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ORAL PRESENTATION

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Cytosolic phospholipase A₂ α gene silencing in monocytes alters development of Th1 responses and reduces autoimmune arthritis

G Courties^{1,2}, J Presumey^{1,2*}, M Baron³, V Escriou^{4,5,6,7}, P Van Lent⁸, D Scherman^{4,5,6,7}, A Cantagrel³, W Van den Berg⁸, C Jorgensen^{1,2,9}, J-L Davignon³, F Apparailly^{1,2,9}

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Introduction

Monocytes play a key role in both the systemic and local progression of rheumatoid arthritis (RA) by producing molecules that participate to the inflammatory and catabolic events of disease pathogenesis (1). Recently, the spleen has been shown to contribute to the regulation of inflammation through monocytes that are able to exit and rapidly deploy to inflammatory sites (2).

These observations uncover a role for splenic monocytes as a resource exploited by the body to regulate inflammation. Thus, the engineering of vectors tailored to selectively target both tissue resident and circulating monocytes is a promising research track for addressing the role of specific genes in RA pathogenicity. Several lines of evidence imply cytosolic phospholipase A₂ α (cPLA₂ α) as a critical enzyme in inflammatory disorders including RA.

Aim

The present study aimed at examining the effect of the cPLA₂ α inhibition within monocytes using RNA interference in experimental arthritis.

Methods

Mice with collagen-induced arthritis (CIA) were injected intravenously with a cPLA₂ α small interfering RNA (siRNA) sequence formulated with the RPR209120/DOPE cationic liposome. Clinical course of the joint inflammation was assessed and the immunological balance analyzed by measuring T helper cell frequencies

and cytokine expression. Biodistribution studies of siRNA were performed.

Results

Weekly systemic injections of anti-cPLA₂ α siRNA-lipoplexes significantly reduced incidence and severity of CIA, both in preventive and curative settings, as compared with control groups. Histological scores of inflammation and cartilage damage were lowered. The clinical effect was associated with local inhibition of TNF- α secretion and lower cPLA₂ α expression and activity. The siPLA₂ lipoplexes enabled to trigger in vivo RNAi-mediated gene silencing of cPLA₂ α in CD11b⁺ cells recovered from the spleen. While the treatment had no effect on anti-collagen II antibodies, CII-specific T helper cells producing IFN- γ , but not IL-17, were decreased in draining lymph nodes cells.

Conclusion

Our findings indicate that systemic RNAi-mediated cPLA₂ α gene silencing in CD11b⁺ cells results in effective treatment of CIA, and Th1 but not Th17 suppression is one of the potential underlying mechanisms.

Author details

¹Inserm, U 844, INM, Hôpital Saint Eloi, Montpellier, France. ²Université Montpellier 1, UFR de Médecine, Montpellier, France. ³JE2510, Paul Sabatier University Toulouse III, IFR 150, CHU Purpan, Toulouse, France. ⁴Inserm, U 1022, Paris, France. ⁵CNRS, UMR8151, Paris, France. ⁶Université Paris Descartes, Faculté de Pharmacie, Laboratoire de Pharmacologie Chimique, Génétique et Imagerie Paris, France. ⁷Ecole Nationale Chimie ParisTech, Paris, France. ⁸Rheumatology Research & Advanced Therapeutics, Radboud University Nijmegen Medical Centre, Nijmegen, The Netherlands. ⁹CHU Lapeyronie, service Immuno-Rhumatologie, Montpellier, France.

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*Inserm, U 844, INM, Hôpital Saint Eloi, Montpellier, France
Full list of author information is available at the end of the article

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