

INTRODUCTION

Amoxicillin is an aminopenicillin that has been in clinical use for decades. Despite its abundant use, amoxicillin pharmacokinetics (PK) has been described in a few studies only. Some have shown nonlinearity in absorption¹⁻⁵. A population PK model of oral amoxicillin tablets is not yet available. The aim of this study was to describe the population PK of oral amoxicillin with a focus on absorption and consequences for exposure.

METHODS

Re-used data of trial 25000/360 (Smith-Kline Beecham, 1994):

- 28 healthy male volunteers
- amoxicillin/clavulanic acid tablets on 2 days (randomized order) at the start of a meal with 200ml water:
 1. twice-daily (b.i.d.) 875/125mg or 500/125mg
 2. three-times daily (t.i.d.) 500/125mg or 250/125mg
- blood samples: 0,0.5,1,1.5,2,2.5,3,4,6,8,10,12 h (t.i.d. ≤8h)
- 140 concentration-time profiles with 1428 samples.

Non-compartmental PK analysis with PKSolver.

Population PK analysis with nonlinear mixed effect modelling: NONMEM 7.2 (FOCE+I). Model selection criteria: decrease in objective function value, diagnostic plots and visual predictive checks (VPC's). Comparison of:

- first-order / zero-order / Michaelis-Menten absorption
- lag-time / transit compartments
- with / without absorption storage compartment
- one / two distribution compartments.

A non-parametric bootstrap method was performed to obtain the 95%CI of each parameter.

Monte-Carlo simulations (n=5000) with several amoxicillin dosing regimens.

Table 1. Population PK parameters

Parameter	Estimate	95%CI	BSV (%)	95%CI
BIO (-)	0.7 (fixed)	—	35.1	29.2 – 71.6
MTT (h)	0.524	0.455 – 0.591	46.8	38.1 – 55.9
N (-)	4.41	3.29 – 8.20	112.7	73.5 – 130.1
Vm (mg/h)	1220	960 – 2036	31.9	21.5 – 120.0
Km (mg)	287	191 – 572	98.7	78.5 – 164.1
Vc (L)	27.7	25.0 – 29.6	34.4	26.4 – 70.9
CL (L/h)	21.3	20.1 – 22.2	25.8	17.0 – 66.7
Q (L/h)	1.70	1.07 – 3.03		
Vp (L)	3.02	2.48 – 3.89		
Add. error	0.0524	0.0406 – 0.700		
Prop. error	0.0824	0.0680 – 0.0931		

BIO: bioavailability
MTT: mean transit time to depot
N: number of transit compartments
Ktr: transit rate constant
Vm: maximal absorption rate

Km: amount corresponding to 50% Vm
Vc: central volume of distribution
CL: clearance
Q: intercompartmental clearance
Vp: peripheral volume of distribution

RESULTS

Non-compartmental PK analysis: Figure 1 shows a non-proportional increase in AUC_{0-24h} to the dose. A dose-dependent saturation was also shown for C_{max}. T_{max} increased with rising doses. t_{1/2} was comparable for the 4 doses.

Population PK analysis: Amoxicillin PK was best described by a transit compartment model⁶ followed by Michaelis-Menten absorption, 2 distribution compartments and first-order elimination (figure 2). The PK parameters estimates and between-subject variability (BSV) are described in table 1. None of the (limited available) covariates were retained in the final model. A combined error model was used. The diagnostic plots and VPC's (figure 3+4) indicate a good predictive performance.

Monte Carlo simulations: Results shown in figure 5.

Adverse events: Diarrhoea was most frequently reported. The frequency declined with total daily doses (5, 4, 2, 2 events with 1750/250, 1500/375, 1000/250, 750/375 mg/day).

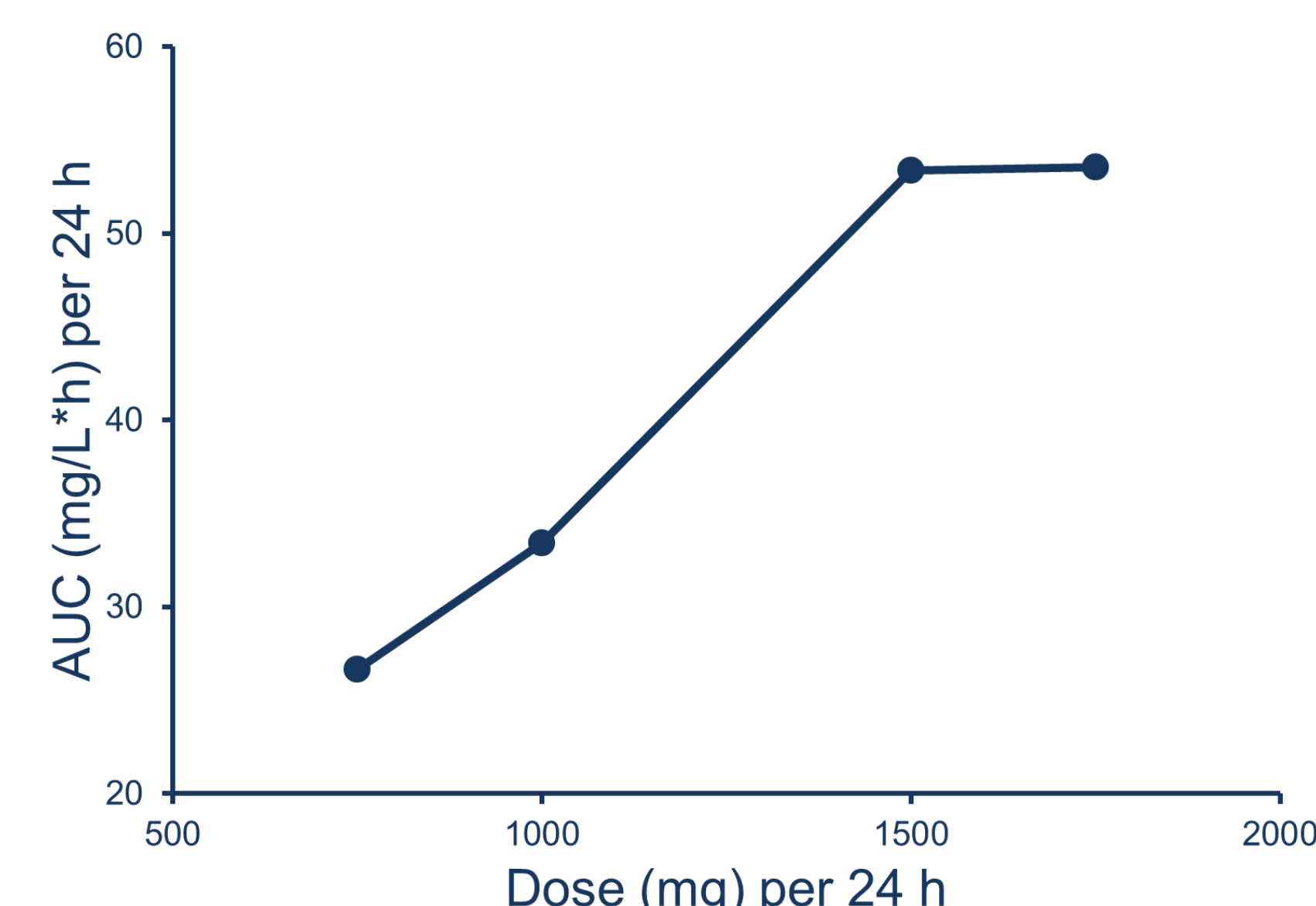


Figure 1. AUC_{0-24h} vs. dose_{0-24h}

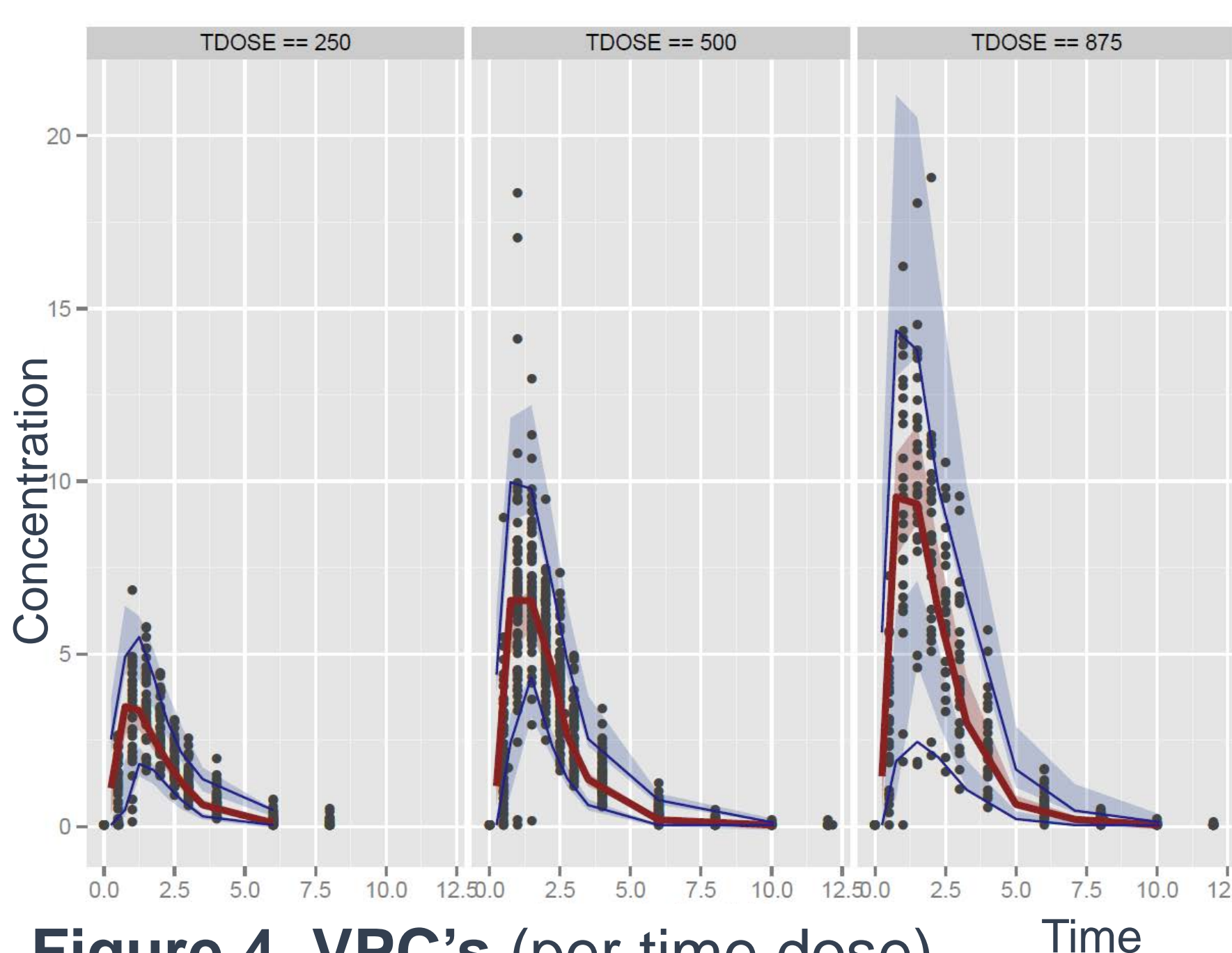


Figure 4. VPC's (per time dose)
red+blue lines: 50th, 5th, 95th percentile of observations; red+blue areas: 95%CI of corresponding percentiles of predictions.

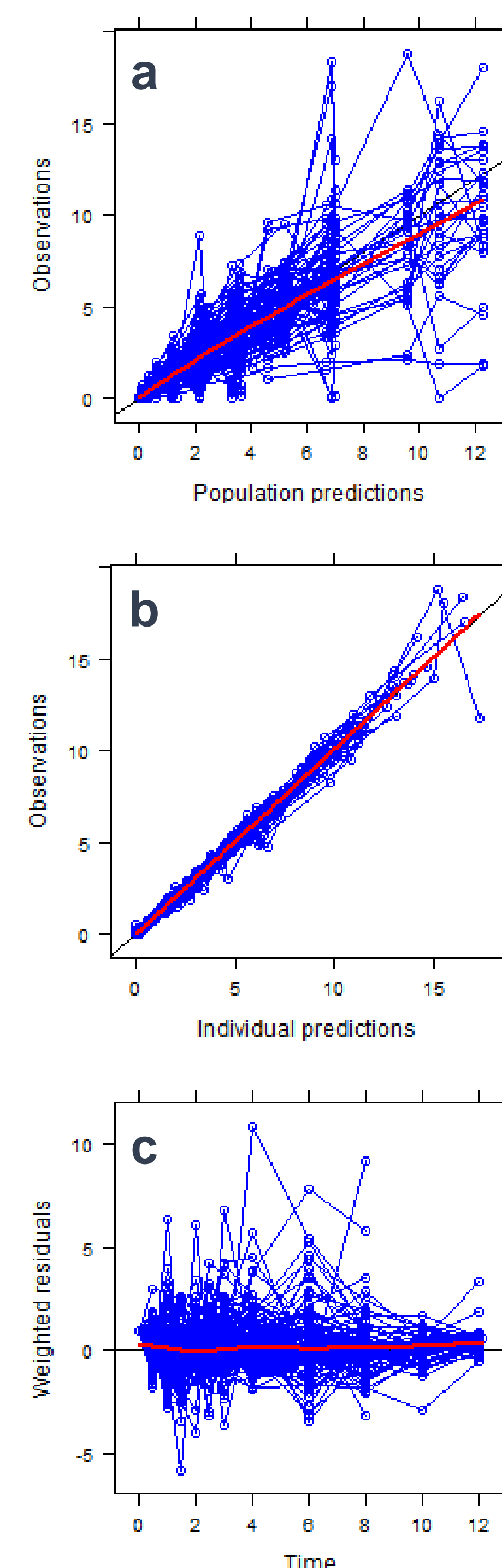


Figure 3a-c. Diagnostic plots

CONCLUSIONS

Amoxicillin absorption is dose-dependent and best described by a Michaelis-Menten absorption model. A saturable absorption may be wasteful in case of high doses and can lead to an increased risk of adverse events and disturbances in intestinal microflora⁷.

Twice daily amoxicillin dosing is unfavourable to three- or four-times daily dosing. These results can be used for dose optimization and breakpoint setting.

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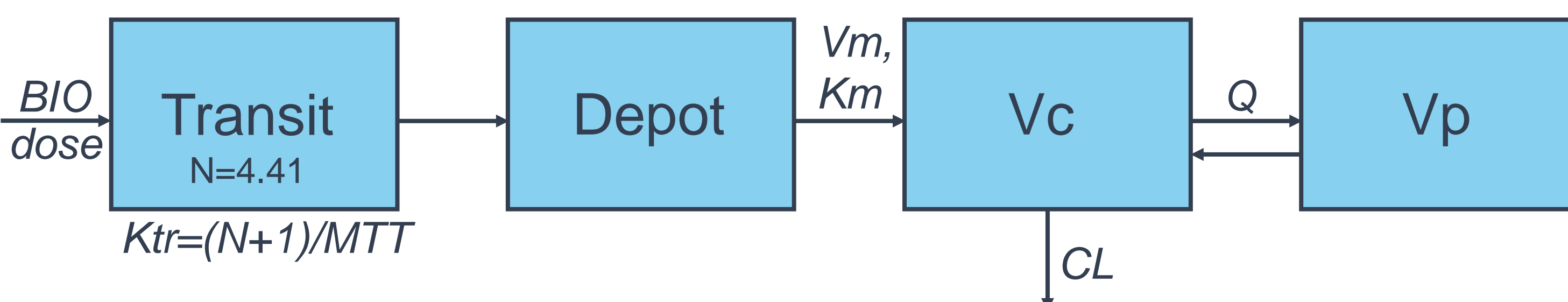


Figure 2. Schematic representation of the final model

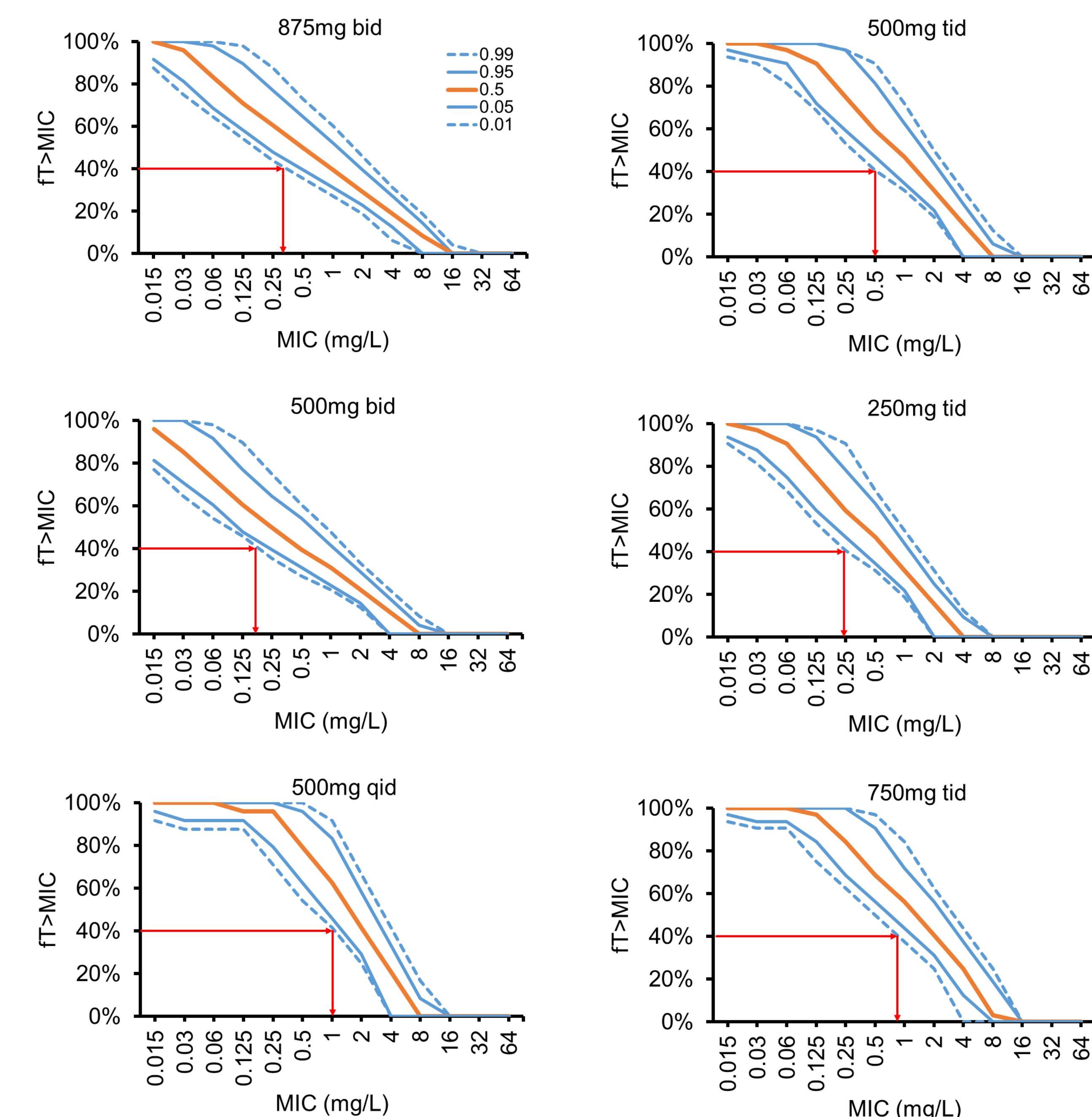


Figure 5. %fT>MIC vs. MIC for several dosing regimens

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