



(86) Date de dépôt PCT/PCT Filing Date: 2004/11/16
 (87) Date publication PCT/PCT Publication Date: 2005/06/02
 (45) Date de délivrance/Issue Date: 2012/05/01
 (85) Entrée phase nationale/National Entry: 2006/05/09
 (86) N° demande PCT/PCT Application No.: JP 2004/017328
 (87) N° publication PCT/PCT Publication No.: 2005/049050
 (30) Priorité/Priority: 2003/11/19 (JP2003-388809)

(51) Cl.Int./Int.Cl. *A61K 31/785* (2006.01),
A23L 1/30 (2006.01), *A61P 1/02* (2006.01)

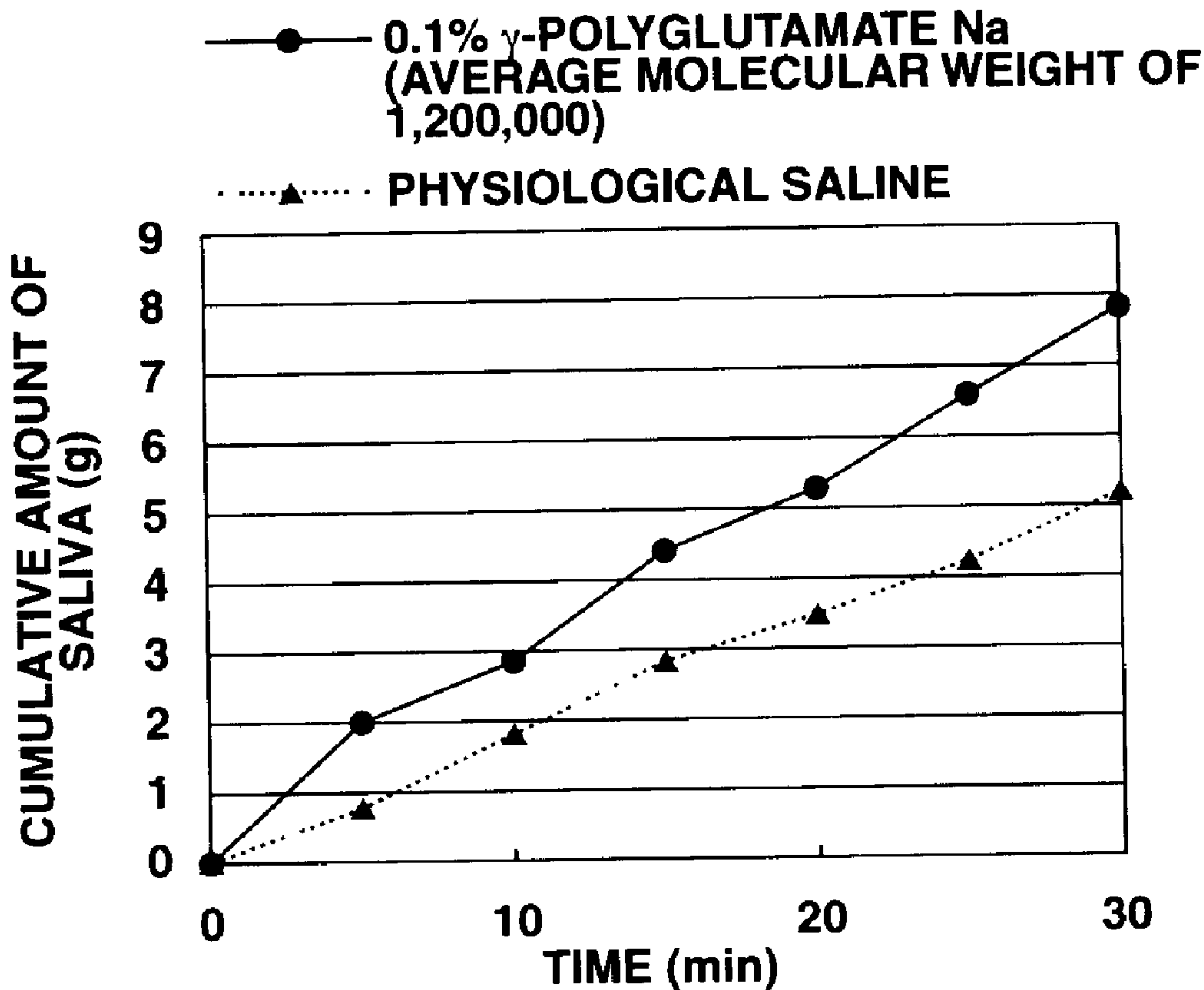
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(54) Titre : COMPOSITION SIALOGOGUE ADMINISTREE PAR VOIE ORALE ET PRODUIT ALIMENTAIRE
CONTENANT CETTE COMPOSITION

(54) Title: SIALOGOGUE, ORAL COMPOSITION AND FOOD PRODUCT CONTAINING THE SAME



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

A sialogogue characterized by comprising polyglutamic acid or its salt. This sialogogue is blended into an oral composition and a food product. This sialogogue is capable of rendering the oral mucosa pleasant even in the case of severe xerostomia.

ABSTRACT

5 A sialogogue characterized by comprising polyglutamic acid or its salt. This sialogogue is blended into an oral composition and a food product. This sialogogue is capable of rendering the oral mucosa pleasant even in the case of severe xerostomia.

DESCRIPTIONSIALOGOGUE, ORAL COMPOSITION AND
FOOD PRODUCT CONTAINING THE SAME

5

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to a sialogogue for curing mouth dryness and an oral composition and food product
10 incorporated therewith.

BACKGROUND ART

Xerostomia (dry mouth) is a physiological phenomenon which is experienced in daily life. It gives sticky
15 displeasure, makes speaking difficult, and causes bad breath. In its pathological state, it changes the oral microbial flora, thereby creating a failure in oral functions such as dental caries, periodontal disease, and mucosal infectious disease. Consequently, promoting salivary secretion and
20 thereby wetting the oral cavity are important in making the oral cavity feel refreshed and preventing oral diseases.

So, it has been recognized that wetting the oral cavity is necessary to make the oral cavity feel refreshed and prevent oral diseases. To meet this requirement, there
25 has been proposed the use of hyaluronic acid (which is a humectant) in W000/56344. There has also been proposed an idea of positively promoting salivary secretion, thereby wetting the oral cavity. To materialize this idea, there has been proposed the use of a sialogogue selected from pickled
30 Japanese apricot or Japanese apricot vinegar (in Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. Sho 56-22719) or organic acid (in Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. Hei 7-101856). There have also been proposed other sialogogues which do not resort to acid stimulation. Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. Hei 10-182392
35 discloses Cola nuts (Sterculiaceae) and Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 2002-265375 discloses Capparis masaikai

69562-70

Centella asiatica (Umbelliferae).

Regrettably, hyaluronic acid produces the moisturizing effect but does not positively promote salivary secretion. Moreover, the above-mentioned sialogogues are limited in their use because they taste somewhat.

DISCLOSURE OF INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide a sialogogue and an oral composition and food product incorporated therewith. The sialogogue is tasteless and capable of moisture retention. The oral composition incorporated with the sialogogue includes toothpaste, mouthwash, artificial saliva, denture stabilizer, and solution for the oral care system with water supply and suction functions. The food product includes swallowing assistant, chewing gum, candy, drinks, and gummi.

In order to achieve the above-mentioned object, the present inventors carried out a series of researches, which led to the finding that polyglutamic acid and salts thereof promote salivary secretion and produce moisturizing effect and are almost tasteless and hence capable of incorporation into oral compositions and food products without the possibility of impairing their taste. The present invention is based on this finding.

69562-70

According to one aspect of the invention, there is provided a sialogogue composition for keeping an oral cavity wet, which comprises the following ingredients: (a) polyglutamic acid or a non-toxic salt thereof, and (b) at least one other ingredient suitable for putting in the oral cavity.

5 According to another aspect of the invention, there is provided the sialogogue composition as described herein, wherein the ingredient (a) is γ -polyglutamic acid or a sodium, potassium, magnesium, calcium, ammonium or basic amino acid salt thereof.

 Thus, the present invention is directed to a sialogogue including
10 polyglutamic acid or a salt thereof and also to an oral composition and a food product both incorporated with the sialogogue.

 The sialogogue according to the present invention moisturizes the oral mucous membrane of a patient suffering from serious dry mouth. Therefore, it easily solves problems with sticky displeasure, difficulties in speaking, and bad
15 breath. In addition, it also prevents a failure in oral functions, such as dental caries, periodontal disease, and mucosal infectious disease. Being almost tasteless, it can be incorporated into oral compositions and food products

without restrictions. Moreover, being known as the sticking component of natto (fermented soybeans), it is highly safe and suitable for oral compositions and food products.

5

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a graph showing how the cumulative amount of saliva changes with time after administration of sodium γ -polyglutamate (with an average molecular weight of 1,200,000) in Experiment Example 1.

10

Fig. 2 is a graph showing how the cumulative amount of saliva changes with time after administration of potassium γ -polyglutamate (with an average molecular weight of 1,200,000) in Experiment Example 1.

15

Fig. 3 is a graph showing how the cumulative amount of saliva changes with time after administration of sodium γ -polyglutamate (with an average molecular weight of 300,000) in Experiment Example 1.

20

Fig. 4 is a graph showing how the cumulative amount of saliva changes with time after administration of sodium hyaluronate in Experiment Example 1.

BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

The sialogogue according to the present invention is polyglutamic acid, which is chemically synthesized α - or γ -polyglutamic acid or a salt thereof, or natural α - or γ -polyglutamic acid or a salt thereof obtained from a variety of strains as a product of fermentation. Natural polyglutamic acid is desirable for incorporation into oral compositions and food products. Most desirable is γ -polyglutamic acid which is industrially available in large quantities. The polyglutamic acid may be either of D-form or L-form. The polyglutamic acid is insoluble in water but its salt is soluble in water. The salt includes sodium salt, potassium salt, magnesium salt, calcium salt, ammonium salt, ethanolamine salt, and basic amino acid salt. Any salt may

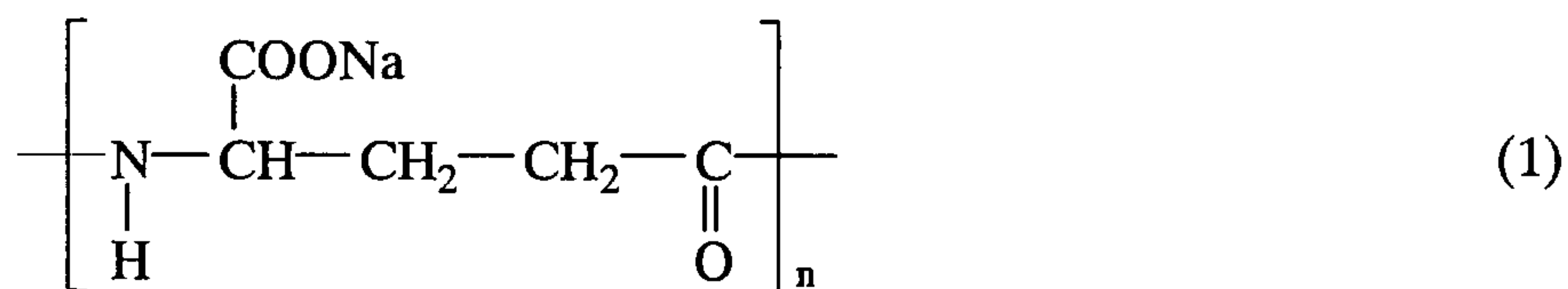
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be used which is suitable for oral compositions and food products. The polyglutamic acid may be neutralized to an adequate degree which is known from the fact that a 1 wt% aqueous solution of the polyglutamate marks pH 1 to pH 14.

5 The polyglutamic acid used in the present invention is not specifically restricted in molecular weight. However, the weight average molecular weight (in terms of sodium salt measured by the method mentioned later) should be 10,000 to 5,000,000, preferably 20,000 to 4,000,000, more preferably

10 40,000 to 3,000,000, and most preferably 50,000 to 2,000,000. An adequate molecular weight should be selected according to the type of the product.

Sodium polyglutamate represented by the formula (1) below is particularly desirable.



15

(wherein n is an integer of 66 to 33,112, especially 331 to 13,245.)

The polyglutamic acid or a salt thereof to be used as the sialogogue according to the present invention should be

20 added to oral compositions or food products in an amount of 0.001 to 10 % by weight, preferably 0.005 to 7 % by weight, more preferably 0.01 to 5 % by weight, and most desirably 0.05 to 3 % by weight. An amount less than the lower limit will not produce the desired effect, and an amount more than

25 the upper limit will increase viscosity to adversely affect the feeling.

The sialogogue according to the present invention may be administered 1 to 6 times a day, with each dose ranging from 0.01 to 1 g, which is enough to promote salivary

30 secretion.

The sialogogue according to the present invention may be incorporated into oral compositions and food product. The

oral compositions include toothpaste, mouthwash, chewing tablet, oral ointment, gargling tablet, troches, artificial saliva, denture stabilizer, and solution for the oral care system with water supply and suction functions. The food product includes swallowing assistant, candy, chewing gum, drinks, and gummi. The sialogogue may be used in combination with any known component according to the kind and form of the oral composition and food product.

Those components used for oral compositions in the form of liquid or paste include humectant, binder, surfactant, sweetener, antiseptic, colorant, flavor, and other effective ingredients. They may be mixed with water to produce the desired products. Another component used for toothpaste is an abrasive.

The humectant is exemplified by polyhydric alcohols such as sorbitol, glycerin, propylene glycol, polyethylene glycol, xylitol, multitol, and lactitol. Its amount should be 5 to 50 % by weight, particularly 20 to 45 % by weight for paste products, and 0 to 50 % by weight, particularly 1 to 20 % by weight for liquid products.

The binder is exemplified by carrageenan, sodium hydroxyethyl cellulose, sodium carboxymethyl cellulose, hydroxyethyl cellulose, hydroxypropyl cellulose, methyl cellulose, hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose, sodium alginate, propylene glycol ester of alginic acid, polyacrylic acid, sodium polyacrylate, xanthan gum, talha gum, guar gum, locust bean gum, jellan gum, gelatin, curdlan, gum Arabic, agar, pectin, polyvinyl alcohol, polyvinyl pyrrolidone, and pullulan. The amount of the binder ranges from 0.1 to 5 % by weight for paste products (such as toothpaste) and 0 to 5 % by weight for liquid products (such as liquid dentifrice and mouthwash).

The surfactant is exemplified by anionic surfactant, cationic surfactant, and nonionic surfactant. Their typical examples include sodium lauryl sulfate, sodium α -olefinsulfonate, N-acylglutamate, 2-alkyl-N-carboxymethyl-N-hydroxyethylimidazolinium betaine, N-acyltaurate, sugar

fatty acid ester, alkylolamide, polyoxyethylene hardened
castor oil, polyglycerin fatty acid ester,
polyoxyethylene-polyoxypropylene glycol,
polyoxyethylenesorbitan monostearate, lauroylsarcosine sodium,
5 alkylpolyglucoside, and polyoxyethylene alkyl ether
sulfosuccinate. The amount of the surfactant is usually 0.5
to 5 % by weight.

The sweetener is exemplified by saccharine sodium,
stevioside, stevia extract, paramethoxycinnamic aldehyde,
10 neohesperidyl hydrochalcone, and perillartine. The colorant
is exemplified by Blue No. 1, Yellow No. 4, and titanium
dioxide. The antiseptic is exemplified by
parahydroxybenzoate ester and sodium benzoate.

The flavor is exemplified by terpenes and their
15 derivatives (such as l-menthol, carvone, anethole, and
limonene) and peppermint oil.

The liquid agents may be incorporated with a nontoxic
solvent (such as ethanol) in an amount of 0 to 30 % by weight,
particularly 1 to 25 % by weight.

20 The abrasive is exemplified by silica gel,
precipitated silica, aluminosilicate, zirconsilicate,
dibasic calcium phosphate anhydride or dihydrate, calcium
pyrophosphate, calcium tertiary phosphate, hydroxyapatite,
calcium carbonate, aluminum hydroxide, alumina, magnesium
25 carbonate, magnesium tertiary phosphate, zeolite, zirconium
silicate, and plastic-based abrasive.

The preferred amount of the abrasive ranges from 10 to
50 % by weight for toothpaste and 0 to 30 % by weight for
liquid dentifrice.

30 The artificial saliva may be incorporated with
potassium chloride (0.1 to 0.2 % by weight), sodium chloride
(0.05 to 0.1 % by weight), calcium chloride (0.01 to 0.02 %
by weight), and magnesium chloride (0.004 to 0.006 % by
weight), and optional dipotassium hydrogenphosphate (0.01 to
35 0.05 % by weight).

To prepare the oral compositions in solid form (such
as tablets and troches), the sialogogue may be combined with

nontoxic filler, binder, disintegrator, lubricant, surfactant, sweetener, and flavor (the last three mentioned above).

The filler is exemplified by cellulose and its derivatives, starch and its derivatives, sugars, and sugar
5 alcohol. Their specific examples include crystalline cellulose, lactose, white soft sugar, mannitol, corn starch, potato starch, hydroxypropylstarch, calcium silicate, calcium hydrogenphosphate anhydride, and magnesium
aluminometasilicate.

10 The binder is exemplified by hydroxypropyl cellulose, hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose, methyl cellulose, polyvinyl alcohol, polyvinylpyrrolidone, gelatin, dextrin, starch, and alpha starch.

The disintegrator is exemplified by carmellose,
15 carmellose calcium, croscarmellose sodium, low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose, low substituted sodium carboxymethyl starch, and crospovidone.

The lubricant is exemplified by magnesium stearate, calcium stearate, sucrose ester of fatty acid, anhydrous
20 silicic acid, light anhydrous silicic acid, and sodium stearyl fumarate.

The amount of the filler should be 1 to 10 % by weight, particularly 3 to 5 % by weight. The amount of the binder should be 0.1 to 1 % by weight, particularly 0.2 to 0.3 % by
25 weight.

The food product may be formed from different materials according to its kind. For example, chewing gum may contain 10 to 50 % by weight of saccharide (such as sugar) and 50 to 90 % by weight of gum base, and candy may
30 contain 35 to 40 % by weight of starch syrup and 60 to 65 % by weight of sugar.

EXAMPLES

The invention will be described below in more detail
35 with reference to Experiment Examples, Working Examples, and Comparative Examples, which are not intended to restrict the scope thereof. In the following examples, "%" means "% by

weight" unless otherwise mentioned. Also, in the following examples, weight average molecular weight (Mw) is represented by the one which is measured by GPC method.

5 GPC Method

A sample (2 mg) of polyglutamic acid is dissolved in 2 mL of 0.1 mol/L phosphate buffer solution (approximately pH 7.0). Each sample (2 mg) of pullulan P-82, pullulan P-10, pullulan P-50, pullulan P-200, and pullulan P-1600 is
10 dissolved in 2 mL of 0.1 mol/L phosphate buffer solution to give standard solutions. The sample solution and the standard solution (each 50 μ L) undergo GPC test, and the peak top molecular weight is obtained by using C-R7A·GPC program (product of SHIMADZU CORPORATION). The thus obtained value
15 is regarded as the molecular weight.

<Conditions of analysis>

Detector: differential refractometer

20 Precolumn: Shodex Asahipak GS-IG 7B (product of Showa Denko K.K), 7.6 mm ID \times 100 mm (or equivalent)

Main column: Shodex Asahipak GF-710 HQ (product of Showa Denko K.K), 7.6 mm ID \times 300 mm + Shodex Asahipak GF-510 HQ (product of Showa Denko K.K), 7.6 mm ID \times 300 mm (or equivalent)

25 Column temperature: constant at about 40° C

Mobile phase: 0.1 mol/L phosphate buffer solution
(prepared by dissolving 7.1 g of disodium hydrogenphosphate anhydride (Na_2HPO_4) and 6.8 g of potassium dihydrogenphosphate (KH_2PO_4)
30 in water just enough to make one liter.)

Flow rate: 0.5 mL/min

Measurement time: 60 minutes.

Experiment Example 1

To evaluate the effect of promoting salivary secretion

A sample of mouthwash was prepared from an aqueous solution containing 0.1% each of γ -polyglutamate and sodium
5 hyaluronate. This sample was tested for the effect of promoting salivary secretion in the following manner.

Test for promotion of salivary secretion:

10 Three panelists, who were made to feel thirsty by heavy exercise in the previous day, were tested for saliva secretion by the following steps which followed one after another.

- (1) Mouth washing for 30 seconds with 20 mL of physiological saline.
- 15 (2) Spitting of saliva into a sputum mug, and measurement of the cumulative amount of saliva (for 30 minutes) at intervals of five minutes.
- (3) Mouth washing for 30 seconds with 20 mL of the sample solution.
- 20 (4) Measurement of the cumulative amount of saliva (for 30 minutes) in the same way as in (2).

Table 1 shows an increase (on average) from salivary secretion after mouth washing with physiological saline to
25 salivary secretion after mouth washing with the sample solution. Figs. 1 to 4 show the cumulative amount of saliva measured at intervals of five minutes.

Table 1

Mouthwash solution	Ratio of increase in saliva secretion (%)
0.1% sodium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 1,200,000)	151
0.1% potassium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 1,200,000)	128
0.1% sodium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 300,000)	132
0.1% sodium hyaluronate (for comparison)	109

It is apparent from Table 1 and Figs. 1 to 4 that
 5 γ -polyglutamic acid promotes salivary secretion.

Experiment Example 2

To evaluate the wet feeling and taste

Samples (0.1% aqueous solutions shown in Table 2) were
 10 prepared as shown in Table 2. Three panelists washed their
 mouth for 30 seconds with 20 mL of each sample solution and
 then spitted it out. Fifteen minutes later, the panelists
 rated the oral wet feeling and refreshed feeling according to
 the following criterion. Table 2 shows the results of rating
 15 (total points given by the three panelists).

Table 2

Samples	Wet feel	Taste	Feature of taste
Sodium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 1,200,000)	◎	○	Tasteless
Potassium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 1,200,000)	◎	○	Tasteless
Sodium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 300,000)	◎	○	Tasteless
Citric acid (for comparison)	X	X	Acidic
Cola nuts: water extract (for comparison)	X	△	Slightly spicy
Capparis masaikai seeds: 50% ethanol extract (for comparison)	X	X	Bitter sweet
Sodium hyaluronate (for comparison)	○	○	Tasteless

*The γ -polyglutamic acid is the same one as used in Experiment Example 1.

Rating of wet feel

Standard for rating:

Degree	Strong	Weak	Slight	None
Point	3	2	1	0

Rating:

Total points	7 to 9	4 to 6	1 to 3	0
Degree	Strong	Weak	Slight	None
Rating	◎	○	△	×

5

Rating of taste

Degree	None	Weak	Strong
Rating	○	△	×

10 Examples 1 to 18 that follow show the formulations. Incidentally, the polyglutamate has a degree of neutralization at pH 7. A good effect of promoting salivary secretion was produced by all the samples of oral compositions and food products.

15

[Example 1] Toothpaste

	Precipitated silica	25.00%
	Glycerin	25.00
20	Sorbit	15.00
	Xylitol	10.00
	Lauroyl decaglycerin ester	1.00
	Myristic acid diethanolamide	2.00
	Flavor	1.00
25	Saccharin sodium	0.20
	Calcium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 1,000,000)	0.10
	Purified water	balance
	<hr/> Total	<hr/> 100.0%

[Example 2] Liquid dentifrice

	Aluminum hydroxide	25.00%
	Glycerin	40.00
	Sorbit	15.00
5	Carboxymethyl cellulose (DP = 500)	0.20
	Propylene glycol	2.00
	Sodium laurate	1.50
	Decaglyceryl monolaurate	1.00
	Flavor	1.00
10	Saccharin sodium	0.10
	Sodium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 1,500,000)	0.10
	Purified water	balance
	<hr/>	
	Total	100.0%

15 [Example 3] Oral ointment

	Liquid paraffin	15.00%
	Cetanol	10.00
	Glycerin	20.00
	Polyoxyethylene sorbitan fatty acid ester	5.00
20	Flavor	0.50
	Saccharin sodium	0.10
	Lysine γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 300,000)	0.20
	Purified water	balance
	<hr/>	
	Total	100.0%

25

[Example 4] Mouthwash

	Ethanol	20.00%
	Flavor	1.00
	Polyoxyethylene (EO 60) hydrogenated castor oil	0.30
30	Sodium monofluorophosphate	0.10
	Saccharin sodium	0.05
	Sodium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 1,200,000)	0.20
	Purified water	balance
	<hr/>	
	Total	100.0%

[Example 5] Gargle tablet

	Sodium bicarbonate	53.0%
	Citric acid	18.0
	Anhydrous sodium sulfate	12.0
5	Dibasic sodium phosphate	10.0
	Polyethylene glycol	3.0
	Flavor	2.0
	<u>Ammonium γ-polyglutamate (Mw = 80,000)</u>	<u>2.0</u>
	Total	100.0%

10

[Example 6] Troche

	Xylitol	92.0%
	Gum acasia	5.0
15	Talc	2.0
	Magnesium stearate	0.7
	<u>Potassium γ-polyglutamate (Mw = 1,200,000)</u>	<u>0.3</u>
	Total	100.0%

20

[Example 7] Chewing tablet

	Erythritol	85.0%
	Potato starch	4.0
	Talc	3.5
25	Magnesium stearate	1.5
	Citric acid	5.0
	<u>Arginine γ-polyglutamate (Mw = 1,200,000)</u>	<u>1.0</u>
	Total	100.0%

[Example 8] Denture stabilizer (in gum form)

	Vinyl acetate resin	60.0%
	Light calcium carbonate	3.0
	Yellow beeswax	3.0
5	Polypropylene glycol	3.0
	Ethanolamine γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 1,500,000)	1.0
	60% ethanol	balance
	<hr/>	
	Total	100.0%

10

[Example 9] Denture stabilizer (in powder form)

	Sodium carboxymethyl cellulose	74.0%
	Polyethylene oxide	24.0
	γ -polyglutamic acid (Mw = 300,000)	2.0
	<hr/>	
15	Total	100.0%

[Example 10] Denture stabilizer (in paste form)

	Sodium carboxymethyl cellulose	32.0%
20	Polyethylene oxide	13.0
	Vaseline	40.0
	Arginine γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 1,000,000)	1.0
	pH adjustor	0.2
	Flavor	0.1
25	Antiseptics	q.s.
	Coloring matter	q.s.
	Liquid paraffin	balance
	<hr/>	
	Total	100.0%

[Example 11] Mouth refrigerant

	Ethanol	30.0%
	Xylitol	10.0
	Flavor	2.0
5	Polyoxyethylene (EO 60) hydrogenated castor oil	1.5
	Potassium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 1,000,000)	1.0
	Purified water	balance
	<hr/>	
	Total	100.0%

10 [Example 12] Solution for the oral care system with water-supply and suction functions

	Glycerin	2.0%
	Xylitol	2.0
	Polyoxyethylene (EO 60) hydrogenated castor oil	1.0
15	Ethanolamine γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 1,200,000)	0.5
	pH adjustor	0.2
	Flavor	0.2
	Antiseptics	q.s.
	Coloring matter	q.s.
20	Purified water	balance
	<hr/>	
	Total	100.0%

[Example 13] Artificial saliva

	Potassium chloride	0.15%
25	Sodium chloride	0.06
	Magnesium chloride	0.005
	Calcium chloride	0.015
	Hydroxypropyl cellulose	0.1
	Glycerin	1.0
30	Calcium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 1,500,000)	0.5
	Flavor	0.02
	Antiseptics	q.s.
	Purified water	balance
	<hr/>	
	Total	100.0%

[Example 14] Swallowing assistant (4.5 g for 100 mL water)

	Xanthan gum	20.0%
	Guar gum	4.0
	Ammonium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 300,000)	1.0
5	<u>Dextrin</u>	<u>balance</u>
	Total	100.0%

[Example 15] Candy

10	Sugar	50.0%
	Starch syrup	33.0
	Organic acid	2.0
	Flavor	0.2
	Sodium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 300,000)	0.1
15	<u>Purified water</u>	<u>balance</u>
	Total	100.0%

[Example 16] Chewing gum

20	Sugar	53.4%
	Gum base	20.0
	Glucose	10.0
	Starch syrup	16.0
	Flavor	0.5
25	<u>γ-polyglutamic acid (Mw = 80,000)</u>	<u>0.1</u>
	Total	100.0%

[Example 17] Drinks

	Glucose	1.35%
	Fructose	1.35
	Milk component	0.1
5	Sodium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 80,000)	0.1
	Sodium chloride	0.029
	Vitamin C	0.03
	Vitamin B1	0.00022
	Valine	0.0384
10	Leucine	0.0462
	Isoleucine	0.0154
	Citric acid	0.01
	Malic acid	0.01
	Flavor	0.01
15	Water	balance
	<hr/> Total	<hr/> 100.0%

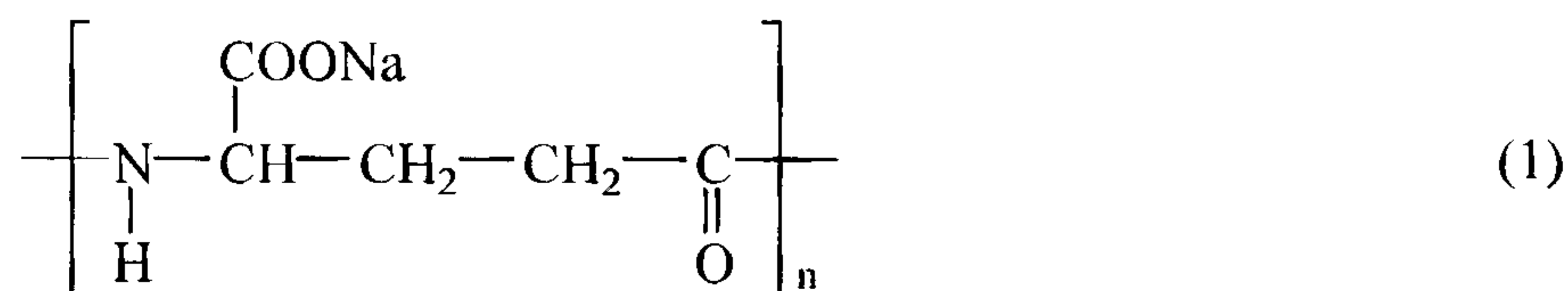
[Example 18] Gummi

20	Sugar	40.2%
	Starch syrup	48.2
	Gelatin	8.0
	Fruit juice	2.0
	Citric acid	0.5
25	Malic acid	0.5
	Flavor	0.5
	Calcium γ -polyglutamate (Mw = 300,000)	0.1
	<hr/> Total	<hr/> 100.0%

69562-70

CLAIMS:

1. A sialogogue composition for keeping an oral cavity wet, which comprises the following ingredients:
- (a) polyglutamic acid or a non-toxic salt thereof, and
- 5 (b) at least one other ingredient suitable for putting in the oral cavity.
2. The sialogogue composition according to claim 1, wherein the ingredient (a) is γ -polyglutamic acid or a sodium, potassium, magnesium, calcium, ammonium or basic amino acid salt thereof.
3. The sialogogue composition according to claim 1, wherein the
- 10 ingredient (a) is sodium γ -polyglutamate.
4. The sialogogue composition according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the ingredient (a) has a weight average molecular weight in terms of sodium salt of 10,000 to 5,000,000.
5. The sialogogue composition according to claim 1, wherein the
- 15 ingredient (a) is sodium polyglutamate of the formula:

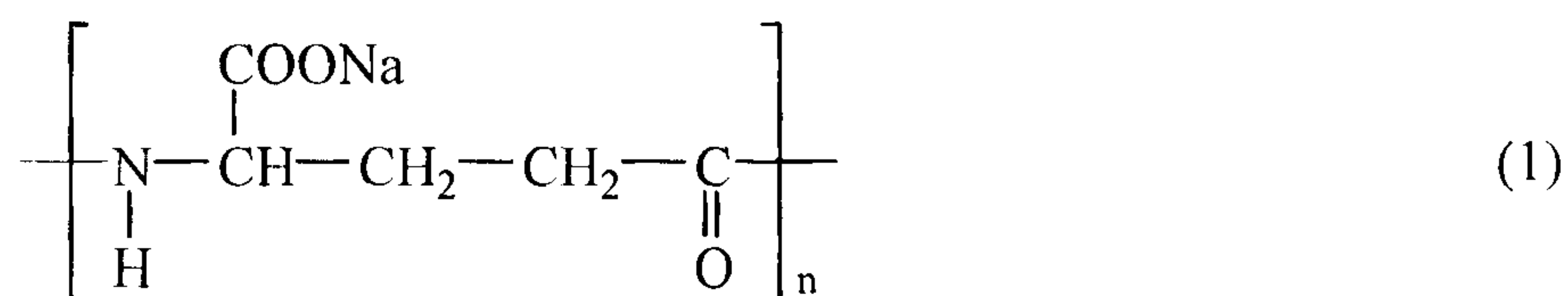


in which n is an integer of 66 to 33,112.

6. The sialogogue composition according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the ingredient (a) is contained in an amount of 0.001-10% by weight of the
- 20 composition.

69562-70

7. The sialogogue composition according to any one of claims 1 to 6, which is a tooth paste, a mouthwash, a chewing tablet, an oral ointment, a gargling tablet, a troche, an artificial saliva, a denture stabilizer and a solution for an oral care system.
- 5 8. The sialogogue composition according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the ingredient (b) is selected from the group consisting of humectant, binder, surfactant, sweetener, antiseptic, colorant and flavor.
9. A food product for keeping an oral cavity wet, which comprises the following ingredients:
- 10 (a) polyglutamic acid or a non-toxic salt thereof, and
(b) at least one edible material.
10. The food product according to claim 9, wherein the ingredient (a) is γ -polyglutamic acid or a sodium, potassium, magnesium, calcium, ammonium or basic amino acid salt thereof.
- 15 11. The food product according to claim 9, wherein the ingredient (a) is sodium γ -polyglutamate.
12. The food product according to claim 9, 10 or 11, wherein the ingredient (a) has a weight average molecular weight in terms of sodium salt of 10,000 to 5,000,000.
13. The food product according to claim 9, wherein the ingredient (a) is
20 sodium polyglutamate of the formula:



in which n is an integer of 66 to 33,112.

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14. The food product according to any one of claims 9 to 13, wherein the ingredient (a) is contained in an amount of 0.001-10% by weight of the food product.
15. The food product according to any one of claims 9 to 14, which is a swallowing assistant, a candy, a chewing gum, a drink or a gummi.
- 5 16. The food product according to any one of claims 9 to 15, wherein the ingredient (b) is selected from the group consisting of saccharide and gum base.
17. A use of polyglutamic acid or a non-toxic salt thereof as a sialogogue for keeping an oral cavity wet.
18. The use according to claim 17, in which γ -polyglutamic acid or a sodium,
10 potassium, magnesium, calcium, ammonium or basic amino acid salt thereof is used.
19. The use according to claim 17, in which sodium γ -polyglutamate is used.
20. The use according to claim 17, 18 or 19, wherein the polyglutamic acid or salt has a weight average molecular weight in terms of sodium salt of 10,000 to 5,000,000.

FIG.1

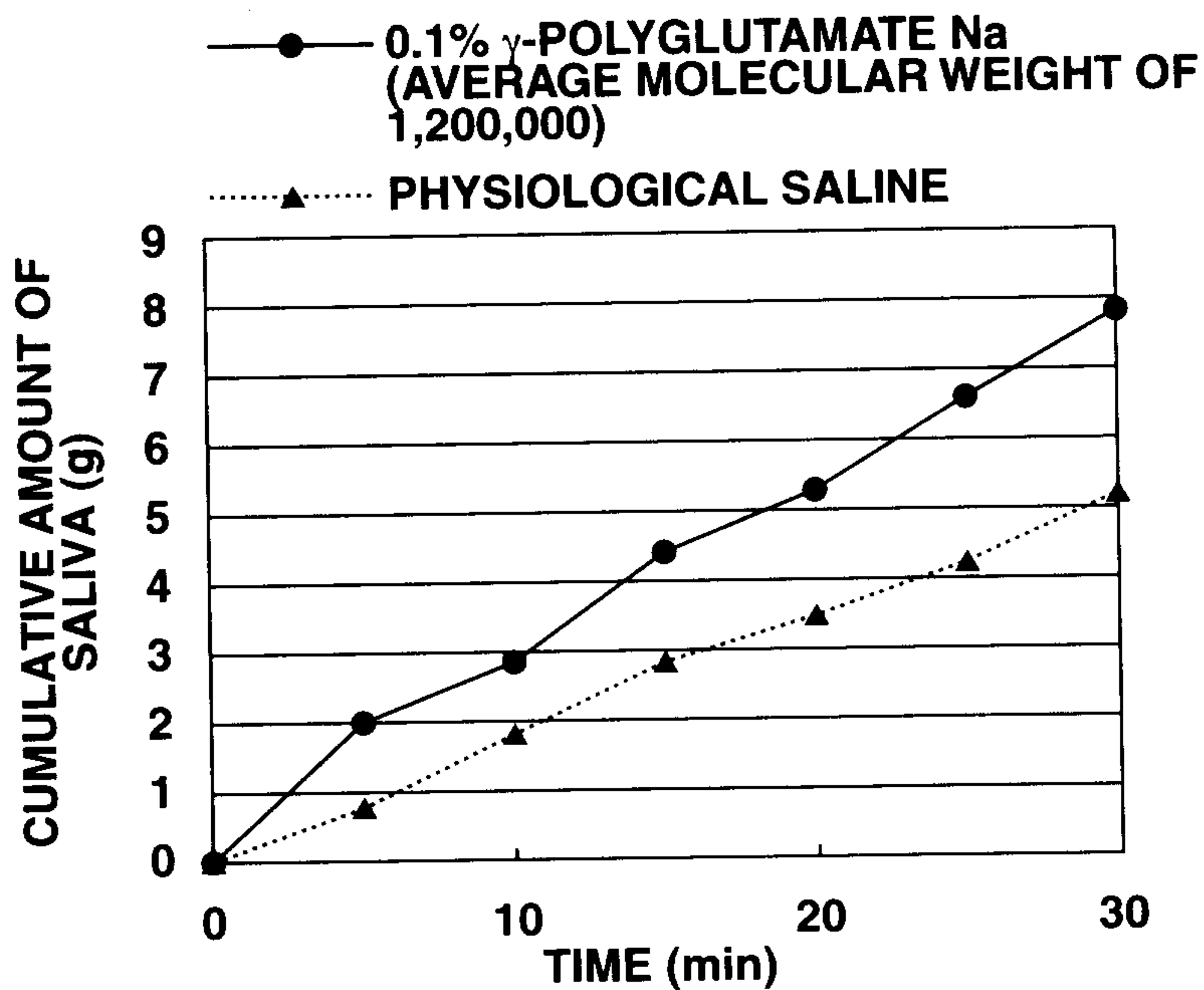


FIG.2

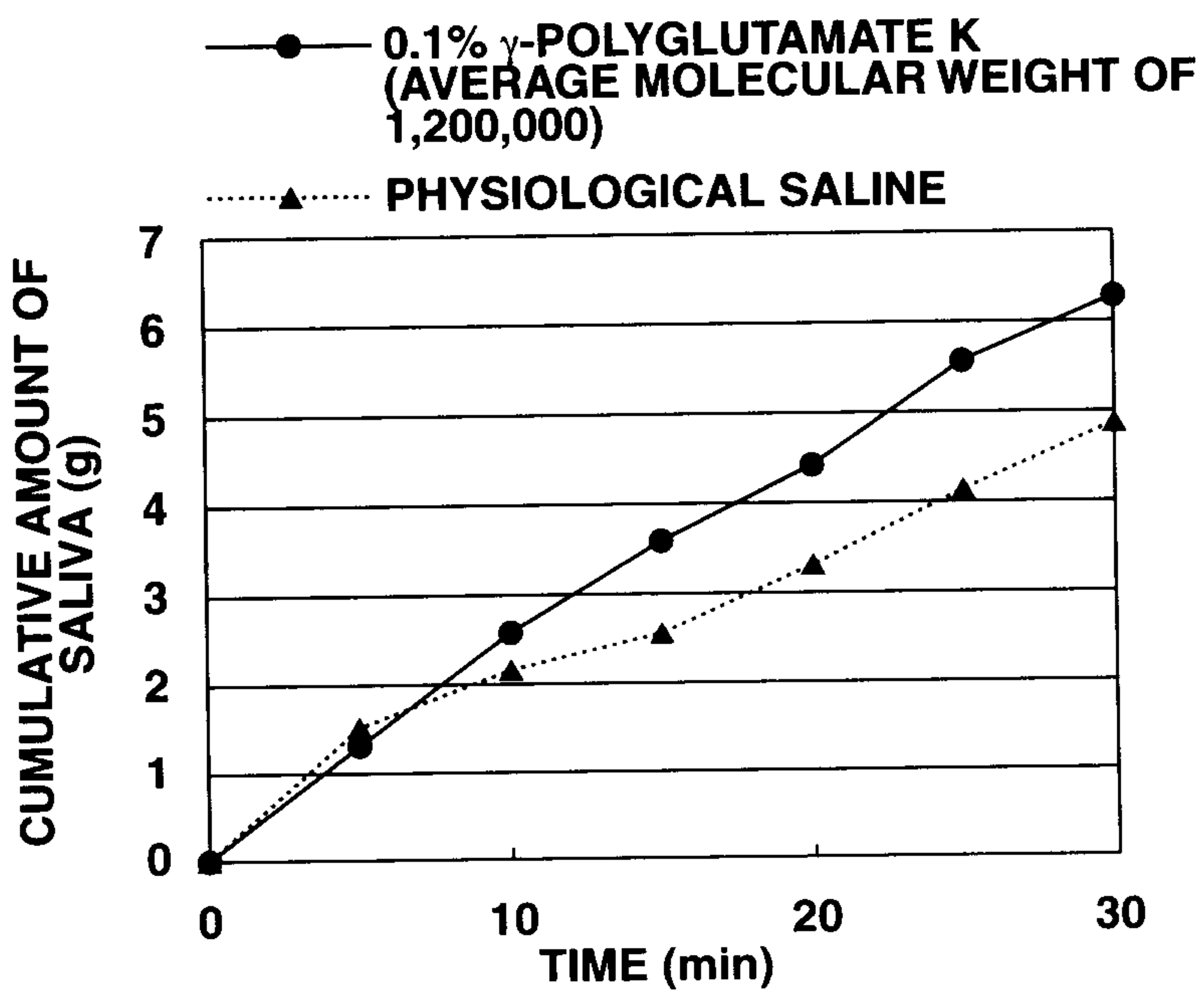


FIG.3

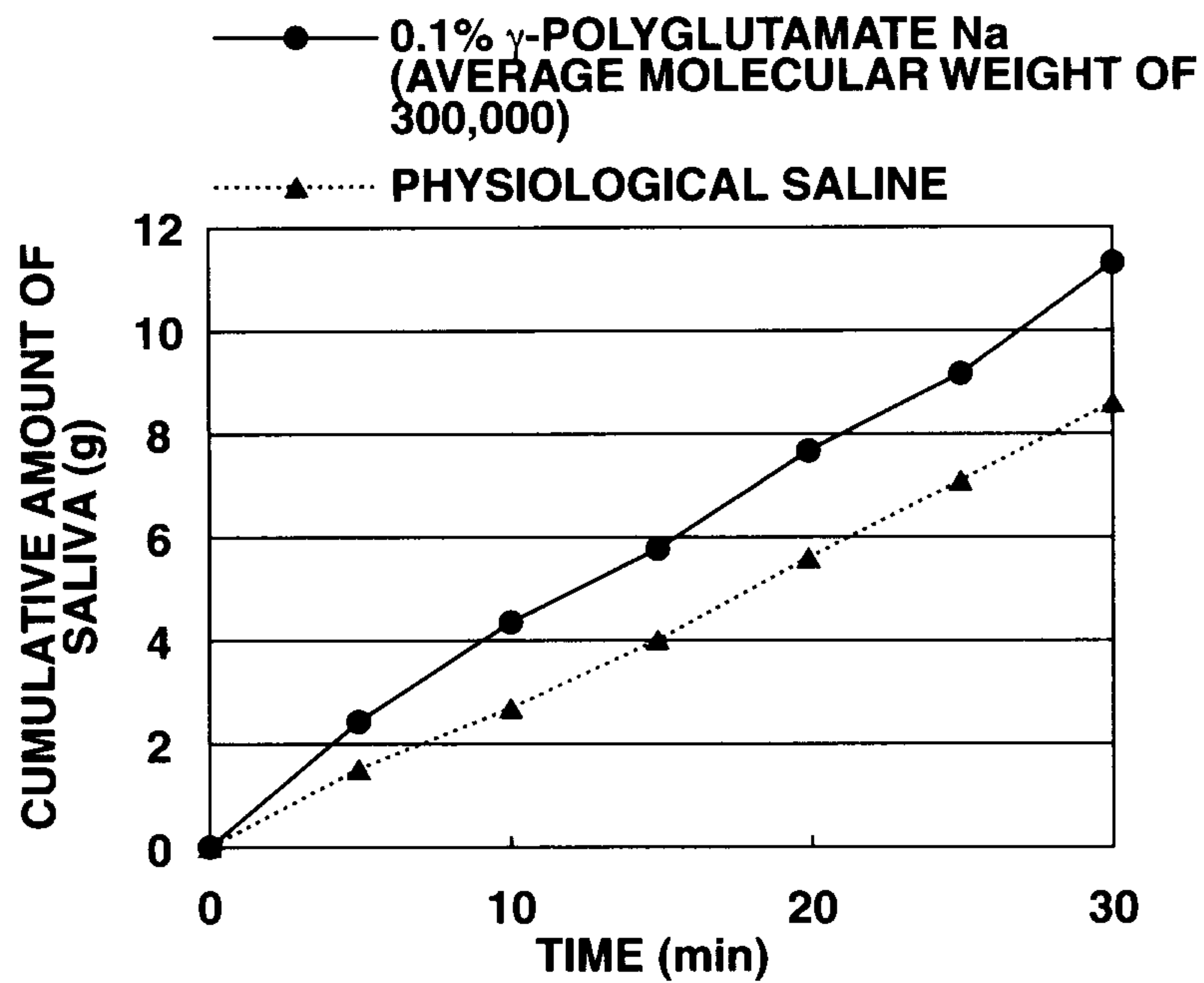
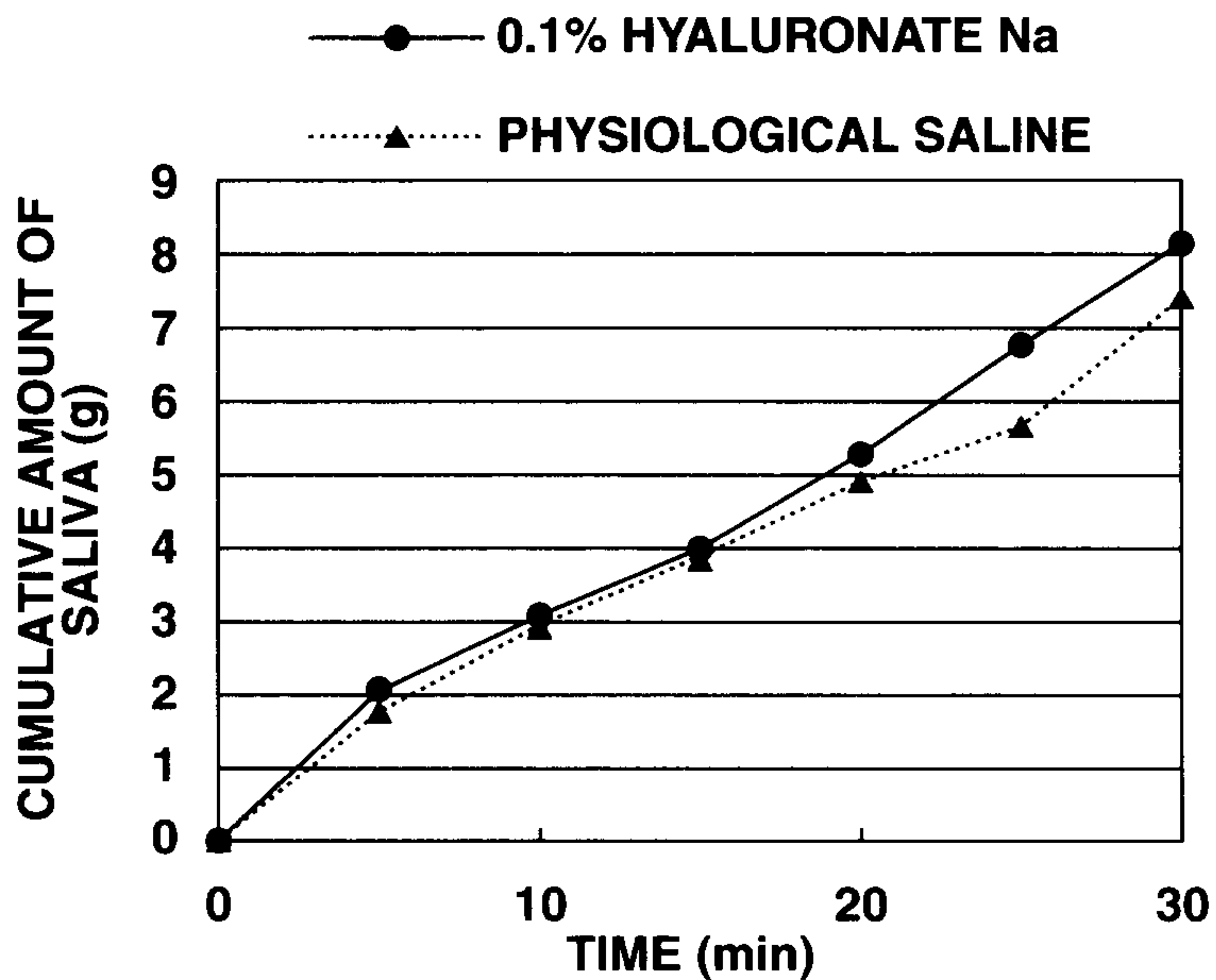


FIG.4



—●— 0.1% γ -POLYGLUTAMATE Na
(AVERAGE MOLECULAR WEIGHT OF
1,200,000)
.....▲..... PHYSIOLOGICAL SALINE

