Uncertainty analysis as essential step in the establishment of the dynamic Design Space of primary drying during freeze-drying - DTU Orbit (09/11/2017)

Uncertainty analysis as essential step in the establishment of the dynamic Design Space of primary drying during freezedrying

Large molecules, such as biopharmaceuticals, are considered the key driver of growth for the pharmaceutical industry. Freeze-drying is the preferred way to stabilise these products when needed. However, it is an expensive, inefficient, timeand energy-consuming process. During freeze-drying, there are only two main process variables to be set, i.e. the shelf temperature and the chamber pressure, however preferably in a dynamic way. This manuscript focuses on the essential use of uncertainty analysis for the determination and experimental verification of the dynamic primary drying Design Space for pharmaceutical freeze-drying. Traditionally, the chamber pressure and shelf temperature are kept constant during primary drying, leading to less optimal process conditions. In this paper it is demonstrated how a mechanistic model of the primary drying step gives the opportunity to determine the optimal dynamic values for both process variables during processing, resulting in a dynamic Design Space with a well-known risk of failure. This allows running the primary drying process step as time efficient as possible, hereby guaranteeing that the temperature at the sublimation front does not exceed the collapse temperature. The Design Space is the multidimensional combination and interaction of input variables and process parameters leading to the expected product specifications with a controlled (i.e., high) probability. Therefore, inclusion of parameter uncertainty is an essential part in the definition of the Design Space, although it is often neglected. To quantitatively assess the inherent uncertainty on the parameters of the mechanistic model, an uncertainty analysis was performed to establish the borders of the dynamic Design Space, i.e. a time-varying shelf temperature and chamber pressure, associated with a specific risk of failure. A risk of failure acceptance level of 0.01%, i.e. a 'zero-failure' situation, results in an increased primary drying process time compared to the deterministic dynamic Design Space; however, the risk of failure is under control. Experimental verification revealed that only a risk of failure acceptance level of 0.01% yielded a guaranteed zero-defect quality end-product. The computed process settings with a risk of failure acceptance level of 0.01% resulted in a decrease of more than half of the primary drying time in comparison with a regular, conservative cycle with fixed settings. (C) 2016 Published by Elsevier B.V.

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