

DOCTORAL THESIS

Modulatory effect of magnolol in colonic motility dysfunction induced by neonatal maternal separation in rats

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**Modulatory Effect of Magnolol in Colonic Motility
Dysfunction Induced by Neonatal Maternal Separation in
Rats**

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

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ABSTRACT

Colonic motility dysfunction is one of the main clinical features of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), which is a common disease of gastrointestinal functional disorders. Stress plays an important role in the onset and development of IBS and can cause the colonic motility dysfunction. The etiology colonic motility dysfunction has not been clarified and current therapies are not perfect. Magnolol, 5,5'-Diallyl-2,2'-biphenyldiol, is a bioactive compound found in the bark of the herb *Cortex Magnoliae Officinalis*, which has been used for lower gastrointestinal disorders such as diarrhea and constipation in Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) for long time but the mechanisms have not been well understood. The aims of this study are: 1) to investigate the colonic motility status induced by neonatal maternal separation (NMS); 2) to investigate whether NMS-induced colonic motility dysfunction is related to the change of L-type calcium channels; 3) to investigate the pharmacological effect of magnolol on colonic motility function in NMS rats; and 4) to investigate the possible underlying mechanism of magnolol's effect.

In *in vivo* study, the changes of colonic transit were detected through water avoidance stress (WAS) test. In *in vitro* study, the spontaneous contraction and smooth muscle contractions of colonic smooth muscles under different ligands were recorded through an organ bath system. Laser confocal fluorescent imaging study method was used to compare intracellular calcium concentration ($[Ca^{2+}]_i$) under different agents in enzymatically isolated single colonic smooth muscle cells of rats. The change of L-type

Ca²⁺ channels currents in the single colonic smooth muscle cells were recorded by using patch clamp technique. Also the immunofluorescence and Western blotting analysis were used to compare the expression of relative proteins.

The results of this study are summarized as follows:

1. NMS increased (1) the fecal pellet number in response to one hour water avoidance stress; (2) the amplitude of spontaneous contraction of colonic sections; (3) contractile responses induced by L-type calcium channels activator Bay K 8644, high K⁺ ions and ACh; and elevated contractile activities was accompanied with an increase of [Ca²⁺]_i in colonic myocytes; (4) the expression of L-type Ca²⁺ channels α_{1c} -subunit protein in colonic smooth muscle. These data indicate that NMS induces colonic motility disorder, which is associated with the up-regulation of L-type Ca²⁺ channels in colonic smooth muscles.
2. Magnolol dose-dependently inhibited (1) the colonic motility under one hour WAS *in vivo* in NMS rats; (2) the colonic smooth muscle spontaneous contraction and contractile effect induced by different stimuli *in vitro* in NMS rats; (3) the increased colonic motility pretreatment with Bay K 8644 under 1 hour WAS *in vivo* with nonhandled (NH) rats; (4) [Ca²⁺]_i of colonic smooth muscle cells in NMS rats. These data suggest that magnolol can regulate abnormal colonic motility, and the effect may be associated with the inhibitory effect on activity of voltage-sensitive L-type calcium channels,

3. Magnolol dose-dependently inhibited 1) the spontaneous contractions of colonic smooth muscle and Bay K 8644-, ACh- and KCl-induced contractions in the rat colons *in vitro* in NH rats; 2) L-type Ca^{2+} - channel currents in isolated single colonic smooth muscle cell; 3) expression of α_{1c} -subunit of L-type Ca^{2+} channels in rat colonic smooth muscles. These results suggest that magnolol caused the relaxation effect on distal colonic smooth muscle in rat through inhibition of L - type Ca^{2+} channels activities and expression in smooth muscle cells, indicating that the magnolol could act as an L-type calcium channels blocker, and has the potential to be used as an agent for treating IBS.

4. Magnolol at the concentration of 10 μM - 100 μM inhibited smooth muscle contractility in the presence of Ca^{2+} but had no inhibitory effect in the absence of Ca^{2+} after activation of PKC with 30 nM phorbol 12-myristate 13-acetate (PMA). Western blotting results showed that magnolol inhibited the expression of MYL9 (MLC_{20}) on smooth muscle but could not affect the expression of MLCK and CPI-17 on smooth muscle. These data suggest that the inhibitory effect of mangolol is involved in the Ca^{2+} dependent PKC pathway. Furthermore, the effect is accompanied by a reduction of MLC_{20} on the colonic smooth muscle.

In conclusion, the results highlight the role of L-type Ca^{2+} channels in the pathophysiological mechanism of NMS-induced colonic motility dysfunction, and clarify that the magnolol can inhibit the colonic muscle contraction; and this effect is mediated through the L-type Ca^{2+} channel signaling. These data indicate that magnolol

could be used as a potential L-type calcium channels blocker to treat IBS.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xvi
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1 Functional gastrointestinal (GI) disorder and motility dysfunction.....	2
1.1 Functional GI disease.....	2
1.1.1 Functional GI disorders (FGIDs).....	2
1.1.2 Symptoms induced by GI motility disorders	4
1.2 Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)	6
1.2.1 Epidemiology and categorization	6
1.2.2 Etiological factors	8
1.2.2.1 Genes	9
1.2.2.2 Psychosocial factors.....	10
1.2.2.3 Diet.....	10
1.2.2.4 GI infection	11
1.2.2.5 Visceral hypersensitivity.....	12
1.2.2.6 Motility disorder	15
A. Clinical features	17
B. Mechanism study	18
2 IBS and Stress	24
2.1 Definition of stress.....	24
2.2 Stress and IBS	24
2.3 Stress and visceral sensitivity	26
2.4 Stress and GI motility dysfunction	27
2.5 Other changes caused by stress.....	29
2.6 Animal model of IBS	30
2.6.1 Currently available animal models of IBS.....	30
2.6.2 NMS model.....	31
2.6.3 Current understanding of NMS model.....	32
3 Calcium and motility	33
3.1 Calcium and colonic smooth muscle contraction	33
3.1.1 Calcium dependent initial contraction	34
3.1.2 Calcium independent sustained contraction	35
3.2 L-type calcium channels and colonic smooth muscle contraction	37
3.3 L-type calcium channels blockers and IBS.....	38
4 Treatments of IBS	39

4.1 Conventional medicine	39
4.1.1 5-HT receptor modulators.....	40
4.1.2 Antispasmodic and anticholinergic agents.....	41
4.1.3 Other drugs	42
4.2 Chinese medicine.....	48
4.2.1 Herbal formulas	48
4.2.2 Acupuncture.....	50
5 Magnolol and motility disorder	51
5.1 Rationale of selection.....	51
5.2 The chemical structure of magnolol	53
5.3 The pharmacological activities of magnolol.....	54
5.3.1 Antifungal and antibacterial effect.....	54
5.3.2 Anti-inflammatory effect	54
5.3.3 Antioxidant and neuroprotective effect.....	55
5.3.4 Anti-tumor and cancer effects	56
5.3.5 Analgesic effects	56
5.3.6 Relaxation of smooth muscle effects	56
6 Scientific Hypotheses	58
7 Aims and Design of the research	59
7.1 Aims and Objectives of the Research	59
7.2 Design of the research.....	60
8 Technique flowchart.....	62
CHAPTER 2 MATERIALS AND METHODS	63
1 Animals	64
2 Neonatal maternal separation (NMS)	64
3 Water avoidance stress (WAS)	65
4 Colonic motility tests <i>in vitro</i>	65
5 Isolation of smooth muscle cells.....	68
6 Laser confocal fluorescent imaging.....	68
7 Immunohistochemistry and Immunofluorescence staining	69
7.1 Tissue preparation	69
7.2 Immunohistochemistry (IHC) detection	70
7.3 Immunofluorescence (IF) detection.....	71
8 Western blotting analysis.....	72
9 Patch-clamp recording of colonic smooth muscle cells.....	73
10 Chemicals and solutions	75
10.1 Chemicals.....	75
10.2 Composition of Krebs solutions	78
10.3 Solutions for IHC.....	79
10.4 Solutions for Western blotting	80
10.5 Solutions for isolating smooth muscle cells	87
10.6 Solutions for Patch Clamp	88
11 Antibodies Used in WB and IHC.....	89
12 Statistics	90

CHAPTER 3 UP-REGULATION OF L-TYPE CALCIUM CHANNELS IN COLONIC SMOOTH MUSCLE CELLS IS INVOLVED IN COLONIC MOTILITY DYSFUNCTION INDUCED BY NMS	91
1 Introduction.....	92
2 Material and methods.....	94
2.1 Experiment design	94
2.2 Drug administration	95
2.3 Data analysis and statistics	96
3 Results.....	96
3.1 Effect of NMS on colonic motility	96
3.2 Effect of NMS on spontaneous contractile activity <i>in vitro</i>	97
3.3 Effect of NMS on colonic contractile response with tetrodotoxin pre-treatment.....	97
3.4 Differences of Bay K 8644 -evoked colonic contraction <i>in vitro</i> and $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ in isolated single colonic myocytes among NMS and NH rats.....	97
3.5 Difference of KCl-evoked colonic contraction <i>in vitro</i> and $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ in isolated single colonic myocytes among NMS and NH rats	98
3.6 Difference of ACh-evoked colonic contraction <i>in vitro</i> and $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ in isolated single colonic myocytes among NMS and NH rats	98
3.7 Effect of NMS on colonic contractile response to ACh with nifedipine pretreatment	99
3.8 Expression of L-type Ca^{2+} channels $\alpha 1c$ -subunit in colonic smooth muscle	100
4 Discussion.....	100
5 Conclusion	106
CHAPTER 4 MAGNOLOL REGULATES COLONIC MOTILITY BY INHIBITING L-TYPE CALCIUM CHANNELS IN COLONIC SMOOTH MUSCLE CELLS IN NEONATAL MATERNAL SEPARATION RATS	115
1 Introduction.....	116
2 Materials and methods	119
2.1 Experiment design	119
2.2 Drug administration	121
2.3 Data analysis and statistics	121
3 Results.....	122
3.1 Effect of magnolol on fecal pellets during WAS in NMS rats.....	122
3.2 Effects of magnolol on colonic motility during WAS <i>in vivo</i> pretreated with Bay K 8644 in NH rats	122
3.3 Time course of magnolol's inhibitory effect on colonic smooth muscle contraction	123
3.4 Dose-dependent inhibitory effect of magnolol on colonic smooth muscle contraction in NMS rats.....	123
3.5 Inhibitory effect of magnolol on contractions induced by KCl, 5-HT, and substance P.....	124
3.6 Effect of magnolol on $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ in colonic smooth muscle cells of NMS rats	124

.....	124
4 Discussion.....	125
5 Conclusion.....	129
CHAPTER 5 DOWN-REGULATION OF VOLTAGE-DEPENDENT L-TYPE Ca^{2+} CHANNELS OF COLONIC SMOOTH MUSCLE CELLS PARTICIPATES IN THE INHIBITORY EFFECT OF MAGNOLOL ON COLONIC MOTILITY IN RATS.....	136
1 Introduction.....	137
2 Materials and methods.....	137
2.1 Experiment design.....	137
2.2 Drug administration.....	138
2.3 Data analysis and statistics.....	140
3 Results.....	141
3.1 Effects of magnolol on spontaneous contraction and KCl- and ACh-induced contractions.....	141
3.2 Effects of magnolol on ACh- induced contraction after tetrodotoxin treatment.....	141
3.3 Effects of magnolol on ACh- induced contraction after L-NAME treatment in NH rats.....	141
3.4 Effects of magnolol on Bay K 8644 - induced colonic smooth muscle contraction.....	142
3.5 Inhibitory effect of magnolol on L-type Ca^{2+} channels currents.....	142
3.6 Inhibitory effect of magnolol on expression of α_{1c} -subunit of L-type Ca^{2+} channels in NH rats.....	143
4 Discussion.....	143
5 Conclusion.....	147
CHAPTER 6 MAGNOLOL ATTENUATES CONTRACTION BY DECREASING THE ACTIVITIES OF MLCK/MYOSIN LIGHT CHAIN 20 IN COLONIC SMOOTH MUSCLE CELLS.....	157
1 Introduction.....	158
2 Materials and methods.....	161
2.1 Experiment design.....	161
2.2 Drug administration.....	162
2.3 Data analysis and statistics.....	163
3 Results.....	163
3.1 Effects of magnolol on 10 μ M ACh-induced colonic muscle contraction after pretreatment with PKC activator.....	163
3.2 Effects of magnolol on 40 mM KCl-induced colonic muscle contraction after pretreatment with PKC activator.....	163
3.3 Effects of magnolol on 40 mM KCl-induced colonic muscle contraction after pretreatment with PKC activator in Ca^{2+} free Kreb's solution.....	164
3.4 Effects of Y-27632 on 10 μ M ACh-induced colonic muscle contraction and 40 mM KCl-induced muscle contraction after pretreatment with PKC activator.....	164
3.5 Effects of magnolol on the expression of MLCK in the colonic smooth	

muscles.....	165
3.6 Effects of magnolol on the expression of MYL9 (MLC ₂₀) in the colonic smooth muscles.....	165
3.7 Effects of magnolol on the expression of CPI-17 in the colonic smooth muscles.....	165
4 Discussion.....	166
5 Conclusion.....	169
CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION.....	178
1 Summary.....	179
1.1 The increased colonic motility induced by NMS is associated with up-regulation of L-type Ca ²⁺ channels in colonic smooth muscle cells.	179
1.2 Magnolol inhibited the colonic motility induced by NMS <i>in vivo</i> and <i>in vitro</i>	181
1.3 The inhibitory effect of managolol on smooth muscle contraction is mediated through L-type Ca ²⁺ channels.	182
1.4 Magnolol attenuates colonic smooth muscle contraction by decreasing the activity of MLCK/myosin light chain 20 in colonic smooth muscle cells. ..	182
2 Prospects.....	184
2.1 The linkage between the up-regulation of L-type Ca ²⁺ channels in colonic smooth muscle cells and colonic motility disorders.....	184
2.2 The effect of magnolol on neurotransmitters involved in colonic motility disorders.....	185
2.3 The effect of magnolol on the PKC pathway.....	185
3 Conclusion.....	186
REFERENCES.....	188
PUBLICATIONS.....	215
CURRICULUM VITAE.....	217