Supplementary Information for

Apoptosis-Independent Organoruthenium Anticancer Complexes that Overcome Multidrug Resistance: Self-Assembly and Phenotypic Screening Strategies

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EXPERIMENTAL

Materials. All experimental procedures were carried out without additional precautions to exclude air or moisture unless otherwise specified. All chemicals and solvents were used as received. RuCl₃.xH₂O was purchased from both Precious Metals Online. [(η⁶hexamethylbenzene)RuCl₂]₂ and [(*η⁶-1,3,5-triisopropylbenzene*)RuCl₂]₂ were synthesized according to previously reported protocols.¹ Thiazolyl blue tetrazolium bromide (MTT), IGEPAL CA-630, DL-Dithiothreitol, Tetramethylethylenediamine (TEMED), Sodium Deoxycholate, Non-fat Dried Milk Bovine, Bovine Serum Albumin, TWEEN® 20 and Ponceau S were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich. Tris was purchased from Vivantis Technologies. Gibco® MEM Non-Essential Amino Acids solution (NEAA) and 10% SDS solution were purchased from Life Technologies. Glycine, HycloneTM Trypsin Protease 2.5% (10X) solution, RPMI 1640, DMEM medium, Fetal bovine serum (FBS) and PierceTM Protease and Phosphatase Inhibitor Mini Tablets were purchased from Thermo Fisher Scientific. Hyclone™ Dulbecco's Phosphate-Buffered Saline (10x) and Penicillin-Streptomycin (10 000 U/mL) were purchased from Ge Healthcare Life Sciences. Bio-rad Protein Assay Dye Reagent Concentrate, 30% Acrylamide/Bis solution, 4x Laemmli Sample Buffer, Nitrocellulose Membrane, 0.2 µm and 0.45 µm were purchased from Bio-rad Laboratories. Luminata™ Classico, Crescendo and Forte Western HRP Substrate were purchased from Merck Millipore Corporation. Pan Caspase Inhibitor z-VAD-fmk was purchased from R&D Systems[™]. All other chemicals used were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich (Singapore).

General instrumentation. ¹H NMR spectrums were obtained using a Bruker Avance 300 spectrometer and the chemical shifts (δ) were reported in parts per million with reference to residual solvent peaks. Electrospray-ionization Mass Spectrometry (ESI-MS) spectra were obtained using Thermo Finnigan MAT ESI-MS System. UV-vis spectra were obtained using the Shimadzu UV-1800 UV Spectrophotometer. Ru concentrations were determined using the Optima ICP-OES (Perkin-Elmer) operated by CMMAC, NUS. Elemental analyses of selected Ru complexes were carried out using a Perkin-Elmer PE 2400 elemental analyzer by CMMAS, NUS. Absorbance on 96-well plates were measured using BioTek® Synergy H1 Hybrid Reader. Western blot proteins bands were visualized *via* enhanced chemiluminescence imaging (PXi, Syngene). Ultrapure water was purified by a Milli-Q UV purification system (Sartorius Stedim Biotech SA).

HPLC analysis of compound purity (assembly yield). Determination of the purity (assembly yield) of 195 RAS complexes was done using analytical HPLC on a Shimadzu Prominence System equipped with a DGU-20A₃ Degasser, two LC-20AD Liquid Chromatography Pump, a SPD-20A UV/Vis Detector and a Shim Pack GVP-ODS 2.0 mm 18 column (5 µM, 120Å, 250 mm

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x 4.60 mm i.d.) with detection at both 214 nm and 254 nm. The gradient elution conditions were as follows: 20-80% solvent B over 30 min, where solvent A is 10 mM aqueous NH4OAc pH 7.0 and solvent B is $CH₃CN$.

C3A Plate Synthesis of RAS complexes. Separate stock solutions containing RA*x* (10 mM), PA*y* (40 mM) and AD*z* (40 mM) were prepared in DMSO. The reactions were then carried out on a Microlon® 200 96-well flat-bottom plate (Greiner Bio-One) with RA*x* (50 µL), PA*y* (25 µL) and AD_z (25 µL) and ddH₂O (100 µL) added to each well in one portion, yielding RAS complexes (5 mM) in 1:1 v/v DMSO/H₂O (200 μ L). The plates were sealed and incubated with shaking at rt for 36 h. This procedure was repeated until all combinations of the three components were achieved. Subsequently, The 195 reaction mixtures were analysed by ESI-MS and RP-HPLC without further work-up or purification.

Cell lines and tissue culture. The human colorectal carcinoma HCT116 and HCT116 p53-/ cell line pair were gifts from Professor Shen Han-ming (NUS). TC7 cells were cloned from parental colorectal adenocarcinoma Caco-2 cells by the limited dilution technique[.2](#page-24-1) Human gastric adenocarcinoma AGS cells, were acquired from ATCC® (Manassa,VA). HCT116 and HCT116 p53^{-/-} cells were cultured in DMEM medium containing 10% FBS and 1% Penicillin/Streptomycin. TC7 cells were cultured in DMEM medium containing 20% FBS, 1% Penicillin/Streptomycin and 1% NEAA. AGS cells were cultured in RPMI 1640 medium containing 10% FBS and 1% Penicillin/Streptomycin. All cell lines were grown at 37 °C in a humidified atmosphere of 95% air and 5% CO2. Experiments were performed on cells within 20 passages.

Inhibition of Cell Viability (Screening). The anti-proliferation activity of the 195 RAS complexes on exponentially growing cancer cells were screened using a modified MTT assay. HCT116 cells and TC7 were seeded at 5000 cells/100 μL per well and 4000 cells/100 µL per well respectively, in Corning® Costar® 96-well plates and incubated for 24 h. Subsequently, the seeded cells were exposed to the library of RAS complexes in a predetermined order, at a single concentration of 25 μ M 1% (v/v) DMSO and incubated for 48 h at 37 °C, 5% CO₂. After 48 h, the medium was aspirated and replaced with MTT solution in complete DMEM media (100 μL, 0.5 mg/mL) and incubated for an additional 45 min at 37 $^{\circ}$ C, 5% CO₂. Subsequently, the medium was aspirated, and the purple formazan crystals dissolved in DMSO (100 μL). The absorbance due to the dissolved purple formazan was than obtained at 570 nm. The cell viabilities associated with each RAS complex were calculated from the measured absorbance of three replicate, with reference to untreated controls.

Synthesis of 532m and 532p. The bulk synthesis of **532m** and **532p** was done in one-pot manner similar to the plate synthesis, except that final volume of the reaction mixture was scaled

up from 200 μ L to 20 mL. The DMSO/H₂O solvent mixture was then lyophilized over 48 h. The resulting brown viscous liquid was reconstituted in minimal amount of chloroform and purified by silica gel colomn chromatography (Gradient elution: 1:4 v/v EtOH/CHCl₃, R_f = 0.5; 1:3 v/v EtOH/CHCl₃, $R_f = 0.7$). The final product was then dried *in vacuo* for 1 h to give a deep red solid. The products were determined to be > 95% pure by elemental analysis.

532m. Yield: 41 mg (64%). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, DMSO-d6): δ 9.34 (s, 1H, py), 8.85 (s, 1H,-CH=N-), 8.17 (m, 2H, py+aryl), 8.05 (m, 2H, py+aryl), 7.90 (m, 2H, py+aryl), 5.92 (s, 3H, C₆H₃), 2.61 (s, 3H, py-C*H*3), 2.40 (sept, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 3H, C*H*Me2), 1.14 (d, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 9H, C(C*H*3)2), 0.98 (d, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 9H, C(C*H*3)2) ppm. ¹³ C NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-d6): δ 171.0, 155.4, 151.6, 151.3, 140.8, 140.1, 130.8, 129.9, 129.6, 126.7, 125.6, 124.7, 122.5, 119.0, 109.1, 80.7, 30.1, 23.4, 20.3, 18.4 ppm. ¹⁹F NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d6): δ -61.3 ppm. ESI-MS (+ve mode): m/z = 605 [M]⁺. Analysis (Calcd., found for $C_{29}H_{35}Cl_2F_3N_2ORu \bullet 4H_2O \bullet 0.2CHCl_3$): C (47.62, 47.47), H (5.91, 5.71) N (3.80, 3.52).

532p. Yield: 35.9 mg (56%). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, DMSO-d6): δ 9.38 (s, 1H, py), 8.91 (s, 1H, -C*H*=N-), 8.23 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H, py), 8.16 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H, py), 8.01 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H, aryl), 7.90 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H, aryl), 5.96 (s, 3H, C6*H*3), 2.62 (s, 3H, py-C*H*3), 2.40 (sept, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 3H, C*H*Me2), 1.13 (d, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 9H, C(C*H*3)2), 0.98 (d, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 9H, C(C*H*3)2) ppm. ¹³ C NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-d6): δ 170.6, 155.4, 153.9, 151.6, 140.9, 140.1, 130.0, 129.2, 129.0, 126.6, 125.0, 123.3, 122.8, 108.9, 81.0, 30.2, 23.6, 20.3, 18.4 ppm. 19 F NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d6): δ -60.9 ppm. ESI-MS (+ve mode): m/z = 605 [M]+. Analysis (Calcd., found for $C_{29}H_{35}Cl_2F_3N_2ORu$ = 5.5H₂O): C (47.09, 47.16), H (6.27, 6.10) N (3.79, 3.73).

Inhibition of cell viability assay. The anti-proliferation activities of **532m** and **532p** on exponentially growing cancer cells were determined using MTT assay. HCT116, HCT116 p53^{-/-} and AGS were seeded at 5 000 cells per well (100 µL) while TC7 cells were seeded at 4000 cells per well in Corning® Costar® 96-well plates and incubated for 24 h. Thereafter, cancer cells were exposed to drugs at different concentration in complete media for 48 h. The final concentration of DMSO in medium was < 1% (v/v) at which cell viability was not significantly inhibited. The medium was removed and replaced with MTT solution (100 μL, 0.5 mg/mL) in media and incubated for an additional 45 min. Subsequently, the MTT-medium solution was aspirated, and the purple formazan crystals dissolved in DMSO (100 μL). The absorbance due to the dissolved purple formazan was than obtained at 570 nm. Inhibition to cell viability was evaluated with reference to the IC_{50} value, which is defined as the concentration needed for a 50% reduction of survival based on the survival curves. IC_{50} values were calculated from the dose - response curves obtained in repeated experiments and adjusted to actual [Ru] administered, which was determined using ICP-OES. The experiments were performed in 3 replicates for each drug concentration and were

carried out at least three times independently. For cell viability assays involving inhibitors, z-VADfmk (40 µM) was added 1 h prior to the addition of the test compounds and subsequently coincubated for an additional 48 h. Cell viability in the absence and presence of inhibitor was normalized against the untreated control.

Antibodies and Western blot protocol. HCT116 cells were grown at 500 000 cells per well (2 mL) on Corning® Costar® 6-well plates for 24 h before being treated with **532m** and **532p** at 0.5x and 1x $[IC_{50}]$ for 24 h and 48 h. Oxaliplatin and 5-fluorouracil was used as a positive control at the same effective concentrations. The cells were lysed with RIPA lysis buffer [100 µL, 0.1% SDS, 0.5% Sodium Deoxycholate, 1% IGEPAL® CA-630, 150 mM NaCl, 25 mM Tris-HCl (pH 8.0), protease and phosphatase inhibitor cocktail]. The cell lysates were transferred to separate 1.5 mL tubes and sonicated for 3 x 15 s. The samples were then centrifuged at 13000 rpm, 4° C for 15 min. The liquid supernatant containing the proteins were collected and total protein content of each sample was quantified *via* Bradford's assay. 50 µg of proteins from each sample were reconstituted in loading buffer [100 mM DTT, 1x Protein Loading Dye] and heated at 95˚C for 5 min. The protein mixtures were resolved on either a 10% or 12% SDS-PAGE gel by electrophoresis and transferred to a 0.2 µm nitrocellulose membrane. Protein bands were visualized *via* enhanced chemiluminescence imaging (PXi, Syngene) after treatment with the appropriate primary and HRP-conjugated secondary antibodies. Equal loading of protein was confirmed by comparison with actin expression. The following antibodies were used: p53 (FL-393) (sc-6243) and p21 (F-5) (sc-6246) from Santa Cruz Biotechnologies. Cleaved caspase-3 (Asp175) (5A1E), cleaved caspase-7 (Asp198) (D6H1), cleaved caspase-9 (Asp330) (D2D4), Parp-1 (46D11), Cleaved Parp-1 (Asp214) (D64E10) and *p*H2A.X (Ser139) (20E3) from Cell Signaling Technology. β-Actin (ab8229) from Abcam. Pierce[™] HRP-conguated anti-rabbit IgG (H+L) (#31460), anti-mouse IgG (H+L) (#31430) and anti-goat IgG (H+L) (#31402) from Thermo Fisher Scientific. All antibodies were used at 1:1000 dilutions except for actin (1:10000), antimouse, anti-goat and anti-rabbit (1:5000).

SUPPLEMENTARY FIGURES

Figure S1. Structures and naming convention for 195 RAS complexes. RAS complexes in the subsequent figures are named according to this standardized convention.

Figure S2. Examples of ESI-MS and HPLC spectrums for assembled RAS complexes. (**a**) HPLC spectrum and (**b**) ESI-MS spectrum of **437p**. (**c**) HPLC Spectrum and (**d**) ESI-MS spectrum of **451**. Samples were analyzed immediately after C3A one-pot synthesis without further work-up or purification.

Figure S3. HCT116 cell viability %, 48h after single-concentration screen (25 µM) with 166 RAS complexes. Only compounds with assembly yield (purity) greater than 70% were chosen for the screen.

Figure S4. TC7 cell viability %, 48h after single-concentration screen (25 µM) with 107 RAS complexes. Only compounds with assembly yield (purity) greater than 70% and cell viability lesser than 50% in HCT116 were chosen for the screen.

Figure S5. Cell viability curves from secondary screening. 22 initial hits from the single-concentration screens were tested at a range of concentrations in both HCT116 (apoptosis-sensitive) and TC7 (apoptosis-resistant) to obtain their cell viability curves. The estimated IC_{50} values from one set of experiments was used to identify the two apoptosis-independent lead compound, **532m** and **532p**.

Figure S6. 1H NMR spectrum of 532m. Spectrum was acquired using a 300 MHz spectrometer in DMSO-d6. The formation of the imine peak around 9.0 ppm is indicative of the formation of the complex. Residual solvent peaks are as indicated.

Figure S7. 13C NMR spectrum of 532m. Spectrum was acquired using a 500 MHz spectrometer in DMSO-d6.

Figure S8. 19F NMR spectrum of 532m. Spectrum was acquired using a 400 MHz spectrometer in DMSO-d6.

Figure S9. ESI-MS spectrum of 532m. (Top panel) Full MS spectrum; (Middle panel) Zoom Scan of molecular ion peak. Ruthenium and chloride isotope pattern is observed; (Bottom panel) Tandem MS-MS spectrum. Expected fragmentation pattern was observed.

Figure S10. 1H NMR spectrum of 532p. Spectrum was acquired using a 300 MHz spectrometer in DMSO-d6. The formation of the imine peak around 9.0 ppm is indicative of the formation of the complex. Residual solvent peaks are as indicated.

Figure S11. 13C NMR spectrum of 532p. Spectrum was acquired using a 500 MHz spectrometer in DMSO-d6.

Figure S12. 19F NMR spectrum of 532p. Spectrum was acquired using a 500 MHz spectrometer in DMSO-d6.

Figure S13. ESI-MS spectrum of 532p. (Top panel) Full MS spectrum; (Middle panel) Zoom Scan of molecular ion peak. Ruthenium and chloride isotope pattern is observed; (Bottom panel) Tandem MS-MS spectrum. Expected fragmentation pattern was observed.

Figure S14. Stability studies of 532m and 532p. The UV-vis profile of the two lead compounds were monitored over 24 h in water and 0.9% w/v NaCl. (Top panels) Shifts in UV-vis profile of both compounds, with the formation of multiple isosbestic points, were observed in water; (Bottom panels) No shift was observed in 0.9% w/v NaCl. The spectrums show that **532m** and **532p** undergo some degree of aquation in water, which could be suppressed by chloride concentration similar to that of physiological conditions.

Figure S15. Comparison of cell viability curves from three different cell line. Each curve shown is the average of three independent experiment. **532m** and **532p** showed similar toxicity profile in all three cell lines. In contrast, oxaliplatin and 5-fluorouracil showed decreased efficacy in p53-null (HCT116 p53 \cdot') and apoptosis-resistant (TC7) cell lines.

Figure S16. Comparison of HCT116 cell viability curves with and without pancaspase inhibitor z-VAD-fmk. Each curve shown is the average of three independent experiment. **532m** and **532p** showed similar toxicity profile with and without z-VAD-fmk. In contrast, oxaliplatin showed decreased efficacy when co-incubated with z-VAD-fmk (with 1h pre-incubation).

Figure S17. Western blot analysis after treatment with 532m, 532p and positive controls. (**a**) p53 and p53-target protein. (**b**) Apoptosis biomarkers. (**c**) Biomarker for DNA damage. Homogeneous protein loading determined with reference to actin.

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLE

Table S1. % Assembly Yield (Purity) of each RAS complex, determined by HPLC analysis.

Table S2. HCT116 cell viability data after single-concentration (25 µM) screen with 166 RAS complexes of sufficient purity.

%
36
13
23

28

100

% 48

 ${\bf 52}$

100

%

 >50

 $30 - 49$

 $10 - 29$

 510

Total

 > 50

 < 50

Number

59

 21

39

47

166

 $AD3m$

AD4m

AD5m

AD6m

AD7m

7

 $\overline{24}$

 75

3

 $\overline{2}$

 18

 $\frac{64}{11}$

 $\begin{array}{c|cc}\n\textcolor{red}{\textbf{2}} & \textcolor{red}{\textbf{2}} \\
\textcolor{red}{\textbf{20}} & \textcolor{red}{\textbf{7}} \\
\textcolor{red}{\textbf{58}} & \textcolor{red}{\textbf{13}}\n\end{array}$

 $\overline{\mathbf{3}}$

 $\overline{25}$

 $\begin{array}{r} 59 \\ 59 \\ 16 \end{array}$

AD_{5p}
AD_{6p}
AD_{7p}

Table S3. TC7 cell viability data after single-concentration (25 µM) screen with 107 RAS complexes, chosen with reference to the cell viability data from HCT116.

% **Number** % % > 50 $>\!\!50$ 54 50 71 $30 - 49$ 22 21 < 50 $10 - 29$ 20 19 29 < 10 11 10 107 100 100 Total

REFERENCES

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