

Sep 13, 2022

## Structural basis for Nav1.7 inhibition by pore blockers

Jiangtao Zhang<sup>1,2\*</sup>, Yiqiang Shi<sup>3\*</sup>, Zhuo Huang<sup>3\*</sup>, Yue Li<sup>4,5</sup>, Bei Yang<sup>4</sup>, Jianke Gong<sup>2</sup>, Daohua Jiang<sup>1,5\*\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Laboratory of Soft Matter Physics, Institute of Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100190, China

<sup>2</sup> College of Life Science and Technology, Key Laboratory of Molecular Biophysics of MOE, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, Hubei, China

<sup>3</sup> State Key Laboratory of Natural and Biomimetic Drugs, Department of Molecular and Cellular Pharmacology, School of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Peking University Health Science Center, Beijing, 100191, China

<sup>4</sup> National Laboratory of Biomacromolecules, CAS Center for Excellence in Biomacromolecules, Institute of Biophysics, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100101, China

<sup>5</sup> University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100049, China

\* These authors contribute equally to this project.

\*\* Correspondence emails: jiangdh@iphy.ac.cn (D.J.)

## 30 Abstract

31 Voltage-gated sodium channel Nav1.7 plays essential roles in pain and odour  
32 perception. Nav1.7 variants cause pain disorders. Accordingly, Nav1.7 has elicited  
33 extensive attention in developing new analgesics. Here we present cryo-EM structures of  
34 human Nav1.7/ $\beta$ 1/ $\beta$ 2 complexed with inhibitors XEN907, TC-N1752 and Nav1.7-IN2,  
35 elucidating specific binding sites and modulation mechanism for the pore-blockers.  
36 These inhibitors bind in the central cavity blocking ion permeation, but engage different  
37 parts of the cavity wall. XEN907 directly causes  $\alpha$ - to  $\pi$ -helix transition of DIV-S6 helix,  
38 which tightens the fast inactivation gate. TC-N1752 induces  $\pi$ -helix transition of DII-S6  
39 helix mediated by a conserved asparagine on DIII-S6, which closes the activation gate.  
40 Nav1.7-IN2 serves as a pore blocker without causing conformational change.  
41 Electrophysiological results demonstrate that XEN907 and TC-N1752 stabilize Nav1.7 in  
42 inactivated state and delay the recovery from inactivation. Our results provide structural  
43 framework for Nav1.7 modulation by pore-blockers, and important implications for  
44 developing subtype-selective analgesics.

## Introduction

Voltage-gated sodium (Nav) channels play fundamental roles in generating and propagating action potentials in excitable cells<sup>1,2</sup>. In humans, nine highly related Nav channel isoforms (Nav1.1-1.9) are expressed with specific tissue patterns<sup>3</sup>. Among them, Nav1.7, encoded by *SCN9A*, is highly expressed in peripheral sensory neurons such as nociceptive and sympathetic neurons<sup>4</sup>, as well as in brain subcortical regions including the thalamus, medial amygdala and the axons of olfactory epithelium<sup>5,6</sup>. Gain-of-function mutations of Nav1.7 are linked to pain disorders such as erythromelalgia, paroxysmal extreme pain disorder, small fiber neuropathy and painful diabetic neuropathy<sup>7-11</sup>. Strikingly, loss-of-function mutations in Nav1.7 were reported to cause congenital insensitivity to pain and anosmia<sup>12-15</sup>. The growing evidence clearly demonstrates that Nav1.7 mediates the transmission of pain signals to the brain<sup>16,17</sup>. Consequently, Nav1.7 represents a new target for developing potentially non-addictive analgesics. Extensive efforts have been made in searching for Nav1.7 selective inhibitors by many programs, several candidate drugs have been undergoing clinical trials such as Funapide (TV-45070, XEN402), Vixotrigine (BIIB074), and PF-05089771<sup>18-20</sup>. However, most of them failed due to the lack of selectivity or weak efficacy<sup>21,22</sup>. Therefore, understanding the structural discriminations among Nav isoforms and the mechanism underlying the functional role of Nav1.7 in pain perception are critical to overcome current barriers.

Recent structural advances in mammalian Nav channels revealed the subunits assembly, activation and fast inactivation, gating mechanism, and modulation by natural toxins and synthetic antiarrhythmic drugs<sup>23-30</sup>. The Nav channel structures manifest highly conserved key structural elements such as voltage-sensor domain (VSD), central cavity and fast inactivation gate. However, the conserved N-terminus domain (NTD), which is essential for Nav channel functions<sup>31-34</sup>, its structure and how it regulates Nav channels remain unknown. Despite the high structural similarity, several aryl sulfonamide

antagonists were reported to potently and selectively inhibit Nav1.7 or Nav1.3 by binding to the VSD<sub>IV</sub><sup>35,36</sup>, retaining potential in finding Nav channel subtype-selective inhibitors. XEN907, a spirooxindole derivative closely related to Funapide (XEN402), showed potent inhibition of Nav1.7 at nanomolar concentration<sup>37</sup>. TC-N1752, a state-dependent Nav1.7 inhibitor, displayed analgesic efficacy in the formalin pain model<sup>38</sup>. Nav1.7-inhibitor2 (Nav1.7-IN2), an aryl carboxamide derivative developed as Nav1.7 inhibitor for pain treatment by Amgen Inc<sup>39</sup>. The detailed binding sites for these specifically developed Nav1.7 inhibitors and the molecular mechanisms underlying their modulation on Nav1.7 remain elusive.

In this study, we describe the structural basis for the modulation of human Nav1.7 by the three chemically different blockers. Our structures reveal that the large central cavity of Nav1.7 accommodates multiple drug binding sites. The pore-blocking inhibitors also induce local conformational rearrangements of the pore-lining S6 helices, thus alter the channel gating property. Our results provide mechanistic insights into the inhibition of Nav1.7 by small-molecule inhibitors, which should facilitate future structure-based drug design.

## Results

### Functional analysis of Nav1.7 and structure of the NTD

The electrophysiological characteristics of human wide-type (WT) Nav1.7 were validated by whole-cell voltage-clamp recording of the Nav1.7 transient transfected HEK293T cells. Nav1.7 generates rapid inward currents and quickly becomes inactivated in response to depolarizing pulses, yielding  $V_{1/2}$  values for the voltage-dependence of activation and steady-state fast inactivation at  $-20.7 \pm 0.7$  mV (n=13) and  $-76.6 \pm 0.9$  mV (n=14) (Extended Data Fig. 1a), respectively, which are consistent with previous report<sup>40</sup>. In order to define the detailed binding sites for the antagonists, we purified

human WT Nav1.7/ $\beta$ 1/ $\beta$ 2 complex sample in the presence of each antagonist individually (Extended Data Fig. 1b and c), and performed cryo-electron microscopy (cryo-EM) single-particle analysis of the purified channel complexes. The final reconstruction maps of the Nav1.7/ $\beta$ 1/ $\beta$ 2 complexed with XEN907 (designated as Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup>), TC-N1752 (designated as Nav1.7<sup>TCN</sup>) and Na1.7-IN2 (designated as Nav1.7<sup>IN2</sup>) were refined to 3.2, 3.1 and 3.1 Å, respectively (Extended Data Fig. 2). The high-quality density map allowed us to build accurate models for the protein and the antagonists (Extended Data Figs. 3 and 4). The overall structure of the pore-forming  $\alpha$ -subunit and the binding poses of  $\beta$ 1 and  $\beta$ 2 to the  $\alpha$ -subunit resemble previously reported Nav structures<sup>23,25,30</sup> (Extended Data Fig. 4a and b).

Interestingly, the density for the NTD of the Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup> map is surprisingly better than the other two structures or the reported mammalian Nav structures<sup>23-25,30</sup>, presumably because the map reconstruction of Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup> has better particle angular distribution than the other two maps (Extended Data Figs. 2b-d, 5a). With the assistance of AlphaFold2 model, a reliable NTD model was built for the Nav1.7 based on the EM density (Fig. 1a, Extended Data Fig. 5a-d). The NTD model (P7-R30 and P49-S113) is composed of two helices and two anti-parallel  $\beta$  sheets with loops connecting them (Fig. 1b, Extended Data Fig. 5d). The loop connecting domain I S2 helix (S2<sub>I</sub>) and S3<sub>I</sub>, which interacts with the loop between the NTD  $\beta$ 2 sheet and S0<sub>I</sub>, agrees well with the density of our Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup> map (Fig. 1c). However, it shows marked difference with previously reported Nav1.7 structure containing the E406K mutation<sup>30</sup> (Fig. 1c). The model differences are probably because the density for this region was not well-resolved in the previous EM maps of Nav channels. The NTD is located under the VSD<sub>I</sub> and forms extensive interactions with the VSD<sub>I</sub>. The S0<sub>I</sub> appears to be very hydrophobic, which closely engages the NTD via conserved hydrophobic interactions (Fig. 1d, Extended Data Fig. 5e). In addition, R116 on the S0<sub>I</sub> forms polar interactions with the main-chain carbonyl oxygen atoms of N101 and T103 (Fig. 1d). Deletion of the NTD of Nav1.5 was reported

to abolish the sodium current<sup>31</sup>, our structural observations suggest that removal of the NTD could cause destabilization of the VSD<sub>i</sub> which is known to be important for the Na<sub>v</sub> channels activation<sup>41</sup>. In line with this hypothesis, the dominant-negative effect (DNE) variant R121W of cardiac sodium channel Na<sub>v</sub>1.5 (equivalent to R116 in Na<sub>v</sub>1.7), which causes Brugada Syndrome (BrS), drastically reduces the peak current to undetectable level<sup>31,33</sup>. We also mapped twelve disease-associated mutations of Na<sub>v</sub> channels on the NTD of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 (Fig. 1b, Extended Data Fig. 5e), revealing the critical role of the NTD for Na<sub>v</sub> channel functions. For instance, R99 plays a critical role in stabilizing the hydrophobic core of the NTD, and its long side-chain forms electrostatic interactions with D77 and D79 at distances of 3.3 Å and 3.9 Å, respectively. The R99 also forms cation- $\pi$  interaction with Y92 at a distance of 3.1 Å. (Fig. 1b). The pathogenic mutations of R99W, R99H, D79G and Y82C were reported as loss-of-function variants, which may abolish these specific interactions and cause incorrect protein folding or reduced plasma membrane localization<sup>31,32,34,42</sup>.

### Nav1.7 modulation by XEN907

We found XEN907 preferentially inhibits Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 in inactivated-state. When holding the Na<sub>v</sub>1.7-expressing HEK239T cells at -120 mV to maintain the channels in resting-state, applying of 100 nM XEN907 only decreases peak current of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 by ~30% after 10 repetitive pulses to reach the steady-state inhibition; in contrast, 100 nM XEN907 drops peak current of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 over 80% when cells were held at -80 mV to drive the channel into inactivated-state (Extended Data Fig. 6a and b). The dose-dependent response curves show that the inactivated-state inhibition ( $IC_{50}=4.5 \pm 1.3$  nM,  $n=4-7$ ) of XEN907 is over 1000-fold more potent than that of the resting-state inhibition ( $IC_{50}=4.7 \pm 2.9$   $\mu$ M,  $n=4-5$ ) (Fig. 2a).

The cryo-EM structure of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7<sup>XEN</sup> revealed one XEN907 molecule bound in the central cavity (Fig. 2b-d, Extended Data Fig. 6e and f), which is located underneath the

selectivity filter (SF) closing to S6<sub>IV</sub> helix (Fig. 2c). The pentyl tail points to the D<sub>III</sub>-D<sub>IV</sub> fenestration (Fig. 2c and d); the benzodioxole lies in the middle of the cavity interacting with Q360, F391 and I394 (Fig. 2c); and the spirooxindole core is sandwiched by S1697 and F1748/V1752 (Fig. 2c). Importantly, the spirooxindole group of XEN907 also interacts with K1406 of the sodium selectivity determining DEKA locus<sup>43</sup>, preventing the exit of Na<sup>+</sup> from the SF (Fig. 2c). Compared to the reported Nav1.7 structure<sup>30</sup> (denoted as Nav1.7<sup>apo</sup>), one helical turn on S6<sub>IV</sub> of Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup> underwent  $\alpha$ - to  $\pi$ -helix transition upon XEN907 binding through direct interaction with V1752 (Fig. 2e, Extended Data Fig. 6g, Supplementary Video 1). Similar helical transitions on the pore-lining S6 helices were observed in Ca<sub>v</sub>1.1-diltiazem and Ca<sub>v</sub>3.1-Z944 structures<sup>44,45</sup>, indicating that the S6 helix is a prominent target for pore-blockers to modulate channel function. In addition, XEN907 interacts with F1748 on S6<sub>IV</sub> at a distance of 3.2 Å, the critical residue for local anesthetic or antiarrhythmic (LA) drugs binding<sup>25,26,29,46</sup>, suggesting that XEN907 partially occupies the binding site of LA drugs. However, no  $\pi$ -helix transition was observed upon LA drugs binding<sup>25,26,47</sup>. Superposition of the Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup> with the Nav1.7<sup>apo</sup> showed no obvious shift for the overall position of the S6<sub>IV</sub> helix, but all residues after V1752 on S6<sub>IV</sub> of Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup> underwent a spiral rotation of one-third helical turn (Fig. 2e, Extended Data Fig. 6g). Consequently, the D<sub>I</sub>-D<sub>IV</sub> fenestration is closed (Fig. 2d), and the intracellular activation gate of Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup> is slightly smaller than that of the Nav1.7<sup>apo</sup> as L1760 displacing I1759 (Fig. 2f, Extended Data Fig. 4c). Intriguingly, we noticed that the fast inactivation gate of Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup> became more hydrophobic as M1754 displacing the hydrophilic N1753, and the 'fast inactivation particle' Ile1742-Phe1743-Met1744 (IFM) motif slightly shifts upward (Fig. 2g). We therefore postulate that the XEN907 induced  $\pi$ -helix transition enhances the binding of IFM-motif to the hydrophobic receptor site, which further stabilizes the channel in the inactivated state. To validate this hypothesis, we assessed the changes of voltage-dependent fast inactivation and recovery from fast inactivation upon XEN907 binding. Although XEN907 does not affect the voltage

dependence of activation, the antagonist dramatically shifts the voltage-dependent fast inactivation to more hyperpolarized potential in a concentration-dependent manner (~11 mV with 100 nM XEN907) (Fig. 2h, Extended Data Fig. 6c and d). In addition, the recovery rate from fast inactivation was significantly slowed by over 3-fold upon XEN907 binding (Fig. 2i). To further verify the effect of XEN907 on delaying the fast inactivation, we sought to see if a N1753M mutation can delay the recovery from fast inactivation in the absence of XEN907, and a M1754N mutation can abolish the delay of recovery from fast inactivation in the presence of XEN907. Unfortunately, no currents can be evoked from either of the two mutants (Extended Data Fig. 6h). Nevertheless, these results confirmed that the XEN907 binding indeed stabilizes Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 in the inactivated state. Our Na<sub>v</sub>1.7<sup>XEN</sup> structure demonstrates that XEN907 not only blocks the ion conductance by binding in the central cavity, but also causes the  $\alpha$ - to  $\pi$ -helix transition on S6<sub>IV</sub> helix which tightens the fast inactivation gate to prevent gate opening.

#### Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 modulation by TC-N1752

We next examined the inhibitory effect of TC-N1752 on Na<sub>v</sub>1.7. Similar to XEN907, TC-N1752 potently inhibits Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 in the inactivated-state (Extended Data Fig. 7a and b). TC-N1752 displayed weak inhibition on Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 when holding at -120 mV (Fig. 3a, Extended Data Fig. 7b). By contrast, the antagonist exhibited strong inhibition of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 when holding at -80 mV (Fig. 3a, Extended Data Fig. 7b). The dose-dependent response curve yields IC<sub>50</sub> value of 199.5 ± 33.5 nM (n=3-8) for TC-N1752 using the inactivated-state protocol, whereas 10  $\mu$ M TC-N1752 only reduces ~30% of the peak current using the resting-state protocol (Fig. 3a). Meanwhile, we tested the potency of TC-N1752 in inhibiting human Na<sub>v</sub>1.5, the results showed that TC-N1752 can also potently inhibit Na<sub>v</sub>1.5 similar to Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 (Extended Data Fig. 7c-e), suggesting that TC-N1752 is a non-selective blocker for Na<sub>v</sub> channels.

In our 3.1 Å resolution cryo-EM map of Nav1.7<sup>TCN</sup>, a piece of unambiguous L-shaped density was observed inside the central cavity, which fits TC-N1752 molecule perfectly (Extended Data Fig. 7g and h). The TC-N1752 occupies large space of the central cavity and physically blocks the ion path (Fig. 3b-d). The antagonist is stabilized by multiple polar and non-polar interactions mainly from S6<sub>I</sub>, S6<sub>III</sub> and S6<sub>IV</sub> helices (Fig. 3c and e). The trifluoromethoxy-phenyl group forms  $\pi$ - $\pi$  stacking with the F1748 of the LA site and blocks the D<sub>III</sub>-D<sub>IV</sub> fenestration (Fig. 3c and d); the piperidiny ring is located right under the SF at a distance of ~5 Å; Q360 from D<sub>I</sub> P-loop engages both the piperidiny ring and the triazine ring by polar interactions with distances of 3.9 Å; a hydrogen-bond between the conserved N395 on S6<sub>I</sub> and the triazine ring reinforces the TC-N1752 binding; and the conserved N1450 on S6<sub>III</sub> forms another hydrogen-bond with the acetamide group further strengthening the binding (Fig. 3c). F391, L398, L964, L1449 and Y1755 also contribute to stabilize TC-N1752 through hydrophobic and van de Waals interactions. Accordingly, TC-N1752 induces marked local conformational rearrangements of the pore-lining S6 helices through these extensive interactions (Fig. 3e-g). Strikingly, despite little direct interaction with TC-N1752 was observed, S6<sub>II</sub> helix underwent an  $\alpha$ - to  $\pi$ -helix transition at the position of ~7 Å away from the phenyl ring of TC-N1752 (Fig. 3e and f, Extended Data Fig. 7i, Supplementary Video 2). A closer look at the binding site revealed that the  $\pi$ -helix transition of the S6<sub>II</sub> helix is mediated by the conserved N1450 on S6<sub>III</sub> (Fig. 3e). TC-N1752 shifts and rotates the side-chains of L1449 and N1450 toward the antagonist. The rotated N1450 forces F963 on S6<sub>II</sub> helix shifted upward about one-third helical turn, eventually one turn of  $\pi$ -helix was formed when the rotation reached G955 (Fig. 3e). In contrast to the XEN907 induced  $\pi$ -helix transition without overall helix shift (Fig. 2e), TC-N1752 indirectly caused  $\pi$ -helix transition shifts the S6<sub>II</sub> toward the activation gate axis up to 5 Å at the cytoplasmic end (Fig. 3f). The shift of the S6<sub>II</sub> helix not only shuts the D<sub>I</sub>-D<sub>II</sub> fenestration (Fig. 3d), but also closes the intracellular activation gate, which is almost completely sealed by the

constriction residues of A402, L968, I1457 and I1759 from S6<sub>I</sub>, S6<sub>II</sub>, S6<sub>III</sub> and S6<sub>IV</sub>, respectively (Fig. 2g, Supplementary Video 2). The resulting activation gate of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7<sup>TCN</sup> is significantly smaller than the gate of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7<sup>XEN</sup>, Na<sub>v</sub>1.7<sup>IN2</sup> and the reported mammalian Na<sub>v</sub> structures<sup>23-25,30</sup> (Extended Data Fig. 4c). These structural observations suggest that the Na<sub>v</sub>1.7<sup>TCN</sup> structure may represent a drug-induced new inactivated-state distinct from previous reports. Meanwhile, our electrophysiological data showed that the voltage-dependent fast inactivation of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 were dramatically shifted to hyperpolarized potential by ~14 mV in the presence of 10 μM TC-N1752 (Fig. 3h), supporting the structural observation that TC-N1752 binding stabilizes the channel in the inactivated-state. However, no effect on the voltage dependence of activation was observed with 10 μM TC-N1752 (Extended Data Fig. 7f). In addition, the recovery rate from fast inactivation were only slightly delayed in the presence of 10 μM TC-N1752 (Fig. 3i), which is in agreement with the nearly identical fast inactivation gate between the Na<sub>v</sub>1.7<sup>TCN</sup> and Na<sub>v</sub>1.7<sup>apo</sup>. Collectively, our Na<sub>v</sub>1.7<sup>TCN</sup> structure elucidated that TC-N1752 can potentially inhibit Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 by physical pore-blocking, and also alter the channel gating property via inducing structural rearrangements of the pore-lining S6 helices.

#### Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 inhibition by Na<sub>v</sub>1.7-IN2

Distinct from the state-dependent inhibition of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 by XEN907 and TC-N1752, Na<sub>v</sub>1.7-IN2 exhibits potent inhibition of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 in both resting-state (holding at -120 mV; IC<sub>50</sub>=12.6 ± 5.4 nM, n=4-6) and inactivated-state (holding at -80 mV; IC<sub>50</sub>=10.2 ± 4.4 nM, n=4-8) with almost the same affinity (Fig. 4a, Extended Data Fig. 8a and b). In addition, Na<sub>v</sub>1.7-IN2 displayed potent inhibition of human Na<sub>v</sub>1.5 with an IC<sub>50</sub> value of 13.6 ± 5.6 nM (n=4-8) (Extended Data Fig. 8c-e), suggesting that Na<sub>v</sub>1.7-IN2 is also a non-selective blocker.

The EM map of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7<sup>IN2</sup> revealed a strong U-shaped density for one Na<sub>v</sub>1.7-IN2 molecule lying in the middle of the central cavity (Fig. 4b-d, Extended Data Fig. 8g and

h). The Nav1.7-IN2 was stabilized in the cavity primarily by interactions from the P-loops and S6 helices. The fluoro-methylphenoxy group interacts with Q360, F391 and I394; the pyrimidine ring wedges between S1697 and F1748; and the benzamide engages F1405 (Fig. 4c). Notably, the carbonyl of the benzamide group closes to the K1406 of the SF at 4.2 Å (Fig. 4c). The Nav1.7-IN2 reclines in the cavity parallel to the membrane plane to perfectly block the ion permeation (Fig. 4d). Compared to the XEN907 and TC-N1752, Nav1.7-IN2 interacts loosely with the cavity wall of Nav1.7. Consequently, the EM density of Nav1.7-IN2 is slightly weaker than that of XEN907 and TC-N1752. And importantly, compared to the Nav1.7<sup>apo</sup>, no obvious conformational change of the Nav1.7<sup>IN2</sup> structure was observed upon Nav1.7-IN2 binding. The S6 helices and the activation gate is nearly identical as the Nav1.7<sup>apo</sup> (Fig. 4e). In agreement with the structural observation, our electrophysiological data showed that Nav1.7-IN2 causes negligible effect on either the voltage-dependent activation, fast inactivation or recovery from fast inactivation (Fig. 4f, Extended Data Fig. 8f). These results suggest that Nav1.7-IN2 may serve as a pure pore-blocker, the fenestrations could be the main access for the antagonist to block the channel (Fig. 4d).

#### Weak selectivity for binding sites in the central cavity

Site-2 neurotoxins, local anesthetic and anti-arrhythmic drugs are known to bind in the central cavity of Nav channels to modulate Nav channel functions with little subtype selectivity<sup>48,49</sup>. Cryo-EM structures of the cardiac sodium channel Nav1.5 bound anti-arrhythmic drugs Flecainide, Quinidine and Propafenone revealed that the canonical LA site is located in the central cavity close to the conserved F1762 on the S6<sub>IV</sub> helix<sup>25,26,29</sup>. The site-2 neurotoxin binding site was recently disclosed from the cryo-EM structure of human Nav1.3-Bulleyaconitine A complex, which is also located in the central cavity but distinct from the canonical LA-drug site<sup>50</sup>. Superposition of the LA-drug bound Nav1.5 structures with our antagonist bound Nav1.7 structures revealed that the binding sites share common key interactions (Fig. 5a-c). All of the six pore-blockers interact with the

conserved Phe of the LA site on S6<sub>IV</sub>, meanwhile, five blockers interact with the Q360-F391-I394 cluster from PM<sub>I</sub> except Flecainide (Fig. 5d-f, Extended Data Fig. 9). These observations suggest that the LA site and the Q360-F392-I394 cluster are the hot-spots for pore-blockers binding to the Na<sub>v</sub> channels. However, sequence alignment of pore helices of the nine Na<sub>v</sub> isoforms illustrates that the LA site and Q360-F391 of the cluster are identical, I394 of the cluster is highly conserved with a Val substitution in some isoforms (Extended Data Fig. 9). Furthermore, we labelled all residues interacting with the six blockers within 5 Å, which are all highly conserved (Extended Data Fig. 9). These observations demonstrate that the binding sites in the central cavity of the nine Na<sub>v</sub> channels are indistinguishable, elucidating the difficulty in developing isoform-selective candidate drugs targeting the central cavity. To achieve the subtype selectivity for potential drugs targeting the pore, the accessibility, use- and state-dependent properties of the candidate drugs should be verified.

## Discussion

Chronic pain is an extremely common disease that affects ~20% people of general population. Given the shortage of effective and non-addictive analgesics, new anti-pain drugs are eagerly awaited. Sodium channel Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 plays an essential role in the transmission of pain signals to the brain<sup>12,16,17</sup>, thus represents an attractive target for anti-pain therapeutics. However, Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 is a very challenging target for developing selective candidate drugs, partially owing to the high sequence similarity within the nine Na<sub>v</sub> isoforms. In this study, we presented cryo-EM structures of human Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 in complexes with three pore-blocking antagonists. All three antagonists directly block the ion path. Strikingly, the binding of XEN907 and TC-N1752 also induces substantial local conformational changes in the pore-lining S6 helices that further alter the channel gating. Structural comparison between our antagonist bound Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 and the anti-arrhythmic drugs bound Na<sub>v</sub>1.5 structures revealed the hot-spots for drug binding inside the central

cavity. In addition, these common binding sites are strictly conserved among Nav isoforms, making the central cavity almost impossible for binding isoform-selective drugs. However, there are also significant differences between the antagonists reported here and the previously reported LA drugs. The three pore-blockers are more potent in inhibiting Nav1.7 with a factor of >100-fold than that of LA-drugs. In addition, no obvious conformational change of the pore-lining S6 helix was observed upon Flecainide, Quinidine or Propafenone binding, whereas XEN907 and TC-N1752 induce the  $\alpha$ - to  $\pi$ -helix transition of S6<sub>IV</sub> and S6<sub>II</sub>, respectively. The structural observations and the electrophysiological data suggest that XEN907 and TC-N1752 stabilize Nav1.7 in the inactivated-state, while Nav1.7-IN2 acts as a pure pore-blocker without altering channel gating. The use- and state-dependent inhibition of local anesthetic and anti-arrhythmic drugs are important for the drugs to preferentially block Nav channels in favorable states<sup>48,51</sup>, conferring a type of functional selectivity of the drugs despite binding to the non-selective receptor sites. Optimization of the potent and state-dependent antagonists XEN907 and TC-N1752 could possibly generate better potential analgesics targeting Nav1.7. On the other hand, future effort on searching for Nav1.7 selective inhibitors should focus on the relative variable regions of the Nav isoforms, such as the VSDs. Taken together, our structures provide detailed mechanistic insights into the pore-blocking and modulation of Nav1.7 by three antagonists, and we hope that our results provided implications that could facilitate the development of new analgesics for pain treatment.

## Acknowledgements

We thank X. Huang, B. Zhu, X. Li, L. Chen, and other staff members at the Center for Biological Imaging (CBI), Core Facilities for Protein Science at the Institute of Biophysics, Chinese Academy of Science (IBP, CAS), and D. Sun at the SM10 Cryo-EM Facility at the Institute of Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences (IOP, CAS) for the

support in cryo-EM data collection. We thank Prof. Xuejun Cai Zhang and Prof. Yan Zhao for their helpful discussions, Xiaoli Cui, Yanli Dong, Zhuoya Yu, Yan Wu and Wei Fan for their research assistant service. This work is funded by Institute of Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences (E0VK101 and E2V4101 to D.J.), the National Natural Science Foundation of China (32271272 to D.J., 31871083 and 82271498 to Z.H., 82071851 to J.G.), the Chinese Academy of Sciences Strategic Priority Research Program (31871083 and 81371432 to Z.H.), and the Chinese National Programs for Brain Science and Brain-like intelligence technology (2021ZD0202102 to Z.H.), and the program for HUST Academic Frontier Youth Team (5001170068 to J.G.).

### Contributions

D.J. designed the experiments. J.Z. and Y.L. and B.Y. prepared sample for cryo-EM study and made all the constructs. J.Z. and D.J. collected cryo-EM data. D.J. processed the data, built and refined the models. J.Z. and Y.S. prepared figures. Y.S. and Z.H. collected the electrophysiology data. J.G., Z.H., and D.J. analyzed and interpreted the results. J.Z., Y.S. and D.J. wrote the paper, and all authors reviewed and revised the paper.

### Competing interests

All authors declare no competing interests.

**Table 1. Cryo-EM data collection, refinement and validation statistics**

|                                                     | Nav1.7/ $\beta$ 1/ $\beta$ 2-XEN<br>(EMD-33292)<br>(PDB: 7XM9) | Nav1.7/ $\beta$ 1/ $\beta$ 2-TCN<br>(EMDB-33295)<br>(PDB: 7XMF) | Nav1.7/ $\beta$ 1/ $\beta$ 2-IN2<br>(EMDB-33296)<br>(PDB: 7XMG) |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Data collection and processing</b>               |                                                                |                                                                 |                                                                 |
| Magnification                                       | 105,000 ×                                                      | 105,000 ×                                                       | 105,000 ×                                                       |
| Voltage (kV)                                        | 300                                                            | 300                                                             | 300                                                             |
| Electron exposure (e <sup>-</sup> /Å <sup>2</sup> ) | 60                                                             | 60                                                              | 600                                                             |
| Defocus range (μm)                                  | -1.2 ~ -2.2                                                    | -1.2 ~ -2.2                                                     | -1.2 ~ -2.2                                                     |
| Pixel size (Å)                                      | 1.04                                                           | 1.04                                                            | 1.04                                                            |

|                                                  |                  |                  |                  |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Symmetry imposed                                 | C1               | C1               | C1               |
| Initial particle images (no.)                    | 1,217,568        | 1,216,370        | 1,849,983        |
| Final particle images (no.)                      | 213,507          | 158,142          | 206,251          |
| Map resolution (Å)                               | 3.22             | 3.09             | 3.07             |
| FSC threshold                                    | 0.143            | 0.143            | 0.143            |
| Map resolution range (Å)                         | 3.0 ~ 5.0        | 3.0 ~ 5.0        | 3.0 ~ 5.0        |
| <b>Refinement</b>                                |                  |                  |                  |
| Initial model used (PDB code)                    | 6J8J, AlphaFold2 | Nav1.7/β1/β2-XEN | Nav1.7/β1/β2-XEN |
| Model resolution (Å)                             | 3.39             | 3.40             | 3.20             |
| FSC threshold                                    | 0.5              | 0.5              | 0.5              |
| Map sharpening <i>B</i> factor (Å <sup>2</sup> ) | -115.4           | -86.5            | -111.0           |
| Model composition                                |                  |                  |                  |
| Non-hydrogen atoms                               | 12,472           | 11,772           | 11,762           |
| Protein residues                                 | 1,523            | 1,433            | 1,431            |
| Ligands                                          | 12               | 12               | 12               |
| <i>B</i> factors (Å <sup>2</sup> )               |                  |                  |                  |
| Protein                                          | 87.2             | 70.1             | 71.8             |
| Ligand                                           | 105.6            | 89.4             | 88.5             |
| R.m.s. deviations                                |                  |                  |                  |
| Bond lengths (Å)                                 | 0.003            | 0.005            | 0.004            |
| Bond angles (°)                                  | 0.604            | 0.700            | 0.741            |
| Validation                                       |                  |                  |                  |
| MolProbity score                                 | 2.41             | 2.62             | 2.87             |
| Clashscore                                       | 10.0             | 11.6             | 13.9             |
| Ramachandran plot                                |                  |                  |                  |
| Favored (%)                                      | 94.70            | 93.60            | 92.32            |
| Allowed (%)                                      | 5.17             | 6.26             | 7.54             |
| Disallowed (%)                                   | 0.13             | 0.14             | 0.14             |

352

## 353 Figure Legends

354

### 355 Figure 1. The NTD structure of Nav1.7

356 **a**, The NTD structure located under the VSD<sub>I</sub> of Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup>. Superposition of Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup> and  
357 Nav1.7<sup>apo</sup> (PDB code: 6j8j, colored in wheat). Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup> is shown in cartoon colored in blue  
358 (NTD), cyan (D<sub>I</sub>), light red (D<sub>II</sub>), light green (D<sub>III</sub>), pink (D<sub>III</sub>-D<sub>IV</sub> linker) and light blue (D<sub>IV</sub>),  
359 respectively. The same color scheme is used throughout the manuscript unless specified.  
360 The β subunits were omitted for clarity. **b**, The structure of the NTD. The locations of twelve  
361 disease-related mutations shown side chains in sticks. Loss- and gain-of-function mutations  
362 are highlighted in red and green, respectively. **c**, EM density for the loop between S2<sub>I</sub> and S3<sub>I</sub>  
363 of Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup>. Residues with good density are shown side chains in sticks. **d**, Interactions

between S0<sub>I</sub> and the NTD. The side chains of key interacting residues are shown in sticks. Red dashed lines represent hydrogen bonds.

## Figure 2. Structural basis for Nav1.7 modulation by XEN907

**a**, The chemical structure and state-dependent inhibition of XEN907. Dose-dependent response curve of XEN907 holding at -120 mV (blue) and -80 mV (red), respectively. Data are mean  $\pm$  s.e.m. The n values of tested concentrations of 0.01 nM, 0.1 nM, 1 nM, 10 nM, 100 nM for holding at -80 mV are 5, 7, 4, 5, 5; the n values of tested concentrations of 1 nM, 10 nM, 100 nM, 1  $\mu$ M, 10  $\mu$ M for holding at -120 mV are 4, 5, 4, 4, 4, respectively. **b**, XEN907 binding site in Nav1.7. The black dashed square indicates the area displayed in panel (c). The  $\beta$  subunits were omitted for clarity. **c**, Detailed binding site for XEN907. The side chains of key residues and XEN907 are shown in sticks. **d**, Cut-open sliced top-down view of Nav1.7 pore module. XEN907 is depicted in spheres. **e**, XEN907 binding induces  $\alpha$ - to  $\pi$ -helix transition in S6<sub>IV</sub>. Compared to Nav1.7<sup>apo</sup> (PDB code: 6j8j, colored in white), one helical turn of  $\pi$ -helix (colored in red) was formed upon XEN907 binding. Pink arrows indicate residue rotations. **f**, Gate comparison of Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup> and Nav1.7<sup>apo</sup>. **g**, Fast inactivation gate comparison of Nav1.7<sup>XEN</sup> and Nav1.7<sup>apo</sup>. **h**, The effect of 100 nM XEN907 on the voltage-dependence of fast inactivation. Data are mean  $\pm$  s.e.m. The n values for control (black) and XEN907 (red) are 9 and 12 respectively. **i**, XEN907 binding slows recovery from fast inactivation. Data are mean  $\pm$  s.e.m. The n values for control (black) and XEN907 (red) are 12 and 9 respectively. Source data are provided.

## Figure 3. Structural basis for Nav1.7 modulation by TC-N1752

**a**, The chemical structure and state-dependent inhibition of TC-N1752. Dose-dependent response curve of TC-N1752 holding at -120 mV (blue) and -80 mV (red), respectively. Data are mean  $\pm$  s.e.m. The n values of tested concentrations of 0.01  $\mu$ M, 0.03  $\mu$ M, 0.1  $\mu$ M, 0.3  $\mu$ M, 1  $\mu$ M, 10  $\mu$ M for holding at -80 mV are 6, 8, 8, 5, 5, 3; and for holding at -120 mV are 6, 4, 4, 4, 5, 6, respectively. **b**, TC-N1752 binding site in Nav1.7. The black dashed square indicates the area displayed in panel (c). The  $\beta$  subunits were omitted for clarity. **c**, Detailed binding site for TC-N1752. The side chains of key residues and TC-N1752 are shown in sticks. Red dashed lines represent polar interactions. **d**, Cut-open sliced top-down view of Nav1.7 pore module. TC-N1752 is depicted in spheres. **e**, N1450 mediates the  $\alpha$ - to  $\pi$ -helix transition of S6<sub>II</sub>. Compared to Nav1.7<sup>apo</sup> (PDB code: 6j8j, colored in white), a  $\pi$ -helix turn of Gly<sub>955</sub>-Asn<sub>961</sub> (colored in blue) was formed upon TC-N1752 binding. Pink arrows indicate the residue rotations. **f**, The S6<sub>II</sub> underwent conformational shift upon TC-N1752 binding compared to Nav1.7<sup>apo</sup>. **g**, Gate comparison of the Nav1.7<sup>TCN</sup> and Nav1.7<sup>apo</sup>. Leu968 shifts toward the gate center and seals the gate. **h**, TC-N1752 shifts the voltage-dependence of fast inactivation

toward hyperpolarized potential. Data are mean  $\pm$  s.e.m. The n values for control (black) and TC-N1752 (red) are 10 and 8 respectively. **i**, The effect of 10  $\mu$ M TC-N1752 on the recovery from fast inactivation. Data are mean  $\pm$  s.e.m. of n=5-10. The n values for control (black) and TC-N1752 (red) are 10 and 5 respectively. Source data are provided.

#### Figure 4. Structural basis for pore-blocking of Nav1.7 by Nav1.7-IN2

**a**, The chemical structure and state-independent inhibition of Nav1.7-IN2. Dose-dependent response curve of Nav1.7-IN2 holding at -120 mV (blue) and -80 mV (red), respectively. Data are mean  $\pm$  s.e.m. The n values of tested concentrations of 0.01 nM, 0.1 nM, 1 nM, 10 nM, 100 nM, 1  $\mu$ M for holding at -80 mV are 4, 6, 6, 8, 6, 4; and for holding at -120 mV are 4, 4, 6, 4, 4, 5, respectively. **b**, Nav1.7-IN2 binding site in Nav1.7. The complex structure is shown in side view with Nav1.7-IN2 depicted in spheres. The black dashed square indicates the area to be displayed in panels (c). The  $\beta$  subunits were omitted for clarity. **c**, Detailed binding site for Nav1.7-IN2. The side chains of key residues and Nav1.7-IN2 are shown in sticks. Red dashed line represents polar interaction. **d**, Cut-open sliced top-down view of Nav1.7 pore module. Nav1.7-IN2 is depicted in spheres. **e**, Gate comparison between Nav1.7<sup>IN2</sup> and Nav1.7<sup>apo</sup>. Key residues at the gate constriction site shown side chains in sticks. **f**, The effect of 100 nM Nav1.7-IN2 on the voltage-dependence of activation and fast inactivation. Data are mean  $\pm$  s.e.m. The n values for control (black) activation and inactivation are 10 and 8 respectively. The n values for TC-N1752 (red) are 7. Source data are provided.

#### Figure 5. Drug binding sites in the central cavity of Nav channels

**a-c**, Superposition of the inhibitors bound in the central cavity of Nav channel viewed from side (a), top-down (b), and bottom (c). XEN907, TC-N1752, Nav1.7-IN2, Quinidine, Propafenone and Flecainide are shown in sticks and colored in gold, blue, pink, green, brown and purple, respectively. The surface of the binding spot of LA site for F1748 (green) and the Q360(purple)-F391(cyan)-I394(brown) cluster are highlighted. **d-f**, Close-up views of the drug binding site from panel (a-c). Side chains of the F1748 and the Q360-F391-I394 cluster are shown in sticks.

#### References

- 1 Catterall, W. A., Wisedchaisri, G. & Zheng, N. The chemical basis for electrical signaling. *Nat. Chem. Biol.* **13**, 455-463 (2017).
- 2 Hille, B. *Ionic channels in excitable membranes*. 3rd Edn (OUP USA, 2001).

435 3 Catterall, W. A., Goldin, A. L. & Waxman, S. G. Nomenclature and structure-  
 436 function relationships of voltage-gated sodium channels. *Pharmacol. Rev.* **57**,  
 437 397-409 (2005).  
 438 4 Toledo-Aral, J. J. *et al.* Identification of PNI, a predominant voltage-  
 439 dependent sodium channel expressed principally in peripheral neurons. *Proc.*  
 440 *Natl. Acad. Sci. U S A* **94**, 1527-1532 (1997).  
 441 5 Kanellopoulos, A. H. *et al.* Mapping protein interactions of sodium channel  
 442 Nav1.7 using epitope-tagged gene-targeted mice. *EMBO J.* **37**, 427-445 (2018).  
 443 6 Branco, T. *et al.* Near-Perfect Synaptic Integration by Nav1.7 in Hypothalamic  
 444 Neurons Regulates Body Weight. *Cell* **165**, 1749-1761 (2016).  
 445 7 Yang, Y. *et al.* Mutations in SCN9A, encoding a sodium channel alpha subunit, in  
 446 patients with primary erythralgia. *J. Med. Genet.* **41**, 171-174 (2004).  
 447 8 Dib-Hajj, S. D. *et al.* Gain-of-function mutation in Nav1.7 in familial  
 448 erythromelalgia induces bursting of sensory neurons. *Brain* **128**, 1847-1854  
 449 (2005).  
 450 9 Fertleman, C. R. *et al.* SCN9A mutations in paroxysmal extreme pain disorder:  
 451 allelic variants underlie distinct channel defects and phenotypes. *Neuron* **52**,  
 452 767-774 (2006).  
 453 10 Faber, C. G. *et al.* Gain of function Nav1.7 mutations in idiopathic small fiber  
 454 neuropathy. *Ann. Neurol.* **71**, 26-39 (2012).  
 455 11 Blesneac, I. *et al.* Rare Nav1.7 variants associated with painful diabetic  
 456 peripheral neuropathy. *Pain* **159**, 469-480 (2018).  
 457 12 Cox, J. J. *et al.* An SCN9A channelopathy causes congenital inability to  
 458 experience pain. *Nature* **444**, 894-898 (2006).  
 459 13 Nilsen, K. B. *et al.* Two novel SCN9A mutations causing insensitivity to pain.  
 460 *Pain* **143**, 155-158 (2009).  
 461 14 Cox, J. J. *et al.* Congenital insensitivity to pain: novel SCN9A missense and  
 462 in-frame deletion mutations. *Hum. Mutat.* **31**, E1670-1686 (2010).  
 463 15 Weiss, J. *et al.* Loss-of-function mutations in sodium channel Nav1.7 cause  
 464 anosmia. *Nature* **472**, 186-190 (2011).  
 465 16 Bennett, D. L., Clark, A. J., Huang, J., Waxman, S. G. & Dib-Hajj, S. D. The  
 466 Role of Voltage-Gated Sodium Channels in Pain Signaling. *Physiol. Rev.* **99**,  
 467 1079-1151 (2019).  
 468 17 Dib-Hajj, S. D. & Waxman, S. G. Sodium Channels in Human Pain Disorders:  
 469 Genetics and Pharmacogenomics. *Annu. Rev. Neurosci.* **42**, 87-106 (2019).  
 470 18 Alsouloum, M., Higerd, G. P., Effraim, P. R. & Waxman, S. G. Status of  
 471 peripheral sodium channel blockers for non-addictive pain treatment. *Nat. Rev.*  
 472 *Neurol.* **16**, 689-705 (2020).  
 473 19 Zakrzewska, J. M. *et al.* Safety and efficacy of a Nav1.7 selective sodium  
 474 channel blocker in patients with trigeminal neuralgia: a double-blind, placebo-

475 controlled, randomised withdrawal phase 2a trial. *Lancet Neurol.* **16**, 291–300  
 476 (2017).  
 477 20 Cao, L. *et al.* Pharmacological reversal of a pain phenotype in iPSC-derived  
 478 sensory neurons and patients with inherited erythromelalgia. *Sci. Transl. Med.*  
 479 **8**, 335ra356 (2016).  
 480 21 Kingwell, K. Nav1.7 withholds its pain potential. *Nat. Rev. Drug Discov.*  
 481 (2019).  
 482 22 Deuis, J. R. *et al.* Analgesic Effects of GpTx-1, PF-04856264 and CNV1014802 in  
 483 a Mouse Model of Nav1.7-Mediated Pain. *Toxins (Basel)* **8** (2016).  
 484 23 Pan, X. *et al.* Structure of the human voltage-gated sodium channel Nav1.4 in  
 485 complex with  $\beta 1$ . *Science* **362** (2018).  
 486 24 Pan, X. *et al.* Molecular basis for pore blockade of human  $\text{Na}^+$  channel Nav1.2  
 487 by the  $\mu$ -conotoxin KIIIA. *Science* **363**, 1309–1313 (2019).  
 488 25 Jiang, D. *et al.* Structure of the Cardiac Sodium Channel. *Cell* **180**, 122–  
 489 134.e110 (2020).  
 490 26 Jiang, D. *et al.* Open-state structure and pore gating mechanism of the cardiac  
 491 sodium channel. *Cell* **184** (2021).  
 492 27 Clairfeuille, T. *et al.* Structural basis of  $\alpha$ -scorpion toxin action on Nav  
 493 channels. *Science* **363** (2019).  
 494 28 Jiang, D. *et al.* Structural basis for voltage-sensor trapping of the cardiac  
 495 sodium channel by a deathstalker scorpion toxin. *Nat. Commun.* **12**, 128 (2021).  
 496 29 Li, Z. *et al.* Structural Basis for Pore Blockade of the Human Cardiac Sodium  
 497 Channel Nav1.5 by the Antiarrhythmic Drug Quinidine. *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.*  
 498 *Engl.* **60** (2021).  
 499 30 Shen, H., Liu, D., Wu, K., Lei, J. & Yan, N. Structures of human Nav1.7 channel  
 500 in complex with auxiliary subunits and animal toxins. *Science* **363**, 1303–1308  
 501 (2019).  
 502 31 Clatot, J. *et al.* Dominant-negative effect of SCN5A N-terminal mutations  
 503 through the interaction of Nav1.5  $\alpha$ -subunits. *Cardiovasc. Res.* **96**, 53–63  
 504 (2012).  
 505 32 Wang, Z. *et al.* Calmodulin binds to the N-terminal domain of the cardiac sodium  
 506 channel Nav1.5. *Channels (Austin)* **14**, 268–286 (2020).  
 507 33 Holst, A. G. *et al.* Sick sinus syndrome, progressive cardiac conduction  
 508 disease, atrial flutter and ventricular tachycardia caused by a novel SCN5A  
 509 mutation. *Cardiology* **115**, 311–316 (2010).  
 510 34 Ben-Shalom, R. *et al.* Opposing Effects on Nav1.2 Function Underlie Differences  
 511 Between SCN2A Variants Observed in Individuals With Autism Spectrum Disorder  
 512 or Infantile Seizures. *Biol. Psychiatry* **82**, 224–232 (2017).  
 513 35 McCormack, K. *et al.* Voltage sensor interaction site for selective small  
 514 molecule inhibitors of voltage-gated sodium channels. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U*  
 515 *S A* **110**, E2724–2732 (2013).

516 36 Ahuja, S. *et al.* Structural basis of Nav1.7 inhibition by an isoform-selective  
 517 small-molecule antagonist. *Science* **350**, aac5464 (2015).  
 518 37 Chowdhury, S. *et al.* Discovery of XEN907, a spirooxindole blocker of Nav1.7 for  
 519 the treatment of pain. *Bioorg. Med. Chem. Lett.* **21**, 3676–3681 (2011).  
 520 38 Bregman, H. *et al.* Identification of a potent, state-dependent inhibitor of  
 521 Nav1.7 with oral efficacy in the formalin model of persistent pain. *J. Med.*  
 522 *Chem.* **54**, 4427–4445 (2011).  
 523 39 Bregman, H. *et al.* Preparation of aryl carboxamide derivatives as sodium  
 524 channel inhibitors for treatment of pain. doi:W0 2011103196 A1 (2011).  
 525 40 Cummins, T. R., Dib-Hajj, S. D. & Waxman, S. G. Electrophysiological properties  
 526 of mutant Nav1.7 sodium channels in a painful inherited neuropathy. *J.*  
 527 *Neurosci.* **24**, 8232–8236 (2004).  
 528 41 Chanda, B. & Bezanilla, F. Tracking voltage-dependent conformational changes in  
 529 skeletal muscle sodium channel during activation. *J. Gen. Physiol.* **120**, 629–645  
 530 (2002).  
 531 42 Sun, J. *et al.* Novel *SCN9A* missense mutations contribute to congenital  
 532 insensitivity to pain: Unexpected correlation between electrophysiological  
 533 characterization and clinical phenotype. *Mol. Pain* **16**, 1744806920923881 (2020).  
 534 43 Favre, I., Moczydlowski, E. & Schild, L. On the structural basis for ionic  
 535 selectivity among Na<sup>+</sup>, K<sup>+</sup>, and Ca<sup>2+</sup> in the voltage-gated sodium channel. *Biophys.*  
 536 *J.* **71**, 3110–3125 (1996).  
 537 44 Zhao, Y. *et al.* Molecular Basis for Ligand Modulation of a Mammalian Voltage-  
 538 Gated Ca<sup>2+</sup> channel. *Cell* **177**, 1495–1506.e1412 (2019).  
 539 45 Zhao, Y. *et al.* Cryo-EM structures of apo and antagonist-bound human Cav3.1.  
 540 *Nature* **576**, 492–497 (2019).  
 541 46 Ragsdale, D. S., McPhee, J. C., Scheuer, T. & Catterall, W. A. Common molecular  
 542 determinants of local anesthetic, antiarrhythmic, and anticonvulsant block of  
 543 voltage-gated Na<sup>+</sup> channels. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U S A* **93**, 9270–9275 (1996).  
 544 47 Li, Z. *et al.* Structural Basis for Pore Blockade of the Human Cardiac Sodium  
 545 Channel Nav1.5 by the Antiarrhythmic Drug Quinidine. *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.*  
 546 *Engl.* **60**, 11474–11480 (2021).  
 547 48 Catterall, W. A., Lenaus, M. J. & Gamal El-Din, T. M. Structure and  
 548 Pharmacology of Voltage-Gated Sodium and Calcium Channels. *Annu. Rev.*  
 549 *Pharmacol. Toxicol.* **60**, 133–154 (2020).  
 550 49 Catterall, W. A. *et al.* Voltage-gated ion channels and gating modifier toxins.  
 551 *Toxicon* **49** (2007).  
 552 50 Li, X. *et al.* Structural basis for modulation of human Nav1.3 by clinical drug  
 553 and selective antagonist. *Nat Commun* **13**, 1286 (2022).  
 554 51 Noreng, S., Li, T. & Payandeh, J. Structural Pharmacology of Voltage-Gated  
 555 Sodium Channels. *J. Mol. Biol.* **433**, 166967 (2021).  
 556

## Methods

### Whole-cell Voltage-clamp recordings of Nav1.3 in HEK 293T Cells

HEK293T cells were cultured with Dulbecco's Modified Eagle Medium (DMEM) (GIBCO, USA) supplemented with 15% (v/v) fetal bovine serum (FBS) (PAN-Biotech, Germany) at 37°C with 5% CO<sub>2</sub>. The cells were seeded in culture dishes (d = 3.5 cm) (Thermo Fisher Scientific, USA) for 24 h, then each dish was transiently transfected with 1 µg plasmids of human Nav<sub>v</sub>1.7 using 1 µg Lipofectamine 2000 Reagent (Thermo Fisher Scientific, USA). Whole-cell voltage-clamp recordings were carried out similarly to our previous study<sup>52</sup>. In brief, transfected cells were placed on a glass chamber with extracellular solution containing 140 mM NaCl, 3 mM KCl, 10 mM HEPES, 10 mM D-Glucose, 1 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 1 mM CaCl<sub>2</sub>, (pH = 7.3, adjusted with NaOH; osmolarity of ~310 mosmol<sup>-1</sup>). Recordings were made from isolated, GFP-positive cells using 1.5 ~2.5 MΩ fire polished pipettes (Sutter Instrument, USA) filled with standard internal solution composed of 140mM CsF, 10 mM HEPES, 1 mM EGTA, 10 mM NaCl, (pH = 7.3, adjusted with CsOH; osmolarity of ~300 mosmol<sup>-1</sup>). Currents were recorded using an EPC-10 amplifier (HEKA Elektronik, Germany) at 20 kHz sample rate and was low pass filtered at 5 kHz. The cells with series resistance in the range of 2-6 MΩ were accepted for the further investigations, and the series resistance was compensated by approximately 70-90%. Recordings were discarded if the series resistance was increased to more than 6 MΩ during the course of recording. The data was acquired by PatchMaster program (HEKA Elektronik, Germany).

For pharmacological studies, all antagonists were dissolved in DMSO at 10 mM stock concentration. The antagonist stocks were diluted into extracellular solutions to obtain the desired concentrations. Cells were perfused using a gravity fed system controlled by a VC<sup>3</sup> 8 channel valve commander (ALA Scientific Instruments, USA). The final concentration of DMSO in the external solution did not exceed 0.3%.

To characterize the voltage-dependence of activation of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7, cells were held at -120 mV and then a series of 100 ms test pulses from -80 mV to +40 mV (5 mV increments) were applied. The voltage-dependence of fast inactivation properties of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 were assessed with a 500 ms holding-voltages ranging from -120 mV to -20 mV (5 mV increments) followed by a 50 ms test pulse at -5 mV. The recovery from fast inactivation properties were assessed by a double-pulse protocol using a varying interval between the two voltage pulses. Holding potential was set at -120 mV followed a pre-pulse at -5 mV for 20 ms, then a recovery test pulse of -5 mV for 20 ms at 1 to 128 ms. The currents elicited by the test pulse were normalized to construct the recovery curve. The antagonist effect on recovery was evaluated using a protocol in which each cell was clamped at -120 mV or -80 mV and after 20 ms recovery of -150 mV, currents were elicited by a 20 ms test pulse at -5 mV. The sodium currents elicited by this test pulse were sampled every 30 s.

As for the voltage-clamp recording analyses, all data were reported as mean ± s.e.m. Data were analyzed using Origin 2019b (OriginLab, USA), Excel 2016 (Microsoft, USA), and GraphPad Prism 8.0.2 (GraphPad Software, USA).

Steady-state activation curves were generated using a Boltzmann equation.

$$\frac{G}{G_{max}} = \frac{1}{1 + \exp[(V - V_{0.5})/k]}$$

Where G is the conductance, G<sub>max</sub> is the maximal conductance of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 during the protocol, V is the test potential, V<sub>0.5</sub> is the half-maximal activation potential and k is the slope factor.

Fast inactivation curves were generated using a Boltzmann equation.

$$\frac{I}{I_{max}} = \frac{1}{1 + \exp[(V - V_{0.5})/k]}$$

Where  $I$  is the current at indicated test pulse,  $I_{\max}$  is the maximal current of Nav1.7 activation during test-pulse,  $V$  is the test potential,  $V_{0.5}$  is the half-maximal inactivation potential and  $k$  is the slope factor.

Recovery curves from fast inactivation were fit using a single exponential of the following equation.

$$\frac{I_{test}}{I_{pre}} = (y_0 - 1) * \exp\left(-\frac{t}{\tau}\right) + 1$$

Where  $I_{pre}$  is the current at pre-pulse,  $I_{test}$  is the current at test pulse,  $y_0$  is the non-inactivated current at the first pulse,  $t$  is the delay time between pre-pulse and test-pulse, and  $\tau$  is the time constant of recovery from fast inactivation.

Concentration response curves were generated from at least 5 different test concentrations ( $n \geq 5$ ) using logistic equation:

$$\frac{I_{drug}}{I_{max}} = \frac{1}{(1 + 10^{((\log IC_{50} - X) * Hillslope)})}$$

Where  $X$  is the log of concentrations and  $IC_{50}$  is the concentration producing a half-maximum inhibition.

### Expression and purification of human Nav1.7/ $\beta 1/\beta 2$ complex

The genes of human Nav1.7 alternative splicing variant 3 (Uniprot accession: 15858-3, splicing isoform 3, missing V648-S658, the residue coordinates are named in consistency with isoform 1; forward primer: gatggcaatgttgctccccag, reverse primer: caaaaatgaagctctatcttttgccttc),  $\beta 1$  (Uniprot accession: Q07699; forward primer: ACAGCTCTTAAGGGATCCCGGTCCGatggggaggctgctggcctta, reverse primer: GGAACAGAACTTCCAGTGCGGCCGctcgccacctggacgcccgtg) and  $\beta 2$  (Uniprot accession: O60939; forward primer: ACAGCTCTTAAGGGATCCCGGTCCGatgcacagagatgcctggcta, reverse primer: TTGTCGAGACTGCAGGCTCTAGATCActtggcgccatcatccgggtgccttc) were amplified

from a human cDNA library, which were subcloned into a modified pEG BacMam vector. A green fluorescent protein (GFP) and a Twin-Strep tag were fused to the C-terminus of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7 to facilitate protein expressing and purification. All constructs were confirmed by DNA sequencing. The Na<sub>v</sub>1.7/β1/β2 complex were expressed and purified similarly to our previous studies with modification<sup>50,52</sup>. Recombinant baculoviruses were produced in Sf9 insect cells using the Bac-to-Bac baculovirus expression system (Invitrogen, USA). The Sf9 cells were cultured in ESF 921 medium (Expression Systems, USA) at 26 °C. HEK293F (GIBCO, USA) cells were cultured in OPM-293 medium (OPM, China) supplemented with 1% (v/v) fetal bovine serum (FBS, PAN, Germany) in a 37 °C incubator with 5% CO<sub>2</sub>. When the cell density reaches 2.5×10<sup>6</sup> cells/ml, P2 viruses of Na<sub>v</sub>1.7, β1 and β2 were added to the medium at ratio of 1:100 (v/v), 1:100 (v/v), and 1:100 (v/v), respectively. After 12 hours, 10 mM sodium butyrate (Sigma, USA) was added to the culture to boost protein expression. The cells were incubated for another 48 hours before harvesting. Then the cells were collected and stored in -80 °C freezer.

For each prep, cell pellets from 1.5-liter cell culture were resuspended in buffer A (20 mM HEPES, 150 mM NaCl, 10 μM XEN907 (MCE, USA), 2 mM β-mercaptoethanol (β-ME), pH 7.5, and protease inhibitor cocktail including 1 mM phenylmethyl-sulfonyl fluoride (PMSF), 0.8 μM pepstatin, 2 μM leupeptin, 2 μM aprotinin and 1 mM benzamidine). Then the cells were homogenized in a Dounce homogenizer and the membrane fraction was collected by ultra-centrifugation at 100,000x g for 45 min. The membrane fraction was resuspended in buffer B (buffer A supplemented with 1% (w/v) n-Dodecyl-β-D-maltoside (DDM, Anatrace, USA), 0.15% (w/v) cholesteryl hemisuccinate (CHS, Anatrace, USA), 5 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub> and 1 mM ATP) and was gently agitated at 4 °C for 2 hours. The insoluble fractions were removed by ultra-centrifugation at 100,000x g for 40 minutes. Then the supernatant was loaded onto Streptavidin beads (Smart-Lifesciences, China), which was pre-equilibrated with buffer C (buffer A supplemented with 5mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 5 mM ATP and 0.06% (w/v) Glyco-diosgenin (GDN, Anatrace, USA)). Subsequently, the Streptavidin

Beads were washed with 10 column volumes of buffer C and buffer D (buffer C without 5 mM  $\text{MgCl}_2$  and 5 mM ATP), respectively. The protein complex was eluted by 5 ml buffer E (buffer D plus 5 mM desthiobiotin). In order to form the  $\text{Nav}_{1.7}$ - $\beta 1$ - $\beta 2$ -XEN907 complex, the eluted protein sample was supplemented with 100  $\mu\text{M}$  XEN907, and was concentrated using a 100-kDa cut-off concentrator (Merck Millipore, Germany). Finally, the concentrated sample was loaded onto Superose 6 Increase 10/300 GL (GE healthcare, USA) pre-equilibrated with 20 mM HEPES, 150 mM NaCl, 0.007% GDN (w/v) and 2 mM  $\beta$ -ME, pH 7.5. Peak fractions were pooled and concentrated to 5.7 mg/ml. Before cryo-EM sample preparation, additional XEN907 was added to the concentrated sample at a final concentration of 100  $\mu\text{M}$ .

For  $\text{Nav}_{1.7}$ / $\beta 1$ / $\beta 2$ -TC-N1752 and  $\text{Nav}_{1.7}$ / $\beta 1$ / $\beta 2$ - $\text{Nav}_{1.7}$ -IN2 complexes, the protein samples were purified similarly. The only difference was that XEN907 was replaced by TC-N1752 or  $\text{Nav}_{1.7}$ -IN2 respectively.

### Cryo-EM sample preparation and data collection

Aliquots of 2.5  $\mu\text{l}$  purified  $\text{Nav}_{1.7}$  complexes at concentrations of approximately 5-10 mg/ml were placed on glow-discharged holey cooper grids (Quantifoil Cu R1.2/1.3, 300 mesh, Germany), which were blotted for 2.0-4.5 s and plunge-frozen in liquid ethane cooled by liquid nitrogen using a FEI Mark IV Vitrobot (ThermoFisher, USA) at 4 °C with 100% humidity. All data were acquired using a Titan Krios transmission electron microscope (ThermoFisher, USA) operated at 300 kV, equipped with a Gatan K2 Summit direct detector (Gatan, USA) and Gatan Quantum GIF energy filter (Gatan, USA) with a slit width of 20 eV. All movie stacks were manually screened and automatically collected using SerialEM at a calibrated magnification of 105,000 with a physical pixel size of 1.04 Å (super-resolution mode). Defocus range was set between  $-1.2$  and  $-2.2$   $\mu\text{m}$ . The dose rate was adjusted to 10 counts/pixel/s. A total of 2,900, 2,601 and 4,430 movie stacks were collected for  $\text{Nav}_{1.7}$ - $\beta 1$ - $\beta 2$ -XEN907,  $\text{Nav}_{1.7}$ - $\beta 1$ - $\beta 2$ -TC-N1752 and  $\text{Nav}_{1.7}$ - $\beta 1$ - $\beta 2$ -

IN-2, respectively. Each movie stack was exposed for 6.4 s fractionated into 32 frames with a total dose of 60 e<sup>-</sup>/ Å<sup>2</sup>.

## Data processing

The movie stacks were motion-corrected, binned by 2-fold and dose-weighted using MotionCorr2<sup>53</sup>, generating summed micrographs for particle picking. Defocus values of each micrographs were estimated using Gctf<sup>54</sup> using the non-dose-weighted micrographs. A total of 1,217,568, 1,216,370 and 1,849,983 particles were auto-picked for Nav<sub>v</sub>1.7-β1-β2-XEN907, Nav<sub>v</sub>1.7-β1-β2-TC-N1752 and Nav<sub>v</sub>1.7-β1-β2-IN2, respectively. All 2D classification, 3D classification, polishing and CTF refinement were carried out in RELION3.0<sup>55</sup>. After polishing, the best class containing 213,507, 158,142 and 206,251 particles for Nav<sub>v</sub>1.7-β1-β2-XEN907, Nav<sub>v</sub>1.7-β1-β2-TC-N1752 and Nav<sub>v</sub>1.7-β1-β2-IN2 were refined using cryoSPARC<sup>56</sup> to 3.22 Å, 3.09 Å and 3.07 Å, respectively. The detailed data processing flowchart was shown in Extended Data Fig. 3.

## Model building

The structure of human Nav<sub>v</sub>1.7 (PDB code: 6j8j) was manually fitted into the EM map of Nav<sub>v</sub>1.7-β1-β2-XEN907 in Chimera<sup>57</sup>. To build the NTD model, the AlphaFold2 model of the Nav<sub>v</sub>1.7 NTD was manually fitted in the EM map of the Nav<sub>v</sub>1.7<sup>XEN</sup>, after several iterations of manual checking and real-space refinement, flexible loop regions without density were removed, yielding the final NTD model containing P7-R30 and P49-S113. Each model was manually checked and corrected in COOT<sup>58</sup>, and then refined in Phenix<sup>59</sup>. The model vs map FSC curves were generated by Phenix.real\_sapce\_refine using Phenix. The statistics of cryo-EM data collection and model refinement were summarized in Table 1. All figures were prepared with PyMOL (Schrödinger, LLC), and Prism 8.0.1 (GraphPad Software) and ChimeraX<sup>60</sup>.

## Data Availability

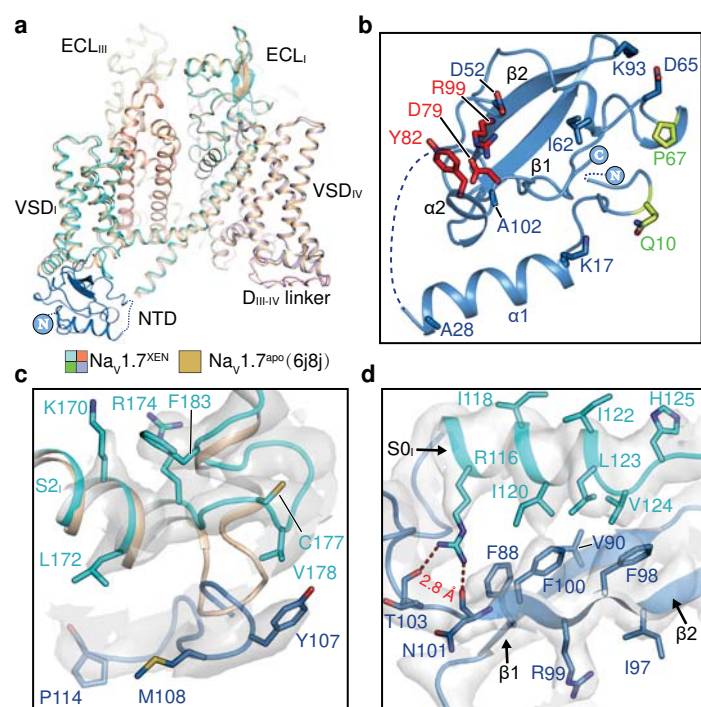
The Uniprot accession codes for the sequences of human Nav1.7,  $\beta 1$  and  $\beta 2$  are Q15858-3 [<https://www.uniprot.org/uniprot/Q15858-3>], Q07699 [<https://www.uniprot.org/uniprot/Q07699>], and O60939 [<https://www.uniprot.org/uniprot/O60939>], respectively. The accession codes for the coordinates of Nav1.7, Nav1.5-Flecainide, Nav1.5-Propafenone and Nav1.5-Qunidine used in this study are 6J8J [<http://doi.org/10.2210/pdb6J8J/pdb>], 6UZ0 [<http://doi.org/10.2210/pdb6UZ0/pdb>], 7FBS [<http://doi.org/10.2210/pdb7FBS/pdb>], and 6LQA [<http://doi.org/10.2210/pdb6LQA/pdb>], respectively. The accession code for the EM map of Nav1.7 used in this study is EMD-9782 [<https://www.emdataresource.org/EMD-9782>]. The three-dimensional cryo-EM density maps of the human Nav<sub>V</sub>1.7- $\beta 1$ - $\beta 2$ -XEN907, Nav<sub>V</sub>1.7- $\beta 1$ - $\beta 2$ -TC-N1752 and Nav<sub>V</sub>1.7- $\beta 1$ - $\beta 2$ -Nav<sub>V</sub>1.7-IN2 have been deposited in the EM Database under accession codes EMD-33292 [<https://www.emdataresource.org/EMD-33292>], EMD-33295 [<https://www.emdataresource.org/EMD-33295>], and EMD-33296 [<https://www.emdataresource.org/EMD-33296>], respectively. The coordinates of the Nav<sub>V</sub>1.7- $\beta 1$ - $\beta 2$ -XEN907, Nav<sub>V</sub>1.7- $\beta 1$ - $\beta 2$ -TC-N1752 and Nav<sub>V</sub>1.7- $\beta 1$ - $\beta 2$ -Nav<sub>V</sub>1.7-IN2 have been deposited in the Protein Data Bank under accession codes 7XM9 [<http://doi.org/10.2210/pdb7XM9/pdb>], 7XMF [<http://doi.org/10.2210/pdb7XMF/pdb>], and 7XMG [<http://doi.org/10.2210/pdb7XMG/pdb>], respectively. Source Data are provided with this paper.

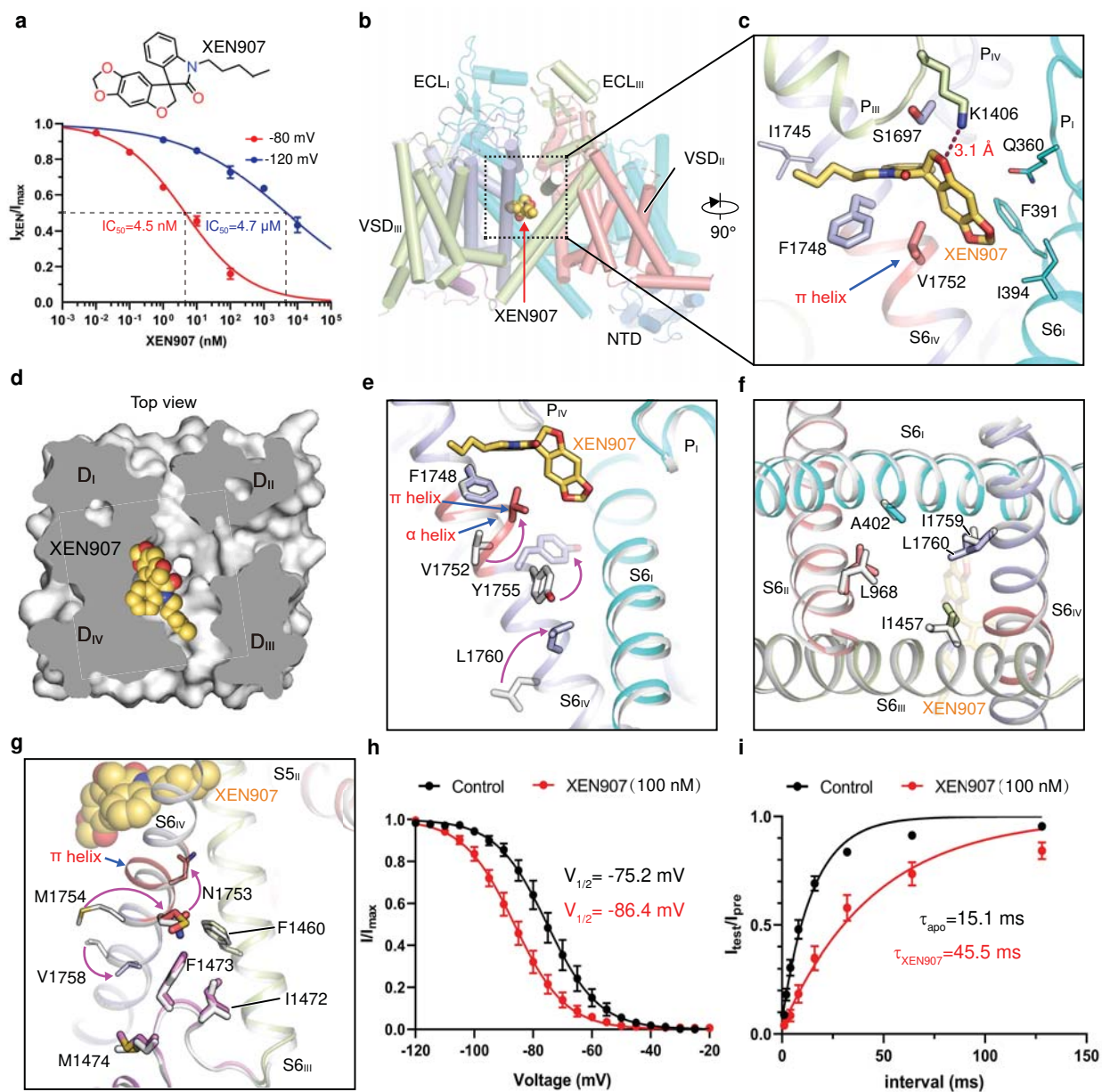
## Methods-only References

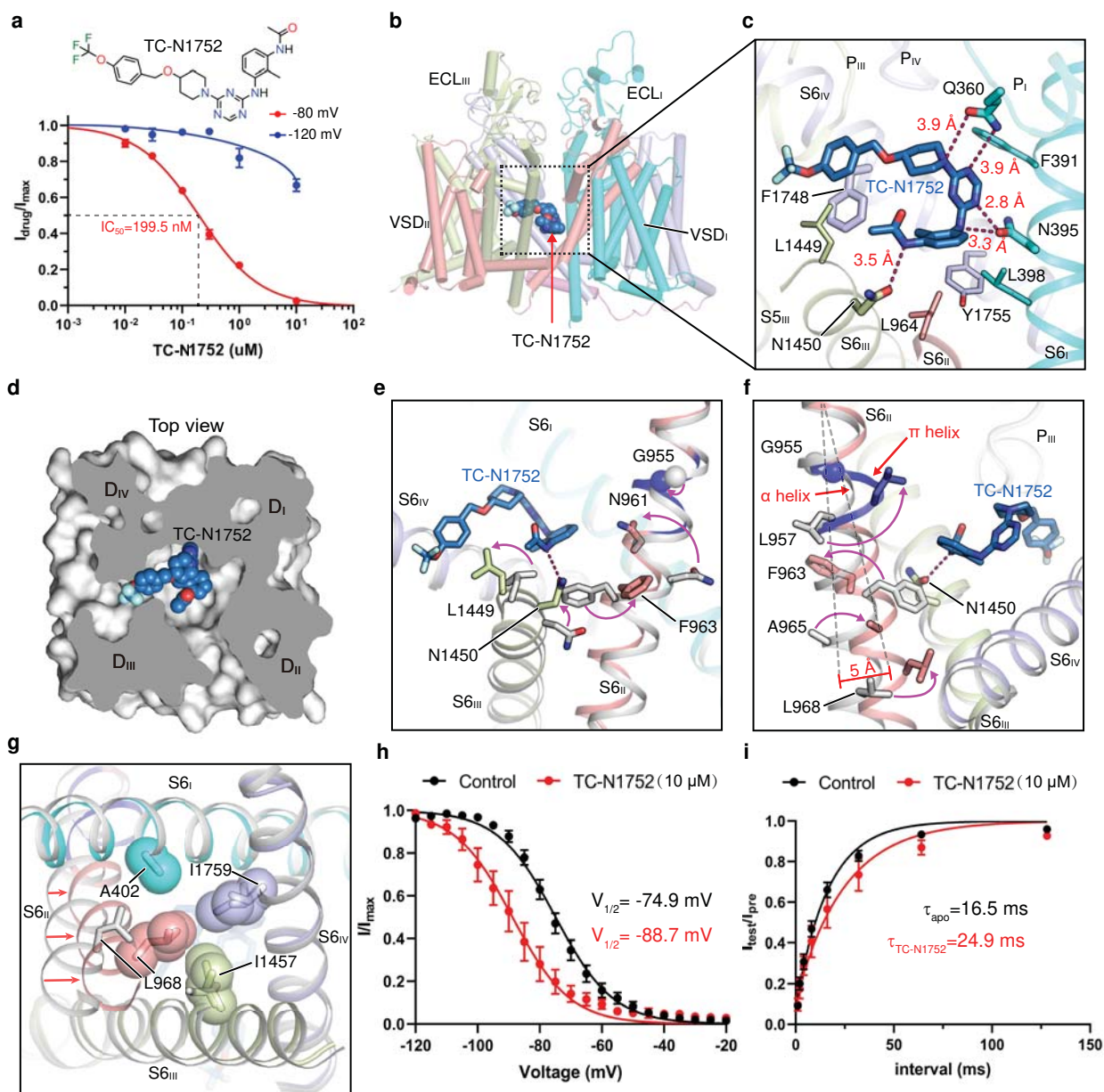
- 52 Zhang, J. *et al.* N-type fast inactivation of a eukaryotic voltage-gated sodium channel. *Nat Commun* **13**, 2713 (2022).
- 53 Zheng, S. Q. *et al.* MotionCor2: anisotropic correction of beam-induced motion for improved cryo-electron microscopy. *Nat Methods* **14**, 331-332 (2017).
- 54 Zhang, K. Gctf: Real-time CTF determination and correction. *J Struct Biol* **193**, 1-12 (2016).
- 55 Zivanov, J. *et al.* New tools for automated high-resolution cryo-EM structure determination in RELION-3. *Elife* **7** (2018).
- 56 Punjani, A., Rubinstein, J. L., Fleet, D. J. & Brubaker, M. A. cryoSPARC: algorithms for rapid unsupervised cryo-EM structure determination. *Nat Methods* **14**, 290-296 (2017).

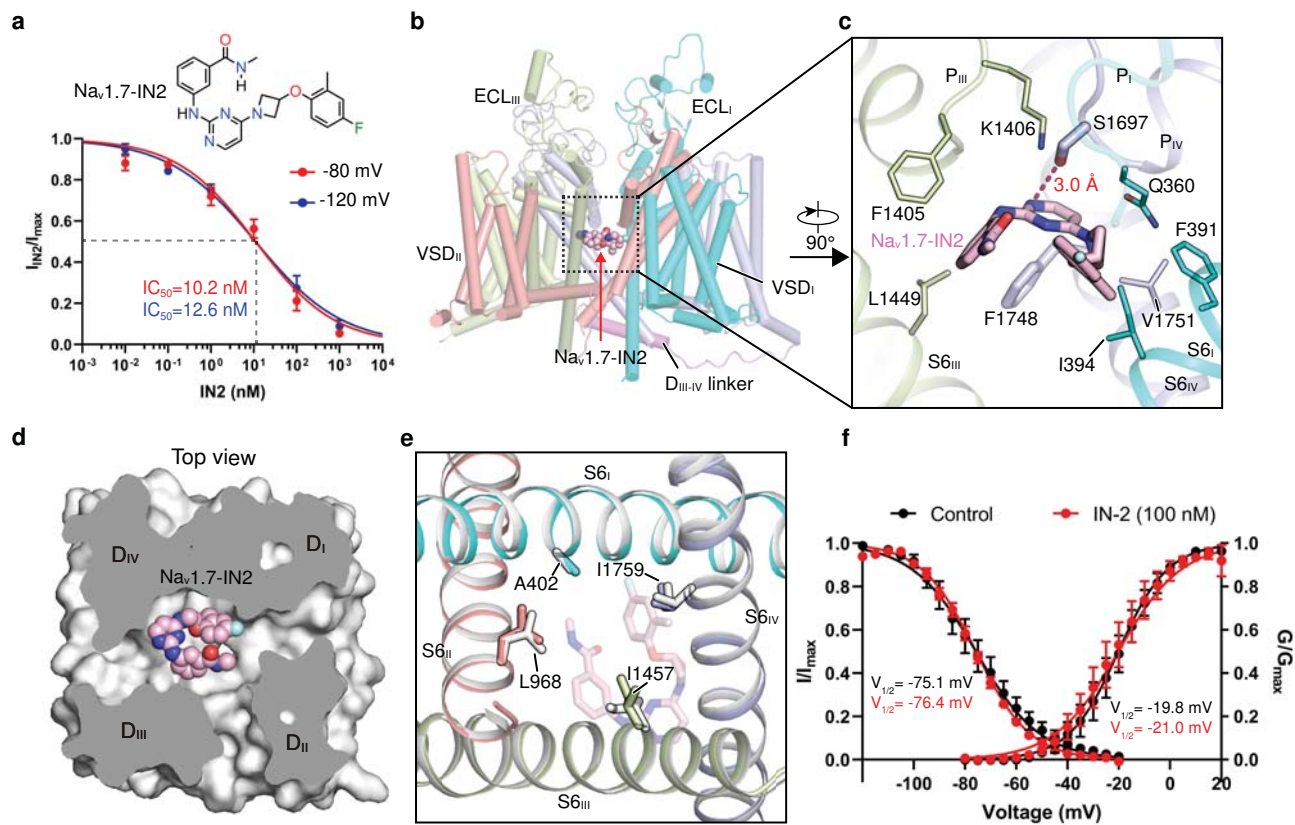
741 57 Pettersen, E. F. *et al.* UCSF Chimera—a visualization system for exploratory  
742 research and analysis. *J Comput Chem* **25**, 1605–1612 (2004).  
743 58 Emsley, P. & Cowtan, K. Coot: model-building tools for molecular graphics. *Acta*  
744 *Crystallogr D Biol Crystallogr* **60**, 2126–2132 (2004).  
745 59 Adams, P. D. *et al.* PHENIX: a comprehensive Python-based system for  
746 macromolecular structure solution. *Acta Crystallogr D Biol Crystallogr* **66**, 213–  
747 221 (2010).  
748 60 Pettersen, E. F. *et al.* UCSF ChimeraX: Structure visualization for researchers,  
749 educators, and developers. *Protein Sci* **30**, 70–82 (2021).

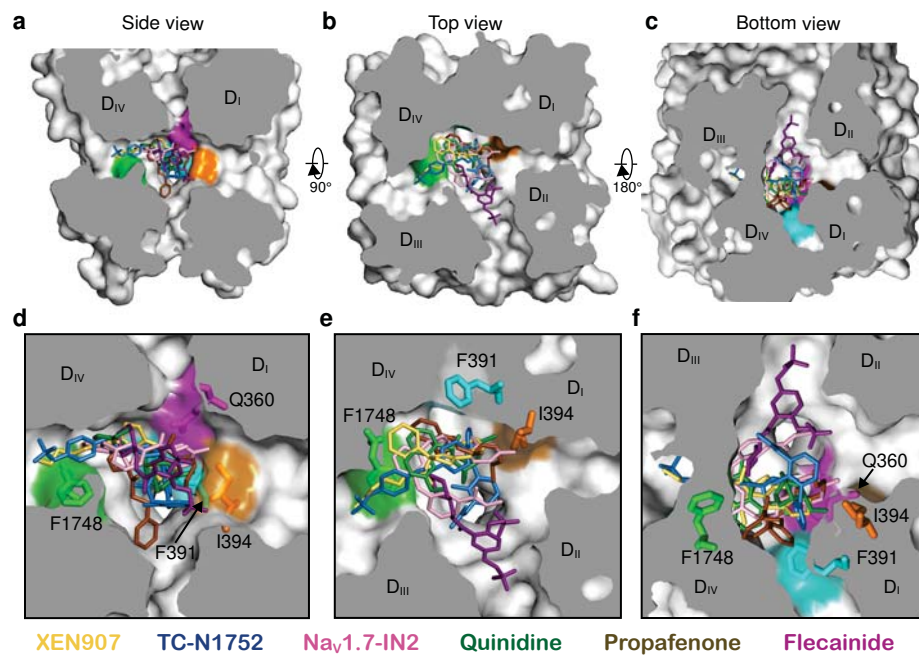
750

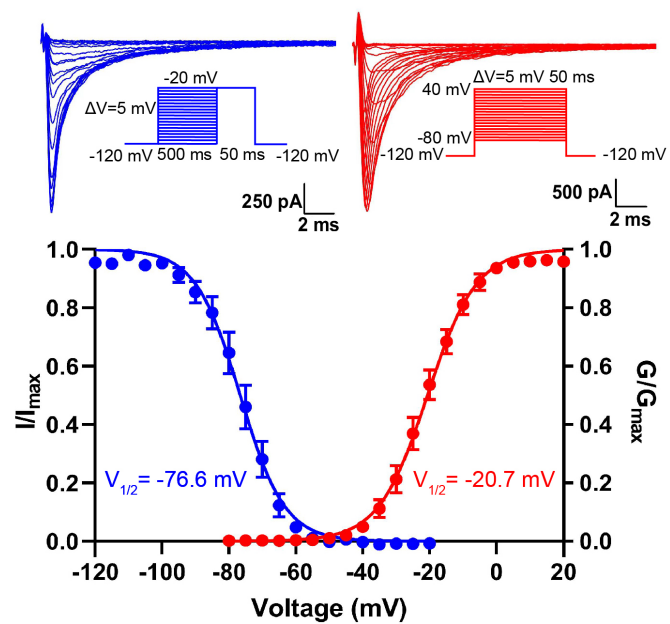
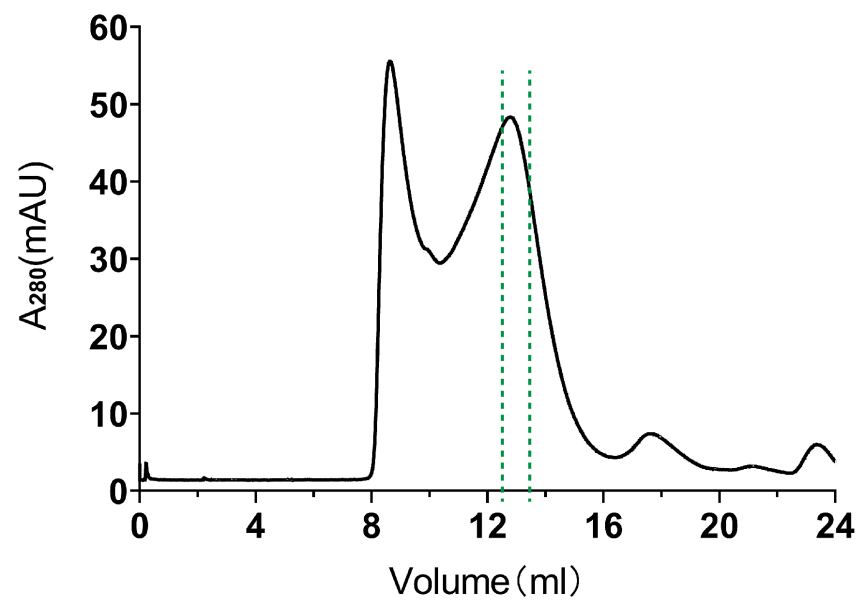










**a****b****c**