sub>/utg-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> heterojunction. Reproduced with permission.<sup>124</sup> Copyright 2019, Elsevier B.V. (E) Mechanism illustration of Pd-WO<sub>3</sub>/m-CN biosensor. Reproduced with permission.<sup>125</sup> Copyright 2018, The Royal Society of Chemistry. (F) Schematic description of g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> hydrogel by hydrothermal method. Reproduced with permission.<sup>126</sup> Copyright 2017, Wiley-VCH. TCA, trithiocyanuric acid

Compared with bulk g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub>, the ultrathin 2D g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> nanosheets present better water solubility, larger surface area, and tunable bandgap. Meanwhile, other studies have suggested that g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> also displays ultralow cytotoxicity and good tissue compatibility,<sup>128</sup> thus implying that the ultrathin 2D g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> can serve as a suitable candidate for bioelectronics and biosensors. Because bulk g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> can be synthesized from a variety of precursors, it is possible to modify the surface of g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> using the desired molecules,

elements, and functional groups. Common design strategies for g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> structures include hydrogen bond modulation, polymerization, coordination, doping and copolymerization, and covalent/non-covalent modifications (Figure 1B).<sup>129</sup> It is well known that covalent chemical modification is an effective way of regulation, including oxidation/carboxylation, polymer grafting, and amidation, which can significantly improve the optical, electronic, and chemical stability of g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub>.<sup>130</sup> For example,



multifunctionalized  $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$  prepared by simultaneous chemical binding of amino-coated  $\text{Fe}_3\text{O}_4$  nanoparticles and CA125 antibody (anti-CA125) on the surface of carboxylated  $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$  can be used to detect the tumor marker carbohydrate CA125.<sup>131</sup> In addition, noncovalent functionalization, such as  $\pi\text{-}\pi$  stacking, electrostatic interactions, and hydrogen bonding, can also enhance the biocompatibility, reactivity, binding ability, and sensing performance of  $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$ . For example, a fluorescent sensor was developed for detecting trithiocyanuric acid (TCA) and  $\text{Hg}^{2+}$  by utilizing hydrogen bonds and  $\pi\text{-}\pi$  interactions between TCA and  $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$ , which quenched the fluorescence of the  $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$  nanosheet solution free of  $\text{Hg}^{2+}$  when TCA was added. Interestingly, when  $\text{Hg}^{2+}$  was added again, the S-coordination of  $\text{Hg}^{2+}$  with TCA destroyed the stacking interaction of TCA- $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$ , thus restoring the fluorescence (Figure 1C).<sup>43</sup>

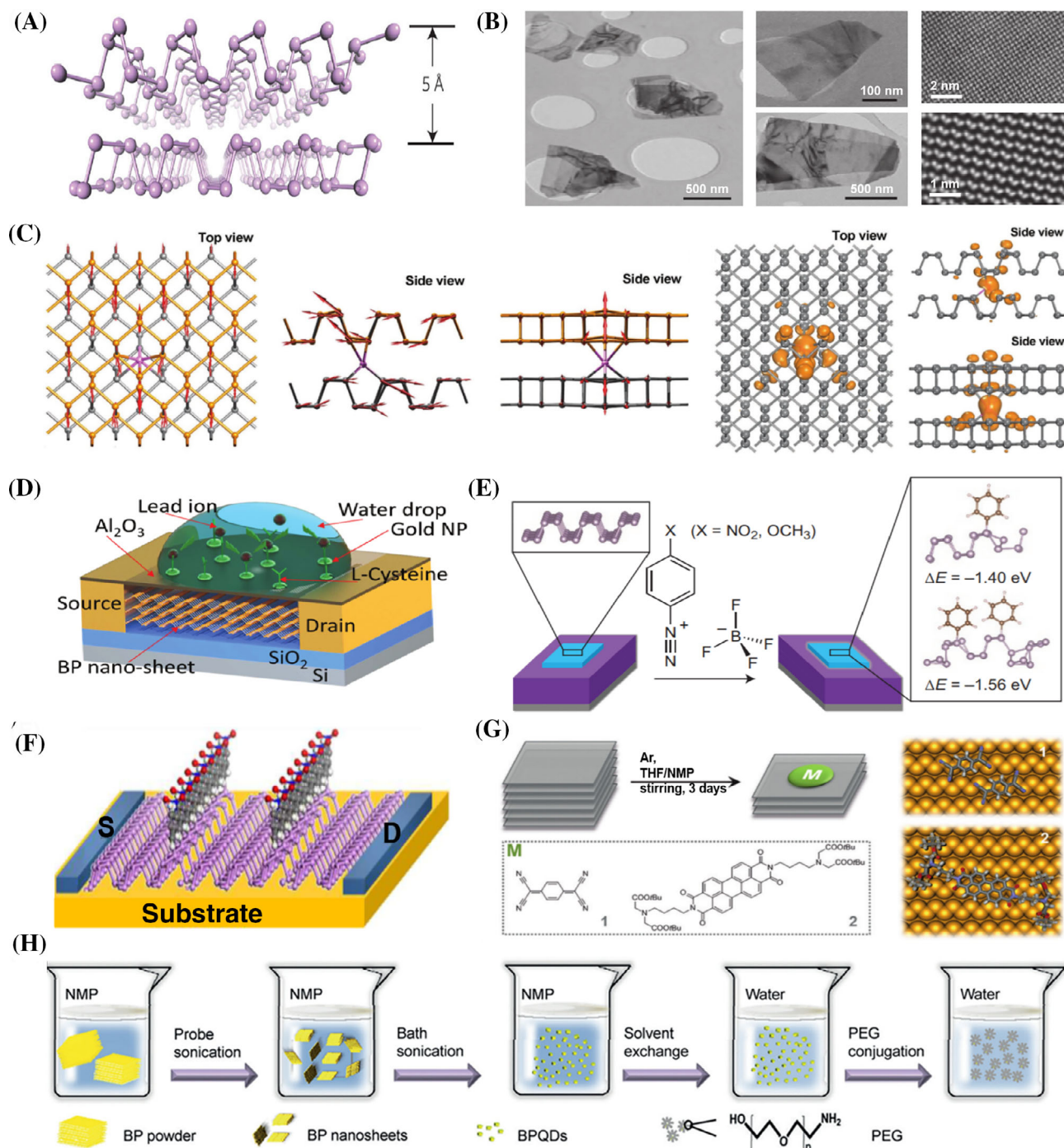
In addition to the regulation by covalent/noncovalent means, another commonly used method is the doping of  $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$ . By incorporating external components into the  $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$  structures, the electrical, optical, luminescent, and magnetic properties of  $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$  can be regulated. Common doping elements such as O, I, P, Ag, Au, Mn, and  $\text{SnO}_2$  have been widely used. For instance, a p-n heterojunction ( $\text{BiFeO}_3/\text{utg-C}_3\text{N}_4$ ) was obtained by electrostatic adsorption based on p-type  $\text{BiFeO}_3$  nanoparticle-coupled n-type ultrathin graphite-like  $\text{C}_3\text{N}_4$  ( $\text{utg-C}_3\text{N}_4$ ) nanosheets. Owing to the introduction of  $\text{utg-C}_3\text{N}_4$ , the construction of a p-n heterojunction reduced the energy gap of the material and increased the charge separation rate, and was successfully applied to a switched PEC sensor for ampicillin (AMP) determination (Figure 1D).<sup>124</sup> Similarly, a kind of  $\text{Pd-WO}_3/\text{m-CN}$  hybrid nanomaterial, which uses m-CN and  $\text{WO}_3$  to form heterojunctions and new electronic barriers with the help of the work function difference between the two materials, has been proven to enhance the sensing ability of  $\text{Pd-WO}_3/\text{m-CN}$  to volatile gases (Figure 1E).<sup>125</sup>

Apart from the introduction of inorganic hybrid materials,  $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$  can also be composited with new 2D organic structures to construct biosensors to detect protein kinase A (PKA). The sensor used a gold nanoparticle-modified imidazoline nanoskeleton ( $\text{Au-ZIF-8}$ ) as the matrix, carbon microsphere (CMS)-modified ITO as the electrode, and  $\text{TiO}_2\text{-}g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$  nanocomposite as the photoactive material. The substrate peptide was assembled by the Au-S bond, which was successfully used for the photoelectrochemical (PEC) detection of PKA using the function of substrate immobilization and signal amplification.<sup>132</sup> Moreover, the introduction of MOF during the synthesis of  $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$ , which can improve the dispersibility of the composite and be used as a nerve detoxification medium; a colorimetric detector has also been reported.<sup>133</sup> In addition to the proper structural design of  $\text{C}_3\text{N}_4$ , the selection of appropriate

preparation methods can also improve its application. Similarly, a hydrogel- $\text{C}_3\text{N}_4$  structure, which was hydrothermally treated at  $200^\circ\text{C}$  in the presence of amphiphilic ionic liquids (ILs), was successfully constructed. During this process, carbonitride was peeled off by ILs and gelled to form a hydrogel network, which was deposited layer by layer on the electrode to form a thin film to obtain a chemical resistance sensor and can be used for the detection of hydrogen sulfide (Figure 1F).<sup>126</sup> Although important advances have been made in using  $\text{C}_3\text{N}_4$ -based materials in sensors, significant challenges remain to be overcome. Controllable, large-scale fabrication of high-quality, defect-free ultrathin  $\text{C}_3\text{N}_4$  nanosheets remains challenging. In addition, the electronic structure and lattice structure of  $\text{C}_3\text{N}_4$ /semiconductor composites need to be studied in detail to fully elucidate the mechanism of  $\text{C}_3\text{N}_4$ -based sensors. In summary, further optimization of the  $g\text{-C}_3\text{N}_4$  structure can effectively expand its application breadth and depth in the field of bioelectronic devices.

## 2.2 | 2D black phosphorus

BP has received enormous attention for its atomically thin 2D structures with even higher carrier mobility and structural performance than graphene since 2014.<sup>134–137</sup> The BP nanosheet is an allotrope of phosphorus that can be viewed as a single layer of phosphorus atoms arranged in a hexagon manner, as shown in Figure 2A.<sup>12,145</sup> Every atom in BP is connected to three neighboring atoms forming  $sp^3$  hybridization with a bandgap of approximately 1.5–2 eV for the monolayer BP, thus presenting broad application potentials in electronic devices and biosensors.<sup>146,147</sup> In the 1960s, bulk BP was synthesized, but until 2014, the exfoliation of monolayer BP was reported (Figure 2B).<sup>138,148–150</sup> The synthesis of 2D BP is a big challenge because of its viable reactivity with oxygen, and two main approaches have been proposed: the scotch tape method and liquid-assisted exfoliation.<sup>148</sup> Among the numerous synthetic methods, a top-down exfoliation method is usually used to peel off bulk BP crystals to obtain uniform size and large-scale layered BP nanosheets. For instance, bulk BP was sonicated in an anhydrous polar organic liquid, *N*-methyl-2-pyrrolidone (NMP), under an inert atmosphere, and then centrifuged to collect the 2D BP.<sup>151</sup> So far, many strategies have been proposed to fabricate BP and hybrid-based devices for sensing applications.<sup>152–154</sup> Recently, a spatially controllable aluminum doping technology was proposed that enables p-n homojunction diodes to be implemented within a single 2D BP nanosheet for high-performance photovoltaic applications. Figure 2C illustrates the theoretical electronic structure of the doped double-layer phosphine.<sup>139</sup> They found that the introduction of Al can



**FIGURE 2** (A, B) Atomic structure of BP and SEM/TEM images of BP nanosheets. Reproduced with permission.<sup>12,138</sup> Copyright 2014, 2015, Nature Publishing Group. (C) Theoretical electronic properties of Al-doping in bilayer BP. Reproduced with permission.<sup>139</sup> Copyright 2017, Wiley-VCH. (D) Illustration of ultrathin BP FET transistor. Reproduced with permission.<sup>140</sup> Copyright 2020, The Royal Society of Chemistry. (E) Functionalization of BP by aryl diazo compounds. Reproduced with permission.<sup>141</sup> Copyright 2016, Nature Publishing Group. Schematic representation of (F, G) covalent/noncovalent functionalization of BP. Reproduced with permission.<sup>142,143</sup> Copyright 2016, American Chemical Society. Copyright 2016, Wiley-VCH. (H) Exfoliation of ultras-small BPQDs and decoration with PEG. Reproduced with permission.<sup>144</sup> Copyright 2015, Wiley-VCH. BP, black phosphorus; BPQDs, BP quantum dots; NMP, *N*-methyl-2-pyrrolidone; PEG, polyethylene glycol; SEM, scanning electron microscopy

greatly supply electrons to BP, which can convert the BP fragment from p-type to n-type, significantly improving the electron migration rate of BP, making it a self-

powered dynamic photovoltaic and photocurrent electronic device. Moreover, controlling the thickness of BP is an effective method to improve its performance. It was

reported that a location-tracked selective region stripping method for BP could rapidly generate thin BP layers from one to seven layers of atomic thickness, whose good gate control provided a more sensitive response than the traditional BP (Figure 2D). Therefore, the prepared phosphorene-based field effect transistor (FET) (PFET) sensor shows a higher current on/off ratio (300–500) and an excellent lead ion response (1–400 ppb).<sup>140</sup>

BP also offers excellent potential for biomedical applications. Nonetheless, poor chemical stability and uncertain cytotoxicity limit the performance of BP.<sup>155</sup> At present, enhancing the stability of BP mainly includes introducing a surface protective layer, surface chemical modification, and doping of heteroatoms.<sup>156</sup> It has been reported that the stability of BP can be enhanced compared to that of bare BP after being modified with a layer of aluminum oxide ( $\text{AlO}_x$ ) via atomic deposition,<sup>157</sup> without compromising the material properties. In addition, owing to the impermeability of graphene to almost all molecules, the graphene sealing layer has been demonstrated to be able to thoroughly prevent the oxidation of BP. Meanwhile, the graphene layer can be easily removed, which facilitates the operation of BP-based devices.<sup>158</sup> BP can also be modified by covalent/noncovalent functionalization.<sup>142,143</sup> Covalent functionalization alters the properties of BP by forming covalent bonds between BP and other materials, whereas noncovalent functionalization uses surface adsorption. As shown in Figure 2E, the chemical degradation of exfoliated BP is inhibited by coupling lone pair electrons on BP with aryl diazo compounds, such as 4-nitrobenzodiazole, to form P-C covalent bonds.<sup>141</sup> Moreover, polymer modification can not only maintain the transport property of BP, but also improve the stability of polymer-BP composites in ambient conditions (Figure 2F).<sup>142</sup> Noncovalent modification, such as wet chemical treatment of BP with 7,7,8,8-tetracyano hydroquinone (TCNQ) molecule (Figure 2G), can create a reasonably flat energy band in the bandgap of BP, which reduces the hole mobility of BP and significantly improves the antioxidant degradation performance of BP.<sup>143</sup> In addition, surface modification by polymers can also improve the chemical properties of BP, such as biocompatibility (Figure 2H).<sup>144</sup> For example, organosilicon compounds (TMSCl) were used for the surface coordination of BP nanosheets to generate more stable TMSCl@BP, which could maintain its surface morphology and properties for 24 h under ambient conditions and has no cytotoxicity at a concentration of 200 ppm.<sup>159</sup>

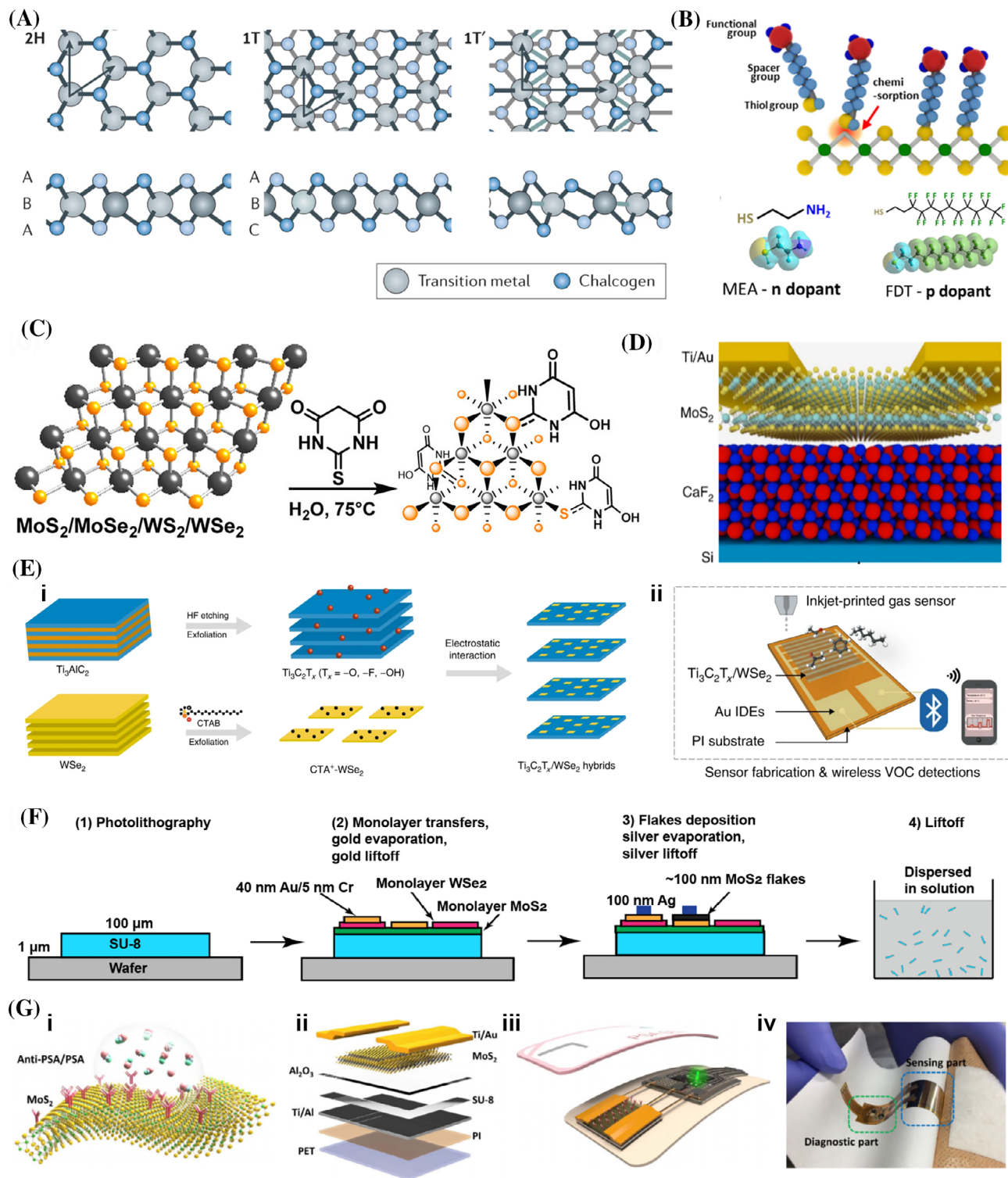
The adjustable band gap is the most representative characteristic of layered BP. Moreover, layered BP possesses sufficiently high carrier mobility and a moderate on/off ratio, which makes it particularly appealing in the field of bioelectronics. However, the synthesis and application of

layered BP still face many challenges. First, almost all the synthesis methods of layered BP are based on a top-down strategy, which makes it difficult to obtain controllable size and ultra-thin BP. Second, compared with other emerging 2D materials, layered BP is easily degraded in the physiological environment because of its poor chemical stability, which significantly enhances the biocompatibility of BP, for instance, reducing the toxicity caused by its accumulation in vivo to normal tissues and organs, thus offering excellent application potential as biodegradable and implantable electronics or biosensors.<sup>137</sup> However, insufficient stability severely affects electronic performance under ambient conditions. Therefore, improving stability is the key to realizing long-life biological electronics and sensors for layered BP materials.

### 2.3 | Layered TMDs

TMDs stand out as emerging 2D materials because of their remarkable physicochemical properties and chemical versatility, including large specific surface areas, high mechanical properties, exceptional electronic performance, tunable chemical stability, high catalytic activity, photoluminescence, optical absorption, direct bandgap, and facile synthetic processes, which have received tremendous attention, making them suitable for the construction of ultrasensitive biosensors.<sup>160–163</sup> The promising properties of TMDs will significantly compensate for the deficiency of many other 2D materials, especially graphene-based devices. TMDs are usually characterized as  $\text{MX}_2$ , where M is a transition metal, for example, Mn, Mo, W, V, and so forth, and X is S, Se, or Te. Bulk TMDs are characterized by covalent in-plane bonding and weak van der Waals interactions between adjacent layers. The crystal structures of the TMDs are shown in Figure 3A.<sup>164</sup> For  $\text{MoS}_2$ , the monolayer thickness is 6.5 Å. As reported, the layer thickness significantly affected the properties of TMDs.<sup>170</sup> Therefore, controlled synthesis of TMDs is essential for further studies. Two-dimensional TMDs can be exfoliated by physical and chemical means, including tape exfoliation, liquid-assisted exfoliation, and ion intercalation.<sup>171–173</sup> “Bottom-up” synthesis of 2D TMDs has been developed as direct wet chemical synthesis and chemical vapor deposition (CVD) in an attempt to achieve adequate control of layer structure. For CVD, a thin layer of metals or metal compounds is first coated on a substrate and then exposed to a chalcogenide atmosphere to grow the 2D TMDs.

Owing to their direct and tunable bandgaps and excellent physicochemical properties, the state-of-the-art structural design of TMDs is currently the frontier research direction in bioelectronic devices. By carefully controlling the reaction conditions, such as the chalcogen content, emerging 2D materials with unique shapes, such



**FIGURE 3** (A) Crystal structure of 2D TMDs. Reproduced with permission.<sup>164</sup> Copyright 2017, Nature Publishing Group. (B) Schematic illustration of thiol molecules absorbed on functionalized MoS<sub>2</sub> via thiol chemistry. Reproduced with permission.<sup>165</sup> Copyright 2015, Wiley-VCH. (C) Synthesis of TBA-modified 2D TMDs. Reproduced with permission.<sup>166</sup> Copyright 2017, American Chemical Society. (D) Schematic illustration of F-terminated CaF<sub>2</sub> (111) and MoS<sub>2</sub> hybrid electronics. Reproduced with permission.<sup>167</sup> Copyright 2019, Nature Publishing Group. (E) (i) Synthesis illustration of Ti<sub>3</sub>C<sub>2</sub>T<sub>x</sub>/WSe<sub>2</sub> nanohybrids and (ii) inkjet-printed gas sensor system. Reproduced with permission.<sup>168</sup> Copyright 2020, Nature Publishing Group. (F) Fabrication steps of CSM electronics. Reproduced with permission.<sup>169</sup> Copyright 2018, Nature Publishing Group. (G) i-iv Illustration and structure of skin-type MoS<sub>2</sub> biosensor. Reproduced with permission.<sup>36</sup> Copyright 2017, Springer International Publishing AG. 2D, two-dimensional; CSM, colloidal state machine; IDE, interdigital electrode; MEA, mercaptoethylamine; PET, polyethylene terephthalate; PSA, prostate cancer antigen; TBA, thiobarbituric acid; TMD, transition metal dichalcogenide; VOC, volatile organic compound

as triangles, stars, and butterflies, can be obtained.<sup>150</sup> By adjusting the surface defects of low-dimensional materials, such as atomic vacancies and step edges, the structure and function of TMDs can play a crucial role. During the synthesis of MoS<sub>2</sub> or other sulfur-based MS<sub>2</sub> nanostructures, lithium (Li) is inserted between the MoS<sub>2</sub> layers, and because of the violent reactivity of Li, the structure of MoS<sub>2</sub> becomes deformed with high molecular affinity and thiol edge absorption. Hence, thiol molecules can fill up the sulfur vacancies of MoS<sub>2</sub>, acting as either donors or acceptors.<sup>31,174–176</sup> In a previous study, mercaptoethylamine (NH<sub>2</sub>-terminated thiol, MEA) or 1H,1H,2H,2H-perfluorodecanethiol (CF<sub>3</sub>-terminated thiol, FDT) was linked to MoS<sub>2</sub> nanosheets, as shown in Figure 3B.<sup>165</sup> Nowadays, covalent conjugation between lipoic acid and MoS<sub>2</sub> via thiol chemistry has been established as a universal approach for the functionalization of MoS<sub>2</sub> because of its high stability and facile reaction conditions, as shown in Figure 3C.<sup>30,166,177,178</sup> Besides thiol, functionalization by electron transfer between TMDs (MoS<sub>2</sub>, WS<sub>2</sub>, and MoSe<sub>2</sub>) and organohalides results in covalent attachment of functional groups to the surface of TMD nanosheets, such as the lone pair electrons in n-type InSe or other 2D materials that can be pulled away from the sulfur atom after being treated by Lewis acids such as TiCl<sub>4</sub>. The Fermi energy level moves down to the valence band, leading to p-type coordination complexes.<sup>179</sup> Moreover, the performance of TMD-based biosensors can be regulated by hybridization with other 2D materials. For instance, by combining the advantages of Ti<sub>3</sub>C<sub>2</sub>T<sub>x</sub> nanosheets with effective charge transfer and WSe<sub>2</sub> nanosheets with abundant active sites, a Ti<sub>3</sub>C<sub>2</sub>T<sub>x</sub>/WSe<sub>2</sub> biosensor for volatile gas sensing could be fine-designed Figure 3E.<sup>168</sup> The hybrid material formed a large number of heterojunction interfaces, which significantly increased the number of adsorbed oxygen species (which in turn trapped more electrons), resulting in a number of electrons released back to the channel, thus improving the detection sensitivity of oxygen-containing volatile organic compounds by more than 12 times.

Currently, owing to the unique semiconducting properties of TMDs, they have shown great potential for technological breakthroughs in sensing applications such as DNA/tactile/gas sensors<sup>56,180–182</sup> and disease detection.<sup>65</sup> As a representative TMD, MoS<sub>2</sub> shows high carrier mobility (60 cm<sup>2</sup> V<sup>-1</sup> s at 250 K), a layer-dependent bandgap (1.2–1.8 eV), a high transistor on/off ratio (~10<sup>8</sup>), and reasonable environmental stability.<sup>183,184</sup> Recent reports have demonstrated that 2D MoS<sub>2</sub> is a desirable channel material in FET sensors with breakthroughs in sensing performance for several fields.<sup>62,65,110,185–188</sup> An ingenious structural design can maximize its abilities. As shown in Figure 3D, a scalable double-layer MoS<sub>2</sub> FET with CaF<sub>2</sub> as the ultrathin gate insulator was fabricated with a thickness of 2 nm and an equivalent oxide thickness of less than 1 nm, compared to conventional

silicon-based transistors, to provide better grid control.<sup>167</sup> Similarly, Figure 3F shows a method for the preparation of a functional electronic circuit/transistor/memory and sensor, called a colloidal state machine (CSM),<sup>169</sup> which is fabricated from the top down by h-BN, MoS<sub>2</sub>, and WSe<sub>2</sub>. By utilizing a combination of a variety of 2D materials, the device not only has the function of memory but also can realize the detection of biosensors, large-area sensors, and sealed space monitors. For disease detection, a MoS<sub>2</sub>-based FET biosensor was prepared (Figure 3G).<sup>36</sup> The surface hydrophobicity of MoS<sub>2</sub> can effectively bind anti-prostate cancer antigen (anti-PSA), and this binding process causes direct changes in the electrical properties of MoS<sub>2</sub>, such as threshold voltage, field-effect mobility, and subthreshold swing, therefore, it can be used for real-time detection of PSA.

TMDs represent a new class of 2D materials with similar structures and performances to graphene. However, the low electrical conductivity restricts the response rate of TMD-based sensors.<sup>189,190</sup> Researchers have reported various methods to overcome these issues, such as interlayer expansion, phase transformation, composite fabrication with various carbons and conductive polymers, and heterostructure construction with metal compounds.<sup>191,192</sup> For instance, conductive polymers can provide a short diffusion path length for ions/electrons when incorporated with TMDs. In another example, a robust 3D conductive carbon nanotube (CNT)-interpenetrated MoS<sub>2</sub> architecture, in which CNTs penetrate and spread the restacked MoS<sub>2</sub> layers vertically, has been successfully built. This unique structure provides abundant heterointerfaces and enlarged interlayer spacing, facilitating both carrier and phonon transportation in the composites.<sup>193</sup> In addition to these cases, the electrical conductivity may be improved by anchoring conductive nanoparticles or developing metallic TMDs by phase change from the 2H phase to the 1T phase. As TMDs have gradually become one of the most promising emerging 2D materials, the potential risks may raise serious concerns about their practical applications and impact on biological systems. Pumera et al.<sup>194–196</sup> investigated the role of chalcogen atoms in the cytotoxicity of TMDs, which is the chemical reactivity associated with the release of thiogen, thus resulting in higher toxicity. In general, selenium and vanadium play significant roles in toxicity, and the cytotoxicity of ditellurides is higher than that of disulfide-containing materials. Therefore, the atomic composition of TMDs should be carefully considered when designing nanostructures for bioelectronics and biosensors.

## 2.4 | MXene nanostructures

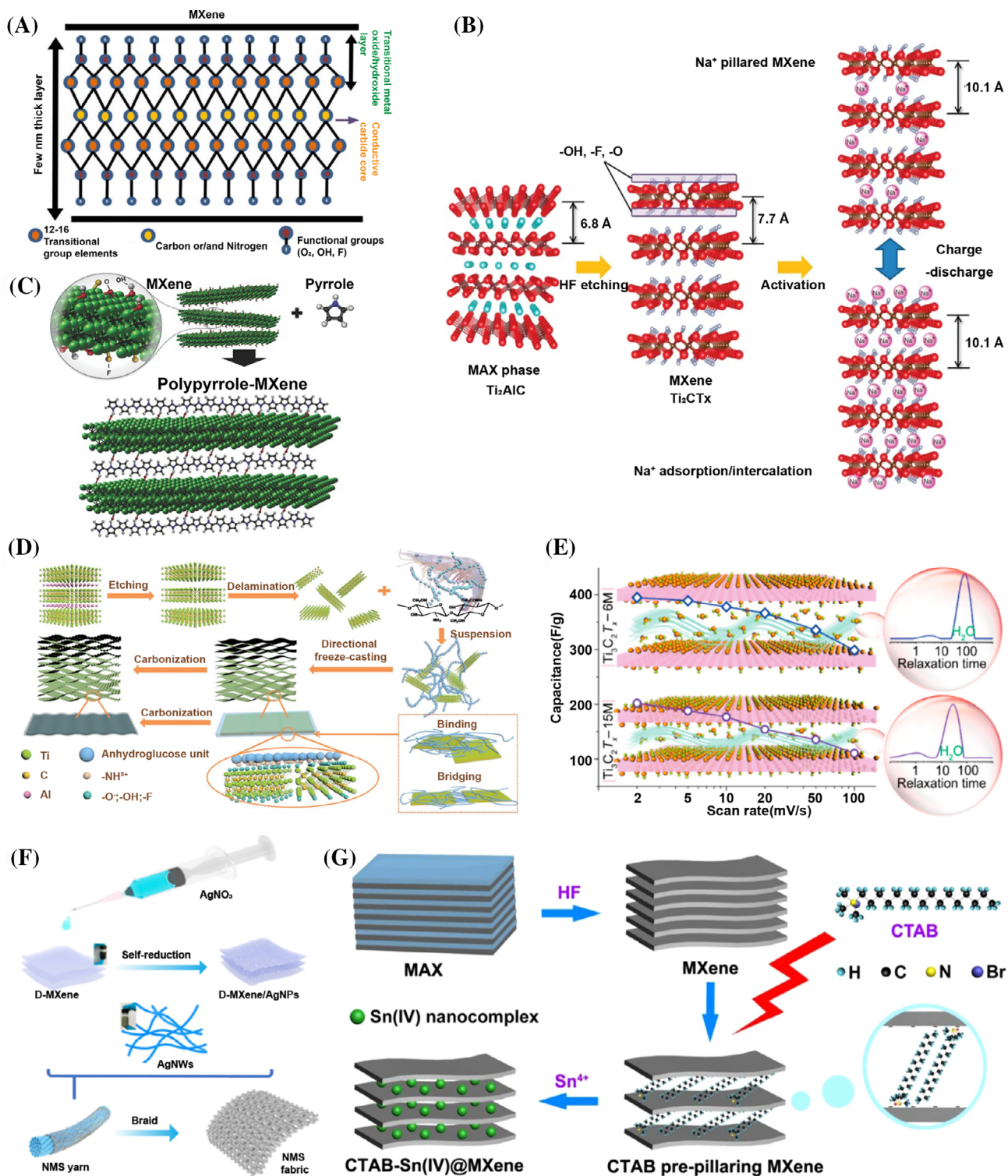
In recent years, a new type of metal-based 2D material has emerged from the horizon of nanomaterials science,

namely MXenes.<sup>197–202</sup> It is a nanosheet of transition metal carbides and/or carbonitrides produced by removing A layers from  $M_{n+1}AX_n$  composites, where M is a transitional metal, A is a group IIIA or IVA, element X is C and/or N, and  $n$  is no bigger than 3, the structure of MXenes is shown in Figure 4A.<sup>203</sup> The MAX phases are hexagonally layered with X atoms filling the octahedral sites of closely packed M layers and A atoms interleaving the neighboring layers. Given that the MAX phases can be synthesized with different combinations of M and X, the family of MXenes is quite large, with more than 60 MAX phases being realized.<sup>197</sup> The typical synthesis method was the selective replacement of Al with O, OH, and F from  $Ti_3AlC_2$  using aqueous hydrofluoric acid (HF). In this process, the interlayer interaction is dramatically weakened by the removal of Al, which allows the MX layer to be readily separated into 2D nanosheets.<sup>201,209</sup> Because the  $n$  values of  $M_{n+1}X_n$  vary from 1 to 3, the 2D MXene consists of three, five, and seven layers of M and X atoms with thicknesses below 1 nm. The properties of MXene can be tuned by the elemental composition and surface terminations, but generally, they show the metallic conductivity of transitional metals and the hydrophilic nature of hydroxyl-terminated nature.<sup>15</sup>

One key factor affecting the properties of MXenes is the interlayer spacing. Generally speaking, MXene obtained by HF etching has a relatively narrow interlayer spacing ( $\pm 0.98$  nm), and its energy storage capacity is limited. To improve this, MXene materials can be utilized because of their high conductivity, large surface area, and tendency to easily accommodate various cations. For example, as shown in Figure 4B, an Na-ion hybrid capacitor with  $Ti_2CT_x$  as the anode was well fabricated, in which the interaction/adsorption of Na ions into/onto the surface of MXene enhanced the interlayer distance from 7.7 to 10.1 Å.<sup>204</sup> In addition to cations, conductive polymers can also be used to expand the interlayer spacing of MXenes. For instance, the insertion of polypropylene between  $Ti_3C_2T$  layers provided high electrochemical performance and excellent cycle life with a 92% capacitance retention rate after 25 000 cycles (Figure 4C).<sup>74</sup> This is because confining polypropylene to the  $Ti_3C_2T$  monolayers leads to high electronic conductivity due to the short diffusion pathway, rapid, reversible oxidation reaction, and better charge transfer. MXenes with tunable hydrophilicity and surface properties are also believed to have promising potential for biomedical applications. Chitosan-linked aerogel sheets of  $Ti_3C_2X$  nanosheets exhibit flexibility (can withstand 99% strain), high compressibility (up to 150 000 cycles), and ultra-high sensitivity, which show great potential in flexible/wearable devices for biological signal detection (Figure 4D).<sup>205</sup>

Moreover, benefiting from a large number of -O or -F on the MXene surface, the performance of MXene can also be improved by adjusting the number of such atoms. For two different concentrations of  $Ti_3C_2T_x$  (6 and 15 M), it was found that the capacitance value of  $Ti_3C_2T_x$ -6 M was much higher because of the presence of more -O functional groups, and more  $H^+$  could enter  $Ti_3C_2T_x$ -6 M with the increase of  $H_2O$  molecules embedded between the interlayers, thereby greatly improving the performance of the electrode (Figure 4E).<sup>206</sup> Another effective method is the preparation of MXene-based composites. For example, as shown in Figure 4F, a multidimensional nanomaterial fabric, which is composed of zero-dimensional nanosilver particles (AgNPs)–one-dimensional silver nanowires (AgNWs)–2D  $Ti_3C_2T_x$  nanosheets, has improved the elasticity and conductivity of traditional one-dimensional materials and still ensures the continuity and high sensitivity of materials under considerable strain (200%) owing to the bridge effect of AgNPs.<sup>207</sup> In addition, to regulate the electrochemical performance of MXene, a cetyltrimethylammonium bromide (CTAB) pretreatment was used for the Sn (IV) columnar capacitor CTAB-Sn(IV)@ $Ti_3C_2$  (Figure 4G).<sup>208</sup> The positively charged CTAB can be effectively inserted into the  $Ti_3C_2$  interlayers, thus increasing the interlayer spacing to 2.708 nm, which results in an increase of 177% compared with the original value of 0.977 nm. Moreover, owing to the column effect brought about by Sn(IV), more Li ions can enter the interlayer of MXene, which causes the CTAB-Sn(IV)@ $Ti_3C_2$  anode to have good cycling and rating performance.

Although MXenes have been widely utilized for photocatalysts,<sup>210</sup> electrocatalysts,<sup>211</sup> energy storage,<sup>212,213</sup> electromagnetic interference shielding,<sup>214</sup> and sensors,<sup>215</sup> the etching process greatly affects the condition of MXenes for biomedical applications. For instance, trace amounts of residual HF in biological devices can induce in vivo cell death. In addition, the fluorine-containing etchant induces an abundance of  $F^-$  on the surface of MXenes, which is challenging to conjugate via  $F^-$  for biomolecules and requires further modification. Therefore, it has been reported that the synthesis of  $Ti_3C_2T_x$  MXene can also be achieved through a series of alkaline-induced removal of Al,<sup>216</sup> for instance, the NaOH/KOH-assisted hydrothermal etching process.<sup>217</sup> However, the production of  $Ti_3C_2T_x$  under successive NaOH treatment was still very low. The required high temperature (270°C) and NaOH concentration (27.5 mol L<sup>-1</sup>) would further hamper their scalable production. In addition to alkaline-induced methods, some etching systems involving acidic media or electrochemical etching have also been developed to produce  $Ti_3C_2T_x$  MXene, such as electrochemical etching in HCl aqueous electrolyte,<sup>218,219</sup> the modified two-step HCl/KOH



**FIGURE 4** (A) Structure of MXene. Reproduced with permission.<sup>203</sup> Copyright 2020, IOP Publishing Ltd. (B) Synthesis of MXene and its reaction mechanism by intercalating and (de)intercalating  $\text{Na}^+$  ion. Reproduced with permission.<sup>204</sup> Copyright 2015, Nature Publishing Group. (C) Schematic illustration of pyrrole polymerization using MXene. Reproduced with permission.<sup>74</sup> Copyright 2015, Wiley-VCH. (D) Illustration of fabricating MXene and  $\text{CS}_x/\text{MXene}$ -Caerogels. Reproduced with permission.<sup>205</sup> Copyright 2019, The Royal Society of Chemistry. (E) Capacitive performances of  $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x-6\text{M}$  and  $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x-15\text{M}$  electrodes. Reproduced with permission.<sup>206</sup> Copyright 2018, American Chemical Society. (F) Synthesis illustration of NMS fabric, where "N", "M", and "S" stand for nanocomposite, MXene, and silver, respectively. Reproduced with permission.<sup>207</sup> Copyright 2019, The Royal Society of Chemistry. (G) Schematic illustration of the preparation of CTAB-Sn(IV)@ $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2$ . Reproduced with permission.<sup>208</sup> Copyright 2017, American Chemical Society. CTAB, cetyltrimethylammonium bromide, HF, hydrofluoric acid

etching method,<sup>220</sup> and electrochemical etching in  $\text{NH}_4\text{Cl}/\text{NH}_4\text{OH}$  aqueous electrolyte.<sup>221</sup> Moreover, to reduce the waste of the produced acidic/alkaline liquid, a new sustainable molten-salt-assisted electrochemical etching method was developed to synthesize fluorine-free  $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{Cl}_2$ .<sup>222</sup> By adding various inorganic salts, the surface terminations can be modified in situ from  $-\text{Cl}$  to  $-\text{O}$  and/or  $-\text{S}$ , which greatly shortens the modification steps and enriches the types of surface terminations.<sup>223</sup> Thus, exfoliation of MXenes with fluorine-free etchers could control the functional surface termination of MXenes, thus facilitating their use in bioelectronic applications.

Despite the increasing scientific interest in exploring various applications of MXenes, few studies on the toxicity of MXene have been reported. It has been found that the cytotoxicity of MXene may be dependent on the size, preparation process, functional group, oxidative state, dose, and exposure time.<sup>224</sup> As the surface multifunctional strategies for MXenes in the biomedical fields are still in their early stages, the biocompatibility and long-term biosafety of MXene-based bioelectronics remains to be fully explored.<sup>225,226</sup> For instance, the in vivo metabolic pathways of MXenes are still unknown, and long-term internal circulation may accumulate in or even damage normal tissues. In addition, it is necessary to further assess the chemical stability of MXenes, which are less stable in storage and subsequent use, and tend to degrade when exposed to humidity or high temperatures.

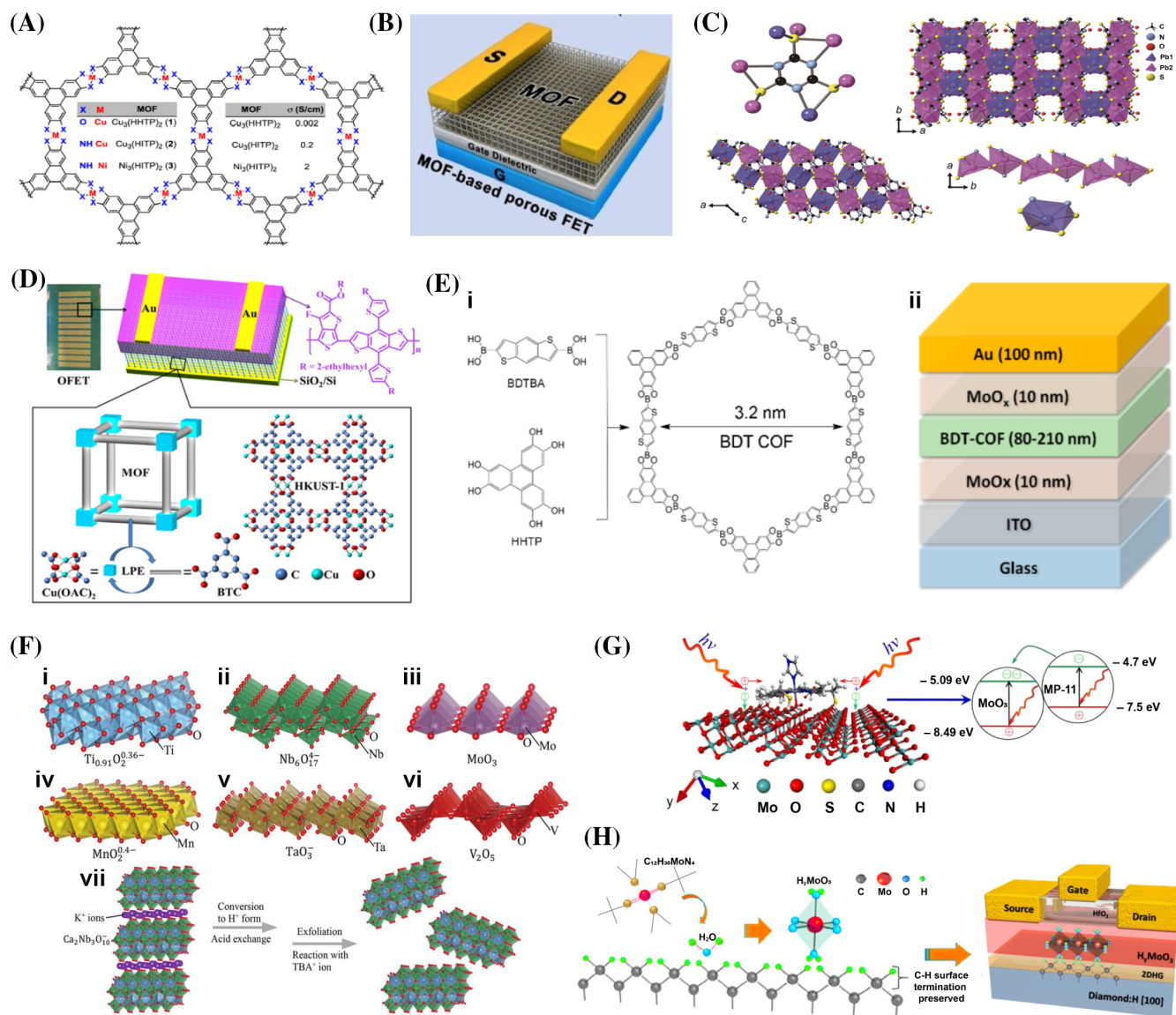
## 2.5 | 2D organic frameworks and polymers

A few years ago, 2D organic frameworks and polymers were realized and explored as a new type of 2D nanoarchitecture for multiple applications. MOFs are compounds consisting of metallic ions, known as secondary building units coordinated to organic ligands (linkers) to form highly porous 3D structures.<sup>227–229</sup> Thousands of MOFs are being discovered every year owing to the variety of metal ions and polymer linkers. Compared with 1D nanofibers and 3D aggregates, the excellent physicochemical properties of 2D nanosheets are due to their short ion transport distance during the ion diffusion and charge-transfer processes.<sup>230</sup> Recently, the exfoliation of 2D MOF nanosheets was reported by ball milling and ultrasonication. By exfoliating the bulk MOF crystals with the assistance of proper solvents such as  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ , acetone, and methanol, thin-layered MOF nanosheets were obtained.<sup>231,232</sup> Bottom-up syntheses of 2D MOF nanosheets have also been achieved by surfactant-assisted fabrication.<sup>233</sup>

As a new type of 2D nanostructure, the applications of MOFs in bioelectronic sensor devices have been highlighted for their large surface area and high porosity. It has been reported that  $\text{Cu}(\text{II})$  and  $\text{Ni}(\text{II})$  ions have been integrated with highly conjugated tricatecholate, that is, 2,3,6,7,10,11-hexamino-triphenylene (HITP), to form porous 2D MOF nanosheets for gas sensors, as shown in Figure 5A.<sup>241</sup> Similarly, other 2D MOF sensors can detect various species of molecules, such as aromatics, amines, and aliphatic hydrocarbons.<sup>234</sup> The sensor array can also be designed using these 2D MOFs by either drop-coating on the patterned Au electrode surfaces with good sensing capabilities (Figure 5B).<sup>235</sup> In a recent report, such conductive 2D MOFs have been applied to design p-type FET devices, which also have discriminable on/off ratios and excellent field-effect hole mobilities at  $48.6 \text{ cm}^2 \text{ V}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$ . However, the lack of electrical conductivity in MOFs has limited their applications in capacitors, batteries, and so forth. Fortunately, the conductivity of MOFs can be further optimized by carefully choosing metal ions/clusters to design institutional building blocks and/or multifunctional objects. For example, as shown in Figure 5C, a Pb-MOF crystal (KGF-1) with a sulfur secondary building unit served as a ligand. By reasonably utilizing the large overlap integrals of Pb-Fe orbitals, KGF-1 takes a robust skeleton with high chemical stability and high conductivity.<sup>236</sup> In addition, in Figure 5D, by modifying the  $\text{SiO}_2$  dielectric layer in an organic field-effect transistor (OFET) using the MOF film prepared by liquid phase epitaxy (LPE), and controlling the LPE cycle of SURMOF ( $\text{HKUST-1}$ ,  $\text{Cu}_3[\text{BTC}]_2$ ,  $\text{BTC} = 1,3,5\text{-benzene tricarboxylate}$ ) between 2 and 4 cycles, the MOF films grown on  $\text{SiO}_2/\text{Si}$  substrates are characterized by high crystallinity, homogeneity, and a low dielectric constant, as well as the small interfacial trap density in OFETs; this method can adjust and optimize the charge mobility, threshold voltage, and current switching ratio.<sup>237</sup>

In addition to the MOF structures, researchers have also found that organic molecules can create lightweight porous crystalline COFs with superior charge transport ability.<sup>242</sup> They can be fabricated into both 2D nanosheets and 3D nanoparticles, which mainly depend on the building block structure. In a 2D COF, the bond framework is limited to 2D sheets and stacked into layered columns. To form an ordered COF, the geometric building blocks should be stored in the COF, meaning that rigid building blocks and discrete bond linkages are required for a 2D COF. The studied building blocks for 2D COF include benzenes, biphenyls, anthracenes, triphenylenes, and porphyrins, which are mostly flat aromatic systems. By selecting the building blocks, COFs with different morphologies and pore sizes were obtained.<sup>243</sup> 2D COF nanosheets have also been applied for molecule sensing





**FIGURE 5** (A) The chemical structures of the conductive 2D MOFs ( $\text{Cu}/\text{Ni}_3[\text{HHTP}/\text{HITP}]_2$ ). Reproduced with permission.<sup>234</sup> Copyright 2015, American Chemical Society. (B) 2D conductive MOF-based FET devices. Reproduced with permission.<sup>235</sup> Copyright 2017, American Chemical Society. (C) The crystal structure of  $\text{Pb}_3\text{ttc}_2 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (KGF-1·H<sub>2</sub>O). Reproduced with permission.<sup>236</sup> Copyright 2020, American Chemical Society. (D) Illustration of SURMOF HKUST-1 OFET. Reproduced with permission.<sup>237</sup> Copyright 2017, American Chemical Society. (E) Schematic illustration of BDT-COF; (i) is the schematic representation of BDT-COF; (ii) is the COF hole-only device layout. Reproduced with permission.<sup>238</sup> Copyright 2017, American Chemical Society. (F) Examples of 2D metal oxide nanosheets; (i) is  $\text{Ti}_{0.91}\text{O}_{2.0.36-}$ ; (ii) is  $\text{MnO}_{2.4-}$ ; (iii) is  $\text{Nb}_6\text{O}_{17-}$ ; (iv) is  $\text{TaO}_3^-$ ; (v) is  $\text{MoO}_3$ ; (vi) is  $\text{V}_2\text{O}_5$ . Reproduced with permission.<sup>239</sup> Copyright 2019, Wiley-VCH. (G) Schematic of MP-11 immobilization into the  $\text{MoO}_3$ . Reproduced with permission.<sup>240</sup> Copyright 2019, Elsevier B.V. (H) Schematic structure of diamond:  $\text{H}/\text{H}_x\text{MoO}_{3-x}$  surface and transistor. Reproduced with permission.<sup>258</sup> Copyright 2018, American Association for the Advancement of Science. 2D, two-dimensional; BDT-COF, benzodithiophene covalent-organic frameworks; BTC, 1,3,5-benzene tricarboxylate; FET, field effect transistor; LPE, liquid phase epitaxy; MOFs, metal-organic frameworks; MP-11, microperoxidase-11

or FET devices, which are similar to those of 2D MOF structures.<sup>244–246</sup> Since the first FET 2D COF devices were reported in 2015, 2D COF films have been widely studied as FET devices. For example, highly oriented benzodithiophene COF (BDT-COF) films have both in-

and out-of-plane conductivities. Because of the transport barrier between the BDT-COF films, the thickness of the BDT-COF films is related to the measured hole mobility, and the hole mobility of the films is higher than that of thick films (Figure 5E).<sup>238</sup> Recently, a porphyrin-based 2D

COF as an electrochemical aptasensor was prepared for the detection of the antibiotics enrofloxacin and AMP.<sup>89</sup> The high specific surface area and extended  $\pi$ -conjugation throughout the COF skeleton enabled ultrasensitive detection of the antibiotics with a limit of detection (LOD) of  $6.07 \text{ fg mL}^{-1}$  for enrofloxacin and  $0.04 \text{ fg mL}^{-1}$  for AMP. Moreover, a 2D MOF-COF nanocomposite (comprising cobalt-based MOF and triazine-based COF) was constructed as an ultrasensitive electrochemical aptasensor for the detection of AMP.<sup>247</sup> It exhibits an extremely low LOD of  $0.217 \text{ fg mL}^{-1}$  for AMP within a wide detection range varying from  $0.001$  to  $2000 \text{ pg mL}^{-1}$ , which is suitable for AMP residue detection in river water, human serum, and milk.

The structural diversity of 2D MOFs and the excellent electrical conductivity of 2D COFs may inspire researchers to explore their potential in the field of biological and biomedical electronics. However, owing to the poor electrical conductivity of 2D MOFs, their practical implementation is restricted. Constructing highly conjugated 2D MOFs or utilizing a combination of conductive substrates such as graphene and CNTs can significantly improve their performance. Considering the application requirements of organic frameworks and polymers for bioelectronics, their properties, such as biocompatibility, biodegradability, and chemical stability, cannot be ignored. Generally, the toxicity properties of MOFs are not only caused by the components of metal ions and organic ligands, but also by the topological structure, biological stability, particle size, and surface compositions.<sup>248,249</sup> COFs usually consist of light atoms, such as C, N, O, and H, which are generally less toxic and more biocompatible than MOFs.<sup>250,251</sup> However, the major limitation of 2D COFs is their poor physiological stability. This is because the reversible nature of the linkages that form 2D COFs increases their biodegradability. Furthermore, owing to the complex molecular arrangements within the 2D organic frameworks and polymers, it is challenging to produce uniform sizes in different batches. Therefore, developing a simple and effective method to achieve scalability, uniformity, and reproducibility during the production process is a great challenge.

## 2.6 | Metal oxide nanosheets

Apart from the above 2D materials, well-defined 2D metal oxides exhibit better properties than common bulk metal oxides because of their high specific surface areas and highly efficient transport of ions and electrons.<sup>252</sup> In addition, metal oxide nanosheets, such as CuO, ZnO, WO<sub>3</sub>, and SnO<sub>2</sub>, can be easily synthesized via hydrothermal or solvothermal methods. Figure 5F shows typical 2D metal oxide structures and preparation methods.<sup>239</sup> 2D metal oxides with layered atomic structures show high sensitivity

owing to the change in electrical resistance when contacting analyte molecules. Recent studies have provided access to a broad range of atomic 2D metal oxide nanosheets.<sup>253</sup> Currently, diverse types of metal oxides have been intensively studied to serve as sensing materials because of their superficial area, and the potential chemical reactions to small molecules may occur at their interface.<sup>254</sup>

Despite the direct use of metal oxide nanosheets for sensing applications, the integration of heterogeneous metal oxide nanostructures could be another potential pathway for designing and integrating specific sensing capabilities, especially with good sensitivity and selectivity to targeted molecules.<sup>255</sup> For example, 2D metal oxides have been used to fabricate different 3D superstructures, which have gained significant attention for optimizing the surface area and porosity of the electrode.<sup>256</sup> Further surface decoration of diverse semiconducting nanoparticles can further tune their intrinsic sensing capabilities.<sup>239,257</sup> For example, as shown in Figure 5G, the synergistic effect and band arrangement between the two entities in the hybrid material self-assembled from layered MoO<sub>3</sub> and microperoxidase-11 (MP-11) significantly enhanced its biocatalysis and photocurrent conversion.<sup>240</sup> In addition, the surface charge doping of 2D metal oxides has expanded the exploration of 2D metal oxides as FET devices. As shown in Figure 5H, a general strategy has been proposed for using the hydrogenated MoO<sub>3</sub> layer as the electrical structure of the diamond instantaneous surface acceptor layer, that is, the diamond: h/H<sub>y</sub>MoO<sub>3-x</sub> interface.<sup>258</sup> The FET device fabricated by this new method is stable, durable, and maintains a high work function value (5.9 eV), relatively high carrier density ( $1.9 \times 10^{13} \text{ cm}^{-2}$ ), and mobility ( $19.5 \text{ cm}^2 \text{ V}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$ ), and the introduction of hydrogen also adjusts the structure of MoO<sub>3</sub>, resulting in intermediate d-d and  $\pi$ - $\pi$  interstitial states in the interstitial space, making it most conducive to carrier transport from the 2D hole gas channel to the contact point.

Because most of the various 2D materials originate from their parent van der Waals crystals, their atomic structures are identical to their bulk counterparts, except for some lattice constant difference and slight atomic relaxation.<sup>239</sup> In contrast, most metal oxides feature strong interlayer ionic bonds. The lack of strong interlayer interactions in their 2D forms usually introduces dangling bonds, leading to strong surface polarization, which induces prominent structural reconstructions.<sup>259</sup> For instance, when the thickness of ZnO is less than three or four layers, the as-synthesized ZnO exhibits a graphene-like structure rather than a bulk wurtzite structure.<sup>260</sup> When a polar LaAlO<sub>3</sub> thin film is deposited on a nonpolar SrTiO<sub>3</sub>(001) substrate with a TiO<sub>2</sub> terminated surface, an insulator-metal transition is observed when the thickness of the deposited LaAlO<sub>3</sub> layers is larger

than four unit cells.<sup>261</sup> These significant differences from bulk materials might make it challenging to determine the atomistic structures of 2D metal oxides, thus hindering their bioelectronic applications. Therefore, in addition to the synthesis of new 2D metal oxides, it is necessary to identify the atomistic structures of 2D metal oxides from both experimental and theoretical perspectives.

Despite many achievements that have been made in bioelectronic and other biomedical applications, the potential cytotoxicity of 2D metal oxides should be fully addressed. In general, bulk metal oxides are considered to have low toxicity, but their 2D counterparts may have different activities in the body. Two-dimensional metal oxides exhibit rapid *in vivo* clearance and can be quickly excreted from the body's organs without long-term retention, minimizing tissue exposure to nanomaterials and avoiding potential long-term toxicity. In contrast, several *in vitro* cell viability reports have suggested that there are certain degrees of cytotoxicity of 2D metal oxides. This may originate from the oxygen sub-stoichiometry of the 2D metal oxides induced by the intensive exposure of metal atoms.<sup>262</sup> In summary, the biocompatibility of 2D metal oxides should be evaluated comprehensively, including *in vivo* histocompatibility, hemocompatibility, acute/chronic toxicity, and metabolic pathways.

### 3 | ADVANCED BIOELECTRONICS AND BIOSENSORS USING EMERGING 2D MATERIALS

#### 3.1 | Neural interfaces simulation

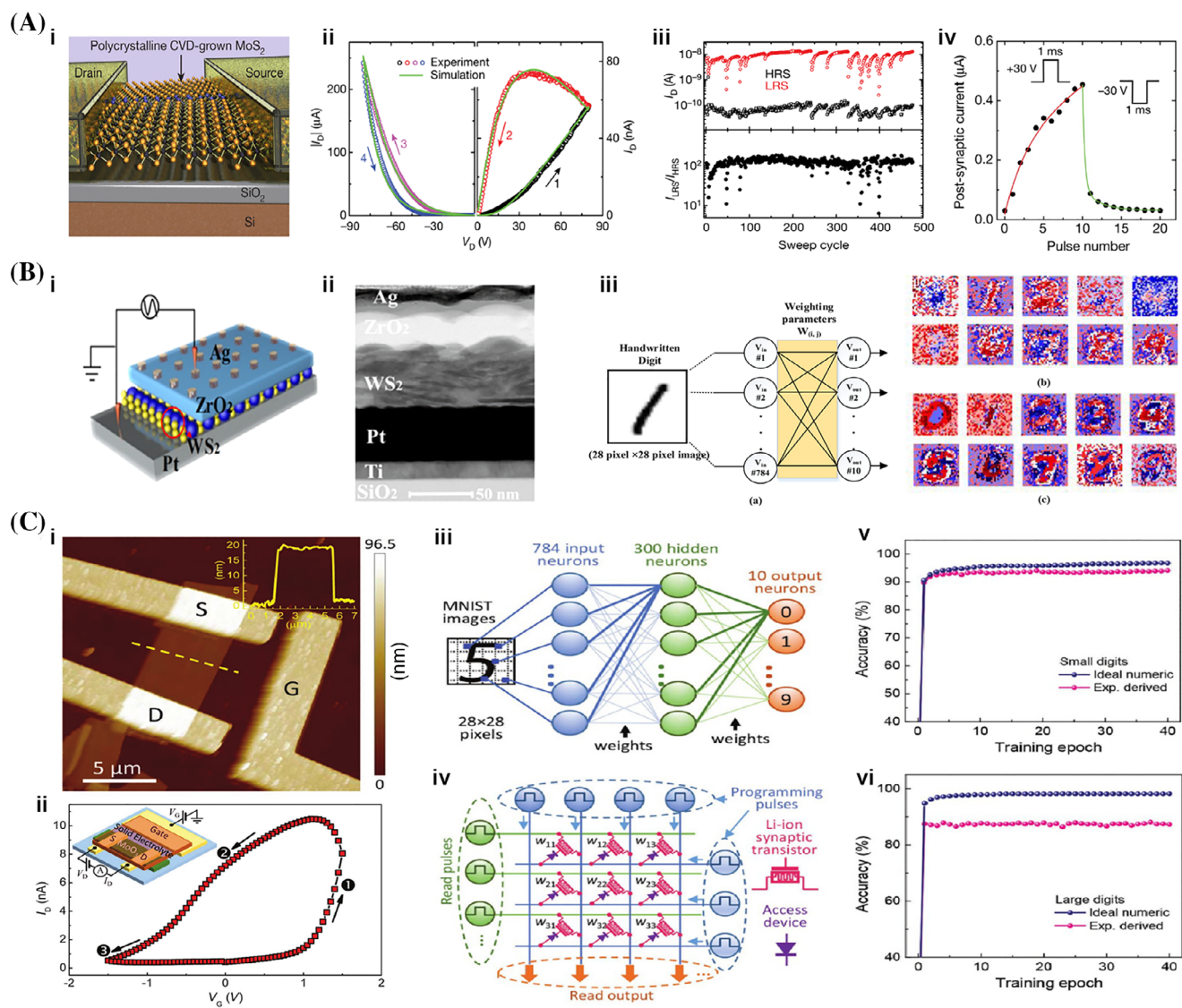
Neural interfaces are artificial simulation devices that record the electrical activity of the brain and the action potentials generated by individual neurons and understand the cell-cell coupling phenomenon that occurs in neural networks based on neuroelectrophysiology.<sup>263,264</sup> The device used to record brain electrophysiological activity can be placed in the scalp, under the dura mater, or in the cerebral cortex, providing a large number of electrical signals with a spatial and temporal resolution.<sup>265–267</sup> Similarly, designing neural interfaces using 2D materials focuses on the simulation of neuronal functions, including neural computation and synaptic simulation.

##### 3.1.1 | Neuromorphic computing

The neural recording is one of the most challenging research areas for tissue recording. Ideally, a large injected charge density and low impedance are necessary to achieve high sensitivity, thus, the sensor's probe should be as small as possible so that it can communicate with a single

neuron to better adapt to the nervous system tissues. Two-dimensional materials might be a solution to address the problems of the lack of highly conductive, mechanically flexible, and robust material.<sup>268–274</sup> For neuromorphic computing, it breaks von Neumann's framework and is highly parallel, fault-tolerant, energy-efficient, and event-driven information processing systems. Traditional simulators are constructed from silicon-based metals, but they are not suitable for large-scale integration. To adapt to the mechanistic performances of neural tissue, 2D materials are usually integrated with flexible substrates instead of rigid conductors.<sup>275,276</sup>

It has been shown that graphene-based sensors can achieve high-resolution neurophysiological activity recording for a rat brain.<sup>267</sup> The electrodes present great potential to mimic live retinal cells with electrochemical methods and can be altered with water-soluble sucrose carrier needles to see the cat visual cortex ulteriorly. The rapid, highly reproducible, and large-scale manufacturing procedure does not require additional welding or connection between electrodes and wires; therefore, it is considered to have potential applications in neural electrodes. In addition to the widespread use of graphene, other emerging 2D materials, such as transition metal sulfides and metal oxides, can also be used in neural computing. As an example, a multiterminal hybrid memory resistor and transistor based on polycrystalline monolayer molybdenum disulfide ( $\text{MoS}_2$ ) can be used for neural computing (Figure 6Ai).<sup>37</sup> This low-resistance state (LRS)-high-resistance state (HRS) memory transistor has gate adjustability of four orders of magnitude, high cycle durability, and long-term stability (Figure 6Aii,iii). More importantly, it also exhibits long-term potentiation and inhibition, and postsynaptic currents (PSCs) exhibit exponential increases/decreases as a consequence of repeatable positive/negative bias pulses, thus successfully mimicking synaptic excitability and inhibition in organs (Figure 6Aiv). Similarly, an  $\text{Ag/ZrO}_2/\text{WS}_2/\text{Pt}$  mixed memory resistor,<sup>114</sup> which has a highly stable memory switch and a centralized ON- and OFF-state voltage distribution that can dramatically reduce the randomness of conductive filaments, as well as complete the neuromorphological simulation in the handwritten recognition data set (Figure 6Bi-iii). Multiterminal memory resistor devices are possible candidates for neural computation, but their filament formation mechanism limits their accuracy and energy efficiency. Therefore, an all-solid-state electrochemical transistor was designed, which does not require filament formation and uses lithium ion-based solid dielectric and 2D  $\text{MoO}_3$  nanosheets as channels to achieve short-/long-term synaptic plasticity and bidirectional near-linear simulation (Figure 6Ci,ii).<sup>40</sup> Moreover, in the recognition of handwritten digital datasets, the recognition rates of large or small handwritten data reached 94.1% and 87.3%, respectively (Figure 6Ciii,vi).



**FIGURE 6** (A) (i) Schematic of a MoS<sub>2</sub> memtransistor on SiO<sub>2</sub>-Si (gate); (ii)  $I_D$ - $V_D$  curve of MoS<sub>2</sub> memtransistor at  $V_G = 10$  V; (iii) Endurance of the current and  $I_{LRS}/I_{HRS}$  for 475 cycles at  $V_D = 0.5$  V; (iv) The long-term potentiation/depression of MoS<sub>2</sub> memtransistor at 30-V and -30-V pulses. Reproduced with permission.<sup>37</sup> Copyright 2018, Nature Publishing Group. (B) (i, ii) Structure illustration and TEM image of Ag/ZrO<sub>2</sub>/WS<sub>2</sub>/Pt memristor devices; (iii) The working frame of the ANN system and the weighted parameter mapping identification to numbers by memristor devices. Reproduced with permission.<sup>114</sup> Copyright 2019, American Chemical Society. (C) (i) AFM image of the  $\alpha$ -MoO<sub>3</sub> transistor; (ii) the schematic illustration and the channel current ( $I_D$ ) dependence of the transistor; (iii, iv) The schematics three-layer neural network and synaptic weight layer. (v-vi) Handwritten digit image recognition: accuracy-time figures, 8 × 8 pixels, and 28 × 28 pixels, receptively. Reproduced with permission.<sup>40</sup> Copyright 2018, Wiley-VCH. AFM, atomic force microscopy; ANN, artificial neural network; CVD, chemical vapor deposition; HRS, high-resistance state; LRS, low-resistance state; MNIST, Modified national institute of standards and technology; TEM, transmission electron microscopy

### 3.1.2 | Synaptic transistor

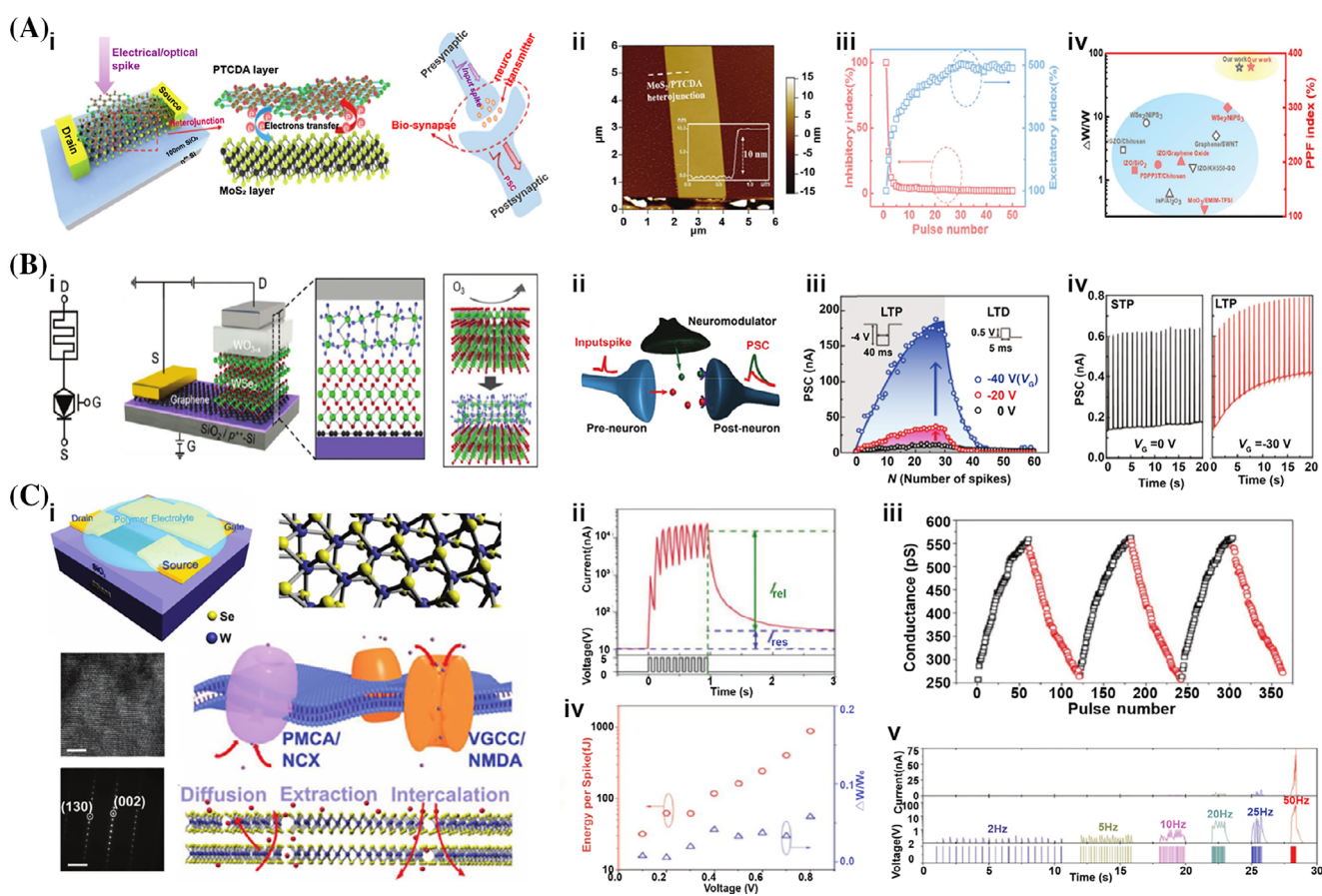
Artificial synapses, as well as neurocomputing that use electronic devices to stimulate the functions of the nervous system, are widely considered the original thought in building a human-like computer or artificial intelligence devices with hardware.<sup>277,278</sup> Current research on artificial synapses has focused on the simulation of biological synaptic capabilities using transistors of different

materials, such as floating-gate,<sup>279</sup> electrolyte-gate,<sup>280</sup> ferroelectric-gate,<sup>281</sup> and photosynaptic transistors.<sup>282</sup> Various materials, such as semiconductor CNTs, gold and silver nanoparticles, and polymers, can be used in artificial synapses.<sup>283-285</sup> Similarly, emerging 2D materials have shown promising application prospects in many new electronic applications owing to their unique material properties.<sup>286,287</sup> For example, 2D van der Waals layered crystals and quasi-2D transition metal oxide

semiconductor materials have been used in bioneuron-inspired synaptic transistors.<sup>94</sup>

As another example of a 2D material-based synaptic transistor, Wang et al.<sup>288</sup> first reported a multifunctional synaptic transistor based on a MoS<sub>2</sub>/perylene-3,4,9,10-tetracarboxylic dianhydride (PTCDA) hybrid structure using the energy band arrangement between 2D inorganic/organic semiconductors, which achieves robust electro-optic modulation through carrier transfer at the heterojunction interface (Figure 7Ai-ii). By increasing the number of electrons, the minimum inhibition rate and maximum facilitation rate are 3% and 500%, respectively (Figure 7Aiii). The flexible short-term plasticity (STP) and adjustable long-term plasticity (LTP) make this transistor with remarkable STP and LTP and is much superior to other reported transistors (Figure 7Aiv). In

addition to changing the band arrangement, constructing ion-gated modulated synaptic transistors is an efficient synaptic simulation device. As an example, a transistor made from layered WSe<sub>2</sub> and phosphorus trihalides can cause different poststimulus diffusion kinetics through surface adsorption and embedding in channel media (Figure 7Ci).<sup>115</sup> It also exhibits excellent STP/LTP transition at different frequencies, excellent repeatability, and linearity, as well as biosynapse-like energy expenditure, resulting in a variety of STP and LTP (Figure 7Cii-v). Moreover, the rapid regulation of synaptic activity can improve the efficiency of artificial synapse simulations. A three-terminal “synaptic barrister”, constructing a monolithic tungsten oxide resistor and a variable barrier tungsten self-melting point/graphene Schottky diode are shown in Figure 7Bi,ii.<sup>113</sup> Changes in the



**FIGURE 7** (A) (i) Schematic of the MoS<sub>2</sub>/PTCDA hybrid synaptic transistor and the biological synaptic diagram; (ii) AFM image of the MoS<sub>2</sub>/PTCDA synaptic transistor; (iii) pulse number of the artificial synaptic transistor; (iv) comparison of weight changes and PPF ratios of artificial synapses with those in reported study. Reproduced with permission.<sup>288</sup> Copyright 2019, Wiley-VCH. (B) WO<sub>3-x</sub>/WSe<sub>2</sub>/graphene barrister: (i) the schematic illustration and the monolithic oxidation process; (ii) the corresponding circuit diagram. (iii-iv) Changes of the PSC while applying numbers of spikes as a function of numbers/time at  $V_D = -0.1$  V. Reproduced with permission.<sup>113</sup> Copyright 2018, Wiley-VCH. (C) (i) Schematic of the WSe<sub>2</sub> synaptic transistors, HRTEM images, and the similarity of biosynapse, scale bar = 5 nm; (ii) the  $I_{ds}$  response as a consequence of STP to LTP transition; (iii) the linearity, symmetry, and reproducibility of the long-term potentiated and depressed WSe<sub>2</sub> synaptic transistor; (iv) function of energy consumption and long-term weight change at 100  $\mu$ s pulse width; (v) dynamic filtering characteristic of the synaptic transistor at different frequencies. Reproduced with permission.<sup>115</sup> Copyright 2018, Wiley-VCH. AFM, atomic force microscopy; HRTEM, high resolution transmission electron microscopy; LTD, long-term depression; LTP, long-term plasticity; NCX, Na<sup>+</sup>/Ca<sup>2+</sup> exchangers; NMDA, N-methyl-D-aspartic acid; PMCA, plasma membrane Ca<sup>2+</sup> ATPase; PPF, paired pulse facilitation; PSC, postsynaptic current; PTCDA, perylene-3,4,9,10-tetracarboxylic dianhydride; STP, short-term plasticity; VGCC, voltage gated calcium channel

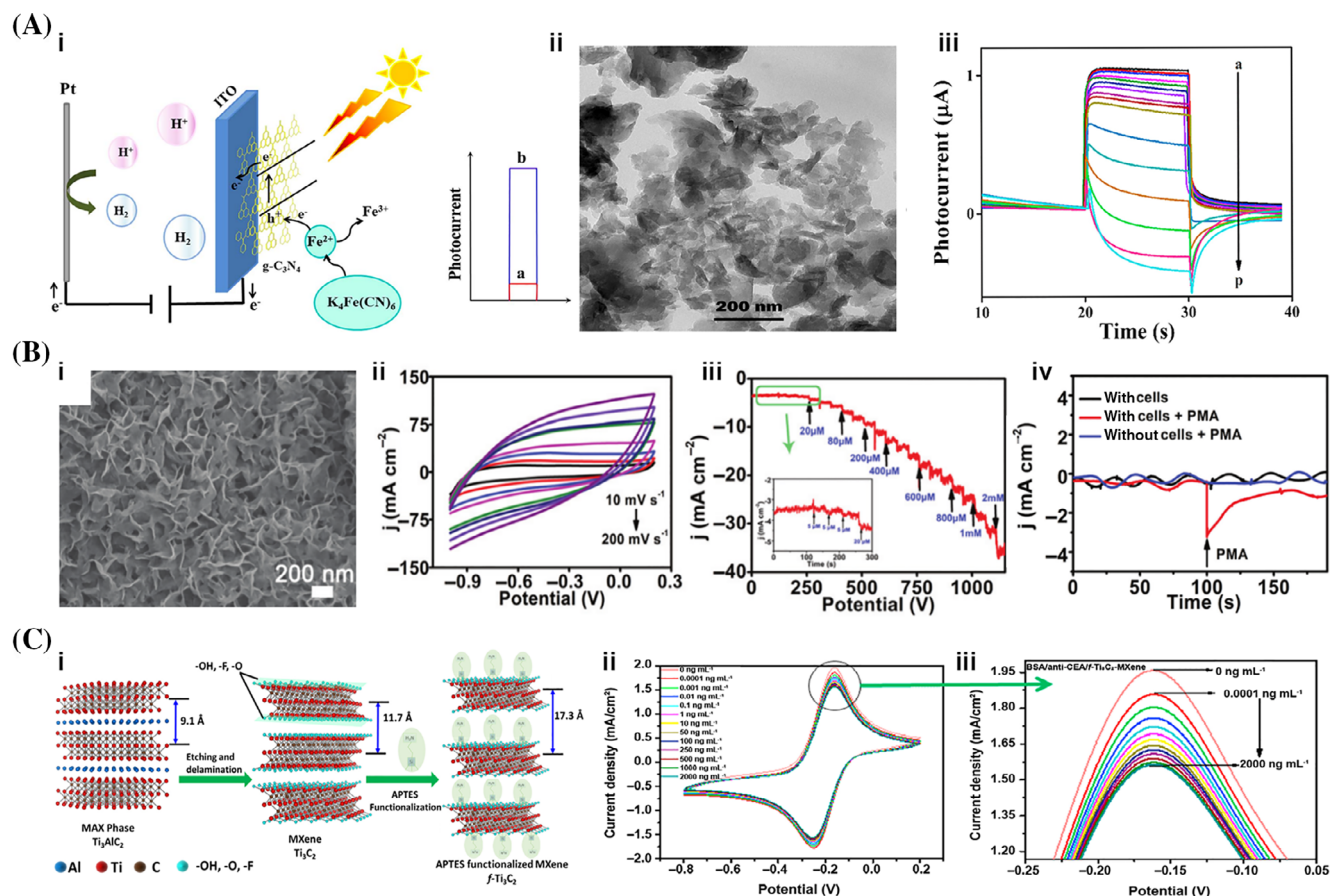
WSe<sub>2</sub>/graphene Schottky diode cause changes in the electrical field strength of WO<sub>3-x</sub>, thereby leading to changes in PSC, demonstrating its synaptic plasticity (LTP/LTD, STP/LTP, Figure 7Biii,iv). Therefore, it can moderately organize the synaptic degree/rate of the programmed pulses at the source and drain terminals by electrostatic tuning with the gate terminals, which cannot be accomplished by other reported synaptic devices. These properties make it possible to accelerate the consolidation and transformation of synaptic plasticity, as well as STP and LTP and pair pulsing facilitation of synapses.

### 3.2 | Detection of biomolecules or biomarkers

In recent years, surveillance biosensors and bioelectronics have developed rapidly in adjustable, wearable, and

minimally invasive biomedical devices for disease diagnosis and therapy.<sup>289,290</sup> Two-dimensional nanostructures are a top-rated class of materials in this field because they can fill the mechanical differences between rigid/planar devices and flexible/curved interfaces, and they are also a kind of nanomaterial with therapeutic functions.<sup>291,292</sup> Owing to the structural specificity of emerging 2D materials, their available surface area is tremendous, and any chemisorption on their surface may lead to significant changes in the electrical properties of single or several layers of nanosheets, making them very suitable for detecting chem-/biomolecules.<sup>14,22,128,293</sup>

A typical example of the use of emerging 2D materials as biosensors is the detection of various oxides and reactive oxygen species (ROS). By coating g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> on the ITO electrode, a simple PEC sensor using K<sub>4</sub>[Fe(CN)<sub>6</sub>] as an electron donor solution (Figure 8Ai,ii) was constructed.<sup>294</sup> The PEC sensor can achieve good linear detection of H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> under different pH conditions; it also



**FIGURE 8** (A) (i) Transfer mechanism of g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub>-K<sub>4</sub>[Fe(CN)<sub>6</sub>]; (ii) TEM image of g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> NSs; (iii) photocurrent response of the g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub>/ITO electrode in PBS (pH 10) from 0 to 4400 µM. Reproduced with permission.<sup>294</sup> Copyright 2018, Elsevier B.V. (B) (i) SEM images of MoS<sub>2</sub>/CC; (ii) cyclic voltammetry of MoS<sub>2</sub>/CC in 0.1 M PBS mixed with 1 mM H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>; (iii–iv) the amperometric response of MoS<sub>2</sub>/CC in 0.1 M PBS (pH 7.4) (iii) to the continuous addition of H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> or (iv) with and without A549 cells. Reproduced with permission.<sup>295</sup> Copyright 2019, The Royal Society of Chemistry. (C) (i) Functionalization diagram of Ti<sub>3</sub>C<sub>2</sub>-MXene. (ii, iii) Electrochemical sensing performances of BSA/anti-CEA/f-Ti<sub>3</sub>C<sub>2</sub>-MXene/GC electrode of CEA from 0.0001 to 2000 ng mL<sup>-1</sup>. Reproduced with permission.<sup>296</sup> Copyright 2018, Elsevier B.V. APTES, aminosilane; CEA, cancer embryonic antigen; ITO, indium–tin oxide; NSs, nanosheets; PBS, phosphate buffer saline; PMA, phorbol-12-myristate-13-acetate; SEM, scanning electron microscopy; TEM, transmission electron microscopy

has a LOD of 0.25–100  $\mu\text{M}$  for ascorbic acid (AA) and  $0.5\text{--}19 \times 10^{-3}\%$  (v/v) for  $\text{ClO}^-$  at pH 7.4. This sensor has good response characteristics to trace elements and has high specificity, long-term stability, and good reproducibility (Figure 8Aiii). In addition to detecting substances in vitro, emerging 2D materials can detect  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  in vivo. As shown in Figure 8Bi–iv, a low-cost, self-supporting  $\text{MoS}_2$  nanosheet array with good electrocatalytic performance, exhibiting 1.0  $\mu\text{M}$  ( $\text{S/N} = 3$ ) LOD and 5.3  $\text{mA mM}^{-1} \text{cm}^{-2}$  sensitivity against  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  in phosphate buffer saline (PBS), and most importantly, it successfully detected trace  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  secreted by A549 cancer cells in vivo.<sup>295</sup> Emerging 2D materials can also perform ultrasensitive detection of disease markers, such as cancer markers (cancer embryonic antigen [CEA]). Salama et al.<sup>296</sup> synthesized ultrathin  $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{-MXene}$  nanosheets and functionalized them with amino silane to obtain  $f\text{-Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{-MXene}$  (Figure 8Ci). They found that when  $[\text{Ru}(\text{NH}_3)_6]^{3+}$  was used as the redox probe, the detection of anti-CEA- $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{-MXene}$  for CEA ranged from 0.0001 to 2000  $\text{ng mL}^{-1}$  (Figure 8Cii,iii). The LOD of this  $f\text{-Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{-MXene}$  is higher than that of the original 2D nanomaterials and is comparable to that of hybrid emerging 2D materials. Therefore, the use of emerging 2D materials as highly sensitive sensors for DNA, aptamers, enzymes, antibodies, and cells is a new and promising means that can be further applied in the field of in vivo monitoring.

### 3.3 | Skin sensors and bioelectronics

The emerging 2D materials used in bioelectronic devices have been widely studied. In this section, we provide representative examples of these devices, including skin monitoring, which is one of the most important application fields of 2D materials-based biosensors; it has been found that the 2D materials-based sensor can be constructed and customized based on the application position of skin with tight attachment to the skin without loss of sensitivity for several hours.

The human skin interface is a unique and attractive research field that can be used to monitor temperature, pressure, tactile, and even diseases.<sup>297–299</sup> Therefore, a skin-sensing device (E-skin) composed of 2D materials for detecting various indicators of the human body has been fabricated. In the past 10 years, metal-, graphene-, and conductive polymer-based sensitive E-skins have received tremendous progress.<sup>300,301</sup> However, excessive metal utilization can lead to increased rigidity, high cost, and potential metal ion toxicity. The high electron mobility but near-zero bandgap of graphene might increase the off-state current leakage in graphene-based E-skins, resulting in false signals. Polymers usually possess relatively low

conductivities, and their intrinsic conductivity depends on the doped charge carriers. Compared with metal-, graphene-, and polymer-based sensitive E-skins, the emerging 2D materials (e.g.,  $\text{BP}$ <sup>302</sup> and  $\text{MXene}$ <sup>71</sup>) have many physicochemical advantages, such as a large surface/volume ratio, atomically thinness, mechanical flexibility, high transparency, high carrier transfer characteristics, tunable bandgap and conductivity, and good biocompatibility, which endows them with enormous potential for designing soft and wearable E-skins. Additionally, the quantum confinement effect in atomically thin 2D layers introduces interesting optoelectronic properties and superb photodetection capabilities.<sup>303</sup> Therefore, it is believed that these emerging 2D materials could surpass the performances of these pioneering electronic devices based on metals, graphene, and polymers. Moreover, the emerging 2D materials also show great potential to integrate other unique functionalities when fabricating as E-skin devices, such as photosensitivity, mechanical softness, excellent hydrophilicity, and catalytic properties.

#### 3.3.1 | Physiological monitor

In today's society, everyone is very concerned about personal medical health, which has prompted the flourishing development of medical devices. Among them, portable, intelligent, and wearable medical detection equipment has become an indispensable part of people's daily lives, which is very helpful for diagnosing, treating diseases, and evaluating daily health status. Wearable electronic detection equipment made of 2D materials has the characteristics of high sensitivity, softness, and versatility, and can accurately detect various indicators, including blood glucose concentration, sweat acidity, and alkalinity. Here, a modular, stretchable, and wearable multifunctional sweat biosensor with the solid-liquid-air three-phase interface has been fabricated, which is composed of  $\text{MXene/Prussian blue (Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x/\text{PB})$  composite material as shown in Figure 9A.<sup>39</sup> The product diagram are shown in Figure 9B,C. Owing to the unique 2D morphology and metallic conductivity of  $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x$ ,  $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x/\text{PB}$  composites distinctly improved the electrochemical activity and stability for measuring hydrogen peroxide, and the active sensors in the system are independent and replaceable modules; therefore, different biomarkers can be selected and implanted to detect different indicators. In this report, the sensitivity of the sensor to glucose, lactate, and pH value in artificial sweat and human sweat was tested and proved that it had high electrochemical sensitivity to the concentration of glucose and lactate in artificial sweat as low as 35.3 and 11.4

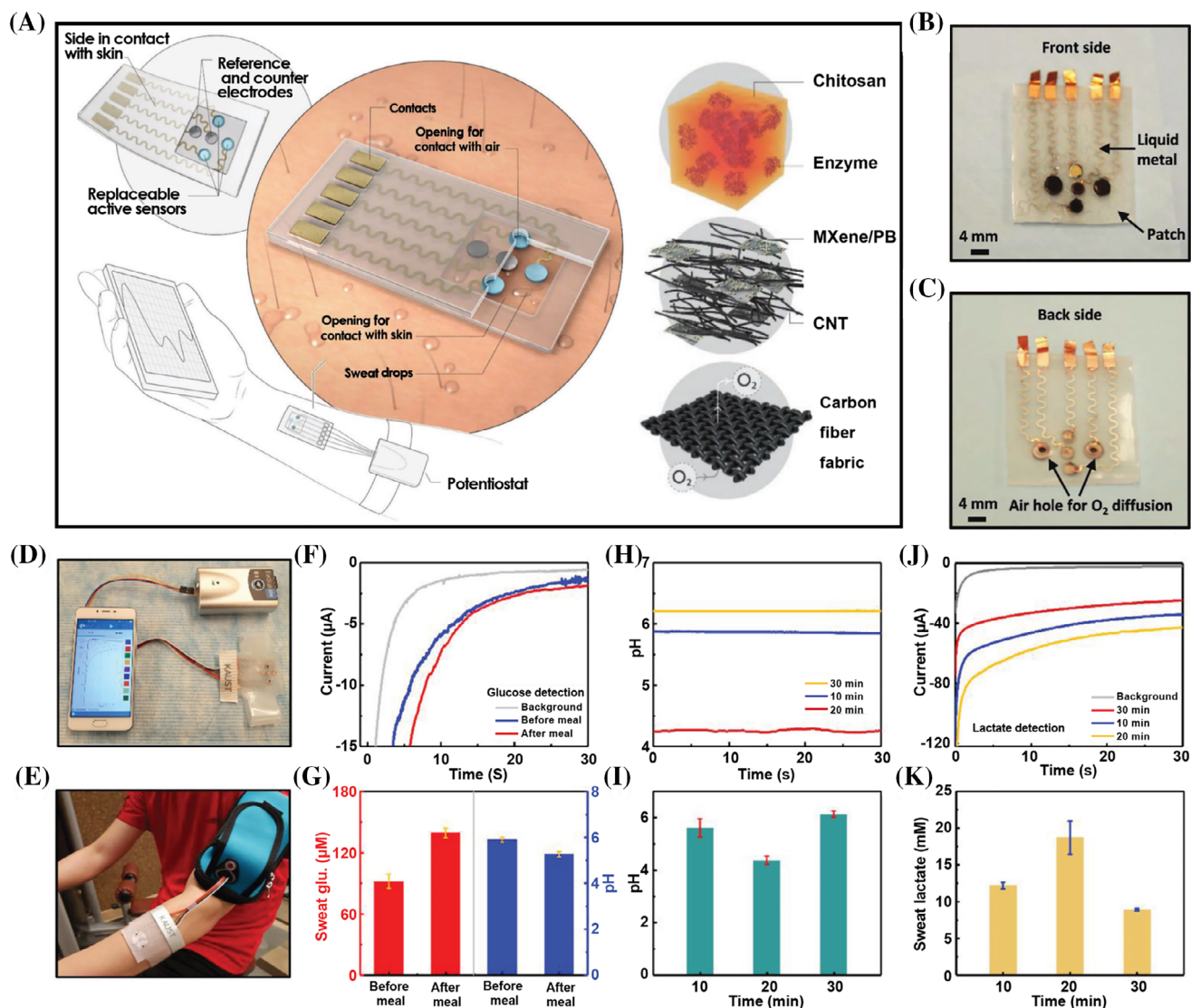


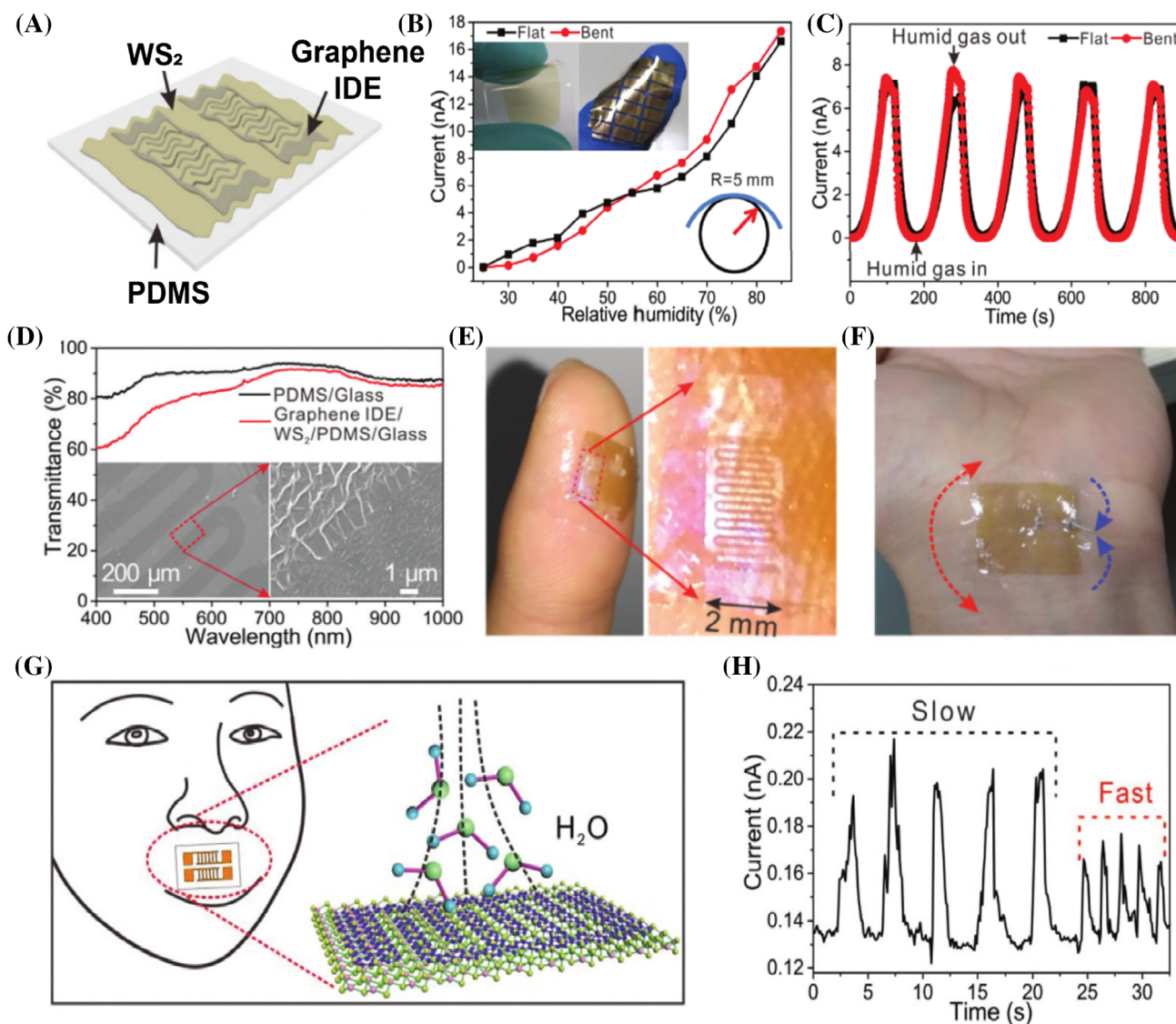
FIGURE 9 (A) Schematic diagram of  $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x/\text{PB}$  sensor and the oxygen-rich enzyme electrode. (B, C) Front/backside optical images of the  $\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2\text{T}_x/\text{PB}$  sensor. (D, E) Images of real-time evaluation sensing system on the human body. (F–K) The concentrations of pH levels, lactate, and glucose after different treatments. Reproduced with permission from Lei et al.<sup>39</sup> Copyright 2019, Wiley-VCH. CNT, carbon nanotube; PB, Prussian blue

$\mu\text{A mM}^{-1} \text{cm}^{-2}$ , respectively. Similarly, it can also measure physiological and chemical signals (glucose/lactate levels and pH changes) simultaneously on human subjects' sweat and maintain high sensitivity and good repeatability, demonstrating its potential for personalized health monitoring (Figure 9D–K). Therefore, this wearable multimode biosensing device can concurrently observe changes in glucose, lactate, and pH values in sweat. This three-phase interface structure is conducive to providing oxygen for the enzyme electrode, thus making the enzyme electrode have a more extensive detection range and ultra-high sensitivity to biomarkers.

In addition to sweat monitoring, emerging 2D materials have been widely used for humidity monitoring. As shown in Figure 10A,B, the  $\text{WS}_2$  film can be used as a

high humidity sensor under natural flat or high mechanical flexible states and also shows repeatability in the periodically introduced saturated moisture gas sensing Figure 10C.<sup>304</sup> The electronic conductivity of  $\text{WS}_2$  endows this device with high sensitivity to the humidity of 90%. When integrated with graphene and thin polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS), a transparent, flexible, and stretchable sensor for humidity monitoring can be fabricated Figure 10D, which can adhere well to the skin and provide a highly stable sensing capability for moisture Figure 10E,F. It has a repeatable humidity response in the stretching, relaxing, and compressing states. When monitoring human breathing in real-time, it is found that it can effectively track relatively fast breathing (1 s) or slower breathing (5 s; Figure 10G,H), thus providing





**FIGURE 10** (A) Schematic of the WS<sub>2</sub> humidity sensor. (B, C) Humidity performance of WS<sub>2</sub> sensor. (D) Transmittance spectra of WS<sub>2</sub>-/graphene/PDMS. (E, F) Photograph of WS<sub>2</sub> sensor attached to a fingertip and waist. (G, H) The sensing performances of the relatively slow and fast respiration rates for the human nose. Reproduced with permission.<sup>304</sup> Copyright 2017, The Royal Society of Chemistry. IDE, interdigital electrode; PDMS, polydimethylsiloxane

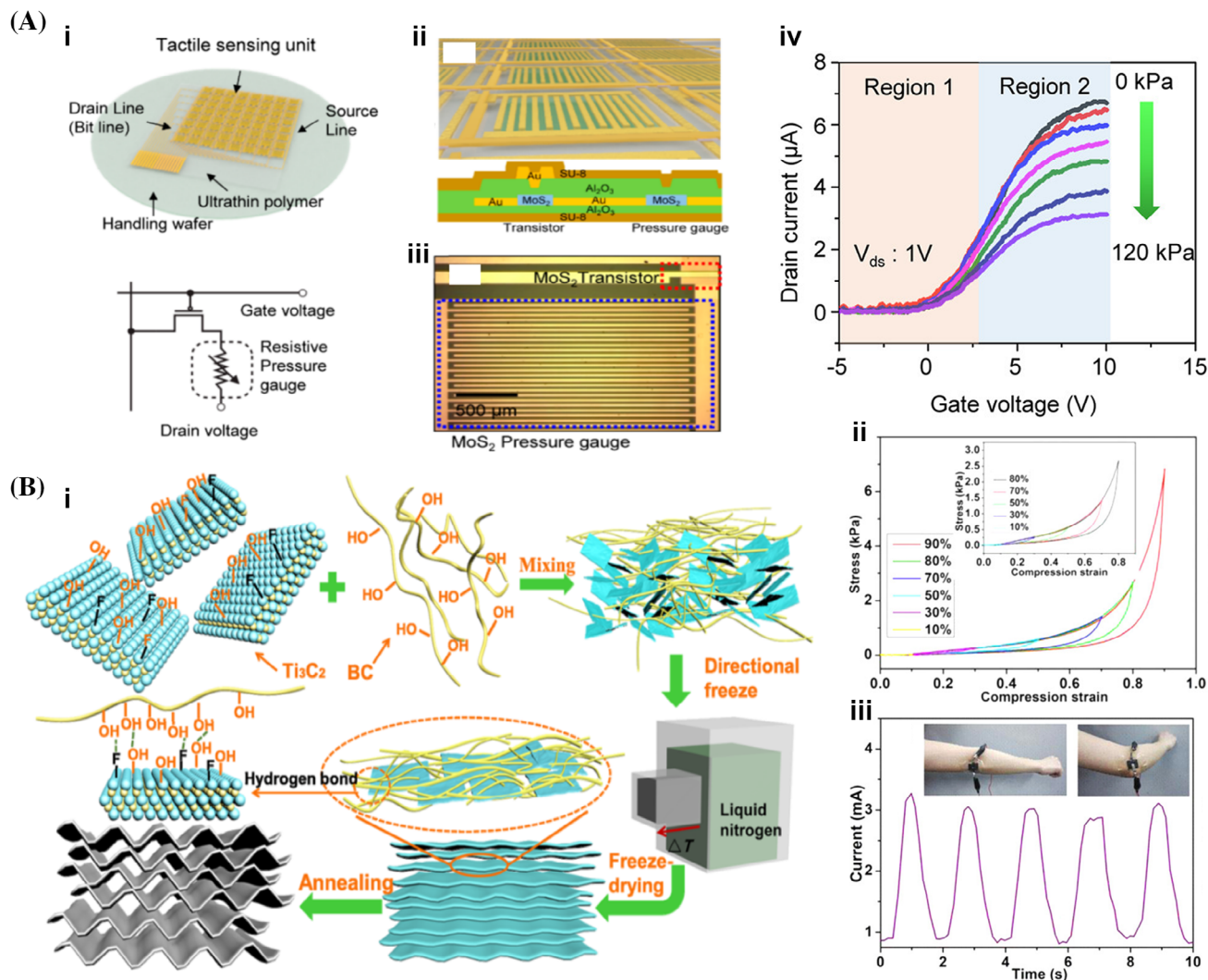
great application potential for healthcare monitoring, for instance, the development of low-power consumption wearable chemical sensors.

### 3.3.2 | Physical-signals monitor

Besides the monitoring of human physiological signals, other physical signals, such as pressure and strain, can also be “visualized” by emerging 2D materials.<sup>305</sup> Pressure sensors based on piezoresistive, capacitive, and triboelectric effects have been achieved based on various types of 2D materials.<sup>306,307</sup> For example, a large-size tactile sensor based on 2D MoS<sub>2</sub> can overcome the interference of

crosstalk of traditional passive pressure sensors by placing MoS<sub>2</sub> in the high-*k* Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> layers, thus making the MoS<sub>2</sub> tactile sensor sensing from 1 to 120 kPa, as well as high sensitivity ( $\Delta R/R_0$ : 0.011 kPa<sup>-1</sup>) and good linearity response mode (180 ms).<sup>55</sup> The results in Figure 11Ai–iv suggest their excellent application potential for multitouch perception and handwriting recognition.

Based on earlier studies, many CNTs, graphene, and other 2D nanomaterial-based compressible and elastic carbon aerogels (CECAs) exhibit efficient piezoresistive behavior. They can be applied to test tactile contacts with high sensitivity in wearable bioelectronics and E-skins. However, the insufficient interaction between these nanomaterials makes it challenging to fabricate highly

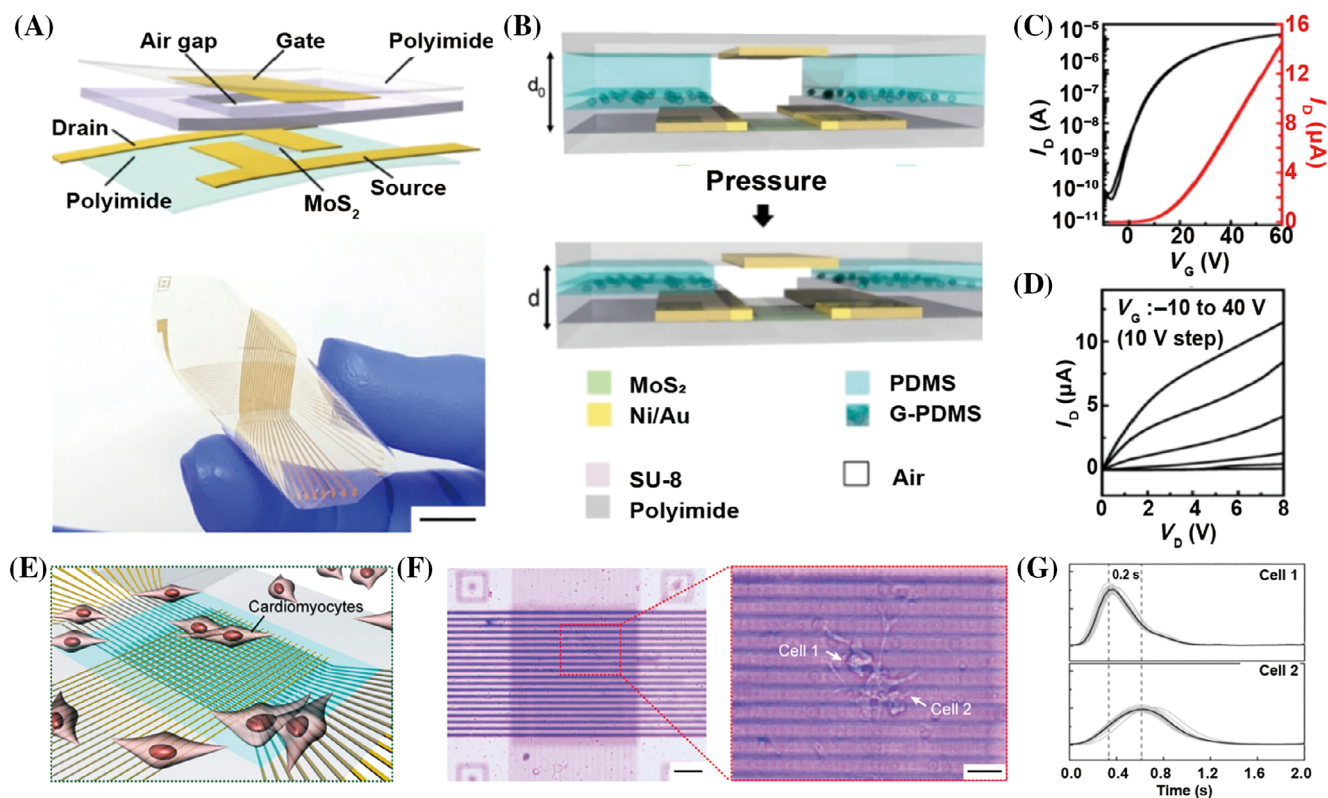


**FIGURE 11** (A) (i–iii) The schematic structure and images of the MoS<sub>2</sub> sensor. (iv) Applied pressure–transfer parameters of MoS<sub>2</sub> sensor from 0 to 120 kPa. Reproduced with permission.<sup>55</sup> Copyright 2019, American Chemical Society. (B) (i) Illustration of the fabrication of C-MX/BC-x (C, MX, BC, and x represent carbonization, Ti<sub>3</sub>C<sub>2</sub>, bacterial cellulose, and the mass ratio of BC to Ti<sub>3</sub>C<sub>2</sub>, respectively) carbon aerogel. (ii) Stress–strain curves at various compression strains. Current signals from (iii) elbow. Reproduced with permission.<sup>308</sup> Copyright 2019, American Chemical Society. BC, bacterial cellulose

sensitive and robust sensors based on CECAs; therefore, as shown in Figure 11Bi, the bacterial cellulose (BC) as a nanobinder was used to join Ti<sub>3</sub>C<sub>2</sub> nanosheets to fabricate a lightweight CECAs for electronic devices.<sup>308</sup> The prepared CECAs showed continuous and wave-shaped/oriented lamellae, resulting in good compressibility (as high as 99% strain for more than 10 000 cycles) and elasticity. As shown in Figure 11Bii,iii, the results show that this device has high sensitivity with a broad working pressure range from 0 to 10 kPa and ultrahigh linearity up to 95% workable strain. Furthermore, it is found that this sensor is very sensitive to subtle strain and pressure changes. When the sensor is attached to the human throat, it can record the current changes from speaking different words, such as “carbon” and “super”. Scientists

believe that this CECA-based sensor has superior mechanical properties, ultra-high/wide linear sensitivity, and low LOD, indicating a significantly improved possibility of future application of fabricated sensors in wearable sensing devices.

The primary sensing range of most 2D pressure sensors revolves around electronic skin, health monitoring devices, and human–machine interface applications, but are still limited by their specific sensing range, sensitivity, and spatial resolution. An active matrix array based on MoS<sub>2</sub> transistors was reported to monitor various mechanical or biological movements in real-time and can be used in a wide detectable range from footprint to cell movement (Figure 12A–D).<sup>309</sup> The resulting active matrix arrays of mechano-luminescent, air-mediated field-effect



**FIGURE 12** (A) Illustration and the photograph of air-dielectric MoS<sub>2</sub> FET, scale bar = 1 cm. (B) MoS<sub>2</sub> FET as a pressure sensor. (C, D) Transfer ( $V_D = 1$  V)/output ( $V_G = -10$  to 40 V) characteristics of MoS<sub>2</sub> FET. (E) Illustration of MoS<sub>2</sub> FET sensor array for cardiomyocyte pulsation detection. (F) Optical micrographs of MoS<sub>2</sub> FET sensor array, scale bars represent 50 and 20 μm, respectively. (G) The  $I_D$  changes of the MoS<sub>2</sub> FET around the cardiomyocytes. Reproduced with permission.<sup>309</sup> Copyright 2020, American Chemical Society. FET, field effect transistor; PDMS, polydimethylsiloxane

transistors can improve their spatial resolution to analyze the pressure distribution in a single cardiomyocyte for precise monitoring (Figure 12E,F). The pressure generated by the cardiomyocyte pulsation changes the  $I_D$  of the FET sensor; the pulsation peak and the time to reach the peak of the two cells are also different (Figure 12G). Therefore, this device can measure biological activity even in very small units with excellent resolution, which can facilitate the propagation of cardiomyocyte signals intracellularly and/or intercellularly, which are significantly superior to other pressure sensors.

## 4 | CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

In this review, the physicochemical structures of the most representative emerging 2D materials and the design of their nanostructures for engineering high-performance bioelectronic and biosensing devices are summarized. To guide the future design of bioelectronics, we offer a unique focus on discussing the structural optimization of emerging 2D material-based composites to achieve better

performance. Meanwhile, recent developments in emerging 2D materials in bioelectronics, such as neural interface simulation, biomolecular/biomarker detection, and skin sensors, have been introduced in detail. Although the use of emerging 2D materials as bioelectronic devices has been demonstrated in many studies, there is still a long way to go to fill the gap between theoretical research and actual demands.

The first problem to be solved is an optimization of the synthetic process. When designing emerging 2D materials for bioelectronic devices, complex synthetic methods are often introduced during the preparation process. However, these methods may not be controllable when expanding production, which leads to the devices not having ideal structural features or their special surface-related functions being lost, which will become an essential obstacle to the industrialization of bioelectronic devices. At the same time, the stability of the materials prepared by these uncontrollable methods is also worth speculating; when facing a complex environment, it may also lead to the oxidative decomposition of structures and even collapse.

Second, owing to the complex physiological environments, emerging 2D materials that are more suitable for

biological interfaces need to be developed for in vivo biosensing applications. The priority is to ensure their biological safety, and then to maintain stability in long-term contact with tissue interface/body fluid without causing an immune response. This requires a detailed study of the biocompatibility, cytotoxicity, and possible metabolic pathways of the materials. The chemical stability, atomic composition, exfoliation process, and lateral dimensions of emerging 2D materials are the key factors in determining their biocompatibility, whereas PEGylation or functionalization with biocompatible polymers can endow them with enhanced biocompatibility and more favorable profiles on long-term tissue compatibility.<sup>293,310,311</sup> At the same time, the mechanism of electron transfer between biological interfaces and 2D materials should be studied comprehensively. A better understanding of the interaction between 2D materials and various substances can provide more opportunities to explore biosensing applications and improve the current LOD.

Third, each emerging 2D material has unique advantages, but its shortcomings cannot be ignored. Building hybrid nanomaterials with other materials, including and not limited to 2D materials themselves, is an effective way to avoid the original shortcomings. For example, a hybrid of MXene and TMDs has successfully constructed a sensitive and efficient sensor, as shown in Figure 3E. Meanwhile, the mutual hybridization of materials may also bring more interesting material interfaces, which can help to improve their recognition ability and signal amplification while avoiding material defects.

Finally, to realize the joint development of bioelectronics with multiple disciplines, such as materials, medicines, and computational simulation, especially the development of devices integrated with artificial intelligence with the ability to simultaneously detect physical and chemical signals, will be a more comprehensive development direction for the evaluation of human signals by 2D bioelectronic devices. In conclusion, bioelectronic devices obtained by integrating 2D materials with flexible circuit systems can be effectively applied in human body signal detection because of their multifunctional sensing abilities and will be further promoted through the improvement of technology and material performance for high-quality disease monitoring. We believe that with an in-depth understanding of the characteristics and design of emerging 2D materials, as well as new technologies and methods, biocompatible and highly efficient bioelectronics and biosensors can be realized.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The manuscript was written through the contributions of all authors. All authors have approved the final version of the manuscript.

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