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| Author(s) | Tang, WC; Wen, C; Yan, CH; Chiu, KY |
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INTERPLAY OF TRANSFORMING GROWTH FACTOR BETA 1 AND ENDOTHELIN 1 SIGNALLING IN SUBCHONDRAL OSTEOBLAST DYSFUNCTION IN OSTEOARTHRITIS

Tang WC, Wen CY, Yan CH, Chiu KY

Department of Orthopaedics and Traumatology, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

BACKGROUND: Osteoarthritis (OA) is a common degenerative disease among elderly with some cases associated with hypertension. Endothelin-1 (ET-1) is a hypertension agonist which has been shown to induce type I collagen secretion and inhibit mineralisation in osteoblasts. Upregulation of transforming growth factor beta 1 (TGF β -1) is associated with the onset of OA. Crosstalks between TGF β -1 and ET-1 may increase the OA severity.

METHODS: Nine advanced OA patients with total knee replacement were selected. Comparison of gene expression profile of osteoblasts between medial and lateral sides of tibial plateau were performed. Quantitative gene expression level of type I collagen (α 1 and α 2), endothelin A receptor (ETAR) and B receptor (ETBR), ET-1, and TGF β -1 were detected in OA osteoblasts treated with or without TGF β -1 and TGF β -1 inhibitor.

RESULTS: Gene expression levels of ET-1, ETAR, and ETBR were correlated with changes of bone mineral density ($p < 0.069$), trabecular bone number ($p < 0.079$), and bone volume fraction ($p < 0.051$) in medial side. Upregulation of ETAR (> 2.4 -fold), type I collagen (α 1: > 12.5 -fold, α 2: > 1.3 -fold), and endogenous TGF β -1 (> 4.5 -fold) were detected in TGF β -1-induced osteoblasts.

CONCLUSION: Differences in osteoblast-associated gene expression in medial and lateral tibial plateaux might be due to the severity of subchondral bone degeneration. The TGF β -1 increased type I collagen and ETAR expression in osteoblasts harvested from medial compartment, which might be dependent on ET-1 signalling.