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SI Methods

Bioinformatics. The viral genome database [\(https://www.ncbi.](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/genome/viruses) [nlm.nih.gov/genome/viruses](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/genome/viruses)) was downloaded from the NCBI and was searched for the hormone peptide sequences reported in Table S1 with a threshold e-value ≤ 0.1 using tBLASTn (50). This yielded the data in Tables S2 and S3. An additional bioinformatics search was performed by BLASTp using the A-chain or B-chain of insulin, IGF1, and IGF2 as query sequences against viral proteomes (NCBI taxonomic ID: 10239). This uncovered GIV VILP presented in this paper, which had not been identified in the original search because the GIV genome was not included in the NCBI viral genome database. The whole protein sequence of each significant hit was compared with insulin, IGF1, and IGF2 using a multiple sequence alignment program (Clustal Omega) to determine the positions of the cysteines and the number of the identical and conserved residues. Sequence alignment was used to predict domain structures of the VILPs, and I-TASSER was used to predict 3D structures (18). SignalP was used to predict the possible signal peptides of the VILPs [\(www.cbs.dtu.dk/services/SignalP/\)](http://www.cbs.dtu.dk/services/SignalP/).

Residues involved in IR and IGF1R binding were added using the CCP4 Molecular Graphics program ([www.ccp4.ac.uk/MG/\)](http://www.ccp4.ac.uk/MG/). Crystal structures of human insulin [Protein Data Bank (PDB) ID code 1MSO] and hIGF1R (PDB ID code 1GZR) and I-TASSER–predicted structures of the VILPs were used in this analysis. The two arginines at positions 36 and 37 in the IGF1 molecule are missing from the crystal structure and were inserted manually. An evolutionary tree was constructed using sequences of 30 different insulin, IGF1, and IGF2 sequences and the four VILPs obtained from UniProt (Table S4). After the multiple sequence alignment of these sequences, the alignment file was utilized for the production of a neighbor-joining phylogenetic tree without distance corrections using Clustal Omega ([https://www.ebi.ac.uk/Tools/msa/clustalo/](http://www.ebi.ac.uk/Tools/msa/clustalo/)).

The sequences identified in the previously published enteric virome/microbiome analysis were used to make a blast database. SGIV, GIV, LCDV-Sa, and LCDV-1 genomes were used as queries for search against the library using the BLASTn program to determine if these viruses are present in these samples. The significant hits obtained from the virome/microbiome study for VILP-carrying viruses were explored a second time to determine their specificity to these viruses and to show they are not found in any other species. The significant DNA reads were retrieved from the previous BLAST databases result and were used as queries to run BLASTn on the NCBI nonredundant database. The sequences reported in this study are the ones that are 100% specific to these viruses. The code for these database searches is available at <https://github.com/jdreyf/viral-insulin-peptides>.

Peptide Synthesis and Folding. The single-chain viral insulins were assembled on 0.1 mmol Rink amide ChemMatrix (PCAS BioMatrix Inc.) resin using an ABI 433A peptide synthesizer and Fmoc/6- Cl-HOBt/N,N′-diisopropylcarbodiimide coupling protocols. Fmoc-Asp-OtBu was employed to introduce the C-terminal Asn. Cleavage was conducted by treatment with 10 mL of trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) solution containing 2.5% triisopropylsilane, 2.5% 2-mercaptoethanol, 2.5% anisole, and 2.5% H₂O at room temperature with gentle agitation for 2 h. The resin was filtered, and the peptide was precipitated by the addition of cold ether (50 mL). The precipitate was collected by centrifugation and then was washed with cold ether $(3 \times 50 \text{ mL})$. The crude peptide was dissolved in 20 mM alkaline glycine buffer (500 mL) followed with the addition of solid cysteine·HCl (0.75 mmol). The pH of

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the solution was adjusted to 10.5 with 1 M NaOH. Sonication was used to accelerate the dissolution of the crude peptide. The resulting solution was stirred vigorously at 4 °C for 2 d. The pH was lowered to 7.0 by the addition of 1 M HCl, and the solution was subjected to purification by preparative reverse-phase HPLC column [Luna 10-μm C8 100 Å, LC column (Phenomenex Inc.), 250×21.2 mm, $10-50\%$ aqueous acetonitrile $(0.1\%$ TFA) over 90 min, at a flow rate of 15 mL/min]. The results were assessed by analytical LC-MS. The pooled fractions were lyophilized to provide the single-chain viral insulin as a white fluffy solid.

Receptor Competition Assays. Murine brown preadipocyte cell lines with double knockout of the endogenous IR and IGF1R were stably transfected with either hIR-B or hIGF1R, as previously described (25), and were grown to confluence in 48-well plates and were serum-starved overnight. After washing with PBS, cells were incubated in a Hepes binding buffer containing 125I-IGF1 (2.5 nM) for hIGF1R-binding experiments or 125 I-insulin (1 nM) for IR-binding experiments and increasing concentrations of the unlabeled ligands for 2 h at room temperature. Binding competition was performed in triplicate for each dose. After washing, cells were solubilized with 0.1 M NaOH containing 0.1% SDS, and radioactivity was measured using a gamma-counter. The data were plotted as the percentage of the maximal binding of the ligand alone and were expressed as mean \pm SEM.

IR and IGF1R Phosphorylation. HEK293 cells (ATCC CRL-1573) overexpressing hIR-A, hIR-B, or hIGF1R were plated in 96 well plates and were cultured in DMEM supplemented with 100 IU/mL penicillin, 100 μg/mL streptomycin, 10 mM Hepes, and 0.25% bovine growth serum (HyClone SH30541) for 16–20 h at 37 °C, 5% $CO₂$, and 90% humidity. Serial dilutions of recombinant human insulin, IGF1, and test peptides were prepared in DMEM supplemented with 0.5% BSA and were added to the wells. After 15 min incubation at 37 °C in humidified atmosphere with 5% CO₂, the cells were fixed with 5% paraformaldehyde for 20 min at room temperature, washed twice with PBS (pH 7.4), and blocked with 2% BSA in PBS for 1 h. The plate was washed three times, filled with HRP-conjugated antibody against phosphotyrosine (#16-105; Upstate Biotechnology), and incubated for 3 h at room temperature, after which the plate was washed four times, and 0.1 mL of TMB One-Solution substrate (#00-2023; Invitrogen) was added to each well. Color development was stopped 5 min later by adding 0.05 mL 1 M HCl. Absorbance at 450 nm was measured on a Titertek Multiskan MCC340 microplate reader (Thermo Fisher). Absorbance vs. peptide concentration dose–response curves were plotted, and EC_{50} values were determined using logistic nonlinear three-parameter regression in GraphPad Prism 6 (GraphPad Software).

Insulin Signaling and Immunoblotting. All cells were maintained in DMEM supplemented with 10% FBS, 100 U/mL penicillin, and 100 μg/mL streptomycin (Gibco) and were cultured at 37 °C in a humidified atmosphere of 5% CO₂. Cells expressing hIR-B, mIR-A, hIGF1R, and mIGF1R were serum-starved for 4 h with DMEM containing 0.1% BSA and were stimulated with insulin, IGF1, or VILPs at the indicated concentrations for 15 or 60 min as indicated in Fig. $2 F$ and H and Fig. S4. To stop the experiments, cells were washed with ice-cold PBS and were lysed with RIPA lysis buffer (Millipore) complemented with 50 mM

potassium fluoride, 50 mM β-glycerolphosphate, 2 mM EGTA (pH 8), 1 mM $Na₃VO₄$, and 1 \times protease inhibitor mixture (Calbiochem). Protein concentrations were determined using the Pierce 660 nm Protein Assay Reagent (Bio-Rad). Lysates (10– 20 μg) were resolved on SDS/PAGE gels and were transferred to PVDF membrane for immunoblotting. Membranes were blocked in Starting Block T20 (Thermo Fisher) at room temperature for 1 h, were incubated with the indicated primary antibody in Starting Block T20 solution overnight at 4 °C (Figs. 2 and 3 and Fig. S4), and then were washed three times with $1 \times PBS$ and Tween-20 and incubated with HRP-conjugated secondary antibody (1:20,000; anti-mouse IgG, NA931; anti-rabbit IgG, NA934; GE Healthcare) in Starting Block T20 for 1 h. Signals were detected using Immobilon Western Chemiluminescent HRP Substrate (Millipore). Antibodies against phospho-IR/IGF1R (1:500; #3024), IRβ (1:500; sc-711), phospho-ERK1/2 (T202/Y204) (1:1,000; #9101), ERK1/2 (1:1,000; #9102), phospho-Akt (S473) (1:1,000; #9271), and Akt (1:1,000; #4685) were purchased from Cell Signaling Technologies. IRβ antibody (1:500; sc-711) was purchased from Santa Cruz. Human insulin was purchased from Sigma, and hIGF1 was purchased from PeproTech. Densitometric analyses of membranes were performed using ImageJ.

Plasmid Transfections. The cDNA sequence of the LCDV-1 VILP gene (240 bp, whole sequence) was synthesized by Integrated DNA Technologies, Inc. and was subcloned into 3×Flag-CMV-10 mammalian expression vector (Sigma). For transfection, AML-12 (mouse hepatocyte cell line; ATCC) cells were plated at 5×10^4 cells per well and were transfected using 1 µL of Lipofectamine 3000 and 0.5 μg DNA for 0.3 mL medium in each well per the manufacturer's instructions. For signaling experiments of LCDV-1 VILP-transfected cells, the culture medium was replaced 12 h after the transfections with starvation medium (DMEM containing 0.1% BSA), and cells were incubated for an additional 24 h.

DNA Synthesis and Proliferation. GM00409 human fibroblasts (Coriell Institute) were plated in 24-well plates at 5×10^4 cells per well in 500 μL DMEM supplemented with 10% FBS, 100 U/mL penicillin, and 100 μg/mL streptomycin (Gibco) and were cultured at 37 °C in a humidified atmosphere of 5% $CO₂$. After 24-h incubation, the cells were serum-starved for 24 h with DMEM containing 0.1% BSA, after which 1 µCi [3 H]-thymidine (Perkin-Elmer) was added to each well along with the indicated concentrations of ligands, all in triplicate. Experiments were stopped after 24 h, and the wells were washed with PBS. Cells were fixed by the addition of 10% trichloroacetic acid (TCA) for 10 min and were incubated at −20 °C. The plates were washed one more time with 10% TCA and were lysed in 0.1 M NaOH, followed by liquid scintillation counting.

For transfected AML-12 cells, a related protocol was used. Twelve hours after transfection, cells were serum-starved for 3 h with DMEM containing 0.1% BSA, and 1μ Ci [3 H]-thymidine was added. The experiment was stopped after 6 h of incubation with thymidine.

Cell Culture and Glucose Uptake. 3T3-L1 cells were differentiated as described previously (51). For 2-deoxyglucose uptake, cells were washed with PBS and incubated in starvation medium (lowglucose DMEM + 0.5% FBS) at 37 °C. After 3-h incubation, cells were washed again with PBS, and 0.45 mL of Krebs–Ringer Hepes buffer (KRBH) was added with the indicated concentrations of insulin, IGF1, or different viral insulins for 30 min at 37 °C. One microcurie of $[$ ¹⁴C] 2-deoxyglucose (Sigma) in 50 μL KRBH was added to each well for the final 5 min of stimulation. Glucose uptake was stopped by adding 50 μL of 200 mM 2 deoxyglucose. Cells were washed with PBS and were lysed with lysis buffer (0.1% SDS in PBS) followed by liquid scintillation counting. For Fig. 4A, results of two experiments were combined.

Insulin Tolerance Test. All animal studies complied with the regulations and ethics guidelines of the NIH and were approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees of the Joslin Diabetes Center (no. 97-05) and Harvard Medical School (no. 05131). I.p. insulin tolerance testing was performed after a 4-h fast using 9-wk-old male C57BL/6J mice (Jackson Laboratory). Mice were injected i.p with LCDV-1 VILP (1 μ mol/kg; $n = 4$), SGIV VILP (1 μ mol/kg; $n = 4$), insulin [Humulin, 6 nmol/kg (1.0 U/kg); $n = 6$, or 200 μL of saline ($n = 6$). Tail-vein blood glucose was measured at the indicated time points (Fig. 4B) using an Infinity glucometer (US Diagnostics Inc.). Statistical analysis was by twoway ANOVA followed by Tukey correction; $P < 0.05$; $*P <$ 0.01, **** $P < 0.0001$.

Data and Code Availability. The VILP structures were predicted using I-TASSER (<https://zhanglab.ccmb.med.umich.edu/I-TASSER/>). All the data used in this study, including PDB files and all the original codes that support the bioinformatics analysis in this study have been deposited with GitHub, [https://github.com/jdreyf/](https://github.com/jdreyf/viral-insulin-peptides) [viral-insulin-peptides](https://github.com/jdreyf/viral-insulin-peptides).

Fig. S1. VILPs are structurally a part of insulin superfamily. (A) Whole-sequence alignment of insulin, IGF1, IGF2, and four VILPs. The domains are shown at the top of the sequences. Identical residues are denoted by asterisks, and low and high degrees of similarity are represented by periods and colons, respectively. The underlined sequences are D-domains of IGF1 and IGF2. (B and C) Conservation IR- (B) and IGF1R- (C) binding residues of VILPs. The I-TASSER-predicted structures of SGIV, GIV, and LCDV-Sa are shown. The A-chain is cyan; the B-chain is light green; the C-peptide is yellow; and the D-domain is pale brown. The conserved or conservatively substituted side chains of residues of VILPs that are involved in binding to site 1 of the IR/IGF1R are shown in red, and binding-site 2 residues are shown in blue. Conservative substitutions are also indicated by an equal sign. Substitutions that increase affinity are indicated by a plus sign. Molecules were drawn with CCP4-Molecular Graphics.

Fig. S2. Phylogenetic tree for VILPs. A phylogenetic tree produced by Clustal Omega for a sample of 30 vertebrate sequences, including fish, insect, mammal, and bird insulins, IGF1s, IGF2s, and VILPs. The numbers are the terminal branch distances, the distance since the last theoretical splitting event.

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Fig. S3. LC-MS profile of purified single-chain VILPs. Each panel shows the LC-MS profile of a purified VILP. (A) SGIV. The single-chain peptide eluted at 4.141 min as a single peak. A mass of 6,488.3 was found for the peptide, consistent with the calculated molecular weight of 6,490.2. (B) GIV. The single-chain peptide eluted at 4.293 min as a single peak. A mass of 6,518.2 was found for the material, consistent with the calculated molecular weight of 6,516.2. (C) LCDV-1. The single-chain peptide eluted at 3.928 min as a single peak. A mass of 6,710.7 was found for the material, consistent with the calculated molecular weight of 6,708.8.

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A Human IGF-1 Receptor

Fig. S4. SGIV and GIV stimulate a late postreceptor signaling response. (A) Immunoblotting of protein phosphorylation in lysates from hIGF1R-overexpressing cells stimulated with insulin, IGF1, or VILPs for 60 min. (B) Immunoblotting of protein phosphorylation in lysates from hIR-overexpressing cells stimulated with insulin, IGF1, or VILPs for 60 min. Because of an error in the loading order for the different concentrations of GIV, the image showing stimulation in cells overexpressing hIR has been cut and rearranged to indicate a dose–response similar to other analogs. The areas of cutting are indicated by the vertical white lines in the figure.

Table S1. SignalP-predicted signal peptide positions of the VILPs

VILP source	Signal peptide	Cleavage site position	Residues
SGIV VILP	Yes	Between positions 20 and 21 THQ-LQ	
GIV VILP	Yes	Between positions 20 and 21 TYQ-LQ	
LCDV-1 VILP	Yes	Between positions 19 and 20	ITA-EI
LCDV-Sa VILP	Yes	Between positions 20 and 21	ILC-OT

Table S2. hIR-binding site 1 and corresponding residues on hIGF1 and VILPs

Column 3 shows the effect of alanine ligand mutations on the hIR-binding affinity (from ref. 14 and references therein). Residue numbering is according to the corresponding PDB ID codes. Underlined residues are neither conserved nor conservatively substituted.

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Column 3 shows the effect of alanine ligand mutations on the hIR-binding affinity (from ref. 14 and references therein). Residue numbering is according to the corresponding PDB ID codes. Underlined residues are neither conserved nor conservatively substituted.

Column 2 shows the effect of alanine ligand mutations on the IGF-1R affinity (from refs. 15 and 16 and references therein). Residue numbering is according to the corresponding PDB ID codes. Underlined residues are neither conserved nor conservatively substituted. The affinity of alanine mutation at residues 36 and 37 is a combined mutation at both sites.

Column 2 shows the effect of alanine ligand mutations on the IGF-1R affinity (from refs. 15 and 16 and references therein). Residue numbering is according to the corresponding PDB ID codes. Underlined residues are neither conserved nor conservatively substituted. The affinity of alanine mutation at residues 36 and 37 is a combined mutation at both sites.

SVNG PNS

Table S6. Insulin, IGF1, IGF2, and VILP sequences used to produce the Clustal Omega phylogenetic tree

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Table S6. Cont.

Table S7. Approximate EC_{50} values (nM) calculated for the autophosphorylation experiment

Other Supporting Information Files

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