

Poster presentation

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## HIV activates indoleamine 2,3-dioxygenase: inhibition of T cell proliferation by tryptophan starvation

A Boasso\*<sup>1</sup>, AW Hardy<sup>1</sup>, JP Herbeuval<sup>1</sup>, SA Anderson<sup>2</sup>, MJ Dolan<sup>2</sup>, JD Lifson<sup>3</sup>, D Fuchs<sup>4</sup> and GM Shearer<sup>1</sup>

Address: <sup>1</sup>Experimental Immunology Branch, National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland, USA, <sup>2</sup>Henry M. Jackson Foundation and Infectious Diseases Service Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, USA, <sup>3</sup>Division of Biological Chemistry, Innsbruck Medical University, Innsbruck, Austria and <sup>4</sup>AIDS Vaccine Program, SAIC, National Cancer Institute, Frederick, Maryland, USA

\* Corresponding author

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T cell immune responses of HIV+ patients are functionally impaired prior to CD4+ T cell depletion. Tryptophan (trp) degradation by indoleamine-2, 3-dioxygenase (IDO) is an immunosuppressive system that may be important in HIV/AIDS. We show here that IDO is increased in PBMC from HIV+ patients compared to controls. Culture with the IDO-inhibitor 1-methyl tryptophan (1 mT) increased proliferation of PBMC from HIV+ patients in response to PHA or anti-CD3/CD28. Exposure of PBMC from HIV-uninfected donors to infectious or noninfectious HIV increased IDO in plasmacytoid dendritic cells (pDC). Supernatants from HIV-exposed PBMC inhibited CD4+ T cell responses to PHA or anti-CD3/CD28, and this effect was reversed by 1 mT. CD8+ T cell proliferation in response to anti-CD3/CD28, but not to PHA, was also inhibited. Analysis of cyclin mRNA expression showed that CD4+ T cell were arrested in G1, whereas CD8+ T cell were blocked in G0. HIV-induced IDO inhibited expression of CD28 mRNA in CD8+ T cells. Thus HIV directly induces IDO expression in pDC, resulting in unresponsiveness of CD4+ T cells by inhibiting progression to the S phase of the cell cycle, and blocking of CD8+ T cell costimulation through downregulation of CD28.