4th Advanced in silico Drug Design workshop/hackathon

21-25 January 2019 Olomouc, Czech Republic

# Pharmacophore Modeling: How to Enhance Virtual Screening Efficacy in Early Drug Discovery



**Thierry Langer** 



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Univerzita Palackého

# **Answer Important Questions**



#### Selection - Hit ID

• Which molecule(s) to chose for biological assessment ?

Optimize selectivity towards excluding false positives

#### Design - Lead Optimization

• How to modify molecules for optimizing properties ?

Optimize a structure towards multiple key parameters



# **The Pharmacophore Concept**



"A pharmacophore is the ensemble of steric and electronic features that is necessary to ensure the optimal supramolecular interactions with a specific biological target and to trigger (or block) its biological response."

C.-G. Wermuth et al., Pure Appl. Chem. 1998, 70: 1129-1143



## **Feature-based Pharmacophores**



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Totality of universal chemical features that represent a defined binding mode of a ligand to a bio-molecular target

Features: Electrostatic interactions, H-bonding, aromatic interactions, hydrophobic regions, coordination to metal ions ...



## **Pharmacophore Screening** ...







[Mangold 2006] Martina Mangold. *Human Rhinovirus Coat Protein Inhibitors - A Pharmacophore Modeling Approach*. Master's thesis at the University of Innsbruck (2006)



#### **Pharmacophore Screening** ...





[Mangold 2006]

Martina Mangold. *Human Rhinovirus Coat Protein Inhibitors - A Pharmacophore Modeling Approach*. Master's thesis at the University of Innsbruck (2006)



#### There Is A Problem ...



- "Old" 3D pharmacophore methods suffer from severe limitations
  - different tools return inconsistent results
  - alignment by graph matching ----> slow
  - low number of features ----> inaccurate

# What is the solution ?



#### **Pattern Recognition**





T. Langer, 2019-01-23

### ... Breaking the Code



• Why Yuor Barin Can Raed Tihs

http://www.livescience.com/18392-reading-jumbled-words.html



## ... Breaking the Code



 It deson't mttaer in waht oredr the Itteers in a wrod aepapr, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and Isat Itteer are in the rghit pcale. The rset can be a toatl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit pobelrm.

http://www.livescience.com/18392-reading-jumbled-words.html



### ... Breaking the Code



 S1M1L4RLY, YOUR M1ND 15 R34D1NG 7H15 4U70M471C4LLY W17H0U7 3V3N 7H1NK1NG 4B0U7 17

http://www.livescience.com/18392-reading-jumbled-words.html



### **Distance Characteristics**



#### Result: Best matching pairs for each feature





### **Distance Characteristics**



#### Result: Best matching pairs for each feature



Final step: 3D rotation using Kabsch algorithm



# LigandScout Prototype 2003





Gerhard Wolber University of Innsbruck



Thierry Langer<sup>1)</sup> and Gerhard Wolbe

<sup>1)</sup> University of Innsbruck, Innsbruck, Aust
 <sup>2)</sup> Inte:Ligand GmbH, Vienna, Aust



# LigandScout Prototype 2003





#### Gerhard Wolber University of Innsbruck



# **LigandScout Evolution**



- Automated structure-based pharmacophores
- Alignment algorithm development
- Ligand-based pharmacophore generation & clustering
- Virtual screening
- Software code refactoring
- Implementation of dynamic relational databases
- Including docking algorithms & rescoring technology
- Creation of Inte:Ligand KNIME Extension Nodes
- Pharmacophore-based analysis of MD trajectories



## LigandScout 4.4 Expert







#### **LigandScout Scientific Articles**

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- More than 1700 papers\*
  - structure-based modeling
  - ligand-based modeling
  - virtual screening
- Hit identification
- Fragment-based design
- Lead structure optimization
- Protein-Protein Interactions
- Drug repurposing
- Profiling (side-effects)

 rotein Interface Pharmacophore Mapping Tools for Small Molecule rotein: Protein Interaction Inhibitor Discovery
 Arnout Voet<sup>1,\*</sup>, Eleanor F. Banwell<sup>2</sup>, Kamlesh K. Sahu<sup>1</sup>, Jonathan G. Heddle<sup>2</sup> and Kam Y. J. Zhang<sup>1</sup>
 <sup>1</sup>Zhang Initiative Research Unit, and <sup>2</sup>Heddle Initiative Research Unit, Advanced Science Institute, RIKEN, 2-1 Hirotwa, Wako, Saitama 351-0198, Japan
 Abstract: Protein:protein interactions are becoming increasingly significant as potential drug targets; however, the rational identification of small molecule inhibitors of such interactions remains a challenge. Pharmacophore modelling is a nonular tool for virtual screening of compound libraries. and has previously been successfully applied to the discovery of ling in the field of protein:protein interaction inns limited. In this review, we explore the interacing, demonstrating the validity of pharmacophore

lling in the field of protein:protein interaction inns limited. In this review, we explore the interacig, demonstrating the validity of pharmacophore the pharmacophore mapping methods that have These successful cases demonstrate the usefulness ations demonstrate the usefulness

Laura De Luca,<sup>\*[a]</sup> Maria Letizia Barreca,<sup>\*[b]</sup> Stefania Ferro,<sup>[a]</sup> Frauke Christ,<sup>[c]</sup> Nunzio Iraci,<sup>[b]</sup> Rosaria Gitto,<sup>[a]</sup> Anna Maria Monforte,<sup>[a]</sup> Zeger Debyser,<sup>\*[c]</sup> and Alba Chimirri<sup>[a]</sup>

Integrase and Cellular Cofactor LEDGF/p75

The cellular protein lens epitheliun transcriptional coactivator p75 (LED in HIV integration. The protein-prc tween HIV-1 integrase (IN) and its c may therefore serve as targets for anti-HIV drugs. In this work, a struc model for potential small-molecu LEDGF/p75 interaction was develop software. The 3D model obtained v ing of our in-house chemical data: identification of compound CHIBA. for further optimization. The rationa

Identification of the first non-peptidic small molecule inhibitor of the c-Abl/14-3-3 protein–protein interactions able to drive sensitive and Imatinib-resistant leukemia cells to apoptosis

Valentina Corradi<sup>a,†</sup>, Manuela Mancini<sup>b</sup>, Fabrizio Manetti<sup>a</sup>, Sara Petta<sup>b</sup>, Maria Alessandra Santucci<sup>b</sup>, Maurizio Botta<sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Dipartimento Farmaco Chimico Tecnologico, Università degli Studi di Siena, Via Aldo Moro 2, I-53100 Siena, Italy <sup>b</sup> Dipartimento di Ematologia e Scienze Oncologiche "Lorenzo e Ariosto Seràgnoli", Università di Bologna, Via Massarenti 9, I-40138 Bologna, Italy

A R T I C L Article history: Received 28 June Revised 3 Augus Accepted 4 Augu

Therapeutic Discovery

Molecular Cancer

#### New Use for an Old Drug: Inhibiting ABCG2 with Sorafenib

Yinxiang Wei<sup>1,3</sup>, Yuanfang Ma<sup>3</sup>, Qing Zhao<sup>1,4</sup>, Zhiguang Ren<sup>1,3</sup>, Yan Li<sup>1</sup>, Tingjun Hou<sup>2</sup>, and Hui Peng<sup>1</sup>

Abstract

Human ABCG2, a member of the ATP-binding cassette transporter superfamily, represents a promising target for sensitizing MDR in cancer chemotherapy. Although lots of ABCG2 inhibitors were identified, none of them has been tested clinically, maybe because of several problems such as toxicity or safety and pharma-cokinetic uncertainty of compounds with novel chemical structures. One efficient solution is to rediscover new uses for existing drugs with known pharmacokinetics and safety profiles. Here, we found the new use for

\* <u>scholar.google.com</u>, Jan 2019

# A Few Recent Success Stories (1)



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 First dual inhibitor of the 5-lipoxygenase-activating protein and soluble epoxide hydrolase by pharmacophore-based VS



Temml, V. et al., Nature Sci. Rep., 7, 42751; doi: 10.1038/srep42751 (2017)

### A Few Recent Success Stories (2)



- Active compound binds to pheromone binding proteins (PBPs) to modulate the behavior of Cydia pomonella
- Avoid damage to fruit production
- First use of pharmacophore modeling for discovery of semiochemicals





Liu, J., et al., Nature Sci. Rep. 6, (2016); doi :10.1038/srep34600



#### A Few Recent Success Stories (2)

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### A Few Recent Success Stories (3)

 Discriminating agonists and antagonist ligands of the nuclear receptors using 3D-pharmacophores





Lagarde, N. et al., J Cheminform (2016). DOI 10.1186/s13321-016-0154-2



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# An Interesting Article To Read ...

CHEMICAL INFORMATION

#### pubs.acs.org/jcim

Article

#### Highly Specific and Sensitive Pharmacophore Model for Identifying CXCR4 Antagonists. Comparison with Docking and Shape-Matching Virtual Screening Performance

Arnaud S. Karaboga,<sup>†,§</sup> Jesús M. Planesas,<sup>‡,§</sup> Florent Petronin,<sup>†</sup> Jordi Teixidó,<sup>‡</sup> Michel Souchet,<sup>\*,†</sup> and Violeta I. Pérez-Nueno<sup>\*,†,‡</sup>

<sup>†</sup>Harmonic Pharma, Espace Transfert, 615 rue du Jardin Botanique, 54600 Villers lès Nancy, France <sup>‡</sup>Grup d'Enginyeria Molecular, Institut Químic de Sarrià (IQS), Universitat Ramon Llull, Barcelona, Spain

ABSTRACT: HIV infection is initiated by fusion of the virus with the target cell through binding of the viral gp120 protein with the CD4 cell surface receptor protein and the CXCR4 or CCR5 coreceptors. There is currently considerable interest in developing novel ligands that can modulate the conformations of these coreceptors and, hence, ultimately block virus—cell fusion. Herein, we present a highly specific and sensitive pharmacophore model for identifying CXCR4 antagonists that could potentially serve as HIV entry inhibitors. Its performance was compared with docking and shapematching virtual screening approaches using 3OE6 CXCR4 crystal structure and high-affinity ligands as query molecules, respectively. The performance of these methods was compared by virtually screening a library assembled by us, consisting of 228 high affinity known CXCR4 inhibitors from 20 different chemotype families and 4696 similar presumed inactive molecules. The area under the ROC plot (AUC), enrichment factors, and diversity of the



resulting virtual hit lists was analyzed. Results show that our pharmacophore model achieves the highest VS performance among all the docking and shape-based scoring functions used. Its high selectivity and sensitivity makes our pharmacophore a very good filter for identifying CXCR4 antagonists. Karaboga et al., J. Chem. Inf. Model. 53 1043—1056 (2013)



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**LigandScout for VS** Pharmacophore from PDB entry 30E6

#### Figure 2. CXCR4 pharmacophore model with a high activity CXCR4 antagonist aligned. Five-featured manually refined final pharmacophore model. The pharmacophore hydrophobic features are shown in yellow. Positively charged features are shown in blue, and hydrogen bond donor features are shown in green.

Karaboga et al., J. Chem. Inf. Model. 2013, 53, 1043–1056

Figure 3. ROC plot validation of the pharmacophore model applied to CXCR4 antagonists. Values of area under the curve (AUC) and enrichment factor (EF) are displayed at 1, 5, 10, and 100% of screened database, respectively. These values highlight the high sensitivity and specificity of the designed pharmacophore model.







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# **Virtual Screening Performance**



Karaboga et al., J. Chem. Inf. Model. 2013, 53, 1043–1056



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# **Virtual Screening Performance**











# **The Conclusions**



- Overall, the total area under de curve of the ROC plot and the early recovery results of the present pharmacophore model show that it is a highly specific and sensitive screening filter, which makes it very appropriate for identifying CXCR4 antagonists.
- Moreover, the scaffold retrieval analysis shows that the pharmacophore model is able to retrieve a diverse scaffold pool.

Karaboga et al., J. Chem. Inf. Model. 2013, 53, 1043–1056



# **Fragment-based Drug Design**

#### MedChemComm

#### **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

View Article Online View Journal | View Issue



Cite this: Med. Chem. Commun., 2016, 7, 506

#### Received 5th October 2015, Accepted 28th December 2015

DOI: 10.1039/c5md00444f

www.rsc.org/medchemcomm

#### Fragment pharmacophore-based in silico screening: a powerful approach for efficient lead discovery<sup>†</sup>

Laurence Deyon-Jung,\*<sup>a</sup> Christophe Morice,\*<sup>a</sup> Florence Chéry,<sup>a</sup> Julie Gay,<sup>a</sup> Thierry Langer,<sup>ab</sup> Marie-Céline Frantz,<sup>c</sup> Roger Rozot<sup>c</sup> and Maria Dalko-Csiba<sup>c</sup>

Through a process of fragmentation, functionalization, and recombination of market approved molecules for cosmetic usage, we customized an *in-house* virtual library comprising molecules ideally suited for virtual screening. Computational pharmacophore-based screening of this virtual library followed by a 3 month optimization phase led to the identification of an optimized lead with all its expected properties in hand to be developed as a candidate molecule for skin care in cosmetic applications. The success of this pilot project paves the way for other cosmetic targets of interest.









#### **Pharmacophores for FBDD**









#### **Pharmacophores for FBDD**









### **Pharmacophores for FBDD**









# In Silico FBDD Strategy



- Use set of smart, recombinable fragments
- Perform pharmacophore-based screening
- Recombine fragments in silico
- Synthesize the highest ranked solutions
  - IP situation
  - Fit for the target
  - Chemical tractability
  - Physicochemical properties





# **Real Life - The Numbers**



- PPI target with known 3D structure (x-ray)
- Pharmacophore derived in direct approach
- Chemistry based fragment library design: 274 -> 837 -> 582
- Virtual combination of 2 fragments: 91k compounds
- LigandScout virtual screening delivered a reasonably small number of hits: 0.005% range
- Synthesis and biological testing: Novel IP, low  $\mu M$  hits





#### T. Langer, 2019-01-23



A medicinal chemistry company

## **Real Life - Timelines**



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# **First Summary**



- Universal and rapid method for accurate feature-based
  3D-pharmacophore model generation now available
- Highly selective models will retrieve low number of false positives
- High enrichment factor will be obtained
- Where and how to apply such models in the drug discovery pipeline ?

#### • What are the next steps to integrate ?



### **Statics & Dynamics**






## **Molecular Dynamics**



- MD approaches have gained substantial interest in early drug discovery due to parallel computing hardware options\*
- Interpretation of MD trajectories still cumbersome
- Pharmacophores are a perfect solution

J. Mortier et al., Drug Discov Today. 2015. 20(6):686-702. doi: 10.1016



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Teaser An overview on molecular dynamics (MD) studies illustrating the range of applications in the field of drug design.



#### The impact of molecular dynamics on drug design: applications for the characterization of ligand– macromolecule complexes

#### Jérémie Mortier<sup>1</sup>, Christin Rakers<sup>1</sup>, Marcel Bermudez<sup>1</sup>, Manuela S. Murgueitio<sup>1</sup>, Sereina Riniker<sup>2</sup> and Gerhard Wolber<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Pharmacy, Freie Universität Berlin, Königin-Luise-Strasse 2+4, 14195 Berlin, Germany <sup>2</sup> Laboratory of Physical Chemistry, ETH Zürich, Vladimir-Prelog-Weg 2, CH-8093 Zurich, Switzerland

Among all tools available to design new drugs, molecular dynamics (MD) simulations have become an essential technique. Initially developed to investigate molecular models with a limited number of atoms, computers now enable investigations of large macromolecular systems with a simulation time reaching the microsecond range. The reviewed articles cover four years of research to give an overview on the actual impact of MD on the current medicinal chemistry landscape with a particular emphasis on studies of ligand–protein interactions. With a special focus on studies combining computational approaches with data gained from other techniques, this review shows how deeply embedded MD simulations are in drug design strategies and articulates what the future of this technique could be.

#### Jérémie Mortier

is a postdoctoral fellow in Gerhard Wolber's computer-aided drug design group at the Free University of Berlin, Germany. His main field of research is at the interface of biological and medicinal chemistry, with a particular focus on the prediction and



understanding of molecular systems, their structures and interactions. After a Master in Chemistry in 2006, he was first introduced to computational chemistry during his PhD in pharmaceutical and biomedical sciences at the University of Namur, Belgium, in 2010. His position is currently funded by a fellowship from the Deutsche Forschung Gemeinschaft.

weir as Cambridge, Massachuseus, before

Sereina Riniker received her PhD at ETH Zurich in the field of molecular dynamics simulations. In 2012, she moved on to take a postdoctoral position in cheminformatics at the Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research in



REVIEWS

# **MD and Pharmacophores**



- Analysing molecular dynamics trajectories
- Finding relevant pharmacophore models
- Defining ways to calculate similarities
- Sampling and identification of rare (but important) events
- Using pharmacophores as a way to abstract ligandprotein interactions in MD trajectories



# **Model POC Study**



- Data set: 40 Protein ligand complexes selected from PDB / DUD-E
  - single ligand, no metal ions involved in binding interaction, < 200k atoms</li>
- MD Simulation: 10 x 20 ns, CHARMM, TIP3P water
  - 1 fs time steps, coordinate saved every 10 ps
- Pharmacophore generation & virtual screening analysis
  - 10 x 2.000 coordinate sets + 10 x 1 PDB structures = 20.010 P4 Models
  - Pharmacophore vector for feature frequency analysis
  - Parallel virtual screening with all models
  - Post screening processing for ranking the hits





# **Model POC Study**



 Data set: 40 Protein ligand complex / DUD-E Nuclear receptor 7 - single ligand, no metal ions invol atoms Protease 4 MD Simulation: 10 x 20 ns, 1 fs time steps, coordinate Miscelaneous 2 Other enzymes 10 Pharmacophore generatic GPCR 2 ng a - 10 x 2.000 coordinate sets - x 1 PDF 010 Pharmacophore vector for fea – Parallel virtual screening with a Kinase 15 Post screening processing for ranking Wieder M. et al., J. Chem. Inf. Model., 57, 365-385 (2017)



# **Sampling Pharmacophore Models**





PDB ID 2178: MD pharmacophore features, appearance in % of total frames

Wieder M. et al., J. Chem. Inf. Model., 57, 365-385 (2017)



### P4 Vector MD Analysis



AR2	AR1	H1	H5	H6	H4	H3	H2	HBA1	HBA9	HBA8	HBA6	HBA7	HBA5	HBA4	HBA3	HBA2	HBD1	PI1	#p4	% tf
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1818	9,1%
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	826	4,1%
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	805	4,0%
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	683	3,4%
0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	455	2,3%
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	451	2,3%
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	424	2,1%
0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	384	1,9%
0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	363	1,8%
0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	353	1,8%
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	332	1,7%
0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	325	1,6%
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	259	1,3%
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	236	1,2%
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	217	1,1%
0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	205	1,0%
0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	180	0,9%
1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	176	0,9%
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	169	0,8%
***************************************																				
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	45	0,2%
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	44	0,2%
0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	43	0,2%
0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	43	0,2%
0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	41	0,2%
0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	40	0,2%
0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	40	0,2%
0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	37	0,2%
0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	37	0,2%
0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	36	0,2%
	MD pharmacophore feature							P	PDB pharmacophore feature							PDB initial pharmacophore				



# **Sampling Pharmacophore Models**



- Out of a total of 260k possibilities, 50 400 combinations exist
- Many features are not present in the initial PDB-derived pharmacophore model
- Initial PDB model does not have the highest frequency
- Frequency does not seem to have an impact on quality of screening result

# How to use all this information ?



## **Post-screening Process**



- Underlying Principle
  - A true active molecule should have a higher chance to fit more than one model than a false positive one
  - A higher enrichment should be obtained when using a consensus fit approach
- Application: "Common Hits Approach (CHA)"
  - First, all hits from all models are considered
  - Then, the hits are ranked by the number models they fit



#### VS Results Example: AUC (2i78)





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#### **How Diverse Are The Hits ?**







#### Garon, A. et al., manuscript in preparation







Garon, A. et al., manuscript in preparation

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#### 0.1 % of database screened

Garon, A. et al., manuscript in preparation

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#### 0.5% of database screened

Garon, A. et al., manuscript in preparation

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#### 1% of database screened

Garon, A. et al., manuscript in preparation

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#### 5% of database screened

Garon, A. et al., manuscript in preparation

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# **Enrichment & AUC**



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Garon, A. et al., manuscript in preparation

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# **MD in Optimization Strategy**



- A growing number of MD trajectories is available, however it is difficult to interpret them for design guidance
- Need for easy understandable interaction schemes

#### **First Steps**

- Focus on specific regions
  - e.g. looking for water mediated ligand-protein interactions
- Pharmacophore feature frequency analysis
  - for prioritising replacement of molecular substructures



#### **Current Implementation**







# **MD Trajectory Analysis**







# **Find Models With Specific Feature**





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# **Find Models With Specific Feature**





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### **Further Steps in the Procedure**



- Create for each frame a grid within the binding site
- Perform grid calculations
  - Buriedness and drugability threshold
  - Interaction probabilities for each grid point
- Align the grids
- Visualize and analyse
  - Look for emerging binding pockets
  - Hot spots for interactions
  - Water



# **Visual Analysis**





'unhappy' water molecules

'happy' water molecules

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# **Use in Lead Optimization**



- Easy understandable design guidance provided
- Focus on specific regions
  - e.g. replacing 'unhappy' water molecules with small hydrophobic substituent ("magic methyl positioning")
- Pharmacophore hotspot feature frequency analysis
  - for prioritizing replacement/modifications of molecular substructures
  - providing interaction preference guidance
  - easily adaptable for automatization for de novo design



# **Example: Modafinil Analogs**





Pharmacophore analysis of MD trajectory reveals predominant ligand-protein interactions

Kalaba, P. et al., 2017: DOI 10.1021/acs.jmedchem.7b01313



# **Example: Valerenic Acid Analogs**



Designing  $\beta_{2/3}$  selective GABA<sub>A</sub> modulators, inspired by the natural product Valerenic Acid (VA)



- Identified in Valeriana officinalis
- GABA<sub>A</sub> receptor modulator
- ß<sub>2/3</sub>-subunit selective
- anticonvulsant and anxiolytic
- hits also other interesting targets



### **VA Putative Binding Mode**





#### D. Luger et al., Brit. J. Pharmacol. (2015) 172 5403–5413



#### **VA Putative Binding Mode**





D. Luger et al., Brit. J. Pharmacol. (2015) 172 5403–5413



# P4-based Scaffold Hopping

- Total synthesis of VA by Ramhalter & Mulzer\*:
  13 steps, overall yield 8%, starting from (R)-glycidol
- Optimized lead VP-13: 3 steps, overall yield > 80%\*\*



- <sup>\*</sup> J. Ramhalter, J. Mulzer, Org. Lett. (2009) 11, 1151 1153
- \*\* M. Stadler et al., J. Med. Chem. (2019) 62, 317-341



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#### **Chloride Current Enhancement**



#### **VP-13** is more efficient in modulating $\alpha_1\beta_3\gamma_2$ than VA and VA-A



VP-13: Emax 1477.7 ± 71.1 %; EC50: 8.4 ± 1.5 μM



### **Anticonvulsant Activity**



**VP-13** is more potent in elevation of seizure threshold in male C57BL/6N mice induced by PTZ (tail vein infusion, same conditions) than VA



#### Conclusions



 Our pattern recognition-base pharmacophore technique is superior to all previous P4 methods with respect to speed and accuracy

#### Highly useful for hit identification

• The pharmacophore interaction analysis concept is no more limited to static observation but is available in a convenient dynamic approach

#### Highly useful for lead structure optimization







- On average, the CHA retrieved more structurally diverse actives than the PDB method
- The higher the number of considered molecules, the more diverse the retrieved actives
- Next steps: Comparison with pharmacophore fingerprint methods



### Thank you for your attention
## LigandScout: Introduction



- Fully integrated molecular design package
- High end GUI & command line tools
- Workflow integration into KNIME



# LigandScout: Unique Features



#### Structure-based pharmacophore modeling

- Automated recognition of ligand-protein interactions
- User-friendly analysis of tautomers & side chain rotamers

#### Ligand-based pharmacophore modeling

- Pharmacophore-based ligand clustering
- Automated creation of exclusion volume for ligand-based pharmacophores
- Unlimited number of features per pharmacophore

#### **Virtual screening**

• Speed & accuracy increases with the number of features



#### What's New in LigandScout 4.4?

- 2D Molecule editor for convenient structure editing
- Binding affinity prediction and atom contribution display
- Automated protein binding site alignment
- Radar plot for interactive graphics-based data analysis
- New features in scatter & parallel coordinate plots
  - colouring points, reversing axes, ready to use math functions ...



#### What's New in LigandScout 4.3?

- Remote execution from the GUI:
  - iScreen on local HP clusters or on the Amazon Cloud\*
  - idbgen on local HP clusters or on the Amazon Cloud\*
- Halogen bond acceptor feature
- New fully searchable online help system



#### **Remote Execution from the GUI**

# LigandScout Remote: A New User-Friendly Interface for HPC and Cloud Resources

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**ABSTRACT:** High-performance computing (HPC) clusters play a major role in scientific research. However, working with these clusters is often cumbersome, especially for researchers without a formal background in computer science. It requires preparation and transfer of the input data, manual gathering of results, and command-line expertise. Current approaches for improving accessibility to remote HPC clusters are focused on providing web-based graphical front-ends that allow jobs to be submitted to the distributed resource management system running on the cluster. This comes with significant usability benefits over command-line usage but does not circumvent the need for manual handling of the input and output files. With LigandScout Remote, we propose a different solution. Our software enables the seamless integration of HPC resources into the LigandScout desktop application that scientists use also in their day-to-day work. By handling necessary data conversion and network communication transparently to the user, this approach completely evades any HPC usability barriers. We show that the developed software combines the usability of local graphical desktop applications with the performance of HPC clusters.





#### What's New in LigandScout 4.2 ?



- User interactive charts for analyzing and filtering tables
- Fully editable tables, import & export from and to Excel
- Fully editable parameter sets for library filtering
- Find ligands present in the PDB database in any table
- Remodelled workflow for ligand-based pharmacophore generation
- Visualization of multiple superimposed binding sites
- MD trajectory import from AMBER & Gromacs, in addition to Charmm
- Automated creation of pharmacophores from MD trajectories
- Tools for analysis of pharmacophores derived from MD



## LigandScout Expert: KNIME Integration Wiensität

#### LigandScout functionality in KNIME workflows

- Molecular structure data input and output
- Data set manipulation
- Conformational analysis
- LigandScout 3D database generation
- Query builder for ChEMBL online databank
- Patent searching in SureChEMBL
- Virtual screening & Activity profiling
- MD trajectory analysis using pharmacophores
- Toxicity prediction

Deploy easy-to-use workflows to co-workers



### **The Inte:Ligand KNIME Extensions**





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### **The Inte:Ligand KNIME Extensions**

#### LigandScout functionality available in KNIME

- Batch data extraction from ChEMBL
- Conformational analysis & 3D database generation
- Batch mode for pharmacophore model building (LB & SB)
- Pharmacophore-based analysis of MD trajectories
- Virtual screening & activity profiling
- Validated toxicity models from eTox Consortium
- Patent searching using SureChEMBL

Screening
Activity Profiling
IScreen
Models

IL-Carcinogenesis-Models

- O IL-DILI-Models
- IL-MAO-Models
- O IL-Tox-Models
- IL-hERG-Models







### **Batch Mode Pharmacophore Generation**





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## LigandScout VS in KNIME





- Input molecule files (smiles/sdf/mol2)
- Screen with your favourite pharmacophore model(s)
- Retrieve ranked hits



## LigandScout Docking in KNIME





- Input PDB protein structure & list of molecules (smiles/sdf/mol2)
- Perform docking experiment
- Output sdf file of docked poses for further ranking



### **Search for Patented Structures**







## **3D Visualizer within Knime**







# **Activity Profiling**



inte:ligand Advance Your Molecular Design





## **Toxicity Assessment Models**



#### 7 year collaborative EC Project on Toxicity Prediction

Executive Committee	
NOVARTIS Bayer HealthCare Fundació IN Pharmaceuticals	
EFPIA	
AstraZeneca Boehringer ESTEVE	oSmithKline
Lundbeck K Pfizer (Roche) SANOFI	
	SERVIEN
Academia	
	raunhofer 🔀 🕅 🕅
	tät
Vien	VU University Amsterdam
SMEs	
Chemotargets interligand LMD Lhasa	Molecular Networks





### **KNIME Nodes Available for ...**



Advance Your Molecular Design



#### **KNIME Tutorial Workflows**



#### Inteiligand KNIME EXTENSION TUTORIAL CARD 3 Create Ligand Based Pharmacophore Models

01/0

Experience level: intermediate

Node Repository Sequence Read a SMILES file by using "SM Connect the output of "SMILES Conformer Generator" node PDB Reader Configure "Icon Conformer Gene Pharmacophore Connect the first port of "Icon C Ligand-based with the second input port of " Pharmacophore Clustering" node and execute it Creator Connect the second output por "Pharmacophore/Molecule Clus port of "Ligand-based Pharmace o Configure "Ligand-based Pharm selecting the "Treat cluster inc Connect "Ligand-based Pharma "Pharmacophore Writer" node "Export all pharmacophores t Choose the folder in which sa execute the node

Time needed: 15 minutes

In the Node Repository panel, open the "I/O" drop do the "SMILES Reader" [1] node and drag and drop it into F6[2] A pop-up window for configuration will appear the traffic light underneath the node, which was red right click on it and press "Execute" from the pop-up visit the Node Repository panel again and open the Look for the "Icon Conformer Generator" node and dri node (black triangle) with the input port of the "icon node and configure it. In the pop-up window, click o (F7). In the "Clustering" drop down menu select the connect the first output of the "Icon Conformer Gene "Pharmacophore" drop down menu, drag and drop 1 second output port of "Pharmacophore/Molecule Clu configure it selecting the "Treat cluster individually" the first output port of the "Ligand-based Pharmacop pharmacophores to a single file" and choose a nam Press OK and execute the node (F7). [4] The program the pharmacophore model(s) you have generated.

Where to go from here:

 Screening database(s) against pharmacophore Use generated pharmacophores for Activity Pre



Inteiligand KNIME EXTENSION TUTORIAL CARD 1

#### Create Structure Based Pharmacophore Models

Experience level: basic Time needed: 10 minutes

#### Advanced controls (opt.) Prepare batch mode processing:

coat to the model

saved as separate files)

Configure "PDB Reader" node to read

multiple PDB files at the same time

Modify pharmacophore creation parameters

Explore the options of the "Pharmacophore

Writer" node (e.g. pharmacophore models

Configure "Structure-based Pharmacophore

Creator" node to add the exclusion volume

Sequence Read a PDB file by using "PDB Reader" node Node Repository Connect the output of "PDB Reader" node with "Structure-based Pharmacophore Creator" node PDB Reader o Configure "Structure-based Pharmacophore Creator" Pharmacophore Writer Pharmacophore node and execute it Connect "Structure-based Pharmacophore Creator" Structure-based Pharmacophore Creator node with "Pharmacophore Writer" node Configure "Pharmacophore Writer" node selecting "Export all pharmacophores to a single file" Choose the folder in which save my\_model.pmz, then execute the node

In the Node Repository panel, open the "I/O" drop down menu in the LigandScout section to see all the Input/Output nodes. Look for the "PDB Reader" [1] node and drag and drop it into the workspace. Configure the "PDB Reader" node by using a left double click or by pressing F6. [2] A pop-up window for configuration will appear and you enter the path to the PDB file you want to load. Press the "Add" button. You can add multiple PDB files. After pressing OK, the traffic light underneath the node, which was red before, will turn to outton. You can add multiple PUB files. After pressing UK, the traffic light underneath the node, which was red before, will turn to yellow. Press F7 to execute the node (alternatively, you can right click on it and press "Execute" from the pop-up menu). The traffic light will turn green once the node has finished the task. Now, visit the Node Repository panel again and open the "Pharmacophore" drop down menu in the LigandScout drop down menu. Look for the "Structure-based Pharmacophore Creator" node and drag and drop it into the workspace. Connect the output port of the "PDB Reader" node (black triangle) with the input port of the "Structure-based Pharmacophore Creator" node (black triangle) [3]. Select the "Structure-based Pharmacophore Creator" node and configure it. in the popup window, select the minimum number of features necessary or creating the model (3) and the set the flag for adding an exclusion volume coat. After pressing OK, execute the node as before (F7). Once the task is finished the traffic light underneath the "Structurebased Pharmacophore Creator" node will turn green. In the "I/O" drop down menu select the "Pharmacophore Writer" node and drag and drop it in the workspace, connect the output of the "Structure-based Pharmacophore Creator" node with it and start the configuration as before. In the pop-up windows select "Export all pharmacophores to a single file" and choose a name for the output (you can also browse for the folder). [4] Press OK and execute the node (F7). The program will save a file in the specified directory containing the

pharmacophore model(s) you have generated.



#### e level: basic d: 5 minutes Advanced controls (opt.) sing "SDF Reader" node Calculate physicochemical properties:

Perform Vi-

ut of "SDF Reader" node with "Standard Configure "Standard Properties" node to compute different sets of properties erties" node and execute it perties" node with "Library Filter" node Modify filtering parameters: er" node and execute it Add other text and/or numeric filters in "Library Filter" node put port of "Library Filter" node with Configure the "Library Filter" node output port of "Library Filter" node with adding multiple properties to your filter

InterLigand KNIME EXTENSION TUTORIAL CARD 3

Calculate Physicochemical Properties and Filter a Database

#### Explore all the filtering operators (equal, different, smaller than, greater than)

op down menu in the LigandScout section to see all the input/Output nodes. Look for the workspace. Configure the node as showed in previous tutorial cards (by pressing ository panel again and open the "Molecule properties" drop down menu in the fard Properties" node and drag and drop it into the workspace. Connect the output nt of the "Standard Properties" node. Select the "Standard Properties" node and configure mical properties you want to compute (these properties will be used in the next at once by pressing the corresponding "Select all" button. After pressing OK, execute Ject the "Library Filter" node and drag and drop it in the workspace, connect the antinue with its configuration. In the pop-up windows, the "Library Filter" node tring (pressing the "+abc" button)[1 red circle] or numeric property (pressing the in and a filtering row will appear. Configure the row by choosing "MolWt" in the n[2] until "c" symbol appears. Write then in the editable text box a value to use for he node will filter out molecules with molecular weight smaller than 400. Explore er" node and drag and drop two of them in the workspace. Connect them with sectively. The "SOF Writer" node connected to the first output port of the cular weight smaller than 400, while the one connected to the second output ater than 400. Configure the "SDF Writer" nodes choosing the name for the failed\_molecules.sdf for the second). Execute them with F7.[4]



#### ed controls (opt.) Ligand parameters Bure "SDF Reader" node to extract name a different column BEST settings) mer Generator" settings (e.g. ameters for "IScreen" node the scoring function agment screening mode erent retrieval modes e the node in order to not check the de processi acophore Reader" s at the same time node to read

NA KNIME EXTENSION TUTORIAL CARD 4

in expression with "iScreen" node not 3. Numbers are referred to the s ranking in the "Pharmacophore

into the workspace. Configure the op the "Icon Conformer Gener port of the "SDF Reader" node node. In the pop-up window, /O\* drop down menu ,select the mer Generator" node DB file.[3] Execute and then drop down menu. Add the acophore model you want to cond input port of the he name for the output file. cules as a sdf file.

(4



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