

Article 1 : Early molecular remodeling and spontaneous ventricular tachycardia in a mouse model of complete atrioventricular block

In the present study, we used a genetic-engineering approach to suppress I_{CaT} by specifically knocking out the T-type Ca^{2+} -channel subunits Cav3.1 and Cav3.2. We saw no evidence of protection against post-MI remodeling with I_{CaT} α -subunit deletion. On the contrary, Cav3.1-KO mice developed greater post-MI impairments in myocardial function and more arrhythmia susceptibility than WT mice. The discrepancy from previous results obtained with mibefradil as a pharmacological probe may relate to the limited specificity of mibefradil. In addition to inhibiting I_{CaT} , mibefradil also suppresses I_{CaL} ,²³ I_{Na} ,²⁴ I_{Kr} ²⁵ and cytochrome function,²⁶ any of which could have contributed, along with presently-unrecognized actions of the compound, to its effects.

4.2 Recent insights into T-type Ca^{2+} -channel function from genetically-engineered mouse models

The ability to produce mice that are genetically-engineered to lack Cav3-channel subunits is providing new insights into the functional role of I_{CaT} . Mangoni et al showed that I_{Ca} knockout impairs sinus node automaticity and atrioventricular node conduction, indicating an important role in nodal function.³ Jaleel et al studied the effects of I_{CaT} augmentation by Cav3.1 overexpression and compared them with the effects of I_{CaL} enhancement by overexpression of the L-type Ca^{2+} -channel β 2a-subunit.¹⁶ Although Ca^{2+} -influx was increased similarly in both models, enhanced sarcoplasmic reticulum Ca^{2+} -loading only occurred with I_{CaL} enhancement and Cav3.1-overexpression produced smaller contractile enhancement. Nakayama et al recently examined the effect of Cav3.1-overexpression and knockout on various forms of cardiac hypertrophy.¹⁷ They noted exaggerated hypertrophic remodeling with Cav3.1 knockout and reduced hypertrophy with Cav3.1 enhancement. In contrast, Chiang et al did not observe an effect of Cav3.1 knockout on pressure-overload hypertrophy, but identified an important role for Cav3.2-subunits in the hypertrophic response to pressure overload, with the presence of Cav3.2-subunits being essential for calcineurin/NFAT hypertrophic signaling to occur.¹⁸ Consistent

information from mouse models engineered to lack I_{CaT} subunits. Interestingly, we did not observe any differences in ventricular weight or ventricular weight/body weight ratios among groups, suggesting that $Cav3.1^{-/-}$ -associated adverse remodeling was not associated with changes in cardiac hypertrophic responses.

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Disclosures

None.

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