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## PRELIMINARY STUDY OF THE REMOVAL OF ACETAMINOPHEN FROM WASTEWATER

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### Introduction

Acetaminophen (paracetamol) is a pharmaceutical drug for curing fever, headaches and body aches. The main areas that pollute the environment with acetaminophen and its residues come from hospitals, domestic and veterinary effluents and the pharmaceutical industries. Pharmaceutical drugs have appeared in our environment and entered as residues in rivers, sewage effluents, surface, soil and drinking water.

The adsorption method is economically and technically favourable for wastewater treatment. This technique consists in the ability of the adsorbent material to absorb on its surface's pollutants and its residues from wastewater from the environment.

Fe<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub> nanomaterial has been used as an adsorbent due to its high pollutant removal efficiency, small particle size and maximum internal surface area. The specific surface area of the adsorbent material is important because the removal efficiency generally increases with increasing surface area.

### Materials and methods

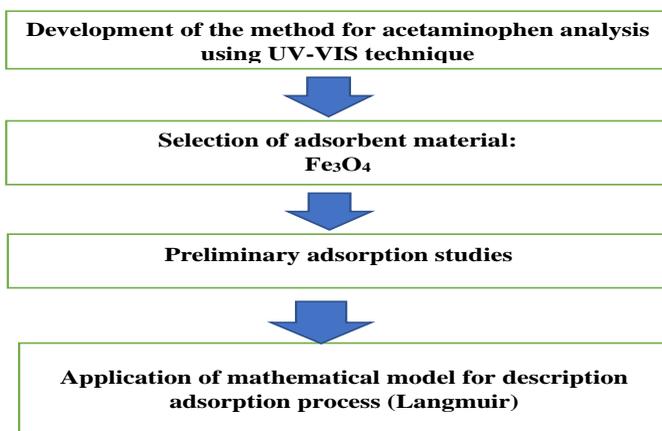
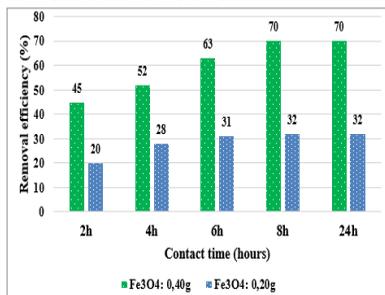


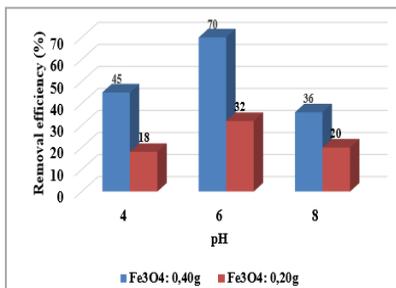
Figure 1. The experiments preparation scheme

For this study, magnetite ( $\text{Fe}_3\text{O}_4$ ) nanomaterial was selected as the adsorbent material. During the experiments, the initial concentration of acetaminophen in wastewater was in the range 10 mg/L - 25 mg/L. The studied parameters were: pH (4, 6, 8), contact time (2h, 4h, 6h, 8h, 24h), the amount of adsorbent material (0.20g and 0.40g) and the adsorption isotherm (Langmuir). To determine the concentration of acetaminophen in wastewater, a method of analysis was developed using the UV-VIS technique at a wavelength of 297 nm. The calibration curve was in the range 0.10 - 0.50 mg/L acetaminophen. The analysis method was developed to evaluate the performance parameters of the method: LOD detection limit, LOQ quantification limit, repeatability, intermediate accuracy and extended uncertainty.

### Results and conclusions



**Figure 2.** The removal efficiency of acetaminophen using  $\text{Fe}_3\text{O}_4$  nanomaterial depending on the contact time



**Figure 3.** The removal efficiency of acetaminophen using  $\text{Fe}_3\text{O}_4$  nanomaterial depending on the pH

To determine the concentration of the wastewater samples, appropriate dilutions were made to fit the concentration range 0.10-0.50 mg/L. The most representative results are shown in Figures 2 and 3. Higher removal efficiency was obtained at pH 6, using 0.4 g of adsorbent material (70%) compared to 0.2 g of adsorbent material (32%) as can be seen in figure 2 and figure 3. From the obtained results it can be said that the adsorption process can be influenced by experimental parameters such as: amount of adsorbent, adsorbent concentration, pH and contact time. The Langmuir adsorption isotherm was used to describe the adsorption data for the adsorption process of acetaminophen on  $\text{Fe}_3\text{O}_4$ . The best Langmuir results are explained by the correlation coefficient ( $R^2$ ) and the equilibrium parameter ( $R_L$ ) which is in the range 0 - 1 (0.88 for  $\text{Fe}_3\text{O}_4$ ). The value of 0.88 obtained for  $R_L$  (equilibrium factor) supports the correlation of the data obtained with the Langmuir model.

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