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Hydrogels in Biology and Medicine

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Message from the Guest Editors

Hydrogels are ordered three-dimensional cross-linked systems formed by polymeric chains embedded in a water-rich environment. They are composed of hydrophilic homopolymers or copolymers, which may absorb from 10–20% up to thousands of times their dry weight in water.

A great variety of naturally derived and synthetic polymers can be processed into hydrogels. For this reason, they can be classified, depending on the polymer origin, as natural, synthetic, and hybrid gels. They can also be divided into two groups according to the nature of the formation mechanisms of the three-dimensional network (physical and chemical gelation).

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