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Analytical Chemistry II – Quiz (14th May, 2024)

Explain the operational principle of electrospray ionization source used in mass spectrometry. Illustrate this explanation with a scheme of the device.

- Liquid sample is infused through a metal capillary.
- Electric voltage is applied to the capillary and a counter electrode (near the MS orifice).
- The liquid meniscus forms Taylor cone, and microdroplets detach from its apex.
- The microdroplets undergo desolvation (evaporation of solvent).
- Electric charge density on the surface of droplets increases.
- Because surface tension forces cannot balance electrostatic repulsion forces, the microdroplets undergo fission.
- Finally, all the solvent molecules evaporate leaving behind gaseous ions of analyte species.
- Multiply charged species are formed from large molecules.
- Ionization typically follows any of the following pathways:
 - protonation
 - deprotonation
 - formation of adducts



