Rapid stopping of A23187 action by phosphatidylcholine

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Received 22 February 1983

The action on pigeon erythrocytes of the Ca^{2+} ionophore, A23187, can be nearly completely stopped within 30 s by treatment with a phosphatidylcholine dispersion at 39°C. A time-limited $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ uptake pulse can be produced by treating cells sequentially with A23187 and lipid, and the time-course of expulsion of this $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ uptake pulse can be easily determined.

Ca^{2+} flux *A23187 removal* *Phospholipid* *Erythrocyte*

1. INTRODUCTION

Ionophores are widely used to adjust ionic compositions within cells, subcellular organelles and membrane vesicles [1]. For many purposes it would be desirable to remove them again. The divalent cation ionophore, A23187, can be removed from erythrocytes by treatment with serum albumin and washing [2]. We have reported [3] that the action of the Na^+,K^+-ionophore, gramicidin D, on pigeon erythrocytes could be nearly stopped by incubating gramicidin-treated cells with phospholipid vesicles for 10 min at 39°C. We now report that the action of large doses of A23187 on pigeon erythrocytes is virtually completely stopped in < 30 s by the addition of phospholipid vesicles at 39°C. Temporally controlled Ca^{2+} entry pulses can be produced by sequential additions of ionophore and lipid.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

$^{45}CaCl_2$ and NaB^3H_4 were from ICN (Irvine CA). Tritium-labeled maltitol was prepared by reduction of maltose with NaB^3H_4 [4] and purified by passage through a Sephadex G-15 column. The scintillation counting cocktail 3a70B was from RPI (Mount Prospect IL), A23187 was a gift from Eli Lilly (Wood's Hole MA), α-tocopherol was from Sigma (St Louis MO) and egg yolk phosphatidylcholine was from Avanti (Birmingham AL).

Pigeon erythrocytes obtained as in [3] were washed 3 times with 132 mM NaCl, 10 mM TES (pH 7.4), 10 mM D-glucose and 2 mM $MgCl_2$. Cells were incubated in the same buffered saline plus 3 mM potassium phosphate and $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ at the desired $[Ca_o^{2+}]$. In some experiments amino acids were added (8.4 mM A, 6 mM N, 0.52 mM C*, 6 mM Q, 1 mM P, 5.2 mM S and 2.8 mM T). A23187, 2 mM in ethanol–dimethylsulfoxide (7:1, v/v) was used for the dose of 60 μmol/kg cells, 0.1 mM in ethylene glycol–dimethylsulfoxide (2:1, v/v) was used for doses of 4–10 μmol/kg cells. Equal volumes of solvent blanks were added to control samples. The phosphatidylcholine dispersion was prepared as follows. Lipid (20 mg/ml hexane) was mixed with α-tocopherol (1% of the lipid) and the hexane removed with a stream of N_2. Then 200 mg lipid and 1 ml buffered saline were sonicated under N_2 in a 12°C bath for five 30-s periods at setting 3 with a microtip (sonicator Model 185D, Heat System Ultrasonic, Plainview NJ); 40 mg lipid/g cells were used. Without α-tocopherol, cells turn brown after

* Cysteine was prepared by reducing cystine with the stoichiometric amount of dithiothreitol since commercial cysteine inhibited Ca^{2+} transport by cytoplasmic membrane vesicles from pigeon erythrocytes [5]

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30 min at 39°C. In one experiment, the lipid suspension was held at 39°C for 10 min, then held at 0°C until use. This lipid was virtually ineffective. Cell suspensions were incubated for various times and aliquots (0.1 g cells) were mixed with ice-cold diluent (fig.1,2) containing [^{3}H]maltitol and centrifuged promptly. The lipid does not sediment. Cell pellets were extracted with 1.0 ml 8.5% trichloroacetic acid, 5 mM $CaCl_2$ and 0.50 ml of the trichloroacetic acid extracts were mixed with 7.0 ml 3a70B counting cocktail and radioactivities measured by liquid scintillation counting. Pellet ^{45}Ca counts were corrected for ^{45}Ca from entrained medium using pellet ^{3}H counts and the ^{45}Ca:^{3}H ratio in the medium.

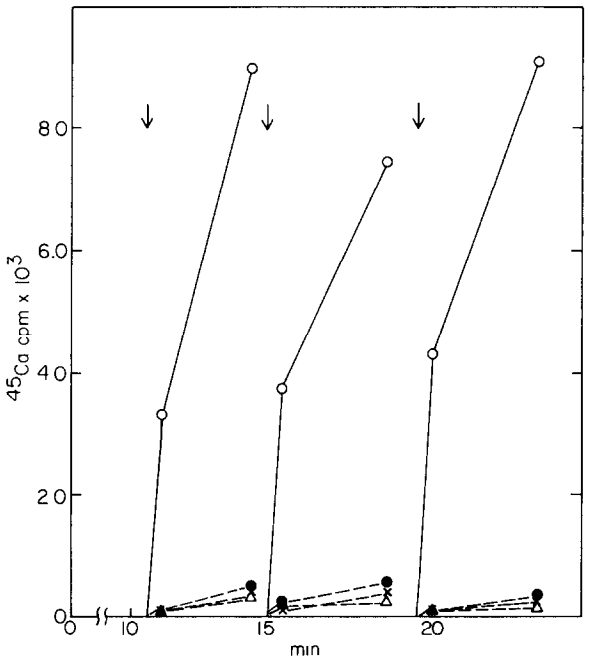

Fig.1. The effect of phosphatidylcholine addition on A23187 action. Cells (50%, w/v) in buffered saline, with 'trace' Ca^{2+} were incubated at 39°C with or without the addition of 60 μmol A23187/kg cells. After 10 min, 0.1 vol. lipid or buffered saline was added and tracer $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ (1.4 nM, 1.0 μCi/ml) was added at the times shown by the arrows. Aliquots of 0.20 ml were withdrawn 0.5 and 4.0 min after ^{45}Ca addition and mixed with 1.3 ml ice-cold buffered saline containing [^{3}H]maltitol (0.4 mM, 0.3 μCi/ml) and centrifuged immediately for 10 s in a Beckman microfuge at 8730 × *g*. A23187 added: + PC (●), − PC (○). No A23187 added: + PC (△), − PC (×).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The action of a large dose of A23187 was stopped at 39°C < 30 s by the addition of 0.1 vol. lipid dispersion (fig.1). The suppression of A23187 action was the same with lipid added 0.5, 5 or 10 min before the $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ tracer. With the 'trace' [Ca^{2+}] (~5 μM) used in this experiment, there was a just perceptible difference between $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ uptake by cells never exposed to A23187 and cells treated with A23187 and then lipid. At [Ca_o^{2+}] = 0.50 mM $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ uptake in 1 min was 169 μmol/kg (not shown). This uptake underestimates the influx, which was too fast to measure by our procedure.

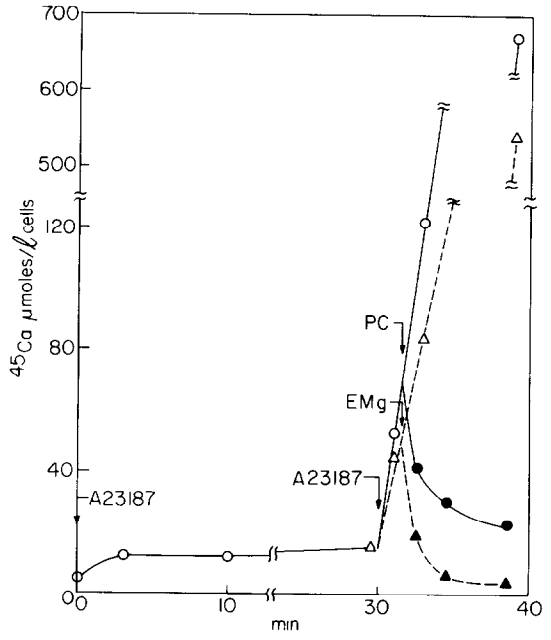

Fig.2. Loss of cell $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ following addition of phosphatidylcholine or EGTA. Cells (20%, w/v) in buffered saline containing 0.15 mM $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ (0.8 μCi/ml), and the amino acid mixture were incubated with 4 μmol A23187/kg cells at 39°C. At 30 min, 10 μmol A23187/kg cells were added and 1.5 min later additions were made (⟶) of lipid (PC, ●) or MgEGTA, 1 mM final conc. (EMg, ▲) or buffered saline (○, △). All additions were 0.020 ml/cell suspension. Aliquots of 0.50 ml were mixed at the indicated times with 9.0 ml ice-cold diluent (149 mM NaCl, 0.033 mM MgEGTA, 5 mM TES (pH 7.4) and 0.05 mM [^{3}H]maltitol, 0.04 μCi/ml) and promptly centrifuged in a Sorval RC2-B centrifuge 14600 × *g* for 5 min.

After lipid treatment, the residual influx was 7 μmol . kg^{-1} . min^{-1} above the influx of cells never exposed to A23187.

Asolectin (soybean 'lecithin') also works but it contains Ca^{2+} (2.3 nmol/g) and binds considerable Ca^{2+}, as measured by atomic absorption and dialysis, respectively. The egg lipid had 0.73 mmol Ca^{2+}/g and undetectable Ca^{2+} binding.

Fig.2 shows the cells' responses to a 1.5 min $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ influx pulse (apparent influx: 38 μmol . kg^{-1} . min^{-1}) started by A23187 addition and stopped by addition of either lipid or MgEGTA.

In this experiment, the cells' exchangeable Ca^{2+} pool(s) was first labeled with $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ using 4 μmol A23187/kg cells. This low dose simply labels the cell pool(s) without enlarging it (unpublished). The influx pulse was started by adding 10 μmol A23187/kg cells (apparent influx $\propto$ $[A23187]^{2.9}$, unpublished). Whether $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ influx was stopped by lipid or by MgEGTA, the resulting initial $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ effluxes were similar. However, during the 1.5 min exposure to high A23187, some $^{45}Ca^{2+}$ entered a cell compartment from which it was not expelled by the Ca^{2+} pump after lipid addition.

In this experiment, cells were very quickly brought to a non-equilibrium, non-steady state with respect to Ca^{2+}, and quickly released to 'decay' back toward their original condition. So far as we are aware, it can be done by this procedure only.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was supported by grant HL-13256 from the US Public Health Service and by a grant from the University of Nebraska Research Council. We thank Cynthia Stryker for excellent technical assistance.

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