

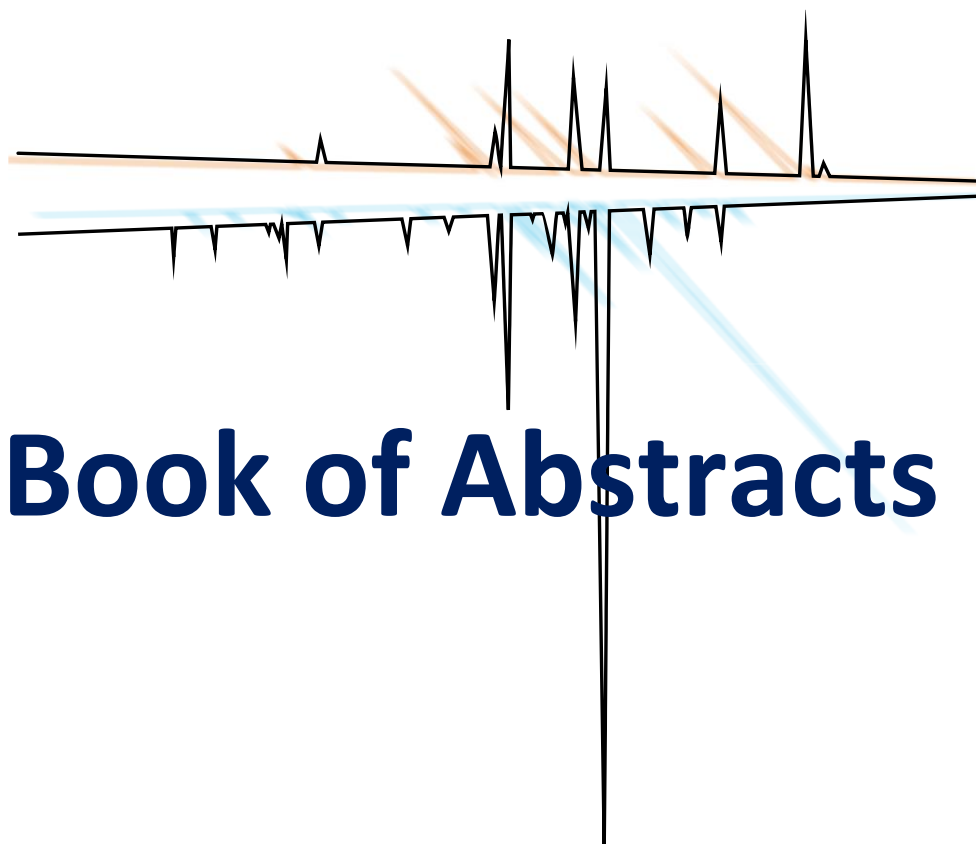
# 10<sup>th</sup> IAPC Meeting

Tenth World Conference on

Physico-Chemical Methods in Drug Discovery

&

Sixth World Conference on ADMET and DMPK



# Book of Abstracts



September 2023 :: Belgrade, Serbia

## **10<sup>th</sup> IAPC Meeting**

*Tenth World Conference on Physico-Chemical Methods in Drug Discovery  
&*

*Sixth World Conference on ADMET and DMPK  
Belgrade, Serbia, September 4-6, 2023*

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# CONTENTS

## Oral presentations

<b>Virtual assessment to provide insights into drug-exciipient-intestinal fluid interactions and support virtual formulation design</b> <i>Christel Bergström</i>	2
<b>In vitro evaluation of drug presence in the micellar phase of contents of upper small intestine: Rationale, challenges, opportunities</b> <i>Christos Reppas</i>	3
<b>Continuous improvement in the molecular properties assessment world</b> <i>Gilles Goetz, Jim Federico, Brendon Kapinos, Matt Troutman</i>	4
<b>Nanotechnology enabled innovation in inhalation drug delivery</b> <i>Eride Quarta, Paolo Colombo, Lorenzo Degli Esposti, Daniele Catalucci, Michele Iafisco, Claudio De Luca, Gaia Colombo</i>	5
<b>Neuro pharmacokinetics: the secret life of - old and novel - psychopharmacological drugs</b> <i>Miroslav Savić</i>	6
<b>Celebrating 40 years of the ROSS™ electrode and 50 years of pH<sub>max</sub></b> <i>Alex Avdeef</i>	7
<b>Salt disproportionation in bicarbonate buffer</b> <i>Kiyohiko Sugano</i>	8
<b>Development of rapidly dissolving 3D-printed tablets for personalized medicine by applying acid-base supersolubilization (ABS) principle</b> <i>Abu Serajuddin</i>	9
<b>Salt selection for development - solubility &amp; bioperformance advantages from salts made by weaker acidic counterions explained by thermodynamic equilibria</b> <i>Yan He</i>	10
<b>Solubility prediction by deep learning of quantum information</b> <i>Tonglei Li</i>	11
<b>Micro-scale solubility measurement to guide early decision making</b> <i>Sami Svanbäck</i>	12
<b>Insights in the solubility and dissolution rate determination of cocrystals</b> <i>Elisabet Fuguet, Hanan Fael, Rafael Barbas, Rafel Prohens, Rebeca Ruiz, Clara Ràfols</i>	13

**Preparation and characterization of solid dispersion of mesalazine using anti-solvent precipitation technique**

*Emin, Zekir Kade, Poturcu, Alan Bogos, Aygme, Konstantyn Kozłowski, Abdalla E. Elbashir* \_\_\_\_\_ 14

**Revealing the story of an orphan drug: clofazimine speciation and solubilization as a function of pH**

*Tatjana Ž. Verbić, Alex Avdeef, Kin Y. Tam, Olivera S. Marković, Miloš P. Pešić, Igor A. Topalović, Dušan Ž. Veljković, Mufaddal Kathawala, Abu T. M. Serajuddin* \_\_ 15

**Amorphous solid dispersions: True supersaturation measured in a time-resolved manner by microdialysis**

*Annette Bauer Brandl* \_\_\_\_\_ 16

**Metabolism as a target for drug development**

*Godefridus J. Peters, Kin Tam, Marika Franczak, Yan Zhou, Filippo Minutolo, Carlotta Granchi, R. Tom Smolenski, Elisa Giovannetti* \_\_\_\_\_ 17

**Dichloroacetophenone derivatives as pyruvate dehydrogenase kinase inhibitor in non-small cell lung cancer models**

*Kin Tam* \_\_\_\_\_ 18

**Development of catalytic inhibitors of topoisomerase II $\alpha$  as chemotherapeutic agents**

*Barbara Herlah, Matej Janežič, Kaja Bergant Loboda, Katja Valjavec, Andrej Perdih* \_ 19

**Highlight on the benefits of PBPK modeling: A link between drug properties and its in vivo performance**

*Sandra Cvijić* \_\_\_\_\_ 20

**Navigating towards improved cytotoxicity assessment in nanomedicine development: Shifting from colorimetric to fluorescence-based assays**

*Ines Nikolić, Marija Petrović, Jelena Mitović, Emmanuelle Sublet, Olivier Jordan, Snežana Savić, Gerrit Borchard* \_\_\_\_\_ 21

**Chromatography platform to highlight compounds behavior in a membrane: A journey of interactions**

*Laurence Philippe-Venec* \_\_\_\_\_ 22

**Combining biomimetic chromatography and the quantitative structure-(chromatographic) retention relationships approach using machine learning**

*Krzysztof Ciura* \_\_\_\_\_ 24

**Application of lipophilicity, protein and phospholipid binding measured by HPLC for prediction of ADME properties and toxicity of compounds**

*Klara Valko, Bard Calvin* \_\_\_\_\_ 25

**Application of biomimetic chromatography for the prediction of acute aquatic toxicity of organic pollutants**

*C. Stergiopoulos, F. Tsopeas, M. Ochsenkühn-Petropoulou, K. Valko* \_\_\_\_\_ 26

<b>From <math>\Delta \log k_w^{IAM}</math> to multidimensional biomimetic chromatography: a journey to shed light on the absorption potential of therapeutics. What will the future bring?</b>	
<i>Giacomo Russo</i> _____	27
<b>Ability of physicochemical systems to predict skin permeation of neutral compounds. A comparison study</b>	
<i>Martí Rosés, Sara Soriano-Meseguer, Adriana Port, Elisabet Fuguet</i> _____	28
<b>Towards better understanding of drug interactions with mesoporous silica carriers by using inverse gas chromatography and molecular modelling</b>	
<i>Andreas Niederquell, Barbora Vraníková, Martin Kuentz</i> _____	29
<b>In silico approaches for understanding the role of intermolecular interactions in formulations and combination therapies: implications for ADME properties optimization</b>	
<i>Mire Zloh</i> _____	30
<b>Octanol-water distribution coefficient (<math>\log D</math>) as molecular descriptor to count environmental effect in QSAR models: comparison on experimental and predicted values for common reference drug substances for wide pH scale</b>	
<i>Mare Oja, Uko Maran</i> _____	31
<b>With a little help from computer-aided drug design – new antitumor agents as tubulin polymerization inhibitors</b>	
<i>Robert Vianello</i> _____	32
<b>Elucidation of molecular mechanisms of activity of <i>Echinacea spp.</i> constituents for possible treatment of COVID 19 by computer-aided methods</b>	
<i>Slavica Erić, Milena Jović, Mire Zloh</i> _____	33
<b>Quantitative structure-activity relationship of pyrimidine and uracil derivatives for characterization and evaluation the potential of chemical compounds for cervical cancer</b>	
<i>S. Zukic, U. Maran</i> _____	34
<b>Bridging science &amp; regulation: quality by design in patient- focused formulation development</b>	
<i>Jelena Đuriš</i> _____	35
<b>Improvement of digital twin for transdermal fentanyl delivery based on anomalous diffusion</b>	
<i>Milena Čukić Radenković, Slobodanka Galović</i> _____	36
<b>Sponsors' presentations</b>	
<b>High-resolution mass spectrometry in drug discovery and design – trends and perspectives</b>	
<i>Luka Mihajlović</i> _____	38

<b>Determination of active components in medicines and food on Shimadzu chromatographies</b>	
<i>Stefan Jovanović, Aleksandar Zurkić, Vanja Vranjevac</i>	39
<b>Advancing drug safety: PrimeVigilance's comprehensive pharmacovigilance approach</b>	
<i>Nebojša Jankov, Nikola Stojanović</i>	40
<b>Poster presentations</b>	
<b>Evaluation of the micellization of the biosurfactant sodium taurocholate using fluorescence measurements</b>	
<i>S. Amézqueta, E. Fuguet, U. Casanova, C. Ràfols</i>	42
<b>Investigation of molecular mechanism of action of <i>Satureja Montana</i> essential oil constituents related to effects on viremias</b>	
<i>Slavica Erić, Đorđe Vasilić, Katarina Ilić, Mire Zloh</i>	43
<b>Computational study of interactions of <i>Cannabis Sativa</i> constituents with potential epigenetic targets involved in processes of multiple sclerosis</b>	
<i>Slavica Erić, Charline Hendricks, Mire Zloh</i>	44
<b>Computational study of the monoamin oxidase B mechanism- based irreversible inhibitors</b>	
<i>Lucija Vrban, Robert Vianello</i>	45
<b>Virtual docking and design of novel Histone deacetylase and Rho- associated protein kinases dual inhibitors (HDAC/ROCKs)</b>	
<i>Milan Beljkaš, Miloš Petković, Katarina Nikolić, Slavica Oljačić</i>	46
<b>Towards the multitarget HDAC Inhibitors for the treatment of pancreatic carcinoma by joining the drug synergy predictions and the molecular modeling</b>	
<i>Nemanja Đoković, Aleksandra Ilić, Alen Čebzan, Branko Radović, Dušan Ružić, Ana Đurić, Tatjana Srdić-Rajić, Katarina Nikolić</i>	47
<b>Biomimetic characteristics of dual TLC retention mechanism</b>	
<i>Darija Obradović, Lukasz Komsta, Marija Popović-Nikolić, Jovana Milutinović, Saša Lazović</i>	48
<b>Study of ionization of montelukast in differently charged micellar solutions as biomembrane mimetic systems</b>	
<i>Marija Popović-Nikolić, Slavica Oljačić, Katarina Nikolić, Gordana Popović</i>	49
<b>Improvement of the vitamin D<sub>2</sub> photostability through the formation of cocrystals</b>	
<i>Emma Bello, Eirini Tarelli, Rafael Barbas, Rafel Prohens, Clara Ràfols, Elisabet Fuguet</i>	50
<b>Design of microfluidic devices for fast determination of octanol/water partition coefficients by HPLC</b>	
<i>Elisabet Fuguet, Abdulkarim Albishiri, Joan M. Cabot, Martí Rosés</i>	51



<b>Drug-excipient interactions: evaluation of the binding constants</b> <i>Clara Râfols, Rebeca Ruiz, Elisabet Fuguet</i>	52
<b>Chamelogk: a new experimental-chromatographic chameleonicity descriptor</b> <i>Maura Vallaro, Diego Garcia Jimenez, Matteo Rossi Sebastiano, Giulia Aprato,</i>	53
<b>EPR imaging: A convenient method for <i>in vivo</i> monitoring the efficacy of anti-inflammatory drugs</b> <i>Marko Jovanović, Hadi Waisi, Stevan Blagojević, Vladimir Tajković, Marko Daković, Đura Nakarada, Miloš Mojović</i>	54
<b>Green synthesis of Ag-Fe nanoparticles using <i>cotinus coggygia</i>: Preparation, characterization and photothermal potential</b> <i>Tsenka Grancharova, Stanislava Simeonova, Bissera Pilicheva, Plamen Zagorchev</i>	55
<b>Quantitative measurement of concentration and diffusion properties of molecules using fluorescence correlation spectroscopy</b> <i>J. Z. Jelić, A. Denčevski, M. D. Rabasović, A. J. Krmpot</i>	56
<b>Evaluation of dose dependent oral drug absorption by <math>\mu</math>Flux</b> <i>Shiori Ishida, Samuel Lee, Karl Box, Balint Sinko, Kiyohiko Sugano</i>	57
<b>Effect of bicarbonate buffer on the precipitation behavior of drugs</b> <i>Hibiki Yamamoto, Kiyohiko Sugano</i>	58
<b>Combined in silico approach in screening of flavonoids database for potential NLRP3 inhibitors</b> <i>Kristina Stevanović, Draginja Radošević, Vladimir Perović, Sanja Glišić</i>	59
<b>Searching for the best way to incorporate the proprietary compound GL-II -73 into the nanoemulsion carrier for prospective parenteral application</b> <i>Jelena Đoković, Bojan Marković, Dishary Sharmin, James M Cook, Miroslav Savić, Snežana Savić</i>	60
<b>Design of tailor-made biocompatible nanocarrier for novel pyrazoloquinolinone ligand (CW-02-79) based on comprehensive evaluation of critical physicochemical descriptors</b> <i>Tijana Stanković, Tanja Ilić, Ivana Pantelić, Anđela Tošić, Jelena Mitrović, James M. Cook, Miroslav Savić, Snežana Savić</i>	61
<b><i>In silico</i> prediction of liquid-liquid phase separation concentration using abraham solute descriptors</b> <i>Taiga Uekusa, Kiyohiko Sugano</i>	62
<b>Polymorphic conversion of a hydrophobic drug in water: Posaconazole suspensions</b> <i>Matteo Guidetti; Fritz Blatter; Rolf Hilfiker; Annette Bauer-Brandl; Martin Kuentz</i>	63
<b>Challenges in peptide method development Interactions between peptides and HPLC vials</b> <i>Ksenija Žibert, Mateja Filković, Iva Filipović</i>	64

<b>Determination of the nifedipine solubility at biorelevant temperature</b> <i>Ekin Guler, Kaan Altun, Emelhan Rahimoglu, Bolgacem Aybar</i>	65
<b>Clofazimine acid-base solubilization: influence of small organic acids' concentration</b> <i>Igor A. Topalović, Olivera S. Marković, Miloš P. Pešić, Mufaddal Kathawala, Abu T. M. Serajuddin, Alex Avdeef, Tatjana Ž. Verbić</i>	66
<b><sup>1</sup>H-NMR-based serum metabolomics of bipolar disorder patients</b> <i>Nataša Avramović, Katarina Simić, Zoran Miladinović, Nina Todorović, Snežana Trifunović, Aleksandra Gavrilović, Silvana Jovanović, Dejan Gođevac, Ljubodrag Vujisić, Vele Tešević, Ljubica Tasić, Boris Mandić</i>	67
<b><sup>1</sup>H-NMR metabonomic view on schizophrenia</b> <i>Nataša Avramović, Katarina Simić, Zoran Miladinović, Nina Todorović, Snežana Trifunović, Aleksandra Gavrilović, Silvana Jovanović, Dejan Gođevac, Ljubodrag Vujisić, Vele Tešević, Ljubica Tasić, Boris Mandić</i>	68
<b>Salt dissolution, supersaturation, and precipitation kinetics: A comparison between the USP II and the <math>\mu</math>DISS Profiler™</b> <i>Laurin Zöllner, Sara Carlert, Eva Karlsson, Anders Borde, Christoph Saal, Jennifer Dressman</i>	69
<b>Development of ophthalmic nanoemulsion for advanced delivery of poorly water- and oil-soluble loteprednol etabonate</b> <i>Josip Ljubica, Bisera Jurišić Dukovski, Drago Špoljarić, Iva Krtalić, Ivan Sušan, Anita Hafner, Ivan Pepić, Jasmina Lovrić</i>	70
<b>Preparation and evaluation of poly-<math>\epsilon</math>-caprolactone nanoparticles as carriers for nose-to-brain delivery of lidebenone</b> <i>R. Boyuklieva, B. Pilicheva</i>	71
<b>Directed protein evolution for the investigation of endogenous proteins in synaptic organization and transmission</b> <i>Ivana Trivunovic, Charlotte Rimbault, Ellyn Renou, Cameron Mackereth, Daniel Choquet, Matthieu Sainlos</i>	72
<b>NMR study of haloperidol in weak acid solutions</b> <i>Mladen M. Đurđević, Miloš P. Pešić, Tatjana Ž. Verbić</i>	69

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## Neuro pharmacokinetics: the secret life of - old and novel - psychopharmacological drugs

Miroslav Savić

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In the 21st century, the pace of development of new pharmacological treatments for general medical and psychiatric disorders is remarkably different. While successes for the former are frequent, new drugs for mental, behavioral and neurodevelopmental disorders are sporadic. Many factors contribute to this discrepancy. Probably the most important is the complexity of etiology and manifestations of mood, psychotic, anxiety, neurocognitive and other disorders that are commonly treated with psycho pharmacological drugs. Although this factor cannot be directly addressed in drug development, optimization of drug exposure in brain tissue can certainly help to balance the efficacy and safety of both widely used and novel psycho pharmacological drugs. While drug exposure of various organs and tissues can be easily assessed from free (unbound) blood concentrations, the central nervous system (CNS) has a number of barriers, most notably the blood-brain barrier (BBB) that separates nervous tissue from the periphery. Optimised CNS exposure of a drug to its target site over a desired time period is critical to triggering its therapeutic effect. The presence of the BBB readily leads to an asymmetry of drug (unbound) exposure in the brain and in the systemic circulation, which prohibits the use of unbound drug concentration in plasma as a surrogate for unbound drug concentration in the brain. Comprehensive pharmacokinetic/pharmacodynamic studies of marketed CNS drugs have shown that the concentration of unbound drug in brain interstitial fluid is an appropriate measure of CNS exposure in the context of cell membrane targets of action. The more recent concept of brain-plasma partition coefficient,  $K_{p,uu}$ , as a parameter describing the relationship between the concentration of unbound drug in brain interstitial fluid and the concentration of unbound drug in plasma, is assumed to be the most important means of assessing brain exposure. Experimental assessment of  $K_{p,uu}$  requires either measurement of the brain unbound drug concentration in the interstitial fluid by microdialysis *in vivo* or estimation of the fraction of unbound drug in the whole brain homogenate ( $f_{u,brain}$ ) by equilibrium dialysis *in vitro*.  $K_{p,uu}$  can be calculated by dividing either the area under the curve (AUC) of the profile of the concentration of unbound drug in brain and plasma after a single administration or the steady-state unbound concentrations of drug in brain interstitial fluid and plasma. Although many marketed psychotropic drugs have  $K_{p,uu}$  values as low as 0.1-0.2, it is theorized that the most successful small molecule CNS drugs should have  $K_{p,uu}$  values near 1. The neuropharmacokinetic behavior of benzodiazepine compounds, both widely used and those in preclinical and clinical development, is presented as a showcase. Given the variety of receptor subpopulations at which these drugs act as positive allosteric modulators of GABA<sub>A</sub> receptors, the complexity of linking brain exposure data to the corresponding pharmacodynamic effect is explained.