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The Effect of Extracellular Collagen on Synthesis of Extracellular Matrix in a 3-Dimensional Culture of Intervertebral Disc Cells

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- Abstract -

Study Design: In-vitro experimental study

Objectives: To determine the proteoglycan synthesis of the rabbit nucleus pulposus cells in various concentration of extracellular collagen type I and II under the stimulation of TGF- 1.

Summary of Literature Review: Therapeutic effect of growth factor and gene therapy can be altered by composition of extracellular matrix. However, the effect of extracellular collagen types I and II on synthetic activity of intervertebral disc cells is not thoroughly studied before.

Materials and Methods: The nucleus pulposus cells were isolated and cultured from 10 skeletally mature rabbits. Cultures were trypsinized and incorporated into alginate beads with different concentration of extracellular collagen type I and II (0.5%, 1.0% and 1.5%). Those cultures with TGF- $\,^{1}$ (10 ng/ml) served stimulated condition of matrix synthesis. Newly synthesized proteoglycans were assessed by $\,^{35}$ S-sulfate incorporation using chromatography on Sephadex G-25 in PD-10 columns. Scintillation count was normalized with DNA content by Hoechst dye method.

Results: In basal condition, difference in proteoglycan synthesis in given concentration of extracellular collagen type I and II were statistically insignificant. In stimulated condition with TGF- $\,^{1}$, difference in proteoglycan synthesis in given concentration of extracellular collagen type I and II was also statistically insignificant. However, cultures in stimulated condition with TGF- $\,^{1}$ showed increased amount of newly synthesized proteoglycans compared to those of basal condition regardless of the concentration of extracellular collagen type I and II (p < 0.05).

Conclusion: Anabolic response of rabbit nucleus pulposus cells is relatively insensitive to extracellular matrix composition, which facilitates application of gene therapy in various conditions of disc degeneration.

Key Words: Extracellular collagen, Proteoglycan, Nucleus pulposus cell, TGF-1

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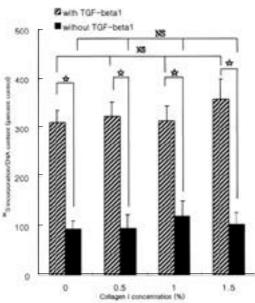
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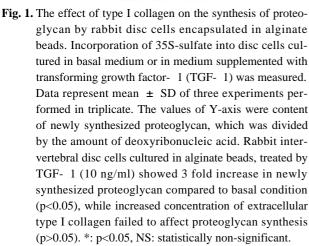
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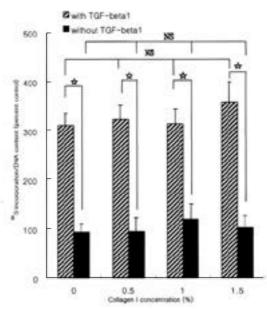


Fig. 2. The effect of type II collagen on the synthesis of proteoglycan by rabbit disc cells encapsulated in alginate beads. Incorporation of 35S-sulfate into disc cells cultured in basal medium or in medium supplemented with transforming growth factor- 1 (TGF- 1) was measured. Data represent mean ± SD of three experiments performed in triplicate. The values of Y-axis were content of newly synthesized proteoglycan, which was divided by the amount of deoxyribonucleic acid. Rabbit intervertebral disc cells cultured in alginate beads, treated by TGF- 1 (10 ng/ml) showed 3 fold increase in newly synthesized proteoglycan compared to basal condition (p<0.05), while increased concentration of extracellular type II collagen failed to affect proteoglycan synthesis (p>0.05). *: p<0.05, NS: statistically non-significant.

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