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2 **Structure and mechanism of NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 channel complex**

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19 **Summary**

20 NALCN channel mediates sodium leak currents and is important for maintaining proper resting
21 membrane potential. NALCN and FAM155A form the core complex of the channel, the activity
22 of which essentially depends on the presence of both UNC79 and UNC80, two auxiliary proteins.
23 NALCN, FAM155A, UNC79, and UNC80 co-assemble into a large hetero-tetrameric channel
24 complex. Genetic mutations of NALCN channel components lead to neurodevelopmental
25 diseases. However, the structure and mechanism of the intact channel complex remain elusive.
26 Here, we present the cryo-EM structure of the mammalian NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80
27 quaternary complex. The structure showed that UNC79-UNC80 form a large piler-shaped
28 heterodimer which was tethered to the intracellular side of the NALCN channel through tripartite
29 interactions with the cytoplasmic loops of NALCN. Two interactions are essential for proper cell
30 surface localization of NALCN. The other interaction relieves the self-inhibition of NALCN by
31 pulling the auto-inhibitory CTD Interacting Helix (CIH) out of its binding site.

32 **Introduction**

33 NALCN channel mediates voltage-modulated sodium leak currents which can be blocked by
34 extracellular calcium¹. It is essential for maintaining the proper resting membrane potential, and
35 thus the electrical excitability of certain cells². The mutation of the NALCN gene can lead to
36 genetic diseases such as Infantile Hypotonia with Psychomotor Retardation and Characteristic
37 Facies 1 (IHPRF1; OMIM 615419)^{3,4} and Congenital Contractures of the Limbs and Face,
38 Hypotonia, and Developmental Delay (CLIFAHDD; OMIM 616266)⁵. Mice lacking the NALCN
39 gene are neonatal lethal due to respiratory rhythm defects⁶, while the gain-of function mutation
40 of NALCN impairs rapid eye movement sleep and causes the *dreamless* phenotype in mouse⁷.

41 Functional NALCN channel is a hetero-tetrameric channelosome that is composed of NALCN,
42 FAM155, UNC79, and UNC80 proteins, with a total molecular weight of 920 kDa¹. The co-
43 expression of these four proteins is necessary and sufficient to reconstitute robust NALCN
44 currents in a heterologous system such as *Xenopus* oocyte and HEK293 cells¹. NALCN protein
45 is the pore-forming subunit of the complex and shares sequence and structural homology with
46 eukaryotic voltage-gated sodium channels (Na_v) and calcium channels (Ca_v)⁸. FAM155 proteins
47 are transmembrane proteins with a cysteine-rich domain. They are important for the membrane
48 localization of NALCN⁹. UNC79 and UNC80 are large proteins without any known domains
49 but are essential for the function of NALCN¹⁰⁻¹². Notably, the lack of either UNC79 or UNC80
50 resulted in no NALCN currents in a heterologous system, such as HEK293T cells or *Xenopus*
51 oocyte¹. In agreement with this, genetic mutations of the UNC80 gene also lead to IHPRF
52 diseases (IHPRF2; OMIM 616801) in human¹³, and knock-out of UNC79 leads to disrupted
53 breathing rhythms¹⁴, phenocopying the loss-of-function of the NALCN channel in mice⁶.
54 Recently advances on the structure determination of mammalian NALCN-FAM155A
55 subcomplex have provided insights into how FAM155A interacts with the NALCN channel, how
56 the functional and degenerate voltage sensors are spatially arranged, and how the non-canonical
57 selectivity filter allows the permeation of sodium¹⁵⁻¹⁷. Moreover, the high-resolution structure
58 allowed the identification of a CTD Interacting Helix (CIH) on the linker of NALCN domain II-
59 III (D_{II-III})¹⁵. The interaction between CTD and CIH has never been observed in related Na_v or
60 Ca_v channels before. Despite the progress, these structural works were done using the NALCN-
61 FAM155A subcomplex which is essentially not functional due to the absence of UNC79 and
62 UNC80 subunits¹. Therefore, the structures of UNC79 and UNC80 and their regulatory
63 mechanism on the NALCN channel remain enigmatic. To answer these fundamental questions,

64 we embarked on structural studies of the NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 hetero-tetrameric
65 channel complex.

66 **Results and discussion**

67 **Architecture of the NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary complex**

68 Previous studies on the NALCN-FAM155A heterodimer showed that this subcomplex is well-
69 folded in the absence of UNC79 and UNC80¹⁵⁻¹⁷. However, both UNC79 and UNC80 are
70 crucial for the NALCN currents in HEK293T cells¹, indicating that UNC79 and UNC80 might
71 not be necessary for channel folding, but rather affect the plasma membrane localization of the
72 channel or play other regulatory roles. We inserted 3×HA tag after P1077 of NALCN which is
73 on the extracellular loop between S5 and P1 helices of Domain III (D_{III}) and found that the
74 insertion of 3×HA tag does not affect electrophysiological properties of NALCN channel
75 (Supplementary information, Fig. S1a). We used HA antibody to quantify the surface
76 localization of NALCN¹⁸. Using this construct, we found that the NALCN-FAM155A
77 subcomplex has little surface localization (Fig. 1a), which is consistent with the fact that little
78 currents were observed when only NALCN and FAM155A were expressed¹. Co-expression of
79 both UNC79 and UNC80 dramatically promoted the surface localization of NALCN (Fig. 1a), in
80 agreement with markedly enhanced currents¹. These results collectively suggest that co-
81 expression of UNC79 and UNC80 could promote the surface localization of the NALCN to
82 enhance NALCN currents. To understand the underlying structural mechanism, we sought to
83 obtain the NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary protein complex for cryo-EM studies.
84 By screening the high-affinity binary interactions within the complex, we found that UNC79 and
85 UNC80 subunits co-migrate on FSEC (Supplementary information, Fig. S1b), suggesting they

86 could form a stable heterodimer. However, the quaternary complex tends to dissociate during
87 purification^{16,17}, probably due to the low affinity between NALCN-FAM155A subcomplex and
88 UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer. To overcome this obstacle, we exploited the tight binding between
89 GFP and its nanobody¹⁹. We fused GFP onto the C-terminus of NALCN and fused nanobody
90 (NbGFP) onto the N-terminus of UNC80 to increase the affinity between NALCN-FAM155A
91 and UNC79-UNC80 and to enhance the stability of the hetero-tetrameric complex
92 (Supplementary information, Fig. S1c). We also included HA or FLAG tags in certain subunits
93 to facilitate the detection during protein expression and purification. We found that co-
94 expression of NALCN-GFP, FAM155A-FLAG, NbGFP-UNC80, and HA-UNC79 conferred
95 typical NALCN currents in HEK293T cells (Supplementary information, Fig. S1d), suggesting
96 these constructs recapitulate the properties of NALCN and are suitable for studying the structural
97 mechanism of the NALCN quaternary complex.

98 Subsequent protein purification and cryo-EM multi-body analysis showed relative motions
99 between NALCN-FAM155A subcomplex and UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer (Supplementary
100 information, Video S1)²⁰. Further extensive focused refinements and signal subtraction resolved
101 five overlapping structural fragments at 2.9-3.7 Å resolution (Supplementary information, Figs.
102 S2, S3, and Table S1). The maps from focused refinement were combined to generate the
103 composite map for model building and interpretation. We exploited AlphaFold2 to aid the
104 manual building of UNC79 and UNC80 models²¹. Our final model encompasses 1346 out of
105 1738 residues of NALCN, 173 out of 467 residues of FAM155A, 1528 out of 2654 residues of
106 UNC79, and 1711 out of 3326 residues of UNC80 (Supplementary information, Table S1). The
107 remaining unmodeled regions are probably highly disordered and therefore unresolvable in cryo-
108 EM maps.

109 The structure of the NALCN-FAM155A subcomplex is overall similar to our previous structure
110 at 2.65 Å (Fig. 1b-f)¹⁵. The UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer forms a large helix-rich structure in the
111 cytosol. The NALCN-FAM155A subcomplex sits above the central joint of the UNC79-UNC80
112 heterodimer to form an asymmetric quaternary complex occupying 200 Å × 315 Å × 145 Å 3D
113 space (Fig. 1b-f; Supplementary information, Video S2).

114 **Structure of the UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer**

115 We resolved 72 cytosolic helices for UNC79 and 77 helices for UNC80 (Supplementary
116 information, Figs. S4, S5). These cytosolic helices further pack into HAET repeats and ARM
117 repeats which act as basic building blocks for UNC79 and UNC80 (Fig. 2a-d). We did not find
118 any transmembrane helices of UNC79 or UNC80 in our cryo-EM density map. Although there is
119 little sequence homology between UNC79 and UNC80, they share an overall wave-shaped
120 structure formed by supercoiled helices (Fig. 2a-d). UNC79 and UNC80 interact in a head-to-tail
121 fashion to form a plier-shape complex, akin to the infinity symbol “∞” (Fig. 2a-d). We divided
122 the structures of UNC79 and UNC80 into five large consecutive functional domains: N terminal
123 UNC-heterodimerization domain (UHD-N), UNC connecting domain 1 (UCD1), middle UNC-
124 heterodimerization domain (UHD-M), UNC connecting domain 2 (UCD2), and C terminal
125 UNC-heterodimerization domain (UHD-C) (Fig. 2a). UNC79 and UNC80 interact through three
126 regions: head, joint, and tail (Fig. 2b; Supplementary information, Fig. S6). The head region is
127 formed by 79-UHD-N and 80-UHD-C, in which $\alpha 5$ - $\alpha 13$ of UNC79 interact with $\alpha 71$ - $\alpha 76$ of
128 UNC80 (Fig. 2b-d; Supplementary information, Fig. S6b). The central joint region is formed by
129 extensive interactions between the 79-UHD-M ($\alpha 26$ - $\alpha 49$) and 80-UHD-M ($\alpha 24$ - $\alpha 56$) with an
130 interface of 4,270 Å² area (Fig. 2b-d; Supplementary information, Fig. S6c-g). The tail region is

131 formed by 79-UHD-C and 80-UHD-N, in which $\alpha 66$ - $\alpha 71$ of UNC79 interact with $\alpha 1$ - $\alpha 8$ of
132 UNC80 (Fig. 2b-d; Supplementary information, Fig. S6h).

133 Besides the HEAT and ARM repeats, there are also other structural modules present in the
134 structures of UNC79 and UNC80. A ubiquitin-like domain (ULD) between $\alpha 43$ and $\alpha 45$ of
135 UNC80 protrudes out of 80-UHD-M (Fig. 2e). We observed one C3H-type zinc-finger between
136 $\alpha 26$ and $\alpha 27$ of 80-UHD-M (Fig. 2f), and another C3H-type zinc-finger between $\alpha 46$ and $\alpha 47$ of
137 79-UHD-M (Fig. 2g). These structural modules are located on the surface of the UNC79-UNC80
138 heterodimer. We further mapped the genetic mutations of UNC80 found in human patients onto
139 the structure of rat UNC80^{13,22-25} (Fig. 3a). We found the majority of them are involved in intra-
140 subunit interactions of UNC80. R2901 (R2842Q in human patients) on $\alpha 74$ interacts with E2965
141 on $\alpha 77$ (Fig. 3b); E2634 (E2566A in human patients) interacts with K2573 on $\alpha 60$ (Fig. 3c);
142 R2604 (R2536T in human patients) on $\alpha 61$ interacts with E2607 on $\alpha 61$ and E2484 close to $\alpha 59$
143 (Fig. 3d); R1724 (R1566C in human patients) on $\alpha 33$ interacts with E1952 on $\alpha 37$ (Fig. 3e). The
144 charge-neutralization mutations found in human patients would abolish the electrostatic
145 interactions within the UNC80 subunit and affect protein folding or overall conformation of
146 UNC80 to impair its function, leading to diseases.

147 **Interactions between NALCN and UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer**

148 NALCN interacts with UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer through three cytosolic UNC-interacting
149 motifs (UNIM-A, B, C), which all are on loop regions of NALCN (Fig. 1b). UNIM-A (residues
150 348-363) locates on the D_{I-II} linker of NALCN and both UNIM-B (residues 641-669) and UNIM-
151 C (residues 702-740) reside on the D_{II-III} linker (Fig. 1b). All of these UNIMs were not resolved
152 in previous structures of the NALCN-FAM155 subcomplex, probably due to their high

153 flexibilities in the absence of UNC79 and UNC80. The location of UNIMs on the cytosolic loops
154 of NALCN is consistent with the flexible tethering of NALCN-FAM155A subcomplex with the
155 UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer, evidenced by the relative motion between them observed in the
156 cryo-EM analysis (Supplementary information, Video S1).

157 UNIM-A has a short β hairpin structure which is inserted into a hydrophobic crevice formed
158 between $\alpha 48$ - $\alpha 50$ of UNC79 (Fig. 4a). In detail, F351, W359, and L361 of UNIM-A make
159 hydrophobic interactions with A2061, L2064, L2065, and M2068 on 79-UHD-M and I2113,
160 L2117 on 79-UCD2 (Fig. 4a). To validate the structural observation biochemically, we used co-
161 immunoprecipitation experiments to detect the interaction between GST-tagged UNIM-A and
162 UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer (Fig. 4b). We found UNIM-A could be co-immunoprecipitated by
163 UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer (Fig. 4b). If the crucial hydrophobic residues on UNIM-A of
164 NALCN (F351, W359 and L361) were mutated into alanine (UNIM-3A), the interaction was
165 abolished (Fig. 4b).

166 UNIM-B shows a loop-like structure followed by a short helix and interacts with 80-UHD-M and
167 80-UCD2 (Fig. 4c). Hydrophobic residues on the loop, including V644, I646, L649, P650, F653,
168 P656, and I658, pack onto a hydrophobic patch on the surface of UNC80, making hydrophobic
169 interactions with L2417, V2419, V2421, and Y2424 on $\alpha 57$, and A2478 and Y2481 on $\alpha 59$ (Fig.
170 4c). The F662, M663, F666, and I667 on the helix of UNIM-B are inserted into a hydrophobic
171 groove formed by L2295 on $\alpha 52$, L2339, A2343 on $\alpha 55$, V2421, Y2424, A2425 on $\alpha 57$, and
172 M2434 on $\alpha 58$ of UNC80 (Fig. 4c). Mutations of I658A, F662A, M663A, F666A, and I667A on
173 NALCN (UNIM-B-5A) abolished the interaction between UNIM-B and UNC79-UNC80
174 heterodimer, evidenced by the co-immunoprecipitation experiment (Fig. 4d).

175 UNIM-C folds into an L-shape structure with two helices (Fig. 4e). The first helix lies on the
176 interface between 79-UHD-M and 80-UHD-M and the second helix is sandwiched between α 47
177 and α 50 of 80-UHD-M (Fig. 4e). R717 of UNIM-C makes electrostatic interactions with D917
178 of 79-UHD-M and E2270 of 80-UHD-M (Fig. 4e). K722 of UNIM-C makes polar interactions
179 with Y2312 and main-chain carbonyl group of L2267 of 80-UHD-M (Fig. 4e). V726, I729, and
180 L730 of UNIM-C make hydrophobic interactions with I2206, F2210, I2266, and L2267 of 80-
181 UHD-M (Fig. 4e). R737 makes hydrogen bonding with the main-chain carbonyl group of L2196
182 and L2198 of 80-UHD-M (Fig. 4e). Mutations of R717A, K722A, V726A, I729A, and L730A
183 on NALCN (UNIM-C-5A) diminished the binding of UNIM-C to UNC79-UNC80 (Fig. 4d).

184 **Mechanism of NALCN channel regulation by UNC79-UNC80**

185 The UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer regulates the NALCN channel through physical interactions
186 with UNIMs of NALCN observed in the structure. In order to study the functional roles of these
187 three identified interactions, we disrupted them individually by making the aforementioned
188 mutations on UNIMs and recorded the NALCN currents of the mutants. We found mutations of
189 UNIM-A (UNIM-A-3A) and UNIM-B (UNIM-B-5A) diminished the whole-cell currents of
190 NALCN (Fig. 5a, b). The reduction of currents correlates with the reduced surface localization of
191 NALCN (Fig. 5c). Therefore, we speculate that there are cytoplasmic retention signals, such as
192 ER retention signals, on cytosolic regions of NALCN, and the binding of UNIM-A and UNIM-B
193 onto UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer masks such signals to facilitate the surface localization of the
194 NALCN channel. This is akin to the K_{ATP} channel, in which the SUR subunits mask the ER
195 retention signal of Kir6 subunits to promote the surface localization of the fully assembled K_{ATP}
196 channel²⁶.

197 In contrast, the UNIM-C-5A mutant retains both robust whole-cell currents and surface
198 localization compared to the wild-type channel (Fig. 5c, d). However, the conductance versus
199 voltage (G-V) curve of the UNIM-C-5A mutant shifts to the positive potential compared with the
200 wild-type channel (Fig. 5e), suggesting that the UNIM-C-5A mutation inhibits the opening of the
201 NALCN. Close inspection of the cryo-EM map showed that the CIH density was missing in the
202 NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary complex (Supplementary information, Fig.
203 S7a). Both UNIM-C (702-740) and CIH (751-765) are on the D_{II-III} linker of NALCN and there
204 are only 10 amino acids between UNIM-C and CIH. If we modeled the CIH in its binding site of
205 NALCN CTD of the quaternary complex, we found the linear distance between the termini of
206 UNIM-C and CIH is about 60 Å (Supplementary information, Fig. S7b), which is much longer
207 than the distance that 10 amino acids could extend to, even in their fully extended conformation.
208 Therefore, our structural observation and modeling study highly suggest the possibility that the
209 binding of UNIM-C of NALCN D_{II-III} linker to UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer in the quaternary
210 complex would pull the neighboring CIH out of the binding pocket in NALCN CTD, and
211 UNIM-C-5A mutations would disrupt the binding of UNIM-C to UNC79-UNC80 and release
212 the pulling force on CIH to allow it to re-bind to NALCN CTD. The rightward shift of the G-V
213 curve of the UNIM-C-5A mutant indicates that the binding of CIH in CTD inhibits channel
214 opening, probably by stabilizing the channel in a closed state. To further validate this model, we
215 looked for the mutants on CIH which could disrupt the interaction between CIH and CTD.
216 Guided by our previous high resolution structure of NALCN-FAM155A subcomplex¹⁵, we
217 found that the combination of I753A, L754A, R761A, R764A and R765A mutations (CIH-5A) is
218 sufficient to disrupt such interaction, shown by GST pull-down assay (Fig. 5f). We hypothesis
219 that the CIH-5A mutation might release the self-inhibition of NALCN. Indeed, we found that

220 additional CIH-5A mutation on the background of UNIM-C-5A mutant shifts the G-V curve of
221 UNIM-C-5A back to the level similar to the wild-type channel, while CIH-5A itself has no effect
222 on the gating of NALCN (Fig. 5e), in agreement with our mechanistic model.

223 In summary, the near-atomic resolution structure of the NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80
224 complex presented here shows the architecture of the functional mammalian NALCN channel
225 complex, reveals the structure of UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer, and depicts the detailed
226 interactions between UNC79 and UNC80. More importantly, the structure uncovers the
227 activation mechanism of the NALCN channel by UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer, not only through
228 promoting the surface localization of NALCN but also through modulating the gating of
229 NALCN (Fig. 6). Our work provides a structural basis to target the NALCN channel complex for
230 future therapeutic intervention.

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338 resolution in 3D structure determination by single particle electron cryomicroscopy.
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341 **Video S1. The relative motion between NALCN-FAM155A subcomplex and UNC79-**
342 **UNC80 heterodimer revealed by multi-body analysis.**

343 Repositioning of reconstructed densities of NALCN-FAM155A and UNC79-UNC80 along the
344 first and the second eigenvectors reveals the relative motions between NALCN-FAM155A and
345 UNC79-UNC80. Eigenvector #1 explains 29% variance and eigenvector #2 explains 25%
346 variance.

347 **Video S2. Overall structure of NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary complex.**

348 The cryo-EM map of NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary complex.

349 **Methods**

350 **Cell Culture**

351 Sf9 insect cells (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA, USA) were cultured in SIM SF (Sino
352 Biological, China) at 27 °C. FreeStyle 293F suspension cells (Thermo Fisher Scientific) were
353 cultured in FreeStyle 293 medium (Thermo Fisher Scientific) supplemented with 1% fetal bovine
354 serum (FBS) at 37 °C with 6% CO₂ and 70% humidity. HEK293T (ATCC) were cultured in
355 Dulbecco's Modified Eagle Medium (Gibco, Gaithersburg, MD USA) supplemented with 10%
356 FBS at 37 °C with 5% CO₂. The cell lines were routinely checked to be negative for mycoplasma
357 contamination but have not been authenticated.

358 **Determination of the surface expression of NALCN subunit**

359 HEK293T cells were plated onto poly-D-lysine treated 24-well plate (303002; Corning Sciences)
360 and transfected with indicated plasmids (Figs. 1a, 5c, in a modified BacMam expression vector²⁷)
361 at a ratio of 1:1.5:1.75:2 (FAM155A-3×FLAG:NALCN-1077-3×HA-GFP:UNC79-

362 3×FLAG:UNC80-3×FLAG) using Lipofectamine 3000 (Thermo Fisher Scientific) and incubated
363 for 40-48 hours. When certain constructs were excluded from the transfection, an equal amount
364 of empty vector was added. The cells were washed with PBS twice, fixed using 4%
365 formaldehyde in PBS for 30 min, and washed with PBS twice again. Then the cells were blocked
366 with 3% goat serum in PBS for 30 min and labeled with primary antibody [rabbit anti-HA (3724;
367 CST, diluted 2,500 times in blocking buffer)] for 1 hour. After washing with PBS for 3 times,
368 cells were incubated with horseradish-peroxidase (HRP) labeled goat anti-rabbit secondary
369 antibody (31460; Thermo Fisher Scientific, the antibody was diluted 2,500 times in blocking
370 buffer) for 30 min. After extensive washing, the cells were incubated with High-Sig ECL
371 Western Blotting Substrate (Tanon) for 2 min, and chemiluminescence signals were measured
372 with Infinite M Plex plate reader (Tecan). The signals represent the surface expression of the
373 NALCN subunit. Then the cells were permeabilized by incubating in PBS with 0.1% TX-100 for
374 30 min. The cells were subsequently blocked, labelled with primary and secondary antibodies,
375 and detected by ECL chemiluminescence as described above. The chemiluminescence signals of
376 permeabilized cells represents the total expression of NALCN.

377 **Fluorescence-detection size-exclusion chromatography (FSEC)**

378 Purified protein or cell lysates were injected onto a Superose 6 increase 5/150 column (GE
379 Healthcare), running in a buffer containing 20 mM Tris (pH 7.5), 150 mM NaCl, 0.5 mM *n*-
380 dodecyl β-D-maltoside (DDM, Anatrace), and detected by a fluorescence detector (Shimadzu,
381 excitation 488 nm and emission 520 nm for GFP signal) at room temperature.

382 **Electrophysiology**

383 HEK293T cells were co-transfected with constructs containing rNALCN-GFP, mFAM155A-
384 FLAG, mScarlet-mUNC80, and HA-mUNC79 plasmids or their various mutants (in a modified
385 BacMam expression vector²⁷) at a ratio of 2:1:1:1 using Lipofectamine 3000 (Thermo Fisher
386 Scientific) and incubated for 24 hours before recording. Patch electrodes were pulled with a
387 horizontal microelectrode puller (P-1000, Sutter Instrument Co, USA) to a resistance of 1.7-2.5
388 M Ω . Whole-cell patch clamps were performed using an Axon-patch 200B amplifier (Axon
389 Instruments, USA), and data were collected with pClamp 10 software (Axon Instruments, USA)
390 and an Axon Digidata 1550B digitizer (Axon Instruments, USA). Pipette solution containing
391 (mM): 10 HEPES (pH 7.2, NaOH), 136 NaCl, 10 NaF, 5 EGTA, 2 Na₂ATP and bath solution
392 containing (mM): 10 HEPES (pH 7.4, NaOH), 150 NaCl, 30 glucose. At the end of each
393 experiment, the bath solution was exchanged to 10 mM HEPES (pH 7.4, HCl), 150 mM NMDG,
394 and 30 mM glucose by local perfusion system (MPS-2, InBio) to exclude the loosely sealed
395 patch (cells with current <-100 pA at -100 mV was discarded). Serial resistance was
396 compensated by at least 75%. The steady-state currents were used to generate G/G_{max} versus V
397 curves (G = I/V). The Boltzmann equation was used to fit the G-V curve in GraphPad Prism 6.
398 Signals were acquired at 5 kHz and low-pass filtered at 1 kHz. The data was processed using
399 Clampfit, Microsoft Excel and GraphPad Prism 6.

400 **Protein expression and purification**

401 The cDNAs of rat NALCN, mouse FAM155A, mouse UNC79, and mouse UNC80 were cloned
402 into a modified BacMam expression vector²⁷ with C-terminal GFP-strep-FLAG tag, a FLAG tag,
403 N-terminal HA tag and NbGFP-strep-FLAG tag, respectively. The baculoviruses were produced
404 using the Bac-to-Bac system and amplified in Sf9 cells. We expressed NALCN-FAM155A
405 subcomplex and UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer separately. For protein expression, FreeStyle 293F

406 cells cultured in FreeStyle 293 medium at a density of $2.5 \times 10^6 \text{ ml}^{-1}$ were infected with 6%
407 volume of NALCN P2 virus and 4% volume of FAM155A P2 virus or 6% volume of UNC79 P2
408 virus and 4% volume of UNC80 P2 virus. 10 mM sodium butyrate was added to the culture 12
409 hours post-infection and transferred to a 30°C incubator for another 48 hours (NALCN-
410 FAM155A) or 60 hours (UNC79-UNC80) before harvesting. Cells were collected by
411 centrifugation at 4,000 rpm (JLA-8.1000, Beckman) for 10 min, and washed with 20 mM Tris
412 (pH 7.5), 150 mM NaCl, 2 µg/ml aprotinin, 2 µg/ml pepstatin, and 2 µg/ml leupeptin, flash
413 frozen and storage at -80°C.

414 For each batch of protein purification, cell pellets corresponding to 0.6 liter culture of NALCN-
415 FAM155A or UNC79-UNC80 was thawed and extracted with 42 ml or 21 ml lysis buffer
416 containing 50 mM HEPES (pH 8.0), 150 mM NaCl, 2 µg/ml aprotinin, 2 µg/ml pepstatin, 2
417 µg/ml leupeptin, 10% (v/v) glycerol, 1 mM phenylmethanesulfonyl fluoride (PMSF), 2 mM
418 MgCl_2 , 0.7 µg/ml benzonase, 1mg/ml iodoacetamide and 1% (w/v) glyco-diosgenin (GDN,
419 Anatrace) at 4°C for 1 hour, respectively. The lysates were then mixed and incubated for 30 min
420 and centrifuged at 40,000 g (JA25.5, Beckman) for 40 min at 4°C. The supernatant was incubated
421 with 1 ml Anti-FLAG Affinity Beads (Smart-Lifesciences) for 90 min at 4°C and washed with 5
422 ml W buffer (20 mM HEPES (pH 8.0), 150 mM NaCl, 10% glycerol, 2 µg/ml aprotinin, 2 µg/ml
423 pepstatin, 2 µg/ml leupeptin, and 0.02% GDN) for 4 times. The target protein was eluted with
424 1ml W buffer plus 200 µg/ml 3×FLAG peptides (Smart-Lifesciences) and 30 mM HEPES (pH
425 8.0) 5 times. The eluate was loaded onto 2ml Streptactin Beads 4FF (Smart-Lifesciences)
426 column and washed with 45 ml W buffer plus 2 mM ATP and 10 mM MgCl_2 , and washed with
427 20 mM HEPES (pH 8.0), 150 mM NaCl, 10% glycerol and 0.02% GDN for 20 ml. The target
428 protein was eluted by 25 mM HEPES (pH 8.5), 150 mM NaCl, 10% glycerol, 0.02% GDN and 5

429 mM desthiobiotin (IBA). Eluted protein was crosslinked with 0.04% glutaraldehyde (EM-grade,
430 Sigma) on ice for 25 min, and stopped with 50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5) on ice for 15 min.
431 Crosslinked protein was concentrated using 100-kDa cut-off concentrator (Millipore) and further
432 purified by Superose 6 increase (GE Healthcare) running in a buffer containing 20 mM Tris (pH
433 7.5), 150 mM NaCl and 0.006% GDN. Fractions corresponding to NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-
434 UNC80 complex were pooled and concentrated to $A_{280} = 0.38$ for cryo-EM sample preparation.

435 **Cryo-EM sample preparation and data collection**

436 Holey carbon grids (Quantifoil Au 300 mesh, R 0.6/1) coated with home-made ultrathin
437 continuous carbon were glow-discharged by plasma cleaner (Harrick, PDC-32G) for 30 s with
438 the “Low” setting. Aliquots of 3 μ l concentrated protein sample were applied on glow-
439 discharged grids and the grids were blotted for 2 s before plunged into liquid ethane using
440 Vitrobot Mark IV (Thermo Fisher Scientific). Cryo-grids were firstly screened on a Talos
441 Arctica electron microscope (Thermo Fisher Scientific) operating at 200 kV with a K2 Summit
442 direct electron camera (Thermo Fisher Scientific). The screened grids were subsequently
443 transferred to a Titan Krios electron microscope (Thermo Fisher Scientific) operating at 300 kV
444 with a K2 Summit direct electron camera and a GIF Quantum energy filter set to a slit width of
445 20 eV. Images were automatically collected using SerialEM in super-resolution mode at a
446 nominal magnification of 105,000 \times , corresponding to a calibrated super-resolution pixel size of
447 0.662 \AA with a preset defocus range from $-1.5 \mu\text{m}$ to $-1.8 \mu\text{m}$. Each image was acquired as a 10
448 s movie stack of 40 frames with a dose rate of $5 \text{ e}^- \text{\AA}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$, resulting in a total dose of about $50 \text{ e}^- \text{\AA}^{-2}$
449 ².

450 **Cryo-EM image analysis**

451 The image processing workflow is illustrated in Supplementary information, Fig. S2c. A total of
452 6,714 super-resolution movie stacks were collected. Motion-correction, two-fold binning to a
453 pixel size of 1.324 Å, and dose weighting were performed using MotionCor2²⁸. Contrast transfer
454 function (CTF) parameters were estimated with Gctf²⁹. Micrographs with ice or ethane
455 contamination and empty carbon were removed manually. A total of 2,742,149 particles were
456 auto-picked using Gautomatch from 6,156 micrographs. All subsequent classification and
457 reconstruction were performed in Relion 3.1³⁰ unless otherwise stated. Two rounds of reference-
458 free 2D classification were performed to remove contaminants, yielding 797,032 particles. The
459 particles were subjected to 30 iterations K = 1 global search 3D classification with an angular
460 sampling step of 7.5° to determine the initial alignment parameters using the initial model
461 generated from cryoSPARC³¹. For each of the last five iterations of the global search, a K = 4
462 multi-reference (resolution gradient) local angular search 3D classification with the mask of
463 UNC79-UNC80 was performed with an angular sampling step of 3.75° and search range of 30°.
464 The classes that showed obvious secondary structure features were selected and combined.
465 Duplicated particles were removed, yielding 567,778 particles in total. These particles were
466 subjected to additional six rounds of multi-reference local angular search 3D classification with
467 the mask of UNC79-UNC80 using resolution gradient references or good and phase randomized
468 references, yielding 202,781 particles. These particles were subsequently subjected to local NU-
469 refinement in cryoSPARC with the mask of UNC79-UNC80³², which resulted in a map with a
470 resolution of 3.3 Å. To further improve the resolution, seed-facilitated 3D classification was
471 performed³³. The CTF parameters were re-estimated with Patch CTF in cryoSPARC. 486,791
472 particles were selected after two rounds of seed-facilitated 3D classification using good and
473 biased references or references with resolution gradients in cryoSPARC. These particles were

474 subjected to reference-free 2D classification, yielding 430,068 particles. The particles were
475 subjected to global and local search 3D classification to determine the correct alignment
476 parameters, yielding 336,476 particles. In further clean up the dataset, no alignment 3D
477 classification was performed with the mask of the UNC79-UNC80 middle region. Particles with
478 the best features were selected, yielding 275,170 particles. These particles were subjected to
479 local NU-refinement in cryoSPARC with the mask of UNC79- UNC80 or whole complex, which
480 resulted in maps with resolutions of 3.1 Å and 3.2 Å, respectively. We applied different local
481 masks of UNC79-UNC80 fragments to improve the local map quality, yielding four overlapping
482 focus-refined maps with resolutions of 2.9-3.4 Å. Due to the relative motions between NALCN-
483 FAM155A and UNC79-UNC80, we performed particle subtraction to remove signals of UNC79-
484 UNC80 to improve the alignment of the NALCN-FAM155A subcomplex. After 3 rounds of
485 local search 3D classification using subtracted particles, 68,126 particles were selected. These
486 particles were subjected to local NU-refinement in cryoSPARC with the mask of NALCN-
487 FAM155A, yielding a map with a resolution of 3.7 Å. These subtracted particles were re-
488 extracted on original micrographs and analyzed by multi-body refinement with masks of
489 NALCN-FAM155A and UNC79-UNC80²⁰. The focus-refined maps were combined to generate
490 the composite map for model building and interpretation.

491 All of the resolution estimations were based on a Fourier shell correlation (FSC) of 0.143 cutoff
492 after correction of the masking effect. B-factor used for map sharpening was automatically
493 determined by NU-refinement in cryoSPARC. The local resolution was estimated with Relion
494 3.1 with half maps output from cryoSPARC.

495 **Model building**

496 The model of NALCN-FAM155A (PDB ID: 7CU3) was docked into the electron density map
497 using UCSF Chimera³⁴ and manually adjusted using Coot³⁵. The models of the UNC79-UNC80
498 joint region were built manually using Coot. The models of UNC79-UNC80 head and tail
499 regions were predicted by AlphaFold2²¹, docked into cryo-EM map and manually adjusted using
500 Coot. The initial models of UNIMs were traced by DeepTracer³⁶ according to the cryo-EM
501 maps and protein sequences, and re-built manually using Coot. Model refinement was performed
502 using phenix.real_space_refine in PHENIX³⁷. Images were produced using Pymol, UCSF
503 Chimera³⁴ and ChimeraX³⁸. Sequence alignment was performed with ClustalX2³⁹ and
504 illustrated by ESPript 3.0⁴⁰.

505 **Co-immunoprecipitation**

506 For co-immunoprecipitation between UNIM-A and UNC79-UNC80 (Fig. 4b), fragment of
507 UNIM-A WT or 3A mutant was cloned into a pGEX-6P-1 vector. GST-UNIM-A WT or 3A was
508 over-expressed in *E. coli* NiCo21 (DE3) induced with 1 mM isopropyl- β -D-thiogalactoside
509 (IPTG) when the cell density reached OD₆₀₀ = 0.6 for 4 hours at 37°C. The cells were collected
510 and sonicated in lysis buffer containing 50 mM Tris (pH 7.5), 150 mM NaCl, 2 μ g/ml aprotinin,
511 2 μ g/ml pepstatin, 2 μ g/ml leupeptin, and 1 mM PMSF. Then the cell debris was removed by
512 centrifugation at 30,966 \times g (JA-25.50, Beckman) for 30 min. the supernatants were loaded onto
513 Glutathione Sepharose 4B and washed with 20 mM Tris (pH 7.5), 150 mM NaCl and eluted with
514 50 mM Tris (pH 8.0), 50 mM NaCl and 10 mM reduced glutathione. GST eluates were further
515 purified with an anion exchange column (HiTrap Q HP, GE Healthcare) and the peak fractions
516 were pooled for co-immunoprecipitation experiments. To obtain the protein of UNC79-UNC80
517 heterodimer, we expressed and purified N-terminal HA tagged UNC79 and GFP-strep tagged
518 UNC80 by infecting FreeStyle 293F cells with corresponding BacMam viruses. Protein was

519 purified with Streptactin affinity beads as described in ‘Protein expression and purification’
520 section. 200 μ l of purified GST-UNIM-A-WT/3A ($A_{280} = 0.744$, diluted by 20 mM Tris (pH 7.5),
521 150 mM NaCl, 10% glycerol, 2 μ g/ml aprotinin, 2 μ g/ml pepstatin, 2 μ g/ml leupeptin and 0.006%
522 GDN) was mixed with 100 μ l purified HA-UNC79 and GFP-UNC80 heterodimer ($A_{280} = 0.138$
523 in Streptactin elution buffer, 20 μ l of the mixture was saved as input) and incubated with Anti-
524 HA Magnetic Beads (88836; Thermo Fisher Scientific) for 2 hours at 4°C. The beads were
525 washed with 20 mM Tris (pH 7.5), 80 mM NaCl, 2 μ g/ml aprotinin, 2 μ g/ml pepstatin, 2 μ g/ml
526 leupeptin, 10% glycerol and 0.006% GDN 5 times, and eluted with 30 μ l SDS-PAGE loading
527 buffer (without reducing agent).

528 For co-immunoprecipitation of UNIM-B/C and UNC79-UNC80 (Fig. 4d), cDNA of UNIM-B/C
529 WT or 5A mutant was cloned into a modified BacMam expression vector²⁷. FreeStyle 293F
530 cells cultured in FreeStyle 293 medium were transfected with indicated plasmids (Fig. 4d) at a
531 ratio of 1:1:1 using PEI. 48 hours post-transfection, 2 ml cells were collected and lysed using 300
532 μ l 20 mM Tris (pH 7.5), 150 mM NaCl, 2 μ g/ml aprotinin, 2 μ g/ml pepstatin, 2 μ g/ml leupeptin,
533 1 mM PMSF, 20% glycerol and 0.5% GDN at 4 °C for 30 min. After ultra-centrifugation at
534 100,000 \times g (TLA-55, Beckman) for 30 min, the supernatants (20 μ l of lysate was saved as input)
535 were mixed with Anti-HA Magnetic Beads (88836; Thermo Fisher Scientific) and incubated at
536 4 °C for 2.5 hours. Then the beads were washed with 20 mM Tris (pH 7.5), 150 mM NaCl, 2
537 μ g/ml aprotinin, 2 μ g/ml pepstatin, 2 μ g/ml leupeptin, 20% glycerol and 0.006% GDN 5 times.
538 Bound proteins were eluted with 30 μ l SDS-PAGE loading buffer (without reducing agent).

539 Proteins of input and elution were separated with SDS-PAGE and transferred onto
540 polyvinylidene difluoride (PVDF) membranes (GFP signal was detected by in-gel fluorescence).
541 PVDF membranes were blocked using 5% nonfat milk in TBST [25mM Tris (pH 7.4), 137 mM

542 NaCl, 3 mM KCl and 0.1% Tween-20] for 1 hour at room temperature and incubated with
543 primary antibodies [mouse anti-GST (30901ES10; Yeasen Biotechnology) or [rabbit anti-HA
544 (3724; CST), both of antibodies were diluted 5,000 times] overnight at 4°C. Then membranes
545 were incubated with corresponding horseradish-peroxidase (HRP) labeled goat anti-mouse
546 secondary antibody (31444; Thermo Fisher Scientific) or horseradish-peroxidase (HRP) labeled
547 goat anti-rabbit secondary antibody (31460; Thermo Fisher Scientific, both of antibodies were
548 diluted 10,000 times) for 1 hour at room temperature and developed using High-Sig ECL
549 Western Blotting Substrate (Tanon).

550 **GST pull-down assay**

551 FreeStyle 293F cells cultured in FreeStyle 293 medium were transfected with indicated plasmids
552 (Fig. 5f) at a ratio of 1:1 using PEI. 48 hours post-transfection, cells were collected and sonicated
553 in a buffer containing 20 mM Tris (pH 7.5), 150 mM NaCl, 2 µg/ml aprotinin, 2 µg/ml pepstatin,
554 2 µg/ml leupeptin, 1 mM PMSF. After centrifugation at 14,800 rpm for 20 min, the supernatants
555 were mixed with Glutathione Sepharose 4B (GE Healthcare) and incubated at 4°C for 1 hour.
556 Then the beads were washed with 20 mM Tris (pH 7.5) and 150 mM NaCl 6 times. Bound
557 proteins were eluted with 50 mM Tris (pH 8.0), 150 mM NaCl, and 10 mM reduced glutathione.
558 For Western blot, proteins were separated with 10% SDS-PAGE and transferred onto PVDF
559 membranes. Membranes were blocked using 5% nonfat milk in TBST for 1 hour at room
560 temperature and incubated with primary antibodies [mouse anti-GST (30901ES10; Yeasen
561 Biotechnology) or mouse anti-FLAG (M20008M; Abmart), both of antibodies were diluted
562 5,000 times] overnight at 4°C. Then membranes were incubated with horseradish-peroxidase
563 (HRP) labeled goat anti-mouse secondary antibody (31444; Thermo Fisher Scientific, the

564 antibody was diluted 10,000 times) for 1 hour at room temperature and developed using High-
565 Sig ECL Western Blotting Substrate (Tanon).

566 **Quantification and statistical analysis**

567 Global resolution estimations of cryo-EM density maps are based on the 0.143 Fourier Shell
568 Correlation criterion⁴¹. The local resolution was estimated using Relion3.1 with half maps
569 output from cryoSPARC. The number of independent experiments (N) and the relevant statistical
570 parameters for each experiment (such as mean or standard error of mean) are described in the
571 figure legends. No statistical methods were used to pre-determine sample sizes.

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582 **Author contributions**

583 L.C. initiated the project and wrote the manuscript draft. Y.K. carried out experiments with the
584 help of L.C.. Both authors contributed to the manuscript preparation.

585 **Conflict of Interest**

586 The authors declare no conflict of interests.

587 **Data availability**

588 Cryo-EM maps and atomic coordinates of the NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 complex
589 have been deposited in the EMDB and PDB under the ID codes EMDB: EMD-32344 and PDB:
590 7W7G, respectively.

591 **Additional Information**

592 **Correspondence and requests for materials** should be addressed to L.C.

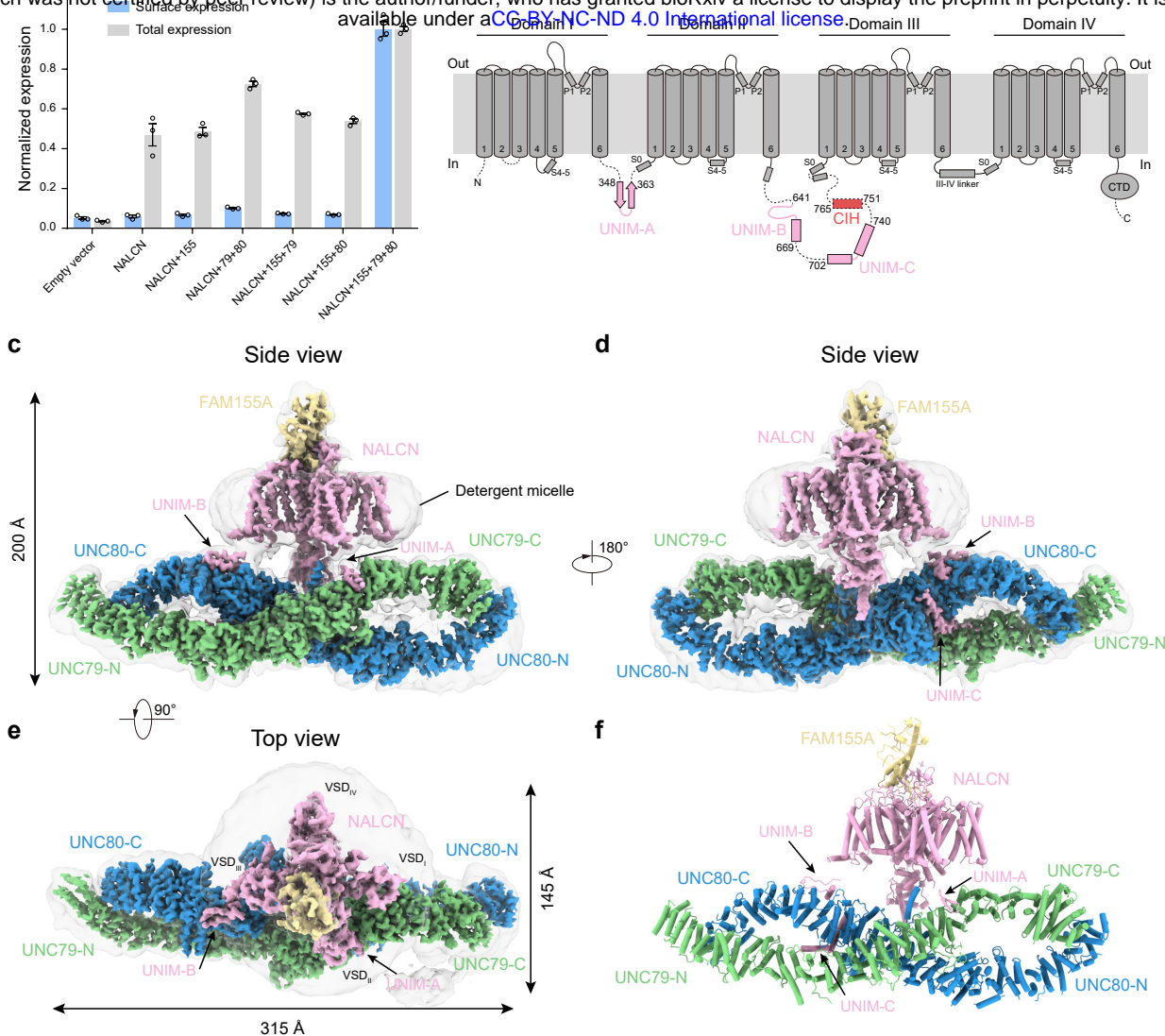


Fig. 1: Architecture of NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary complex.

a The surface localization of the NALCN subunit in the presence or absence of FAM155A, UNC79, and UNC80. The signals of the 3×HA tag on the NALCN subunit in each combination were normalized to that of co-expression of NALCN, FAM155A, UNC79, and UNC80. Data are presented as mean ± SEM, $n = 3$ biologically independent samples. **b** Topology of the NALCN subunit. The UNC-interacting motifs (UNIM) located on intracellular loops of NALCN are shown in pink. The CTD-Interacting Helix (CIH) is shown in red. **c** The side view of cryo-EM map of NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary complex. NALCN, FAM155A, UNC79, and UNC80 are colored in pink, yellow, green, and blue, respectively. The detergent micelle and unresolved flexible region are shown in gray and in semi-transparency. **d** A 180° rotated side view of **c**. **e** A 90° rotated top view of **c**. **f** The atomic model of NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary complex. Each subunit is colored the same as in **c**.

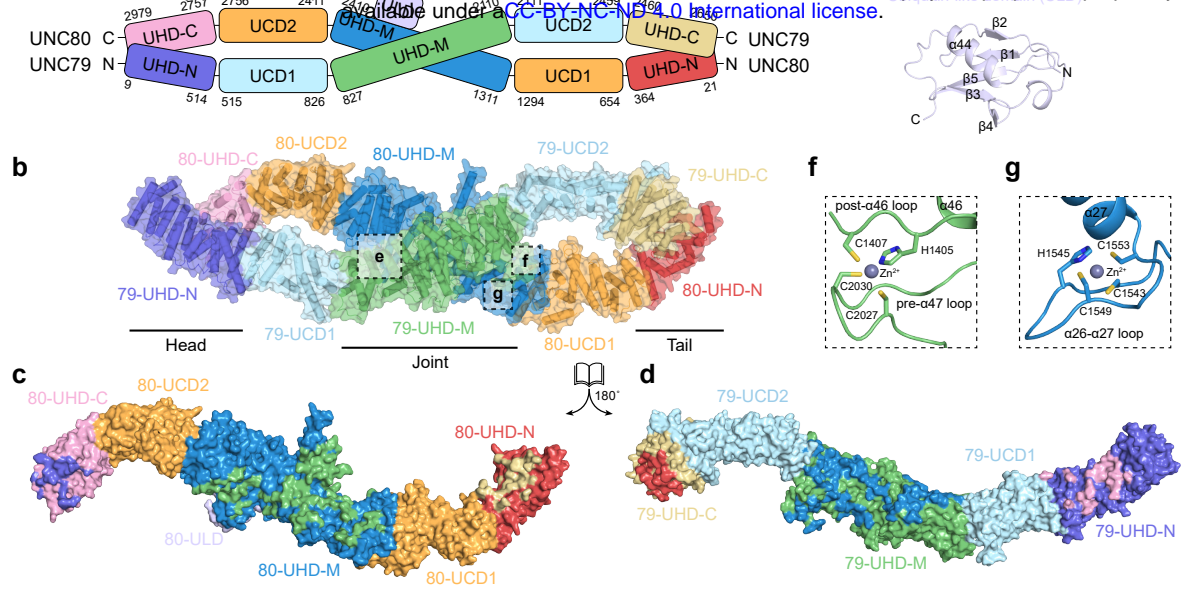


Fig. 2: Structure of UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer.

a Cartoon representation of the domain organizations of UNC79 and UNC80. UNC-heterodimerization domain (UHD), UNC connecting domain 1 (UCD1), middle UNC-heterodimerization domain (UHD-M), UNC connecting domain 2 (UCD2), and C terminal UNC-heterodimerization domain (UHD-C). **b** Structure of UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer colored according to domain organization shown in **a**. The helices are shown as cylinders. **c, d** The open-book view of UNC79 and UNC80 shows their interaction interface. UNC79 and UNC80 are shown in surface representation and colored according to domain organization in **a**. Interaction interfaces on each domain are stained by the colors of their interaction partners. **e** The structure of Ubiquitin-like domain (ULD) of UNC80 boxed in **b**. **f** The structure of the zinc-finger domain of UNC79 boxed in **b**. **g** The structure of the zinc-finger domain of UNC80 boxed in **b**.

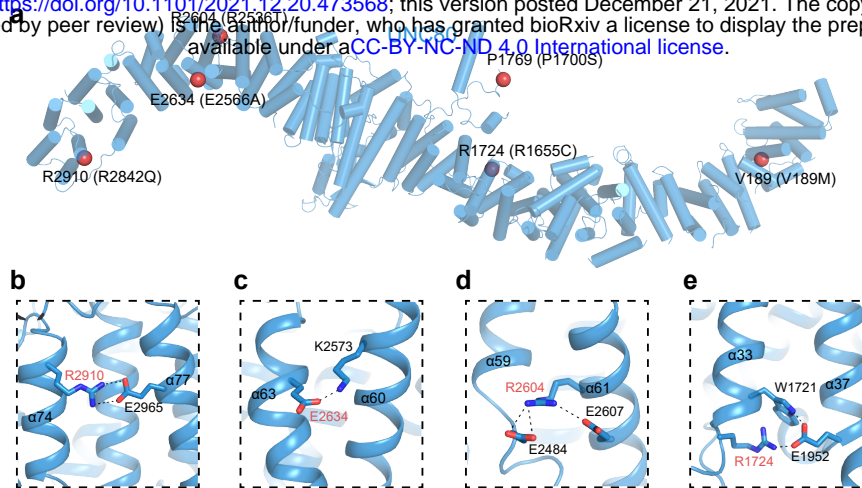


Fig. 3: Structural mapping of disease-causing mutations in UNC80.

a Cartoon representation of UNC80. Helices are shown as cylinders. The C α atoms of disease-causing residues (corresponding mutations in human are indicated in parenthesis) are shown as red spheres. **b-e** Close-up view of disease-causing residue (marked with red) and its interacting residues.

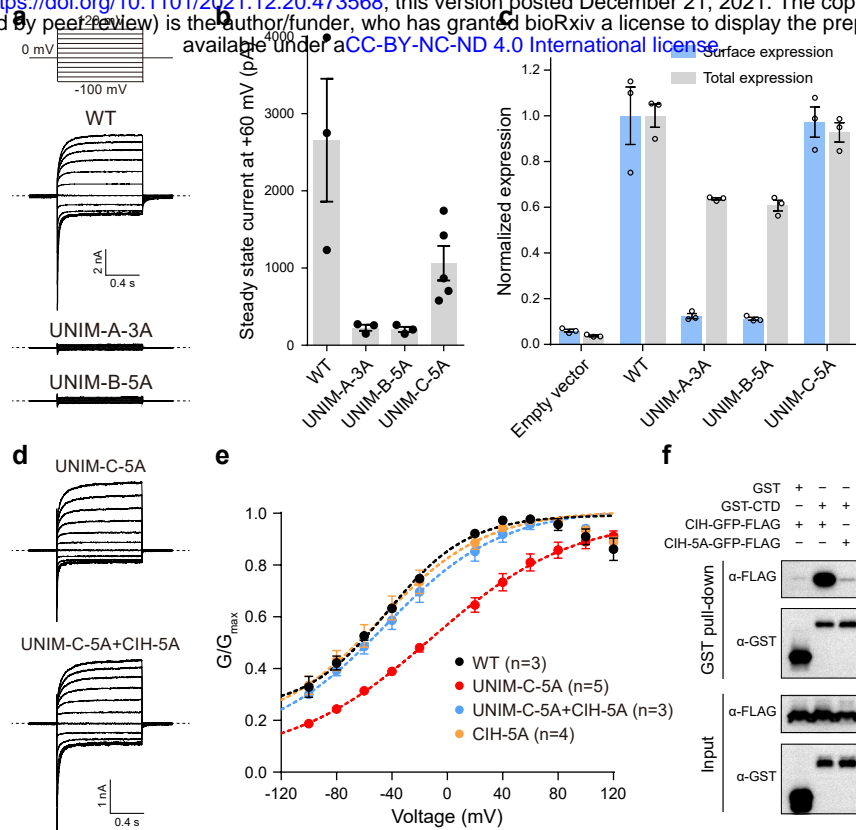


Fig. 5: Mechanism of NALCN activation by UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer.

a The whole-cell voltage step protocol and representative whole-cell current traces of wild-type NALCN, UNIM-A-3A, or UNIM-B-5A mutants in the presence of FAM155A, UNC79, and UNC80. Dashed lines indicate the position of 0 nA. The experiments were repeated independently three times with similar results. **b** Whole-cell steady-state currents of wild-type NALCN, UNIM-A-3A, UNIM-B-5A, or UNIM-C-5A mutants in the presence of FAM155A, UNC79, and UNC80 at +60 mV. Data are presented as mean \pm SEM, $n \geq 3$ biologically independent cells. **c** The normalized surface localization of the NALCN subunit and its mutants in the presence of FAM155A, UNC79, and UNC80. Data are presented as mean \pm SEM, $n = 3$ biologically independent samples. **d** Representative whole-cell current traces of UNIM-C-5A and UNIM-C-5A+CIH-5A mutants of NALCN in the presence of FAM155A, UNC79, and UNC80. The whole-cell voltage step protocol was same as in **a**. Dashed lines indicate the position of 0 nA. The experiments were repeated independently at least three times with similar results. **e** Conductance versus voltage (G-V) curve of wild-type NALCN and its mutants in the presence of FAM155A, UNC79, and UNC80. The conductance at each voltage step was normalized to the maximum conductance obtained by fitting the data into the Boltzmann equation. Data are presented as mean \pm SEM, $n \geq 3$ biologically independent cells. **f** The GST pull-down assay of interactions between NALCN-CTD and CIH-GFP or its mutant CIH-5A. The experiments were repeated independently three times with similar results.

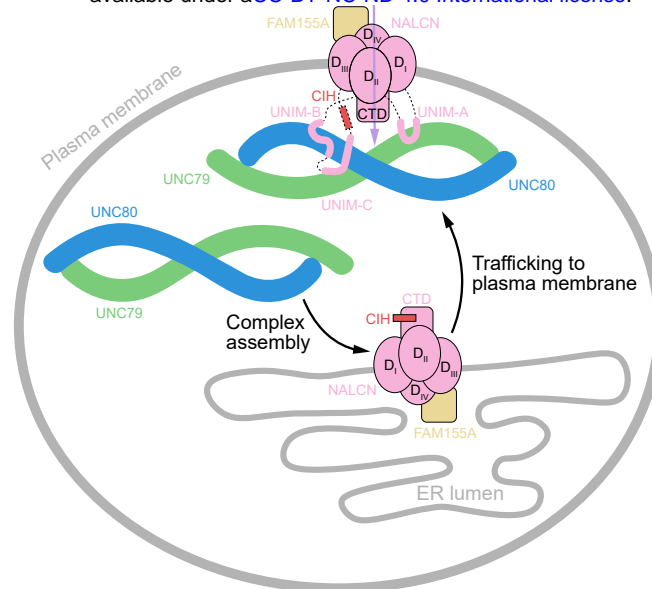


Fig. 6: Mechanistic model of NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 channel complex.

NALCN, FAM155A, UNC79, and UNC80 are shown as cartoons and colored the same as Fig. 1c. Initially, the NALCN-FAM155A subcomplex is assembled in an intracellular compartment, probably in the ER. Subsequently, the UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer binds to the UNIM-A, B, and C of NALCN-FAM155A subcomplex to activate the channel. Binding of UNC79-UNC80 with UNIM-A and UNIM-B promotes plasma localization of NALCN complex. Binding of UNC79-UNC80 with UNIM-C releases the auto-inhibition of NALCN by CIH.

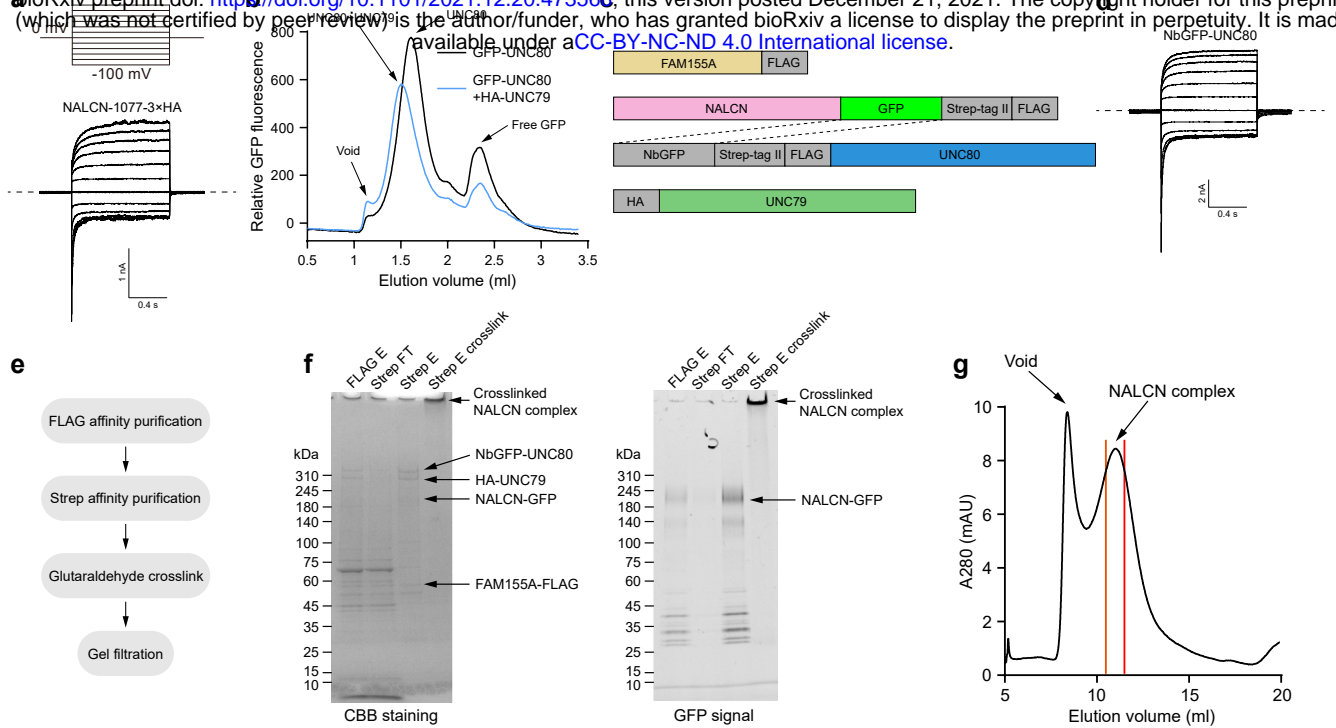


Fig. S1: Electrophysiology and biochemistry characterization of NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary complex.

a The whole-cell voltage step protocol and representative whole-cell currents of NALCN with 3×HA tag inserted between residues 1077 and 1078 in the presence of FAM155A, UNC79, and UNC80. Dashed lines indicate the position of 0 nA. The experiments were repeated independently three times with similar results. **b** Fluorescence-detection size-exclusion chromatography of GFP-UNC80 in the absence (black) or presence of UNC79 (blue). The experiments were repeated independently three times with similar results. **c** The construct used for protein purification. **d** Representative whole-cell currents of constructs shown in **c**. The whole-cell voltage step protocol was same as in **a**. Dashed lines indicate the position of 0 nA. The experiments were repeated independently three times with similar results. **e** The protein purification work-flow. **f** SDS-PAGE of protein purified by affinity-chromatography stained by coomassie blue (left) or detected by in-gel fluorescence using GFP channel (right). **g** Size-exclusion chromatography of crosslinked NALCN complex. Fractions between red lines were pooled for cryo-EM sample preparation.

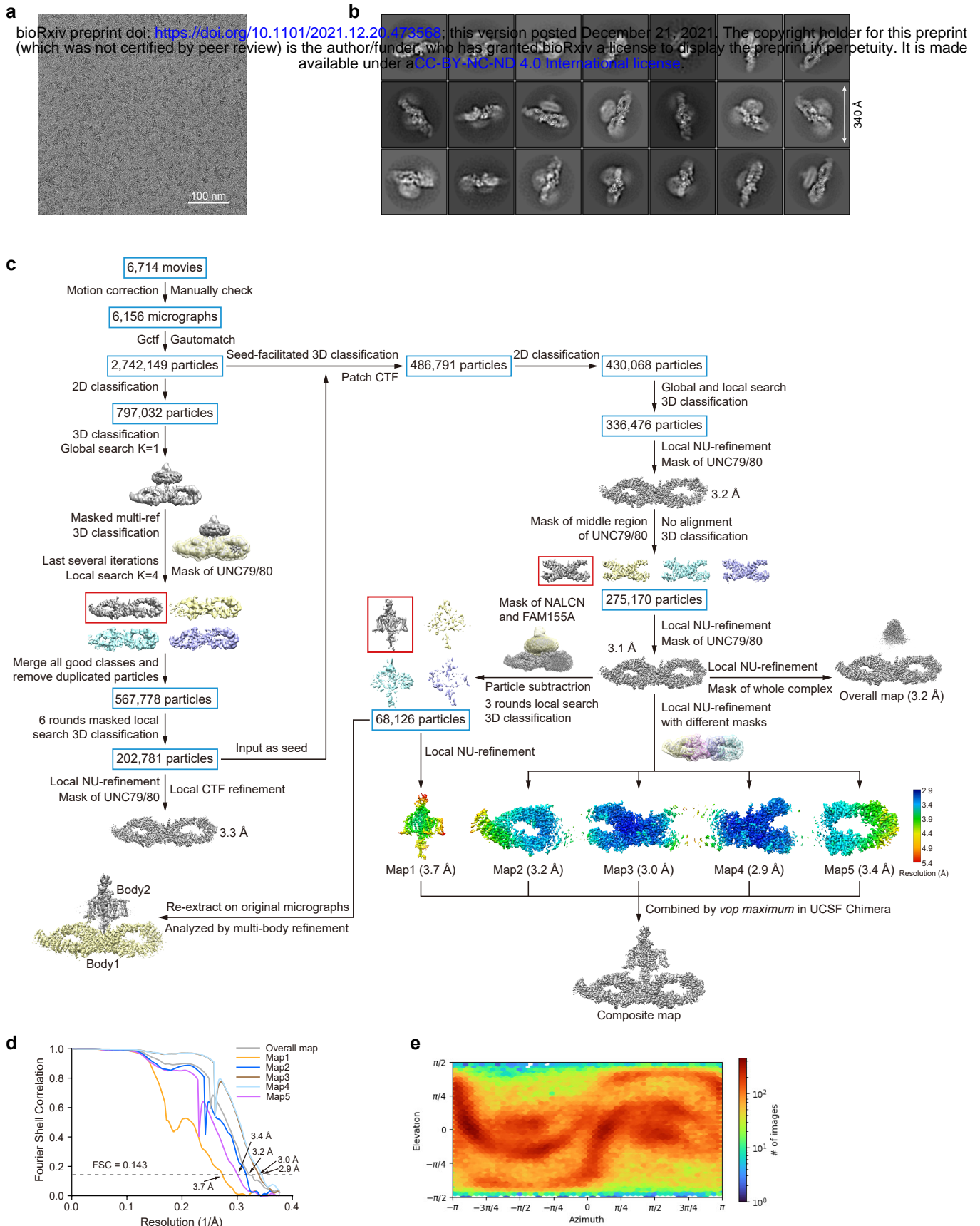


Fig. S2: Cryo-EM image analysis of NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary complex.

a The raw micrograph of NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary complex. **b** 2D-class averages of NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary complex with clear features. **c** Cryo-EM data processing workflow. For details, see 'Cryo-EM image analysis' in the Methods section. **d** Gold-standard Fourier Shell Correlation (FSC) of focus-refined maps shown in **c** after correction of masking effects. **e** Angular distribution of consensus refinement of the quaternary complex.

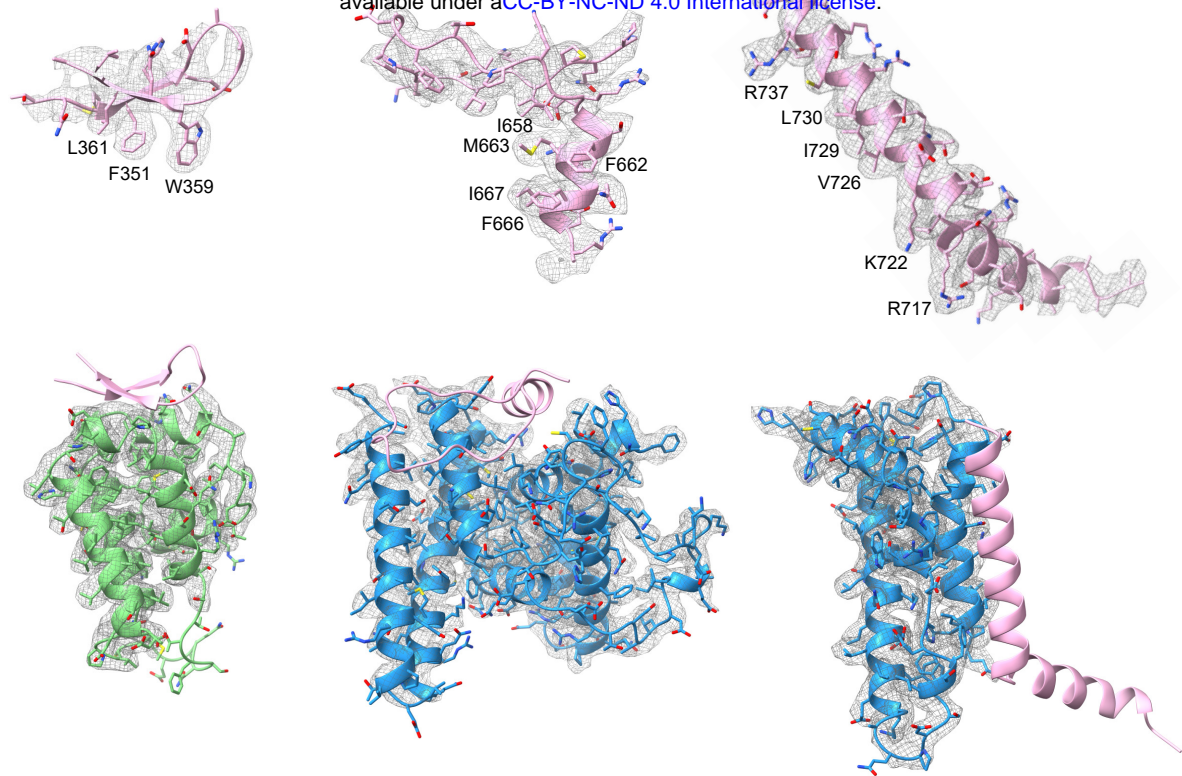
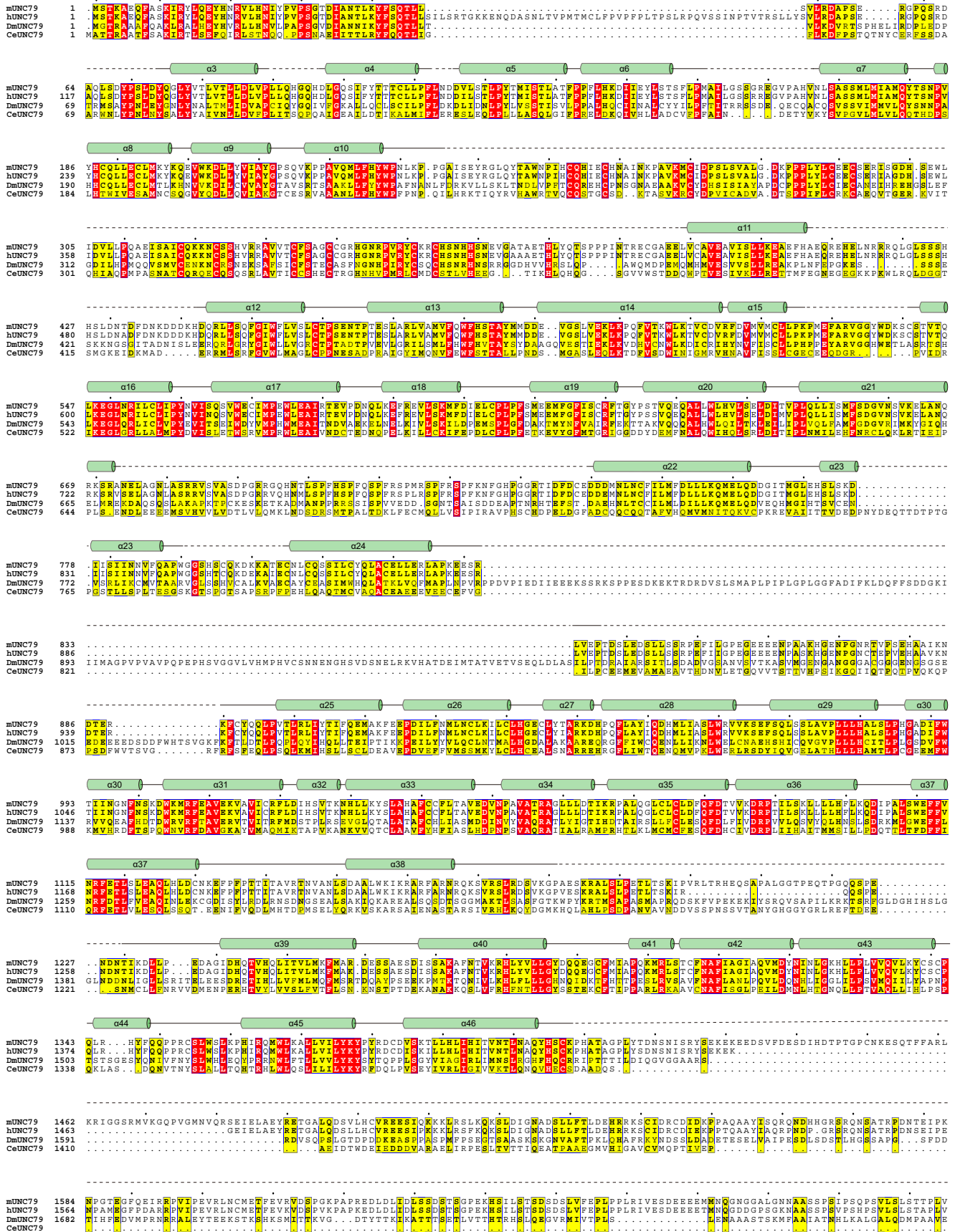


Fig. S3: Electron density maps.

a The electron density map of UNIM-A was shown in gray meshes, with the electron density of its interacting region in UNC79 is shown below. **b** The electron density map of UNIM-B was shown in gray mesh, with the electron density of its interacting region in UNC80 is shown below. **c** The electron density map of UNIM-C was shown in gray mesh, with the electron density of its interacting region in UNC80 is shown below. The contour level was 4-6 σ .



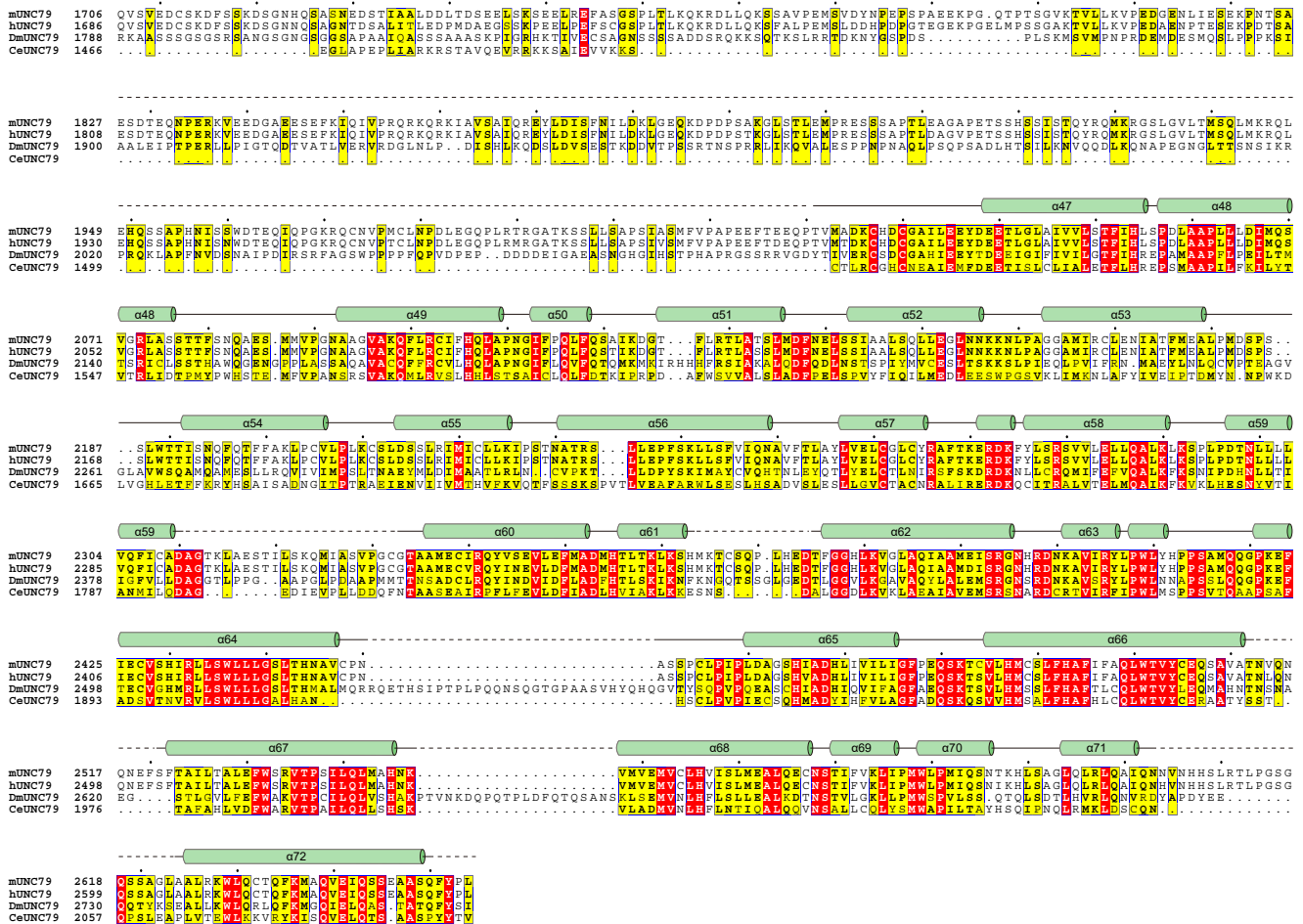
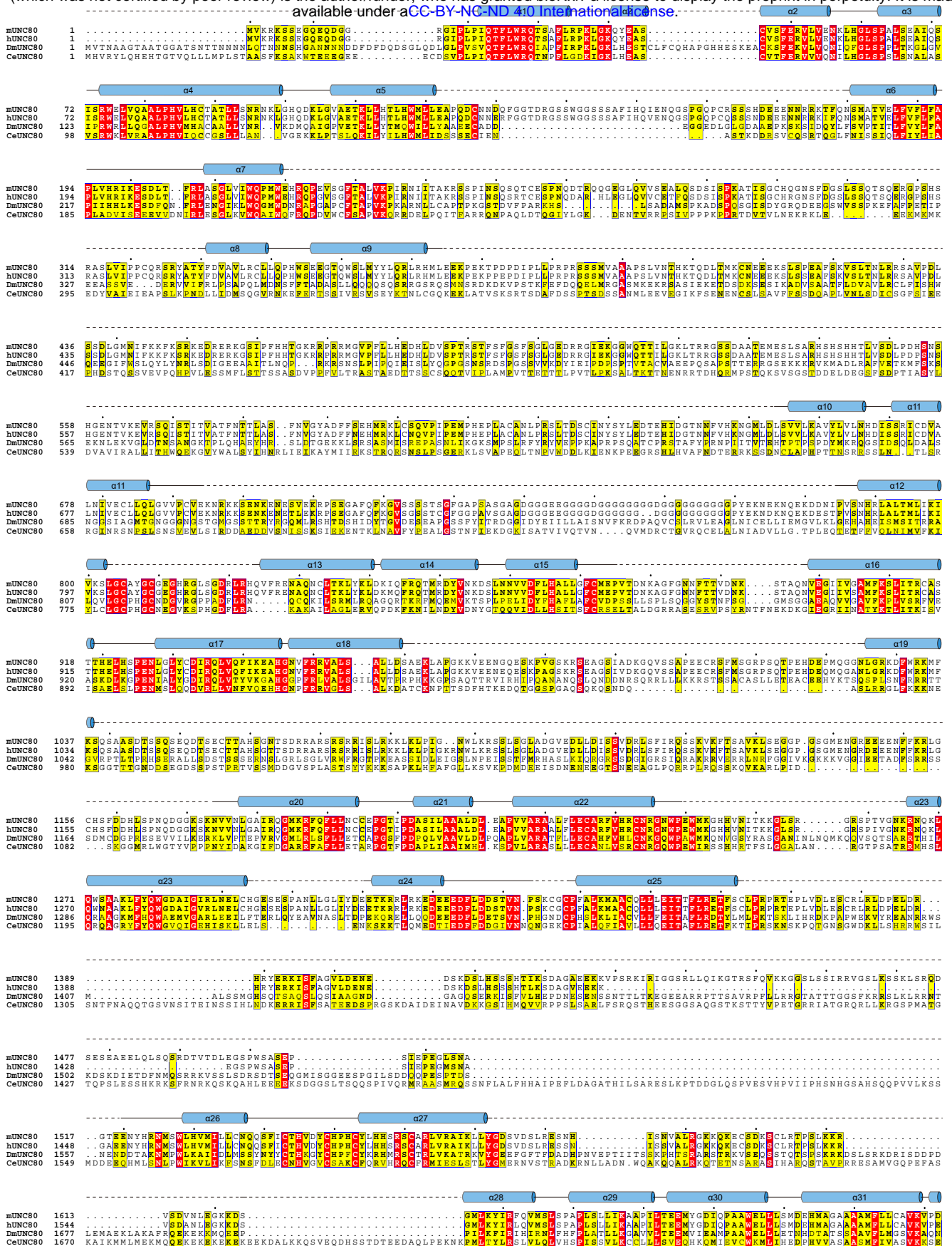


Fig. S4: Sequence alignment of UNC79.

The sequence alignment of UNC79 from mouse (mUNC79), human (hUNC79), *Drosophila melanogaster* (DmUNC79), and *Caenorhabditis elegans* (CeUNC79). Highly conserved and relative conserved residues are shaded in red and yellow, respectively. Secondary structures are shown above and unresolved residues are shown as dashes.



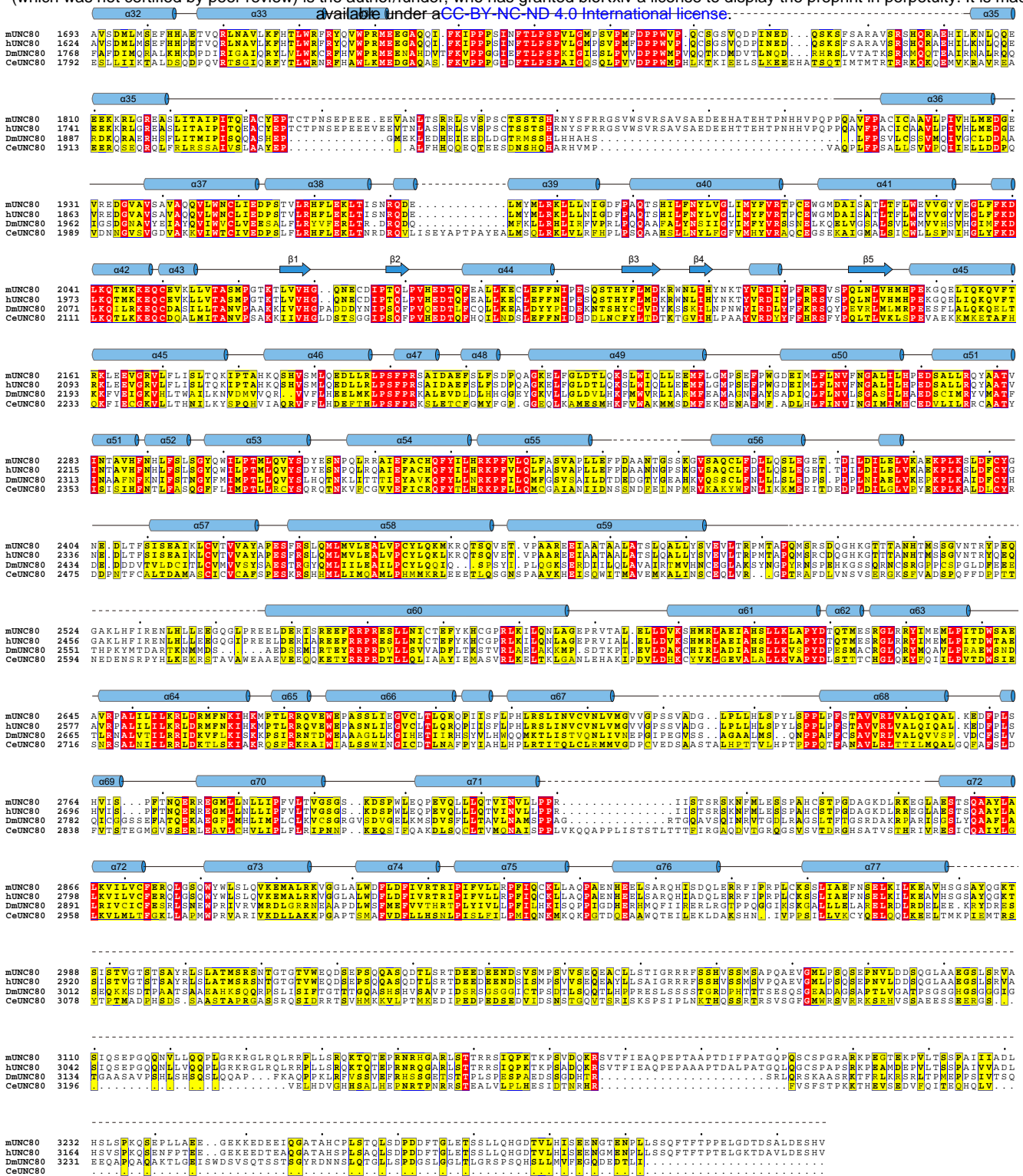


Fig. S5: Sequence alignment of UNC80.

The sequence alignment of UNC80 from mouse (mUNC80), human (hUNC80), *Drosophila melanogaster* (DmUNC80), and *Caenorhabditis elegans* (CeUNC80). Highly conserved and relative conserved residues are shaded in red and yellow, respectively. Secondary structures are shown above and unresolved residues are shown as dashes.

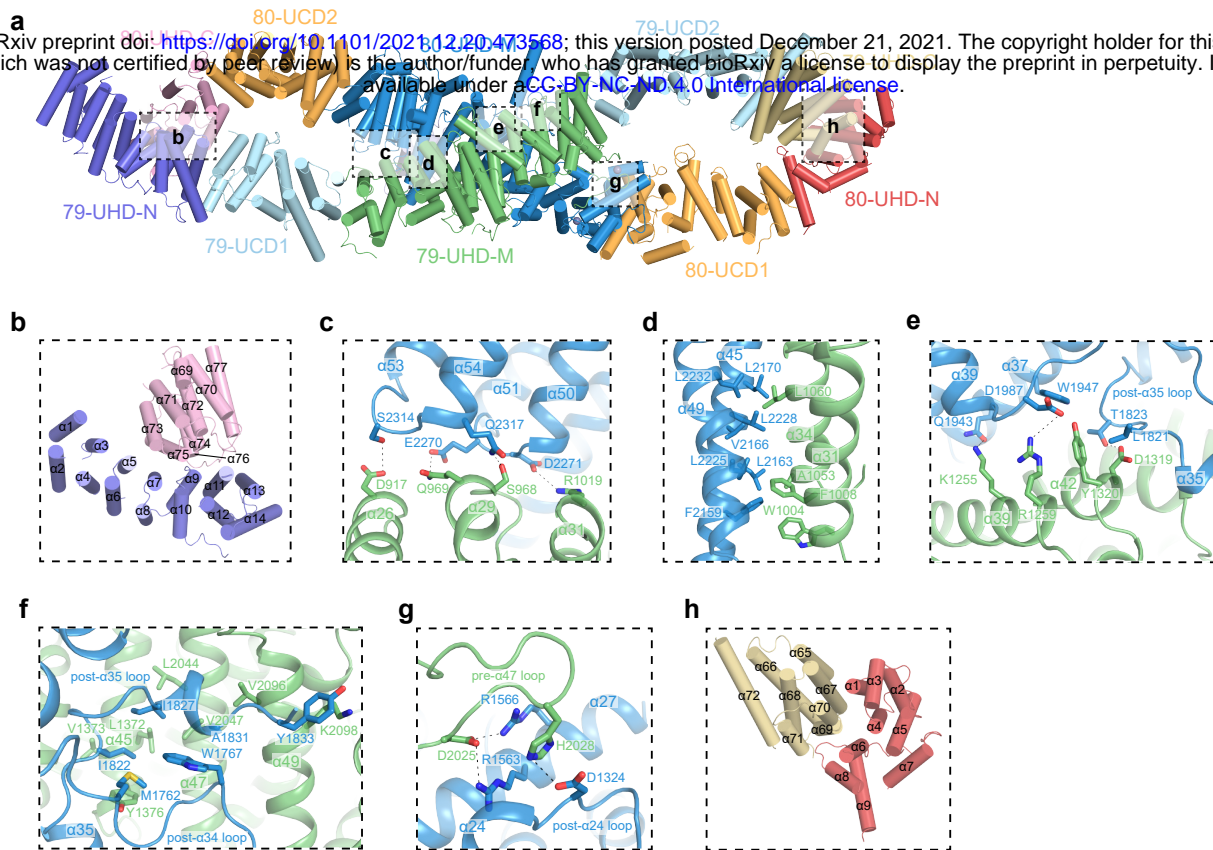


Fig. S6: Details of interactions between UNC79 and UNC80.

a Cartoon representation of UNC79-UNC80 heterodimer. Helices are shown as cylinders. Each domain is colored as in Fig. 2a. **b** The interface between 79-UHD-N and 80-UHD-C boxed in **a**. **c-g** The interface between 79-UHD-M and 80-UHD-M boxed in **a**. **h** The interface between 79-UHD-C and 80-UHD-N boxed in **a**.

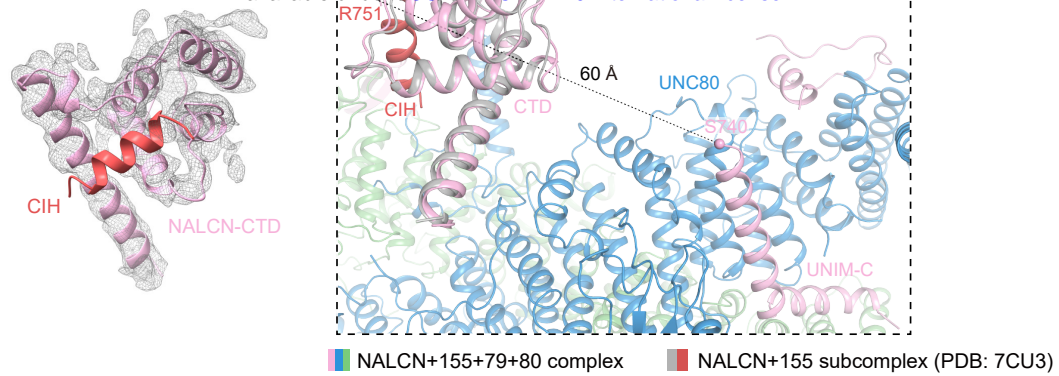


Fig. S7: The Structure of NALCN CTD in NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary complex.

a Electron density map of NALCN CTD was shown in gray meshes. The density of CIH is absent. The position of CIH (red helix) is based on the structure NALCN-FAM155A subcomplex (PDB ID: 7CU3). The contour level was 4σ . **b** The structure of the NALCN-FAM155A subcomplex (PDB ID: 7CU3, gray and red) is aligned onto the NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 quaternary complex using the NALCN subunit as reference. The distance between $C\alpha$ atoms of the N-terminus of CIH (R751) in the NALCN-FAM155A subcomplex and the C-terminus of UNIM-C (S740) is measured and labelled as dashes.

Table S1: Cryo-EM data collection, refinement and validation statistics.

| NALCN-FAM155A-UNC79-UNC80 complex | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| PDB ID | 7W7G |
| EMDB ID | EMD-32344 |
| Data collection and processing | |
| Magnification | 105,000 × |
| Voltage (kV) | 300 |
| Electron exposure (e ⁻ /Å ²) | 50 |
| Defocus range (µm) | -1.5 to -1.8 |
| Pixel size (Å) | 1.045 |
| Symmetry imposed | <i>C1</i> |
| Initial particle images (no.) | 2,742,149 |
| Final particle images (no.) | 68,126/275,170 [#] |
| Map resolution (Å) | 3.7/3.2/3.0/2.9/3.4* |
| FSC threshold | 0.143 |
| Map resolution range (Å) | 250.0-2.9 |
| Refinement | |
| Initial model used | 7CU3 and AlphaFold2 prediction |
| Model resolution (Å) | 3.1 |
| FSC threshold | 0.5 |
| Model resolution range (Å) | 250.0-3.1 |
| Map sharpening <i>B</i> factor (Å ²) | -136.1/-103.1/-111.7/-110.3/-115.5* |
| Model composition | |
| Non-hydrogen atoms | 38,143 |
| Protein | 4,758 |
| Ligand | 5 |
| <i>B</i> factors (Å ²) | |
| Protein | 96.29 |
| Ligand | 136.02 |
| R.m.s. deviations | |
| Bond lengths (Å) | 0.004 |
| Bond angles (°) | 0.516 |
| Validation | |
| MolProbity score | 2.09 |
| Clashscore | 8.02 |
| Poor rotamers (%) | 3.29 |
| Ramachandran plot | |
| Favored (%) | 96.12 |
| Allowed (%) | 3.88 |
| Disallowed (%) | 0.00 |

[#]The numbers of final particle images correspond to map1/map2-5 in Fig. S2c.

*The numbers of map resolution and map sharpening *B* factor correspond to map1/2/3/4/5 in Fig. S2c.