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## **Structural Basis of Species-dependent Differential Affinity of 6-Alkoxy-5-aryl-3-pyridinecarboxamide Cannabinoid Receptor 1 Antagonists**

Malliga R. Iyer, Resat Cinar, Jie Liu, Grzegorz Godlewski, Gergő Szanda, Henry Puhl, Stephen R. Ikeda, Jeffrey Deschamps, Yong-Sok Lee, Peter J. Steinbach, and George Kunos

*Laboratory of Physiologic Studies (M.R.I., R.C., J.L., G.G., G.S., G.K.) and Laboratory of Molecular Physiology (H.P., S.R.I.), National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD 20892; Naval Research Laboratory, Washington, DC 20375 (J.D.); and Center for Molecular Modeling, Center for Information Technology, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD 20892 (Y.S.L., P.J.S.)*

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Running Title: Species-specific affinity of CB1 receptor antagonists.

Correspondence: George Kunos, Laboratory of Physiologic Studies, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Bethesda, MD 20892-9413. E-mail: [george.kunos@nih.gov](mailto:george.kunos@nih.gov)

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ABBREVIATIONS: **14g**, 5-(4-chlorophenyl)-6-(cyclopropylmethoxy)-N-[(1*R*,2*R*)-2-hydroxy-cyclohexyl]-3-pyridinecarboxamide; **14h**, 5-(4-chlorophenyl)-N-[(1*R*,2*R*)-2-hydroxycyclohexyl]-6-(2-methoxyethoxy)-3-pyridinecarboxamide; CB<sub>1</sub>R, cannabinoid receptor 1; DIO, diet-induced obesity;

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## Abstract

6-Alkoxy-5-aryl-3-pyridincarboxamides, including the brain penetrant compound **14g** and its peripherally restricted analog **14h**, have been recently introduced as selective, high affinity antagonists of the human cannabinoid receptor-1 (hCB<sub>1</sub>R, *J. Med. Chem.* 56, 9874-96, 2013). Binding analyses revealed two orders of magnitude lower affinity of these compounds for mouse and rat versus human CB<sub>1</sub>R, whereas the affinity of rimonabant is comparable for all three CB<sub>1</sub>Rs. Modeling of ligand binding to CB<sub>1</sub>R and binding assays with native and mutant (Ile105Met) hCB<sub>1</sub>Rs indicate that the Ile105 to Met mutation in rodent CB<sub>1</sub>Rs accounts for the species-dependent affinity of **14g** and **14h**. Our work identifies Ile105 as a new pharmacophore component for developing better hCB<sub>1</sub>R antagonists and invalidates rodent models for assessing the antiobesity efficacy of **14g** and **14h**.

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## Introduction

An overactive endocannabinoid/CB<sub>1</sub>R system has been implicated in obesity and its metabolic complications (Bluher et al., 2006; Pacher et al., 2006). Globally acting CB<sub>1</sub>R antagonists reduce body weight and hepatic fat accumulation and improve insulin sensitivity and dyslipidemia in overweight people with the metabolic syndrome (Despres et al., 2005; Pi-Sunyer et al., 2006), but their therapeutic development was halted due to neuropsychiatric side effects (Le Foll et al., 2009). However, CB<sub>1</sub>R in peripheral tissues, including adipose tissue, liver, skeletal muscle, pancreatic  $\beta$ -cells and tissue macrophages contribute to the metabolic effects of endocannabinoids (Cota et al., 2003; Jourdan et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2005; Osei-Hyiaman et al., 2005), suggesting that selective blockade of peripheral CB<sub>1</sub>R may provide a therapeutic alternative by avoiding side effects linked to blockade of CB<sub>1</sub>R in the CNS. Indeed, several recent studies documented that when tested in rodent models of obesity/metabolic syndrome and type-2 diabetes, novel CB<sub>1</sub>R antagonists with very low brain penetrance are devoid of behavioral effects predictive of neuropsychiatric side effects in humans, yet have retained most if not all the metabolic efficacy of globally acting CB<sub>1</sub>R antagonists (Jourdan et al., 2013; Tam et al., 2012; Tam et al., 2010).

In a recent study, 6-alkoxy-5-aryl-3-pyridinecarboxamides have been introduced as a new series of orally bioavailable CB<sub>1</sub>R antagonists with low nanomolar affinity for the human CB<sub>1</sub>R (Röver et al., 2013). Two analogs were tested in that study, one with high and one with low brain penetrance (brain:plasma ratios of 1.3 versus 0.13, respectively) in a rat model of high-fat diet-induced obesity (DIO) and found that the analog with high brain penetrance (5-(4-chlorophenyl)-6-(cyclopropylmethoxy)-N-[(1*R*,2*R*)-2-hydroxycyclohexyl]-3-pyridinecarbox-amide, designated as **14g**, see Fig. 1) caused significant delays in weight gain and adiposity, but the analog with low brain penetrance (5-(4-chlorophenyl)-N-[(1*R*,2*R*)-2-hydroxycyclohexyl]-6-(2-methoxyethoxy)-3-pyridinecarboxamide, designated as **14h**, see Fig.

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1) did not. This had led the authors to the conclusion that the antiobesity efficacy of CB<sub>1</sub>R blockade is primarily centrally mediated (Röver et al., 2013).

The high-fat fed rats used in the above study represent a weak model of the metabolic syndrome as only a subset of the animals develops modest weight gain beyond the normal growth of the animals, and they do not display an increase in the accumulation of ectopic fat in the liver or changes in plasma leptin and insulin concentrations, which would indicate insulin or leptin resistance (Flamment et al., 2009; Röver et al., 2013). We wanted to test the effects of the above two compounds in DIO mice, a more robust model of the metabolic syndrome (Collins et al., 2004), for which we needed to establish their affinities for the mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R. Unexpectedly, we found that the binding affinity ( $K_i$ ) of both compounds was one to two orders of magnitude lower for both the mouse and rat CB<sub>1</sub>R relative to their affinities for the human CB<sub>1</sub>R, and accordingly failed to elicit CB<sub>1</sub>R blockade in functional assays *in vivo*. This prompted us to analyze these ligands along with the reference compound rimonabant, which has equal high CB<sub>1</sub>R binding affinity in the 3 species (Govaerts et al., 2004), for their interaction with mouse, rat and human CB<sub>1</sub>R, using molecular modeling. The resulting binding model, strongly supported by site-directed mutagenesis of a key residue in human vs mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R, provides the likely structural basis of these striking species-dependent differences, unprecedented among other CB<sub>1</sub>R ligands introduced to date (Govaerts et al., 2004; Thomas et al., 2005).

## Materials and Methods

**CB<sub>1</sub>R Antagonists.** Compounds **14g** and **14h** were synthesized as described (Röver et al., 2013). The correct structure was verified by NMR spectroscopy and, for compound **14h**, by X-ray crystallography (Supplemental Figure 1). Rimonabant (SR141716) was provided by the NIDA Drug Supply Program.

**X-ray Diffraction.** Details provided in supplemental materials.

**CB<sub>1</sub>R Binding Assays.** The binding affinity of different antagonists/inverse agonists was determined in radioligand displacement assays using 1nM of [<sup>3</sup>H]CP55940 as the agonist radioligand and plasma membrane preparations from mouse or rat brain or from Chinese hamster ovary (CHO) cells transfected with the cDNA encoding the human CB<sub>1</sub>R. K<sub>i</sub> values were derived by computerized curve fitting and using the Cheng-Prusoff equation to account for the affinity of the radioligand by using the GraphPad Prism 6 program (GraphPad Prism Software In., San Diego, CA). Non-specific binding was determined in the presence of 1 μM rimonabant and accounted for <20% of total binding. Plasma membranes were prepared as described from mouse and rat brain (Compton et al., 1993) and from cultured CHO-K1 cells (Perkin Elmer, MA).

**CB<sub>1</sub>R Functional Antagonism.** The inhibitory potency of antagonists/inverse agonists was determined by the concentration-dependent inhibition of 1 μM CP55940-stimulated [<sup>35</sup>S]GTPγS binding, assayed as described earlier (Griffin et al., 1998). In some assays, full agonist dose-response curves were generated in the absence or presence of increasing concentrations of antagonists to generate Schild-plots for testing the competitive nature of the antagonism (Sim-Selley et al., 2001). Concentration-response relations were analyzed by sigmoidal curve fitting using the GraphPad Prism 6 program. Mouse brain crude membrane fractions (10 μg) were incubated with 0.05 nM [<sup>35</sup>S]GTPγS and the indicated concentrations of ligands in TEM buffer (50 mM Tris-HCl, 0.2 mM EGTA and 9 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, pH 7.4) containing 100 μM GDP, 150 mM NaCl and 0.1% (w/v) BSA in a total volume of 1 mL for 60 min at 30°C. Nonspecific binding was determined in the presence of 10 μM GTPγS, and at baseline it represented <10% of total binding. Agonist-stimulated GTPγS binding was expressed as % increase over baseline. Bound and free [<sup>35</sup>S]GTPγS were separated by vacuum filtration through Whatman GF/B filters using a Brandel M24 Cell Harvester (Gaithersburg, MD, USA). Filters were washed with 3 X 5 mL of ice-cold buffer, and radioactivity was detected by scintillation spectrometry (LS6500; Beckman Coulter).

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**Ligand Modeling.** The X-ray structure of **14h** (Supplemental Figure 1) was used as a template to build **14g**. The compound **32a** was built based on the structure shown in (Röver et al., 2013). The conformers of these ligands were obtained by varying the dihedral angle  $\phi$  as defined in Fig. 3A while relaxing the rest of the structure at the level of B3LYP/6-31G\* as implemented in the Gaussian 09 software (Frisch et al., 2009). The X-ray structure of rimonabant was retrieved from the Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre as CCDC 924604 (Perrin et al., 2013). Its 2,4-dichlorophenyl ring was then rotated with respect to the C1-N1 bond axis, and a more stable conformer was used for a docking study. Each of the conformers in the study was fully geometry optimized without any constraint. The calculated Gibbs free energy of each conformer includes the electronic energy as well as the thermal and entropy contribution at 298.15K.

**CB<sub>1</sub>R Modeling.** A model of human CB<sub>1</sub>R was built using the Prime software (Schrodinger, LLC). The crystal structure of the sphingosine 1-phosphate receptor fused to T4-lysozyme with a sphingolipid mimic bound was chosen as the template (pdb code: 3V2W) (Hanson et al., 2012). Of the 293 residues modeled in CB<sub>1</sub>R (ranging from F89 to M411), 83 (28 %) are nearest to identical residues in the template structure (Data Supplement 1).

**Human and Mouse *CNR1* Mutagenesis.** The human *CNR1* (NM\_007726) open reading frame was inserted into the mammalian expression vector pCI (Promega). The mouse *Cnr1* (NM\_0011602586) open reading frame in pcDNA3 (Life Technologies) was kindly provided by Dr. Mary E. Abood. Mutagenesis was performed using the QuikChange site directed mutagenesis system from Agilent. The human *CNR1* was mutated at amino acid position 105 from Ile to Met using the following primer and its complement (mutated codon is indicated): *hCNR1* I105M: 5'-GAGAACTTCATGGACATGGAGTGTTCATGGTC-3'. The mouse *Cnr1* was mutated at amino acid position 106 from Met to Ile using the following primer and its complement: mCnr1 M106I: 5'-GGAGAATTTTATGGACATAGAGTGCTTCATGATTCTG-3'. Mutations were verified by sequence analysis (Macrogen USA) and plasmids were prepared using the QIAfilter Plasmid Maxi Kit (Qiagen).

**Cell Culture and Plasmid Transfection.** HEK293 cells (ATCC) were maintained in EMEM with 10% FBS. Cells were transfected with different plasmids (hCB<sub>1</sub>R-Ile105, hCB<sub>1</sub>R-mutant met105, mCB<sub>1</sub>R-met106, and mCB<sub>1</sub>R-mutant Ile106) using Lipofectamine 2000 (Life Technologies) according to the manufacturer's protocol. Transfected cells were harvested after 48 h and membranes prepared for receptor binding assays, as described (Abood et al., 1997).

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**Upper GI Motility Assay.** Animal protocols were approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee of the NIAAA, NIH. Drugs (CB<sub>1</sub>R antagonists, arachidonoyl-2'-chloroethylamine, and their combination) or vehicle were administered orally by gavage to male, 8-10 week-old C57Bl6/J mice 1 h prior to oral administration of the marker (10% charcoal suspension in 5% gum arabic). Thirty min later, mice were killed and the distance travelled by the head of the marker between the pylorus and the caecum was measured and expressed as percent of total length of the small intestine.

**Hyperambulatory Activity.** Locomotor activity of drug-naïve mice treated with an oral bolus dose of a CB<sub>1</sub>R antagonist or vehicle was quantified by the number of disruptions of infrared beams in two dimensions in an activity chamber.



## Results and Discussion

We synthesized compounds **14g** and **14h** (Fig. 1A) as described (Röver et al., 2013). The CB<sub>1</sub>R binding affinity of the compounds was then analyzed in CHO cells transfected with the human CB<sub>1</sub>R. The low nanomolar affinity of both compounds was similar to published values (Röver et al., 2013) and was also similar to that of the binding affinity of the reference compound rimonabant (Fig. 1B). In the same cells, **14g** and **14h** also displayed high potency as competitive inhibitors of CB<sub>1</sub>R agonist-stimulated GTP $\gamma$ S activity, as derived from Schild-plots (Supplemental Figure 2). Because we wanted to test the compounds in a mouse model of DIO, we also tested their binding to mouse brain CB<sub>1</sub>R. Surprisingly, the binding affinities of both **14g** and **14h** were 20- to 30-fold lower for mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R compared to human CB<sub>1</sub>R, whereas the affinity of rimonabant was comparable for mouse and human CB<sub>1</sub>R (Fig. 1B). As this finding represents the first known example of a substantial species-specific difference in the affinity of a CB<sub>1</sub>R antagonist, we also tested all three compounds for binding to the rat brain CB<sub>1</sub>R, which differs in only one amino acid from the mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R. In contrast, the human CB<sub>1</sub>R, is one amino acid shorter and differs in an additional 13 amino acid residues from the mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R. As seen in Fig. 1B, binding to the rat CB<sub>1</sub>R revealed the same pattern as seen with the mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R, i.e. rimonabant retained its high affinity, whereas **14g** and **14h** both had two orders of magnitude lower binding affinities and similar low potencies in a functional assay as inhibitors of agonist-stimulated GTP $\gamma$ S binding (Fig 1C).

Peak plasma concentrations of **14g** and **14h** in rats following an oral dose of 8-9 mg/kg were reported in the range of 1-3  $\mu$ M with 96-98% of the ligands being plasma protein bound (Table 5 in (Röver et al., 2013)). Thus, the concentration of unbound ligand (20-60 nM) was well below the K<sub>i</sub> for the rat or mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R for both ligands, making it very unlikely that functional CB<sub>1</sub>R blockade was achieved even at the somewhat higher dose of 30 mg/kg used in the earlier metabolic studies (Röver et al., 2013). To test this hypothesis, we treated normal control mice with a single oral dose of 10 or 30 mg/kg **14g** or **14h** or 10 mg/kg rimonabant and examined their effects in the upper GI motility assay (Izzo et al., 2001),

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the industry standard for quantifying peripheral CB<sub>1</sub>R blockade. As shown in Fig. 2A, upper GI motility as quantified by the distance traveled in 30 min by an oral charcoal bolus along the small intestine was profoundly inhibited by pretreatment with 10 mg/kg of the CB<sub>1</sub>R agonist arachidonyl-2'-chloroethylamide, and the inhibition was completely prevented by rimonabant but remained unaffected by 10 or 30 mg/kg of either **14g** or **14h** (Fig. 2A). Similarly, rimonabant, but not **14g** or **14h**, caused hyperambulatory activity in drug-naïve wild-type but not CB<sub>1</sub>R<sup>-/-</sup> mice (Fig. 2B). The hyperambulatory activity was associated with stereotypic behavior, such as scratching and grooming (not shown), and it is a recognized indicator of blockade of central CB<sub>1</sub>R (Kunz et al., 2008; Tam et al., 2012; Tam et al., 2010). Thus, the reported inhibition of the modest diet-induced weight gain in rats by chronic treatment with the brain penetrant **14g** compound (Röver et al., 2013) may not be attributed to CB<sub>1</sub>R blockade but rather to an off-target effect. Similarly, the lack of an inhibitory effect of **14h** is not relevant to the question of whether or not peripheral CB<sub>1</sub>R contribute to the metabolic benefit of CB<sub>1</sub>R blockade, as proposed (Röver et al., 2013).

However, the unique pharmacological property of compounds **14g** and **14h** to discriminate between human and rodent CB<sub>1</sub>R could be exploited to gain new insight into the structure of the presumed binding pocket. We did molecular modeling of the CB<sub>1</sub>R to explore the possible role of non-homologous amino acid residues of human versus rodent CB<sub>1</sub>R that might account for the differential affinities of these ligands. As illustrated in Fig. 3A, compound **14g** can exist in solution in two conformations (**A** and **B**), due to a small energy difference, as indicated by quantum chemical calculations at the density functional level of B3LYP/6-31G\*. Note that **14g** was constructed based on the X-ray structure of compound **14h** (Supplemental Figure 1). Of the two, conformer **B** rather than **A** is likely recognized by the human, rat or mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R. This hypothesis is based on the comparison of the pharmacological properties of the core variants of the pyridine ring of **14g**, as indicated in Table 4 in (Röver et al., 2013). For example, conformer **A** of the compound **32a** is calculated to be 9.4 kcal/mol

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more stable than conformer **B** of the same compound, as illustrated in Fig. 3B. This energy difference virtually assures that only **A** of **32a** exists in solution, and thus the reported significant decrease in  $K_i$  of **32a** ( $> 7000$  nM for human CB<sub>1</sub>R)(Röver et al., 2013) likely stems from the unfavorable orientation of the chlorophenyl and/or cyclo-propyl moiety of **A** in the binding pocket of CB<sub>1</sub>R. A similar trend was observed for compounds **37a** and **51** (Röver et al., 2013). This in turn suggests that the conformer **B** of **14h** is also preferentially recognized by the CB<sub>1</sub>R, as illustrated in Fig. 3C. It is noted that **14h** is crystallized as conformer **B**. In order to rationalize the differential affinity of **14g** and **14h** versus rimonabant towards the human, rat and mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R, a model of human CB<sub>1</sub>R was built based on the X-ray structure of a lipid GPCR (Hanson et al., 2012). Earlier models have been proposed based on the structures of bovine rhodopsin (Hurst et al., 2002; McAllister et al., 2003; Salo et al., 2004; Shim et al., 2003; Silvestri et al., 2008) or the  $\beta$ 2-adrenergic receptor (Shim et al., 2012). The more recent structure used here as template affords a sequence alignment that is almost devoid of insertions and deletions. Thus, extracellular structure can be modeled readily for CB<sub>1</sub>R, under the assumption that it is similar to that in the lipid GPCR (Data Supplement 1).

The mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R is one amino acid longer than the human CB<sub>1</sub>R, and the two differ in 13 additional amino acids, most of which are located at the N-terminal tail or in extracellular loops (Supplemental Figure 4). Our attention turned quickly to Ile105, because the side chain of this isoleucine points directly into the pocket of the modeled CB<sub>1</sub>R (Fig. 4A). The three compounds of interest were manually docked into the human CB<sub>1</sub>R model, taking into account the binding affinity data of rimonabant and other inverse agonists on CB<sub>1</sub>R mutants, such as W279A (Sitkoff et al., 2011) and S383A (Kapur et al., 2007; Lin et al., 2008). Figure 4 depicts the putative binding modes of rimonabant and **14h**, and suggests that Ser383 can H-bond to the nitrogen of the pyridine ring of **14h**. Moreover, Ile105 in the human CB<sub>1</sub>R is positioned to provide van der Waals interaction with the cyclohexanol of **14h**. The mouse and rat CB<sub>1</sub>R have an equivalent methionine at position 106 (see Supplemental Figure 4), which likely

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alters the protein-ligand interactions (Fig. 4B), and thus may explain the 20-fold lower  $K_i$  of **14h** for the rat compared to human  $CB_1R$ . Note that the 20-fold difference in  $K_i$  corresponds to 1.8 kcal/mol, which could result from the different interactions with Ile and Met at position 105/106 and/or the altered packing of adjacent residues.

To test the validity of this model, we mutated Ile105 in the human  $CB_1R$  to methionine, and Met106 in the mouse  $CB_1R$  to isoleucine, and transiently expressed the 2 native receptors and their mutants in HEK cells. Fig. 5 illustrates the results of radioligand displacement assays using membrane preparations from the 4 cell lines and rimonabant or compound **14h** as the unlabeled ligand. Whereas rimonabant had similar high affinity for the 2 native receptors and their mutants (Fig. 5A,B), the Ile105Met mutation of the human  $CB_1R$  resulted in a >100-fold decrease in the  $K_i$  of **14h** (Fig. 5C) and, conversely, the low affinity of **14h** to the native mouse  $CB_1R$  increased by two orders of magnitude in the Met106Ile mutants (Fig. 5D). These findings clearly confirm the critical role of Ile105Met in the differential affinity of **14h** for the human versus mouse  $CB_1R$ , as postulated in our model. Since the structures of **14g** and **14h** are essentially identical except at 6-alkoxy (Supplemental Figure 3), **14g** is expected to display similar differential affinity to the wild type and the mutant  $CB_1R$ s.

The putative binding mode of rimonabant is depicted in Fig. 4A. This mode is compatible with the non-discriminatory binding affinity of rimonabant towards all three  $CB_1R$  orthologs. As compared to **14g** and **14h**, the aromatic portion of rimonabant was docked to be closer to the hydrophobic pocket formed by F268, W279 and W356, resulting in a sizable separation between Ile105 and the piperidine ring of rimonabant. As a consequence, neither Ile105 nor Met105 influences the binding affinity of rimonabant. Fig. 4B shows the positions of both the cyclohexanol of **14h** and the piperidine of rimonabant in the binding pocket of the human  $CB_1R$ .

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In summary, an unprecedented, species-dependent difference in the binding affinity of a novel class of CB<sub>1</sub>R antagonist to human versus rodent CB<sub>1</sub>R was uncovered and its structural basis analyzed by molecular modeling based on the structure of a related lipid GPCR. The structural analysis suggested that the mutation of Ile to Met at position 105 most likely accounts for the lower affinity of 6-alkoxy-5-aryl-3-pyridinocarboxamide CB<sub>1</sub>R antagonists for rodent than for human CB<sub>1</sub>R, and this hypothesis was then strongly supported by binding assays performed on site-directed mutants altered at this position. CB<sub>1</sub>R antagonists have therapeutic potential in obesity/metabolic syndrome, and peripherally restricted analogs have been reported to retain metabolic efficacy with much reduced neuropsychiatric liability. The present findings highlight the importance of analyzing the interaction of CB<sub>1</sub>R antagonists not only with the therapeutic target human CB<sub>1</sub>R but also with the CB<sub>1</sub>R of rodents used to generate preclinical proof of principle, in order to reach valid conclusions about mechanism of action.

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## Author Contributions

*Participated in research design:* Kunos, Steinbach, Lee, Iyer, Cinar, Ikeda.

*Conducted experiments:* Cinar, Steinbach, Lee, Iyer, Puhl, Deschamps, Liu, Szanda, Godlewski.

*Performed data analysis:* Steinbach, Lee, Cinar, Iyer.

*Wrote or contributed to the writing of the manuscript:* Kunos, Steinbach, Lee, Iyer, Cinar.

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**Footnotes.**

M.R.I. and R.C. are co-first authors of this paper

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## Figure Legends

**Fig. 1.** Chemical structure (A), binding affinity (B) and inhibitory potency (C) of rimonabant and compounds **14g** and **14h** to human, rat and mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R receptors. K<sub>i</sub> values for binding and functional antagonism were determined as described in Methods. Points and vertical bars represent means ± SE from 4–6 independent assays. Hill slopes were not significantly different from 1.0. For panel B, specific binding (fmol/mg protein) in the absence of competitor was 2236 ± 30 (hCB<sub>1</sub>CHO), 225 ± 6 (rat brain), or 222 ± 14 (mouse brain), and was defined as 100%. For panel C, basal GTPγS specific binding was 187 ± 5 fmol/mg protein.

**Fig. 2.** In vivo assays to assess peripheral and central CB<sub>1</sub>R blockade. A: the upper GI motility assay was conducted as described in Methods. Note that rimonabant, but not compound **14g** or **14h**, block the CB<sub>1</sub>R agonist (Farghali, #2150)-induced inhibition of upper GI motility. Columns and vertical bars represent means ± SE from 4 separate experiments. \*, #: Significant difference (P<0.01) from values in vehicle + vehicle-treated or vehicle + ACEA-treated mice, respectively. B,C: ambulatory activity in drug-naïve mice was quantified as described in Methods. Note that rimonabant, but not **14g** or **14h**, causes long lasting hyperambulatory activity in wild-type mice (B) but not in CB<sub>1</sub>R<sup>-/-</sup> mice (C).

**Fig. 3.** Geometry optimized A and B conformers of **14g** (A), **32a** (B), and **14h** (C), at the level of B3LYP/6-31G\* in the gaseous phase. Values in parentheses represent the Gibbs free energy in kcal/mol relative to that of A at 298.15 K. The conversion of B to A was done by varying the dihedral angle φ centered on the C-C bond as indicated by the arrow. Atom coloring: white, hydrogen; green, carbon; dark green, chlorine; blue, nitrogen; red, oxygen.

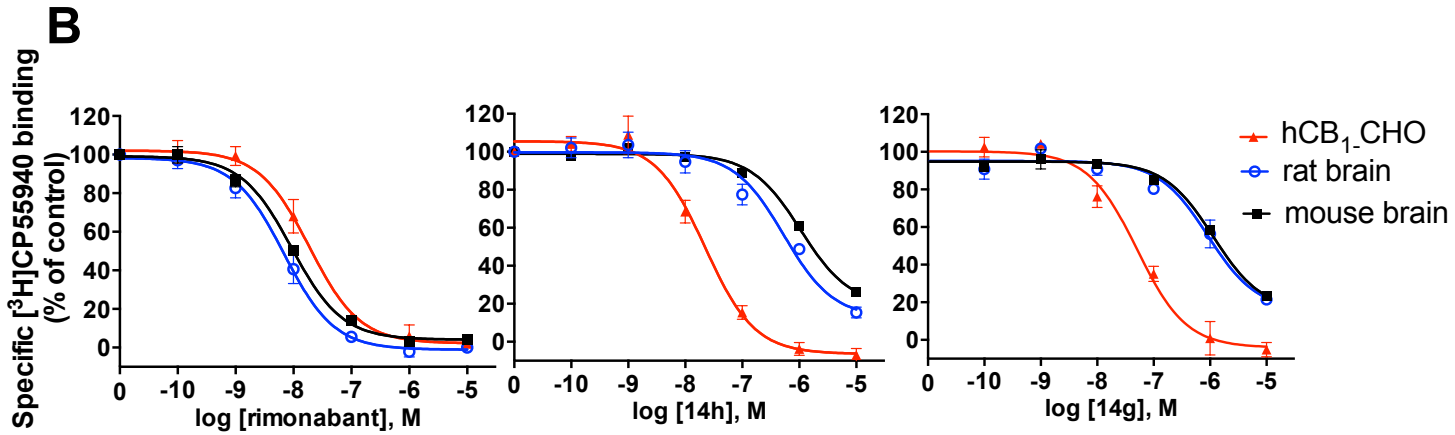
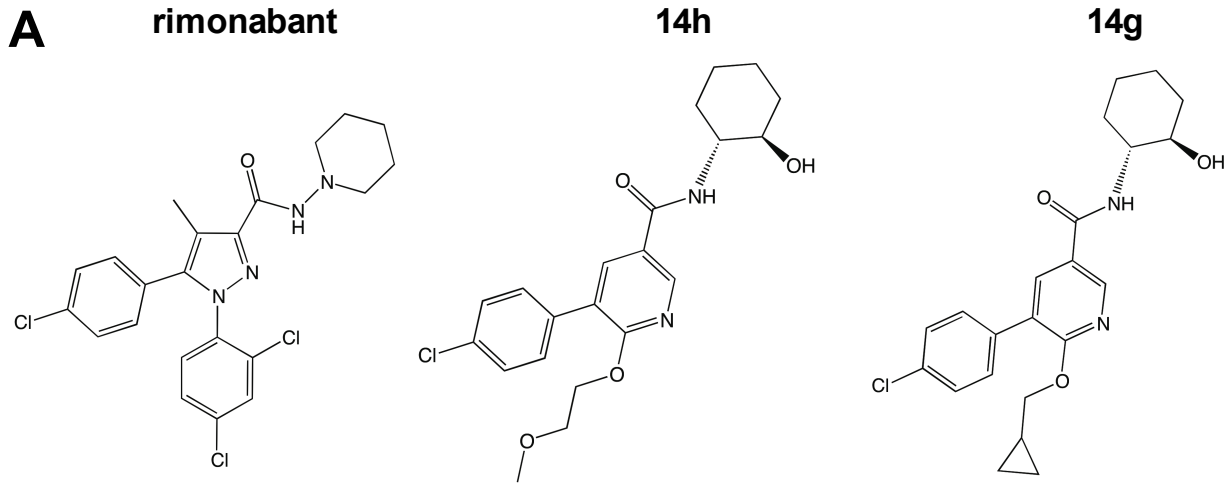
**Fig. 4.** Model of rimonabant and **14h** binding to human CB<sub>1</sub>R. A) The homology model of human CB<sub>1</sub>R is depicted with the protein backbone colored by sequence identity to the template X-ray structure (gold where identical, light blue where different). The side chains of Ile105, Phe268, Trp279, and Trp356 are shown as space-filling, and those of Glu94, Val110, Ile175, Arg186, Glu258, and His270 (where human CB<sub>1</sub>R differs from rat and/or mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R) are shown as ball-and-stick. Rimonabant and **14h** are shown manually docked in the pocket of the receptor as ball-and-stick with carbon atoms colored green and gray, respectively. B) Close-up, rotated view of the docked ligands in the receptor pocket, colored as in (A). This figure was created using the programs MolScript (Kraulis, 1991) and Raster3D (Merritt and Bacon, 1997).

**Fig. 5.** Binding of rimonabant (A, B) and compound **14h** (C, D) to wild-type and mutated human and mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R. Radioligand binding displacement by compound **14h** was tested using plasma membrane

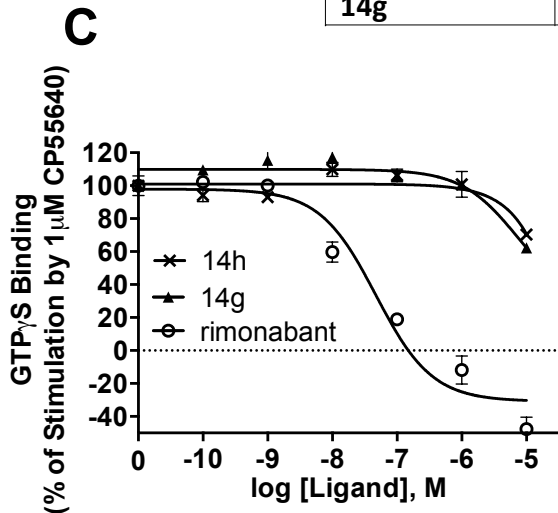
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preparations from CHO cells transfected with cDNA for the wild-type human or mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R, with an Ile105Met mutant of human CB<sub>1</sub>R, or a Met106Ile mutant of mouse CB<sub>1</sub>R. [<sup>3</sup>H]CP55940 (2 nM) was used as the labeled ligand. Points and vertical bars are means ± SE from 4 independent assays.

Figure 1

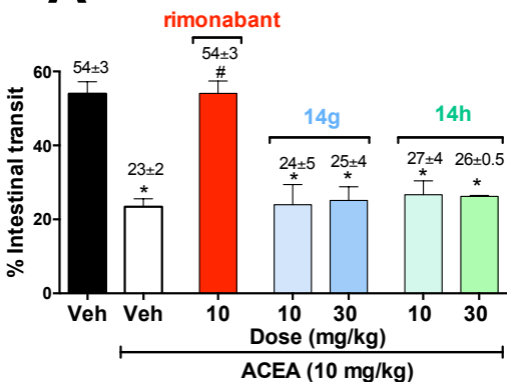


	rat brain K <sub>i</sub> [nM]	mouse brain K <sub>i</sub> [nM]	hCB <sub>1</sub> -CHO K <sub>i</sub> [nM]
<b>Rimonabant</b>	3 ± 1	4 ± 0.5	9 ± 2
<b>14h</b>	244 ± 7	469 ± 9	10 ± 2
<b>14g</b>	392 ± 2	485 ± 1.3	21 ± 1.4



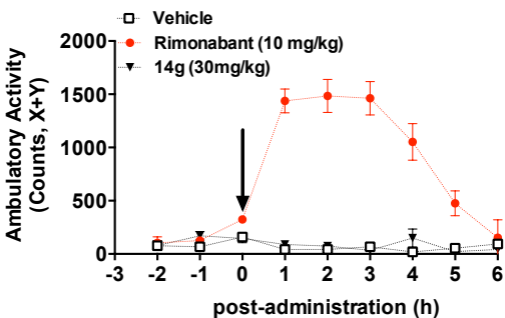
# Figure 2

## A upper GI motility assay in mice



## B

$CB_1R^{+/+}$



## C

$CB_1R^{-/-}$

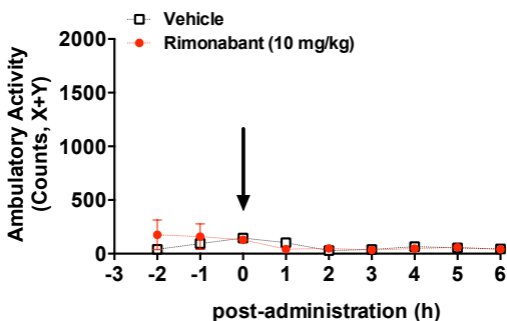
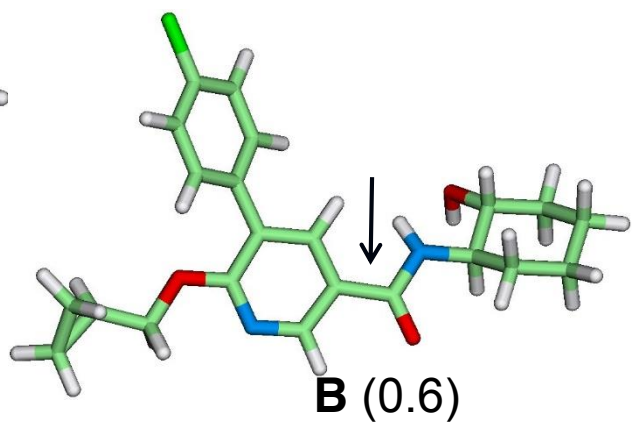
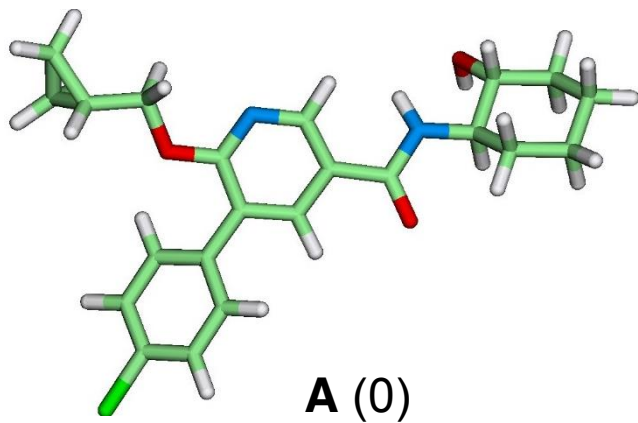
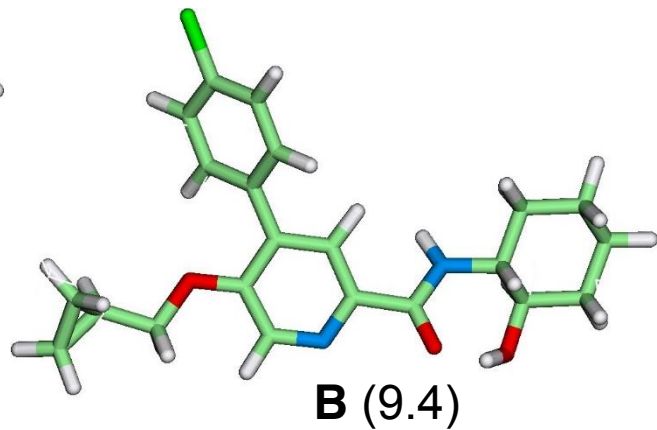
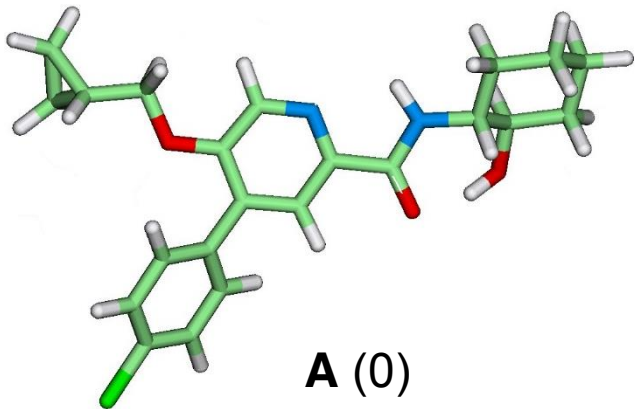


Figure 3

**A**



**B**



**C**

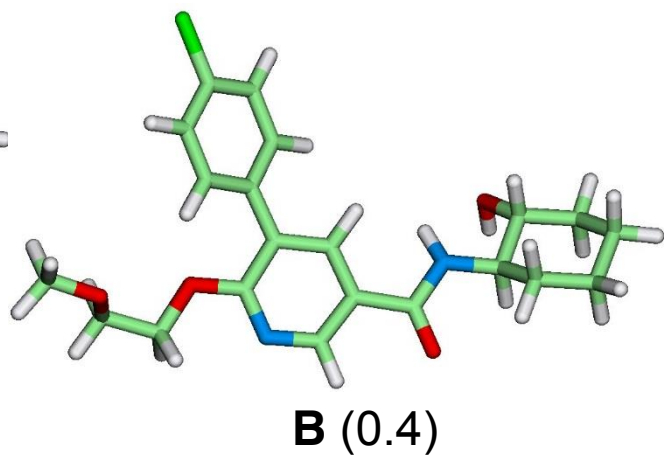
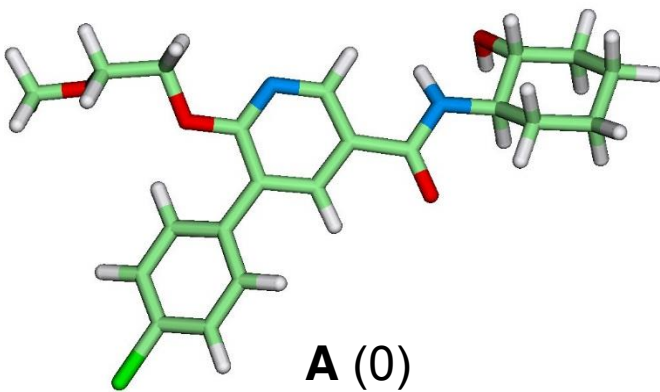




Figure 4

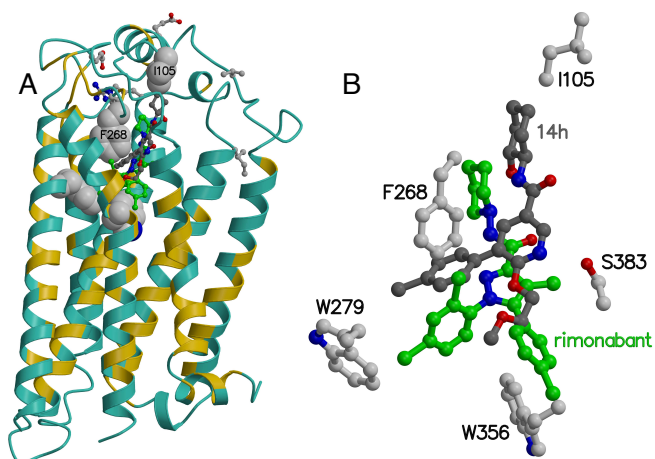
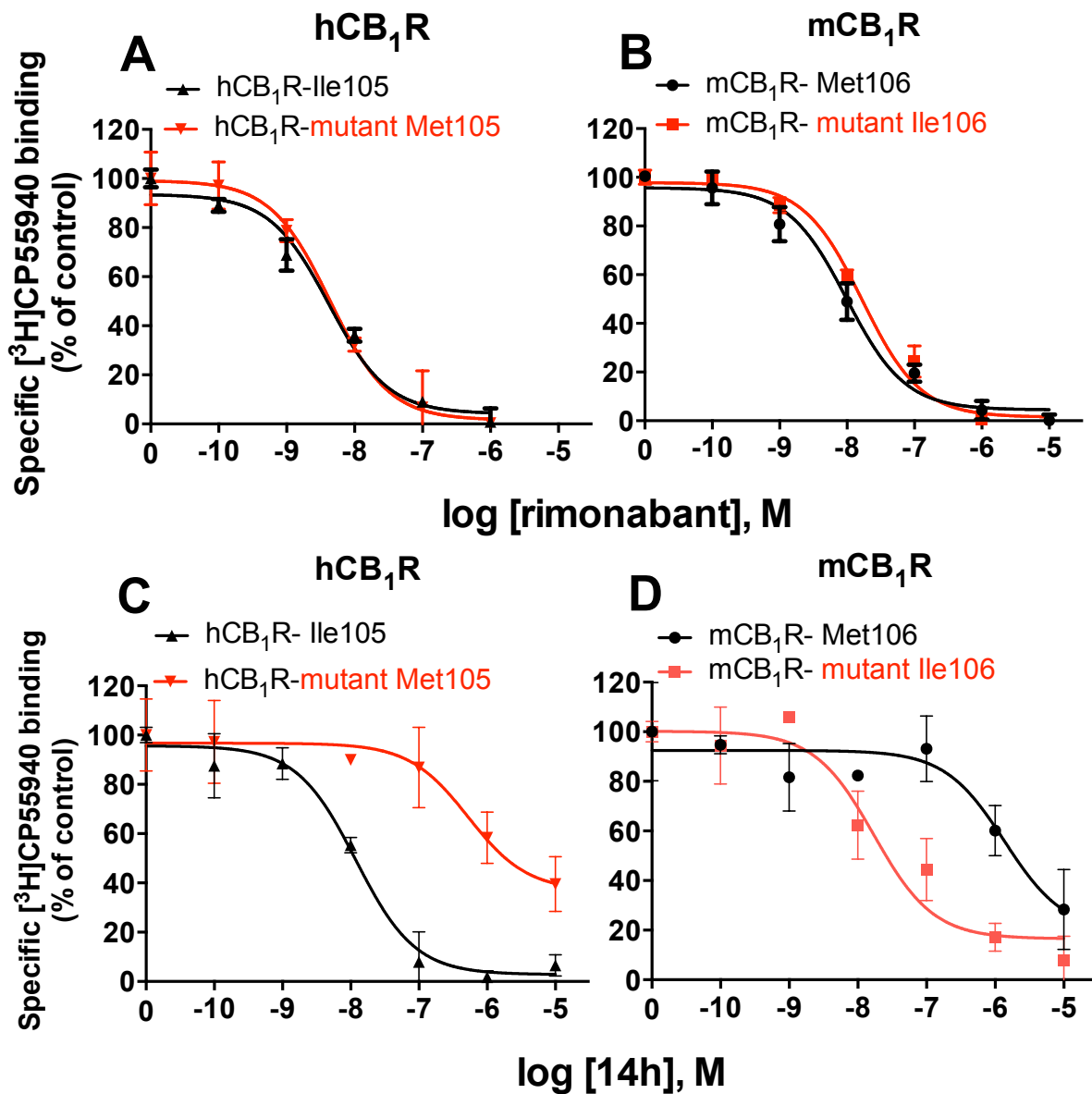


Figure 5



	hCB <sub>1</sub> R I105	hCB <sub>1</sub> R mutant M105	mCB <sub>1</sub> R M106	mCB <sub>1</sub> R mutant I106
Compound 14h Ki [nM]	5 ± 1	771 ± 27	614 ± 22	8 ± 4
Rimonabant Ki [nM]	1.8 ± 0.5	1.9 ± 0.6	3.4 ± 0.3	3.4 ± 0.2