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# <sup>1</sup> Crystallization at Solvent Interfaces Enables Access to a Variety of <sup>2</sup> Cocrystal Polymorphs and Hydrates

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7 **(3)** Supporting Information

ABSTRACT: A crystal growth technique, interfacial cocrystalli-8 zation, is demonstrated to be a simple and effective method for 9 preparing multicomponent crystal forms. The technique is based 10 on the generation of a liquid-liquid interface between two 11 immiscible solutions of cocrystal-forming compounds, and its 12 utility is demonstrated through the preparation of polymorphs 13 and hydrates of caffeine cocrystals, involving three different 14 hydroxy-2-naphthoic acids, including the formation of some with 15 unexpected compositions. 16

### 17 INTRODUCTION

<sup>18</sup> Multicomponent crystals are widely utilized for crystal <sup>19</sup> engineering purposes in a variety of settings, including the <sup>20</sup> pharmaceutical industry.<sup>1</sup> Cocrystals, which consist of at least <sup>21</sup> two different types of neutral molecules (coformers) held <sup>22</sup> together by noncovalent interactions (such as hydrogen <sup>23</sup> bonds), play an increasingly important role in drug develop-<sup>24</sup> ment owing to their capacity to enhance relevant chemical and <sup>25</sup> physical properties of drug molecules in the solid state<sup>2</sup> (e.g., <sup>26</sup> chemical stability,<sup>3</sup> hygroscopicity,<sup>4</sup> tabletability,<sup>5</sup> or taste<sup>6</sup>). <sup>27</sup> The mounting number of patents and new FDA-approved <sup>28</sup> medicines<sup>7</sup> based on pharmaceutical cocrystals also attest to <sup>29</sup> their potential and usefulness. Cocrystals are, however, prone to <sup>30</sup> polymorphism like all other types of molecular crystals,<sup>8,9</sup> and <sup>31</sup> as a result it is essential to screen thoroughly for polymorphic <sup>30</sup> forms of cocrystals during product development.<sup>10</sup>

To date, various techniques have been developed for the the preparation of cocrystals on a laboratory scale,<sup>11–16</sup> with the smajority being solvent based (e.g., solvent evaporation and solvent cooling<sup>17,18</sup>). Solvent-based methods avoid partial degradation of drug molecules during cocrystallization, which may occur in the use of thermal methods such as occrystallization from the melt.<sup>19</sup> A drawback of solution growth, however, is the high risk of precipitating the pure components because of their potentially significant solubility differences,<sup>20</sup> or the undesired formation of solvates.<sup>21</sup> To avoid this issue, methods that employ less or even no liquid solvent (such as grinding,<sup>22</sup> liquid-assisted<sup>11</sup> and polymer-assisted s grinding,<sup>23</sup> and slurrying<sup>24</sup>) have been devised and applied.

46 We applied the approach of crystallization at solvent 47 interfaces to the cocrystallization of phenazine and mesaconic 48 acid in an earlier study, resulting in the generation of a novel 49 monohydrate cocrystal form.<sup>20</sup> Here we report the results of a 50 systematic study that aimed to explore how precipitation at the



boundary between two immiscible solutions containing the 51 coformer molecules, a technique referred to as interfacial 52 cocrystallization (IC), is a very effective screening method 53 (Scheme 1). 54 s1

Recognizing the numerous studies that report the use of 55 solvent interfaces to precipitate or crystallize various organic 56 and inorganic species, 25-29 this study focuses on the 57 preparation of pharmaceutical cocrystals at solvent interfaces 58 and highlights in particular the large number of experimental 59 variations that are possible.

Using caffeine (caf) and hydroxy-2-naphthoic acids (xH2Ns) 61 as model compounds, we show that IC enables fast access to a 62 variety of polymorphs, hydrates of pharmaceutical cocrystals, as 63 well as cocrystal forms with atypical stoichiometric ratios. We 64 further demonstrate how the chemical nature of the solvents, 65 solution concentrations, various cocrystallization rates, and the 66 surrounding ambient temperatures affect the crystallization 67 outcome. We also highlight several key advantages of the IC 68 approach, namely, the ability to screen multiple potential 69 coformers simultaneously in a single experiment by using 70 solutions containing several possible coformers, as well as the 71 ability to access a broad variety of crystal forms without the 72 knowledge of solubility phase diagrams. 73

The studied compounds have previously been investigated in 74 the context of crystal engineering and pharmaceutical 75 cocrystals;  $^{30-34}$  caf is a widely known central nervous system 76 stimulant, while xH2Ns are pharmaceutically active ingredients 77 known to exhibit higher activity than salicylate in the treatment 78 of stress-mediated diseases.<sup>35</sup> The three hydroxy-2-naphthoic 79 acids, namely, 1-hydroxy-2-naphthoic acid (1H2N), 3-hydroxy- 80

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Scheme 1. Representation of an Interfacial Cocrystallization Experiment Whereby Two Saturated Solutions of Coformers in Immiscible Solvents Are Prepared Separately and Then Combined (Providing an Interface at Which Cocrystallization Can Occur) (Top); and Molecular Structures of caf, 1H2N, 3H2N, and 6H2N (Bottom)



81 2-naphthoic acid (**3H2N**), and 6-hydroxy-2-naphthoic acid 82 (**6H2N**), differ significantly in the geometry of their potential 83 hydrogen-bonding interactions (Scheme 1), and therefore in 84 their solubility and cocrystallization performance.

The caf:xH2N cocrystals were initially investigated using 85 86 more traditional solution-based methods by Bučar et al.,<sup>30</sup> who 87 identified and structurally characterized one cocrystal form for 88 each system, each having a 1:1 stoichiometry (Cambridge 89 Structural Database (CSD) reference codes: KIGKIV, 90 KIGKOB, KIGKUH; henceforth referred to for each case as 91 form I).<sup>30</sup> In the study reported here, we pursued the interfacial 92 cocrystallizations of caf with the same three xH2Ns. The 93 reactions involved the layering of two solutions: one being a 94 saturated solution of caffeine in water (a reasonably good 95 solvent for caf), and the second being a nearly saturated 96 solution of xH2N in an organic solvent that is immiscible with 97 water (see SI) and in which the solubility of the acid is high, 98 while the solubility of caf is low (e.g., noncyclic ethers, aliphatic 99 alcohols, and acetic acid esters). Whereas there is no driving 100 force for crystallization to occur because of the low amount of 101 both coformers simultaneously present in either phase, layering 102 the two solutions allows a cocrystal to precipitate at the 103 interface (Scheme 1) owing to its lower free energy. A coformer 104 concentration gradient at the interface then facilitates slow 105 incorporation of coformer molecules from both sides of the 106 interface to the growing cocrystal. In almost every example 107 reported below, crystals suitable for single crystal X-ray studies 108 were obtained.

#### 109 **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

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**110 1. Effects of Solvent Choice on Cocrystal Composition 111 and Polymorphic Form.** *1.1. caf:6H2N Cocrystal.* Initial **112 studies focusing on the caf:6H2N system yielded a range of 113 cocrystals of various stoichiometries, as well as new polymorphs 114 and hydrates (Table 1), thus demonstrating the high efficacy of 115 IC in cocrystal screening. Specifically, we were able to 116 reproduce the 1:1 (caf)·(6H2N) cocrystal, initially reported** 

 Table 1. Solvents Used in Combination with Water to

 Crystallize Various caf:xH2N Cocrystal Forms

TION		.1.6 11
XH2N	organic solvent	cocrystal form obtained
6H2N	ButOAC	1:1, form I
	EtOAc	1:1, form <b>II</b>
	DIPE <sup>a</sup>	1:1, form III
	DIPE/xylene <sup>a</sup>	1:1, form <b>IV</b>
	ButOAC	1:1, monohydrate
	DIPE	2:1
	2-butanone <sup>a</sup>	2:3, monohydrate
1H2N	EtOAC	1:1, form I
	DIPE	1:1, form <b>II</b>
3H2N	EtOAC	1:1, form <b>I</b>
	DIPE	1:1, form <b>II</b>
<sup><i>a</i></sup> Supersaturated	solution.	

by Bučar et al. (form I; space group  $P\overline{I}, Z' = 1$ ) (Figure 1a), but 117 fl we also obtained an additional new polymorph of this cocrystal, 118 namely, form II (see SI document). Form II crystallizes in 119 space group  $P2_1/c$  and its structure is based on discrete 2:2 120 supramolecular caf:6H2N assemblies, wherein the 6H2N 121 molecules form dimers through O–H…O hydrogen bonds 122 via an  $R_2^2(8)$  synthon. The caf molecules are disordered over 123 two positions and are bound to the hydroxyl group of 6H2N 124 through either an O–H…O hydrogen or an O–H…N 125 hydrogen bond via a D(2) synthon (Figure 1b). 126

Further IC experiments led to the discovery of a third 127 anhydrous cocrystal form, namely, the 2:1  $(caf)_2 \cdot (6H2N)$  128 cocrystal (see SI). The crystal structure of this material is based 129 on discrete three-component caf:6H2N assemblies. In the 130 assembly, one caf molecule is bound to 6H2N through an O- 131 H…N hydrogen bond via an  $R_2^2(7)$  synthon, while the second 132 caf molecule is disordered over two positions and bound to 133 naphthoic acid through an O-H…N or O-H…O hydrogen 134 bond (depending on the caf orientation) via a D(2) synthon 135 (Figure 1d).

Notably, two hydrated caf:6H2N cocrystal forms were 137 discovered: the 1:1:1 (caf)  $(6H2N) \cdot (H_2O)$  and the 2:3:1 138  $(caf)_{2} \cdot (6H2N)_{3} \cdot (H_{2}O)$  cocrystal monohydrate.<sup>36</sup> The crystal 139 structure of the  $(caf) \cdot (6H2N) \cdot (H_2O)$  cocrystal monohydrate is 140 based on two-dimensional flat hydrogen-bonded layers. Within 141 the layers, caf and disordered 6H2N molecules are connected 142 by O–H…N hydrogen bonds via  $R_2^2(7)$  synthons. The 143 caf:6H2N molecular pairs are further linked through water 144 molecules by O-H…O hydrogen bonds through D(2) 145 synthons (Figure 1e). Structural analyses of the  $(caf)_2$  · 146  $(6H2N)_3$  (H<sub>2</sub>O) monohydrate revealed that its structure is 147 based on interpenetrated three-dimensional caf:6H2N:H2O 148 assemblies. In these structures, caf and 6H2N are linked into 149 molecular chains that are sustained by O-H…N and O-H…O 150 hydrogen bonds via  $R_2^2(7)$  and D(2) synthons. The one- 151 dimensional structure is extended into three dimensions by a 152 disordered pair of 6H2N:H<sub>2</sub>O molecules (Figure 1f). 153

It should be noted that it was not possible to obtain 154 reproducibly phase-pure samples of the previously reported 155 anhydrous 1:1 cocrystal (form I) using nearly saturated 156 solutions of the coformers. This form was initially only 157 observed 3 days after harvesting all  $(caf) \cdot (6H2N) \cdot (H_2O)$  158 crystals at the solvent interface, when a second crop of large 159 single crystals of form I emerged.

The mechanisms leading to the formation of the large variety 161 of caf:6H2N cocrystal forms are not understood at this time.<sup>37</sup> 162



Figure 1. Supramolecular caf:6H2N assemblies in the crystal structures of (a) anhydrous (caf)·(6H2N), form I; (b) anhydrous (caf)·(6H2N), form II; (c) anhydrous (caf)·(6H2N), form III; (d) anhydrous (caf)·(6H2N); (e) (caf)·(6H2N)·(H<sub>2</sub>O) monohydrate; (f) (caf)<sub>2</sub>·(6H2N)<sub>3</sub>·(H<sub>2</sub>O) monohydrate. Minor occupation sites (up to 50%) of disordered molecules are shown using the "wireframe" display style. Hydrogen atoms are omitted to enhance clarity.

<sup>163</sup> We do, however, speculate that access to the crystal form with a <sup>164</sup> different atypical stoichiometry may be attributed to solubility <sup>165</sup> effects. In particular, we believe that a change from a 2:1 to 1:1 <sup>166</sup> coformer ratio is likely to be related to the higher solubility of <sup>167</sup> **6H2N** in butyl acetate compared to diisopropyl ether, leading <sup>168</sup> to a higher concentration of **6H2N** at the interface.

1.2. caf:1H2N and caf:3H2N Cocrystals. The substantial 169 170 variety of discovered caf:6H2N cocrystal forms prompted us to 171 extend our studies to the caf:1H2N and caf:3H2N cocrystal 172 systems. A more limited set of experiments soon led not only to 173 the preparation of the previously known cocrystal phases 174 (Figure 2a,b), but also to the discovery of a new polymorph of 175 (caf)·(1H2N) and (caf)·(3H2N), referred to as form II (Table 176 1 and SI). Form II of  $(caf) \cdot (1H2N)$  crystallizes in space group  $_{177}$  P2<sub>1</sub>/n with three caf:1H2N pairs in the asymmetric unit (Z' = 178 3). Each of the pairs is held together by O-H…N hydrogen 179 bonds through  $R_2^2(7)$  synthons, whereby the **1H2N** hydroxyl 180 groups are engaged in intramolecular O-H…O hydrogen 181 bonds by a S(6) synthon (Figure 2a). Form II of (caf)  $\cdot$  (3H2N) 182 crystallizes in space group  $P2_1/n$  with one molecule of caf and **3H2N** in the asymmetric unit (Z' = 1). The cocrystal 183 components are also held together by O-H…N and O-H… 184 <sub>185</sub> O hydrogen bonds through  $R_2^2(7)$  and S(6) synthons (Figure 186 2b).

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187 It was also established that, in the cases of the **caf:1H2N** and 188 **caf:3H2N** cocrystal systems, a change in polymorphic form of 189 the product was achieved by varying the interface conditions, as 190 shown in Table 1.

<sup>191</sup> Specifically, the use of more polar solvents favored in both <sup>192</sup> cases the crystallization of form **I**. That solvent properties can <sup>193</sup> influence the polymorphic outcome of IC processes is not <sup>194</sup> unexpected,<sup>9</sup> as it mirrors what has been widely reported for <sup>195</sup> conventional solution crystallizations. With specific regard to <sup>196</sup> cocrystal polymorphism, however, it should be noted that <sup>197</sup> problems associated with the precipitation of individual <sup>198</sup> coformers during conventional solution crystallization experi-<sup>199</sup> ments<sup>20</sup> are minimized.



Figure 2. (a) Crystallographically independent caf:1H2N assemblies in the (caf)·(1H2N) cocrystal forms I and II. (b) Supramolecular caf:3H2N assembly found in the crystal structures of (caf)·(3H2N) forms I and II (highlighted in the rounded rectangle) and crystal packing diagrams of (caf)·(3H2N) forms I and II. Hydrogen atoms are omitted to enhance clarity.

**2. Effects of Solution Concentrations on Polymorphic** 200 **Outcome for the caf:6H2N Cocrystal.** In an attempt to 201 facilitate the growth of single crystals during the IC 202 experiments, we resorted to the layering of supersaturated 203 solutions of the cocrystal components. Such an approach has 204 not only led to the formation of crystals suitable for single 205 crystal X-ray diffraction studies, but also enabled, to our 206 207 surprise, the appearance of new polymorphs. In particular, two 208 new polymorphs of the **caf:6H2N** cocrystal were discovered, 209 namely, forms **III** and **IV** (see SI). These two forms, however, 210 appeared only occasionally and single crystals suitable for 211 structural analyses could be produced only in the case of form 212 **III**.<sup>38</sup>

213 Crystallographic analyses revealed that form III crystallizes in 214 space group  $P2_1/c$  with three molecules of both caf and 6H2N 215 in the asymmetric unit (Z' = 3). The crystal structure is based 216 on two crystallographically independent types of 2:2 caf:6H2N 217 assemblies similar to those seen in forms I and II. One is centrosymmetric with disordered 6H2N and ordered caf 218 219 molecules that are held together by O-H…O hydrogen 220 bonds through  $R_2^2(8)$  and D(2) synthons. The second assembly is noncentrosymmetric and also based on disordered 221 222 caf and ordered 6H2N molecules, which are sustained by the same types of hydrogen bonds and synthons as those in the first 223 assembly type (Figure 1c). 224

It was also observed that the use of supersaturated solutions constant of caf and 6H2N (using polar solvents) regularely leads to the crystallization of form I of the caf:6H2N cocrystal, which could not be reliably achieved with the use of nearly saturated solutions (see Table 1 and SI).

**3. Effects of Temperature on Cocrystallization 3. Effects of Temperature on Cocrystallization 3. Kinetics and Polymorphic form.** Saturated solutions of caf **3. and context and a state of the stat** 

Cable 2. Effects of Temperature on Cocrystal Formation					
xH2N	10 °C	20 °C	40 °C		
1H2N	1:1, form <b>II</b>	1:1, form <b>II</b>	1:1, form I + II		
	10 min	5 min	<1 min		
3H2N	1:1, form <b>II</b>	1:1, form <b>II</b>	1:1, form <b>II</b>		
	15 min	8 min	1 min		
6H2N	2:1	2:1	2:1		
	2 days	1 day	4 h		

In general, the higher the temperature at which interfacial 237 238 cocrystallization is performed, the faster a cocrystal is formed at 239 the interface. For instance, the precipitation of the  $(caf)_2$ . 240 (6H2N) cocrystal can be accelerated from 2 days to 4 h by 241 increasing the temperature from 10 to 40 °C. This increase in cocrystallization rate may result from the increased amount of 242 coformer dissolved in solutions at high temperature and/or 243 244 from increased molecular diffusion rates which facilitate the 245 precipitation process. Accompanying the faster cocrystallization 246 and nucleation processes at higher temperature was a reduction 247 in the particle size of the resulting crystals (see SI Figure S2). Low-temperature interfacial crystallizations were, therefore, 248 249 found to be most appropriate for the growth of large single 250 crystals suitable for structure determination.

Temperature was also observed to have an influence on the polymorphic outcome (Table 2). With the caf:1H2N system, and increasing the crystallization temperature to 40 °C, a mixture of forms I and II was obtained (rather than pure form II, as seen at lower temperatures). We suggest that form II is sof still the form which precipitates at the interface, and the increased temperature merely increases the rate of conversion to the more stable form I.<sup>39</sup> This is certainly the case for the caf:3H2N system where form II precipitates at the interface 259 shortly after layering of the two solutions, but at higher 260 temperature undergoes conversion to form I within hours. 261

**4. Effects of Stirring.** The effect of high-speed stirring (at 262 750 rpm) during interfacial cocrystallization was investigated 263 for the three caf:xH2N cocrystals using magnetic stir bars (see 264 Table 3). This agitation resulted in the formation of an 265 t3

Table 3. Effects of Stirring at Room Temperature	on
Cocrystal Formation	

xH2N	solvent	static conditions	stirred solutions
1H2N	DIPE	1:1, form <b>II</b>	1:1, form <b>II</b>
3H2N	DIPE	1:1, form <b>II</b>	1:1, form I
6H2N	DIPE	2:1	1:1, form <b>I</b>

emulsion of the two immiscible solutions wherein small 266 droplets were created and the curvature of the liquid—liquid 267 interface increased. The crystallization rate of each of the 268 cocrystals increased dramatically as a result. Stirring also led to 269 a change in the polymorphic form which was obtained for the 270 caf:3H2N cocrystal, with form I rather than form II being 271 isolated, and a change in the stoichiometry of the caf:6H2N 272 cocrystal form 1:1 to 2:1. The origins of these polymorphic and 273 stoichiometric variations, which could be based on the 274 increased curvature of the interface, or due to the shear 275 introduced to the system by stirring, is still under investigation. 276

**5. Competitive Coformer Studies.** The potential 277 application of IC to screening for cocrystal formation between 278 a compound of interest and multiple putative coformer 279 molecules in a simultaneous manner was investigated by 280 layering a saturated aqueous solution of caffeine and a solution 281 of DIPE saturated with both **1H2N** and phenazine. Phenazine, 282 in contrast to **1H2N**, does not possess a carboxylic acid group 283 and was, therefore, not expected to form a cocrystal with 284 caffeine. After combining the two solutions, the known 285 **caf:1H2N** cocrystal precipitated at the interface. Phenazine 286 did not crystallize either as a pure phase or as a cocrystal with 287 caffeine, thus demonstrating that cocrystallization of **caf** with a 288 coformer at a solvent interface is not inhibited by the presence 289 of a molecule which does not form a cocrystal. 290

To investigate a situation where competition between 291 coformer molecules is possible during interfacial cocrystalliza-292 tion a saturated solution of caffeine in water was combined with 293 a solution of DIPE saturated with both **1H2N** and **3H2N** (the 294 overall molar ratio of **caf:1H2N:3H2N** was approximately 295 1:3:3). PXRD indicated that the resulting precipitate at the 296 solvent interface contained a mixture of (**caf**)·(**1H2N**) form **II** 297 and (**caf**)·(**3H2N**) form **II** (see Figure S1 in SI). 298

## SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK

It has been demonstrated that IC is a tunable and efficient 300 technique to produce a range of multicomponent crystal forms. 301 For the three **caf:xH2N** cocrystals investigated in this study, IC 302 yielded at least one new cocrystal form for each system. 303 Furthermore, with appropriate control of temperature, solution 304 concentrations, solvent selection, and the cocrystallization rate, 305 it was possible to grow single crystals at the interface for all 306 three systems. 307

Interfacial cocrystallization can be applied to screen quickly 308 and simultaneously for cocrystal formation between a drug 309 molecule and several potential coformer molecules in one 310 crystallization vessel. We have also demonstrated that a 311

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312 cocrystal will readily form at the interface of two immiscible 313 solvents, despite the direct interactions and competition of 314 coformers within the organic solution. The great variety of 315 identified **caf:xH2N** cocrystal forms obtained, as well as its 316 convenience, establishes the merit of this crystallization method 317 in the context of cocrystal screening and materials discovery.

# 318 **ASSOCIATED CONTENT**

#### 319 **Supporting Information**

320 The Supporting Information is available free of charge on the 321 ACS Publications website at DOI: 10.1021/acs.cgd.8b00114.

- 322 Specifics concerning the synthesis of the crystal forms 323 and their crystallographic and microscopic analysis
- 324 (PDF)

## 325 Accession Codes

326 CCDC 1053238 and 1583501–1583507 contain the supple-327 mentary crystallographic data for this paper. These data can be 328 obtained free of charge via www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data\_request/ 329 cif, or by emailing data\_request@ccdc.cam.ac.uk, or by 330 contacting The Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre, 12 331 Union Road, Cambridge CB2 1EZ, UK; fax: +44 1223 336033.

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#### 348 **ABBREVIATIONS**

349 EtOAc, ethyl acetate; BuOAc, *n*-butyl acetate; DIPE, 350 diisopropyl ether

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