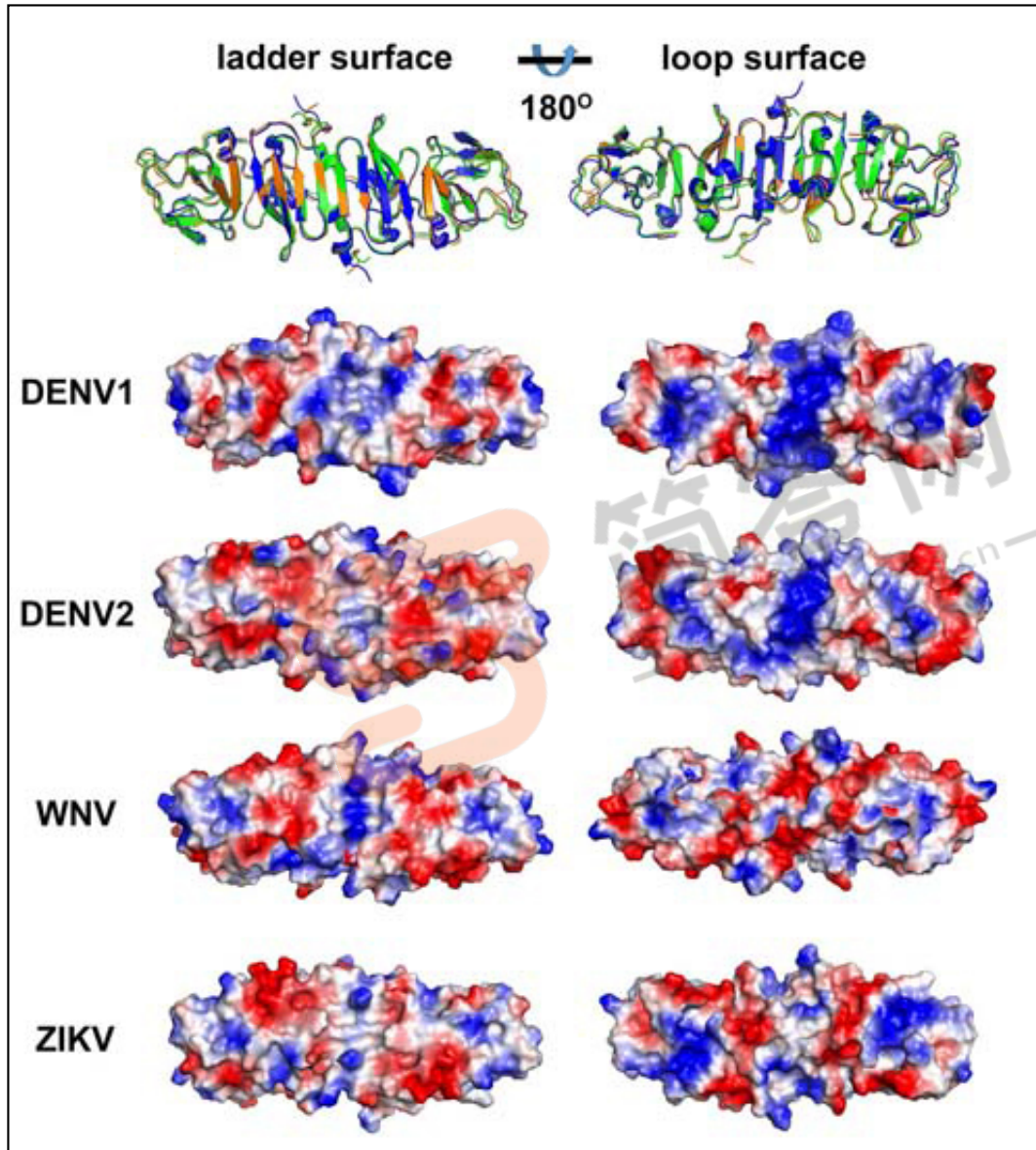


《中国科学家计算出Zika病毒的蛋白质结构》

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????????????Zika??NS1??????



This photo shows that the distribution of Zika virus NS1 protein's electric charges is entirely different from other members of the flavivirus genus. [Photo/Institute of Microbiology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences]

Chinese scientists say they have worked out the structure of the Zika virus NS1 protein.

The discovery could help researchers develop a vaccine for the virus which is transmitted by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito.

Associate research fellow from the Institute of Microbiology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Shi Yi, says the protein, which also exists in other viruses of the flavivirus genus, has two functions.

"First, it can help eliminate the virus from human body. Second, it can be used as a target for vaccines to locate the virus, because some antibodies will be generated by its stimulation resulting in some autoimmune diseases."

According to Shi Yi, they have not only worked out the protein's molecular structure, but also how it interacts with the host during the infection process.

Shi Yi added that this kind of research can help global prevention of the Zika virus, but said more research was needed.

"The main objective of our research is to inform people that there is a Zika virus NS1 protein that can be used as an important virus locator in the future. We can use the NS1 protein to develop vaccines and provide relevant diagnosis."

Zika virus outbreaks in over 30 countries have been blamed for a steep increase in the birth of babies with abnormally small heads, or microcephaly, as well as cases of Guillain-Barre syndrome, a kind of muscle weakness disease.

