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Distinct and mutually exclusive Ca²⁺ flux- and adenylyl cyclase-inducing gene expression profiles of G-protein-coupled receptors on human antigen-specific B cells

Chang, Iris ; Kaushik, Abhinav ; Satitsuksanoa, Pattaporn ; Yang, Minglin ; Buergi, Laura ; Schneider, Stephan R ; Babayev, Huseyn ; Akdis, Cezmi A ; Nadeau, Kari ; van de Veen, Willem ; Akdis, Mübeccel

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/all.15858>

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ZORA URL: <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-252703>

Journal Article

Published Version



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Originally published at:

Chang, Iris ; Kaushik, Abhinav ; Satitsuksanoa, Pattaporn ; Yang, Minglin ; Buergi, Laura ; Schneider, Stephan R ; Babayev, Huseyn ; Akdis, Cezmi A ; Nadeau, Kari ; van de Veen, Willem ; Akdis, Mübeccel (2023). Distinct and mutually exclusive Ca²⁺ flux- and adenylyl cyclase-inducing gene expression profiles of G-protein-coupled receptors on human antigen-specific B cells. *Allergy*, 78(11):3016-3019.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/all.15858>

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Rebecca K. Martin and Anuj Tharakan own stock in Pleros Therapeutics Inc. which is currently of no value. The rest of the authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

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Distinct and mutually exclusive Ca²⁺ flux- and adenylyl cyclase-inducing gene expression profiles of G-protein-coupled receptors on human antigen-specific B cells

To the Editor,

B cells play an essential role in allergies by producing allergen-specific IgE, which is a prerequisite for allergen-induced degranulation of mast cells (MCs) and basophils. MCs, basophils, dendritic cells and bacteria are capable of secreting inflammatory mediators including histamine.¹ Histamine is a bioactive amine that exerts its function through binding to histamine receptors (HRs), which are 7-transmembrane G-protein-coupled receptors (GPCRs). Histamine can regulate its function through four receptors (HR1-HR4), in which

ligation of histamine with HR1 can trigger Ca²⁺ mobilization, whereas HR2 stimulates and increases cAMP concentrations.² Interestingly, *HRH1* and *HRH2* genes can show mutually exclusive expression pattern in B cells, with a differential antibody response as demonstrated in the clones. HR1+/HR2- increases Th1 response and HR1 deficient mice has increased antigen specific IgE, whereas HR1-/HR2+ mice has suppressed Th2 cytokines and induced tolerance and show suppressed antigen specific IgE.² Functionally, HR1 and HR2 GPCRs are well-known to generate a different set of downstream signaling

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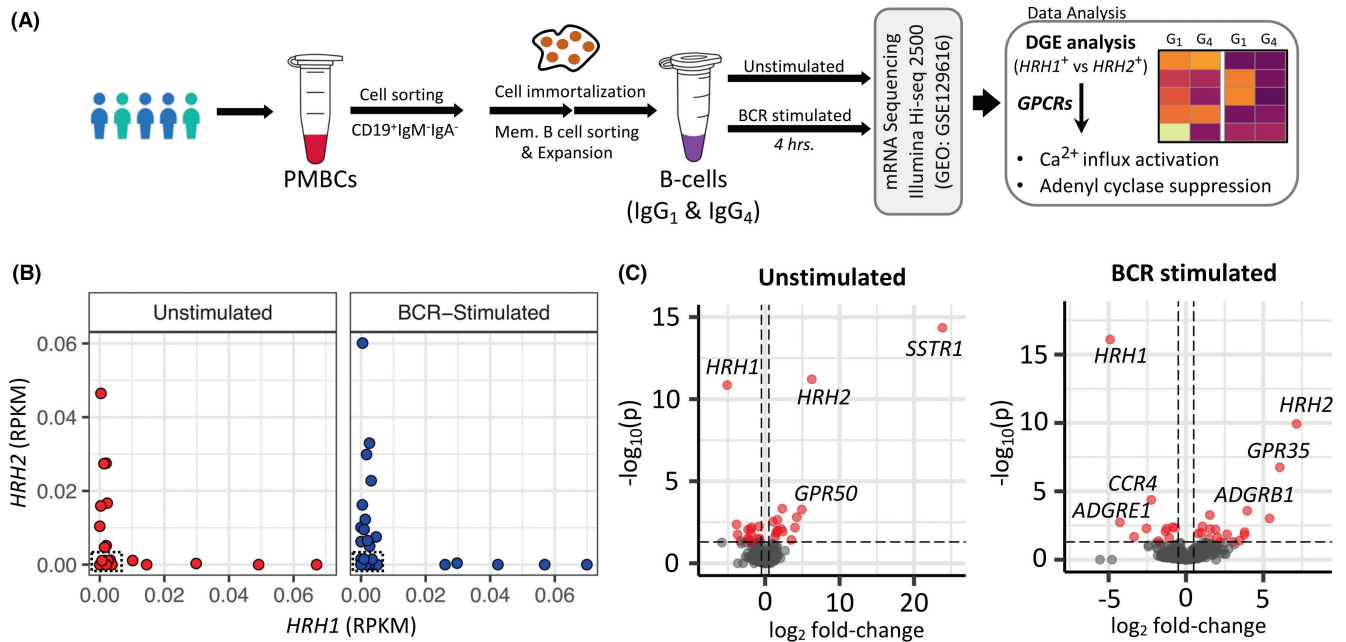


FIGURE 1 Study design and differential gene expression of histamine receptors. (A) The study design used for isolation and sorting of B cells clones for gene expression analysis and the data analysis workplan for identification and prioritization of GPCRs. (B) Mutually exclusive expression profile of *HRH1* and *HRH2* in both unstimulated and BCR-stimulated clones. The dotted box represents the threshold within which samples were considered as double negative, that is, *HRH1*⁻/*HRH2*⁻. (C) Volcano plots to highlight DE GPCR genes in *HRH1*⁺ versus *HRH2*⁺ samples in both unstimulated and BCR-stimulated samples. The red dots represent significantly differentially expressed genes (absolute logFC >0.5 & *p* < .05). Histamine receptor genes are represented as *HRH1* or *HRH2*, whereas their histamine receptor GPCR protein are represented as HR1 or HR2.

events in response to histamine. Therefore, to explore the response of B cells in allergic diseases, we analyzed the expression profile of HRs and other GPCRs in B cell clones. We hypothesized that the expression profile of HR genes (*HRH1*⁺ vs. *HRH2*⁺ B cell clones) could differentially affect the corresponding B cells response by triggering different intracellular events and downstream cascade of pathways in a GPCR-dependent manner.

A total of 27 IgG1 and IgG4 expressing B cell clones were isolated for gene expression analysis under unstimulated and BCR stimulated conditions, respectively (Figure 1A and Data S1). Interestingly, we observed B cell clones with mutually exclusive expression profile of *HRH1* and *HRH2* genes (Figure 1B), with more *HRH1*⁺ B cell clones in BCR-stimulated samples than unstimulated samples. The subsequent *HRH1*⁺ versus *HRH2*⁺ differential gene expression analysis (Figure 1C), reveal 28 differentially expressed (DE) GPCRs in unstimulated samples, with upregulated *P2RY13* and *C5AR1* genes in *HRH2*⁺ B cell clones (Figure 2A,B), which are associated with the cAMP signaling and suppressive pathway.^{3,4} To further prioritize the DE GPCRs specifically associated with Ca²⁺ and cAMP signaling pathways, we reconstructed the co-expression networks and performed the weighted degree analysis across *HRH1*⁺ versus *HRH2*⁺ clones. The analysis reveals that the purinergic receptor family of GPCRs (i.e., *P2RY1*, *P2RY13*) and complement component 5a receptor family of genes (i.e., *C5AR1* and *C5AR2*) share highest degree of interactions. These genes are upregulated in *HRH2*⁺ samples and are well-known to affect cAMP signaling pathway^{3,4} (Figure S1A).

Intriguingly, we also observed upregulation of *GPR35* in *HRH2*⁺ B cells, which is associated in maintaining a low baseline Ca²⁺ level.⁵ Similarly, we also observed upregulation of *GPR68* and *GPR171* in *HRH1*⁺ B cells; both are known to stimulate Ca²⁺ flux (Data S1).

Similarly, 27 GPCRs were DE in BCR-stimulated samples (Figure 2C,D), including higher expression of serotonin receptor type 1A (*HTR1A*) and *HCAR1* (or *GPR81*) in *HRH2*⁺ samples, with a cAMP-linked suppressive function. In addition, we also observed upregulation of complement component 5a receptor family of genes (i.e., *C5AR1* and *C5AR2*) and *GPR35*, in agreement with the trend observed in unstimulated *HRH2*⁺ B cell clones. Surprisingly, we observed a higher expression of prostaglandin E2 receptor subtype EP4 (*PTGER4*) and adenosine A2A receptor (*ADORA2A*) in *HRH2*⁺ samples,^{4,6} which are known to be associated with activation of cAMP production and share the highest strength of interactions with the cAMP signaling sub-network (Figure S1B). Among the up-regulated genes in *HRH1*⁺ samples, we found three Ca²⁺ mobilizing genes, that is, *GPR34*, *P2RY10*, and *PTAFR*.

The results reported in this study provide data for a novel hypothesis suggesting investigation of co-expressed genes that may play important synergistic or antagonistic regulatory roles in B cell function.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Iris Chang: Writing, review & editing, formal analysis; Abhinav Kaushik: Writing, review & editing, software and formal analysis;

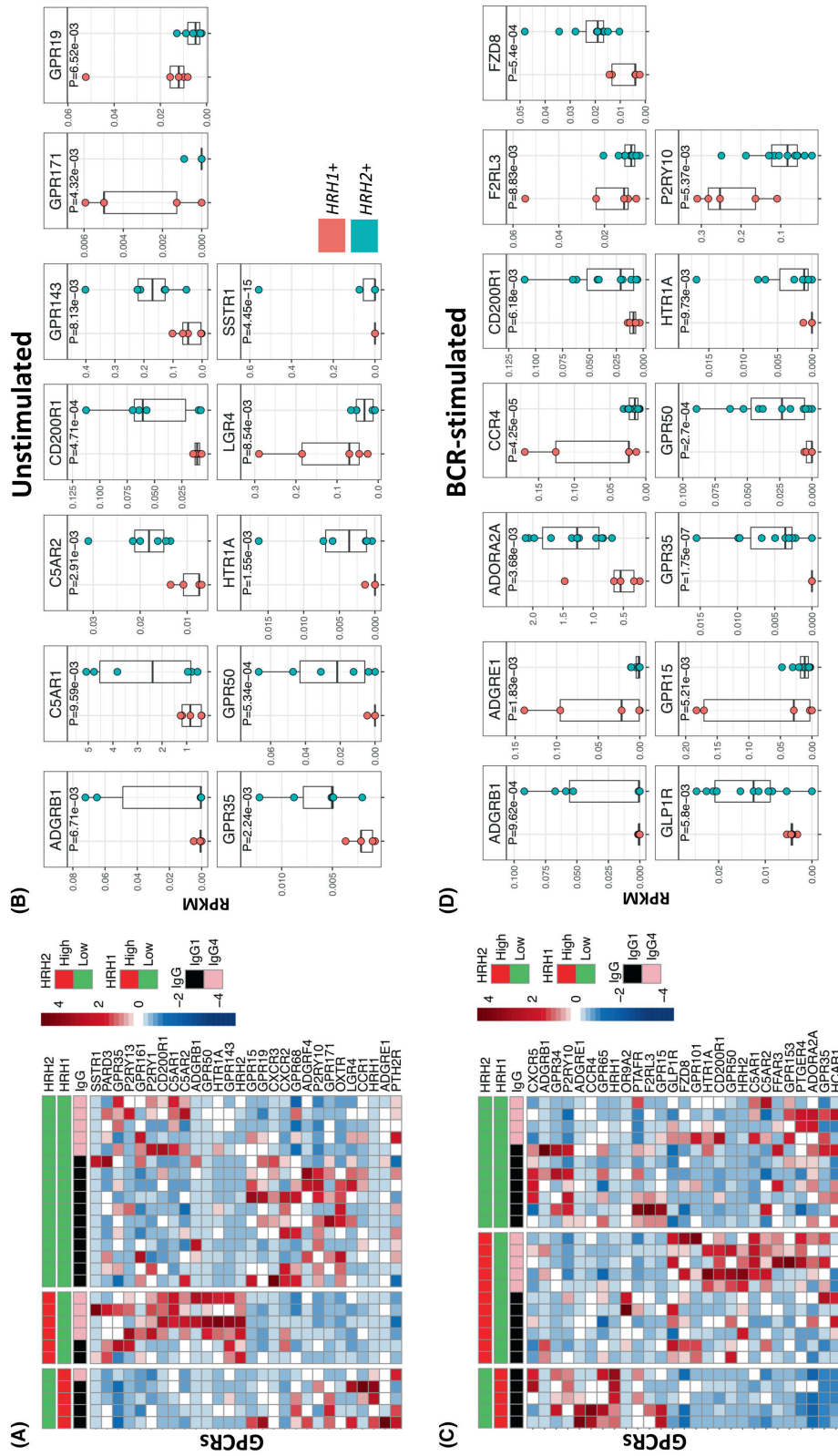


FIGURE 2 Differentially expressed (DE) GPCRs in HRH1+ versus HRH2+ samples. (A) Heatmap showing expression profile of DE GPCR genes in all the unstimulated samples, including double negative samples. The top two panels represent the HRH1+ and HRH2+ status of each sample. (B) The boxplot showing topmost significantly DE GPCR genes in (absolute logFC > 0.5 & $p < .001$) in unstimulated samples. (C) Heatmap showing expression profile of DE GPCR genes in all the BCR-stimulated samples. The annotations are same as (A). (D). The boxplot showing topmost significantly DE GPCR genes in (absolute logFC > 0.5 & $p < .001$) in BCR-stimulated samples. Histamine receptor genes are represented as HRH1 or HRH2, whereas their histamine receptor GPCR protein are represented as HR1 or HR2.

Patraporn Satitsuksanoa, Laura Buergi, Stephan R. Schneider: review & editing; Minglin Yang: formal analysis; Kari Nadeau: supervision, review & editing; Willem van de Veen: review & editing, conceptualization, method, provide data; Huseyn Babayev: software and formal analysis; Cezmi A. Akdis and Mübeccel Akdis: review & editing, conceptualization, supervision.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

M.A. has received research support from the Swiss National Science Foundation No. 310030-201053/320030-159870 and the Sean N Parker Center for Allergy and Asthma Research at Stanford University. C.A.A. is employed by the Swiss Institute of Allergy and Asthma Research, University of Zurich; has research grants from the Swiss National Science Foundation No. 310030-156823, and the Christine Kühne—Center for Allergy Research and Education (CK-CARE). W.V. received research grant from Promedica Stiftung. M.S. received research grants from the Swiss National Science Foundation (No. 310030_189334/1) and the GSK, and Novartis. K.N. has received the funding from NIAID grants U19AI104209, U01AI140498, and R01AI140134 and the Sean N. Parker Center for Allergy and Asthma Research at Stanford University.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that supports the findings of this study are available in the supplementary material of this article

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