

## Molecular cloning and sequence analysis of *splt1* and tertiary structure prediction of deduced protein in *Cyprinus carpio* L.

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**Abstract:** Na<sup>+</sup>/glucose cotransporter (Sglt1) plays an important role in transporting Na<sup>+</sup> and glucose and maintaining the adjustment of metabolism. The aim to study *splt1* is to further understand the regulation mechanism of *splt1* gene in fish. In this study, the full-length cDNA of Na<sup>+</sup>/glucose cotransporter gene was cloned in intestine of *Cyprinus carpio* L. using RT-PCR and RACE methods, which included 2856 bp involved in 113 bp 5'-untranslated region, 766 bp 3'-untranslated region, and 1977 bp open reading frame (ORF) which encoded 658 amino acids. The predicted amino acid sequence was the highest similar with that of *Danio rerio* (90.70%), and the lowest similar with that of rabbit (71.40%). Fourteen transmembrane domains were predicted in the 3-D protein model using comparative protein modeling program SWISS-MODEL. The structural core was comparative of 5 TM helices (TM2-TM6 and TM7-TM11) with the inverted repeat. It was demonstrated that Glucose might be bounded in the center of the structural core, and a possible Na<sup>+</sup>-binding site was located at the intersection of TM2 and TM9. Thereby, the functional roles and regulation mechanism of Sglt would provide unique opportunities to investigate the biochemical processes in intestine of *Cyprinus carpio* L., and lay the foundation for artificial culture of the species involved.

[Guoxing Nie, Caixia Hou, Junli Wang, Jianxin Zhang, Dongying Song, Bei Wang, Xuejun Li, Xianghui Kong. **Molecular cloning and sequence analysis of *splt1* and tertiary structure prediction of deduced protein in *Cyprinus carpio* L.** Life Science Journal. 2011;8(2):204-212] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>.

**Keywords:** *splt1*; cDNA sequence analysis; Protein tertiary structure; *Cyprinus carpio* L.

### 1. Introduction

Na<sup>+</sup>/substrate cotransport (or symport) is a widespread mechanism of solute transportation across cytoplasmic membranes of prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells, which is mainly performed by cotransport proteins. Based on sequences similarities, the members of these proteins are classified into different families (Reizer *et al.*, 1994). Proteins of these families generally utilize electrochemical sodium gradient to drive transportation of substance in reverse concentration like sugars, amino acids, vitamins, ions, myoinositol, phenyl acetate, urea and water (Reizer *et al.*, 1994; Frank *et al.*, 1998). Among them, human sodium-glucose transporter (hSglt1) is one of the best characterized members of the Solute Sodium Symporters Families (SSSF). In addition, the sodium-iodide transporter (NIS) and the sodium-proline transporter (PutP) in *E. coli* and sodium-galactose symporter (*vsplt*) in *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* also were described in publications (Frank *et al.*, 1998; Schwan *et al.*, 1998; Zeuthen *et al.*, 2001; Hirayama *et al.*, 1997). Sglt1 and NIS catalyze the uptake of substance with a 2:1 sodium-substrate stoichiometry while the value of sodium-proline transported by PutP is 1:1 (Zeuthen *et al.*, 2001; Hirayama *et al.*, 1997; Eskandari *et al.*, 1997). In addition, it was also reported that Sglt1 could couple the uptake of two sodium and one sugar

with the transportation of 264 water molecules (Wegener *et al.*, 2000).

The high-affinity Na<sup>+</sup>/glucose cotransporter (Sglt1) (Martin *et al.*, 1996) is an important member of the sodium: solute symporter family (SSSF) (Ernest *et al.*, 2004) with more than 700 different sequences (Wright *et al.*, 2004; Turk *et al.*, 1997). Sglt1, belonging to the homologous family 5 (SLC5), is abundantly expressed in small intestine (Balen *et al.*, 2008; Hirsh *et al.*, 1998), while at a lower level in kidney (Ikeda *et al.*, 1989). The major function of Sglt1 is to accumulate sugar in intestinal or kidney epithelial cells adverse concentration gradient. Since the driving force of Na<sup>+</sup>-coupled transporters is provided by the Na<sup>+</sup> electrochemical potential gradient across the plasma membrane. It serves as the principal uptake pathway for glucose derived from diet. Mutations of *splt1* could result in the dysfunction of this pathway, which would affect intestinal glucose/galactose absorption (Martin *et al.*, 1996). Recently, Sglt1 has been studied as a target protein for diabetes treatment (Ikumi *et al.*, 2008; Sabino-Silva *et al.*, 2010). Ryuichi *et al.* findings indicate that Sglt1 serves as the intestinal glucose sensor for glucose-induced incretin secretion and that a noncalorigenic Sglt1 substrate ameliorates hyperglycemia by stimulating incretin secretion (Ryuichi *et al.*, 2009).

The crystal structure of the *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* sodium/galactose symporter (vSglt) had been reported (Faham *et al.*, 2008). So far, few studies on Na<sup>+</sup>/glucose cotransporter were reported in the freshwater fishes. In this study, *splt1* gene with the high affinity was first cloned in intestine of *Cyprinus carpio* L. and subsequently used to obtain new insights into the molecular mechanism of Na<sup>+</sup>/glucose cotransporter. The secondary structure and tertiary structure of Sglt1 protein in *C. carpio* have been predicted with several computational algorithms.

## 2. Material and Methods

### Fish acclimation

In this study, *C. carpio*s with body weight of (12.6±0.38) g were used as experimental animals, which were acclimated in a 200-L tank filled with dechlorinated water with constant aeration (DO: 6.2±0.2 mg /L) and a 12/12 h light/dark photoperiod. Water temperature was controlled at (26.8±0.68)°C. During the period of acclimation, the fishes were fed for four times each day (8:30am, 11:30am, 14:30pm and 17:30pm) with commercial pellet feed. After the acclimation, ten fishes were randomly arrested to be used as experimental fishes. Subsequently, the intestines of which were obtained by fish dissection respectively after general anesthesia, and scissored

immediately into intestine, and the contents in guts were cleared rapidly. All the operations were conducted under aseptic condition on the ice.

### Total RNA extraction and 5' and 3' RACE

The prepared guts were quickly frozen in liquid nitrogen and used to extract the total RNA with TRIzol reagent (purchased from Invitrogen) respectively. The total RNA (5mg) was used to synthesize the first-stand cDNA using AMV reverse transcriptase (from Shanghai Sangon) and oligo-p (dT)<sub>18</sub> Primer (from Shanghai Sangon) in a 20 µL reaction, according to the manufacturer's instruction. The *splt1* cDNAs were then amplified by PCR in a total volume of 50 µL, containing 10mM Tris-HCl(pH9.0), 50mM KCl, 1.25mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 0.2mM dNTPs, 1 units of Taq polymerase (from Takara, Japan), 40pmol primer for each one and 5 µL template cDNA (Table 1). A initial reaction of 3 min at 94°C was followed by 35 cycles (denaturation at 95°C for 35 s, annealing at specific temperature for 35 s and extension at 72°C for 2 min), and a final extension for 10 min at 72°C. The annealing temperatures of PCR reaction were depended on the *splt1* to be amplified (Table I). The PCR product was resolved on 1% agarose gels via electrophoresis. Photographs of the gels stained with ethidium bromide are show in an inverted black/white format.

Table 1. Sequences of oligonucleotide primers used for PCR and rapid amplification of cDNA ends (RACE)

Names	Oligonucleotide sequence (5'→3')	Length (bp)
3' GSP1 <i>splt1</i>	GGTGGATTTGAATGGAATGCTCT	23
3' GSP2 <i>splt1</i>	ACCTCTCCGTGCTCTCCCTGTTT	23
3' RACE outer	TACCGTCGTTCCACTAGTGATTT	23
3' RACE inner	CGCGGATCCTCCACTAGTGATTTCACTATAGG	32
5' GSP1 <i>splt1</i>	ATCCCACGACCATGATGATTGTC	23
5' GSP2 <i>splt1</i>	CTGTGTGGCAGCGTTTGGAGGAG	23
5' RACE outer	CATGGCTACATGCTGACAGCCTA	23
5' RACE inner	CGCGGATCCACAGCCTACTGATGATCAGTCGATG	34

Note: The primers were based on the *splt1* sequences of Zebrafish and other animals deposited in GenBank.

### Cloning and sequencing of *C. Carpio*s intestion cDNAs

The amplified bands corresponding to *splt1* cDNAs were accurately excised from the 1% agarose gel and purified using the Gel extraction kit (from Takara, Japan) respectively. The purified *splt1* cDNAs were ligated into the pGEM-T Easy vectors (from Promega, USA), and the resultant recombinant plasmids were transferred into competent *Escherichia coli* strain JM109. For each cDNA, 4-6 plasmid clones containing *splt1* cDNAs were sequenced by

ABI3730 using M13+/-universal primers (from Takara, Japan).

## 3. Results

### Isolation of the *C. Carpio*s *splt1* cDNA by RACE

The primer was originally designed from highly conserved regions of *splt1* based on the sequence alignment of zebrafish, spiny dogfish, mouse, rat, human, bat, horse, bovine and rabbit *splt1* cDNA from GenBank. Employing the RACE strategy,

the full-length *sglt1* of *C. Carpio* were cloned. The 5'-RACE and 3'-RACE results were sequenced and spliced to obtain the full-length cDNA (Figure 1). The complete coding sequence of the *C. carpio* *sglt1* cDNA with 2856 nucleotides comprised coding sequence region with 1974-bp open reading frame (ORF), a 113-bp 5'-untranslated region and a 766-bp 3'-untranslated region including poly (A), encodes a putative protein of 658 amino acids (Figure 2).

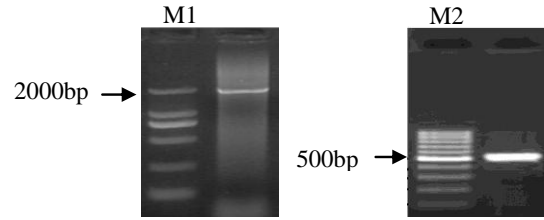


Figure 1. The results of RACE-PCR on *sglt1*. A, the result of 5'-RACE, the acquired gene was about 2000bp fragment; B, the result of 3'-RACE, the acquired was about 500bp fragment; M1, 2000bp DNA ladder; M2, 100bp DNA ladder.

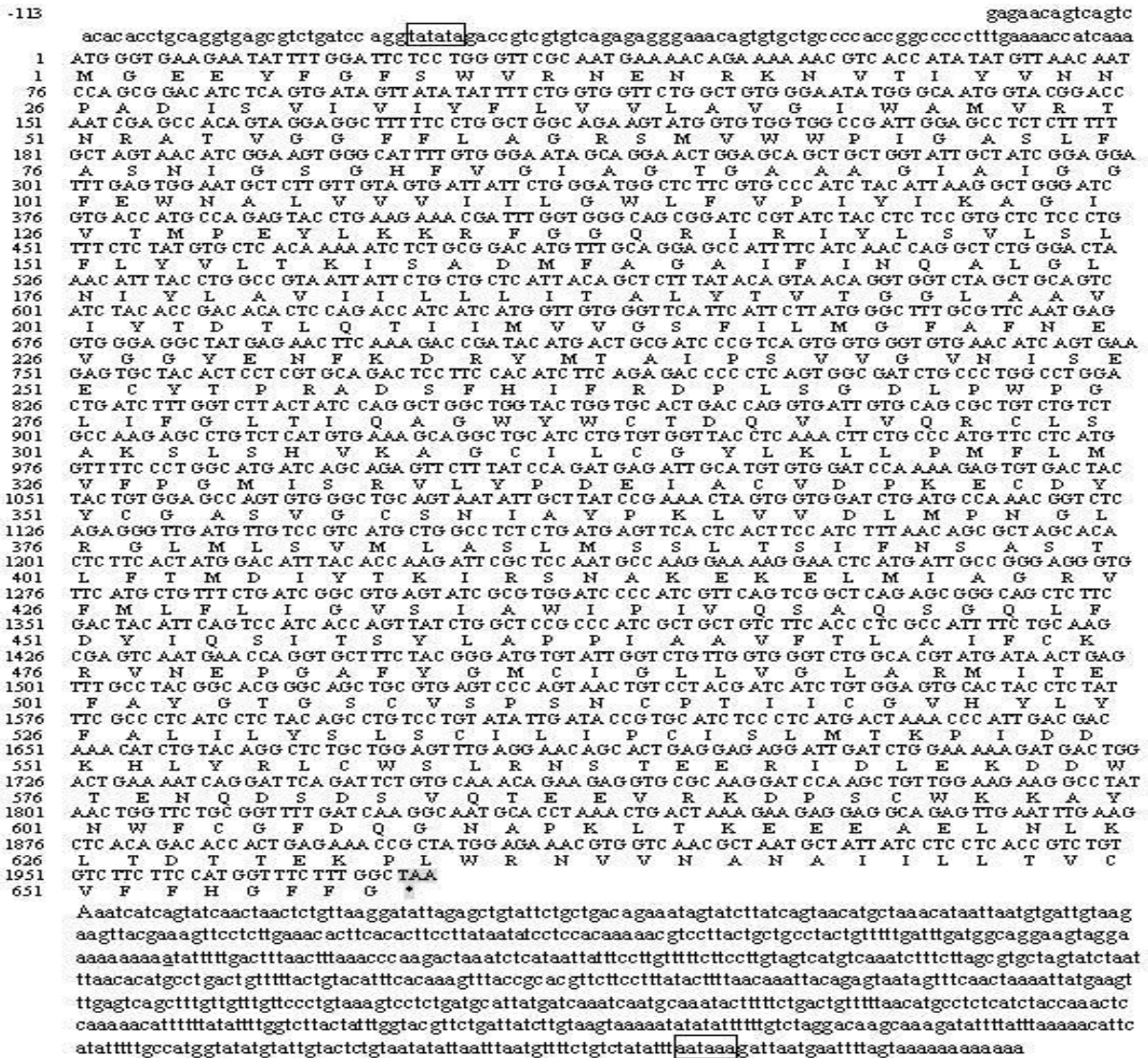


Figure 2. Nucleotide and deduced amino acid sequence of Na<sup>+</sup>/glucose cotransporter in intestine of *Cyprinus carpio* L. The sequence contains a single open reading frame which encodes a protein with 658 amino acids. The complete 5'-untranslated region was 113 nucleotides.

### Sequence analysis of *C. Carpio sgt1* gene

The deduced amino acid of carp Sgl1 using EXPASY is composed of 658 amino acids with a molecular weight of approximately 72.9 kDa and the isoelectric point of 6.35. The secondary structure of the deduced Sgl1 amino acid sequence was analyzed to seek potential transmembrane regions using TMHMM Server v. 2.0 (DTU) (Figure 3). Fourteen transmembrane domains were also putative in this study using SOPMA (Significant improvement in protein secondary structure prediction by consensus prediction from multiple alignments) (Figure 4). The *sgt1* gene contains 47.26% of  $\alpha$ -helix, 17.17% of extended strand, 2.74% of  $\beta$ -turn and 32.83% of random coil.

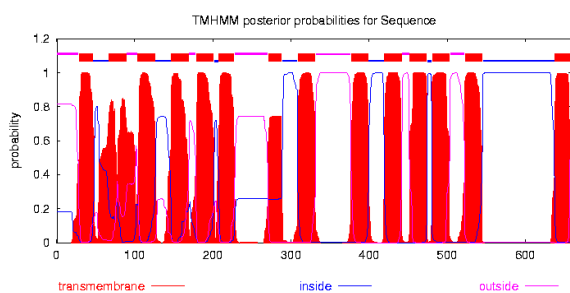


Figure 3. Secondary structure model and 14 transmembrane domains of Sgl1 Predicted by TMHMM Server v. 2.0. The C-terminal and the N-terminal of Sgl1 were out of the cytoplasm

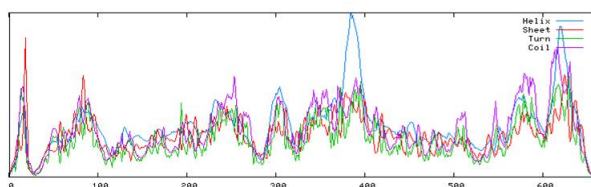


Figure 4. SOPMA result for *sgt1* from *Cyprinus carpio* L. intestine. The *sgt1* gene contains 47.26% of  $\alpha$ -helix, 17.17% of extended strand, 2.74% of  $\beta$ -turn and 32.83% of random coil.

SignalP 3.0 Sercer analysis predicted a signal peptide of carp Sgl1 positioned in the amino-terminal (N-terminal) sequence (MGEEYFGFSWVRNENRKNV TIYVNNPADISVIVIVYFLVVLAVGIWA) (Figure 5).

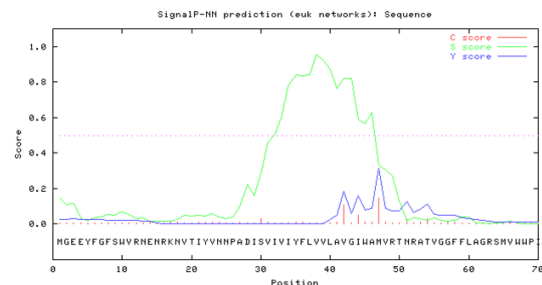


Figure 5. SignalP 3.0 Sercer analysis predicted a signal peptide of carp Sgl1 positioned in the amino-terminal (N-terminal) sequence (MGEEYFGFSWVRNENRKNV TIYVNNPADISVIVIVYFLVVLAVGIWA).

### Homology and phylo genetic analysis of *sgt1* genes

The *sgt1* cDNA sequence achieved in this study has been submitted to GenBank and assigned the accession No EU328389.1. The reference sequences in the analysis were downloaded from GenBank. The deduced amino acid sequence of *C. carpio sgt1* was 72.3%, 72.1%, 71.4%, 73.7%, 74.3%, 75.0%, 74.0%, 75.2% and 90.7% identical to Human (*Homo sapiens*), Horse (*Equus caballus*), Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), Bovine (*Bos taurus*), Bat (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*), Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), Mouse (*Mus musculus*), Spiny dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*), Zebrafish (*Danio rerio*) respectively, as shown in Table 2. The homology and divergence among the sequences were calculated using the Laser-gene analysis software package (DNAMAN, USA) (Figure 6). The deduced amino acid sequence of Sgl1 in *C. carpio* was the lowest similarity with that in rabbit (71.4%) and the highest similarity with that in *Danio rerio* (90.70%)

### 4. Discussions

The  $\text{Na}^+$ /glucose cotransporter (Sgl1) are members of the expanded solute carriers SLC5A family and are predominantly expressed in the brush-border membranes of small intestine and proximal convoluted tubule of the kidney (Zhao *et al.*, 2005). Sgl1 as a member of the  $\text{Na}^+$ -glucose cotransporter family, play an important role in transporting sodium and glucose to maintain the basic physiological metabolism and nutrition requirement (Zhao *et al.*, 2005; Zhou *et al.*, 2003). Sgl1 moves 2  $\text{Na}^+$  ions with each glucose per cycle (D éz-Sampedro and Barcelona, 2010; Sabino-Silva *et al.*, 2010). In present study, *sgt1* was first cloned and characterized in *C. carpio*, and subsequently used to obtain new insights into the molecular mechanism of  $\text{Na}^+$ -glucose cotransporter.



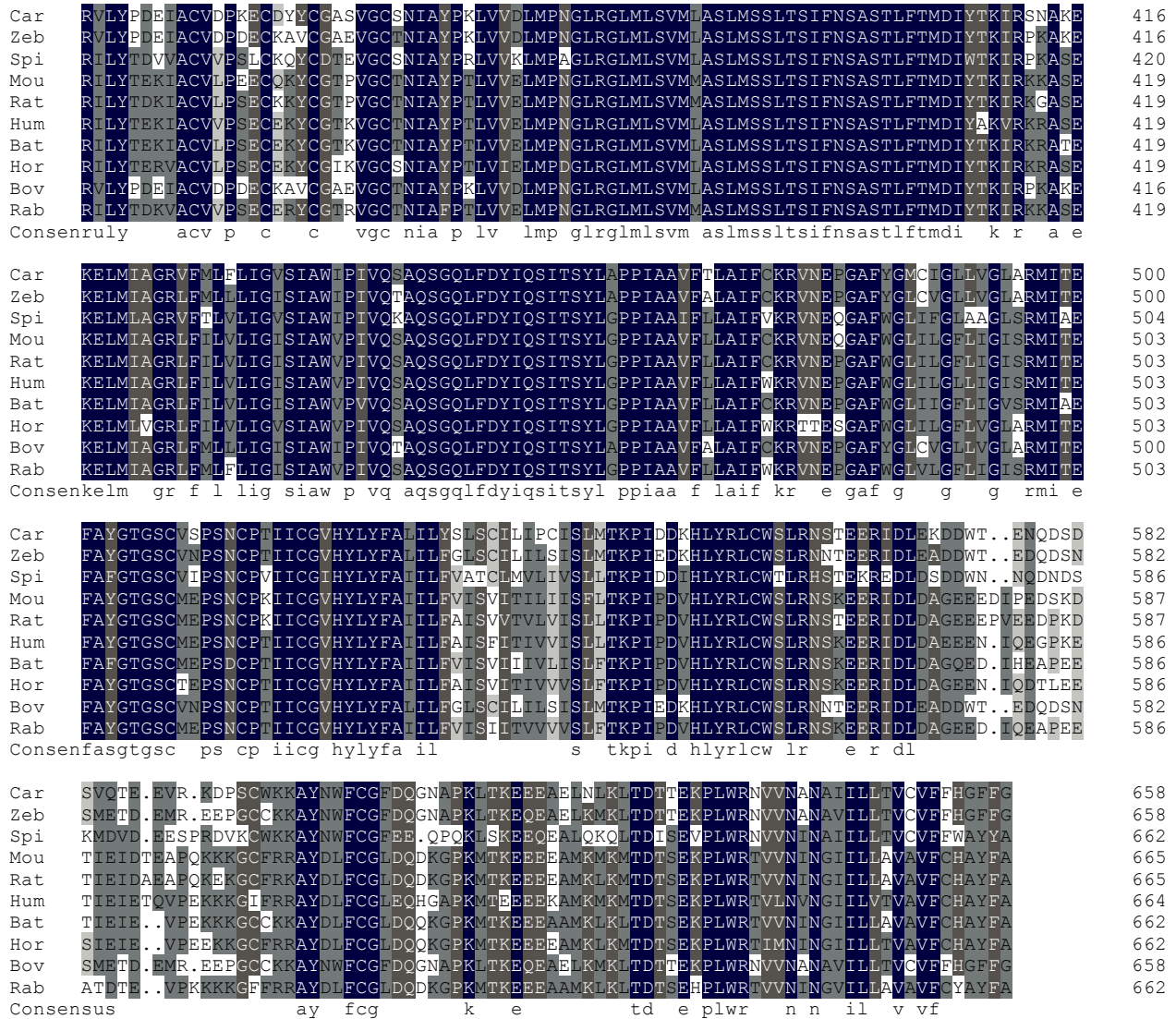


Figure 6. Alignment of deduced amino acid sequences of the Sglt1 subunit from the *Cyprinus carpio* L. (Car), Zebrafish (Zeb), Spiny dogfish (Spi), Human (Hum), Horse (Hor), Mouse (Mou), Rabbit (Rab), Bovine (Bov), Bat (Bat) and Rat (Rat). These protein sequences were aligned using the Clustal program. Identical amino acids are shown on a black background,  $\geq 75\%$  similar amino acids on a red background and  $\geq 50\%$  similar amino acids on a green background.

Totally, based on the characteristic analysis of the transmembrane and cytoplasmic domains, it was indicated to be the highest conservative between *C. carpio* and other species. For the Sglt1 subunit of the *C. carpio* it was high similar with that of Zebrafish, as well as the homologues of Spiny dogfish. On the other hand, phylogenetic trees were constructed using MEGA4.0 (Fig. 7). The nucleotide sequences of *sglt1* gene from several species were classified into two major groups. The Sglt1 subunits of other mammal were clustered into one group. The Sglt1 subunit of *C. carpio*, Zebrafish and Spiny

dogfish were clustered into another group. The homology of Sglt1 was highest between *C. carpio* and Zebrafish.

The major member of Sglt1 family have been successfully cloned and sequenced (Hediger *et al.*, 1987; Pajor *et al.*, 1992; Kwon *et al.*, 1992; Kong *et al.*, 1993) in the intestine of human (Hediger *et al.*, 1989), rat (Lee *et al.*, 1994; Aoshima *et al.*, 1997), mouse (Tabatabai *et al.*, 2001), rabbit (Hediger *et al.*, 1987; Morrison *et al.*, 1991), bovine (Zhao *et al.*, 1999), and zebrafish, etc. The results of comparison analysis showed that

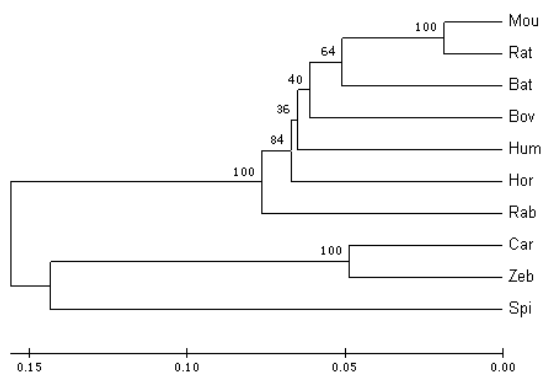


Figure 7. The Phylogenetic relationship of fish Sglt1 and its orthologues. A molecular phylogenetic tree of Sglt1 was generated based on the alignment of the amino acid sequences by MEGA4. The accession numbers for the sequences are as follows: Hum, *Homo sapiens* (AAA60320); Hor, *Equus caballus* (NP001075341); Rab, *Oryctolagus cuniculus* (CAA39040); Bov, *Bos Taurus* (AAM34274); Bat, *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* (ACC68880), Rat, *Rattus norvegicus* (BAA03676); Mou, *Mus musculus* (AAF17249); Spi, *Squalus acanthias* (CAJ75582), Zeb, *Danio rerio* (NP956975).

the homologous sequences of other fishes were more than 90% and among different animals were more than 70% (Table II). It is showed that *sglt1* gene is the high conserved sequence.

Transporters with a C-terminal extension (e.g. hSglt1) were proposed to have an additional 14th TM (Hirsh *et al.*, 1998). Information on tertiary interactions has recently been gained by chemical cross-linking of splits of the sodium-galactose transporter in *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* (vSglt) (Reizer *et al.*, 1994). However, little is known about the tertiary status of other members of the SSSF. The 11~15 putative transmembrane domains (TMs) in a-helical conformation of SSSF proteins were the average hydrophathy plot (Turk *et al.*, 1997). For PutP, it contained 13 TMs with the N-terminus located on the periplasmic side of the membrane and the C-terminus facing the cytoplasm.

To gain structural insight into the mechanistic details, the structure of vSglt were solved in the presence of Na<sup>+</sup> and galactose (Faham *et al.*, 2008). The 3-D protein models in this study were predicted by comparative protein modeling program SWISS-MODEL (Fig. 8). The transporter has two charged regions in common at residues 130-140 and 408-420. It was further confirmed from the similarity between sequences, when compared with the secondary structural elements such as the

occurrence of a-helix in front of transmembrane regions 4. The structural core is involved in the inverted repeats of 5 TM helices (TM2-TM6 and TM7-TM11). It was suggested that glucose might be bound in the center of the core, and a Na<sup>+</sup>-binding site might be located at the intersection of TM2 and TM9. Results of the study are in line with the result of Sodium-binding site and galactose-binding site by Faham *et al.* (Faham *et al.*, 2008).

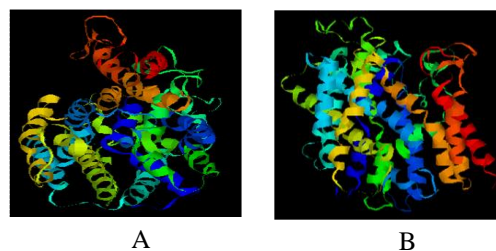


Figure 8. The predicted 3-D structure of Sglt1 in intestine of *Cyprinus carpio* L. A, Structure of Sglt1 viewed in the membrane plane. B, Structure of Sglt1 viewed from the intracellular side.

#### Acknowledgements:

This study was supported by Program Science & Technology Innovation Talents in Universities of Henan Province (2010HASTIT020).

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