

Fluorescent Products

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Introduction

The reaction of lipid peroxidation products, such as malonaldehyde, with amino groups of proteins, free amino acids, aminophospholipids, or nucleic acid bases, produces fluorescent lipid-peroxidation products known as conjugated Schiff bases with the general structure $RN=CHCH=CHNHR'$ (N,N'-disubstituted 1-amino-3-iminopropenes) [1]. When these products are excited at 360 nm the fluorescence maximum is in the region 430-440 nm.

Protocol

Spectrofluorimetric analysis of fluorescent lipid peroxidation products is covered in detail elsewhere [2,3]. The method described here is a simple procedure for detection of lipid-soluble and water-soluble fluorescent products formed during lipid peroxidation of biological membranes.

Lipid-Soluble Fluorescent Products

1. Place membrane sample (e.g. oxidized tissue homogenate, plasma, mitochondria, microsomal suspension, or lipoproteins; 0.5 mL) and ethanol-ether (3:1, v/v, 1.5 mL) in screw-capped tubes (1.3×10 cm, Pyrex).
2. Mix on a vortex mixer for 1 min.
3. Centrifuge for 10 min at 3,000 rpm (4°C).
4. Wash the sediment at the bottom of tube twice with ethanol-ether (3:1, v/v, 2 mL) repeating assay steps 2 and 3.
5. Pipette the solution (1.5 mL) into a 1-mL quartz cuvette.
6. Measure fluorescence (emission) and excitation spectra by spectrofluorimetry. (The fluorescent lipid-peroxidation products have usually an excitation maximum in the region of 355—365 nm and an emission maximum at 430-440 nm).

Water-Soluble Fluorescent Products

1. Dissolve sediments from assay of lipid-soluble fluorescent products (above) in 2.0 mL 15% SDS-PBS (phosphate-buffered saline, pH 7.4) on a vortex mixer for 5 min.

2. Centrifuge for 10 min at 3,000 rpm (room temperature).
3. Pipette the solution (1.5 mL) into a 1-mL quartz cuvette.
4. Measure fluorescence (emission) and excitation spectra by spectrofluorimetry.

Calculation

The fluorescence intensity of quinine sulfate (1 mg mL^{-1}) in H_2SO_4 solution (0.05 M) is the standard for the relative fluorescence intensity of the sample [2]. Quinine sulfate in the solution has a fluorescence maximum at 457 nm when excited at 360 nm.

Comments

Fluorescent products which bind to proteins are insoluble in common organic solvents and their structures (fluorophores) can be disrupted, in part, during extraction of lipids with 2:1 (v/v) chloroform-methanol. They are, however, stable in 3:1 (v/v) ethanol-ether, as described elsewhere [4]. It should be noted that the lipid extracts from biological membranes and tissue homogenates contain retinol as one of interfering fluorescent compounds. Retinol, a lipid-soluble compound, has a fluorescence maximum at 478 nm when excited at 335 nm [5] and its fluorescence can be removed from the lipid extracts by exposing it to high-intensity ultraviolet light for 30 s [2].

References

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