### *Supporting information*

# **PredCRP: predicting and analysing the regulatory roles of CRP from its binding sites in** *Escherichia coli*

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## **Materials and Methods Datasets of CRP-binding sites**

#### **A survey of the 23 putative CRP-binding sites**

The DNA sequence, -NNNTG<sub>5</sub>TG<sub>7</sub>ANNNNNNTC<sub>16</sub>AC<sub>18</sub>ANNN-, a well-known palindromic sequence, is bound by CRP  $^{1-3}$ . (a G to C mutation at position 5 and a C to G mutation at position 16) reduced CRP-binding ability significantly and used as the negative control in normal EMSA experiments <sup>4,5</sup>. Careful observation of all of the 23 putative CRP-binding sites on promoter regions which we used in this study reveals that all DNA sequences four matched base on the  $G_5$ ,  $G_7$ ,  $C_{16}$  and  $C_{18}$  at the palindromic sequence, except the CRP consensus sequence on the *ycdZ* promoter, which have one mutation on  $C_{18}$  change to  $T_{18}$ . Based on the above reasons, the experiment results of EMSA and the related references from the EcoCyc database <sup>6</sup> listed in Table S1, we can conclude and generalize that 23 putative CRP-binding sites are CRP-binding sites.

### **Feature extraction of the CRP-binding sites**

### **Composition descriptor**

The composition of 4-mer motifs was calculated based on the number of all 4-mer motifs (i.e. from AAAA to TTTT), which may be related to the codon usage of polymerase  $\frac{7}{1}$ . The number of all 4-mer motifs were calculated using the following formula.

$$
N_{4-mer} = \left(\frac{N_{AAAA}}{L}, \frac{N_{AAAC}}{L}, \dots, \frac{N_{TTTT}}{L}\right)
$$
\n<sup>(1)</sup>

In equation (1), *L* is the length of the binding site sequence and the  $N_{\text{AAAA}}$  to  $N_{\text{TTTT}}$  are defined as the occurrence frequency of a specific 4-mer in a given binding site sequence. Similarly, The composition of 3-mer was calculated using the following formula.

$$
N_{3-mer} = \left(\frac{N_{AAA}}{L}, \frac{N_{AAC}}{L}, ..., \frac{N_{TTT}}{L}\right)
$$
 (2)

### **Location-dependent descriptor**

Although the regulatory roles of CRP have been previously examined  $\delta$ , few quantitative studies have been conducted. For instance, the distribution of transcription factor (TF)-binding site locations for activators and repressors has been examined in studies characterising the roles of regulation of TFs in *E. coli*. However, the accuracy of predicting each TF using the distribution of TF binding site locations has not been reported. In this work, the 17 features from the location-dependent location descriptor were integrated to predict the regulation mode of CRP in *E. coli*. The novel location descriptor include location-dependent knowledge such as the operator centre position of the CRP-binding site, the size of the overlap regions between a CRP-binding site to the regions of specific mechanisms (Table S3). However, these sequence descriptors have not been reported previously for predicting the regulation roles of TFs in *E. coli*.

### **Physicochemical property descriptor**

For a given DNA sequence, the 3 DNA physicochemical properties represent the average absorption maxima, molecular weight, and molar absorption coefficient of the given sequence, respectively  $9$ .

### **Global sequence descriptor**

The global sequence descriptior of promoter/non-promoter sequences contains four parts, entropy density profile (EDP), single nucleotide composition, transition, and DNA nucleotide distribution <sup>10</sup>. The EDP model is a globally statistical descriptor of DNA sequences based on Shannon's artificial linguistic description for a DNA sequence of finite length <sup>11</sup>. Six EDP descriptors, including  $EDP_{EQ}$ ,  $EDP_{EH}$ , and  $EDP_{Ei}$  ( $EDP_{EA}$ ,  $EDP_{EC}$ ,  $EDP_{EG}$ , and  $EDP_{ET}$ ) are defined as follows:

$$
EDP_{EQ} = q_A^2 + q_C^2 + q_G^2 + q_T^2 \tag{3}
$$

$$
EDP_{EH} = -\sum_{i} q_i \log q_i \tag{4}
$$

$$
EDP_{E_i} = \frac{-1}{EDP_{EH}} q_i \log q_i \tag{5}
$$

In these formulas,  $EDP_{EQ}$  and  $EDP_{Ei}$  are statistical quantities,  $q_i$  is the single nucleotide composition, *i* is the index that specifies the nucleotides  $(A, C, G, and T)$ , and  $EDP_{EH}$  is Shannon's entropy. Additionally, the  $q_i$  of four nucleotides (A, C, G, and T) is also included in the global sequence descriptor.

Features of the transition descriptor,  $T(\alpha, \beta)$ , are used to characterise the percent frequency with which  $\alpha$  is followed by β or β is followed by α, where  $\alpha$  is not equal to β. The six transition frequencies include T(A, C), T(A, G), T(A, T), T(C, G), T(C, T), and T(G, T). For example, for the S20 sequence, there are four transitions of type T(A, C), CATAGCCATTGCATGACCCG; the letters shown in bold indicate that the value of CRP T(A, C) is 21.05 %(4/19).

The final part of the global sequence descriptor is the locations of a certain nucleotide (A, C, G, and T) in n-th segments of a given sequence divided by the length of the given sequence. In this work,  $n = 5$  was used. For example, the S20 sequence, CATAGCCATTGCATGACCCG, The nucletiode "A" is shown at the positions 2, 4, 8, 13, and 16. Hence, the features of first A, second A, third A, fourth A and fifth A have values of 10% (2/20), 20% (4/20), 40% (8/20), 65% (13/20), and 80% (16/20), respectively.

### **Feature selection in cooperation with an SVM**

- Step 1: Each sample is represented as an *n*-dimensional feature vector  $p = [p_1, p_2, ..., p_n]$  In this work,  $n =$ 380 was used.
- Step 2: Each IBCGA-chromosome consists of binary genes  $f_i$  from which to select 380 features and two 4-bit genes for encoding the kernel parameter γand the cost parameter (*C*). The corresponding feature  $p_i$  (the i-th feature) is excluded from the SVM classifier if  $f_i = 0$ , and  $p_i$  is included if  $f_i = 1$ . Let *m* be the sum of  $f_i$ . The  $\gamma > 0$  determines how the samples are transformed into a

high-dimensional search space. The cost parameter  $C > 0$  of the SVM classifier adjusts the penalty of total error. These two parameters C and  $\gamma$  must be tuned to obtain the best prediction performance. In this work,  $\gamma \in \{2^{8}, 2^{7}, ..., 2^{7}\}$  and  $C \in \{2^{8}, 2^{7}, ..., 2^{7}\}$ 

- Step 3: The fitness function is the prediction accuracy of k-fold cross-validation using the LIBSVM classifier  $12$  with the *m* selected informative features and the SVM parameters ( $\gamma$  and *C*) by decoding the IBCGA-chromosome. In this study, a popular kernel function which is a radial basis function exp  $(-\gamma ||x^j - x^j||^2)$  was adopted.  $x^i$  and  $x^j$  were training samples and  $\gamma$  was a kernel parameter. The parameter settings of IBCGA are shown in Table S4. In this study,  $k = 24$  was used.
- Step 4: All solutions for  $S_r$  from  $r = r_{start}$  to  $r_{end}$  are obtained using IBCGA. Let  $S_m$  be the most accurate solution with *m* selected features among all solutions from  $C(n, r_{start})$  to  $C(n, r_{end})$  search space. In this study,  $r_{start} = 10$  and  $r_{end} = 40$  were used.
- Step 5: IBCGA use mechanisms of randomisation and are therefore characterised as non-deterministic because the results of individual runs are not always the same. Therefore, Steps 3 and 4 are performed for *R* independent runs to obtain the best *R* number of discrete runs to obtain the best *R* solutions. In this study,  $R = 30$  was used.

## **Inference process of interpretable rules**

Let *l* and *r* be the left end (the start position of CRP-binding site) and the right end (the end position of CRP-binding site) of a given CRP-binding site. Since the length of a CRP-binding site is 22, there exists the following equations. The nodes of the decision tree are numbering in both top-to-down and left-to-right manners (Figure S8).

$$
l + 21 = r \tag{6}
$$

$$
r - 21 = l \tag{7}
$$

### **Activation rule 1**

Step1: IF (Node1 is equal to 0) THEN  $(r < -10 \text{ OR } l > 2)$ 

Step2:SINCE (*r* < -10) THEN (*l* + 21 < -10)

Step3: SINCE (*l* + 21 < -10) THEN (*l* < -31)

Step4:HENCE, IF (Node1 is equal to 0) THEN  $(l < -31$  OR  $l > 2$ ) Step5: IF (Node  $3 \le 11.5$ ) THEN  $((r - 10.5 \le -60) \text{ OR } (l + 10.5 \ge 60))$ Step6: SINCE  $(r - 10.5 \le -60)$  THEN  $(l + 21 \le -49.5)$ Step7: SINCE ( $l + 21 \le -49.5$ ) THEN ( $l \le -70.5$ ) Step8: HENCE, IF (Node 3 <= 11.5) THEN (*l* <= -70.5 OR *l* >= 49.5 ) Step9: IF ((Node1 is equal to 0) AND (Node  $3 \le -11.5$ ) AND (the TTTT composition  $\le -2$ )) THEN (a given CRP-binding site tends to be an activator)

Activation rule 1 states that if a given CRP-binding site statisfy (*l* < = -70.5 OR *l* >= 49.5) AND (the TTTT composition  $\langle 2 \rangle$ ) then it tends to be an activator.  $l \langle 2 \rangle = -70.5$  is equivalent to  $r \langle 2 \rangle = -49.5$ . The inference process of the location criteria is shown in Figure S2.

#### **Activation rule 2**

Step1: IF (Node1 is equaul to 0) THEN  $(r < -10 \text{ OR } l > 2)$ 

Step2: SINCE  $(r < -10)$  THEN  $(l + 21 < -10)$ 

Step3: HENCE, IF (Node1 is equal to 0) THEN (*l* < -31 OR *l* > 2)

Step4: IF (Node3 > 11.5) THEN ((*r* - 10.5 > -60) OR (*l* + 10.5 < 60))

Step5: SINCE (*r* - 10.5 > -60) THEN (*r* > -49.5)

Step6: SINCE (*r* > -49.5) THEN (*l + 21* > -49.5)

Step7: SINCE (*l + 21* > -49.5) THEN (*l* > -70.5)

Step8: HENCE, IF (Node3 > 11.5) THEN (*l* > -70.5 OR *l* < 49.5)

Step9: IF (Node5 > 15.5) THEN ((*r* - 14.5 > -95) AND (*l* + 14.5 < -35))

Step10: SINCE (*r* - 14.5 > -95) THEN (*l* + 21 > -80.5)

Step11: SINCE (*l* + 21 > -80.5) THEN ( *l* > -101.5)

Step12: HENCE, IF (Node5 > 15.5) THEN  $(-101.5 < l < -49.5)$ 

Step13: IF ((Node1 is equal to 0) AND (Node3 > 11.5) AND (Node5 > 15.5)) THEN ( -70.5 < *l* < -49.5)

Step14: SINCE ( *l* < -49.5) THEN (*r* – 21 < -49.5)

Step15: SINCE ( *r* - 21 < -49.5) THEN ( *r* < -28.5)

Step16: IF ((Node1 is equal to 0) AND (Node3 > 11.5) AND (Node5 > 15.5) AND (the AACG composition is equal to 0)) THEN (a given CRP-binding site tends to be an activator)

Activation rule 2 states that if a given CRP-binding site statisfy ((-70.5 < *l* < -49.5) AND (the AACG composition is equal to 0)) then it tends to be an activator.  $(-70.5 < l < -49.5)$  is equivalent to  $-70.5 <$  *region* <

-28.5. The inference process of the location criteria is shown in Figure S3.

### **Repression rule 1**

Step1: IF (Node1 is equal to 0) THEN (*r* < -10 OR *l* > 2)

Step2: SINCE (*r* < -10) THEN (*l* + 21 < -10)

Step3: SINCE  $(l + 21 < -10)$  THEN  $(l < -31)$ 

Step4: HENCE, IF (Node1 is equal to 0) THEN (*l* < -31 OR *l* > 2)

Step5: IF (Node 3 > 11.5) THEN ((*r* - 10.5 > -60) OR (*l* + 10.5 < 60))

Step6: SINCE (*r* - 10.5 > -60) THEN (*r* > -49.5)

Step7: SINCE (*r* > -49.5) THEN (*l* + 21 > -49.5)

Step8: SINCE (*l* + 21 > -49.5) THEN (*l* > -70.5)

Step9: HENCE, IF (Node 3 > 11.5) THEN ((*l* > -70.5) OR (*l* < 49.5))

Step10: IF (Node5 <= 15.5) THEN  $((r - 14.5 \le -95) \text{ OR } (\underline{l} + 14.5 \ge -35))$ 

Step11: SINCE (*r* - 14.5 <= -95) THEN (*r* <= -80.5)

Step12: SINCE  $(r \le -80.5)$  THEN  $(l + 21 \le -80.5)$ 

Step13: HENCE, IF (Node5 <= 15.5) THEN(*l* <= -101.5 OR *l* >= -49.5)

Step10: IF ((Node1 is equal to 0) AND (Node  $3 > 11.5$ ) AND (Node5  $\le$  15.5) AND (the TTAC composition is equal to 0))

THEN (a given CRP-binding site tends to be a repressor)

Repression rule 1 states that if a given CRP-binding site statisfy  $((-49.5 \le l \le -31) \text{ OR } (2 < l \le 49.5))$ AND

(the TTAC composition is equal to 0)) then it tends to be a repressor.  $(-49.5 \le l \le -31)$  is equivalent to  $-49.5 \le l \le 100$ 

*region*  $<$  -10. 2  $<$  *l*  $<$  49.5 is equivalent to

2 < *region* < 70.5. The inference process of the location criteria is shown in Figure S4.

#### **Repression rule 2**

Step1: IF (Node1 is equal to 0) THEN  $((r > -10) \text{ OR } (l < 2))$ 

Step2: SINCE  $(r > -10)$  THEN  $(l + 21 > -10)$ 

Step3: SINCE (Step1 AND Step2) THEN (-31 < *l* < 2)

Step4: SINCE  $(l < 2)$  THEN  $(r - 21 < 2)$ 

Step5: SINCE  $(r - 21 < 2)$  THEN  $(r < 23)$ 

Step6: IF (Node1 is equal to 0 AND (the GAGC composition is equal to 0) AND (the TTAC composition is equal to 0)) THEN (a given CRP binding site tends to be a repressor)

Repression rule 2 states that if a given CRP-binding site statisfy ((-31 < *l* < 2) AND (the GAGC composition is equal to 0) AND (the TTAC composition is equal to 0)) then it tends to be a repressor.  $(-31 < l < 2)$  is equiavalent to -31 < *region* < 23. The inference process of the location criteria is shown in Figure S5.

### **Inference of relative quantity in real-time qPCR**

In this study, To determine the regulatory roles of the studied sequence, a relative method can be used, where *16S* rRNA gene is a calibrator. First, internal control for each gene, difference between ΔCt of studied gene and control gene (*16S*) is calculated, then subtract between (so the value of the "ΔΔCt") ΔCt of sample with 1mM and  $\Delta$ Ct of the calibrator (0mM). Normalized value of the expression level relative to the calibrator is determined by the formula <sup>13</sup>: Relative quantity =  $2^{-\Delta \Delta Ct}$ . The results of qPCR experiment are shown in Table S2.

### **Supplementary Tables**



**Table S1.** Analysis of the crucial binding positions of the 23 putative CRP-binding sites

The  $G_5$ ,  $G_7$ ,  $C_{16}$  and  $C_{18}$  are highlighted in bold.





Roles, A stands for activation, and R stands for repression; RQ: Relative quantity; R1: Replicate 1; R2: Replicate 2





feature may involve in the transcription bubble mechanism.

- L7 The size of the overlap region between the CRP-binding site and other repressor binding sites
- L8 The size of the overlap region between the CRP-binding site and other activator binding sites
- L9 The CRP binding site located on forward strand or reverse strand
- L10 The size of the overlap region between the CRP-binding site and the region from -95 to -60. This feature is consistent with the Class I rule.
- L11 Thes size of the overlap region between the CRP-binding site and the region from -50 to 35. This feature is consistent with the Class II rule.
- L12 The size of the overlap region between the CRP-binding site and the region from -60 to 60. This feature may involve in the three mechanisms, 1) activation by DNA conformation change, 2) repression by DNA looping and 3) cooperative repression
- L13 The size of overlap region between the CRP-binding site and the region from position -10 to 60. This feature may involve in the repression by roadblock mechanism.
- L14 The size of the overlap region between the CRP-binding site and the region from -95 to -10.
- This feature may involve the repression by activator modulation mechanism
- L15 The size of the overlap region between the CRP-binding site and the region from -95 to -35. This feature may involve in the cooperative activation mechanism.
- L16 The size of the overlap region between the CRP-binding site and the region from -10 to 10. This feature may involve in the promoter escape regulation mechanism.
- L17 The number of escaped promoters.

Transcription start site denotes +1;

<b>Parameter</b>	Value
Population size $N_{\text{pop}}$	50
Selection probability $p_s$	0.2
Crossover probability $p_c$	0.8
Mutation probability $p_m$	0.05
Factor number of orthogonal arrays	
Maximum generations $G_{\text{max}}$	

**Table S4.** The used control parameters of IBCGA





## **Supplementary Figures**



Figure S1. The decision tree was established using 12 informative features.

This decision tree is pruned using the confidence level 25%. The four prediction rules with a high cover rate of CRPS were selected. These corresponding paths are highlighted with thick lines.



**Figure S2.** The inference process of the location critieria of activation rule 1.



**Figure S3.** The inference process of the location critieria of activation rule 2.



**Figure S4.** The inference process of the location critieria of repression rule 1.



**Figure S5.** The inference process of the location critieria of repression rule 2.



**Figure S6.** The CRP-regulated interactions where the regulatory roles were predicted by PredCRP.



**Figure S7.** Sequence logo of each rule obtained from WebLogo



**Figure S8.** The nodes of the decision tree are numbered in both top-to-down and left-to-right manners.

The gray nodes are related to informative motifs. On the other hand, the white ones are related to locations of CRP-binding sites.

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