**Engineered Prolonged-Acting Prodrugs via Albumin-Binding Probes**

Principal Investigators: Prof. Yoram Shechter, Prof. Matityahu Fridkin. Yeda ref. 1555.

Summary:

Therapeutics based on proteins and peptides are an important class of medicines. Recently, approved recombinant protein therapeutics have been developed to treat a wide variety of clinical indications. However, most protein and peptide based drugs, in particular those lacking specific chemical modifications (e.g. glycosylation) and under a specific size (molecular mass < 50 kDa), are short-lived when introduced to the bloodstream. Therefore, there is a clear need for a method to extend the half-life of protein and peptide based therapeutics that minimally interferes with its pharmacological activity. The groups of Profs. Shechter and Fridkin have designed a set of probes capable of extending the half-life of short-lived drug containing either an amino or mercapto group.

Applications and Advantages:

* Up to a 6-fold increase in peptide/protein drug residence time in the blood.
* Generally does not interfere with target drugs pharmacological activity.
* Has potential application in extending the life-time of amine and/or cysteine containing molecule such as proteins, peptides, amino acids and other drugs containing amine and/or mercapto groups.

Technology's essence:

The joint teams of Profs. Shechter and Fridkin have developed a set of novel probes capable of binding human serum albumin (HSA) with high affinity, sufficient to turn short-lived molecules into long-lived species *in vivo*. The probes are comprised of long-chain fatty acids (LCFA)-like sulfonated derivatives of selectively reacting with drugs containing an amino and/or mercapto group (e.g. protein or peptides containing a free lysine or cysteine residue). Thanks to the flexibility in terms of ligation sites on the target drug, drug-probe conjugates can be generated that are likely not to interfere with the pharmacological activity of the target drug. Testing done at Profs. Shechter’s and Fridkin’s labs demonstrated that all conjugates prepared using these probes exhibited considerably extended *in vivo* half-lives compared to non-conjugated drugs, and were pharmacologically active.