Electronic Supplementary Information

Furin substrate as a novel cell-penetrating peptide: Combining

delivery vector and inducer of cargo release

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1. Experimental section

1.1 Materials

RVRR, (RVRR)₃, (RVRR)₃, (RVRR)₂-KLAKLAKKLAKLAK and (RVRR)₃-KLAKLAKKLAKLAK were customized from China Peptides Co., Ltd. (Hefei, China). Fluorescein isothiocyanate-(FITC) modified peptides such as FITC-RVRR, FITC-R₆, FITC-R₉, FITC-(RVRR)₂, FITC-(RVRR)₃, FITC-KLAKLAKKLAKLAK, FITC-(RVRR)₂-KLAKLAKKLAKLAK and FITC-(RVRR)₃-KLAKLAKKLAKLAK were customized by Guo Ping Co., Ltd. (Hefei, China). Fmoc-Arg(Pbf)-OH, Fmoc-Val-OH were purchased from GL Biochem (Shanghai, China) Ltd., Roswell Park Memorial Institute (RPMI-1640), Dulbecco's Modified Eagle Medium (DMEM) and Fetal Bovine Serum (FBS). Antibiotics (Penicillin-Streptomycin) were purchased from Macgene Biotech Co., Ltd. (Beijing, China). Golgi-Tracker Red, caspase-3 activity kit were purchased from Beyotime Biotechnology (Shanghai, China) and Lysosome tracker deep were purchased from Thermo Fisher Scientific (Shanghai, China).

1.2 Synthesis of FITC labeled peptides

All peptides were prepared using standard solid-phase fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl (Fmoc) chemistry with 1-Hydroxybenzotriazole (HOBT) and O-Benzotriazole-N,N,N',N'-tetramethyl-uronium-hexafluorophosphate (HBTU) as the peptide coupling reagents. The fluorescein moiety FITC was attached by an aminohexanoic acid spacer by treating a resin-bound peptide (0.5 mmol) with FITC (1.0 mmol) and diisopropyl ethyl amine DIEA (5 mmol) in DMF (6 mL) for overnight. Cleavage from the resin was achieved by using 90:10 TFA/CH₂Cl₂ and stirred the solution for 3 hours at room temperature. Removal of the solvent and precipitated with cold ether. The crude was centrifuged, the ether was removed, and the resulting orange solid was purified by HPLC (H₂O/CH₃CN in 0.1% TFA). The products were characterized by ESI-mass. The purity of the peptides was >95% as determined by analytical RP-HPLC (H₂O/CH₃CN in 0.1% TFA). The HPLC purification methods of each peptides and the HPLC spectrum are listed in supporting figure.

1.3 Cell culture

The MDA-MB-231 (human breast cancer cells), LoVo (human colorectal cancer cells), C_2C_{12} (myoblast cells) were purchased from the Procell Life Science & Technology Co., Ltd. (Wuhan, China). LoVo and C_2C_{12} were cultured in RPMI-1640 supplemented with 10% (v/v) (FBS). MDA-MB-231 cell were cultured in DMEM medium supplemented with 10% (v/v) fetal bovine serum (FBS).

1.3.1 Flow cytometry analysis

Flow cytometry analysis was used to evaluate the cellular uptake ability of CPPs using MDA-MB-231, LoVo and C_2C_{12} . Three cell lines were plated at 500,000 cells/well in 6-well plates and incubated at 37°C for overnight until completely adherence. Cells were washed twice with serum-free DMEM prior to treatment. FITC labeled peptides were diluted from 1 mM stock solutions in PBS to 10 μ M solution in

serum-free DMEM. 2mL of diluted solution was added to 6-well plate. Cells were incubated at 37°C for designed time. After incubation, the media was removed and washed twice with PBS. 1 mL of Trypsin with EDTA was added and incubated for 3 min. The solution of each well was transferred to 1.5 mL EP tube and centrifuged at 1000 rpm for 5 min. After removal of the supernatant, cells were re-suspended in 500 μ L of PBS and transferred to FACS tubes. The fluorescence intensity of each well was analyzed on a flowcytometry analyzer. Results were analyzed by FCS express 6 Reader software. Data presented is the mean fluorescence intensity from 10,000 cells analyzed. The excitation wavelength was 488nm. The detection wavelength was 525 nm.

1.3.2 Fluorescence cellular imaging

Confocal laser scanning microscopy (CLSM) analysis was used to evaluate the cellular uptake and distribution of fluorescein isothiocyanate (FITC) labeled peptides. In general, cells were cultured in 35-mm dishes covered with three coverslips and incubated at 37°C overnight until totally adherent. The cells were incubated with FITC labeled peptide (10 μ M) and diluted with serum free medium at 37°C. After incubation, the cells were washed with PBS twice and analyzed using CLSM (with a FV1000 Olympus instrument). The excitation wavelength was 488 nm and the detection region from 495 to 545 nm. Intracellular localization was investigated using Golgi-Tracker Red (Beyotime) and Lysosome-Tracker Red (Thermo-Fisher Scientific) according to their instruction books. The excitation wavelength of Golgi-Tracker Red is 543 nm and its detection wavelength from 595 to 645 nm.

1.3.3 In vitro assay for cell viability

The MDA-MB-231 cells were cultured in DMEM supplemented with 10% serum in 96-well plates. The concentration of (RVRR)₂, (RVRR)₃, **KLA**, (RVRR)₂-**KLA**, and (RVRR)₃-**KLA**, R₆, R₆-**KLA**, R₉, R₉-**KLA**, chlorambucil (CHL), CHL-RV3 ranged appropriately, and were diluted with serum-free DMEM and incubated for 24 h at 37 °C. Subsequently, the incubating solutions were removed, and 100 μ L of MTT (0.5 mg/mL) diluted with serum-free DMEM was added into each well. After 4 h of incubation, the MTT solution was aspirated, and the formazan crystals were dissolved using 100 μ L of DMSO. The 96-well plate was shaken for 5 min. Absorbance was detected at 490 nm by a micro-plate reader.

1.3.4 Furin incubation and HPLC analysis

FITC-RV3-**KLA** (50 μ M) was incubated with pure furin enzyme (2 units) for overnight at 37°C in 0.1 mL furin buffer. The assay buffer contains 100 mM HEPES, pH 7.4, 0.5 % Triton X-100, 1 mM CaCl₂, and 1 mM GSH. After incubation, HPLC analysis of products and enzyme hydrolysis is a linear 25 min gradient from 5% to 75% acetonitrile in water with 0.1% TFA.

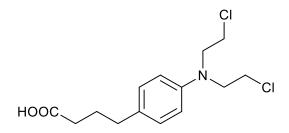
1.3.5 Caspase-3 Assay

Caspase-3 activity was measured by following the manufacturer's instructions. Briefly, MDA-MB-231 cells were incubated with 10 μ M (RVRR)₃-KLA for 4 and 8 h or with 20 μ M (RVRR)₃-KLA for 4 and 8 h. The cells were then collected and washed with PBS. The cells were lysed using lysis buffer, after which the lysates were centrifuged at 12,000 g at 4 °C for 15 min. For caspase-3 activity assay, cell lysate (50 μ L) and caspase-3 detecting buffer (40 μ L) were incubated with 10 μ L of caspase-3 substrate (2 mM Ac-DEVD-pNA) in a total volume of 100 μ L at 37 °C for 2 h. The colorimetric release of p-nitroaniline from the Ac-DEVD-pNA substrate was recorded at a wavelength of 405 nm.

1.4 In vivo therapeutic efficacy and systemic toxicity studies

Animal procedures were in agreement with the guidelines of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. Female nude mice C57 BL were subcutaneously injected with 4×10^6 MDA-MB-231 cells into the right armpit. When the average tumor volume reached approximately 150 mm³, the mice were randomly divided into four groups (3 mice per group). Each mice was administered with 25 µL of PBS, **KLA**, RV3-**KLA** and R9-**KLA** intratumorally at a concentration of 2 mM every other day. Tumor volumes and body weights were measured every other day. Tumor volumes were calculated using the following formula: volume = (length × width²)/2. After observation for 16 days, the mice were taken photos first and then sacrificed to excise the tumors. The tumors were weighed, measured and taken photo.

2. Additional figures and tables



Scheme S1 Chemical structure of chlorambucil (CHL)

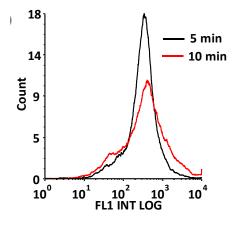


Fig. S1 Flow cytometry curves of MDA-MB-231 cells after incubated with FITC-RV3 at 37°C for 5- or 10 min.

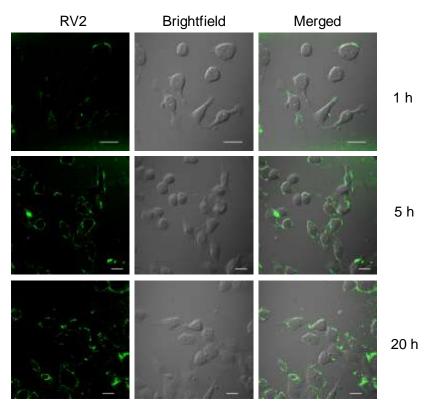


Fig. S2 CLSM images of MDA-MB-231 cells incubated with 10 μ M FITC-RV2 at 37 °C for 1 hour, 5 hours and 20 hours. Green channel: $\lambda_{ex} = 488$ nm, $\lambda_{em} = 495 - 545$ nm. scale bar = 20 μ m.

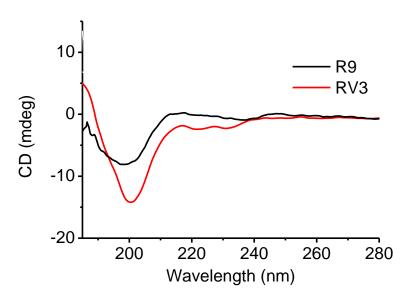


Fig. S3 Circular Dichroism (CD) spectra of R9 and RV3 (20 μ M) in PBS buffer.

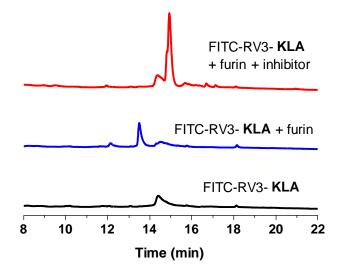


Fig. S4 HPLC traces of FITC-RV3-**KLA** (lower), FITC-RV3-**KLA** with furin (middle) and FITC-RV3-**KLA** incubated with the inhibitor before addition of furin for 1 h (upper).

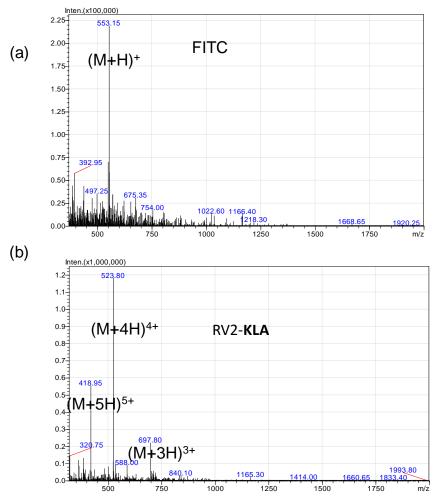


Fig. S5 ESI-Mass of HPLC peaks at 13.6 minutes (a) and 15.2 minutes (b).

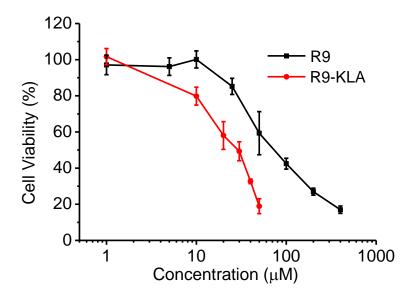


Fig. S6 Cell viability of R9-KLA and R9 against MDA-MB-231 cells after 24 hour incubation. Data represent the mean \pm SD (n = 6).

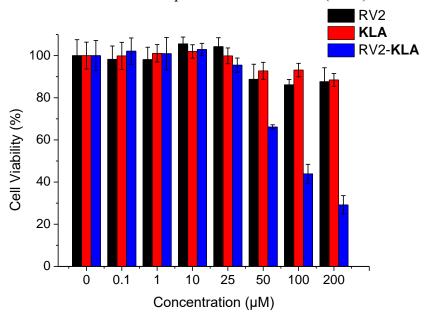


Fig. S7 Cell viability of RV2-KLA, RV2 and KLA against MDA-MB-231 cells after 24 hours incubation. Data represent the mean \pm SD (n = 6).

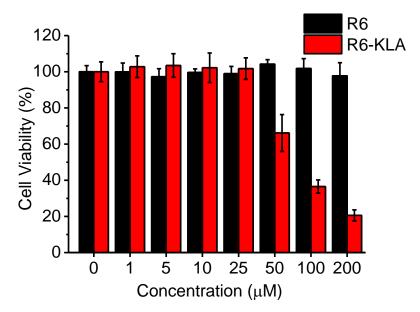


Fig. S8 Cell viability of R6-KLA, R6 against MDA-MB-231 cells after 24 hours incubation. Data represent the mean \pm SD (n = 6).

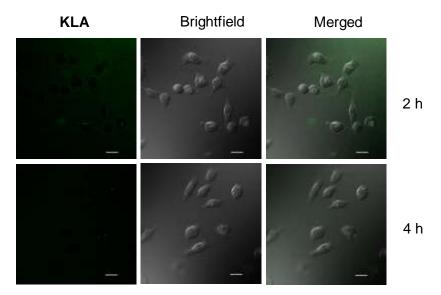


Fig. S9 CLSM images of MDA-MB-231 cells incubated with 10 μ M FITC-KLA at 37 °C for 2 hours and 4 hours. Green channel: $\lambda_{ex} = 488$ nm, $\lambda_{em} = 495$ - 545 nm. scale bar = 20 μ m.

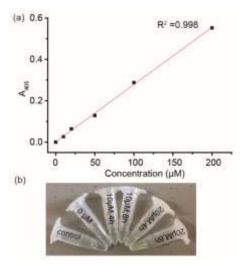


Fig. S10 (a) Standard line of detecting caspase-3 activity. (b) The images of samples from left to right: control, MDA-MB-231 cell lysate incubate with 0 μM, 10 μM
 RV3-KLA for 4 h, 10 μM RV3-KLA for 8 h, 20 μM RV3-KLA for 4 h, 20 μM RV3-KLA for 8 h.

control	control	0.075
	0 µM	0.158
10 µM	4 h	0.220
	8 h	0.266
20 µM	4 h	0.352
	8 h	0.416

Table S1. The absorption values of samples in Figure S5b at 405 nm.

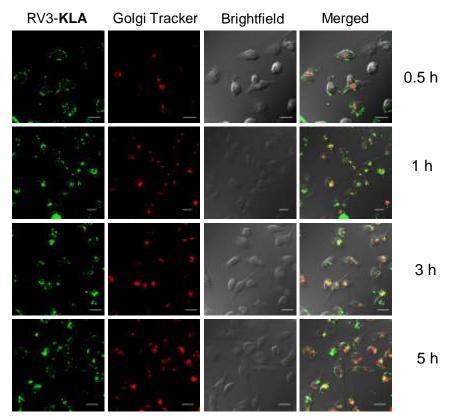


Fig. S11 CLSM images of MDA-MB-231 cells co-incubated with 10 μ M FITC-RV3-KLA and Golgi Tracker (33 μ g/ml) for 0.5-, 1-, 3-, 5 h at 37°C. Green channel: λ_{ex} =488 nm, λ_{em} =495-545 nm. Red channel: λ_{ex} =543 nm, λ_{em} =595-645 nm. Scale bar=20 μ m.

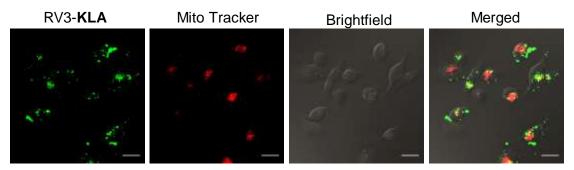


Fig. S12 CLSM images of MDA-MB-231 cells co-incubated with 10 μ M FITC-RV3-KLA and Mito-Tracker for 3 hours at 37 °C. Green channel: $\lambda_{ex} = 488$ nm, $\lambda_{em} = 495$ - 545 nm. Red channel: $\lambda_{ex} = 543$ nm, $\lambda_{em} = 620$ - 670 nm. scale bar = 20 μ m.

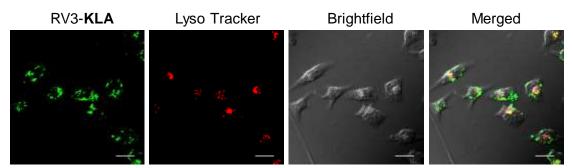


Fig. S13 CLSM images of MDA-MB-231 cells co-incubated with 10 μ M FITC-RV3-KLA and Lyso-Tracker for 3 hours at 37 °C. Green channel: $\lambda_{ex} = 488$ nm, $\lambda_{em} = 495$ - 545 nm. Red channel: $\lambda_{ex} = 543$ nm, $\lambda_{em} = 575$ - 625 nm. scale bar = 20 μ m.

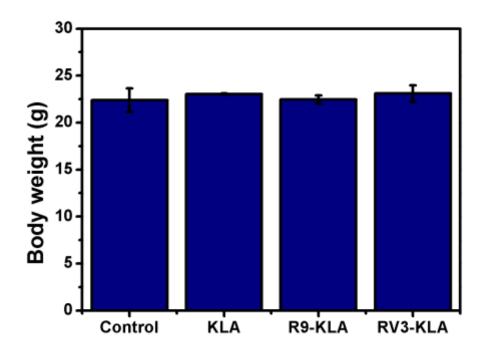


Fig. S14 The original body weight of different groups

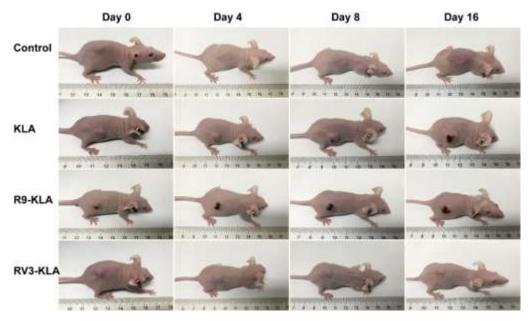


Fig. S15 Photographs of different groups showing the size of tumor during the treatment with PBS, KLA and RV3-KLA and R9-KLA.

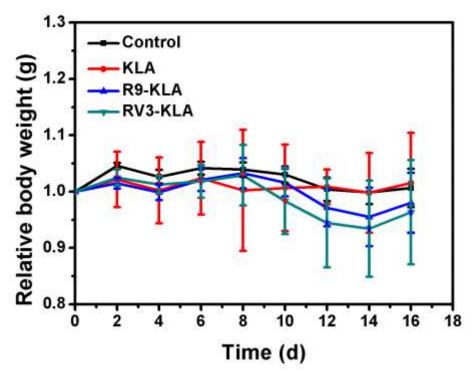


Fig. S16 Body weight changes of mice during treatment.



				Sam	ple Informa	tion			
Order	ID		: Syn-6	54497					
Name			: SYNS	\$560-2					
Seque	nce		: RVR	RRVRR					
Lot No	o.								
Pump	A		: 0.1%	Trifluoro	acetic in 100	% Water			
Pump	в		: 0.1%	Trifluoro	acetic in 100	% Acetonrtri	le		
Total I			: Iml/r	nin					
Wave	avelength : 214nm								
	문제가 2 4 11 2 4 2 4 5 1 5 6 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3				nertsil ODS-S	SP (4.6*250	mm*5um)		
	ution me			ACN+859		31	and sum		
Inj. Ve		intro.	: 30ul	1011-007	01120				
Time	stunie	Mo	dule		Action		Value		
0.01			mps		B.Conc		1.0		
25.00			mps		B.Conc		50		
30.00			mps		B.Conc		100		
36.00		Pu	mps		B.Conc		100		
40.00		Pu	mps		B.Conc		2		
50.00		Co	ntroller		Stop		61		
0.80				\$					
0.70				9,8,6					
0.60									
0.50									
₹ 0.40									
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000			291	107					
0.20		7~~~~	96.291	3.707					
0.20 0.10 0.00		7~~	96.291	1 0 1.8					
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0.20 0.10 0.00	2010111-0		5.00 B.0	540 0 10.00		16,00 18.00	20.00 22.00	24.00	
0.20 0.10 0.00	RT	Area	5.00 8.0 % Area	o tolao Height		16,00 18,00	20.00 22.00	24.00	

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Fig. S17 HPLC trace of RVRRRVRR.

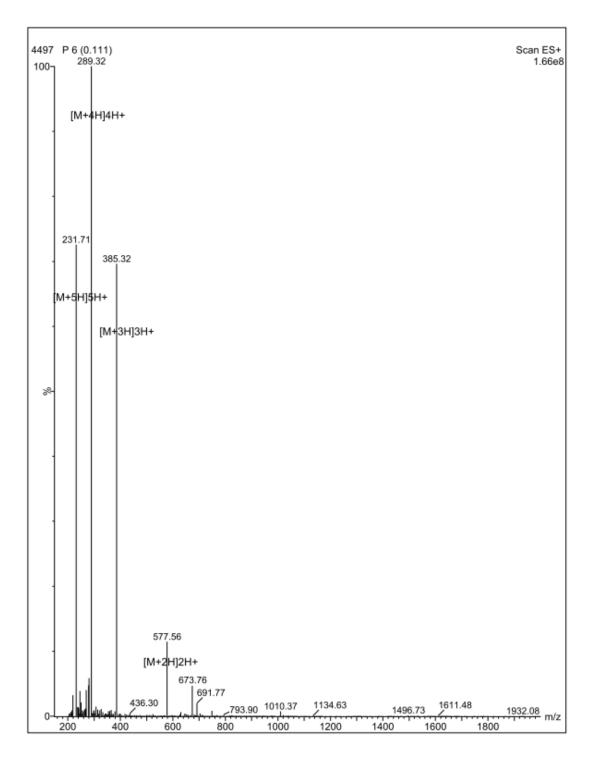
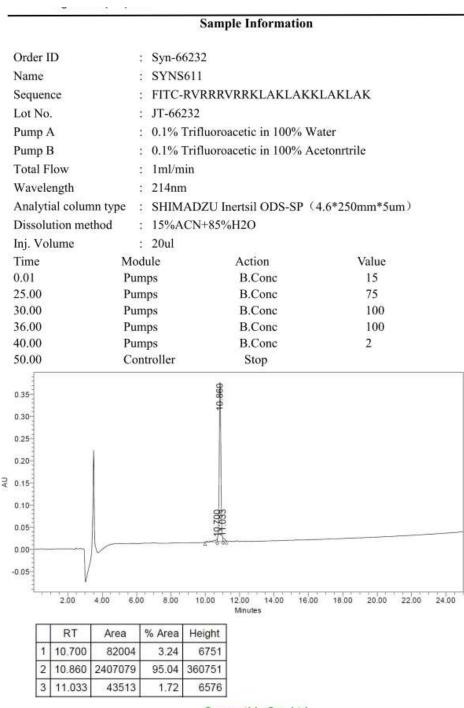


Fig. S18 ESI-Mass spectrometry of RVRRRVRR.



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Fig. S19 HPLC trace of FITC-RVRRRVRRKLAKLAKLAKLAK.

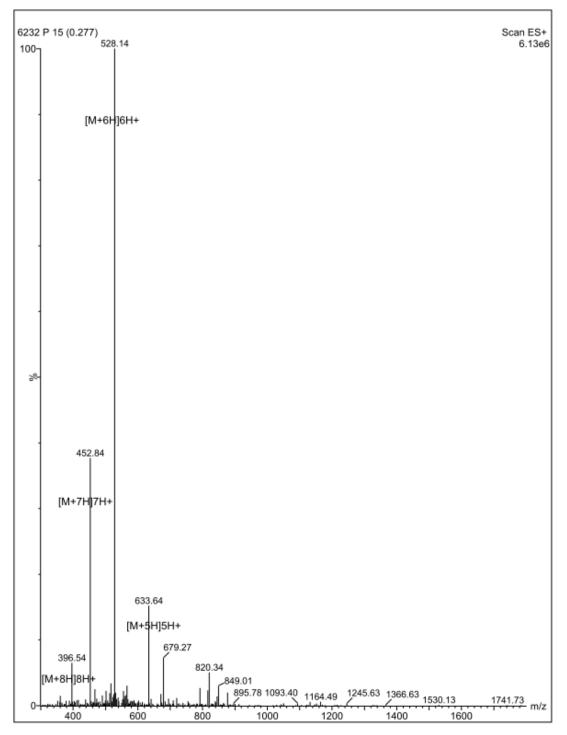


Fig. S20 The ESI-Mass spectrometry of FITC-RVRRRVRRKLAKLAKLAKLAKLAK.

Sample Information

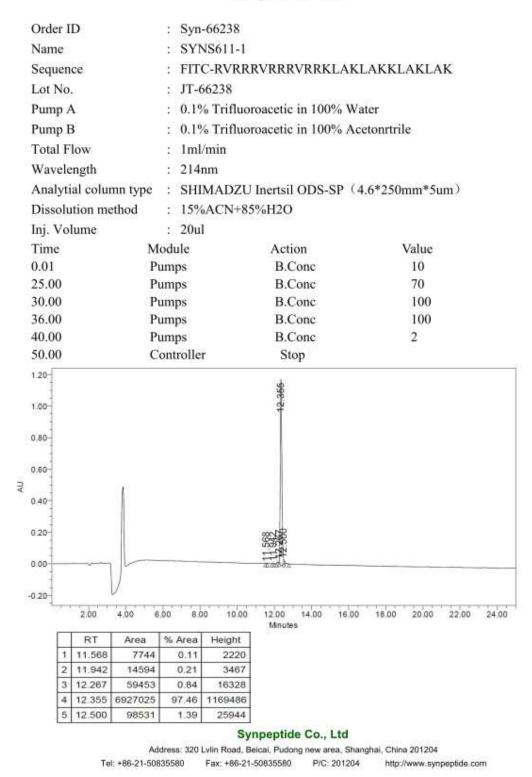
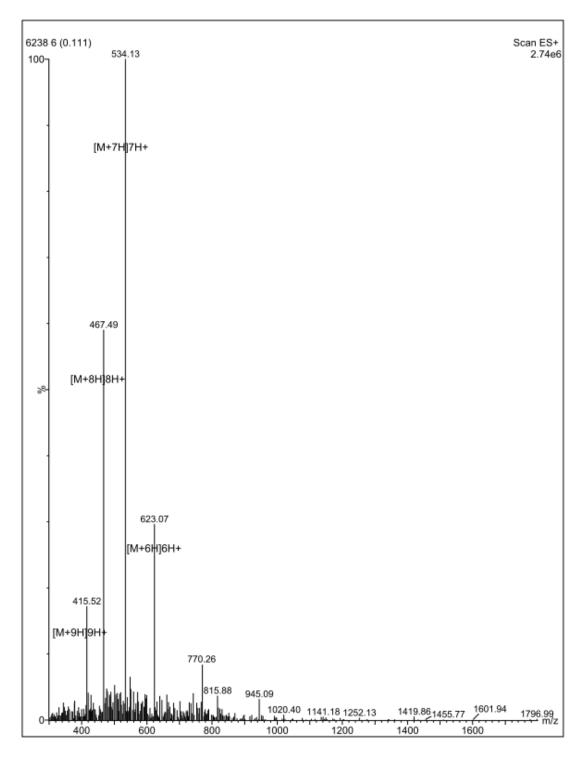
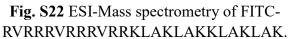


Fig. S21 HPLC trace of FITC-RVRRRVRRRVRRKLAKLAKLAKLAK.







			Samp	le Informat	ion		
Order ID		: Syn-78	8822				
Name		: SYNS	868-1				
Sequence	: FITC-ACP-RRRRRKLAKLAKKLAKLAK						
Lot No : JT-78822							
Pump A	ump A : 0.1% Trifluoroacetic in 100% Water						
Pump B	: 0.1% Trifluoroacetic in 100% Acetonrtrile						
Total Flow	•						
Wavelength : 220nm							
	alytial column type : SHIMADZU Inertsil ODS-SP (4.6*250mm*5um)				n)		
Inj. Volume		: 30ul					
Time	Mod	4. F. F. F. F.		Action		Value	
0.00	Pum	ps		B.Conc		10	
25.00	Pum	ips		B.Conc		70	
25.01	Pum			B.Conc		100	
30.00	Pun			B.Conc		100	
30.01	Pum	ips		Stop			
1.50			876 0.317				
0.00 mM			204				
0.00 2.00	4.00 e.00	8.00	10.00	12.00 14.00 Minutes	10.00	18.00 20.00	22.00 24
1,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,		s.oo % Area			16.00	18.00 20.00	22.00 24
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200	T Area 376 76986	% Area	Height		10.00	18.00 20.00	22.00 24

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Fig. S23 HPLC trace of FITC-RRRRRRKLAKLAKLAKLAKLAK.

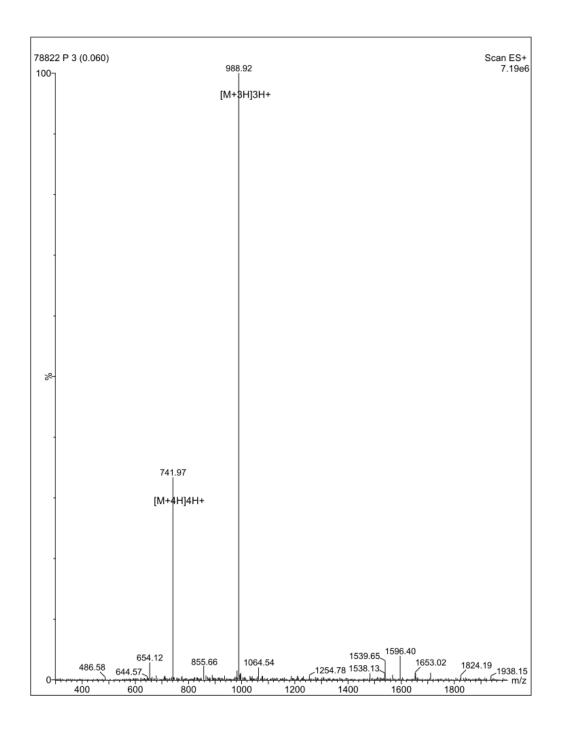


Fig. S24 ESI-mass of FITC-RRRRRKLAKLAKLAKLAKLAK.



				Sai	nple Infor	mation				
Order IE	Order ID : Syn-78823			78823						
Name										
Sequenc	e		: FITC	C-ACP-F	RRRRRR	RKLAKI	AKKL	AKLAK	2	
Lot No	Lot No : JT-78823									
Pump A	Pump A : 0.1% Triflu					100% Wat	er			
Pump B			: 0.1% Trifluoroacetic in 100% Acetonrtrile							
Total Flo	Total Flow : 1ml/min									
Waveler	elength : 220		: 220r	: 220nm						
Analytia	l colun	nn type	: SHIMADZU Inertsil ODS-SP (4.6*250mm*5um)		ADZU Inertsil ODS-SP (4.6*250mm*5um))		
Inj. Volu	ıme		: 30ul							
Time			dule		Action			alue		
0.00			mps		B.Conc			10		
25.00			mps		200 - 20 - 20 - 20 - 20 - 20 - 20 - 20	B.Conc 70				
25.01 30.00			mps mps		B.Conc B.Conc					
30.00			mps	-			100			
0.80	1				11:200	-15,632				

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Fig. S25 HPLC trace of FITC-RRRRRRRRRKLAKLAKLAKLAKLAK.

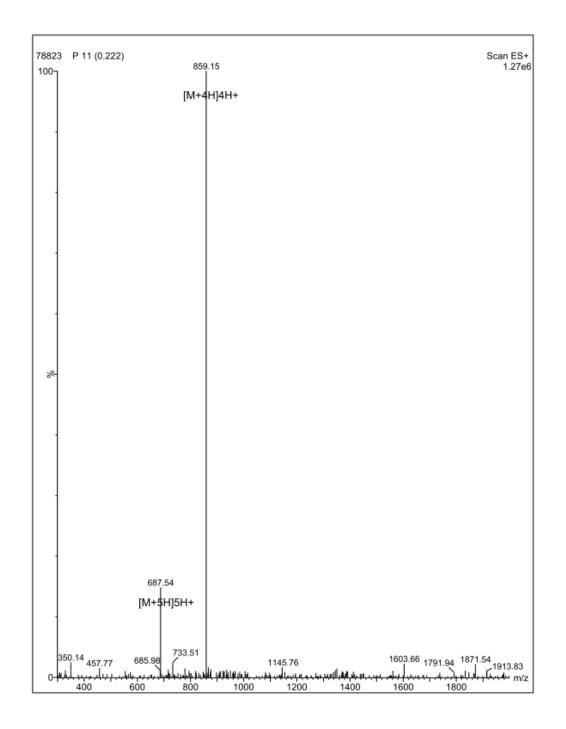


Fig. S26 ESI-Mass spectrometry of FITC-RRRRRRRRRKLAKLAKLAKLAKLAK.



				Sample	Information		
Order II)		: Syn-'	78824			
Name			: SYN	S868-3			
Sequenc	e		: RVR	RRVRRRVR	RGGKLAKL	AKKLAKLAK	
Lot No			: JT-78	3824			
Pump A			: 0.1%	Trifluoroace	tic in 100% W	ater	
Pump B		: 0.1% Trifluoroacetic in 100% Acetonrtrile					
Total Flo							
Wavelength			: 220n	m			
Analytia	l colun	nn type	: SHIN	ADZU Inert	sil ODS-SP	4.6*250mm*5um)	
Inj. Voli			: 30ul				
Time		Мо	dule	A	ction	Value	
0.00		Pu	mps	E	B.Conc	5	
25.00		Pu	mps	E	B.Conc	65	
25.01			mps	E	B.Conc	100	
30.00			mps		3.Conc	100	
30.01 Pu		Pu	mps	S	stop		
80- 60- 40-				11,993		-16.700	
	200 4	100 6.00	s.00	10.00 12.0	0 14.00 16.0 nutes	0 18.00 20.00 2	12.00 24
					1997 - C		
	RT	Area	% Area	Height			
1	11.033	324079	3.51	66392			
2	11.147	AP 10 States	95.27	1256117			
3	11.317	65951	0.71	26058			
		46604	0.50				

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Fig. S27 HPLC trace of RVRRRVRRRVRRGGKLAKLAKLAKLAK.

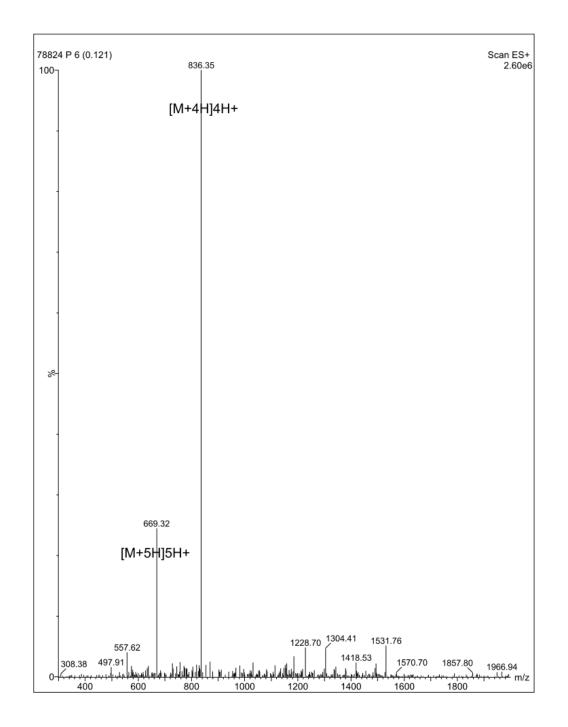


Fig. S28 ESI-Mass spectrometry of RVRRRVRRRVRRGGKLAKLAKKLAKLAK.



		Sam	ple Informatio	n			
Order ID	: Syn-82020						
Name		YNS963-1					
Sequence	: R	RRRRRRRRKLAKLAKKLAK					
Lot No		: JT-82020					
Pump A		: 0.1% Trifluoroacetic in 100% Water					
550		: 0.1% Trifluoroacetic in 100% Acetonrtrile					
Pump B							
Total Flow	: 1ml/min						
Wavelength : 220nm							
Analytial colu	mn type : Sl	HIMADZU I	nertsil ODS-SP	(4.6*250mm*5um)			
Inj. Volume	: 30	0.0210					
Time	Module		Action	Value			
0.00	Pumps		B.Conc	10			
25.00	Pumps		B.Conc	70			
25.01	Pumps		B.Conc	100			
30.00	Pumps		B.Conc	100			
30.01	Pumps		Stop				
0.60- ⊋ 0.40-			_ 2	5			
1	1	×9.516	10.828	\$~22.434			
0.00		9.516	-a-zbà	52			
1	2.00 4.00 6.00	8.00 10.0	a 268a 0 12.00 14.00 Minutes	16.00 16.00 20.00 22.00 2			
1	RT Area	% Area Heigh	a zdek 0 12.00 14.00 Minutes	52			
0.00	RT Area 9.516 81441	% Area Heigh 1.62 1879	a złóż o 12.00 14.00 Minutes t	52			
0.00	RT Area 9.516 81441 10.828 24467	% Area Heigh 1.62 1879 0.49 520	a 244 0 12:00 14:00 Minutes 1 5 0	52			
0.00	RT Area 9.516 81441 10.828 24467 12.017 23919	8.00 10.0 % Area Heigh 1.62 1879 0.49 520 0.48 1591	a 268 0 12:00 14:00 Minutes 1 5 0 7	52			
0.00	RT Area 9.516 81441 10.828 24467 12.017 23919 12.118 4659724	8.00 100 % Area Heigh 1.62 1879 0.49 520 0.48 1591 92.89 85383	a 268 0 12:00 14:00 Minutes 1 5 0 7 1	52			
0.00	RT Area 9.516 81441 10.828 24467 12.017 23919 12.118 4659724 12.250 81808	8.00 10.0 % Area Heigh 1.62 1879 0.49 520 0.48 1591	a 268 0 12:00 14:00 Minutes 1 5 0 7 1 5	52			

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Fig. S29 HPLC trace of RRRRRRRRRKLAKLAKLAKLAK.

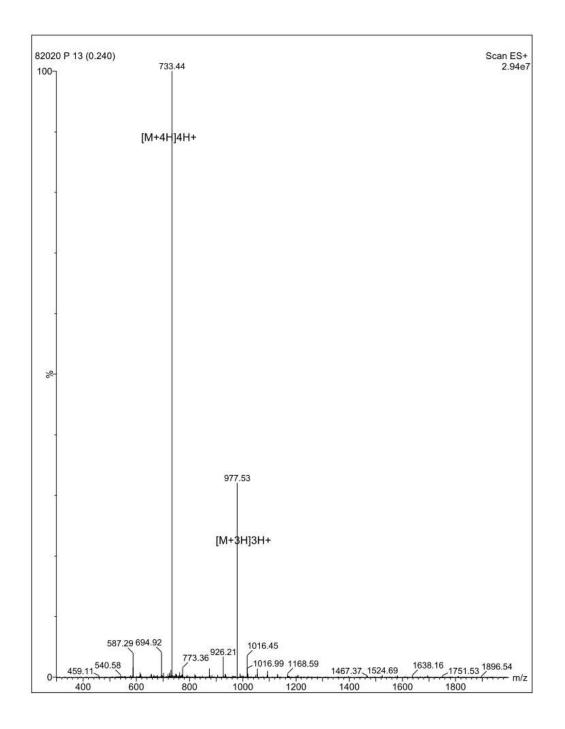
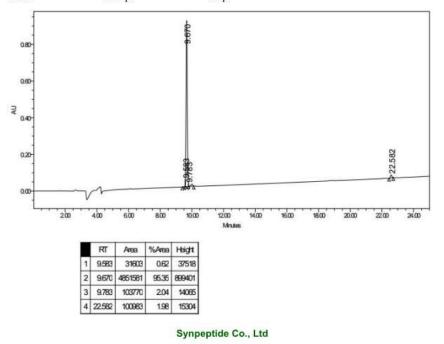


Fig. S30 ESI-Mass spectrometry of RRRRRRRRRKLAKLAKLAKLAK.



		Sample Information	1
Order ID	: Syn-820	022	
Name	: SYNS9	63-3	
Sequence	: KLAKI	LAKKLAKLAK	
Lot No	: JT-8202	22	
Pump A	: 0.1% Tı	rifluoroacetic in 100% V	Vater
Pump B	: 0.1% Tı	rifluoroacetic in 100% A	Acetonrtrile
Total Flow	: 1ml/mir	n	
Wavelength	: 220nm		
Analytial column ty	ype : SHIMA	DZU Inertsil ODS-SP	(4.6*250mm*5um)
Inj. Volume	: 30ul		
Time	Module	Action	Value
0.00	Pumps	B.Conc	10
25.00	Pumps	B.Conc	70
25.01	Pumps	B.Conc	100
30.00	Pumps	B.Conc	100
30.01	Pumps	Stop	
	111111 C 11111 C 11110	2222.24.26.24	



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Fig. S31 HPLC trace of KLAKLAKKLAKLAK.

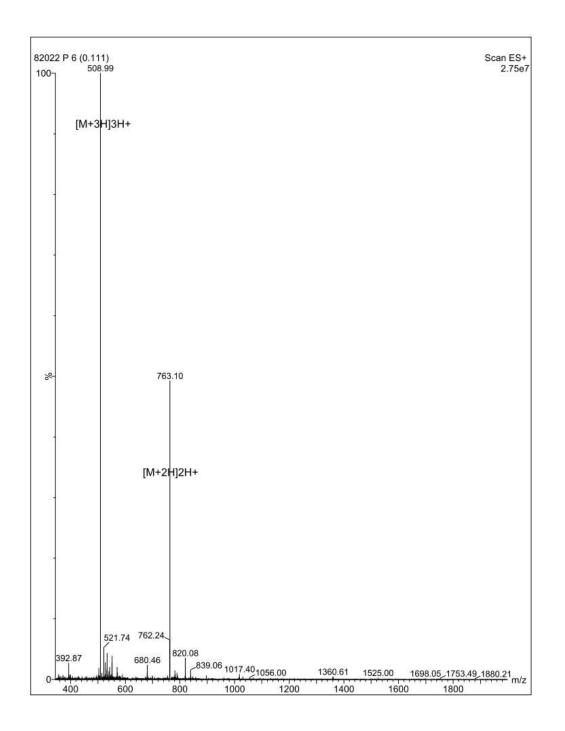


Fig. S32 ESI-mass spectrometry of KLAKLAKKLAKLAK.