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Editorial

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AI integration in bioactive-oriented research: Discovery, development, and design for pharmaceutical and medical applications

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into bioactive-oriented research is transforming the landscape of pharmaceutical and medical science (Sun et al., 2025). From early-stage discovery of bioactive compounds to drug development and rational design, AI offers unprecedented speed, precision, and scalability. In an era where traditional drug discovery pipelines are often costly and time -consuming, AI-driven approaches provide a promising paradigm shift for this case (Vamathevan et al., 2019; Schneider et al., 2020).

Cumulative studies support that AI facilitates the identification of novel bioactive molecules by analyzing vast datasets derived from genomics, proteomics, metabolomics, and natural product libraries (Chen et al., 2018; Zhavoronkov et al., 2019). Machine learning algorithms, particularly deep learning models, can predict biological activity, toxicity, and pharmacokinetic properties with remarkable accuracy (Chen et al., 2018). This significantly reduces the reliance on trial-and-error experimentation and accelerates lead compound identification. For instance, virtual screening powered by AI can evaluate millions of compounds in silico, narrowing down potential candidates for further experimental validation. This approach is also reducing the cost and loads for wet lab studies (Zhavoronkov et al., 2019).

In the development phase, AI contributes to optimizing drug candidates by predicting structure–activity relationships (SAR) and guiding chemical modifications. Computational models such as quantitative structure–activity relationship (QSAR) and molecular docking simulations are increasingly augmented by AI to improve predictive reliability. Additionally, AI assists in repurposing existing drugs by uncovering new therapeutic indications, thus reducing development time and cost (Paul et al., 2021).

The design of bioactive compounds has also been revolutionized through AI-based generative models. Techniques such as generative adversarial networks (GANs) and reinforcement learning enable the de novo design of molecules with desired pharmacological properties. These models can tailor compounds for specific targets, enhancing efficacy while minimizing adverse effects (Elton et al., 2019). Furthermore, AI-driven systems biology approaches help elucidate complex biological pathways, enabling a more holistic understanding of disease mechanisms and therapeutic interventions.

In the context of pharmaceutical and medical consumption, AI holds immense promise in personalizing treatment strategies. Precision medicine, driven by AI analytics, allows for the customization of therapies based on individual genetic and biochemical profiles. This not only improves therapeutic outcomes but also minimizes adverse drug reactions (Jumper et al., 2021).

On the other hand, the integration of AI into bioactive-related clinical research is transforming pharmaceutical and medical problem-solving by enabling faster data analysis, improved patient stratification, and predictive modeling of therapeutic outcomes. AI-driven tools such as machine learning and deep learning facilitate the identification of novel bioactive compounds, optimize dose–response relationships, and enhance biomarker discovery, thereby improving the efficiency and accuracy of clinical trials (Yu et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2025). Moreover, AI supports real-time monitoring of adverse drug reactions (ADRs) and patient adherence, addressing key challenges in clinical study management (Khan et al., 2025). However, issues such as data heterogeneity, lack of standardized datasets, algorithmic bias, regulatory uncertainty, and ethical concerns regarding patient privacy remain significant barriers to widespread implementation (Yu et al., 2018; Mak et al., 2019). Despite these challenges, AI integration holds substantial promise for advancing precision medicine and accelerating the translation of bioactive compounds into safe and effective pharmaceutical products.

However, the integration of AI into bioactive-related studies in pharmaceutical sciences presents several notable drawbacks. Firstly, AI tools have limited availability of high-quality, and standardized biological datasets, which can lead to biased or non-generalizable predictive models. Secondly, AI systems often rely on large-scale omics and chemical databases, yet inconsistencies in data curation and annotation may compromise reproducibility and reliability. Additionally, the “black box” nature of many machine learning algorithms reduces interpretability, making it difficult for researchers to understand mechanistic insights behind predicted bioactivities. This lack of transparency poses challenges in regulatory acceptance and clinical translation. Thirdly, AI-driven predictions may overlook complex biological interactions, such as pharmacokinetics and toxicity, leading to false positives or failures in later experimental validation. Fourthly, high computational costs, the need for interdisciplinary expertise, and ethical concerns related to data privacy also hinder widespread adoption. Therefore, despite its potential, AI integration must be approached cautiously with rigorous validation and domain-specific refinement (Chen et al., 2018; Ekins et al., 2019; Vamathevan et al., 2019; Mak & Pichika, 2019).

In conclusion, despite of some unresolved challenges AI integration in bioactive-oriented research represents a powerful convergence of computational science and life sciences. By enhancing discovery, streamlining development, and enabling intelligent design, AI is poised to revolutionize pharmaceutical innovation. However, to fully realize its potential, collaborative efforts among researchers, clinicians, data scientists, and policymakers are crucial. Moreover, to ensure ethical implementation is also another important fact in drug discovery and development studies using bioactive compounds from various sources for pharmaceutical and medical consumption.

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