

HOESSLI • ILANGUMARAN

Daniel C. Hoessli • Subburaj Ilangumaran

GPI-Anchored Membrane Proteins and Carbohydrates

GPI-Anchored Membrane
Proteins and Carbohydrates

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**MOLECULAR BIOLOGY
INTELLIGENCE
UNIT 7**

GPI-Anchored Membrane Proteins and Carbohydrates

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MOLECULAR BIOLOGY INTELLIGENCE UNIT

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R.G. LANDES COMPANY

Austin, Texas, U.S.A.

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PREFACE

This book is intended to provide the relevant and recent information about GPI-anchored molecules and hopefully clarify a number of issues regarding their involvement in biological and pathological situations. In both microbes and mammalian cells, such molecules have become intriguing plasma membrane constituents, and inquiries into why and how they accumulate and function in membranes have led to the elaboration of new concepts in membrane biology. For instance, membrane organization of proteins and lipids, transmembrane signaling and membrane recycling have been revisited to accommodate recent data on GPI-anchored molecules. Moreover, the capacity of microbial GPI-anchored molecules to exchange between different membranes and alter functional properties of host cells has highlighted unexpected ways for virulence expression on the part of those microorganisms. Research on the function and membrane organization of GPI-anchored biomolecules has grown quite extensively in the past five years, but a number of these observations remain inadequately explained. These issues were discussed in a recent meeting, "GPI Anchors and Biological Membranes" (organized by U. Brodbeck, P. Robinson and D. Hoessli; reported in *Trends in Cell Biology* 1998; 8:87-89) held at Splügen, Switzerland, September 14-17, 1997. This meeting also provided an opportunity to hear almost all of the contributors to this book and was quite useful in organizing the subjects presented in the following chapters.

In his introductory chapter, Martin Low reviews how GPI anchors were discovered and how "GPI research" has evolved from a purely biochemical problem to a fascinating issue in cell biology. In chapter 2, Peter Butikofer and Anant Menon describe the mammalian cell pathways for GPI anchor biosynthesis and discuss how GPI anchors are distributed in cellular membranes. Chapter 3 is devoted to GPI anchors and the organization of cellular membranes; Satyajit Mayor and Teymuraz Kurzchalia discuss these important and sensitive issues. Subburaj Ilangumaran, Peter Robinson and Daniel Hoessli give, in chapter 4, an overview of the equally sensitive issue of signaling via GPI-anchored receptors. In chapter 5, Vaclav Horejsi, Petr Draber and Hannes Stockinger unfold the panorama of GPI-anchored surface proteins expressed by hematopoietic cells. David Harris reviews in chapter 6 the particular behavior of GPI-anchored prions and cell-surface proteins in the nervous system. The current state of the art concerning GPI-anchored complement defense surface molecules is illustrated in chapter 7 by Carmen van den Berg and Paul Morgan. Chapter 8 is an attempt by Pascal Schneider and Daniel Hoessli to highlight the baroque variety of GPI anchors in a selection of microbial pathogens. The properties of phospholipases that cleave the GPI anchor, and their possible *in vivo* functions, are discussed by Martin Low and Urs Brodbeck in chapter 9. The intercellular exchange of GPI-anchored molecules between cells in the test tube and body fluids is illustrated by Isabelle Rooney in chapter 10. Finally,

Periasamy Selvaraj, Rebecca McHugh and Shanmugam Nagarajan show in chapter 11 how GPI-anchored molecules can be made and utilized in experimental medicine.

The synthesis achieved at this point does not reflect a full consensus, but the multidisciplinary approach of “GPI research” has been useful in providing fresh insights into old issues and defining further experimental goals. The enthusiasm of all contributors, their friendly collaboration and serious efforts to provide this timely synthesis is gratefully acknowledged by the editors of this book.

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FOREWORD

The complex and novel chemistry of glycosylphosphatidylinositols (GPIs) has allowed evolution to develop a surprising diversity of cell membrane functions in a great range of cell types from mycobacteria, yeast and protozoa to man. Even for investigators who were already impressed with the diversity of cellular lipids, the discovery of these units and the elucidation of the first complete structure in 1988 added an unexpected dimension to membrane biology. The dolichol-linked oligosaccharides which are assembled and transferred to protein acceptors in the ER and the glycosphingolipids which mature in the Golgi and then move to the cell surface were no longer the only glycolipids of importance. Free GPIs and GPIs linked to either proteins or polysaccharides have now become the centerpiece for investigations by chemists, cell biologists, immunologists, protozoologists, cell signalling aficionados, and many others.

Is there a unifying characteristic of the enzymes, antigens and even prions which are anchored by a GPI rather than by a transmembrane anchor? One of the first generalizations to be formulated with regard to GPI anchors was that they endowed proteins with increased mobility in the plane of the lipid bilayer, by comparison to trans-membrane proteins. Perhaps because membrane proteins often are influenced by their molecular neighbors and because not all GPI anchors are identical, it has proven difficult to sustain this hypothesis. It has become evident, however, that GPI-anchored proteins,

- are primarily found at the cell surface, perhaps because they cannot be retained in the ER and Golgi,
- associate with compositionally distinctive domains of membrane lipids, in all likelihood because of strong lipid-lipid interactions,
- preferentially concentrate at the apical cell surface of many polarized cells, implying that they are recognized by components of the sorting machinery in the Golgi complex,
- can transduce signals upon cross-linking, implying that they interact with components which extend across the membrane, and
- appear to cause their protein moieties to have an “unusual” relation to the membrane bilayer, which is reflected in the observation that GPI anchored membrane fusogens cannot mediate full membrane-membrane fusion but instead participate in “hemifusion.”

Among the relatively uncharted areas of GPI biology are the mechanisms of transfer of GPI-anchored membrane proteins between cell surfaces, both in vivo and in vitro. Moreover, in a related area with significant applied potential, lipid or GPI derivatization of proteins provides a convenient means for allowing their insertion into cell surfaces, thereby allowing radical alternation of the cell surface without transfection.

Apart from GPI biology of the cell surface, there has been major interest in GPI biosynthesis in the ER. The biosynthesis of GPIs makes use of precursors which are also used for synthesis of other lipids and glycans. By contrast, to the

extent that they have been identified, the transferases which link these components together, the enzymes responsible for lipid remodeling and the transamidase which joins the complete GPI to newly-synthesized proteins in the endoplasmic reticulum appear to be uniquely dedicated to GPI biosynthesis. Thus, a novel equipment was invented in order to generate GPI anchors. It is therefore surprising to realize that mammalian cell mutants can survive in culture even if they do not synthesize the simplest of GPI structures and have no GPI-anchored proteins on their surface. This comment also pertains to affected red and white blood cells in the hemolytic anemia, paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria, in which early steps of GPI biosynthesis are blocked. Moreover, since GPI units which are not linked to protein can normally be detected on the surface, they too cannot be needed for survival under these conditions.

Apart from the issues of identifying the enzymes which assemble GPIs, flip them to the luminal surface of the ER membrane, and add them to proteins, several other aspects of anchor addition are relatively unexplored. For example, there is little characterization of the condition of acceptor proteins prior to GPI addition. Interestingly, in most cases these proteins do not leave the ER, thereby providing a conspicuous example of censorship of transport along the secretory path. A further unexplored area concerns the physical relation of the GPI biosynthetic enzymes to each other, their relation to the transamidase, and the relation (if any) between the transamidase and the translocon which delivers newly-synthesized acceptor protein to the luminal space of the ER.

The present volume provides a unique resource of broad interest. By bringing together diverse areas of biology related to GPIs, it exemplifies the multiplicity of investigations which have flourished during the past ten years. It will serve as a landmark in this still evolving field.

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GPI-Anchored Biomolecules— An Overview

Martin G. Low

In 1985 it was shown that glycosylphosphatidylinositols (GPIs) were covalently attached to a diverse group of cell surface proteins and played an essential role in anchoring them to the plasma membrane.¹⁻⁵ This discovery provoked an explosion of research by numerous investigators into the distribution, structure, biosynthesis and function of GPI anchors. Over the last decade research in the first three of these areas has produced a fairly comprehensive picture of where GPIs are found, what they look like and how they are made. Although there are still many fascinating details to be resolved, particularly in the area of GPI biosynthesis, relatively little remains controversial. However, this sentiment certainly does not apply to the last of these research areas, the function of GPIs: Why do cells go to all the trouble of making GPIs? This is an obvious and important question, but it is also a much more open-ended one. Not surprisingly, many of the attempts to define functional roles for GPI anchors have resulted in inconclusive or controversial findings. At present it is difficult to tell if the GPI anchor is capable of conferring “unique” functional properties on some cell surface proteins that cannot be provided by other means of membrane anchoring. Are there special structure-dependent features of the GPI anchor, with its conserved Man α 1-2Man α 1-6Man α 1-4GlcN α 1-6*myo*-inositol glycan, that have led to its widespread use for attaching proteins to cell surfaces, or is this just another example of biochemical redundancy in higher organisms? The purpose of this chapter is not to provide answers to this question but to indicate why the question remains important.

Discovery of GPI Anchors

The “fluid mosaic” model of membrane structure proposed in the early 1970s⁶ envisaged a continuous, relatively disordered lipid bilayer traversed by hydrophobic regions of proteins. The fluid mosaic model essentially settled a long-running debate in which earlier models had attempted (in vain) to reconcile the relatively constant chemical composition of the cell membrane with its diverse functional properties. However, two important features of membrane structure were not predicted by the fluid mosaic model: covalent linkage between membrane lipids and proteins and “long range” organization of the lipids within the plane of the bilayer. As will be seen below, it has become apparent that these two aspects of membrane structure are intimately related.

The first indication that proteins could be attached to membranes via a covalent interaction with a phospholipid molecule came from investigations into the pathophysiology of anthrax. It had been noticed that in the terminal stages of this disease secondary toxic shock was accompanied by increased alkaline phosphatase in urine and plasma.⁷ However, more detailed studies with soluble toxin preparations indicated that the major increase in alkaline

phosphatase circulating in the blood occurred a few hours after injection, several days before the appearance of other symptoms and, finally, death of the animal. Subsequent attempts to purify the toxin revealed that the factor responsible for phosphatase release was a contaminant of the toxin preparation.⁸ Furthermore, the phosphatase-releasing factor was produced in much greater amounts by *B. cereus* (a relatively mild human pathogen) and *B. thuringiensis* (an insect pathogen!).⁹ Fortunately, this interesting phenomenon was investigated further, even though it was clear by then that the phosphatase-releasing factor had little or no role in the pathogenesis of anthrax. It should be pointed out that this work was being carried out under the auspices of the US Army Chemical Corps at Fort Detrick and it could be argued that this discovery was one of the few demonstrable benefits (to cell biology) of the cold war! The demonstration that the factor could also release alkaline phosphatase from bone or kidney slices in vitro allowed the development of a relatively simple "bioassay" and partial purification of the factor from *B. cereus*. Surprisingly, the releasing factor was separated from the major, broad specificity phospholipase C and copurified instead with a minor "phosphatidylinositol-specific" phospholipase C activity.^{10,11}

The work on phosphatase-releasing factor was apparently abandoned at this point and these important observations were essentially ignored for over a decade. Their potential significance was only appreciated when the releasing activity was observed in preparations of phosphatidylinositol-specific phospholipase C (PI-PLC) which had been purified to homogeneity from *B. cereus*¹² and the unrelated bacteria *Staphylococcus aureus*¹³ and *Clostridium novyi*.¹⁴ Furthermore, it was shown that alkaline phosphatase release induced by PI-PLC did not require intact tissues and could be reproduced with tissue homogenates and membrane fractions as well as isolated cells.¹³ Under these conditions, essentially all of the alkaline phosphatase could be released from the membrane. A survey of other cell surface enzymes indicated that liver 5'-nucleotidase^{15,16} and erythrocyte acetylcholinesterase¹⁷ were releasable, but three others were not. The release of acetylcholinesterase from erythrocytes occurred in the absence of hemolysis, suggesting that the effects of PI-PLC were restricted to the cell surface and did not result in gross disruption of membrane structure.

Collectively this work demonstrated that individual molecules of some cell surface proteins were attached to the membrane via a relatively specific interaction with the polar headgroup of phosphatidylinositol.¹⁶ The nature of this interaction could not be determined definitively, but three observations indicated that it was relatively strong and probably covalent:¹⁸

1. Alkaline phosphatase could not be released from membranes by manipulating the ionic conditions or by addition of a headgroup analog (inositol-glycerol phosphate);
2. Alkaline phosphatase released by PI-PLC and then repurified to remove free inositol phosphate was unable to rebind to liposomes even if they contained PI;
3. Alkaline phosphatase which had been delipidated by extraction with butanol was able to rebind to liposomes regardless of whether they contained PI or not.

Similar results were subsequently obtained with affinity-purified acetylcholinesterase.¹⁹ However, the idea that these enzymes were anchored to the membrane via a covalent linkage with inositol was not taken seriously until chemical analyses revealed that the membrane-anchoring domain of acetylcholinesterase⁴ and alkaline phosphatase²⁰ contained stoichiometric amounts of myo-inositol which was retained even after PI-PLC treatment.

Although the presence of inositol in purified acetylcholinesterase and alkaline phosphatase provided compelling evidence for a covalent interaction, the molecular details remained obscure. However, separate studies on two other proteins, the variant surface glycoprotein of *Trypanosoma brucei* and rat brain Thy-1, had suggested that they might utilize a glycopospholipid moiety for attachment to the membrane.^{5,21,22} The connection between these three, quite independent lines of research became apparent when it was shown

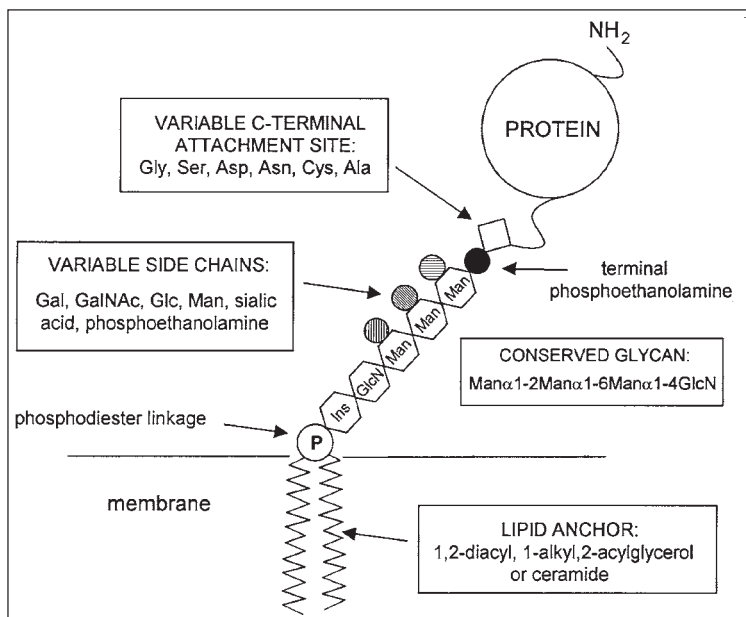


Fig. 1.1. GPI anchor structure. This cartoon summarizes the main structural features common to all GPI-anchored proteins and the range of structural variation. The lipid moiety of the phosphatidylinositol molecule can be a 1,2-diacylglycerol, a 1-alkyl,2-acylglycerol, a *lyso*, 1-alkylglycerol or a ceramide of varying chain length and degree of unsaturation. The type of sugar residues in the glycan backbone and the linkages between them are conserved in all GPI-anchored proteins characterized to date. The glycan is linked to the C-terminal amino acid through a phosphoethanolamine residue. The identity of the C-terminal amino acid has a limited range of variability between different proteins. The mannose residues in the glycan backbone can also be linked to a variety of side chains, ranging from single sugar or phosphoethanolamine residues to complex glycan chains. The 2-OH group on the inositol ring can be palmitoylated, rendering the GPI molecule insensitive to cleavage by PI-PLC. Some of the structural variations appear to be restricted to particular groups of organisms, but at present there is insufficient data to assess the functional or evolutionary significance of these variations.

that PI-PLC could remove the anchoring domain from VSG and Thy-1 and convert these proteins to a soluble form.¹⁻³ The chemical similarities between the anchors in these four proteins, and the availability of a highly selective reagent for degrading it (i.e., PI-PLC), laid the foundation for the rapid identification of many other GPI-anchored proteins, as well as the elucidation of GPI structures and biosynthetic pathways (Fig. 1.1).

Distribution of GPI Anchors

Distribution Amongst Organisms

GPI-anchored proteins are broadly distributed in eukaryotic organisms.²³⁻²⁵ In mammals and other vertebrates they have been identified in every major tissue and cell type examined. GPI-anchored proteins have also been found in representatives from many other major groups of eukaryotic organisms, including protozoa, yeast, slime molds, nematodes, molluscs and insects. Evidence is emerging that they are also present in photosynthetic

organisms such as algae, as well as aquatic and terrestrial higher plants.^{26,27} Although structural data is only available for a few well-characterized systems, it is reasonable to assume that all eukaryotes have the capability of producing GPIs and attaching them to proteins. The observation that there is absolute conservation in the core structure of the GPI anchor (Fig. 1.1) between protozoa, slime molds, yeast and mammals suggests that it appeared at least 1.2 billion years ago (when protozoa are believed to have diverged from all other eukaryotic organisms). GPI-anchored proteins appear to be relatively abundant in several protozoa (both free-living and parasitic) and at least one GPI-anchored protein has been detected in *Giardia lamblia*.²⁸ Since this organism is believed to represent the most primitive type of protozoa, GPI-like anchoring molecules may have existed even earlier. It is also noteworthy that several protozoa contain extreme variants of the GPI structure which only retain the Man α 1-4GlcN α 1-6-*myo*-inositol head group and are attached to a wide variety of glycan chains rather than protein.²⁵ These lipids may have appeared as a result of additions to the biosynthetic pathway because *Leishmania* also express GPI-anchored proteins containing the conserved glycan core. There is some preliminary evidence for GPI-like molecules linked to proteins in the thermoacidophile *Sulfolobus acidocaldarius*, but there is no detailed information on their composition or structure.²⁹ Archaeatidylinositol (a diphytanylglycerol ether analog of 1-6-glucosaminyl phosphatidylinositol) has been found in *Methanosarcina barkeri*.³⁰ However, there are as yet no reports of it being attached to protein, and this lipid does not appear to be widely distributed, even amongst other methanogens.³¹ It is relevant to note that *Sulfolobus acidocaldarius* and *Methanosarcina barkeri* represent the two major kingdoms of Archaea (Crenarchaeota and Euryarchaeota respectively) which suggests that "primitive" GPI-like molecules could have begun to emerge when archaeobacteria and eukaryotes diverged about 1.8-2 billion years ago.³²

Numerous variations have been found in the lipid moiety and the side chains attached to the conserved glycan core of the GPI anchor (see Fig. 1.1 and ref. 25). It is probable that some of these side chains (e.g., mannose) are widely distributed throughout eukaryotes, although systematic, comparative studies have not been done as yet. This broad distribution may not apply to the ceramide lipid moiety (found in yeast and *Dictyostelium* but not in higher eukaryotes) and the phosphoethanolamine side chain (found in higher eukaryotes and *Dictyostelium* but not yeast or protozoa³³⁻³⁵). This suggests that the acquisition of the phosphoethanolamine side chain and the loss of the ceramide in GPI of higher eukaryotes occurred about 1 billion years ago when fungi and *Dictyostelium* diverged from other major eukaryotic groups.³² It will be interesting to see if any of these structural variations are present in GPI anchors of plants (which also diverged about 1 billion years ago).

Although free PI is found in several bacterial species and glycosylated forms of PI are present in *Mycobacteria* (see chapter 8), there is at present no evidence indicating that GPI-anchored proteins are present in eubacteria. As described below, bacteria utilize a different form of lipid anchor for attaching proteins to the cell surface and this may represent yet another fundamental biochemical difference between eubacteria and all other organisms.

Distribution Among Proteins

Over 100 distinct GPI-anchored proteins have been identified (listings of GPI-anchored proteins which include many of these proteins have appeared in review articles,²³⁻²⁵ more recent additions may be found in the Medline database where "glycosylphosphatidylinositols" has been used as an indexing term since 1992). It is difficult to be more precise about the number of distinct GPI-anchored proteins because of the occurrence of multiple isoforms and species homologs which often acquire quite different names. Also, the techniques available for identifying a GPI anchor are quite diverse (e.g., chemical composition, radiolabeling with anchor components, release by PI-PLC, identification of GPI attachment signal from

genomic or cDNA sequence etc.) and have not always been applied uniformly and/or interpreted with equal rigor. CD antigens have been comprehensively studied with respect to PI-PLC sensitivity and currently 11 (i.e., about 10%) are believed to be GPI-anchored. It is likely that, in most cell types and organisms (except protozoa), GPI-anchored proteins represent a minority of cell surface proteins both in amount and number.

A striking feature of GPI-anchored proteins is that they are, from a structural point of view, a very diverse group.^{23,24} They differ markedly in molecular size, quaternary structure and extent/type of glycosylation: e.g., alkaline phosphatase is a homodimer of 67 kDa subunits; CD52 is a heavily glycosylated dodecapeptide; glypican is a heparan sulfate proteoglycan. They also have quite distinct biochemical functions such as ectoenzymes (e.g., acetylcholinesterase), cell adhesion molecules, complement regulatory proteins and protective coats in parasites. In fact, they are found on all the major types of cell surface protein which do not require some part of the polypeptide chain to cross the phospholipid bilayer, i.e., everything except ion channels, solute transporters and most signaling receptors. The majority of GPI-anchored proteins were chosen for study because of their species/tissue-specific expression patterns, developmental regulation, association with disease or mere abundance, and many have not yet had any specific biochemical function assigned to them. Furthermore, all of these classes of GPI-anchored proteins are also found in polypeptide-anchored forms. For example, hydrolytic ectoenzymes or immunoglobulin superfamily adhesion molecules occur in both GPI-anchored and polypeptide-anchored forms. In a few cases the same protein (e.g., CD16 or LFA-3) can even be expressed naturally either in a GPI-anchored or a polypeptide-anchored form, depending on the cell type. There is also evidence that some proteins may utilize both a GPI and polypeptide anchor at the same time.³⁶

Why Use a GPI Molecule for Membrane Anchoring?

The ability of bacterial PI-PLC to remove the lipid moiety and thereby release most GPI-anchored proteins from membranes suggests that, despite its conserved structure, the phosphoinositol-glycan is simply a linking moiety and may not be directly involved in the interaction with the membrane (Fig. 1.1). This raises the obvious question: Why not use a simpler lipid (i.e., without a glycan linker) as a membrane anchor? Presumably the glycan has some other role which is of functional value. It is well known that GPI molecules are not the only type of lipid that can be used to modify membrane proteins, thereby increasing their hydrophobicity and affinity for membranes. Direct N-myristoylation of N-terminal glycine residues or S-palmitoylation of cysteine residues (usually close to the N or C-terminus) had been demonstrated on several intracellular proteins in yeast and mammalian cells by the early 1980s, before the existence of the GPI anchor was widely accepted. However, it is only in the last five years that the important role of these other lipid groups has become appreciated. During that time it also became apparent that a novel type of lipid modification was occurring in which cysteine residues close to the C-terminus become modified by isoprenoids: a 15-carbon farnesyl or a 20-carbon geranylgeranyl group.³⁷

Although these other types of lipid anchor only occur on intracellular proteins (or in some cases of S-palmitoylation on intracellular sites of transmembrane cell surface proteins) it is relevant to compare them to GPI anchors. Studies of the intracellular lipid anchors have provided a great deal of information on the relative effectiveness of different lipid groups for membrane attachment, as well as the contribution of other factors such as electrostatic interactions in determining the membrane binding affinity.^{38,39} This information can be extrapolated, with caution, to GPI anchors. Biophysical studies, which have largely been confirmed by experiments in intact cells, indicate that myristate (14 carbon unbranched fatty acid) and farnesyl groups are by themselves very weak anchors and are unable to retain

proteins in a membrane. Indeed, some farnesylated (e.g., nuclear lamin) or N-myristoylated proteins (e.g., cAMP dependent protein kinase catalytic subunit) do not associate with membranes at all, and the lipid group may have a structural role or be involved solely in protein-protein interaction. Increasing the chain length by using palmitate (16 carbon unbranched fatty acid) or geranylgeranyl groups provides higher affinity association with the membrane, but these lipids, by themselves, are still unable to provide stable anchoring.

At the cell surface, a weak lipid anchor would be a serious liability because the protein would be continuously (and essentially irreversibly) lost into the extracellular fluid. Maybe this is why eukaryotic cells do not use a single lipid group for anchoring proteins at the cell surface, utilizing instead the GPI anchor with its ceramide, diacyl or alkyl, acyl lipid moiety. It is relevant to note here that a lipid anchor containing three fatty acyl groups is utilized by prokaryotes. In proteins which use this lipid anchor (designated by the unfortunate and confusing name 'bacterial lipoproteins') the N-terminal cysteine is modified by an amide-linked fatty acid and a thioether-linked diacylglycerol.^{40,41} This structure anchors proteins to the periplasmic face of the inner or outer membrane or to the cell surface in Gram-negative or Gram-positive bacteria respectively. However, these structures do not occur in eukaryotes, and it seems that GPI anchoring is the only lipid-based anchoring mechanism available for stable high affinity attachment of proteins to the cell surface of eukaryotic cells.

In the contained environment inside the cell, weak, readily reversible binding to membranes via a lipid anchor is less problematic. Indeed, it may provide a highly versatile mechanism for regulating protein function, because relatively small changes in the binding affinity can have a very marked effect on the distribution of proteins between the cytoplasm and membranes.^{38,39} There are several mechanisms which are utilized by the cell to modulate the binding affinity:

1. Additional lipid groups can be used to increase the binding, e.g., S-palmitoylation of a cysteine near the amino terminus of N-myristoylated tyrosine kinases Fyn and Lck, S-palmitoylation near the C-terminus of farnesylated H-Ras or N-Ras, use of an additional geranylgeranyl group or carboxymethylation of isoprenylated proteins;
2. Basic residues near the N-terminus of myristoylated Src or the C-terminus of farnesylated K-Ras increase the electrostatic attraction of the negatively-charged membrane surface;
3. Conversely, the binding affinity can be reduced by removing the extra S-palmitoyl group, by "masking" the lipid group with a soluble protein containing a hydrophobic binding site or by phosphorylating the protein to increase electrostatic repulsion from the membrane.

A major question to be answered is whether similar mechanisms play a role in determining the membrane binding affinity of different GPI-anchored proteins. As noted above, the binding affinity of the GPI anchor is predicted (from the fatty acid composition) to be relatively high. Furthermore, the glycan chain connecting the protein to the lipid moiety is likely to be highly flexible, and as a consequence the high binding affinity of the lipid group is not offset by a loss of entropy due to restrictions in rotational and translational motion of the protein. Variations in binding affinity could result from electrostatic interactions with the bilayer surface, the attachment of additional lipid groups (e.g., inositol acylation of GPI) or even participation in microdomains (see below). Because of the high binding affinity of the lipid anchor, these secondary interactions might not be large enough to have a major effect on the distribution of the proteins between the cell surface and the extracellular fluid. However, such interactions could have a profound influence on the rate and direction of GPI transfer between different cells. Similar interactions have been proposed to regulate the

transfer of intracellular lipid-anchored proteins between different organelles, and their influence on GPI-anchored proteins at the cell surface should be taken into consideration.⁴²

Does the GPI Anchor Have Additional Functions Besides Anchoring Proteins to the Cell Surface?

The complexity of the GPI anchor compared to polypeptide anchors or other types of lipid anchor strongly suggest that it has other functions besides anchoring proteins to the cell surface. In general, it is not possible to state what contribution a GPI anchor makes to the function of a particular protein beyond retaining it at the cell surface. This is for two main reasons:

1. As noted above, the biochemical function and/or physiological role of most GPI-anchored proteins is not known;
2. The biophysical properties of the GPI in the membrane are not thoroughly understood.

Furthermore, it seems extremely unlikely that the GPI anchor would have the same function in parasitic or free-living unicellular organisms such as protozoa and yeast, as well as multicellular organisms such as higher plants and vertebrates. Presumably, GPI-like molecules, which appeared at a very early stage of eukaryotic evolution, have acquired a diverse set of functions which differ not only between different proteins but also between different unicellular organisms and the different cell types of multicellular organisms. As described below, GPI anchors have several “unique” properties not found in other lipid anchors, which may have important functional consequences. However, it should be emphasized that for none of these “functions” is there compelling evidence that the conserved Mana1-2Mana1-6Mana1-4GlcNa1-6myo-inositol glycan core is required.

A variety of mammalian cell lines deficient in GPI biosynthesis do not appear to be seriously impaired in their ability to survive and grow in culture, even though they have lost the ability to express GPI-anchored proteins. This indicates that GPI-anchored proteins (or free GPI molecules) are not required for most “housekeeping” functions of mammalian cells. However, in budding or fission yeast, mutations in any of the three genes known to be required for GlcNAc-PI biosynthesis are conditionally lethal and mutant cells exhibit aberrant cell wall maturation and cell division.⁴³⁻⁴⁵ GPI molecules have also been shown to play an essential role in mammalian development. A knockout of the mouse *PIG-A* gene (responsible for the first step in GPI biosynthesis) is lethal and *PIG-A*-deficient mice are not viable unless chimerism is >5%.⁴⁶ Similarly, GPI-deficient embryonic stem (ES) cells would only differentiate in vitro if they were mixed with normal ES cells.⁴⁷ A tissue-specific knockout of *PIG-A* in skin resulted in mice with aberrant skin development.⁴⁶ It was suggested that GPI-anchored proteins play an important role in the transport of ceramide into the extracellular space of the epidermal horny layer, although the mechanism for this effect is unclear.⁴⁶ The profound developmental effects of mutations that block GPI biosynthesis is not a surprising result given that numerous GPI-anchored proteins will have been mislocated/degraded within the cell, leading to reduced cell surface expression. However, interpretation of these results is complicated by the fact that protein-free GPI molecules may have essential functions distinct from protein anchoring (e.g., signaling) and it is conceivable that their absence (rather than impaired expression of GPI-anchored proteins) is responsible for the developmental disruptions resulting from mutation of GPI biosynthetic genes.

An alternative approach to the question of GPI anchor function has been to study, at the cellular level, distinctive properties shared by several GPI-anchored proteins which transcend their individual biochemical differences. Three general properties of GPI anchors have received the most attention in this respect:

1. Their ability to form a protective coat;

2. Their tendency to associate with other lipid molecules and proteins, resulting in the formation of discrete clusters or microdomains—this property could have many important consequences, including the ability of many GPI-anchored proteins to act as “receptors” for transmembrane signaling events as well as influencing their intracellular transport, localization to particular sites on the cell surface and intercellular transfer;
3. Their ability to be cleaved by endogenous “GPI-specific” phospholipases.

Protective Coat

It has been suggested that the relatively high frequency with which GPI anchors are utilized in parasitic protozoa (compared to mammalian cells) is because of the relatively harsh environment these organisms are exposed to in the bloodstream of the mammalian host or the gut of an insect vector.²⁵ The GPI anchor appears to be a highly versatile mechanism for anchoring molecules which have a protective role at the cell surface (see chapter 8). Thus, GPI-anchored proteins (e.g., VSG, the major surface protein in the bloodstream form of *T. brucei*) can be packed at relatively high density into the cell surface, thereby forming an effective barrier without affecting the integrity of the phospholipid bilayer. Such high densities might not be achievable with a polypeptide anchor. Alternatively, the glycan chain can provide a location for the introduction of side chains which can enhance the barrier function by filling space between the glycan chains in a less densely packed protein coat (e.g., PARP, the major surface protein in the insect form of *T. brucei*). A further adaptation of this strategy is the use of protein-free GPI-like molecules (which retain the Man α 1-4GlcN α 1-6myo-inositol portion) for the attachment of a variety of glycan side chains to the cell surface of *T. cruzi* and *Leishmania* spp.

Microdomains, Transmembrane Signaling and Intracellular Transport

Thy-1 and 5'-nucleotidase were proposed (on the basis of detergent insolubility) to form complexes with other plasma membrane components even before they were shown to have GPI anchors.^{48,49} Interest in the nature of these complexes was renewed by the observation that Thy-1 and 5'-nucleotidase, in common with several other GPI-anchored proteins, participate in transmembrane signaling events (see chapter 4).⁵⁰ Since the GPI anchor does not cross the membrane, interaction of the GPI-anchored protein with one or more proteins containing a transmembrane polypeptide seems the most reasonable explanation for these effects. Furthermore, the formation of “specific” complexes with particular membrane components could also provide an explanation for the ability of the GPI anchor to act as an apical sorting signal in some polarized cells.⁵¹ The existence of complexes is supported by some photobleaching studies which indicated that a proportion of the GPI-anchored protein molecules on the cell surface can have relatively low lateral mobility.⁵² There is also evidence indicating that GPI-anchored proteins are clustered soon after they arrive at the cell surface.⁵³ However, the poor spatial resolution of these techniques precludes determination of the size, stability or composition of the complexes. Fluorescence and electron microscopy have also been used to determine if GPI-anchored proteins colocalize with morphological features and other markers on the cell surface.⁵⁴ Unfortunately, interpretation of these studies has been complicated by the tendency of GPI-anchored proteins to redistribute during fixation and staining with labeled antibodies.⁵⁵⁻⁵⁷ Redistribution to caveolae following crosslinking with antibodies is particularly interesting, because these specialized regions of the cell surface may provide a site where extracellular signals recognized by GPI-anchored proteins can be passed to components of established signal transduction pathways.⁵⁸ It is relevant to note that, although the physiological stimuli

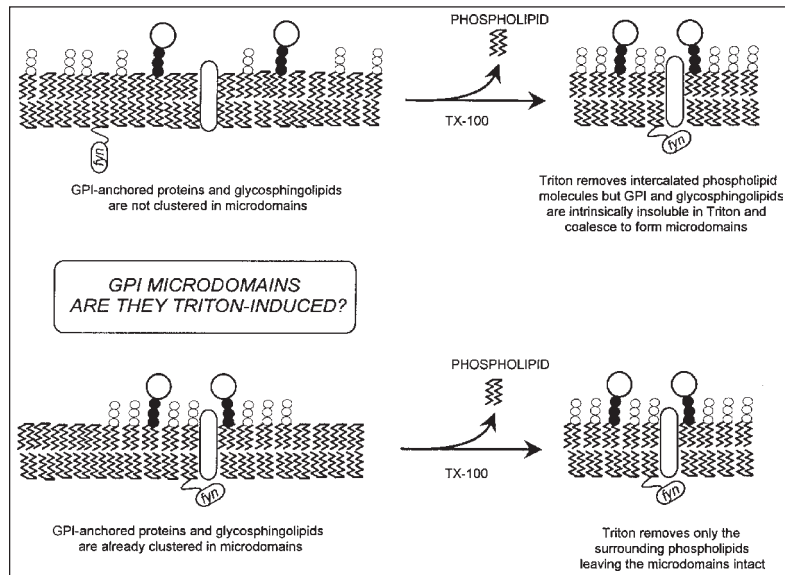


Fig. 1.2. GPI-anchored proteins and microdomains. This cartoon summarizes the controversy regarding the origin of Triton-insoluble microdomains that contain GPI-anchored proteins. In the upper part of the Figure, GPI-anchored proteins are randomly distributed and not clustered together with glycosphingolipids (and other membrane components) into microdomains. However, when the bulk of the phospholipids are extracted with Triton X-100, the GPI-anchored proteins and glycosphingolipids are forced into clusters because they have low solubility in Triton. The lower Figure shows how essentially the same result would be produced if the GPI-anchored proteins and glycosphingolipids were already clustered into microdomains. A major concern is whether other molecules (shown here by the lipid-anchored, Src family tyrosine kinase Fyn and a transmembrane protein) are also forced into the microdomains and a non-physiological association with GPI and glycosphingolipids simply as a result of their Triton insolubility.

recognized by GPI-anchored proteins are largely unknown, crosslinking by antibodies usually provides an alternative and highly effective activating stimulus.⁵⁰

An additional problem identified by the electron microscopy studies is that the redistribution referred to above can also be produced by extraction in cold detergents such as Triton X-100.⁵⁶ This latter observation is both intriguing and worrisome because these are essentially the same conditions that are used to isolate the complexes for biochemical analysis. One interpretation of this result is that by removing the Triton-soluble bulk phospholipid, preexisting “GPI microdomains” simply aggregate into large rafts, permitting their isolation on the basis of relatively low buoyant density. However, it is also possible that “randomly”-distributed GPI-anchored proteins are forced into a non-physiological association with other insoluble components when bulk phospholipid is removed (Fig. 1.2). The final composition of these complexes could easily be influenced by extrinsic factors and therefore be potentially misleading.⁵⁹ Studies on natural and model membranes indicate that GPI anchors have low Triton solubility (probably as a result of a relatively high proportion of long, saturated hydrocarbon chains) and this may be the trivial explanation of why they appear to localize “specifically” in the complexes.^{60,61} Obviously this phenomenon could

have a major influence on the reliability of composition analysis of microdomains, as well as tyrosine kinase assays performed on immunoprecipitates. At best, the potential for induction of complexes by Triton X-100 makes it difficult to distinguish genuine and preexisting interactions from spurious ones. Hopefully, more detailed studies of the size, stability and structure of microdomains in intact membranes and how these parameters are affected by detergent extraction will allow the biochemical analysis of microdomains and their role in signaling to be approached with more confidence in the future (see chapter 3).⁶² As noted above, there is currently no evidence that features specific to the GPI anchor (such as the conserved Man₃GlcN-inositol glycan) or any of its side chains determine the ability of GPI-anchored proteins to participate in these complexes. The concept of a specific GPI “receptor” in the cell surface, although an attractive one, has little experimental support.

Anchor Degradation by Endogenous “GPI-Specific” Phospholipases

The initial identification of GPI-anchored proteins in both *T. brucei* and mammalian tissues was complicated by the presence of relatively large amounts of endogenous anchor-degrading phospholipases which removed the anchor during extraction.^{18,63} At first this autolytic phenomenon was regarded mostly as a nuisance, but it was soon realized that the enzymes responsible were relatively specific for GPI structures and might be responsible for GPI degradation in vivo. As described in chapter 9, these two enzymes, the *T. brucei* (G)PI-specific phospholipase C and the mammalian GPI-specific phospholipase D, have been studied quite extensively at the molecular level over the last decade. However, in spite of this interest the function of these enzymes remains unknown. This apparent lack of progress is particularly evident for mammalian GPI-PLD. The occurrence of soluble forms of GPI-anchored proteins in culture media or body fluids has been recognized for many years and considerable evidence has accumulated that release from cells is due to GPI-PLD. However, as with other areas in the GPI field, the physiological significance of GPI-PLD mediated protein release remains uncertain.

Several potential functions of GPI-PLD have been suggested, although it should be emphasized that these possibilities are all highly speculative.

Intracellular Catabolism of GPIs

There is some data indicating that GPI-PLD can act on GPI-anchored proteins inside cells.^{64,65} GPI degradation at an intracellular location might also provide a mechanism for removing excess free GPIs that were not used for attachment to proteins.

Rapid Downregulation of GPI-Anchored Proteins on Cell Surface

Rapid removal of the protein from the cell surface might be useful in immunological or developmental recognition processes which require transient adhesive cell contact. It would also provide a mechanism for terminating an activating signal mediated by a GPI-anchored protein.

Regulation of Intercellular Transfer

Recent studies indicate that intercellular transfer of a GPI-anchored form of CD4 between cocultured cells can be quite rapid (i.e., minutes).^{66,67} The mechanism is not known, but efficient transfer seems to require prolonged cell contact and consequently would be restricted to neighboring cells in tissues. Transfer between blood cells and endothelial cells would also be limited because close contact of these cells is transient and relatively rare. However, the observation that transfer can be mediated by HDL in vitro also raises the possibility of continuous rapid and promiscuous transfer between different blood cells and endothelial cells without the necessity for direct contact.⁶⁸ A potentially important function

of GPI-PLD might be to restrict or regulate promiscuous transfer by cleaving the GPI-anchor when it is no longer protected by insertion into the lipid bilayer.

Summary

Many proteins are anchored to the cell surface via covalent linkage to a glycosylphosphatidylinositol (GPI) molecule located in the membrane lipid bilayer. GPI molecules are broadly distributed amongst eukaryotic organisms, and in multicellular organisms they are present in essentially all cell types. GPI-anchored proteins have diverse biochemical and physiological functions, and relatively little is known about the properties of GPI molecules which have led to their widespread use for cell surface protein anchoring.

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Biosynthesis of GPIs in Mammalian Cells

Anant K. Menon and Peter Bütikofer

Glycosylphosphatidylinositol (GPI) structures are widely distributed among eukaryotic organisms in the form of GPI anchors covalently linked to select proteins, or as free glycosphospholipids. GPIs have a common ethanolamine-phosphate-6Man α 1-2Man α 1-6Man α 1-4GlcN α 1-6*myo*-inositol-phospholipid backbone structure that is assembled by stepwise transfer of components to phosphatidylinositol (Fig. 2.1). This review will focus on recent progress towards delineating the reactions involved in GPI biosynthesis in mammalian cells. Previous general reviews on GPI biosynthesis can be found in Englund,¹ Ferguson,² Stevens,³ Takeda and Kinoshita,⁴ Vidugiriene and Menon,⁵ Udenfriend and Kodukula,⁶ and Kinoshita et al.⁷ More specific reviews on GPI biosynthesis in parasites include those of Turco and Descoteaux,⁸ McConville and Ferguson,⁹ Mengeling et al.,¹⁰ and Ferguson.¹¹

GPI Anchor Assembly

General Outline of the GPI Biosynthetic Pathway

GPI biosynthesis is initiated by transferring *N*-acetylglucosaminyl (GlcNAc) from UDP-GlcNAc to phosphatidylinositol (PI) to yield GlcNAc-PI. GlcNAc-PI is then de-*N*-acetylated, inositol acylated, triply mannosylated and decorated with phosphoethanolamine residues to generate a GPI molecule that can be attached to protein. Attachment occurs via the amino group of a phosphoethanolamine moiety linked to the 6-position of the terminal mannose in the GPI structure. Many aspects of the GPI biosynthetic pathway can be reproduced in cell-free systems using cell lysates or subcellular membrane fractions supplemented with appropriate soluble metabolites (e.g., UDP-GlcNAc, GDP-mannose). GPI biosynthesis is not essential for the viability of mammalian cells in culture (although mammals and yeast with defects in GPI synthesis are not viable), and a number of mutant cell lines are available that are unable to express GPI-anchored proteins at the cell surface because of defects in steps required for assembly of a complete GPI structure. These cell lines have been invaluable in identifying genes that most likely encode the biosynthetic enzymes required for GPI assembly. An outline of the GPI biosynthetic pathway is shown in Figure 2.1 and discussed in more detail below; the membrane topologies of gene products known to be involved in GPI assembly are shown in Figure 2.2.

Biosynthesis of GlcNAc-PI

The synthesis of GlcNAc-PI from UDP-GlcNAc and PI¹² occurs on the cytoplasmic face of the endoplasmic reticulum (see later for a more complete discussion of the subcellular

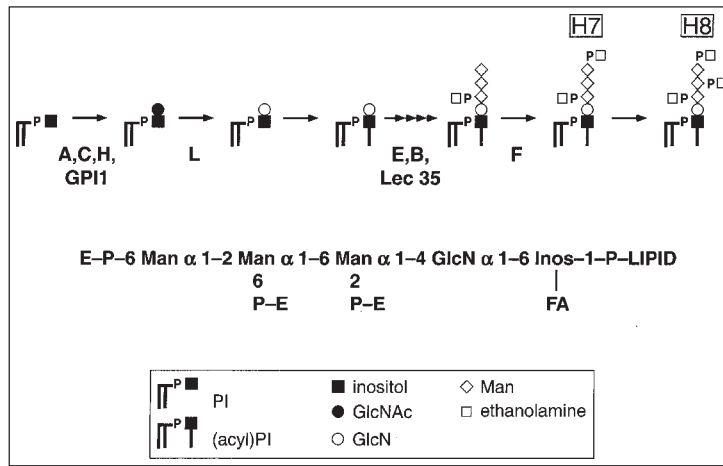


Fig. 2.1. GPI assembly in mammalian cells. The figure shows an outline of the GPI biosynthetic pathway in mammalian cells and the structure of the GPI molecule H8. GlcNAc-PI is synthesized from UDP-GlcNAc and PI in a reaction requiring the products of the *PIG-A*, *PIG-C*, *PIG-H* and *GPI1* genes. GlcNAc-PI is de-*N*-acetylated to form GlcN-PI. The *PIG-L* protein may be the de-*N*-acetylase. GlcN-PI is elaborated by inositol acylation, mannosylation and phosphoethanolamine addition. The 3 mannose residues are derived from dolichol-P-mannose, and the terminal phosphoethanolamine residue (attached to the mannose residue at the non-reducing terminus of the glycan) is derived from phosphatidylethanolamine. Mutants belonging to complementation class E are defective in dolichol-P-mannose synthesis and are consequently unable to mannosylate GPIs. The class B mutants are defective in the third mannosyltransferase, and the Lec35 mutation affects Dol-P-Man usage. Class F mutants lack the ethanolamine-phosphotransferase activity involved in attaching the terminal EtN-P residue.

location of GPI biosynthesis). At least four gene products (termed *PIG-A*, *PIG-C*, *PIG-H*, and *GPI1*) are known to be involved in GlcNAc-PI synthesis (Fig. 2.2)^{2,7,13,14} and the current model is that a complex of these gene products yields the functional GlcNAc transferase enzyme.¹⁵ The nature and stoichiometry of the complex is unknown, but *PIG-A*, which bears some resemblance to a bacterial GlcNAc transferase, has been proposed to be the catalytic unit. The other components of the complex may have other substrate binding or regulatory functions, or play a role in the assembly of the complex. The proposed hetero-oligomeric nature of the GPI GlcNAc transferase is unusual for a glycosyltransferase involved in the modification of secretory proteins, since ER and Golgi glycosyltransferases tend to be monomers or homo-oligomeric complexes (see e.g., ref. 16).

Somatically acquired deletions or mutations in the *PIG-A* gene of hematopoietic stem cells have been shown to cause paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH), an acquired hemolytic disease in humans characterized by abnormal activation of complement on blood cells due to a deficiency of GPI-anchored complement regulatory proteins.¹⁷⁻¹⁹ The absence of decay accelerating factor (CD55) and membrane inhibitor of reactive lysis (CD59) on PNH erythrocytes results in the increased sensitivity of these cells to lysis induced by complement, and in a characteristic intermittent intravascular hemolysis. Recent reviews on GPI deficiency in PNH cells can be found in Kinoshita et al^{20,21} and Rosse.²²

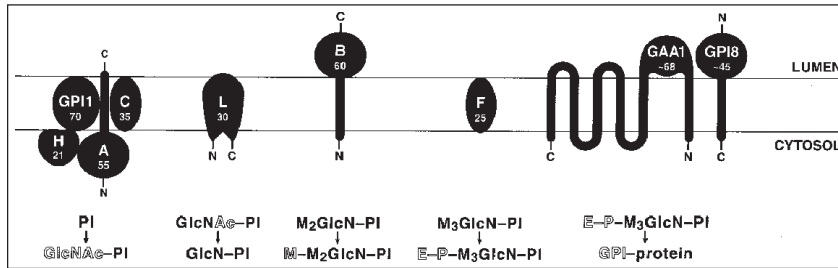


Fig. 2.2. Membrane topology of gene products involved in GPI biosynthesis. The proposed topological arrangements of gene products involved in GPI assembly are shown, along with the reactions in which they participate. The human *PIG-A* (phosphatidylinositol glycan of complementation class A) gene encodes an ER transmembrane protein of 484 amino acids¹⁰⁵ with a large cytoplasmic domain.¹⁰⁶ The sequence homology of the cytoplasmic domain with a bacterial GlcNAc transferase¹⁰⁷ suggests that *PIG-A* bears the catalytic site for GlcNAc transfer. Chromosomal localization studies have established that *PIG-A* is on the X chromosome.¹⁷ Human *PIG-C* encodes a predicted ER protein of 297 amino acids with multiple potential transmembrane domains.¹⁰⁸ The human *PIG-H* gene which is localized on chromosome 1 encodes a protein of 188 amino acids¹⁰⁹ with its N- and C-termini facing the cytoplasm.¹⁰⁶ *PIG-H* has no significant sequence homology with other known proteins, and thus its function cannot be predicted from its primary structure. The genomic localization of *PIG-H* is on chromosome 12 in the mouse.¹¹⁰ Since many of the genes on mouse chromosome 12 are located on human chromosome 14, human *PIG-H* may also be located on chromosome 14 (Ware et al, 1994).¹¹⁰ There are no human diseases known to be caused by deletions or mutations in *PIG-C* or *PIG-H*. Human *GPI1* encodes a 581 amino acid protein that has at least one putative transmembrane domain and shows a 24% amino acid identity to the gene product of yeast *GPII*.¹⁵ *PIG-L* encodes a putative ER membrane protein of 252 amino acids with a large cytoplasmic domain.²⁷ It has no sequence homology to other known proteins. *PIG-B* encodes a 554 amino acid ER transmembrane protein with its N-terminus on the cytosolic side and C-terminus within the lumen of the ER.⁵⁴ Since deletion of the cytoplasmic portion of *PIG-B* does not affect complementation of the mutant, the active site of *PIG-B* is likely present on the luminal side of the ER. The human *PIG-B* gene is located on chromosome 15.⁵⁴ *PIG-F* encodes a hydrophobic protein of 219 amino acids with no homology to other known proteins;¹¹¹ *PIG-F* is located on mouse chromosome 2. Human *GPI8* encodes a protein of 395 amino acids and is localized on chromosome 1.⁹⁴ A human homologue of yeast *GAA1* has recently been isolated and encodes a membrane protein of 621 amino acids.¹¹²

De-N-acetylation of GlcNAc-PI to GlcN-PI

In the second step of the GPI biosynthetic pathway, GlcNAc-PI is de-*N*-acetylated to yield GlcN-PI. The reaction has been reported to be specifically stimulated by GTP *in vitro*,²³ but the reasons for this effect remain unclear. Studies of the substrate specificity of the enzyme have been reported with respect to N-acyl groups (R) that can be released from GlcNR-PI substrates (R = acetyl, propionyl, etc.);²⁴ these studies show that GlcNAc-PI is, by far, the preferred substrate. Two cell lines have been generated that are defective in de-*N*-acetylase activity. The two lines have been tentatively assigned to different complementation classes, class J²⁵ and class L.²⁶ However, since no complementation analyses have been reported, it is unclear whether or not the two cell lines indeed belong to different complementation classes. Rescue of the class L mutant led to the cloning and characterization of the *PIG-L* gene;²⁷ *PIG-L* encodes a putative ER membrane protein (*PIG-L*) that may correspond to the GlcNAc-PI de-*N*-acetylase. It is possible that the putative *PIG-J* protein is

distinct from PIG-L and represents a second subunit (auxiliary or catalytic) of the de-*N*-acetylase.

Inositol Acylation of GlcN-PI to GlcN-(acyl)PI

Acylation of the inositol ring is an obligatory step prior to mannosylation in GPI biosynthesis in mammalian cells^{28,29} and yeast,³⁰ but not in trypanosomes.³¹ This modification renders the GPI structure insensitive to cleavage by GPI-hydrolyzing phospholipases C.³² Results from several studies indicate that the acyl chain is attached at the 2-position of the inositol ring.³³⁻³⁶ Compositional analyses of mammalian GPI structures have identified palmitic acid as the predominant³⁴ or only^{32,35,37,38} acyl chain bound to the inositol moiety, although in vitro studies by Doerrler et al²⁹ show that a number of different fatty acids can be transferred to inositol (see also Sharma et al²⁴). Interestingly, inositol acylated GPI structures in trypanosomes show heterogeneity in the composition of inositol-bound acyl chains.^{36,39}

Inositol acylation in mammals and yeast involves fatty acyl-CoA,^{29,40} but it is not clear if an acyl-CoA is the direct donor of the acyl chain for the acyltransferase or if another metabolite serves as an intermediate in acyl transfer to GlcN-PI.²⁹ In trypanosomes it appears that the inositol acyl donor is not acyl CoA, but quite possibly a phospholipid.⁴¹ The differences in inositol acylation in mammals and yeast versus trypanosomes are reinforced by the observation that inositol acylation is inhibited by phenylmethylsulfonyl fluoride (PMSF) in trypanosomes but not in mammalian cells;⁴² the mammalian and parasite inositol acyltransferase enzymes are likely to be substantially different.^{31,42,43}

Mannosylation of GlcN-(acyl)PI

The elaboration of GlcN-(acyl)PI proceeds by the addition of mannose and phosphoethanolamine (EtN-P) residues to yield a mature GPI structure. Biochemical analyses using a trypanosome cell-free system indicate that the three core mannose residues are derived from dolichol-phosphomannose (Dol-P-Man).⁴⁴ Consistent with this observation, mammalian and yeast mutants⁴⁵⁻⁴⁸ with a defect in Dol-P-Man synthesis or utilization are deficient in GPI biosynthesis. GPI biosynthesis in the class E and Lec15 mammalian mutants can be restored by transfecting the cells with a yeast cDNA, *DPM1*, encoding yeast Dol-P-Man synthase.^{49,50} Curiously, a human homolog of *DPM1* restored Dol-P-Man synthesis, and hence GPI synthesis, in the class E mutant but not in the Lec15 mutant.⁵¹ These results indicate that at least two genes are involved in Dol-P-Man synthesis in mammalian cells. The human homologue of *DPM1* encodes a protein of 260 amino acids with a 30% amino acid identity with the yeast translation product.⁵¹ Human *DPM1* lacks a transmembrane domain that is present in the yeast protein and it is possible that the gene mutated in the Lec15 mutant is necessary for membrane association of mammalian *DPM1*.⁷

The first mannosylated GPI intermediate, Man α 1-4GlcN-(acyl)PI, is modified by an EtN-P residue on the 2-position of the mannose to generate (EtN-P)Man α 1-4GlcN-(acyl)PI.^{52,53} Transfer of two mannose residues to (EtN-P)Man α 1-4GlcN-(acyl)PI then yields the completed core mannosylated structure Man α 1-2Man α 1-6(EtN-P)Man α 1-4GlcN-(acyl)PI. Mutant cell lines defective in the transfer of the third mannose have been identified (class B mutants)^{14,52} and the gene product PIG-B (Fig. 2.2) is presumed to encode the third mannosyltransferase.⁵⁴

EtN-P Addition

The final step in GPI precursor biosynthesis involves the addition of EtN-P to the 6-position of the third mannose to form EtN-P-6Man α 1-2Man α 1-6(EtN-P)Man α 1-4GlcN-(acyl)PI. The EtN-P donor in yeast⁵⁵ and trypanosomes⁵⁶ is phosphatidylethanolamine,

and in all likelihood the same is true in the mammalian system.⁵⁶ A GPI structure containing three mannoses accumulates in a class F lymphoma mutant, suggesting that the class F mutant cells are defective in attachment of the terminal phosphoethanolamine.¹⁴ The *PIG-F* gene which complements this defect most likely encodes the terminal ethanolamine-phosphotransferase.

An additional EtN-P residue may be added to the second mannose of the GPI core to form EtN-P-6Man α 1-2(EtN-P)Man α 1-6(EtN-P)Man α 1-4GlcN-(acyl)PI.⁵⁷ This EtN-P, as well as the other side-chain EtN-P (attached to the innermost mannose early in GPI biosynthesis), may be derived from phosphatidylethanolamine.⁵⁶

GPI Lipid Remodeling

In almost all cases where the lipid composition of a GPI anchor has been determined, it was found that the fatty acyl or alcohol chains attached to the glycerol moiety, or the ceramide moiety, consisted of components that are not typically found in membrane lipids. These results suggest that:

1. Specific lipids may be selected for the initiation of GPI biosynthesis;
2. GPI biosynthesis may be initiated in membrane domains having a unique lipid composition;
3. The lipids on the GPI structures may selectively be remodeled during or after GPI biosynthesis; or
4. A combination of the above.

The GPI anchor of *T. brucei* variant surface glycoprotein (VSG) contains exclusively myristic acid attached in ester linkage to the glycerol backbone.⁵⁸ However, GPI anchor precursors in trypanosomes have stearic acid in the *sn*-1 position and a mixture of fatty acids in the *sn*-2 position of the glycerol, implying that the fatty acids must be removed and replaced with myristic acid during or after biosynthesis. The reaction sequence involved in the replacement of the fatty acids by myristate has been termed fatty acid remodeling.⁵⁹ The remodeling process occurs on the completed GPI precursor by sequential replacement of first the *sn*-2 fatty acid and then the *sn*-1 fatty acid with myristate. A process similar to fatty acid remodeling, called myristate exchange, serves to exchange the myristic acid of the VSG GPI anchor with myristate from myristoyl-CoA.^{60,61} This exchange may function as a proof-reading mechanism to ensure the VSG GPI anchor's unique fatty acid composition.⁶² To date, VSG represents the only protein with a GPI anchor consisting of two identical fatty acyl chains.

A different GPI lipid remodeling mechanism has been observed in *Trypanosoma cruzi* parasites. Both epimastigote and metacyclic trypomastigote forms of *T. cruzi* have GPI-anchored mucin-like glycoproteins on their cell surface (see chapter 8). Detailed structural analyses of the mucin GPI anchors from isolated metacyclic trypomastigotes and epimastigotes in culture show that while the carbohydrate structures are identical in both stages of the parasite, the GPI lipid moieties are different.⁶³ The PI moiety of the epimastigote mucins consists of alkylacylglycerol, while that of the metacyclic trypomastigote mucins is mostly ceramide-based. These results suggest that when epimastigotes transform into metacyclic trypomastigotes, the PI moiety of the mucin GPI anchors is modified from glycerol-based lipids to lipids having mostly a ceramide backbone.⁶³

Yet another GPI lipid exchange process has been noted in the yeast *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. Yeast GPI precursors are known to consist of completely alkaline-sensitive diacylglycerol moieties.^{30,64} However, most of the protein GPI anchors in yeast are composed of an alkaline-resistant ceramide backbone.⁶⁵ This observation implies that the diacylglycerol moiety found in the GPI precursors is replaced with a sphingolipid moiety to

generate the profile of mature protein GPI anchors. The GPI lipid exchange reaction was shown to occur only after the transfer of the GPI anchor to protein.⁶⁵

Although GPI lipid remodeling reactions have not been described in mammalian cells, it is possible that they occur. Studies on the lipid composition of human³² and bovine⁶⁶ erythrocyte acetylcholinesterase have shown that only a limited selection of fatty acyl and alcohol chains is present in their GPI anchors. More recently, a similar GPI molecular species composition has also been found in human erythrocyte CD59, suggesting that at least in this cell, different proteins receive identical GPI anchors.³⁸ However, the molecular species composition of the PI pools in human and bovine erythrocytes is clearly different from that of the respective protein GPI anchors,⁶⁷ indicating that selection processes or specific remodeling reactions must be involved during GPI biosynthesis or after GPI attachment to protein. A similar situation has also been observed in acetylcholinesterase from the electric organ of *Torpedo marmorata*, which consists of a set of PI molecular species that is distinctly different from that of the bulk PI.⁶⁸ The reason that GPI structures consist of atypical lipid species is unknown.

Inhibitors of GPI Biosynthesis

A number of compounds have been identified that interfere with GPI biosynthesis in cells and/or cell-free systems. These compounds have not only been critical in delineating the reactions involved in GPI biosynthesis, but have also proved extraordinarily useful in highlighting differences between the GPI biosynthetic pathways in mammalian cells, yeast and protozoan parasites. Despite the conserved GPI core structure, significant species-specific variations exist in the biosynthesis of GPIs; these differences may eventually be exploited to provide treatments for yeast and protozoal infections of humans and animals. Smith et al⁶⁹ used cell-free systems to show that early GPI intermediates containing 2-O-methyl inositol, i.e., an inositol residue substituted on the 2-hydroxyl group, the position of the attachment of the inositol-bound fatty acid, can be used by the GPI biosynthetic machinery of parasites but not by that of a human cell line. The results from this study are consistent with earlier observations showing that inositol acylation of GlcN-PI is a prerequisite for subsequent mannosylation in mammalian cells^{51,70} but not in parasites. Sütterlin et al⁷¹ identified and isolated a terpenoid lactone that specifically blocks addition of the third mannose residue in the GPI core in the mammalian and yeast GPI biosynthetic pathways. The compound was found to be ineffective in parasitic protozoa.

In earlier reports, several other compounds were identified that inhibited GPI biosynthesis. Although these compounds proved useful in elucidating the steps involved in GPI biosynthesis, they did not distinguish between the mammalian and parasite pathways and/or were relatively unspecific inhibitors. For example, mannosamine blocks GPI biosynthesis in mammalian cells and trypanosomes by inhibiting the addition of the third mannose to the respective GPI intermediates.⁷²⁻⁷⁵ Also, mannosylation of mammalian and protozoan GPI intermediates is reduced in cells and cell-free preparations treated with 2-fluoro-2-deoxyglucose (cells) and amphomycin (cell-free systems), inhibitors of Dol-P-Man synthase.^{44,76,77} However, since mannosamine, 2-fluoro-2-deoxyglucose and amphomycin also affect N-glycosylation, they cannot be used specifically against the GPI biosynthetic pathway. Other useful GPI biosynthesis inhibitors include the protease inhibitors PMSF and diisopropylfluorophosphate, which inhibit inositol acylation and deacylation, respectively, in trypanosomes; PMSF has no effect on GPI assembly in mammalian cells.^{31,42}

Attachment of GPI to Protein

GPI anchors are attached to select proteins via the action of an ER enzyme, presumed to be a transamidase (GPI: protein transamidase, or GPT). The GPT-catalyzed reaction

involves removal of a C-terminal signal sequence from an ER-translocated polypeptide substrate and concomitant attachment of a GPI moiety to yield a GPI-anchored polypeptide. Nontransfer of GPIs to target proteins results in lack of surface expression of these proteins (see, e.g., refs. 78, 79) and thus GPI-anchoring may be viewed as a control for the exit of certain proteins from the ER.⁸⁰

Genes encoding GPI-anchored proteins specify two signal sequences in the primary translation product—an N-terminal signal sequence for targeting the protein to the ER and a C-terminal signal sequence directing the attachment of the GPI anchor.⁶ The hydrophobic N-terminal signal peptide is typical of proteins that are targeted to the ER and is removed during or after translocation across the ER membrane, although its cleavage is not strictly necessary for subsequent GPI addition.⁸¹ The second hydrophobic signal peptide at the C-terminus of the polypeptide chain is also removed during processing, followed by the attachment of the completed GPI precursor, via the terminal EtN-P, to the newly exposed C-terminal amino acid. This final step occurs via a transamidase reaction.⁸² The entire sequence of events—ER targeting, translocation, N-terminal signal sequence cleavage and GPI addition—can be reproduced *in vitro*.^{83,84} In addition to the obvious requirements for the ER translocation machinery and GPT, soluble, luminal ER proteins are required for successful GPI anchor addition.⁸⁵ These proteins may well be ER chaperones such as BIP/GRP78.

The cleavage site (ω site) between the C-terminal signal peptide and the mature GPI-anchored protein has been determined experimentally and also by mutational studies (see, e.g., refs. 86-89). Extensive analyses and testing of possible C-terminal signal peptides suggest that GPI attachment to protein only occurs when mainly small amino acids (Gly, Ala, Cys, Ser, Asp, Asn) are present at the ω and $\omega+1$ sites, with cleavage occurring between the ω and $\omega+1$ site. At the $\omega+2$ site, most mammalian GPI-anchored proteins contain either Ala or Gly. These studies indicate that GPI addition occurs in a small amino acid domain at the amino end of a hydrophobic C-terminal signal peptide. A detailed compilation of the available data on the ω site and the hydrophobic signal peptide has been published by Udenfriend and Kodukula.⁶

Mutants in mammalian cells (class K)^{25,90} and yeast (*gaa1* and *gpi8*)^{91,92} have been identified that appear to synthesize the complete GPI precursor yet lack GPI-anchored proteins. These cells are most likely defective in GPT. A mouse homologue of *GAA1* has recently been cloned.⁹³ Disruption of *GAA1* in a mouse cell line results in lack of surface expression of GPI-anchored proteins, demonstrating its involvement in GPI anchor attachment.⁹³ The human class K mutant, which has a reported defect in transamidase activity,⁹⁰ could be complemented with human *GPI8*^{93,94} but not *GAA1*,⁹³ confirming that at least two genes are involved in GPI transfer to proteins in mammalian cells (Fig. 2.2). The GPI8 protein may represent the catalytic component of the transamidase complex, since the yeast *GPI8* gene was found to encode an ER membrane protein with a large luminal domain (Fig. 2.2) and homology to a plant endopeptidase which has been shown to have transamidase activity.⁹² In addition, it has recently been shown that reconstitution of class K cells with human *GPI8* restored the ability of isolated microsomes to form an active carbonyl in the presence of a suitable substrate,⁹⁴ which is regarded as an intermediate in catalysis by a transamidase.⁸² Together, these data indicate that GPT is, at the very least, a complex of *GAA1* and *GPI8*; it is possible that GPT contains other hitherto unidentified components.

Subcellular Location and Membrane Topology of GPI Biosynthesis

GPIs are synthesized in the endoplasmic reticulum (ER). However, the ER is a heterogeneous organelle with compositionally distinct subregions (see, e.g., ref. 95) and recent data suggest that GPI biosynthetic activities are not uniformly distributed in the ER

membrane. For example, early biosynthetic steps (up to the addition of the first mannose residue) appear to be unusually concentrated in a rapidly sedimenting subregion of the ER.^{96,97} Unlike conventionally isolated 'microsomal' ER, this GPI-active ER subregion cofractionates with mitochondria in simple differential centrifugation analyses of cell homogenates, and may correspond to a previously described ER fraction shown to be active in lipid synthesis⁹⁸ and possibly also involved in phospholipid transfer between the ER and mitochondria (see, e.g., ref. 99). Later steps in GPI assembly appear to be less compartmentalized and occur with similar efficiencies in the 'mitochondrion-associated' ER subregion as well as in 'microsomal' ER.⁹⁷ The significance of this compartmentation of the GPI biosynthetic pathway is unclear.

The initial steps of GPI synthesis are not only laterally compartmentalized in the ER membrane,⁹⁷ but also appear to be transversely confined. Early GPI biosynthetic intermediates (GlcNAc-PI and GlcN-PI) can be hydrolyzed by PI-specific phospholipase C in intact ER vesicles, indicating that these lipids are located in the outer (cytoplasmic) leaflet of ER vesicles.¹⁰⁰ The membrane topologies of the GPI GlcNAc transferase complex as well as that of the candidate de-*N*-acetylase, PIG-L, are compatible with this proposal since the bulk of the proteins appear to be cytoplasmically disposed (Fig. 2.2). Thus GlcNAc-PI and GlcN-PI are most likely synthesized on the cytoplasmic face of the ER. Experiments with trypanosomes and yeast indicated that even the later GPI intermediates were accessible to membrane topological probes, suggesting that these more elaborate structures are also located on the cytoplasmic face of the ER.¹⁰¹⁻¹⁰³ Based on these data, and the knowledge that GPI-anchored proteins are confined to the exoplasmic membrane leaflet, it was proposed that the entire GPI biosynthetic pathway is confined to the cytoplasmic face of the ER membrane bilayer with the mature, triply mannosylated, phosphoethanolamine-containing GPIs being flipped into the exoplasmic leaflet (via a GPI translocator/flippase?) for transfer to protein.¹⁰¹ However, it is conceivable that at least some part of the biosynthetic pathway is located in the luminal leaflet of the ER (the lumenally-biased membrane topology of mammalian PIG-B (Fig. 2.2), a candidate GPI mannosyltransferase, suggests that the third GPI mannosylation reaction may occur in the luminal leaflet of the ER in mammalian cells), and that GPI intermediates take advantage of numerous and/or promiscuous lipid translocators in the ER¹⁰⁴ to find their way to the cytoplasmic leaflet, where they are detected by membrane topological probes.

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Organization of GPI-Anchored Proteins in Mammalian Cell Membranes

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A long-standing debate in the area of glycosylphosphatidylinositol (GPI)-anchored protein structure and function concerns their organization in plasma membranes of living cells. From a functional perspective, understanding how GPI-anchored proteins are distributed in cell membranes has implications for many of the putative roles ascribed to the GPI anchor. GPI-anchored proteins have been proposed to be associated with 'domains' at the cell surface; therefore at the outset we will define the use of the term 'domain' in its different contexts. In cells, there are domains that constitute morphological specializations of the plasma membrane, such as the apical and basolateral domains in polarized epithelia or axonal and dendritic surfaces in neurons. These domains arise due to active processes mediated and maintained by complex cellular machinery. Another type of domain arises due to lateral heterogeneities in relatively undifferentiated areas of the plasma membrane (e.g., areas devoid of morphologically defined specializations) in polarized and nonpolarized cells.^{3,4} Studies on the trafficking of GPI-anchored proteins and glycosphingolipids in polarized epithelia (reviewed in refs. 3, 4), and the involvement of GPI-anchored proteins in intracellular signaling processes (reviewed in ref. 5), have led Simons and colleagues⁸ to propose a mechanism that envisages domains or 'rafts' in the cell membranes, enriched in (glyco)sphingolipids, cholesterol and specific membrane proteins including GPI-anchored proteins. These domains dictate the sorting of associated proteins and may provide sites for assembling cytoplasmic signaling molecules.⁸ In this chapter we will critically examine the available data on the organization of GPI-anchored proteins in the plasma membrane in the light of various biochemical and morphological techniques utilized to study the association of GPI-anchored proteins with specialized membrane domains.

Lateral Heterogeneity in Cell Membranes

Our concept of the structure and organization of the membrane of cells has undergone major revisions from the time of the fluid mosaic model proposed by Singer and Nicolson.⁹ Instead of considering the membrane as 'two-dimensional oriented solution of integral proteins ... in a viscous phospholipid bilayer', it is increasingly apparent that both protein and lipid components of the bilayer are anisotropically arranged in the lateral and vertical directions. These arrangements may be due to protein-protein, lipid-protein or lipid-lipid interactions or, as in the case of transbilayer asymmetry of membrane lipids,^{4,10} due to active processes such as the asymmetric synthesis and flip-flop of some lipid classes.¹¹

The study of lateral heterogeneity of proteins in cell membranes has been greatly aided by the development of microscopic techniques such as fluorescence recovery after photobleaching (FRAP), single particle tracking and optical laser traps. These studies have provided a much more complex picture of the cell membrane.³ Analyses of protein diffusion at the cell surface has shown that most proteins do not undergo exclusively unrestricted lateral diffusion characteristic of a relatively dense, two-dimensional fluid; a considerable fraction of membrane proteins is immobile on long timescales as measured by FRAP experiments and single particle tracking analyses. In addition, they are transiently confined for average times of 6-8 seconds to small domains (200-400 nm in diameter) in relatively undifferentiated areas of the membrane.¹² However, the size and lifetimes of transient confinement do not appear to be dependent on the nature of the membrane anchor of the protein: GPI-anchored or transmembrane-anchored neural cell adhesion molecules and a ganglioside, GM1, exhibit similar diffusive motions at the surface of plasma membrane.¹²⁻¹⁴ This, instead, may reflect considerable lateral heterogeneity in the membrane at the nanometer scale. Kusumi and coworkers¹⁵ have proposed the idea of 'the membrane skeleton fence' as a restraint on lateral motion, whereas Jacobson and coworkers¹⁶ have envisaged the existence of dense obstacle fields. Currently, the underlying bases for these lateral constraints are being vigorously investigated, and it is likely that these ideas are not mutually exclusive.

Most of the understanding of the lateral heterogeneity in the organization of membrane lipids has come from studies in artificial membranes. A clear indication of lateral heterogeneity is the coexistence of phase-separated regions in the membrane bilayer. This has been validated by theoretical considerations as well as experimental observations (reviewed in ref. 15). Many parameters appear to play a role in the maintenance of segregated domains in artificial bilayers (reviewed in refs. 2, 8, 15, 16). In a bilayer of lipids with mismatched acyl chains, small differences in interaction energies will lead to the segregation of liquid-ordered regions (rigid domains) consisting of long saturated acyl chain lipids, whereas the shorter acyl chain or unsaturated acyl chain lipids prefer the liquid-disordered, less rigid domains. Preferential lateral interactions between hydrophilic head groups are also an obvious mechanism for the formation of domains. There is considerable evidence for strong lateral interactions between cholesterol and sphingolipids, resulting in domain formation in liposomes (reviewed in refs. 2, 8, 17, 18). Cholesterol (and possibly other sterols) play a major role in modulating the size and extent of these domains due to their planar 'rigid' structure and potentiate the organization of liquid-ordered domains in membranes.^{21,22} Although the plasma membrane domains may differ in size and structure from the phase-segregated regions or 'self-organized' domains observed in artificial systems, similar physical principles will apply to both. However, many physical measurements, including differential scanning calorimetry, spectroscopy, and NMR, have been too inconclusive to detect these 'self-organized' domains in living cells. This is probably due to the presence of a relatively large number of lipid species, and to the presence of proteins that have specific lipid annuli associated with their hydrophobic transmembrane domains.

In the following sections we will analyze the morphological and biochemical evidence for the presence of GPI-anchored proteins in membrane domains, and discuss the functional implications in some specific instances.

Association of GPI-Anchored Proteins with Domains, Detergent-Insoluble Complexes and Caveolae

Some clues regarding the existence of domains or 'rafts' in living cells rests on the observation that specific membrane proteins and lipids, including GPI-anchored proteins and lipid-linked nonreceptor tyrosine kinases, (glyco)sphingolipids and cholesterol form detergent-insoluble complexes in cold Triton X-100 (TX-100).^{8,23} Although this is a

convenient methodology, copurification with such detergent-resistant complexes cannot constitute proof of preexisting domains in cells; the detergent resistant complexes may be different from the domains or 'rafts' that are involved in functional processes inside cells.^{2,24,25} This is a poorly appreciated point and several researchers at different times, possibly due to the lack of alternative methodology, have equated caveolae, signaling complexes, or sorting domains with these biochemically generated entities (see below and refs. 24, 25).

A considerable interest in detergent-resistant complexes has been generated by the correlation of morphological observations that GPI-anchored proteins are clustered at significantly higher density in caveolae than on other areas of the plasma membrane,^{27,28} and that caveolin/VIP-21, along with GPI-anchored proteins and a subset of membrane lipids (sphingomyelin, acidic and neutral glycolipids, and cholesterol), are largely insoluble in nonionic detergents, mainly cold Triton X-100.²⁹⁻³² Caveolae are small, 60-80 nm cell surface in-pocketings with a characteristic protein coat of caveolin.²⁷ Together, these properties have been used to suggest that domains or 'rafts' enriched in these detergent insoluble components are associated with caveolae or 'caveolin/VIP-21-rich membranes' (reviewed in refs. 29,33). Furthermore, many cytoplasmically-oriented signaling molecules, including heterotrimeric GTP-ases, small GTP-ases, and nonreceptor type protein-tyrosine kinases (PTKs), have been localized to caveolae, primarily in aggregates derived with Triton X-100 (reviewed in ref. 21). Based on this 'copurification', GPI-anchored proteins have been proposed to mediate intracellular signaling in caveolae due to their association with PTKs in these structures.^{23,33,34}

However, using fluorescently-labeled monoclonal antibodies to different GPI-anchored proteins, these proteins were shown not to be constitutively concentrated in caveolae; they are enriched in these structures only after crosslinking with polyclonal secondary antibodies.³⁵ Similar results have been obtained by using a fluorescein-labeled analogue of folic acid as a monovalent ligand to visualize the distribution of GPI-anchored folate receptor at the plasma membrane. The diffuse distribution of these proteins is, therefore, not a consequence of antibody binding.²⁵ Electron microscopic (EM) analyses of the cell surface distribution of GPI-anchored folate receptor, Thy-1 antigen, and alkaline phosphatase also confirmed that these proteins are not constitutively enriched in caveolae.³⁵⁻³⁷ A careful quantitative EM analysis has shown that at the level of the sensitivity of the technique, GPI-anchored proteins are randomly distributed over the cell surface; they are neither concentrated in caveolae or clathrin coated pits nor excluded from them.^{25,35} Thus, it appears that multimerization of GPI-anchored proteins regulates their sequestration in caveolae, but in the absence of agents that promote clustering they are uniformly distributed over the plasma membrane.^{25,35-37}

These studies raise questions about how GPI-anchored proteins become enriched in the caveolae preparations obtained from detergent-extracted cells. Analysis of the effect of Triton X-100 on the surface distribution of GPI-anchored proteins show that GPI-anchored proteins at the cell surface are almost completely insoluble in Triton X-100 and become quantitatively incorporated in low density complexes, although only 4% of the surface is occupied by caveolae in fibroblast cells.²⁵ There also appears to be an increase in the extent of GPI-anchored protein clustering in the detergent-insoluble membranes. Under these conditions, transmembrane proteins such as the transferrin receptor and most other polypeptide-anchored proteins are readily solubilized.^{25,31,38,39} These observations are contrary to the widespread interpretation that the low density Triton X-100 insoluble membranes represent a purified caveolae preparation (or a caveolin/VIP-21-rich preparation: 50- to 100-fold enriched) thereby accounting for the 100- to 200-fold enrichment of the GPI- anchored proteins contained in them.^{33,34,38,40}

Using entirely different methods, Schnitzer and colleagues have shown that GPI-anchored proteins and caveolae may be separated from each other using a colloidal silica coating technique;⁴¹ the caveolae may be separated from the colloidal silica coated membrane areas of cells because colloidal silica fails to penetrate the narrow necks of the caveolae. A further immuno-isolation of caveolin-coated membranes in this preparation resulted in the separation of many components initially thought to be part of 'purified' caveolae.⁴² Another biochemical procedure involving sequential density sedimentation punctuated by a vigorous sonication procedure has been utilized to show that GPI-anchored proteins are enriched in caveolae/caveolin-containing fractions.⁴³ These studies are apparently paradoxical, and as yet there appears to be no clear resolution of the extent of concentration of GPI-anchored proteins in caveolae-coated membranes as determined by biochemical means.

It is possible that different biochemical procedures may provide contradictory results because the methods utilized alter lateral membrane organization differently. In this regard, treatment with colloidal silica may result in the immobilization of GPI-anchored and other proteins outside the caveolae and prevent their access to the narrow-necked structures. On the other hand, vigorous sonication may generate low density membrane fragments with altered composition leading to the copurification of caveolae and GPI-anchored proteins. A controversy also exists about the enrichment of heterotrimeric G-proteins in these detergent-insoluble complexes or 'purified caveolae' preparations.⁴³⁻⁴⁶ Collectively, these observations show that biochemical procedures currently available to isolate specialized regions of the plasma membrane are yet to be refined to provide an unambiguous separation of its lipid-linked constituents.

Enrichment of several GPI-anchored proteins and glycolipids in detergent resistant complexes^{33,38,40,47,48} has been interpreted to suggest that multiple GPI-anchored proteins are associated with each other (or with a common receptor) in these complexes. In apparent contradiction of these observations, Mayor and coworkers have shown that multiple GPI-anchored proteins on the same cell did not cocluster nor get recruited to caveolae unless they were independently crosslinked, showing that GPI-anchored proteins may not be stably associated with each other at the cell surface.³⁵ Similar observations have been made in lymphocytes and in keratinocytes where Thy-1 and GM-1 did not cocluster after crosslinking with multivalent agents.^{37,48} In a mouse keratinocyte cell line, Fujimoto has shown that the GPI-anchored protein Thy-1, sphingomyelin, glycosphingolipids and β_2 -microglobulin (possibly in conjunction with MHC class I) were independently recruited to caveolae only after crosslinking via primary and secondary antibodies, whereas another membrane protein, the transferrin receptor, was not sequestered in caveolae.³⁷ On the other hand, independently crosslinked GPI-anchored proteins did show a propensity to colocalize to the same small punctate areas of the plasma membrane.³⁵ Recently, Simons and coworkers have observed that crosslinked GPI-anchored proteins and sphingolipids colocalize to common patches outside caveolae and in cells that lack morphologically identifiable caveolae (Harder et al, *J Cell Biol* 1998:929-942). A transmembrane protein, MHC class I, is also recruited to caveolae only after crosslinking.⁴⁹ Thus, there must exist mechanisms for recruiting GPI-anchored proteins, sphingolipids and certain other membrane proteins to caveolae.

It is possible that there may be common 'receptors' that are capable of being recruited to caveolae and stabilize GPI-anchor- and sphingolipid-rich domains. One potential candidate is VIP-36, which is recruited to caveolae only after crosslinking and has lectin binding motifs.⁵⁰⁻⁵² Molecular analyses of the protein domains involved in recruiting transmembrane proteins to caveolae will provide an understanding of this process. Alternatively, GPI-anchored proteins may exist as small, dynamic domains which are stabilized by crosslinking (see below). These stabilized structures are then able to interact with each other and caveolae.

In the next section we discuss how detergent insoluble complexes may arise due to physical lipid-lipid interaction.

Mechanisms of Detergent Insolubility

The almost complete insolubility of the GPI-anchored proteins, along with their lack of enrichment in the relatively small punctate areas occupied by caveolae after detergent-treatment, showed that these proteins are detergent-insoluble independently of their association with caveolae. The lack of association with caveolin/VIP-21 is consistent with recent studies in lymphocytes where GPI-anchored Thy-1 and the ganglioside GM1 were detergent-insoluble and almost quantitatively formed 'low-density complexes', even though the cells lack detectable caveolin/VIP-21 or caveolae.⁴⁸ This could be due to the formation of specific detergent-insoluble glycolipid domains.⁴⁸ Alternatively, these proteins may be intrinsically detergent-insoluble in the milieu of the plasma membrane.

Brown and colleagues have demonstrated that the insolubility of GPI-anchored proteins and membrane lipids in Triton X-100 can be reconstituted in the absence of any special structures or protein(s).⁵³ The primary requirement for detergent insolubility is the presence of a significant mole fraction of high melting temperature lipids such as saturated acyl chain-containing phospholipids. Increasing concentration of cholesterol or neutral glycolipids positively influences the extent of insolubility. GPI-anchored proteins incorporated into such liposomes are insoluble in cold nonionic detergents, and they can be solubilized by increasing the temperature. In contrast, the lipid component is equally insoluble at high and low temperatures, suggesting that the GPI-anchored proteins are only loosely associated with the detergent-resistant membranes. Furthermore, detergent insolubility of GPI-anchored proteins requires the presence of the appropriate lipid milieu in the same bilayer as these proteins (D. Brown, personal communication and ref. 52). Thus, the insolubility of GPI-anchored proteins in Triton X-100 depends mainly on the acyl or alkyl chain composition of the membrane lipids, cholesterol or neutral glycolipid content, and probably the degree of saturation of the acyl or alkyl moiety of the GPI-anchor. Brown and colleagues have further shown that the requirements for promoting liquid-ordered phases or domains in artificial membranes and for generating detergent-insoluble complexes are similar. They observed that cholesterol and sphingolipids are not essential for insolubility in artificial liposomes, but potentiate the Triton X-100-insolubility of the incorporated GPI-anchored proteins.^{22,54} In most GPI-anchored proteins, saturated alkyl/acyl chains appear to be the predominant components of the lipid portion of GPI-anchors,⁵⁵ which appears to contribute to their detergent insolubility.

Modulating cholesterol levels *in vivo* by treatment with agents that inhibit cholesterol synthesis (e.g., compactin, see refs. 56, 57) or alter its distribution (e.g., saponin, see ref. 58) have shown that GPI-anchored proteins become more soluble in detergent after reducing the available cholesterol in membranes. Utilizing a sphingolipid deficient cell line, Hanada and coworkers have shown that the insolubility of GPI-anchored proteins is considerably reduced when sphingolipid levels are lowered.⁵⁶ Furthermore, the extent of insolubility of the GPI-anchored protein examined could be restored to the control levels by metabolic compensation via exogenously added sphingolipids. These data are consistent with the hypothesis that detergent insoluble domains may require cholesterol and sphingolipids. However, in none of these studies was the composition of the detergent-resistant membranes determined. As mentioned above, cholesterol and sphingolipids enhance the detergent insolubility of GPI-anchored proteins by promoting the formation of ordered membrane domains which are likely to be insoluble in TX-100.^{22,53,54} These domains are relatively stable on the time scales of fluorescence quenching experiments.²²

Other lipid-linked proteins are also insoluble in nonionic detergents; many cytoplasmically oriented proteins such as PTKs and heterotrimeric G proteins have been found in detergent insoluble complexes.^{33,40,47,59-61} As pointed out by Lisanti and coworkers, these proteins share a common lipid modification motif, Met-Gly-Cys, which is the site for N-myristoylation (on the N-terminal Gly after cleavage of Met) and palmitoylation (on the Cys) at the N-terminus and may direct association with the detergent-insoluble complexes.⁶² In confirmation of this hypothesis, the association of two PTKs, p56^{lck} and p59^{lyn}, with the detergent-insoluble complexes was found to be due to the N-terminal myristoylation at the Gly residue and palmitoylation at the Cys3 residue.⁶³ Furthermore, another PTK, p60^{src}, which is N-myristoylated but not palmitoylated (since it has the sequence Met-Gly-Ser at the N-terminus) was found not to be associated with these detergent-insoluble complexes.⁶³ However, a mutant version of p60^{src} with the Met-Gly-Cys motif at its N-terminus was found to be associated with the detergent-resistant complex.

These data are consistent with the idea that association with the detergent-insoluble membranes requires closely juxtaposed saturated fatty acyl chains and the presence in the same bilayer of the various saturated acyl/alkyl chain-containing proteins and lipids. Cytoplasmic lipid-modified proteins share the property of detergent insolubility with GPI-anchored proteins and association with the low-density complexes. However, in the case of the GPI-anchored proteins, this does not reflect an initial concentration in any specialized structures.²⁵

Direct Evidence for GPI-Anchored Protein Domains in Living Cell Membranes

The failure to observe domains of GPI-anchored proteins by conventional imaging methods may be because the domains are dynamic on the time scales of imaging, and the resolution of current microscopic techniques is limited. Fluorescence microscopy is limited by the wavelength of the emitted light (>300 nm),⁶⁴ and electron microscopic techniques are too insensitive to detect small aggregates of lipidic species.⁶⁵ Therefore, these domains or 'rafts' must be small (much less than 300 nm in size), dynamic, and contain only a few protein species.

One method for proving the existence of domains would be to measure the molecular proximity between GPI-anchored proteins and determine whether they represent a nonrandom organization. To measure distances between GPI-anchored species, several investigators have utilized the technique of fluorescence resonance energy transfer (FRET).⁶⁶ FRET experiments that measured the aggregation state of chimeric GPI-anchored gD1 (a viral spike glycoprotein) also confirm that there is no significant clustering of these proteins at steady state.⁶⁷ However, newly arrived GPI-anchored gD1 at the plasma membrane appear to be clustered.⁶⁷ In these studies it was not established whether the clusters were due to the GPI-anchoring of the virus glycoprotein or to an intrinsic property of virus glycoprotein oligomerization during biosynthetic transport. In recent studies using imaging FRET measurements, Edidin and coworkers have shown that while the ganglioside GM1 appears to be present as clusters at the cell surface, a GPI-anchored protein exhibits FRET efficiencies consistent with random distributions at the cell surface.⁶⁸ It is possible that the precise arrangement of fluorophores on the antibodies and their relatively large sizes (5-8 nm in diameter) may limit the ability to observe significant FRET between individual GPI-anchored species which are organized in domains.

Recent studies using a small fluorescent ligand to study the distribution of the GPI-anchored folate receptor, coupled with a sensitive measure of the extent of energy transfer, have shown that GPI-anchored proteins occur in cholesterol-dependent submicron domains (less than 70 nm in diameter) at the surface of living cells (Varma and Mayor,

Nature 1998; 394:798-801). Consistent with this finding, Friedrichson and Kurzchalia have utilized classical chemical crosslinking techniques to show that GPI-anchored proteins are present as molecular aggregates consisting of at least 15 molecules (manuscript submitted). They show that the extent of chemical crosslinking does not depend on the expression levels of the GPI-anchored proteins in membranes but is critically dependent on the presence of a GPI anchor and cholesterol in membranes. In fact, detergent treatment appears to dramatically increase the extent of crosslinking (Friedrichson and Kurzchalia, *Nature* 1998; 394:802-805). These studies using fundamentally different methodologies provide direct evidence for the organization of GPI-anchored proteins in 'rafts' or domains in living cell membranes.

As discussed above the development of microscopic techniques such as fluorescence recovery after photobleaching (FRAP), single particle tracking and optical laser traps have provided a much more complex picture of the cell membrane.³ Analyses of protein diffusion at the cell surface has shown that proteins are transiently confined for average times of 6-8 seconds to small domains in relatively undifferentiated areas of the membrane.¹² Although the size and life times of transient confinement do not appear to be dependent on the nature of the membrane anchor of the protein,¹²⁻¹⁴ it would be interesting to correlate the domains identified by the different techniques. These new approaches should aid in the understanding the function of rafts, implicated in diverse processes such as protein sorting and signal transduction.

The model shown in Figure 3.1 is consistent with all available information on the organization of GPI-anchored proteins in cell membranes (wherein artifacts due to the methodology of detection have been taken into consideration). These submicron domains consisting of only a few GPI-anchored proteins are likely to be randomly distributed in membranes, as shown in Figure 3.2.

Functional Implications of GPI-Anchored Protein Domains

The most compelling evidence for domains in the undifferentiated plasma membrane of cells is functional. Several cell biological processes as diverse as signal transduction and sorting of membrane proteins towards morphologically distinct regions of the cell may be understood in terms of the presence of (glyco)sphingolipid, and cholesterol-enriched domains of lipid-linked proteins.^{7,69-72} These domains or 'rafts' are postulated to recruit a specific set of membrane proteins and exclude others, thereby sorting membrane proteins or concentrating signaling molecules where they may interact more efficiently with their effectors. In this regard, the ability of the GPI-anchor to act as an apical sorting signal in polarized epithelia and to transduce cellular activation signals may be rationalized if GPI-anchored proteins are integral components of domains or 'rafts' in cell membranes.⁸ Here, we will discuss the role of membrane domains in proteins sorting; their involvement in signaling is discussed in chapter 4.

Membrane Domains in Biosynthetic and Endocytic Sorting

Sorting of proteins to different routes during biosynthetic transport is mediated by specific protein sequence or glycosylation based motifs (e.g., the targeting of lysosomal membrane proteins to lysosomes from the trans-Golgi network⁷³ or the delivery of specific sets of proteins to the basolateral and apical domains of epithelial cells^{1,2}). The relatively recent realization that lipid-based sorting motifs are also involved in sorting of membrane components comes from the observation that glycosphingolipids and GPI-anchored proteins are preferentially sorted to apical domains in epithelial cells.^{5,74} The observation that GPI-anchored protein, glycosphingolipids and cholesterol are found in detergent-resistant complexes during biosynthetic transport to the apical membrane along with a canonical apical protein, the HA protein of influenza virus, has provided support for the

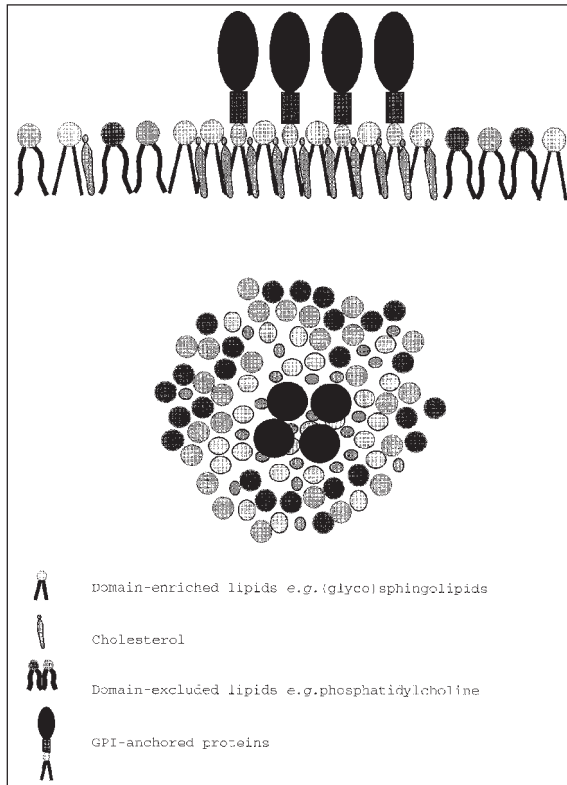


Fig. 3.1. Domain organization of GPI-anchored proteins. GPI-anchored proteins have been depicted in small, sub-micron sized domains or rafts in association with other raft components, cholesterol and (glyco)sphingolipids, consistent with the available information on the organization of these proteins. These domains or rafts are likely to be self-organizing and enriched in specific proteins and lipids, while excluding others, as proposed by the raft hypothesis.^{8,23}

involvement of membrane rafts or DIGs in sorting.^{8,19,29,75} However, there are several reasons to question the proposal that the detergent-insoluble complex or 'raft' is a 'sorting platform'. Sphingomyelin, although a major component of the 'detergent-resistant' lipids, is not enriched at the apical surface.⁷⁶ Replenishment of lipids incapable of being incorporated into detergent resistant membranes are capable of rescuing the impaired sorting of GPI-anchored proteins in sphingolipid-depleted cells.^{77,78} Furthermore, although cholesterol depletion appears to result in the loss of the ability of GPI-anchored proteins to associate with detergent-insoluble complexes, it is still sorted to the apical domain.⁵⁷

Recent work has also shown that there are different biosynthetic routes for 'apical' and 'basolateral' proteins in apparently morphologically 'nonpolarized' cells.^{79,80} Therefore, understanding the basis of lipid-based sorting is a fundamental issue in membrane trafficking in all cell types. The organization of GPI-anchored proteins is clearly a handle to unravel the mechanism of domain structure, formation and maintenance in cells.

The internalization of membrane proteins and fluid into eukaryotic cells is mediated by clathrin-coated pits, nonclathrin coated pits and uncoated pits at the cell surface.⁸¹⁻⁸³ Rapid endocytosis of membrane proteins is mediated by specific, cytoplasmically-oriented, peptide signal-dependent enrichment of these proteins in clathrin-coated pits.⁸⁴ Membrane proteins lacking functional endocytosis signals are internalized at rates which are five- to twenty-fold slower and are similar to the rate of bulk membrane lipid internalization.⁸⁵⁻⁸⁷ While clathrin-independent means of internalization have been demonstrated for many years, the specific mechanism for these processes have yet to be elucidated. Caveolae are

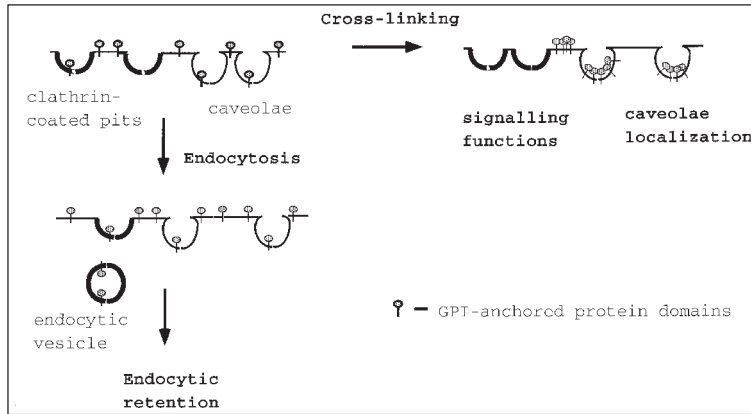


Fig. 3.2. Cell surface dynamics of GPI-anchored proteins. A schematic of the cell surface dynamics of GPI-anchored proteins wherein, in their native state, GPI-anchored proteins (organized as sub-micron domains) are free to diffuse in the plane of the bilayer. Consequently, they are neither enriched nor depleted in coated or noncoated pits and are taken into the cell by mechanisms of bulk membrane endocytosis. These proteins are then retained in endocytic compartments traversed by recycling membrane components. Upon crosslinking by antibodies or by physiological agents, these proteins will be clustered and preferentially localize to caveolae. Crosslinking in many instances is a prerequisite for activating the signaling function of GPI-anchored proteins (reviewed in ref. 5).

examples of nonclathrin mediated invaginations at the plasma membrane, but in most cell types, caveolae per se appear not to be internalized to a great extent.³⁶

Based on the observations that cholesterol depletion disrupts caveolar morphology and inhibits folate uptake, and the requirement for a GPI anchor for efficient folate uptake, Anderson and coworkers proposed that GPI-anchored proteins such as the folate receptor take up small molecules via caveolae by a process called potocytosis.⁸⁸ Once again, the observation that the folate receptors (or any other GPI-anchored proteins) are not constitutively clustered in caveolae, questions the role of caveolae in folate uptake and the mechanism of GPI anchor-dependent folate uptake.

In the absence of crosslinking, glycolipid-containing areas of plasma membrane and GPI-anchored proteins are internalized via noncoated vesicles and clathrin-coated pathway at rates corresponding to overall membrane internalization rates^{72,89,90} (Fig. 3.2). Regardless of their means of internalization, we have recently found that GPI-anchored proteins, including the folate receptor, are able to enter bona fide endosomes which contain recycling transferrin receptors and fluid phase markers and are quantitatively recycled back to the cell surface.^{71,72,91} However, as compared to recycling receptors and overall membrane components, GPI-anchored proteins are extensively retained in endosomes.^{71,72,91,92} This retention in endosomes is dependent on the lipid levels in cellular membranes: Cholesterol and sphingolipid depletion appears to relieve retention relative to other recycling receptors.^{72,78} This lipid-dependent retention in endosomes will expose GPI-anchored endosomes (specifically the folate receptor) to the acidic milieu of both sorting and recycling endosomes for longer times than recycling receptors with conventional transmembrane anchor. This is

likely to be the reason for the GPI anchor- and cholesterol and sphingolipid-dependent uptake of folates via the folate receptor.^{93,94}

Another GPI-anchored protein, the cellular scrapie protein, is processed to the infectious proteinase K-resistant prion form more efficiently than its transmembrane anchored form⁹⁵ (also see chapter 6). This processing is dependent on acidic pH in endosomes and is inhibited by the depletion of cholesterol in membranes.⁹⁵⁻⁹⁷ These observations are consistent with the observation that the presence of the GPI-anchor causes extensive retention of the cellular scrapie protein in acidic endosomes. If the infectious (prion) form of the scrapie protein were also present in these endosomes, then the cholesterol-dependent retention mechanism could facilitate an efficient conversion of the native scrapie protein into prions, possibly in distinct membrane domains or aggregates.⁹⁵ These observations suggest that cholesterol and possibly other lipids play a role in GPI-anchored protein sorting in endosomes.

Recent data supportive of the role of specific lipid domains (rigid or liquid-ordered domains) being segregated from other types of membrane (liquid-disordered or fluid areas) comes from studies on membrane organization and trafficking properties of the lipophilic dialkylcarbocyanines, the rigid domain-preferring DiIC16 and the fluid domain-preferring DiIC12, in mammalian cells.⁹⁸⁻¹⁰⁰ These studies have shown that the two kinds of lipid analogues are sorted from each other at the surface of cells^{98,99} and in endosomes,¹⁰⁰ consistent with the hypothesis that the rigid domain-preferring GPI-anchored proteins may segregate into specialized microdomains which are rich in cholesterol in endosomes and at the cell surface.

Summary

In this review we have examined the organization of GPI-anchored proteins in the plasma membrane in the context of the current understanding of lateral heterogeneity in cell membranes. We have also provided a critical evaluation of the association of GPI-anchored proteins with membrane domains of various types, including their association with caveolae, and have discussed the role of the GPI-anchor in protein sorting, which may have broader implications for the biology of many of the GPI-anchored proteins described to date.

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Signaling through GPI-Anchored Receptors

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The ability of antibodies directed against GPI-anchored cell surface molecules to cause changes in cell physiology has been known for some time. Despite being confined to the extracellular leaflet, several GPI-anchored proteins, when crosslinked, can transduce cellular activation or inhibition signals, resulting in Ca^{2+} fluxes, protein tyrosine phosphorylation, cytokine secretion and proliferation or inhibition of defined responses^{1,2} (Table 4.1). This prompted the search for an explanation of how the aggregation of receptors located exclusively on the outer face of the membrane could initiate intracellular signaling events. Parallel investigations into the organization of GPI-anchored proteins in plasma membranes have given us important new insights into membrane structure and organization. In this chapter, we shall describe the present state of the art in this fertile field and attempt to integrate the many new, and sometimes conflicting, data into a working model. We shall first review the recent work on extracellular and lateral interactions of GPI-anchored receptors with transmembrane signaling receptors. We shall then consider the composition of sphingolipid microdomains, the preferred habitat of GPI-anchored receptors in the plasma membrane, and discuss to what extent the GPI anchor itself participates in transmembrane signaling. Finally, we shall return to the lymphocyte where GPI-mediated signaling was originally observed and attempt to interpret the wealth of data within the framework of these new concepts of membrane organization.

Association of GPI-Linked Receptors with Transmembrane Proteins into Receptor Complexes

The simplest and most direct way for GPI-anchored receptors to participate in signaling is through physical association with transmembrane proteins that are already linked to an intracellular signaling machinery. In this cooperative interaction the transmembrane protein partner will either have intrinsic tyrosine kinase activity, or the capacity to initiate a signaling cascade upon ligand binding. Three GPI-anchored neurotrophic factor receptors have recently been assigned transmembrane signaling partners, and certain other GPI-anchored receptors were shown to interact with integrins.

GPI-Anchored Neurotrophic Factor Receptors

The GPI-anchored receptors for the glial-cell derived neurotrophic factor (GDNFR- α)^{70,71} and neurturin (NTNR- α)^{72,73} when bound to their respective ligands, are recognized by the Ret transmembrane receptor protein tyrosine kinase. Ret actually recognizes the GDNF-GDNFR α or NTN-NTNR α complexes and undergoes conformational changes that result in the activation of its protein tyrosine kinase (PTK) activity (see chapter 6, Fig. 6.1).

Table 4.1 Signal transduction via GPI-anchored glycoproteins

Molecule	Cells	Response	Ref.
<i>Human</i>			
CD14	Monocytes	h oxidative burst h IL-1 secretion h $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ h oxidative burst	3-6
	Transfected murine pre-B cell line	NF- κ B activation h Tyr phosphorylation	7
	Monocytes	h PKC, MAPK, PI-3K activities h PI-(3,4,5)P3	8,9
CD16B	Monocytes Neutrophils	h $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ h oxidative burst	6,10
CD24	Tonsilar B cells Granulocytes	h $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ h oxidative burst	6,11
CD48	Neutrophils T-cell line	h $[Ca^{2+}]_i$	10,12
CD52	T-cells	h proliferation h cytokine production	13
CD55	T-cells Transfected EL4 mouse thymoma	h proliferation h IL-1 production	14,15
	Neutrophils Jurkat T-cell line	h $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ h Tyr phosphorylation	10 16
CD58	Neutrophils	h $[Ca^{2+}]_i$	10
	Monocytes	h IL-1 secretion	17
CD59	T-cell lines	h $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ h PI turnover h IL-1 secretion h proliferation	18
	Neutrophils	h $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ h Tyr phosphorylation	6,10
	Monocyte line	h $[Ca^{2+}]_i$	19
CD66b, c	Neutrophils	h CD11b expression	20
CD67	Neutrophils	h $[Ca^{2+}]_i$	6,10
CD73	T-cells	h IL-2 secretion h IL-2R expression h proliferation h Tyr phosphorylation	21-23
	B cells	h proliferation	24
CD87	Monocytes	h Tyr phosphorylation	25

Table 4.1 Signal transduction via GPI-anchored glycoproteins (con't)

Molecule	Cells	Response	Ref.
<i>Human</i>			
CD157 (Bst-1)	Monocyte cell lines	h Tyr phosphorylation	26
PrPc	T-cells	h proliferation	27
<i>Mouse, Rat, Guinea pig, Chicken</i>			
Thy-1	Spleen cells	h proliferation	28-33
	Peripheral T-cells	h IL-2 secretion	
	T-cells clones	h [Ca ²⁺] _i	
	T-cell line	h IL-2R expression	
Ly-6	T-cell hybridoma	h Tyr phosphorylation	34
	Transfected human T-cells, murine B lymphoma	h [Ca ²⁺] _i h PI turnover h IL-2 secretion	35-37
	Transfected neural cell line	i neurite outgrowth	38
	Thymocytes	Apoptosis	39
Ly-6	T-cells, T-cell clones, cell hybridoma	hori proliferation* hori secretion* h [Ca ²⁺] _i h IL-2R expression	40-44
	B cells	h proliferation	45
	Transfected mouse T-cells, human T-cells	hori secretion, NF-κB, AP-1, NF-AT activities	46, 47
Qa-2	T-cells, transgenic mouse T-cells	h proliferation h [Ca ²⁺] _i h IL-2 secretion h IL-2R expression	48-50
sgp-60	T-cells	h IL-2 secretion, proliferation h IL-2 secretion, proliferation, [Ca ²⁺] _i , IP turnover*	51-53
Heat stable antigen	Purified CD4+ cells	Costimulation	54
	B lymphocytes	h [Ca ²⁺] _i	55
	B cell precursors	Apoptosis	56
TSA-1/Sca-2	T-cells, T-cell hybridoma, transfected human T-cells	i IL-2 secretion CD3 ζ Try phosphorylation*	57, 58
	T-cells hybridoma, in vivo	i anti-TCR-induced apoptosis	59
BST-1/BP3	Pre T-cells	h proliferation	60
Mouse F3	Transfected CHO cells	h Try phosphorylation	61

Table 4.1 Signal transduction via GPI-anchored glycoproteins (con't)

Molecule	Cells	Response	Ref.
<i>Mouse, Rat, Guinea Pig, Chicken (con't)</i>			
Rat RT6	T-cells	h proliferation	62
Rat Thy-1	mast cells	h [Ca ²⁺] _i h Tyr phosphorylation h histamine release	63-66
Rat gp42	NK-like cell line	h [Ca ²⁺] _i h PI turnover	67
Rat GDNFR α	embryonic spinal cord motor neurons	h Tyr phosphorylation of RET RPTK	68
Guinea Pig gpTAA	T-cells	h proliferation	69

* depending on the antibody used and the mode of crosslinking

A similar situation is encountered with the GPI-anchored receptor for the ciliary neurotrophic factor (CNTFR- α), which forms a tripartite receptor complex with CNTF and the LIF (leukemia inhibitory factor) binding protein (see Fig. 6.1). This complex then encounters gp130, the transmembrane signal transducing subunit of the interleukin 6 receptor, and signaling is initiated by the JAK kinases associated with gp130.⁷⁴ In all these instances, the ligand binding subunits apparently serve to limit ligand diffusion, in addition to their primary role in specificity determination. Whether the presence of a GPI anchor, which endows these neurotrophic factor receptors with higher mobility in the plane of the membrane, enhances capture and concentration of ligands is not known. However, it will become apparent in the next sections of this chapter that GPI-anchored receptors acquire signaling potential while residing in sphingolipid microdomains, so that GDNF and NTN-induced signals should be viewed within the context of other signaling molecules which reside in these domains.

Interactions of GPI-Linked Receptors with Integrins

In myeloid cells, the three GPI-linked receptors CD14 (LPS receptor), Fc γ RIIB (CD16b) and CD87 (uPAR, or urokinase-type plasminogen activator receptor) have been shown to undergo lateral interactions with the β 2 integrin CR3²⁵ (complement receptor type 3) (reviewed in ref. 75). Resonance energy transfer measurements and cocapping experiments suggest specific interactions between CD87-CR3, CD14-CR3 and CD16b-CR3 pairs (see ref. 76 for a review). In addition, coprecipitation of CD87 and CR3 in detergent-resistant membrane complexes containing Src family kinases (see below) suggests an additional transmembrane cooperation in signaling.²⁵ The association of CD16 and CD87 with CR3 is mediated by lectin-like properties of CR3 which are inhibitable by the appropriate monosaccharides.⁷⁶

CD87 has also been reported to localize to caveolae in endothelial cells,⁷⁷ and to associate with β 1 integrins in membrane complexes containing caveolin.⁷⁸ Caveolae are morphologically distinct plasma membrane invaginations present in all cell types that express the

Table 4.2 Association of GPI-linked molecules with Src family protein tyrosine kinases

Molecule	Src-kinase	Cell/tissue	Assay	Ref.
<i>Human</i>				
CD14	Lyn	Peripheral blood monocytes	Reprecipitation from IC kinase assay	84
CD48	Lck	T-cell line (HPB-ALL)	WB of IP from total lysate	85
CD55	Lck	T-cell line (HPB-ALL)	WB of IP from total lysate	85
	Lck, Fyn	HeLa Transfectants	Reprecipitation from IC kinase assay	15
CD59	Lck	T-cell line	Disappearance from the sphingolipid microdomain after clearing with anti-Thy-1 WB of IP from total lysate	85, 86
CD66b, c	Lyn, Hck	Peripheral blood	Reprecipitation from IC kinase assay	87
<i>Mouse, Rat</i>				
Thy-1	Lck	Rat and mouse thymocytes	Reprecipitation from IC kinase assay	88
		EL4 thymoma	Disappearance from the sphingolipid microdomain after clearing with anti-Thy-1	89
	Fyn	Rat and mouse thymocytes	Reprecipitation from IC kinase assay	88, 90
	Lyn	Rat basophilic leukemia	Reprecipitation from IC kinase assay	65
Ly6	Lck	EL4 thymoma	Disappearance from the sphingolipid microdomain after clearing with anti-Ly6	89
Ly-6C	Fgr	J774 macrophage cell line	IC kinase assay, comparison by peptide mapping	91
F3	Fyn	Adult mouse brain	WB of IP from GPI-rich microdomains	61, 92
CD24	c-Fgr	Small cell lung carcinoma	WB of IP from total lysate	93
	Lyn	Erythroleukemia (K562)	WB of IP from total lysate	93
	Lck, Fyn	ESb lymphoma	Reprecipitation from IC kinase assay	94
CD48	Lck, Fyn	Rat and mouse thymocytes	Reprecipitation from IC kinase assay	88

Table 4.2 Association of GPI-linked molecules with Src family protein tyrosine kinases (con't)

Molecule	Src-kinase	Cell/tissue	Assay	Ref.
<i>Chicken</i>				
F11	Fyn	Embryonic chick brain	In vitro kinase assay on IC from sphingolipid microdomains Microscopy (colocalization)	95
Axonin-1	Fyn	Cultured dorsal root ganglia	Reprecipitation from IC kinase assay	96

IC, Immune complex; IP, Immunoprecipitate; WB, Western blot

caveolar coat protein caveolin⁷⁹ (see below). Although CD87 may modulate $\beta 1$ integrin signaling,⁸⁰ the functional relevance, if any, of the caveolar localization of the CD87- $\beta 1$ integrin complex is not known. Unlike the CD87- $\beta 2$ interaction,⁸¹ which involves carbohydrate recognition and is labile, the relatively stable CD87- $\beta 1$ integrin complexes are the result of protein-protein interactions and can be inhibited by peptides corresponding to specific motifs in the interacting proteins. CD87 may thus engage in distinct interactions with different integrin molecules, and could therefore signal through different pathways. Both $\beta 1$ and $\beta 2$ integrins are capable of mediating activation signals via multiple pathways (Ca^{2+} mobilization, protein tyrosine phosphorylations and p21^{ras} activation).^{82,83}

Detergent-Resistant Sphingolipid Microdomains as Signaling Platforms for GPI-Anchored Receptors

In contrast to the few GPI-anchored proteins described above which transduce signals by associating with known transmembrane signal transducer molecules, the signaling properties of the vast majority of GPI-linked receptors are linked to their localization in sphingolipid-rich microdomains. Involvement of Src family PTKs in signaling via GPI-anchored proteins was suggested because:

1. Crosslinking the GPI-anchored receptors at the cell surface leads to a rapid increase in tyrosine phosphorylation of several intracellular protein substrates (Table 4.1); and
2. PTKs coprecipitate with GPI-anchored receptors in mild detergent lysates of whole cells (Table 4.2).

Whether Src family PTKs participate in signaling through GPI-anchored receptors and sphingolipid microdomains has not been directly demonstrated, but much progress has been made towards understanding the relationship of Src PTKs to the plasma membrane, particularly to sphingolipid microdomains. The Src family PTKs associate with the inner leaflet of the plasma membrane through their amino-terminal acyl chains (see ref. 97 for a review) and thus do not communicate directly with the outer leaflet. An integral membrane protein that could bridge GPI-anchored receptors in the outer leaflet with a Src kinase in the inner leaflet was proposed,^{1,2,98} but no candidate for the role of "adaptor" has been identified so far. A 100 kDa protein, reported to be required for signaling via GPI-anchored Thy-1 and which associates with Src PTKs, appears to be restricted to a subset of CD4⁺ cells⁹⁹ and thus cannot qualify as a general adaptor linking GPI-anchored receptors to Src PTKs.

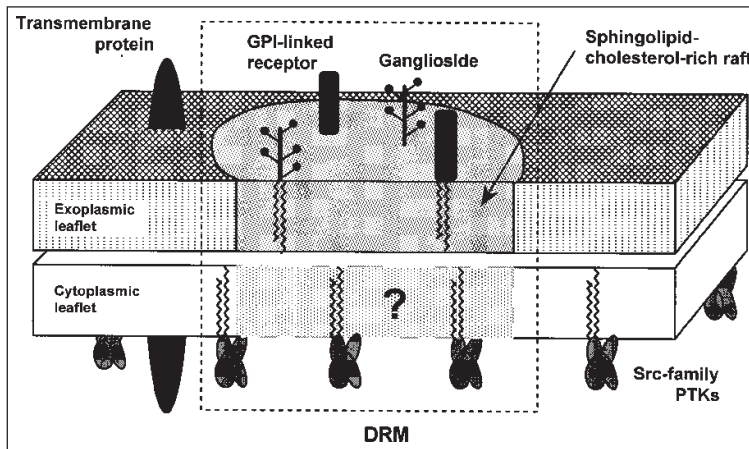


Fig. 4.1. A model for the organization of sphingolipid microdomains in the plasma membrane. Sphingolipids and cholesterol in the exoplasmic leaflet organize themselves into 'liquid ordered domains' or 'rafts' which segregate from the phospholipid milieu of the plasma membrane. Glycosphingolipids (gangliosides) and GPI-anchored proteins preferentially associate with these rafts, whilst most transmembrane proteins are excluded from them. These rafts, or microdomains, can be isolated as 'detergent resistant membranes' (DRMs) by isopycnic density gradient centrifugation of nonionic detergent lysates. Acylated signaling proteins, such as Src family PTKs, are also enriched in DRMs. The cytoplasmic face of the microdomains is also thought to differ in lipid composition from the rest of the plasma membrane, but whether the lipid composition is identical to that of the exoplasmic leaflet is not known.

While the search for transmembrane connecting mechanisms was going on, it became evident that GPI-anchored proteins are not randomly distributed in the plasma membrane but tend to accumulate in regions of the plasma membrane enriched in sphingolipids and cholesterol.¹⁰⁰ These 'sphingolipid microdomains' could be isolated because of their insolubility in nonionic detergents and buoyancy in isopycnic density gradients^{86,100-102} (see chapter 3). The biophysical basis for microdomain formation and detergent insolubility was shown to lie in the ability of sphingolipids to form a liquid ordered phase within the milieu of glycerophospholipids^{103,104} (Fig. 4.1). Independent support for the localization of GPI-anchored proteins to sphingolipid microdomains has come from recent biophysical studies using the single particle tracking technique, which showed transient confinement of GPI-anchored proteins and gangliosides to "obstacle zones" of approximately 300 nm in diameter.^{105,106} The concept of sphingolipid microdomains as signaling platforms is further supported by the fact that a number of glycosphingolipids (gangliosides) are also potent signal transducers that function by activating Src family PTKs (Table 4.3). Interestingly, the phosphoprotein profiles associated with the crosslinking of GPI-linked receptors and gangliosides in *in vitro* kinase assays are quite similar, suggesting that a common 'scaffold' of kinases and substrates may be involved in both instances (see references in Table 4.2 and 4.3). In addition to Src kinases, similarly acylated G protein α subunits also associate with GPI-anchored proteins in lymphocytes.¹²⁰

Aggregation of GPI-anchored receptors, by antibody crosslinking for instance, may alter the distribution of sphingolipid microdomains on the cell membrane. What effect this may have on the distribution and activity of the Src family PTKs associated with the microdomains is only now becoming clear. At least three studies using different approaches

Table 4.3 Signal transduction via gangliosides

Ganglioside	Activation by	Cells	Response	Ref.
GM1	Polyclonal Ab	Rat thymocytes	hDNA synthesis	107
	Cholera toxin	Rat thymocytes	hDNA synthesis h[Ca ²⁺] _i	108,109
	Cholera toxin	Mouse N18 neuroblastoma	hdifferentiation	110
	Cholera toxin	Stimulated mouse B cells	iproliferation	111
	Cholera toxin	Rat mast cells	hIL-6 secretion iTNF- α secretion	112
GD1b	AA4 mAb	Rat basophilic leukemia	iTyr-P of cellular substrates	113
GD3	R24 mAb	Human T-cells	hDNA synthesis	114
	R24 mAb	Human T-cells	hcytokine synthesis hTyr-P of PLC γ hRas activation h[Ca ²⁺] _i	115,116
	R24 mAb	Rat cerebellar cultures	iTyr-P of cellular substrates	117

Association of Src family protein tyrosine kinases with gangliosides

Ganglioside	Src kinase	Cells	Ref.
GM3	c-Src	B16 melanoma	118
GD1b	Lyn	Rat basophilic leukemia	119
GD3	Lyn	Rat brain	117

provide support for the involvement of sphingolipid microdomains in signaling via GPI-anchored glycoproteins. First, purified GPI-anchored molecules such as CD59 that readily integrate into the plasma membrane (reviewed in ref. 121; also see chapters 7 and 10) become signaling competent only after they have become incorporated into sphingolipid microdomains.¹⁹ The ability to induce a Ca²⁺ influx after crosslinking with anti-CD59 antibodies coincided temporally with the coprecipitation of CD59 and Src family kinases in detergent-resistant membrane complexes. Second, lowering the cellular cholesterol content (and consequently that of sphingolipid microdomains) markedly diminished the Ca²⁺ signaling via the endogenous GPI-anchored proteins CD59 and CD48 in lymphocytes.¹² The surface expression and association of CD59 and CD48 with microdomains were unaffected by cholesterol depletion, suggesting that signaling is a more sensitive indicator of subtle changes in lipid composition. Third, the Src family PTK Fyn coaggregates at the plasma membrane inner leaflet upon surface crosslinking of the GPI-linked proteins⁹⁵ or other sphingolipid microdomain components (Harder et al. *J Cell Biol* 1998; 141:929-942). These studies favor the idea that sphingolipid microdomains act as functional signaling

platforms, and that linking together of several individual domains by antibodies enhances their functional activity.

Sphingolipid Microdomains and Caveolae

The use of Triton X-100 and isopycnic centrifugation as a means of isolating GPI-rich membrane domains was criticized on the grounds that the removal of phospholipids by the detergent would automatically increase the buoyancy of proteins remaining associated with the detergent-insoluble fraction, raising doubts that 'microdomains' could simply be extraction artefacts and not natural features (see ref. 122 for a review). Further complexity arose when caveolae from endothelial cells and fibroblasts were shown to behave similarly upon TX-100 extraction and could also be recovered as buoyant membrane complexes.^{123,124} Moreover, some experiments showing enrichment of GPI-anchored proteins and the ganglioside GM1 in caveolae^{125,126} suggested that sphingolipid microdomains and caveolae were identical.

Despite these striking similarities, it was possible to distinguish caveolae from sphingolipid microdomains by a number of criteria. For instance, isolation of GPI-rich sphingolipid microdomains in cells that do not express caveolin pointed out that sphingolipid microdomains exist in the absence of caveolin expression or morphologically detectable caveolae.^{127,128} Further, GPI-anchored molecules, sphingolipids and gangliosides were sequestered into caveolae only upon surface crosslinking,^{129,130} and it was cautioned that coisolation of caveolin and GPI-anchored proteins after TX-100 extraction does not reflect the native distribution of the latter.¹³¹ This would also explain why photocrosslinking of GM1 with caveolin was more extensive after crosslinking with cholera toxin.¹³² Subsequent technical refinements for the isolation of caveolae without use of detergents allowed the physical separation of caveolae from the 'GPI-rich annulus', but still showed an enrichment for GM1, sphingomyelin and many signaling proteins in caveolar fractions.^{133,134} More recently, 'affinity' purified caveolae were shown not to contain any signaling molecules¹³⁵ and morphological studies showed G α proteins located not exclusively in caveolae, but also in noncaveolar membrane regions.¹³⁶

In spite of these findings, there is still evidence that detergent-resistant, buoyant membranes fractions enriched in caveolin (hence referred to as caveolar membranes) contain a wide variety of signaling molecules (see Table 4.4). Individual signaling molecules show different degrees of enrichment in caveolar membranes. Direct interactions between caveolin and Src family PTKs, G α protein subunits and PKC isozymes^{78,142,143,148} through their putative 'caveolin binding motif',¹⁴⁹ and regulation of eNOS activity by reversible association with caveolae¹⁵⁰ fostered the view that caveolin could provide a framework for the caveolar signaling platform.¹⁵¹ This view gave rise to a model where caveolae are surrounded by an annulus of sphingolipid microdomains, GPI-anchored proteins and sphingomyelin in the outer leaflet, and kinases in the inner leaflet. Signaling molecules on the inner leaflet bind to caveolin through distinct motifs¹⁵¹ (Fig. 4.2). GPI-linked molecules do not seem to enter caveolae unless aggregated by antibodies or ligands. One problem with this model is that direct intercalation of the acylated signaling molecules into caveolar membrane is unlikely, as caveolin and its palmitate chains already occupy most of the caveolar membrane area.¹²² Many observations remain difficult to resolve in any model, such as the exclusion of GPI-anchored proteins,¹³³ but inclusion of signaling molecules,¹³⁴ in caveolae isolated after cationized silica coating of the plasma membrane. It is interesting to note that low density membrane complexes of neuronal cells which do not contain caveolae contained a similar array of signaling molecules reported to be present in caveolae¹⁵² (see chapter 6). Precise definition of the organization of the membrane associated signaling

Table 4.4 Signaling molecules enriched in caveolae

Molecule	Ref.
Src family PTKs	134, 137
Phosphoinositide phosphatase PI (4,5) P2	138
P13K, PLC γ	134
IP3 receptor	139, 140
G α protein subunits	141
PKC isozymes	142
Ha-Ras	143
MAP kinase pathway components	144
Endothelial nitric oxide synthase	145
Receptor PTKs (PDGFR, EFGFR)	146, 147

molecules in caveolae and their relationship to sphingolipid microdomains will definitely require further investigations and technical refinements.

Localization and Regulation of Src Family PTKs in Sphingolipid Microdomains

The localization of Src kinases to the plasma membrane inner leaflet^{153,154} and their enrichment in sphingolipid microdomains^{153,155} are critically dependent upon double acylation at the amino-terminal glycine and cysteines with myristate and palmitate, respectively. Doubly acylated Lck uniformly localizes to the plasma membrane inner leaflet in cells devoid of CD4 and CD8.¹⁵⁴ Similarly, doubly acylated Fyn first associates with membranes and then equilibrates with detergent-resistant membrane fractions.¹⁵³ An increase in the local concentration of PTKs following crosslinking of GPI-anchored receptors remains a possible outcome, although this has not been convincingly shown. Recent observations of Fyn cocapping with GPI-anchored receptors and other sphingolipid microdomain components (ref. 95, and Harder et al. *J Cell Biol* 1998; 141:929-942) suggest that movement and coalescence of sphingolipid microdomains may induce a concomitant redistribution of inner leaflet constituents. The plasma membrane inner leaflet sphingomyelin and cholesterol may also form domains similar to the outer leaflet domains.¹⁵⁶ Like most of the GPI-anchored proteins, the acyl chains of Src kinases are saturated and thus may preferentially associate with these putative inner leaflet domains. In support of this, about 50% of the lymphocyte Lck and Fyn kinases are recovered in the buoyant membrane fractions.^{157,158} It is therefore particularly important to know whether:

1. Inner leaflet domains with detergent-resistant properties match the outer domains spatially; and
2. The inner and outer domains differ in their lipid composition. If so, then antibody-induced clustering could increase the size and potency of these preexisting signaling platforms.

The enzymatic activity of Src family PTKs is regulated primarily by phosphorylation of two key tyrosine residues that allow modular interactions within the kinase molecule

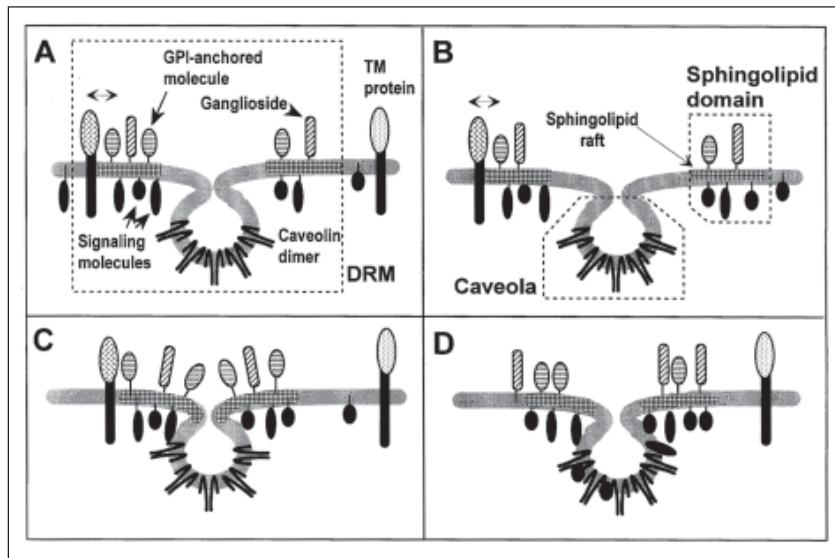


Fig. 4.2. A working model for the organization and regulatory interactions of sphingolipid rich microdomains and caveolae. (A) DRMs are, in practice, crude isolates consisting of sphingolipid-rich microdomains and caveolar components. Caveolae are nonclathrin coated plasma membrane invaginations formed by oligomerization of caveolin dimers and which include membrane cholesterol. Preparation of DRMs cannot distinguish between components of microdomain origin (e.g. GPI-anchored proteins, gangliosides and acylated, membrane-associated signaling molecules) and caveolae. Only a very few transmembrane proteins are included in DRMs, possibly due to association with GPI-anchored proteins or gangliosides through their extracellular domains. (B) Mechanical and affinity methods can separate caveolae from sphingolipid domains, with the signaling molecules (e.g., PTKs) associated exclusively with the latter. (C) Antibody-, ligand- or mild detergent-induced perturbation of microdomain integrity may cause GPI-anchored proteins, gangliosides and sphingomyelin to coalesce with caveolae, thus explaining their coisolation in DRMs. (D) In intact membranes, close proximity of the sphingolipid rafts to caveolae induced by crosslinking could result in the transfer of signaling molecules from microdomains into caveolae.

itself (see ref. 159 for review; Fig. 4.3). In Lck, phosphorylation of regulatory tyrosine residue Y505 (by the cytoplasmic PTK Csk) results in the formation of an intramolecular loop with the SH2 domain that locks the kinase in an inactive conformation. Dephosphorylation of Y505 by the CD45 protein tyrosine phosphatase may render Lck catalytically active by opening the molecule and exposing the kinase domain Y394.¹⁶⁰ Phosphorylation of Y394 by autophosphorylation (in trans) enhances the catalytic activity. This occurs selectively in the membrane bound forms of Lck and is critically dependent on N-terminal myristoylation and palmitoylation of the kinase.¹⁶¹

There is still some controversy about whether Lck and Fyn kinases are more or less enzymatically active when associated with sphingolipid microdomains. One report¹⁶¹ suggests that Lck in sphingolipid microdomains is less active than elsewhere in the plasma membrane due to exclusion of the receptor tyrosine phosphatase CD45 from these microdomains, which leaves Lck in the inactive configuration. This explanation is not consistent, however, with the apparent increase in signaling ability exhibited by crosslinking

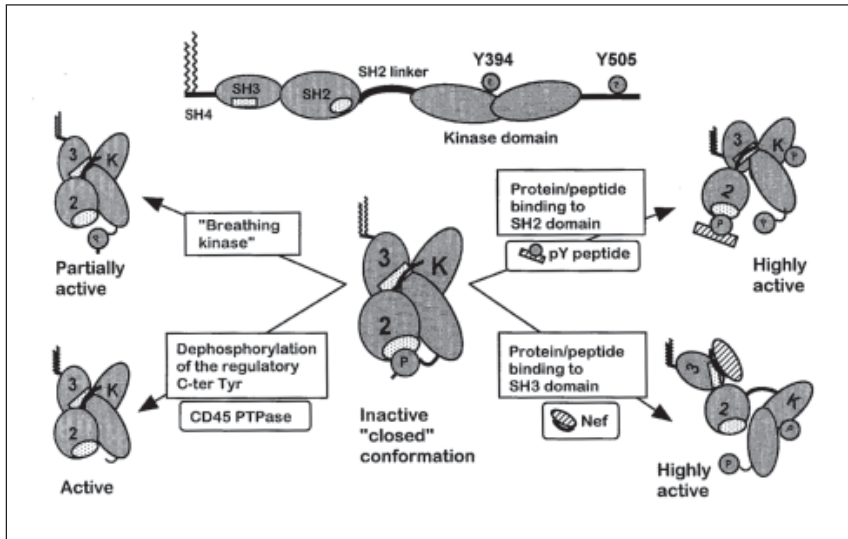


Fig. 4.3. Regulation of Src family PTKs. Src family PTKs such as Lck and Fyn are organized into distinct modules comprising kinase, SH2 and SH3 domains, and a consensus site for double acylation at the amino terminus (SH4 domain). The SH2 and SH3 domains contain binding pockets for phosphotyrosine (pY, P-Tyr) and a proline rich repeat, respectively. Two tyrosine residues, a regulatory one at the C-terminus and another within the kinase domain (activator Tyr) control the activity of the kinase. In Lck, phosphorylation of the regulatory Y505 results in binding of the C-terminus to the SH2 domain, thus locking the kinase in an inactive, closed conformation. This is stabilized by the SH2 linker binding to the SH3 domain. In contrast, phosphorylation of Y394 in the kinase domain enhances the catalytic activity of the enzyme. In its membrane-bound form, the kinase undergoes a conformational change allowing transient opening ("breathing") of the kinase domain and phosphorylation of the Y394, which can lead to its partial activation. The kinase is activated physiologically by dephosphorylation of Y505 by tyrosine phosphatases such as CD45. Other regulatory effects, e.g., binding of a P-Tyr competitor peptide, or allosteric displacement, e.g., HIV Nef protein binding to Heck, of the regulatory tyrosine from the SH2 domain can result in hyperactivation of the kinase.

GPI-linked molecules. Studies in the authors' laboratory showed that PTKs in lymphocyte sphingolipid microdomains are more active than in membranes containing less lipids,¹⁶² but PTK activity of the latter could be dramatically increased by detergents while that of the former was minimally perturbed (Ilangumaran et al. Mol Biol Cell 1999;in press). This suggests that the membrane lipid environment may regulate PTKs activity, an idea which is consistent with molecular modelling of Src kinases wherein conformational interactions with noncatalytic domains of the kinase could modulate the catalytic activity without dephosphorylating the regulatory tyrosine¹⁶³ (Fig. 4.3). A recent study has indeed directly demonstrated that one active form of Lck can have both the active site (Y394) and the regulatory tyrosine (Y505) phosphorylated.¹⁶⁴ In another study, c-Src but not the highly active v-Src was shown to undergo a negative regulatory interactions with caveolin,⁷⁸ but it remains to be seen whether other PTKs of the Src family also undergo regulatory interactions with caveolin.

Lck activity is also modulated by exogenously added gangliosides¹⁶⁵ that probably insert into the plasma membrane,¹⁶⁶ and can alter the structure of the inner leaflet. Similarly, PKC activity in liposomes is influenced by GPI-anchored leishmanial lipophosphoglycans (see chapter 8) inserted into the outer leaflet of the bilayer.¹⁶⁷ Sphingolipid microdomains therefore appear to confer on Src family PTKs a unique form of regulation which may be perturbed either by crosslinking or by addition of exogenous gangliosides or GPI-anchored molecules.¹²¹

Transmembrane Receptors Requiring the Participation of Sphingolipid Microdomains for Signaling

A few transmembrane receptors also utilize the signaling machinery of sphingolipid microdomains. Studies on signaling through the FcεRI, the receptor for the Fc fragment of immunoglobulin E, have been especially informative, and preliminary evidence suggests that the B cell surface molecule CD20 and the hyaluronan receptor CD44 function similarly, as they both seem to utilize the signaling machinery of the sphingolipid microdomains.

The multichain FcεRI receptor is expressed on mast cells and serves to bind IgE to the cell surface in such a way that the antigen-binding site of the IgE remains available for crosslinking by multivalent antigens (see ref. 168 for a review). When appropriately crosslinked, FcεRI associates with sphingolipid microdomains where the Lyn tyrosine kinase phosphorylates the β and γ chains of the FcεRI.¹⁶⁹ Association of FcεRI with sphingolipid microdomains is critically dependent upon crosslinking of the IgE molecules. SH2-dependent recruitment of the downstream signaling molecules Syk and PLCγ1 to specific tyrosine phosphotyrosylated motifs in the cytoplasmic domain of FcεRI β subunits leads to signal propagation.¹⁷⁰ This study is actually the first to show colocalization of a ganglioside (GM1), the FcεRI receptor and intracellular signaling molecules (Syk and PLCγ1) to sphingolipid microdomains during cellular activation by a physiological stimulus. Interestingly, colocalization of SH2-containing polypeptides with FcεRI was found to be more transient than the GM1-FcεRI association of surface molecules, indicating the dynamic nature of these interactions.

CD20, a transmembrane protein which traverses the membrane bilayer four times, is involved in B lymphocyte maturation. Strikingly, almost all CD20 molecules are rapidly included in detergent-resistant membrane complexes after surface crosslinking with certain antibodies. These complexes contain Src family PTKs that are thought to relay the CD20 signal.¹⁷¹ CD44, the ubiquitous and polymorphic hyaluronan receptor expressed both at the surface of cells that display (endothelial cells) or do not display (leukocytes) caveolae, is required for the extravasation of activated T cells in inflammatory sites.¹⁷² It is the transmembrane portion of CD44 that confers detergent resistance properties to a subset of CD44 molecules,¹⁷³ although detergent-insoluble CD44 can also associate with the cytoskeleton, presumably via its intracellular domains (reviewed in ref. 174). The signaling capacity of CD44 and its association with Lck¹⁷⁵ and Fyn kinases are restricted to a small but significant proportion of the CD44 molecules that are recovered in sphingolipid-rich, buoyant membrane fractions.¹⁷⁶ Clearly, the signaling machinery of the sphingolipid microdomains is not exclusively used by GPI-anchored proteins, but also by a number of nonkinase, transmembrane receptors as well. Large membrane complexes containing a variety of transmembrane proteins and PTKs, distinct from the GPI-rich domains, have been demonstrated in lymphocytes¹⁷⁷ and whether there exists any communication between these two, especially upon stimulation via the transmembrane proteins, is a point worth investigating. It is also interesting to note that the m2 muscarinic acetylcholine receptor,

upon binding to an agonist but not an antagonist, is targeted to caveolar membrane fractions in cardiac myocytes.¹⁷⁸

Interactions of the Sphingolipid Microdomains with Transmembrane Proteins: Implications for Proximal Signaling Events

As discussed above, the interactions between sphingolipid microdomains and the transmembrane proteins are reciprocal, as certain GPI anchored proteins utilize the signaling machinery of the transmembrane proteins, and certain transmembrane proteins utilize the signaling components of the sphingolipid microdomains. For instance, the ganglioside GM1 tightly binds to the high affinity NGF receptor Trk (with intrinsic tyrosine kinase activity) and modulates the responses to NGF.¹⁷⁹ This interaction requires glycosylated Trk not only for association with GM1 but also for expression of the Trk tyrosine kinase activity. Similarly, the recovery of EGFR, PDGFR and insulin receptor^{146,147,152} in buoyant membrane complexes raises the interesting possibility that growth factor receptor tyrosine kinases localized next to the sphingolipid microdomains might undergo regulation by Src-family PTKs from the sphingolipid microdomains. Since PDGFR activity is modulated by Src family PTKs,¹⁸⁰ similar regulation could occur for other receptor PTKs when positioned near the Src family PTKs associated with the sphingolipid microdomains. One can envisage that association with GPI-anchored proteins or gangliosides may serve to bring the transmembrane receptors in contact with the sphingolipid microdomains, which in turn would regulate their signaling behavior. In cells that express caveolae, caveolin can be one such regulator, as the sphingolipid microdomains surrounding the caveolae may position the signaling molecules in close proximity to caveolin (Fig. 4.2).

Transmembrane proteins interact with the sphingolipid microdomains (e.g., CD44) or become detergent-insoluble upon stimulation (FcεRI, CD20) through different mechanisms. These interactions are weak and only demonstrable under mild lysis conditions.^{169,176} In the case of CD44, the transmembrane segment confers TX-100 insolubility, although this does not explain why only a small fraction is recovered in TX-100-resistant complexes. It is possible that the transmembrane segment permits dynamic lateral interactions with sphingolipid microdomain components, and that only a small proportion of CD44 molecules are involved in these interactions. Reversible palmitoylation of Cys residues in the transmembrane segment of CD44 and dimerization may influence sphingolipid microdomain association, as it does modulate hyaluronan binding by CD44.¹⁸¹ In contrast, the ligand-induced association of FcεRI with sphingolipid microdomains is induced by crosslinking and is very transient, and the pre-assembled signaling machinery of the sphingolipid microdomains appears to provide FcεRI a temporally and spatially regulated signaling platform.¹⁷⁰

Role of the GPI Anchor in Signaling

A number of studies have questioned the requirement for a GPI-anchor in signaling. Typically, these studies involved engineering transmembrane forms of GPI-anchored receptors (see chapter 11) and compared their ability to transduce signals with that of the native GPI-anchored forms. For example, transmembrane forms of Qa-2 and Ly-6A/E were unable to stimulate cell proliferation after antibody-mediated crosslinking.^{49,182} This is probably due to their inability to associate with sphingolipid microdomains, as was the case for the transmembrane form of placental alkaline phosphatase.¹⁸³ Importantly, the transmembrane form of CD55 (DAF, see chapter 7) no longer coprecipitated with the Src family PTKs, stressing the strict dependence of CD55 on sphingolipid microdomains for Src kinase association.¹⁵ Comparison of the signaling pathways utilized by GPI-anchored and

transmembrane forms of CD14 shows that only the GPI-anchored form is able to induce tyrosine phosphorylation-dependent Ca^{2+} flux upon antibody mediated crosslinking.¹⁸⁴ Similarly to CD14, CD73 in transmembrane form still functions as a costimulator, albeit less efficiently.¹⁸⁵ However, the transmembrane form of CD14 binds to endotoxin (bacterial lipopolysaccharide, LPS) to the same extent as the GPI-anchored CD14 and mediates NF- κ B activation and protein tyrosine phosphorylation.⁷ CD14 binds LPS complexed to serum LPS binding protein (LBP) and transfers LPS to a distinct membrane phospholipid environment; the anchor-free soluble CD14 is equally efficient in this process¹⁸⁶ (see also chapter 5). It appears that LPS can use alternate signal transduction mechanisms, as it can integrate phospholipid bilayers in a CD14-independent fashion,¹⁸⁷ stimulate cells that do not express Src family PTKs¹⁸⁸ and stimulate the CD14-negative cells via integrins.¹⁸⁹

The signaling properties of engineered proteins consisting of transmembrane protein ectodomains linked to a GPI-anchor were also investigated. GPI-modified MHC class I ectodomains expressed in transgenic mouse T cells were functional,⁴⁹ while GPI-modified human CD4 expressed in murine T cells was not.¹⁹⁰ Surprisingly, GPI-modified human complement receptor 1 (transmembrane) and human tissue inhibitor (secreted) proteins expressed in murine thymoma did not associate with Src family PTKs.¹⁹¹ Although association with sphingolipid microdomains has not been investigated in these very few cases, extracellular interactions could also influence the functionality of these heterologous proteins. Therefore, on one hand the GPI-linked proteins modified with the transmembrane anchor may still interact with sphingolipid microdomains through extracellular interactions, while on the other hand similar interactions may interfere with stable association of GPI-modified protein ectodomains with the same sphingolipid microdomains. Actually, the anchor type may have an influence on the conformation of the extracellular microdomain, with consequences on the signaling capacity.¹⁹² Therefore, although the GPI-anchored proteins are usually targeted to sphingolipid microdomains, utilization of the signaling machinery of the latter appears to be modulated by the participation of other cell surface molecules, resulting in different outcomes.

GPI Anchor-Derived Second Messengers

Early observations by Saltiel and colleagues¹⁹³ suggested that insulin receptor signaling stimulated the production of lipidic second messengers derived from GPI anchors, possibly through the action of an endogenous PI-PLC (see chapter 9 for GPI specific phospholipases). At least some of the insulin-mediated effects were attributable to these GPI-derived inositol phosphoglycan and diacylglycerol moieties¹⁹⁴ (see ref. 195 for a review). Subsequently, these GPI-derived second messengers were shown to accumulate intracellularly following IL-2 receptor engagement.^{196,197} It is quite possible that such messengers could also be derived from the 'free GPIs' reported to be 4-5 times more abundant than GPI-anchored proteins on the cell surface.¹⁹⁸ In any event, the once entertained possibility that signaling via GPI-anchored receptors could be mediated by inositol phosphoglycans derived from hydrolysis of the GPI anchor itself^{2,197} has not received experimental confirmation so far.

Signaling via GPI-Anchored Glycoproteins of the Lymphocytes

Lymphocytes express a large number of signaling-competent GPI-anchored proteins (see chapter 5). It is apparent from the earlier sections that many GPI-anchored proteins in lymphoid cells depend upon localization to sphingolipid microdomains for their signaling properties. Although the use of antibody-mediated crosslinking as a means of cellular activation is not physiological, positive or negative signaling responses depending on the antibody used and the mode of crosslinking (Table 4.1) suggest interactions of GPI-anchored molecules with other membrane components. This section is intended to provide

a conceptual framework for such regulatory interactions in signaling via GPI-anchored proteins using the lymphocyte model.

One example of cooperative interaction is the requirement for GPI-anchored Ly-6/TAP for efficient signaling via the CD3-T-cell receptor complex (CD3/TCR). T-cell clones with reduced Ly-6 surface expression (after *in vitro* mutagenesis or antisense oligonucleotide treatment) showed a marked reduction in proliferation after stimulation via the antigen receptor complex.^{199,200} Interestingly, the defect seemed to be specific to Ly-6, as the mutants expressed normal levels of GPI-anchored Thy-1. Removal of the GPI-anchored molecules by PI-PLC treatment,¹⁹⁹ and use of mutants deficient in GPI-anchor biosynthesis,²⁰¹ had similar effects on TCR signaling. These results are at variance with those of Presky et al who reported only a reduction in Con A, but not anti-CD3 responses in PI-PLC-treated murine splenic T lymphocytes.²⁰² Subsequent studies revealed that the signaling defect in Ly-6 deficient cells is due to a concomitant reduction in surface TCR expression, and a defect in Fyn kinase activity.²⁰³

Components of the CD3/TCR complex are also required for signaling via GPI-anchored glycoproteins, which again points to a close cooperation between the two types of receptor. For instance, stimulation via Thy-1, Ly-6 or human CD55 failed to induce T-cell proliferation or interleukin 2 secretion in the absence of TCR expression, although elevation of intracellular Ca^{2+} was not affected.^{16,36,204} Qualitative differences in the signals transduced by Thy-1 and TCR suggest that they follow independent pathways, but do not preclude the possibility of a synergy between the two for generating optimal activation signals. While Thy-1 proliferative responses require Fyn kinase activity, Fyn was not required for CD3/TCR-induced proliferation and interleukin production.^{37,205} Signaling via Ly-6 was also found to differ from CD3/TCR-mediated events.⁴⁷ The ability of Thy-1 to mobilize Ca^{2+} also occurred in transfected B cells.³⁵ Similarly, in human T cells activated via GPI-linked CD73, CD2 could replace the TCR as a provider of help.²² Although signaling via GPI-anchored proteins is not expected to take precedence over TCR signals under physiological conditions, they usually synergize with CD3/TCR-mediated signals, possibly by modulating Lck and Fyn²⁰⁶ activity in the membrane contact area where CD3/TCR accumulate.

One last type of interaction between GPI-anchored proteins and TCR is the negative regulation of TCR-mediated responses by signals generated via the GPI-anchored proteins. Crosslinking of the murine Ly-6A/E, and related sgp60 molecules inhibited anti-CD3-mediated T-cell activation by interfering with IL-2 production.^{43,46,51} In all these cases the nature of crosslinking was important for eliciting the inhibitory response, as a different mode of crosslinking led to activation. The sgp60-mediated inhibition appeared to proceed at the level of Ca^{2+} mobilization.⁵³ Another GPI-anchored protein, the TSA differentiation antigen on murine T cells (thymic shared antigen, TSA-1/Stem cell antigen-2, Sca-2) was also shown to inhibit stimulation via anti-CD3 through interference with IL-2 production and tyrosine phosphorylation of the CD3 ζ chain.⁵⁸ Apparently, these inhibitory effects stem from extracellular interactions, as the GPI anchor was not essential for mediating inhibition.^{46,58} TSA-1 has also been implicated in preventing anti-CD3-induced apoptosis of immature thymocytes,⁵⁹ while Thy-1 was shown to trigger thymocyte apoptosis by a TCR independent mechanism.³⁹

During T-cell activation by antigen, the TCR recognizes peptide-MHC complexes on the antigen presenting cell (APC) (for a review see ref. 207). The cell-cell contact which ensues considerably reduces the intercellular space, so that larger molecules, such as CD44 and CD45, are forced away from the contact site. It is expected that the CD3/TCR complex undergoes numerous lateral interactions with GPI-anchored (Thy-1, Ly6) and transmembrane receptors (CD45, CD2), but which of those interactions remain operative after clearing the T cell/APC contact area of bulky surface molecules is still not known. If the normal

homeostatic equilibrium at the cell surface is suddenly disturbed, and small GPI-anchored costimulatory receptors and larger molecules such as CD44 and CD45 localize to different regions of the plasma membrane, the intracellular phosphorylation events are likely to be disturbed. However, testing such hypotheses will not be easy, as it will require techniques to follow cell surface topography without the use of antibodies which themselves cause redistribution.

Summary

In this chapter we have examined several concepts with the aim of achieving a better understanding of how GPI anchors participate in signaling. We propose that sphingolipid-rich domains provide a unique and special environment for GPI anchors. In these regions of the membrane, there is evidence for active cooperation of GPI-anchored molecules with the established signaling pathways, and particularly signal transducers such as the β integrins and gp130 (the common signal transducing chain of the cytokine receptor complex), which may relay messages from a range of different GPI-anchored proteins. The unique topographical distribution of GPI anchors in sphingolipid microdomains does not itself cause signal transduction but may bring potential transducers in proximity to signaling molecules such as PTKs. Crosslinking of their GPI-linked passenger receptors may collect the Src protein tyrosine kinases and other signaling molecules at the inner leaflet to generate a localized threshold level of activation signals. Recruitment of cytoplasmic signaling molecules to such platforms is also expected to integrate other signaling pathways. Clearly, the concept that sphingolipid microdomains are preexisting signaling platforms which may coalesce and provide a scaffold for the recruitment, assembly and regulation of other signaling intermediates is gaining support. However, direct demonstration of a number of these propositions under physiological means of stimulation remains a challenging task.

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While this review was in press several reports have strongly implicated the sphingolipid-rich membrane microdomains in signaling via the CD3/TCR complex. Following TCR engagement the CD3 z chain is recruited to the microdomains,^{1,2} presumably through the mediation of the microdomain-associated Lck and Fyn PTKs. The transmembrane adaptor molecule LAT (Linker for T-cell Activation) is targeted to the microdomains by dual acylation, becomes rapidly tyrosine phosphorylated upon T-cell activation and recruits several signaling molecules including PLCg1 and Vav to the microdomains via protein modular binding domains.³ Disrupting the membrane microdomain architecture by cholesterol depletion or gangliosides decreased tyrosine phosphorylation of CD3 z and PLCg1, and abolished the intracellular calcium flux.² Further evidence suggest that association of CD3 z with actin cytoskeleton upon activation is also dependent on intact microdomains.⁴ Finally, under conditions mimicking the interaction of antigen-presenting cells and T lymphocytes, signaling via the costimulatory molecule CD28 appears to be necessary for coupling the microdomain signaling machinery to the CD3/TCR complex.⁵ Interestingly, accumulation of polyunsaturated fatty acids in T-lymphocyte membranes decreases the amount of Lck but not CD59 associated with microdomains, suggesting that the microdomain cytoplasmic leaflet may be selectively perturbed in its interactions with PTKs.⁶

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GPI-Anchored Proteins of Leucocytes: Inventory, Structural Properties and Functions

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In this chapter we describe the structural properties and known functions of GPI-anchored proteins expressed on leucocytes. Basic characteristics of the leucocyte surface GPI-anchored proteins are summarized in Table 5.1 and are not repeated in the separate entries on individual molecules. We will not mention here the numerous observations on the capacity of these molecules to transduce signals into cells upon antibody crosslinking and on their association with membrane microdomains rich in glycosphingolipids and protein tyrosine kinases, as these topics are discussed in chapter 4.

CD14

The polypeptide chain of CD14 contains 10 repeats with partial similarity to the leucine-rich glycoprotein.¹ In addition to its typical expression on myeloid cells (Table 5.1), very low levels of functional CD14 are also expressed by B cells.² Significant amounts of CD14 are stored together with other GPI-anchored proteins (CD16b, alkaline phosphatase) and with complement receptor type 3 (CR3; CD11b/CD18) in neutrophil secretory vesicles which fuse upon cell stimulation with plasma membrane, resulting in markedly increased expression of these molecules.³ Soluble forms of CD14 are present in relatively high concentrations (around 2-3 µg/ml) in normal serum and in urine of nephrotic patients.^{4,5} One of the soluble forms (48 kDa) is produced by proteolytic shedding of the cell surface form.⁶ A second soluble form is secreted by human monocytes and corresponds to a full length polypeptide with the C-terminal peptide normally removed during GPI anchor addition.⁷ It should be noted that the total amount of soluble CD14 in blood exceeds the amount of membrane-bound CD14 by several hundred-fold.

CD14 is a receptor for lipopolysaccharide (LPS; endotoxin) released from Gram-negative bacteria.⁸ The binding of LPS to CD14 is facilitated by LPS-binding protein (LBP).^{9,10} Myeloid cell surface CD14 with bound LPS appears to interact with another so far poorly characterized receptor(s) responsible for the LPS-induced signaling^{11,12} which ultimately leads to secretion of TNF, IL-6 and IL-1. One of the transmembrane receptors capable of reversible interaction with the CD14-LPS complex may be the complement receptor type 3 (CR3; the leucocyte integrin CD11b/CD18).¹³ Some reports indicate that the myeloid cell activation by LPS via CD14 is dependent on protein tyrosine kinase activation,^{14,15} while others deny it.^{16,17} Interestingly, the LPS-triggered signaling capacity of the transmembrane version of CD14 is similar to that of the natural GPI-anchored one.¹¹

Table 5.1 Leucocyte surface GPI-anchored proteins

Protein	Synonyms	MW (kda)	Amino acids (mature protein)	N-glycosylation sites	Chromosome localization	Structural family	Cellular expression	Key refs. reviews
CD14	LPS receptor	55	333	4	5q31	Leucine rich gp ²	M, N	208-210
CD16b	Fc _γ receptor type III	48-60	186	6	1q23	Ig SF	N	31,211, 212
CD24	BA-1; HSA; J11d (mouse)	42	33	2	6q21		B, N, EPC	47
CD48	BLAST-1; OX-45 (rat); BCM1 or sgp-60 (mouse)	41	194	6	1q21-q23	Ig SF	Leukocytes	64,66-68
CD52	Campath-1; B7(2) (mouse)	21-28	12	1			Leukocytes	75,76,79
CD55	DAF	60-70	319	1	1q32	CR-SF	Most cell types	213-215
CD58	CFA-3	40-65	180	6	1p13.1	Ig SF	Many cell types	85-87
CD59	Protectin, HRF20, MIRL	19-25	77	1	11q13	Ly-6 SF	Most cell types	214,216, 217
CD66b	CD67, NCA95	95-100	286	11	19q13.1-2	Ig SF	N	99,218
CD66c	NCA50	90-95	286	12	19q13.1-2	Ig SF	N	99,218
CD73	Ecto-5' nucleotidase VAP-2	69	523	4	6q14-q21		B sub., T sub., EC	110,114, 219
CD87	uPA-R	45-55	283	5	19q13	Ly-6 SF	M, N, EC, tumor cells, fibroblasts, smooth muscle	122,123, 127
CD90	Thy-1	25-35	111	3	11q23.3	Ig SF	BM sub., HEV, neurons, Thy, T (mouse)	220-222
CDw108	JMH blood group antigen	75	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	HPB-ALL (T-cell line) T act, E	162,163
CD109	Gov ^{a/b} alloantigen	170	Unknown	Probably	Unknown	Unknown	EC, T act, P	165,166
CD157	BST-1 Mo5	42-50	272	4		NAD-glyco-hydratase family	M, N BM stroma	167,168
RT6		24-35	227	1 or 0 (allelic forms)	Rat	Arg-ribosyl transferase family	T	183,223

Table 5.1 Leucocyte surface GPI-anchored proteins (con't)

Protein	Synonyms	MW (kda)	Amino acids (mature protein)	N-glycosylation sites	Chromosome localization	Structural family	Cellular expression	Key refs.
Melano-transferrin	gp97	80-97	692	3		Transferrin family	Melanoma, HPB-ALL (T)	188,189
Ly-6A/E (mouse)	Sca-1, TAP	15-18	79	0	15 band E (mouse)	Ly-6 SF	Lymphocytes T sub.	190,191 225
Ly-6C (mouse)		14	76	0	15 band E (mouse)	Ly-6 SF	BM, N, M, T sub.	190,191 225
Ly-6G (mouse)		?	79	0	15 band E (mouse)	Ly-6 SF	BM	190,191, 226
ThB (mouse)		15		0	15 (mouse)	Ly-6 SF	Thymus B, skin	190,191, 227
TSA-1 (mouse)	Sca-2	15-17	82	1	15 (mouse)	Ly-6	BM, thymus, B, T act.	190,191 228,229

Abbreviations: act., activated; B, B cells; BM, bone marrow; CR, complement receptor; DAF, decay accelerating factor; EC, endothelial cells; EPC, epithelial cells; E, erythrocytes; gp, glycoprotein; HEV, high endothelial venules; HRF, homologous restriction factor; HSA, heat stable antigen; HSC, hematopoietic stem cells; Ig, immunoglobulin; LFA, lymphocyte function associated antigen; LPS, lipopolysaccharide; MIRL, membrane inhibitor of reactive lysis; M, monocytes; N, neutrophils; NCA, nonspecific crossreactive antigen; P, platelets; Sca, stem cell antigen; SF, superfamily; sub., subpopulation; T, T-cells; T act, activated T-cells; TAP, T-cell activating protein; Thy, thymus shared antigen; uPA-R, urokinase plasminogen activator receptor; VAP, vascular adhesion protein.

The complex of soluble CD14 (sCD14) with LPS binds to an unidentified receptor on endothelial and epithelial cells and activates these cells.^{18,19} Soluble CD14-LPS complexes may also stimulate macrophages, neutrophils²⁰ and dendritic cells.²¹ Soluble CD14 also plays an important role in neutralization and clearance of LPS, which is transferred from the sCD14-LBP-LPS complexes to serum high density lipoprotein particles.^{22,23}

In addition to binding of LPS released from bacteria, monocyte cell surface CD14 may also interact with the bacterial surface LPS and induce phagocytosis.²⁴ The binding ability of CD14 appears to be much broader than originally thought: In addition to LPS it binds and initiates response to other bacterial envelope components from Gram-negative and Gram-positive microorganisms as well as mycobacteria,²⁵ such as streptococcal polysaccharides,²⁶ an unidentified minor staphylococcal compound,²⁷ peptidoglycans,²⁸ uronic acid polymers²⁹ or lipoteichoic acids.³⁰ Thus, CD14 appears to be a versatile "pattern receptor" used by myeloid cells for recognition for a variety of microorganisms.

CD16b

CD16 exists in two distinct forms encoded by two closely linked genes. One of them is a transmembrane protein (CD16a) expressed on NK cells and macrophages, the other one (CD16b) is GPI-anchored and present on neutrophils.³¹ The extracellular parts of CD16a and CD16b differ in 6 amino acid residues. Two allelic forms of CD16b are called NA1 and NA2.³² Interestingly, only the transmembrane form of CD16 exists in the mouse and is expressed on both NK cells and neutrophils.³³ The polypeptide chain of CD16b consists of two Ig-like domains and is richly and variably *N*-glycosylated, producing a heterogeneous range of molecular forms. CD16b serves as a neutrophil low affinity IgG receptor which

plays an important role (in cooperation with other neutrophil Fc receptors and complement receptor type 3) in phagocytosis of antigenic particles opsonized with IgG and in generation of signals leading to respiratory burst.³⁴⁻⁴⁰ Some patients with paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria lacking GPI-anchored proteins on a fraction of their neutrophils therefore have increased levels of circulating immune complexes and suffer from increased susceptibility to bacterial infections.⁴¹ CD16b is noncovalently associated with complement receptor type 3 (CR3; the CD11b/CD18 integrin) in the neutrophil membrane; this interaction is based on the lectin-carbohydrate interaction between the carbohydrate-binding site in the CR3 molecule and CD16b oligosaccharide.^{42,43} CD16b is released by proteolytic shedding from neutrophil surfaces;⁴⁴ and rapid loss of surface CD16b is an early sign of neutrophil apoptotic changes.⁴⁵ Carbohydrates of serum CD16b may bind CR3 and CR4 via carbohydrate-lectin interaction. CR3 ligation by soluble CD16b may induce IL-6 and IL-8 production by monocytes.⁴⁰ CD16b seems to also collaborate functionally with the bacterial chemotactic formyl-peptide receptors.⁴⁶

CD24

The unusually short polypeptide chain of CD24 is richly *N*- and *O*-glycosylated.⁴⁷ The true Mr of the mature glycoprotein is not known, as the apparent value is probably largely overestimated due to anomalously slow migration of heavily glycosylated proteins under the conditions of SDS PAGE. This glycoprotein is characteristic for human granulocytes and B lymphocytes, but its expression decreases after B-cell activation and it is absent on plasma cells.⁴⁸ It is also present on approximately 2% of thymocytes and on normal epithelium. CD24 is expressed at high levels on small cell lung carcinoma.⁴⁹ A likely mouse homologue molecule is called J11d or HSA (heat stable antigen) and is present on all stages of B cells. HSA is expressed on cortical (CD4⁺CD8⁺) thymocytes but absent from single-positive medullary thymocytes and mature T cells.⁵⁰ Mouse erythrocytes, myeloid cells and epidermal dendritic cells are also HSA-positive.⁵¹ The relatively low degree of sequence identity (33%) between mature mouse HSA and human CD24 raises the possibility that these molecules are not true homologues. The data on expression of CD24 and HSA should be interpreted with caution, as most mAbs are directed to carbohydrate epitopes which may be present on other molecules as well.

Mouse CD24 (HSA) may function (in addition to PSGL-1 (CD162)) as a ligand of P-selectin, an important adhesion molecule of thrombocytes and activated endothelia.^{52,53} This interaction may play a role in extravasation of murine myeloid cells and perhaps also in the binding of human metastatic tumor cells to thrombi.⁵⁴ It may be speculated that interactions between B-cell surface CD24 and an unknown lectin play a regulatory role in B-cell development. In this respect, it is relevant that crosslinking of HSA by antibodies induces apoptosis in B-cell precursors and suppresses CD40-mediated proliferation of mature B lymphocytes,⁵⁵ indicating that HSA is possibly a negative regulator of B-cell development and activation.⁵⁶ Some of these effects may be indirect and due to modifications of expression or affinity of other adhesion molecules such as the β_1 integrin VLA-4 induced upon CD24 ligation.⁵⁷ HSA may also play a negative regulatory role in thymocyte development.⁵⁸ HSA expressed on the surface of antigen-presenting cells appears to act as a ligand of an unidentified receptor which delivers important costimulatory signals to T cells.⁵⁹⁻⁶² It was suggested that this costimulatory activity is due to a homotypic interaction between HSA molecules on the APC and T cells⁶⁰ (though mature T cells express very little HSA).

Finally, a single report indicates that HSA may contribute to protection of cells from lysis by homologous complement.⁶³

CD48

The polypeptide chain of CD48 consists of two N-glycosylated Ig-like domains. Among other members of the Ig superfamily, the degree of amino acid sequence similarity is highest for CD2, CD58, Ly-9, 2B4 CD150 (SLAM).⁶⁴ Human CD48 is widely expressed on leucocytes, except granulocytes and platelets.⁶⁵ The expression increases upon activation; actually, one of the first described B-cell activation antigens, Blast-1, is identical to CD48.⁶⁶⁻⁶⁸ The rat CD48 homologue (OX-45) is detectable also on endothelia, connective tissue and erythrocytes.⁶⁹ The mouse homologue is also called BCM1 or sgp60.^{70,71} Human CD48 is a low affinity ligand for the adhesion/signaling T-cell receptor CD2.⁷² However, the affinity of the CD2-CD48 interaction is more than two orders of magnitude lower than that of the CD2-CD58 interaction.⁶⁴ It may be speculated that an alternative CD48 receptor (other than CD2) exists and binds it with a higher affinity. On the other hand, CD48 is the major, medium-affinity CD2 ligand in rat⁷³ as well as mouse.⁷⁴

CD52

This molecule, called also Campath-1, is generally similar to CD24: It has also a short (only 12 amino acid residues) polypeptide chain⁷⁵ carrying a large sialylated, polylactosamine-containing, core-fucosylated, tetra-antennary oligosaccharide.⁷⁶ The Mr as determined by SDS PAGE is largely overestimated due to anomalous SDS binding; true Mr is approximately 8 kDa.⁷⁶ Two forms of CD52 were described which differ in the structure of the GPI anchor.⁷⁶ CD52 is strongly expressed on most leucocytes except plasma cells and platelets and characteristically is strongly positive on eosinophils as compared to neutrophils.⁷⁷ The mouse homologue of CD52 was named, somewhat unfortunately, B7(2) (not to be confused with similar "pre-CD" names of CD80 and CD86!).⁷⁸ Nothing is known about possible ligands or receptors of CD52, nor its biological function. Some mAbs to CD52 are very efficient in complement-mediated lysis of lymphocytes and therefore are used as therapeutic lymphocyte-depleting immunosuppressants in treatments of transplantation rejections, autoimmune diseases and in autologous bone marrow transplantation in malignant lymphoma patients.^{79,80}

CD55

This protein (decay accelerating factor, DAF) is described in the chapter on complement protecting molecules (see chapter 7). Here we will just mention that CD55 interacts with CD97,⁸¹ the physiological role of this adhesion interaction is so far unclear. CD55 may serve as a receptor for several Echoviruses^{82,83} and coxsackie B virus.⁸⁴

CD58 (LFA-3)

The structure of CD58 is very similar to that of CD48, i.e., the polypeptide chain consists of two N-glycosylated Ig-like domains.^{85,86} However, in addition to the GPI-anchored form, an alternative transmembrane form exists which is a product of alternative splicing.⁸⁷ CD58 is broadly expressed on various cell types; memory T cells and dendritic cells have particularly high levels of expression.^{88,89} CD58 is the major ligand of the adhesive/signaling receptor of T and NK cells, CD2.⁹⁰ Ligation of CD2 by CD58 provides regulatory signals to T and NK cells.⁹¹ The homologue of CD58, expressed at high density on sheep erythrocytes, is responsible for the well known "rosetting" of human T cells with sheep erythrocytes.⁹² A soluble form of CD58 is found in human body fluids.⁹³

CD59

This protein is described in chapter 7. Here we will just mention that CD59 may be an alternative low-affinity ligand of the T-cell adhesion/signaling receptor CD2.^{94,95} However, this issue is controversial.⁹⁶

CD66

On human leucocytes, two CD66 glycoproteins are expressed (CD66b and CD66c), which are anchored to the cell surface via a GPI moiety. They belong to the carcinoembryonic antigen (CEA) family, which forms a subgroup within the Ig superfamily. CD66b, (previously called CD67) called also CGM6, W272 or NCA-95, contains 3 Ig-like, heavily glycosylated domains. It is present at low levels on resting mature granulocytes and its expression is rapidly increased following activation with inflammatory agonists.⁹⁷⁻⁹⁹ CD66c, called also NCA, NCA-50/90 or TEX contains also 3 heavily glycosylated Ig domains. It is expressed mainly in granulocytes and epithelial cells. It seems that CD66c has a signaling role and regulates the adhesion activity of CD11/CD18 in neutrophils.⁹⁷⁻⁹⁹ Members of the CD66 subgroup have also been found in mice and rats, but none of them is anchored to the cell plasma membrane via a GPI moiety. This finding led to the suggestion that GPI-anchored members of the CD66 family represent part of a gene family in transitional evolution.¹⁰⁰

All GPI-anchored members of the CD66 family are able to mediate intercellular adhesion under in vitro conditions. CD66b exhibits heterotypic adhesion with CD66c and CD66e, while CD66c and CD66e exhibit both homotypic and heterotypic adhesion.¹⁰¹⁻¹⁰³ The binding sites for these interactions lie within their N-terminal domains. CD66c and CD66e glycoproteins can also bind *E. coli* and *Salmonella* strains, suggesting that these proteins can be involved in recognition of bacteria.¹⁰⁴ Interestingly, CD66 glycoproteins have been found to serve as receptors for gonococcal opacity proteins, and it has been suggested that CD66e and some other members of the CD66 family are involved at early stages of colonization of *Neisseria gonorrhoea* in urogenital tissues.¹⁰⁵⁻¹⁰⁷ It should be also noted that the presence of CD15 (Le^x) on CD66 glycoproteins may modulate adhesive functions, and that CD66c may be able to present CD15s (sialylated Le^x) to E-selectin.^{108,109}

CD73

This protein displays 5'-nucleotidase activity and catalyzes the 5'-dephosphorylation of extracellular ribo- and deoxyribonucleoside monophosphates to nucleosides (mainly AMP to adenosine) which can be then transported inside the cell.¹¹⁰ It is expressed on approximately 75% of peripheral blood B cells, 10% of CD4⁺ and 50% of CD8⁺ peripheral T cells.¹¹¹ CD73 expression increases during the development of both B and T cells.^{110,112} In addition, it is present also on epithelial, endothelial and dendritic cells.¹¹¹ In addition to the ectoenzyme activity, CD73 appears to be an adhesion molecule playing a role in lymphocyte-endothelial cell interaction: the endothelial cell surface molecule originally called VAP-2 (vascular adhesion protein 2) was found to be identical to CD73.^{113,114} The receptor or ligand for endothelial CD73 on the lymphocyte surface has not been identified as yet. On the other hand, lymphocyte surface CD73 seems to be important in lymphocyte binding to vascular endothelium in inflamed human skin.¹¹⁵ The interaction between CD73 on the surface of follicular dendritic cells and an unknown ligand on the B cell surface may control the contact between these two cell types.¹¹⁶ In this context, it may be relevant that chicken gizzard 5'-nucleotidase was reported to be a receptor for the extracellular matrix component fibronectin.¹¹⁷ Several studies describe induction of T-cell activation by antibody-mediated crosslinking of CD73.¹¹⁸⁻¹²⁰ It is not clear whether this is just an in vitro artefact or a valid model of activation due to CD73 ligation by the putative natural ligand.

CD87

CD87, alias urokinase plasminogen activator receptor (uPA-R), is a polypeptide of 31 kDa which matures into a heavily N-glycosylated, cell surface glycoprotein of 50-60 kDa. The extracellular region consists of three Ly-6 domains which are separated by hinge-like sequences.¹²¹⁻¹²⁴ Ly-6 domains are stretches of 70-80 amino acids containing 10 conserved cysteine residues which were first recognized in Ly-6 antigens (see below and refs. 125, 126).

CD87 is a multifunctional component expressed on monocytes, granulocytes, activated T cells and endothelial cells that are capable of migration through the extracellular matrix. It is also expressed on tumor cells, where high level of expression correlates with high risk of recurrence and metastasis.¹²⁷

On the one hand, CD87 localizes and controls the fibrinolytic system at the cell surface. Upon binding to the first (N-terminal) Ly-6 domain of CD87, its ligand, pro-uPA, is proteolytically converted into uPA, which can enzymatically cleave plasminogen into the serine protease plasmin. Plasmin can directly degrade matrix proteins and activates a variety of biologically potent substances.^{128,129} Internalization of CD87 involving CD91 (α_2 -macroglobulin receptor), ligand clearing and reexpression are crucial devices controlling uPA activity, and therefore the fibrinolytic system.^{130,131}

Furthermore, CD87 is directly (via interaction with vitronectin) and indirectly (via interaction with integrins) involved in regulation of cell adhesion during migration. Within domains 2 and 3 of CD87, there is a binding site for the matrix protein vitronectin,¹³²⁻¹³⁴ and this interaction is suggested to mediate cell adhesion to extracellular matrix and other cells coated by vitronectin. Recently, it has been shown that this binding site is also involved in binding of high molecular weight kininogen, but the significance of this binding remains doubtful. However, one could envisage a function in the regulation of cell adhesion involving vitronectin, but also in the formation of uPA, since kininogen can bind prekallikrein which may, upon activation, proteolytically activate pro-uPA.¹³⁵

Several lines of evidence link CD87 and integrins to adhesion regulation and signal transduction. Presence of CD87 at focal adhesion sites and the leading edges of migrating cells where integrins accumulate was found earlier.^{136,137} Recently, CD87 was coprecipitated with the β_2 integrins CD11a/CD18 (LFA-1) and CD11b/CD18 (CR3, Mac-1) together with Src protein tyrosine kinases from lysates of human monocytes. This complex represents a relatively large, detergent-resistant plasma membrane domain and contains several other so far unidentified molecules.¹³⁸ Incubation of monocytes with antibodies to CR3 impaired CD87-dependent adhesion to vitronectin, and engagement of CD87 by uPA inhibited CR3-dependent fibrinogen degradation, while this function (probably important in wound healing) was promoted when CD87 was ligated with vitronectin.¹³⁹ Downregulation of CD87 in monocytes by antisense oligonucleotides reduced the adhesiveness of CR3.¹⁴⁰ Association of CD87 and β_2 integrins has also been found in various myeloid cell lines including U937 and THP-1 (Godar S and Stockinger H, unpublished data), and in resting neutrophils.¹⁴¹ Interestingly, neutrophils from leucocyte-adhesion-deficient patients (lacking β_2 integrins) showed impaired Ca^{2+} signaling. Moreover, COS transfectants mobilized Ca^{2+} only upon uPA incubation when both CD87 and CR3 were expressed,¹⁴² suggesting that CR3 may act as a transmembrane adaptor for CD87. During neutrophil polarization, CD87 and CR3 dissociate,¹⁴³ CR3 moves to the rear, whereas CD87 concentrates at lamellipodia of migrating cells, where it associates in an oscillatory manner with the β_2 integrin CD11c/CD18, alias CR4.¹⁴⁴ Together, these studies indicate a physical and functional link of CD87 and β_2 integrins on the surface of myeloid cells.

In nonhematopoietic cells which do not express β_2 integrins, cooperation of CD87 with β_1 and β_3 integrins has been observed. In a fibrosarcoma cell line, CD87 associated with members of the β_1 and β_3 integrin family when the cells were allowed to adhere to

substrates of the respective integrins.¹⁴⁵ Expression of CD87 in a kidney embryonic cell line resulted in complex formation with $\beta 1$ integrin and inhibition of the adhesive function of the integrin,¹⁴⁶ suggesting that CD87 can act as a disintegrin. On the other hand, integrin-dependent adhesion was reported to be facilitated by CD87,^{140,147} suggesting the CD87 may act as an integrin amplifier. In spite of this controversy, CD87 seems to regulate the function of different integrins in various cells.

Besides the link to integrins and adhesion regulation, CD87 is also molecularly connected to cytokine systems. CD87 was found to complex with CD130 (the signal-transducing subunit of receptors for IL-6, IL-11 and several other cytokines) in a tumor cell line and to activate the CD130-associated signaling components JAK1 and STAT1.¹⁴⁸ Whether the CD87/CD130 association is involved in modulating cytokine signals or in the known mitogenic capacity of uPA for various tumor cells¹⁴⁹ remains to be determined. Furthermore, CD87 was found to directly interact with the mannose-6-phosphate/insulin-like growth factor type II receptor, which can simultaneously bind the latent form of transforming growth factor- $\beta 1$ (TGF- $\beta 1$); there is evidence that this complex formation is important for conversion of latent TGF- $\beta 1$ into its active form.¹⁵⁰ Thus, CD87 is not only involved in the regulation of the fibrinolytic system and integrins, but also appears to regulate signaling through cytokine receptors.

CD90

This glycoprotein, also called Thy-1, is similar in structure to a single, highly *N*-glycosylated variable region domain of the immunoglobulin superfamily of cell surface and secreted molecules.¹⁵¹ In the mouse, Thy-1 occurs in two allelic forms, Thy-1.1 and Thy-1.2, which differ by a single amino acid substitution at residue 89 (arginine in Thy-1.1 and glutamine in Thy-1.2).

CD90 is expressed by hematopoietic stem cells and neurons and in connective tissues in all species studied. In mice it is also expressed in thymocytes and peripheral T cells, whereas in rats it is absent from peripheral T cells. In man, its expression is even more restricted to a small fraction of fetal thymocytes. Interestingly, large amounts of CD90 are found on the surface of rat but not mouse or human mast-cells.¹⁵² Immunohistochemical analysis revealed that CD90 is also found in some other human tissues such as kidney tubules, blood vessel endothelium and skin fibroblasts.¹⁵³ Importantly, the composition of CD90 carbohydrates varies between tissues of the same animal and within the same tissue at different stages of differentiation.¹⁵¹

The function of CD90 remains vexingly unknown. It has been proposed that Thy-1 is functionally related to the putative Ig superfamily primordial domain and involved directly in cell-cell interactions. CD90 expression on a neural cell line selectively inhibited neurite outgrowth of mature astrocytes in vitro.¹⁵⁴ Although Thy-1 is a dominant surface glycoprotein in brain and thymus cells, mice lacking the CD90 gene exhibited a regional impairment of long term potentiation in the hippocampal dentate gyrus.¹⁵⁵ Thy-1^{-/-} cells also showed altered cell-cell contacts and hyperresponsiveness to TCR triggering, suggesting that CD90 negatively regulates TCR signaling.¹⁵⁶ This might be related to previous data indicating that a substantial fraction of Thy-1 and also TCR are physically associated with CD45, a transmembrane tyrosine phosphatase.¹⁵⁷ Recently it has been shown that rodent CD90 is a high affinity receptor for the channel-forming toxin aerolysin, secreted by virulent *Aeromonas* sp.¹⁵⁸ This could explain the increased sensitivity of rodent T cells to this toxin. Antibody-mediated crosslinking of Thy-1 on T cells is strongly activating, an effect which is probably related to inclusion of Thy-1 (as well as other GPI-anchored proteins) in the protein-tyrosine kinase-rich membrane microdomains (see chapter 4). Similarly, aggregation of surface Thy-1 in rat mast-cells or rat basophilic leukemia cells

induces cell activation and release of mediators independently of the high-affinity IgE receptor.^{152,159} On the other hand, it has been shown that immobilized antibodies directed at a defined Thy-1 epitope region can promote apoptosis in cultured CD4⁺CD8⁺ double-positive thymocytes. This cell death pathway is developmentally regulated and occurs through a *Bcl-2*-resistant mechanism.¹⁶⁰ It is not clear whether these signaling effects represent in vitro antibody artefacts or whether they reflect a physiological response to Thy-1 ligation with its hypothetical ligand.

CDw108

The primary structure of this protein is so far unknown. Apparent Mr of the glycoprotein is approximately 80 kDa, of which about 28% is *N*-linked oligosaccharide.¹⁶¹ It is expressed on erythrocytes, activated lymphocytes and some T-cell lines such as HPB-ALL.¹⁶² The CDw108 glycoprotein carries the determinants of the erythrocyte JMh antigen,¹⁶³ which is identical to the H105 antigen.^{161,164} Nothing is known about CDw108 function.

CD109

CD109 is a monomeric glycoprotein of so far unknown primary structure, bearing two *N*-linked glycan chains¹⁶⁵ and expressed on activated platelets and activated lymphocytes as well as on endothelial and epithelial cells. The molecule carries the Gov^{a/b} thrombocyte alloantigenic determinants.¹⁶⁶ Nothing is known about its function.

CD157 (Mo5, BST-1)

This protein has the ADP-ribosyl cyclase and cyclic-ADP-ribose hydrolase ectoenzyme activities, i.e., it converts NAD into nicotinamide and cyclic ADP-ribose (cADPR) and further hydrolyzes cyclic ADP-ribose into ADP-ribose.^{167,168} Intracellular cADPR acts as a second messenger regulating cytoplasmic Ca²⁺ concentrations. The role of extracellular cADPR, and whether the enzyme is transported inside the cells, are not known. CD157 shares limited sequence homology (33%) with a transmembrane leucocyte surface protein, CD38,¹⁶⁷ which also has similar enzymatic activities. CD157 is expressed on myeloid cells, follicular dendritic cells and endothelia; expression in the lymphoid lineage appears to correlate with developmental stages of early progenitors.^{169,170} It is not yet established whether antibody-induced costimulatory signaling via CD157^{171,172} is an in vitro artefact or reflects a receptor role of CD157 for an unidentified ligand. High levels of soluble CD157 are detectable in sera of patients with severe rheumatoid arthritis.¹⁷³

RT6

This bifunctional T-cell ectoenzyme acts as an NAD-dependent arginine ADP-ribosyltransferase that covalently modifies arginine residues with ADP-ribose.¹⁷⁴ In addition, it is also a potent NAD glycohydrolase (hydrolyzes NAD into nicotinamide and ADP-ribose).¹⁷⁵ The protein substrates of the ADP-ribosylation are not well known, but one of them is RT6 itself¹⁷⁶ and another may be an unidentified 40 kDa protein regulating the kinase activity of Lck.¹⁷⁷ The RT6 molecule was studied mainly in rat and mouse; the human gene is transcriptionally inactive.¹⁷⁸ A similar protein is present in the membrane of human skeletal muscle cells.¹⁷⁹ A GPI-anchored cell surface ADP-ribosyltransferase appears to negatively regulate the function of the adhesion receptor LFA-1 in human T cells,¹⁸⁰ this ectoenzyme is specifically released from cytotoxic T cells upon activation.¹⁸¹ It may be a product of the recently cloned RT6-related gene.¹⁸² RT6 is a specific marker of rat peripheral T lymphocytes, expressed only after emigration from the thymus.¹⁸³ Particularly high levels of RT6 expression were reported for intestinal epithelial T cells.¹⁸⁴ Low expression of RT6

may be related to enhanced T-cell autoreactivity,^{185,186} suggesting an immunosuppressive role for this ectoenzyme.

Melanotransferrin

This protein is predominantly expressed on nonhematopoietic cells (melanomas, fetal tissues, liver, epithelia, placenta)¹⁸⁷ but it is also present on some leukemic cell lines such as HPB-ALL. The polypeptide chain is composed of two homologous domains bearing sequence similarity to transferrin.^{188,189} Melanotransferrin binds iron ions and plays a role in an alternative route of iron transport into some cell types.

Ly-6

Several members of the Ly-6 family have been characterized in the mouse: Ly-6A/E (Ly-6E, originally considered as a separate gene product, was found to be an allelic form of Ly-6A), Ly-6C, Ly-6F, Ly-6G, ThB and TSA-1 (Sca-2) (for review see refs. 190, 191). All of them are small (mature polypeptide of about 80 amino acids), mostly nonglycosylated GPI-anchored proteins of very different tissue distribution (see Table 5.1) encoded by genes residing in a gene cluster on mouse chromosome 15.¹⁹² The structure of the Ly-6 domains is covalently stabilized by 5 cysteine bridges. The expression of those Ly-6 proteins present on lymphoid cells is markedly regulated by interferons.¹⁹³ Recently, three likely human Ly-6 homologues have been described; one of them, E48, appears to be a ThB homologue,¹⁹⁴ another is a TSA-1/Sca-2 homologue¹⁹⁵ and the last one (RIG-E) may be a Ly-6C homologue.¹⁹⁶ The Ly-6 proteins are prototypic members of a structural family which includes also CD59, CD87, squid brain protein Sgp-2, snake venom toxins such as α -bungarotoxin and snake plasma inhibitor or phospholipase-A2 (for a review see ref. 190).

The functions of the Ly-6 proteins are not clearly defined, although tight regulation of their expression suggests functional importance. So far, no Ly-6 knockout mice have been produced. Transgenic mice were prepared with Ly-6A expression under the control of a CD2 promoter¹⁹⁷ and thus not turned off at the early stage of thymocyte development, as is the case for the endogenous Ly-6. This resulted in a block of thymocyte development at the very early stage (CD4⁻CD8⁻). The transgenic thymocytes spontaneously aggregated (and formed also aggregates with normal thymocytes); the aggregation could be blocked by antibodies to Ly-6A.¹⁹⁸ This indicates an adhesion interaction of Ly6A with an unidentified cell surface ligand potentially important in thymocyte development. Ly-6C may play an adhesive role during the interaction between cytotoxic T cells and their targets.¹⁹⁹ Also, E48, the putative human homologue of ThB, appears to be an adhesion molecule (or an adhesion regulator) in keratinocytes.¹⁹⁴

Crosslinking of Ly-6A/E or Ly-6C by suitable antibodies produces marked cellular responses in T cells similar to those observed upon crosslinking of Thy-1 (CD90) or other GPI-anchored proteins. These effects are probably due to inclusion of the Ly-6 molecules in the membrane microdomains rich in signaling molecules (see chapter 4); antibody crosslinking may perturb these membrane complexes in such a way that signaling cascades are initiated. It is not clear to what extent these antibody-induced effects mimic the effect of Ly-6 ligation with their presumed natural ligands. At least some signaling properties of the Ly-6A/E molecules are not exclusively due to their GPI-anchorage: crosslinking of a transmembrane version of Ly-6A/E was able to inhibit T-cell stimulation triggered by CD3 crosslinking.²⁰⁰ Surprisingly, antisense-mediated downregulation of Ly-6A/E expression in a T-cell line led to impairment of the Fyn protein tyrosine kinase activity, downregulation of TCR β chain synthesis and loss of surface TCR expression and function.^{201,202} This would therefore suggest an important role for Ly-6A in regulation of TCR expression and signaling.

Other Leucocyte GPI-Anchored Proteins

A broadly expressed murine nonclassical (class Ib) MHC glycoprotein, Qa-2, is anchored via a GPI moiety; it binds antigenic peptides and appears to serve as one of the antigen-presenting MHC molecules (for review see refs. 203, 204). At least one isoenzyme of alkaline phosphatase (different from the well known placental isoenzyme) is expressed as a GPI-anchored ectoenzyme on the surface of various cell types including granulocytes²⁰⁵ and activated murine and rat B cells;²⁰⁶ it is identical to the mouse Ly-31 alloantigen,²⁰⁷ but the biological function of this ectoenzyme is still unknown.

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GPI-Anchored Proteins in the Nervous System

David A. Harris

Of all the cells in the body, those of the nervous and immune systems probably contain the richest variety of proteins with glycosyl-phosphatidylinositol (GPI) anchors. This fact may reflect the complex cell-cell interactions and transmembrane signaling phenomena required for development and plasticity in the nervous system and for response to foreign antigens by the immune system. In the nervous system, GPI-anchored proteins play roles in a wide range of processes, including growth factor signaling, axon pathfinding and fasciculation, synapse formation and modification, and neurodegenerative diseases. Although a great deal is often known about the biology of these proteins, in only a few cases is the functional significance of the GPI anchor itself known with any certainty.

In this chapter, I will review the main classes of GPI-anchored proteins in the nervous system, address the issue of whether caveolae exist in neurons, and discuss the properties and possible functions of detergent-resistant rafts. In addition, I will present recent work from my own laboratory concerning the prion protein, which is involved in a group of unusual neurodegenerative diseases, as a way of illustrating how the GPI anchor plays an important role in the biology of one medically relevant protein.

Growth Factor Receptors

Signal transduction by several important neuronal growth factors has been found to involve a receptor component that is GPI-anchored (Fig. 6.1; see also chapter 4). One group includes glial-derived neurotrophic factor (GDNF),¹ neurturin (NTN)² and the recently identified protein persephin (PSP).³ These proteins, which are distantly related members of the TGF- β family, promote the survival of specific subsets of neurons from both the central and peripheral nervous system, and also serve as inductive factors in embryonic development of the kidney. Each of these factors utilizes a signal transduction system that consists of a GPI-linked receptor (designated GFR α) and a transmembrane tyrosine kinase called Ret.^{4,5} The growth factor binds to the GFR α component, which then associates with Ret to form a ternary complex, resulting in activation of the tyrosine kinase activity of Ret. Activated Ret is then thought to autophosphorylate as a result of growth factor-induced dimerization, initiating a signaling cascade that includes components of the MAP kinase pathway.⁶ The importance of GFR α in this process is clearly demonstrated by the fact that treatment of cells with PIPLC, a bacterial phospholipase that cleaves the GPI anchor, abolishes their responsiveness to growth factor.⁷ There are now three different GFR α variants identified.⁸ GFR α -1 appears to be relatively specific for GDNF and GFR α -2 for NTN; the binding specificity of GFR α -3 is uncertain. PSP does not appear to interact with

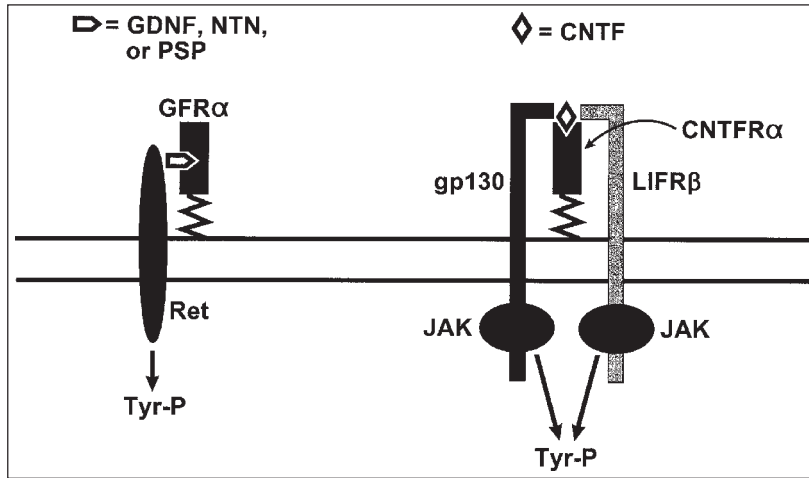


Fig 6.1. Receptor complexes for two classes of neuronal growth factors contain a GPI-anchored component. GFR α and CNTFR α are GPI-anchored proteins that bind GDNF/NTN/PSP and CNTF, respectively. There are several isoforms of GFR α with different binding specificities. Ret and JAK are tyrosine kinases.

either any of the three GFR variants, which suggests that other binding components remain to be discovered.³

Another growth factor that utilizes a GPI-anchored binding component is ciliary neurotrophic factor (CNTF), which sustains survival of parasympathetic, motor, and sensory neurons.⁹ Binding of CNTF to the GPI-anchored CNTFR α receptor induces association with two transmembrane signal-transducing components, gp130 and LIFR β .¹⁰ These latter two proteins are not themselves kinases, but their cytoplasmic domains are associated with kinases of the JAK family that phosphorylate substrates responsible for propagating the growth signal to the nucleus.¹¹ The same gp130 and LIFR β proteins are also components of the signal transduction mechanism engaged by several other structurally related cytokines active in the hematopoietic system (leukemia inhibitory factor, interleukin 6, and oncostatin M), although GPI-anchored subunits are not involved.¹²

In each of these systems, a ligand-binding α subunit cooperates with one or more transmembrane signaling subunits. The function of the α subunit is presumed to confer ligand specificity, but it may also serve to concentrate the ligand, and so intensify the signal. Another role might be to induce a conformational change in the ligand that increases its affinity for the transmembrane signaling subunits of the complex.¹³

The functional significance of having an α subunit with a GPI anchor is unclear. One intriguing fact is that ligand bound to soluble forms of GRF α and CNTFR α released by treatment with PIPLC are capable of stimulating a response in cells that lack these subunits.⁷ This raises the possibility that release of the GPI-anchored components by endogenous phospholipases might subservise a physiological function. One such function may be mediating the response to nerve injury. In support of this idea, it has been found that denervation dramatically increases release of soluble CNTFR α from skeletal muscle, and in a complementary fashion nerve damage stimulates release of CNTF from Schwann cells

Table 6.1 GPI-anchored molecules of the immunoglobulin superfamily involved in axonal and synaptic adhesion

Protein	Number of Ig domains
F3 (F11/Contactin)	6
TAG-1 (Axonin-1)	6
BIG-1	6
BIG-2	6
NCAM*	5
ApCAM*	5
Fasciclin II*	5
OBCAM	3
Neurotrimin	3
CEPU-1	3
LAMP	3
Thy-1	1

For original citations, see ref. 16.

*These molecules exist in both GPI-linked and transmembrane isoforms.

that ensheathe the axon.¹⁴ Thus nerve injury elicits a coordinated release of a GPI-anchored receptor and its cognate ligand.

Molecules Involved in Axonal and Synaptic Adhesion

A number of GPI-anchored proteins in the nervous system are involved in axon outgrowth and fasciculation, as well as the formation and plasticity of synapses (Table 6.1). These proteins are thought to mediate adhesion between the axonal or synaptic membranes of adjacent neurons, or between the axonal membrane of a neuron and its substrate. Many of these proteins are members of the immunoglobulin superfamily, and contain multiple immunoglobulin and fibronectin domains. I will not attempt to review here the extensive literature on the function of these proteins (see refs. 15-17), but only consider several issues relevant to the role of the GPI anchor.

The proteins listed in Table 6.1 are a small subset of a much larger group of neuronal and glial adhesion proteins, the rest of which have a transmembrane rather than a GPI anchor.¹⁶ Thus, the GPI anchor is not a general feature of molecules mediating adhesion in the nervous system, and the presence of this modification on some molecules may endow them with special properties. Several possibilities have been suggested. First, GPI-anchored adhesion proteins, like other glycolipidated proteins, are found in soluble as well as membrane-bound forms, and it has been hypothesized that regulated release of these proteins from the cell surface may play a role in neurite outgrowth.^{18,19} Such soluble forms could diffuse over long distances and establish adhesive gradients during development. The soluble forms may also possess different biological activities than the membrane-attached forms.²⁰

Second, some adhesion molecules such as NCAM, ApCAM, and fasciclins exist in both GPI-linked and transmembrane isoforms, and it is possible that differential expression, degradation, or localization of these forms may have functional significance. For example, it is hypothesized that the transmembrane form of ApCAM promotes fasciculation of axons, while the GPI-linked form stabilizes synaptic contacts. Neuronal activity is thought to

induce selective endocytosis and degradation of transmembrane ApCAM, which would then allow axonal sprouting and formation of new synaptic sites without loss of existing synapses.²¹

Third, it is now well known that adhesion molecules such as integrins can transduce signals to the cell interior, and GPI-anchored adhesion molecules may be especially suited to this role by virtue of their incorporation into cholesterol-rich raft domains which contain various kinds of signaling components (see below). Signal transduction is likely to be important in processes such as axonal chemoattraction and repulsion, growth cone collapse, and target-induced differentiation. Interactions between neighboring cells may be bidirectional, since several of the molecules in Table 6.1 can function as both receptor and ligand.¹⁷

Finally, it is possible that the presence of the GPI anchor may play a role in determining where on the surface of the neuron the adhesion molecule is displayed, and therefore the targets with which it will interact. In at least some situations, the GPI anchor may serve as an axonal targeting signal (discussed below), and so may be present on molecules that are meant to be excluded from the soma and dendrites. In addition, the anchor may play a role in determining whether the protein is localized at the terminals of the axon, or along its shaft.²²⁻²⁴

Caveolae and Detergent-Resistant Rafts

Current evidence indicates that caveolae are not present in peripheral or central neurons. This conclusion is based on both morphological and biochemical data. First, caveolae have not been observed in cultured neurons or neuronal cell lines by either thin-section or deep-etch electron microscopy (ref. 25 and J. Heuser, personal communication). The latter technique allows unequivocal identification of the striated caveolar coat, which is easily distinguishable from the lattice-like clathrin coat (Fig. 6.2). Second, cultured neurons, neuronal cell lines, and brain tissue express low or undetectable levels of the known caveolin isoforms and their mRNAs.²⁵⁻³³ Small amounts of caveolin mRNA that have sometimes been detected in brain are likely to be derived from astrocytes, which contain abundant caveolae based on morphological and biochemical evidence.³⁴ Of course, it is possible that only certain anatomically or developmentally defined subsets of neurons possess caveolae, or that neurons contain caveolin isoforms which are not detectable with current nucleic acid and antibody reagents. However, it seems more likely that whatever function caveolae perform in other cells is dispensable, or is performed by other structures, in nerve cells.

Despite the apparent absence of caveolae in neurons, there is abundant evidence that these cells contain detergent-resistant membrane domains (rafts) that are similar in physical properties, composition, and appearance to the domains isolated from cells such as fibroblasts and smooth muscle cells that contain caveolae. The fact that rafts can be isolated from neurons clearly demonstrates that these domains are not identical to caveolae, although it is likely that rafts are associated with caveolae in cell types that possess these invaginations. The detergent-resistant domains prepared from cultured nerve cells and brain by lysis in cold Triton buffer are large by gel filtration chromatography ($>2 \times 10^7$ daltons),³⁵ they have a low buoyant density on sucrose gradients,^{29,35,36} and in the electron microscope they have the appearance of membranous vesicles of heterogeneous size and shape.^{29,35,36} They are enriched in sphingolipid and cholesterol,^{29,35} as well as in GPI-anchored proteins, including the prion protein^{35,37,38} (Fig. 6.3) and the adhesion molecules F3,^{29,39,40} Thy-1,²⁹ NCAM-120,²⁹ and axonin-1.⁴¹ They contain a variety of signaling components, including the Src-family kinases Fyn^{29,39,40} and Yes,³⁵ and the heterotrimeric G-protein subunits $G_{0\alpha}$, $G_{i\alpha}$ and $G_{\beta 1}$.³⁵ A light membrane fraction containing similar kinds of molecules has also been isolated from brain using a procedure that does not involve the use of detergent.⁴²

Interestingly, this fraction contains, in addition to cytoplasmic signaling proteins, a number of transmembrane receptors, including insulin receptor, the neurotrophin receptors *trkB* and *p75*, and a member of the Eph family of receptors, which are thought to be involved in axon guidance and pathfinding.

Possible Functions of Rafts in the Nervous System

There is considerable debate (see chapters 3 and 4) about whether the detergent-resistant complexes that have been characterized biochemically correspond to membrane domains that exist in intact cells, or whether they are artifacts of detergent extraction. If rafts do exist *in vivo*, however, they might subserve several possible functions in neurons and glia. Given the wide variety of signal-transducing elements they contain, one plausible hypothesis is that rafts are involved in transmembrane signaling. Several pieces of evidence support this idea. First, the kinases in rafts prepared from brain and neuroblastoma cells are catalytically active, as demonstrated by incorporation of $^{32}\text{PO}_4$ and formation of phosphotyrosine upon incubation at 37°C.³⁵ In addition, binding of ligands to GPI-anchored proteins on intact cells alters the activity or distribution of cytoplasmic kinases. For example, antibody-induced crosslinking of F3 on neurons or transfected cells results in increased association with Fyn, and enhanced tyrosine phosphorylation.^{39,40} Less artificial stimuli, including F3-mediated cell aggregation,⁴⁰ or binding to F3 of its natural ligand tenascin-R,³⁹ also activate or redistribute Fyn kinase. Fasciculation of dorsal root ganglion axons induces clustering of axonin-1 with the transmembrane adhesion molecule Ng-CAM, with a concomitant reduction in Fyn kinase activity.⁴¹ These results with neuronal cells are quite similar to those that have been obtained with lymphocytes, in which antibody crosslinking of GPI-anchored surface proteins induces changes in tyrosine phosphorylation. The transmission of a signal from a GPI-anchored protein on the external leaflet of the lipid bilayer to cytoplasmic kinases is presumed to require mediation of a transmembrane linker protein, but the identity of such molecules in the nervous or immune systems has remained a mystery.

Another possible function for detergent-resistant membrane domains in neurons is in polarized sorting of proteins, analogous to the function that has been suggested for them in epithelial cells. In polarized MDCK epithelial cells, most GPI-anchored proteins are delivered preferentially to the apical surface after synthesis, a phenomenon that has been proposed to depend on their incorporation into raft domains in the trans-Golgi network.⁴³ In neurons, it has been suggested that the axonal membrane is analogous to the apical surface of epithelial cells, and the somatodendritic membrane to the basolateral surface. In support of this notion, GPI-anchored Thy-1, as well as influenza virus hemagglutinin (a transmembrane protein that is apically localized in MDCK cells) are both preferentially localized on the axonal membrane in cultured hippocampal neurons.^{44,45}

Once deposited in the axonal membrane, GPI-anchored proteins may be prevented from diffusing back into the soma and dendrites by the presence of a barrier at the axon hillock that prevents mixing of lipids from the two domains.⁴⁶ However, the existence of this barrier has recently been challenged, raising the possibility that selective removal as well as delivery might play a role in restricting GPI-anchored proteins to the axonal membrane.⁴⁷ It is also possible that the stringency of the diffusion barrier may vary among neurons, explaining why certain GPI-anchored proteins are found on both the axonal and somatodendritic surfaces of some neurons, but are restricted to the axonal surface of other neurons.²⁴

A third possible function for rafts, one that would be particular to the nervous system, is in assembly of myelin by oligodendrocytes. Myelin, the multilamellar sheath that insulates large caliber axons, is enriched in glycosphingolipids and cholesterol, and so represents a

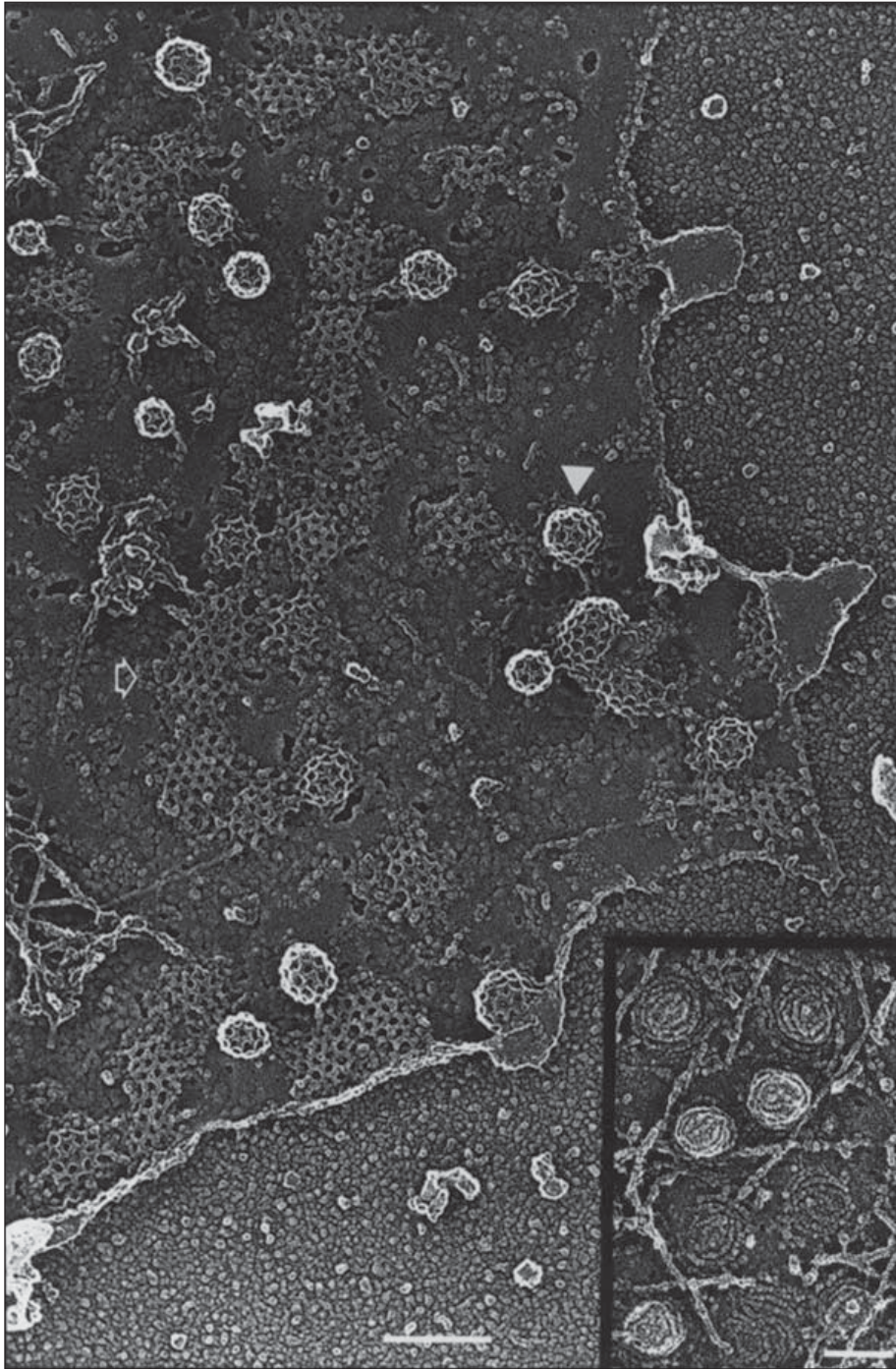


Fig. 6.2. (opposite page) Cultured neuroblastoma cells do not contain caveolae. The electron micrograph in the main panel shows the inner surface of the plasma membrane of an N2a neuroblastoma cell that has been sheared open, quick-frozen and deep-etched. Numerous clathrin lattices are seen; some are relatively flat (open arrowhead), while others curve around a budding vesicle (filled triangle). These polygonal lattices are easily distinguished from the striped coats of caveolae, which are seen in the inset taken from a 3T3-L1 adipocyte. Despite extensive examination, no structures that display a caveolar coat could be found in N2a cells. In addition, N2a cells do not express caveolin protein or mRNA.²⁵ Scale bars in both panels are 0.2 μm . Reprinted with permission from Shyng SL, Heuser JE, Harris DA. *J Cell Biol* 1994; 125:1239-1250. ©1994 The Rockefeller University Press.

natural membrane domain that is similar in lipid composition to the rafts produced by detergent extraction. Interestingly, oligodendrocytes do not assemble their GPI-anchored proteins into a detergent-resistant form until after the cells reach a mature stage of differentiation, concomitant with their ability to synthesize glycosphingolipids and cholesterol.⁴⁸ This observation suggests that rafts might serve as functional units that are required for assembly of the lipid and protein components of myelin. However, factors other than incorporation into rafts must also influence delivery of molecules to the myelin sheath, since the hemagglutinin (HA) protein of influenza virus is Triton-insoluble in oligodendrocytes but is not found in myelin; conversely the G protein of vesicular stomatitis virus, which is Triton-soluble, is incorporated into myelin.⁴⁹

Prions

For many proteins, it has proven difficult to assign a functional significance to the presence of a GPI anchor. The prion protein (PrP), however, is a good candidate for investigating the role of the anchor, since this modification features in several important ways in the biology of the protein.

Prion Diseases

This group of fatal neurodegenerative disorders includes Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD), Gerstmann-Sträussler syndrome (GSS), fatal familial insomnia (FFI) and kuru in human beings, and scrapie and bovine spongiform encephalopathy ("mad cow disease") in animals. These diseases, which are characterized by dementia, motor dysfunction, and cerebral amyloidosis, now pose potentially grave dangers to public health because of the likelihood that bovine spongiform encephalopathy has already been transmitted to human beings by consumption of contaminated beef.⁵⁰ Prion diseases are also of enormous scientific interest because infectious, inherited, and sporadic cases are all thought to result from changes in the conformation of a single, highly unusual membrane glycoprotein called PrP (for a review see ref. 51). This molecular transition converts a normal version of the protein (PrP^C) into a pathogenic form (PrP^{Sc}) that constitutes the major component of an unprecedented type of infectious particle (prion) devoid of nucleic acid.

The GPI Anchor of PrP

Both PrP^C and PrP^{Sc} contain a GPI anchor, based on the sensitivity of the proteins to PIPLC (although this sensitivity is manifested only after denaturation in the case of PrP^{Sc}), the demonstration by chemical analysis or metabolic labeling of anchor components such as fatty acids and ethanolamine, and the presence of a C-terminal hydrophobic domain that is cleaved upon anchor addition.⁵²⁻⁵⁴ A complete structure has been determined for the anchor on PrP^{Sc} from hamster brain.⁵⁵ This anchor contains a core structure common to other glycolipidated proteins, including an ethanolamine residue amide-bonded to the

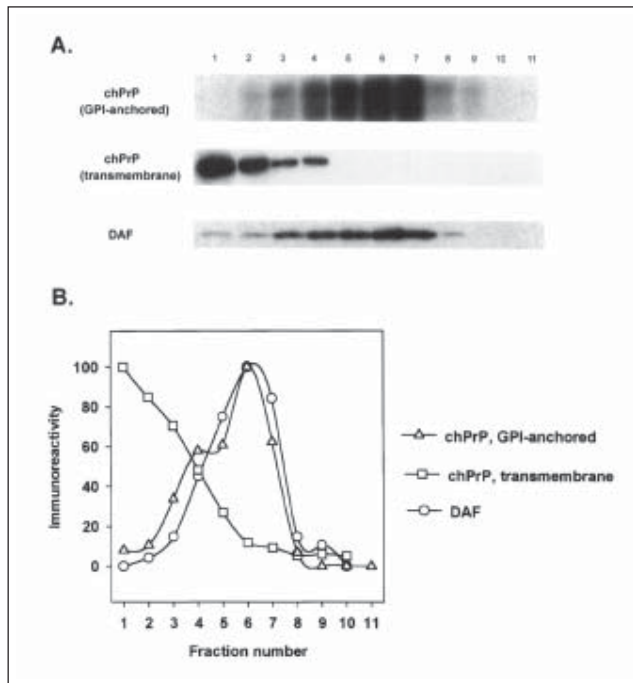


Fig. 6.3. GPI-anchored forms of PrP^C and DAF, but not a transmembrane form of PrP^C, are present in low-density rafts after detergent extraction of neuroblastoma cells. Transfected N2a cells expressing either GPI-anchored chicken prion protein PrP^C (chPrP), transmembrane chPrP (chPrP residues 1-241 fused to the transmembrane and cytoplasmic domains of the cation-independent mannose-6-phosphate receptor), or DAF (decay-accelerating factor) were homogenized at 4°C in a buffer containing 1% Triton X-100. The homogenate was brought to 40% sucrose, overlaid with a continuous gradient of 30% to 5% sucrose, and centrifuged to equilibrium (170,000 x g for 16 h). Gradient fractions were immunoblotted to detect the expressed proteins (A), and the signals quantitated (B). The two GPI-anchored proteins float at 15-20% sucrose (fractions 5-7), while the transmembrane form of chPrP is found near the bottom of the gradient (fractions 1-4) with the bulk of the total cellular protein. Reprinted with permission from Gorodinsky A, Harris DA. *J Cell Biol* 1995; 129:619-627. ©1995 The Rockefeller University Press.

C-terminal amino acid, three mannose residues, an unacetylated glucosamine residue, and a phosphatidylinositol molecule. This core is modified to a variable extent by additional ethanolamine and mannose residues, as well as by GalNAc, Gal, and sialic acid moieties, the last of which are not found on other GPI anchors described to date.

Endocytosis of PrP^C

Experiments using transfected cell lines indicate that PrP^C constitutively cycles between the plasma membrane and an early endocytic compartment.⁵⁶⁻⁵⁸ This conclusion is based on several lines of evidence. First, it is possible to directly measure internalization and recycling of surface PrP^C molecules that have been labeled with membrane-impermeant iodination or biotinylation reagents. Kinetic analysis of these data indicate that PrP^C molecules cycle through cultured neuroblastoma cells with a transit time of ~60 minutes. Second, endocytosis of PrP^C can be visualized by using immunofluorescence microscopy to

track internalization of antibodies that have been bound to PrP^C on the cell surface. Third, PrP^C is subject to a proteolytic cleavage in its mid-region that is inhibited by lysosomotropic amines and leupeptin, suggesting that it occurs within an endosomal compartment that is acidic and protease-containing. This endocytic recycling pathway is of interest because it may be the route along which certain steps in the conversion of PrP^C to PrP^{Sc} take place. In addition, this pathway suggests that one physiological function of PrP^C might be to facilitate uptake of an as yet unidentified extracellular ligand, by analogy with receptors responsible for uptake of transferrin and low density lipoprotein.

Clathrin-Coated Pits

We have found that clathrin-coated pits and vesicles are the morphological structures responsible for endocytic uptake of PrP^C.²⁵ This conclusion is based on immunogold localization of PrP^C in these organelles by electron microscopy, inhibition of PrP^C internalization by incubation of cells in hypertonic sucrose which disrupts clathrin lattices, and detection of PrP^C in purified preparations of coated vesicles from brain. We hypothesize that PrP^C molecules enter clathrin-coated pits after exiting detergent-resistant raft domains on the plasma membrane.³⁵

The involvement of clathrin-coated pits in endocytosis of PrP^C is surprising, since GPI-anchored proteins like PrP^C lack a cytoplasmic domain that could interact directly with the intracellular components of coated pits such as clathrin and adapter proteins. Indeed, it has been speculated that other GPI-anchored proteins are excluded from coated pits, and are internalized via caveolae.⁵⁹ To explain this paradox, we have postulated the existence of a "PrP^C receptor", a transmembrane protein that has a coated-pit localization signal in its cytoplasmic domain, and whose extracellular domain binds the N-terminal portion of PrP^C (Fig. 6.4).⁵⁸ This model is consistent with our observation that deletions within the N-terminal domain of PrP^C diminish internalization of the protein measured biochemically, and reduce its concentration in coated pits as determined morphometrically.⁶⁰ We presume that these deletions reduce the affinity of PrP^C for the endocytic receptor. Identification of this receptor is now of great importance, as it is likely to provide clues to the normal function of PrP^C, and may allow design of therapeutic strategies for blocking endocytic uptake of PrP^C, thereby inhibiting prion replication. Such a receptor might also be involved in the conversion of PrP^C into PrP^{Sc}, or in the initial uptake of PrP^{Sc}-containing prion particles into cells.

Membrane Topology of PrP^{Sc} and the Cleavability of its GPI Anchor

Although both isoforms contain a GPI anchor, PrP^{Sc}, in contrast to PrP^C, cannot be released by PIPLC from membranes of scrapie-infected cells and brain.^{53,61} The same is true for PrP molecules carrying mutations linked to familial CJD, GSS and FFI, which acquire the biochemical attributes of PrP^{Sc} when expressed in transfected CHO cells^{54,61} (Fig. 6.5) and in the brains of transgenic mice (Chiesa and Harris, unpublished data). The explanation for this unusual property has been uncertain, although it is likely to reflect an important feature of the PrP^{Sc} molecule and could play a role in the disease process.

Several hypotheses can be envisioned to explain lack of PIPLC release (Fig. 6.6). First, it is possible that the PrP^{Sc} molecule has a second mechanism of membrane attachment in addition to the GPI anchor, such as integration of the PrP polypeptide chain into the lipid bilayer or tight binding to another membrane protein. In favor of this explanation, we find that ³H-fatty acid label incorporated into mutant PrP is partially removed upon treatment of intact cells with PIPLC, even though virtually all of the protein remains tightly associated with the cell membrane.⁵⁴ Alternatively, the GPI anchor of PrP^{Sc} could be physically shielded from the phospholipase, either by aggregation of the protein or by intrinsic conformational

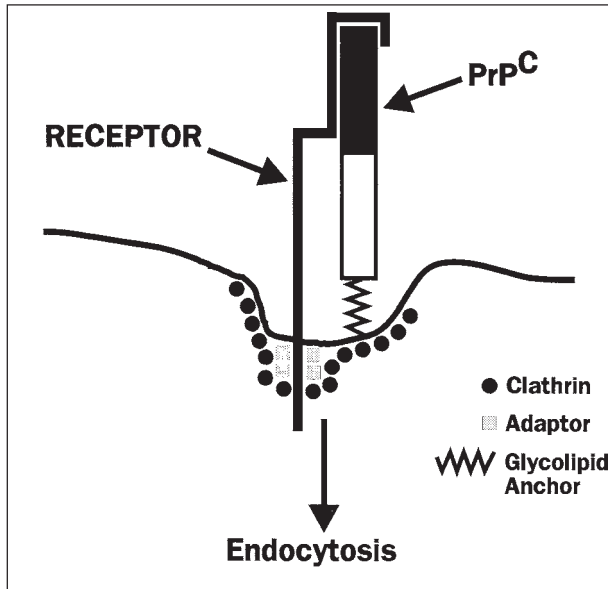


Fig. 6.4. Model for the function of a putative PrP^C receptor. Reprinted with permission from Harris DA, Gorodinsky A, Lehmann S et al. *Curr Top Microbiol Immunol* 1996; 207:77-93. ©1996 Springer-Verlag.

features of the polypeptide chain. This mechanism may also be operative, based on our observation that some mutant PrP molecules remain resistant to PIPLC cleavage after extraction into Triton lysis buffer, but not after boiling in SDS, which would unfold the polypeptide chain and disrupt any intermolecular aggregates (Narwa and Harris, unpublished data). Clearly, further work will be needed to determine the relative contributions of these different models.

Whatever the underlying mechanism, PIPLC resistance is a property that develops very early in the biosynthesis of mutant PrPs.⁶² The mutant proteins acquire this property within a 5-10 minute pulse-labeling period, as assayed by partitioning in Triton X-114, or binding to phenyl-Sepharose. This suggests that PIPLC resistance marks a very early step in the conversion of mutant PrPs to a PrP^{Sc} state, one that is likely to take place in the endoplasmic reticulum (ER). The involvement of the ER in the formation of PrP^{Sc} makes sense theoretically, since this is the compartment where proteins fold, usually in association with resident chaperone proteins. It is attractive to think that acquisition of PIPLC resistance reflects the fundamental conformational transition of mutant PrP to the PrP^{Sc} state, and that ER chaperones play an important role in this conversion.

Role of Rafts in the Formation of PrP^{Sc}

There are several pieces of evidence suggesting that detergent-resistant raft domains play a role in at least some steps in PrP^{Sc} generation. First, PrP^{Sc} as well as PrP^C are present in Triton-insoluble complexes prepared from scrapie-infected cultured cells and brain.³⁸ Second, depletion of cellular cholesterol, which disrupts rafts, inhibits formation of PrP^{Sc}.⁶³ Third, engineered forms of PrP that contain a transmembrane segment instead of a GPI anchor, and which are presumably excluded from rafts, are poor substrates for conversion to PrP^{Sc}.⁶⁴

Our own results with mutant PrPs shed further light on the role of rafts in PrP^{Sc} formation. Insolubility in nondenaturing detergents and partial resistance to protease digestion are two operational characteristics which are commonly used to recognize PrP^{Sc}.

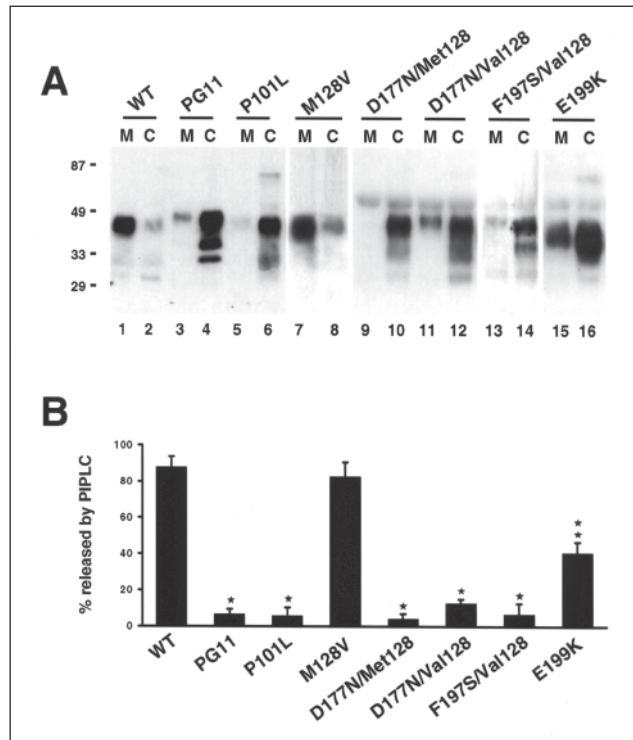


Fig. 6.5. PrP molecules carrying disease-related mutations are not released from the cell surface by PIPLC. (A) CHO cells were stably transfected to express wild type (WT) mouse PrP, or mutant mouse PrPs whose human homologues are associated with familial CJD, GSS or FFI. Cells were biotinylated with the membrane-impermeant reagent sulfo-biotin-X-NHS, and were then incubated with PIPLC prior to lysis. PrP in the PIPLC incubation media (M lanes) and cell lysates (C lanes) was immunoprecipitated, separated by SDS-PAGE, and visualized by developing blots of the gels with HRP-streptavidin and enhanced chemiluminescence. M128V is the mouse homologue of a non-pathogenic polymorphism in human PrP. (B) The amount of PrP released by PIPLC was plotted as a percentage of the total amount of PrP (medium + cell lysate). Each bar represents the mean \pm SD. Values that are significantly different from wild type PrP by t-test are indicated by single ($p < 0.001$) and double ($p < 0.01$) asterisks. Reprinted with permission from Harris DA, Lehmann S. In: Iqbal K, Winblad B, Nishimura T et al., eds. *Alzheimer's Disease: Biology, Diagnosis and Therapeutics*. 1997:631-643. ©John Wiley and Sons Ltd.

We find that PIPLC treatment of intact cells inhibits the acquisition of detergent insolubility by mutant PrPs, presumably because at least some of the molecules have had their anchors cleaved, and although they are still present on the cell surface, they are no longer present in raft domains (Daude and Harris, unpublished data). Similarly, chimeric forms of mutant PrP that contain a transmembrane domain without a GPI anchor never become detergent insoluble or protease resistant. Taken together, these results argue that detergent insolubility and protease resistance are attributes acquired in raft domains on the plasma membrane.

This interpretation accords with the results of kinetic experiments which demonstrate that detergent insolubility and protease resistance are acquired relatively late (>30 minutes)

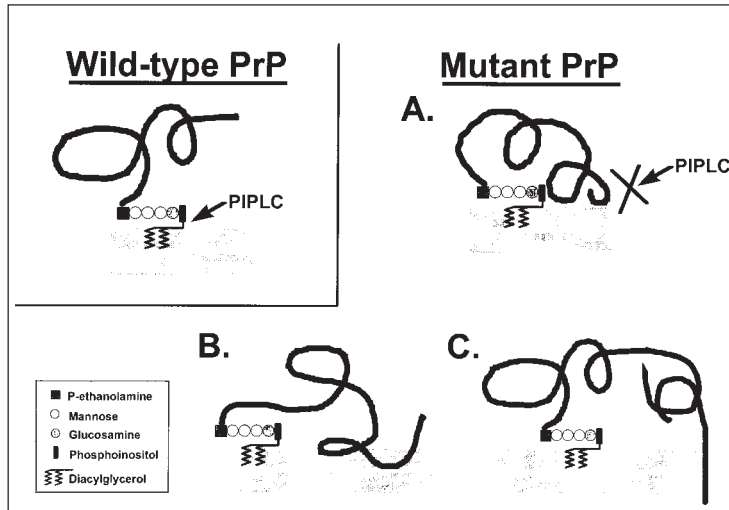


Fig. 6.6. Models to explain why PIPLC releases wild-type but not mutant PrP from cell membranes. Wild type PrP is anchored to the membrane exclusively by its GPI anchor, the core structure of which is illustrated, along with the site cleaved by PIPLC. The polypeptide chain of mutant PrP may adopt a conformation that physically blocks access of PIPLC to the anchor (A). Alternatively, the polypeptide chain of the mutant protein may be integrated into the lipid bilayer (B), or bind tightly to another membrane-associated molecule (C); in these last two cases, the PrP molecule would be retained on the membrane even after the anchor is cleaved.

after synthesis of mutant PrP molecules.^{62,65} By this time, the proteins would have already reached the cell surface or been delivered to endocytic compartments. In contrast, acquisition of PIPLC resistance is a much earlier step in PrP^{Sc} formation, one that takes place in the ER and which therefore does not involve rafts (which are thought to be assembled in the trans-Golgi network). It is attractive to speculate that rafts may facilitate formation of a detergent-insoluble and protease-resistant form of PrP^{Sc} by forcing the protein molecules together in a circumscribed area of the membrane, thereby favoring aggregation. Figure 6.7 summarizes how mutant PrPs are converted to a PrP^{Sc} state in a stepwise manner as they traverse different cellular compartments.

Summary

GPI-anchored proteins are numerous and abundant in the nervous system, playing roles in a variety of physiological phenomena including growth factor signaling, axonal outgrowth and fasciculation, synaptic development and plasticity, polarized sorting, and possibly myelination. In addition, at least one important class of neurodegenerative disorders is caused by alterations in the conformation of a highly unusual GPI-anchored protein, PrP. The GPI anchor of PrP is an important factor in its mechanism of endocytic trafficking and its localization in detergent-insoluble membrane domains where some steps in formation of PrP^{Sc} take place. In addition, resistance of the anchor to enzymatic cleavage turns out to be a very early marker of conversion to the PrP^{Sc} state. Although broad generalizations about the role of the GPI-anchored proteins in the nervous system are not possible, additional investigations will undoubtedly uncover new ways in which the anchor figures in the biological function of particular proteins.

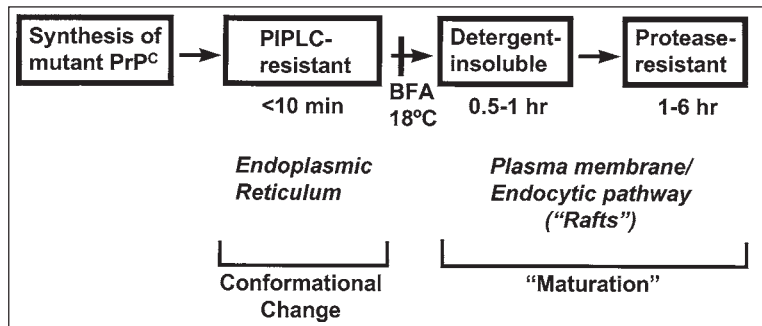


Fig. 6.7. A scheme for transformation of mutant PrPs to a PrP^{Sc} state. Mutant PrPs are initially synthesized in the PrP^C state, and acquire PrP^{Sc} properties in a stepwise fashion as they pass through the endoplasmic reticulum and arrive at the plasma membrane. PIPLC resistance reflects folding of the polypeptide chain into the PrP^{Sc} conformation, while detergent insolubility and protease resistance result from subsequent intermolecular aggregation (“maturation”). The times given underneath the boxes indicate when after pulse-labeling the corresponding property is detected. Addition of Brefeldin A (BFA) to cells or incubation at 18°C, treatments which block movement of proteins beyond the Golgi apparatus, inhibit acquisition of detergent insolubility and protease resistance but not PIPLC resistance. Adapted from Daude N, Lehmann S, Harris DA. *J Biol Chem* 1997; 272:11604-11612. ©1997 The American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Inc.

Acknowledgments

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GPI-Anchored Complement Regulatory Molecules

Carmen W. van den Berg and B. Paul Morgan

The Complement System

The complement (C) system is a major component of the humoral defense system and plays an important role in inflammation. Its primary roles are opsonization of bacteria, production of chemotactic and anaphylactic peptides (all aiding the killing of bacteria by phagocytes) and direct cell killing through formation of a transmembrane pore. The C system consists of approximately 20 plasma proteins and can be activated through 3 different pathways: the classical pathway, the lectin pathway and the alternative pathway, all resulting in a cascade of enzymatic activities (Fig. 7.1). The classical pathway (CP) is activated through binding of C1q to antibodies. Subsequent activation of C1r and C1s leads to activation of C4, C2 and C3. The lectin pathway (LP) is activated after binding of mannan binding lectin (MBL) to mannose-containing proteins on bacteria. This results in the activation of MASP1 and MASP2 followed by C4, C2 and C3. The alternative pathway (AP) is initiated when spontaneously activated C3 binds to the surface of a pathogen. Factor B becomes bound to this bound C3 and is then activated by factor D. This pathway also functions as an amplification loop of the classical pathway. All pathways result in formation of the C3/C5 convertases, which then activate the terminal pathway. Activation of the terminal pathway by cleavage of C5 is the last enzymatic reaction and results in assembly of a multimeric membrane-perturbing complex consisting of C5b, C6, C7, C8 and up to 18 molecules of C9, the membrane attack complex (MAC). Activation of the C system leads to release of protein fragments with anaphylactic (C3a, C4a, C5a) and chemotactic (C5a) properties, thereby attracting phagocytes. Deposition of C3b fragments leads to opsonization and ingestion by phagocytes, and MAC formation leads to membrane perturbations which can cause lysis. Because of the powerful amplification of the cascade and the potentially hazardous side effects, C activation has to be kept under tight control. This regulation is accomplished by a number of fluid phase and membrane bound regulators which act at different stages of activation. The first evidence for the existence of membrane bound regulators of C came from studies using extracts of human erythrocytes.¹ These extracts protected sheep erythrocytes against lysis by guinea pig complement. Several membrane bound inhibitors have now been identified, which act either on the C3/C5 convertase or on the MAC (Fig. 7.1). These inhibitors are of particular importance to protect cells against damage by host complement.

The membrane bound inhibitors acting on the C3/C5 convertase are decay accelerating factor (DAF/CD55), membrane cofactor protein (MCP/CD46) and complement receptor 1

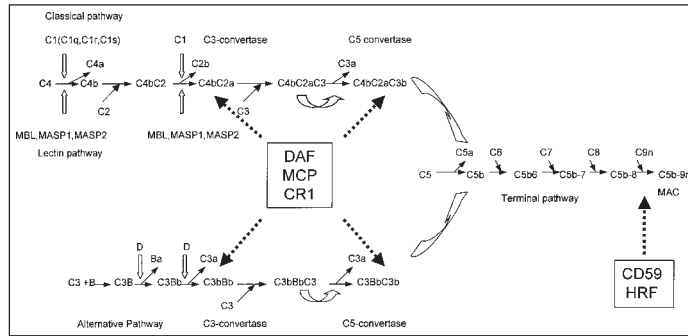


Fig. 7.1. The complement system, showing the division into four interacting pathways. Enzymatic cleavages are represented by open arrows, stages of inhibition are represented by hatched arrows.

(CR1/CD35). These proteins inhibit amplification in the activation pathways and initiation of the terminal pathway either by enhancing dissociation of the convertase (DAF, CR1) or by acting as a cofactor (MCP, CR1) for the serum protease factor I in the cleavage of C3. CD59 and homologous restriction factor (HRF) both act as regulators of the MAC by binding to C8 and C9 and so preventing pore formation. DAF, CD59 and HRF are all anchored to the membrane by a glycosylphosphatidylinositol (GPI) anchor and hence are the focus of this chapter, while MCP and CR1 are transmembrane-anchored proteins (Fig. 7.2). The GPI-anchors of DAF and CD59 are considered to give these molecules more lateral mobility and enhance the ability of these molecules to protect the cells against damage by C. For the purposes of this book, we will limit further discussion to the GPI-anchored C-regulatory proteins DAF, CD59 and HRF. It must, however, be understood that these proteins work in concert with the transmembrane C-regulatory proteins to protect the cells.

Decay Accelerating Factor (DAF, CD55)

Function

Regulation of C activation by DAF occurs at the stage of the C3/C5 convertase (Fig. 7.1). Inhibition of the C3 convertase by DAF prevents amplification of the C-cascade and inhibits release of anaphylatoxins and chemotaxins generated by C3 and C5 activation and activation of the terminal lytic pathway.

DAF functions as a regulator of C-activation by enhancing the dissociation of C2a and Bb from the C4b2a and C3bBb C3-convertase complexes² (Fig. 7.3). DAF does not prevent binding of C2 and factor B to the target. Nephritic factors, which are antibodies in serum of patients with rheumatoid arthritis with specificity for the C3-convertase, are able to stabilize these complexes and prevent decay by DAF.³ DAF, unlike the other membrane-bound C3-convertase regulators CR1 and MCP, has no cofactor activity for the cleavage of C3b or C4b by factor I.⁴ The active sites of DAF reside within SCR-2 and SCR-3 for the CP C3-convertase, while AP C3-convertase regulatory function resides within SCR-2, -3, and -4.⁵ DAF can reincorporate into cells through its GPI anchor and in standard assays using sheep erythrocytes as target, the activity of DAF is due to reincorporated protein.

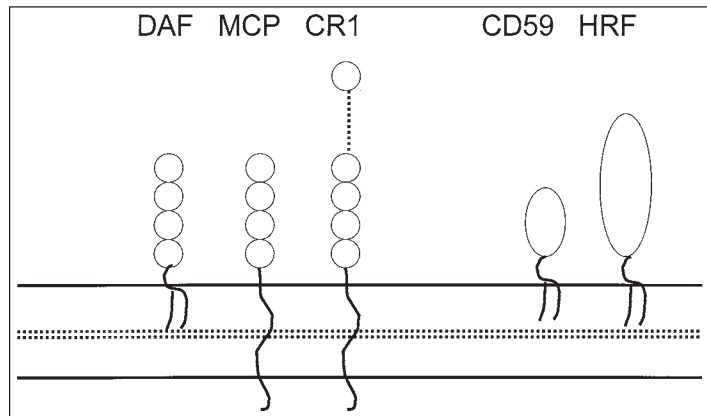


Fig. 7.2. Membrane-bound regulators of complement with different modes of anchorage. GPI-anchored: DAF, CD59 and HRF, and transmembrane anchored: MCP and CR1.

Structure

The membrane-bound regulators of the C3-convertase are structurally related. DAF, MCP and CR1 and also the membrane-bound complement receptor 2 (CR2) and the fluid phase inhibitors factor H and C4-binding protein all originate from a common ancestral gene. These proteins form a family termed the regulators of complement activation (RCA) and are all built up of homologous domains, the short consensus repeats (SCR). Each SCR unit consists of approximately 60 amino acids characterized by four conserved Cys residues and several other highly conserved residues which include Pro, Trp, Tyr, Phe and Gly. From sequence analyses of enzymatic digests of DAF, the disulfide bonds in the 4 SCR units of DAF were found to be between the first and third and between the second and fourth half-cystines within each SCR unit.⁶ The RCA proteins are built of between 4 (DAF, MCP) and 30 SCRs. The genes for all these proteins are closely linked and localized to the long arm of chromosome 1, band q32.^{7,8}

The DAF gene was originally cloned from cDNA libraries from HeLa and HL-60 cells.^{9,10} In the human genome there is only one copy of the DAF gene,¹¹ which consists of 11 exons. Two or three major DAF mRNA species have been identified from Northern blot analysis.^{9,10} The first exon encodes the 5' signal peptide, containing a 34 amino acid leader sequence, which is removed upon translocation in the endoplasmic reticulum. Exons 2-6 encode the first 250 amino acids of the mature protein containing the 4 SCRs; exons 7-9 encode amino acid 253-322, the Ser/Thr rich region; and exon 11 encodes the COOH terminus of the spliced and unspliced transcript.¹² Exon 10 is spliced out of the predominant GPI-anchored form of DAF. The last 28 amino acids of the translated DAF are removed upon addition of the GPI anchor at Ser319.¹³

The ability of purified DAF to bind and insert into sheep erythrocytes and protect against C-damage indicated that DAF was anchored to the membrane by a GPI anchor.¹⁴ Further proof was provided by the demonstration that DAF could be cleaved from the membrane by phosphatidylinositol-specific phospholipase C.^{15,16} While DAF on most cells has a PIPLC-sensitive GPI anchor, on erythrocytes the anchor contains an additional ester-linked fatty acid on inositol, which makes it resistant to PIPLC.¹⁶

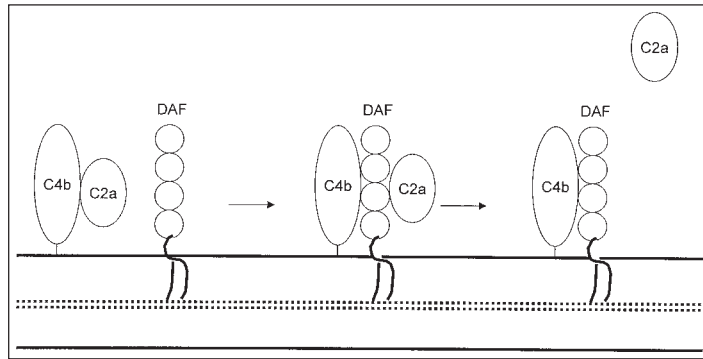


Fig. 7.3. Mechanism of action of DAF. DAF binds C4bC2a and dissociates this complex, thereby inactivating the C3 cleaving enzyme; DAF dissociates the C3bBb complex in a similar manner.

DAF is expressed on cells as a single chain protein with a Mr of 70 kDa, but the calculated Mr of the native protein after removal of the N- and C-terminal signal sequences is about 46 kDa. Endo F decreases the Mr of DAF by about 3 kDa, suggesting that the one N-terminal glycosylation site at Asn61 is occupied. The Mr of DAF is decreased by 18 kDa after neuraminidase treatment, indicating that it is heavily sialylated, and by a further 8 kDa after endo- α -N-acetylgalactosylaminidase treatment. Most of the sialic acid is on the O-linked side chains.¹⁷ Biosynthetic studies showed that the earliest DAF precursor had a Mr of 43 kDa, and was rapidly converted into a 46 kDa molecule.¹⁷ The O-linked carbohydrate side chains are not necessary for DAF function but make DAF resistant to proteolytic degradation.¹⁸

Alternative forms of DAF have been reported. On erythrocytes, 55 kDa and 63 kDa forms were found which are probably the consequence of proteolytic degradation,¹⁹ while 100 and 140 kDa erythrocyte forms were probably dimers of native DAF.^{20,21} A DAF species with a Mr of 44-54 kDa has been found on sperm.²² Carbohydrate analysis of sperm DAF indicated that it contains non-sialylated N- and O-linked sugars. The absence of mature oligosaccharides on this protein appears to account for the difference in molecular mass between sperm DAF and the 70 kDa DAF expressed on other human tissues.²³

Distribution

DAF is very broadly distributed; in the circulation it is present on erythrocytes, granulocytes, monocytes and lymphocytes.^{24,25} A subpopulation of lymphocytes, including NK cells, are DAF negative.²⁵ DAF expressed on leukocytes has a higher Mr than erythrocyte DAF, due to a difference in glycosylation.^{17,25} DAF is also expressed in a wide variety of tissues including vascular endothelium, endocardium, uterus, synovium and urinary and gastrointestinal tracts and exocrine glands. On polarized cells, DAF, like other GPI-anchored molecules, is targeted to the apical cell surface.²⁶ Secreted forms of DAF have been detected in plasma, tears, saliva, synovial fluid, cerebrospinal fluid, urine and seminal fluid.²⁷ DAF from urine is not able to incorporate into membranes, which suggests that it has lost its anchor.²⁷

Regulation of Expression

At sites of inflammation protection against C-mediated damage is essential. Upregulation of expression of C-regulatory molecules would give cells enhanced protection against C-activation products generated at such sites. Agents produced during inflammation, including products of C-activation, have been investigated for their ability to influence the level of expression of DAF. In the synovial lining cell layer and on vascular endothelial cells of synovial tissue, a high expression of DAF has been observed both in rheumatoid arthritis and in osteoarthritis. A significant correlation was found between the expression of DAF and of HLA-DR in the lining layer, suggesting that DAF may be induced during a local inflammatory response.²⁸ An upregulation of DAF was also observed in diseased cartilage from arthritic joints and in IL-1-treated cartilage compared to normal cartilage.²⁹ A direct effect of C activation on DAF expression was observed in mesangial cells. Immune complex-induced C-activation increased DAF expression on these cells; this was a consequence of MAC formation on the cells, as no upregulation was observed in the absence of C5 or C8.³⁰ Upregulation of DAF at sites of inflammation is not always observed. In patients with cutaneous immune complex vasculitis, the endothelial cells of upper dermal vessels in vasculitic lesions were almost completely devoid of DAF, while abundant expression was observed in healthy skin of the same patients. The mechanism of this downregulation or loss is not known, but removal by shedding of membrane including DAF or enzymatic release of DAF may account for low level of expression in the lesion.³¹

Activation of endothelial cells with various concentrations of TNF- α , IL-1 β , and especially IL-4 increased expression of DAF.³² In other studies, stimulation of HUVEC with various cytokines including TNF, IL-1, and IFN- γ did not alter DAF levels, but wheat germ agglutinin and the lectins ConA and PHA increased DAF levels two- to five-fold when incubated with HUVEC for 12 to 24 h.³³ TNF- α and IL-4 also induced a marked increase in DAF mRNA and protein expression in HT-29, T84 and Caco-2 cells. But IL-1 β induced only a weak upregulation, and IL-6, IL-8, IL-10, and IFN- γ had no effect.^{34,35} Phorbol esters (PMA) induced an increase in expression of DAF in human endothelial cells and the HOG cell line,^{36,37} no change in cell surface expression on the erythroblast cell line K562 was observed.³⁸ These data show that regulation of DAF expression may differ between cells. While in most instances induction of DAF expression required de novo synthesis and thus took hours to occur, an upregulation of DAF cell surface expression was observed within minutes after stimulation of neutrophils. This upregulation of cell surface expression was shown to be due to release from intracellular stores.³⁹

Little is known about the regulation of induction of DAF. Nerve growth factor (NGF) treatment of adult dorsal root ganglion (DRG) neurons induced DAF expression, and this was dependent on sequences between -206 and -77 relative to the DAF transcriptional start site.⁴⁰ Analysis of the promoter region of DAF revealed a series of transcription start sites in a 10 nucleotide region located 86 nucleotides upstream from the ATG (the first of these start sites is numbered +1). Major enhancer activity was demonstrated between -206 and -77, and between -77 and -54 (containing cAMP responsive element and AP-1 binding site), and between -54 and -34 (containing an Sp1 binding site). The identification of transcription start sites and enhancer regions in the DAF gene are important for studies of the mechanisms whereby cytokines and other factors may modulate DAF expression.⁴¹

Deficiencies

Deficiency of DAF has been identified in patients with antibodies recognizing the Cromer-related antigens. These antibodies recognized a 70 kDa protein in normal erythrocytes, which was identified as DAF.^{42,43} Patients lacking the Cromer antigens were designated as having the Inab phenotype. Patients do not suffer from hemolysis as might

have been predicted, but in in vitro assays significantly more C3 was deposited on cells after C-activation.⁴³ The Inab phenotype is caused by a point mutation in the DAF gene resulting in introduction of a stop codon.^{44,45} Inab erythrocytes are not more sensitive to lysis by acidified serum in the Hamm test.^{43,46}

In paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH) an autosomal mutation in the bone marrow gives rise to a clonal deficiency of all GPI-anchored molecules, including DAF and CD59, on erythrocytes, monocytes, granulocytes, platelets and sometimes lymphocytes.⁴⁷ The deficiency is caused by a mutation in the PIG-A gene, which causes a deficiency of a component of glycosylphosphatidylinositol biosynthesis with the consequence that no GPI anchor is attached to proteins with the correct signal sequence.⁴⁸ The absence of both DAF and CD59 makes the cells extremely sensitive to C-mediated lysis, including by acidified serum in the Hamm test.⁴⁹ Patients suffering from PNH have recurring episodes of intravascular complement-mediated hemolysis and venous thrombosis.

DAF in Other Mammalian Species

DAF was first isolated from guinea pig erythrocytes.⁵⁰ Guinea pig DAF was characterized as a single polypeptide chain with a Mr of 60 kDa. Isolation of guinea pig DAF cDNA clones from a spleen library identified six different classes. All encoded the same four SCR domains, with 58% amino acid sequence identity to human DAF. Alternative splicing of two exons generated transmembrane, GPI-anchored, and secreted forms of guinea pig DAF, and differential usage of splice sites generated variable Ser/Thr-rich regions.⁵¹ Mouse DAF purified from mouse erythrocytes had a Mr of 60 kDa and was susceptible to PIPLC treatment.⁵² Cloning of mouse DAF identified two classes of cDNA clones. Rather than representing alternately spliced mRNAs, these were derived from two separate but closely linked genes. While one cDNA encoded a GPI-anchored form, the other encoded a transmembrane-anchored form.⁵³ Chromosome localization studies mapped the mouse DAF genes to chromosome 1, where they segregated with the C4-binding protein gene.⁵³ A GPI-anchored 66 kDa molecule with decay accelerating activity has also been isolated from rabbit erythrocytes. No sequence of this rabbit DAF has been published.⁵⁴

Parasites

An important strategy used by parasites to evade the C system is the expression of C-inhibitory molecules. For example, a molecule exhibiting DAF-like activity was found in trypomastigotes, the C-resistant stage of *Trypanosoma cruzi*, but could not be detected in the C-sensitive epimastigotes.⁵⁵ The purified molecule (T-DAF) had a Mr of about 90 kDa,⁵⁶ but isolated T-DNA showed only limited homology with human DAF and no SCRs could be identified.⁵⁷ Comparison of the partial T-DAF sequence with recently submitted sequences in Genbank databases suggest that T-DAF may be a trans-sialidase and confer its protective effect by transfer of sialic acid, a potent inhibitor of C, to the trypomastigotes. *T. cruzi*-derived trans-sialidases have been shown to confer resistance on desialylated sheep and human erythrocytes by transfer of sialic acid from serum onto the target cell.⁵⁸ Desialylated *T. cruzi* replenish sialic acid from serum and so regain C-resistance.⁵⁹ Another molecule, which restricts C-activation by binding C3b and inhibiting C3 convertase formation, has been purified from *T. cruzi*. This molecule, with a Mr of 160 kDa, was cloned and hybridized with human DAF, suggesting sequence similarity.⁶⁰ Comparison of the full length coding sequence identified this protein as a member of the FL-160 gene family, a group of trypanosome surface molecules of unknown function.⁶¹ However, again a high degree of homology with trans-sialidases was found, suggesting that this molecule exerts its inhibitory effects in a manner similar to that of T-DAF.

Another way for parasites to evade the immune system is by capturing GPI-linked C-regulatory molecules from the host. Anti-human DAF immunoprecipitates of *Schistosoma mansoni* isolated from primates revealed a 70 kDa molecule which appeared to be DAF acquired from the host.⁶² In an in vitro experiment where schistosomula were incubated with normal human erythrocytes, parasites became resistant to C by acquisition of a 70 kDa surface protein which could be immunoprecipitated by anti-DAF antibodies; DAF-deficient erythrocytes did not confer resistance.⁶³

Viruses and Virus Infected Cells

Virus infection of cells often changes the expression of cell surface antigens, and viruses, when budding from the cell, often capture part of the host cell membrane. Increasing the level of C-regulatory molecules on the cell surface and capture of C-regulatory molecules by the budding virus is a potential strategy to aid the survival of the virus against lysis by C. Indeed, DAF has been found on primary isolates of HIV virions and blocking of DAF with antibodies made the virions susceptible to C.⁶⁴⁻⁶⁶ Human cytomegalovirus infection induced an eight-fold increase in DAF expression on fibroblasts and glioblastoma, but no change in DAF expression occurred after infection with HSV-1 or adenovirus.⁶⁷ As a consequence of this, CMV virions were protected by DAF captured from the host cell.⁶⁸

Signaling

Like most GPI-anchored molecules, DAF induces cell activation upon crosslinking with antibodies (see also chapter 4). The importance of the GPI anchor in this signaling capacity was demonstrated by replacing the GPI anchor with the TM anchor of MCP. This abrogated the ability of DAF to induce tyrosine phosphorylation and IL-2 production.⁶⁹ When anti-DAF immunoprecipitates were prepared from the transfected cells, only the GPI-anchored form of DAF coprecipitated kinase activity. Both p56^{lck} and p59^{lyn} were associated with DAF in DAF-transfected EL-4 cells. The putative transmembrane signal transducing molecule has not yet been identified.

Other Ligands

It has recently been reported that DAF functions as a ligand for the seven-span transmembrane molecule CD97.⁷⁰ CD97 is an activation-induced antigen homologous to the secretin receptor superfamily. An anti-DAF mAb recognizing SCR-2 blocked the adhesion between CD97 transfectants and red cells. Erythrocytes from PNH patients or from individuals with the Inab phenotype did not adhere to CD97 transfectants, confirming that DAF was the ligand. The significance of the role of DAF as a ligand for CD97 is not known.

DAF as a Receptor for Microorganisms

Cell surface molecules are often used by bacteria and viruses as receptors to which to adhere, or to enter and infect the host. DAF has been shown to function as a receptor for several viruses and bacteria.

Viruses

Echoviruses are human pathogens belonging to the picornavirus family and have been shown to use DAF to attach to and possibly enter the cell. Anti-DAF monoclonal antibodies or PIPLC treatment prevents attachment of Echoviruses of at least six serotypes to susceptible cells and protects cells from infection. Transfection with DAF of cells that are not normally susceptible to echovirus facilitated binding of the echovirus to the cells.⁷¹ Similar studies showed that DAF also functioned as a major cell attachment receptor for coxsackieviruses B1, B3, and B5.⁷² However, expression of human DAF on the surface of nonpermissive murine

fibroblasts led only to virus attachment without subsequent replication, and it was shown that an unidentified 50 kDa cell surface coreceptor is required to facilitate cell entry and subsequent replication.⁷³

Enterovirus 70 (EV70) is a recently emerged human pathogen belonging to the family Picornaviridae, it has been demonstrated that this virus also uses DAF as a receptor for cell entrance.⁷⁴

Bacteria

Bacterial adhesins are important virulence factors that allow colonization of the human urogenital tract by *Escherichia coli*. Adhesins of the Dr family have been found to be more frequently expressed in strains associated with symptomatic urinary tract infections. The ligand of the Dr adhesin has been shown to be DAF and binding of Dr occurs to SCR-3 and -4.^{75,76} Change of expression of DAF as observed, e.g., on the endometrium during the menstrual cycle may explain the differences in susceptibility to infections observed.⁷⁷

CD59

Of the two known membrane-bound inhibitors of the terminal pathway, CD59 is the best characterized. An inhibitor of the final stage of C-cascade was isolated independently by several different groups in 1988-89.⁷⁸ The protein was given several different names including P-18, MACIF,⁷⁹ MIRL (membrane inhibitor of reactive lysis),⁸⁰ 1F5 antigen and HRF-20 (homologous restriction factor with Mr 20 kDa).⁸¹ Two groups identified the protein, independently of its role in C-regulation, as a widely distributed cell surface antigen recognized by a specific monoclonal antibody (MEM-43 antigen⁸²) or as a molecule involved in adhesion of T cells to erythrocytes (H19⁸³). Only upon submitting the various monoclonal antibodies to the 4th Leukocyte Workshop was it realized that all these antibodies recognized the same antigen, which was placed in the cluster designated CD59.⁷⁸ CD59 is now the generally used name for this inhibitor of C.

Function

CD59 is a powerful inhibitor of the membrane attack complex (MAC) and acts by restricting the binding of C9 to the C5b-8 complex and so preventing pore formation (Fig. 7.4).^{84,85} CD59 has binding sites both for C8 α and the 'b' domain of C9⁸⁶ and can, through its GPI anchor, reinsert into membranes and confer resistance to C-mediated lysis upon these cells.^{78,87} The first indication that CD59 was GPI-anchored to the membrane was provided by the observation that if cells were washed after incubation with purified protein or erythrocyte extract, the cells were still protected against C.^{78,79} Like other GPI-anchored molecules on erythrocytes, CD59 is refractory to PIPLC release due to an extra lipid anchor on inositol. On nucleated cells, about 70% of the CD59 can be removed from the cell surface by PIPLC treatment.

The ability of CD59 to prevent lysis by autologous serum led to the hypothesis that CD59 was responsible for the phenomenon of 'homologous restriction'. Homologous restriction is the finding that cells are resistant to lysis by complement of the same species. However we have shown in an extensive study that human CD59 is able to inhibit lysis by C8 and C9 from a variety of species and is thus not a 'homologous restriction factor'.⁸⁸ In the same series of studies we showed that pig CD59 is an efficient inhibitor of human C.⁸⁹ In these studies the ability to confer resistance by incorporation of human CD59 was shown to be partially dependent on the target cell used. While human CD59 efficiently protected guinea pig and chicken erythrocytes against lysis by human C, sheep erythrocytes were refractory to protection by human CD59 due to the presence of high levels of endogenous CD59.⁸⁸ However, some incompatibility between CD59 and C8/C9 from different species

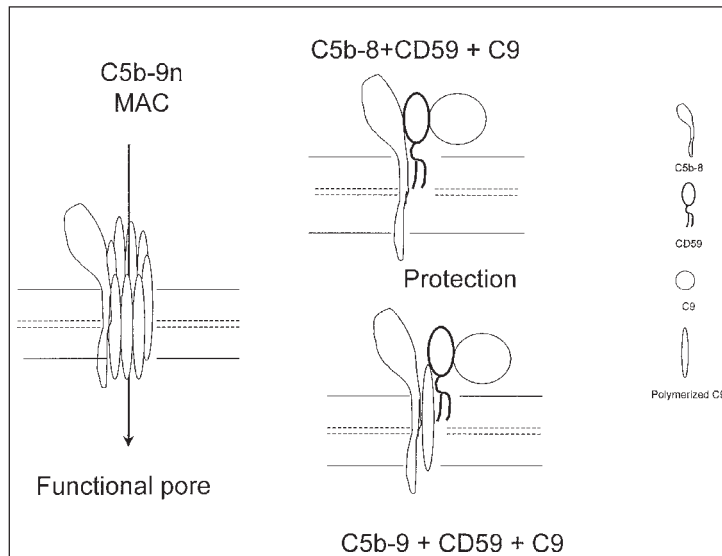


Fig. 7.4. Mechanism of action of CD59. CD59 binds to C5b-8 or C5b-9 and prevents binding and polymerization of C9, thereby inhibiting functional MAC formation.

exists. Based on this species specificity, the binding site for CD59 in C9 has been localized between Cys359 and Cys384 of C9, with an additional contribution by residues C-terminal to this segment,⁹⁰ while the binding site in C8 was assigned to the region between Cys345 and Cys369 in the C8 α -chain, a region homologous to C9.⁹¹

To inhibit C, CD59 has to be in close proximity to the membrane, and when CD59 is spaced away from the membrane by attaching to the amino-terminus of DAF it is unable to prevent MAC formation.⁹² Soluble CD59, either purified from urine or generated by deletion of the GPI anchor attachment site, is at least 100 times less efficient than membrane-incorporated CD59 in preventing MAC formation.⁹³

Structure

The primary sequence of CD59 has been deduced from cDNA clones.^{78,94} CD59 belongs to a superfamily of proteins that include Ly-6 and the urokinase plasminogen-activator receptor (CD87). Because of the homology found with members of the Ly-6 family (27%), including the conservation of the 10 cysteines, it had been suggested that Ly-6 was the mouse analogue of human CD59. However, lack of C-inhibitory activity, different chromosomal localization and the recent cloning of mouse CD59 has shown that this is not the case.⁹⁵

The CD59 gene is about 27 kb and consists of one 5'-untranslated exon and three coding exons.^{96,97} The second exon encodes the hydrophobic leader sequence of the protein, and the third exon encodes the amino-terminal portion of the mature protein. The fourth exon encodes the remainder of the mature protein, including the hydrophobic sequence necessary for GPI anchor attachment. The gene structure is similar to that of mouse Ly-6 except for the larger size of CD59 introns. Northern blot analysis showed that more than four different CD59 mRNA molecules were generated by alternative polyadenylation.

Karyotypic analysis showed that the gene for CD59 was localized in the region p13 of the short arm of chromosome 11.^{98,99}

Translation of the 370 bp CD59 mRNA coding sequence generates a 128 aa protein. N-terminal amino acid sequencing has determined that the first 25 amino acids of the translated protein are cleaved off, and lysine is the N-terminal amino acid of the mature protein.⁸² Tryptic digestion of CD59 has identified the GPI-anchoring site at asparagine 77 of the mature protein.¹⁰⁰ This study also assigned the following disulfide-linked cysteine pairs: Cys3-Cys26, Cys6-Cys13, Cys19-Cys39, Cys45-Cys63 (or 64) and Cys63 (or 64)-Cys69, generating 5 different loops.

CD59 runs on gels as an 18-20 kDa protein, a Mr much larger than expected based on its amino acid contents. Deglycosylation with Endo-F resulted in a reduction of 6 kDa, while treatment with neuraminidase had only a marginal effect.^{78,82} Removal of the GPI anchor with PIPLC even increased the Mr by 1 kDa.⁷⁸ CD59 has 2 potential *N*-glycosylation sites at position 8 and 18, but sequencing showed that only position 18 is occupied; position 8 is unusable because residue 9 is a proline.⁷⁸ Detailed analysis of the carbohydrate structure revealed that CD59 may also have some *O*-linked carbohydrate, although the site of attachment could not be determined.¹⁰¹ Enzymatic removal of the *N*-linked carbohydrate of CD59 abolished its functional activity,¹⁰² but eliminating the *N*-glycosylation site by deleting N at position 18 had no effect on^{103,104} or even enhanced¹⁰⁵ the complement inhibitory activity of CD59.

Detailed mutational analysis by three different groups has assigned the C-inhibiting site of CD59 to a region between amino acids 40 and 61, indicating the involvement of the third and fourth loops.¹⁰⁴⁻¹⁰⁶ Nuclear magnetic resonance has resolved the three dimensional structure of urine and erythrocyte-derived CD59 and confirmed the localization of the *N*-glycosylation site and disulfide bonds.^{107,108}

On Western blots, CD59 of nucleated cells often shows a ladder pattern. This is most likely due to differences in glycosylation, and Mr up to 25 kDa can be found. Sometimes 40 and 80 kDa proteins with anti-CD59 reactivity can be observed. These are most likely aggregates that often arise during purification, (ref. 78 and our unpublished observations). In cells overexpressing CD59, a 14 kDa protein can be found which probably reflects newly synthesized but not yet glycosylated CD59.³⁸

Distribution

CD59 has a very wide tissue distribution and has been found on all cells of hemopoietic origin. It is also widely expressed on tissues including endothelial cells, cells of the peripheral and central nervous system and on spermatozoa. Soluble forms of CD59 have been found in urine,⁷⁸ seminal plasma,¹⁰⁹ breast milk¹¹⁰ and in supernatants of cultured cells.³⁸ CD59 found in urine has lost its GPI anchor and cannot reinsert in a membrane.⁷⁸

Regulation of Expression

Upregulation of expression of C-inhibitors at sites of inflammation will protect the cells from harmful side effects of C-activation. Many cell activation events induced by C are mediated through the MAC.¹¹¹ Protection against MAC by upregulation of CD59 would be an important strategy to prevent tissue damage. Inflammatory agents, including C, have been studied for their effects on the level of CD59 expression.

C is thought to be involved in damaging the colonic mucosa in ulcerative colitis (UC). While in normal colonic epithelia, GPI-anchored molecules are targeted to the apical surface, enhanced expression of DAF and CD59 on epithelial cells of UC also results in redistribution to the basolateral surfaces.¹¹² This altered cell distribution was also observed in colonic mucosa in other inflammatory bowel diseases, such as ischemic colitis. In

rheumatoid arthritis, CD59 expression was increased in the diseased cartilage of joints compared to normal cartilage. IL-1 treatment elicited the same effect in normal cartilage.²⁹

Although sublethal C-attack caused increased resistance to subsequent C-attack, it did not result in an increase in expression of CD59 or other C-regulatory molecules on K562 cells.¹¹³ The same study showed that expression of CD59 and C-resistance were inversely correlated; confluent cells were low CD59 and C-resistant, whereas cells growing in log phase were high CD59 and C-susceptible, showing that expression of C-regulators is not the only factor involved in resistance to C-lysis.

The expression of CD59 and several other GPI-anchored molecules, including DAF, were decreased in non-lesional psoriatic skin and virtually abolished in lesional psoriatic skin. The reduction of all GPI-anchored molecules, but not of the TM molecules, suggested a shedding or enzymatic cleavage specific for the GPI-anchored molecules.¹¹⁴

Tumor cells often have a high level of expression of C-regulatory molecules. Therapeutic downregulation of expression would augment C-mediated immune surveillance. Levamisole was found to downregulate CD59 expression on the human colorectal cell lines HT29 and Caco-2 which may partially explain the effects of Levamisole in the reduction of incidence of colon cancer relapse following surgical resection.¹¹⁵

PMA has been shown to induce an up to 15-fold increase in CD59 expression on a variety of cells including the EA.hy 926 endothelial cell line,¹¹⁶ K562 erythroblasts^{110,117} and the HOG oligodendrocyte cell line.³⁷ This increased expression was due to de novo mRNA and protein synthesis. Analysis of the promoter region of CD59 showed that the first 70 nucleotides immediately 5' of the transcriptional start site of the CD59 gene were essential for both constitutive and PMA-responsive transcription; however, responsiveness to PMA was cell line-specific and could not be induced in all cell lines.¹¹⁸ Exposure of K562 erythro-leukemia cells to a variety of stimulants (dexamethasone, calcium ionophore, lipopolysaccharide, IL-1, TNF- α , hemin, and cyclic AMP) had no effect on CD59 expression.¹¹⁷ Endothelial cells (EC) slightly upregulated CD59 upon incubation with TNF- α and downregulated when incubated with IL-1 β .¹¹⁹ Activation of neutrophils by stimulation with fMLP or calcium ionophore A23187 induced an immediate upregulation of CD59 as a consequence of release from intracellular stores. Upregulation was dependent on release of calcium from intracellular stores.¹¹²

Deficiencies

PNH is caused by an autosomal mutation in the PIG-A gene, which causes a deficiency of a component of GPI biosynthesis with the consequence that no GPI anchor is attached to proteins with the correct signal sequence.⁴⁸ Patients suffer from recurrent hemolysis. The importance of deficiency of CD59 in PNH was demonstrated in one patient with severe PNH who was shown to be deficient only in CD59. All other GPI-anchored molecules, including DAF, were found to be normally expressed.^{121,122} Other circulating cells and tissues of this patient were also found to be completely devoid of CD59. The molecular basis of this deficiency was a base deletion which caused a codon frame shift resulting in failure to produce intact CD59.¹²³ The parents and cousins of the patient had decreased CD59, suggesting that the deficiency is hereditary and that complete deletion was brought about by a homozygous abnormality in the CD59 gene.

Other Species

CD59 analogues have been purified and/or cloned from a variety of mammalian species, including monkeys (baboon, owl monkey, African green monkey, marmoset),¹²⁴ rat,^{125,126} mouse,⁹⁵ sheep,¹²⁷ pig,^{89,128} goat and rabbit (our unpublished results). Overall identity at the protein level between human and baboon, rat and mouse was 82%, 44% and

34% respectively, while rat and mouse were 60% identical. In all cases the cysteines and the N-glycosylation site were conserved. The highest degree of homology observed was between sheep and goat (90% of first 20 amino acids), and this was the only combination where antibodies showed cross-species reactivity (our unpublished results).

The CD59 analogues purified and characterized all had a similar Mr to CD59 and showed C-inhibitory activity toward human C8 and C9. All of them, however, showed some species selectivity. CD59 on rat, sheep and pig erythrocyte were all sensitive to PIPLC cleavage, demonstrating that these species expressed the simple two lipid GPI anchor on their erythrocytes.^{125,127}

The gene encoding the mouse analogue of human CD59 has been localized to the E2-E4 region of mouse chromosome 2, a region that is syntenous with the location of the human CD59 gene on chromosome 11p13.⁹⁵ No transmembrane species of any CD59 analogue has yet been found and is not known if any of the analogues is encoded by more than one gene. The distribution of the rat and sheep CD59 species is different from that of human CD59. Rat CD59 was not detected on platelets and lymphocytes¹²⁵ and newborn rats did not express CD59 on oligodendrocytes.¹²⁹ Sheep CD59 was not detected on sheep platelets.¹²⁷

Parasites

Expression of inhibitors of the terminal pathway by parasites or acquisition of GPI-anchored inhibitors from the host would enhance parasite survival in the blood. Some stages of the parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi* are very resistant to lysis by C. While the amastigote and epimastigote activate C via the AP to similar degrees, only the epimastigotes are destroyed.¹³⁰ Restriction at the final stage of MAC assembly was demonstrated by showing a reduced binding of C9 to amastigotes. Reactivity of a polyclonal anti-human CD59 antibody with cell lysates of amastigotes and trypomastigotes but not epimastigotes, and the isolation of MAC-inhibitory activity from cell supernatants of cultured amastigotes and trypomastigotes, suggests that *T. cruzi* expresses a molecule with functional and antigenic similarity to CD59 (Tambourgi DV, personal communication).

Crossreactivity of a polyclonal anti-human CD59 antibody with a 94 kDa GPI-anchored protein on *Schistosoma mansoni* has been demonstrated. The same antibody enhanced the susceptibility of schistosomula to C-mediated lysis, suggesting that this protein had functional and antigenic similarity to CD59. No sequence is known for this protein and it is not clear whether it is host derived or parasite encoded.¹³¹

Viruses and Virus-Infected Cells

Mimicking, enhancing expression of and/or capturing human C-regulators would aid the survival of viruses and virus-infected cells in the host. The only virus so far identified to express an analogue of CD59 is Herpesvirus saimiri (HVS). This virus is a T lymphotropic tumor virus that causes lymphomas and leukemias in various New World primates other than its natural host, the squirrel monkey (*Saimiri sciureus*). An open reading frame of 363 nucleotides in the viral genome encoded a 121 amino acid protein which showed 48% homology to human CD59.¹³² BALB/3T3 cells stably expressing HVS-CD59 or HuCD59 were equally well protected from C-mediated lysis by human serum.¹³³ Other mechanisms used by viruses to avoid C-mediated lysis include increasing expression of C-regulators on the surface of the host cell and capturing C-regulators on the budding virion. HIV-1 virions, grown in CHO cells expressing either human CD46, CD55 or CD59, were shown to incorporate GPI-anchored CD55 and CD59 as well as transmembrane CD46.¹³⁴ Further evidence that HIV captures CD59 from the host cell is provided by the observation that HIV virus grown in GPI anchor-deficient cells was more sensitive to C-mediated lysis than virus grown in normal cells.¹³⁵ Plasma HIV-1 virus appeared more sensitive to C than

primary isolates. While primary isolated virions contained CD46, CD55, and CD59, only CD59 was detected on plasma virus.⁶⁵ Both CD59 and CD55 were associated with the external membrane of HTLV-I derived from MT2 cells, and antisera to CD55 and CD59 induced C-mediated lysis of HTLV-I virions. Purified HCMV produced in human foreskin fibroblasts also contained both CD55 and CD59.¹³⁶ Infection of fibroblasts or glioblastoma cells with human cytomegalovirus did not alter the expression of CD59 on these cells.⁶⁷

Signaling

Like other GPI-anchored molecules (see chapter 4) crosslinking of CD59 induces a wide range of signaling events (rise in intracellular calcium, tyrosine phosphorylation, inositol phosphate production, IL-2 production, cell proliferation) in a variety of nucleated cells.¹³⁷⁻¹³⁹ Incorporation of purified CD59 into a CD59 negative cell line showed that association of CD59 with Src-kinases in cholesterol-rich patches is an essential requirement for the signaling capacity of CD59.¹⁴⁰ In T cells, presence of the T-cell receptor is a requirement for cell activation through CD59, but on other cells no similar association with a receptor-signaling complex has yet been found.

Ligand

One of the groups which first discovered CD59 identified it as a cell surface molecule involved in the CD2-dependent rosetting of T cells with erythrocytes.⁸³ In an in vitro binding assay with purified CD58 and CD59, CD2⁺ cells bound to immobilized CD58 and also to CD59. It was demonstrated that the binding sites on CD2 for CD58 and CD59 were overlapping but nonidentical. These observations suggest that direct interactions between CD2 and both CD58 and CD59 contribute to T-cell activation and adhesion.¹⁴¹ Binding of CD59 could be inhibited by some but not all anti-CD59 antibodies.¹⁴² However, other groups, using the highly sensitive surface plasmon resonance technique, could not find any interaction of CD59 with CD2.¹⁴³

Homologous Restriction Factor

The first inhibitor of the membrane attack complex discovered was identified and purified by its ability to bind C8 and C9 and is known by the names homologous restriction factor (HRF),¹⁴⁴ C8-binding protein¹⁴⁵ and MAC inhibiting protein (MIP).¹⁴⁶ It was first isolated from human erythrocytes as a 38 kDa protein by affinity chromatography using a C9-Sepharose column.¹⁴⁴ Because of its ability to protect against lysis by complement of the same species, it was named homologous restriction factor (HRF). Antibodies raised against this protein reacted mainly with a 65 kDa molecule, suggesting that the 38 kDa protein constituted a fragment of membrane HRF. A soluble form of HRF with Mr of 65 kDa (HRF-U) was isolated from normal human urine.¹⁴⁷ HRF purified from erythrocyte membranes by virtue of its binding to C8 had a Mr of 65 kDa.¹⁴⁵ Erythrocyte-derived HRF had a Mr of 55 kDa under nonreducing conditions and 65 kDa under reducing conditions.¹⁴⁶ HRF was also found in plasma, urine, saliva and cerebrospinal fluid.

HRF had a similar function to CD59 in that it restricted the binding of C9 to C5b-8 and so limited cell damage. The capacity to incorporate into chicken erythrocytes, the absence on erythrocytes of PNH patients^{148,149} and susceptibility to release by PIPLC¹⁵⁰ showed that HRF was also a GPI-anchored C-regulator. Very little is known about this protein; there is no amino-terminal amino acid or DNA sequence known and no analogues in other animals have been described. The only relation with disease is the absence of the protein on erythrocytes of PNH patients.^{148,149}

Why Are So Many C-Regulatory Molecules Anchored through a GPI Anchor?

Of the five known C-regulatory molecules, three are anchored to the membrane through a GPI anchor. Originally it was thought that the GPI anchors would give the molecules more lateral mobility, enabling them to reach their target more quickly and so exert their function more efficiently. However, TM forms of DAF and CD59, generated by replacing the GPI anchor sequence by the TM and cytoplasmic tail of MCP, showed similar ability to decay the C3-convertase¹⁵¹ or prevent MAC formation¹⁵² (our unpublished results). One possibility is that the selection of GPI anchoring for C-regulatory proteins relates to the ability of GPI-anchored molecules to induce cell activation (see chapter 4). The precise link is still poorly understood, but further study may reveal a role in protection against C for the GPI anchor on these molecules. Another possible reason for GPI anchoring relates to the ability of these molecules to transfer to other cells (see chapter 10). Transfer of GPI-anchored C-regulatory molecules is an efficient way of conferring C-resistance on cells that do not express endogenous C-regulatory molecules. This phenomenon is best illustrated by the observation that mice and pigs, expressing human DAF and CD59 under control of the globin promoter, (resulting in exclusive expression of these molecules on erythrocytes), were found also to have DAF and CD59 on the endothelial cells lining the vascular system in sufficient quantities to protect against C.^{153,154} The high content of DAF and CD59 in prostasomes in seminal fluid may, by a similar transfer process, confer protection on the sperm in the female genital tract.¹⁵⁵

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GPI-Containing Molecules of Pathogenic Mycobacteria and Protozoa

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GPI-anchored proteins and glycolipids are widely distributed throughout eukaryotes. They are extremely abundant in protozoan parasites and often represent major cell surface constituents of these organisms which are exposed to variable and mostly unfavorable environments throughout their life cycles. It is likely that these surface molecules have evolved to accommodate these harsh conditions, and the use of GPI moieties rather than trans-membrane segments to anchor surface antigens may be advantageous in allowing very high levels of protein packing and in reducing the interactions of extracellular proteins with the interior of the cell. The GPI-linked glycolipids, coat proteins and enzymes of parasites are also important players in the interactions with arthropod or mammalian hosts and in the avoidance of destruction by the host's immune system. More recently, several GPI structures of parasite origin have been shown to induce or modulate host cell functions to the parasite's benefit, a finding which could partially explain the outcome of certain diseases. These effects are mediated by changes in the physical properties and/or signaling pathways of host cell membranes, and the understanding of the molecular mechanisms underlying the signaling interferences caused by parasite products is of considerable interest in explaining both parasite virulence and transmembrane signaling in mammalian cells.

Mycobacterial GPI-Linked Molecules

The causative agents of tuberculosis and leprosy belong to the species of mycobacteria. Successful tissue reactions to mycobacteria consist of granuloma wherein macrophages phagocytose and kill those microorganisms. Neither *M. tuberculosis* nor *M. leprae* secrete any toxin and they owe their virulence properties to the nature and constituents of their envelopes. The mycobacterial envelopes are thick and impermeable barriers consisting of a framework of peptidoglycans, arabinogalactans and mycolic acids. The GPI-linked lipomannans (LM) and lipoarabinomannans (LAMs) are inserted within this framework and can amount to 5 mg/g of bacterial weight.¹ They are readily released in blood and infected tissues.^{2,3} Part of these LMs and LAMs are integrated in the underlying mycobacterial plasma membrane by means of their GPI anchor. LM and LAM polymers originate from phosphatidylinositolmannosides (PIMs) through biosynthetic pathways that are still incompletely defined.⁴ The mycobacterial GPIs only contain mannoses in the glycan that links the phosphatidylinositol to the mannan or arabinan polymers⁵ and so differ from the canonical Man α 1-2Man α 1-6Man α 1-4GlcN α 1-6*myo*-inositol GPI glycan core.^{6,7} The

arabinan termini of the large LAM polymers may either be unsubstituted (Ara-LAMs) or capped with mannose (Man-LAMs). Whether distinct biological properties (virulence, speed of growth) characterize Mycobacteria that elaborate the different LAMs is not yet fully understood.

Biological Effects of Mycobacterial GPI-Linked Molecules

LAMs play a key role in the recognition and phagocytosis of Mycobacteria and serve as a ligand for the mannose receptor of macrophages.⁸⁻¹⁰ In addition, released LAMs exert widespread effects on monocytes and macrophages *in vitro*.^{12,13} In particular, LAMs are able to deactivate the phagocytic functions of macrophages and diminish their responsiveness to T lymphocyte-derived interferon- γ ,¹¹⁻¹³ while at the same time stimulating the macrophage production of several proinflammatory cytokines.¹⁴ Man-LAMs appear less potent than Ara-LAMs in inducing TNF- α , IL-1, IL-6 and IL-10, but retain the capacity to induce expression of the “deactivating” TGF- β cytokine.¹⁵ The effects of LAMs on cytokine production by macrophages^{5,16} and T lymphocytes^{14,17} are all abolished by deacylation of the molecule. This points to the importance of the membrane-seeking, lipophilic portion of the GPI anchor in promoting the biological effects of LAMs. Recently, the polar PIM structure on the mycobacterial surface was shown to serve as an adhesin for nonphagocytic cells in a mannan-inhibitable manner.¹⁸ The neutralization of cytotoxic free oxygen radicals by LAMs also diminishes the macrophage bactericidal capacity,¹⁹ but paradoxically stimulates the production of nitric oxide.²⁰ In any event, the main block in the bactericidal pathway of macrophages towards live Mycobacteria resides in the early endosomes,²¹⁻²³ which become unable to fuse with lysosomes and to accumulate the membrane proton ATPase complexes responsible for vesicle acidification.²⁴ LAMs have been identified histochemically in vesicles free of Mycobacteria and therefore must become redistributed among intracellular membranes of the infected macrophage,²⁵ possibly through transfer to host cell membranes.²⁶ Whether LAMs and related molecules have any disruptive role to play in the vesicular traffic of Mycobacteria-infected macrophages remains an important question to be addressed.

The T lymphocyte proliferative response is inhibited by LAMs,^{14,16,17,27} and downregulation of IL-2, IL-5 and GM-CSF gene expression in response to LAMs has been observed in human T cells.²⁸ However, detailed investigations of the direct effects of LAMs on T lymphocytes are still lacking.

LAMs are therefore nontoxic molecules capable of inducing contrasting responses in phagocytes and T cells. On the one hand, they enhance cytokine production, and on the other considerably impair phagocytosis and bactericidal activity. LAMs have been reported to stimulate tyrosine phosphatases in macrophage membranes and could indeed deactivate transmembrane signaling in this manner.²⁹ It is therefore expected that LAMs should profoundly perturb cellular interactions leading to protective responses against mycobacterial pathogens.

Interactions of Mycobacterial GPI-Linked Molecules with Host Cell Surface

PIMs, LMs and LAMs released by mycobacteria can integrate mammalian plasma membranes, a capacity which is dependent on the presence of the acyl chains as shown by deacylation and competition experiments.³⁰ Integration of LAMs in target cells occurs preferentially in plasma membrane domains already enriched in endogenous GPI-linked surface glycoproteins and glycosphingolipids.³⁰ In addition, LAMs and their derivatives, either as released molecules or as part of mycobacterial envelopes, also interact with defined receptors on the surface of specialized cells.

Mannose Receptors

The interaction of the mannosyl chains of LAMs with mannose receptors on phagocytes is more efficient with high virulence mycobacterial strains (Erdman and H37Rv) than low virulence (H37Ra) ones,¹⁰ and free LAMs inhibit the nonopsonic binding of Mycobacteria to macrophages.⁸ The terminal di-mannosyl unit present in both high and low virulence strains is necessary for interaction with the mannose receptor, but other undefined structural features of the LAM molecule are required to account for the difference in virulence. LAM molecules with arabinan groups at their termini (Ara-LAMs) no longer bind to mannose receptors.^{9,10}

CD14

LAMs and several other lipoglycans³¹ as well as peptidoglycans³² bind to the GPI-linked lipopolysaccharide (LPS) receptor CD14 (see chapters 4 and 5). This receptor has been proposed to bind LAMs and transmit activation signals to phagocytic cells involved in the innate defense mechanisms.³¹ GPI-anchored CD14 may be confined to specialized domains of the plasma membrane and could therefore determine the kind of interactions undergone by LPS or LAMs with cell membranes. Soluble CD14 and LAM-binding proteins could also cooperate in transferring LAMs to phospholipid bilayers, utilizing a mechanism similar to that suggested for LPS.³²

CD1

LAMs also interact with the CD1 family of antigen-presenting molecules.^{15,34} Unlike the molecules encoded in the major histocompatibility complex, CD1b is a nonpolymorphic antigen-presenting surface molecule characterized by an unusual hydrophobic groove which accommodates the lipid part of mycobacterial lipoglycans and may also present their carbohydrate portion to CD1-restricted T lymphocytes.^{35,36} The association of LAMs with CD1 is thought to take place in late endosome/lysosome vesicles, where MHC class II molecules also acquire their antigenic peptides.³⁷ LAM and related lipoglycans elicit strong immune responses in infected individuals.^{3,4} It is possible that the anti-carbohydrate antibody response observed in patients is initiated by the presentation of LAM antigens to CD1-restricted T lymphocytes^{34,37} and that CD1-restricted, cytotoxic T cells may likewise contribute to killing mycobacteria-infected macrophages.³⁸ However, the nonprotective humoral response appears to prevail over the protective cellular one in naive human populations.³⁹

GPI in Protozoa

Several methods are used to suggest or demonstrate the presence of a GPI anchor in protozoan antigens, e.g., metabolic labeling experiments using specific precursors of GPIs, direct chemical characterization of the anchor, determination of cDNA sequences which encode characteristic hydrophobic carboxy-termini,⁴⁰ and solubilization of the antigen after exposure to phosphatidylinositol-specific phospholipase C (PI-PLC). GPI anchors in which the inositol is acylated are, however, resistant to PI-PLC treatment. The hallmark of GPI-anchored proteins is the remarkably conserved linear polysaccharide structure linking the carboxy-terminal amino acid of the protein to the lipid. The lipid moiety itself and the side chains of the conserved backbone are, however, very heterogeneous.⁶ Protozoan GPI anchors for which structural information is available are depicted in Figure 8.1. It is noteworthy that a given protein may be anchored by different types of lipids. The structure of some constituents of GPI and GPI-related glycolipids is shown in Figure 8.2.

Besides GPI-anchored proteins, free glycolipids called glycoinositol phospholipids (GIPLs), which contain the conserved structure $\text{Man}\alpha 1-4\text{GlcN}\alpha 1-6\text{myo-inositol-1-PO}_4$, are

Protein (species)	R1	R2 / R2'	R3	R4	Lipid
VSG (<i>T. brucei</i> MITat 1.4)	OH	±Galα1-2Galα1-6Galα1-3 ±Galα1-2	OH	OH	Glycerolipid 1-O-acyl (C14:0) 2-O-acyl (C14:0)
VSG (<i>T. congolense</i>)	OH	Galβ1-6GlcNAcβ1-4	OH	OH	Glycerolipid 1-O-acyl (C14:0) 2-O-acyl (C14:0)
Procyclin/PARP (<i>T. brucei</i>)	OH	[NANA] ₅ βGal ₉ βGlcNAc ₉ ^a	OH	Acyl various	Glycerolipid 1-O-acyl (C18:0) 2-O-Jyso 1-O-alkyl (C18:0)
35/50 mucin ^b epimastigote (<i>T. cruzi</i>)	Manα1-2	OH	2-aminoethyl- phosphonate	OH	Glycerolipid 1-O-alkyl (C16:0) 2-O-acyl (C16:0)
35/50 mucin metacyclic trypomastigote (<i>T. cruzi</i>)	Manα1-2	OH	2-aminoethyl- phosphonate	OH	Ceramide Sphinganine N-acyl (C16:0) (C24:0)
gp90/1G7 (<i>T. cruzi</i>)	Manα1-2	OH	2-aminoethyl- phosphonate	OH	Glycerolipid 1-O-alkyl (C16:0) 2-O-acyl (C16:0)
Tc-85 (<i>T. cruzi</i>)	OH	OH	?	OH ^d	Glycerolipid 1-O-alkyl (C16:0) ?
Ssp-4 (<i>T. cruzi</i>)	?	?	?	?	Ceramide Sphinganine N-acyl (C16:0) (C18:0)
Gp63 (<i>L. major</i> <i>L. mexicana</i>)	OH	OH	OH	OH	Glycerolipid 1-O-alkyl (C24:0) 2-O-acyl
MSP-1 / MSP-2 (<i>P. falciparum</i>)	Xxx-Manα1-2 ^e	OH	OH	Acyl	Glycerolipid 1-O-acyl 2-O-acyl
P30 / gp23 (<i>T. gondii</i>)	OH	±Glcα1-4GalNAcβ1-3	OH	Acyl	Glycerolipid 1-O-acyl 2-O-acyl

Fig. 8.1. Structural features of GPI anchors found in protozoan proteins. The core structure depicted at the top of the Figure is conserved in all GPI anchors. This core structure may carry additional substituents at various positions (R1 to R4), which are listed in the included table. The lipid moiety is either a glycerolipid or a ceramide. In glycerolipids, the hydroxyl group at position 1 of the glycerol is either esterified with a fatty acid (acyl) or etherified with a fatty alcohol (alkyl). When known, the length of the carbon chain and the number of double bonds are indicated. If various types of lipids exist on the same protein, the major species is indicated in boldface. Microheterogeneity is present in most lipids, except in those of the VSGs that consist exclusively of myristic acid. For the detailed structure of the lipids, see Figure 8.2. a) The side chain of procyclin/PARP is attached at position R2 and contains an undefined sialylated poly lactosamine; b) A portion of the 35/50 kDa mucin of *T. cruzi* is linked to the GPI via AEP instead of the conserved ethanolamine phosphate; c) The ceramide lipid is enriched in the inositol; ¹¹⁸ d) The shed form of the protein is acylated on the inositol; ¹¹⁸ e) Xxx is a nitrous acid-sensitive, uncharacterized substituent. References: *T. brucei* VSG, ⁴⁶ *T. congolense* VSG, ²⁹² procyclin, ^{68,69,293} 35/50 kDa mucin epimastigote, ^{130,131} 35/50 kDa mucin trypomastigote; ¹³¹ gp90/1G7, ^{132,133} Tc-85; ¹¹⁷ Ssp-4, ¹³⁸ Gp63; ^{182,183} MSP-1/MSP-2, ^{272,277} P30 ²⁹⁴ and gp23. ²⁸⁸

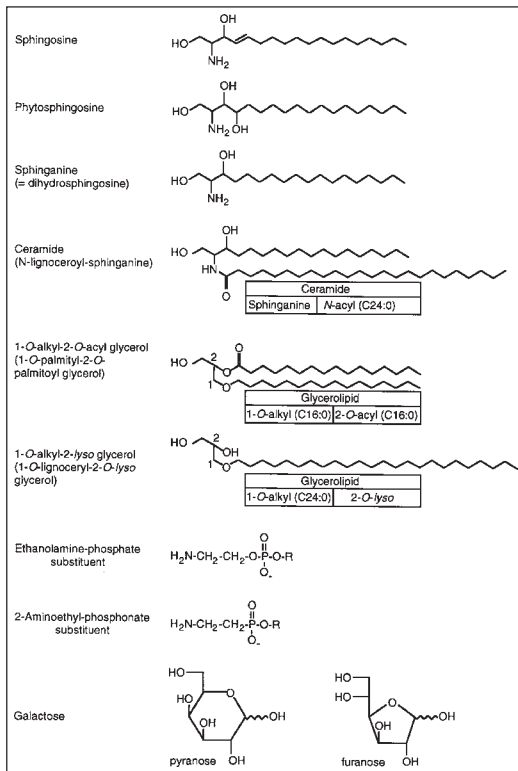


Fig. 8.2. Structures occurring in GPIs, GIPLs and LPG. Sphingosine, sphinganine and phytosphingosine are long base constituents of ceramides which are found in some GPI-anchored proteins and in several GIPLs. Alkyl-acyl glycerol is a common lipid component of both glycoinositol phospholipids (GIPLs) and protein GPIs. *Lyso*-alkyl glycerol is found in the LPG of *Leishmania* and in some GIPLs. Lipid structures are summarized in boxes showing the long base chain and fatty acid components for ceramides and the major acyl and/or alkyl chains for glycerolipids. Aminoethyl-phosphonate is a common substituent in *T. cruzi*, *Herpetomonas* and *Leptomonas* proteins and GIPLs. Galactose in the furanose ring configuration occurs in *T. cruzi* *O*- and *N*-linked oligosaccharides, in the lipophosphoglycan of *Leishmania*, in the lipoarabinogalactan of *Crithidia* and in GIPLs of *T. cruzi*, *Leishmania*, *Endotrypanum* and *Leptomonas*.

often major constituents of parasite surfaces (Fig. 8.3). GIPLs are characterized by a wide variety of carbohydrate and lipid structures, some of which provide the membrane anchor for bigger hydrophilic polymers such as in *Crithidia* lipoarabinogalactan⁴¹ and in *Leishmania* lipophosphoglycan (Fig. 8.4).

African Trypanosomes

Introduction and Life Cycle

Trypanosomes are the causative agents of animal trypanosomiasis (due to *T. vivax*, *T. congolense*, *T. evansi*, *T. equiperdum* and *T. brucei*) and of sleeping sickness in man (due to *T. brucei rhodiense* and *T. brucei gambiense*). These diseases are characterized by cyclic waves of fever that correlate with spikes of trypanosomes in the blood. The African *T. vivax*, *T. congolense* and *T. brucei* parasites are generally transmitted by the *Glossina* species of tsetse fly. In the mammalian bloodstream, the trypanosomes consist of a pleomorphic population of long, slender dividing forms, intermediate forms, and nondividing short stumpy forms, all of which are surface-coated with variant surface glycoprotein (VSG). Metabolic changes in the stumpy forms facilitate their developmental adaptation after ingestion by the fly, whereupon they differentiate and multiply in the tsetse midgut as noninfective procyclic trypomastigote forms. Procyclic forms migrate to the anterior portion of the gut (*T. vivax*, *T. congolense*) or colonize the salivary glands (*T. brucei*) where they differentiate and multiply as epimastigotes. Procyclic trypomastigotes and epimastigotes no longer express VSG, but switch to a different surface protein (procyclin/PARP in *T. brucei*;

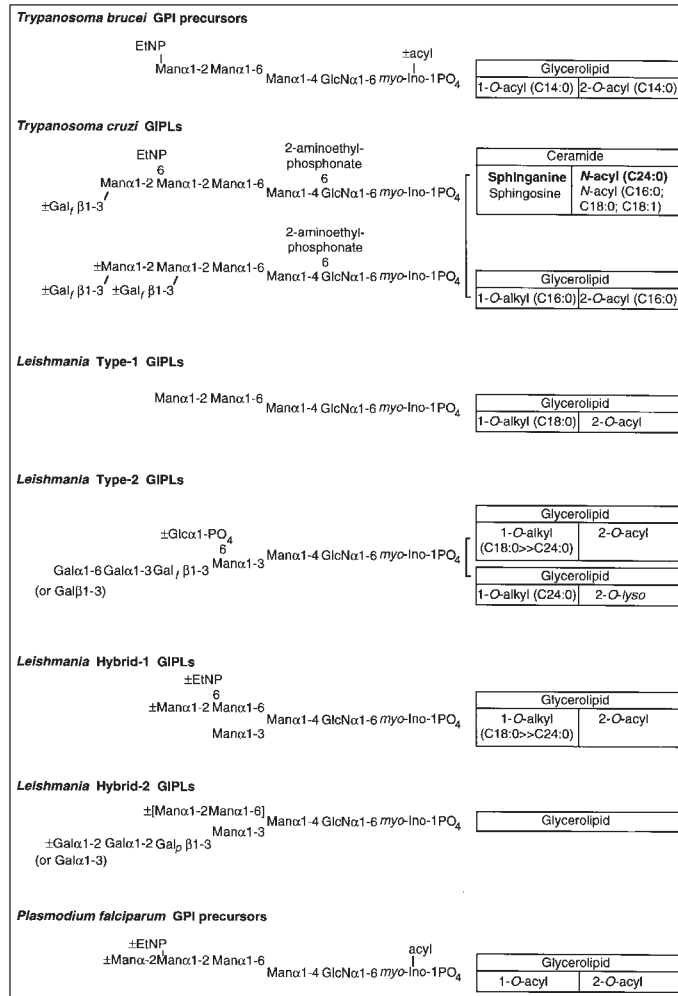


Fig. 8.3. Structure of *Trypanosoma*, *Leishmania* and *Plasmodium* GPIs and GPI precursors. Only representative GPI species are shown. In most cases shorter end products or intermediates have also been characterized. When known, the nature and composition of the lipid component is shown in a box (see Fig. 8.2 for details). References: *T. brucei*,^{50,295,296} *T. cruzi*,¹⁵⁴⁻¹⁵⁶ *Leishmania* Type-1,²⁰⁹ Type-2,^{210,213,297} Hybrid-1,^{183,208,298} Hybrid-2 (McConville MJ, personal communication), *P. falciparum*.²⁷⁸

GARP in *T. congolense*). After division, epimastigotes resume synthesis of the VSG coat and mature to nondividing, free-swimming, infective metacyclic trypomastigotes (for a review, see refs. 42,43).

Variant Surface Glycoprotein (VSG)

The trypanosome uses the large, serially expressed repertoire of antigenically distinct VSGs, for which over a thousand genes are present in its genome. The VSG has the dual function of preventing complement-activated lysis by the alternative pathway and allowing

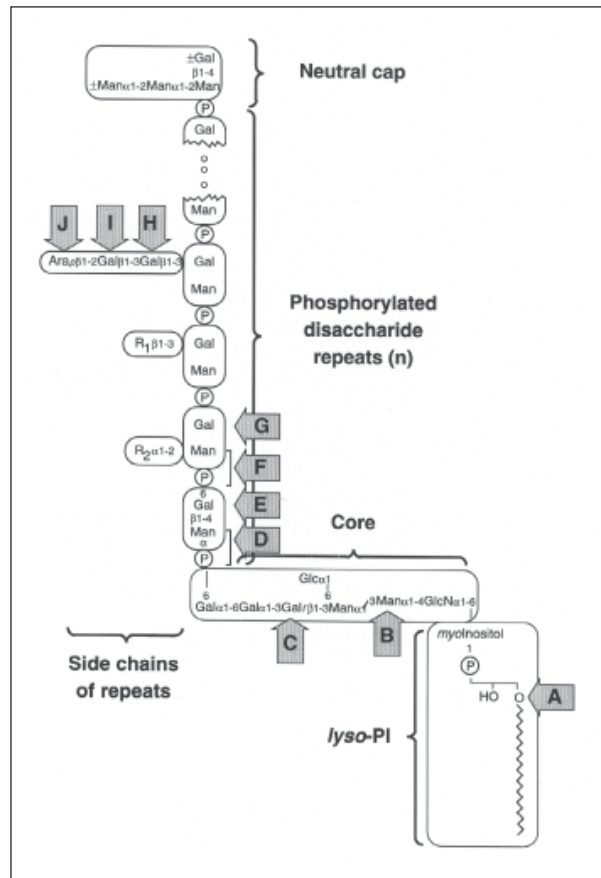


Fig. 8.4. Schematic structure and biosynthesis of *Leishmania* lipophosphoglycan (LPG). Schematic representation of LPG showing phosphatidylinositol (PI), core, phosphorylated disaccharide repeats and cap structures. The *lyso*-PI contains mainly C24:0 and C26:0 long alkyl chains. The phosphorylated disaccharide repeats can be substituted either on the Gal (R_1) or on the Man (R_2) residues. Residues for which activated precursors or biosynthetic enzymes have been characterized are indicated with arrowheads containing a capital letter: A. NADH-dependent alkyl-glycerol cleavage enzyme;²⁹⁹ Biosynthesis occurs in glycosomes;³⁰⁰ B. Transferred by a Dol-P-Man: GlcN-P1 α 1-4-mannosyltransferase;³⁰¹ C. Defective addition in *L. donovani* R2D2 mutant (*lpg1*⁻).^{302,303} LPG1 is a Golgi enzyme;³⁰⁴ D. Defective addition in *L. donovani* C3PO mutant (*lpg2*⁻).³⁰⁵ LPG2 is a Golgi transporter allowing GDP-Man uptake into the Golgi.³⁰⁶ The initiating mannosyl-phosphate is transferred by a Mn²⁺-dependent GDP-Man: Gal α 1-6Gal-R α -mannosylphosphate transferase whose activity is downregulated in the amastigote stage;³⁰⁷ E. Defective addition in OB1 mutant (*lpg3*⁻). LPG3 is a chaperone which allows the first repeating unit to have the Gal residue attached (S. J. Turco and S. Beverley, unpublished observations); F. Transferred from GDP-Man³⁰⁸ by a GDP-Man: Gal β 1-4Man α -1-PO4-R α -mannosylphosphate transferase.³⁰⁹ Defective addition in JEDI mutant (*lpg4*⁻). LPG4 might be the elongating mannosylphosphate transferase (S. J. Turco and S. Beverley, unpublished observations); G. Transferred from UDP-Gal;³⁰⁸ H. Defective addition in *L. major* Spock mutant.²²⁹ Transferred on phosphorylated disaccharide repeats from UDP-Gal by a Mn²⁺-dependent β 1-3 galactosyl transferase;^{310,311} I. - Transferred from UDP-Gal by a β 1-3 galactosyl transferase activity distinct from the previous one (see point G);³¹⁰ J. Transferred from GDP- α -D-Arap.^{312,313}

the parasite to escape immune recognition by periodic switching to a new antigen type.⁴² The surface-exposed N-terminal domains of VSGs are highly variable and yet display similar tertiary structures,⁴⁴ whereas the C-terminal domains are conserved. The GPI moiety of VSGs contain a typical dimyristoyl-glycerol lipid moiety and a side chain of branched and space-filling Gal residues.^{45,46} The specific use of myristic acid in the GPI of VSG may be required to achieve very dense surface packing of this protein (10^7 VSG molecules per cell, representing 10% of the total protein content of the cell).

Although the GPI backbone of trypanosome and mammalian proteins is identical, the enzymes involved in its biosynthesis are markedly different in their substrate specificities and inhibitor sensitivities, and therefore represent potential targets for anti-protozoan chemotherapy.⁴⁷⁻⁴⁹ In addition, the trypanosome-specific fatty acid exchange and remodeling reactions occurring in GPI precursors and mature VSG^{50,51} are essential for trypanosome survival, and myristic acid analogs are toxic to the parasite.⁵²

A GPI-specific phospholipase C, which is associated with the cytosolic face of intracellular membranes, is expressed in bloodstream trypanosomes.^{53,54} PI-PLC-mediated release of VSG occurs upon disruption of the parasite,⁵⁵ under stress conditions⁵⁶ or during normal protein turnover.⁵⁷ However, the rapid release of VSG during differentiation to the procyclic form is mediated by a protease which also cleaves stage-specific, transmembrane invariant proteins.^{58,59}

GPI anchors isolated from VSG or its precursors induce macrophages to secrete IL-1 α and TNF- α . Similar effects have been obtained with crude parasite extracts. This activation depends on protein tyrosine kinase activation, and can be inhibited by a monoclonal antibody raised against the GPI moiety of *Plasmodium* antigens (see below). This mechanism could explain the cachexia frequently observed during trypanosome infection.⁶⁰ Interestingly, recombinant human IL-1 β specifically binds the Man-6-phosphate of the VSG anchor.⁶¹ This could result in the sequestration of IL-1 β and thus decrease its biological efficacy.

Procyclin

During differentiation of the bloodstream to the procyclic form, VSG is released from the cell surface^{62,63} and is replaced by a new invariant protein coat consisting of procyclin (also called procyclic acidic repetitive protein, PARP).^{62,64-66} There are two types of procyclins which are named according to their glutamic acid- and proline-rich repetitive sequences, i.e., EP- and GEEPT-procyclins. Both types can be expressed simultaneously in varying ratio at the cell surface.^{67,68} Procyclin possesses a complex, sialylated GPI anchor (Fig. 8.1),⁶⁹ which in GEEPT-procyclin accounts for over two-thirds of the apparent molecular weight.⁶⁷ As trypanosomes are unable to synthesize sialic acid, they transfer it from host proteins to the GPI anchor of PARP by means of a stage-specific, membrane-bound *trans*-sialidase.⁷⁰⁻⁷²

In *T. congolense*, the functional homologue of procyclin is a glutamic acid/alanine-rich protein (GARP).^{73,74} The procyclin and GARP coats may protect parasites from attack by digestive enzymes in the insect gut, or may serve as a means of direct attachment to epithelial membranes, and influence tropism and development in the fly (for a review, see ref. 75). Knockout experiments have revealed that all of the six to seven EP-procyclin genes could be deleted, but that at least one of the two GPEET-procyclin genes was required, for parasite viability.⁷⁶ The EP-procyclin knockouts were, however, limited in their ability to establish a heavy infection in the insect midgut. The two forms of procyclin thus appear to play different roles: GPEET-procyclin is required for cell growth, and EP-procyclin enhances survival in the fly.⁷⁶

Transferrin Receptor

Trypanosomes are dependent upon host transferrin for growth.⁷⁷ The transferrin receptor of trypanosomes is a heterodimeric complex of low abundance (about 3000 molecules per cell) encoded by two related genes, *ESAG6* and *ESAG7* that are associated with the VSG expression site. A functional transferrin receptor is only obtained when *ESAG6* and *ESAG7* proteins are coexpressed.⁷⁷⁻⁸³ *ESAG6*, but not *ESAG7*, encodes a GPI-addition signal; the two genes are otherwise very similar.⁷⁸ The *ESAG6* product is indeed a glycoprotein of 50-60 kDa modified by a GPI anchor, whereas the 42 kDa *ESAG7* product has an unmodified COOH-terminus.⁸⁰

Transferring binding activity has been observed in the flagellar pocket, a membrane invagination specialized in secretion and endocytosis.^{84,85} Interestingly, both transferrin and the transferrin receptor predominantly localize to the lumen of the flagellar pocket, whereas a few of these proteins are located on the membrane of the flagellar pocket and in intracellular vesicles.⁸⁰ These results suggest that the transferrin receptor may shuttle between the membrane and the lumen of the flagellar pocket, where it may bind its ligand more efficiently. After transferrin binding, the ternary complex is endocytosed to an acidic endosomal compartment wherein iron is released from transferrin, and transferrin from its receptor.⁸⁶ Apo-transferrin is then degraded in lysosomes, and only the receptor is recycled. This mechanism is distinct from the mammalian one where both the receptor and apo-transferrin are recycled (for a review, see ref. 87).

Trypanosoma Cruzi

Introduction and Life Cycle

Trypanosoma cruzi causes Chagas disease, which is endemic in South and Central America. Unlike its African relative *T. brucei*, *T. cruzi* does not undergo antigenic variation, but avoids the immune response by invading and multiplying within host cells. Infection is characterized by an acute phase with high parasitemia, followed by an asymptomatic phase which may last for more than 10 years and lead to a chronic disease, with characteristic megasyndromes of the heart and digestive tract. In the course of a complex life cycle involving mammals and insect vectors (reduviid bugs), several life stages of *T. cruzi* are recognized: the dividing epimastigotes which colonize the midgut of the vector; the nondividing, infective metacyclic trypomastigotes which are excreted within feces of the feeding bug and enter the mammalian host via the micro-wound generated by the biting vector; the amastigotes, which proliferate in the cytoplasm of a variety of host cells before differentiation into nondividing trypomastigotes; and trypomastigotes which are released in the bloodstream upon host cell lysis and provoke a transient parasitemia before invading new host cells.

T. cruzi expresses numerous GPI-anchored surface antigens, which can be either stage-specific or common to different life stages.⁸⁸ Establishing the link between a gene and a mature surface antigen is not easy in *T. cruzi*: first, the genes encoding surface antigens often belong to large families, and protein products of closely related genes can be expressed simultaneously.⁸⁹ Second, carbohydrate substituents of these antigens carry strain- or stage-specific immunogenic epitopes⁹⁰⁻⁹² that do not always correlate with actual protein expression.^{93,94} This latter point can generate some confusion when monoclonal antibodies against these epitopes are used for antigen identification.^{88,95} The GPI-anchored antigens discussed below are expressed on various life stages of *T. cruzi*, as summarized in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1 GPI-anchored antigens expressed on various life cycle stages of *T. cruzi*.

Life Cycle Stages	GPI-Anchored Molecules
Epimastigotes	GIPLs; 35/5.0 kDa mucins; Cruzain
Metacyclic trypomastigotes	GIPLs; 35/50 kDa mucins; Cruzain; <i>trans</i> -sialidases: gp82, gp90/IG7
Amastigotes	Cruzain; Ssp-4; <i>trans</i> -sialidases: ASP-1, ASP-2; SA85-1
Cellular and bloodstream trypomastigotes	GIPLs; Cruzain; <i>trans</i> -sialidase: SAPA; SA85-1; F2/F3 mucins; Tc-85

Sialidase/*Trans*-Sialidase Family

The genes encoding *trans*-sialidase and related proteins devoid of enzymatic activity belong to a large family of several hundred members characterized by:

1. GPI-addition signals; and
2. Sequences encoding a conserved amino acid motif of 11 residues (VTVxNVxLYNR).

These genes are classified into four subfamilies according to sequence criteria.^{96,97} Group I contains the active *trans*-sialidase, the inactive shed acute phase antigen (SAPA) and related sequences sharing homologies with bacterial and viral sialidases. Group II comprises genes coding for the so-called gp85 surface glycoprotein family, such as the metacyclic trypomastigote-specific gp82⁹⁸ and gp90/IG7, the amastigote-specific ASP-1⁹⁹ and ASP-2,^{100,101} the trypomastigote-specific *TSA-1*¹⁰² and Tt341, and the SA85-1 family which is expressed in both amastigotes and trypomastigotes. Group III contains proteins of about 160 kDa, including a flagellar protein, Fl-160¹⁰³ and group IV consists of the more distantly related Tc13 family (refs. 96, 97 and references therein).

T. cruzi parasites circumvent their inability to synthesize sialic acid precursors¹⁰⁴ by expressing a unique *trans*-sialidase, which transfers α 2-3-linked sialic acids from host glycolipids and glycoproteins to β -Gal-containing mucins present on the parasite surface. The 120-220 kDa sialidase/*trans*-sialidase is an oligomeric GPI-anchored protein mostly expressed in infective trypomastigotes; its heterogeneity results from variations in the presence and length of a noncatalytic, but very immunogenic, carboxy-terminal repetitive domain.¹⁰⁵ Its activity is dependent on a tyrosine residue (Tyr342) as shown by natural or experimental point mutations.¹⁰⁶⁻¹⁰⁸ The enzyme is absent in amastigotes, whereas epimastigotes express a distinct monomeric *trans*-sialidase which is devoid of COOH-terminal repeats and is not anchored to the membrane via a GPI anchor.^{97,109,110} Sialylation of the F2/F3 mucin complex of trypomastigotes (see below) only occurs on parasites exposed to extracellular environments and leads to the formation of a novel, stage-specific surface epitope, Ssp-3.^{88,111} Antibodies directed against Ssp-3 block attachment to host cells,^{111,112} and populations of trypomastigotes not expressing *trans*-sialidase are attenuated, the latter phenotype being fully reversed by addition of exogenous *trans*-sialidase.¹¹³ Surface sialylation has also been implicated in trypomastigote resistance to complement-mediated lysis (for a review, see ref. 97) and in the exit of intracellular parasites from parasitophorous vacuoles into the cytoplasm.¹¹⁴ In this case, PI-PLC released sialidase activity appears to desialylate lysosomal glycoproteins, rendering the membrane more susceptible to Tc-TOX, a parasite hemolysin related to the mammalian C9 lytic component of the complement.¹¹⁵ Finally, *trans*-sialidase is readily shed from parasites and

may favor the establishment of an infection. Indeed, mice primed with small doses of *trans*-sialidase before parasite injection display greatly enhanced parasitemia and mortality rates, an effect which is dependent on the *trans*-sialidase activity.¹¹⁶

Tc-85 Antigens

Trypomastigote-specific, GPI-anchored Tc-85 antigens¹¹⁷ are possible products of the *TSA-1* and *Tt34l* genes and contain both acylated and nonacylated inositol. Unexpectedly, the acylated form is shed from the parasite surface, whereas the nonacylated one remains cell-associated.¹¹⁸ Monoclonal antibodies to Tc-85 reduced invasion of cultured mammalian cells by trypomastigotes,¹¹⁹ and an acidic component of the Tc-85 family was shown to bind the host's extracellular matrix protein laminin,¹²⁰ pointing to the involvement of Tc-85 proteins in the attachment and cell invasion processes.

SA85-1 Antigens

The SA85-1 protein family expressed in amastigotes and trypomastigotes is encoded by a large number of genes,⁸⁹ resulting in the simultaneous expression of related proteins. This polymorphism may play a role in immune evasion in a way distinct from the antigenic variation of African trypanosomes. In *T. cruzi*, protein heterogeneity may limit (or dilute) the amount of epitopes required to fully activate T lymphocytes, and would therefore not favor an efficient antiparasitic Th1 response.¹²¹

Gp82 and Gp90/1G7 Antigens

Metacyclic trypomastigotes express a specific set of GPI-anchored surface proteins,⁹⁵ including gp90/1G7 and gp82, which are involved in infectivity and host cell invasion.¹²²⁻¹²⁴ This indicates that the molecular mechanism of host cell invasion by metacyclic and blood-stream form trypomastigotes are at least partially distinct.

Surface Mucins (35/50 kDa Mucins)

These antigens identified in epimastigotes more than 20 years ago¹²⁵ are GPI-anchored, *O*-glycosylated mucins^{92,104} also expressed on metacyclic trypomastigotes.^{126,127} The "LPG-like antigen" described in epimastigotes most probably represents the same molecule.¹²⁸ A complex gene family encodes these antigens, which differ in the number and sequences of characteristic threonine- and proline-rich repeats^{94,129} carrying a series of branched, *O*-linked oligosaccharides harboring terminal β -Gal residues which act as sialic acid acceptors.^{92,130,131} These carbohydrate structures are unusual in that they are linked to threonine residues via GlcNAc and contain terminal and internal Gal_f residues,^{92,131} unlike mammalian *O*-linked oligosaccharides.

The only structural variation of the 35/50 kDa mucins detected during transition from noninfective epimastigote to infective metacyclic trypomastigote forms occurs in the GPI lipid, which changes in 70% of the cases from an alkylacyl-glycerol to a ceramide (Fig. 8.1).¹³¹ This exchange probably occurs after the addition of the GPI to the protein, as GPI precursors in *T. cruzi* do not contain ceramide.¹³² This developmentally regulated lipid exchange might correlate with the ability of the parasite to selectively shed the ceramide-containing mucins upon invasion of the host cell,¹²⁷ but not the alkylacyl-PI-anchored 1G7 antigen.^{131,132} Interestingly, ceramides of similar structure originating from *T. cruzi* GPIs have a potential to induce biological responses in the host's immune system (see below).¹³⁴

F2/F3 Mucins

In the mammalian trypomastigote stage, the F2/F3 mucin complex is a group of GPI-anchored molecules sharing the stage-specific epitope Ssp-3,⁸⁸ which is dependent on parasite sialylation.¹¹¹ The *O*-linked oligosaccharides of the F2/F3 mucins are linked to threonine residues via GlcNAc rather than by GalNAc, and contain terminal α -Gal residues⁹⁰ which are also present in the *N*-linked oligosaccharides of Tc-85.¹³⁵ These α -Gal residues are the targets of lytic antibodies found in patients with chronic Chagas disease and which lyse parasites by intense agglutination in a complement-independent fashion. Although anti-Gal antibodies exist in normal human serum, these are not lytic to *T. cruzi* and are very poor binders of the F2/F3 mucins compared to Chagas anti-Gal antibodies.⁹⁰

Ssp-4 Antigen

The amastigote-specific Ssp-4 surface protein(s) is named after its characteristic epitope Ssp-4, which is detected both *in vitro* and *in vivo*.⁸⁸ This PI-PLC sensitive, GPI-anchored antigen is progressively shed during transformation of amastigote to trypomastigote, or epimastigote forms.^{136,137} The lipid moiety of Ssp-4 is a ceramide, and newly synthesized, free ceramides of similar composition have been specifically detected in freshly differentiated amastigotes.¹³⁸ Ssp-4 can be released from the parasite together with membrane material from the flagellar pocket of the amastigote.¹³⁹ The gene(s) encoding Ssp-4 are not known, although the amastin gene family represents a possible candidate.^{140,141} The amastin genes encode surface proteins of about 170 amino acids with a possible GPI-addition signal and several putative *O*-glycosylation sites reminiscent of mucins.

Membrane-Bound Cruzain

T. cruzi expresses a glycosylated lysosomal cysteine protease of 51/57 kDa, called cruzain or cruzipain, which is present in the three main stages of the parasite. Cruzain is encoded by a large number of tandemly arranged genes, clustered on two to four chromosomes.¹⁴²⁻¹⁴⁵ Most of these genes are apparently identical and encode a predicted soluble form of lysosomal cruzain. However, the genes at the 3' extremities of the arrays are different and encode GPI-addition signals.¹⁴⁵ In common with other cysteine proteinases of *Trypanosomatid* origin, the soluble cruzain contains a noncatalytic, posttranslationally modified and immunodominant COOH-terminal domain.¹⁴⁶ Cruzain inhibitors block both intracellular amastigote replication and differentiation into trypomastigotes and decrease the ability of trypomastigotes to invade host cells.¹⁴⁷ These inhibitors are taken up by intracellular amastigotes in which they accumulate in vesicles, but they do not reach lysosomes of the mammalian host.¹⁴⁸ The existence of a GPI-anchored form of cruzain is suggested by the fact that a GPI-anchored surface antigen of 50/55 kDa identified in the epimastigote, trypomastigote and amastigote stages^{149,150} and displaying cysteinyl protease activity¹⁵¹ can be detected with anti-cruzain antibodies in freeze-fractured amastigote membranes.¹³⁷ Whether cruzain inhibitors prevent amastigote replication by inhibiting soluble cruzain, or whether inhibition of GPI-anchored cruzain or of other proteases also contribute to this phenotype is not entirely resolved. Interestingly, *T. cruzi* stably expressing the PI-PLC of *T. brucei* showed impaired surface expression of several GPI-anchored proteins, including cruzain. These parasites were still infective, although with reduced efficiency, but were arrested at the amastigote stage by failure to duplicate their nucleus.^{152,153}

GIPLs

Epimastigotes synthesize large amounts of GIPLs^{125,154} (also known as LPPG in the literature) which resemble a protein GPI anchor in the core structure and are characterized by the presence of additional galactofuranose residues, an aminoethylphosphonate

substituent and a ceramide lipid¹⁵⁴⁻¹⁵⁶ (Fig. 8.3). *T. cruzi* GIPLs either contain an ethanolamine phosphate substituent on the third Man residue (as in protein GPIs), or additional Gal_f residues.¹⁵⁶ These GIPLs downregulate activation of both CD4⁺ and CD8⁺ T cells in vitro and in vivo, and this effect was mapped to their ceramide moiety,¹³⁴ suggesting that either a bulky substituent does not affect ceramide activity or that target cells contain the necessary enzymes to release active ceramide from their GIPL precursors. The effect was also obtained with palmitoyl(C16:0)-sphingosine and lignoceroyl(C24:0)-sphinganine (which is the major ceramide found in GIPLs), but not with palmitoyl-sphinganine, indicating an effect of the 4,5 double bond (Fig. 8.2). These results also indicate that beside the 4,5 double bond, the nature of the fatty acid chain can also modify the biological activity of ceramides.^{134,135} The effect of exogenously added ceramide on cells has been well studied and can cause cell cycle arrest or apoptosis.^{157,158} The immunomodulatory action of GIPLs would favor Th2 type responses, since CD4⁺ T cells exposed to GIPLs display a decreased production of IL-2, but not IL-4.¹³⁴ This phenomenon could contribute to chronic infections by generating a predominantly useless Th2 instead of a Th1-type response. Trypomastigotes express significant amounts of GIPLs (about 10% of the epimastigote content),¹⁵⁹ together with other ceramide-containing molecules.^{131,132} A drift towards ceramide anchors rather than alkyl-acyl glycerol has been reported during epimastigote transition from log to stationary phase,¹⁶⁰ or epimastigote differentiation to metacyclic trypomastigotes,¹³¹ and free ceramide is also present in *T. cruzi*.¹⁶¹ These molecules are a potential source of active ceramides and may transfer from parasites to host cells, similarly to ceramide-containing mucins during cell invasion.¹²⁷

The *T. cruzi* GIPLs are potent activators of immunoglobulin secretion by B cells and act synergistically with cytokines. This activity was mapped to the inositolphosphoglycan moiety, which was even more active than the native molecule.¹⁶² In another study, GIPL headgroups were able to reduce ACTH action in calf adrenocortical cells, and this inhibition was markedly reinforced after removal of the Gal_f residues.¹⁶³ These effects could be due to solubilized GIPLs that interfere with a putative signaling pathway of the host responding to soluble, extracellular inositolphosphoglycans.

Leishmania

Introduction and Life Cycle

Leishmania is a protozoan parasite with a digenetic life cycle occurring in a mammalian host and a sandfly vector. Three major stages of the parasite can be recognized in its life cycle. The amastigote form is an obligate intracellular parasite of mammalian macrophages, where it lives and proliferates as round, nonmotile cells with a cryptic flagellum. The procyclic promastigote form infests the digestive tract of sandfly vectors of the *Phlebotominae* or *Lutzomia* genus and is characterized by the presence of an anterior flagellum. Finally, the free-swimming metacyclic promastigotes present in the mouth parts of the sandfly have an elongated and flagellated morphology, a high motility and have undergone the biochemical preadaptations for successful infection of the mammalian host. All three stages of the parasite express surface macromolecules GPI-anchored to the plasma membrane. GIPLs are abundantly expressed in all three stages of the parasite, while GPI-anchored proteins (gp63) and lipophosphoglycans (LPG) are predominantly expressed at the surface of procyclic and metacyclic promastigotes.

Surface Protease Gp63

This abundant surface glycoprotein is a zinc endopeptidase with broad substrate specificity¹⁶⁴⁻¹⁶⁷ that has been identified in promastigotes of virtually all *Leishmania* species

investigated.¹⁶⁸⁻¹⁷⁰ Gp63 genes organized in tandem arrays located on one or more chromosomes are present in 5 to more than 50 copies, according to the species, and some of them can be expressed simultaneously.¹⁷¹⁻¹⁷⁶ Gp63 genes can be either constitutively expressed or specifically transcribed in procyclic or metacyclic promastigote stages.^{173,177} Specific 3'-untranslated regions are essential for stage-specific expression in metacyclic promastigotes.^{178,179} Most gp63 cDNAs predict the addition of the GPI anchor, which is found in the mature protease^{180,181} and consists of the minimally required structure to anchor a protein^{182,183} (Fig. 8.1). Mutation of the GPI attachment site results in the release of a soluble protease.¹⁸⁴ In metacyclic promastigotes of *L. chagasi*, gp63 expression is increased by ten-fold and a distinct protease of 59 kDa, encoded by one of the metacyclic-specific genes, is expressed and correlates with infectivity of the parasite.¹⁸⁵ It is noteworthy that expression levels of gp63 do not correlate with infectivity, as exemplified by the avirulent, LPG-deficient strain of *L. major* which overexpresses gp63.¹⁷¹

Gp63, like other surface proteins, is not accessible to antibodies¹⁸⁶ or to the protease inhibitor α_2 -macroglobulin,¹⁸⁷ probably because it is buried under the thick glycocalyx of metacyclic stages.^{188,189} Complement activation occurs at the promastigote surface independently of gp63, but may be regulated by gp63. In gp63-deficient promastigotes, or in promastigotes expressing proteolytically inactive gp63, fixation of terminal complement components occurs, leading to parasite lysis. The same parasites transfected with active gp63 display accelerated conversion of C3b to an inactive iC3b-like molecule, thus preventing formation of the membrane attack complex and leading to enhanced resistance to serum-mediated lysis.¹⁹⁰ In addition, iC3b provides the ligand for Mac-1-mediated recognition of promastigotes by macrophages,^{190,191} without activating the microbicidal defenses of the latter. The surface protease might contribute to parasite protection within macrophage phagolysosomes^{164,192} and might also prevent presentation of parasite-derived peptides by class I molecules of the major histocompatibility complex. In a particular case, presentation of an ovalbumin peptide derived from parasites transfected with ovalbumin was inhibited by the endopeptidase activity of gp63.¹⁹³ It remains to be investigated whether this effect was fortuitous or could be of more general significance. In this respect, it is noteworthy that live promastigotes and amastigotes can degrade extracellular peptides with peptidase activities distinct from that of gp63.¹⁹⁴

Occurrence of gp63 in the amastigote stage seems to depend on the parasite species. It is virtually absent in *L. major*,¹⁹⁵ but it is quite abundant in *L. mexicana* where it is expressed as a soluble protein apparently confined to the lysosomal compartment of the parasite,^{196,197} a remarkably unusual location for a metalloprotease. Amastigote gp63 is the probable product of the C1 family of gp63 genes encoding transmembrane proteases lacking the GPI addition signal.^{173,177} The production of soluble gp63 may be explained either by a post-translational proteolytic event or by the use of a gene directly encoding a soluble protein, as has been reported in *L. guyanensis*.¹⁷⁶

Gp46/M2 (PSA-2)

The 46 kDa surface antigen (gp46/M2) first described in *L. amazonensis*¹⁹⁸ and a group of proteins of 94, 90 and 80 kDa (promastigote surface antigen-2 complex; PSA-2) detected in *L. major*¹⁹⁹ are products of a single gene family comprising more than 14 members. These proteins contain a short N-terminal motif, repeated 3 to 7 times depending on the species,^{179,200,201} followed by serine-, threonine- and proline-rich sequences reminiscent of mucins and a conserved C-terminal domain carrying the GPI anchor.^{199,202} mRNA levels of gp46/PSA-2 are developmentally regulated and increase by more than 30-fold when promastigotes of *L. chagasi* progress to the infectious metacyclic stage.¹⁷⁹ The protein is also expressed at the surface of *L. major* amastigotes as a PI-PLC-resistant 50 kDa molecule,²⁰³

but has not yet been assigned enzymatic or other functions. Its conformation or post-translational modifications are probably unusual, as suggested by the observation that protective immunity in mice was obtained by vaccination with the recombinant protein produced in *L. mexicana*, but not by a bacterial recombinant protein.²⁰⁴ Gp46/PSA-2 genes are present in a number of *Leishmania* species except in the *L. braziliensis* complex (*L. braziliensis*, *L. guyanensis* and *L. panamensis*) where all copies have been deleted.²⁰⁵⁻²⁰⁷

Glycoinositol Phospholipids (GIPLs)

GIPLs are free GPI molecules which are very abundant in all developmental stages of the parasite. They are classified (Fig. 8.3) according to structural criteria: Type-1 GIPLs are related to protein GPI anchors (Fig. 8.1) and Type-2 GIPLs resemble the GPI core of LPG (Fig. 8.4). Glycolipids displaying features of both Type-1 and Type-2 GIPLs are referred to as Hybrid-1 GIPLs whereas Hybrid-2 GIPLs contain distinct branched oligosaccharides. Only the minor fraction of these GIPLs containing very long alkyl chains on the *sn*-1 position of the glycerol (C24:0 or C26:0) are biosynthetic intermediates of GPI-anchored proteins and LPG,¹⁸³ whereas the bulk of GIPLs, containing shorter alkyl chains (C18:0), are metabolic end products incorporated into the glycocalyx architecture of the parasite surface. In promastigotes, GIPLs are buried under a thick LPG coat and may not be accessible to host macromolecules. The amastigote glycocalyx is thinner,¹⁸⁸ containing no other GPI-linked molecules, and probably displays surface-exposed GIPLs along with host-derived glycosphingolipids.⁶ Depending on the subset of exposed GIPLs, the surface may be rich in terminal Man (Type-1 GIPLs of *L. donovani* and Hybrid-1 GIPLs of *L. mexicana*),^{208,209} or Gal residues (Type-2 GIPLs of *L. major*).²¹⁰ These carbohydrate epitopes may be recognized by macrophages either directly (mannose-fucose receptor)²¹¹ or after opsonization with -mannose-binding protein of the serum²¹² or specific anti-Gal antibodies,²¹³ and therefore facilitate the entry of amastigotes into a new host macrophage.

Interaction of GIPLs with the Host

Parasites certainly modulate to their advantage some of the host cell functions involved in macrophage activation and cytokine production. GIPLs, or GIPL degradation products, have been proposed to be directly implicated in these phenomena by virtue of their structural homology with host signaling molecules. The carbohydrate headgroup of iM4, a Hybrid-1 GIPL of *L. mexicana* containing the evolutionarily conserved core glycan of protein GPI anchors, could induce activation of the protein tyrosine kinase p59^{hck} in macrophages, but was unable to activate PKC ϵ .²¹⁴ On the contrary, both Type-2²¹⁵ and Hybrid-1 GIPLs²¹⁶ have a tendency to downregulate this response and could inhibit production of nitric oxide by the macrophage in response to IFN- γ , concomitantly reducing their leishmanicidal activity. This effect was mapped to the alkyl-*acyl* glycerol lipid moiety of GIPLs.²¹⁵ A similar effect on inducible nitric oxide synthase was obtained with LPG but with distinct structural requirements²¹⁷ (see below). GIPLs and LPG may thus participate in *Leishmania* immune evasion. Indeed, clinical and experimental evidence indicates that the control of cutaneous *Leishmaniasis* requires IL-12 production by activated macrophages which drive Th1 cells to differentiate and proliferate. Th1 cells produce IFN- γ that activates macrophages to produce NO and kill intracellular parasites (for a review, see ref. 218). The inhibition of inducible nitric oxide synthase expression by LPG might be therefore important for intracellular survival of the parasite.

Lipophosphoglycan (LPG)

The LPG molecule is predominantly expressed in promastigotes. It is characterized by several unusual structural features and consists of a backbone of phosphorylated disaccharide

repeats which is capped with neutral oligosaccharides (Fig. 8.4). The repeats can be substituted with various branching oligosaccharides and the molecule is anchored in the membrane via a GPI anchor related to that of Type-2 GIPLs and containing a *lyso*-ether lipid (mainly 1-*O*-lignoceryl-2-*O*-*lyso*-glycerol). Three classes of LPG are recognized according to the presence and structure of substituents on the phosphorylated disaccharide repeats. Type-1 LPG (e.g., in East African strains of *L. donovani*) is unsubstituted.^{219,220} Type-2 LPG (e.g., *L. mexicana*, *L. major* and *L. tropica*) are substituted on the C-3 position of the Gal residues present in the disaccharide repeats with side chains of varying complexity depending on species and strains.²²¹⁻²²⁴ Type-3 LPG (of which *L. aethiopica* is the only known member) contain side chains on both the C-3 position of the Gal residue and the C-2 position of the Man residue in the disaccharide repeat, the latter substitution being likely to affect the extended helical conformation of LPG.^{224,225}

The biosynthesis of LPG requires a number of steps, some of which have been characterized by functional complementation of LPG-deficient *Leishmania* mutants (Fig. 8.4). The GPI anchor is synthesized first and serves as a support for initiation and elongation of the phosphorylated disaccharide repeats. The half life of surface LPG is considerably shorter than that of GIPLs because it is readily shed from the parasite surface.^{223,226}

Interaction of LPG with the Vector

Parasites ingested during a blood meal infest the digestive tract of the vector, and successful infection correlates with the ability of parasites to bind to the midgut epithelium. In a later stage, differentiation to the infective metacyclic promastigotes is accompanied by detachment of the parasite and migration to the mouth parts of the insect. The LPG appears to be required in the initial stages of infection, as LPG-deficient mutants proliferate less than wild type parasites in the insect's digestive tract.²²⁷ Proliferation alone, however, is not sufficient to establish a long-term infection if attachment to the midgut epithelium does not taken place.²²⁷ This interaction occurs in specific pairs of vectors and parasites and depends on the complementarity of the insect's lectins and the parasite's carbohydrate epitopes.²²⁷⁻²²⁹ Subsequent detachment of *L. major* metacyclic promastigotes depends on developmental modifications of the LPG, leading to its elongation and to the masking of the lectin-interacting terminal β -Gal residues by β -Ara residues.²²¹⁻²²⁸ The metacyclic form of LPG is first detected 5 days after infection of the fly and is found in 100% of the parasites egested by the fly 10 days later.²³⁰ In *L. donovani*, the metacyclic LPG is altered in its packing or conformation and no longer interacts with gut lectins.¹⁸⁹ The notion of a developmentally-controlled, conformational change in the LPG molecule is supported by the fact that human C-reactive protein specifically binds to metacyclic LPG but not to procyclic LPG of *L. donovani*.²³¹ Thus, midgut adhesion appears to be a sufficiently critical component of vectorial competence to provide the evolutionary drive for LPG structure polymorphisms.

Interaction of LPG with the Host

Between the time of inoculation and infection of macrophages, promastigotes are exposed to the potential lytic effects of normal serum. The developmental modifications of *L. major* and *L. donovani* LPG are similar, particularly with respect to the increase in the number of repeat units, resulting in a doubling of the glycocalyx thickness in metacyclic promastigotes.^{189,232} This modification prevents binding of the membrane attack complex to *L. major* metacyclic promastigotes.^{233,234} *L. donovani* metacyclic promastigotes also display higher resistance to complement,^{235,236} probably for the same reason. Complement activation and C3 deposition on the parasite surface could be important in targeting the parasite to macrophages and promoting their phagocytosis and intracellular survival.^{237,238}

Alternative pathways implicate mannose-fucose receptors,^{211,239} direct binding of LPG to macrophage receptors,^{240,241} and opsonization by either serum mannan-binding protein that recognizes the oligosaccharide caps of LPG²¹² or C-reactive protein recognizing phosphorylated disaccharide units of metacyclic *L. donovani* LPG.²³¹

LPG is undetectable in *L. donovani* and *L. mexicana* amastigotes,^{209,242} whereas amastigotes of *L. major* express low levels of an antigenically distinct LPG²⁴³⁻²⁴⁴ recognized by macrophage receptors.²⁴⁵ In *L. mexicana* amastigotes, however, there is no intrinsic surface ligand to enable high affinity interaction with macrophages.²⁴⁶ For both *L. major* and *L. mexicana*, opsonization with specific host immunoglobulins may be the key factor in vivo because amastigotes carry detectable surface immunoglobulins and because progression of the disease is slower in mice lacking immunoglobulins.^{246,247} Possible targets for the immunoglobulins may be the abundant surface GIPLs of the amastigote stage.²⁰⁸⁻²¹⁰ LPG mediates downregulation of a variety of biological functions such as production of proinflammatory cytokines by macrophages,^{248,249} expression of inducible nitric oxide synthase,²¹⁷ induction of c-Fos transcription factor,²⁵⁰ oxidative burst²⁵¹⁻²⁵⁴ and monocyte chemotaxis.^{251,252} These effects are similar to those of *Leishmania* GIPLs in that they downregulate macrophage functions and activation, but contrast with those observed in response to malarial GPIs, suggesting that the different structural features of these glycolipids can lead to distinct effects on host cells. A number of the cellular functions downregulated by LPG depend on the activation of protein kinase C (PKC), and it is interesting in this context that *trans*-bilayer inhibition of PKC by LPG has been observed.^{255,256} This does not appear to be the result of direct inhibition of PKC by LPG, although this activity has been reported,²⁵⁷ but rather of specific alterations of membrane properties by LPG.²⁵⁸ Indeed, incorporation of full length LPG into lipid bilayers results in decreased fusogenic capacity of the membranes by stabilizing them against the formation of an inverted hexagonal structure.^{258,259} LPG also modulate the bending rigidity and the spontaneous curvature of the membrane, making the destabilization and rearrangement of the underlying lipid bilayer more difficult. This affects the activity of several membrane-interacting proteins, including PKC,^{258,260} and could provide a clue as to how LPG modulates PKC-dependent cellular functions. The anti-fusogenic properties of LPG have been shown to be essential for successful infection of host macrophages by *Leishmania* promastigotes.²⁶¹ In this study, it was observed that phagosomes containing wild type promastigotes do not fuse with endosomes, whereas the reverse was true for LPG-deficient mutants. This effect was attributed to LPG, as passive transfer of LPG or functional genetic complementation of the mutant fully restored its capacity to inhibit phagosome-endosome fusion.²⁶¹ LPG is transferred within minutes from the promastigote surface to the macrophage membrane at the immediate area of internalization²⁶² and thus prevents destruction of the parasite after fusion of the endosome with the parasitophorous vacuole. Transformation of promastigotes into amastigotes occurs concomitantly with the release of phagosome-endosome fusion inhibition. Amastigotes then proliferate inside acidic, hydrolase-rich vacuoles,²⁶³⁻²⁶⁵ and the fact that they produce little or no LPG suggests that the role of LPG may be restricted to the establishment of infection during promastigote to amastigote conversion. These results confirm numerous reports showing that a variety of mutants partially or completely deficient in LPG biosynthesis display partial or total loss of virulence,²⁶⁶⁻²⁶⁸ a phenotype which could be rescued by the addition of exogenous LPG^{269,270} or reversion to normal levels of LPG expression.²⁷¹

Plasmodium

Among the 4 *Plasmodium* species that infect man, *P. falciparum* is the most virulent. *P. falciparum* undergoes a complex life cycle involving an anopheles insect vector and

human host. Clinical symptoms of malaria are entirely caused by the asexual, proliferative intraerythrocytic stage of the parasite. Infected erythrocytes in the peripheral blood only contain ring and early trophozoite stage parasites, whereas erythrocytes containing mature trophozoites and schizonts may be sequestered from the peripheral circulation by adhesion to the endothelial cells of capillaries in several organs. In the small venous capillaries of the brain, the attached infected erythrocytes can actually interrupt the blood flow, leading to local anoxia and tissue necrosis. This pathology is known as “cerebral malaria” characterized by numerous dysfunctions, coma and often death.

GPI-Anchored Proteins

GPI-anchored proteins are present in several proteins of the erythrocytic stage of *P. falciparum*, including a 195 kDa merozoite surface protein 1 (MSP-1) and its C-terminal proteolytic fragments,^{272,273} a 45 kDa merozoite surface protein-2 (MSP-2),^{272,274} a 102 kDa transferrin receptor found at the erythrocyte surface,²⁷⁵ and a 76 kDa serine-protease.²⁷⁶ In *P. falciparum*, GPI appears to be the major carbohydrate modification of intraerythrocytic parasite proteins.²⁷⁷ Precursors of GPI anchors have been structurally characterized.²⁷⁸

Interaction of Plasmodial GPIs with the Host

Schofield and collaborators have studied the biological effects of GPIs isolated from *P. falciparum* on a variety of host cells and attempted to define the molecular mechanism of malaria GPI signaling in macrophages.^{60,214,216,279-281} At least two macrophage enzymes appear to be implicated in early events of signal transduction: p59^{hck}, a protein tyrosine kinase of the Src family, and PKC ϵ , one of the six isoforms of protein kinase C present in macrophages. These two protein kinases synergize to activate transcription factors of the c-Rel/NF- κ B family which then turn on transcription of a specific set of genes, including those of cytokines, inducible nitric oxide synthase and adhesion molecules. The structural features of GPI required to activate p59^{hck} and PKC ϵ was investigated using GPIs of various origins, which in some cases were further modified by enzymatic treatment. The minimal GPI structure tested that was able to activate p59^{hck} consisted of a soluble Man α 1-2Man α 1-6Man α 1-4GlcN-inositol core glycan. Removal of one Man residue at the nonreducing end, or replacement of GlcN-inositol by anhydromannitol abolished this activation. In contrast, various substituents, including ethanolamine phosphate, single Man residues and acyl group on the inositol had no effect. For PKC ϵ activation, the diacyl glycerol moiety attached to the GPI was required and substitution of diacyl glycerol for either alkylacyl glycerol or 1-*O-acyl-2-lyso*-glycerol resulted in loss of activity. Both p59^{hck} and PKC ϵ activation by GPI was inhibited by a monoclonal antibody recognizing the GPI moiety of *P. falciparum* glycoproteins. Identical results were obtained using crude parasite extracts, suggesting that GPI are major signaling-competent molecules of the parasite.

These results suggest the existence of a lectin-like receptor for carbohydrate epitopes present in the GPI, regardless of whether these are linked to lipids or proteins. This binding results in p59^{hck} activation, whereas the signaling via PKC ϵ requires a membrane bound GPI with specific (i.e., diacyl glycerol) lipid component. Whether hydrolysis of the GPI will occur during this process is not known.

The downstream effects of cellular activation by *P. falciparum* GPI, i.e., cytokine release and adhesion molecule expression, could contribute to the pathology of cerebral malaria. TNF- α levels correlate with the severity of malaria²⁸² and upregulate the expression of adhesion molecules in the vascular endothelium, favoring the sequestration of the parasite-infected erythrocytes in the postcapillary venules of the brain.^{283,284}

Signaling via second messengers derived from GPI structures has been proposed to occur for several mammalian receptors (see chapter 4), but the molecular mechanism of

these signaling pathways and the structural characterization of the second messengers still remain unknown (for a review, see ref. 285). The use of parasite GPIs, which offer a large structural diversity, will probably prove useful in addressing these questions. GIPLs have been described at the surface of mammalian cells and could serve as candidate precursors of second messengers for these pathways.²⁸⁶ Interestingly, these glycolipids, which resemble GPI precursors, contain diacylglycerol, in contrast to mature GPI-anchored proteins of the same cell which contain alkylacyl glycerol. A comprehensive evaluation of the effects of malarial GPI precursors and those derived from MSP-1 by proteolysis^{60,214,216,279-281} should therefore await further studies to define the transmembrane signaling pathways involved.

Toxoplasma

Toxoplasma gondii is a protozoan parasite infecting nearly all warm-blooded animals and is the causative agent of toxoplasmosis in man. The parasite only undergoes sexual replication in cats and other felines. Development and multiplication of *Toxoplasma* tachyzoites is obligatorily intracellular, and the parasite has the ability to invade almost any nucleated cell in a complex process.²⁸⁷ Tachyzoites express several GPI-anchored proteins (P22, gp23, P30, P35 and P45)²⁸⁸ among which P30 which has been implicated in host cell invasion.²⁸⁹ As an immune response is established, a second stage of the parasite is observed, the bradyzoite, which expresses a different set of surface proteins. Bradyzoites divide less rapidly and persist within large cysts found in tissues not readily accessible to the immune system such as the brain and skeletal muscle. Toxoplasmosis is a benign infection except if it occurs during pregnancy, or if dormant brain cysts are reactivated in an immunocompromised individual, leading to *Toxoplasma* encephalitis.

The GPI structures of P30 and gp23 surface proteins as well as immunogenic surface GIPLs have been determined.^{288,290,291} These molecules are characterized by a unique and highly immunogenic Glc α 1-4GalNAc side chain on the GPI core which appears to be widely expressed in various clinical isolates of *T. gondii* and might prove useful for diagnosis purposes.²⁹¹ As in *Plasmodium*, modifications of the conserved GPI backbone appear to take place in the ER before transfer to the protein, which is in contrast with the situation observed in trypanosomes, yeast and mammals.

Summary

Free GPIs and GPI-anchored molecules are major components of mycobacterial envelopes and surface membranes of *Trypanosoma*, *Leishmania*, *Plasmodia* and *Toxoplasma* parasites. GPI-containing molecules critically influence the outcomes of host-parasite and vector-parasite relationships in various contexts. In particular, it has become evident that the outcome of infection depends not only on the immune recognition of microbial antigens but also on microbial products, especially GPI-containing ones, which act as major modulators of host cell function. GPI-containing molecules modify host cell behavior by interfering with both transmembrane signaling pathways and membrane fusion processes of the cells involved in immune recognition, microbe phagocytosis and cytokine production. Several target molecules involved in host cell signaling pathways have already been identified. In the future, the availability of synthetic GPI structures will help define the effects of microbial molecules on host cell function.

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Enzymes Cleaving the Phosphodiester Bond in the GPI Anchor

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Since the discovery of GPI-anchored proteins, anchor hydrolyzing phospholipases from bacteria have been prominent tools in establishing this particular membrane link. There are two activities which cleave the phosphodiester bond in a GPI anchor: phosphatidylinositol-specific phospholipase C (PI-PLC) and glycosylphosphatidylinositol-specific phospholipase D (GPI-PLD). The products of GPI-PLD hydrolysis are phosphatidic acid and the corresponding hydrophilic inositol glycan (Fig. 9.1). PI-PLC produces diradylglycerol (a collective term for diacyl-, alkyacyl- and alk-1-enylacyl-glycerol) as hydrophobic cleavage product, and the hydrophilic glycan, with a terminal inositol residue containing (in most cases) a 1-2 cyclic phosphodiester. From work on the variant surface glycoprotein (VSG) from trypanosomes, the inositol-cyclic-phosphodiester is known as a key component of the so-called crossreacting determinant (CRD). This antigenic site is common to all GPI-anchored proteins after cleavage by bacterial PI-PLC and (G)PI-PLC from trypanosomes, and its detection by anti-CRD antibodies provides key evidence for GPI anchoring. If a GPI-anchored protein is solubilized by a phospholipase of unknown cleavage specificity, the occurrence of the CRD provides evidence for a C-type cleavage.

GPI Anchor-Cleaving Phospholipases from Bacteria

As detailed in chapter 1, work in the early 60s on a factor from bacteria releasing alkaline phosphatase from the cell surface led to the identification and purification of bacterial phospholipases that later on became indispensable tools in establishing the GPI membrane anchors of proteins. In 1968 Lundin¹ reported that cholinesterase from plaice body muscle was solubilized when a bacterium of the species *Cytophaga* was grown on minced tissue of fish; however, the mechanism of cholinesterase solubilization remained unknown. Subsequently, work on the release of alkaline phosphatase, 5'-nucleotidase, and acetylcholinesterase from cell membranes proposed a link between the activity of bacterial phospholipases and the membrane anchors of these proteins.² The phospholipases isolated from *Bacillus cereus*, *Bacillus thuringiensis*, *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Clostridium novyi* were found to cleave phosphatidylinositol (PI) with the specificity of a phospholipase C, but showed virtually no activity towards phosphatidylcholine, phosphatidylethanolamine or phosphatidylserine, and thus were termed PI-specific phospholipase C (PI-PLC). Subsequently, bacterial PI-PLCs were found to also cleave the PI moiety of GPI-anchored proteins and glycolipids. In fact, it was this unique property that led to the initial discovery of GPI-anchored proteins. Ever since, PI-PLCs have been widely used in the detection and analysis of GPI-anchored molecules. Accordingly the *Cytophaga* factor responsible for the release of cholinesterase from fish tissue was later also identified as a PI-PLC.³

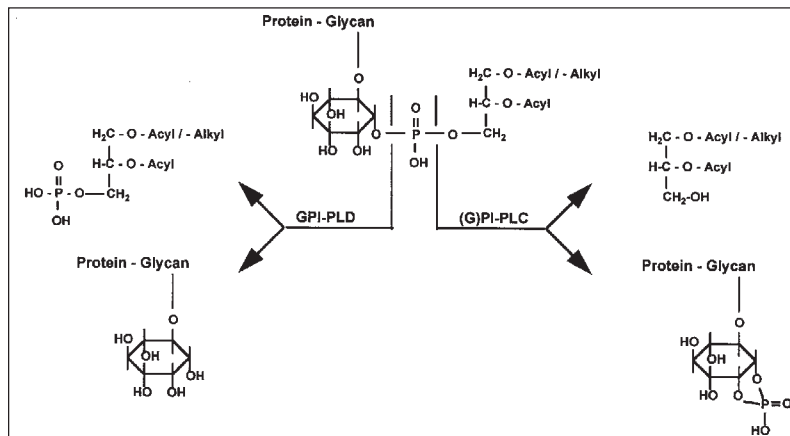


Fig. 9.1: Cleavage specificity of GPI-hydrolyzing phospholipases.

Bacterial PI-PLCs have been purified from several sources, including *B. cereus* and *B. thuringiensis*.⁴ The enzymes from these two strains differ in only 8 amino acids and consequently show nearly identical properties with respect to molecular mass, electrophoretic mobility, substrate specificity, sensitivity to inhibitors and interaction with inhibitory antibodies. The properties of bacterial phospholipases have been extensively reviewed (see for example, ref. 5) and their role in bacterial virulence is of special interest.⁶ The crystal structure of PI-PLC from *B. cereus* has been solved to 2.5 Å resolution in complex with myo-inositol,⁷ and more recently to 2.2 Å in complex with glucosaminyl(α 1-6)-D-myo-inositol.⁸

It was shown that the myo-inositol moiety of GlcN(α 1-6)Ins occupies the same position in the active site as does free myo-inositol, which provides convincing evidence that the enzyme utilizes the same catalytic mechanism for cleavage of PI and GPI. The myo-inositol moiety is well defined in the crystal structure and undergoes several specific hydrogen bonding interactions with active site residues. In the crystal structure the glucosamine moiety is less well defined, suggesting enhanced conformational flexibility. This is consistent with the view that the glucosamine moiety lies exposed to solvent at the entrance of the active site with minimal specific protein contacts. On the basis of the positioning of GlcN(α 1-6)Ins in the active site, it is predicted that the remainder of the GPI glycan moiety makes little or no specific interactions with *B. cereus* PI-PLC. This explains why *B. cereus* PI-PLC is able to cleave GPI anchors having variable glycan structures.⁸ By probing the roles of the active site residues in PI-PLC from *B. cereus* by site-directed mutagenesis, the general acid-base catalysis including the four residues directly involved in catalysis could be substantiated.⁹ In contrast to other GPI anchor-degrading phospholipases, bacterial PI-PLCs effectively cleave the GPIs in both intact membranes and artificial lipid bilayers. The enzymes were shown to exhibit a 5- to 6-fold "interfacial activation" when its substrate is present in an interface as opposed to existing as a monomer in solution.¹⁰ As with other phosphodiesterases such as RNase, GPI-anchor cleavage by PI-PLC occurs via formation of an inositol-1-2-cyclic-phosphate.¹¹ Whether the cyclic phosphate is stably formed, thus exposing the CRD, or further hydrolyzed to inositol-phosphomonoester is kinetically controlled and depends on the polarity of the solvent. Organic solvents miscible in water (dimethyl sulfoxide, dimethylformamide, and 2-propanol) increased more than

80-fold the catalytic efficiency (V_{\max}/K_m) of cyclic phosphodiesterase by lowering the K_m for myo-inositol 1, 2-cyclic phosphate and substantially increasing V_{\max} .¹² The formation of an inositol-cyclic, 1-2-phosphate is possible only if the 2-OH of inositol is not acylated. An inositol-acylated GPI anchor was first described for acetylcholinesterase from human erythrocytes, a modification which rendered the GPI anchor insensitive to the hydrolysis by PI-PLC.¹³ A possible insensitivity of a membrane protein to PI-PLC thus either means that the protein is not GPI anchored or that it contains a GPI anchor with a fatty acid linked to the 2-OH of inositol.

GPI Anchor-Cleaving Phospholipase C (GPI-PLC) from Trypanosomes

The surface of the bloodstream form of the African trypanosome *Trypanosoma brucei* is covered with about 10^7 molecules of the variant surface glycoprotein (VSG), a protein tethered to the plasma membrane by a GPI anchor. Independent of the work on the bacterial factor solubilizing alkaline-phosphatase, 5'-nucleotidase and acetylcholinesterase from mammalian cells, the characterization of VSG from trypanosomes led to the discovery of a GPI anchor-hydrolyzing phospholipase C in these parasites.¹⁴⁻¹⁷ The initial identification of GPI-anchored proteins in *T. brucei* was complicated by the presence of relatively large amounts of endogenous anchor-degrading phospholipase which removed the anchor during extraction.¹⁸ In living trypanosomes, GPI-PLC does not release VSG from the cell surface and it was only under the peculiar conditions used for extraction (osmotic lysis) that its activity was noticed. Although the enzyme was shown to be active against intracellular GPIs after transfection into *Leishmania* parasites,¹⁹ no clear role in GPI metabolism has been attributed to this enzyme in vivo.²⁰ To investigate whether the ability to cleave the membrane anchor of the VSG is an essential function of the enzyme in vivo, a GPI-PLC null mutant trypanosome had been generated by targeted gene deletion. The mutant trypanosomes were fully viable; they could go through an entire life cycle and maintain a persistent infection in mice. Thus, the GPI-PLC is not an essential activity and is also not required for antigenic variation in the bloodstream form of trypanosomes. However, mice infected with mutant trypanosomes had a reduced parasitemia and survived longer than those infected with control trypanosomes.²¹

GPI-PLC from *T. brucei* has a relatively low sequence similarity to the bacterial PI-PLCs, and originally the enzyme was thought to be GPI specific. This notion derived from early work in which the enzyme was assayed under conditions that did not reveal the hydrolysis of PI (for a review see ref. 22). More recently, the substrate specificity was reinvestigated and it was shown that PI hydrolysis indeed occurred.²³ In addition, endogenous PI was hydrolyzed during osmotic and detergent lysis of trypanosomes under conditions used to obtain quantitative hydrolysis of VSG.

GPI-PLC activity is downregulated when trypanosomes differentiate from the bloodstream form to the procyclic form found in the tsetse fly vector. The GPI-PLC locus in the trypanosome genome was mapped and the mechanism for this developmental regulation in *T. brucei* examined.²⁹ Surprisingly, the enzyme does not appear to be involved in the shedding of the VSG coat during differentiation from the bloodstream form to the procyclic form.³⁰ However, recent data indicates that the GPI-PLC is involved in the release of VSG in response to cellular stress induced by low pH or trypsin.³¹ GPI-PLC is associated with the cytoplasmic surface of intracellular vesicles, consistent with its lack of a signal sequence.³² Its mechanism of association with the membrane is unclear, because it has no obvious hydrophobic transmembrane domains.³³ Initially, the cytoplasmic orientation of this enzyme was difficult to understand; however, the subsequent discovery that GPI precursors are synthesized at the cytoplasmic surface of the endoplasmic reticulum suggest that its real

Table 9.1 GPI anchor and PI hydrolysis by phospholipases

Phospholipase	Km-values (μM) for	
	GPI anchor hydrolysis	PI hydrolysis
Pi-PLC (<i>B. cereus</i>) ^a	12.0	2000
PI-PLC (<i>Cytophaga</i> sp.) ^b	3.0	2500
(G)PI-PLC (peanut seeds) ^c	2.8	9590
GPI-PLC (<i>T. brucei</i>) ^d	0.8	37
GPI-PLD (bovine serum) ^e	0.1	– ^f
GPI-PLD (bovine brain) ^e	0.05	– ^f

a) Mean value from experiments using acetylcholinesterase from bovine erythrocytes and *Torpedo maromorata* as substrates;²⁴ b-e) Values determined using acetylcholinesterase from bovine erythrocytes as substrate; b) Taken from ref. 3; c) Taken from ref. 25; d) data obtained using the recombinant enzyme²⁶, values taken from ref. 23; e) Taken from refs. 27 and 28; f) Ny hydrolysis.

function is in the metabolism of the protein-free lipid rather than GPI-anchored proteins (see chapter 2). The recent observation that GPI-PLC also hydrolyzes PI in trypanosomes²³ raises the possibility that PI rather than GPI may be the true intracellular substrate.

PI-PLCs differ with respect to their ability to act on substrates (Table 9.1). PI-PLC from *B. cereus*, *B. thuringiensis*, and *S. aureus* readily cleave PI and GPI anchors in intact cell membranes, while the enzymes from trypanosomes and *Listeria monocytogenes*³⁴ efficiently cleave GPI anchors only when they are present in a detergent micelle (Table 9.2). In this respect they resemble mammalian GPI-PLD, which has a low membrane activity (see below). (G)PI-PLCs are overall hydrophilic enzymes, and their binding to the membrane interface is a necessary step to make a long chain phospholipid substrate accessible to hydrolysis. A possible reason for the different behavior towards substrates in cell membranes could lie in the different interfacial activation of the phospholipases (see ref. 33 for a review). Allosteric activation of lipolytic enzymes at the water lipid interphase is a necessary prerequisite for catalytic activity on the substrate in the lipid bilayer, and in this context the allosteric activation of PI-PLC³⁶ and GPI-PLC³⁷ by several aminoglycoside antibiotics may be of special interest.

GPI Anchor-Cleaving Activity in Plants

A GPI anchor-cleaving enzyme in peanut seeds has been identified and partially purified by a series of column chromatographic steps.²⁵ It cleaves detergent-solubilized GPI anchors but does not act on membrane-bound GPI nor on inositol-acylated GPI anchors. In addition, PI is also hydrolyzed, while other phospholipids (PC, PE, and PS) are not. The water-soluble products of phosphatidylinositol hydrolysis by peanut phospholipase C were characterized as a mixture of inositol 1,2-cyclic phosphate and inositol phosphate,²⁴ identifying the activity from peanut seeds as a (G)PI-PLC.²⁵ However, until recently, potential GPI substrates for this enzyme had not been observed in higher vascular plants. Six proteins on the outer surface of cultured *Nicotiana tabacum* cells with molecular weights of 92, 84, 60.5, 54.5, 39.5 and 37 kDa were found to move from a Triton X-114 detergent-rich phase to an aqueous phase following incubation with PI-PLC. Seven GPI-anchored proteins were

Table 9.2 Substrate specificity of GPI anchor-hydrolyzing phospholipases

Substrate	Bacterial PI-PLCs ^a	<i>T. brucei</i> (G)PI-PLC	Peanut (G)PI-PLC	Mammalian GPI-PLD
Detergent solubilized GPI anchor, not inositol-acylated	+	+	+	+
Detergent solubilized, inositol-acylated GPI anchor	-	-	-	+
Membrane-bound GPI, not inositol-acylated	+	-	-	-
Membrane-bound GPI, inositol-acylated	-	-	-	-
PI	+	+	+	-

a) Except for PI-PLC from *Listeria monocytogenes*³⁴ which poorly hydrolyzes membrane bound GPI anchors

also detected on the surface of tobacco leaf protoplasts with molecular weights of 67.5, 62, 39, 33.5, 27, 23 and 15.6 kDa.³⁸

Mammalian GPI-PLC

The existence of a mammalian GPI-PLC has been described for rat liver^{27,39} and mouse brain.⁴⁰ The main evidence for a C-type cleavage specificity was based on the release of diacylglycerol from the GPI-anchored VSG, and diradylglycerol from the GPI anchor of bovine red cell acetylcholinesterase. However, later work on rat hepatocyte membranes showed that if the assays were carried out in the presence of NaF and sodium orthovanadate, which are known inhibitors of phosphatidic acid phosphohydrolases, phosphatidic acid was detected in addition to diradylglycerol.⁴¹ In addition, the GPI anchor-converting activity showed properties similar to those of GPI-PLD from serum, i.e., it was Ca²⁺-sensitive and inhibited by heavy metal chelating agents. These findings strongly suggested that in rat liver the GPI anchor-hydrolyzing activity was due to a phospholipase D and not a phospholipase C.⁴¹

In conjunction with the mechanism of insulin action, the effect of insulin on the turnover of GPI-anchored structures in cell membranes has been widely studied, and a large body of evidence has accumulated indicating that the action of insulin may, in part, be mediated by the hydrolysis of a phosphatidylinositol-glycan. Part of insulin action is thought to result in the generation of soluble inositol phosphoglycans and diradylglycerol as putative second messengers of this hormone (for recent reviews see refs. 42-46). To date, however, a putative insulin-sensitive GPI-PLC responsible for the hydrolysis of GPI-anchored proteins and lipids has not been isolated and, thus, its existence is only conjectural.⁴²⁻⁴⁶ In several reports, GPI-PLC activities have been postulated to be involved in the release of GPI-anchored ecto-proteins after stimulation of insulin-sensitive cells. Anti-diabetic compounds like sulphonylurea drugs are known to stimulate glucose transport and metabolism in muscle and fat cells in vitro. It was shown that incubation of 3T3 adipocytes with glimepiride, a sulphonylurea compound, caused a time- and concentration-dependent release of the GPI-anchored ecto-proteins 5'-nucleotidase, lipoprotein lipase, and cAMP-binding

protein from the plasma membrane into the culture medium.⁴⁷ The conversion of the membrane-anchored amphiphilic proteins into their soluble hydrophilic forms was accompanied by the appearance of the CRD in the released proteins. This, together with the release of inositol phosphate from these proteins after deamination with nitrous acid, suggested that the GPI membrane anchors were hydrolyzed by a GPI-PLC.⁴⁷ Similarly, incubation of 3T3-L1 adipocytes with either insulin or glimepiride was found to induce a rapid concentration- and time-dependent release of GPI-anchored membrane dipeptidase from the cell surface.⁴⁸ Again, the hydrophilic form of membrane dipeptidase after stimulation of the cells with insulin was recognized by anti-CRD antibodies, suggesting that the GPI anchor was cleaved through the action of a GPI-PLC.⁴⁸

In a further report,⁴⁹ stimulation of adipocytes by insulin and glimepiride was found to result in solubilization by lipolytic cleavage of two other GPI-anchored proteins, lipoprotein lipase and cAMP-binding ecto-protein. Inositol-phosphate was retained in the residual protein-linked anchor structure, suggesting cleavage of the GPI anchor by an endogenous GPI-specific insulin- and glimepiride-sensitive GPI-PLC. Interestingly, despite GPI cleavage, the hydrophilic forms of these proteins remained membrane associated and were released only if a competitor, e.g., inositol-(cyclic)monophosphate, was added.⁴⁹ Other constituents of the GPI anchor (glucosamine and mannose) were less efficient. This suggests peripheral interaction of lipolytically cleaved lipoprotein lipase and cAMP-binding ecto-protein with the adipocyte cell surface involving the terminal inositol-(cyclic)monophosphate epitope and, presumably, a receptor of the adipocyte plasma membrane.⁴⁹

Signal-induced release of GPI-anchored proteins from the cell surface seems to be a general phenomenon, as it is not restricted to the action of insulin.⁵⁰⁻⁵² In these cases, however, product identification was less stringent than in the work cited in conjunction with the effect of insulin on the release of GPI-anchored proteins. Altogether, the involvement of GPI-anchored molecules in insulin signaling remains controversial until definite proof of the structure(s) of the putative GPI mediator(s) becomes available and the enzyme producing the phospho-oligosaccharide second messenger has been identified and characterized (see chapter 4).

Mammalian GPI-PLD

Distribution of GPI-PLD

A mammalian GPI-degrading activity was first described during early investigations of the anchoring mechanism of alkaline phosphatase (see chapter 1). It was observed that the standard procedure for extracting alkaline phosphatase from mammalian tissues (incubation of a homogenate or membrane fraction with aqueous butanol) produced a soluble form that was similar in its physical characteristics to that released from membranes with purified bacterial PI-PLC.⁵³ The butanol treatment had converted this tightly bound membrane enzyme to a dimeric, hydrophilic form that was no longer able to bind liposomes. By contrast, when the extraction was done with cold butanol, or if EDTA was added, an aggregated hydrophobic form was produced which could bind liposomes. The hydrophobic form of alkaline phosphatase could then be converted to the hydrophilic form by incubation with PI-PLC. The simplest interpretation of this phenomenon was that butanol had activated an endogenous enzyme capable of removing the anchor from alkaline phosphatase. The Ca^{2+} -dependent phosphoinositide-specific phospholipase C, found in the cytosolic and membrane fractions of most mammalian tissues, was proposed as the most likely culprit.^{53,54} The observation that anchor degradation was strongly pH dependent over the range 5.5-8.0 supported the idea that an endogenous enzyme was responsible.⁵⁵⁻⁵⁷

However, more detailed characterization of this activity was not possible until the membrane anchor on alkaline phosphatase was found to be a GPI molecule.

Although phosphatidylinositol hydrolysis and GPI degradation (using alkaline phosphatase and VSG as substrates) exhibited comparable sensitivities to pH and EGTA, it was observed that the GPI-degrading activity was relatively heat stable.⁵⁷ Furthermore, the GPI anchor-degrading activity, but not phosphatidylinositol hydrolysis, could be inhibited by 1,10-phenanthroline.⁵⁸ The distinction between these two activities was reinforced when it was shown that the GPI-degrading activity released phosphatidic acid but did not expose the CRD epitope on VSG.^{57,59} Collectively, this data indicated that the mammalian anchor-degrading activity was a phospholipase D with a preference for GPI substrates.

The anchor-degrading activity was subsequently found to be relatively abundant in plasma and serum from several mammalian species.^{58,60,61} In fact, the activity of the GPI-specific phospholipase D (GPI-PLD) in serum is so high that most of the GPI-degrading activity that has been detected in homogenates of unperfused tissues probably results from contamination with plasma.^{59,62} However, there is recent evidence indicating that GPI-PLD activity is also tightly associated with liver plasma membranes or located in lysosomes, and it is possible that these are distinct forms of the enzyme.⁶³⁻⁶⁵ Although all mammalian species tested have substantial activity, the amount in human serum and plasma is relatively low (10-30% of that found in other species).^{58,66} The GPI-PLD activity has been purified from human and bovine serum and shown to be capable of degrading the GPI anchors on several different proteins but not to hydrolyze any other phospholipid, including phosphatidylinositol.⁶⁶⁻⁶⁹

Although the abundance of GPI-PLD in plasma proved useful for purification and molecular characterization, it has severely hampered studies on GPI-PLD located in cells. Using a combination of enzyme assay and immunostaining techniques, GPI-PLD has been detected, often at relatively low levels, in several cell types: neurons, keratinocytes, bone marrow, leukocytes, pancreatic cells and mast cells.^{62,70-72} However GPI-PLD is known to be taken up into cells *in vitro*, and a major concern with the localization studies is the potential for contamination by residual, exogenous GPI-PLD (originating from the serum normally present in culture media).⁷³ This may explain the substantial decrease in cell-associated GPI-PLD activity often observed following culture in serum-free media.^{62,72} The presence of GPI-PLD mRNA has been confirmed in several tissue/cell types by Northern blotting or PCR amplification of cDNA libraries.^{71,74-76} However, it has only been detected by *in situ* hybridization in mast cells and there is no biosynthetic labeling data for GPI-PLD in any cell type.⁷⁶

There is also a great deal of uncertainty regarding cellular sources of the GPI-PLD found in plasma, although the recent demonstration of regulated secretion from pancreatic β cells makes them a good candidate.⁷⁷ Constitutive "secretion" has also been reported from myeloid cell lines, raising the possibility that circulating leukocytes are another source of the plasma GPI-PLD.⁷² It should be emphasized that the specific activity of GPI-PLD in serum is several orders of magnitude higher than in any tissue/cell type analyzed to date. This suggests that the cells which secrete GPI-PLD must be quite abundant, the GPI-PLD is stored in the secretory cells in a relatively inactive form or the secreted GPI-PLD has a long half life in the bloodstream. In two clinical studies, serum GPI-PLD was reduced in patients with impaired liver function and it was suggested that this organ might be an important source of the enzyme.^{78,79} GPI-PLD has also been detected in milk and cerebrospinal fluid, but the concentrations are relatively low, <1% of that found in plasma.⁶⁶ There is relatively little information on the distribution of GPI-PLD in other organisms besides mammals. GPI-PLD is present in chicken plasma and neural tissue, but there are no reports of a similar enzyme in other vertebrates or in nonvertebrates.^{58,80}

Structure/Function Studies on GPI-PLD

GPI-PLD has been purified from bovine and human serum and has a molecular mass of 100-120 kDa by SDS-PAGE, with a pI of 5.6.^{66-69,81} The predicted molecular mass from the bovine liver DNA sequence (816 residues; Genbank accession # M60804) is 90.2 kDa.⁸² Two cDNAs with similar, but not identical, sequences predicting a protein of 817 residues have been isolated from human liver and pancreatic cDNA libraries (Genbank accession # L11701 and L11702). The C-terminal region of GPI-PLD is highly homologous to the N-terminal domain of integrin α subunits (see below and Figs. 9.2 and 9.3) but there is no apparent homology with any other protein, including the phospholipases D that hydrolyze phosphatidylcholine. The cDNA sequences predict the presence of eight potential N-linked glycosylation sites. Although there is no detailed information on the glycan structure, at least three of these sites are likely to be glycosylated based on sensitivity to N-glycosidase F or glycan staining of tryptic fragments (Li J-Y, Low MG, unpublished work). Four of these sites are clustered around the junction between the two major domains of GPI-PLD (Figs. 9.2, 9.3). GPI-PLD is insensitive to O-glycanase.⁶⁶ Presumably the N-glycosylation accounts for the ability of human and bovine GPI-PLD to bind to concanavalin A or wheat germ lectin, as well as the difference between the predicted molecular mass and that determined by SDS-PAGE.^{61,66,68,69}

Several gel filtration studies have indicated that purified GPI-PLD is an aggregate with a molecular mass of >400 kDa, which decreases in the presence of Triton X-100 to 200-350 kDa.^{66,69,83} Disruption of GPI-PLD aggregates is consistent with the decrease in sedimentation coefficient from >9.5S to approx 6S induced by detergent.⁶⁶ However, there is also one report suggesting that purified GPI-PLD has a molecular mass of approximately 100 kDa (by gel filtration) even in the absence of detergent.⁶⁸ At present, inherent inaccuracies in the methods used to estimate the size of the monomeric and aggregated forms make it difficult to draw any firm conclusions as to the number of GPI-PLD molecules in the aggregates. Although it seems likely that GPI-PLD is mostly dimeric in the presence of detergent, other possibilities (e.g., an asymmetric monomer, binding to detergent micelles, etc.) cannot be excluded at present. In plasma, GPI-PLD appears to have a molecular mass of approx 500 kDa by gel filtration.⁵⁸ However, this is probably due to the association of most of the GPI-PLD in plasma with the apolipoprotein AI fraction of HDL rather than formation of aggregates consisting entirely of GPI-PLD.^{66,84} Purified apoAI will disaggregate GPI-PLD, suggesting that this amphipathic protein is able to interact directly with GPI-PLD.⁸⁵

In two independent studies, tryptic degradation of purified GPI-PLD cleaved the protein into two fragments of approximately 40 kDa and one of approximately 30 kDa.^{83,86} However, the formation of fragments does not inactivate the GPI-PLD; in fact, under some assay conditions, it produces a substantial increase in activity. A similar stimulation is given by several other proteases.⁸³ Apart from increased activity, there were no other major changes in its properties. Attempts to isolate a catalytic domain from the tryptic digest were difficult because the three fragments remain associated unless they were previously denatured. After chromatography in 6 M urea followed by renaturation, enzymatic activity was detected in the N-terminal fragment.⁸⁶ No activity was present in the other two fragments, either alone or in combination with the N-terminal fragment. Although recovery of activity after this procedure was poor, the work strongly suggests that the catalytic site is located in the N-terminal region of the GPI-PLD molecule (see Fig. 9.2).

The GPI-PLD cDNA sequence predicted the presence of four Ca^{2+} -binding sites in the C-terminal region (see Fig. 9.2).⁸² This prediction was consistent with the sensitivity of GPI-PLD to inhibition by EGTA and EDTA, which can be blocked by excess Ca^{2+} ions.^{27,28,57,68} However, more detailed studies comparing the ability of different cations to reverse the inhibitory effects of EGTA have indicated that Ca^{2+} can be removed from the GPI-PLD

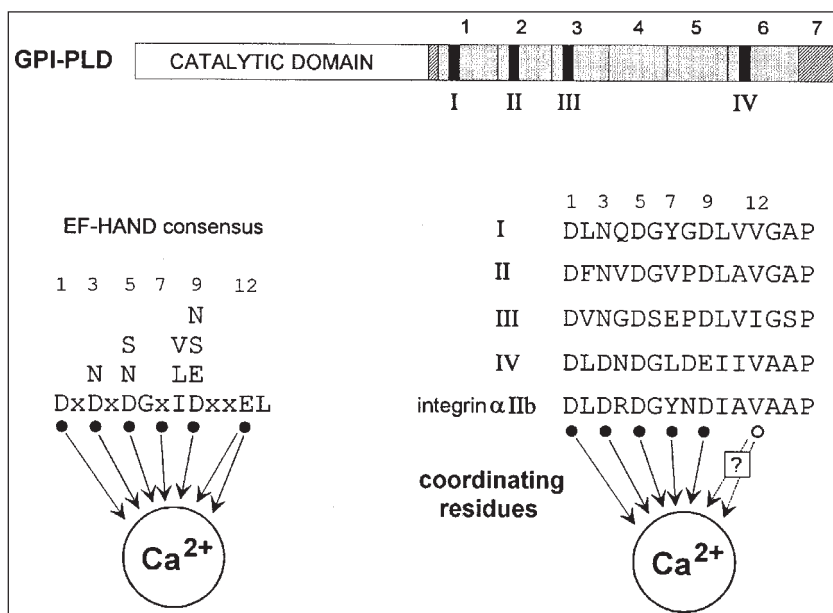


Fig. 9. 2. Predicted Ca^{2+} -binding sites in GPI-PLD. The location of predicted Ca^{2+} -binding sites (solid shading) within GPI-PLD is shown at the top of the figure. The amino acid sequences of these sites are shown at the lower right. For comparison, a typical divalent cation binding site sequence from an integrin α -subunit (sixth repeat of IIb) is shown below the GPI-PLD sequences. The locations of predicted Ca^{2+} -coordinating residues (solid circle) are based on comparisons with the EF-hand sequences.⁸⁷ Coordination at position 7 is provided by the main chain carbonyl and at position 9 is via a H-bonded water molecule. The bidentate coordination provided in conventional EF-hands by a glutamic acid at position 12 is absent in integrin EF-hands, where it is usually replaced by an isoleucine or a valine residue. The identity of the "missing" coordinating residue at position 12 is unknown for both GPI-PLD and integrins.

without affecting enzymatic activity.⁸³ They further suggest that the inhibitory effects of EDTA and EGTA (as well as 1,10-phenanthroline) are probably due to their ability to remove bound zinc from the protein. Although Ca^{2+} does not appear to be necessary for activity, it will bind to GPI-PLD.⁸³ The binding appears to be relatively specific for Ca^{2+} since it is not blocked by other divalent cations, including zinc. Metal analyses and equilibrium dialysis indicate that approximately 5 Ca^{2+} ions are bound to each GPI-PLD molecule.

The metal analysis also indicated that GPI-PLD contains ten zinc ions.⁸³ Although this result provides independent support for the inhibitor studies described above, it is not obvious how and where such a large number of zinc ions could be bound by GPI-PLD. It is unlikely that all of these divalent cations could be located in the active center and it is probable that most, if not all, of the zinc ions have a structural rather than a catalytic role. Comparable numbers of structural zinc ions have been found in several zinc finger proteins, but there are no zinc fingers or other well characterized zinc-binding domains in GPI-PLD. At least two closely-spaced cysteines are required to bind a zinc ion, but bovine GPI-PLD is predicted to contain only ten cysteine residues in total, and of these only two are close together. Histidine is a more likely ligand for binding the zinc ions in GPI-PLD

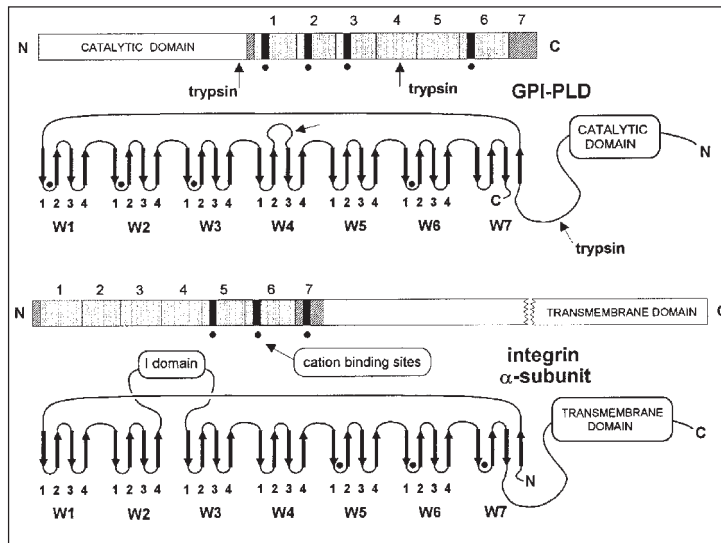


Fig. 9.3. Structural comparison of GPI-PLD and integrin α -subunits. This figure compares the seven-fold repeat structure of GPI-PLD and a representative integrin α -subunit based on modeling studies.^{88,89} For each protein the location of the repeats (stippled shading) and the EF-hand-like Ca^{2+} -binding sites (solid shading) is shown schematically in the upper figure. The folding predicted by the β -propeller model⁸⁹ is shown in the lower figure. Each repeat (W1-W7) is predicted to fold as a four-stranded antiparallel sheet with the Ca^{2+} -coordinating residues located in a loop between the first and second strands (see Fig. 9.2). Also shown is the location of the I domain, which is inserted between the second and third repeat in some integrins. The location of predicted calcium ion binding sites (filled circles) and tryptic cleavage sites in GPI-PLD (arrows) are also indicated.

because in several different enzymes only two histidine residues, in conjunction with an acidic residue, are required to coordinate one zinc ion.

Initial sequence comparisons indicated that the predicted Ca^{2+} -binding sites have a strong resemblance to EF-hand-like sites found in the N-terminal region of α -subunits of integrins.^{82,87} A distinctive feature of the EF-hand-like sites in both integrins and GPI-PLD is that they lack a suitable coordinating residue at position 12 (Fig. 9.2). A subsequent structure modeling study suggested that the similarity between GPI-PLD and integrin α -subunits was even more extensive and encompassed the 400-500 residues contained in the seven FG-GAP repeats common to all integrin α -subunits.⁸⁸ In fact the only major differences in this region between integrin α -subunits and GPI-PLD are the location of the FG-GAP repeats relative to the rest of the protein and the distribution of the predicted Ca^{2+} -binding sites amongst the FG-GAP repeats. More recently, all of the FG-GAP repeats in integrin α -subunits and GPI-PLD have been predicted to fold into a single domain: a seven-bladed β -propeller (Fig. 9.3).⁸⁹ This model locates all of the Ca^{2+} -binding sites relatively close together on the 'lower' face of the β -propeller, but does not indicate what the function of these sites is, either in integrins or in GPI-PLD. It is of interest to note that the most sensitive tryptic cleavage site on GPI-PLD is predicted to be in an exposed loop on the upper face of the β -propeller (Fig. 9.3).^{83,86} The β -propeller model may also explain why relatively small deletions at the C-terminus have such a drastic effect on the enzymatic activity of GPI-PLD when the catalytic site is predicted to be in the N-terminal region of the protein.⁹⁰ These

regions of the molecule are in fact adjacent to each other as a consequence of the circular arrangement of the FG-GAP repeats in the β -propeller. However, it should be emphasized that, even though the limited "structural" information available for GPI-PLD is consistent with the β -propeller structure, it does not provide a rigorous test for any of its predictions.

Regulation of Activity on In Vitro Model Systems

GPI-PLD (either purified or in serum) is active on detergent-solubilized substrates but it has very low or undetectable activity towards GPI-anchored proteins located in cell membranes.^{60,67,91} The reason why proteins in cell membranes are resistant to GPI-PLD is unknown, but it plays an important role in protecting cells from the high levels of this enzyme in the circulation. It has been calculated that if GPI-PLD were fully active on cells, there would be sufficient activity in the plasma to remove all GPI-anchored proteins from an exposed cell surface in a few minutes.⁹¹ One potential explanation for resistance of GPI-anchored proteins in cells to hydrolysis by GPI-PLD could be their sequestration in the cholesterol and sphingolipid-rich microdomains (see chapter 3). However, there is conflicting evidence as to whether cholesterol-binding agents such as saponin (which would be expected to disrupt the microdomains) can stimulate GPI-PLD-mediated release of GPI-anchored proteins.^{67,92} Furthermore, most of the resistance to GPI-PLD exhibited by cell membranes can be restored when the detergent-solubilized substrates are inserted into liposomes containing phosphatidylcholine alone.^{67,91}

GPI-PLD is unable to bind to phosphatidylcholine liposomes even if they contain substrate molecules (Low MG, unpublished work). Thus, the relatively low activity towards membranes may be a simple result of the inability of GPI-PLD to bind to the phospholipid bilayer (or cell membranes) and gain the kinetic advantage resulting from processive hydrolysis at the interface. It is not known if the stimulatory effect of detergent on hydrolytic activity is due to disruption of GPI-PLD aggregates (discussed in the previous section) or more effective substrate presentation. In this regard, it is relevant to note that apoAI not only disaggregates GPI-PLD but will also stimulate enzymatic activity.⁸⁵ Although this effect is only seen with a large molar excess of apoAI, it is nevertheless significant, because it occurs even in the presence of detergent. It seems likely that activity of GPI-PLD towards substrates dispersed in detergent is a complex interaction between GPI-PLD aggregation state and interfacial properties of the substrate particle, as well as dilution of substrate in the interface. In addition to the nonspecific "inhibition" GPI-PLD activity by the phospholipid bilayer, it has also been found that some lipids have a more specific inhibitory effect which is not reversed by detergents. Thus phosphatidic acid, lysophosphatidic acid and lipid A are all capable of inhibiting GPI-PLD activity in the 0.5-2 μ M concentration range. Although the mechanism of this effect is unknown, it is unlikely that it is due to alteration in substrate presentation or to the surface characteristics of the substrate particle, because the effect is seen when the mole fraction of inhibitor:detergent in the assay is <0.01 .⁹³ The observation that phosphatidic acid also interacts with integrin IIb 3 complexes and thereby increases their ability to bind fibrinogen raises the intriguing possibility that the β -propeller domain might contain a binding site for this lipid in both GPI-PLD and integrin α -subunits.⁹⁴

Does GPI-PLD Release GPI-Anchored Proteins from Cells In Vivo?

Low molecular weight, hydrophilic forms of alkaline phosphatase are often found in serum, and it has been suggested that the GPI anchor-degrading enzyme might be responsible for their release from tissues in vivo.⁵⁴⁻⁵⁷ Although the amount of liver alkaline phosphatase increases in serum of patients with cholestasis and in experimental animals following bile duct ligation, the mechanism of this effect is uncertain. The alkaline phosphatase is present

in the circulation as a complex mixture of both hydrophilic (dimers with anchor removed) and hydrophobic (aggregates and membrane fragments) species. However, the hydrophobic forms appear to be stable and resistant to the action of the GPI-PLD in serum. It has therefore been proposed that GPI-PLD only acts for a brief period of time on alkaline phosphatase aggregates released from the hepatocyte membrane by bile salts leaking into the liver sinusoids.⁹⁵ As soon as the alkaline phosphatase aggregates enter the circulation, the bile salts become too dilute to allow further GPI-PLD action. GPI-PLD-mediated anchor degradation would be accelerated in pathological situations (e.g., cholestasis) which increase bile salt concentration in liver sinusoids. Recent studies with glucocorticoid-treated dogs indicate that the increased concentration of bile acids in the liver, resulting from the normal enterohepatic circulation, could also be sufficient to produce a transient activation GPI-PLD.^{96,97}

In addition to alkaline phosphatase, several other GPI-anchored proteins have been identified in plasma or other body fluids, or are released from cells into the culture media (summarized in Table 9.3). However, direct evidence that anchor degradation by GPI-PLD is responsible for these observations has proven surprisingly difficult to obtain. In this regard it should be emphasized that for most, if not all of these proteins, there is no compelling physiological reason why they should be converted to a soluble form. In the absence of any well characterized physiological processes that require phospholipase-mediated GPI degradation, studies in this area have so far been confined to identifying the mechanism of protein release from cells, without any idea as to what its ultimate purpose might be (see chapter 1).

Progress in this area has also been hampered by a number of technical problems. First, there are several mechanisms beside GPI degradation which can cause release of GPI-anchored proteins from cells. The ability of GPI-anchored proteins to be enriched in small membrane vesicles or to form soluble, but hydrophobic, oligomeric aggregates can be mistaken for GPI degradation unless the released protein is analyzed (i.e., by Triton X-114 phase separation) to show that it no longer has a hydrophobic anchor.^{92,95,98} This analysis is itself problematic because the conditions of the phase separation will activate any contaminating GPI-PLD (particularly in a serum sample) giving a completely erroneous result. Proteolysis adjacent to the GPI anchor or alternative splicing could also cause release of hydrophilic proteins from cells and it is necessary to eliminate them by a positive ³H-ethanolamine labeling result (see below). An interesting example of this type of problem was the proposal that a hydrophilic form of intestinal alkaline phosphatase found in the circulation might have arisen by alternative splicing. Initially, the identification of two distinct cDNAs without discernible C-terminal GPI addition signals supported this possibility. However, it was subsequently shown that this cDNA directed the synthesis of GPI-anchored forms of alkaline phosphatase due to the presence of a cryptic GPI addition signal.⁹⁹

The second problem is that release of GPI-anchored proteins from cells is generally slow (i.e., hours to days) and constitutive, rather than an acutely regulated process. Slow release of a protein increases the likelihood of secondary degradation by a protease, cyclic phosphodiesterase or endoglycosidase which would obscure the location of the original cleavage event. One notable exception is the release of ADP ribosyltransferase from cytotoxic T cells, which can be stimulated acutely (i.e., 30-180 min) by activation of protein kinase C with PMA, crosslinking with anti-CD3 or incubation with IL-2.¹⁰⁰ However, other agents which stimulate release of GPI-anchored proteins from cells perturb membrane structure also.^{67,92,95} Conversely, attempts to block release are restricted by the lack of specific GPI-PLD inhibitors. 1,10-phenanthroline is an effective inhibitor of serum GPI-PLD and blocks release of GPI-anchored proteins in several systems.^{74,75,80,100} However, this

Table 9.3 GPI-PLD mediated release of proteins from cells and tissues

Protein	Source	Evidence in support of GPI-PLD mediated cleavage	Ref.
Thy-1	human cerebro-spinal fluid	chromatographic behavior of C-terminal glycopeptide	103
Alkaline phosphatase	canine serum	inositol analysis; no CRD activity, electrophoretic mobility	96
CD59	human urine	structure of C-terminal glycopeptide	104,105
DAF	HeLa cells	³ H-ethanolamine labeling; no CRD reactivity; 1,10-phenanthroline inhibition	75
NCAM	murine myoblast cells	³ H-inositol labeled product released by nitrous acid deamination	106
Axonin-1	chicken dorsal root ganglion cells	³ H-ethanolamine/ ³ H-inositol labeling; no CRD reactivity; 1,10-phenanthroline inhibition	80
Heparan sulfate proteoglycan	human bone marrow cells	³ H-ethanolamine labeling; no CRD reactivity; 1,10-phenanthroline inhibition	74
ADP ribosyl-transferase	murine cytotoxic T-cells	1,10-phenanthroline inhibition	100

transition metal chelator would also be capable of blocking other enzymes that might be responsible for release (e.g., metalloproteases).

The final problem is the poor sensitivity, specificity and the nonquantitative nature of the analytical techniques used to determine the site of GPI anchor cleavage. Labeling cells with ³H-GPI precursors is commonly used to demonstrate that a GPI-anchored protein was not released by proteolysis. ³H-inositol is the most suitable label because it is located immediately distal to the presumed site of cleavage. However, ³H-ethanolamine is often used instead, because incorporation of ³H-inositol into GPI precursors is relatively poor. Prolonged labeling periods increase the likelihood that secondary metabolism of the ³H-labeled precursors will give misleading results. Another technique that has been widely used is immunoblotting with the CRD antibody.^{74,75,80,96} The CRD antibody reacts with epitopes present in many GPIs (primarily inositol 1,2 cyclic phosphate) that are exposed by phospholipase C cleavage. However, this is essentially a negative result which only serves to eliminate release mediated by cellular GPI-PLC. By itself, the CRD technique cannot distinguish between release mechanisms as diverse as proteolysis, vesiculation or GPI-PLD-mediated degradation, all of which give a negative result.

In spite of the potential problems indicated above, the data summarized in Table 9.3 provide reasonable evidence that GPI-anchored proteins are released from cells by an endogenous phospholipase D. The subcellular location where GPI cleavage takes place is not known. GPI-anchored proteins are released from cells following transfection with GPI-PLD (native or a GPI-anchored chimera of GPI-PLD), but GPI-PLD secreted from transfected cells was unable to release proteins when added to control cells.^{82,101,102} This data suggests that cell-associated GPI-PLD is more effective than soluble GPI-PLD, but there is no evidence to indicate that cell association “activates” GPI-PLD directly. Release could be

due to a concentrating effect resulting from colocalization of GPI-PLD and its substrate in the secretory pathway, in some other intracellular compartment or even at the cell surface. By contrast, several studies of release by endogenous GPI-PLD suggest that GPI degradation does not occur at an intracellular location because it is not blocked by Brefeldin A or monensin.^{74,75,100} Furthermore, the ability of a cell impermeant analog of 1,10-phenanthroline (bathophenanthroline disulfonic acid) to inhibit PMA-stimulated ADP ribosyltransferase release suggests that in T lymphocytes GPI anchor degradation does in fact occur on the cell surface.¹⁰⁰

One criticism of GPI-PLD-mediated anchor degradation as a physiologically relevant mechanism for releasing proteins from cells is that it would be relatively nonspecific. However, there is some data which suggests that release might be selective for particular GPI-anchored proteins. Whereas ADP ribosyltransferase and Thy-1 or several unidentified ³H-inositol-labeled proteins are all released from cytotoxic T cells by PI-PLC treatment, only ADP ribosyltransferase is released following stimulation with PMA.¹⁰⁰ Axonin-1 is released from cultured chick dorsal root ganglion neurons or from transfected myeloma cells to a much greater extent than the closely related GPI-anchored protein F11. A comparison of the secretion exhibited by chimeric axonin-1/F11 or axonin-1 deletion mutants indicate that the fourth fibronectin type III-like domain of axonin-1 is required for high levels of release.⁸⁰ Antibodies specifically directed against the fourth fibronectin type III-like domain also blocked axonin-1 release. This selectivity suggests that the GPI-PLD-mediated release of particular proteins can be regulated independently, although the mechanism remains uncertain.

Summary

A feature common to most GPI-anchored proteins and other biomolecules is their susceptibility to degradation by specific phospholipases that cleave the phosphodiester bond between the lipid and the inositol glycan moieties. Although these enzymes are absolutely specific for the site of cleavage, they are relatively insensitive to the precise structure of the GPI. A phospholipase C (PI-PLC) capable of cleaving phosphatidylinositol as well as GPIs is secreted by several different bacteria and is widely used as a means of identification and experimental manipulation of GPI-anchored biomolecules. However, bacteria do not synthesize GPI and the physiological role of PI-PLC is unknown. Phospholipases C and D capable of degrading GPIs are also produced by eukaryotes, and it has been proposed that these enzymes might play a role in the physiological release of GPI-anchored proteins from cell surfaces.

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Intercellular Transfer of GPI-Anchored Molecules

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The proteins which are attached to cells by a glycosylphosphatidylinositol (GPI) anchor are structurally and functionally diverse.¹⁻³ Included in this group are cell surface enzymes, adhesion molecules, parasite antigens, complement regulatory proteins, lymphocyte antigens and others. In common, these proteins have at their C terminus a GPI moiety which is attached in the rough endoplasmic reticulum as an early posttranslational event, after cleavage of a C-terminal signal sequence from the nascent protein.^{1,4,5} The GPI moiety is inserted into the outer leaflet of the cell's membrane bilayer, while the entire protein component of the molecule is extracellular.

Possible Functions of the GPI Anchor

The biological advantage of the GPI anchor is poorly understood, and the diverse functions of the proteins which utilize it complicate the issue. On epithelial and endothelial cells, most anchored proteins are expressed preferentially at the apical surface of the cell.^{6,7} This location suggests a role for the anchor at tissue interfaces. A number of authors have presented evidence that GPI-anchored proteins are associated with tyrosine kinases and that the anchor may be involved in cell signaling following ligand binding of the extracellular protein moiety.⁸⁻¹¹ This issue, although still controversial, continues to be the focus of intense research. Alternatively, the anchor's value may relate to the potential for removal and export of anchored proteins from the cell surface. The anchor can be cleaved by specific phospholipase enzymes (PI-PLC and PI-PLD) of both eukaryotic and prokaryotic origin.¹ Further, vesiculating cells release a higher percentage of GPI-anchored proteins than of other cell surface proteins.^{12,13} In some cases the mechanisms which facilitate removal of GPI-anchored proteins from cells confer a clear biologic advantage. Tumor cells and parasitic trypanosomes have been observed to release GPI-anchored proteins,¹⁴⁻¹⁸ and this may be a mechanism by which they evade the immune response.

Export of functional GPI-anchored proteins from cells, either in soluble, anchor-negative form after phospholipase cleavage, or on the surface of vesicles, may also benefit the organism. Complement regulators, exported from vesiculating cells at sites of inflammation, may inhibit complement activation in the fluid phase, thus reducing the level of complement attack on cell surfaces; digestive enzymes, exported from intestinal cells, might increase the amount of food which these cells can process.

In recent years evidence has accumulated which supports the hypothesis that, in some situations, GPI-anchored proteins transfer between cell membranes *in vivo* either during direct membrane-membrane contact or via a fluid phase, micellar intermediate. The implications of this phenomenon both as a biologic principle, and a tool for experimentation

and therapy are considerable. This chapter attempts to summarize current knowledge regarding this issue.

Evidence that GPI-Anchored Proteins can Transfer between Cell Membranes

In 1977, Bouma et al demonstrated transfer of the GPI-anchored enzyme acetylcholinesterase from erythrocytes to liposomes *in vitro*.¹⁹ It was subsequently demonstrated that the complement inhibitory protein decay accelerating factor (DAF) can be purified from the membranes of detergent-solubilized erythrocytes with the anchor intact, and that this purified DAF can insert into cell membranes and function to protect the acceptor cells from attack by human complement.²⁰⁻²¹ Medof et al later demonstrated that purified DAF could incorporate into erythrocytes from patients with paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH, a condition in which erythrocytes fail to express GPI-anchored proteins including complement inhibitors and are therefore extremely sensitive to complement mediated damage) and that this incorporated DAF rendered the PNH cells more resistant to human complement.²² At this time, however, there was no evidence to indicate that this phenomenon occurred *in vivo*.

In 1990, Pearce et al²³ reported that schistosomes isolated from host animals possess host DAF on their tegument, although they did not determine whether the parasites acquire this protein as a result of adherence of host cell membrane fragments, or by direct inter-membrane transfer of DAF's GPI moiety. Rifkin and Landsberger²⁴ demonstrated that, during incubation with live trypanosomes, erythrocytes acquired copies of the GPI-linked trypanosome variant surface glycoprotein (VSG) in a time and temperature dependent manner, based on lysis of the erythrocytes in the presence of anti-VSG and complement. Erythrocytes acquired VSG not only during incubation with live trypanosomes, but also during incubation with high speed supernatants of medium in which trypanosomes had been incubated, establishing that cellular acquisition of VSG was independent of direct cell-cell contact. This report did not, however, demonstrate conclusively that the VSG inserted into erythrocytes via the GPI anchor and was not present on small trypanosome membrane fragments or in protein complexes which became adherent to the erythrocyte surface membrane.

Recent evidence suggests that GPI-anchored proteins may transfer between the membranes of mammalian cells *in vivo* and *in vitro*. Kooyiman et al,²⁵ by linking the coding sequences of two human GPI-linked complement regulatory proteins, CD59 and DAF, to the regulatory sequence of the globin gene, created transgenic mice which expressed these human proteins in an erythroid cell specific manner. Using immunofluorescent staining they showed that the endothelium of these animals possessed CD59 and DAF immunoreactivity, and that this immunoreactivity was lost during cell culture. Further, they demonstrated that hearts from these animals, when perfused with human plasma, showed significantly less complement-mediated endothelial damage than did hearts from control animals. These data indicate that the endothelium acquired copies of exogenous, functional CD59 and DAF from circulating erythrocytes, although the results might be explained by adherence of erythrocyte membrane fragments to the endothelial cells, and do not provide conclusive evidence of intercellular GPI transfer.

Dunn et al²⁶ created a "knockout" mouse negative for the PIG-A gene, which is necessary for GPI anchor synthesis, so that the "knockouts" failed to express all GPI-anchored proteins. Although the mutation was lethal and embryos did not develop beyond an early stage, the authors were able to generate GPI anchor-negative cell lines using this technique. GPI-anchor-negative cells also contained a neomycin resistance gene and a fluorescent marker to facilitate their separation from normal cells after coculture. Cell lines generated from

disaggregated PIG-A negative embryoid bodies did not form the hematopoietic colonies which are typically formed by cells from normal embryoid bodies. When the PIG-A negative cells were cocultured with cells from normal embryos for three to five days, however, they acquired the GPI-anchored protein CD24, and also gained the ability to form hematopoietic colonies, suggesting that acquisition of a GPI-anchored protein allowed these cells to function normally. In these experiments, PIG-A negative cells could not acquire GPI-anchored proteins from culture supernatant of normal cells, indicating that, in this system, direct cell-cell contact was necessary for protein acquisition by the acceptor cells. The mechanism by which PIG-A negative cells acquired CD24 from normal cells was not further investigated.

The above data are inconsistent with the evidence that in the disease paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria, populations of erythrocytes which are entirely GPI anchor negative coexist in the bloodstream for weeks or months with GPI anchor positive erythrocytes, but do not acquire copies of GPI-anchored proteins.²⁷ It is possible that the conditions of cell culture promote release of GPI-anchored proteins from erythroid cells, either on vesicles or membrane fragments or as single molecules.

Anderson et al²⁸ infected HeLa cells with an adenovirus carrying cDNA which coded for a fusion protein composed of the extracellular domain of the T cell antigen CD4, fused to a GPI anchor. These HeLa cells, designated JM88 cells, then expressed a GPI-anchored form of CD4. Uninfected HeLa cells incubated with JM88 cells acquired CD4-GPI in a time and temperature-dependent manner, as evidenced by immunofluorescence staining. Acquisition of CD4 immunoreactivity occurred within fifteen minutes and was prevented by formaldehyde fixation of the JM88 cells. Further, cells expressing the viral glycoprotein gp160, which binds CD4, induced syncytia formation of HeLa cells bearing acquired CD4-GPI, providing strong evidence that the CD4-GPI protein had indeed become an integral component of the cell membrane. Erythrocytes acquired CD4 immunoreactivity during incubation with culture supernatants from JM88 cells, demonstrating that in this system, unlike that described by Dunn et al,²⁶ direct cell-cell contact was not required for acquisition of GPI-anchored protein by the acceptor cells.

Mechanisms by which Cells Acquire Exogenous GPI-Anchored Proteins

Cells might acquire new GPI-anchored proteins in the following ways:

1. By adherence of donor cell membrane fragments or vesicles to the acceptor cell surface;
2. By fusion of donor vesicles with the outer leaflet of the acceptor cell's plasma membrane;
3. By direct transfer of the GPI moiety from donor cell (or vesicle) membrane to acceptor cell membrane during membrane-membrane contact;
4. By transfer of the GPI moiety from a proteolipid or micellar intermediate to the outer leaflet of the acceptor cell membrane.

All of the above mechanisms may operate *in vitro* and *in vivo*. In recent years several authors have focused on this question and evidence has accumulated that, at least in some systems, micellar or proteolipid intermediates play an important role in the phenomenon of intermembrane GPI-anchored protein transfer.

Until recently, only anchor negative forms of GPI-anchored proteins had been detected in body fluids. Anchor-intact GPI-anchored proteins, including the complement regulators CD59 and DAF, and the lymphocyte antigen CDw52, have now been shown to occur in amniotic fluid,²⁹ seminal plasma³⁰⁻³² and breast milk.³³⁻³⁵ In seminal plasma and breast milk these proteins are in part associated with membranous particles. In seminal plasma,

GPI-linked proteins are carried on the membranes of "prostasomes",^{31,32} extracellular vesicular organelles which arise from prostatic epithelium,³⁶ while in breast milk they have been identified on the membranes of milk fat globules,³⁷ membrane-bound lipid droplets secreted by mammary cells.³⁵

The function of prostasomes is poorly understood, although some evidence exists that these organelles promote sperm motility³⁶ and may have an immunosuppressive function.³⁸ They have been shown to associate with the membranes of spermatozoa in vitro.³⁹ Rooney et al³² investigated the interaction of prostasomes with cells using fluorescent dyes and videomicroscopy and demonstrated that prostasomes bind to, but do not fuse with, cell membranes, in a time and temperature dependent manner. Cells incubated with prostasomes acquired prostatic CD59 and prostatic membrane cofactor protein (a transmembrane protein) with comparable efficiency, indicating that cellular acquisition of CD59 was due to uptake of whole prostasomes, and not to intermembrane GPI transfer. Cells to which prostasomes bound showed increased resistance to lysis by human complement, demonstrating that proteins on vesicles which are adherent to cells can function as though expressed on the cell's plasma membrane. Adherence of cell-derived vesicles to acceptor cells likely explains some of the cellular acquisition of GPI-anchored proteins described in the reports cited here, and is an important caveat for researchers in this area.

Cellular acquisition of GPI-anchored proteins from seminal plasma was, however, only partly due to prostasomes. Using density gradient centrifugation, Rooney et al³² identified a second, membrane-free form of GPI-anchored proteins in seminal plasma. This fraction had higher density than prostasomes and other membranes, as would be expected from complexes with a high protein, low lipid content. GPI-anchored proteins in this fraction partitioned into the detergent phase of solution of Triton X-114, demonstrating that they retained the hydrophobic anchor⁴⁰ and were able to incorporate into cell membranes.

The above finding suggested that GPI-anchored proteins may be protected by "carriers", such as lipid-protein complexes or lipoproteins, in some fluids. This possibility is supported by the work of Vakeva et al⁴¹ who, using radiolabeled, purified CD59 demonstrated that this protein incorporated efficiently into high density lipoprotein (HDL) particles (but poorly into low density lipoproteins) of human serum. Further, they isolated HDL and LDL from human serum and demonstrated the presence of CD59 in association with HDL, but not LDL. HDL particles were able to incorporate 25-42% of labeled CD59 which had been pre-incorporated into rabbit erythrocytes, and to donate 7-14% of this acquired CD59 to new rabbit erythrocytes, indicating that these lipoprotein particles can serve as intermediates in the transfer of GPI-anchored proteins between cells.

Mechanisms by which Cells Release GPI-Anchored Proteins

The evidence presented above indicates that GPI-anchored proteins can be released intact from cells and, via the anchor, become incorporated into the membranes of other cells or associate with lipoprotein carriers. The mechanisms by which GPI-anchored proteins could be released from the cell surface are discussed below.

Spontaneous Transfer Between Cell Membranes: Effect of Collision

A small amount of transfer may occur between membranes spontaneously, and this may be increased under certain conditions. Yang and Huestis⁴² studied transfer of phospholipids between membranes and demonstrated that, for hydrophobic lipids, percentage transfer is significantly increased when the density of the membrane particles allows frequent collision. Additionally, transfer is promoted at acidic pH. This may explain why PNH erythrocytes do not acquire significant amounts of GPI-anchored proteins from healthy cells in the bloodstream, but can be shown to acquire these proteins in vitro, in

culture conditions. In situations with high cell density, low fluid volume and relative stasis of fluid (e.g., inflammatory foci and body cavities), the amount of transfer which occurs may be sufficient to have a significant biological effect.

Effect of Stress on Cells

Cells may release increased amounts of GPI-anchored proteins from the outer leaflet of the cell membrane's lipid bilayer when under certain stress conditions, for example when the membrane deforms during the process of vesiculation. Further, GPI-anchored proteins are preferentially concentrated in released vesicles,¹¹⁻¹³ and it is possible that such vesicles release their GPI-anchored proteins more easily than do intact cell membranes. In support of this hypothesis, milk fat globules have been shown to be unstable, and to undergo further vesiculation after their release from cells.⁴³

Lipid-Protein Intermediates: Effects of Fluid Characteristics

Intact GPI-anchored proteins are abundant in seminal plasma.³⁰⁻³² Concentrations of free CD59 in the high density, nonmembrane fraction of the fluid are at least 1 µg/ml (Rooney IA, unpublished data). These unusually high concentrations of free GPI-anchored proteins might be due to characteristics of the fluid itself, or to characteristics of the cells which contribute to it. GPI-anchored proteins in seminal plasma derive from several sources. CD59, which is widely expressed in human tissues,⁴⁴ may be released by several tissues; since this protein is present in vasectomy seminal plasma at approximately half the concentration of that seen in fertile seminal plasma, it must derive from organs both above (testis and epididymis) and below (prostate and seminal vesicles) the point of transection of the ductus deferens. CD55 is unlikely to derive from testis which expresses CD55 of lower molecular weight than that seen in seminal plasma,^{45,46} and may derive from prostate, epididymis and seminal vesicles. CDw52, which is poorly expressed on prostasomes, although abundant in the nonmembrane fraction, and is absent from vasectomy seminal plasma,³² must arise from above the point of transection of the ductus deferens, most likely from epididymis, where it is very strongly expressed.⁴⁷ Clearly, more than one cell type contributes to the nonmembrane fraction of GPI-anchored proteins in seminal plasma, suggesting that the high concentration of anchor-intact proteins in seminal plasma depends on characteristics of the fluid itself, rather than on characteristics of a specialized cell type.

GPI-anchored proteins are known to associate preferentially with membranes which are rich in cholesterol and sphingolipids.^{6,48,49} Seminal plasma is rich in sphingolipids,⁵⁰ and prostasomes have an unusually high concentration of cholesterol in their membranes.⁵¹ The presence of these lipids in seminal plasma may support retention of the GPI anchor on released proteins. The fact that this fluid represents the products of several glandular organs contained within a small volume may also be a contributing factor. It is likely that other body fluids contain GPI-anchored proteins in similar complexes to those seen in seminal plasma, albeit in lower concentration.

In summary, it is likely that transfer of GPI-anchored proteins between cell membranes occurs spontaneously at a rate which is low in most physiological situations, and that the rate of transfer is increased under certain conditions, including high cell density, low pH, high lipid content of intercellular fluid and the presence of lipids or lipoproteins with which GPI-anchored proteins preferentially associate. GPI-anchored proteins may be able to transfer between cell membranes with low efficiency and between membranes and lipoprotein "carriers" with higher efficiency. It has been noted that lipoproteins inhibit incorporation of purified GPI-anchored proteins into cell membranes, presumably because the GPI anchor associates preferentially with the lipoprotein.⁴¹ Lipoprotein intermediates may "capture" released GPI-anchored proteins and function thereafter as a "slow-release"

reservoir of these proteins, from which copies of the proteins can incorporate into cell membranes.

Importance of Intercellular GPI-Anchored Protein Transfer

Acquisition of new GPI-anchored proteins by a cell can profoundly alter the characteristics of the cell's surface membrane, including antigenicity, susceptibility to immune attack, surface enzyme and receptor properties.

Infective organisms may benefit by acquisition of complement regulatory proteins and other immunosuppressive proteins, as has been reported to occur in schistosomiasis.²³ Rifkin and Landsberger²⁴ suggest that incorporation of trypanosome VSG protein into host erythrocytes may precipitate immune attack of these erythrocytes, thus contributing to the anemia associated with trypanosomiasis. Bacteria and viruses may also acquire immunoprotective proteins. It has recently been shown that HIV can incorporate purified CD59 and DAF into its membranous coat and that the acquired proteins render the virus more resistant to lysis by human complement.⁵² This phenomenon may be of particular importance in seminal plasma, where the concentration of the GPI-anchored CD59 is high, and may facilitate sexual transmission of HIV.

Intercellular transfer of GPI-anchored proteins may also benefit self cells. Complement regulators in semen may replenish protein lost from spermatozoa during normal membrane turnover or complement attack in the female reproductive tract, and may therefore be important for fertility. GPI-anchored proteins released from damaged or dead cells may become available for incorporation into new cells, thus providing a mechanism by which important surface proteins can be recycled, reducing the demand for synthesis by cells which are already under stress. Vakeva et al⁵³ observed loss of CD59 from damaged myocardium after infarction, and described removal of CD59 from damaged cells in microparticles. They suggest that released CD59 may be incorporated into HDL particles, and thus become available for incorporation into myocardial cells which, although undamaged by the primary infarction event, are at risk of complement-mediated lysis in the post-infarction period. Thus, complement regulatory proteins released from dead cells at inflammatory sites could contribute to the immune defense of neighboring cells.

Clearly, the phenomenon of intercellular transfer of GPI-anchored proteins is both intriguing and of major biological consequence. Further research in this area will yield data important both in our understanding of the physiology of these proteins and for therapeutic advances.

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Engineering GPI-Anchored Proteins

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The majority of cell surface proteins contain three distinct polypeptide segments: a glycosylated extracellular domain, a hydrophobic transmembrane (TM) domain and a hydrophilic cytoplasmic tail. The TM domain anchors the protein to the plasma membrane. Some cell surface proteins do not have a TM hydrophobic peptide sequence, but are anchored to the cell surface via a glycosylated phosphatidylinositol (GPI) moiety, and are widely distributed from parasites to man¹⁻³ (see chapter 1). It remains difficult to make a general statement regarding the physiological significance of this type of membrane anchoring. However, it is becoming clear that the domain architecture of the plasma membrane influences the physical and functional behavior of GPI-anchored membrane proteins (see chapter 3). Comparative studies using membrane isoforms of receptors which are either naturally occurring or produced by genetic engineering have shed some light on the influence of the membrane anchor on biological and functional properties of some cell surface receptors. The property of GPI-anchored proteins to transfer to foreign cell membranes has evolved into a simple and useful technology to express novel proteins on the cell surface without resorting to gene transfer. In this chapter we discuss the evolution of this technology and the use of engineered GPI-anchored proteins of medical interest in therapeutic applications.

Naturally Occurring Membrane Isoforms of Cell Surface Glycoproteins

At least five well characterized cell surface receptors, neural cell adhesion molecule (NCAM),^{4,5} leukocyte function antigen 3 (LFA-3),⁶⁻⁹ mouse vascular cell adhesion molecule 1 (VCAM-1),¹⁰⁻¹³ CD16¹⁴⁻¹⁹ and cadherins²⁰⁻²² exist as both TM- and GPI-anchored proteins. The membrane isoforms may be cell type specific or both isoforms may be expressed on the same cell. NCAM is a homophilic adhesion molecule mediating adhesion events during neuronal development.⁵ The GPI-anchored form is expressed later in development than the TM-anchored form.²³ The physiological significance of developmental, stage specific expression of a membrane isoform remains elusive. LFA-3 is a counterreceptor for a T lymphocyte adhesion antigen, CD2.²⁴ Human erythrocytes express only the GPI-anchored form of LFA-3, whereas all nucleated cells express both forms.^{6,7} Both membrane isoforms of LFA-3 bind CD2 and mediate cell adhesion.^{6,25} VCAM-1 is a cell adhesion molecule expressed on cells of the vasculature. It binds VLA-4, a $\beta 1$ integrin expressed in many immune cells.^{26,27} The VLA-4-VCAM-1 interaction plays a major role in lymphocyte homing. VCAM-1 expressed on human vascular cells are TM-anchored forms,²⁸ whereas in mouse both TM- and GPI-anchored VCAM-1 have been reported.¹⁰⁻¹³ TM-anchored murine VCAM-1 contains seven Ig domains, as does the human VCAM-1. GPI-anchored VCAM-1 is a truncated form with three Ig domains. Molecular cloning

studies show that the NCAM, VCAM-1 and LFA-3 membrane isoforms arise from a single gene by alternative mRNA splicing.^{8-11,29,30}

CD16, a low affinity receptor for monomeric IgG, is a glycoprotein of 50-70 kDa expressed on neutrophils, natural killer (NK) cells, eosinophils and tissue macrophages.³¹⁻³⁵ The CD16b molecule expressed on neutrophils is GPI anchored,^{14,36} while the NK cell and macrophage CD16a molecules are TM anchored.¹⁵⁻¹⁹ The neutrophil and NK cell CD16 are products of two highly homologous genes¹⁷ differing by only 4 or 6 amino acids in the extracellular domain. TM-CD16 expressed on NK cells can associate with subunits including the γ chain of Fc ϵ RI^{37,38} and the ζ chain of the T cell receptor (TCR)/CD3 complex.³⁹

Cadherins are a group of Ca²⁺-dependent cell adhesion molecules that mediate homophilic cell-cell interaction.^{20,22} A large number of cadherins and cadherin-related proteins are expressed in a variety of multicellular organisms. The cadherin superfamily is subdivided into six groups depending upon the number of "cadherin-repeats" and homology in the cytoplasmic domains. Most of the cadherins are expressed as TM-anchored proteins except the T-cadherin, which is expressed as a GPI-anchored protein.⁴⁰ T-cadherin shares the ectodomain of TM-anchored N- and E-cadherins. Most cell types express at least one type of cadherin in a developmentally regulated manner.²¹ Cadherin-mediated cell adhesion plays a pivotal role in various developmental functions such as cell layer segregation, axon guidance, cell differentiation and formation and maintenance of tissues.

Transmembrane Proteins Engineered into GPI-Anchored Forms

Although the mature GPI-anchored proteins expressed at the cell surface do not have a transmembrane polypeptide domain, their mRNA sequence predicted that the precursors of GPI-anchored proteins have a hydrophobic stretch of amino acids at the C-terminus resembling TM domains. Site-directed mutagenesis and recombinant DNA techniques revealed that the C-terminal hydrophobic domain and 15-20 amino acids of the extracellular domain proximal to the C-terminus possess the signal for GPI anchor attachment. Analysis of the GPI anchor attachment signal sequences of many cloned GPI-anchored proteins revealed a lack of consensus.⁴¹ In the case of Qa-2 protein, the TM domain carries the signal for the GPI anchor addition.⁴² Extensive studies by Udenfriend and coworkers have established the amino acid requirements for GPI anchor attachment.^{41,43-45}

TM-proteins are converted into GPI-anchored forms by replacing the TM and cytoplasmic domains with a GPI anchor.⁴⁶⁻⁵³ This manipulation involves ligating the 5' end of a cDNA encoding the extracellular domain of a TM-anchored, or a secretory, protein to the 3' end of another cDNA coding for the anchor attachment signal of a GPI-anchored protein (Fig. 11.1). The chimeric construct is transfected into cells, which are then analyzed for surface expression of the protein and its susceptibility to PI-PLC. Initial studies using this recombinant DNA methodology were focused on constructing chimeric molecules to identify the signal sequence for GPI anchor attachment on endogenous GPI-anchored proteins. In a series of experiments, Caras et al⁵⁴⁻⁵⁶ and Tykocinski et al⁵⁷ assigned the GPI anchor addition signal of DAF to the last 37 amino acids at the C-terminus. Subsequently, GPI-anchored forms of type I and type II integral membrane proteins and secretory and viral envelope proteins were constructed to characterize the structural requirements of their extracellular domains to carry out specific functions (Table 11.1).

The immunologically important CD4 protein was converted to a GPI-anchored form to map the domains required for HIV-1 binding and infection.^{58,59} These studies demonstrated that GPI-anchored CD4 can bind to HIV-1 envelope protein gp120 via the first two extracellular domains, and TM and cytoplasmic domains are not at all required for HIV-1 infection. Other immunologically important molecules such as CD16a,^{38,60} CD8,⁶¹ mouse MHC class I,^{49,62,63} MHC class II,⁴⁷ TCR,⁶⁴ ICAM-1,^{48,65} B7-1,^{66,67} B7-2^{67,68} and the

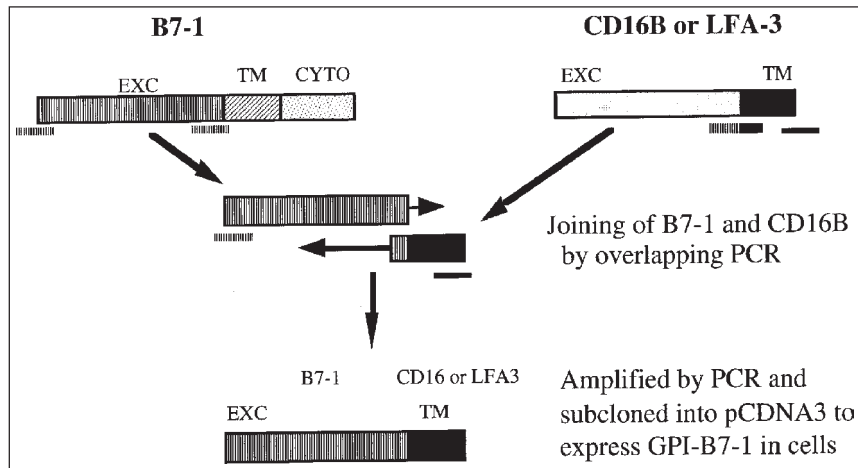


Fig. 11.1. Construction of a GPI-anchored form of B7-1 transmembrane protein. The extracellular domain of B7-1 and the GPI anchor signal domain of CD16b or LFA-3 was amplified by PCR reaction. The N-terminal primer of CD16b or LFA-3 contained an overhang with C-terminal sequences of the extracellular domain of B7-1. To obtain a hybrid product, the two PCR products were mixed together and overlapping PCR was carried out for 5 cycles without primers and then 25 cycles with primers. The amplified product was cloned into the pCDNA-3 expression vector and used for transfection.

LFA-1 I domain⁶⁹ were also converted to GPI-anchored forms for investigating the functional consequences of this new mode of membrane association. Studies from our laboratory using GPI-anchored CD16a (natively expressed as a TM-anchored form in NK cells) have shown that the GPI-anchored form can bind to an immune complex and endocytose the bound ligand.^{60,70} GPI-anchored T cell receptor efficiently recognized antigen presented by MHC class II molecules.⁶⁴ GPI-anchored mouse MHC class I molecule H2-D^d conferred protection from NK cell lysis in vivo and in vitro.⁶² However, in other studies GPI-anchored H2-D^b was not able to load endogenously processed antigenic peptides, though it bound to exogenously added antigenic peptides as efficiently as its TM counterpart.⁶³ Recently, we have demonstrated that GPI-anchored B7-1 can bind to CD28 and induce T cell proliferation as efficiently as the transmembranous B7-1.⁶⁶ The therapeutic use of GPI-anchored B7-1 in tumor immunotherapy is discussed later in this chapter.

The technology of constructing chimeric GPI-anchored molecules has also been applied to analyze the structure/function relationship of viral envelope proteins such as herpes simplex virus I envelope glycoprotein D (gD1),⁷¹⁻⁷³ vesicular stomatitis virus glycoprotein (VSVG),⁷⁴ influenza virus hemagglutinin (HA),⁷⁵⁻⁷⁷ rubella virus envelope protein E1,⁷⁸ murine leukemia virus envelope protein,⁷⁹ HIV-1 gp120⁸⁰ and Rous sarcoma virus envelope protein.⁸¹ In these studies, the chimeric GPI-anchored viral proteins were used to map the sites required for virus entry and replication.

Comparative Studies Using Naturally Occurring and Genetically Engineered Membrane Isoforms

GPI-anchored cell surface proteins are implicated in a number of cellular functions such as signal transduction (T lymphocyte activation, e.g., Thy-1, CD73),^{82,83} protecting cells from complement-mediated damage (DAF and homologous restriction factor)^{84,85} and

Table 11.1 Studies on engineered GPI-anchored proteins

Engineered GPI-anchored proteins	Studies to delineate the functional domains	Ref.
<i>Immunologically important proteins</i>		
CD4	IV-1 viral infection, endocytosis	58,59,133-135
CD8	Ligand binding	61
T-cell receptor	Antigen presentation	64
ICAM1	Rhinovirus internalization Cytoskeletal association	48,65
B7-1	Ligand binding, induction of tumor immunity	66,67
B7-2	Ligand binding, induction of tumor immunity	67,68
MHC class I	Antigen presentation NK cytotoxicity	62,63,136,137
MHC class II	Antigen presentation	47
CD16A	IgG binding and endocytosis Signal transduction	38,60
LFA-1 I domain	Binding to ICAM-1 and ICAM-3	69
<i>Viral envelope proteins</i>		
HSV-1 g-D1	Apical targeting of proteins	71-73
HA	Cell fusion and apical targeting studies	75-77
Murine leukemia virus E1	Subunit association and viral infection	79
HIV-1 gp-120	CD4 binding Viral entry and infection	80
<i>Enzymes</i>		
Neutral endopeptidase	Topology of type II membrane	138

cell adhesion (LFA-3 and NCAM).^{7,8,86,87} Some GPI-anchored proteins like 5' nucleotidase and alkaline phosphatase are enzymes.^{88,89} However, in all these cases, how the GPI anchor influences the function of the protein does not follow any pattern. Comparative studies using naturally occurring and engineered membrane isoforms suggest that the GPI anchor does influence the physical and functional properties of the protein, which include:

1. Lateral mobility on the plane of the membrane;
2. Apical targeting in polarized epithelial cells; and
3. The nature of the signal transduced.

GPI-anchored Thy-1,⁹⁰ DAF⁹¹ and alkaline phosphatase⁹² show altered lateral mobilities in the cell membrane compared to TM-anchored proteins. It is predicted that the lipid anchor of the GPI moiety, which does not cross the membrane bilayer, facilitates a less

restricted mobility of GPI-anchored proteins in the cell membrane.^{88,92,93} However, a large fraction of GPI-anchored molecules is relatively less mobile⁹⁰ due to their association with sphingolipid-rich membrane rafts^{94,95} and extracellular interactions with transmembrane glycoproteins.⁹³ High lateral mobility of the GPI anchor may be physiologically important during cellular adhesion in facilitating the diffusion of adhesion receptors to the contact site. Using glass supported planar membranes reconstituted with LFA-3 isoforms, Chan et al⁹⁶ and Tozeren et al⁹⁷ demonstrated that mobile GPI-LFA-3 was more efficient than glass immobilized TM-LFA-3 in binding of CD2-expressing Jurkat cells. On the other hand, the TM-HLA class II is more efficient in interacting with TCR than GPI-HLA class II,⁴⁷ and TM- and GPI-anchored forms of DAF and membrane cofactor protein are equally efficient in protecting cells from complement-mediated cytotoxicity.⁹⁸ It appears that the GPI anchor may cause a subtle change in the conformation or orientation of a receptor on the cell membrane that may influence the affinity of only some receptors, but not others. Other factors, such as interaction with neighboring molecules via extracellular domains, may also influence the lateral mobility of a receptor.^{90,93,99}

Role of GPI anchors in apical targeting of membrane receptors is well established in different systems. Endogenous and recombinant GPI-DAF are always expressed on the apical surface of epithelial cells.⁷³ Conversion by recombinant DNA methods of basolateral transmembrane proteins such as vesicular stomatitis virus glycoprotein and herpes simplex glycoprotein D into GPI-anchored forms results in apical sorting.^{73,100} Similarly, in polarized epithelial cells, TM-NCAM is found on the basolateral membrane, whereas GPI-NCAM is expressed on the apical surface.¹⁰¹

Comparative studies using CD16 membrane isoforms show that signals transduced by GPI- and TM-receptor isoforms could be very different. Crosslinking of TM-CD16 on transfected Jurkat cells induces IL-2 secretion and IL-2 receptor expression, whereas GPI-CD16 is unable to do so.⁶⁰ Membrane isoforms of CD16 expressed on CHO cell transfectants also differ in their ability to mediate phagocytosis of IgG-coated particles, as only the TM-CD16 but not GPI-CD16 was able to mediate efficient phagocytosis.¹⁰² CD16 isoforms also differ in triggering tumor cell cytotoxicity. NK cells with TM-CD16 kill tumor targets bearing anti-CD16 surface Ig very efficiently, whereas neutrophils carrying GPI-CD16 are inefficient effectors.^{15,103} The GPI anchor of CD16 on neutrophils, however, is not completely signaling incompetent, since neutrophils can be triggered through CD16 to lyse chicken erythrocytes.^{104,105} Crosslinking of GPI-CD16 on neutrophils with specific mAbs induces Ca²⁺ mobilization and degranulation, but not the respiratory burst.^{106,107} These differences in nature and intensity of signaling demonstrate that receptor isoforms with distinct membrane anchors may associate with different signal transducing molecules and thus influence the receptor function.

GPI-Mediated Protein Transfer

Purified proteins that contain a GPI anchor are able to spontaneously incorporate into the lipid bilayer of many cells.^{6,84,108} Reconstitution of GPI-anchored proteins into cell membranes is a specific process, mediated by hydrocarbon chains of the lipid moiety, as chemical or enzymatic removal of the acyl chains completely abolished the incorporation. The GPI-mediated protein transfer (also referred to as GPI painting, see ref. 109) has become an attractive strategy to express new proteins on cell membranes. Both naturally occurring and engineered GPI-anchored proteins transfer equally well. The membrane incorporation process is dependent on temperature and duration of incubation and concentration of the purified protein.¹¹⁰ Fatty acid binding serum proteins such as BSA and orosomucoid inhibit the transfer.⁸⁴ Under serum-free conditions, genetically engineered, affinity purified GPI-B7-1 incorporated maximally at 10-20 µg/ml concentration after 2 h

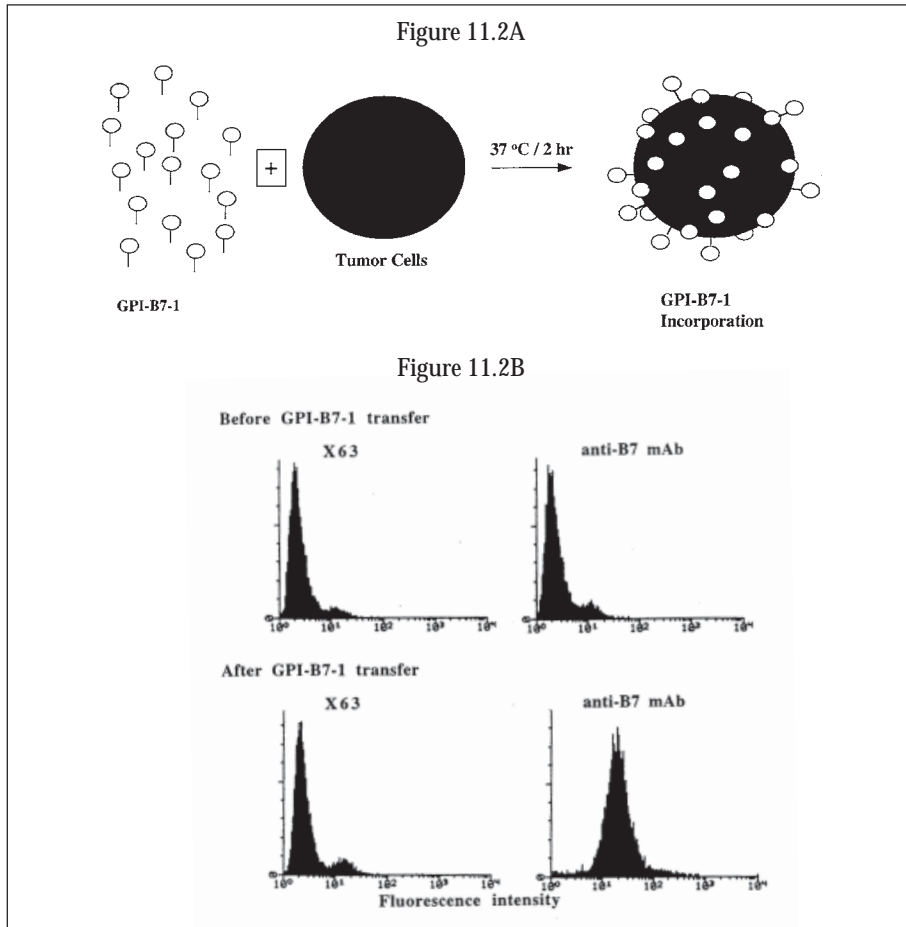


Fig. 11.2. Schematic representation of GPI-mediated protein transfer. (A) Intact live or irradiated tumor cells were incubated with purified GPI-B7-1 molecules for 2 hours at 37°C. The unincorporated proteins were washed out and the tumor cells incorporated with GPI-B7-1 were used for further studies. (B) WM115, a human melanoma cell line, was incubated with 30 µg/ml of purified GPI-B7-1 for 2 h in HBSS/5mM EDTA. The cells were washed and stained with a non-binding control antibody (X63) or with anti-B7 mAb (BB-1 from Becton-Dickinson) and a FITC-conjugated goat anti-mouse antibody. The stained cells were analyzed by flow cytometry.

incubation at 30°C without any significant decrease in cell viability (Fig. 11.2). A number of tumor cell lines including primary breast carcinoma cells could be modified with GPI-B7-1 with similar kinetics of incorporation.⁶⁶

Initially, the GPI-protein transfer was used to correct the defect in paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH) patients' erythrocytes. PNH is an acquired abnormality of hematopoietic cells affecting GPI anchor biosynthesis or attachment, thus selectively affecting the membrane expression of GPI-anchored proteins.^{1,2} The complement regulatory activity of erythrocytes from PNH patients could be reconstituted by incorporation of GPI-anchored

Table 11.2 Protein transfer of native and engineered GPI-anchored proteins

Molecule	Cells Incorporated	Functions Tested	Ref.
<i>Naturally occurring GPI-anchored molecules</i>			
DAF	Erythrocytes, Endothelial cells	Complement regulation	84,111,112, 128-129
CD59	Erythrocytes, U937, Oligodendrocytes	Complement regulation Signal transduction Complement regulation	112,130,131
LFA-3	Erythrocytes	Cell adhesion	6
CD16B	Leukemic cells	Ligand binding Endocytosis	110
Thy-1	Tumor cells	Lateral mobility	108
<i>Engineered GPI-anchored molecules</i>			
Human B7-1	Tumor cells	Immunoregulation	66
CD4	HeLa cells	Viral infection	132
Mouse B7-1	Tumor cells	Immunoregulation	67
Mouse class I	Tumor cells	CTL target lysis	49

DAF and CD59^{84,111,112} by protein transfer. Apart from complement regulatory proteins, PNH erythrocytes also lack LFA-3 and, therefore, do not adhere to T cells expressing CD2, a natural ligand for LFA-3.²⁴ Expression of LFA-3 by protein transfer reconstituted the ability of PNH erythrocytes to adhere to T cells,⁶ suggesting that adhesion function of a cell can be manipulated by protein transfer.

Subsequent studies have shown that not only erythrocytes, but also nucleated cells can be reconstituted with GPI-anchored molecules (Table 11.2). In all these studies, purification and reincorporation of GPI-anchored proteins do not seem to alter their ligand binding capacity: GPI-CD4 retained the ability to bind HIV-1 gp120;^{58,59} GPI-MHC class I molecule induced allogeneic T cell proliferation like its TM counterpart;⁴⁹ and GPI-MHC class I MHC molecules loaded with a viral peptide stimulated CTLs specific for that particular viral peptide.⁴⁹ As shown in Figure 11.3, GPI-B7-1 incorporated RCC-1 cells could stimulate proliferation of allogeneic T cells to the same extent as the TM- or GPI-anchored B7-1 expressed by transfection. These observations highlight the potential use of GPI-protein transfer for immunomodulation (see below).

Potential Application of GPI-Protein Transfer in Tumor Immunotherapy

Many murine and human tumor cell lines lack the expression of costimulatory molecules, especially B7-1¹¹³⁻¹¹⁵ and thus are incapable of providing costimulatory signals to tumor-specific T lymphocytes. However, they can provide the first TCR recognition signal by presenting the tumor antigen on MHC class I molecules. In the absence of a costimulatory signal, these TCR-stimulated tumor-specific T cells become anergic and eventually die. In this way, tumor cells can incapacitate the T cell population specific for their antigens and escape from immune surveillance. Expression of B7-1^{114,116-121} and other

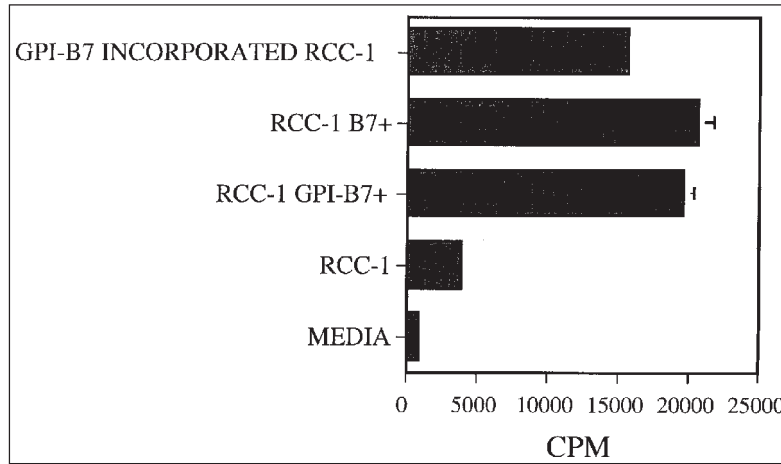


Fig. 11.3. GPI-anchored protein transferred to a foreign cell surface is functional. Human renal carcinoma cell line RCC-1 was either transfected with transmembrane B7-1 or GPI-B7-1 or modified with GPI-B7-1 by protein transfer and irradiated. Human peripheral blood lymphocytes were stimulated with irradiated RCC-1 cells and the proliferation was measured using ^3H -thymidine uptake. Reprinted with permission from *Vaccines: New Advances in Technologies and Applications*, R. Ostriker, Ed. ©1996 International Business Communications, Inc., Southborough, MA.

costimulatory molecules such as ICAM-1^{122,123} on the tumor cell by gene transfection induces specific anti-tumor immunity and subsequent tumor rejection in animal models.

Gene transfer by either transfection or viral transduction is the most widely used method for stable expression of novel proteins. This technique has a number of practical limitations and disadvantages for use in patients. Transfection of cells is a time consuming process, requiring weeks for selection of homogeneous cell populations. In addition, transfection of primary tumor cells is difficult, requiring establishment of tumor cell lines. The use of viral vectors to transduce cells has eliminated most time constraints, but this technique has its own disadvantages. Utilization of viral vectors may introduce mutations at the site of DNA integration. Further, the host can develop strong immune responses to viral proteins, making it difficult to immunize more than once with the same vector.¹²⁴⁻¹²⁶

Protein transfer provides an alternative method for the introduction of costimulatory molecules onto the surface of tumor cells and eliminates most of the problems encountered with gene transfer.^{109,127} GPI-protein transfer is fast, requiring only a short incubation of the cells with the purified protein. This technique also allows for simultaneous incorporation of a number of molecules, virtually on all cell types including primary tumor cells at any stage of their cycle. One of the limitations of GPI-protein transfer is related to the stability of the incorporated molecule on the cell surface. Live cells gradually lose surface expression of the incorporated protein upon multiple cell divisions. However, in clinical settings where live cells are undesirable to use, non-proliferating, irradiated cells or cell membrane preparations are preferred. Live cells and even irradiated cells retained only about 30% of surface incorporated GPI-B7-1 after 24 hours, probably due to membrane dynamics. Stability of GPI-B7-1 on the surface of cell membrane preparations, however, is stable up to

four days after incorporation (unpublished observations). Experimentation with these techniques for tumor immunotherapy in animal models is currently under way.

Summary

Understanding the mechanism of addition of GPI anchor has resulted in techniques to create GPI-anchored forms of transmembrane cell surface glycoproteins.^{49,66,67} Comparative studies using TM- and GPI-anchored isoforms of membrane glycoproteins have been used to analyze the structure/function relationship of distinct segments or domains of receptor proteins. The special property of naturally occurring and engineered GPI-anchored molecules to incorporate spontaneously onto cell membranes has been utilized in a simple, rapid technique for transient expression of foreign molecules on virtually any cell type. This technique has overcome several limitations of gene transfer techniques and thus offers many advantages when human clinical trials are considered. Using this technique, we have demonstrated that GPI-anchored B7-1 can spontaneously incorporate onto many tumor cell lines,⁶⁶ which regained their capacity to stimulate tumor-specific T cells.

In addition to tumor immunotherapy, many other experimental and therapeutic applications of GPI-protein transfer can be envisioned. As against proteins that stimulate the immune response, proteins that downregulate or modulate the effector immune functions can be expressed on the cell surface. Certain molecules, such as CD8, could be used to downregulate T cell responses after antigen recognition,¹²⁷ which may be beneficial in treating autoimmune diseases and transplant rejection. In conclusion, we envisage that engineering and transfer of GPI-anchored proteins is likely to become a method of choice for developing immunotherapeutic reagents to stimulate specific anti-tumor immunity, to treat autoimmune diseases, and to delay/inhibit transplant rejection.

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