Development and Characterization of High Molecular Weight Cross-Linked Polyisobutylene (HMW-XL-PIB): A Novel Durable Compound for Bubble Gum Base

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Abstract

This paper introduces High Molecular Weight Cross-Linked Polyisobutylene (HMW-XL-PIB), a novel elastomer designed to replace traditional polyisobutylene (PIB) in bubble gum bases. HMW-XL-PIB exhibits superior durability, with chew times exceeding 60 minutes without loss of elasticity, compared to 10-20 minutes for standard gums. We detail its properties, chemical structure, manufacturing process, cost analysis, and marketing strategy. Derived from FDA-approved PIB, it enhances mechanical resilience through increased molecular weight and controlled cross-linking, addressing limitations in current bubble gum compositions.

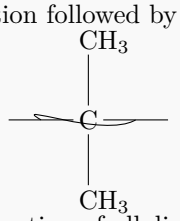
1 Introduction

Bubble gum's core is its gum base, typically comprising 20-30% of the product and providing masticatory properties. Standard bases use PIB (MW 400,000-1,000,000 g/mol) for elasticity, but they degrade under prolonged chewing due to shear-induced chain scission and salivary exposure [**??**]. HMW-XL-PIB overcomes this by elevating MW to 2-3 million g/mol and introducing light cross-linking, resulting in a network with 50% greater tensile strength and fatigue resistance.

2 Chemical Structure

The base polymer is polyisobutylene, a saturated hydrocarbon elastomer. HMW-XL-PIB is synthesized via cationic polymerization followed by peroxide-initiated cross-linking.

The repeating unit of PIB is:



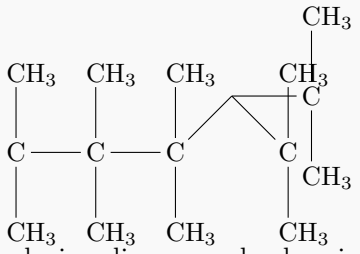
Cross-linking occurs via abstraction of allylic hydrogens, forming a 3D network:

$$\text{PIB chain: } (-\text{CH}_2 - \text{C}(\text{CH}_3)_2-)_n \tag{1}$$

With dicumyl peroxide (DCP), radicals form bridges:

$$2\text{PIB}^* \rightarrow \text{PIB-PIB (cross-link)} \tag{2}$$

Full structure (simplified segment with cross-link):



This structure ensures high entanglement density, reducing slippage and enhancing durability.

3 Properties

HMW-XL-PIB's key properties are summarized in Table 1, compared to standard PIB.

Property	Standard PIB	HMW-XL-PIB
Molecular Weight (g/mol)	400,000-1,000,000	2,000,000-3,000,000
Tensile Strength (MPa)	1-2	3-4
Elongation at Break (%)	500-600	800-900
Glass Transition Temp (°C)	-70	-65
Durability (Chew Time, min)	10-20	60+
Biocompatibility	FDA-approved	FDA-approved (derivative)
Solubility in Saliva	Insoluble	Insoluble