

In Silico Study of Compounds Identified in Curcuma aeruginosa Roxb Rhizome as BRAF V600E Inhibitors in Melanoma Cancer

by Ririn Suharsanti

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1 Original Article

2 **In Silico Study of Compounds Identified in *Curcuma***
3 ***aeruginosa* Roxb Rhizome as BRAF V600E Inhibitors**
4 **in Melanoma Cancer**

5 **Ririn Suharsanti^{*)}, Muhammad Ryan Radix Rahardhian, Lia Kusmita**

6 **^{*)} Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Farmasi Yayasan Pharmasi Semarang, Central Java, 50192, Indonesia**

7 * Corresponding author: ririnsuharsanti@stifar.ac.id; Tel.: +6282136923586

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10 **Abstract:** *Curcuma aeruginosa* Roxb rhizome contains secondary metabolite compounds and plays a role in
11 various activities such as antioxidant, antibacterial, anthelmintic, antiandrogenic, antinociceptive, and
12 anticancer. Anticancer activity that has been reported in *Curcuma aeruginosa* Roxb rhizome is limited to breast
13 and cervical cancer. The purpose of this study was to explore the potential of *Curcuma aeruginosa* Roxb rhizome
14 in melanoma cancer through the mechanism of inhibiting the BRAF V600E. The 96% ethanol extract of *Curcuma*
15 *aeruginosa* Roxb rhizome was separated to produce n-hexane (HF), ethyl acetate (EAF), and ethanol (EF)
16 fractions. The GC-MS results showed that there were 51 compounds from the three fractions. The docking
17 validation process was carried out on the native ligand N-(3-[[5-(4-chlorophenyl)-1H-pyrrolo[2,3b]pyridin-3-yl]
18 carbonyl]2,4-difluorophenyl) propane-1-sulfonamide. All compounds were prepared as ligands for molecular
19 docking with the BRAF V600E receptor (PDB ID: 3OG7). Docking validation on native ligand showed RMSD
20 1.03Å. The smallest binding affinity are 4,4a,5,6,7,8-Hexahydronaphthalen-2(3H)-one (-6,89 kcal/mol); 1-
21 Cyclohexyl-2-propen-1-one (-6,68 kcal/mol); Cyclooctenone (-6,23 kcal/mol); and vemuravnb is still better as
22 K+ (-11.11 kcal/mol). All three compounds do not bind to key amino acid residues of BRAF V600E such as
23 vemuravnb at GLN A:530, CYS A:532; ASP A:594. These results indicate that further structural development
24 is needed for better activity.

25 **Keywords:** *Curcuma aeruginosa*; GC-MS ; In Silico, BRAF V600E inhibitor, Vemuravnb

26

27 **1. INTRODUCTION**

28 Over the past 50 years, melanoma incidence has steadily climbed globally. Melanoma is more
29 prevalent in lower latitudes and among white-skinned individuals. Melanoma is the most common
30 cancer in teenagers and young adults, but it is often more prevalent in the elderly population. In 2020,
31 melanoma of the skin is expected to account for 1.7% of all cancer diagnoses worldwide, with an
32 estimated 325,000 new cases [1]. Vemurafenib and dabrafenib are BRAF mutation-inhibiting
33 chemotherapy drugs to treat melanoma [2], [3]. Approximately 50% of cutaneous melanoma patients
34 have active BRAF V600 mutations, so selective inhibitors were developed. Vemurafenib is responsive
35 in 50% of patients with BRAF V600 mutations and is longer progression-free than dacarbazine
36 (DTIC). In previous research, the reticuline compound in soursop leaves was proven to have the
37 potential to treat cancer through the BRAF V600E inhibitor mechanism in silico [4]. In addition, in
38 silico evaluation of several 4-(quinolin-2-yl)pyrimidin-2-amine derivatives as potent V600E-BRAF
39 inhibitors was carried out [5]. There are several active compounds as BRAF V 300E inhibitors, which
40 provide an opportunity for other natural ingredients to have the same activity.

41 Traditionally, the *C. aeruginosa* rhizome has been used medicinally to treat stomach ache,
42 obesity and rheumatism, asthma and cough, scurvy and mental disorders [6]. Essential oil content
43 has been identified from the results of the distillation of *C. aeruginosa* Roxb. rhizomes such as

44 curzerenone (24.6%), 1,scineole (11.0%), camphor (10.6%), zedoarol (6.3%), isocurcumenol (5.8%),
45 curcumenol (5.6%) and filranogermenone (5.5%) [7]. Other identified compounds include champor
46 (29.39%) dan germacrone (21.21%) [8], monoterpen (21.47%) berupa β -pinen dan 1,8 cineol [9], 1,8-
47 cineol (22.65%) dan germacrone (17.70%) [10], tropolene (18.1%) dan eucalyptol (17.9%) [11], β -pinene
48 (21.9%), neocurdione (16.1%) and curcumol (15.2%) [12]. Meanwhile, the compounds that were
49 successfully separated from the black turmeric extract using chromatography include germacrone,
50 zederone, dehydrocurdione, curcumenol, γ -loarondiol dan isocurcumenol [13]; dehydrocurdione,
51 curcumenol, dan germacrone [14]; Pyrocurzerenone, Dehydrochromolaenin, Curzeone,
52 Linderazulene, Curzerenone, 8, 12 - Epoxy - 1 (10), 4(15), 7, 11 -germacratetraen-6-one [15]; aeruginon
53 and curcumenone [16]; dan flavon [17]. *C. aeruginosa* isolates that have quite potential in various
54 activities are germacrone as antiandrogenic [13], hair growth promoter [14], antinociceptive [18], and
55 anticancer [16]. Anticancer activity that has been reported in *C. aeruginosa* Roxb rhizome is limited to
56 breast cancer (MCF-7 and T-47D) and cervical cancer (Ca Ski and HeLa S3) [19], [20]. There have been
57 no reports of *C. aeruginosa* being tested for BRAF V600E inhibitory activity as an anti-melanoma cancer
58 in silico so that it is worthy of being processed.

59 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

60 2.1. Chemical

61 Ethanol, methanol, n-hexane, and ethyl acetate as solvents from Smart Lab, Indonesia. All reagents
62 used for the research were of analytical grade.

63 2.2. Plant Collection

64 *C. aeruginosa* Roxb dried rhizome from the Center for Research and Development of Traditional
65 Medicinal Plants and Medicines Tawangmangu, Central Java, harvested in February 2000.

66 2.3. Instrumentation

67 GCMS analysis was carried out in GCMS (Shimadzu QP 2010 SE) and mass spectrophotometer. The
68 columns used are Rtx-5MS (5% diphenyl/95% dimethyl polysiloxane) and Carbowax (Polyethylene
69 glycol), thickness 0.25 μ m, length: 30.0m, inside diameter: 0.25mm.

70 2.4. Software and Hardware

71 The Protein Databank (PDB, www.rcsb.org) provided PDB ID: 3OG7 for download [4], [21]. The
72 natural chemical's 3D structure files were obtained from PubChem
73 (www.pubchem.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov). Ligands made with chemdraw 3D 15.0 for molecular docking.
74 AutoDock Tool 1.5.6 Sep_17_14 employed the molecular docking procedure for in-silico screening,
75 and Biovia Discovery Studio V21.1.0.2.20298 was used to view the results. Using a Lenovo laptop
76 running Windows 10 with a Core i3 CPU, 4 GB of RAM, 64-bit operating system, and an x-64
77 processor, pharmacokinetics and toxicity prediction are performed. The online SMILES Translator
78 (<https://cactus.nci.nih.gov>) was used to translate the compound into SMILES format. To forecast
79 pharmacokinetics and chemical toxicity, the SMILES-formatted molecule was processed using the
80 pkCMS online tool (<https://biosig.lab.uq.edu.au/pkcms>) [22].

81 2.5. Extraction and Fractination

82 One kg of the powdered material was macerated for three days at a ratio of 1:5 using 70% ethanol.
83 Ethanol extract (EE) was obtained by combining the filtrates and drying them out using a revolving
84 vacuum evaporator set at 60 °C and 100 rpm. Then, using solvents ranging from non-polar (n-
85 hexane), semi-polar (ethyl acetate), and polar (ethanol), the ethanol extract (EE) was separated by
86 sequential fractination to provide n-hexane (FH), ethyl acetate (EAF), and ethanol (EF). By turning
87 the vacuum evaporator at 60 °C and 100 rpm, respectively, fractions were concentrated [23], [24].

88 2.6. Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry (GC-MS) Analysis

89 GCMS analysis was carried out in GCMS (Shimadzu QP 2010 SE) and mass spectrophotometer. The
90 column used are Rtx-5MS (5% diphenyl/95% dimethyl polysiloxane) and Carbowax (Polyethylene
91 glycol), thickness 0.25um, length: 30.0m, inside diameter: 0.25mm. The mobile phase used is helium
92 and was adjusted to a column velocity flow of 0.74 mL/min. Other GC-MS conditions are ion-source
93 temperature, 250 °C; interface temperature, 300 °C; pressure, 42.5 kPa; and 1 µl injector in split mode
94 with a split ratio of 153.0 with injection temperature of 300 °C. The temperature was raised to 320 °C
95 at the rate of 10 °C/min and held for 5 min. The total elution was 24 min.

96 2.7. Molecular Docking Studies, Pharmacokinetics, and Toxicity Prediction of Chemical Constituents

97 Protein and ligand preparation is the initial stage of molecular docking. AutoDock Tools-1.5.6 was
98 used to carry out 3D interaction, docking, and binding investigations. The Protein Data Bank
99 provided the target proteins for download (PDB ID: 3OG7) [4], [21]. The Biovia Discovery Studio
100 visualizer program is used to extract native ligands and water molecules from 3D structures to create
101 protein files (.pdb). Chemdraw 3D 15.0 was used to produce the test ligand file (.sdf), which was
102 retrieved from PubChem, for molecular docking. The ligand contributes charge and torsion after the
103 receptor adds charge prior to molecular docking. The grid box's dimensions and coordinates were
104 established. X: 2.643, Y: -2.28, Z: -19.403, and spacing are the grid box coordinates, and the grid box
105 size is 44 × 40 × 40Å, spacing 0.375. Molecular docking parameters include interacting amino acid
106 residues and binding affinity (kcal/mol). Interaction 2D and 3D between ligand and protein were
107 visualized using Biovia Discover Studio visualizer. The following chemical properties were predicted
108 and explained: polar surface activity (PSA), hydrogen bond acceptors (HBA), hydrogen bond donors
109 (HBD), the number of atom-to-atom bonds that can rotate (Torsion), the logarithm of the coefficient
110 octanol/water partition (Log P), and molecular weight (MW). These were conducted utilizing
111 Lipinski's rule of five, a set of guidelines that aids in distinguishing between molecules that resemble
112 drugs and those that do not, using the pkCMS web tool application [5], [21], [25]. This approach might
113 forecast the higher probability of success or failure because of drug penetration and absorption.
114 Following the 3D drawing of the chemical structure using Chemdraw 3D 15.0 and its saving in a
115 particular format (.pdb), the online SMILES Translator (<https://cactus.nci.nih.gov>) was used to
116 convert it to SMILES format. The pkCMS online tool (<https://biosig.lab.uq.edu.au/pkcsms>) was used
117 to process the SMILES formatted compound in order to forecast chemical toxicity and
118 pharmacokinetics [22].

119 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

120 3.1. Fraction Compounds

121 According to the GC-MS data, HF was primarily composed of sesquiterpenes (63.1%) and diterpenes
122 (5.26%), with 31.58% of it being unknown substances. The EF was made up of sesquiterpenes
123 (68.42%) and others (31.58%), whereas the EAF was made up of sesquiterpenes (42.86%), diterpenes
124 (21.43%), steroids (7.14%), and others (28.57%). Saturated fatty acids were present when IF was
125 identified. Curcumenol and epicurzerenone were the primary constituents of HF and EF, whereas
126 curcumenol and 2,4-Dispironorbornylcyclobuta-1,3-dione (ketene dimers) were the primary
127 constituents of EAF. All compounds detected from the *C. aeruginosa* fraction are shown in Figure 1.

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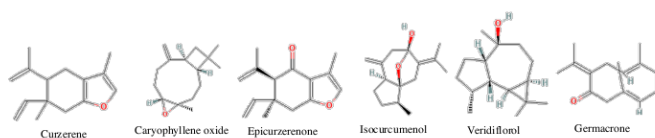
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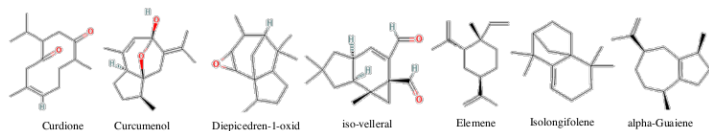


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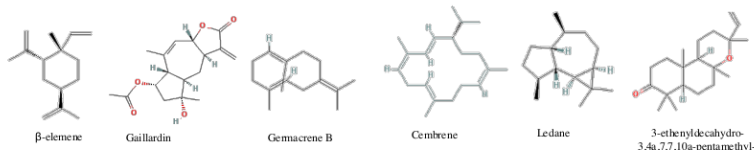


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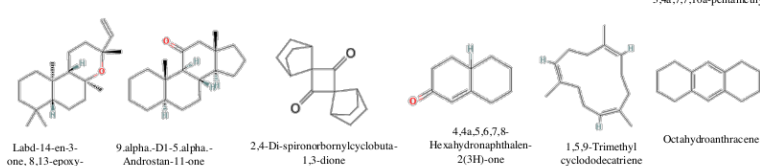


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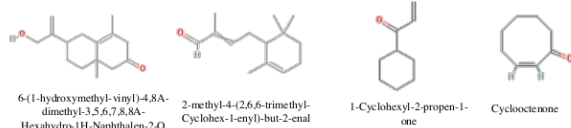


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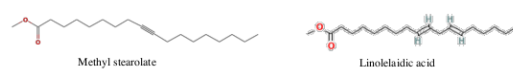
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Figure 1. Compound Name and Structure Identification of *C. aeruginosa* Fractions Using GC-MS

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3.1. Molecular Docking Studies, Pharmacokinetics, and Toxicity Prediction of Chemical Constituents

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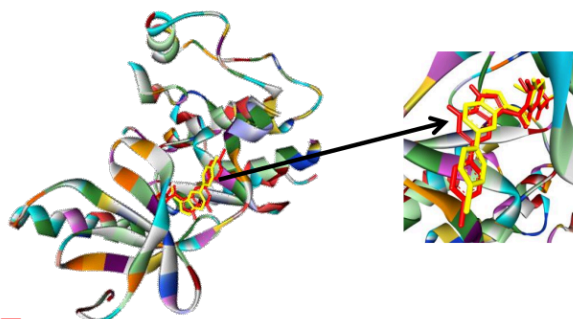
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Redocking, or confirming the docking technique between the receptor and the native ligand, is the first step in molecular docking. RMSD 1.03A is the outcome of the validation procedure. Since the RMSD value is $\leq 2A$ the docking procedure can be deemed acceptable, and the RMSD obtained satisfies the validation acceptance criterion [22]. To show the stance before and after docking, native ligands are shown in two distinct colors. Native ligand in the redocking process with the BRAF V600E resistor is shown in figure 2. Vemurafenib, a commercial medication, was utilized as a control ligand against the BRAF V600E receptor (PDB ID: 3OG7), while all substances discovered by GC-MS (figure 1) were used as test ligands. ligand preparation is the initial stage of molecular docking.

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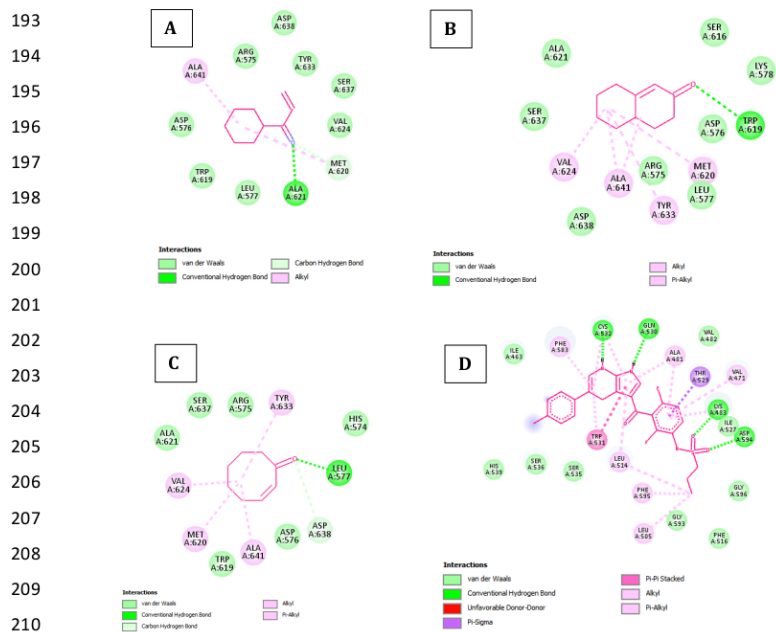
178 **Figure 2.** 3D diagram for the interaction of native ligand with BRAF-V600E receptor (yellow =before
179 and red = after redocking)

180 The smallest binding affinity are 4,4a,5,6,7,8-Hexahydronaphthalen-2(3H)-one (-6,89 kcal/mol); 1-
181 Cyclohexyl-2-propen-1-one (-6,68 kcal/mol); Cyclooctenone (-6,23kcal/mol); and vemuravni is still
182 better as K+ (-10.593,68kcal/mol). The smaller binding affinity value, the affinity between the receptor
183 and ligand was higher and the vice versa, the greater the binding affinity value, the affinity between
184 receptors and the ligands is getting lower [5], [22]. All three compounds do not bind to key amino
185 acid residues of BRAF V600E such as vemuravenib at GLN A:530, CYS A:532; ASP A:594 [22]. The
186 amino acid residues that were shown to interact with ligands displays in table 1 and illustrates the
187 interaction between ligands and the BRAF-V600E receptor using 2D visualization displays in figure
188 2.

189 **Table 1.** Molecular interactions present in the selected complex ligands and BRAF V600E receptor
190 and the amino acids involved.

Complex	Binding Energy (kcal/mol)	Inhibition Constant/ Ki (μ M)	Amino acid residues
1-Cyclohexyl-2-propen-1-one	-6,68	12,63	Arg 575, Asp 576, Leu 577, Trp 619, Met 620, Ala 621, Val 624, Tyr 633, Ser 637, Asp 638, Ala 641
4,4a,5,6,7,8-Hexahydronaphthalen-2(3H)-one	-6,89	8,96	Arg 575, Asp 576, Leu 577, Lys 578, Ser 616, Trp 619, Met 620, Ala 621, Val 626, Tyr 633, Ser 637, Asp 638, Ala 641
Cyclooctenone	-6,23	27,21	Arg 575, Asp 576, Leu 577, Trp 619, Met 620, Ala 621, Val 624, Tyr 633, Ser 637, Asp 638, Ala 641
Vemuravenib	-11.11	7,42	Ile-463, Val-471, Ala- 481, Lys-483, Leu-505, Leu-514, Phe-516, Ile-527, Thr-529, Gln-530, Trp-531, Cys-532, Ser-535, Ser-536, His-539, Phe-583, Asp-594, Asp-593, Phe-595, Gly-596

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192



211 **Figure 3.** 2D Visualization of Complex Interactions Between Ligands 1-Cyclohexyl-2-propen-1-one
 212 (A), 4,4a,5,6,7,8-Hexahydrophthalen-2(3H)-one (B), Cyclooctenone (C), and Vemurafenib (D)
 213 with BRAF V600E receptor

214 The likelihood that a molecule has the same or superior activity than BRAF V600E increases with the
 215 number of amino acid similarities between the reference chemical and crucial amino acid. GLN A:530,
 216 CYS A:532, ASP A:594, and THR A:529 are important amino acids linked to the BRAF V600E receptor.
 217 The reticuline compound has the same hydrogen-bonded amino acids (GLN 530 and ASP 549) as the
 218 reference compound Vemurafenib/key amino acids [22]. Conversely, compounds that had better
 219 binding scores than vemurafenib and a decent MolDock score (≥ -158.139) and Rerank score (\geq
 220 -118.607) were recognized as possible hits [5].

221 Out of all the compounds, the three identified compounds found by GC-MS were found to have the
 222 smallest binding affinities. The pkCMS online tool was used to further investigate these compound's
 223 pharmacokinetic and toxicity characteristics (ADMET). The Lipinski test uses passive diffusion to
 224 ascertain whether a substance in cell membranes is hydrophobic or hydrophilic. According to Lipinski's
 225 guidelines, a ligand must have a molecular weight of less than 500 Da and a LogP value of less than 5.
 226 molar refractivity between 40 and 130, donor hydrogen bonds < 5 , and acceptor hydrogen bonds < 10 .
 227 Cell membranes are more readily penetrated by ligands with molecular weights less than 500 Da than
 228 by those with molecular weights greater than 500 Da. The polarity of the ligand in fat, oil, and non-
 229 polar solvents is correlated with the logP value. Ligands that are widely dispersed throughout the body
 230 and have a log P value greater than 5 will interact more readily via the lipid bilayer layer of cell
 231 membranes. As a result, the ligand becomes more hazardous and its sensitivity to binding to the target
 232 molecule decreases. Because they are more broadly distributed throughout the body and are kept in

lipid membranes for longer, excessively hydrophobic compounds typically have a high level of toxicity. The ligand is hydrophobic and has a tendency to dissolve in water when the log P value is less. Since the ligand cannot cross the lipid bilayer membrane, its Log P value cannot be negative. The biological activity of a ligand or medicine is correlated with the amount of hydrogen bonds in the donor and acceptor. The amount of energy needed for absorption increases with the strength of the hydrogen bond [25]. Table 2 displays the outcomes of the molecular docking studies, which showed that the three compounds satisfied Lipinski's guidelines.

Table 2. Ligand's Lipinski Rules of Five

Complex	Molecular Weight	Log P	Hydrogen Bond Donor (HBD)	Hydrogen Bond Acceptor (HBA)	Polar surface activity (PSA)
1-Cyclohexyl-2-propen-1-one	138.21	2.3218	0	1	62.125
4,4a,5,6,7,8-Hexahydrona phthalen-2(3H)-one	150.221	2.4659	0	1	67.484
Cyclooctenone	124.183	2.0758	0	1	55.760

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When evaluating the pharmacokinetics of novel pharmacological compounds, ADMET estimates are essential. If a compound's anticipated value is more than 0.09, it has significant Caco2 permeability. Human colorectal cancer epithelial cells are known as Caco-2 cells. To estimate oral drug absorption, Caco-2 cell monolayers are frequently employed as an in vitro model of the human intestinal mucosa. The volume needed for a drug to be uniformly distributed and produce the same concentration as in blood plasma is known as the Steady State Volume of Distribution (VD_{ss}). Excretion in log (ml/min/kg) is predicted by total clearance (CL_{tot}). Hepatic clearance (liver metabolism and biliary clearance) and renal clearance (renal excretion) are the two primary parts of drug clearance. AMES toxicity is frequently used to evaluate a compound's capacity to cause mutagenesis using bacteria. Positive findings suggest that the substance is mutagenic and carcinogenic [22]. If a compound's predictive value is greater than 0.90, it is deemed to have high CaCO-2 permeability [26]. It has good permeability because the test results showed a value greater than 0.90. When the volume of distribution (VD_{ss}) is less than 0.71 L/kg (log VD_{ss}<-0.15), it is deemed low; when it is greater than 2.81 L/kg (log VD_{ss}>0.45), it is deemed excessive [27]. In table 3, all compounds are in the range volume distribution requirements so that it can be predicted that all these compounds can be distributed evenly to provide the same concentration as in blood plasma. Based on table 3, all ligands have good pharmacokinetic parameter.

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Table 3. Pharmacokinetics (ADMET) Parameters of Ligands

Complex	Absorption Caco2 permeability	Distribution VD _{ss} (human)	Metabolism (CYP2D6 substrate)	Excretion (Total Clearance)	AMES toxicity	Hepato toxicity
1-Cyclohexyl-2-propen-1-one	1.085	0.148	No	0.221	No	No
4,4a,5,6,7,8-Hexahydrona	1.501	0.344	No	0.112	No	No

phthalen-2(3H)-one						
Cyclooctenone	1.487	0.136	No	0.213	No	No

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260 4. CONCLUSION

261 The three best components of *C. aeruginosa* fraction with the smallest binding affinity and meet the
 262 pharmacokinetic requirements are 4,4a,5,6,7,8-Hexahydronaphthalen-2(3H)-one (-6,89 kcal/mol); 1-
 263 Cyclohexyl-2-propen-1-one (-6,68kcal/mol); Cyclooctenone (-6,23kcal/mol); and vemuravnb is still
 264 better as K⁺ (-10,593,68kcal/mol). All three compounds do not bind to key amino acid residues of BRAF
 265 V600E such as vemuravnb at GLN A:530, CYS A:532; ASP A:594. All three compounds have good
 266 pharmacokinetic parameter. These results indicate that further structural development is needed for
 267 better activity.

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