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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

厚生労働科学研究費補助金(再生医療実用化研究事業) 分担研究報告書

イヌモデル組織工学的人工再生歯根技術の開発に関する研究

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研究要旨:本研究は,前臨床モデルとしての基礎研究において汎用性の高いビーグル大を用いて,組織工学的な人工再生歯根技術を開発・確立するために計画された.つまり,ハイドロキシアパタイトなどのスキャホードと組織幹細胞である歯髄組織由来間葉系幹細胞および歯根膜組織由来間葉系幹細胞を応用することで,歯根膜の機能を有した人工歯根を,大型動物であるビーグル大で再生することを目的としている.

A. 研究目的

歯の欠損は、摂食障害、発音障害、審美障害などを引き起こし、患者のQOLを低下させる. 現在の歯科治療は、義歯やインプラントなどの人工材料を用いて喪失した歯の機能回復を図っている. しかし、これらの治療法では口腔機能を十分に回復することが困難な場合が多い. 本研究では、ミニブタモデルでの報告がある組織幹細胞を用いた組織工学的人工再生歯根技術を、前臨床モデルとしての基礎研究において汎用性の高いビーグル犬において実施し、その技術を開発・確立することを目的とした.

B. 研究方法

本報告書に記載の実験は,すべて本学動 物実験管理委員会の許可を受けて行った.

1. ビーグル成犬抜去歯からの細胞の分離お よび幹細胞マーカー発現の解析ならびに多 分化能の検討 はじめに、ビーグル成犬から歯に関連し た細胞を分離し、その培養法を検討した.

対象は、顎顔面部に奇形の無いビーグル成大とし、全身麻酔下で下顎小臼歯を抜歯した. 抜歯後、歯根表面から歯根膜組織を分離した. その後、歯を歯科用タービンで分割し、歯髄組織を分離した. 分離した歯髄組織と歯根膜組織は、ヒトの組織間細胞分離プロトコールに則り、単一細胞化を行った. すなわち、分離した組織をメスで細断し、 I型コラゲナーゼ($3 \, \text{mg/ml}$)とディスパーゼ Π ($4 \, \text{mg/ml}$) で約1時間処理した. その後、セルストレイナーを通過させることで結合組織残渣を除去し、単一細胞溶液を調整した. 本細胞を各種培地で培養し、その後の細胞の出現と増殖を評価した.

次に、これらの細胞が幹細胞マーカーを発現しているかを確認するため、CD34、CD45、CD29、CD44、CD90、CD271の細胞表面マーカーの発現について、フローサイトメトリーを用い、骨髄由来幹細胞と比較検討

した. また,多分化能を有しているか確認するため,分離した細胞のin vitroでの石灰化能は,デキサメタゾンとKH₂PO₄を含む石灰化誘導培地で長期培養することで評価した. In vivoでの硬組織形成能はキャリアと共に免疫不全マウス背部皮下へ移植し,組織学的に評価した. また,脂肪分化誘導培地で長期間培養し,オイルレッドO染色にて脂肪分化の有無を確認した.

2. 歯根型スキャホードの選択

イヌから分離した細胞を, イヌ顎骨に移植する際のキャリアと歯根型付与のためのスキャホードを兼ねる材料を検索した. 歯根型とするための賦形性と, 埋入時の強度, 生体親和性の観点から市販の各種材料を検討した.

3. 歯髓細胞, 歯根膜細胞評価

歯髄細胞の象牙質形成能,歯根膜細胞の 歯周組織形成能を確認するため,多孔性ハ イドロキシアパタイト(HA:ネオボーン,エ ム・エム・ティー)に歯髄細胞を含浸させ, 歯根膜細胞シートで被覆して,SCIDマウス 背部皮下に移植し,8週後に回収し,組織 学的に評価した.

4. 移植モデルの開発と評価

選択したスキャホードを、歯根形態を模した長さ8ミリ、直径4ミリの円柱状に調整し、一晩培地中に保存することで培地と馴染ませた.その後、歯髄から分離した細胞を含む培地中に浸漬し、37℃で転倒混和し、スキャホード中に細胞を取り込ませた.さらに、歯根膜細胞を温度感受性培養ディッシュ上で培養した後、細胞シートを作成し、上記の歯髄細胞を取り込んだ歯根型スキャホードを多層に被覆させた.

細胞分離のために下顎小臼歯抜歯を行ったビーグル成大の抜歯後の顎骨の治癒を3カ月待ち,顎骨に歯科用ドリルで移植窩洞を形成した。それぞれの顎骨の近心部には内部に歯髄細胞を取り込ませた歯根型スキャホードを移植,遠心部には内部に歯髄細胞を取り込ませた歯根型スキャホード表面を歯根膜細胞シートで被覆したものを移植した。

移植後は粘膜弁を縫合し、閉鎖創とした. 移植体の評価は、移植後、経時的にレント ゲン撮影を行うことと、12週後に灌流固定 のうえで屠殺し、顎骨ごとサンプリングし たものを組織学的に評価した.

なお,本移植実験は免疫学的な拒絶の可能性を排除するため,細胞はイヌの個体別に培養し,細胞を分離した個体と同一の個体に細胞を移植する自家細胞移植とした.

5. 再生歯根膜の機能的評価

歯根膜細胞シートにより正常な歯根膜組織が再生されれば、挺出方向の矯正力に対して、周囲骨は歯根膜の付着レベルを維持したまま垂直方向に増生されると推測される.この仮説を検証するため、挺出装置付きの再生人工歯根を顎骨へ埋植し、2-3ヶ月後に矯正力を加え、人工歯根並びに周囲組織の移動量をX線学的、肉眼的に評価した.

また、歯根膜組織の成熟には機能力の負荷が必要であると考えられるため、歯髄細胞を含浸させ、歯根膜細胞シートで被覆ししたHAに歯冠補綴物装着のためのポスト(維持孔)を形成した。その後、歯冠補綴物作製のための印象採得を行い、歯冠補綴装置の作製、装着を行い、負荷をかけた。

<u>6. 人工歯根に適したチタン表面性状の選定</u> (*in vitro*)

これまでに,人工歯根の歯根膜組織の成熟 には機能力の負荷が必要であると考え歯冠補 綴物を装着し咬合の負荷をかけたが, 多孔性 HAの強度的な問題からHAの破折による補綴物 の脱離が認められた. そこで, このキャリアの強 度の問題を解決するため、既製のチタン表面に 歯髄幹細胞を播種し、象牙質基質を形成させ、 その周囲に歯根膜幹細胞を応用することでイン プラント体に強固に結合する歯周組織が再生で きないかと考えた、そこでまず、歯髄幹細胞の 象牙質基質形成に適した生体材料の選定を目 的に、#600研磨紙で研磨した純チタン(研磨チタ ン), サンドブラストならびに酸処理により表面を 粗造化した純チタン(粗造化チタン), 粗造化チ タン表面にHAを析出させたチタン(HAチタン) の表面上での歯髄幹細胞の細胞動態をin vitro で形態学的、分子生物学的に検討した.

C. 研究結果

1. ビーグル成犬抜去歯からの細胞の分離お よび幹細胞マーカー発現の解析ならびに多 分化能の検討

ビーグル成犬から抜去した下顎小臼歯から分離した歯髄組織と歯根膜組織からは線維芽細胞形態を呈する細胞が問題なく分離できた.数種の組成の培地で培養し、本細胞の増殖を評価したところ、15%ウシ胎児血清を含む α MEMでの培養が適切であった.

次に、歯髄細胞、歯根膜細胞の表面抗原発 現動態の評価を行った結果、 CD29 (歯髄細胞: 28.6%、歯根膜細胞: 22.8%)、CD44 (100%, 100%)、CD90 (41.9%, 15.9%)、CD271 (17.4%, 8.18%)陽性、CD34、CD45陰性な細胞群であり、骨髄由来間葉系幹細胞と同様の表面抗原発現動態を示した.

本細胞を石灰化誘導培地で培養し, in vitroでの石灰化能の検討を試みたが、ヒト

細胞などで石灰化ノジュールを形成する2-3週間の長期培養中に、培養ディッシュから細胞層が剥離した。そのため、培養ディッシュをコラーゲン等でコーティングしての培養を試みたが、細胞層の剥離を防止することはできなかったため、適切な評価を行うことは困難であった。

そこで、免疫不全マウス背部皮下へキャリアと共に細胞を移植することで、in vivoでの組織形成能を評価した。キャリアとしては、ハイドロキシアパタイト(HA)と β 型第三リン酸カルシウム(β TCP)顆粒を用いた。移植から8週後に摘出し、パラフィン切片を作成、組織学的に評価したところ、歯髄細胞、歯根膜細胞ともにともに硬組織形成能を有していることを確認した。また、HAよりも β TCPの方が硬組織形成は量的に良好であった。なお、ヒト抜去歯から分離した歯髄細胞と異なり、形成された硬組織は骨様の層板状構造を呈している部分があった。また、ヒト歯髄細胞の移植では基本的に認められない骨髄組織が確認された。

また、これらの細胞を脂肪細胞誘導培地で長期間培養し、オイルレッド0染色を行った結果、脂肪滴の貯留が確認された.

2. 歯根型スキャホードの選択

スキャホードの材料として、賦形性と強度、生体親和性から β TCP(商品名オスフェリオン)とHA(商品名ネオボーン)を使用した、両者ともにトレフィンバーによる事前の調整で、ほぼ統一された規格の円柱状の形態とすることができた.

3. 歯髓細胞, 歯根膜細胞評価

歯根型多孔性HAに歯髄細胞を含浸させ, 歯根膜細胞シートで被覆して,SCIDマウス 背部皮下に移植し, 8週後に回収し, H.E. 染色にて評価した.

歯髄細胞を使用しなければHA内部に硬組織形成は認められないこと、歯根膜細胞シートを使用しない場合は周囲のマウス由来と考えられる脂肪細胞と直接接しているが、歯根膜細胞シートを使用すれば脂肪組織との間には線維性の組織が介在することを確認した.

4. 移植モデルの開発と評価

はじめに、移植体とほぼ同等の大きさの窩洞を顎骨に形成し、 β TCPスキャホードの移植を行なったが、移植窩洞へ挿入する際に、スキャホード自体の軽度の崩壊があった。経時的なレントゲン評価から、崩壊のあった β TCPスキャホードは顎骨内では8週でレントゲン的に確認できなくなった。また、吸収後の移植窩に硬組織像は認められなかった。HAスキャホードは移植窩洞内に確認できるものの、その内部における硬組織形成は確認できなかった。本個体は移植から12週後に屠殺の上で、下顎骨をサンプリングした。

次に、スキャホードの挿入時の崩壊を予防するため、スキャホードの直径よりもさらに大きな窩洞を形成し、移植したところスキャホードの崩壊はなかった。レントゲン的には最初の個体で認められた8週での β TCPスキャホードの吸収像は認められなかった。

次に、摘出した再生歯根サンプルの非脱灰切片の作製し、組織学的な検討を行った結果、キャリアにHAを用いたサンプルにおいては、その中心部においても硬組織の形成が確認された.一方、β-TCPを用いたサンプルにおいては、HAと比べ硬組織形成が低調であり、キャリア中心部では硬組織の形成が確認されなかった.この原因の一つとして、二つのポーラスサイズの違いが考えら

れる. すなわち,今回キャリアに用いた β-TCPはHAと比べてポーラスサイズが明ら かに小さく,内部まで十分な細胞の拡散が 行われなかった事,また十分な栄養供給が されなかったため,硬組織が形成されなか ったものと考えられる. これらの結果から, 今後の研究にはキャリアとしてHAを使用す ることとした.

5. 再生歯根膜の機能的評価

初めに, 歯根膜細胞シートでの被覆の効 果を検討するため、歯髄細胞を含浸させ、 歯根膜細胞シートで被覆した多孔性HA、被 覆しなかった多孔性HAを、イヌ下顎骨に埋 入窩を形成し、移植した. 8週後に下顎骨 ごと回収し、マイクロCT撮影を行い、骨と 多孔性HAとの関係を3次元的に評価した. その結果、細胞シートあり群と比べ、細胞 シートなし群では骨とHAとの間の空間が狭 く、細胞シートなし群においてのみ移植先 の骨が多孔性HAの内部に進展し、骨癒着し ている像が一部観察された. また, 組織切 片を作製し評価したところ、歯根膜シート あり群では、歯根膜様組織像が観察され、 一部で既存骨とキャリアの間をつなぐ線維 の配列が確認されたが、正常歯根膜のよう な均一な線維の配列は認められなかった.

そこで次に、歯根膜組織や線維の成熟には機能力に負荷が必要であると考え、歯冠補綴装置を作製し、咬合力を付与するモデルを作製し、検討した. つまり、歯髄細胞を含浸させ、歯根膜細胞シートで被覆した多孔性HAをイヌ顎骨に埋植し、3ヶ月の治癒期間の後、歯冠補綴装置を装着した. 装着後レントゲンにて経過を追っていたが、装着7日目に脱離したため、組織を回収しX線学的、組織学的に評価した. マイクロCT解析の結果、HAに歯冠補綴物の維持孔を形成した際、

パーフォレーションしている事が確認された。また組織学的解析の結果、歯根膜シートなし群は骨との癒着がみられたが、歯根膜シートあり群ではHA周囲は歯根膜様組織で覆われていた。

そのため次のlotでは、移植前に多孔性HAに維持孔を形成し、イヌ顎骨に埋植を行った。 3ヶ月後に歯冠補綴物作製のため印象採得を 行ったが、維持孔形成による多孔性HAの強度 の低下が原因のためかHAの上部が崩壊して いた.

挺出方向の矯正力に対して、周囲骨は歯根膜の付着レベルを維持したまま垂直的に増生できるという仮説のもと、挺出装置付きの再生人工歯根を顎骨へ埋植し、3ヶ月後に矯正力(挺出力)を加えたが、HAに接着させた矯正用のワイヤーの脱離、またHAの矯正力による破折が認められ、継続的な挺出力を加えることが出来なかった。これらの失敗を改善するため、HAに接着させるワイヤーの形態および接着方法を改良し埋植を行った。しかし、感染、HAの菲薄化による強度的な問題からうまく挺出するには至らなかった。

6. 人工歯根に適したチタン表面性状の選定 (in vitro)

研磨チタン、粗造化チタン、HAチタンのチタン表面を走査型電子顕微鏡(SEM)にて観察した結果、研磨チタン表面は滑拓な表面構造を呈していたが、粗造化チタンはミクロ及びマクロな二重凹凸構造を有し、さらにHAチタンはその凹凸構造の周囲に微小な凹凸構造が観察された。次に、それぞれのチタン表面に細胞を播種し、細胞播種1日後に、それぞれのチタン表面上に付着した細胞の形態をSEMにて観察したところ、すべてのチタン表面で、細胞が伸展している像が観察された。また細胞播種7日後には、研磨チタン群において、単層に細胞

が増殖している像が観察される一方,粗造化チタン,HAチタン群において,細胞が層状に重なり合うように増殖し,それぞれの細胞が多数の突起を出し,チタン表面に接着している像が観察された.最後に,これらの細胞からRNAを回収し,石灰化のマーカーであるオステオポンチンの遺伝子発現を定量性RT-PCR法にて確認した結果,研磨チタンと比べ粗造化チタンで約3.5倍,HAチタンで約7.5倍その発現量は促進された.

D. 考察

1. ビーグル成犬抜去歯からの細胞の分離および幹細胞マーカー発現の解析ならびに多分化能の検討

各個体の抜去歯から歯髄細胞,歯根膜細胞を分離・培養することができた.しかし,歯根膜細胞の培養効率は,歯髄細胞と比較して良くなく,分離手技,培養手法の改良が必要である.また,幹細胞マーカーをフローサイトメトリーで確認したところ,骨髄由来間葉系幹細胞と類似した表現型を有していた.これらの結果から,これら単離した細胞群は間葉系の幹細胞を含む細胞群であることが明らかとなった.

分離したイヌ歯髄細胞ならびに歯根膜細胞は基質産生が旺盛なため、in vitroでの石灰化誘導は困難であったと考えられた. そのため、細胞自体の硬組織形成能は顎骨モデルでの歯根再生モデルでの検討を行うとともに、スキャホードと共に免疫不全マウス背部皮下へ移植する実験系で確認することとした.免疫不全マウスへの移植では、ヒト細胞の場合、歯髄細胞であれば象牙質様組織が、また歯根膜細胞であればやメント質様組織が形成されることが明らかとな っている. しかし、イヌ細胞の移植実験では、形成された硬組織の一部は骨様の層板 状の構造を呈していた.

2. 歯根型スキャホードの選択

ともに移植前の状態で歯根型の形態付与は可能であるが、β TCPはHAと比較すると強度が低いため、形態付与後に培地に一致時間浸漬し、細胞を播種する必要があることを確認した。今後は、形態そのものの規定とともに、歯冠補綴物の装着のための維持機構を内蔵した歯根型スキャホードの作製を目指し、外部委託も考慮する.

さらには、 β TCPはHAと比較すると機械的 強度が低く、移植窩への挿入時に形態が崩壊する危険性があること、崩壊した場合に は早期に吸収が生じることを確認した.

3. 歯髓細胞, 歯根膜細胞評価

SCIDマウス背部皮下移植実験の結果から、 歯髄細胞がないとHA内部に硬組織形成は認 められないこと、また、歯根膜細胞シート の使用が移植体と周囲組織との癒合を防止 する役割を果たしていることが明らかとな った.

4. 移植モデルの開発と評価

SCIDマウス背部皮下移植実験においては β-TCPはHAと比べてポーラス内部に硬組織 形成が誘導されていたが、イヌ顎骨移植モ デルにおいては明らかにβ-TCP内部に硬組 織は形成されていなかった。これはSCIDマ ウス移植実験とイヌ顎骨移植実験に用いた キャリアの形状が異なったためと考えられ る。つまり、SCIDマウス移植実験には多孔 質形状を有した顆粒状のスキャフォルドを 使用したのに対し、イヌ移植実験には歯根 形態の多孔質形状を有したブロックを使用 したため、ポーラスサイズの小さなβ-TCP ブロックにおいて、内部まで細胞の進展、 栄養供給がなされなかったためと考えられ る. 今後は強度のことも考慮に入れHAを用 いることとした.

5. 再生歯根膜の機能的評価

歯根膜の機能評価を行うため、歯冠補綴 装置を装着し咬合機能させる事による評価、 矯正力を負荷する事による評価をこれまで 行ってきたが、補綴物脱離、矯正装置の脱離 などのトラブルによりなかなか前進してい ないのが現状である. そこで、強度の問題を 解決するため既製のチタンインプラントの 表面性状の選定を実験で行なった.

6. 人工歯根に適したチタン表面性状の選定 (in vitro)

粗造化したチタン表面で歯髄幹細胞を培養することで、細胞は三次元的な立体構造を持ちつつ増殖し、かつ象牙芽細胞分化に関連するマーカーの発現が促進されることを確認した. さらに、粗造化したチタン表面にHAを析出させることで、遺伝子発現レベルから見た歯髄幹細胞の分化が促進されていた.

E. 結論

ビーグル成犬抜去歯から得た歯髄組織ならびに歯根膜組織より、幹細胞を含む細胞群が採取可能であり、これらの細胞は硬組織形成能、脂肪細胞分化能を有していることを確認した.

また、ビーグル成大抜去歯から採取した 歯髄細胞が歯根型スキャホードのポーラス 内部に象牙質様硬組織を再生させるのに有 用であること、歯根膜細胞シートは歯根型 スキャホードの周囲に歯根膜様組織の形成を促し、周囲組織との癒合を防止する役割を果たすことが確認させた.しかし,今回用いたポーラス構造を有したハイドロキシアパタイトの強度的な問題を解決するため、ポーラスの構造,気孔率を再度検討する必要がある.

強度の問題を解決するため既製のチタンインプラントの表面性状の選定を行なった. その結果,チタンの粗造化とその表面へのハイドロキシアパタイトの析出は,歯髄幹細胞による象牙質基質形成に適した表面改質法である可能性が示唆された.

今後は、このハイドロキシアパタイトを 析出させたチタンの有用性を*in vivo*で検討 していく予定である.

F. 健康危険情報 該当なし

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2. 実用新案登録 該当なし その他
 該当なし

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Repetition of continuous PTH treatments followed by periodic withdrawals exerts anabolic effects on rat bone

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Abstract Various animal experiments and human studies have shown that intermittent injections of parathyroid hormone (PTH) exert anabolic effects on bone, whereas continuous PTH treatment decreases the bone mass and causes hypercalcemia in animals. However, limited data are available with regard to the effects of a repetitive regimen of continuous treatments of PTH followed by periodic withdrawals on the bone metabolism. We investigated the effects of this regimen by comparing the findings of intermittent and continuous PTH treatments in rats. Infusions of PTH for 24 h followed by 6-day withdrawal periods from PTH transiently increased the serum calcium levels on day 1, but these levels were within the normocalcemic range. The repetition of 4 cycles of continuous PTH infusions followed by PTH withdrawals as well as intermittent PTH treatment increased the trabecular bone thickness, osteoblast surface, and bone formation rate. Continuous PTH infusions followed by PTH withdrawals also increased the cortical thickness of the femoral diaphysis and the osteoid volume in trabecular bones, whereas the continuous treatment failed to induce these changes. These findings suggest that continuous PTH treatment followed by PTH withdrawal is a potential regimen that

can induce the anabolic effects of PTH in bone metabolism without inducing hypercalcemia.

Keywords Parathyroid hormone · Bone mineral density · Mechanical properties · Intermittent treatment · Continuous treatment

Introduction

Parathyroid hormone (PTH) regulates bone remodeling through its action on bone formation as well as bone resorption. Studies using serum biochemical markers and bone histomorphometric analysis have shown that both intermittent and continuous PTH treatments stimulate bone turnover in trabecular and cortical bones [1–3].

Intermittent PTH treatment, which is administered via daily injections or daily short-time infusions, increases trabecular and cortical bone mass in not only normal rats [4, 5], but also ovariectomized rats [6]. These studies revealed that the optimal exposure time and frequency required to induce anabolic effects through intermittent PTH treatment are 1 h and 1-3 times per day, respectively [5, 7]. Many human studies with intermittent PTH injections also showed apparent anabolic effects on bone mass and prevention of bone fractures [8]. Although the recommended dose regimen of Forteo, a potent Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved drug for the treatment of osteoporosis, is once a day by self-administered injections, compliance with this regimen is moderate because of high cost and adverse effects such as pain at the injection sites [9].

To avoid these adverse events, new suitable therapeutic regimens are required. One possible regimen is extension of the interval of intermittent PTH injection, but it has not been

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clearly understood whether the elongated injection interval of PTH treatment induces similar anabolic action with daily PTH injection under the same total dose of PTH [10]. A possible alternative regimen is short-term continuous PTH treatment associated with a long-term withdrawal period. In this context, continuous PTH exposure by using osmotic pumps in rats results in hypercalcemia and decreased bone mass. However, various parameters of PTH treatment regimens, such as the exposure time in the continuous treatment and periodic withdrawals, have not been well documented. If continuous PTH treatment in combination with a relatively long-term withdrawal period is found to induce an anabolic effect in bones, an alternative clinical dosing regimen can be established on the basis of these findings. For example, daily subcutaneous injections of PTH could be replaced by a weekly injection of sustained controlled release PTH. This regimen can decrease the number of injections and may prevent patients from discontinuing the treatment. Furthermore, sustained pharmacokinetics may be more acceptable in the oral administration of PTH-mimicking peptides by using a drug delivery system [11].

In the present study, we conducted experiments to investigate a new therapeutic regimen of PTH administration that induces anabolic effects on bone metabolism that are comparable with those of classical intermittent PTH administration. We compared the effects of three regimens: intermittent PTH treatment, continuous PTH treatment, and repetition of continuous PTH treatments followed by periodic withdrawals. Here, we show that continuous PTH administration with periodic withdrawals exerts an anabolic effect on the bone metabolism in rats.

Materials and methods

Chemicals

Synthetic human PTH (1-34) was purchased from the Peptide Institute (Osaka, Japan) and prepared at an appropriate dose in a vehicle (10 mM acetic acid, 2% heatinactivated rat serum in sterile PBS). Calcein was purchased from Sigma (St. Louis, MO).

Animals

Nine-week-old female Sprague-Dawley rats (Charles River, Kanagawa, Japan) were used in this study. They were maintained under 12:12 h light/dark cycles with unrestricted access to tap water and a standard diet containing 1.2% Ca, 0.9% P, 22% protein, and 6.2 IU vitamin D3 per gram (CRF-1; Oriental Yeast, Tokyo, Japan). The animals were allowed to acclimatize for 12 days before the start of the experiment. The animal studies were performed in compliance with the

standards mentioned in the Care and Management of Laboratory Animals and Relief of Pain (Notice no. 88 of the Japanese Ministry of Environment, 2006).

Experimental groups

As shown in Table 1, the rats were divided into three groups (intermittent PTH treatment group, continuous PTH treatment group, and continuous PTH treatment with withdrawal group) with equal body weight distributions. Intermittent PTH treatments were administered by subcutaneous injections of PTH with a total dose of 40 µg/kg/ week. This group comprised three regimens: PTH injection (40 μg/kg) once a week (I×1-PTH), PTH injection (13.3 µg/kg) 3 times a week (I×3-PTH), and vehicle injection 3 times a week (I-CON). Continuous PTH treatment was conducted by subcutaneous implantation of Alzet micro-osmotic pumps (Model 1007D; Durect Corp., CA), which constantly deliver a fluid for 7 days. The Alzet pumps were aseptically filled with appropriate amounts of PTH or the vehicle, and the pumps were replaced every week. This group also comprised three regimens. The first regimen was continuous PTH treatment with a dose of 0.24 µg/kg/0.5 µl/h (C40-PTH), in which the total dose of PTH supplement (40 µg/kg/week) was administered. The second regimen was continuous PTH treatment with a dose of 1.67 µg/kg/0.5 µl/h (C280-PTH), in which the total dose of PTH 280 µg/kg/week was administered. This regimen was used as a positive control for PTH-induced hypercalcemia. The third regimen of this group was continuous treatment with the vehicle (C-CON). Continuous PTH treatment with withdrawal (PTH-WD) was conducted by continuous PTH treatment for 24 h through the subcutaneously implanted Alzet micro-osmotic pumps (Model

Table 1 Experimental design

Experimental group	Total dose (µg/kg/ week)	Abbreviations
Intermittent		
Control	0	I-CON
PTH 40 μg/kg × 1 injection/week	40	I×1-PTH
PTH 13.3 μ g/kg \times 3 injections/week	40	I×3-PTH
Continuous		
Control	0	C-CON
PTH 40 μg/kg/week	40	C40-PTH
PTH 280 μg/kg/week	280	C280-PTH
Continuous-withdrawal		
Control	0	CON-WD
PTH 40 μg/kg/24 h 6-day withdrawal	40	PTH-WD



1003D), which were removed from the animals 24 h after the implantation, followed by withdrawal of PTH treatment for 6 days. In this regimen, the dose of PTH was 1.67 μ g/kg/0.9 μ l/h, which is equivalent to 40 μ g/kg/24 h. Each osmotic pump was filled up more than 6 h before implantation and stored in sterile saline at 37°C so that pumping could be initiated immediately after implantation. The total amount of PTH administrated was identical for all the injection and infusion groups (40 μ g/kg/week), except for the C280-PTH group (280 μ g/kg/week).

Serum calcium levels were measured for 1 week during the various PTH treatments described above. All of the PTH treatments induced no significant differences in body weight gain as compared with the control rats (data not shown).

Measurement of serum calcium

Under ether anesthesia, approximately 200 μ l of blood was obtained from the subclavian vein immediately before and 24, 48, 72, and 168 h after implantation or the first injection of PTH. The blood was centrifuged, and the serum was stored at -80° C. Total serum calcium was determined using an automated analyzer (Super Z818; MC Medical, Tokyo, Japan) and the Calcium E-HA test Wako (Wako Pure Chemical Ind. Ltd., Tokyo, Japan).

Preparation of bone samples

Calcein (10 mg/kg) was subcutaneously administered to all rats on the 10th and 3rd days before death. At the end of the experiment, the animals were anesthetized with diethyl ether and killed by cardiectomy. The right and left femurs and the right tibia were removed. The right and left femurs were stored at -20°C , and the right femurs were analyzed using dual energy X-ray absorptiometry (DXA) and microcomputed tomography (μCT), and left femurs were used for mechanical properties analysis. For bone histomorphometry, the tibiae were fixed for 24 h in 10% phosphate-buffered formalin, which was subsequently replaced with 70% ethanol. Histological sections were obtained as described below.

Measurement of bone mineral density

The bone mineral density (BMD; mg/cm²) of the right femur was measured using DXA (DCS-600EX-IIIR; Aloka Co. Ltd., Tokyo, Japan) with a scan pitch of 1 mm and a scan speed of 25 mm/s.

μCT analysis

For cortical bone analysis, the midpoint of the femur diaphysis was scanned at a voxel size of $12.5 \times 12.5 \times 12.$

12.5 μm^3 by using μCT (Scan Xmate-RB090SS150; ComscanTechno, Kanagawa, Japan) with an X-ray source of 70 kV/100 μA . The obtained images were reconstructed and processed using 3D image analysis software (TRI/3D-BON; RATOC System Engineering, Tokyo Japan). Four slices (thickness, 50 μm) of bone were examined, and the mean cortical thickness (μm) was measured.

Analyses of the mechanical properties of bones

The cantilever bending strength of the femoral neck was measured according to a previously described method [12] by using a mechanical testing machine (EZ-L-1kN; Shimadzu, Kyoto, Japan); subsequent data were analyzed using this machine's enclosed software package. Before performing the femoral neck compression test, the femora were thawed at room temperature. For the test, the femur was cut at the midpoint of its diaphysis. The proximal part of each specimen was mounted in methacrylate resin (OSTRON-II; GC Dental Products Co., Aichi, Japan) to fix the specimen to the fixation device. The specimen was then placed on the test apparatus, and a vertical load was applied to the top of the femoral head by using a stainless steel cylinder equipped with a small, concave steel cup at its end. The loading was directed parallel to the femoral shaft. On the basis of the load-deformation curve, the maximum load (N), stiffness (N/mm), and energy to fracture (N mm) were recorded.

Bone histomorphometry

The right proximal tibiae were kept in 70% ethanol and prestained with Villanueva bone stain for 72 h. After dehydration, they were embedded in methyl methacrylate (MMA). Frontal sections of the distal tibia (thickness, 5 μ m) were obtained using a microtome. Histomorphometric analyses of metaphyseal trabecular bone were performed using the histomorphometric system for trabecular bone (BONE; System Supply, Nagano, Japan). The bone marrow cavity located 620–1240 μ m from the growth plate closest to the diaphysis and 310 μ m from both sides of the endosteum of the cortical bone was examined (field of view, 310 \times 310; magnification, 320).

The following parameters were analyzed according to standard formulae and nomenclature [13]: bone volume/tissue volume (BV/TV [%]), trabecular thickness (Tb.Th [μ m]), trabecular number (Tb.N [N/mm]), osteoblast surface/bone surface (Ob.S/BS [%]), number of osteoclasts/bone surface (N.Oc/BS [N/mm]), bone formation rate/bone surface (BFR/BS [mm³/mm²/year]), osteoid volume/bone volume (OV/BV [%]), and mineralization lag time (Mlt [days]).

Statistical analysis

All data in the tables and figures are expressed as the mean \pm standard error of the mean (SEM). Statistical analysis was carried out using Static Analysis System (SAS) software. The significance of difference was determined using the Dunnett multiple test (in the intermittent treatment group or the continuous treatment group for comparison between C-CON and C40-PTH or C280-PTH) and the Student's t test (in the continuous treatment group for comparison between C-CON and C40-PTH or in the continuous-withdrawal treatment group). A p value of <0.05 was considered significant.

Results

Effects of various PTH treatment regimens on serum calcium

Because a critical adverse effect of PTH treatment is the induction of hypercalcemia, we first determined the appropriate PTH-treatment regimens that do not induce hypercalcemic action. As shown in Fig. 1, intermittent PTH injections both once a week (I×1-PTH) and 3 times a week (I×3-PTH) did not induce any increase in serum calcium levels, as compared with those of control rats (I-CON). In contrast, continuous PTH treatment with a high dose of PTH (280 µg/kg/week; C280-PTH) significantly increased the serum calcium levels from day 1 to day 7 during the treatment, resulting in hypercalcemia (defined as a serum calcium level greater than 10.5 mg/dl). Continuous PTH treatment with a dose of 40 µg/kg/week (C40-PTH) transiently increased the serum calcium level only on day 2, as compared with that in control rats, though it was within the normocalcemic range (8.4-10.4 mg/dl). Similarly, continuous PTH treatment for 24 h followed by withdrawal of PTH treatment for 6 days (PTH-WD) increased the serum calcium level only on day 1, but this level was also within the normocalcemic range. Thus, among the PTH treatment regimens described above, a high-dose continuous PTH treatment (C280-PTH) induced apparent hypercalcemia during PTH treatment. We therefore excluded this group from further investigations of bone status.

Effects of various PTH treatment regimens on BMD

Table 2 summarizes the BMD of the entire femur and the proximal, diaphyseal, and distal parts of the femur. Intermittent PTH treatment for 4 weeks with 1 injection per week ($I \times 1$ -PTH) produced no significant differences in the BMD at each part of the bones measured, but the intermittent PTH treatment for the same period with 3 injections

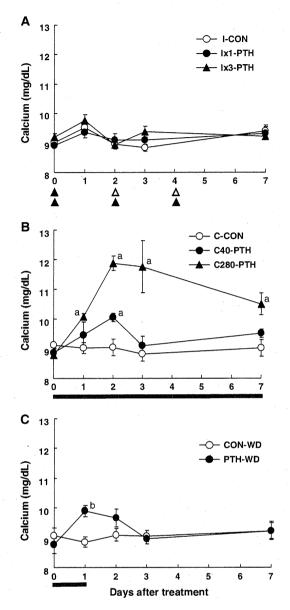


Fig. 1 Serum total calcium in rats treated with intermittent PTH (a), continuous PTH (b), and continuous PTH withdrawal (c). a *Solid triangles* indicate the days of PTH injections, and *open triangles* indicate the days of vehicle injections. b, c The treatment periods are indicated as *black bars*. Values are represented as mean \pm SEM (n = 5). $^{a}p < 0.05$ vs. C-CON, $^{b}p < 0.05$ vs. CON-WD

per week (I×3-PTH) significantly increased the BMD of the entire femur and the diaphyseal and distal parts of the femur, as compared with that in the corresponding control rats (I-CON). Continuous treatment with PTH (C40-PTH) for 4 weeks significantly decreased the BMD of the entire femur and the proximal region of the femur, as compared with that in the corresponding control rats (C-CON). In contrast, repetitive treatments for 4 weeks with continuous PTH infusion for 24 h followed by withdrawal for 6 days (PTH-WD) significantly increased the BMD in the



Table 2 Bone mineral density of femurs in rats treated with various PTH treatment protocols

	Whole (mg/cm ²)	Proximal (mg/cm ²)	Diaphysis (mg/cm ²)	Distal (mg/cm²)
I-CON	114.4 ± 1.4	113.8 ± 1.8	105.4 ± 1.5	123.0 ± 1.2
$I \times 1$ -PTH	118.6 ± 1.7	116.1 ± 1.8	109.8 ± 2.3	128.7 ± 2.2
I×3-PTH	121.7 ± 2.6^{a}	119.2 ± 2.7	112.3 ± 1.8^{a}	131.9 ± 3.4^{a}
C-CON	117.5 ± 1.2	117.2 ± 1.1	109.7 ± 1.9	128.4 ± 3.8
C40-PTH	112.1 ± 1.4^{b}	110.8 ± 1.5^{b}	104.5 ± 2.1	119.9 ± 1.9
CON-WD	114.4 ± 2.0	111.9 ± 1.5	106.4 ± 1.3	123.4 ± 3.4
PTH-WD	118.4 ± 1.5	118.7 ± 1.7^{c}	109.2 ± 1.7	126.2 ± 1.5

Values are expressed as mean \pm SEM (n=6). Comparisons of data were performed using Dunnett's test (I-CON, I×1-PTH, and I×3-PTH) and the unpaired t test (C-CON and C40-PTH; CON-WD and PTH-WD)

Significance is indicated by: ${}^{a}p < 0.05$, I×3-PTH vs. I-CON; ${}^{b}p < 0.05$, C40-PTH vs. C-CON; and ${}^{c}p < 0.05$ PTH-WD vs. CON-WD group

proximal region by 6.0%, as compared with that in the control group (CON-WD).

μCT analysis of cortical bone

Both intermittent PTH treatments, i.e., I×1-PTH and I×3-PTH, slightly increased the cortical thickness, but this increase was not significantly different from that observed in the control group (I-CON; Fig. 2). C40-PTH induced no apparent changes in cortical thickness, as compared with those in the control rats (C-CON; Fig. 2). PTH-WD significantly increased the cortical thickness, as compared with that in the control group (CON-WD; Fig. 2).

Bone histomorphometric analyses for cancellous bone

Figure 3 summarizes the results of bone histomorphometric analyses at the metaphyseal region of the proximal tibiae. I×1-PTH induced no significant differences in any parameter, as compared with those in the control rats (I-CON). However, I×3-PTH increased the values of BV/TV, Tb.Th, Ob.S/BS, and BFR/BS, as compared with those in the control rats (I-CON). C40-PTH increased the osteoclast number (N.Oc/BS), but produced no significant differences in the other parameters. PTH-WD significantly increased

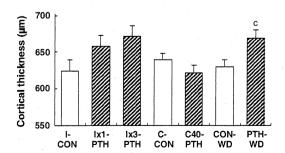


Fig. 2 Cortical thickness of femoral diaphyses measured by micro-CT, as described in "Materials and methods." Values are presented as mean \pm SEM (n=6). $^{\rm c}p<0.05$ vs. CON-WD

the OV/BV, Tb.Th, Ob.S/BS, and BFR/BS, as compared with those in the control rats (CON-WD). In the PTH-WD group, a slight but significant decrease in the trabecular number (Tb.N) was also observed. No apparent increase in the N.Oc/BS was observed in this group. We found no significant differences on mineralization lag time (Mlt: O.Th/MAR × OS/MS) among each group (Fig. 3). These data indicate that PTH-WD treatment produces anabolic effects on trabecular bones by stimulating bone formation, without the continuously elevated osteoclastic bone resorption observed in the C40-PTH treatment.

Mechanical properties of the femoral neck

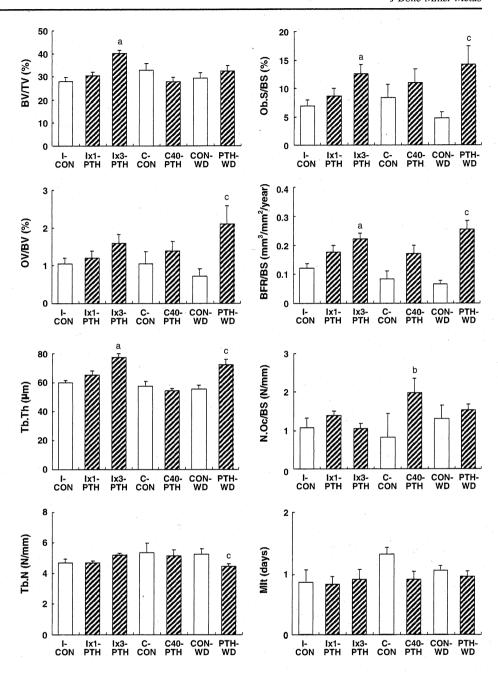
Table 3 summarizes the mechanical properties of the femoral neck in rats treated with various regimens. I×3-PTH and PTH-WD slightly increased the maximum load, but these values were not significantly different from those in the control rats. The stiffness of the femoral neck tended to be less in the C40-PTH and PTH-WD treatment groups than in each control group. PTH-WD treatment increased the energy required to fracture by 47%, but this value was not significantly different from the values of the control femurs.

Discussion

Various animal experiments have shown that in rats, a continuous infusion of PTH induced catabolic actions in bones, resulting in decreased bone mass and hypercalcemia. However, intermittent treatment with PTH exerted anabolic effects by increasing the bone mass in intact and ovariectomized (OVX) rats and humans [4, 6, 8]. Previous pharmacokinetic studies have indicated that the duration of the serum concentration of PTH above the baseline level of endogenous PTH is a critical factor in regulating such catabolic and anabolic actions on the bone mass [6, 13].



Fig. 3 Histomorphometric indices of trabecular bone in the proximal metaphyses of tibiae in rats treated with various administration regimens for 4 weeks, as described in "Materials and methods" I-CON, intermittent treatment control; I×1-PTH, intermittent injection of PTH once a week: I×3-PTH, intermittent injections of PTH 3 times a week; C-CON, continuous treatment control; C40-PTH, continuous infusion of PTH for 4 weeks; CON-WD, control for PTH continuous treatment followed by PTH withdrawal; PTH-WD, continuous infusion of PTH for 24 h followed by PTH withdrawal for 6 days. Values are presented as mean \pm SEM (n = 6). ^ap < 0.05 vs. I-CON, ^bp < 0.05vs. C-CON, $^{c}p < 0.05$ vs. CON-WD



Sustained serum concentration of PTH above the baseline level for more than 6 h per day causes catabolic effects such as decreased bone mass and hypercalcemia; these effects are symptoms of hyperparathyroidism [5, 14]. We showed that the repetition of a continuous infusion of PTH for 24 h followed by a 6-day withdrawal period (PTH-WD) induced some anabolic activity in the bone metabolism, without causing hypercalcemia. This PTH treatment may increase the serum PTH level for more than 6 h on the day of infusion; therefore, a substantial period of withdrawal is important to induce the anabolic effects of PTH in bone

metabolism, regardless of continuous treatment with PTH for 24 h. Interestingly, Ishii et al. [15] reported that intermittent lowering of the serum PTH level exerted "anabolic-like" effects on bone mass in rats with chronic renal insufficiency. In their study, intermittent lowering of the serum PTH level increased the trabecular bone thickness, but not the trabecular number; this finding is similar to that observed in the rats of the PTH-WD group in our study. Another study reported that a continuous PTH infusion for 7 days followed by a 21 day withdrawal period increased the mechanical properties of bones [16]; however, the dose



Table 3 Mechanical properties of the femoral head in rats treated with various treatment protocols of PTH for 28 days

	Femoral head compression				
	Maximum load (N)	Stiffness (N/mm)	Energy to fracture (N mm)		
I-CON	86.7 ± 5.5	264 ± 27	19.0 ± 2.4		
I×1-PTH	82.9 ± 5.0	194 ± 28	23.4 ± 3.6		
$I \times 3$ -PTH	96.8 ± 2.8	304 ± 38	21.0 ± 3.4		
C-CON	85.1 ± 5.7	205 ± 13	17.0 ± 3.0		
C40-PTH	73.6 ± 3.1	176 ± 23	19.8 ± 2.7		
CON-WD	81.2 ± 8.0	273 ± 36	21.4 ± 5.8		
PTH-WD	96.1 ± 7.3	172 ± 32	31.3 ± 4.4		

Values are expressed as mean \pm SEM (n=6). No significance was detected

used in this study (40 μ g/kg/day for 7 days) caused transitional hypercalcemia in our experiment (Fig. 1). These results indicate that suitable periods of sustained serum PTH level and PTH withdrawal are important to induce the anabolic effects of PTH on bone, even after continuous PTH treatment.

Our study showed that 4 cycles of PTH-WD treatment as well as I×3-PTH treatment induced some anabolic activity in the bone metabolism. Both treatments increased Tb.Th, Ob.S/BS, and BFR/BS. However, these 2 regimens also produced some other effects. PTH-WD treatment significantly increased the OV/BV, but I×3-PTH treatment failed to significantly increase it. In contrast, PTH-WD treatment failed to increase BV/TV, and I×3-PTH treatment significantly increased it. The Tb.N was maintained in the I×3-PTH group at the level of the control group, but the Tb.N was reduced in the PTH-WD group. This decrease in the Tb.N in the PTH-WD group may be a cause of the non-elevated values of BV/TV, which was observed in the I×3-PTH group. Further, the dissociation between increased Tb.Th and decreased Tb.N in the PTH-WD group will provide important information to understand the action mechanism of PTH-WD treatment. We speculate that the decreased Tb.N might be due to transient or acute bone resorption during continuous PTH treatment for the initial 24 h, though N.Oc/BS was not significantly increased at the end of PTH-WD treatment. Thereafter, active bone formation occurred, and it contributed the increased Tb.Th. Thus, anabolic actions induced by the PTH-WD treatment on the bone structure seem to be different from those observed in the intermittent PTH treatment group without changes in mineralization lag time.

Cortical bone thickness is an important factor that determines the mechanical characteristics of a femur and predicts the bone strength and fracture risk in patients with osteoporosis [17]. Although PTH-WD treatment increased the cortical thickness, the PTH-WD group had mild

increases in ultimate force at maximal load without significant differences as well as the I×3-PTH group. The PTH-WD group showed the increase in energy to fracture, but it was not significantly different from other groups. Since PTH-WD treatment failed to induce significant changes in the mechanical properties, it is necessary to conduct long-term studies for more than 4 weeks to record apparent improvements in the mechanical properties.

Continuous PTH treatment as well as intermittent PTH treatment stimulates bone formation, but the former treatment enhances osteoclastic bone resorption that exceeds the stimulated bone formation. In the present study, PTH-WD treatment as well as I×3-PTH treatment prevented increases in the N.Oc/BS, whereas prolonged continuous PTH treatment for 7 days (C40-PTH) significantly increased the N.Oc/BS. These results suggest that a suitable PTH withdrawal period contributes to the induction of anabolic bone action by preventing overstimulation of osteoclastic bone resorption. This assumption is supported by studies that showed that the ratio of the receptor activator of the nuclear factor kB ligand (RANKL) to osteoprotegerin (OPG) (RANKL/OPG ratio) and MCP-1 expression, which are known to be the key regulators of osteoclast differentiation, depend on the exposure time to PTH [18, 19].

The recommended regimen of recombinant human PTH(1-34), Forteo, which is a potent FDA-approved drug for the treatment of osteoporosis, is once a day by selfadministered injections. The compliance of patients with this treatment is moderate because of high cost and adverse effects such as pain at the injection site [9, 20, 21]. To overcome these problems, several researchers have attempted the use of less- or noninvasive and inexpensive delivery systems for PTH [11, 22, 23], including an injectable formulation with a low frequency of injection and an oral delivery system. Balck et al. [24] showed that daily injections of PTH (1-84) for a month followed by weekly injections of PTH (1-84) for 11 months increased the vertebral BMD in patients with osteoporosis; this suggests that less frequent PTH injections can be used as an anabolic therapeutic regimen. One of the hurdles in oral administration appears to be the attainment of pulsatile PTH plasma concentrations, which induce anabolic effects in the bone. In the present study, we showed that the repetition of 24-h continuous infusions of PTH followed by 6day withdrawal periods induced anabolic effects in the bone. Another critical issue that should be considered carefully is the induction of hypercalcemia by PTH administration. Horwitz et al. [25] revealed that continuous infusion of PTH for 23 h did not induce severe hypercalcemia in healthy human volunteers. Our results indicated that continuous PTH infusion for 24 h slightly increased the serum calcium level, which remained lower than the

hypercalcemic level on day 1, and the normocalcemic level was regained from day 2. Since the serum calcium level after the oral administration of PTH will return to normal level within 24 h, oral administration followed by PTH withdrawal will be a potential therapeutic regimen of PTH treatment that can induce anabolic effects in the bone without inducing hypercalcemia.

It is essential to determine the suitable intervals of PTH exposure and withdrawal in order to establish a therapeutic regimen for PTH treatment. Katz et al. [26] reported that in 9- to 13-week-old male rats, the resorption and formation periods are 2.1 days and 14.4 days, respectively, and these periods are prolonged in older rats and humans; therefore, the bone turnover period, expressed as the activation frequency or bone remodeling unit, is a critical factor in determining suitable treatment periods. In addition, this study raised the possibility that variable regimens of PTH treatment regulate osteoclastic bone resorption and osteoblastic bone formation. Further studies on the doses of PTH and the durations of PTH exposure and withdrawal are required to determine a suitable regimen that induces more effective anabolic action of PTH on the bone structure. Since a recent study demonstrated that PTH predominantly affected preosteoblastic proliferation rather than osteoblastic bone synthesis, the effects of PTH-WD treatment on proliferation of preosteoblastic cells will be of particular interest for understanding the mechanism underlying such PTH treatment [27].

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