

Linking Biochemical and Cellular Efficacy of the Coronavirus Main Protease

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in collaboration with Lulu Kang

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SARS-CoV (Severe **A**cute **R**espiratory **S**yndrome **Co**rona**V**irus**)**:

- 8098 SARS infected cases and 774 deaths \Rightarrow 10% mortality [1]

MERS-CoV (Middle **E**ast **R**espiratory **S**yndrome **Co**rona**V**irus):

- 2458 infected cases and 848 deaths
- \Rightarrow 35% mortality [1]

SARS-CoV-2:

- 774,954,393 confirmed cases, 7,040,264 deaths
- => 1% mortality

[\[1\]](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7300470/) Ali Pormohammad *et al.*, *Rev Med Virol*, 2020 [2] <https://covid19.who.int/>on March 17, 2024

Lead Optimization

SARS-CoV-2 / MERS-CoV Mpro Assay Cascade

(IC50: the concentration of a substance required to inhibit a specific biological response or activity by 50%. pIC50 = -logIC50) **5**

Fig. 5b. Catalytic activity of 10 µM MPro as a function of increasing GC376 concentration.

Inhibition pIC50 Control pIC50 Simple procedures to fit a biphasic curve

Hypothesis

• Cellular pEC50 of MPro inhibitors is driven by the pIC50 of the MPro dimer

Protein shown as orange rectangles for the monomer (M) or pair of overlapping green rounded rectangles for the dimer (D). Species on the top arrows are added going right/removed going left. Species to the right of arrows are added going down/removed going up. Equilibriumconstants(K) are forward for the direction that leads to more complex species, with various Kd for dimerization, KI for the inhibitor binding, and KS for the substrate binding. Rate constants kcat may depend on the dimerization and ligand binding.

cMi = c ^M + cMS + cMI + 2c ^D + 2cDS + 2cDI + 2cDII + 2cDSS + 2cDSI cSi = c^S + cMS + cDS + 2cDSS + cDSI cIi = c ^I + cMI + cDI + 2cDII + cDSI 10 v = kcat,M cMS + kcat,DS cDS + kcat,DSS cDSS + kcat,DSI cDSI

Prediction based on dimer -only model

 10^{-7}

It is hypothesized that the dimer-only pIC50 is correlated with cellular pEC50

- Aim 1: To construct the Bayesian model for the estimation of kinetic parameters of MPro
- Aim 2: To apply the Bayesian model for the global estimation of kinetic parameters for multiple inhibitors of MPro
- Aim 3: To analyze the correlation between the estimated pIC50 from kinetic model and the cellular pEC50 for multiple inhibitors.

Aim 1: To construct the Bayesian model for the estimation of kinetic parameters

1.1. Constructing Bayesian model for SARS-CoV-2 MPro datasets 1.2. Simplifying model by adding the constraints on parameters

Nonlinear Regression **¹⁴**

Bayesian Regression

- + Can incorporate prior knowledge.
- + Better uncertainty quantification.

AIM 1.1: Methods

Data

Modulation of the monomer-dimer equilibrium and catalytic activity of SARS-CoV-2 main protease by a transition-state analog inhibitor

Nashaat T. Nashed¹, Annie Aniana¹, Rodolfo Ghirlando ², Sai Chaitanya Chiliveri ¹ & John M. Louis ^{1⊠}

Fig. 5b. Catalytic activity of 10 µM MPro as a function of increasing GC376 concentration.

Fig. 8 Mechanism of activation and inhibition of MPro^M by GC376. M, D, S, I, DS, DI, DI₂, DIS denote monomer, dimer, substrate, inhibitor, dimersubstrate complex, dimer-inhibitor complex, dimer bound to 2 inhibitors, dimer bound to 1 inhibitor and 1 substrate, respectively.

Set of parameters

 $\theta \equiv (K_d^i, K_{S,M}, K_{S,D}, K_{S,DS}, K_{I,M}, K_{I,D}, K_{I,DI}, K_{I,DI}, K_{S,DI},$

 $k_{cat, MS}^i, k_{cat, DS}^i, k_{cat, DSS}^i, k_{cat, DSI}^i, \sigma^j).$

- K_d and K_{cat} were local parameters, in which ith is the index for MPro^{Mut} and MPro^{wt}.
- The others were the globally shared parameters between the two enzyme variants.
- \bullet σ_j is assumed to be constant for the dataset j th .

How can we evaluate the results?

- The convergence of the model (not shown)
- Can model fit all datasets?
- Marginal probability densities
	- 1D How well do we know each parameters?
	- 2D How correlated are the parameters?

Figure. MAP fitted SARS-CoV-2 datasets

The solid line is the theoretical response $y_n * (\theta_{MAP})$, where θ_{MAP} is the Maximum a Posteriori estimate of the parameters. Dots are the observed response.

(Maximum **A P**osterior or MAP: a set of parameter which maximizes the posterior distribution of θ given the data.)

Model fitted

all datasets.

- All logK parameters are unimodal and have small HDIs, except for $log K_{LM}$.
- Large distribution of posterior suggested that this $log K_{LM}$ cannot be determined by available datasets.
- K_d^{WT}: [0.04, 18.94] uM
- K_d^{Mut}: [0.43, 7.61] mM

(The **H**ighest **D**ensity **I**nterval - HDI is the interval which contains the required mass such that all points within the interval have a higher probability density than points outside the interval.)

Figure. Representative 1D marginal distributions of rate constants

Large posterior distribution of k_{cat} suggested that these parameters could not be determined by available datasets.

AIM 1.1: Additional analysis

Figure. Heat map of the correlation matrix estimated from the Bayesian posterior of dissociation constants.

Figure. Representative 2D marginal distributions of dissociation constants

It is hypothesized that estimated pIC50 from kinetic model is correlated with cellular pEC50.

- Aim 1: To construct the Bayesian model for the estimation of kinetic parameters for one set of inhibitor
- Aim 2: To apply the Bayesian model for the global estimation of kinetic parameters for multiple inhibitors
- Aim 3: To analyze the correlation between the estimated pIC50 from kinetic model and the cellular pEC50 for multiple inhibitors.

AIM 2.1: Methods

Data from Biochemical assay Core

AI-driven Structure-enabled Antiviral Platform (ASAP)

ASAP uses artificial intelligence and computational chemistry to accelerate structure-based open science antiviral drug discovery and deliver oral antivirals for pandemics with the goal of global, equitable, and affordable access.

dimerization but without inhibition.

AIM 2.1: Methods

Figure. Full enzyme kinetic model 26

Dimerization

• logKd

Binding of substrate (S)

- logK_S_M + kcat_MS
- logK S D + kcat DS
- logK S DS + kcat DSS

Binding of inhibitor (I)

- logK I_M
- logK_I_D
- logK_I_DI

Binding of S/I

• logK_S_DI + kcat_DSI 27

AIM 2.2: Results

Figure. MAP fitted ES and ESI inhibitor datasets

The lines are the theoretical responses $y_n * (\theta_{MAP})$, where θ_{MAP} is the Maximum a Posteriori estimate of the parameters. Dots are the observed response.

 -0.00036

 Ω

 -5

Figure. Representative 1D marginal distributions of parameters from fitting **1 ES and 1 ESI datasets**

Figure. Representative 1D marginal distributions of shared parameters from **global fitting** (1 ES and 13 ESI datasets)

It is hypothesized that estimated pIC50 from kinetic model is correlated with cellular pEC50.

- Aim 1: To construct the Bayesian model for the estimation of kinetic parameters for one set of inhibitor
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- Aim 3: To analyze the correlation between the estimated pIC50 from kinetic model and the cellular pEC50 for multiple inhibitors.

AIM 3: Methods

Correlation analysis for pIC50/pEC50

Correlation analysis for pIC90/pEC90

Cellular $pEC90$ 0.427 \pm 9.135E-3 0.436 \pm 8.550E-3 0.405 \pm 1.068E-2

Dimer-only pIC50/90 estimated from biphasic curve are highly correlated with cellular pEC50/90

Summary

- We successfully constructed the kinetic model to estimate kinetic parameters of MPro from SARS-CoV-2 and MERS-CoV.
- Dimer-only pIC50/90 estimated from biphasic curve are highly correlated with cellular pEC50/90
- The accuracy of predicting cellular pEC90 using dimer-only pIC90 was higher than that of predicting pEC50 using dimer-only pIC50.

Contribution

• Given the biphasic concentration-response curves, estimated pIC50/pIC90 from dimer-only model can be used for compound screening and aid the drug design.

• The model can be adjusted and applied to any system with complex mechanisms involving dimeric enzymes and numerous binding events.

Acknowledgements

Modulation of the monomer-dimer equilibrium and catalytic activity of SARS-CoV-2 main protease by a transition-state analog inhibitor

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AI-driven Structure-enabled Antiviral Platform (ASAP)

ASAP uses artificial intelligence and computational chemistry to accelerate structure-based open science antiviral drug discovery and deliver oral antivirals for pandemics with the goal of global, equitable, and affordable access.

Thank you for your attention!!!!

SARS-CoV MPro and SARS-CoV-2 MPro: 96% sequence similarity of the 306 residues, only 12 residues are different.

Fig. Three-dimensional structures of SARS-CoV-2 MPro (PDB ID: [6M03\)](http://pdb:6M03/), SARS-CoV MPro (PDB ID: [2C3S\)](http://pdb:2C3S/) and MERS-CoV Mpro (PDB ID: [4YLU\)](http://pdb:4YLU/). Domains I–III are colored in green, blue and yellow, respectively. Two main amino acid residues (His41 and Cys145) in the catalytic site of SARS-CoV-2 MPro are shown and are colored by atom types.

[\(Ref:](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7286838/) Jun He *et al.*, *Int J Antimicrob Agents*, 2020)

SARS-CoV MPro and MERS-CoV MPro: 51% sequence similarity

Dimerization is essential for catalytic activity of Mpro.

 K_d : ranged from 230 ± 30 μM [Ref] down to 0.19 ± 0.03 μ M [Ref]

Fig. Intermolecularinteractions at the dimer interface of **SARS-CoV-2 Mpro** (A and B. Ser1-Glu166; C. Ser10-Ser10, Lys12-Glu14; D. Arg4-Glu290, and Ser139-Gln299)

[\(Ref:](https://www.jbc.org/article/S0021-9258(22)00463-X/fulltext) Juliana Ferreira *et al.*, *J Biol Chem*, 2022)

Dimerization is essential for catalytic activity of Mpro.

Fig. Stereo view of an overlay of the dimerization interface and the active site of MERS-CoV MPro (in cyan and orange) with that of SARS-CoV MPro (grey). The red dashed lines indicate polar interactions between the two protomers of MERS-CoV MPro, while the black dashed lines show polar interactions between those of SARS-CoV MPro. The C atoms of the modeled substrate P4-P1 residues (from the structure of C148A mutant) are colored magenta.

([Ref:](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4682845/) Bo-Lin Ho *et al.*, *PLoS One*, 2015)

SARS-CoV MPro:

- Four amino acid pairs with intermolecular polar interactions (Ser1-Glu166, Arg4-Glu290, Ser123- Arg298 and Ser139- Gln299).
- K_d: $0.06 \pm 0.01 \mu M$

MERS-CoV MPro:

- Only two pairs of intermolecular hydrogen bonds(Ser1-Glu169 and Ser142-Gln299)
- K_d: 52 ± 5 μ M

Ligand-induced Dimerization

Fig. AUC (Analytical Ultracentrifugation) **analyses of ligand-induced dimerization of MERS-CoV MPro.** *A,* sedimentation coefficient distribution for varying concentrations of enzyme (4.1 to 23 μM) with sedimentation coefficient values of 2.9S and 3.9S for the monomer and the dimer, respectively. *B,* sedimentation coefficient distribution of MERS-CoV 3CLpro (25 μM) in the presence of different stoichiometric ratios of compound **6** (25, 50, and 100 μM). C, sedimentation coefficient distribution of MERS-CoV 3CL^{pro} (25 μM) in the presence of different stoichiometric ratios of compound **10** (25, 50, and 100 μM). A significant shift in the 2.9S peak (monomer) to a 4.1S peak (dimer) is detected upon addition of increasing concentrations of compounds **6** and **10.**

[\(Ref:](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4528106/) Sakshi Tomar *et al.*, *J Biol Chem*, 2015)

(**H**ighest **D**ensity **I**nterval - HDI isthe interval which contains the required mass such that all points within the interval have a higher probability density than points outside the interval.)

 $p(\sigma) \propto \frac{\sigma_0}{\sigma}$

 $log K_d^{Mut} \sim Normal(-6.08, 1.32)$

 $log K_{I,D} \sim Normal(-6.51, 1.32)$

 $logK_{I,DI} \sim Normal(-6.51, 1.32).$

 $log K \sim Uniform(-8.68, 0.00).$

 $k_{cat}^{Mut} \sim Uniform(0, 1).$

 $k_{cat}^{WT} \sim Uniform(0, 200).$

Prior Likelihood

 $y_n \sim \mathcal{N}(y_n^*(\boldsymbol{\theta}), \sigma^2)$

$$
p(\mathcal{D}|\boldsymbol{\theta}) = \frac{1}{(2\pi)^{N/2}\sigma^N} \exp\left[-\frac{1}{2\sigma^2} \sum_{n=1}^N (y_n - y_n^*(\boldsymbol{\theta}))^2\right]
$$

Sampling from the posterior

- NUTS sampling
	- 4 chains of 2000 warmups, and 10000 samples

• Figure. **Convergence of percentiles of the Bayesian posterior**. 10,000 samples were drawn from the Bayesian posterior using the NUTS sampler. All kinetic parameters are shown. Lines correspond to the 5 -th (blue circle), 25 -th (green square), 50 -th (red diamond), 75 -th (cyan upward triangle) and 95 -th (magenta downward triangle) percentile.

AIM 2.1: Methods

 $log K_d \sim Normal(-5.00, 0.50)$ $log K_{S,M} \sim Uniform(-9.00, 0.00)$

 $logK_{S,D} \sim Uniform(-9.00, 0.00)$

 $logK_{S,DS} \sim Uniform(-9.00, 0.00)$

 $log K_{I,M} \sim Uniform(-12.00, 0.00)$

 $log K_{I,D} \sim Uniform(-12.00, 0.00)$

 $log K_{I,DI} \sim Uniform(-12.00, 0.00)$

 $log K_{S,DI} \sim Uniform(-12.00, 0.00)$

$$
k_{cat} \sim Uniform(0.00, 20.00)
$$

$$
p(\sigma) \propto \frac{\sigma_0}{\sigma} \frac{\alpha^i \sim Uniform(0, 2)}{\log[E]^k \sim \mathcal{N}(\mu = [E]_0^k, \sigma = 0.1 * [E]_0^k)}
$$

Prior Likelihood

 $y_n \sim \mathcal{N}(\alpha y_n^*(\boldsymbol{\theta}), \sigma^2)$

$$
p(\mathcal{D}|\boldsymbol{\theta}) = \frac{1}{(2\pi)^{N/2}\sigma^N}\exp\left[-\frac{1}{2\sigma^2}\sum_{n=1}^N(y_n - \alpha y_n^*(\boldsymbol{\theta}))^2\right]
$$

Sampling from the posterior

- NUTS sampling
	- 4 chains of 2000 warmups, and 10000 samples

• Figure. **Convergence of percentiles of the Bayesian posterior of dissociation and rate constants**. 10,000 samples were drawn from the Bayesian posterior using the NUTS sampler. All kinetic parameters are shown. Lines correspond to the 5 -th (blue circle), 25 -th (green square), 50 -th (red diamond), 75 -th (cyan upward triangle) and 95 -th (magenta downward triangle) percentile.

AIM 2.1: Methods

Set of parameters

 $\theta \equiv (K_d, K_{S,M}, K_{S,D}, K_{S,DS}, K_{I,M}, K_{I,D}, K_{I,DI}, K_{S,DI},$

 $k_{cat, MS}, k_{cat, DS}, k_{cat, DSI}, k_{cat, DSS}, \alpha^i, [E]^k, \sigma^j).$

- K and k_{cat} are global parameters.
- \cdot α^i is normalizing factor for each plate
- σ_j is assumed to be constant for the dataset jth.
- $[E]^{k}$ with $k = \{100, 50, 25\}$ (unit: nM).

Model fitted datasets.

Figure. MAP fitted ES and ASAP-00000214 datasets

The lines are the theoretical responses $y_n * (\theta_{MAP})$, where θ_{MAP} is the Maximum a Posteriori estimate of the parameters. Dots are the observed response.

Aim 1: To construct the Bayesian model for the estimation of kinetic parameters for one set of inhibitor

1.1. Fitting the Bayesian model from SARS-CoV-2 MPro datasets 1.2. Simplifying model by adding the constraints on parameters

Based on model result:

- $K_{S,M} = K_{I,M}$
- $K_{S,DI} = K_{S,DS}$
- kcat_{DS} = kcat_{DSS}
- kcat_{DS} = kcat_{DSI}
- kcat_{DSI} = kcat_{DSS}

The symmetry of model:

- $\log K$ _{S,D} $\log K$ _{S,M} = $\log K$ _{I,D} $\log K$ _{I,M}
- $log K$ _{LDS} $log K$ _{S,DS} = $log K$ _{S,DI} $log K$ _{LDI}

Global fitting procedure

- 1. We fitted only ES datasets and estimated $\log K_d$, $\log K_{S, M}$, $log K$ _{S,D}, $log K$ _{S,DS}, k _{cat,DS}, k _{cat,DSS}, and [E]. α was set at 1 for this dataset.
- 2. The posterior distributions of parameters obtained in step 1 were used to adjust the prior of those parameters for the separate fitting of each ESI dataset. Different α and [E] parameters were assigned for different plates.
- 3. The overlapping range of shared parameters logK, kcat, α , and [E] were extracted and used as the prior information for the global fitting of all datasets.
- 4. Values of shared parameters were fixed based on the MAP of the posterior distribution from step 3, and Bayesian model is fitted once more for ESI.

Fitting each CRC

Extended global fitting: Results

in the same colors represent for the datasets in the same plates.

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