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Development of a tetracycline-inducible lentiviral vector with an instant regulatory system

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
Master of Science (MSc)
in
Biochemistry

at Massey University, Manawatu,
New Zealand

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2013

Abstract

Lentiviral vectors, originally derived from human immunodeficiency virus, provide highly efficient viral gene delivery vehicles. Lentiviral vectors often use a constitutive promoter to drive the expression of a therapeutic gene. To regulate the expression of a therapeutic gene, a regulatory system such as Tet-On needs to be established in the target cell lines to produce a regulatory protein, reverse Tet-responsive transcriptional activator (rtTA). The expressed rtTA binds to the tetracycline responsive element (TRE) in the promoter in response to doxycycline and activates transcription of gene of interest. A hypothesis in this study is based on the speculation that a basal leaky expression of rtTA in the bi-directional TRE vectors allows instantly inducible expression of a gene of interest and thereby avoids the time-consuming procedures for generating Tet-On cell lines. Based on this hypothesis, a novel lentiviral vector has been developed to examine an instant induction of PP2C β as a target gene. Three instantly inducible bicistronic lentiviral vectors [pLenti-Bi-TRE-Tet-on (V), pLenti-Bi-TRE-Tet-on-PP2C β WT (WT), pLenti- Bi-TRE-Tet-on-PP2C β MUT (MUT)] were constructed and characterised to assess the usefulness of these vectors. Transient transfection of both WT and MUT vectors into HEK293T cells showed a great induction of PP2C β expression upon 24 h of 1 μ M doxycycline treatment. The result promises the use of these vectors as a mammalian expression plasmid with a feature of inducible target gene expression. However, viral infection studies involving lentiviral packaging and infection procedures did not show a reproducible expression of rtTA or PP2C β in HEK293T cells. Therefore, the inducibility of viral transduction needs to be improved for the future studies of PP2C β in primary cells.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my foremost gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Jeong Park for his expertise, guidance and support throughout this project and in the preparation of this thesis.

Thank you to Associate Professor Kathryn Stowell for her help throughout my postgraduate studies and valuable suggestions on thesis writing.

Thank you to Yajie Wang, Cornelia Roesl and Rebecca Smith for their friendship, support and guidance, especially towards the end of my thesis writing.

Thank you to everybody at the Park Lands and the Twilite Zone lab, especially Chris Burrows for helping with the infection experiments.

Thank you to my friend Poppy Liang and Elaine Zhao for providing me a cozy place to stay and supporting me. Thank you to Xinning, Mia, Joyee and Jason, for making non-science life so enjoyable.

I would like to thank my family and friends in China, for your love, support, encouragement and most importantly to have put up with my meltdowns. Thank you for keeping me going.

I acknowledge the Palmerston North Medical Research Foundation and the Genesis Oncology Trust for funding this project.

Abbreviations

A	absorbance
AD	activation domain
APS	ammonium persulfate
ATP	adenosine triphosphate
attL	Left integration attachment site
attR	Right integration attachment site
b	path length
bp	base pair
BAD	Bcl-2-associated death promoter
BSA	bovine serum albumin
CA	capsid
CAK	CKD-activating kinase
cDNA	complementary deoxyribonucleic acid
CDKs	cyclin-depend protein kinase
CFU	colony-formation unit
CIP	calf intestinal alkaline phosphatase
CMV	cytomegalovirus
Cp/Ct	crossing point
CFU	colony-formation unit
DBD	DNA binding domain
DMEM	Dulbecco's Modified Eagle medium
DMSO	dimethyl sulphoxide
DNase	deocytbonuclease
dNTP	deoxyribonucleotide triphosphate
Dox	doxycycline
DTT	dithiothreitol
ϵ	extinction coefficient
EDTA	ethylene diamine tetra-acetic acid
FBS	fetal bovine serum
FCS	fetal calf serum
GFP	green fluorescent protein
GPCR	G protein-coupled receptor
GUSB	beta glucuronidase

HEK 293T	human embryonic kidney 293T cell line
hES	human embryonic stem cell
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
HRP	horse radish peroxidase
IN	integrase
I κ B	NF κ B inhibitory binding partner
IKK	I κ B kinase
IL-1 β	Interleukin-1 β
JUK	Jun N-terminal kinase
kb	kilo base
LB	Luria-Bertani
LTR	long terminal repeat
LV	Lentiviral vector
M	molar
MA	membrane associated matrix
MAPK	mitogen-activated protein kinase
MCS	multiple cloning site
MEKK	MAP kinase kinase kinase
MLK	mixed lineage kinase
mM	millimolar
MKK	MAPK kinase
MKKK	MKK kinase
MTK1	MAP three kinase 1
MUT	vector containing mutant PP2C β
NC	nuclear capsid
NCBI	national centre for biotechnology information
NF κ B	nuclear factor kappa B
nm	nanometer
nM	nanomolar
nt	nucleotide
OD	optical density
PEG	polyethylene glycol
Pen/Strep	penicillin-streptomycin
PIC	pre-integration complex
PMSF	phenylmethanesulfonyl fluoride

RNAi	RNA interference
PP2C β	protein phosphatase type 2C isoform beta
PPMs	protein phosphatase magnesium-dependent enzymes
<i>PPM1B</i>	PP2C β
PPPs	phospho-protein phosphatases
PR	protease
PTPs	protein tyrosine phosphatases
PVDF	polyvinylidene fluoride transfer membrane
qPCR	quantitative real-time PCR
RCR	replication competent recombinant
RCV	replication competent virus
RE	restriction endonuclease
RHD	Rel homology domain
RNase	ribonuclease
RIN	RNA integrity number
RRE	Rev-responsive element
RT	reverse transcription/reverse transcriptase
RT-	reverse transcriptase free reaction
RT-qPCR	reverse transcription quantitative real-time PCR
rTetR	Reverse TetR
rtTA	tetracycline-responsive transcriptional activator
SAPKs	stress signaling pathways
SDS	sodium dodecyl sulphate
SDS-PAGE	sodium dodecyl sulphate polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis
SIN	self-inactivating vector
SU	Surface/envelop glycoprotein
TAK1	TGF β -activated kinase 1
TBST	Tris-buffered saline with Tween 20
TEMED	N,N,N',N'-tetramethylethylenediamine
<i>tetO</i>	tet operator
TetR	Tet repressor protein
TGF α	Transforming growth factor α
TGF β	transforming growth factor β
TLR	toll-like receptor
TM	Trans membrane protein

T _m	melting temperature
TNF α	tumor necrosis factor
TRE	tetracycline-response element
TRE _{mod}	modified TRE-response element
tTA	tetracycline-controlled transactivator
U	units
μ M	micromolar
UV	ultraviolet
V	vector only/no PP2C β control vector
VSV-G	vesicular stomatitis virus G glycoprotein
WT	vector containing wild type PP2C β
ψ	packaging signal

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgments	ii
Abbreviations	iii
Table of Contents	vii
List of Figures	x
List of Tables.....	xi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Generation of a new vector system	1
1.1.1 Lentiviral systems	1
1.1.2 Tetracycline regulatory system	7
1.1.3 Applications of lentiviral systems in primary and stem cells	10
1.2 Molecular ageing in association with Protein phosphatase type 2C isoform beta (PP2C β).....	11
1.2.1 Protein phosphatase type 2C isoform beta (PP2C β)	11
1.2.2 Known functions of PP2C β	12
1.3 Background to this project	17
1.4 Project outline	19
1.4.1 Hypothesis.....	19
1.4.2 Research aim	20
Chapter 2: Materials and Methods	21
2.1 Materials.....	21
2.1.1 General	21
2.1.2 Cloning.....	21
2.1.3 Cell culture and lentiviral preparation.....	22
2.1.4 RNA extraction	22
2.1.5 DNA extraction	23
2.1.6 Protein extraction and western blotting.....	23
2.1.7 Reverse transcriptase quantitative real-time PCR.....	23
2.2 Methods.....	24
2.2.1 Cloning.....	24
2.2.2 Cell culture	26
2.2.3 Lentiviral preparation and optimisation	29

2.2.4 RNA	31
2.2.5 DNA	32
2.2.6 Protein analysis	33
2.2.7 Reverse transcriptase-coupled quantitative real-time PCR (RTqPCR)	36
Chapter 3: Results	39
3.1 Construction of inducible lentiviral vectors	39
3.1.1 Introduction	39
3.1.2 Cloning strategies	39
3.1.3 Construction of pLenti-Bi-TRE-Tet-On-PP2C β MUT (MUT)	41
3.1.4 Construction of pLenti-Bi-TRE-Tet-On (V) and pLenti-Bi-TRE-Tet-On-PP2C β WT (WT)	43
3.2 Confirmation of inducibility of rtTA and PP2C β expression in V, WT and MUT vectors.	45
3.2.1 Introduction	45
3.2.2 Confirmation of inducibility in transient transfected HEK 293T cells	45
3.2.3 Optimization of Doxycycline concentration	46
3.3 Inducibility of lentivirally infected HEK 293T cells	48
3.3.1 Introduction	48
3.3.2 Optimisation of lentiviral packaging	48
3.3.3 Stability of PP2C β in response to Dox induction	50
3.3.4 Optimisation of lentiviral induction condition	51
3.4 Examine <i>rtTA</i> expression using reverse transcriptase-coupled quantitative real-time PCR	54
3.4.1 Introduction	54
3.4.2 Primer design	54
3.4.3 RNA quality control	56
3.4.4 Reverse transcriptase negative control	56
3.4.5 PCR efficiency optimization	57
3.4.6 Relative quantification	58
Chapter 4: Discussion and future directions	60
4.1 Construction of lentiviral vectors	60
4.2 Inducibility of lentiviral vector system	62
4.3 Implications in expected PP2C β levels in WT and MUT constructs	64
4.4 Summary	64

4.5 Future directions.....	65
4.5.1 Addition of tags in vector construct.....	65
4.5.2 Improvement of lentiviral induction by priming.....	66
4.5.3 Applications in cellular senescence	66
Reference.....	68
Appendices.....	73
Appendix I: Primers used for PP2C β sequencing.....	73
Appendix II: Vector map of pTet-On vector.....	73
Appendix III: Vector map of pTRE-Tight-BI.....	74
Appendix IV: Vector map of pLenti-Bi-Tet-On- PP2C β construct.....	74
Appendix V: Sequence of pLenti-Bi-Tet-On-PP2C β construct.....	75
Appendix VI: Standard curves of <i>rtTA</i> and <i>GUSB</i> for statistical analysis.....	91
Appendix VII: Amplification curves, standard curve and melting peaks for <i>rtTA</i>	92
Appendix VIII: Amplification curves, standard curve and melting peaks for <i>GUSB</i>	93

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: A schematic representation of HIV-1-derived vector structure.....	3
Figure 1.2: Virus packing system	4
Figure 1.3: Schematic diagram of the gene regulation in the Tet-Off and Tet-On systems	9
Figure 1.4: Regulation of stress-activated protein kinase (SAPK) signal pathways by PP2C β 1.....	14
Figure 1.5: Activation of bi-directional lentiviral vector of PP2C β	18
Figure 3.1: Cloning strategy.....	40
Figure 3.2: Screening of <i>rtTA</i> in V and MUT constructs using 1% agarose gel electrophoresis.....	41
Figure 3.3: Confirmation of <i>rtTA</i> containing constructs using 1% agarose gel electrophoresis.....	42
Figure 3.4: Partially digested MUT construct with <i>XmaI</i> and <i>EcoRV</i> to produce a full length <i>rtTA</i> fragment.....	44
Figure 3.5: Confirmation of Dox-dependent <i>rtTA</i> and PP2C β expression via transient transfection on the immunoblot	46
Figure 3.6: Determination of the minimum Dox concentration and dose-response time in HEK 293T cells transfected with MUT construct	47
Figure 3.7: Colony formation of lentivirally infected HEK 293T cells.....	49
Figure 3.8: Time course of <i>rtTA</i> expression in response to Dox induction using V virus infected HEK 293T cells.....	52
Figure 3.9: Examination of <i>rtTA</i> protein expression in response to Dox induction in stably established V lentivirus-infected HEK 293T cells	53
Figure 3.10: Specificity check of <i>rtTA</i> amplicon using a conventional PCR	55
Figure 3.11: Confirmation of induced <i>rtTA</i> expression using quantitative real-time PCR analysis.....	59

List of Tables

Table 1.1: The function of lentivirus components	2
Table 2.1: Component of lentivirus transduction mixture for each vector	28
Table 2.2: Ten-fold serial dilutions of three viral stocks	31
Table 2.3: Components of 8% and 10% SDS-PAGE gel.....	35
Table 2.4: PCR cycling conditions for the amplification of <i>rtTA</i>	37
Table 3.1: Primers used for <i>rtTA</i> fragment amplification.....	41
Table 3.2: Viral titer of the three lentiviruses	50
Table 3.3: Sequences, melting temperatures (T_m °C) and amplicon size of <i>rtTA</i> primer pairs	55
Table 3.4: Comparison of RNA concentration before and after DNase treatment using Nanodrop spectrophotometry.....	56