

Mini review

Cellular factors as alternative targets for inhibition of HIV-1¹

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1. Introduction

A number of compounds have been reported to inhibit the replication of human immunodeficiency virus type 1 (HIV-1) in vitro (De Clercq, 1995a,b). Among them, HIV-1 reverse transcriptase (RT) and protease inhibitors have shown efficacy in vivo. At present, six RT inhibitors (zidovudine, didanosine, zalcitabine, stavudine, lamivudine, and nevirapine) and three protease inhibitors (saquinavir, zalcitabine, and indinavir) have been formally licensed for clinical use in the treatment of HIV-1 infections. Since these compounds interact with the viral-specific enzymes HIV-1 RT or protease, emergence of drug-resistant viruses caused by amino acid mutations of the enzymes may not be avoidable during long-

term treatment with monotherapy. In particular, rapid emergence of drug-resistance is a serious concern in the treatment with non-nucleoside RT inhibitors, since they have high specificity to HIV-1 RT (Baba et al., 1995; De Clercq, 1996). Thus, it is generally considered that the virus-specific inhibitors have potent activity, weak toxicity, narrow antiviral spectrum, and high risk for drug-resistance. In contrast, the inhibitors that interact with host cellular factors may have low selectivity (little difference between their effective concentration and cytotoxic threshold), broad antiviral spectrum, and low risk for drug-resistance.

Several events in the viral replicative cycle have been identified as possible targets for inhibition of HIV-1 replication, namely, viral adsorption, virus-cell fusion, penetration, uncoating, reverse transcription, integration, transcription, translation, maturation, assembly, and budding (Fig. 1A). Virus-specific structural and non-structural proteins play an important role in fulfilling each event. In addition to the viral proteins, several

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known and unknown cellular factors are assumed to be essential for or involved in the replication of HIV-1 (Fig. 1B). For instance, murine cell lines expressing human CD4 are resistant to the fusogenic effect of HIV-1 envelope, suggesting that the cells lack human-specific cofactors necessary for the CD4/envelope-mediated membrane fusion (Dragic et al., 1992). A novel cellular protein 'fusin' and the β -chemokine receptor CC-CKR-5 have recently been identified as cofactors of HIV-1 fusion and entry (Feng et al., 1996; Alkhatib et al., 1996; Deng et al., 1996; Dragic et al., 1996). Furthermore, with the exception of the viral trans-activator protein Tat, the transcription of HIV-1 is mainly regulated by cellular transcriptional factors, such as nuclear factor- κ B (NF- κ B) and Sp1 (Jones et al., 1986; Nabel and Baltimore, 1987). Thus, effective anti-HIV-1 chemotherapy might also be accomplished by the compounds that interact with such host cellular factors. The present review will focus on the host cellular factors as a possible approach to the intervention in HIV-1 replication.

2. Agents targeted at cellular factors

2.1. Inhibitors of cellular factors for viral entry

Several but not many agents (or compounds) have been identified as possible inhibitors of HIV-1 replication *in vitro* through their interacting with cellular factors. They could be classified according to the putative target molecules (Table 1). The first group includes bovine β -lactoglobulin modified by 3-hydroxyphthalic anhydride (3HP- β -LG) (Neurath et al., 1996), secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor (SLPI) (McNeely et al., 1995), and C-C chemokines released by CD8⁺ T cells (RANTES, MIP-1 α , and MIP-1 β) (Cocchi et al., 1995). These substances interact with the CD4 molecule or cellular co-factors for viral entry and interfere with HIV-1 infection. 3HP- β -LG blocks the binding of monoclonal antibodies specific for the HIV-1 binding site on CD4 and inhibits viral replication at nanomolar concentrations (Neurath et al., 1996). SLPI appears to be targeted at a host cell-associated molecule (McNeely et al., 1995).

However, another study has demonstrated that SLPI did not exert anti-HIV-1 activity under any experimental conditions (Turpin et al., 1996). Thus, exact nature of this molecule still remains to be elucidated. The C-C chemokines have proved to be highly potent inhibitors of HIV-1 and HIV-2 infections (Cocchi et al., 1995). Furthermore, they are assumed to confer relative resistance to HIV-1 infection in persons who are hyper-exposed to the virus but remain uninfected (Paxton et al., 1996).

2.2. Inhibitors of cellular transcription factors

The compounds that interact with the cellular transcriptional factors NF- κ B and Sp1 may become promising anti-HIV-1 agents, since the HIV-1 long terminal repeat (LTR) contains two tandem κ B elements followed by three tandem Sp1-binding sites and TATA box sequence (Luciw and Shacklett, 1993; Roulston et al., 1995). Tran-

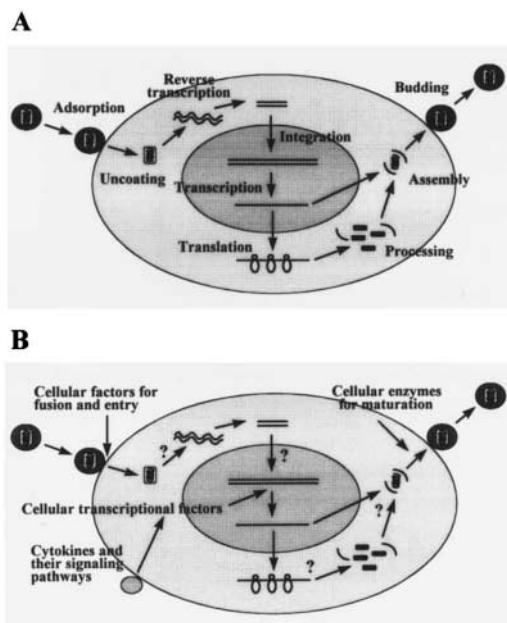


Fig. 1. Essential steps in the HIV-1 replicative cycle (A) and possible cellular factors that affect viral replication (B). To simplify the figures, complex structures of viral RNA with reverse transcriptase and proviral DNA with integrase are not taken into account for drawing.

Table 1
Agents targeted at cellular factors

1.	Inhibitors of cellular factors for viral entry (CD4 and co-factors) Bovine β -lactoglobulin modified by 3-hydrophthalic anhydride (3HP- β -LG), Secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor (SLPI), C-C chemokines
2.	Inhibitors of cellular transcription factors (NF- κ B and Sp1) Pentoxifylline, Sodium salicylate, Topotecan, β -Lapachone, Curcumin, 3'-O-methylnordihydroguaiaretic acid (Mal.4)
3.	Antioxidants <i>N</i> -acetyl-L-cysteine (NAC), Glutathione (GSH), Oltipraz, Ebselen
4.	Inhibitors of cytokine production (TNF- α and IL-6) Pentoxifylline, Thalidomide, RP 55778 (Acopafant), OPC-8212 (Vesnarinone)
5.	Inhibitors of second messengers (phosphatidic acid and PKC) CT-2576, Gö 6976, Staurosporine
6.	Inhibitors of cellular factors for viral maturation (<i>N</i> -myristoyltransferase and gp160 processing enzyme) 13-Oxatetradecanoic acid, Brefeldin A
7.	Others SDZ NIM 811 (cyclosporin A derivative), Benzothio- phene derivatives, Flavonoids (chrysin, acacetin, apigenin)

scription of the HIV-1 genome is regulated by these transcriptional factors cooperating with the viral regulatory protein Tat (Berkhout et al., 1990; Kamine et al., 1991; Alcamí et al., 1995). Therefore, inhibition of NF- κ B and Sp1 leads to effective suppression of Tat-induced transactivation as well as basal transcription of HIV-1. Pentoxifylline, 1-(5-oxohexyl)-3,7-dimethylxanthine, has been shown to suppress HIV-1 replication through the inhibition of either tumor necrosis factor- α (TNF- α) production or NF- κ B activation or both (Biswas et al., 1993; Fazely et al., 1991), yet existence of another mechanism of action is also suggested (Navarro et al., 1996). Although recent clinical trials in AIDS patients have demonstrated that pentoxifylline certainly decreases the expression of TNF- α without significant adverse effects, its antiviral efficacy has not

yet been fully established yet (Dezube and Lederman, 1995).

Fig. 2 schematically shows the intracellular signaling events after stimulation of HIV-1-infected cells with TNF- α (Schutze et al., 1992; Hannun, 1994). In general, NF- κ B exists in an inactive form in the cytoplasm, where it is bound to the inhibitory molecule I κ B α . Stimulation of the cells with several cytokines including TNF- α leads to the immediate degradation of I κ B α and activates NF- κ B through the indicated pathways, resulting in the translocation of NF- κ B from the cytoplasm to the nucleus (Thanos and Maniatis, 1995; Roulston et al., 1995). Sodium salicylate and aspirin have been reported to prevent the degradation of I κ B α and inhibit the activation of NF- κ B (Kopp and Ghosh, 1994). This study has also demonstrated that these compounds can inhibit κ B-dependent transcription from HIV-1 LTR in Jurkat T cells at high concentrations (2–5 mM). Furthermore, salicylic acid interferes with ultraviolet- and *cis*-platinum-induced HIV-1 expression in HeLa cells (Woloschak et al., 1995). Topotecan, β -lapachone, and curcumin have been identified as potent and selective inhibitors of HIV-1 LTR-directed gene expression at concentrations that have minor effects on the host cells (Li et al., 1993). They inhibit p24 antigen production in the cells either acutely or chronically infected with HIV-1. Their target is transcriptional function of the LTR. In addition to these compounds, a plant

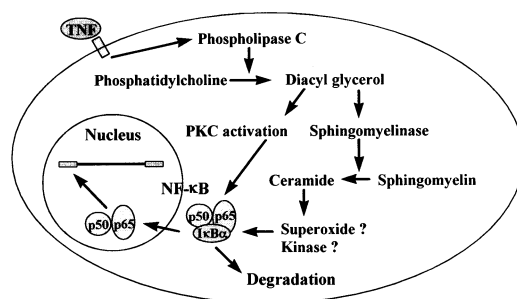


Fig. 2. Intracellular signaling pathways of NF- κ B activation by TNF- α . Ceramide, a breakdown product of sphingomyelin, is the second messenger-like molecule, and it leads to the phosphorylation of I κ B α by protein kinases followed by its degradation. I κ B α is also phosphorylated directly by PKC in vitro.

lignan, 3'-*O*-methylnordihydroguaiaretic acid (Mal.4) is able to suppress HIV-1 replication by blocking the promotor activity of HIV-1 LTR. Gel mobility-shift studies have revealed that Mal.4 does not affect NF- κ B binding but does strongly inhibit Sp1 binding (Gnabre et al., 1995).

2.3. Antioxidants

In addition to the cytokine stimulation, HIV-1 gene expression and viral replication can be induced by oxidative stress, suggesting that the signaling pathways leading to NF- κ B activation are redox regulated (Legrand-Poels et al., 1990; Staal et al., 1990; Schreck et al., 1991). Thus, various antioxidants have been examined for their inhibitory effects on HIV-1 activation and found to suppress viral replication. Among these, *N*-acetyl-L-cysteine (NAC) has been most extensively studied. NAC inhibits cytokine-stimulated HIV-1 replication in both acutely and chronically infected cell systems (Roederer et al., 1990, 1991). Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that NAC also inhibits the activation of NF- κ B induced by TNF- α , phorbol myristate acetate (PMA) or oxidative stress (Mihm et al., 1991; Staal et al., 1990, 1993). Since NAC exerts its anti-HIV-1 activity by increasing the intracellular level of glutathione (GSH) (Burgunder et al., 1989), administration of GSH itself and its monoester also increases the intracellular GSH level and inhibits HIV-1 expression in chronically infected monocytic cells (Kalebic et al., 1991; Ho and Douglas, 1992).

Other anti-oxidative molecules recently identified as HIV-1 inhibitors are oltipraz (5-pyrazinyl-4-methyl-1,2-dithiole-3-thione) and ebselen [2-phenyl-1,2-benzisoselenazol-3(2*H*)-one]. Oltipraz, an anti-carcinogenic agent, and its metabolite are known to inhibit HIV-1 replication in chronically infected cells as well as acutely infected cells (Prochaska et al., 1993, 1995). Although the metabolite has recently proved inhibitory to HIV-1 LTR-directed gene expression (Prochaska et al., 1996), the mechanism of inhibition has not been fully elucidated yet. Ebselen is a selenium-containing heterocyclic compound (Fig. 3), which exhibits GSH peroxidase-like activity and anti-inflammatory activity (Parnham and

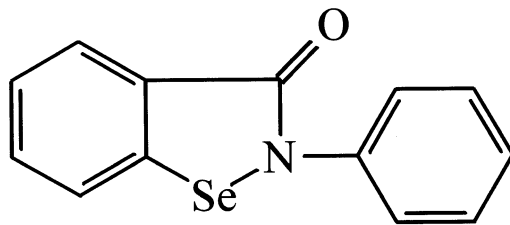


Fig. 3. Chemical structure of ebselen.

Graf, 1987). Ebselen is now under phase III clinical trials for cerebrovascular diseases as an anti-stroke agent in Japan. We have recently found that ebselen selectively inhibits HIV-1 replication in MOLT-4 cells at a concentration of 5–10 μ M (data not shown). In addition, it proved also inhibitory to PMA-induced NF- κ B activation in MOLT-4 cells at this concentration, as determined by the gel mobility shift assay (Fig. 4). Although it remains to be determined whether the anti-HIV-1 activity of ebselen can be attributed to the inhibition of NF- κ B activation, ebselen may be a new candidate drug for treatment of HIV-1 infections in vivo.

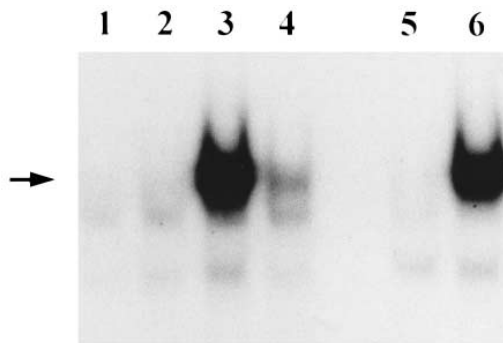


Fig. 4. Inhibitory effect of ebselen on PMA-induced NF- κ B activation determined by gel mobility shift assay. MOLT-4 cells were cultured for 2 h in the absence (lanes 1, 3, 5, and 6) or presence of ebselen (10 μ M) (lanes 2 and 4). The cells were stimulated with PMA (10 ng/ml) (lanes 3–6) and further incubated for 60 min. Nuclear proteins were extracted and examined for their NF- κ B binding activity to the [γ - 32 P]ATP-labeled NF- κ B-specific DNA probe. One hundred-fold molar excess of the unlabeled specific DNA probe (lane 5) or the random DNA probe (lane 6) was added for competition.

2.4. Inhibitors of cytokine production

Several cytokines, such as TNF- α , interleukin (IL)-1 β , and IL-6, are potent inducers of HIV-1 replication, and they are overexpressed in the lymphoid tissues of HIV-1-positive individuals (Fauci, 1993; Fauci et al., 1996). Blocking these factors may suppress their action to enhance viral replication. Thalidomide, a selective inhibitor of TNF- α synthesis (Moreira et al., 1993), has been shown to suppress the activation of HIV-1 in U1 cells (a monocyte cell line latently infected with HIV-1) and peripheral blood mononuclear cells (PBMCs) isolated from HIV-1-infected patients (Makonkawkeyoon et al., 1993). This compound seems also effective to the wasting syndrome in AIDS patients (Tramontana et al., 1995). A phase I clinical study of thalidomide in HIV-1-infected patients is currently enrolling. A platelet-activating factor antagonist, (+)-3-(3-pyridyl)-1*H*,3*H*-pyrrolo[1,2-*c*]thiazole-7-carboxamide (RP 55778, Acopafant) is also capable of inhibiting the expression of HIV-1 in U1 cells through the inhibition of endogenous TNF- α production (Weissman et al., 1993). However, RP 55778 is not effective in monocyte-derived macrophages infected with a primary isolate of HIV-1 (Naour et al., 1994). Another interesting compound is 3,4-dihydro-6-[4-(3,4-dimethoxybenzoyl)-1-piperazinyl]-2(1*H*)-quinolinone (OPC-8212, Vesnarinone), which is an oral inotropic agent used for treatment of congestive heart failure in Japan. OPC-8212 suppresses HIV-1 replication in acutely infected PBMCs and chronically infected macrophages at clinically achievable concentrations (Maruyama et al., 1993). It inhibits the production of TNF- α and IL-6 from lipopolysaccharide (LPS)-stimulated PBMCs.

2.5. Inhibitors of second messengers

Second messengers involved in the intracellular signaling pathways after stimulation with cytokines, mitogens, and antigens might also be the targets for suppression of HIV-1 activation, if they could be effectively blocked without affecting cellular functions (Fig. 1B and Fig. 2). 1-(11-Octylamino-10-hydroxyundecyl)-3,7-dimethylxanthine

(CT-2576) is a potent inhibitor of phosphatidic acid metabolism, which plays an important role in cellular activation and mitogenesis (Rice et al., 1994). CT-2576 has been proven to suppress Tat-induced phosphatidic acid generation and HIV-1 LTR-directed gene expression in response to Tat or TNF- α at a posttranscriptional step (Leung et al., 1995). CT-2576 displays the selective inhibition of HIV-1 replication in both acutely and chronically infected cell systems. Gö 6976 is structurally related to staurosporine, the most potent inhibitor of protein kinase C (PKC), and has been shown to block HIV-1 transcription induced by PKC activators and cytokines in chronically infected cells at nanomolar concentrations (Qatsha et al., 1993). Since the PKC isoform responsible for viral activation in HIV-1-infected cells has not been clarified yet (Diaz-Meco et al., 1994; Folgueira et al., 1996), the specificity of PKC inhibitors to this isoform seems to be a crucial factor for this class of compounds.

2.6. Inhibitors of cellular factors for viral maturation

The Gag and Gag-Pol precursor proteins need to be myristoylated by the cellular enzyme *N*-myristoyltransferase for their maturation (Götlinger et al., 1989). Therefore, this enzyme seems to be a target for inhibition of HIV-1. Several myristic acid derivatives, such as 13-oxatetradecanoic acid (Bryant et al., 1991), have been found to inhibit HIV-1 replication in both acutely and chronically infected cells, yet their selectivity is rather small. The envelope glycoproteins are initially synthesized as a precursor polyprotein (gp160) and are cleaved to gp120 and gp41 by the cellular enzyme(s) in the Golgi complex (Willey et al., 1988; Pal et al., 1989). Inhibition of this processing leads to the formation of non-infectious viral particles (McCune et al., 1988). However, the enzyme(s) responsible for the gp160 processing has not been fully characterized. Therefore, with the exception of glycosylation inhibitors (De Clercq, 1995a), few compounds have been reported as the selective inhibitors of envelope maturation. Brefeldin A, which is known

to block intracellular transport of proteins, inhibits the processing of gp160 (Pal et al., 1991). In fact, the infectivity of HIV-1 particles released from brefeldin A-treated cells is markedly lower than that obtained from untreated cells.

2.7. Other inhibitors

The immunosuppressive drug cyclosporin A has previously been shown to inhibit HIV-1 replication (Karpas et al., 1992). Recently, a nonimmunosuppressive cyclosporin A analog (SDZ NIM 811) has been identified as a highly potent and selective inhibitor of HIV-1 (Rosenwirth et al., 1994). Since it has been shown that cyclophilin A, a major receptor molecule for cyclosporin A, specifically binds to the HIV-1 Gag precursor proteins and is necessary for the formation of infectious virus particles (Franke et al., 1994; Thali et al., 1994), the mechanism of action of SDZ NIM 811 may be attributed to the interference with Gag-cyclophilin A interaction. Other agents that probably interact with cellular factors are benzothiophene derivatives and certain flavonoids (chrysin, acacetin, and apigenin) (Butera et al., 1995; Critchfield et al., 1996). Although benzothiophene and flavonoid totally differ in their chemical structures, they share several characteristic features. Both derivatives are effective in inhibiting HIV-1 replication in chronically infected cells. They can prevent HIV-1 mRNA accumulation, yet they do not inhibit the activity of Tat or NF- κ B (Butera et al., 1995; Critchfield et al., 1996). The molecular basis for their antiviral activity remains to be determined.

3. Screening systems for inhibitors of cellular factors

To specifically detect the agents that can interact with the cellular factors involved in HIV-1 replication, novel screening assay systems need to be established. The cytopathicity inhibition assay by using 3-(4,5-dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-2,5-diphenyltetrazolium bromide (MTT) in MT-2 or MT-4 cells (Pauwels et al., 1988), which is now widely used for screening of anti-HIV-1 com-

pounds, may not be suitable for this purpose, since it is prone to detect the virus-specific inhibitors, such as viral adsorption inhibitors, RT inhibitors, and protease inhibitors. In addition, the Tat inhibitors Ro5-3335 and Ro24-7429 have proved ineffective against HIV-1 replication in MT-2 and MT-4 cells (Witvrouw et al., 1992; Baba, unpublished data). This may be due to the high level expression of NF- κ B in these cell lines (Luznik et al., 1995). Thus, it appears that the MTT assay in MT-2 or MT-4 cells cannot pick up the compounds inhibitory to cellular transcription factors, cytokine production, or second messengers (Table 1).

We have recently described a novel anti-Tat screening system by using the CEM cells stably transfected with a plasmid (Kira et al., 1995). The plasmid contains the hygromycin B phosphotransferase gene under the control of HIV-1 LTR and constitutively expressed tat gene. This system is also based on the quantitative determination of cell viability by the MTT method. We have found that it is applicable to the screening of the agents inhibitory to cellular transcription factors as well as Tat, if the construction of the plasmid is slightly modified (Merin et al., 1996). Another possible approach is the viral induction assay by using the cell line latently infected with HIV-1, such as OM-10.1 and U1 cells. These cell lines produce little or no HIV-1 under basal conditions (Fig. 5A and 5C) but do induce significant level of virus after stimulation with various substances, including TNF- α (Butera et al., 1991; Folks et al., 1987). In fact, OM-10.1 cells became HIV-1 antigen-positive by more than 90% after stimulation with 1 ng/ml TNF- α (Fig. 5B). However, only 20–25% of the U1 cells expressed HIV-1 antigens under the same experimental conditions (Fig. 5D), indicating that OM-10.1 cells are more sensitive to TNF- α stimulation than U1 cells. Furthermore, OM-10.1 cells have a unique property. Unlike other chronically infected cell lines, OM-10.1 cells remain CD4⁺ unless the activation of HIV-1 occurs (Feorino et al., 1993).

It has been reported that heat shock induces the activation of HIV-1 in U1 and ACH-2 (T cell line latently infected with HIV-1) cells and that κ B sequence is necessary for maximal heat-induced

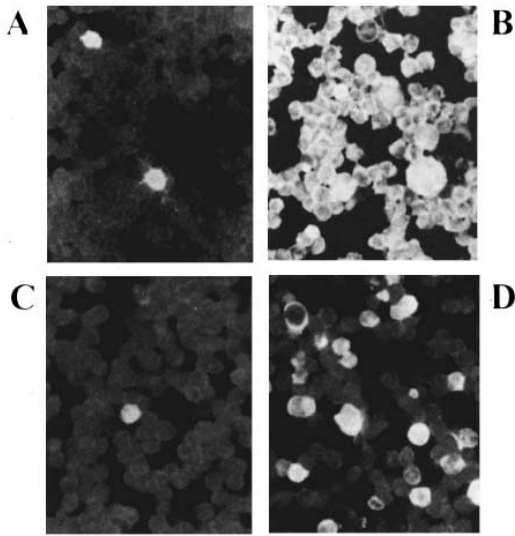


Fig. 5. TNF- α -induced activation of HIV-1 in OM-10.1 and U1 cells. OM-10.1 (panels A and B) and U1 (panels C and D) were incubated in the absence (panels A and C) or presence (panels B and D) of TNF- α (1 ng/ml). After a 3-day incubation at 37°C, the cells were subjected to the indirect immunofluorescence microscopy by using an anti-HIV-1 polyclonal antibody as the probe.

viral production (Stanley et al., 1990). We have also examined whether the heat shock treatment activates the latent HIV-1 in OM-10.1 cells and found that the heat shock (42°C for 2 h) results in a high level of HIV-1 production without addition of any cytokines (Hashimoto et al., 1996). Interestingly, addition of anti-TNF- α antibody into culture medium was able to partially suppress the heat shock-induced viral activation (Fig. 6). To elucidate the mechanism of HIV-1 activation by heat shock, we examined the effect of heat shock on NF- κ B activation in OM-10.1 cells. No NF- κ B binding activity was observed in the nuclear proteins extracted at 30 min after heat shock treatment (Fig. 7), indicating that the heat shock does not directly induce the activation of NF- κ B. This result is consistent with the previous report in heat shock-treated HeLa cells (Kretz-Remy and Arrigo, 1994).

Fig. 8 shows putative signaling pathways of heat shock-induced HIV-1 activation in OM-10.1 cells. In this scheme, it appears that the heat shock treatment induces HIV-1 replication with-

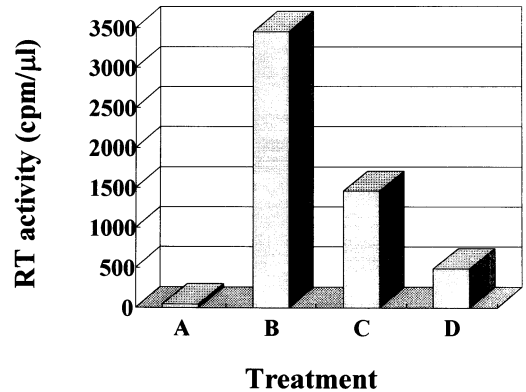


Fig. 6. Activation of HIV-1 by TNF- α and heat shock in OM-10.1 cells. OM-10.1 cells were untreated (A) or treated with 50 U/ml TNF- α (B) or heat shock at 42°C for 2 h (C and D) and cultured in the absence (A–C) or presence (D) of anti-TNF- α antibody. After a 3-day incubation at 37°C, the culture supernatants were examined for their RT activity. Data are taken from Hashimoto et al. (1996).

out direct activation of NF- κ B and that the addition of anti-TNF- α antibody suppresses viral production. Furthermore, any other substances that interfere with one of these pathways may also be able to reduce the production of HIV-1. We have examined the inhibitory effects of anti-TNF- α antibody, staurosporine, Ro5-3335, and pentox-

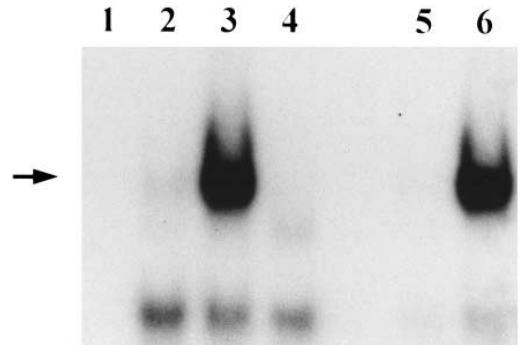


Fig. 7. Effect of heat shock on NF- κ B determined by gel mobility shift assay. OM-10.1 cells were untreated (lane 2) or treated with 1 ng/ml TNF- α (lanes 3, 5, and 6) or heat shock at 42°C for 2 h (lane 4). Nuclear proteins were extracted and examined for their NF- κ B binding activity to the [γ - 32 P]ATP-labeled NF- κ B-specific DNA probe. One hundred-fold molar excess of the unlabeled specific DNA probe (lane 5) or the random DNA probe (lane 6) was added for competition. Lane 1 is the control with no nuclear proteins.

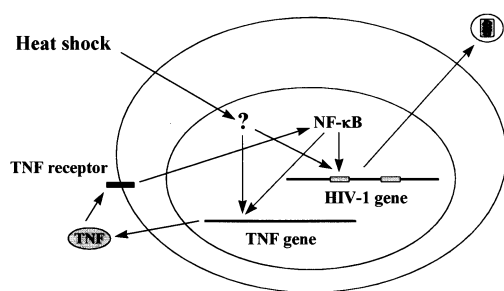


Fig. 8. Putative mechanism of heat shock-induced HIV-1 activation in OM-10.1 cells. Heat shock induces unknown cellular factors, presumably heat shock proteins and heat shock factors (Baler et al., 1992; Abravaya et al., 1992). The heat shock factors interact with the consensus heat shock element existing in the promoter region of TNF- α gene and bring about TNF- α production and NF- κ B activation. The activated NF- κ B induces TNF- α production as well as HIV-1 replication (autocrine loop). The heat shock factors may also be able to interact directly with the κ B elements of HIV-1 LTR and induce HIV-1 replication. Furthermore, it cannot be excluded that cytokines other than TNF- α also generate a similar autocrine loop and play a considerable role in the heat shock-induced HIV-1 activation.

ifylline on HIV-1 production in the heat shock-treated OM-10.1 cells and compared to those in the TNF- α -treated cells. With the exception of anti-TNF- α antibody, all compounds were more inhibitory to HIV-1 antigen expression in the heat shock-treated cells than in the TNF- α -treated cells (Table 2). In particular, pentoxifylline achieved 71.4% inhibition at a concentration of 1 mM in the heat shock-treated cells, whereas it displayed little, if any, inhibition in TNF- α -treated cells, suggesting that the suppression of TNF- α production is a primary mechanism of this compound. Thus, the heat shock-treated OM-10.1 cells are considered as a useful system for detection of anti-HIV-1 agents that modulate host cellular factors including cytokine production.

4. Conclusion

The recent progress of the combination chemotherapy with HIV-1 RT inhibitors and protease inhibitors has achieved more than 2 log₁₀ reduction of viral RNA level in plasma within several weeks of starting treatment (Gulick et al.,

1996; Condra et al., 1996; Markowitz et al., 1996), indicating that the repetitive acute HIV-1 infection accounts for $\geq 99\%$ of the plasma viruses in infected individuals (Perelson et al., 1996). On the other hand, several lines of evidence suggest that long-survived chronically infected cell populations such as tissue macrophages considerably affect the disease progression. These cell populations continuously produce or start producing HIV-1 particles in response to various stimuli. It is, therefore, clear that viral production from these cell populations needs to be suppressed until they have been totally eradicated. Furthermore, secondary bacterial or viral infections induce unregulated immune cell activation through their antigens thereby enhancing the replication of HIV-1 (Nelson et al., 1990; Wallis et al., 1993; Hashimoto et al., 1995). Thus, a rationale exists for the inhibition of excessive production of certain cytokines and subsequent activation of cellular transcriptional factors. In this regard, the approach described herein should be undertaken as an effective intervention in the treatment of HIV-1 infections.

Table 2

Inhibition of heat shock- or TNF- α -induced HIV-1 activation in OM-10.1 cells

Treatment	Inhibition of HIV-1 antigen expression ^a (%)	
	Heat shock	TNF- α
None	0	0
Anti-TNF- α antibody (1 μ g/ml)	80.5	100
Staurosporine (10 nM)	92.0	48.3
Ro5-3335 ^b (15 μ M)	62.6	34.9
Pentoxifylline (1 mM)	71.4	11.2

^aOM-10.1 cells were treated with heat shock at 42°C for 2 h or 50 U/ml TNF- α . After a 36 h incubation at 37°C, the cells were subjected to the indirect immunofluorescence and analyzed for their HIV-1 antigen expression by FACSscan. All compounds did not show significant cytotoxicity at the indicated concentrations, as determined by the MTT method (data not shown).

^b7-Chloro-5-(2-pyrryl)-3H-1,4-benzodiazepine-2(H)-one (Hsu et al., 1991).

Data are taken from Hashimoto et al. (1996).

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