



# Tissue- and temporal-specific regulation of 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase type 1 by glucocorticoids in vivo

Pauline M. Jamieson\*, Karen E. Chapman, Jonathan R. Seckl

*Molecular Endocrinology, Molecular Medicine Centre, University of Edinburgh, Western General Hospital, Edinburgh, EH4 2XU, Scotland, UK*

Received 6 October 1998; accepted 23 November 1998

---

## Abstract

11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase type 1 (11 $\beta$ -HSD-1) catalyses the interconversion of active corticosterone and inert 11-dehydrocorticosterone. Short-term glucocorticoid excess upregulates 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 in liver and hippocampus leading to suggestions that 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 ameliorates the deleterious effects of glucocorticoid excess by its 11 $\beta$ -dehydrogenase activity. However the predominant activity of 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 in vivo is 11 $\beta$ -reduction, thus generating active glucocorticoid. We have re-examined the time-course of glucocorticoid regulation of 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 in the liver, hippocampus and kidney of adult male rats in vivo.

Sham operation markedly reduced 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 mRNA expression in all tissues, and reduced 11 $\beta$ -HSD bioactivity in liver and hippocampus when compared to untouched controls. Adrenalectomy reduced 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 expression in all tissues in the short-term (7 days), followed by subsequent recovery of enzyme activity by 21 days in liver and hippocampus. Dexamethasone replacement of adrenalectomised rats attenuated the initial decrease in hepatic 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 activity, but by 21 days dexamethasone reduced activity compared to control levels.

Thus glucocorticoids regulate 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 in a complex tissue- and temporal-specific manner. This pattern of regulation suggests glucocorticoids repress 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 at least in the liver, a pattern of regulation more consistent with the evidence that 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 is an 11 $\beta$ -reductase in vivo. Operational stress per se down-regulates 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 which has implications for interpretation and design of in vivo studies of 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1. © 1999 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

---

## 1. Introduction

Glucocorticoids regulate many metabolic and homeostatic processes and comprise a key component of the response to stress. Recently it has become apparent that the tissue response to glucocorticoids is modulated not only by circulating levels of steroids and the cellular expression of their receptors, but also by the presence of isozymes of 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase (11 $\beta$ -HSD), which catalyse interconversion of physiologically active glucocorticoids (cortisol, corticosterone) and their inert 11-dehydro forms (cortisone, 11-dehydrocorticosterone) [1,2].

11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 is a NADP(H)-dependent enzyme, orig-

inally purified from rat liver [3]. 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 is widely distributed, with highest expression in the liver. There is clear expression throughout the brain, notably in the hippocampus, as well as in the kidney [4,5]. Although 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 shows bi-directional activity in tissue homogenates and purified microsomal fractions in vitro [3], this isoform is a predominant 11 $\beta$ -reductase (regenerating active glucocorticoids) in the liver in vivo [6,7]. Cultures of intact primary cells which continue to express endogenous 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 (hepatocytes, hippocampal cells, lung cells), also show that the enzyme in its cellular context primarily catalyses 11 $\beta$ -reduction [8–10].

Previous studies conducted over 1–10 days have reported glucocorticoid induction of 11 $\beta$ -HSD activity and mRNA levels, both in the liver in vivo [11,12] and in cell culture in vitro [8,13,14], whilst adrenalectomy over this time frame attenuates hepatic 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 [11]. Glucocorticoid regulation of 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 also

---

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: 01 441-31-651-1031; fax: 01 441-31-651-1085.

E-mail address: [pjam@srv0.med.ed.ac.uk](mailto:pjam@srv0.med.ed.ac.uk) (P.M. Jamieson)

appears to be tissue-specific, since neither adrenalectomy, nor glucocorticoid administration affect  $11\beta$ -HSD-1 mRNA levels in the rat kidney [15,16]. Glucocorticoid excess or inflammatory (arthritis) stress increase  $11\beta$ -HSD-1 mRNA and enzyme bioactivity in the hippocampus [11,15]. However, the reasons for this are unclear, as chronic glucocorticoid excess is detrimental to neuronal function and survival [17,18], and  $11\beta$ -reductase induction might be anticipated to potentiate neurotoxicity. Recent data from this group have shown an upregulation of  $11\beta$ -HSD-1 21 days following adrenalectomy with respect to sham operation [19]. Some of these discrepancies may be explained by experimental design and/or differences in time-courses examined. Therefore we have investigated the time course of glucocorticoid control of  $11\beta$ -HSD-1 in rat liver, kidney and hippocampus over a period of 21 days in more detail.

## 2. Materials and methods

### 2.1. *In-vivo* studies

Male Han Wistar rats (200–250 g) were maintained under controlled lighting (lights on from 07.00 to 19.00 h) and temperature (22°C) with food and water available ad libitum. Groups of animals ( $n=5$ /group) were bilaterally adrenalectomised (ADX) or sham-operated (Sham ADX) through dorsal incisions under halothane anaesthesia. Following operative procedures a sub-group of adrenalectomised animals were injected subcutaneously with 250  $\mu$ g/kg dexamethasone (Sigma, Poole, UK) daily (ADX+DEX). The other subgroup of adrenalectomised animals and all Sham ADX animals were injected daily with vehicle (4% ethanol in 0.9% NaCl). Adrenalectomised rats were maintained on 0.9% saline. Rats were killed 2, 5, 7, 9, 15 or 21 days after surgery. Undisturbed animals served as controls. Trunk blood was collected into heparinised tubes, plasma separated and stored at  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Corticosterone levels were measured by radioimmunoassay as previously described [20] in order to confirm the adequacy of adrenalectomy (data not shown). Liver, hippocampus and kidney were removed and dissected on ice for assay of  $11\beta$ -HSD activity. An aliquot of each tissue was frozen on dry ice and stored at  $-80^{\circ}\text{C}$  until extraction of RNA.

### 2.2. Quantitation of $11\beta$ -HSD activity

Tissues were homogenised in Krebs-Ringer bicarbonate buffer (118 mmol/l NaCl, 3.8 mmol/l KCl, 1.19 mmol/l  $\text{KH}_2\text{PO}_4$ , 2.54 mmol/l  $\text{CaCl}_2$ , 1.19 mmol/l  $\text{MgSO}_4 \cdot 7\text{H}_2\text{O}$ , 25 mmol/l  $\text{NaHCO}_3$  and 0.2% glucose, pH 7.4) and assayed as described previously [11].

Briefly, following estimation of the total protein concentration of each homogenate colorimetrically (Bio-Rad protein assay kit, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, UK), homogenates (6.25  $\mu$ g of liver protein, 250  $\mu$ g of hippocampal protein, 25  $\mu$ g of kidney protein; chosen to be in the linear portion of the relationship between protein concentration and enzyme activity) were incubated with 200  $\mu$ mol/l NADP (Sigma, Poole, UK) and 12 nmol/l [ $^3\text{H}$ ]-corticosterone (specific activity 84 Ci/mmol; Amersham International, Aylesbury, UK) in a total volume of 250  $\mu$ l with Krebs-Ringer buffer supplemented with 0.2% bovine serum albumin for 10 min at 37°C.  $11\beta$ -dehydrogenase activity was quantified in this assay as a measure of active enzyme since  $11\beta$ -dehydrogenase activity was quantified in this assay as a measure of active enzyme since  $11\beta$ -reductase is unstable in homogenates. Steroids were extracted with ethyl acetate and separated by HPLC with on-line  $\beta$  counter.  $11\beta$ -HSD activity was expressed as conversion of corticosterone (B) to 11-dehydrocorticosterone (A), after correction for apparent conversion in reactions without homogenate (less than 3%).

### 2.3. Extraction and analysis of mRNA

Total RNA was extracted from tissues by the guanidinium thiocyanate method [21] and resuspended in diethylpyrocarbonate-treated water. RNA concentration and purity was assayed spectrophotometrically. Aliquots (20  $\mu$ g) were separated on a 1.2% agarose gel containing 2% formaldehyde. RNA was blotted onto nitrocellulose membranes (Hybond-N, Amersham International, UK), prehybridized in 6 ml phosphate buffer (0.2 mol/l  $\text{NaH}_2\text{PO}_4$ , 0.6 mol/l  $\text{Na}_2\text{HPO}_4$ , 5 mmol/l EDTA), 3 ml 20% SDS and 100  $\mu$ g denatured herring testis DNA (Sigma, Poole, UK) for 2 h at 55°C and hybridized at 55°C overnight in the same solution containing rat  $11\beta$ -HSD-1 cDNA, labelled with  $^{32}\text{P}$ -dCTP using a random primed DNA labelling kit (Boehringer Mannheim UK Ltd, Lewes, UK). Three 20 min washes were carried out at room temperature in  $1 \times \text{SSC}$  (0.3 mol/l NaCl, 0.03 mol/l sodium citrate), 0.1% SDS followed by a stringent wash at 55°C for 30 min in  $0.3 \times \text{SSC}$ , 0.1% SDS. Filters were exposed to autoradiographic film for 1–4 days. Filters were rehybridised with similarly labelled 7S cDNA probes to control for loading, as previously described [11]. Optical density was determined using a computer-driven image analysis system (Seescan plc, Cambs, UK). Values are expressed as a percentage of control levels.

### 2.4. Statistics

Data are the means  $\pm$  S.E.M. of five replicates. Data

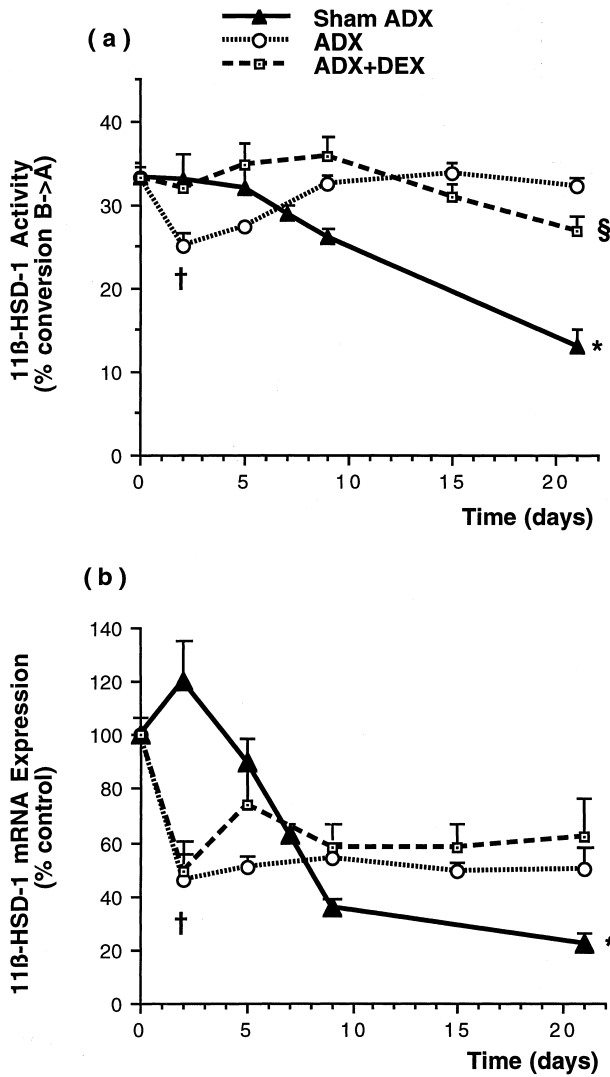


Fig. 1. Time course of the effect of adrenalectomy and dexamethasone replacement upon hepatic 11β-HSD-1. (a) 11β-HSD-1 activity and (b) 11β-HSD-1 mRNA levels in the livers of male rats following adrenalectomy (ADX), adrenalectomy with dexamethasone (ADX+DEX) or sham adrenalectomy (Sham ADX). Controls are untouched animals and are represented by the values on the y-axis at the 0 days time point. Data are expressed as (a) % conversion corticosterone (B) to 11-dehydrocorticosterone (A) ±S.E.M. or (b) percentage of mRNA levels (±S.E.M.) in untouched control animals; n=5. \*P < 0.001 compared with control; \*\*P < 0.01 compared with control; \*\*\*P < 0.05 compared with control.

were compared by ANOVA and Newman-Keuls post-hoc test. Significance was set at P < 0.05.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Liver

Sham operation per se resulted in a progressive decrease in both 11β-HSD activity and 11β-HSD-1 mRNA expression in the liver over 21 days (Fig. 1)

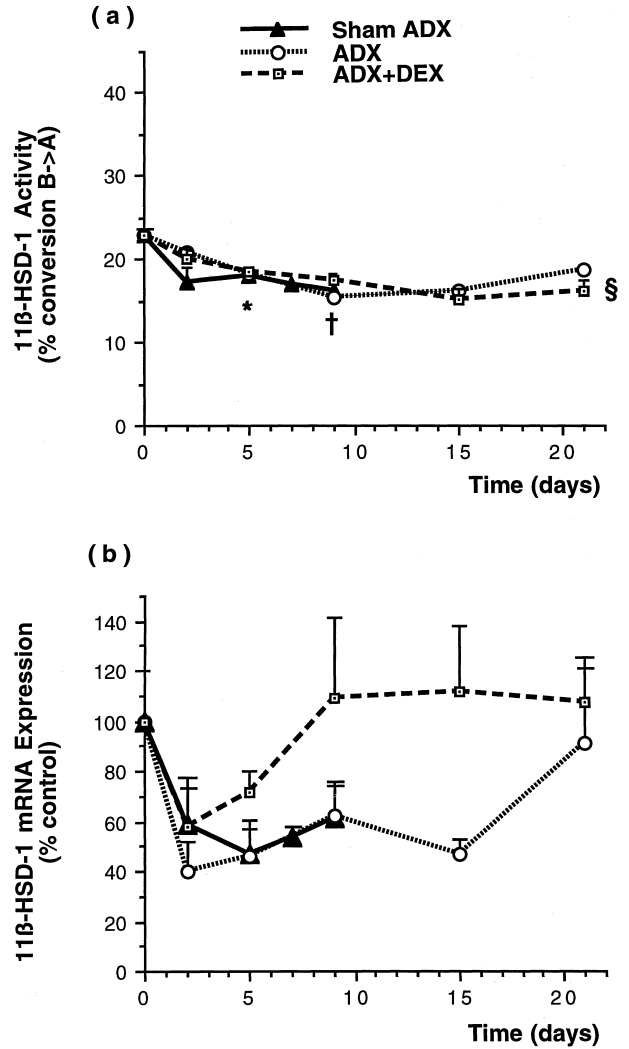


Fig. 2. Time course of the effect of adrenalectomy and dexamethasone replacement upon hippocampal 11β-HSD-1. (a) 11β-HSD-1 activity and (b) 11β-HSD-1 mRNA levels in the hippocampi of male rats following adrenalectomy (ADX), adrenalectomy with dexamethasone (ADX+DEX) or sham adrenalectomy (Sham ADX). Controls are untouched animals and are represented by the values on the y-axis at the 0 days time point. Data are expressed as (a) % conversion B to A (±S.E.M.) or (b) percentage of mRNA levels (±S.E.M.) in untouched control animals; n=5. \*P < 0.01 compared with control; \*\*P < 0.001 compared with control; \*\*\*P < 0.05 compared with control.

when compared to levels in untouched control animals. The decrease in 11β-HSD-1 mRNA levels preceded the decrease in activity. There was no recovery in 11β-HSD activity or 11β-HSD-1 mRNA levels over this time period. ADX produced a more rapid attenuation in 11β-HSD activity and 11β-HSD-1 mRNA than sham operation, such that both were minimal and significantly less than either sham or unoperated control levels at 2 days (Fig. 1). Subsequently, hepatic 11β-HSD activity rose following ADX, reaching control levels by 9 days, although 11β-HSD-1 mRNA levels remained below control levels over the time course

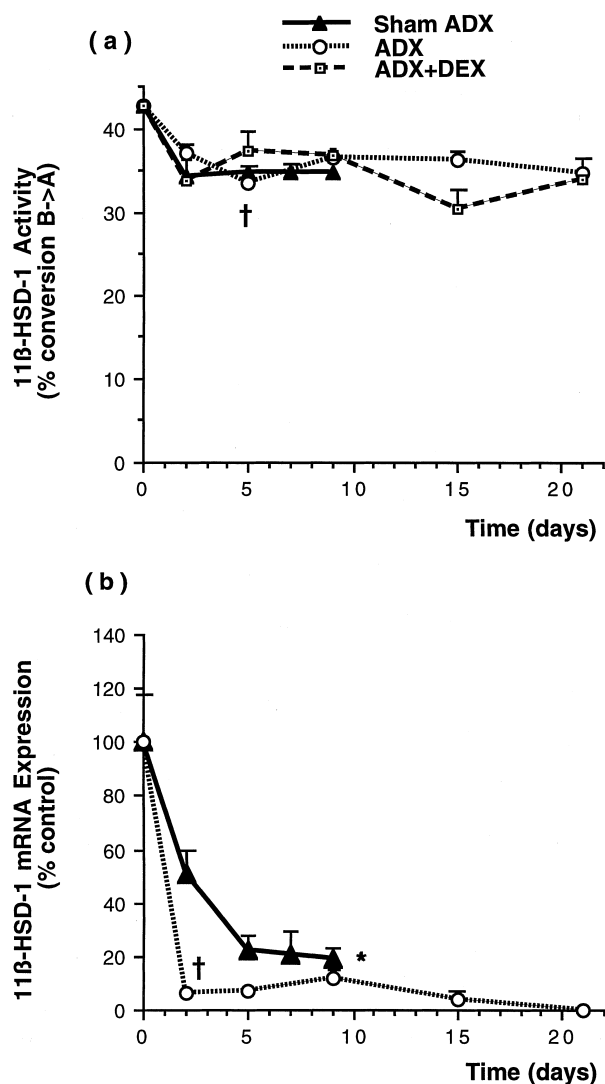


Fig. 3. Time course of the effect of adrenalectomy and dexamethasone replacement upon renal 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1. (a) 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 activity and (b) 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 mRNA levels in the kidneys of male rats following adrenalectomy (ADX), adrenalectomy with dexamethasone (ADX+DEX) or sham adrenalectomy (Sham ADX). Controls are untouched animals and are represented by the values on the y-axis at the 0 days time point. Data are expressed as (a) % conversion B to A ( $\pm$ S.E.M.) or (b) percentage of mRNA levels ( $\pm$ S.E.M.) in untouched control animals;  $n=5$ . \* $P < 0.001$  compared with control; \*\* $P < 0.001$  compared with control.

examined. In ADX+DEX animals, hepatic 11 $\beta$ -HSD activity was maintained immediately after operation, but fell significantly after 21 days and was lower than following ADX alone (Fig. 1). At 21 days, sham operated animals had lower activity and mRNA expression than either the ADX or ADX+DEX animals.

### 3.2. Hippocampus

Hippocampal 11 $\beta$ -HSD activity was reduced within 2 days of sham operation and remained significantly

lower than control levels until 9 days postoperatively (Fig. 2). ADX resulted in an initial fall in 11 $\beta$ -HSD activity in the hippocampus, reaching a nadir at 9 days, and although there was some recovery, activity was still significantly less than control levels at 21 days. ADX+DEX led to a decline in hippocampal 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 activity reaching significance at 15 days. There was no difference in activity between the groups at any time point. Neither was there any difference in 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 mRNA levels between or within treatments (Fig. 2), probably owing to the large standard errors, but there was a trend for 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 in the hippocampus to fall following all manipulations and then to recover over the time course of the experiment.

### 3.3. Kidney

Overall 11 $\beta$ -HSD activity in the kidney was unaffected by sham operation (Fig. 3). There was, however, a small but significant decrease in renal 11 $\beta$ -HSD activity following ADX, with the lowest level at 5 days. Levels returned to control values by 9 days. Likewise, ADX+DEX reduced 11 $\beta$ -HSD activity at 2 days. At 21 days, both ADX and ADX+DEX reduced 11 $\beta$ -HSD activity compared with controls. In contrast, both sham operation and ADX resulted in a dramatic decrease in renal 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 mRNA expression (Fig. 3) which did not recover over the time course examined.

## 4. Discussion

Previous studies have reported glucocorticoid induction of 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 activity and mRNA expression over 1–10 days in the liver and hippocampus in vivo and in various cell types in culture [8,11–15], with adrenalectomy reducing 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 expression in vivo over the same time frame. However, the clear finding from the present work is that the effects of glucocorticoid manipulations in vivo are more complex and time-dependent. Moreover, sham operation/handling stress per se reduced expression of 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1.

Sham operation reduced 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 mRNA expression and bioactivity in liver. mRNA levels also fell in kidney. The absence of activity changes in kidney throughout the study reflects the predominant contribution of the distinctly regulated 11 $\beta$ -HSD-2 isozyme to overall renal activity [15,16]. This fall in 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 expression with sham operation remains to be explained. Operational stress could be responsible for the initial decrease, but the continued decline suggests the effect may be mediated by factors other than glucocorticoids. Nevertheless, other manipulations in vivo must be assessed against this changing control baseline.

In the liver, which expresses only the 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 isozyme, the initial response to glucocorticoid manipulations confirmed previous findings [11,12] and concur with direct transcriptional induction of the 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 gene promoter by glucocorticoids observed in vitro [22]. By 21 days hepatic 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 activity was restored, with greater activity following adrenalectomy alone than with dexamethasone administration. This suggests that the secondary increase in 11 $\beta$ -HSD activity may be due to non-transcriptional control of 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 e.g. reduced protein turnover. Adrenalectomy-associated induction of 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 is more in accordance with its regeneration of active glucocorticoid in vivo. In chronically-adrenalectomised animals, the increase in 11 $\beta$ -reductase may be an attempt to compensate for the lack of intrahepatic glucocorticoid to sustain crucial glucocorticoid-regulated functions. 11-dehydrocorticosterone circulates at levels of around 50 nM in the rat (Andrew and Seckl, unpublished data), providing a reservoir of endogenous substrate for intrahepatocellular regeneration of corticosterone.

In the hippocampus, 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 activity fell following adrenalectomy and then levels returned towards control, whilst dexamethasone administration to adrenalectomised animals resulted in a continued reduction of activity, indicating a similar pattern of glucocorticoid regulation to liver. The glucocorticoid regulation of 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 in the hippocampus is of particular interest as the hippocampus has a crucial role in hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis feedback [23,24]. The hippocampus is rich in corticosteroid receptors [25,26] and so 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 has the potential to play a major role in modulating glucocorticoid action in this tissue [4,5]. Glucocorticoid excess and glucocorticoid deprivation both compromise hippocampal cell function and survival [27,28]. In vitro, hippocampal 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 regenerates active glucocorticoid from substrate [9]. Thus it may be that the function of hippocampal 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 is to ensure the provision of optimal levels of active glucocorticoid for the maintenance of essential neuronal functions when corticosterone levels are low (e.g. during the diurnal nadir), whilst negative-feedback provides rapid responses to avoid over-exposure to glucocorticoids under normal circumstances. Glucocorticoid-mediated regulation of hippocampal 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 may help to ensure this protection of neurones. Corticosterone actions in the hippocampus are mediated via both glucocorticoid receptors and mineralocorticoid receptors [25,26], whereas dexamethasone is a specific agonist for the glucocorticoid receptor and as such dexamethasone administration is not entirely analogous to increases in endogenous glucocorticoids. Nevertheless, chronic (28-day) stress attenuates 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 activity in tree-shrew liver and hippocampus [29], demonstrating that this

pattern of glucocorticoid regulation of 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 does operate under physiological conditions.

In summary, this study demonstrates that glucocorticoids regulate 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 in a complex tissue- and temporal-specific manner. This pattern of glucocorticoid regulation is consistent with the notion the 11 $\beta$ -HSD-1 is a functional 11 $\beta$ -reductase regulating levels of active glucocorticoid at the tissue level.

### Acknowledgements

These studies were supported by a Wellcome Veterinary Research Training Scholarship (PMJ), a Wellcome Senior Clinical Research Fellowship (JRS), and grants from the Wellcome Trust and the Medical Research Council.

### References

- [1] C. Monder, P.C. White, 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase, *Vitamins and Hormones* 47 (1993) 187–271.
- [2] J.R. Seckl, 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase isoforms and their implications for blood pressure regulation, *European Journal of Clinical Investigation* 23 (1993) 589–601.
- [3] V. Lakshmi, C. Monder, Purification and characterisation of the corticosteroid 11 $\beta$ -dehydrogenase component of the rat liver 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase complex, *Endocrinology* 123 (1988) 2390–2398.
- [4] V. Lakshmi, R.R. Sakai, B.S. McEwan, C. Monder, Regional distribution of 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase in the rat brain, *Endocrinology* 128 (1991) 1741–1748.
- [5] M-P. Moisan, J.R. Seckl, C.R.W. Edwards, 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase bioactivity and messenger RNA expression in rat forebrain: localisation in hypothalamus, hippocampus and cortex, *Endocrinology* 127 (1990) 1450–1455.
- [6] I.E. Bush, 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase: contrast between studies in vivo and studies in vitro, *Advances in Bioscience* 3 (1969) 23–39.
- [7] B.R. Walker, J.C. Campbell, R. Fraser, P.M. Stewart, C.R.W. Edwards, Mineralocorticoid excess and inhibition of 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase in patients with ectopic ACTH syndrome, *Clinical Endocrinology* 37 (1992) 483–492.
- [8] P.M. Jamieson, K.E. Chapman, C.R.W. Edwards, J.R. Seckl, 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase is an exclusive 11 $\beta$ -reductase in primary cultured rat hepatocytes: effect of physicochemical and hormonal manipulations, *Endocrinology* 136 (1995) 4754–4761.
- [9] V. Rajan, C.R.W. Edwards, J.R. Seckl, 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase in cultured hippocampal cell reactivates inert 11-dehydrocorticosterone, potentiating neurotoxicity, *Journal of Neuroscience* 16 (1995) 65–70.
- [10] S. Hundertmark, H. Buhler, V. Ragosch, L. Dinkelborg, B. Arabin, H.K. Weitzel, Correlation of surfactant phosphatidylcholine synthesis and 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase in the fetal lung, *Endocrinology* 136 (1995) 2573–2578.
- [11] S.C. Low, M-P. Moisan, C.R.W. Edwards, J.R. Seckl, Glucocorticoids and chronic stress up-regulate 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity and gene expression in the hippocampus, *Journal of Neuroendocrinology* 6 (1994) 285–290.
- [12] B.R. Walker, B.C. Williams, C.R.W. Edwards, Regulation of 11 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity by the hypothala-

- mic-pituitary-adrenal axis in the rat, *Journal of Endocrinology* 141 (1994) 467–472.
- [13] M.M. Hammami, P.K. Siiteri, Regulation of  $11\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity in human skin fibroblasts: enzymatic modulation of glucocorticoid action, *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism* 73 (1991) 326–334.
- [14] Y. Takeda, I. Miyamori, T. Yoneda, Y. Ito, R. Takeda, Expression of  $11\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase in rat vascular smooth muscle cells, *Life Sciences* 54 (1994) 281–285.
- [15] M-P. Moisan, C.R.W. Edwards, J.R. Seckl, Effect of adrenalectomy and dexamethasone administration on  $11\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase in vitro activity in rat brain and kidney, *Journal of Physiology* 434 (1990) 87P.
- [16] W.C. Smith, R.W. Funder, Renal  $11\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity: effect of age, sex and altered hormonal status, *Journal of Steroid Biochemistry and Molecular Biology* 38 (1991) 265–267.
- [17] P.W. Landfield, J. Waymire, J. Lynch, Hippocampal aging and adrenocorticoids: A quantitative correlation, *Science* 202 (1978) 1098–1102.
- [18] R.M. Sapolsky, L.C. Krey, B.S. McEwan, The neuroendocrinology of stress and aging. The glucocorticoid cascade hypothesis, *Endocrine Reviews* 7 (1986) 284–301.
- [19] P.M. Jamieson, M.J. Nyirenda, K.E. Chapman, B.R. Walker, J.R. Seckl, Interactions between oestradiol and glucocorticoid regulatory effects on liver-specific glucocorticoid-inducible genes: possible evidence for a role of hepatic  $11\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase type 1, *Journal of Endocrinology* 160 (1999) 103–109.
- [20] I. MacPhee, F. Antoni, D. Mason, Spontaneous recovery of rats from experimental encephalomyelitis is dependent on regulation of the immune system by endogenous adrenal corticosteroids, *Journal of Experimental Medicine* 169 (1989) 431–445.
- [21] P. Chomczynski, N. Sacchi, Single-step method of RNA isolation by guanidinium thiocyanate-phenol-chloroform extraction, *Analytical Biochemistry* 162 (1987) 156–159.
- [22] M. Voice, J.R. Seckl, C.R.W. Edwards, K.E. Chapman,  $11\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase type 1 expression in 2 S-FAZA hepatoma cells is hormonally-regulated: a model for the study of hepatic corticosteroid metabolism, *Biochemical Journal* 317 (1996) 621–625.
- [23] L. Jacobson, R. Sapolsky, The role of the hippocampus in feedback regulation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenocortical axis, *Endocrine Reviews* 12 (1991) 118–134.
- [24] M.H. Whitnall, Regulation of the hypothalamic corticotropin-releasing hormone neurosecretory system, *Progress in Neurobiology* 40 (1993) 573–629.
- [25] B.S. McEwen, E.R. de Kloet, W. Rostene, Adrenal steroid receptors and action in the central nervous system, *Physiological Reviews* 66 (1986) 1121–1188.
- [26] J.H.M.H. Reul, E.R. de Kloet, Two receptor systems for corticosterone in rat brain: Microdissection and differential occupation, *Endocrinology* 117 (1985) 2505–2511.
- [27] R.M. Sapolsky, A mechanism for glucocorticoid toxicity in the hippocampus: Increased neuronal vulnerability to metabolic insults, *Journal of Neuroscience* 5 (1985) 1228–1232.
- [28] R.S. Sloviter, G. Valiquette, G.M. Abrams, E.C. Ronk, A.L. Sollas, L.A. Paul, S. Neubort, Selective loss of hippocampal granule cells in the mature rat brain after adrenalectomy, *Science* 243 (1989) 535–538.
- [29] P.M. Jamieson, E. Fuchs, G. Flügge, J.R. Seckl, Attenuation of hippocampal  $11\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase type 1 by chronic psychosocial stress in the tree shrew, *Stress* 2 (1997) 123–132.