

Volume 45, Issue 17, Page 619-632, 2024; Article no.UPJOZ.3849 ISSN: 0256-971X (P)

Identification of Novel Drug Compound for the Mutated Protein (PKBB-Protein Kinase B, Beta) Responsible for Endometrial Cancer Using Advanced *Insilico* **Drug Designing Technique**

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Article Information

DOI[: https://doi.org/10.56557/upjoz/2024/v45i174407](https://doi.org/10.56557/upjoz/2024/v45i174407)

Open Peer Review History:

This journal follows the Advanced Open Peer Review policy. Identity of the Reviewers, Editor(s) and additional Reviewers, peer review comments, different versions of the manuscript, comments of the editors, etc are available here: <https://prh.mbimph.com/review-history/3849>

Review Article

Received: 23/06/2024 Accepted: 25/08/2024 Published: 31/08/2024

ABSTRACT

Currently, one of the most important health problems affecting individuals worldwide is endometrial cancer. Numerous studies have been conducted by oncologists in an effort to create preventive medications that will lower the cancer's death rate. Using 3D Insilico drug docking techniques, we investigate the potential interactions between the mutant target protein, PKBB-Protein Kinase B, Beta, and the anti-cancer pharmaceutical (control drug), Mercaptopurine, and the proposed de novo drug derivative. To perform drug docking procedures, the translated amino acid sequence and

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Cite as: Rekha, S., and Arivoli. S. 2024. "Identification of Novel Drug Compound for the Mutated Protein (PKBB-Protein Kinase B, Beta) Responsible for Endometrial Cancer Using Advanced Insilico Drug Designing Technique". UTTAR PRADESH JOURNAL OF ZOOLOGY 45 (17):619-32. https://doi.org/10.56557/upjoz/2024/v45i174407.

three-dimensional chemical compound were acquired from the NCBI database. The most sophisticated 3D molecular imaging instruments were used to conduct post-docking studies. The de novo medicine directly blocks amino acid mutational sites, as the results of the docking investigation clearly showed (PKBB). The suggested de novo drug has a higher binding score than the control medication, mercaptopurine. Using molecular dynamics techniques, a three-dimensional image of the H-bond contact force between PKBB and the de novo drug is produced. Therefore, we deduce that the suggested anti-cancer de novo drug may aid in the treatment of endometrial cancer. Thus, we suggest the de novo medicine, which lessens discomfort while reducing the signs and symptoms of malignancy.

Keywords: PKBB-protein kinase B; beta drug designing; docking.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past 30 years, there has been a noticeable increase in the prevalence of endometrial cancer and a substantial rise in the complexity of patients affected by the disease. Over 417,000 new cases of endometrial cancer were reported globally in 2020, and 97,370 people died from the disease, making it a significant health burden [1]. With the world's population getting older and the prevalence of diabetes and obesity rising, these figures are expected to rise even higher. With the goal of stopping this rise, a deeper comprehension of the processes by which these risk factors promote the development of endometrial carcinogenesis has made it possible to design focused primary disease preventive treatments. "Despite the nearly twofold increase in endometrial cancer deaths since 1990, the agestandardized mortality rate has declined dramatically in nearly every geographical region due to advancements in early diagnosis and treatment" [2]. "Although the majority of women receive an early-stage diagnosis and are expected to fully recover from their endometrial cancer, 20% of women still have extra-uterine disease at the time of presentation, and only 15% of women with stage IV illness are still living five years after their diagnosis. Thus, early detection is still crucial. Non-invasive diagnostics that aim to rule out endometrial cancer in most postmenopausal bleeding women are becoming more and more common, and women are probably going to find them more acceptable than endometrial biopsies. The growing discrepancy in survival between White, Black, Asian, and Hispanic women is concerning, as it could be caused by variations in tumor biology as much as a lack of access to endometrial cancer therapies" [3,4]. "Hopefully, a deeper comprehension of the genetic alterations causing endometrial carcinogenesis will close this knowledge gap. However, this knowledge is

already being applied to tailor treatments and identify women with Lynch syndrome, for whom endometrial cancer is a sentinel malignancy" [5]. "The goal of this review is to identify the unanswered research concerns that need to be addressed over the next thirty years while also summarizing the most recent developments in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of endometrial cancer. Endometrial cancer is highly amenable to primary disease prevention due to its significant correlation with modifiable risk factors. Models indicate that up to 60% of instances of endometrial cancer may be averted" [6,7]. "Many interventions to lower the incidence of endometrial cancer have been proposed as a result of a better understanding of the mechanisms underlying endometrial carcinogenesis, specifically unopposed oestrogen, insulin resistance, and chronic inflammation. However, the majority of the data regarding these interventions' efficacy comes from retrospective observational studies" [8]. Designing an anti-cancer medicine without side effects is one of the major issues faced by pharma industries. Our research work focuses on resolving this problem.

1.1 Objectives of the Project Work

• To use digital literature databases and clinical literature to identify putative genes linked to endometrial cancer.

• To examine and visualize the target protein's molecular mechanics.

• To choose and create drugs in order to forecast drug docking and binding scores and to visualize the results.

2. METHODOLOGY

Insilico 3D Modelling:

• **Sequence Retrieval System:** We selected the PKBB (Protein Kinase B -

Beta) gene, which is directly linked to endometrial cancer in humans, based on a variety of clinical and molecular genetics literature research. OMIM can be found at https://omim.org/entry/118505. The UniProt database provided the gene-coded protein sequence in FASTA format. Proteomics database UniProt [\(https://www.uniprot.org/uniprot/P30532\)](https://www.uniprot.org/uniprot/P30532).

• **Protein 3D Structure Prediction:** Using an automated homology modeling server called CPH 3.0 model server (http://www.cbs.dtu.dk/services/CPHmodel s/), the amino acid sequence of the PKBB (PROTEIN KINASE B -BETA) protein was transformed into a 3D structure. The structure was then verified using Procheck server [\(https://www.ebi.ac.uk/thornton](https://www.ebi.ac.uk/thornton-srv/software/PROCHECK/)[srv/software/PROCHECK/\)](https://www.ebi.ac.uk/thornton-srv/software/PROCHECK/).

Insilico Drug Designing:

• **Drug compound selection:** To construct the medicine, the endometrial cancer drug chemical that was already on the market was obtained from the NCBI PubChem

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

chemical database (https://pubchem.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/). With the use of Discovery Studio software, the chemical 2D structure was recovered and transformed into a 3D structure.

• **Drug designing and validation:** Using the Molinspiration software (https://www.molinspiration.com/), the preexisting drug molecule and an antioxidant molecule were joined, and the qualities of the drug likeness score were verified.

. **Molecular Drug Docking:**

Using an automated molecular proteindrug docking service called PatchDock (https://bioinfo3d.cs.tau.ac.il/PatchDock/), the developed chemical compounds were inserted into the modeled endometrial cancer target protein, PKBB (Protein Kinase B -Beta). Discovery Studio Software was used to verify the docking data and view the affinities for drug-protein binding and the H-bond interaction.

Table 1. Protein target summary

The above table gives information on the target protein retrieved from NCBI and UniProt databases.

Fig. 1. Sequence of PKBB protein (Normal) - UniProt Database

The above picture shows the sequence format of Normal amino acids content of PKBB with amino acid position (Asp: 399) highlighted in yellow.

Fig. 2. Protein Modelling: 3D structure of PKBB (Normal)

The above picture shows the 3D view of the normal protein structure of PKBB shown in secondary structure colour model with amino acid label (Asp: 399,), visualized using Discovery Studio Software.

Fig. 3. Sequence of PKBB protein (Mutated) - UniProt Database

The above picture shows the FASTA format of Normal amino acids content of PKBB with amino acid position (Asn : 399) highlighted in yellow [9].

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Fig. 4. Protein Modelling: 3D structure of PKBB (Mutated)

The above picture shows the 3D view of the Mutated protein structure of PKBB shown in Space-filling model with the mutated amino acid label (Asn: 399,), visualized using Discovery Studio Software.

Fig 5 Assessment of Ramachandran plot for the predicted mutated protein sequence of the modeled PKBB

Cheminformatics

The above table provides information on the drug compounds retrieved from NCBI PubChem Compound database.

Fig. 6. Cheminformatics -3D Structure of Mercaptopurine

The above picture shows the 3D structure of Mercaptopurine with coloured atoms: Grey-Carbon, Blue-Nitrogen, Yellow-Sulphur and White –Hydrogen using Discovery Studio Software

Fig. 7. Cheminformatics -2D Structure of *de novo* **Drug**

Calculation of the Molecular Properties of the combined structure of Mercaptopurine with 2 acetyloxybenzoic acid using Molinspiration Cheminformatics Software.

Fig. 8. Cheminformatics -2D Structure of Mercaptopurine Drug

Calculation of the Bioactivity Scores of the combined structure of Mercaptopurine with 2 acetyloxybenzoic acid using Molinspiration Cheminformatics Software.

Fig. 9. Cheminformatics - 3D Structure of *de novo* **Drug**

The above picture shows the 3D structure of the de novo compound with atom colours: Grey-Carbon, Red-Oxygen, Yellow-Sulphur, Blue-Nitrogen and White – Hydrogen using Discovery Studio Software.

Fig. 10 Molecular drug docking

The above picture is the PatchDock result page showing the drug docking score of the existing drug, Mercaptopurine with the modelled mutated protein target, PKBB. The negatively high ACE (Atomic Contact Energy) value is -186.66

Fig. 11. Molecular drug docking

The above picture represents the existing drug molecule (Mercaptopurine) docked with PKBB protein structure. Yellow colour indicates Mercaptopurine in space- filling model using Discovery Studio Software.

Fig. 12. Ligand –protein binding prediction

The above picture represents the existing drug molecule docked with PKBB protein structure with drug binding amino acids labels. Green colour indicates Mercaptopurine in Stick model using Discovery Studio Software

Fig: 13. H-bond interaction (Mercaptopurine + PKBB)

The above table shows the H-bond interaction between Mercaptopurine and the endometrial cancer protein, PKBB

Fig 14. Van Der Waals Interaction Prediction 3D structure of PKBB with Existing Drug

The above picture represents the existing drug molecule (Mercaptopurine) docked with PKBB protein structure in Van Der Waals model view with drug binding amino acids labels. Green colour indicates Mercaptopurine in Stick model using Discovery Studio Software

Fig. 15. Molecular Drug Docking- PatchDock results PKBB with *de novo* **(Mercaptopurine + 2 acetyloxybenzoic acid)**

The above picture is the PatchDock result page – drug docking score of de novo (Mercaptopurine + 2 acetyloxybenzoic acid) drug with the modelled mutated protein target, PKBB. The negatively high ACE (Atomic Contact Energy) value is -305.25

The above picture represents the de novo drug molecule docked with PKBB protein structure. Yellow colour indicates the de novo molecule in space-filling model viewed using Discovery Studio Software

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Fig. 17. Molecular drug docking

The above picture represents the de novo drug molecule docked with PKBB protein structure with drug binding amino acids labels. Green colour indicates denovo molecule in Stick model viewed using Discovery Studio Software

Fig. 18. H-bond interaction (Mercaptopurine+ 2-acetyloxybenzoic acid + PKBB) *The above table shows the H-bond interaction between Mercaptopurine+2- acetyloxybenzoic acid and the endometrial cancer protein, PKBB.*

Fig. 19. Molecular drug docking

The above picture represents the de novo drug molecule docked with PKBB protein structure in Van Der Waals model view with drug binding amino acids labels. Green colour indicates De Novo drug in Stick model viewed using Discovery Studio Software

Table 3. Molecular Drug Docking Summary

The above table represents the molecular drug docking results of the control molecule, Mercaptopurine and the designed molecule docked with PKBB protein. The *de novo* drug value when docked with PKBB is high when compared to the value of the existing molecule interacting with PKBB protein.

The target protein for endometrial cancer in this study is PKBB, or protein kinase B-beta (UniProt: P31751). Its gene sequence is 1446 nt long, while its protein sequence is 481 aa long. It is located on the 19th chromosome. Our first step in the research was to do motif and domain analysis. The amino acid FASTA sequence in PKBB is displayed in Fig. 1 (OMIM ID: [164731\)](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/omim/164731). Figs. 1 and 3. Table 1

(PKBB-Protein Kinase B -Beta) One of the three closely related serine/threonine-protein kinases known as the AKT kinase, AKT2, AKT1, and AKT3, regulates a number of biological processes, including angiogenesis, growth, metabolism, and cell survival. A variety of downstream substrates are phosphorylated either serine or threonine to facilitate this process. Kinases of eukaryotic proteins [10] are enzymes that belong to a large family of proteins that includes both tyrosine and serine/threonine protein kinases, which have a shared catalytic

core. The catalytic domain of protein kinases contains multiple conserved areas. Two of these regions have been chosen by us to create signature patterns. The first area is a stretch of residues near a lysine residue that is rich in glycine and is situated at the N-terminal end of the catalytic domain. It has been shown that ATP binding implies this. The conserved aspartic acid residue in the second region, which is located in the middle of the catalytic domain, has been demonstrated to be important for the enzyme's catalytic activity. Two signature patterns—one particular to tyrosine kinases and the other to serine/threonine kinases—have been identified for that location. Additionally, we created a profile that spans the whole catalytic domain and is connected to the alignment [11]. Oral contraceptives have been shown to reduce the risk of endometrial cancer by 24% after five years of use, a benefit that has been demonstrated over the past 20 years.

In this research study, SWISS-MODEL was used to convert the amino acid sequence of PKBB into 3D structure. To facilitate docking, a detailed molecular and structural analysis of TSHR was conducted using SWISS-MODEL [12]. A service called SWISS-MODEL is used to automatically compare three-dimensional (3D) protein structures. The SWISS-MODEL server homology modeling pipeline, which is built on ProMod3, an internal comparative modeling engine based on Open Structure, is used by Waterhouse et al. to calculate models. Ramachandran Plot evaluation of the modelled 3D protein was conducted using ProCheck server [13] in a comprehensive manner. Following modeling, ProCheck server was used to validate the altered protein's 3D structure. The Ramachandran Plot evaluation in Fig. 12 verifies that the simulated protein has no errors (88.2%). Fig. 5.

Discovery studio software, a molecular visualization tool, was used to explore the anticipated structure. The 3D structure of the normal PKBB protein is displayed in Fig. 2 with the use of Discovery studio software, an advanced molecular visualization tool. Using Discovery Studio software, the 3D structure of the mutant PKBB protein is displayed in Fig. 4.

In order to create the innovative drug candidate based on the existing molecule, the possible existing drug candidate was chosen utilizing the NCBI PubChem compound database. Here, we select Mercaptopurine (CID: 667490), a possible culprit for a number of cancers, including endometrial cancer. Our plan is to use Cheminformatics procedures to increase this molecule's efficiency. 2-Acetoxybenzoic acid (CID: 2244) also known as acetylsalicylic acid is a pharmaceutical product that has been used for more than a century in clinical and therapeutic settings. It is arguably the most widely used analgesic sold worldwide: Table 2. Fig. 6.

Mercaptopurine (CID: 667490) is a purine analogue used to treat leukemia, autoimmune diseases, and several types of cancer. It is also useful as an immunosuppressive and anticancer agent. Molinspiration software was used to mix the two molecules and validate them in drugdesigning studies. Our goal is to add the antioxidant 2-Acetoxybenzoic acid to the current medication, Mercaptopurine. There are no errors in the created molecule, as indicated by the computation of their molecular properties and the expected bioactivity 7 and 8. It follows the scores for drug likeness. Mercaptopurine coupled with 2- Acetoxybenzoic acid is shown in Fig. 9

3.9 Drug Docking

An innovative and incredibly effective approach for docking two molecules was presented by [14]. Although the algorithm's results for the docking of two protein molecules are displayed here,

receptor-drug scenarios can also benefit from its application. We introduced the De Novo drug with PKBB protein and the existing medicine, Mercaptopurine, with PKBB protein in molecular docking investigations. The amino acids that interact with H bonds and have binding affinity scores were found in this investigation. The drugdocking outcome scores are displayed in Table 3. Fig. 10,11,12,13 and 14 displays the 3D structure of H-bond interactions with the corresponding drug-binding amino acid pockets and the PatchDock result scores of the PKBB protein with Mercaptopurine (an existent medication) (His:591,Cys 589,Lys:602,Pro:590,Cys:621,and Lys:622) . Our study's conclusions are in agreement with those of several earlier docking investigations.
[15.16.17]. Comparably, PKBB protein [15,16,17]. Comparably, PKBB protein PatchDock result scores with Mercaptopurine + 2-Acetoxybenzoic acid (de novo drug) are displayed in Figs. 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19. Fig. 18 illustrates the three-dimensional structure of Hbond interactions with the corresponding drugbinding amino acid pockets (Gly:31, Met:60, Gly:284,Thr:282, Cys:301, Gln:281,Val:302, and Val:295) Table 3.

The De Novo medication's PatchDock results with the PKBB protein indicate an atomic contact energy value of -305.25. In contrast, Mercaptopurine, the pharmacological compound now in use, has a PKBB protein of -186.66 (Table 3). Thus, it's interesting to note that the de novo drug candidate in the study had a good binding to the PKBB protein. A larger negative number, in theory, denotes a greater affinity for binding between the medication and the target. Here, we have demonstrated that the PKBB protein, which causes endometrial cancer, may be effectively targeted by our therapeutic candidate. In the end, the developed De Novo drug candidate exhibits anti-inflammatory and possible inhibitory effects on cancer cell proliferation. Remarkably, our docking study's results unequivocally demonstrate that the 282 (Rouse M.B et al., 2009) binding areas are the locations of H-bond interactions between the PKBB protein and the proposed de novo medication.

4. CONCLUSION

We draw the conclusion that the newly developed therapeutic candidates would be effective molecules for the treatment of endometrial cancer based on the Insilico results. For the created compounds, we have completed the pharmacokinetics profiling investigations. All things considered, the drug docking data provide a clear explanation for the possible binding affinities between the PKBB protein and the intended candidates. This chemical would lessen its carcinogenic qualities and boost its inhibitory effect, which would slow the proliferation of cancer cells in endometrial cancer.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc) and text-to-image generators have been used during writing or editing of manuscripts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors acknowledge the help extended by Dr.Balaji Munivelan, PhD., CEO and Senior Bioinformatician (bioinfobalaji@gmail.com) , ABS Geno-informatics, Chennai, for his contribution towards *Insilico* drug docking studies.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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> *Peer-review history: The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here: <https://prh.mbimph.com/review-history/3849>*