Importance of formulation type, ionisation at skin surface, binding to keratin along with thickness and lipid levels of skin layers in quantitative prediction of human dermal absorption of diclofenac and ibuprofen

Nikunjkumar Patel1, Sebastian Polak2, Khaled Abduljalilib, Masoud Jameil, Amin Rostami-Hodjegan1,6

n.likumar.patel@certara.com

Simcyp Limited (a Certara Company), Sheffield, S2 4SU, U.K.; b Faculty of Pharmacy, Jagiellonian University Medical College, Poland; c Manchester Pharmacy School, The University of Manchester, U.K.

PURPOSE:
Physiologically based pharmacokinetic (PBPK) models have a unique advantage in accounting for the drug and the formulation characteristics and the underlying inter- or intra-individual variability in physiology and biology. A mechanistic dermal absorption model informed by human physiology (skin layer thickness, lipid contents and blood flow rates, etc.) has been developed previously in the Simcyp Simulator to predict human dermal absorption of drugs [1]. Here we introduce new enhancements [Fig 1] which account for the impact of formulation type, ionisation at skin surface, dermal metabolism and binding to keratin (fuSC). Validity of enhancements are assessed using two model compounds Diclofenac (DF) and Ibuprofen (IP), commonly used for dermal treatments. DF was administered as lotion whereas the IP was given as gel and cream formulations.

Materials and Methods:
All simulations were carried out in Simcyp version 13.2 using the enhanced mechanistic dermal absorption (MechDermA) model [Fig 1]. Due to the bottom-up nature of MechDermA, neither clinical nor animal dermal absorption data were necessary. Instead, a range of built-in QSAR models and prior in vitro data were used as model input. Simulation of plasma concentration-time profiles for DF and IP were carried out with both the enhanced and original models and were compared against each other. Dermal metabolism of both drugs was considered negligible. A clinical trial design is replicated by selecting an appropriate population from Simcyp Library and applying the trial design parameters [Table 1]. Predicted profiles and values of C\text{\textsubscript{\text{max}}}, T\text{\textsubscript{\text{max}}} and AUC were then compared with reported clinical results [2, 3].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:
DICLOFENAC: The predicted PK profiles are overlaid with the clinically observed data (Fig 2). The predicted values and % prediction errors (%PEs) in C\text{\textsubscript{\text{max}}} (ng/mL), T\text{\textsubscript{\text{max}}} (h) and AUC (ng/mL·h) showed improved outcome by using the enhanced MechDermA model (Table 2).

IBUPROFEN: Similar to DF case, inclusion of ionisation and fuSC significantly improved predictions of two different formulations of IP (gel formulation was simulated as aqueous base vehicle; cream formulation was simulated as non-aqueous base vehicle). The results from predictions were compared to clinically measured pharmacokinetic profiles including the population variability of each of the formulations (Fig 3).

CONCLUSIONS:
Formulation type, drug ionisation at the skin surface and binding to keratin along with lipid content of skin layers and their thickness can significantly impact upon dermal absorption of ionisable compounds and should be considered during modelling for more realistic predictions. Further validation of the model on drugs with varying physicochemical characteristics and different types of formulation are warranted to improve confidence in such modelling strategy.

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REFERENCES: