ABSTRACTS

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PLENARY LECTURES

PL2 - Interrogating sweet taste cells
R. F. Margolskee
rmargolskee@monell.org
Monell Chemical Senses Center, 3500 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA

Knockout mice lacking the sweet taste receptor subunit Tas1r3 lose behavioral and nerve responses to non-caloric sweeteners but retain responses to glucose and other sugars. This suggests the presence of a Tas1r3-independent mechanism to detect the sweetness of sugars. We used PCR, in situ hybridization and immunohistochemistry to identify signal transduction elements selectively expressed in sweet-responsive taste cells that might mediate Tas1r3-independent responses to sugars. Glucose transporters (GLUTs), Na-dependent glucose co-transporter-1 (SGLT1) and ATP-gated K+ channels (K_ATP) are all present in Tas1r3+ taste cells and may constitute a Tas1r3-independent means to detect caloric sugars. In addition, Tas1r3+ taste cells selectively express disaccharidase enzymes sucrase, maltase, trehalase and lactase. In both wildtype and Tas1r3 knockout mice disaccharide inhibitors significantly reduced gustatory nerve responses to the disaccharides sucrose and maltose, but not to the monosaccharides glucose and fructose or the noncaloric sweeteners. It appears that these orally expressed enzymes act in concert with salivary amylase to generate free glucose from starch, sucrose, maltose, trehalose and lactose that can activate the Tas1r3-independent sugar detection pathway. To identify additional signalling components and regulatory factors selectively expressed in Tas1r3+ taste cells we used single taste cell RNA-Seq (deep sequencing) and bioinformatics to “data-mine” the Tas1r3+ taste cell “transcriptome” (i.e. all genes transcribed in Tas1r3+ taste cells). Gli3, a key transcriptional effector in the sonic hedgehog signalling pathway, was found to be selectively expressed in Tas1r3+ taste cells and Lgr-5+ taste stem cells, but not in type I or type III taste cells. Gli3 conditional knockout mice were more sensitive to sweet, umami and bitter compounds and had increased numbers of type II taste cells. Our results suggest that Gli3 is an important negative regulator of taste bud maintenance that enhances the number of type II taste cells, including those responsive to sweet.

PL3 - Cellular and molecular basis for taste sensation in Drosophila
Craig Montell
craig.montell@lifesci.ucsb.edu
Department of Molecular, Cellular, & Developmental Biology, University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA 93106–9625

Insects such as the fruit fly respond to a similar spectrum of tastants as humans, but do so through a distinct repertoire of receptors. The largest family of taste receptors in insects are the so called “gustatory receptors” (GRs). We showed these aversive GRs are highly complex and are ionotropic receptors. Recently, we made the surprising discovery that two members of the Drosophila rhodopsin family are co-expressed in gustatory receptor neurons (GRNs), and enable flies to sense and avoid feeding on a noxious compound. The chemosensory roles played by the opsins are light-independent. A well-known, but poorly understood behavior is that animals are attracted to low Na+ - containing foods and reject foods with high Na+. We uncovered the cellular and molecular mechanism through which low- and high-salt tastes are differentially encoded in GRNs. We also addressed the question as to how dietary experience can alter taste preferences. We found that dynamic regulation of the TRPL channel comprises a mechanism that allows the animals to alter taste behavior in response to a changing food environment. Food texture influences food preferences. However, the mechanosensory receptors responsible for sensing food texture are unknown. Akin to mammals, we found that flies prefer foods with a specific texture. This taste discrimination depends on the fly homolog of the transmembrane channel-like (TMC) family. TMC is expressed in the primary gustatory organ and defines a previously unknown multidendritic neuron (md-L). We propose that TMC and md-L neurons are molecular and cellular mechanoreceptors through which food mechanics is perceived and encoded by a taste organ.
PL4 - Molecular regulation of taste bud cell renewal

David Castillo Azofeifa, Dany Gaillard, Jennifer K. Scott and Linda A. Barlow

linda.barlow@ucdenver.edu

Dept of Cell and Developmental Biology, Graduate Program in Cell Biology Stem Cells and Development, and the Rocky Mountain Taste and Smell Center

University of Colorado School of Medicine, Anschutz Medical Campus

Aurora, Colorado 80045 USA

Taste is a fundamental sense and is crucial for human health. Like our other primary senses, we consider our ability to appreciate sweet, sour, salty, bitter and umami tastes to be relatively constant, even though taste bud cells that transduce these stimuli are renewed rapidly and regularly. The importance of the sense of taste is particularly evident for cancer patients receiving a range of radiation and chemotherapies, as these individuals often experience significant taste loss or dysfunction, and as a result, a significantly diminished quality of life. In the past decade, understanding of cellular and molecular mechanisms governing taste bud renewal has expanded significantly. In numerous renewing epithelia, the Hedgehog (HH) and Wnt/beta-catenin signaling pathways are key regulators of homeostasis. Using an arsenal of multi-allelic mouse models, we have found that HH and Wnt signaling also control taste bud cell renewal. Specifically, Wnt signaling is required to maintain taste cell renewal and is key for continued proliferation of taste progenitor cells, while the level of Wnt/beta-catenin signal impacts the cell fate of new cells generated from the progenitor population. Our working model of HH pathway function is that it promotes taste bud cell differentiation from progenitors, but does not regulate progenitor proliferation. Going forward, it will be important to understand how these pathways function together, as well as how these may be impacted by cancer therapies.

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PL5 - Sour: More than a Primary Taste

Thomas E. Finger & Jennifer M. Stratford

Tom.finger@ucdenver.edu

Rocky Mountain Taste & Smell Center

Univ. Colorado School of Medicine

Aurora, CO 80045

When acidic solutions are taken into the oral cavity, people and animals show avoidance responses, which are commonly attributed to the negative hedonic value of sour taste. Our data brings into question whether this avoidance should be attributed to taste per se, i.e. activation of acid-responsive cells in taste buds -- or whether the avoidance is also due to direct activation of mucosal, e.g. trigeminal, acid-sensitive nerve fibers. In the anterior tongue, the chorda tympani nerve is a pure taste nerve innervating taste buds, while the trigeminal nerve provides general mucosal innervation. Conversely, the glossopharyngeal and superior laryngeal nerves contain two sets of axons, ones that innervate taste buds within the posterior tongue and larynx, respectively, and others that innervate the non-taste epithelium. These general mucosal fibers include polymodal nociceptors many of which express the neuropeptide CGRP, as well as a host of pH-sensitive ion channels including TRPV1, TRPA1, ASICs and ENAC.

The sour-sensing taste cells are Type III cells, which release serotonin (5-HT) upon acidification. Our recent studies (Larson et al J. Neurosci. 2016) show that this released 5-HT activates gustatory nerve fibers via 5-HT3A receptors. More recently, we have found that taste fibers expressing 5-HT3A specifically innervate Type III but not Type II taste cells -- and therefore 5-HT3A serves as a marker of sour-responsive nerve fibers. Using transgenic mice in which GFP is driven by the 5-HT3A promoter, we mapped the distribution of the 5-HT3A expressing (sour) nerve fibers in the primary taste nucleus of the brainstem, the nucleus of the solitary tract (nTS). These GFP-labeled nerve fibers terminate preferentially in the lateral tier of subnuclei within rostral and intermediate levels of the nTS. In order to test whether sour stimulation tends to activate neurons within this 5-HT3A-recipient zone, we mapped citric acid-induced c-Fos in the brainstem orosensory complex including the nTS (nTS) and the adjoining trigeminal nuclei. As described by others, intraoral infusion of citric acid (30mM) evokes substantial c-Fos activity in the lateral and middle segments of the rostral/intermediate (gustatory) nTS – exactly wherein the 5-HT3A fibers terminate. In addition, substantial acid-induced c-Fos activation occurs in the mediadorsal spinal trigeminal nucleus (DMSpV), laterally adjacent to the rostral nTS. Since the DMSpV does not receive input from taste nerves, the c-Fos activation there must arise from trigeminal rather than taste inputs.

In order to test this proposition, we examined acid-induced c-Fos in P2X2/P2X3 double knockout (P2X-dblKO) “tasteless” mice, which lack neural taste responses to acids and all other taste modalities. In these P2X-dblKO mice, intraoral infusion of citric acid evoked substantially reduced activity in the nTS but essentially normal levels of activity in the DMSpV, suggesting that trigeminal detection of acids is intact. This correlates well with the preserved behavioral avoidance of acid solutions by P2X-dblKO mice despite the absence of taste transmission in this strain. We suggest this continuing avoidance is due to activation of acid-responsive trigeminal or general mucosa nerve fibers rather than to transduction through taste buds. The molecular means by which the trigeminal fibers respond to acids remains to be elucidated.
Democritus: “Sour consists of atoms that are bulky, jagged, and many-angled, without curves”

PLENARY SYMPOSIUM 1: DECIPHERING OLFACTION: FROM THE NOSE TO THE BRAIN
S1 - A Novel Mechanism and Logic for Mammalian Olfaction
Sandeep Robert Datta
srdatta@hms.harvard.edu

Department of Neurobiology, Harvard Medical School, USA

The Datta lab studies how information from the outside world is detected, encoded in the brain, and transformed into meaningful behavioral outputs. We address this fundamental problem by characterizing the olfactory system, the sensory system used by most animals to interact with their environment. Here we discuss recent results relevant to understanding sensorimotor coupling — the process of linking sensation to action — in the olfactory system. In particular, we describe a novel molecular mechanism and neural logic that underlies odor perception, one that may be specialized for the detecting and processing of odors with innate meaning. This mechanism defines a new mode of sensory encoding in mammals, and may be relevant to odor perception across deuterostomal lineages, including humans.

S2 - Stability and plasticity in the Drosophila olfactory system across timescales
Jia W. Pan1, Scott Barish1, Tristan Li1*, Catherine Hueston1, Doug Olsen1, Songhui Zhao1, Sayan Mukherjee2, Corbin D. Jones3, Pelin C. Valkan1,4
pc72@duke.edu

1Duke University, Department of Biology; 2Duke University, Department of Statistical Science, Computer Science and Mathematics; 3University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Department of Biology & Carolina Center for Genome Studies; 4Duke Institute for Brain Sciences; *Current Address: Stanford University, Department of Neurobiology

Most organismal phenotypes result from a trade-off between genetically hardwired genetic and developmental programs to invariably build working cellular systems, and more plastic and variable programs that enable adaptability. In fast-evolving and complex neural systems like the olfactory system, some neuronal lineages and their developmental programs may be more stable to conserve important behavioral functions; others may be more variable to enable better behavioral adaptability to the environment. We pursue this question in both organismal and evolutionary timescales. In the evolutionary timescale, using transcriptional profiling of olfactory system development from 6 Drosophila species, we find that olfactory receptor gene expression, as an output of ORN lineages, and their developmental programs appear strikingly stable across the 6 species. However, specific OR genes normally expressed in large and thin basiconic sensilla ORNs and their combinatorial developmental programs show high variation across evolution. Interestingly, some of these OR genes in large basiconic sensilla neurons are involved in chemosensory behavioral adaptation and show transcriptional, developmental and anatomical convergence in species with host plant specializations. The combinatorial transcription factor code for large and thin basiconic ORN development, which normally show high levels of transcriptional variation across 6 species, also shows convergent transcriptional configuration in feeding specialist. These results identify the large and thin basiconic neuronal lineages and their developmental transcriptional programs as an evolutionary hotspot across Drosophila species. Convergence of these transcriptional programs in species with specialized chemosensory adaptations suggests surprising levels of evolutionary constraints at the levels of transcription in the olfactory system.

We observe a very similar compartmentalization of stability and plasticity at the circuit level in each organism. For this, we make use of the ORNs that regulate courtship behaviors in Drosophila. Three classes of ORNs (Or67d, Or47b and Ir84a) were shown to be involved in courtship behaviors. Or67d functions to drive innate aspects of courtship, whereas Or47b and Ir84a have more modulatory functions on courtship behaviors. All three ORN classes express the key behavioral switch gene and a molecular marker of courtship circuits in Drosophila, fruitless. We found that developmentally hardwired programs coordinate fruitless expression in these ORNs with appropriate olfactory receptors. However, once the flies emerge, maintenance of fruitless expression in Or47b and Ir84a ORNs, but not Or67d ORNs, require olfactory receptor signaling and histone acetyl transferase p300, in an age-dependent manner. Our results highlight ORN class-specific functional differences in fru regulation that rely either on stable or plastic mechanisms driven by olfaction. Such dual mode of fru regulation in ORNs might be a trait of neurons driving innate and plastic aspects of sex-specific behaviors, respectively.

As a whole, our findings highlight neural diversity as a facilitator to compartmentalize stability and plasticity of transcriptional programs underlying olfactory system function. This allows for stable transcriptional programs to invariably build neuronal lineages and circuits with innate or critical behavioral functions, as well as variable transcriptional programs for neuronal components that enable odor-guided behavioral adaptations to changing environments.
S3 - Odorant Receptor Regulation of Gene Choice, Axon guidance, and Ligand binding

Charlotte D’Hulst, Kia Movahedi, Xavier Grosmaitre and Paul Feinstein

feinstein@genectr.hunter.cuny.edu

Hunter College, City University of New York, USA

The mouse olfactory system owes its architecture through the regulation and function of odorant receptors (ORs). Initially, ORs are activated in a singular gene choice fashion such that each of the thousands of OR alleles are expressed in a small proportion of neurons.

This equal representation of like ORs results in their axons coalescing into homotypic glomeruli. Thus, a low and relative equal probability of choice, sets the system in motion for turning on an OR allele, then the OR protein determines the odorant profile and axon identity of the neuron. We have put forth new principles for the how the olfactory system is organized and utilized through a series of genetic experiments. Using multimers of a gene choice enhancer (the MouSensor Technology), we can alter the representation of any cloned OR. We find that the number of OSNs expressing a given OR determines the threshold towards ligands both in olfactory bulbs and in behavioral experiments (D’Hulst et al, 2016). In a separate series of experiments we have modified cAMP levels generated by OR activation and find that these levels are not required for the regulation of first choice or axonal identity (Movahedi et al., 2016). Taken together our data strongly argue that many developmental functions of the OR are carried out in a G-protein/cAMP independent manner as we originally proposed (Feinstein and Mombaerts, 2004). In addition, our MouSensor Technology will provide a platform to finally crack the human olfactory code.

S5 - Olfactory sensation promotes social determination in the mouse

Lisa Stowers and Tsung-Han Kuo

stowers@scripps.edu

Department of Molecular and Cellular Neuroscience, The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, California, USA

How individuals are motivated to either strive for social dominance or avoid risk by capitulating to subordination is largely unknown. Here we utilized an unenforced tube test and studied the effects of olfactory sensation to promote social behavior. In this setting, our study indicates that olfactory cues are essential not to release a specific behavior, but to generate grit and persistence to endeavor in social engagement. We find that variance in social persistence underlies the formation of dominance hierarchies. We additionally find that individual odor scents evoking experience-dependent memories do not serve as a mechanism to generate behavioral differences across the hierarchy. Instead olfactory cues act differentially on high and low ranked individuals to promote action. The unenforced tube test provides a robust platform to begin to identify the mechanisms underlying resilience and determination.

S6 - Neural Circuit Formation for Odor-Induced Innate Social Behaviors

Hitoshi Sakano

sakano.hts@gmail.com

Department of Brain Function, University of Fukui, School of Medicine, 23-3 Shimoaizuki, Matsuoka, Fukui 910–1193, Japan

In mammals, neural circuits are formed based on a genetic program and further refined by neuronal activity. Here we report that in the mouse olfactory system, the glomerular map is not merely refined but newly connected to second-order neurons in a specificity-dependent manner. It was found that Sema7A/PlxnC1 interaction within glomeruli is key for inducing activity-dependent olfactory synapse formation during the neonatal period. Postnatal blockage of Sema7A signaling perturbs odor perception and some social behaviors in adulthood. Our results provide the molecular basis for the critical period of the mouse olfactory system.

We also studied neural circuit formation for social attraction behaviors in the mouse main olfactory system. It was found that expression of a single axon guidance molecule, Nrp2, in a subset of mitral cells is sufficient to instruct their neural circuit formation from the posteroventral main olfactory bulb (MOB) to the anterior medial amygdala (MeA). By using repulsive interactions with Sema3F, Nrp2+ mitral cells are guided to the posteroventral MOB to receive attractive social signals and send their axons to the anterior MeA to elicit attractive behavioral responses. Gene-targeting experiments demonstrate that neural circuit formation of Nrp2+ mitral cells and odor-induced social attraction behaviors are impaired in the mitral-cell-specific Nrp2 knockout.

PARALLEL SYMPOSIUM 2: DECIPHERING OLFACTION: FROM THE NOSE TO THE BRAIN

S9 - Carbon dioxide sensing in higher brain centers of Drosophila melanogaster

Nélia Varela, Miguel Gaspar, Sophie Dias, Maria Luísa Vasconcelos

maria.vasconcelos@neuro.fchampalimaud.org

Champalimaud Research, Champalimaud Centre for the unknown, Lisbon, Portugal

Carbon dioxide generates a strong avoidance response in Drosophila melanogaster that at the first olfactory center is
processed by a single channel, the V glomerulus. Projection neurons that innervate the V glomerulus make direct connections to the Lateral Horn (LH). It is thought that the innate olfactory responses are processed at the LH however the LH neurons are very poorly described. We did a neuronal silencing screen for LH neurons that are required for CO2 avoidance. We identified two positive lines. Interestingly, the neurons in each line are quite distinct in terms of the areas that they innervate LH and where they project in the brain. Further behavioral testing of the two lines revealed specificity to carbon dioxide response. We are now imaging the neurons to assess their response profile to different odorants. Our findings suggest that there are two sets of neurons dedicated to CO2 processing at the LH that output to different brain areas possibly contributing to different aspects of the behavioral response.

S10 - Representations of odor identity and odor intensity in piriform cortex

Kevin Franks
franks@neuro.duke.edu
Dept of Neurobiology, Duke University School of Medicine, USA

The ability to represent both the identity and intensity of an odor are fundamental for olfactory perception and odor-driven behaviors. To determine how these distinct odor features are represented in olfactory (piriform) cortex we recorded odor-evoked spiking activity in large populations of piriform neurons in awake mice. We find distinct coding strategies facilitate non-interfering representations of odor identity and intensity. Odor identity can be accurately decoded using population spike counts. By contrast, intensity is encoded, in part, with spike timing. We find subsets of cells have brief, concentration-insensitive responses, providing a rapid identity code, while others occur later with concentration-dependent response latencies. We also find functionally distinct subpopulations of ‘on’ and ‘off’ neurons that preferentially represent different features of the odor. Together, our data support a multiplexed spatial-identity/temporal-intensity cortical odor code in which different subpopulations of neurons represent odor features that may be most salient for their specific downstream targets.

S11 - Cortical neural circuits for olfaction

Alexander Fleischmann
alexander.fleischmann@college-de-france.fr
CIRB, Paris, France

The olfactory (piriform) cortex is the main target of olfactory bulb mitral and tufted cells and plays key functions in odor perception and memory. To understand principles of odor coding in piriform neural networks we have recorded, using in vivo two-photon calcium imaging in anesthetized mice, odor-evoked activity from large ensembles of piriform neurons. We find that odor identity - at a given odor intensity - can accurately be decoded from spatially distributed ensembles of piriform neurons. However, piriform response patterns change substantially over a 100-fold change in odor concentration, apparently degrading information about odor identity. We show that this problem can be resolved by decoding odor identity from a subpopulation of concentration-invariant piriform neurons. We propose that distinct perceptual features of odors are encoded in independent subnetworks of neurons in the olfactory cortex.

S12 - Learning-related changes in Mitral and Tufted cell responses reflect changes in sniff behaviour

Rebecca Jordan, Izumi Fukunaga, Mihaly Kollo, Andreas Schaefer
Andreas.Schaefer@crick.ac.uk
The Francis Crick Institute, UK

Sensory circuit activity has often revealed correlates of information about behavioral context. Such representations could arise either from physiological changes to the network, or from changes in stimulus sampling behaviour. The olfactory bulb (OB) is ideally suited to studying this, with both inputs from higher centers and clear coupling of activity to the sniff cycle. Using whole cell recordings in the OB of passive and behaving mice, we identified learning-related changes in mitral and tufted cell odor responses. Sniffing behavior also underwent parallel changes, which correlated with the changes in odor response. In absence of learning, sniffing could alter both baseline activity and odor responses. Learning-related changes occurred prior to both the typical reaction time and earliest estimates of decision time (a single sniff cycle), while sniff changes correlated with the motivational state of the animal. Therefore, highly motivated mice may modulate their sampling strategy, altering odor representations to facilitate decision. Thus, contextual representations in sensory circuits can be explained by alteration in stimulus sampling behavior.

S13 - Phase dependent lateral inhibition in the olfactory bulb

Lavi Secundo1, Ronit Shmuel1, Anastasia Abashidze2 & Rafi Haddad2
rafihaddad@gmail.com
1Weizmann Institute of Science, Rehovot, 7610001, Israel; 2Gonda Multidisciplinary Brain Research Center, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan, 5290002, Israel

In the olfactory bulb (OB) the mitral/tufted cells (M/T), receive lateral inhibition from surrounding neurons. However, the spatial organization, density, and strength of
PARALLEL SYMPOSIUM 3: NUTRITIONAL CHEMOSENSING AND FOOD INTAKE REGULATION

S14 - Nutrient and non-nutrient sensing in the gastrointestinal tract

Soraya P Shirazi-Beechey
spsb@liverpool.ac.uk

Institute of Integrative Biology, University of Liverpool, Liverpool L69 7ZB, UK

The intestinal epithelium is a major interface with the outside world. This interface is separated from the body’s internal milieu by a single layer of epithelial cells consisting of absorptive enterocytes, goblet, enteroendocrine and Paneth cells. These cells are exposed, at the luminal domain, to an external environment that is continuously changing by types and amounts of nutrients, microorganisms, microbial products, gastrointestinal secretions and potentially toxic chemicals. The intestinal epithelium constantly monitors the composition of its contents in order to optimize nutrient absorption, as well as defending threats to its integrity.

In recent years significant advances have been made in the understanding of the molecular recognition events involved in sensing the luminal contents of the gastrointestinal tract. The sensing of various nutrients in the gastrointestinal tract is accomplished by a number of G-protein coupled receptors, expressed on the luminal membrane of enteroendocrine cells. Sensing of nutrients by these receptors leads to secretion of hormones that control vital physiological functions such as food intake, nutrient digestion and absorption, intestinal barrier function and insulin secretion.

The intestine also contains approximately 1000 different species of bacteria and has to discriminate between pathogenic and commensal bacteria in order to maintain a balance between immune protection and inflammatory over-reactions. A class of proteins known as pattern recognition receptors, in particular toll-like receptors (TLRs 1–10) play a key role in the recognition of microbes via detection of conserved molecular features.

The sensory receptors that face the lumen of the intestine and are responsive to luminal contents provide a unique therapeutic opportunity.

In my talk I will present data on the role of the gut expressed taste 1 receptor (T1R) family in intestinal nutrient sensing and the contribution of TLR9-recognition of bacteria in control of gut hormone release. The impact of these findings in respect to health maintenance and disease prevention will be discussed.

S16 - fMRI activation during hunger and satiety in young and older individuals with metabolic syndrome

Claire Murphy, Aaron Jacobson, Erin Green, Lori Haase, and Jacquelyn Szajer
cmurray@mail.sdsu.edu

San Diego State University, SDSUUCSD Joint Doctoral Program and the University of California, San Diego, CA USA

Age effects on the human taste system are evident at both peripheral and central levels. Metabolic syndrome is a constellation of risk factors (e.g., abdominal obesity, hypertension) that commonly occur together, increase with age, and heighten the risk for cardiovascular disease, type II diabetes and cognitive decline in old age. Little is known about how age, metabolic syndrome and hunger state interact to influence how the brain processes information about taste, a powerful motivator of consumption. Thus, here we aimed to investigate differences in functional MRI of brain response during the hedonic evaluation of a pleasant, nutritive stimulus (sucrose) within regions critical for taste, homeostatic energy regulation, and reward as a function of the interactions among age, metabolic syndrome, and hunger condition. We scanned young and elderly adults, with and without metabolic syndrome, at 3T twice: once fasted over night and once after a preload. Data were analyzed using voxel-wise 3dMVM (multivariate modeling) in AFNI, and a region of interest analysis in key regions associated with taste, homeostasis, and reward processing. Results indicated significant effects of age as well as interactions between 1) age and metabolic syndrome, 2) age and hunger condition, and 3) hunger condition and metabolic syndrome. The present
findings indicate that metabolic syndrome influences functional activation and that there are significant age related differences in activation that are dependent on the hunger state in regions critical for 1) homeostatic energy regulation, 2) basic as well as higher-order sensory processing and integration, and 3) cognitive and emotional aspects of eating behavior. The effects of age and metabolic syndrome on activation seen in regions such as the insula, orbital frontal cortex, caudate and the hypothalamus may have particularly important implications for taste processing, energy regulation and dietary choices. Implications for development and management of obesity will be discussed.

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S17 - Maternal transfer of food cues

David Solà-Oriol
david.sola@uab.cat

Animal Nutrition and Welfare Service, Department of Animal and Food Sciences, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Bellaterra 08193, Spain

The maternal transfer of food cues in perinatal fluids has been widely reported in most mammal species and pigs are not an exception. As omnivorous, pigs share large number of physiological similarities with humans and amongst others, perinatal fluids are sensitive to the uptake of odorants and food cues coming from the maternal diet. Although pigs due to the commercial production practices do not have the opportunity to choice between different diets, it has been observed that slight changes in feed composition or ingredients promote changes in the presence of some odorants in amniotic fluid and milk. However, amniotic fluid and milk are considered as perinatal fluids, there is not compositional resemblance between them as the volatile compound profile and most of the volatiles are not shared between amniotic and milk. Even for those compounds that could be found in both fluids, a higher concentration is found in the amniotic fluid than in milk, in which only traces are observed. For this reason it is reported in pigs that the pre-natal exposure to flavours or odour metabolites that can enter to the fetal environment together with nutrients establishing a positive rewarding relationship with their mother. Changes in the sow diet during the last third of gestation are enough to change the amniotic fluid volatile compounds (flavors) and even chemicals with distinct taste properties transmitted from the maternal diet that can be detected by the fetus and therefore easily recognized by the after birth by the newborn piglet with a long lasting effect that allows the weaned pig to discriminate relevant foods and reflecting species-specific needs. Pigs have a high number of taste buds (19,904) relative to humans (6,074) but the ratio of taste buds to body weight is similar. The comparison of taste sensory studies between the two species is limited by the methodologies used: threshold concentrations are determined in pigs using preference tests, whereas recognition thresholds are used in human studies. Nonetheless, the molecular mechanisms and taste sensitivity are regarded similar between the two species for simple sugars (sweet), glutamate (umami), citric acid (sour) and fatty acids. However, in contrast to humans, pigs do not seem to taste most high-intensity sweeteners, have a broader sensing of amino acids and appear less sensitive to NaCl (salty). Taste differences between humans and pigs

S18 - Oral and extraoral nutritional chemosensing in pigs and humans

Eugeni Roura
e.roura@uq.edu.au

Centre for Nutrition and Food Sciences, Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation, The University of Queensland

Nutritional chemosensing is the science studying the perception of nutrients in biological systems. Nutrients are perceived in the oral cavity through the taste system allowing to discriminate relevant foods and reflecting species-specific needs. Pigs have a high number of taste buds (19,904) relative to humans (6,074) but the ratio of taste buds to body weight is similar. The comparison of taste sensory studies between the two species is limited by the methodologies used: threshold concentrations are determined in pigs using preference tests, whereas recognition thresholds are used in human studies. Nonetheless, the molecular mechanisms and taste sensitivity are regarded similar between the two species for simple sugars (sweet), glutamate (umami), citric acid (sour) and fatty acids. However, in contrast to humans, pigs do not seem to taste most high-intensity sweeteners, have a broader sensing of amino acids and appear less sensitive to NaCl (salty). Taste differences between humans and pigs
Gut hormones play a pivotal role in the regulation of food intake and the control of gastrointestinal functioning. Their release is induced by food-derived nutrients and sweeteners involving intestinal sensing by chemosensory receptors and/or transporters. One well-known gut hormone is the glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1), which besides its effects on food intake acts as an incretin by influencing insulin secretion and satiety, in a developed 2D-organoid model. Rebaudioside A-induced GLP-1 release was found to be location specific with highest secretion in ileal-derived 2D organoids. Similar results were found in the ex vivo pig intestinal model (2). Interestingly, expression of entero-endocrine markers, including glucagon expression, was enhanced after long term stimulation with Rebaudioside A. These data highlight potentially new applications for rebaudioside A in metabolic diseases like type 2 diabetes mellitus.

Discussion and conclusion: Stevia-derived Rebaudioside A enhanced secretion of GLP-1, a key intestinal hormone known to modulate insulin secretion and satiety, in a developed 2D-organoid model. Rebaudioside A-induced GLP-1 release was found to be location specific with highest secretion in ileal-derived 2D organoids. Similar results were found in the ex vivo pig intestinal model (2). Interestingly, expression of entero-endocrine markers, including glucagon expression, was enhanced after long term stimulation with Rebaudioside A. These data highlight potentially new applications for rebaudioside A in metabolic diseases like type 2 diabetes mellitus.

S20 - Imaging brain responses to oral and visceral food stimuli in the pig model

David Val-Laillet
David.Val-Laillet@rennes.inra.fr
INRA, UR1341 ADNC, 35590 St Gilles, France

Describing brain responses to food signals is important to investigate food pleasure and motivation, or decipher the brain matrices underlying sensory and nutrient perception. Studies using large animal models did not make fully use of the opportunities provided by in vivo brain imaging yet. Our group was the first to use the pig model to investigate brain responses to oral and visceral food signals via 99mTc-HMPAO
SPECT (single photon emission computed tomography) and 18F-fluorodeoxyglucose PET (positron emission tomography), allowing for mapping cerebral blood flow and brain glucose metabolism, respectively. In a pig model of food conditioning, specific modulations of the brain reward circuit were recorded after exposure to flavours with positive or negative hedonic values. This model might be useful to understand the onset of conditioned aversion and anorexia in human patients treated with chemotherapy or radiotherapy for example. To alleviate these clinical symptoms or improve appetite in the elderly and malnourished people, sensory additives might be used to increase food pleasure and consumption. In a recent study in the pig model, we managed to improve food consumption and modulate the metabolism of the brain reward circuit using sensory food additives, which opens the way to further (pre)clinical trials. In another set of studies, we explored the brain responses to sugar. We showed that both duodenal and portal glucose infusions led to activity changes in brain areas regulating food intake and pleasure, but that these stimuli induced different systemic and central responses. Comparing congruent versus dissociated oral and duodenal sucrose perception, we found different brain responses in the limbic and reward circuits. These studies are important to understand the brain correlates of sugar craving in the human, as well as the behavioural and brain changes that could emerge further chronic consumption of non-caloric sweeteners for example. Overall, the pig model is a real asset to perform mechanistic studies in sensory sciences and nutrition, or design preclinical studies relevant to human medicine.

PLENARY SYMPOSIUM 4: OROSENSORY PERCEPTION BEYOND TASTE

S21 - Some like it hot – TRPV1 agonists in health and medicine

Veronika Somoza, Barbara Lieder

veronika.somoza@univie.ac.at

Department of Nutritional and Physiological Chemistry, Christian Doppler Laboratory for Bioactive Aroma Compounds Faculty of Chemistry, University of Vienna, Althanstrasse 14 (UZA II), Vienna 1090, Austria

Heat receptors provide an important early warning system to prevent tissue damage. Capsaicin — the ‘hot’ component of chilli peppers — evokes a sensation of burning pain by activating one such receptor: The ion channel TRPV1. The TRPV1 is a heat-activated, ligand-gated ion channel of the transient receptor potential (TRP) family, and is further specified as belonging to the subfamily V as member 1 (TRPV1). TRPV1 receptors are predominantly found in nociceptive neurons of the peripheral nervous system, but they have also been described in many other tissues, including the central nervous system. In the presence of capsaicin, i.e., or temperatures higher than 43°C, TRPV1 becomes activated. The phospholipid molecule phosphatidylinositol-4,5-bisphosphate (PIP2) inhibits the activation of TRPV1. In 2003, Prescott and Julius (1) identified a motif in the cytoplasmic domain of TRPV1 that had the structural characteristics of a PIP2 binding site and concluded that a compound’s potency for TRPV1 activation is determined by the strength of its interaction with PIP2. Next to capsaicin, other TRPV1 activators include, e.g. allyl isothiocyanate, the pungent compound in mustard and wasabi as well as the endocannabinoid anandamide, or N-arachidonoyl-dopamine. One of the widely studied competitive antagonist is the synthetic capsaicin-analog capsaazepine, whereas numerous TRPV1 antagonists have been developed by pharmaceutical companies for the reduction of nociception from inflammatory and neuropathic pain. Since TRPV1 receptors are also expressed at high levels in the central nervous system, they have been further proposed as a targets for treatment of other neurological conditions such as anxiety or depression.

TRPV1 receptors have also been identified to play a critical role in the development of inflammatory hyperalgesia. Whereas mice lacking the TRPV1 receptor failed to develop thermal hyperalgesia during inflammation (2), pharmacological studies using TRPV1 antagonists such as, e.g. capsaazepine, demonstrated that mechanical hyperalgesia and inflammatory processes were attenuated in a variety of pain models, making TRPV1 a potential target for novel analgesic and anti-inflammatory drugs. Recent evidence also indicates functional roles of TRPV1 beyond sensory nerve activity. TRPV1 and has been shown to control vascular responses with impact on blood pressure, and to play a homeostatic role in the regulation of body temperature and body fat (3). Recent studies of our own group have demonstrated a less-pungent TRPV1 agonists than capsaicin, noni-vamide, to impact adipogenesis and fatty acid uptake in cells in culture (4,5), to reduce ad-libitum energy intake from a standardized breakfast (6) and to prevent a dietary-induced body fat gain in healthy, moderately overweight subjects (7). However, whether the underlying mechanisms for the role of TRPV1 in thermoregulation are intrinsically linked with cellular mechanisms regulating body fat has to be elucidated in future studies.


S22 - Pungent sensation through TRPV1 and TRPA1 in oral cavity

Makoto Tominaga
tominaga@nips.ac.jp
Division of Cell Signaling, Okazaki Institute for Integrative Bioscience, Japan

TRP channels are nonselective cation channels with high Ca\(^{2+}\) permeability. They are known to be involved in the taste receptor-independent sensation in the oral cavity, and capsaicin receptor TRPV1 and wasabi receptor TRPA1 are two representatives. Their structures at an atomic level have recently been clarified by the single particle analysis with the cryoEM. We previously reported the physical and functional interaction between TRPV4 and anoctamin1 (ANO1), a Ca\(^{2+}\)-activated chloride channel in which Ca\(^{2+}\) entering the cell through TRPV4 activates ANO1. Similar physical and functional interaction between TRPV1 and ANO1 was found in HEK293T cells and mouse sensory neurons. Well co-expression of TRPV1 and ANO1 was observed in the trigeminal ganglion. Large chloride currents were induced in the cells expressing both TRPV1 and ANO1, but not in the cells expressing TRPV1/TRPA1 or ANO1 alone. Capsaicin-evoked inward currents were significantly inhibited by a specific ANO1 antagonist T16Ainh-A01 (A01) in mouse DRG neurons, indicating that capsaicin-induced inward currents are composed of two components; a TRPV1-mediated cation influx and an ANO1-mediated chloride efflux. In addition, capsaicin-evoked action potential was drastically inhibited by A01. These results indicate that the TRPV1-ANO1 interaction is a significant pungency-enhancing mechanism in the trigeminal neurons. The same interaction is true for TRPA1 and ANO1. Thus, TRP channel/anoctamin complex could play an important role in the pungent sensation of capcicum and wasabi.

S23 - The complexity of orosensory lipid detection in humans.

Maik Behrens\(^1\), Nadine Toele\(^1\), Jan-Dirk Raguse\(^2\), Thomas Hofmann\(^3\), Wolfgang Meyerhof\(^4\)
behrens@dife.de

\(^1\)German Institute of Human Nutrition Potsdam-Rehbruecke, Dept. Molecular Genetics, 14558 Nuthetal, Germany; \(^2\)Clinic and Polyclinic for Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Plastic Surgery, Charité, Campus Virchow Hospital, 13353 Berlin, Germany; \(^3\)Chair of Food Chemistry and Molecular Sensory Science, Technische Universität München, 85354 Freising, Germany

Together with the other two macronutrients, proteins and carbohydrates, dietary lipids are an important source for energy and a supply of essential metabolites in humans and other mammals. While it has been convincingly demonstrated that the building blocks of proteins and carbohydrates, the amino acids and mono- and disaccharides, are recognized in the oral cavity by specialized taste receptors, it is still a matter of debate whether the orosensory perception of lipids also relies on gustatory detection pathways or not. Regardless of the suspected transmission pathway, due to the palatability and high energy density of dietary lipids, the regulation of fat consumption plays an important role for human nutrition. Previous research in human and rodents has identified a number of candidate receptive molecules for free long-chain fatty acids, the prime stimulus for orosensory fat perception, which are currently, alone or in combination, evaluated for their contribution to the detection process.

Using functional calcium-mobilization assays, sensory tests, diverse histochemical and molecular analyses, we investigated the potential of humans to detect fatty stimuli and the occurrence of G protein-coupled receptors specific for free long-chain fatty acids as well as auxiliary proteins in human taste tissue.

Although the majority of data on the ability of mammals to recognize dietary lipids were obtained in rodent models, this presentation will focus on human. We will provide evidence for the expression of fatty acid receptor candidates in human lingual tissue and the pharmacological characteristics of human G protein-coupled receptors involved in fatty acid recognition. The fact that triglycerides, in which fatty acids are bound
to glycerol, represent the major form of ingested dietary lipids and that human subjects can detect trioleate, whereas fat receptor candidates do not respond to these molecules, spawned our interest in the occurrence of oral lipases able to liberate fatty acids from triglycerides. Indeed, we detected the presence of lipases in human von-Ebner’s gland tissue as well as lipolytic activity in human saliva. In order to identify the cells in human taste buds, which are involved in the detection of fatty acids, we started immunohistochemical experiments using cell type markers combined with GPR120 antibodies. These experiments hint at type I cells as the dominant cell type expressing GPR120 in human taste buds.

Taken together we found that humans, similar to rodents, appear well equipped to recognize dietary lipids in the oral cavity, however, further research to elucidate the detection and transmission of fatty stimuli is necessary.

S24 - Beyond olfaction: other airway senses

Stephen D. Liberles
Stephen.Liberles@hms.harvard.edu
Harvard Medical School, Department of Cell Biology, Boston, MA, USA

The airways contain a myriad of sensory cells that mediate olfaction, control breathing, and protect the respiratory system from damage and disease. The vagus nerve is a major conduit between lung and brain required for normal respiration. Within the airways, vagal sensory neurons detect mechanical stretch of the lung during cycles of inhalation and exhalation, cues associated with inflammation and illness, and irritants that in some species evoke cough. However, mechanisms by which vagal sensory neurons detect and encode respiratory stimuli remain poorly understood. We initiated a molecular and genetic analysis of the sensory vagus nerve, identifying novel vagal receptors, classifying distinct sensory neuron subtypes, and adapting genetic approaches to map, image, and control each neuron population. Using these tools, we identified two vagal afferent subtypes that exert powerful and opposing effects on breathing. One neuron type expresses P2RY1 and consists largely of Piezo2-expressing, fast-conducting A fibers that innervate clusters of pulmonary secretory cells termed neuroepithelial bodies. Optogenetic activation of vagal P2RY1 neurons stops breathing, trapping animals in a state of apnea, without acutely impacting heart rate or gastric pressure, which are also under vagal control. A second non-overlapping vagal neuron type expresses NPY2R and consists largely of capsaicin-responsive C fibers. Optogenetic activation of vagal NPY2R neurons causes rapid and shallow breathing, similar to some pulmonary defense responses. These findings raise basic questions about the natural stimuli sensed by each neuron type, how signals are transduced, and the necessity of each neuron type in respiratory physiology. Understanding the sensory biology of respiratory control neurons in the vagus nerve may provide therapeutic targets for airway disease intervention.

S25 - Interdependent conductances drive infra-slow intrinsic rhythmogenesis in a subset of accessory olfactory bulb projection neurons

Monika Gorin1, Chryssanthi Tsitoura1, Anat Kahan2, Katja Watznauer1, Kira Gerhold1, Julia Mohrhardt1, Daniela R. Drose1, Martijn Arts2, Rudolf Mathar3, Simon O’Connor1, Ileana L. Hangasu-Opatz2, Yoram Ben-Shaul1, Marc Spehr1

m.spehr@sensorik.rwth-aachen.de

1Department of Chemosensation, Institute for Biology II, RWTH Aachen University, D-52074 Aachen, Germany; 2School of Medicine, Department of Medical Neurobiology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel; 3Institute for Theoretical Information Technology, RWTH Aachen University, D-52074 Aachen, Germany; 4Biocomputation Group, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, Hertfordshire, UK AL10 9AB; 5Developmental Neurophysiology, Institute of Neuroanatomy, University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf, D-20251 Hamburg, Germany

The accessory olfactory system controls social and sexual behavior. However, key aspects of sensory signaling along the accessory olfactory pathway remain largely unknown. Here, we investigate patterns of spontaneous neuronal activity in mouse accessory olfactory bulb mitral cells - the direct neural link between vomeronasal sensory input and limbic output. We identify a subpopulation of mitral cells that exhibit slow stereotypical rhythmic discharge both in vitro and in vivo. In intrinsically rhythmogenic neurons, these periodic activity patterns are generated in absence of fast synaptic drive. The physiological mechanism underlying mitral cell autorhythmicity involves cyclic activation of three interdependent ionic conductances: subthreshold persistent Na+ current, R-type Ca2+ current, and Ca2+-activated big conductance K+ current. Together, the interplay of these distinct conductances triggers infra-slow intrinsic oscillations with remarkable periodicity, a default output state likely to affect sensory processing in limbic circuits.

S26 - Information Processing in the Accessory Olfactory Bulb

Karen Marom, Anat Kahan, Yoram Ben-Shaul
yoramb@ekmd.huji.ac.il

The Hebrew University Medical School, Jerusalem, Israel

In my talk, I will discuss three different lines of investigation pursued in our lab, each addressing a different aspect of information processing in the accessory olfactory bulb.
(AOB). First, I will describe behavioral experiments in which we study whether the AOB can facilitate associative learning. Our findings indicate that rather than playing an exclusive role in innate/hardware responses, AOB activity, much like that in the MOB, can be associated with arbitrary behavioral responses. Next, I will summarize a set of electrophysiological experiments, in which we show that behaviorally relevant information is encoded by the activity of multiple AOB neurons, each of which can provide only limited information. This finding is inconsistent with the view that readout of a few dedicated “experts” suffices to direct behavioral outputs. Finally, I will show a more refined examination of the temporal evolution of stimulus induced responses in the AOB, as manifest by local field potential oscillations. Specifically, I will describe a unique oscillatory signature in the AOB which is associated with vomeronasal stimulus delivery, and describe our ongoing attempts to better characterize and understand the significance of this unique activity signature.

S27 - Inhibitory control of chemosignal processing in the accessory olfactory bulb

Hillary L. Cansler¹,², Marina A. Maksimova⁴, and Julian P. Meeks⁴

Julian.Meeks@UTSouthwestern.edu

¹Department of Neuroscience, UT Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, Texas, USA; ²Neuroscience Graduate Program, UT Southwestern Graduate Program of Biomedical Sciences, Dallas, Texas, USA

The accessory olfactory bulb (AOB) is a critical computational circuit for chemosensory processing in most mammals. Proper AOB function is required for the expression of behaviors that promote survival and reproduction, including predator avoidance, mate choice, and territorial aggression. The AOB circuit consists of thousands of projection neurons called mitral cells (MCs) and a large and diverse population local inhibitory interneurons. AOB interneurons come in several classes, including juxtaglomerular cells (JGCs), external granule cells (EGCs) and internal granule cells (IGCs). GABAergic inhibition by these interneurons is essential for maintaining proper levels of MC activity. Moreover, MC inhibition has been shown to be plastic, and is increased after salient chemosensory social encounters.

Despite their importance, we know very little about AOB interneuron function. We took a bottom-up physiological approach, with the goal of improving the foundation underlying AOB interneuron research. We discuss two current studies investigating the intrinsic physiology of AOB interneuron classes and their roles in experience-dependent plasticity. In the first study, we made targeted patch clamp recordings from AOB JGCs, EGCs, and IGCs, revealing blends of intrinsic conductances in each that give rise to distinct electrophysiological properties. For example, AOB IGCs have pronounced HCN-mediated I\(_{H}\) currents, and are poorly able to sustain high rates of action potential firing during direct somatic depolarization. In contrast, EGCs have small I\(_{H}\) currents, extremely hyperpolarized resting membrane potentials, and do sustain high firing rates. Quantitative evaluation of AOB interneuron intrinsic properties revealed capabilities and limitations of each class that will be important for understanding their computational roles.

In the second study, we investigated a subpopulation of AOB IGCs that expresses the plasticity-associated immediate-early gene Arc following intermale aggressive encounters. Arc-expressing IGCs are more strongly excited by sensory input than non-expressing IGCs 4-8 hours after behavior, suggesting enhanced MC-IGC communication specifically in Arc-expressing cells. This effect is not the result of an increased number of IGC synaptic gemmules or an increase in the frequency or amplitude of IGC miniature excitatory postsynaptic currents. Instead, Arc-expressing IGCs showed increased intrinsic excitability and a paradoxical decrease in I\(_{H}\) currents. Arc-expressing IGCs strongly inhibit MCs up to one week following behavior, suggesting that these interneurons contribute to experience-dependent MC inhibition. In sum, these results highlight the importance of interneuron diversity and plasticity in shaping MC responses and, ultimately, behavior.

S28 - Persistent firing and synchronous infra-slow bursting in accessory olfactory bulb mitral cells: implications for sensory information processing

Asaph Zylbertal¹, Yosef Yarom¹ and Shlomo Wagner²

shlomow@research.haifa.ac.il

¹Department of Neurobiology, Institute of Life Sciences, Hebrew University and the Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Brain Sciences, Jerusalem 9190401, Israel; ²Sagol Department of Neurobiology, University of Haifa, Haifa 31905, Israel

Accessory olfactory bulb (AOB) mitral cells exhibit multiple unique features distinguishing them from their counterparts in the main bulb. Among these are prolonged responses to stimuli, infra-slow (<0.1 Hz) rhythmic bursting activity and distinct network connectivity. We combined intracellular recordings, calcium imaging and computational modelling to explore the biophysical basis of these features, as well as their consequences for sensory information processing in the AOB. We found that the prolonged epochs of persistent firing reflect a slow interplay between Na\(^+\) and Ca\(^{2+}\) extrusion mechanisms that dictates extremely prolonged dynamics of dendritic Na\(^+\) and Ca\(^{2+}\) concentrations. We then examined the bursting activity of AOB mitral cell in light of the slow dynamics of their responses to transient stimuli and the unique network topology of the AOB. We found that infraslow bursting activity emerges from the interaction between
the intrinsic properties and network connectivity of AOB mitral cells. We further show that assemblies of AOB mitral cells are synchronized by lateral connections through chemical synapses and gap junctions. The AOB network topology, where a mitral cell receives input from multiple glomeruli, thus enables integration of chemosensory stimuli over long time scales by inter-glomerular synchrony. Therefore, we provide a possible functional significance for the distinct AOB physiology and topology.

PARALLEL SYMPOSIUM 6: VARIATION IN CHEMOSENSORY RECEPTORS ACROSS INDIVIDUALS

S29 - Variation in sequence, structure and ligands of chemosensory GPCRs
Masha Niv
masha.niv@mail.huji.ac.il

The Hebrew University, Israel

Bitter taste perception can be elicited by dramatically dissimilar compounds and is mediated by bitter taste receptors (TAS2Rs), a subfamily of GPCRs. TAS2Rs present an intriguing case for studying receptor promiscuity: some of the receptors are still orphan, or have few known ligands, while others can be activated by numerous, structurally dissimilar compounds. Furthermore, some compounds are selective towards a single TAS2R, while others activate multiple TAS2Rs. We show that TAS2R-promiscuous and TAS2R-selective bitter molecules differ in size, globularity, and other properties; and develop a ligand selectivity predictor. Selective TAS2Rs, with the exception of hTAS2R5 and hTAS2R49, are activated by promiscuous compounds, which are already recognized by additional TAS2Rs. Thus, unique ligands, that may have been the evolutionary driving force for the development of selective TAS2Rs, still need to be unraveled. The ability of Family A GPCRs and of TAS2Rs to recognize chemically diverse ligands, can be predicted based on the hydrophobicity and accessibility of the canonical ligand-binding site. TAS2R receptors have lower affinities and higher agonist-to-antagonist ratios than typical Family A GPCRs, possibly due to differences in some of the structural motifs. SNPs are less abundant in the transmembrane regions of both TAS2Rs and Family A GPCRs, and some regions of TAS2Rs seem to be more SNP-prone. These results are discussed in the context of tantast discovery, protein evolution and protein engineering.


S31 - Bittersweet human taste genetics

Danielle R Reed
reed@monell.org

Monell Chemical Senses Center, Philadelphia PA

The human sense of taste is intensely diverse which is due in part to inborn variation in sensory receptor genes such as the T1R and T2R family that produce proteins in the sweet/umami and bitter sensory cascade. While the classic example of individual differences in bitter taste perception is for the receptor T2R38 and its ligand phenylthiocarbamide, we and others have discovered additional examples of extremes in perceptual differences, for example bitter compounds found in plants used for foods or medicines and high-potency sweeteners. In addition to inborn genotype, gene expression and epigenetic modifications of genomic DNA that affects the abundance and timing of gene expression and receptor abundance may partially determine individual differences in taste perception. Not all genes and their protein products that participate in the taste signaling cascade are known; thus, genome-wide association methods, commonly used to identify genes relevant to human disease, can be harnessed to point to novel genes and their variants, e.g., for taste qualities less studied using genetic approaches, such as sourness and saltiness. These genome-wide association methods may also point to transcribed sequences that are not protein coding genes, e.g., non-coding RNAs. While the relationship between taste perception, liking and intake of foods and medicines is not always direct, these basic sensory processes contribute to behaviors like food choice and the acceptance of medicines.

S32 - Bitter Taste Receptors in Asthma

Pawan Sharma, Shi Pan, Gregory Hawkins and Deepak A. Deshpande
Deepak.Deshpande@jefferson.edu

Center for Translational Medicine, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA

Multiple type 2 taste receptors (TAS2Rs) are expressed in human airway smooth muscle (HASM). TAS2R agonists...
decrease airway constriction and invoke a bronchodilatory response, suggesting that TAS2Rs could be novel targets for obstructive airways diseases such as asthma. In addition, airway diseases are characterized by airway inflammation, remodeling and mucus production. Extensive in vivo studies using murine model of asthma suggested anti-inflammatory and anti-remodeling effect of TAS2R agonists such as chloroquine and quinine. Furthermore, in vitro studies using human ASM cells demonstrated that bitter tastants inhibit mitogen-induced airway smooth muscle proliferation, and the antimitogenic effect of TAS2R agonists on HASM involves inhibition of cell cycle progression and induction of autophagy. Human peripheral blood mononuclear cell migration is significantly attenuated by chloroquine and quinine supporting our findings from in vivo studies. Twelve TAS2R genes expressed in HASM and known to contain common, potentially functional non-synonymous coding variations were systematically evaluated in 1048 subjects with asthma (41% severe) for correlation with pre-drug % predicted FEV1 and post-bronchodilator max % predicted FEV1. Coding variations with significant correlations with one or both lung function measures were further evaluated for associations with additional asthma phenotypes and asthma severity. All associations were adjusted for ethnicity, age, and gender. The G allele for the non-synonymous TAS2R42 coding change Tyr260Cys (TAC>TGC; rs1451772) was found to be associated with higher pre-drug % predicted FEV1 (ANOVA; p=0.012), post-bronchodilator max % predicted FEV1 (ANOVA; p=0.009), and log PC20 (ANOVA; p=0.015). The SNP rs1451772 is in complete linkage disequilibrium (LD) with the TAS2R42 coding change Arg292Gln (rs1669412), and there are four additional common non-synonymous coding changes in TAS2R42, suggesting that multiple isoforms of this receptor are expressed in human airways. These findings demonstrate the clinical importance of TAS2R genotypes in asthma severity and bronchodilatory responsiveness. Collectively, TAS2Rs have emerged as novel, promising drug targets in obstructive airway inflammatory diseases such as asthma.

PARALLEL SYMPOSIUM 7: Olfactory Regulation of Reproductive Behavior in Mammals

S33 - A multitask mammalian chemosignal and the definition of pheromones
Benoist Schaal
Benoist.schaal@u-bourgogne.fr
Centre des Sciences du Goût, CNRS-Université de Bourgogne, Dijon, France

The concept of pheromone, construed on the basis of insect research (Karlson & Lüscher 1959), designates a chemically identified mono- or multi-molecular compound that selectively releases in a conspecific a behavioural or physiological response that is formally stereotyped and reproducible with the synthetic version of the compound. Since this minimal conceptualization, research on olfactory communication has been generalized to all animal phyla, from unicellular organisms to tetrapods. The original pheromone concept has fueled an active debate when it was first applied to mammals. Mammalian actions were then thought to be determined by highly complex mechanisms, especially through widespread learning and context effects. Thus, the original definition evolved to integrate the fact that the stimulus-response coupling should not depend on previous exposure effects or learning. In view of the huge challenge to discard such exposure/learning effects in the explanation of mammalian behavior, but also in view of the indiscriminate use of the concept by scientists and of its operational emptiness, it was proposed that this concept is tossed out. We will however highlight the potential usefulness of the concept of pheromone in relying on one mammalian case.

The work that led to the identification of a pheromone emitted by lactating rabbit females and acting on newborn rabbits will be reviewed. Extensive investigations by German groups (P Schley, R Hudson) led to reliable bioassays making possible chemical analyses to pinpoint the effective compound in rabbit milk. The milk head-space was analyzed using gas chromatographs equipped with an olfactory port to which pups were presented to concurrently monitor peak elution and pup behavior. This approach led to evidence a key-compound, 2-methyl-but-2-enal (2MB2), in rabbit milk. As synthetic 2MB2 selectivity released pup grasping in both species general and species-specific ways, and as behavioural activity of 2MB2 developed without prior direct exposure to it, it was then construed as a pheromone and denoted as the ‘rabbit mammary pheromone’ (rMP). The rMP is obviously involved in female-offspring exchanges, as it elicits immediate arousal in pups, searching/grasping of nipples and ingestion of milk. Pup initial reactivity to the rMP is prognostic to their long-term viability. The behavioral effectiveness of the rMP on pups matches the period when they depend on milk, especially the first 10 postnatal days, after which automatic rMP-induced responses come to be modulated by multisensory and metabolic influences. The response to the rMP can, however, take different forms in different contexts, such as in the nest right after satiation where it controls contact and first ingestion of non-milk items. During this period of the first 10 days post-birth, the rMP fulfills thus multiple tasks: In addition to its releasing effects on various forms of behaviors, it operates i) as a strong reinforcer of olfactory learning during a sensitive period, and ii) as a potential synchronizer, as it appears to be involved in setting circadian rhythmicity in neonate pups.

These multiple functions of the rMP and their relative timing during postnatal development will be discussed in the
context of the developmental shift of rMP-induced responsiveness from automatic to integrated will be discussed. Finally, the case of the rabbit pup will be used to propose operational steps in the identification of pheromones in mammals.

S34 - The multiple roles of MUPs and their volatile ligands in mouse sexual signalling

Jane L Hurst and Robert J Beynon

Institute of Integrative Biology, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, UK

Abstract: Major urinary proteins (MUPs) are excreted in the urine of house mice, together with the low molecular weight volatile sexual pheromones that they bind. MUPs and their ligands play a surprisingly large number of roles in sexual signalling in the mouse and teasing apart the specific roles of each member of this complex multicomponent system is challenging. Components are not expressed independently and, most importantly, act in concert in the natural scent marking system of the mouse. MUPs are encoded by a cluster of over 20 functional genes, with distinct differences in sequence similarity and function between MUPs encoded in the periphery of the cluster or by central genes.

Males compete to attract female mates through urinary scent marking and females must be able to recognise the scent mark owners. The male-specific peripheral MUP darcin plays a particularly important role as a sexual pheromone and is highly potent in inducing learned attraction to the location of male signals and to the odour of specific males. Highly similar central Mup paralogues encode a stable individuality signature; this genetic signature also underpins avoidance of inbreeding and preference for more heterozygous males. Individuality arises from a combination of (i) variation in central MUP sequences at specific sites on the MUP surface and within the ligand-binding cavity, and (ii) differential expression resulting in substantial combinatorial diversity between individuals. The genetically determined signature of central MUPs and darcin determines the volatile signature used to recognise individuals through differential ligand binding by the MUPs.

Under competitive reproductive conditions, investment in these MUP-ligand signals increases substantially among mice of both sexes. While little is yet known about the roles of MUPs in female sexual signalling, female MUP output is elevated slightly around oestrus, and is strongly related to body mass and competitive aggression. Breeding females with the highest MUP output in semi-natural populations are monopolized by males with the highest overall mating success. This suggests that female MUP investment may allow them to mate with the highest quality males and gain heritable fitness benefits for their offspring.

S35 - A proposed mechanism for coding pheromones in pig

Patricia Nagnan-Le Meillour, Julien Bouclon, Alexandre Joly, Sven Potelle, Corentin Spriet, Chrystelle Le Danvic and Jean-Paul Cornard

patricia.le-meillour@univ-lille1.fr

1 Univ. Lille, CNRS UMR8576, INRA USC1409, UGSF, Unité de Glycobiologie Structurale et Fonctionnelle, F 59000, Lille, France; 2 ALLICE, 149 rue de Bercy F 75000 Paris, France; 3 Univ. Lille, CNRS UMR8516, LASIR, Laboratoire de Spectrochimie Infrarouge et Raman, F 59000, Lille, France; *present address: LBM, UMR 7203 CNRS, Ecole Normale Supéérieure, Paris, France

Pheromones involved in reproductive behaviours in domestic pig are well known for the 60s. These well-identified molecules open the way to molecular studies of the coding of pheromone compounds by odorant-binding proteins (OBP). In particular, huge amounts of OBPs allow characterisation of post-translational modifications (PTM), as modified proteins represent only a small fraction of total OBPs. Recently, we have identified the olfactory secretome of the pig by using two-dimensional electrophoresis coupled to mass spectrometry (Nagnan-Le Meillour et al., 2014). We have shown that 30 OBP isoforms are generated by post-translational modifications, namely phosphorylation and glycosylation, issued from only three genes coding for OBP, VEG and SAL. These PTM are involved in the modulation of binding specificity of OBP isoforms, suggesting that they constitute a dynamic mechanism for the coding of pheromone components.

If the localisation of phosphates sites on Ser/Tyr/Thr residues was successfully achieved by mass spectrometry, those of O-GlcNAc were a little bit more complicated. This post-translational modification is unusual on secreted proteins and Sakaidani et al. characterised the responsible enzyme in 2011 in Drosophila. This enzyme, eOGT, is resident in endoplasmic reticulum where secreted proteins are elongated and matured. In pig, we have characterised the homolog enzyme, eOGT that modifies secreted OBPs by adding a single sugar on Ser/Thr residues (Nagnan-Le Meillour et al., 2014). To assess the glycosyltransferase function of pig eOGT, we expressed the recombinant enzyme in CHO cells and followed its cellular trafficking by fluorescence microscopy in both living cells and fixed cells. This new cellular pathway is important not only to better understand olfaction mechanisms but is also involved in heavy pathologies such as Alzheimer’s disease and Adams-Oliver syndrome.
S36 - Olfactory communication and reproductive strategies in Old World primates

Stefano Vaglio
S.Vaglio@wlv.ac.uk

1School of Biology, Chemistry and Forensic Science, University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton WV1 1LY, UK; 2Department of Anthropology & Behaviour, Ecology and Evolution Research (BEER) Centre, Durham University, Durham DH1 3LE, UK

It is becoming increasingly clear that olfaction plays an important role in primate sexual behaviour. Female primates signal impending ovulation with a suite of sexual signals. Studies of these signals have focused on visual, and to a lesser extent, acoustic signals, neglecting olfactory signals, despite the fact that male primates clearly pay attention to female olfactory cues. This is particularly the case for Old World monkeys and apes (catarrhines), which have traditionally been considered as “microsmatic” (i.e., olfactory sense reduced). I will present a study that investigates the role of chemical signals in social and sexual behaviour in one species of catarrhine, the olive baboon (*Papio anubis*). This study aims to investigate the information content of female olfactory signals and to relate these to the female sexual cycle and the fertile period, other female sexual signals (visual, acoustic and behavioural), and male behaviour. This is the first detailed study of olfaction in sexual communication in Old World primates, and the first to integrate information concerning all the potential signals that females exhibit. Our analyses of the volatile profile of baboon vaginal secretions show that they differ with sexual cycle status, suggesting that odour plays a role in signalling the timing of ovulation. This study of olfactory communication provides a crucial missing piece of the puzzle of how females advertise their sexual receptivity and contributes to an improved understanding of the role of odour in reproductive strategies, sexual selection and signalling in primates.

PARALLEL SYMPOSIUM 8: TALKS SELECTED FROM SUBMITTED ABSTRACTS

S37 - Functional role of the centrifugal feedback to the olfactory bulb: computational model and experimental data

Li Zhaoping
z.li@ucl.ac.uk

Department of Computer Science, University College London, Gower St. WC1E 6BT, London, UK

The centrifugal feedback to the olfactory bulb is mostly targeted on the granule cells, the inhibitory inter-neurons in the olfactory bulb. Using a neural circuit model of the bulb, Li (1990) proposed that such feedback to the granule cells serves the following roles in a context and task dependent manner: (1) odor segmentation by suppressing bulbar responses to ongoing, but already recognized, odors so that a subsequent addition of a foreground odor object can be singled out for recognition, (2) target odor seeking by enhancing bulbar sensitivities to a particular target odor object. I examine the emerging experimental data related to the model predictions: odor adaptation and segmentation in the bulbar activities, input dependency of the centrifugal feedback to the bulb, effect of odor adaptation on odor segmentation and perception, effect of expectation on odor detection and odor perception, effect of odor familiarity on bulbar responses. In addition, the model can be applied to explain how task-dependent feedback can enhance sensitivities in fine odor discrimination (Zhaoping 2016). I will also discuss further experimental investigations that can investigate the role of the centrifugal feedback.


S38 - Neuropilin-1 and the positions of glomeruli in the mouse olfactory bulb

Bolek Zapiec, Olaf Bressel, Mona Khan, Peter Mombaerts
Peter.Mombaerts@gen.mpg.de

Max Planck Research Unit for Neurogenetics. Frankfurt, Germany

It has been known since 1996 that mouse odorant receptors (ORs) are involved in determining the positions of the sites of coalescence of axons of olfactory sensory neurons (OSNs) - the thousands of glomeruli in the olfactory bulb. But the mechanisms remain unclear. In 2006 and 2009 a model was proposed by Imai et al. whereby OR-derived cAMP signals, rather than direct action of OR molecules, determine the target destinations (glomeruli) of OSNs in the bulb. The model hypothesizes that OR-derived cAMP signals determine the expression levels of neuropilin-1 (Nrp1) in OSN axon termini; that levels of Nrp1 in glomeruli form a gradient from anterior-low to posterior-high throughout the bulb; and that these Nrp1 levels determine anterior-posterior patterning of glomeruli. Here, we describe the first independent assessment of the Nrp1 model since 2006. We test the model with the strains used by Imai et al. to formulate their model, and independently, for the well-characterized mouse OR M71 with publicly available gene-targeted strains. Our results do not support the generality of the Nrp1 model. Combined with our analyses of Nrp1 levels in 3D reconstructed bulbs by serial two-photon tomography and a survey of the literature about Nrp1 patterns in the bulb, we conclude that it is unlikely that
Nrp1 levels determine positioning along anterior-posterior axes for all 3,600 glomeruli throughout the bulb.

**S39 - Acute selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitor (SSRI) administration modulates taste sensitivity in untreated depressed human subjects**

LF Donaldson,1 V Immadisetty,2 R Bipeta,3 SRR Yerramilli,4 and JK Melichar1

janmelichar@ranvierhealth.com

1Ranvier Health Ltd, Bristol UK; 2Turning Point, Suffolk, UK; 3Rajasri clinic, Hyderabad, India; 4Sri Venkateswara Nursing home, Hyderabad, India

Serotonin has been postulated to act as a neurotransmitter in taste buds [1]. In healthy subjects, acute administration of drugs that modulate serotonin (SSRI) or noradrenaline (nor-adrenaline re-uptake inhibitor, NARI) lower taste recognition thresholds after 2h in a taste-modality specific manner [2], suggesting that changes in peripheral rather than central monoamines modulate taste threshold. In patients with depression refractory to treatment, taste is reportedly blunted and resolves with treatment [3]. We sought to determine whether a single acute SSRI could also modulate taste threshold in untreated subjects with depression.

Baseline taste recognition thresholds were measured at the tip of the tongue in an initial sample of healthy (M:F - 6:8; median age 32, range 19–56, n=15) and depressed subjects (M:F - 9:6 (p=0.47); median age 32, range 23–55, n=15 (p=0.8)) recruited from new registrations at a psychiatric clinic (Hyderabad, India) after diagnosing depressive disorder as per International Classification of Disorders-10th revision (ICD-10, WHO, 1992) criteria. In depressed subjects only, thresholds were measured both before and 2h after acute administration of 20mg paroxetine (SSRI).

The severity of depression was rated on the Montgomery–Åsberg Depression Rating Scale (MADRS) before taste testing. Ethical approval for the study was given by Maarg Independent Ethics Committee, Hyderabad, India. Two subjects withdrew after the initial taste measurements. Different concentrations of sweet (sucrose, 100-0.1mM), salt (NaCl 100-0.1mM), sour (citric acid 100-0.1mM), and bitter (quinine HCl 1mM – 1pM) solutions were presented to each subject, using cotton buds soaked in each solution. Psychophysical taste functions were constructed to calculate taste thresholds for each volunteer before and after the intervention.

In moderate/severely depressed subjects (MADRS score > 20, n=11), baseline taste recognition thresholds were significantly greater for sweet (25.7 ± 4mM, p<0.001), salt (18 ± 3mM, p<0.001), sour (18 ± 6mM, p<0.01) and bitter (17 ± 50μM, p<0.01) compared to healthy subjects (sweet: 2.3 ± 0.3mM, salt: 7.7 ± 0.7mM; sour: 1.3 ± 0.2mM; bitter: 16 ± 5.8μM). In depressed subjects (n=13), a single 20mg dose of paroxetine significantly lowered sweet taste recognition thresholds: 12 ± 3mM (p=0.0017 compared with before paroxetine, Wilcoxon test), and tended to lower sour thresholds (7.6 ± 2.2mM, p=0.06).

In previously untreated depressed subjects, paroxetine lowered sweet and sour thresholds, in a manner similar to that seen in healthy subjects [2]. These findings suggest that although SSRIs have delayed efficacy on symptoms of depression, they can have much more rapid effects on physiological markers such as taste recognition, in previously untreated depressed subjects.


**S40 - Molecular markers of GC-D-expressing and Grueneberg ganglion chemosensory neurons**

Zhi Huang, Arthur Zimmerman, Steven D. Munger

steven.munger@ufl.edu

Center for Smell and Taste and Department of Pharmacology & Therapeutics, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, 32610, USA

The main olfactory bulb (MOB) can be differentiated into subregions based on their innervation by molecularly distinct chemosensory neurons. For example, while olfactory sensory neurons (OSNs) of the main olfactory epithelium (MOE) type I odorant receptors (ORs), type II ORs and trace amine-associated receptors (TAARs) share a common cAMP-mediated sensory transduction cascade, they target glomeruli found in distinct domains across the anterior ~90% of the MOB surface. Similarly, OSNs that utilize cGMP-mediated transduction cascade – guanylyl-cyclase D-expressing (GC-D+) OSNs of the MOE and chemosensory neurons of the Grueneberg ganglion (GGNs) – project to distinct groups of “necklace” glomeruli encircling the caudal MOB. To better understand the unique functionality and neural circuitry of the necklace glomeruli and their associated sensory neurons, we sought to identify additional molecular markers that would differentiate GC-D+ OSNs and GGNs. We found in mouse that the Ca2+/calmodulin-dependent phosphodiesterase Pde1a is expressed in both GC-D+ OSNs and GGNs. Pde1a and immunolocalized throughout the dendrites, somata and axons of these neurons but is not seen in canonical OSNs. Stronger Pde1a immunolabeling in necklace glomeruli innervated by GGNs than in those innervated by GC-D+ OSNs suggests either greater Pde1a expression in individual GGNs than in GC-D+ OSNs or a difference in...
sensory neuron innervation density between the two types of necklace glomeruli. Supported by NIDCD grant DC005633.

S41 - Novel Ca\textsuperscript{2+}-activated Cl\textsuperscript{−} Channel of the chemosensory cilia of rat olfactory sensory neurons

Ricardo Delgado\textsuperscript{1}, Casilda V. Mura\textsuperscript{1}, Diego Restrepo\textsuperscript{2}, Juan Bacigalupo\textsuperscript{1}

bacigalu@uchile.cl

\textsuperscript{1}Universidad de Chile, Santiago, Chile; \textsuperscript{2}University of Colorado Denver, USA

The signaling pathway mediating odor transduction in the chemosensory cilia of olfactory sensory neurons involves cationic cyclic nucleotide-gated channels (CNGs), opened by cyclic AMP. Ca\textsuperscript{2+} entering through CNG opens Ca\textsuperscript{2+}-activated Cl\textsuperscript{−} channels (CaCCs). A Cl\textsuperscript{−} efflux through such channels is generally thought to amplify the CNG-dependent inward current. The main component of the Ca\textsuperscript{2+}-activated Cl\textsuperscript{−} current corresponds to Anoctamine 2 (ANO2), a ~1 pS conductance channel with \( K_{\text{on}} \) for Ca\textsuperscript{2+} \( \approx 1 \) \( \mu \)M. Another two CaCCs found in olfactory cilia are Bestrophin-2 (Best2), of similar conductance and \( K_{\text{on}} \), and ANO6, likely combined with ANO2 forming a heteromultimeric channel. ANO2 ablation suppresses the CaCC current in isolated mice OSNs, but has a limited effect over field potential odor responses and does not impair smell behavior. Best2 KO exhibits no cellular and behavioral alterations. The evidence suggests an additional olfactory CaCC. We report a novel CaCC recorded in inside-out patches from olfactory cilia, with substantially higher conductance (>10-fold) and Ca\textsuperscript{2+} affinity (>5-fold). This channel was also found in HEK293 cells transfected with CiCa4l, a CaCC previously detected in olfactory cilia, but not in the non-transfected cells. This channel co-expresses with ANO2 in the cilia, as shown by immunocytochemistry. A similar channel was previously recorded in toad cilia. The evidence demonstrates a new olfactory cilia Cl\textsuperscript{−} channel, supporting the involvement of multiple CaCCs in chemotransduction. It also reveals the ciliary expression of CiCa4l, which may correspond to the channel or a functionally related protein.

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S42 - Odorant reception in the diamondback moth Plutella xylostella

Guirong Wang\textsuperscript{*}, Mengjing Sun, Jiao Zhu, Paolo Pelosi
grwang@ipppcaas.cn

State Key Laboratory for Biology of Plant Diseases and Insect Pests, Institute of Plant Protection, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Beijing 100193, China

Olfaction is critical for insect survival, mediating key behaviors such as host preference, mate choice, and oviposition site selection. We identified the olfactory gene subfamilies of the important vegetable pest, the diamondback moth Plutella xylostella through de novo transcriptomic analysis. These genes include 25 OBPs, 54 ORs, 16 IRs and 15 CSP. We used fluorescence spectrophotometer to measure the binding affinity of PBP to sex pheromone and its analogs. We also used heterologous expression system Xenopus oocyte combined two-electrode voltage clamp to deorphanzed PRs in Plutella xylostella. However, electrophysiological and behavioral assays didnot match with molecular studies. Further investigation revealed that PBP increased the sensitivity of PR to sex pheromone components. Behavioral assays suggested larvae of the diamondback moth Plutella xylostella were attracted to their natural sex pheromone and to their major sex pheromone component. However, all three PBPs were detected not to be expressed in the larval antennae. Instead, two general odorant-binding proteins, abundantly expressed in the three major sensilla basiconica of the larval antenna, involved in sex pheromone component reception. We also provided evidence that GOBP2 was a narrowly tuned binding protein, whose affinity could be easily switched from linear pheromones to branched plants terpenoids.

S43 - New insights in vertebrate « biotransfolfaction »

Jean-Marie Heydel\textsuperscript{1}, Aline Robert-Hazotte\textsuperscript{1}, Rachel Schoumacker\textsuperscript{1}, Hassan-Ismail Hansen\textsuperscript{1}, Fabrice Neiers\textsuperscript{1}, Yves Artur\textsuperscript{1}, Elisabeth Guichard\textsuperscript{1}, Patricia Duchamp-Viret\textsuperscript{2}, Jean-Luc Le Quere\textsuperscript{1}, Gérard Coureaud\textsuperscript{2}, Philippe Faure\textsuperscript{1}

jean-marie.heydel@u-bourgogne.fr

\textsuperscript{1}Centre des Sciences du Goût et de l’Alimentation, UMR 6265 CNRS / 1324 INRA / Université de Bourgogne Franche-Comté, 9 boulevard Jeanne d’Arc, F-21000 Dijon, France; \textsuperscript{2}Centre de Recherche en Neurosciences de Lyon, INSERM 1028 / CNRS UMR 5292 / Université Claude Bernard Lyon1, 50 avenue Tony Garnier, F-69007, Lyon, France

In the peripheral olfactory process, odorant biotransformation is an enzymatic mechanism which modulates the availability of odorant for olfactory receptors. It involved, in particular, Odorant Metabolizing Enzymes (OME) which, alike olfactory receptors, have a preferential expression in olfactory epithelium, a high number of isoforms and a cross-reactivity toward odorants. Our recent studies demonstrated that “biotransfolfaction” is much more than an expected enzymatic mechanism of odorant elimination in order to terminate the olfactory signal and maintain the sensitivity of the peripheral olfactory process. We showed thus, using an \textit{ex vivo} analytical method (headspace gas chromatography), that the availability of odorants in the epithelium environment is strongly impacted by their metabolism. Moreover, we demonstrated using real-time \textit{ex-vivo} analysis (proton-transfer-reaction mass spectrometry) that the fast kinetic of this odorant enzymatic metabolism is in total agreement with the dynamic of the olfactory reception. “Biotransfolfaction”
can instantaneously lead to volatile metabolites with odorant properties, potentially interacting with receptors. Additionally, we evidenced, in vitro and ex vivo, an odorant-odorant metabolic competition mechanism demonstrating that in odorant mixture, the availability of an odorant in the receptor environment can be strongly modulated by the presence of another odorant. Strikingly, in the European rabbit, this odorant-odorant metabolic interaction induces perceptual and behavioral consequences, i.e. led to the significant enhancement of the mammary pheromone perception in newborns and of sucking-related orocephalic movements displayed in response to the pheromone. We also showed that each EMO may take in charge dozens of different odorants.

The metabolic events would constitute a supplementary level of sophistication in the complex stimulus peripheral processing: within the OE, odorant-odorant interactions would contemporarily occur at ORs and OMEs’ levels, and “biotransfolfaction” would offer to the olfactory peripheral system an additional way to specifically and transiently modulate the peripheral and behavioral response to odors.

PARALLEL SYMPOSIUM 9: TRENDS IN HUMAN CHEMOSENSATION: OLFATORY ENHANCEMENT AND CHEMOSIGNALING

S44 - Olfactory training in patients with olfactory loss and in healthy people

Thomas Hummel
thummel@mail.zih.tu-dresden.de

Smell & Taste Clinic, Department of ORL, TU Dresden, Fetscherstrasse 74, 01307 Dresden, Germany; phone +49-351-458-4189

Patients with olfactory dysfunction benefit from repeated exposure to odors, so-called “olfactory training” (OT). This does not mean the occasional smelling, but the structured sniffing of a defined set of odorants, twice daily, for a period of 4 months or longer.

Methods/Results: This effectivity of this treatment has been shown in several studies. In fact, patients with post-traumatic, postinfectious and idiopathic olfactory loss seem to benefit from this measure. In healthy subjects OT seems to work best in children and least well in older people, where it rather stabilizes olfactory function. In young, healthy participants OT appears to increase OB volume as assessed with MRI; it also seems to produce changes in responsiveness at the level of the olfactory epithelium based on electrophysiological recordings.

Conclusion: Short-term exposure to odors seems to modify olfactory function.

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S50 - The role of human body odors in ingroup-outgroup relationships

Valentina Parma1,2,3, Sandra Soares2,4,5
vparma@sissa.it

1 International School for Advanced Studies (SISSA), Trieste, Italy; 2Department of Clinical Neuroscience, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden; 3Center for Autism Research, University of Pennsylvania, USA; 4CINTESIS, Department of Education and Psychology, University of Aveiro, Aveiro, Portugal; 5William James Research Center (WJCR), Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada (ISPA), Lisbon, Portugal

Why is interaction and integration across members of different so hard to achieve? We present the theoretical framework suggesting that humans have evolved a so-called “behavioral immune system,” a collection of mechanisms designed to early detect and avoid pathogens, including those associated with outgroup members. Here, we focus on the role played in such ingroup-outgroup relationships by chemosensory (body odor) messages. We present preliminary experimental evidence showing that odors from participants of Caucasian and African-American descent qualitatively differ on perceptual ratings (Study 1) and trigger distinctive decision-related strategies, based on the belief of the body odors being collected from the members of the ingroup or outgroup (Study 2).

S51 - The impact of androstadienone on the multifaceted stress response in females and males

Chung, K.C., Kogler, L., Turetsky, B., Freiher, J. & Derntl, B.
birgit.derntl@med.uni-tuebingen.de

Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, University of Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany

Androstadienone (ANDR), a bodily secreted steroid compound, is a socially relevant chemosignal that modulates subjective and (neuro)physiological responses, predominantly in women. The impact of ANDR on stress responses in men and women has not been explored. Using fMRI we aimed to examine psychosocial stress reactions induced by mental arithmetic and social evaluation on behavioral, hormonal and neural levels in healthy women [15 naturally cycling women in their early follicular phase (EF), 15 females in their luteal phase (ML), 15 females on hormonal contraceptives (HC)] and 16 men in an ANDR/placebo treatment repeated-measures design. Additionally, 20 depressed patients have been measured with the same protocol.

In the talk, results regarding sex differences and impact of menstrual cycle phase will be presented. Taken together, our findings suggest that the male stress reaction was more strongly affected by ANDR than female stress reactions.
More specifically, ANDR modulated stress-related processes including mood, anxiety, interoception and executive control particularly in men but also in mid-luteal females. Thus our data highlight its significance in communicating social threat that facilitates adaptive stress responses which are sex- and cycle-dependent. Moreover, a short outlook on the effect of ANDR on stress reactions in depressed patients will be given.

PARALLEL SYMPOSIUM 10: TALKS SELECTED FROM SUBMITTED ABSTRACTS

S52 - Functional metabolomics using a microfluidic chemoreceptor cell assay
Margriet Roelse, Maurice Henquet, Ric de Vos, Bert Schipper, Gerrit Polder, Norbert de Ruijter, Robert Hall and Maarten Jongema
Margriet.roelse@wur.nl
Wageningen University and Research, Wageningen, The Netherlands

Cell-based receptor assays have found many applications in compound discovery and research. These assays usually have multiwell plate formats and are optimal for high throughput screening. Cell based assays in a microfluidic format have advantages in other applications like screening for differences in receptor signalling dynamics and for applications involving a combination with other microfluidic techniques like liquid chromatography in metabolomics. We investigated the first step to combine LC-MS with a flow-through receptor assay. Next steps aim towards developing a functional metabolomics platform.

We developed a flow through biosensor consisting of human cells expressing both TRPV1, a calcium ion channel which responds to capsaicin, and the fluorescent calcium ion reporter protein, YC3.6. We analysed three contrasting Capsicum varieties. Two were selected with contrasting degrees of spiciness for characterization by HPLC coupled to high mass resolution MS. Subsequently, the biosensor was used to link individual pepper compounds to TRPV1 activity. Among the compounds in the crude pepper fruit extracts, we confirmed capsaicin and also identified both nordihydrocapsaicin and dihydrocapsaicin as true agonists of the TRPV1 receptor. Furthermore, the biosensor was able to detect receptor activity in extracts of both Capsicum fruits as well as a commercial product (Tabasco). Sensitivity of the biosensor to this commercial product was similar to the sensory threshold of a human sensory panel.

Our results demonstrate that the TRPV1 biosensor is suitable for sequential detection of bioactive metabolites. Novel opportunities for the development of a continuous functional assay, where similar biosensors are directly coupled to the LC-MS will be discussed.


S53 - A novel functional screening assay to monitor sweet taste receptor activation in vitro
S. Bastiaan-Net1, B.P.M. van de Berg-Somhorst1, R.M.C. Ariëns1, M. Paques2 and J.J. Mes1
Shanna.bastiaan@wur.nl

1Food and Biobased Research, Wageningen University and Research Centre, the Netherlands; 2FrieslandCampina, the Netherlands

Sweet taste transduction is mediated by the G protein-coupled heterodimeric receptor T1R2/T1R3. Currently, receptor activation responses are either monitored by intracellular [Ca^{2+}] mobilization using calcium-sensitive dyes or by quantifying cellular cAMP or IP3 levels. However, for many receptors it has been shown that, dependent of the ligand, different intracellular signalling pathways can be activated. With a full panel of methods to analyse these different intracellular signalling events a more relevant biological interpretation of responses will be possible. For these reasons, we developed an in vitro cell screening assay based on β-arrestin recruitment, a component involved in receptor desensitisation within several GPCR family members.

The screening assay is based on the PathHunter® GPCR platform of DiscoveRx BV. making use of the β-gal enzyme complementation technology in which the N-terminal deletion mutant of β-gal fused to β-arrestin (called enzyme acceptor or EA) is stably co-expressed with the small donor fragment ProLink™. Upon receptor activation by an agonist, β-arrestin-mediated endosomal receptor internalisation takes place forcing the two enzyme fragments to complement leading to increased β-gal enzyme activity which can be quantified using chemiluminescence. Experiments indicate that the sweet taste receptor T1R2/T1R3, activated by natural sugars, artificial sweeteners and enhancers or inhibitors induce β-gal enzyme activity indicating for the first time that β-arrestin recruitment is involved in the desensitisation mechanism of the sweet taste receptor.

The high-throughput 96-well plate screening format of the T1R2/T1R3 cell assay platform is just as sensitive (capable
to distinguish 1% fractions between 4 and 9% sucrose) and follows similar S-shape activation curves as most used Ca\(^{2+}\) based GPCR read-outs but both assay configurations can also be combined making it possible to study different intracellular pathways at the same time. The assay is suitable to study agonist/antagonist modulator effects of sweet taste enhancers and inhibitors or the influence of sweeteners/sugar mixtures on receptor sensitivity. This in vitro screening assay for objective taste analyses is the first to make use of β-arrestin recruitment upon receptor activation and as such, the first within the class-C GPCR family.

We will discuss how such an assay platform provides opportunities studying the synergistic effect of sugar/sweetener mixtures, food-matrix effects, sweet taste modulator and the possibilities to extrapolate such platform to the other basic tastes.

S54 - Biosensors based on immobilised Major Urinary Proteins from the mouse

Carla Mucignat\(^1\), Maria J. Ricatti\(^1\), Emmanuel Scorsone \(^2\), Raafa Manai\(^2\), Philippe Bergonzo\(^3\), Krishna C. Persaud\(^4\)

krishna.persaud@manchester.ac.uk

\(^1\)Department of Molecular Medicine, University of Padova, 35131 Padova, Italy; \(^2\)CEA, LIST, Diamond Sensors Laboratory, 91191, Gif-sur-Yvette, France; \(^3\)The University of Manchester, School of Chemical Engineering and Analytical Science, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, UK

Major urinary proteins (MUPs) are ligand binding proteins excreted in mice urine. They belong to the lipocalin family, having a beta barrel structure with a highly hydrophobic binding pocket which retains organic molecules, allowing their transport in hydrophilic media. MUPs are involved in mouse chemical communication and they transport small odorant molecules which are slowly released into the environment. They are extremely resistant to environmental challenges like heat, dehydration and proteolysis, making them good candidates for hybrid biosensor implementation. A new bio-sensing platform based on MUPs as chemical recognition elements was developed. The transducers were surface acoustic devices coated with diamond nanoparticles as an intermediate layer enabling covalent attachment of the proteins. The resulting sensors detected 2,4-dinitrotoluene, 4-nitrotoluene and 2-isobutyl-3-methoxypyrazine at ppb levels. The best sensor showed a sensitivity of 24000 Hz/ppm\(^{-1}\) to 2,4-dinitrotoluene when grafted with the protein isoform MUP20. Trends in sensitivity of the various volatile organic compound sensors were compared to the association constant values Ka of the proteins to target ligands measured by competitive assay in liquid phase. The system is able to detect analytes both in liquid as well as vapour phase and indicate that MUPs are robust bio-recognition elements that can be utilized in artificial olfaction applications.

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S55 - Multiple receptors contribute to the transduction of fat taste

Sami Damak

sami.damak@rdls.nestle.com

Nestlé Research Center, Vers-chez-les-Blanc, 1000 Lausanne, Switzerland

Fat is the most energy-dense macronutrient, yet there is incomplete knowledge on how fat is detected by the taste system. Two receptors GPR40, GPR120 and a transporter, CD36, contribute to detection of free fatty acids by the taste system. These three proteins are expressed in gustatory sensory cells, and knockout mice lacking either of those genes have diminished preference and taste nerve responses for fatty acids and oils. However the responses to oil and fatty acids are not totally abolished in any of these knockouts. Strikingly, very strong preference for intralipid, an emulsion of soybean oil, remains in all three lines of knockout animals. To determine if the residual response of GPR40 KO and of GPR120 KO mice to oil is caused by the activity of the other fatty acid-responsive GPCR, we analyzed the responses to fatty acids and intralipid of GPR40/GPR120 double KO mice by two bottle preference tests and compared them to the responses of single knockouts and wild type mice. We found that preference and/or intake were in the following order: WT > GPR120KO > GPR40KO = GPR40/GPR120 double knockouts. These results suggest that GPR40 plays a more important role than GPR120 in mediating preference for fat, and that in the absence of GPR40, GPR120 does not play a role.

We also investigated the response to fat of KO mice lacking Trpm5, a common signaling element downstream from G-protein-coupled taste receptors. We found that the preference for intralipid was more impaired in those mice, compared to that of GPR120 or GPR40 single and double KO mice or CD36 KO mice. Together the data show that in addition to GPR40, GPR120 and CD36, other receptors may contribute to the oral detection of fat.

S56 - CD36 is involved in fatty acid detection in the murine olfactory system

Eva Neuhaus

eva.neuhaus@med.uni-jena.de

Friedrich-Schiller University Jena, Germany

Olfactory signals influence food intake in a variety of species. To maximize the chances of finding a source of calories, an animal’s preference for fatty foods and triglycerides already becomes apparent during olfactory food search behavior. However, the molecular identity of both receptors and ligands
mediating olfactory-dependent fatty acid recognition are, so far, undescribed. We here describe that a subset of olfactory sensory neurons expresses the fatty acid receptor CD36 and demonstrate a receptor-like localization of CD36 in olfactory cilia by STED microscopy. CD36-positive olfactory neurons share olfaction-specific transduction elements and project to numerous glomeruli in the ventral olfactory bulb. In accordance with the described roles of CD36 as fatty acid receptor or co-receptor in other sensory systems, the number of olfactory neurons responding to oleic acid, a major milk component, in Ca²⁺ imaging experiments is drastically reduced in young CD36 knock-out mice. Strikingly, we also observe marked age-dependent changes in CD36 localization, which is prominently present in the ciliary compartment only during the suckling period. Our results support the involvement of CD36 in fatty acid detection by the mammalian olfactory system.

**S57 - Neural mechanisms underlying the ageing-associated decline in chemosensory perception**

Ashiq Hussain, Mo Zhang, Habibe Ucpunar, Ilona C. Grunwald Kadow

ahussain@neuro.mpg.de

Max Planck Institute for Neurobiology Am Klopferspitz, 18a 82152 Germany

Ageing is associated with anosmia - loss of the sense of smell - a fundamental feature of several neurodegenerative disorders such as idiopathic Parkinson's disease (IPD), Alzheimer's disease (AD) and Huntington's disease (HD). The decline in the capacity to perceive and discriminate odors in aged humans leads to a dramatic decline in the quality of life and weakened appetite with accompanying impacts on nutritional status. Although the gradual loss of olfaction is described in the context of ageing-associated neurodegenerative diseases, the paucity of information on the underlying cellular and molecular mechanisms in the aged olfactory system remains surprising. These mechanisms may include variations in neuronal populations, synaptic organization, and neural/synaptic functions. We have observed gradual regressions in the olfactory driven choice behavior of *Drosophila melanogaster* with natural ageing. Nonetheless, the vision and motility of aged flies were significantly intact in the behavioral analyses. Consistent with their reduced olfactory response, aged flies show declined olfactory neuronal activities. High throughput deep RNA sequencing revealed downregulation of 181 inheritable factor in the antenna of old flies. Then again, inhibition of superoxide dismutase2 (SOD2), which normally leads to premature aging, in olfactory projection neurons (PNs) instigated similar olfactory declines in young flies as their older counterparts. Remarkably, defunct olfactory perception in the older flies was fully rescued with overexpression of SOD2 in projection neurons. We anticipate that this comprehensive investigation will identify conserved and potentially causative mechanisms of ageing-associated olfactory functional decline.

**S58 - Oral and intestinal sweet taste T1R2/R3 receptors in mice; effect on consumption, over weight, blood glucose and insulin levels**

Göran Hellekant, Eric Kaplan, Jared Schmolling and Teresa Rose-Hellekant

ghelleka@d.umn.edu

Department of Biomedical Sciences, Medical School, University of Minnesota, Duluth, MN 55812, USA

Stimulation of oral Type II taste receptor cells with T1R2/R3 receptors elicits sweet taste and invites to consumption. Intestinal Type II taste receptor cells with T1R2/R3 receptors facilitate glucose absorption by the glucose transporter type 2 (GLUT2). Type II taste receptor cells contain a calcium channel, CALHM1. Genetic deletion of the CALHM1 channel results in loss of ability to sense and perceive the sweet taste quality. Comparison between mice with CALHM1+/+ (WT) and without CALHM1-/- (KO), respectively, provides the means to examine T1R2/R3 receptors’ effect on intake and intestinal absorption via measurements of body weight (BW), blood glucose (BG) and plasma insulin. In this study we confirm our findings that WT mice are heavier, eat more, and have higher mortality than KO mice. We report that higher BG and insulin levels accompany higher BW in both WT and KO mice, although KO mice with the same BW as their WT counterpart have lower BG and insulin level. Glucose gavage increased and prolonged BG and plasma insulin increases more consistently in WT than in KO mice. The effects of fructose gavage was small and did not differ between WT and KO mice. Gavage with the high potency artificial sweetener SC 45647 increased both BG and insulin levels in WT but less than with glucose. This increase was also larger in heavier WT mice than lighter. In KO mice the effects of gavage with water or SC 45647 on BG levels and insulin did not differ significantly. In WT mice there was a difference. These results suggest that inhibition of T1R2/R3 receptors lowers intake and intestinal uptake, which then decreases BG and insulin levels. These findings can be applied to weight control in humans.

**S59 - Rise of the urethral brush cells**

Klaus Deckmann1, Chrissy Kandel1, Luisa Schulz1, Amir Rafiq1, Paul Scholz2, Sabrina Baumgart2, Wolfgang Kummer2

Klaus.Deckmann@anatomie.med.uni-giessen.de

1Institute for Anatomy and Cell Biology, Justus-Liebig-University, Giessen, Germany; 2Department of Cellphysiology, Ruhr-University, Bochum, Germany

We recently identified a novel cholinergic chemosensory cell in the urethra of 14 mammalian species including humans (urethral brush cell = UBC). UBC utilize the canonical bitter and umami taste transduction signaling cascade to detect putative harmful compounds (e.g. bacterial bitter
substances) and initiate reflex detrusor contractions by cholinergic transmission to sensory nerve fibers.

Here, we addressed their postnatal and their ontogenetic origin utilizing choline acetyltransferase (ChAT)-eGFP and Wnt1-tomato reporter mice, deep sequencing to identify potential novel markers for these cells, and a mouse model (MyD88-knockout) based on these sequencing data.

Postnatal appearance of UBC was assessed in urethral whole mounts of ChAT-eGFP reporter mice of both genders from day P0 to P100. UBC appear first at P4-P6 in male and at P13-P14 in female mice. After about 10 weeks, UBC numbers have reached the same level in both genders. MyD88 is a key factor for the genesis of UBC, since they were absent in urethrae of MyD88 knock out mice (N=5). Deep sequencing and immunolabeling of tissue sections from ChAT-eGFP mice revealed doublecortin like kinase 1 (DCLK1) as strong UBC marker. Antibodies against this marker were applied to urethral sections of Wnt1-cre tomato mice, a reporter strain for cells of neural crest origin. Neither DCLK1-positive UBC nor serotonin-positive endocrine cells expressed Wnt1-driven tomato, and, hence, are not derived from the neural crest. On the other hand, UBC were immunolabeled with antibodies against the epithelial marker cytokeratin 18 in ChAT-eGFP reporter mice. These data were also supported by deep sequencing.

Taken together, UBC represent cholinergic epithelial cells not derived from the neural crest which develop postnatally in a MyD88-dependent manner.

**S60 - Specificity versus Promiscuity: The Ligand-binding Pocket for Bacterial Signal Peptides in Formyl Peptide Receptors**

*Henrike Reder, Frank Zufall, Bernd Bufe*
bernd.bufe@uks.eu

*Center for Integrative Physiology and Molecular Medicine, Saarland University, 66421 Homburg, Germany*

We recently discovered that bacterial signal peptides represent a novel pathogen-associated molecular pattern for formyl peptide receptors (FPRs) and showed that the vomeronasal receptor Fpr3 reacts to a specific set of signal peptides (Bufe et al., JBC 2015). By contrast the receptors FPR1 and FPR2 that are expressed in the mouse and human immune cells are broad detectors that can potentially detect more than 100,000 different peptides. A reliable and specific detection of bacterial signal peptides represents a molecular challenge because signal peptides are a vast group of molecules with a highly variable chemical structure. Direct binding studies with fluorescently labelled peptides, in combination with competition experiments and site-specific point mutations, enabled us to obtain the first insight into the underlying detection mechanism of bacterial signal peptides by FPRs. Competition studies using a chemical antagonist provide clear evidence that a single binding site in mouse and human FPR1 is sufficient for the detection of a vast array of different bacterial signal peptides. We identified three amino acid residues in the binding pocket of mouse and human FPR1 that are critical for bacterial signal peptide detection. These are highly conserved in the FPR1 sequence of different species and their mutation leads to a drastic loss in the functional response and the binding affinity of signal peptides. Sequence comparison of all mouse and human FPRs revealed a distinct pattern of conserved amino acid exchange between the immune and vomeronasal receptors at these positions. We propose that these alterations in the binding pocket contribute to the functional differences between immune and vomeronasal FPRs. Our experiments using receptor mutants in combination with peptide derivatives also provide clear evidence that ligand detection of FPRs does not primarily rely on specific interactions with conserved amino acid residues. Instead, these results suggest that FPRs favour a shape-oriented detection process that focuses on the ability of a peptide to assume a specific three-dimensional conformation. This novel concept of a primarily three-dimensional oriented ligand recognition may also lead to a better understanding of receptor-ligand interactions of other receptor families such as odorant or taste receptors that recognize broad ligand repertoires as well.

**S61 - A calcium signaling ‘fingerprint’ in vomeronasal sensory neurons**

*Maximilian Nagel, David Fleck, Marc Spehr*
M.Nagel@sensorik.rwth-aachen.de

*RWTH Aachen University, Dept. of Chemosensation, Aachen, Germany*

Recently, a growing number of chemosensory signals were discovered which are detected by the mammalian vomeronasal organ (VNO). These complex chemical cues regulate social behavior and carry information about sexual, social and reproductive status of both con- and heterospecific individuals. To date, however, little is known about both the sensory coding strategies implemented by the VNO and the stimulation-dependent activity patterns in single vomeronasal sensory neurons (VSNs).

In this study, we used Ca$^{2+}$ imaging in acute mouse VNO slices to determine the activity of VSNs both on the population and the individual neuron level. Slices were loaded with the Ca$^{2+}$-sensitive dye Cal-520/AM in a custom-made circulating oxygenation chamber. This new loading approach significantly increased the yield of vital VSNs. Precise focal perfusion of gender-specific pooled urine samples allowed us to analyze the neural code of vomeronasal information. In parallel, we analyzed the spatiotemporal response characteristics in single VSNs.

Together, we present an improved in situ Ca$^{2+}$ imaging approach that will allow an effective VNO ligand screening,
characterization of population response patterns, kinetics analysis of individual Ca$^{2+}$ transients, as well as investigation of VSN adaptation and signaling robustness. Thus, on-going experiments aim to provide a quantitative perspective on vomeronasal coding at the VSN population level as well as a detailed analysis of Ca$^{2+}$ signaling events in single neurons.

S62 - Olfactory sensory neurons transiently express multiple olfactory receptors during development

Longzhi Tan$^{1,6}$, Qian Li$^{2,3,6}$, X Sunney Xie$^{1,*}$
xie@chemistry.harvard.edu

$^1$Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA; $^2$Department of Cell Biology, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA, USA; $^3$Current Address: Departments of Anatomy, Histology, and Embryology, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, School of Medicine, South Chongqing Road No. 227, Shanghai, China; #These authors contributed equally to this work

In mammals, each olfactory sensory neuron randomly expresses one, and only one, olfactory receptor (OR)—a phenomenon called the “one-neuron-one-receptor” rule. Although extensively studied, this rule was never proven for all ~1,000 OR genes in one cell at once, and little is known about its dynamics. Here, we directly tested this rule by single-cell transcriptomic sequencing of 178 cells from the main olfactory epithelium of adult and newborn mice. To our surprise, a subset of cells expressed multiple ORs. Most of these cells were developmentally immature. Our results illustrated how the “one-neuron-one-receptor” rule may have been established: At first, a single neuron temporarily expressed multiple ORs—seemingly violating the rule—and then all but one OR were eliminated. This work provided experimental evidence that epigenetic regulation in the olfactory system selects a single OR by suppressing a few transiently expressed ORs in a single cell during development.

S63 - Effect of aging in the activity of the posterior piriform cortex of rats during flavor recognition memory

A. Grau-Perales, E. Morillas, B. Gómez-Chacón and M. Gallo
abgrau@ugr.es

Department of Psychobiology, Institute of Neurosciences. Center for Biomedical Research (CIBM). University of Granada. Spain

Deficits in chemosensory recognition memory are among the first signs of pathological aging. Brain areas involved in aging-related decay can be studied in rats using habituation of flavor neophobia as a model of recognition memory. The habituation of taste neophobia relies on the ability to assess the familiarity of a previously ingested flavor without negative consequences. This leads to increased intake over repeated exposures to the flavor. The habituation of taste neophobia seems to depend on a neural circuit that involves the insular cortex (IC) and its connections with the basolateral amygdala (BLA) and the perirhinal cortex (PRh) among others.

This type of memory has been studied using basic taste solutions (salty, sweet, acid and sour), and there are important differences in the olfactory component of the stimuli, ranging from odorless saccharin or quinine taste solutions to vinegar or lemon flavored solutions with a strong odorant component. Previous results in our lab using a flavored cider vinegar solution (3%) have shown that aged rats exhibit a peculiar pattern of brain activity that might be related to age-induced changes in flavor recognition memory. Research about the potential role of the piriform cortex (PirCx) in taste recognition memory is scarce. Given the convergence between olfactory and gustatory circuits at the level of the posterior PirCx and the fact that this region is considered as a multisensory integration area of taste and olfaction, it seems particularly relevant to explore potential activity changes related to flavor novelty and familiarity. In order to explore this, 21 five-month-old (n=7 per group) and 24 twenty-four-month-old male Wistar rats were exposed to a novel cider vinegar solution (3%) for one, two or six consecutive days using 15-minute drinking sessions. Then, c-Fos immunohistochemistry was applied in the anterior and posterior Piriform Cortex as an index of neural activity. The behavioral results confirmed the habituation of flavor neophobia which progressed as the number of exposures to the vinegar solution increased in both groups of age, although it was delayed in time in the case of aged rats. The immunohistochemical analyses revealed an increased number of c-Fos positive cells in the rostral portion of the posterior PirCx in the group that had 6 exposures to vinegar compared to the groups that had one or two exposures to the flavor. No differences in c-Fos expression were found in the anterior PirCx between groups. This suggests a potential role of pPirCx in flavor recognition memory. Its selective involvement in the fully consolidated flavor memory is consistent with its anatomical connections since it maintains reciprocal connections with IC and it is considered a multisensory integration area.

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S64 - Automated operant olfactory conditioning of group-housed mice

Janine K. Reinert$^1$, Andreas T. Schaefer$^{2,3}$, Thomas Kuner$^1$
reinert@ana.uni-heidelberg.de

$^1$Heidelberg University, Institute for Anatomy and Cell Biology, Functional Neuroanatomy Department, Heidelberg, Germany; $^2$The Francis Crick Institute, Mill Hill Laboratory
**S65 - Odor threshold relates to sexual pleasure**

*Johanna Bendas*, Thomas Hummel, MD*, Kerstin Weidner, MD*, Ilona Croy, PhD*°

johanna.bendas@gmail.com

*Department for Psychotherapy and Psychosomatic Medicine, Dresden University Hospital, Technische Universität Dresden, Dresden, Germany; °Smell and Taste Medicine, Dresden University Hospital, Technische Universität Dresden, Dresden, Germany; °Department for Psychotherapy and Psychosomatic Medicine, Dresden University Hospital, Technische Universität Dresden, Dresden, Germany*

Despite the staggering increase in specific as well as efficient techniques for generating transgenic mouse lines the behavioural analysis of these strains still relies heavily on manual characterisation of individual animals. Not only is this approach labour and cost-intensive but also highly prone to experimenter-induced errors and variations. Additionally, most tests are conducted on single-housed animals during the daytime – a suboptimal setting for natively social and nocturnal animals.

To circumvent these limitations, we used an automated operant olfactory conditioning setup that allows for group-housing of even large cohorts of animals (>18 subjects) while simultaneously training these animals on a go/no-go odour discrimination task.

Animals, identified via an implanted RFID-tag, could initiate trials themselves allowing for generation of unique training protocols specifically tailored to each animal. The animals reached >95% correct performance as quickly as during manual training and we were able to resolve discrimination time differences as described previously by us and others (Nixon et. al 2004, Shimshek et. al 2005, Nixon et. al 2010). Simultaneously we could monitor key additional parameters like the licking-patterns, air flow, air pressure, temperature and humidity with millisecond precision.

In summary, this setup enables automated training of socially housed mice while minimizing experimenter interaction with the animals. Apart from the odour discrimination tasks described here the setup can readily be expanded to encompass additional sensory cues or even serve as a pre-training phase to screen for high performing animals for use in further studies like awake 2P imaging or electrophysiological recordings.

This work was supported by funding from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft SPP 1392 “Integrative Analysis of Olfaction”.

**Conclusion:** The present results suggest a contribution of the sense of smell to the perception of sexual pleasure.
context the faces were rated as more arousing than in the disgusting odor context. In contrast the N170 component was stronger for disgusted faces in disgusting odor trials than in trials with a pleasant odor context. These results suggest that for evaluative responses positive information is more pronounced; whereas brain responses are more attuned to negative information in emotional odor contexts.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

P1 - Highlighting the large variation in perceived properties of odors over time
Linus Andersson1, Anna-Sara Claeson2, Petra Sandberg1
linus.andersson@umu.se
1Department of Occupational and Public Health Sciences, University of Gävle, Sweden, 2Department of Psychology, Umeå University, Sweden

Individuals differ considerably when rating the perceived properties of odors, especially over time. A second glance at previously published data-sets from our laboratory revealed that the same invariant exposure often produced both floor and roof effects. An odor that at the end of the exposure session was regarded as non-existent by one participant, could border the “absoulute maximum” rating category in another. We provide re-analyses from four exposure studies where we illustrate the perceptual variability over time, and outcomes associated with such ratings. We note that high, compared with low ratings of odor intensity over time is associated with ratings of unpleasantness and symptoms, but also with everyday distress, cognitive performance, autonomous nervous system activity and deviating responses in the so-called pain or saliency matrix of the brain. We bring an open question to ECRO regarding how this considerable variability should be interpreted, and what the consequenced are for research and for setting exposure limits.

P2 - Effects of Androstadienone on dominance perception and gaze avoidance in low and highly socially anxious males
Amir Banner & Simone Shamay-Tsoory
amir.banner@gmail.com
Department of Psychology, University of Haifa, Israel

In the animal kingdom, chemosensory information has been long known to convey signals of dominance, communicating information about the sender’s social status and general fitness. Increasing evidence suggests that humans may also communicate both trait-dominance and state-dominance via chemical compounds. Androstadienone (androsta-4,16-dien-3-one), a testosterone derivative chemosignal found in human sweat, seems to be a likely candidate for signaling dominance and aggression in humans.

A psychopathology involving concerns pertaining specifically to social dominance is social anxiety. Socially anxious individuals tend to see themselves as being low in the hierarchical rank and others as dominant competitors for social status. These individuals are hypersensitive to signs of dominance and they are prone to respond in maladaptive submissive behaviors. One such behavior is a symptom commonly reported in social anxiety - avoidance of eye contact. Socially anxious individuals tend to avert their gaze and avoid the eye region of their adversary as a sign of submission or in an attempt to prevent feared social catastrophes.

The current study aimed to investigate whether androstadienone serves as a chemosignal of dominance in low and high socially anxious (HSA) males. In the first experiment, we expose normosmic, heterosexual male participants to images of male targets depicting dominant, submissive and neutral facial poses. They are then asked to rate the target’s dominance level on a 9-point scale. In the second experiment, participants are exposed to a free-view task of male targets depicting similar dominant and neutral facial poses, while we examine their visual scanpath using an eye-tracker. Participants, divided to two groups according to their social anxiety level, complete these two tasks twice, once under exposure to androstadienone and once under exposure to a blank control solution. We hypothesize that compared to a blank control solution, when exposed to androstadienone, participants, and HSA individuals in particular, will rate the male protagonists as more dominant and show a lower number of fixations and shorter dwell time around the eyes region of the targets. Preliminary results from the first experiment show that HSA rated the dominance of protagonists higher during exposure to androstadienone compared to the control solution. Additional results of this ongoing effort will be presented.

P3 - Odorant-binding proteins mutants having novel binding properties
Emilie Barou, Christine Belloir, Nicolas Poirier, Fabrice Neiers, Loïc Briand
loic.briand@dijon.inra.fr
Centre des Sciences du Goût et de l’Alimentation - CNRS - INRA

Univ. Bourgogne Franche-Comté, F-21000 Dijon, FRANCE

Odorant-binding proteins (OBP) are small soluble proteins present in the nasal mucus covering the olfactory epithelium. Vertebrate OBPs belong to the lipocalin superfamily, whose members share a common scaffold made of 8-stranded β-barrel. This folding pattern defines a central apolar cavity, named calyx, whose role is to bind
hydrophobic molecules such as odorants. Although the physiological role of OBPs is not clearly established, they are supposed to carry odorants from the air to olfactory receptors through the aqueous nasal mucus. OBPs have been described in numerous species including pig, rat and human beings. OBPs are broadly tuned and bind a large spectrum of volatile molecules. Interestingly, it has been shown that the three rat OBP subtypes (rOBP1, rOBP2, rOBP3) have different and complementary ligand properties [1], suggesting that OBPs are involved in odorant discrimination. Protein sequence alignment of the three rat OBPs reveals the presence of an amino acid residue located in the binding pocket, which may be important for guiding binding specificity. Using site-directed mutagenesis, we generated variants of rOBP3, in which this amino acid residue has been substituted. Using isothermal titration calorimetry, we found that some substitutions decreased the affinity of rOBP3 towards some odorant molecules while others generated OBPs possessing novel binding properties. Our work gives new elements to understand the binding mechanisms of OBPs and opens the way towards technological applications based on OBP, as odorant biosensors.


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P4 - Stability of Odorant Binding Protein Biosensors over Time

Khasim Cali, Mara Bernabei, Krishna Persaud
Khasim.Cali@manchester.ac.uk

The University of Manchester, School of Chemical Engineering and Analytical Science, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, UK; School of Chemical Engineering and Analytical Science, The University of Manchester, UK

Odorant Binding Proteins (OBPs) can be used as Biosensors to detect variety of volatile organic compounds (1, 2, 3). The previous work showed that OBPs immobilised on to quartz crystal microbalances (QMB) are capable of sensitive detection of different volatiles with selectivities dependent on the type of OBP and ligand affinity, but it was not known how stable these sensors are over time. An array of sensors comprising PigWT-OBP1, Agam-OBP4, Agam-OBP1-S82P, immobilised using a self-assembled monolayer on to QMBs were tested for their responses towards saturated vapours of Cocaine, Ephedrine, Trinitrotoluene and Tobacco continuously over a period of four months. The results indicated that although there were small daily variations in response the sensors were able to continue to sensitively detect the target analytes over the period tested. This indicates that biosensors comprising immobilised OBPs may be robust enough for long term use in industrial applications.


P5 - Sequence variation determining stereochemistry of a Δ11 desaturase active in moth sex pheromone biosynthesis

Bao-Jian Ding, Colm Carraher, Christer Löfstedt
colm.carraher@biol.lu.se

Pheromone Group, Department of Biology, Lund University, Sölvegatan 37, SE-22362, Lund, Sweden

A Δ11 desaturase from the oblique banded leaf roller moth Choristoneura rosaceana takes the saturated myristic acid and produces a mixture of (E)-11-tetradecenoate and (Z)-11-tetradecenoate with an excess of the Z isomer (35:65). A desaturase from the spotted fireworm moth Choristoneura parallela also operates on myristic acid substrate but produces almost pure (E)-11-tetradecenoate. The two desaturases share 92% amino acid identity and 97% amino acid similarity. There are 24 amino acids differing between these two desaturases. We constructed mutations at all of these positions to pinpoint the sites that determine the product stereochemistry. We demonstrated with a yeast functional assay that one amino acid at the cytosolic carboxyl terminus of the protein (258E) is critical for the Z activity of the C. rosaceana desaturase. Mutating the glutamic acid (E) into aspartic acid (D) transforms the C. rosaceana enzyme into a desaturase with C. parallela-like activity, whereas the reciprocal mutation of the C. parallela desaturase transformed it into an enzyme producing an intermediate 64:36 E/Z product ratio. We discuss the causal link between this amino acid change and the
The objective of the study was to examine the relationship between perceived stress, sensory irritation and the concentration of four eicosanoids in plasma after exposure to acrolein.

Each participant (n=30) took part in two exposure conditions – one with the mild odorant heptane (the masking compound), and one with heptane and acrolein at a dose below previously reported sensory irritation thresholds. During the 60 minutes exposure, eye, nose and throat irritation was rated on Borg’s CR-100 scale. Blood samples were collected before entering the exposure chamber, directly after exiting and 24 hours post-exposure. The four eicosanoids evaluated in this exploratory study were PGF2α, PGE2, PGD2 and TXB2. Before exposure self-reported stress was assessed by the perceived stress questionnaire (PSQ).

Participants with moderate to high level of stress perceived the masked exposure to acrolein near the detection threshold as more irritating compared to the control condition and the participants with low stress. There was a significant correlation (r=0.49; p<0.01) between self-reported stress and increase of prostaglandin F2α immediately after the exposure and also 24 hours after (r=0.39; p<0.05). No correlation was found before the exposure or at any time before or after the control exposure. No correlations were found for the other three eicosanoids. The results suggest that perceived stress is associated with increased sensitivity to low-level exposures of acrolein via a prostaglandin F2α mediated response.

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P8 - Molecular adaptation in olfactory functions in the fire ant social chromosome

Amir B. Cohanim1, Eyal Privman1
eprivman@univ.haifa.ac.il

1Haifa University, Israel

Insects use pheromones as a major mode of communication. Social insects need a complex language of signals to coordinate cooperation between thousands of individuals. The evolution of such chemical communication required genes for the synthesis of pheromones and for their olfactory perception. In the fire ant Solenopsis invicta chemical signals are involved in the determination of social organization. Single-queen (monogyne) or multi-queen (polygyne) social structure is determined by the “social chromosome”: a non-recombining region consisting of approximately 527 genes with two distinct haplotypes: SB and Sh. Monogyne queens are always SB/SB and polgyne queens are always SB/Sb. Workers discriminate monogyne and polgyne queens based on olfactory cues, presumably non-volatile lipids on the queens’ cuticle. We searched for candidate genes in the social chromosome that could be responsible for this discrimination.
We focused on olfactory receptors (ORs), because this gene family was dramatically expanded in the evolution of ants. We annotated 472 putative ORs in the *S. invicta* genome. The OR gene tree shows many *S. invicta*-specific expansions, and multiple branches show evidence for positive selection. Notably, a cluster of 23 ORs resides in the social chromosome. Nine genes in this cluster are the result of recent duplications in the *S. invicta* lineage. We also identified significant differences in these genes between the SB and Sb haplotypes. The most dramatic difference is the complete deletion of two of these genes in Sb. Furthermore, projection of amino-acids changes along the *S. invicta* lineage on a structural model of ORs revealed significant changes in hydrophobicity in a putative ligand recognition site. This result is in line with the expected hydrophobic nature of queen cuticular pheromones. Therefore, these receptors are prime candidates for involvement in queen discrimination. These results suggest that the evolution of polygyne social organization involved adaptations in genes responsible for olfaction and opens the way for functional studies of the molecular mechanism of this phenomenon.

**P9 - Olfaction versus audition: Perceptual, cognitive, and metacognitive functions in early blind, late blind, and sighted individuals**

Stina Cornell Kärnekull*, Artin Arshamian*bc†, Mats E Nilsson, Maria Larsson

artin.arshamian@ki.se

*Gösta Ekman Laboratory, Department of Psychology, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden; †Division of Psychology, Department of Clinical Neurosciences, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden; ‡Center for Language Studies and Donders Institute for Brain, Cognition, and Behavior, Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands; †Shared first co-authorship

Previous research has shown that blindness can lead to improved perceptual and cognitive abilities in the nonvisual senses. However, few studies have compared different sensory modalities using similar perceptual and cognitive tasks. In this study, olfactory and auditory absolute threshold, discrimination, identification, episodic recognition, and judgments of learning (JOL) were assessed in early blind (n = 15), late blind (n = 15), and sighted (n = 30) participants. The largest advantages for blind participants over the sighted were found for auditory discrimination and episodic recognition, advantages that were most clear for early blind participants. Although trends of group differences in the same direction were found for some of the olfactory tasks, these differences were not statistically significant. Moreover, early blind participants showed better metacognitive abilities in predicting olfactory and auditory memory than late blind and sighted participants. In conclusion, there were clear modality- and task-related group differences. The larger effects observed for the auditory sense might be related to increased attentional capacity and training, as this sense is crucial for everyday functioning among blind individuals.

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**P10 - Peripheral odour processing and configurational perception in newborn rabbits**

Gérard Coureaud, Pia Lambot, Patricia Duchamp-Viret
gerard.coureaud@cnrs.fr

Centre de Recherche en Neurosciences de Lyon, INSERM 1028 / CNRS UMR 5292 / Université Claude Bernard Lyon1, 50 avenue Tony Garnier, F-69007, Lyon, France

Olfaction is involved in vital behaviours such as interactions between mother and young, searching for food, etc. Throughout life, these behaviours are displayed by animals (including humans) in a complex and changing olfactory environment composed by molecules (odorants) forming mixtures, perceived as odours after their processing by the olfactory system and brain. To deal with this complexity, organisms process mixtures in the elemental (perception of elements that compose the mixture) or weak/robust configural ways (perception of a configuration in addition to/at the expense of the elements). These modes of perception, used alternatively or simultaneously, are shared between organisms across the animal kingdom. Sometimes, a given perception mode is shared between species for the same mixture. For instance, newborn rabbits perceive in the weak configurational way a binary AB mixture of ethyl isobutyrate (A) and ethyl maltol (B) at the 30/70 v/v ratio, which is also perceived configurally, at the same ratio, in human adults. In addition, rabbits and humans perceive the binary AC mixture (C: guaiacol) in the elemental way. The two perceptual modes may already be in question at the peripheral level of the olfactory system: indeed, on the olfactory mucosa, receptor neurons are endowed by (few selective) olfactory receptors (ORs) which are in charge to bind odorants; facing mixtures, ORs are the site of odorant-odorant interactions which result in a first integration leading to a more or less important loss of the elemental information. Here, our work starts to explore, in newborn rabbits, whether the peripheral processing of the AB and AC mixtures could account, at least partly, for the perception and behavioural responsiveness to the mixture as a whole (AB) or to the elements composing the mixture (AC). It includes the recordings of electro-olfactograms (EOG) at olfactory turbinates and, in parallel, of sucking-related behavioural responses. The results point that the configurational AB mixture is differently processed by ORs compared to the elemental AC mixture: AB evokes larger EOGs than its elements, while AC, A and C evoke EOGs which are similar in amplitude. This suggests synergistic vs. rather hypo-additive interactions.
between odorants in the case of configural vs. elemental mixtures and, additionally, supports that the two modes involved in odour mixture perception are engaged from the olfactory system periphery in rabbit neonates.

P11 - Mother-child bonding is related to body odor perception

Theresa Mohr¹, Juliane Junge-Hoffmeister¹, Kerstin Weidner¹, Thomas Hummel², Ilona Croy¹
ilona.croy@tu-dresden.de

¹Department of Psychotherapy and Psychosomatic Medicine, TU Dresden, Germany; ²Smell and Taste Clinic, Department of Otorhinolaryngology, TU Dresden, Germany

Interpersonal communication is shaped by the – mostly unconscious – perception of body odors. Especially the odor of babies is described as a very pleasant and rewarding experience. Aim of the study was to examine the perception of the baby’s odor in mothers with troubled and with normal bonding to their child.

In total 75 mothers and their children (0–12 months of age) were examined; 25 of those were recruited in a day hospital, specialized for mother-child bonding disorders. 50 age-matched healthy women and their children served as controls. All mothers were blindfolded to the odor of their own and stranger’s babies; they rated pleasantness, intensity and “wanting” of those odors. Further, they were asked to identify the own baby. In addition, olfactory threshold and identification ability were tested and mothers rated the bonding to their child with a standardized questionnaire.

In result, healthy mothers showed a clear preference of the own compared to a stranger’s baby odor, while mothers with troubled bonding did not. In addition, the degree of preference was correlated to the self-reported strength of bonding. Further, mothers with troubled relation could not identify their own baby, while mothers with normal relation could. General ability to smell however was similar in both groups. We conclude, that dysfunctional bonding is related to specific olfactory abnormalities, which affect the processing of baby odors, but not general olfactory function. It can be assumed, that body odor perception plays an important role in human mother-child bonding.

P12 - Bioaccumulation of heavy metals and inhibition of vesicular docking within osn in mudskipper [Pseudapocryptes lanceolatus]

Subrata Kumar De* and Swaraj Kumar Sarkar
*skdvu@yahoo.co.in

Ultrastructure and Fish Biology Research Unit, Department of Zoology, Vidyasagar University, Midnapore (West) – 721102, West Bengal, India

Olfactory neurons can respond to a wide range of chemical cues but are also vulnerable when exposed to various types of pollutants. The cytological consequences of bioaccumulation of heavy metals within olfactory sensory receptor neuron (OSN) has been studied under transmission electron microscope (TEM) attached with x-ray microanalyser in Pseudapocryptes lanceolatus (Bloch and Schneider, 1801) [Anaesthetization: MS-222, dose: 100 – 200 mg./lit.; Fixation: 2.5% glutaraldehyde and 1% osmium tetroxide in 0.1 (M) phosphate buffer (pH. 7.2 – 7.4) at 4°C for 1 hour respectively]. The different morphs of vesicles viz., small vesicles (10nm. – 20nm.), small dense core vesicles (30nm. – 40nm.), pleomorphic vesicles (40nm. – 60nm.), coated vesicles (60nm. – 70nm.), synaptic vesicles (70nm. – 90nm.), etc. are identified within the ciliated olfactory sensory receptor neuron (cOSN) [1]. These vesicles are characteristically associated with cytoskeletal structures i.e., microtubules (25nm.) and neurofilaments (10nm.). Microtubules are geometrically arranged with the major subcellular organelles like rER and Golgi apparatus in perinuclear cytoplasm, centrioles at basal body of kinocilia, axial filaments of cilia, etc. The topology of neurofilaments is also indicating its position in between the microtubular elements forming cross bridge like cytoskeletal networks for bidirectional transport of vesicular cargo as well as docking at the terminal compartment of cOSN. Bioaccumulation of heavy metals (i.e., copper, iron, nickel, cadmium, lead, etc.) causes disintegration of cytoskeletal structure in axoplasm of cOSN that inhibiting transport of vesicular cargo and lead to neuronal degeneration, etc. The detail cytology based x-ray microanalysis of heavy metals in cOSN under TEM may significant for exploring the events of metallobiology of neurodegenerative disorders in fish [2].

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P13 - Human body odors and interpersonal relationships

Camille Ferdenzi¹, Arnaud Fournel¹, Nicolas Baldovini², Moustafa Bensafi¹

camille.ferdenzi@inserm.fr

¹Lyon Neuroscience Research Center, CNRS UMRS292, INSERM U1028, University Claude Bernard Lyon 1, Lyon, France; ²Institut de Chimie de Nice, CNRS UMR 7272, Université de Nice-Sophia Antipolis, Nice, France
Social communication is one of the major functions of olfaction, but aspects of this function remain a mystery in humans. Body odors are undoubtedly important in human interpersonal relationships. Their importance shows for example through the serious consequences of olfactory loss on the quality of interactions with the beloved ones. Although the role of human body odor in mate choice and interpersonal relationships has gained scientific interest over recent decades, many aspects remain to be elucidated regarding body odor composition, relevant body odor compounds and effects on human physiology and behavior. A particular family of body odor compounds, androgen steroids, has been in the focus of many studies, but the legitimacy of such attention is questionable. Other molecules might very well serve as chemosignals in humans. Many compounds undoubtedly remain to be chemically identified. Some others, which have been identified in human sweat, would be worth investigating as candidates, such as those found in sex-specific proportions. We investigated sex differences in the perception of (±)-3-hydroxy-3-methylhexanoic acid and in its effect on person evaluation through face. The precursor of this molecule seems to be present in higher proportions in men’s than in women’s sweat. Distribution of the studied population (N=40) for threshold detection abilities was bimodal, but men and women did not significantly differ on sensitivity, on other perceptual measures (pleasantness, familiarity, irritation, affective feelings) or on verbal descriptions. In spite of this, in another study (N=40), having participants smell this odor when evaluating faces with ambiguous gender modulated gender attribution (increased perceived masculinity) in male participants only. The possible role of (±)-3-hydroxy-3-methylhexanoic acid in intra-sexual and intersexual relationships will be discussed, and preliminary results of an fMRI study involving this compound will be presented.

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P14 - Salicin Preferences in Golden Hamsters (Mesocricetus auratus)
Bradford W. Ganz, Marion E. Frank, Thomas P. Hettinger, Bradley K. Formaker
mfrank@uchc.edu
UCONN HEALTH, School of Dental Medicine, Farmington, Connecticut, USA

Hamsters may have a T2R similar to the humanT2R-16 GPCR bitter-taste receptor for salicin because hamsters behaviorally generalize the taste of salicin to quinine [1]. Salicin and saccharin concentrations (1-100mM, in half log steps) from near rodent bitter taste thresholds were tested to compare preferences for saccharin [2] and salicin across concentration series. We hypothesized (I) salicin, bitter at high concentrations, will be preferred at low concentrations, but rejected at high concentrations compared to water; (II) saccharin, sweet at low concentrations but bitter at high concentrations, will be preferred at low but not high concentrations, compared to 10mM salicin. Water, 1mM quinine and 100mM sucrose were neutral-, bitter-, sweet-preference controls. 16 hamsters were tested, 8 in each study. They had continuous access to food and were provided the choice between two 12mL centrifuge tubes, switched between left and right side every 24 hours. A new trial with a new pair of substances was conducted after 48 hours. The total experiment ran for 36 days. Percent taste-preference, based on consumption, was calculated as: (mL stimulus ingested ÷ mL total fluid ingested) X 100. Scores of less than 50% indicate avoidance; scores greater than 50% indicate preference. Results showed (1) 73% control preference for water over quinine but 75% control preference for sucrose over water. (2) 1mM and 3 mM salicin were preferred to neutral water as well as to aversive 100mM salicin (t-tests ≤5%; significance level). At higher salicin concentrations, beginning at 10mM, preference switched to water. (3) All saccharin concentrations were strongly preferred to 10mM salicin; preference for 100 mM saccharin was greater than for 1mM saccharin (t-test, p = 0.006). Conclusions: (1) At low salicin concentrations, 1mM and 3 mM, were preferred to water and may be sweet. (2) Saccharin, preferred over 10 mM salicin at all tested concentrations, was less preferred at the lowest than highest concentration (t-test, p = 0.006). (3) Testing saccharin concentrations vs. a constant concentration of purely bitter quinine (as aversive as 10 mM salicin) may further distinguish the 2 bitters.

(1) Zhao LF, Frank ME, Hettinger TP, Formaker BK. 2010. Is there more than bitter to the taste of salicin? AChemS XXXII. Abstract 400.

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P15 - Neuronal processing of malodor coverage
jfreiherr@ukaachen.de
Uniklinik RWTH Aachen, Diagnostische und Interventionelle Neuroradiologie, Pauwelsstr. 30, 52074 Aachen
Malodors and their efficient coverage are an important problem in our modern world. The aim of this experiment was to gain insights into the neuronal processing of malodor coverage. In this context, the neuronal correlates of a combination of an unpleasant and a pleasant odor and the mechanisms leading to certain physiological and behavioral responses to such mixtures were investigated using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). In particular, responses to caproic acid (CAP) as an unpleasant odorant, citral (CIT) as a pleasant odorant, and combinations thereof were evaluated. The odorant mixtures were a solution in which citral completely masked caproic acid (COMP) and a solution in which citral partially masked caproic acid (INCOMP). During the fMRI scan the task of the subject was to evaluate relative quality of the odors. We included 29 healthy and normosmic participants (age ranged from 20 to 36 years). Five participants were excluded from the fMRI analysis due to technical problems. On the behavioral level, we are able to show, that although relative quality ratings of CIT and COMP differed, perceived intensity and pleasantness did not and thus assume that CIT perceptually masked CAP in the complete mixture. On the neuronal activation level, CIT and COMP are both processed in the orbitofrontal cortex (OFC) and the precentral gyrus. Further, perception of CIT specifically activated the inferior occipital gyrus and perception of COMP specifically activated cingulate cortex. To conclude, while hedonic ratings of CIT and COMP did not differ and thus CIT can be used to perceptually mask CAP. Differences in the neuronal network involved in the processing of the odors are evident. Those differences are most evident in typical visual areas as well as areas responsible for attention processing.

P16 - Patterns of olfactory receptor gene expression in the zebrafish olfactory epithelium arise from migration of specified olfactory sensory neurons

Stefan H. Fuss, Xalid Bayramli, Ugurcan Sakizli, and Yigit Kocagöz

Bogazici University, Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics, 34342 Istanbul, Turkey

The functional architecture of the olfactory system shows a remarkable degree of similarity across phyla. For instance, individual olfactory sensory neurons (OSNs) express only a single olfactory receptor (OR) from a large genomic repertoire and axons of OSNs expressing the same OR converge onto defined glomeruli in the olfactory bulb. In addition, the pattern of OR expression appears to be non-random within the peripheral olfactory tissue in a variety of species.

In zebrafish, OSNs expressing a particular OR gene have been described to be arranged in partially overlapping concentric expression domains, closely resembling “zonal expression” in the rodent olfactory epithelium (Weth et al., 1996). Here we show that the apparent zonal organization of OR expression in zebrafish is a consequence of migration of functionally specified OSNs and is not an inherent property of molecularly defined zones laid out in the olfactory tissue.

OSNs in zebrafish are generated from two discontinuous proliferation zones located at the central and peripheral edge of the sensory epithelium. Using birthdating of OSNs by incorporation of the proliferation marker BrdU in combination with in situ hybridization for chemoreceptor and cell type-specific marker expression, we find that OSNs reach functional maturity in terms of OR expression as early as two days after they exit mitosis. Notably, OSNs express chemoreceptor genes while they are still in close proximity to their respective birth zone and subsequently invade the sensory tissue. The position of newborn OSNs shifts gradually over time and OSNs of similar age migrate as a coherent band of cells towards the center of the sensory tissue.

We propose a model by which the seemingly structured distribution of OSNs expressing the same chemoreceptor gene is generated by a combination of biased generation of different OSN subtypes, lateral migration across the sensory tissue, and limited lifetime of OSNs.

Acknowledgements: This work was supported by The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) under grant number 113T038 to SHF. Weth et al., PNAS, 1996, 93:13321-6.

P17 - Role of the nucleus accumbens in flavor recognition memory: effect of aging and D1/D5 dopamine receptors blockade

Grau-Perales, A., Morillas, E., Gómez-Chacón, B., Navarro-Expósito, A., Juan, B., Morón, I. and Gallo M.

abgrau@ugr.es

Dept. Psychobiology. Institute of Neurosciences. CIBM. University of Granada. Spain

The attenuation of neophobia to a novel flavor over repeated exposures is associated with changes in its hedonic value as the flavor becomes more palatable. Previous studies have suggested a role of the nucleus accumbens (Nacc) in processing taste palatability which is affected by aging. To explore the role of Nacc in flavor neophobia during aging, we applied c-Fos immunohistochemistry as an index of neural activity of the Nacc Core and Shell. Twenty one adult (5-month-old) and 24 aged (24-month-old) male Wistar rats were exposed to a 3% cider vinegar solution for 1, 2 or 6 consecutive days (n=7 adult and n=8 aged rats per group). Aged rats exhibited slower attenuation of flavor neophobia than adult rats.
This was consistent with the Nacc pattern of c-Fos activity. Adult rats exhibited increased Nacc Shell activity on day 2 compared to days 1 and 6, while this increase was delayed to day 6 in aged rats. Adult rats did not show differences in the number of Nacc Core c-Fos positive cells. However, increased c-Fos expression was found on day 6 compared to days 1 and 2 in the case of aged rats. This suggests that changes in the activity of neural circuits during normal aging could underlie the slower attenuation of flavor neophobia in aged rats.

Due to the increased c-Fos activity found on day two in adult rats, we then explored the implication of D1/D5 dopamine receptors in the Nacc Shell during flavor recognition memory. Forty adult (five-month-old) male Wistar rats were exposed to either water (n=18) or a 3% cider vinegar solution (n=22) for six consecutive days using 15-minute drinking sessions. They received i.c. injections of either vehicle or the D1/D5 receptors antagonist SCH23390 (1µl per hemisphere, quantity: 5µg/µl) into the Nacc Shell 15 minutes prior to the drinking session on day two (coordinates from Bregma: AP=+2mm, ML=±1,1mm and DV=-7.8mm). The behavioral results indicated a neophobic response to the vinegar solution in all the groups. The control group receiving vehicle showed an increased consumption of the vinegar solution on day two, indicating attenuation of flavor neophobia. However, those rats that received SCH23390 did not increase consumption of vinegar on day two. In addition, the groups exposed to water did not differ in consumption regardless the i.c. injection received. These results are consistent with previous reports relating the area with the acquisition of learned taste aversions and support an additional role of the nucleus accumbens shell in flavor recognition memory mediated by D1/D5 dopamine receptors.

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P18 - Sweet taste sensitivity relates to salivary leptin and food selection from a buffet meal in humans

Pengfei Han1,2 and Eugeni Roura1*

*e.roura@uq.edu.au

1Centre for Nutrition and Food Sciences, The University of Queensland, Australia; 2Interdisciplinary Centre “Smell & Taste”, Department of Otorhinolaryngology, Technische Universität Dresden, Dresden, Germany

Macronutrient / food intake in humans has been related to variations on bitter and fatty acid taste sensitivities in humans. However, much less is known regarding how sweet taste sensitivity may affect food appetite. The current study aimed at assessing the impact of sweet taste sensitivity on hedonic and satiety responses to soup preloads and on food selection from a buffet meal in healthy human subjects. In a randomized crossover design whereby 30 young adult subjects (aged 24.2 ± 0.9 years, Body mass index: 21.7 ± 0.4; mean ± SEM) were offered one of three iso-energetic preloads consisting of a common soup base differing in taste quality: sweet, umami or no-taste control. A washout period of one week was established between any two test days. Individual sweet sensitivity was assessed using a 9mM sucrose one-solution method. The subjects were separated into two groups named as the sweet sensitive (SS, n=19) and non-sweet sensitive (NSS, n=11). At 60 min after the preload consumption, subjects were offered an ad libitum buffet which consisted of multiple food items varying in taste (sweet or savoury) and fat content (high or low). Subjective measures included appetite and satiety ratings (sensory specific satiety –SSS-). In addition, salivary leptin concentration was measured at arrival. Compared to NSS, the SS cohort had lower salivary leptin concentrations (p < 0.001), weaker umami SSS after consuming umami tasting soup and stronger sweet SSS after the sweet soup (p < 0.05). In addition, SS consumed more protein and fat, but less carbohydrate (expressed as percentage of total energy) from the buffet than NSS (p < 0.01), which contributed to the higher total energy intakes in the SS group (p < 0.01). In conclusion, SS subjects had lower salivary leptin concentrations and consumed more energy, as well as more fat and protein, but less carbohydrate from the buffet meal than the NSS subjects. This increase in fat and energy consumption over time could contribute to a positive energy balance and pose a risk of weight gain. The study was registered at anzctr.org.au as ACTRN12615001129572

P19 - A generic microfluidic biosensor of G protein-coupled receptor activation

Maurice Henquet, Margriet Roelse, Norbert de Ruijter and Maarten Jongsm

Maurice.Henquet@wur.nl

BU Bioscience, Wageningen UR, Wageningen, The Netherlands

During consumption of food and drinks by humans, signalling processes are triggered by a specific activation of G-protein coupled receptors (GPCR). This project aims to mimic on a chip the sensory capability of human smell and taste receptors and evaluate their activation by the wide range of ligands present in food products and plants. To reach this goal we functionally express taste and smell receptors in human cells. Cells expressing taste receptors are assembled into a flowcell and attached to a pump system which is mounted on a fluorescent microscope for analysis. This creates a microfluidic biosensor that enables direct detection of GPCR activation by monitoring dynamics in cytosolic calcium ion concentration using a genetically encoded calcium ion sensor. The biosensor platform is generic for all G-protein
coupled receptors which use calcium as second messenger in their signalling pathway. Expressing taste and/or smell receptors generates a biosensor capable of determining taste aspects of food products or purified food/plant compounds. Finding novel ligands will improve our understanding of the complex sensory mechanism of taste and smell, and opens possibilities for new developments in food and agricultural sectors.

Reference

P20 - How does Saliva Secretion and Composition Respond to Trigeminally Active Compounds?
Jack Houghton1, Gordon Proctor1, Guy Carpenter1, Jakob Ley2, Manuel Pesaro2, Joachim Hans2
jack.houghton@kcl.ac.uk
1King’s College London, London, UK; 2Symrise AG, Holzminden, Germany
Identifying compounds that increase salivary flow and modify salivary composition in a desirable way is relevant for the development of treatments for chronic dry mouth (xerostomia). Flavour compounds in the oral cavity can interact with chemosensory receptors to cause reflex salivation, increase salivary secretion and potentially modify saliva composition. One group of flavour compounds can interact with Transient Receptor Potential (TRP) channels which are expressed in the oral cavity in a number of cell types. In the present study TRP agonist-TRP channel interactions in the oral cavity and the effects on salivation were investigated.

Healthy volunteers rinsed for 30 sec with 10 mL of different mouth rinses containing a TRP agonist - menthol, cinnamaldehyde or nonivamide. Either whole mouth saliva (WMS) or separate parotid gland and non-parotid gland salivas were collected following the mouth rinse and flow rates determined. The qualitative and quantitative protein composition of collected salivas were analysed using SDS-PAGE followed by protein staining and western blotting, and quantitative proteomics respectively. Intracellular calcium signaling in TRP channel expressing CHO cells and in salivary gland epithelial SMG-C6 cells in response to TRP agonists were assayed using Ca2+-imaging.

One ppm nonivamide (TRPV1 agonist) and 500 ppm menthol (TRPM8 agonist) were demonstrated to increase salivary flow rate for 1 min after a 30s mouth rinse, whereas cinnamaldehyde (TRPA1 agonist) failed to elicit an increase even at high concentrations (300 ppm) (contradiction with FOP-abstract). Changes in salivary protein composition after the different mouth rinses were demonstrated.

The tested compounds showed multiple interactions with the TRP channels investigated in this study.

It can be concluded that nonivamide and menthol but not cinnamaldehyde can illicit salivary secretion. The protein composition of saliva changes in response to nonivamide mouth rinse. The intracellular calcium assays showed multiple TRP agonist-TRP channel interactions.

P21 - Motility of developing taste bud cells.
Marina Soulika, Marika Kapsimali
marika.kapsimali@ens.fr
IBENS, INSERM U1024, CNRS UMR8197, Ecole Normale Superieure, Paris, France
We have recently shown (1) that developing taste bud cells including intermediate progenitors (expressing an fgf8a enhancer) and taste receptor cells (Type II) are displaced in a confined, random or directed mode relative to the 5-HT cell. All these types of displacement are observed during the period of organ assembly, in cells within the taste bud organ, cells within the epithelium that join a taste bud and cells that are displaced from one organ to another.

A distinct case is that of intermediate progenitors (expressing an fgf8a enhancer), located in the oropharyngeal epithelium which join taste bud organs in a directed mode (migration) and are maintained within the organ. In this case, asc11a activity and the 5-HT cell are required for the directed motility of intermediate progenitor cells and their maintenance within the taste bud, respectively.

We would like to understand the ‘why and how’ of the variety in cell motility during taste bud assembly. We are currently developing tools to address hypotheses on candidate molecules involved in displacement and the functional significance of diversity in motility of taste bud cells.


P22 - Analysis of Statistics and Semantic Relations of Odor-Describing Words in Written Olfactory Versus Non-Olfactory Contexts
Georgios Iatropoulos, Jonas Olofsson, Pawel Herman, Anders Lansner, Maria Larsson
georgios.iatropoulos@psychology.su.se
Gösta Ekman Laboratory, Department of Psychology, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden; Computational Brain Science Lab, Department of Computational Science and Technology, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden; Stockholm Brain Institute, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden; Department of Numerical Analysis and Computer Science, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden
In comparison to the performance in visual object identification tasks, humans greatly underperform when it comes to naming odors. The poor ability in humans to identify olfactory stimuli has since long been established in psychophysical research; yet, the root cause of this peculiar shortcoming remains essentially unknown. Two primary explanations have been hypothesized: The first posits that poor odor naming is a consequence of neuroanatomical constraints limiting the sensory processing ability of cortical olfactory systems as well as their communication with cortical regions responsible for lexical and semantic representations. In contrast, the second hypothesis proposes that inability to name odors is caused by a mixture of social, cultural, and linguistic factors, whereby humans fail to learn strong and well-defined odor-word associations due to a lack of sufficiently odor-specific lexical labels combined with a negligence of accurate and consistent odor descriptions in everyday written and verbal communication. In this study, we attempt to disentangle and quantify the premise of the latter hypothesis. By applying computational linguistic techniques for semantic content analysis on a corpus of tens of millions of documents published online on a wide variety of topics, we quantify the semantic content, semantic similarity and usage frequency of a set of odor-descrpiptor words used in a previous psychophysical study to classify odors (Dravnieks, 1985). Crucially, we disambiguate between the semantic content in olfactory and non-olfactory contexts, allowing for an estimation of the semantic ambiguity (number of different meanings attributed to the word), olfactory ambiguity (number of types of smells related to the word), commonness (relative frequency in all contexts), and odor applicability (relative frequency in olfactory contexts) of the odor descriptors. These metrics are compared to the applicability values of the descriptors as reported in Dravnieks’ dataset (1985).

P23 - Thalamic-amygdaloid circuit and aging influence in gustatory memory

Juan-Cordoba B, Morillas E, Gómez-Chacón B Y, Gallo M.

bjuancordoba@correo.ugr.es

Department of Psychobiology, Institute of Neurosciences. Center for Biomedical Research (CIBM), University of Granada. Spain

Habituation of taste neophobia is defined as a reduction of the initial neophobic response as a novel taste is presented in repeated exposures while it becomes familiar. This process evidences the formation of a safe taste memory. Previous data pointed to the implication of the gustatory thalamus and of the amygdala in the habituation of taste neophobia. In addition, it has been proposed a potential role for the non-relay intralaminar thalamic nuclei in codifying salient events related with feeding behaviour. Among these nuclei the central medial thalamic nucleus (CM) has projections to different amygdala nuclei, including the central nucleus (CeA). In order to explore a potential role of the thalamic-amygdaloid connection in the habituation of taste neophobia, we examined the activity of the CM and the CeA in male adult Wistar rats while they were drinking a novel vinegar solution (3%) the first (Novel), second (Familiar I) or the sixth day (Familiar II). Given the fact that previous reports indicated that aging modifies the pattern of neural activity during taste memory, we also assessed aged (24-month-old) Wistar rats. Both age groups exhibited habituation of vinegar neophobia although it was delayed in old rats. In adult rats both CM and CeA exhibited an increase in Fos-like immunoreactivity after the consumption of the most familiar solution (Familiar II), indicating the same pattern of activation. These results support the involvement of both CM and CeA in the habituation of taste neophobia. In contrast, the CM-CeA taste familiarity increase was absent in aged rats. Also, aging was related with changes in the taste-induced regional CeA activity pattern. In all, the similar pattern of activation might indicate that a thalamic-amygdaloid circuit, which is modulated by aging, underlies the long-term maintenance of a safe taste memory.

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P24 - Induced Pluripotent Stem Cell Derived Olfactory Receptor Neurons

Moritz Klingenstein1, Stefanie Raab1, Stefan Liebau1

moritz.klingenstein@uni-tuebingen.de

1Institute of Neuroanatomy and Developmental Biology, Eberhard Karls University Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany

The inner cell mass of early embryos can be isolated as embryonic stem cells (ESCs) and have the potential to proliferate and to differentiate into all three germ layers. The over-expression of specific factors leads to a reprogramming of somatic cells to induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) which are like the ESCs pluripotent and have a high proliferative potential. With the iPSC model it is not only possible to create patient specific cell lines to investigate diseases, it is also feasible to differentiate and characterize specific cell types which are not easily to be obtained like neurons or in our case olfactory receptor neurons (ORNs).

For reprogramming we use keratinocytes from plucked human hair as somatic cell source. This method is a well-established non-invasive possibility to gain cell samples for reprogramming compared to the widely used method with human skin fibroblasts. After approximately four weeks after infection with a lentivirus containing the four reprogramming factors OCT4, SOX2, KLF4 and c-MYC, iPSC colonies can be characterized for pluripotency via staining and germlayer differentiation.
A lot of neuronal differentiation protocols are available, but until now there is none for ORNs. Our new established protocol includes several adherent and suspension steps with addition of various factors at different time points, mimicking the development of the ORNs, to achieve a higher amount of ORNs in our final neuronal culture.

The ORNs in the neuronal culture were characterized via diverse methods like qRT-PCR and immunofluorescence for specific markers like OMP (olfactory marker protein) and functional assays like odorant depending calcium-imaging and electrophysiological experiments.

We reprogrammed keratinocytes from plucked human hair to iPSCs and differentiated those to a neuronal culture with an increased amount of ORNs and proved their function with calcium responses after odorant stimulation.

**P25 - Russian Smell Identification Test**

Maria A. Klyuchnikova¹, Anna Voznesenskaya¹², Elena I. Rodionova¹², Vera V. Voznesenskaya¹

klyuchnikova@gmail.com

¹A.N. Severtsov Institute of Ecology & Evolution, Moscow, Russia; ²A.A. Kharkевич Institute for Information Transmission Problems, Moscow, Russia

Olfactory dysfunction can severely affect a person’s quality of life, lead to poor nutritional choices and even poses a safety concern. Moreover, development of several serious neurodegenerative disorders, such as Parkinson’s and Alzheimer disease, are hallmarked by a decline in individual’s ability to smell and identify the odors at the early stages of the disease. Thus, evaluation of the olfactory function has been proposed as a method that may help to diagnose these disorders early, at the stages when the medical intervention is the most effective. However, up to this day no standardized test for evaluation of olfactory function in Russian population has been developed. To rectify this oversight, we conducted a study aimed at adapting The University of Pennsylvania Smell Identification Test (UPSIT) for the population of Central Russia. UPSIT is a widely used scratch and sniff odor identification test initially developed by Richard Doty and colleagues targeting US population. Subsequently the test was successfully modified to be used in several other populations, Italy and Brazil among others, adjusting for cultural differences in familiarity with certain odors and smells.

Our study sample included over two hundred people (17–83 years old, median age of 24.5 years) living either in a big city or in a small rural town in Central Russia. Median test score in the group of participants aged 17–59 years (n=172) was 34 out of 40 items (50th percentile - 28). These numbers are in line with the original test criteria for inclusion of odor items. Less than 50% of the test subjects correctly identified five odors: “lime”, “fruit punch”, “lilac”, “cheddar” and “grass”. The most frequent alternate for “fruit punch” was “soap” (95% of respondents) which allowed us to rename the odorant to “soap”, not excluding it from the test. To preserve the original number of test items, seven odor samples were suggested as potential substitutes by UPSIT manufacturer and were tested in 86 adult subjects from different age groups and places of residence. “Garlic”, “grapefruit”, “rubber tire” and “coffee” odor samples were selected to replace unidentifiable odorants based on the threshold of 75% correct responses. Our data demonstrate that the modified version of the UPSIT could be successfully used for the assessment of olfactory function in Central Russia population. Further studies will be aimed at collecting normative data on the adapted version of the UPSIT and assessing its validity for early diagnostics of neurodegenerative disorders in Russian Population.

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**P26 - How do we use olfactory information effectively? -from behavioral experiment and brain imaging-**

Tatsu Kobayakawa and Naomi Gotow

kobayakawa-tatsu@aist.go.jp

Human Technology Research Institute, National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), Tsukuba Central 6, 1-1-1 Higashi, Tsukuba, Ibaraki 305–8566, Japan

Needless to say, the ability of olfactory perception will be improved by training. It is, however, still unclear which training method is better than others. In this study, we explored whether the performance of olfactory three-point identification test was changed by giving two types olfactory hints. And also, rCBF was measured by fMRI during these tasks.

We prepared three flavor components by bubbling soy source, kombu (kelp) soup stock and bonito soup stock. These flavors are frequently used in Japanese cuisine, therefore were familiar to all participants. We prepared two flavor samples A and B. A was composed 2L/min. soy source and 4L/min bonito soup stock bubbling. B was composed 1L/min. soy source, 2L/min bonito soup stock and 3L/min kombu soup stock bubbling.

Participants (n=46) were instructed to select one sample different from other two samples for seven trials as former session. And after this, they were presented hint flavor three times. Kombu stock flavor was presented as hint flavor into half participants (target focus condition), and soy source flavor was presented into another half participants (residual focus condition). After these presentations, we repeated seven trials as latter session. Before each trial, we presented hint flavor in latter session. EPI (TR=3s) were acquired during all these sessions, in MRI magnet.

Correct answer rate increased comparing former and latter session in 19 participants, no change in 10, and decreased in 17 participants. Participants under target focus condition
were included in correct answer increasing group significantly, than decreasing one, which implied additional information (hint) will not always improve the olfactory performance.

EPI analysis performed comparing former session and latter one, using performance increasing group (In) and no change group (No). There was no difference in frontal lobe, between “In” and “No” group. There found, on the other hand, differential activation in occipital area (including visual cortices) in only “No” group, and found difference in posterior cingulate gyrus in only “In” group. These results showed that different strategy was performed between “In” and “No” group. Precise analysis will be performed from now on.

P27 - Distinct stem / progenitor cell populations contribute to two different modes of neurogenesis in the adult zebrafish olfactory epithelium

Yigit Kocagöz, Xalid Bayramli, Serdar Çapar, Burak Bali, and Stefan H. Fuss

yigilantis@gmail.com

Bogazici University, Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics, Istanbul, Turkey

Regeneration and replacement of lost neurons is a limited process in the post-developmental nervous system. The peripheral olfactory epithelium (OE) is a curious exception to this limitation as olfactory sensory neurons have a limited life span and are constantly replaced to maintain a sense of smell. In addition to maintenance of the neuronal population by perpetual neurogenesis, the OE is also capable of mounting efficient regenerative responses to acute injury. There is growing evidence that different stem / progenitor cell populations and molecular mechanisms contribute to neurogenesis under maintenance and repair conditions (e.g. Leung et al., 2007).

We use chemical ablation of the OE by nasal irrigation with Triton X-100 (Iqbal and Byrd-Jacobs, 2010) in zebrafish to examine differences and similarities between these two modes of neurogenesis. Using the proliferation marker BrdU we find that maintenance neurogenesis in unperturbed OE tissue is provided by proliferative fields at the center and the peripheral edge of the OE flanking the inner sensory tissue. In contrast, damage of sensory neurons by Triton X-100 treatment induces neurogenic proliferation throughout the sensory region of the OE. Using immunohistochemistry against the pan-neuronal marker HuC/D following Triton X-100-induced degeneration of the OE, we observe that the neuronal population declines to about 12 ± 9 % of its original value by 24h and that it recovers morphologically and quantitatively by 7 days following the insult. Double marker incorporation before and after chemical damage suggests that distinct stem / progenitor cell populations located at the periphery of and within the sensory aspect of the OE contribute to neurogenesis under maintenance and repair conditions, respectively. However, the nature and organization of these stem / progenitor cell populations in the zebrafish OE are elusive.

As a first approach to characterize non-neuronal cells in the zebrafish OE, including potential stem / progenitor cell populations, we employed immunohistochemistry and in situ hybridization against candidate stem cell markers, such as Sox2 and ∆NP63 that have been described in the rodent OE to selectively label globose and horizontal basal cells, respectively. Sox2- and ∆NP63-immunoreactive cells can be identified as continuous bands of cells throughout the basal OE. Most, if not all, Sox2-positive cells also label positive for the sustentacular cell marker cytokeratin II. Interestingly, Sox2-positive cells show proliferative activity at the central and peripheral edge of the OE in unperturbed tissue and throughout the sensory region of the OE upon Triton X-100-induced regeneration. This observation raises the hypothesis that a subpopulation of sustentacular glia cells in the zebrafish OE maintains stem / progenitor cell properties and actively contributes to neurogenesis.

To gain insight into the differential regulation of regenerative neurogenesis, we used RNA-seq transcriptome profiling over the time course of de- and regeneration to identify signaling pathways that may selectively regulate stem / progenitor cell proliferation following tissue injury. Among those, wnt-, egf-, and ∆NP63-regulated pathways appear to be significantly upregulated at time points that coincide with increased proliferative activity. We are currently verifying the contribution of the identified signaling pathways by functional assays using specific agonists and antagonists. As a preliminary result, induction of the wnt pathway using systemic or nasal administration of LiCl induces proliferative activity in the OE that closely resembles the pattern of proliferation observed upon tissue damage.

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P28 - Cross-fostering of Mus musculus and M. spicilegus: Effect on response to conspecific odors

Elena Kotenkova, Alexander Ambaryan, Alexey Maltsev

evkotenkova@yandex.ru

Severtsov Institute of Problems of Ecology and Evolution RAS, Moscow, Russia

Results of investigations concerned of preferences of con- and heterospecific odors of cross-fostering house mice are contradictory. According to some authors male and female mice, weaned by females of other species of rodents prefer odor of individuals of cross-fostered species in comparison with conspecific odor (Quadagno, Banks, 1970; Sokolov, Kotenkova, 1987). According to other authors response to the odor of con- and heterospecifics does not change (Kirchhof-Glazier, 1979; Wuensh, 1992). To determine the role of maternal environment in the development of adult
olfactory preference, pups of two species of mice (Mus musculus and M. spicilegus) were reciprocally cross-fostered shortly after birth. At 30 days of age all pups were weaned and isolated in individual plastic cages. At 2 months of age all mice were tested for response to con- and heterospecific urine odors in two-choice tests (in their home cages by introducing two 35 mm Petri dishes as sources of odors). Mice of control (non-fostered) groups investigated urine odors of conspecifics significantly longer in all presented combinations. Cross-fostered M. musculus and M. spicilegus showed increased preference for heterospecific odor (M. musculus weaned at 6 days of age) or showed no preference (M. musculus weaned at 3–4 days of age and all M. spicilegus regardless of weaning age). These results suggest that adult species-specific odor preferences are learned during the neonatal period. We compare these results with those of other authors. In the future, we plan to explore the significance of different forms of learning modifying response to con- and heterospecific odors and neuronal activity of some regions of brain in control and cross-fostered individuals. Research were supported by the grant of the Russian Science Foundation (project №16-14-10269).

Literature cited

P29 - Divergence of the Olfactory Signals in Subspecies of the House Mouse Mus musculus

Elena Kotenkova¹, Aleksei Mal’tsev¹, Alexander Romachenko², Mikhail Moshkin²
evkotenkova@yandex.ru
¹Severtsov Institute of Problems of Ecology and Evolution RAS, Moscow, Russia; ²Institute of Cytology and Genetics, Siberian Branch of RAS, Novosibirsk

The differences of olfactory signals in forms at early stages of divergence may be the first step of the development of their reproductive isolation. In many rodent species, including house mice, olfactory signals play the main role in various types of behavior. Individuals of allopatric, parapatric, and sympatric species of house mice Mus musculus s.l. species group can distinguish odors of conspecifics from heterospecifics of closely related taxa. (Kotenkova et al., 1989; Christophe and Baudoin, 1998; Kotenkova and Naidenko, 1999). The aim of our study was to evaluate the divergence in olfactory signals related to the mechanisms of precopulatory reproductive isolation in three subspecies of M. musculus (Mus musculus musculus, M. m. wagneri, M.m.gansuensis). In the first experiment males of three subspecies investigated urine odor of estrus and anestrus females in two-choice test. To confirm the data obtained with this method and to reinterpret the results, samples mouse urine were presented to humans, who were used as odor detectors. Our results (from experiments with both mice and humans) have shown that wagneri urine odor different from the urine odor of the other two subspecies. To compare neuronal activation in MOB and AOB MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) namely MEMRI (manganese-enhanced magnetic resonance imaging) method was used. Male mice S57B/6J (M.domesticus) were exposed to the odor of estrus and anestrus female S57B/6J, M.m.musculus and M.m.wagneri. The odor of urine of conspecific estrus or anestus female (M.domesticus) caused greater activation in AOB than the odor of closely related subspecies (M. musculus). Differences of neuronal activation in the MOB were less pronounced. The least pronounced activation in the olfactory bulbs was observed in response to the odor of urine female M. m. wagneri. Our results confirm the divergence of olfactory cues in subspecies of M. musculus. In previous studies we demonstrated c-fos expression in AOB in two sympatric species M. domesticus and M. spicilegus males in response to stimulation with estrous female urine of conspecifics, but we did not observed c-fos expression in AOB in response to stimulation with estrous female urine from heterospecific females. The role of olfactory cues as isolating mechanisms is discussed.

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Literature cited
P30 - Identification of novel natural sweet taste modulating compounds

Christina Kuhn1,2, Marcel Winnig1,2, Jens Bitzer1, Thomas Henkel2,3
christina.kuhn.ck@axxam.com

1Axxam SpA, Bresso (MI), Italy; 2IMAX Discovery GmbH, Dortmund, Germany; 3IMD Natural Solutions GmbH, Dortmund, Germany

Sweet taste is an undeniably attractive sensation for humans and signals foods that provide energy and essential nutrients. As a consequence, sugar is often added to foods to fulfill consumer’s demands in taste and satisfaction. In recent times, however, added sugar has come under scrutiny as driver for obesity and diseases such as cardiovascular diseases and diabetes. To reduce the content of sugar in foods while retaining their appealing sweet taste without off-notes, addition of non-caloric and preferentially natural compounds that enhance the sweet perception of low amounts of sugar might prove an ideal solution.

Here, we report the identification of a class of plant-derived compounds exhibiting a significant and pleasant enhancement of the sweet taste of sucrose. Based on a combination of bioprofiling together with structural homology data analyses of our natural product library NatPure, a small targeted library of natural compounds was tested on our proprietary cellular Novel Sweet Taste Modifier Platform (“NSweeT”), which was genetically engineered to endogenously express the human sweet taste receptor. The natural compounds were assayed for activity as both agonists and/or enhancers of the human sweet taste receptor. In the course of this testing, we identified one compound, IMAX-005681, to specifically enhance the agonist activity of sugars and sweeteners on the sweet taste receptor while not activating the receptor on its own. Subsequently, several chemically related analogues and congeners were also tested on the assay with some found to be active as enhancers as well, thereby identifying a structure-activity relationship comprising a common structural motif. Furthermore, a preliminary taste assessment on IMAX-005681 involving a small human sensory panel was carried out, confirming the enhancement of the sweet taste of sucrose in human subjects.

These results thus emphasize the high potentials of our natural product collections and our novel NSweeT assay platform in the identification of novel natural sweet tasting or sweet taste enhancing compounds.

P31 - Search for novel odorant receptor (OR) enhancers in the mouse genome using genetic, epigenetic, and evolutionary signatures

Robert Lane
rlane@wesleyan.edu

Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT, USA

Previous work has demonstrated that the expression of a number of Olfactory Receptor genes (“ORs”) is regulated by a series of DNA elements termed Locus Control Regions (“LCRs”). As opposed to conventional enhancer elements which up-regulate the expression of a single gene, LCRs are able to trigger the expression of multiple proximal genes in a single locus. Crucially, prior research has shown that knocking out an LCR sequence results in the total loss of expression of a set of proximal ORs. In turn, this suggests that the interaction between an LCR with its cognate promoters may be necessary for the establishment of monogenic OR expression from a repertoire of more than 1000 ORs in a given developing mouse neuron. In line with the canonical epigenetic signature of enhancer elements, a recent study employed tissue-specific genome-wide H3K4me1 and H3K27ac ChIP-Seq data in conjunction with DNase Hypersensitivity-Seq enrichment to identify 33 candidate LCRs in OR gene clusters (2). In recognition of the vast size of the mouse OR gene family and data suggesting that LCRs regulate only on the order of 10 proximal ORs in cis, there are almost certainly more LCRs that can be computationally identified with a more nuanced analysis incorporating a broader range of criteria. An algorithm has been thus designed to combine the aforementioned genome-wide epigenetic data with H3K79me3 ChIP-Seq signal, sequence conservation, and predicted transcription factor binding motifs using a scoring system to best distinguish additional candidate LCRs from non-regulatory intergenic sequence in OR loci. Reassuringly, virtually all of these newly predicted regions preside in clusters that lack a previously determined LCR. Moreover, some of these predicted sequences are located proximal to sets of genes that have similar levels of expression in a clonal cell line population. The identification of new LCRs promises to help better understand the extent to which such cis regulatory mechanisms are necessary for the choice of an OR for monogenic expression.


P32 - Lysine-specific demethylase-1 (LSD1) depletion disrupts monogenic and monoallelic odorant receptor (OR) expression in an olfactory neuronal cell line

Robert Lane
rlane@wesleyan.edu

Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT, USA

Function of the mammalian olfactory system depends on specialized olfactory sensory neurons (OSNs) that each express only one allele (“monoallelic”) of one odorant receptor (OR) gene (“monogenic”). The lysine-specific demethylase-1 (LSD1) protein removes activating H3K4 or silencing H3K9 methylation marks in a variety of developmental contexts, and is thought to be important for proper OR regulation. Most of the focus in the field has been on a potential “activating” function for LSD1; e.g., in the demethylation of H3K9 associated with the expressed OR allele. Here we show that depletion of LSD1 in an immortalized olfactory-placode-derived cell line (OP6) results in multigenic and multiallelic OR transcription per cell, while not seemingly disrupting the ability of these cells to activate new OR genes during clonal expansion. These results are consistent with LSD1 having a role in silencing additional OR alleles, as opposed to being required for the activation of OR alleles, within the OP6 cellular context.

P33 - Pheromones: a response to future sustainable farming. The example of the male effect

Chrystelle Le Danvic1, Marina Dillenbourgh1, Laurent Schibler1, Patricia Nagnan-Le Meillour2
chrystelle.ledanvic@allice.fr

1ALLICE, 149 rue de Bercy F 75000 Paris, France; 2Univ. Lille, CNRS UMR8576, INRA USC1409, UGSF, Unité de Glycobiologie Structurale et Fonctionnelle, F 59000, Lille, France

In farm animals, as in the entire animal kingdom, exchange of chemical cues or pheromones play a major role in numerous reproductive behaviours. Indeed, olfactory cues have been shown to influence sexual attraction, estrus induction and indication, puberty acceleration, hormonal stimulation, and libido enhancement. In a changing and challenging agricultural world, the use of such molecules could participate to the development of new breeding management tools in line with a more sustainable farming and a more respectful animal welfare. Easy and fast, without any invasive procedure on the animal, pheromones respond to societal concerns appealing to both farmers and consumers. During the past decades, efforts were concentrated on the identification of cattle pheromones. Several molecules identified in urine, faeces or saliva of cows have been characterized as sexual pheromones emitted specifically during oestrus. One combination of cow urinary molecules identified in our laboratory enhanced bull libido and semen production (Pherobull®; Le Danvic et al., 2015).

These researches have attracted the attention of two other livestock sectors, sheep and goat. In these two season species, the introduction of a sexually active male in an anoestrus female herd induces a surge of LH leading to ovulation. This process conventionally used by breeders in their flock, known as “male effect”, allows the control reproduction and appears to be also an interesting alternative to the use of hormone. Male effect depended predominantly on olfactory stimuli generated by the male (Okamura & Mori, 2005; Cohen-Tanoudji et al., 1994). If some potentially involved molecules have previously been identified (Cohen-Tanoudji et al., 1994; Murata et al., 2014), the complete signal (those inducing ovulation) remains to be clearly characterized. Using an original approach based on the comparison of olfactory profiles of males during non-reproductive and reproductive periods, we undertook the complete “male effect” pheromones characterization in French breeds. First results clearly highlight variations of olfactory profiles during the season. Indeed specific ram and bulk olfactory profiles have been observed during the period of maximal sexual activity with appearance of numerous molecules (ethyl esters, ketones, … - chemical identification still on-going).

If potential chemical cues are identified, more work is needed to validate their biological activity and to find the best way to use them in a farm context. This task proves to be a new exciting challenge. But without doubt, male effect pheromones seem to be a promising response to the limitation of hormone used to synchronize cycle in sheep and goat, which would lead to a more sustainable livestock’s management.

P34 - Aroma volatile odorous metabolites at olfactory mucosa level evidenced by in vitro and in vivo PTR-MS studies

Rachel Schoumacker, Aline Robert-Hazotte, Etienne Sémon*, Elisabeth Guichard, Jean-Marie Heydel, Philippe Faure, Jean-Luc Le Quéré*
jllequere@dijon.inra.fr

Centre des Sciences du Goût et de l’Alimentation (CSGA), CNRS, INRA, Université de Bourgogne Franche-Comté, and *CSGA ChemoSens Platform, F-21000 Dijon, France

Olfactory mucosa can metabolize odorants through various enzymatic mechanisms of the Xenobiotic Metabolism Enzymes (XMEs) pathway, participating in odorants clearance and therefore in the termination of the olfactory signal [1]. Ex-vivo methodology using headspace-gas chromatography (HS-GC) was developed to measure odorant
olfactory metabolism and revealed the formation of volatile metabolites when odorant molecules were injected above a fresh explant of rabbit olfactory mucosa (OM) [2]. Preliminary studies conducted with rat OM afforded the same results. However, this method did not allow accessing the data during the first five minutes of contact between the odorant and the mucosa, thus limiting the olfactory biological significance. Using a direct-injection mass spectrometry technique (Proton Transfer Reaction Mass Spectrometry, PTR-MS) we have been able for the first time to investigate the first moments of the enzymatic process of the metabolic capacity of ex-vivo rat OM in real time [3]. The protocol used a discontinuous sampling in headspace vials containing a fresh explant of rat OM in which a known concentration of the volatile ethyl acetate was injected in the gas phase [3].

The current study will present the results of a continuous monitoring obtained by implementing a two-way circuit connected to the PTR-MS instrument that allows direct odorant delivery either above the biological material or in the second branch serving as a control. Injection of ethyl acetate as model odorant above an ex-vivo rat OM resulted in immediate apparition of ethanol, the known main volatile metabolite produced by carboxylesterases. Using various food-grade odorous substrates pertaining to the dairy-fatty sensory context (the diketones pentane-2,3-dione, hexane-2,3-dione, hexane-3,4-dione, and 2-acetoxybutanone), we have been able to demonstrate that they can be metabolized by an ex-vivo olfactory mucosa within seconds, producing volatile metabolites that have been identified. Significance for human olfaction has been investigated in an in vivo approach combining nasal odorant delivery and nosespace analysis with the PTR-MS instrument. Production of volatile metabolites, confirmed to be odorous in a HS-GC-Olfactometry experiment, will be discussed in terms of their potential impact on overall sensory perception.

P35 - Palatability of three basic tastes in a cross-species approach

Emilie A. Leclerc¹, Magali Fournier¹, Aurélie De Ratuld¹, Daniel J. Long², R. Kyle Palmer²

e.leclerc@diana-petfood.com

¹Diana Pet Food, Elven, France; ²Opertech Bio, Inc. Philadelphia, PA, United States

Taste sensitivities across mammalian species are thought to depend on feeding strategies shaped by evolution. A growing body of evidence obtained from wild species occupying different environmental and behavioral niches supports this notion. Yet surprisingly little has been documented on the taste sensitivities of domestic cats and dogs, companion animals of substantial social and commercial significance. Consequently we have conducted a series of palatability tests focusing on 3 basic taste categories (salty, sour, and bitter) in cats and dogs, and compared the results to those obtained in similar studies of an omnivorous mammal animal model — Rattus norvegicus. Twelve tastants, 4 from each basic taste category, each were examined at 3 concentrations. Palatability in cats and dogs was evaluated by monadic consumption of tastant solutions relative to water; and in rats by a high throughput operant taste system. In the salty category, NaCl was appetitive, whereas K₂SO₄ was aversive, to all 3 species, but at lower concentration for rats (30 mM) compared to cats and dogs (100 mM). Other ionic compounds tested in this category (KCl, and NH₄Cl) were aversive to rats but had no effect on cats and dogs. Therefore, rats seem to be more sensitive to salty tastants than cats and dogs. Among the sour stimulants, organic acids (citric, lactic, and ascorbic) were aversive at 100 mM to all species. In contrast the inorganic phosphoric acid was neutral to rats at all concentrations, appetitive to cats at 1 mM, and aversive to both cats and dogs at 10 mM. Species-specific differences were most evident in the bitter category — although quinine was commonly rejected at all concentration tested, responses (whether aversive, neutral, or appetitive) to denatonium benzoate, naringin, and L-phenylalanine were observed to be both species- and concentration-dependent. Together, our data reveal for the first time some commonalities in the taste sensitivities across cats, dogs and rats, especially regarding sour tastants, that could be relevant to the development of food for companion animals.

P36 - Involvement of TRPA1 in the inhibition of adipogenesis, but not the maturation of 3T3-L1 adipocytes by pellitorine

Barbara Lieder¹,², Mathias Zaunschirm¹,², Ann-Katrin Holik¹,², Joachim Hans¹, Sabine Widder¹, Jakob P. Ley¹, Gerhard E. Krammer³ and Veronika Somoza¹,²

¹Christian Doppler Laboratory for Bioactive Aroma compounds, University of Vienna, Althanstrasse
Adipose tissue is an important endocrine organ in the human body, however, pathological overgrowth is also associated with chronic illness such as coronary heart disease or type 2 diabetes mellitus. Therefore, regulation of adipogenesis and maturation of adipocytes via bioactive compounds in our daily diet has been in focus of research in the past years. For example, several trigeminal active amides such as piperlonguminine, capsaicin and nonivamide have been demonstrated to modulate lipid accumulation during differentiation and maturation of murine preadipocytes (3T3-L1). Here, we investigated the anti-adipogenic potential of the structurally related and tingling alkamide pellitorine present in *Piper nigrum* in 3T3-L1 cells as a model.

Addition of pellitorine suppressed lipid accumulation, which was assessed by oil red O staining, when applied during differentiation, but also during maturation of 3T3-L1 cells in a concentration range between 1 nM and 1 µM by up to 8.84 ± 4.97% or 7.49 ± 5.08% respectively. In addition, the transient receptor potential channel (TRP) V1 inhibitor trans-tert-butyl-cyclohexanol diminished the effects of pellitorine on adipogenesis and maturation of the adipocytes, while addition of AP-18 as inhibitor for TRP A1 only blocked the effect of pellitorine on adipogenesis, but not on maturation. These effects were further investigated on a mechanistic level, suggesting the following signaling pathway for the anti-adipogenic activity of pellitorine: Inhibition of adipogenesis is mediated by TRP V1 and TRP A1, which is associated with a decreased PPARg expression on gene and protein level. PPARg expression may be additionally regulated by increased expression of the micro-RNA mmu-let7b: In contrast, inhibition of lipid accumulation during maturation depends on TRP V1, but not on TRP A1, which was associated with decreased expression of the gene encoding for fatty acid synthase (*FAS*) as well. Down-regulation of *FAS* may be linked to increased expression of micro-RNA 103, as well as to a decreased fatty acid uptake on the functional level.

In summary, these data point to an involvement of TRP A1 in addition to the already identified TRP V1 cation channel in the regulation of adipogenesis by aroma compounds and provide a novel functional role for pellitorine. Since pellitorine does not directly activate TRP V1 and TRP A1, an indirect modulation of the channel activity is assumed and warrants further investigation.

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**P37 - Odor memory game training improves olfaction and memory in older adults**

Joanna Lindström, Marta Zakrzewska, Ingrid Ekström, Maria Larsson & Jonas Olafsson

Joanna.lindstrom@psychology.su.se

Gösta Ekmans Laboratory, Department of Psychology, Stockholm University

Ageing is associated with declines in both cognitive and olfactory functions. Moreover, olfactory impairments predict memory decline, subsequent onset of dementia, and morbidity. We investigated whether an odor memory game could improve both olfactory and memory functions in older adults, aged 65–80. Participants were randomly assigned to a memory training intervention, either odor memory or visual memory. Our preliminary results suggest that odor memory training resulted in improvements in odor naming and discrimination, as well as transfer of learning to the visual and verbal tasks. Olfactory-based interventions might be a promising means of improving memory in older adults at risk for memory decline and dementia.

**P38 - Olfactory attention**

Susanne Menzel¹, Thomas Hummel⁶, Cornelia Hummel⁷, Ilona Croy²

susannemenzel1@gmx.de

¹Smell and Taste Clinic, Department of Otorhinolaryngology, TU Dresden, Germany; ²Department of Psychotherapy and Psychosomatic Medicine, TU Dresden, Germany

Through their senses humans connect themselves to the environment in both spatial and temporal envelopes. Vision provides a very precise input related to both coordinates. In olfaction, we observe a lack of attention perceiving stimuli exactly in the spatial or temporal envelopes.

The present study aimed to investigate “olfactory attention” and its depending factors, like general attention (d2-R test), environmental hypersensitivity, nasal chemosensory function (tested by “Sniffin’ Sticks”), the ability to lateralize odors due to trigeminal chemoreception and individual evaluation of the odorants regarding pleasantness and intensity.

83 healthy participants (aged 18 to 34, 50 women, 33 men) were presented to three different sequences of four odorants, including two pleasant and two unpleasant ones (peach odor in a low and a high concentration, fish odor in a low and a high concentration) in a pulsed mode using an olfactometer. The subjects were requested to press a button when perceiving a change of the odor regarding quality or intensity. All subjects were acoustically and visually shielded. For control
purpose, participants were presented to similar sequences of pictures with the same instruction.

In result, change of visual stimuli were detected faster and far more precisely compared to change of olfactory stimuli. Considering the olfactory results, unpleasant odor quality and high odor concentrations facilitated change detection. However, only a few subjects were able to detect the change of odors above chance level. This subgroup showed a significantly better nasal chemosensory sensitivity, a higher individual significance of olfactory function and less environmental hypersensitivity.

In conclusion, human olfactory attention dependent on individual olfactory sensitivity.

P39 - Bitter tasting compounds of red wine contribute to the regulation of gastric acid secretion, studied in HGT-1 cells

Kathrin Ingrid Liszt1,2, Celina Dugulin1,2, Veronika Somoza1,2

kathrin.liszt@univie.ac.at

1Department of Nutritional and Physiological Chemistry, University of Vienna, Althanstrasse 14 (UZA II), Vienna 1090, Austria; 2Christian Doppler Laboratory for bioactive compounds, Althanstrasse 14 (UZA II), Vienna 1090, Austria

In previous studies, we demonstrated that individual food compounds like organic acids in wine (1) stimulate gastric acid secretion (GAS). Moreover, red wines were shown to stimulate proton secretion in HGT-1 cells, a well established cell model for studying GAS in vitro, more pronounced than white wines (2). In this study, we investigated the effect of several bitter tasting compounds in red wine representative concentrations (~0.05 – 500 μM) on proton secretion in HGT-1 cells. Ethyl gallate, Ethyl vanillate, gallic acid and procyanidin B3 stimulated proton secretion, while protocatechuic acid, the hydroxycinnamic acids and epicatechin as well as pentagalloylgucose (PGG) had no effect. Since PGG has been described to be anti-secretory and an inhibitor of the gastric H+\text{-}K+\text{-}ATPase (3), it was tested in combination with histamine (1 mM), a natural stimulator of proton secretion. As a result, the bitter tasting PGG inhibited the proton-secretory effect of histamine indicating an involvement of bitter taste receptors (TAS2Rs). Since PGG is an activator of TAS2R4, 5 and 39 (4), mRNA expressions of these bitter taste receptors and of genes relevant for GAS were not.

These results demonstrate that also bitter compounds, besides organic acids, in red wine regulate proton secretion in HGT-1 cells. Furthermore, an involvement of TAS2R4, 5 and 39 in the regulation of proton secretion is indicated.


P40 - Nicotine-induced Effects on Nicotinic Acetylcholine Receptors (nAChRs), Ca2+ and Brain Derived Neurotrophic Factor (BDNF) in Cultured Human Fungiform Taste Papillae (HBO) Cells

Jie Qian1, Shobha Mummalaneni1, Andrew I. Spielman2, Mehmet Hakan Özdeneri3 and Vijay Lyall1

vijay.lyall@vcuhealth.org

1Department of Physiology & Biophysics, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA, 23298, USA; 2NYU College of Dentistry, New York, NY 10010, USA and 3Monell Chemical Senses Center, Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA

We have previously shown that neural and behavioral responses to nicotine are modulated by nAChR agonists and antagonists (Oliveira-Maia et al. PNAS 106: 1596–1601, 2009; Ren et al. PLOS ONE 10:e0127936, 2015). Accordingly, we investigated the expression and localization of nAChRs in HBO cells using molecular techniques. Using specific human primers for α and β nAChR subunits and RT-PCR, the mRNAs for chrna3, chrna4, chrna5, chrna6, and chrnb4 were detected in HBO cells. In addition, we detected the mRNAs of α-ENaC subunit, β-ENaC subunit, γ-ENaC subunit, T1R1, T1R3, PLCβ2, TRPM5 and T2R38. Western blot experiments confirmed the presence of α4, α5, and β2 nAChR proteins in HBO cells. Immunofluorescence studies showed only a subset of HBO cells bind to α3 and α5 antibodies. In HBO cells loaded with Fura-2, acetylcholine (200 μM) or nicotine (200 μM) induced an increase in cell Ca2+. Treated HBO cells with 0.25, 0.50 and 1.0 μM nicotine for 24h produced a dose-dependent increase.
in chrnb4 mRNA level without affecting the mRNA levels of chrna5 and chrna6. While treating HBO cells with 50 and 100 mM ethanol for 24h upregulated both chrna6 and chrnb4 mRNA levels in a dose dependent manner with no change in the chrna5 mRNA level. Treating HBO cells deprived of serum overnight with 0.25-1.0 μM nicotine for 30 min at 36°C increased the cellular content of brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) in a dose-dependent manner. We conclude that HBO cells express several nicotinic acetylcholine receptors and their expression is modulated by acute exposure to nicotine and ethanol. Nicotine at sub-micromolar concentrations increases the expression of BDNF in HBO cells. Thus, nAChRs are involved in the detection of the bitter taste of nicotine and ethanol and also in the synthesis and release of neurohumoral peptides. Supported by NIDCD grant DC-011569 (VL).

**P41 - Effect of Cyclic-AMP on Postnatal Development of Neural and Behavioral Responses to NaCl in Rats**

**Jie Qian**, **Shobha Mummalaneni**, **David West**, **Sunila Mahavadi**, **Karnam S. Murthy**, **Mee-Ra Rhyu**, **Andrew I. Spielman**, **Mehmet Hakan Özdenber**, and **Vijay Lyall**

vijay.lyall@vcuhealth.org

1Departments of Physiology and Biophysics, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA 23298, USA; 2Korea Food Research Institute, Bundang-gu, Sungnam-si, Gyeonggi-do 463–746, Korea; 3NYU College of Dentistry, New York, NY 10010, USA and 4Monell Chemical Senses Center, Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA

In rats, 7–50 days postnatal, NaCl chorda tympani (CT) responses and number of functional apical amiloride-sensitive epithelial Na+ channels (ENaCs) in salt sensing fungiform (FF) taste receptor cells (TRCs) increase with age. Currently, the intracellular signaling effectors that regulate the postnatal development of mammalian TRC ENaC have not been identified. We investigated the role of cAMP in the postnatal development of NaCl CT responses and behavior in 9–23 day old rats. CT responses were monitored in the absence and presence of cetilpyridinium chloride (a blocker of the amiloride-insensitive NaCl CT response), before and after topical lingual application of 8-chlorophenylthio-cAMP (8-CPT-cAMP; 0–20 mM) for 10–15 min. CT responses were monitored under open-circuit conditions (zero voltage clamp) and under ±60 mV lingual voltage clamp. The data were fitted to an ENaC channel kinetic model. Behavioral responses were tested using 2 bottle 24h NaCl intake tests. Temporal relationship between [deamination-Cys1, D-Arg4]-vasopressin (dDAVP) induced cAMP generation and ENaC subunit trafficking was investigated in cultured adult human fungiform taste cells (HBO cells). Our results show that in 19–23 day old rats, the ENaC-dependent maximum NaCl CT response (r_{max}) was a saturating sigmoidal function of 8-CPT-cAMP concentration and increased by 2.18 fold. 8-CPT-cAMP also increased the voltage-sensitivity of the NaCl CT response. The response conductance (K_{v}), defined as the slope of the CT response curve as a function of applied lingual clamp voltage, increased by a factor of 11.7. In HBO cells dDAVP increased intracellular cAMP, and cAMP in turn, increased trafficking of γ-ENaC from cytosolic compartment to the apical pole. Control 19–23 day old rats were indifferent to NaCl, but showed clear preference for appetitive NaCl concentrations after 8-CPT-cAMP treatment. We conclude that an incremental increase in cAMP mimics the postnatal age-dependent increase in TRC ENaC and thus the neural and behavioral responses to NaCl.

**P42 - Individuals with anosmia demonstrate enhanced performance in a multisensory binding task**

**Moa Peter**, **Danja Porada**, **Christina Regenbogen**, and **Johan N. Lundström**

moa.peter@ki.se

1Department of Clinical Neuroscience, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden; 2Department of Psychiatry, Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics, Medical School, RWTH Aachen University, Aachen, Germany; 3JARA - BRAIN Institute 1: Structure Function Relationship, Jülich, Germany; 4Monell Chemical Senses Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 5Department of Psychology, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

Auditory and visual sensory loss has repeatedly been shown to promote enhanced and compensatory abilities in the respective remaining sensory modality. In contrast, cross-modal compensation in anosmia (olfactory loss) has obtained very little attention. The sparse existing literature focuses mainly on the spared chemical senses, gustation and the trigeminal sense, with mixed results. Given the olfactory sense dependence on heterogeneous sensory cerebral areas, a fact that makes pronounced neural reprogramming less plausible, it can be hypothesized that loss of olfactory functions might have supra-modal consequences. Specifically, we hypothesize that individuals with olfactory sensory loss, compared to healthy individuals, will demonstrate a more efficient information processing of multimodal stimuli.

To examine this, the perception of audio-visual temporal congruency was assessed in a group of individuals with anosmia and a group of matched, healthy controls. Participants followed a simple flash-beep task, in which the beep was presented either synchronously with the flash or asynchronously, ranging from -300 ms to +300 ms relative to the flash onset. After each trial participants judged whether auditory and visual stimuli were presented simultaneously or not.

Preliminary results indicate that individuals with anosmia compared to controls exhibit a narrowing of the temporal binding window, i.e., a slimmer time window between the
onset of beep and flash for which the stimuli are perceived as simultaneous. Specifically, individuals with anosmia are better than healthy controls at detecting smaller asynchronous presentations as such, i.e., are less tolerant to temporal violations. This suggests that individuals with anosmia have developed an enhanced accuracy in judging cross-modal temporal congruency, possibly a multisensory compensational mechanism for the loss of olfactory function.

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P43 - Construction of overexpression system of the human bitter taste receptor using a methanol-utilizing yeast Pichia

Yumi Nakano, Naoya Hashikawa, Satoru Yamaguchi
s.yamaguchi@dls.ous.ac.jp
Department of life Science, Okayama University of Science, Ridaicho 1-1, Kita ku, Okayama City, Okayama Prefecture, Japan

Taste plays an important role to identify the chemicals included in the food. A human bitter taste receptors (hTAS2Rs) have seven-transmembrane helixies and belong to the T2R family, which is one of the G-protein-coupled-receptor (GPCR).

To elucidate the bitter taste receptor mechanism, in this study, we tried to construct a overexpression system of the bitter taste receptor hTAS2R14.

For expression of human protein in yeast, a DNA codon usage of the bitter taste receptor, TAS2R14 was optimized for yeast and chemically synthesized. The vector, pPICZαB, containing this TAS2R14 gene was transformed to a methanol-utilizing yeast Pichia and the antibiotics Zeocin resistant transformants were selected.

The transformants were inoculated fresh YPD media containing the appropriate concentration of Zeocin before methanol induction in BMMY media. We tried to confirm the protein expression by SDS-PAGE (coomassie-stained) and Western Blotting.

P44 - Increase of medial prefrontal cortex activation during the habituation of flavour neophobia in adult and aged rats

AN Expósito, E Morillas, B Gómez-Chacón, M Gallo.
anexposito@ugr.es

While previous data has shown that the medial prefrontal cortex (mPFC) activation increases with the repeated presentation of an aversive auditory stimulus, there are no data on the effect of repeated exposure to neophobic flavours in this area. Immunohistochemistry of c-Fos as a marker of neural activity was applied in order to explore the activity of mPFC associated to flavour neophobia and its habituation. Additionally, the effect of aging was explored. Twenty one 5-month-old male Wistar adult rats (n=7 per group) and 24 aged (24-month-old) male Wistar rats (n=8 per group) were exposed to a solution of cider vinegar (3%) and sacrificed 90 minutes after drinking during the first (Novel), second (Familiar1) and sixth (Familiar2) day. The number of c-Fos-positive cells in mPFC was quantified dissociating the prelimbic area (PRL) and infralimbic (IL) areas. The results showed attenuation of flavour neophobia in both age groups as the intake of the vinegar solution increased over exposure sessions. However, the process was slower in the older group. The overall statistical analysis showed greater number of c-Fos-positive cells in the group Familiar1 compared to the Novel group, regardless of age, in both PRL and IL. The results support a role for the mPFC in the formation of the familiar flavour trace during the habituation of flavour neophobia that is preserved at older ages.

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P45 - A Drosophila melanogaster glutathione transferase overexpressed in the sensory organs after exposure to bitter molecules in food

Daniel Gonzalez, Stéphane Fraichard, Jean-François Ferveur, Yves Artur, Loïc Briand, Jean-Marie Heydel, Fabrice Neiers fabrice.neiers@u-bourgogne.fr
Centre des Sciences du Goût et de l’Alimentation, INRA, CNRS, Univ. de Bourgogne Franche-Comté, F-21000 Dijon, France

Glutathione transferases (GSTs) are ubiquitous key detoxification enzymes that catalyze the conjugation of glutathione to a large variety of xenobiotic chemical including odorants and sapid molecules. A previous study in Drosophila melanogaster demonstrated the existence of a GST specifically expressed in the antenna and involved in signal termination by catalyzing biotransformation of odorant molecules. Genomic analysis revealed the presence of 40 genes coding GSTs. However, their biochemical properties are poorly documented. Herein, we report that among the GSTs, the isoform dmelGSTD2-2 is strongly and preferentially overexpressed in the sensory organs (antennae, proboscis, legs, and wings) after exposure to bitter molecules. To further understand its physiological role, dmelGSTD2-2 was heterologously expressed then purified using bacteria. Its enzymatic characterization was performed revealing that this enzyme is able to interact and bioconvert bitter compounds. Moreover, we solved (1.5 Å resolution) the crystal structure of dmelGST D2-2 dimer. This is the first resolution of this enzyme subclass. The biochemical function in Drosophila melanogaster of this enzyme toward bitter...
Major urinary proteins (MUPs) of the house mouse form a large group of highly polymorphic acidic isoforms with molecular masses of 18–20 kDa. MUPs are encoded by the Mup gene cluster, which consists of about 35 genes and pseudogenes and is mapped to chromosome 4. Since 1992 and up to now MUPs are considered as a key component of the mouse olfactory signature (fingerprint) which can provide all essential information about individuality of donors (genotype, sex, age, hierarchical status) (e.g. Bacchini et al., 1992; Böcskei et al., 1992; Churakov et al., 1992; Stopková et al., 2007; Novikov et al., 2009; Kvak et al., 2012; Enk et al., 2016; Sheehan et al., 2016).

This study was performed on laboratory mice from the reciprocal crosses of C57BL/6 and CBA strains which represent two different mouse lineages (Cheetham et al., 2009). Using one-dimensional gel electrophoresis we evaluate eight different bands (A–H) which form genotype- and sex-dependent MUPs patterns in parental strains (Novikov et al., 2009). There are distinct intersexual differences in the volume of total urinary proteins in F1 progeny from reciprocal crosses CBAB6F1 and B6CBAF1. This volume in CBAB6F1 males is 2.3 times higher than in CBAB6F1 females (6.67 ± 0.24 mg/ml vs. 2.85 ± 0.34 mg/ml) and 2.8 times higher in males than in females from the B6CBAF1 hybrids (7.63 ± 0.14 mg/ml vs. 2.69 ± 0.26 mg/ml). However, there are no any significant differences in total MUPs content within the same sex between reciprocal hybrids: it is 5.09 ± 0.33 mg/ml and 5.59 ± 0.25 mg/ml for CBAB6F1 and B6CBAF1 male mice, 2.14 ± 0.33 mg/ml and 1.92 ± 0.25 mg/ml for CBAB6F1 and B6CBAF1 female mice, respectively. Moreover, F1 progeny have highly similar MUPs profiles within the same sex. Spearman’s rank-order correlation between hybrids of the same sex from reciprocal crosses reveals that for both sexes similarity of MUPs patterns is highly significant: rₚ=0.91 in males and rₚ=0.98 in females (P<0.01). Concentrations of individual MUP fractions practically do not differ between CBAB6F1 and B6CBAF1 animals of the same sex, except fractions A and D: their concentrations in B6CBAF1 males are significantly higher than those in CBAB6F1 males. These data suggest that genes which control MUP expression are not linked to the Y chromosome, the trait in overall is not influenced by the mother’s organism and exhibits an additive inheritance in F1.

Bearing in mind that C57BL/6 laboratory mice line has predominantly Mus musculus domesticus’ genome (Piálek et al., 2007), the obtained results can provide valuable insight into olfactory mechanisms of sexual recognition and mate choice in feral mice in order to pinpoint concrete Mup genes as a testable cause of mate preferences in hybrid zone between two European subspecies – Mus musculus musculus and Mus musculus domesticus (Stopková et al., 2007; Mucignat-Caretta et al., 2010; Smadja et al., 2015).

Key words: CBA and C57BL/6 laboratory mice strains, F1 reciprocal crosses, major urinary proteins (MUPs), MUPs ratio, combinatorial Mup gene expression, olfactory signatures...
difference in handling time compared to agar pellets with only water. A mixture of five of the major amino acids in the food pellet extract (40 mM alanine, 20 mM glycine, 20 mM arginine, 8 mM serine, 8 mM leucin) gave a significant longer handling time compared to agar pellets with only water. The handling time was also longer for the three amino acids that had the highest concentrations (40 mM Ala, 20 mM Gly, 20 mM Arg) and finally with only alanine (128 mM). Agar pellets with only Ala gave, however, a significant shorter handling time compared to agar pellets with food pellet extract. The mussel meal extract had the same content of free amino acids and their ranking order was the same as in extracts of food pellets, but at much higher concentrations. Based on the free amino acid content, the mussel extract should have stimulated feeding. This indicates that the mussel extract contained compounds that acted as feeding deterrents in omnivorous crucian carp that do not feed on blue mussels in their natural environment. Previous studies have shown that blue mussel extracts act as feeding stimulants in several bottom feeding carnivorous fish. We finally tested betaine (100 mM) but the molecule had no significant stimulating effect that have been observed in some other fish species.

P48 - Sex odour preference in guppy (Poecilia wingei) males are influenced by the social environment

Christian Sommer & K. Håkan Olsén*
hakan.olsen@sh.se
Department of Natural Sciences, Technology and Environmental Studies, Södertörn University, SE-757 59 Huddinge, Sweden

The social environment of animals, particularly in the early stages of life, can have great impact on species-specific and sex-specific behaviours. These changes can be irreversible and continue during the entire life. In the present study we asked the question whether the social environment of male Endler’s guppies, Poecilia wingei, housed in an all-male community could affect their preference response to female or male odour cues in a flow through Y-maze. After 30 days in an all-male group males were tested for their preference-avoidance responses to conspecific odours. The males were attracted to male-scented water but not to water scented by females. In simultaneous choice between male and female odours they demonstrated no significant preference-avoidance responses to conspecific odours. The males were attracted to male-scented water after they were kept for 48 hours or 12 days with females. After the Y-maze tests the males’ were placed with two females and their courting behaviour were recorded. The males showed low frequencies of reproductive behaviours. In the all-male group the males had been courting each other. The results show that the social environment influence sexual odour preference and courting behaviour in guppy males.

P49 - Multisensory detection of sickness

Regenbogen, C.1,2,3, Axelsson, J.1, Lasselin, J.1,4,5, Porada, D.1, Sundelin, T.1,5, Peter, M.1, Lekander, M.1,3, Lundström, J.N.1,4,7, Olsson, M.J.1
mats.j.olsson@ki.se
1Department of Clinical Neuroscience, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden; 2Department of Psychiatry, Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics, Medical School, RWTH Aachen University, Aachen, Germany; 3JARA - BRAIN Institute 1: Structure Function Relationship, Jülich, Germany; 4Institute of Medical Psychology and Behavioral Immunology, Universitätsklinikum Essen, Germany; 5Stress Research Institute, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden; 6Monell Chemical Senses Center, Philadelphia, PA, United States; 7Department of Psychology, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, United States

Converging evidence suggests that humans have a behavioral repertoire that assists the immune system in the defense against infectious disease. Behavioral detection of subtle and early sickness cues in others, and subsequent avoidance of the infected conspecific, would indeed be a cost-efficient way of coping with an environment fraught with pathogens. That humans can detect early and subtle cues of sickness by way of both olfaction and vision was recently demonstrated. The current study targeted how sickness cues affect social perception and how these visual and olfactory cues, alone and in unison, activate the brain.

Healthy sample donors were injected with placebo or with endotoxin (lipopolysaccharide, 2.0ng / kg body weight), which induces a transient inflammation-driven sickness response that vanishes within hours. Body odor and facial features were sampled 5 and 2 hrs, respectively, after injection. By presenting facial photographs and body odors of these donors when sick and when healthy (saline injection) to a separate group of participants during fMRI scanning, we could determine the effects of sickness cues on rated “liking” of the presented donors and the underlying neural mechanisms mediating sickness perception.

Results demonstrated that sick faces received lower liking ratings than healthy ones, and that faces, in general, paired with sick body odor tended to be less liked than faces paired with healthy body odor. Moreover, olfactory and visual sickness cues rendered a unique neural processing profile, characterized by activation of the odor perception network and mediiodorsal thalamus; as well as activation of face processing areas in superior and middle frontal areas; both in line with threat signal discrimination in the respective modality. Interestingly, multisensory sickness cues elicited superadditive activity, indicative of multisensory integration, in the intraparietal sulcus (IPS), motor cortex, and visual areas. Activity in the IPS to sickness signals where functionally linked to changes in ratings of liking.
We argue that olfaction and vision may be part of a behavioral defense, shaping receiver’s neural and behavioral responses to health-threatening interactions. Such early detection of subtle sickness cues, leading up to altered social perception, may have a great significance in limiting the toll of pathogenic disease through avoidance behavior.

Keywords: Body odor, lipopolysaccharide, endotoxin, smell of sickness, disease detection

P50 - Chemosignals of women's fertility affect emotion recognition in single men

Oren C.1, Shamay-Tsoory S.1
coren01@campus.haifa.ac.il

1Department of Psychology, University of Haifa

An abundance of studies suggest that there are several detectable changes that increase the attractiveness of women during the ovulation. One significant change that occurs across the menstrual cycle is the change in women’s body odor, which is perceived as more attractive by men, when taken from periods of higher fertility. Motivation for reproduction, which rises with exposure to women, specifically at more fertile periods of the menstrual cycle, influences men’s behavior in various ways. Thus, it is possible that odors of ovulating women have a role in shaping mating behaviors among men.

Here we investigated whether chemical signals associated with women fertility can influence the ability to accurately identify emotional facial expressions. We first recruited 23 healthy women, not using hormonal contraceptives, who donated two samples of body odor, one from the time of ovulation and one from the luteal phase of the menstrual cycle. Women’s samples were mixed together, creating two sets of body odor pools, each for a different experimental condition; low and high fertility odor condition. The mixed pools were presented to 19 single and 21 pair-bond males, while performing the Face Morphing Task, that assess identification of emotional facial expressions of men and women. We found a significant three-way interaction between the odor condition, the relationship status and the gender of the figure in the task. When presented with body odor of the high fertility condition, single men identified more accurately women’s emotional facial expressions. This effect was not found among subjects who were in a romantic relationship.

We conclude that while the exposure to women’s body odor of high fertility may affect the behavior of single male, it has no effect on pair-bond males. A possible mechanism for these changes is the oxytocinergic system, which is known to regulate pair bonding as well as the perception of emotion in facial expressions. From an evolutionary standpoint, it is possible that increased sensitivity to female’s emotional expressions may contribute to detecting and choosing potential mating partners in non-pair-bond males.

P51 - A Bacterial Signal Peptide Increases Mucociliary Clearance in Explanted Mouse Trachea

Perniss, A.1, Bufe B.2, Krasteva-Christ, G.3, Kummer W.1
alexander.perniss@bio.uni-giessen.de

1Institute of Anatomy and Cell Biology, German Center for Lung Research, Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, Giessen, Germany; 2Center for Integrative Physiology and Molecular Medicine (CIPMM), Department of Physiology, University of Saarland, Homburg, Germany; 3Institute for Anatomy and Cell Biology, Julius-Maximilians-Universität, Würzburg, Germany

Bacterial signal peptides are known to trigger innate immunity responses by activation of formyl peptide receptors (FPRs) present in immune cells, e.g. leukocytes. Members of the FPR-family are also found in the murine vomeronasal organ where they are candidates for chemosensory recognition of bacterial pathogens. Here, we investigated the effects of bacterial signal peptides on mucociliary clearance in the murine trachea.

Methods: The trachea of C57Bl6, TRPM5-deficient (transient receptor potential cation channel subfamily M member 5; a crucial component of the canonical bitter and umami taste transduction) and FVB/NCrI mice was explanted and particle transport speed (PTS) was visualized by tracking directed transport of dynabeads at the surface. The transcriptome of single tracheal ciliated and brush cells, a chemosensory epithelial cell type, was analyzed by single cell deep sequencing.

Results: Deep sequencing showed FPR expression in both ciliated and brush cells. The N-formylated bacterial signal peptide FL185 increased PTS from 43.48 ± 5.05 to 75.96 ± 3.56 µm/s (N=8; p<0.0001) at 10 µM which addresses FPR1-3. Specific FPR1 and FPR2 inhibitors [cyclosporine H (1 µM) and t-BOC2 (10 µM)] did not reduce the effect. The effect was conserved in FVB/NCrI mice which are lacking a functional FPR3. In contrast, FL185 was ineffective in increasing PTS in TRPM5-deficient mice. Four other tested bacterial signal peptides did not increase PTS.

Conclusion: A bacterial signal peptide stimulates cilia-driven mucociliary clearance, that could represent a novel defense mechanism against invasive bacteria in the trachea. This effect involves elements of the classical taste transduction cascade.

P52 - Odor Object-related Activity in PPC Increases with the Number of Stimulated Senses

Danja Porada1, Christina Regenbogen1,2, Jessica Freiherr4, Johan N. Lundström1,5,6
danja.porada@ki.se

1Department of Clinical Neuroscience, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden; 2Department of Psychiatry, Institute of Anatomy and Cell Biology, German Center for Lung Research, Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, Giessen, Germany; 3Center for Integrative Physiology and Molecular Medicine (CIPMM), Department of Physiology, University of Saarland, Homburg, Germany; 4Institute for Anatomy and Cell Biology, Julius-Maximilians-Universität, Würzburg, Germany; 5Center for Integrative Physiology and Molecular Medicine (CIPMM), Department of Physiology, University of Saarland, Homburg, Germany; 6Institute of Anatomy and Cell Biology, German Center for Lung Research, Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, Giessen, Germany

An abundance of studies suggest that there are several detectable changes that increase the attractiveness of women during the ovulation. One significant change that occurs across the menstrual cycle is the change in women’s body odor, which is perceived as more attractive by men, when taken from periods of higher fertility. Motivation for reproduction, which rises with exposure to women, specifically at more fertile periods of the menstrual cycle, influences men’s behavior in various ways. Thus, it is possible that odors of ovulating women have a role in shaping mating behaviors among men.

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Recognizing and categorizing odor objects is a fundamental task in olfactory perception. Recent data suggests that the posterior piriform cortex (PPC), one of the core olfactory areas, plays an important role in the formation of odor objects. It is further known that concurrent multisensory information facilitates and improves the perception of odor objects on a behavioral level. However, whether this beneficial multisensory influence modulates neural processing in core olfactory areas and whether this influence is linear with the number of stimulated sensory modalities is not yet known. In the present study, we investigated the effect of multisensory stimulation on information processing in olfactory areas: the anterior piriform cortex (APC), the PPC, and the orbitofrontal cortex (OFC). We hypothesized that brain regions encoding odor objects (i.e. PPC) would show a linear activation increase with the number of modalities providing congruent object information. In an event-related fMRI paradigm, participants (N=16) were exposed to uni-, bi-, and trimodal combinations of short video sequences (2s) of familiar objects with congruent sounds and/or odors. We extracted subject-wise activation in regions of interest (APC, PPC, OFC) to investigate linear activation change, driven by the number of involved modalities. We observed that activation in the PPC increased with the number of stimulated sensory modalities while activation in APC and OFC remained constant, independent of the number of modalities. This result suggests that the amount of sensory information provided about one object influences the benefit for odor object formation. Taken together, these results suggest that multisensory signals influence odor object processing in the PPC in a quantity-dependent manner.

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P53 - Mosquito olfactory receptors as essential biomimetic odorant sensor for human volatile

Qian Chen, Yahui Man, Jianyong Li, Wenjian Wu
cathy97031@126.com
School of Science, National University of Defense Technology, Changsha, 410073, China

The detection and identification of human odorants is highly demanded in the fields of life rescue and medical diagnosis. Mosquitoes exhibit exquisite sensitivity and selectivity to human odorous stimuli due to their blood-feeding behaviour, they are able to distinguish between different chemical moieties found in human bodies. Mosquito olfactory receptor (ORs) proteins are considered the most important molecular in the processes of olfactory events, and the olfactory system is much simpler than mammalian’s due to its independent of G-protein signaling pathway. Therefore, considerable effort has been expended to develop an artificial nose based on the mosquito OR proteins. The present work analyzed the interaction between ORs, human odours, and environmental components in mosquitoes’ olfactory system. Furthermore, a biomimetic odorant sensor which expresses these OR genes in living cells is being constructed, in order to detect specific types of human skin volatile. This study provides an alternative way for the construction of odorant sensors, and would promote the development and application of biomimetic odorant sensors in a range of applications such as life rescue and disease diagnosis.

P54 - Generation of an iPSC-based Olfactory Receptor Neuron (ORN) culture in vitro

Stefanie Raab, Moritz Klingenstein, Stefan Liebau
stefanie.raab@uni-tuebingen.de
Institute of Neuroanatomy, University Tübingen, Germany

With the groundbreaking work of Yamanaka and Takahashi in 2006 it became possible to generate induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) from adult human somatic cells. We could prove that our generated iPSCs from human hair derived keratinocytes share the same characteristics like embryonic stem cells. They have a high proliferative potential and exhibit the capacity to differentiate into all three germ layers. With a self-established protocol iPSCs can be differentiated into olfactory receptor neurons (ORNs) together with a mixture of other neurons. The generated ORNs were characterized at the age of 160 days in vitro and could show positive staining for olfactory marker protein (OMP) and other olfactory markers.

A non-invasive somatic cell source are keratinocytes from plucked human hair which grow out of the hair root. These cells can be reprogrammed subsequently via a lentivirus containing the four so called Yamanaka factors OCT4, SOX 2, KLF4 and c-MYC (OSKM) to undergo iPSC formation. iPSCs can be kept feeder free on Matrigel coated plates and can be directly used for further differentiation. The differentiation protocol involves several suspension and adherent steps and spans over at least 100 days. The result is a mixture of all kind of neurons with a higher amount of ORNs. To achieve a larger number of ORNs special cytokines and growth factors have to be added at different time points in the differentiation process.

In vitro generated ORNs were fixed and stained against established olfactory marker, like OMP, ASCL1 or TUBB3 after 160 days. Here we could show, that our iPSC derived
ORNs are positive against OMP, ASCL1 and partially against TUBB3. To prove that the antibodies work in our hands we stained human olfactory epithelium and could see the characteristic staining patterns.

We could generate iPSCs from primary human hair derived keratinocytes and prove that they fulfill all requirements for pluripotent stem cells. With our self-designed differentiation protocol we could generate neurons which can be positive stained for several olfactory markers.

P55 - Taste in Parkinson's disease: a four-year prospective evaluation

Maria Jimena Ricatti1, Sarah Ottaviani2, Federico Boschi3, Alfonso Fasano4,5, Michele Tinazzi2,6, Maria Paola Cecchini1

mariajimena.ricatti@univr.it

1Department of Neurosciences, Biomedicine and Movement Sciences, Anatomy and Histology Section, University of Verona, Verona, Italy; 2Neurology Unit, Ospedale Civile Maggiore, Verona, Italy; 3Department of Computer Sciences, University of Verona, Verona, Italy; 4Department of Computer Sciences, University of Verona, Verona, Italy; 5Morton and Gloria Shulman Movement Disorders Clinic and the Edmond J. Safra Program in Parkinson's Disease, Toronto Western Hospital, UHN, Division of Neurology, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada; 6Krembil Research Institute, Toronto, Ontario, Canada; 7Department of Neurosciences, Biomedicine and Movement Sciences, Neurology Section, University of Verona, Verona, Italy

It is well-known that Parkinson’s disease is characterized by a variety of non-motor symptoms. A gustatory deficit is hypothesized to be one of them although few and only cross-sectional studies are available. The aim of our study was to prospectively investigate the taste function in Parkinson’s disease patients after some years from the first evaluation (mean follow-up: 4.35 ± 4.9 years; time range: 3.5–5.6 years).

A group of 26 patients was re-examined (M:F=16:10; age range: 54–88 years; mean age: 70.9 ± 8.4 years). Taste function was assessed in one session, by means of the Whole Mouth Test (WMT, Burghart Company, Germany). All patients were able to understand and complete the procedure.

Although scores decreased over time, no significant difference was found between global taste scores of first and second evaluation (WMT: p=0.234, Mann-Whitney U-Test; TST: p=0.747, Mann-Whitney U-Test) confirming a persistent slight taste impairment. Our results point to a quite steady condition of this impairment across time. A further statistical analysis regarding every single taste quality is currently ongoing. Considering that the patients’ pool re-examined, after a mean disease duration of 9.7 ± 4.9 years, had similar motor evaluation (H&Y=1–3) and a good cognitive status with no impact on daily life activities (MMSE=24), a deep taste impairment could probably appear in the more advanced disease’s phase. Future studies on a much larger sample of patients are certainly required.

P56 - Odorant-odorant metabolic competitions: ex vivo inhibition of the mammamy pheromone catabolism

Aline Robert-Hazotte1, Gérard Coureaud2, Hassan-Ismail Hanser1, Rachel Schoumacker1, Etienne Sémon1, Jean-Luc Quéré1, Jean-Marie Yeddel1, Philippe Faure1*

philippe.faure@u-bourgogne.fr

1Centre des Sciences du Goût et de l’Alimentation, CNRS, INRA, Univ. Bourgogne Franche-Comté, F-21000 Dijon, France; 2Centre de Recherche en Neurosciences de Lyon, Université Lyon1, INSERM U1028 / CNRS UMR5292, F-69366 Lyon, France; 3ChemoSens Plateform (CSGA), F-21000 Dijon, France

Lactating female rabbits emit in their milk an odorant, the mammamory pheromone (MP; 2-methylbut-2-enal), which elicits orocephalic “searching-grasping” movements in newborns and helps them to find the nipples and suck. Rapid responsiveness to the MP is crucial for the pups since the mother is nursing briefly (5 min) and only once per day. It is then essential for newborns to remain sensitive to the MP during the whole duration of a nursing session in order to optimize milk intake. Therefore, the MP must be efficiently processed by the olfactory system.

In the olfactory perireceptor environment, Odorant Metabolizing Enzymes (OMEs) have the dual function of volatile compounds detoxification and active clearance of odorants from the perireceptor environment to respectively maintain the integrity of the tissues and the sensitivity of the detection. Thus, OMEs could modify the bioavailability of odor molecules and influence the olfactory perception. The enzymes involved in such modifications are similar to those of the general xenobiotic metabolism for which a competition between the substrates is well known (drug-drug interaction for example). Although emphasized by recent studies, this enzymatic olfactory mechanism is poorly documented in mammals. Here, we (i) used an innovative ex-vivo Mass Spectrometry technique to study the kinetics of the MP olfactory metabolism, (ii) explored potential competition between the MP and other odorants toward OME, and (iii) determined if this competition influences newborn rabbits’ perception and behavioral responsiveness to the MP. For this purpose, we used Proton Transfer Reaction Mass Spectrometry (PTR-MS), a very sensitive technique for real time online monitoring of volatile compounds, and tested the orocephalic behavioral response usually displayed by newborn rabbits to suck.

The results showed that the MP is metabolized quasi instantaneously and that its olfactory metabolism is modified in
presence of another odorant competing metabolically in a dose dependent manner. This modification of the MP olfactory metabolism by a competitor has consequences on behavioral responsiveness of pups to the MP. Thus, this odorant-odorant interaction can lead to changes in odorant bioavailability and in fine in olfactory perception. OMEs appear as good candidates to interfere with peripheral processing of odorants, inducing such changes in their bioavailability and thus modifying their detection, perception and resulting behaviors. We are currently exploring these mechanisms also in humans.

P57 - Variation in TAS2R38 bitter gene: a possible association with feeding behaviour of infants at weaning

Antonietta Robino1, Diego Vozzi2, Gabriele Conti, Martina Guerra1, Paola Paganin1, Giulia Paviotti1, Sergio Demarini1, Paolo Gasparini1,2
antonietta.robinob@burlo.trieste.it

1Institute for Maternal and Child Health - IRCCS “Burlo Garofolo”, Trieste, Italy; 2Department of Medical Sciences, University of Trieste, Trieste, Italy; 3Division Experimental Genetics, Sidra, Doha, Qatar

Variation in TAS2R38 taste receptor gene influences bitter taste sensitivity of children and adults, accounting for individual differences in taste preferences and consequently food selection.

In this study we analyzed the association between three polymorphisms in TAS2R38 gene (rs1726866, rs713598, rs10246939) and the feeding behaviour of infants at weaning.

The Infant Feeding Questionnaire (IGQ) was collected in 131 new-borns, as well as information on weaning, breastfeeding and anthropometric measures at birth and at six months of age. TAS2R38 polymorphisms were genotyped and infants were classified in three groups: PAV/PAV, PAV/AVI and AVI/AVI. In the statistical analyses AVI/AVI infants were considered “bitter insensitive”, while PAV/PAV and PAV/AVI infants “bitter-sensitive”.

For the first time a significant association was found between TAS2R38 genotypes and the time required for eating a standard volume of meal (150 ml) (p-value=0.02). While 31% of “bitter-insensitive” infants achieve this aim at the first day, only 13% of “bitter-insensitive” eat all the meal at the first day.

The association was statistically significant also after correction for confounding variables such as gender, type of food supplied at the weaning, age at weaning and breastfeeding.

Therefore, our study indicates that variations in the TAS2R38 gene may influence feeding behaviour of infants at weaning, resulting a much more effective weaning in “bitter-insensitive” infants compared to the others.

Understanding the factors able to modulate the weaning, included the genetic ones, may be of particular interest since food habits in weaning period may mark out food preferences development across the life course.

P58 - Genetic variation associated with individual differences in human salty taste perception

Antonietta Robino1, Paolo Gasparini1,2, Diego Vozzi1
antonietta.robinob@burlo.trieste.it

1Institute for Maternal and Child Health - IRCCS “Burlo Garofolo”, Trieste, Italy; 2Department of Medical Sciences, University of Trieste, Trieste, Italy; 3Division Experimental Genetics, Sidra, Doha, Qatar

Genetic variations in taste receptors may contribute to individual variability in the perception of different tastes such as bitter, sweet and umami, while little is known on the genetic bases of human salt perception.

In this study salt taste intensity perception was measured on ~900 healthy Italian individuals with the labelled magnitude scale (LMS) using a concentration of NaCl 1 M. All of the subjects have been genotyped with the 370k Illumina Chip and then imputed using the 1000G SNP set.

The present work report the first Genome Wide Association Study (GWAS) conducted using the log10 of the NaCl intensity ratings and including sex and age as covariates.

Our study confirmed the association between rs3765964 SNP in C46 gene and NaCl perception (p-value=0.018), while no association was found with polymorphisms in SCN1A, SCN1B and TRPV1 genes, previously reported in other studies.

Moreover, GWAS detected an association between salt perception and rs547916 polymorphism, closely located to the KCNA5 gene (p-value=5.6x10^-08).

KCNA5 belongs to the delayed rectifier K+ (DRK) channels, already involved in the modulation by a variety of taste stimuli, including acids, sweeteners, bitter stimuli and fatty acids. Moreover, a study has also shown that KCNA5 is the main functional DRK channel expressed in rat taste buds.

Further studies are needed to clarify the biological role of KCNA5 in salt perception and liking and possible implications for human health, such as the potential involvement in the genesis of hypertension and in the related cardiovascular diseases.

P59 - Human diversity and complexity in TAS2R-mediated bitter taste response: from individuals to populations

Natacha Roudnitzky*,1, Maik Behrens1, Sophie Thalmann1, Susann Kohl1, Stefanie Nowak1, Stefanie Schultz1, Stephen P. Wooding2, Wolfgang Meyerhof1
*natacha.roudnitzky@dife.de

1German Institute of Human Nutrition Potsdam-Rehbruecke, Department of Molecular Genetics, Arthur-Scheunert-Allee 114–116, 14558 Nuthetal, Germany; 2Health Sciences
Many inherited traits are obvious and observable within or between populations, such as a blue, green, or brown eye colour. Other traits, although having a direct impact in our daily life, are less apparent. Bitter taste perception drives innate aversive behaviour and is therefore considered to prevent ingestion of numerous bitter-tasting toxic compounds. Yet, individual differences in bitter taste perception exist and arise from genetic functional polymorphisms in \textit{TAS2R} genes, e.g. the long-known genetic predisposition to taste phenylthiocarbamide is driven by the \textit{TAS2R38} gene. Since bitter taste is mediated by approximately 25 bitter taste receptors (\textit{TAS2Rs}), characterized by complex molecular receptive ranges with most \textit{TAS2Rs} recognising multiple bitter compounds and many compounds activating several \textit{TAS2Rs}, such simple associations of bitterness perception with a single gene are rare.

Therefore, we first investigated systematically the genetic differences in bitter taste response by examining the worldwide genetic diversity in \textit{TAS2R} genes. To this end, we analysed genetic data sets of 2504 individuals from 26 worldwide populations retrieved from the International 1000 Genomes Project (1000G) Phase 3. We identified most \textit{TAS2R} haplotypes, and we functionally characterized allelic variants. Our data reveal the extent of diversity of \textit{TAS2R}-mediated bitter taste responses and provide evidence for a population-specific genetic structure among the African, Ad Mixed American, European, East Asian, and South Asian populations.

Secondly, to decipher how \textit{TAS2R} genes shape variation in bitter taste perception, we applied, in a sample of the Caucasian population, an integrative approach, by sequencing all \textit{TAS2R} loci, inferring long-range haplotypes, mapping their effects on perception, and characterizing functionally causal allelic variants. Our analyses revealed the complexity of genetically driven perceptual differences in bitter taste, arising from genetic functional polymorphisms and genomic structure.

Keywords: Gustatory perception; bitter taste receptor (\textit{TAS2R}); genetic polymorphism; genomic structure; genetic population structure.

\textbf{P60 - Some behavioural responses to chemosensory stimuli of wild type and TMEM16A conditional knockout mice}

\textbf{Carla Mucignat-Caretta$^{1,2}$, Simone Pifferi$^2$, Andres Hernandez-Clavijo$^3$, Angela Bassoli$^4$, Jason Rock$^5$, Anna Menini$^3$

\texttt{carla.mucignat@unipd.it}}

\textbf{1DMM - Department of Molecular Medicine, University of Padua, Italy; 2INBB - National Institute of Biostructures and Biosystems; 3Neurobiology Group, SISSA, International School of Advanced Studies, Trieste, Italy; 4DefENS - Department of Food, Environmental and Nutritional Sciences University of Milan, Italy; 5Department of Anatomy, University of California, San Francisco, USA}

The TMEM16A \textit{Ca$^{2+}$}-activated Cl$^{-}$ channel is expressed in vomeronasal sensory neurons and is involved in the transduction current in response to stimuli. Conditional TMEM16A knock out (cKO) mice were generated using loxP-Cre system with \textit{Cre recombinase} driven by OMP promoter and were tested for a variety of behavioural responses. Adult mice (n=44) were maintained in single sex/mixed genotype cages and tested over three consecutive days. The time to descend from a pole was faster in both males and females cKO mice, compared to the WT. When mice had to search for hidden food using their nose, males were faster than females. Moreover, cKO females were slower when food was visible. Mice were then exposed to two pairs of chemosensory stimuli. Adult male urine was used as a stimulus activating the vomeronasal and olfactory epithelium, paired to linalool as a main olfactory stimulus: females were faster than males to approach the stimuli, and gave more sniffs. Interestingly, cKO mice gave more sniffs to both stimuli compared to WT. Moreover, female cKO mice were faster to approach linalool. In the second test, adult male urine was paired to perilla essential oil, that activates the trigeminal chemosensation. All mice approached faster perilla oil than adult male urine. In conclusion, cKO mice appear less frightened in new challenging situations, like in the pole test. They reacted to complex chemosensory stimuli similarly to their WT counterparts, however cKO mice appeared more interested in olfactory/trigeminal stimuli, compared to stimuli that activate also the vomeronasal pathway.

\textbf{P61 - Disease detection: Volatile biomarkers in acute inflammation}

\textbf{Georgia Sarolidou$^1$, Bruce A. Kimball$^{1,3}$, Julie Lasselin$^{1,4,5}$, John Axelsson$^{1,5}$, Mats Lekander$^{1,5}$, Johan N. Lundström$^{1,2,6}$, Mats J. Olsson$^{1}$

\texttt{georgia.sarolidou@ki.se}}

\textbf{1Department of Clinical Neuroscience, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden; 2Monell Chemical Senses Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; 3U.S Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services National Wildlife Research Center, Philadelphia; 4Institute of Medical Psychology and Behavioral Immunology, Universitätsklinikum Essen, Germany; 5Stress Research Institute, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden; 6Department of Psychology, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia}

Through history, infectious bacteria and viruses have posed a threat to humanity. Being able to detect and avoid pathogens is, therefore, of crucial importance. It has been shown
that body odor samples, such as urine, from immune-activated animals contain sickness cues and detection of which, results in avoidance behavior in conspecifics. Perceivable changes in body odor samples have also, recently, been shown in immune-activated human participants. The main aim of this study was to identify potential volatile biomarkers of the acute inflammatory response. Healthy volunteers were injected twice in a crossover design, once with the bacterial endotoxin lipopolysaccharide (LPS, 2ng/kg bw) and once with placebo (saline). LPS caused a transient systemic inflammatory response as shown by pro-inflammatory cytokines, tympanic temperature and subjective sickness ratings (significant interactions between condition and time with all ps<.001, and all ηp^2>.663). Axillary sweat and urine were collected both before and 2–4 hours after injection. Headspace from these samples were analyzed using gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS). GC-MS data analyses assessed the differences in the profile of volatile compounds of urine and sweat from LPS and placebo donors. Results regarding possible differences between volatile biomarkers in LPS and placebo condition will be presented and discussed.

P62 - Describing odorspace

Kobi Snitz
snitz@weizmann.ac.il
Department of Neurobiology, Weizmann Institute of Science, Rehovot 7610, Israel

In the pursuit of connecting odorant physical properties to odorant perceptual properties a fundamental question is how to parametrize the perception of odors. Our work has focused on an unambiguous measure that must be a part of any full model of odor perception: the perceived similarity of odorants. In order to model realistic odor percepts we compared odor mixtures of varying number of components. In earlier work we successfully modeled the similarity between mixtures of equally intense components. Here we first apply our previously published algorithm to an extensive new data set of odorant similarity tests recently published by Keller, Vosshall and colleagues. We find that our algorithm effectively predicts odorant similarity in this independently collected data set (r = 0.65, p < 0.001). A limitation of our algorithm is that it assumes odorant mixtures whose components were first diluted such that they were equal in perceived intensity. Such mixtures exist in lab but not in nature. To overcome this limitation and extend our model we used a new set of 45 molecules that were not included in our previous work and this time were not equated for intensity. We used 30 test subjects who rated similarity in 100 comparisons of mixtures. We then extended our similarity model by adding a concentration constant to account for differing component intensities. This modified model effectively predicted perceptual mixture similarities in mixtures made of components with unequal intensity (r=-0.79, p=e-22). It should be noted that the extended model is identical to our previous model when the intensities of the components are equated. We will present these recent results and discuss the related question of modeling odorant intensity itself from molecular structure.

P63 - Amniotic liquid of sows is sensitive to dietary supplementation of eugenol, anethol and cinnamaldehyde during late gestation

Laia Blavi, Juan José Mallo, José Francisco Pérez, David Solà-Oriol
david.sola@uab.cat
Animal Nutrition and Welfare Service, Department of Animal and Food Sciences, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Bellaterra 08193, Spain. Norel S.A, Madrid 28007, Spain

Some flavours intrinsically related with the common feed ingredients are known to be transferred in small amounts from the maternal diet to the amniotic fluid and milk, promoting mother rewarding effects on the newborn and weaned pig, a phenomenon known as a pre-natal or perinatal conditioning. It has been reported that perinatal conditioning is determinant to reduce the stress and improve the feed intake in weaning pigs. Therefore, the use of volatile compound not commonly present in sow gestating diets could be a useful strategy for the swine industry to manage and reinforce the perinatal conditioning effect. However, the transfer of some volatiles like anethol, eugenol or cinnamaldehyde rom the maternal diet to the amniotic fluid and milk has not been reported in swine by direct analysis with solid-phase micro-extraction, gas chromatography and mass spectrometry (SPME-GC-MS). The presence of volatile compounds in the amniotic fluid and milk was determined in 10 sows fed a late gestating diet (last month of gestation) differing by flavour inclusion (four sows from the control (C) diet and six from the flavour supplemented diet (F). Fluidarom 1003® (> 25% of anethol and cinnamaldehyde and > 10% of eugenol) a commercially flavored feed additives from Norel S.A., supplemented at 375 ppm was used as source of the main volatiles under study. Farrowing was induced, two days before the expected date of farrowing, by 2 cm^2 of D-cloprostenol (PGF2α) followed 24h later by 2 cm^3 of oxytocin. After approximately 1 hour, farrowing began and the amniotic fluid was collected. Milk samples were collected on d 10 of lactation, after intramuscular oxytocin injection. All of the samples were kept frozen until lab analysis. Amongst other compounds, anethol, cinnamaldehyde and eugenol were detected in amniotic fluid within the most influent compounds differing F vs. C sows, and > 10% of eugenol) a commercially flavored feed additives from Norel S.A., supplemented at 375 ppm was used as source of the main volatiles under study. Farrowing was induced, two days before the expected date of farrowing, by 2 cm^2 of D-cloprostenol (PGF2α) followed 24h later by 2 cm^3 of oxytocin. After approximately 1 hour, farrowing began and the amniotic fluid was collected. Milk samples were collected on d 10 of lactation, after intramuscular oxytocin injection. All of the samples were kept frozen until lab analysis. Amongst other compounds, anethol, cinnamaldehyde and eugenol were detected in amniotic fluid within the most influent compounds differing F vs. C sows but, only traces were observed in milk. There was an increase (P < 0.01) in anethol abundance of sows fed the flavor diet compared with sows fed the control diet (7579 vs. 1601 mass number/charge number (m/z)). There
was also an increase (P < 0.001) for sows fed the flavor diet compared with the control diet for cinnamaldehyde (2376 vs. 1346 m/z) and eugenol (12606 vs. 1209 m/z). The Principal Component (PC) analysis of the volatile compounds showed clear differentiation between C sows and F Sows and also the presence of anethol, Cinnamaldehyde and eugenol was only in the amniotic fluid of sows fed the flavor diet. Therefore the two first PC already explained a 83% of the total variability which indicates that those compounds present in the amniotic fluid clearly differentiate the sows supplemented than those fed the common diet. Therefore it can be concluded that the amniotic fluid of sows is sensitive to dietary anethol, eugenol and cinnamaldehyde inclusion and that could be a useful strategy to manipulate piglet feeding behaviour before and after weaning due to the positive maternal reward.

P64 - Chemosensory cholinergic signaling network in the thymic medullary epithelium

A. Soultanova1, C. Cen1, K. Fleck1, G. Krasteva-Christ1, U. Boehm1, S. M. Wienhold1, H. Müller-Redetzky1, M. Witzenrath1, W. Kummer1

aischurek.soultanova@anatomie.med.uni-giessen.de

1Institute for Anatomy and Cell Biology, Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, Germany; 2Institute for Anatomy and Cell Biology, Julius-Maximilians-University Würzburg, Germany; 3Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, University of Saarland, Germany; 4Department of Infectious Diseases and Pulmonary Medicine, Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Germany

Objective: A subset of medullary epithelial cells in the thymus (mTECs) was previously shown to be cholinergic and to express components of the bitter taste transduction cascade. In this study we set out to further characterize these cells and elucidate their function.

Methods: Immunohistochemistry, real-time RT-PCR and intracellular calcium measurements were conducted on thymi from ChAT- (choline acetyltransferase) and Chrna3-eGFP (nicotinic receptor subunit alpha3) reporter mice, mice expressing diphtheria toxin A driven by TRPM5 promoter (TRPM5: channel in taste transduction signaling) and wild-type mice with streptococcal pneumonia. Newborn human thymi were subjected to immunohistochemistry.

Results: Analysis of murine thymi at different age stages revealed that expression of ChAT and chemosensory components in the mTECs starts at birth but not before. The ChAT-positive cells in the thymus are in proximity to terminally differentiated mTECs (Hassall-like bodies) carrying Chrna3.

In human newborn thymi, these cells closely surround or are integrated in the outer layer of the Hassall’s corpuscles. Hassall-like bodies were not observed in TRPM5-DTA mice lacking chemosensory cells. These cholinergic cells respond to the bitter substance denatonium with an increase in intracellular calcium concentration. Thymic mRNA expression of TRPM5 and alpha-gustducin was up-regulated in murine model of streptococcal pneumonia.

Conclusion: We hypothesize that the novel chemosensory cholinergic cell type in the thymic medulla senses bacterial products, presumably coming from the bloodstream and responses by release of acetylcholine which in turn stimulates Hassall’s corpuscles.

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P65 - Functional Overexpression of Vomeronasal Receptors Using a Herpes Simplex Virus type 1 (HSV-1)-Derived Amplicon

Benjamin Stein1, Maria Teresa Alonso2, Frank Zufall1, Trese Leinders-Zufall1* and Pablo Chamero1,3

*pchamero@tours.inra.fr, trese.leinders@uks.eu

1Center for Integrative Physiology and Molecular Medicine, University of Saarland School of Medicine, 66424 Homburg, Germany; 2Instituto de Biologia y Genética Molecular (IBGM), University of Valladolid and CISC, Valladolid, Spain; 3Laboratoire de Physiologie de la Reproduction & des Comportements, UMR885 INRA-CNRS-IFCE-Université de Tours, Nouzilly, France

The accessory olfactory system is specialized in processing social interactions such as those conveyed by pheromones, kairomones, and other socially relevant chemosignals. These molecular cues are detected in the vomeronasal organ (VNO) by vomeronasal sensory neurons (VSNs) expressing one of three major families of G protein-coupled receptors (GPCRs), vomeronasal receptors (V Rs) type 1 and 2 (V1 Rs and V2 Rs), and formyl peptide receptors (FprRs). These receptors are implicated to recognize a highly diverse collection of ligands. Matching socially relevant molecules with their specific receptors provides important knowledge about their function and biological relevance. Thus far, only few receptors out of nearly 400 receptor genes, have been matched with specific ligands, in part due to the lack of suitable heterologous expression tools. To overcome this limitation, we developed a herpes virus-based amplicon delivery system to overexpress three types of murine vomeronasal receptor genes in native VSNs and characterized cell responses to their proposed ligands. Through Ca

and intracellular calcium imaging in infected cells we show that virus-induced overexpression of V1rj2, V2rlb or Fpr3 caused a pronounced increase of responsivity to sulfated steroids, MHC-binding peptide or the synthetic hexapeptide W-peptide, respectively. Other related ligands were not recognized by infected individual neurons, indicating a high degree of selectivity by the overexpressed receptor. Removal of G-protein signaling eliminates Ca

and Ca

responses, indicating that the endogenous second messenger system is essential for observing receptor activation. In summary, our novel expression system for vomeronasal receptors provides
a new tool to deorphanize the molecular logic of VNO ligand detection contributing to decipher chemosignal-based mammalian communication.

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P66 - Glomeruli of the OR37 subsystem possess a more stable interneuronal network than others

Anna-Maria Maier, Heinz Breer and Jörg Strotmann
strotman@uni-hohenheim.de
University of Hohenheim, Institute of Physiology, Stuttgart, Germany

The olfactory subsystem OR37 is targeted to the paraventricular nucleus (PVN) of the hypothalamus and seems to be involved in social buffering effects under moderately stressful conditions. Due to the pheromone-like character of the system, we hypothesized that its neuronal network in the olfactory bulb may be more stable than those for general odorants. Therefore, we have analyzed adult-generated interneurons around translationally labeled glomeruli of mOR37 members in comparison to glomeruli of receptors responding to general odors.

Results of BrdU labelling experiments indicated that at glomeruli of the OR37 family the proportion of adult born interneurons was significantly lower than at glomeruli of mOR256-17 or mOR18-2. This observation was confirmed by immunohistochemical stainings for Doublecortin, a marker of migrating neuroblasts in the olfactory bulb; it was found that also the number of immigrating neuroblasts was lower around OR37 glomeruli compared to other glomeruli. Thus, the proposed role of OR37 odorant receptors in social communication coincides with a more persistent, “hard-wired” functional glomerular domain, whereas the glomerular domains for non-social odorants are characterized by a more fluctuating setting of interneurons indicating a more flexible neuronal network.

This work was supported by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft.

P67 - Effects of different isocaloric oral nutrient solutions on olfactory functioning, hunger and food craving

Norbert Thuerauf, Melanie Denzer-Lippmann, Stephan Bachlechner, Jan Wielopolski, Marie Fischer, Andrea Buettner, Arndt Doerfler, Christof Schöfl, Gerald Münch, Johannes Kornhuber.
norbert.thuerauf@uk-erlangen.de
Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, Erlangen, Germany

Food intake influences human olfaction, hunger and food craving. However, little research has been done in this field to elucidate the effects of different nutrients. Thus, the goal of our study was to investigate the effects of oral ingestions of different nutrient solutions on olfactory functioning, hunger and food craving. 20 healthy men (mean age: 23.8 years, SD: 3.22, BMI: 22.79 Kg/m², SD: 1.44) participated in our study employing a double-blind, cross-over, repeated measurement design. Participants were tested on 4 different study days. Each day participants received one of three isocaloric (carbohydrate or fat or protein, 600 kcal, 1500 ml) or a placebo (NaCl) solution in randomized order. Olfactory and cognitive tests were conducted three times, i.e. 100 min before the beginning of the nutrient intake, following oral ingestion of the nutrient solution and 60, and 240 min after. Craving and metabolic function tests were performed 7 times each examination day (observation period: -100 min, 0=nutrient intake, +60, +120, +180, +240, +340 min).

We tested olfactory functioning by means of the “Sniffin’ Sticks” test battery comprising a threshold (n-butanol), a discrimination and an identification test. Participants rated odor intensity and hedonics for the odorants of the identification test by means of analog rating scales. We registered ‘hunger’, and ‘food craving’ by means of VAS (visual analogue scales, ranging from -10, to +10, including 0 as a neutral point). Craving was registered following the presentation of five pictures (craving order of pictures: 1. fat-rich food, 2. protein-rich food, 3. carbohydrate-rich food, 4. sweets, 5. vegetables). In addition we monitored cognitive and metabolic functioning using the Tests for Attentional Performance 2.2 (Vera Fimm, Germany) and analyzed specific metabolic parameters.

We found significantly different TDI-scores for the four oral solutions used with lowest olfactory functioning following the solution of fat. Ratings of hunger significantly differed over the observation period with lowest ratings following the solution of protein. Ratings of craving significantly differed over the observation period with lowest craving for fat, protein, carbohydrates, sweet and for vegetables following the solution of proteins. Highest ratings of craving were found following solution of placebo as expected. Estimates of olfactory hedonics and intensity did not differ significantly following nutrient solutions. Our study revealed that the type of nutrients possess a significant influence on olfactory functioning, hunger and food craving.

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P68 - Female mouse tears inhibit aggression in males

Rosa Maria Cavaliere and Roberto Tirindelli
roberto.tirindelli@unipr.it
Department of Neuroscience, University of Parma, Parma, Italy
The lacrimal fluid of prepupertal and adult male mice is a powerful pheromonal source, eliciting effects on the  
cellular behavior of females and modulating male mating  
behavior and aggressiveness.  
Here, we report that the lacrimal fluid of the female mouse,  
when rubbed onto a male intruder during an intermale aggres-  
sion test, inhibits aggressiveness and induces mounting be-  
havior in a resident male. Resident male aggressiveness is retained  
when the rubbed lacrimal fluid was collected from females  
subjected to ovariectomy or extraorbital gland removal.

P69 - Infraslow Intrinsic Rhythmogenesis in a Subset  
of Mitral Cells Entrains Oscillatory Microcircuits in the  
Accessory Olfactory Bulb of Mice

Chryssanthi Tsitoura, Kira Gerhold, Julia Mohrhardt, Katja  
Watznauer, Monika Gorin, Marc Spehr  
c.tsitoura@sensorik.rwth-aachen.de  
Department of Chemosensation, Institute for Biology II,  
RWTH Aachen University, D-52074 Aachen, Germany  
The accessory olfactory system (AOS) is a key component  
in rodent conspecific chemical communication. Despite its  
fundamental function, however, sensory coding in the acces-  
sory olfactory bulb (AOB), the first stage of information pro-  
cessing in the AOS, is poorly understood. Here, mitral cells  
(MCs) receive sensory input from peripheral vomeronasal  
neurons and relay this information to the vomeronasal amyg-  
dala and the hypothalamus. Recently, we demonstrated that  
a subpopulation of mouse MCs is intrinsically rhythmogenic  
and exhibits slow stereotypical oscillatory discharge triggered  
by cyclic activation of three interdependent ionic conduct-  
ces: subthreshold persistent Na\textsuperscript{+} current, R-type Ca\textsuperscript{2+}  
current, and Ca\textsuperscript{2+}-activated big conductance K\textsuperscript{+} current. Here,  
we identify an excitatory circuit within the AOB network that  
entrains oscillatory activity in a second MC subpopulation.  
Using a battery of physiological techniques in acute AOB tis-  
sue slices we show that entrained MCs display periodically  
increased excitatory synaptic input that correlates with their  
respective rhythmic discharge patterns. Several such MCs are  
often organized into synchronized microcircuits. Ongoing  
experiments aim to identify the detailed mechanisms of oscil-  
latory entrainment and synchronization, and the role of slow  
rhythmic activity in AOB information processing.  
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Analysis of Olfaction”).

Insect Molecular Genetics and Biotechnology Group,  
National Centre for Scientific Research “Demokritos”,  
Athens, Greece  
Allosteria is an important element of regulation of protein  
function. It modulates structure-function relationships in  
complex oligomeric assemblies, such as GPCRs and ion chan-  
nels, and has significant consequences for drug-related appli-  
cations. Insect odorant receptors (ORs) constitute a family  
of ligand-gated ion channels (LGICs) that are not related  
to other membrane-anchored receptor families including  
mammalian olfactory receptors, which are members of the  
G-protein coupled receptor (GPCR) superfamily. They are  
heteromeric complexes of a variable (ORx) and a conserved  
(ORco) subunit (ORx/ORco) of as yet unknown stoichio-  
meters. Their study has received much attention both in the  
context of basic biology and evolution and that of olfaction-  
based potential applications for insect pest control.  
In this presentation, we describe our findings on the positive  
allosteric modulation exerted on odorant-gated mosquito  
ORs by ORco agonists. This is demonstrated by heterolo-  
gously expressing four different Anopheles gambiae ORx  
subunits, along with ORco and the photoprotein Photina,  
in insect cells and by using a toolbox of specific odorants  
(full and partial agonists) and ORco agonists. We find that  
low concentrations of ORco agonists potentiate significantly  
specific ORx ligand-induced responses, affecting both the  
efficacy and potency of the ligands. These findings provide  
new insights into the basic biology of the receptors and may  
also have practical implications for the development of new  
reagents for enhancement of insect OR responses.

P71 - Comparison of research methods for functional  
characterization of insect olfactory receptors

Bing Wang, Yang Liu, Guirong Wang*  
grwang@ippcaas.cn  
State Key Laboratory for Biology of Plant Disease and Insect  
Pests, Institute of Plant Protection, Chinese Academy of  
Agricultural Sciences, Beijing, China  
Insect olfactory receptors (ORs) in the peripheral olfac-  
tory system play an important role detecting elements of  
information from the environment. The identification of  
the OR repertoire is the first step towards understanding  
how the insect can integrate and process the huge diver-  
sity of volatile compounds present in their environment,  
including signals of food, enemies and mates. At present,  
various approaches are being adopted for deorphaniza-  
tion of ORs in insect. In this study, we compared methods  
for functional analysis of ORs in vitro and in vivo taking  
the candidate pheromone receptor OR13 of Helicoverpa  
assulta (HassOR13) as the object of our experiments. We  
found that the natural system was more sensitive than  
those utilizing transgenic Drosophila. The two-electrode
voltage-clamp recording is more suitable for functional screening of large numbers of ORs, while the in vivo transgenic Drosophila system could prove more accurate to further validate the function of a specific OR. We also found that, among the different solvents used to dissolve pheromones and odorants, hexane offered good reproducibility and high sensitivity. Finally, the function of ORs was indirectly confirmed in transgenic Drosophila, showing that odor-activation of ORs-expressing olfactory receptor neurons (ORNs) can mediate behavioral choices. In summary, our results compare advantages and drawbacks of different approaches, thus helping in the choice of the method most suitable, in each specific situation, for deorphanizing insect ORs.

P72 - Effects of Sex and Sexual Preference on Olfactory Awareness

Theresa L. White, Caitlin Cunningham

Le Moyne College, Syracuse, NY USA

The Olfactory Awareness Survey (OAS; Smeets et al., 2008) measures the relevance of olfactory cues in daily life. Although the sex differences observed in both olfactory sensation (e.g., Navarrete-Palacios et al., 2003) and in the value of olfactory information in mate selection (Herz & Inzlicht, 2002; White & Cunningham, 2015) might lead to the suspicion that the sexes differ in odor awareness, findings from the OAS vary considerably in this matter (e.g., Dematté et al., 2011; Sodavari et al., 2015, Novákova et al., 2014). The present study explored the possibility that sexual orientation may have acted as an intervening variable that contributed to the diversity of findings by presenting the OAS to 453 individuals: 142 heterosexual women, 161 heterosexual men, and 150 gay men. A one-way ANOVA conducted on the positive items of the OAS showed a difference between the groups [F(2, 450) = 3.31, p = .04] that reflected differences between heterosexual and gay men, t(289) = -2.50, p = .02. Analysis of the negative items of the OAS with a one-way ANOVA also indicated a difference between the groups, F(2, 450) = 3.49, p = .03. Follow-up tests indicated that heterosexual men differed on the negative items from both heterosexual women [t(299.6) = -2.40, p = .01] and gay men [t(289.96) = -2.15, p = .03]. These findings indicate that heterosexual men are less aware of the negative aspects of olfactory stimuli than are gay men and heterosexual women; heterosexual men are also less aware of the positive aspects of odorants in their environment than gay men. This is in keeping with previous findings that heterosexual men value odors in their environment less than other groups. Funding for this project was provided by the Stipend Funds of the Department of Psychology at Le Moyne College.

P73 - Are there ERP correlates of olfactory and visual mental imagery?

Marta Zakrzewska1, Elmeri Syrjänen1, Andreas Wartel1, Maria Larsson1, Jonas Olofsson1

marta.zakrzewska@psychology.su.se

1 Gösta Ekman’s Laboratory, Department of Psychology, Stockholm University

The ability to create mental images has been studied in various modalities (visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile etc.) and using different techniques such as subjective vividness measures, functional magnetic resonance and positron emission tomography. Sensory areas involved in perception of stimuli have been shown to be involved in mental imagery for both visual and olfactory imagery (McNorgan, 2012). We were interested in studying the temporal dynamics of mental imagery. We used electroencephalography to measure the activity connected to mental imagery of smells and objects. Additionally, we manipulated participants’ ability to image odors by requesting them to wear a nose clip during half of the experiment. Our study corroborates previous findings showing that odors are more difficult to imaging than visual objects, especially if the nose is blocked (Arshamian et al., 2008). Interesting, our results indicate a different relationship between the amplitude of event related potentials and vividness of imagined smells vs imagined objects.

P74 - The surrounding host plant volatiles can enhance the sex pheromones recognition of green plant bug, Apolygus lucorum

Xiao-Qiang Zhu, Liang Sun, Qiang Zhang, Yong Xiao, Shao-Hua Gu, Xing-kui An, Yong-Jun Zhang1, Yu-Yuan Guo

yzhang@ippcaas.cn

Institute of Plant Protection, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences

At present, it is an intractable problem that the synthetic sex pheromones lure of green plant bug Apolygus lucorum with high biological attraction in the field does not work indoors. We assumed that there were interactions between the identification of sex pheromones in A. lucorum and their perception of the surrounding host plant volatiles. The initial behavior assays showed that the synthetic sex pheromones could not attract the virgin male bugs, even the sex pheromones plus cotton volatiles still had no attraction to virgin male A. lucorum. After feeding on cotton leaves, the virgin males showed significant taxis selection to sex pheromone plus cotton volatiles, while the lure without cotton volatile did not work. In the following parallel tests, we found that virgin males which were fed on favorite host plants had strong tendency to sex pheromone plus cotton volatile, whereas after feeding on green beans and maize, male bugs showed no
obvious taxis response to sex pheromone plus cotton volatiles. The results suggested that the host plant volatiles may play a key messenger role in the course of *A. luctorum* males searching for spouse. In the long process of adaptation to natural environment, perceiving the surrounding host plants become the precondition and foundation for *A. luctorum* to mate and breed population.

**P75 - Olfactory dysfunction in athletes following moderate and severe head injury: a possible cut-off from normality to pathology**

Gesualdo M. Zucco*, Andrea Carletti*, Richard J. Stevenson+

zucco@unipd.it

+Department of General Psychology, University of Padova, (Italy); *Department of Psychology, Macquarie University, Sydney (Australia).

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is one of the most common causes (approximately 20%) of olfactory impairment. Suggested underlying mechanism accounting for complete or partial loss of olfactory function include olfactory nerve fiber injury, nasal bones and/or skull-base fractures and hemorrhage-related damage in olfactory brain areas. Sports players are at an increased risk of such injuries. Here we report on olfactory function (identification and detection threshold) in 9 sports players (3 case studies and 6 matched controls) who suffered moderate (2) and severe (1) concussion during motocross, rugby and football practice. We investigated the relationship between severity of head trauma and olfactory loss and whether the stage in between moderate and severe head trauma can be identified as a cut-off from olfactory normality to pathology. Results supported this notion showing that only the participant with a previous severe TBI performed significantly worse than controls and moderate TBI subjects. Our outcomes stress the importance of an olfactory assessment, along with a general neuropsychological evaluation, in case of sport injuries.

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**P76 - Spontaneous Firing Pattern in Mouse Vomeronasal Sensory Neurons lacking TMEM16A Channel**

Andres Hernandez-Clavijo, Simone Pifferi, Jason Rock and Anna Menini

ahernand@sissa.it

1Neurobiology Group, Scuola Internazionale Superiore di Studi Avanzati, 34136 Trieste, Italy; 2Department of Anatomy, University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine, San Francisco, CA 94143

The Vomeronasal Sensory Neurons (VSNs) use a PLC mediated cascade to transduce the chemosensory signals leading to increase of intracellular Ca\(^{2+}\) mainly through the activation of TRPC2 channels. Moreover, it has been shown that VSNs express two members of the calcium-activated chloride channels TMEM16A and TMEM16B. Previous study performed by our group found that the specific deletion of TMEM16A channel in VSNs abolished the calcium activated chloride currents without affecting the expression of other components of the transduction machinery. Here, we investigate the basic electrophysiological properties and the spontaneous activity of the VSNs from TMEM16A conditional knockout (cKO) mice compared with WT mice.

Whole-cell recordings both in voltage and current-clamp mode showed that the voltage-activated inward and outward currents, the input resistance of the membrane, resting membrane potential and excitability of the membrane after current steps application were not statistically significant different in cKO animal. Then we measured the spontaneous activity of VNSs by loose-patch recordings. The mean frequency of spontaneous activity was not different between WT and TMEM16A cKO mice. However, calculating the Interspike Interval distribution (ISI) we found that VSN from WT mice showed a narrow distribution of firing between 50 and 200 ms (between 5 and 20 Hz), with around 78% of spikes presents in that interval. In contrast in VSNs from TMEM16A cKO mice the percentage of spikes that fell in this range was reduced to about 50%. These data suggested that TMEM16A channels do not play a critical role in resting membrane conditions in VSNs. However, it was shown that the specific deletion of TMEM16A channels from VSNs altered the spontaneous firing pattern leading to a broader distribution of the firing without affecting the mean frequency revealing a role of calcium-activated chloride channels in the regulation of firing pattern in VSNs.

**P77 - Elimination of a ligand gating site generates a supersensitive olfactory receptor**

Kanika Sharma¹, Gaurav Ahuja¹*, Ashiq Hussain¹*, Sabine Balfanz²*, Arnd Baumann², Sigrun I. Korsching³

Ksharma997@gmail.com

1Institute of Genetics, Biocenter, University at Cologne, Zülpicherstrasse 47a, 50674 Cologne, Germany; ²Current address: Max Planck Institute for Neurobiology, Am Klopferspitz 18A, 82152 Martinsried, Germany; ³Institute of Complex Systems (ICS-4), Research Center Jülich, 52428 Jülich, Germany; * equal contribution

Olfaction poses one of the most complex ligand-receptor matching problems in biology due to the unparalleled multitude of odor molecules facing a smaller but still impressively large number of cognate olfactory receptors. Sometimes a single functional group of the ligand determines the specificity of the ligand-receptor interaction, in other cases
an ensemble of molecular features is recognized. We have recently deorphanized an olfactory receptor of the trace amine-associated receptor family, TAAR13c, as a specific and sensitive receptor for a bifunctional compound, the death-associated odor cadaverine.

Here we have modeled the cadaverine/TAAR13c interaction. Several predicted binding residues were exchanged by site-directed mutagenesis, and after heterologous expression the functionality and pharmacological properties of the resulting receptors were compared with wildtype TAAR13c.

We observed a binding site for cadaverine at the external surface of the receptor, in addition to an internal binding site, whose mutation resulted in complete loss of activity. Unexpectedly, site-directed mutagenesis of the external binding site resulted in supersensitive receptors. Modeling suggests this site to act as a gate, limiting access of the ligand to the internal binding site and thereby downregulating the affinity of the native receptor. This constitutes a novel mechanism to fine-tune physiological sensitivity to socially relevant odors.