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OVERVIEW OF THE ELECTROPHYSIOLOGICAL MODELS FOR THE LEFT VENTRICLE SIMULATIONS

Bogdan Milićević[1,2*], Nenad Filipović[2,3]

[1] Institute for Information Technologies, University of Kragujevac, Kragujevac, Serbia
[2] Research and Development Center for Bioengineering, Kragujevac, Serbia
[3] Faculty of Engineering Sciences, University of Kragujevac, Kragujevac, Serbia

[*] Corresponding author: bogdan.milicevic@uni.kg.ac.rs

Abstract: Electrophysiological models play a crucial role in understanding the complex dynamics of the heart, particularly the left ventricle. These models provide insights into the mechanisms underlying cardiac function and are essential for developing treatments for cardiac diseases. This paper presents an overview of various electrophysiological models used for simulating the left ventricle, including the van der Pol oscillator, the FitzHugh-Nagumo model, the Luo-Rudy model, and the O'Hara-Rudy model. By exploring the historical development, applications, and future directions of these models, this paper aims to highlight their significance and potential in advancing cardiac research and clinical practice.

Keywords: electrophysiology, cardiac cycle, left ventricle, action potentials.

1. INTRODUCTION

The heart is a vital organ responsible for pumping blood throughout the body, and its proper function is critical for maintaining health. The left ventricle, in particular, plays a significant role in ensuring efficient circulation by pumping oxygenated blood into the systemic circulation. Understanding the electrophysiological properties of the left ventricle is essential for diagnosing and treating various cardiac conditions, including arrhythmias and heart failure. Electrophysiological models are mathematical representations that describe the electrical activity of cardiac cells and tissues. These models are invaluable tools for researchers and clinicians, providing insights into the mechanisms of cardiac function and dysfunction. They allow for the simulation of various conditions and interventions, aiding in the development of new treatments and therapies. This paper provides a comprehensive overview of the electrophysiological models used for left ventricle simulations. It begins with a discussion of basic concepts in electrophysiological modeling and the historical development of cardiac models. The paper then delves into specific models, including the van der Pol oscillator, the FitzHugh-Nagumo model, the Luo-Rudy model, and the O'Hara-Rudy model, examining their structure, applications, and limitations. Additionally, other notable models are briefly discussed to provide a broader perspective on the field. The paper concludes with an exploration of the applications, challenges, and future directions of electrophysiological modeling in cardiac research.

2. BASIC CONCEPTS OF ELECTROPHYSIOLOGICAL MODELING

Electrophysiological modeling is a field of study that involves creating mathematical representations of the electrical properties and behavior of biological cells and tissues. In the context of cardiac research, these models simulate the electrical activity

of heart cells (cardiomyocytes), which is crucial for understanding the mechanisms underlying normal and abnormal heart function. The heart's electrical activity is initiated and propagated by ion channels, pumps, and exchangers in the cell membranes of cardiomyocytes. These elements work together to generate and propagate action potentials, which are rapid changes in membrane potential that trigger heart muscle contractions. The key phases of a cardiac action potential include:

- Depolarization: A rapid influx of sodium ions (Na+) into the cell, leading to a positive shift in membrane potential.
- Plateau Phase: A sustained influx of calcium ions (Ca2+) and efflux of potassium ions (K+), maintaining a prolonged depolarized state.
- Repolarization: Efflux of K+ ions, returning the membrane potential to its resting state.

Electrophysiological models aim to replicate these phases by using mathematical equations that describe the ionic currents and voltage changes across the cell membrane.Simulations using electrophysiological models provide a powerful tool for investigating cardiac function under various conditions. They allow researchers to:

- Study the effects of genetic mutations on cardiac electrophysiology.
- Test the impact of pharmacological agents on heart function.
- Explore the mechanisms underlying arrhythmias and other cardiac disorders.
- Develop and optimize medical devices such as pacemakers and defibrillators.

By providing a controlled and reproducible environment, simulations help bridge the gap between experimental observations and theoretical understanding.

3. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF CARDIAC MODELS

The development of electrophysiological models has evolved significantly over the decades, starting from simple representations to more complex and detailed models that capture the intricacies of cardiac electrophysiology.

3.1. Early Models and Their Limitations

One of the earliest models of excitable tissue is the Hodgkin-Huxley model, developed in the 1950s to describe the action potential in the squid giant axon. While not a cardiac model per se, it laid the groundwork for subsequent cardiac models. The Hodgkin-Huxley model uses a set of differential equations to describe the ionic currents and voltage changes across the cell membrane. However, the Hodgkin-Huxley model was limited in its ability to accurately represent cardiac cells, which have different ionic currents and more complex behavior compared to neurons. This led to the development of cardiac-specific models.

3.2. Evolution of Modeling Techniques

The first cardiac-specific models emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. Notable among these is the Beeler-Reuter model, which introduced more realistic descriptions of cardiac action potentials by incorporating additional ionic currents relevant to heart cells. This model was a significant advancement but still had limitations in terms of accurately simulating the detailed electrophysiological properties of cardiac tissues. With advances in computational power and experimental techniques, more sophisticated models were developed. These models incorporated a wider range of ionic currents, detailed descriptions of intracellular calcium dynamics, and more accurate representations of the cell's geometry and tissue structure.

This paper will focus on several key models that have been influential in the field of cardiac electrophysiology:

- The van der Pol Oscillator: An early and simple model used to describe oscillatory behavior in biological systems.
- The FitzHugh-Nagumo Model: A simplification of the Hodgkin-Huxley model, useful for understanding excitable media.
- The Luo-Rudy Model: A comprehensive model that incorporates detailed ionic currents and has been widely used in cardiac simulations.
- The O'Hara-Rudy Model: An advanced model that provides a highly detailed and accurate representation of human ventricular myocytes.

3.3. The van der Pol oscillator

The van der Pol oscillator, introduced by Balthasar van der Pol in the 1920s, is a non-linear oscillator with damping [1]. It is described by the differential equation:

$$\frac{d^2x}{d^2t} - \mu(1 - x^2)\frac{dx}{dt} + x = 0$$

where x represents the system's state variable, and μ is a parameter that controls the nonlinearity and the damping. The van der Pol oscillator is characterized by its ability to produce self-sustained oscillations with a stable limit cycle, making it useful for modeling rhythmic behaviors in biological systems, including the heart. In cardiac modeling, the van der Pol oscillator has been used to represent the rhythmic contractions of the heart. It provides a simple yet insightful way to study the dynamics of oscillatory systems. Although it does not capture the detailed electrophysiology of cardiac cells, it serves as a useful tool for understanding basic principles of cardiac rhythm and synchronization. The main strength of the van der Pol oscillator lies in its simplicity and ability to model oscillatory behavior. However, its limitations include: (1) Lack of detail in representing ionic currents and action potentials, (2) Inability to simulate complex behaviors observed in cardiac tissues, (3) Limited applicability to detailed physiological studies.

Despite these limitations, the van der Pol oscillator remains a valuable educational tool and a starting point for more complex models [2,3].

3.4. The FitzHugh-Nagumo Model

The FitzHugh-Nagumo model, developed in the 1960s by Richard FitzHugh and J. Nagumo, is a simplification of the Hodgkin-Huxley model [4,5]. It reduces the complexity of the original model while retaining essential features of excitability and action potential generation. The model is described by the following set of equations:

$$\frac{dv}{dt} = v - \frac{v^3}{3} - \mathrm{w} + I$$
$$\frac{dw}{dt} = \epsilon(v + a - bw)$$

where v represents membrane potential, w is recovery variable, I is external stimulus currents, a, b and ϵ are parameters that control the dynamics of the model.

The FitzHugh-Nagumo model captures the essential features of excitability and refractory periods, making it useful for studying wave propagation in excitable media, including cardiac tissue [6,7]. The FitzHugh-Nagumo model simplifies the Hodgkin-Huxley model by reducing the number of variables and equations. Instead of modeling multiple ionic currents in detail, it uses a single recovery variable to represent the combined effects of all recovery processes. This simplification makes the model more tractable for analytical and numerical studies while still capturing the key dynamics of action potentials. Despite its simplicity, the FitzHugh-Nagumo model has been effectively used to simulate cardiac action potentials and study phenomena such as: (1) Wave propagation and reentry in cardiac tissue, (2) The effects of external stimuli on excitability, (3) The mechanisms of arrhythmias and other pathological conditions. Its ability to generate action potentials and support wave propagation makes it a valuable tool for investigating basic principles of cardiac electrophysiology. The FitzHugh-Nagumo model offers several advantages, including simplicity and ease of use, analytical tractability. ability to capture essential features of excitability and wave propagation. However, its limitations include: lack of detailed representation of ionic currents, inability to accurately model the fine details of cardiac action potentials, limited applicability to complex physiological studies. Overall, the FitzHugh-Nagumo model is a powerful tool for studying fundamental aspects of cardiac electrophysiology, particularly in educational and theoretical contexts.

3.5. The Luo-Rudy model

The Luo-Rudy model, developed by Ching-Kuan Luo and Yoram Rudy in the 1990s, represents a significant advancement in cardiac electrophysiological modeling [8]. It provides a detailed description of the ionic currents and intracellular processes that govern the action potential in cardiac cells. The model has undergone several iterations, with the LRd (Luo-Rudy dynamic) model being one of the most widely used versions. The Luo-Rudy model consists of a set of differential equations that describe the dynamics of various ionic currents, The model also includes equations for the intracellular calcium dynamics and the effects of calcium-induced calcium release (CICR) from the sarcoplasmic reticulum. The key equations for the ionic currents are:

$$I_{Na} = g_{Na} m^3 hj(V - E_{Na})$$
$$I_{CaL} = g_{CaL} df(V - E_{Ca})$$
$$I_{K1} = g_{K1}(V - E_K)/(1 + e^{[0.07(V+80)]})$$

where I_{Na} represents sodium current, I_{CaL} is L-type calcium current, I_{K1} is potassium current, g represents the conductance of the respective ions, m, h, j, d, f, X_{r1} and X_{r2} are gating variables, and is membrane potential.

The model's complexity allows for a highly detailed and accurate simulation of cardiac action potentials, making it a valuable tool for both basic research and clinical applications. The Luo-Rudy model has been extensively used to simulate the electrical activity of the left ventricle. Its detailed representation of ionic currents and intracellular processes makes it ideal for studying various aspects of ventricular function, including:

- The effects of drugs on cardiac electrophysiology.
- The mechanisms of arrhythmias and their treatment.
- The impact of genetic mutations on ion channel function.
- The development and testing of medical devices.

By providing a realistic and comprehensive simulation environment, the Luo-Rudy model has contributed significantly to our understanding of left ventricle electrophysiology [10,11]. Compared to simpler models like the van der Pol oscillator and the FitzHugh-Nagumo model, the Luo-Rudy model offers a much more detailed and accurate representation of cardiac electrophysiology. While this complexity comes at the cost of increased computational requirements, the insights gained from such detailed simulations justify the trade-off. The Luo-Rudy model is also more detailed than earlier cardiac-specific models like the Beeler-Reuter model, providing a more comprehensive description of ionic currents and intracellular processes.

3.6. The O'Hara Rudy model

The O'Hara-Rudy model, developed by Thomas O'Hara and Yoram Rudy in 2011, represents one of the most advanced and detailed models of human ventricular myocytes [12]. It builds upon previous models, incorporating extensive experimental data to provide a highly accurate representation of the electrophysiological properties of human heart cells. The O'Hara-Rudy model includes detailed descriptions of various ionic currents, calcium handling processes, and the interactions between different cellular components. Key features of the model include:

- Detailed representation of sodium, calcium, and potassium currents.
- Incorporation of calcium-induced calcium release (CICR) and intracellular calcium dynamics.
- Inclusion of late sodium current and its role in action potential duration.
- Description of the effects of beta-adrenergic stimulation on ionic currents and calcium handling.

The model is described by a set of differential equations that govern the behavior of ionic currents and intracellular processes. Some of the key equations are:

$$I_{Na} = g_{Na} m^3 hj(V - E_{Na})$$
$$I_{CaL} = g_{CaL} df(V - E_{Ca})$$
$$I_{Kr} = g_{Kr} X_{r1} X_{r2}(V - E_K)$$

where g represents the conductance of the respective ions, m, h, j, d, f, X_{r1} and X_{r2} are gating variables, and V is membrane potential. The O'Hara-Rudy model also includes equations for intracellular calcium dynamics, such as:

$$\frac{d[Ca^{2+}]i}{dt} = -(I_{CaL} + I_{NCX} - 2I_{NaCa})/(2 \times V_{cell} \times F)$$

where $[Ca^{2+}]i$ is the intracellular calcium concentration, I_{NCX} is the sodium-calcium exchanger current, and I_{NaCa} is the sodium-calcium exchange current.

The O'Hara-Rudy model offers several significant advantages for simulating the left ventricle. One of its primary strengths is its high accuracy, as the model incorporates extensive experimental data, providing a highly accurate representation of human ventricular myocytes. This level of precision is crucial for generating realistic simulations that can reliably inform both research and clinical practice. Additionally, the model's comprehensive detail includes detailed descriptions of various ionic currents and intracellular processes, which are essential for creating realistic simulations of cardiac electrophysiology. The model's accuracy and detail also make it

highly relevant for clinical applications, such as drug testing and personalized medicine. By providing a detailed and accurate depiction of cardiac function, the O'Hara-Rudy model is a valuable tool for advancing our understanding of heart physiology and improving clinical outcomes.

The O'Hara-Rudy model has been extensively utilized in numerous studies to investigate various aspects of cardiac electrophysiology [13,14]. One notable application is in drug testing, where the model has been used to study the effects of various drugs on cardiac electrophysiology, aiding in the identification of potential proarrhythmic effects. This capability is particularly important for developing safe and effective pharmaceutical treatments. In genetic studies, researchers have employed the model to investigate the impact of genetic mutations on ion channel function and overall cardiac electrophysiology, providing insights into the mechanisms of inherited cardiac conditions. Additionally, the model has been used to develop personalized simulations based on patient-specific data, enhancing the diagnosis and treatment of cardiac conditions. These personalized simulations are a crucial step toward personalized medicine, allowing for tailored treatment strategies that improve patient outcomes.

3.7. Other Notable Models

In addition to the major models discussed, several other electrophysiological models have made significant contributions to the field. These models provide alternative approaches and additional insights into cardiac electrophysiology.

The Beeler-Reuter model, developed in the 1970s, was one of the first cardiac-specific models to provide a detailed description of the action potential in ventricular myocytes. It includes four ionic currents and provides a foundation for subsequent models. Despite its limitations, the Beeler-Reuter model remains a valuable tool for studying basic principles of cardiac electrophysiology.

The Ten Tusscher model, developed by Kristen Ten Tusscher and colleagues, provides a detailed representation of human ventricular myocytes. It includes a comprehensive description of various ionic currents and intracellular processes. The model has been widely used in studies of wave propagation, arrhythmias, and drug effects.

The Noble model, developed by Denis Noble in the 1960s, is one of the earliest cardiac models. It provides a simplified description of cardiac action potentials, focusing on the main ionic currents. The model has been updated and refined over the years, incorporating additional data and improving its accuracy. The Noble model remains a valuable tool for studying cardiac electrophysiology.

While the major models discussed earlier (van der Pol oscillator, FitzHugh-Nagumo model, Luo-Rudy model, O'Hara-Rudy model) offer varying levels of detail and complexity, the additional models provide alternative approaches and insights. The choice of model depends on the specific research question and the required level of detail and accuracy.

4. APPLICATIONS AND IMPACT OF ELECTROPHYSIOLOGICAL MODELS

Electrophysiological models have a wide range of applications in both basic research and clinical practice. Their ability to simulate the electrical activity of cardiac cells and tissues makes them invaluable tools for investigating various aspects of cardiac function and developing new treatments. Electrophysiological models play a crucial role in clinical applications, including:

- **Diagnosis and treatment of arrhythmias**: Models are used to study the mechanisms underlying arrhythmias and to develop and optimize treatment strategies, such as ablation therapy and antiarrhythmic drugs.
- **Development of medical devices**: Models are used to design and test medical devices, such as pacemakers and defibrillators, ensuring their safety and efficacy.
- **Risk assessment**: Models help assess the risk of proarrhythmic effects of drugs and other interventions, aiding in the development of safer treatments.

Electrophysiological models are essential tools in the drug development process. They are used to:

- **Screen potential drug candidates**: Models help identify compounds that have the desired effects on cardiac electrophysiology, reducing the need for extensive animal and human testing.
- **Investigate drug mechanisms**: Models provide insights into the mechanisms of action of drugs, helping to identify potential targets and optimize drug design.

• **Predict adverse effects**: Models help predict potential proarrhythmic effects of drugs, improving safety and reducing the risk of adverse events.

Personalized medicine aims to tailor treatments to individual patients based on their specific characteristics. Electrophysiological models play a key role in this approach by:

• **Developing patient-specific simulations**: Models can be customized based on patient-specific data, providing personalized insights into cardiac function and helping to guide treatment decisions.

• **Optimizing treatment strategies**: Models help identify the most effective treatment strategies for individual patients, improving outcomes and reducing the risk of adverse effects.

Electrophysiological models have significantly contributed to our understanding of various cardiac diseases, including:

• **Arrhythmias**: Models have provided insights into the mechanisms underlying different types of arrhythmias, helping to develop new treatment strategies.

• **Heart failure**: Models have been used to study the changes in cardiac electrophysiology associated with heart failure, identifying potential targets for intervention.

• **Genetic disorders**: Models have helped investigate the impact of genetic mutations on cardiac electrophysiology, improving our understanding of inherited cardiac conditions.

5. CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Despite significant advancements in electrophysiological modeling, several challenges persist, necessitating ongoing efforts to further progress in the field. One major challenge is the computational complexity associated with detailed models. These models demand significant computational resources, which can limit their accessibility and applicability. Reducing computational requirements while maintaining accuracy is essential for broadening the use of these models.

Another challenge lies in the integration of experimental data from various sources and scales, such as molecular, cellular, and tissue levels. Effectively combining these diverse data sets into cohesive models is difficult but critical for improving model accuracy and reliability. Enhancing data integration techniques will be pivotal in overcoming this obstacle.

Model validation is another area requiring attention. Ensuring that models accurately represent real-world cardiac behavior necessitates extensive validation against experimental data. This process can be time-consuming and complex, but it is crucial for building confidence in the models' predictive capabilities.

Additionally, capturing inter-individual variability in cardiac electrophysiology poses a significant challenge. Variations in cardiac function between individuals must be accurately represented to advance personalized medicine. Developing models that can incorporate patient-specific data and reflect this variability is essential for tailoring treatments to individual patients.

Future research in electrophysiological modeling should focus on improving computational efficiency, enhancing data integration, and advancing model validation methods. Developing more efficient algorithms and computational techniques will make detailed models more accessible. Innovative methods for integrating diverse data sources and scales will improve the accuracy and reliability of these models. Moreover, robust validation techniques will ensure that models accurately represent cardiac behavior.

The future of electrophysiological modeling lies in personalized cardiac simulations. By incorporating patient-specific data and utilizing advanced modeling techniques, personalized simulations have the potential to revolutionize cardiac care. These simulations can develop and optimize treatment strategies based on individual patient characteristics, predict the effects of interventions, and identify potential adverse events. Ultimately, personalized cardiac simulations will enhance diagnosis, treatment, and outcomes, providing a promising avenue for future research and clinical practice.

6. CONCLUSION

Electrophysiological models are invaluable tools for understanding the complex dynamics of the heart, particularly the left ventricle. From early models like the van der Pol oscillator and the FitzHugh-Nagumo model to more advanced models like the Luo-Rudy and O'Hara-Rudy models, these mathematical representations have significantly contributed to our understanding of cardiac function and disease.

While challenges remain, the continued advancement of electrophysiological modeling holds great promise for the future of cardiac research and clinical practice. By improving computational techniques, integrating experimental data, and advancing personalized simulations, we can continue to enhance our understanding of the heart and develop more effective treatments for cardiac diseases.

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ПРЕГЛЕД ЕЛЕКТРОФИЗИОЛОШКИХ МОДЕЛА ЗА СИМУЛИРАЊЕ РАДА ЛЕВЕ КОМОРЕ

Сажетак Електрофизиолошки модели играју кључну улогу у разумевању рада срца, а посебно леве коморе. Ови модели дају увид у механизме срчане функције који су кључни за развој лечења срчаних болести. Наш рад представља преглед различитих електрофизиолошких модела за симулирање рада леве коморе укључујући Ван дер Полов осцилатор, ФицХју-Нагумо модел, Луо-Руди и О'Хара Руди модел. Истраживањем историјског развоја, примене и будућих праваца развоја модела, рад тежи да истакне њихов значај и потенцијал у унапређивању истраживања и клиничке праксе.

Кључне ријечи: електрофизиологија, срчани циклус, лева комора, акциони потенцијали.

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