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Research findings from University of Arizona, Department of Pharmacology update understanding of pancreatitis
12/06/2010
NewsRx.com

Research findings, 'Attenuation of persistent experimental pancreatitis pain by a bradykinin b2 receptor antagonist,' are discussed in a new report. "The role of bradykinin (BK) receptors in activating and sensitizing peripheral nociceptors is well known. Recently, we showed that spinal dynorphin was pronociceptive through direct or indirect BK receptor activation," scientists in the United States report (see also ).

"Here, we explored the potential role of BK receptors in pain associated with persistent pancreatitis in rats. Experimental pancreatitis and abdominal hypersensitivity were induced by intravenous administrations of dibutyltin dichloride (DBTC). [des-Arg-Leu]BK (B1 antagonist) and HOE 140 (B2 antagonist) were given by intraperitoneal or intrathecal injection. Dynorphin antiserum was given intrathecally. Reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction was used to detect spinal mRNA for BK receptors. Dibutyltin dichloride-induced pancreatitis upregulated B1 and B2 mRNA in the thoracic dorsal root ganglion and B2, but not B1, in the pancreas. No changes in spinal B1 or B2 mRNA were observed. Intraperitoneal or intrathecal administration of HOE 140 dose dependently abolished DBTC-induced abdominal hypersensitivity, whereas [des-Arg-Leu]BK was without effect by either route of administration. Antiserum to dynorphin (intrathecal) abolished DBTC-induced hypersensitivity. These results suggest that blockade of peripheral or spinal BK B2 receptors may be an effective approach for diminishing pain associated with pancreatitis," wrote Q. Chen and colleagues, University of Arizona, Department of Pharmacology.

The researchers concluded: "Moreover, it is suggested that spinal dynorphin may maintain pancreatitis pain through direct or indirect activation of BK B2 receptors in the spinal cord."

Chen and colleagues published their study in Pancreas (Attenuation of persistent experimental pancreatitis pain by a bradykinin b2 receptor antagonist. Pancreas, 2010;39(8):1220-5).

For additional information, contact Q. Chen, University of Arizona College of Medicine, Dept. of Pharmacology, Tucson, AZ 85724 USA.

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Scientists discuss in 'Analysis of gene function using DNA microarrays' new findings in health and medicine. "This chapter provides a guide to analyzing gene function using DNA microarrays. First, I discuss the design and interpretation of experiments where gene expression levels in mutant and wild-type strains are compared," scientists in the United States report (see also ). "I then provide a detailed description of the protocols for isolating mRNA from yeast cells, converting the RNA into dye-labeled cDNA, and hybridizing these samples to a microarray. Finally, I discuss methods for washing, scanning, and analyzing the arrays," wrote A.P Capaldi and colleagues, University of Arizona.

The researchers concluded: "Emphasis is placed on describing approaches and techniques that help to minimize the artifacts and noise that so often plague microarray data."

Capaldi and colleagues published their study in Methods In Enzymology (Analysis of gene function using DNA microarrays. Methods In Enzymology, 2010;470():3-17).

For more information, contact A.P. Capaldi, University of Arizona, Dept. of Molecular and Cellular Biology, Tucson, Arizona USA.

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Grim health choices in Arizona
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International Herald Tribune

Even physicians with decades of experience telling patients that their lives are nearing an end are having difficulty discussing a potentially fatal condition that has arisen in Arizona: death by budget cut.

Effective at the beginning of October, Arizona stopped financing certain transplant operations under the state's version of Medicaid, the U.S. health care program for the poor. Many doctors say the decision amounts to a death sentence for some low-income patients, who have little chance of survival without transplants and lack the hundreds of thousands of dollars needed to pay for them.

"The most difficult discussions are those that involve patients who had been on the donor list for a year or more and now we have to tell them they're not on the list anymore," said Dr. Rainer Gruessner, a transplant specialist at the University of Arizona College of Medicine. "The frustration is tremendous. It's more than frustration."

Organ transplants in the United States are already the subject of a web of regulations, which do not guarantee that everyone in need of a lifesaving organ will receive one. But Arizona's transplant specialists are alarmed that patients who were in line to receive transplants one day were, after the state's budget cuts to its Medicaid program, ruled ineligible the next — unless they raised the money themselves.

Francisco Felix, 32, a father of four who has hepatitis C and is in need of a liver, received news a few weeks ago that a family friend was dying and wanted to donate her liver to him. But the budget cuts meant he no longer qualified for a state-financed transplant.

He was prepared anyway at Banner Good Samaritan Medical Center as his relatives scrambled to raise the needed $200,000. When the money did not come through, the liver went to someone else on the transplant list.

"I know times are tight and cuts are needed, but you can't cut human lives," said Mr. Felix's wife, Flor.

Such high drama is unfolding regularly here as more and more of the roughly 100 people affected by the cuts are becoming known: the father of six who died before receiving a bone marrow transplant, the plumber in need of a new heart and the high school basketball coach who struggles to breathe during games at high altitudes as she awaits a lung transplant.

"I appreciate the need for budget restraints," said Dr. Andrew M. Yeager, a University of Arizona professor who is director of the Blood and Marrow Transplantation Program at the Arizona Cancer Center. "But when one looks at a potentially lifesaving treatment, admittedly expensive, and we have data to support efficacy, cuts like this are shortsighted and sad."

State Medicaid officials said they recommended discontinuing some transplants only after
assessing the success rates for previous patients. Among the discontinued procedures are lung
transplants, liver transplants for hepatitis C patients and some bone marrow and pancreas
transplants, which would save the state about $4.5 million a year.
"As an agency, we understand there have been difficult cuts, and there will have to be more difficult
cuts looking forward," said Jennifer Carusetta, chief legislative liaison at the state Medicare agency.
The issue has led to a fierce political battle, with Democrats condemning the reductions as
"Brewercare," after Governor Jan Brewer.
"We made it very clear at the time of the vote that this was a death sentence," said State Senator
Leah Landrum Taylor, a Democrat.
The Republican governor has in turn blamed "Obamacare," meaning the national health care
overhaul, for the transplant cuts even though the Arizona vote came in March, before President
Barack Obama signed that bill into law.
But a top Republican, State Representative John Kavanagh, has already pledged to reconsider at
least some of the state's cuts for transplants when the Legislature reconvenes in January. Mr.
Kavanagh, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, said he did not believe lawmakers had the
full picture of the effect of the cuts on patients when they voted.
"It's difficult to be linked to a situation where people's lives are jeopardized and turned upside
down," he said in an interview. "Thankfully no one has died as a result of this, and I believe we have
time to rectify this."
Across the country, states have restricted benefits to their Medicaid programs, according to a 50-
state survey published in September by the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. But
none have gone as far as Arizona in eliminating some transplants, which are considered optional
services under federal law.
There has been a flurry of lobbying to persuade the state to reverse the decision. Dr. Gruessner
said he and others met with state health officials recently to propose other cuts associated with
transplants, like eliminating tests typically conducted before surgery.
If the Legislature does decide to reconsider the cuts, one of the affected people, a plumber and
father of three named Randy Shepherd, 36, who has an ailing heart and needs a transplant, plans
to attend the debate.
"I'm trying not to take it personally," he said of being cut out of the program. "None of the politicians
had heard of me when they made their decision. They didn't say, 'Let's kill this guy.'"
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DANCERS FROM ACROSS THE STATE CRANKED UP THE MUSIC AND PUT ON THEIR
DANCING SHOES TO BENEFIT THE ARIZONA CANCER CENTER.
12/04/2010
KMSB-TV

MORGAN, WE TOLD YOU EARLIER ABOUT MISSION GARDEN, AN HISTORICAL GARDEN ON
TUCSON'S WEST SIDE THAT HAS A LOT OF HISTORY BEHIND IT. WHEN VOTERS
APPROVED RIO NUEVO FUNDING IN 19-99, MISSION GARDEN WAS SUPPOSED TO BE
RECONSTRUCTED. IT HASN'T BEEN. RIO NUEVO FUNDS DRIED UP WHEN THE NATION
WENT INTO A RECESSION. MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY ARE WORKING TO FIND OTHER
SOURCES OF FUNDING. We're hoping that the Rio Nuevo Board will see the progress, and
remember, the voters approved, reconstruction of D DOLLARS HAS BEEN DONATED TO THE
PROJECT. AT LEAST 15-THOUSAND MORE IS NEEDED. THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA, IS
ABOUT TO GET BIGGER. A NEW BRANCH OF THE U OF A WILL BE STARTED DOWNTOWN.
The price tag one dollar a year. It's an over 33-THOUSAND SQUARE FOOT
BUILDING THAT SITS NEAR STONE AND PENNINGTON. CLASSES WILL BE TAUGHT IN THE
BUILDING, AND COULD BEGIN AS SOON AS NEXT SUMMER. PIMA COUNTY BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS PLAN TO REVIEW THE LEASE THIS WEEK. SOL CASINOS HOSTED IT'S
SIXTH ANNUAL TAMAL AND HERITAGE FESTIVAL TODAY, AND AS FOX 11'S CARISSA
PLANALP TELLS US, COMPETITION NEVER TASTED SO GOOD. SOME CAME FOR THE PERFORMANCES. "Yeah to the kids to santana yeah it's been really really good. OTHERS CAME TO FIND A ONE OF KIND GIFT. i have them in five colors i have blue green charcoal gray. BUT IT WAS THE FOOD COURT THAT REALLY DREW A CROWD. the big attraction at the festival is the tamale contest where visitors can sample all kinds of family recipes. i was able to learn to develop my grandmother's recipe and it's been a success. ELIAS DAVID SALAZAR SAYS IT TAKES A FEW SPECIAL INGREDIENTS TO MAKE HIS AWARD-WINNING TAMALEs. the corn that we're using is form sonora mexico and it's a white corn a sweet corn and it's very known back there and that's what they make the tortillas out of. YOU DON'T HAVE TO TAKE THE CHEF'S WORD FOR IT. (LIFTS PLATE AND TAKES BITE mmm very good. TAMALE EATERS HERE HAVE A VERY REFINED PALET. its like the maza and the food is very moist. ACROSS THE WAY, MORE PEOPLE ARE PUTTING THEIR FAMILY TRADITIONS TO THE TEST. we've been doing these tamales for 19 years that i can remember and we dont change the recipe its my moms recipe. AT THE TAMAL FESTIVAL, A LITTLE FRIENDLY COMPETITION TRANSLATES INTO A GREAT LUNCH. i also look for the longest line because usually the longest line means the best tamales. CARISSA PLANALP FOX 11 NEWS. THE TAMALE CONTEST WAS BROKEN DOWN INTO SEVERAL CATEGORIES RANGING FROM TRADITIONAL TO SPECIALTY. FOR ONE LAST WEEKEND, NORTHWEST FIRE DISTRICT FIREFIGHTERS ARE OUT COLLECTING CASH AND TOY DONATIONS TO HAND OUT THIS HOLIDAY SEASON. THE FUNDRAISER IS CALLED STUFF THE TRUCK. FIREFIGHTERS WERE OUT STUFFING A FIRE TRUCK ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE FOOTHILLS MALL TODAY. THEY'LL BE THERE AGAIN TOMORROW UNTIL THE MALL CLOSES. DONATIONS WILL BE GIVEN TO MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY AND STUDENTS WHO RIGHT NOW HAVE NOTHING. some of the kids unfortunately dont even eat so so if they get a meal for breakfast and they get to open a toy or two thats phenomenal. STUFF THE TRUCK ENDS TOMORROW NIGHT AT 7PM. THE TUCSON WALDORF SCHOOL HELD THEIR ANNUAL RIVER BEND FARM AND CRAFT FAIR THIS AFTERNOON NEAR RIVER AND ALVERNON. THE FAIR FEATURED LOTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS, INCLUDING GAMES, WOOL SPINNING, FACE PAINTING, MUSIC, FOOD AND HANDMADE ARTS AND CRAFTS. THERE WAS ALSO MORE THAN 12-HUNDRED DOLLARS WORTH OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES THAT WERE RAFFLED OFF. This fair is really, it goes back to traditional times. You know, you're going to find products here that are all organic, handmade, very unique. PROCEEDS FROM THE FAIR BENEFIT THE SCHOOL'S OPERATING EXPENSES, WHICH INCLUDES TEACHERS' SALARIES AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES. THE SCHOOL IS A NON-PROFIT PRIVATE SCHOOL. THE SCHOOL ALSO HELD A GROUNDBREAKING EVENT FOR THEIR EXPANSION. ANOTHER BENEFIT HELD THIS AFTERNOON, THIS ONE WILL HELP TUCSON CHILDREN WITH CANCER. DANCERS FROM ACROSS THE STATE CRANKED UP THE MUSIC AND PUT ON THEIR DANCING SHOES TO BENEFIT THE ARIZONA CANCER CENTER. THE GALA WAS HELD IN HONOR OF PETER "CHIO" ALVAREZ, WHO DIED AFTER A 17-YEAR BATTLE WITH THE DISEASE IN AUGUST. MONEY RAISED WILL HELP GIVE EVERY TUCSON CANCER CHILD AND THEIR FAMILY A CHRISTMAS GIFT AND EITHER A TURKEY OR HAM. the siblings and the parents suffer so much and the financial strain on them and the mental and emotional strain is unbelievable. PETER'S MOTHER HAS BEEN FUNDRAISING SINCE OCTOBER. AFTER TODAY, THE GRAND TOTAL WILL BE MORE THAN FIVE-THOUSAND DOLLARS. A GARAGE SALE IN TUCSON TODAY HAD YOUR TYPICAL Kニック KNACKS AND HOUSEHOLD ITEMS, NOT SO USUAL THOUGH WAS THE MESSAGE THAT CAME WITH THEM. THE TUCSON LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS HOSTED ITS FIRST EVER ELEGANT GARAGE SALE. LEAGUE MEMBERS DONATED ALL SORTS OF ART AND HOUSEHOLD ITEMS TO SELL. THE MONEY RAISED GOES TOWARD LEAGUE PROJECTS THAT ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN GOVERNMENT.