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HIV-1 制御遺伝子を標的とした新規抗ウイルス剤開発

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厚生労働科学研究費補助金 (創薬等ヒューマンサイエンス総合研究事業) 総括研究報告書

HIV-1 制御遺伝子を標的とした新規抗ウイルス剤開発

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研究要旨

昨年度の研究で、我々が同定した Vpr との相互作用する複数の因子に関して生化学 的解析を行い, Vpr と hAXIN との相互作用領域の同定, および該当領域の Vpr ペプチ ド断片でこの相互作用が阻害されることを見出した。Vprと相互作用する因子として他 に nucleophosmin M (NPM, 別名 B23) を同定しており、その共局在性や, NPM の 過剰発現により Vpr による細胞周期停止効果が減弱することを見いだした。本年度の 研究から,Vpr-hAXIN 相互作用は hAXIN の足場機能を阻害し,βカテニン経路の活 性化に関与することが分かった。この知見は Vpr-hAXIN 相互作用は T 細胞・マクロフ ァージなどの細胞活性化状態を制御している可能性を示すものである。さらに Vpr 発 現による染色体異数化が NPM の過剰発現によって抑制されることを発見した。

Nef による CD4 発現抑制のウイルス複製における意義を検討したところ, Nef の CD4 発現制御機能が欠失し重感染が成立すると, 感染性ウイルスの産生が減少することが見 出された。このことは Nef による重感染阻害はウイルスの増殖性を維持する上で重要 な機能を果たしていることを示している。いずれの制御因子も,抗 HIV 剤あるいはエ イズ発症阻害薬の標的分子として期待されるものである。

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A. 研究目的

我が国において HIV-1 感染者数の増加 は大きな社会的問題であり、啓蒙活動な どによる感染拡散の防止策を講じるとと もに、エイズ発症を抑える治療法の開発 が急務となっている。HIV-1 に感染した 場合の治療法としては、現在のところ HAART 療法が主流であるが、それでも なお薬剤耐性変異ウイルスの出現が確認 されており、より効果的な治療法を考案 する必要がある。そのためには新規の作 用標的を持った薬剤を開発し、多面的に ウイルスの複製を抑制することが重要で ある。

この研究課題では新規抗ウイルス剤の 標的として、ウイルス固有の遺伝子であ りエイズ発症に重要であることが多く報 告されている Vpr と Nef に着目している。 これらの遺伝子機能を阻害する化合物を 同定することで,効果的な抗 HIV 活性を 持つプロドラッグが開発されると期待で きる。更に、この新規抗ウイルス剤を既 存の HAART 療法に取り入れることで, より効果的に HIV-1 の複製を抑えること が可能となる。

HIV-1 の制御遺伝子産物の中で、Vpr は 【ウイルス DNA の核移行】【細胞周期制 御】【アポトーシス制御】など多彩な生物 活性を持つことが知られている。これら の機能は感染個体内でのエイズ発症に重 要な機能を果たしている。

これらの Vpr の機能発現には細胞性タ ンパクとの相互作用が必須であると考え られるが、【ウイルス DNA の核移行】以 外は関与する因子は明らかではない。 我々のグループでは Vpr と相互作用する ものとして hAXIN を同定している。 hAXIN は Wnt/βカテニン経路に関わる 因子であることから,Vpr 発現がこの Wnt/βカテニン経路を修飾することで、その生物機能を発現している可能性が考えられた。そこで Vpr による Wnt/βカテニン経路の修飾・改変を生化学的に明かにし、そのモデルに基づいて抗 HIV の標的となりうる分子標的を探ること情報のである。生化学がずると対して、今後現れると考えられる。

B. 研究方法

【Vpr】Vpr と nucleophosmin M (NPM)の相互作用の分子レベル・および細胞機能レベルでの研究。

- (1)VprとNPMの結合に関わる機能ドメインを同定する。これは機能阻害化合物をデザインあるいは選定する上での重要な情報を与えるものである。in vivoでの結合実験としては、NPMを同定するのに用いた yeast two hybrid 法を利用した。in vitro での解析においては、GST 融合タンパクとして大腸菌で発現させた Vprに対して、in vitro で転写・タンパク合成した NPM の断片の結合性を調べる手法を用いた。
- (2) 細胞内での局在性の評価を行う。 Vpr はその N 末部分に FLAG エピトープタッグを付加した。 このタッグ付加が Vpr の局在性や機知の生物機能に影響しないことは予め確認してある。 NPM に関しては市販の抗 NPM 抗体(Santa Cruz 社)を利用した。また,centrosome の検出には β チューブリン抗体(SIGMA 社)を利用した。
- (3) Vpr-NPM 相互作用の生物学的意義の検討。用いた細胞は HeLa 細胞,CV1 細胞,初代培養ヒト繊維芽細胞(human dermal fibroblast: HDF)でいずれも10%FBS/DMEM で培養した。HDF は市販品を利用し,最初に起こしてから 2-5 経代数のものを利用した。遺伝子導入には常法のリン酸カルシウム法,リポフェクション法,またエレクトロポレーショ

ン法を改変した AMAXA 社の遺伝子導入 装置,および MuLV 系のレトロウイルス ベクターを利用した。NPM 発現プラスミ ドは,最初の yeast two-hybrid スクリー ニングで全長のものが得られていたので, これを利用して作成した。細胞の蛍光免 疫染色は,細胞を MeOH/aceton 固定し たものを, Tween20/TBS (TBS-T) で膜 透過性を高めた後, normal goat serum +non-fat milk/TBS-T でブロッキングし た後,適切な抗体・二次抗体の組み合わ せで検出した。

【Nef】Nef による CD4 発現抑制のウイルス複製における意義を検討する。

Nef の発現が,細胞表面での CD4 発現の 抑制に寄与することに関しては既に多く の報告があり, 我々も Vpu と Nef の機能 を解析し, Vpu に細胞内の CD4 発現を強 く抑制する機能があり、Nef には細胞表 面に発現しているCD4を特異的に減少さ せることを見いだしている。この細胞表 面の CD4 発現低下は, HIV の重感染を抑 制することがわかったが,そのウイルス 複製への効果は不明であった。そこで、 HIV-1 ウイルス複製実験を行い,CD4 の 発現抑制とウイルス感染性の関連を検討 した。 重感染に対しては CD4 陽性の T 細 胞株を用いて,以下のような手法を用い た。(1) 細胞にまずレトロウイルスベク ターを用いて Nef を導入したものと,導 入していないものを用意した。この各細 胞に Nef 領域にオワンクラゲのルシフェ ラーゼ遺伝子を導入した HIV-1 を感染さ せた。この状態でウイルスの産生量と, 産生されたウイルスの感染価を評価した。 次に Env 領域にホタルのルシフェラーゼ 遺伝子を導入したウイルスを感染させた。 この重感染に用いたウイルスは Env を欠 失しているので、先のウイルスに感染し ている細胞に重感染した場合のみに感染 性ウイルスを産生する。重感染後に産生 された各ウイルスの感染性をそれぞれに 対応したルシフェラーゼ反応基質で解析 した。(2) 細胞に予め Env 領域にホタル のルシフェラーゼ遺伝子を導入したウイ

(倫理面への配慮)

ただし、HIV-1 という病原ウイルスを 扱うことから、年度毎に大学の「病原体 取り扱い規定」に基づいた審査を受け、 研究者の安全性の確保と同時に、第三者 に対しても研究の安全性を示すことが出 来るように努めている。

C. 研究成果

【Vprの機能を標的とした研究】

[1] NPM との相互作用領域の同定 まず GST-Vpr と in vitro で合成した NPM の結合性を確認した。Vpr に関して は N 末, C 末それぞれの欠失変異体を作 成し, NPM に関しても同様に N 末, C 末それぞれをおおよそ 3 分の 1 欠失した 変異体を作成し、それぞれの間での結合性を評価した。その結果 Vpr の中央領域と NPM の N 末領域が相互作用することが確認された。しかし、その結合の程度は顕著に低下していたことから、全体のコンフォーメーションも重要であることが示唆された。

[2] 細胞内局在の確認

NPM は snRNP の合成に関与することが知られており、核内の核小体に局在する。同時に centrosome の複製・分配にも関与しており、centrosome にも局在が確認できた。Vpr は単独では核膜周辺にいることが分かっている。Vpr 発現細胞で内在性 NPM の局在を認いたところ、NPM の核内移行が阻しており、NPM の核関辺に分布も有意に減弱していることが分かった。これらのことから、Vpr 発現細胞では NPM の局在性が変化しており、NPM の生理的な機能が失われている可能性が考えられた。

より局在性を明確にするために,発現ベクターを用いて NPM を過剰発現させ,同様の解析を行ったところ,はやり Vpr と NPM は共局在することが確認され,さらに NPM 発現量を高くすることで, NPM は本来の核小体, および centrosome へ移行できるようになった。

[3] Vpr-NPM 結合の生理的意義の検討Vpr の発現により、NPM は核膜周辺に蓄積し核小体への局在が弱まることが確認された。この状態で細胞は主に G2/M 期細胞周期停止状態にあり、一部の細胞でapoptosis が確認された。ここで NPM の過剰発現を行うと、核への局在性が復元され、同時に Vpr による G2/M 期細胞周期停止効果が有意に減弱した。RNAi による NPM の発現抑制は G2/M 期細胞周期停止を誘導することが報告されており、Vpr の生物機能に NPM との相互作用が関与している可能性が示された。

更にNPM はcentrosomeの複製を制御しており,NPM の機能異常は染色体のaneuploidy (異数性) を亢進することが

報告されている。Vpr の発現でも apoptosisを逃れたCVI細胞, HDFなど で aneuploidy が確認されることから, Vpr-NPM 相互作用は細胞の代謝のみで なく,染色体分配にも関与していると考 えられた。

【Nef の機能を標的とした研究】

Nef の研究については以前我々のグルー プで、Nefによる細胞表面のCD4発現抑 制が、ウイルスの感染性維持と重感染阻 害の効果を示すことを報告している。こ の重感染の阻害が HIV-1 の複製や感染性 にどのように寄与しているかを検討した。 予め選択マーカーを持つ HIV-1 を感染さ せておき、そこに種々の変異 HIV-1 を重 感染させて,マーカーを持つ HIV-1 の産 生や感染性を評価したところ, 先に感染 したウイルスが nef 欠損型の場合, 重感 染の効率が3倍程度増加することが分か った。また重感染が成立すると感染性ウ イルスの産生が減少することが見出され た。このことはウイルスによる重感染阻 害機能はウイルスの活発な増殖性を維持 する上で重要な役割を果たしていること を示している。しかし、特に HIV-1 では 重感染による組換えウイルスの出現が多 く報告されており、稀に起こる重感染が HIV-1 の生存に有利に働くことが示唆さ れている。細胞の種類や状態によって Vpu や Nef が抑制されており、そこでは ウイルス産生よりも潜伏化や組換えウイ ルス出現の可能性が亢進している可能性 も考えられる。今後更に種々の細胞系を 利用して、Nef と Vpu の機能を検討した 61

D. 考察

NPMは多くのウイルス性核局在性タンパク質と相互作用することが知られている。このことはウイルスがNPMの持つ機能を利用している、もしくはNPMの機能を阻害することがウイルス感染に有利である可能性を示している。いくつかのタンパクでは、核移行のためにNPMとの結合性を利用していると考えられるが、Vpr

の場合にはimportinなどを介した経路を 利用しており、Vpr-NPM相互作用は、瀬 尾の結合によって生じる生物学的効果が 重要であろうと推察された。NPMは核小 体においてsnRNPの合成に関与しており, またリボソームの代謝にも重要であるこ とが報告されている。細胞内局在の解析 から、VprはNPMと相互作用してその核 内への移行を阻害し、核膜周辺に蓄積さ せることが分かった。これにより核内で のsnRNPやリボソーム代謝に異常を来し, 細胞周期停止が誘導される可能性が考え られた。このことはRNAiを利用してNPM 発現をノックダウンした報告からも支持 される。またNPMはcentrosomeの複製に も関与しており, Vprとの相互作用によっ てその本来の機能が阻害されることで, 染色体の不安定性が更新し、それにより DNAダメージセンサー機構がG2/M期細 胞周期停止, あるいはアポトーシスの誘 導を引き起こす可能性も考えられる。p53 やpRbなど、細胞周期のチェックポイン トに関わる遺伝子の変異・発現の状況に よって、細胞のVpr発現に対する反応性が 大きく異なることから, Vprによる細胞増 殖停止やアポトーシス誘導に、これらの チェック機構が関与している可能性は高 いと考えられる。実際にCV1細胞やHDF (ヒト正常繊維芽細胞)でVprによる染色 体異常の亢進を確認しており、その分子 機構の詳細を明らかにしたい。

Nefによる CD4 発現抑制と、それによる ウイルス重感染阻止機能がウイルスの複 製に有利に働くことが示された。Nefに よる CD4 発現抑制がウイルス増殖に正の 方向で寄与していることは、初代培養 T 細胞での感染実験からも示されている。 今後はさらに Nef の機能の詳細を明らか にして、Nef の機能を阻害する分子の検 索を行いたい。

E. 健康危険情報

当研究課題の遂行において,主任研究者・分担研究者から健康危険情報は得られていない。

F. 研究発表

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G. 知的財産権の出願・登録状況

1. 特許取得

なし

2. 実用新案登録

なし

3. その他

なし

厚生労働科学研究費補助金 (創薬等ヒューマンサイエンス総合研究事業) 分担研究報告書

HIV-1 制御遺伝子による Wnt/βカテニン経路制御の機能解析

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研究要旨

Vpr は hAXIN と相互作用することが分かっており、その詳細な結合部位に関しても昨年度の研究結果において解析が進められた。この研究では Vpr-hAXIN の相互作用の生物学的な意義を検討する。hAXIN は Wnt シグナルの下流に存在し、 β カテニンのリン酸化過程に関わる足場タンパクである。昨年度の研究から、Vpr 発現が hAXIN の足場機能を阻害し、 β カテニン経路の活性化に関与することが分かった。本年度は、Vpr 依存的な β カテニン経路の活性化が、休止期 T 細胞の活性化状態に影響し、HIV-1 感染を促進する可能性を示した。また、マクロファージにおいても、Vpr- β カテニン経路の修飾が、ウイルス遺伝子の発現を正に制御していることを示した。これらの知見より、Vpr 発現が感染 T 細胞やマクロファージの増殖性や分化機構を改変することで、HIV-1複製に有利な細胞環境が形成される可能性が考えられた。また、HAART 療法で問題となる、潜伏感染への対処策としても有望であると考えられた。

A. 研究目的

我が国においてHIV-1感染者数の増加は大きな社会的問題であり、啓蒙活動なインを感染拡散の防止とともに、エとをが急れたとなる。HIV-1に感染した場合の治療法の開発が急の治療法を引きるのところHAART法が主要があるが、それでもなお薬剤耐性変異のかな治療法を考案する必要がある。薬剤には利用であるが、多面的にウイルスの複製を抑制を持つによが重要である。

この研究課題では新規抗ウイルス剤の標的として、ウイルス固有の遺伝子でありエイズ発症に重要であることが多く報告されているVprに着目している。HIV-1の制御遺伝子産物の中で、Vprは【ウイルスDNAの核移行】【細胞周期制御】【アポトーシス制御】など多彩な生物活性を持つことが知られている。これらの機能は感染個体内でのエイズ発症に重要な機能を果たしている。

Vprの機能発現には細胞性タンパクとの相互作用が必須であると考えられるが、

【ウイルスDNAの核移行】以外は関与す る因子は明らかではない。我々のグルー プではVprと相互作用するものとして hAXINを同定している。hAXINはWnt/ βカテニン経路に関わる因子であること から, Vpr発現がこのWnt/βカテニン経 路を修飾することで,その生物機能を発 現している可能性が考えられた。そこで VprによるWnt/βカテニン経路の修飾・ 改変を生化学的に明らかにし、そのモデ ルに基づいて抗HIV剤の標的となりうる 分子標的を探ることがこの研究の目的で ある。生化学的な情報にもとづいてプロ ドラッグをデザインする手法は、今後現 れると考えられる新興感染症への対応に おいても重要であると考えられる。

B. 研究方法

VprとhAXINの相互作用を介したWnt/β-catenin経路の制御機構について生化学的な解析を加え、分子レベルでの研究の基盤を確立する。

(1) VprとhAXINの結合に関わる,機能ドメインを同定する。これは機能阻害化合物をデザインあるいは選定する上で

の重要な情報を与えるものである。in vivoでの結合実験としては,hAXINをVpr結合因子として同定するのに用いた yeast two hybrid法を利用した。in vitroでの解析においては,GST融合タンパクとして大腸菌で発現させたVprに対して,in vitroでタンパク合成したhAXINの断片の結合性を調べる手法を用いた。

- (2) VprによるWnt/β-catenin経路の活性化が細胞機能に影響することは十分に考えられる。その機能とVprに関して知られている既知の活性 (G2/M細胞周期停止,アポトーシス誘導)との関連を謂べる。Vprによる細胞周期停止活性とアポトーシス誘導活性を評価するにはHeLa細胞とCV1細胞の2種類の細胞を用いた。hAXINの発現ベクターは秋山徹博士(東大)より分与していただいたものを利した。hAXINの発現を補うことによってVprの生物機能に影響があるかをFACSやアポトーシスの評価を行うことで検討した。
- (3) 細胞内での局在性の評価を行う。 VprはそのN末部分にFLAGエピトープタッグを付加した。このタッグ付加がVprの局在性や機知の生物機能に影響しないことは予め確認してある。hAXINに関しては市販の抗AXIN抗体を利用した。ただしこの場合にバックグラウンドのシグナルが若干高いので、hAXINのN末領域にDsRed標識を付加したものも併用した。局在性に関してはこの標識が影響しないことは確認した。
- (4) Vpr 発現による Wnt/βカテニン経路への影響を解析した。用いた細胞はHeLa 細胞,CV1 細胞,HEK293 細胞,SW480 細胞,そして T 細胞株として Jurkat 細胞を利用した。さらに初代培養細胞として,ヒト由来単核球細胞と分化型マクロファージをバフィーコートより回収した。遺伝子導入には常法のリンカ法,リポフェクション法,たエレクトロポレーション法を改変した。カルシウム法,リポテスを改変した。カAXIN1 発現プラスミドは東大の秋山徹

博士から分与されたものを利用した。リポーターアッセイにはTcf/Lef1 の結合部位を持つルシフェラーゼリポータープラスミドを用いた。これにより、 β カテニンの活性化(核内への蓄積)が確認できる。 β カテニンの発現量変化は抗 β カテニン抗体を利用したウェスタンブロット法においても検討した。

(倫理面への配慮)

この研究課題では個体間の遺伝情報を質の差などを対象としておらず,人を変更を対象としておらず。というの題となる状況ないは生じた解析では生じた解析ではない。中ではないの感やではいるがではない。中ではないの感やではないが、はないのではないが、はないではないが、はいるでは、はいるでは、個人情報などの機密は確保される。

C. 研究成果

「1] hAXIN との相互作用

平成 1 6年度の研究では、特に Vpr の機能に関する解析を進めることが出来た。 Vpr にはウイルスのプレインテグレーション複合体 (PIC) の核移行、細胞周期の G2/M 期での停止、更に apoptosis 誘導など、多くの生物機能が報告されており、更にエイズ発症にも重要であることが知られている。既に我々は Vpr が hAXIN と結合することを見出している。hAXIN は Wnt/β カテニン経路の制御に関わる 因子で、種々の遺伝子発現を介して細胞の分化や活性化を調節している。

今年度はまず、Vpr-hAXIN 相互作用のインターフェーズを同定した。Vpr においては中央の 30 アミノ酸程度の領域が必要であり、hAXIN に関しては C末の100アミノ酸程度の領域が関与していることが分かった。更にこの相互作用がこの領域のペプチド断片で阻害されることを見

出した。

Vpr の示す生物機能の中で、特に細胞周期調節と apoptosis 誘導に関して、hAXIN の関与を検討した。Vpr の発現は、多くの細胞で強い G2/M 期細胞周期停止と apoptosis 誘導を起こすが、hAXIN の過剰発現によりそれらの機能が一部阻害されることが示された。阻害活性のあるペプチドでも、hAXIN の過剰発現と同様の効果が得られたことから、Vpr-hAXIN の相互作用を阻害する分子が、抗エイズ薬の重要な候補と期待される。

[2] Vpr による Wnt/βカテニン経路へ の影響

結腸がん由来の SW480 細胞では hAXIN を導入するとレポーター遺伝子の発現が 抑制され,hAXIN を介した β カテニンの リン酸化が促進され, β カテニンが分解 誘導されたと考えられた。hAXIN と Vpr を同時に発現させると,hAXIN による抑制効果が解除された。これは Vpr が hAXIN による Wnt/ β カテニン経路抑制機能を阻害した可能性を示している。

ヒト由来のPBLにVprおよびhAXIN発現系をレンチウイルスベクターを用いて導入し、その効果を検討した。通常の活性化T細胞ではVpr発現はG2/M期細胞周期停止を起こし、ここへhAXINを発現させることで一部細胞周期停止から回復することが確認された。一方静止期T細胞ではVprの発現によって細胞周期へとエントリーし、この活性化は同時にhAXINを発現させることで抑制されることが分かった。

分化型マクロファージでは、Vpr の発現によって細胞の生存性や形態には有意の影響は認められなかった。しかし、HIV-1感染マクロファージでは、Vpr の発現によってウイルス産生が亢進した。この効果は Vpr 欠損 HIV-1を用いた場合により顕著であった。この効果は hAXIN の発現により一部減弱した。

[3] Vpr 発現による hAXIN の細胞内局 在性の変化

Vpr は細胞核、特に核膜周辺に局在する

ことが知られている。この局在性は細胞 周期制御やアポトーシス誘導の機能とは 相関しないことが報告されている。それ に対して hAXIN は細胞質にスポット状 に散在することが知られており、今回の 解析でも同様の局在性が確認できた。 HeLa 細胞で hAXIN と Vpr を同時に発現 させると、hAXIN が核膜周辺に凝集塊と して存在することが確認できた。Vpr は 核膜部分にもあるが, やはり hAXIN と共 局在することが観察された。このとき hAXINによるβカテニン制御は異常とな っていることから、Vprによる hAXIN 局 在性の改変は hAXIN 機能に影響を及ぼ していると考えられる。同様の局在性は マクロファージにおいても観察されたが, ここでは Vpr 単独での局在は他の細胞に 比べて不明確であった。

D. 考察

Vpr の機能に関しては、細胞周期の停 止機能、およびアポトーシスの誘導の他 に、プレインテグレーション複合体を細 胞質から核内へ移行させる際にも機能す ることが知られている。細胞周期の停止 に関しては、ウイルス遺伝子の発現が G2 期に活性化されるという報告や、細胞寿 命の延長によるウイルス産生の持続、ま た最近はウイルス初期感染性が高くなる という意義が報告されている。アポトー シスに関しては, 感染細胞が死滅するこ とはウイルス複製には有利ではないが、 周辺の細胞に対して傷害を与え、エイズ 発症に寄与している可能性がある。プレ インテグレーション複合体の核内以降に 関しては、特に静止期の T 細胞や単球細 胞, 分化したマクロファージへの感染に 重要であると考えられる。しかしこれら の機能の中で, 感染時のエイズ発症に重 要なものがどれであるのかは分かってい ない。

今回の解析から、Vpr が hAXIN との相互作用を介して Wnt/β カテニン経路を改変し、 β カテニンの下流を活性化することが示された。 β カテニン経路は細胞

E. 研究発表

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- F. 知的財産権の出願・登録状況
- 1. 特許取得

なし 2. 実用新案登録 なし 3. その他 なし

研究成果の刊行に関する一覧表

雑誌

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Centrosomal P4.1-associated Protein Is a New Member of Transcriptional Coactivators for Nuclear Factor- κB^*

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Nuclear factor-kB (NF-kB) is a transcription factor important for various cellular events such as inflammation, immune response, proliferation, and apoptosis. In this study, we performed a yeast two-hybrid screening using the N-terminal domain of the p65 subunit (RelA) of NF-κB as bait and isolated centrosomal P4.1-associated protein (CPAP) as a candidate for a RelA-associating partner. Glutathione S-transferase pull-down assays and co-immunoprecipitation experiments followed by Western blotting also showed association of CPAP with RelA. When overexpressed, CPAP enhanced NF-κB-dependent transcription induced by tumor necrosis factor- α (TNF α). Reduction of the protein level of endogenous CPAP by RNA interference resulted in decreased activation of NF-κB by TNFα. After treatment with TNFα, a portion of CPAP was observed to accumulate in the nucleus, although CPAP was found primarily in the cytoplasm without any stimulation. Moreover, CPAP was observed in a complex recruited to the transcriptional promoter region containing the NF-kB-binding motif. One hybrid assay showed that CPAP has the potential to activate gene expression when tethered to the transcriptional promoter. These data suggest that CPAP functions as a coactivator of NF-kB-mediated transcription. Since a physiological interaction between CPAP and the coactivator p300/CREB-binding protein was also observed and synergistic activation of NF-kB-mediated transcription was achieved by these proteins, CPAPdependent transcriptional activation is likely to include p300/CREB-binding protein.

Nuclear factor- κB (NF- κB)¹ is a Rel transcription factor that regulates the expression of a wide variety of genes involved in

cellular events such as inflammation, immune response, proliferation, and apoptosis (1–3). Rel family members form hetero- and homodimers that possess distinct specificities and functions. In mammals, five Rel family members have been identified: c-Rel, RelA/p65, RelB, NF- κ B1 (p50/p105), and NF- κ B2 (p52/p100). In the canonical NF- κ B signaling pathway, the prototypical NF- κ B complex composed of p50 and RelA subunits is sequestered in the cytoplasm through its assembly with a family of NF- κ B inhibitors (I κ B) at steady state. When cells are stimulated by signals such as tumor necrosis factor- α (TNF α) and interleukin-1, I κ B is phosphorylated by the I κ B kinase complex, marking it for ubiquitination and subsequent degradation. The liberated NF- κ B heterodimer rapidly translocates into the nucleus and activates target genes by binding directly to κ B regulatory elements present in the target loci.

Although these cytoplasmic signaling events are understood in detail, the subsequent nuclear events that regulate the strength and duration of NF-kB-mediated transcriptional activation remain poorly defined (4). RelA contains a transactivation domain (TAD) in its C-terminal region that is known to be responsible for transcriptional activation. TAD has so far been reported to interact with various transacting and basal transcription factors that recruit RNA polymerase II, including TATA-binding protein, transcription factor IIB, TAF_{II}105 (TATA-binding protein-associated factor II105), and TLS (translocated in liposarcoma) (5-8). In addition, general coactivators such as cAMP response element-binding protein (CREB)-binding protein (p300/CBP) (9, 10), p300/CBP-associated factor, and ACTR (coactivator for nuclear hormone receptors) are recruited to the NF-kB transcriptional complex and enhance NF-kB-mediated transcriptional activation (11, 12).

The N-terminal domain of RelA is also known to play important roles in the regulation of NF-kB-mediated transcriptional activation. For example, stimulus-coupled phosphorylation of RelA is known to change its transcriptional activity (4, 10, 13-16), and two of the four serine phosphoacceptor sites present in RelA are in the N-terminal domain. In addition, association with p300/CBP has been reported to occur not only via TAD, but also through the N-terminal domain of RelA. RelA phosphorylation at Ser²⁷⁶ by the catalytic subunit of cAMP-dependent protein kinase (14) or mitogen- and stress-activated protein kinase-1 (15) or at Ser^{311} by protein kinase $C\zeta$ (16) was shown to enhance the binding of p300/CBP to RelA. Moreover, p300/CBP has also been reported to acetylate RelA at three sites in the N-terminal domain: Lys²¹⁸, Lys²²¹, and Lys³¹⁰. Acetylation is thought to regulate the transcriptional activity of RelA by increasing its DNA-binding affinity for the kB enhancer or by preventing its association with IkBa (4, 17-20). Finally, BRCA1 also associates with the N-terminal domain of

ferase; siRNA, small interfering RNA; DBD, DNA-binding domain; SRC-1, steroid receptor coactivator-1; C/H, cysteine/histidine-rich.

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¹ The abbreviations used are: NF-κB, nuclear factor-κB; TNFα, tumor necrosis factor-α; TAD, transactivation domain; CREB, cAMP response element-binding protein; CBP, cAMP response element-binding protein; CPAP, centrosomal P4.1-associated protein; STAT, signal transducer and activator of transcription; GST, glutathione S-trans-

RelA as well as CBP and functions as a scaffolding protein by tethering together the RelA-CBP-BRCA1 complex, thereby supporting the transacting function of CBP (21).

Thus, not only TAD, but also the N-terminal region of RelA appears to contribute to NF-kB target gene induction. However, little is known about the factors that interact with the N-terminal region. Here, we sought to clarify the mechanism of NF-κB-dependent transcriptional activation by identifying factors that interact with the N-terminal region of RelA. In a yeast two-hybrid screen using the N terminus of RelA as bait, we identified a novel RelA-interacting factor, centrosomal P4.1associated protein (CPAP). CPAP was previously identified by virtue of its interaction with the cytoskeletal protein 4.1R-135 (22). Although CPAP appears to be a component of the centrosomal complex, the majority of CPAP is found in soluble fractions, mainly in the cytoplasm and a small portion in the nucleus (22, 23). In addition, it was previously reported that CPAP interacts with STAT5 and enhances STAT5-mediated transcription (23), although the mechanism by which this occurs remains unclear. In this study, we show evidence suggesting that CPAP is a novel coactivator of NF-kB that binds to the N-terminal region of RelA, possibly activating transcription through CBP.

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES

Plasmid Construction—pEFr-FLAG-CPAP was a kind gift from Dr. J. E. Visvader (Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, Melbourne, Australia) (23). The cDNA fragment consisting of the entire open reading frame of CPAP was generated by PCR using a human spleen cDNA library (Clontech, Palo Alto, CA) as the template and primers 5'-CGCGGATCCATGTTCCTGATGCCAACCTC-3' and 5'-TTTTCCTTTTGCGGCC GCATCGTCACAGCTCCGTGTCC-3'. The fragment was inserted into the BamHI-NotI sites of the pcDNA3-Myc vector (24) to construct pcDNA3-Myc-CPAP and blunt-end cloned into the pCMV-FLAG vector (24) to generate pCMV-CPAP. The series of plasmids encoding deletion mutants of CPAP, pcDNA3-Myc-CPAP-(1-1149), pcDNA3-Myc-CPAP-(1150-1338), and pcDNA3-Myc-CPAP-(967-1338), was constructed by inserting fragments generated by PCR using appropriate synthetic oligonucleotides as primers and pcDNA3-Myc-CPAP as the template. pcDNA3-HA-RelA (where HA is hemagglutinin), pcDNA3-HA-RelA-(1-427), pcDNA3-HA-RelA-(428-551), pcDNA3-HA-RelA-(1-312), pcDNA3-HA-RelA-(313-427), and pcDNA3-HA-RelA-(201-427) were generated in a similar manner using pcDNA3-RelA (25) as the template.

pGEX-2TK-RelA was created by inserting the RelA BamHI-MfeI fragment into the BamHI-EcoRI sites of the pGEX-2TK vector (Clontech). pFastBac1-RelA was constructed by inserting the glutathione S-transferase (GST)-RelA fragment of pGEX-2TK-RelA into the BamHI-XbaI sites of the pFastBac1 vector (Invitrogen). pGEX-CPAP-C was created by inserting the EcoRI-NotI fragment of pcDNA3-Myc-CPAP-(967–1338) into the EcoRI-NotI sites of the pGEX-6P-1 vector (Clontech).

pM-CPAP was generated by inserting the BamHI-XbaI fragment, which was PCR-amplified from pcDNA3-Myc-CPAP using primers 5'-CGCGGATCCCAATGTTCCTGATGCCAACCTC-3' and 5'-GCTCTA-GAATCGTCACAGCTCCGTGTCC-3', into the BamHI-XbaI sites of the pM vector (Clontech). pM-CPAP-(967-1338) was obtained by inserting the EcoRI-XbaI fragment of pcDNA3-Myc-CPAP-(967-1338) into the EcoRI-XbaI sites of the pM vector.

pCMV-CBP was a kind gift from Dr. I. Talianidis (Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, Crete, Greece) (26). The expression plasmids for a series of CBP deletion mutants (CBP1-CBP5) were kindly provided by Dr. A. Fukamizu (Center for Tsukuba Advanced Research Alliance, Tsukuba, Japan) (27). The reporter plasmids pNF-kB-luc and pFR-luc were obtained from Stratagene. The construction of the reporter plasmid pNF-kB-mt-luc was described previously (28).

Yeast Two-hybrid Screening—The DNA fragment encoding amino acids 1–427 of RelA was subcloned into the pHybLex-Zeo vector (Invitrogen). This plasmid was used as a bait construct to screen a human leukemia cDNA library (Clontech) according to the manufacturer's instructions (Invitrogen). A total of 1.6×10^6 transformants were selected based on histidine prototrophy and β -galactosidase activity.

GST Pull-down Assay—GST and the GST-RelA fusion protein, encoded by pFastBac1 and pFastBac1-RelA, respectively, were produced in Sf9 cells using the Bac-to-Bac baculovirus expression system (In-

vitrogen). GST and the GST-CPAP-(967–1338) fusion protein, encoded by pGEX-6P-1 and pGEX-CPAP-(967–1338), respectively, were produced in BL21 cells (Amersham Biosciences) exposed to 0.1 mm isopropyl β -D-thiogalactopyranoside. After affinity separation of the proteins from cell lysates using glutathione-Sepharose (Amersham Biosciences), proteins bound to the resin were mixed and incubated with in vitro transcription/translation products at 4 °C for 2 h. The in vitro transcription/translation product was prepared with the TnT T7 quick coupled transcription/translation system (Promega) using 0.25 μ g of each expression plasmid in the presence of L-[38S]methionine (Amersham Biosciences) according to the manufacturer's instructions. After being washed five times in binding buffer (50 mm Tris-HCl (pH 8.0), 150 mm NaCl, 1 mm EDTA, 0.5% Nonidet P-40, 1 mm dithiothreitol, and 1 mm phenylmethylsulfonyl fluoride), resin-bound radiolabeled proteins were fractionated by SDS-PAGE and detected by autoradiography.

Cell Culture and Transfection—293T and MCF-7 cells were cultured in Dulbecco's modified Eagle's medium (Nissui) supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum and L-glutamine. Transfection of plasmids into cells was performed with FuGENE 6 transfection reagent (Roche) according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

Immunoprecipitation—Cells were lysed in immunoprecipitation buffer (50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), 150 mM NaCl, and 0.1% Nonidet P-40). After centrifugation, the supernatant was incubated with anti-FLAG antibody M2 (Sigma), anti-RelA antibody F-6 (Santa Cruz Biotechnology, Inc.), anti-c-Myc antibody 9E10 (Santa Cruz Biotechnology, Inc.), or normal mouse IgG (Zymed Laboratories Inc.) for at least 1 h. Immunocomplexes were recovered by adsorption to protein G-Sepharose (Amersham Biosciences). After being washed five times in immunoprecipitation buffer, the immunoprecipitates were analyzed by immunoblotting.

Immunoblot Analysis—Immunoblot analysis was performed essentially as described previously (29). The antibodies used in these experiments were specific for FLAG, RelA (antibody F-6), and α-tubulin (antibody-1, Calbiochem). The rabbit antiserum against CPAP was kindly provided from Dr. T. K. Tang (Institute of Biomedical Sciences, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China) (22).

Reporter Assay—Cell extracts were prepared in reporter lysis buffer (Promega) 48 h after transfection. After removal of cell debris, the luciferase activity in the extracts was measured with a luciferase assay kit (Promega) and a Berthold Lumat LB 9507 luminometer according to the manufacturers' instructions.

RNA Interference Technique—A 21-nucleotide small interfering RNA (siRNA) duplex (5'-AAUGGAAUGCACGUGACGAUG-3') containing 3'-dTdT overhanging sequences was synthesized (Qiagen Inc.). siRNA transfection was performed using Oligofectamine reagent (Invitrogen) according to the manufacturer's instructions.

RNA Isolation and Reverse Transcription-PCR—Total RNA was isolated from cultured cells using Sepasol RNA I Super (Nacalai Tesque, Kyoto, Japan) according to the manufacturer's instructions. The relative expression of each mRNA was evaluated by semiquantitative reverse transcription-PCR using a One-Step RNA PCR kit (Takara). Glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase mRNA was used as an internal control. The primers used were as follows: CPAP, 5'-AAAGGGACCACAGGTAGCGG-3' and 5'-TGAATTCACTCGCACGATCTGGGATG; interferon-β, 5'-CACGACAGCTCTTTCCATGA-3' and 5'-AGCCAGTGCTCGATGAATCT-3'; and TNF receptor-associated factor-1, 5'-GCCCCTGATGAGAATGAGTT-3' and 5'-CTCATGCTCTTGCA-CAGACT-3'.

Indirect Immunofluorescence Analysis—Indirect immunofluorescence analysis was performed as described previously (29). Cells were permeabilized with 0.05% Triton X-100 after fixation and treated with anti-RelA primary antibody F-6 or rabbit antiserum against CPAP (22). Secondary antibodies conjugated to Alexa 488 and Alexa 568 (Molecular Probes, Inc.) were used to visualize primary antibody distribution. Nuclei were stained with 4',6-diamidino-2-phenylindole (Sigma).

DNA-Protein Complex Immunoprecipitation Assay—293T cells treated with 10 nm TNFα were transfected with plasmids. After cross-linking with 1% formaldehyde for 15 min, cells were lysed; sonicated; and subjected to immunoprecipitation using anti-FLAG or anti-RelA antibody or normal mouse IgG. Recovered immunocomplexes were incubated at 65 °C for 16 h and then digested with proteinase K for 2 h. DNA was extracted from the immunocomplexes with phenol and precipitated with ethanol. The primers used for detection of recovered DNA were 5'-ACCGAAACGCGCAGGCAGGCAGGCAGCCATA-3' and 5'-GCTCTCCAGCGGTTCCATC-3' for pNF-κB-luc and 5'-CTAGCAAAATA-GGCTGTCCC-3' and 5'-CTTTATGTTTTTGGCGTATTCCA-3' for pNF-κB-mt-luc.

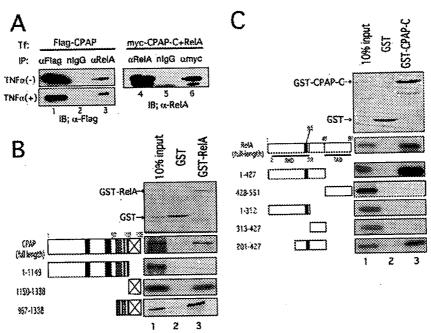


Fig. 1. Interaction between RelA and CPAP. A, interaction between RelA and full-length CPAP without (left upper panel) and with (left lower panel) TNFa stimulation or the C-terminal domain of CPAP from amino acids 967 to 1338 (CPAP-C) (right panel). Lysates from 293T cells transfected with 10 µg of pEFr-FLAG-CPAP or 8 µg of pcDNA3-Myc-CPAP-C and 2 µg of pcDNA3-RelA were used for the immunoprecipitation analysis. Tf and IP denote proteins produced from the transfected plasmids and antibodies used in the immunoprecipitation experiments, respectively. aFLAG, nIgG, aRelA, and amyc indicate anti-FLAG antibody, normal mouse IgG, anti-RelA antibody, and anti-Myc antibody, respectively. FLAG-tagged CPAP and RelA in the immunoprecipitates were detected by immunoblotting (IB) using anti-FLAG and anti-RelA antibodies, respectively. B, mapping of the region of CPAP responsible for interaction with RelA by deletion analysis. The 35S-labeled in vitro transcription/translation product of full-length CPAP or its deletion mutants was incubated with GST (lane 2) or GST-RelA (lane 3) immobilized on glutathione-Sepharose. The proteins bound to the resin were eluted, resolved by SDS-PAGE, and visualized by autoradiography (lower panel). 10% input indicates 0.1 volume of the ³⁵S-labeled product used in the pull-down assay (lane 1). The Coomassie Brilliant Blue staining pattern of proteins pulled down from the reaction mixture containing full-length CPAP is shown as an example (upper panel). Bands representing GST and GST-RelA are indicated by arrows. A schematic representation of the structures of CPAP and its deletion mutants is shown on the left. CPAP contains a leucine zipper motif (gray boxes), a series of nonamer glycine repeats (G-box region; crossed boxes), three putative nuclear localization signals (dashed boxes), and two potential nuclear export signals (black boxes). The numbers indicate the amino acids demarcating fragments of the CPAP protein used. C, mapping of the RelA region that interacts with CPAP by deletion analysis. The 35S-labeled product of full-length RelA or its truncated mutants was incubated with GST (lane 2) or GST-CPAP-C (lane 3). The Coomassie Brilliant Blue staining pattern of proteins pulled down from the reaction mixture with full-length RelA is shown as an example (upper panel). The bands representing GST and GST-CPAP-C are indicated by arrows. A schematic representation of RelA and its mutants is shown on the left. RelA contains a Rel homology domain (RHD), a nuclear localization signal (NLS), and a TAD.

RESULTS

Identification of CPAP as a Factor That Interacts with RelA—To identify cellular factors that interact with the N-terminal region of RelA, a yeast two-hybrid screen was performed using a human leukemia cDNA library as bait and the N-terminal 427-amino acid region of RelA as prey. From 1.6 \times 10^6 L40 yeast transformants, 64 clones were obtained that appeared to interact with RelA. Among them, three independent clones were revealed to encode portions of CPAP.

To confirm the interaction of CPAP with RelA, we performed an immunoprecipitation assay using 293T cells exogenously producing FLAG-tagged CPAP. FLAG-tagged CPAP was detected in cell lysates in the immunocomplex formed with anti-RelA antibody (Fig. 1A, left panels, lane 3), but not with normal IgG (lane 2). The interaction between FLAG-tagged CPAP and endogenous RelA was seen without considerable alteration both before and after treatment with TNF α (Fig. 1A, upper and lower left panels, respectively). This seemed to imply that $TNF\alpha$ -induced phosphorylation of RelA is not essential for the interaction with CPAP. Actually, we found that FLAG-tagged CPAP was co-immunoprecipitated with a RelA mutant in which one of the TNFa-induced phosphorylation target sites (Ser²⁷⁶) was replaced with alanine (data not shown). This may support the above idea. This interaction was also seen in a GST pull-down assay. Under conditions in which in vitro translated CPAP was not pulled down with GST-bound Sepharose beads (Fig. 1B, lane 2), we found it in a pellet with recombinant GST-RelA-bound Sepharose beads (lane 3). These results suggest that CPAP interacts specifically with RelA. In addition, to examine the region of CPAP responsible for interaction with RelA, we performed a GST pull-down assay as described above using several deletion mutants of CPAP. The in vitro synthesized fragments of CPAP spanning amino acids 1150-1338 and 967-1338, but not amino acids 1-1149, were co-purified with GST-RelA (Fig. 1B). This indicates that the region of CPAP responsible for interaction with RelA resides within amino acids 1150-1338, including a series of 21 nonamer repeats (G-box region). This result was also obtained with the immunoprecipitation assay. In the lysates of 293T cells producing RelA and Myc-tagged CPAP-C (C-terminal amino acids 967-1338 of CPAP), exogenous RelA was efficiently detected in immunocomplexes formed with anti-Myc antibody (Fig. 1A, right panel, lane 6), but not with normal mouse IgG (lane 5). The region of RelA that interacts with CPAP was similarly assessed. The in vitro synthesized fragments of RelA spanning amino acids 1-427 and 201-427, but not amino acids 428-551, 1-312, or 313-427, were co-purified with GST-CPAP-C (Fig. 1C). These results indicate that the central region of RelA is necessary and sufficient for interaction with CPAP.

CPAP Augments NF-κB-dependent Gene Expression—Because CPAP has been reported to activate STAT5-mediated transcription (23), we examined the effect of this protein on RelAmediated transcription using a reporter assay. When CPAP was ectopically expressed, NF-κB-responsive reporter gene expres-

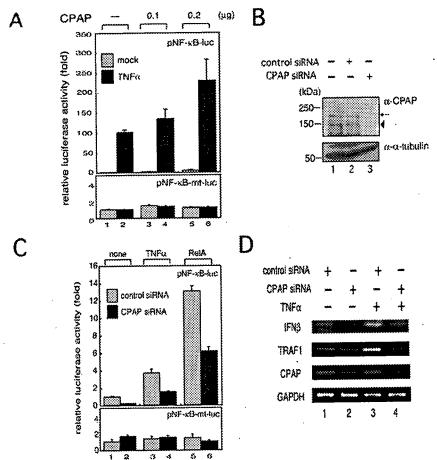


Fig. 2. CPAP increases NF-κB-induced gene expression. A, enhancement of NF-κB-dependent reporter gene expression by ectopic expression of CPAP. 293T cells were transfected with 25 ng of pNF-kB-luc (containing wild-type NF-kB-binding sites upstream of the luciferase gene; upper panel) or pNF-kB-mt-luc (containing mutated NF-kB-binding sites; lower panel) together with the indicated amounts of pCMV-FLAG-CPAP. After 42 h of transfection, cells were mock-treated (bars 1, 3, and 5) or treated with 10 ng/ml TNF α (bars 2, 4, and 6) and harvested after an additional incubation for 6 h. Values represent the relative luciferase activity expressed as the mean \pm S.E. of three independent transfections. B, suppression of endogenous CPAP production by siRNA. The 21-nucleotide RNA duplex (siRNA) directed against the CPAP sequence was transfected into MCF-7 cells (lane 1). The levels of CPAP protein were evaluated by immunoblotting 48 h post-transfection. As a negative control, total cell extracts from MCF-7 cells with no siRNA treatment (lane 1) and with treatment with control siRNA (lane 2) were used. The relative protein levels of CPAP (upper panel) and α-tubulin as a positive control (lower panel) are shown. Molecular mass markers are shown on the left. The arrow indicates intact CPAP protein. The arrowhead shows the putative degraded form of CPAP. C, effects of CPAP siRNA on NF-kB-dependent reporter gene expression. MCF-7 cells were transfected with control siRNA (gray bars) or CPAP siRNA (black bars). At 24 h posttransfection, 25 ng of pNF-kB-luc, 25 ng of pRL-TK-luc, and 200 ng of either pKS+-CMV (bars 1-4) or pcDNA3-RelA (bars 5 and 6) were transfected into cells (upper panel). The same experiment using pNF-κB-mt-luc instead of pNF-κB-luc was also carried out (lower panel). An additional 18 h later, cells were treated with (bars 3 and 4) or without (bars 1, 2, 5, and 6) 10 ng/ml TNF α for 6 h. Values represent the luciferase activity expressed as the mean ± S.E. of three independent transfections. D, effects of CPAP siRNA on endogenous gene expression induced by TNFa. MCF-7 cells were transfected with control (lanes 1 and 3) or CPAP siRNA (lane 2 and 4). The cells were treated for 6 h with 10 ng/ml TNFα (lanes 3 and 4). Semiquantitative reverse transcription-PCR was performed to estimate the amounts of interferon- β (IFN β), TNF receptor-associated factor-1 (TRAF1), CPAP, and glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GAPDH) mRNAs.

sion was enhanced by up to 2–3-fold in a dose-dependent manner (Fig. 2A, upper panel). In contrast, reporter activity from the plasmid containing mutated NF- κ B-binding sites in the promoter region was not affected by ectopically expressed CPAP (Fig. 2A, lower panel). These data suggest that CPAP can specifically up-regulate NF- κ B-mediated transcription.

To investigate the contribution of endogenous CPAP to transcriptional activation, we examined the effect of CPAP siRNA, which was designed to specifically knock down the expression of CPAP, on NF- κ B-dependent transcriptional activation in MCF-7 breast cancer-derived cells. We confirmed that endogenous CPAP protein levels were significantly reduced by transfection with CPAP siRNA, whereas the levels of other cellular proteins such as α -tubulin were not changed (Fig. 2B). The level of NF- κ B-mediated transcription induced by either TNF α or RelA in CPAP siRNA-treated cells was decreased to <50% of that in cells transfected with control siRNA (Fig. 2C, upper panel). In contrast, reporter activity from the plasmid contain-

ing mutated NF- κ B-binding sites was not affected by knocking down CPAP (Fig. 2C, lower panel). These findings indicate that endogenous CPAP is required for full activation of NF- κ B-dependent reporter gene expression.

Next, we examined whether CPAP affects expression of endogenous target genes. After treatment with TNF α , total RNA was isolated from MCF-7 cells transfected with either control or CPAP siRNA and analyzed by reverse transcription-PCR to detect the mRNA levels of interferon- β and TNF receptor-associated factor-1, which are known to be induced by NF- κ B. As shown in Fig. 2D, transfection with CPAP siRNA, but not control siRNA, down-regulated TNF α -induced expression of interferon- β and TNF receptor-associated factor-1 mRNAs. These results indicate that CPAP plays an important role in NF- κ B-mediated transcriptional activation in cells.

Translocation of CPAP into the Nucleus upon TNFa Treatment—RelA is translocated from the cytoplasm into the nucleus upon stimulation by specific cytokines. To determine.

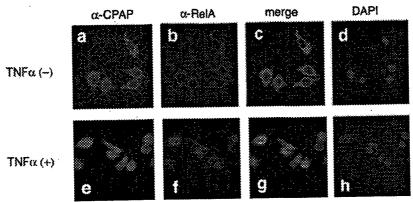


Fig. 3. The subcellular localization of CPAP is partially shifted from the cytoplasm to the nucleus by TNF α stimulation. Indirect immunofluorescence analysis was performed on MCF-7 cells treated with (lower panels) or without (upper panels) TNF α for 20 min. The antibodies used in this experiment were anti-CPAP (α -CPAP; α and e, green) and anti-RelA (α -RelA; b and f, red). Merged images of green and red signals are shown (c and g). 4',6-Diamidino-2-phenylindole (DAPI) was used to visualize nuclear staining (d and h).

whether the localization of CPAP is similarly altered by activation of the NF- κ B pathway, we examined the subcellular localization of CPAP in MCF-7 cells by indirect immunofluorescence analysis with or without TNF α treatment. As reported previously (23), CPAP was found to localize primarily in the cytoplasm, although some protein was also detectable in the nucleus without stimulation (Fig. 3 α). As CPAP was immunoprecipitated with RelA from the cytoplasmic fraction of such cells (data not shown), it seemed likely that a cytoplasmic complex is present before TNF α treatment. However, following TNF α treatment for 20 min, a portion of CPAP was observed to accumulate in the nucleus (Fig. 3 ϵ), similar to RelA (ϵ) and ϵ). These results suggest that at least a portion of cytoplasmic CPAP enters the nucleus in a TNF α -dependent manner.

Recruitment of CPAP to the NF-KB-binding Motif-The increase in NF-kB-dependent transcriptional activation by CPAP, the nuclear accumulation of CPAP in response to $TNF\alpha$ stimulation, and the physical interaction of CPAP with RelA all suggested the possibility that CPAP, together with RelA, is recruited to the transcriptional promoters of NF-kB target genes. To examine this possibility, we performed a DNA-protein complex immunoprecipitation assay. As shown in Fig. 4 (upper panel, lanes 1-3), a DNA fragment containing an NF- κB -binding motif was detected by PCR in complexes specifically immunoprecipitated by either anti-FLAG or RelA antibodies from lysates of 293T cells transfected with pNF-kB-luc, FLAGtagged CPAP, and RelA expression plasmids. In contrast, no DNA fragment was amplified from cells transfected with pNFκB-mt-luc instead of pNF-κB-luc (Fig. 4, lower panel, lanes 2 and 3). These data suggest that CPAP is recruited to the transcriptional promoter region containing an NF-kB-binding motif via association with RelA.

CPAP Can Activate Gene Expression When Tethered to a Transcriptional Promoter—We showed above that CPAP interacted with RelA, up-regulated NF-κB-mediated transcription, and formed part of the complex binding to a transcriptional promoter containing NF-kB-binding motifs. These data suggest that CPAP acts as a transcriptional coactivator of NF-kB. We examined this possibility using a one-hybrid assay system with fusion proteins consisting of the Gal4 DNA-binding domain (DBD) and full-length CPAP or its C-terminal region in mammalian cells. As demonstrated in Fig. 5 (second bar), Gal4 DBD-fused CPAP up-regulated luciferase expression from pFR-luc, a reporter plasmid containing a Gal4-responsive transcriptional promoter. In contrast, CPAP by itself had no effect on the same promoter (Fig. 5, third bar). No difference in luciferase levels was observed among the exogenous Gal4 DBDcontaining constructs (data not shown). This suggests that

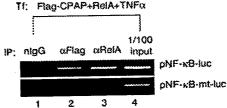


Fig. 4. Recruitment of CPAP to a promoter containing an NF-κB-binding motif. 293T cells cotransfected with expression plasmids for RelA and FLAG-CPAP and pNF-κB-luc (upper panel) or pNF-κB-mt-luc (lower panel) were harvested after treatment with TNFα for 20 min. After formaldehyde fixation, the cross-linked DNA-protein complexes were immunoprecipitated with anti-RelA antibody (αRelA; lane 3), anti-FLAG antibody (αFLAG; lane 2). or normal mouse IgG (nIgG; lane 1). 1% input of total cell lysate was used as positive control (lane 4). The DNA extracted from each immunoprecipitate was used as the template for PCR to detect the DNA fragment containing NF-κB-binding motifs as described under "Experimental Procedures." Tf and IP denote proteins produced from the transfected plasmids and antibodies used in the immunoprecipitation experiments, respectively.

CPAP has a transactivation capacity when tethered to the transcriptional promoter. This activity is likely to be located in the C-terminal part of CPAP because this region showed higher reporter activation compared with full-length CPAP (Fig. 5, fourth and second bars, respectively). Together with our results above, these data suggest that CPAP acts as a transcriptional coactivator in the NF-κB transcriptional complex.

Interaction between CPAP and CBP—To obtain insights into the mechanism of CPAP-dependent transcriptional activation, we assessed whether CPAP can recruit known coactivators to the transcriptional promoter. First, we examined the physical association of CPAP with CBP, p300, steroid receptor coactivator-1 (SRC-1), and transcription intermediary factor-2 using a GST pull-down assay. In vitro synthesized CBP or p300, but not SRC-1 or transcription intermediary factor-2, was co-purified with GST-CPAP-C, whereas none could be pulled down by GST itself (Fig. 6A) (data not shown), suggesting that CPAP interacts with CBP and p300. To narrow down the region of CBP required for interaction with CPAP, deletion analysis was carried out using five CBP fragments, CBP1-CBP5 (27), which were produced and metabolically labeled in cells. Only CBP4, which contains the C/H3 domain, could be co-purified with GST-CPAP-C (Fig. 6B), suggesting that CPAP associates with CBP through this region of CBP.

Next, we performed a reporter assay to examine the effect of CPAP on NF- κ B-mediated transcription. As shown in Fig. 6C, overexpression of either CBP or CPAP in cells enhanced TNF α -induced NF- κ B-dependent transcription by \sim 2-3-fold

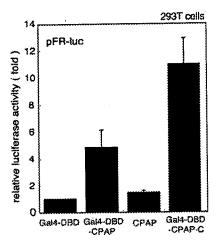


Fig. 5. CPAP supports transcriptional activation when tethered to the promoter. 293T cells were transfected with 50 ng of pFR-luc together with 0.3 μ g of pM, pM-CPAP, pCMV-FLAG-CPAP, or pM-CPAP-C. After 48 h of transfection, cells were harvested and subjected to a luciferase assay. Values represent the relative luciferase activity expressed as the mean \pm S.E. of three independent transfections.

compared with untransfected cells. When both CBP and CPAP were overexpressed in cells, reporter gene expression was synergistically elevated to levels 10-fold higher than in untransfected cells. These results suggest that CPAP contributes to NF-kB-dependent transcriptional activation at least partly by binding CBP and recruiting it to the cellular transcriptional machinery.

DISCUSSION

We identified CPAP as a molecule that associates with RelA and contributes to RelA-mediated transcriptional activation. Although CPAP was previously identified as a centrosomal protein (22), its function was not clear. Recently, however, CPAP was reported to interact with STAT5 to enhance STAT5-mediated transcription (23). However, the mechanism of CPAP-mediated transcriptional activation remained unclear. In this study, we have presented data showing that CPAP is a component of the NF-kB transcriptional activation complex and can activate transcription when tethered to a promoter. Moreover, we found that the transcriptional coactivator CBP contributes at least in part to transcriptional activation by association with CPAP.

Because CPAP fused with Gal4 DBD, but not CPAP itself, could induce reporter gene expression under the control of a promoter with Gal4-responsive elements (Fig. 5), CPAP is likely to activate transcription when presented to the transcriptional machinery. We also observed that CPAP exists in a DNA-protein complex including RelA and an NF-κB-responsive element, suggesting that CPAP binds to the promoter of NF-κB target genes in association with RelA to activate transcription. Enhancement of STAT5-mediated transcription by CPAP could be explained by a similar mechanism because CPAP was shown to interact with STAT5a/b as well as RelA. These data suggest that CPAP is a transcriptional coactivator.

The C-terminal 372 amino acids of CPAP exhibited transcriptional activation capability when fused with Gal4 DBD, suggesting that this region is responsible for transcriptional activation. This region associates with CBP, indicating that CBP may be involved in the transcriptional activation potential of CPAP. CBP is known to activate transcription by two mechanisms. CBP functions as a molecular bridge between the basal transcriptional machinery and transcription factors recruited to specific enhancer elements. In addition, the histone acetyltransferase activity of CBP plays an essential role in opening up chromatin structure to allow for efficient transcriptional transcription activates transcription of the content of

scriptional activity (30, 31). Previous work also showed that p300/CBP binds to RelA and supports NF- κ B-mediated transcriptional activation (9, 10). Here, we have shown that CPAP can associate with p300/CBP as well as RelA, indicating that these three proteins may form a complex. The breast cancer-related BRCA1 has been proposed to function as a scaffolding protein that tethers several factors, including RelA, CBP, and RNA polymerase II, to transcriptional promoter elements (21). By analogy with BRCA1, it seems likely that CPAP supports the transactivating effects of CBP by acting as a scaffolding protein that stabilizes CBP within the NF-kB transcriptional complex. We have shown that the C-terminal domain of CPAP interacts with the C-terminal region of p300/CBP containing the C/H3 and glutamine-rich domains. It was previously reported that the C-terminal TAD of RelA interacts mainly with the N-terminal region of p300/ CBP containing the C/H1 and KIX domains (9, 10), which is distinct from the region that interacts with CPAP. These results may provide a structural framework for the formation of a complex including these three factors. However, the interactions are likely rather more complex because the Cterminal region of CPAP has also been identified as a RelAinteracting region. Furthermore, we already found that CPAP forms multimer (data not shown). Therefore, stoichiometric analysis will be required to unveil the functional structure of this mysterious complex as well as to better understand the molecular mechanism of CPAP-dependent transcriptional activation.

It is well known that some CBP-associated transcriptional coactivators such as p300/CBP-associated factor, SRC-1, and ACTR have histone acetyltransferase activity (32-34). Some members of the p300/CBP-associated factor-related family with strong histone acetyltransferase activity, such as GCN5, have a conserved amino acid sequence called motif A (35), which is considered to be a characteristic structural feature of histone acetyltransferase. However, we have not found any amino acid sequences similar to motif A in CPAP. On the other hand, it has been reported that the histone acetyltransferase domains of SRC-1 and ACTR members of the SRC family with relatively low histone acetyltransferase activity share regions of high glutamine content (33, 34). Because CPAP has multiple glycine or glutamine repeats in the C-terminal region shown to have transcriptional activation capacity, it is possible that CPAP possesses histone acetyltransferase activity in the C-terminal region. To determine whether this is in fact the case, biochemical analysis using purified CPAP is required in the future.

Besides functioning as a transcriptional coactivator, CPAP might also affect interactions between RelA and molecules that inhibit NF-kB-mediated transcription, such as IkB, histone deacetylase-1 (13), and RelA-associated inhibitor (36). Histone deacetylase-1 has been reported to interact directly with the N-terminal region of RelA to exert its corepressor function (13). RelA-associated inhibitor, which binds to the central region of RelA, has also been reported to inhibit RelA-mediated transcriptional activation via an unknown mechanism (36). As we have already detected that $I\kappa B\alpha$ was coprecipitated with a CPAP-RelA complex from the cell lysate (data not shown), it may be unlikely that the presence of $I\kappa B\alpha$ precludes the association of RelA and CPAP. Further analysis of the complex including RelA and CPAP under physiological conditions should provide valuable insight into the regulatory mechanism of NF-&B-dependent transcriptional activation.

In addition, we found that the subcellular localization of CPAP was partially altered from the cytoplasm to the nucleus upon TNF α treatment. It was also previously reported that CPAP, which binds to STAT5, translocates from the cytoplasm

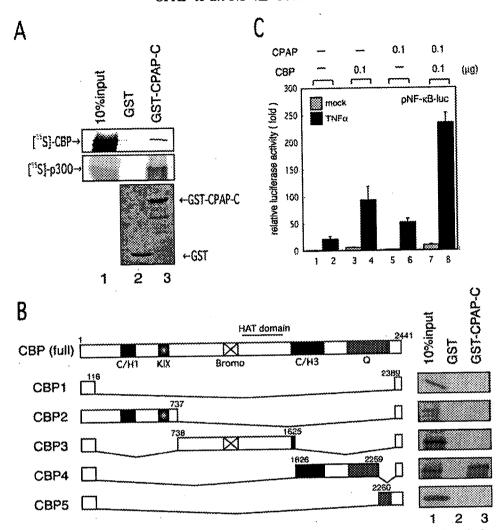


Fig. 6. Association between CPAP and CBP. A, results from a GST pull-down assay performed as described under "Experimental Procedures." ³⁵S-Labeled full-length CBP (upper panel) or p300 (middle panel) was incubated with recombinant GST (lane 2) or GST-CPAP-C (lane 3). 10%input indicates 0.1 volume of the ³⁵S-labeled product used in the pull-down assay (lane 1). The Coomassie Brilliant Blue staining pattern of GST fusion proteins is shown (lower panel). B, mapping of the region of CBP that interacts with CPAP by deletion analysis. A schematic representation of the structures of CBP and its deletion mutants (CBP1-CBP5) is shown on the left. Numbers above the diagrams indicate the amino acid positions of CBP relative to the N terminus. C/H1 and C/H3 are the cysteine/histidine-rich regions, and KIX is the CREB-binding domain. Bromo, bromodomain; Q, glutamine-rich domain. The results of the GST pull-down assay using the C-terminal region of CPAP and a series of deletion mutants of CBP are shown on the right. ³⁶S-Labeled CBP1-CBP5 were incubated with recombinant GST (lane 2) or GST-CPAP-C (lane 3). HAT, histone acetyltransferase. C, synergistic enhancement of NF-κB-dependent reporter gene expression by CPAP and CBP. 293T cells were transfected with 25 ng of pNF-κB-luc together with the indicated amounts of pCMV-FLAG-CPAP (CPAP; bars 5-8) and/or pCMV-CBP (CBP; bars 3, 4, 7, and 8). After 42 h of transfection, cells were treated with (black bars 2, 4, 6, and 8) or without (mock; gray bars 1, 3, 5, and 7) 10 ng/ml TNFα and harvested after an additional incubation for 6 h. Values represent the luciferase activity expressed as the mean ± S.E. of three independent transfections.

to the nucleus in response to prolactin-mediated activation of the JAK-STAT pathway and enhances STAT5-dependent transcription (23). As it has been reported that CPAP has three putative nuclear localization signals in its C-terminal region (23), it seems possible that CPAP is retained in the cytoplasm somehow in the steady state of cells, but released by particular stimuli. It has been revealed that ACTR, which is located mainly in the cytoplasm with a small portion in the nucleus in most cells, translocates from the cytoplasm to the nucleus upon TNF α activation and subsequent phosphorylation by IkB kinase- β (37). Further study on the molecular mechanism of stimulation-dependent nuclear translocation of CPAP may provide new knowledge regarding the fine regulation of gene expression by extracellular stimuli.

In this study, we have shown that CPAP can modulate RelA function in the nucleus. However, CPAP was first identified as a component of the centrosomal complex. The molecular interaction between CPAP and RelA evokes the possibility that RelA

exists in centrosomes. Centrosomal location of factors related to transcription, such as p53 (38, 39) and BRCA1 (40, 41), has been reported and may be involved in centrosomal replication in a transcriptional activity-dependent or -independent manner. Further analysis of whether the interaction between CPAP and RelA affects centrosomal function may reveal new biological roles for RelA as well as CPAP.

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