α-MSH and dTRPβγ-MSH inhibit TNF-α induced MMP 1 and 13 expression in human C20/A4 chondrocytes

Μουγδάλη Κανεσσα, Ιαν Χ. Λογκε, Μαρκ Ε. Κερργιαν, Στέπη Ν. Γεττίνγκ

Γυναικεία οδι Οδομηνίστερ, Ημιαν ανδ Ηεαλτη Χιενχχες, ΩΙΩ 6ΥΩ, Λονδον, Υνιαδ Κινηγοβ

Melanocortin peptides display potent anti-inflammatory effects via their ability to activate a family of G-protein coupled receptors termed melanocortin receptors. To date five receptors (MC1-5) have been cloned and MC1 and MC3 shown to display anti-inflammatory properties. Here we have used an in vitro model of chondrocyte stimulation to determine the effects of the pan agonist α-MSH and the selective MC3 agonist dTRPβγ-MSH on matrix metalloproteinase (MMP) 1 and 13 expression following tumor necrosis factor-α (TNF-α) stimulation of human C20/A4 chondrocytes which leads to IL-6 and IL-8 release, whilst cartilage degradation occurs following elevations in MMP1 and 13.

Human C20/A4 cell-line chondrocytes were plated at 1 x 10^6/well in 24 well plates and stimulated with TNF-α (60 pg/ml) over a 2-48h time-course. In separate experiments, cells were pre-treated with 3 μg/ml of the pan melanocortin agonist α-MSH and the selective MC3 agonist dTRPβγ-MSH for 30 mins prior to stimulation with either PBS or TNF-α (60 pg/ml) for 6 h. Cells were then harvested and mRNA expression of IL-6, IL-8, MMP1 and 13 analysed by RT-PCR. In separate experiments the effects of α-MSH and dTRPβγ-MSH were evaluated in the presence of the MC3 antagonist SHU9119 (10 μg/ml). Data are expressed as Mean ± SD of n=4 determination in triplicate. *P<0.05 vs. appropriate control.

RT-PCR showed significant (*P<0.05) increases in IL-6, IL-8, MMP1 and MMP13 mRNA following TNF-α stimulation over a time-course compared to non-treated chondrocytes. α-MSH and dTRPβγ-MSH (3 μg/ml) caused a significant reduction in the cytokines IL-6 (56.4 ± 3.1% and 47.5 ± 2.3% respectively; p<0.05) and IL-8 (61.6 ± 5.4% and 52.9 ± 4.5% respectively; p<0.05) as measured by densitometry. The effect of the peptides on MMP expression was then determined with α-MSH inhibiting MMP1 and 13 expression by 35.5 ± 1.4% and 79.0 ± 2.1%, whilst dTRPβγ-MSH caused a 40.7 ± 3.3% and 76.7 ± 3.6% reduction in MMP1 and 13 expression respectively (p<0.05). In the presence of the MC3/4 antagonist SHU9119 (10 μg/ml) the ability of these peptides to inhibit these genes was abrogated.

These data suggest that TNF-α causes a time-dependent increase in IL-6, IL-8, MMP1 and 13 and that pre-treatment with both α-MSH and dTRPβγ-MSH inhibit this expression at 6 h, an effect blocked by the MC3/4 antagonist SHU9119. Collectively these data highlight a potential role for melanocortin peptide based therapy in osteoarthritis.