

STRUCTURAL PROTEOMICS OF FTSH COMPLEXES
USING CROSS-LINKING MASS SPECTROMETRY

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF NATURAL AND APPLIED SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

HATİCE AKKULAK

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
BIOCHEMISTRY

AUGUST 2023

Approval of the thesis:

**STRUCTURAL PROTEOMICS OF FTSH COMPLEXES
USING CROSS-LINKING MASS SPECTROMETRY**

submitted by **HATİCE AKKULAK** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Science in Biochemistry, Middle East Technical University** by,

Prof. Dr. Halil Kalıpçılar
Dean, Graduate School of **Natural and Applied Sciences**

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Özgül Persil Çetinkol
Head of the Department, **Biochemistry**

Assist. Prof. Dr. Süreyya Özcan Kabasakal
Supervisor, **Biochemistry, METU**

Dr. Burak Veli Kabasakal
Co-Supervisor, **Turkish Accelerator and
Radiation Laboratory**

Examining Committee Members:

Prof. Dr. Pervin R. Dinçer
Department of Medical Biology, Hacettepe University

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Serhan Türkyılmaz
Chemistry, METU

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erkan Kiriş
Biology, METU

Assist. Prof. Dr. Antoine Marion
Chemistry, METU

Assist. Prof. Dr. Süreyya Özcan Kabasakal
Chemistry, METU

Date: 14.08.2023

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Name Last name : Hatice Akkulak

Signature :

ABSTRACT

STRUCTURAL PROTEOMICS OF FtsH COMPLEXES USING CROSS-LINKING MASS SPECTROMETRY

Akkulak, Hatice
Master of Science, Biochemistry
Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Süreyya Özcan Kabasakal
Co-Supervisor: Dr. Burak V Kabasakal

August 2023, 98 pages

FtsH proteases are responsible for membrane protein quality control and are highly conserved in bacteria, mitochondria, and chloroplasts. FtsH contains an ATP-dependent endonuclease that degrades improperly folded integral membrane proteins and interacts with other membrane proteins HflK and HflC, modulating this process. This thesis investigated the composition and structure of FtsH complexes using cross-linking mass spectrometry (XL-MS) based structural proteomics. Recombinant expression of protein complexes was performed in *E. coli*, inner membranes were solubilized, and proteins were purified using affinity chromatography. The residues of proteins in close proximity were covalently bound to each other via cross-linkers. Cross-linked proteins were then enzymatically digested and analyzed by the high-resolution MS. Commonly used XL-MS software tools, MaxLynx, MeroX, MS Annika, and XlinkX were assessed to elucidate the protein interactions within the membrane protein complexes containing FtsH, HflK, and HflC. The cross-link search analysis yielded over 300 inter- and intra-protein interactions. The results provide valuable information regarding the complex structure and function and could be applied to molecular docking for structural modeling.

Keywords: Cross-linking Mass Spectrometry, Protein Interactions, Structural Proteomics, FtsH Complexes, Membrane Proteins

ÖZ

ÇAPRAZ BAĞLAMA KÜTLE SPEKTROMETRESİ KULLANILARAK FTSH KOMPLEKSLERİNİN YAPISAL PROTEOMİĞİ

Akkulak, Hatice
Yüksek Lisans, Biyokimya
Tez Yöneticisi: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Süreyya Özcan Kabasakal
Ortak Tez Yöneticisi: Dr. Burak V Kabasakal

Ağustos 2023, 98 sayfa

FtsH proteazları, membran protein kalite kontrolünden sorumludur ve bakteri, mitokondri ve kloroplastlarda yüksek oranda korunur. FtsH, yanlış katlanmış integral membran proteinlerini parçalayan ATP'ye bağlı bir endonükleaz içerir ve bu işlemi modüle eden diğer membran proteinleri HflK ve HflC ile etkileşime girer. Bu tez, XL-MS tabanlı yapısal proteomik yaklaşımını kullanarak FtsH komplekslerinin bileşimini ve yapısını araştırdı. Protein komplekslerinin rekombinant ifadesi *E. coli*'de gerçekleştirildi, iç membranlar çözüldü ve proteinler afinite kromatografisi kullanılarak saflaştırıldı. Protein komplekslerinin yakın mesafedeki amino asitleri, çapraz bağlayıcılar aracılığıyla birbirlerine kovalent olarak bağlandı. Çapraz bağlı proteinler daha sonra enzimatik olarak sindirildi ve yüksek çözünürlüklü MS ile analiz edildi. Yaygın olarak kullanılan XL-MS yazılım araçları, MaxLynx, MeroX, MS Annika ve XlinkX, FtsH, HflK ve HflC içeren membran protein kompleksleri içindeki protein etkileşimlerini aydınlatmak amacıyla değerlendirildi. Çapraz bağlantı arama analizi, 300'den fazla proteinler arası ve protein içi etkileşim ortaya çıkardı. Sonuçlar, kompleks yapısı ve işleviyle ilgili değerli bilgiler sunuyor ve yapısal modelleme için moleküler yanıştırma metoduna uygulanabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: apraz Baęlı Ktle Spektrometre, Protein Etkileşimleri, Yapısal Proteomiks, FtsH Kompleksleri, Membran Proteinleri

To my dearest family, late father and friends

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Assist.Prof.Dr. Süreyya Özcan Kabasakal and co-supervisor Dr. Burak Veli Kabasakal for their guidance, advice, endless support, encouragement, and insight throughout the research. They were always positive and sweet to me; I feel very lucky and happy to work with them.

I am very thankful to each Q-OmicS laboratory members, especially Hayri Kerim İnce, who works on this project with me, to get through all the hard times with me. I am also very grateful to BvK LaB members and specifically Günce Göç for her guidance and support.

I would love to express my sincere thanks to my best friends Polen Narçın and Setenay Ağdeniz for being there for me all the time even when I become a crybaby. I could not have been able to complete this journey without the friendship, support, and comfort zone they provided to me.

This work was funded by the TUBITAK 2232 International Outstanding Researchers Program (Project No: 118C225). We thank Prof. Carlito B. Lebrilla and Lebrilla Group from the University of California, Davis for his support in XL-MS experiments, also Prof. Christiane Berger-Schaffitzel and Prof. Imre Berger from the University of Bristol for providing the plasmid of the protein complex.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Transmembrane Domain	(TD)
Protein Quality Control	(PQC)
Proton Motive Force	(PMF)
Endoplasmic Reticulum	(ER)
Inner Membrane Proteins	(IMP)
Mass Spectrometry	(MS)
Ion Exchange Chromatography	(IC)
Size Exclusion Chromatography	(SEC)
Affinity Chromatography	(AC)
Glutathione-S-transferase	(GST)
Cross-linking Mass Spectrometry	(XL-MS)
Tandem Affinity Purification	(TAP)
Cryogenic Electron Microscopy	(Cryo-EM)
Mass-to-charge	(m/z)
Protein Data Bank	(PDB)
Electrospray Ionization	(ESI)
Matrix-Assisted Laser Desorption Ionization	(MALDI)
Time-of-flight	(TOF)
Tandem mass spectrometry	(MS/MS)
Collision-Induced Dissociation	(CID)

High-energy Collisional Dissociation (HCD)

Hydrogen–Deuterium Exchange Mass Spectrometry (HDX-MS)

n-Dodecyl-B-D-Maltoside (DDM)

Phenylmethylsulfonyl Fluoride (PMSF)

Disuccinimidyl Dibutyric Urea (DSBU)

Bis(sulfosuccinimidyl)suberate (BS3)

Dimethyl Sulfoxide (DMSO)

Dithiothreitol (DTT)

Iodoacetamide (IAA)

High-Pressure Liquid Chromatography (HPLC)

Gene Ontology (GO)

Protein-Protein Interaction (PPI)

Solubilized Membrane (SM)

Purified Protein (PP)

Total Ion Chromatogram (TIC)

Small Angle X-ray Scattering (SAXS)

Graphical User Interface (GUI)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Membrane Proteins

Membrane proteins are proteins that are embedded into the lipid bilayer of the cell membrane, forming a barrier between the cell and the external environment. They consist of amino acids which fold as a hydrophobic surface contacting with the alkane chains of the lipids and hydrophilic surface contacting with the aqueous phases on the sides of the membrane and hydrophilic polar head groups of the lipids in the bilayer.¹

Membrane proteins play crucial roles in cells, such as cell trafficking, signal transduction, ion transport, cell-cell interactions. They make up ~30% of the cell proteome and their disruption leads to various diseases, such as cystic fibrosis, retinitis pigmentosa, and other numerous heritable diseases.² Therefore, they are studied as a target for developing new therapeutics.^{3,4}

There are two classes of membrane proteins: integral membrane proteins and peripheral membrane proteins. These classes are illustrated in **Figure 1.1a**. Integral membrane proteins span the lipid bilayer of the membrane and are stabilized by hydrophobic interactions of the transmembrane domains (TD) and lipids. Two types of integral membrane proteins are present: alpha-helical and beta-barrels, as demonstrated in **Figure 1.2a**. Alpha-helical integral membrane proteins are the most abundant ones and are encoded in most organisms, whereas beta-barrel integral membrane proteins are found in the outer membranes of bacteria, mitochondria, and chloroplasts.^{5,6} Peripheral membrane proteins, on the other hand, are amphipathic proteins interacting with the cell membrane directly or indirectly. They do not cover

the entire lipid bilayer; however, could be anchored into the lipid bilayer with a hydrophobic domain.⁷

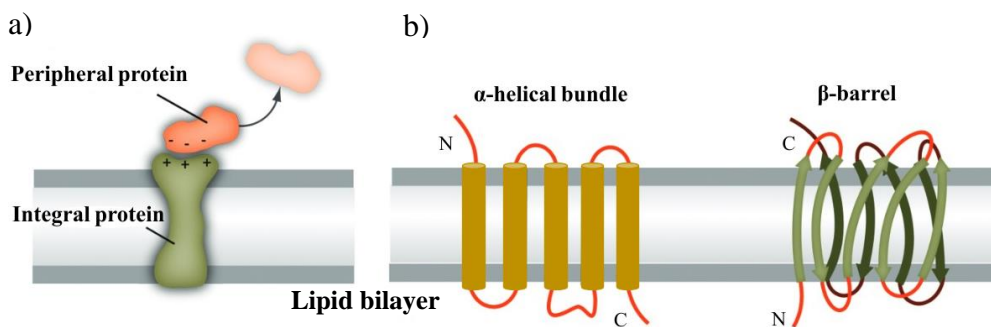


Figure 1.1. a) Classes of membrane proteins and b) types of integral membrane proteins regenerated from “An Introduction to Membrane Proteins” by Hedin et. al. J. Proteome Res. 2011, 10 (8), 3324–3331.

1.1.1 Quality Control Mechanism of Membrane Proteins

Cell membrane comprises a considerable number of proteins and they have various important functions for the cells. Quality control is highly important for the cells. They go through different quality control mechanisms for their proper folding, insertion, stability, and function.⁸

After translation, some part of nascent chains of proteins undergo degradation due to mistakes in biogenesis or maturation. Errors in the protein synthesis cause severe cellular damage and toxicity, and leads to diseases and many pathologies.⁹ In the case of misfolding and/or aggregation, these proteins are either degraded by proteases, or they are promoted for proper folding by chaperones.¹⁰

Chaperones target the unfolded and partially folded polypeptide chains, having hydrophobic regions exposed on the surface of the proteins. These proteins repeatedly bind to the chaperones and are released from them.¹¹

In the case of protease degradation, there are different compartments for the action of proteases of the protein quality control system. Proteins to be degraded are first unfolded and then transferred to the proteolytic cavities of the proteases to be broken down into small peptides. Cytosolic proteins are targeted for destruction by ubiquitination machinery.¹² In Golgi complex and Endoplasmic Reticulum (ER) different degradation machinery are triggered upon the misfolding.¹³ The functioning of the protein quality systems is simply represented in **Figure 1.2**.

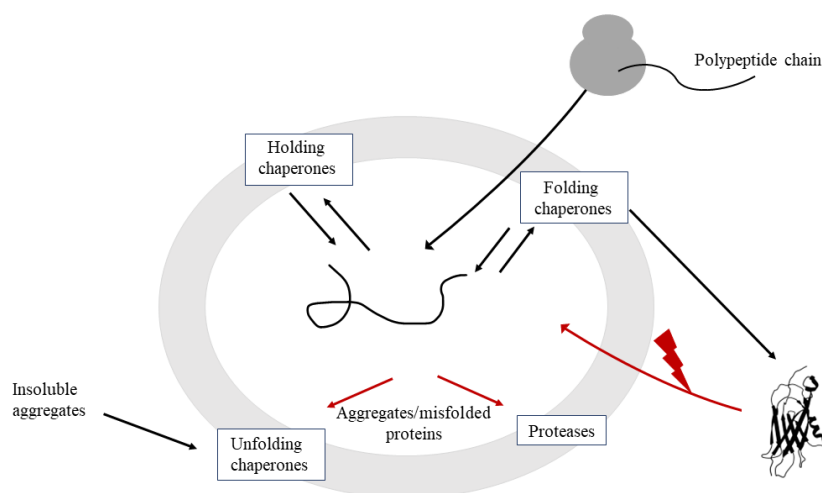


Figure 1.2. The representation of the functioning of protein quality control (PQC) systems. The figure is regenerated from “Protein Misfolding and Human Disease” by Gregersen et. al. *Annu. Rev. Genomics Hum. Genet.* 2006, 7, 103–124.

1.1.1.1 The Role of FtsH Complexes in Bacterial Membrane Quality Control

As for the bacterial membrane protein quality control, SecYEG-SecDF-YajC-YidC holo-translocon is in action in the inner membranes of *E. coli*. Seven membrane protein subunits, including SecYEG responsible for protein secretion and YidC for membrane protein insertion, are present in this complex. Transmembrane proton-motive force (PMF) assists the protein translocation by the sub-complex of SecD and

SecF through SecYEG.¹⁴ FtsH protein is a member of AAA+ protease family, and it degrades the misassembled inner membrane proteins (IMPs) contributing to the bacterial membrane protein quality control.¹⁵ FtsH is conserved in bacteria, mitochondria and chloroplast.¹⁶ The ligand interaction sites of FtsH is illustrated in **Appendix**. *E. coli* FtsH consists of a periplasmic domain at the N-terminus and a cytoplasmic domain with ATPase and zinc-protease domains at the C-terminus. C-terminal protease cleaves the unfolded proteins with Zn⁺².¹⁷ FtsH is known to form a very large membrane-bound complex with HflK and HflC, comprising periplasmic domains. HflKC modulates the proteolytic activity of FtsH and the FtsH-HflK-HflC complex plays a chaperone role to stabilize proteins in mitochondria, and a modulator role to limit ATPase activity of FtsH.^{16,18,19} Information of FtsH, HflK, HflC is presented in **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1. The information of FtsH, HflK, and HflC proteins.

	FtsH	HflK	HflC
UniProt ID	P0AAI3	P0ABC7	P0ABC3
Length (Amino Acids)	644	419	334
Molecular Weight (Da)	70,708	45,545	37,650
Structure	7WI3	7WI3	7WI3

1.2 Protein Complexes

Polypeptide chains assemble by non-covalent protein-protein interactions forming protein complexes. They are the crucial functional units involved in various biological processes and functioning within the cell. They provide valuable insight into the behavior of biological systems. When a protein complex forms, it could activate and/or inhibit other proteins and/or protein complexes, and that way they lead to different functions. Protein complexes are known to take part in important processes, such as transcription, translation, folding, quality control, and signal transduction, in cell systems.²⁰

A protein complex could catalyze multiple reactions simultaneously or sequentially, and complex cellular processes start taking place. Metabolic and cellular pathways, signal transduction pathways, and other functions in the cells are regulated by the enzymatic activities of protein complexes. Enzymatic activities of the protein complexes catalyze different biochemical reactions that are important for the cells. These reactions are diverse, essential, and vital for the integrity, functioning, interaction, and survival of the cells.²¹ Any defect, mutation or aggregation occurring to proteins, may result in various diseases and protein complexes aid in the understanding and explaining these processes.²² Understanding of protein complex structure, dynamics and function has accelerated drug design and discovery research.²³

1.3 Structural Proteomics

Determination of the three-dimensional structures of the proteins and protein complexes are crucial for enlightening the functions. Moreover, it facilitates the identification of protein-protein interactions and pathways they are included in. Structural proteomics is a field of study where invaluable insights into three-dimensional structures of the proteins are obtained, assisted by mass spectrometry

(MS). It is used to understand the relationship between protein sequence, structure, and function.²⁴ In recent years, structural proteomics, along with main structural biology methods, has broadened our knowledge and perspective of structures of proteins and protein complexes.²⁵ Structural proteomics has provided us with an essential gate for the discovery of proteins and/or protein complexes that are important in drug targets and protein-ligand interactions.²⁶ The studies of structural proteomics involve two important steps: protein expression and/or purification, and structural analysis of proteins.

1.3.1 Sample Preparation for Structural Proteomics: Protein Expression and Purification

The first stage of the structural determination of the proteins and protein complexes of interest is the expression of them in the desired system and/or purification with an appropriate method.

- **Recombinant Protein Expression**

In order to express target proteins, DNA templates of genes of interest are easily constructed through recombinant DNA techniques. Recent recombinant protein expression techniques consist of transforming/transfecting cells with a vector which has the template and culturing the cells. Thus, these cells first transcribe DNA into mRNA and then translate the protein of interest. Before the purification process, the cells are lysed for the extraction of the expressed proteins. According to the type of protein of interest different protein expression systems are preferred. Mammalian, insect, yeast, bacterial, algal, and cell-free systems are available for recombinant protein expression.²⁷

- **Protein Purification**

Protein purification is the process of isolation of proteins from the complex mixtures of cells, tissues or organisms. The desired protein/protein complex is separated from other proteins and matrices. Proteins are isolated through various physical and biochemical approaches. Protein purification comprises the combination of following steps: extraction, precipitation, differential solubilization, ultracentrifugation, and chromatographic methods. After the cells or tissues are broken and proteins are extracted, a centrifugation process is applied for the isolation of proteins. Chromatographic methods, such as ion exchange chromatography (IC), size exclusion chromatography (SEC), affinity chromatography (AC), and immunoaffinity chromatography, are most commonly used methods to isolate the desired protein.

In affinity chromatography, different affinity tags, such as strep-tag and glutathione-S-transferase (GST), are used for protein purification in which recombinant proteins with an engineered specific peptide or a tag are purified. This process is effective in terms of improving the yield, purity, and solubility of the target protein.²⁸ The pull-down methods are used for the purification of protein complexes. Physical interactions of the proteins with each other, in other words, protein-protein interaction networks, are obtained through pull-down assays. Affinity pull-down, tandem affinity purification (TAP), and co-immunoprecipitation are the methods included. In affinity pull-down and TAP, affinity tags are used, whereas antibodies are used against target protein in co-immunoprecipitation method.²⁹ The processes of protein expression and purification play a vital role in determining the structure, function, and interactions of the protein of interest. Protein samples used for the structure determination should be as pure, homogeneous, and highly concentrated as possible.

1.3.2 Structural Analysis of Proteins and Protein Complexes

Several methods emerged for the structural elucidation of proteins and protein complexes and determination of protein-protein interactions, such as X-ray crystallography, cryogenic electron microscopy (cryo-EM), and mass spectrometry (MS).

X-ray crystallography provides the structural information by obtaining the arrangement of atoms in a protein of a crystal exposed to X-rays diffracting into specific directions. Cryo-EM is electron microscopy carried out on cryogenically frozen samples. Proteins are bombarded with electrons and images of individual molecules are obtained. On the other hand, mass spectrometry is an analytical method measuring the mass-to-charge ratio (m/z) of ions. It allows the qualitative and quantitative analysis of proteins. Each method has its own advantages and disadvantages. They could be integrated into each other in order to obtain accurate, reliable and high-resolution structures, which is known as “integrative structural biology”.

1.3.2.1 X-ray Crystallography

X-ray crystallography is one of the most reliable, precise, and powerful methods used in structural biology and most of the structures in the Protein Data Bank (PDB)³⁰ have been determined by X-ray crystallography. It is a method used to acquire a three-dimensional structural information from a protein crystal. In the crystal structure determination workflow, first, a protein of interest is purified and crystallized. The crystallization process is applied to highly pure samples by subjecting them to different crystallization conditions and precipitants. The crystal is then subjected to the beam of X-rays. The protein crystal diffracts the X-ray beams into different, unique patterns before being analyzed to a map of the distribution of electrons in the protein. The location of atoms is determined through the electron

density map. Detailed atomic information regarding even the complex biomacromolecules incorporated into the crystal could be obtained through X-ray crystallography.³¹ However, the limitations of X-ray crystallography in terms of the sample preparation and capturing the dynamics remain challenging in this method.³² Membrane proteins are difficult to crystallize and efforts are being made to improve the challenges of obtaining pure protein crystals.³³

1.3.2.2 Cryogenic Electron Microscopy (Cryo-EM)

Cryo-EM is a powerful technique used to observe the conformations of biomacromolecules directly in their nearly native environments. It provides a detailed insight into the dynamic behaviors of the molecules.³⁴ The protein of interest is flash-frozen and then bombarded with electrons producing microscope images of each molecule. These images (micrographs) are used to reassemble the three-dimensional structure or shapes.³⁵ Unlike X-ray crystallography, Cryo-EM technique does not require crystals. It requires a much smaller sample amount (between 50 nm and 5 μ M) and large variety of sample type can be used for analysis.^{34,36} High-resolution structures are desired to see every atom in the electron density map and nowadays, high resolution structures, even less than 2 ångströms (Å), can be obtained through this method.^{37,38} However, the samples used for Cryo-EM technique should be stable, pure and homogeneous and it is challenging to analyze small proteins and protein complexes (less than 65 kDa) with this methods.³⁹

1.3.2.3 Mass Spectrometry for Proteomics

Mass spectrometry is an analytical method measuring the mass-to-charge ratio (m/z) of molecules. It is a sensitive, selective, versatile, and high-throughput tool

applicable to all types of samples. The basic principle of mass spectrometry includes the first ionization step where the target molecules are converted into gas-phase ions. The formed ionic species are then separated and analyzed based on their m/z . As a final step, detectors measure the ion current and create a mass spectrum.

MS-based proteomics includes a wide range of studies from the sequences of proteins to the three-dimensional structures qualitatively and quantitatively.⁴⁰ Bottom-up approach, which is peptide centric, is the most common approach in MS-based proteomics. The conventional workflow includes the extraction of proteins in suitable buffers, denaturation of proteins in the samples by dithiothreitol (DTT), alkylation by iodoacetamide (IAA), and digestion by trypsin which has specificity on lysine and arginine side chains. The resulting peptides are separated by chromatography and analyzed by high-resolution mass spectrometry which will be explained in detail below. The protein search software, such as MaxQuant^{41,42}, Mascot⁴³ and Proteome Discoverer⁴⁴, first identify the precursor ions (MS1) and verify the peptides searching the tandem MS spectra through libraries and generate a protein list. Thus, the proteins in the samples are detected and quantified. Furthermore, biological insights where proteins are involved could be obtained.

A mass spectrometer has essential components: Inlet system, ion source/ionization system, mass analyzer, detector, data system, vacuum system, and electronics. These components are illustrated in **Figure 1.3**. First, the sample is transferred into the ion source via the inlet system. An ion source is required to convert the neutral molecules into charged molecules. Electrospray Ionization (ESI) and MALDI (Matrix-assisted laser desorption ionization) are two soft ionization techniques which allow the analysis of larger and non-volatile biomolecules such as proteins and peptides.⁴⁵ Analyte ions are separated and analyzed in a mass analyzer according to their mass. Ion motions are controlled by applying magnetic or electric fields. Time-of-flight (TOF) and the novel technology Orbitrap, which offers high resolving power, mass accuracy, and dynamic range⁴⁶, are the most common mass analyzers used for the analysis of proteins.⁴⁰ Orbitrap is based on the electrostatic trapping of ions. The ions

are collected from the linear trap quadrupole by C-trap and injected into the orbitrap. They are kept in oscillating movement by the electrical field applied.

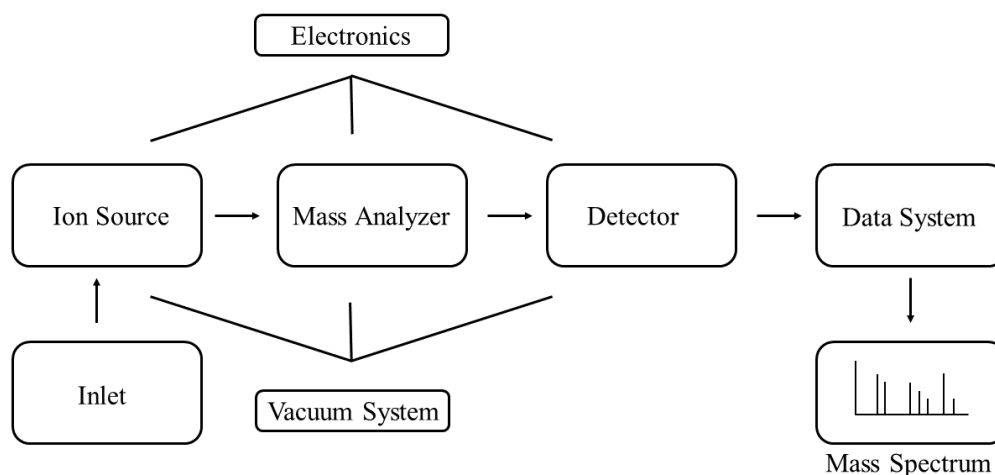


Figure 1.3. Basic components of a mass spectrometer.

Resolution is one of the main performance metrics provided by a mass analyzer.⁴⁷ The ability of the instrument to differentiate between masses is resolving power and it's given as the ratio of the mass of the first peak (m) over the mass difference between two adjacent peaks resolved (Δm):

$$\text{Resolving Power (RP)} = \frac{m}{\Delta m}$$

Low mass resolution leads to limited mass accuracy; therefore, the false discoveries increase in the protein identification. High mass resolution is desired from the mass spectrometer for accurate mass measurements, resolving every species, increasing the accuracy of the quantification. The Orbitrap mass analyzer is nowadays one of the most popular technologies in MS applications.⁴⁸ Ultra-high resolving power over 1,000,000 with Orbitrap technology is now reached.⁴⁹ This technology is recently

preferred to be used in structural proteomics approaches where cross-linking mass spectrometry is used.⁵⁰⁻⁵²

High mass resolution, additionally, allows for the selection of precursor ions in tandem mass spectrometry for structural analysis. Different mass analyzers are combined creating hybrid instruments to increase the mass resolution, mass accuracy, sensitivity, and at the end, capability of the analysis. Tandem mass spectrometry (MS/MS) is a technique where two or more mass analyzers are coupled to characterize and verify structural composition. The schematic of the technique is illustrated in **Figure 1.4**. Ions with particular m/z (precursor ions) are selected and fragmented by fragmentation techniques, such as collision-induced dissociation (CID) and high-energy collisional dissociation (HCD), creating product ions. In CID, ions are activated through collisions with neutral gas molecules (helium, nitrogen, argon) and the kinetic energy is converted to internal energy. This energy leads to bond breakage and fragmentation. HCD is a CID technique that is associated with Orbitrap instruments. The kinetic energy of the precursor ion is increased through voltage offsets and the ions collide with nitrogen molecules. They are transferred back to C-trap and injected to Orbitrap mass analyzer.⁵³

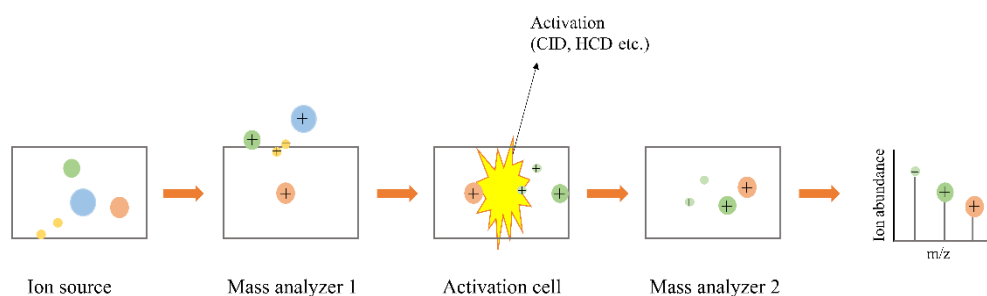


Figure 1.4. Schematic diagram of the functioning of tandem mass spectrometry technique.

- **Importance of Mass Spectrometry Method in Structural Proteomics**

The analysis of protein structure with mass spectrometry is an emerging method compared to conventional structure determination techniques mentioned above. Mass spectrometry offers several advantages: 1) MS is not restricted by sample preparation requirements. 2) It is compatible with low abundant analytes and complex samples; therefore, it can be applied to a wide range of samples, including organelles, cells, and even tissues.⁵⁴ 3) Proteins and protein complexes exhibit dynamic behavior on distinct time scales, thus it is difficult to capture the transitions and states.⁵⁵ Mass spectrometry is, therefore, advantageous for selectively analyzing complex samples containing different protein forms.

Recently, multiple analytical approaches based on mass spectrometry have been derived, such as native mass spectrometry, hydrogen–deuterium exchange mass spectrometry (HDX-MS), and cross-linking mass spectrometry (XL-MS). Native mass spectrometry is a method enabling the analysis and characterization of intact proteins and protein complexes.⁵⁶ HDX-MS provides information about protein conformation and dynamic by measuring the rate of solvent where hydrogens are exchanged with the heavy hydrogen isotope deuterium.⁵⁷ XL-MS is a method used to elucidate the interactions in complex molecules by binding the residues in close proximity via covalent bound. XL-MS method will be explained in detail in following sections.

1.4 Cross-linking Mass Spectrometry (XL-MS) for Proteomics

Cross-linking mass spectrometry (XL-MS) is an evolving method for structural proteomics analyses, with constant improvements in the reagents, software, and instrumentation.⁵⁸ The method is used for the structural elucidation of protein complexes and determination of protein-protein interactions. XL-MS enables us to capture proteins from their native environment and provides information about physical contacts of the proteins by the use of agents (cross-linkers) binding proteins in close proximity. It allows obtaining different protein forms and it is capable of

providing data on proximal distances that could not be easily achieved by other structure determination methods.

The overall workflow, which is demonstrated in **Figure 1.5**, involves the selection of system to work on, cross-linking reaction, sample processing, chromatographic separation, MS analysis, cross-link identification, and analysis of cross-link data.⁵⁹ The proteins of interest are produced with appropriate methods, as described in **Section 1.3.1**, and then cross-linked with cross-linkers via covalent bonding. The cross-linked proteins are enzymatically digested and subjected to analysis using a high-resolution mass spectrometer. The resulting raw mass spectrometry data, which includes both precursor ions (MS) and product ions (MS/MS), is processed using cross-linking software to detect the proteins involved and the specific points of interaction. The identification of proteins is based on unique peptides searched against spectral and protein libraries.

The cross-linking reactions and the agents used will be reviewed in detail in the following sections.

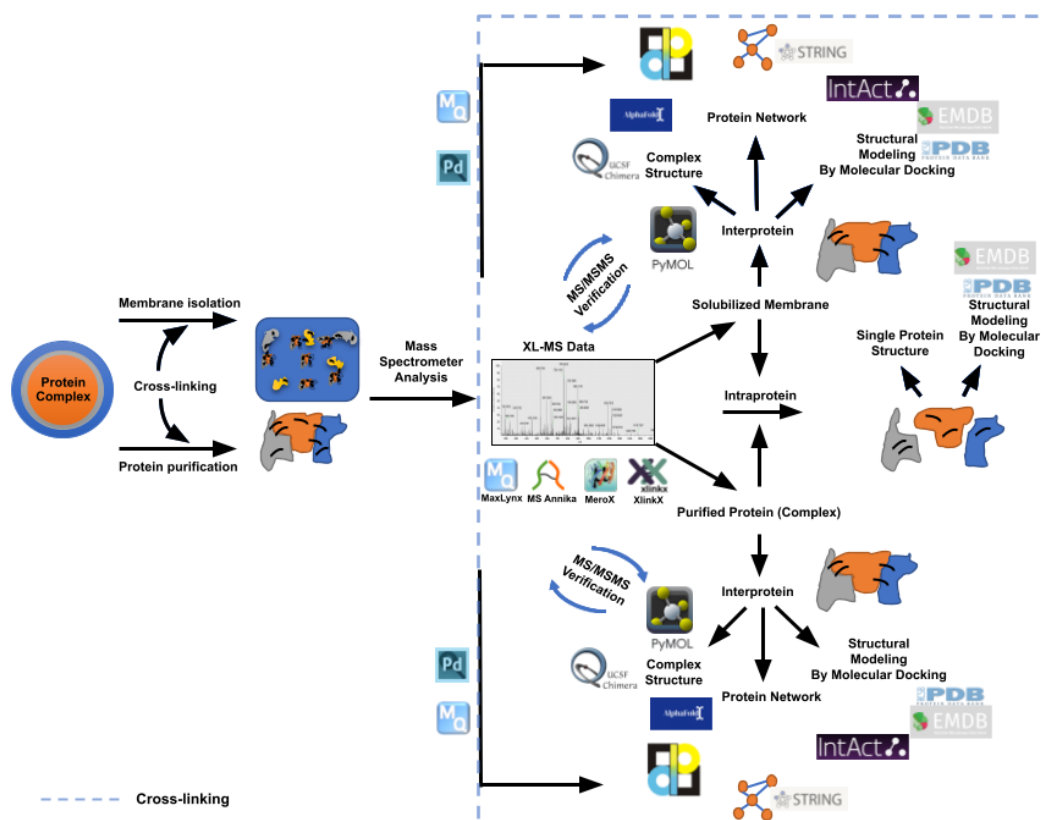


Figure 1.5. General workflow of cross-linking mass spectrometry (Akkulak et al., 2023).

1.4.1 Cross-Linking Chemicals and Process

Cross-linkers are chemicals that connect two specific residues of proteins with their reactive groups at the end of a spacer arm via covalent bond. Different cross-linkers exhibit different reactivity towards the side chains of amino acids. Amine-reactive cross-linkers, such as BS3 and DSBU, bind to lysine amino acid which has primary amines at the N-terminus and in the side chain. It is also suggested in the literature that NHS esters, such as DSBU, BS3, DSS, and DSSO, could show reactivity towards serine, threonine, and tyrosine amino acids.⁶⁰

Cross-linkers are categorized based on their functions and MS features, as demonstrated in **Figure 1.6**. When their functions are considered, they could be homobifunctional or heterobifunctional. Homobifunctional cross-linkers possess

two identical reactive end groups and they are mostly used for intra-molecular cross-link formation with one-step reactions. Heterobifunctional cross-linkers, on the other hand, have different reactive groups at either end of spacer arm. The MS features of the cross-linkers change among the types. Some cross-linkers are cleaved when the fragmentation is applied, whereas others are not. The cleavable cross-linkers produce signature ions and the cross-linked peptide pairs are distinguished by their mass differences during the analysis. Non-cleavable cross-linkers, on the contrary, cannot be cleaved during fragmentation. The representative cleavable and non-cleavable cross-linkers are illustrated in **Figure 1.7**. The cleavable cross-linker DSBU and the non-cleavable cross-linker BS3 are two cross-linkers most commonly used in the literature.⁵⁸

Besides the functionality and MS features of cross-linkers, targeted functional groups, spacer arm length, water solubility, and membrane permeability are the important factors of the selection process.

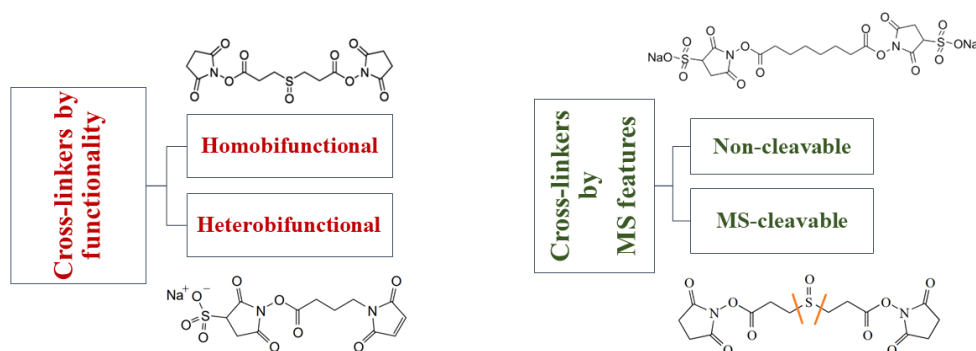


Figure 1.6. Categorization of cross-linkers by their functionality and MS features.

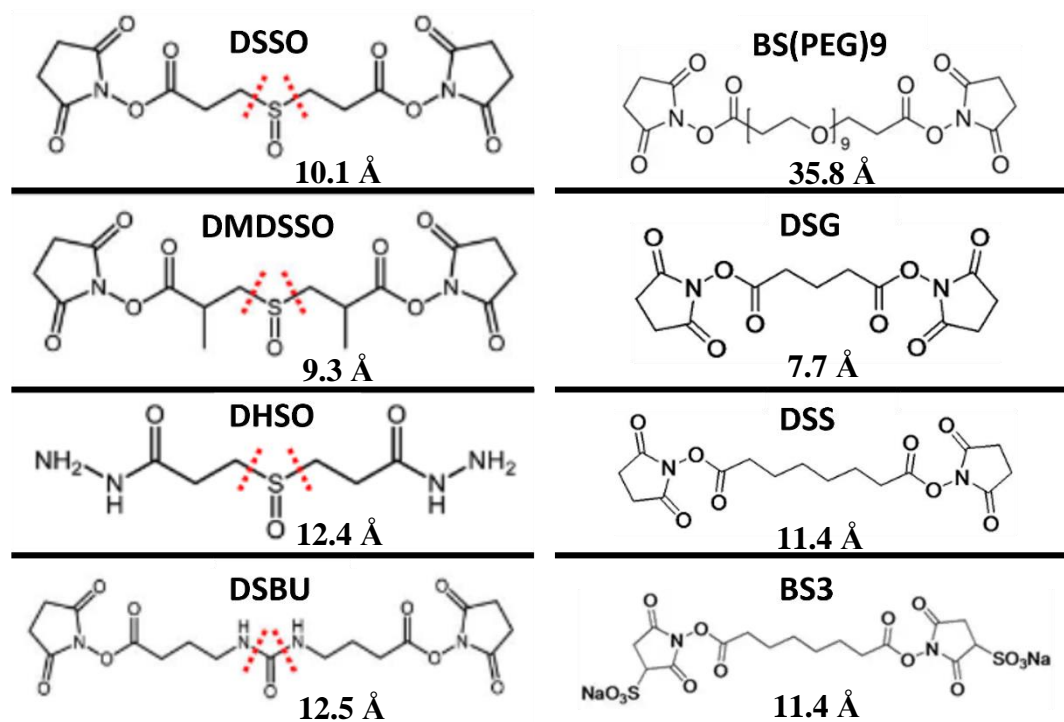


Figure 1.7. Representative MS-cleavable and non-cleavable cross-linkers, regenerated from “Cross-Linking Mass Spectrometry: An Emerging Technology for Interactomics and Structural Biology” by Yu et. al. *Anal. Chem.* 2018, 90 (1), 144–165.

Several types of connections are possible in the systems, as illustrated in **Figure 1.8**. The cross-linked products are distinguished as mono-links (type 0, dead-end), where one of the reactive end groups is bound to a residue, intra-molecular (type 1), where the cross-linker connects to different peptides in a protein, inter-protein (type 2), where the cross-linker connects to peptides of different proteins.⁶¹ Cross-linkers are the key parts in the identification and characterization of cross-linked products. The generation of different types of products after the cross-linking reaction with appropriate cross-linkers leads to the accurate and reliable results.

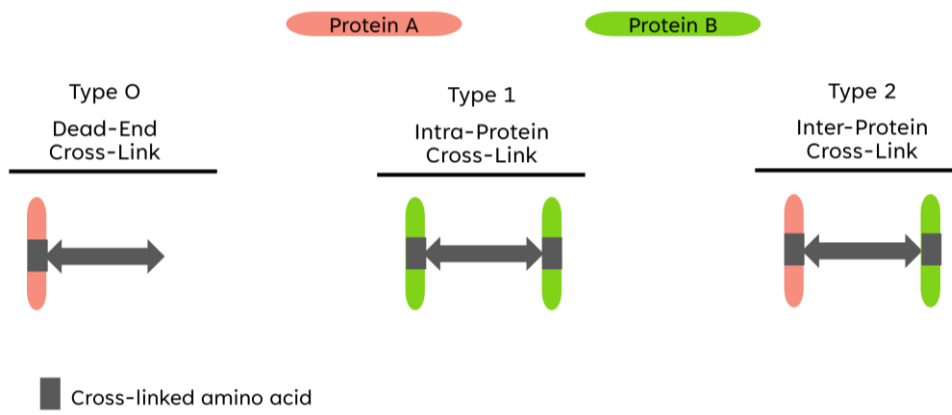


Figure 1.8. The three types of cross-linker connections.

1.5 State-of-the-art and Motivation

FtsH is known to form a mega complex with HflK and HflC. This complex plays a chaperone role to stabilize proteins in mitochondria and a modulator role to limit ATPase activity of FtsH. The structures of HflK and HflC are elucidated; however, the complete structure of FtsH protein in the complex is yet to be known.¹⁷ Thus, this study has attempted to elucidate the structure of this complex by determining inter- and intra-protein interactions with XL-MS method, along with the attempt to decipher the protein-protein interactions of FtsH, HflK, and HflC. XL-MS is an integrative and complementary method to conventional structural biology methods used to obtain distance restraints and structural information⁶². It has been applied to purified proteins/protein complexes and a wide range of system-wide studies. Various cell lysates, including human cell lines⁶³⁻⁶⁵ and *Drosophila* embryos⁶⁶, organelles^{67,68}, tissues^{69,70}, as well as living bacterial^{52,71,72} and human cells⁷³⁻⁷⁵, have been studied using this technique so far. In this study, the samples of solubilized membrane and purified protein of FtsH-HflK-HflC were cross-linked with DSBU and BS3, which are two commonly used cross-linkers for structural biology studies. The residues of proteins in close proximity were covalently bound to each other via cross-linkers. Cross-linked proteins were then enzymatically digested and analyzed by high-resolution mass spectrometer. The data obtained were then analyzed by four commonly used software, MaxLynx, MeroX, MS Annika, and XlinkX. XL-MS is an evolving method and there is no gold standard for software use. In the literature, the XL-MS software were compared using synthetic peptide libraries⁷⁶⁻⁷⁹; however, this study utilizes a real biological system for software comparison. Moreover, the software were compared by applying strict parameters (e.g. 1% of False Discovery Rate) in the studies so far⁸⁰; however, in this study, the interactions were verified manually using raw MS and MS/MS data as well. The outcomes of this study will provide novel interactions of FtsH-HflK-HflC that could not be resolved and the physical interactions of FtsH, HflK, and HflC with other proteins to the literature. The roles of the FtsH-HflK-HflC complex in bacterial quality control mechanism

will be enlightened. Moreover, the overall workflow will guide researchers in identifying protein interactions by XL-MS and using XL-MS data.

CHAPTER 2

MATERIALS AND METHOD

2.1 Protein Expression and Purification

In order to obtain inter-protein and intra-protein interactions of the FtsH-HflK-HflC membrane protein complex two different samples were produced: Solubilized membrane and purified protein. Detailed information from transformation and over-expression to the purification is presented in the following sections.

2.1.1 Over-Expression of Proteins

- **FtsH-HflK-HflC Transformation and Over-expression**

A 50 μ L of Lemo21 (DE3) competent *E. coli* cells were thawed on ice for 10 mins. A 1 μ L of the plasmid (~100 ng total) (obtained from BvK LaB, TARLA) containing FtsH-HflK-HflC genes was added. Heat shock was given to the cells at 42°C for 10 seconds. The mixture was placed on ice for 5 mins. A 950 μ L of LB broth was added and the mixture was placed at 37°C for an hour. A 20 μ L of cells diluted 10-fold and 1 μ L of ampicillin were spread onto the plate and incubated overnight. A single colony was picked for each and used to inoculate a 125 mL preculture with 100 μ g/mL ampicillin and 50 μ g/mL Spectinomycin in a 2L Erlenmeyer flask. The cells were grown overnight at 37°C while shaking. The 2xYT expression media was inoculated at 1:50 dilution. 20 mL of overnight culture was added to 1L of media in a 2L Erlenmeyer flask for over-expression. The cells were incubated at 37°C while shaking until 0.4-0.8 OD was reached. The cells were induced with 0.4 mM IPTG and 0.2% arabinose at 30°C for 4 hours. After 4 hours, the cells were harvested at 5000 rpm for 25 mins. The cell pellets were frozen till the separation and purification.

2.1.2 Cell Lysis

The same procedure was applied for all samples. The cell pellets were resuspended in 40 mL of the breaking buffer (50 mM HEPES, 100 mM NaCl, 2 mM of MgCl₂, 0.2 mg/mL lysozyme, 0.2 mg/mL RNase, 0.2 mg/mL benzonase, 1 mM phenylmethylsulfonyl fluoride (PMSF), ½ tablet protease inhibitor) for 1L of culture. 12L of culture was used for the total protein used. The resuspension was incubated at 4°C for 30 mins using a magnetic stirrer. The cell pellets were sonicated with 40% amplitude, 2s on/8s off for 2 mins in 2 cycles. The sonicated cell pellets were centrifuged at 10.000 g for an hour, and the supernatant was taken.

2.1.3 Membrane Separation and Solubilization

The supernatant was centrifuged at 100.000 g for an hour to separate the membrane. The supernatant was discarded, and the waxy membrane pellet was weighed. 2% of n-Dodecyl-B-D-Maltoside (DDM) (w/w) and 15 mL of breaking buffer were added, and the samples were incubated at 4°C for an hour using a magnetic stirrer. Following the solubilization, the solubilized membrane was transferred to a prechilled ultracentrifuge tube and centrifuged at 100.000 g for 45 mins to separate the soluble part.

2.1.4 Protein Purification

3 mL Strep-tactin Sepharose (IBA Life Sciences) resin was used for 1L of culture and the resin was equilibrated using the wash buffer (100 mM HEPES pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl, 0.01% DDM). The protein extract was added to the matrix slowly and incubation was done for at least 30 mins. The flow through was collected and the column was washed with 50 mL of wash buffer. The protein was eluted with 5 mL

of elution buffer (100 mM HEPES pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl, 0.01% DDM, 2.5 mM desthiobiotin) 6 times. The elutions were concentrated separately to 200 μ L using 100 kDa MWCO concentrators equilibrated with the wash buffer. The OD280nm and OD260/280 were measured with NanoDrop UV-Vis Spectrophotometer (AllSheng).

2.2 Cross-Linking

Cross-linking reactions with disuccinimidyl dibutyric urea (DSBU) (Thermo Fisher Sigma, USA) and bis(sulfosuccinimidyl)suberate (BS3) (Thermo Fisher Sigma, USA) were carried out on the samples according to manufacturer's instructions.^{50,63,81-83} A 50 mM of cross-linker stock solution was prepared with 46.9 μ L of DMSO and 1 mg of DSBU. A 50 mM of cross-linker stock solution was, in addition, prepared with 70 μ L of ddH₂O and 2 mg of BS3. 2.5 μ L of cross-linker (final concentration of 10 mM) was added to 10 μ L of solubilized membrane and 5 μ L of cross-linker (final concentration of 2.5 mM) was added to 100 μ L of purified protein sample. The mixture was incubated at room temperature for 60 mins. After the incubation, 20-fold Tris-HCl (1M, pH 8.0) was added to stop the reaction.

2.3 Proteolytic Digestion

The solubilized membrane and purified protein samples were extracted in 100 μ L of 50 mM ammonium bicarbonate (pH 7.8) and incubated with 11 μ L of 100 mM dithiothreitol (DTT) for 50 min at 60 °C to denature the proteins. Free cysteines were alkylated with 22 μ L of 100 mM iodoacetamide (IAA) for 30 min at room temperature in the dark. Then 50 μ L 0.1 μ g/ μ L trypsin was added and samples were incubated at 37 °C for 18 h. Samples were dried in miVac at room temperature and dry peptide samples were dissolved in 0.1% formic acid. Before the MS analysis

peptide concentrations were determined with Pierce™ Quantitative Peptide Assay (Thermo Fisher Scientific, USA).

2.4 MS-based Proteomics Analysis

A 1 µg of digested samples (peptides) were analyzed by the UltiMate™ WPS-3000RS nanoLC system coupled with Orbitrap Fusion Lumos (Thermo Fisher Scientific, USA). The peptides were separated on Acclaim™ PepMap™ 100 C18 HPLC Columns (3 µm, 0.075 mm × 500 mm, Thermo Fisher Scientific, USA). The mobile phase A containing 0.1% aqueous formic acid and mobile phase B comprising 0.1% formic acid in 80% acetonitrile were set to a gradient; 0–5 min, 4–4% (B); 5–130 min, 4–35% (B); 130–150 min, 35–50% (B); 150–153 min, 50–100% (B); 153–168 min, 100–100% (B); 168–170 min, 100–4% (B); and 170–180 min, 4–4% (B). The MS and MS/MS spectra were collected with a mass range of m/z 300–1800 in positive ionization ion mode. The high-energy C-trap dissociation (HCD) fragmentation was performed with nitrogen gas, and collision energies of 25%, 30%, and 35%. The precursor and the product ions were detected at 120K resolution and 15K resolution, respectively.

2.5 Data Analysis

2.5.1 Protein Profiling

The raw MS data were analyzed via MaxQuant^{41,42} through the whole *E. coli* proteome (ID: UP000000625) to profile the proteins present in the samples, using the parameters in **Table 2.1**.

- **MaxQuant Search Parameters**

MaxQuant parameters were optimized through several conditions applied for each run. The most protein group yielding, and the least decoy and contaminant existing parameters were applied during the analysis. The optimized parameters are shown in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1. Protein search parameters used for MaxQuant analysis.

Type	Parameter	Value
Group-specific Parameters	Variable Modifications	Oxidation (M), Acetyl (Protein N-term)
	Fixed Modifications	Carbamidomethyl (C)
	Enzyme	Trypsin
	Max. Missed Cleavages	1
	Max. Charge	4
	Main Search Peptide Tolerance	5 ppm
	First Search Peptide Tolerance	20 ppm
Global Parameters	Mass Spectrometry (MS/MS)	20 ppm
	Match Tolerance	
	Min. Peptide Length	7
	Max. Peptide Mass	4600 Da
	Protein FDR	0.01
	PSM FDR	0.01
Protein Quantification	Unique Peptides	

- **Intensity Normalization**

Proteins obtained from MaxQuant analysis were compared based on their intensity. The intensities of each protein were divided by the sum of the intensities and then

the % ratio was calculated for relative protein quantitation. Proteins were sorted from high abundance to low abundance.

- **Gene Ontology (GO) Search**

The GO annotation search was carried out on STRING (v.11.5)⁸⁴ by applying advanced settings of required score as highest score (0.900) and FDR Stringency as 1%. The EnrichmentMap, which is a Cytoscape (v.3.9.1)⁸⁵ App, was used for the visualization of the results of gene-set enrichment. Generic enrichment results were used for operation and p-values were operated for visualization as radial heat-maps. Gene sets are represented by nodes and the sizes show the number of genes.

2.5.2 Structural Proteomics

In the structural proteomics part of the data analysis, the most commonly used four software were utilized for the cross-linking search to identify inter- and intra-protein interactions. The raw MS data were pre-processed when it is required, as described below. The search by the software was completed through target protein sequences and whole proteome. The interactions obtained were further manually verified using the raw MS and MS/MS data. The processes can be found in detail in the following sections.

2.5.2.1 Data Pre-processing

- **Conversion of Raw MS File**

The data format required by the software to process the data and identify cross-linked peptides varies from software to software. The raw data were used for MaxLynx⁷⁹, MS Annika⁷⁸ and XlinkX⁷⁷ without any conversion, whereas the data were converted into mzml file for MeroX.^{76,81,86,87} In order to convert raw data to mzml ProteoWizard⁸⁸ software library was used.

- **Target Protein Sequences - FASTA**

Processing through the software was carried out by using the FASTA file comprising the sequences of FtsH, HflK, HflC and by retrieving whole *E. coli* proteome. UniProt was used to retrieve FASTA files. First, FASTA files of these four proteins were downloaded from the UniProtKB database and proteome of *E. coli* was downloaded from Proteomes database.

2.5.2.2 XL-MS Search

- **Software Workflow Integration**

The four software implemented to this study for the cross-link search were MaxLynx, MeroX, MS Annika, and XlinkX. MaxLynx is integrated into the MaxQuant environment. MS Annika and XlinkX are the two nodes of Proteome Discoverer (Thermo Fisher Scientific, USA). They both have different workflows that must be integrated into Proteome Discoverer 2.5. MS Annika workflow is present at the website of MS Annika, whereas XlinkX workflow is directly present in Proteome Discoverer 2.5 Cross-linking workflows. MeroX is specified for cross-linked peptide identification; therefore, they have their own specific algorithm of the software.

- **Search Parameters**

The overall cross-linking search parameters are presented in **Table 2.2**. C-terminals of lysine and arginine residues were defined as specific protease cleavage sites, and maximum missed cleavages were set to 3. Precursor and fragment ion mass tolerances were limited to 10 ppm and 20 ppm. Carbamidomethylation at cysteine was assigned as the fixed modification, while the oxidation at methionine was defined as the variable modification. Signal to noise ratio was set to 2.0. The minimum precursor mass limit was 1000 Da, whereas the maximum precursor mass limit was 20000 Da. The default settings were used instead. The cross-link modification sites were set as Lysine, Serine, Threonine, and Tyrosine in MeroX,

MS Annika and XlinkX; however, only Lysine was able to be chosen in MaxLynx. False Discovery Rate (FDR) was defined as 1%. The maximum C α -C α distance was defined as 30Å as suggested by previous studies.^{87,89,90}

Table 2.2. Cross-linking search parameters.

Minimum Precursor Mass Limit	1000 Da
Maximum Precursor Mass Limit	20000 Da
S/N Threshold	2
Precursor Mass Tolerance	10 ppm
Fragment Mass Tolerance	20 ppm
Maximum Missed Cleavage	3
Minimum Peptide Length (AAs)	5
Maximum Peptide Length (AAs)	40
FDR	1%
Maximum C α -C α Distance	30Å
* Other parameters were kept as default parameters for all the software.	
** The corresponding parameters for all the software are applied as above.	

▪ **Computer Specifications**

The specifications of the computer used were Intel i5 9300-H Processor with 4 Cores (8 Logical Cores), and 8GB DDR4 2666MHz RAM. The maximum RAM usage was limited to 5GB of RAM (3GB RAM was assigned for the operating system). The capacity of the processor and the amount of free RAM Memory amount were two limiting factors.

2.5.2.3 Data Verification

The spectra obtained from different software were verified in MS and MS/MS levels through the raw MS file. FreeStyle software (Thermo Fisher Scientific, USA) was used to visualize and qualitatively analyze raw mass spectrometry data. First, MS/MS spectra, where the peptide fingerprints and cross-linker diagnostic ions exist, given by software were matched with the raw data. Then, m/z value of two peptides and cross-linker (MS spectra) were examined by charge states.

2.5.3 Protein-Protein Interactions (PPIs) Search

In order to understand the physical and functional interactions of complex proteins in biological system, STRING (v.11.5)⁸⁴, IntAct^{91,92}, DIP⁹³, MINT⁹⁴ and Cytoscape (v.3.9.1)⁸⁵ were used. The search on STRING was done by applying advanced settings of required score as highest score (0.900) and FDR Stringency as 1%.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Protein Expression and Identification

All the raw MS data were analyzed by MaxQuant to identify proteins in the purified protein and solubilized membrane samples prior to the cross-linking search. MaxQuant is designed for qualitative and quantitative analysis of protein isolates as well as complex mixtures. The algorithms of MaxQuant include the detection of precursor ions (MS), the verification of peptides (MS/MS) searching against the database and identification of proteins based on unique peptides.

The protein search parameters used for the MaxQuant analysis are given in **Table 2.1**. The protein search was carried out against *E. coli* proteome on purified protein and solubilized membrane samples cross-linked with DSBU and BS3. The number of proteins obtained from the DSBU cross-linked samples of purified protein and solubilized membrane was 160 and 511, respectively (**Appendix B**). The normalized % ratio of FtsH in purified protein sample was 70%, followed by HflK with 4% and HflC with 3%. However, the runs could not be completed in the samples cross-linked with BS3. Since the matrix used in this study was very wide and complex, the analysis through whole proteome of *E. coli* (4403 proteins) was difficult for the software to handle. This problem can be solved with the use of a super computer; however, it is not feasible for routine use. The complexity of the samples can be understood from the normalized TIC (Total Ion Chromatogram), which is presented in **Appendix C**. Since the mass of peptides is high when non-cleavable cross-linkers are bound, the ionization of the peptides and intensity of the peaks decrease⁹⁵, as can be shown in **Figure 3.1**. In addition, fragmentation of non-cleavable cross-linkers occurs randomly from carbon-carbon bonds, and the resulting carbocations are not stable. The intensities of these fragments are low and there are lots of random peaks.

Thus, the identification of non-cleavable cross-linkers is challenging for the software.

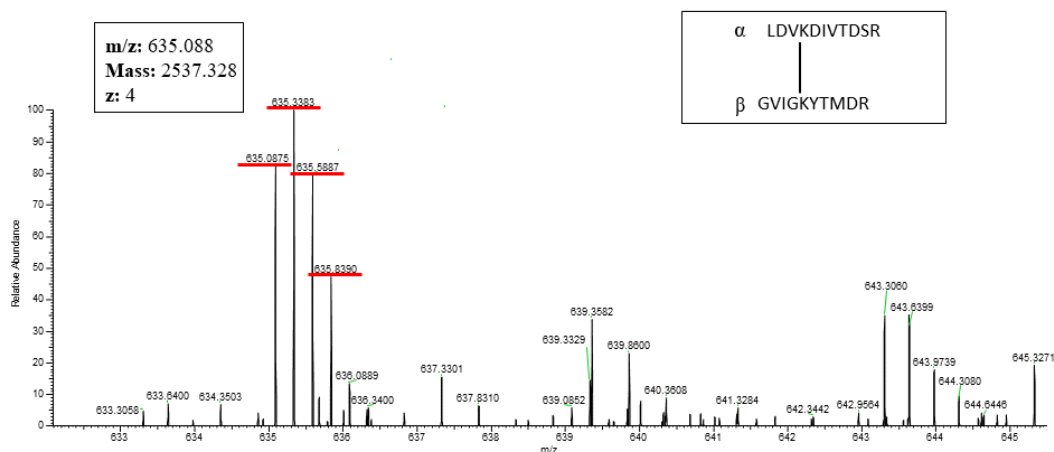


Figure 3.1. The representative MS spectrum of BS3-cross-linked two peptides (alpha and beta).

3.2 Cross-linker Assessment

In order to investigate the difference between two commonly used cross-linkers in the literature, MS cleavable cross-linker DSBU (disuccinimidyl dibutyric urea) and MS non-cleavable cross-linker BS3 (bis(sulfosuccinimidyl)suberate) (**Figure 1.7**) were chosen. The performance of these cross-linkers during the identification of inter-protein and intra-protein interactions was tested.

The samples were analyzed through the *E. coli* proteome by four cross-linking software, MaxLynx, MeroX, MS Annika, and XlinkX to elucidate the inter- and intra-protein interactions, and obtain the protein-protein interactions (PPIs). The analysis of the samples cross-linked with DSBU were completed by all software, yielding comprehensive and valuable interactions. The total number of inter-protein and intra-protein interactions of complex proteins and interactions with other

proteins was 444, as will be described in detail in **Section 3.3**. However, the analysis of the samples cross-linked with BS3 could not be completed in all software.

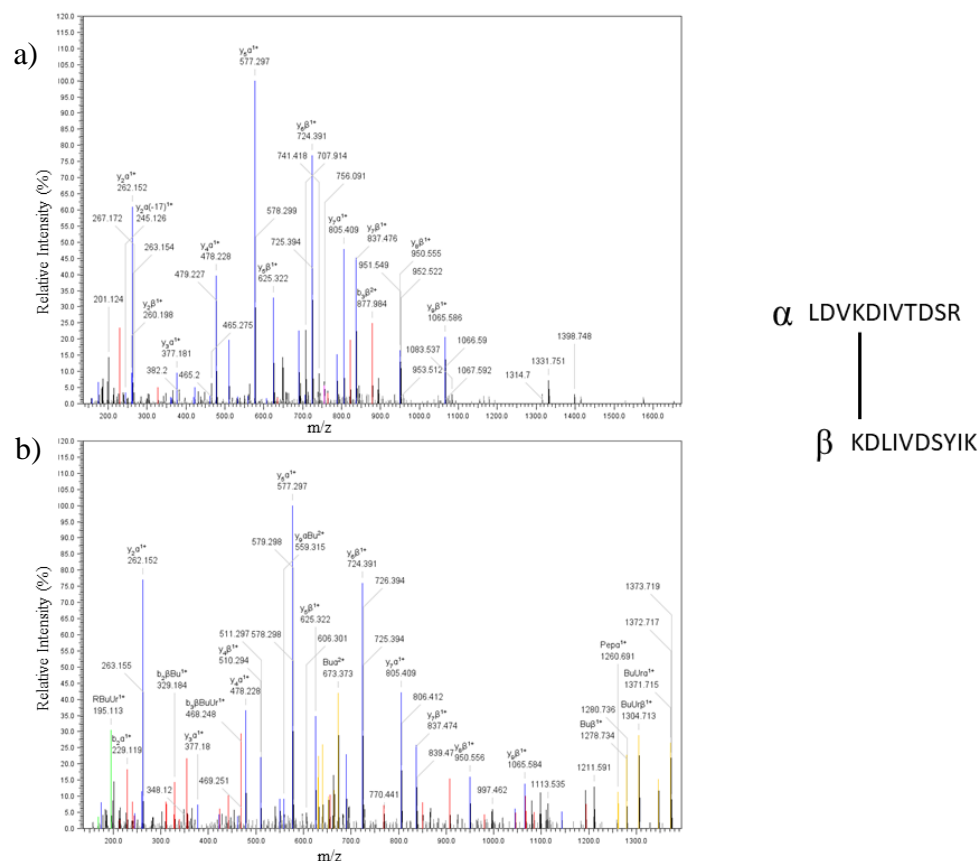


Figure 3.2. Representative MS/MS spectra of the purified protein sample of FtsH-HflK-HflC complex cross-linked with a) BS3 and b) DSBU.

The identification of peptide pairs cross-linked with MS cleavable cross-linkers in MS/MS is straightforward compared to the peptide pairs cross-linked with non-cleavable cross-linkers. The representative MS/MS spectra of the purified protein sample of FtsH-HflK-HflC complex are demonstrated in **Figure 3.2**. Since MS cleavable cross-linkers yield two pairs of signature ions when fragmented, the search algorithms of the software can distinguish the ions of individual cross-linked peptides by the mass differences. Therefore, identification is improved with cleavable cross-linkers.⁹⁶ The fragmentation of peptide backbone is also enhanced with the MS-cleavable cross-linker.⁹⁷ The DSBU cross-linker fragments (Bu and

BuUr) and other fragmentation products representing two peptides are shown in **Figure 3.2b**. The fragmentation of peptides cross-linked with BS3 was random and it did not occur as much as the peptides cross-linked with DSBU in 3 FASTA search, as can be seen in **Figure 3.2a**.

The application of BS3 was not successful in the proteome-wide cross-link search since the runs could not be completed. The identification of peptide pairs with non-cleavable cross-linkers is very challenging especially when larger, and more complex samples are analyzed.⁸⁰ The bacterial membrane used in this study was very complex and the protein complex studied was considerably large. Through the identification of cross-linked peptide pairs, the search space for non-cleavable cross-linkers is in n-square time complexity. The number of peptide pairs that meet the precursor mass limit is quadratic over the linear peptide number in the database since the pairwise interactions are considered.⁹⁸ The quadratic time complexity increases with the proteome-wide studies. However, in the case of cleavable cross-linkers, the signature ions produced by cross-linked peptide pairs reduce the search space.⁹⁹

The proteome-wide analysis with DSBU-cross-linked samples provided very comprehensive and valuable information about the protein-protein interactions. Considering the results described above, only the DSBU cross-linker was chosen to proceed with.

3.3 Protein Interactions in the Complex

3.3.1 Cross-link Identification and Verification

The intra- and inter-protein interactions within and between the large multimeric membrane protein complex were analyzed in the purified form and over-expressed in the solubilized membrane. In order to identify the inter- and intra-protein

interactions, signature fragment ions representing cross-linkers and peptides were searched through four software.

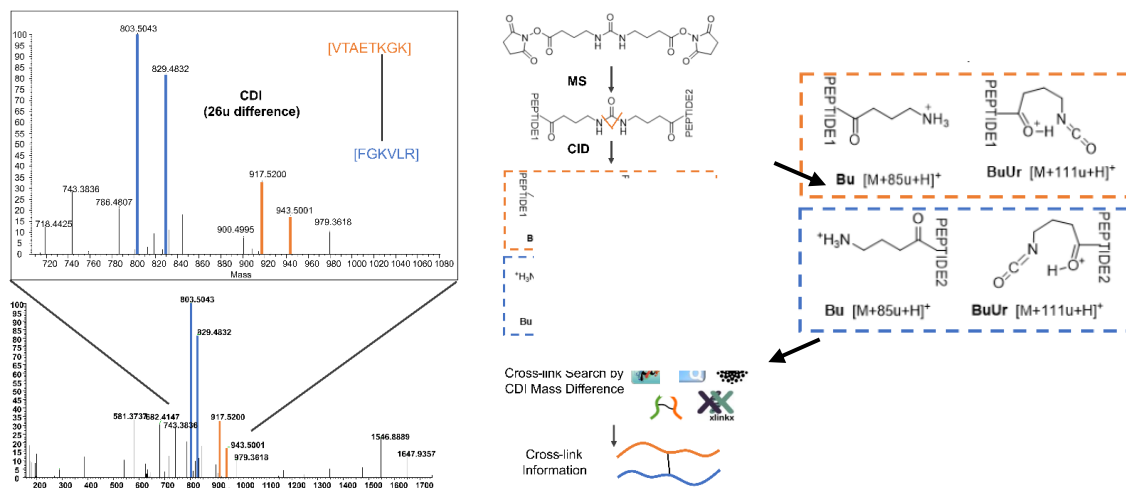


Figure 3.3. Fingerprint fragments confirming cross-linked peptides.

A representative MS/MS spectrum of a cross-linked peptide pair is presented in **Figure 3.3**. DSBU provided a significant advantage since software were able to confirm specific interactions using the mass difference between two fragments of cross-links, as mentioned before. The DSBU was covalently connected to residues of proteins using NHS ester reactive sides. The Collision-Induced Dissociation (CID) cleaves DSBU between carbonyl and amine parts and results in two characteristic diagnostic ions. The diagnostic ion corresponds to the peptide and cross-linker with protonated amine group at the cleavage point (PEPTIDE 1/2+Bu), which provides 85u mass adduct on the peptide. In **Figure 3.3**, the FGKVLRL peptide with Bu part of the cross-linker on the lysine gives the peak of 803.5043. Additionally, the VTAETKKGK peptide with Bu part of the cross-linker on the lysine peak appears at 917.5200. The other diagnostic ion is the BuUr part of the cross-linker bound to the peptide, where the nitrogen on amine group loses one proton due to the cross-linker cleavage, resulting in a 111u mass adduct to the connecting peptide (PEPTIDE 1/2+BuUr). **Figure 3.3** shows the FGKVLRL peptide with BuUr

part of the cross-linker on the lysine giving the peak of 829.4832, and the VTAETK GK peptide with BuUr part of the cross-linker on the lysine peak appearing at 943.5001. The cross-link search was conducted by software to search 26 u mass difference owing to the cleavage of the cross-linker described above.

The XL-MS software predominantly uses lysine specific cross-linking sites to identify interactions. Literature also suggests that serine, threonine, and tyrosine could be cross-linked to DSBU.⁶⁰ However, corresponding connections have not been validated in tandem MS level up to date. Among the four software, only MeroX enables simultaneous multi/variable amino acid-crosslinker search. A representative fragmentation pattern confirming threonine-DSBU interactions is shown in **Figure 3.4**.

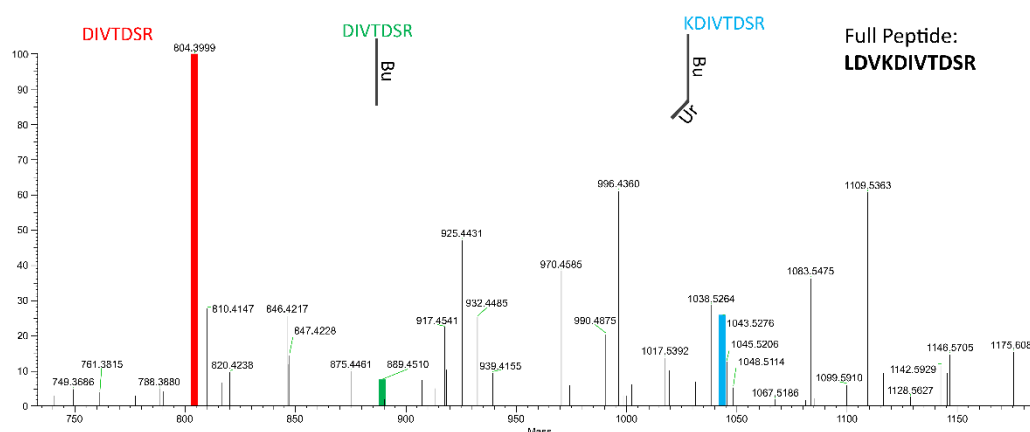


Figure 3.4. Different cleavage patterns of the cross-linker and backbone revealing the cross-link between threonine and lysine.

The deconvoluted MS/MS spectrum of LDVKDIVTDSR-GVIGKYTmDR peptide pair was given in **Figure 3.4**. In addition to two diagnostic ions specific to peptide-DSBU (85 and 111), several ions were observed to validate the threonine-

DSBU connection. The peak at the 1043.5276 mass unit belongs to Y8 cleavage of the peptide LDVKDIVTDSR and BuUr part of the cross-linker which is KDIVTDSR+BuUr. In this case, the cross-linker is bound to lysine. The peak at 889.4510 mass unit belongs to Y7 cleavage of the peptide LDVKDIVTDSR and Bu part of the cross-linker which is DIVTDSR+Bu. In this example, there is no lysine in the sequence, but threonine. Furthermore, the peak at 804.3999 mass unit belongs to Y7 cleavage of the LDVKDIVTDSR yielding the DIVTDSR without the cross-linker. Data suggested that the DSBUs were linked to both lysine and threonine residues and corresponding peptides were co-eluted.⁴⁶

The cross-link search through the whole proteome yielded 1093 unique interactions (**Appendix D**). The total number of inter-protein and intra-protein connections were 620 and 473, respectively (**Appendix K and L**).

3.3.2 Inter-protein Interactions

There were 30 inter-protein interactions obtained from four software and two different samples. Excluding repeating and unspecified connections from different software, 18 interactions between the complex proteins were found (**Table 3.1**). Two connections in the table shown as unspecified connections (198-141/143 and 294-328/330/331/333) confirm also that the unspecified connections are the link not on amino acid level, but in consecutive peptide levels allowing uncertainty up to 4 AAs. Four of the interactions were found through all four software considering both samples. Among them, one key interaction between FtsH and HflK was only found by MaxLynx from the purified protein sample. Considering that a single cross-link found can improve the quality of further studies such as modelling, this interaction is a valuable result¹⁰⁰. The number of interactions between FtsH and HflC was 7, and the number of interactions between HflK and HflC was 12 from all the software and samples. The highest number of unique connections was obtained from the purified protein complex sample and most of them were by MaxLynx (11 interactions).

MeroX resulted in 5 unspecific connections from the purified protein complex and 2 from the solubilized membrane.

Table 3.1. Inter-protein interactions of three proteins in the complex obtained in two samples (PP: purified protein, SM: solubilized membrane) analyzed through four software, MaxLynx, MeroX, MS Annika, XlinkX.

	Connection Points	MaxLynx		MeroX		MS Annika		XlinkX	
		PP	SM	PP	SM	PP	SM	PP	SM
FtsH-HflK	31-133	+							
FtsH-HflC	84-120	+				+		+	
	61-211	+							
	60-211	+				+			
	31-63	+		+*		+		+	
	31-36					+			
	60-120					+			
	61 - 120		+						
HflK-HflC	172-36	+				+			
	346-327	+	+		+	+		+	
	172-122	+				+			
	294-327	+							
	198-137	+	+	+*	+	+	+	+	+
	294 -281	+						+	+
	198 - 141/143			+*	+*				
	294 - 248		+	+*	+*	+		+	+
	294 - 328/330/331/333			+*					
	198 - 82							+	
	198 - 84							+	
310 - 281						+		+	

*Unspecific connections

3.3.3 Intra-protein Interactions

A total of 119 intra-protein interactions were obtained from four software and two different samples, and 86 of them were non-repeating and unique interactions (**Appendix E**). There were 70, 14, and 2 intra-protein interactions of FtsH, HflC, and HflK, respectively from all the software and samples. In the purified protein sample, XlinkX gave the highest result with 39 interactions. The lowest number of unique intra-protein interactions was obtained by MS Annika in the solubilized membrane sample with 7 interactions. Fifteen of the interactions were found in all the software considering both samples.

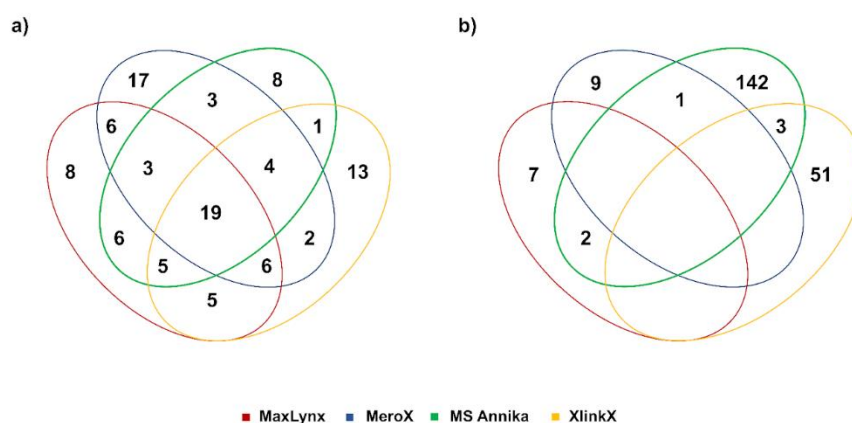


Figure 3.5. Venn diagram of interactions a) within and between complex proteins and b) interactions of complex proteins with other proteins.

The non-repeating and specific inter- and intra-protein interactions found in both samples were compared through all software based on the interactions within and between the complex proteins and the interactions of proteins in the complex with other proteins (**Figure 3.5**). Nineteen of the connections within and between the complex proteins were obtained in all four software. MeroX gave the highest result with a total of 60 connections, whereas MS Annika gave the least with 49

connections. MeroX, in addition, gave the highest number of interactions (17 interactions) not found in other software (**Figure 3.5a**). On the other hand, most of the interactions between the complex proteins and other proteins were obtained through MS Annika (**Figure 3.5b**). Compared with the previous results, MS Annika surprisingly caught a successful number of protein-protein interactions with 148 interactions including both samples. On the contrary, MaxLynx and MeroX gave the least number of interactions (9 and 10, respectively). Furthermore, there are not any common interactions found by all software. MeroX and MS Annika found 1 common interaction, MaxLynx and MS Annika found 2, MS Annika and XlinkX found 3. The utilization of the four software provided us deep insight about the protein-protein interactions in the samples. All of the interactions of complex proteins with other proteins can be found in **Appendix M**.

The FtsH-HflK-HflC complex was analyzed with the FASTA files of only these three proteins in all software for close-up examination of the interactions and for the comparison with proteome-wide search. The most abundant 10 inter- and intra-protein interactions from both samples were listed in **Appendix F**. Additional miscleavages and modified peptides were indicated in the table with different symbols. Since serine, threonine and tyrosine modifications were set as modification sides, it was clearly observed binding of the cross-linker to a residue other than lysine (**Figure 3.4**).

The interactions were further manually verified using raw data (MS and MS/MS) and 120 out of 160 interactions were successfully validated. The verification of results obtained from MeroX, MS Annika, and XlinkX was possible, whereas in MaxLynx the verification was difficult since the MS/MS spectrum could not be visualized in the software.

3.3.4 Visualization of Interactions on Protein Structures

Intra-protein and inter-protein interactions determined by various XL-MS software were visualized in previously published experimental structures and AlphaFold2-predicted models of the components of the membrane protein complex, FtsH-HflK-HflC in **Figure 3.6**. The cross-links between HflK and HflC, and their interactions between FtsH were confirmed in the recently published cryo-EM structure of the FtsH-HflK-HflC complex.¹⁷ In the cryo-EM structure (PDB: 7WI3), HflK and HflC form a heterodimer with a close dimer interface, and the HflK-HflC dimer forms a dodecamer, comprising 12 HflK and HflC monomers. Thus, the cross-links between HflK and HflC may represent the connections between either the HflK-HflC heterodimer or neighboring HflK and HflC monomers. Moreover, cross-links between FtsH and HflK-HflC were determined only between the periplasmic region of FtsH, and stomatin/prohibitin/flotillin/HflK/C (SPFH) domain and N-terminal of HflK-HflC proteins, aligning with interactions observed in the cryo-EM structure. Both intra- and inter-protein cross-links obtained by MaxLynx and MeroX were well distributed on the experimental structure of the membrane protein complex; however, less number of interactions were determined between FtsH and HflK-HflC with MaxLynx and MeroX, compared to those obtained by MS Annika and XlinkX.

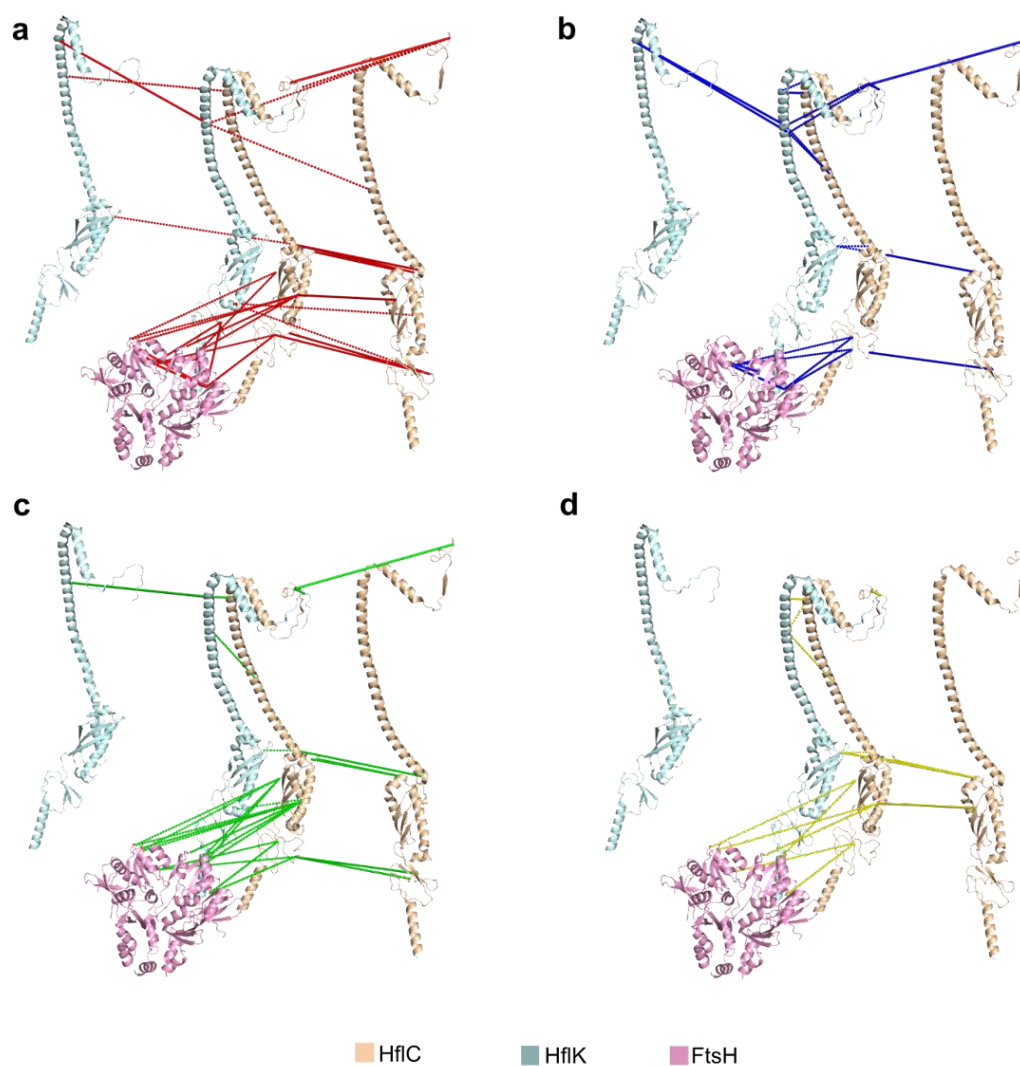


Figure 3.6. Top ten intra-protein (lines) and inter-protein (dashed lines) interactions of FtsH-HflK-HflC (pink - light blue - wheat) membrane protein complex (PDB ID: 7WI3) obtained from XL-MS software and colored red MaxLynx (a), blue MeroX (b), green MS Annika (c) and yellow XlinkX (d). Periplasmic and transmembrane regions of hexameric FtsH are shown only. The possible interactions are also shown between neighboring HflK and HflC that are positioned away from the HflK-HflC heterodimer.

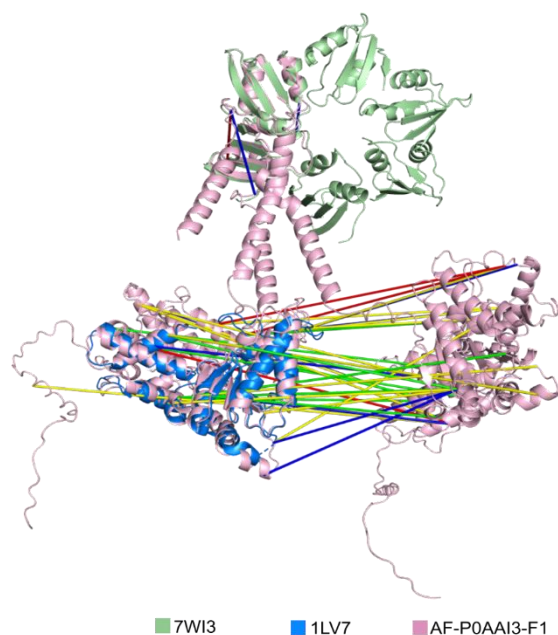


Figure 3.7. The detailed intra-protein connections of FtsH, represented between two monomers, obtained from XL-MS software MaxLynx (red), MeroX (blue), MS Annika (green) and XlinkX (yellow). Experimental structures are superposed with the predicted AlphaFold2 model (pink) (AF-P0AAI3-F1). The periplasmic region of hexameric FtsH (PDB ID: 7WI3) is shown in pale green, the partial cytoplasmic structure (PDB ID: 1LV7) is shown in blue. 91 residues of FtsH, in which no linkage was obtained, in N-terminus were removed in the AlphaFold2 model for clarity.

The intra-protein interactions in FtsH were visualized on both experimental structures (PDB: 1LV7, 7WI3)^{17,101} and the predicted AlphaFold2 model (AF-P0AAI3-F1) due to the lack of full-length FtsH structure deposited in the PDB although experimental structures align well with the predicted model (**Figure 3.7**). There are cross-links determined between not only the periplasmic region (N-domain) but also the cytoplasmic region of FtsH. These connections may reflect both intra-protein interactions within the FtsH monomer and between FtsH monomers at the dimer interface as FtsH exists in a hexameric conformation. MaxLynx and MeroX determined cross-links within the N-domain of the FtsH whereas the number

of interactions within the cytoplasmic region were low compared to other software. On the other hand, there were many connections determined by MS Annika and XlinkX within the cytoplasmic region; however, there was no cross-link determined in the N-domain with these software.

Overall, there are sufficient intra- and inter-protein interactions determined by each XL-MS software. The partial structure of FtsH was elucidated and interactions between residues which are not seen in experimental structures were found in this study. For instance, HflK-Lys360 interacts with FtsH-Lys408, HflC-Lys211 interacts with FtsH-Lys60, HflC-Thr330, Ser331, and Thr333 interact with HflK-Lys294 and Lys346. All these interactions may be used to model the protein complex using experimental and predicted structures, and molecular docking programs such as HADDOCK.¹⁰² Multimeric structures of proteins, for instance, hexameric FtsH or dodecameric HflK-HflC, can also be modeled by molecular docking and cross-linking data. Likewise, the multimer structures predicted by structure prediction programs such as AlphaFold^{103,104} and RoseTTAFold¹⁰⁵ can be confirmed by XL-MS data. The predicted structures can also be fitted into low resolution cryo-EM maps or SAXS (Small Angle X-ray Scattering) models.

In addition to structural proteomics studies, the interaction between proteins can be used for protein mapping and protein-protein networking, especially for complex samples such as a cell membrane as in our study.¹⁰⁶

3.4 XL-MS Software Performance Characteristics

Four software were compared according to performance parameters; the number of cross-links identified, and processing time for two different datasets of solubilized membrane and purified protein complex (**Figure 3.8**). According to

overall time spent during data processing by the software, MS Annika was the fastest.

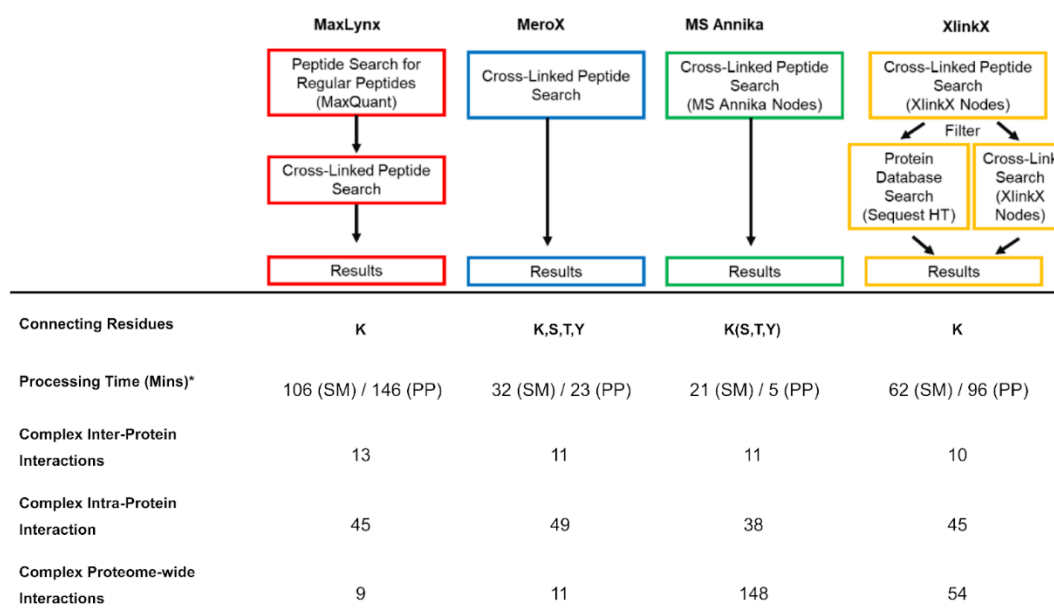


Figure 3.8. Comparison of four XL-MS software; MaxLynx (Red), MeroX (Blue), MS Annika (Green), XlinkX (Yellow). Overall search process, including connection residues, processing time for solubilized membrane (SM) and purified protein (PP), complex inter-protein interactions, complex intra-protein interactions and complex proteome-wide interactions are given.

Proteins were analyzed based on unique peptides. The number of interactions is based on unique peptides connected via DSBU. The DSBU cross-linker was already integrated into all software. The software outcome file lists inter- and intra-protein interactions by indicating specific AA positions and corresponding tryptic peptide sequence for each protein pair. The matching score is also listed along with standard MS search parameters such as number of matching spectra, precursor, mass error, retention time and intensities.

MaxLynx is a software embedded into MaxQuant, a protein database search software, and thus, the cross-link search is performed only after the protein search. Although it is a useful process to identify proteins and their interactions simultaneously, the overall processing time is longer. This could be a limitation considering the size and spectra count of a high-resolution MS data searched against a large database.

The cross-linker connection side could be set to only lysine residue by default in MaxLynx, contrary to MeroX software which conducts only cross-linked peptide search at a time. Unlike MaxLynx and other software, MeroX enables selecting multiple residues such as serine, threonine, and tyrosine in addition to lysine simultaneously. Searching various cross-linking possibilities does not make MeroX's processing time longer, compared to MaxLynx and XlinkX. In addition, the graphical user interface (GUI) is user-friendly and fluent, and the size of data is not a limitation. However, in MeroX, the protein search is not an option, and only cross-linking information can be obtained.

MS Annika is a Proteome Discoverer 2.5 node, and the workflow used for MS Annika contains a spectrum selector mode. MS Annika allows conducting searches with multiple residues such as serine, threonine, and tyrosine in addition to lysine, but cannot achieve this simultaneously. Also, it contains both protein IDs and cross-link information. The processing time is significantly shorter than any other software. This might be due to the less number of nodes in the overall search workflow, and doing only cross-linked peptide search by MS Annika nodes. Additionally, MS Annika nodes provide different search modes and these modes result in fast processing times.

XlinkX is another Proteome Discoverer 2.5 node with a workflow consisting of different nodes, such as Sequest HT. Thus, protein database search is performed with the cross-link search. This is a useful outcome for identifying proteins in samples, and their interactions, like MaxLynx. This may cause the longer processing

time of XlinkX than MS Annika in a way. However, the cross-link search is performed with only lysine residue, and this is one of the limitations of XlinkX.

All the software provided similar numbers of inter-protein connections between complex proteins. MaxLynx provided 13, MeroX provided 11, MS Annika Provided 11, and XlinkX provided 10 inter-protein connections between complex proteins. Likewise, the number of intra-protein connections are similar. MaxLynx provided 45, MeroX provided 49, MS Annika Provided 38, and XlinkX provided 45 intra-protein connections within complex proteins. However, MS Annika yielded the highest number of cross-links (148 interactions) between complex proteins and other proteins, compared to all other software (**Figure 3.8**).

All the software have different source usage during data analysis (**Appendix G**). MaxLynx is the most source-friendly software in terms of CPU and RAM usage. While the RAM usage of MeroX was comparable to that of MaxLynx, its CPU usage was exceptionally high, reaching 99% utilization during analysis. On the other hand, MS Annika utilized all 5 GB of RAM assigned to it; however, had a CPU utilization of around 25%, lower than that of MeroX and XlinkX, and similar to that of MaxLynx. XlinkX also had a high CPU usage of 99% like MeroX, and utilized more RAM than MeroX, with an average of 3.8 GB, but still less than that of MS Annika. These differences can be due to the different search and working algorithms of each software. Additionally, it was observed that computer resources usage was the same for both purified protein and solubilized membrane MS data. However, the processing time changes depending on the file size.

3.5 Protein Network

3.5.1 Protein Search

The identification of proteins in the purified protein complex and solubilized membrane fractions allowed us to compare differences in interaction maps generated by cross-links. It was aimed to determine interactions not only within the FtsH-HflK-HflC membrane protein complex, but also with its surroundings. The network map generated by the STRING database revealed numerous connections, indicating that FtsH, HflK, and HflC have multiple biological relations with other proteins involved in different pathways. Upon comparing the two samples, two factors stood out: genomic neighborhood and functional similarity. The solubilized membrane sample contained 42% membrane protein, whereas the purified FtsH-HflK-HflC sample had an overall membrane protein content of 96% (**Appendix H**).

A total of 20 connections from the findings obtained with protein search of both samples were curated in the STRING, IntAct and DIP databases as functionally associated with FtsH, HflK, and HflC. Approximately half of the interacting partners were found in the purified sample (**Figure 3.9a**), while the solubilized membrane fraction had 17 interacting partners (**Figure 3.9b**). STRING, IntAct and DIP databases were used for the demonstration of functional association. RpIL, RpID, YajC, GpmA and RlpIU proteins were found to be associated only on DIP and IntAct, whereas all remaining interacting partners were found by all three databases.

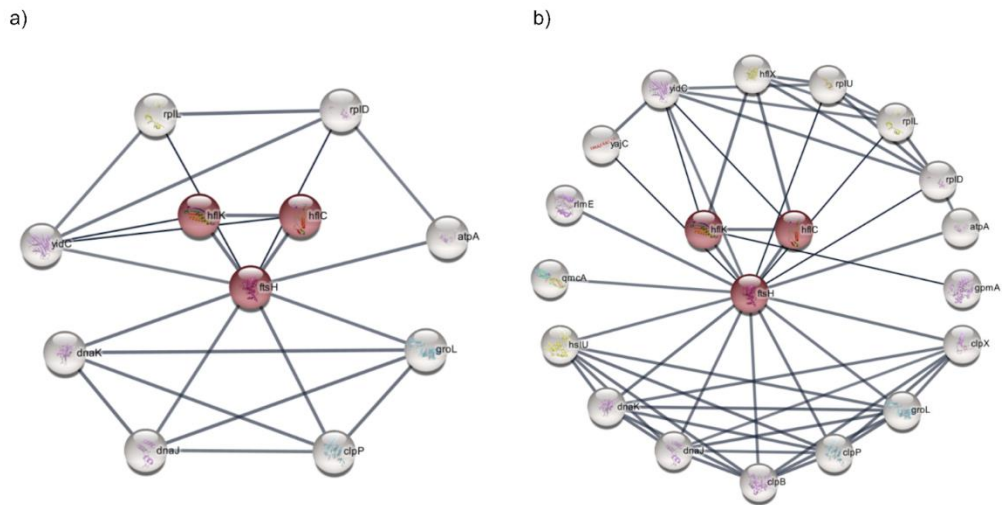


Figure 3.9. Interacting partners (colored in grey) of FtsH-HflK-HflC (colored in red) a) in the purified protein complex sample b) in the solubilized membrane fraction (STRING database combined with IntAct and DIP, score ≥ 0.9 , FDR Stringency 1%).

Figure 3.10 and **Figure 3.11** show biological processes in which the proteins in the solubilized membrane and purified protein samples are involved, respectively. A total of 108 nodes in the solubilized membrane sample (**Figure 3.10**) and 60 nodes in the purified protein sample (**Figure 3.11**) were obtained. The top 15 biological processes with the lowest p-values are shown. Translation and peptide biosynthetic process are the biological processes with the lowest p-values. Proteins involved in translation, membrane protein insertion and quality control processes constitute 60% of all interacting partners identified in both samples (**Appendix I**). Several chaperones, including ClpB, DnaK, DnaJ, GroEL, and proteases such as ClpP, ClpX, HslU, as well as YidC, and YajC, were identified in both samples. These chaperones are functionally associated with the FtsH-HflK-HflC membrane protein complex. Specifically, YidC and YajC are proteins involved in preprotein translocation, and a

part of the membrane-bound holo-translocon system comprising seven proteins including SecB (chaperone), SecA (ATPase), SecYEG (protein secretion complex), and two membrane proteins, SecD and SecF, playing roles in the release of the mature peptide into the periplasm. The proximity of YidC to FtsH, HflK, and HflC in the bacterial cell was previously shown via *in vitro* photo cross-linking. The confirmed interaction of YidC with the FtsH-HflK-HflC complex, and coexistence of YajC with it suggest that FtsH-HflK-HflC complex interacts and cooperates with the holo-translocon system in membrane protein secretion and quality control.

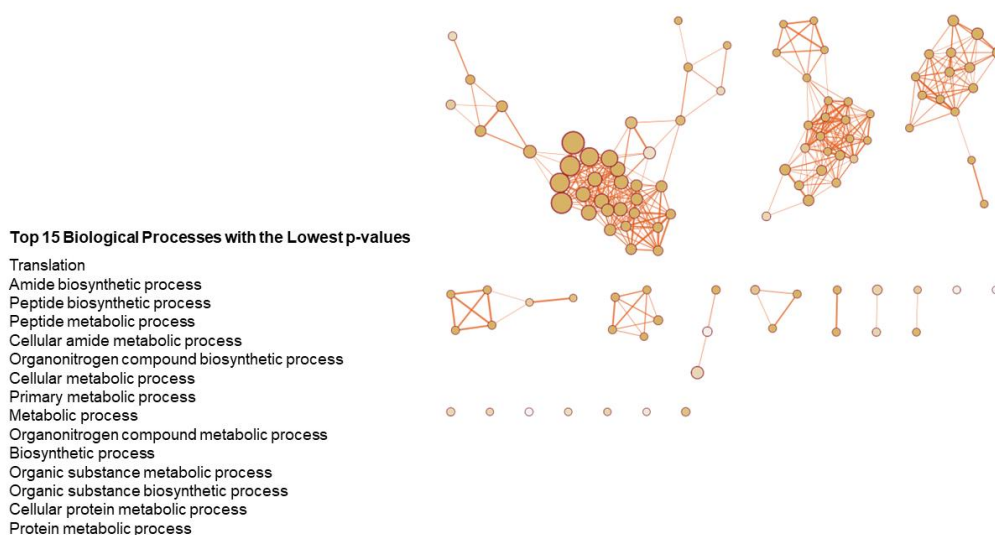


Figure 3.10. The top 15 biological processes of proteins found in the solubilized membrane sample with the lowest p-values.

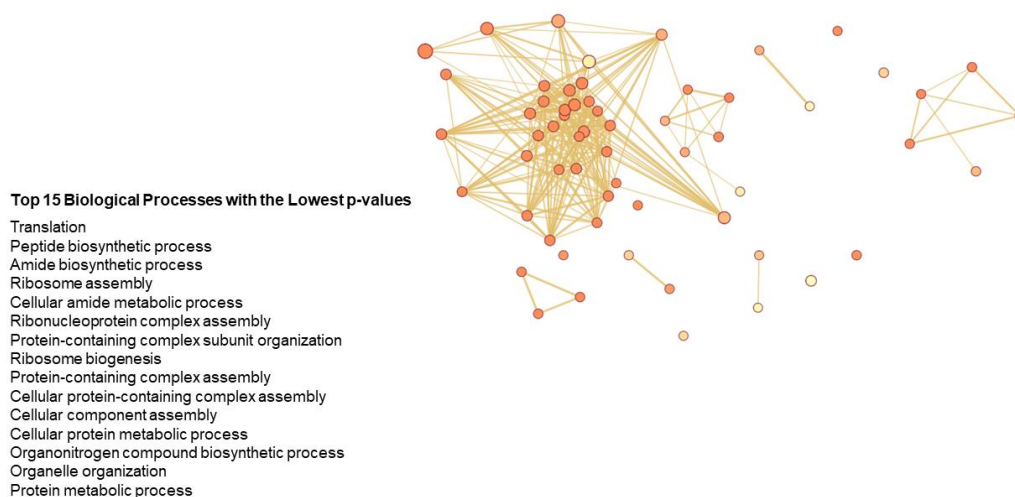


Figure 3.11. The top 15 biological processes of proteins found in the purified protein sample with the lowest p-values.

3.5.2 Cross-Linking

A total of 106 interactions of HflC, 96 interactions of FtsH, and 23 interactions of HflK, including FtsH-HflK-HflC complex, with other proteins separately from the cross-linking analysis of both samples were obtained through four software. Approximately 93% of the interactions were found in the purified complex sample and 223 interactions (out of 225) were verified through the raw data by fragment (MS/MS) and precursor ions (MS). These interactions were compared with literature through online databases, STRING (<https://string-db.org>), IntAct (<https://www.ebi.ac.uk/intact/home>), DIP (<http://dip.doe-mbi.ucla.edu>), and MINT (<https://mint.bio.uniroma2.it/>). The connections of FtsH, HflK, and HflC were presented (**Appendix J**).

Although the literature suggests that GroEL, ClpB, and HflX are functionally associated with HflC, direct interactions between these proteins and HflC have been

identified. Chaperonins such as ClpB and GroEL play an essential role in protein folding, particularly under stress conditions where unfolded proteins are generated. Therefore, the novel direct interactions of ClpB and GroEL with HflC may be responsible for the exposure to stress during the expression of the recombinant FtsH-HflK-HflC membrane protein complex. Another novel interaction of HflX to HflC indicates a possible cooperation between these proteins according to their regulating role for protein synthesis and quality control of membrane proteins.⁸⁶

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

In this study, the composition and structure of FtsH-HflK-HflC complex were investigated with the XL-MS based structural proteomics. Commonly used XL-MS software tools, MaxLynx, MeroX, MS Annika, and XlinkX were utilized to elucidate the protein interactions within a membrane protein complex containing FtsH, HflK, and HflC, over-expressed in *E. coli*. The four software were assessed based on the utility, feasibility and reliability and the yield of inter- and intra-protein connections. In addition, two common cross-linkers in literature were assessed. Given that the affinity-based purified complex yielded more interactions with other proteins, FtsH-HflK-HflC complex may be interacting with many associated proteins in the cell. The outcomes of the study were compared with the complex structure obtained from Protein Data Bank (PDB) to validate intra- and inter-protein interactions. Interactions between residues not seen in experimental structures were also determined. These interactions may be used to model monomeric and multimeric protein complexes using experimental and predicted structures, and molecular docking programs, assisted with protein structure/assembly prediction programs. Outcomes were not only the cross-link information within the overexpressed FtsH-HflK-HflC complex but also interactions between other proteins in close proximity with the protein and the protein complexes. Thus, XL-MS can be used for protein mapping and protein-protein networking studies in various matrices. Further studies are ongoing to elucidate the structural and biological phenomena behind the protein-protein interactions and decipher the possible complexes of FtsH.

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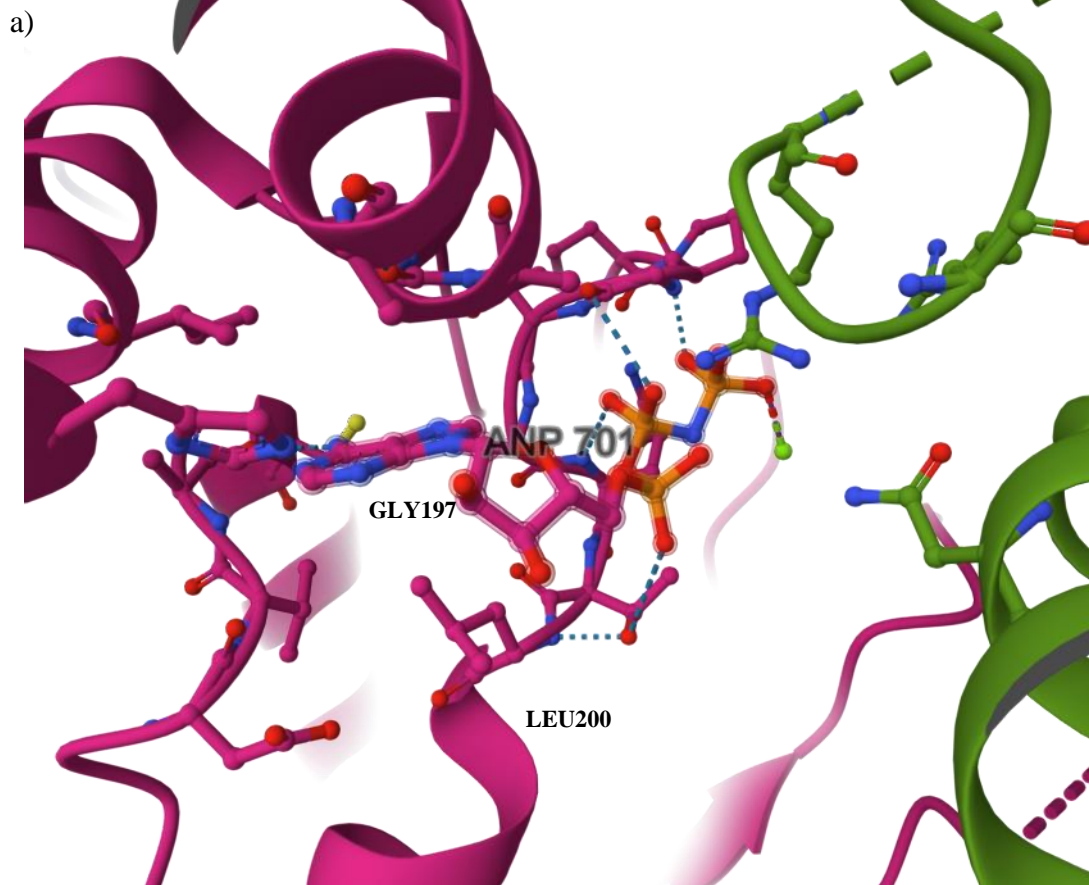
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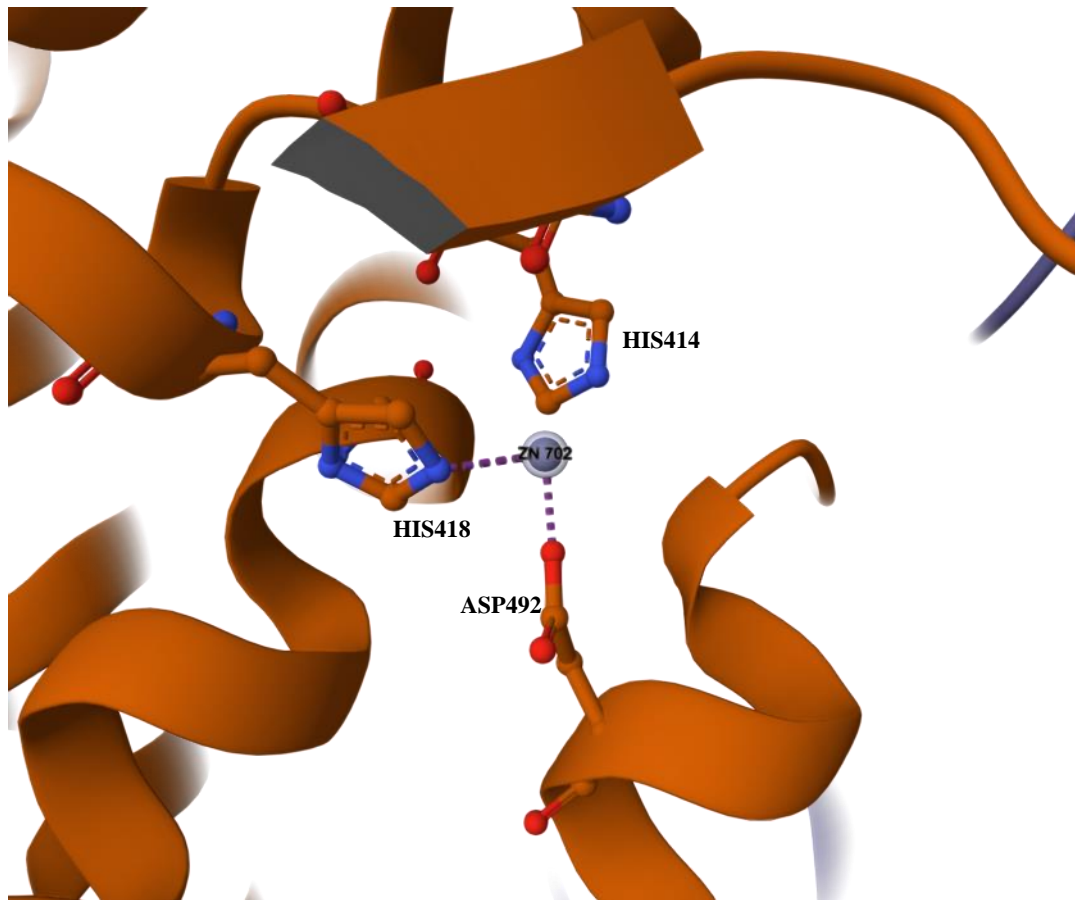
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APPENDICES

A. a) ANP (phosphoaminophosphonic acid-adenylate ester) and b) Zinc-binding domains of FtsH.

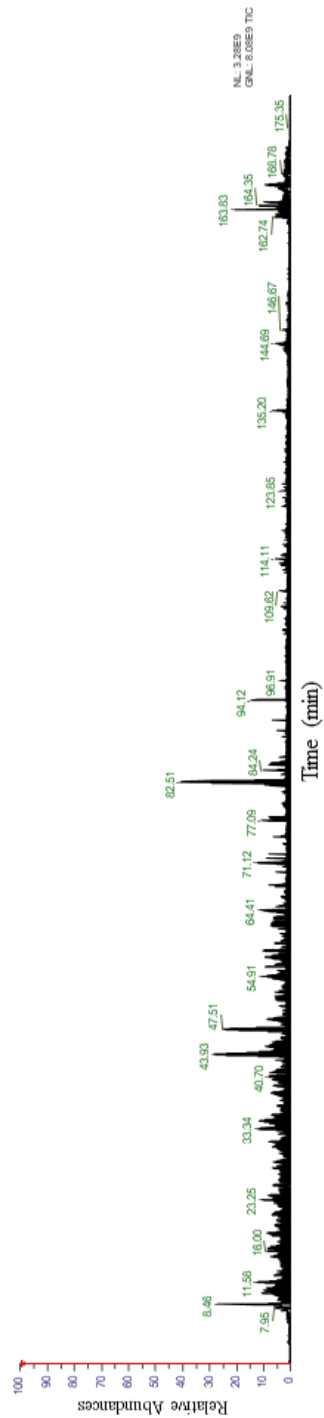


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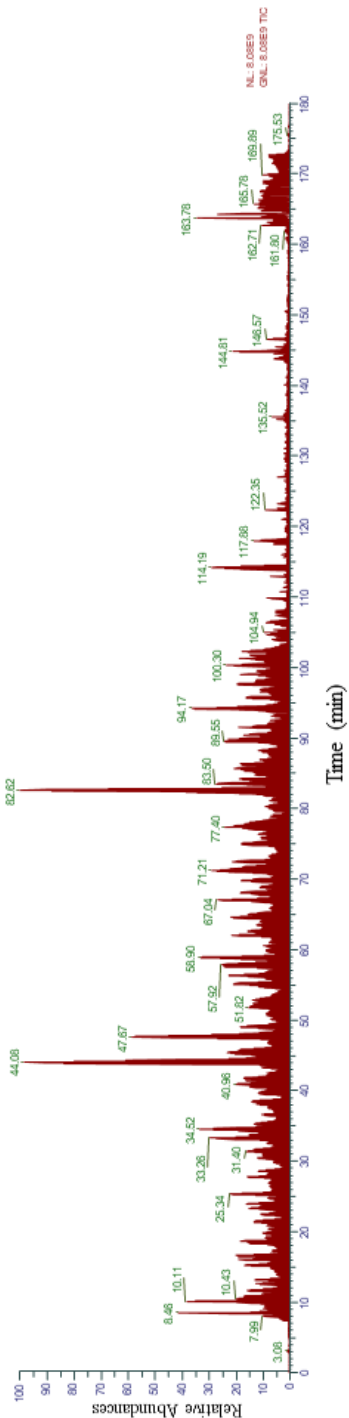


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PK0798	PK0798	2	2	2	2	2	2
PK0799	PK0799	2	2	2	2	2	2
PK0800	PK0800	2	2	2	2	2	2

C. Total Ion Chromatogram (TIC) of a) BS3 and b) DSBU-cross-linked solubilized membrane samples.



a)



b)

D. Total number of interactions.

Interaction Type	Number of Interaction		
Complex Inter-Protein	30		
Complex Intra-Protein	119		
Complex-Other	218		
Other Proteins Inter-Protein	372		
Other Proteins Intra-Protein	354		
MaxLynx	Purified Complex	Protein	Solubilized Membrane
Complex Inter-Protein	11		4
Complex Intra-Protein	33		23
Complex-Protein-Protein	8		1
Other Protein Interaction	2		100
MeroX	Purified Complex	Protein	Solubilized Membrane
Complex Inter-Protein	8		6
Complex Intra-Protein	50		43
Complex-Protein-Protein	10		1
Other Protein Interaction	5		204
MS Annika	Purified Complex	Protein	Solubilized Membrane
Complex Inter-Protein	10		2
Complex Intra-Protein	37		7
Complex-Protein-Protein	146		3
Other Protein Interaction	300		0
XlinkX	Purified Complex	Protein	Solubilized Membrane
Complex Inter-Protein	8		4
Complex Intra-Protein	39		21
Complex-Protein-Protein	45		10
Other Protein Interaction	7		184

E. Table of intra-protein interactions of three proteins in the complex obtained in two samples (purified protein, solubilized membrane) analyzed through four software, MaxLynx, MeroX, MS Annika, XlinkX.

	MaxLynx		MeroX		MS Annika		XlinkX	
	Purified System	Solubilized Membrane	Purified System	Solubilized Membrane	Purified System	Solubilized Membrane	Purified System	Solubilized Membrane
FtsH	494-550	+					+	
	31-60	+						
	31-31	+						
	494-533	+						
	148-203	+	+				+	
	387-332	+						
	433-387	+	+					
	580-332	+	+					
	203-332	+						
	535-533	+						
	203-61	+						
	550-535	+						
	332-332	+						
	550-179	+						
	242-203	+						
	408-332	+						
	620-332	+						
	203-179	+						
	550-61	+						
	408-387	+						
	461-387	+						
	433-61	+						
	433-203	+						
	76-391	+						
	179-179	+						
	550-550							
	387-391							
	533-533							
	461-550							
	31-179							
	332-391							
	387-550							
	332-461/464/467/488/470							
	456/458-461							
	494-535							
	535-535							
	332-433/435							
	391-433							
	408-580							
	410/411/413-580							
	332-76							
	533-550							
	332-148							
	550-433							
	179-332							
391-494								
179-76								
332-550								
84-76								
203-494								
433-183								
203-183								
186-179								
408-391								
183-550								
433-179								
494-183								
494-387								
183-332								
408-389								
76-76								
494-541								
186-203								
179-387								
179-391								
136/137-179								
433/435-461/464								
203-136								
183-391								
461-533								
63-36								
137-85								
120-211								
44-36								
327-327								
187-36								
327-328/330/331/333								
137-186								
248-327								
327-333								
82-85								
82-137								
187-44								
84-137								
294-310								
368-368								
HflK		+						
HflC								
HflK								

*Unspecific connections

F. The most abundant 10 inter- and intra-protein interactions from solubilized membrane and purified protein samples.

		MaxLynx												
		Peptide 1	Peptide 2	Protein 1	Protein 2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site	
Purified System Intraprotein Interactions	FtsH	LAEEIYGPEHVSTGASNDIKVATNLAR	IIDQEVKALIER	FtsH	FtsH	494	550	271.46	1	4	1148.3658	4590.44193	3	
		KVDYSTFLOEVNNDQVR	EINVTKK	FtsH	FtsH	31	60	205.39	2	3	1027.8666	3081.58563	1	
		KVDYSTFLOEVNNDQVR	KVDYSTFLOEVNNDQVR	FtsH	FtsH	31	31	180.42	3	3	1435.7068	4305.10643	3	
		VVSMVEFEKAK	EQLKVVHMR	FtsH	FtsH	387	332	118.97	10	3	872.47311	2615.40533	1	
		LAEEIYGPEHVSTGASNDIKVATNLAR	SVAKAK	FtsH	FtsH	494	533	139.69	7	3	1256.9373	3766.99793	2	
		[M]LTEDQIKTFADVAGCDEAK	TLLAKAIAGEAK	FtsH	FtsH	148	203	127.46	8	3	1247.2971	3739.87743	3	
Purified System Interprotein Interactions	FtsH and H1K	IPFIETVKMLDAR	FGKVLK	H1K	H1K	63	36	171.75	4	3	816.46628	2447.39483	2	
		LDVKDIVTDSR	KDLIVDSYIK	H1K	H1K	137	85	148.28	5	4	663.11409	2649.43513	1	
		YYLATGGDISQAEVLLKR	IKQINLPTVSEAIYNR	H1K	H1K	120	211	141.71	6	4	1060.068	4237.25083	2	
		DDNKPLVYEPGLHFK	FGKVLK	H1K	H1K	44	36	120.99	9	3	934.49221	2801.46263	1	
Purified System Interprotein Interactions	H1K and H1K	VLNPKYLYSVTSPDDSLR	FGKVLK	H1K	H1K	172	36	89.159	2	3	1033.5434	3098.61623	1	
		LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYTMDR	H1K	H1K	137	198	86.543	4	3	865.78641	2595.34523	3	
Cell Lysate Intraprotein Interactions	FtsH	VVSMVEFEKAK	DKIMMGAER	FtsH	FtsH	387	391	198.68	2	3	838.09179	2512.26133	10	
		LAEEIYGPEHVSTGASNDIKVATNLAR	SVAKAK	FtsH	FtsH	494	533	145.6	7	3	1256.9373	3766.99793	2	
		TLLAKAIAGEAK	LGKIPK	FtsH	FtsH	203	183	125.97	8	3	698.42793	2093.26983	2	
		IIDQEVKALIER	SVAKAK	FtsH	FtsH	550	533	119.26	9	4	557.07705	2225.28693	1	
		MLTEDQIKTFADVAGCDEAK	TLLAKAIAGEAK	FtsH	FtsH	148	203	153.82	5	3	1241.9655	3723.88253	2	
Cell Lysate Interprotein Interactions	FtsH and H1K	YKQILEAQGEVAR	SGQGEAEKLR	H1K	H1K	294	248	201.62	1	3	1073.2198	3217.64533	3	
		LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYTMDR	H1K	H1K	137	198	143.27	2	3	865.78641	2595.34523	4	
		VLNPKYLYSVTSPDDSLR	Y[M]KTPSATR	H1K	H1K	346	327	106.85	3	4	891.72131	3563.86393	1	

[] Modified Amino Acids
* Extra miscleavage

Not verified

		MeroX												
		Peptide 1	Peptide 2	Protein 1	Protein 2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site	
Purified System Intraprotein Interactions	FtsH	LAEIYGPEHVSTGASNDIKVATNLR	IIDQEVKALIER	FtsH	FtsH	494/497	550	150	9	4	1148.37146	4590.464011	4	
		KVDYSTFLQEVNNDQVR	KVDYSTFLQEVNNDQVR	FtsH	FtsH	31	31	190	4	4	1077.032593	4305.108542	1	
		[M]LTEDQIKITTFADVAGBDEAK	TLLAKAIAGEAK	FtsH	FtsH	148/149/150	203	200	3	4	935.7270508	3739.886374	1	
		TLLAKAIAGEAK	EQILKVH[M]R	FtsH	FtsH	203	332	143	10	4	638.368042	2550.450339	2	
		IIDQEVKALIER	IIDQEVKALIER	FtsH	FtsH	550	550	217	1	4	762.9437866	3048.753317	1	
	HfIC	VVSMVFEKAK	DKIMMGAER	FtsH	FtsH	387	391	202	2	3	838.0932617	2512.265232	4	
		FGKVLK	IPFIETVKMLDAR	HfIC	HfIC	36	63	179	5	4	612.6036377	2447.392722	4	
		KDLIVDSYIK	LDVKDIVTDSR	HfIC	HfIC	85	137	178	6	4	663.1153564	2649.439597	2	
		Y[M]KTPSATR	Y[M]KTPSATR	HfIC	HfIC	327	327	176	7	4	635.3143921	2538.235739	4	
		AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	FAKLLPEYK	HfIC	HfIC	293/294	310	173	8	3	1017.890869	3051.658055	3	
		MeroX												
		Peptide 1	Peptide 2	Protein 1	Protein 2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site	
Purified System Interprotein Interactions	FtsH and HfIC	KVDYSTFLQEVNNDQVR	IPFIETVKMLDAR	FtsH	HfIC	31	63	127	4	4	946.4923096	3782.947409	1	
	FtsH and HfIC	KVDYSTFLQEVNNDQVR	IPFIETVK[M]LDAR	FtsH	HfIC	31	61/63	89	6	4	950.4899902	3798.938132	2	
		LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIC	137	198	190	1	4	649.5930786	2595.350485	1	
		SEIGRLDVKDIVTDSR*	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIC	137	198/199/200	172	2	5	628.3331299	3137.636544	10	
		LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYT[M]DR	HfIC	HfIC	141/143	198	131	3	4	653.5912476	2611.343161	5	
		LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYT[M]DR	HfIC	HfIC	137/141	198/199/200	42	9	3	871.1190796	2611.342686	2	
	HfIC and HfIC	LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYT[M]DR	HfIC	HfIC	137/141/143	198/199/200	80	7	3	871.1191406	2611.342869	3	
		AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	YMKTPSATR	HfIC	HfIC	294	328/330/331/333	90	5	4	775.4056396	3098.600729	1	
		AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	Y[M]KTPSATR	HfIC	HfIC	293/294/297	327/328/330/331/333	42	10	4	779.4036865	3114.592917	1	
		SQGQEEAEKLR	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	HfIC	HfIC	248	293/294	77	8	4	805.1678467	3217.649558	1	
		MeroX												
		Peptide1	Peptide2	Protein1	Protein2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site	
Cell Lysate Intraprotein Interactions	FtsH	VVSMVFEKAK	DKIMMGAER	FtsH	FtsH	387	391	212	4	4	628.8223267	2512.267478	4	
		LGGKIPK	TLLAKAIAGEAK	FtsH	FtsH	183	203	153	10	4	524.072937	2093.269919	2	
		MLTEDQIKITTFADVAGBDEAK	TLLAKAIAGEAK	FtsH	FtsH	148/149/150	203	183	6	4	931.7333984	3723.911765	1	
		MLTEDQIKITTFADVAGBDEAK	TLLAKAIAGEAK	FtsH	FtsH	148	203	166	7	4	931.7238159	3723.873435	2	
		AKHMSDETAR	AKHMSDETAR	FtsH	FtsH	535	535	236	2	4	622.2925415	2486.148337	2	
		YTTYIPVQDPKLLDNLTK	YTTYIPVQDPKLLDNLTK	FtsH	FtsH	76	76	163	8	4	1167.139648	4665.536765	1	
		HfIC	KDLIVDSYIK	LDVKDIVTDSR	HfIC	HfIC	85	137	187	5	4	663.1148071	2649.437399	4
			AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	FAKLLPEYK	HfIC	HfIC	294	310	222	3	3	1017.890381	3051.656559	1
	HfIC	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	FAKLLPEYK	HfIC	HfIC	293/294	310	158	9	4	763.6702881	3051.659323	3	
		GGNAPAAKSDNGASNLLR	GGNAPAAKSDNGASNLLR	HfIC	HfIC	368	368	258	1	4	905.9602661	3620.819235	1	
		MeroX												
		Peptide1	Peptide2	Protein1	Protein2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site	
Cell Lysate Interprotein Interactions	FtsH and HfIC	KVDYSTFLQEVNNDQVR	IPFIETVKMLDAR	FtsH	HfIC	31/34/35/36	63	10	10	4	946.4918213	3782.945456	1	
	FtsH and HfIC	SQGQEEAEKLR	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	HfIC	HfIC	248	293/294	185	2	4	805.166687	3217.644919	1	
		SQGQEEAEKLR	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	HfIC	HfIC	248	294	84	7	3	1073.217163	3217.636936	1	
		LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIC	137	198	170	3	4	649.5924072	2595.3478	2	
		LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYT[M]DR	HfIC	HfIC	137	198/199/200	101	6	3	871.1171265	2611.336827	1	
		YMKTPSATR	VLVNDKGGNLMVLPDQMLK	HfIC	HfIC	327	346	139	5	4	887.7294312	3547.895895	2	
		YMKTPSATR	VLVNDKGGNLMVLPDQMLK	HfIC	HfIC	331/333	346	13	9	3	1183.304199	3547.898045	1	
		GEGDAEAAKLFADAFSK	FAKLLPEYK	HfIC	HfIC	281	310	202	1	4	758.3927612	3030.549216	1	
		LFADAFSKDPDFYAFIR	FAKLLPEYK	HfIC	HfIC	288/289/294	310	60	8	4	832.4420166	3326.746237	1	
		LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYT[M]DR	HfIC	HfIC	141	198	143	4	4	653.5905151	2611.340231	1	
		MeroX												
		Peptide1	Peptide2	Protein1	Protein2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site	

[] Modified Amino Acids
* Extra miscleavage

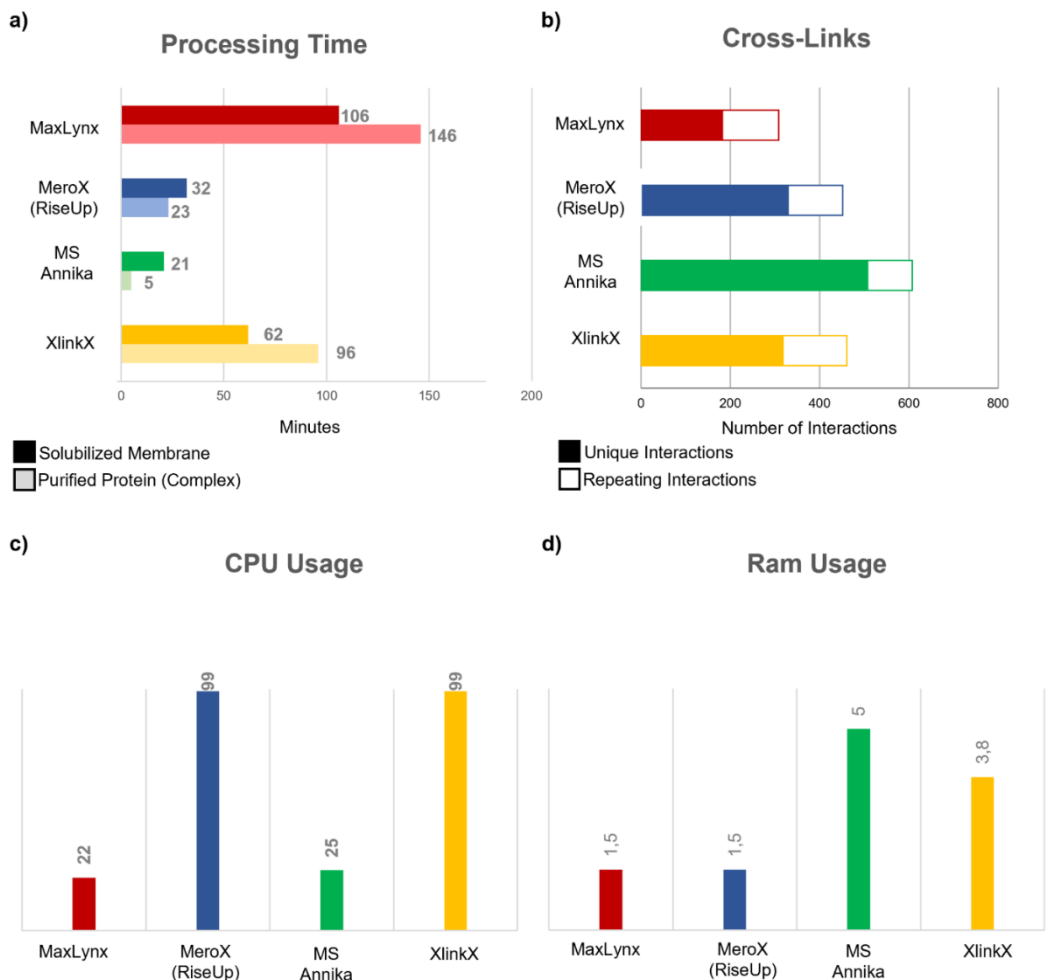
		MS Annika												
		Peptide 1	Peptide 2	Protein 1	Protein 2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site	
Purified System Intraprotein Interactions	FtsH	IIDQEVKALIER	EIIYGPEHVSTGASNDIKVATNI	FtsH	FtsH	550	494	342.92	4	5	918.895752	4590.449654	4	
		SVAKAK	EIIYGPEHVSTGASNDIKVATNI	FtsH	FtsH	533	494	225.4	10	3	1256.344238	3767.018162	13	
		TLLAKAIAAGEAK	MLTEDQIKTFADVAG[C]DEAK	FtsH	FtsH	203	148	538.37	1	3	1241.967896	3723.889134	3	
		DALMKYETIDAPQIDDL[M]AR	MVMTEAQKESTAYHEAGHAIIG	FtsH	FtsH	580	408	434.57	2	4	1285.122314	5137.467428	4	
		EQILKVH[M]R	TLLAKAIAAGEAK	FtsH	FtsH	332	203	265.73	7	4	638.368286	2550.451315	1	
		VVSMVFEKAK	LVPEHDPVHKVTIIPR	FtsH	FtsH	387	433	267.19	6	3	1104.614624	3311.829319	1	
		AKHMSDETAR	IIDQEVKALIER	FtsH	FtsH	535	550	229.4	9	3	923.15387	2767.447056	3	
	HfIC	KDLVDSYIK	LDVKDIVTDSR	HfIC	HfIC	85	137	394.28	3	4	663.114929	2649.437887	2	
		LDVKDIVTDSR	EKKDLVDSYIK	HfIC	HfIC	137	85	300.01	5	3	969.53064	2906.577366	1	
		HfIK	FAKLLPEYK	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	HfIK	HfIK	310	294	244.89	8	4	763.669434	3051.655905	1
			MS Annika											
			Peptide 1	Peptide 2	Protein 1	Protein 2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site
	Purified System Interprotein Interactions	FtsH and HfIK	LLDNLTKNVK	YYLATGGDISQAEVLLKR	FtsH	HfIC	84	120	171.42	6	3	1173.987183	3519.946995	1
IPFIEIVKIMILDAR			KVDYSTFLOEVNDOVR	HfIC	FtsH	63	31	420.74	1	3	1266.989258	3798.953221	3	
FtsH and HfIC		KDSNR	IKQINLPTEVSEAINR	FtsH	HfIC	61	211	70.07	10	3	834.83313	2802.484837	1	
		EINVTKK	YYLATGGDISQAEVLLKR	FtsH	HfIC	60	120	178.64	5	4	770.922302	3080.66738	1	
		EINVTKK	IKQINLPTEVSEAINR	FtsH	HfIC	60	211	118.4	7	3	1005.558044	3014.65958	2	
		KDSNR	YYLATGGDISQAEVLLKR	FtsH	HfIC	61	120	78.99	9	4	717.879578	2868.496481	4	
HfIK and HfIC		GVIGKYTMDR	LDVKDIVTDSR	HfIK	HfIC	198	137	387.4	2	4	649.594055	2595.354391	15	
		Y[M]KTPTSATR	VLVNDKGGNLMVLPDQMLK	HfIC	HfIK	327	346	319.82	3	4	891.7229	3563.869772	7	
		KFSDR	VTNPEKYLVSPTSDDSLR	HfIC	HfIK	122	172	102.68	8	3	1011.173218	3031.5051	1	
		SQGQEEAEKLR	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	HfIC	HfIK	248	294	247.61	4	3	1073.557861	3218.659031	1	
		MS Annika												
			Peptide1	Peptide2	Protein1	Protein2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site
Cell Lysate Intraprotein Interactions		FtsH	DKIMMGAER	VVSMVFEKAK	FtsH	FtsH	391	387	224.26	9	3	838.093567	2512.266148	5
			SVAKAK	EIIYGPEHVSTGASNDIKVATNI	FtsH	FtsH	533	494	255.69	8	3	1256.338135	3766.999851	16
	TLLAKAIAAGEAK		MLTEDQIKTFADVAG[C]DEAK	FtsH	FtsH	203	148	653.17	1	3	1241.966919	3723.886204	3	
	TLLAKAIAAGEAK		IPKGVLMVPPGPGTK	FtsH	FtsH	203	186	332.91	4	4	708.670471	2831.660055	2	
	DALMKYETIDAPQIDDL[M]AR		MVMTEAQKESTAYHEAGHAIIG	FtsH	FtsH	580	408	272.04	5	5	1028.496948	5138.455635	1	
	EQILKVHMR		DALMKYETIDAPQIDDLMAR	FtsH	FtsH	332	580	258.05	7	3	1220.292847	3658.863987	5	
	GAMSGFGSK		TLLAKAIAAGEAK	FtsH	FtsH	136	203	216.36	10	3	765.094666	2293.269444	1	
	HfIC	KDLVDSYIK	LDVKDIVTDSR	HfIC	HfIC	85	137	401.07	2	3	883.822632	2649.453343	2	
		LDVKDIVTDSR	EKKDLVDSYIK*	HfIC	HfIC	137	85	355.12	3	3	969.527893	2906.569126	2	
	HfIK	FAKLLPEYK	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	HfIK	HfIK	310	294	265.46	6	5	611.140137	3051.671578	8	
			MS Annika											
			Peptide1	Peptide2	Protein1	Protein2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site
	Cell Lysate Interprotein Interactions	FtsH and HfIK	KDSNR	YYLATGGDISQAEVLLKR	FtsH	HfIC	61	120	79.36	4	4	717.875977	2868.482077	4
HfIK and HfIC		GVIGKYTMDR	LDVKDIVTDSR	HfIK	HfIC	198	137	342.75	2	3	865.787781	2595.348789	3	
		Y[M]KTPTSATR	VLVNDKGGNLMVLPDQMLK	HfIC	HfIK	327	346	195.31	3	4	891.723328	3563.871481	1	
		FAKLLPEYK	GEGDAEAAKLFADAFSK	HfIK	HfIC	310	281	352.56	1	4	758.391174	3030.542868	3	

[] Modified Amino Acids
* Extra miscleavage

		XlinkX												
		Peptide 1	Peptide 2	Protein 1	Protein 2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site	
Purified System Intraprotein Interactions	FtsH	LAEEIYGPEHVSTGASNDIKVATNLAR	IIDQEVKALIER	FtsH	FtsH	494	550	163.84	2	4	1148.370361	4590.459616	3	
		[M]LTEDQIKITTFADVAG[C]DEAK	TLLAKAIAAGEAK	FtsH	FtsH	148	203	158.38	3	3	1247.304443	3739.898777	1	
		S[M]V[M]TEAQKESTAYHEAGHAIIGR	VVSMVEFEKAKDKIMMGAER	FtsH	FtsH	408	391	125.57	6	5	1068.520874	5338.575264	1	
		FOKLGKIPKGVLMVGGPGTGK	IIDQEVKALIER	FtsH	FtsH	183	550	116.23	8	4	1007.572209	4027.287008	4	
		SMVMTEAQKESTAYHEAGHAIIGR	EQILKVHMR	FtsH	FtsH	408	332	106.84	9	4	992.252807	3965.989401	2	
		S[M]V[M]TEAQKESTAYHEAGHAIIGR	DAL[M]KYETIDAPOIDDLMAR	FtsH	FtsH	408	580	116.55	7	4	1293.115478	5169.440084	1	
	HfIC	FVTKEKKDLIVDSYIK*	SEIGRLDVKDIVTDSR*	HfIC	HfIC	85	137	215.31	1	4	895.243652	3577.95278		21
		YYLATGGGDISQAEVLLKR	IKQINLPTEVSEAIYNR	HfIC	HfIC	120	211	155.58	4	4	1060.052734	4237.189108		1
		FVTKEKKDLIVDSYIK*	LDVKDIVTDSR	HfIC	HfIC	84	137	131.3	5	3	969.53064	2906.577366		5
		FVTKEKKDLIVDSYIK*	SEIGRLDVKDIVTDSR*	HfIC	HfIC	82	137	100.02	10	4	895.242187	3577.94692		14
	HfIK													
			XlinkX											
		Peptide 1	Peptide 2	Protein 1	Protein 2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site	
Purified System Interprotein Interactions	FtsH and HfIC	YYLATGGGDISQAEVLLKR	LLDNLLTKNVK	HfIC	FtsH	120	84	62.72	6	3	1173.987182	3519.946995	1	
		KVDYSTFLQEVNNDQVR	IPFIETVK[M]LDAR	FtsH	HfIC	31	63	136.35	2	3	1266.989258	3798.95322	1	
		IKQINLPTEVSEAIYNR	KDSNR	HfIC	FtsH	211	61	32.32	10	3	934.83313	2802.484837	1	
	HfIK and HfIC	SEIGRLDVKDIVTDSR*	GVIGKY[T]M]DR	HfIC	HfIK	137	198	111.69	3	4	653.598022	2611.37026		22
		VLVNDKGGNMLVPLDQMLK	Y[M]KTPSATR	HfIK	HfIC	346	327	55.44	7	3	1188.631592	3563.880222		2
		AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	GEGDAEAAKLFADAFSK	HfIK	HfIC	294	281	65.35	5	3	1223.956665	3669.855442		1
		AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	SQGQEEAEKLR	HfIK	HfIC	294	248	142.11	1	3	1073.230591	3217.677219		3
		FVTKEKKDLIVDSYIK*	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIK	82	198	66.27	4	4	864.968872	3456.853659		1
		FVTKEKKDLIVDSYIK*	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIK	84	198	50.02	8	3	1152.956055	3456.853611		1
		FVTKEKKDLIVDSYIK*	GVIGKY[T]M]DR	HfIC	HfIK	85	198	44.14	9	4	868.971741	3472.865133		1
		XlinkX												
		Peptide1	Peptide2	Protein1	Protein2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site	
Cell Lysate Intraprotein Interactions	FtsH	[M]LTEDQIKITTFADVAG[C]DEAK	TLLAKAIAAGEAK	FtsH	FtsH	148	203	121.29	5	4	935.735657	3739.920797	1	
		LAEEIYGPEHVSTGASNDIKVATNLAR	IIDQEVKALIER	FtsH	FtsH	494	550	148.21	4	4	1148.375976	4590.482077	1	
		TLLAKAIAAGEAK	FQKLGKIPK	FtsH	FtsH	203	183	92.69	6	3	904.200317	2710.586399	3	
		IPKGVLMVGGPGTGK	TLLAKAIAAGEAK	FtsH	FtsH	186	203	82.28	7	4	708.670471	2831.660055	2	
		PAGWEEPGASNSGDNGSPKAPRPV	EQILKVHMR	FtsH	FtsH	620	332	80.38	8	5	961.676575	4804.353767	1	
		SVAKAKHMSDEIAR*	SVAKAK	FtsH	FtsH	535	533	77.93	9	4	636.58728	2543.327291	5	
		DKIMMGAER	FQKLGK	FtsH	FtsH	391	179	72.05	10	3	675.020996	2023.048435	2	
		FVTKEKKDLIVDSYIK*	LDVKDIVTDSR	HfIC	HfIC	84	137	215.31	1	4	895.240661	3577.940817	4	
	HfIC	FVTKEKKDLIVDSYIK*	LDVKDIVTDSR	HfIC	HfIC	82	137	180.93	2	4	895.239929	3577.937887		2
		FVTKEKKDLIVDSYIK*	LDVKDIVTDSR	HfIC	HfIC	85	137	175.94	3	4	895.249328	3577.975485		8
	HfIK													
			XlinkX											
		Peptide1	Peptide2	Protein1	Protein2	From	To	Score	Score Rank	Charge	m/z	M+H+	Number of spectra matching to this site	
Cell Lysate Interprotein Interactions	FtsH and HfIK	SMVMTEAQKESTAYHEAGHAIIGR	SGNLMVPLDQMLKGGNAPAAH	FtsH	HfIK	408	360	12.38	5	6	835.421631	5007.493402	1	
	HfIK and HfIC	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	SQGQEEAEKLR	HfIK	HfIC	294	248	126.24	2	3	1073.217163	3217.636936		1
		LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIK	137	198	117.56	3	3	865.787781	2595.348789		4
		GEGDAEAAKLFADAFSK	FAKLLPEYK	HfIC	HfIK	281	310	62.84	4	3	1010.864441	3030.57877		1
		AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	GEGDAEAAKLFADAFSK	HfIK	HfIC	294	281	152.59	1	3	1223.96936	3669.893528		2
		Y[M]KTPSATR	GVIGKY[T]M]DR	HfIC	HfIK	327	198	7.4	6	3	841.419495	2522.243931		1

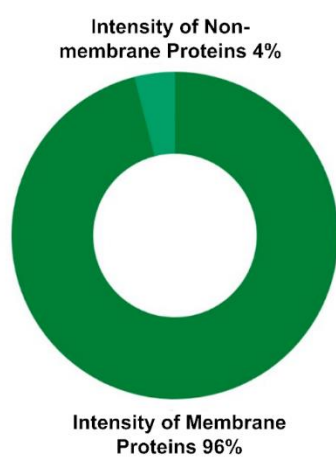
[] Modified Amino Acids
* Extra miscleavage

G. Cross-linking software performance characteristics a) Total cross-link search processing time of four different software, MaxLynx (Red), MeroX (Blue), MS Annika (Green), and XlinkX (Yellow). The processing time differences for two samples' data are indicated with different tones of colors, where dark ones denote solubilized membrane samples, and light ones denote the purified protein complex. b) Number of interactions obtained from the purified protein complex and solubilized membrane shown as the unique interactions and repeating interactions. c) CPU usage of the software for the whole cross-link search process. d) RAM usage of the software for the whole cross-link search process.



H. Relative abundances of membrane and other proteins isolated from the purified protein complex (a) and solubilized membrane fraction (b).

a)



b)



I. Identification of the proteins in the solubilized membrane and in the purified FtsH-HflK-HflC sample.

Gene	UniProt Accession #	Gene Product	Localization	Pathway	Sample Source
Stress-induced chaperone system					
clpB	P63284	Chaperone protein ClpB	Cytoplasm	Response to heat; protein folding	Solubilized Membrane
dnaJ	P08622	Chaperone protein DnaJ	Cytoplasm	Response to heat; protein refolding	Solubilized Membrane & Purified Sample
dnaK	P0A6Y8	Chaperone protein DnaK	Cytoplasm & Cell inner membrane	Response to heat; protein refolding	Solubilized Membrane & Purified Sample
groL	P0A6F5	Chaperonin GroEL	Cytoplasm	Response to heat; protein refolding	Solubilized Membrane & Purified Sample
Metabolism and energy production					
atpA	P0AB80	ATP synthase subunit alpha	Cell inner membrane	ATP biosynthesis	Solubilized Membrane & Purified Sample
hflX	P25519	GTPase HflX	Cytoplasm	GTP hydrolysis	Solubilized Membrane & Purified Sample
Translation					
rplD	P60723	50S ribosomal protein L4	Cytoplasm	Structural constituent of ribosome	Solubilized Membrane & Purified FtsH-HflK-HflC Complex
rplL	P0A7K2	50S ribosomal protein L7/L12	Cytoplasm	Structural constituent of ribosome	Solubilized Membrane & Purified FtsH-HflK-HflC Complex
rplU	P0AG48	50S ribosomal protein L21	Cytoplasm	Structural constituent of ribosome	Solubilized Membrane
rflE (ftsJ, mraF, rrmJ)	P0C0R7	Ribosomal RNA large subunit methyltransferase E	Cytoplasm	Structural constituent of ribosome	Solubilized Membrane
Degradation					
gpmA	P62707	2,3-bisphosphoglycerate-dependent phosphoglycerate mutase	Cytoplasm	Carbohydrate degradation; glycolysis	Solubilized Membrane
ATP-dependent proteolytic activity					
clpP	P0A6G7	ATP-dependent Clp protease proteolytic subunit	Cytoplasm	Proteolysis	Solubilized Membrane & Purified FtsH-HflK-HflC Complex
clpX	P0A6H1	ATP-dependent Clp protease ATP-binding subunit ClpX	Cytosol	Proteolysis	Solubilized Membrane & Purified FtsH-HflK-HflC Complex
hslU	P0A6H5	ATP-dependent protease ATPase subunit HslU	Cytoplasm	Proteolysis	Solubilized Membrane
ftsH	P0AAI3	ATP-dependent zinc metalloprotease FtsH	Cell inner membrane	Proteolysis	Solubilized Membrane & Purified FtsH-HflK-HflC Complex
Suppression					
qmcA (ybbK)	P0AA53	Protein QmcA (Identified as a multi-copy suppressor of an FtsH/HtpX protease double disruption mutant)	Cell inner membrane	Quality control-related membrane complex	Solubilized Membrane
Regulators					
hflK	P0ABC7	Modulator of FtsH protease HflK	Cell inner membrane	Regulation of proteolytic activity of FtsH	Solubilized Membrane & Purified FtsH-HflK-HflC Complex
hflC	P0ABC3	Modulator of FtsH protease HflC	Cell inner membrane	Regulation of proteolytic activity of FtsH	Solubilized Membrane & Purified FtsH-HflK-HflC Complex
Insertion					
yidC	P25714	Membrane protein insertase YidC	Cell inner membrane	Cytochrome c biogenesis (system I type)	Solubilized Membrane & Purified FtsH-HflK-HflC Complex
yajC	P0ADZ7	Sec translocon accessory complex subunit YajC	Cell inner membrane	Cytochrome c biogenesis (system I type)	Solubilized Membrane

J. The connections of FtsH, HflK and HflC with other proteins.

FtsH					
Protein 1	Gene 1	From	Protein 2	Gene 2	To
P0AAI3	ftsH	533	P21507	srmB	407
P0AAI3	ftsH	31	P21365	yciC	2
P0AAI3	ftsH	533	P10121	ftsY	2
P0AAI3	ftsH	494	P0ABB8	mgtA	350
P0AAI3	ftsH	31	P39363	sgcA	6
P0AAI3	ftsH	203	P00562	ftsY	676
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P06960	argF	35
P0AAI3	ftsH	535	P0A7Q1	rpmI	36
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P46837	yhgF	704
P0AAI3	ftsH	550	P23841	xapR	133
P0AAI3	ftsH	550	P76235	yeaH	222
P0AAI3	ftsH	535	P0ACV0	lpxL	191
P0AAI3	ftsH	533	P0AF20	nagC	63
P0AAI3	ftsH	550	P23367	mutL	165
P0AAI3	ftsH	265	P0A6A0	ubiB	550
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P0AF20	nagC	63
P0AAI3	ftsH	580	P0AAB2	wzb	119
P0AAI3	ftsH	433	P0A853	tnaA	409
P0AAI3	ftsH	408	P25526	gabD	281
P0AAI3	ftsH	550	P0ACR7	yfeR	274
P0AAI3	ftsH	461	P0A7E9	pyrH	222
P0AAI3	ftsH	31	P0AG90	secD	608
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P0AF06	motB	234
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P0A6X1	hemA	208
P0AAI3	ftsH	76	P0AAG8	mglA	260
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P37631	yhiN	120
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P31548	thiQ	180
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P18775	dmsA	134
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P37627	yhiJ	88
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P42632	tdcE	147
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P0AGC3	slt	300
P0AAI3	ftsH	433	P0AA16	ompR	184
P0AAI3	ftsH	494	P0AEJ4	envZ	228
P0AAI3	ftsH	203	P37330	glcB	421
P0AAI3	ftsH	550	P0A763	ndk	1

P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P0ADR8	ppnN	337
P0AAI3	ftsH	535	P07118	valS	113
P0AAI3	ftsH	203	P51025	frmB	235
P0AAI3	ftsH	437	P31447	yidJ	408
P0AAI3	ftsH	148	P37659	bcsG	382
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P76613	ypjC	81
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P0A6H8	clsA	286
P0AAI3	ftsH	433	P37127	aegA	619
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P0ABD3	bfr	53
P0AAI3	ftsH	494	P32128	yihF	207
P0AAI3	ftsH	533	P37177	ptsP	97
P0AAI3	ftsH	391	P78271	yfeS	70
P0AAI3	ftsH	433	P77561	ydeP	288
P0AAI3	ftsH	494	P37640	yhjB	160
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	Q46861	ygiQ	1
P0AAI3	ftsH	550	P0AAB4	ubiD	5
P0AAI3	ftsH	533	P28638	yhdJ	78
P0AAI3	ftsH	76	P06612	topA	3
P0AAI3	ftsH	203	P08331	cpdB	550
P0AAI3	ftsH	461	P0AFB8	glnG	445
P0AAI3	ftsH	433	P0AA99	yafK	210
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P76573	yfgI	173
P0AAI3	ftsH	533	P15288	pepD	393
P0AAI3	ftsH	533	P52043	scpC	318
P0AAI3	ftsH	461	P37008	yagB	1
P0AAI3	ftsH	543	P60785	lepA	203
P0AAI3	ftsH	741	P18775	dmsA	580
P0AAI3	ftsH	580	P32694	yjbM	153
P0AAI3	ftsH	46	P07364	cheR	76
P0AAI3	ftsH	494	P37767	yfhH	57
P0AAI3	ftsH	494	P0ABH7	gltA	1
P0AAI3	ftsH	203	P0A9Q5	accD	84
P0AAI3	ftsH	203	P69931	hda	232
P0AAI3	ftsH	535	P13009	metH	446
P0AAI3	ftsH	84	P37659	bcsG	382
P0AAI3	ftsH	136	P0A9Q5	accD	84
P0AAI3	ftsH	76	P21177	fadB	302
P0AAI3	ftsH	203	P0A9Q5	accD	84

P0AAI3	ftsH	203	Q47152	rayT	41
P0AAI3	ftsH	203	P37671	yiaJ	1
P0AAI3	ftsH	433	Q47688	ykfC	0
P0AAI3	ftsH	433	P0ABK9	nrfA	90
P0AAI3	ftsH	408	P24175	manB	0
P0AAI3	ftsH	408	P76542	intZ	106
P0AAI3	ftsH	433	P0AA10	rplM	111
P0AAI3	ftsH	203	P37645	yhjG	380
P0AAI3	ftsH	408	P37009	fbpC	0
P0AAI3	ftsH	533	P02929	tonB	197
P0AAI3	ftsH	408	Q47688	ykfC	0
P0AAI3	ftsH	494	P0AAJ8	hybA	215
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P0ABN5	dcuA	220
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P0AAJ8	hybA	215
P0AAI3	ftsH	550	Q46890	otnC	0
P0AAI3	ftsH	433	P52696	ybhD	61
P0AAI3	ftsH	408	P76205	arpB	1
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P42592	ygiK	546
P0AAI3	ftsH	199	P0A993	fbp	433
P0AAI3	ftsH	408	P39285	mscM	67
P0AAI3	ftsH	332	P0ADE6	kbp	13
P0AAI3	ftsH	533	P76041	ycjM	1
P0AAI3	ftsH	408	P26266	fepE	228
P0AAI3	ftsH	433	P0A7J7	rplK	97

HflK					
Protein 1	Gene 1	From	Protein 2	Gene 2	To
P0ABC7	hflK	294	P37650	bcsC	702
P0ABC7	hflK	172	P77694	ecpD	27
P0ABC7	hflK	198	Q47538	tauB	123
P0ABC7	hflK	198	Q46868	ubiK	6
P0ABC7	hflK	198	P37652	bcsB	424
P0ABC7	hflK	294	P0A8P8	xerD	136
P0ABC7	hflK	294	P33997	alpA	2
P0ABC7	hflK	294	P43329	hrpA	1262
P0ABC7	hflK	294	Q46814	xdhD	188
P0ABC7	hflK	333	P0DMC5	rscC	502
P0ABC7	hflK	198	P0AB65	yccX	63
P0ABC7	hflK	294	P76641	guaD	9
P0ABC7	hflK	198	P0AAG3	gltL	228
P0ABC7	hflK	198	A0A7H2C793	yqiM	1
P0ABC7	hflK	31	P37024	hrpB	784
P0ABC7	hflK	198	P24183	fdnG	1
P0ABC7	hflK	198	P60757	hisG	2
P0ABC7	hflK	310	P63224	gmhA	147
P0ABC7	hflK	198	P0C093	slmA	0
P0ABC7	hflK	198	P0ADP9	yihD	0

HflC					
Protein 1	Gene 1	From	Protein 2	Gene 2	To
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P76594	patZ	526
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P0AG07	rpe	9/12
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P0AFX7	rseA	17
P0ABC3	hflC	333	P68767	pepA	156
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P03018	uvrD	621
P0ABC3	hflC	85	P75785	opgE	8
P0ABC3	hflC	44	P23367	mutL	159
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P09126	hemD	2
P0ABC3	hflC	327	P68767	pepA	156
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P05791	ilvD	3
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P00363	frdA	324
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P77180	ykgH	109
P0ABC3	hflC	327	P42592	ygjK	189
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P0A7A7	plsB	446
P0ABC3	hflC	327	P15038	helD	4
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P17445	betB	477
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P08956	hsdR	1124
P0ABC3	hflC	327	P76093	ynbD	301
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P22939	ispA	262
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P45537	yhfK	300
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P0A6F5	groEL	15
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P06710	dnaX	571
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P77611	rsxC	258
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P07017	tar	413
P0ABC3	hflC	137	A0A385XJN2	ygiA	64
P0ABC3	hflC	327	P00452-2;P00452	nrdA	359;384
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P76235	yeaH	14
P0ABC3	hflC	36	Q46908	ygcR	204
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P45800	yrfF	446
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P06136	ftsQ	120
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P23842	pdeA	690
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P0AF36	zapB	61
P0ABC3	hflC	44	P0A8U2	yafD	3
P0ABC3	hflC	327	P31064	yedE	189
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P18776;P0AAJ1	dmsB;ynfG	2;2
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P0AEZ7	mltD	233
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P0ABG4	ftsW	167
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P77551;P75719	rzpR;rzpD	21;76
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P39375	iraD	17
P0ABC3	hflC	122	P0AEW6	gsk	10

P0ABC3	hflC	327	P00350	gnd	314
P0ABC3	hflC	327	P15043	recQ	593
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P30128	greB	15
P0ABC3	hflC	327	P45463	ttdR	91
P0ABC3	hflC	327	P15082	srlR	2
P0ABC3	hflC	122	P64554	queE	46
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P39452	nrdE	524
P0ABC3	hflC	44	P21888	cysS	370
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P37682	yaU	1
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P75972	ymfI	1
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P0ADY3	rplN	1
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P0CK95	yghJ	167
P0ABC3	hflC	122	P0A8K1	psd	6
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P0A8M0	asnS	1
P0ABC3	hflC	36	A0A7H2C767;P63284	clpB	303;451
P0ABC3	hflC	248	P32128	yihF	350
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P63389	yheS	272
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P04036	dapB	187
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P12282	moeB	1
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P77615	ycjW	317
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P16703	cysM	88
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P37766	ydiF	455
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P25519	hflX	391
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P77610	ansP	15
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P0AAV0	ybgE	14
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P23890	cadC	463
P0ABC3	hflC	44	P0A6F1	carA	2
P0ABC3	hflC	44	P0AC75	waaA	168
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P0AF28	narL	188
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P33596	recX	1
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P64448	ynbE	37
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P0AGL5	ratA	2
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P27829	wecC	172
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P0AAF3	araG	324
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P37773	mpl	198
P0ABC3	hflC	327	Q46927	tcdA	259
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P24188	trhO	183
P0ABC3	hflC	36	P21170	speA	1
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P19323	fhlA	526
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P0A6N4	efp	54
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P0ADK0	yaF	0
P0ABC3	hflC	44	P30750	metN	0

P0ABC3	hflC	137	P0DSF4	ynfU	8
P0ABC3	hflC	44	P0AGM0	yhhT	8
P0ABC3	hflC	44	P77306	yqiK	378
P0ABC3	hflC	82	P0AF78	yjFJ	44
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P77488	dxs	284
P0ABC3	hflC	327	P0AEF0	dnaC	1
P0ABC3	hflC	44	P0A9Q7	adhE	876
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P0A749	murA	152
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P32721	alsA	338
P0ABC3	hflC	122	P0ADP9	yihD	0
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P29745	pepT	177
P0ABC3	hflC	137	P71311	yaiS	3
P0ABC3	hflC	248	P09184	vsr	92
P0ABC3	hflC	85	P0AFG8	aceE	881
P0ABC3	hflC	327	P21365	yicC	0
P0ABC3	hflC	84	P0AES4	gyrA	1

K. Complex inter-protein interactions.

	Purified Protein							Solubilized Membrane							
	Peptide1	Peptide2	Protein 1	Protein 2	From	To	Number of spectra matching to this site	Peptide1	Peptide2	Protein 1	Protein 2	From	To	Number of spectra matching to this site	
MaxLynx	VTNPEKYLVSVPDSSLR	FGKVL	HfIK	HfIC	172	36	1	YYLATGGGDISQAEVLLKR	KDSNR	HfIC	FtsH	120	61	1	
	VLVNDKGGNLMVLPDQMLK	YMKTPTSATR	HfIK	HfIC	346	327	6	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	SQGQEEAEKLR	HfIK	HfIC	294	248	3	
	VTNPEKYLVSVPDSSLR	KFSDR	HfIK	HfIC	172	122	1	VLVNDKGGNLMVLPDQMLK	YMKTPTSATR	HfIK	HfIC	346	327	1	
	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	YMKTPTSATR	HfIK	HfIC	294	327	2	LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIK	137	198	4	
	KVDYSTFLQEVNNDQVR	PTFIDEVKPVNVEAVR	FtsH	HfIK	31	133	2								
	LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIK	137	198	3								
	GEGDAEAAKLFADAFSK	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	HfIC	HfIK	281	294	1								
	YYLATGGGDISQAEVLLKR	LLDNLLTKNVK	HfIC	FtsH	120	84	1								
	IKQINLPTEVSEAIYNR	KDSNR	HfIC	FtsH	211	61	1								
	IKQINLPTEVSEAIYNR	EINVTCK	HfIC	FtsH	211	60	1								
KVDYSTFLQEVNNDQVR	IPFIETVKMLDAR	FtsH	HfIC	31	63	6									
MeroX	KVDYSTFLQEVNNDQVR	IPFIETVKMLDAR	FtsH	HfIC	31	63	1	GEGDAEAAKLFADAFSK	FAKLLPEYK	HfIC	HfIK	281	310	1	
	QYLAPLSADFSR	LDVKDIVTDSR	FtsH	HfIC	31	61/63	2	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	SQGQEEAEKLR	HfIC	HfIK	248	293/294	1	
	SEIGRLDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIK	137	198/199/200	10	DATNKAADIVLQAAIAAGAPK	IPLAKMAVAESGMGIVEDK	HfIC	HfIK	137	198	2	
	LAEEIYGPEHVSTGASNDIKVATNLAR	IIDQEVKALIER	HfIC	HfIK	137	198	1	VLVNDKGGNLMVLPDQMLK	YMKTPTSATR	HfIC	HfIK	327	346	2	
	LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIK	141/143	198	4	LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIK	141	198	1	
	SMVMTEAQKESTAYHEAGHAIIGR	DALMKYETIDAPQIDDLMAR	HfIC	HfIK	248	293/294	1	WLGGMILTNNWKTVR	QSIKR	HfIC	HfIK	248	294	1	
	LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIK	137/141/143	198/199/200	1								
	KNGKEVQKLTGK	EQLKVHMR	HfIK	HfIC	294	328/330/331/333	1								
	MS Annika	IPFIETVKMLDAR	KVDYSTFLQEVNNDQVR	HfIC	FtsH	63	31	3	GVIGKYTMDR	LDVKDIVTDSR	HfIK	HfIC	198	137	3
		FGKVL	KVDYSTFLQEVNNDQVR	HfIC	FtsH	36	31	1	FAKLLPEYK	GEGDAEAAKLFADAFSK	HfIK	HfIC	310	281	3
EINVTCK		YYLATGGGDISQAEVLLKR	FtsH	HfIC	60	120	1								
LLDNLLTKNVK		YYLATGGGDISQAEVLLKR	FtsH	HfIC	84	120	1								
EINVTCK		IKQINLPTEVSEAIYNR	FtsH	HfIC	60	211	2								
GVIGKYTMDR		LDVKDIVTDSR	HfIK	HfIC	198	137	15								
YMKTPTSATR		VLVNDKGGNLMVLPDQMLK	HfIC	HfIK	327	346	6								
SQGQEEAEKLR		AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	HfIC	HfIK	248	294	1								
KFSDR		VTNPEKYLVSVPDSSLR	HfIC	HfIK	122	172	1								
FGKVL		VTNPEKYLVSVPDSSLR	HfIC	HfIK	36	172	2								
XlinkX	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	SQGQEEAEKLR	HfIK	HfIC	294	248	2	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	GEGDAEAAKLFADAFSK	HfIK	HfIC	294	281	2	
	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	GEGDAEAAKLFADAFSK	HfIK	HfIC	294	281	1	AYKAQTILEAQGEVAR	SQGQEEAEKLR	HfIK	HfIC	294	248	1	
	VLVNDKGGNLMVLPDQMLK	YMKTPTSATR	HfIK	HfIC	346	327	2	LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIK	137	198	4	
	LDVKDIVTDSR	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIK	137	198	19	GEGDAEAAKLFADAFSK	FAKLLPEYK	HfIC	HfIK	281	310	1	
	FVTKEKKDLIVDSYIK	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIK	82	198	2								
	FVTKEKKDLIVDSYIK	GVIGKYTMDR	HfIC	HfIK	84	198	1								
	YYLATGGGDISQAEVLLKR	LLDNLLTKNVK	HfIC	FtsH	120	84	1								
	KVDYSTFLQEVNNDQVR	IPFIETVKMLDAR	FtsH	HfIC	31	63	1								

M. Interactions of complex proteins with other proteins.

Protein	Solubilised Membrane				Purified Protein			
	Peptide 1	Peptide 2	Protein 1	Protein 2	Peptide 1	Peptide 2	Protein 1	Protein 2
Maxlynx	TLAKADAGEAK		POAA13	POAA13				
	DVMRRKLVILAR		POAA13	POAA13				
MeroX	ITDKQER		POAABC3	POAABC3				
	MINPIVR		POAABC3	POAABC3				
MS Amnlla	YEKDDSIK	YEKDDSIK	POAABC3	POAABC3				
	MPKVR	MPKVR	POAABC3	POAABC3				
	KLHER	KLHER	POAABC3	POAABC3				

