Increased beta cell workload modulates proinsulin/insulin ratio in humans

Teresa Mezza[1], Pietro. M. Ferraro[2], Vinsin A. Sun[1], Simona Moffa[1], Chiara M. A. Cefalo[1], Giuseppe Quero[3], Francesca Cinti[1], Gian Pio Sorice[1], Alfredo Pontecorvi[1], Franco Folli[4], Andrea Mari[5], Sergio Alfieri[3], Andrea Giaccari[1]

1 Endocrinologia e Diabetologia, Fondazione Policlinico Universitario A. Gemelli IRCSS-Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Roma, Italia;

2 Nefrologia, Fondazione Policlinico Universitario A. Gemelli IRCSS-Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Roma, Italia;

3 Chirurgia Digestiva, Fondazione Policlinico Universitario A. Gemelli IRCSS-Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Roma, Italia

4 University of Milan, Milano, Italia

5 Institute of Neuroscience, National Research Council, Padova, Italia

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Corresponding author:

Andrea Giaccari MD, PhD

Center for Endocrine and Metabolic Diseases, Fondazione Policlinico Universitario A. Gemelli IRCSS-Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

Largo F. Vito 1- 00168 Rome - Italy

andrea.giaccari@unicatt.it

Tel: 06 9673 8272 Fax: 06 9480 3782

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Abstract

Increased proinsulin secretion, which characterizes type 2 diabetes and insulin resistance, may be due to an intrinsic, primitive defect in proinsulin processing, or be secondary to increased demand on β-cells (hyperinsulinemia secondary to insulin resistance). An alternative way to investigate the relation between relative hyperproinsulinemia and increased secretory demand is to study the dynamic changes in proinsulin to insulin ratio after partial pancreatectomy, a model of acute increased beta cell workload on the remaining pancreas. To pursue this aim, non-diabetic patients, scheduled for partial pancreatectomy, underwent 4-hour mixed meal tests and hyperinsulinemic euglycemic clamps before and after surgery. Following acute beta cell mass reduction, no changes were observed in fasting proinsulin to insulin ratio, while fold change in proinsulin to insulin ratio significantly increased over time after the meal. Further, our data demonstrate that whole-body insulin resistance is associated with underlying defects in proinsulin secretion, which become detectable only in the presence of increased insulin secretion demand.

INTRODUCTION

Increased circulating levels of proinsulin, and a consequently elevated proinsulin-to-insulin ratio, is a well-known abnormality in type 2 diabetes (1-4). Disproportionate proinsulin secretion has been reported as marker for beta cell dysfunction in both diabetic patients and individuals at risk of diabetes (5,6). The exact mechanism behind this increase is unknown, although it has been hypothesized that an elevated proinsulin-to-insulin ratio is caused by increased secretory demand on beta cells due to insulin resistance and continuous hyperglycemia, which promotes the release of immature granules with a higher relative content of proinsulin and its conversion intermediates.

Experimental studies in nicotinic-acid-induced insulin resistance in baboons (7) and humans (8), and observations in non-diabetic obese subjects (9), which show unchanged proinsulin-to-insulin ratios, however, do not support the above hypothesis. Further, it has also been shown that an

elevated proinsulin-to-insulin ratio in type 2 diabetes is highly correlated with the degree of decreased secretory capacity (10). However, it is still unclear how beta cell dysfunction *per se* or increased beta cell demand relates to conversion of intact proinsulin to insulin, or whether a combination of insulin resistance, beta cell dysfunction and increased beta cell demand has a differential effect on this conversion process.

To investigate the relation between relative hyperproinsulinemia and increased secretory demand, we examined the effects of acute ~50 % reduction of islet mass, and concomitant increased beta cell workload on the remaining ~50% islet mass, using partial pancreatectomy as a human model. Several previous studies have examined the metabolic changes occurring following partial pancreatectomy in humans (11,12). Due to anatomical reasons (the head/right part of the pancreas is vascularized by branches of the gastroduodenal artery, while the tail is vascularized by branches of the splenic artery) all patients undergoing pancreaticoduodenectomy receive virtually the same partial (50%) resection, maintaining almost the same remaining portion of the endocrine pancreas. This surgery is therefore a unique way to examine the effects of a sudden increase in the workload of the remaining pancreas.

Furthermore, it is unclear which pre-surgery metabolic defects have a greater impact on post-challenge glucose tolerance and islet function. This issue is particularly relevant because metabolic response differs among subjects who undergo a 50% partial pancreatectomy, suggesting that underlying insulin resistance could play a major role.

Therefore, in the present study we aim: (1) to examine changes in proinsulin secretion and beta cell secretory capacity, modeled from a 4h mixed meal test, in non-diabetic individuals before and after acute beta cell reduction and (2) to assess whether preexisting insulin resistance can modify proinsulin processing subsequent to increased beta cell workload.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Subject selection and protocols

Nine patients (7 female; 2 male; mean age 55±7 yrs ±SE) undergoing pylorus-preserving pancreatoduodenectomy were recruited from the Digestive Surgery Unit and studied in the Center for Endocrine and Metabolic Diseases unit (both at the Agostino Gemelli University Hospital, Rome, Italy). The study protocol (ClinicalTrials.gov Identifier: NCT02175459) was approved by the local ethics committee (P/656/CE2010 and 22573/14) and all participants provided written informed consent, which was followed by a comprehensive medical evaluation. Indication for surgery was tumor of the ampulla of Vater. None of the patients enrolled had a known history of diabetes. Patients underwent both fasting glucose and HbA1c testing to exclude diabetes, according to the American Diabetes Association criteria (13). Only patients with normal cardiopulmonary and kidney function, as determined by medical history, physical examination, electrocardiography, estimated glomerular filtration rate and urinalysis were included. Altered serum lipase and amylase levels prior to surgery, as well as morphologic criteria for pancreatitis, were considered exclusion criteria. Patients with severe obesity (BMI> 40), uncontrolled hypertension and/or hypercholesterolemia were also excluded. Clinical and metabolic characteristics of patients are shown in Table 1.

All subjects underwent a 2-hour euglycemic clamp (insulin infusion rate: 40 $mIU \cdot min^{-1} \cdot m^{-2}$), Hyperglycemic clamp with arginine stimulation and a 4-hour mixed meal test to evaluate insulin secretion (from C-peptide deconvolution) and proinsulin/insulin ratio, as described below, before and ~40 days after surgery. The adequacy of the recovery period was determined on the basis of the normalization of inflammatory parameters such as C-reactive protein, erythrocyte sedimentation rate, stability of weight, absence of symptoms of abnormal intestinal motility or exocrine pancreatic deficiency.

Hyperinsulinemic euglycemic clamp procedure

The hyperinsulinemic euglycemic clamp test was performed after a 12h overnight fast using insulin 40 mIU·min^{-1}·m^{-2} of body surface according to DeFronzo and colleagues (14). A primed-constant infusion of insulin was administered (Actrapid HM, Novo Nordisk, Copenhagen, Denmark). The constant rate for the insulin infusion was reached within 10 min to achieve steady-state insulin levels; in the meantime, a variable infusion of 20% glucose was started via a separate infusion pump and the rate was adjusted, on the basis of plasma glucose samples drawn every 5 min, to maintain plasma glucose concentration at each participant's fasting plasma glucose level. During the last 20 min of the clamp procedure, plasma samples from blood drawn at 5–10 min intervals were used to determine glucose and insulin concentrations. Whole-body peripheral glucose utilization was calculated during the last 30-min period of the steady-state insulin infusion and was measured as the mean glucose infusion rate (as mg·Kg^{-1}·min^{-1}).

Hyperglycemic clamp procedure

Plasma glucose was clamped at a stable level of 125 mg/dl above fasting blood glucose concentration. The hyperglycemic clamp was started with a bolus dose of dextrose 200 mg/mL (150 mg/kg) administered into the antecubital vein. Blood was drawn from a cannulated dorsal hand vein on the opposite arm. Every 5 min, venous plasma glucose was analyzed with a glucose analyzer and the infusion of 20% glucose was adjusted to achieve a stable glucose level of 125 mg/dl above the fasting value. Serum samples for insulin, and C-peptide were drawn at 0, 2.5, 5, 7.5, 10, 15, 30, 60, 90, 120, 130, 140, and 150 min. At 120 min, a 5g arginine bolus was administered to measure maximum C-peptide secretory capacity at a steady-state blood glucose concentration of 250 mg/dl. Arginine-stimulated β cell secretory capacity was calculated as delta of 130 min C-peptide and 120 min C-peptide levels

Mixed meal test

A mixed meal test (MMT) was performed, as previously described (15). Patients were instructed to consume a meal of 830 kcal (107 kcal from protein, 353 kcal from fat, and 360 kcal from carbohydrates) within 15 min. Blood samples were drawn twice in the fasting state and at 30 min intervals over the following 240 min (sample time 0', 30', 60', 90', 120', 150', 180', 210' and 240') for the measurement of plasma glucose, insulin, C-peptide, proinsulin. Blood samples for proinsulin were sampled in tubes containing EDTA; after centrifugation (1000 rpm for 10 min at 4°C), they were stored at -80°C until analysis. Insulin levels were determined using a commercial RIA kit (Medical System, Immulite DPC, Los Angeles, CA). Plasma glucose concentrations were determined by the glucose oxidase technique, using a glucose analyzer (Beckman Instruments, Palo Alto, CA, USA). Plasma C-peptide was measured by autoDELPHIA automatic fluoroimmunoassay (Wallac, Turku, Finland), with a detection limit of 17 pmol/L. Proinsulin was measured by ELISA kit no. 10-1118-01 (Mercodia), which reacts specifically with total proinsulin.

Surgical procedures

Pancreatoduodenectomy was performed according to the pylorus preserving technique (16). Briefly, the pancreatic head, the entire duodenum, common bile duct, and gallbladder were removed en bloc, leaving a functioning pylorus intact at the gastric outlet. All adjacent lymph nodes were carefully removed. The continuity of the gastrointestinal tract was restored by an end-to-side invaginated pancreato-jejunostomy. Further downstream, an end-to-side hepaticojejunostomy and an end-to-side pylorojejunostomy were performed. The volume of pancreas removed during the surgery is constant (~50%), as previously reported by Schrader et al. (17).

Calculations

To further characterize the relation between insulin resistance and changes in proinsulin to insulin ratio, we divided subjects according to their insulin sensitivity, as measured by the euglycemic hyperinsulinemic clamp procedure before surgery. As previously described (18), the cut-off for

insulin sensitivity was the median value of glucose uptake in the overall cohort (4.9 $mg \cdot Kg^{-1} \cdot min^{-1}$); therefore, subjects whose glucose uptake was above the median value were classified as "more insulin-sensitive" than subjects whose glucose uptake was below the median; for ease of comprehension, we defined the subjects as "insulin sensitive" (n.5) or "insulin resistant" (n.4).

During the mixed meal test, insulin secretion was derived from C-peptide levels by deconvolution (19). β-Cell Glucose Sensitivity (βCGS), i.e. the slope of the relationship between insulin secretion and glucose concentration, was estimated from the mixed meal by modeling, as previously described (20,21).

Statistics

All data are expressed as mean ± SEM, unless otherwise indicated. Since samples did not deviate significantly from normal, differences in means were tested by two tailed Student's t test. The relationship between variables was derived with linear regression analysis. For measures of insulin, C-peptide, proinsulin, proinsulin to insulin ratio, we compared the effects of time and pancreatectomy using linear mixed model for repeated measures, with each parameter as the dependent variable and time (analyzed as a continuous variable), pancreatectomy and the product term of time x pancreatectomy to investigate interaction effects. For proinsulin to insulin ratio, we evaluated third level interaction by including a product term of time x pancreatectomy x insulin sensitivity in the model. The area under the curve (AUC) of proinsulin to insulin ratio was calculated during the 0-240 interval of the mixed meal test using the trapezoidal method. Proinsulin to insulin ratio was also calculated as fold change in proinsulin to insulin ratio, dividing each time point by the basal level. P-values <0.05 were considered significant. Analysis was performed using Stata (StataCorp, TX, USA).

RESULTS

Clinical and metabolic characteristics of study subjects are provided in Table 1.

Hemipancreatectomy induced a marked reduction in basal and total insulin secretion rate, with concomitant reduction in glucose sensitivity

Subjects were evaluated one week before surgery and 40±7 days (range 34-48 days) after surgery, as stated in the study design. As expected, both the basal insulin secretion rate (pre-surgery: 85.3±10.3 vs post-surgery: 57.7±7.59 pmol·min^{-1}·m^{-2}, P=0.04, Figure 1A) and total insulin secretion rate during the meal test (pre-surgery: 69.6±10.9 vs post-surgery: 34.0±4.43 nmol·m^{-2}, P=0.01 Figure 1B) decreased significantly following surgery. Further, partial pancreatectomy also caused a significant reduction in βCGS (pre-surgery: 187±46.1 vs post-surgery: 51.7±18.7 pmol·min^{-1}m^{-2}·mM^{-1}, P<0.01; Figure 1C) and in arginine-stimulated insulin secretion (indirect measure of beta cell mass) (pre-surgery: 1691±366,5 vs post-surgery: 632.5±265.8 pmol/L, P=0.02; Figure 1D). To provide further proof of increased beta cell workload, we also normalized all insulin secretory parameters for arginine-stimulated insulin secretion. We observed a significant increase in basal ISR (pre-surgery: 0.045±0.005 vs post-surgery: 0.262±0.099, P<0.04; Supplementary figure 1A), Total ISR (pre-surgery: 0.040±0.005 vs post-surgery: 0.157±0.050, P<0.03; Supplementary figure 1B), and also in beta cell glucose sensitivity (pre-surgery: 0.080±0.014 vs post-surgery: 0.233±0.046, P<0.01; Supplementary figure 1C) perarginine-stimulated insulin secretion following acute islet cell mass reduction, which indicates an enhanced beta cell workload in the remaining islet cell mass. Conversely, no changes were observed in insulin sensitivity, as assessed by the hyperinsulinemic euglycemic clamp (18), after pancreatectomy (pre-surgery: 5.08±0.26 vs post-surgery: 5.04± 0.17 mg·Kg^{-1}·min^{-1}, P=0.95). Fasting and plasma glucose concentrations during MMT increased significantly after surgery (P<0.01 for pancreatectomy) (Figure 2A), while insulin and C-peptide secretion were significantly reduced (P<0.01 and P<0.01 for pancreatectomy, respectively, Figure 2B-C).

Hemipancreatectomy induces a increase in proinsulin to insulin ratio, while its dynamic secretion is preserved.

Proinsulin concentration changes over time tended to increase after surgery (P=0.08 for pancreatectomy), (Figure 2D). Insulin to proinsulin ratios showed increased time-dependent response both before and after surgery (P=0.01 for time), while no differences due to surgery were detectable. Fold change in proinsulin to insulin ratios increased considerably over time before and after surgery and the increase over time was significantly greater following surgery (P value for interaction=0.01) (Figure 2E).

Insulin resistance induces amplified proinsulin to insulin ratio after hemipancreatectomy

To further characterize changes in proinsulin to insulin ratio following removal of ~50% of pancreas, we investigated the correlations between insulin sensitivity (glucose infusion rate during the euglycemic hyperinsulinemic clamp) and proinsulin to insulin ratio following pancreatectomy. The analysis of the entire cohort revealed strong inverse correlations, both in the fasting state (basal P/I ratio r= -0.78, P=0.01, Figure 3A) and as AUC after the meal test (AUC P/I ratio 0-240 min r=-0.73, P=0.02, Figure 3B).

In order to better characterize the relation between insulin sensitivity and changes in proinsulin to insulin ratio, we compared insulin resistant and insulin sensitive subjects.

A trend to increase in basal ISR, total ISR, and also in beta cell glucose sensitivity per arginine-stimulated insulin secretion was observed in both insulin sensitive and insulin resistant subjects following acute islet cell mass reduction (Supplementary Figure 2).

Interestingly, basal proinsulin to insulin ratio (insulin sensitive 0.39±0.10 vs insulin resistant 0.33±0.08, P=0.65; Supplementary Figure 3B) and total proinsulin to insulin ratio (AUC P/I ratio 0-240 min insulin sensitive 68.2±20.3 vs insulin resistant 59.0±17.2, P=0.80, Supplementary Figure

1C) were comparable before surgery, while insulin secretion was significantly greater in insulin resistant subjects (P=0.03) (Supplementary Figure 4A).

Although 50% pancreatectomy led to increased proinsulin to insulin ratio in the entire cohort, pancreatectomy had a significantly different and opposite effect on time-dependent change in proinsulin to insulin ratio in insulin sensitive compared to insulin resistant subjects. (P<0.001 for the interaction between pancreatectomy, time and insulin sensitivity. Supplementary Figure 3A)

After partial pancreatectomy, all subjects experienced a significant reduction in insulin secretion and insulin levels were comparable in insulin sensitive compared to insulin resistant subjects (p=0.83) (Supplementary figure 4B), but only the insulin sensitive subjects showed a significant decrease in the basal proinsulin to insulin ratio (insulin sensitive before surgery 0.39±0.10 vs after surgery 0.20±0.07, P=0.02; Supplementary Figure 3A-B) and a numerical decrease in total proinsulin to insulin ratio (AUC P/I ratio 0-240 min insulin sensitive before surgery 68.2±20.3 vs after surgery 47.9±10.2, P=0.18; Supplementary Figure 3A-C). Conversely, in the insulin resistant subjects basal proinsulin to insulin ratio (insulin sensitive before surgery 0.33±0.08 vs after surgery 0.46±0.08, P=0.04; Supplementary Figure 3A-B) and total proinsulin to insulin ratio increased after surgery (AUC P/I ratio 0-240 min insulin sensitive before surgery 59.0±16.2 vs after surgery 78.1±21.4, P=0.04; Supplementary Figure 3A-C).

DISCUSSION

Our findings suggest that an acute per cell insulin secretion demand alters insulin secretion processes (proinsulin/insulin ratio) mainly in the presence of insulin resistance. The key result is that insulin sensitivity following partial pancreatectomy was strongly and inversely correlated with proinsulin to insulin ratio, measured either in the fasting state or after the mixed meal.

To reproduce a condition of acute increased insulin secretory demand due to loss of islets of Langerhans, we used subjects undergoing a 50% pancreatectomy as a model. Following a ~50%

removal of islets of Langerhans, we observed a two-fold time-dependent increase in the proinsulin to insulin ratio (expressed as a fraction of the basal value) during a meal, suggesting that this increased beta cell workload affects proinsulin processing.

In line with a previous study in which the surgical removal of two-thirds of the pancreas in dogs failed to reproduce a surgically induced change in the proinsulin to insulin ratio (22), no statistically significant changes in fasting P/I ratio were observed following acute beta cell mass reduction. This suggests that the imbalance in the insulin secretory machinery due to increasing beta cell demand occurs under stimulus. These data differ from those obtained in a study on pancreas donors following partial pancreatectomy (23), in which an increased fasting proinsulin to insulin ratio was observed after surgery and this was directly correlated with fasting glucose levels and measures of maximal beta cell reserve capacity. This controversial result could be explained by the different timing of the post-surgical evaluation. Indeed, while Seaquist et al. (23) evaluated donors no earlier than 12 months and up to 96 months after hemipancreatectomy, we performed a follow-up after a mean of 45 days. It seems that increased proinsulin to insulin ratio in the fasting state needs a chronic adaptation to increasing beta cell workload, which requires a long-term evaluation.

Further, we also demonstrated that proinsulin/insulin ratio increases physiologically in a time-dependent manner in the four hours after a meal and that this time-dependent secretion in response to meals is preserved following acute beta cell mass reduction.

We must also account for the effect of hyperglycemia, as it is the major factor increasing insulin secretory demand, and the changes observed in our study are also mediated by worsening glucose control.

We employed a mixed meal test which reproduces physiological stimulus to insulin secretion and represents an appropriate method to investigate the proinsulin response. This finding highlights the important role of appropriate stimuli in investigating insulin secretion dynamics.

Despite preservation of the time-dependent proinsulin to insulin ratio following beta cell mass reduction, overall secretion increased after partial pancreatectomy, in the presence of a concomitant

worsening in beta cell secretion rate and glucose sensitivity, suggesting that the remaining beta cell mass is under stress due to the increased workload (likely due to a combination of insulin resistance and reduced beta cell mass).

These data support our hypothesis that increased beta cell demand, rather than preexisting beta cell dysfunction *per se*, determines a rapid change in proinsulin to insulin secretion ratio, in line with earlier studies showing that increased proinsulin levels, which are the consequence of impaired proinsulin conversion to insulin, predict worsening glucose tolerance (24,25).

Furthermore, both basal and stimulated levels of P/I ratio were comparable in insulin sensitive and insulin resistant subjects at baseline (before surgery), suggesting that underlying insulin resistance does not affect proinsulin secretion in normal physiological conditions.

Earlier studies have been inconclusive regarding the relative fasting proinsulin levels in prediabetes, mainly because proinsulin and insulin were analyzed only at baseline, *i.e.* non stimulated samples. Several studies have shown an increase in the P/I ratio in IGT, obese and insulin resistant non-diabetic individuals, suggesting that proinsulin conversion might be a useful biomarker for the prediction of diabetes risk and beta cell dysfunction (26-28), whereas others have found normal levels compared to controls (29-33).

Despite the small population, it is worth noting that our data overcome the limits of previous studies on this relevant topic and we did our best to strengthen the study with a stronger statistical analysis. We therefore performed a mixed measures repeated statistical analysis, which includes every single time point in the outcome evaluation without violating the assumption of data independence while accounting for random effects.

As there are differences in the half-lives of insulin and proinsulin (34), the circulating concentrations during the fasting state do not reflect what is actually released by the beta cell granules. Instead, measuring insulin secretion directly after acute stimulation provides a better estimate of the granule content of insulin and proinsulin. Larsson and Ahren (35) have shown an

increase in the P/I ratio after acute stimulation of insulin secretion with arginine in IGT women, but we were unable to demonstrate the same trend when comparing insulin sensitive to insulin resistant subjects before surgery, probably due to the use of a different stimulus.

However, in response to increased beta cell workload following acute beta cell mass reduction, insulin resistant subjects showed an increase in both fasting and area under the curve proinsulin to insulin ratio, while the proinsulin to insulin ratio showed no increase in insulin sensitive subjects. Further, it seems less likely that intrinsic processing defects are involved, as otherwise one would expect the same response in the more and less insulin sensitive subgroups.

Despite the acute onset of hyperglycemia (40 days), we cannot exclude that worsening insulin sensitivity, leading to glucose toxicity effects and structural modifications in the beta cells (as observed after many years of chronic hyperglycemia) may play a role in the proinsulin to insulin changes observed or that hyperglycemia and other metabolic parameters may also impair proinsulin processing. Further, we do not have functional follow-up reevaluation before 40 days and we cannot exclude that a different condition could be present a few hours/days after surgery. Nevertheless, we purposely chose to conduct follow-up reevaluation 40 days after surgery to ensure full recovery after this complex surgery and limit additional confounders due to the short period of recovery from the surgical procedure.

Besides, in type 2 diabetes it has been demonstrated that P/I ratio is increased both in the fasting state (36-40) and after acute stimulation (41). It seems, therefore, that insulin resistance is a feature of prediabetes, in which there are compensatory attempts to cope with the various aspects of the beta cell dysfunction seen in diabetes, such as defective proinsulin processing in the granules.

Furthermore, we here suggest that morphological and functional modifications induced by insulin resistance directly impact the beta cell secretory system, but that their negative effects become

evident only in response to supraphysiological beta cell demand, when probably no further compensation for increased beta cell workload is possible.

In this context, the improvement of proinsulin to insulin conversion recently observed after lifestyle intervention and at long term follow-up is an important finding (42), as it suggests that in the early beta cell dysfunction phase, the defect in proinsulin processing could be partially reversed by improving insulin sensitivity. Investigating the mechanisms underlying defects in proinsulin secretion could reveal new potential therapeutic targets to slow or cure beta cell dysfunction, by applying personalized strategies for each single aspect of beta cell dysfunction.

In summary, the proinsulin to insulin ratio increases after physiological stimulation of insulin secretion in non-diabetic humans, and this is further amplified following acute beta cell mass reduction. This indicates a physiological regulation in the proinsulin secretion process, which is significantly impaired after prolonged stimulation and when beta cell demand is increased following beta cell mass reduction. Thus, insulin resistance directly impacts proinsulin processing, leading to increased relative, both basal and stimulated, proinsulin release, detectable only in the presence of increased insulin secretion demand, due to acute beta cell mass reduction.

Author contribution

T.M. generated the data and wrote the manuscript. P.M.F. performed statistical analysis. F.F., A.M, S.A. and A.G. reviewed/edited manuscript. G.P.S., A.S, G.Q., S.M., F.C., G.G. and A.P. contributed to discussion, reviewed/edited manuscript. C.M.A.C., S.M. and V.A.S. researched data, A.M. generated data. T.M. and A.G. are guarantors of this work and, as such, had full access to all the data in the study and take responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of data analyses.

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Table 1.

Subject characteristics	**Before Surgery**	**After Surgery**	**P value**
Mean age (y)	55 ± 7.0	---	---
Gender (female/male)	7/2	---	---
BMI (kg/m^2)	27.8±1.63	25.2±1.32	0.17
Fasting glucose (mg/dl)	88.0±6.00	117±12.0	0.01
Fasting insulin (μIU/ml)	5.56±0.79	5.23±1.77	0.92
Fasting C-peptide (ng/ml)	2.55±0.66	2.03±0.22	0.36
Total Cholesterol (mg/dl)	203±23.4	144±19.9	0.03
Triglycerides (mg/dl)	142±12.6	102±13.5	0.06
HbA1c % (mmol/mol)	5.61±0.19 (38.0±1.83)	6.76±0.4 (50.0±4.36)	0.008

Clinical and metabolic characteristics of patients before and after surgery. Data are means ± SE or n. (gender distribution), p- value <0.05 is considered statistically significant.

TABLE AND FIGURE LEGENDS

Table 1. Clinical and metabolic characteristics of patients before and after surgery. Data are means ± SE or n. (sex distribution and clinical diagnoses),* p- value significant <0.05.

Figure 1. MMT-derived basal insulin secretion rate (A), total insulin secretion rate (B) and glucose sensitivity (C), Clamp-derived arginine-stimulated insulin secretion (D) before (white bars) and after (dark bars) partial pancreatectomy.

Figure 2. Glucose (A), insulin (B) C-peptide (C), proinsulin (D) levels before (white circles) and after (dark squares) partial pancreatectomy. (E) Fold change in proinsulin to insulin ratio during MMT before (white circles) and after (dark squares) partial pancreatectomy. P<0.01 for pancreatectomy (A, B and C), P=0.08 for pancreatectomy (D), P value for interaction=0.01 (E).

Figure 3. (A) Correlation between glucose uptake (insulin sensitivity index) and basal proinsulin to insulin ratio after partial pancreatectomy in all subjects. r= -0.78; P=0.01 (B) Correlation between glucose uptake (insulin sensitivity index) and total proinsulin to insulin ratio after partial pancreatectomy in all subjects r=-0.73; P=0.02. Insulin sensitive subjects (black circles) and Insulin resistant subjects (white circles).

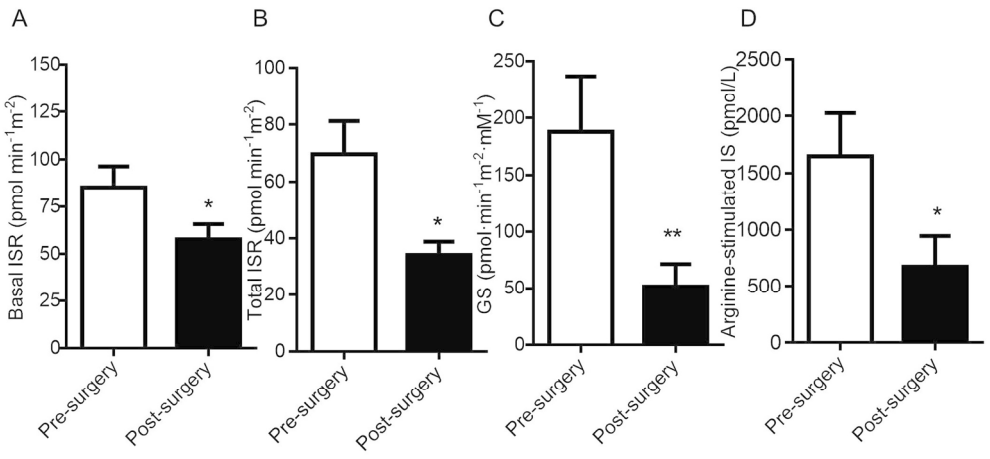

Figure 1. MMT-derived basal insulin secretion rate (A), total insulin secretion rate (B), glucose sensitivity (C) and clamp-derived arginine-stimulated insulin secretion (D) before (white bars) and after (dark bars) partial pancreatectomy.

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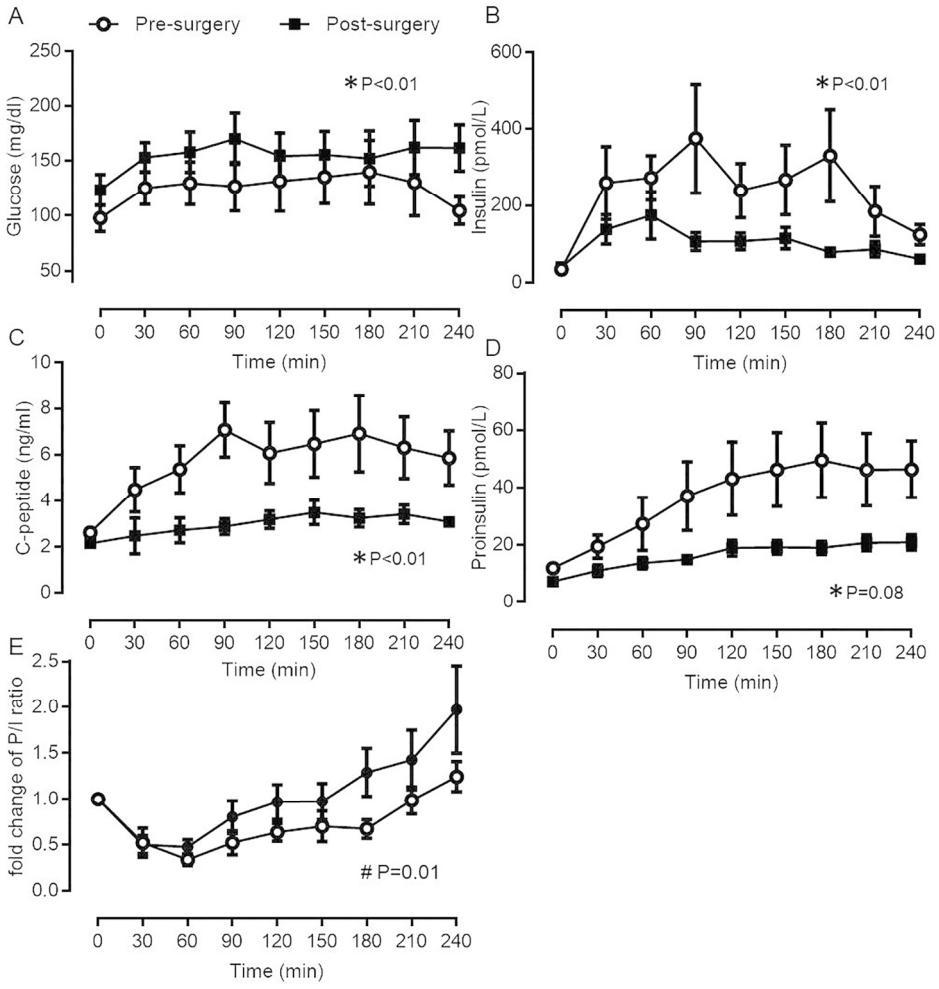

Figure 2. Glucose (A), insulin (B) c-peptide (C), proinsulin (D) levels before (white circles) and after (dark squares) partial pancreatectomy. (E) Fold change in proinsulin to insulin ratio during MMT before (white circles) and after (dark squares) partial pancreatectomy . * P<0.01 for pancreatectomy (A,B and C), P=0.08 for pancreatectomy (D), # P value for interaction=0.01 (E).

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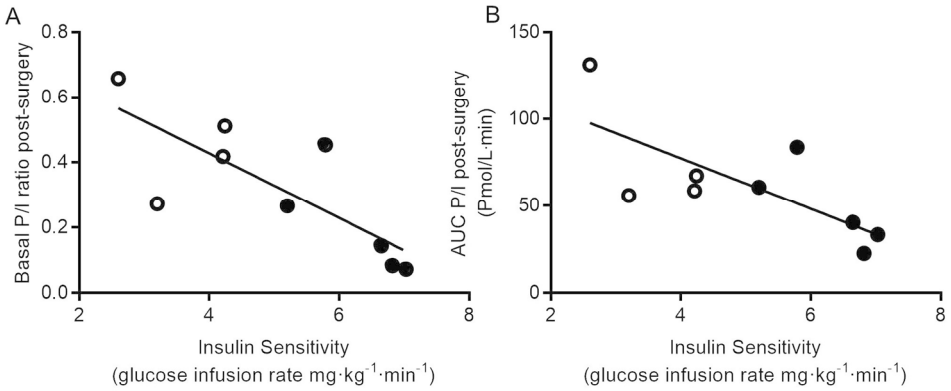

Figure 3. (A) Correlation between insulin sensitivity and basal proinsulin to insulin ratio after partial pancreatectomy in all subjects. r= -0.78; P=0.01 (B) Correlation between insulin sensitivity and total proinsulin to insulin ratio after partial pancreatectomy in all subjects r=-0.73; P=0.02. insulin sensitive subjects (black circles) and Insulin resistant subjects (white circles).

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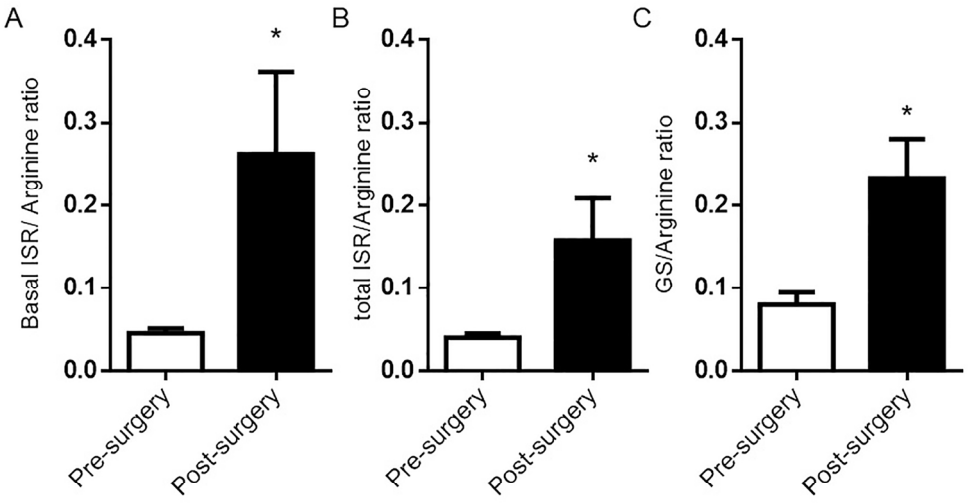

Supplementary Figure 1. Ratio between clamp-derived arginine-stimulated insulin secretion and MMT-derived basal insulin secretion rate (A), total insulin secretion rate (B), and glucose sensitivity (C) before (white bars) and after (dark bars) partial pancreatectomy.

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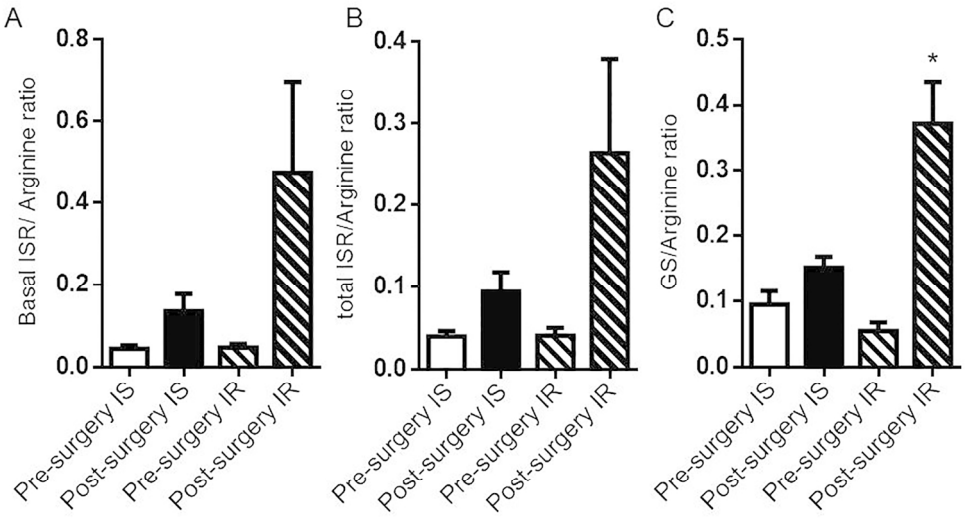

Supplementary Figure 2. Ratio between clamp-derived arginine-stimulated insulin secretion and MMT-derived basal insulin secretion rate (A), total insulin secretion rate (B), and glucose sensitivity (C) before (white bars) and after (dark bars) partial pancreatectomy in insulin sensitive (full bar) and insulin resistant (striped bar).

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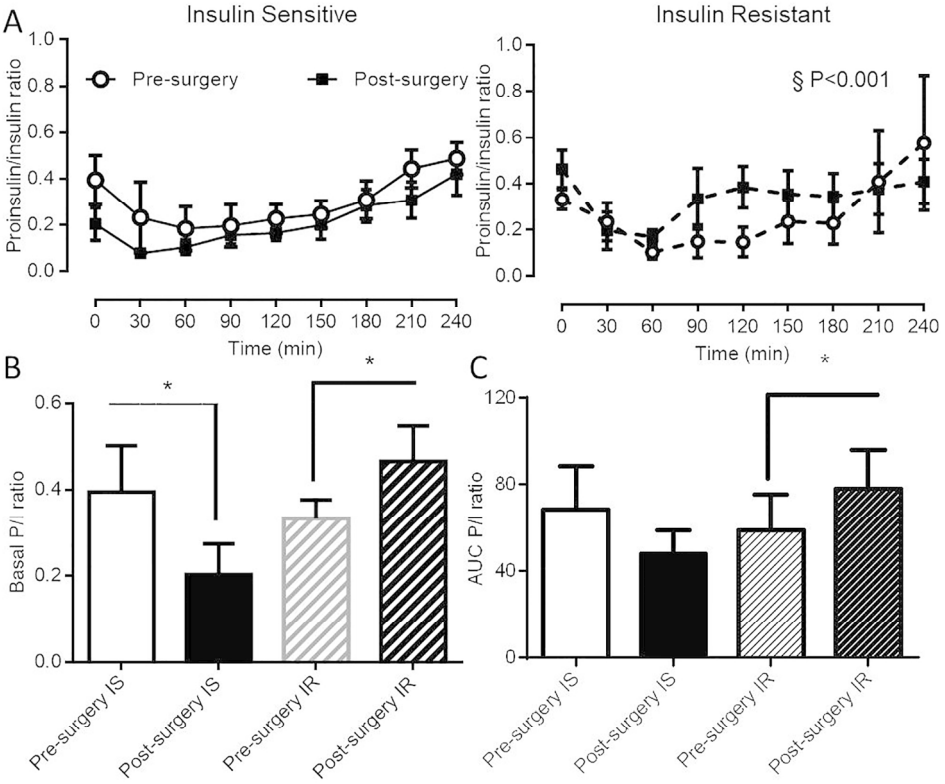

Supplementary Figure 3 (A) Proinsulin to insulin ratio during MMT before (white circles) and after (dark squares) partial pancreatectomy in insulin sensitive (solid lines, left panel) and insulin resistant subjects (dotted lines, right panel). § P<0.001 for the interaction between pancreatectomy, time and insulin sensitivity. (B) Basal proinsulin to insulin ratio before (white bar) and after (dark bar) partial pancreatectomy in insulin sensitive (full bar) and insulin resistant (striped bar). (C) Changes in area under the curve (AUC) of proinsulin to insulin ratio before (white bar) and after (dark bar) partial pancreatectomy in insulin sensitive (full bar) and insulin resistant subjects (striped bar).

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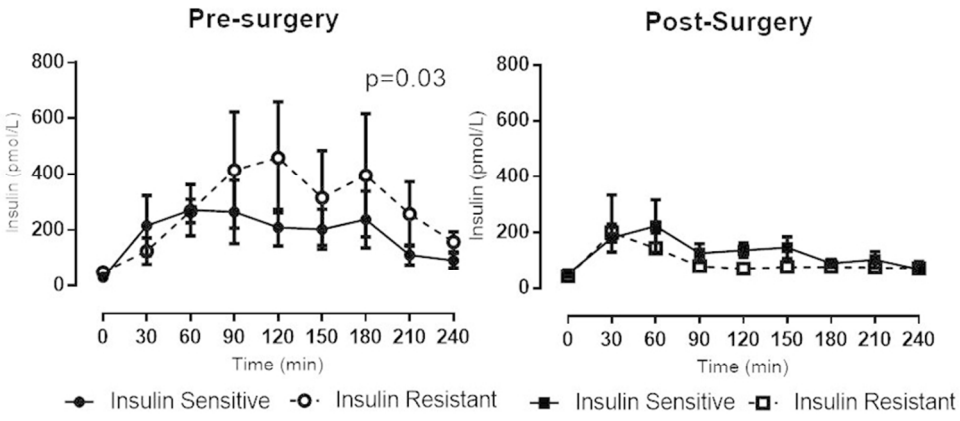

Supplementary Figure 4 (A) Insulin levels during MMT in insulin sensitive (solid lines) and insulin resistant subjects (dotted lines) before partial pancreatectomy (B) Insulin levels during MMT in insulin sensitive (solid lines) and insulin resistant subjects (dotted lines) after partial pancreatectomy. p=0.03 for the interaction between time and insulin sensitivity.

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180x120mm (150 x 150 DPI)

Supplementary Table 1.

Subject characteristics	Insulin sensitive (n.5)		Insulin resistant (n.4)	
	Before Surgery	After Surgery	Before Surgery	After Surgery
Glucose Uptake ($mg \cdot Kg^{-1} \cdot min^{-1}$)	6.29±0.44	5.97±0.31	3.56±0.46*	3.88±0.26
BMI (kg/m^2)	27.6±1.68	26.2±0.96	26.1±2.38	25.4±2.13
Fasting glucose (mg/dl)	79.4±6.20	99.6±7.71#	95.7±3.49	139±18.0§
Fasting Insulin (μUI/ml)	4.32±0.54	4.38±0.60	7.12±1.18*	6.30±3.41
Fasting C-peptide (ng/ml)	1.50±0.18	1.78±0.14	3.77±1.18	2.35±0.95
Total Cholesterol (mg/dl)	182±26.1	144±25.7	229±41.9	132±16.6
Triglycerides (mg/dl)	135±28.6	102±15.8	150±21.4	102±13.2
HbA1c (%)	5.58±0.22	5.94±0.24	5.65±0.23	7.60±0.34§
HbA1c (mmol/mol)	37.4±2.50	38.2±2.54	41.4±2.64	59.5±3.81§

Clinical and metabolic characteristics of insulin sensitive and insulin resistant patients before and after surgery. Data are means ± SE, * P- value <0.05 is considered statistically significant insulin sesnsitive vs insulin resistant before surgery. # P- value <0.05 is considered statistically significant before vs after surgery in insulin sensitive. § P- value <0.05 is considered statistically significant before vs after surgery in insulin resistant.