

# **CLINICAL AND PHARMACOLOGICAL STUDIES OF OROFACIAL PAIN**

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***“The pain in my jaw is like a bad, nagging toothache or migraine pain, which can last up to two or three days. Sometimes I feel like taking my life because of the pain.” - a patient diagnosed with atypical odontalgia***

## ABSTRACT

For pain research, the orofacial region is unique in a number of ways. The region has complex local anatomy, including substantial sensory innervation from neural pathways, and muscles of facial expression that convey important information concerning pain intensity and associated psychological traits. Although chronic orofacial pain conditions appear prevalent, useful documentation on pain intensity ratings using well established instruments is sparse. In particular, two conditions, *atypical facial pain* and *atypical odontalgia*, are poorly understood in aetiology so that definitive treatment modalities are severely limited. The region's local biofluid, saliva, has been used to diagnose various local and systemic disease states, and to quantitate drug concentrations. However, recent studies indicate that saliva also contains some of the same peptides, e.g. bradykinin, that are involved in pain mechanisms. It may be that pharmacological-pharmacokinetic studies of these peptides could shed more information on the significance of their presence in saliva.

This thesis consists of four major sections. Section 1 comprises of three clinical studies investigating orofacial pain. Section 2 deals with clinical laboratory studies of saliva. Section 3 is concerned with the development of chromatographic methods to assay bradykinin and its pharmacokinetics in saliva. Section 4 uses chromatography for the identification of novel salivary peptides. This thesis, then, presents clinical studies of orofacial pain and pharmacological investigations of saliva as the local biofluid.

## **Section 1**

Study 1 analysed 120 consecutive patients with chronic orofacial pain who completed a comprehensive questionnaire that included pain intensity scales (McGill Pain Questionnaire and visual analogue scale). The most frequent condition diagnosed was atypical facial pain (n = 40), followed by temporomandibular disorder (n = 32), atypical odontalgia (n = 29) and pain arising from recognised pathology of the orofacial region (n = 19). Results showed a disproportionate female : male ratio (88 : 32) ( $P < 0.001$ ) in the study group, and in the subgroup of patients diagnosed with atypical facial pain (34 : 6) ( $P < 0.001$ ). Temporomandibular disorder was present in 65% subjects as the sole pain complaint (n = 32) or as a secondary condition (n = 43). The Pain Rating Index (Total) of chronic orofacial pain conditions was similar to other chronic pain conditions including back pain, cancer pain and arthritis. Patients diagnosed with multiple orofacial pain complaints reported higher Pain Rating Index (Miscellaneous and Total) scores than those patients with a single diagnosis. A significant positive relationship was found between visual analogue scores and the Number of Words Chosen rating ( $P = 0.002$ ).

Study 2 examined patients with a diagnosis of atypical facial pain. The current IASP definition interprets this condition as “psychogenic pain” and specifically excludes an organic basis or component. Results of this study revealed that these patients described pain with sensory qualities, which is highly suggestive of underlying, but undetected, pathophysiology. Furthermore, a majority of patients were diagnosed with an associated temporomandibular disorder. It is proposed that patients with atypical facial pain have an

organic component contributing to pain, but psychological factors can magnify the affective component of 'pain and suffering' on clinical presentation.

Study 3 evaluated 50 patients diagnosed with atypical odontalgia. Patients underwent pharmacological tests including topical anaesthetic application and phentolamine infusion. Therapeutic trials of topical capsaicin were carried out to assess its efficacy for pain reduction. Results showed that 34 females and 16 males, with an age range of 21 - 82 years, were diagnosed with the condition. Dental treatment triggered the pain in 74% of patients. The pain was generally "constant" (80% of patients) and "medium" to "severe" in intensity (78%). A secondary temporomandibular disorder was present in 35 patients. EMLA topical anaesthetic cream applied to the site of intraoral pain for five minutes caused a significant reduction in pain intensity as measured by the visual analogue scale ( $P < 0.0001$ ). Patient-blinded saline / phentolamine infusions demonstrated that there was a variable contribution to the pain condition from the sympathetic nervous system. A four week trial of topical capsaicin resulted in 19 / 30 patients reporting a significant pain reduction ( $P < 0.0001$ ), which was maintained at long term review in the majority of patients. The response to these pharmacological procedures and the high occurrence of dental treatment in the aetiology of atypical odontalgia is highly suggestive that this condition is a neuropathic pain of the oral cavity.

## **Section 2**

Study 4 assessed whether measurements of concentrations of salivary bradykinin might be useful markers in quantifying pain states. This was a screening study based on preliminary

chromatographic ‘fingerprint’ profiles obtained from patients with pain. The preliminary work assaying saliva showed that chromatographic profiles of patients with different pain conditions were markedly different compared to patients without pain; further development may result in a ‘fingerprint’ of different pain states. Study 5 investigated bradykinin as a possible marker in these profiles. The results assessing salivary bradykinin concentrations showed that there was wide intersubject variation among healthy controls and several groups of patients with pain (cancer pain, arthritis and post-operative pain). Generally, females and surgical post-operative patients were found to have quantifiable levels of salivary bradykinin.

### **Section 3**

Based on the results of study 5, the pharmacokinetics of salivary bradykinin were investigated. For this study, an alternative bradykinin assay to immunoassay was developed using high-performance liquid chromatography. The purpose of using chromatography is that other peptides potentially involved in pain pathways could be investigated with relative ease using identical or similar (i.e. minor changes in mobile phase chemistry) chromatographic conditions. A chromatographic assay for salivary bradykinin was successfully developed that is rapid and simple in sample preparation and mobile phase chemistry. Study 6 assessed the degradation and stability of salivary bradykinin. Metabolic clearance of bradykinin using an *ex vivo* model showed that its clearance was much slower than its known plasma pharmacokinetics. The method required stabilisation of salivary bradykinin that was achieved at low pH; saliva at pH 2 through the addition of orthophosphoric acid showed excellent stability for five to nine days at 20<sup>0</sup>C and for 60

days at 4<sup>0</sup>C. Study 7 determined the salivary bradykinin concentrations in healthy subjects and it showed this peptide to be present in concentrations at several orders of magnitude greater than reported plasma concentrations.

#### **Section 4**

Chromatographic assays were optimised to identify a variety of novel salivary peptides. In conjunction with mass spectrometry, novel salivary peptides defensin HNP-1 and HNP-2 have been identified. These peptides have proven antimicrobial, antifungal and antiviral (including anti-HIV) activities. There were high concentrations of these salivary defensin peptides (2-350 µg/mL) in ten healthy subjects; this may have potentially important therapeutic applications such as the prevention and / or treatment of oral candidiasis and other infections.





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*This thesis is dedicated to my parents, (the late) E. Russell Vickers (Snr) and Barbara M. Vickers, who instilled in my youth the essential quality of perseverance.*



### **Statement by the Author Pertaining to Original Work**

The Human Research and Ethics Committee of the Royal North Shore Hospital gave approval for the studies, where appropriate, in this thesis. All patients and subjects assessed in the studies in this thesis were personally consulted and treated by the author. The method development utilising high-performance liquid chromatography and all analyses using saliva as the investigating matrix was the original work of the author and, in addition, the development of the sample preparation prior to mass spectrometry. The concept of using high-performance liquid chromatography-mass spectrometry for salivary peptide analysis was the original idea of the author. The operation of the mass spectrometer and tentative identification of defensin HNP-1 and HNP-2 peptides and other salivary constituents were carried out in collaboration with Miss Catrin Goebel and Dr Lindsey Mackay and is acknowledged in the appropriate sections of this thesis.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
Title	I
Abstract	III
Publications	VIII
Acknowledgments	XI
Dedication	XII
Statement by Author	XIII
Table of Contents	XIV
List of Tables	XIX
List of Figures	XX
Appendices	XXII
Glossary of Terms	XXIII

## **Introduction and aims of this thesis**

Definition of pain	1
Historical aspects of pain	2
Scope of the problem	4
<i>Prevalence of pain</i>	4
<i>Ethno-cultural reinforcers of pain</i>	6
<i>Psychological aspects of pain</i>	7
<i>Neurophysiological and biochemical factors in the mechanism of pain</i>	9
<i>Toward a standard for pain measurement</i>	9
Aims of this thesis	11

## **SECTION 1 - CLINICAL STUDIES**

### **CHAPTER 1**

#### **Study 1: Pain intensity and pain description of chronic orofacial pain conditions**

1.1	Introduction	14
1.2	Aims	17
1.3	Patients and methods	17
1.4	Results	19
1.5	Discussion	21
1.5.1	<i>Gender differences</i>	21
1.5.2	<i>Severity of chronic orofacial pain</i>	28
1.5.3	<i>Clinical aspects and parameters of using VAS / MPQ and inter-instrument relationships</i>	36
1.5.4	<i>Complexity of diagnosis: the prevalence of two or more concurrent chronic orofacial pain conditions</i>	38
1.6	Conclusion	42



## CHAPTER 2

### Study 2: Atypical facial pain: a contentious definition, and guidelines for diagnosis and treatment

2.1	Introduction	44
2.2	Aims	48
2.3	Patients and methods	48
2.4	Results	49
2.5	Discussion	55
2.5.1	<i>AFP case studies - diagnostic and treatment guidelines</i>	58
2.6	Conclusion	62

## CHAPTER 3

### Study 3: An evaluation of pharmacological procedures for the diagnosis and treatment of atypical odontalgia

3.1	Introduction	66
3.2	Aims	70
3.3	Patients and methods	71
3.3.1	<i>Pain questionnaire and multidisciplinary pain centre assessment</i>	71
3.3.2	<i>Topical application of EMLA</i>	71
3.3.3	<i>Sympathetic blockade</i>	72
3.3.4	<i>Treatment efficacy of topical capsaicin</i>	72
3.4	Results	73
3.5	Discussion	78
3.5.1	<i>General findings</i>	78
3.5.2	<i>Aetiological factors</i>	80
3.5.3	<i>Efficacy of capsaicin</i>	84
3.5.4	<i>TMD considerations</i>	86
3.5.5	<i>Sympathetic nervous system contributions</i>	87
3.6	Conclusion	89

## **SECTION 2 - CLINICAL LABORATORY STUDIES**

## CHAPTER 4

### Study 4: Saliva as a potential matrix for objective pain measurement

4.1	Introduction	94
4.1.1	<i>Historical perspectives of saliva</i>	94
4.1.2	<i>Saliva as a matrix and diagnostic fluid</i>	95
4.1.3	<i>Advantages in the analysis of saliva</i>	97
4.2	Aim	97
4.3	Patients and methods	98
4.4	Results	99

4.5	Discussion	99
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## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Bradykinin literature review and study 5**

5.1	Introduction	103
5.2	Biochemistry of bradykinin	104
5.3	Biological actions and receptor sites of bradykinin	106
5.3.1	<i>Cardiovascular effects</i>	106
5.3.2	<i>Algogenic actions</i>	107
5.3.3	<i>Receptor sites</i>	109
5.3.4	<i>Kallikrein content in exocrine glands</i>	110
5.3.5	<i>Biofluid concentrations of bradykinin</i>	111
5.4	Aims	112
5.5	Patients and methods	113
5.6	Results	113
5.7	Discussion	115

## **SECTION 3 - LABORATORY METHODOLOGY** **STUDIES**

### **CHAPTER 6**

#### **Methods for the determination of bradykinin concentrations**

6.1	Introduction	118
6.2	Immunoassay versus chromatography	118
6.3	UV detection of bradykinin in saliva	120
6.4	HPLC - fluorescence detection	122
6.4.1	<i>o-Phthalaldehyde (OPA)</i>	122
6.4.2	<i>Benzoin</i>	126
6.4.3	<i>N-methylisatoic anhydride</i>	131
6.5	Summary of the review of published methods	136

### **CHAPTER 7**

#### **Development of an improved chromatographic method for salivary bradykinin**

7.1	Introduction	137
7.2	Materials and equipment	138
7.3	HPLC - separation of peptides	138
7.4	UV absorbance spectra	141
7.4.1	<i>UV absorbance spectra of peptides</i>	141
7.4.2	<i>Determination of UV wavelength</i>	141
7.4.3	<i>Effect of pH on UV absorbance</i>	141
7.5	Bradykinin validation curve	150

7.6	Saliva mass / volume ratio	153
7.7	Saliva collection and sample preparation	153
7.7.1	<i>Method 1</i>	153
7.7.2	<i>Method 2</i>	154
7.8	Summary of HPLC method	156

## CHAPTER 8

### Confirmation of the identity of salivary bradykinin

8.1	Introduction	157
8.2	Stopped flow UV scanning	158
8.3	Retention time / co-chromatography	158
8.4	Multiple chromatographic methods	161
8.5	HPLC-MS	166

## CHAPTER 9

### Study 6: *Ex vivo* kinetics of salivary bradykinin

#### 1. Metabolic Clearance of Bradykinin at pH 7

9.1	Introduction	171
9.2	Subjects and methods	171
9.3	Results	172

#### 2. Stabilisation of Bradykinin at Low pH

9.4	Introduction	182
9.5	Subjects and methods	182
9.6	Results	182

## CHAPTER 10

### Study 7: Salivary bradykinin concentrations in healthy subjects

10.1	Introduction	189
10.2	Daily variations	189
10.2.1	<i>Subjects and methods</i>	189
10.2.2	<i>Results</i>	190
10.3	pH effects	190
10.3.1	<i>Subjects and methods</i>	190
10.3.2	<i>Results</i>	190
10.4	Discussion	191
10.4.1	<i>Salivary bradykinin concentrations in healthy controls</i>	191
10.4.2	<i>Ex vivo kinetics of salivary bradykinin</i>	192
10.4.3	<i>Possible functions and mechanisms of salivary bradykinin</i>	194
10.5	Conclusion	197

## **SECTION 4 - NOVEL APPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

## CHAPTER 11

	<b>Novel applications of the developed HPLC methodology</b>	
	<u>Specific Application 1 : HPLC-MS analysis of salivary constituents</u>	
11.1	Introduction	206
11.2	Methods	206
11.3	Results	207
11.4	Discussion	207
	 <u>Specific Application 2 : Defensin peptides HNP-1 and HNP-2</u>	
11.5	Introduction	216
11.6	Background	216
11.7	Methods, confirmation of assignment of defensins and results	219
11.8	Discussion	220
	<b>CHAPTER 12</b>	
	<b>Summary of findings and future directions</b>	
12.1	Section 1 - Clinical studies	226
12.2	Section 2 - Clinical laboratory studies	228
12.3	Section 3 - Laboratory methodology studies	229
12.4	Section 4 - Novel applications	230
12.5	Concluding comments	231
	 <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	234
	 <b>APPENDICES</b>	253

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1	Primary diagnosis of chronic orofacial pain conditions	23
Table 1.2	Diagnosis of pathological conditions	24
Table 1.3	Relative pain intensity of various pain conditions	33
Table 1.4	Mean pain intensity scores	34
Table 1.5	Temporal qualities of pain conditions	35
Table 1.6	Frequency of MPQ pain descriptors	41
Table 2.1	Frequency of TMD signs and symptoms in AFP-TMD patients	65
Table 3.1	Frequency of MPQ descriptors used by patients	82
Table 3.2	Aetiology of atypical odontalgia	83
Table 3.3	Frequency of TMD signs and symptoms in AO-TMD patients	93
Table 4.1	Subject data and pain variables for study 4	101
Table 5.1	Summary of salivary bradykinin concentrations in healthy controls and patient groups	114
Table 7.1	Effects of pH on UV absorbance of bradykinin	149
Table 7.2	Units of peak area for bradykinin concentration range 1-20 ng at pH 2	151
Table 7.3	Saliva mass / volume ratio in healthy controls	155
Table 9.1	Degradation of bradykinin spiked into saliva at 50 ng per injection	176
Table 9.2	Degradation of bradykinin spiked into saliva at 500 ng per injection	179
Table 9.3	Rate of degradation for each subject	180
Table 9.4	Bradykinin concentration in spiked saliva, at 20 <sup>0</sup> C or 4 <sup>0</sup> C for 9 days and 60 days respectively	184
Table 10.1	Daily variations of salivary bradykinin concentrations in healthy subjects	200
Table 10.2	Salivary bradykinin concentrations in healthy subjects following oral sucrose rinse	202
Table 10.3	Comparison of mean bradykinin concentrations in biofluids	204
Table 11.1	HPLC-MS of saliva	210





## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	Correlation between VAS and NWC	25
Figure 1.2	Scatterplots of PRI(T) scores	26
Figure 1.3	Scatterplots of PRI(M) scores	27
Figure 2.1	VAS of the AFP and the AFP-TMD groups	50
Figure 2.2	Aetiology of pain as reported by subjects	51
Figure 2.3	Subjects' expectation of "pain being cured" from treatment	51
Figure 3.1	Percentage pain reduction from diagnostic procedures	76
Figure 3.2	Percentage pain reduction from topical capsaicin treatment	77
Figure 4.1	Chromatograms of controls and patients with pain states	102
Figure 6.1	Percentage recovery of bradykinin standard using filters	121
Figure 6.2	UV and fluorescence detection of bradykinin standard	124
Figure 6.3	Analysis of OPA-bradykinin reaction described by Omori <i>et al.</i> , (1986b)	125
Figure 6.4	Analysis of benzoin-bradykinin reaction described by Kai <i>et al.</i> , (1987)	127
Figure 6.5	Analysis of excitation and emission spectra of benzoin	129
Figure 6.6	Mantyl-bradykinin derivatisation reaction	132
Figure 6.7	UV detection of mantyl-bradykinin derivitisation	133
Figure 6.8	Fluorescence detection of mantyl-bradykinin reaction	134
Figure 7.1	HPLC separation of four peptides	140
Figure 7.2	Comparison of UV spectra of four peptides	143
Figure 7.3	UV spectral differences of peptides	145
Figure 7.4	UV absorbance spectra of bradykinin and mobile phase	146
Figure 7.5	Effect of pH on UV absorbance of bradykinin	147
Figure 7.6	pH effects on chromatograms	148
Figure 7.7	Validation curve for bradykinin 1-20 ng at pH 2	152
Figure 8.1	UV stopped flow scan of eluted peak identified as bradykinin by co-chromatography	159
Figure 8.2	Confirmation of bradykinin in saliva by co-chromatography	160
Figure 8.3	Chromatogram of bradykinin standard	163
Figure 8.4	Chromatogram of saliva	164
Figure 8.5	Comparison of chromatograms of bradykinin standard and effluent	165
Figure 8.6	Direct infusion of bradykinin standard into MS	168
Figure 8.7	HPLC-MS of bradykinin standard	169
Figure 8.8	Identification and confirmation of salivary bradykinin by HPLC-MS	170
Figure 9.1	Degradation of bradykinin standard at pH 7 (MilliQ)	173
Figure 9.2	Degradation of 50 ng bradykinin in saliva	174
Figure 9.3	Degradation of bradykinin in whole untreated saliva (pH 7) at 50 ng bradykinin per injection	175
Figure 9.4	Degradation of 500 ng bradykinin in saliva	177
Figure 9.5	Degradation of bradykinin in whole untreated saliva (pH 7) at 500	

ng bradykinin per injection

178

Figure 9.6	Approximation of the rate of degradation by a first-order rate of bradykinin	181
Figure 9.7	Stability of bradykinin with addition of 0.1 M H <sub>3</sub> PO <sub>4</sub>	186
Figure 9.8	Chromatograms of saliva (pH 2) spiked with bradykinin (50 and 500 ng per HPLC injection)	187
Figure 9.9	Stability of bradykinin with addition of 0.1 M H <sub>3</sub> PO <sub>4</sub>	188
Figure 10.1	Daily variations of salivary bradykinin concentrations	199
Figure 10.2	pH of saliva in subjects over 40 minute sampling time	201
Figure 10.3	Salivary bradykinin concentration for each subject throughout sampling period	203
Figure 11.1	Structure of defensin peptides	218
Figure 11.2	Chromatograms of defensin HNP-1 and HNP-2 standards, HPLC method using C8 column	222
Figure 11.3	Chromatogram of saliva, HPLC method using C8 column	223
Figure 11.4	Chromatograms of defensin HNP-1 and HNP-2 standards, HPLC method using WCX column	224
Figure 11.5	Chromatogram of collected effluent, HPLC method using WCX column	225

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Study 1, Pain data for each subject	253
Appendix 2	Study 1, VAS and MPQ data for each subject	256
Appendix 3	Study 3, Socio-economic data of atypical odontalgia group	259
Appendix 4	Study 3, Psychological variables of atypical odontalgia group	261
Appendix 5	Study 3, Diagnosis and pain variables in atypical odontalgia group	263
Appendix 6	Study 3, Patient response to pharmacological procedures	265
Appendix 7	Study 5, Post-operative (0-2 hours) group data	267
Appendix 8	Study 5, Post-operative (1-10 days) group data	269
Appendix 9	Study 5, Cancer group data	271
Appendix 10	Study 5, Arthritis group data	273

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACTH	adrenocorticotrophic hormone
AFP	atypical facial pain
AFP-TMD	atypical facial pain with secondary temporomandibular disorder
ANOVA	analysis of variance
AO	atypical odontalgia
AO-TMD	atypical odontalgia with secondary temporomandibular disorder
BK	bradykinin
CGRP	calcitonin gene-related peptide
CRPS	complex regional pain syndrome
CSF	cerebrospinal fluid
EEG	electroencephalogram
EMLA	eutectic mixture of local anaesthetics
GIT	gastrointestinal tract
GRS	Graphic Rating Scale
HF	Hageman factor
HMW	high molecular weight
HPLC	high-performance liquid chromatography
HPLC-MS	high-performance liquid chromatography-mass spectrometry
IASP	International Association for the Study of Pain
LMW	low molecular weight
MMPI	Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory
MPQ	McGill Pain Questionnaire
MS	mass spectrometer
NWC	Number of Words Chosen
OPA	o-Phthalaldehyde
PG	prostaglandin
PRI(A)	Pain Rating Index (Affective)
PRI(E)	Pain Rating Index (Evaluative)
PRI(M)	Pain Rating Index (Miscellaneous)
PRI(S)	Pain Rating Index (Sensory)
PRI(T)	Pain Rating Index (Total)
S.D.	standard deviation
SMP	sympathetically maintained pain
TMD	temporomandibular disorder
VAS	visual analogue scale

**CLINICAL AND PHARMACOLOGICAL STUDIES  
OF OROFACIAL PAIN**

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***“The pain in my jaw is like a bad, nagging toothache or migraine pain, which can last up to two or three days. Sometimes I feel like taking my life because of the pain.” - a patient diagnosed with atypical odontalgia***

## ABSTRACT

For pain research, the orofacial region is unique in a number of ways. The region has complex local anatomy, including substantial sensory innervation from neural pathways, and muscles of facial expression that convey important information concerning pain intensity and associated psychological traits. Although chronic orofacial pain conditions appear prevalent, useful documentation on pain intensity ratings using well established instruments is sparse. In particular, two conditions, *atypical facial pain* and *atypical odontalgia*, are poorly understood in aetiology so that definitive treatment modalities are severely limited. The region's local biofluid, saliva, has been used to diagnose various local and systemic disease states, and to quantitate drug concentrations. However, recent studies indicate that saliva also contains some of the same peptides, e.g. bradykinin, that are involved in pain mechanisms. It may be that pharmacological-pharmacokinetic studies of these peptides could shed more information on the significance of their presence in saliva.

This thesis consists of four major sections. Section 1 comprises of three clinical studies investigating orofacial pain. Section 2 deals with clinical laboratory studies of saliva. Section 3 is concerned with the development of chromatographic methods to assay bradykinin and its pharmacokinetics in saliva. Section 4 uses chromatography for the identification of novel salivary peptides. This thesis, then, presents clinical studies of orofacial pain and pharmacological investigations of saliva as the local biofluid.



## **Section 1**

Study 1 analysed 120 consecutive patients with chronic orofacial pain who completed a comprehensive questionnaire that included pain intensity scales (McGill Pain Questionnaire and visual analogue scale). The most frequent condition diagnosed was atypical facial pain (n = 40), followed by temporomandibular disorder (n = 32), atypical odontalgia (n = 29) and pain arising from recognised pathology of the orofacial region (n = 19). Results showed a disproportionate female : male ratio (88 : 32) ( $P < 0.001$ ) in the study group, and in the subgroup of patients diagnosed with atypical facial pain (34 : 6) ( $P < 0.001$ ). Temporomandibular disorder was present in 65% subjects as the sole pain complaint (n = 32) or as a secondary condition (n = 43). The Pain Rating Index (Total) of chronic orofacial pain conditions was similar to other chronic pain conditions including back pain, cancer pain and arthritis. Patients diagnosed with multiple orofacial pain complaints reported higher Pain Rating Index (Miscellaneous and Total) scores than those patients with a single diagnosis. A significant positive relationship was found between visual analogue scores and the Number of Words Chosen rating ( $P = 0.002$ ).

Study 2 examined patients with a diagnosis of atypical facial pain. The current IASP definition interprets this condition as “psychogenic pain” and specifically excludes an organic basis or component. Results of this study revealed that these patients described pain with sensory qualities, which is highly suggestive of underlying, but undetected, pathophysiology. Furthermore, a majority of patients were diagnosed with an associated temporomandibular disorder. It is proposed that patients with atypical facial pain have an

organic component contributing to pain, but psychological factors can magnify the affective component of 'pain and suffering' on clinical presentation.

Study 3 evaluated 50 patients diagnosed with atypical odontalgia. Patients underwent pharmacological tests including topical anaesthetic application and phentolamine infusion. Therapeutic trials of topical capsaicin were carried out to assess its efficacy for pain reduction. Results showed that 34 females and 16 males, with an age range of 21 - 82 years, were diagnosed with the condition. Dental treatment triggered the pain in 74% of patients. The pain was generally "constant" (80% of patients) and "medium" to "severe" in intensity (78%). A secondary temporomandibular disorder was present in 35 patients. EMLA topical anaesthetic cream applied to the site of intraoral pain for five minutes caused a significant reduction in pain intensity as measured by the visual analogue scale ( $P < 0.0001$ ). Patient-blinded saline / phentolamine infusions demonstrated that there was a variable contribution to the pain condition from the sympathetic nervous system. A four week trial of topical capsaicin resulted in 19 / 30 patients reporting a significant pain reduction ( $P < 0.0001$ ), which was maintained at long term review in the majority of patients. The response to these pharmacological procedures and the high occurrence of dental treatment in the aetiology of atypical odontalgia is highly suggestive that this condition is a neuropathic pain of the oral cavity.

## **Section 2**

Study 4 assessed whether measurements of concentrations of salivary bradykinin might be useful markers in quantifying pain states. This was a screening study based on preliminary

chromatographic ‘fingerprint’ profiles obtained from patients with pain. The preliminary work assaying saliva showed that chromatographic profiles of patients with different pain conditions were markedly different compared to patients without pain; further development may result in a ‘fingerprint’ of different pain states. Study 5 investigated bradykinin as a possible marker in these profiles. The results assessing salivary bradykinin concentrations showed that there was wide intersubject variation among healthy controls and several groups of patients with pain (cancer pain, arthritis and post-operative pain). Generally, females and surgical post-operative patients were found to have quantifiable levels of salivary bradykinin.

### **Section 3**

Based on the results of study 5, the pharmacokinetics of salivary bradykinin were investigated. For this study, an alternative bradykinin assay to immunoassay was developed using high-performance liquid chromatography. The purpose of using chromatography is that other peptides potentially involved in pain pathways could be investigated with relative ease using identical or similar (i.e. minor changes in mobile phase chemistry) chromatographic conditions. A chromatographic assay for salivary bradykinin was successfully developed that is rapid and simple in sample preparation and mobile phase chemistry. Study 6 assessed the degradation and stability of salivary bradykinin. Metabolic clearance of bradykinin using an *ex vivo* model showed that its clearance was much slower than its known plasma pharmacokinetics. The method required stabilisation of salivary bradykinin that was achieved at low pH; saliva at pH 2 through the addition of orthophosphoric acid showed excellent stability for five to nine days at 20<sup>0</sup>C and for 60

days at 4<sup>0</sup>C. Study 7 determined the salivary bradykinin concentrations in healthy subjects and it showed this peptide to be present in concentrations at several orders of magnitude greater than reported plasma concentrations.

#### **Section 4**

Chromatographic assays were optimised to identify a variety of novel salivary peptides. In conjunction with mass spectrometry, novel salivary peptides defensin HNP-1 and HNP-2 have been identified. These peptides have proven antimicrobial, antifungal and antiviral (including anti-HIV) activities. There were high concentrations of these salivary defensin peptides (2-350 µg/mL) in ten healthy subjects; this may have potentially important therapeutic applications such as the prevention and / or treatment of oral candidiasis and other infections.



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*This thesis is dedicated to my parents, (the late) E. Russell Vickers (Snr) and Barbara M. Vickers, who instilled in my youth the essential quality of perseverance.*



### **Statement by the Author Pertaining to Original Work**

The Human Research and Ethics Committee of the Royal North Shore Hospital gave approval for the studies, where appropriate, in this thesis. All patients and subjects assessed in the studies in this thesis were personally consulted and treated by the author. The method development utilising high-performance liquid chromatography and all analyses using saliva as the investigating matrix was the original work of the author and, in addition, the development of the sample preparation prior to mass spectrometry. The concept of using high-performance liquid chromatography-mass spectrometry for salivary peptide analysis was the original idea of the author. The operation of the mass spectrometer and tentative identification of defensin HNP-1 and HNP-2 peptides and other salivary constituents were carried out in collaboration with Miss Catrin Goebel and Dr Lindsey Mackay and is acknowledged in the appropriate sections of this thesis.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
Title	I
Abstract	III
Publications	VIII
Acknowledgments	XI
Dedication	XII
Statement by Author	XIII
Table of Contents	XIV
List of Tables	XIX
List of Figures	XX
Appendices	XXII
Glossary of Terms	XXIII

## **Introduction and aims of this thesis**

Definition of pain	1
Historical aspects of pain	2
Scope of the problem	4
<i>Prevalence of pain</i>	4
<i>Ethno-cultural reinforcers of pain</i>	6
<i>Psychological aspects of pain</i>	7
<i>Neurophysiological and biochemical factors in the mechanism of pain</i>	9
<i>Toward a standard for pain measurement</i>	9
Aims of this thesis	11

## **SECTION 1 - CLINICAL STUDIES**

### **CHAPTER 1**

#### **Study 1: Pain intensity and pain description of chronic orofacial pain conditions**

1.1	Introduction	14
1.2	Aims	17
1.3	Patients and methods	17
1.4	Results	19
1.5	Discussion	21
1.5.1	<i>Gender differences</i>	21
1.5.2	<i>Severity of chronic orofacial pain</i>	28
1.5.3	<i>Clinical aspects and parameters of using VAS / MPQ and inter-instrument relationships</i>	36
1.5.4	<i>Complexity of diagnosis: the prevalence of two or more concurrent chronic orofacial pain conditions</i>	38
1.6	Conclusion	42



## CHAPTER 2

### Study 2: Atypical facial pain: a contentious definition, and guidelines for diagnosis and treatment

2.1	Introduction	44
2.2	Aims	48
2.3	Patients and methods	48
2.4	Results	49
2.5	Discussion	55
2.5.1	<i>AFP case studies - diagnostic and treatment guidelines</i>	58
2.6	Conclusion	62

## CHAPTER 3

### Study 3: An evaluation of pharmacological procedures for the diagnosis and treatment of atypical odontalgia

3.1	Introduction	66
3.2	Aims	70
3.3	Patients and methods	71
3.3.1	<i>Pain questionnaire and multidisciplinary pain centre assessment</i>	71
3.3.2	<i>Topical application of EMLA</i>	71
3.3.3	<i>Sympathetic blockade</i>	72
3.3.4	<i>Treatment efficacy of topical capsaicin</i>	72
3.4	Results	73
3.5	Discussion	78
3.5.1	<i>General findings</i>	78
3.5.2	<i>Aetiological factors</i>	80
3.5.3	<i>Efficacy of capsaicin</i>	84
3.5.4	<i>TMD considerations</i>	86
3.5.5	<i>Sympathetic nervous system contributions</i>	87
3.6	Conclusion	89

## SECTION 2 - CLINICAL LABORATORY STUDIES

## CHAPTER 4

### Study 4: Saliva as a potential matrix for objective pain measurement

4.1	Introduction	94
4.1.1	<i>Historical perspectives of saliva</i>	94
4.1.2	<i>Saliva as a matrix and diagnostic fluid</i>	95
4.1.3	<i>Advantages in the analysis of saliva</i>	97
4.2	Aim	97
4.3	Patients and methods	98
4.4	Results	99



4.5	Discussion	99
-----	------------	----

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Bradykinin literature review and study 5**

5.1	Introduction	103
5.2	Biochemistry of bradykinin	104
5.3	Biological actions and receptor sites of bradykinin	106
5.3.1	<i>Cardiovascular effects</i>	106
5.3.2	<i>Algogenic actions</i>	107
5.3.3	<i>Receptor sites</i>	109
5.3.4	<i>Kallikrein content in exocrine glands</i>	110
5.3.5	<i>Biofluid concentrations of bradykinin</i>	111
5.4	Aims	112
5.5	Patients and methods	113
5.6	Results	113
5.7	Discussion	115

## **SECTION 3 - LABORATORY METHODOLOGY** **STUDIES**

### **CHAPTER 6**

#### **Methods for the determination of bradykinin concentrations**

6.1	Introduction	118
6.2	Immunoassay versus chromatography	118
6.3	UV detection of bradykinin in saliva	120
6.4	HPLC - fluorescence detection	122
6.4.1	<i>o-Phthalaldehyde (OPA)</i>	122
6.4.2	<i>Benzoin</i>	126
6.4.3	<i>N-methylisatoic anhydride</i>	131
6.5	Summary of the review of published methods	136

### **CHAPTER 7**

#### **Development of an improved chromatographic method for salivary bradykinin**

7.1	Introduction	137
7.2	Materials and equipment	138
7.3	HPLC - separation of peptides	138
7.4	UV absorbance spectra	141
7.4.1	<i>UV absorbance spectra of peptides</i>	141
7.4.2	<i>Determination of UV wavelength</i>	141
7.4.3	<i>Effect of pH on UV absorbance</i>	141
7.5	Bradykinin validation curve	150

7.6	Saliva mass / volume ratio	153
7.7	Saliva collection and sample preparation	153
7.7.1	<i>Method 1</i>	153
7.7.2	<i>Method 2</i>	154
7.8	Summary of HPLC method	156

## CHAPTER 8

### Confirmation of the identity of salivary bradykinin

8.1	Introduction	157
8.2	Stopped flow UV scanning	158
8.3	Retention time / co-chromatography	158
8.4	Multiple chromatographic methods	161
8.5	HPLC-MS	166

## CHAPTER 9

### Study 6: *Ex vivo* kinetics of salivary bradykinin

#### 1. Metabolic Clearance of Bradykinin at pH 7

9.1	Introduction	171
9.2	Subjects and methods	171
9.3	Results	172

#### 2. Stabilisation of Bradykinin at Low pH

9.4	Introduction	182
9.5	Subjects and methods	182
9.6	Results	182

## CHAPTER 10

### Study 7: Salivary bradykinin concentrations in healthy subjects

10.1	Introduction	189
10.2	Daily variations	189
10.2.1	<i>Subjects and methods</i>	189
10.2.2	<i>Results</i>	190
10.3	pH effects	190
10.3.1	<i>Subjects and methods</i>	190
10.3.2	<i>Results</i>	190
10.4	Discussion	191
10.4.1	<i>Salivary bradykinin concentrations in healthy controls</i>	191
10.4.2	<i>Ex vivo kinetics of salivary bradykinin</i>	192
10.4.3	<i>Possible functions and mechanisms of salivary bradykinin</i>	194
10.5	Conclusion	197

## **SECTION 4 - NOVEL APPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

## CHAPTER 11

	<b>Novel applications of the developed HPLC methodology</b>	
	<u>Specific Application 1 : HPLC-MS analysis of salivary constituents</u>	
11.1	Introduction	206
11.2	Methods	206
11.3	Results	207
11.4	Discussion	207
	 <u>Specific Application 2 : Defensin peptides HNP-1 and HNP-2</u>	
11.5	Introduction	216
11.6	Background	216
11.7	Methods, confirmation of assignment of defensins and results	219
11.8	Discussion	220
	<b>CHAPTER 12</b>	
	<b>Summary of findings and future directions</b>	
12.1	Section 1 - Clinical studies	226
12.2	Section 2 - Clinical laboratory studies	228
12.3	Section 3 - Laboratory methodology studies	229
12.4	Section 4 - Novel applications	230
12.5	Concluding comments	231
	 <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	234
	 <b>APPENDICES</b>	253

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1	Primary diagnosis of chronic orofacial pain conditions	23
Table 1.2	Diagnosis of pathological conditions	24
Table 1.3	Relative pain intensity of various pain conditions	33
Table 1.4	Mean pain intensity scores	34
Table 1.5	Temporal qualities of pain conditions	35
Table 1.6	Frequency of MPQ pain descriptors	41
Table 2.1	Frequency of TMD signs and symptoms in AFP-TMD patients	65
Table 3.1	Frequency of MPQ descriptors used by patients	82
Table 3.2	Aetiology of atypical odontalgia	83
Table 3.3	Frequency of TMD signs and symptoms in AO-TMD patients	93
Table 4.1	Subject data and pain variables for study 4	101
Table 5.1	Summary of salivary bradykinin concentrations in healthy controls and patient groups	114
Table 7.1	Effects of pH on UV absorbance of bradykinin	149
Table 7.2	Units of peak area for bradykinin concentration range 1-20 ng at pH 2	151
Table 7.3	Saliva mass / volume ratio in healthy controls	155
Table 9.1	Degradation of bradykinin spiked into saliva at 50 ng per injection	176
Table 9.2	Degradation of bradykinin spiked into saliva at 500 ng per injection	179
Table 9.3	Rate of degradation for each subject	180
Table 9.4	Bradykinin concentration in spiked saliva, at 20 <sup>0</sup> C or 4 <sup>0</sup> C for 9 days and 60 days respectively	184
Table 10.1	Daily variations of salivary bradykinin concentrations in healthy subjects	200
Table 10.2	Salivary bradykinin concentrations in healthy subjects following oral sucrose rinse	202
Table 10.3	Comparison of mean bradykinin concentrations in biofluids	204
Table 11.1	HPLC-MS of saliva	210



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	Correlation between VAS and NWC	25
Figure 1.2	Scatterplots of PRI(T) scores	26
Figure 1.3	Scatterplots of PRI(M) scores	27
Figure 2.1	VAS of the AFP and the AFP-TMD groups	50
Figure 2.2	Aetiology of pain as reported by subjects	51
Figure 2.3	Subjects' expectation of "pain being cured" from treatment	51
Figure 3.1	Percentage pain reduction from diagnostic procedures	76
Figure 3.2	Percentage pain reduction from topical capsaicin treatment	77
Figure 4.1	Chromatograms of controls and patients with pain states	102
Figure 6.1	Percentage recovery of bradykinin standard using filters	121
Figure 6.2	UV and fluorescence detection of bradykinin standard	124
Figure 6.3	Analysis of OPA-bradykinin reaction described by Omori <i>et al.</i> , (1986b)	125
Figure 6.4	Analysis of benzoin-bradykinin reaction described by Kai <i>et al.</i> , (1987)	127
Figure 6.5	Analysis of excitation and emission spectra of benzoin	129
Figure 6.6	Mantyl-bradykinin derivatisation reaction	132
Figure 6.7	UV detection of mantyl-bradykinin derivitisation	133
Figure 6.8	Fluorescence detection of mantyl-bradykinin reaction	134
Figure 7.1	HPLC separation of four peptides	140
Figure 7.2	Comparison of UV spectra of four peptides	143
Figure 7.3	UV spectral differences of peptides	145
Figure 7.4	UV absorbance spectra of bradykinin and mobile phase	146
Figure 7.5	Effect of pH on UV absorbance of bradykinin	147
Figure 7.6	pH effects on chromatograms	148
Figure 7.7	Validation curve for bradykinin 1-20 ng at pH 2	152
Figure 8.1	UV stopped flow scan of eluted peak identified as bradykinin by co-chromatography	159
Figure 8.2	Confirmation of bradykinin in saliva by co-chromatography	160
Figure 8.3	Chromatogram of bradykinin standard	163
Figure 8.4	Chromatogram of saliva	164
Figure 8.5	Comparison of chromatograms of bradykinin standard and effluent	165
Figure 8.6	Direct infusion of bradykinin standard into MS	168
Figure 8.7	HPLC-MS of bradykinin standard	169
Figure 8.8	Identification and confirmation of salivary bradykinin by HPLC-MS	170
Figure 9.1	Degradation of bradykinin standard at pH 7 (MilliQ)	173
Figure 9.2	Degradation of 50 ng bradykinin in saliva	174
Figure 9.3	Degradation of bradykinin in whole untreated saliva (pH 7) at 50 ng bradykinin per injection	175
Figure 9.4	Degradation of 500 ng bradykinin in saliva	177
Figure 9.5	Degradation of bradykinin in whole untreated saliva (pH 7) at 500	

ng bradykinin per injection

178

Figure 9.6	Approximation of the rate of degradation by a first-order rate of bradykinin	181
Figure 9.7	Stability of bradykinin with addition of 0.1 M H <sub>3</sub> PO <sub>4</sub>	186
Figure 9.8	Chromatograms of saliva (pH 2) spiked with bradykinin (50 and 500 ng per HPLC injection)	187
Figure 9.9	Stability of bradykinin with addition of 0.1 M H <sub>3</sub> PO <sub>4</sub>	188
Figure 10.1	Daily variations of salivary bradykinin concentrations	199
Figure 10.2	pH of saliva in subjects over 40 minute sampling time	201
Figure 10.3	Salivary bradykinin concentration for each subject throughout sampling period	203
Figure 11.1	Structure of defensin peptides	218
Figure 11.2	Chromatograms of defensin HNP-1 and HNP-2 standards, HPLC method using C8 column	222
Figure 11.3	Chromatogram of saliva, HPLC method using C8 column	223
Figure 11.4	Chromatograms of defensin HNP-1 and HNP-2 standards, HPLC method using WCX column	224
Figure 11.5	Chromatogram of collected effluent, HPLC method using WCX column	225



## APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Study 1, Pain data for each subject	253
Appendix 2	Study 1, VAS and MPQ data for each subject	256
Appendix 3	Study 3, Socio-economic data of atypical odontalgia group	259
Appendix 4	Study 3, Psychological variables of atypical odontalgia group	261
Appendix 5	Study 3, Diagnosis and pain variables in atypical odontalgia group	263
Appendix 6	Study 3, Patient response to pharmacological procedures	265
Appendix 7	Study 5, Post-operative (0-2 hours) group data	267
Appendix 8	Study 5, Post-operative (1-10 days) group data	269
Appendix 9	Study 5, Cancer group data	271
Appendix 10	Study 5, Arthritis group data	273

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACTH	adrenocorticotrophic hormone
AFP	atypical facial pain
AFP-TMD	atypical facial pain with secondary temporomandibular disorder
ANOVA	analysis of variance
AO	atypical odontalgia
AO-TMD	atypical odontalgia with secondary temporomandibular disorder
BK	bradykinin
CGRP	calcitonin gene-related peptide
CRPS	complex regional pain syndrome
CSF	cerebrospinal fluid
EEG	electroencephalogram
EMLA	eutectic mixture of local anaesthetics
GIT	gastrointestinal tract
GRS	Graphic Rating Scale
HF	Hageman factor
HMW	high molecular weight
HPLC	high-performance liquid chromatography
HPLC-MS	high-performance liquid chromatography-mass spectrometry
IASP	International Association for the Study of Pain
LMW	low molecular weight
MMPI	Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory
MPQ	McGill Pain Questionnaire
MS	mass spectrometer
NWC	Number of Words Chosen
OPA	o-Phthalaldehyde
PG	prostaglandin
PRI(A)	Pain Rating Index (Affective)
PRI(E)	Pain Rating Index (Evaluative)
PRI(M)	Pain Rating Index (Miscellaneous)
PRI(S)	Pain Rating Index (Sensory)
PRI(T)	Pain Rating Index (Total)
S.D.	standard deviation
SMP	sympathetically maintained pain
TMD	temporomandibular disorder
VAS	visual analogue scale