

The analysis of CH- π interaction in protein-carbohydrate binding

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The molecular recognition of carbohydrates by proteins plays a key role in many biological processes including immune response, pathogen entry into a cell and cell-cell adhesion (e.g., in cancer metastasis). Carbohydrates interact with proteins mainly through hydrogen bonding, metal-ion-mediated interaction and non-polar dispersion interactions. The role of dispersion-driven CH- π interactions (stacking) in protein-carbohydrate recognition has been underestimated for a long time considering the polar interactions to be the main forces for saccharide interactions. However, over the last few years it turns out that non-polar interactions are equally important. Using the Protein Data Bank (PDB) structural data, we analyzed the CH- π interactions employing bioinformatics (data mining, structural analysis), several experimental (ITC, X-ray crystallography) and computational techniques [1]. Within 12 000 protein complexes with carbohydrates from PDB, the stacking interactions were found in about 39% of them. The calculations and the ITC measurement results suggest that the CH- π stacking contribution to the overall binding energy ranges from 4 kcal/mol up to 8 kcal/mol. All the results show that the stacking CH- π interactions in protein-carbohydrate complexes can be considered to be a driving force of the binding in such complexes.

[1] Houser, J., Kozmon, S., Mishra, D., Hammerova, Z., Wimmerova, M., Koca, J. (2020). *Chem. Eur. J.* **26**, 1-13

Keywords: CH- π interaction; protein-carbohydrate binding; bioinformatics; aromatic amino acids

We thank the BESSY II electron storage ring (Berlin-Adlerhof, Germany) for access to the synchrotron data collection facility and allocation of synchrotron radiation beam time. The research leading to this result has been supported by the project CALIPSOplus under the Grant Agreement 730872 from the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation HORIZON 2020. The work was supported by Czech Science Foundation (18-18964S), by the projects CEITEC 2020 (LQ1601) and INTER-COST (LTC17076) from the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. We acknowledge the Biomolecular Interactions and Crystallization Core Facility of CEITEC MU supported by the CIISB research infrastructure (LM2018127) funded by MEYS CR for their support with obtaining scientific data presented in this paper. S.K. is grateful to program SASPRO (ArIDARuM, 0005/01/02, S.K.) co-funded by the People Programme (Marie Curie Actions 7FP, grant agreement REA no. 609427) and by the Slovak Academy of Sciences, and the Scientific Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic and the Slovak Academy of Sciences (grant VEGA-02/0024/16 and 02/0058/16) for the financial support. The computational resources were provided by the CESNET LM2015042 and the CERIT Scientific Cloud LM2015085, provided under the programme "Projects of Large Research, Development, and Innovations Infrastructures".