

## Supplementary Information

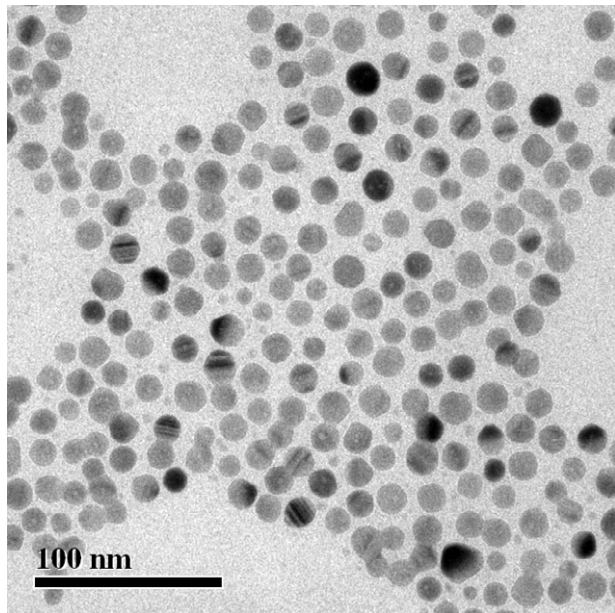


Fig S1: TEM image of CTAB-coated silver particles

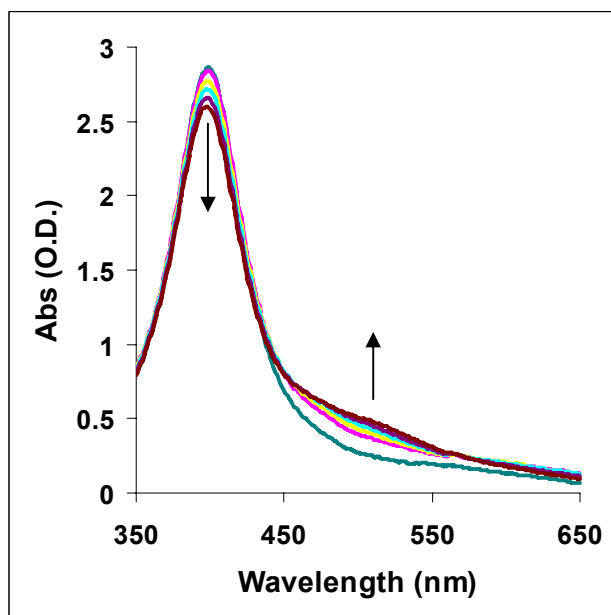


Fig S2: Absorption spectrum of CTAB coated colloids after mixing with 8nM of R6G-labelled DNA. A Scan was made every 10 minutes.

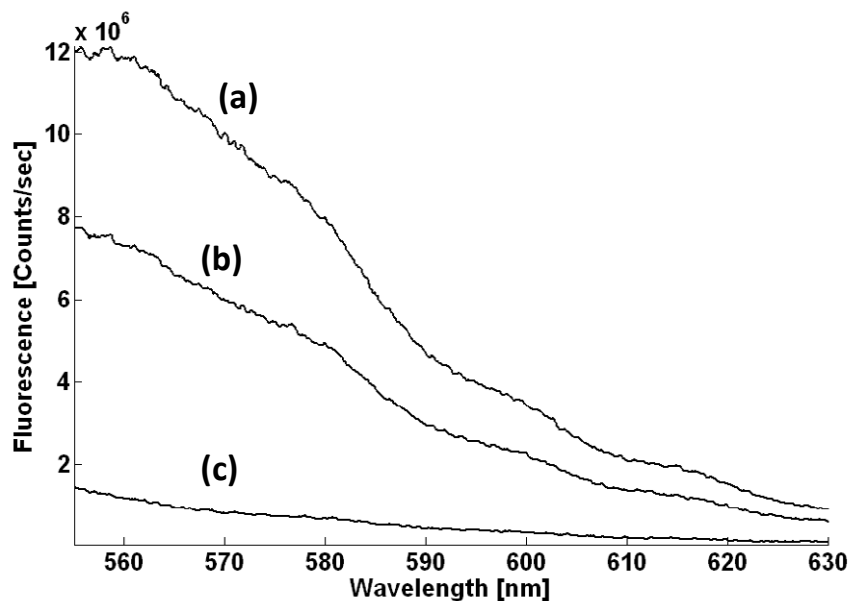


Fig S3: Fluorescence spectra of 2000pM R6G-dye labeled DNA: (a) in water, (b) immediately after mixing with the filtrate from CTAB colloids using a 5000MWCO filter, (c) immediately after mixing with CTAB colloids.

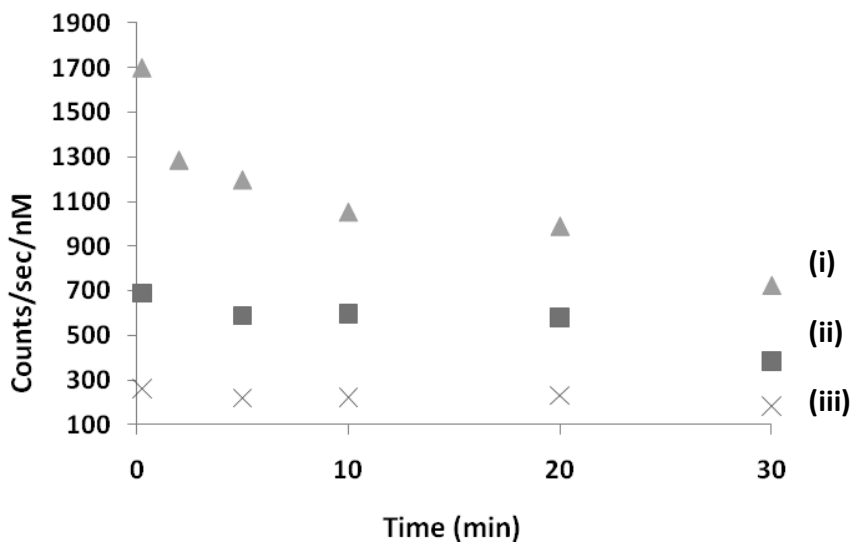


Fig S4: Time dependence of the SERRS peak value (from the 1361 cm<sup>-1</sup> peak) after aggregation using Citrate-coated particles, and spermine, for different concentrations of DNA: (i) 2nM (ii) 8nM (iii) 20nM. In order to keep the surface area similar to that of the CTAB-coated colloids, the larger (40-50nm diameter) citrate colloids were used at a 100pM final concentration.