Title
Structure of AcrA on a lipid monolayer

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Author
Nogales, E.

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The multi-drug efflux complex AcrAB-TolC confers drug resistance in *E. coli* by pumping antibiotics out of the cell. We determined a 20 Å resolution structure of the periplasmic component AcrA by electron crystallography of negatively stained specimens. Expressed with a HIS-tag, the protein bound to a lipid monolayer containing the nickel-chelating phospholipid DOGS-NTA. Under the monolayer, AcrA crystallized in layer group P2₁2₂, with a unit cell size of 157 by 95 Å, and a thickness of about 100 Å. The unit cell contains two identical coiled structures, each with a length of about 210 Å over approximately 1 1/2 turns around a central hole 30 Å in diameter. According to the space group, the asymmetric unit would be 1/2 of a coiled structure, or 1/4 of the unit cell. A simple interpretation of the map is that each coiled structure is a dimer, with the monomers intertwined in an antiparallel fashion, possibly mediated by a region of the sequence that is predicted to have a high propensity to form coiled coils.