

# 1 Structural insight into binding site access and ligand recognition by human ABCB1

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## 12 **Abstract:**

13 ABCB1 is a broad-spectrum efflux pump central to cellular drug handling and multidrug resistance  
14 in humans. However, its mechanisms of poly-specific substrate recognition and transport remain  
15 poorly resolved. Here we present cryo-EM structures of lipid embedded human ABCB1 in its apo,  
16 substrate-bound, inhibitor-bound, and nucleotide-trapped states at 3.4-3.9 Å resolution without  
17 using stabilizing antibodies or mutations and each revealing a distinct conformation. The substrate  
18 binding site is located within one half of the molecule and, in the apo state, is obstructed by  
19 transmembrane helix (TM) 4. Substrate and inhibitor binding are distinguished by major  
20 differences in TM arrangement and ligand binding chemistry, with TM4 playing a central role in  
21 all conformational transitions. Our data offer fundamental new insights into the role structural

22 asymmetry, secondary structure breaks, and lipid interactions play in ABCB1 function and have  
23 far-reaching implications for ABCB1 inhibitor design and predicting its substrate binding profiles.

## 24 **Introduction**

25 The ATP binding cassette (ABC) transporter ABCB1, also known as Multidrug resistance  
26 protein (MDR)1 or P-glycoprotein (p-gp) is a ubiquitously expressed drug exporter that plays a  
27 key role in cellular drug handling<sup>1-8</sup>. Its pharmacological relevance makes it a key transporter in  
28 the Food and Drug Administration's guidance for all developmental drugs to be screened against<sup>10</sup>.  
29 ABCB1 activity can be a limiting factor in cancer chemotherapy<sup>6,11-14</sup> and treatment of  
30 neurological disorders<sup>4,15-19</sup> and has been increasingly implicated in accumulation of amyloid-beta  
31 peptides, a hallmark feature of Alzheimer's Disease<sup>17</sup>. Despite its relevance, ABCB1's promise as  
32 druggable clinical target remains unrealized largely due to systemic toxicities and off target effects  
33 resulting from its inhibition<sup>14,20</sup>. Understanding the detailed mechanisms by which ABCB1  
34 recognizes and transports a wide range of structurally and chemically diverse substrates remains a  
35 major focus in biomedicine. Visualizing the underlying chemistry involved is key to designing  
36 more specific ABCB1 inhibitors and circumventing ABCB1 mediated efflux of a wide range of  
37 developmental drugs. However, despite long-term efforts, ABCB1 has so far remained notoriously  
38 averse to direct structural analysis without the use of antibody fragments and stabilizing mutations  
39 to aid conformational trapping.

40 ABCB1 is a type II ABC exporter/type IV ABC transporter with each TMD comprising 6  
41 transmembrane helices (TMs) and followed by a cytosolic nucleotide binding domain (NBD). It  
42 is topologically arranged as a pseudo-symmetric domain swapped dimer with the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> TMs  
43 of each TMD making extensive contacts with the opposing TMDs and NBDs as first revealed by  
44 the structure of its bacterial homolog Sav1866<sup>22</sup>. To date, the only structures of human ABCB1

45 determined are those of its hydrolysis deficient mutant in the ATP bound outward facing (OF)  
46 state and those in complex with antigen binding fragments (Fabs) from the inhibitory antibodies  
47 UIC2<sup>23</sup> and MRK16<sup>24</sup>. Key mechanistic questions about polyspecific substrate recognition and the  
48 drug transport cycle of ABCB1 therefore remain open. First, the nature of its Inward Facing (IF)  
49 apo state remains unknown, leaving open the question of how substrates gain access to their  
50 respective binding site(s). Second, the binding chemistry governing differential substrate and  
51 inhibitor interactions with ABCB1 in the absence of conformational trapping by inhibitory Fabs  
52 remains unknown. Third, it is unclear what role sequence and structural asymmetry plays in  
53 ABCB1 function. Finally, while lipids have been implicated in modulation of ABCB1 structure  
54 and its interaction with ligands<sup>25-28</sup>, the extent and specifics of these interactions remains largely  
55 unexplored.

56 To address the above-mentioned gaps in knowledge, we determined multiple structures of  
57 wildtype human ABCB1 in a lipid environment by single particle cryo-EM. Four distinct  
58 conformations of the transporter were observed including, for the first time, its IF apo and  
59 substrate-bound states. These structures allow us to map out the conformational transitions  
60 associated with ligand and nucleotide binding and visualize key differences in how substrates and  
61 inhibitors interact with the TMD. They highlight the concerted TM and NBD movements  
62 underlying ATP coupled drug transport and regulation of binding site access and the complex  
63 interplay between lipid interactions and TM secondary structure breaks that impart tremendous  
64 TMD flexibility and overall conformational heterogeneity to human ABCB1 that has made its  
65 high-resolution structure determination difficult. Overall, our results offer fundamental insights  
66 into the mechanistic details of the ABCB1 drug transport cycle and its inhibition that will have  
67 significant implications for ABCB1 targeted therapeutic design in various medical applications as

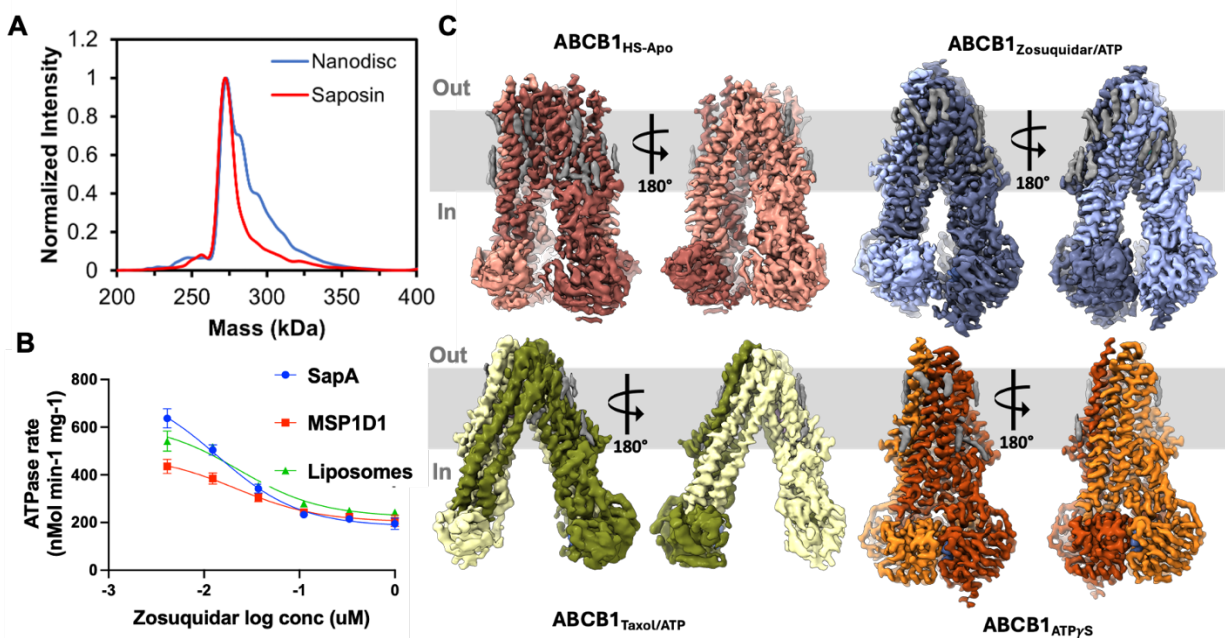
68 well broader drug-development efforts where potential ABCB1 interactions may limit drug-  
69 bioavailability, among other undesired effects.

#### 70 **Four distinct conformations of lipid-embedded wildtype human ABCB1**

71 Human ABCB1 (ABCB1) was stably expressed in HEK293 cells, purified in detergent, and  
72 reconstituted in saposin A (sapA) nanoparticles comprising a mixture of Brain Polar Lipids (BPL)  
73 and cholesterol (Chol). SapA reconstituted ABCB1 displayed a more homogenous mass  
74 distribution as analyzed by native mass spectrometry (nMS) as well as greater ATPase activity  
75 compared to MSP1D1 nanodisc reconstituted samples (Figure 1A-B) and was chosen for cryo-EM  
76 analysis. We analyzed ABCB1 in its apo state and in the presence of ATP/Mg<sup>2+</sup> and either the  
77 substrate Taxol, representing turnover conditions similar to a recent analysis for human ABCG2<sup>29</sup>,  
78 or its third-generation inhibitor Zosuquidar. Taxol and Zosuquidar complexes of ABCB1 in the  
79 absence of ATP/Mg<sup>2+</sup> displayed near identical conformations and are not discussed in further detail  
80 here. We also determined the structure of its nucleotide trapped state in the presence of ATP $\gamma$ S,  
81 allowing for a visualization of the conformational spectrum associated with the drug transport  
82 cycle and its inhibition in ABCB1 (Figure 1C). The overall conformation of the zosuquidar  
83 complex was nearly identical to the inhibitor occluded state seen in the presence of UIC2 or  
84 MRK16 fabs<sup>23,24</sup>. Similarly, the ATP $\gamma$ S trapped ABCB1 structure was identical to that previously  
85 reported for ATP bound state of its hydrolysis deficient EQ mutant in a detergent environment<sup>30</sup>.  
86 In contrast, the conformations observed for its apo- and substrate bound states are fundamentally  
87 different and has not been previously described. Conventional models of the apo state of ABCB1  
88 based on homologous structures or alphafold predictions invoke a symmetric, IF conformation  
89 with a wide separation between the NBDs as seen in the crystal structure of murine ABCB1<sup>31</sup>.  
90 Substrate binding is thought to promote NBD closure and explain consequent ATPase rate



91 stimulation. In contrast, the apo state structure determined here displays distinct asymmetry  
92 between the two halves and closely spaced NBDs while the Taxol complex shows an IF<sub>OPEN</sub> state  
93 with wider NBD separation compared to the apo conformation, among other significant differences  
94 compared to structures of the Taxol- complex of ABCB1 bound to inhibitory antibodies, as  
95 discussed in detail below.

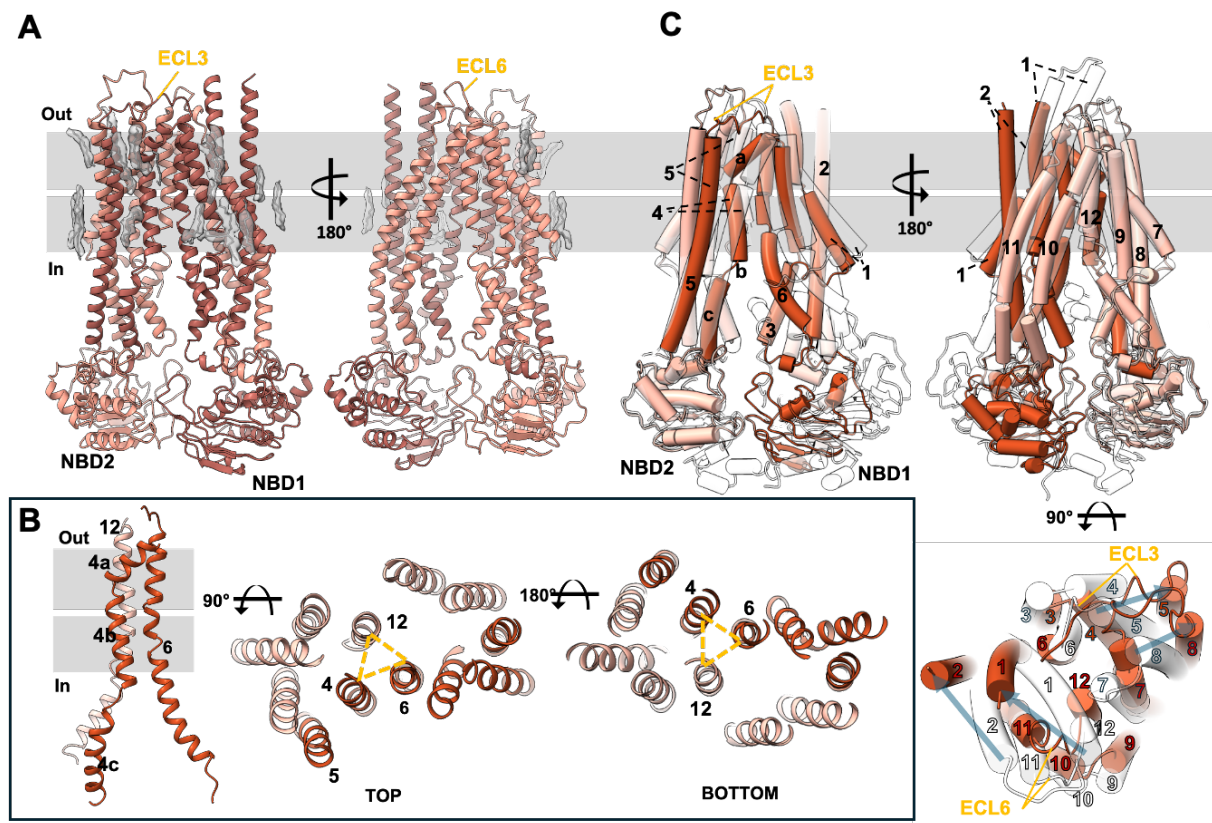


**Figure 1 Conformational landscape of lipid embedded human ABCB1.** *A* Comparison of saposin and nanodisc reconstituted human ABCB1 by nMS *B*) Comparison of ATPase activity of saposin, MSP1D1 nanodisc, and Liposome reconstituted human ABCB1. *n*=3 and error bars denote standard deviation. *C* Structures of human ABCB1 in multiple distinct conformational states. EM density for the two halves is colored differently and that of modeled acyl chains is colored gray.

## 96 Apo ABCB1 adopts a unique IF<sub>CLOSED</sub> conformation

97 The predominant conformation of apo ABCB1 observed here features an asymmetric TMD  
98 arrangement with a closed central TMD pathway (Figure 2A), closely spaced NBDs, and widely  
99 spaced extracellular “wings”<sup>22</sup> (Figure 1C). We chose to classify this state as an IF<sub>CLOSED</sub> state  
100 based on TMD conformation. The structure is marked by multiple secondary structure (SS) breaks  
101 in the TMDs mediated by Glycine and Proline residues and several predicted SS breakers<sup>32</sup>, most

102 noticeably at G317 and G329 that leads to an elongation of extracellular loop (ECL)3 and wide  
 103 separation between TM5 and TM6 (Figure S1). Conversely, ECL6, connecting TM11 & TM12  
 104 displays a lower degree of helix unraveling, likely owing to lower frequency of secondary structure  
 105 breaking residues that we speculate limit its conformational freedom and possibly that of TM10  
 106 and TM11. As shown in figure 2B, closing of the central TMD pathway is facilitated by TM4,  
 107 which adopts a kinked conformation with secondary structure breaks at P223 and K242, effectively  
 108 dividing it into 3 sub helices (TM4a-c). In conjunction with TM6 and TM12, it forms a central 3-

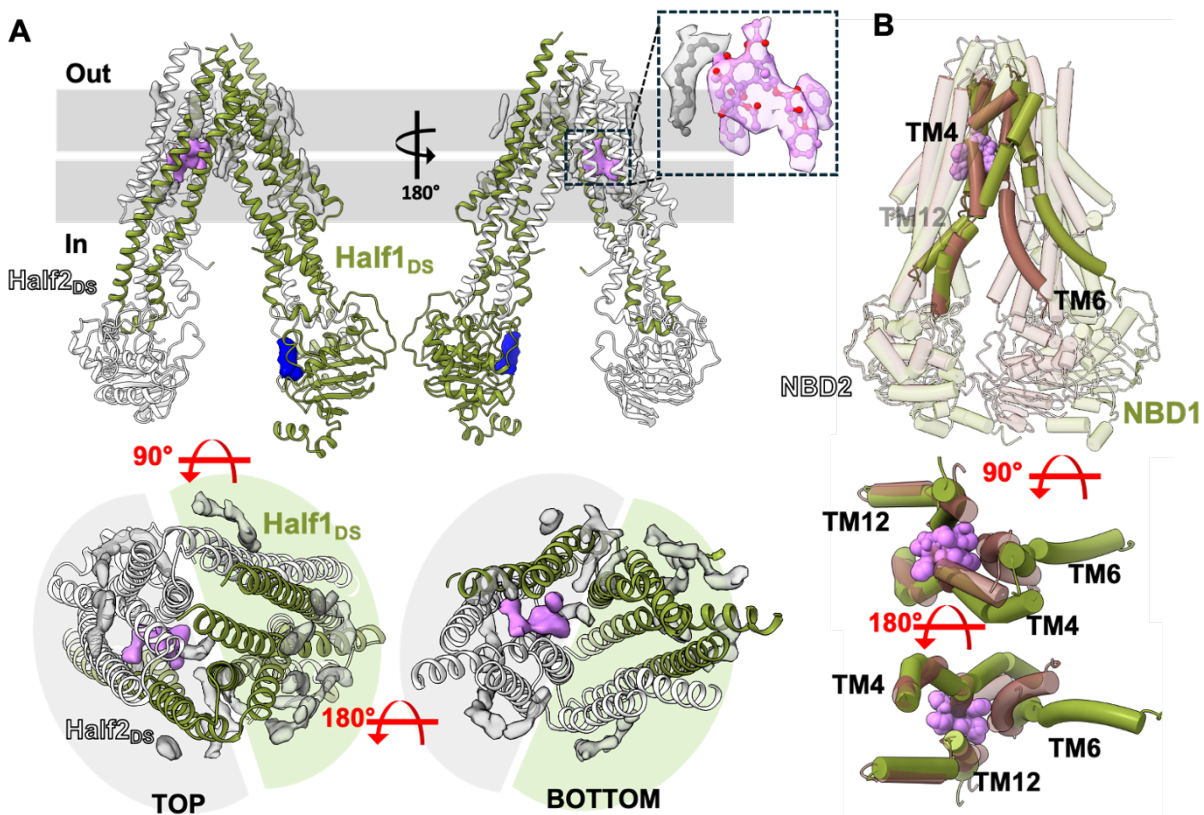


**Figure 2. Structure of apo-ABC1.** *A* Overall structure with the two halves colored as different shades of red and density modeled as lipid acyl chains (gray sticks) shown as transparent gray surfaces. *B* 3TM bundle formation by TM4, TM6, and TM12. TM4 sub-helical segments. The yellow dashed triangle highlights the central 3TM bundle in top and bottom views. *C* Comparison of the cryo-EM structure of apo-ABC1, colored as in *A*, and its alphafold predicted structure (transparent cartoon). Blue transparent arrows indicate major movements of select TMs. The gray bars represent the plasma membrane.

109 TM bundle that closes off the central cavity (Figure 1C). In contrast to TM4, TM10 adopts a  
 110 straight conformation, contributing further to structural asymmetry and leading to a lateral opening

111 to the lower bilayer leaflet. These features lead to an overall conformation that diverges widely  
 112 from canonical IF open conformations as demonstrated by a comparison to the alphafold predicted  
 113 structure of ABCB1 (Figure 2C). The starkest differences are between the respective positions of  
 114 TM1/TM2 and TM4/TM5 pairs, leading to a more splayed open asymmetric arrangement of the  
 115 extracellular “leaflets” and closer NBD spacing. The implications of this conformation for  
 116 substrate and nucleotide access are expanded upon below.

### 117 Distinct Substrate and Inhibitors interactions in human ABCB1



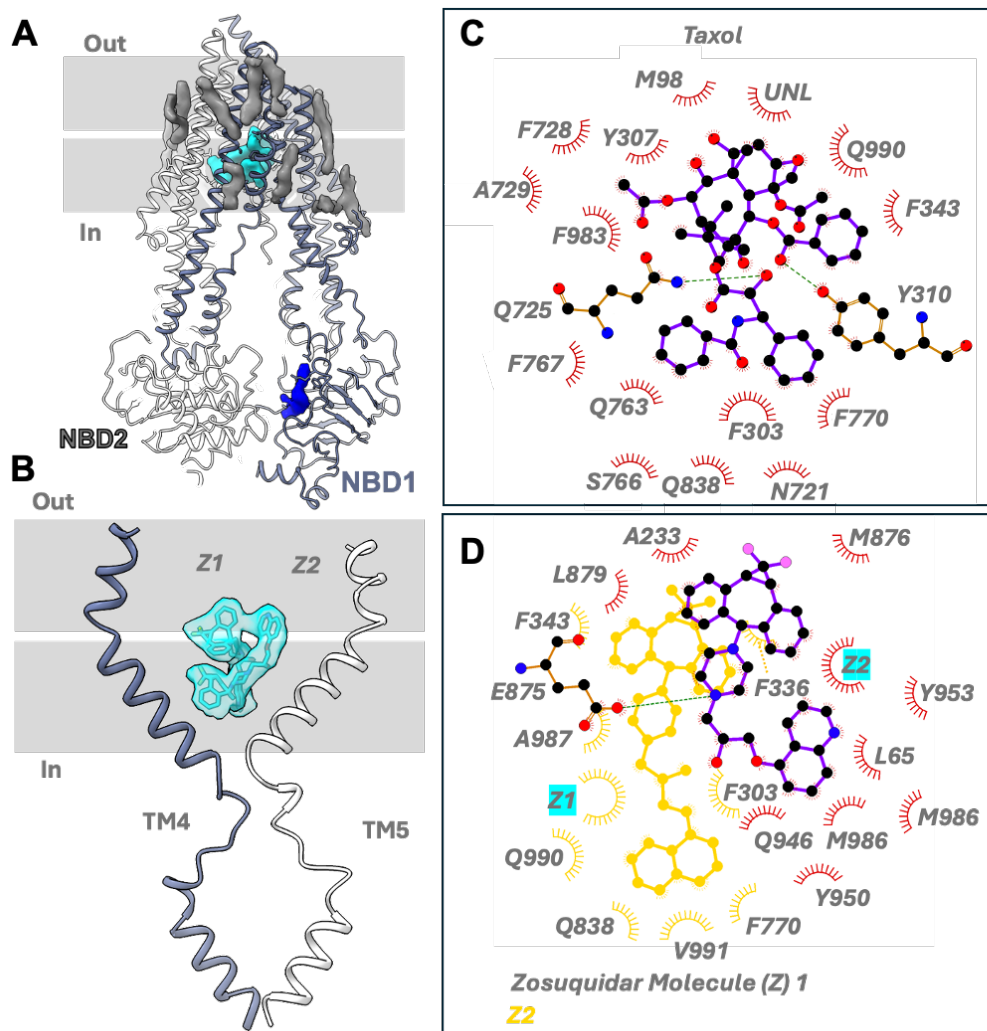
**Figure 3 Structure of ABCB1 bound to Taxol** **A** Overall structure with first and second halves (primary structure based) colored green and white, respectively, and distinguished from domain swapped (DS) halves. Density for Taxol and lipids is shown in pink and grey (0.01 contour threshold), respectively. Weaker density for the NBD1 nucleotide is shown in blue (0.008 contour threshold). The zoom panel shows Taxol (pink sticks) density along with associated density features modeled as a lipid acyl chain (grey sticks) as transparent pink and grey surfaces, respectively. Domain swapped halves are highlighted demarcated by grey and green semicircles **B** Overall comparison of apo and Taxol complexes of ABCB1 (transparent brown and green cartoons respectively) with 3TM forming helices (solid tube helices) and Taxol (pink spheres) shown

118 Previous analyses of substrate and inhibitor discrimination in human ABCB1 in the presence of  
119 conformational antibody Fabs revealed that both classes could occupy a centrally located, occluded  
120 TMD site with subtle differences between drug interacting residues and overall conformation<sup>23,24</sup>.  
121 Here we show that the predominant conformational states of Taxol and zosuquidar complexes with  
122 ABCB1 alone are completely different. As shown in Figure 3A, Taxol bound ABCB1 adopts a  
123 symmetrical IF conformation with wider NBD spacing compared to the apo state. Taxol binding,  
124 however, is asymmetric, with a single molecule observed within the C-terminal half of the  
125 molecule/2<sup>nd</sup> half comprising the domain swapped (DS) TMD2 (TM7-9 and TM12 from TMD2,  
126 and TM4 and TM5 from TMD1) and NBD2 pair, offset from the central TMD space. Interestingly,  
127 this binding site is occupied by TM4b in the apo state, which swings away to allow Taxol binding  
128 (Figure 3B). This is accompanied by major rearrangements of TM5, ECL6, and TM6, breakup of  
129 the 3TM bundle observed in the apo state and an outward movement of NBD1. The position of  
130 NBD2 and its associated coupling helices remains largely unchanged. This links substrate binding  
131 to NBD orientation through TM4, which may act as an affinity gate to add a degree of substrate  
132 discrimination as expanded upon below. Density features within the hydrophobic TMD cavity are  
133 consistent with the presence of lipids and/or sterols. As their specific identity and orientation are  
134 impossible to ascertain from these data alone, we modeled them as unidentified acyl chains. A  
135 comparison of the two domain swapped halves of Taxol bound ABCB1 reveals distinct differences  
136 between residues within 5Å of the observed Taxol molecule in the C-terminal Half and its N-  
137 terminal equivalent that would present a steric and electrostatic barrier to Taxol binding. (Figure  
138 S2).

139 In contrast to its Taxol complex, zosuquidar bound ABCB1 adopts the same conformation  
140 as seen in the antibody bound complexes, marked by a fully occluded cavity with 2 closely



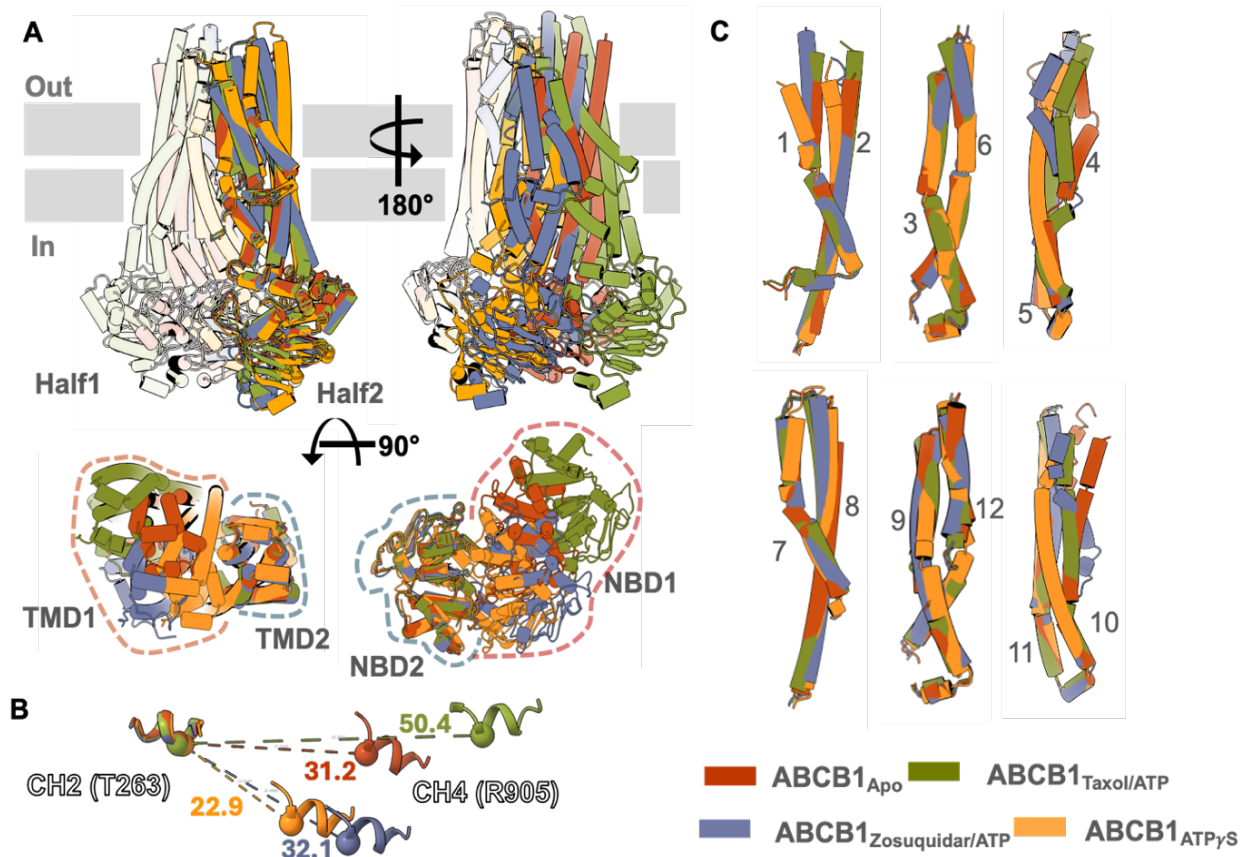
141 interacting zosuquidar molecules (Figure 4A-B). Cavity occlusion is brought about by the  
142 concerted kinking of TM4 and TM10, further highlighting its role in in the overall transport cycle.  
143 Diffuse density for bound nucleotide is observed in NBD1. The overall structure of zosuquidar  
144 bound ABCB1 shows increased positional order compared to the Taxol complex, with clearer  
145 density for TMD associated lipids and NBD1 associated nucleotide. While the overwhelming  
146 majority of Taxol-interacting residues are drawn from the C-terminal Half (Figure 4C), zosuquidar



**Figure 4 Comparison of Zosuquidar and Taxol binding.** **A** Overall structure of the ABCB1 bound to Zosuquidar. Zosuquidar and ATP density is shown (0.0175 contour) as teal and blue surfaces, respectively. **B** Zoomed view of the occluded TMD cavity with TM4 and TM10 shown with EM density for both Zosuquidar molecules (teal sticks, Z1 and Z2) shown as a transparent teal surface (0.017 contour). **C** Ligand interaction plot of ABCB1 complexed to Taxol. **D** Ligand interaction plot of zosuquidar bound ABCB1 with the second Zosuquidar molecule shown in yellow.

147 interactions span both halves of the transporter (Figure 4D) and no extraneous lipid density was  
 148 observed in the occluded cavity.

149 **Structural transitions in human ABCB1 are asymmetric and dependent on TM4**



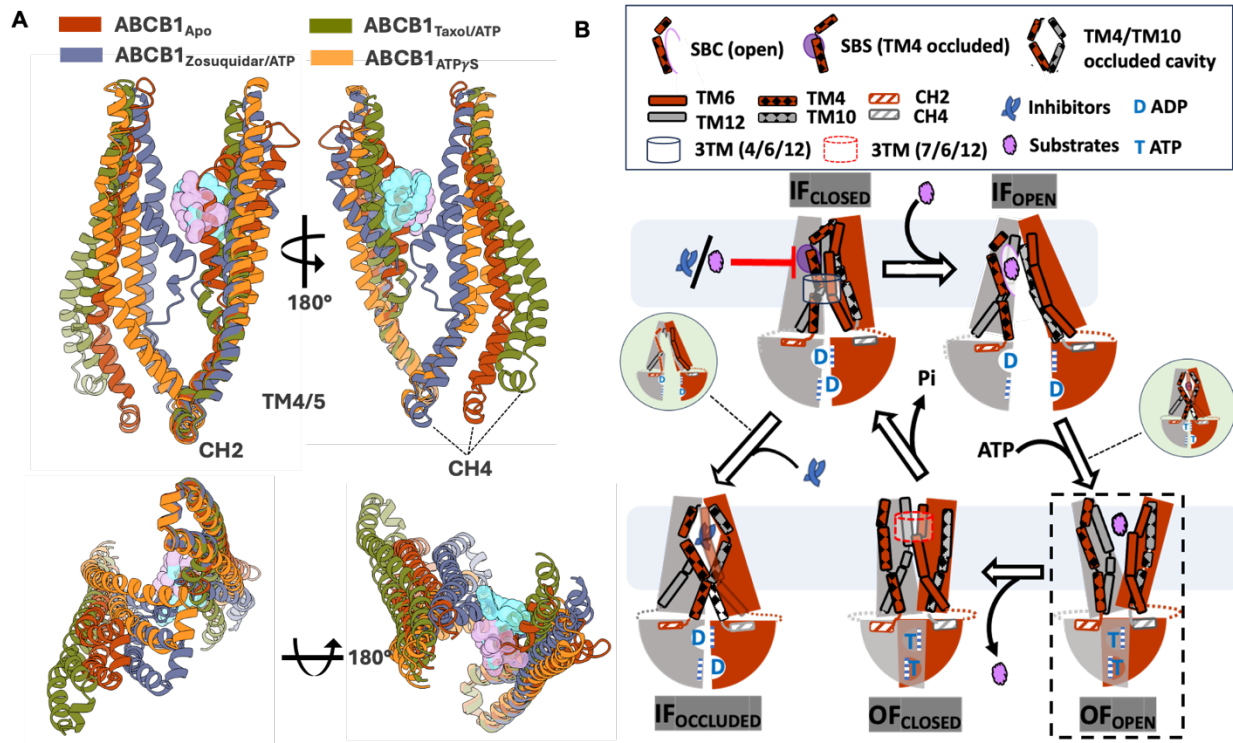
**Figure 5 Structural Transitions in ABCB1.** **A** Overlay of full transporter in all 4 conformations with Half 1 and half 2 shown as transparent surfaces (front and back views, respectively) and with individual TMDs and NBDs outlined top and bottom views, respectively. **B** Pairwise structural alignment of linked TM pairs expected to move together in different type II ABC exporter conformational states.

150 The four conformational states of ABCB1 presented here allow for a direct comparison of the  
 151 overall transitions associated with its drug transport cycle. As shown in Figure 5A, the C-terminal  
 152 half of the transporter remains relatively rigid in comparison to its N-terminal counterpart, with  
 153 significant positional changes of NBD1 associated with the different TMD conformations. Inter  
 154 NBD separation is similar for the apo and inhibited state with the widest separation between the  
 155 NBDs of the Taxol bound IF conformation and narrowest separation for the sandwiched NBD

156 dimer in the ATPγS complex as highlighted by Cα distance measurements between T263 (CH2)  
157 and R905 (CH4) (Figure 5B). While the overall conformations of the 4 states diverge significantly,  
158 a pairwise alignment of TM pairs 1/2, 3/6, and 4/5 (and their half 2 counterparts) shows expected  
159 patterns of linked movements during conformational cycling<sup>33</sup> with major exceptions for TM4 and  
160 TM10, and to a lesser extent, TM1 and TM2 (Figure 5C). TM4 adopts a different conformation in  
161 all 4 structures, including three unique kinked conformations in the apo, substrate bound, and  
162 inhibitor bound states. Similarly, TM10 adopts different conformations in all four structures, but  
163 only the zosuquidar bound state displays a kinked conformation like that of TM4. The Cytoplasmic  
164 halves of all TMs match very closely in all structures, revealing that the conformational changes  
165 occur within the membrane environment, likely stabilized by dynamic lipid contacts, as expanded  
166 upon below.

## 167 **Discussion**

168 Our data allow us to formulate an updated mechanism for substrate transport and its  
169 inhibition in ABCB1 as shown in Figure 4B. Central to this scheme is TM4, which acts as a gating  
170 helix and undergoes large-scale rearrangements in all conformations reported here. In the unbound  
171 (apo) state, human ABCB1 likely exists in a conformational equilibrium between multiple IF  
172 states. The IF<sub>CLOSED</sub> state that is dominant from our analysis is incompatible with substrate binding,  
173 with TM4 involved in 3TM bundle formation to close the TMD pathway and also sterically  
174 occluding the substrate binding site. As such, TM4 may play an autoinhibitory role and act as an  
175 affinity filter akin to the regulatory domains of ABCC type transporters<sup>34,35</sup>. Substrates overcoming  
176 this affinity threshold shift the conformational equilibrium towards an IF<sub>OPEN</sub> state with greater  
177 NBD separation, concurrent opening of the 3-TM bundle, and ejection of TM4b from the substrate



**Figure 6 Substrate and inhibitor interactions in ABCB1** **A** Overlay of TM4/5 and TM10/11 of all structures reported, highlighting overall conformational changes linked to substrate (Taxol, pink) or inhibitor (zosuquidar, teal) binding and CH2 and CH4 movements **B** Schematic of working model for substrate transport and inhibition in human ABCB1. With the exception of the OF<sub>OPEN</sub> state (based on homologous transporters like human ABCD1<sup>9</sup> and Sav1866<sup>21</sup>). Green circles highlight potential intermediate/alternate states.

178 binding site. Compared to the apo state, this NBD separation may be more sterically favorable for  
 179 ATP binding (ATP/ADP exchange), linking substrate binding to stimulation of ATPase rates. The  
 180 IF<sub>OCCLUDED</sub> state observed in the zosuquidar complex has been previously shown to be stabilized  
 181 by inhibitory antibodies and capable of accommodating substrates<sup>23,24,36</sup>. Combined with insights  
 182 from our current data, it likely represents a sparsely populated high-energy state prior to substrate  
 183 extrusion through the OF<sub>OPEN</sub> conformation. Inhibitors like zosuquidar, on the other hand, stabilize  
 184 the IF<sub>OCCLUDED</sub> conformation, thereby inhibiting the transport cycle. This clear difference between  
 185 substrates and inhibitors may be explained by their divergent ligand interactions based on our  
 186 observations for the Taxol and Zosuquidar complex structures described here. Asymmetry may  
 187 play a key role here, with inhibitors like zosuquidar able to make stabilizing interactions with both



188 domain-swapped halves of the transporter. In contrast, substrates like Taxol seen to bind within  
189 TMD<sub>2DS</sub> may be destabilized upon contact with TMD<sub>1DS</sub> upon ATP binding induced NBD closure  
190 and consequent TMD rearrangements, promoting a transition to the OF<sub>OPEN</sub> conformation and  
191 substrate extrusion. This suggests that TMD<sub>1DS</sub> residues that have been implicated in substrate  
192 interactions through mutagenesis and cellular efflux studies but not seen to directly interact with  
193 substrate here may be involved in promoting extrusion rather than stabilizing substrate binding<sup>37-</sup>  
194 <sup>42</sup>. Upon substrate extrusion the external leaflets of ABCB1 adopt a closer arrangement in contrast  
195 to OF states such as that seen in human ABCD1<sup>9</sup>. Interestingly, this OF<sub>CLOSED</sub> state is also  
196 characterized by formation of a 3TM bundle like that in the apo state, albeit involving TM6, TM7,  
197 and TM12, and may similarly serve to prevent undesired substrate or lipid interactions before the  
198 transporter resets upon ATP hydrolysis to its IF conformation(s).

199         Insights into TMD access and auto-inhibition of the binding site by TM4 gleaned from our  
200 data fundamentally change our understanding of how human ABCB1 works. They have a number  
201 of important implications for development of better ABCB1 inhibitors as well as drugs that bypass  
202 its substrate transport cycle. First, the IF<sub>CLOSED</sub> apo state lays the foundation for development of a  
203 new class of ABCB1 inhibitors that could potentially trap it, thereby preventing substrate access  
204 to the TMD. Second, the taxol complex offers unprecedented detail into a discreet substrate  
205 binding site that can aid the design of more accurate computational models for studying ABCB1  
206 drug interactions. Third, the zosuquidar and taxol complexes of ABCB1 define the underlying  
207 binding chemistry that distinguishes substrates and inhibitors. Finally, our structural data reconcile  
208 decades of mutagenesis studies and showcase the remarkable structural and functional variability  
209 helix breaking elements impart to TMDs, especially in context of a lipid bilayer environment and  
210 dynamic lipid interactions, that existing homology and predicted models have failed to capture.

211 Additional structures of human ABCB1 in complex with drugs with different physiochemical are  
212 needed to explore the extent of binding site plasticity and potential deviations from the mechanistic  
213 framework proposed above.

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343

## 344 **Methods**

### 345 **Cell Culture, Protein expression and purification**

346 The expression and purification of wild-type human ABCB1 were conducted largely as previously  
347 described<sup>23,24,36</sup>. First, an ABCB1 stable cell line with a C-terminal eYFP-Rho1D4 tag and a  
348 3C/precision protease site between the protein and tag was generated using the Flp-In TREX  
349 system (Thermo Fisher Scientific) for tetracycline-inducible expression. These ABCB1 stable  
350 cells were grown in DMEM media supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS), penicillin-  
351 streptomycin, and antimycotic antibiotics at 37 °C in a 5% CO<sub>2</sub> incubator until they reached over  
352 70% confluency, which typically took about 72-96 hours. Next, the media was replaced with  
353 DMEM supplemented with 2% FBS and 0.6 µg/ml tetracycline, and the cells were allowed to  
354 express the protein for 72 hours at 37 °C in a 5% CO<sub>2</sub> incubator. These cells were subsequently  
355 washed with PBS before being harvested by centrifugation at 3000 r.c.f for 3 minutes at 4 °C, and  
356 flash-frozen in liquid nitrogen for storage at -80 °C.

357 All protein purification steps were carried out at 4°C or on ice. Cell pellets were thawed  
358 and resuspended in eight volumes of lysis buffer per gram of pellet (25 mM HEPES pH 7.5, 150  
359 mM NaCl, 20% glycerol, 0.5 mM PMSF, 2 µg/ml trypsin inhibitor, and one complete mini tablet  
360 per 50 ml). After dounce homogenizing, the cell lysate incubated with a 0.5%/0.1% mixture of n-  
361 dodecyl-β-D-maltopyranoside (DDM) and cholesteryl hemisuccinate (CHS) for 2 hours, and then  
362 centrifuged at 48000 r.c.f for 30 minutes. The supernatant was applied to Cyanogen bromide-  
363 activated Sepharose 4b beads (Cytiva) coupled to rho1D4 antibody (University of British  
364 Columbia) resin for binding over 3 hours. The resin was washed four times with 10 column  
365 volumes (CV) of wash buffer (25 mM HEPES pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl, 20% glycerol, and  
366 0.02%/0.004% DDM/CHS) followed by protein elution by addition of Wash Buffer supplemented



367 either with 0.25 mg<sup>-1</sup>ml<sup>-1</sup> 1D4 peptide (GenScript) or a 1:10 w:w ratio of 3C protease for on-  
368 column cleavage and incubated overnight at 4 °C on a roller for tag cleavage. 3C protease was  
369 removed by incubation with Ni-NTA beads.

370

### 371 **Lipid reconstitution of ABCB1**

372 Expression and purification of MSP1D1 (Addgene) and Saposin A (Salipro) was carried out as  
373 described<sup>43,44</sup> except that the final purification and storage buffer contained 25 mM HEPES pH  
374 7.5, 150 mM NaCl. Brain Polar Extract lipids (BPL, Avanti) and cholesterol (Chol, Sigma) were  
375 mixed at an 80:20 w:w ratio and dried using a rotary evaporator (Bucchi), resuspended in diethyl  
376 ether, dried again, and finally resuspended in HEPES buffer (25 mM HEPES pH 7.5, 150 mM  
377 NaCl). Nanodisc reconstitution followed our published protocols<sup>9,45</sup>. Briefly, The BPL/Chol  
378 mixture was solubilized in storage buffer supplemented with a 0.2%/0.04% solution of DDM/CHS  
379 and homogenized using water bath sonication, with three cycles of 2 minutes on and 2 minutes  
380 off. 3C cleaved or ID4 peptide eluted ABCB1 was mixed with MSP1D1 and solubilized lipids a  
381 molar ratio of 1:10:350 for ABCB1:MSP1D1:BPL/Chol and the mixture diluted to reduce the final  
382 glycerol concentration to less than 4% (v:v). After 1-hour incubation at 4 °C on a roller, detergent  
383 was removed by addition of 0.8 grams ml<sup>-1</sup> reaction buffer of Bio-Beads SM-2 (Biorad) prewashed  
384 in storage buffer and incubation on a roller for 2 hours at room temperature (RT). The supernatant  
385 was removed from the biobeads and concentrated using a 100kDA molecular weight cut off  
386 (M.W.C.O) centrifugal filter. Saposin A reconstituted ABCB1 was prepared similarly except that  
387 a 1:15:400 molar ratio of ABCB1:Saposin A:BPL/Chol was used. Protein concentration was  
388 measured by densitometry analysis of SDS-PAGE bands using detergent purified ABCB1 of  
389 known concentrations as standards.

390 ABCB1 proteoliposomes were prepared as described<sup>46</sup> with minor modifications. Briefly, the  
391 BPL/Chol lipid mixture (80:20 wt:wt ratio) was first reconstituted in buffer comprising 150mM  
392 NaCl and 25mM Hepes pH 7.5 at a concentration of 20mg<sup>-1</sup>ml<sup>-1</sup>. Empty liposomes were prepared  
393 through extrusion using a 0.2 µm filter. Pre-formed liposomes and detergent-purified ABCB1 were  
394 supplemented with at 0.3 % and 0.14 % (v:v) of Triton X-100, respectively, mixed, and incubated  
395 at RT for 30 minutes. Detergent removal was done in five successive incubation steps using each  
396 using fresh 50 mg Bio-beads SM-2 per ml reaction mix. The incubation steps were carried out with  
397 gentle agitation for 30 mins at RT, 60 mins at 4°C, overnight at 4 °C, followed by two 60-minute  
398 incubations at 4 °C. Liposomes were pelleted by ultracentrifugation at 80,000 r.p.m using a TLA-  
399 100 rotor (Beckmann Coulter), the supernatant discarded and resuspended in an equivalent volume  
400 of reconstitution buffer at 0.5-1 mg<sup>-1</sup>ml<sup>-1</sup>.

401

#### 402 **ATPase Assays**

403 ATPase measurements were based on a molybdate-based calorimetric assay measuring release of  
404 inorganic phosphate (Pi) <sup>47</sup> as described<sup>9,45</sup>. Stocks of zosuquidar (Tocris) and taxol (PhytoLab)  
405 were prepared in 100% Dimethyl sulfoxide DMSO. ATPase measurements were performed by  
406 incubating 0.02-0.1 mg<sup>-1</sup>ml<sup>-1</sup> ABCB1 with 2mM ATP, 10mM MgCl<sub>2</sub> with varying concentrations  
407 of zosuquidar or taxol at 37°C. Statistical analyses and linear regression were done in GraphPad  
408 Prism 9. All assays were replicates of three independent experiments.

409

#### 410 **Native-Mass spectrometry**

411 Wild-type ABCB1 was purified and reconstituted into nanoparticles as described in the above  
412 sections. The detergent sample and the reconstituted ABCB1 samples were buffer exchanged into

413 200 mM ammonium acetate (99.999% Trace Metals Basis, Sigma Aldrich) containing 0.02%  
414 DDM/0.004% CHS (only 200 mM ammonium acetate for nanoparticle sample) using 40k zeba  
415 spin desalting column and further purified by injecting into an Agilent 1260 Infinity II LC system  
416 (Agilent Technologies) using pre-equilibrated TSKgel G4000SWxl column (TOSOH biosciences)  
417 Samples were diluted to 500 nM and ionized via nano-electrospray ionization using gold coated  
418 borosilicate capillaries (prepared in-house) and analyzed on a Q Exactive Ultra High Mass Range  
419 orbitrap mass spectrometer (Thermo Fisher Scientific)<sup>48,49</sup>. The instrument was operated in Direct  
420 Mass mode, enabling orbitrap-based charge detection mass spectrometry measurements of  
421 individual intact lipoprotein nanoparticle ions<sup>50,51</sup>. Briefly, the instrument was operated with the  
422 Ion Target set to “high m/z” and the Detector Optimization set to “low m/z.” The in-source  
423 trapping and higher-energy collisional dissociation cell were operated at 1-10 V. All measurements  
424 were acquired at a resolution setting of 200,000 (FWHM at m/z 400) with a trapping gas pressure  
425 setting of 1. All data processing was performed using STORIBoard (Proteinaceous Inc.). Ions were  
426 filtered based on ion lifetime and signal-to-noise, and ion charge states were assigned using the  
427 “Voting v3” charge assignment algorithm<sup>51</sup>. Ion filtering and charge assignment parameters are  
428 summarized in Table S1. Charge assignment was calibrated using carbonic anhydrase, alcohol  
429 dehydrogenase, pyruvate kinase, beta-galactosidase, and GroEl. All samples were acquired for 10-  
430 20 minutes, and the reported measurements are representative of ~10,000 ions.

431

### 432 **Cryo EM Sample Preparation & Data collection**

433 For Grid preparation ABCB1-eYFP reconstituted in Saposin A Nanoparticles (SapNPs)  
434 were incubated antiGFP nanobody (Addgene) coupled Sepharose 4B resin prepared in house for  
435 2 hrs at 4°C, washed with 3 x 10CV of reconstitution buffer, followed on-column cleavage by in

436 3CV reconstitution buffer supplemented with 3C protease to recover ABCB1 SapNPs. Samples  
437 were subsequently concentrated using a 100 MWCO centrifugal filter and further purified by Size  
438 exclusion chromatography (SEC) on an Agilent 1260 Infinity II LC system (Agilent Technologies)  
439 using a TSKgel G4000SWxl column (TOSOH biosciences) pre-equilibrated with reconstitution  
440 buffer at 4 °C and peak fractions pooled and concentrated to 0.5-1 mg<sup>-1</sup>ml<sup>-1</sup> for grid preparation .  
441 Where needed zosuquidar and taxol were added to pooled fractions at 10 μM final concentration  
442 with or without ATP/Mg<sup>2+</sup> (5mM each) and incubated for 10 minutes at RT before concentration.  
443 4 μL of sample was applied to the glow discharged (60 s, 15 mA) Quantifoil R1.2/1.3 Cu grids  
444 using Vitrobot Mark IV with 4 s blot time and 0 blot force under >90 % humidity at 4 °C and  
445 plunge frozen in liquid ethane. All grids were clipped and stored in liquid nitrogen.

446 All the Cryo EM data were collected on a 300 kV Titan Krios electron microscope  
447 equipped with a Biocontinuum K3 Direct Electron Detector with 20 eV GIF energy filter, 50 eV  
448 condenser C2 and 100 μm objective apertures. Automated data collection was carried out using  
449 the EPU 2.8.0.1256REL software package (Thermo Fisher Scientific) at a magnification of  
450 130,000× in Counted Super Resolution mode corresponding to a calibrated pixel size of 0.664 Å  
451 with defocus range set from -0.5 μm to -2.5 μm. Three shots were taken per hole. Image stacks  
452 comprising 40 frames were recorded for 60 s at an estimated dose rate of 1e-/Å<sup>2</sup>/frame.

### 453 **Data processing, model building, and refinement**

454 Data processing was done in Relion<sup>52-54</sup>. In brief, image stacks were motion corrected using  
455 Relion's internal MotionCor2 implementation, followed by CTF estimation using CTFFIND4<sup>55</sup>.  
456 All resolution estimates were based on the gold standard 0.143 cutoff criterion<sup>53</sup>. Data collection  
457 and processing parameters are provided in Table S2 along with model building and refinement  
458 statistics. Data processing flow charts are shown in Figure S3. EM density around individual

459 domains/TMs and Local resolution-colored maps are shown in Figure S5 and Figure S6,  
460 respectively.

461 For ABCB1-apo, an initial dataset comprising 5974 micrographs was used for reference  
462 free automated particle picking (Laplacian-of-Gaussian algorithm) within Relion. 2167202  
463 particles were extracted at a 3x binned pixel size of 1.992 Å and subjected to several rounds of 2D  
464 classification, followed by Ab-initio model building using within Relion. This initial model was  
465 used for subsequent 3D classification (number of classes (N)=5) and a single predominant class  
466 comprising 662694 was refined to 5.1 Å followed by another round of 3D classification (N=5) and  
467 3D refinement, re-extraction at a 1.5X binned pixel size of 0.996 Å, and particle polishing to yield  
468 a 4.1 Å map. A second set of 6321903 particles from 13327 micrographs was picked using Topaz  
469 (default model) and processed similarly except that a refined 3D class from the first set was used  
470 as a reference. A refined 3D at 4.0 Å resolution and comprising 660276 particles was obtained.  
471 Particles from the final refined classes from both sets were combined, followed by additional  
472 rounds of 3D refinement and postprocessing to yield a 3.8 Å map.

473 For the ABCB1<sub>Taxol</sub>/ATP complex, 15494460 particles from 33055 micrographs were  
474 autopicked using Topaz and extracted at a 3x binned pixel size of 1.992 Å. After one round of 2D  
475 Classification, 6254156 particles were used for 3D classification (N=5) with a low pass filtered  
476 ABCB1-apo map as a reference. The single highest resolution class revealed an IF conformation  
477 and was subjected to iterative 3D refinement and particle polishing, followed by subtraction of the  
478 SapNP. After 3D classification (N=5), 154538 particles from the highest resolution were reverted  
479 to their original non-subtracted images and refined to 3.9 Å.

480 For the ABCB1<sub>Taxol</sub> complex, 5725 micrographs were used to pick 2547172 particles by  
481 Topaz and extracted at a 3x binned pixel size of 1.992 Å. After 2D classification, 1270596 particles

482 were used for 3D classification (N=3) using the ABCB1<sub>apo</sub> map as a reference. 486111 particles  
483 from the best class were subjected to another round of 3D classification. The single highest  
484 resolution class comprised 133895 particles and was refined to 4.7 Å.

485 For the ABCB1<sub>Zosuquidar</sub> complex, 2182930 particles were automatically picked by Topaz  
486 from 7281 micrographs. After two rounds of 2D classification, 943398 particles entered 3D  
487 classification (N=5) with a low-pass filtered ABCB1<sub>apo</sub> map used as a reference. The single, highest  
488 resolution class comprising 373279 particles was subjected to re-extraction at a 1.5X binned pixel  
489 size of 0.996 Å and signal subtraction to remove delocalized bulk lipid density and refined to 3.6  
490 Å resolution.

491 For the ABCB1<sub>Zosuquidar/ATP</sub> complex, 10710935 particles from 12897 micrographs were  
492 picked using topaz. 2468729 particles were chosen for 3D classification (N=5) using the map of  
493 the zosuquidar complex without ATP as a reference. A single highest resolution class comprising  
494 733688 particles was subjected to iterative rounds of 3D classification and particle polishing within  
495 Relion to yield a final refined map at 3.6 Å resolution.

496 For the ABCB1<sub>ATP<sub>YS</sub></sub> sample, 7689616 particles from 12165 micrographs were  
497 automatically picked using Topaz. After several rounds of 2D classification, 1732065 particles  
498 were subjected to 3D classification (N=5) using a low pass filtered ABCB1<sub>Apo</sub> map as a reference.  
499 A single OF classes comprising 400787 particles was subjected to another round of 3D  
500 classification (N=5). 180,163 Particles from two similar and roughly equally populated OF classes  
501 were combined, re-extracted at a 1.5X binned pixel size of 0.996 Å and refined to 3.75 Å. A second  
502 dataset of 6204620 particles from 9318 micrographs was processed similarly to yield a final  
503 refined class at 3.5 Å comprising 260172 particles. Particles from the final class from both datasets

504 were combined and subjected to another round of 3D classification (N=5) and the highest  
505 resolution class comprising 136896 particles was refined to 3.4 Å.

506 Final EM maps were used for model building in COOT 0.9.6 EL<sup>56</sup>. De novo model building  
507 was guided by the predicted structure of ABCB1 from AlphaFold2<sup>57</sup> for the apo and taxol  
508 complexes. For the zosuquidar complexes, model building was guided initially by the structure of  
509 ABCB1 bound to the MRK16 fab (PDBID 7A6F). For the ATP $\gamma$ S complexed ABCB1, the  
510 structure of ATP bound ABCB1-EQ (PDBID: 6C0V) was used as an initial model before minor  
511 adjustments and refinement. Non-proteinaceous continuous density features attributed to lipids or  
512 sterols were modeled as Acyl-chains. The structures were refined with secondary structure and  
513 geometry restraints in COOT 0.9.6 and PHENIX<sup>58</sup>. Where NBD density was too weak for denovo  
514 model building, docked NBDs from higher resolution structures reported here were used and  
515 minimally refined. The final models for ABCB1<sub>apo</sub> comprised residues 33-81, 106-606, 694-1230,  
516 for ABCB1<sub>Taxol/ATP</sub> comprised residues 30-87, 100-630, 689-1257, for ABCB1<sub>Zosuquidar/ATP</sub>  
517 comprised residues 30-90, 104-630, 691-1272, and for ABCB1<sub>ATP $\gamma$ S</sub> comprised residues 35-80,  
518 105-630, 692-1276. Map and Structure visualization was performed in UCSF Chimera<sup>59</sup> and  
519 ChimeraX<sup>60</sup>.

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## 521 **References (Methods)**

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567

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### 577 **Author Contributions**

578 AA conceived the research. DK performed all experiments with contributions from LTML, AA,  
579 and PXD. AA and DK performed all cryo-EM Data processing, model building, and refinement.  
580 V.V.G performed the nMS data collection analysis simulations. AA and DK wrote the manuscript  
581 with contributions from all other authors.

### 582 **Competing Financial Interests**

583 The authors declare no competing financial Interests.

### 584 **Data and materials availability:**

585 Requests for materials should be addressed to Amer Alam. The cryo-EM Maps have been  
586 deposited at the Electron Microscopy Databank (EMDB) under accession codes EMD-45854  
587 (ABCB1<sub>apo</sub>), EMD-45904 (ABCB1<sub>Taxol/ATP</sub>), EMD-45903 (ABCB1<sub>Zosuquidar/ATP</sub>), and EMD-45906  
588 (ABCB1<sub>ATPγS</sub>) and the associated atomic coordinates have been deposited at the Protein Data bank  
589 (PDB) under accession codes 9CR8, 9CTF, 9CTC, and 9CTG, respectively. Maps for ABCB1<sub>Taxol</sub>  
590 and ABCB1<sub>Zosuquidar</sub> have been deposited at the EMDB with accession codes MD-45931 and EMD-  
591 45932, respectively.

592

### 593 **Additional Information**

594 Supplementary Information is available for this manuscript.

595 **Supplementary Data**

596 **Tables S1-S2**

597 **Figures S1-S6**

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**Table S1: Ion filtering and charge assignment parameters**

<b>Ion Filtering</b>	
R <sup>2</sup> Threshold	0.996
Duration threshold	0.42
Minimum Time of Death	0.2
Maximum Time of Birth	0.1
Signal-To-Noise Threshold	3
<b>Charge Assignment (Voting v3)</b>	
Bin Size (ppm)	5
Minimum Ions in Bin	1
Number of Charge Neighbors	2
Number of Isotope Neighbors	5

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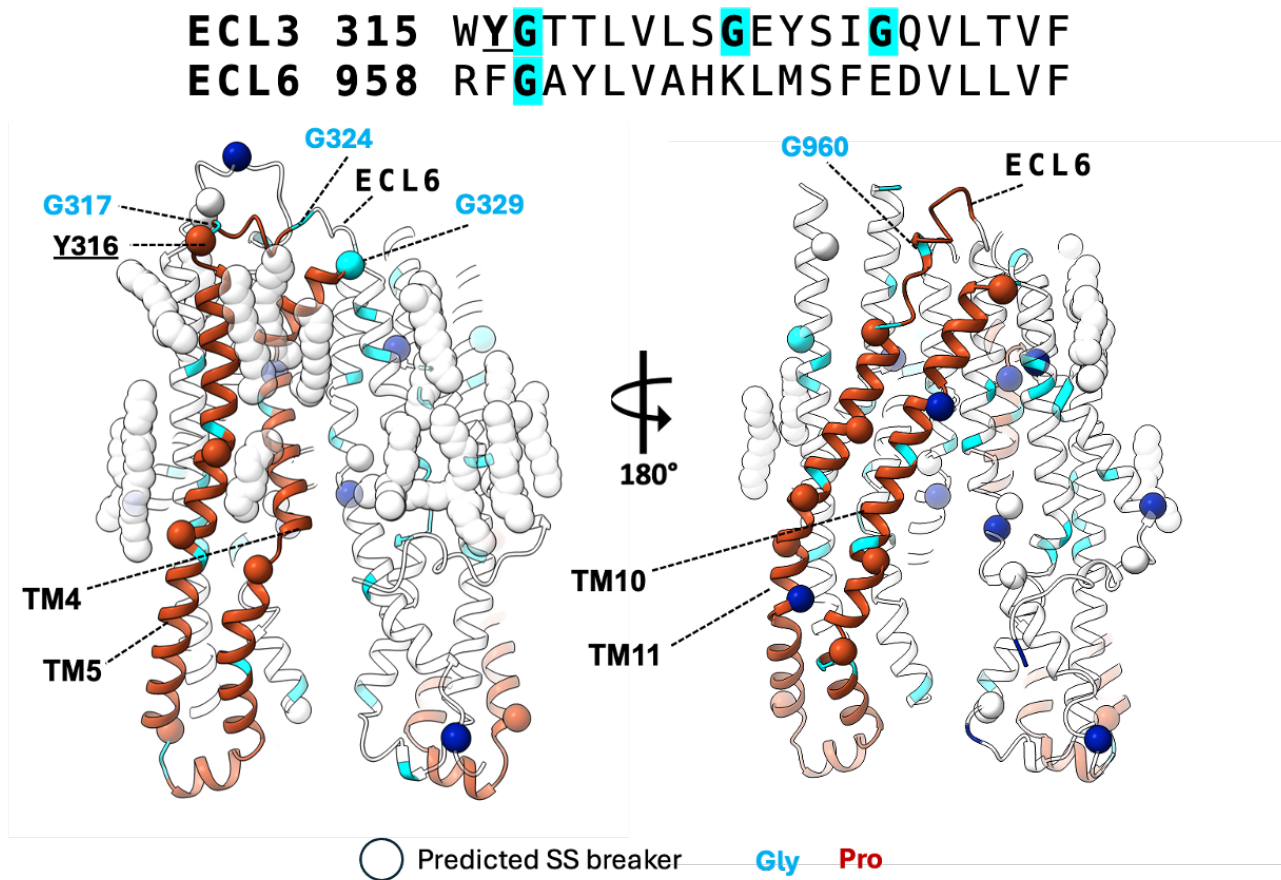
636 **Table S2 Cryo-EM data collection, refinement and validation statistics of human ABCB1**

<b>Data collection and processing</b>	ABCB1 <sub>apo</sub>	ABCB1 Taxol/ATP	ABCB1 Zosuquidar/ATP	ABCB1 ATP $\gamma$ S	ABCB1 Zosuquidar	ABCB1 Taxol
Microscope	FEI Titan Krios					
Camera	Gatan Biocontinuum K3					
Magnification	130kx					
Voltage (kV)	300					
Electron exposure (e <sup>-</sup> /Å <sup>2</sup> )	45-50					
Defocus range (μm)	-0.5 to -2.5					
Pixel size (Å)	0.664					
Energy filter (eV)	20					
Micrographs (#)				9318	7281	
Symmetry imposed	C1					
Particles in final Class	660276	154538	733688	136896	373279	133895
Map resolution (Å) (FSC 0.143)	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.6	4.7
Map sharpening B factor (Å <sup>2</sup> )	-197.74	- 168.435	-223.113	-137.7	- 148.229	- 240.975
Local Resolution Range (Å <sup>2</sup> )	3.7-4.9	3.8-5.9	3.5-4.5	3.4-5.0		
<b>Refinement</b>	ABCB1 <sub>apo</sub>	ABCB1 Taxol/ATP	ABCB1 Zosuquidar/ATP	ABCB1 <sub>ATP<math>\gamma</math>S}</sub>		
Model composition						
Non-hydrogen atoms	8664	9398	9525	9128		
Protein residues						
Ligands	1087	1158	1170	1157		
	15	24	25	13		
<i>B</i> factors (Å <sup>2</sup> )						
Protein	65.21	128.74	79.80	70.65		
Ligand	41.21	100.83	60.54	62.68		
R.m.s. deviations						
Bond lengths (Å)	0.003	0.002	0.003	0.004		
Bond angles (°)	0.489	0.483	0.516	0.579		
Validation						
MolProbity score	1.84	1.62	1.73	1.59		
Clashscore	7.50	9.52	6.72	7.68		
Poor rotamers (%)	0.22	0.52	0.31	0.11		
Ramachandran plot						
Favored (%)	93.52	97.40	94.85	97.05		
Allowed (%)	6.48	2.52	4.81	2.95		
Disallowed (%)	0.0	0.09	0.34	0		

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639 **Figure S1**



640 **Figure S1. Secondary structure (SS) breaks in apo ABCB1** Gly and Pro residues colored teal  
641 and blue, respectively, and predicted SS breaks shown as spheres. An ECL3 and ECL6 sequence  
642 alignment is also shown with residues colored similarly and predicted SS breaking residues  
643 underlined. TM4/5 and TM10/11 pairs are colored red. Acyl chains for prospective lipid/sterol  
644 molecules are shown as transparent spheres.

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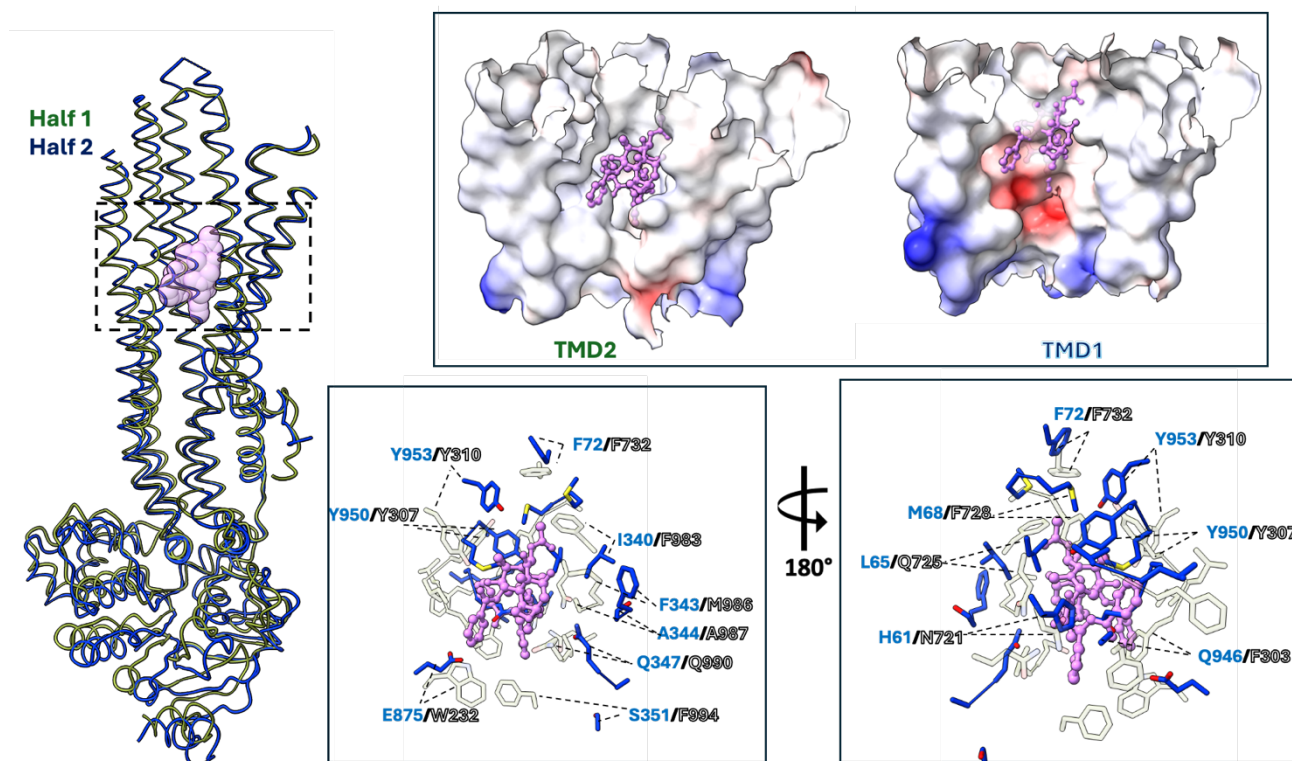
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650 **Figure S2**

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652 **Figure S2 Mismatch between TMD1 and TMD2 cavities for taxol binding.** **A** Overlay of  
653 domain swapped (DS) halves of ABCB1. The Taxol molecule bound to TMD2<sub>DS</sub> is shown as  
654 transparent pink spheres. The Zoom panel shows electrostatic potential map of the TMD2<sub>DS</sub> cavity  
655 (left) and its TMD1<sub>DS</sub> cavity equivalent (right) showing electrostatic and steric clashes with Taxol.  
656 **B** TMD1<sub>DS</sub> equivalent residues of TMD2<sub>DS</sub> residues (Blue sticks) within 5 Angstroms of bound  
657 Taxol (transparent sticks), with residue labels colored similarly.

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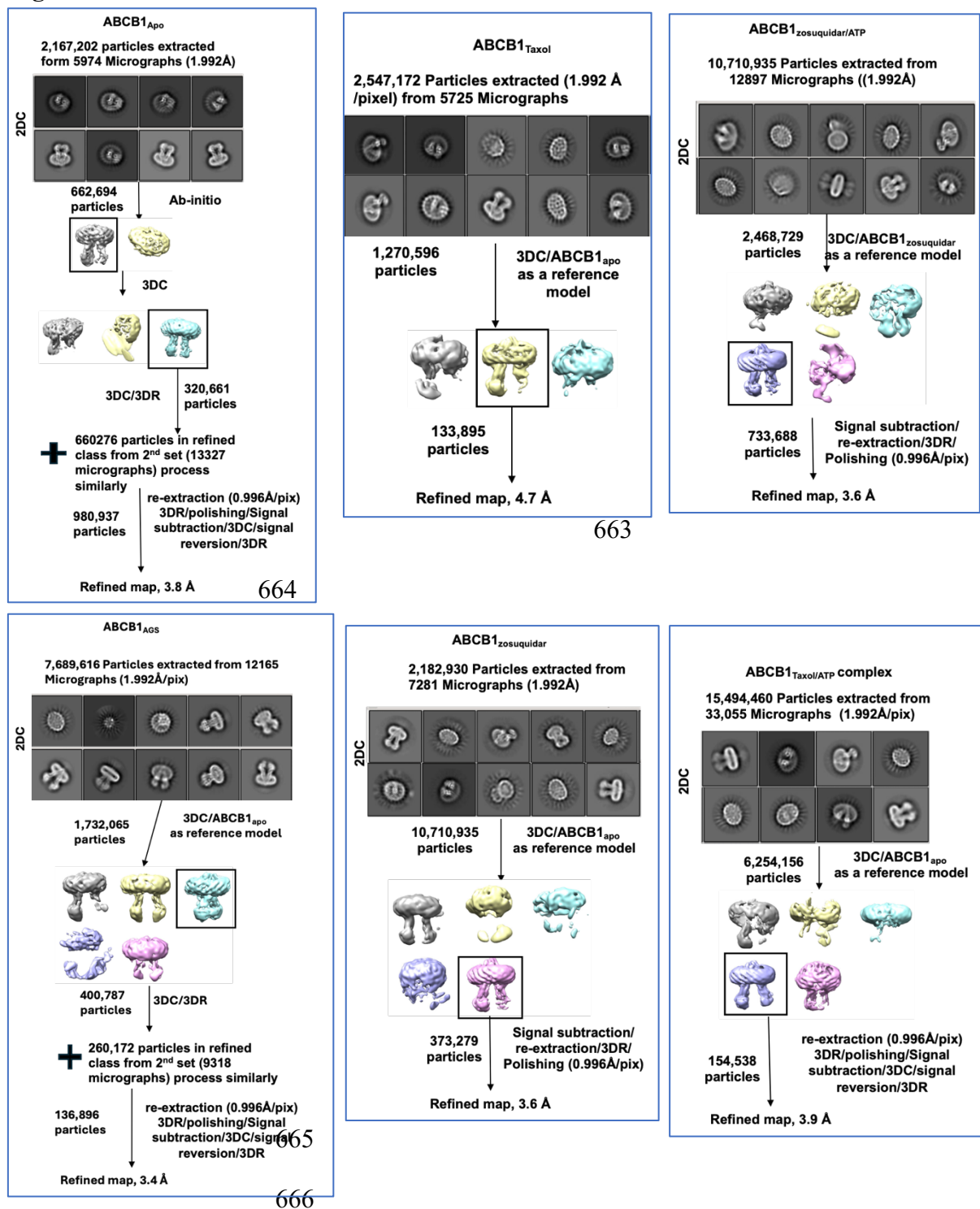
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662 **Figure S3**



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**Figure S3 Data processing overview. 3D classes chosen for further processing are boxed.**

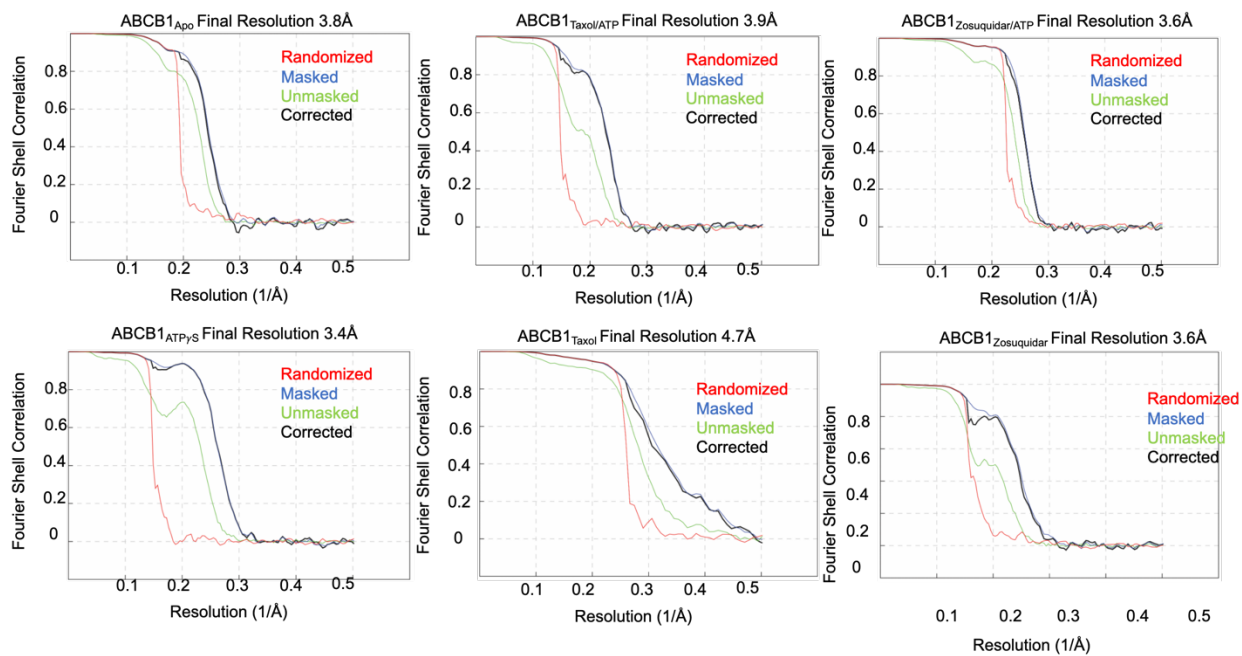
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669 **Figure S4**

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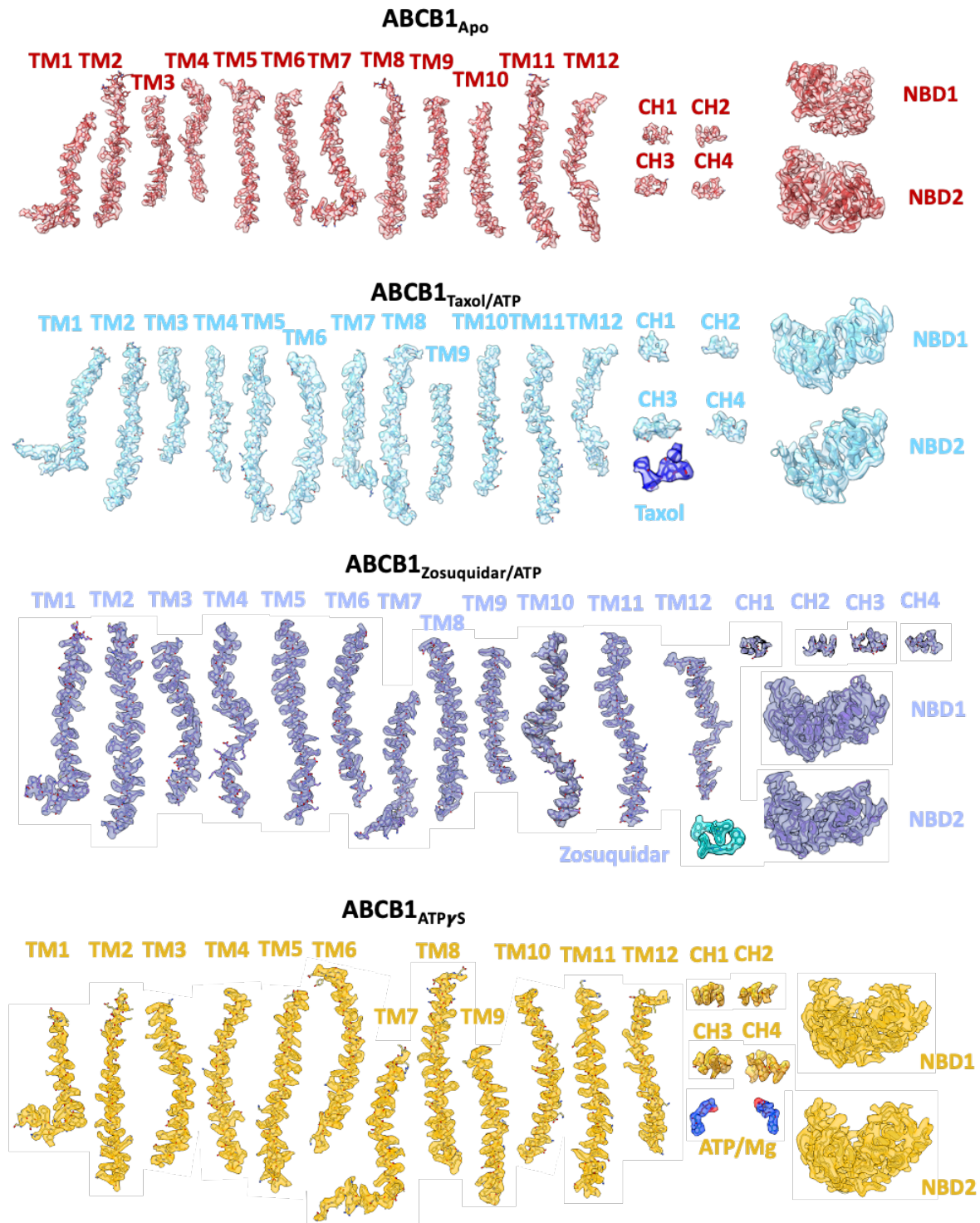
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**Figure S4 Data processing overview. FSC curves for final human ABCB1 maps**

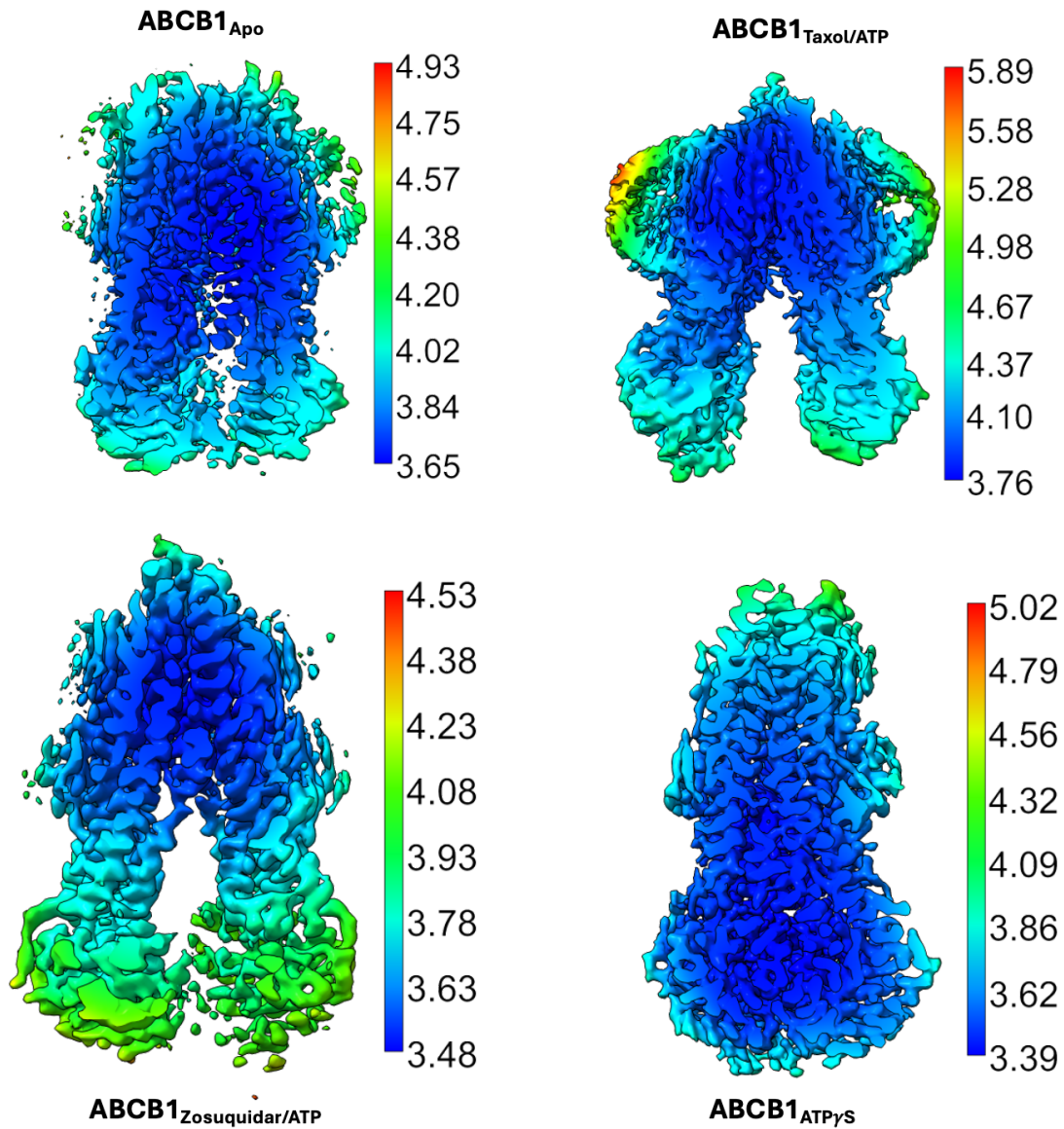
673 **Figure S5**



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675 **Figure S5 EM Density maps for lipid embedded ABCB1.** Contour levels for Apo: 0.012;  
Taxol/ATP complex: 0.011; Zosuquidar/ATP complex: 0.031; and ATP $\gamma$ S complex: 0.011

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**Figure S6 Local Density filtered Maps.** Color Key indicates Resolution range for each filtered map.