Bioinformatics of Protein Bound Water

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School
University of Missouri-Columbia

In Partial Fufillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

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July 2005

The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled:

BIOINFORMATICS OF PROTEIN-BOUND WATER

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A candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

And hereby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

B. When

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I really appreciate Dr. Jack Tanner's tutelage. If I had known about the field of Structural Bioinformatics before coming to MU, I would probably have gone to another university. Fortunately, I did not. I could not have received better training and become so involved in a project so dear to my heart than I have here. I really appreciate Jack's patience with me. I am somewhat of a "Lone Ranger" by nature and he probably often wondered what I was up to. He has really given me the room to spread my wings and I thank him for it.

In the summer of 2002, we had just completed our first paper, "A Structurally Conserved Water Molecule in Rossmann-fold Dinucleotide Binding Proteins." Finding this conserved water was a fortuitous accident, and I wished for a way to find conserved water molecules in other proteins. So, Jack and I began discussing the idea. If I remember correctly, it took several weeks of brainstorming before we came up with the current algorithm described herein. He taught me FORTRAN, helping me develop new code as well as providing some of his own. Though the process was still rough, within a few weeks we had recognizable results.

I have really enjoyed writing papers with Jack. This is probably the first time in my life that I have actually written collaboratively. I cannot count the number of times we sat down together to work on text, either writing notes on a manuscript or actually typing in the computer as we composed.

I want to thank Jack for occasionally staying late. Sometimes ideas just started rolling and everything else went on hold for a while. I apologize to Jack's wife, Evelyn. I

believe that spending time with one's family is very important and I've kept Jack late too often. So, I apologize and thank her for her patience. I wish the best of luck to Jack, Evelyn and family.

Many thanks to the Interdisciplinary Plant Group for providing the bulk of my funding during my graduate training. Their funding gave me the freedom to pursue a very novel line of research, one I never would have anticipated. I am also grateful to the Genetics Area Program for also providing financial assistance.

I doubt Matthew L. Klein realizes how much he has assisted me in my research. Never in my wildest dreams did I expect that one of my college roommates would have such an influence on my research. Matthew, a young undergraduate computer science student, could not believe that I was using such an archaic language as FORTRAN. He kept contrasting it with some new language called C# (pronounced C sharp). After hearing about C# advantages like being "object-oriented," having "garbage collection," and other terms and features that were completely novel to me, I finally gave in and tried it. My research has not been the same since. He is currently serving as a Latter-day Saint missionary in Mexico and will return to school in Fall 2005 or Winter 2006. I wish him success wherever he goes.

Our first successful test set, after Rossmann-fold proteins, was parvalbumins. My first rotation had been with Dr. Michael Henzl, so I had developed an affection for parvalbumins. In fact, he introduced me to my first molecular graphics program (Rasmol) and parvalbumin was the first protein model I ever viewed on a computer. It was really gratifying to go to him and show him something novel about his protein. We later collaborated in solving a 1.05Å structure of rat α-parvalbumin.

With respect to an education that led up to my current research, I would like to thank all of my former teachers, from kindergarten through graduate school. I still remember you. I would especially like to thank Mr. William Burns, my computer science teacher at Taft Middle School, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for making computer programming fun. Because of his classes, I aspired to become a computer programmer. Experiences in high school diverted my path from computer science, but now I am back and enjoying every minute of it. I would also like to thank Dr. Charles Graham of Piedmont High School in Piedmont, Oklahoma. Learning physiology in his Biology II class led me to study biochemistry in college. I would also like to specifically thank Drs. Robert Fink, Terry Conley, Susan Barber, and Terry Phelps from Oklahoma City University for their instruction and continued friendship. There are many, many more who deserve my thanks and I regret not being able to name everyone.

Most of all, I would like to thank my dear mother and father. They have always encouraged me in my studies. They helped me feel that I could acheive whatever I desired. In particular, I would like to mention the memory of my father bringing home our first computer, an Atari 400. We have had a computer in the home ever since. He taught us children some basic programming. He planted a seed that is now flourishing. Thanks Dad.

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Chapter 1

Exploring Structurally Conserved Solvent Sites in Protein Families

(Adapted from manuscript by Bottoms, White, and Tanner submitted to

Proteins: Structure, Function and Bioinformatics.)

Chapter 1 Abstract

Protein-bound water molecules are important components of protein structure, and therefore, protein function and energetics. Although structural conservation of solvent has been studied in a few protein families, a lack of suitable computational tools has hindered more comprehensive analyses. Here we present a semi-automated computational approach for identifying solvent sites that are conserved among proteins sharing a common three-dimensional structure. This method is tested on six protein families: (1) monodomain cytochrome c, (2) fatty-acid binding protein, (3) lactate/malate dehydrogenase, (4) parvalbumin, (5) phospholipase A₂, and (6) serine protease. For each family, the method successfully identified previously known conserved solvent sites. Moreover, the method discovered several novel conserved solvent sites, some of which have higher degrees of conservation than the previously known sites. Analyses of these novel sites led to new structure/function hypotheses for the protein families studied. Our results suggest that every protein family will have highly conserved solvent sites, and that these sites should be considered as one of the defining three-dimensional structural characteristics of protein families and folds.

Key Words

Bioinformatics; cytochrome c; fatty-acid binding protein; lactate dehydrogenase; malate dehydrogenase; parvalbumin; EF-hand; phospholipase A_2 ; Rossmann fold; serine protease; water molecules

Abbreviations used

DOC, degree of conservation; SSM, Secondary Structure Matching

1.1 Introduction

Water is the solvent of biological chemistry and so it is not surprising that water molecules underlie many fundamental biochemical processes, including protein folding, enzymatic catalysis and biomolecular recognition. The major driving force of protein folding, the hydrophobic effect, is an entropic gain associated with the solvent. Catalytic water molecules poised in enzyme active sites directly participate in the bond-breaking and bond-making steps of many enzymatic reactions. Other water molecules in active sites may be involved in binding and stabilizing the substrate during catalysis. Water is critical for biomolecular recognition and association since molecular surfaces must be desolvated during complexation, and this shedding of solvent contributes significantly to the free energy of association. Lastly, and most relevant to our work, ordered water molecules that are tightly bound to proteins mediate intramolecular interactions within proteins and intermolecular interactions within biomolecular complexes.

The role of water as a mediator of noncovalent interactions is supported by high-resolution X-ray crystallographic data. Analysis of protein crystal structures has shown that water-mediated hydrogen bonds are abundant in protein complexes with DNA, protein, and small-molecule ligands. It is estimated that 40% of all protein-DNA hydrogen bonds are water mediated,¹ and that protein-protein interfaces contain an average of 22 water molecules and 11 water-mediated hydrogen bonds.² There are many examples of protein-ligand complexes in which water molecules bridge the protein and a bound small molecule ligand. For example, our study of Rossmann dinucleotide-binding domains revealed that 30% of the hydrogen bonds between the protein and adenine dinucleotide cofactors (NAD(P)⁺, FAD) were water-mediated.³ Similarly, Babor *et al.*

showed that water-mediated hydrogen bonds were important for recognition of the ribose moieties of ATP, ADP, and FAD.⁴

Importantly, several examples from the structure-based drug design and medicinal chemistry literature have demonstrated the essential nature of water-mediated hydrogen bonds in protein-inhibitor recognition, including the class C β-lactamase AmpC,⁵ HIV-1 integrase,⁵ HIV protease,⁶⁻⁸ cyclin-dependent kinase-2,⁸ Factor Xa,⁹ thrombin,¹⁰⁻¹² Herpes simplex virus type I thymidine kinase,¹³ thymidylate synthase,^{14,15} neuraminidase,¹⁶ heat-labile enterotoxin,¹⁶ adenosine deaminase⁵ and FKBP12.¹⁷ In these cases, water molecules play a crucial role in ligand recognition by mediating hydrogen bonds between the ligand and the receptor protein. The overarching conclusion from this body of work was that successful drug design often requires explicit consideration of ordered water molecules in the binding pocket.

Given that protein-bound water molecules are important for maintaining proteins in their native conformations and for mediating biomolecular associations, there is considerable interest in elucidating exactly which water molecules might be particularly critical for protein structure and function. One hypothesis is that structurally and functionally important water molecules occupy solvent sites that are highly conserved among proteins sharing a common three-dimensional fold or active site structure. Conserved solvent sites have been examined only in a few protein families, such as fatty-acid binding proteins, 18 cytochrome c, 19 lectins, 20 phospholipase A_2 , 21 ribonucleases, 22 Rossmann dinucleotide-binding proteins, 3 serine proteases 12,23,24 and parvalbumins. 25

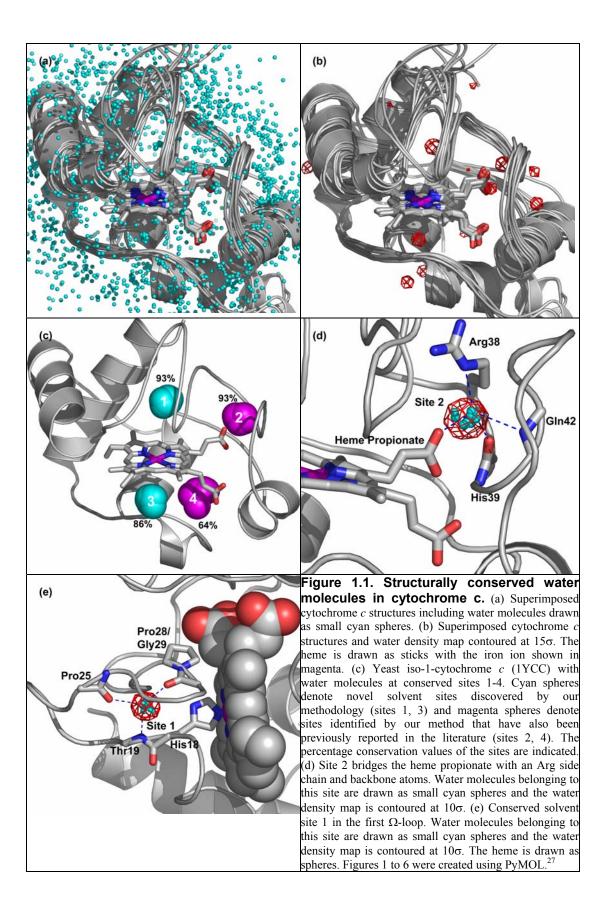
As part of our ongoing interest in probing the roles of solvent in protein structure and function, we have developed a structural bioinformatics methodology for identifying and analyzing conserved solvent sites in protein structures. The method is tested on six protein families for which conserved solvent sites have been previously identified: monodomain cytochrome c, fatty-acid binding protein, lactate/malate dehydrogenase, parvalbumin, phospholipase A_2 and serine proteases. Our method not only identified known conserved solvent sites, but also revealed many novel ones. Analysis of the novel sites generated new hypotheses about protein structure, stability and function. Since our method has the potential to become fully automated, it could eventually be used to perform comprehensive analyses of conserved solvent sites in all protein families represented in the Protein Data Bank (PDB). 26

1.2 Results

1.2.1 Introduction to the Methodology (see also Materials and Methods)

Our method of analyzing conserved solvent is based on identifying equivalent water molecules in a superimposed set of structurally-related proteins. For example, in the cytochrome c data set, the superimposed structures are shown in Figure 1.1a. It is readily apparent that identification of conserved water molecules by manual inspection is an extremely challenging task and that robust computational methods are preferred, particularity when considering protein families with many members. Note that our method is structure-based, allowing for the comparison of proteins that have similar structures despite limited sequence similarities.

Equivalence of water molecules is determined by considering two criteria: (1) the spatial locations of water molecules relative to the protein, and (2) the noncovalent interactions that water molecules form with the protein. Spatial equivalence is assessed by calculating the distribution of water molecules within a non-redundant set



of superimposed protein structures. This distribution is represented as a pseudo-electron density map, which is calculated from the water molecules of the superimposed family of structures. For example, the water distribution map for cytochrome c is shown in Figure 1b. Note that there are several prominent features in the map. These regions of high electron density represent potential conserved solvent sites, and the map provides an intuitive visual representation of the structural context of these sites. One can see, for example, that there are several strong features near the heme group in this case (Figure 1b). Water molecules near these peaks are considered spatially equivalent.

Interaction equivalence is assessed by comparing the noncovalent interactions that each water molecule in the family makes with its respective protein. This criterion is quite general, and could include, for example, hydrogen bonding based on angle and distance cutoffs, and van der Waals interactions. For this initial study, a simple hydrogen-bonding criterion based on a 3.2 Å distance cutoff was used.

Water molecules in different structures of the family are considered structurally equivalent if (1) they are close to same peak in the water distribution map, and (2) they have at least one interaction with the protein in common. This analysis leads to a quantitative measure that expresses the degree of conservation (DOC) of a solvent site, as explained in the Materials and Methods section. The DOC-value is the percentage of structures in the protein family possessing an equivalent water molecule in a given solvent site. For example, the strongest peak in the cytochrome c map had a density value of 33σ (σ = standard deviations above the mean density, see A3.3.2) and the corresponding site had a DOC-value of 93% (Table 1.1, site 1). Thus, 93% (13/14) of the

	Table	1.1. Selec	cted conserv	ed solvent site	es of cytochrome c	i
Site	Novel	DOC	Density	Representat	ive Interactions ^a	Water
	Site?	(%)	Peak (σ)	Backbone	Side Chain	ID^a
1	✓	93	33	N-Thr19		110
				O-Pro25		
				O-Gly29		
2		93	32	O-His39	NE-Arg38	121
				N-Gln42	O1A-Hem104	
3	\checkmark	86	30	O-Lys79		122
				N-Ala81		
4		64	20		ND2-Asn52	166
					OH-Tyr67	
					OG1-Thr78	

^aRepresentative interactions and water ID for structure with PDB code 1YCC. cytochrome *c* structures surveyed possessed an equivalent water molecule in this solvent site. Note that the DOC-value is analogous to the percent conservation of an individual amino acid residue within a sequence alignment.

1.2.2 Cytochrome c

Using a yeast mitochondrial cytochrome c (1YCC) as a query structure, we obtained a non-redundant cytochrome c data set consisting of 14 structures with resolution of at least 2.2 Å (see Materials and Methods). These matching structures were all monodomain cytochrome c proteins, comprising five eukaryotic mitochondrial cytochrome c proteins, seven bacterial cytochrome c_2 proteins, one bacterial cytochrome c_{552} .

The top three conserved solvent sites had DOC-values of 86-93% and peak heights in the water distribution map of $30-33\sigma$ (Table 1.1, sites 1-3). The high DOC-values suggest that these sites are highly conserved within this family. Site 4 has lower, but nonetheless significant, conservation (DOC = 64%). All four listed sites are near the

heme (Figure 1.1c), which suggests possible roles for these water molecules in stabilizing protein structural elements that bind the heme.

The conservation of sites 2 and 4 in the monodomain cytochrome c family has been discussed previously. Thus, our method successfully identified known conserved solvent sites. Site 2 has been described by Benning $et\ al$. as conserved in eukaryotic mitochondrial cytochrome c and in bacterial cytochrome c_2 . This site is interesting because it bridges the heme propionate with the surrounding protein (Figure 1.1d). This interaction likely helps to stabilize the heme and orient it correctly in the active site.

In addition, our method identified two novel sites with DOC-values of 93 % and 86 % (Table 1.1, sites 1 and 3). A water molecule located in site 1 has been discussed for cytochrome c_2 separately for *Rhodopila globiformis*, ³⁰ *Rhodopseudomonas palustris* ³¹ and *Paracoccus denitrificans*. ³² To our knowledge, the wider conservation of this site among monodomain cytochrome c structures has not been previously appreciated. This site is located in the middle of the first Ω -loop in cytochrome c (Figure 1.1e), and the water molecule is buried by the protein backbone. Within members of our data set, site 1 typically forms a bridge between a backbone amide nitrogen and two backbone carbonyls within the middle of this loop (Figure 1.1e).

It is interesting to note that this conserved site exists despite variations of sequence positions, or of spatial positions, of the solvent-coordinating residues. For example, the length of this Ω -loop is variable in our data set (Figure 1.1b). More specifically, given that the amino interaction is with residue number i of the sequence, the

first carbonyl interaction is located at a position within i+3 to i+6, and the second carbonyl interaction is located at a position within i+7 to i+13.

Despite the structural variation of the Ω -loop, the loop does contain a conserved Gly-Pro motif that interacts with the conserved water molecule. The second interacting carbonyl (i.e. at a position within i+7 and i+13) belongs to the Gly residue of the conserved Gly-Pro motif. Therefore, this carbonyl lies in the same plane as the N, C_{α} and C_{β} atoms of the proline. The conserved Gly-Pro structural feature of the Ω -loop probably contributes to the observed high level of conservation of solvent site 1.

1.2.3 Fatty-acid binding proteins

Prendergast's group has extensively studied a conserved, internal solvent site in fatty-acid binding proteins using NMR, molecular dynamics simulations, and analysis of crystal structure data. In our study, this site corresponded to the top peak in the water distribution map (62σ) , and the site's DOC-value was 100% (Table 1.2, Figure 1.2a). Thus, as in the monodomain cytochrome c case, our method successfully identified a known conserved solvent site.

In addition, our method identified two novel sites with DOC-values greater than 80%. Site 3 is near the Prendergast site (Figure 1.2a), and site 2 is near the bound fatty acid.

Table 1.2. Selected conserved solvent sites of fatty-acid binding proteins.

Site	Novel	DOC	Density	Representative Interactions ^a	Water
	Site?	(%)	Peak (σ)	Backbone Side Chain	ID^a
1		100	62	O-Lys65	143
				O-Val68	
				N-Val84	
2	\checkmark	91	29	O-Ala33	135
				O-Thr36	
3	\checkmark	82	35	N-Lys65	212
				O-Val68	

^aRepresentative interactions and water ID for structure with PDB code 1HMT.

Site 2 is particularly interesting because it appears to play a role in fatty-acid binding (Figure 1.2b). It typically donates hydrogen bonds to backbone carbonyl oxygen atoms that are i and i+3 with respect to each other. These two residues lie at the end of the second helix of a pair of helices that have been described as a "lid" for the fatty-acid binding site.³⁴ In three structures, this structurally conserved water accepts a hydrogen bond from a conserved arginine residue (Arg126 in 1HMT) that, in turn, interacts with a negatively charged group of the bound fatty acid (Figure 1.2b).

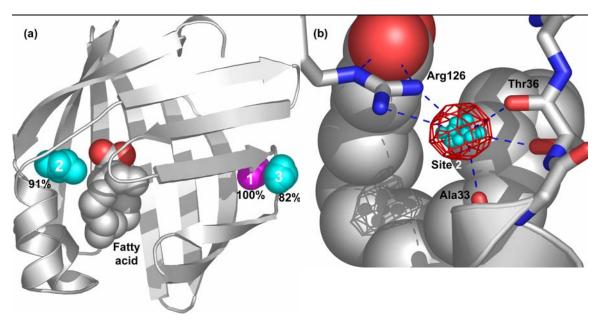


Figure 1.2. Structurally conserved water molecules in fatty-acid binding proteins. (a) Human muscle fatty-acid binding protein (1HMT) with water molecules from the superposition at conserved sites 1-3 (Table 1.2). Cyan spheres denote novel solvent sites discovered by our methodology (sites 2, 3) and magenta spheres denote a site identified by our method that has also been previously reported in the literature (site 1). The percentage conservation values of the sites are indicated. (b) Close-up view of conserved solvent site 2 (Table 1.2). Water molecules belonging to this site are drawn as small cyan spheres and the water density map is contoured at 10σ .

1.2.4 Lactate/malate dehydrogenase

The lactate/malate dehydrogenase family features a structurally conserved water molecule in the dinucleotide-binding site. This site was previously described in the lactate dehydrogenase family^{35,36} and, more generally, in proteins containing the dinucleotide-binding Rossmann fold.³ In our study, this site corresponded to the top peak

in the density map, and the DOC-value was 100% (Figure 1.3a, Table 1.3 site 1). Thus, a water molecule was found in this site in all 14 of the structures in our data set.

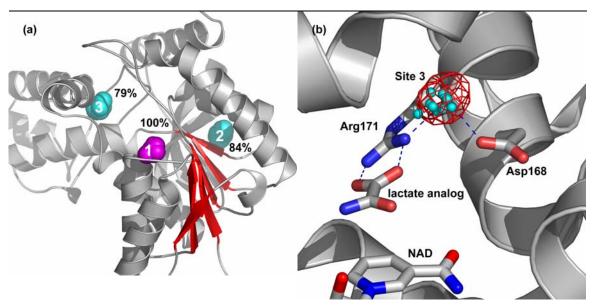


Figure 1.3. Structurally conserved water molecules in lactate/malate dehydrogenases. (a) Lactate dehydrogenase of the malaria-causing *Plasmodium falciparum* (1LDG) with highly conserved water molecules from the superposition. Cyan spheres denote novel solvent sites discovered by our methodology (sites 2, 3) and magenta spheres denote a site identified by our method that has also been previously reported in the literature (site 1). The percentage conservation values of the sites are indicated. (b) Close-up view of conserved solvent site 3, which is in the active site (Table 1.3, site 3). Water molecules belonging to this site are drawn as small cyan spheres and the water density map is contoured at 10σ.

Site 3, one of the interesting novel sites, had a DOC-value of 79%. Water at this site often serves as a salt bridge link, forming hydrogen bonds to both an arginine and an aspartate residue (Figure 1.3b). These residues are located at positions i and i+3 with respect to each other and are 100% conserved by sequence. It is well known that, within this family, the positively charged guanidinium group of this arginine stabilizes the negatively charged carboxylate of the substrate.³⁵ Thus, we see a correlation between amino acid sequence conservation and solvent structural conservation. The water-mediated salt-bridge occurs in 8 of the 14 proteins studied. In three of the remaining proteins, a water molecule near the peak interacts with either the arginine or aspartate, but not both. Using the Electron Density Server.³⁷ we observed that in another structure

Table 1.3. Selected conserved solvent sites of lactate/malate dehydrogenases.

			a o ta to / i i i a i a t	o aony arogon	uooo:	
Site	Novel	DOC	Density	Represent	Water	
	Site?	(%)	Peak (σ)	Backbone	Side Chain	ID^a
1		100	62	N-Gly29	OG1-Thr97	13
				N-Gly32	NO2-NAD401 ^b	
2	\checkmark	86	39	O-Lys157	OG1-Thr273	11
				O-Ile160		
				N-Leu274		
3	\checkmark	79	35	O-Thr232	OD1-Asp168	59
					NH1-Arg171	

^aRepresentative interactions and water ID for structure with PDB code 1LDG.

(1HYH) there was experimental density in both subunits that could be attributed to this conserved water. There was a sulfate ion in 6LDH and a crystal contact in 1LLD that could be attributed to disrupting the normal interactions.

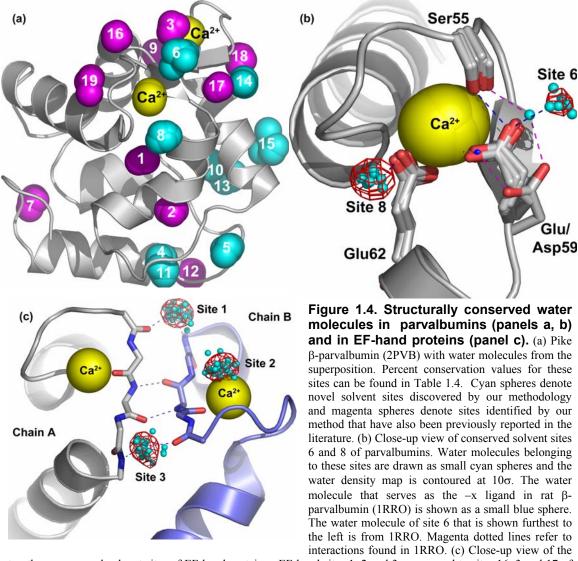
An analysis on the fold level for NAD(P)-binding Rossmann-fold proteins (n=126 structures) was also performed (see Materials and Methods) in order to test our method with a set of structures with low overall sequence identity. The 126-structure data set had mean pairwise sequence identity of only 14 %. Nonetheless, our method clearly showed that the most conserved site on the fold level corresponded to site 1 of the LDH/MDH family (Table 1.3, site 1). This result agrees with our previous survey of water molecules in Rossmann dinucleotide-binding domains, which was performed using laborious manual inspection of superimposed structures.³ This highly conserved solvent site is critical for cofactor recognition because it bridges the dinucleotide pyrophosphate with the Gly-rich loop of the Rossmann fold.³

1.2.5 Parvalbumins

Parvalbumins are soluble calcium-binding proteins containing two Ca²⁺-binding sites: the CD-loop and the EF-loop. Conservation of solvent sites in the parvalbumin family has

^bNO2 is a pyrophosphate oxygen of the nicotinamide half of NAD. It is equivalent to atom name O2P in Schultze and Feigon. ³⁸

been extensively studied,^{25,39-41} and thus represents a good test case for our method. Our calculation revealed many sites with DOC-values > 70% that corresponded to previously identified sites (Figure 1.4a and Table 1.4, sites 1-3, 7, 9, 12, 16-19). Nine novel solvent



top three conserved solvent sites of EF-hand proteins. EF-hand sites 1, 2 and 3 correspond to sites 16, 3 and 17 of the parvalbumin family, respectively (Table 1.4). Water molecules belonging to these sites are drawn as small cyan spheres and the water density map is contoured at 10σ . The protein shown is timothy grass (*Phleum pratense*) pollen allergen Phl p 7 (1K9U). Unlike other EF-hand proteins, the structurally adjacent calcium-binding sites are from different polypeptide chains.

sites were also found (Table 1.4). Sites 4-6 are particularly notable because they have DOC-values of 100%, yet they have not been mentioned, to our knowledge, as being conserved in this family.

Table 1.4. Selected conserved solvent sites of parvalbumins.

	Table	I.T. Delec	teu consei v	eu soiveiit si	tes of parvaibulinis.	
Site	Novel	DOC	Density	Represen	ntative Interactions ^a	Water
	Site?	(%)	Peak (σ)	Backbone	Side Chain	ID^a
1		100	30	O-Ile50		204
				O-Glu62		
2		100	30	O-Lys64		202
				N-Leu67		
				O-Arg75		
3		100	28	C	OD1-Asp94	201
					OD2-Asp94	
					OE1-Glu101	
4	\checkmark	100	27	O-Leu15		211
5	\checkmark	100	24	O-Ala76		284
6	\checkmark	100	15		OE2-Glu59	295
7		86	26	N-Lys7	OD2-Asp10	216
				O-Val33		
8	\checkmark	86	26		OE2-Glu62	212
9		86	25	O-Gly89		203
				O-Glu101		
10	✓	86	25	O-Glu81		246
11	\checkmark	86	24	N-Arg75		230
12		86	23	O-Ala17		218
				N-Ala20		
13	✓	86	20	O-Phe24		261
14	✓.	86	19	O-Gly95		257
15	\checkmark	86	17	O-Ala80		205
16		71	21	O-Gly56		$208^{\rm b}$
				N-Ile99		
17		71	21	N-Glu60		224
10				O-Gly95	0.00	210
18		71	17		OD2asp90	210
19		71	16		OD2asp51	221

^aRepresentative interactions and water ID for structure with PDB code 2PVB.

these water molecules play direct or indirect roles in binding Ca^{2+} . In this family of proteins, the ligands to the calcium ion are labelled with a letter corresponding to each of the three Cartesian coordinate axes and a positive or negative sign to indicate whether the ligand is "above" or "below" a specific plane. Within this coordination sphere, therefore, the -x ligand lies on the x axis and below the yz plane. Hence, there are +x, -x, +y, -y, +z, and -z ligands. In the present study, site 3 is the -x ligand for the EF Ca^{2+} -binding

^bSymmetry-mate of water 208.

site. Two other known conserved water molecules, sites 18 and 19,⁴¹ interact with the +x ligand of the EF- and CD-loops, respectively. Site 8, a novel site with DOC = 86%, hydrogen bonds to the CD –z ligand.

Novel site 6 is particularly interesting because it plays an indirect role in binding Ca²⁺ at the CD-loop (Figure 1.4b). This water molecule hydrogen bonds to the side chain of residue 59, which is Asp in 1RRO or Glu in the remaining structures. One of the carboxylate oxygen atoms of Glu59 is the –x ligand of the Ca²⁺-binding site and the other hydrogen bonds to the hydroxyl of Ser55, which is the +z ligand.⁴¹ In 1RRO, however, the carboxylate oxygen atoms of Asp59 each use a water molecule extension to allow them to fill the same roles as in Glu59. One water serves as the –x ligand to the Ca²⁺ ion,⁴¹ and the site 6 water forms a hydrogen bond with Ser55. These two water molecules are also within hydrogen bonding distance of each other. Thus, we see that despite some variation in the Ca²⁺-binding site, the site-6 water molecule still interacts with the –x ligand.

We also performed an analysis of a nonredundant set of proteins (n=38) representing the EF-hand superfamily, as defined by SCOP.⁴³ The three sites with the highest DOC values (71-76%) were equivalent to sites 3, 16 and 17 of the parvalbumin family. In a family mostly comprised of Ca²⁺ binding proteins, it is not surprising that site 3, the –x ligand of the EF-loop calcium ion, should be conserved. However, sites 16 and 17 are not obvious candidates for very high conservation. As noted by Strynadka and James over fifteen years ago, these solvent sites effectively extend the β-sheet between the calcium-binding loops.⁴¹ They also mentioned that loops lacking calcium tended to form direct hydrogen bonds instead of water-mediated hydrogen bonds at these positions

within the sheet. Their observations were made in a study that included five proteins: carp parvalbumin, turkey troponin C, chicken troponin C, bovine calmodulin and bovine intestinal calcium-binding protein. In our study, all three sites are also seen in frequenin (1G8I),⁴⁴ osteonectin (1SRA),⁴⁵ the calcium-binding pollen allergen Phl p 7 (1K9U),⁴⁶ S100 proteins (1E8A,⁴⁷ 1MHO,⁴⁸ 1IRJ⁴⁹), and sarcoplasmic calcium-binding protein (2SCP).⁵⁰ One or more of the three top sites are also seen in many of the other proteins within the EF-hand superfamily.

Conservation of the β -sheet-extending solvent sites (sites 16 and 17 of parvalbumin) is particularly interesting in Phl p 7 (1K9U). In contrast to the other calcium-binding proteins, the two calcium-binding sites that form the β -sheet are from two different polypeptide chains (Figure 1.4c). Thus, these highly conserved water molecules extend an *inter*molecular β -sheet in Phl p 7, in contrast to an intramolecular β -sheet in the other proteins. Figure 1.4c depicts Phl p 7 with the three most highly conserved water molecules of the EF-hand superfamily. Despite this unique structural difference, this protein contains all three of the most conserved solvent sites of this family. This is an excellent example of structural conservation that would not likely be predicted by amino acid sequence alone.

1.2.6 Phospholipase A₂

In the phospholipase A₂ family, two known conserved solvent sites are part of an important hydrogen-bonding network that typically involves the N-terminal residue (e.g. Ser1), His48, Tyr52, Ser68, and Asp99.^{21,51,52} One is considered to have more of a structural role (Table 1.5, site 3), while the other has an important catalytic role (Table 1.5, site 9). The structural water molecule typically hydrogen bonds to all of these

	Table 1.	5. Selecte	ed conserve	d solvent sites	of phospholipase A	A ₂ .
Site	Novel	DOC	Density	Represent	tative Interactions ^a	Water
	Site?	(%)	Peak (σ)	Backbone	Side Chain	ID^a
1	✓	100	45	O-Cys1044		2005
2	✓	100	43	O-Cys1098		2002
3		100	39	N-Ser1001	OD2-Asp1099	2006
				O-Ser1068	-	
4	✓	92	39	N-Thr1041	OD2-Asp1039	2003
					OG1-Thr1041	
					OG1-Thr1112	
5	✓	92	33	O-Ala1101		2173
6	✓	83	38	N-Cys1084	OE2-Glu1097	2016
7	✓	83	36	O-Leu1106	OH-Tyr1022	2001
					OG1-Thr1041	
8	✓	83	27	O-Lys1049		2083
9		67	26	-	ND1-His48 ^b	69 ^b
					OD1-Asp49 ^b	

^aExcept where noted, representative interactions and water ID for structure with PDB code 1MC2. ^bInteractions and solvent ID from 1G4I, since it more accurately represents the family in this instance.

residues except for His48. His48 interacts with Asp99 and with the catalytic water molecule.

The structural water is conserved in all of the proteins in our data set (DOC-value = 100%) and the catalytic water is conserved in most of the proteins in our data set (DOC

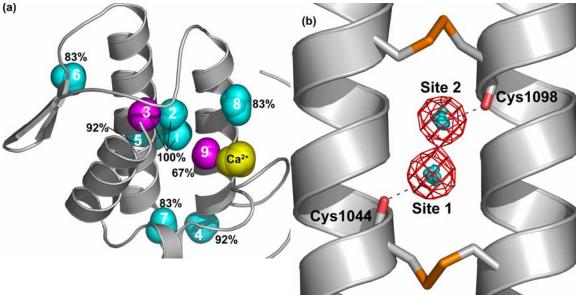


Figure 1.5. Structurally conserved water molecules in the phospholipase A2 family. (a) Phospholipase A_2 from $Agkistrodon\ acutus$ venom (1MC2) with water molecules from the superposition. Cyan spheres denote novel solvent sites discovered by our methodology and magenta spheres denote sites identified by our method that have also been previously reported in the literature. The percentage conservation values of the sites are indicated. (b) Close-up view of sites 1 and 2 (Table V), which bridge backbone carbonyls of disulfide-linked cysteines. Water molecules belonging to these sites are drawn as small cyan spheres and the water density map is contoured at 10σ .

value = 67%), which attests to their importance (Figure 1.5 and Table 1.5, sites 3 and 9). In two cases (1HN4^{53} and 1KVO^{54}), the catalytic water was displaced by an inhibitor.

Interestingly, our method uncovered two highly conserved novel solvent sites (Table 1.5, sites 1 and 2) nestled between two α -helices (Figures 1.5a, 1.5b). These sites had DOC-values of 100%, thus they are at least as well conserved as the previously described structural and catalytic water molecules.

The two helices are linked by two conserved disulfide bonds, which are always separated by two helical turns (Figure 1.5b). The pair of conserved water molecules bridges backbone carbonyls of the two disulfide links. These water molecules most likely fulfill a structural role, and their ubiquity among members of this family invites further study.

1.2.7 Serine Proteases

Several studies have been published on conserved solvent sites in serine proteases. ^{12,23,24,55,56} Our study discovered many conserved solvent sites in this protein, ten of which had DOC values greater than 80% (Table 1.6). All of these had already been described in the literature. Perhaps this should not be surprising, since serine proteases are among the most studied with respect to conserved solvent. Two of these conserved sites (5 and 10) were found near the catalytic triad (Figure 1.6). These two sites represent water molecules that are typically in hydrogen bonding contact with each other. Sometimes they are replaced by three water molecules that perform similar roles. Site 5 bridges the amino nitrogen of either residue 101 or 102 to the N-terminus of a β-sheet (Figure 1.6b). Site 10 bridges the carbonyl oxygen of residue 99 to the hydroxyl of

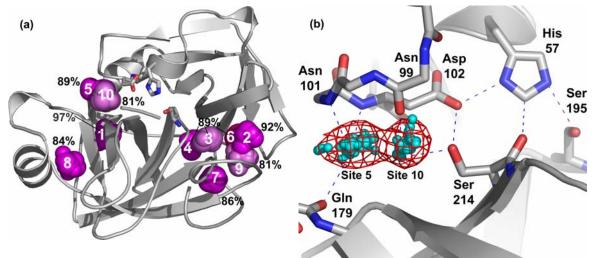


Figure 1.6. Structurally conserved water molecules in serine proteases. (a) *Fusarium oxysporum* trypsin (1FY4) with water molecules from the superposition. Residues of the catalytic triad are depicted as sticks. Magenta spheres denote solvent sites identified by our method that have also been previously reported in the literature. The percentage conservation values of the sites are indicated. (b) Close-up view of sites 5 and 10 (Table 1.6), which are near the catalytic triad (Asp 102, His 57, Ser 195). Water molecules belonging to these sites are drawn as small cyan spheres and the water density map is contoured at 10σ.

Site	Novel	DOC	Density	Represer	ntative Interactions ^a	Water
	Site?	(%)	Peak (σ)	Backbone	Side Chain	ID^a
1		97	40	O-Ile210		1020
				N-Gly232		
2		92	37	O-Ile30		1011
				O-Arg-66 ^b		
				N-Ser70		
3		89	43	N-Trp141		1003
				O-Gly193		
4		89	42	O-Ala139		1002
				O-Asp194		
5		89	36	N-Asn101	OG1-Thr229 ^{c,d}	1005°
				N-Asp102		
				O-Gln179 ^c		
6		89	35	O-Pro28		1024
				O-Ile30		
				N-Gly69		
7		86	42	N-Ile16		1014
				O-Gly140		
				O-Gly142		
8		84	26	O-Val163		1018
				N-Cys182		
9		81	34	O-Glu70 ^b		67 ^b
10		81	33	O-Asn99	OGser214	1008
				O-Glu70 ^b	OGser214	

^aExcept where noted, representative interactions and water ID for structure with PDB code 1FY4. ^bFrom 1HJ8, since it more accurately represents the family in this instance., ^cFound in less than half of the structures, ^dFrom 1GVK, since it more accurately represents the family in this instance. ^cThis site has two waters in some structures.

1.3 Discussion

1.3.1 Advantages and limitations of the method

Structural conservation of solvent sites in six protein families was studied using a method that represents the distribution of water in superimposed structures as a pseudo-electron density map. The method described here has advantages over other methods that have been used to identify conserved solvent sites. For example, manual inspection using a graphics program has been the most commonly used approach. The main advantages of our computational approach are speed and objectivity. The only *a priori* knowledge required is a set of superimposed structures. No previous knowledge of conserved structural elements is required, such as the location of the active site or binding site. Thus, our method provides a powerful discovery tool. Manual analysis tends to focus on water molecules near the active sites or binding sites of proteins. Our method, however, is unbiased. It will discover conserved solvent sites in any part of the structure.

Sanschagrin and Kuhn have described a semi-automated computational method for identifying conserved solvent sites.¹² Using complete cluster linkage analysis, they found conserved water molecules among a set of thrombin structures (minimum pairwise sequence identity > 96%) and among a set of trypsin structures (100% sequence identity). The results of each of these two analyses were compared to find solvent sites conserved between thrombin and trypsin. However, complete linkage cluster analysis was not directly used to compare thrombin and trypsin. Linkage cluster analysis has also been used to study conserved water in structures of *Bacillus stearothermophilus* alanine racemase that were crystalized with different ligands bound.⁵⁷

In contrast to these two studies using cluster linkage analysis, our method has been applied to directly compare much more diverse protein structures (Table 1.7). Since linkage cluster analysis studies have focused on proteins with very high sequence identity, a direct comparison between our method and linkage cluster using diverse data sets is not possible at this time. We did, however, apply our method to the set of serine protease structures used in the Sanschagrin and Kuhn work, and we were able to reproduce their results with excellent quantitative agreement (results not shown).

The current implementation of our method does have a few limitations. First, it is dependent on the superposition method. We used a method that superimposes proteins by their global fit to other proteins. Since global fitting is based on similar folds, it is an inherently low resolution method. To improve results, fitting of domains and smaller substructures could be implemented. Iterative superpositioning could focus on protein regions near water density peaks.

Another limitation of this method is that only water molecules seen in crystal structures are analyzed. Of these, only the most ordered solvent molecules will be consistently seen in multiple structures. In principle, there could potentially be dynamic water molecules that are also conserved but that are not observed in crystal structures. To identify such mobile, yet conserved, solvent molecules will require additional techniques such as molecular dynamics simulation, which has been used previously to identify preferred hydration sites around proteins. ^{58,59}

1.3.2 Other applications

This paper focused on conserved solvent in protein families, but the methods employed could be applied to other problems involving protein-bound water. For example,

conserved solvent sites could be analyzed within a single structure that has a repeating structural unit. In this context, our method has been used recently to show that a particular β -propeller protein⁶⁰ has multiple solvent sites that are structurally conserved among all six individual blades (L.J. Beamer, X. Li, C.A. Bottoms, and M. Hannink unpublished results).

Knowledge of conserved solvent could also be used to selectively model highly conserved water molecules in low/moderate resolution crystal structures. Difference electron density maps for low/moderate resolution structures will likely exhibit features corresponding to highly conserved solvent sites, although most crystallographers would be reluctant to model any solvent. For example, using the Electron Density Server³⁷ we observed an electron density peak in a 3.0 Å structure of human class IV alcohol dehydrogenase (1AGN)⁶¹ that corresponds to the highly conserved water molecule of the Rossmann-fold dinucleotide-binding domain (peak 1, Table 1.3). This feature is especially apparent in the D chain of 1AGN. Thus, a conserved water molecule could probably be built in this low-resolution structure, even if no other water molecules were included. Doing so in this case would have been substantiated by a 2.5Å resolution structure (1D1S⁶²) of the same protein deposited later in the PDB, which contained the structurally conserved water molecule modeled in all four chains in the asymmetric unit.

Protein structure modeling is another area of potential application. Due to advances in whole genome sequencing, there are currently many more protein sequences known than three-dimensional protein structures, making protein structure modelling ever more important. 63,64 Homology modeling programs often treat solvent as a continuum fluid because of the computational and theoretical challenges associated with modeling

explicit water molecules. Yet, bound water molecules are integral components of protein folds, and thus there are clear benefits to including water in protein models. For example, addition of conserved water to a homology model of rat submaxillary kallikrein greatly improved the Ramachandran statistics and led to a more accurate model.⁵⁶ We suggest that knowledge of highly conserved water molecules and the interactions that they form with the protein could provide a basis for selective incorporation of water into homology models. This application will be explored in the future.

1.4 Conclusion

For each protein family studied, our method successfully identified previously known conserved solvent sites, which validated our approach. Moreover, our method discovered several novel conserved solvent sites in protein families that have been intensely studied for decades. These discoveries suggested new structure/function relationships. For example, site 1 of cytochrome c probably serves a structural role within an Ω -loop that coordinates the iron of the heme group. Site 3 of fatty-acid binding proteins apparently assists the establishment of protein-fatty-acid interactions. Site 3 of the LDH/MDH family helps stabilize a conserved side chain that binds the substrate. Sites 6 and 8 of parvalbumins provide supplementary interactions that may help stabilize the calcium ion of the CD site. Lastly, sites 1 and 2 of phospholipase A_2 provide a compelling picture of structural solvent integrated into a protein structure.

All of the families studied had conserved solvent sites with degree of conservation values greater than 90 %. This result is significant because it suggests the hypothesis that all protein families have highly conserved solvent sites. Moreover, we assert that these conserved water molecules are integral to the protein structure because they provide

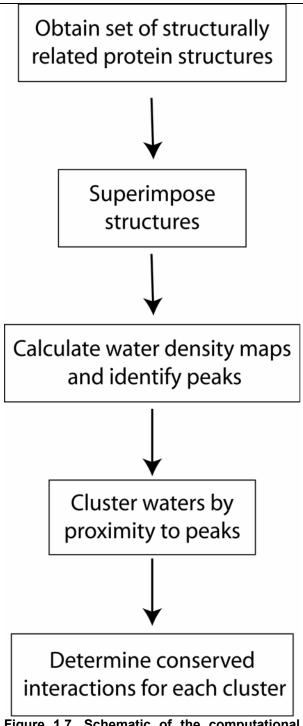


Figure 1.7. Schematic of the computational algorithm used in this study for discovery of structurally conserved water molecules.

noncovalent interactions that help stabilize specific regions of the protein fold. Thus, we suggest that highly conserved solvent sites should be considered as defining features of protein families, in addition to the better known secondary and tertiary structural features of the polypeptide chain. We plan to test and elaborate these ideas in the future by performing a PDB-wide analysis of protein-bound water using the approach described here.

1.5 Materials and Methods 1.5.1 Description of Method

Our strategy involves a pipeline of five calculations, as shown in Figure 1.7. First, a query protein structure is input to the Secondary Structure Matching (SSM)⁶⁵ service in order to retrieve a set of protein structures related by a common three-dimensional architecture. The default parameters of

SSM were used for this study. A non-redundant subset of the structures returned by SSM is identified by comparison to the PDB_SELECT list, 66 and structures with a high

resolution diffraction limit of 2.2 Å or better were retained. Coordinate files are retrieved from the Protein Quaternary Structures (PQS) database. These files contain the full quaternary structure and all crystallographically related water molecules near the protein. The SSM service (also called MSDfold) and the PQS database can be found at the European Bioinformatics Institute's Macromolecular Structure Database web-site (http://www.ebi.ac.uk/msd/).

The non-redundant protein structures, including water molecules, are next superimposed using the transformation matrices obtained from SSM. An electron density map representing the distribution of water molecules in the data set is calculated using the fast Fourier transform algorithms in CNS⁶⁷ or the CCP4 suite. ⁶⁸ For this calculation, all atoms except water molecules are removed, and the B-factors of all water molecules are set to 20 Å². Setting all of the B-factors to the same value avoids weighting effects due to variations in B-factors from structure to structure. Water molecules extremely distant from the surface of the reference structure were also excluded. The number of water molecules used to calculate each density map ranged from 1208 for parvalbumins to 38845 for the Rossmann fold data set. Peaks for the resulting electron density map are found using the peak picking modules of CNS or the CCP4 suite. ⁶⁸ Each peak represents a potential conserved solvent site of the protein family.

The water molecules in the data set are next organized into clusters based on their proximity to the peaks of the map using a 2.0 Å cutoff. Finally, the noncovalent interactions formed by each water molecule in its respective structure are tabulated. For this study, two atoms were defined as interacting with each other if they were separated by no more than 3.2 Å. This criterion focuses on hydrogen bonding, but it could easily be

modified to include van der Waals interactions, or it could be made more restrictive by adding a hydrogen bond angle cutoff.

Water molecules in different structures are considered to be structurally conserved if (1) they belong to the same peak cluster, and (2) they have at least one equivalent interaction with the protein in common. This approach allows one to quantitatively express the degree of conservation (DOC) of a solvent site. We define DOC as the percentage of structures within a data set that contain structurally equivalent water molecules within a given cluster. This value is analogous to "percent conservation" of an amino acid residue at a specific position within a sequence alignment.

Though many conserved solvent sites exist, we have limited ourselves to listing only those that have the highest conservation (e.g. cytochrome c sites 1-3, Table 1.1) or, in several cases, those that have interesting features or that have had considerable attention in the literature (e.g. cytochrome c site 4, Table 1.1).

Programs used for molecular visualization during the course of this project include O,⁶⁹ Protein Explorer,⁷⁰ PyMOL,²⁷ and Coot.⁷¹

1.5.2 Data sets used in this study

The method was tested on six protein families for which conserved solvent sites have been previously identified: cytochrome c, fatty-acid binding protein, lactate/malate dehydrogenase, parvalbumin, phospholipase A_2 and serine proteases. For each data set containing n structures, n(n-1)/2 pairwise sequence identities were obtained using SSM.⁶⁵ In the case of serine proteases, ten structures were removed from the data set because they contained greater than 90% sequence identity. The resulting sequence comparison statistics for each of these data sets is given in Table 1.7.

The representative structure of the cytochrome c family that was input to SSM was 1YCC⁷², and the resulting non-redundant data set consisted of 14 structures: 1CCR, ⁷³ 1CO6,²⁹ 1COT,³² a revised 1CXC structure,⁷⁴ 1HRO,³⁰ 1I8O,³¹ 1JDL,⁷⁵ 1QL3,⁷⁶ 1QN2,⁷⁷ 1WEJ,⁷⁸ 1YCC,⁷² 1YTC,⁷⁹ 3C2C,⁸⁰ 5CYT.⁸¹ For the fatty-acid binding protein family, the representative structure was 1HMT⁸² and the non-redundant data set included 11 structures: 1B56,83 1CBS,84 1CRB,85 1FDQ,86 1FTP,87 1HMT,82 1KQW,88 1LID,89 1LPJ, 90 1MDC, 91 1OPB. 92 For lactate/malate dehydrogenases, the representative structure was 1LDG⁹³ and the resulting data set consisted of 14 structures: 1A5Z, 81 1BDM, 94 1GUY,⁹⁵ 1GUZ,⁹⁵ 1HYE,⁹⁶ 1HYH,³⁶ 1I0Z,⁹⁷ 1LDG,⁹³ 1LLD,⁹⁸ 1MLD,⁹⁹ 1O6Z,¹⁰⁰ 2CMD, 101 6LDH, 102 9LDT. 103 The representative of the parvalbumin family was 2PVB 39 and the data set consisted of 7 structures: 1A75, 104 1BU3, 105 1PVA, 106 1RRO, 107 2PVB, 39 4CPV, 108 5PAL. 40 The phospholipase A2 data set included 12 structures, resulting from using 1MC2¹⁰⁹ as the representative structure: 1FV0, 10 1G4I, 11 1HN4, 5 1JIA, 112 1JLT, 113 1KVO, 54 1LE6, 114 1M8R, 115 1MC2, 109 1QLL, 116 1VAP, 117 1VIP. 118 The serine protease data set included 37 structures, with 1FY4¹¹⁹ as the reference: 1A0J, ¹²⁰ 1A7S, ¹²¹ 1BIO, 122 1CGH, 123 1CQQ, 124 1DDJ, 125 1EAX, 126 1ELT, 127 1EQ9, 128 1F7Z, 129 1FI8, 130

Family	n	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Stdev	$\binom{n}{2}$
Cytochrome c	14	44	42	31	84	9	91
Fatty-acid binding protein	11	39	38	15	74	13	55
Lactate/malate dehydrogenase	14	30	28	12	77	11	91
Rossmann-fold dinucleotide-binding	126	14	13	1	88	6	7875
Parvalbumins	7	59	55	44	89	14	2
EF-hand Superfamily	38	20	18	1	86	11	703
Phospholipase A ₂	12	49	48	33	82	11	66
Serine Proteases	37	35	35	9	87	11	660

1FIW,¹³¹ 1FUJ,¹³² 1FXY,¹³³ 1FY4,¹¹⁹ 1G2L,¹³⁴ 1GJ7,¹³⁵ 1GL1,¹³⁶ 1GVK,¹³⁷ 1H4W,¹³⁸ 1H8D,¹³⁹ 1HJ8,¹⁴⁰ 1HJ9,¹⁴⁰ 1IAU,¹⁴¹ 1KLI,¹⁴² 1LO6,¹⁴³ 1MBM,¹⁴⁴ 1MCT,¹⁴⁵ 1NN6,¹⁴⁶ 1NPM,¹⁴⁷ 1PPF,¹⁴⁸ 1SGT,¹⁴⁸ 1TON,¹⁴⁹ 1TRN,¹⁵⁰ 1UCY,¹⁵¹ 2HLC,¹⁵² 3RP2.¹⁵³

Analysis of conserved solvent was also performed for Rossmann-fold proteins and for the EF-hand superfamily. In this case, the PDB Beta web site (http://pdbbeta.rcsb.org/pdb)²⁶ was used to identify structurally similar proteins. Using selection features of this new site, PDB files were chosen such that they (1) were within the same SCOP classification, (2) were crystal structures with 2.2 Å or better resolution, and (3) were not more than 90% identical in sequence (using the CD-HIT algorithm).¹⁵⁴

The EF-hand data set was based on the SCOP superfamily classification "EF-hand" (SCOP code: a.39.1). The EF-hand superfamily included 38 structures: 1ALV, ¹⁵⁵ 1AUI, ¹⁵⁶ 1BU3, ¹⁰⁵ 1CDP, ¹⁵⁷ 1DTL, ¹⁵⁸ 1E8A, ⁴⁷ 1EG3, ¹⁵⁹ 1EXR, ¹⁶⁰ 1G4Y, ¹⁶¹ 1G8I, ⁴⁴ 1GGZ, ¹⁶² 1IG5, ¹⁶³ 1IRJ, ⁴⁹ 1J55, ¹⁶⁴ 1JF0, ¹⁶⁵ 1K8U, ¹⁶⁶ 1K94, ¹⁶⁷ 1K9U, ⁴⁶ 1KSO, ¹⁶⁸ 1M45, ¹⁶⁹ 1MHO, ⁴⁸ 1MR8, ¹⁷⁰ 1NCX, ¹⁷¹ 1OE9, ¹⁷² 1OMR, ¹⁷³ 1PSR, ¹⁷⁴ 1PVA, ¹⁰⁶ 1QV1, ¹⁷⁵ 1RRO, ¹⁰⁷ 1RWY, ²⁵ 1S6C, ¹⁷⁶ 1SRA, ⁴⁵ 1UHN, ¹⁷⁷ 1WDC, ¹⁷⁸ 2CBL, ¹⁷⁹ 2PVB, ³⁹ 2SCP, ⁵⁰ 5PAL. ⁴⁰

The Rossmann-fold protein data set was based on the SCOP fold classification "NAD(P)-binding Rossmann-fold domains" (SCOP code: c.2). The nonredundant data set (n=126) of structures within the SCOP fold classification "NAD(P)-binding Rossmann-fold domains" included the following: 1A4I, ¹⁸⁰ 1A5Z, ¹⁸¹ 1B16, ¹⁸² 1B7G, ¹⁸³ 1B8P, ¹⁸⁴ 1BDB, ¹⁸⁵ 1BDM, ⁹⁴ 1BG6, ¹⁸⁶ 1BGV, ¹⁸⁷ 1BXK, ¹⁸⁸ 1CDO, ¹⁸⁹ 1CF2, ¹⁹⁰ 1CYD, ¹⁹¹ 1D7O, ¹⁹² 1DLJ, ¹⁹³ 1DPG, ¹⁹⁴ 1DSS, ¹⁹⁵ 1DXY, ³⁵ 1E3I, ¹⁹⁶ 1E5Q, ¹⁹⁷ 1E6U, ¹⁹⁸ 1E6W, ¹⁹⁹ 1E7W, ²⁰⁰ 1EK6, ²⁰¹ 1EQ2, ²⁰² 1EUD, ²⁰³ 1EVY, ²⁰⁴ 1F06, ²⁰⁵ 1F0Y, ²⁰⁶ 1FJH, ²⁰⁷ 1FMC, ²⁰⁸

1G00, 209 1GAD, 210 1GD1, 211 1GEE, 212 1GEG, 213 1GPJ, 214 1GR0, 215 1GU7, 216 1GUZ, 95 1GY8, 217 1H2B, 218 1H5Q, 219 1H6D, 220 1HDO, 221 1HEU, 222 1HT0, 223 1HXH, 224 1HYE, 96 1I0Z, 97 1I24, 225 1I36, 226 1IUK, 227 1IY8, 228 1J3V, 229 1J4A, 230 1J5P, 231 1JA9, 232 1JAY, 233 1JQB, 234 1JTV, 235 1JVB, 236 1K3T, 237 1K6X, 238 1KEW, 239 1KOL, 240 1KS9, 241 1L7D, 242 1LC0, 243 1LDM, 102 1LI4, 244 1LJ8, 245 1LLD, 98 1LUA, 246 1M6H, 247 1MB4, 248 1MG5, 249 1MLD, 99 1MV8, 250 1MX3, 251 1N2S, 252 1N7H, 253 1NP3, 254 1NPY, 255 1NVM, 256 1NWH, 257 1NXQ, 258 1NYT, 259 1O0S, 260 1O6Z, 100 1OAA, 261 1OBB, 262 1OBF, 263 1OC2, 264 1O17, 265 1ORR, 266 1P0F, 267 1P1J, 268 1P77, 269 1PJ3, 270 1PJC, 271 1PL8, 272 1PR9, 273 1PX0, 274 1PZG, 275 1Q7B, 276 1QMG, 277 1QSG, 278 1R6D, 279 1RKX, 280 1RPN, 281 1T2A, 282 1T2D, 283 1UAY, 284 1UDC, 285 1UR5, 286 1UUF, 287 1V12, 288 1VJ0, 289 1VJ1, 290 1VJP, 291 2AE2, 292 2CMD, 101 2NAC, 293 2PGD, 294 9LDT, 103

Chapter 1 Acknowledgments

We thank Dr. Herbert Axelrod for providing revised coordinates of 1CXC, and Drs. Eugene Krissinel and Kim Henrick for help with SSM and MSD.

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Chapter 2

Analysis of Structure and Solvent of Rat α -Parvalbumin at 1.05 Å Resolution

(adapted from Bottoms CA, Schuermann JP, Agah S, Henzl MT, Tanner JJ. Protein Sci 2004;13:1724-1734.)

Chapter 2 Abstract

The crystal structure of rat alpha-parvalbumin has been determined at 1.05 Å resolution, using synchrotron data collected at Advanced Photon Source beamline 19-ID. After refinement with SHELX, employing anisotropic displacement parameters and riding hydrogen atoms, R = 0.132 and Rfree = 0.162. The average coordinate estimated standard deviations are 0.021 Å and 0.038 Å for backbone atoms and side-chain atoms, respectively. Besides providing a more precise view of the alpha isoform than previously available, these data permit comparison with the 0.91 Å structure determined for pike beta-parvalbumin. Visualization of the anisotropic displacement parameters as thermal ellipsoids yields insight into the atomic motion within the Ca²⁺-binding sites. The asymmetric unit includes three parvalbumin molecules. Interestingly, the EF site in one displays uncharacteristic flexibility. The ellipsoids for Asp-92 are particularly large and nonspherical, and the shape of the Ca²⁺ ellipsoid implies significant vibrational motion perpendicular to the plane defined by the four y and z ligands. The relative dearth of crystal-packing interactions in this site suggests that the heightened flexibility may be the result of diminished intermolecular contacts. The implication is that, by impeding conformational mobility, crystal-packing forces may cause serious overestimation of EFhand rigidity. The high quality of the data permitted eleven residues to be modeled in alternative side-chain conformations, including the two core residues, Ile-97 and Leu-105. The discrete disorder observed for Ile-97 may have functional ramifications, providing a mechanism for communicating binding status between the CD and EF binding loops and between the parvalbumin metal ion-binding domain and the N-terminal AB region.

Keywords: parvalbumin, EF-hand, Ca²⁺-binding proteins, atomic resolution crystallography

Abbreviations: PV, parvalbumin; RMSD, root mean square difference; e.s.d., estimated standard deviation; PDB, Protein Data Bank; ADP, anisotropic displacement parameter.

2.1 Introduction

EF-hand proteins are essential components of the eukaryotic Ca^{2+} signaling machinery.¹ Certain members of this large protein family function as Ca^{2+} -dependent signal transducers, calmodulin and troponin C being the archetypal examples. Others function as soluble Ca^{2+} buffers, shaping the size and duration of the Ca^{2+} signal. The small (M_r 12,000), vertebrate-specific proteins called parvalbumins (PVs) exemplify the latter. These proteins occupy a prominent place in EF-hand protein lore – the first family members detected, purified to homogeneity, sequenced, and crystallized.² Importantly, the X-ray structure of carp parvalbumin, reported by Kretsinger *et al.*³ established the EF-hand structural paradigm.

Kretsinger observed that the parvalbumin molecule consists of three homologous 30-residue segments – each consisting of a central loop flanked by short, amphipathic helices. These were termed the AB, CD, and EF domains, in reference to the flanking helical elements. Only the latter two display Ca^{2+} -binding activity; it is thought that a two-residue deletion abolished the metal ion-binding capacity of the AB domain. Within the CD and EF binding loops, the six ligands to the bound Ca^{2+} are located at the approximate vertices of an octahedron and are indexed by Cartesian axes. Side-chain oxygen atoms furnish the +x, +y, +z, and -z ligands. A main-chain carbonyl provides the invariant -y ligand. The -x position is occupied by a glutamyl side-chain in the CD site and by a water molecule in the EF site. Ligation by the nearly invariant glutamyl carboxylate at -z is bidentate, so that the Ca^{2+} coordination geometry is actually pentagonal bipyramidal. Kretsinger also made the paradigmatic observation that the CD and EF sites are related by a two-fold symmetry axis and are physically joined by a short

segment of anti-parallel β -sheet structure. With very few exceptions, the 30-residue EF-hand sub-structures occur in pairs, forming a so-called EF-domain. The parvalbumin tertiary structure, then, includes two structural domains – the metal ion-binding domain, formed by the paired CD and EF sites, and the N-terminal AB domain. The AB domain packs tightly against the hydrophobic aspect of the CD-EF domain, preventing calmodulin-like interactions with target proteins.

In the three decades since Kretsinger and Nockolds published the structure of carp parvalbumin, over 20 additional parvalbumin structures have been deposited in the PDB. Despite our familiarity with the parvalbumin molecule, however, our understanding of parvalbumin structure-function relationships remains embryonic. For example, the rat α - and β -parvalbumin isoforms display 49% sequence identity, ^{4,5} and the overall RMSD for their superimposed CA backbones is just 0.8-0.9 Å (based on 88 equivalent residues). Nevertheless, these two proteins exhibit markedly different divalent ion-binding properties ^{6,7}. It is also well known that typical parvalbumin CD and EF sites, including those in rat α , behave identically in titrations with Ca²⁺ or Mg²⁺. However, just one of the sites in α is capable of binding Na^{+,8} evidence that this apparent functional equality is the result of cooperativity and not a reflection of any intrinsic equivalence.

Insight into these, and other, issues of parvalbumin behavior will require additional high-precision physical and structural measurements. Toward that goal, Declercq *et al.* recently reported a 0.91 Å structure for the pike 4.10 β isoform. The superior resolution of that structure enabled the investigators to discern multiple side-chain conformations for several internal residues, indicative of slow structural rearrangement of the hydrophobic core. They suggested that the internal mobility of the protein core is linked

to the dynamics of the entire protein molecule and that the millisecond conformational dynamics of the core could influence the kinetics of Ca^{2+} and Mg^{2+} association/dissociation.

We herein describe a 1.05 Å structure of rat α -parvalbumin. The substantially higher resolution permits significant refinement of the 2.0 Å structure presently in the PDB. 10 Thus, the uncertainties in Ca²⁺-ligand distances and ligand-Ca²⁺-ligand bond angles are considerably smaller. Analysis of solvent at atomic resolution reveals eleven water molecules common to α -PV and β -PV structures. Moreover, the quality of the data allows refinement of the anisotropic displacement parameters (ADP), and visualization of the ADPs as thermal ellipsoids facilitates an evaluation of the atomic motions in the Ca²⁺-binding sites. Finally, as observed for the pike 4.10 β isoform, alternative side-chain conformations are also evident for several internal residues in the high-resolution structure of the rat α isoform.

2.2 Results and Discussion

2.2.1 Quality of the structure and overall fold

The crystallographic asymmetric unit contains three α-PV molecules, labeled A, B, and C. With few exceptions, the protein electron density was unambiguous throughout. The entire backbone could be modeled with full occupancies in all three molecules, except for the terminal residue Ser-C109. Several surface side chains could not be modeled completely due to weak density (Lys-A44, Lys-A52, Lys-A80, Lys-B13, Lys-C36, Lys-C37, Glu-C108, and Ser-C109) and were therefore truncated. We note that

Table 2.1. Data collection and refinement statistics

Statistics					
Wavelength (Å)	0.946				
Space group $P2_12_12_1$					
Unit cell dimensions (Å) $a = 33.8, b = 54.7, c = 153.6$					
No. of protein molecules per asymmetric unit 3					
Diffraction resolution (Å)	50-1.05 (1.07-1.05) ^a				
No. of observations	937, 912				
No. of unique reflections	132, 869				
Redundancy	7.1 (3.9) ^a				
Completeness (%)	99.2 (97.5) ^a				
Mean I/σ_I	36.2 (4.6) ^a				
R_{merge}	0.06 (0.319) ^a				
No. of protein atoms	2515				
No. of water molecules	373				
No. of calcium ions	6				
No. of sulfate ions	4				
No. of ammonium ions	1				
No. of PEG molecules	1				
R_{cryst}	0.1325				
R_{free}^{b} 0.162					
RMSD from restraint target values					
Bond lengths (Å)	0.015				
Angle distances (Å)	0.029				
Distances from restraint planes	(Å) 0.028				
Zero chiral volumes (ų)	0.079				
Non-zero chiral volumes (Å ³)	0.089				
Antibumping (Å)	0.076				
Rigid-bond ADP components	$(Å^2)$ 0.005				
Similar ADP components (Å ²)	0.034				
Approximate isotropic ADPs ($Å^2$) 0.064				
Ramachandran plot ^c					
Favored (%)	95.6%				
Allowed (%)	4.1%				
Generous (%)	0.3%				
Disallowed (%)	0.0%				
Average isotropic B-factors (Å ²)					
Protein 11					
Solvent					

^a Values for the outer resolution shell of data are given in parenthesis.

Lys-13, Lys-44, and Lys-52 are truncated in the 1.54 Å shark α -PV structure (PDB code 5PAL¹¹).

As expected, the protein molecules

display the characteristic parvalbumin fold, which consists of six α -helices (labeled A-F) connected by loops (Figure 2.1). ^{1,3} The helices associate in pairs to form three domains labeled AB, CD, and EF. Calcium ions are bound in the helix-loop-helix, or EF-hand, substructures of the CD-EF domain. The two Ca²⁺-binding sites are joined by a short segment of anti-parallel β -sheet structure formed by Phe-57 and Ile-58 from the CD loop and Lys-96 and Ile-97 from the EF loop.

Several statistical indicators attest to the quality of the structure. For example, 96% percent of the non-glycine residues occupy the favored region of the Ramachandran plot; and there are no residues in the disallowed regions (Table 2.1). Most notably, the estimated standard

^b 5% random test set (6703 reflections).

^c Calculated using PROCHECK ¹³).

deviations (e.s.d.s) of atomic coordinates determined from blocked matrix refinement in SHELX are indicative of a well-refined high resolution structure (Figure 2.2). The average coordinate e.s.d. is 0.021 Å for backbone atoms, and 0.038 Å for side-chain atoms.

The e.s.d. values are strongly correlated with the density of crystal contacts. Whereas regions of low e.s.d.

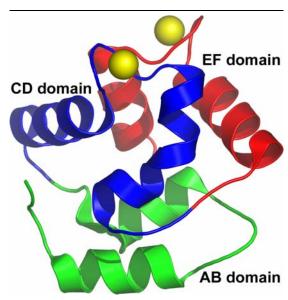


Figure 2.1. Ribbon drawing of one of the three protein molecules in the asymmetric unit. The bound Ca ions are indicated by spheres. Figures 2.1, 2.3, and 2.5 created using PyMol¹²).

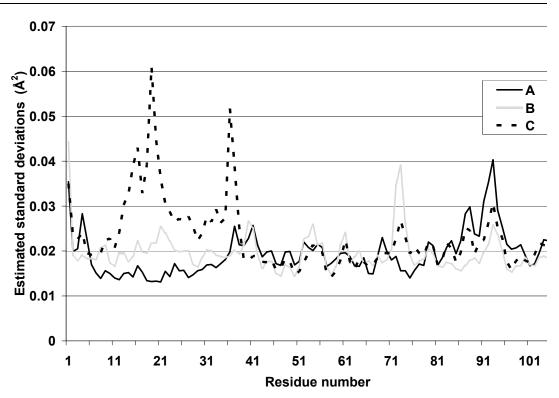


Figure 2.2. Estimated standard deviations (e.s.d.s) of coordinates for backbone atoms. The e.s.d.s were obtained from blocked matrix refinement performed in SHELX.

show numerous contacts, regions of high e.s.d. display a relative dearth of contacts. For example, consider the e.s.d.s for residues 13-37, which are much higher in the C chain than in the A and B chains (Figure 2.2). Residues C13-C37 form only 12 crystal contacts, while A13-A37 and B13-B37 make 40 and 34 crystal contacts, respectively. Likewise, residues B73-B75, which have relatively high e.s.d.s, form only a single crystal contact, while A73-A75 and C73-C75 form 9 and 4 crystal contacts, respectively. Finally, residues 87-95, which include a portion of the EF site, display higher e.s.d.s in the A chain (only 3 crystal contacts) than in the B (11 crystal contacts) and C chains (9 crystal contacts).

The protein backbone conformation is very similar to that of the 2.0 Å room temperature structure (PDB code $1RTP^{10}$). For example, the root mean square difference (RMSD) between the chain A backbones of the 1.05 Å and 2.0 Å structures is only 0.34 Å (following superposition of the A chain backbone atoms). The corresponding values for the B and C chains are 0.29 Å and 0.41 Å, respectively. The backbone differences between the 1.05 Å and 2.0 Å structures within the protein core are even smaller, with RMSD values of 0.27 Å, 0.22 Å, and 0.24 Å for chains A, B, and C. The RMSDs (C_{α}) between our structures and the 1.54 Å shark α -PV structure¹¹ are 0.7-0.8 Å; the RMSDs with the 0.91 Å pike β -PV structure (PDB code 2PVB⁹) are 0.8-0.9 Å.

The RMSDs between pairs of protein molecules in the asymmetric unit of the 1.05 Å structure are 0.6-0.7 Å, approximately two times greater than those between corresponding molecules in the 2.0 Å and 1.05 Å structures (0.3-0.4 Å). The relatively large RMSDs within the asymmetric unit are believed to reflect conformational differences resulting from disparate crystal packing environments. Indeed, this crystal

form – characterized by a relatively low solvent content – contains an unusually large number of intermolecular contacts. Chains A, B, and C form 116, 119, and 118 protein-protein crystal contacts, respectively. Moreover, 45% of the non-core residues participate in at least one crystal contact. In other words, roughly half of the solvent-exposed residues engage in protein-protein crystal packing interactions.

Cryogenic treatment has evidently provoked a contraction of the unit cell (see Materials and Methods). This alteration produces an interesting difference between the 1.05 Å and 2.0 Å structures. If the asymmetric units in the two are superimposed so as to minimize the deviations in the B and C chains, the resulting RMSDs for the A, B, and C chains are 1.0 Å, 0.33 Å, and 0.43 Å. The uniquely high RMSD value for the A chain indicates a relative rigid-body movement of the A chain. This movement is significant because it breaks a crystal contact that links the EF Ca²⁺-binding site of chain A and the backbone of chain B in the room temperature structure (discussed below).

2.2.2 Solvent structure: H₂O, NH₄⁺, SO₄²⁻, and PEG

The refined 1.05 Å structure includes 373 water molecules (362 at full occupancy and 11 at half occupancy). The isotropic B-factors for these water molecules are in the range 6-54 Å², with an average of 21 Å². For comparison, the 2.0 Å structure has 110 water molecules. Thus, as expected, the increased resolution affords a more detailed and complete view of protein solvation. Nine of the peaks modeled as water in the 2.0Å structure correspond to non-aqueous solvent molecules or side chains in the 1.05Å structure. The 1.05 Å and 2.0 Å structures have 92 water molecules in common. The average B-factor of these common water molecules in the 1.05 Å structure is 14 Å², which is lower than average B-factor of 23 Å² for the remaining water molecules in the

1.05 Å structure. The water molecules common to the two structures, then, are generally the more ordered ones, so that the increased resolution appears to provide a better picture of the less well-ordered protein-associated solvent.

Of the 373 water molecules in the asymmetric unit, 292 form at least one hydrogen bond to protein. Forty-seven water molecules form bridging hydrogen bonds between two proteins, thus directly mediating crystal packing. The low solvent content of this crystal form (38%) prompted interest in the relative influence of crystal packing on solvent structure. The crystalline environments of the three polypeptides in the unit cell differ substantially. Thus, if crystal packing considerations strongly impact solvent structure, one would anticipate a relatively small number of structurally conserved water molecules among the three chains. In fact, superposition of the A, B, and C chains with their hydration shells reveals a common set of just 29 water molecules (1.5 Å cutoff, at least one interaction in common). This finding implicates crystal packing as a major determinant of solvent structure.

A comparison of the solvent in this structure with that of the atomic resolution β -PV structure was undertaken to identify solvent sites conserved in both lineages. For this analysis, all three α -PV chains and the β -PV structure were superimposed onto a common reference structure. Conserved water molecules were strictly defined as those that (1) occupied the same location in at least one of our proteins and in the β -PV structure, and (2) had at least two common hydrogen bonding partners. The analysis revealed 11 structurally conserved water molecules and 25 conserved protein-water hydrogen bonds (Table 2.2). For reference, Table 2.2 also lists the equivalent water

molecules in two other high resolution PV structures, 1.3 Å rat β -PV (PDB code 1RRO¹⁴) and 1.54 Å shark α -PV¹¹.

	Table 2.2. Water molecules common to four high resolution parvalbumin crystal structures									
				Water-ID	Hydrogen Bond Partners in 1RWY					
	1RWY ^a			2PVB ^b	1RRO ^c	5PAL ^d				
site	A	В	C	2PVB IRRO		SPAL				
1	252	246	228	201	111	246	OD1-Asp-94	OD2-Asp-94	OE1-Glu-101	
2	34	105	230	204	120	203	O-Leu-50	O-Glu-62		
3	57		9	203	194	236	O-Gly-89	O-Glu-101		
4	47	43	10	224		264	N-Glu-60	O-Gly-95		
5		32	33	208e	131	272	O-Gly-56	N-Val-99		
6	22	14	70	216	117	202	N-Ser-7	O-Val-33	OD2-Asp-10	
7	35	41	18	202	115	204	O-Gly-64	N-Leu-67	O-Arg-75	
8	221		196	319			O-Ser-72	O-Ala-74		
9		72		218	123	215	O-Ala-17	N-Ala-20		
10	238	51		286			O-Ile-49	NZ-Lys-54		
11	169	64	92	235			N-Ser-39	OD2-Asp-42		

^a1.05 Å rat α-PV (PDB code 1RWY, this work)

Most of the conserved hydrogen bonds involve main chain atoms and the carbonyl oxygen, in particular. Seven of the eleven conserved water molecules are likewise present in both the shark α -PV and rat β -PV structures. Although conserved solvent sites 1-7 in Table 2.2 have been reported earlier^{9,11}, sites 8-11 represent previously unidentified structurally conserved water molecules. Site 1 has a clear functional role as the -x ligand of the EF site (see Table 2.3). Waters 2-7 bridge residues distant in sequence, while waters 8-11 link residues relatively close in sequence.

Site 2 hydrogen bonds to the backbone of Glu-62 and Leu-50 (Table 2.2), which are both located in the CD Ca²⁺-binding loop. Glu-62 provides the conserved bidentate coordination with Ca²⁺, and Leu 50 precedes the first coordinating residue (Asp-51).

^b0.91Å pike β-PV (PDB code 2PVB, ⁹))

^c1.30 Å rat β-PV (PDB code 1RRO, ¹⁴))

^d1.54 Å shark α-PV (PDB code 5PAL, ¹¹))

eSymmetry mate of water 208 of the PDB file for 2PVB.

Thus, site 2 joins the beginning and end of the CD loop. Site 3 forms analogous interactions in the EF domain. It hydrogen bonds to the backbone of Gly-89 and Glu-101. Thus, sites 2 and 3 are related by the pseudo-two-fold symmetry of the CD-EF domain.

Sites 4 and 5 are also related by the two-fold symmetry of the CD-EF domain; however, instead of being part of a single EF-hand, they bridge the CD and EF domains. These water molecules hydrogen bond to residues preceding and following the short β -sheet that joins the CD and EF loops, effectively extending the sheet in both directions and concomitantly doubling the number of hydrogen bonds between backbone atoms of the sheet. By virtue of their location, these water molecules could be involved in communication between the CD and EF sites.

Conserved solvent site 6 links residues quite distant in sequence, Ser-7, Asp-10, and Val-33. This water molecule bridges the amino terminus of helix-A to the carboxy terminus of helix-B. Note that one of its hydrogen bonding partners is the carboxylate of highly conserved Asp-10.

Sites 7 and 8 hydrogen bond to residues in the loop connecting the D and E helices. Site 9 bridges residues within the loop connecting helices A and B. Site 10 bridges the side chain of Lys-54 (a residue within the CD Ca²⁺-binding site) and the backbone of Ile-49. Conserved water 11 helps stabilize the N-terminus of helix C by bridging the first residue of the helix, Ser-39, with the i+3 residue, Asp-42. Interestingly, the same bridge is formed in rat β -PV and shark α -PV, except that in those structures Gln-42 replaces *both* Asp-42 and the water molecule.

A solvent molecule in a crystal contact near the CD site of chain A was modeled as an ammonium ion (B-value = 10 Å^2), based on hydrogen bonding environment. It interacts with five protein atoms that probably serve as hydrogen bond acceptors, namely two backbone carbonyl atoms of chain C (Thr-3 and Leu-6) and three carboxylate oxygen atoms of chain A (Asp-53, Glu-59, and Asp-61). The sixth hydrogen bonding partner, a water molecule, could theoretically be either an acceptor or a donor. This site is modeled as a water molecule in the B and C chains. The structures of rat α -PV at 2.0 Å resolution 10 and pike 4.10 β -PV also have ammonium ions modeled at this location. 9,15

The solvent structure includes four sulfate ions (E1-E4). All four are located in intermolecular contact regions, and each interacts with at least one basic residue and two water molecules. Sulfate E1 interacts with His-A26, Thr-A84, Lys-A12, and three water molecules. Sulfate E2 is stabilized by His-B48, Lys-B12, Lys-B37, and four water molecules. Though not very clear, the density near LYS37 suggests a possible alternate binding mode in which NZ forms hydrogen bonds with two sulfate oxygen atoms. Sulfate E3 interacts with Lys-B54, Lys-A36, and two water molecules. Within 3.0Å, is additional 2Fo-Fc density that appears to be a water molecule. However, it looks quite messy at 0.8σ (2Fo-Fc) and was not modelled. Sulfate E4 is bound by Lys-B28, Ala-C79, and two water molecules.

A polyethylene glycol (PEG) fragment with molecular weight 194 Da (HO(CH₂CH₂O)₄H) was modeled, on the basis of a very strong tubular electron density feature in a crystal-contact region near residue Lys-C52 (Figure 2.3). The PEG molecule adopts a horseshoe-shaped conformation, allowing it to wrap around the Lys-52 ammonium group. There are 3 hydrogen bonds between this ammonium group and the

PEG molecule. HOH-75 and HOH-271 provide other hydrogen bonds to the PEG molecule (Figure 2.3). The clarity and strength of the electron density suggested that this PEG molecule is very tightly bound. The high degree of order, along with the location between protein molecules, suggested that the PEG molecule participates in noncovalent interactions that are essential for maintenance of the crystal lattice. Indeed, this PEG molecule may be, in part, responsible for the ability of the crystal to diffract x-rays to such high resolution.

Although the electron density maps suggested the presence of a second PEG fragment near residue Lys-B27, this feature was less convincing than that in Figure 2.3. When attempts to model PEG into this feature were unsuccessful, an overlapping set of water molecules (i.e. 366-371) were modeled at half occupancy within this density instead.

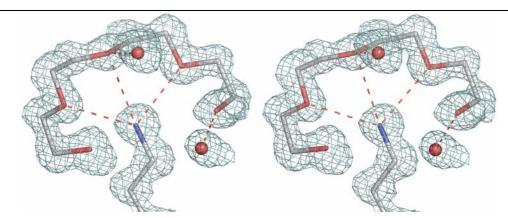


Figure 2.3. Stereoscopic view depicting the PEG fragment bound in a crystal contact, with 2Fo-Fc density contoured at 1σ. Lys—C52 can be clearly seen interacting with three PEG oxygen atoms.

Table 2.3. Ca^{+2} -binding geometry of rat α -parvalbumin determined at 1.05 Å resolution^a

Ca²⁺ - ligand distances (Å)

Α

2.26

2.32

2.56

2.33

2.37

2.41

2.54

2.40

2.33

2.34

2.34

2.37

2.46

2.42

2.53

2.40

Α

166.0

74.4

78.6

75.8

79.2

77.0

Α

158.7

75.6

80.7

81.0

80.3

79.4

Ligand – Ca²⁺ – ligand angles (°)

Α

Coordinating atom

Asp-51-OD1

Asp-53-OD1

Ser-55-OG

Glu-59-OE1

Glu-62-OE1

Glu-62-OE2

Coordinating atom

Average

Asp-90-OD1

Asp-92-OD1

Asp-94-OD1

Glu-101-OE1

Glu-101-OE2

Glu-59-OE1

Glu-62-OE2

Asp-53-OD1

Ser-55-OG

Phe-57-O

HOH-Ob

Glu-101-OE2

Asp-92-OD1

Asp-94-OD1

Lys-96-O

Lys-96-O

HOH-Ob

Average

CD site

EF site

 Ca^{2+}

Ca²⁺

Ca²⁺

EF site

Phe-57-O

CD site

position

+x

+y+z

-у -x

-z

-z

position

 $+_{\mathbf{X}}$

+y

+z

-у

 $-\mathbf{x}$

-z

-z

Asp-51-OD1 Ca²⁺

Asp-53-OD1 Ca²⁺

Glu-62-OE1 Ca²⁺

Asp-90-OD1 Ca²⁺

Asp-92-OD1 Ca²⁺

Asp-94-OD1 Ca²⁺

Glu-101-OE1 Ca²⁺

Average, equatorial angles

Ser-55-OG

Phe-57-O

Lys-96-O

2.2.3	Ca ²⁺ -binding
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sites

C

2.27

2.32

2.51

2.34

2.35

2.42

2.53

2.39

C

2.33

2.34

2.33

2.36

2.38

2.43

2.54

2.39

C

165.4

73.7

80.0

75.4

80.5

77.4

C

161.4

76.1

83.4

78.8

84.9

Mean

2.27

2.32

2.53

2.33

2.36

2.42

2.52

Mean

2.32

2.35

2.34

2.36

2.40

2.44

2.53

Mean

166.1

74.0

79.1

75.6

80.2

Average

161.3

75.1

80.9

79.5

81.9

The

В

2.28

2.31

2.51

2.33

2.35

2.43

2.48

2.38

2.31

2.38

2.36

2.35

2.37

2.47

2.51

2.39

В

167.0

73.9

78.7

75.8

81.0

77.3

В

163.9

73.6

78.7

78.6

80.6

В

The structural features
of the EF-hand Ca ²⁺ -binding
motif have been discussed
extensively ^{16,17} . The Ca ²⁺
ions in both helix-loop-helix
sites are heptacoordinate
with pentagonal bipyramidal
geometry. The Ca ²⁺ ligands
are listed in Table 2.3. The
carboxyl groups of Asp and
Glu account for five of the
ligands in each site.
Backbone carbonyl and Ser
hydroxyl groups complete
the coordination sphere of
the CD site; the EF site
features a backbone carbonyl
and a water molecule.

Average, equatorial angles 77.9 80.8 ^a Axial ligands occupy ±x positions (i.e. Asp-51 and Glu-59 in the CD site, Asp-90 and HOH in the EF site). Equatorial ligands occupy ±y and ±z ^b Water residue numbers are 252, 246, and 228 for A, B, and C, respectively.

resolution of the present structure provides a more precise determination of the coordination geometry within the Ca²⁺-binding sites than was previously available at 2.0

improved

Å resolution. The bond distances and angles describing the Ca²⁺-binding geometry are listed in Table 2.3. Although the average bond lengths and angles are similar to those of the 2.0 Å structure, there is significantly less molecule-to-molecule variation in the 1.05 Å structure. For example, in the 2.0 Å structure, the Asp-50 – Ca²⁺ bond length varies from 2.08 - 2.35 Å.¹⁰ The variation in this bond length at 1.05 Å resolution is just 2.26 – 2.28 Å. Likewise, the variation in bond angles among the three molecules in the asymmetric unit is lower in the 1.05 Å structure than in the 2.0 Å structure. Whereas the axial bond angle in the EF site ranges from 152° - 168° in the 2.0 Å structure, the variation is just 159°-164° in the present structure.

The bonds and angles of the Ca^{2+} -binding sites are virtually identical to those of the 0.91 Å β -PV structure.⁹ The average bond length difference between the two structures is 0.01 Å, and the average angle difference is 1.1°. The largest bond length difference is 0.03 Å (-x bonds), and the largest angle difference is 1.6° (Asp94-Ca²⁺-Asp92 angle).

Very high-resolution crystallographic data permit refinement of anisotropic displacement parameters (ADPs). The ADPs can be visualized as thermal ellipsoids, thereby providing insight into the amplitude and direction of atomic motions. For five of the six Ca²⁺-binding sites in the asymmetric unit, the thermal ellipsoids for the Ca²⁺ ions and their oxygen ligands are generally small and nearly spherical. By contrast, the thermal ellipsoids for the atoms in the EF site of chain A are much larger than those in the other sites and decidedly nonspherical, indicating a substantially less rigid Ca²⁺-binding site (Figure 2.4). Note, in particular, that the ellipsoids for Asp-A92 are much larger and more anisotropic that those of the other Ca²⁺-binding ligands. Also, the Ca²⁺ion ellipsoid for the chain A EF site suggests vibration perpendicular to the

equatorial plane (defined by the ligands at the $\pm y$ and $\pm z$ positions). The isotropic B-values also suggest increased flexibility in the EF site of chain A. The average isotropic B-value of the Ca²⁺ ion and its oxygen atom ligands is 13 Å² for the EF site of chain A, but only 7-8 Å² for the other five sites.

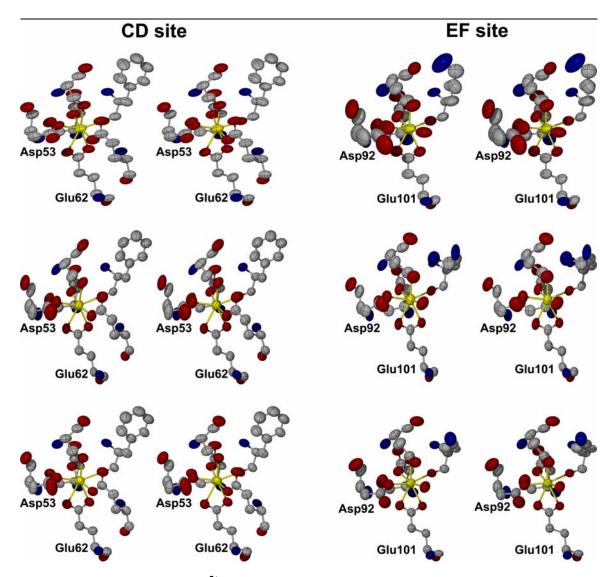


Figure 2.4. The six Ca²⁺-binding sites in the asymmetric unit. These are shown in stereographic pairs, with the atoms represented as thermal ellipsoids displayed at the 50% probability level. The CD sites appear on the left side of the figure, and the EF sites appear on the right side. The top, middle, and bottom rows correspond to the sites of chains A, B, and C, respectively. This figure was made with X-seed.¹⁹

In all likelihood, the larger thermal parameters associated with this site reflect a paucity of noncovalent interactions with surrounding residues relative to the other Ca²⁺-

binding sites. Whereas the EF site of chain A (residues A90-A101) forms 9 proteinprotein crystal contacts, the EF sites of chains B and C form 12 and 16 crystal contacts, respectively. The CD sites of chains A, B, and C are even more highly constrained by the crystalline environment, forming 34, 13, and 26 protein-protein crystal contacts, respectively. Careful inspection of the Ca²⁺-binding sites in the context of the crystalline environment revealed interactions that appear to be particularly important in stabilizing the EF sites of chains B and C. For example, Asp-B92 hydrogen bonds to a symmetry mate of Thr-B19, while Asp-B94 ion pairs with Lys-B96. These interactions help stabilize the EF site of the B chain, resulting in lowered thermal parameters and a more rigid binding site. This situation is even more evident in the EF site of chain C, where a PEG molecule is wedged between the Ca²⁺-binding site and a neighboring protein molecule. The PEG molecule is within van der Waals contact (3.7-3.9 Å) of side-chain atoms of Asp-C92 and Glu-C101. Moreover, Asp-C94 hydrogen bonds to a crystallographic symmetry mate of Ser-C72, while Lys-C96 ion pairs to a symmetry mate of Asp-C73. Again, these noncovalent interactions stabilize the EF Ca²⁺-binding site in the C chain.

These contacts are not observed in the EF site of chain A, and thus this Ca²⁺-binding site displays higher thermal parameters. We therefore suggest 1) that the crystal structures of the EF sites in the B and C chains overestimate the rigidity of the EF site and 2) that the intrinsic flexibility of this site is more accurately depicted by thermal ellipsoids in the A chain EF site. Furthermore, the mobility of the A chain is probably more representative of the solution behavior.

Interestingly, the A chain EF Ca²⁺-binding site in the room temperature 2.0 Å structure does not display reduced rigidity. The average B-value for that site in the 2.0 Å structure is 8 Å², as compared to 5-13 Å² for the other sites. This discrepancy between the 1.05 Å and 2.0 Å structures arises from a difference in the crystal-packing environment around the EF site of chain A. In the 2.0 Å structure, a hydrogen bond links OD2 of Asp-A94 and the backbone N-H of Ala-B79 (OD2-N distance = 2.9 Å). This interaction is absent in the 1.05 Å structure (OD2-N distance = 4.4 Å), due to the rigid-body movement of chain A caused by freezing the crystal in liquid nitrogen. Evidently, this intermolecular hydrogen bond contributes to the EF-site rigidity in the 2.0 Å structure, and its absence in the present structure allows greater flexibility.

2.2.4 Residues with alternative side-chain conformations

The quality of the 1.05 Å electron density map permitted the identification of eleven residues having alternative side-chain conformations. The side-chain dihedral angles for these residues – all of which were modeled by single side-chain conformations in the 2.0 Å structure – are listed in Table 2.4. Although most of these occur on the surface of the protein, Ile-97 and Leu-105 are notable because 1) they contribute to the hydrophobic core of the protein and 2) because the corresponding residues display two side-chain conformations in other high resolution EF-hand protein structures. Ile-97 has been modeled with dual side-chain conformations in the 1.44 Å structure of the rat α CD-EF fragment (PVrat Δ 37, PDB code 1G33²⁰), the 0.91 Å β -PV structure⁹, and the 1.0 Å calmodulin structure (PDB code 1EXR, residue Ile-136²¹). Leu-105 displays two side-chain conformations in 2PVB (Met-105) and in 1EXR (Met-144), but only a single conformation in PVrat Δ 37.

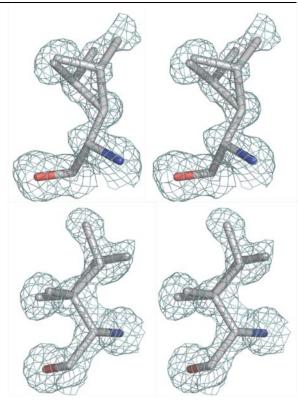


Figure 2.5.Stereoscopic view of core residues having dual side-chain conformations. (a) Ile-A97. (b) Leu-A105. The 2Fo-Fc map is contoured at 1σ in each figure.

It should be emphasized that alternative conformations have been modeled for Ile-97 and Leu-105 only in chain A of our structure (Figure 2.5). Although the electron density maps suggested minor secondary conformations for B97 and C97, the density was not sufficiently convincing to warrant the inclusion of two conformations. The unmistakable presence of two side-chain conformations for A97 may reflect the relatively greater flexibility of the A-chain EF site

(see previous section).

The presence of buried residues with alternative side-chain conformations in β -PV

Table 2.4. Dihedral angles (°) for side-chains with alternative conformations.										
Residue	Conformation A					Conformation B				
	Occ.	χ1	χ_2	χ3	χ4	Occ.	χ1	χ2	χ3	χ4
Lys A12	0.69	172	-171	173	164	0.31	-168	-98	-174	-179
Gln A31	0.52	-69	158	27		0.48	172	69	54	
His A48	0.61	-72	-66			0.39	171	-110		
Ser A72	0.50	59				0.50	-49			
Thr A82	0.48	63				0.52	-52			
Ile A97	0.56	-71	167			0.44	-47	-60		
Leu A105	0.46	-175	-178			0.54	-175	63		
Ile B15	0.58	-63	-76			0.42	-63	-164		
Lys B38	0.51	-64	-82	106	-172	0.49	-64	-40	-64	-168
Lys B96	0.74	60	-166	-177	-66	0.26	60	-166	-177	-170
Gln C31	0.50	-65	157	-154		0.50	-159	-91	-23	

has been interpreted as evidence for conformational multistates within the hydrophobic core, and it has been proposed that conversion between these multistates might represent a slow dynamical process directly related to Ca^{2+} binding and release. Our results would seem to support this idea and extend it to include α -PV as well. The calmodulin structure has a relatively large number of residues with multiple conformations (36 total). These discretely disordered residues may provide the structural plasticity that enables calmodulin to interact with a broad spectrum of effector molecules. 21

There is presently no crystal structure available for Ca^{2+} -free rat α -PV. However, it is apparent that divalent ion binding must provoke significant conformational alterations in the molecule. Although residues 21 and 80 are well separated in the Ca^{2+} -bound protein (CA-CA distance = 9 Å), they clash in the apo-protein²² – indicating that substantial inter-domain rearrangement must accompany divalent ion binding. Furthermore, the highly cooperative divalent ion-binding behavior²³ displayed by rat α -PV requires significant inter-site rearrangement.

That Ile-97 should display alternative conformations in three distinct PV structures suggests that the dynamics of this residue might be vital to parvalbumin function. Ile-97 is ideally positioned to transmit/receive binding information – simultaneously a component of the EF Ca²⁺-binding loop, the short β-sheet segment connecting the CD and EF sites, and the hydrophobic core. We therefore suggest that the discrete disorder of Ile-97 may provide a mechanism for transmitting binding information between the two Ca-binding sites and between the EF site and the core. Targeted site-specific mutagenesis studies could provide insight into this issue. For example, replacement of Ile-97 by Val or Ala would reduce the side-chain volume and the number of possible

side-chain conformations, perhaps reducing the cooperative interaction between the two binding sites.

2.3 Materials and Methods

The purification of recombinant rat α -PV has been described previously.²⁴ The homogeneity of the isolated material was assessed by SDS-PAGE and UV absorbance spectroscopy. Because rat α -PV lacks tyrosine and tryptophan, the UV spectrum is a valuable indicator of purity. Assuming an average extinction coefficient at 280 nm of 1.0 (mg/mL)⁻¹ cm⁻¹ for contaminants, the purity of the α preparation used for crystallization exceeded 99%.

Rat α -PV was dialyzed to equilibrium against 50 mM sodium acetate, 100 μ M CaCl₂, pH 4.90, prior to use. Crystallization conditions were adapted from McPhalen *et al.*¹⁰ The crystals were grown at 22°C by vapor diffusion. Reservoir solutions contained (NH₄)₂SO₄ (80% saturation), 50 mM sodium acetate (pH 4.55 – 4.66), 12 mM CaCl₂, and PEG 600 (1 – 3%). Hanging drops were formed by combining 2 μ L of the protein solution (12 – 20 mg/mL) with an equal volume of reservoir solution. The largest crystals were produced in 3% PEG at pH 4.55. A crystal was prepared for cryogenic data collection by soaking it in a solution of 80% saturated ammonium sulfate, 11% glycerol, and 50 mM sodium acetate for a few minutes. The crystal was then picked up with a cryoloop and plunged into liquid nitrogen.

The crystals belong to the space group $P2_12_12_1$ with three molecules per asymmetric unit, as reported previously¹⁰ The unit cell dimensions are a=33.8 Å, b=54.7 Å, c=153.6 Å. The Matthews coefficient²⁵ is 2.0 with a solvent content of only 38%. Note that the c

axis reported here is 2.5 Å shorter than that of the room temperature cell reported previously. Freezing of the crystal presumably caused a compression of the c-axis.

A 1.55 Å data set was collected from a single crystal using an R-axis IV detector coupled to a Rigaku RU-H3R copper rotating-anode generator equipped with Osmic MaxFlux confocal optics and an X-stream cryogenic system. The data set consisted of 377 frames with an oscillation angle of 0.5° per frame, detector distance of 100 mm, detector theta of zero, and an exposure time of 5 minutes per frame. The data were processed using d*trek, as implemented in the program CrystalClear. The 1.55 Å data set contained 41,649 unique reflections.

A higher resolution data set was subsequently collected from the same crystal at beamline 19-ID of the Structural Biology Center at the Advanced Photon Source (APS). The data collection consisted of three scans corresponding to different values of the detector theta and goniostat kappa angles. The detector distance was 120 mm, and the oscillation range was 0.5° per frame for all three scans. Scan 1 consisted of 240 frames with theta and kappa set to zero, and an exposure time of 1 second per frame. Scan 2 consisted of 240 frames with theta=20°, kappa=0, and an exposure time of 3 seconds per frame. The final scan consisted of 280 frames with theta=20°, kappa=-50°, and an exposure time of 3 seconds per frame. The data were processed using HKL2000 ²⁷. See Table 2.1 for data processing statistics. Note that the 1.05 Å data set provided a three-fold increase in the number of unique reflections compared to the 1.55 Å data set.

Initial model building and refinement efforts were done with the 1.55 Å R-axis data set because the APS data set was not available at the time. The coordinates of the 2.0 Å structure (PDB code 1RTP, solvent removed) were input to rigid body refinement,

positional refinement, and B-factor refinement performed using CNS,²⁸ which resulted in an R-factor of 0.289 for all data to 1.55 Å. No geometrical bonding restraints were imposed on the Ca²⁺ ions during refinement. The resulting phases were input to the automated building program ARP/wARP,²⁹ which correctly built the backbone of 317 of the expected 327 residues in the asymmetric unit, with a Connectivity Index of 0.98. Side chains were added to the ARP/wARP model with guiSIDE via CCP4i.³⁰ The autobuilt model was improved with several rounds of manual building in O³¹ followed by refinement in CNS.

When the 1.05 Å data set became available, the best 1.55 Å model was input to refinement in SHELX-97, 32 and the model was completed over several rounds of iterative model building and refinement in SHELX. See Table 2.1 for refinement statistics. The SHELX calculations consisted of conjugate gradient least-squares (CGLS) minimization, using the default effective standard deviations for geometrical restraints. The riding hydrogen and anisotropic displacement parameter (ADP) features of SHELX were used, with the ADPs of solvent molecules restrained to be approximately isotropic. No geometrical bonding restraints were imposed on the Ca²⁺ ions during refinement. After the refinement had converged, a blocked-matrix least-squares refinement calculation was performed to obtain estimated standard deviations (e.s.d.s) for atomic coordinates. For this calculation, each protein molecule was divided into overlapping blocks of 9-10 residues, with an overlap of two residues between each block. Atomic coordinate parameters and ADPs were refined for each block.

Structure analysis was performed with X-PLOR,³³ CNS, O, Pymol,¹² and Protein Explorer.³⁴ For purposes of core RMSD calculations, core residues for rat α -PV were

defined previously¹⁰ as those having solvent accessibility of less than 5%: 2, 6, 11, 14, 29, 30, 33-35, 46, 47, 50, 58, 63, 66, 67, 70, 74, 85, 89, 97, 102, 105, and 106. RMSD calculations were performed with CNS and the CE website.³⁵ Structural alignments utilized transformation matrices obtained from the secondary structure matching service available at the European Bioinformatics Institute website (http://www.ebi.ac.uk/msd-srv/ssm).³⁶ Analysis of protein-protein crystal contacts was done with CNS using a 3.9-Å atom-based cutoff.

2.4 PDB accession code

The atomic coordinates and structure factors have been deposited in the PDB as entry 1RWY.

2.5 Acknowledgements

We thank the personnel of APS beamline 19-ID for assistance with data collection, especially Younchang Kim. Use of the Argonne National Laboratory Structural Biology Center beamlines at the APS was supported by the U. S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Research, under Contract No. W-31-109-ENG-38.

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Chapter 3

A structurally conserved water molecule in Rossmann dinucleotide-binding domains

(Adapted from Bottoms CA, Smith PE, Tanner JJ. A structurally conserved water molecule in Rossmann dinucleotide-binding domains. Protein Sci 2002;11(9):2125-2137.)

Chapter 3 Abstract

A computational comparison of 101 high-resolution (≤1.90 Å) enzyme-dinucleotide (NAD, NADP, FAD) complexes was performed to investigate the role of solvent in dinucleotide recognition by Rossmann fold domains. The typical binding site contains about 9-12 water molecules, and about thirty percent of the hydrogen bonds between the protein and the dinucleotide are water-mediated. Detailed inspection of the structures reveals a structurally conserved water molecule bridging dinucleotides with the wellknown glycine-rich phosphate-binding loop. This water molecule displays a conserved hydrogen-bonding pattern. It forms hydrogen bonds to the dinucleotide pyrophosphate, two of the three conserved glycine residues of the phosphate-binding loop, and a residue at the C-terminus of strand four of the Rossmann fold. The conserved water molecule is also present in high-resolution structures of apo enzymes. However, the water molecule is not present in structures displaying significant deviations from the classic Rossmann fold motif, such as having nonstandard topology, containing a very short phosphate-binding loop, or having alpha-helix "A" oriented perpendicular to the beta-sheet. Thus, the conserved water molecule appears to be an inherent structural feature of the classic Rossmann dinucleotide-binding domain.

Keywords: NAD; NADP; FAD; dinucleotide-protein interactions; Rossmann fold; structurally conserved water molecule; molecular recognition.

Abbreviations: A, adenine; ACP, acyl carrier protein; ADH, alcohol dehydrogenase; CNS, Crystallography and NMR system; CoA, coenzyme A; dh, dehydrogenase; dTDP, deoxythymidine diphosphate; EBI-MSD, European Bioinformatics Institute Macromolecular Structure Database; FAD, flavin adenine dinucleotide; GAPDH, D-glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase; GDP, Guanosine diphosphate; N, nicotinamide; NAD, nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide; NADP, nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate; NMN, nicotinamide adenine mononucleotide; P, pyrophosphate; PDB, Protein Data Bank; Ra, adenine ribose; rd, reductase; RMSD, root mean square deviation; Rn, nicotinamide ribose; UDP-galactose, uridine 5'-diphosphate galactose.

3.1 Introduction

Flavin adenine dinucleotide (FAD), nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD), and nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate (NADP) serve as enzyme cofactors in many essential biological processes, such as glycolysis (NAD), the citric acid cycle (FAD and NAD), and photosynthesis (NADP) (Figure 3.1).

Because of the central role played by adenine dinucleotides in biological redox chemistry, many dinucleotide-dependent enzymes are potential drug design targets for

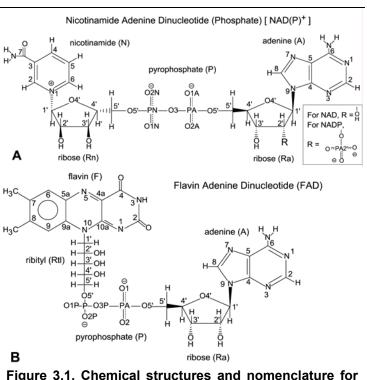


Figure 3.1. Chemical structures and nomenclature for (A) NAD(P)⁺ and (B) FAD.

treatment of cancer, 1-4 infections,⁵ bacterial diseases.6-10 trypanosomal Knowledge of the structural and dynamic features that dinucleotide govern recognition by enzymes is important for understanding the many biochemical roles of dinucleotides and for designing analogues for therapeutic applications.

The Rossmann fold was first identified in dinucleotide-binding proteins 11 and remains one of the most thoroughly studied dinucleotide-binding folds. The Rossmann fold, or mononucleotide-binding motif, is a single $\beta\alpha\beta\alpha\beta$ motif that binds a mononucleotide. The

fold that binds NAD and NADP consists of two mononucleotide-binding motifs that are structurally related by a pseudo 2-fold rotation, with the most N-terminal strands adjacent to each other (Figure 3.2a). Together, the two $\beta\alpha\beta\alpha\beta$ motifs form a six-stranded parallel β -sheet flanked by α -helices, with relative strand order 321456. The fold that binds FAD typically contains one mononucleotide-binding motif with two additional parallel β -strands, giving a relative strand order of 32145 (Figure 3.2b). ¹²

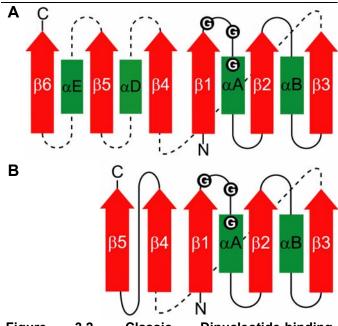


Figure 3.2. Classic Dinucleotide-binding Rossmann-fold topologies. Arrows designate β -strands and rectangles denote α -helices. Circles represent conserved glycine residues in the pyrophosphate-binding loop. (a) Topology of NAD(P)-binding proteins. (b) Topology of FAD-binding proteins

dinucleotide-Although binding domains show very low overall sequence homology, large portions of their protein backbones superimpose very well. However, there two common sequence features. First, a glycine-rich phosphate-binding loop connects the C-terminus of β 1 with the N-terminus of α A (Figure 3.2). ¹⁴ Typically, this loop

contains three conserved glycine residues arranged in patterns such as GXGXXG. Mutations in the conserved glycine residues of the loop have been correlated with attenuation or elimination of enzyme activity¹⁵⁻¹⁷ and also with disease.¹⁸ The second feature is a side chain interaction with the adenine ribose group of the dinucleotide. In NAD- and FAD-binding Rossmann fold proteins, the carboxylate of Asp or Glu interacts

with the adenine ribose hydroxyls. In contrast, NADP-binding proteins typically have Arg interacting with the monophosphate at the O2' position of adenine ribose. 13

The conserved characteristics of dinucleotide-binding proteins have been described in several studies; 11,19 however, the role that structural water plays in dinucleotide recognition has not been extensively analyzed. Five years ago, Carugo and Argos reported a study of NAD(P)-protein interactions, ²⁰ using a data set of 32 NAD(P)-enzyme complexes representing 19 enzymes. The resolution of these structures ranged from 1.6 to 3.20 Å, averaging 2.30 Å, and only eight structures had 1.9 Å resolution or better. Since their work, many high-resolution (≤1.90 Å) structures have become available for study. Here we describe the results of a survey of 101 high-resolution enzyme/dinucleotide complexes that display the Rossmann dinucleotide-binding fold. These higher resolution structures allow an accurate description of the role of solvent in dinucleotide recognition. We find that bridging water molecules contribute significantly to the dinucleotidebinding interface in all of the enzymes studied. Moreover, we identified a structurally conserved water molecule that links, through hydrogen bonding, the glycine-rich loop and the dinucleotide pyrophosphate moiety. We assert that this conserved water molecule is an integral characteristic of dinucleotide-binding Rossmann fold domains, and thus it contributes significantly to dinucleotide recognition.

3.2 Results

3.2.1 Data set of structures analyzed

All crystal structures (as of Jan 2002) in the Protein Data Bank (PDB)²¹ with NAD(P) or FAD (Figure. 3.1) bound to a Rossmann fold motif and having a resolution of 1.9 Å or better were selected for analysis. The resulting data set consists of 101 structures, and

represents 43 enzymes and 40 species (Tables 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3). The crystallographic resolution ranges from 1.15 to 1.90 Å, averaging 1.70 Å. Notwithstanding our conservative resolution cutoff, this study is one of the largest comparisons of dinucleotide-binding proteins performed to date.

	Table 3.1. NAD-bin	ding proteins		
Enzyme	Species	PDB codes and references	Sequence pattern	Wat
			(GXGXXG)	
alcohol dehydrogenase	Equus caballus	1EE2 ²² ; 1HET, 1HEU ²³ ; 2OHX ²⁴ ; 3BTO ²⁵	GLGGVG	✓
3-dehydroquinate synthase	Aspergillus nidulans	1DQS ²⁶	$\textbf{G} \ldots \textbf{G} \textbf{G} \textbf{V} \textbf{I} \textbf{G}$	
GAPDH	Bacillus stearothermophilus	1GD1 ²⁷	GFGRIG	✓
	Escherichia coli	1GAD ²⁸	GFGRIG	✓
L-3-hydroxyacyl-CoA dh	Homo sapiens	1F0Y ²⁹	$\textbf{G} \ldots \textbf{G} \textbf{G} \textbf{L} \textbf{M} \textbf{G}$	✓
D-2-hydroxyisocaproate dh	Lactobacillus casei	1DXY ³⁰	GTGHIG	✓
lactate dehydrogenase	Plasmodium falciparum	1LDG ³¹	GSGMIG	✓
phenylalanine dehydrogenase	Rhodococcus sp. M4	1BW9 ³² ; 1C1D, 1C1X ³³	$\textbf{G}\dots \textbf{L}\textbf{G}\textbf{A}\textbf{V}\textbf{G}$	✓
			(GXXGXXG)	
dTDP-glucose 4,6-dehydratase	Escherichia coli	1BXK ³⁴	${f G}$ ${f G}{f A}{f G}{f F}{f I}{f G}$	✓
malate dehydrogenase	Escherichia coli	1EMD 35	${f G}$ ${f A}{f A}{f G}{f G}{f I}{f G}$	✓
	Thermus flavus	1BMD ³⁶	${\tt GAAGQIG}$	✓
sulfolipid biosynthesis	Arabidopsis thaliana	1QRR ³⁷	\mathbf{G} \mathbf{G} \mathbf{D} \mathbf{G} \mathbf{Y} \mathbf{C} \mathbf{G}	✓
UDP-galactose 4-epimerase	Escherichia coli	1NAH ³⁸ ; 1UDA, 1UDB, 1UDC ³⁹ ; 1XEL ⁴⁰ ; 2UDP ⁴¹	GGSGYIG	✓
	Homo sapiens	1EK5, 1EK6 ⁴² ; 1HZJ ⁴³	GGAGYIG	✓
			(GXXXGXG)	
7-α-hydroxysteroid dh	Escherichia coli	1FMC ⁴⁴	${f G}$ AGA ${f G}$ I ${f G}$	✓
D-glucose-1-dehydrogenase	Bacillus megaterium	1GCO ⁴⁵	GSSTGLG	✓
L-3-hydroxyacyl-CoA dh	Rattus norvegicus	1E6W ⁴⁶	${f G}$ ${f G}{f A}{f S}{f G}{f L}{f G}$	✓
meso-2,3-butanediol dh	Klebsiella pneumoniae	1GEG ⁴⁷	GAGQGIG	✓
			(GXXXXXXXG)	
enoyl ACP reductase	Brassica napus	1D7O ⁴⁸ ; 1ENO ⁴⁹	$\mathbf{G} \texttt{IADDNGY} \mathbf{G}$	✓
	Escherichia coli	1QG6 ⁵⁰ ; 1QSG ⁵¹	G VASKLSIA	✓
NMN adenylyltransferase	Methanobacterium thermoautotrophicum	1EJ2 ⁵²	G RMQPFHR G	

Tables 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 show alignments of the glycine-rich pyrophosphate-binding sequences for the enzymes studied. The majority of enzymes in our data set display the pyrophosphate-binding loop sequence patterns GXGXXG, GXXGXXG, or GXXXGXG, where G is Gly and X is any amino acid residue. Two enzymes have the sequence pattern

GXXXXXG, and two have the pattern GXXXXXXXG. Note that sometimes Ala substitutes for the last Gly. And, in one case, dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase, Ser substitutes for the last Gly. Note that all the FAD-binding proteins in our data set except one have the phosphate-binding loop sequence GXGXXG. Quinone reductase does not have a glycine-rich loop, although it is still classified as a Rossmann fold protein.

Table 3.2. NADP-binding proteins							
Enzyme	Species	PDB codes and references	Sequence pattern	Wat			
			(GXGXXG)				
acetohydroxy ac isomeroreductase	id Spinacia oleracea	1YVE ⁵³	GWGSQA	✓			
adrenodoxin reductase	Bos taurus	1E1M ⁵⁴	$\mathbf{G}\dots \mathbf{Q}\mathbf{G}\mathbf{N}\mathbf{V}\mathbf{A}$	✓			
glutathione reductase	Homo sapiens	1GRB ⁵⁵	$\textbf{G}\dots \textbf{A}\textbf{G} \textbf{Y} \textbf{I} \textbf{A}$	✓			
NADP(H) transhydrogenase.	Bos taurus	1D4O ⁵⁶	$\textbf{G} \dots \textbf{Y} \textbf{G} \textbf{L} \textbf{C} \textbf{A}$				
			(GXXGXXG)				
biliverdin-IX β reductase	Homo sapiens	1HDO, 1HE2, 1HE3, 1HE 1HE5 ⁵⁷	4, GATGQTG	✓			
coenzyme F420H2: NADI oxidoreductase (Fno)	⊃ ⁺ Archaeoglobus fulgidus	1JAY ⁵⁸	GGTGNLG	✓			
GDP 4-keto-6-deoxy-D-mannos epimerase reductase	se Escherichia coli	1E6U ⁵⁹	GHRGMVG	✓			
L-lactate/malate dehydrogenase	Methanococcus jannaschii	1HYE ⁶⁰	GASGRVG	✓			
			(GXXXGXG)				
1,3,6,8-tetrahydroxy-naphthalen reductase	e Magnaporthe grisea	1JA9 ⁶¹	GAGRGIG	✓			
carbonyl reductase	Mus musculus	1CYD ⁶²	GAGKGIG	✓			
mannitol dehydrogenase	Agaricus bisporus	1H5Q ⁶³	GGNRGIG	✓			
nitric-oxide synthase	Rattus norvegicus	1F20 ⁶⁴	GPGTG(IA)				
sepiapterin reductase	Mus musculus	10AA ⁶⁵	GASR G FG	✓			
tropinone reductase-II	Datura stramonium	2AE2 ⁶⁶	GGSRGIG	✓			
			(GXXXXXG)				
methylenetetrahydrofolate dh	Homo sapiens	1A4I ⁶⁷	GRSKIVG	✓			
pteridine reductase	Leishmania major	1E7W ⁶⁸	GAAKRLG	✓			
			Other				
dihydrofolate reductase	Candida albicans	1AI9, 1AOE ⁶⁹ ; 1IA1, 1IA 1IA3, 1IA4 ⁷⁰	2, G RKT				
	Escherichia coli	1RA2, 1RA3, 1RC4, 1RX 1RX9 ⁷¹	2, G GGRV				
	Gallus gallus	8DFR ⁷²	G KKT				
	Lactobacillus casei	3DFR ⁷³	G RRT				
	Mycobacterium tuberculosis	1DF7, 1DG7 ⁷⁴	G RRT				
	Pneumocystis carinii	1DYR ⁷⁵ ; 2CD2 ⁷⁶	G RKT				

Table 3.3. FAD-binding proteins								
Enzyme	Species	PDB codes and references	Sequence pattern	Wat				
			(GXGXXG)					
adrenodoxin reductase	Bos taurus	1CJC ⁷⁷ ; 1E1M ⁵⁴	$\textbf{G} \ldots \textbf{S} \textbf{G} \textbf{P} \textbf{A} \textbf{G}$	✓				
alkyl hydroperoxide rd	Escherichia coli	1FL2 ⁷⁸	$\textbf{G} \ldots \textbf{S} \textbf{G} \textbf{P} \textbf{A} \textbf{G}$	\checkmark				
cholesterol oxidase	Brevibacterium sterolicum	1COY, 3COX ⁷⁹	$\mathbf{G} \dots \mathbf{S} \mathbf{G} \mathbf{Y} \mathbf{G} \mathbf{G}$	\checkmark				
	Streptomyces sp.	1B4V ⁸⁰	$\mathbf{G}\dots\mathbf{T}\mathbf{G}$ YGA	\checkmark				
D-amino acid oxidase	Rhodotorula gracilis	1C0K, 1C0L, 1C0P ⁸¹	GSGVIG	\checkmark				
dihydropyrimidine dh	Sus scrofa	1H7W ⁸²	$\mathbf{G}\dots\mathbf{A}\mathbf{G}$ PAS	\checkmark				
flavocytochrome C3	Shewanella frigidimarina	1QJD ⁸³	$\mathbf{G} \dots \mathbf{S} \mathbf{G} \mathbf{G} \mathbf{A} \mathbf{G}$	\checkmark				
glucose oxidase	Aspergillus niger	1CF3 ⁸⁴	$\textbf{G} \dots \textbf{G} \textbf{G} \textbf{L} \textbf{T} \textbf{G}$	\checkmark				
	Penicillium amagasakiense	1GPE ⁸⁴	$\textbf{G} \dots \textbf{G} \textbf{G} \textbf{L} \textbf{T} \textbf{G}$	\checkmark				
glutathione reductase	Escherichia coli	1GER ⁸⁵	$\mathbf{G} \dots \mathbf{G} \mathbf{G} \mathbf{S} \mathbf{G} \mathbf{G}$	\checkmark				
	Homo sapiens	1DNC, 1GSN ⁸⁶ ; 1GRB ⁵⁵ ; 3GRS ⁸⁷	GGGSGG	✓				
p-hydroxybenzoate hydroxylase	Pseudomonas fluorescens	1PBE ⁸⁸	GAGPSG	✓				
polyamine oxidase	Zea mays	1B37, 1B5Q ⁸⁹ ; 1H82, 1H83 ⁹⁰	GAGMSG	✓				
sarcosine oxidase	Bacillus sp.	1EL5, 1EL7, 1EL8 ⁹¹	GAGSMG	✓				
trypanothione reductase	Crithidia fasciculata	1FEC ⁹²	GAGSGG	✓				
			Other					
quinone reductase	Homo sapiens	1D4A ⁹³ ; 1H69 ² ; 1KBQ ⁹⁴	AHSERTSFNY					

3.2.2 Identification of a structurally conserved water molecule

All the structures in our database have several water molecules in the interface between the dinucleotide and the protein. On average, FAD-, NADP-, and NAD-binding proteins accommodate about 12, 11, and 9 interfacial (within 3.75Å of the protein and dinucleotide) water molecules per dinucleotide-binding site, respectively. As expected, many of these interfacial water molecules hydrogen bond to both the dinucleotide and the protein, thus forming water-mediated hydrogen bonds. Figure 3.3 shows the average numbers of direct and water-mediated hydrogen bonds formed between the protein and the five groups of each of the dinucleotides. Water-mediated hydrogen bonds comprise 29%, 32%, and 29% of the protein/dinucleotide hydrogen bonds for NAD, NADP, and FAD, respectively. The pyrophosphate group forms almost as many water-mediated hydrogen bonds (2.7 for NAD, 2.4 for NADP, and 3.5 for FAD) as direct hydrogen bonds

(2.8 for NAD, 3.2 for NADP, and 4.1 for FAD) to the protein. The remaining groups average one or fewer water-mediated hydrogen bonds, with the exception of adenine ribose in NADP. This group averages more than two water-mediated hydrogen bonds, a result due to its monophosphate. Thus, bridging water molecules are concentrated around the pyrophosphate and monophosphate groups, though they are commonly found associated with the rest of the dinucleotide as well.

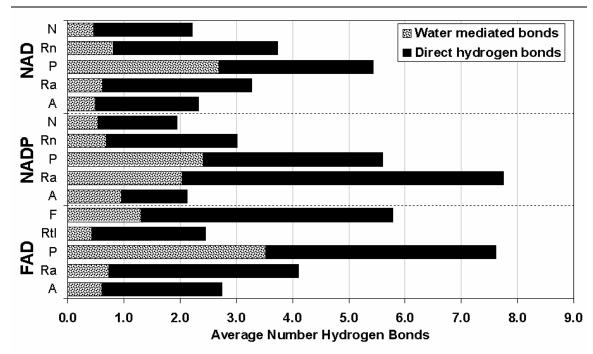


Figure 3.3. Protein/dinucleotide hydrogen bonds by groups. Hydrogen bonds to each group are divided into direct and water-mediated categories. Their sum represents the total number of hydrogen bonds between the protein and dinucleotide. The various groups of the three dinucleotides are abbreviated as follows: N, nicotinamide; Rn, nicotinamide ribose; P, pyrophosphate; Ra, adenine ribose; A, adenine; F, flavin isoalloxazine; Rtl, flavin ribityl side chain.

The presence of numerous water-mediated hydrogen bonds between protein and dinucleotides implicates water as a significant component of dinucleotide recognition.

Superimposition of the structures allowed us to identify whether any of the bridging water

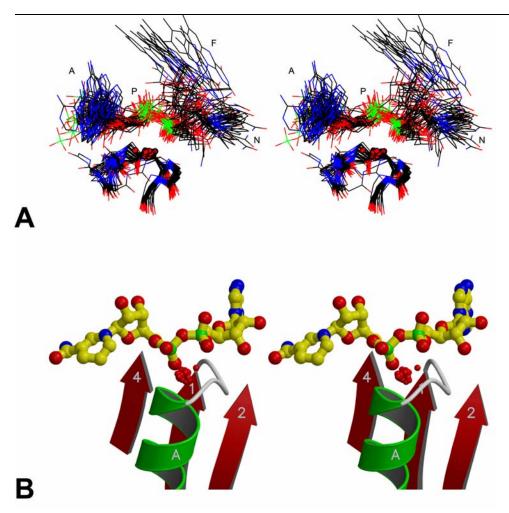


Figure 3.4. Superposition of protein structures. (A) Stereoimage showing the dinucleotides, phosphate-binding loops, and structurally conserved water molecules of 37 enzymes. (B) Stereoimage showing the structurally conserved water molecules of 77 structures superimposed according to their glycine-rich loops as described in Methods. The NADH and protein shown are from alcohol dehydrogenase (1HET). In both (A) and (B), the oxygen atoms of the water molecules are shown as red spheres with 1/5 van der Waals radii. Figures created using MOLSCRIPT ⁹⁵ and Raster3D ⁹⁶.

molecules bound in structurally conserved sites. The crystal structures were superimposed using the coordinates of only three alpha carbon atoms within the glycinerich loop, as described in Methods. This analysis revealed a structurally conserved water molecule located at the N-terminus of the phosphate binding helix (i.e. α A) in 77 structures, which represents 37 of 43 enzymes studied. The structures displaying the conserved water molecule are indicated by the checkmark in Tables 3.1-3.3. Figure 3.4A

shows the superimposed phosphate binding loops, cofactors, and structurally conserved water molecules of these 37 enzymes. Note the almost perfect superimposition of the phosphate moiety, the glycine-rich loop, and the structurally conserved water molecule of these different structures. In contrast, adenine, nicotinamide, and flavin do not superimpose as well. Figure 3.4B shows the structurally conserved water molecule from 77 structures after superposition onto the alcohol dehydrogenase structure 1HET, as described in Methods. Also shown are secondary structurally elements and NADH of 1HET. These water molecules have an RMSD of 0.5 Å from a reference water molecule, which indicates that the water molecules occupy essentially the same location in their respective structures. As will be discussed below, the six enzymes that do not bind this water molecule show significant deviations from the classic Rossmann fold motif.

3.2.3 Hydrogen bonds formed by the structurally conserved water molecule

The structurally conserved water molecule typically makes four hydrogen bonds. Two of the four bonds are invariant and two vary according to the sequence pattern of the glycine-rich phosphate-binding loop. The hydrogen-bonding pattern of the conserved water molecule is shown schematically in figure 3.5A, and an example of this hydrogen bond coordination is shown in figure 3.5B. A table detailing the hydrogen bonding partners of the structurally conserved water molecule in each dinucleotide-binding site is provided in Table 3.4.

The two invariant hydrogen bonds formed by the conserved water molecule involve pyrophosphate and the amine of the last conserved Gly (Figure. 3.5). Thus, the water molecule always links the pyrophosphate to the glycine-rich loop. Moreover, the

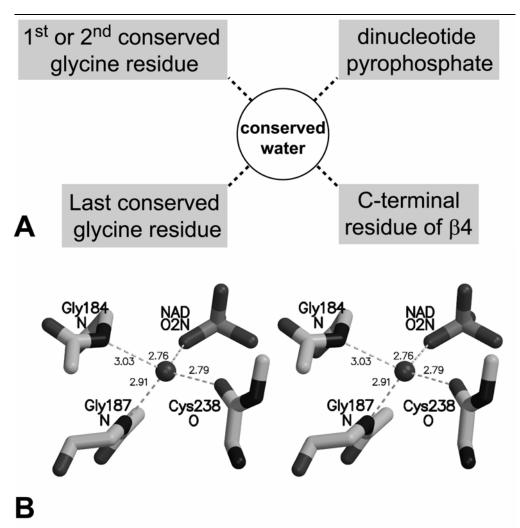


Figure 3.5. Hydrogen bonding patterns of the structurally conserved water **molecule.** (A) Schematic of the hydrogen bonds formed by the structurally conserved water molecule. The dotted lines denote hydrogen bonds. (B) An example of the structurally conserved water molecule's hydrogen bond coordination as seen in phenylalanine dehydrogenase of *Rhodococcus sp.* M4 (PDB code 1C1D). Gly184 and Gly187 donate hydrogen bonds via their amide nitrogens, while the carbonyl of Cys238 accepts a hydrogen bond. Only backbone atoms are shown. Distances are in angstroms.

interaction with the pyrophosphate is stereospecific. Though the pyrophosphate is not chiral, the oxygen atoms are distinct stereochemically (i.e. prochiral).⁹⁷ Almost without exception, the pyrophosphate atom that interacts with the structurally conserved water molecule is O2N in the case of NAD or NADP binding proteins. In FAD binding proteins, however, it is always O1P (i.e. equivalent to O1N of NAD(P)) that interacts with the structurally conserved water molecule. Interestingly, the only two structures in

our study that have both FAD and NADP bound are also the only ones in which NADP binds to the structurally conserved water molecule via its pyrophosphate atom O1N (see 1E1M and 1GRB).

The partners for the other two hydrogen bonds formed by the conserved water molecule depend upon the sequence of the glycine-rich loop. One sequence-dependent hydrogen bond involves either the first or second conserved Gly. This bond occurs in structures with the sequence patterns GXGXXG, GXXGXXG, and GXXXXXXXG. It also occurs in seven of the eight structures with the sequence pattern GXXXGXG, but does not occur in structures with the sequence pattern GXXXXXG. In structures with the sequence GXGXXG, the water molecule forms a hydrogen bond with the amino group of the second conserved Gly. An example of this hydrogen-bonding pattern is shown in figure 3.5B. In structures with the sequence patterns GXXGXXG, GXXXXGXG, and GXXXXXXXXG, the water molecule instead forms a hydrogen bond with the carbonyl group of the first conserved Gly.

The second sequence-dependent hydrogen bond involves a C-terminal residue of $\beta 4$. In structures with the pattern GXGXXG and GXXGXXG, this hydrogen bond usually involves the backbone carbonyl of either a small residue or a hydrophobic residue (i.e. Ala, Cys, Gly, Leu, Phe, Ser, or Val for the structures studied). However, occasionally it will involve the hydroxyl of Ser or Thr. In structures with the sequence pattern GXXXGXG, the C-terminal residue of $\beta 4$ usually donates a hydrogen bond via the side chain of an Asn. In structures with the sequence pattern GXXXXXXXXG, the C-terminal residue of $\beta 4$ donates a hydrogen bond via a Ser hydroxyl.

The hydrogen bonding patterns observed in structures with the sequence GXXXXXG are minor variations of the paradigm described above. There are two such structures in our data set, 1A4I (human methylenetetrahydrofolate dehydrogenase) and 1E7W (*Leishmania major* pteridine reductase). The water molecule of 1A4I does not superimpose as well as the others, as is evident from its 1.1 Å separation from the others in figure 3.4. The conserved water molecule of 1A4I displays a hydrogen-bonding pattern identical to that of GXGXXG structures, with Ser of its GRSKIVG sequence playing the role of the second conserved Gly. On the other hand, the hydrogen bond coordination in 1E7W is very similar to that of proteins with the sequence GXXXGXG. The only exception is that the first conserved glycine residue interacts with the structurally conserved water molecule via another water molecule inside the phosphate-binding loop. To our knowledge, this is the only case in which the structurally conserved water molecule forms a hydrogen bond with another water molecule.

Finally, the conserved water molecule sometimes forms a fifth hydrogen bond. For example, in structures with the sequence pattern GXXXGXG, the conserved water molecule forms a fifth hydrogen bond with the carbonyl of the third "X" residue. And, it is common to see the methylene of the second or third conserved Gly within hydrogen bonding distance of the structurally conserved water molecule. Several studies have mentioned the presence of CH...O hydrogen bonds in NAD(P) interfaces. Though CH...O hydrogen bonds are somewhat unconventional, the methylene of glycine can theoretically form a significant hydrogen bond. Such a bond would have about half the energy of a typical hydrogen bond from water. 99

3.2.4 Structures lacking the conserved water molecule

Six enzymes (3-dehydroquinate synthase, NMN adenylyltransferase, NADP(H) transhydrogenase, nitric-oxide synthase, dihydrofolate reductase, quinone reductase) lack the structurally conserved water molecule (Tables 3.1-3.3). These enzymes show significant deviations from the standard Rossmann fold motif in terms of their sequence and/or structure. Thus, the conserved water molecule is found only in classic Rossmann fold structures.

Some of the unusual features of these enzymes are obvious. For example, 3-dehydroquinate synthase has a nonstandard topology in which the phosphate-binding loop connects $\beta 4$ and αD instead of $\beta 1$ and αA . No other enzyme in our data set has this unusual topology. In NADP(H) transhydrogenase and dihydrofolate reductase, the long axis of αA runs perpendicular to the β -sheet rather than parallel to it as in all the other structures. NMN adenylyltransferase differs from the other enzymes in our data set because NAD is a product of catalysis rather than a redox cofactor. The pyrophosphate binds near the beginning of the phosphate-binding loop rather than at the end of the loop near the N-terminus of αA as occurs in the classic Rossmann fold structures. Thus, the pyrophosphate interacts with the Rossmann fold in a fundamentally unique way that is related to the nature of the reaction catalyzed.

3-dehydroquinate synthase, NADP(H) transhydrogenase, and nitric-oxide synthase show a subtle, but very important, deviation from the standard Rossmann fold structure concerning the hydrogen bonding potential of the last residue of their phosphate-binding sequences. In the classic Rossmann fold, this residue occurs at the beginning of α A (Figure 3.2) and its amino group donates one of the invariant hydrogen bonds to the

structurally conserved water molecule (Figure 3.5A). However, in 3-dehydroquinate synthase, NADP(H) transhydrogenase, and nitric-oxide synthase, this residue cannot hydrogen bond to a water molecule because it is the fifth or later residue of the helix, and its amino group must form an "n+4" α -helix hydrogen bond with the carbonyl four residues preceding it in the sequence.

Lastly, dihydrofolate reductase and quinone reductase deviate from the classic Rossmann fold because of the length and sequence, respectively, of their phosphate binding loops. The dihydrofolate reductases have short phosphate-binding loops. Their loops consist of 4-5 residues compared to 6-9 residues in the other structures (Tables 3.1-3.3). The resulting loop between $\beta 1$ and αA is not wide enough to accommodate a water molecule. Quinone reductase, on the other hand, has no glycine residues in its phosphate-binding loop. This is a critical feature, because, in the classic Rossmann fold motif, the first Gly of the phosphate-binding loop always occupies the first quadrant (i.e. $\phi > 0$, $\psi > 0$) of the Ramachandran plot. This region of $\phi + \psi$ space is typically inaccessible to nonglycine residues. Thus, the phosphate-binding loop of quinone reductase cannot adopt the backbone conformations typically observed in classic Rossmann fold proteins.

3.3 Discussion

3.3.1 Bridging water molecules

NAD, NADP, and FAD have extraordinary hydrogen bonding potential. They have 19, 22, and 22 polar nitrogen and oxygen atoms, respectively. Therefore, it is not surprising that NAD, NADP, and FAD form about 16, 19, and 23 hydrogen bonds with the protein. However, the observation that water molecules mediate about 30% of these

hydrogen bonds is a novel result and indicates that bridging water is an important component of dinucleotide recognition.

More generally, our results demonstrate a pitfall of ignoring water molecules when analyzing protein crystal structures. In the present case, neglecting water molecules would have given the incorrect impression that Rossmann fold domains greatly underutilize the hydrogen bonding potential of dinucleotides. This issue is critical for ligand docking calculations and structure-based drug design and optimization. ^{100,101}

The result that water molecules are important in dinucleotide recognition is perhaps not surprising, because solvent is important in protein recognition of small molecules, DNA, and protein. For example, about 40% of all protein-DNA hydrogen bonds are water-mediated, ¹⁰² and protein-protein interfaces contain an average of about 22 water molecules and 11 water-mediated hydrogen bonds. ¹⁰³

3.3.2 Structurally conserved water molecule

We discovered a water molecule that bridges the glycine-rich loop and the pyrophosphate in 77 of the 101 structures studied. The structurally conserved water molecule binds at the N-terminus of αA and it displays a conserved hydrogen-bonding pattern (Figure 3.4). Structurally conserved water molecules have also been identified in fatty acid binding proteins¹⁰⁴ and serine proteases. Water molecules of ligand-binding sites have also been found to be conserved between pairs of homologous proteins from different species. Several authors have noted the presence of a water molecule that we refer to as the structurally conserved water molecule, but they did not realize its ubiquity in Rossmann fold domains nor its conserved hydrogen-bonding pattern. ^{22,30,42,49,63,107-109} In NAD-binding proteins, we found the water molecule to be more highly conserved than

the carboxylate interaction with the adenine-ribose diol. Not only do the structures in our data set represent a significant cross section of enzymes, but they also represent a variety of species and even biological kingdoms. Such structural conservation argues strongly for an important functional role.

The structurally conserved water molecule typically forms hydrogen bonds with two of the three conserved glycine residues, a C-terminal residue of $\beta 4$, and the dinucleotide pyrophosphate. The water molecule always forms hydrogen bonds to both the pyrophosphate and the last conserved Gly, which is part of helix αA . This water-mediated hydrogen bond is significant, because

Previous studies have noted that direct hydrogen bonding between αA and the pyrophosphate is not optimal. Based on this observation, a favorable electrostatic interaction between the helix dipole of αA and the pyrophosphate has been considered an important factor in dinucleotide recognition.¹⁴ This conclusion, however, was based on analyses of crystal structures that generally lacked water molecules; therefore, water-mediated hydrogen bonds could not be considered. Including water-mediated hydrogen bonds almost doubles the number of observed hydrogen bonds between the protein and pyrophosphate. Due to the high solvent content about the pyrophosphate and the several water-mediated hydrogen bonds, we wonder if the helix dipole would be an important contributing factor to pyrophosphate binding. Additional studies would be needed to resolve this issue.

Structures that exhibit the classic Rossmann fold motif bind the structurally conserved water molecule, whereas structures that have major deviations from the standard Rossmann fold do not. The following classic features are shared by all the

structures bearing the conserved water molecule. The β -sheet topology is 321456 for NAD(P)- and 32145 for FAD-binding domains, and αA is parallel to the β -sheet. The phosphate-binding loop is at least six residues long, and it contains Gly at the first position. The last residue of the phosphate-binding sequence is located at the beginning of αA where its amino group is available to hydrogen bond to the water.

The conserved water molecule appears to be a structural feature inherent to the classic Rossmann dinucleotide-binding fold itself, because this water molecule is also present in apo-structures. Examples of such apo-structures include the FAD utilizing enzyme L-aspartate oxidase, 1CHU,¹¹⁰ the NAD enzyme malate dehydrogenase, 1MLD,¹¹¹ and the NADP enzyme secondary alcohol dehydrogenase, 1PED.¹¹² Some of the FAD-containing structures in our study also contained NADP-binding domains that lacked NADP. All of these apo-NADP domains also contained the structurally conserved water molecule.

There are several potential functional roles for the conserved water molecule in dinucleotide recognition. First, it could help maintain the unique conformation of the glycine-rich phosphate-binding loop. This role is suggested by the presence of the water molecule in apo structures of dinucleotide-binding enzymes, and by the fact that at least two residues of the glycine-rich loop hydrogen bond to the water molecule (Figure 3.5A). These residues interact with the water molecule through their backbone carbonyl or amide groups, thus these protein-water hydrogen bonds appear to stabilize the backbone conformation of the loop by maintaining these residues in specific phi and psi ranges. A second functional role for the water molecule is that it helps to maintain the cofactor in an extended conformation. Experimental and computational studies 114,115 of NAD in

various solvents suggest that NAD⁺ is folded in aqueous solution such that the two bases stack against each other at a distance of about 4-5 Å. Thus, NAD⁺ must unfold into an extended conformation during complexation to the enzyme. The extent to which the enzyme facilitates the unfolding of the cofactor is unknown; however, the protein presumably provides interactions that encourage and maintain the extended geometry. The hydrogen bonding and steric interactions provided by the conserved water molecule could help constrain the dihedral angles of the pyrophosphate group to the values observed in enzyme/dinucleotide complexes. A third possible functional role for the conserved water molecule is that the sequence independent hydrogen bond between the dinucleotide pyrophosphate and the water molecule (Figure 3.5) presumably provides a favorable enthalpic contribution to the free energy of binding. Future studies will explore these potential roles to evaluate their possible contributions to dinucleotide recognition and binding.

3.4 Methods

3.4.1 Selection and preparation of structures

Crystal structures of enzyme/dinucleotide complexes that contained at least one Rossmann fold were selected for analysis. This selection was restricted to structures having resolutions of 1.90 Å or better to ensure reliable solvent structure. Excluded were any structures having mutations other than for expression purposes and any structures having chemical modifications in the active site. 101 structures, representing 43 enzymes, were included in the study (Tables 3.1-3.3). Some of the proteins had representatives in multiple species.

To ensure an accurate accounting of interactions, including those involving solvent positions near subunit interfaces, the biologically relevant oligomeric forms of the enzyme were used. Typically, we used the "Likely Quaternary Structure" obtained from the European Bioinformatics Institute Macromolecular Structure Database (EBI-MSD) via the OCA-browser interface (http://oca.ebi.ac.uk/oca-bin/ocamain). Using symmetry operators, the EBI generates oligomeric structures from coordinates deposited in the PDB. Each structure downloaded from the EBI-MSD was superimposed onto its parent structure from the PDB using CNS¹¹⁶ and visualized in O¹¹⁷ to verify the accuracy of the symmetry expansion and to inspect the dinucleotide-binding site. In a few cases, the symmetry expansion was incorrect or incomplete, and CNS was used to create the correct quaternary structures from the corresponding PDB structures. In other cases, visual inspection revealed that a few subunits contained incompletely modeled NAD⁺ molecules. These subunits were omitted from the subsequent analysis. Bound sulfate ions present due to the crystallization medium were removed.

To facilitate comparison, all the structures were superimposed onto a common structure using CNS. Each protein was superimposed onto the ADH structure of Meijers et al. (1HET) using the alpha-carbon coordinates of the first, third from last, and last residue of the phosphate-binding loop. The molecular visualization programs O and Protein Explorer¹¹⁸ were used to examine the structures.

3.4.2 Hydrogen bonding calculations

Hydrogen bonds found in biological molecules typically have an acceptor-donor distance of 2.7-3.2 Å. 119 For the purposes of our study, the functional definition of a

hydrogen bond was the presence of an acceptor and a donor within 3.2 Å of each other. Only nitrogen and oxygen atoms were considered for our hydrogen bonding calculations (i.e. CH...O hydrogen bonds were not included in Figure 3.3). Due to the difficult nature of assigning hydrogen atom positions for water molecules and hydroxyl groups, as well as the absence of explicit hydrogen atoms in the crystal structures under study, an angle cutoff was not included in our definition of a hydrogen bond. Based on our functional definition, X-PLOR¹²⁰ was used to identify hydrogen bonds.

The data set of structures used in this study contains some redundancy; therefore, hydrogen-bonding calculations for each structure were weighted to avoid biasing the results toward enzymes heavily represented in our data set. Each enzyme contributed equally to the overall average by assigning each structure a weight equal to the inverse of the product of the number of sources per enzyme and the number of structures per source. For example, Table 3.1 lists three structures of UDP-galactose-4-epimerase from E. Coli. Thus, each E0. E1. E2 apiens and six structures from E3. E3. E4 apiens UDP-galactose-4-epimerase structure would receive a weight of 1/6, while each E3. E4 coli UDP-galactose-4-epimerase structure would receive a weight of 1/12. Likewise, since there is only one source and one structure representing E3. E4 hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase (1FMC), it would receive a weight of 1. In addition, most of the structures used in this analysis are oligomers; therefore, the hydrogen bonding data were averaged over all the subunits within each structure.

Chapter 3 Acknowledgments

This project was partially supported by a Big 12 Faculty Fellowship Award to JJT.

Table 3.4. Atoms within 3.4Å of the structurally conserved water molecule.

For completeness, all atoms within 3.4Å of the structurally conserved water molecule are shown. As described in Methods, our functional definition of hydrogen bonds had a 3.2Å cutoff. Atoms in italics are greater than 3.2Å but less than 3.4Å from the structurally conserved water molecule. Therefore, all atoms in italics would not have been included in the calculation of hydrogen bonds to the structurally conserved water molecule. Carbon atoms were also excluded from the hydrogen bonding calculations. Atom notation is ATOMresidueNUMBER (e.g. Ngly201 = atom N of glycine residue 201).

Heading Abbreviations:

PDB ID, Protein Data Bank structure code; PDB wat, residue identification number of the structurally conserved water molecule of the corresponding PDB coordinate file; dinuc, dinucleotide; pyro, pyrophosphate; Gly3, last conserved glycine residue or equivalent; Gly1/Gly2, first and/or second conserved glycine or equivalent; C-term β4, atom from C-terminal residue of β-strand 4; Other N/O, nitrogen or oxygen atom not included in a previous column; dinuc C, dinucleotide carbon atom; Gly CA, alpha carbon of glycine residue; Other C, carbon atom not included in a previous column.

Atomic nomenclature:

C = backbone carbonyl carbon. CA = α carbon. CB = side chain β carbon. N = backbone nitrogen. ND2 = amide nitrogen of Asn side chain. O = backbone oxygen. OD1 = amide oxygen of Asn side chain. OG or OG1 = hydroxyl oxygen (i.e. of Ser or Thr). Note that ND2 and OD1 of Asn are essentially indistinguishable in the crystal structures studied. Atomic nomenclature for the dinucleotides conforms to figure 3.1.

PDB ID	PDB wat	dinuc	pyro	Å	Gly3	Å	Gly1/Gly2	Å	C-term β4	Å	Other N/O	Å	dinuc C	Å	Gly CA	Å	Other C	Å
1A4I	37	NDP	O2N	2.82	Ngly178	3.17	Nser174 OGser174	3.09 2.98	Oala215	2.81							CBser174	3.33
1B37	66	FAD	O1P O5'A	2.94 3.12	Ngly16	2.96	Ngly13	2.83	OGser265	2.67			AC5*	3.33	CAgly13	3.12	Cgly13 CBser265	3.33 3.36
1B4V	631	FAD	O1P	2.69	Nala22	2.93	Ngly19	3.09	Ogly288	2.65	Ngly21	3.34			CAgly19	3.08	Cgly19 <i>CBal</i> a22	3.06 3.29
1B5Q	39	FAD	O1P <i>O5'A</i>	2.87 3.21	Ngly16	2.90	Ngly13 <i>Ogly13</i>	2.81 3.39	OGser265	2.66	OGser15	3.28	AC5*	3.37	CAgly13	3.10	Cgly13	3.26
1BMD	20	NAD	O2N	2.99	Ngly16	2.98	Ogly10	2.56							CAgly13	3.21	Cgly13	3.29
1BW9	33	NAD	O2N	2.68	Ngly187	2.79	Ngly184	3.01	Ocys238	2.87					CAgly184	3.24	CAgly187	3.38
1BXK	2	NAD	O2N	2.80	Ngly14	2.84	Ogly8	2.88							CAgly11	3.39		
1C0K	3002	FAD	O1P	2.72	Ngly1016	2.94	Ngly1013	2.87	Oala1178	2.76					CAgly1013	3.31		
1C0L	2002	FAD	O1P	2.61	Ngly1016	2.93	Ngly1013	2.78	Oala1178	2.84					CAgly1013	3.21		
1C0P	3003	FAD	O1P	2.70	Ngly1016	2.97	Ngly1013	2.90	Oala1178	2.76					CAgly1013	3.32		
1C1D	1163	NAD	O2N	2.77	Ngly187	2.92	Ngly184	3.04	Ocys238	2.80					CAgly184	3.27		
1C1X	1079	NAD	O2N	2.77	Ngly187	2.85	Ngly184	2.98	Ocys238	2.83					CAgly184	3.29		
1CF3	203	FAD	O1P	2.88	Ngly31	2.88	Ngly28	3.05	Oala288	2.75	OG1thr30	3.37			CAgly28	3.12	Cgly28	3.27
1CJC	16	FAD	O1P	2.64	Ngly18	2.90	Ngly15 <i>Ogly15</i>	2.73 3.26	Oser101	2.75					CAgly15	3.11	Cgly15	3.26

PDB ID	PDB wat	dinuc	pyro	Å	Gly3	Å	Gly1/Gly2	Å	C-term β4	Å	Other N/O	Å	dinuc C	Å	Gly CA	Å	Other C	Å
1COY	524	FAD	O1P	2.75	Ngly23	2.96	Ngly20	2.99	Oala288	2.68					CAgly20	3.23	Cgly20	3.20
1CYD	10	NAP	O2N <i>O5'A</i>	2.78 3.24	Ngly20	2.81	Ogly14	3.12	OD1asn83	2.71	Olys17	2.84						
1D7O	38	NAD	O2N O2A O5'A	3.26 3.07 3.12	Ngly33	3.00	Ogly25	2.86	OGser136	3.27					CAgly33	3.40		
1DNC	504	FAD	O1P	2.74	Ngly32	2.81	Ngly29 <i>Ogly29</i>	2.96 3.37	Oala155	2.79					CAgly29	3.32	Cgly29 CBala155	3.31 3.36
1DXY	341	NAD	O2N	2.78	Ngly157	2.98	Ngly154 <i>Ogly15</i> 2	2.81 3.29	Ohis204	2.81					CAgly154	3.26		
1E1M	9	FAD	O1P	2.60	Ngly18	2.82	Ngly15 Ogly15	2.81 3.16	Oser101	2.85					CAgly15	3.11	Cgly15	3.14
1E1M	192	NAP	O1N	2.44	Nala157	3.24	Ngly154	3.09	OGser328 Oser328	2.72 3.16					CAgly154	3.21		
1E6U	9	NAP	O2N	2.70	Ngly16	2.81	Ogly10	3.29	Oala62	2.82					CAgly13	3.32		
1E6W	3	NAD	O2N O5'A	2.83 3.20	Ngly23	2.88	Ogly17	3.01			Oser20	2.95	NC5*	3.23				
1E7W	9	NDP	O2N	2.72	Ngly19	2.97	Ohoh6	3.12	ND2asn109	3.08	Olys16	3.14	AC5*	3.22				
1EE2	6	NAD	O2N	2.78	Ngly203	3.03	Ngly200	2.93	Oval267	3.04					CAgly200	3.32		
1EK5	601	NAD	O2N O5'A	3.16 3.13	Ngly15	2.66	Ogly9	2.84							CAgly12 CAgly15	3.23 3.27	Cgly12	3.31
1EK6	1110	NADH		2.93 3.05	Ngly15	2.78	Ogly9	2.81							CAgly12 CAgly15	3.29 3.28	Cgly12	3.33
1EL5	11	FAD	O1P	2.68	Ngly15	2.89	Ngly12 Ogly10	3.04 3.11	Oser200	2.87								
1EL7	11	FAD	O1P <i>O5'A</i>		Ngly15	2.94	Ngly12 Ogly10	2.81 3.13	Oser200	3.03					CAgly12	3.15	Cgly12	3.28
1EL8	11	FAD	O1P	2.78	Ngly15	2.91	Ngly12 Ogly10	2.82 3.05	Oser200	2.87					CAgly12	3.21	Cgly12	3.31
1EMD	316	NAD	O2N <i>O5'A</i>	2.84 3.29	Ngly13	3.01	Ogly7	2.98	Oser76	3.26					CAgly10	3.29		
1ENO	45	NAD	NO5*	2.70	Ngly33	3.13	Ogly25	2.96	OGser136	3.08								
1F0Y	818	NAD	O2N <i>O5'A</i>	2.75 3.37	Ngly27	2.91	Ngly24	2.88	Oala107	2.75					CAgly24	3.29		
1FEC	52	FAD	O1P	2.61	Ngly15	2.82	Ngly12	3.05	Oala158	2.94					CAgly12	3.28	Cgly12 CBala158	3.37 3.38

PDB ID	PDB wat	dinuc	pyro	Å	Gly3	Å	Gly1/Gly2	Å	C-term β4	Å	Other N/O	Å	dinuc C	Å	Gly CA	Å	Other C	Å
1FL2	528	FAD	O1P	2.65	Ngly224	2.84	Ngly221 Ogly221	2.76 3.34	Oala321	2.70					CAgly221	3.27	Cgly221	3.36
1FMC	196	NAD	O2N <i>O5'A</i>	2.70 3.22	Ngly24	2.82	Ogly18	3.04	ND2asn95	2.85	Oala21	2.73	NC5*	3.39				
1GAD	356	NAD	O2N	2.82	Ngly12	3.01	Ngly9 <i>Ogly7</i>	2.98 3.37	Oala95	3.10					CAgly9	3.11	Cgly9	3.31
1GD1	356	NAD	O2N	2.75	Ngly12	2.93	Ngly9 Ogly7	3.13 3.18	Oser95	2.85					CAgly9	3.30		
1GCO	1	NAD	O2N O5'A	2.69 2.84	Ngly20	2.87	Ogly14	3.17	OD1asn92	2.96	Othr17 Nleu19	2.78 3.36						
1GEG	530	NAD	O2N	2.69	Ngly15	2.83	Ogly9	2.90	ND2asn86	2.80	Ogln12	3.06	NC5*	3.35				
1GER	11	FAD	O1P	2.75	Ngly16	2.93	Ngly13 <i>Ogly11</i>	2.90 3.37	Oala138	2.91					CAgly13	3.19	Cgly13	3.24
1GPE	21	FAD	O1P	2.83	Ngly36	2.97	Ngly33	2.93	Oala292	2.58	OG1thr35	3.26			CAgly33	3.04	Cgly33	3.22
1GRB	490	FAD	O1P	2.68	Ngly32	2.87	Ngly29 <i>Ogly</i> 29	2.86 3.38	Oala155	2.89					CAgly29	3.10	Cgly29	3.16
1GRB	524	NDP	O1N	2.74	Nala199	3.10	Ngly196	2.88	Oala288	2.57					CAgly196	3.24	<i>Cgly196</i> CBala199	3.35 3.13
1GSN	504	FAD	O1P	2.66	Ngly32	2.95	Ngly29 <i>Ogly</i> 29	2.83 3.38	Oala155	2.83					CAgly29	3.12	Cgly29	3.21
1H5Q	1125	NAP	O2N	2.76	Ngly24	3.11					Oarg21 Nile23	2.82 3.00	NC5*	3.19	CAgly22	3.35	Cgly22	3.40
1H7W	1171	FAD	O1P	2.57	Nser199 OGser199	3.01 3.38	Ngly196 Ogly196	2.92 3.17	Ogly282	2.73					CAgly196	3.10	Cgly196	3.14
1H82	232	FAD	O1P O5'A	2.77 3.09	Ngly16	2.91	Ngly13 Ogly13	2.92 3.29	OGser265	2.79	OGser15	3.34	AC5*	3.34	CAgly13	3.14	Cgly13	3.22
1H83	122	FAD	O1P O5'A	2.85 3.08	Ngly16	3.01	Ngly13	2.86	OGser265	2.63			AC5*	3.35	CAgly13	3.12	Cgly13 CBser265	3.35 3.35
1HDO	32	NAP	O2N O3	2.84 3.31	Ngly16	2.84	Ogly10	3.03	Oleu74	3.19					CAgly13	3.23	Cgly13	3.32
1HE2	27	NAP	O2N	2.90	Ngly16	2.84	Ogly10	3.04	Oleu74	3.23					CAgly13	3.23	Cgly13	3.33
1HE3	29	NAP	O2N	2.91	Ngly16	2.79	Ogly10	3.00	Oleu74	3.26					CAgly13	3.21	Cgly13	3.30
1HE4	29	NAP	O2N O3	2.86 <i>3.40</i>	Ngly16	2.81	Ogly10	3.08	Oleu74	3.20					CAgly13	3.25	Cgly13	3.34
1HE5	27	NAP	O2N	2.90	Ngly16	2.83	Ogly10	3.01	Oleu74	3.23					CAgly13	3.19	Cgly13	3.33

PDB ID	PDB wat	dinuc	pyro	Å	Gly3	Å	Gly1/Gly2	Å	C-term β4	Å	Other N/O	Å	dinuc C	Å	Gly CA	Å	Other C	Å
1HET	762	NAD	O2N	2.79	Ngly204	3.00	Ngly201	3.00	Oval268	3.04					CAgly201	3.37		
1HEU	629	NAD	O2N	2.79	Ngly204	3.00	Ngly201	3.00	Oval268	3.06					CAgly201	3.36		
1HYE	1007	NAP	O2N	3.06	Ngly13	2.87	Ogly7	2.86	OG1thr81	2.89							CG1val12	3.23
1HZJ	1101	NAD	O2N O5'A		Ngly15	2.77	Ogly9	2.87							CAgly12 CAgly15	3.33 3.34	Cgly12	3.37
1JA9	630	NDP	O2N	2.76	Ngly42	2.93	Ogly36	3.06	ND2asn114	2.98	Oarg39	2.78	AC4*	3.40				
1JAY	226	NAP	O2N	2.75	Ngly13	2.85	<i>Ngly10</i> Ogly7	3.35 3.12	Othr71	3.32					CAgly10	3.17	Cgly10	3.11
1LDG	13	NAD	O2N	2.87	Ngly32	2.95	Ngly29	2.77	OG1thr97	2.92					CAgly29	3.21	Cgly29	3.40
1NAH	15	NAD	O2N O5'A		Ngly13	2.77	Ogly7	2.85							CAgly13	3.39		
1OAA	12	NAP	O2N	2.70	Ngly21	2.97	Ogly15	3.05	ND2asn101	2.90	Oarg18 Nphe20	2.78 3.32						
1PBE	419	FAD	O1P	2.82	Ngly14	2.97	Ngly11	2.96	Ocys158	2.48					CAgly11	3.15	Cgly11	3.32
1QG6	7	NAD	O2N	2.70	Nala21	3.03	Ogly13	2.94	OGser91	2.84			NC5*	3.29			CBala21	3.33
1QJD	908	FAD	O1P	2.71	Ngly138	2.93	Ngly135	2.94	Oala312	2.66					CAgly135	3.14	Cgly135	3.28
1QRR	444	NAD	O2N <i>O5'A</i>	2.71 3.24	Ngly14	2.71	Ogly8	2.80							CAgly14	3.23		
1QSG	74	NAD	O2N	2.88	Nala21	2.99	Ogly13	2.95	OGser91	2.86								
1UDA	509	NAD	O2N O5'A	2.80 3.10	Ngly13	2.84	Ogly7	2.80										
1UDB	523	NAD	O2N O5'A		Ngly13	2.71	Ogly7	2.90							CAgly13	3.39		
1UDC	514	NAD	O2N O5'A		Ngly13	2.79	Ogly7	2.89										
1XEL	1	NAD	O2N O5'A		Ngly13	2.79	Ogly7	2.81										
1YVE	314	NDP	O2N	2.73	Ngly134	2.84	Nala137	2.95	Oleu199	2.81					CAgly134	3.40	CBala137	3.09
2AE2	114	NAP	O2N O5'A		Ngly22	2.83	Ogly16	3.25	ND2asn94	2.89	Oarg19	2.81	AC5* AC4*	3.31 3.34				
2OHX	77	NAD	O2N	2.73	Ngly204	3.07	Ngly201	2.91	Oval268	3.19					CAgly201	3.28		
2UDP	11	NAD	O2N <i>O5'A</i>	2.79 3.23	Ngly13	2.67	Ogly7	2.69							CAgly13	3.22		

PDB ID	PDB wat	dinuc	pyro	Å	Gly3	Å	Gly1/Gly2	Å	C-term β4	Å	Other N/O Å	dinuc C Å	Gly CA	Å	Other C	Å
3ВТО	64	NAD	O2N	2.73	Ngly201	3.02	Ngly204	2.94	Oval268	3.07						
3COX	524	FAD	O1P	2.70	Ngly23	3.08	Ngly20	2.97	Oala288	2.70			CAgly20	3.15	Cgly20	3.16
3GRS	45	FAD	O1P	2.66	Ngly32	2.96	Ngly29	2.88	Oala155	2.88			CAgly29	3.17	Cgly29	3.19

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Vita

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