We are IntechOpen, the world’s leading publisher of Open Access books
Built by scientists, for scientists

6,600
Open access books available

177,000
International authors and editors

195M
Downloads

154
Countries delivered to

TOP 1%
Our authors are among the most cited scientists

12.2%
Contributors from top 500 universities

WEB OF SCIENCE™
Selection of our books indexed in the Book Citation Index in Web of Science™ Core Collection (BKCI)

Interested in publishing with us?
Contact book.department@intechopen.com

Numbers displayed above are based on latest data collected.
For more information visit www.intechopen.com
1. Introduction

Myocardial infarction is one of the major causes of morbidity and mortality in many developed countries. A potential method for treatment of such disease is the cell replacement therapy which involves the transplantation of cardiomyocytes (CMs). However, CMs are of very limited supply. Embryonic stem cells (ESCs) isolated from the inner cell mass of blastocysts are capable of self-renewal and can differentiate into all cell lineages, including CMs (He et al., 2003; Kehat et al., 2002; Kehat et al., 2001; Moore et al., 2008; Mummery et al., 2003; Ng et al., 2010; Thomson et al., 1998; Xu et al., 2002; Xue et al., 2005). Therefore, ESCs can be an excellent source of CMs for regenerative medicine.

Calcium (Ca$^{2+}$) is a universal signaling molecule that regulates a wide variety of cellular functions. In CMs, intracellular Ca$^{2+}$ concentration ([Ca$^{2+}$]$_i$) plays an important role in the contraction and relaxation of CMs. The [Ca$^{2+}$]$_i$ is tightly regulated by many proteins, including ion channels, receptors, pumps, and exchangers that are located on the cell surface plasma membrane and on the sarcoplasmic reticulum (SR). The aim of this book chapter is to provide a thorough review on Ca$^{2+}$ handling in ESC-derived CMs.

For each protein of interest, some basic information on the protein was firstly presented. Then, changes in the expression of the protein and their contribution to the Ca$^{2+}$ homeostasis and Ca$^{2+}$ transient as described in human (h) and/or mouse (m) ESC studies were presented. In vivo data in mouse embryo studies were also presented for comparison purposes. The information reviewed in this chapter would be important not only for understanding the basic biology of early differentiating CMs, it would also be important for providing insights into the future uses of ESC-derived CMs for cell replacement therapies.

2.1 Regulation of intracellular calcium level by voltage-operated calcium channels

Voltage-operated Ca$^{2+}$ channels are typically composed of five subunits, namely $\alpha_1$, $\alpha_2$, $\beta$, $\delta$ and $\gamma$ (Catterall, 1995; Catterall, 2000; De Waard et al., 1996; Dolphin, 2006; Moreno Davila, * Corresponding author.

www.intechopen.com
The $\alpha_1$ subunit forms the ion conduction pore of the channels while the other subunits modulate the functions of the channels. The $\alpha_1$ subunit is itself a tetramer of proteins, each of which consists of six transmembrane segments (S1-S6). This subunit confers all of the major properties to voltage-operated $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channels in that it contains a voltage sensor at segment S4 and forms a $\text{Ca}^{2+}$-selective pore at segments S5-S6. The other subunits are regarded as to providing ancillary functions to the channels. The $\alpha_2$ and $\delta$ subunits are two products of the same gene; the protein is cleaved into two peptides following translation. Subsequent disulfide bond formation anchors the extracellular $\alpha_2$ subunit to the membrane via the transmembrane $\delta$ subunit. The $\beta$ subunit is a cytoplasmic protein; it contains an $\alpha_1$-binding pocket, where specific amino acids in the linker region between segments S1 and S2 of the $\alpha_1$ subunit bind (Richards et al., 2004). The $\gamma$ subunit is a monomer, which consists of four transmembrane segments (S1-S4). A diverse range of functionally distinct voltage-operated $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channels are formed by the combinations of different isoforms that have been identified for each of these subunits. The $\alpha_1$ subunit is encoded by a family of ten distinct genes (the Cav gene family), which can be divided into three sub-families; Cav1 consists of Cav1.1-1.4, Cav2 consists of Cav2.1-2.3 and Cav3 consists of Cav3.1-3.3 (Catterall et al., 2005). The $\alpha_2/\delta$ and $\beta$ subunits are each encoded by a family of four genes; $\alpha_2/\beta_1$ and $\beta_2$, respectively, while the $\gamma$ subunit is encoded by eight genes (Arikkath and Campbell, 2003; Yang et al., 2011). Voltage-operated $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channels function by regulating the entry of extracellular $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ into cells. Two types of voltage-operated $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channels exist in adult CMs (Catterall et al., 2005; Ono and Iijima, 2005). These are $\text{T-type}$ $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channels, which open in response to more negative membrane potentials at about $>-70\text{mV}$ for very short durations of 0.5 to 2 milliseconds (transient activation), and $\text{L-type}$ $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channels, which open in response to less negative membrane potentials at about $>-30\text{mV}$ for relatively longer periods of 0.5 to 10 milliseconds (long-lasting activation) (De Waard et al., 1996).

### 2.1.1 T-type calcium channels

T-type $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channels could be the simplest type of voltage-operated $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channels known thus far. Its structure was initially predicted in silico by homology to other $\alpha_1$ subunits known at the time (Perez-Reyes, 2006). Since expression of the synthetic products was able to reproduce most of the electrophysiological properties observed in its native form, T-type $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channels were thought to consist of only one $\alpha_1$ subunit; the other ancillary subunits ($\alpha_2$, $\beta$, $\delta$ and $\gamma$) were considered absent. Although later co-expression studies could describe a role for the other ancillary subunits in the regulating functions of T-type $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channels in vitro, presence of these subunits have not been validated in vivo (Dolphin et al., 1999; Dubel et al., 2004; Green et al., 2001; Hobom et al., 2000; Lacinova and Klugbauer, 2004). Therefore, further investigations will be required to ascertain the genuine structure of this type of voltage-operated $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channel.

The $\alpha_1$ subunit of T-type $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channels is encoded by either one of the three Cav3 genes, among which Cav3.1 and Cav3.2 are expressed in sinoatrial (SA) nodal cells of the heart (Bohn et al., 2000; Perez-Reyes, 2003). The SA node is the primary site, where spontaneous rhythmic action potentials are initiated. At the beginning of each action potential in an SA nodal cell, an influx of extracellular $\text{Na}^+$ into the cytosol, known as the funny current ($\text{If}$), first depolarizes the cell to about $-50\text{mV}$, at which T-type $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channels on the membrane open to allow an influx of extracellular $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ into the cytosol. This produces a T-type $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ current ($I_{\text{CaT}}$), which further depolarizes the cell to about $-40\text{mV}$. L-type $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ channels on the membrane then open at this membrane potential to allow a greater influx of extracellular...
Ca\(^{2+}\) into the cytosol and produce an L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) current (\(I_{Ca, L}\)) to a membrane potential until the threshold to produce an action potential is reached. Action potentials generated in the SA nodal cells are conducted to CMs within the working myocardium via gap junctions, ultimately resulting in regular contractions of the adult heart.

Cav.3.1 mRNA and protein were simultaneously detected as early as embryonic day 14 (E14) after the heart has fully matured \(in vivo\) within mouse embryos (Cribbs et al., 2001). In a separate experiment, the mRNA level of Cav.3.1 was moderately reduced from E18 when compared to its expression at adult stage (Yasui et al., 2005). Ni\(^{2+}\) at a high concentration of 100\(\mu\)M could be used to selectively block 50% of Cav.3.1 T-type channels. The application of Ni\(^{2+}\) at this concentration was found to reduce \(I_{Ca, T}\) by about 40% in CMs derived from mouse embryos at E12.5, indicating that the Cav.3.1 T-type channels were functional by this time-point (Cribbs et al., 2001). In addition, homozygous null Cav.3.1\(-/-\) mice displayed bradycardia, i.e. a reduced rate of cardiac contraction (Mangoni et al., 2006). Expression of Cav.3.1 has also been studied \(in vitro\). Its mRNA could be detected as early as day 5 and generally increased up until its last measurement at day 15 post-differentiation in h7 mouse ESC- (mESC-) derived CMs (Mizuta et al., 2005). In R1 mESC-derived CMs, however, Cav.3.1 mRNA could only be detected at two copies per cell by day 12, with its expression reaching the highest level at day 23 and declining by day 34 post-differentiation; the expression pattern reflected the amplitudes of \(I_{Ca, T}\) measured at these time-points. (Zhang et al., 2003).

A reduction of about 46% in Cav.3.1 expression from day 9.5 to day 23.5 post-differentiation was also reported in EMG7 mESC-derived CMs; this down-regulation was found to be associated with a decrease in the contraction rates of the CMs in that \(I_{Ca, T}\) was smaller in non-contracting myocytes at day 23.5 when compared to contracting CMs at day 9.5 and that the contraction rate at day 9.5 could be reduced via the application of 10\(\mu\)M efonidipine, an L- and T-type blocker, to the CMs (Yanagi et al., 2007). These data suggested a role for Cav.3.1 in regulating the early contractions observed in the developing embryonic heart; by maintaining these contractions exclusively in developing pacemaker cells, other cells could then develop into non-contracting atrial or ventricular cells.

Cav.3.2 mRNA was detected as early as eight-week gestation in humans (Qu and Boutjdir, 2001). In mouse, the expression of Cav.3.2 was also measured at three time-points; its mRNA was detected as early as E9.5 and then its level was decreased by E18 until it was no longer detected at adult stage (Yasui et al., 2005). Again, Cav.3.2 has been studied \(in vitro\). Its mRNA was detected as early as day 5, but peaked at day 6 and gradually declined and was still detectable up until the last measurement at day 15 post-differentiation in h7 mESC-derived CMs (Mizuta et al., 2005). In line with this finding, Cav.3.2 mRNA level was also found to be down-regulated by about 24% from day 9.5 to day 23.5 post-differentiation in EMG7 mESC-derived CMs (Yanagi et al., 2007). Ni\(^{2+}\) at a low concentration of <50\(\mu\)M could be used to selectively block 50% of Cav.3.2 T-type channels. When Ni\(^{2+}\) was applied at 40\(\mu\)M to h7 mESC-derived CMs at day 8 post-differentiation, \(I_{Ca, T}\) was found to be evidently decreased by about 60%, which signified the presence of functional Cav.3.2 T-type channels by this time-point. Homozygous null Cav.3.2\(-/-\) mice showed no sign of cardiac arrhythmia, but cardiac fibrosis with age-dependent severity (Chen et al., 2003). These data suggested a role for Cav.3.2 in regulating the growth and maturation of the developing embryonic heart.

### 2.1.2 L-type calcium channels

L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channels are distinguished from other voltage-operated Ca\(^{2+}\) channels that open at high membrane potentials for long periods on the basis of their sensitivity to 1, 4-
dihydropyridines (DHPs) (Hess et al., 1984). DHP-binding sites are contained within the α1 subunit of L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channels, which are encoded by either one of the four genes of the Cav1 sub-family. Among these, Cav1.1 is expressed predominantly in skeletal myocytes, Cav1.2 in adult CMs and Cav1.3 exclusively in SA nodal and atrial cells of the heart (Catterall, 2000; Qu et al., 2005). Unlike T-type, L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channels are typical voltage-operated Ca\(^{2+}\) channels, which are made up of five subunits. Together with one of each of the α\(_d\)/β\(_{1,3}\) and γ\(_{4,6,8}\) ancillary subunits, Cav1.2- and Cav1.3-encoded α1 proteins form the functional L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channels that are found within the adult heart (Freise et al., 1999; Hosey et al., 1996; Yang et al., 2011). Cav1.2 L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channels are responsible for cardiac excitation-contraction coupling (E-C coupling), a mechanism by which an action potential is transformed into contraction in adult CMs. Upon the arrival of an action potential from SA nodal cells, L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channels, which are clustered at transverse tubules (T-tubules), briefly open at the sarcolemma to allow an influx of extracellular Ca\(^{2+}\) into the cytosol of the CMs. This only accounts for about 30% of the increase in cytosolic Ca\(^{2+}\), which is maintained and magnified through a process known as calcium-induced calcium release (CICR) (Bers, 2002). CICR is mediated via ryanodine receptor (RyR) Ca\(^{2+}\) release channels, which detect the I\(_{Ca, L}\) and open to release Ca\(^{2+}\) from its intracellular stores within the SR into the cytosol of the CMs. This rise enhances binding of Ca\(^{2+}\) to troponin within the CMs, ultimately bringing about contractions of the adult heart. Conversely, Cav1.3 L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channels are responsible for producing I\(_{Ca, L}\) which constitutes one of the ionic currents to initiate action potentials at the SA node. Hence, these L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channels contribute in maintaining the pacemaker activity of the adult heart (see ‘T-type calcium channels’ for details).

Consistent with its role in E-C coupling in the adult heart, Cav1.2 mRNA was detected as early as eight-week gestation in humans, with its level culminating to its maximum at adult stage (Qu and Boutiljier, 2001). Cav1.2 mRNA was also present in vitro at <40 days post-beating in H9.2 human ESC- (hESC-) derived CMs (Satin et al., 2008). In H7 hESC-derived CMs, Cav1.2 transients that were detected at day 17 post-differentiation could be eliminated by the application of 10μM diltiazem, an L-type specific antagonist; this signified the functionality of L-type channels by this time-point (Zhu et al., 2009). Similar to humans, the expression of Cav1.2 was also up-regulated from its initial detection at E9.5 when the earliest contractions were observed by about three-fold at E15.5 when the heart has fully matured in mouse embryos; its protein was detected by E12.5 in mouse embryos (Acosta et al., 2004; Xu et al., 2003). In mESCs, patch clamp and Ca\(^{2+}\) imaging experiments indicated the functional expression of the I\(_{Ca, L}\) starting from differentiation day 7, even before the appearance of spontaneous contractions (Kolossov et al., 1998). The current density of I\(_{Ca}\) continued to increase to day 10, the day of beginning of spontaneous contractions in most differentiating embryoid bodies (EBs). Thereafter, similar current density was recorded on day 17, the last day of measurement (Kolossov et al., 1998). Homozygous null Cav1.2/- mice died in utero by E14.5, probably due to an absence of CICR-regulated contractions, resulting in reduced oxygen supply to the embryos (Seisenberger et al., 2000). Despite the lethality observed, normal rhythmic contractions were sustained in the Cav1.2/- mice until E12.5. For this reason, CICR was initially thought to be non-essential for regulating the early cardiac contractions observed before E12.5 until later time-points. This conclusion was further supported by the fact that both the contractions and Ca\(^{2+}\) oscillations of D3 mESC-derived CMs were insensitive to the application of 50nM nisoldipine, a specific L-type channel blocker, at days 8-11 post-differentiation (Viatchenko-Karpinski et al., 1999). In addition,
these cells were insensitive to the application of high K\(^+\) when compared to D3 mESC-derived CMs at day 16 post-differentiation; exposure to high K\(^+\) at this stage would normally lead to immediate hyper-contraction and death of these cells. Albeit these findings, the notion that \(I_{\text{Ca}, \text{L}}\) was not required at earlier stages of development was overthrown when evidence for the existence of a compensatory mechanism emerged; the expression of Cav1.3 was eminently up-regulated at E9.5 and E12.5 by four fold to produce a DHPR-insensitive \(I_{\text{Ca}, \text{L}}\) in Cav1.2\(^{-/-}\) mouse embryos when compared to wild-type (Xu et al., 2003). This has not only reinstated the importance of \(I_{\text{Ca}, \text{L}}\) in maintaining cardiac contractions, even at the embryonic stage of the heart, but also appointed a new role for Cav1.3 to substitute for Cav1.2 and preserve its role in CICR for E-C coupling in its absence. In contrast with Cav1.2, Cav1.3 mRNA was detected by E9.5, with its level elevated only by a modest amount at E15.5 in mouse embryos. Its protein was also detected by E12.5 in mouse embryos (Xu et al., 2003). Analogous to Cav3.1\(^{-/-}\) mice, homozygous null Cav1.3\(^{-/-}\) mice developed bradycardia, consistent with its primary role in regulating the pacemaker activity of the heart (Platzer et al., 2000; Zhang et al., 2002). In R1 mESC-derived CMs, the expression of L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channels could be detected as early as day 7 post-differentiation; given that the application of 1\(\mu\)M nifedipine, an L-type channel-specific antagonist, could eliminate Ca\(^{2+}\) transients that were normally observed at early (days 9-11) and intermediate (days 13-15), but only partially inhibit those at late (18-21 days post-differentiation) stages, this indicated that L-type channels were, in fact, playing a more dominant role at earlier developmental stages (Fu et al., 2006b).

### 2.2 Regulation of intracellular calcium level by ligand-operated calcium release channels

#### 2.2.1 Ryanodine receptor (RyR) calcium release channels

RyR-Ca\(^{2+}\) release channels of a molecular mass of greater than two Mega-Daltons probably form the largest ion channels known thus far (Lanner et al., 2010). RyR-Ca\(^{2+}\) release channels are composed of homo-tetramers of RyR proteins. Owing to its enormous size, structural elucidation of these channels has been a major challenge. Nonetheless, RyR-Ca\(^{2+}\) release channels have been predicted to be largely cytoplasmic, with an ion-conducting pore consisting of around four to twelve transmembrane segments. Three mammalian isoforms of RyRs exist; RyR1 is predominantly expressed in skeletal myocytes, RyR2 in CMs and RyR3 in astrocytes. The isoforms differ in three particular regions, which have been named domains D1-3 (Ma et al., 2004). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, RyR-Ca\(^{2+}\) release channels are induced to open in response to Ca\(^{2+}\) influx via L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channels to facilitate E-C coupling in muscle cells. In skeletal myocytes, E-C coupling takes place through direct physical interaction between RyR1 and the D2 region, which is located between segments S2 and S3 of the Cav1.1-encoded \(\alpha_1\) subunit of L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channels. In CMs, however, sequence divergence in the D2 domain between RyR1 and RyR2 means that RyR2 cannot physically interact with the Cav1.2-encoded \(\alpha_1\) subunit of L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channels; E-C coupling can, therefore, only occur via CICR. RyR-Ca\(^{2+}\) release channels are, thus, organized into large arrays at junctions between the SR and the sarcolemma, in close proximity to the Cav1.2 L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channels in adult CMs (Bers, 2004). Localized Ca\(^{2+}\) release events are referred to as Ca\(^{2+}\) sparks, which are collectively synchronized by \(I_{\text{Ca}, \text{L}}\) to produce large, whole cell Ca\(^{2+}\) transients in the CMs. Release of Ca\(^{2+}\) from the SR greatly increases the amount of cytosolic Ca\(^{2+}\) available to bind troponins in adult CMs. Adult CMs are mostly occupied by bouquets of thick and thin
filaments. Thick filaments are composed of myosin II molecules, while thin filaments are made up of troponin, tropomyosin and actin molecules. Troponin is itself a globular complex, which consists of three subunits, namely troponin T (TnT), troponin C (TnC) and troponin I (TnI). The TnT subunit binds tropomyosin, which coils around strands of actin molecules in the thin filament. Binding of Ca$^{2+}$ to the TnC subunit induces a conformational change in the TnT subunit, thereby removing the steric hindrance on actin from tropomyosin. Binding of myosin II to actin can then occur, inducing a conformational change in the complex. This pulls the actin-associated thin filament past the myosin II-associated thick filament, resulting in a contracting phenomenon in the CMs.

RyR2 protein was present as early as day 17 post-differentiation in H7 hESC-derived CMs (Zhu et al., 2009). In H9.2 hESC-derived CMs, the application of a puff of 10mM caffeine was able to induce Ca$^{2+}$ release from the SR as early as day 2 post-beating; this signified the functionality of RyR-channels in these cells at this early time-point (Satin et al., 2008). In mouse embryos, RyR2 mRNA was detected as early as E8.5, the level of which continued to increase up until its last measurement at E16.5 (Rosemblit et al., 1999). Ca$^{2+}$ release from the SR was inducible by the application of 10mM caffeine, indicating the functionality of RyR2 channels by E8.5 in mouse embryos. In a different study, RyR2 protein was also detected at E18 and the detection persisted until adult stage (Liu et al., 2002). Homozygous null RyR2/- mice died at E10, displaying morphological abnormalities in the heart tube (Takehashima et al., 1998). RyR2 expression has also been studied in vitro in mESC-derived CMs. RyR2 mRNA and protein were detected as early as day 5 and day 9 post-differentiation in mESC-derived CMs respectively (Boheler et al., 2002; Fu et al., 2006a). Immunohistochemistry revealed a continuous increase in RyR immunofluorescence intensity in differentiation day 15-25 CMs compared with differentiation day 8-11 CMs, suggesting an increasing density of RyRs during cardiac differentiation (Sauer et al., 2001). The application of 10mM caffeine elicited Ca$^{2+}$ transients, the amplitudes of which increased from day 8 to day 17 post-differentiation in mESC-derived CMs (Kapur and Banach, 2007). Hence, RyR2 channels were functional by day 8 post-differentiation in mESC-derived CMs. RyR2/- knockout R1 mESC-derived CMs exhibited no difference in the amplitudes of Ca$^{2+}$ transients but contractions at a reduced rate from early (days 9-11) to intermediate (days 13-15) to late (days 18-21 post-differentiation) differentiation stages when compared with wild-type (Fu et al., 2006a; Yang et al., 2002). The applications of 10μM ryanodine and 10mM caffeine were able to inhibit and induce Ca$^{2+}$ release from the SR respectively. Cardiac differentiation was not affected, as indicated by the number of contracting colonies present in the differentiating cultures. Both effects of ryanodine and caffeine were seen to increase with time post-differentiation, indicating that SR Ca$^{2+}$ loads increased during differentiation (Fu et al., 2006a; Sauer et al., 2001). Altogether, these findings suggested a role for RyR to mediate SR Ca$^{2+}$ release, thereby regulating the rate of the earliest contractions observed in the developing embryonic heart, and that this regulation increases with differentiation.

2.2.2 Inositol 1, 4, 5-trisphosphate Receptor (IP$_3$R) calcium release channels

IP$_3$R Ca$^{2+}$ release channels represent a type of enigmatic intracellular Ca$^{2+}$ channels in that both its structure and function(s) are not fully understood (Foskett et al., 2007; Taylor et al., 2004; Taylor and Tovey, 2010; Yule et al., 2010). IP$_3$R-Ca$^{2+}$ release channels can be formed from either homo- or hetero-tetramers of IP$_3$R proteins. Each subunit of IP$_3$R proteins contains an IP$_3$-binding domain at its N-terminus and six transmembrane segments (S1-6) at its C-terminus; the Ca$^{2+}$-selective pore is formed at segments S5-6. Three mammalian
isoforms of IP$_3$Rs exist, namely IP$_3$R1, IP$_3$R2 and IP$_3$R3. These isoforms differ in their binding affinities for IP$_3$, with IP$_3$R2 being the most and IP$_3$R3 being the least sensitive to the ligand (Iwai et al., 2007; Tu et al., 2005). All three IP$_3$Rs are expressed in human adult CMs, but their subcellular localizations have not been studied (Nakazawa et al., 2011; Uchida et al., 2010). In rat adult CMs, these are expressed at about 50-fold lower than those of RyRs; IP$_3$R1s are localized around the nuclear envelope and SR, both of which are connected, while IP$_3$R2s are dispersed throughout the cytosol in a punctate pattern (Bare et al., 2005; Li et al., 2005; Moschella and Marks, 1993). Thus far, the role of IP$_3$Rs in the adult heart has not been defined, but an up-regulation in their expression has been associated with conditions of cardiac failure in that the mRNA levels of IP$_3$R1 and IP$_3$R2 were increased by 123% and 93%, respectively in failing compared with normal heart tissues (Ai et al., 2005; Go et al., 1995).

Activation of IP$_3$R-Ca$^{2+}$ release channels is regulated by both the concentration of cytosolic Ca$^{2+}$ ions and the binding of IP$_3$ to one or more of the IP$_3$-binding domains (Iino, 1990; Taylor and Laude, 2002). Low concentrations of cytosolic Ca$^{2+}$ ions are known to activate pore opening, while high concentrations inhibit it. IP$_3$ is a second messenger that is generated via a G protein-coupled receptor-mediated signal transduction pathway. G protein-coupled receptors are transmembrane receptors that are able to sense external stimuli and relay these signals into the cell via their interactions with cytosolic G proteins. G proteins are heterotrimeric complexes, which consist of a GDP-bound $G_{qi}$ subunit and a $G_{qj}$ dimer. G protein-coupled receptors are classified into different types according to the isoform of the $G_{qi}$ subunits contained within their $G$ protein-interacting partners. Generation of IP$_3$ involves the stimulation of a $G_{qi}$ type of G protein-coupled receptors. Upon stimulation with their agonists, a conformational change is induced in the $G_{qi}$ protein-coupled receptors. This causes an exchange of GDP for GTP in the $G_{qi}$ subunits, which then dissociate from their $G_{qi}$ protein complexes. GTP-bound $G_{qi}$ subunits of $G_{qi}$ protein complexes are responsible for activating phospholipase C. It is this enzyme, which hydrolyses phosphatidylinositol 4, 5-bisphosphate (PIP$_2$), a phospholipid component of the plasma membrane, to ultimately yield IP$_3$ and another second messenger, diacylglycerol (DAG). IP$_3$ then binds to and activates IP$_3$R-Ca$^{2+}$ release channels.

IP$_3$R mRNA was present at detectable levels in D3 mESCs at the undifferentiated state (Yanagida et al., 2004). Application of 5μM ATP generated a Ca$^{2+}$ transient in the undifferentiated D3 mESCs, which was inhibited by pre-treatment with 75μM 2-APB, an IP$_3$R blocker. This verified the functionality of IP$_3$R-channels in these cells. In H9.2 hESCs, immunostaining indicated that both IP$_3$R1 and IP$_3$R2 were expressed in hESC-derived CMs (Sadan et al., 2010; Sedan et al., 2008); and the expression of IP$_3$R2 was shown to gradually decline with maturation as revealed by quantitative RT-PCR (Satin et al., 2008). The expression of IP$_3$R was also tested during development in vivo; its mRNA was first measured and detected as early as E5.5 in mouse embryos; it was present at high levels by E8.5 and continued to increase until E16.5 when its level started to drop (Rosembli et al., 1999). These were demonstrated to be functional at two time-points; application of 5μM of IP$_3$ was able to induce Ca$^{2+}$ release from the SR in CMs derived from mouse embryos at E5.5 and E8.5. Application of 5μM xestospongin C, an IP$_3$R antagonist, to mouse embryos at E10 diminished its Ca$^{2+}$ spiking; washing the drug out allowed slow recovery of this spiking activity (Mery et al., 2005). Likewise, application of 5μM xestospongin C also abrogated the Ca$^{2+}$ spiking activity observed in CGR8 mESC-derived CMs at day 8-10 post-differentiation. In addition, during the whole course of cardiac differentiation of R1 mESCs, 2-APB www.intechopen.com
decreased both the amplitude and upstroke velocity of Ca\(^{2+}\) transients, with the inhibitory effect decreased as differentiation proceeded, suggesting that IP\(_3\)R contributes to the Ca\(^{2+}\) transient and its effect decreases with differentiation (Fu et al., 2006b). In an attempt to discriminate between the roles of RyR- and IP\(_3\)R2- channels, 50\(\mu\)M ryanodine was first used to block RyR-channels before the application of 5-20\(\mu\)M IP\(_3\)-AM to CMs derived from mouse embryos at E10 (Rapila et al., 2008). This was able to induce a Ca\(^{2+}\) leak from the SR of the CMs in a concentration-dependent manner, whereby the slopes of the Ca\(^{2+}\) transients were elevated, despite its frequency stayed unchanged. In the absence of ryanodine, however, application of 10\(\mu\)M IP\(_3\)-AM led to an increase in the frequency of Ca\(^{2+}\) transients and, hence, increased contractions in the CMs at E10. These data suggested a role for IP\(_3\)R in regulating the rate of the earliest contractions observed in the developing embryonic heart, perhaps by providing a source of Ca\(^{2+}\) to bind RyRs so as to increase its open probability for greater Ca\(^{2+}\) release from the SR, as suggested by Rapila et al. (Rapila et al., 2008) In support of this finding, genetic knockdown of IP\(_3\)R in CGR8 mESC-derived pacemaker cells resulted in weak and infrequent contractions, although differentiation was not affected, whilst mice over-expressing the IP\(_3\)R2 gene developed mild cardiac hypertrophy by three months of age (Mery et al., 2005; Nakayama et al., 2010).

2.3 Regulation of intracellular calcium level by exchanger and pump

As previously mentioned, upon arrival of cardiac action potential, activation of L-type Ca\(^{2+}\) channel followed by CICR increases [Ca\(^{2+}\)]\(_i\) for the contraction process. Subsequently, the excess Ca\(^{2+}\) has to be removed in order to initiate relaxation. In CMs, this Ca\(^{2+}\) removal process is mediated by different Ca\(^{2+}\) extrusion mechanisms via the action of sodium-calcium exchanger (NCX) and sarcoplasmic/endoplasmic reticulum Ca\(^{2+}\)-ATPase (SERCA).

2.3.1 Sodium-calcium exchanger (NCX)

NCX contains 9 transmembrane segments with a large loop at the cytoplasmic side (Philipson and Nicoll, 2000). Mutation experiments demonstrated the importance of \(\alpha\)-helices in the transmembrane segments for the transport activity of NCX (Nicoll et al., 1996). The large intracellular loop is found to be not essential for the transport; however, it is important for catalyzing the ion translocation reaction and has important regulatory functions (Philipson and Nicoll, 2000). This loop consists of multiple regulatory sites, including the regulatory Ca\(^{2+}\) binding site and the exchanger inhibitory peptide (XIP) region. The activity of NCX is known to be regulated by at least 4 factors, including Ca\(^{2+}\) (DiPolo, 1979), Na\(^+\) (Hilgemann et al., 1992), PIP\(_2\) (Hilgemann, 1990), and phosphorylation (Iwamoto et al., 1996). Binding of Ca\(^{2+}\) to the Ca\(^{2+}\) binding site is required for activating the Na\(^+\)-Ca\(^{2+}\) exchange activity (Giladi et al., 2010; Ottolia et al., 2004; Wu et al., 2010). On the other hand, the XIP region is responsible for the Na\(^+\)-dependent inactivation and is involved in the elimination of the Na\(^+\)-dependent inactivation process by PIP\(_2\) (Matsuoka et al., 1997). The activity of NCX is also regulated by phosphorylation, with stronger phosphorylation leading to higher NCX activity (Reppel et al., 2007a). Requirements of direct phosphorylation for up-regulation of NCX function by PKA and PKC are still in debate. A recent study by Wanichawan et al. demonstrated that the PKA phosphorylation site in full-length NCX1 is inaccessible, suggesting that NCX1 is not a direct substrate of PKA (Wanichawan et al., 2011). On the other hand, another study showed that the activity of NCX1 is dependent on PKC, although direct phosphorylation by PKC is not required (Iwamoto et al., 1998). NCX exists in 3 different isoforms, namely NCX1, NCX2 and NCX3.
NCX1 is referred as the cardiac NCX isoform as it is highly expressed in CMs but only in a lesser extent in other tissues such as brain and kidney (Lee et al., 1994).

NCX is classified as a secondary active transporter, which uses the energy stored in the electrochemical gradient in Na$^+$ to extrude Ca$^{2+}$ out of the cells, while the electrochemical gradient of Na$^+$ is maintained by the Na$^+$/K$^+$-ATPase. Under normal condition, NCX operates in the forward mode in which it constitutively brings 3 Na$^+$ into the cells and extrudes 1 Ca$^{2+}$ in each translocation cycle. The forward mode is stimulated in response to a rise in [Ca$^{2+}$]$_i$, and it serves to bring [Ca$^{2+}$]$_i$ back to normal level. In CMs, the primary role of NCX is to extrude Ca$^{2+}$ after excitation under normal physiological conditions (Philipson and Nicoll, 2000). Some studies also showed that NCX functions in shaping the cardiac action potential. Application of NCX blocker KB-R7943 leads to shortening of plateau phase of cardiac potential (Spencer and Sham, 2003); similarly, CMs from NCX knockout mice also has a shorter AP when compare to wild-type mice (Pott et al., 2005), while induced over-expression of NCX leads to a longer plateau (Wang et al., 2009). On the other hand, NCX also operates in the reverse mode in response to membrane depolarization in CMs. During the depolarization phase of action potential when the [Ca$^{2+}$]$_i$ has not reached the peak of Ca$^{2+}$ transients, the reverse mode is predominant (Sah et al., 2003). Ca$^{2+}$ influx via the reverse mode of NCX has been suggested to act synergistically with Ca$^{2+}$ influx via L-type Ca$^{2+}$ channels to trigger Ca$^{2+}$ release from the SR as $I_{Ca,L}$ are small at depolarized membrane potential (Sah et al., 2003). In addition, NCX can positively regulate SR Ca$^{2+}$ load via the reverse mode action (Hirot et al., 2007). Interestingly, under pathophysiological conditions such as cardiac failure, NCX also operates in the reverse mode to allow additional Ca$^{2+}$ influx for contraction in order to compensate for the reduction in Ca$^{2+}$ release from SR (Gaughan et al., 1999).

NCX is found to be essential for embryo development. Several studies showed that NCX1 is expressed restrictedly in the embryonic heart during early development. NCX knockout are embryonic lethal at ~9-11 days post coitum with immature heart development (Cho et al., 2000; Koushik et al., 2001; Reuter et al., 2003; Wakimoto et al., 2000). Molecular studies demonstrated that NCX mRNA expresses before the appearance of spontaneously beating mESC-CMs; the expression persists thereafter in the CMs (Fu et al., 2006b). It is suggested that expression of NCX at that early stage is essential for early EC-coupling as SR is not well-developed at that stage, NCX is hence essential for maintaining the proper Ca$^{2+}$ homeostasis even in the very early stage cardiac development (Reppel et al., 2007a; Reppel et al., 2007b). Two approaches were used to demonstrate the functional expression of NCX in ESC-CM. In Otsu et al. (Otsu et al., 2005), function of NCX was indirectly assessed by using high concentration of NCX blocker KB-R7943. Application of KB-R7943 induced sustained elevation of [Ca$^{2+}$], and this elevation increased as differentiation of mESC-CMs proceeded (Otsu et al., 2005). Apart from using pharmacological blocker, direct measurement of NCX activity was performed by using patch-clamping. $I_{NCX}$ was found to be increased as hESC-CMs developed from day 7+40 to day 7+90 (Fu et al., 2010). However, CMs derived from murine embryonic heart at late stage (E16.5) showed a significantly lower $I_{NCX}$ density when compared to CMs at early stage (E10.5) (Reppel et al., 2007a), probably due to the high phosphorylation status of NCX in early stage. Consistently, upon differentiation, the proportion of Ca$^{2+}$ extrusion by NCX declined from day 9 to day 17 in mESC-CMs (Kapur and Banach, 2007). The discrepancy between different studies on the absolute functional expression of NCX as development proceeds is unknown. Nonetheless, it is clear that NCX is important for Ca$^{2+}$ extrusion in differentiating CMs and the decreased contribution by
NCX to Ca^{2+} extrusion as development proceeds may be explained by the gradual development of SERCA on the SR. In the study by Fu et al., the basal [Ca^{2+}] of mESC-CMs in both early and late developmental stages was increased after applying Na^{+}-free solution, suggesting that NCX is functional in maintaining Ca^{2+} homeostasis (Fu et al., 2006b). Interestingly, Na^{+}-free solution completely blocked the Ca^{2+} transients in CMs from late developmental stage but not the CMs from early developmental stage, suggesting that NCX starts to regulate Ca^{2+} transients only in the late developmental stage (Fu et al., 2006b). Similar results were obtained from hESC-CMs (Fu et al., 2010). Basal [Ca^{2+}] was marginally increased in CMs at day 7+90 after applying Na^{+}-free solution, but the same was not observed in CMs at day 7+40. In addition, irregular Ca^{2+} transient pattern was observed in day 7+90 CMs treated with Na^{+}-free solution (Fu et al., 2010). These suggested that the contribution of NCX to Ca^{2+} transients becomes more important as development proceeds in ESC-CMs.

2.3.2 Sarcoplasmic/endoplasmic reticulum Ca^{2+}-ATPase (SERCA)

Details of the structure and function relationship of SERCA have been extensively reviewed (Periasamy et al., 2008; Periasamy and Huke, 2001; Toyoshima, 2008; Toyoshima and Inesi, 2004; Wuytack et al., 2002). SERCA is a single polypeptide with ~1000 amino acid residues located on the ER/SR membrane. It consists of 10 transmembrane (M) domains and 3 cytosolic domains, including actuator (A) domain, phosphorylation (P) domain, and nucleotide-binding (N) domain. A domain regulates the Ca^{2+} binding and release. N domain is connected to the P domain; it contains the adenosine binding site and forms the catalytic site. On the other hand, the \( \gamma \)-phosphate reacts with an amino acid residue in the P domain. SERCA utilizes the energy derived from ATP hydrolysis to pump Ca^{2+} against concentration gradient from the cytosol to the lumen of ER/SR. Two Ca^{2+} are transported by hydrolysis of one ATP in each catalytic cycle.

Regulation of SERCA is mainly achieved by the action of SR membrane proteins phospholamban and sarcolinin (Asahi et al., 2003a; Edes and Kranias, 1987; MacLennan et al., 2002; MacLennan and Kranias, 2003; MacLennan and Kranias, 2003; Traaseth et al., 2008). De-phosphorylated form of phospholamban interacts with SERCA and inhibits the pumping activities by decreasing the Ca^{2+} affinity of SERCA. Phospholamban exists in monomeric or pentameric form, while the monomeric form is inhibitory. Phosphorylation of phospholamban favors the formation of pentameric form, which in turns relieves the inhibitory effect on SERCA. Phosphorylation of phospholamban is regulated by cAMP-dependent protein kinase (Schwinger et al., 1998) and Ca^{2+}/calmodulin-dependent kinase (Ji et al., 2003). Sarcolinin is a shorter homolog of phospholamban (Hellstern et al., 2001). Unlike phospholamban, sarcolinin has no obvious phosphorylation site (Odermatt et al., 1997); therefore, the effect of sarcolinin on SERCA inhibition is mainly controlled by altering the expression level of sarcolinin (Odermatt et al., 1998). Sarcolinin interacts directly with SERCA and inhibits its function by decreasing the Ca^{2+} affinity of SERCA. Sarcolinin can also exert its superinhibitory effect on SERCA by forming the tertiary complex phospholamban-sarcolinin-SERCA (Asahi et al., 2002; Asahi et al., 2003b). In addition, sarcolinin stabilizes the SERCA-phospholamban complex in the absence of phospholamban phosphorylation and also inhibits phospholamban phosphorylation (Asahi et al., 2004). SERCA plays a vital role in Ca^{2+} cycling between SR and cytosol, and this is important for EC-coupling. Over-expression of SERCA2a improved cardiac contractility by increasing SR Ca^{2+} loading and frequency of Ca^{2+} transients (Baker et al., 1998; He et al., 1997; Maier et al.,...
2005; Prasad et al., 2004). On the other hand, homozygous SERCA2a knockout mice are embryonic lethal (Periasamy et al., 1999), while heterozygous knockout mice are alive and able to reproduce (Shull et al., 2003). Ji et al. has reported that the content of SR Ca²⁺ stores and the amplitude of Ca²⁺ transients were decreased by 40-60% and ~30-40%, respectively, in heterozygous CMs (Ji et al., 2000). Interestingly, heterozygous CMs showed a reduced phospholamban expression, an enhanced phospholamban phosphorylation, and an upregulated NCX expression. However, these changes in Ca²⁺ handling proteins were not sufficient to compensate the effects on contractility by the loss of SERCA2a, indicating that SERCA2a is a critical regulator in controlling the E-C coupling of CMs (Ji et al., 2000). Apart from genetic manipulation of the expression level of SERCA, function of SERCA can also be assessed by using the pharmacological blocker thapsigargin. Acute application of thapsigargin caused the decrease in Ca²⁺ transient amplitude, rate of decay of Ca²⁺ transients, and duration of action potential in isolated ventricular myocytes (Kirby et al., 1992), again suggesting the involvement of SERCA in the E-C coupling of CMs.

In vertebrates, SERCA is encoded by three genes, including the SERCA1, SERCA2, and SERCA3. Alternative splicing of the transcripts from these genes produces more than 10 SERCA isoforms. In CMs, SERCA2a and SERCA2b are expressed, with SERCA2a being the predominant form (Periasamy and Kalyanasundaram, 2007). SERCA2a mRNA is present before initial contraction of mESC-CMs, but has no obvious change in expression level during further differentiation (Fu et al., 2006b). From embryo studies, SERCA2 protein increased from E9.5 to E18 in mouse heart (Liu et al., 2002). In human, it was reported that SERCA2a protein level remained steady between 8 to 15th week gestation, and started to increase afterwards (Qu and Boutjdir, 2001). Role of SERCA in regulating Ca²⁺ transients in ESC-CMs has been studied by several groups. Zhu et al. demonstrated that SERCA inhibitors, including thapsigargin and cyclopiazonic acid, reduced ~70% amplitude of Ca²⁺ transients in hESC-CMs, but had no effect on the time of decay (Zhu et al., 2009). In case of mESC-CMs, thapsigargin reduced both the amplitude and decay of Ca²⁺ transients, but exerted similar inhibitory effect on CMs from the 3 developmental stages (Fu et al., 2006a; Fu et al., 2006b). These findings are therefore consistent with the mRNA expression level of SERCA during mESC-CM differentiation. However, the contribution of Ca²⁺ removal by SERCA is estimated to be more important as differentiation proceeds based on Ca²⁺ imaging experiments (Kapur and Banach, 2007). Therefore, the role of other SR Ca²⁺ handling proteins cannot be neglected. For example, expression level of calsequestrin increases as SR matures (Fu et al., 2006a). This increases the capacity of SR Ca²⁺ load and may account for the requirement of greater contribution of Ca²⁺ removal by SERCA in later developmental stage of mESC-CMs.

To summarize for the whole chapter, Figure 1 represents a summary of the relative contributions of different proteins responsible for regulating Ca²⁺ transients in early differentiating ESC-CMs as development proceeds.

3. Conclusion

In summary, early differentiating ESC-CMs have already developed a scheme for regulating their [Ca²⁺]i for E-C coupling. The relative contributions of the proteins that regulate Ca²⁺ transients alter upon the maturation of CMs. By comparing the regulation of [Ca²⁺]i in ESC-CMs and that in adult CMs, we can obtain important insights into the potential strategies for ‘fine-tuning’ ESC-CMs to better-suit different therapeutic and research purposes.
Fig. 1. Summary of the regulation of Ca$^{2+}$ transients in CMs at early differentiation stage (EDS) and late differentiation stage (LDS). Number of a particular protein represents the relative changes in the expression level of that particular protein as differentiation proceeds. Thickness of the arrows represents the relative contribution of a particular path to the Ca$^{2+}$ transients as differentiation proceeds.
4. Acknowledgements

When writing up this book chapter, due to space limitations, we were unable to include all the important studies in the field related to calcium homeostasis in ESC-CMs; we apologize to those investigators whom we may have missed here. I. C. Lo and C. K. Wong contributed equally to this work. I. C. Lo and C. K. Wong were supported by postgraduate studentships from the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK). This work was supported by the Competitive Earmarked Research Grant (474907) from the University Grants Committee of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Focused Investment Scheme (1901073) from the CUHK.

5. References

Acosta L, Haase H, Morano I, Moorman AF, Franco D. 2004. Regional expression of L-type calcium channel subunits during cardiac development. Dev Dyn 230(1):131-136.

Ai X, Curran JW, Shannon TR, Bers DM, Pogwizd SM. 2005. Ca2+/calmodulin-dependent protein kinase modulates cardiac ryanodine receptor phosphorylation and sarcoplasmic reticulum Ca2+ leak in heart failure. Circ Res 97(12):1314-1322.

Arikhath J, Campbell KP. 2003. Auxiliary subunits: essential components of the voltage-gated calcium channel complex. Curr Opin Neurobiol 13(3):298-307.

Asahi M, Kurzylowski K, Tada M, MacLennan DH. 2002. Sarcolipin inhibits polymerization of phospholamban to induce superinhibition of sarco(endo)plasmic reticulum Ca2+-ATPases (SERCAs). J Biol Chem 277(30):26725-26728.

Asahi M, Nakayama H, Tada M, Otsu K. 2003a. Regulation of sarco(endo)plasmic reticulum Ca2+ adenosine triphosphatase by phospholamban and sarcolipin: implication for cardiac hypertrophy and failure. Trends Cardiovasc Med 13(4):152-157.

Asahi M, Otsu K, Nakayama H, Hikoso S, Takeda T, Gramolini AO, Oudit GY, Morita T, Kusakari Y, Hirano S, Hongo K, Hirotani S, Yamaguchi O, Peterson A, Backx PH, Kurihara S, Hori M, MacLennan DH. 2004. Cardiac-specific overexpression of sarcolipin inhibits sarco(endo)plasmic reticulum Ca2+ ATPase (SERCA2a) activity and impairs cardiac function in mice. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A 101(25):9199-9204.

Asahi M, Sugita Y, Kurzylowski K, De Leon S, Tada M, Toyoshima C, MacLennan DH. 2003b. Sarcolipin regulates sarco(endo)plasmic reticulum Ca2+-ATPase (SERCA) by binding to transmembrane helices alone or in association with phospholamban. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A 100(9):5040-5045.

Baker DL, Hashimoto K, Grupp IL, Ji Y, Reed T, Loukianov E, Grupp G, Bhagwattr A, Hoit B, Walsh R, Marban E, Periasamy M. 1998. Targeted overexpression of the sarcomplasmic reticulum Ca2+-ATPase increases cardiac contractility in transgenic mouse hearts. Circ Res 83(12):1205-1214.

Bare DJ, Kettlun CS, Liang M, Bers DM, Mignery GA. 2005. Cardiac type 2 inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate receptor: interaction and modulation by calcium/calmodulin-dependent protein kinase II. J Biol Chem 280(16):15912-15920.

Bers DM. 2002. Cardiac excitation-contraction coupling. Nature 415(6868):198-205.

Bers DM. 2004. Macromolecular complexes regulating cardiac ryanodine receptor function. J Mol Cell Cardiol 37(2):417-429.
Boheler KR, Czyz J, Tweedie D, Yang HT, Anisimov SV, Wobus AM. 2002. Differentiation of pluripotent embryonic stem cells into cardiomyocytes. Circ Res 91(3):189-201.

Bohn G, Moosmang S, Conrad H, Ludwig A, Hofmann F, Klugbauer N. 2000. Expression of T- and L-type calcium channel mRNA in murine sinoatrial node. FEBS Lett 481(1):73-76.

Catterall WA. 1995. Structure and function of voltage-gated ion channels. Annu Rev Biophys Biomol Struct 24:493-555.

Catterall WA. 2000. Structure and regulation of voltage-gated Ca2+ channels. Annu Rev Cell Dev Biol 16:521-555.

Catterall WA, Perez-Reyes E, Snutch TP, Striessnig J. 2005. International Union of Pharmacology. XLVIII. Nomenclature and structure-function relationships of voltage-gated calcium channels. Pharmacol Rev 57(4):411-425.

Chen CC, Lamping KG, Nuno DW, Barresi R, Prouty SJ, Lavoie JL, Cribbs LL, England SK, Sigmund CD, Weiss RM, Williamson RA, Hill JA, Campbell KP. 2003. Abnormal coronary function in mice deficient in alpha1H T-type Ca2+ channels. Science 302(5649):1416-1418.

Cho CH, Kim SS, Jeong MJ, Lee CO, Shin HS. 2000. The Na+-Ca2+ exchanger is essential for embryonic heart development in mice. Mol Cells 10(6):712-722.

Cribbs LL, Martin BL, Schroder EA, Keller BB, Delisle BP, Satin J. 2001. Identification of the t-type calcium channel (Ca(v)3.1d) in developing mouse heart. Circ Res 88(4):403-407.

De Waard M, Gurnett CA, Campbell KP. 1996. Structural and functional diversity of voltage-activated calcium channels. Ion Channels 4:41-87.

DiPolo R. 1979. Calcium influx in internally dialyzed squid giant axons. J Gen Physiol 73(1):91-113.

Dolphin AC. 2006. A short history of voltage-gated calcium channels. Br J Pharmacol 147 Suppl 1:S56-62.

Dolphin AC, Wyatt CN, Richards J, Beattie RE, Craig P, Lee JH, Cribbs LL, Volsen SG, Perez-Reyes E. 1999. The effect of alpha2-delta and other accessory subunits on expression and properties of the calcium channel alpha1G. J Physiol 519 Pt 1:35-45.

Dubel SJ, Altier C, Chaumont S, Lory P, Bourinet E, Nargeot J. 2004. Plasma membrane expression of T-type calcium channel alpha(1) subunits is modulated by high voltage-activated auxiliary subunits. J Biol Chem 279(28):29263-29269.

Edes I, Kranias EG. 1987. Regulation of cardiac sarcoplasmic reticulum function by phospholamban. Membr Biochem 7(3):175-192.

Foskett JK, White C, Cheung KH, Mak DO. 2007. Inositol trisphosphate receptor Ca2+ release channels. Physiol Rev 87(2):593-658.

Freise D, Himmerkus N, Schroth G, Trost C, Weissgerber P, Freichel M, Flockerzi V. 1999. Mutations of calcium channel beta subunit genes in mice. Biol Chem 380(7-8):897-902.

Fu JD, Jiang P, Rushing S, Liu J, Chiamvimonvat N, Li RA. 2010. Na+/Ca2+ exchanger is a determinant of excitation-contraction coupling in human embryonic stem cell-derived ventricular cardiomyocytes. Stem Cells Dev 19(6):773-782.

Fu JD, Li J, Tweedie D, Yu HM, Chen L, Wang R, Riordon DR, Brugh SA, Wang SQ, Boheler KR, Yang HT. 2006a. Crucial role of the sarcoplasmic reticulum in the...
developmental regulation of Ca2+ transients and contraction in cardiomyocytes derived from embryonic stem cells. FASEB J 20(1):181-183.

Fu JD, Yu HM, Wang R, Liang J, Yang HT. 2006b. Developmental regulation of intracellular calcium transients during cardiomyocyte differentiation of mouse embryonic stem cells. Acta Pharmacol Sin 27(7):901-910.

Gaughan JP, Furukawa S, Jeevanandam V, Hefner CA, Kubo H, Margulies KB, McGowan BS, Mattiello JA, Dipla K, Piacentino V, 3rd, Li S, Houser SR. 1999. Sodium/calcium exchange contributes to contraction and relaxation in failed human ventricular myocytes. Am J Physiol 277(2 Pt 2):H714-724.

Giladi M, Boyman L, Mikhasenko H, Hiller R, Khananshvili D. 2010. Essential role of the CBD1-CBD2 linker in slow dissociation of Ca2+ from the regulatory two-domain tandem of NCX1. J Biol Chem 285(36):28117-28125.

Go LO, Moschella MC, Watras J, Handa KK, Fyfe BS, Marks AR. 1995. Differential regulation of two types of intracellular calcium release channels during end-stage heart failure. J Clin Invest 95(2):888-894.

Green PJ, Warre R, Hayes PD, McNaughton NC, Medhurst AD, Pangalos M, Duckworth DM, Randall AD. 2001. Kinetic modification of the alpha(II) subunit-mediated T-type Ca(2+) channel by a human neuronal Ca(2+) channel gamma subunit. J Physiol 533(Pt 2):467-478.

He H, Giordano FJ, Hilal-Dandan R, Choi DJ, Rockman HA, McDonough PM, Bluhm WF, Meyer M, Sayen MR, Swanson E, Dillmann WH. 1997. Overexpression of the rat sarcoplasmic reticulum Ca2+ ATPase gene in the heart of transgenic mice accelerates calcium transients and cardiac relaxation. J Clin Invest 100(2):380-389.

He JQ, Ma Y, Lee Y, Thomson JA, Kamp TJ. 2003. Human embryonic stem cells develop into multiple types of cardiac myocytes: action potential characterization. Circ Res 93(1):32-39.

Hess P, Lansman JB, Tsien RW. 1984. Different modes of Ca channel gating behaviour favoured by dihydropyridine Ca agonists and antagonists. Nature 311(5986):538-544.

Hilgemann DW. 1990. Regulation and deregulation of cardiac Na(+)-Ca2+ exchange in giant excised sarcolemmal membrane patches. Nature 344(6236):242-245.

Hilgemann DW, Matsuoka S, Nagel GA, Collins A. 1992. Steady-state and dynamic properties of cardiac sodium-calcium exchange: Sodium-dependent inactivation. J Gen Physiol 100(6):905-932.

Hirota S, Pertens E, Janssen LJ. 2007. The reverse mode of the Na(+)/Ca(2+) exchanger provides a source of Ca(2+) for store refilling following agonist-induced Ca(2+) mobilization. Am J Physiol Lung Cell Mol Physiol 292(2):L438-447.

Hobom M, Dai S, Marais E, Lacinova L, Hofmann F, Klugbauer N. 2000. Neuronal distribution and functional characterization of the calcium channel alpha2delta-2 subunit. Eur J Neurosci 12(4):1217-1226.

Hosey MM, Chien AJ, Puri TS. 1996. Structure and regulation of L-type calcium channels a current assessment of the properties and roles of channel subunits. Trends Cardiovasc Med 6(8):265-273.
Iino M. 1990. Biphasic Ca2+ dependence of inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate-induced Ca release in smooth muscle cells of the guinea pig taenia caeci. J Gen Physiol 95(6):1103-1122.

Iwai M, Michikawa T, Bosanac I, Ikura M, Mikoshiba K. 2007. Molecular basis of the isoform-specific ligand-binding affinity of inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate receptors. J Biol Chem 282(17):12755-12764.

Iwamoto T, Pan Y, Nakamura TY, Wakabayashi S, Shigekawa M. 1998. Protein kinase C-dependent regulation of Na+/Ca2+ exchanger isoforms NCX1 and NCX3 does not require their direct phosphorylation. Biochemistry 37(49):17230-17238.

Iwamoto T, Pan Y, Wakabayashi S, Imajawa T, Yamanaka H, Shigekawa M. 1996. Phosphorylation-dependent regulation of cardiac Na+/Ca2+ exchanger via protein kinase C. J Biol Chem 271(23):13609-13615.

Ji Y, Lalli MJ, Babu GJ, Xu Y, Kirkpatrick DL, Liu LH, Chiamvimonvat N, Walsh RA, Shull GE, Periasamy M. 2000. Disruption of a single copy of the SERCA2 gene results in altered Ca2+ homeostasis and cardiomyocyte function. J Biol Chem 275(48):38073-38080.

Ji Y, Li B, Reed TD, Lorenz JN, Kaetzel MA, Dedman JR. 2003. Targeted inhibition of Ca2+/calmodulin-dependent protein kinase II in cardiac longitudinal sarcoplasmic reticulum results in decreased phospholamban phosphorylation at threonine 17. J Biol Chem 278(27):25063-25071.

Kapur N, Banach K. 2007. Inositol-1,4,5-trisphosphate-mediated spontaneous activity in mouse embryonic stem cell-derived cardiomyocytes. J Physiol 581(Pt 3):1113-1127.

Kehat I, Gepstein A, Spira A, Itskovitz-Eldor J, Gepstein L. 2002. High-resolution electrophysiological assessment of human embryonic stem cell-derived cardiomyocytes: a novel in vitro model for the study of conduction. Circ Res 91(8):659-661.

Kehat I, Kenyagin-Karsenti D, Snir M, Segev H, Amit M, Gepstein A, Livne E, Binah O, Itskovitz-Eldor J, Gepstein L. 2001. Human embryonic stem cells can differentiate into myocytes with structural and functional properties of cardiomyocytes. J Clin Invest 108(3):407-414.

Kirby MS, Sagara Y, Gaa S, Inesi G, Lederer WJ, Rogers TB. 1992. Thapsigargin inhibits contraction and Ca2+ transient in cardiac cells by specific inhibition of the sarcoplasmic reticulum Ca2+ pump. J Biol Chem 267(18):12545-12551.

Kolossov E, Fleischmann BK, Liu Q, Bloch W, Viatchenko-Karpinsky S, Manzke O, Ji GJ, Bohlen H, Addicks K, Hescheler J. 1998. Functional characteristics of ES cell-derived cardiac precursor cells identified by tissue-specific expression of the green fluorescent protein. J Cell Biol 143(7):2045-2056.

Koushik SV, Wang J, Rogers R, Moskophidis D, Lambert NA, Creazzo TL, Conway SJ. 2001. Targeted inactivation of the sodium-calcium exchanger (Ncx1) results in the lack of a heartbeat and abnormal myofibrillar organization. FASEB J 15(7):1209-1211.

Lacina L, Klugbauer N. 2004. Modulation of gating currents of the Ca(v)3.1 calcium channel by alpha 2 delta 2 and gamma 5 subunits. Arch Biochem Biophys 425(2):207-213.

Lanner JT, Georgiou DK, Joshi AD, Hamilton SL. 2010. Ryanodine receptors: structure, expression, molecular details, and function in calcium release. Cold Spring Harb Perspect Biol 2(11):a003996.
Lee SL, Yu AS, Lytton J. 1994. Tissue-specific expression of Na(+)-Ca2+ exchanger isoforms. J Biol Chem 269(21):14849-14852.

Li X, Zima AV, Sheikh F, Blatter LA, Chen J. 2005. Endothelin-1-induced arrhythmogenic Ca2+ signaling is abolished in atrial myocytes of inositol-1,4,5-trisphosphate (IP3)-receptor type 2-deficient mice. Circ Res 96(12):1274-1281.

Liu W, Yasui K, Opthof T, Ishiki R, Lee JK, Kamiya K, Yokota M, Kodama I. 2002. Developmental changes of Ca(2+) handling in mouse ventricular cells from early embryo to adulthood. Life Sci 71(11):1279-1292.

Ma J, Hayek SM, Bhat MB. 2004. Membrane topology and membrane retention of the ryanodine receptor calcium release channel. Cell Biochem Biophys 40(2):207-224.

MacLennan DH, Abu-Abed M, Kang C. 2002. Structure-function relationships in Ca(2+) cycling proteins. J Mol Cell Cardiol 34(8):897-918.

MacLennan DH, Kranias EG. 2003. Phospholamban: a crucial regulator of cardiac contractility. Nat Rev Mol Cell Biol 4(7):566-577.

Maier LS, Wahl-Schott C, Horn W, Weichert S, Pagel C, Wagner S, Dybkova N, Muller OJ, Nabauer M, Franz WM, Pieske B. 2005. Increased SR Ca2+ cycling contributes to improved contractile performance in SERCA2a-overexpressing transgenic rats. Cardiovasc Res 67(4):636-646.

Mangoni ME, Traboulsie A, Leoni AL, Couette B, Marger L, Le Quang K, Kupfer E, Cohen-Solal A, Vilar J, Shin HS, Escande D, Charpentier F, Nargeot J, Lory P. 2006. Bradycardia and slowing of the atroventricular conduction in mice lacking CaV3.1/alpha1G T-type calcium channels. Circ Res 98(11):1422-1430.

Matsuoka S, Nicoll DA, He Z, Philipson KD. 1997. Regulation of cardiac Na(+)-Ca2+ exchanger by the endogenous XIP region. J Gen Physiol 109(2):273-286.

Mery A, Aimond F, Menard C, Mikoshiba K, Michalak M, Puceat M. 2005. Initiation of embryonic cardiac pacemaker activity by inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate-dependent calcium signaling. Mol Biol Cell 16(5):2414-2423.

Mizuta E, Miake J, Yano S, Furuichi H, Manabe K, Sasaki N, Igawa O, Hoshikawa Y, Shigemasa C, Nanba E, Ninomiya H, Hidaka K, Morisaki T, Tajima F, Hisatome I. 2005. Subtype switching of T-type Ca 2+ channels from Cav3.2 to Cav3.1 during differentiation of embryonic stem cells to cardiac cell lineage. Circ J 69(10):1284-1289.

Moore JC, Tsang SY, Rushing SN, Lin D, Tse HF, Chan CW, Li RA. 2008. Functional consequences of overexpressing the gap junction Cx43 in the cardiogenic potential of pluripotent human embryonic stem cells. Biochem Biophys Res Commun 377(1):46-51.

Moreno Davila H. 1999. Molecular and functional diversity of voltage-gated calcium channels. Ann N Y Acad Sci 868:102-117.

Moschella MC, Marks AR. 1993. Inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate receptor expression in cardiac myocytes. J Cell Biol 120(5):1137-1146.

Mummery C, Ward-van Oostwaard D, Doevendans P, Spijker R, van den Brink S, Hassink R, van der Heyden M, Opthof T, Pera M, de la Riviere AB, Passier R, Tertoolen L. 2003. Differentiation of human embryonic stem cells to cardiomyocytes: role of coculture with visceral endoderm-like cells. Circulation 107(21):2733-2740.
Nakayama H, Bodi I, Maillet M, DeSantiago J, Domeier TL, Mikoshiba K, Lorenz JN, Blatter LA, Bers DM, Molkentin JD. 2010. The IP3 receptor regulates cardiac hypertrophy in response to select stimuli. Circ Res 107(5):659-666.

Nakazawa M, Uchida K, Aramaki M, Kodo K, Yamagishi C, Takahashi T, Mikoshiba K, Yamagishi H. 2011. Inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate receptors are essential for the development of the second heart field. J Mol Cell Cardiol.

Ng SY, Wong CK, Tsang SY. 2010. Differential gene expressions in atrial and ventricular myocytes: insights into the road of applying embryonic stem cell-derived cardiomyocytes for future therapies. Am J Physiol Cell Physiol 299(6):C1234-1249.

Nicoll DA, Hryshko LV, Matsuoka S, Frank JS, Philipson KD. 1996. Mutation of amino acid residues in the putative transmembrane segments of the cardiac sarcolemmal Na+-Ca2+ exchanger. J Biol Chem 271(23):13385-13391.

Odermatt A, Becker S, Khanna VK, Kurzydlowski K, Leisner E, Pette D, MacLennan DH. 1998. Sarcolipin regulates the activity of SERCA1, the fast-twitch skeletal muscle sarcoplasmic reticulum Ca2+-ATPase. J Biol Chem 273(20):12360-12369.

Odermatt A, Taschner PE, Scherer SW, Beatty B, Khanna VK, Combath DR, Chaudhry V, Yee WC, Schrank B, Karpati G, Breuning MH, Knoers N, MacLennan DH. 1997. Characterization of the gene encoding human sarcolipin (SLN), a proteolipid associated with SERCA1: absence of structural mutations in five patients with Brody disease. Genomics 45(3):541-553.

Ono K, Iijima T. 2005. Pathophysiological significance of T-type Ca2+ channels: properties and functional roles of T-type Ca2+ channels in cardiac pacemaking. J Pharmacol Sci 99(3):197-204.

Otsu K, Kuruma A, Yanagida E, Shoji S, Inoue T, Hirayama Y, Uematsu H, Hara Y, Kawano S. 2005. Na+/K+ ATPase and its functional coupling with Na+/Ca2+ exchanger in mouse embryonic stem cells during differentiation into cardiomyocytes. Cell Calcium 37(2):137-151.

Ottolia M, Philipson KD, John S. 2004. Conformational changes of the Ca(2+) regulatory site of the Na(+)-Ca(2+) exchanger detected by FRET. Biophys J 87(2):899-906.

Perez-Reyes E. 2003. Molecular physiology of low-voltage-activated t-type calcium channels. Physiol Rev 83(1):117-161.

Perez-Reyes E. 2006. Molecular characterization of T-type calcium channels. Cell Calcium 40(2):89-96.

Periasamy M, Bhupathy P, Babu GJ. 2008. Regulation of sarcoplasmic reticulum Ca2+ ATPase pump expression and its relevance to cardiac muscle physiology and pathology. Cardiovasc Res 77(2):265-273.

Periasamy M, Huke S. 2001. SERCA pump level is a critical determinant of Ca(2+)homeostasis and cardiac contractility. J Mol Cell Cardiol 33(6):1053-1063.

Periasamy M, Kalyanasundaram A. 2007. SERCA pump isoforms: their role in calcium transport and disease. Muscle Nerve 35(4):430-442.

Periasamy M, Reed TD, Liu LH, Ji Y, Loukianov E, Paul RJ, Nieman ML, Riddle T, Duddy JJ, Doetschman T, Lorenz JN, Shull GE. 1999. Impaired cardiac performance in heterozygous mice with a null mutation in the sarco(endo)plasmic reticulum Ca2+-ATPase isoform 2 (SERCA2) gene. J Biol Chem 274(4):2556-2562.

Philipson KD, Nicoll DA. 2000. Sodium-calcium exchange: a molecular perspective. Annu Rev Physiol 62:111-133.
Platzer J, Engel J, Schrott-Fischer A, Stephan K, Bova S, Chen H, Zheng H, Striessnig J. 2000. Congenital deafness and sinoatrial node dysfunction in mice lacking class D L-type Ca2+ channels. Cell 102(1):89-97.

Pott C, Philopin KD, Goldhaber JL. 2005. Excitation-contraction coupling in Na+-Ca2+ exchanger knockout mice: reduced transsarcolemmal Ca2+ flux. Circ Res 97(12):1288-1295.

Prasad V, Okunade GW, Miller ML, Shull GE. 2004. Phenotypes of SERCA and PMCA knockout mice. Biochem Biophys Res Commun 322(4):1192-1203.

Qu Y, Baroudi G, Yue Y, El-Sherif N, Boutjdir M. 2005. Localization and modulation of [alpha]1D (Cav1.3) L-type Ca channel by protein kinase A. Am J Physiol Heart Circ Physiol 288(5):H2123-2130.

Qu Y, Boutjdir M. 2001. Gene expression of SERCA2a and L- and T-type Ca channels during human heart development. Pediatr Res 50(5):569-574.

Rapila R, Korhonen T, Tavi P. 2008. Excitation-contraction coupling of the mouse embryonic cardiomyocyte. J Gen Physiol 132(4):397-405.

Reppel M, Fleischmann BK, Reuter H, Sasse P, Schunkert H, Hescheler J. 2007a. Regulation of the Na+/Ca2+ exchanger (NCX) in the murine embryonic heart. Cardiovasc Res 75(1):99-108.

Reppel M, Sasse P, Malan D, Nguemo F, Reuter H, Bloch W, Hescheler J, Fleischmann BK. 2007b. Functional expression of the Na+/Ca2+ exchanger in the embryonic mouse heart. J Mol Cell Cardiol 42(1):121-132.

Reuter H, Henderson SA, Han T, Mottino GA, Frank JS, Ross RS, Goldhaber JL, Philopin KD. 2003. Cardiac excitation-contraction coupling in the absence of Na(+) - Ca2+ exchange. Cell Calcium 34(1):19-26.

Richards MW, Butcher AJ, Dolphin AC. 2004. Ca2+ channel beta-subunits: structural insights AID our understanding. Trends Pharmacol Sci 25(12):626-632.

Rosemblit N, Moschella MC, Ondriasa E, Gutstein DE, Ondrias K, Marks AR. 1999. Intracellular calcium release channel expression during embryogenesis. Dev Biol 206(2):163-177.

Sah R, Ramirez RJ, Oudit GY, Gidrewicz D, Trivieri MG, Zobel C, Backx PH. 2003. Regulation of cardiac excitation-contraction coupling by action potential repolarization: role of the transient outward potassium current (I(to)). J Physiol 546(Pt 1):1-18.

Satin J, Itzhaki I, Rapoport S, Schroder EA, Izu L, Arbel G, Beyar R, Balke CW, Schiller J, Gepstein L. 2008. Calcium handling in human embryonic stem cell-derived cardiomyocytes. Stem Cells 26(8):1961-1972.

Sauer H, Theben T, Hescheler J, Lindner M, Brandt MC, Wartenberg M. 2001. Characteristics of calcium sparks in cardiomyocytes derived from embryonic stem cells. Am J Physiol Heart Circ Physiol 281(1):H411-421.

Schwinger RH, Bolck B, Munch G, Brixius K, Muller-Ehmsen J, Erdmann E. 1998. cAMP-dependent protein kinase A-stimulated sarcoplasmic reticulum function in heart failure. Ann N Y Acad Sci 853:240-250.

Sedan O, Dolnikov K, Zeevi-Levin N, Fleishmann N, Spiegel I, Berdichevski S, Amit M, Itskovitz-Eldor J, Binah O. 2010. Human embryonic stem cell-derived cardiomyocytes can mobilize 1,4,5-inositol trisphosphate-operated [Ca2+]i stores.
the functionality of angiotensin-II/endothelin-1 signaling pathways. Ann N Y Acad Sci 1188:68-77.

Sedan O, Dolnikov K, Zeevi-Levin N, Leibovich N, Amit M, Itskovitz-Eldor J, Binah O. 2008. 1,4,5-Inositol trisphosphate-operated intracellular Ca(2+)-stores and angiotensin-II/endothelin-1 signaling pathway are functional in human embryonic stem cell-derived cardiomyocytes. Stem Cells 26(12):3130-3138.

Seisenberger C, Specht V, Welling A, Platzer J, Pfeifer A, Kuhbandner S, Striessnig J, Klugbauer N, Feil R, Hofmann F. 2000. Functional embryonic cardiomyocytes after disruption of the L-type alpha1C (Cav1.2) calcium channel gene in the mouse. J Biol Chem 275(50):39193-39199.

Shull GE, Okunade G, Liu LH, Kozel P, Periasamy M, Lorenz JN, Prasad V. 2003. Physiological functions of plasma membrane and intracellular Ca2+ pumps revealed by analysis of null mutants. Ann N Y Acad Sci 986:453-460.

Simmerman HK, Jones LR. 1998. Phospholamban: protein structure, mechanism of action, and role in cardiac function. Physiol Rev 78(4):921-947.

Spencer CI, Sham JS. 2003. Effects of Na+/Ca2+ exchange induced by SR Ca2+ release on action potentials and afterdepolarizations in guinea pig ventricular myocytes. Am J Physiol Heart Circ Physiol 285(6):H2552-2562.

Takeshima H, Komazaki S, Hirose K, Nishi M, Noda T, Iino M. 1998. Embryonic lethality and abnormal cardiac myocytes in mice lacking ryanodine receptor type 2. EMBO J 17(12):3309-3316.

Taylor CW, da Fonseca PC, Morris EP. 2004. IP3 receptors: the search for structure. Trends Biochem Sci 29(4):210-219.

Taylor CW, Laude AJ. 2002. IP3 receptors and their regulation by calmodulin and cytosolic Ca2+. Cell Calcium 32(5-6):321-334.

Taylor CW, Tovey SC. 2010. IP(3) receptors: toward understanding their activation. Cold Spring Harb Perspect Biol 2(12):a004010.

Thomson JA, Itskovitz-Eldor J, Shapiro SS, Waknitz MA, Swiergiel JJ, Marshall VS, Jones JM. 1998. Embryonic stem cell lines derived from human blastocysts. Science 282(5391):1145-1147.

Toyoshima C. 2008. Structural aspects of ion pumping by Ca2+-ATPase of sarcoplasmic reticulum. Arch Biochem Biophys 476(1):3-11.

Toyoshima C, Inesi G. 2004. Structural basis of ion pumping by Ca2+-ATPase of the sarcoplasmic reticulum. Annu Rev Biochem 73:269-292.

Traaseth NJ, Ha KN, Verardi R, Shi L, Buffy JJ, Masterson LR, Veglia G. 2008. Structural and dynamic basis of phospholamban and sarcolin inhibition of Ca(2+)-ATPase. Biochemistry 47(1):3-13.

Tu H, Wang Z, Nosyreva E, De Smedt H, Bezprozvanny I. 2005. Functional characterization of mammalian inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate receptor isoforms. Biophys J 88(2):1046-1055.

Uchida K, Aramaki M, Nakazawa M, Yamagishi C, Makino S, Fukuda K, Nakamura T, Takahashi T, Mikoshiba K, Yamagishi H. 2010. Gene knock-outs of inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate receptors types 1 and 2 result in perturbation of cardiogenesis. PLoS One 5(9).

Viatchenko-Karpinski S, Fleischmann BK, Liu Q, Sauer H, Gryshchenko O, Ji GJ, Hescheler J. 1999. Intracellular Ca2+ oscillations drive spontaneous contractions in...
cardiomyocytes during early development. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A 96(14):8259-8264.

Wakimoto K, Kobayashi K, Kuro OM, Yao A, Iwamoto T, Yanaka N, Kita S, Nishida A, Azuma S, Toyoda Y, Omori K, Imaie H, Oka T, Kudoh S, Kohmoto O, Yazaki Y, Shigekawa M, Imai Y, Nabeshima Y, Komuro I. 2000. Targeted disruption of Na+/Ca2+ exchanger gene leads to cardiomyocyte apoptosis and defects in cardiac function. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A 97(18):9857-9862.

Wang J, Chan TO, Zhang XQ, Gao E, Song J, Koch WJ, Feldman AM, Cheung JY. 2009. Induced overexpression of Na+/Ca2+ exchanger transgene: altered myocyte contractility, [Ca2+]i transients, SR Ca2+ contents, and action potential duration. Am J Physiol Heart Circ Physiol 297(2):H590-601.

Wanichawan P, Louch WE, Hortemo KH, Austbo B, Lunde PK, Scott JD, Sejersted OM, Carlson CR. 2011. Full-length cardiac Na+/Ca2+ exchanger 1 protein is not phosphorylated by protein kinase A. Am J Physiol Cell Physiol 300(5):C989-997.

Wu M, Le HD, Wang M, Yurkov V, Omelchenko A, Hnatowich M, Nix J, Hryshko LV, Zheng L. 2010. Crystal structures of progressive Ca2+ binding states of the Ca2+-sensor Ca2+ binding domain 1 (CBD1) from the CALX Na+/Ca2+ exchanger reveal incremental conformational transitions. J Biol Chem 285(4):2554-2561.

Wuytack F, Raeymaekers L, Missiaen L. 2002. Molecular physiology of the SERCA and SPCA pumps. Cell Calcium 32(5-6):279-305.

Xu C, Police S, Rao N, Carpenter MK. 2002. Characterization and enrichment of cardiomyocytes derived from human embryonic stem cells. Circ Res 91(6):501-508.

Xu M, Welling A, Paparisto S, Hofmann F, Klugbauer N. 2003. Enhanced expression of L-type Cav1.3 calcium channels in murine embryonic hearts from Cav1.2-deficient mice. J Biol Chem 278(42):40837-40841.

Xue T, Cho HC, Akar FG, Tsang SY, Jones SP, Marban E, Tomaselli GF, Li RA. 2005. Functional integration of electrically active cardiac derivatives from genetically engineered human embryonic stem cells with quiescent recipient ventricular cardiomyocytes: insights into the development of cell-based pacemakers. Circulation 111(1):11-20.

Yanagi K, Takano M, Narasaki G, Uosaki H, Hoshino T, Ishii T, Misaki T, Yamashita JK. 2007. Hyperpolarization-activated cyclic nucleotide-gated channels and T-type calcium channels confer automaticity of embryonic stem cell-derived cardiomyocytes. Stem Cells 25(11):2712-2719.

Yanagida E, Shoji S, Hirayama Y, Yoshikawa F, Otsu K, Uematsu H, Hiraoka M, Furuichi T, Kawano S. 2004. Functional expression of Ca2+ signaling pathways in mouse embryonic stem cells. Cell Calcium 36(2):135-146.

Yang HT, Tweedie D, Wang S, Guia A, Vinogradova T, Bogdanov K, Allen PD, Stern MD, Lakatta EG, Boheler KR. 2002. The ryanodine receptor modulates the spontaneous beating rate of cardiomyocytes during development. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A 99(14):9225-9230.

Yang L, Katchman A, Morrow JP, Doshi D, Marx SO. 2011. Cardiac L-type calcium channel (Cav1.2) associates with gamma subunits. FASEB J 25(3):928-936.

Yasui K, Niwa N, Takemura H, Opthof T, Muto T, Horiba M, Shimizu A, Lee JK, Honjo H, Kamiya K, Kodama I. 2005. Pathophysiological significance of T-type Ca2+ channels...
channels: expression of T-type Ca2+ channels in fetal and diseased heart. J Pharmacol Sci 99(3):205-210.

Yule DI, Betzenhauser MJ, Joseph SK. 2010. Linking structure to function: Recent lessons from inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate receptor mutagenesis. Cell Calcium 47(6):469-479.

Zhang YM, Shang L, Hartzell C, Narlow M, Cribbs L, Dudley SC, Jr. 2003. Characterization and regulation of T-type Ca2+ channels in embryonic stem cell-derived cardiomyocytes. Am J Physiol Heart Circ Physiol 285(6):H2770-2779.

Zhang Z, Xu Y, Song H, Rodriguez J, Tuteja D, Namkung Y, Shin HS, Chiamvimonvat N. 2002. Functional Roles of Ca(v)1.3 (alpha(1D)) calcium channel in sinoatrial nodes: insight gained using gene-targeted null mutant mice. Circ Res 90(9):981-987.

Zhu WZ, Santana LF, Laflamme MA. 2009. Local control of excitation-contraction coupling in human embryonic stem cell-derived cardiomyocytes. PLoS One 4(4):e5407.
Embryonic Stem Cells - Differentiation and Pluripotent Alternatives
Edited by Prof. Michael S. Kallos

ISBN 978-953-307-632-4
Hard cover, 506 pages
Publisher InTech
Published online 12, October, 2011
Published in print edition October, 2011

The ultimate clinical implementation of embryonic stem cells will require methods and protocols to turn these unspecialized cells into the fully functioning cell types found in a wide variety of tissues and organs. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to clearly understand the signals and cues that direct embryonic stem cell differentiation. This book provides a snapshot of current research on the differentiation of embryonic stem cells to a wide variety of cell types, including neural, cardiac, endothelial, osteogenic, and hepatic cells. In addition, induced pluripotent stem cells and other pluripotent stem cell sources are described. The book will serve as a valuable resource for engineers, scientists, and clinicians as well as students in a wide range of disciplines.

How to reference
In order to correctly reference this scholarly work, feel free to copy and paste the following:

Iek Chi Lo, Chun Kit Wong and Suk Ying Tsang (2011). Maintenance Of Calcium Homeostasis in Embryonic Stem Cell-Derived Cardiomyocytes, Embryonic Stem Cells - Differentiation and Pluripotent Alternatives, Prof. Michael S. Kallos (Ed.), ISBN: 978-953-307-632-4, InTech, Available from: http://www.intechopen.com/books/embryonic-stem-cells-differentiation-and-pluripotent-alternatives/maintenance-of-calcium-homeostasis-in-embryonic-stem-cell-derived-cardiomyocytes
© 2011 The Author(s). Licensee IntechOpen. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.