PHYSIOLOGICAL AND PATHOPHYSIOLOGICAL ROLE
OF SOMATOSTATIN RECEPTORS
IN THE HUMAN THYMUS

Stellingen

Rotterdam, May 8th 2000

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1. The role of somatostatin and its receptors in the regulation of immune function, both in animals and humans, has projected this ubiquitous peptide among the regulatory peptides with a proven immunomodulatory function.
[*Present thesis*]

2. Somatostatin receptor subtypes are differentially expressed in immune cells of rodents and man.

3. In addition to classical endocrine pathways, paracrine and autocrine mechanisms are implicated in the influence of hormones and neuropeptides on the thymus.
[*Present thesis*]

4. [^{111}In-DTPA-D-Phe^1]-octreotide is considered as a sst_2-preferring ligand. However, on the basis of the visualization of tumors lacking sst_2 receptors, it is suggested that sst_3 and sst_5 receptors play a role in the uptake of [^{111}In-DTPA-D-Phe^1]-octreotide during somatostatin receptor scintigraphy as well.
[*Present thesis*]

5. The pattern of somatostatin receptor subtype expression on thymocytes seems to follow a predisposed order related to the different stage of maturation of these lymphoid cells.
[*Present thesis*]

6. Pituitary scintigraphy with ^{123}I-methoxybenzamide is a useful tool, which demonstrates the expression of dopamine D_2 receptors on adenomas. This may predict beneficial response to long-term therapy with dopamine agonists in patients with clinically non-functioning pituitary adenomas.
[*Ferone D et al. Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism 1998;83:248-252*]

7. Patients with central diabetes insipidus have a reduced bone mineral mass. Preventing treatment should be considered in every patient.
[*Pivonello R et al. Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism 1998;83:2275-2280*]

8. Gastric inhibitory polypeptide (GIP)-dependent Cushing's syndrome by unilateral adrenal adenoma is a new variant of ACTH-independent Cushing's syndrome which results from the expression of GIP receptors on adrenocortical cells.
[*de Herder WW et al. Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism 1996;81:3168-3172*]

9. Acromegalic patients suffering from hypertension and diabetes mellitus have more severe impairment of cardiac performance than those without hypertension and with normal tolerance to glucose. A clear-cut impairment of cardiac diastolic and systolic function occurs in more than half of acromegalic patients suffering from hypertension and glucose intolerance. Apart the suppression of GH and normalization of IGF-I levels, optimal control of hyperglycemia and hypertension have to be strictly enforced in order to normalize the cardiovascular risk of acromegalic patients.
[*Colao A et al. Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism 2000;85:193-199*]

10. "*Gezelligheid*" is the Dutch nirvana. A Dutch historian has described "*gezelligheid*" as partly a sort of cosiness and partly a living togetherness".

11. In The Netherlands, coffee (*koffie drinken*) is a national institution. One of the most significant classical Dutch novels is about coffee. A cup of coffee marks all goings out and coming in. It is the point around which friendships, funerals, birthdays and office life pivot. Coffee is the essential lubricant of "*gezelligheid*".

12. About Dutch language. Its guttural "g" has potential clients muttering about diseases of the throat, and foreign lips and tongue fail entirely when trying to wrap themselves around "ui". Van Gogh knew all too well the problems that his mother tongue gave others, so he signed his paintings "Vincent" in the hope that gallerists would find it easier to pronounce.

13. Dutch can also be a "*gezellige*" language. The Dutch take the hard edge off any number of words by adding the diminutive "*tje*" or "*je*". Thus, in their cosy neighbourhood café they will order a "*pilsje*" in preference to a pils, and cash dispensing machines will invite you to insert your "*pasje*". Friends and family get the same treatment. There can be nothing more "*gezelliger*" than sitting down with a "*kopje koffie*" in the "*koffie-kamer*" with a "*vriendje*". In the laboratory, you can be asked to provide a "*peukje*" or an "*epje*" while you are eating not two "*koekjes*" but "*eentje*".

14. To the Dutch mind the bicycle (*fiets*) is more an extension of the body than a separate means of transport. People behave on bicycles, as they would do if they were walking. No Dutch cyclists will ever consider that a red traffic light (or any other traffic sign for that matter) applies to him or her. On this, I find a close similarity with Italians, especially with "*Napoletans*"...