

Quaternary Structure

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What is Quaternary Structure?

- The arrangement of folded protein subunits in protein complexes.
- Quaternary structure is flexible, and can be measured by solvent-accessible surface area ([Marsh & Teichmann, 2014](#)).

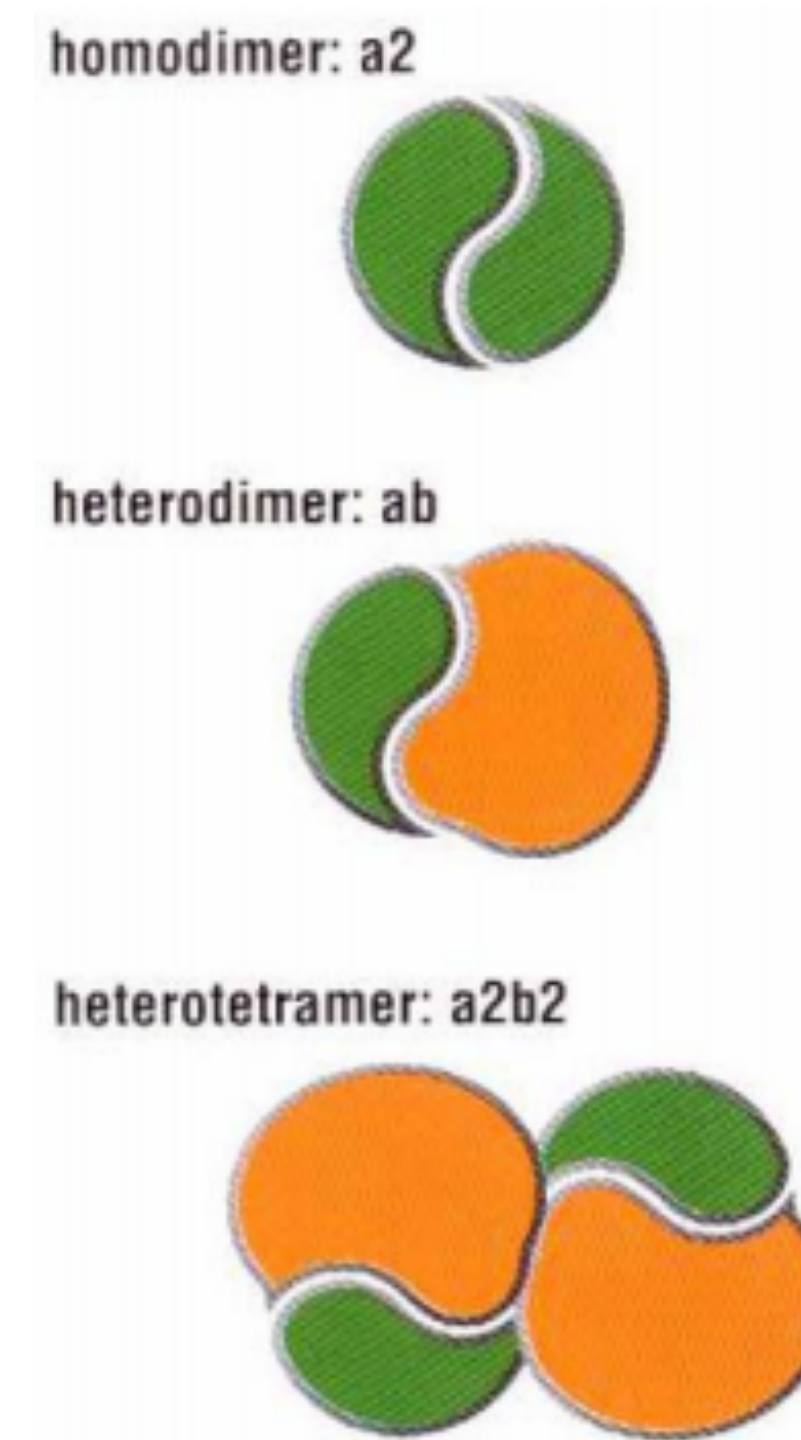


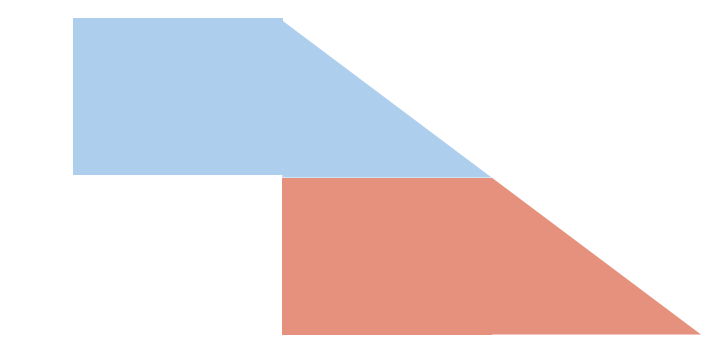
Figure 2: These are examples of types of polymers and how they are named.

Dimerization

- The process of combining two protein subunits
- Homodimers involve two identical monomers and Heterodimers involve two different monomers
- Homodimers can be classified as Isologous and Heterologous Structures



Isologous Structure



Heterologous Structure

Advantages

- By closely positioning subunits against each other, intermolecular forces including hydrogen bonding can hold the complex together.
- The more compact structure allows more stable molecules and this also leads to a lower surface area to volume ratio.

Symmetry

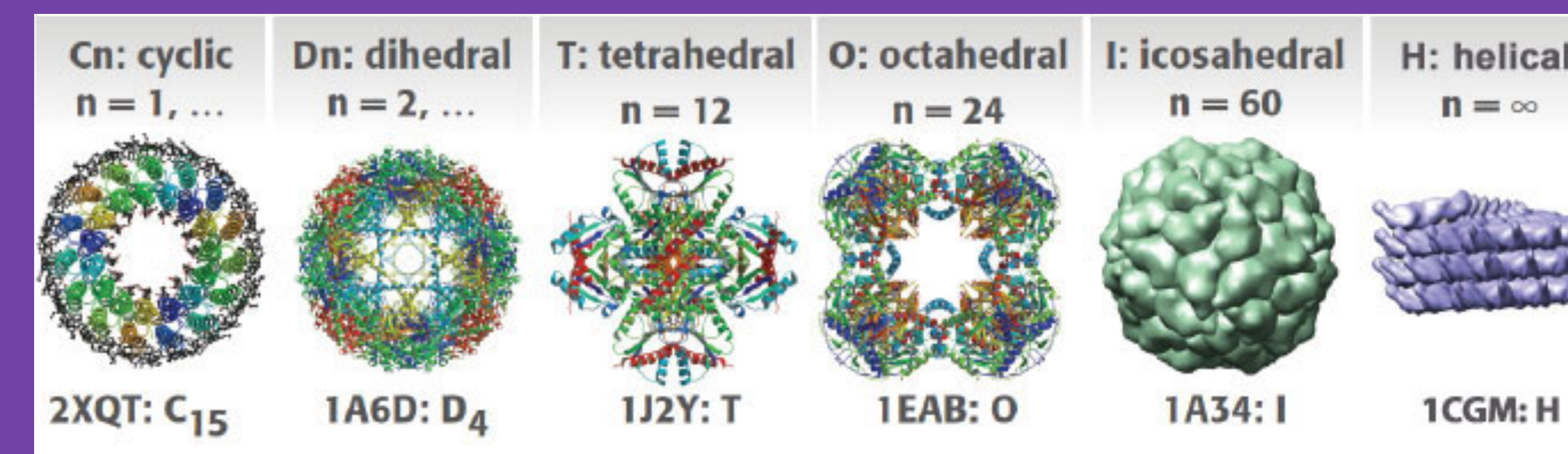


Figure 3: Types of symmetry possible with

- There are several different types of symmetry in terms of geometric shapes
- SymD and CE-Symm programs identify symmetry in protein complexes based on residues and protein geometry (Balaji, 2015).

Bibliography

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Marsh JA, Teichmann SA (2014) Protein Flexibility Facilitates Quaternary Structure Assembly and Evolution. *PLoS Biol* 12(5): e1001870. doi: 10.1371/journal.pbio.1001870

Protein Symmetry View http://www.rcsb.org/pdb/help/viewers/jmol_symmetry_view.html

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