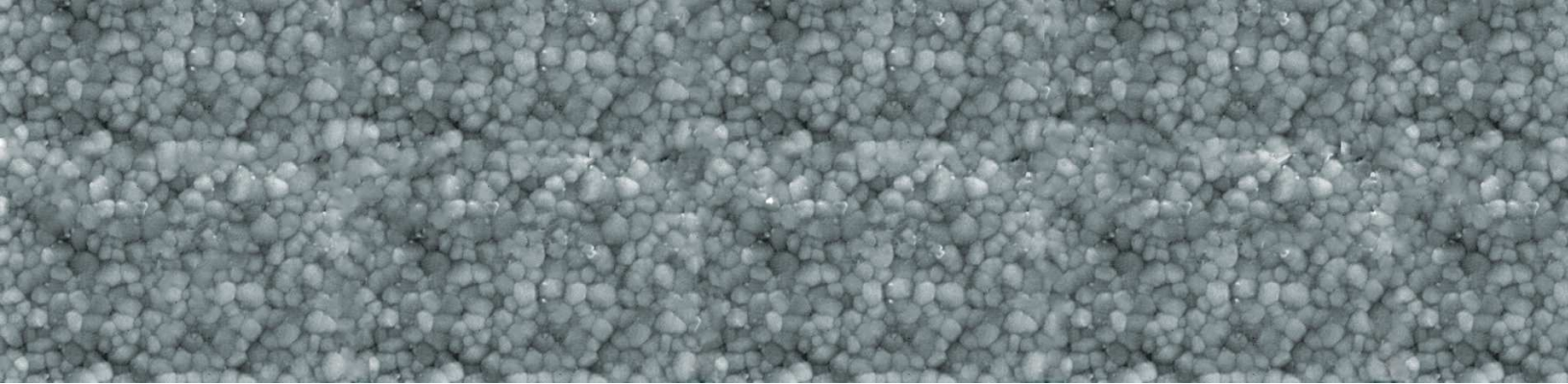




Superior Technical Ceramics
Engineering. Partnership. Solutions.

TRANSFORMATION TOUGHENING OF YTZP: HOW IT RESISTS CRACK PROPAGATION

(or 'How we pinch a crack shut before it even starts')



OVERVIEW

Yttria-stabilized Tetragonal Zirconia Polycrystal (YTZP) ceramics are used when a material needs to be exceptionally strong, wear-resistant, chemically inert and also have a high fracture toughness. Particularly for biomedical applications, YTZP's (relatively) low Young's Modulus promotes a more elastic behavior with a bending strength and high hardness that are also useful. It is because of these helpful properties that YTZP ceramics are chosen for a wide range of applications from aerospace to dentistry. The real key to the utility of these advanced zirconia materials is the way that their strengths have been markedly improved. They have been described as "the ceramic analogue of steel" by a phenomenon known as "transformation toughening". This ensures that the material will be far more fracture resistant than so many other ceramics currently available.

TRANSFORMATION TOUGHENING OF YTZP

Materials science tells us that for polycrystalline materials such as YTZP, the most significant influence on the mechanical properties is the tetragonal crystal structure. Zirconia is commonly alloyed with small amounts of a metal oxide such as Yttrium oxide (Y2O3). When a crack develops, an associated stress field around the crack also forms. This can be enough to induce the transformation of one crystal structure to another which has an approximate 3% volume expansion. This means that when a crack begins to propagate in YTZP, the crystal transformation due to the applied stress results in a resistance to further crack growth. YTZP belongs to a unique family of transformation-toughened ceramics that all have this toughening phenomenon at work within their microstructures.

MORE ABOUT YTZP

The transformation of a tetragonal crystal to a monoclinic crystal structure imparts the superior mechanical properties expected with most stabilized zirconia materials. The combination of stabilizer concentration and grain size is critical in providing stability to the YTZP material.

The Yttria concentration of approximately 5.4 weight percent in conjunction with an average grain size below 1 micron is a desirable combination for optimal stability.

In addition to the superior mechanical properties, YTZP components can be produced with extremely fine surface finishes. This comes primarily from the sub micron crystal size that is always associated with this family of stabilized zirconias.

SPECIFICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

YTZP has a wide range of applications including: dentistry - e.g. tooth crowns, joint replacement, refractory materials, thermal barrier coatings, cutting tools, electro-ceramics and solid fuel cells.

YTZP RELATED SERVICES**

- Powder Preparation
- Forming
- Green Machining
- Firing
- Grinding and Cleaning
- Glazing / Coating
- Metalizing and Plating
- Metrology

CONTACT US

For more information call or email us. You can also learn more about our extensive capabilities at www.ceramics.net

Superior Technical Ceramics

600 Industrial Park Rd.

St. Albans, VT 05478

Tel (802) 527-7726

Fax (802) 527-1181

sales@ceramics.net

Superior Technical Ceramics products and services are subject to the Company's standard terms and conditions, available on request or at ceramics.net. For more information contact an authorized Superior Technical Ceramics representative. Unless noted otherwise, trademarks and service marks herein are the property of Superior Technical Ceramics and may be registered in the United States and/or other countries. Superior Technical Ceramics products named herein may be protected by one or more U.S. and/or foreign patents. For more information, contact sales@ceramics.net. Specifications are subject to change without notice. Superior Technical Ceramics sells its products and services in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth in the applicable contract between Superior Technical Ceramics and the client.

