

1 **Molecular Modeling of Disease Causing Mutations in**

2 **Domain C1 of cMyBP-C**

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15 **Short Title: Modeling Mutations in C1 of cMyBP-C**

16 **Abstract**

17 Cardiac myosin binding protein-C (cMyBP-C) is a multi-domain (C0-C10) protein
18 that regulates heart muscle contraction through interaction with myosin, actin and other
19 sarcomeric proteins. Several mutations of this protein cause familial hypertrophic
20 cardiomyopathy (HCM). Domain C1 of cMyBP-C plays a central role in protein interactions
21 with actin and myosin. Here, we studied structure-function relationship of three disease
22 causing mutations, Arg177His, Ala216Thr and Glu258Lys of the domain C1 using
23 computational biology techniques with its available X-ray crystal structure. The results
24 suggest that each mutation could affect structural properties of the domain C1, and hence it's
25 structural integrity through modifying intra-molecular arrangements in a distinct mode. The
26 mutations also change surface charge distributions, which could impact the binding of C1
27 with other sarcomeric proteins thereby affecting contractile function. These structural
28 consequences of the C1 mutants could be valuable to understand the molecular mechanisms
29 for the disease.

30 **Key Words:** cardiac Myosin Binding Protein-C; Domain C1; Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy;
31 Mutations; Molecular Dynamics Simulation; Structure-function Relationship

32 **Introduction**

33 Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM) is an inherited disease that has continued to
34 interest and intrigue clinicians, molecular biologists, biochemists and modellers due to i) its
35 prevalence (affects 1:500) [1,2], ii) can cause heart failure, arrhythmia and sudden cardiac
36 death, iii) is the commonest cause of sudden death below the age 40 [1,3] and iv) is the
37 predominant cause of sudden death of competitive athletes on the track [4]. HCM is usually
38 caused by mutations in the genes encoding for sarcomeric proteins [5-8]. To date, more than
39 800 mutations have been reported in the genes that encode for sarcomeric proteins [9,10].
40 However, the mechanism by which a single nucleotide polymorphism can cause such a
41 massive difference in the phenotype and its function remains largely unknown. Therefore, the
42 objective of this study is to investigate the basic mechanism by which the mutations translate
43 in to the phenotype.

44 The sarcomere is the basic unit of a muscle and it is composed of a variety of proteins
45 including myosin and actin as the major components that form thick and thin filaments,
46 respectively. Other accessory proteins such as myosin binding protein-c (MyBP-C) [11], titin,
47 troponin, tropomyosin etc. take part in maintaining structure and regulating function of the
48 sarcomere.

49 A mutational analysis study on an Egyptian cohort through Bibliotheca Alexandrina
50 HCM (BA-HCM), a national programme showed that mutations in cardiac MyBP-C
51 (cMyBP-C) gene are a common cause of HCM in Egypt [12]. More than 200 disease causing
52 mutations have been reported in the cMyBP-C [7,13-19].

53 cMyBP-C is a large sarcomeric protein with multiple domains and a component of
54 thick filaments [20-22]. It is solely expressed in the heart of mammals [23,24]. The structure
55 of cMyBP-C is composed of 11 domains including eight immunoglobuline(Ig)-like domains

56 and three fibronectin(Fn)-like domains, which are termed as C0–C10 [25]. Each domain is a
57 globular protein. The three-dimensional structure is available for only a few of the domains
58 including C0, C1, C2 and C5 [26-30]. The N-terminus of the protein including domains C0,
59 C1 and C2 plays a significant role in the regulation of interaction with myosin [31,32] and/or
60 actin [33,34]. Specifically, the domain C1 has been found to interact with sub-fragment 2 of
61 myosin [26]. In addition, N-terminal of this domain might bind with actin through Pro-Ala
62 rich region [27].

63 Here, we studied three disease causing missense mutations of the domain C1 that
64 were recently identified in Egypt for the first time by Kassem et al., [12]. These HCM
65 causing mutations: (i) Arg177His (ii) Ala216Thr and (iii) Glu258Lys are located in the
66 strand-B, the D/E loop and the C-terminal of strand-G, respectively (Figure 1). These
67 mutations have also been reported by others in different parts of the world [35-37]. In
68 particular, Glu258Lys has been reported to cause a founder effect in Italian population [38].
69 Clinical studies suggest the effect of mutations (ie., contractile dysfunction [7,8,12,15,18,36-
70 38]), yet less is known about their structure-function relationship. Although the structural
71 positions of the mutations are known [26-28], their exact role in causing HCM is unclear.
72 Computational biology techniques supply various invaluable tools at the atomic level. These
73 include molecular dynamics (MD) simulations, Floppy Inclusions and Rigid Substructure
74 Topography (FIRST) [39], and electrostatic potential calculations (ESP). Here, we have used
75 these techniques to analyse the mutation-induced changes in the structural and electrostatic
76 properties that could alter the function of the C1 and cMyBP-C, and might therefore lead to
77 the disease.

78

79 **Materials and Methods**

80 *Model Repair*

81 The high resolution crystal structure of domain C1 of cMyBP-C (PDB ID: 2V6H,
82 1.55 Å) [27] was taken from the protein data bank (PDB, <http://www.rcsb.org/pdb/>) for our
83 study. The C1 consists of seven β -stands that form two β -sheets, where sheet-1 consists of
84 strands A, C, F and G while sheet-2 comprises strands B, D and E both with anti-parallel
85 packing of adjacent strands (Figure 1). The structure of domain C1 has four missing residues
86 (Ala181-Leu184) in the B/C loop. The Discovery Studio V3.1 (DS) was used to construct the
87 missing residues (Accelrys, San Diego, USA) [40] and the resulting model was subjected to
88 energy minimization using Groningen Machine for Chemical Simulation (GROMACS) V
89 4.5.4. The energy minimized C1 structure was used to build the mutants that were modelled
90 using the DS “build and edit protein”. A total of four MD simulations were carried out
91 including one wild type and three mutant C1 structures with production runs of 10 ns.

92 *MD Simulations of Domain C1 of cMyBP-C*

93 Energy minimization was carried out for the domain C1 using the steepest descent
94 algorithm with a tolerance of 2000 kJ/mol/nm using the GROMACS simulation package
95 [41,42]. The energy minimized structure was used as the starting structure for the MD
96 simulations. The GROMOS96 [43] force field was applied to the C1 structure while the
97 SPC3 [44] water model was used to create the aqueous environment. The protein was
98 solvated in a cubic box of size of 0.8 nm. Periodic boundary conditions were applied in all
99 directions and the system was neutralized by adding Na⁺ ions. The resulting systems contain
100 ~30860 atoms. A twin range cut-off was used for long-range interactions: 0.8 nm for van der
101 Waals interactions and 1.4 nm for electrostatic interactions. All bond lengths were
102 constrained with the LINCS [45] algorithm. The SETTLE [46] algorithm was applied to

103 constrain the geometry of the water molecules. The energy minimized system was subjected
104 to 100 ps equilibration. This pre-equilibrated system was subsequently subjected to the 10 ns
105 production MD simulations with a time-step of 2 fs at constant temperature (300 K), pressure
106 (1 atm) and number of particles, without any position restraints [47]. The snapshots were
107 collected at every 10 ps. The trajectories were analyzed using GROMACS analysis tools and
108 the structures were analyzed using DS and PyMOL (www.pymol.org).

109 *Rigidity Analysis*

110 The program FIRST is used to identify rigid and flexible regions of the C1 network
111 graphs. In FIRST, the cut-off parameters for the energy and the hydrophobic interactions
112 were set to -0.7 and 1.0, respectively. Structural degrees of freedom, intra-molecular
113 interactions and number of rigid clusters were also calculated.

114 *Electrostatic Surface Calculation*

115 The electrostatic potential was calculated for the WT as well as the mutants using the
116 Delphi package provided in the DS. The Delphi charges were assigned for the structures and
117 the surface electrostatic potential map was obtained by solving the Poisson-Boltzmann
118 equation.

119 **Results**

120 **Trajectory-based Analyses for the MD Simulated Systems**

121 In order to find out the structural stability of WT and mutants of the C1 dynamically,
122 root mean square deviation (RMSD) was computed with respect to their initial structures for
123 the C α -atoms (Figure 2A) throughout the MD simulations. It showed that the deviation
124 pattern was different for WT and mutants. However, after the equilibration phase, all the
125 systems stayed within ~0.3 nm and this suggested that the structures remain stable without
126 any major flaw.

127 To determine the flexible regions of the systems, the average root mean square
128 fluctuations (RMSF) were calculated for 10 ns of the MD simulations and generated as a 2D
129 plot with respect to the C α -atoms of the residues (Figure 2B). Here, residues that are
130 fluctuated more than 0.2 nm considered as flexible regions. As expected, the long loop at the
131 N-terminal and the loops B/C, C/D and F/G were observed as flexible regions while the rest
132 of the domain remained rigid.

133 These trajectory-based analyses did not provide significant differences in the
134 behaviour of the systems. Hence, we tried to examine the individual structures in detail to see
135 whether the mutations induced any changes in the secondary structural elements during the
136 simulations. For this purpose, every one nanosecond structures were collected, observed and
137 analysed for 10 ns.

138

139 **Secondary Structural Changes and Interactions of the Mutated Residues**

140 The nature of the secondary structural elements in the WT (core structure) has been
141 conserved during the MD simulations (Figure 3Aa, 3Ba and 3Ca). However, all three mutants

142 displayed changes in their secondary structural elements at several stages of the MD
143 simulations and the structures that showed major changes are represented in Figure 3Ab, 3Bb
144 and 3Cb.

145 Here, we studied interactions of the residues at positions 177/216/258 with its
146 neighbouring residues in the WT and mutants in order to investigate whether behaviour of the
147 mutants might be the cause for the observed structural changes. This has been performed by
148 identifying two layers of neighbouring residues which are connected via hydrogen bonds.
149 Here, the residues which interact directly with the residue at 177/216/258 are called as first
150 layer residues and the residues that are (indirectly) linked with 177/216/258 through a
151 mediator that is via the first layer residues are considered as the second layer of residues.

152 At 10 ns of the Arg177His mutant simulation, a major part of the β -strand D has been
153 converted into loop that extend the D/E loop (Figure 3Ab). This structural change occurred in
154 the vicinity of the strand B, where the relevant mutation is positioned. Here, we monitored
155 interactions between the residue 177 and its neighbouring residues. In the WT, Arg177
156 directly interacts with Met159, Ser175 and Ser217 and these residues further contact Asp214
157 and Val219 (Figure 4Aa). Whereas, in the mutant, His177 forms hydrogen bonds with
158 Val158, Met159, Asp214, Ser217 and Val219 at the first layer and the network extends
159 further through Leu156 and Lys218 (Figure 4Ab).

160 The mapping of intra-molecular interactions associated with the residue 177 shows
161 that the network based on Arg177 is smaller than the one based on His177. It is mainly
162 because of the exposed side-chain of the arginine that was not involved in formation of many
163 interactions in WT, whereas, the ring structure of His177 fits well within the interaction
164 pocket to make many interactions. The increase in the number of hydrogen bonds based on

165 His177 at this region introduce more bonding constrains that could affect its local flexibility
166 and make it more rigid.

167 At 9 ns of the simulation of the mutant Ala216Thr, the length of the F helix has been
168 increased and the long strand G has been divided into two strands, while the mutation spot is
169 located at the loop D/E (Figure 3Bb). The native residue alanine at 216 makes no contacts
170 because it is exposed to the surface from the loop D/E and due to its short side-chain. On the
171 other hand, the long side-chained hydrophilic residue threonine at 216 forms hydrogen bonds
172 with Asp214, Ser217 and Lys218 and they continue the network with Gly180 and Val219
173 (Figure 4B).

174 Although the interaction pattern has been altered near the loop D/E, the structural
175 change has occurred at the F-G interface. It suggests that the impact of this mutation could be
176 at the distal regions of the domain C1 (Figure 3Bb) where some of the interactions are
177 modified. This behaviour is different from the previous mutation studied above (Figure 3Ab).

178 At 1 ns of the mutant Glu258Lys, half of the long strand-G has been converted into a
179 loop. The mutation spot is located at the C-terminal region of this strand. The Glu258 in the
180 WT directly interacts with Val256 of the same strand-G and indirectly with Phe233 of the
181 loop E/F via Val256, while, Lys258 has no interactions with its nearby residues (Figure 4C).
182 This mutation has similar behaviour as the Arg177His, which affects the neighbouring
183 regions indirectly.

184 The mapping of neighbouring contacts shows the local hydrogen bonding networks
185 that are associated with the residues at the mutational positions. However, for all three
186 mutations, it indicates that they are not directly involved in triggering the secondary structural
187 changes. Thus, to relate these changes to the secondary structural changes, we analysed the
188 fluctuations of the mutated residues during the MD simulations. The average RMSF (Figure

189 5) for 10 ns of the systems shows different behaviour for the WT and the mutated residues at
190 their corresponding positions. The arginine at position 177 fluctuates higher than the histidine
191 at the same position and a similar behaviour was observed for Glu258Lys, where glutamic
192 acid fluctuates slightly higher than lysine. On the other hand, the mutated residue threonine
193 fluctuates significantly more than the native alanine. These results imply that modifying the
194 long side-chain residues (Arg) to short (His) and vice versa (Ala, to Thr and Glu to Lys) at
195 key positions could make them rigid or flexible, respectively. This might induce a local
196 structural instability and intervene with the native bonding of neighbouring residues which
197 can induce structural changes.

198

199 **Rigidity and Flexibility of Residues Linked with Structural Changes**

200 The identification of changes in rigid and flexible regions in the WT and mutated
201 systems of C1 can provide a molecular explanation for the secondary structural changes at the
202 affected regions. FIRST is a program that identifies rigidity and flexibility of substructures in
203 a macromolecule and offers details related to intra-molecular interactions. Therefore, we used
204 FIRST to analyse the representative 3D structures to monitor the key hydrogen bonds, which
205 normally determine the rigidity, and the residues that are involved in the formation of β -
206 sheets. We focused our analyses towards the structurally modified regions of the β -sheets
207 (Figure 6), which could affect the rigidity of the rest of the domain that are structurally
208 conserved.

209 The structural architecture of a typical antiparallel β -sheet is important to maintain
210 integrity of domain C1 and other Ig-like domains of cMyBP-C [26-30]. These types of sheets
211 are constructed with antiparallel β -strands and the majority of the building blocks are
212 hydrophobic residues. The β -sheet is formed through making hydrogen bonds between

213 carbonyl oxygen of one strand and amino hydrogen atom of the other strand. Thus, each
214 residue from the strand-1 makes two hydrogen bonds with their neighbours on the strand-2.
215 This bonding pattern is required for the formation of a successful β -sheet. Interfering with
216 any of the residues in the sheet via an inappropriate mutation will not only break the
217 continuity of the bonding pattern but also make the side-chain of the mutated residue flexible,
218 which could disrupt the natural bonding of neighbours and might result in loss of rigidity or
219 secondary structural elements.

220 In the WT and the Arg177His at 10 ns, we focused on the sheet-2 as it is the
221 structurally modified region due to the mutation. Here, the sheet is shown into two interfaces,
222 the B-E and D-E interfaces (Figure 6Aa-b). The secondary structural change in the B-E
223 interface was observed at the C-terminal of the strand B and D. At this region, the sheet was
224 maintained with two hydrogen bonds between Val178 and Tyr220 in the WT. However, one
225 of the hydrogen bonds between these two residues was lost in the mutant which resulted in
226 the side-chain movement of Tyr220. This side-chain movement of Tyr220 now forms another
227 hydrogen bond with Gly180, which is also flexible as it is in the B/C loop. The movement of
228 the aromatic side-chain of Tyr220 appears to affect the bonding pattern in its vicinity
229 especially at the D-E interface of Arg177His. Although the Ser212 forms two hydrogen
230 bonds with Leu221 in both WT and Arg177His, in the latter case one of the hydrogen bonds
231 is not from the backbone atom. This change together with the motion of Tyr220 might affect
232 the remaining β -strand D and cause rearrangement in the pattern of hydrogen bonds such as
233 loss of hydrogen bonds between Ser217 \leftrightarrow Val219 and Arg215 \leftrightarrow Lys218 and formation of
234 new hydrogen bonds between Asp214 \leftrightarrow Ser217 and Asp214 \leftrightarrow Val219 (Figure 6Ab) (\leftrightarrow
235 indicates a single hydrogen bond). These changes might have caused the loss of secondary
236 structure in the D-E interface.

237 These results suggest that replacement of Arg177 to histidine initiates the changes by
238 disturbing the normal bonding of neighbour Val178 with Tyr220. This tyrosine becomes
239 flexible and interrupts the usual bonding of its neighbour Leu221 with Ser212 and rearranges
240 the pattern of hydrogen bonds of the other mentioned pairs and thus could bring structural
241 change at strand B, D and E.

242 The next mutation (Ala216Thr) is located on the loop D/E in the sheet-2, which
243 affected the distal region at the F-G interface in the sheet-1. In this case, Arg238 of WT
244 formed a strong charge based interaction with Glu240, which was missing in the mutant
245 Ala216Thr and Gly194 formed a new interaction with Ser236 at the C-F interface (Figure
246 6Ba-b). While in the F-G interface, Gly235 of WT formed two hydrogen bonds with Leu254.
247 However, the backbone interactions were lacking in the mutant between Gly235 and Leu254
248 rather they gained one of their lost interactions through contacting Thr255 and Phe252,
249 respectively. This rearrangement of hydrogen bonds induced breakage of the strand G in
250 Ala216Thr, this change brought the E/F loop closer and helped in the establishment of new
251 hydrogen bonds between Phe233 ↔ Gln230. Moreover, this type of change played a role in
252 rearrangement of hydrogen bonds at the F/G loop region (data not shown) such as loss of
253 three hydrogen bonds between Phe247 ↔ Lys246 and Lys246 ↔ Asp248 and formation of
254 hydrogen bonds between Thr243 ↔ Lys246 and Lys246 ↔ Asp245 (Figure 6Bb, ↔ two
255 hydrogen bonds).

256 The observed changes in this mutation occurred at the mid of the F-G interface.
257 Although this region is away from the mutational spot on the D/E loop, these two regions are
258 linked by the strand E and the E/F loop. The changes are possibly initiated by the Gly235
259 (and Thr234), which affected its normal interactions with Leu254 and thereby modified the
260 usual bonding pattern of several residues in the vicinity. Thus, it indicates that the mutation at

261 the other end of the segment in the C1 at some point could induce the structural changes
262 through the strand E-E/F loop.

263 In the Glu258Lys at 1 ns, the sheet-1 has been affected. Here, at 1 ns of WT in the F-
264 G interface, Val256 forms a hydrogen bond with Phe233 (Figure 6Ca-b). This hydrogen bond
265 is missing in the mutant. In addition, new hydrogen bonds were observed between Pro231 ↔
266 Thr234, Phe233 ↔ Tyr237, Thr234 ↔ Val256. This rearrangement (loss and gain) in the
267 hydrogen bonding pattern could have affected the structure locally (the G-strand).

268 Here, the observed changes suggest that mutating a small negatively charged residue
269 Glu258 into a long side-chained positively charged lysine at the C-terminal of the strand G
270 can initiate the structural changes through its neighbouring region. It might have started to
271 intervene with the bonding of Val 256 with Phe233. This was not observed in the mutant.
272 This change has affected the bonding pattern of its neighbours and modified usual network of
273 several residues nearby and could have transformed the long strand into two strands divided
274 by a loop.

275 The rigidity analysis together with RMSF results suggest that the fluctuations of the
276 three mutated residues can cause indirect effects on the rigidity of the domain by
277 breaking/making of interactions with its neighbouring residues thus modifying secondary
278 structural elements.

279

280 **Mutational Impact on the Electrostatic Surface of the Systems**

281 The change in the internal molecular architecture can alter the surface charge
282 distribution, which is important for protein-protein interactions. It is significant for this study
283 as cMyBP-C interacts with myosin and actin using surface electrostatic properties [27].

284 Here, the results of the electrostatic calculations (Figure 7 WT and Arg177His at 10
285 ns) showed that His177 with the help of Leu156, Val158 and Met159 pushes Arg160 near the
286 mutated region to introduce a positive patch in between the negative surface. On the other
287 side, the changes at the sheet-2 bring down Lys185 and Lys190 through the B/C loop to
288 create space for a negative surface created by Glu240 and Asp198.

289 The Thr216 interaction with Asp214 allows Arg160 and Arg177 to project a positive
290 surface near the strand B. Furthermore, the change in the distal region at the N-terminal loop
291 affects the neighbour loop F/G and brings the hydrophobic surface through Phe247 (Figure 7,
292 WT and Ala216Thr at 9 ns).

293 The position of 258, which is highly conserved with negatively charged glutamic acid
294 in cMyBP-C for most of the organisms, was replaced with a positively charged lysine residue
295 in the mutant Glu258Lys. Hence, the presence of Lys258 is responsible for the formation of a
296 positive patch at the C-terminal in this mutant at both the front and back view of the 1 ns
297 snapshots (Figure 7 WT and Glu258Lys).

298 The structural basis of the interactions in the domain C1 depends on conformational
299 integrity and surface charge distributions. Here, results from our study reveal how the
300 mutations in a single domain can initiate structural changes by altering the intra-molecular
301 interactions. These internal changes could bring local structural constrains and affect the
302 formation of secondary structural elements. Consequently, it influences the domain
303 conformation and modifies the nature of surface charge distribution, which is important for
304 this domain to interact with neighbouring domains and to interact with other sarcomeric
305 proteins such as myosin and actin to regulate muscle contraction.

306

307 **Discussion**

308 This study has shown that the disease causing mutations affect the structural
309 properties of domain C1 through changing (i) residue flexibility/rigidity (ii) intra-molecular
310 interactions, (iii) secondary structural elements, and (iv) surface electrostatics. As these
311 changes are inter-linked, this chain of modifications might leads to altered molecular
312 mechanism. Arg177His and Glu258Lys have similar patterns such as via affecting its
313 neighbouring regions, sheet-2 and sheet-1, respectively. In contrast, Ala216Thr affects the
314 distal region from the mutational spot of the C1.

315 The domain C1 is flanked by a structurally and functionally important proline-alanine
316 rich region and a conserved cMyBP-C motif on both sides. The proline-alanine rich region
317 regulates cross-bridge speed thus plays a significant role in the sarcomere [48]. Whereas, the
318 conserved motif is found to be interacting with sub-fragment 2 of myosin [26,56]. Hence, any
319 structural change in the domain C1 might reflect in the function.

320 The reported changes in this key domain could induce cMyBP-C to malfunction and
321 lead to appropriate disease pathways as reported by Frey et al., [8]. However, it is unclear that
322 how these types of disease causing mutations are authorized by the natural quality control
323 systems (mRNA decay, ubiquitin-proteasome system and autophagy), which commonly
324 control their expressions [49]. This opens up new research avenues to explore molecular
325 therapeutic agents that can reinforce the natural way of quality control to prevent this cardiac
326 disease.

327 In conclusion, the HCM causing mutations studied here potentially changes the native
328 structural properties of the domain C1 of cMyBP-C. We have given possible molecular
329 explanations to understand how the mutations could initiate the malfunction. It has shown
330 that three mutations have different mechanisms to disturb the structural integrity of the

331 domain C1. The molecular changes described here could distract binding of the molecule to
332 actin and/or myosin and thus interfere with both contractile and electrical functions. As
333 cMyBP-C is a major player in functional regulation and structural integrity of the sarcomere,
334 its dysregulation can be responsible for atleast some of the pathological changes observed in
335 HCM.

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342

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- 481

482 **Figure Legends**

483

484 **Figure 1. Structural features of the domain C1 of cMyBP-C.** Positions of the examined
485 HCM causing mutations are shown in red.

486

487 **Figure 2. Trajectory-based structural stability analyses of WT and mutants.** (A) Root
488 mean square deviation (RMSD) and (B) average root mean square fluctuation (RMSF) of
489 residues during MD simulations.

490

491 **Figure 3. Secondary structural changes.** The representative snapshots of WT and mutants
492 are shown. (A) a) WT and b) Arg177His at 10 ns, (B) a) WT and b) Ala216Thr at 9 ns and
493 (C) a) WT and b) Glu258Lys at 1 ns. In the structures, red color represents position of the
494 mutation.

495

496 **Figure 4. Intra-molecular interactions.** For the represented snapshots of MD simulations
497 (Figure 3), two layers of neighbouring residues between corresponding WT and mutant
498 residues along with their hydrogen bonds are displayed. Here, (A) a) WT and b) Arg177His
499 at 10 ns, (B) Ala216Thr at 9 ns and (C) WT at 1 ns. At 9 ns Ala216 of WT and at 1 ns
500 Lys258 of Glu258Lys did not make any interactions, hence they are not shown. WT and
501 mutant residues 177, 216 and 258 are shown in yellow, and the residues directly interacting
502 with these residues are shown in pink and are described as first layer. The residues that are
503 interacting with first layer of residues are depicted as second layer and shown in violet.

504 **Figure 5: Fluctuations of the WT and mutant residues during MD simulations.** The
505 average RMSF of the mutated residues for 10 ns are plotted in 2D bar graph. The bars in gray
506 and in different colours (green, orange and aqua green) represent the WT and the mutants,
507 respectively.

508

509 **Figure 6: Molecular explanations for the structural changes.** The rigidity analysis
510 provided information based on the structural rigidity and flexibility of residues. (A) 10 ns
511 snapshots of a) WT and b) Arg177His, (B) 9 ns snapshots of a) WT and b) Ala216Thr and
512 (C) 1 ns snapshots of a) WT and b) Glu258Lys. Here, blue represents rigid regions and black
513 and gray indicates flexible regions. The mutational spots are shown in yellow arrow. As the
514 Ala216Thr affected the distal region of the domain, the position of this mutation has not
515 shown. The hydrogen bonds (red lines) that are missing in the mutants are marked in black
516 and the newly formed hydrogen bonds in the mutants are shown in light blue.

517

518 **Figure 7: Electrostatic surface potential map.** Front view and back view of surface
519 electrostatic potential map for the snapshots shown in Figure 3. Where, blue, red and white
520 represent positive, negative and hydrophobic electrostatic potential, respectively.

Figures

Figure1

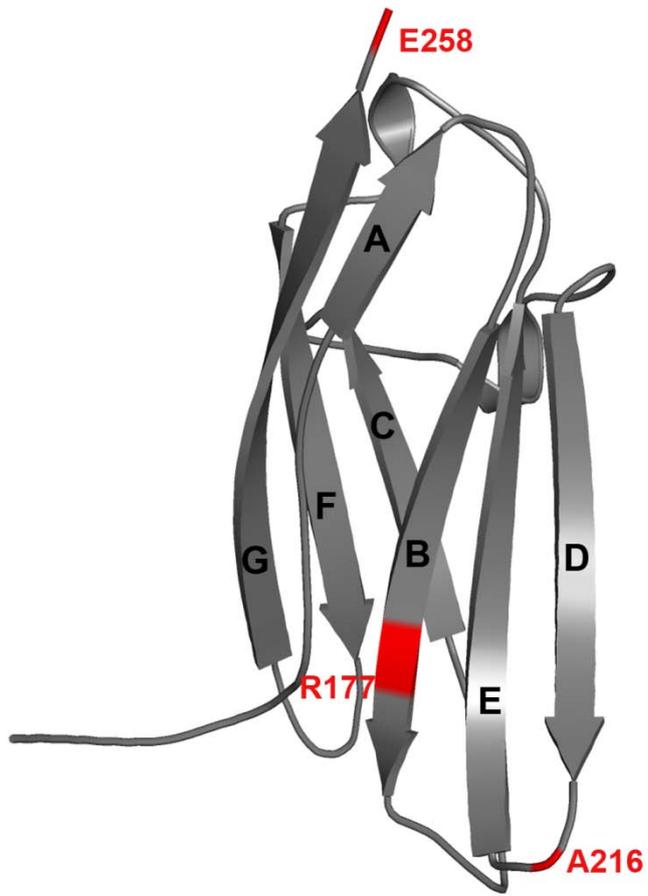


Figure2

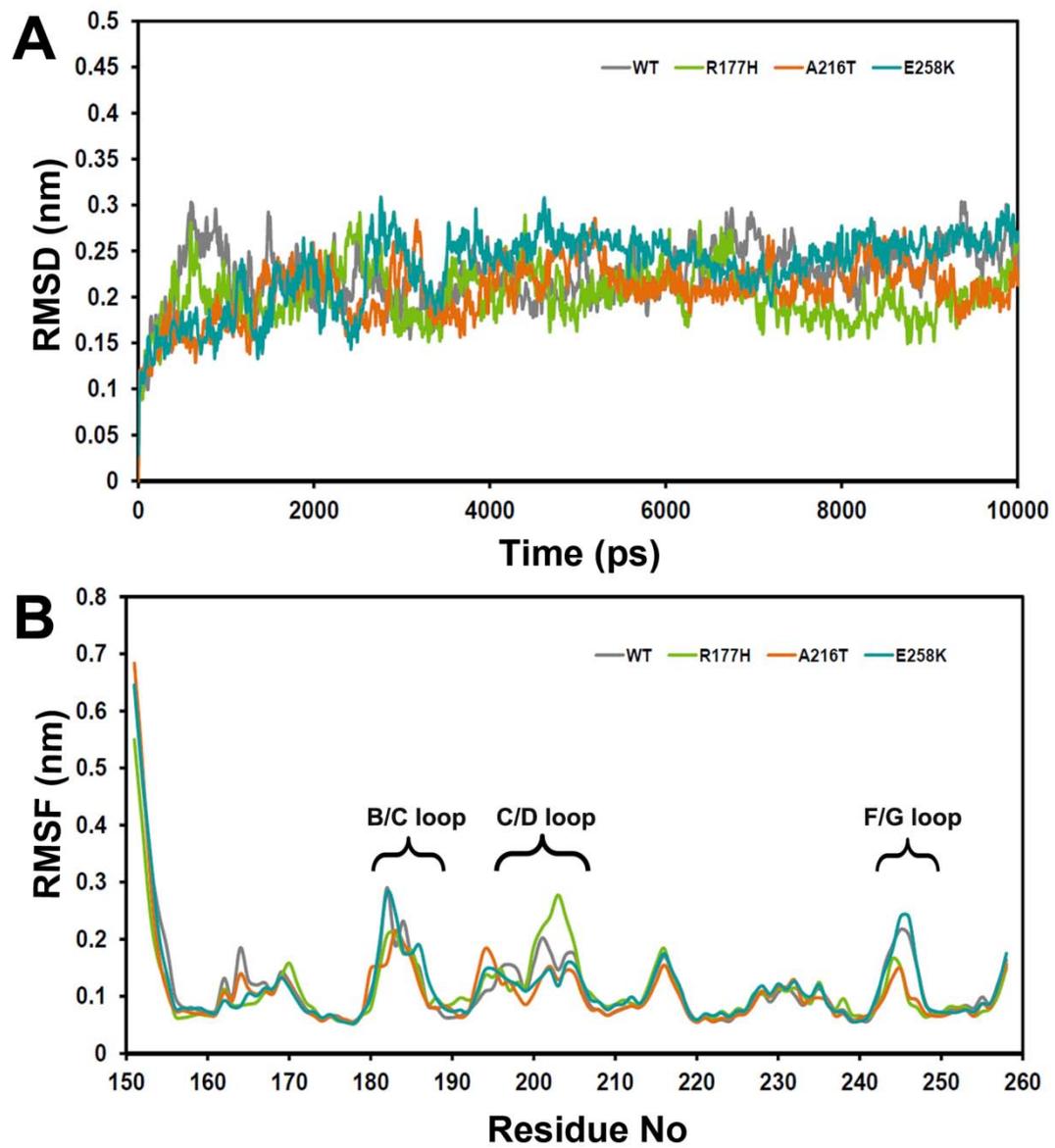


Figure3

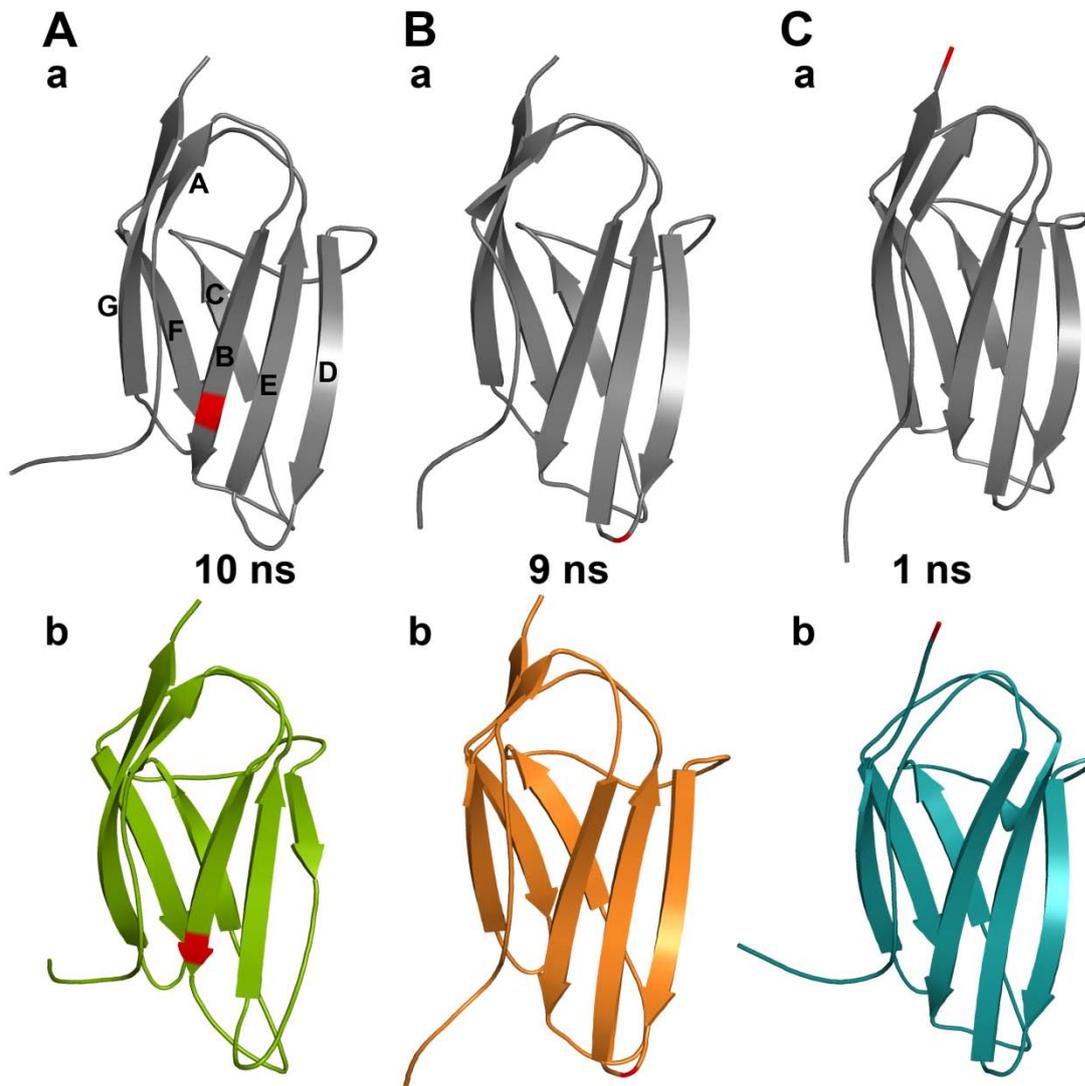


Figure4

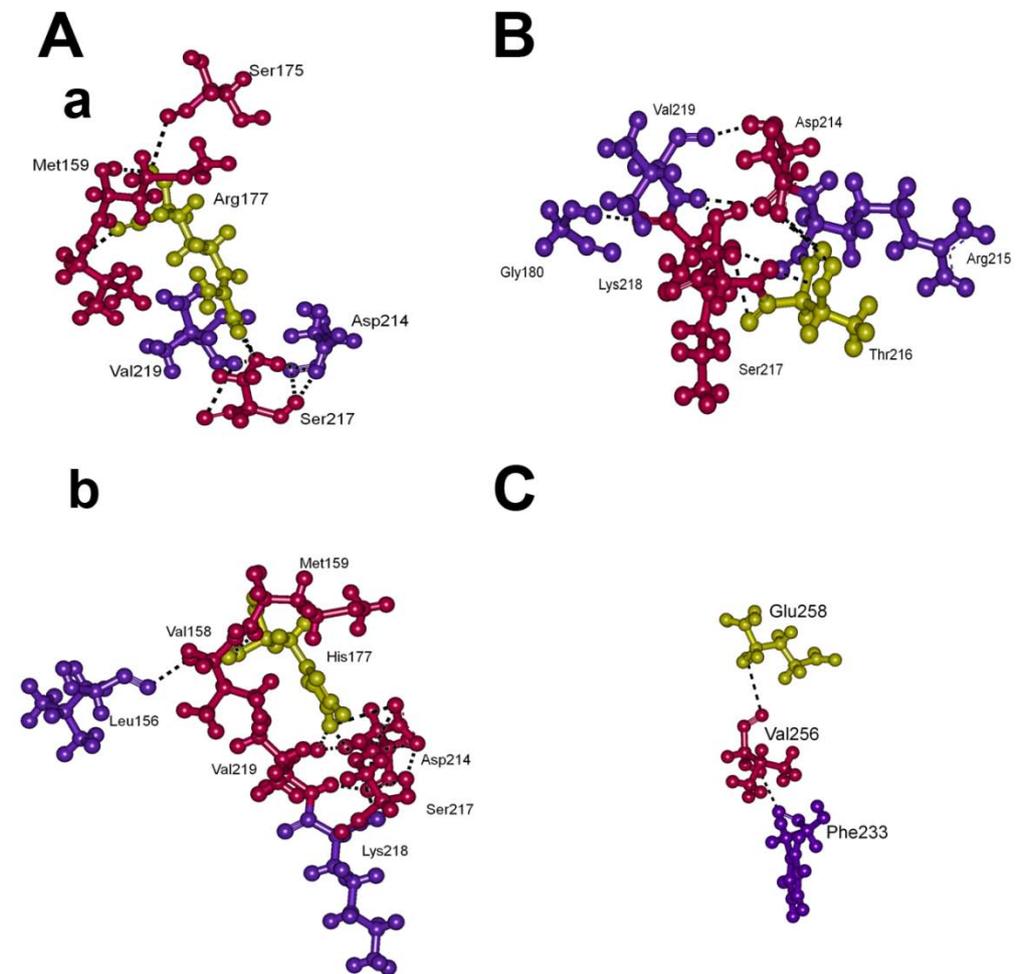


Figure5

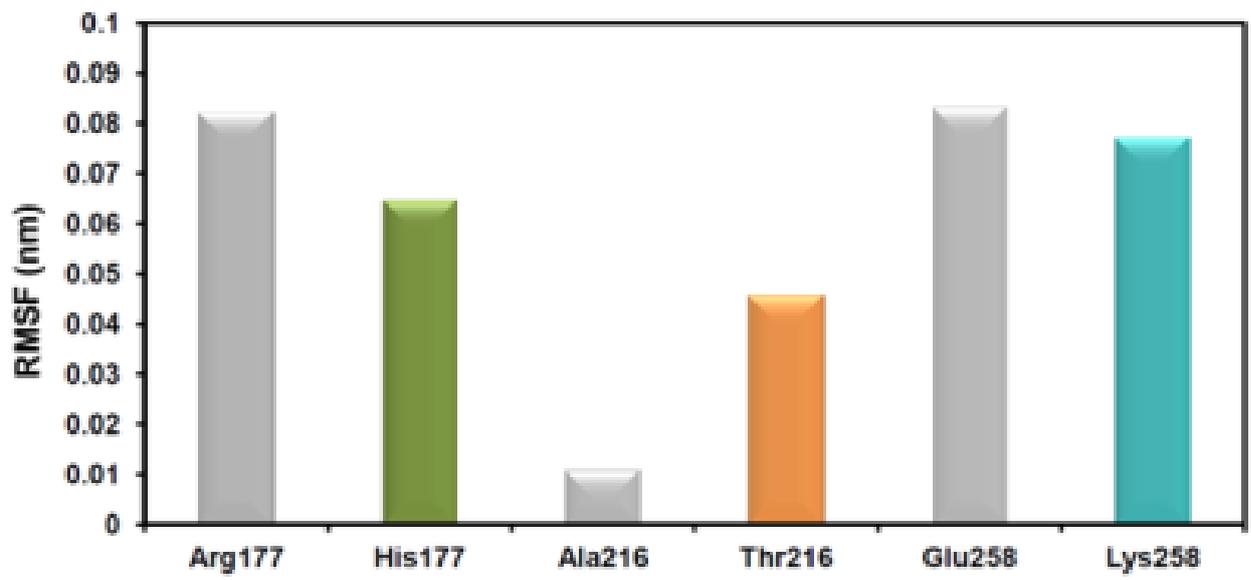


Figure6

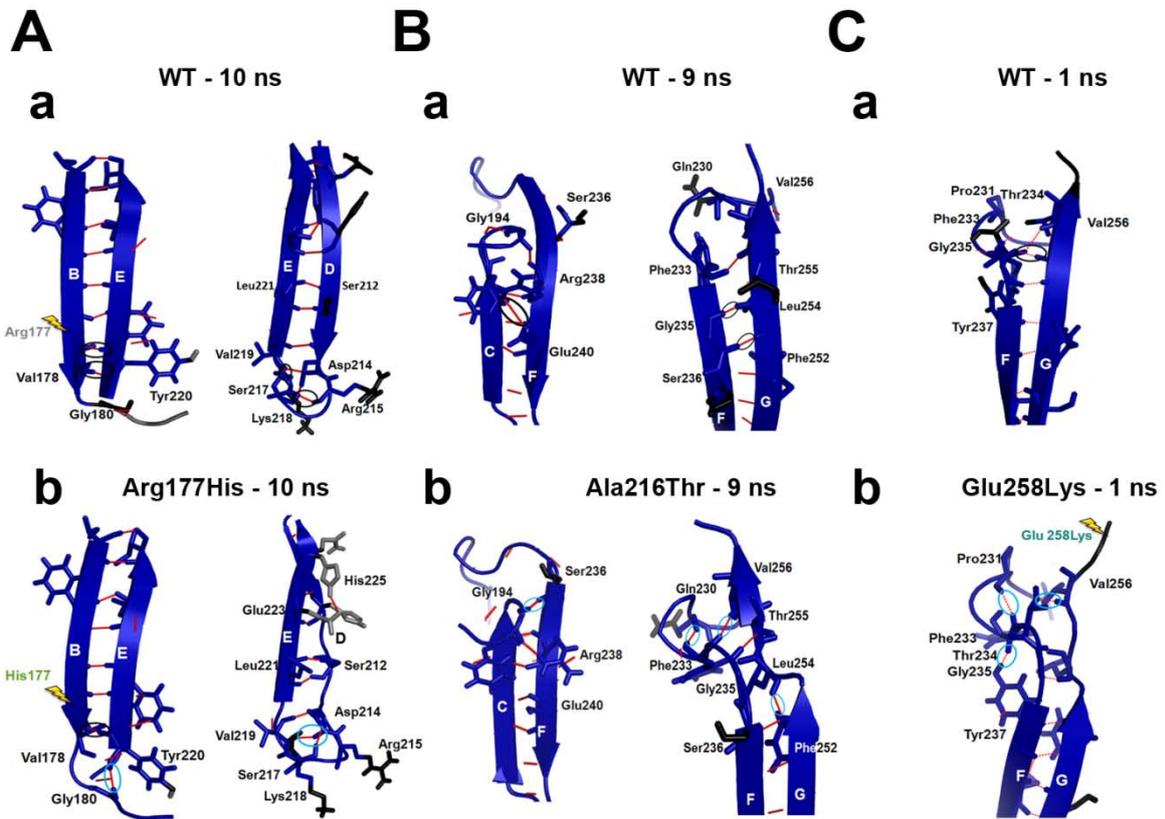


Figure7

