T Cell Receptor-independent CD2 Signal Transduction in FcR+ Cells

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Summary

CD2 subserves both adhesion and signal transduction functions in T cells, thymocytes, and natural killer (NK) cells. In mature T lymphocytes, CD2-mediated signaling function apparently requires surface expression of T cell receptors (TCRs). In contrast, in CD2+CD3− NK cells and thymocytes, signal transduction through CD2 is TCR independent. To resolve this paradox and characterize TCR-independent triggering mechanisms, we transfected a human CD2 cDNA into a murine mast cell line, C1.MC/57 (FceRI+, FcyRII+, FcyRIII+), which is known to produce interleukin 6 (IL-6) as well as release histamine in response to crosslinking of FceRI. In the CD2 transfectant, a combination of anti-T112 + anti-T113 monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) induced a rise in intracellular free calcium ([Ca²⁺]), IL-6 production, and histamine release. As expected, no activation was mediated by the same mAbs in C1.MC/57. F(ab)’2 fragments of the activatory combination of anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs induced IL-6 in the CD2-transfected mast cells, demonstrating an Fcy receptor ectodomain-independent triggering mechanism. In addition, either intact anti-T112 or anti-T113 IgG alone, which failed to induce [Ca²⁺] mobilization in the transfectant, was able to induce IL-6 production. A mAb directed against both FcyRII (previously denoted as FcyRIIb) and FcyRIII (previously denoted as FcyRIIa) inhibits this induction. These results indicate that: (a) Ca²⁺ mobilization is not essential for IL-6 production; and (b) crosslinking of CD2 and Fcy receptors via intact anti-CD2 IgG stimulates IL-6 production. Thus, CD2-mediated IL-6 production occurs by both Fcy receptor ectodomain-independent as well as Fcy receptor ectodomain-dependent mechanisms in these nonlymphoid cells. Northern blot analysis demonstrates that although the mast cells do not express CD3ζ or CD3η mRNA, they express FceRIγ mRNA. The latter is a known component of FcyRIII as well as FceRI, has significant homology to CD3ζ/η, and is thought to have a signal transduction function. In these mast cells, CD2 signaling machinery does not require CD3ζ/η and may be linked to the FceR1γ subunit. We predict that this subunit or a related structure may confer a TCR-independent signal transduction pathway upon CD2 in CD3− NK cells, thymocytes, and certain B lymphocytes.

The CD2 (T11 structure) has been shown to play an important role in the function of both thymus-derived T cells and NK cells (1, 2). mAbs directed against an epitope (T112) within the NH₂-terminal adhesion domain of CD2 block the ability of T cells (3–5), thymocytes (6), and NK cells (4) to interact with the LFA-3-expressing cognate partners. Predictably, therefore, helper and cytotoxic T cell responses, thymocyte-epithelial conjugate formation, and lytic effector function of NK cells are reduced or eliminated by such mAbs. Also, the adhesion function of CD2 molecule has been shown to directly contribute to the T cell recognition of nominal antigen (7, 8). In addition to the adhesion function of CD2, mAbs directed at a second adhesion domain epitope (T113), in concert with a mAb specific for an epitope (T114) within the membrane proximal domain, activate T lymphocytes (3, 4), thymocytes (9), and NK cells (4). Moreover, the cellular CD2 ligand LFA-3 itself, in conjunction with anti-T113 mAb, can activate T cell responses (10). Collectively, these findings indicate an important role for CD2, not only in functioning as an adhesion structure, but also as an activation receptor.

The signal transduction function of CD2 is dependent on its CD2 cytoplasmic tail (11–13). Truncation analysis and site-directed mutagenesis have pinpointed a region between amino acid residues 253 and 287 that is necessary for IL-2 gene induction and increase in intracellular free calcium ([Ca²⁺]) (11). Disruption of a single histidine and arginine at positions 264 and 265 within the first of two tandem PPPGHR repeat sequences can abrogate or dramatically reduce T cell activation (14). The activation of T lineage cells via CD2 is also dependent on other cellular structures. In this respect, studies conducted on a TCR− variant of the human T cell

1 Abbreviations used in this paper: [Ca²⁺], intracellular free calcium; PTK, protein tyrosine kinase.
tumor line Jurkat lacking Ti β transcripts showed that such cells could not be stimulated via CD2 (15). Reconstitution of TCR surface expression in these Jurkat mutants by Ti β gene transfection restored CD2 triggering function. These findings directly demonstrate that the CD2-mediated signal transduction pathway is dependent on the expression of TCR and that both TCR and CD2 activation pathways in T cells are interconnected. Two indirect lines of evidence also support this notion in T lymphocytes. First, prior crosslinking of TCR inhibits subsequent CD2-mediated activation (16-18). Second, subinhibitory concentrations of anti-TCR mAbs and anti-CD2 mAbs, which independently fail to activate T cells, in combination induce T cell proliferation (19). The importance of TCR expression for CD2 signal transduction function has been further emphasized by the failure of CD2 to trigger activation events when transfected and expressed in SF9 (Spodoptera frugiperda) worm gut epithelial cells (20) or murine fibroblasts (21).

Despite the dependence of CD2 function on surface TCR expression in T lymphocytes, both thymocytes and NK cells that lack surface TCR can be triggered upon CD2 stimulation to increase [Ca\textsuperscript{2+}] and mediate cytotoxic activity, respectively (4, 9). The basis of this seemingly paradoxical TCR-independent CD2 signal transduction function is unknown, although we have speculated that it may result from the coupling of CD2 to other transduction elements in NK cells (1). A likely candidate that might functionally interact with the CD2 pathway in these CD2\textsuperscript{-}CD3\textsuperscript{+} NK cells is FcγRIII (CD16). CD16 has recently been shown to be physically associated with CD3\textsuperscript{+} (22, 23) and is also thought to associate with the γ subunit of FcεRI (FcεRIγ) (24). The latter is a component of the tetrameric high affinity IgE receptor expressed on mast cells and basophils (25), whose broader tissue distribution is only now becoming apparent (26). Interestingly, CD3\textsuperscript{+} and FcεRIγ belong to the same gene family located on murine chromosome 1 and are homologous at the primary sequence level (27, 28). Thus, TCR-independent CD2 signal transduction might be linked to either CD3\textsuperscript{+} or FcεRIγ or both.

To investigate these possibilities, we transfected a human CD2 cDNA into murine mast cells that express FcεRIγ as a component of their FcεRI as well as FcγRIII (previously denoted as FcγRIIα in mouse) and examined the ability of CD2 to trigger [Ca\textsuperscript{2+}] increase and IL-6 production. The results demonstrate that CD2 is competent to transduce signals in mast cells, hence proving that TCR expression and/or lymphoid phenotype is not required for CD2 function. Moreover, because the mast cell line lacks both CD3\textsuperscript{+} and CD3\textsuperscript{γ} mRNA, neither CD3\textsuperscript{+} nor CD3\textsuperscript{γ} is required for CD2 signaling.

### Materials and Methods

**Cell Lines and Transfection of Human CD2.** A ϕ-2 helper-free retrovirus packing cell line, which has been transfected with the expression vector DOL carrying both the neomycin resistance gene and a cDNA of human CD2, was used to generate virus stocks for the infection of mast cells (11). A growth factor-independent mast cell line, C1.MC/57 (denoted as MC/57 in the text below), derived from C57BL/6J mouse bone marrow was a kind gift from S. Galli (Beth Israel Hospital, Boston, MA) (29). MC/57 mast cells were maintained in DMEM (Whittaker MA Bioproducts, Walkersville, MD) supplemented with 10% heat-inactivated FCS (Sigma Chemical Co., St. Louis, MO), 5 x 10\textsuperscript{-5} M 2-ME (Sigma Chemical Co.), 2 mM L-glutamine, and 1% penicillin-streptomycin (Gibco Laboratories, Grand Island, NY). Procedures for the growth of ϕ-2 cells, harvesting of virus, and infection of MC/57 mast cells were performed as described (11). The MC/57 mast cell line was infected with freshly derived virus stocks in the presence of 8 µg/ml polybrene (Aldrich Chemical Co., Milwaukee, WI), and selection was initiated 48 h later in 2 mg/ml of G418 (geneticin; Gibco Laboratories). The G418-resistant colonies were screened by indirect immunofluorescence as described below. Additional cell lines used in this study, 2B4.11 and MA5.8, were provided by J.D. Ashwell (NIH, Bethesda, MD), and MH60.BSF2 was a gift from T. Hirano and T. Kishimoto (Institute for Molecular & Cellular Biology, Osaka University, Osaka, Japan) (30).

**Flow Cytometric Analysis.** Phenotypic analyses were performed using indirect immunofluorescence assays. 10\textsuperscript{6} cells were analyzed in each sample on an Epics V cell sorter, and results were expressed as histograms displaying number of cells vs. fluorescence intensity on a log scale. A 1:400 dilution of ascites containing IgE anti-DNP mAbs (31) (H1-DNP-E-26, provided by S. Galli), a 1:200 dilution of ascites containing either anti-Ti11 (3p2H9, IgG1) (3), anti-Ti11 (3o24C1, IgG2a) (3), or anti-Ti11 (Imuno2A6, IgG3) (3) mAbs, and culture supernatant containing monoclonal anti-H-2D\textsuperscript{F} (AF6-88.5.3, IgG2a, kindly provided by K. Rock, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute) (32) were used in this study. Saturating amounts of an anticolonotyptic mAb, 11C5 (IgG1 derived in our lab; 1:200 dilution of ascites), was used as a control to subtract background Fcy receptor binding. Cells incubated with the above mAbs for 30 min at 4°C were washed with HBSS containing 2% FCS. The antibody bound was detected with a 1:40 dilution of fluorescein-conjugated goat anti-mouse IgG (H + L) second antibody (Whittaker MA Bioproducts) by using the Epics V cell sorter. CD2 transfectants were sorted for higher levels of CD2 expression on the Epics V cell sorter by staining up to 5 x 10\textsuperscript{6} cells as described above.

**Determination of Cytokine-free Ca\textsuperscript{2+} by Indirect Fluorescence.** [Ca\textsuperscript{2+}] was determined according to Grynkiewicz et al. (33). Briefly, 2 x 10\textsuperscript{6} cells were suspended in 200 µl of DMEM containing 10% FCS and 2 µg/ml acetoxymethyl ester of Indo-1 (Molecular Probes, Junction City, OR) for 30 min at 37°C. Cells were then diluted up to 1 ml with DMEM containing 10% FCS and kept at 37°C before analysis on the Epics V cell sorter. For determination of triggering through FcεRI, cells were incubated with a 1:400 dilution of ascites containing IgE anti-DNP mAb for 30 min at room temperature and washed twice as described above before loading with Indo-1. The ratio of Indo-1 fluorescence at 410 nm to that at 480 nm was recorded in real time and expressed in arbitrary units, each of which represents ~200 nM [Ca\textsuperscript{2+}]. Samples were analyzed at room temperature by running the Indo-1-loaded cells on the Epics V cell sorter for 1 min to establish a baseline before adding the following stimuli: 100 ng/ml DNP-BSA (Sigma Chemical Co.), a 1:100 dilution of anti-Ti11 + anti-Ti11, or a 1:100 dilution of anti-Ti11 + control mAb (anti-T8, 1mno2E7, an IgG3 isotype-matched mAb for anti-Ti11). Cells that did not show [Ca\textsuperscript{2+}], mobilization received 1 µg/ml of calcium ionophore A23187 (Sigma Chemical Co.). All concentrations indicated above are final concentrations of the respective stimuli.

**IL-6 Production Assays.** Quantitation of IL-6 secreted into the culture supernatant after stimulation of mast cells was analyzed by bioassay. 10\textsuperscript{6} mast cells were plated in 24-well plates and in-
cultivated at 37°C, 5% CO₂, for 24 h with the following panel of stimuli: anti-T11, + anti-T12, + control IgG3 (anti-T8, 1M0n02E7, a control irrelevant isotype-matched mAb for anti-T11), anti-T13, anti-T12, control IgG2a (anti-T1, 24T6G12, a control irrelevant isotype-matched mAb for anti-T11), control IgG3, DNP-BSA, PMA, and media. All of the above-mentioned antibodies were protein A purified and incubated at a final concentration of 10 μg/ml. DNP-BSA and PMA were used at a final concentration of 100 ng/ml. Mast cells that were triggered through FcεRI were incubated with IgE anti-DNP-BSA and anti-J13, anti-T12, or DNP-BSA. Mast cell triggers with DNP-BSA were stimulated for 10 and 60 min with either anti-T12 + anti-J13 + radioimmunoassay kit (Aman Inc., Westbrook, ME). 106 mast cells after stimulation of mast cells was analyzed using the histamine Coomassie G-250 staining and was >95%.

Histamine Release. Histamine release into culture supernatants after stimulation of mast cells was analyzed using the histamine radioimmunoassay kit (Aman Inc., Westbrook, ME). 106 mast cells were stimulated for 10 and 60 min with either anti-T11, + anti-T12, + control IgG2a (anti-T1, 24T6G12, a control irrelevant isotype-matched mAb for anti-T11), control IgG3, DNP-BSA, PMA, and media. All of the above-mentioned antibodies were protein A purified and incubated at a final concentration of 10 μg/ml. DNP-BSA and PMA were used at a final concentration of 100 ng/ml. Mast cells that were triggered through FcεRI were incubated with IgE anti-DNP-BSA and anti-J13, anti-T12, or DNP-BSA. Mast cell triggers with DNP-BSA were stimulated for 10 and 60 min with either anti-T12 + anti-J13 + radioimmunoassay kit (Aman Inc., Westbrook, ME). 106 mast cells after stimulation of mast cells was analyzed using the histamine Coomassie G-250 staining and was >95%.

Results

Generation of Human CD2-expressing Murine Mast Cell Lines. To generate CD2 surface expression in mast cells, MC/57 cells were infected with the defective retrovirus vector DOL, which bears the human CD2 cDNA and neomycin-resistant gene (11), and subsequently, a stable mast cell transfectant was selected by flow cytometry as described in Materials and Methods. As shown in Fig. 1, whereas the parental mast cell line, MC/57, does not show any detectable level of human CD2 expression (Fig. 1 a), the human CD2 transfectant C1.MC/57/64.1 (denoted as MC/64.1 in the text below) expresses surface CD2 as judged by its reactivity with mAbs to the distinct CD2 epitopes T11, T12, and T13 (Fig. 1 d–f). The level of CD2 expressed in these cells is comparable with that of the endogenous H-2Dβ molecules (Fig. 1, e and h). Both the parental and CD2-transfected mast cell lines express equivalent levels of FcεRI (Fig. 1, b and g). These cells also express equivalent levels of both FcεRII (previously denoted as FcγRIIb) and FcγRIII (previously denoted as FcγRIIa) (data not shown). Neither MC/57 nor MC/64.1 expresses TCR as judged by indirect immunofluorescence staining with antimouse CD3ε mAb, 145.2C11 (data not shown).

Human CD2-mediated [Ca²⁺] Changes in CD2-transfected Mast Cells. Next, the ability of CD2 to trigger a rise in [Ca²⁺] in the MC/64.1 mast cell transfectant was examined.
Figure 1. Flow cytometry analysis of human CD2-transfected and untransfected mast cells. Human CD2-transfected MC/64.1 mast cells treated with anti-T112 (d), anti-T113 (f) (bold lines). Untransfected MC/57 mast cells treated with anti-T112 mAb (e) (bold line). CD2-transfected (g) and untransfected (b) mast cells treated with IgE anti-DNP mAb (bold lines). CD2-transfected (h) and untransfected (c) mast cells treated with anti-H-2Db (bold lines). CD2-transfected and untransfected mast cells treated with a control 11C5 antibody (faint lines). Antibody binding was detected by a fluorescein-conjugated goat anti-mouse IgG antibody. The ordinate denotes cell number.

To this end, changes in \([\text{Ca}^{2+}]_i\) triggered through FceRI and CD2 were assessed in Indo-1-loaded cells after specific antibody addition and subsequent receptor crosslinking. As shown in Fig. 2, a and c, crosslinking of the FceRI with monoclonal IgE anti-DNP and DNP-BSA (anti-DNP-IgE/DNP-BSA) resulted in a prompt increase in the level of \([\text{Ca}^{2+}]_i\) in both the parental MC/57 and CD2-transfected MC/64.1 mast cell lines, consistent with FceRI-mediated activation of a functional signal transduction machinery in both cell types (38). In contrast, as shown in Fig. 2, stimulation of MC/64.1 cells (d) but not MC/57 cells (b) with anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs resulted in an increase in the level of \([\text{Ca}^{2+}]_i\). The increase in \([\text{Ca}^{2+}]_i\) after addition of anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs is therefore attributable to CD2 expression on MC/64.1 cells. Note that a nonmitogenic combination of anti-T112 + control mAb (an irrelevant, IgG3 isotype equivalent to that of anti-T113 mAb) did not induce a measurable increase in \([\text{Ca}^{2+}]_i\) in MC/64.1 cells (Fig. 2 e). Nevertheless, the MC/64.1 cells were efficiently loaded with Indo-1 as judged by the ability of the calcium ionophore A23187 to increase \([\text{Ca}^{2+}]_i\) (Fig. 2 e, arrowhead). These findings indicate that both T112 and T113 epitopes on the MC/64.1 mast cells need to be ligated by antibody in order to increase \([\text{Ca}^{2+}]_i\) mediated through CD2. Hence, these data are consistent with earlier studies in T cells, thymocytes, and NK cells, demonstrating that the addition of both anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs triggers a \([\text{Ca}^{2+}]_i\) flux (3-5, 9).

Figure 2. Increase in \([\text{Ca}^{2+}]_i\) after CD2 and FceRI triggering. Changes in \([\text{Ca}^{2+}]_i\) were monitored in cells loaded with the Ca\(^{2+}\)-sensitive dye Indo-1. Cells were stimulated with either a combination of anti-T112 + anti-T113, or anti-T112 + control (an isotype-matched IgG3 mAb for anti-T113) (f), DNP-BSA (\(\checkmark\)), or calcium ionophore A23187 (\(\checkmark\)). Results are expressed as ratio of Indo-1 fluorescence at 410 nm to that of 480 nm in arbitrary units (ordinate) vs. time in minutes (abscissa). One arbitrary unit represents ∼200 nM \([\text{Ca}^{2+}]_i\).

Table 1. IL-6 Induction in Mast Cells through Human CD2 or FceRI

| Stimulus                  | IL-6 produced by: | Exp. 1 | Exp. 1 | Exp. 2 |
|---------------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Parental mast cell line   | Media             | 0.7    | 0.1    | 0.4    |        |
| CD2-transfected mast cell line | Anti-T112 + anti-T113 | 1.8    | 2,300  | ND     |
|                           | Anti-T112 + control IgG3 | ND     | 1,200  | ND     |
|                           | Anti-T113         | ND     | 1,100  | ND     |
|                           | Control IgG2a     | ND     | 1.1    | ND     |
|                           | Control IgG3      | ND     | 1.0    | ND     |
|                           | Anti-H-2Db        | ND     | 8      | ND     |
|                           | Anti-DNP-IgE/DNP-BSA | 170   | 110    | 860    |
|                           | PMA               | 2,400  | 2,100  | 2,100  |

The amount of IL-6 present in culture supernatants was assessed from the titration of culture supernatants and IL-6, as shown in Fig. 3, and is expressed in rIL-6 equivalents. Control IgG2a is a control mAb isotype matched for anti-T112. Control IgG3 is a control mAb isotype matched for anti-T113. SD of IL-6 concentrations were <20%. Results are representative of more than six experiments.
In Table 1, MC/64.1 mast cells stimulated with a combination of anti-T112 and anti-T113 mAbs through CD2 with anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs in the presence of anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs. In contrast, treatment of the cell line produced 11,6 when stimulated with a combination of anti-T112 + anti-T113 (1,500 vs. 2,300 ng/ml/10⁶ cells). More importantly, the CD2-transfected MC/64.1 mast cells and DNP-BSA resulted in production of IL-6 (Table 1, Fig. 3). More importantly, the CD2-transfected MC/64.1 mast cell line produced IL-6 when stimulated with a combination of anti-T112 + anti-T111 mAbs. In contrast, treatment of the same cells with media or the parental MC/57 mast cells with anti-T112 + anti-T111 mAbs failed to induce IL-6 production (Fig. 3, Table 1). In fact, the amount of IL-6 produced by CD2 stimulation was greater than that after FcεRI stimulation in MC/64.1 cells by a factor of 20. Thus, signaling through CD2 with anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs in MC/64.1 mast cells results in both an increase in [Ca²⁺]i, and IL-6 production.

Somewhat unexpectedly, we observed that stimulation of MC/64.1 mast cells with either anti-T112 or anti-T111 mAbs alone also generated significant IL-6 production. As shown in Table 1, MC/64.1 mast cells stimulated with a combination of anti-T112 + control IgG3 (an irrelevant mAb isotype matched to anti-T111 mAb) produced a substantial quantity of IL-6 relative to MC/64.1 cells stimulated with media or parental MC/57 mast cells stimulated with a combination of anti-T112 + anti-T111 mAbs (1,200 ng/ml/10⁶ cells vs. 0.1-1.8 ng/ml/10⁶ cells). Similarly, as shown in Table 1 (Exp. 1), the stimulation of MC/64.1 mast cells with anti-T112 mAb alone induced the production of IL-6 comparable in magnitude with the amount produced by the combination of anti-T112 + anti-T111 (1,500 vs. 2,300 ng/ml/10⁶ cells). Likewise, the anti-T113 mAb by itself was capable of inducing MC/64.1 cells to produce IL-6. Note that the stimulation of MC/64.1 mast cells with either control IgG2a or control IgG3 mAbs resulted in little or no IL-6 production. Thus, in the MC/64.1 mast cells, crosslinking of more than one T11 epitope on CD2 is not an absolute requirement for the generation of signals leading to production of IL-6.

In this context, it is known that mast cells express Fcγ receptors including FcγRIII (39) to which the above mAbs could bind. To investigate Fcγ receptor ectodomain-independent signal transduction via CD2, anti-T112 and anti-T111 F(ab′)² fragments were produced and MC/64.1 cells were cultured with a combination of anti-T112 F(ab′)² + anti-T111 F(ab′)². As shown in Table 2, this stimulation resulted in production of IL-6 (2,100-3,100 ng/ml/10⁶ cells), comparable with that observed with intact anti-T112 + anti-T111 IgG (Table 1). This result indicates that MC/64.1 cells can be activated with a combination of anti-T11 mAbs independent of Fcγ receptor ectodomain binding. Table 2 also shows that reduced but clearly significant IL-6 production was triggered by addition of anti-T113 F(ab′)² alone and, to a lesser extent, by anti-T112 F(ab′)². The amount of IL-6 induced with either one of the anti-T11 F(ab′)² fragments (Table 2) was significantly less than the amount of IL-6 produced with any single intact anti-T11 mAb (Table 1). Thus, the binding of intact anti-T11 mAbs to FcγRII or FcγRIII as well as to CD2 in MC/64.1 cells apparently enhances induction of IL-6.

In contrast, a mouse anti-H-2Db mAb, which is of the same IgG2a isotype as anti-T112, failed to induce any IL-6 production in MC/64.1 (Table 1), indicating that the mere binding of antibody to both H-2Db and Fcγ receptor molecules is not sufficient to trigger IL-6 production.

To more definitively examine the role of the Fcγ receptor in CD2-mediated IL-6 production, the same cells were assayed by FcεRI. Thus, the methods are as described in the legend of Table 1. Exp. 1 with anti-T11 F(ab′)² fragments was done in parallel with Exp. 2 of Table 1.

![Figure 3. Titration of IL-6 induced in mast cells through either human CD2 or FcεRI. Fivefold dilutions of culture supernatants from CD2-transfected and -untransfected mast cells treated with the various stimuli were titrated on the IL-6-dependent MφH60.BSF2 B cell clone as described in Materials and Methods. The lines shown in the figure correspond to the following cells and stimuli: MC/64.1 media (○), MC/64.1 anti-T112 + anti-T111 (●), MC/57 media (△), MC/57 anti-T112 + anti-T113 (▲), MC/57 monoclonal anti-DNP IgE/DNP-BSA (□), and twofold dilutions of 1 ng/ml of rIL-6 (dotted line). 10% of the original culture supernatant was assayed for IL-6 activity. For comparison, IL-6 production by MC/57 or MC/64.1 lines treated with various stimuli were assayed for IL-6 activity. Compare, IL-6 production stimulated via FcεRI was examined in parallel. As expected, the stimulation of both MC/57 and MC/64.1 lines through their FcεRI receptors with a combination of anti-DNP-IgE and DNP-BSA resulted in production of IL-6 (Table 1, Fig. 3). More importantly, the CD2-transfected MC/64.1 mast cell line produced IL-6 when stimulated with a combination of anti-T112 + anti-T111 mAbs. In contrast, treatment of the same cells with media or the parental MC/57 mast cells with anti-T112 + anti-T111 mAbs failed to induce IL-6 production (Fig. 3, Table 1). In fact, the amount of IL-6 produced by CD2 stimulation was greater than that after FcεRI stimulation in MC/64.1 cells by a factor of 20. Thus, signaling through CD2 with anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs in MC/64.1 mast cells results in both an increase in [Ca²⁺]i, and IL-6 production.

Table 2. Fcγ Receptor Ectodomain-independent IL-6 Induction through Human CD2

| Stimulus | MC/64.1 |
|----------|---------|
|          | IL-6 produced by |
| Media    | Exp. 1   | Exp. 2   |
|          | ng/ml/10⁶ cells |
| T112 F(ab′)² | 22 | 44 |
| T111 F(ab′)² | 580 | 260 |
| T112 F(ab′)² + T111 F(ab′)² | 2,100 | 3,100 |

The methods are as described in the legend of Table 1. Exp. 1 with anti-T11 F(ab′)² fragments was done in parallel with Exp. 2 of Table 1.
Table 3. Fcγ Receptor Ectodomain-dependent IL-6 Induction through Human CD2

| Stimulus | IL-6 produced by MC/64.1 ng/ml/10^6 cells |
|----------|------------------------------------------|
| Media    | <0.5                                     |
| Anti-FcγRII (2.4G2) | 0.5                                    |
| Anti-T112 | 440                                    |
| Anti-T112 + Anti-FcγRII (2.4G2) | 33                                    |
| Anti-T112 + control IgG2a (100 μg/ml) | 1                                     |
| Anti-T112 + control IgG2a (10 μg/ml) | 690                                    |
| Control IgG2a (100 μg/ml) | <0.5                                    |
| Control IgG2a (10 μg/ml) | <0.5                                    |
| PMA      | 1,100                                    |

10^6 MC/64.1 cells were incubated with either 5 μg/ml of mAb 2.4G2, which recognizes FcγRII and FcγRIII, or indicated concentrations of control IgG2a mAb for 45 min at room temperature. They were further incubated for 24 h in the presence or absence of 10 μg/ml of anti-T112 mAb.

CD2-mediated signal transduction pathway in MC/64.1 mast cells occurs via both Fcγ receptor ectodomain-binding independent and dependent mechanisms.

CD2 Couples to the Histamine Release Pathway in Mast Cell Transfectants. Stimulation of mast cells via the FcεRI receptor is known to induce histamine release. To determine whether CD2 stimulation couples to the histamine release pathway, MC/57.1 and MC/64.1 were stimulated with anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs or anti-T112 alone for 1 h and supernatants examined for histamine content by RIA. As shown in Table 4, a combination of anti-T112 + anti-T113 or anti-T112 alone showed stimulation to the same degree as stimulation by cross-linking of FcεRI by IgE/DNP-BSA in MC/64.1. Similar results were obtained when MC/64.1 was examined after 10 min of stimulation (data not shown). Note that, as expected, anti-CD2 mAbs had no effect on MC/57.1. These results in conjunction with the above studies demonstrate that CD2 couples to both IL-6 and histamine release pathways in mast cells.

Mast Cell Line MC/57 Does not Express CD3ζ or CD3η. Recent biochemical analysis of human FcγRIII (CD16) on human NK cells reveals that CD16 is associated with the TCR CD3ζ subunit (22, 23). In addition, it is thought that the FcεRIγ, which is homologous to CD3ζ, associates with CD16 in human NK cells (24), and FcγRIII in murine macrophages and mast cells (26). We thus examined if murine mast cells expressing FcεRI and FcγRIII also express CD3ζ or the related CD3η, since one or both might be involved in CD2-mediated signal transduction in the MC/64.1 mast cell line. To this end, Northern blot analysis was performed using specific cDNA probes for CD3ζ, CD3η, and FcεRIγ, with RNA from the MC/57 parental mast cell line, a murine T cell hybridoma 2B4.11 known to express both CD3ζ and CD3η, and a 2B4.11 variant, termed MA5.8, that lacks CD3ζ and CD3η (37). As shown in Fig. 4, MC/57, like MA5.8, lacks transcripts corresponding to CD3ζ and CD3η. In contrast, and as expected, 2B4.11 contains transcripts of 2.0 and 1.8 kb, which correspond to CD3ζ and CD3η, respectively (Fig. 4, a and c). On the other hand, MC/57 mast cells but not 2B4.11 or MA5.8 express a transcript of ~0.5 kb, which corresponds to the mRNA of FcεRIγ (Fig. 4 a). These results indicate that the MC/57 mast cell line can transmit signals via the transfected CD2 gene product in the absence of CD3ζ or CD3η.

Figure 4. Northern blot analysis of CD3ζ, CD3η, and FcεRIγ subunit gene expression in MC/57 mast cells (C57). 10 μg of total RNA isolated from the indicated cells was size fractionated on a 1% agarose gel containing formaldehyde and transferred to nitrocellulose. Subsequently, the filter was hybridized with a CD3η-specific probe, washed, and exposed at -70°C for 1.5 d with an intensifying screen (a). The filter was then stripped, reprobed with a CD3ζ-specific probe, and exposed for 4 d (b). After stripping once more, the filter was hybridized with a probe for the FcεRIγ subunit and exposed for 2.5 d (c). Positions of ribosomal 28S and 18S RNAs are indicated.
Discussion

In an effort to better understand the nature of TCR-independent CD2 signal transduction, we performed CD2 transfection studies using mast cells as recipients. The latter were chosen based on the premise that Fc receptors might function in lieu of the TCR for transduction coupling to CD2 in some cells and to determine whether CD2 signal transduction might be operative in nonlymphoid cells. The present study provides new insight into both the signal transduction mechanism of CD2 and the pathway of IL-6 production and histamine release. Our results indicate that when human CD2 is expressed in mast cells, perturbation of the extracellular segment with a combination of anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs leads to an increase in [Ca^{2+}], IL-6 production, and histamine release. IL-6 production can be mediated independently of the extracellular segment of Fcγ receptor since F(ab)\(^2\) fragments of these same mAbs induced IL-6 production comparable with that obtained with intact mAbs.

In addition, we observed that crosslinking of the CD2 with Fcγ receptor using a single anti-T112 or anti-T113 mAb could also stimulate IL-6 production. Under these latter circumstances, the crosslinking apparently results from the Fc portion of the mAb binding to Fcγ receptor and the antigen-binding sites of the same mAb ligating to CD2, thereby approximating CD2 and Fcγ receptor structures.

Cytokine gene activation studies conducted on parental MC/57 mast cells by Burd et al. (38) with a panel of activating agents showed that the IL-6 gene activation can be induced independently of FcεRI. Activation by PMA or Con A, as well as through FcεRI, resulted in the induction of IL-6 mRNA as detected by Northern blot analysis. Interestingly, the calcium ionophore A23187 did not induce the IL-6 gene in these MC/57 cells, whereas translocation of protein kinase C by itself was sufficient for IL-6 gene induction, indicating that Ca^{2+} mobilization is not essential for IL-6 induction. In contrast to the failure of calcium ionophore to induce the IL-6 gene, it has been shown that a calcium ionophore is itself sufficient to mimic IgE-dependent histamine release in mast cells (40). These findings indicate that histamine release and IL-6 production utilize different signal transduction mechanisms in mast cells.

Additional evidence for a calcium-independent mechanism for IL-6 production was obtained from the present study. A single anti-T112 mAb that failed to induce Ca^{2+} mobilization in MC/64.1 cells was capable of inducing IL-6 in these same cells. On the other hand, the combination of anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs induces Ca^{2+} mobilization and IL-6. These results clearly indicate that IL-6 production is induced either in the presence or absence of Ca^{2+} mobilization. Although activation through CD2 produced less Ca^{2+} mobilization relative to activation via FcεRI (Fig. 2 d compared with 2, a and c), the amount of IL-6 produced upon CD2 stimulation was significantly higher than IL-6 produced after activation through FcεRI (Table 1). The dichotomy observed between Ca^{2+} mobilization and IL-6 induction through CD2 and FcεRI may be explicable if several transduction pathways operate in parallel in the mast cell. It is likely that a Ca^{2+}-independent pathway plays a significant role in the induction of IL-6 after activation via either CD2 or FcεRI. This pathway may include a Ca^{2+}-independent activation of protein tyrosine kinase (PTK), which has already been demonstrated in rat basophilic leukemia cells upon triggering through FcεRI (41). It is thus possible that the MC/64.1 mast cells may utilize a PTK pathway for IL-6 induction. Interestingly, it was shown that tyrosine phosphorylation (in the absence of extracellular calcium) is not sufficient to induce histamine release and required the presence of calcium in the extracellular media. This finding is consistent with the fact that calcium mobilization in mast cells can lead to histamine release (40). However, the ability of anti-T112 mAb to trigger histamine release (Table 4) without a detectable increase in [Ca^{2+}] (Fig. 2) implies an additional complexity to the process of histamine release.

Our observations that an activatory combination of anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs causes calcium mobilization, production of IL-6, and histamine release on human CD2-transfected MC/64.1 mast cells in the absence of TCR expression (Fig. 2 d and Table 1) is somewhat analogous to the situation in CD3- thymocytes. Previous studies with thymocytes have shown that the same combination of anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs causes a mobilization of [Ca^{2+}] and IL-2R expression (9, 9a). Although the activation requirements for IL-2R expression and IL-6 induction are not directly comparable, TCR-independent human CD2 signal transduction in MC/64.1 cells and thymocytes results in both an early change in the ionic milieu of the cell and activation of gene programs. Moreover, the observation that a single anti-T113 antibody is incapable of mobilizing [Ca^{2+}] in these MC/64.1 mast cells (Fig. 2, e) is consistent with the activatory requirements of TCR-independent signaling in CD3- thymocytes (9).

The TCR-independent human CD2 signal transduction obtained with MC/64.1 cells is also reminiscent of the activation requirements in CD2+/CD3- NK cells. Anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs activate NK cells to lyse their target (4). Moreover, F(ab)\(^2\) fragments of anti-T112 + anti-T113 mAbs, which activate MC/64.1 cells to produce IL-6 (Table 2), have also been shown to activate NK cells to lyse target (42). Thus, an Fcγ receptor ectodomain-independent mechanism of human CD2 signal transduction is operative in both MC/64.1 cells and NK cells. On the other hand, it should be noted that human NK cells express FcγRIII (CD16), and single anti-CD2 mAbs activate NK cells in the same way that a single anti-CD2 mAb can induce IL-6 production in MC/64.1 cells. For example, in one report, a single anti-CD2 mAb CLB-T11 was shown to induce cytolytic activity of CD3-CD16+ NK cells (5). In a second independent study, Annasetti et al. (43) showed that the addition of an anti-CD2 mAb 9.1 but not its F(ab)\(^2\) fragment to CD3-CD16+ NK cell lines resulted in cytolysis of targets. The observation of Fcγ receptor ectodomain dependency in NK cell activation is consistent with our observation in mast cells that F(ab)\(^2\) fragments of either anti-T112 or anti-T113 mAbs were not as efficient as a single intact anti-T112 or anti-T113 mAb in inducing IL-6.
production in MC/64.1 cells (Tables 1 and 2). Perhaps more importantly, a mAb that recognizes both FcyRII and FcyRIII or excess control IgG2a isotype-matched mAb blocks anti-CD2-mediated activation of IL-6 production by a single anti-CD2 mAb in CD2-transfected mast cells. Hence, it is likely that the ectodomain of FcyRIII, the murine homologue of human CD16 (44, 45), is involved in CD2 signal transduction when a single anti-CD2 mAb binds to CD2 in both mouse MC/64.1 and human NK cells. Crosslinking of H-2D\(b\) molecules to Fcy receptor failed to stimulate any significant amount of IL-6 (Table 1). Therefore, crosslinking of Fcy receptors to other unrelated molecules is not necessarily capable of inducing activation. These results collectively indicate that activation pathways involving Fcy receptor ectodomain-dependent and -independent mechanisms operate in TCR-independent activation through CD2.

Other studies have shown that Fc receptors on both mast cells and NK cells function as signal transduction molecules. Crosslinking of CD16 molecules (FcyRIII) by certain anti-CD16 mAbs activate human NK cells (46). Similarly, crosslinking of the FcεRI on both the parental MC/57 and human CD2-transfected MC/64.1 cells with a combination of IgE anti-DNP mAb and DNP-BSA resulted in mobilization of \([Ca^{2+}]\), and IL-6 production (Fig. 2, a and c, and Table 1) (38). With respect to the structure of the FcεRI and FcyRIII expressed on mast cells, it is known that they both share a common \(\gamma\) subunit, FcεRI\(\gamma\) (26). FcεRI\(\gamma\) has been shown to have substantial homology with CD3 subunits of the TCR including CD3\(\gamma\) and CD3\(\delta\) subunits (36, 47, 48). Recent studies on human NK cells have revealed that the CD3\(\gamma\) subunit is associated with CD16 in the absence of other TCR subunits (22, 23, 49). In addition, studies conducted on the expression of CD16 suggested that FcεRI\(\gamma\) is associated with CD16 (24). Given the fact that there is evidence suggesting that the CD2-mediated activation of NK cells requires the coexpression of CD16 (46), it is possible that CD2 functionally couples to either the CD3\(\gamma\) or FcεRI\(\gamma\) subunit or both. Our findings by northern analysis that the CD2-transfected MC/64.1 mast cells do not express any CD3\(\gamma\) or related CD3\(\eta\) indicate that these subunits are not essential for CD2 signalling (Fig. 4). In view of the aforementioned expression data, it is tempting to speculate that the FcεRI\(\gamma\) subunit is a structure involved in the functional coupling of CD2 and FcyRIII on MC/64.1 cells.

In addition to NK cells and thymocytes, murine B cells express CD2 in the absence of TCR (50). Although it is not known whether murine CD2 transmits activation signals, the fact that both murine and human CD2 are highly homologous and share a long cytoplasmic tail suggests that murine CD2 has a similar role in B cell activation (50, 51). In this respect, CD2 on murine B cells may also couple with signal transduction elements on Fcy receptors or membrane immunoglobulins. The recent demonstration that the B cell antigen receptor of the IgM class is noncovalently associated with another subunit termed mb-1 (52), which has a cytoplasmic tail consisting of a motif shared between CD3 subunits and FceRI\(\gamma\) (48, 53) (as described below), suggests that mb-1 may couple functionally to murine CD2 on B cells.

The FcεRI\(\gamma\) subunit of FcεRI also appears to be a component of murine FcyRIII (26) and human FcyRIII (CD16) (24), and bears significant homology to CD3\(\gamma/\eta\) (36, 47, 48). The localization of FcεRI\(\gamma\) and CD3\(\gamma/\eta\) subunit genes to mouse chromosome 1 (27, 28), their similar genomic and structural organization, and the sequence homologies between exon 2 encoding the transmembrane region of both genes and between the last two exons of the cytoplasmic domains suggest that they belong to a new family of genes that play a significant role in signal transduction (36, 47). The functional relevance of the primary sequence homology between CD3\(\gamma\) and the FcεRI\(\gamma\) subunit has been provided by a recent experiment in Xenopus oocytes showing that CD3\(\gamma\) can substitute for FcεRI\(\gamma\) in the assembly and surface expression of FcεRI (54). Moreover, a conserved amino acid motif (D or E) \(xx\) \(xx\) \(xx\) \(L\) \(xx\) \(xx\) \(xx\) \(xx\) \(xx\) \(Y\) \(xx\) \(L\) \(xx\) \(lf\) \(xx\) \(lf\) is present in the cytoplasmic domains of receptor molecules such as FcεRI\(\gamma\), CD3\(\gamma\), CD3\(\eta\), and mb-1 (48). Amino acid residues composing the motif (upper case letters and underlined: mouse FcεRI\(\gamma\) [DavYtgLnsrtrgYetL; aa 62–79], mouse CD3\(\gamma\) [DgIYaqLstatkrydEal; aa 118–135], mouse CD3\(\eta\)/CD3\(\eta\) [EgvyYnaLqkdamaeaYsel; aa 87–105], mouse mb-1 [EneYegLnddcsmyedI; aa 179–196]) would be expected to lie on the same side of an \(\alpha\)-helical barrel if the cytoplasmic sequence formed an \(\alpha\) helix. As such, the residues could form a binding site for putative proteins involved in the generation of signals after receptor crosslinking. Therefore, it is possible that the FcεRI\(\gamma\) subunit shared between murine FcεRI and FcyRIII is involved in coupling with the CD2-mediated signal transduction pathway in MC/64.1 cells. It seems likely that the TCR-independent CD2 signalling machinery is linked to the FcεRI\(\gamma\), CD3\(\gamma\), and/or CD3\(\eta\) and mb-1 subunits in some cells such as CD3\(\gamma\) NK cells, thymocytes, and murine B cells. Further analysis, including reconstitution of CD2-mediated signal transduction in TCR- Jurkat variants by transfection with CD16 or other Fc receptors, could provide additional evidence for this hypothesis.

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Note added in proof: As expected, transfection of CD16 into TCR - Jurkat cells restores CD2 signaling function (Moingeon, P., et al., manuscript submitted for publication).
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