

## Asymmetrical Distribution of P2Y Nucleotide Receptors in Rabbit Inner Medullary Collecting Duct Cells

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We cultured the rabbit inner medullary collecting duct (IMCD) cells as monolayers on collagen-coated membrane filters, and investigated distribution of the P2Y receptors by analyzing nucleotide-induced short circuit current ( $I_{sc}$ ) responses. Exposure to different nucleotides of either the apical or basolateral surface of cell monolayers stimulated  $I_{sc}$ . Dose-response relationship and cross-desensitization studies suggested that at least 3 distinct P2Y receptors are expressed asymmetrically on the apical and basolateral membranes. A P2Y<sub>2</sub>-like receptor, which responds to UTP and ATP, is expressed on both the apical and basolateral membranes. In addition, a uracil nucleotide receptor, which responds to UDP and UTP, but not ATP, is expressed predominantly on the apical membrane. In contrast, a P2Y<sub>1</sub>-like receptor, which responds to ADP and 2-methylthio-ATP, is expressed predominantly on the basolateral membrane. These nucleotides stimulated intracellular cAMP production with an asymmetrical profile, which was comparable to that in the stimulation of  $I_{sc}$ . Our results suggest that the adenine and uracil nucleotides can interact with different P2Y nucleotide receptors that are expressed asymmetrically on the apical and basolateral membranes of the rabbit IMCD cells, and that both cAMP- and Ca<sup>2+</sup>-dependent signaling mechanisms underlie the stimulation of  $I_{sc}$ .

Key Words: IMCD cells, Nucleotide, P2Y receptor, Chloride secretion, Short circuit current

### INTRODUCTION

It is now well established that extracellular nucleotides act as agonists to regulate a broad range of physiological processes by interacting with the P2 receptors (Dubyak & El-Moatassim, 1993; North & Barnard, 1997; Williams & Burnstock, 1997). The IUPHAR Purine Nomenclature Subcommittee grouped the P2 receptors into 2 families (Fredholm et al, 1997), P2X and P2Y. The P2X is a ligand-gated ion channel receptor family, seven of which (P2X<sub>1-7</sub>) have been cloned to date (Surprenant et al, 1996). The P2Y is a G protein-coupled receptor family. Recent cloning of a new P2Y receptor (Communi et al, 1997) added the 11th member to this family. Among the P2Y receptors, the P2Y<sub>1</sub> and P2Y<sub>2</sub> have been studied

most widely in relation with their expression and functions in various tissues. These receptors can be discriminated pharmacologically by the agonist selectivity; 2-methylthio-ATP (2MeSATP) > ATP > ADP >> UTP for P2Y<sub>1</sub>, and UTP=ATP > ATPS >> 2MeSATP=ADP for P2Y<sub>2</sub> (Williams & Burnstock, 1997). They have been known as P<sub>2y</sub> and P<sub>2u</sub>, according to the classical nomenclature (Fredholm et al, 1997; Williams & Burnstock, 1997). A peculiar characteristic of the P2Y<sub>2</sub> receptor is that it is responsive to UTP, a uracil nucleotide, as well as adenine nucleotides. The P2Y<sub>4</sub> and P2Y<sub>6</sub> are selective for UDP and UTP, and do not respond to adenine nucleotides (Communi & Boeynaems, 1997; Heilbronn et al, 1997).

It was reported that the P2Y receptors are expressed in a polarized manner in cells derived from the airway (Hwang et al, 1996), intestine (Inoue et al, 1997) and kidney (Woo et al, 1998). Recent studies suggested that the P2Y<sub>2</sub> receptor is expressed in the inner medullary collecting cells of the mouse (McCoy

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et al, 1999) and rat (Kishore et al, 2000), and is involved in regulation of ion transport across the epithelium. However, the exact nature of the distribution and function of the receptors in renal tubular cells are still unknown. The purpose of this study was to investigate distribution of the nucleotide receptors in the rabbit inner medullary collecting duct (IMCD) cells. Toward this end, IMCD cells were isolated from the rabbit kidney inner medulla and grown as monolayers on collagen-coated polycarbonate membrane filters and assayed for nucleotide-stimulated  $\text{Cl}^-$  secretion by measuring short circuit current ( $I_{\text{sc}}$ ) responses. The results suggest that the uracil as well as adenine nucleotides can interact with the P2Y nucleotide receptors, which are expressed asymmetrically on the apical and basolateral membrane of the rabbit IMCD cells, and that both cAMP- as well as  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -dependent signaling mechanisms underlie the stimulation of  $\text{Cl}^-$  secretion.

## METHODS

### *Cell preparation*

IMCD cells were isolated from 1.5~2.0 kg New Zealand white rabbits of both sexes by use of the hypotonic lysis isolation method described previously by others (Grenier & Smith, 1978). In brief, rabbits were anesthetized by *i.v.* injection of phentobarbital sodium. After dissection of the abdominal wall, the kidneys were perfused through a cannula placed into the aorta with Dulbeccos phosphate-buffered saline (PBS). The kidneys were then removed and rinsed with Hanks balanced salt buffer solution (HBSS) containing 50 IU/ml penicillin G and 50  $\mu\text{g/ml}$  streptomycin. The inner medulla was dissected, minced, suspended in HBSS containing 1 mg/ml collagenase, and incubated at 37°C for 2~3 h. IMCD cells were isolated by a further incubation for 5 min in the above solution made hypotonic (1/3 of HBSS) with two volumes of hypotonic water containing 10  $\mu\text{g/ml}$  deoxyribonuclease. Cells were retrieved by centrifugation at 500 g for 5 min and washed twice with 1 : 1 mixture of Dulbecco's modified Eagles medium and Hams F-12 (DMEM/F12) with 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS) and antibiotics. Cells were then suspended in DMEM/F12 supplemented with 10% FBS, 10  $\mu\text{g/ml}$  transferrin, 100 nM hydrocortisone, 10  $\mu\text{g/ml}$  insulin, 10 nM sodium selenite, 5 pM triiodothyro-

nine, 50 IU/ml penicillin G and 50  $\mu\text{g/ml}$  streptomycin.

All the experiments in this study were performed using cells grown as monolayers on permeable filters. Cells were plated on 12-mm polycarbonate membrane filters (Snapwell; Costar, Cambridge, MA, USA). Usually material from one kidney was plated to 4 to 6 Snapwell filters. Before plating, the filters were coated with 1% Vitrogen 100 (Collagen, Palo Alto, CA, USA) and 1 mg/ml human fibronectin (Collaborative Research, Bedford, MA, USA) dissolved in DMEM/F12 supplemented with 1% FBS. After plating, one-third of medium was replaced with serum-free supplemented DMEM/F12 every 24 h. In this way, the serum was diluted gradually.

Cells were evaluated for formation of tight junctions by measuring transepithelial resistance using transepithelial voltometer (EVOM, World Precision Instruments, Sarasota, FL, USA). Usually, transepithelial resistance ( $R_{\text{te}}$ ) reached its peak ( $627 \pm 43 \text{ ohm} \cdot \text{cm}^2$ ) 5 to 6 days after plating. Experiments were carried out on the 6th to 8th day after plating.

### *$I_{\text{sc}}$ measurement*

Short circuit current ( $I_{\text{sc}}$ ) measurement was performed in a modified Ussing chamber designed to accept Snapwell filter (World Precision Instrument, Sarasota, FL, USA). Transepithelial potential difference was short-circuited with a voltage clamp (Model DVC-1000, World Precision Instrument, Sarasota, FL, USA) connected to apical and basolateral chambers via Ag/AgCl electrodes. Experiments were carried out in bicarbonate-free Ringer solution that was composed of (in mM): 140 NaCl, 2.3  $\text{K}_2\text{HPO}_4$ , 0.4  $\text{KH}_2\text{PO}_4$ , 1.5  $\text{CaCl}_2$ , 1.5  $\text{MgCl}_2$ , 10 HEPES and 5 glucose (pH 7.4). Both the apical and basolateral bathing solution was maintained at 37°C, oxygenated with 100%  $\text{O}_2$ , and subject to constant circulation. Prior to stimulation with agonists, cell monolayers were equilibrated in Ringer solution for 30 min. After basal  $I_{\text{sc}}$  was stabilized,  $R_{\text{te}}$  was calculated by Ohms law by determining  $I_{\text{sc}}$  induced with a 10 mV voltage pulse. All the experiments were carried out in the presence of 50  $\mu\text{M}$  amiloride to rule out the possible involvement of  $\text{Na}^+$  current in the nucleotide-stimulated  $I_{\text{sc}}$ .

### *Measurement of intracellular cAMP content*

Cells were grown on Snapwell filters and subjected

to the same procedure as in measurement of  $I_{sc}$ . After 3-min exposure to agonists, Snapwells were rapidly removed from the Ussing chambers and immersed in ice-cold ethanol-HCl solution (ethanol containing 20 mM HCl). Membrane filters were cut off the Snapwell support using sharp tuberculin needle. Cells attached to the membrane filters in ethanol-HCl solution were then transferred to microcentrifuge tubes and sonicated to disrupt the cell membrane and complete extraction of intracellular cAMP. The cell suspension was then centrifuged (12,000 g) for 10 min at 4°C to precipitate the protein, and the supernatant was collected. The supernatant was freeze-dried and dissolved in an adequate volume of 50 mM Tris/1 mM EDTA (pH 7.5). cAMP content was determined by radioimmunoassay using [<sup>3</sup>H]cAMP assay kit from Amersham (Arlington Heights, IL, USA). Protein concentration was determined using the Bio-Rad protein assay kit with bovine serum albumin as a standard.

#### Reagents

ATP, ADP, UTP, UDP, and 2-methylthio-ATP (2MeSATP) were obtained from Research Biochemicals International (Natick, MA, USA). H-89 and BAPTA/AM were purchased from Calbiochem (La Jolla, CA, USA). Fura-2/AM was purchased from Molecular Probes (Eugene, OR, USA). Media and reagents for cell preparation and culture were obtained from GIBCO-BRL (Grand Island, NY, USA).

#### Data analysis

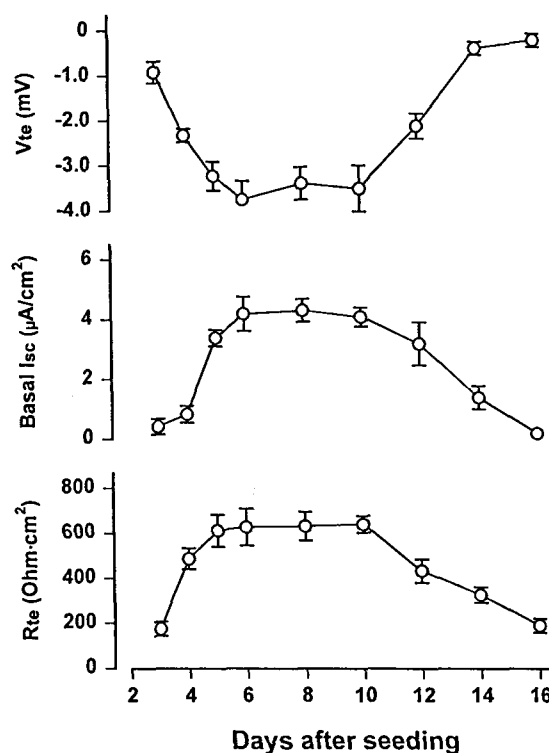
Nucleotide-stimulated  $I_{sc}$  was calculated by subtracting the basal  $I_{sc}$  from the peak  $I_{sc}$  responses, and were presented as means  $\pm$  SE. When necessary, data were analyzed by one-way analysis of variance followed by Duncan's multiple comparison test. A value of  $P < 0.05$  was considered statistically significant.

## RESULTS

#### Functional integrity of cell monolayer

To test the development of functional integrity of cell monolayers, transepithelial potential difference ( $V_{te}$ ), transepithelial resistance ( $R_{te}$ ), and basal  $I_{sc}$  were monitored during culture days. The results are sum-

marized in Fig. 1. Measurable  $V_{te}$  and  $R_{te}$  developed by day 3 after plating ( $-0.91 \pm 0.24$  mV and  $174.4 \pm 31.2$  ohm  $\cdot$  cm<sup>2</sup>), indicating that functional tight junction had been formed.  $V_{te}$  and  $R_{te}$  increased gradually until day 5 to 6. Afterward, they remained at steady levels to day 10. At day 6,  $V_{te}$ ,  $R_{te}$  and basal  $I_{sc}$  were  $-3.74 \pm 0.72$  mV,  $627.8 \pm 43.3$  ohm  $\cdot$  cm<sup>2</sup>, and  $4.2 \pm 0.8$   $\mu$ A/cm<sup>2</sup>, respectively. After day 10,  $R_{te}$  declined gradually, indicating that functional integrity of the monolayers might be deteriorating. Results in this study are from experiments carried out on the 6th to 8th day of culture after plating.



**Fig. 1.** Changes in transepithelial potential difference ( $V_{te}$ ), basal short circuit current (basal  $I_{sc}$ ), and transepithelial electrical resistance ( $R_{te}$ ) at various times after cell seeding on permeable membrane supports. IMCD cells were seeded on membrane filters at a cell density of  $1.2 \times 10^6$  cells/cm<sup>2</sup>. At different time points, cell monolayers were mounted in Ussing chambers and equilibrated with Ringer solution for 20 min. Before stimulation with agonist,  $V_{te}$  and basal  $I_{sc}$  were measured.  $R_{te}$  was calculated by Ohm's law by determining  $I_{sc}$  induced with a 10 mV voltage pulse. Data are expressed as means  $\pm$  SE from 17 to 24 separate cell preparations.

### Stimulation of $I_{sc}$ by nucleotides

Dose-response relationship of the changes in  $I_{sc}$  in response to applications of ATP, UTP, UDP, ADP and 2MeSATP was studied. The apical or basolateral surface of the monolayers was exposed to single doses of the nucleotides at concentrations ranging from 10 nM to 200  $\mu$ M, and the results are summarized in Fig. 2. UTP or ATP in either the apical or basolateral solution stimulated  $I_{sc}$ . The observation that UTP or ATP can stimulate  $I_{sc}$  from both sides of the epithelium indicates that the P2Y<sub>2</sub> (or P2U)-like receptors exist on both the apical and basolateral membranes. In contrast to the effects of ATP or UTP, the action of UDP was predominant on the apical side. It is worthwhile to note that, in the lower concentration range, the magnitude of stimulation by UTP is comparable to the sum of those by ATP and UDP. From these results, it is suggested that a uracil nucleotide receptor that responds to UDP and UTP, but not ATP, is expressed asymmetrically on the

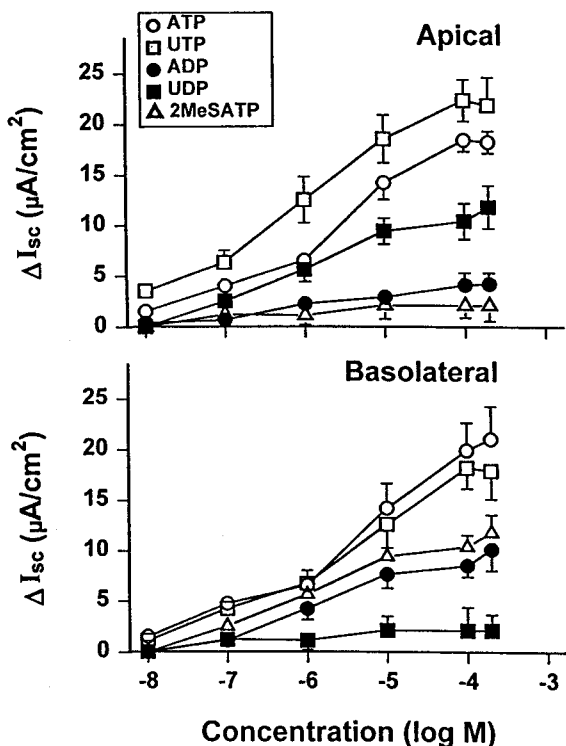


Fig. 2. Concentration-dependent effects of extracellular nucleotides on  $I_{sc}$ . IMCD cells grown on permeable membranes for 6 to 8 days were stimulated with indicated concentrations of each nucleotide from the apical or basolateral side. Maximum increases in  $I_{sc}$  are presented as means  $\pm$  SE ( $n=5$ ).

apical membrane. On the other hand, ADP and 2MeSATP elicited responses predominantly when applied to the basolateral membrane, suggesting that an additional population of nucleotide receptor is present. In the experiments summarized in Fig. 3, we determined  $I_{sc}$  responses to the nucleotides in monolayers of MDCK cells, a cell line established from the canine distal nephron. As shown in Fig. 3, each nucleotide in the apical and basolateral bathing solutions elicited a similar pattern of responses, which is comparable to that in the rabbit IMCD cells. These results lead us to speculate that the pattern of receptor localization observed in this study might be a generalized characteristic of distal nephron cells.

### Cross-desensitization of nucleotide-stimulated $I_{sc}$ responses

Desensitization to the same or different kinds of nucleotides provides an indirect means of assessing receptor heterogeneity. Thus we carried out desensitization experiments to define whether the receptor which responds to UDP and UTP on the apical mem-

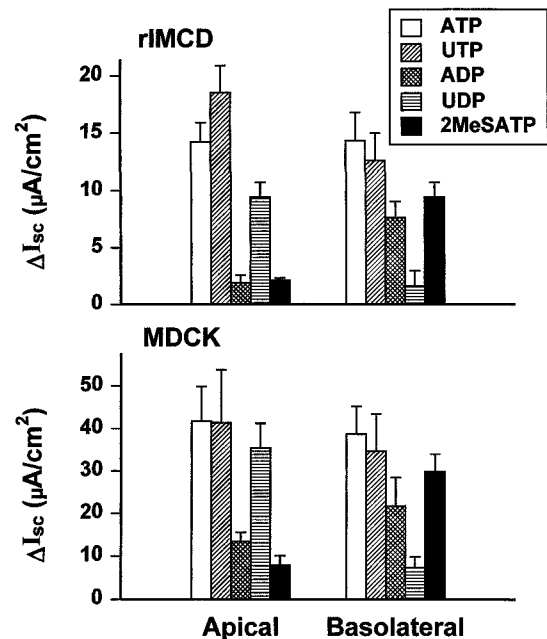
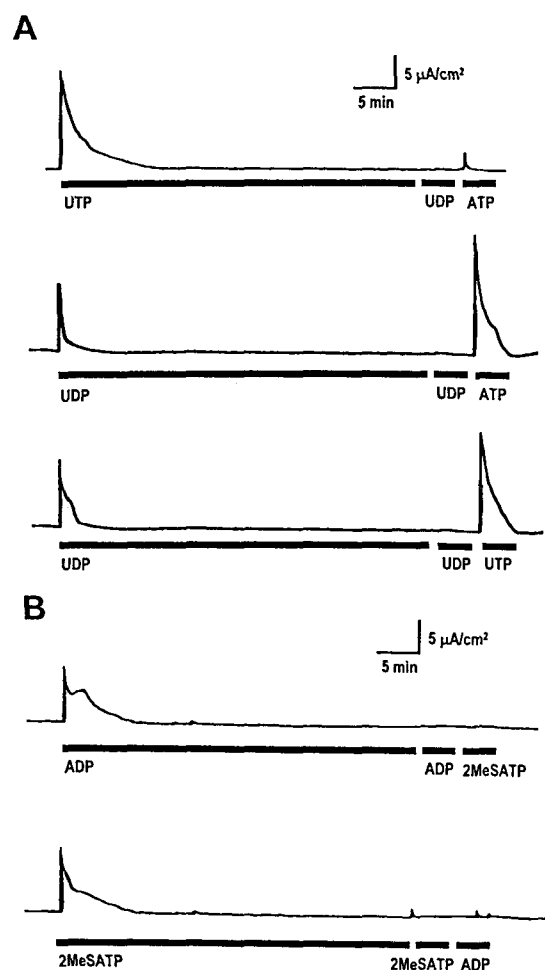


Fig. 3. Extracellular nucleotide-induced  $I_{sc}$  responses in rabbit IMCD cells (rIMCD) and canine distal nephron cells (MDCK). Cells grown on permeable membranes for 6 to 8 days were stimulated with 10  $\mu$ M of each nucleotide from the apical or basolateral side. Maximum increases in  $I_{sc}$  are presented as means  $\pm$  SE ( $n=4$ ).

brane is distinct from the P2Y<sub>2</sub> receptor. As shown in Fig. 4A, when cells were pre-incubated (i.e., desensitized) with UDP (100  $\mu$ M) for 40 min in the apical bathing solution, the subsequent challenge with UDP failed to stimulate I<sub>sc</sub>. However, after this treatment, the cells still responded to ATP or UTP, although the response was less than that observed in cells not desensitized with UDP. This is in sharp contrast with the result from the cells pretreated with UTP, in which the response to ATP as well as UDP is desensitized completely. This result is consistent with the conclusion that there exists a receptor for UDP and UTP, but not ATP, which is distinguished from the P2Y<sub>2</sub>, on the apical membrane. Similar desensitization experiments were carried out to define whether the responses to 2MeSATP and ADP in the basolateral solution were mediated via the same or separate receptors. As shown in Fig. 4B, preincubation with 2MeSATP (100  $\mu$ M) in the basolateral solution resulted in a complete abolishment of a subsequent response to 2MeSATP (100  $\mu$ M) as well as ADP (100  $\mu$ M). The cells preincubated with ADP (100  $\mu$ M) also did not respond to a subsequent challenge by ADP or 2MeSATP. These results suggest that 2MeSATP and ADP stimulate the same receptor subtype, which is distinct from the P2Y<sub>2</sub> receptor activated by ATP as well as UTP. Together, we conclude that three different subtypes of P2Y receptors are located asymmetrically in the apical and basolateral membranes of rabbit IMCD cells.

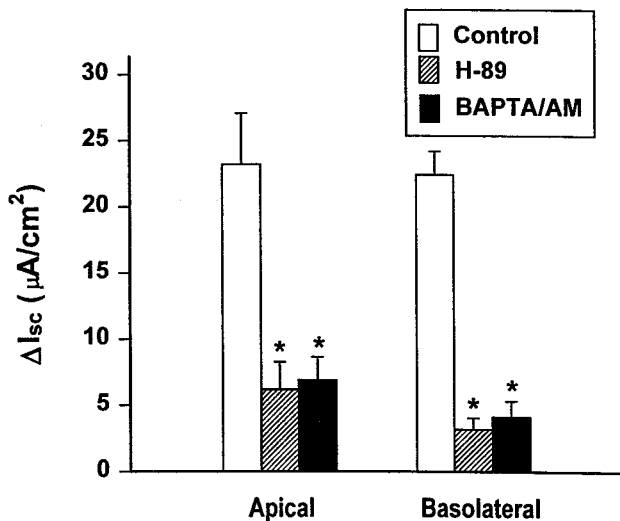
*cAMP- as well as Ca<sup>2+</sup>-dependent mechanism is involved in the ATP-stimulated I<sub>sc</sub>*

G protein-dependent activation of phospholipase C- $\beta$  (PLC $\beta$ ) and subsequent increase in intracellular Ca<sup>2+</sup> has been believed to be a major signaling mechanism to evoke cellular responses upon activation of P2Y receptors (Dubyak & El-Moatassim, 1993; Harden et al, 1995). In addition, there is accumulating evidence that adenylyl cyclase is also involved in the signaling mechanism of the P2Y receptor-mediated responses in a certain type of cells. As shown in Fig. 5, significant inhibition of the ATP-stimulated I<sub>sc</sub> responses by pretreatment of cells with H-89 (20  $\mu$ M), a specific protein kinase A inhibitor (Chijiwa et al, 1990), suggests that the stimulation of I<sub>sc</sub> is dependent on protein kinase A. The result also shows that pretreatment with BAPTA/AM (10  $\mu$ M), a cytosolic Ca<sup>2+</sup> chelator (Harrison & Bers, 1987), inhibits signifi-



**Fig. 4.** A. Desensitization of I<sub>sc</sub> responses on the apical membrane. Cell monolayers were preincubated for 40 min with 100  $\mu$ M of UDP or UTP in the apical bathing solution followed by a 1-min wash, and stimulated again with UDP. After the second wash, cell monolayers were stimulated with 100  $\mu$ M ATP or UTP. B. Desensitization of I<sub>sc</sub> responses on the basolateral membrane. Cell monolayers were preincubated for 40 min with 100  $\mu$ M of ADP or 2-methylthio-ATP (2MeSATP) in the basolateral bathing solution followed by a 1-min wash, and stimulated again with the same nucleotides. After the second wash, cell monolayers were stimulated with 100  $\mu$ M 2MeSATP or ADP. Typical tracing of changes in I<sub>sc</sub> observed after sequential addition of nucleotides is shown.

cantly as well the stimulation of I<sub>sc</sub> by ATP. These results may be a demonstration in support of the hypothesis that ATP lead to increase in intracellular cAMP as well as Ca<sup>2+</sup> upon stimulation of I<sub>sc</sub>.



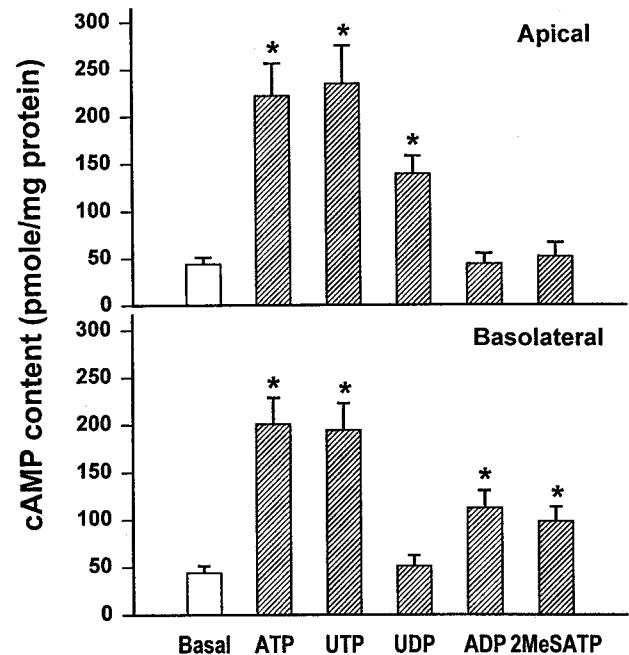
**Fig. 5.** Effects of the protein kinase A inhibitor and intracellular  $Ca^{2+}$  chelator on ATP-stimulated  $I_{sc}$ . Cell monolayers were preincubated for 30 min with H-89 (20  $\mu M$ ) or BAPTA/AM (10  $\mu M$ ), and then stimulated with 10  $\mu M$  ATP from the apical and basolateral sides. Maximum increases in  $I_{sc}$  are presented as means  $\pm$  SE (n=4). \* $P < 0.01$  vs. control.

#### *Changes of intracellular cAMP concentrations in response to nucleotides*

Measurement of intracellular cAMP content was carried out in cells prepared in parallel with those used to record  $I_{sc}$  in Ussing chambers. The results are summarized in Fig. 6. Exposure for 3 min to single doses of ATP (10  $\mu M$ ) in the apical or basolateral solution increased intracellular cAMP content by 4.8 and 4.5 fold, respectively. UTP was equipotent with ATP to stimulate cAMP production in either the apical or basolateral solution. UDP was effective in the apical side only to stimulate cAMP production. In contrast, ADP and 2MeSATP were effective in the basolateral side only. The magnitudes of cAMP production stimulated by UDP, ADP or 2MeSATP were smaller than those by ATP or UTP as was in those of  $I_{sc}$ .

## DISCUSSION

Epithelial cells, when grown on a permeable support, form a polarized monolayer that is useful for studying the differentiated epithelial functions, including vectorial transport of inorganic and organic com-



**Fig. 6.** Changes in intracellular cAMP content in response to different nucleotides. IMCD cell monolayers were stimulated for 5 min with 10  $\mu M$  of each nucleotide in the presence of 0.1 mM isobutylmethylxanthine from the apical or basolateral side. Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SE (n=4). \* $P < 0.01$  vs. basal level.

pounds. Increase of transepithelial resistance and potential difference are hallmarks of the formation of tight junctions and functional monolayer as described in the results summarized in Fig. 1. In polarized epithelial cell monolayers, responses of  $I_{sc}$  to various agonists including nucleotides have been well described to be accounted for by net basolateral to apical  $Cl^-$  secretion (Simmons, 1991). It is based on radioisotope flux studies, anion and cation dependence of the agonist-stimulated  $I_{sc}$ , and the action of inhibitors at the apical and basolateral surfaces.

In this study, exposure to different nucleotides of either the apical or basolateral surface of the cell monolayers stimulated  $I_{sc}$ . The dose-response relationship and cross-desensitization studies suggest that at least 3 distinct P2Y receptors are expressed asymmetrically on the apical and basolateral membrane. Two distinct receptors that are responsive to uracil nucleotides were found to be expressed in rabbit IMCD cells. Expression of a P2Y<sub>2</sub>-like receptor on both the apical and basolateral membrane was not surprising, because this receptor is known to be expressed widely in a variety of mammalian tissues. Recent studies have shown that the P2Y<sub>2</sub> receptor is expressed in the

inner medullary collecting cells of the mouse (McCoy et al, 1999) and rat (Kishore et al, 2000). In contrast to symmetrical expression of the P2Y<sub>2</sub>-like receptor, another uracil nucleotide receptor was present predominantly on the apical membrane. Several investigators have also reported similar pattern of asymmetrical expression of the uracil nucleotide receptors in other types of epithelial cells (Communi et al, 1997; Inoue et al, 1997). UDP and UTP, but not ATP activated the uracil nucleotide receptor expressed on the apical membrane. This agonist profile is consistent with those of cloned uracil nucleotide receptors (i.e., P2Y<sub>4</sub> or P2Y<sub>6</sub>).

We also identified an ADP- and 2MeSATP-sensitive receptor. The most prominent feature of this receptor is its distinct location in the basolateral membrane. As we observed that the response to ADP and 2MeSATP were always parallel, we hypothesized that 2MeSATP and ADP stimulated the same receptor and consequently cross-desensitization studies were conducted. As shown in Fig. 4B, 2MeSATP and ADP cross-desensitized each other, suggesting that these two agonists interact with the same receptor. This receptor is certainly different from the P2Y<sub>2</sub> receptor because cells that had been desensitized with 2MeSATP or ADP still responded to ATP or UTP. The agonist selectivity leads us to conclude that this ADP- and 2MeSATP-sensitive receptor is a P2Y<sub>1</sub>-like receptor.

An interesting finding in this study is that the nucleotides stimulated intracellular cAMP production with an asymmetrical profile, which was comparable to that in the stimulation of I<sub>sc</sub>. G protein-dependent activation of PLC and subsequent increase in intracellular Ca<sup>2+</sup> has been believed to be a major signaling mechanism to evoke cellular responses upon activation of P2Y receptors responses (Dubyak & El-Moatassim, 1993; Harden et al, 1995). However, there is accumulating evidence that adenylyl cyclase is also involved in the signaling mechanism of the P2Y receptor-mediated responses in a certain type of cells. Recently, Post et al (1998) and Woo et al (1998) demonstrated that the P2Y receptor agonists enhance cAMP production in canine distal nephron cells. In addition, cloning of the P2Y<sub>11</sub> receptor coupled to adenylyl cyclase as well as PLC provided an evidence that cAMP- as well as Ca<sup>2+</sup>-dependent mechanism might be an important mediator of the P2Y receptor-induced responses (Communi et al, 1997). In this study, inhibition of ATP-stimulated I<sub>sc</sub> by the protein

kinase A inhibitor H-89 indicates the role of cAMP and protein kinase A in ATP-stimulated signaling (Fig. 5). Determination of intracellular cAMP production provided direct evidence that UDP, ADP, and 2MeSATP as well as ATP and UTP stimulate cAMP production. The stimulation of cAMP production by these nucleotides showed the same profile of sidedness as in stimulation of I<sub>sc</sub> indicating that the nucleotides stimulate cAMP production by interacting with the specific receptors located asymmetrically on the apical and basolateral membranes (Fig. 6). The molecular mechanism that links the adenylyl cyclase and the nucleotide receptors remains to be clarified. The characteristic localization of the nucleotide receptors raises a question of how these nucleotides reach the luminal or serosal extracellular space. There is accumulating knowledge about a specific and controlled release of adenine nucleotides, such as exocytosis from nerve ending and conductive release through CFTR (Reisin et al, 1994; Schwiebert et al, 1995), into the extracellular space. In contrast, only limited information is available concerning the occurrence of uracil nucleotides in extracellular fluid. Uracil nucleotides are stored in granules of platelets and may be released upon stimulation (Goetz et al, 1971). Uracil nucleotides are also known to be present at concentration up to 0.7 mole/g wt. in liver, kidney, and brain (Keppler et al, 1970). By analogy with adenine nucleotides, uracil nucleotides may be released from cells under a variety of physiological and pathological conditions such as trauma, hypoxia and inflammation (Gordon, 1986). What a mechanism, these nucleotides released into extracellular space may play a role as an autocrine and paracrine regulator of cell function.

In conclusion, our results suggest that uracil as well as adenine nucleotides can interact with different P2Y nucleotide receptors which are expressed asymmetrically on the apical and basolateral membrane of the rabbit IMCD cells, and that both cAMP- and Ca<sup>2+</sup>-dependent signaling mechanisms underlie the stimulation of Cl<sup>-</sup> secretion.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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