

ASSOCIATION OF TELOMERE WITH AGEING THROUGH CELLULAR SENESCENCE AND MITOCHONDRIAL MALFUNCTION

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Abstract

Marked by a progressive decline in the function of tissues and organs that ultimately results in death, Aging is a biological condition. Telomeres, are repetitive DNA sequences necessary for cell fate and aging. Telomeres shorten when cells mature, resulting in cellular senescence and mitochondrial dysfunction. "Cellular senescence and mitochondrial malfunction" will then result in organ or tissue degeneration and dysfunction, as well as a variety of somatic ageing mechanisms. We summarized the relationship between cell senescence, mitochondrial dysfunction, and aging in this paper.

1. INTRODUCTION

Mammalian telomeres consist of "TTAGGG" repeats in humans and mice ranging from 5 kb to 100 kb respectively and are associated with shelterin, a protein complex (de Lange 2005). However, due to the "mid-replication issue" and telomere end processing, telomeres gradually shorten with cell division (Wu et al. 2012). Shelterin can lose its binding site when telomeres exceed a critical length and telomeric DNA is unable to form a protective secondary structure. While its biological mechanisms remain largely unclear, the primary hallmark of ageing has been telomere attrition ("Lopez-Otin et al. 2013 and McHugh and Gil 2018"). "Cellular senescence and mitochondrial dysfunction" are two other major ageing hallmarks and can also be mediated by telomere shortening ("Sahin et al. 2011"). In this analysis, we start by explaining the structure and function of the telomerase.

2. TELOMERE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

Barbara McClintock and Herman Muller first hypothesised on advanced telomere structures that can protect the normal ends of linear chromosomes from the repair of aberrant DNA (McClintock 1941) as well as instability of genome (Lazzerini-Denchi and Sfeir 2016).

Telomeric DNA in mammals consists of tandem repeats of TTAGGG which end in single-stranded G-rich thirty overhangs, recognized as G-overhangs (Moyzis et al. 1988). "The G-overhang will invade the double-stranded telomeric DNA that forms a lariat-like structure called the t-loop, observed by electron microscopy as well as stochastic optical reconstruction microscopy in functional telomeres (Doksani et al. 2013 and Griffith et al. 1999). Telomeres can fold into a closed structure by creating t-loops to shield the chromosome ends from being detected by the DNA damage repair machinery as DNA double-strand breaks (Morgan et al. 2018). Telomeric DNA, called G-quadruplexes (Schaffitzel et al. 2001), is also likely to fold into noncanonical secondary structures and plays an important role in capping telomeres to maintain chromosomal integrity and inhibit DNA damage signals in telomeres (Ray et al. 2014 and Smith et al. 2011). In addition, the structure of telomeric G-quadruplexes has been shown to limit telomere extension by affecting telomerase function (Oganesian et al. 2006). In promoters and transcription start sites, G-quadruplexes structures are also found (Bedrat et al. 2016 and Chambers et al. 2015)." Therefore, DNA replication, translation and transcription have regulatory roles ("Hansel-Hertsch et al. 2017 and Rhodes and Lipps 2015").

Telomerase is a "ribonucleoprotein complex made up of the catalytic core of telomerase reverse transcriptase and telomerase RNA". Telomerase prolongs telomeres by tethering to the 3' end of DNA, using the telomerase reverse transcriptase's catalyzed reverse transcription as a guide. ("Jiang et al. 2018 and Wu et al. 2017"). "RNA polymerase II synthesizes noncoding telomeric repeat RNA by converting subtelomeric DNA to telomeric repeat sequences" (Schoeftner and Blasco 2008). "A telomeric repeat containing RNA has been identified as a component of telomeric heterochromatin, which is thought to act as a molecular scaffold for multiple protein enzymes that perform a variety of critical chromosome-end functions" (Azzalin and Lingner 2015) and contributes significantly to telomeric integrity ("Chu et al. 2017 and Montero et al. 2016"). Further research to investigate the association between telomeric repeat-containing RNA and telomerase should therefore be performed. With the exception of this telomeric repeat-containing RNA, R-loops will activate the DNA damage reaction at critically short telomeres (Graf et al. 2017).

Telomeres complexes known as shelterin complexes, which are associated with proteins that shield chromosome ends from DNA damage reaction and keep genome stability. (Blackburn et al. 2015).“Shelterin ends with telomeric DNA after recruitment to secure chromosomes. Shelterin binds specifically to telomeric DNA and protects telomeres by affecting the telomeric DNA structure, preventing DNA damage response directly from telomeres and preserving telomeric DNA by modulating telomerase activity (Benarroch-Popivker et al. 2016 and Kibe et al. 2016).”

3. TELOMERE, CELLULAR SENESCENCE AND AGEING

DNA is replicated in a semi-conservative manner. “DNA replication is continuous in the direction of the advancing replication fork for the leading strand, but discontinuous for the lagging strand, which is formed by merging Okazaki fragments. Because DNA polymerase can only continue (but not initiate) a strand, Okazaki fragment formation requires an RNA primer generated by RNA polymerase.” Following the synthesis of Okazaki fragments, the “RNA primers” are removed and the internal gaps are filled with DNA using DNA polymerase I. The Okazaki fragments are subsequently joined using ligase. Due to DNA replication the telomere shortens.. This is Watson's 1972 "end-replication problem." (“1973; Olovnikov; Sugino et al., 1972; Watson, 1972”). However, inadequate replication is not the primary cause of telomere shortening. Following replication at leading-end telomeres, the G overhang is produced by the excision of five primary ends, which contributes significantly to telomere attrition (“Wu et al. 2012). Except for the end replication issue and resection of the telomere 5' end, telomere attrition rates are associated with a variety of other variables, such as reactive oxygen species, that may accelerate telomere shortening (Herbert et al. 2008”). Olovnikov (1973) related the Hayflick limit to telomere replication and indicated that telomere duration could decide the possible number of rounds of cell division (Olovnikov 1973). “In 1986, Cooke and Smith specifically related telomeres to cell ageing when they compared telomere lengths in different tissues (Cooke and Smith 1986). Over the next few years, researchers have found that because telomerase extends the telomeres, the replicative ability of human cells increases. These studies demonstrated that progressive shortening of telomeres is indeed the primary factor contributing to senescence (Allsopp et al. 1992 and Harley et al. 1992).”Telomeres are known as the "molecular clocks" of cells (“Muezzinler et al. 2013”). Telomeres gradually lose their protective structure and proteins, finally causing replicative senescence via DNA damage response mechanisms (Morgan et al. 2018). In somatic cells lacking telomerase production, telomeres shorten with each replication cycle, and when crucial telomere shortening occurs, short telomeres are identified as double-strand DNA breaks (Arnoult and Karlseder 2015). The DNA damage response is triggered by double-strand breaks, which triggers a signaling cascade that culminates in the activation of the ATM kinase p53 (“Roake and Artandi 2017 and Wang et al. 2011”). In most malignancies, the tumor suppressor P53 is tightly regulated and dormant, but it becomes active in senescent cells due to a posttranslational change (Itahana et al. 2001). P21 was the first to be found, and it inhibits Cdk2 through inhibiting pRb phosphorylation. Hypophosphorylated Rb interacts to transcription factors, particularly E2Fs, which are involved in cell growth, and the cell cycle is stopped at the G1 phase.(“Beausejour et al. 2003; Harper et al. 1993; Shay et al. 1991 and Xiong et al. 1993”). Telomerase, which solves the endreplication problem, is essential for telomere length maintenance in these cells (“Borah et al. 2015; Kim et al. 1994 and Morin 1989”). Shelterin is a compound that attracts telomerase to telomeres and allows for telomere extension.

Numerous studies have established a possible link between telomere length and aging. It would prolong the lives of mice by restoring the function or duration of telomeres, and telomerase gene therapy might be used to treat premature aging and delay physical aging in animals (“Armanios et al. 2009; Bernardes de Jesus et al. 2012; Derevyanko et al. 2017 and Steenstrup et al. 2017”). Senescence induces tiredness and a reduction in stem cell function, impairing tissue breakdown. (Bernet et al. 2014). Senescent cells, however, can force stem cells to re-enter the cell cycle via the secretory phenotype associated with senescence, which accelerates stem cell fatigue (“Cosgrove et al. 2014 and Sousa-Victor et al. 2014”).

Senescence has the potential to alter the optimal functioning of stem cells non-autonomously via the senescence-associated secretory phenotype, in addition to impacting stem cells by causing a protracted growth stop. (“Brack et al. 2007; Jang et al. 2011 and Pricola et al. 2009”). “Senescent cells secrete hundreds of factors that manifest drastic changes in their secretome called the senescence-associated secretory phenotype which is enriched with proinflammatory cytokines, growth factors of chemokine and proteases (Coppe et al. 2010 and Kuilman and Peepers 2009). Emerging research using genetic systems or drugs that remove senescent cells suggest that senescent cell clearance attenuates inflammation and creates a pro-regenerative environment (Jeon et al. 2017). In addition, several studies have shown that exposure to a young systemic environment markedly increased the regenerative capacity of old stem cells (Brack et al. 2007 and Conboy et al. 2005).”Senescent cells are thought to have a paracrine activity, in which they release IL-1b, TGFbeta, and specific chemokine ligands, promoting the degeneration of age-related tissue.(“Acosta et al. 2013 and Nelson et al. 2012”).

Studies have shown that senescent cell clearance decreases levels of chronic inflammatory markers, IL-6 and IL-1b, in the elderly, indicating that the senescence-associated secretory phenotype is partly behind chronic

inflammation, often referred to as inflammatory inflammation (“Baker et al. 2016 and Jeon et al. 2017”). The secretory phenotype associated with senescence will recruit immune cells to kill senescent cells, called immunosenescence (Nikolich-Zugich 2018). Hematopoietic stem cell dysfunction can result in a decline in immune system function (Sahin et al. 2011). The increase of senescent cells throughout aging may be explained by senescent cells secreting inflammatory substances in an autocrine or paracrine way to facilitate senescence and a fall in their clearance.(Sharpless 2017).

4. TELOMERE, MITOCHONDRIA DYSFUNCTION AND AGING

Telomere shortening and mitochondrial dysfunction have long been recognized as critical initiators of natural ageing. ((Fang et al. 2016). P53 and DDR pathways are triggered when “DNA damage occurs due to telomere dysfunction, which in turn suppresses peroxisome proliferator-activated receptor gamma co-activator 1 alpha/beta, contributing to mitochondrial dysfunction” (Dabrowska et al. 2015). In addition, research has shown that overexpression of (PGC-1 alpha) peroxisome proliferator-activated gamma co-activator 1 alpha receptor can reverse ageing muscle at the molecular level to younger muscle and play an important role in longevity (“Garcia et al. 2018”). “The NAD⁺-SIRT1-PGC-1 axis is another prominent pathway connecting telomere attrition to mitochondrial dysfunction. Short telomeres are sensed in this axis as doubled-strand breaks by nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD⁺)-dependent PARP1, which can trigger signalling for DNA repair, a process involving NAD⁺ consumption. PARP1 hyperactivation results in consumption of NAD⁺, thus restricting the activity of the NAD⁺-dependent deacetylase sirtuin 1 (SIRT1) (Fang 2014). SIRT1 has been shown to increase mitochondrial function and biogenesis through the PGC-1 alpha transcription factor, and loss of SIRT1 activity could contribute to mitochondrial dysfunction, particularly in muscle dysfunction (Fang 2014). By increasing mitochondrial biogenesis, telomere shortening can also have an effect on the ageing process as activation of ATM due to DNA damage triggers AKT and the mechanistic target of rapamycin complex 1, resulting in mitochondrial biogenesis based on PGC-1beta and ROS generation (Correia-Melo et al. 2016).”Thus, either an excess or a deficiency of mitochondrial synthesis can result in mitochondrial malfunction..(Kauppila et al. 2017).

Mitochondrial dysfunction results from disruption of metabolic balance, which includes gluconeogenesis, fatty acid metabolism, and -oxidation. Cell dysfunction can be caused by metabolic imbalances, which can lead to cellular senescence via a variety of ways.. (“Sui et al. 2016 and Wiley and Campisi 2016”).Excessive reactive oxygen species formation as a result of telomere shortening has been proven to stabilize the DNA damage response and keep cells alive..(Correia-Melo et al. 2016). “In defective mitochondria, decreased ATP production increases the AMP-to-ATP ratio that promotes cellular senescence by stimulating AMPK, a key mediator of cellular metabolism” (Mihaylova and Shaw 2011).

This research established that compromised mitochondria decreased “NAD⁺/NADH” ratios, resulting in senescence associated with mitochondrial dysfunction via activation of “AMPK, which induces p53-dependent senescence, and that mitochondrial dysfunction induces ageing phenotypes via distinct senescence-associated secretory phenotype components such as CCL27, IL-10, HMB1, and TNF alpha”, all of which affect survivability.(“Davalos et al. 2013; Frankel et al. 2013 and Wiley et al. 2016”). Additionally, the mitochondrial respiratory chain is required for the differentiation of foetal hematopoietic stem cells into progenitor cells and adult hematopoietic stem cell quiescence. Respiratory dysfunction caused by mitochondrial dysfunction would also impair hematopoietic stem cell differentiation, resulting in the loss of quiescence.(Anso et al. 2017). (“Prolla and Denu 2014; Son et al. 2016; Verdin 2015 and Zhang et al. 2016”). Studies have revealed serious episodes of telomere attrition causing severe inflammation predominantly through mitochondrial oxidative stress hyperactivation of the inflammasome.NLRP3 (Kang et al. 2018).

5. CONCLUSION

Telomere shortening in cells appears to be a cause of human aging. Telomere shape variation, shelterin complexes, and tight telomeric chromatin all play a role in keeping chromosomes from degrading with age. “Telomere shortening” is being related to cellular and organismal aging. Finally, determining how cellular senescence and mitochondria cause aging is difficult...

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