

# Rapid uptake of calcium, ATP, and inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate via cation and anion channels into surface-derived vesicles from HIT cells containing the inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate-sensitive calcium store

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In a previous study [K. Lange and U. Brandt (1993) FEBS Lett. 320, 183–188], we showed that the bulk of the ATP-dependent  $\text{IP}_3$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store of the hamster insulinoma cell line, HIT-T15, resides in cell surface-derived vesicles most likely of microvillar origin. The origin and orientation of these vesicles suggested that  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  storage is not due to a membrane-located  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pumping ATPase but rather to ATP-dependent  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -binding within the vesicles. In this case,  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ , ATP and  $\text{IP}_3$  should have free access to the vesicle lumen. This hypothesis was tested. ATP-independent  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake occurred with biphasic kinetics. An initial rapid uptake, which was complete within 30 s, was followed by a slow linear uptake lasting about 10 min. The rapid component was shown by efflux experiments to have an equilibration half-time of about 4 s. This rapid  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  efflux pathway was inhibited by externally applied  $\text{La}^{3+}$  (0.1 mM). A similar rapidly equilibrating  $\text{La}^{3+}$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool was also present in vesicles which had been actively loaded with  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  in the presence of ATP. The intravesicular distribution space of this labile  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool was identical with that of the non-metabolizable hexose analogue 3-*O*-methyl-D-glucose, demonstrating that rapid  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake occurs into a true vesicular water space and is not due to binding. ATP and  $\text{IP}_3$  were also shown to enter the vesicles by an energy-independent pathway which is inhibited by the anion channel inhibitor, 4,4'-diisothiocyanostilbene-2,2'-disulfonic acid (DIDS; 0.5 mM). Both ATP-dependent  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake and  $\text{IP}_3$ -induced  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  release from preloaded vesicles were inhibited by DIDS. These findings clearly demonstrate that (1) the vesicle membrane is permeable to ATP and  $\text{IP}_3$  via anion channels, and (2)  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake into as well as  $\text{IP}_3$ -induced  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  release from the vesicles occur by passive diffusion through a cation channel which is not regulated by  $\text{IP}_3$ . Consequently, the mechanisms for  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  storage and  $\text{IP}_3$ -induced  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  release must be located in the vesicle lumen. Moreover, the microvillar diffusion-barrier concept, originally proposed for the regulation of hexose transport may also be valid for the receptor-operated regulation of cation and anion influx pathways. Functional coupling of the microvillar  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  stores with the associated cation influx pathway is also strongly supported by the previously demonstrated microvillar shape changes accompanying depletion of the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  stores by bombesin or thapsigargin in HIT cells [K. Lange and U. Brandt (1992) FEBS Lett. 320, 183–188].

Calcium ion store (HIT cells); Microvilli; Cation channel, Anion channel, Inositol trisphosphate; ATP

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In a preceding study [1], we isolated from HIT insulinoma cells a surface-derived vesicle fraction which contained 80% of the total cellular  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  stores. Up to 40% of the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  stored in this pool was found to be  $\text{IP}_3$ -sensitive. This vesicle fraction was prepared by applying low shear forces to the surface of suspended cells, a procedure which leaves the bulk of the cells intact but pulls off small surface protrusions. Morphological and biochemical data indicated that this fraction is derived from microvilli abundantly occurring on the surface of HIT cells. Furthermore, scanning electron microscopy revealed that the microvilli on the HIT cell surface conspicuously responded by shape changes to agents such as bombesin and thapsigargin known to release the cel-

lular  $\text{IP}_3$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool [1]. The biochemical properties of the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  storage process of these vesicles were identical with those found in the microsomal fractions of other cells. Furthermore we demonstrated that this cell surface-derived vesicle fraction was quantitatively recovered within the microsomal fraction when cell fractionation was performed according to the classical preparation protocol by cell homogenization with a glass-teflon homogenizer.

The microvillar origin of the surface-derived vesicles strongly suggests that their membrane orientation is right-side-out as shown by other authors [2–4,7]. Consequently, the ATP-dependent  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  storage process is unlikely to proceed via a membrane ATPase, pumping  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  against a concentration gradient into the vesicle lumen. Another possible storage mechanism may be the existence of a passive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  influx pathway through the vesicle membrane combined with an ATP-dependent  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -binding process located in the vesicle lumen. This hypothesis is tested in the present work by studying the uptake properties of the cell surface-derived vesicles for  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ , ATP, and  $\text{IP}_3$ .

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*Abbreviations:* DIDS, 4,4'-diisothiocyanostilbene-2,2'-disulfonic acid;  $\text{IP}_3$ , inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate; 3-OMG, 3-*O*-methyl-D-glucose.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

### 2.1. Cell culture

HIT T15 cells were purchased from the American Type Culture Collection (Rockville, MD). Cells were cultivated in plastic bottles (Costar) for one week in Ham's F12 with 10% horse serum and 2.5% fetal calf serum supplemented with 2 mM glutamine. They were used between the 64th and the 72nd passage. Prior to the experiments, the cells were incubated for 3 h without serum.

### 2.2. Preparation of the cell surface-derived vesicles

Cell surface-derived membrane fractions were prepared as recently described by a hydrodynamic shearing procedure [7]. Shortly, these fractions were prepared by softly detaching the cells from the growth substrate in ice-cold 1 mM HEPES (pH 7.4) with 0.25 M saccharose/1 mM EDTA. Subsequently, the cells, suspended in the same buffer, were gently pressed through hypodermic needles of the following size: No. 1 (0.9 × 40 mm, 0.6 mm internal diameter) and then No. 2 (0.8 mm × 38 mm, 0.5 internal diameter). Each shearing step was repeated once. The resulting suspension was centrifuged at  $2,600 \times g$  for 10 min to remove the intact cells (80–90% by Trypan blue exclusion). The  $2,600 \times g$  supernatant was centrifuged at  $16,000 \times g$  for 20 min and the supernatant of this step was centrifuged at  $180,000 \times g$  yielding the cell surface-derived vesicle fractions  $P_2$  and  $P_3$ , respectively, which have been further characterized in a previous report [1].  $P_2$  and  $P_3$  have been shown to be different from the true microsomal fraction by their high content of  $\text{Na}^+/\text{K}^+$ -ATPase and an immunoreactive species of the GluT1 isoform of the glucose transporter. The fraction  $P_2$  has been used for all experiments of this study. All preparation steps were performed at 4°C or on ice. The membrane fractions were rapidly frozen in liquid nitrogen and stored at  $-80^\circ\text{C}$ .

### 2.3. Calcium uptake into and release from cell surface-derived vesicles

Cell surface-derived vesicles were washed twice with buffer A (140 mM KCl, 2 mM  $\text{Mg}^{2+}$ , 10 mM HEPES, 49  $\mu\text{M}$  EGTA, pH 7.2), sedimented at  $180,000 \times g$  in a Beckman TL 100 centrifuge (TLA 100.3) at 4°C, resuspended in buffer A to give a protein concentration of 300  $\mu\text{g}/\text{ml}$ .  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake was initiated by addition of  $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$  (10–5  $\mu\text{Ci}/\text{ml}$ ; final  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  concentration = 10  $\mu\text{M}$ ; final free  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  concentration = 100–200 nM) and 0.5 mM ATP at room temperature. Effectors were added to each sample (100  $\mu\text{l}$ ) in volumes of maximal 1  $\mu\text{l}$ . The uptake reaction was terminated by dilution of the reaction mixture with 3 ml of washing buffer (buffer A plus 10  $\mu\text{M}$   $\text{CaCl}_2$ , at room temperature), rapid filtration through Schleicher und Schuell cellulose nitrate filters (type BA 85) and two additional washings with the same

buffer. Each of the filtration procedures was completed within 4 s. Radioactivity remaining on the filters was determined by liquid scintillation counting.

The same technique was also used for the passive  $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake and release experiments which were carried out in the absence of ATP and at room temperature. Different times of elution were obtained by repeated filtrations with washing buffer A. Vesicle suspensions were kept on ice until the beginning of the experiment. The basal  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  concentration of the used buffers and solutions were controlled by fura-2 fluorescence ( $K_d = 220$  nM).

### 2.4. Uptake of tritium-labeled 3-OMG, ATP, and $\text{IP}_3$ into cell surface-derived vesicles

Preparation and determination of 3-OMG, ATP, and  $\text{IP}_3$  uptake into the vesicles was carried out following the protocol described in Section 2.3. Uptake was terminated by the addition of cold buffer A and two additional rapid washings with the same buffer. The filtration and washing procedures were performed within 12–15 s. 3-OMG uptake was terminated by ice-cold 0.1 mM phloretin-containing buffer A and 2 washings with the same cold buffer.

## 3. RESULTS

The passive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  influx and efflux kinetics of the cell surface-derived vesicles are shown in Fig. 1. Uptake of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  into the vesicles in the absence of ATP occurred in a biphasic manner (Fig. 1A). A rapid initial uptake which occurred within the first 30 s, the earliest possible time point for uptake measurements, was followed by a much slower linear uptake process. Interpolation yielded a  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  distribution space (clearance) for the fast influx component of 4.93  $\mu\text{l}/\text{mg}$  membrane protein. The efflux kinetics shown in Fig. 1B revealed that the rapidly accumulating  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool is also rapidly equilibrating with the external medium with a half-time of 4 s. This rapid efflux pathway is effectively inhibited by 0.1 mM  $\text{La}^{3+}$  externally applied in the washing buffer. The difference between the vesicular  $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$  content after 3 washings determined in the presence and absence of  $\text{La}^{3+}$  corresponded to a  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  distribution space of about

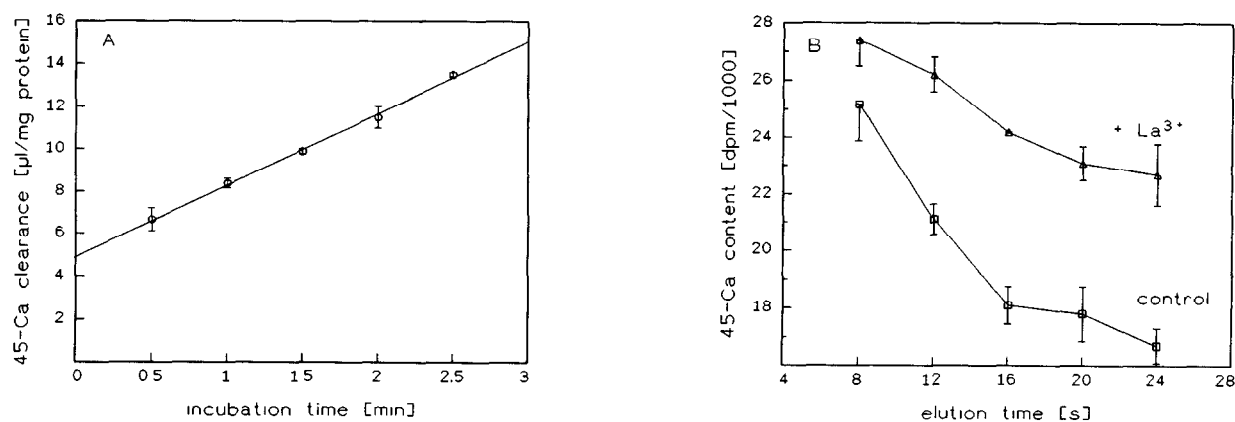


Fig. 1. Time course of the passive  $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake into (A) and release from (B) HIT cell surface-derived vesicles (fraction  $P_2$ ).  $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake was performed as described in Section 2, without ATP in the incubation medium. The samples in A (open circles) and B (open triangles) were stopped and washed with a buffer A containing 0.1 mM  $\text{La}^{3+}$ . The control samples (open squares in A) were stopped and washed with buffer A without  $\text{La}^{3+}$ . In B, a higher concentration of free  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  (15  $\mu\text{M}$ ) was used because EGTA was omitted from the preincubation medium. Each point of A and B represents the mean  $\pm$  S.D. of 3 determinations. The data of A are presented as  $\mu\text{l}$  of incubation medium cleared from  $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$  per mg membrane protein.

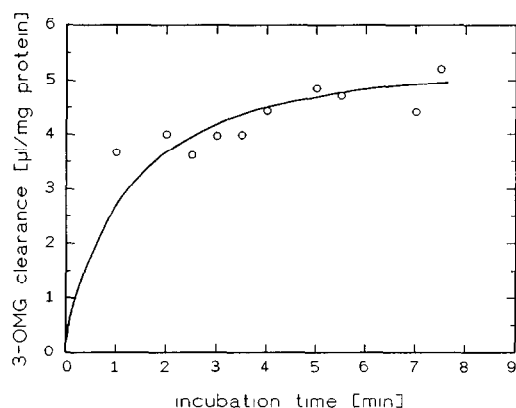


Fig. 2. Determination of the 3-OMG distribution space of cell surface-derived vesicles (fraction  $P_2$ ). 3-OMG ( $20 \mu\text{Ci/ml}$ ;  $2.4 \text{ Ci/mmol}$ ) uptake was achieved as described in Section 2. Data are presented as  $\mu\text{l}$  of incubation medium cleared from [ $^3\text{H}$ ]3-OMG per mg membrane protein

$7 \mu\text{l/mg protein}$ . This higher value may be due to the unavoidable partial elution of vesicular  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  during the washings in the control group.

In order to exclude the possibility that the rapid  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake is merely due to binding, the vesicular distribution space of the rapid component was compared with that of the non-metabolizable glucose analogue 3-OMG (Fig. 2). 3-OMG can enter the vesicles via glucose transporters shown to be present in the cell surface derived vesicles of HIT cells [1] as well as in the microvilli of islet B cells [9]. The sizes of the distribution spaces for  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ( $4.93 \mu\text{l/mg membrane protein}$ ) and 3-OMG ( $4.80 \mu\text{l/mg membrane protein}$ ) were found to be identical. It is, therefore, highly probable that the rapidly accumulated amount of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  is located within the vesicular water space and is in diffusional equilibrium with the extravesicular fluid.

A similar but about 3-fold greater  $\text{La}^{3+}$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool ( $14 \mu\text{l/mg protein}$ ) was also found in vesicles in which the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store has previously been loaded in the presence of ATP (Fig. 3). The higher amount of freely diffusible  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  in the presence of ATP compared to that under passive loading conditions is assumed to be due to the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -complexing properties of ATP (app.  $K_d = 1.6 \times 10^{-4} \text{ M}$ ) which is also present within the vesicles as shown below. On the other side, this ATP effect indicates that ATP and free  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  coexist in a common vesicular water space.

Evidence for a rapid influx pathway for ATP and  $\text{IP}_3$  into cell surface-derived vesicles of HIT cells is presented in Figs. 4 and 5, respectively. Uptake of both agents was inhibited by preincubation (10 min,  $37^\circ\text{C}$ ) of the vesicles with the impermeant anion channel inhibitor, DIDS ( $0.5 \text{ mM}$ ). Uptake of external ATP greatly exceeds the value expected for equilibration with the internal water space alone. These high uptake values are most likely due to intravesicular binding and metabo-

lism of ATP. DIDS-sensitive uptake of  $\text{IP}_3$  is partially obscured by a high amount of  $\text{IP}_3$  bound to the vesicles by a DIDS-insensitive process.

DIDS-sensitive entry of ATP and  $\text{IP}_3$  into the vesicles is also shown by inhibition of both the ATP-dependent  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake into and  $\text{IP}_3$ -mediated  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  release from DIDS-pretreated vesicles (Fig. 6).  $\text{IP}_3$  entry into the vesicles via a DIDS-sensitive pathway was demonstrated by the fact that DIDS treatment of preloaded vesicles almost completely abolished subsequent  $\text{IP}_3$  action on the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store. This experiment further indicates that DIDS does not affect the function of the loaded  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store. DIDS alone did not impair the loading of the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store as seen in an experiment carried out in the presence of DIDS but without preincubation with DIDS which is assumed to be necessary for covalent modification of the anion channel protein. Under these conditions  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake occurred in the presence of DIDS at room temperature for at least 5–10 min and then ceased rapidly (data not shown).

Each of the shown experiments have been repeated at least 3 times yielding highly reproducible results.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

In a series of previous studies, a new concept of hexose transport regulation has been depicted [5–8] based on the assumption of a regulated entrance compartment for cellular hexose uptake formed by the microvillar tip compartment. This entrance compartment was shown by kinetic data to be separated from the cytoplasmic main compartment by a diffusion barrier [5,6] which is

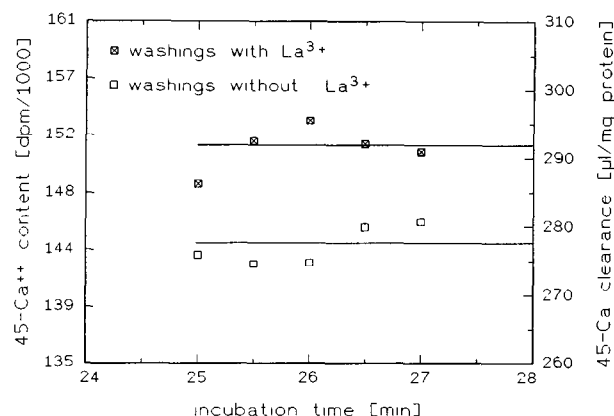


Fig. 3. Determination of the rapidly equilibrating pool of free  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  in  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -preloaded cell surface-derived vesicles (fraction  $P_2$ ).  $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake into the vesicle suspension was carried out as described in Section 2 in the presence of  $0.5 \text{ mM}$  ATP. After an incubation period of 25 min, at which time a filling steady-state has been achieved, two sets of  $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$  determinations were carried out, each consisting of 5 measurements performed within the shortest possible time period (2 min). The washings were carried out either with (squares with cross) or without  $0.1 \text{ mM}$   $\text{La}^{3+}$  (open squares) in buffer A at room temperature. The washings consisted of 3 filtration procedures lasting 4 s each

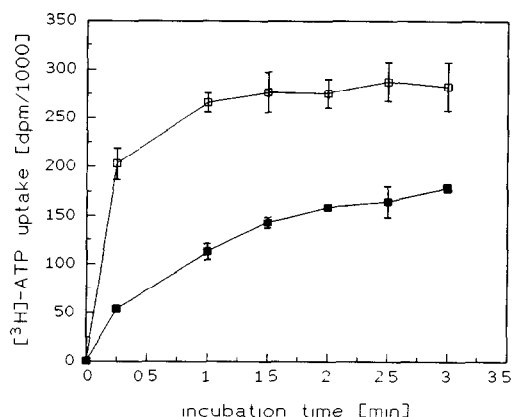


Fig. 4. Inhibition by DIDS of ATP uptake into cell surface-derived vesicles (fraction  $P_2$ ). [ $^3\text{H}$ ]ATP (25  $\mu\text{Ci}/\text{ml}$ ; 57 Ci/mmol) uptake was carried out as described in Section 2 with (filled squares) and without preincubation (open squares) of the vesicle suspension with 0.5 mM DIDS for 10 min at 37°C. The values are expressed as mean  $\pm$  S.D. of 3 determinations

thought to be formed by the internal microfilament structure of the microvilli. Insulin was shown to break down this diffusion barrier, as visualized by the microvillar shape changes, and to open a hexose influx pathway from the tip compartment into the cytoplasm [5,6]. In analogy to the previously shown surface localization of the ATP-dependent  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store, the insulin-sensitive pool of glucose transporters in adipocytes and other cell types generally was found in the microsomal fraction when using classical homogenization techniques. Following the shearing protocol, however, we found this transporter pool in the cell surface-derived vesicle fractions of 3T3-L1 adipocytes [7]. The detection of the  $\text{IP}_3$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool in the surface-derived vesicle fraction once more shows that shear forces which are much lower than those exerted on the cells during homogenization with a teflon-glass homogenizer are sufficient to cause vesiculation of cell surface protrusions such as microvilli, ruffles, veils and other structures. After subcellular fractionation these small membrane components were then recovered in the microsomal fraction which is generally assumed to contain only intracellular membrane components. The apparent cell surface localization of the  $\text{IP}_3$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool of HIT cells opens the question whether the diffusion barrier model, originally designed for glucose transport regulation, may also have relevance for the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  signaling pathway of the cell, i.e., the internal  $\text{IP}_3$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store and the associated  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  influx pathway.

In the present study, we have tested some predictions following from the microvillar localization of the bulk (80%) of the  $\text{IP}_3$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store of HIT cells [1]. The  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  storing properties of the HIT cell surface-derived vesicle fraction have been shown to be identical with those of the microsomal fraction of various cell types including the extent of the  $\text{IP}_3$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool which

amounts to about 40% of the total ATP-dependent  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool [1].

These findings have suggested a mechanistic concept for  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  storage and release quite different from that of the current hypothesis which postulates a membrane-located ATP-driven  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pump combined with an  $\text{IP}_3$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  channel. Here we show that  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake into the cell surface-derived vesicles proceeds via a passive  $\text{La}^{3+}$ -sensitive cation pathway which allows rapid equilibration of the internal vesicular water space with the external medium.  $\text{La}^{3+}$  sensitivity of microsomal  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  release has been repeatedly described by other authors [10–14]. Moreover, we present evidence that  $\text{IP}_3$  and ATP rapidly enter the vesicles via a DIDS-sensitive anion pathway, and we demonstrate that the entry of both compounds into the vesicular lumen via the DIDS-sensitive anion pathway is essential for ATP-dependent loading and  $\text{IP}_3$ -induced emptying of the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store. The latter finding further indicates that the vesicle population containing the DIDS-inhibitable anion pathway is identical with that containing the  $\text{IP}_3$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool. On the other hand, we could also present evidence indicating that the vesicle population containing the  $\text{La}^{3+}$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  influx pathway is identical with that containing the DIDS-sensitive anion pathway and, hence, also the  $\text{IP}_3$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool. Such evidence comes from the observation that the rapidly equilibrating  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool was considerably increased by the presence of ATP. The amount of this increase corresponds to the value that can be calculated on the basis of the apparent dissociation constant of ATP for  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  binding (0.16 mM): in a  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -buffered system, 0.5 mM ATP always binds 3.1 times the amount of free  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ . Thus,  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  binding to ATP would cause a 4-fold enhancement of the amount intravesicular  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  compared to the ATP-free condition: we observed a 3-fold enhancement.

In addition, the 3-OMG equilibration experiments yielded two important items of information. First, the

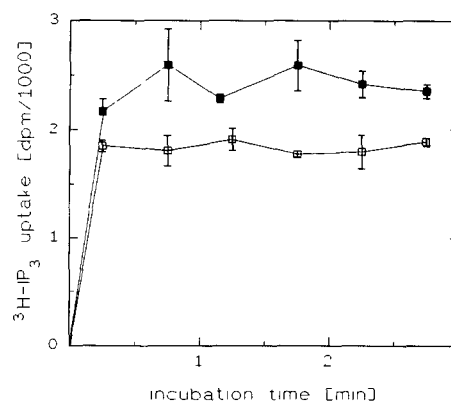


Fig. 5. Inhibition by DIDS of  $\text{IP}_3$  uptake into cell surface-derived vesicles (fraction  $P_2$ ). [ $^3\text{H}$ ]IP<sub>3</sub> (0.6  $\mu\text{Ci}/\text{ml}$ ; 50 Ci/mmol) uptake was performed as described for Fig. 4 with (filled squares) and with preincubation with 0.5 mM DIDS for 10 min at 37°C (open squares). The values are expressed as mean  $\pm$  S.D. of 3 determinations.

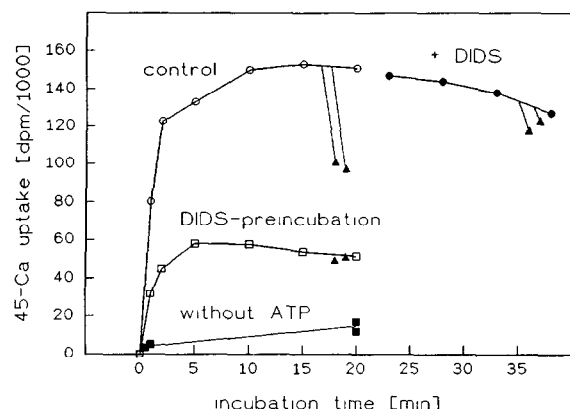


Fig. 6. Inhibition by DIDS of ATP-dependent  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake into and  $\text{IP}_3$ -induced  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  release from surface-derived vesicles (fraction  $\text{P}_2$ ).  $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake in the presence of ATP (open circles) was carried out as described in Section 2. After 20 min of incubation, 0.5 mM DIDS was added to the preloaded vesicles (filled circles). In a second experiment, uptake of  $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$  was performed after preincubation (10 min;  $37^\circ\text{C}$ ) of the vesicles with 0.5 mM DIDS (open squares). In each of the 3 experiments,  $\text{IP}_3$ -induced  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  release ( $10\text{ }\mu\text{M}$ ; 1 min) was initiated at the time points indicated by straight lines connected with the filled triangles. The lower line (filled squares) represents passive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake into the vesicles in the absence of ATP. Passive uptake values at 20 min represent steady-state levels (upper point: without DIDS; lower point: preincubated with DIDS). The open and filled circles and the open squares represent the means of 2 determinations.

presence of a rapid uptake pathway for hexoses indicates that the cell surface-derived vesicles are provided with glucose transport proteins. Since the presence of the bulk of the cell surface glucose transporters in the microvilli of islet  $\beta$ -cells has recently been demonstrated [9], this finding is compatible with the assumed microvillar origin of the used surface-derived vesicle fraction. Second, the vesicular 3-OMG distribution space was found to be identical with that of the  $\text{La}^{3+}$ -sensitive vesicular  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool. This indicates that the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  pool is indeed localized in the intravesicular water space and is not due to some sort of reversible binding, for instance.

To summarize, the presented findings provide strong evidence that the mechanisms for both processes, the ATP-consuming  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  storage and the  $\text{IP}_3$ -dependent  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  release, are located in the lumen of the vesicles and that free  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ , ATP, and  $\text{IP}_3$  can rapidly enter and leave the vesicle lumen via cation and anion channels. Vesicular influx and efflux of free  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  occurs through  $\text{La}^{3+}$ -sensitive cation channels in an  $\text{IP}_3$ -independent manner. Consequently, the  $\text{IP}_3$  sensing mechanism of the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store must also be located in the vesicle lumen.

Furthermore, the demonstration of microvillar shape changes induced by  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store-emptying agents such as the  $\text{IP}_3$ -agonist, bombesin, and the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -ATPase inhibi-

tor, thapsigargin, point to another interesting implication emerging from the concept of a microvillar  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store [1]. In intact cells, the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  influx pathway, detected in the surface-derived vesicle membranes, is located in the microvillar membranes. Under basal conditions,  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  uptake into the cytoplasm through this cation channel may be restricted by the diffusion barrier consisting of the internal cytoskeletal structure of the microvilli. However, after receptor-mediated reorganization of the microvillar shaft structure, as visualized by shape changes of the microvilli on depletion of the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  stores, this internal cytoskeletal diffusion barrier is impaired. The diminished diffusional resistance of the microvillar pathway allows  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  to enter the cytoplasm via the  $\text{La}^{3+}$ -sensitive cation influx pathway.

In the case of the insulin-induced activation of glucose transport in adipocytes, morphological and kinetic evidence indicated that the normal microvillar shaft organization represents an effective diffusion barrier for low molecular weight solutes such as glucose and other hexoses [6]; the same cytoskeletal barrier system may also regulate the microvillar  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  influx pathway. Such structural connection between the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store and the associated cation channel may be the basis for the well known inverse relationship between the filling state of the  $\text{IP}_3$ -sensitive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  store and the activation of a  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  influx pathway as first described by Putney [15].

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