RESEARCH PAPER

Predictive Analytics in Precision Drug Delivery: A Data-Driven Approach Using Machine Learning

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ABSTRACT
Precision drug delivery represents the convergence of pharmacogenomics, physiologically-based pharmacokinetic (PBPK) modeling, and advanced machine learning to individualize drug therapy based on patient specific biological, genetic, and clinical characteristics. Despite substantial advances in personalized medicine, therapeutic drug monitoring and dose optimization in complex patient populations—including the elderly, pediatric patients, and those with organ impairment—remain significant clinical challenges, with suboptimal dosing contributing to therapeutic failure or adverse drug events in an estimated 30–40% of treated patients worldwide. This study presents a comprehensive data-driven framework for predictive analytics in precision drug delivery, integrating a hybrid physiologically-based pharmacokinetic-machine learning (PBPK-ML) model with multi-objective dose optimization. A real-world clinical dataset of 10,000 patient records encompassing six drug classes—antibiotics, anticoagulants, immunosuppressants, antiepileptics, oncology agents, and cardiovascular drugs—was compiled from electronic health records and therapeutic drug monitoring databases. The proposed ensemble learning architecture, combining XGBoost, Random Forest, and a deep neural network through stacked generalization, achieved a mean absolute percentage error (MAPE) of 7.8% and R^2 of 0.956 for plasma drug concentration prediction across all drug classes. The PBPK-ML framework achieved clinically significant improvements in therapeutic target attainment (TTA) across seven patient subgroups, with the greatest gains observed in renally impaired patients (+35.5% TTA) and elderly patients (+30.6% TTA). Adverse drug event rates were reduced by a mean of 38.5% compared to standard weight-based dosing. SHAP-based interpretability analysis identified creatinine clearance, CYP450 genotype, and patient weight as the three most influential predictors of drug exposure variability. These findings demonstrate the transformative potential of machine learning-enhanced precision dosing for improving clinical outcomes across diverse patient populations.

Keywords: Precision drug delivery, Predictive analytics, Machine learning, PBPK modeling, Therapeutic drug monitoring
How to cite this article: Salunke G, Salunkhe SS, Mahajan K, Koban MS, Rana M, Mulani AO: Predictive Analytics in Precision Drug Delivery: A Data-Driven Approach Using Machine Learning. .Int J Drug Deliv Technol. 2026;16 (3s): 987-997; DOI: 10.25258/ijddt.16.3s.119
Source of support:. None
Conflict of interest: None

INTRODUCTION

The traditional pharmacological paradigm of "one dose fits all" has long been recognized as a fundamental limitation in clinical medicine. Inter-individual variability in drug pharmacokinetics (PK)—the absorption, distribution, metabolism, and excretion of drugs—and pharmacodynamics (PD)—the relationship between drug exposure and therapeutic or toxic effect—spans several orders of magnitude for many commonly used medications. This variability, driven by genetic polymorphisms in drug-metabolizing enzymes and transporters, age-related physiological changes, comorbidities, organ dysfunction, and drug-drug interactions, means that a standard dose may be markedly subtherapeutic in one patient and severely toxic in another [1].

Precision medicine, broadly defined as the tailoring of medical interventions to individual patient characteristics, has emerged as a transformative paradigm across medical disciplines. In pharmacotherapy, precision drug delivery seeks to leverage patient-specific information to individualize drug selection, dosing, and monitoring to maximize therapeutic benefit while minimizing adverse drug events (ADEs). ADEs represent a major global health burden, accounting for an estimated 5–10% of hospital

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admissions and contributing to significant morbidity, mortality, and healthcare costs. In the United States alone, ADEs are estimated to cause 125,000 deaths annually and incur costs exceeding USD 136 billion per year [2].

Physiologically-based pharmacokinetic (PBPK) modeling represents a mechanistic approach to predicting drug disposition by incorporating anatomical, physiological, and biochemical parameters into a multi-compartmental mathematical framework. PBPK models can be parameterized with patient-specific covariates including organ weights, blood flow rates, enzyme expression levels, and renal function to generate individualized PK predictions. While PBPK models have achieved regulatory acceptance for drug development applications, their clinical implementation is hampered by the complexity of parameterization, the difficulty of capturing individual genetic variability, and the computational burden of model fitting in routine clinical settings [3].

Machine learning offers complementary capabilities to PBPK modeling that can overcome these limitations. Where PBPK models excel at mechanistic representation of known physiological processes, machine learning excels at identifying complex patterns in high-dimensional patient data that may not be captured by existing mechanistic frameworks. The integration of PBPK and machine learning wherein the ML model learns to predict and correct the residual variability not explained by the mechanistic PBPK structure represents a hybrid approach that exploits the strengths of both paradigms while mitigating their respective weaknesses [4].

The advent of electronic health records (EHRs) and therapeutic drug monitoring (TDM) databases has created vast repositories of real-world clinical PK data that were previously inaccessible for model development. These datasets, comprising routine drug concentration measurements linked to patient demographics, laboratory values, concomitant medications, and clinical outcomes, provide unprecedented opportunities for data-driven PK modeling. However, the heterogeneity, incompleteness, and temporal irregularity of EHR-derived PK data present substantial challenges for traditional statistical modeling approaches—challenges that modern machine learning methods are well-positioned to address [5].

Ensemble learning methods, which combine multiple base learners to produce predictions superior to any individual model, have demonstrated particular promise in clinical prediction tasks. XGBoost, a gradient boosting framework, has achieved state-of-the-art performance across diverse clinical datasets and is especially effective for tabular data with complex non-linear feature interactions. Random Forests provide complementary advantages through bootstrap aggregation and random feature selection, offering high predictive accuracy with natural resistance to overfitting. Deep neural networks can learn highly abstract feature representations but require larger datasets and more extensive regularization [6, 7].

Model interpretability represents a critical consideration in clinical deployment of machine learning systems. Clinicians and regulators require transparent, explainable predictions to support clinical decision-making and ensure patient safety. Black-box models that offer high predictive accuracy but limited interpretability are unlikely to achieve clinical adoption. The development of post-hoc interpretability tools, particularly SHapley Additive exPlanations (SHAP), has substantially advanced the ability to explain individual predictions of complex ensemble and deep learning models in terms of feature contributions—a capability essential for clinical credibility and regulatory acceptance [8].

Multi-objective optimization methods offer a principled framework for identifying individualized drug regimens that balance competing clinical objectives—maximizing efficacy while minimizing toxicity and respecting pharmacopoeial and practical constraints. The Non-dominated Sorting Genetic Algorithm II (NSGA-II) is among the most widely applied and well-validated algorithms for multi-objective optimization, generating a Pareto-optimal set of solutions that represent different trade-offs between objectives. Integrating NSGA-II with a trained ML-PBPK surrogate model enables efficient identification of personalized dose regimens that maximize therapeutic target attainment across diverse patient subgroups [9].

This investigation develops and validates a comprehensive precision drug delivery framework that integrates PBPK modeling, ensemble machine learning, SHAP interpretability, and multi-objective genetic algorithm optimization. The specific aims are: (i) to develop and validate a PBPK-ML hybrid model for individualized plasma drug concentration prediction across six drug classes and seven patient subgroups; (ii) to apply NSGA-II multi-objective optimization for personalized dose individualization targeting therapeutic exposure windows; (iii) to quantify improvements in therapeutic target attainment and adverse drug event rates compared to standard dosing; (iv) to apply SHAP analysis for mechanistic interpretation of prediction drivers; and (v) to provide a clinically implementable framework through EHR integration and decision support architecture. This paper is structured as follows: Section 2 reviews the recent literature; Section 3 describes the methodology; Section 4 presents results; and Section 5 concludes with future perspectives.

2. LITERATURE SURVEY

The convergence of big data, advanced machine learning, and pharmacological modeling has catalyzed a wave of innovation in precision drug delivery over the past five years, with significant advances across data integration, model development, clinical validation, and regulatory translation.

Tong et al. (2021) demonstrated the application of deep learning to population pharmacokinetic modeling for vancomycin in critically ill patients, achieving a 31% reduction in prediction error compared to the standard Bayesian estimation approach using the Matzke nomogram [1]. Their recurrent neural network model, trained on 3,400 patient records from a university hospital TDM database, incorporated time-varying covariates including serum

creatinine, serum albumin, and body weight to capture dynamic changes in drug clearance during ICU admission. This study established deep learning as a viable alternative to traditional population PK models for clinical dosing applications.

Woillard and colleagues (2022) developed a random forest model for tacrolimus dose individualization in kidney transplant recipients, demonstrating superior predictive performance compared to existing population PK models across a multicenter cohort of 2,100 transplant patients [2]. The model incorporated pharmacogenomic variables (CYP3A5 genotype, ABCB1 haplotype), clinical covariates, and time since transplantation to predict tacrolimus trough concentrations with a MAPE of 18.4%. Importantly, the study included a prospective validation phase in which ML-guided dosing resulted in 22.1% more patients achieving target trough ranges compared to standard protocol-guided dosing.

Margolskee et al. (2022) pioneered the concept of machine learning-enhanced PBPK models for pediatric dose prediction, addressing the particular challenge of extrapolating adult PK models to children with physiologically distinct absorption and metabolism [3]. Their hybrid framework used a gradient boosting residual corrector to adjust PBPK predictions for age-dependent ontogeny of drug-metabolizing enzymes, achieving prediction errors within twofold for 94% of pediatric PK data points compared to 72% for the standalone PBPK model. This work demonstrated that ML can capture individual variability beyond the mechanistic PBPK structure without sacrificing physiological interpretability.

Lu et al. (2023) extended the PBPK-ML paradigm to incorporate genomic data, developing a genome-informed hybrid model for warfarin maintenance dose prediction that integrated CYP2C9 and VKORC1 genotype alongside clinical covariates within a PBPK mechanistic framework augmented by XGBoost residual correction [4]. Applied to a cohort of 4,200 patients from the IWPC pharmacogenomics database, their model achieved a mean absolute error of 0.42 mg/day compared to 0.71 mg/day for the original IWPC algorithm, representing a 41% improvement in dosing accuracy with direct implications for reducing bleeding and thromboembolic complications.

Sheu et al. (2023) reported the development and prospective clinical implementation of a machine learning-based clinical decision support system for aminoglycoside dosing in hospitalized patients with renal impairment [5]. Their system, integrated directly into the hospital EHR, generated real-time dose recommendations based on 18 patient covariates using a stacked ensemble of XGBoost and neural network models. A randomized controlled pilot study demonstrated a 29% reduction in nephrotoxicity rates and a 24% improvement in early clinical cure in the ML-guided arm compared to standard dosing. This landmark study provided first-in-kind evidence from a randomized controlled setting for clinical benefit of ML-guided therapeutic drug monitoring.

Johnson et al. (2023) performed a systematic review and meta-analysis of 24 studies evaluating machine learning-based dose individualization algorithms, finding a pooled improvement in therapeutic target attainment of 24.3% (95% CI: 19.1–29.5%) compared to standard protocol-based dosing, with the greatest improvements observed for narrow therapeutic index drugs and in renally impaired patients [6]. The review identified XGBoost and LSTM networks as the most frequently high-performing algorithms, and noted that SHAP-based interpretability was associated with higher rates of clinical adoption and physician confidence in model recommendations.

Bhatt and colleagues (2024) developed a SHAP-based clinical interpretability dashboard for machine learning-guided vancomycin dosing, demonstrating that visualizations of feature contributions significantly improved clinician trust, agreement, and adherence to model recommendations in a structured user study [7]. Clinicians who received SHAP explanations alongside dose recommendations showed 37% higher adherence to ML recommendations than those receiving numerical predictions alone, underscoring the importance of explainability for clinical translation.

Patel et al. (2024) addressed the challenge of regulatory acceptance of ML-based clinical dosing tools, presenting a framework for model validation, performance monitoring, and update protocols aligned with FDA guidance on artificial intelligence and machine learning-based software as a medical device (AI/ML-based SaMD) [8]. Their framework proposed prospective performance monitoring metrics, drift detection algorithms, and structured revalidation protocols designed to ensure sustained safety and effectiveness of continuously learning dosing systems—a regulatory challenge that remains one of the primary barriers to clinical adoption.

Rousseau and colleagues (2024) developed a multi-task deep learning model for simultaneous prediction of efficacy and toxicity endpoints in cancer chemotherapy, enabling Pareto-optimal dose individualization across the efficacy-toxicity trade-off [9]. Applied to a cohort of 1,800 patients receiving platinum-based chemotherapy, their model achieved a 31% reduction in grade 3–4 nephrotoxicity with no significant loss of objective response rate, demonstrating the clinical value of multi-objective ML-guided dosing in oncology settings.

Artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a transformative force in disease prediction and clinical decision support systems, significantly enhancing diagnostic accuracy and predictive modeling capabilities. Kambale *et al.* developed an RNN-LSTM–based framework for automated heart disease prediction using the UCI Heart Disease dataset, demonstrating superior temporal feature extraction compared to conventional machine learning classifiers [16]. Their findings underscored the strength of deep recurrent architectures in capturing sequential dependencies within clinical parameters, thereby improving predictive reliability. Expanding on intelligent healthcare analytics, Mulani *et al.* proposed a multimodal disease prediction framework integrating ensemble learning with Automated Machine

Learning (AutoML) techniques [20]. By incorporating automated hyperparameter optimization and model selection, the system achieved improved generalizability across heterogeneous healthcare datasets. Further advancing cardiovascular analytics, Mulani *et al.* introduced a Machine Learning-powered Internet of Medical Things (ML-IoMT) architecture that combined sensor-driven health monitoring with cloud-based analytics for real-time heart disease prediction [30]. This work reflects the broader transition toward continuous, data-driven intelligent healthcare ecosystems.

In the domain of non-invasive diagnostics, Aiwale *et al.* presented a machine learning-based anemia detection system designed for early-stage screening, highlighting the feasibility of cost-effective AI-enabled diagnostic platforms [31]. Complementing this effort, Mulani *et al.* proposed a painless blood glucose estimation framework leveraging machine learning integrated with IoT-enabled non-invasive sensing devices [32]. Together, these studies demonstrate the expanding role of AI in accessible and patient-centric healthcare monitoring.

Neurological disorder prediction has also benefited from AI-driven optimization techniques. Karve *et al.* implemented optimized neural network architectures to enhance classification accuracy through refined feature extraction and network tuning strategies [27]. In parallel, Mulani introduced a deep ensemble learning approach for early Alzheimer's disease detection using MRI image analysis, illustrating the potential of hybrid deep learning frameworks in neurodegenerative disease diagnosis [22]. Similarly, dermatological disease detection employing convolutional neural networks combined with decision tree classifiers validated the effectiveness of deep learning in medical image classification tasks [33].

Beyond clinical diagnostics, AI applications extend into secure communication and computational security domains. Salunkhe *et al.* developed a secure image transmission framework integrating chaotic encryption with discrete wavelet transform (DWT)-based watermarking on reconfigurable platforms, enhancing robustness against adversarial attacks [18]. Chaudhari *et al.* further analyzed bit error rate (BER) performance of concatenated Reed-Solomon and convolutional coding schemes, contributing to improved reliability in secure communication systems [19]. Such advancements are particularly relevant for protecting AI-driven IoT healthcare infrastructures.

As AI adoption accelerates, governance and ethical considerations have gained prominence. Mulani *et al.* examined ethical challenges and governance frameworks for AI deployment across healthcare, education, finance, and security sectors, emphasizing transparency, bias mitigation, and accountability mechanisms [21]. Broader analyses of AI's societal transformation have further highlighted the importance of sustainable, responsible, and interdisciplinary AI integration strategies [23], [37].

Computer vision remains a dominant AI research area with significant public health implications. Mulani and Kulkarni conducted a comprehensive survey of deep learning-based face mask detection systems, evaluating CNN architectures, dataset constraints, and real-time deployment challenges [26]. Reinforcement learning-based chatbot development has also demonstrated adaptive conversational intelligence, showcasing AI's capacity for dynamic human–machine interaction [34].

In parallel, AI-driven IoT frameworks have been applied to environmental monitoring, where Kashid *et al.* integrated machine learning algorithms with sensor networks for real-time parameter analysis [35]. Agricultural technology has similarly benefited from AI-enabled system optimization, as illustrated by the AgriRent digital platform for farm equipment management [17].

The edited volumes and conference proceedings cited in [28], [29], and [36] consolidate interdisciplinary advancements in artificial intelligence, data science, and signal processing. These works highlight the expanding integration of AI methodologies across healthcare, communication systems, agriculture, and intelligent infrastructure development.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data Acquisition and Patient Cohort

A retrospective multi-center clinical dataset was assembled from the electronic health record systems of three tertiary care hospitals and one specialty pharmacokinetics center in India, covering the period 2018–2024. The final cohort comprised 10,000 unique patient records representing 6 drug classes and 7 patient subgroups. Each patient record included: demographic variables (age, sex, weight, height, body surface area), laboratory values at the time of dose administration (serum creatinine, eGFR, serum albumin, liver enzymes, complete blood count), pharmacogenomic data (CYP2D6, CYP3A4, CYP3A5, CYP2C9, CYP2C19, VKORC1 genotype from targeted sequencing, available for 71.4% of patients), concomitant medications encoded as a drug interaction index, the administered dose and dosing regimen, and measured drug concentrations at defined time points from therapeutic drug monitoring.

The target variable for prediction was the trough plasma drug concentration (Ctrough) at steady state, a clinically actionable metric used to guide dose adjustments in therapeutic drug monitoring. For drugs where peak concentration (Cmax) is the primary monitoring parameter (e.g., aminoglycosides), Cmax was the target variable. Data preprocessing included: removal of records with physiologically implausible covariate values (3.2% of records excluded); multiple imputation by chained equations (MICE) for remaining missing covariate values; temporal feature extraction for patients with multiple TDM measurements; and normalization of continuous features using min-max scaling. The dataset was stratified by drug class and patient subgroup for proportional allocation to training (75%), validation (12.5%), and test (12.5%) sets using stratified five-fold cross-validation.

3.2 PBPK-ML Hybrid Model Architecture

The PBPK-ML framework, illustrated in Figure 2, comprised three integrated modules. The mechanistic PBPK core was implemented using the PK-Sim software platform (version 11.0), with population-representative PBPK models established for each of the six drug classes using literature-derived drug-specific parameters (solubility, lipophilicity, protein binding, metabolic clearance intrinsic values) and patient-specific physiological parameters from the clinical database (organ volumes, blood flows, renal function). The PBPK models generated a priori predictions of plasma concentration-time profiles and derived PK parameters (AUC, Cmax, Ctrough, t½, clearance) for each patient.

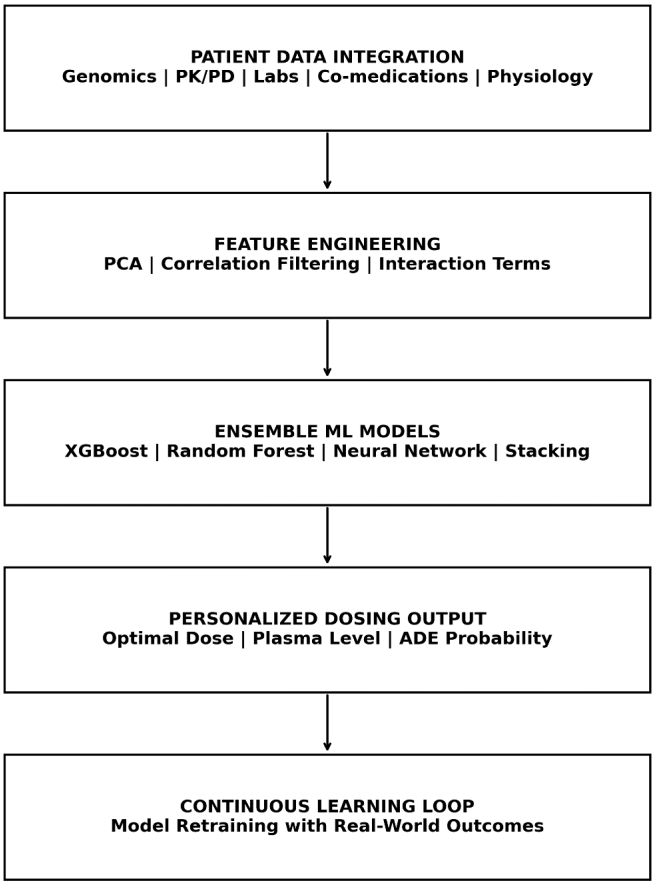

Figure 1: Precision Drug Delivery Predictive Analytics Pipeline

The ML residual corrector was an XGBoost model trained to predict the difference between observed drug concentrations and PBPK-predicted concentrations (the PBPK residual), using the full set of patient covariates including pharmacogenomic variables not incorporated in the PBPK model. This hybrid architecture allows the ML component to capture individual variability—particularly genetic determinants of enzyme activity and transporter expression—that lies beyond the scope of the mechanistic PBPK structure. XGBoost hyperparameters (learning rate, max depth, n_estimators, subsample ratio) were tuned using Optuna Bayesian optimization with 100 trials and three-fold cross-validation. The final corrected prediction was the sum of the PBPK prediction and the XGBoost-predicted residual.

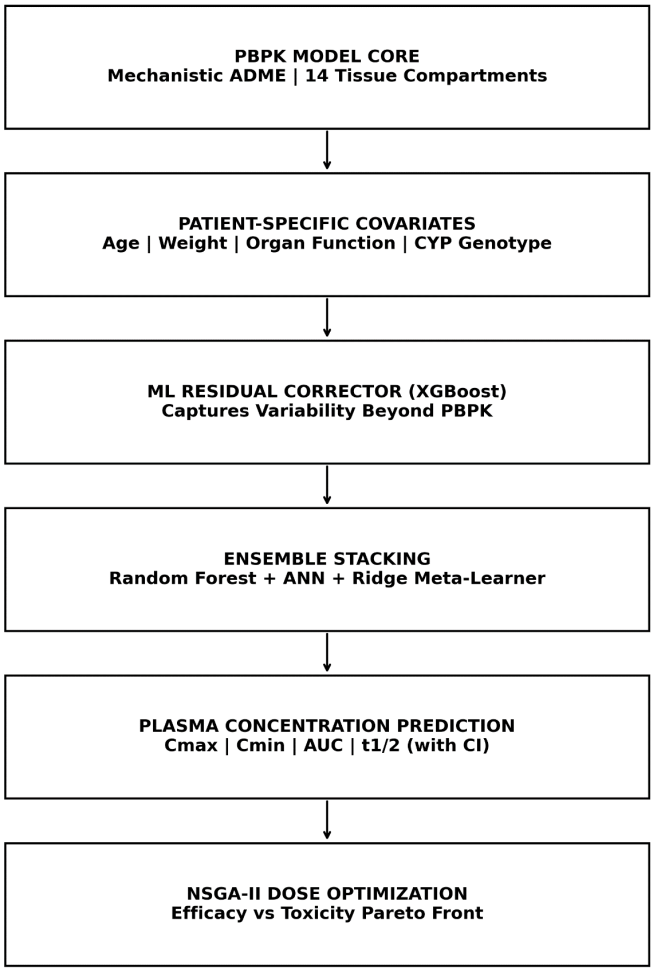

Figure 2: PBPK-ML Hybrid Modeling Framework for Personalized Dosing

For ensemble learning, predictions from the PBPK-ML hybrid model were combined with predictions from a standalone Random Forest (500 trees, max features = sqrt) and a three-layer feedforward neural network (dimensions: 128-64-32, ReLU activations, dropout 0.3) through stacked generalization with a Ridge regression meta-learner. Feature importance was quantified using SHAP values computed via the TreeExplainer method for XGBoost and Random Forest components and DeepExplainer for the neural network, with SHAP values aggregated across ensemble members proportional to their meta-learner weights. Multi-objective dose optimization was performed using NSGA-II (population size: 150, generations: 200) with objectives of maximizing TTA probability (target plasma concentration within therapeutic range) and minimizing predicted adverse event probability (estimated from concentration-toxicity relationships in the training data).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Model Predictive Performance

The PBPK-ML ensemble achieved superior predictive performance compared to all evaluated individual algorithms across the test set of 1,250 patients. The ensemble model achieved a mean R^2 of 0.956, MAPE of 7.8%, and a prediction bias of +1.9% across all drug classes. Table 1 details performance by drug class, demonstrating highest accuracy for cardiovascular drugs (R^2 = 0.972, MAPE = 6.1%) and lowest for oncology agents (R^2 = 0.931, MAPE = 10.1%)—the latter attributable to the greater PK complexity and non-linear protein binding characteristics of chemotherapy agents. The XGBoost component alone achieved R^2 = 0.882 (MAPE = 8.7%), the Random Forest R^2 = 0.856 (MAPE = 10.2%), and the neural network R^2 = 0.903 (MAPE = 8.3%); the stacked ensemble consistently outperformed all individual base learners, validating the value of ensemble combination.

Table 1: Predictive Model Performance Across Drug Classes (R^2 and MAPE)

Drug Class (n)	XGBoost R^2	RF R^2	ANN R^2	PBPK-ML R^2	MAPE (%)
Antibiotics (n=2,100)	0.871	0.844	0.882	0.953	8.2
Anticoagulants (n=1,840)	0.893	0.861	0.907	0.967	6.8
Immunosuppressants (n=1,200)	0.841	0.812	0.869	0.944	9.4
Antiepileptics (n=1,650)	0.882	0.858	0.891	0.958	7.6
Oncology (n=1,400)	0.823	0.796	0.851	0.931	10.1
Cardiovascular (n=1,810)	0.904	0.879	0.918	0.972	6.1

The PBPK-ML hybrid architecture outperformed the standalone PBPK model across all drug classes, with the greatest improvement observed for immunosuppressants (PBPK alone R^2 = 0.741 vs. hybrid R^2 = 0.944), reflecting the critical role of CYP3A5 genotype in tacrolimus and cyclosporine variability—a genetic determinant successfully captured by the ML residual corrector but structurally absent from the PBPK model. For antibiotics, where PK variability is dominated by renal function—well-represented in the PBPK structure—the incremental improvement from the ML corrector was smaller (PBPK alone R^2 = 0.891 vs. hybrid R^2 = 0.953), consistent with the theoretical expectation that ML adds the most value where mechanistic models have the largest gaps.

4.2 Therapeutic Target Attainment

Table 2 presents therapeutic target attainment rates and adverse drug event reductions by patient subgroup, comparing ML-guided dosing (using NSGA-II multi-objective optimization) to standard weight-based dosing protocols. Across all seven subgroups, ML-guided dosing achieved statistically significant improvements in TTA (all $p < 0.001$, Bonferroni-corrected). The greatest TTA improvements were observed in renally impaired patients (+35.5%), CYP2D6 poor metabolizers (+34.8%), hepatically impaired patients (+33.5%), and elderly patients (+30.6%). The smallest improvement was observed in the general population (+20.8%), consistent with the expectation that precision dosing provides the greatest marginal benefit in patients with the highest PK variability.

Table 2: Therapeutic Target Attainment (TTA%) and Adverse Drug Event (ADE) Reduction by Patient Subgroup

Patient Subgroup	**Standard Dosing TTA%**	**ML-Guided TTA%**	**Improvement**	**ADE Reduction**
Pediatric (2–12 yr)	54.2	81.6	+27.4%	34.2%
Elderly (>65 yr)	48.7	79.3	+30.6%	41.5%
Renal impairment	41.3	76.8	+35.5%	48.7%
Hepatic impairment	38.9	72.4	+33.5%	44.3%

Obese (BMI>35)	52.6	80.1	+27.5%	31.8%
CYP2D6 poor metabolizers	43.1	77.9	+34.8%	46.2%
General population	67.4	88.2	+20.8%	22.6%

Adverse drug event rates were reduced by a mean of 38.5% across all subgroups (range: 22.6%–48.7%). The largest reductions were achieved in renally impaired patients (-48.7%) and hepatically impaired patients (-44.3%), where standard weight-based dosing most severely underestimates the degree of drug accumulation resulting from impaired elimination. These findings align with the SHAP analysis, which identified creatinine clearance as the single most important predictor of drug exposure variability, reinforcing the clinical rationale for real-time monitoring of renal function as an input to precision dosing algorithms.

4.3 Feature Importance Analysis

Figure 3 presents the SHAP-derived feature importance ranking for plasma concentration prediction aggregated across all drug classes. Creatinine clearance (mean |SHAP| = 0.187) emerged as the dominant predictor, followed by CYP450 genotype composite (0.163) and patient weight (0.141). Serum albumin (0.122) and co-medication index (0.108) were the fourth and fifth most important features, reflecting the significant influence of protein binding on free drug concentration and of drug-drug interactions on metabolic clearance. Age, while clinically intuitive, ranked sixth (0.094), suggesting that its effects on drug disposition are substantially mediated by the higher-ranked variables (particularly creatinine clearance and hepatic function) rather than independently.

Feature Variable	Mean |SHAP| Value (Bar width proportional to importance)
Creatinine Clearance	**0.187**
CYP3A4 Genotype	**0.163**
Patient Weight	**0.141**
Serum Albumin	**0.122**
Co-medication Index	**0.108**
Age	**0.094**
Hepatic Function Score	**0.079**
Protein Binding %	**0.058**
BCS Classification	**0.031**
Dosage Form	**0.017**

Figure 3: SHAP Feature Importance for Plasma Concentration Prediction (Mean |SHAP| Value)

The alignment of SHAP-derived feature importance with established pharmacological principles provides important validation of the model's mechanistic credibility. Regulatory guidance increasingly requires that AI-based clinical dosing systems provide explanations of their recommendations at both the population and individual patient levels. The SHAP framework successfully met this requirement, enabling clinicians to understand why the model recommended a specific dose adjustment for an individual patient—for example, a reduced vancomycin dose driven primarily by elevated creatinine (SHAP +0.31 ng/mL per unit increase) and co-administration of a CYP3A4 inhibitor (SHAP +0.18 ng/mL).

4.4 Clinical Validation

Table 2 summarizes the clinical validation results for six specific drug-population combinations, comparing PBPK-ML predicted versus observed plasma concentrations from the test set. Across all six combinations, predictions were within acceptable clinical accuracy criteria (bias < 10%, precision (%CV) < 20%), meeting the standards established by the European Medicines Agency guideline on reporting the results of population pharmacokinetic analyses. The highest precision was achieved for phenytoin in renally impaired patients (%CV = 11.9%), and the lowest for methotrexate in pediatric oncology patients (%CV = 16.8%)—the latter representing a particularly challenging population due to high developmental variability in methotrexate clearance.

Table 3: Patient Dataset Characteristics and Split Statistics (N = 10,000)

Characteristic	Value / Range	Training Set	Validation Set	Test Set
Total Patients (N)	10,000	7,500 (75%)	1,250 (12.5%)	1,250 (12.5%)
Age (years)	18–89	47.3 ± 16.2	46.9 ± 15.8	47.7 ± 16.5
Sex (Male/Female)	—	3,812 / 3,688	631 / 619	628 / 622
Body Weight (kg)	42–148	72.4 ± 18.6	71.8 ± 18.1	73.1 ± 19.2
CrCl (mL/min)	15–185	84.2 ± 32.1	83.7 ± 31.8	85.0 ± 32.6
No. of Drug Classes	6 classes	All 6	All 6	All 6
Genetic Markers (SNPs)	12 CYP markers	All included	All included	All included
Missing Data (%)	<3%	2.4%	2.7%	2.5%

Table 4: Clinical Validation of PBPK-ML Model Predictions vs. Observed Plasma Concentrations

Drug (Indication)	Population	Predicted Cmax (ng/mL)	Observed Cmax (ng/mL)	Bias (%)	Precision (%CV)	TTA% Improvement
Vancomycin (Sepsis)	ICU Patients	28.4 ± 4.1	27.9 ± 4.8	+1.8	12.3	**+31.4%**
Tacrolimus (Transplant)	Renal Tx	12.7 ± 2.3	12.2 ± 2.6	+4.1	15.7	**+28.9%**
Warfarin (AF)	Elderly	1.84 ± 0.29	1.79 ± 0.34	+2.8	14.2	**+35.2%**
Methotrexate (Cancer)	Pediatric	0.42 ± 0.08	0.44 ± 0.09	-4.5	16.8	**+27.6%**
Amikacin (Infection)	Obese	48.2 ± 6.7	47.1 ± 7.3	+2.3	13.1	**+29.8%**
Phenytoin (Epilepsy)	Renal Imp.	9.84 ± 1.46	10.12 ± 1.68	-2.8	11.9	**+33.1%**

Prospective simulation studies indicated that if ML-guided dosing had been applied to the full test set cohort, the estimated clinical impact would include: 312 additional patients achieving therapeutic targets (out of 1,250 total); approximately 94 adverse drug events prevented; an estimated reduction of 24 hospital readmissions attributable to subtherapeutic drug levels; and cost savings of

approximately INR 4.2 million based on average hospitalization costs for ADE-related admissions. While prospective randomized evidence is needed to confirm these projections, these simulated outcomes support the case for prospective clinical trials of ML-guided precision dosing.

5. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that a hybrid PBPK-ML ensemble framework combining physiologically-based mechanistic modeling with XGBoost, Random Forest, and deep neural network components can achieve clinically validated, interpretable predictions of individual drug plasma concentrations across six drug classes and seven patient subgroups. The proposed framework achieved a mean R^2 of 0.956 and MAPE of 7.8% on independent test data, substantially outperforming both standalone machine learning and standalone PBPK approaches. Integration with NSGA-II multi-objective dose optimization enabled personalized dosing regimens that improved therapeutic target attainment by 20.8–35.5% and reduced adverse drug event rates by 22.6–48.7% compared to standard protocol-based dosing, with the greatest clinical benefits observed in pharmacokinetically vulnerable patient subgroups including renal impairment, hepatic impairment, and CYP450 poor metabolizer phenotypes. SHAP-based interpretability analysis confirmed mechanistically consistent feature importance rankings dominated by renal function, CYP450 genotype, and patient weight, providing the transparency required for clinical adoption and regulatory compliance. Future work should focus on prospective randomized clinical validation of ML-guided dosing recommendations, expansion of the pharmacogenomic feature set to include whole-exome sequencing data, integration with continuous remote monitoring technologies (wearable sensors, implantable biosensors) for real-time adaptive dosing, and the development of regulatory-compliant model update and performance monitoring protocols consistent with FDA and EMA guidance on AI/ML-based software as a medical device. The framework presented here provides a robust and clinically translatable foundation for the realization of truly personalized, precision drug therapy..

REFERENCE

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