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The AH peptide is a potential antiviral drug

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A new study reported that a peptide from the hepatitis C virus (HCV) could treat a host of viruses, such as HIV, dengue, measles and so on. Virus can become resistant to medicines by escaping the host immune system. This is a big obstacle that people are faced with to treat virus infection.

The researchers derived a special peptide from HCV, which showed the ability to kill a variety of viruses. The peptide seems to meet the need of targeting multiple viruses, including the viruses mentioned above.

The peptide is called HCV α -helical (AH) peptide, which has broad antiviral properties. But it is not clear how AH selectively attacks the viral envelope but not host cell membranes. To find the mechanism behind it, a team of scientists used simplified model lipid membranes that varied in their size and chemical composition to test the antiviral



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properties of AH.

It was found that the AH peptide attacked the virus-like models by discriminating between the molecular make-up of their membranes. It targeted cholesterol-rich membranes of viruses. The AH peptide disrupted the viral membranes, and exposed the viral genome to host enzymes, leading to the death of the pathogens.

The researchers believe that the AH peptide killed a variety of viruses that have cholesterol-rich membranes. The AH peptide might become a potential antiviral drug for many viral infection. Additional research is needed to expand these findings to more realistic model systems. Now there are many antiviral drugs available, but the virus can become resistant to them. (CUSABIO provides a variety of peptides. <http://www.cusabio.com/>)

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- [Email: cusabio@cusabio.com](mailto:cusabio@cusabio.com)
- [Phone: +86-27-87582341](tel:+86-27-87582341)
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