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Commentary

Analysis of the Pathogenesis of *Leishmania major* in Fibroblasts

Ulrike Bogdan*

Department of Clinical Microbiology, Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg, Erlangen, Germany

DESCRIPTION

In the area of infectious diseases, understanding the complex interplay between pathogens and host cells is important for devising effective therapeutic interventions. *Leishmania* major, a protozoan parasite transmitted by sandflies, is the causative agent of cutaneous leishmaniasis, affecting millions worldwide. Recent advancements in molecular imaging techniques have prepare for innovative approaches to track the pathogen's movement within host cells. One such revolutionary method involves labeling *Leishmania* major with Superparamagnetic Iron Oxide Nanoparticles (SPIONs) to enable their visualization and tracking in fibroblasts, providing insights on the pathogenesis of this fatal disease.

Leishmania major is an interesting intracellular parasite with a complex life cycle involving two main stages: the promastigote form, residing in the midgut of the sandfly vector, and the amastigote form, which proliferates within the phagolysosomes of mammalian host cells, particularly macrophages and fibroblasts. The ability of *Leishmania* to control host cell machinery for its survival and replication underscores the importance of elucidating its interactions with different cell types, particularly fibroblasts, which play a significant role in the immune response and wound healing.

The advent of nanotechnology has revolutionized the field of biomedical imaging, offering unprecedented opportunities for non-invasive visualization of cellular processes. SPIONs, composed of iron oxide nanoparticles coated with biocompatible polymers, possess unique magnetic properties that make them ideal contrast agents for Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI). By conjugating SPIONs to specific targeting ligands, such as antibodies or peptides, it is possible to selectively label and track various cell types or pathogens with high sensitivity and spatial resolution.

In the context of infectious diseases, SPION labeling provides an important tool for studying host-pathogen interactions in real-time. In the case of *Leishmania major*, researchers have successfully coated the parasite's surface with SPIONs without controlling its viability or infectivity. This innovative approach allows for the visualization of labeled parasites within host cells, offering insights into their intracellular trafficking dynamics and the formation of parasitophorous vacuoles.

Fibroblasts, though traditionally regarded as structural support cells in connective tissue, play diverse roles in immunity, wound healing, and tissue remodeling. Growing evidence suggests that fibroblasts serve as important reservoirs for intracellular pathogens, including *Leishmania major*, contributing to disease persistence and dissemination. However, the precise mechanisms underlying the interaction between *Leishmania* and fibroblasts remain poorly understood.

The incorporation of SPIONs into *Leishmania major* provides a powerful tool for investigating its behavior within fibroblasts. By infecting fibroblast cultures with SPION-labeled parasites and subjecting them to MRI, researchers can monitor the spatiotemporal distribution of parasites within host cells over time. This approach enables the visualization of parasite entry, replication, and egress from fibroblasts, offering valuable insights into the dynamics of infection and host response.

The ability to trace SPION-labeled *Leishmania major* in fibroblasts holds significant implications for understanding the pathogenesis of cutaneous leishmaniasis and developing novel therapeutic strategies. By elucidating the mechanisms by which *Leishmania* interacts with fibroblasts, researchers can identify potential targets for intervention, ranging from modulating host cell signaling pathways to enhancing immune responses against the parasite.

Furthermore, SPION-based imaging offers a non-invasive means of assessing disease progression and treatment efficacy in preclinical models and clinical settings. By tracking the fate of labeled parasites *in vivo*, researchers can evaluate the impact of antiparasitic drugs, immunomodulators, or vaccines on parasite burden and tissue inflammation, facilitating the development of more targeted and efficacious therapies.

While SPION-based labeling techniques hold immense potential for studying host-pathogen interactions, several challenges must be addressed to realize their full potential. These include optimizing labeling efficiency, minimizing off-target effects, and

Correspondence to: Ulrike Bogdan, Department of Clinical Microbiology, Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg, Erlangen, Germany, E-mail: ulrikeb@uk-erlangen.de

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improving the sensitivity and resolution of imaging modalities. Additionally, further research is needed to elucidate the long-term SPION-labeled parasites *in vivo* and their impact on host physiology.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the integration of superparamagnetic iron oxide-labeled *Leishmania major* with fibroblast imaging represents a revolutionary approach in infectious disease research. By controlling the power of nanotechnology and molecular imaging, researchers can resolve the unexplainable host-pathogen interactions at the cellular level, prepare for innovative diagnostic tools and therapeutic interventions in the fight against leishmaniasis and other infectious diseases.