Biochemistry of Cardiac Muscle-1

Specificity of cardiac metabolism

The heart is one of the most active and highly conducted organs in the body. muscle relative to its size, need a very reduced O2 supply. Myocardial function depends on a fine equilibrium between the work the heart has to perform to meet the requirements of the body and the availability of O2 and metabolic substrates. Biochemical and mechanistic events, resulting in the pumping of blood to all bodily tissues and the energy to be synthesized and transferred as ATP molecules to sustain excitation-contraction coupling.

To support high rates of cardiac power, metabolism is designed to generate large amount of ATP by oxidative phosphorylation to meet energetic demand for generating the needed mechanical force, and for maintaining cellular homeostasis.

N.B. Mitochondria occupies ~30% of cardiomyocyte space.

The energetic metabolism of the cardiomyocyte consists of three key components:

1- Substrate oxidation: utilization of primary substrates, with the incorporation of their metabolites into TCA cycle.

2- Oxidative phosphorylation, which occurs in ETC within the mitochondrial membranes; and

3- The phosphocreatine (PC)-creatine kinase (CK) energy transference system, a network for rapid energy transference from ATP to creatine (an "energy-storing" molecule), through mitochondrial CK and cytosolic CK. (an important source of energy under high-demand conditions).

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- The metabolic machinery of the heart utilizes oxygen up to 60% -90% of the maximum capacity of ETC , however, at a resting state, the heart operates at only 10%-20% of its maximum oxidative capacity.

- Approximately 95% of the total cost of ATP-hydrolysis, which is strongly linked to oxidative phosphorylation occurs under non-ischemic conditions, over 90% of these cells' ATP is produced in this process.

- Under basal aerobic conditions:
1. 60% of energy comes from FAA, but their contributing capacity for tissue metabolism is relatively low.
2. 35% from carbohydrates (glucose and the lactate of FAs from the vascular compartments), and this is because the rate of consumption for cardiac muscle is principally determined by the concentration of non-esterified FAs in plasma.
3. 5% from ketone bodies.

- 2- 35% from carbohydrates
- ~ 30% of glucose is taken up from the vascular circulation.
- ~ 60-70% of ATP-hydrolysis is used for muscle contraction.
- ~ 30 - 40% for the sarcoplasmic reticulum (SR) Ca++-ATPase and other ion pumps.

- CAC is fueled by substrates formed by oxidative decarboxylation of pyruvate, acetoacetate and beta-β-hydroxybutyrate, and fatty acids.
- The reducing equivalents, NADH and FADH2, generated by pyruvate, ketones and fatty acids oxidation are delivered to the ETC , and oxidative phosphorylation takes place.

Regulation of metabolic pathways in the heart

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Carbohydrate metabolism

Glycolytic substrate is derived from exogenous glucose and glycogen stores.

- Glycogen pool in the heart is relatively small (~ 30 mmol/g wet wt compared with ~ 100 mmol/g wet wt in skeletal muscles).
- Once born, cardiac muscle is the richest source of Fe.
- Glucose transport into cardiomyocyte is regulated by insulin-dependent glucose transporter (GLUT4) and insulin-independent transporter or translocator, GLUT1(b). Both is translocating to the membrane in response to signaling by insulin, increased work demand, or ischemia, with GLUT1 playing an accessory role.
- Glycolytic pathway converts glucose to phosphate and NAD+ to pyruvate and NADH, generating 2 ATP molecules for each glucose molecule. Pyruvate is then oxidized in the mitochondria to acetyl-CoA and more oxidative phosphorylation. Under aerobic condition, pyruvate and NADH are shuttled to the mitochondrial matrix to generate ATP and NAD+.
- Glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GAPDH) converts glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate to 1,3-diphosphoglycerate + production of NADH.
- GAPDH is a major regulatory step, it is inhibited by the accumulation of its NADH and activated by NAD+.
- Severe ischemia or hypoxia → lactate and NADH accumulation → cessation of oxidative metabolism and lactate production.

- PDH, the key regulatory enzyme in glycolytic pathway converts the second pyruvate molecule to acetyl-CoA.
- PFK-1 utilized ATP → fructose 1,6-bisphosphate, which is activated by ADP, AMP and inhibited by ATP and citrate.
- PFK-1 can be also stimulated by fructose 2,6-bisphosphate. Formed from fructose 6-phosphate by PFK-2.

- In the mitochondria pyruvate is
1- Transported into the mitochondrial matrix and converted to pyruvate dehydrogenase complex.
2- Decarboxylated oxidatively to acetyl-CoA.
3- Pyruvate dehydrogenase complex is regulated by covalent modification.
- It's controlled by fluctuations in calcium levels.

- The control of PDH activity is an essential part of overall control of glucose metabolism.
- Pyruvate dehydrogenase
- Under anaerobic and endurance exercise, activity is controlled by pyruvate dehydrogenase kinase.
- Lactate is released in the blood-stream through specific transporters, which has considerable role in maintaining the intracellular pH. However, it is also produced by glycolysis.

Lactate metabolism

- Under ischemia, lactate can be converted to pyruvate.
- Pyruvate is then oxidized to NADH (3 ATP - lactate oxidation to pyruvate).
- Pyruvate is then further oxidized to the CAC, liberating 12.5 ATP per cycle.

- Although only 5% the heart's ATP is produced in glycolysis, but it becomes very important under anaerobic or ischemic states.
- Under normal conditions and hyperkalemia, there is a metabolic switch towards favoring carbohydrate over FAs metabolism in the heart.
- Glycolytic intermediates can participate in several additional pathways that do not lend to ATP generation.
- These pathways are of biological significance in the heart despite the small fluxes.
- Fructose 6-phosphate is produced by the hexokinase reaction and can be converted to glucosamine during the oxidative phase and 5-carbon sugars via the non-oxidative phase.
- The sugars synthesized from the PPP is important for antioxidant defense (NADPH) is required for maintaining the reduced state of glutathione.

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Fatty acids metabolism

- Fatty acid uptake is mediated across sarcolemma - fatty acid translocase (FAT) or plasma membrane fatty acid binding protein (FABPpm).
- Fatty acyl-CoA synthase (FACS) activates mitochondrial FA by esterification to fatty acyl-CoA.

- FACT CD36 is one of the main FA transporters, most abundantly expressed in cardiomyocytes, as well as, striated muscles and adipocytes. It is also found in macrophages, platelets, and selected tumors. It is also the most important FAs translocase in the heart. It is also the most important FAs translocase in the heart. It is also found in the mitochondrial membrane, where it plays a role in the entry of long-chain FAs into the mitochondria.
- Excessive expression of FACT/CD36 has been associated with cardiac dysfunction and lipotoxicity.
- Peroxisome proliferator-activated receptors (PPARs) are important regulators of lipid homeostasis and function of cells in their entirety.

- The targeted genes are including those involved in FAs energy (such as diacylglycerol acyltransferase, promoted by PPARα), FA oxidation (PPARα), or malonyl-coA:acyl-CoA dehydrogenase, promoted by PPARβ/δ), and FA storage (PPARγ, such as perilipin, an adipocyte differentiation marker, promoted by PPARγ).

- PPAR and PPARγ also plays an important role in the regulation of oxidative stress in the cardiovascular system, with the induction of antioxidant genes, such as catalase, as a mechanisms for antioxidant genes, such as suppressing the transcription and activation of cyclooxygenase-2 (COX-2) and cytokine in cardiac tissues. Furthermore, PPARγ coactivator-1α (PGC-1α), subsequently activating the PPARγ, PPARα, PPARβ/δ, and promoting cardiomyocyte oxidative metabolic genes.

- Long chain fatty acyl-CoA can be:
1- Esterified to triacylglycerols (glycerolipotoxic acyltransferase) ⟶ intracardiac triacylglycerols pool (10-20% of FAs).
2- Or converted to long chain fatty acylcarnitine by carnitine palmitoyltransferase I (CPT I) between inner and outer mitochondria membranes.

- Carnitine acyltranslocase (CAT) transports long-chain acylcarnitine across the inner membrane in exchange for free carnitine.
- Carnitine palmitoyltransferase II (CPT-II) regenerates long chain acyl-CoA for fatty acyl-CoA

- CPT-I can be strongly inhibited by malonyl CoA (on the cytosolic side of the enzyme).
- Malonyl-CoA is formed from acetyl-CoA by acetyl-CoA carboxylase (ACC) from exturnmochondrial acetyl-CoA (derived from citrate via ATP- citrate lyase reaction)
- Rapid rate of turnover in the heart.

- ACC activity is inhibited by phosphorylation of AMPK (AMP-activated protein kinase) ⟶ acceleration of FA oxidation.

- FAs undergo β-oxidation generating NADH and FADH2. Acetyl-CoA formed in b-oxidation generate more NADH in CAC cycle.

Interrogation of fatty acid and carbohydrate oxidation

- Glucose and fatty acid are important regulator of flux through PDH and the rate of glucose oxidation.
- PDH activity is inhibited by high rate of FA oxidation via an increase in mitochondrial acetyl-CoA/free CoA and NADH/NAD+ which activates PDH kinase.
- Inhibition of FA oxidation increases glucose and lactate oxidation via the following:
1- Decreasing cytosolic levels and activation of PFK.
2- Lowering acetyl-CoA and NADH levels in the mitochondria

Fatty acids vs. glucose as energetic substrates

- The selection of energetic substrates in cardiomyocytes is a fundamental step for the consistent generation of ATP which depends on the dynamic metabolic requirements in each beat at a given time.
- The fluctuations present during cardiomyocytes, however, after birth, a balance of oxygen and dietary fats.
- Cardiomyocytes are exposed to changes in O2 and substrates with modulation to genes involved in FA metabolism have been documented to develop cardiomyopathy when under-stress.
- Likewise, in heart failure and left ventricular hypertrophy (when the oxidative capacity of mitochondria in cardiomyocytes is diminished), there is a shift towards a predominance for glucose metabolism.

- Several reports have shown that a defect affecting, in terms of myocyte consumption, is similar when oxidizing glucose and lactate rather than FAs.

- The increase in oxygen consumption during utilization of FAs is accompanied with no changes in mechanical capacity of the left ventricle, which suggests a greater functional capacity for this chamber when utilizing glucose.

- This may be due to the higher level of oxidative stress caused by the oxidation of FA in comparison with carbohydrates, due to the increased oxygen consumption rate in the former.

- The ATP-consumption pathways assumption rates for glucose and fatty acid are ~ 17.8 and ~ 6.06, respectively; whereas they are ~ 5.93 and ~ 2.04 on mitochondrial basis, respectively.

- When comparing pathways with glucose, the comparative oxidation of 1 molecule of palmitate yields 9.2 ATP molecules and requires ~46 oxygen atoms, while 1 molecule of glucose generates 30 ATP molecules and uses ~12 oxygen atoms.

- Thus, despite FAs clearly yielding greater amount of ATP, this occurs at the expense of larger oxygen requirements.
- Furthermore, the oxidation of FAs is associated with a greater peroxidation due to 1 delivery of NADH and FADH2 to ETC and production of superoxide anion.
- In addition, elevated free FAs are harmful to the ischemic myocardium, augmenting cell damage in the first hours of MI.
- Increased circulating levels of FAs are associated with serious fast-beating arrhythmias, predisposing to sudden cardiac death.
- Free enzymes can lead to contractile dysfunction, ischemic damage, and apoptosis in association with accumulation of FA metabolites.

- Partial inhibition of free FAs oxidation in the myocardium can provide a substantial tissue damage and dysfunction under conditions of ischemia or reperfusion, diabetic cardiomyopathy, and cardiac.
- This occurs because the heart shifts towards glucose as the main source for ATP synthesis, which reduces the oxygen demand by 10-15% and therefore improves cardiac efficiency and possible mitochondrial function.