

別紙4

研究成果の刊行に関する一覧表(分子構造イメージングx線回折)

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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Involvement of adaptor protein Crk in malignant feature of human ovarian cancer cell line MCAS

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Signaling adaptor protein Crk regulates cell motility and growth through its targets Dock180 and C3G, those are the guanine-nucleotide exchange factors (GEFs) for small GTPases Rac and Rap, respectively. Recently, over-expression of Crk has been reported in various human cancers. To define the role for Crk in human cancer cells, Crk expression was targeted in the human ovarian cancer cell line MCAS through RNA interference, resulting in the establishment of three Crk knockdown cell lines. These cell lines exhibited disorganized actin fibers, reduced number of focal adhesions, and abolishment of lamellipodia formation. Decreased Rac activity was demonstrated by pull-down assay and FRET-based time-lapse microscopy, in association with suppression of both motility and invasion by phagokinetic track assay and transwell assay in these cells. Furthermore, Crk knockdown cells exhibited slow growth rates in culture and suppressed anchorage-dependent growth in soft agar. Tumor forming potential in nude mice was attenuated, and intraperitoneal dissemination was not observed when Crk knockdown cells were injected into the peritoneal cavity. These results suggest that the Crk is a key component of focal adhesion and involved in cell growth, invasion, and dissemination of human ovarian cancer cell line MCAS.

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Introduction

The regulation of cell motility is a well-organized process in which cells receive information from the surrounding environment through the extracellular matrix (ECM) (Gumbiner, 1996; Lauffenburger and Horwitz, 1996; Sheetz *et al.*, 1998). Cell surface receptor molecules for the ECM, such as integrins, transmit signals to the actin cytoskeleton through the focal adhesion complex (Brugge, 1998; O’Neil *et al.*, 2000). Tyrosine kinases, such as focal adhesion kinase (FAK) or proline-rich tyrosine kinase 2 (PYK2), are activated by the ECM and their substrates, p130^{cas} (Crk associated substrate) or paxillin, may play a role in regulation of focal adhesion (Yano *et al.*, 2000; Summy and Gallick, 2003). Downstream of focal adhesion complexes, the Rho family of small GTPases, including Rho, Rac and Cdc42, regulate the reorganization of actin fibers to form stress fibers, lamellipodia and filopodia, all of which control cell motility (Hall, 1998). Although the deregulation of focal adhesion complexes may contribute to motility and invasion of tumor cells, the precise mechanism is not well understood.

Signaling adaptor protein Crk (CT10 regulated kinase), which is mostly composed of SH2 (src homology 2) and SH3 domains, was originally isolated as an avian sarcoma virus CT10 (chicken tumor 10) encoding oncogene product (Mayer *et al.*, 1988). Since the isolation of mammalian homologues of viral Crk, such as c-Crk-I and c-Crk-II (Matsuda *et al.*, 1992b), Crk has been shown to transmit signals under various stimuli including epidermal growth factor, neurotrophic growth factor and fibroblast growth factor (Tanaka *et al.*, 1993; Feller, 2001). c-Crk-II possesses one SH2 domain at the N-terminus and two SH3 domains, whereas its alternative splicing product c-Crk-I is composed of the SH2 domain and a single SH3 domain. The SH2 domain is responsible for binding to the tyrosine phosphorylated form of 130^{cas} and paxillin, suggesting a role for Crk in regulation of the cytoskeleton (Feller, 2001). In fact, Crk has been shown to transmit signals to small GTPases by association with its downstream effectors such as Dock180 and C3G, which

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are the guanine-nucleotide exchange factors (GEFs) for Rac and Rap, respectively (Tanaka *et al.*, 1994; Gotoh *et al.*, 1995; Hasegawa *et al.*, 1996; Kiyokawa *et al.*, 1998). The activation of Rho was also reported (Tsuda *et al.*, 2002; Iwahara *et al.*, 2003).

Dock180 and its binding molecule ELMO cooperatively regulate Rac activity and are thought to be involved in the phagocytosis of apoptotic cells (Albert *et al.*, 2000; Gumieny *et al.*, 2001; Brugnera *et al.*, 2002). C3G regulates the MAP kinase and JNK pathway by activating Rap and R-Ras, respectively, following phosphorylation on tyrosine residue 504 (Tanaka *et al.*, 1997; Tanaka and Hanafusa, 1998; Mochizuki *et al.*, 2000). Studies in C3G knockout mice suggested a role for C3G in the control of cell adhesion (Ohba *et al.*, 2001).

The contribution of c-Crk to tumorigenesis was suggested by an earlier study showing that c-Crk-I induced anchorage-independent growth of rodent fibroblasts together with tyrosine-phosphorylation of p130^{Cas} (Matsuda *et al.*, 1992b). We previously reported that Crk is overexpressed in human cancers including various carcinomas and sarcomas (Nishihara *et al.*, 2002c). In addition, there are several reports describing overexpression of c-Crk-I in malignant brain tumors and lung cancers (Miller *et al.*, 2003; Takino *et al.*, 2003). Because ovarian cancer possesses prominent metastatic potential in general and frequently exhibit intraperitoneal dissemination in patients, the human ovarian cancer cell line MCAS provides an appropriate model system to study the role of Crk in tumorigenesis (Judson *et al.*, 1999; Chen *et al.*, 2001).

In Crk knockdown MCAS cells, disorganization of actin cytoskeleton and decrease of Rac activity was observed. Cell motility and invasion were also decreased in addition to the growth suppression. Crk knockdown MCAS cells lost the ability of intraperitoneal dissemination in mice. These results suggest that Crk may be involved in malignant feature of human ovarian cancer cell line MCAS.

Results

Association of Crk and its targets in MCAS cells

Because both p130^{Cas} and paxillin are major targets of the SH2 domain of Crk, the tyrosine-phosphorylation status of these proteins was examined in MCAS cells. Immunoprecipitation analysis demonstrated that p130^{Cas} and paxillin were significantly tyrosine-phosphorylated (Figure 1a), and their association with Crk was clearly demonstrated (Figure 1b). We also analysed the association of Crk and its well-known downstream effectors, including Dock180, C3G, Sos and c-Abl, by GST pull-down assay. GST-Crk-I, GST-Crk-II and GST-Crk-SH3(N) associated with these molecules in MCAS cell lysates, whereas GST alone or GST-SH2 did not (Figure 1c).

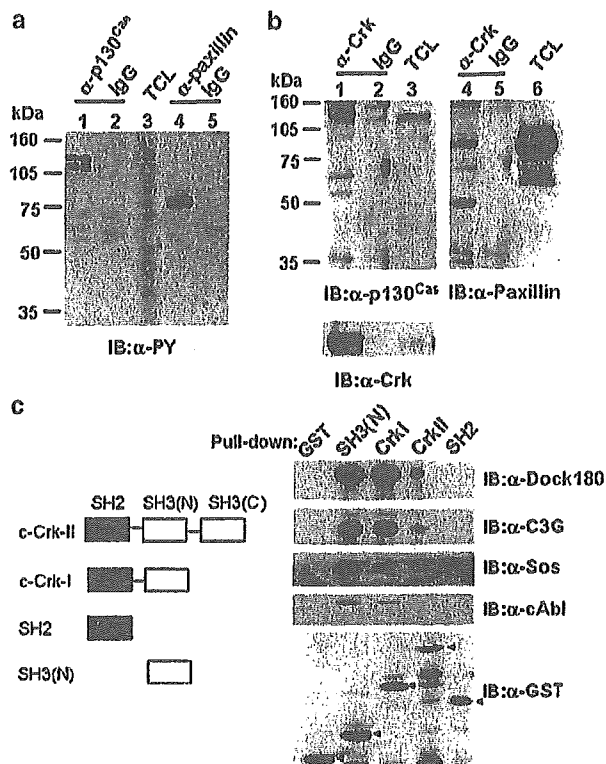


Figure 1 (a) Tyrosine phosphorylation of p130^{Cas} and paxillin in MCAS cells. Immunoprecipitation by using anti-p130^{Cas} Ab (lane 1), anti-paxillin Ab (lane 4) or control immunoglobulin (IgG, lanes 2 and 5) was performed, and probed with anti-phosphotyrosine Ab. TCL, total cell lysates (lane 3). (b) Association of Crk with p130^{Cas} and paxillin. Immunoprecipitation by using anti-Crk Ab (lanes 1 and 4) or control IgG (lanes 2 and 5) was performed and probed with anti-p130^{Cas} Ab (left panel), anti-paxillin Ab (right panel) or anti-Crk Ab (lower panel). (c) Association of Crk and target molecules. MCAS cell lysates were incubated with GST alone or GST fusion form of N-terminus SH3 domain of c-Crk-II (Crk-SH3(N)), c-Crk-I (CrkI), c-Crk-II (CrkII) or SH2 domain of c-Crk-II (SH2), and probed with anti-Dock180, anti-C3G, anti-Sos, anti-Abl or anti-GST Abs. Arrowheads show the calculated molecular weight of the GST fusion proteins.

Establishment of Crk knockdown MCAS cell lines and morphological analysis

To reduce expression of endogenous Crk in MCAS cells, small interfering RNA (siRNA) was employed. By using Crk siRNA in the pSUPER vector, we successfully established three independent Crk knockdown MCAS cell lines, which were designated Crki-1, Crki-2 and Crki-3. In all three cell lines, the expression of c-Crk-I was completely suppressed (Figure 2A). The expression of c-Crk-II was significantly decreased in Crki-1 and Crki-2 cells, whereas it was slightly suppressed in Crki-3 cells (Figure 2A). Endogenous protein levels of CrkL were unchanged as were those of actin (Figure 2A). The tyrosine-phosphorylation levels of p130^{Cas} and paxillin seemed to be slightly different but were statistically constant in Crk knockdown cells (Figure 2B).

In MCAS cells, filopodia and lamellipodia were readily identified at the cell edge (Figure 2C). In contrast, Crk knockdown cells tended to form small

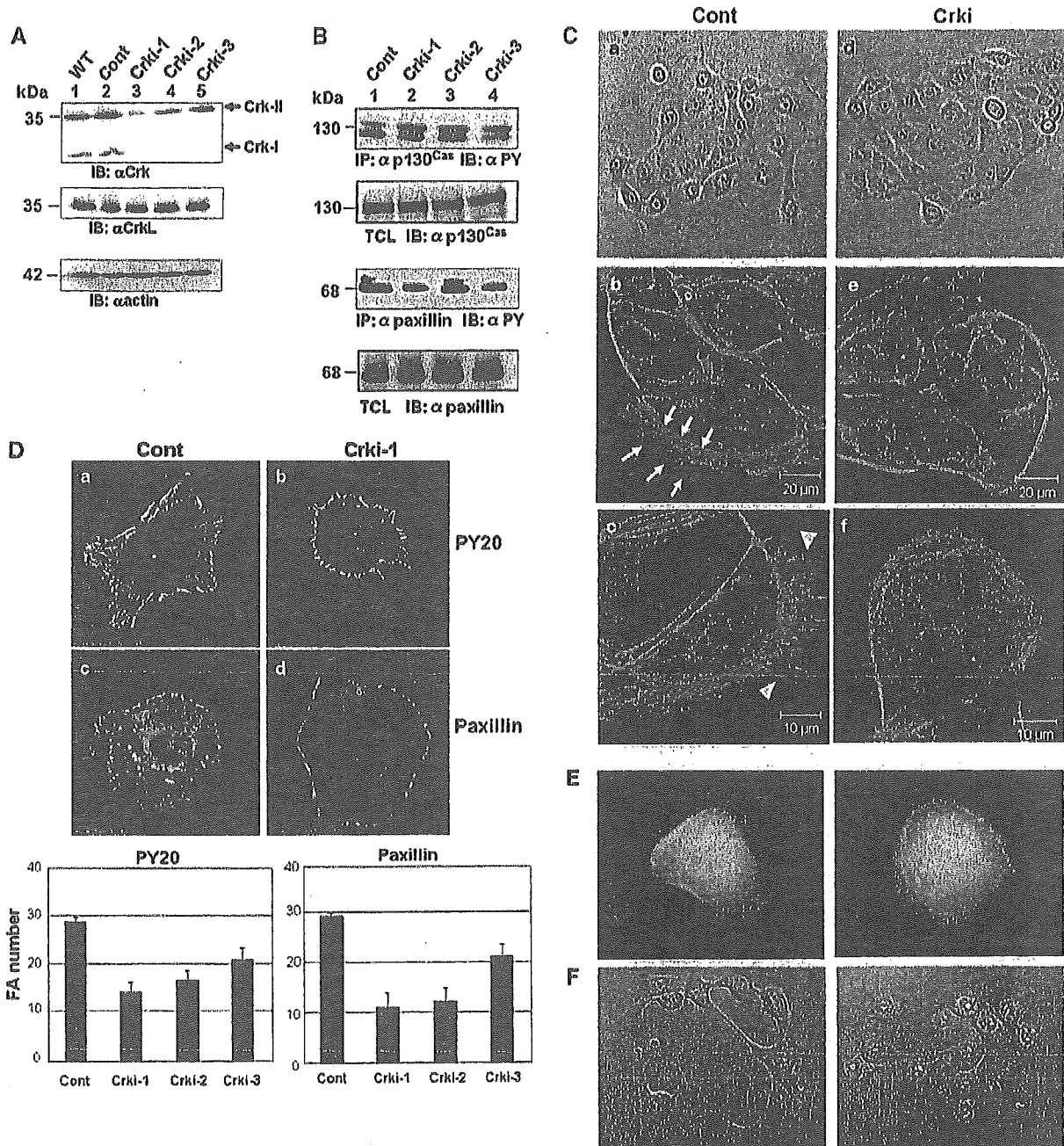


Figure 2 (A) Establishment of Crk knockdown MCAS cell lines. Total cell lysates of parental MCAS, control vector transfected cells or three Crk siRNA transfected cells (Crki-1, Crki-2 and Crki-3) were immunoblotted with anti-Crk, anti-CrkL or anti-actin Abs. The positions of Crk-I and Crk-II were indicated by arrow. (B) Tyrosine phosphorylation of p130^{Cas} and paxillin in Crk knockdown cells was analysed by immunoprecipitation and immunoblotting using total cell lysate. Total levels of p130^{Cas} and paxillin were also analysed by immunoblotting. (C) Morphology of parental (panels a–c) and Crk knockdown MCAS cells (panels d–f). Phase-contrast microscopical observation (panels a and d) and phalloidine staining (panels b, c, e and f). Arrow and arrowhead indicate lamellipodia and filopodia, respectively. (D) Immunofluorescence of control cells and Crk knockdown Crki-1 cells by antiphosphotyrosine (panels a and b) and antipaxillin (panels c and d) Abs. The numbers of focal adhesion were counted and described as bar graph with standard error. (E) GFP-actin transfected control (left panel) and Crk knockdown Crki-1 (right panel) cells. The results of time-lapse observation of these cells were available as Supplementary data. (F) Phase contrast microscopical observation of control (left panel) and Crk knockdown (right panel) cells 3 h after serum stimulation. (G) Transient transfection of both GFP-actin and RFP-Crk-I expression plasmids (panels a–c) or both GFP-actin and RFP (panels d–f) into Crk knockdown cells. RFP-Crk-I and GFP-actin were separately observed and displayed as upper (a and d) and middle (b and e) panels. Merged images were displayed at the bottom (c and f). The results of time-lapse observation of RFP-Crk-I expressed cells were available as Supplementary data. (H) Transient expression of myc-Crk-I and myc-Crk-II in Crk knockdown cells. Anti-myc Ab was used to detect overexpression of Crk (green). Phalloidine stain was performed to detect actin cytoskeleton (red). Yellow bar indicates 20 μ m.

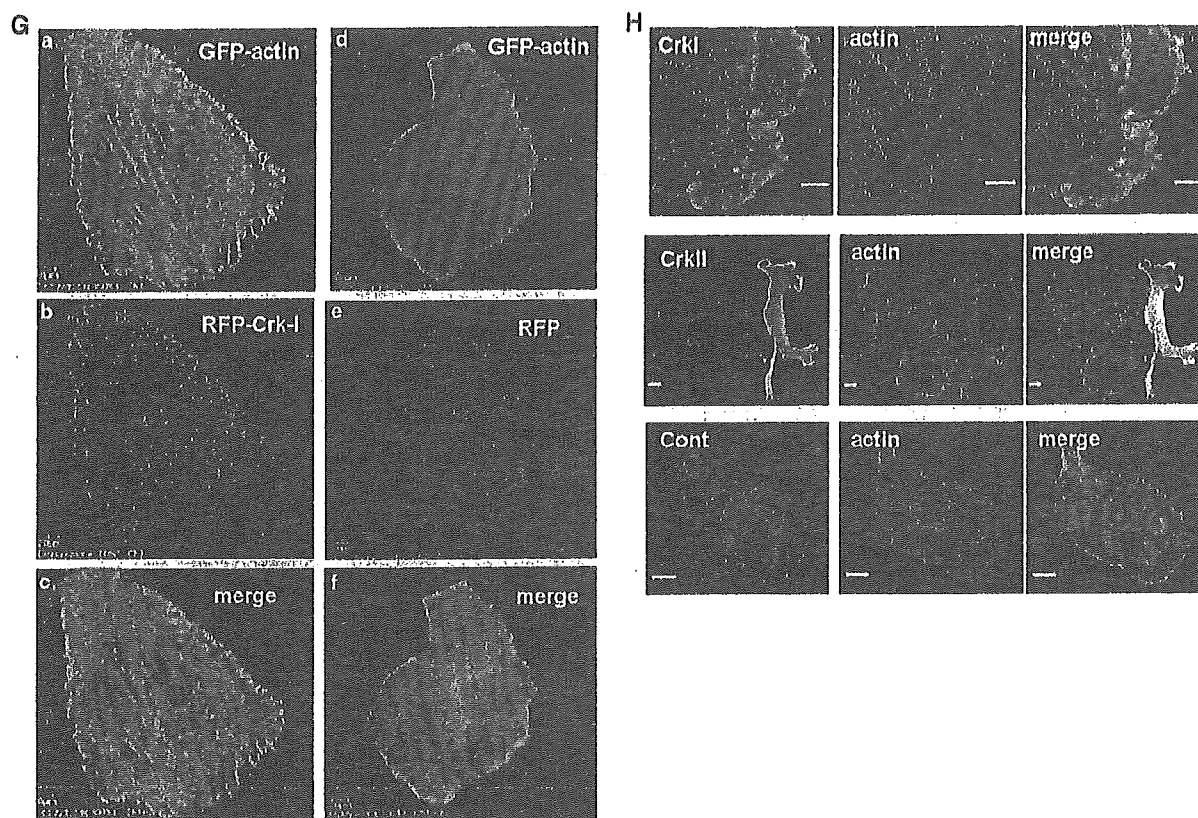


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clusters, and the thin cytoplasmic edge found in control MCAS cells was not observed in Crk knockdown cells in phase contrast microscopical analysis (Figure 2C). Actin staining demonstrated that dense actin bundles were present at the edge of the cytoplasm in Crk knockdown cells, and no lamellipodia was observed (Figure 2C). Immunofluorescence using antiphosphotyrosine and antipaxillin antibodies showed that the number of focal adhesions was significantly decreased in Crk knockdown cells (Figure 2D). Suppression of lamellipodia formation was confirmed by the transient transfection of the GFP fusion form of actin followed by time-lapse microscopy (Figure 2E and Supplementary data 1). Thirty-minute observations of single GFP-actin transfected cells showed that Crk knockdown cells can still move, even in the absence of lamellipodia (Figure 2E and Supplementary data 1 and 2). However, after 3 h of serum stimulation, cell scattering was much more prominent in control MCAS cells than in Crk knockdown cells (Figure 2F). To confirm the contribution of Crk to focal adhesion formation, we transiently transfected a expression plasmid for c-Crk-I fused to red fluorescent protein (RFP). Re-expression of c-Crk-I resulted in a recovery of the number of focal adhesions and also lamellipodia formation (Figure 2G and Supplementary data 3 and 4). It should be noted that in contrast to the RFP-Crk-I, we failed to transiently express RFP-Crk-II with unknown reason (data not shown). Thus, we re-

expressed myc-tagged Crk-I or Crk-II in Crk knockdown MCAS cells, and found recovery of lamellipodia both by Crk-I and Crk-II (Figure 2H).

Analysis of Rac activity by pull-down assay and FRET-based time-lapse analysis

As Crk is known to regulate Rac through Dock180, we examined the activity of Rac. Consistent with the disappearance of lamellipodia, the amount of activated form of Rac was decreased in three Crk knockdown cells as determined by pull-down assay (Figure 3a). The decrease of Rac activity seemed to be correlated to the knockdown levels of Crk-II. To confirm the decrease of Rac activation, we utilized FRET-based time-lapse analysis for monitoring the activity of Rac (Itoh *et al.*, 2002). Positive signals were observed after serum stimulation in control cells, but not in Crk knockdown cells (Figure 3b and Supplementary data 5 and 6).

Analysis of motility, invasion, adhesion and matrix production of Crk knockdown cells

To clarify the effect of Crk on cell motility, a phagokinetic track assay was performed. Significantly decreased motilities of Crk knockdown cells were observed in all three Crk knockdown MCAS cells (Figure 4a). Furthermore, Crk knockdown resulted in a marked suppression of cellular invasion as was deter-

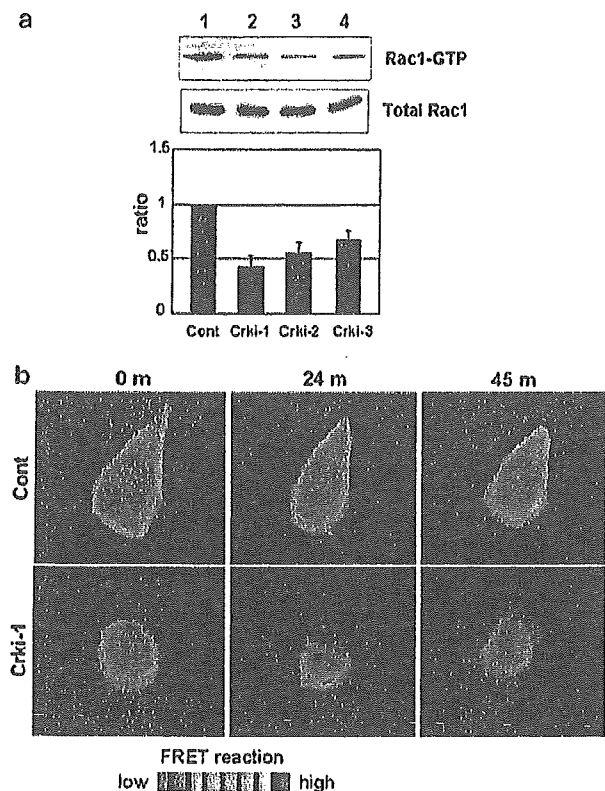


Figure 3 (a) Activity of Rac measured by pull-down assay in control and Crk knockdown cells. The GTP bound form of Rac was precipitated by GST-Pak-RBD and probed with anti-Rac Ab (upper panel). Total levels of Rac were visualized by immunoblotting using anti-Rac Ab (lower panel). Ratio of GTP-Rac and total level of Rac was quantified and described as bar graph with standard error. Lane 1, control; lane 2, Crki-1; lane 3, Crki-2; lane 4, Crki-3. (b) Time-lapse based FRET analysis of Rac activity in control (upper panels) and Crk knockdown Crki-1 (lower panels) cells 0, 24 and 45 min after 50 ng/ml of HGF stimulation. Reference of intensity was displayed at the bottom.

mined by a transwell assay (Figure 4b). As C3G was reported to regulate cell adhesion (Ohba *et al.*, 2001), an *in vitro* adhesion assay was performed. Only Crki-1 cells, not Crki-2 nor Crki-3, display a 15% reduction of adhesion on the laminin-coated culture dishes compared to control cells (Figure 4c). By pull-down assay, no significant alteration of Rap1 activity was observed in Crk knockdown MCAS cells (Figure 4d).

Anchorage-dependent and -independent growth of cells

As c-Crk has been shown to upregulate cell growth (Matsuda *et al.*, 1992a), we examined the role for Crk in growth of MCAS cells. Compared to parental cells and control cells, growth rates of three Crk knockdown cells were diminished when grown on non-coating culture plates (Figure 5a). We next examined the anchorage-independent growth of these cells by soft agar colony-forming assay. The numbers of medium sized colonies, 1.0–2.0 mm in diameter, were considerably decreased in all three of Crk knockdown cell lines (Figure 5b).

Furthermore, large colonies, more than 2.0 mm in diameter, were detected in wild type and control cells, but not in Crk knockdown cells (Figure 5b). In contrast, the numbers of small sized colonies, 0.5–1.0 mm in size, were increased in Crk knockdown cells (Figure 5b).

Tumor formation assay in nude mice

Finally, we investigated the tumor-forming potential of Crk knockdown cells in nude mice. Three weeks after injection of cells, control MCAS cells formed tumors with $14 \times 10 \times 10 \text{ mm}^3$ in size and 0.8 g in weight on average. However, smaller sized tumors, with mean volumes of $10 \times 6 \times 5 \text{ mm}^3$ and mean weight of 0.4 g, were observed following injection with Crk knockdown cells (Table 1 and Figure 6a). Histopathological analysis demonstrated that control cells formed tumors with necrosis both in center and peripheral area of the tumor nodules (Table 1 and Figure 6b and c). Tumors formed by Crk knockdown cells exhibited central necrosis, but no small necrotic focus was observed in the peripheral area of the tumor (Figure 6b and c). Although the MCAS cell line was established from a surgical specimen of mucinous adenocarcinoma, the tumors formed in nude mice did not exhibit prominent mucous secretion. In contrast, in tumors formed by Crk knockdown cells, tubular formation was remarkable and significant mucous production was demonstrated by both of hematoxylin and eosin (H&E) and periodic acid Schiff (PAS) staining (Figure 6d).

We also injected established cell lines in the peritoneal cavity of nude mice and examined the potential of tumor growth as peritonitis carcinomatosa, which is one of the characteristic features of human ovarian cancer. Autopsy demonstrated that small nodules, 1.0–5.0 mm in size, were disseminated in the peritoneal cavity of mice injected with control cells (Table 1). Microscopically, tumor cells had invaded into the retroperitoneum with remarkable lymphatic vessel infiltration of the peritoneal wall (Figure 6e). In contrast, there was no evidence of tumor growth in mice injected with Crk knockdown cells (Figure 6e).

Discussion

Despite recent advancements in cancer therapy, aggressive tumors, characterized by invasion and metastasis, are still associated with poor prognosis. Among the most highly invasive human cancers, ovarian cancer, especially mucinous adenocarcinoma, is distinguishable due to its frequent intraperitoneal dissemination as well as local invasion. To control the dissemination of tumor cells, an understanding of the physiological mechanism of cell movement is important. ECM stimuli-provoked signals are transmitted, by way of cellular surface receptors such as integrins, to downstream effectors such as the Rho family of small GTPases, which play a central role in cell motility. However, regulation of the activity of small GTPases is complex and is still under investigation.

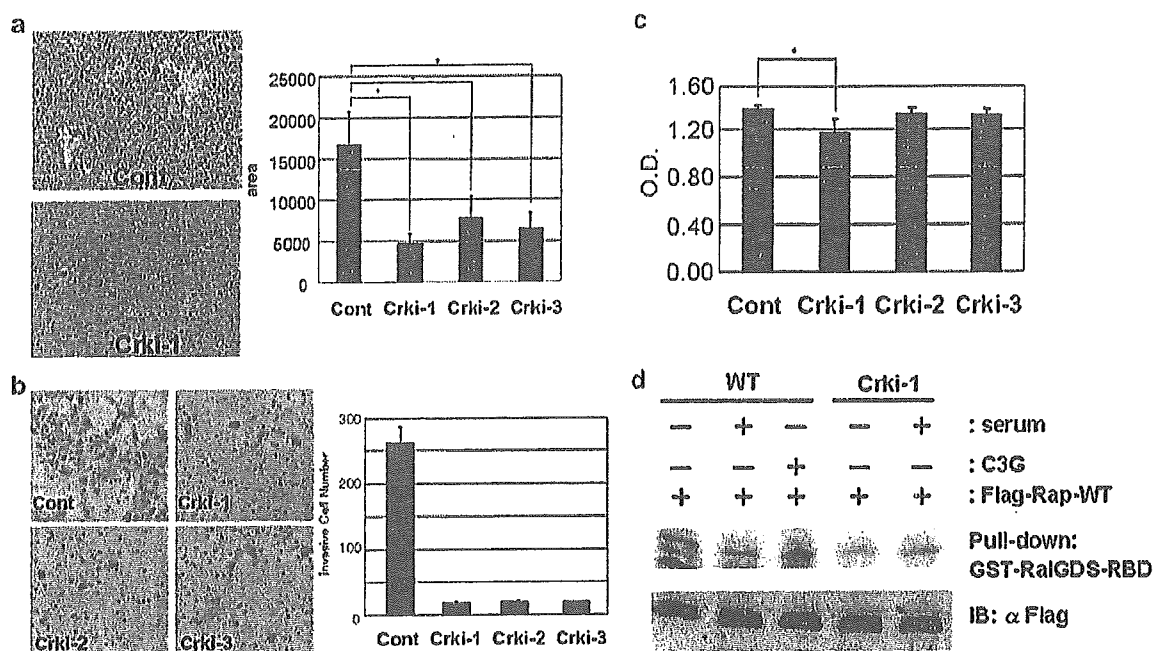


Figure 4 (a) Analysis of cell motility of control MCAS cells and Crk knockdown cells by phagocytotic track assay. Phase-contrast microscopic observation (left panels) of the moved area. Moved areas were measured and described as bar graphs (right). The difference among groups was analysed statistically by ANOVA, $F = 82.9$, $P < 0.01$. (b) Invasion of MCAS cells were analysed by transwell assay. The number of moved cells were counted and described as bar graph with standard error. (c) Cell adhesion was analysed on laminin-coated dishes and described as bar graph, $F = 11.75$, $P < 0.01$ in Crki-1 cells. No significance was found between control and Crki-2 and -3 cells. (d) Measurement of Rap activity. Wild type and Crki-1 cells were transfected with Flag-Rap1 expression plasmids and with or without serum stimulation for 30 min cells were lysed and GTP-Rap1 was precipitated by GST-RalGDS-RBD, and probed with anti-Flag tag Ab (upper panel). pCAGGAS-C3G was transfected as positive control for the assay. Total levels of exogenous Rap-1 were demonstrated by using anti-Flag tag Ab (lower panel).

Recently, we and others reported that signaling adaptor protein Crk is overexpressed in human cancers (Nishihara *et al.*, 2002c; Miller *et al.*, 2003; Takino *et al.*, 2003). Because Crk links the components of focal adhesion and GEFs for small GTPases, including Rho family proteins, overexpression of Crk may be one of the key events leading to the deterioration of cell motility. To define the precise role for Crk in malignancy of human cancers, we employed siRNA to knock down Crk expression in the human ovarian mucinous adenocarcinoma cell line MCAS. When Crk expression was diminished, cells did not form lamellipodia, probably because of the loss of focal adhesion formation as was shown by immunofluorescence study using antipaxillin and antiphosphotyrosine antibodies. Time-lapse analysis for GFP-actin transfected MCAS cells clearly confirmed that Crk knockdown decreased lamellipodia formation. In Crk knockdown cells, Rac activity was decreased and the motility and invasion potentials were also disturbed. These data suggest that Crk bound to Dock180, which is a GEF for Rac, may play a role in the regulation of motility in MCAS cells.

We did not observe compensatory overexpression of CrkL in CrkII knockdown mice (Figure 2a). By using retroviral insertional mutation technique, CrkII depleted mice were established. In these mice, the protein expression level of CrkI was intact. The authors of this paper did not examine the levels of CrkL (Imaizumi

et al., 1999). Furthermore, in CrkL knockout study, it is described that the expression level of CrkII was not altered in the mice lacking CrkL (Hemmerlyckx *et al.*, 2002). In fact, we have established CrkII knockdown cells by using three human sarcoma cell lines and a glioblastoma cell line, and we did not observe the increase of the levels of CrkL in these cell lines (data not shown).

In general, the major components of focal adhesions have been shown to include talin, vinculin, tensin, paxillin and p130^{Cas}. Considering the decrease of the number of focal adhesions in Crk knockdown cells, Crk may be one of the essential components of a certain fraction of focal adhesion complexes. Because the focal adhesions still presented at the border of the cytoplasm in Crk knockdown cells, Crk may not be required to maintain the focal adhesions, at least, located at the cytoplasmic edge.

As C3G and Rap1 have been shown to regulate cell adhesion, we analysed the alteration of cell attachment to several ECMs including fibronectin, collagen, laminin and hyaluronic acid. Although, only Crki-1 cells exhibit small reduction of attachment to laminin (Figure 4c), basically, no significant suppression of attachment for ECMs was observed in Crk knockdown cells. Correlating to these results, Rap-1 activity was also not changed in Crk knockdown MCAS cells, although serum stimulation did not function as positive control for the

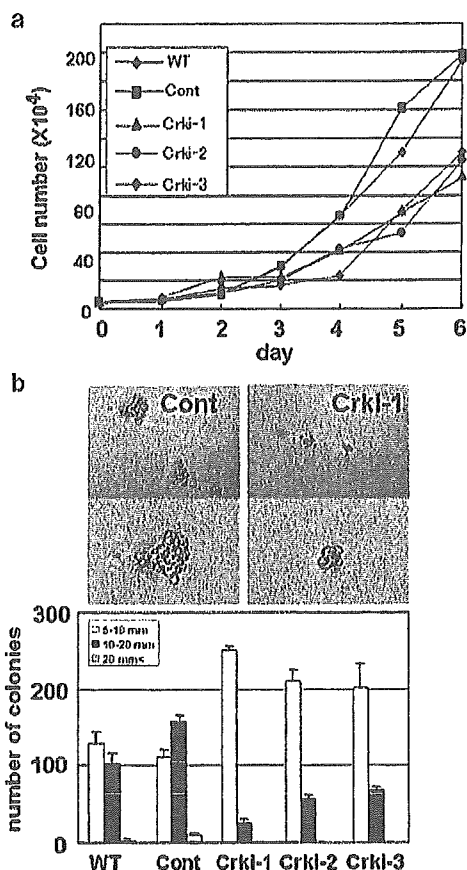


Figure 5 (a) Growth rates of control and three Crk knockdown cells were measured for 6 days on plastic plates. (b) Colony formation assay. Upper panels showed the formed colonies in soft agar. Numbers of colonies were measured and displayed as bar graph. Open bar, colonies sized 5–10 mm in diameter. Closed bar, colonies 10–20 mm in diameter and gray bar, more than 20 mm in diameter.

Table 1 Tumor formation in nude mice

	Control	Crki-1	Crki-2
<i>s.c.</i> ^a (injected number <i>n</i> = 5)			
Number	5	5	5
Size (mm)	14 × 11 × 10	10 × 6 × 5	10 × 7 × 5
Weight (g)	0.8	0.4	0.4
<i>I.P.</i> ^b (injected number <i>n</i> = 5)			
Number	3	0	2
Dissemination	Yes	No	No ^c

^a*s.c.*, subcutaneous injection. ^b*i.p.*, intraperitoneal injection. ^cSingle small nodule 2 mm in size presented.

assay (Figure 4d). Therefore, at least in MCAS cells, Crk/C3G-dependent Rap activation may not be a major mechanism of control of cell adhesion to ECMs. The reason why the effect of Crk/C3G/Rap1-dependent signaling was not dominantly observed in MCAS cells should be examined in future.

We also analysed the effect of Crk on the growth of MCAS cells, and found that growth rates of Crk knockdown cells were considerably lower than those of control cells. Thus, Crk may control the cell cycle through a C3G/R-Ras/Jun kinase-dependent mechanism, in addition to activating Ras/Erk through Sos (Tanaka *et al.*, 1997; Tanaka and Hanafusa, 1998). Furthermore, the suppression of anchorage-dependent growth of Crk knockdown cells seems to be reasonable because both cell motility and proliferation were down-regulated in these cells. Subcutaneous injection of the cells into nude mice supported the *in vitro* observations suggesting that Crk may play a role in tumor cell growth and invasion. We confirmed that Crk knockdown cells did not exhibit apoptotic phenotype by using TUNEL stain and FACS analysis for cell cycle. It should be noted that Crk-I was clearly diminished in all three Crk knockdown cells, but Crk-II remained at differential levels. The decrease of Rac-activity in three Crk knockdown cells seemed to be related to the levels of remained Crk-II. However, there was no significant difference in the suppression of anchorage-dependent and independent growth of three Crk knockdown cells. It should be noted that we have established several Crk knockdown cells by using human sarcoma and brain tumor cell lines in which Crk-II remained differentially. But in all of the Crk knockdown cell lines, significant decrease of cell growth was observed (T Watanabe, L Wang and S Tanaka, in preparation).

Histopathological analysis showed that reduction of Crk expression enhanced the mucous production of cells. In culture, Crk knockdown cells exhibited matrix production as was demonstrated by the particle exclusion assay. Cells stained positive for PAS, implying that such matrix contains mucin, which may be indicative of cell differentiation. Together with the report that Crk has been shown to be overexpressed in tumor cells with poor prognosis (Miller *et al.*, 2003), these results suggested that eliminated Crk expression may induce differentiation in tumor cells.

Intraperitoneal injection of tumor cells resulted in a remarkable difference in tumor formation between control and Crk knockdown cells. Crk knockdown cells did not form any tumors in the peritoneal cavity, while control cells produced tumor nodules with lymphoid vessel infiltration. From these results, the attenuation of cell motility, invasion or adhesion may be critical in the survival and growth of tumor cells in the peritoneal cavity. Alternatively, the production of matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs) may be involved in the tumor forming ability in the peritoneal cavity, because Crk was shown to regulate MMP production in rat fibroblasts 3Y1 cells (Liu *et al.*, 2000).

The results of this study suggest that Crk may be critical for the malignant potential of MCAS cells, presumably by enhancing tumor cell motility, invasion and dissemination. Therefore, the development of a chemical compound that specifically inhibits the association of SH2 or SH3 domains of Crk to their targets may have therapeutic value in future.

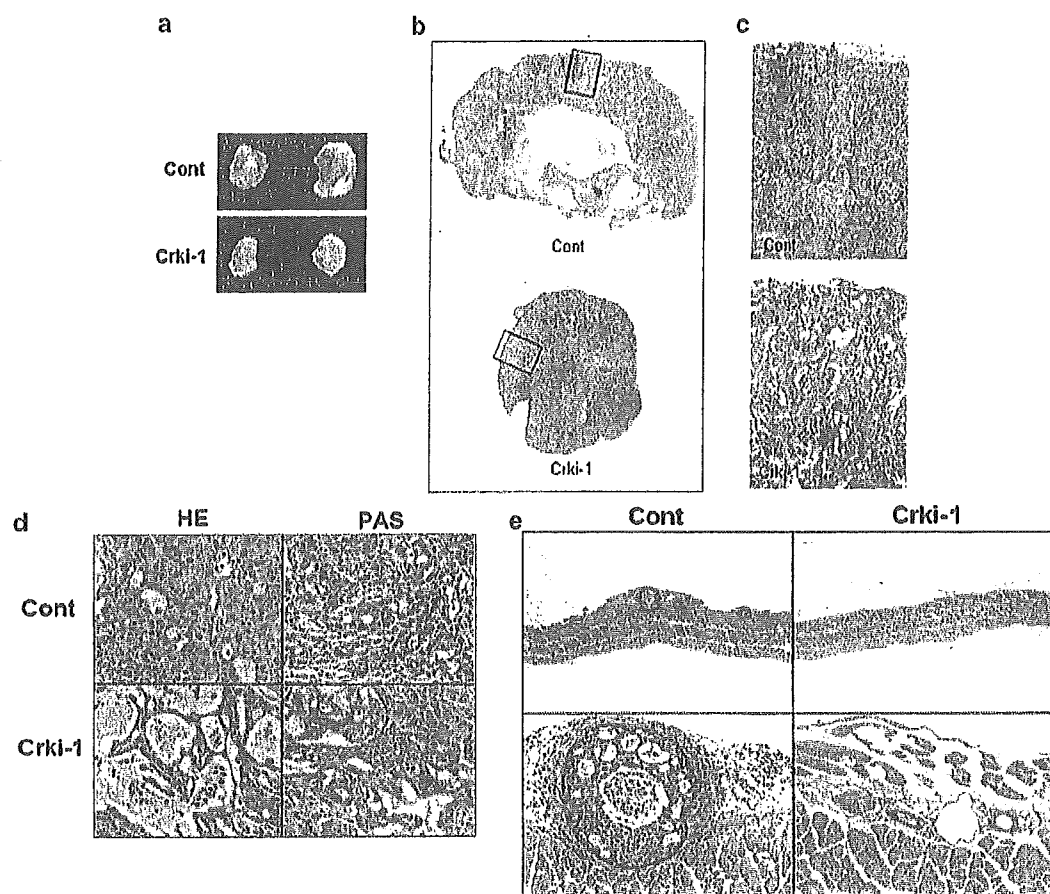


Figure 6 (a) Tumor formation of control (Cont) or Crk knockdown (Crki) MCAS cells at the back of nude mice. Macroscopic observation of surgically resected tumor nodules. (b) Histopathological analysis of resected tumors. H&E stain. (c) Histopathological analysis of peripheral region of each tumor. H&E and PAS stainings. (d) Higher magnification of peritoneal walls with H&E stain (upper panels). Lower panels showed the lymphoid vessel of the peritoneal walls.

Materials and methods

Cell lines and antibodies

MCAS, a human mucinous cystadenocarcinoma cell line (JCRB0240), was purchased from Health Science Research Resources Bank (HSRRB, Osaka, Japan) and maintained in Dulbecco's modified minimal essential medium (DMEM) supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS), 2 mM L-glutamine, and 100 U/ml penicillin and streptomycin. The recombinant antibody (Ab) for phosphotyrosine (RC20H), mouse monoclonal antibody (mAb) for Crk (clone 22) and rabbit polyclonal Abs for p130^{cas} (C20) and paxillin, were purchased from Transduction Laboratories (Lexington, KY, USA). Antibodies for C3G (C19), CrkL (C20), and Dock180 (H4) were obtained from Santa Cruz Biotechnology (Santa Cruz, CA, USA).

Plasmids

The plasmid used for Crk interference, pSUPER (suppression of endogenous RNA)-Crk-interference (pSUPER-iCrk) with sequence of 5'-UGCCUACGACAAGACAGCC-3' corresponding to 746-765 bp of human c-Crk-II gene, was described previously (Nagashima *et al.*, 2002). pCXN2-Flag-Crk and

pCXN2-Flag-CrkL were generated in our laboratory. pGEX-Crk-I, pGEX-Crk-II, pGEX-Crk-SH3(N) and pGEX-CRK-SH3(C) were described previously (Tanaka *et al.*, 1993). pGEX-PAK2-RBD was also described previously (Nishihara *et al.*, 2002b).

Immunoprecipitation and immunoblotting

Cells were lysed with lysis buffer containing 150 mM NaCl, 10 mM Tris hydrochloride (pH 7.5), 5 mM EDTA, 10% glycerol, 0.5% Nonidet P-40, 1 mM sodium orthovanadate, 1 mM phenylmethylsulfonyl fluoride (PMSF), 50 mM sodium fluoride. Lysates were incubated with antibodies for 1 h at 4°C, followed by incubation with protein G- or protein A-sepharose beads (Calbiochem, Darmstadt, Germany) for 1 h at 4°C while rotating. Immunoprecipitates were separated by sodium dodecyl sulfate-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis and immunoblotted onto PVDF (polyvinylidene fluoride) filter (Immobilon, Millipore Co., Bedford, MA, USA). The filter was blocked with 3% bovine serum albumin and then incubated with primary Abs followed by peroxidase-conjugated secondary Abs. Positive signals were detected by enhanced chemiluminescence system (Amersham Biosciences,

Piscataway, NJ, USA) and analysed by LAS-1000 detection system (Fuji Film, Tokyo, Japan).

Establishment of Crk knockdown MCAS cells

Cells were co-transfected with 3 μ g of pSUPER-iCrk and 0.6 μ g of pBabe-puro plasmid, followed by selection with 2 μ g/ml puromycin containing medium for 2–3 weeks. Colonies were isolated and the expression levels of Crk were analysed by immunoblotting.

Immunofluorescence analysis of the cells

Subconfluent cells grown on glass coverslips were fixed with 3.7% formaldehyde in phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) for 15 min and permeabilized with 0.2% Triton X-100 in PBS for 5 min. To visualize actin filaments (F-actin), cells were stained with TRITC-conjugated phalloidine (1 μ g/ml) for 30 min and observed under a confocal immunofluorescence microscope (Olympus, Japan). For time-lapse imaging, MCAS cells were transfected with the mammalian expression plasmid pEGFP-actin, 36 h later cells were replated onto glass dishes and GFP signal was obtained every 90 min using a time-lapse system (Nippon Roper, Chiba, Japan). Images were analysed using Metamorph software (Molecular Probe, USA).

GST pull-down assay for detection of Crk-binding proteins

Cell lysates containing 300 μ g of protein were incubated with 20 μ g of either GST, GST-CrkI, GST-CrkII, GST-Crk-SH2 or GST-Crk-SH3(N) for 1 h at 4°C, followed by incubation with glutathione-sepharose beads (Amersham Bioscience, Piscataway, NJ, USA) for 1 h at 4°C while rotating. Proteins bound to the beads were analysed by immunoblotting.

Pull-down assay for Rac1 activity

Detection of the GTP-bound form of Rac1 was performed as described previously (Nishihara *et al.*, 2002a). Cells were lysed with buffer containing 25 mM HEPES (pH 7.4), 150 mM NaCl, 10% glycerol, 1 mM EDTA, 1% NP40, 10 mM MgCl₂, 1 μ g/ml aprotinin and 1 mM PMSF. Lysates were centrifuged at 12 000 r.p.m. at 4°C for 1 min, and the supernatants were incubated with 10 μ g of purified GST-PAK2-RBD and glutathione-Sepharose 4B beads. The resulting precipitants were analysed by immunoblotting with anti-Rac1.

FRET-based analysis of Rac activity

pRachu-Rac-CAAX was transfected into MCAS cells, and 30 h later cells were cultured in DMEM with 2% FBS for 8 h. After 10% FBS stimulation, FRET-based analysis of Rac activity was performed following the methods established by Dr M Matsuda (Osaka University, Japan) (Itoh *et al.*, 2002).

Phagokinetic track assay

To analyse cell motility, 2 \times 10⁵ cells in DMEM were spread on 24 \times 24 mm² coverslips precoated with 1% BSA and colloidal gold particles. After incubating for 24 h, cells were fixed with 3.5% formaldehyde, and the phagokinetic range for each cell was measured using Image Gauge software (Fuji Film, Tokyo, Japan).

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Adhesion assay

For analysis of adhesion, 4 \times 10⁴ cells were suspended in 0.1 ml of DMEM, plated on 96-well plates, and incubated for 1 h at 37°C. The bound cells in each well were lysed, stained with 0.1% crystal violet, and quantified by spectrophotometer at OD A590 nm.

Invasion assay

The lower surface of the filter Bio Coat Matrigel Invasion Chamber (BD Biosciences, Franklin Lakes, NJ, USA) was coated with 1 μ g of collagen. Fifty thousands cells were seeded in the upper chambers (24-well chambers) in 0.5 ml of serum-free medium containing 0.01% BSA and 3.3 mM glucose, and the bottom chambers contained the appropriate medium with 1% FBS as a chemo-attractant. The non-invading cells on the upper surface of the filters were removed by wiping with a cotton swab. Cells at the bottom side of the membranes were fixed with ethanol, and stained with 0.5% methyl blue. The number of cells invading through the matrigel membrane was counted in microscopic fields at \times 200 magnification. To minimize the bias, at least three randomly selected fields were counted. Data were averages of triplicate determinants for each condition.

Measurement of growth rates

To measure growth rates, 1 \times 10⁵ cells were seeded onto 60-mm diameter plates with DMEM containing 10% FBS, and the numbers of cells were counted everyday using a hemocytometer (Fisher Scientific).

Colony formation assay

To analyse the anchorage-independent growth of cells, 1 \times 10⁴ of cells were plated in 60-mm diameter plates with 3 ml of 0.4% noble agar in DMEM in 10% FBS, overlaying 5 ml of 0.5% bacto agar in DMEM with 10% FBS. Colonies were scored 3 weeks after plating. The number of colonies larger than 5 mm in diameter was counted under a microscope.

In vivo tumor formation assay in nude mice

MCAS-Crki1 cell line, in which the expression levels of both c-Crk-I and c-Crk-II was most efficiently suppressed among three established clones (Figure 2a), were injected into mice. Subcutaneously or intraperitoneally, 1 \times 10⁶ cells were injected into three of the 6-week-old female nude mice, BALB/cA Jcl-nu (nu/nu) (CLEA Japan Inc., Japan). The mice were euthanized 21–24 days after injection, and tumors were removed and weighed. A histopathological examination was performed, including hematoxylin and eosin stain and periodic acid Schiff stain.

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MAGI-1 Is Required for Rap1 Activation upon Cell–Cell Contact and for Enhancement of Vascular Endothelial Cadherin-mediated Cell Adhesion D V

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Rap1 is a small GTPase that regulates adherens junction maturation. It remains elusive how Rap1 is activated upon cell–cell contact. We demonstrate for the first time that Rap1 is activated upon homophilic engagement of vascular endothelial cadherin (VE-cadherin) at the cell–cell contacts in living cells and that MAGI-1 is required for VE-cadherin-dependent Rap1 activation. We found that MAGI-1 localized to cell–cell contacts presumably by associating with β -catenin and that MAGI-1 bound to a guanine nucleotide exchange factor for Rap1, PDZ-GEF1. Depletion of MAGI-1 suppressed the cell–cell contact-induced Rap1 activation and the VE-cadherin-mediated cell–cell adhesion after Ca^{2+} switch. In addition, relocation of vinculin from cell–extracellular matrix contacts to cell–cell contacts after the Ca^{2+} switch was inhibited in MAGI-1-depleted cells. Furthermore, inactivation of Rap1 by overexpression of Rap1GAP1 impaired the VE-cadherin-dependent cell adhesion. Collectively, MAGI-1 is important for VE-cadherin-dependent Rap1 activation upon cell–cell contact. In addition, once activated, Rap1 upon cell–cell contacts positively regulate the adherens junction formation by relocating vinculin that supports VE-cadherin-based cell adhesion.

INTRODUCTION

Intercellular adhesion of vascular endothelial cells is essential for connecting neighboring endothelial cells to develop a vascular tree and to function as a barrier separating blood and tissues. Vascular endothelial cell adhesion is characterized by the overlapping of adherens junctions (AJs) and tight junctions (TJs). AJs are constituted by vascular endothelial cadherin (VE-cadherin) in close cooperation with platelet and endothelial adhesion molecule-1 (PECAM-1) and nectin. VE-cadherin-mediated cell adhesion depends on extracellular Ca^{2+} , but not those mediated by PECAM-1 and nectin. TJs are made up of junctional adhesion molecule

(JAM) family members, occludin, claudin-5, and nectin (reviewed in Dejana, 2004).

VE-cadherin has an extracellular domain constituted by five cadherin domains, a transmembrane domain, and a cytoplasmic domain connected to p120 catenin and β -catenin (Iyer *et al.*, 2004). Through β -catenin, VE-cadherin is linked to α -catenin that is associated with the actin cytoskeleton, which results in the maintenance of cell–cell adhesion in conjunction with cytoskeleton (Herren *et al.*, 1998; Navarro *et al.*, 1998; Kobiela and Fuchs, 2004). Tyrosine-phosphorylated VE-cadherin in its cytoplasmic domain provides docking sites for signal-transmitting molecules (Esser *et al.*, 1998; Zanetti *et al.*, 2002; Hudry-Clergeon *et al.*, 2005). Conversely, cytoplasmic domain modified by phosphorylation or associated with signaling molecules triggers the inside-out signal that regulates the VE-cadherin-mediated cell adhesion (Nwariaku *et al.*, 2004). β -catenin binds to other signaling molecules including PI3-K and MAGUK with inverted domain structure-1 (MAGI-1) as well as α -catenin (Kotelevets *et al.*, 2005).

MAGI-1 consists of six PSD95/Disclarge/ZO-1 (PDZ) domains, a guanylate kinase domain and two WW domains flanked by the first and second PDZ domain (Dobrosotskaya *et al.*, 1997). Because PDZ domains are docking domains for PDZ-binding molecules, MAGI-1 associates with a variety of molecules such as NMDA (*N*-methyl-D-aspartate) receptors, PTEN, BAI-1, δ -catenin, mNET1, and β -catenin (Hirao *et al.*, 1998; Ide *et al.*, 1999; Mino *et al.*, 2000; Dobrosotskaya, 2001). These MAGI-1-associating molecules function at cell–cell contacts (Laura *et al.*, 2002). MAGI-1, therefore, functions as a scaffold molecule by localizing to cell–cell contacts. Recently, MAGI-1 is reported to biochemically form a complex with E-cadherin and β -catenin (Kawajiri *et al.*, 2000). How-

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Abbreviations used: AJ, adherens junction; CFP, cyan fluorescent protein; ECM, extracellular matrix; EGFP, enhanced green fluorescent protein; FRET, fluorescence resonance energy transfer; GEF, guanine nucleotide exchange factor; GAP, GTPase activating protein; HAEC, human aortic endothelial cell; HUVEC, human umbilical vascular endothelial cell; JAM, junctional adhesion molecule; MAGI-1, MAGUK with inverted domain structure-1; GFP, green fluorescent protein; PBS, phosphate-buffered saline; PDZ, PSD95/Disclarge/ZO-1; PECAM-1, platelet and endothelial cell adhesion molecule-1; siRNAs, small interfering RNAs; TJ, tight junction; VE-cadherin, vascular endothelial cadherin; VEC-Fc, recombinant VE-cadherin ectodomain-Fc chimera; YFP, yellow fluorescent protein.

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ever, the role of the E-cadherin/ β -catenin-MAGI-1 complex in cell-cell junctional formation remains elusive.

Rap1 regulates cell-cell adhesion as well as cell-extracellular matrix (cell-ECM) adhesion (Bos, 2005). We have previously demonstrated that Epac-Rap1 signaling enhances VE-cadherin-dependent cell adhesion, thereby stabilizing vascular endothelial cell junctions (Fukuhara *et al.*, 2005). On cell-cell contact, C3G, a guanine nucleotide exchange factor (GEF) for Rap1, is involved in the signaling mediated by E-cadherin and nectin in epithelial cells (Hogan *et al.*, 2004; Fukuyama *et al.*, 2005). Rap1 cycles between GDP-bound inactive form and GTP-bound active form; Rap1-specific GEFs and GTPase activating proteins (GAPs) activate and inactivate Rap1, respectively. Rap1 GEF family consists of C3G (RAPGEF1), PDZ-GEF1 (RAPGEF2), PDZ-GEF2, CalDAG-GEF1, Epac, and Epac2 (Bos *et al.*, 2001).

We here investigate the involvement of MAGI-1-PDZ-GEF1 in the activation of Rap1 on vascular endothelial cell contact and demonstrate that MAGI-1 recruited to cell-cell junctions by associating β -catenin contributes to cell-cell contact-dependent activation of Rap1. In addition, the MAGI-1-mediated signal evoked upon cell-cell contact augments VE-cadherin-dependent endothelial cell adhesion. Thus, engagement of VE-cadherin activates Rap1 via MAGI-1, resulting in positive regulation of VE-cadherin-mediated cell adhesion.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Plasmids and Adenovirus

pRaichu-Rap1, Rap1 activation monitoring-probe based on fluorescence resonance energy transfer (FRET), and Adeno-Raichu-Rap1, an adenovirus expressing Raichu-Rap1 were described previously (Mochizuki *et al.*, 2001). Adenoviruses encoding Rap1GAPII and LacZ were obtained from S. Hattori (The Institute of Medical Science, University of Tokyo) and M. Matsuda (Research Institute for Microbial Disease, Osaka University, Osaka, Japan), respectively. Endothelial cells were infected with adenovirus at the appropriate multiplicity of infection for more than 24 h before imaging. The coding sequences of human MAGI-1b (hereafter MAGI-1) and PDZ-GEF1 were amplified by PCR using human heart cDNA library as a template and resultant DNAs were inserted into p3'-FLAG-CMV-10 (Sigma, St. Louis, MO) and pEGFP-C1 (Clontech, Palo Alto, CA). cDNAs encoding truncated MAGI-1 as indicated in Figures 3B and 4A were similarly inserted into pEGFP-C1. pCALW1-FLAG-C3G, a FLAG-tagged mammalian expression vector, was obtained from M. Matsuda (Research Institute for Microbial Disease, Osaka University, Osaka, Japan; Ohba *et al.*, 2001). pIRM21-PDZ5 expressed FLAG-tagged PDZ domain 5 of MAGI-1 and internal ribosomal entry site-driven dsFP593 (Nagashima *et al.*, 2002). HcRed-p120 catenin-expressed HcRed-tagged p120 catenin was described previously (Kogata *et al.*, 2003).

Reagents and Antibodies

Purified human immunoglobulin (Ig) G Fc protein was purchased from ICN Biologicals (Cosa Mesa, CA). Glutathione Sepharose, protein A- and G-Sepharose were purchased from Amersham Biosciences (Piscataway, NJ). The rabbit polyclonal anti-MAGI-1b and anti-PDZ-GEF1 antibodies were developed in our laboratory by immunizing rabbits with recombinant glutathione S-transferase (GST)-tagged MAGI-1b (aa 1-140) or PDZ-GEF1 (aa 1-250) coupled with complete Freund's adjuvant, respectively. Anti-green fluorescent protein (GFP) antibody was generated in our laboratory. Other antibodies were purchased as follows: anti-Rap1 from Santa Cruz Biotechnology (Santa Cruz, CA); anti-FLAG (M2) and anti-vinculin from Sigma; anti-VE-cadherin, and anti- β -catenin from BD Bioscience (San Jose, CA); anti-ZO-1 from Zymed (South San Francisco, CA), Alexa 488- or Alexa 546-labeled secondary antibodies from Molecular Probes (Eugene, OR); horseradish peroxidase-coupled goat anti-mouse and anti-rabbit IgG from Amersham Biosciences.

Cell Culture and Transfection

Human umbilical vein endothelial cells (HUVECs) and human arterial endothelial cells (HAECs) were purchased from Kurabo (Kurashiki, Japan). The cells were maintained in HuMedia-EG2 with a growth additive set as described previously (Nagashima *et al.*, 2002). Bovine aortic endothelial cells (BAECs), MDCK and 293T cells were maintained in DMEM (Nissui, Tokyo,

Japan) supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum and antibiotics (100 μ g of streptomycin and 100 U of penicillin/ml). Endothelial cells and 293T cells were transfected by LipofectAMINE plus reagent (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA) and by the calcium phosphate method, respectively.

FRET Imaging and Fluorescence Imaging

HUVECs cultured on collagen-coated glass-base dishes were infected with Adeno-Raichu-Rap1 or transfected with pRaichu-Rap1. The structure of Raichu-Rap1 and the principle of FRET are illustrated as in Figure 1A. Cells were imaged on an Olympus IX-81 inverted fluorescence microscope (Lake Success, NY) as described previously (Nagashima *et al.*, 2002). Dual images for cyan fluorescent protein (CFP) and yellow fluorescent protein (YFP) were obtained through an XF1071 excitation filter, an XF2034 dichroic filter, and an XF3075 emission filter for CFP and an XF 3079 for YFP (Omega Scientific, Tarzana, CA), respectively. The ratio image of YFP/CFP were created by MetaMorph 5.0 software (Universal Imaging, West Chester, PA) and displayed as an intensity-modulated display image as described previously (Nagashima *et al.*, 2002).

Quantitative FRET analysis at the cell-cell contacts was performed by dividing the intensity of YFP by that of CFP in the area defined by randomly selected 30 cell-cell contact sites. The detail was explained in the figure legend of Supplementary Figure 2. Cells expressing either fluorescence-tagged proteins (GFP, dsFP593, and HcRed) were time-lapse imaged similar to FRET imaging on an IX-81 microscope using appropriate filter sets for GFP and dsFP593.

Calcium Switch

HUVECs serum-starved for 10 h in medium 199 (Invitrogen) containing 1% bovine serum albumin (BSA) were transiently exposed to 4 mM EGTA for 30 min to chelate extracellular calcium and disrupt Ca^{2+} -dependent intercellular junctions (Volberg *et al.*, 1986). After washing, the cells were allowed to recover in complete cell calcium-containing culture media for the time indicated in the figure.

Detection of GTP-bound Rap1

GTP-bound active Rap1 was detected according to Bos's method (Franke *et al.*, 1997). Briefly, cells starved in medium 199 containing 1% BSA for 10 h were subjected to a calcium switch or stimulated with 10 μ g/ml VE-cadherin ectodomain-Fc (VEC-Fc) protein for the time indicated at the top of the figure. The cells were lysed at 4°C in pull-down lysis buffer (20 mM Tris-HCl [pH 7.5], 100 mM NaCl, 10 mM MgCl_2 , 1% Triton X-100, 1 mM EGTA, 1 mM dithiothreitol, 1 mM Na_2VO_4 , 1 \times protease inhibitor cocktail). Pre-cleared lysates were incubated with GST-Rap1 binding domain of RalGDS precoupled to glutathione-Sepharose beads. Proteins collected on the beads were subjected to SDS-PAGE followed by immunoblotting with anti-Rap1 antibody.

Immunocytochemistry and Confocal Imaging

Cells cultured on glass-bottom dishes were fixed with 2% formaldehyde in phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) for 30 min and permeabilized with 0.1% Triton X-100 for 10 min. Cells were blocked with 3% BSA for 30 min and incubated with anti-MAGI-1b, anti-VE-cadherin, anti-ZO-1, anti-vinculin, or anti- β -catenin antibody for 1 h at room temperature. Immunopositive reaction was visualized with Alexa 488- or Alexa 546-labeled secondary antibodies. Confocal images were obtained by an Olympus BX50WI microscope controlled by Fluoview.

Immunoprecipitation Assay

HUVECs were lysed with lysis buffer (100 mM NaCl, 50 mM Tris-HCl [pH 7.5], 1% Triton X-100, 2 mM Na_2VO_4 , 1 \times protease inhibitor cocktail). Pre-cleared cell lysates by centrifugation at 15,000 \times g were incubated with antibodies. Immunoprecipitates collected on protein A- or G-Sepharose were subjected to SDS-PAGE and immunoblotting with antibodies as indicated in the figure.

siRNA-mediated Protein Knockdown

Small interfering RNAs (siRNAs) targeted to human MAGI-1; 5'-GGACCCUUCUCAGAGAAGUCCUCA-3' and 5'-UUGAGGGAACUUCUGAGAAGGGUCC-3, corresponding to nt 843-867 of coding sequence of MAGI-1 cDNA, and that for PDZ-GEF1; 5'-GGGAGUAAUCAAACAAA-GAAGACUU3' and 5'-AAGUCUUCUUGUUUUGAUUACUCC3', corresponding to nt 1980-2004 of PDZ-GEF1, were obtained from Invitrogen. VE-cadherin siRNAs were purchased from Santa Cruz Biotechnology. As a control, siRNA duplex with an irrelevant sequence was used. HUVECs were transfected with 20 nM siRNA duplexes using LipofectAMINE 2000 (Invitrogen) according to the manufacturer's instructions and incubated for 48 h after replacing fresh HuMedia-EG2.

Cell Adhesion Assay

Recombinant VEC-Fc chimeric protein was prepared as described previously (Fukuhara *et al.*, 2005). Twenty-four-well tissue culture plates were coated