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Molecular recognition via protein-ligand interactions is of fundamental importance to numerous processes in living organisms. The behaviour of biomolecules in a temperature gradient, i.e. as thermodiffusion or thermophoresis, changes when a ligand binds. Microscale thermophoresis (MST) uses the sensitivity of the thermophoretic response to access information on binding dynamics, although the physicochemical processes are still unclear. Thermophoresis is promising as a tool to gain information on the hydration layer and how it changes due to complex formation. We use infra-red thermal diffusion forced Fourier transform spectroscopy (FT-IR) in a temperature range from 20 to 300 K to investigate the thermodiffusion properties. In previous studies, we used cyclo-oxygenase-1 (COX) as a model system for complexes and showed that the temperature dependence of the thermodiffusion behaviour is sensitive to the solvent in interactions. Now, we shift our focus to the protein streptavidin and its bioincompatible complex with cyclo-oxygenase-1, formation of the C-bio in complex leads to a temperature sensitive response of the thermodiffusion behaviour, although the effect is more pronounced. This indicates a less hydrophilic complex. To quantify the influence of structural fluctuations and conformational motion of the protein on the entropic change of its hydration layer upon ligand binding, we combine quasi-elastic incoherent neutron scattering (QENS) and isothermal titration calorimetry (ITC) data. As the QENS measurements are only possible in heavy water, the ITC needs to be performed in heavy water as well in order to gain a better understanding of the hydration layer. The aim of this work is to develop a microscopic understanding of the correlation between the strength of the solvent interactions and the thermophoretic behaviour.

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