

negative feedback with age. Additionally, RBM plasma CORT was further reduced in all time groups versus NM, accompanied by a return to baseline CORT after 90 min recovery, suggesting a parity-dependent effect on the HPA axis. Changes in CORT levels were correlated with c-FOS-*ir*. MMS increased PVN c-FOS-*ir* in all groups compared to controls and c-FOS-*ir* in NM was significantly greater than PVN c-FOS of RBM. Further, while c-FOS-*ir* in the NY females was reduced to baseline 30 min after MMS, the return to baseline was more gradual in NM. No effect of parity or age was seen in *Crh* mRNA. Collectively, our findings show that activation of the HPA axis in females involves interactions between age- and parity- dependent function. Our findings further show activation and inhibition of the HPA axis in females involving long-term changes that occur after pregnancy, which may increase risk for stress- or postpartum- related disorders. Supported by NIDDK 1-R01 DK105826

Neuroendocrinology and Pituitary NEUROENDOCRINOLOGY AND PITUITARY BASIC RESEARCH ADVANCES

Analysis of the Relationship Between Learning and Synaptophysin in Obese Rats Treated With DPP4 Inhibitor

Murat Korkmaz, PhD, Sibel Oguzkan Balci, PhD, Can Demirel, PhD, Ibrahim Yilmaz, MSc., Ersin Akarsu, MD.
Gaziantep University, Gaziantep, Turkey.

In this study, it is aimed to investigate possible changes in cognitive functions in obesity by using targeted treatment hypothesis. Accordingly, the effects of DPP4 inhibitor, which is actively used in the clinic in the treatment of diabetes, and the effect of exercise, which has been proven to be effective in the treatment of obesity, on the change of learning performance and the relationship of these effects with the synaptophysin molecule were investigated. In our study, 42 Wistar albino rats were used. The animals were randomly divided into seven groups as obese, control, obese+DPP4i, control+DPP4i, obese+exercise, control+exercise, control+NaCl. To create experimental obesity, the animals that are targeted to be obese were separated and fed on a high fat diet for 8 weeks. After the obese model was created, sitagliptin was applied to the DPP4i groups and swimming exercise was applied to the exercise groups for obesity treatment. The last week of the study was performed reference memory learning test to the whole group with Morris water maze. Then, the hippocampus tissues were removed from the animals under anesthesia. mRNA and protein isolations were performed from the extracted tissues. Synaptophysin gene expressions were determined from mRNA samples by Real-Time PCR method. Synaptophysin protein levels were determined from protein lysates by Western Blot method. In the learning test, in the obese groups, there was a statistically significant difference between the average escape time of the DPP4i and exercise groups and the groups that did not ($p < 0.05$). As a result, in groups where obesity is treated with DPP4i and exercise; It was concluded that cognitive performance was better than obese groups. There was an evident decrease in synaptophysin gene expression levels in

obese groups compared to the control group. In the treatment groups, an increase was observed in synaptophysin gene expression levels in the DPP4 inhibitor and especially in the exercise groups compared to the control groups ($P > 0.05$). Gene expression results were similar in analyzes performed at the protein level. According to these results, in terms of performance in cognitive function due to obesity and synaptophysin gene relationship; DPP4 inhibitor showed as effective a result as exercise. This provides a resource for advanced molecular and metabolic research.

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Neuroendocrinology and Pituitary NEUROENDOCRINOLOGY AND PITUITARY BASIC RESEARCH ADVANCES

Antisense Oligonucleotides as a Novel Therapy for Cushing's Disease

Hanan Eltumi, MBChB, MRes, Jacob Whatmore, BMedSci, Elizabeth Helen Kemp, PhD, John Newell-Price, PhD.
University of Sheffield, Sheffield, United Kingdom.

Background: Cushing's disease (CD) is caused by high levels of blood cortisol resulting from excess secretion of ACTH from a corticotroph adenoma in the anterior pituitary gland. Clinical features include hypertension, diabetes, osteoporosis, and depression. If untreated CD has an increased mortality of five-fold owing to cardiovascular comorbidities, stroke or raised vulnerability to infection. Transsphenoidal surgery is considered the first-line treatment but remission is achieved in only 65% of cases and the relapse rate is high. Furthermore, medical treatments are often accompanied by unpleasant side-effects. Antisense therapy is a technique for suppressing gene expression at the level of translation using antisense oligonucleotides (ASOs) against the mRNA of interest. **Aims:** To investigate antisense therapy as a treatment for CD by targeting ASOs against ACTH-encoding POMC mRNA thereby reducing secretion of the hormone. To transfect mouse AtT20 cells (cells that secrete high levels of ACTH) with ASOs against POMC at varying doses to determine which is the most effective at reducing ACTH secretion. **Methods:** AtT-20 cells that secrete high levels of ACTH were used as the model system. ASOs were designed to specifically target exon 3 of the POMC gene. Transfection of AtT-20 was carried out using Lipofectamine. FACS was used to determine transfection efficiency. ACTH levels secreted by AtT-20 cells were determined by immunoassay. Statistical analysis was done using ANOVA with P values < 0.05 considered significant. **Results:** ASOs that targeted POMC exon 3 (ASO-2 and ASO-3) were transfected into AtT-20 cells at 10 and 100 nM. Control ASOs were ASO-1 (matched to POMC sense strand) and ASO-4 (a scrambled version of ASO-3). Experiments included untreated AtT-20 cells and AtT-20 cells treated with transfection reagent or ASOs alone. The results of six experiments indicated that ACTH secretion from AtT-20 cells was reduced after transfection with ASO-2 and ASO-3 at 100 nM (ANOVA, $P = < 0.05$) and 10 nM (ANOVA, $P < 0.05$) when compared with untreated AtT20 cells. ASO-1 and ASO-4 had no effect on ACTH