



# Biomolecular Impact Spectroscopy in Hydrophobins to Measure the Hydrophilic Character of the Molecules

Stefan Karl\*

Department of Biophysics, University of Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany

## DESCRIPTION

Surface-active proteins known as hydrophobins are made by filamentous fungi. Hydrophobins have a very compact amphiphilic structure with a distinct hydrophobic patch on one side of the molecule that is locked by four intramolecular disulfide bridges. To protect these hydrophobic patches from contact with water, hydrophobins combine to form dimers and multimers in solution. In a solution, hydrophobin monomers can switch between different multimers during multimer synthesis. Class II hydrophobins form highly organized films at the air-water interface in contrast to class I hydrophobins. Investigated the molecular interaction forces between class II hydrophobins from under various environmental conditions using atomic force microscopy for single molecule force spectroscopy in order to better understand the strength and nature of the interaction between hydrophobins. With the help of a genetically modified hydrophobin variant called NCys-HFBI, proteins could be covalently attached to the sample surfaces and cantilever tip of atomic force microscopy in a controlled orientation with enough freedom of movement to measure molecular forces between hydrophobic patches. Hydrophobins and hydrophobic surfaces interact more strongly than two assembling hydrophobin molecules do. Furthermore, the stability of this contact under various environmental circumstances shows that hydrophobicity predominates in hydrophobin-hydrophobin interactions. It has never been possible to directly measure at the level of a single molecule the forces that interplay between hydrophobin molecules and naturally existing hydrophobic surfaces.

Fungal proteins called hydrophobins exhibit exceptional surface activity and characteristics that have long captivated scientists. Hydrophobins are particularly intriguing chemicals because of their wide-spread potential for use as dispersants of solids, foam and emulsion stabilizers and in the immobilization of biological activity on surfaces. The surface active proteins known as hydrophobins are generated by filamentous fungus. Their biological functions include acting as coating and protective

agents as well as surface adhesion. They are highly effective at reducing water surface tension which is necessary for hyphal development at the air-water interface. Based on their hydrophobicity plots and how they assemble at the air-water interface, hydrophobins are classified into two classes, class I and class II. Class I hydrophobins assemble into fibrils that resemble amyloids and have robust intermolecular connections. Whereas class II hydrophobins form highly organized films. Strong interfacial films are particularly well-known for being formed by hydrophobins.

Hydrophobin films' greater surface elasticity results from the ordered self-assembled structure at fluid interfaces. Recent bilayer investigations of hydrophobin films using a microfluidic technique have made use of this characteristic to calculate the adhesion energy of the bilayers. The pH of the environment is another factor it has been demonstrated that variations in pH change the structure and flexibility of the hydrophobin film by reorienting hydrophobin molecules which in turn affects how the hydrophobins interact at the air-water interface. Hydrophobins' unusual and extremely rigid structure which is held together by four intramolecular disulfide bonds is the source of their amphiphilicity. Hydrophobins possess a noticeable hydrophobic patch on one side of the molecule as opposed to having hydrophobic residues hidden inside the protein structure. The behaviour and operation of hydrophobins appear to be dominated by this hydrophobic region.

Since hydrophobins are very soluble in water, it has been demonstrated that they combine to reduce the surface area of the hydrophobic patch that is exposed to water. The tendency of hydrophobic units to group together in an aqueous solution is a characteristic that occurs naturally and is caused by van der Waals forces. Hydrophobin multimers have the ability to constantly dismantle and reassemble themselves in solution. The connection between hydrophobins certainly involves hydrophobic contact, although the magnitude of this interaction is unknown. To show the energy landscape underlying a biological interaction, Single Molecule Force Spectroscopy

**Correspondence to:** Stefan Karl, Department of Biophysics, University of Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany, E-mail: karl@gmail.com

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(SMFS) based on Atomic Force Microscopy (AFM) has been created. The energy barrier is lowered in single-molecule pulling studies where a force is applied to a biomolecular complex. The complicated rupture force's dependency on the rate of the applied force load is revealed by measurements made on the same system at various pulling velocities. However, hydrophobicity is not the only factor considered in traditional biomolecular complexes. A crucial part is also played by other noncovalent weak interactions, including as electrostatic interactions and hydrogen bonds. As a result the hydrophilic

side of the variant molecules can be used to covalently connect to surfaces while keeping the hydrophobic side open to interaction and with some flexibility to the integrated linker. Additionally, a PEG linkage was employed to secure the hydrophobins to the AFM tip, allowing for enough motional mobility to overcome steric hindrance in complex formation. It has never before been possible to directly measure at the level of a single molecule the forces that interact between naturally existing hydrophobic surfaces.