

## ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Molecular dynamics simulation of atomic interaction between mediator protein of human prostate cancer and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> buckyballs-statin structures

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### ABSTRACT

Atomic interaction between mediator protein of human prostate cancer (PHPC) and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin is important for medical science. For the first time, we use molecular dynamics (MD) approach based on Newton's formalism to describe the destruction of PHPC via Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin with atomic accuracy. In this work, the atomic interaction of PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin introduced via equilibrium molecular dynamics approach. In this method, each PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin is defined by C, H, Cl, N, O, P, S, and Fe elements and contrived by universal force field (UFF) and DREIDING force-field to introduce their time evolution. The results of our studies regarding the dynamical behavior of these atom-base compounds have been reported by calculating the Potential energy, center of mass (COM) position, diffusion ratio and volume of defined systems. The estimated values for these quantities show the attraction force between Buckyball-based structure and protein sample, which COM distance of these samples changes from 10.27 Å to 2.96 Å after 10 ns. Physically, these interactions causing the destruction of the PHPC. Numerically, the volume of this biostructure enlarged from 665,276 Å<sup>3</sup> to 737,143 Å<sup>3</sup> by MD time passing. This finding reported for the first time which can be considered by the pharmaceutical industry. Simulations indicated the volume of the PHPC increases by Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin diffusion into this compound. By enlarging this quantity (diffusion coefficient), the atomic stability of PHPC decreases and protein destruction procedure fulfilled.

**Keywords:** human prostate; atomic buckyball; molecular dynamic method; atomic interaction; diffusion ratio

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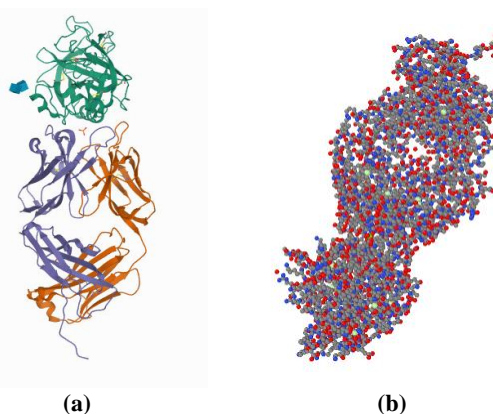
## 1. Introduction

The prostate is a gland in the male reproductive system that stabilized in vicinity of urethra just below the bladder from biological view<sup>[1]</sup>. Most prostate cancers are slow growing in this region of human body<sup>[2,3]</sup>. But, prostate cancer cells can be spread to other regions of human body<sup>[4]</sup>. It may initially cause no symptoms<sup>[5]</sup>. In the next evolution steps of this type of cancer, symptoms include pain or difficulty urinating, blood in the urine, or pain in the pelvis or back<sup>[1]</sup>. Benign prostatic hyperplasia may produce similar symptoms<sup>[1]</sup>. Other late symptoms include fatigue, due to low levels of red blood cells<sup>[1]</sup>. Clinically, important parameters which increased the risk of this cancer include older age, race, and family history<sup>[6,7]</sup>. Other biological parameters such as a diet high in processed meat (or red meat), while the risk from a high intake of milk products is inconclusive<sup>[8]</sup>. An association with gonorrhoea detected, although no scientific description for this cancer

performance reported<sup>[9]</sup>. An increased risk is associated with the BRCA mutations<sup>[10]</sup>. Diagnosis is by biopsy. Medical imaging may be done to assess whether metastasis is present<sup>[11]</sup>.

In actual cases, physicians have established cancer cell lines to predict the disease progress. Various techniques used for this purpose such as LNCaP, PC3, and DU145. The LNCaP cancer cell line was established from a human lymph node metastatic lesion of prostatic adenocarcinoma. PC3 and DU145 cells were established from human prostatic adenocarcinoma metastatic to bone and to brain, respectively. LNCaP cells express AR, but PC3 and DU145 cells express very little or no AR. The proliferation of LNCaP cells is androgen-dependent but the proliferation of PC3 and DU145 cells is androgen-insensitive. Elevation of AR expression is often observed in advanced prostate tumors in patients<sup>[12–15]</sup>. Today, more than common methods in prostate cancer detection, new atomistic methods such as computer simulations can be used for clinical purposes. Technically, atomistic study of cancer protein evolution can provide effective cancer treatment methods.

According to our descriptions, atomic analysis of prostate cancer's mediator protein should be introduced new methods to treat patients. The chemical/atomic representation of mediator Protein of Human Prostate Cancer (PHPC) depicted in **Figure 1**<sup>[16]</sup>. Today, computer simulations used in numerous fields of science<sup>[17–20]</sup>. The representation of the evolution of one system by the performance of the other sample modeled after it is known as computer simulation. A model of an actual phenomenon in the form of a computer algorithm is used by a simulation. This mathematical description is made up of equations that duplicate the functional relationships within the actual phenomenon. Molecular dynamics (MD) approach is the exact type of computer simulation that is capable of describing the time dependent behavior of atom-base systems<sup>[21–23]</sup>. Today, this computational approach is widely used in living structures simulations<sup>[24,25]</sup>. In current research, theoretical calculations were performed to predict the atomic interaction between mediator protein in PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin system. A nanostructure is a structure of intermediate size between microscopic and molecular structures. Structurally, spherical nanoparticles have three dimensions on the nano-scale, i.e., the particle is between 0.1 and 100 nm in each spatial dimension. Buckyballs belong to this group. Here, we introduce this type of nanoparticles as a drug delivery-based structure to implementing destruction procedure to PHPC for the first time.



**Figure 1.** Schematic of (a) chemical; (b) atomic arrangement of PHPC<sup>[16]</sup>.

## 2. Computational method details

In this computational work, MD method in equilibrium condition has been used to estimate the atomic interaction between PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin structure at 300 K and  $P = 1$  bar<sup>[26]</sup>. In this method, atomic interaction is allowed for each time steps, providing an understanding of the atom-based systems evolution with time passing. Generally, solving Newton's equations of atom-base systems via computational algorithms, the trajectories of each atom are predicted where the interactions between them are computed by

force-field concept<sup>[27]</sup>. LAMMPS package has been used for the present MD simulations<sup>[28–31]</sup>. LAMMPS introduced us with different force-fields for MD description of soft structures such as protein-based compounds.

Technically, various interactions between particles in PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statins system are estimated by DREIDING and universal force field (UFF)<sup>[32,33]</sup>. The description of atomic systems and dynamics of biological molecules can be done by using these two effective force-fields<sup>[32,33]</sup>. Moreover, UFF contains interaction constants for every element of periodic table. By using general rules solely based upon the element, its hybridization, and its connectivity, the force-field parameters are chosen. In DREIDING and UFF force-fields, Lennard-Jones (LJ) formalism is applied for non-bond interactions between modeled particles<sup>[34]</sup>:

$$V(r_{ij}) = 4\varepsilon \left[ \left( \frac{\sigma}{r_{ij}} \right)^{12} - \left( \frac{\sigma}{r_{ij}} \right)^6 \right], r_{ij} \leq r_c \quad (1)$$

where,  $\varepsilon$  constant defines depth of the potential well,  $\sigma$  constant represent distance which the interaction value is zero, and  $r$  parameter is the distance between various particles inside MD box. Furthermore,  $r_c$  constant introduced the cut off radius and accounts for 12 Å in our simulations. The  $\varepsilon$  and  $\sigma$  parameters for PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statins system listed in **Table 1**.

**Table 1.** The length and energy parameters for LJ interaction inside computational box<sup>[32,33]</sup>.

Element	$\varepsilon$ (kcal/mol)	$\sigma$ (Å)
C	0.105	3.851
H	0.044	2.886
Cl	0.227	3.947
N	0.069	3.660
O	0.060	3.500
P	0.305	4.147
S	0.274	4.035
Fe	0.013	2.912

On the other hand, in DREIDING and UFF force-fields harmonic formalism implemented for various bonding interactions<sup>[35]</sup>:

$$V(r) = k_r(r - r_0) \quad (2)$$

$$V(\theta) = k_\theta(\theta - \theta_0) \quad (3)$$

The  $k_r/k_\theta$  represents harmonic constant and  $r_0/\theta_0$  presents the equilibrium distance/angle of inter-atomic bonds. Next, Newton's law at the nano-scale has been used as the gradient of the defined force-fields for computations of the time evolution of defined<sup>[35]</sup>:

$$F_i = \sum_{i \neq j} F_{ij} = m_i \frac{d^2 r_i}{dt^2} = -\nabla V \quad (4)$$

in this equation,  $F$  represents the total force,  $r_i$  is the position,  $m_i$  is the mass and  $v_i$  is the velocity of particle  $i$ . The following equations represent the integration of the Newton law by the prevalent Velocity-Verlet approach, to associate the previous formulations<sup>[36–38]</sup>:

$$r(t + \Delta t) = r(t) + v(t)\Delta t + \frac{1}{2}a(t)\Delta t^2 + O(\Delta t^4) \quad (5)$$

$$v(t + \Delta t) = v(t) + \frac{a(t) + a(t + \Delta t)}{2} \Delta t + O(\Delta t^2) \quad (6)$$

in these equations,  $r$  and  $v$  parameters defined position and velocity of particles in various time steps, respectively. Computationally, we can say our MD study done in the following two main steps via described simulation method:

Step A: Atomic interaction between PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin structures was simulated at the defined initial condition. The simulation box has 250 Å length in X, Y, and Z directions and periodic boundary condition defined for them<sup>[35]</sup>. Here, modeled samples temperature and pressure was equilibrated at 300 K and 1 bar as initial condition. Time step value for this process setting set to 1 fs. Technically, we used Nose-Hoover algorithm with 10 and 100 damping ratio for temperature and pressure parameters<sup>[39–42]</sup>. Described simulations done for  $t = 10$  ns and potential energy variation of PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin samples calculated for verifying of our computational settings.

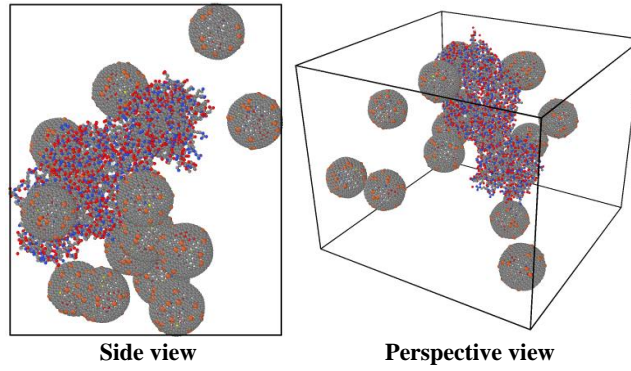
Step B: Next, PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin system were simulated in the unit computational box. The atomic interaction between PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin atomic compound was carried out by using NVT ensemble for 10 ns. For analyzing the atomic evolution of modeled system, various quantities such as total energy, distance of structures, diffusion coefficient and volume of atomic compounds were reported. Our computational study details listed in **Table 2**.

**Table 2.** MD simulation details in current computational research.

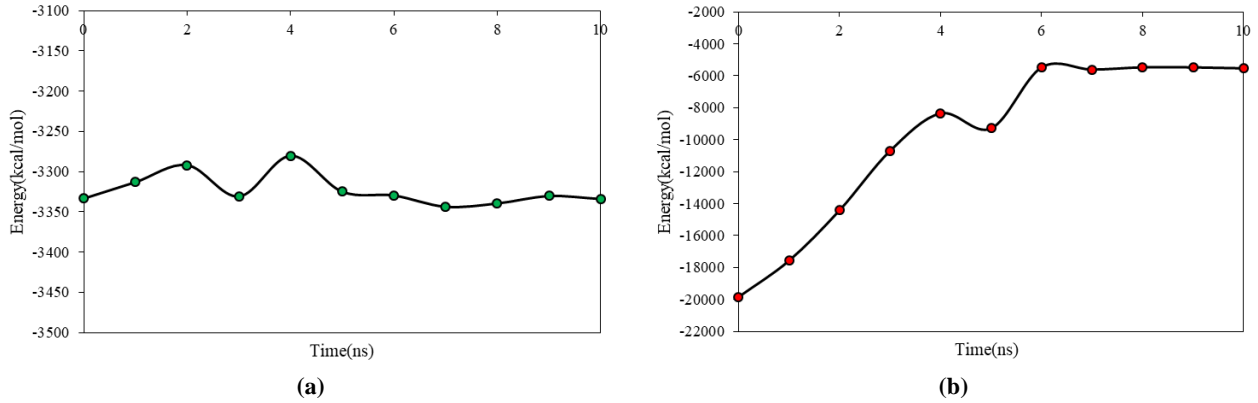
Computational parameter	Value/setting
Computational box length	250 × 250 × 250 Å <sup>3</sup>
Boundary condition	Periodic
Initial temperature	300 K
Initial pressure	1 bar
Time step	1 fs
Computational ensembles	NPT/NVT
Temperature damping ratio	10
Pressure damping ratio	100
Equilibrium time	10 ns
Total simulation time	30 ns

### 3. Results of MD simulations and discussions

Firstly, the equilibrium phase of PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin system was studied and final arrangement of these compounds saved to next step of research as depicted in **Figure 2**. Snapshots of atomic compounds were visualized by OVITO visualization package<sup>[43]</sup>. Technically, Fe atoms added to pristine C<sub>720</sub> Buckyball (as atomic doping) to influence the magnetic field in the behavior of the atomic ball. MD outputs in current computational step indicated the initial arrangement of particles in PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin system is adopted with UFF and DREIDING potentials. Numerically, the thermodynamic stability of atomic system introduced by calculating of potential parameter inside MD box. **Figure 3** shows the potential energy of modeled samples as a function of MD simulation time. From this figure one can see, the potential parameter converged to finite value after 10 ns. The potential energy decreased by simulation time steps passing and converged to constant value. This atomic performance occurs in modeled samples by kinetic energy of particles increasing. By this evolution occur, the mean distance between various particles enlarged. Physically, potential energy has reciprocal relation with this distance. So, the potential and total energies of compounds converged to lesser values by enlarging this atomic parameter.



**Figure 2.** Atomic representation of the PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin system simulated with LAMMPS package.



**Figure 3.** Potential energy changes of (a) PHPC; (b) Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin structures as a function of MD time.

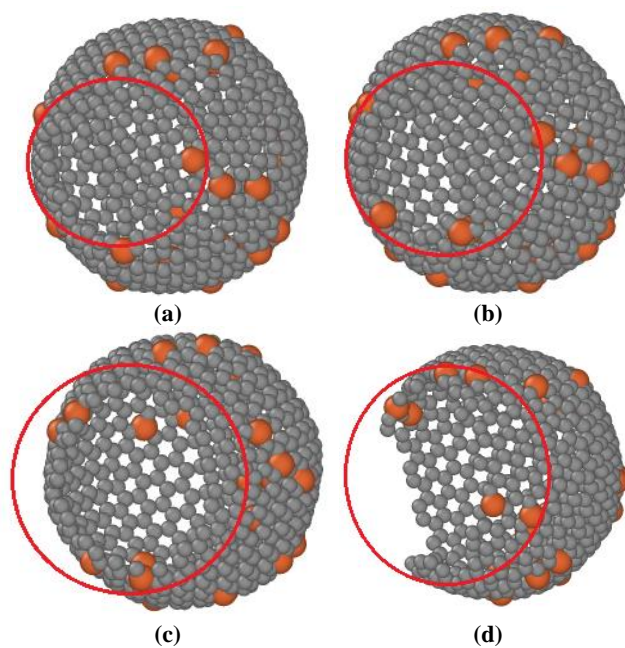
After equilibrium phase detection in modeled sample, external field implemented to defined system. The formalism of plane, spherical and cylindrical external electric fields are as blow equations (respectively):

$$y = A \exp(ik \cdot r - wt) \quad (7)$$

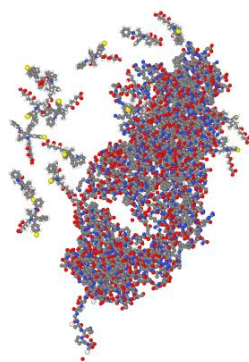
$$y = A \frac{\sin(k \cdot r - wt)}{\sqrt{r}} \quad (8)$$

$$y = A \frac{\sin(k \cdot r - wt)}{r} \quad (9)$$

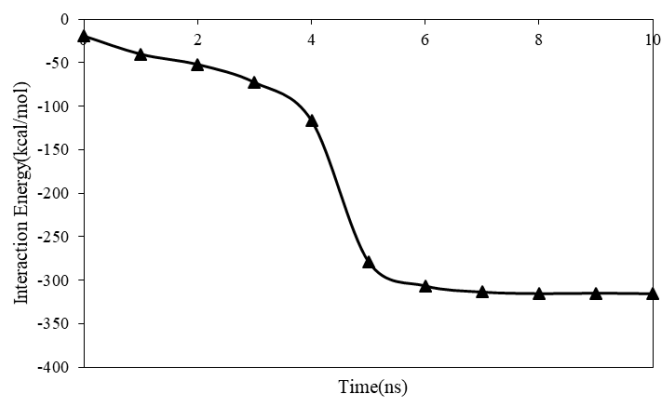
MD outputs predicted 88 GHz value as normal frequency of defined compounds. Also, by setting frequency of plane, spherical and cylindrical external fields at 1.25, 1.71, and 1.73 GHz, the PHPC destruction process occur effectively (see **Figure 4**). Numerically, by implementing plane, spherical and cylindrical external fields, the destruction time of defined drug deliver compounds reached to 3.21, 3.05, and 3.82 ns (respectively) as listed in **Table 3**. Next, to study the interaction between PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin samples. These atomic structures interaction inside box done for 10 ns later. The equilibrated arrangement of each molecule exported from equilibration step and used in current computational section. The atomic evolution of defined compounds depicted in **Figures 4** and **5**. In this particle-base mixture, the initial distance of PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin lesser than  $r_C$  parameter for simulation of particles interaction. The interaction energy variation of this system depicted in **Figure 6**. From this figure, the interaction energy of final structure bigger than each individual atomic structure's potential energy. Physically, the stability of defined samples has direct relation with this energy value. So interacting energy increasing verified the atomistic stability of final atomic mixture.



**Figure 4.** Atomic representation of simulated drug delivery system in presence of external field at (a) 3 ns; (b) 4 ns; (c) 5 ns; (d) 7 ns.



**Figure 5.** Atomic representation of defined PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin system after drug releasing process.

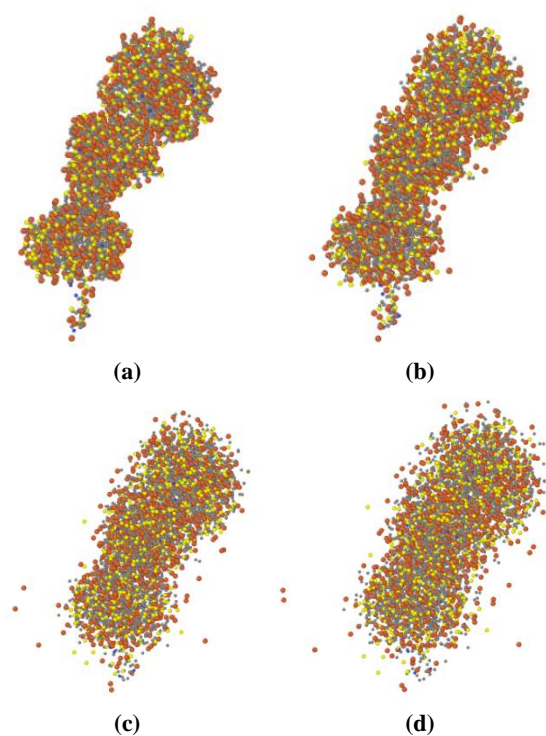


**Figure 6.** Interaction energy variation of PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin system by MD time passing.

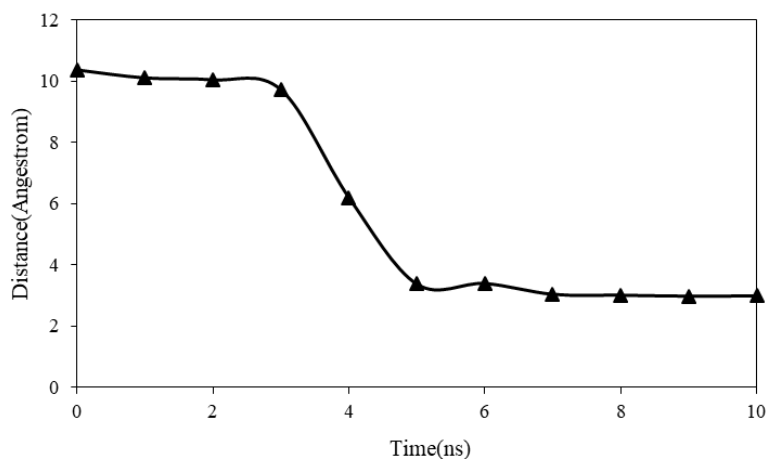
**Table 3.** The destruction time of Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs in presence of external field with various types.

External field type	Destruction time (ns)
Plane	3.21
Spherical	3.05
Cylindrical	3.82

After initial step of our computational research done and temperature/pressure equilibrium state of PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin system detected, canonical (NVT) ensemble continued for 10 ns. In thermodynamic, the accessible states of an atom-base system in thermal equilibrium with a heat bath at a finite initial temperature are defined by a NVT algorithm. In this computational procedure, the exchange of energy inside modeled system leads to a difference in the accessible energy states of final mixture. In this step, the center of mass (COM) variation of PHPC and drug-base sample has been reported by implementing NVT ensemble. From **Figure 7**, we concluded the net force type between various particles inside MD box is an attractive one. Numerically, the COM values of PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin samples varies from 10.27 Å to 2.96 Å (as reported in **Table 4**) at standard condition. This performance of modeled compounds arises from enlarging of the amplitude of particles movement. Physically, by atomic movement enlarging, the attraction ratio between modeled atoms decreases. So, we can conclude increasing the amplitude of atomic movement cause more particles penetration together. Atomic evolution of PHPC by drug diffusion to them depicted in **Figure 8**.



**Figure 7.** Atomic representation of human prostate protein at (a) 0 ns; (b) 1 ns; (c) 5 ns; (d) 10 ns.

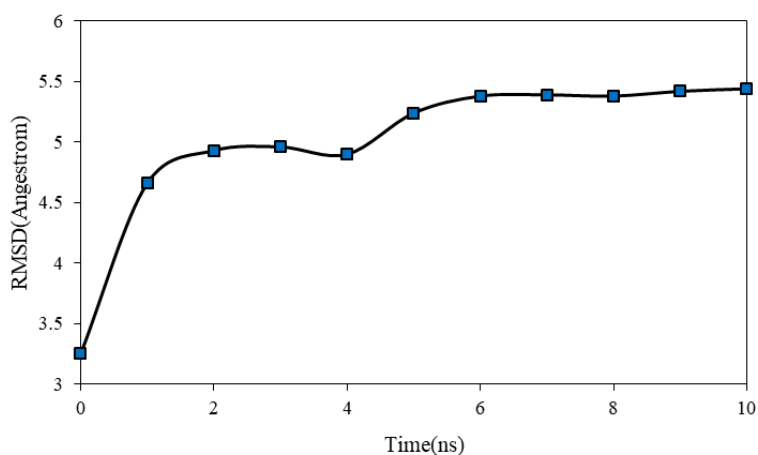


**Figure 8.** COM distance variation of PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin samples by time passing inside simulation box.

**Table 4.** COM distance of PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin samples as a function of MD time.

MD time (ns)	COM distance (Å)
0	10.27
1	10.01
2	9.95
5	3.34
10	2.96

The diffusion parameter is another numerical factor for describing various interactions (bonded/non-bonded) inside computational box. In this step of our computational research, to diffusion ratio estimation, MSD parameter of atomic compound has been calculated, by using the “compute/msd” command in LAMMPS input script. Computationally, the slope of this parameter versus time is proportional to the diffusion ratio (diffusion coefficient). Our results show that, by MD time enlarging the diffusion ratio increased to 1.153  $\mu\text{m}^2/\text{s}$ . This atomistic parameter increasing arises from decreasing of total energy of PHPC-Buckyballs system which cause increasing the amplitude of particle’s fluctuation. As the diffusion coefficient increases in MD simulations, the diffusion of PHPC into Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin structure enlarged and the physical stability of protein-based sample decreases and this atomic structure is destructed by MD time steps passing. In bioinformatics, the root-mean-square deviation (RMSD), is the measure of the average distance between the atoms of superimposed proteins. Typically, RMSD is used as a quantitative measure atomic evolution of protein-based structures. Numerically, this parameter converged to 5.44 Å in PHPC sample after interaction occur between drug and protein as shown in **Figure 9** and **Table 5**. This process shows destruction process in PHPC sample inside MD box.

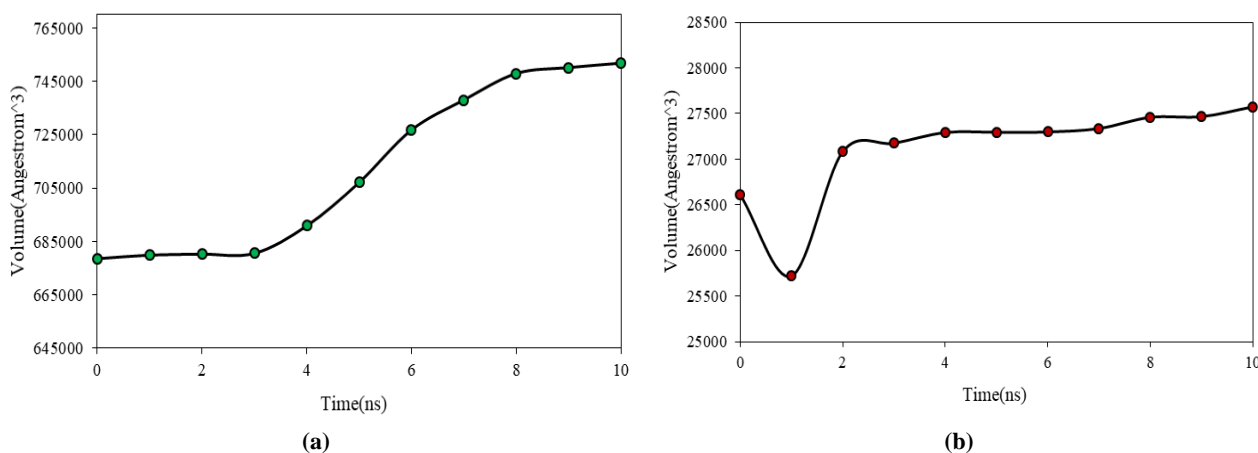
**Figure 9.** RMSD changes of PHPC sample by MD time steps passing.**Table 5.** COM and RMSD parameters variation of modeled sample as a function of computational time.

MD time (ns)	COM distance (Å)	RMSD (Å)
0	10.27	3.25
1	10.01	4.66
2	9.95	4.93
5	3.34	5.24
10	2.96	5.44

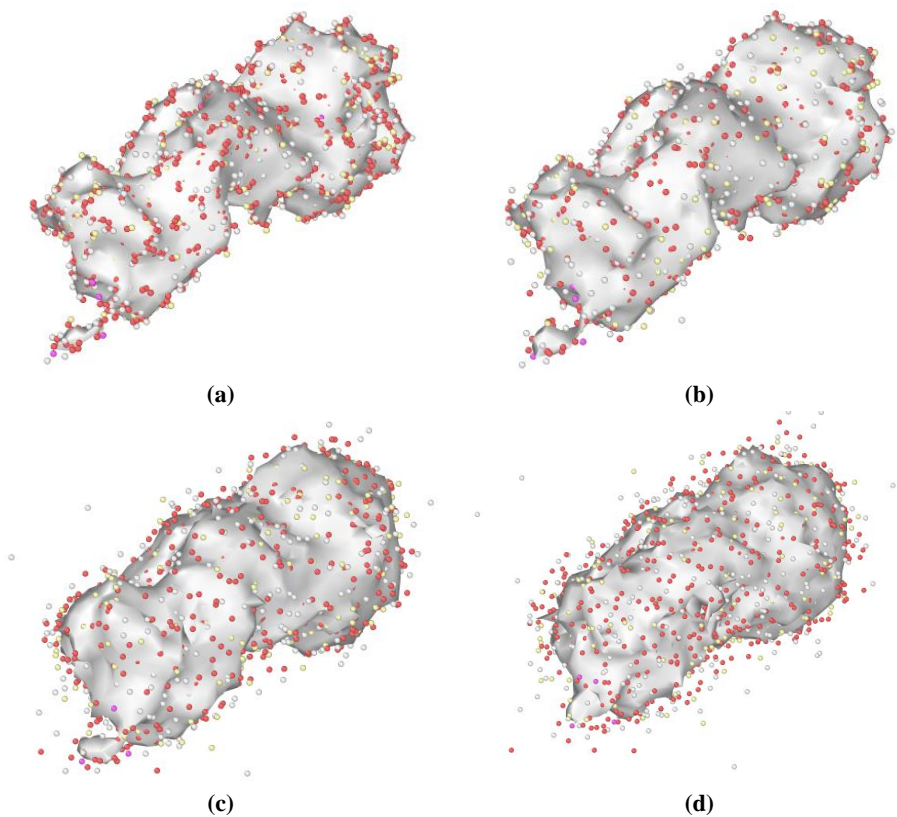
The total volume of each atom-base samples is proportional to their physical stability. So, PHPC structure’s volume changes indicated this compounds stability by MD time passing (from 0 to 10 ns). MD outputs indicated the volume of PHPC increases by more MD time steps passing. By enlarging the volume of



this compound, the atomic distance between protein particles increases. By this atomic evolution detection, total energy of protein decreases and stability of them converged to lesser ratio. Numerically, the volume of PHPC sample increases from 665,267 Å<sup>3</sup> to 737,143 Å<sup>3</sup> by MD time steps passing. Unlike the PHPC sample, Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin's volume doesn't change appreciably by simulation time evolution as depicted in **Figure 10**. Our results show that, the volume of this atom-base compound varies from 25341 Å<sup>3</sup> to 26261 Å<sup>3</sup> by MD time passing (as listed in **Table 6**). Finally, we conclude that, the total energy decreasing in this step of computational research arises from PHPC's stability decreasing. **Figure 11** shows the volume changes of PHPC schematically. Technically, these figures and volume estimation have been done with "construct surface mesh" modifier of OVITO package.



**Figure 10.** Evolution of (a) PHPC; (b) Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin structure's volume by MD time steps passing.



**Figure 11.** Evolution of PHPC structure's volume at (a) 0 ns; (b) 1 ns; (c) 5 ns; (d) 10 ns.

**Table 6.** PHPC (protein) and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin (drug) structure's volume changes as a function of MD time.

MD time (ns)	Protein volume (Å <sup>3</sup> )	Drug volume (Å <sup>3</sup> )
0	665,267	25,341
1	666,591	25,448
2	666,931	25,793
5	693,281	25,996
10	737,143	26,261

## 4. Conclusion

In current computational research, we study the effect of Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin structure on atomic performance (destruction) of mediator protein of human prostate cancer (PHPC) via molecular dynamics (MD) approach. In this method, each PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin compounds is represented with atom by atom arrangement. Also, to simulate of interatomic force between various particles inside MD box, universal force field (UFF) and DREIDING force-field have been used inside simulation box. Our main outputs from MD simulations are as following:

- DREIDING and UFF atomic functions are appropriate for MD description of PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin samples. Numerically, the potential energy of modeled samples reached to ... kcal/mol after 10 ns. This physical performance shows the stability of this atom-base system.
- PHPC and Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin sample's center of mass decreases from 10.27 Å to 2.96 Å by MD time steps passing.
- By increasing the diffusion of Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin into PHPC sample, the stability of target protein converged to lesser ratios.
- The total volume of the PHPC enlarged by Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin diffusion into this protein. Numerically, PHPC's volume 10.80% increase after atomic interaction with Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyballs-Statin. By increasing this physical quantity, the stability of PHPC compound converged to lesser ratio.

Finally, we concluded Fe/C<sub>720</sub> Buckyball system can be used as drug-delivery system for Statin compound in PHPC destruction process for treatment of prostate cancer (in clinical cases).

## Author contributions

Conceptualization, MPP and RS; methodology, RS; software, MPP; validation, RS; formal analysis, RS; investigation, RS; resources, RS; data curation, RS; writing—original draft preparation, MPP; writing—review and editing, RS; visualization, MPP and RS; supervision, RS; project administration, RS; funding acquisition, RS. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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## Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## Nomenclature

$F_{ij}$	Force between various particles;
$m_i$	Atomic mass;

$r_c$	Cutoff parameter in LJ formalism;
$r_{ij}$	Distance between various particles;
$t$	MD time step;
$v_i$	Atomic velocity;
$k_\theta$	Constant parameter in angular harmonic formalism;
$k_r$	Constant parameter in simple harmonic formalism;
$r_0$	Equilibrium distance in simple harmonic formalism;
$V$	atomic potential function.

Greek symbols:

$\varepsilon$	Atomic energy in LJ formalism;
$\sigma$	Distance constant in LJ formalism;
$\phi$	Potential function of atomic systems;
$\theta_0$	Equilibrium angle in angular harmonic formalism.

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