

Amphotericin B: Stimulation of Bone Resorption in Organ Culture<sup>1</sup> (41352)

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**Abstract.** Organ culture studies of 5-day-old mouse calvaria show that amphotericin B, a polyene antibiotic, is a potent bone resorption-stimulating agent, as measured by calcium release into the medium, residual calcium, and hydroxyproline in the calvaria at the end of the 7-day culture period, and by histological examination. Nystatin and filipin, two other polyene antibiotics, also induce bone resorption in the same system. Amphotericin B and nystatin are thought to act on natural and artificial membrane systems by binding to cholesterol or other steroids thereby forming aqueous pores that permit the passage of ions and some other solutes. Such alteration of cell membrane permeability may be a crucial initial step in the chain of events leading to bone resorption by these two agents. Inhibition of polyene antibiotic-stimulated bone resorption by indomethacin and dexamethasone suggest that polyene antibiotic-stimulated resorption is mediated by prostaglandin biosynthesis.

Many specific cellular responses, such as contraction, secretion, and fusion, are affected by ionophores, often mimicking the function of more specific agents. This applies particularly to the divalent cation ionophore A23187 (1-6). Recent studies have shown that this ionophore can also stimulate bone resorption in tissue culture (7-10). These observations prompted us to study the effect on bone in tissue culture of

some other compounds affecting the transport of ions across cell membranes, such as the polyene antibiotic amphotericin B. We report here that amphotericin B is a potent bone resorption-stimulating factor in tissue culture, as determined by calcium release into the medium, residual calcium, and hydroxyproline in the cultured bones at the end of the experiment, and by histological examination. Two other polyene antibiotics, nystatin and filipin, also induced bone resorption but to a lesser extent.

**Material and Methods.** Bone cultures were prepared as follows: Calvaria of 5-day-old mice (Swiss albino, Webster strain) were dissected aseptically and mounted individually (concave side down) on stainless steel grids in small plastic petri dishes (35 × 10 mm Falcon No. 3001). Two milliliters of Dulbecco's modified eagle's medium, containing 4.5 mg/ml glucose (M.A. Bioproducts, Walkersville, Md.) and supplemented with 2 ml/100 ml of 200 mM glutamine (M.A. Bioproducts, Walkersville, Md.), 5 mg/ml bovine serum albumin, fraction V (Sigma Chem. Co., St. Louis, Mo.), 10 u/ml heparin (E. Lilly and Co., Indianapolis, Ind.), 100 u/ml penicillin, and 100 μg/ml streptomycin were added to each culture. In addition, test substances were included in the media added to the experimental groups, as indicated under Results.

Amphotericin B, nystatin, and filipin

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were dissolved in DMSO. The amount of DMSO in the medium never exceeded 0.1% except in one experiment in which 0.2% was used. Indomethacin was dissolved in absolute ethanol and PGE<sub>2</sub> in 70% ethanol. The amount of ethanol also never exceeded 0.1%. These concentrations of DMSO or ethanol per se did not influence the extent of bone resorption when added to non-treated cultures or cultures treated with parathyroid extract (PTE). Bone cultures were placed in a water-jacketed CO<sub>2</sub> incubator (National Appliance Co., Portland, Ore.) at 37°, in a closed and constantly moisturized compartment and flushed for 30 min with a gas mixture consisting of 5% CO<sub>2</sub>, 50% O<sub>2</sub>, and 45% N<sub>2</sub>. In most experiments, there were at least four calvaria per group; in some experiments, there were six, seven, or eight calvaria per group. During the 7-day culture period, the medium was changed twice (every 2–3 days) and the compartment was regassed with the same gas mixture. Used media were analyzed for the total calcium content, using an automated fluorometer (Corning calcium analyzer, Model 940). Appropriate corrections were made for calcium initially present in the various batches of freshly prepared media. Net calcium values were accumulated and subjected routinely to an

analysis of variance. The amount of calcium released into the medium above the amount present in fresh medium (net calcium) served as a chemical index for expressing the amount of bone resorption. At the end of the experiment, calvaria were routinely fixed and processed for histological examination using hematoxylin and eosin staining. In some experiments, two to four calvaria from each group were hydrolyzed in 6 N HCl at 110°, for 18 hr. Hydrolysates were then analyzed for the amount of hydroxyproline as an index of residual bone collagen, according to the method of Woessner (11) and, also, for the amount of residual calcium, using the Corning calcium analyzer. These data were also subjected to an analysis of variance and used as additional parameters to express the degree of bone resorption.

**Results.** Table I presents the data from four representative experiments illustrating the effect of amphotericin B on the total amount of calcium released into the medium above the amount present in fresh medium during the 7-day culture period. It may be seen that the addition of 0.1 u/ml PTE gives rise to a substantial increase in calcium released into the medium compared to the untreated controls. In comparison, at a concentration of 5 µg/ml, am-

TABLE I. EFFECT OF AMPHOTERICIN B ON 7-DAY CUMULATIVE CALCIUM RELEASE INTO THE CULTURE MEDIUM<sup>a</sup>

Experimental groups	Experiment 1	Experiment 2	Experiment 3	Experiment 4
Control	0.7 ± 0.62	1.3 ± 0.70	1.7 ± 0.73	0.1 ± 0.74
Parathyroid extract (0.1 u/ml)	8.3 ± 0.62***	9.5 ± 0.99***	6.7 ± 0.73***	8.3 ± 0.74***
Amphotericin (µg/ml)				
100	—	—	—	14.3 ± 0.74***
75	—	—	—	15.3 ± 0.74***
50	—	17.7 ± 0.70***	15.3 ± 0.73***	14.5 ± 0.74***
20	18.2 ± 0.62***	—	—	—
10	16.3 ± 0.62***	17.5 ± 0.70***	15.9 ± 0.73***	—
5	12.9 ± 0.62***	8.9 ± 0.70***	10.3 ± 0.73***	8.7 ± 0.74***
1	3.5 ± 0.62**	—	2.3 ± 0.73	—
0.5	—	2.0 ± 0.81	2.5 ± 0.73	—
0.1	0.1 ± 0.62	—	—	—

<sup>a</sup> Values represent mg/dl (mean ± SEM).

\* *P* < 0.05 as compared to the untreated control.

\*\* *P* < 0.01 as compared to the untreated control.

\*\*\* *P* < 0.001 as compared to the untreated control.

photicin B caused an increase in calcium release equal to or greater than that obtained with 0.1 u/ml PTE. At a concentration of 10  $\mu\text{g/ml}$ , amphotericin B brought about a large calcium release, approximately double that obtained with PTE. Although no significant additional increase was obtained at higher concentrations of amphotericin B, it should be noted that even at 100  $\mu\text{g/ml}$ , large amounts of calcium were released into the medium. The addition of 1  $\mu\text{g/ml}$  of amphotericin B or less did not consistently increase calcium release over the untreated controls.

Data presented in Table II illustrate the effect of amphotericin B on the amount of calcium and hydroxyproline found in the calvaria at the end of the 7-day culture period. The data are obtained from the same experiments numbered 1, 2, and 3 in Table I. It may be seen that, similarly to the PTE-treated cultures, amphotericin B-treated cultures contained significantly less calcium and hydroxyproline at the end of the experiment as compared to the untreated controls. Both parameters complement the data presented in Table I in illustrating the bone resorption stimulating effect of amphotericin B.

Histological examination of bone sections stained with hematoxylin and eosin revealed that cultures treated with amphotericin B had numerous osteoclasts, many with giant vacuoles ("bubble" osteoclasts), a finding very similar to that observed previously with PTE during rapid bone resorption in culture (12).

In an attempt to unravel the mode of action of amphotericin B, the effect of indomethacin, an inhibitor of prostaglandin biosynthesis (13), was tested in conjunction with amphotericin B. Indomethacin does not inhibit bone resorption induced in tissue culture by PTH (14, 15) or  $\text{PGE}_2$  (16) but does inhibit the effect of several other bone resorption-stimulating agents, such as the unidentified bone resorption-stimulating factor(s) present in conditioned medium from cultures of inflamed human gingival tissue (14), dibutyryl cyclic AMP, 8-bromo cyclic AMP, theophylline, 3-isobutyl-1-methylxanthine, 25-hydroxycholecalciferol (17), tumor-promoting phorbol diesters,

and mellitin (18). Also, the effect of dexamethasone on amphotericin B-stimulated bone resorption was tested, because this compound and some other glucocorticoids have been shown to inhibit in tissue culture the effect of PTH (19). As shown in Table III, whereas indomethacin (100 ng/ml) had no effect on  $\text{PGE}_2$ -stimulated bone resorption (100 ng/ml), it did abolish the bone resorption-stimulating effect of amphotericin B (5  $\mu\text{g/ml}$ ). At the same concentration, indomethacin only partially but significantly inhibited bone resorption induced by higher concentrations of amphotericin B (data not shown). As may be seen in Table IV, dexamethasone ( $10^{-8}$  M) also abolished the bone resorption-stimulating effect of amphotericin B (5  $\mu\text{g/ml}$ ). At  $10^{-9}$  M, dexamethasone was not as effective but did reduce the resorption induced by 5  $\mu\text{g/ml}$  of amphotericin B by approximately 50%. As with indomethacin, dexamethasone only partially but significantly inhibited bone resorption induced by higher concentrations of amphotericin B (data not shown).

Results obtained with amphotericin B prompted us to study the effect of two other polyene antibiotics, i.e., nystatin and filipin, in the same system. As shown in Table V, nystatin (10 and 20  $\mu\text{g/ml}$ ) also promoted bone resorption, but was less potent as compared to amphotericin B. As also shown in Table V, whereas it had no effect on  $\text{PGE}_2$ -stimulated bone resorption, indomethacin abolished the bone resorption-stimulating effect of nystatin observed at the concentrations indicated. It should be noted that, similar to amphotericin B, nystatin induced bone resorption even at higher concentrations (50  $\mu\text{g/ml}$ ), although the bone resorption-stimulating effect at this concentration was only slightly higher than that obtained with 20  $\mu\text{g/ml}$  (data not shown). As shown in Table VI, at the concentration indicated (3.5  $\mu\text{g/ml}$ ), filipin also caused a significant bone resorption-stimulating effect which was abolished by indomethacin. At higher concentrations (14 and 35  $\mu\text{g/ml}$ ), filipin was toxic, as determined by histological examination of sections prepared from cultured bones.

**Discussion.** In the present study, amphotericin B showed a significant bone

TABLE II. EFFECT OF AMPHOTERICIN B ON THE CALCIUM AND HYDROXYPROLINE REMAINING IN THE CALVARIA AT THE END OF THE EXPERIMENT<sup>a</sup>

Experimental groups	Experiment 1		Experiment 2		Experiment 3	
	Ca content (μg/calv.)	Hydroxyproline (μg/calv.)	Ca content (μg/calv.)	Hydroxyproline (μg/calv.)	Ca content (μg/calv.)	Hydroxyproline (μg/calv.)
Controls	553 ± 30	66 ± 5.0	545 ± 37	62 ± 5.5	608 ± 33	63 ± 6.1
Parathyroid extract (0.1 μ/ml)	390 ± 30**	38 ± 5.0***	320 ± 50*	28 ± 7.8*	459 ± 33**	46 ± 6.1
Amphotericin B (μg/ml)						
50	—	—	225 ± 37*	20 ± 5.5**	240 ± 33***	26 ± 6.1***
20	213 ± 30***	22 ± 5.0***	—	—	—	—
10	160 ± 30***	18 ± 5.0***	265 ± 37**	24 ± 5.5**	257 ± 33***	24 ± 6.1***
5	277 ± 30***	29 ± 5.0***	375 ± 37*	40 ± 5.5*	396 ± 33***	42 ± 6.1*
1	590 ± 30	64 ± 5.0	—	—	568 ± 33	63 ± 6.1
0.5	—	—	620 ± 37	64 ± 7.7	609 ± 33	67 ± 6.1
0.1	583 ± 30	74 ± 5.0	—	—	—	—

<sup>a</sup> Values represent the mean ± SEM.

\*  $P < 0.05$  as compared to the untreated control.

\*\*  $P < 0.01$  as compared to the untreated control.

\*\*\*  $P < 0.001$  as compared to the untreated control.

TABLE III. EFFECT OF INDOMETHACIN ON AMPHOTERICIN B-INDUCED CALCIUM RELEASE INTO THE CULTURE MEDIUM<sup>a</sup>

Experimental groups	Experiment 1	Experiment 2
Control	2.7 ± 0.71	4.2 ± 0.67
100 ng/ml indomethacin	-1.2 ± 0.71***	0.1 ± 0.67***
100 ng/ml PGE <sub>2</sub>	6.3 ± 0.71***	9.9 ± 0.67***
100 ng/ml PGE <sub>2</sub> + 100 ng/ml indomethacin	6.8 ± 0.71***	8.9 ± 0.67***
5 μg/ml amphotericin B	6.2 ± 0.71***	9.5 ± 0.67***
5 μg/ml amphotericin B + 100 ng/ml indomethacin	0.1 ± 0.7** †††	1.3 ± 0.67** †††

<sup>a</sup> Values represent mg/dl (mean ± SEM).

\*\* *P* < 0.01 as compared to the untreated control.

\*\*\* *P* < 0.001 as compared to the untreated control.

††† *P* < 0.001 as compared to the corresponding indomethacin-untreated group.

resorption-stimulating effect in bone organ culture. The release of large amounts of calcium into the medium in cultures treated with amphotericin B cannot be explained by a mere leaching out of calcium salts during the culture period. Analysis of residual calcium and hydroxyproline in the calvaria after 7 days of treatment with amphotericin B revealed a significant decrease as compared to the untreated control cultures. These findings, together with the histological observations, clearly indicate that the calcium release into the medium

represented bone degradation affecting both bone collagen matrix and bone mineral.

Results obtained in the present study clearly showed that indomethacin strongly inhibited the bone resorption-stimulating effect of all three polyene antibiotics studied. In addition, dexamethasone inhibited amphotericin B-stimulated bone resorption. Since dexamethasone interferes with prostaglandin biosynthesis at the level of phospholipase A<sub>2</sub>, which provides prostaglandin precursors (20), and indometha-

TABLE IV. EFFECT OF DEXAMETHASONE ON AMPHOTERICIN B-INDUCED CALCIUM RELEASE INTO THE CULTURE MEDIUM<sup>a</sup>

Experimental groups	Experiment 1	Experiment 2
Control	0.7 ± 0.68	0.6 ± .61
0.1 u/ml PTE	9.1 ± 0.68***	8.8 ± 0.61***
0.1 u/ml PTE + 10 <sup>-8</sup> M dexamethasone	3.9 ± 0.68** †††	6.1 ± 0.61*** ††
0.1 u/ml PTE + 10 <sup>-9</sup> M dexamethasone	7.2 ± 0.68***	5.5 ± 0.61*** †††
5 μg/ml amphotericin B	11.8 ± 0.68***	9.0 ± 0.61***
5 μg/ml amphotericin B + 10 <sup>-8</sup> M dexamethasone	-0.3 ± 0.68†††	0.4 ± 0.61†††
5 μg/ml amphotericin B + 10 <sup>-9</sup> M dexamethasone	5.0 ± 0.68*** †††	4.8 ± 0.61*** †††

<sup>a</sup> Values represent mg/dl (mean ± SEM).

\*\* *P* < 0.01 as compared to the untreated control.

\*\*\* *P* < 0.001 as compared to the untreated control.

†† *P* < 0.01 as compared to the corresponding dexamethasone-untreated group.

††† *P* < 0.001 as compared to the corresponding dexamethasone-untreated group.

TABLE V. EFFECT OF INDOMETHACIN ON NYSTATIN-INDUCED CALCIUM RELEASE INTO THE CULTURE MEDIUM<sup>a</sup>

Experimental Groups	Experiment 1	Experiment 2
Control	-0.8 ± 0.38	1.3 ± 0.51
100 ng/ml indomethacin	-1.6 ± 0.38	—
1 μg/ml PGE <sub>2</sub>	—	14.2 ± 0.51***
1 μg/ml PGE <sub>2</sub> + 100 ng/ml indomethacin	—	10.8 ± 0.65***
100 ng/ml PGE <sub>2</sub>	5.0 ± 0.42***	—
100 ng/ml PGE <sub>2</sub> + 100 ng/ml indomethacin	5.9 ± 0.42***	—
20 μg/ml nystatin	2.7 ± 0.38**	4.7 ± 0.51***
20 μg/ml nystatin + 100 ng/ml indomethacin	0.9 ± 0.38††	2.3 ± 0.80†
10 μg/ml nystatin	2.7 ± 0.38**	3.5 ± 0.51**
10 μg/ml nystatin + 100 ng/ml indomethacin	-0.1 ± 0.38†††	1.6 ± 0.51†

<sup>a</sup> Values represent mg/dl (mean ± SEM).

\*\* *P* < 0.01 as compared to the untreated control.

\*\*\* *P* < 0.001 as compared to the untreated control.

† *P* < 0.05 as compared to the corresponding indomethacin-untreated group.

†† *P* < 0.01 as compared to the corresponding indomethacin-untreated group.

††† *P* < 0.001 as compared to the corresponding indomethacin-untreated group.

cin at the level of cyclooxygenase, which converts prostaglandin precursors to prostaglandin endoperoxides (21), it may be hypothesized that polyene antibiotics stimulate bone resorption in tissue culture by a prostaglandin-mediated mechanism. In this respect, they resemble the membrane active agents, such as the tumor-promoting phorbol diesters and mellitin. These compounds have been shown to stimulate bone resorption in tissue culture accompanied by an increased prostaglandin production. In these experiments, indomethacin inhibited

both bone resorption and prostaglandin production (18).

In considering the mechanism of action of polyene antibiotics, it should be noted that amphotericin B binds to cholesterol or some other steroids in cell membranes, thereby modifying the cell membrane and causing an increased permeability (22–25). Apparently, the interaction of amphotericin B and membrane steroids results in the formation of aqueous pores of specific size (about 8 Å in diameter) which facilitate the transport of some ions and other solutes up

TABLE VI. EFFECT OF INDOMETHACIN ON FILIPIN-INDUCED CALCIUM RELEASE INTO THE CULTURE MEDIUM<sup>a</sup>

Experimental groups	Experiment 1	Experiment 2
Control	3.2 ± 0.50	2.2 ± 0.80
100 ng/ml indomethacin	-0.7 ± 0.50***	-1.1 ± 0.80***
100 ng/ml PGE <sub>2</sub>	9.2 ± 0.50***	8.2 ± 0.80***
100 ng/ml PGE <sub>2</sub> + 100 ng/ml indomethacin	9.7 ± 0.50***	6.9 ± 0.80***
3.5 μg/ml filipin	8.7 ± 0.50***	6.8 ± 0.80***
3.5 μg/ml filipin + 100 ng/ml indomethacin	1.2 ± 0.50†††	1.6 ± 0.80†††

<sup>a</sup> Values represent mg/dl (mean ± SEM).

\*\*\* *P* < 0.001 as compared to the untreated control.

††† *P* < 0.001 as compared to the corresponding indomethacin-untreated group.

to the size of glucose (24, 25). It is possible, therefore, that in the experiments reported here, amphotericin B interacted with bone cell membranes to form pores and increase cellular permeability, thereby triggering the bone resorption process. Along this line, it is of interest that in the same systems nystatin was shown to give rise to membrane pores of somewhat smaller size than those formed by amphotericin B, and that filipin caused a formation of aggregates in the hydrophobic core of the membrane leading to the disruption of the cell membranes (24, 25). Our observation that dexamethasone, a membrane-stabilizing agent (26), inhibits amphotericin B-stimulated bone resorption may be explained on the basis of its blocking cell membrane alterations caused by the polyene antibiotics. Finally, it is generally believed that glucocorticoids inhibit protein synthesis and, therefore, it is conceivable that the inhibition of amphotericin B-stimulated bone resorption by dexamethasone is due to the inhibition of synthesis of proteins necessary for continued resorption. Such a conclusion has been drawn by others about dexamethasone inhibition of PTH-stimulated bone resorption in tissue culture (19).

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