Volume 59(Suppl. 3):370-419, 2015
Acta Biologica Szegediensis
http://www2.sci.u-szeged.hu/ABS

ABSTRACTS
of the
19th Congress of the Hungarian Anatomical Society

June 11–13, 2015

University of Szeged

Szeged, Hungary

The hypothalamic regulation of growth

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The hypothalamo-hypophyseal axis plays a pivotal role in the regulation of growth. Growth hormone (GH) is released by the somatotropes from the anterior lobe of the hypophysis and either exerts direct effect on target cells or stimulates the production of insulin-like growth factor (IGF)-I to induce metabolic changes leading to growth.

The release of GH is under the stimulatory effect of the hypothalamic growth hormone-releasing hormone (GHRH) that is antagonized by somatostatin synthesized in the anterior periventricular zone. Both substances reach the anterior lobe through the hypophyseal portal capillaries in the median eminence. In addition, somatostatin appears to directly inhibit the release of GHRH.

The secretion of GHRH and somatostatin is regulated by neurotransmitters, neuropeptides, and hormones. Neurotransmitter systems can control GHRH and somatostatin release by either endocrine/paracrine route, via autocrine regulation based on colocalization of multiple chemical messengers or via direct synaptic contacts. Indeed, in our recent studies we have revealed intimate associations between several neurotransmitter systems and GHRH/somatostatinergic neurons in the human hypothalamus using light microscopic double-label immunohistochemistry. These associations may be functional synapses and may represent the regulatory effect of several neurotransmitters/neuromodulators on growth.

Plasticity of C-fibre spinal afferent neurons

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Lesions of peripheral nerves induce multifold changes in the distribution, connections, chemistry and function of C-fibre primary afferent neurons which transmit pain. Investigations into the mechanisms of lesion-induced neuroplastic alterations suggested a vigorous sprouting into the most superficial layers of the spinal dorsal horn of myelinated A-fibre primary afferents which bind and transport the B subunit of choleratoxin (CTB). Studies in our laboratory have revealed that this phenomenon may largely be explained by a phenotypic change of injured C-fibre afferents expressing increased levels of GM1 ganglioside rather than a sprouting response of A-fibre afferents. Studies on cultured dorsal root ganglion neurons have revealed that GM1 ganglioside plays an important role in both the nociceptive and nocifensor functions of C-fibre primary sensory neurons. Importantly, inhibition of ganglioside synthesis resulted not only in a decreased activation of the major nociceptive ion channel, the transient receptor potential vanilloid type 1 receptor (TRPV1), but also in a decreased expression of the TRPV1 protein. In contrast, the proportions of neurons which show CGRP and/or substance P immunoreactivity or bind the Bandeira simplicifolia isolectin B4 were similar to the control. The capsaicin- but not the high potassium-induced release of calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) was inhibited in DRG cultures pretreated with an inhibitor of ganglioside synthesis. Collectively, these findings suggest that neural gangliosides and/or the enzymes of ganglioside metabolism may be novel targets for the modulation of nociceptor function and pain.

Supported by OTKA K-101873.

Novel approaches to promote neuroprotection and long-distance axon regeneration by enhanced FGFR1 signaling

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Nerve injuries cause motor and sensory deficits with often serious clinical consequences such as prolonged paralysis, anaesthesia and neuropathic pain. Improvement of long-distance axon growth is required for faster regeneration of axons to the skin and into target muscles which atrophy in the absence of reinnervation. Primary sensory neurons derived from adult dorsal root ganglia are particularly suitable to study regeneration-associated neuronal plasticity. Their axons rapidly regenerate after lesion because of the permissive environment provided by Schwann cells, cytokines and neurotrophic factors.

FGF-2 is up-regulated in response to nerve injury and has been shown to promote neuronal survival and neurite outgrowth via activation of FGFR1. Our laboratory focusses on the signaling pathways activated by FGFR1 to exert neurotrophic effects and to influence different modes of axon regeneration, such as elongation and branching. FGFR1 overexpression and inhibition of receptor degradation stimulate the neuronal ERK pathway and promote elongative axon growth of adult sensory neurons. Degradation of FGFR1 is reduced by the lysosomal inhibitor leupeptin which leads to enhanced receptor recycling.

Sprouty proteins act as negative feedback inhibitors of the ERK pathway. Down-regulation of Sprouty2 via transfection of shRNA promotes elongative axon growth by peripheral and central neurons. In response to Sprouty2 knockdown, enhanced RTK-induced activation of ERK and Ras is observed, but phosphorylation of Akt and p38 remains unaffected. Adult neurons dissociated from Spry2 knock-out mice reveal enhanced axon outgrowth on laminin exhibiting prominent elongation in neuronal cultures obtained from Spry2+/- mice while Spry2-/- neurons extend more axon branches. Following sciatic nerve crush, significantly more myelinated axons regenerate in heterozygous Spry2+/- mice which is accompanied by faster recovery of sensomotor performance and higher number of motor endplates in distal muscles. Axonal growth-associated-protein (GAP43) mRNA and protein levels are elevated in the distal sciatic nerve of Spry2+/- mice after crush as compared to wildtype littermates.

Furthermore, applying double heterozygous Spry2/4 knockout mice, we analyzed the effects of Spry2/4 deficiency in the brain following local kainic acid (KA) injection into the dorsal hippocampus. Neuronal cell death in Spry2/4+/- mice is significantly reduced in CA1 and CA3c principal neuron layers and in interneurons of CA1 or hilus of the contralateral hippocampus. GFAP labeling reveals significant increases in intensity and number of reactive astrocytes in the contralateral cortex and ipsilateral molecular layer of knock-out mice that exhibit a significant reduction in granule cell dispersion as well.

Taken together, our data demonstrate neuroprotective effects of Spry2/4 reduction in an epilepsy model of KA induced neuronal cell death and corroborate the functional significance of the neuronal Ras/Raf/ERK pathway as well as downstream GAP43 induction for neuroprotection and axon regeneration following nerve injury suggesting a novel role for Spry2 as potential target downstream of FGFR1 (funded by the Austrian Science Fund).

Molecular composition of extracellular matrix in the vestibular nuclei of the rat

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Previous studies have demonstrated that the molecular and structural composition of the extracellular matrix (ECM) shows regional differences in the central nervous system. By using histochemical and immunohistochemical methods, we provide a detailed map of the distribution of ECM molecules in the vestibular nuclear complex (VNC) of the rat. We have observed common characteristics of the ECM staining pattern in the VNC and a number of differences among the individual vestibular nuclei and their subdivisions. The perineuronal net (PNN), which is the pericellular condensation of ECM, showed the most intense staining for hyaluronan, aggrecan, brevican and tenascin-R in the superior, lateral and medial vestibular nuclei, whereas the HAPLN1 link protein and the neurocan exhibited moderate staining intensity. The rostral part of the descending vestibular nucleus (DVN) presented a similar staining pattern in the PNN, with the exception of brevican, which was negative. The caudal part of the DVN had the weakest staining for all ECM molecules in the PNN. Throughout the VNC, versican staining in the PNN, when present, was distinctive due to its punctuate appearance. The neuropil also exhibited heterogeneity among the individual vestibular nuclei in ECM staining pattern and intensity. We find that the heterogeneous distribution of ECM molecules is associated in many cases with the variable cytoarchitecture and hodological organization of the vestibular nuclei, and propose that differences in the ECM composition may be related to specific neuronal functions associated with gaze and posture control and vestibular compensation.

Molecular organization of the endocannabinoid system in the spinal dorsal horn of rodents

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Although cannabinoids are widely known as powerful regulators of nociceptive information processing, the molecular organization of the endocannabinoid system is poorly defined in the spinal dorsal horn, representing the primary relay station of pain processing pathways. Thus, we investigated the distribution and function of cannabinoid-1 receptor (CB1-R), as well as diacylglycerol lipase alpha (DGL-alpha) and monoacylglycerol lipase (MGL), synthesizing and degrading enzymes of the endocannabinoid ligand 2-AG, in the rodent spinal dorsal horn, using immunocytochemical and calcium imaging methods.

DGL-alpha was primarily associated with dendrites, in close vicinity to synapses, as well as with astrocytic profiles, suggesting that 2-AG can be released by postsynaptic dendrites and astroglial cells. The released 2-AG may activate CB1-Rs, which were found on axonal varicosities of a number of primary afferents and spinal interneurons, as well as on astrocytes. Here we show also, that activation of CB1-R evokes calcium transients in astrocytes, in spinal cord slices as well as in primary astrocyte cultures, which results in Ca-dependent endocannabinoid release. Importantly, the distribution of MGL suggests that 2-AG can be broken down only in some of the axon terminals and glial cells, indicating that 2-AG may act in both phasic and tonic manners.

Our results suggest that the activity-dependent release of 2-AG and consecutive activation of CB1-R may put an unexpectedly diverse signaling mechanism into action. In addition to presynaptic inhibition of various axon terminals, it can also turn on a bidirectional neuron-astrocyte-neuron communication pathway, which may further modulate pain processing in the spinal dorsal horn.

This work was supported by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA-TKI 242) and the Hungarian Brain Research Program (KTIA_NAP_13-1-2013-0001).

Interleukins in spinal pain processing

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Although the contribution of interleukin signaling to the development of chronic pain is generally accepted, our present knowledge about the cellular expression of interleukin receptors and their ligands in the spinal dorsal horn is insufficient. There is general agreement in the literature that due to the activation of nociceptive primary afferents (among other substances) pro-inflammatory cytokines are released from glial cells which will act on their neural receptors, resulting in the modulation of neuronal excitability.

Based on gene expressional data (TLDA method) our work focused on the study of the pro-inflammatory cytokine, interleukin-1beta and the ligand-binding unit of its receptor (IL-1R1) in the spinal dorsal horn in the Complete Freund Adjuvant (CFA)-induced inflammatory pain model. In agreement with the TLDA results, Western blot analysis showed a gradual increase of IL1-R1 protein during the course of the model. Immunohistochemical investigations revealed that in the superficial spinal dorsal horn in addition to neurons IL1-R1 is abundantly expressed by astrocytes and only sparsely by microglial cells in animals suffering from CFA-evoked inflammatory pain, while IL-1beta is primarily synthetised by astrocytes. Factors that stimulate the synthesis and release of IL-1beta were further studied in primary astrocyte cultures.

Our data indicate that spinal astrocytes but not microglial cells play dominant role in interleukin-mediated signaling mechanisms which strongly contribute to the development of central sensitization of spinal pain processing neural circuits in CFA-evoked chronic inflammatory pain. This work was supported by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA-TKI242) and Hungarian Brain Research Program (KTIA_NAP_13-2013-0001).

Radial and non-radial migratory forms of spinal dorsal horn neurons during embryogenesis

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Superficial spinal dorsal horn neurons differentiate from late-born progenitor cells and assemble into circuits fundamental for nociception. During their early development they may follow unique migratory pathways since they have to migrate through or around the earlier born neurons populating the deep dorsal horn. To examine this process, we labelled neurons in the cervical spinal cords of mice embryos by in utero electroporation of GFP and BrdU incorporation assays. We found that most of the neurons migrating into the superficial spinal dorsal horn born in a remarkably narrow time interval at around 12.5 gestation day (E12.5) in the ventricular zone of the mouse cervical spinal cord. We also demonstrated that the first neurons arrive to the superficial layers of the dorsal gray matter at around E14. Investigating the immunoreactivity of electroporated neurons for Pax2 and Brn3a, it was revealed that GFP labelled neurons display immunostaining for Pax2 and Brn3a in a non-overlapping manner indicating that the differentiation of superficial spinal dorsal hon neurons into inhibitory (dILA, Pax2 positive) and excitatory (dILB, Brn3a positive) neurons had been completed by E14 – E15. Time-lapse microscopy on electroporated spinal cord explants revealed that the migration of the investigated neurons can be divided into two phases. First they migrate radially, bur after reaching the superficial dorsal horn they change their migratory pathway and move parallel to the pial surface into medio-lateral direction until they find their final destination.

This research was supported by TÁMOP 4.2.4.A/2-11-1-2012-0001 „National Excellence Program”. The project was subsidized by the European Union and co-financed by the European Social Fund. Further support was provided by the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund (OTKA PD 108467), the Hungarian Brain Research Program (KTIA_NAP_13-1-2013-0001) and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA-TKI 242; MTA-JSPS bilateral mobility grant).

The effect and mechanism of action of clonal stem cell lines on the regenerative capacity of the injured spinal cord

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Spinal cord injury has a devastating effect on the patients, leaving the body without motor and sensory functions distal to the the injury. Transplantation of stem cells provides a successful experimental therapeutic strategy to treat spinal cord injuries.

Clonal stem cells are reliably reproducible cells with constant features. Their possible mechanism of action is based upon their neuroprotective role (preventing the formation of secondary injury), promoting regeneration of injured axons by downregulating the development of the non-permissive glial environment and replacement of lost glial cells and neurons. Indeed, grafting various types of clonal stem cells into the injured cord results in functional improvement and improved morphological characteristics. Our data suggest that undifferentiated clonal stem cells secrete a variety of cytokines and some of the neural growth factors for a limited time after transplantation into the injured cord. On the other hand, some cells of graft origin appear to have been integrated into the injured cord, especially those that have differentiated towards a oligodendrocyte phenotype. The administration of function-blocking antibodies via osmotic pumps along with grafted stem cells nearly completely abolished the effect of stem cell grafting, suggesting a minor, but not negligible role for the stem cell-derived glial and neuronal cells in the cellular replacement process. These data suggest that clonal stem cells exert their effects via multiple mechanisms of action, resulting in considerably improved outcome after a severe experimental spinal cord injury.

Survival and regeneration of adult motoneurons induced by grafted neuroectodermal stem cells following ventral root avulsion injury: The effect of various administration routes

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Spinal cord motoneurons are severely injured and destined to die due to a ventral root avulsion injury. Stem cell transplantation is a possible strategy to induce the survival and regeneration of the injured motoneurons.

In our experimental model the left lumbar 4 (L4) ventral root of the spinal cord was avulsed in Sprague-Dawley rats, increasing number of NE-GFP-4C neuroectodermal stem cells were grafted into the L4 segment of the spinal cord or injected into the blood-stream and the avulsed ventral root was reimplanted. In control animals only the L4 ventral root was avulsed and reimplanted without stem cell transplantation. After 3 months survival the L4 spinal nerve was labelled with Fast Blue and the transplanted cells were detected by immunhistochemical markers.

The grafted cells settled mainly in the dorsal horn, in the intermedier gray matter and differentiated into neurons or astrocytes. On the other hand, both stem cell-derived astrocytes and neurons were found on the pial surface of the cord, although they appeared to be less differentiated. The stem cells induced a dose-dependent survival and regeneration of the host motoneurons in both transplantation paradigms, but the motoneuron-rescuing effect was considerably lower in the case of intravenous application. Moreover, these motoneurons not only survived but were able to extend their axons into the vacated ventral root and reinnervate the peripheral targets.

Our results provided evidence that both the intravenous or intraspinal application of stem cells are able to promote the survival and regeneration of the host motoneurons.

Spinal microgliosis induced by peripheral nerve lesions: the role of A- and C-fiber primary afferent neurons

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Lesions of peripheral nerves induce striking microgliosis in the spinal cord. The mechanisms and, in particular, the types of primary afferents crucial for the development of this microglial reaction are unclear. Therefore, in the present study, by making use of the selective C-fibre chemodenervation technique utilizing capsaicin, we examined the contributions of C- and A-fibre primary afferents to the spinal microglial response in the rat.

The sciatic nerve of adult male Wistar rats was either transected or treated perineurally with capsaicin (1%) under anesthesia. Two weeks later, the animals were sacrificed and sections of the lumbar spinal cord were processed for the demonstration of microglia and C-fiber primary afferents by applying OX42-immunohistochemistry and Bandeiraea simplicifolia isolectin (IB4) histochemistry, respectively. The microglia reaction was quantitatively evaluated in thin optical sections obtained with a laser-scanning confocal microscope using an image analysis software.

Peripheral nerve transection resulted in robust microgliosis in the segmentally and somatotopically appropriate regions of the spinal cord. The density of microglial elements increased significantly by 237±36% and 525±78% in laminae I-II and III-X, respectively, as compared to the contralateral control side. In contrast, perineural treatment with capsaicin resulted only in small increases of microglial density by 58±22% and 59±17% in laminae I-II and III-X, respectively.

These findings indicate that transganglionic changes of injured A-fibre afferents predominate in the initiation of the spinal microglia reaction following peripheral nerve injury. The results also suggest that spinal microgliosis may be a good biomarker for neuropathic pain but not peripheral nerve lesions.

Supported in part by János Bolyai Research Felowship of H.A.S.

Prolactin responsive neurons in the maternal rat brain

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We confirmed previous studies that 2 hours suckling resulted in a widespread induction of pSTAT5 in some forebrain regions such as the arcuate nucleus, the para- and periventricular nuclei, the medial preoptic area, the bed nucleus of the stria terminalis, and the medial amygdala. We also demonstrated by double labeling that pSTAT5 appears in oxytocin neurons in the lateral subcommissural nucleus of the preoptic area. Following direct intracerebroventricular injection of prolactin, pSTAT5 appeared in all the nuclei as following suckling suggesting that prolactin mediated the effect of suckling.

To investigate the time course of prolactin response, pups were allowed to suckle for 30 min, 2 h and 6 h, respectively. At 30 min, only neurons in the arcuate and periventricular nuclei showed significant pSTAT5 labeling. At 6 h, all the nuclei we observed in earlier time points, as well as the posterior intralaminar complex of the thalamus (PIL) contained prolactin-activated cells. Most of the responsive cells in the PIL were identified as TIP39 neurons. In contrast, other TIP39 neurons in the brain did not contain pSTAT5 labeling.

In conclusion, we demonstrated that prolactin affects neurons in a complex spatial and temporal pattern, which overlaps to some degree with the Fos activation pattern following suckling. However, peculiar differences were found including TIP39-containing relay neurons in the PIL, which showed Fos activation immediately after suckling but pSTAT appeared in them with a time delay.

The work was supported by HAS Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Program for MCS, OTKA K100319 and KTIA_NAP_B_13-2-2014-0004 Program.

Protective effects of pituitary adenylate cyclase activating polypeptide (PACAP) in mouse hind-limb ischaemia

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PACAP is expressed by the central nervous system and peripheral organs. It has neurotrophic, neuroprotective and general cytoprotective effects. It regulates vascular functions: endothelial cells express PACAP and its receptors, and PACAP increases the level of cAMP in smooth muscle cells, resulting in vasodilatation. PACAP protects endothelial cells in vitro against ischaemia and has proangiogenic effects.

In our research we investigated the protective effects of endogenous PACAP in a mouse hind-limb ischaemic model. We ligated the right femoral artery of 5-month-old male wild-type (WT, n=5) and PACAP-deficient (KO, n=5) mice. Blood perfusion in the upper layers of the sole of hind limbs was measured with PERIMED PSI before the ligature, 1 hour and 7 days thereafter. After transcardial perfusion cross sections were cut from the soleus muscle and immunofluorescence staining followed with the endothelium specific anti-lectin antibody.

After the ligature, the proportion of the perfusion of right and left leg showed a significantly greater decrease in KO mice compared to the WT mice. The cross sections of the soleus muscle showed significantly lower capillary density in KO mice compared to WT ones.

We proved that KO mice show a greater decrease of perfusion in acute ischemia, and in ischaemic muscle tissue they have decreased capillary density compared to WT mice. We confirmed, that endogenous PACAP can play an important role in the protection against ischaemia and in subsequent angiogenesis, but for discovering the exact mechanisms further experiments are needed.

Support: MTA-PTE „Lendület” Program, Arimura Foundation, OTKA K104984, PD109644, KTIA_NAP_13-1-2013-0001.

Spine pruning in the frontal cortex leads to abnormal synaptic contacts in a mouse model of schizophrenia

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Psychiatric and neurodevelopmental disorders may arise from anomalies in long-range neuronal connectivity downstream of pathologies in dendritic spines. However, the mechanisms that may link spine pathology to circuit abnormalities relevant to atypical behavior remain unknown. Using a mouse model to conditionally disrupt a critical regulator of the dendritic spine cytoskeleton, the actin-related protein 2/3 complex (Arp2/3), we examined the ultrastructural morphology of frontal cortical pyramidal neuron synapses of these Arp2/3 mutant mice. Our data demonstrate that the main effect of Arp2/3 loss in cortical neuropil is on excitatory synaptic contacts, which leads to a reduction in the number of normal axospinous synapses. Although axonal contacts remain, they either shift directly onto dendritic shafts or form multi-axonal synaptic contacts on the remaining spines. Our findings reveal a mechanism that unexpectedly reveals the inter-relationship of progressive spine pruning, elevated frontal cortical excitation of pyramidal neurons, which may lead to striatal hyperdopaminergia in a cortical-to-midbrain circuit abnormality.

Transcriptomic and proteomic analysis of a human chondrogenic progenitor cell line

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Osteoarthritis (OA) is one of the ten most disabling musculoskeletal conditions in developed countries. As there is currently no effective treatment for OA, there is a pressing need for the development of novel therapeutic strategies to preserve articular cartilage. In order to develop such methods a better understanding of normal and OA chondrocyte physiology is necessary. As cells in OA cartilage reside in a significantly altered, inflammatory extracellular matrix, it is logical to assume that these cells may be characterised by a transformed "membranome" – an assembly of plasma membrane ion channels and transporters. This work focuses on the analysis of mRNA and protein expression of plasma membrane proteins in a human chondrogenic cell population from OA knee cartilage with the help of transcriptomics and proteomics. Samples with enriched cell surface proteins were prepared using EZ-Link Sulfo-NHS-SS-Biotin and analysed using the short GeLC-MS/MS method on a Bruker Impact HD instrument. Approximately 25% of the proteins identified were plasma membrane proteins, which support the efficacy of the biotinylation method. In total, different 78 plasma membrane proteins were identified, some of which play important roles in chondrocyte cell biology, such as integrins, CD44, or PMCA4. To further enhance the efficacy of membrane protein enrichment, we are considering combining the biotinylation method with a Triton X-114 phase separation protocol. Correlating ion channel expression with altered function during the development of OA will provide a better understanding of pathophysiological mechanisms controlling disease progression and will contribute to the understanding of cartilage degeneration.

LPS can modify the mineralization of tooth germ

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Several TLR receptor recognized on odontoblasts, however data is scanty about the its developmental effects during tooth development. TLR4 is well known to inhibit mineralization of dentin and cause inflammation by mature odontoblasts and dental pulp cells. However, unlike these pathological functions of TLR4, little is known about the developmental aspect of TLR4 during odontogenesis.

The goal of this work is to investigate the possible presence and role of Toll-like receptor 4 during the development of mouse tooth germ. TLR4 expression was detected by Western blot in developing lower mouse incisors during the bell stage. To learn more about the effects of TLR4, a specific agonist (LPS) was applied to the medium of *in vitro* cultures, followed by Western blot, histochemical staining, *in situ* hybridization and ELISA. Increased accumulation of biotin-labeled LPS was detected in the enamel organ and in preodontoblasts. LPS treatment induced the activation of the NF- B signaling pathway through the degradation of inhibitor molecule (I B). However, no morphological alterations were detected in cultured tissue after LPS addition at the applied dosage. Activation of TLR4 decreased the mineralization of enamel and dentin matrix, as we demonstrated by alizarin-red staining and as decreased levels of collagen type X. mRNA expression of ameloblastin was elevated after LPS administration.

These results indicate that TLR4 may decrease the mineralization of enamel and dentin of the developing tooth and it may trigger the maturation of ameloblasts.

Volume and distribution of the cerebrospinal fluid in dogs

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The cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) has a central role in multiple symptoms and clinical procedures like myelography or hydrocephalus. Despite that, very little information is available about its volume in dogs. All major dosage systems are based on the assumption that the volume is directly proportional to the bodyweight of the animal, although multiple research data proved that false.

In this study we aimed to measure the volume of the entire CSF using an MRI based in vivo measurement method in 12 healthy, male mongrel dogs, between 2-5 years of age. We developed a SPACE sequence and validated it with two different methods. We measured not only the overall CSF volume, but the volume of every compartment (extra cranial subarachnoid (SA) space, intracranial SA space, ventricles) individually.

Our results show that the correlation between the subjects CSF volume and bodyweight is linear but not directly proportional, while the proportional distribution of the CSF between the compartments is highly constant and independent from the physical measurements (bodyweight, shoulder-height, total spinal length). Based on our data, the first, approximate base values for the canine CSF volume and distribution can be defined which will be very useful in the diagnosis of hydrocephalus or syringomyelia.

Despite the small number of subjects, our findings should be taken into consideration when working with the canine SA space, and any dosage system that uses the traditional approach for the injection of material into the SA space should be reconsidered.

Interstrain differences in ionotropic glutamate receptor subunits enhanced by pilocarpine treatment in mice

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Rodent strains used in epilepsy research have various neurological characteristics. These differences were suggested to be attributed to the diverse densities of the ionotropic glutamate receptor (iGluR) subunits. However, previous studies failed to find interstrain differences in the hippocampal receptor levels.

We supposed that a detailed layer-to-layer analysis of the iGluR subunits in the hippocampus might reveal strain-dependent differences in their base lines and long-term reactions induced by pilocarpine (PILO) between two mouse strains without documented common ancestors.

Levels of iGluR subunits in Balb/c and NMRI mice were compared that underwent PILO-induced severe seizures in the hippocampal layers using semiquantitative immunohistochemistry after two–month post-treatment period. The alterations in the neuronal circuitry were validated by neuropeptide Y (NPY) and neuronal nuclear antigen (NeuN) immunostainings.

Immunohistochemistry showed interstrain laminar differences in some subunits of both the control and PILO-treated animals. The seizure-induced irreversible neuronal changes were accompanied by reduced GluA1 and GluA2 levels. Their alterations were inversely correlated in the individual NMRI mice by Pearson's method. Increase in NPY immunoreactivity showed positive correlation with GluA1, and negative correlation with GluA2.

Basal levels of iGluRs differ in mouse strains, which may account for the interstrain differences in their reactions to the convulsant. Also, strain-dependent changes were found in the iGluR subunit densities of some hippocampal layers after PILO treatment. The ratio of the GluA1 and GluA2 levels might be dynamically fine-tuned by certain delicate intracellular machinery.

Examination of bioactive factors in human milk

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Breast milk contains several bioactive compounds that play important roles in the development of the nervous system and in gaining immuncompetence. Recently, we have shown that PACAP, a multifunctional neuropeptide, is present in high level in breast milk and we have described changes of PACAP levels during lactation. In the present experiment we aimed to examine the changes of MIF, a proinflammatory cytokine, and other bioactive factors (Fractalkine, MIP-1, Eotaxin, MDC, RANTES, EGF,MCP-1, GRO, Flt-3L, CD40) both in the water and lipid phase of milk samples during the first 6 months of lactation. We also analyzed the difference between the milk samples of male and female newborns.

We collected 5 ml milk every month during the first 6 months of nursing. First we separated the milk samples to lipid and water phase by centrifugation. We used ultrasonication to factor the lipid phase to additional lipid and water fraction. We measured the MIF concentration with ELISA, the other bioactive factors with Luminex and the PACAP level with radioimmunoassay examination.

We detected the presence of examined factors in the lipid phase of milk for the first time. We measured higher concentrations in the water fraction than in the lipid fraction. With Luminex technique we also detected significant differences in the concentration of different bioactive factors in 3 different milk fraction during the first 6 month of lactation. Our preliminary examinations did not find significant differences between milk samples of male and female newborns. Our future aim is to establish the exact influence of the above-mentioned factors in the process of lactation.

Support: MTA-PTE "Lendület" Prog., OTKA K10498, Arimura Foundation.

New innovative surgical solutions of congenital laryngeal malformations in newborns

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Congenital malformations of the larynx are relatively rare but may be life-threatening. The most common causes include laryngomalacia, vocal cord paralysis, and subglottic stenosis. Even nowadays, tracheotomy is the most often performed surgical intervention due to respiratory failure. The conventional glottis widening procedures can't be applied on account of the narrow anatomical situation. New minimally invasive surgical procedures were introduced in our clinic to perform airway reconstruction surgeries at the earliest possible age.

The authors present the three most common congenital anomalies of the larynx and describe their surgical treatment. Unilateral endoscopic arytenoid abduction lateropexy, laser aryepiglottoplasty and cricotracheal resecion were performed in a case of laryngomalacia, bilateral vocal cord paraysis and subglottic stenosis. The infants were 8, 4, and 9 days-old, respectively.

Tracheostomy could be avoided in all cases. The infants were extubated successfully after a short postoperative intubation period. No further surgical interventions were required.

Tha cases show that the minimally invasive surgical procedures might be performed even in early childhood. The „quality of life destroying" tracheostomy and its consequential complications could be avoided. Continuous cooperation among the surgical team, the anaesthesiologist and the paediatric intensive care unit may improve the postoperative results.

Pathological aspects of congenital heart defects detected prae and postnatally

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In the past, most of the congenital heart defects belonged to congenital malformations with a dismal prognosis. Due to the improvement of prenatal detection and postnatal therapeutic options, the prognosis dramatically improved.

In our work, we examined the distribution of congenital heart defects between 2004 and 2013 in the Department of Pathology, University of Szeged. We compared our findings with a previous survey conducted between 1996 and 1999 in the same Department, and with international publications. 78 postnatal and 13 prenatal cases were analysed.

In the postnatal heart defects the left to right (LTR) shunt represented 35%, the right to left (RTL) shunt 37%. In 27 % of the cases the dominant finding was obstruction. 1% of the cases belonged to the other category. Out of the 78 postnatal cases, there were 46 males, 32 females. The average survival period was 163 days, the oldest patient was 9.5 years old. In the prenatally detected cases 37% was characterised by obstruction, 26-26%- were the RTL and LTR heart defects. There was operation in 63% of the cases. Associated malformations were seen in 11 cases, including 8 Down syndrome. In 10 cases, prenatal termination of pregnancy was carried out due to the detected malformation, three cases were discovered in spontaneous abortions. Gestational age of the foetuses was 20-23 weeks.

The prenatal detection of congenital heart defects might reach 80-90 % detection rate in specialised centres. Our data indicates that we do not reach this rate, that requires further improvements of prenatal care, also widening and organising the prenatal monitoring system of pregnant women.

Transapical endoscopic investigation model of the tricuspid valve

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An increasing number of tricuspid valve repairs requires new demonstrational viewpoints of both valvular and subvalvular complex for the better understanding of the correlation between anatomical and functional aspects, and for achieving better patient outcomes. The aim of our study was to reveal the functional anatomy of the tricuspid valve under simulated physiological circumstances on human heart model.

Investigations were carried out in eight *ex situ* human hearts, excluded organs with previous cardiac surgery and/or visible valvular disease. One centimetre wide apical incision was made next to the interventricular groove and the pulmonary trunk was ligated while leaving both caval veins open. In order to document the role of the subvalvular structures, 0 and 70 degrees rigid endoscopes were introduced through the apical incision into the right ventricle under continuous irrigation with saline.

Closure of the valve was properly demonstrated in all cases according to the coaptation areas. The ventricular surfaces of the valve leaflets with their three zones, the five types of adherent chords and the papillary muscle system could be precisely determined. We constructed a 'double triangle' concept, which clearly explains the relative placement of the tricuspid and pulmonary valvular complexes for the better identification of potential vulnerable points during standard surgical stitches.

Our tricuspid valve visualization model provides additional insight into the functional anatomy of the subvalvular complex, supporting the development of safer surgical procedures.

A rare Mullerian-duct anomaly - a missing kidney illuminated the case

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Mullerian-duct anomalies affect 2-4% of the female population. The spectrum varies from uterus septa to total agenesia. Anomalies of the urinary tract can associate with these malformations, due to their common origin from the intermediate mesoderm. We present a rare case of Mullerian-duct anomaly.

A 16-year-old adolescent girl was admitted at our clinic with progressing abdominal pain. She had experienced periodic abdominal discomfort for several months. Her period started at age 13 (regular hypomenorrhoea). On physical examination a solid abdominal mass was detected in the lower abdomen that extended to the umbilical line. The vulval vestibule was anatomically normal. The ultrasound scan revealed a cyst-like structure arising from the lesser pelvis. On the right side no kidney was found. These findings led us suspect a Mullerian-duct anomaly with double uterus and vagina, with the atresia of the distal end of the right hemivagina. The MRI scan confirmed our hypothesis. The obstructed system was punctured, the retained menstrual blood was aspirated, then the hemivaginas were united by removing the septum partially. During the postoperative period no complications were detected.

Uterus didelphys, obstructed hemivagina and ipsilateral renal agenesis were diagnosed, which is also known as Herlyn-Werner-Wunderlich syndrome. Besides the patient's history and the physical examination, the "incidentally" found renal agenesis helped the diagnosis.

Without embryological background the proper diagnosis and treatment of this malformation would have been impossible. This case is a perfect example to show the importance of embryology in the every day's clinical practice.

Congenital external auditory canal atresia and methods of rehabilititation

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Congenital external auditory canal atresia is a disorder with a prevalence of one in 10,000 - 20,000 live births and is bilateral in one third of patients. Because of the different developmental origin of the inner ear and the external and middle ear, the cochlea and sensorial elements are usually unremarkable. With a conductive hearing loss of 60 dB, even unilateral atresia restricts hearing related social skills. The degree of middle ear deformity may make reconstruction surgery impossible or hazardous, thus bone-conduction hearing aids have become the first-line therapy.

Children with unilateral cartilaginous and bony external auditory canal atresia were enrolled. High-resolution computed tomography with three dimensional reconstructions were made to precisely determine the position of the structures of the middle ear and to assist preoperative planning. Reconstruction surgery from retroauricular approach comprised maximal enlargement of the tympanic and mastoid cavities. The cavities were then closed with an adapted conchal cartilage.

Hearing improvement reached the level above the social threshold. The reconstructed auditory canal remained stable and widely patent and facial nerve function was unremarkable during the follow-up period of 1 year.

The authors highlight that surgical reconstruction of the external auditory canal is possible in selected cases. The procedure is safe and effective with a reasonably short surgical time, if it is supported by deep anatomical knowledge, careful preoperative imaging and intraoperative facial nerve monitoring. Stable audiological benefits improve patients' satisfaction and quality of life. If reconstruction surgery is not possible, bone-conduction hearing aids are beneficial.

Extremly large giant coronary aneurysm associated with inferior ST elevation myocardial infarction in adult patient

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A 66 year-old-man was admitted to our department with inferior ST segment elevation myocardial infaction. Coronary angiography revealed thrombotic occluded right coronary artery (RCA). Primary percutaneous coronary intervention of RCA was performed with a thrombus aspiration and bare-metal stent implantion.

Echocardiography (TTE) found an echolucent mass measuring 35 *mm* × *24 mm* in diameter in the pericardial space at the right heart border, however the relationship of the mass to the RCA was not well documented. Computer tomography (CT) demonstrated the mass to be a giant coronary aneurysm (GCA) measuring *38,7 x 32,3 mm* in diameter with a partially trombotic lumen. True lumen of the right GCA was *8 mm* in diameter. CT also found another, smaller totaly thrombotic anuerysm measuring *10 x 13,5 mm* in diameter of the left anterior descending artery.

According to „heart team" decision the patient was treated conservatively by means of oral anticoagulation (OAC) with close medical followup. After three months OAC therapy thrombus burden was only slightly smaller inside the aneurysm. At two years follow up CT showed progressive dilation of the GCA *(52 x 43 mm* in diameter) with lumen widening as well (*10 mm*). Due to progression of the disease heart surgery and aneurysmectomy is under consideration at this time.

Giant coronary artery aneurysm is a very rare disease, but with potentialy fatal complications. GCA may cause coronary artery rupture, thromboembolism and myocardial infarction leading to death. Due to the lack of clinical evidence concerning treatment case by case decision making is advised with close medical follow up.

Investigation of the small arterial vessels of the metacarpophalangeal joints using cryomacrotomisation

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Modern ultrasonography allows detailed imaging of small hand joint vessels from their origin up to entering the bones. This investigation modality is becoming mandatory in the follow-up of patients with chronic articular inflammation e.g. rheumatoid arthritis.

The aim of our study was to find a proper method to investigate the arterial supply of the 2nd - 5th metacarpophalangeal joints (MCP) of the hand, which should give the basics of data acquisition about these vessels in a future larger population in order to differentiate between normal and pathologic states.

The left hand of a 38-year-old woman were harvested above the wrist. The vessels were injected through the radial and ulnar arteries with red coloured resin. After polymerisation the hand was embedded into gelatine and stored at -80 °C. Cryosectioning of this block was then carried out in the frontal plane with a CNC machine calibrated to 0,1mm thickness. Each layer surface was then digitally photographed. 3D reconstructions were made.

From the resulting 516 layers 156 contained the investigated joints. The joint capsules were visible everywhere, but some on the dorsal sides and the muscle tendons showed unclear boundaries due to tearing of their fibrous tissue. The course of the arteries was detectable between their origin and bony entering, but in some cases their kinking led to discontinuities.

CNC milling combined with vessel injection is a proper method for investigation of metacarpophalangeal blood supply, but improving of surface clarity, reduction of layer thickness are necessary.

Experiences in 3D modeling and printing of a French bulldog skull's composite anatomical structures

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During academic and postgraduate training demands are getting higher on behalf of students to use new technological achievements (eg. ebook readers, tablet and cellphone related 3D-applications etc.) which give them a unique, interactive way of learning and understanding. We alloyed conventional preparation techniques with digitalization to make a useful 3D-model from a dog.

A French bulldog's cadaver was used to the study. Tubes have been inserted into left subclavian and brachiocephalic arteries and external jugular veins, and after flushing the vessels red methacrylate resin has been injected selectively into the cranio-cervical arterial system. 24 hours later when hardening completed the head has been removed together with neck at the level of the second thoracic vertebra and we placed it into a mixed detergent solution at 64 °C for 3 weeks. Careful bathing in 3% hydrogen-peroxid cleaned further the surface and minor channels from sediments. The bone-vessel composite corrosion cast was scanned with CT, then using different surface and volume reconstruction softwares DICOM images were segmented to distinguish arteries from bones based upon signal-intensity. STL-(Stereolithography) models were exported from both sequences and were eventually printed in 3D to have a concrete, palpable object in corresponding colors.

Using 3D pdf-s and 3D-printing allows us to make unlimited copies from a good resolution model, gives the possibility to modify, label or animate objects thus all the required details can be observed and learned, and helps graduate studies and clinical activities as well.

From cryosectioning to 3D-modeling: complex visualization of a feline head with milling, diagnostic imaging (CT, MRI) and volume rendering methods

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Diagnostic imaging techniques are widely used in clinical medicine, especially to confirm pathological processes which cannot be detected with other (*e.g.*, ultrasound, x-ray) methods. Main limiting factor is usually resolution and tissue differentiation. In our study we wanted to provide comparable grey-scale and full color images from same locations to help better orientation and diagnostic work.

The study was performed on an adult cat cadaver. Arterial system was injected with red polyurethane resin through both common carotid arteries to improve contrast ratio during later segmentation process, then the head has been fixed into a special methacrylate box designed for this study which prevented displacement during examinations. Isovolumetric CT and MR imaging was performed involving complete skull till the third cervical vertebra. After imaging the whole body was freezed to -28 °C. Head was removed together with the box after concretion to embed layer by layer into a gelatin-water compound and freezed to -80 °C. The block under continuous cooling has been sectioned by 0.4 mm layer-thickness with a CNC milling machine, and each layer were photographed with high-resolution DSLR camera. Finally all the images from the three different modalities were merged into one stack allowing exact comparison of same structures, selective area display, segmentation and 3D reconstruction.

We provide an appropriate method for cryomacrotomisation, which enables precise and efficient work, image capturing and post-processing thereby we could created from these recordings the studied cat's head complex 3D model, including surface, bones, vessels.

Clinical anatomy of Eustachian tube from the aspect of ventilation disorders

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Chronic middle ear ventilation disorders are usually caused by inadequate aeration of the Eustachian tube. Many cases with failed aeration converge on minor anatomic variations resulting in tube dysfunction, responsible for the disease.

The aim of our work was to demonstrate these structures.

We used 10 bilateral skull base blocks of formalin-fixed cadavers.

In five of them we performed layer-by-layer anatomical preparation. The same region of four specimens were sliced into 3 mm thick sections. The remaining specimens were histologically prepared for light microscopy investigation.

After injecting both external carotid arteries of a fresh cadaver with resin, we performed milling with a CNC machine, calibrated to 0,1 mm thickness. Layers were then photographed. A 3D model was created based on these photographic images.

We identified the Rüdinger's safety canal and the auxiliary gap -two structures of different role- on each fixed specimen. The inner diameter of the tube varied between 1.6-5.5 mm. The minimum was measured at the isthmus with a mean distance of 26 mm from the pharyngeal ostium. Next to the muscles we identified the Zuckerkandl ligament. On cross-sectional specimens Kirchner's diverticulum – of therapeutic importance -, the Weber-Liel fascia and Ostmann's fat pad - both significantly affecting the tubal function - were also demonstrated. The thickness of the latter varied between 4-18 mm.

The exact knowledge of these anatomical structures is mandatory for making causative therapy and restoring ventilation. These structures can be precisely demonstrated using different anatomical investigation methods.

3D modeling of a horse stifle joint based on fusioned CT and MR images

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Computed tomography (CT) gives superior spatial resolution possibility for image postprocessing and 3D reconstruction. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) makes possible the high resolution visualization of soft tissues of a certain anatomical region. With the combination of the two technique high detailed 3D images can be reconstructed for both, research and teaching.

An isolated horse stifle joint was placed in a special designed container which allowed us to scan the details in the same position during the CT and MR imaging. Isovolumetric CT (0.3 mm slice thickness) and MR (0.6 mm slice thickness) imaging was performed from the middle of the femur to the end of the extensory recess of the long digital extensor muscle. The DICOM images were imported to the 3DSlicer software. Fiducial markers were placed on the clearly remarkable anatomical points on the CT and MR images respectively and transformed and fusioned in a common series. The bones were reconstructed automatically on the CT sequences of the series, the joint cavities and soft tissue structures manually based on the MR sequences. The reconstructed models were saved in .stl format and finished in Autodesk software.

Image fusion gives the possibility for high accuracy 3D reconstruction on series of different modalities. The reconstructed models can be used for 3D printing, animation, virtual surgical planning, virtual arthroscopy and can serve as a base for 3D PDF files which can be used in teaching and education.

Clinicopathological correlation in spontaneous and medically induced abortions

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The aim of perinatal pathological examinations is evaluation of clinical findings and to offer data for subsequent clinical investigations. They also offer a potential for improvement of prenatal care.

In our retrospective study, we examined a four-year period of abortions in the University of Szeged, between 2009 and 2014. 185 (85 medically induced and 100 spontaneous) abortions were examined following Wigglesworth recommendations.

We studied the occurrence of spontaneous abortions and medically induced abortions, the occurrence of malformations, clinicopathological correlations, foetal and maternal age distribution. We compared our findings with data, available in international publications, with a previous work conducted between 2006 and 2008 at the University of Szeged, and with a similar work from Pécs (1992-1998).

The distribution of malformations in the 85 induced abortions was the following: 15.3% central nervous system (n=13), 10.6% congenital heart diseases (n=9), 7.1% urogenital (n=6), 2.4% gastrointestinal (n=2), 10.6% skeletal (n=9), 38.8% chromosomal defect (n=33). In 3.5% of the cases no morphological anomaly was detected (n=3). There were no isolated pulmonary malformations. 100 spontaneous abortions were examined, in 38% we could not determine the cause of abortion (n=38). There was a high proportion (39%) of chorioamnionitis (n=39), which could be associated with the termination.

Perinatal pathology is an important part of an interdisciplinary collaboration that gives feedback to the clinicians. With its help we can monitor not only the distribution, but the shifts in distribution of malformations.

Body-builder in the service of anatomy teaching

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The musculoskeletal anatomy is a large portion of the anatomy curriculum. Students are introduced to the anatomical science through the skeletal and muscular structures of the human body. It is crucial for the students to be able to understand the origin, insertion and course of muscles and ligaments. The dissection classes have always been vital in the hands of anatomists for teaching musculoskeletal anatomy. However, it is important for medical students to find the link between theory, cadavers and living patients. For the instructors it has been a great challenge to help students achieve this. Earlier we invited body builders several times to our classes to demonstrate surface anatomy; however, due to the increasing number of students recently we have been unable to provide this experience to all of our students. Based on this practice, we asked a multiple world champion body builder to help us develop new and innovative learning tool for our musculoskeletal module. We took photos of his muscle groups and labeled the images. As a pilot study we introduced these images to some of our students as study aids. Moreover we created practice tests based on the images. Our students received the new tool with great enthusiasm. According to them it not only helped them to understand the material better, but the new, visible connection between theory and the real life motivated them greatly.

Support: TÁMOP-4.1.1.C-13/1/KONV-2014-0001.

Introducing cutting edge technology to the anatomy curriculum at the University of Pécs

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Modern technology is a part of our life. Today, medical doctors utilize cutting edge technology in all fields for the benefit of their patients. It is essential for medical students to learn to live and work with modern technology as early as possible in their carrier.

Turning towards the latest technology in education is a clear tendency now. Newly founded and dynamically developing universities, such as Ross University, School of Medicine, are in the vanguard of utilizing technology in education. This process is significantly slower and more difficult in old medical schools where there are strong traditions of teaching. The University of Pécs (UP), Hungary is one of Europe's oldest universities (founded in 1367 A.D.). In the Medical School at UP the leadership realized the necessity of introducing modern technology to the curriculum, while keeping and respecting the old traditions. The anatomy curriculum provides an excellent opportunity for this. In the anatomy department students meet their first „patient". In the dissection rooms they meet the human body in the traditional way while dissecting cadavers, but at the same time an excellent opportunity is presented to introduce the latest technological innovations utilized both in medical education and clinical practice. With the support of the UP, School of Medicine, the Department of Anatomy started a robust modernization to help the future doctors to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Clinical Anatomy course at the Department of Anatomy of University of Pécs

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There are significant differences in the medical curriculum among universities. In some countries (e.g. USA) the students receive less theoretical training and handle patients from the first year of medical school. Although we stand on the necessity of anatomy teaching on cadavers we think that a more clinical approach could be beneficial for medical students.

Therefore, we created an optional course for second year students studying currently splanchnology: Clinical Anatomy. The course was accessible for 20 students parallel with the regular splanchnology semester, following its thematic. Mostly clinicians held the 45-minute lectures in their own clinical fields. The students had the opportunity of practical training: they could try nose endoscope and ultrasound devices, and practice physical examination.

At the end of the course the students evaluated the course based on different questions in a scale from 1 to 10. Based on the students' reviews the course was beneficial for studying regular anatomy (8.55), showed the connection between anatomy and clinical work (9.73) and gave an insight to the clinical work (9.26). We evaluated whether these students have better results at splanchnology exams than students who didn't attend the course, but at this low number of participants we couldn't show significant difference between the two groups.

The course showed that students are concerned in getting more clinical lectures at the beginning of their studies. In the future we plan to start the course also for English program students and establish a Clinical Neuroanatomy course.

Supported by: TÁMOP-4.1.1.C-13/1/KONV-2014-0001.

Borderline Anatomy - A new course in the curriculum of Pécs University

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A new optional course was introduced in the medical curriculum on the diverse aspects of anatomy. The topics include interesting anatomy-related topics with many different fields of anatomy. Although this knowledge is not required for the medical curriculum, it might help the student to learn anatomy with more interest and enthusiasm. The course also gives an insight into different kinds of Anatomy curriculum, like what kind of Anatomy does a massage therapist or a veterinary need in comparison to medical students and also shows some other Anatomy teahing systems from different universities worldwide. Expert lecturers were also invited for Dinosaur anatomy and for Anatomy teaching in Art Schools.

Main topics:

Anatomy and Art (Leonardo's Anatomy to modern artists, parallelism between anatomy stuctures and art, creating art from structures; Rembrandt's painting: Dr Tulp's Anatomy);

Dinosaurus Anatomy and Veterinary Anatomy;

Anatomy museums and bone collections;

Anatomy of Tortures and Body Modicifactions;

Anatomy of anthropology (from mummies to skull identifications);

Massage and body building anatomy;

Anatomy Teaching at other Universities;

Eponymes - who is behind the anatomical names?

Students were offered to collect an anatomy-related topic themselves and submit a powerpoint presentation instead of writing a test. In the first semester of the course, 62 students took it and 53 from them submitted a ppt work and only 9 students took the multiple choice test. The experience of the first course show that the acceptance of the course was very good, students enjoyed these broad and interesting „borderline" aspects of anatomy and most students enjoyed preparing for a presentation themselves.

Support: TÁMOP-4.1.1.C-13/1/KONV-2014-0001.

E-learning in anatomy: Online quizzes and dissection lab

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While traditional cadaver-based, instructor-led dissection was proven as the gold standard for teaching anatomy, over the last few decades computer-enhanced learning (e-learning) has evolved rapidly. There is no doubt that e-learning cannot replace the traditional educational methods, but is able to supplement it if designed and used properly. E-learning promotes students' cognitive effectiveness, motivation, and flexibility of learning style. It improves interactivity which places the student into a learner-centered model with stronger learning stimulus. E-learning contents must be developed, managed, delivered and standardized with learning-management system (LMS), which are predesigned software environments offering among others automatic tracking of student activity.

We utilized online interactive quizzes to increase the time spent studying anatomy of voluntary groups of first- and second-year medical students. The learners were responsible for completing the tests according to their own schedule. The tests were delivered through Coo-Space (University's own online platform) and the professional iSpring LMS (iSpring Solutions, Inc., www.ispringsolutions.com). Besides collecting information about the learning styles, the activity and the progress of students, we used questionnaires to measure the subjective opinions concerning the integration of this e-learning technology into the dissection lab practice.

Tempora mutantur... et nos? Teaching anatomy in Hungary and in Germany

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Anatomy, the traditional four-semester complex subject is under the "threat" of reduction due to *external factors*; therefore it is considered as an "innocent victim" of curricular reforms by many fellow colleagues. There is, however, a paradoxical *intrinsic need* for the reorganisation, in the light of the new challenges.

To accommodate anatomy better to the changing environment, five questions should be addressed by comparing the German system with the Hungarian model. (1) *What* kind of knowledge should the medical students receive from studying anatomy? Could we agree in a national requirement system, applied by all Departments of Anatomy in Hungary? (2) *Who* should teach anatomy? What could be done for the quality development of teaching faculty? What is the role of student demonstrators, residents, physicians or non-medical scientists in the teaching duties? (3) *Whom* do we teach anatomy? What are the needs of the digital generations, should anatomy recur after the basic and preclinical modules or even after the Hippocratic Oath? (4) *How* should we teach anatomy? The shift from frontal, passive forms of teaching to the interactive, life-oriented modalities seems to be inevitable. (5) *Why* should anatomy be taught? Are the clinicians the "clients", is the anatomy the "supplier"? Do we emphasise enough the skills concerning applied anatomy, such as identifying superficial landmarks of the body, projections of internal organs, understanding sectional anatomy and the clinically relevant relations between structure and function in our current curricula? Or have we got lost in teaching unnecessary data subjected to be forgotten immediately?

Intralingual reflex arc in the rat tongue – a light- and electronmicroscopical study

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The most rostral parts of the enteric nervous system are the oral cavity and the pharynx. Our previous investigations demonstrated that a large number of ganglia were located in the tounge. The nerve cell bodies were immunoreactive (IR) for substance P (SP), vasoactive intestinal polypeptide (VIP), neuropeptide Y (NPY). In a few cases somatostatine positive neurons were also observed. A large number of calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) and galanin IR nerve fibres were also oberserved in the tongue, especially in the gustatory epithelium and/or in the connective tissue around them.

In our present study a large number of IR nerve fibres were observed in the epithelium, in the tunica propria around the blood vessels. The other part of them were observed in the ganglia very close situation to the perikarya and to their processes. A large number of VIP and NPY IR nerve processes were also found in the glands and around the blood vessels. Immunocytochemical analysis demonstrated that some IR nerve fibers had axo-somatic and axo-dendritic synapses in the ganglia. In a few cases VIP immunopositive nerve fibres made synapses with the other VIP IR nerve elements.

Therefore, an intralingual reflex arc can exist in these ganglia based on light- and electronmicroscopical analysis, where the SP sensory nerve fibres might be the afferent part of it and can influence the activity of the glands and the blood flow. These intralingual ganglion cells might integrate the afferent informations and/or further send certain informations to the central nervous system.

Development of GABA-erg neurons in the mouse superficial spinal dorsal horn

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γ-Aminobutyric acid (GABA) is considered to be the main inhibitory neurotransmitter in the central nervous system, which is synthetized by two isoforms of glutamic acid decarboxylase (GAD65 and GAD67) enzyme. In the spinal cord GABA-erg neurons are abundant in the superficial spinal dorsal horn where they substantially contribute to spinal pain processing.

In the present study we investigated the development of the GABA-erg neurons in the cervical spinal cord of wild type and GAD65-GFP as well as GAD67-GFP „knock in" transgenic mice.

NeuN immunhistochemistry revealed, that neurons of the superficial spinal dorsal horn born before E14,5 than migrate to their final destination. Immunostaining for Pax2, an early transcription factor characteristic for GABA-erg neurons, first appeared at E11,5 and showed substantial colocalisation with both GAD65 and GAD67. Furhermore, we observed that the total number of GABA-erg neurons in the superficial spinal dorsal horn increased between E14,5 and E16,5, reached peak at E16,5-E17,5, and decreased after that.

Our results indicate that GABA-erg neurons of the superficial spinal dorsal horn born at E11-E13, migrate to their final destination between E14-E18 than their numbers decline during the late prenatal and early postnatal days.

The work was supported by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA-TKI 242) and the Hungarian Brain Research Program (KTIA_NAP_13_1_2013_0001).

Effects of D-aspartate and its interaction with L-glutamate on single neurons in striatal slice preparation from chicken brain

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Evidence suggest that D-aspartate (D-Asp) is involved in the early development of the brain and modulates adult neural plasticity probably through regulation of neurogenesis. However, the mechanisms and molecular nature of this regulation remain to be clarified. Here we provide data on the postsynaptic effects of D-Asp alongside with L-glutamate (L-Glu) in striatal slices from chicken (1- to 10-day-old) using visually guided patch-clamp technique. Bath application D-Asp and L-Glu produced similar dose-dependent inward currents and an increase in spontaneous synaptic activity in all of the recorded striatal neurons. In the presence of TTX both the NMDA receptor antagonist D-AP5 and the AMPA/kainate receptor antagonist CNQX reduced and the co-application of these two antagonists almost abolished the postsynaptic effects of D-Asp and L-Glu in a reversible manner. In the two studied age-groups (2-3 days and 4-10 days) both D-Asp and L-Glu evoked inward currents were larger in the younger than in the older age-group. Testing the interaction of D-Asp and L-Glu in these striatal neurons we found that co-application of 1 mM D-Asp and 1mM L-Glu produced larger inward currents (165,7%) than 2 mM D-Asp (100%) or 2 mM L-Glu (82,3%) alone. This effect are similar but somewhat smaller than the potentiation observed by the co-application the L-Asp and L-Glu (261,3%). (The data are normalized amplitude % of D-Asp) However, inhibition of all glutamate transporters with TBOA eliminated this potentiating effect in both cases.

Supported by OTKA 109077.

Endoderm derived sonic hedgehog regulate the extracellular matrix patterning during enteric nervous system development

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The enteric nervous system (ENS) is a large neural network in the wall of the intestine which is colonized by a small number of enteric neural crest cells (ENCCs). These multipotent stem cells originate from vagal level of neural tube and migrate rostrocaudally along the entire length of the gastrointestinal tract to differentiate as neurons and glial cells that form the ganglionated ENS. Incomplete migration of ENCCs leads to Hirschsprung disease, a congenital disorder characterized by the absence of enteric ganglia along variable lengths of the distal intestine. Inductive interactions between gut epithelium and mesenchyme have been suggested to regulate the migration and differentiation of ENCCs. However, little is known about the function of epithelial derived factors, such as Sonic hedgehog (Shh), how they influence the intestinal extracellular matrix expression during ENS development.

Hindgut from 6 day old chicken embryo was cultured in the presence of Shh protein or after injection of Shh overexpressing replication competent retrovirus (RCAS)-virus. In presence of Shh the hindgut is aganglionic, while in the presence of Shh inhibitor (cyclopamine) large and ectopic ganglia developed. Shh treatment strongly induced the expression of chondroitin sulphate proteoglycans (CSPGs) such as versican and collagen type IX, whereas cyclopamine reduced the expression pattern of these inhibitory matrix molecules. These results indicate that versican and collagen IX is a candidate for mediating the effects of Shh on ENCC migration. Shh also inhibited the proliferation and promoted the differentiation of ENCCs. Abnormalities of NCC migration and extracellular pattern formation are characteristic of two human intestinal disorders, Hirschsprung disease and intestinal neuronal dysplasia. Our results support an essential role for epithelial-mesenchymal interactions in these aspects of ENS development.

Modelling Alzheimer's Disease with three-dimensional engineered neural tissue

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Differentiation of patient-derived induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) into a three dimensional engineered neural tissue (3D-ENT) provides advantages to study the pathophysiology of neurodegenerative disorders including major pathologies such as Alzheimer's disease. Three-dimensional ENTs also allow preclinical analyses of selected neural drug candidates and could be a promising tool for neurotoxicology.

In this study mononuclear blood cells were isolated from genetically and clinically well-characterized patients with Alzheimer's Disease phenotype and from healthy individuals, reprogrammed into iPSCs and differentiated into neurons using an air-liquid interface based, scaffold-free system which allowed generation of a compact 3D neural tissue without added growth factors.

After 6 or 8 weeks of differentiation the 3D-ENTs were characterized with electrophysiology (multi-electrode array, MEA), calcium imaging technique and immunocytochemical methods.

MEA recordings and calcium imaging revealed that ENT neurons exhibited spontaneous firing activity and the evidence of functional synapses. Immunocytochemistry analyses confirmed these results with the presence of various neuronal (beta-III tubulin, NF200kD, MAP2), glial (GFAP, OSP) and synaptic markers (Synaptophysin, VGLUT1/2, VGAT, VAChT). The ENT structures were fairly homogeneous and the majority of cells differentiated into neurons, but we have found areas with strong nestin positivity, which indicates less differentiated cell types, as well as a sign of active proliferation.

In conclusion, these findings suggest that 3D-ENT neurons might be suitable for drug development and studying the pathophysiology of different neurodegenerative disorders, such as Alzheimer's disease, frontotemporal dementia (FTD) or spinocerebellar ataxia (SCA).

This work was supported by grants from EU FP7 projects (STEMMAD, PIAPP-GA-2012-324451; EpiHealth, HEALTH-2012-F2-278418; EpiHealthNet, PITN-GA-2012-317146; D-BOARD, FP7-HEALTH-2012-INNOVATION-1-305815).

Inner ear malformations – anatomical pitfalls in cochlear implant surgery

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Several inner ear abnormalities result in severe sensorineural hearing impairment therefore require surgical procedure to improve hearing. Cochlear implantation is the most beneficial treatment option for these patients. The inner part of the cochlear implant contains of an electrode array which is surgically placed into the scala tympani and stimulates the spiral ganglion cells. Recent technological advancements in the design of implant electrode array enable to aid the electrode insertion in these cases. These special anatomical situations due to the high risk for complications have a great influence on the postoperative rehabilitation, the hearing and speech development. Prior to the surgery, determined preoperative investigations, including a high resolution computed tomography, are needed in order to measure the cochlear morphology.

The authors demonstrate two cases of inner ear malformations and the outcome results of each cases following the ear surgery. Both patients underwent cochlear implantation. One patient was diagnosed with a variant of Mondini dysplasia, and the other one had multiple middle and inner ear malformation.

Comparative analysis of the results presenting the postoperative hearing development was performed. The possible peri- and postoperative complications were also considered and compared to the benefits of the implantation.

The authors support the idea to perform cochlear implantation in patients with certain inner ear abnormalities. However, careful preoperative investigation, consideration of the cost-benefit ratio and the surgeon's experience are significant factors concerning the postoperative outcome.

Loss of mossy cells in the murine pilocarpine model of epilepsy: cause or effect?

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Pilocarpine (PILO) treatment induces variable pathological changes in the hippocampus, including loss of mossy cells (MCs) and mossy fibre (MF) sprouting, which are often associated with spontaneous recurrent seizures (SRS). Most theories on the epileptogenesis suggest that loss of MCs is of crucial importance in this process.

Our aim was to test whether the loss of MCs is coupled to the characteristic neuropathological landmarks of epileptogenesis after PILO treatment in one rat strain and three mouse strains without documented common ancestors.

Animals which exhibited intense PILO-induced convulsions for at least 30 min were used. After a 2-month survival period, the incidence of epileptic seizures was checked individually by Timm's method for zinc-containing sprouted ectopic MF and by immunohistochemical detection of increased quantity of neuropeptide-Y for hippocampal marker of SRS. The MCs were visualised by immunohistochemistry for calretinin, calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) and GluA2/3 receptor subunit.

The CGRP immunoreactivity was severely reduced in rats exhibiting simultaneous increases in zinc content and neuropeptide-Y immunoreactivity in the supragranular layer and stratum lucidum. However, the calretinin immunoreactivity remained unchanged in the main terminal field of the MCs in each verified individual of all three mouse strains. Extrahippocampal source of calretinin immunoreactivity was excluded by its persistence after transfornical section. The numbers of GluA2/3 immunoreactive hilar cells were reduced to a strain-dependent way.

Our findings suggest that the MCs may survive PILO treatment in mice, but not in rats. Therefore, the loss of MCs may be rather concomitant than cause of the epileptogenesis.

Presence and role of primary cilia on chondrifying high density cell cultures (HDCs)

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The prime candidate for chondrocyte mechanosensation is the primary cilium, an organelle present on eukaryotic cell types, including chondrocytes. This immotile solitary cytoplasmic protrusion possess various type of mechanosensitive Ca^{2+}-permeable ion channels and a special intraflagellar transport (IFT) mechanism which plays a crucial role in ciliary signalling. Defects in the structure of the cilium or in the transport and/or function of ciliary signal proteins are associated with a series of pathologies, including certain developmental disorders of the skeletal system. High density cell culture system (HDC) established from chondrogenic mesenchymal cells isolated from limb buds of 4-day-old chicken embryos was used to investigate the presence and the role of this organelle. First, we have identified the expression of IFT88 (a special protein in the intraflagellar transport) and acetilated tubulin (a special microtubular protein in the primary cilium), which are typical of all phases in cell cycle. The expression of Kif3a and Kif3b (two subunits of the heterotrimeric motor protein, kinesin-2) were also confirmed in HDCs. Our aims are to study the effects of chloral hydrate on cartilage differentiation, because it is known that can inhibit the function of primary cilia. According to our preliminary results primary cilia play important role in the chondrogenesis.

Expression and cellular localization of P2X4 and P2X7 purinergic receptors in the superficial spinal dorsal horn of rats suffering from chronic inflammatory pain

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In chronic pain conditions in addition to glutamate, nociceptive primary afferents release also ATP in the spinal dorsal horn. Acting on purinergic receptors ATP can evoke the release of interleukin-1βeta (IL-1β) from glial cells that contributes to the development of central sensitization in pain processing spinal neuronal circuits. Although the contribution of interleukins to the development of chronic inflammatory pain is widely accepted, our present knowledge concerning the role of purinergic receptors in spinal pain processing mechanisms is insufficient. Thus, in the present experiment we investigated the expression of P2X4 and P2X7 receptors in the superficial spinal dorsal horn in adult male rats suffering in chronic inflammatory pain evoked by unilateral plantar injection of complete Freund adjuvant (CFA). Immunohistochemical staining showed that purinergic receptors are widely expressed by glial cells in the superficial spinal dorsal horn in chronic pain conditions. We also showed that the immunostainings for both receptors are enhanced in CFA evoked inflammatory pain. Elevation of purinergic receptor expression was also confirmed by Western blot analysis. Our data indicate that P2X4 and P2X7 receptors may play a role in spinal pain processing mechanisms.

This work was supported by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA-TKI 242) and the Hungarian Brain Research Program (KTI_NAP_13-1-2013-001).

Long time epigenetical consequences of intrauterine undernourishment

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Intrauterine undernourished (IU) rats undergo altered fetal programming of the brain leading to epigenetical changes that predispose animals for obesity in adulthood. Reward is an essential component of food intake regulation and the accumbens nucleus (Acc) is a key centre in this respect. We examined hedonic food intake of IU adult offsprings, determined neuronal activity (Fos) evoked by consumption of highly palatable food, as well preproenkephalin, D1 and D2 dopamine receptor mRNA expressions in the Acc. IU rats were born smaller, but they have reached the body weight of controls by the time of the experiments. IU rats consumed significantly more palatable food than controls. The reward value of taste was reflected well as a correlation between the consumed quantity and the number of Fos+ cells in the medial shell region of Acc in both groups and in the core region in IU rats, however the number of Fos+ cells was similar in the groups. There was a decrease in D1 receptor mRNA expression in the Acc shell and a tendency for decrease in the core region of IU animals, while D2 receptor mRNA showed a tendency for increase, but only in the core region. Preproenkephalin mRNA showed also a tendency for decrease in the Acc core, but not in the shell. Data show that hedonic component of food reward plays a dominant role in consumption of IU animals. There is a reduced sensitivity of the reward center, probably related to the altered dopaminergic and opioid signaling in the Acc.

PACAP protects human retinal pigment epithelial cells against oxidative stress

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Angiogenesis plays a critical role in many retinal diseases, such as diabetic retinopathy and macular degeneration. Under these conditions the integrity of the pigment epithelial cells is disrupted, thus photoreceptor survival and normal vision is impossible. The retinal pigment epithelial cells are very important elements of the blood-retina barrier, and they are known to express different angiogenic factors, such as VEGF (vascular endothelial growht factor), so these cells are most likely key factors in the process of neovascularisation. PACAP is known to exert retinoprotective effects, against several types of retinal injuries in vivo, including optic nerve transection, retinal ischemia, excitotoxic injuries, UV-A-induced lesion and diabetic retinopathy. We have shown that PACAP activates antiapoptotic pathways and inhibits proapoptotic signaling in retinal lesions in vivo. Recently we proved that PACAP is also protective in oxidative stress-induced injury in human pigment epithelial cells (ARPE), but not in retinoblastoma cell line (Y79). According to these findings this could be a cell specific protection of the PACAP. In this study we also examined the possible antiangiogenic effect of PACAP on ARPE cells exposed to oxidative stress. Cells were treated with H_2O_2 and the expression of angiogenic markers was investigated by specific arrays, and flow cytometry. Our results showed that H_2O_2 administration increased different proangiogenic factors like VEGF, angiogenin, endothelin and TIMP-1 while PACAP treatment could decrease most of them.

This study was supported by OTKA K104984, Arimura Foundation, MTA-PTE “Lendulet” Program, NIH/NIGMS 2 SO6 GM08016-39, Hungarian Brain Research Program - Grant No. KTIA_13_NAP-A-III/5.

Urocortinergic neurons in the central projecting Edinger-Westphal nucleus contribute to maladaptation in the three hit model of depression in mice

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The three hit theory is an accepted concept in the field of mood disorders: genetic predisposition, epigenetic factors and stress together cause depression. Besides several well studied stress-related brain areas, the urocortinergic central projecting Edinger-Westphal nucleus (cpEW) is a neglected center, however it is the main site of urocortin1 (Ucn1) expression.

Our aim was to set up and validate a mouse model for studying depression at behavioral level, moreover, we planned to examine the (mal)adaptive changes in the cpEW.

Offsprings of mice heterozygous for pituitary adenylate cyclase-activating polypeptide (PACAP) (genetic factor) were subjected to severe maternal deprivation (epigenetic factor) and chronic variable mild stress (environmental stress factor) versus controls. The FosB neuronal activity was mapped throughout the brain. We found that mice subjected to all three factors showed increased FosB expression in the cpEW. In a Ucn1-FosB double labeling we saw FosB expression changes taking place specifically in urocortinergic cells. The highest neuronal activity in Ucn1 neurons was found in PACAP KO mice with maternal separation and chronic variable mild stress history. Interestingly, the lowest survival ratio was found in this group, suggesting maladaptation. In contrast, the magnitude of the neuronal activity increase upon stress was blunted in heterozygous mice, accompanied with normal survival but depression-like phenotype.

Based on our findings we conclude that the cpEW plays a role in the pathophysiology of mood disorders. In this experiment we conclude that PACAP heterozygous mice in our three hit model could be a reliable tool to study major depression in mice.

Different activation of the neocortex, hippocampus and mammillary body during acute seizures in young rats

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We examined the 4-aminopyridine (4-AP) induced changes of neuronal activity in the neocortex, hippocampus and mammillary body of developing rats by using c-fos and parvalbumin immuno. We investigated 15, 20, 30 and 60 days old rats. Seizures were induced by intraperitoneal injection of 5 mg/kg 4-AP.

The neocortex of P15 rats showed maximal c-fos expression. The number of activated inhibitory neurons increased significantly with animal age. C-fos expression in the Ammon's horn was maximal at P30 .

The number of activated inhibitory neurons peaked at P20, while c-fos expression of the dentate gyrus was maximal at P30.

The amount of c-fos immunoreactive and activated inhibitory neurons displayed similar alterations during maturation, c-fos expression was significantly higher in P20 animals, while the peak was detected in P60 animals. The number of c-fos positive neurons in the mammillary body showed a positive correlation with the number of activated neurons in the CA1 region of the hippocampus.

According to our results, at early postnatal age (P15) mainly corticothalamic and thalamocortical convulsions predominated. Convulsive treshold of the young animals was significantly lower until P40. This sensibility change may be the consequence of the postnatal maturation of inhibitory interneurons.

Modification of versican expression following unilateral labyrinthectomy is related to functional differences of the individual nuclei in the rat vestibular complex

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Unilateral lesion of the vestibular system in mammals results in disturbances of eye movements, muscle tone, and posture. Symptoms spontaneously restore within 1-2 weeks, during the vestibular compensation. Studies showed that the extracellular matrix (ECM) has important role in plastic modifications of the central nervous system (CNS). We earlier observed that unilateral labyrinthectomy (UL) is accompanied by the modification of hyaluronan and chondroitin sulfate proteoglycan staining in the perineuronal net (PNN) and neuropil of the lateral vestibular nucleus (LVN) in the rat. PNN reestablishment was parallel with functional restoration, suggesting the role of ECM in the recovery process. The present study examines *versican* expression in each vestibular nucleus following UL.

Experiments were made on adult female rats. The vestibular receptors were mechanically damaged and after 1, 3, 7 and 14 survival days, immunohistochemical reaction against versican was performed on brainstem sections.

In normal animals versican reaction revealed heavily stained dots pericellularly and continuous PNNs were also recognizable in the superior (SVN) and descending vestibular nuclei (DVN). Following UL, changes were seen on 1st postoperative day in the ipsilateral SVN and DVN. The versican staining fainted in the PNN and restored after 3 days. Staining intensity of the neuropil weakened in each nucleus, mostly in the SVN.

Our results suggest that the decreased expression of non-permissive versican in the PNN of the SVN and DVN may be involved in the restoration of vestibular functions within these nuclei.

Support: MTA-TKI 11008.

Morphological and functional integration of grafted embryonic motoneurons into the host rat spinal cord circuitry after ventral root avulsion and reimplantation

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Plexus injuries often result in the avulsion of one or more ventral roots, thus leading to irreversible motoneurone loss. Transplantation of embryonic motoneurons into a damaged spinal cord depleted of its own motoneurons is a feasible strategy to replace the lost motor pool and induce functional reinnervation of the denervated limb muscles. Our aim was to investigate the morphological and functional integration of the grafted embryonic motoneurons into the host spinal cord circuit.

Embryonic spinal cord pieces (E13-eGFP rat) was grafted into the lumbar four (L4) spinal segment of Sprague-Dawley rats after L4 ventral root avulsion and reimplantation Three experimental groups have been set: in the control group the ventral root was avulsed and reimplanted without an embryonic graft, animals in the second group received an embryonic graft. In the third group the embryonic tissue received tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF-alpha) treatment prior to transplantation. Six months later electromyography was recorded from the ankle flexors and extensors of the hind limbs on the intact and operated sides.

Rhythmic locomotor limb movement could be observed in the treated animals. Two populations of motor unit action potentials (MUAPs) were distinguished in the grafted animals without TNF-alpha treatment. Differences were observed in the firing period, frequency, duration and amplitude of MUAPs. The firing frequency of some MUAPs showed bimodal distribution. Retrograde labelling from the reinnervated muscles proved that both the graft and host neurons contributed to the reinnervation of the denervated hindlimb muscles. Anterograde tracing with Phaseolus vulgaris revealed substantial reciprocal connections between the graft and the host spinal cord. TNF-alpha pretreatment enhanced the number of reinnervating neurons in the spinal cord providing an opportunity to study the integration of the transplanted cells with intracellular recording and labelling.

Our results have provided evidence that grafted embryonic motoneurons are able to survive, differentiate and establish functional connections with the circuitry of the host cord.

Expression of a novel calcium-binding protein, secretagogin, in the mammalian visual system

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Intracellular calcium level is critically regulated by calcium binding proteins. They protect against excess intracellular calcium ion levels or act as sensor proteins thereby regulating downstream cascades. Secretagogin, a recently described calcium sensor protein, has been identified in several organs including forebrain. Here, we show that secretagogin is present throughout the main visual centres of the rat brain. In the diencephalon, immunoreactive neurons were identified in the dorsal and ventral divisions of the lateral geniculate nucleus, and in an outstanding density in the superficial layers of the superior colliculus. *In vivo* tracing experiments suggested that these cells did not belong to the major thalamus-projecting neurons. In contrast to animals developing at standard housing conditions, rat pups born and reared in complete darkness lacked secretagogin expression in the early postnatal period. Human samples showed a largely different distribution pattern. Secretagogin-containing neurons appeared in a very low number both in the superior colliculus and in the lateral geniculate nucleus. The primary visual cortex, however, were densely populated by typically bipolar-shaped immunoreactive neurons that concentrated in supragranular, but excluding the molecular layers. We suggest that secretagogin is a candidate functional and immunohistochemical marker in the mammalian visual system.

Neurons producing melanin-concentrating hormone: regulation of food intake and sleep / awake cycle - a study of the mouse hypothalamus

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One of the functions of the hypothalamus in mammals is the control of food and water intake. To serve this regulatory task a great number of neuropeptides are produced locally and distributed throughout the brain. Some of these hormones do increase food intake (*i.e.* are orexigenic), while others have the opposite effect, thus are anorexigenic.

One of the orexigenic hormones is the melanin-concentrating hormone (MCH). Somata of MCH-neurons are mainly located in the caudal part of the hypothalamus being predominant in the lateral hypothalamic area (LHA) and the zona incerta (ZI). The anatomy of the MCH-neurons is best known in the rat, interspecific differences of their somata and projections, however, were recorded even in two closely related rodents, like rats and mice. Some possible species-specific function are suggested, *e.g.*, due to the presence and lack of MCH-positive somata within the posterior periventricular nucleus (PVP) in the rat and mouse, respectively. Besides acting as a neuromodulator on both hypothalamic and distant targets melanin-concentrating hormone is involved in regulating the sleep/awake cycle. We have initial recordings of temporal, diurnal differences of the MCH-immuno-positivity of neurons in the mouse hypothalamus.

Ultrasound is a valuable method in cartilage thickness measuring

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Nowadays, the standard protocol in the imaging of the metacarpophalangeal cartilage thickness is plain radiography. It shows the distance between the metacarpal bone and the phalanx, and we can only indirectly estimate the cartilage thicknesses at a cost of radiation exposure.

Our aim is to compare the anatomical cartilage thickness with ultrasound (US) in cadavers to validate ultrasound as a valuable diagnostic modality in cartilage imaging.

Nineteen formalin-fixed metacarpophalangeal (MCP) 2-5 joints (all women, age at death: 65-90 years; mean: 78 years) were examined by measuring the metacarpal cartilage thickness (MCT) with US. High resolution, longitudinal ultrasound images were performed with 7-15 MHz frequency linear transducer. The US MCT measurement was correlated to a single, central anatomical measurement, which, due its position, the most closely corresponds to the ultrasound measurement in flexed joint position.

There was no significant ifference between MCT measured by the anatomical or the ultrasound method (mean±SD; (range) (0.67±0.11; 0.52-0.92 mm) vs. (0.69±0.12; 0.43-0.93 mm)) Pearson correlation was calculated (0.73, CI: 95%).

Sonographic cartilage assessment in MCPs is closely related to anatomical cartilage thickness. Thus, US is a valid and valuable tool for measuring MCT.

Although it requires experience, ultrasound is a fast, cost-effective and repeatable diagnostic method, without any radiation exposure in contrast to plain radiography.

N-methyl-D-aspartate type glutamate receptors influence viability of melanoma cells

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The NMDA type glutamate receptors (NMDAR) are diheterotetrameric non-selective cationic channels, comprising of NR1, NR2, NR3 subunits and are mostly permeable for Ca^{2+}. NR1 may contain a nuclear localization signal, which binds to importin- , suggesting that nuclear transport of NR1 is conceivable. As NMDARs have been described in some tumors, we aimed to map the expression pattern and potential functions of NMDAR subunits in melanoma cells.

Human melanoma cell lines (A2058, HT199, HT168M1, MEL35/01 and WM35) were used for our experiments. NMDAR subunit mRNAs were detected with RT-PCRs. Western blots of samples from cytosolic, plasma membrane and nuclear fractions of cellular lysates were performed to prove the protein expression of subunits. Subcellular localization was also investigated with fluorescent immunocytochemistry. Cellular viability was measured by MTT assay after treatments with agonists and antagonists.

RT-PCR showed that mRNAs of all types of subunits (NR1, NR2A, NR2B, NR2C, NR2D, NR3A, NR3B) are present in all cell lines. Western blots proved that NR1 and NR3 subunits are present throughout in the cells. NR1-NR3B immunocytochemisty revealed that the two subunits colocalize inside the nuclei rather than the cytoplasm. NR1-NR3 composed NMDARs can function as alternative glycine receptors. MTT assays revealed that treatments with glycine+strychnine (a glycine receptor antagonist) and glycine+strychnine+glutamate significantly increased the metabolic activity and viability in every investigated melanoma cell line.

Our results suggest that NMDAR with unusual composition are present in the nuclei of melanoma cells and may transduce glycine signalling influencing the survival of melanoma cells.

A comparative study of the anatomical and clinical aspects of the female pelvic floor

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Accordig to the traditional anatomy, the pelvic floor muscles are characterized by their origin, insertion, function and innervation. It seems to be a good way of description at first glance, but it does not give sufficient background for the understanding of gynecological deseases and up-to-date operational methods. Contrary to this, the clinical approach concentrates more on the functional description, *i.e.* the static and dynamic movements, the relation of muscles and fasciae, and the pathological changes caused by their malfunction. The modern, clinically oriented view is that the muscles of the lesser pelvis are the elementary components of „maintaining position of the organs in proper orientation and thereby ensuring their normal function". Therefore, any muscular abnormality may result in dislocation of the organs and/or the loss of the sphincter function of muscles. Most of the anatomical descriptions do not even mention the obvious difference between the shape and consistency of the organs taken out of the body and of those being *in situ*. Our personal experiences clearly show that the understanding of the position of uterus, Fallopian tube, ovary and rectum is frequently beset with difficulties for students, since the organs removed from their original location lack the structures (muscles and fasciae) keeping them in normal position. In our work, we try to reconsile the anatomical descriptions to the clinically important contexts and relations, but only to the degree that serves students in understanding spatial relations and in acquiring firm support for clinical mentality.

Support: TÁMOP-4.1.1.C-13/1/KONV-2014-0001 (Coordinated, practice-oriented, student-friendly modernization of biomedical education in three Hungarian universities (Pécs, Debrecen, Szeged), with focus on the strengthening of international competitiveness).

Effects of PACAP on human trophoblast cells

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Pituitary adenylate cyclase activating polypeptide (PACAP) is a pleiotropic and multifunctional neuropeptide widely distributed throughout the body. The aim of the present study was to investigate the effects of PACAP on invasion, proliferation, cell survival, and angiogenesis of trophoblast cells. Furthermore, cytokine production was investigated in human decidual and peripheral blood mononuclear cells. For in vitro studies, human invasive proliferative extravillous cytotrophoblast (HIPEC) cells and HTR-8/SVneo human trophoblast cells were used. Both cell types were used for testing the effects of PACAP on invasion and cell survival. Invasion was studied by standardized invasion assay. PACAP increased proliferation in HIPEC cells, but not in HTR-8 cells. Cell viability was examined using different methods. Survival of HTR-8/SVneo cells was studied under oxidative stress conditions induced by hydrogen peroxide. PACAP as pretreatment, but not as co-treatment, significantly increased the number of surviving HTR-8 cells. Viability of HIPEC cells was investigated using methotrexate toxicity, but PACAP1-38 could not counteract its toxic effect. Angiogenic molecules

Extracellular matrix expression in the olfactory bulb of the rat

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In vertebrates smells are sensed by olfactory sensory neurons in the olfactory epithelium. After binding an odorant, receptors send signals into the olfactory bulb, where information is encoded during a complicated signal processing. The extracellular matrix (ECM) molecules fill the extracellular space. They may aggregate around the neurons forming the perineuronal net (PNN) or they are distributed throughout the neuropil. Hyaluronan (HA) is the backbone of PNNs, and anchors lecticans of the chondroitin sulfate proteoglycan (CSPG) family. The ECM molecules are involved in various forms of plasticity, and its expression is determined by neuronal activity. The aim of our work was to map the distribution of HA and CSPG in the olfactory bulb. Observations were performed on female adult Wistar rats. Olfactory bulbs were removed from anesthetized animals and fixed in St. Marie's fixative. Distribution of HA was detected by biotinylated Hyaluronan Binding Protein histochemistry, and CSPGs by using biotinylated Wisteria floribunda agglutinin (WFA) histochemistry on transverse sections. HA showed diffuse expression throughout the olfactory bulb and sporadic PNNs were accumulated around mitral cells. WFA staining was experienced in the internal plexiform layer and surrounding mitral cells, even forming PNNs. There was great difference between CSPG expressions of glomeruli. Variable WFA labeling in glomeruli suggests ongoing reorganization in synaptic units. The diffuse and high hyaluronan expression corresponds with this argument.

Support: MTA-TKI-11008.

Differential expression patterns of K^+/Cl^- co-transporter (KCC2) in neurons within the superficial spinal dorsal horn of rats

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$GABA_A$ receptor mediated inhibition is associated with a chloride-influx that depends on inwardly directed chloride electrochemical gradient, which is regulated by potassium-chloride co-transporter, KCC2. Here, we investigated the cellular distribution of KCC2 in the superficial spinal dorsal horn of rats by using immunocytochemical methods. We demonstrated that perikarya and dendrites widely expressed KCC2, but axon terminals proved to be negative for KCC2. Studying the somato-dendritic distribution of KCC2, high and low levels of KCC2 expression were equally recovered. In single ultrathin sections we also observed dendritic segments that were negative for KCC2. Investigating KCC2 expression on neurons immunoreactive for NK1 receptor, which allowed us to study a large part of the somato-dendritic compartment of some neurons we found that KCC2 presented a quite heterogeneous distribution along the dendritic membrane. Measuring the distances between gephyrin-IR and KCC2-IR spots on NK1-R-IR dendrites we found that some putative inhibitory postsynaptic membranes keep larger distances from KCC2 than others. In addition, we found that postsynaptic membranes of putative inhibitory synaptic contacts establishing loose association with KCC2 transporters are arranged in clasters along the dendritic membrane. The results suggest that $GABA_A$ receptor mediated synaptic mechanisms may vary at different sites of the somato-dendritic membrane of neurons in the superficial spinal dorsal horn.

This work was supported by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA-TKI 242) and the Hungarian Brain Research Program (KTIA_NAP_13-1-2013-0001).

Does enriched environment have a neuroprotective effect on Parkinson's disease?

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Environmental enrichment is considered as a strategy of neuroprotection. Its effects have already been shown in traumatic, ischemic and toxic nervous system lesions. The aim of our study was to investigate the effects of early postnatal environmental enrichment in a rat model of Parkinson's disease in adulthood.

We used Wistar rats in our experiment. The animals of the standard group were placed under regular conditions. For environmental enrichment, we placed rats in larger cages, supplemented with toys of different shape and material during the first five postnatal weeks. Three months later rats were treated with unilateral injections of 2 µl 6-OHDA (5 µg/µl) into the left substantia nigra, control animals received 2 µl physiological saline. Behavioral experiments were done preinjury, and 1, 10 days after the operation. After the behavioral testing tyrosine-hydoxylase immunohistolochemistry was performed to label dopaminergic cells of the substantia nigra.

We observed hypokinetic symptoms due to the operation. The 6-OHDA treatment made significant cell loss in the standard group: 24% of dopaminergic cells died, while in rats kept in enriched environment the cell loss was not significant, only 16%.

Our experiments provided evidence for the protective effect of early postnatal environmental enrichment in adulthood, because rats under regular circumstances showed more severe neurological signs and dopaminergic cell loss after 6-OHDA lesion of the substantia nigra compared to animals grew up in environmental enrichment.

Support: NAP (Hungarian National Brain Research Program) KTIA_NAP_13-1-2013-0001, MTA-PTE „Lendület" Program, Arimura Foundation, OTKA K104984.

Multicystic encephalopathy

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Multicystic encephalopathy is a rare disorder. This symmetric, multilocular, cystic condition has been named as "hypoxic –ischemic damage of the brain", "multiple cystic emollition", „progressive degenerative encephalopathy", „encephaloclastic porencephaly", „polyporencephaly", „multilocular encephalomalacia". According to our recent knowledge, the cause is attributable to a third trimester noxa, which can be hypoxia, foetal viral infection, toxaemia, maternal anaphylactic shock, maternal traffic accident. The affected area will undergo into a cystic change, on the territory of the basal ganglia and cortical region. Occasionally it is unilateral but most commonly it is bilateral. Histology shows foamy macrophages with reactive glia proliferation in the cystic cavity.

We present two cases with the clinical and pathological findings.

Multicystic encephalopathy is an extremely rare entity. The characteristic findings were described by Aicardi and co-workers (J Neurol Sci 1972, 15:357-373) based on 29 cases available in the international literature. Clinical findings can be paralysis, convulsions, irritability, slow mental development, difficulty of feeding. Although the brainstem, the cerebellum, and the thalamus are relatively unaffected the background remains unknown. Our two presented cases show the characteristic macro and microscopic findings. Histologically cortical and subcortical cysts, gliosis, necrosis, calcification, status spongiosus, and foamy macrophages can be seen.

In the differential diagnosis ependimal, chorioid, colloid, septal and arachnoideal cysts should be considered, as well as Pallister-Hall syndrome, and the congenital polycystic alteration of the brain. Interhemisphaerial cystic corpus callosum agenesis should also be excluded. It is hard to predict the long-term outcome, due to the small number of patients.

Neuronal background of the prey-catching behavior of the frog: sensory-motor integration in the brainstem

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The prey-catching behaviour of frogs consists of a sequence of coordinated activity of different muscles. The activity of muscles can be modified via sensorimotor connections. The sensorimotor integration was studied in the ambiguus nucleus which is necessary for gulping and visceromotor functions, and the hypoglossal nucleus responsible for contraction of tongue muscles.

The aim of our experiments was to study whether the afferent fibres establish direct connections with the motoneurons. The nerves were simultaneously labeled with neuronal tracers, and the close appositions between afferent fibers and motoneurons were detected with confocal microscope.

Micrographs showed direct contacts between sensory terminals of trigeminal nerve and ambiguus motoneurons. The contacts were not evenly distributed: two-third of the afferents terminated on the viscero-motoneurons of the stomach, heart and lung, large number of terminals were found on the pharyngo-motoneurons, while the number of connections on the laryngo-motoneurons was insignificant.

We also demonstrated direct connections between trigeminal, vestibular, glossopharyngeal-vagal, hypoglossal and second cervical spinal afferent terminals and hypoglossal motoneurons. Based on the highest number and closest location of the connections, we presume that the glossopharyngeal-vagal afferents can exert the strongest effect on the retractor and protractor motoneurons. The hypoglossal and C2 afferents can modify the retraction of tongue. The monosynaptic influence of trigeminal and vestibular afferents on the hypoglossal motoneurons is probably less important.

We conclude that these monosynaptic connections may serve as one of the neuro-morphological substrates of the fast response during feeding movements of amphibians that gives reflex-like ability of prey-catching behaviour.

Support: MTA-TKI 11008.

Nesfatin-1/NUCB2 mRNA level changes after osmotic challenges

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Nesfatin-1/NUCB2 (nesfatin) is an anorexigenic peptide, however, besides reducing food intake it also decreases water intake. Nesfatin is highly coexpressed with vasopressin (VP), a main regulator of fluid and osmotic balance, in the supraoptic nucleus (SON). It is a question whether the antidipsogenic effect of nesfatin is independent of its anorectic action. Therefore. we measured nesfatin mRNA expression in the SON after water deprivation (WD) and hypertonic challenge (2% NaCl) and used *ad libitum* fed (Co) and also pair-fed (WD-Co and 2% NaCl-Co) controls. To separate the effect of food intake on fluid homeostasis another group of rats was fasted for 48 h. Body weights, food and water consumption were monitored. Additionally, we investigated whether VP deficiency affects nesfatin mRNA expression in the SON. Nesfatin mRNA levels increased significantly in the treated groups independently of food intake, and these animals consumed less chow than *ad libitum* fed controls. Restricted food intake of pair-fed groups did not change the water intake and nesfatin mRNA levels of these rats. Animals of 2% NaCl group drank more fluid than controls. Body weights of treated animals decreased significantly compared to their controls. Negative energy balance (48h fasting) itself did not influence nesfatin mRNA expression in the SON. VP deficiency resulted in an elevated nesfatin mRNA expression in the SON. Our data show that nesfatin participates in maintaining the osmotic balance, and this action is independent of its role in food intake regulation.

PACAP transgenic mice in the three hit model of depression: the involvement of BNST- CRF, cpEW – Urocortin1

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According to the three hit theory genetic, epigenetic and stress factors may lead to major depression. The shortage on pituitary adenylate cyclase-activating polypeptide (PACAP) leads to depressive-like symptoms in mice. The importance of hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis in etiology of depression is known, but its supra-hypothalamic regulation is largely elusive. The corticotropin releasing factor (CRF) expressing bed nucleus of the stria terminalis [BNST] and central amygdala [CeA], moreover the urocortin1 (Ucn1) producing central projecting Edinger-Westphal nucleus [cpEW] contributes to stress adaptation. We hypothesized that mice carrying all risk factors will show maladaptation in the HPA axis, CRF and Ucn1 systems.

Litters from PACAP heterozygous mice were exposed to maternal separation (MS) vs. controls. Half of adult offspring was subjected to chronic variable mild stress (CVMS). To validate the model, the HPA axis activity was measured by corticosterone radioimmuneassay. The contribution BNST and CeA, in addition urocortinergic neurons in the cpEW were studied.

Results indicate that CVMS most effectively increased adrenal weights and corticosterone titers in MS mice accompanied by increased CRF-cell counts and specific signal density (SSD) in the BNST. In the CeA, the CVMS-induced rise in CRF SSD was observed only in non-MS mice. In MS, the CVMS induced rise of FosB in Ucn1 neurons was abolished.

The increased BNST-CRF and decreased cpEW-Ucn1 neuronal activity suggests that these inverse alterations may contribute to the psychopathology. The three hit theory of depression seems to be applicable in PACAP heterozygote mice to study the pathophysiology of stress-related mood disorders.

Differences in the seizure driven neuronal activity in zebrin II positive and negative cerebellar cortical zones

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For a long time it was assumed, that the cerebellar cortex is uniform regarding the cytoarchitecture and the microcircuitry. Electrophysiological and immunohistochemical investigations in the past ten years revealed remarkable differences. The differences are in the distinct connection of cerebellar areas the different phenotypes of the Purkinje cells (PC).

We examined the temporal activation pattern of the cortical neurons after 4-aminopyridine induced seizures. The c-Fos protein immunohistochemistry was used as marker of the neuronal activity. The cells were investigated in all cerebellar cortical layers, and a comparison was made between the zebrin II positive (Z+) and the negative (Z-) bands of the vermal lobules and the hemispherium.

In the granular layer the Z+ band displayed a prominent activation peak at 3h after the drug application, as shown by the density of the c-Fos immunoreactive (IR) nuclei. The Z- bands contained significantly fewer IR nuclei, and the maximum c-Fos activation was delayed. The interneurons of the molecular layer (IML) were activated in significantly larger number in the Z+ bands. The PC's, surprisingly, exhibited just scattered c-Fos IR cell nuclei in all bands.

Explaining the surprisingly low activation level of PC's we assume the role of the strong inhibition of IML's during the seizure. To complete our work, we plan further studies in order to evaluate the activation of deep cerebellar nuclei during the acute seizure.

Effect of PACAP on ischaemia-reperfusion-induced kidney injury of male and female rats

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Several pathological conditions and operations are accompanied by ischaemia-reperfusion-induced kidney injury. Protective effect of the neuropeptide PACAP (pituitary adenylate-cyclase activating polypeptide) in the kidney has been shown under several circumstances.

The aim of the present study was to investigate the ischaemia-reperfusion-induced kidney injury of male and female rats to reveal the possible gender differences, furthermore to confirm the protective effect of PACAP in the kidney.

Male and female Wistar rats underwent one-sided renal artery clamping followed by 24-hour, 48-hour or 14-day reperfusion. PACAP was administered intravenously before arterial clamping in half of the rats in each group. Histological evaluation of the PAS stained sections was performed with Adobe Photoshop and Scion Image programs. In the focus of our investigation was the tubular damage, that influences the renal function. Cytokine expression pattern and level of oxidative stress markers were also determined following 24-hour reperfusion.

The tubular damage was significantly less severe in the PACAP-treated male and female rats compared to the untreated after 48-hour and 14-day reperfusion. Results of female animals were significantly better in both treated and untreated groups. Investigation of cytokine expression and of oxidative stress markers has confirmed the histological results.

Based on our findings it can be concluded that PACAP is protective in renal ischaemia-reperfusion in both genders. Differences between the results of male and female rats may be due to the stronger effect of PACAP and the presence of further protective factors in females.

Support: TAMOP 4.2.4.A/2-11-1-2012-0001 'National Excellence Program', OTKA K104984, PD109644, Arimura Foundation, PTE-MTA "Lendület" Program.

Neurochemical phenotypes of rat pancreatic spinal and vagal chemosensitive afferent neurons which express the insulin receptor

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Spinal and vagal chemosensitive afferents may significantly contribute to the pathogenesis of inflammatory processes affecting both the exocrine and endocrine pancreas. Recent observations indicated functional interactions between the insulin (InsR) and the transient receptor potential vanilloid type 1 (TRPV1) receptor. The aim of this study was to reveal the neurocehmical phenotypes of InsR-expressing spinal and vagal primary afferent nerurons which innervate the rat pancreas. Adult male Wistar rats (n=5) weighing 300-350 g were used. To identify pancreatic afferents biotin-conjugated wheat germ agglutinin (bWGA) was injected into the pancreas. Immunohistochemistry and quantitative morphometry were used to demonstrate TRPV1-, InsR-, substance P (SP)- and calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP)-immunoreactivity in neurons of rat spinal (Th8-L4) and nodose ganglia. 287 and 164 neurons were retrogradely labelled in spinal and vagal sensory ganglia. The cross-sectional areas of the labelled neurons amounted to 498,6±114,4 μm^2 in the spinal, and 535,3±149,2 μm^2 in the vagal division. Of the labelled neurons 68% showed TRPV1-, 46% InsR-, 33% SP- and 52% CGRP imunoreactivity in the spinal division, and 64%, 49%, 40% and 22% in the vagal division. Colocalizations of TRPV1 and InsR, SP and InsR, CGRP and InsR immunoreactivities were demonstrated in 23%, 14%, 26% of the labelled neurons in the spinal division, and 35%, 21% and 8% in the vagal division. These findings provide evidence for the colocalizations of TRPV1, InsR and sensory neuropeptides in pancreatic spinal and vagal afferent neurons. We suggest that insulin may modulate TRPV1 activation and subsequent peptide release from spinal and vagal afferents and contribute to inflammatory and nociceptive mechanisms in the pancreas.

Altered expression of insulin-like growth factor binding protein 3 in the maternal brain

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The postpartum physiological and behavioral changes are regulated by a complex neuronal network, which includes parts of the hypothalamus. Lesions of the preoptic area abolish maternal behaviors while the arcuate nucleus plays a role in the regulation of lactation.

In our previous microarray study, significantly increase was described in the anterior hypothalamic areas of mother rat in the expression of insulin-like growth factor binding protein-3 (IGFBP-3) compared to mothers whose litter was taken away immediately after birth. This finding was also validated by RT-PCR. In the blood, IGFBP-3 is the major carrier molecule of insulin-like growth factors (IGFs), it forms a ternary complex with an acid-labile subunit of either IGF-1 or 2. The distribution of the IGF-system including IGFBP-3 has not been described in the brain. Therefore, we developed in situ hybridization probes to map IGFBP-3. IGFBP-3 mRNA was abundant in some nuclei of the hypothalamus and in the choroid plexus as well. We could also confirm the elevation of IGFBP-3 expression in the hypothalamic sites of mothers, but a change was not seen in the choroid plexus suggesting a specific role of hypothalamic IGFBP-3 in the female brain. We also discovered co-localization of IGFBP-3 with tyrosine-hydroxylase (TH) positive neurons using a combination of in situ hybridization and immunohistochemistry. The time course of alterations in the IGFBP-3 mRNA levels during the reproductive cycle was also determined: it is low in control female rats, does not elevate by the end of pregnancy but is markedly induced by the first postpartum day.

Advances of Squamata astroglia to other reptiles: numerous astrocytes and GFAP- free areas

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Squamata are diapsid reptiles. Testudines were positioned formerly to the most ancient group, Anapsida, but it has been challenged and recently they are rather classified as diapsid reptiles, although their position within this group is uncertain. Animals were obtained from breeders, lizards: *Timon tanginatus* (Lacertidae), *Pogona vitticeps* (Agamidae), *Eublepharis macularis* (Gekkota), *Chameleo calypratus* (Chameleonidae), snakes: *Epicrates cenchria maurus* (Boidae), *Python regius* (Pythonidae), *Pantherophis guttata* (Colubridae), and turtles: *Testudo hermanni* (Testudinidae), *Trachemys scripta* and *Ocadia sinensis* (Emydidae), and *Pelomedusa subrufa* (Pleurodira). They were sublethally overanasthetised with Nembutal and transcardially perfused with 4% buffered paraformaldehyde. Coronal sections were processed according to the immunoperoxidase protocoll. As a primary antibody monoclonal mouse anti-GFAP (Novocastra) were used in a dilution of 1:100.

The main astroglial type is the radial ependymoglia. However, there are two principal differences between the two groups. In Squamata a) astrocyte-like elements were frequent in several areas, *e.g.*, in the pallium and the striatum although nowhere predominated; b) considerable GFAP-poor areas were found, *e.g.*, in the dorsal pallium, septum, dorsal ventricular ridge and hypothalamus. They were especially extended in the *Python,* and in the *Pogona* GFAP was almost missing (at least undetectable) throughout the brain.

The Squamata share more astroglial features with the birds than the turtles (and crocodilians: Kálmán and Pritz 2001), although represent separate branch (Lepidosauria *versus* Archosauria). In mammals and birds the GFAP-free areas represent usually advanced, expanded and plastic ones. Note that Squamata display quite complex behavioural phenomena among reptiles.

Connectivity-based segmentation of the brainstem by probabilistic tractography

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Investigation of the complex structure of the brainstem is still challanging even with the currently available modern neuroimaging techniques. Mapping of subcortical regions has become possible with connectivity-based segmentation by probabilistic tractography. Our aim was to identify the main functional subregions of the brainstem with the help of this technique.

Twenty healthy volunteers were involved in the study. High-resolution T1-weighted (1 mm^3 isometric voxels) and DTI (60 diffusion directions, 2.4 mm^3 isometric voxels) scans were obtained at 1.5 T. Probabilistic tractography was performed using the fsl software from a pontomesencephalic seed mask to four supratentorial target regions (anterior and posterior limbs of the internal capsule, medial and sensory thalamus on both sides). Then hard segmentation was applied and the resulting connectivity maps were compared to histological sections to verify anatomic correspondance. Quantitative analyses of the connectivity and fractional anisotropy values in the identified subregions were also carried out.

The main brainstem functional subregions identified by the connectivity-based segmentation corresponded well with the known anatomy on group and individual levels as well. A characteristic pattern of connectivity and fractional anisotropy values were detected in the identified subregions along the rostrocaudal axis of the brainstem.

An advantage of connectivity-based segmentation is that it can identify the main fiber tracts in the brainstem without reliance on anatomical ladmarks. Therefore, it may be applied successfully in diseases distorting normal anatomy. Quantitative analyses may be sensitive to the involvement of the main brainstem pathways in certain disease states (traumatic brain injury, demyelinating disorders).

Nesfatin in the arcuate nucleus participates in adaptation to food deprivation

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The hypothalamic arcuate nucleus (ARC) is the primary regulatory center of food intake. Anorexigenic neurons like alpha-melanocyte stimulating hormone (α-MSH) containing cells occupy its lateral part; orexigenic neuropeptide Y (NPY) neurons populate the medial subdivision. Food deprivation induces gene expression changes in the ARC, α-MSH expression decreases, while NPY expression increases. Nesfatin-1/NUCB2 (nesfatin) is a recently discovered anorexigenic neuropeptide expressed in the lateral ARC, coexpressed highly with α-MSH. There are no data about nesfatin expression changes in the ARC in response to fasting. Therefore, we investigated 1, 3 and 5 day-long fasted rats compared to controls by immunohistochemistry against nesfatin and also detected activity of the cells (Fos positivity) during this period. Additionally, effect of intracerebroventricularly (icv) injected nesfatin on Fos activity was studied in normal fed rats. In controls nesfatin cells located mainly in the lateral ARC, many of them was double labeled for α-MSH. After 5 days of food deprivation, α-MSH immunpositive cells were undetectable, however the number of nesfatin-positive cells did not decrease. Additionally, nesfatin immunoreactivity increased in the medial ARC. Fasting induced neuronal activity in the medial ARC as well as in the tanycytes along the wall of the 3rd ventricle adjacent to the ARC. Nesfatin injected icv activated the tanycytes - reported to participate in energy homeostasis - similar manner. We suggest that fasting induces nesfatin expression in the medial ARC that may contribute to the activation of the tanycytes. Further studies are needed to elucidate how all this is related to the adaptation process.

Asphyxia and bicuculline-induced seizures reduce connexin 43 (Cx43) expression in the hippocampus and cerebral cortex of neonatal piglets

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During perinatal asphyxia and subsequent seizures, cerebral blood flow cannot match the metabolic demands of neurons resulting in oxygen and glucose deficiency triggering changes in cerebral protein synthesis. Gap junctions in neurons and astrocytes dominantly express the Cx43 subunit. Our purpose was to determine whether asphyxia/seizures would affect cerebral Cx43 expression in newborn piglets, an accepted large animal model of the human term neonate.

Anaesthetized, room air ventilated, 1-day old piglets of either sex (body weight 1-2 kg, n=30) were divided into four experimental groups: naive controls, sham-operated time controls, seizure animals (bicuculline, 3 mg/kg iv), and asphyxia. During the course of the 8-hour survival, the mean arterial blood pressure, the arterial pH, pCO_2, and pO_2 values were monitored and maintained within their normal physiological ranges.

Cx43 levels were examined with immunoblotting and immunocytochemistry in brain regions most vulnerable to hypoxia: the hippocampus and the cerebral cortex.

The experimental groups did not differ in the monitored physiological parameters. However, seizures and asphyxia decreased significantly Cx43 levels in the hippocampus, but only seizures could reduce Cx43 in the cortex, albeit not in every region assessed compared to the control groups on Western blots. Immunocytochemistry further revealed that the decreased Cx43 levels after seizures and asphyxia are mainly restricted to the molecular layer of the frontal cortex and the stratum lacunosum of the hippocampal CA1 area

The described reduction of cerebral Cx43 expression levels may contribute to the pathomechanism of hypoxic/ischemic encephalopathy of neonates developing after perinatal asphyxia often complicated by seizures.

The anatomy specimen collection of Albert Gellért

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We describe a more than 70-year-old method, invented by professor Albert Gellért. The human cadavers were carefully prepared and then embedded into paraffin, similarly to tissue blocks in routine histology. Following the embedding, the specimen was stained and covered by a protecting varnish. The specimens were arranged into a collection, which is now known as the „Albert Gellért Anatomical Collection", in the Department of Anatomy, University of Szeged, Hungary. The volume shrinkage of the tissues due to dehydration was 10-40% during the Gellért-method. The „Albert Gellért Anatomical Collection" has syndesmology specimens, a large number of myology specimens, where muscles and muscle groups and some anatomical variations can be studied. We have paraffine-embedded organs: hearts, kidneys, genital organs, alimentary organs, respiratory organs and brains. We have topographical anatomy specimens in which nerves, blood vessels, ganglia are shown together with muscles and organs. The embryology preparations are placentas embedded in paraffine. The collection also includes male-, female- and infant torsos, in order to display the characteristic body shape and proportions. We have one pathology preparation: an infant with hydrocephalus. The present number of preparations stored in the museum of the Department is 500. The preparations are especially suitable for the study of muscles: the attachments, the layers and the fasciculation of the muscles are clearly visible. At present, efforts are directed towards the laser scanning of the specimens. We aim to create a digital/virtual anatomy museum for students, research and postgraduate studies.

Histological structure of the parodontium in Man and Rattus

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Adult human dental tissue and young rat jaws with developing teeth were used. The tissues were fixed by immersion in 4% buffered paraformaldehyde. Decalcified tissues were embedded into paraffin or sectioned on a freezing microtome. Paraffin sections (5 μm) were stained with hematoxylin and eosin. Frozen sections (25 μm) were stained with calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) antibodies using avidin-biotin systems and peroxidase labelling. The histology of the acellular cement and the periodontal ligament were analyzed and the course of the Sharpey-fibers and the epithelial rests of Malassez were described in human samples. We described the epithelial sheath of Hertwig in developing rat maxillae and mandibles (postnatal days 1-11). We describe the layers of the Hertwig-sheath. We observed the numerical increase of CGRP-stained nerve fibers during these postnatal days. CGRP-stained nerve fibers appeared before the development of the dental root indicating the presence of growth factors which guide the sensory axons. We hypothesize, that the epithelial sheath of Hertwig plays essential role in the development of cementoblasts, periodontal fibroblasts and alveolar osteoblasts. We think that the growth factors secreted by the Hertwig-sheath stimulate the axonal growth, too.

Transplantation of human induced pluripotent stem cells into an injured rat spinal cord improves locomotor function

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Spinal cord injury leads to deficit of motor and sensory functions below the lesion. In this study we investigated whether application of human induced pluripotent stem cells (hiPS) is able to prevent the secondary spinal cord damage and induce functional recovery. hIPS cells were grafted intraspinally or injected intravenously one week after a thoracic (T11 vertebral level) spinal cord contusion injury performed in rats. Control animals received physiological saline one week after injury via the same delivery routes. Locomotor analysis of the injured animals was performed by applying the BBB test and a detailed kinematic analysis system of the hind limb movement to ascertain improvements in locomotor function. The retrograde tracer Fast Blue was injected into the spinal cord two segments caudally to the lesion to determine the extent of propriospinal axonal sparing/regeneration at 9 weeks after the injury.

hiPS cells applied either locally or intravenously induced moderate functional recovery after contusion injury. Morphologically, the contusion cavity at the epicenter was significantly smaller in grafted animals than in controls. The amount of spared white matter was significantly greater in grafted cords compared with controls. Retrograde tracing studies showed statistically significant increase in the number of propriospinal neurons projecting to the distal spinal cord in both intraspinally and intravenously treated rats. The moderate morphological improvement was accompanied by significant functional improvement.

These data suggest that grafted human iPS cells prevent the secondary spinal cord damage and are able to induce a moderate improvement in the outcome of spinal cord injuries.

This work was supported by grants from EU FP7 projects (STEMMAD, PIAPP-GA-2012-324451; EpiHealth, HEALTH-2012-F2-278418; EpiHealthNet, PITN-GA-2012-317146; D-BOARD, FP7-HEALTH-2012-INNOVATION-1-305815).

Demonstrating the anatomy of the canine heart using MRI based 3D reconstruction technology

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Because of characteristics of the curriculum of the anatomy, the visual demonstration has always had a very important role in its education. The digital tools available today and the increasing demand of the students make it reasonable to develop 3D models as further tools for education. Researches, including recent Hungarian studies, proved that the practical education is more effective than the theoretical lectures and that modern imaging procedures may provide significant help for students in understanding complex 3D structures.

The object of the study was to create and develop a virtual model of the dog's heart wherewith help the students in understanding and learning its anatomy.

We removed the heart from a refrigerated dog cadaver (cross-breed, male, 36 kg body weight). Following a formalin based fixation process, the organ was casted with a two component synthetic resin. This specimen was examined with MRI using a 1 mm slice gap. The sequence was processed with 3D Slicer, using a semiautomatic segmentation method. The resulted model was exported into 3DS Max for further adjustments and the addition of the major vessels.

The final model is rotatable, and the user can create pictures or animations of that using any desired angle or virtual environment. The model is realistic in its proportions.

This model is available for the students to study why the process may be used for modelling further organs.

Localization of CD26/DPP4 enzyme in the rat spinal cord and effects of its inhibitors in inflammatory and neuropathic pain models

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CD26/DPP4 is a moonlighting protein existing within and in the membrane of several cell types and acts as a proteolytic enzyme, a receptor and a costimulatory protein. It has a role in immune response and is involved in adhesion and apoptosis. We have shown that DPP4 inhibitors (vildagliptin and the tripeptide isoleucine-proline-isoleucine; IPI) had opioid mediated spinal antihyperalgesic effect in inflammatory conditions. In this study we (1) looked for evidence for the existence of DPP4 enzyme in the spinal cord, (2) examined which opioid receptors are involved in the antihyperalgesic effects of DPP4 inhibitors in carrageenan-induced hyperalgesia and (3) investigated if DPP4 inhibitors are also effective in neuropathic pain.

Dot-like immonolabelleing of the DPP4 appeared in the spinal dorsal horn. DPP4-positivity was found on cell bodies and axon terminals of neurons as well as on the surface of glial cells. DPP4-positive dots were frequently surrounded by mu-opioid receptor immunoreactivity.

In carrageenan-induced hindpaw inflammation antihyperalgesic effect of vildagliptin was completely eliminated by the highly delta-selective antagonist TIPP(psi), while the mu-selective CTAP and kappa-selective gNTI abolished only the 35% and 45% of this effect, respectively. However, IPI-induced antihyperalgesia was fully blocked by CTAP, while TIPP(psi) and gNTI did not alter the nociceptive threshold, suggesting the exclusive involvement of mu-receptors.

In neuropathic pain model of Seltzer produced by partial sciatic nerve injury both DPP4 inhibitors reduced nociceptive thresholds significantly, but this effect was found to be opioid independent.

These data suggest that DPP4 enzyme exists in the spinal cord and interacts with the endogenous opioid system in a very complex manner especially in inflammatory pain.

Transient Receptor Potential Vanilloid ion channels expressed on human chondroprogenitor cells

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Chondroprogenitor cell (CPC) population, characterized by a multipotent differentiation capacity, was recently described in human osteoarthritic cartilage. These cells show a strong commitment especially towards chondrogenic lineage. Accumulating evidence indicates that Transient Receptor Potential Vanilloid ion channels (TRPV) have novel functions, such as regulating cell migration and differentiation in various cell types. Therefore, our aim was to find out whether TRPVs have any role in cell migration or chondrogenic differentiation in these chondroprogenitor cells.

All six TRPV ion channels were present at mRNA level in CPCs cultured in monolayer; TRPV1 and TRPV4 were monitored also at the protein level. After treating the CPCs with TRPV1 agonist (10 μM capsaicin) and antagonists (10 μM capsazepine, 10 μM ruthenium red) we evaluated their proliferation rate, monitored gene expression of certain genes possibly involved in migration, and also examined their migration potential with Boyden chamber assay. The TRPV1 agonist and antagonists exerted a concentration-dependent influence on the proliferation rate of chondroprogenitor cells. The mRNA expression of hyaluronidases (especially HYAL2) significantly decreased, while CD44 and hyaluronan synthase 2 (HAS2) expressions elevated after capsaicin treatments. While capsaicin promoted, the TRPV1 antagonists attenuated the migration of CPCs. These findings suggest that TRPV1 may stimulate the migration via influencing hyaluronan production and formation of precartilage cell aggregations in CPCs during chondrogenesis.

Subthreshold dendritic impulse propagation in neocortical layer II/III principal cells of an animal model for Alzheimer's disease

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Alzheimer's disease (AD) is the most frequent neurological degenerative disorder. The amyloid hypothesis suggests that amyloid-beta accumulation induces or at least related to neurodegeneration, disrupts synaptic transmission and neural networks and leads to dementia. We investigated the dendritic impulse propagation in morphologically realistic computational models of layer II/III pyramidal neurons of the somatosensory cortex from human amyloid precursor protein over expressing Tg2576 transgenic and control mice. In passive segmental cable models of these cells (n=58), within the NEURON (Duke University, USA) simulation environment, current was injected to various dendritic points of mutant and healthy neurons to simulate local activity of synapses and to study attenuations and delays of PSPs during subthreshold dendritic impulse propagation towards the soma. Effects of degree of soma-dendritic membrane inhomogeneity on dendritic impulse propagation were also studied by utilizing three membrane models (uniform, leaky soma and leaky dendrite models, where somatic and dendritic membrane resistances were equal or either the membrane resistance of soma or dendrites was smaller than that of the other compartment). Neuron input resistances and membrane time constants were fitted to electrophysiological measurements in all models.

Despite the severe morphological degeneration detected in dendrites of transgenic neurons, features of subthreshold dendritic impulse propagation remained relatively unaltered in the uniform and leaky dendrite models. However, current transfers in apical dendrites of transgenic neurons got significantly bigger in the leaky soma model. This alteration may be related to increased excitability of neocortical pyramidal neurons found in AD-related transgenic mice and also in humans with AD.

Induction of maternal amylin in the preoptic area depends on TIP39-containing posterior thalamic neurons

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Amylin, a peptide previously known as a pancreatic hormone, was found to be expressed in the preoptic area of mother rats in our previous microarray study. The increase in mRNA expression was validated by RT-PCR and the appearance of the peptide was detected by immunohistochemistry. Amylin is not expressed in the brain before and during pregnancy but its significant increase was observed in rats and mice immediately after parturition in the preoptic area, the center of maternal behaviors. Amylin-positive neurons, in the medial preoptic nucleus, parts of the medial preoptic area, and the ventral part of the bed nucleus of the stria terminalis were activated by pup exposure in dams. Since our previous studies suggested that suckling effect on maternal motivation may be mediated by posterior thalamic neurons expressing tuberoinfundibular peptide of 39 residues (TIP39), we examined the relationship of amylin and TIP39. Fiber terminals containing TIP39 and the parathyroid hormone 2 receptor (PTH2 receptor; the receptor of TIP39) have the same distribution as amylin neurons in the preoptic area. TIP39 terminals closely apposed amylin neurons suggesting their innervation by TIP39 neurons. The maternal induction of amylin was markedly reduced in mice lacking the PTH2 receptor suggesting a functional relationship between amylin and TIP39. These results imply that amylin is a novel neuropeptide with maternal functions, and its maternal induction is driven by posterior thalamic TIP39-containing neurons that have been suggested to convey suckling information.

Support: Bolyai János Fellowship of the HAS, OTKA K100319 research grant, and the NAP_B Program.

The human thoracolumbar fascia: anatomy, histology and immunohistochemistry

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The thoracolumbar fascia (TLF) is a complex myofascial and aponeurotic girdle around the lower back, which stabilizes the lumbosacral spine. The TLF has significant role in maintaining posture, transmitting and balancing tension and shear force between the active muscle and passive bony compartments. It has strong connections with the superficial fascial layers in the lower limb, the abdomen and the thorax, thus building a complex biomechanical protecting system. The presence of SP, CGRP, PGP 9.5 and S-100 immunopositive signals and the numerous sympathetic vasomotor fibers in the TLF prove its dense sensory and autonomic innervation, respectively. Although the proprioceptive innervation of TLF is not fully determined yet, evidences show that reduced proprioception activity of the fascia results in increased pain sensitivity.

The present study utilized fixed cadavers, paraffin-plastinated TLF preparations in order to elucidate the fascia layers of the TLF. The intrafascial nerve endings were studied on fresh human tissue samples through silver impregnation and immunohistochemistry.

The role of septins in store operated Ca^{2+} entry (SOCE) during chondrogenesis of human mesenchymal stem cells (hMSC)

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Septins belong to a highly conserved family of proteins in eukaryotes and are increasingly recognized as components of the cytoskeleton. All septins bind GTP and form hetero-oligomeric complexes and higher-order structures, including filaments and rings. Septins form plasmamembrane domains juxtaposed to the endoplasmic reticulum membrane punctae which are important in the STIM1-ORAI1 signalling. The knock down of certain septin types or the inhibition of their remodeling inhibits SOCE and related downstream events. Septins have no previously described role in chondrogenesis and their role in other differentiational processes is also sparsely described.

Previous results of our laboratory indicate that SOCE is necessary for chondrogenesis, therefore we aimed to link septin function to chondrogenesis.

Our studies were carried out in hMSC differentiated as high density cultures (HDC). We verified the expression of the SOCE-associated septin types and the components of SOCE at the mRNA and protein level. HDC were treated with the inhibitor of septin remodeling, forchlorfenuron. We performed transient gene silencing of the discussed septin types with an shRNA vector, examined SOCE functions using cells loaded with the calcium-sensitive dye Fura-2 with a set-up measuring single cell calcium levels. Eventually, we compared chondrogenesis in control to forchlorfenuron-treated cultures by chondrogenic marker analysis and histological stainings.

Our results demonstrate the link between SOCE and chondrogenic processes in hMSC. Our present findings, although further experiments are needed, provide a novel function of the septin protein family.

This work was sponsored by the grant GOP-1.1.1-11-2012-0197.

Determination of the essential number of motoneurons required to produce functionally useful hindlimb locomotion

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An avulsion injury of one or more spinal ventral roots induces a critical loss of motoneurons followed by irreversible locomotor function impairment. Recent peripheral nerve surgery techniques result in the improvement of limb function, however, the question remains how many motoneurons are needed to achieve sufficient muscle reinnervation. The aim of this study was to determine the minimum motoneuron numbers, required to reinnervate the denervated muscles of the limb and produce a functionally useful locomotor pattern. In order to determine the threshold of satisfactory functional reinnervation we have developed a sensitive movement recording and analysis system as none of the commercially available methods/equipment were able to provide in-depth data about the motor pattern of the whole hind limb. Therefore we combined the use of video-based footprint and hind limb motion analyses to achieve a reliable assessment. Rats that underwent a lumbar 4-5 (L4-5) ventral root avulsion had their L4 ventral root reimplanted and received different doses of riluzole in order to rescue incremental numbers of the damaged motoneuron pool. Control animals received no treatment. Lateral and rear-view parameters of the hind limb movement pattern were evaluated by measuring specific joint angles, footprints and gait parameters in single video frames. Four months postoperatively we carried out retrograde tracing in order to label and count the reinnervating motoneurons. A correlation between the numbers of the reinnervating motoneurons and the functional improvement was made and a strong relationship between functional restoration of the original movement pattern and morphological reinnervation has been proven.

Immunohistochemistry of cerebellar seizures: mossy fiber afferents play important role in seizure spread and initiation in the rat

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Clinical reports suggest the participation of the cerebellum in epilepsy. Mossy fibers are the main excitatory afferents of the cerebellar cortex; most of them use glutamate and strongly excite granule cells through NMDA- and AMPA receptors. The role of the pontocerebellar mossy fibers in cerebellar neuronal hyperactivity was investigated in the present study. We detected neuronal hyperactivity through the expression of the glutamate induced c-fos protein, by means of immunohistochemistry and immunoblotting in the vermis and in the hemispheres. Generalized seizures were induced by means of intraperitoneal 4-aminopyridine injections. Following the 4-aminopyridine seizures, the c-fos expression of cerebellar granule cells was significantly elevated at 1.5 h in every lobule. Maximum c-fos expression was seen at 3 h. The role of the pontocerebellar mossy fiber afferents in the induction of c-fos expression was examined after the transection of the middle cerebellar peduncle on the left side. Immunohistochemical analysis 14 days after the surgery revealed that the synapsin I immunoreactivity was significantly reduced in the cerebellar cortex on the operated side, compared to the sham operated controls and to the non-operated cerebellar hemisphere of the operated animals; indicating the degeneration of mossy fiber terminals. Transection of the middle cerebellar peduncle suppressed cerebellar c-fos expression in the vermis and in the hemispheres significantly. These findings suggest the strong involvement of the middle cerebellar peduncle and the pontocerebellar mossy fibers in the pathophysiology of cerebellar epilepsy.

Early phenomena following cryogenic lesions of rat brain

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The cerebrovascular laminin becomes detectable following lesions, whereas the immunoreactivity of the lamina basalis-receptor beta-dystroglycan disappears. These alterations are supposed to be indirect markers of the *post-lesion* glio-vascular detachment which may have role in the impairment of blood-brain-barrier. The aim of the present study is to estimate the temporal and territorial correlations between the *post-lesion* exudation and the aforementioned phenomena.

Cryogenic lesions were performed in deep ketamine-xylazine anaesthesia with a copper rod cooled with dry ice. Immediately, or in 5 or 10 min brains were removed and immersed in buffered 4% paraformaldehyde, and immunohistochemical reactions were performed in floating sections. *Post-lesion* exudation due to blood-brain-barrier impairment was estimated with immunohistochemical detection of plasma-fibronectin and immunoglobulins. Gliovascular connections were investigated with immunohistochemistry (GFAP, S100, glutamine synthetase, and (applying perfusion) electron microscopy.

Laminin immunoreactivity appeared already at immediate fixation. Exudate was found around the laminin-immunopositive vessels but not in a confluent territory. B-dystroglycan was still detectable. At five-ten minutes the territory of exudate became confluent and dystroglycan disappeared. Some but not all vessels were free of astrocytes. Electron microscopy demonstrated wide perivascular spaces.

'In vivo' monitoring was attempted with a Femtonics Femto2D-Inverted multiphoton microscope in the Department of Biophysics of Semmelweis University. Astrocytes were labeled supravitally with sulforhodamine 101 smeared on the brain surface so some gliovascular connections were visible. However, within the investigated *post-lesion* period (20 min) no astrocyte motility was observed.

Unilateral labyrinthectomy modifies the tenascin-R expression in the perineuronal nets of the vestibular nuclei in the rat

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The vestibular system or system of balance provides information about the motion, equilibrium, and spatial orientation of the body. Lesion of vestibular system results in various static and dynamic symptoms which are restored spontaneously during the vestibular compensation. Vestibular compensation involves multiple, parallel mechanisms in the vestibular nuclei and in various parts of vestibular networks. We have previously observed modification of hyaluronan and chondroitin sulfate proteoglycan expression in the perineuronal net (PNN) of the lateral vestibular nucleus (LVN) during the vestibular compensation suggesting the role of extracellular matrix in the compensatory mechanisms.

In the present work by using immunohistochemical method, we studied the modification of TN-R expression in the superior (SVN), medial (MVN), lateral (LVN), and descending (DVN) vestibular nuclei of the rat following UL. On the first postoperative day, the perineuronal nets (PNN) disappeared on the side of UL in the SVN, LVN, MVN, and rostral part of DVN. At survival day 3, the staining intensity of PNNs recovered in the operated side of the MVN, whereas they are restored by the time of seventh postoperative day in the SVN, LVN and rostral part of DVN. The staining intensity of TN-R reaction remained unchanged in the caudal part of DVN, bilaterally.

Our results showed that the UL is accompanied by the modification of TN-R staining pattern in the vestibular nuclei. The time course of re-establishment of PNN is being attained parallel to the improvement of vestibular symptoms.

Support: MTA-TKI 11008.

Diagnostic value of histological findings in cases of advanced putrefaction and autolysis

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Performing autopsies without available medical data in the cases of "unattended death" with advanced autolytic and putrefactive changes is not exceptional in the forensic pathology. The macroscopically inconclusive autopsies increase the significance of the supplementary diagnostics, not forgetting the relevance of good old routine pathohistology.

The myocardial scarring after ischaemia, the chronic congestive heart failure-related haemosiderin deposits in ghost remnants of macrophages, the lamellar fibroelastosis of muscular arteries suggesting hypertension or the hyalinised glomeruli in the kidney, altogether, if not accompanied by signs of external inflicts, may support the diagnosis of natural cardiovascular death *(Case #1: a male corpse found in his flat with running heating after at least four days)*. The multiplex myocardial scars with different age, signs of oedema and chronic congestion (haemosiderin deposits) in the lungs, the remnants of granulation tissue from organising pneumonia or the fatty degeneration of the liver could be decisive by demonstrating the medical history if such data would be later available *(Case #2: an unidentified female corpse found in the River Tisza)*.

The medical history, the circumstances of death, the time elapsed and the environment surrounding the body after death, largely influence the diagnostic value of histology. For corpses with unknown identity, the careful evaluation of "time-resistant" histological findings could even contribute to the personal identification. The histological specimens after processing for routine haematoxylin-eosin stained light microscopic slides can be surprisingly informative and sometimes even decisive, even if we are taken aback by the macroscopical appearance of the organs at first sight.

Secretagogin labels the noradrenergic axis in the rat brain stem

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Secretagogin, a recently described calcium binding protein, has been identified in several organs including brain. Being a calcium sensor it is believed to regulate downstream cascades after a conformational change upon activation. Here, we show that secretagogin is present in the rat brainstem with a distinct distribution pattern largely concentrated in noradrenergic centres, especially locus coeruleus. Additionally, secretagogin-containing neurons were identified in rather heterogeneous fields including, but not restricted to, superior colliculus, dorsal nucleus of vagus, medial vestibular nucleus or interpeduncular nucleus. Tyrosine hydroxylase-containing neurons typically co-expressed secretagogin both in their somata and axonal fibres. In stress, secretagogin and tyrosine hydroxylase levels in brain stem samples elevated in parallel as shown by select brain stem serial section- or micropunch-technique based protein analysis. Knock-down of secretagogin expression using small interfering RNA in primary neuronal brain stem cultures resulted in reduced tyrosine hydroxylase expression. We suggest that secretagogin is a useful neurochemical marker to identify neuronal subsets in the mammalian brain stem and could play a role in stress reactions.

Case presentation: Six-year-old child with schizencephaly

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Childhood epileptic conditions, based on the patophysiological mechanisms, can be classified into three main groups:

(a) The cause of epilepsy is well characterised, it is definitive;

(b) The cause is not known, however there is a high suspicion of certain background condition**;**

(c) The cause is entirely unknown**.**

Based on the above criteria, (a) symptomatic**, (**b) cryptogenic and (c) idiopathic epileptic groups can be identified.

Due to the development of diagnostic methods, there is an increased proportion of diagnosed neonatal and childhood symptomatic epilepsy cases, mainly those which are attributable to developmental defects. Focal cortical dysplasia, the cortical dysgenesis and the impaired developmental migratory conditions are more frequently diagnosed, due to diagnostic improvements. In our case report, we present the morphological findings of a patient, suffering from schizencephaly.

Bilateral schizencephaly with microcephaly is a severe psychomotor retardation with spastic tetraparesis. Unilateral schizencephaly is dominated by impaired motor function with one sided disability and spastic hemiparesis. Clinical symptoms show a wide range of variation. Unilateral schizencephaly is frequently diagnosed when an epileptic focus is looked for. The most important differential diagnostic condition is porencephaly, where loss of brain parenchyma is due to a previous damage, most commonly due to vascular damage during the third trimester. It should be emphasized that in porencephaly the noxa affects the brain after the neuronal migration has already ceased, there is no glia reaction in the immature brain. Porencephaly is usually associated with sever neurological and mental impairment.