## Exploring ternary copper coordination compounds interacting with DNA as a promising anticancer and antibacterial drug

## I. Kekez1, K. Mišković Špoljarić2,D. Vušak1,M. Belas1, D. Kučera-Čavara1,B. Prugovečki1

### 1University of Zagreb, Faculty of Science, Department of Chemistry, Horvatovac 102a, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia

### 2University Josip Juraj Strossmayer Osijek, Faculty of Medicine, Josipa Huttlera 4, 31000 Osijek, Croatia

### ikekez@chem.pmf.hr

Ternary metal complexes are gaining increasing attention in drug discovery due to their unique structural and biological properties [1-2]. These complexes feature a central metal ion coordinated by two distinct ligands, often resulting in enhanced stability, selectivity, and therapeutic potential. Among them, copper(ii) coordination compounds with amino acidates and heterocyclic bases form a well-studied subclass known as Cassiopeia, recognized for their anticancer activity [3]. We have recently been involved in synthesizing novel copper ternary coordination compounds with different amino acids and heterocyclic bases, including 2,2’-bipyridine and 1,10-phenanthroline, as potential DNA binders with antiproliferative activity towards various cancer cells [4-5]. In this work, we have investigated anticancer activity of three different copper(ii) ternary coordination compounds with glycine and 1,10-phenanthroline (**1** - {[Cu(Gly)(H2O)(phen)][Cu(*μ*-Gly)(phen)]SO4·2H2O}*n*, **2** - [Cu(Gly)(H2O)(phen)][Cu(Gly)(SO4)(phen)]·5H2O and **3** - [Cu(Gly)(phen)(H2O)]2SO4·6H2O)). All three compounds (**1−3**) exhibited potent antiproliferative activity against five human cancer cell lines MDA-MB 231 (breast), Hep-G2 (liver), KATO III (gastric), PANC-1 (pancreatic duct) and Caco-2 (intestinal) with *IC*50 values ranging from 0.6 to 2.8 μmol dm−3. The most potent and selective activity was observed against KATO III gastric cancer cells (*IC*50 = 0.6 μmol dm−3), with lower cytotoxicity against MRC-5 healthy fibroblast control cells (*IC*50 = 4 μmol dm−3). The antibacterial activity of compound **2** was also assessed against two Gram-positive (*S. aureus* ATCC 29213, *E. faecalis* ATCC 29212) and two Gram-negative strains (*E. coli* ToIC-Tn10, *M. catarrhalis* ATCC 23246). It displayed moderate activity against Gram-positive bacteria and pronounced activity against Gram-negative strains, with the lowest minimal inhibitory concentration (MIC) observed for *M. catarrhalis* (*MIC* = 4 μg/mL). The binding affinity of compound **2** toward the double-stranded oligonucleotide **DNA** (ds(CGCGAATTCGCG)) was explored by spectroscopic and crystallographic methods. Absorption and fluorescence spectra suggested a moderate binding affinity of **2** to the double-stranded DNA dodecamer. Co-crystallization experiments were carried out using the Oryx8 crystallization robot, and obtained crystals were further analysed using the X-ray diffraction method on XRD2 Elettra synchrotron beamline (Trieste, Italy). A new crystal form of double-stranded DNA dodecamer ds(CGCGAATTCGCG) was obtained, crystallizing in trigonal space group – *H*3 with unit cell parameters *a* = *b* = 38.520 Å, *c* = 99.200 Å, *α* = *β* = 90°, *γ* = 120°. These findings highlight the potential of copper-based ternary complexes as dual-function anticancer and antibacterial agents. Their capacity to engage with DNA and exhibit selective biological activity positions them as promising candidates in the development of next-generation metallodrugs.

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