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Ferritin iron core, Actinide uptake by transferrin and ferritin metalloproteins: two EXAFS studies

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► To cite this version:

C. Barbot, Christophe den Auwer, Guy G. Ouvrard, Isabelle Llorens, Philippe Moisy, et al.. Ferritin iron core, Actinide uptake by transferrin and ferritin metalloproteins: two EXAFS studies. AEC-CPCM, Apr 2008, Marseille, France. hal-02535591

HAL Id: hal-02535591

<https://hal.science/hal-02535591v1>

Submitted on 10 Apr 2020

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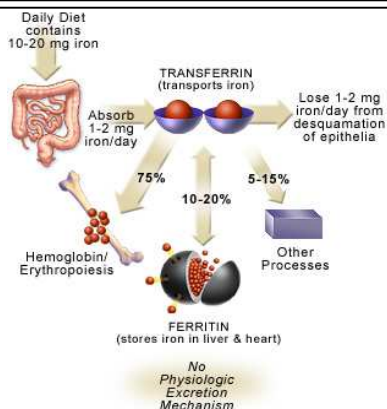
ABSTRACT

In order to better understand the mechanisms of actinide uptake by specific biomolecules, it is essential to explore the intramolecular interactions between the cation and the protein binding site.

Although this has long been done for widely investigated transition metals, very few studies have been devoted to complexation mechanisms of actinides by active chelation sites of metalloproteins.

In this field, X-ray absorption spectroscopy has been extensively used as a structural and electronic metal cation probe. The two examples that are presented here are related to two metalloproteins in charge of iron transport and storage in eukaryote cells: transferrin and ferritin.

U(VI)O₂²⁺, Np(IV) and Pu(IV) have been selected because of their possible role as contaminant from the geosphere.



EXPERIMENTAL

The stock solution of Np(IV) ([Np]=24 mM, ²³⁷Np) was prepared by hydroxylamine (310 mM) reduction (60°C) of Np(V) obtained by dissolution of Np(V)O₂·xH₂O in HCl solution. Nitrotriacetic acid (NTA) complexation was achieved with 2.8 equivalents of ligands at pH 4.

The stock solution of Pu(IV) ([Pu(IV)]=62 mM, ²³⁹Pu), was prepared in HCl solution. NTA complexation was achieved with 2 equivalents of ligand with 1M HCl.

The stock solution of U(VI)O₂²⁺ was obtained by dissolving uranium diacetate in pure water (pH=4.0-4.5). A 5 mM solution was obtained by dilution of the previous one in 10 mM sodium acetate (pH=7).

Human serum transferrin and horse spleen ferritin were buffered with N-(2-hydroxyethyl)piperazine-N'-(2-ethanesulfonic acid) sodium salt (HEPES).

Neptunium and plutonium L_{III}-edge EXAFS spectra were recorded at the ROBL beamline (BM20) at ESRF and uranium L_{III}-edge at BM29.

Iron K-edge EXAFS spectra were recorded at the LURE D44 beamline.

Data treatment was carried out using EXAFS98 code [1] concerning actinide uptake and « EXAFS pour le Mac » [2] for evaluating iron structure in ferritin.

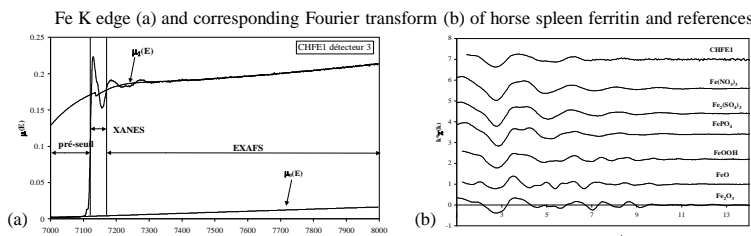
For more details on acquisition, data analysis and fitting, see references [3, 4].

CONCLUSION

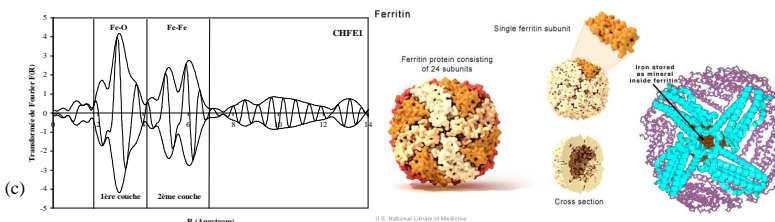
Ferritin iron core resembles to that of hematite.

In all cases the actinides are mostly bound to the protein via oxygen donor functions (although nitrogen donor functions as histidine might also participate) resulting in a splitted (CN=8) first coordination sphere. Additional water molecules may also enter the coordination polyhedron.

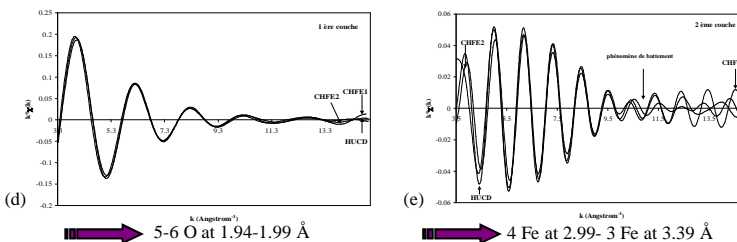
RESULTS : ferritin iron core



Radial distribution function of horse spleen ferritin (c), non corrected for phase changes, by Fourier transform, of the data $k^3\chi(k)$.

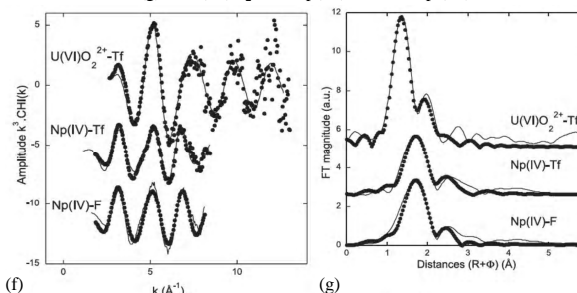


Inverse Fourier transform of horse spleen ferritin (d) for first shell (e) for second shell



RESULTS : actinide uptake by ferritin and transferrin

Actinide L_{III} edge (f) and corresponding Fourier transform (g) of U(VI)O₂²⁺-Tf, Np(IV)-Tf and Np(IV)-F



Sample	O/N first shell	O/N second shell	C shell	R factor
Np(IV)-Tf	5.7 O/N at 2.34(2) Å $\sigma^2=0.007 \text{ \AA}^2$	2.3 O/N at 2.5(1) Å $\sigma^2=0.035 \text{ \AA}^2$	7C at 3.4(1) Å $\sigma^2=0.007 \text{ \AA}^2$	0.06
U(VI)O ₂ ²⁺ -Tf	2 O at 1.78(2) Å $\sigma^2=0.004 \text{ \AA}^2$	5 O/N at 2.36(2) Å $\sigma^2=0.016 \text{ \AA}^2$	3 C at 2.9(1) Å $\sigma^2=0.012 \text{ \AA}^2$	0.04
Np(IV)-Tf	5.0 O/N at 2.35(2) Å $\sigma^2=0.012 \text{ \AA}^2$	3.0 O/N at 2.8(1) Å $\sigma^2=0.028 \text{ \AA}^2$	8 C at 3.3(1) Å $\sigma^2=0.025 \text{ \AA}^2$	0.09

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