

Fabrication of biological arrays by unconventional lithographic methods

Sun Min Kim¹, Kahp Yang Suh²

¹ Department of Mechanical Engineering, Inha University, 253 Young Hyun-dong, Nam-gu, Incheon, 402-751, Republic of Korea,

² School of Mechanical and Aerospace engineering and the Institute of Advanced Machinery and Design, Seoul National University, San 56-1, Shinlim-dong, Kwanak-gu, Seoul, 151-742, Republic of Korea

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Abstract
2. Introduction
3. Methods for fabricating biological arrays
 - 3.1. Direct transfer of biological species
 - 3.1.1. Dip-pen nanolithography (DPN)
 - 3.1.2. Direct contact printing
 - 3.1.3. Droplet dispensing
 - 3.2. Selective deposition of biological species on patterned surfaces
 - 3.2.1. Nanoimprint Lithography (NIL)
 - 3.2.2. Capillary Force Lithography (CFL)
 - 3.2.3. Indirect contact printing
 - 3.3. Stencil-based patterning
4. Conclusions
5. Acknowledgements
6. References

1. ABSTRACT

Biological arrays with dimensions less than 100 nm are emerging as a new tool for biological research in the fields of genomics, proteomics, cell analysis, and tissue engineering. In this review, unconventional lithographic methods for the fabrication of biological arrays are summarized and compared in terms of spot size, density, resolution and ease in fabrication. The methods are classified into three categories: a) direct transfer of biological species on the substrate, b) selective deposition on the patterned surface using an adhesion-controlled template material, and c) stencil or membrane-based deposition on specific regions of a substrate. This review would be useful to related researchers in bioscience and bioengineering.

2. INTRODUCTION

Biological arrays with biomolecules (e.g., DNA and proteins), cells, or tissues on solid substrates provide valuable information for biological research in the fields of genomics, proteomics, cell analysis, and tissue engineering (1). DNA arrays are used for measuring gene expression levels and genotyping or detecting subtle variation in gene sequences, which are useful for disease diagnosis, evaluation, and drug development (2-5). Protein arrays enable screening protein-protein or protein-ligand (e.g., DNA, lipid, and drugs) interactions, which can be utilized for evaluating/diagnosing disease susceptibility, and for finding potential therapeutic targets (6-12). Cell arrays are useful tools for high-throughput cellular investigation in drug screening, toxicology testing, and functional genomic

studies (13-16). In addition, tissue arrays of embedded biopsies of donor block are used for phenotypic analyses to examine the stage and progression of the disease by monitoring the expression of molecular markers in these arrays (17-19).

Key issues in biological array systems include uniformity, high resolution of patterned arrays, and high-throughput analysis with these arrays. Miniaturization of biological arrays can enhance the sensitivity of biomolecular analysis and achieve single molecule detection and rapid molecular analysis by reducing the spot size (20). For example, if one can reduce the diameter of the spots in an array to the order of 10^3 , then a 10^6 -fold gain in sensitivity is possible for reading the array with single molecule sensitivity (21). The array of molecular size spots is also required for single molecule detection and rapid, high-throughput molecular analysis because biological molecules are in the range of 1-100 nm (e.g. albumin is in the range of 1-10 nm and most gene and DNA are in the range of 1-100 nm) (22).

A variety of fabrication techniques have been developed to achieve tiny size of biomolecular spots as small as single molecule in array systems. Fabrication techniques for miniaturization used in biological research have emerged with developments in the electronics industry, evolving into a smaller, faster, and cheaper fabrication technology with respect to semiconductor market demand (23). As a result, biological arrays containing features with dimensions of less than 100 nm, more similar to the dimensions of single biomolecule, are now emerging in biological applications. The motivation for these improvements is to increase the density of arrays, lower their cost, and increase their performance per array system (24).

Fabrication techniques for biomolecular arrays are typically categorized into top-down and bottom-up approaches (24). The top-down approach creates micro- or nanoscale structures from a bulk starting material, while the bottom-up approach utilizes the interactions of molecules and colloidal particles to self-assemble into structures of interest (25). The conventional fabrication techniques are based on various light sources in the top-down approach. These top-down approaches include photolithography (26-28), electron beam lithography (29-34) and focused ion beam lithography (35-37). These conventional techniques are commercially available and widely implemented in manufacturing, but they are often limited by their high cost, difficult multiple-step processes, and poor accessibility to the clean room facilities necessary for processing. Conventional techniques are also restricted to planar fabrication of semiconductor materials and expose the substrates to corrosive chemicals, high-energy radiation, and high temperature (24). These limitations motivate the development of new, unconventional methods which appear to be more flexible for nanofabrication, such as nano-imprint lithography (38-46), soft lithography (47-54), scanning probe nanolithography (including dip-pen nanolithography) (55-64). Unconventional fabrication techniques are in research stage and tools for nano-pattern

molding are just entering commercial production. They are favorably applicable to biological materials and to sensitive organic material without deterioration. These novel unconventional methods have the potential to be future low-cost and simple process for nanoscale pattern formation and replication.

Although there are several reviews for biological arrays in micro-scale (65-67), we focus on the unconventional fabrication of nanoscale biological arrays (< 100 nm) in this review. It is difficult to summarize all of the fabrication techniques being developed at present because the field is continually changing and the boundaries constantly being challenged and modified. However, the objectives of the fabrication techniques are the same: patterning of uniform, dense arrays of tiny spots of biomolecules with low costs.

In this review the state-of-the-art fabrication methods for biological arrays, especially unconventional approaches, are outlined to provide the reader with an overview of current fabrication techniques. Each method can be categorized into one of three categories; a) direct patterning: biological species are directly transferred and patterned on the substrate, b) selective deposition on patterned surface: biological species selectively adhered to the patterned surfaces, and c) stencil-based patterning: patterned stencils can be used to pattern biological species to specific region of a substrate (See Table 1 and Figure 1). However, it should be noted that in many instances, more than one fabrication process can be implemented to achieve the final production of a device.

3. METHODS FOR FABRICATING BIOLOGICAL ARRAYS

3.1. Direct transfer of biological species

Direct patterning methods are used to form micro- or nanoarrays by means of the direct deposition of biological molecules on the substrate. This approach includes dip-pen nanolithography (DPN) based on AFM (atomic force microscopy) (60-64, 68-73), direct contact printing (stamping) based on soft lithography (12, 74-76), and droplet dispensing technique based on inkjet printing (77-80).

3.1.1. Dip-pen nanolithography (DPN)

DPN employs an AFM tip to print spots at the nanoscale. AFM offers ultra-high resolution and *in situ* imaging capability which can be applied for nanofabrication (64). AFM has two modes of operation: scanning and tapping modes. The ink-coated AFM tip transfers proteins or other biomolecules to the substrate with high resolution (sub-50-nm) using the tapping mode. The solution with biological molecules flows from an AFM tip to a substrate by capillary action when the AFM tip is brought into contact with the substrate (1). Figure 2 shows an example of protein patterning using DPN. An AFM tip transfers biomolecules that bind with target proteins to the substrate creating nano-patterns. Then, the rest of substrate is covered with the bio-blocking molecules which do not bind with biomolecules. Subsequently, the substrate is

Fabrication of biological arrays by unconventional lithographic methods

Table 1. Comparison of unconventional nanofabrication methods for biological arrays

Category	Technique	Resolution	Applications	Advantages	Disadvantages
Direct patterning	Dip-pen nanolithography	~50 nm	Patterning organic molecules, polymers, DNA, proteins, peptides, and colloidal particles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deposit multiple compounds with high precision. - No damage from severe conditions (UV, ion or electron-beam irradiation, non-polar solvents) - Various choice of patterning biomolecules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slow patterning speed - Patterning resolution depends on the environmental conditions (ambient humidity and temperature)
	Direct contact printing	~100 nm	Patterning solvents, metals, polymers, DNA, proteins and cells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easy replication of stamp - Fast printing by parallelization - Low-cost batch production - Minimize the problems of sample carry-over and cross contamination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in the pattern size due to the swelling of stamp - Distorted patterns due to the deformation of stamp
	Droplet dispensing	~100 nm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Patterning proteins & DNA - Stand-alone liquid dispenser - Tool for liquid handling robots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inexpensive robotic system for positioning printing heads - Non-contact printing - Reproducibility - Scalability of sample volume 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contamination by undesirable satellite droplets - Difficult to clean printing nozzles to exchange the biological solutions - High shear rate
Selective deposition on patterned surfaces	Nanoimprint Lithography	~10 nm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Patterning proteins & DNA - Patterning substrates coated with polymers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mass production over a large area with low-cost, high throughput, and high reproducibility - Simplicity, high density and resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Breakage of the substrate due to very high pressure - Bubble-like defects
	Capillary Force Lithography	~100 nm	Patterning of polymeric materials, proteins and cells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Patterning a broad range of materials - Simplicity, low cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-uniform wettability over large areas
	Indirect contact printing	~100 nm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Patterning SAM - Patterning substrates with selective adhesive molecules 	Same with direct contact printing	Same with direct contact printing
Stencil-based patterning	PDMS stencil	~ 50 μ m	Patterning chemically and thermally sensitive compounds, including cells, proteins, wax, and sol.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convenient way for patterning cells on surfaces - A broad range of substrates can be used - Replicated many times from the same master mold 	Problems in large-area application by membrane detachment
	Parylene membranes	~30 μ m	Patterning chemically and thermally sensitive compounds, including cells, proteins, wax, and sol.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easily removed or attached to a surface due to its mechanical robustness (compared to PDMS) - Small size, high performance, low cost, and low power 	Many steps and special equipments (compared to those for PDMS membrane)

exposed to the biomolecule solutions and target proteins specifically adhere to the patterned biomolecules. The resolution of DPN depends on a variety of parameters including tip size, writing speed, ambient humidity, substrate roughness, and nature of the sample solution (21). DPN can deposit multiple compounds, sequentially, precisely, and exclusively on the substrate. The patterning substrates for DPN do not need to be exposed to severe conditions such as UV, ion or electron-beam irradiation, or non-polar solvents so that cross-contamination or damage to the substrate can be avoided.

DPN has been developed to pattern a variety of inks including organic molecules, polymers, DNA, proteins, peptides, and colloidal particles. Also, substrates have been extended to many insulating, semiconducting, and metallic substrates (64). These capabilities of DPN enable a variety of biomolecules to be patterned in the form of nanoarrays on the substrates. Lee *et al.* fabricated nanoarrays of mecaptohexadecanoic acid (MHA) dots for anti-p24 antibody immobilization to screen for the human immunodeficiency HIV-1 virus p24 antigen in serum samples. This nanoarray-based immunoassay system can

overcome the detection limit of conventional ELISA (enzyme-linked immunosorbent assays) by several orders of magnitude (81). Kang *et al.* directly constructed integrin $\alpha_5\beta_3$ nanoarrays using DPN and studied the interaction between integrin and vitronectin cell adhesion protein (82). This study demonstrated that the patterned nanoarrays of integrin proteins retain their biological selectivity after surface immobilization. DPN was also used to pattern viruses which are in the range of 20-200nm length scale (83). This work showed the capability of DPN which can position individual biological structures on the substrate to investigate biorecognition and virus-cell infectivity processes. DPN also can fabricate nanoarrays of extracellular-matrix components which can mimic the environment encountered by cells. These patterning approaches can be a useful tool for the study of cell-cell adhesion and the mechanism of cell migration (64).

DPN can pattern nano-scale structures on the substrate but the speed of printing is slow because DPN is a serial printing method. Slow printing reduces the efficiency of patterning and limits the functionality because the small volume of samples tends to dry out quickly. Recently,

Fabrication of biological arrays by unconventional lithographic methods

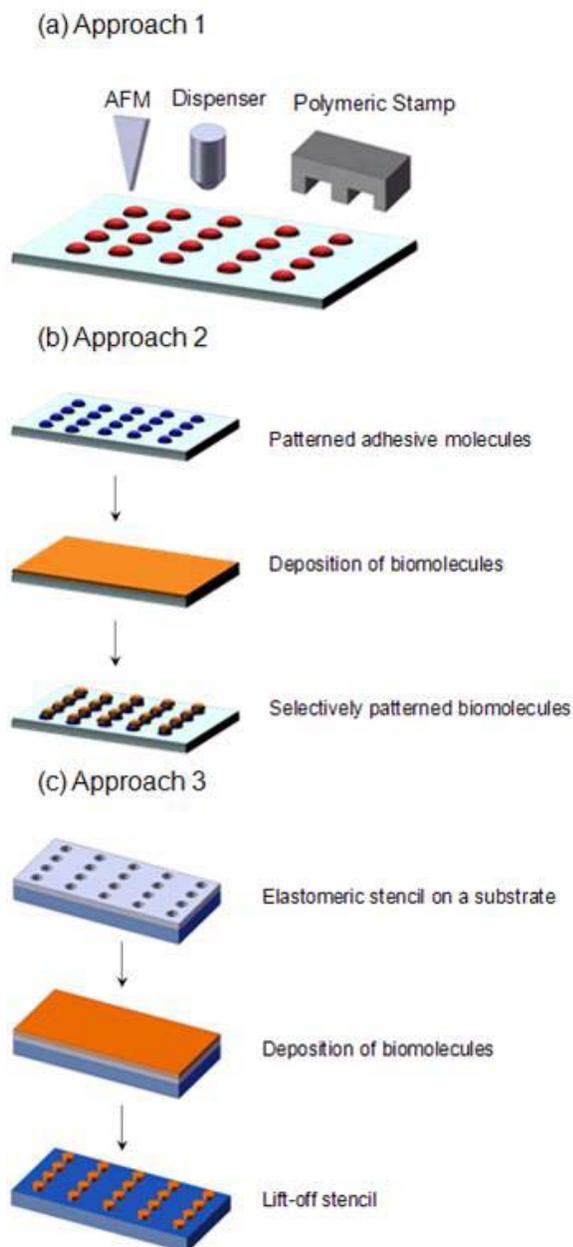


Figure 1. Classification of fabrication methods for biomolecular arrays. (a) Direct transfer of biomolecules (using AFM tip, dispenser, and polymeric stamp), (b) selective deposition of biological species on patterned surfaces, and (c) stencil based patterning with lift-off.

multi-tip DPN techniques have been developed for parallel printing to improve the printing speed and printing different types of biological molecules simultaneously (84, 85).

3.1.2. Direct contact printing

Contact printing is a direct patterning method using an elastomeric stamp fabricated by soft lithography (75, 76). Soft lithography was first introduced by G.M. Whitesides and co-workers (47, 50) and includes a family

of techniques involving a soft polymeric mold such as polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS) replicated from an original hard master. The mold masters are typically fabricated by photolithography to define a pattern of the stamp. Stamps are made by curing a prepolymer of PDMS on the mold master. After curing, PDMS stamps are soaked in the molecular “ink” and brought into the conformal contact with a substrate to transfer the ink to the substrate surface (Figure 3).

Contact printing was initially developed for patterning self-assembled alkylthiol monolayers on gold surfaces (86) in micro-scale but its flexibility makes it possible to pattern various molecules including solvents, metals, polymers, DNA, proteins and cells in a much higher resolution (76). The resolution of the contact printing is dictated by the resolution of the fabrication process of the mold masters. To achieve nanoscale resolution, mold masters for nanocontact printing are prepared by electron beam lithography (EBL), scanning probe lithography (SPL) or LIGA process (20). Renault *et al.* used EBL to fabricate a polymer stamp for patterning single or several protein molecules (12). They achieved protein nanoarrays with a resolution less than 100 nm using nanocontact printing (nCP) technique. The capability of patterning single protein can improve the study of molecular biophysics and individual protein-protein interactions (76). Contact printing was also used to pattern extracellular matrix (ECM) proteins to study cell behavior. Lehnert *et al.* fabricated PDMS stamps with nanoarrays (~300nm×~300nm squares) using silicon mold master prepared by EBL (87). They showed that the extent of cell spreading directly depends on the total substratum coverage with ECM-proteins, rather than on the geometrical pattern.

Contact printing enables easy replication of stamp, fast printing by parallelization, and low-cost batch production. The polymer stamps also minimize the problems of sample carry-over and cross contamination. However, contact printing has some limitations which are mainly caused by the use of soft polymer stamp (75). The swelling of stamp during inking often results in an increase in the pattern size by diffusion of the excessive printed molecules on the substrate. The deformation of stamp also poses a challenge that results in distorted patterns (88). The nature of elastomeric stamps shows pairing, buckling, or roof sagging during contact with the surfaces. Several techniques have been developed to reduce or overcome these problems. Submicron thick stamp on a rigid support can eliminate sagging problem (89) and the stamps formed from a stiff layer of hard PDMS and a flexible layer of conventional PDMS can reduce the deformation problem and achieve high resolution patterns (49, 51). The development of cost effective master fabrication techniques and reducing stamp deformation and related ink-transfer problems will allow the contact printing to become more applicable to biological fields in the future.

3.1.3. Droplet dispensing

Droplet dispensing is an alternative method which directly transfers biomolecules on the substrate. Several droplet dispensing approaches have been developed

Fabrication of biological arrays by unconventional lithographic methods

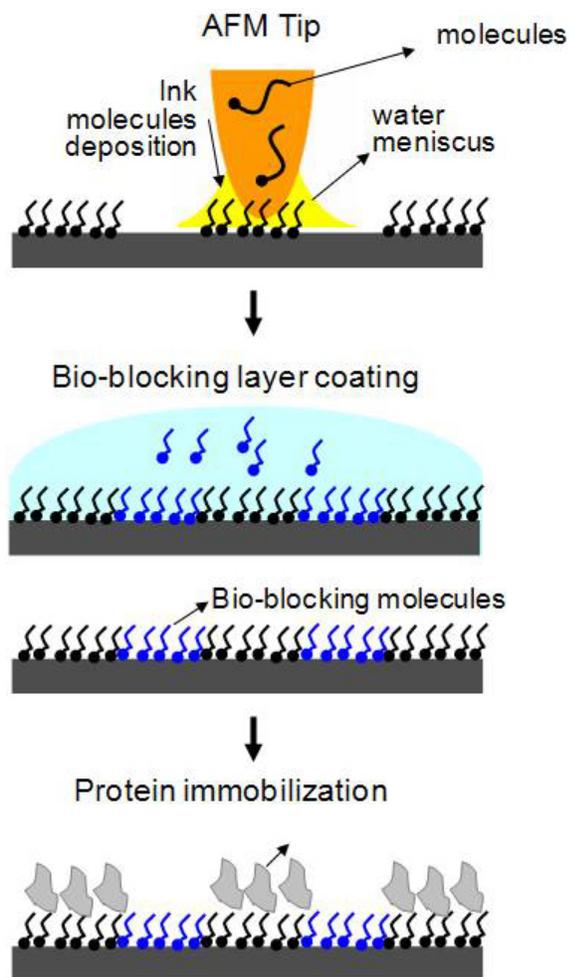


Figure 2. Schematic drawing of dip-pen nanolithography (DPN) for biological nanoarrays.

but of these the technique based on inkjet printing technology is most popular due to low cost and rapid implementation (90). Commercially available inkjet printers are modified to dispense biomolecule solutions instead of inks (1). The advantages of using commercially available inkjet printers for biological array fabrication are: i) inexpensive robotic system for positioning printing heads; ii) non-contact printing for minimizing the possibilities of sample contamination; iii) small sample delivery (8-95 pL per droplet); and reproducibility and scalability of sample volume (90-92).

The two main types of inkjet printers available in the market today are bubble-jet (or thermal inkjet) printer and piezoelectric printer. Bubble-jet printer uses resistive heater to evaporate a small volume which drives the dispensing of an ink droplet through a nozzle. The printing head assembled in the ink cartridge is composed of a nozzle plate with several ink ejection orifices connected to resistive heaters and contact with an ink reservoir. Droplet sizes depend on the temperature gradient applied, frequency, and ink viscosity (92). In the bubble-jet printing system, the local temperature gradient produced by

resistive heaters can reach 200°C and this high temperature may induce denaturation of biological materials (90). Allain *et al.* fabricated microarrays containing PCR-amplified genomic DNA extracts from mice tumors on a Zetaprobe membrane using a modified bubble-jet printer (91). This system enables the rapid and reliable deposition of DNA onto the membrane and then these membranes were used in a hybridization assay with fluorescent probes for detection in a biochip. Okamoto *et al.* have fabricated DNA microarrays using bubble-printer to eject 5'-terminal-thiolated oligonucleotides to a glass surface (90). It was noted that the denaturation of biological molecules would come into play by the heat transfer associated with bubble generation and demonstrated ejecting DNA solutions ranging from 10 to 300 bases in strand length, and concentrations ranging from 0.02 to 1.6 mg/mL without any damage.

Piezoelectric printer uses piezoelectric actuators to dispense droplets. Ink droplets are formed by the mechanical deformation of capillary nozzles using a ceramic piezoelectric layer. There is no temperature increase in the droplets dispensing process with piezoelectric actuators, and hence thermal denaturation of biological molecules is not a concern. Blanchard *et al.* produced the high-density arrays of oligonucleotides (93). Piezoelectric printer heads dispense small drop of reagents to a chemically modified silicon oxide surface, where they react to synthesize DNA. Budach *et al.* also used piezoelectric printer mechanism to deliver oligonucleotide capture probes to binding membranes for hybridization assays (94).

Inkjet printing is an attractive method for fabrication of biological arrays due to low cost and reliable drop dispensing but this technique has some drawbacks: i) inkjet has a tendency to produce undesirable satellite droplets which possibly contaminate surrounding spots, ii) it is difficult to clean printing nozzles to exchange the biological solutions. This problem is more important in piezoelectric printing because the nozzles are separated from the ink reservoirs and all connecting channels must be cleaned, and iii) droplets experience high shear rate while passing through the nozzle and smashing with substrate surface. There is a risk of denaturing biomolecules in the solution under this high shear rate (1). Several techniques have been suggested to solve these problems. For example, Tseng *et al.* introduced an innovative bubble-jet printer nozzle that has an extra thermal resistive heater to eliminate the satellite droplets by forming secondary vapor bubble, which pinches off or trims the exiting droplet at the nozzle (95).

3.2. Selective deposition of biological species on patterned surfaces

Selective deposition methods use different adhesiveness of biological molecules on the patterned surface by using variations of surface properties such as surface charge, chemistry, hydrophilicity, and topology (14, 96-98). Based on these differences it is possible to selectively localize biomolecules to pre-defined regions on a substrate. This approach includes nanoimprint

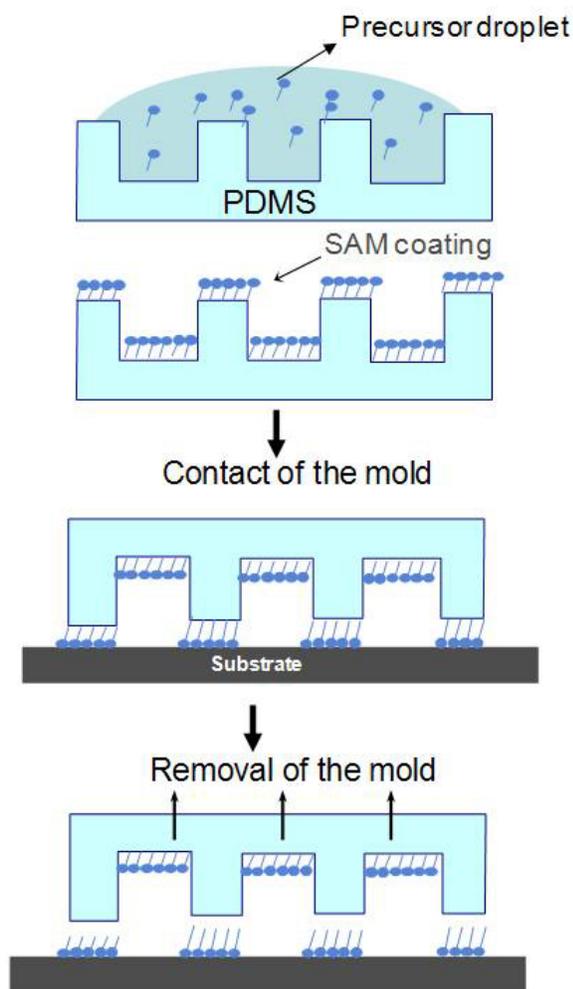


Figure 3. Schematic illustration of contact printing.

lithography (NIL) (38-46), capillary force lithography (CFL) (99-107), and indirect contact printing (47-53).

3.2.1. Nanoimprint Lithography (NIL)

NIL is a forming process in which a master with nanoscale features is pressed into a polymer substrate resulting in a relief replica of the master on the substrate (38). The basic principle of NIL is that a polymer substrate such as polystyrene is first heated above its softening temperature and then a mold (or master) is physically pressed against the polymer substrate, rather than by modifying the resist's chemical structure by irradiation. After an enough contact time between the mold and the substrate, the system is cooled down below the softening temperature, followed by de-molding from the substrate (20). The advantage of NIL is mass production of polymeric nanostructures as small as 10 nm over a large area with low-cost, high throughput, and high reproducibility (39). NIL can imprint fine structure directly in polymer materials and generate patterned features using polymers with certain desirable physical and chemical functionalities such as polycarbonate (PC), polystyrene (PS) and polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA). (40)

NIL has been used in nanoscale protein patterning (41, 42) due to its simplicity. Hoff *et al.* presented a flexible technique for selective patterning of bioactive proteins with nanoscale resolution (sub-100nm features) using surface passivation with a fluoropolymer and then studied the specificity of the biotin/streptavidin linkage (41). After the nanopatterning of the substrate using NIL, the patterned substrate was modified sequentially with an aminosilane, biotin, streptavidin, and finally biotinylated target protein to immobilize proteins (Figure 4). It was reported that the biomolecules were attached to the desired regions (“patterned regions”) with a high density, not being attached to the other regions (“unpatterned regions”). They further demonstrated that the functionality of patterned antibodies was retained by patterning the target protein and observing its binding using fluorescence detection. Falconnet *et al.* also showed patterning of proteins with nanoscale resolution using NIL (42). They produced streptavidin patterns with feature sizes in the order of 100 nm and the streptavidin patterns were used as a platform for subsequent immobilization of biotin-tagged proteins or vesicles at controlled surface densities. This process combines NIL and molecular assembly patterning by lift-off (MAPL). Briefly, PMMA polymer layer is spin-coated on the niobium oxide (Nb_2O_5) sputter-coated silicon wafer or Pyrex plate. The PMMA layer was then imprinted using a mold followed by a dry etching step, converting the substrate into a PMMA/ Nb_2O_5 contrast. A biotin functionalized copolymer, poly (L-lysine)-graft-poly (ethylene glycol)-biotin (PLL-g-PEG/PEG-biotin), spontaneously adsorbs on the oxide surfaces. After PMMA lift-off, the background was filled with protein-resistant PLL-g-PEG. Finally, streptavidin selectively adsorbed on the biotin areas and thus can be used as a universal platform for immobilization of biotin-tagged molecules.

Since NIL allows for features as small as 10nm (39), the placement of individual biomolecules would be possible. NIL also enables the patterning of multiple proteins on a single substrate because of high contrast and resolution (protein densities more than an order of magnitude higher than those currently available). These characteristics have the potential to improve sensitivity, reduce required analyte volumes, and increase the number of proteins that can be screened against on a single chip (41).

3.2.2. Capillary Force Lithography (CFL)

A new lithographic technique called capillary force lithography (CFL) has been developed by simply combining NIL and soft lithography to overcome several shortcomings of NIL (99, 100). NIL requires a very high pressure, typically on the order of 10^9 Pascal (N/m^2), which could cause breakage of the substrate. A recent study reported that material transport limits the performance of NIL in general, especially when the mold is negative or has recessed features within a large elevated surface level. The pattern transfer turned out to be unsatisfactory and bubble-like defects were observed, possibly due to lack of conformal contact (108)

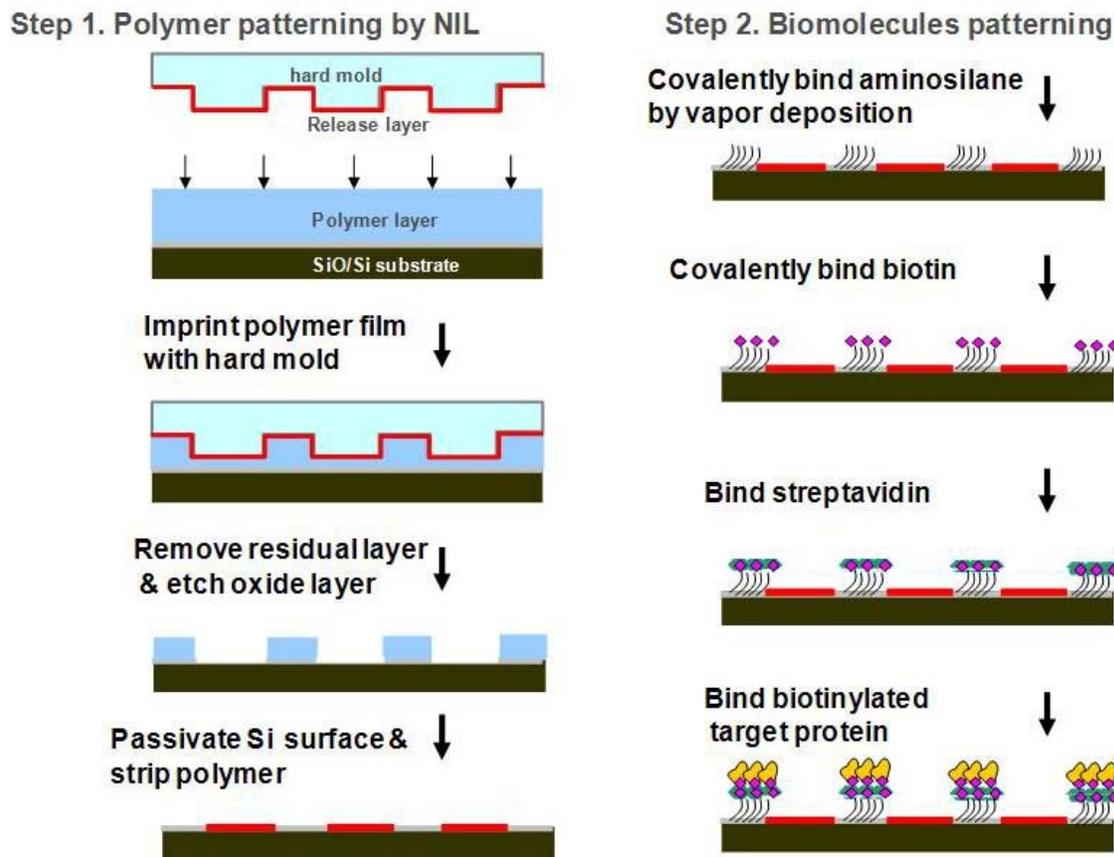


Figure 4. Schematic illustration of nanoimprint lithography for protein patterning.

CFL is based on capillary rise of polymer melt into void spaces engraved in a patterned mold (99). The fabrication procedure is similar to NIL except that a hard mold is replaced by a soft mold (typically PDMS mold) and thus no pressure is applied. When a patterned (positive or negative) mold is placed on a polymer surface and heated above the polymer's glass transition temperature (T_g), the polymer melt rises into the void space of the channels formed between the mold and the polymer by capillary force, thereby generating a negative replica of the mold (Figure 5). The pattern formation is also possible with a solvent-laden polymer or a UV-curable resin followed by solvent evaporation or exposure to UV light (103-106). In addition, a UV curable mold made from polyurethane functionalized with acrylate groups has been introduced to replace PDMS mold for sub-100nm lithography, thus expanding the use of CFL to studies of cell biology (103).

Suh *et al.* demonstrated the fabrication of poly(ethylene glycol) (PEG) microstructures for protein patterning using CFL (101). A uniform PEG film spin coated onto silicon or glass substrate was molded with a patterned PDMS stamp by means of capillary force. The patterned PEG structures act as a physical and biological barrier for the adhesion of proteins and cells. The patterned substrates consist of two regions: the molded PEG surface that acts as a resistant layer and the exposed substrate surface that promotes protein and cell adsorption. As seen

in Figure 5, fibronectin molecules which mediate cell adsorption only adhere to the non-PEG region and fibroblast cells in the sample solution selectively adhere to the patterned fibronectin molecules. A notable finding was that the substrate surface can be directly exposed during the molding process due to the ability to control the wetting properties of the polymer on the stamp, which is a key factor to patterning proteins and cells. Khademhosseini *et al.* also developed a method for patterning cells using layer-by-layer deposition of ionic biomolecules (102, 107). Hyaluronic acid (HA), which is a biocompatible and biodegradable material (109, 110), were patterned on glass slides by CFL, followed by fibronectin adsorption onto the non-HA patterned region because HA is repellent to protein adsorption. Then, cells were seeded and only attached to the fibronectin coated region. Subsequent ionic adsorption of poly-L-lysine (PLL) to HA pattern was used to change HA surfaces from cell repulsive to cell adhesive. Finally, the different type cells were seeded and attached to the PLL pattern. Co-culturing of ES cells with fibroblasts and hepatocytes with fibroblasts were successfully performed by utilizing this method (102). Both HA and PLL are commercially available and do not require any chemistry or complex techniques for immobilization.

CFL provides a general platform for patterning a broad range of materials since it can be applied to substrates such as glass, silicon, silicon dioxide and

Fabrication of biological arrays by unconventional lithographic methods

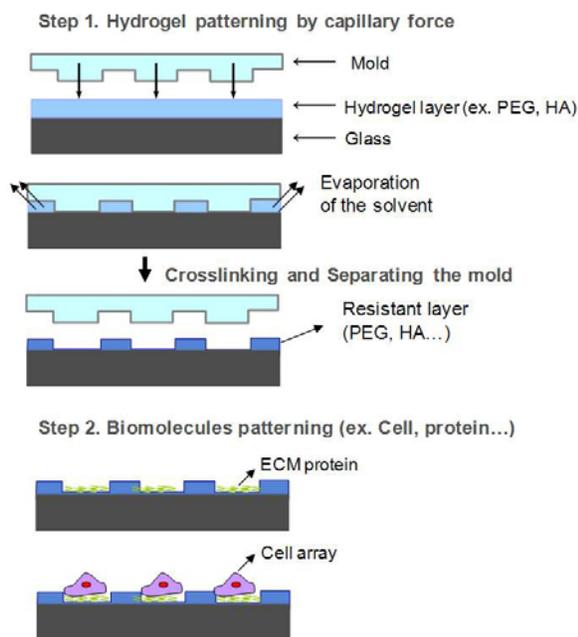


Figure 5. Schematic of protein or cell arrays using capillary force lithography (CFL).

polymers. As a result, it could be a valuable tool for protein chips and high-throughput cell screening devices involving nanoarrays of various biomolecules (~500nm to ~500 μm) on a large area.

3.2.3. Indirect contact printing

It has been discussed earlier in section 0 that the micro-nano contact printing enables direct patterning of proteins and DNA on a substrate. However, contact printing also enables indirect patterning of biological molecules by patterning the surface with SAMs (self-assembled monolayers) which extensively control the adsorption of proteins and cells on the substrate (14, 111, 112). Lopez *et al.* presented a method for controlling both the concentration and spatial distribution of proteins adsorbed onto patterned SAMs (111). Patterned SAMs were formed by the serial chemisorptions of two or more functionalized alkanethiols on gold substrate using contact printing. The spatially-defined areas that resist protein adsorption were formed from oligo(ethylene glycol)-terminated thiols and other areas that allow protein adsorption were formed from thiols terminated by nonpolar and ionic groups. Contact printing also has been used to control the interaction between cells and substrates. Singhvi *et al.* patterned islands of SAMs that promote adsorption of cell-adhesive ECM proteins by using contact printing technique (14). These islands have the same length scale with individual cells; when cells were seeded onto the substrates they preferentially bound to the patterned islands and spread to conform to their size and shape.

Contact printing usually involves PDMS molds for micro-scale patterns but this mold has many limitations to high-resolution nanopatterning because of its low modulus. To solve this challenge, researchers have used a

number of alternative molds, such as composite PDMS (49), bilayer PDMS (51), photocurable PDMS (45), and a photocurable polyurethane acrylate (PUA) (113). These stamps have been used to form sub-100nm patterns and further developed to obtain features as small as 30 nm (114).

3.3. Stencil-based patterning

Elastomeric stencil can be used to pattern biomolecules to specific region of a substrate in array patterns (115-119). Elastomeric stencils with microengineered holes typically fabricated by soft lithography can be reversibly sealed on a substrate to promote patterned deposition of biomolecules or cells directly on a substrate.

Ostuni *et al.* presented a PDMS stencil based *lift-off* approach to generate patterned cell-arrays (117). For fabrication of a stencil membrane, PDMS polymer was spin coated on a microstructured silicon wafer containing photoresist posts to generate a PDMS membrane which has circular or square holes less than 50 μm . Subsequently, the cured membrane was brought into conformal contact with a substrate. Cell adhesion promoting molecules such as fibronectin or gelatin were absorbed to the patterned holes in the membranes and then membrane was removed from the substrate to generate a pattern of adhesion promoting molecules. After coating the rest of the substrate with cell repulsive molecules to inhibit cell adhesion, cells were only patterned on the adhesive regions (Figure 6).

This membrane-based patterning offers a more convenient way for patterning cells on surfaces and for studying cell spreading. PDMS stencils are applicable to a broad range of substrates which can absorb adhesion promoting proteins and can make conformal contact with PDMS membranes (117). PDMS membranes also can be replicated many times from the same master mold because replication procedure does not break the mold (118). However, the attachment of PDMS membranes over the substrates and the peeling off membranes after patterning can be a trouble in large-area applications (120).

Recently, microfabricated parylene membranes have been used as stencils for patterning various biological molecules (121-123). Pal *et al.* presented a photolithographically patterned parylene-SU-8 bilayer microstencil that can be used for micropatterning (121). The parylene layer enables mechanical peeling of the hybrid film from a hydrophilic substrate. SU-8 layer provides a mask for parylene etching as well as height to the microstencil for controlling the amount of material patterned. The amount of material patterned can be controlled using a variety of techniques, including spin coating and thin film deposition. The parylene stencils can have a conformal contact with silicon, glass, and polymer substrates, and then be used for patterning chemically and thermally sensitive compounds, including cells, proteins, wax, sol, and cyclized-perfluoropolymer (CYTOP).

Parylene membranes have several advantages over PDMS membranes. Parylene membranes can be easily

Fabrication of biological arrays by unconventional lithographic methods

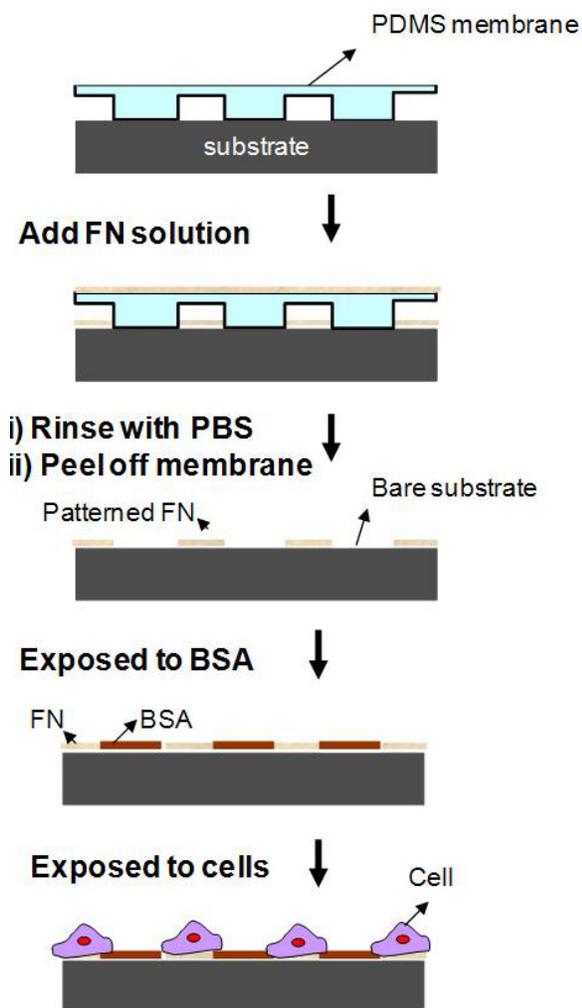


Figure 6. Schematic of micropatterning of proteins or cells using an elastomeric membrane stencil.

removed or attached to a surface without tearing due to its mechanical robustness compared to PDMS (124, 125) and can form a reversible binding with hydrophobic surfaces. However, fabricating a parylene membrane requires many steps and special equipments compared to those for PDMS membrane (123).

4. CONCLUSIONS

Biomolecule arrays provide valuable information and high-throughput analysis for biological research including genomics, proteomics, cell analysis, and tissue engineering. Uniformity, high resolution, and high-throughput analysis are key factors in biological array systems. A variety of fabrication techniques based on conventional microfabrication process were used for micro to nano array systems. However, the limitations of the conventional fabrication techniques including high cost, difficult multiple-step processes, and poor accessibility to the facilities motivate the development of new, unconventional methods which are easily accessible and

economically viable for micro- to nanofabrication. It appears that the combination of conventional and unconventional methods can cover a broad range of length scale and can be the effective way for mass production of biological arrays in nanoscale. In recent years, various biocompatible materials have been studied in conjunction with unconventional nanopatterning methods to reduce the processing steps and contamination of patterned molecules. With increasing demands in biological research, biological array systems would continuously evolve into a more flexible platform integrated with smart, functional molecules.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work was supported by the Korea Research Foundation Grant funded by the Korean Government (MOEHRD, Basic Research Promotion Fund, KRF-2007-331-D00064) for Sun Min Kim, and the Korea Science and Engineering Foundation (KOSEF) grant funded by the Korea Government (MOST) (R01-2007-000-20675-0), the Korea Research Foundation Grant funded by the Korean Government (MOEHRD, Basic Research Promotion Fund) (KRF-2006-003-D00040), and the Grant-in-Aid for Strategy Technology Development Programs from the Korea Ministry of Knowledge Economy (No.10030046) for Kahp Yang Suh.

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Key Words Biological arrays, Unconventional lithography, Dip-pen nanolithography, Contact printing, Droplet dispensing, Nanoimprint lithography, Capillary force lithography, Stencil-based patterning

Send correspondence to: Kahp Yang Suh, Address: School of Mechanical and Aerospace engineering and the Institute of Advanced Machinery and Design, Seoul National University, San 56-1, Shinlim-dong, Kwanak-gu, Seoul, 151-742, Republic of Korea, Tel: 822-880-9103, Fax: 822-883-0179, E-mail: sky4u@snu.ac.kr

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