

Jacksonville State University [JSU Digital Commons](https://digitalcommons.jsu.edu/)

[Theses](https://digitalcommons.jsu.edu/etds_theses) [Theses, Dissertations & Graduate Projects](https://digitalcommons.jsu.edu/etds)

Spring 2022

Comparative Modeling and Evolutionary Comparison of Serine Protease, A Timber Rattlesnake Venom Protein

Qawer Ayaz aqawer@stu.jsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.jsu.edu/etds_theses](https://digitalcommons.jsu.edu/etds_theses?utm_source=digitalcommons.jsu.edu%2Fetds_theses%2F35&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages)

 \bullet Part of the [Bioinformatics Commons,](http://network.bepress.com/hgg/discipline/110?utm_source=digitalcommons.jsu.edu%2Fetds_theses%2F35&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages) [Biotechnology Commons](http://network.bepress.com/hgg/discipline/111?utm_source=digitalcommons.jsu.edu%2Fetds_theses%2F35&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages), [Computational Biology Commons](http://network.bepress.com/hgg/discipline/28?utm_source=digitalcommons.jsu.edu%2Fetds_theses%2F35&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages), [Genetics Commons,](http://network.bepress.com/hgg/discipline/29?utm_source=digitalcommons.jsu.edu%2Fetds_theses%2F35&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages) and the [Molecular Genetics Commons](http://network.bepress.com/hgg/discipline/31?utm_source=digitalcommons.jsu.edu%2Fetds_theses%2F35&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages)

Recommended Citation

Ayaz, Qawer, "Comparative Modeling and Evolutionary Comparison of Serine Protease, A Timber Rattlesnake Venom Protein" (2022). Theses. 35. [https://digitalcommons.jsu.edu/etds_theses/35](https://digitalcommons.jsu.edu/etds_theses/35?utm_source=digitalcommons.jsu.edu%2Fetds_theses%2F35&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations & Graduate Projects at JSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses by an authorized administrator of JSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@jsu.edu.](mailto:digitalcommons@jsu.edu)

THESIS APPROVAL

Major: Biology

Thesis Title: Comparative Modeling and Evolutionary Comparison of Serine Protease, A Timber Rattlesnake Venom Protein

COMPARATIVE MODELING AND EVOLUTIONARY COMPARISON OF VG35 SERINE PROTEASE, A TIMBER RATTLESNAKE VENOM PROTEIN

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Jacksonville State University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science With a Major in Biology

By

QAWER AYAZ

Jacksonville, Alabama

May 06, 2022

copyright 2022

All Rights Reserved

 Ω auga Λ uga Ω \mathbb{Z} and \mathbb{Z} and

Qawer Ayaz Date

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to create homology model of VG35 serine protease and evaluate the evolutionary comparison of secondary structure on basis of protein model using YASARA. This method was furthermore used to predict the potential epitopes which can helps in the investigation of future studies.

The VG35 was used to run BLAST search which gave most resembled serine protease of different species which was then translated and modeled in YASARA. The modeled protein data was then used to determine the secondary structure. This was then used for evolutionary comparison of all proteins to VG35. And then potential epitope was found using DiscoTope 2.0.

Homology ribbon model were generated using YASARA for VG35 and 12 other serine protease proteins. This was then used to make a dataset of secondary structure which shows sheet, helix, turn, and coil of protein structure. This dataset was used to determine the conservation of other proteins to VG35. And the homology ribbon models were used to find epitopes of VG35, VG172, and serine protease of Crotalus tigris.

The homology model helps to understand the difference in the structure of proteins and how it has impact on the enzymatic activity of the proteins. This also helps in understanding the variants which lead to change in the secondary structure of proteins which can be caused during post-transcriptional process. The potential epitopes found can be used to future studies to design and develop anti-venom to target specific venom.

Preliminary pages: 9. Manuscript pages: 54

iv

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

 I would like to thank and dedicate this research in the memory of Dr. Benjie Blair who proposed the idea initially and helped me understand the research. And in memory of Dr. George Cline, who guided me in making the right decision for the research.

 I would also like to acknowledge and thank my committee Mr. Richard Watkins, Dr. Jenna Lee Ridlen, and Dr. Chris Murdock for all the support and guidance which made me reverse engineer the complete proposed idea which made this research possible.

Qawer Ayaz

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

I. INTRODUCTION

History of Snake Venom

The history of the venom study traces back more than two millennia. The earliest survived detailed synopsis of venomous animals and their bites were given as early as 322 BC by Aristotle in Historia Animalium. Modern scientific understanding of venomous snakes and venoms began to take shape thanks to the Italian scientists Francesco Redi and Felice Fontana, who worked in the city of Pisa in the 17 and 18 centuries, respectively. Physician, biologist, linguist, and poet Francesco Redi (1664) published a treatise on poisonous snakes entitled "Osservazioni intorno alle vipere". He found that snake bile is not toxic, as it was accepted at that time, and toxicity is in the venom released from the teeth at the bite. Redi is considered as one of the founders of "toxinology," a specialist area of science dealing with animal, microbial, and plant venoms, poisons, and toxins. A hundred years later, in the 18th century, another Italian, Felice Fontana, discovered snake venom glands and obtained snake venom, which he used for a variety of experiments with animals. "Fontana corrected Redi: venom acts on the animals not by getting in stomach as Redi believed, but in the blood" (Redi 1664).

General Information

Snake venom is a highly modified saliva containing zootoxins that facilitate the immobilization and digestion of prey, and defense against threats. It is injected by unique fangs during a bite, and some species are also able to spit their venom (Bauchot 1994). The glands that secrete the zootoxins are a modification of the parotid salivary glands found in other vertebrates and are usually situated on each side of the head, below and behind the eye, and encapsulated in a muscular sheath. The glands have large alveoli in which the synthesized venom is stored before being conveyed by a duct to the base of channeled or tubular fangs through which it is ejected (Bottrall et al. 2010). Venoms contain more than 20 different compounds, mostly proteins and polypeptides (Halliday and Kraig 2002). A complex mixture of proteins, enzymes, and various other substances with toxic and lethal properties serves to immobilize the prey animal (Mattison 2007). Enzymes play an important role in the digestion of prey, and various other substances are responsible for important but non-lethal biological effects. Some of the proteins in snake venom have very specific effects on various biological functions including blood coagulation, blood pressure regulation, and transmission of the nervous or muscular impulses, and have been developed for use as pharmacological or diagnostic tools, and even useful drugs (Bauchot 1994).

Physiological effects of Snake Venom

Snake venom has two main purposes: to impair the prey so that they can be consumed and to improve the digestibility of the prey. The four distinct types of venom act on the body differently. Proteolytic venom dismantles the molecular surroundings, including the bite, and enables the breakdown of proteins into smaller polypeptides or amino acids. Hemotoxic venom acts on the heart and cardiovascular system, destroys red blood cells (that is, causes hemotoxin), disrupts blood clotting, and/or causes organ degeneration and generalized tissue damage. Neurotoxic venom acts on the nervous system and brain, alters the normal activity of the nervous system in such a way as to cause permanent or reversible damage to nervous tissue. This can

eventually disrupt or even kill neurons, which are cells that transmit and process signals in the brain and other parts of the nervous system. Cytotoxic venom has a localized action at the site of the bite (Martin 1907).

Clinical applications of venom

 Given that snake venom contains many biologically active ingredients, some may be useful to treat disease. For instance, phospholipases type A2 (PLA2s) from the Tunisian vipers Cerastes cerastes and Macrovipera lebetina have been found to have antitumor activity. Anticancer activity has been also reported for other compounds in snake venom. PLA2s hydrolyze phospholipids, thus could act on bacterial cell surfaces, providing novel antimicrobial (antibiotic) activities. The analgesic (painkilling) activity of many snake venom proteins has been long known. The main challenge, however, is to deliver protein to the nerve cells as proteins usually are not applicable as pills. Captopril emulates the function of the toxin found in Brazilian pit viper venom; Captopril is an ACE inhibitor (angiotensin converting enzyme) that was approved by the FDA in April 1981. It lowers blood pressure by inhibiting the production of angiotensin II which acts in a pathway that leads to vasoconstriction which raises blood pressure (Slagboom et al. 2017). Eptifibatide was modeled after a component in southeastern pygmy rattlesnake venom and is used in anticoagulation therapies to reduce the risk of heart attacks. Batroxobin, is a serine protease found in snake venom produced by Bothrops atrox and Bothrops moojeni, venomous species of pit viper found east of the Andes in South America. It cleaves fibrinogen, similarly to thrombin (Maroun 2004).

Serine protease

Serine proteases also known as serine endopeptidases are enzymes that cleave peptide bonds in proteins, in which serine serves as the nucleophilic amino acid at the (enzyme's) active site (Hedstrom 2002). They are found ubiquitously in both eukaryotes and prokaryotes. Serine proteases are widely distributed in nature and found in all kingdoms of cellular life as well as many viral genomes. However, significant differences exist in the distribution of each clan across species. For example, clan PA proteases are highly represented in eukaryotes, but rare constituents of prokaryotic and plant genomes. Vertebrates boast an array of clan PA proteases responsible for a variety of extracellular processes. SB and SC clans are most represented in other organisms. Serine proteases are usually endoproteases and catalyze bond hydrolysis in the middle of a polypeptide chain. However, several families of exoproteases have been described as removing one or more amino acids from the termini of target polypeptide chains (Page and Di Cera. 2008). Barrett and coworkers have devised a classification scheme based on statistically significant similarities in sequence and structure of all known proteolytic enzymes and term this database MEROPS (Rawlings et al. 2013). The classification system divides proteases into clans based on catalytic mechanism and families based on common ancestry. Over one third of all known proteolytic enzymes are serine proteases grouped into 13 clans and 40 families (Hedstrom. 2002).

Homology modeling

Homology modeling, also known as comparative modeling of protein, refers to constructing an atomic-resolution model of the "target" protein from its amino acid sequence and an experimental three-dimensional structure of a related homologous protein (the "*template*").

Homology modeling relies on the identification of one or more known protein structures likely to resemble the structure of the query sequence, and on the production of an alignment that maps residues in the query sequence to residues in the template sequence. It has been shown that protein structures are more conserved than protein sequences amongst homologues, but sequences falling below a 20% sequence identity can have very different structure (Chothia and Lesk 1986). Evolutionarily related proteins have similar sequences and naturally occurring homologous proteins have similar protein structure. It has been shown that three-dimensional protein structure is evolutionarily more conserved than would be expected based on sequence conservation alone. The sequence alignment and template structure are then used to produce a structural model of the target. Because protein structures are more conserved than DNA sequences, detectable levels of sequence similarity usually imply significant structural similarity. The quality of the homology model is dependent on the quality of the sequence alignment and template structure. Homology modeling can produce high-quality structural models when the target and template are closely related, which has inspired the formation of a structural genomics consortium dedicated to the production of representative experimental structures for all classes of protein folds (Williamson 2000).

Model Assessment

Assessment of homology models without reference to the true target structure is usually performed with two methods: statistical potentials or physics-based energy calculations. Both methods produce an estimate of the energy (or an energy-like analog) for the model or models being assessed; independent criteria are needed to determine acceptable cutoffs. Neither of the two methods correlates exceptionally well with true structural accuracy, especially on protein

types underrepresented in the PDB, such as membrane proteins. Statistical potentials are empirical methods based on observed residue-residue contact frequencies among proteins of known structure in the PDB. They assign a probability or energy score to each possible pairwise interaction between amino acids and combine these pairwise interaction scores into a single score for the entire model. Some such methods can also produce a residue-by-residue assessment that identifies poorly scoring regions within the model, though the model may have a reasonable score overall. These methods emphasize the hydrophobic core and solvent-exposed polar amino acids often present in globular proteins. A very extensive model validation report can be obtained using "What If" software package YASARA; it produces a many pages' document with extensive analyses of nearly 200 scientific and administrative aspects of the model.

Yet Another Scientific Artificial Reality Application (YASARA)

YASARA creates a new level of interaction with 'artificial reality', that allows you to focus on your goal and forget about the details of the program. YASARA is powered by PVL (Portable Vector Language), a new development framework that provides performance way above traditional software. PVL allows you to visualize even the largest proteins and enables true interactive real-time simulations with highly accurate force fields on standard PCs, making use of GPUs. You can push and pull molecules around and work with dynamic models instead of static pictures. YASARA's innovative 3D engine, which is up to 10 times faster than what you usually know from OpenGL, you can load multiple structures at the same time, create publication-quality ray-traced images including labels, and program your own macros and Python plugins.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Tissue Extraction and cDNA Synthesis

The Timber rattlesnake was captured in the wild and placed under controlled conditions of laboratory. The venom was collected by milking the snake three day prior to tissue extraction. The tissue was kept in the TRI reagent and to isolate total RNA the tissue was homogenized using Qiagen (Tokyo, Japan). The integrity of the RNA is checked using agarose gel electrophoresis.

The cDNA first strand was synthesized using SMARTTM cDNA Library Construction Kit (BD Biosciences Clontech, San Jose, CA, USA), from 0.5 to 1 μg of mRNA. The primers were the BD Biosciences oligonucleotides SMART™ Oligo VI and CDS-3M containing the SfiI A and SfiI B recognition sequence. Using LD PCR (Qiagen, Tokyo, Japan), first strand of cDNA and 2 μl of polymerase was amplified. Twenty-one cycles (initial denaturation at 95°C for 1 min; 95°C for 15s, 66°C for 20s, and 72°C for 3 min; and final extension at 66°C for 20s and 72°C for 3 min) is performed and cDNA purification was performed using QIA quick PCR purification kit (Qiagen, Tokyo, Japan) to remove primer excess, dNTPs, and salts. And, precipitated in ethanol.

 Using duplex specific nuclease (DSN) enzyme and amplified. To perform the second PCR amplification, PCR was carried out as follows: 80 μL of MilliQ water, 10 μL of 10× PCR buffer, 2 μL of dNTP mix (10 mM), 4 μL of PCR primer-M2, 2 μL of diluted normalized cDNA, and 2 μL of polymerase mix. PCR cycling used the following program: initial denaturation at 95°C for 1 min; 12 PCR cycles at 95°C for 15 s, 64°C for 20 s, and 72°C for 3 min; and a final extension at 64°C for 15 s and 72°C for 3 min. After completing cDNA amplification, 5 μL of the PCR products were analyzed by electrophoresis alongside of 1 kb DNA size markers on a 1.5% (w/v) agarose/EtBr gel run in $1 \times$ TAE buffer to check PCR quality.

 Normalized cDNA samples digested by SfiI were ligated and packaged into to λTriplEx2 Vector. Three separate ligation reactions were set up with different ratios of cDNA to phage vector. It was then incubated at 16°C overnight. Lastly, MaxPlax™ Lambda Packaging Extracts for λ packaging reaction were used according to the manufacturer's instruction.

 To determine the titer of unamplified library, first the overnight culture was prepared using a stock plate of single isolated E. coli, inoculated in 15 ml of LB/MgSO4/maltose broth in a 50 ml test tube. And incubated at 37^oC overnight at 140 rpm on a shake until OD600 of the culture reached 2.0. 1:5, 1:10, 1:15, and 1:20 dilutions of each of the packaging extracts were prepared in 1x lambda dilution buffer (NaCl, MgSO4•7H2O Tris-HCI (pH 7.5)). 1 μl of the diluted phage was added to 200 μl of the XL1-Blue overnight culture, and allowed the phage to adsorb at 37°C for15 min. After that 5 ml of melted LB/MgSO4 top agar was added and poured onto LB/MgSO4 plates and incubated at 37°C for 18 hours.

 50μl of 1:20 diluted lysate was added to twenty 10ml tubes containing 200μL of overnight bacterial culture and incubated at 37°C for 15 minutes. Following incubation, we added 5ml of melted LB/MgSO4 soft top agar into the tubes and then poured the content on to LB/MgSO4 agar plates. After waiting 10 minutes for the top agar to harden, the inverted plates were placed in the incubator at 37°C for 18 hours. Following incubation, 12ml of 1X lambda dilution buffer was added to each plate and then stored at 4°C overnight. The next day, plates were placed on a shaker (50 rpm) for an hour at a room temperature. From that, the pooled λ phage lysate was poured into a sterile 50ml screw-cap tube. To clear phage lysate of cell debris, 10 ml of chloroform was added to the tube, then it was vortexed for 2 minutes, and centrifuged at 7000rpm for 10 minutes. The supernatant was then collected and stored at 4°C.

Collection of raw sequence data of proteins

The target protein VG35 raw sequences data was taken and was quality checked. The quality check and annotation were based on comparing the obtained sequence data to the sanger sequence avi peak file. The changes in the nucleotide and the quality assurance were made as per the sequencer peaks of each base pair.

The resultant quality assured sequence was then used to determine the region similarity between different biological sequences. This was achieved using the BLAST (Basic Local Alignment Search Tool) which is an online tool offered by NCBI and acts as a cloud-based data warehouse of different biological genetic sequences and their relative functions. The BLAST tool compares the target nucleotide sequence to the data of different sequence available and calculate the statistical significance. By the results obtained from the BLAST search gave details of the different species of rattlesnake's venom serine protease has the highest statistical significance to the target VG35 serine protease.

A total of eleven different rattlesnake venom serine protease were selected which has the highest statistical significance to the target VG35 serine protease. Once the highest significance species were determined, UNIPROT was used to extract the raw sequence data of venom serine

protease for the other eleven different rattlesnake species. UNIPROT (The Universal Protein Resource) is a tool which is offered by the collaboration between European Bioinformatics Institute (EMBL-EBI) and Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics (SIB). It is a comprehensive online collection tool of protein sequence and its annotation data.

Once the raw nucleotide sequence of the target VG35 and serine protease other eleven species of rattlesnake was obtained using UNIPROT, it needs to be translated to amino acid sequence which can be used for Homology modelling in YASARA. Expasy, an online tool operated by Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics (SIB) was used to translate the nucleotide sequences to amino acid sequences. Once the translation was completed, each file was downloaded in FASTA format which can then be used to YASARA for homology modeling.

Homology Modeling using YASARA

 Homology modeling in YASARA is done in two steps, i.e., homology modeling and refinement. From all the FASTA files of eleven different rattlesnake venom serine protease and VG35 serine protease, homology modeling was commenced in YASARA one at a time and left over night or consecutive day for the program to run. When the program has the run complete the resultant model was save in SCE and PDB file format. This was done with VG35 and eleven different species of rattlesnake proteins. When all the models are obtained and saved refinement of the models was done. The refinement process of program refines the slightest and minute changes to the model structure by determining the energy retention of each amino acid impact on structure. The refinement process was left over night or conservative day for the 500 ps simulation program to run. When completed the refinement process result in a text file which give the list of different possible models and their energy level.

Evolutionary Comparison

 To determine the evolutionary comparison between the VG35 serine protease and the eleven serine proteases of different species of rattlesnakes, the secondary structure of each serine protease was found using YASARA. The secondary structure of each serine protease was then complied in a spreadsheet and different color was coded to the different aspect of the secondary structure. Using the different parts of secondary structure of each proteins helps to determine the evolutionary relationship between the different species of rattlesnake serine protease and the VG35 serine protease.

Epitope of VG35 and VG172

When the evolutionary relationship was found of VG35 serine protease, it was then subjected to determine the potential epitope site which can acts as a protein binding site for the anti-venom. The epitopes were found using an online tool called Discotope 2.0, in which the target VG35 serine protease was compared with the epitopes found on VG172 and a randomly selected serine protease from the eleven species given.

III. RESULTS

The sequence data obtained was used to gather the serine protease data of other species. As per the BLAST result the serine protease K8RSA4 of Crotalus horridus was taken and used to make the homology ribbon model in YASARA (Figure 1). The second result was of serine protease of Crotalus tigris was taken and ribbon model was created using YASARA (Figure 2). This process was then continued to obtain the serine protease of different species, VG172 and VG35 and the resultant homology ribbon model was created using YASARA (Figures 3-13). When all the homology ribbon model and model with least energy retention was obtained, the models were used to identify secondary structure of each protein. Each aspect of secondary structure was color coded for visual understanding of the secondary structure across of each protein (Table 1). If an amino acid has a secondary structure of coil, it is colored as black, white amino acid represents the turn, blue amino acid represents sheet and yellow amino acid represent helix (Table 1).

The obtained homology ribbon model was then superimposed to on each other using YASARA and the correlation of each protein was found to determine the conservation of VG35. The conservation of each amino acid helps to determine impact of insertion, deletion, and other variants of an amino acid at position found in all the serine protease (Table 2 and Figure 14).

The homology ribbon model was used in Discotope 2.0 to determine the possible epitopes found in VG35, VG172 and Crotalus tigris serine protease. It was determined that serine protease of Crotalus tigris has 8 sites out of 244 residues which are found to be potential epitopes (Table 3). VG172 was found to have 37 sites out of 194 residues which can be possible epitopes (Table 4). In VG35 it was determined that it has 28 sites out of 201 total residue which can be possible epitopes (Table 5).

IV. DISCUSSION

Snake venom is a unique combination mixture of biologically active substances which has highly specialized mode of action of the complex biological processes. Many types of proteins which were isolated from snake venom has found its application in different aspects of medicine and many are found useful in other research (Stocker 1999). In this research by using the computational methods helps to determine the structure of various serine proteases. This helps to visualize the role of protein structure and determine its stability. When compared to the different serine proteases of different rattlesnake species it was found that the difference in amino acid to set location has different impact on the stability of the protein ribbon model and then leading to the difference in the secondary structure. Thus, this change in structure of protein and its impact on stability may affect the enzymatic activities of the protein. It was found that the change in the amino acids and structure of protein may lead to change in the hydrolytic activity of the serine protease activity and may also lead to complete for partial loss of catalytic action of the protein.

While analyzing the data of secondary structure and variants in amino acid chain (Table 1), it can be predicted that the variants among the sequence of amino acids in each protein has led to difference in the secondary structure of the proteins. These variants can be explained due to the different environmental factors which lead to the evolutionary changes in the protein splicing during post-transcriptional process of the mRNA.

By using the homology modeling of different serine protease helps to understand the function of the protein and thus different potential epitope sites were determined. This site can be used for future studies and can be tested to develop any possible anti-venom to battle the snake venom. A computational recombinant anti-venom can be designed and by using homology modeling in YASARA different antibody site and ligand/receptors sites can be found. This program of YASARA will give the detail function and result of how the designed anti-venom would act on the target protein.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baker M, Marti-Renom MA, Chiu W, Sali A. 2006. Refinement of protein structures by iterative comparative modeling and CryoEM density fitting. Mol Biol. 357(5):1655–68.
- Bauchot R. 1994. Snakes: a natural history. New York City, NY, USA: Sterling Publishing Co., Inc. 194-209.
- Bottrall JL, Madaras F, Biven CD, Venning MG, Mirtschin PJ. 2010. Proteolytic activity of Elapid and Viperid Snake venoms and its implication to digestion. Journal of Venom Research. 1(3):18-28.
- Brahmbhatt VVK, Bhatt H, Parmar U. 2013. Therapeutic potential of snake venom in cancer therapy: current perspectives. Asian Pacific Journal of Tropical Biomedicine. 3(2):156- 162.
- Chothia C, Lesk AM. The relation between the divergence of sequence and structure in proteins. EMBO J. 1986-5(4):823-6.
- Halliday A, Kraig T. 2002. Encyclopedia of reptiles and amphibians. Toronto, Canada: Firefly Books Ltd. 202-203.

Hedstrom L. 2002. Serine protease mechanism and specificity. Chem Rev. 102(12):4501-4502.

Jain D, Kumar S. 2012. Snake venom: a potent anticancer agent. Asian Pacific Journal of Cancer Prevention. 13(10):4855–4860.

- John B, Sali A. 2003. Comparative protein structure modeling by iterative alignment, model building and model assessment. Nucleic Acids Res. 31(14):3982-3992.
- Kaczanowski S, Zielenkiewicz P. 2010. Why similar protein sequences encode similar threedimensional structures. Theoretical Chemistry Accounts. 125:643-50.
- Lazaridis T, Karplus M. 1999. Discrimination of the native from misfolded protein models with an energy function including implicit solvation. J. Mol. Biol. 288(3):477-487.
- Levitt, M. 1992. Accurate modeling of protein conformation by automatic segment matching. J Mol Biol. 226(2):507–33.
- Maroun RC, Serrano SM. 2004. Identification of the substrate-binding exosites of two snake venom serine proteinases: molecular basis for the partition of two essential functions of thrombin. J. Mol. Recognit. 17, 51–61.
- Martin, C.J., and G. Lamb. 1907. Snake-poison and snakebite. A System of Medicine. Vol. ii (part ii). 783–821.
- Marti-Renom MA, Stuart AC, Fiser A, Sanchez R, Melo F, Sali A. 2000. Comparative protein structure modeling of genes and genomes. Annu Rev Biophys Biomol Struct. 29:291– 325.
- Mattison, C. 2007. The New Encyclopedia of Snakes. Princeton, New Jersey, USA Princeton University Press.
- McCleary JG. 2007. Ziconotide: a review of its pharmacology and use in the treatment of pain. Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment. 3(1):69–85.

Page MJ, Di Cera E. 2008. Evolution of peptidase diversity. J Biol Chem. 283(44):30010-30014.

- Pothineni NV, Watts TE, Ding Z, Dai Y, Deshmukh AJ. 2016. Eptifibatide-induced thrombocytopenia: when inhibitor turns killer. American Journal of Therapeutics. 23(1): e298–299.
- Raufman JP. 1996. Bioactive peptides from lizard venoms. Regulatory Peptides. 61(1):1–18.
- Rawlings ND, Morton FR, Kok CY, Kong J, Barrett AJ. 2008. MEROPS: the peptidase database. Nucleic Acids Res. 2008:36.
- Redi F, 1664. Osservazioni Intorno alle Vipere. Florence: All'Insegna della Stella 98.
- Richardson DC, Richardson JS. 2002. Teaching molecular 3-D literacy. Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education. 30:21–26.
- Richardson JS. 1985. Schematic drawings of protein structures. Methods in Enzymology. 115:359–380.
- Saab F, Ionescu C, Schweiger MJ. 2012. Bleeding risk and safety profile related to the use of eptifibatide: a current review. Expert Opinion on Drug Safety. 11(2):315-24.
- Slagboom J, Kool J, Harrison RA, Casewell NR. 2017. Haemotoxic snake venoms: their functional activity, impact on snakebite victims and pharmaceutical promise. British Journal of Haematology. 177(6):947-959.
- Williamson AR. 2000. Creating a structural genomics consortium. Nature Structural Biology 7, 953.

APPENDIX A: FIGURES

Ribbon Model of Crotalus horridus Protein

Note: The ribbon model of Crotalus horridus modelled using YASARA showing the secondary structure of the protein.

Ribbon Model of Crotalus tigris Protein

Note: The ribbon model of Crotalus tigirs modelled using YASARA showing the secondary structure of the protein.

Ribbon Model of Crotalus tzabcan Protein

Note: The ribbon model of Crotalus tzabcan modelled using YASARA showing the secondary structure of the protein.

Ribbon Model of Crotalus lepidus Protein

Note: The ribbon model of Crotalus lepidus modelled using YASARA showing the secondary structure of the protein.

Ribbon Model of Crotalus mictchellii Protein

Note: The ribbon model of Crotalus mictchellii modelled using YASARA showing the secondary structure of the protein.

Ribbon Model of Crotalus molossus Protein

Note: The ribbon model of Crotalus molossus modelled using YASARA showing the secondary structure of the protein.

Ribbon Model of Crotalus scutulatus Protein

Note: The ribbon model of Crotalus scutulatus modelled using YASARA showing the secondary structure of the protein.

Ribbon Model of Crotalus cerastes Protein

Note: The ribbon model of Crotalus cerastes modelled using YASARA showing the secondary structure of the protein.

Ribbon Model of Crotalus atrox protein

Note: The ribbon model of Crotalus atrox modelled using YASARA showing the secondary structure of the protein.

Ribbon Model of Crotalus adamanteus Protein

Note: The ribbon model of Crotalus adamanteus modelled using YASARA showing the secondary structure of the protein.

Ribbon Model of Crotalus durissus Protein

Note: The ribbon model of Crotalus durissus modelled using YASARA showing the secondary structure of the protein.

Ribbon Model of VG172 Protein

Note: The ribbon model of VG172 modelled using YASARA showing the secondary structure of the protein.

Ribbon Model of VG35 Protein

Note: The ribbon model of VG35 modelled using YASARA showing the secondary structure of the protein.

Conservation of VG35

APPENDIX B: TABLES

Table 1

Evolutionary Comparison

L.

Table 2.

Conservation of VG35 to the different serine proteases.

Table 3.

Epitopes of Crotalus tigris serine protease.

Table 4.

Epitopes of VG172 serine protease.

Table 5.

Epitopes of VG35 serine protease.

