

Enzymes as Drugs

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Soluble Polymer- Enzyme Adducts

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1 INTRODUCTION

It is not often realized that today's advances in the modification of enzymes for therapeutic use are an outgrowth of the pioneering work of Landsteiner (1) and van der Scheer (2–5), who studied the effect on antigenic specificity of short peptides coupled to proteins. This led to a great body of work by Sela and others [for review see (6)] on the elucidation of the immune response through the use of synthetic polypeptides, both free and coupled to proteins. During the course of this work, it was found that the coupling of certain polyamino acids to proteins could dramatically decrease immunogenicity and antigenicity.

This information was very important to investigators in the field of enzyme therapy as immune complications, invariably associated with the

injection of heterologous enzyme, have proved the greatest obstacles to effective enzyme therapy (7). To overcome the problem of immunogenicity and other shortcomings of enzymes such as limited circulating life in the blood, unsatisfactory pH optima, instability, and nonaccumulation at target sites, investigators have turned to chemical modification of enzymes. Today, many different polymer systems are used in an attempt to overcome these problems and improve therapeutic performance.

2 IMPROVED BIOLOGICAL PROPERTIES

The main thrust of this type of research is the production of soluble adducts with biological properties suitable for *in vivo* use. This is usually taken to mean that the conjugates have long circulating half-lives, do not produce or react with antibodies and are themselves nontoxic. Each polymer and its corresponding enzyme conjugate will be discussed individually. The effect of the various polymers on the circulating life of the enzymes is summarized in Table 1.

2.1 Poly(*N*-Vinylpyrrolidone)

A single enzyme, β -D-*N*-acetyl-hexosaminidase A, has been modified by the covalent attachment of poly (*N*-vinylpyrrolidone) (PVP), and tested *in vivo* (8). The native enzyme and the conjugated enzyme exhibited strikingly different clearance rates following intravenous injection into rabbits. Approximately 90% of the native human enzyme was cleared from the blood within 10 minutes after injection and the remainder was cleared within 1 hour. During the same time period (1 hour), 40% of the conjugated enzyme was still circulating in the blood. After 5 hours approximately 21% remained in the circulation. The clearance rate then steadily decreased so that 14% was detectable after 48 hours. Unfortunately, the polymer-bound enzyme reacted weakly with anti-hexosaminidase A indicating that this preparation may be immunogenic as well as antigenic. It is not known, however, if the clearance rates would be altered by the presence of antibodies that would invariably be produced upon repeated injections of the conjugate.

2.2 Glycosylation

Glycosylated enzymes also show enhanced plasma persistence as compared to the native enzymes. Sherwood et al. (9) prepared dextran conjugates of carboxypeptidase G from *Pseudomonas* sp. and arginase from *Fusarium solani*, which exhibited enhanced circulating lives. The half-life ($t_{1/2}$) of carboxypeptidase G in DBA/2 mice was 3.5 hours, while the $t_{1/2}$ for the corresponding dextran conjugate was 17 hours. Similarly, the $t_{1/2}$ for native arginase was 1.4 hours, as compared with 12 hours for its dextran conjugate.

Table 1 Effect of Various Polymers on the Circulating Life of Enzymes

Enzyme	Polymer	Clearance from Blood (% remaining/time or half-life, $t_{1/2}$)	Ref.
β -D-N-Acetyl hexosaminidase A	Poly (N-vinylpyrrolidone)	40%/1 hr, 21%/5 hr, 14%/48hr	8
β -D-N-Acetyl hexosaminidase A	None	0%/1 hr	8
Carboxypeptidase G	Dextran	$t_{1/2}$ = 17 hr	9
Carboxypeptidase G	None	$t_{1/2}$ = 3.5 hr	9
Arginase	Dextran	$t_{1/2}$ = 12 hr	9
Arginase	None	$t_{1/2}$ = 1.4 hr	9
Arginase	Polyethylene glycol	15%/72 hr	24
<i>Acinetobacter</i> glutaminase- asparaginase	Glycopeptide	$t_{1/2}$ = 16 hr ^a , 8.2 hr ^b , 19 hr ^c	10
<i>Acinetobacter</i> glutaminase asparaginase	None	$t_{1/2}$ = 1.1 hr ^a , 1 hr ^b , 4.3 hr ^c	10
Lysozyme	Desialized fetuin	Targeted to liver within 10 min	12
<i>Pseudomonas</i> 7A glutaminase-asparaginase	Desialized orosomucoid	$t_{1/2}$ = 7 min (targeted to liver)	13
<i>Pseudomonas</i> 7A glutaminase-asparaginase	None	$t_{1/2}$ = 7 hr	13
<i>E. coli</i> asparaginase	Lactose (17 residues/mol)	Targeted to liver within 10 min	14
<i>E. coli</i> asparaginase	None	$t_{1/2}$ = 4 h	14
Indolyl-3-alkane α -hydroxylase	Polymaleic acid	$t_{1/2}$ = 2 hr ^a	37
Indolyl-3-alkane α -hydroxylase	None	$t_{1/2}$ = 6 hr ^a	37
<i>E. coli</i> asparaginase	Poly-DL-alanine	$t_{1/2}$ = 21 hr ^a	43
	None	$t_{1/2}$ = 3 hr ^a	43
<i>Erwinia carotovora</i> asparaginase	Poly-DL-alanine	$t_{1/2}$ = 36 hr	43
	None	$t_{1/2}$ = 5 hr	43
Uricase	Albumin (homologous)	$t_{1/2}$ = 26 hr	15
Uricase	None	$t_{1/2}$ = 6 hr	15
Uricase	Polyethylene glycol	20%/48 hr	19
Catalase	Polyethylene glycol	10%/48 hr	17
Catalase	None	6%/6 hr	17
Adenosine deaminase	Polyethylene glycol	$t_{1/2}$ = 30 hr	25
Adenosine deaminase	None	$t_{1/2}$ < 0.5 hr	25
Superoxide dismutase	Polyethylene glycol	40%/72 hr	26
Superoxide dismutase	None	6%/4 hr	26

^aMice.^bRats.^cRabbits.

Glycosylation of *Acinetobacter glutaminasificans* glutaminase-asparaginase with glycopeptides from human fibrin and γ -globulin produced adducts with prolonged half-lives when tested in either mice, rats, or rabbits (10). Increasing the extent of modification produced conjugates with increased plasma half-lives and correspondingly decreased isoelectric points. A maximal increase in the half-life was obtained at a pI of 5, which was 15-fold that of the native enzyme (1.1 hours; pI = 8.2). Similarly in rats, the $t_{1/2}$ of the native enzyme was 1 hour as compared with 8.2 hours for the conjugate (pI = 4.7). In rabbits the $t_{1/2}$ of glycosylated enzyme was 19 hours compared with 4.3 hours for the native enzyme. Unfortunately, the glycosylated enzyme cross-reacted with rabbit antiserum raised against the native en-

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