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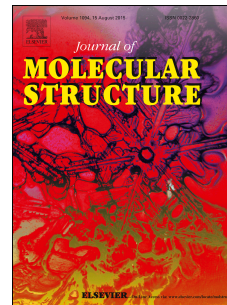
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Subham Ranjan, Ramesh Devarapalli, Sudeshna Kundu, Venu R. Vangala, Animesh Ghosh, C. Malla Reddy



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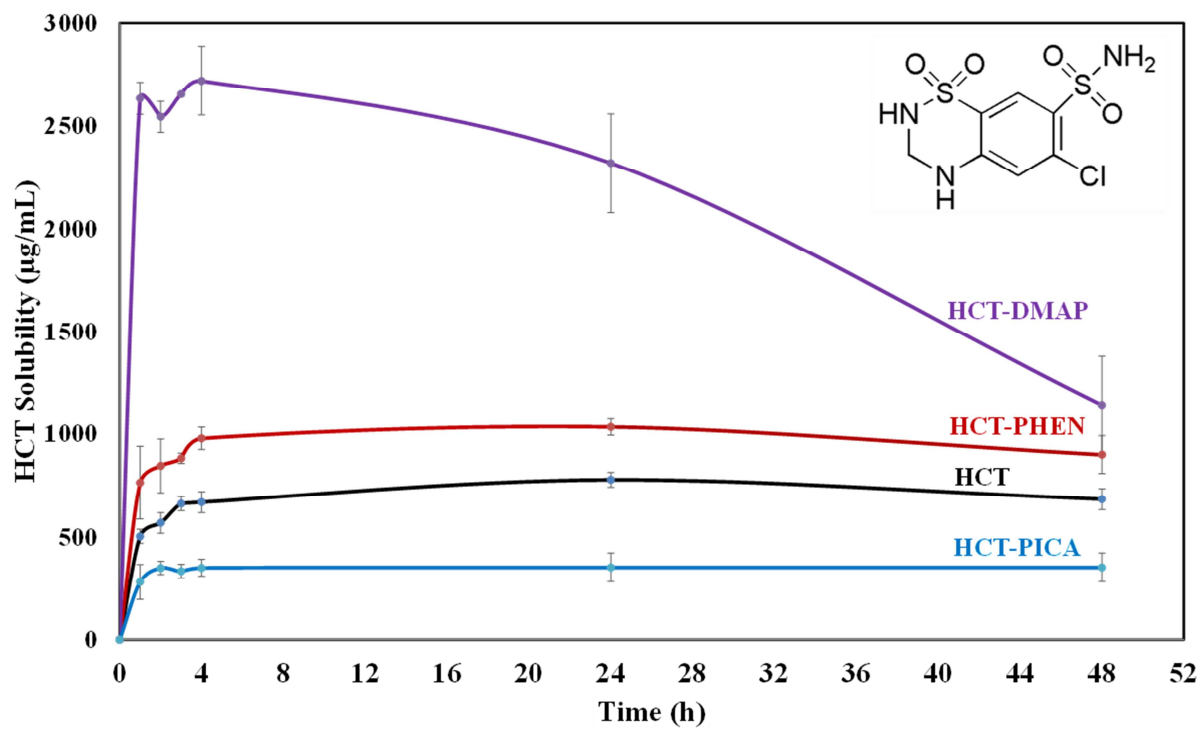
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Three new hydrochlorothiazide cocrystals: Structural analyses and solubility studies

Subham Ranjan,^a Ramesh Devarapalli,^a Sudeshna Kundu,^{a,b} Venu R. Vangala,^{c,*} Animesh Ghosh^{b,*} and C. Malla Reddy^{a,*}

^a*Department of Chemical Sciences, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Kolkata, Mohanpur Campus, Mohanpur 741 246, India*

^b*Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Technology, Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra Ranchi 835 215, India*

^c*Centre for Pharmaceutical Engineering Science and School of Pharmacy, University of Bradford, Richmond Road, Bradford BD7 1DP, United Kingdom*

* Corresponding author:

1. C. Malla Reddy

Department of Chemical Sciences, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Kolkata, Mohanpur Campus, Mohanpur 741 246, India

E-mail: cmallareddy@rediffmail.com, cmallareddy@gmail.com

2. Animesh Ghosh

Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Technology, Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra Ranchi 835 215, India.

E-mail: aghosh@bitmesra.ac.in, anim_1607@yahoo.co.in

3. Venu R. Vangala

Centre for Pharmaceutical Engineering Science and School of Pharmacy, University of Bradford, Richmond Road, Bradford BD7 1DP, United Kingdom.

E-mail: V.G.R.Vangala@bradford.ac.uk

31 **Abstract**

32 Hydrochlorothiazide (HCT) is a diuretic BCS class IV drug with poor aqueous solubility and
33 low permeability leading to poor oral absorption. The present work explores the
34 cocrystallization technique to enhance the aqueous solubility of HCT. Three new cocrystals
35 of HCT with water soluble cofomers phenazine (PHEN), 4-dimethylaminopyridine (DMAP)
36 and picolinamide (PICA) were prepared successfully by solution crystallization method and
37 characterized by single crystal X-ray diffraction (SCXRD), powder X-ray diffraction
38 (PXRD), fourier transform –infraredspectroscopy (FT-IR), differential scanning calorimetry
39 (DSC) and thermogravimetric analysis (TGA). Structural characterization revealed that the
40 cocrystals with PHEN, DMAP and PICA exists in $P2_1/n$, $P2_1/c$ and $P2_1/n$ space groups,
41 respectively. The improved solubility of HCT-DMAP (4 fold) and HCT-PHEN (1.4 fold)
42 cocrystals whereas decreased solubility of HCT-PICA (0.5 fold) as compared to the free drug
43 were determined after four hours in phosphate buffer, pH 7.4, at 25 °C by using shaking flask
44 method. HCT-DMAP showed a significant increase in solubility than all previously reported
45 cocrystals of HCT suggest the role of a cofomer. The study demonstrates that the selection
46 of cofomer could have pronounced impact on the physicochemical properties of HCT and
47 cocrystallization can be a promising approach to improve aqueous solubility of drugs.

48

49 **Keywords:** Crystal engineering, cocrystal, solubility, thermal analysis, structural analysis.

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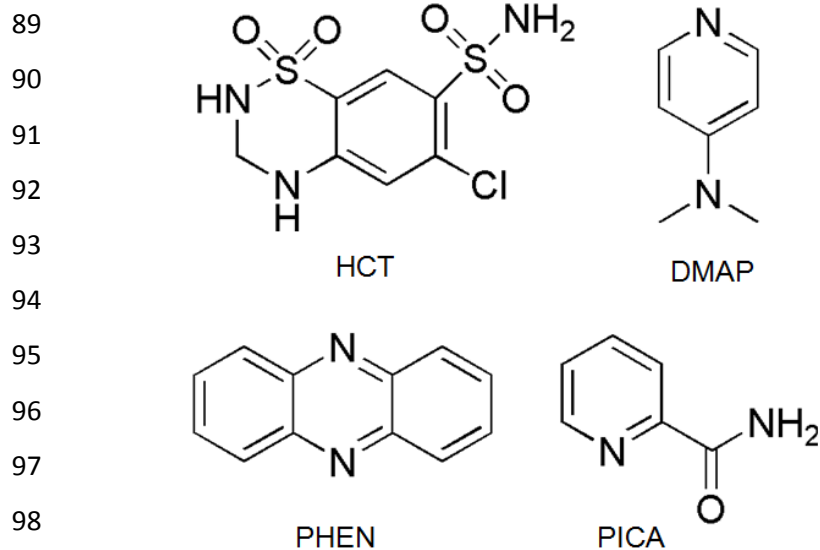
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56 1. Introduction

57 The properties of an active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) are broadly determined by
58 the molecular arrangement in three-dimensional crystal lattice.¹ In recent times, many
59 effective APIs are appearing eventually less in the market place due to poor
60 biopharmaceutical properties.² Poor aqueous solubility is one of the crucial problems,³
61 which affects the dissolution and bioavailability. Therefore, designing a new solid
62 form with desired physicochemical properties is essential for its progress in the
63 advanced stage of research and development. Exploitation of non-covalent interactions
64 of the molecules in the crystal lattice, thereby altering the molecular arrangement may
65 aid in the development of crystal with desirable physicochemical properties.⁴ The
66 various solid forms such as amorphous solids,⁵ polymorphs,⁶ salts,⁷ hydrates⁸ and
67 solvates⁹ have been utilized in tailoring specific physicochemical properties to
68 overcome the difficulties associated with poor aqueous solubility. The most common
69 approaches that are used for improving the delivery of poorly soluble drugs includes
70 salt formation,¹⁰ micronisation,¹¹ solid-lipid nanoparticles carrier,¹² solid dispersion,¹³
71 solubilization of drugs in co-solvents,¹⁴ complexation with cyclodextrins,¹⁵ etc.
72 Cocrystallization of API with water soluble cofomers is an emerging strategy to
73 achieve the spring and parachute nature of aqueous solubility. It involves the
74 formation of a homogenous crystalline material of two or more molecules with defined
75 stoichiometry in a single crystal lattice.¹⁶ Non-covalent interactions such as hydrogen
76 bonding, halogen bonding, π - π stacking, and van der Waals forces are the most
77 common type of interactions utilized for engineering of cocrystals.¹⁷
78 Biopharmaceutical properties such as solubility, dissolution, bioavailability, moisture
79 uptake, chemical stability, mechanical properties have been altered by
80 cocrystallization.¹⁸ Amongst these, solubility and dissolution are the most frequently
81 studied properties.

82 Hydrochlorothiazide (HCT, 6-chloro-3,4-dihydro-2*H*-1,2,4-benzothiazine-7-
83 sulfonamide) (Scheme 1) is a diuretic antihypertensive drug of the thiazide family,
84 widely prescribed for the management of edema and hypertension. However, this API
85 as per biopharmaceutical classification system (BCS) class IV drug, has poor water
86 solubility (0.7 g/L) and low permeability (Caco-2 permeability: -6.06) which is a
87 major barrier in making it bioavailable (65 %) in the body.¹⁹

88



100 **Scheme 1.** Chemical structures of hydrochlorothiazide (HCT) and the cofomers used
101 in this study.

102
103 Several researchers have attempted to improve the solubility of HCT by complexation
104 with cyclodextrins,²⁰ solid dispersions,²¹ liquid–solid compacts,²² lecithin/chitosan
105 nanoparticles,²³ pluronic® nanoaggregates,²⁴ etc. It reveals that these formulations
106 could favorably impact an aqueous solubility of HCT. Recently, HCT has also been
107 investigated for its cocrystallization tendencies where there is a potential for solubility
108 enhancement at the molecular level. HCT cocrystals involving some cofomers were
109 reported and they exhibited improved aqueous solubility and dissolution than the drug
110 itself.^{19,25}

111 Hydrochlorothiazide moiety, the principal functional unit i.e. two sulfonamide and one
112 aromatic amine group is expected to form $S=O \cdots H$ and $N-H \cdots O$ hetero-synthons. On
113 this basis several cofomers including aromatic acids and amides were attempted for
114 cocrystallization with HCT (see Table S1, Electronic Supplementary Information, ESI
115 for complete list of cofomers tested). However, the cocrystals were identified with
116 only three cofomers, phenazine (PHEN), 4-dimethylaminopyridine (DMAP) and
117 picolinamide (PICA) and are reported herein. From the literature it has been found that
118 the cofomers phenazine (PHEN),²⁶ picolinamide (PICA)²⁸ could form cocrystals or a
119 cofomer, 4-dimethylaminopyridine (DMAP),²⁹ forms salt with APIs and have altered
120 the physicochemical properties of the API. Thus in this study, we undertaken these
121 cofomers and investigated the solubility of all three HCT cocrystals.

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2. Experimental section

2.1 Materials

Hydrochlorothiazide and all cocrystal formers (phenazine, 4-dimethylaminopyridine and picolinamide) were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich chemicals, Bangalore, India. All the solvents were used (for crystallization) as received without any further purification.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 Cocrystals preparation method

HCT and cocrystal former in a definite stoichiometric ratio were subjected to grinding using an agate mortar and pestle for about 6 to 8 min with the addition of few drops of methanol. The Liquid Assisted Grinding (LAG) was used because it is expected to increase cocrystallization kinetics and for polymorph control.³⁰ After grinding, the mixture was dissolved in ethanol (or methanol) and the suspension was heated until a clear solution was obtained. Then the solution was filtered to remove any undissolved particles into a fresh conical flask and the filtrate was left to evaporate slowly at ambient conditions. The single crystals suitable for X-ray diffraction studies were obtained in 4 to 6 days.

2.2.2 Single crystal X-ray diffraction (SXRD)

X-ray diffraction data for all the cocrystals of HCT were recorded on a SuperNova, Eos diffractometer using monochromatic Mo-K α radiation ($\lambda = 0.71073 \text{ \AA}$). The data collection was carried out at 246 K for HCT-PHEN, 291 K for HCT-DMAP, and 296 K for HCT-PICA cocrystals respectively. The structure was solved using Olex²,³¹ with Superflip³² structure solution program using Charge Flipping solution method and refined with the ShelXL³³ refinement package using Least Squares minimization.

2.2.3 Powder X-ray diffraction (PXRD)

The PXRD patterns were collected on a RigakuSmartLab with a Cu-K α radiation (1.540 \AA). The tube voltage and amperage were set at 20 kV and 35 mA, respectively. Each sample was scanned between 5 and 50° 2 θ with a step size of 0.02°. Before performing the experiments, the instrument was calibrated using a silicon standard.

2.2.4 Fourier transform-infrared spectroscopy (FT-IR)

156 Transmission infrared spectra of all the cocrystals and coformers including HCT were
157 obtained using a Fourier-transform infrared spectrometer (PerkinElmer502). Before
158 measuring the spectra for samples, background scan was performed with pure KBr pellet.
159 Later the samples were pelleted with the help of 2 mg in 15 mg of KBr and 8 scans were
160 collected at 4 cm^{-1} resolutions for each sample. The spectra were measured over the range of
161 $4000 - 400\text{ cm}^{-1}$.

162

163 **Differential scanning calorimetry (DSC)**

164 DSC was conducted on a Mettler-Toledo DSC11 STAR^e instrument. Accurately weighed
165 samples (4–5 mg) were placed in hermetically sealed 40 μL aluminium crucibles and scanned
166 from 50 to 300 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ at a heating rate of 10 $^{\circ}\text{C}/\text{min}$ under a dry nitrogen atmosphere (flow rate
167 60 ml/min). The data was managed by STAR^e software.

168

169 **2.2.5 Thermogravimetric analysis (TGA)**

170 TGA was carried out using a Perkin Elmer, Diamond TG/DTA analyzer, operated under
171 nitrogen atmosphere with a heating rate of 10 $^{\circ}\text{C}/\text{min}$ and in the range of 30-300 $^{\circ}\text{C}$.

172

173 **2.2.6 Solubility studies**

174 The solubility of HCT, HCT-PHEN, HCT-DMAP and HCT-PICA were measured in
175 phosphate buffer, pH 7.4, at 25 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ by using shaking flask method.¹⁹ An excess amount of the
176 drug and cocrystals were added to 20 mL of buffer. The resulting slurry was shaken in a
177 water bath shaker, maintained at 25 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ for 48 h. Aliquots (0.5 mL) of the slurry were
178 withdrawn at different time intervals for a period of 48 h to confirm that the solution has
179 achieved equilibrium. The samples were assayed after suitable dilution for drug content by
180 HPLC at 227 nm. The amount of drug dissolved in each time interval was calculated using
181 the standard curve (linearity range: 2-32 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$) which was prepared in phosphate buffer (pH
182 7.4). The experiment was performed in triplicate and values were expressed as mean \pm
183 standard deviation.

184

185 **2.2.7 High performance liquid chromatography (HPLC)**

186 Solution concentration of HCT and its cocrystals were analyzed by HPLC (Knauer) equipped
187 with a UV/vis detector. A C18 Nova-Pak column 5 μm , $4.6 \times 250\text{ mm}$ (Waters, USA) at
188 ambient temperature with a flow rate of 1 mL/min was used to separate HCT, PHEN, DMAP
189 and PICA. An isocratic method with acetonitrile and phosphate buffer (pH=2.8) mixed in a

190 ratio of 40:60 (v/v), respectively, was optimized for quantitative determination of
191 hydrochlorothiazide (retention time 3.7 min) at an optimum wavelength of 227 nm. Sample
192 injection volume was 20 μ L. Eurochrom software was used to collect and process the data.

193 3. Results and discussion

194 Three new cocrystals of HCT with heteroaromatic coformers were synthesized by the
195 slow evaporative crystallization method (see also experimental section). Crystal
196 structure analysis was performed to rationalize the hydrogen bonding preferences of
197 acceptors and donors in presence of other competing functional groups.
198 Crystallographic data is listed in the Table S2, ESI.

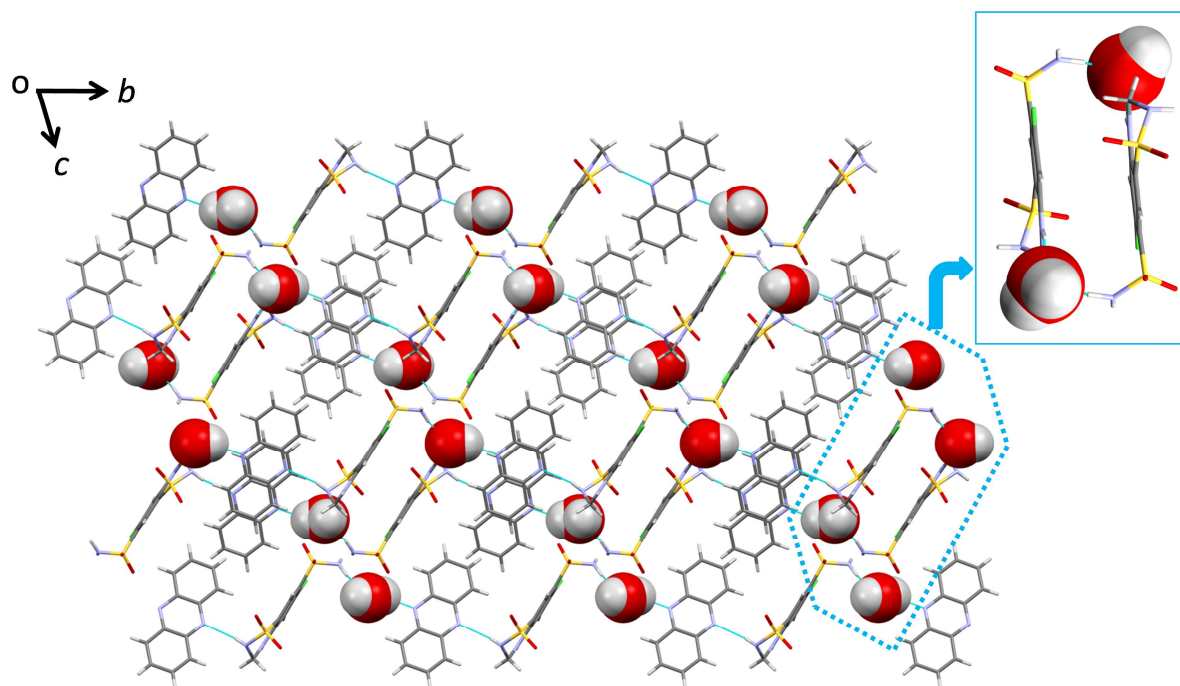
199 From the available literature on HCT cocrystals, it was found that HCT prefer to bind
200 with a hetero atom in the coformer. Hence, strategically we chose only heteroaromatic
201 compounds as coformers for this study. Most common synthons found in the reported
202 HCT cocrystals are N–H \cdots O and N–H \cdots N by the primary and secondary sulfonamide
203 groups of HCT with coformers. However, it was observed (in reported and present
204 cocrystals as well) that the typical synthons, sulfonamide dimer and sulfonamide
205 catemer that are present in polymorphs of HCT, were disrupted by the coformers to
206 form a stable cocrystal. A common synthon in all three new cocrystals has been found
207 as N–H \cdots N between the primary sulfonamide N-H and pyridine N. Amongst the three
208 studied compounds, only PHEN appeared as a cocrystal hydrate of HCT, which is
209 similar to the isonicotinamide, which also exists as a cocrystal hydrate with HCT.³⁴
210 The detailed crystal structure analyses for all the cocrystals are discussed below and
211 experimental details are provided in the ESI.

212

213 3.1 Hydrochlorothiazide:Phenazine:H₂O (1:1:1), (HCT-PHEN.H₂O)

214 The crystal structure of HCT-PHEN.H₂O revealed that it is a monohydrate of the 1:1
215 cocrystal of HCT and PHEN. The cocrystal crystallized in monoclinic $P2_1/n$ space
216 group with one molecules of each HCT, PHEN and H₂O in the asymmetric unit (Fig.
217 S1, ESI). In the crystal packing, two molecules of each HCT and H₂O formed a
218 tetrameric motif as shown in Fig. 1. The alternative tetrameric motifs were connected
219 by PHEN molecules *via* strong N–H \cdots N ($d/\text{\AA}$, θ° ; 0.77 \AA , 171 $^\circ$) and moderately
220 strong O–H \cdots N (0.92 \AA , 146 $^\circ$) interactions to form 1D sheets along *b*-axis. The
221 interlinked PHEN molecules in the 1D tape are stacked by π - π interactions

222 perpendicular to HCT molecular plane. The overall crystal packing from the top view
223 of a -axis is shown in Fig. 1.

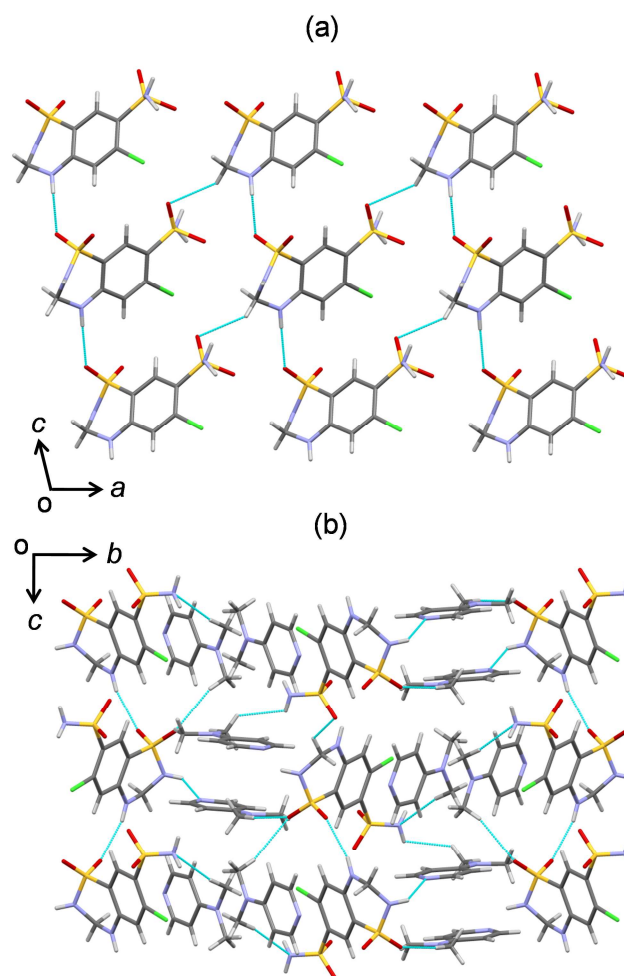


224
225 **Fig. 1.** HCT-PHEN.H₂O crystal packing view along a -axis, where the water molecule
226 incorporated in the crystal structure is represented with a space fill model. The inset
227 highlights the tetrameric motif in the crystal packing.

228

229 3.2 Hydrochlorothiazide:4-Dimethylaminopyridine (1:2), (HCT-DMAP)

230 The cocrystal, HCT-DMAP crystallizes in the monoclinic $P2_1/c$ space group with one
231 molecule of HCT and two molecules of DMAP in the asymmetric unit (Fig. S2, ESI).
232 The HCT molecules form 2D sheets *via* N–H \cdots O (0.86 Å, 166°) interactions along c -
233 axis and C–H \cdots O (2.714 Å, 121°) interactions along a -axis (Fig. 2a). In the third
234 dimension the DMAP molecules are sandwiched between the HCT 2D-sheets (Fig.
235 2b).



236

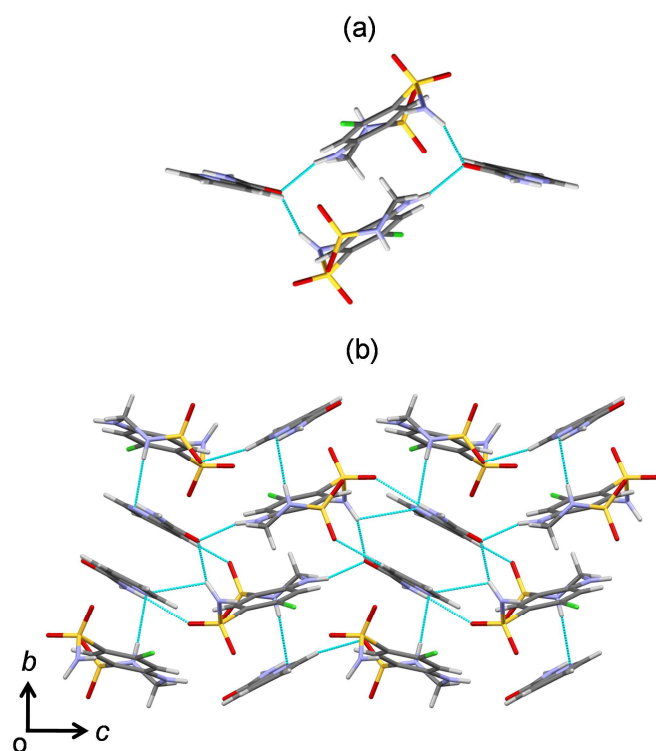
237 **Fig. 2.** Crystal packing of HCT-DMAP where (a) 2d sheet in *ac* plane and (b) crystal
238 packing, when viewed down *a*-axis.

239

240 3.3 Hydrochlorothiazide:Picolinamide (1:1), (HCT-PICA)

241 The PICA is a positional isomer of nicotinamide (NIC) and isonicotinamide (INIC).
242 NIC and INIC were reported as a cocrystal and cocrystal monohydrate of HCT,
243 respectively.^{25a} Here the cocrystal HCT with PICA crystallizes in the monoclinic
244 $P2_1/n$ space group with one molecule of each HCT and PICA in the asymmetric unit
245 (Fig. S3, ESI). Though the three coformers NIC, INIC, and PICA are isomers, they
246 form cocrystals with HCT in three different crystal systems as orthorhombic, triclinic
247 and monoclinic respectively. This means that the position of heteroatom of the
248 coformer is deciding the crystal system by forming different types of intermolecular
249 interactions with HCT.

250 In the crystal structure of HCT–NIC co-crystal, NIC molecules form 1D chains
 251 through amide···pyridine (N–H···N) synthons and HCT molecules are sandwiched
 252 between these alternate 1D chains. But, the INIC molecules in the crystal structure of
 253 HCT–INIC–H₂O form amide-amide supramolecular homosynthons and are linked to
 254 HCT molecules by water molecules. Here, the water molecules act as both H-bond
 255 donor (to pyridyl moieties of INIC) and acceptor (to sulfonamide groups of HCT). The
 256 crystal packing in the present case HCT-PICA is completely different compared to
 257 above two. Here, a two molecules of each HCT and PICA form a tetrameric motif
 258 (Fig. 3a) *via* N–H···O (0.86 Å, 160°; 0.96 Å, 150°) interactions. In the overall crystal
 259 packing the tetramers were propagated along the *b* and *c*-axes directions *via* N–H···N
 260 and N–H···O interactions, respectively (Fig. 3b).



261

262 **Fig. 3.** Crystal packing diagram of HCT-PICA. (a) Tetrameric motif in the crystal packing
 263 formed by two molecules of HCT and two molecules of PICA. (b) Crystal packing, when
 264 viewed down *a*-axis.

265 3.4 Powder X-ray diffraction (PXRD)

266 PXRD is a powerful tool for preliminary characterization of new solid forms as well as
 267 cocrystals.³⁵ In each case freshly prepared powder samples were used for the data
 268 collection. The PXRD patterns for all the cocrystals were plotted in comparison with

269 respective individual cofomers and simulated PXRD pattern (Fig. S4, ESI). The
270 absence of characteristic peaks of starting compounds and the close superimposition of
271 the experimental and simulated patterns confirm the cocrystal formation.

272

273 **3.5 FT-IR analysis**

274 The cocrystals were further characterized by FT-IR spectroscopy, which is a cogent
275 tool to make sure the cocrystal formation. The comparison of the stretching frequency
276 shifts as shown in Fig. S6, ESI corroborated the formation of hydrogen bonds between
277 the functional groups in cocrystals. At first instance, the SO₂ asymmetric region
278 (1320–1380 cm⁻¹) was found to be very broad in the FT-IR spectra of HCT than when
279 compared to the same region in the spectra of cocrystals. Furthermore, The NH and
280 NH₂ stretching frequencies in free HCT observed at 3267 and 3361 cm⁻¹ respectively.
281 But, in the cocrystals the NH frequency merged with NH₂ and appeared as a broad
282 peak compared to free HCT.

283

284 **3.6 Thermal analysis**

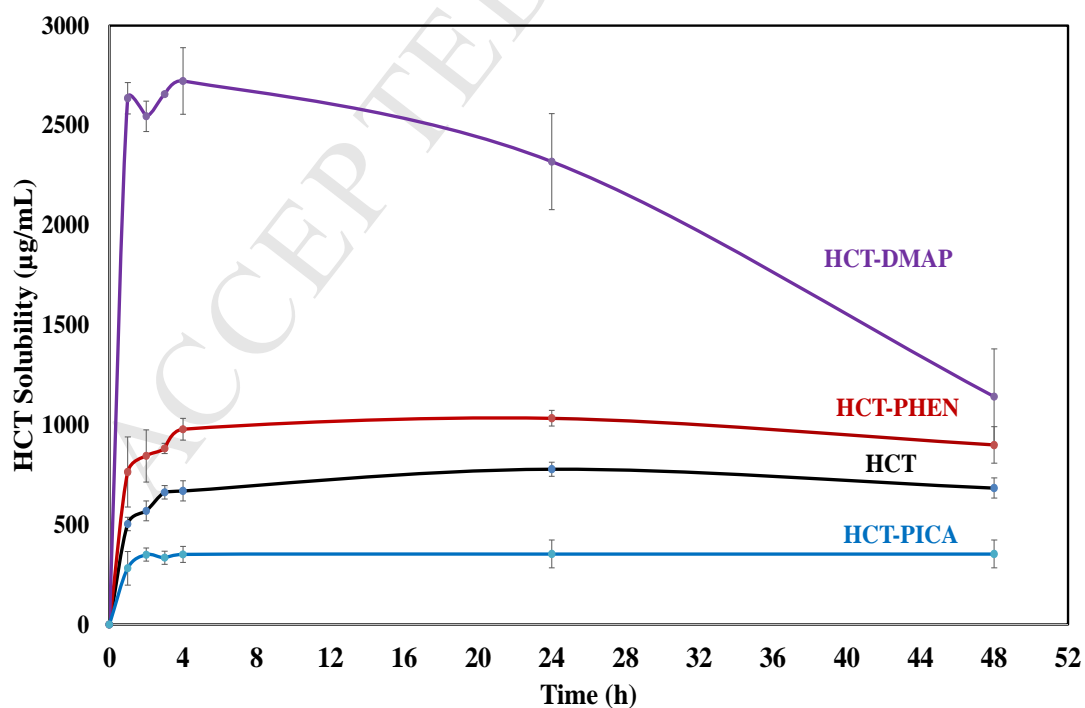
285 Thermal behavior of all the cocrystals was investigated by differential scanning
286 calorimetry (DSC) and thermogravimetric analysis (TGA). DSC results have revealed
287 that the melting point of all cocrystals except for the monohydrate cocrystal (HCT-
288 PHEN) were distinct from HCT (267-269 °C) and individual cofomers. In the case of
289 HCT-PHEN, loss of crystalline water leads to dissociation of cocrystal. This confirms
290 the formation of new crystalline phase. The melting point of HCT-DMAP and HCT-
291 PICA cocrystals were observed as 138 °C, and 159 °C, respectively (Fig. S5, ESI).

292 In the TGA curve of HCT-PHEN, there was a weight loss of 4.19 % in the temperature
293 range of 100-145 °C which corresponds to loss of one water molecule. This value is in
294 accordance with the theoretical mass loss of 3.7 % for desolvation of one mole of
295 water from the crystal lattice of HCT-PHEN. Next, there was a weight loss of 34.43 %
296 in the temperature range of 147-197 °C. This can be attributed to the
297 degradation/sublimation of one mole of phenazine (theoretical weight loss 36.36%).
298 This event is followed phase transition and melting of hydrochlorothiazide. Similarly,
299 for all other HCT cocrystals, TGA profiles corroborated well with the DSC results and
300 their data is presented in the ESI (Fig. S5).

301

3.7 Solubility Studies

HCT is a poorly soluble drug (0.7 g/L)¹. Poor aqueous solubility not only limits its dissolution and absorption but also challenges its pharmaceutical development. Cocrystallization was employed to modify the solubility of HCT. The solubility profile of hydrochlorothiazide and its cocrystals are illustrated in Fig. 4. It was observed that cocrystallization markedly increase the solubility of HCT. It was found that the solubility of HCT and its cocrystals after four hours follows the rank order: HCT-DMAP (4 fold) > HCT-PHEN (1.4 fold) > HCT > HCT-PICA. The solubility studies conducted by Desiraju *et al.* (2015) reported improved solubility of HCT-*para*-aminobenzoic acid (2.4 times), HCT-resorcinol (1.3 times), HCT-nicotinamide (1.2 times) as compared to HCT.¹⁹ Interestingly, our results suggest that HCT-DMAP has exhibited the highest transient solubility among the HCT cocrystals reported thus far. The parachute nature of the HCT-DMAP cocrystal extended till 48 hours. On the other hand, HCT-PICA showed poor aqueous solubility as compared to HCT, which is in accordance with a literature finding of a couple of other HCT cocrystals.¹⁹ Further, it reveals a selection of suitable coformer can lead to a potential modulation in the solubility of HCT in either direction.



320

321 **Fig. 4.** Solubility profile of hydrochlorothiazide and its cocrystals (Avg. value \pm SD (n=3)).

322 4. Conclusions

323 In this study, cocrystallization was explored to address the solubility issues of
324 hydrochlorothiazide. The strategy to exploit the preferable binding nature of HCT with
325 the hetero atom in the coformer has been demonstrated successfully by obtaining three
326 new solid forms. The formation of cocrystals was confirmed by thermal, FT-IR,
327 PXRD, and single crystal X-ray diffraction studies. The melting points of all the three
328 cocrystals were lower than API but higher than the corresponding coformer. The
329 solubility of the drug and cocrystal after four hours follows the order HCT-DMAP (4
330 fold) > HCT-PHEN (1.4 fold) > HCT > HCT-PICA. HCT-DMAP solubility results
331 suggest that a selection of an appropriate coformer would have a great potential to
332 increase the solubility of HCT. Thus, cocrystallization approach proved to be a
333 promising alternative in positively modifying the solubility of hydrochlorothiazide.

334

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342

343 **Note:** Electronic Supplementary Information (ESI) available: ORTEP representations,
344 PXRD patterns of all the cocrystals, DSC and TGA curves, table containing
345 crystallographic information, ideal solubility calculations.

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Highlights

- 1) Three new cocrystals of HCT with water soluble cofomers were successfully prepared by solution crystallization method.
- 2) Transient Solubility of HCT was increased by 4 fold in case of HCT-DMAP cocrystal.
- 3) Selection of cofomer is vital, otherwise reduced solubility can be observed as in the case of HCT-PICA.