## **Electronic supplementary information**

## PEGylation of silver nanoparticles by physisorption of cyclic poly(ethylene glycol) for enhanced dispersion stability, antimicrobial activity, and cytotoxicity

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**Fig. S1** SEC traces of HO–PEG–OH (blue), MeO–PEG–OMe (green) and *c*-PEG (red) with a molecular weight of (a) 2, (b) 3, and (c) 9 kDa.



**Fig. S2** <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectra of HO–PEG–OH (blue), MeO–PEG–OMe (green), and *c*-PEG (red) with a molecular weight of (a) 2, (b) 3, and (c) 9 kDa.



**Fig. S3** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra of HO–PEG–OH (blue), MeO–PEG–OMe (green), and *c*-PEG (red) with a molecular weight of (a) 2, (b) 3, and (c) 9 kDa.



**Fig. S4** MALDI-TOF mass spectra of HO–PEG–OH (blue) and *c*-PEG (red) with a molecular weight of (a) 2 and (b) 3kDa.



**Fig. S5** UV–Vis spectra of HO–PEG<sub>9k</sub>–OH (blue), MeO–PEG<sub>9k</sub>–OMe (green), HS–PEG<sub>9k</sub>–OMe (yellow), and *c*-PEG<sub>9k</sub> (red).



**Fig. S6** Stability test of AgNPs/PEG against CaCl<sub>2</sub>. UV–Vis spectra and photographs of AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/No PEG (black), AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/HO–PEG<sub>9k</sub>–OH (blue), AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/MeO–PEG<sub>9k</sub>–OMe (green), AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/HS–PEG<sub>9k</sub>–OMe (yellow/orange), and AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/*c*-PEG<sub>9k</sub> (red) with a PEG concentration of 0.25 wt% (a) before (b) immediately after and (c) 1000 min after the addition of a concentrated CaCl<sub>2</sub> solution. The resulting dispersions had 10 mM of CaCl<sub>2</sub>.



**Fig. S7** Stability test of commercial AgNPs<sub>80</sub>/HS–PEG<sub>5k</sub>–OMe against heating. UV–Vis spectra of AgNPs<sub>80</sub>/HS–PEG<sub>5k</sub>–OMe (a) before heating and (b) after heating at 95 °C for 4 h. Photographs of AgNPs<sub>80</sub>/HS–PEG<sub>5k</sub>–OMe (c) before heating and (d) after heating at 95 °C for 4 h.



**Fig. S8** Cell viability for AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/No PEG, AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/HO–PEG<sub>9k</sub>–OH, AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/MeO–PEG<sub>9k</sub>–OMe, AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/HS–PEG<sub>9k</sub>–OMe, and AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/*c*-PEG<sub>9k</sub>. Data represent mean  $\pm$  s.e. from measurements of six wells. \**p* < 0.05.



**Fig. S9** Scratch assay test for AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/No PEG, AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/HO–PEG<sub>9k</sub>–OH, AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/MeO–PEG<sub>9k</sub>–OMe, AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/HS–PEG<sub>9k</sub>–OMe, and AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/*c*-PEG<sub>9k</sub>. The pictures were taken at 0 and 22 h after scratching. Migration of the cells into the scratched area was observed in all the specimens except for AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/*c*-PEG<sub>9k</sub>. Most of the cells in AgNPs<sub>10</sub>/*c*-PEG<sub>9k</sub> were stripped from the plate upon scratching.