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Cell surface macromolecules play a crucial role in the biology and pathobiology of flaviviruses, both as receptors for virus entry and as signaling molecules for cell–cell interactions in the processes of vascular permeability and inflammation. This review examines the cell tropism and pathogenesis of flaviviruses from the standpoint of cell surface molecules, which have been implicated as receptors in both virus–cell as well as cell–cell interactions. The emerging picture is one that encompasses extensive regulation and interplay among the invading virus, viral immune complexes, Fc receptors, major histocompatibility complex antigens, and adhesion molecules.
I. INTRODUCTION

Flaviviruses comprise a rich and diverse family of agents that infect a variety of hosts and cause a wide spectrum of disease. Three disease types are recognized for flaviviruses, namely encephalitis, hemorrhagic fever, and fever–arthralgia–rash. Disease distinctions are not absolute, and overlapping pathologies among various flavivirus members are often observed. The ability of flaviviruses to cause such divergent clinical syndromes, associated with virus replication in a number of different organs, has profound implications for the types of cell surface molecules the virus recognizes as receptors. Mutational analyses of the flaviviral E protein have demonstrated a striking ability of flaviviruses to adapt to different cells and receptors. Given the considerable homologies among them, flaviviruses show a remarkable capacity to cause vastly different diseases with a minimum of alterations in the E protein.

The cell surface molecules, which act as receptors for flaviviruses, are only starting to be identified. In addition to providing the molecules involved in virus attachment and penetration, the host cell erects a battery of surface structures that mediate communication with other cells and trigger host defense and pathological processes. Many of these are modulated by flavivirus infection and contribute to the overall picture of pathogenesis.

II. THE FLAVIVIRUS RECEPTOR BINDING PROTEIN

The flavivirus E protein is a multifunctional protein involved in cell receptor binding (Anderson et al., 1992; Chen et al., 1996; He et al., 1995) and virus entry via fusion with a host cell membrane (Rice, 1996). Some of the functional activities of the E protein, notably membrane fusion, are regulated by interaction with a second viral protein, prM. It is believed that the association of prM with E stabilizes certain pH-sensitive epitopes on the E protein, thereby preventing the conformational changes that normally occur at acidic pH and activate the fusogenic activity of the E protein (Allison et al., 1995; Guirakhoo et al., 1992; Heinz et al., 1994). In addition to its normal role in flavivirus assembly, the prM protein has also been included in novel recombinant formulations in which it is generally coexpressed with the E protein; the resultant E/prM complexes have been shown to be immunogenic and protective as vaccines against challenge with several flaviviruses, including Japanese encephalitis virus (Mason et al.,
1991), yellow fever virus (Pincus et al., 1992), dengue virus (Fonseca et al., 1994), and tick-borne encephalitis (TBE) virus (Heinz et al., 1995).

In TBE virus, the majority of extracellular virus is largely free of prM protein due to a late intracellular processing event that generates a carboxy-terminal fragment designated M and which together with the E and C proteins are believed to constitute the protein components of the mature virus particle (Heinz et al., 1994). Cleavage of prM to M enhances low pH–dependent virus–cell fusion (Guirakhoo et al., 1991) and infectivity (Guirakhoo et al., 1992; Heinz et al., 1994; Randolph et al., 1990; Shapiro et al., 1972; Wengler, 1989). Dengue virions containing prM are still infectious (Randolph et al., 1990) and bind to permissive cells in a manner that can be blocked using E-specific antibodies (He et al., 1995; Wang et al., 1999). Virus particles containing mainly E and prM also show antibody-enhanced binding to Fc receptor-bearing K562 cells as well as to platelets (Wang et al., 1995). Thus, in addition to being requisite precursors to mature virus particles, virus particles containing prM possess many properties associated with mature virus particles.

Flaviviruses appear to gain entry to the cell by the endocytic pathway (Rice, 1996). At low pH, the E protein undergoes a conformational change (Allison et al., 1995) involving dissociation of the E dimer (Stiasny et al., 1996), thereby exposing a hidden fusion peptide, followed by reorganization of E into a trimer (Allison et al., 1995), in which the fusion peptide is brought close to the membrane-anchoring carboxy terminus (Ferlenghi et al., 2001). Remarkably similar structural features and conformational rearrangements have been noted between the flavivirus E protein and the alphavirus E1 (Heinz and Allison, 2001; Lescar et al., 2001; Pletnev et al., 2001; Strauss and Strauss, 2001), suggesting a common evolutionary origin for these two virion surface proteins.

Considerable homology exists among flaviviral E proteins, raising the possibility that different flaviviruses may have similar receptor-binding motifs. For example, many mosquito-borne flaviviruses contain an RGD sequence (e.g., residues 388–390 of the Murray Valley encephalitis virus E protein), which has been implicated in virulence (Lobigs et al., 1990) and receptor binding by analogy with integrin-binding motifs (Rey et al., 1995). Mutagenesis studies of the yellow fever virus (Van der Most et al., 1999) and Murray Valley encephalitis virus (Hurrelbrink and McMinn, 2001) RGD motifs, however, have cast doubt on the role of integrins in flavivirus attachment or entry.
Studies with TBE virus have identified important determinants for pathogenicity within the suspected receptor-binding site on the upper-lateral surface of domain III (Mandl et al., 2000). Acquisition of heparan sulfate-binding mutations by passaging TBE in cell culture has also implicated amino acids in this region in receptor binding (Mandl et al., 2001). The selection of virus mutants on the basis of weak binding to brain membranes has been used with several neurotropic flaviviruses (Holbrook et al., 2001; Ni and Barrett, 1998; Ni et al., 2000) and has identified a variety of mutations within domain III as well as other regions of E. For dengue virus, blocking of virus cell binding correlates more closely to virus neutralization for mAb 3H5 than for mAb 1B7 (Wang et al., 1999). This may suggest that mAb 3H5 neutralizes dengue virus predominantly by blocking virus–cell attachment, whereas mAb 1B7 neutralizes dengue virus largely by a postattachment mechanism. The mAb 3H5-binding site on the dengue viral E protein has been partly characterized (Hiramatsu et al., 1996; Megret et al., 1992; Trirawatanapong et al., 1992) and probably encompasses, at a minimum, residues 383–385 (Hiramatsu et al., 1996) within domain III. More recent data involving a larger number of monoclonal antibodies indicate that mAbs that interact with domain III are in fact the most effective blockers of virus–cell attachment (Crill and Roehrig, 2001). A putative heparan sulfate-binding site on the dengue-2 E protein is also located within this region (Chen et al., 1997), and comparative sequencing of dengue type 2 genomes has implicated amino acid 390 of the E protein as a major determinant of pathogenicity (Leitmeyer et al., 1999). The pH-dependent conformational “hinge” region (between domains I and II) of the E protein has also been implicated in virulence, receptor interaction, and/or membrane fusion (Hurrelbrink and McMinn, 2001; Lee et al., 1997; Monath et al., 2002). Further mutagenesis studies will undoubtedly help define the sites of the E protein involved in flavivirus–cell macromolecule recognition.

III. CELL TARGETS FOR FLAVIVIRUSES

A. Dendritic Cells

Transmission of flaviviruses to humans generally occurs via the bite of an infected mosquito or tick. In the case of dengue, inoculated virus is thought to first replicate in skin Langerhans (dendritic) cells (Palucka, 2000; Taweechaisupapong et al., 1996a, 1996b; Wu et al.,
Dendritic cells have also been shown to be involved in the transport of intradermally inoculated West Nile virus to local draining lymph nodes, with a subsequent accumulation of leukocytes (Johnston et al., 2000). It is likely that dendritic cells will prove to be efficient carriers of a wide number of flaviviruses from their cutaneous site of infection to lymphoid and possibly other tissues.

Given the importance of dendritic cells in initiating immune responses (Banchereau et al., 2000), they probably play a pivotal role in stimulating host defense against invading flaviviruses. Dengue virus infection of immature myeloid dendritic cells has been shown to induce their maturation accompanied by the expression of major histocompatibility complex (MHC) class I and II antigens; the costimulatory molecules CD40, CD80, and CD86; and the dendritic cell marker CD83 (Libraty et al., 2001). Such changes were seen in both dengue-infected and bystander cells, indicating that upregulation of cell surface molecules could be a consequence of virus infection as well as virus-induced cytokine expression. Similarly, Langerhans cells infected with West Nile virus, as well as an alphavirus, Semliki Forest virus, express increased cell surface MHC class II and appear to undergo maturation to a cell type similar to lymphoid dendritic cells (Johnston et al., 1996). The efficient presentation of both MHC class I– and II–associated viral peptides on the surface of dendritic cells permits the generation of potent cytotoxic and helper T cell responses (see also Section V,A).

### B. Monocytes and Macrophages

Monocytes and macrophages have long been recognized as major targets of flavivirus replication in the human host (Halstead, 1989; Halstead et al., 1977; Scott et al., 1980). They are also important host cells for the antibody-enhanced replication of certain flaviviruses (see Section IV,C). Because of their presence in the circulation, blood monocytes may be particularly important to the pathogenesis of hemorrhagic viruses, such as dengue. Because most of the pathological changes associated with dengue virus are hemostatic in nature, it is suspected that blood cells, particularly virus-infected blood monocytes, orchestrate many of these effects.

Dengue virus–infected human monocytes have been shown to be potent sources of vasoactive cytokines such as tumor necrosis factor (TNF)-α (Anderson et al., 1997) and interleukin (IL)-1β (Chang and Shaio, 1994). Monocytes are also known producers of several other vasoactive mediators, including IL-6, platelet-activating factor (PAF), prostaglandins, thromboxanes, leukotrienes, and nitric oxide.
(Bulger and Maier, 2000; Funk, 2001; Lefer, 1989; Maruo et al., 1992; Montrucchio et al., 2000; Szabo and Billiar, 1999), any of which could have powerful effects on endothelial cell physiology. A crucial aspect in understanding dengue pathogenesis will be the identification of additional vasoactive mediators, which trigger the key dysfunctional events in vascular integrity.

Various tissue macrophages are undoubtedly important in the pathogenesis of flaviviral diseases but have, to date, not received much attention. Skin mononuclear cells, pulmonary, splenic, and thymic macrophages and liver Kupffer cells have been recognized carriers of viral antigen (Halstead, 1989). In the liver, virus or viral antigen has been found in Kupffer cells and hepatocytes in infections with yellow fever (Monath et al., 1989) and dengue (Bhamarapravati et al., 1967; Hall et al., 1991; Halstead, 1989; Rosen and Khin, 1989). Destruction of Kupffer cells, possibly by apoptosis, has been reported in the liver of some patients with fatal dengue (Huerre et al., 2001). Primary cultures of Kupffer cells apparently undergo an abortive infection with dengue virus in which viral antigen but no progeny virus is produced (Marianneau et al., 1999).

C. Endothelial Cells

Many flaviviruses invade either visceral or central nervous system tissues following initial replication in dendritic cells, monocytes, or macrophages. Often this necessitates a transfer of virus across blood vessel endothelial layers.

For neurotropic flaviviruses, endothelial cells of the cerebral microvasculature constitute a barrier that must be overcome in order to gain access to the central nervous system. How this occurs remains uncertain. Transendothelial passage of virus may direct infection of cerebral microvascular endothelial cells, may transport across the endothelial layer, or both (Dropulic and Masters, 1990). Japanese encephalitis virus has been observed electron microscopically to traverse mouse cerebral endothelial cells by transcytosis (Liou and Hsu, 1998). Alternatively, virus may spread from blood vessels to the olfactory neuroepithelium and from there to olfactory neurons (McMinn et al., 1996; Monath et al., 1983).

Even normally nonneurotropic flaviviruses may occasionally invade the central nervous system under certain conditions. Modulation of the blood–brain barrier by anesthetics (Ben-Nathan et al., 2000) or lipopolysaccharide (Lustig et al., 1992) has been reported to facilitate neuroinvasion by a normally noninvasive strain of West Nile virus.
Flaviviruses may also trigger the production of soluble factors that perturb the integrity of the blood–brain barrier, leading to increased leakage of proteins and cells into the central nervous system (Chaturvedi et al., 1991). These studies indicate that even nonneurotropic flaviviruses may infect tissues of the central nervous system or otherwise affect the integrity of the blood–brain barrier under special circumstances.

Transendothelial migration of individual leukocytes (e.g., lymphocytes, monocytes, neutrophils, eosinophils) is regulated in a highly specific manner by the differential expression of selected adhesion molecules on endothelial cells (reviewed in Crockett, 1998; Lowell and Berton, 1999). Flaviviruses, including dengue (Anderson et al., 1997) and West Nile (Shen et al., 1997) viruses, activate endothelial cell adhesion molecule expression by either direct (virus-mediated) or indirect (cytokine-mediated) mechanisms (see Section V,C). In the presence of leukocyte-attracting chemokines, such virus-triggered activation of the vascular endothelium may contribute toward the migration of leukocytes into extravascular tissues. In addition to being a mechanism for virus dissemination, this process may also be a factor in phenomena such as leukopenia and particularly neutropenia (loss of circulating leukocytes, neutrophils) often observed in flavivirus, particularly dengue, infection (reviewed in Halstead, 1989). Due to the lack of suitable animal models for severe dengue disease, i.e., dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF) or dengue shock syndrome (DSS), there are difficulties in assessing the roles of such events, particularly the identification of adhesion molecules mediating the transendothelial migration of neutrophils using blocking antibodies against specific integrins, as has been performed for other disease states (Doerschuk et al., 1990; Gao et al., 1994; Issekutz and Issekutz, 1993; Laberge et al., 1995; Springer, 1995).

The hallmark feature of increased vascular permeability in hemorrhagic flavivirus (e.g., dengue) infection suggests that vascular endothelial cells may mediate the fluid leakage and hemorrhaging that occur in DHF/DSS. Endothelial cells line the inner surface of blood vessels and play essential roles in maintaining an antithrombogenic surface and regulating vascular permeability. Increased vascular permeability can arise from a variety of mediators associated with acute inflammation and shock (Bulger and Maier, 2000; Funk, 2001; Lefer, 1989; Michel, 1988; Montrucchio et al., 2000; Schnittler et al., 1990). It is thought that vascular permeability is largely controlled by changes in endothelial cell–cell contact, which result in gap formation, thus allowing for fluid exchange between blood and interstitial tissue
fluid (Michel, 1988). An electron microscopic study of endothelium from DHF biopsy samples revealed the occasional presence of gaps (Sahaphong et al., 1980), thus providing evidence that endothelial cell features may indeed be perturbed during DHF/DSS.

Although dengue virus infects endothelial cells in vitro (Andrews et al., 1978; Avirutnan et al., 1998; Killen and O’Sullivan, 1993), there is no evidence that endothelial cell infection occurs clinically, as neither virus particles nor viral antigen has been detected in the endothelium of tissue specimens (Halstead, 1988, 1989; Sahaphong et al., 1980), in contrast to that seen in cases of ebola (Zaki et al., 1999) or hantaan hemorrhagic fever (Gavrilovskaya et al., 1999; Wang et al., 1997). It is likely that dengue virus mediates endothelial cell activation via an indirect route, involving blood monocytes, which are a major cell target for dengue virus infection (Halstead et al., 1977b; Scott et al., 1980). A major candidate event in such a route is the activation of endothelial cell adhesion molecules by a factor(s) (particularly TNF-α) produced by dengue virus–infected blood monocytes (Anderson et al., 1997).

TNF is a key cytokine in a variety of normal and pathological immune responses, including immunoregulation, regulation of cell proliferation, cytotoxicity, and in the mediation of endotoxic shock (Fiers, 1991; Tartaglia and Goeddel, 1992; Tracey and Cerami, 1993; Vassalli, 1992). Monocyte-derived TNF-α appears to play a pivotal role in dengue-associated endothelial cell activation (Anderson et al., 1997) and may be an important effector in the manifestation of DHF/DSS. Support for the clinical significance of this observation comes from observations of elevated TNF levels in the sera of patients with severe dengue disease (Green et al., 1999b; Hober et al., 1993; Vitarana et al., 1991; Yadav et al., 1991). Taken together, current evidence indicates that dengue virus represents a rather unique group of viruses that target monocytes, thereby triggering the production of factors such as TNF-α, which in turn affect other cell targets, including endothelial cells. While the overall picture of endothelial cell dysfunction in DHF/DSS is obviously more complex than can be explained by any single factor, the role of TNF in dengue pathogenesis would seem to merit particular attention.

Current knowledge of endothelial cell responses observed in endotoxic shock may be instructive for the understanding of vascular leakage in DHF/DSS. Plasma leakage induced by endotoxin (lipopolysaccharide, LPS) from gram-negative bacteria encompasses a complex cascade of processes, including activation and functional alteration of endothelial cells. Major mediators of endothelial cell perturbation
in endotoxic shock are LPS itself, as well as cytokines such as TNF-\(\alpha\) and IL-1\(\beta\) (Bevilacqua, 1993). These factors can modulate endothelial cell function to varying degrees by activating cytokine and vasoactive factor release (Rink and Kirchner, 1996; Shanley et al., 1995), upregulating adhesion molecule expression (Bevilacqua, 1993; Luscinskas et al., 1991; Moser et al., 1989; Smith et al., 1989), and mediating transendothelial migration of specific leukocytes (Issekutz et al., 1995; Luscinskas et al., 1991; Morzycki et al., 1990; Moser et al., 1989; Smith et al., 1989). Additional factors, particularly lipid mediators such as PAF, leukotrienes, thromboxanes, and prostaglandins, may contribute to further endothelial cell dysfunction, including vascular leakage (Bulger and Maier, 2000; Funk, 2001; Lefer, 1989; Montrucchio et al., 2000). While the involvement of these vasoactive mediators is recognized in endotoxic shock, more needs to be learned of their role in the vascular dysfunction that occurs in severe dengue disease.

D. Lymphocytes

Although lymphocytes are potently involved in the host response and immunopathology of flavivirus (especially dengue) diseases, their role as virus-permissive host cells is unclear. Dengue virus has been identified in circulating B cells from acutely ill dengue patients by immunocytochemistry and by recovery of infectious virus after passage in mosquitoes (King et al., 1999). In vitro studies showed that cells and cultured cell lines of both B and T cell derivation could be infected with dengue virus (Bielefeldt-Ohmann et al., 2001; Kurane et al., 1990; Marchette and Halstead, 1978; Mentor and Kurane, 1997; Sung et al., 1975; Takasaki et al., 2001; Theofilopoulos et al., 1976). Continued passage of dengue virus in lymphoblastoid (Raji) cells can give rise to dengue virus variants capable of replication in human lymphocytes (Brandt et al., 1979). Interestingly, lymphocytes do not appear to undergo antibody-enhanced dengue virus infection (Brandt et al., 1979; Kurane et al., 1990), even though B cells do have Fc receptors (Dijstelbloem et al., 2001; see Section IV,C).

E. Neural Cells

The initial stages of pathogenesis for neurotropic flaviviruses appear to be common for flaviviruses in general in that the virus progresses from the subcutaneous site of inoculation to lymph nodes, followed by viremia and replication in extraneurial tissues. Invasion into the
central nervous system is marked by high virus titers in the brain and detectable virus or viral antigen in neurons (Albrecht, 1968). Cell destruction in tick-borne encephalitis may be less extensive than that seen in herpes simplex type 1 encephalitis (Studahl et al., 2000), although this is variable and may involve considerable inflammation (Chu et al., 1999; Matthews et al., 2000; Suzuki et al., 2000). Susceptible cell types include both neurons and glial cells (Chu et al., 1999; Ramos et al., 1998; Steele et al., 2000).

**F. Basophils/Mast Cells**

As notorious producers of vasoactive mediators, mast cells have been a source of controversial speculation for years in dengue pathogenesis. Cells resembling degranulated mast cells have been reported in skin perivascular infiltrates from DHF/DSS cases (Bhamarapravati et al., 1967). Dengue patients showed elevated levels of urinary histamine (a major granule product of mast cells), which correlated with disease severity (Tuchinda et al., 1977), suggesting that mast cells may have a contributory role in the pathogenesis of dengue. Although antihistamine treatment does not resolve shock in severely dengue-diseased patients (Halstead, 1989), histamine is only one of several potent vasoactive factors produced by mast cells (Benyon et al., 1991; Bradding et al., 1993; Galli et al., 1984; Grabbe et al., 1994; Marshall and Bienenstock, 1994; Moller et al., 1991, 1993, 1998; Nilsson et al., 1995; Schwartz and Austen, 1984), some of which could cause vascular dysfunction in dengue infection. DHF/DSS patients have been reported to have elevated serum levels of IgE (Pavri et al., 1979), which has been speculated to relate to IgE-triggered histamine release in the manifestation of shock (Pavri and Prasad, 1980).

Mast cells reside mainly in the tissues, often closely associated with blood vessels (Alving, 1991; Anton et al., 1998; Pesci et al., 1996; Pulimood et al., 1998; Selye, 1966; Selye et al., 1968). They are present in large numbers in the skin (Marshall et al., 1987), where transmission of insect-borne flaviviruses occurs. Basophils, however, comprise about 1% of total circulating cells and would be accessible to virus in the blood. Dengue virus infects basophil/mast cell–like KU812 cells in an antibody-enhanced manner, coupled with the release of vasoactive cytokines, IL-1β and IL-6 (King et al., 2000, 2002). This cell line, which can be differentiated easily toward either a basophil or mast cell phenotype (Saito et al., 1995), may provide further insights into potential roles for basophils and mast cells in dengue disease.
Dengue patients show increased serum levels of anaphylatoxins C3a and C5a (Malasit, 1987), which can attract (Nilsson et al., 1996) and activate (Kownatzki, 1982) mast cells. Among the expected mast cell secretion products would be vasoactive factors, including histamine, which has been detected in elevated amounts in the urine of dengue patients (Tuchinda et al., 1977).

G. Platelets

Evidence for platelet involvement in dengue pathogenesis comes from at least two (probably related) sources. First, thrombocytopenia (loss of circulating platelets) is one of the most consistent clinical features of severe dengue infection (Halstead, 1989). Second, viral immune complexes have been detected on platelets from dengue patients (Boonpucknavig et al., 1979; Phanichyakarn et al., 1977a). Functional studies on platelets in dengue-diseased individuals have been sparse, but include a markedly reduced half-life (Mitrakul et al., 1977), deficient ADP release (Mitrakul et al., 1977), increased adhesiveness (Doury et al., 1976), increased tagging by complement fragments (Malasit, 1987), and increased release of \( \beta \)-thromboglobulin and platelet factor 4 (Srichaikul et al., 1989). There is also evidence for platelet activation in dengue patients (Doury et al., 1976; Krishnamurti et al., 2001; Srichaikul et al., 1989). Although these results relate to a variety of platelet functions, they do indicate a general alteration in platelet physiology, which is consistent with platelet involvement and triggering of thrombocytopenia in dengue disease.

Dengue virus has been recovered from washed patient platelets (Scott et al., 1978), and virus has been reported to bind to platelets in the absence of antibody as assayed using immunofluorescence and immunoperoxidase techniques (Funahara et al., 1987). However, the levels of antibody-independent bound virus are very low compared to the levels of virus bound in the presence of dengue-specific antibodies (Wang et al., 1995). As noted earlier, dengue immune complexes have been demonstrated on platelets from dengue patients (Boonpucknavig et al., 1979; Phanichyakarn et al., 1977a). Weiss and Halstead (1965) originally proposed the possibility that dengue virus interactions with platelets might be involved in the thrombocytopenia observed in severe dengue disease. The finding that dengue virus binding to platelets is dependent on a virus-specific antibody is consistent with epidemiological and experimental data linking preexisting host antibodies to an increased risk of DHF/DSS (reviewed in Halstead, 1990).
Several other viruses have been shown to bind directly to platelets (Bik et al., 1982; Danon et al., 1959; Forghani and Schmidt, 1983; Larke and Wheelock, 1970; Lee et al., 1993; Zucker-Franklin et al., 1990). Platelet association may stabilize or protect blood-borne viruses (Larke and Wheelock, 1970) and may function as a mechanism of hematogenous dissemination (Forghani and Schmidt, 1983). Virus binding to platelets has been suggested to be a contributing mechanism to thrombocytopenia arising from infections with vaccinia (Bik et al., 1982), chikungunya (Larke and Wheelock, 1970), and rubella (Bayer et al., 1965). Thrombocytopenia in these virus infections is generally much milder than that observed in severe dengue disease.

Levels of dengue virus in the blood can exceed $10^7$ infectious units/ml (Gubler, 1988; Monath, 1994). Such high viremic titers are likely necessary to ensure infection and transmission of the obligate mosquito intermediary host (Monath, 1994). Assuming a reasonable particle:infectivity ratio of 100:1, virus particle titers in blood may rival normal platelet counts ($3 \times 10^8$/ml). Such parity between numbers of virus particles and platelets suggests that antibody-enhanced binding of virus to platelets may have a profound effect on platelets. circulating virus-immune complexes are detected in DHF/DSS, and levels of immune complexes have been correlated with severity of disease (Ruangjirachuporn et al., 1979) and some of these are platelet associated (Boonpucknavig et al., 1979; Phanichyakarn et al., 1977a). These observations suggest that sufficient binding of virus immune complexes to platelets may occur to tag the majority of circulating platelets. Such an event could lead to immune clearance by the reticuloendothelial system, thereby precipitating the thrombocytopenia frequently associated with severe dengue disease.

It is likely that molecules other than Fc receptors on the platelet surface may mediate antibody-enhanced binding of dengue virus (Wang et al., 1995). Drug-induced thrombocytopenias provide interesting examples in this regard. It is known that given the appropriate accessory ligand (i.e., drug), IgG can bind to platelets through either the Fc receptor or other surface proteins. A variety of clinical thrombocytopenias are known that involve an immune component in pathogenesis. Many of these reflect activities of host antibodies, which react with proteins on the surface of platelets. These antibodies may be autoimmune in nature (i.e., antibodies that bind to platelet surface molecules) or dependent on a third party ligand (drug or protein), which then induces binding of the antibody–ligand complex to either the platelet Fcγ receptor or to another surface protein. For example, a number of individuals are susceptible to drug-dependent
thrombocytopenia when administered drugs such as heparin or quinine/quinidine (Aster, 1989; Hackett et al., 1982). While heparin-dependent antibodies bind to the platelet Fcγ receptor (Adelman et al., 1989; Chong et al., 1989a, 1989b; Kelton et al., 1988), quinine/quinidine-dependent antibodies bind to platelet protein heterodimers GPIIb/IIIa and GPIa/IX (Berndt et al., 1985; Chong et al., 1983; Christie et al., 1987; Devine and Rosse, 1995). This latter category of immune-mediated thrombocytopenia may be relevant to the understanding of dengue-associated thrombocytopenia, as patient antibodies mediate dengue virus binding to platelets via a platelet surface protein other than the Fcγ receptor (Wang et al., 1995).

Communication between platelets and endothelial cells is a frequent intermediate step in certain events such as platelet adhesion, aggregation, and regulation of vascular permeability. How this occurs in dengue infection and what the effects are on endothelial cell function are unknown. Binding of viruses to platelets can have potentially profound immunological effects [e.g., the stimulation of TGF-β release by platelets bound by Epstein–Barr virus (Ahmad and Menezes, 1997)]. In light of reports of altered platelet function in dengue patients, discussed earlier, there is a tantalizing need to determine the immunological consequences of antibody-enhanced dengue virus binding to platelets in terms of platelet as well as endothelial cell physiological responses.

Many products of complement activation can also be deposited on platelets (Devine, 1992). In view of evidence for complement activation in severe dengue disease (Halstead, 1989; Malasit, 1987), binding of complement products might play a role in the immune destruction of platelets leading to thrombocytopenia. Platelets display surface receptors, e.g., C1q receptor (Peerschke and Ghebrehiwet, 1987, 1998), membrane cofactor protein (Seya et al., 1986), and decay-accelerating factor (Devine et al., 1987), for specific components of complement activation. In addition, the platelet surface can act as a substrate for the deposition of C3dg and C5b-9 (Devine, 1992). Fragments of C3 have been detected on the platelets of DHF/DSS patients (Malasit, 1987).

In addition to immune complex deposition on platelets, thrombocytopenia associated with DHF/DSS might also arise by the immune destruction of platelets through antiplatelet autoantibodies. Antiplatelet autoantibodies have been reported in the sera of dengue patients (Lin et al., 2001), although they have also been detected in patients recovering from a variety of viral infections (Imbach, 1994). Antiplatelet antibodies are strongly linked to the pathogenesis of immune-mediated thrombocytopenias, such as idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura (Winkelstein and Kiss, 1997).
While this brief discussion of cell targets for flaviviruses is by no means complete, it highlights some of the major interactions as they relate to pathogenesis. Because pathogenesis is probably best understood for dengue, Fig. 1 illustrates the interactions of hemorrhagic flavivirus (e.g., dengue) with cell targets both within and outside the vascular system.

**H. Cell Targets: An Overview**

While this brief discussion of cell targets for flaviviruses is by no means complete, it highlights some of the major interactions as they relate to pathogenesis. Because pathogenesis is probably best understood for dengue, Fig. 1 illustrates the interactions of hemorrhagic flavivirus (e.g., dengue) with cell targets both within and outside the vascular system.

**IV. Cell Surface Macromolecules Involved in Flavivirus Attachment**

**A. Glycosaminoglycans**

Glycosaminoglycans and proteoglycans (i.e., proteins bearing glycosaminoglycans) are important cell surface molecules involved in a variety of ligand recognition and cell signaling processes (Gallo, 2000). Because glycosaminoglycans are widely distributed on cells,
they are attractive candidates as virus receptors. Some degree of specificity (i.e., virus tropism) may arise from the compositional heterogeneity of glycosaminoglycans, as well as quantitative differences in the degree of expression on various cell types.

Flaviviruses seem to share, with a large number of virus families, the ability to bind glycosaminoglycans (Birkmann et al., 2001; Dechecchi et al., 2000, 2001; Duisit et al., 1999; Feldman et al., 1999, 2000; Giroglou et al., 2001; Goodfellow et al., 2001; Heil et al., 2001; Hsiao et al., 1999; Hulst et al., 2000, 2001; Lin et al., 2000; Liu and Thorp, 2002; Patel et al., 1993; Rue and Ryan, 2002; Shukla et al., 1999; Shukla and Spear, 2001). Glycosaminoglycans such as heparin and its structural analogues have been investigated for their ability to bind dengue virus and thereby to gain insights as to the structural requirements for dengue receptors. Potential glycosaminoglycan-binding motifs have been identified on the dengue viral E protein at two sites, the best characterized of which appears to be composed of amino acids 188, 284–295, and 305–310 and which may also play a role in virus–cell attachment (Chen et al., 1997). Heparin (minimum of 10 carbohydrates) and an uncharacterized highly sulfated heparin sulfate isolated from bovine liver were found to show the best binding to dengue E protein (Chen et al., 1997). Attachment of dengue virus to human hepatoma cells has also been reported to be inhibited by heparin (Hilgard and Stockert, 2000). A further study involving a panel of natural and synthetic polyanionic, sulfated compounds suggested that binding of the dengue E protein required a highly sulfated (and highly charged) oligosaccharide with a minimum size of 39Å and a high degree of structural flexibility (Marks et al., 2001).

The role of glycosaminoglycans in natural (i.e., nontissue culture-adapted) strains of flaviviruses needs to be studied further. It has long been recognized that dengue virus passaged in various host cell types can give rise to virus variants with altered cell specificity (Brandt et al., 1979; Halstead et al., 1984a, 1984b, 1984c). Passage-dependent mutations of the dengue virus E protein at a number of different amino acid residues have been documented (Lee et al., 1997). Following passage of TBE virus in cultured BHK-21 cells, virus mutants were selected that contained more positively charged amino acids in the putative receptor-binding region of the E protein, resulting in dependence on cell surface heparan sulfate (Mandl et al., 2001). Such mutants were diminished in their neurovirulence in mice as well as in their replication in primary chicken cells and plaque formation in porcine kidney cells (Mandl et al., 2001). A large number of other viruses have also been shown to undergo loss of virulence upon adaptation to cell culture
associated with heparan sulfate utilization (Bernard et al., 2000; Byrnes and Griffin, 2000; Klimstra et al., 1998, 1999; Lee and Lobigs, 2000; Neff et al., 1998; Sa-Carvalho et al., 1997).

B. CD14

CD14 and the Toll-like receptor (TLR) pattern recognition receptors are involved in the innate response to lipopolysaccharide and other microbial products (Diamond et al., 2000; Imler and Hoffmann, 2000). A role for CD14 and TLR4 has been found for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) (Kurt-Jones et al., 2000), suggesting that these receptors may have a broader involvement in host response than previously thought. A possible role for CD14 in dengue infection has been postulated on the basis of inhibition of dengue virus infection of human monocytes with bacterial lipopolysaccharide (Chen et al., 1999). However, this has been disputed (Bielefeldt-Ohmann et al., 2001) and requires further investigation.

C. Fc Receptors

As indicated earlier, flaviviruses are capable of initiating infection of appropriate host cells through as yet largely unidentified primary receptors. In addition, a number of flaviviruses are capable of using sub-neutralizing levels of virus-specific antibodies to attach to and gain entry to cells bearing Fc and/or complement receptors (Cardosa et al., 1983; Halstead, 1982; Halstead and O’Rourke, 1977a; Schlesinger and Brandriss, 1981a) by a process known as antibody-dependent enhancement (ADE) of infection (Table I). ADE has been documented for dengue (Halstead et al., 1980), West Nile (Peiris and Porterfield, 1979), yellow fever (Schlesinger and Brandriss, 1981b), tick-borne encephalitis (Phillpotts et al., 1985) and Japanese encephalitis (Cecilia and Ghosh, 1988) viruses. Early work with dengue virus and monocytes differentiated between trypsin-sensitive and trypsin-resistant cell surface molecules as the putative receptors for antibody-independent and antibody-dependent infection, respectively (Daughaday et al., 1981).

To date, dengue virus appears to be the only flavivirus in which strong evidence exists for antibody-dependent enhancement as a major contributing factor to severe disease (Halstead, 1980; Thein et al., 1997). Severe dengue disease, encompassing conditions known as dengue hemorrhagic fever/dengue shock syndrome, involves several well-defined hemostatic abnormalities, including the leakage of
plasma into interstitial spaces, as well as thrombocytopenia and bleeding (Halstead, 1990; Kurane et al., 1994). The potential to cause severe hemorrhagic disease is a general property of dengue viruses and is not limited to any one viral serotype (Gubler, 1998; Rigau-Perez et al., 1998). Although different strains of dengue may influence the severity of hemorrhagic symptoms (Leitmeyer et al., 1999; Rico-Hesse et al., 1997), it is also generally accepted that pathogenesis depends on immunopathological processes (Rothman and Ennis, 1999). Thus the roles of prior immunity, antibody-enhanced virus infection, and immune-mediated pathologic effects on the vascular system are key points in understanding the pathogenesis of dengue hemorrhagic disease.

While the pathogenesis of severe dengue disease is not completely understood, it is clear from laboratory and epidemiological studies that a considerable risk factor is prior immunity. Severe dengue disease, DHF/DSS, rarely occurs in seronegative individuals suffering their first dengue infection, but instead occurs in individuals who have preexisting dengue viral antibodies, either from a previous infection or from passive antibody transfer, e.g., following maternal transmission of antibodies to the fetus (Kliks et al., 1988, 1989). Estimates suggest that 99% of children suffering from DHF/DSS have preexisting immunity from a prior dengue virus infection (Halstead, 1988). Consequently, from this and other studies, it has been calculated that prior exposure to dengue increases the risk for hemorrhagic disease in a

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**TABLE I**

| Cell                   | FcγR<sup>a</sup> | Ab independent | Ab enhanced  | FcγR for ADE |
|------------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Monocyte               | I,II,III         | Yes<sup>b</sup> | Yes<sup>b</sup> | I, II<sup>f</sup> |
| Dendritic cells        | II               | Yes<sup>c</sup> | No<sup>c</sup>  | None         |
| Mast cell/basophil     | I,II             | No<sup>d</sup>  | Yes<sup>d</sup> | Unknown      |
| Kupffer cell           | I,II,III         | No<sup>c</sup>  | Unknown      | Unknown      |

<sup>a</sup> Compiled from van de Winkel and Anderson (1991), Dijstelbloem et al. (2001), Okayama et al. (2000), Anselmino et al. (1989), and Tuijnman et al. (1993).

<sup>b</sup> From Halstead and O’Rourke (1977).

<sup>c</sup> From Wu et al. (2000) and Libraty et al. (2001).

<sup>d</sup> From King et al. (2000).

<sup>e</sup> Abortive infection, but expressing viral antigen (Marianneau et al., 1999).

<sup>f</sup> From Littaua et al. (1990) and Kontny et al. (1988).
second dengue infection by at least 15-fold (Halstead, 1980; Thein et al., 1997). Preexisting serum antibodies can potentiate virus infection by the mechanism of antibody-dependent enhancement, giving rise to amplified virus replication and to an increased potential for the development of hemorrhagic symptoms (Halstead, 1989). Viremic titers are higher in secondary dengue infections in both humans (Gubler et al., 1979) and experimental monkeys (Halstead et al., 1973). Antibody-enhanced dengue virus infection of human blood monocytes is necessary for the production of endothelial cell activators (Anderson et al., 1997), thereby providing a link between antibody-dependent enhancement and alteration of endothelial cell properties, which might contribute to vascular permeability in dengue infection.

For certain other viruses, e.g., influenza (Tamura et al., 1993) and HIV (Takeda et al., 1990, 1992), distinct “neutralizing” and “antibody-enhancing” epitopes have been identified on the respective viral attachment proteins. Surprisingly, no systematic approach has yet been undertaken to identify regions on the E protein that are essential for ADE, even though this issue was raised as a challenge to research on dengue many years ago (Halstead, 1988).

Human Fcγ receptors are currently categorized into three classes: FcγRI (CD64), FcγRII (CD32), and FcγRIII (CD16). While FcγRI shows high affinity for monomeric IgG, FcγRII and FcγRIII bind monomeric IgG poorly and are more likely involved in binding immune complexes (Dijstelbloem et al., 2001). FcγRII is the most widely distributed, being expressed on most circulating leukocytes (van de Winkel and Anderson, 1991). Monocytes express all three FcγRs to varying degrees (van de Winkel and Anderson, 1991), although FcγRI and FcγRII predominate, whereas FcγRIII appears to be limited to a subpopulation (~10%) of monocytes (Anderson et al., 1990; Passlick et al., 1989). FcγRIII constitutes the major FcγR on macrophages (Fanger et al., 1989), although FcγRI and FcγRII are also present (Tuijnman et al., 1993; van de Winkel and Anderson, 1991). It is also important to recognize that FcR expression on cells, including macrophages, can vary depending on the microenvironment (Tomita et al., 1994).

Although strong evidence exists for FcγR involvement in ADE of dengue virus, the participating FcγRs in vivo have not yet been identified rigorously. In cultured cell lines (monocytic U937 or erythroleukemic K562 cells), FcγRI (Konnty et al., 1988) and FcγRII (Littaua et al., 1990) have been shown to mediate ADE of dengue virus infection. That FcγRI has the ability to mediate ADE of dengue has been demonstrated using COS cells transfected with FcγRI (Schlesinger and Chapman, 1999).
Dengue and DHF patients show elevated serum levels of interferon (IFN)-γ (Kurane et al., 1991). Because IFN-γ can upregulate both MHC class I and II molecules as well as FcγR (particularly FcγRI) expression in monocytes (Erbe et al., 1990; Perussia et al., 1983), the chances for ADE may be increased, thereby creating a vicious cycle involving positive cytokine feedback and virus amplification (Kurane and Ennis, 1992). IFN-γ has been shown to enhance ADE of dengue virus infection of human monocytic U937 cells (Kontny et al., 1988), although any enhancing effect on dengue infection of peripheral blood monocytes may be negated by the antiviral properties of IFN-γ (Sittisombut et al., 1995).

Mast cells and basophils express mainly FcγRII (Anselmino et al., 1989; Okayama et al., 2001a; Wedi et al., 1996) and some (IFN-γ-inducible) FcγRI (Okayama et al., 2000, 2001b) as well as the high-affinity FcεRI for IgE (Guo et al., 1992; Sperr et al., 1994). As noted previously, the basophil/mast cell KU812 cell line exhibits antibody-enhanced dengue virus infection and produces vasoactive cytokines (King et al., 2000).

Although FcγR-mediated ADE of flaviviruses has been examined extensively as a mechanism for virus amplification, the biological consequences for the participating host cell are not well understood. Because FcγR-mediated cell signaling is complex, the functional effects of virus–antibody interactions with cell surface FcγRs need to be investigated. Monocytes infected with dengue virus in the presence of antibody release cytokines such as TNF-α (Anderson et al., 1997). Induction of TNF-α requires infectious virus (Anderson et al., 1997), suggesting that virus replication (or perhaps expression of one or more crucial viral genes) is responsible for the stimulation of TNF-α release. Therefore, in this case, the FcγR is likely facilitating antibody-enhanced virus replication rather than providing a signal triggered by virus binding to the FcγR. Similarly, antibody-enhanced dengue virus infection of KU812 basophil/mast cells produces IL-1β, IL-6 (King et al., 2000, 2002), and selected chemokines (King et al., 2002). Suppressive effects of antibody-enhanced flavivirus or alphavirus infection on monocyte cytokine secretion have also been reported (Lidbury and Mahalingam, 2000; Yang et al., 2001).

Both activating (FcγRI, FcγRIIa, and FcγRIIIa) and inhibitory (FcγRIIb) forms of FcγRs exist, which mediate signal transduction via a cytoplasmic immunoreceptor tyrosine-based activation motif (ITAM) or inhibitory (ITIM) motif, respectively (Dijstelbloem et al., 2001). The ITAM and associated molecules are necessary for the endocytosis of FcR-bound immune complexes (Amigorena and Bonnerot, 1999) and
therefore play a likely role in the initiating events of antibody-enhanced flavivirus infection. Although not necessary for FcγRII, an accessory subunit (homo- or heterodimeric γ or ζ chains) is required for signaling through FcγRI and FcγRIIIa (Ravetch, 1994). A further FcγR (FcγRIIIb) lacks transmembrane and cytoplasmic domains and is instead anchored to the cell surface membrane via a glycosylphosphatidylinositol (GPI) linkage (Selvaraj et al., 1988; Simmons and Seed, 1988). It apparently does not participate in signal transduction and has been speculated to sequester and accumulate immune complexes at specific sites on the cell surface (Huizinga et al., 1988; Selvaraj et al., 1988).

The roles of activating and inhibitory FcRs in viral ADE have not yet been ascertained. Activating FcRs are expressed on monocytes, macrophages, granulocytes, natural killer (NK) cells, and platelets but not on most lymphocytes (Dijstelbloem et al., 2001). Inhibitory FcRs, however, are found on B cells, dendritic cells, and macrophages (Dijstelbloem et al., 2001). Interestingly, ADE of dengue virus is best documented for monocytes/macrophages and related cell lines (Halstead, 1989). In contrast, lymphocytic cells (Brandt et al., 1979; Kurane et al., 1990) and dendritic cells (Wu et al., 2000) do not appear to support antibody-enhanced dengue virus infection. Whether this is due to differential expression of activating versus inhibitory FcRs remains to be investigated.

FcRs for IgE (primarily the high-affinity FcεRI) are expressed on cells such as monocytes, macrophages, mast cells, basophils, and dendritic cells and are structurally related to FcγRs (Ravetch, 1994). Their role in binding IgE and/or immune-complexed flaviviruses, such as dengue, remains unexplored. Similarly unexplored is the potential role of the neonatal Fc IgG receptor (FcRn), structurally related to MHC class I and involved in IgG transport across cells (Ghetie and Ward, 2000). In addition to being expressed on certain epithelial and endothelial cells, FcRn is also expressed functionally on monocytes, macrophages, and dendritic cells (Zhu et al., 2001).

D. Complement Receptors

In addition to the FcγR, the antibody-complexed flavivirus has been shown to be taken up by a macrophage cell line using the complement receptor-3 (Cardosa et al., 1983). In the case studied—West Nile virus infection of mouse P388D1 macrophages—ADE was mediated by the presence of antiviral IgM and was inhibited with a CR3-blocking antibody. This mode of ADE was, however, found to be quantitatively less
productive than the more commonly studied route of ADE, i.e., involving FcγR-mediated uptake route of IgG–virus complexes (Cardosa et al., 1983).

**E. Virus Binding Proteins Identified on Cells**

The recent demonstration of DC-SIGN as a functional dengue virus receptor on human dendritic cells represents an important advance in the definitive identification of flavivirus receptors (Navarro-Sanchez et al., 2003; Tassaneetrithep et al., 2003). Several studies have identified cell surface proteins that bind flaviviruses, generally assayed by virus overlay blots of SDS–PAGE-resolved cell proteins (Table II). Further work is required to confirm the involvement of these and other proteins as receptors in flavivirus infection.

**V. CELL SURFACE MACROMOLECULES MODULATED BY FLAVIVIRUS INFECTION**

A number of flaviviruses are able to stimulate the expression of cell surface molecules. Notable among these are adhesion molecules and major histocompatibility antigens. Multiple mechanisms appear to be involved, including virus- and cytokine-dependent pathways.

**A. MHC Class I**

Flavivirus infection of a number of cell types causes an increase in cell surface MHC class I expression (King and Kesson, 1988; King et al., 1989; Libraty et al., 2001; Liu et al., 1989; Lobigs et al., 1996; Shen et al., 1995a, 1997). Evidence for both virus-dependent (Lobigs et al., 1996) and cytokine-dependent (Libraty et al., 2001; Shen et al., 1997) mechanisms has been reported. One process appears to be driven by the amount of flaviviral peptides generated by proteolysis and imported into the transporter associated with antigen processing (TAP), which results in increased cell surface expression of peptide-loaded MHC class I (Momburg et al., 2001). The upregulation of MHC class I molecules by flaviviruses is perhaps reminiscent of that observed in infections by coronaviruses (Suzumura et al., 1986) but stands in contrast to the virus-manipulated downregulation of MHC class I by viruses such as herpesviruses (Jennings et al., 1985; Ploegh, 1998), adenoviruses (Sparer and Gooding, 1998), poxviruses (Boshkov et al., 1992), and HIV (Scheppler et al., 1989). Although enhanced
| Cell                          | Virus    | Binding protein(s) | Reference                        |
|-------------------------------|----------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| Human erythroleukemic K562 cells | Dengue-2 | 100 kDa            | Rothwell et al. (1996)           |
| Human and mouse neuroblastoma cells | Dengue-2 | 65 kDa             | Ramos-Castaneda et al. (1997)    |
| Human monocytic, B and T cell lines | Dengue-2 | 32, 45, 72 kDa     | Bielefeldt-Ohmann (1998); Bielefeldt-Ohmann et al. (2001) |
| Monkey kidney Vero cells      | Dengue-4 | 44, 74 kDa         | Martinez-Barragan and del Angel (2001) |
| Mosquito C6/36 cells          | Dengue-4 | 40, 45 kDa         | Salas-Benito and del Angel (1997) |
| Mosquito C6/36 cells          | Dengue-2 | 65, 80 kDa         | Munoz et al. (1998)              |
| Human hepatoma HuH-7 cells    | Dengue-1 | 33- and 37-kDa proteoglycans | Hilgard and Stockert (2000) |
| Pig kidney PS cells           | TBE      | 35 kDa             | Kopecky et al. (1999)            |
| Human dendritic cells         | Dengue   | DC-SIGN            | Navarro-Sanchez et al. (2003); Tassaneetrithep et al. (2003) |
| Vero cells; mouse neuroblastoma cells | West Nile | 105 kDa           | Chu and Ng (2003)               |
MHC class I expression would be expected to lead to greater cytotoxic T (Tc) cell–mediated cytolysis, it would render cells less susceptible to recognition by NK cells. Evidence has been presented that flavivirus-infected cells in fact show reduced susceptibility to NK cells at the cost of enhanced Tc cell–mediated lysis (Lobigs et al., 1996). It has been suggested that such a response may permit flaviviruses to evade an early NK cell response and thereby allow for substantial amplification of virus during the viremic phase of infection (Momburg et al., 2001). Nevertheless, evidence shows that NK cells are activated during dengue infection (Green et al., 1999a), and NK cell–mediated cytotoxicity has been reported to correlate with the severity of disease (Homchampa et al., 1988).

Dendritic cells also undergo upregulation of MHC class I molecules following infection with dengue virus (Libraty et al., 2001). Compared to other antigen-presenting cells, dendritic cells have superior T cell–stimulating activities (McKinney and Streilein, 1989; Timares et al., 1998). Because antigen presentation via dendritic cell MHC class I can provoke exceptionally strong proliferation in CD8-bearing T cells (Bhardwaj et al., 1994; Elbe et al., 1994; McKinney and Streilein, 1989), much of the overall cytotoxic T cell response arising in flavivirus infection may be dictated at the level of the dendritic cell.

B. MHC Class II

West Nile virus infection induces MHC class II expression in mouse macrophages (Shen et al., 1995a), mouse astrocytes (Liu et al., 1989), rat Schwann cells (Argall et al., 1991), and human myoblasts (Bao et al., 1992). Upregulation of dendritic cell MHC class II occurs in response to dengue (Libraty et al., 2001) and West Nile (Johnston et al., 1996) virus infection. Given the potent ability of dendritic cells to activate T cells (Banchereau et al., 2000), the communication between dendritic cell MHC class II–peptide complexes and recognition molecules on CD4-expressing T cells should provide insights into some of the molecular processes underlying T cell activation.

C. Adhesion Molecules

Adhesion molecules are expressed on a variety of cells and mediate a spectrum of processes (Ley, 2001; Roebuck and Finnegan, 1999; Springer, 1995). From the standpoint of flaviviruses, the most significant processes likely concern adhesion molecules on vascular endothelial cells, as these cells regulate permeability as well as
transendothelial migration of leukocytes (Springer, 1995). Of particular importance are intercellular adhesion molecule 1 (ICAM-1; CD54), vascular cell adhesion molecule-1 (VCAM-1; CD106), and E-selectin (CD 62E), which are upregulated on the surface of the endothelium by inflammatory cytokines, cellular stress, and virus infection (Roebuck and Finnegan, 1999).

In the case of dengue, activation of endothelial cells occurs in vitro via TNF-α released from antibody-enhanced dengue virus infection of monocytes (Anderson et al., 1997). Such activation involves upregulation of adhesion molecules E-selectin, ICAM-1, and VCAM-1. Evidence that similar activation processes occur in vivo comes from clinical studies showing elevated serum levels of TNF-α (Green et al., 1999b; Hober et al., 1993; Vitarana et al., 1991; Yadav et al., 1991) and soluble VCAM-1 (Murgue et al., 2001) in dengue- and DHF/DSS-infected patients. Surprisingly, serum levels of soluble ICAM-1 were actually found to be lower than those of control subjects, although this may reflect plasma protein loss through leakage (Bethell et al., 1998). Moreover, the function of soluble forms of ICAM-1 remains unclear, and their expression appears to be regulated differently from that of membrane-bound ICAM-1 (Komatsu et al., 1997; van Den Engel et al., 2000).

Two phases of ICAM-1 upregulation have been noted in West Nile and Kunjin virus infection of human embryonic fibroblasts, namely an early (~2 h postinfection) virus-dependent process and a later (~24 h postinfection) event that is mediated by type 1 interferon (Shen et al., 1995b). For neurotropic flaviviruses, such as West Nile virus in the mouse, the development of encephalitis has been correlated with viremia (Weiner et al., 1970), suggesting virus penetration of the blood–brain barrier. The endothelium of the brain microvasculature normally represents a block between circulating virus and the central nervous system. Expression of endothelial cell adhesion molecules, thereby facilitating leukocyte adherence and diapedesis through the endothelium, may be an important mode of dissemination of virus-infected monocytes or other leukocytes into the brain. West Nile virus infection of human endothelial cells causes the upregulation of E-selectin, ICAM-1, and VCAM-1 (Shen et al., 1997), which could mediate the transendothelial migration of leukocytes. Upregulation of these adhesion molecules was observed to occur early (2–4 h) in infection and appeared to be triggered by the virus rather than by cytokines (Shen et al., 1997).

Further studies are required to clarify the role of endothelial cell adhesion molecule expression in the neuroinvasion of certain flaviviruses. Assuming such a role is confirmed, it will be incumbent to identify the mechanisms by which either free or cell-borne flaviviruses
are stimulated to cross the vascular endothelial layer. For virus-infected leukocytes, such stimulation likely arises, at least in part, from chemokines produced by cells of the central nervous system. Astrocytes infected with JE virus have been reported to release chemokines (RANTES and MCP-1), which may play a role in the transendothelial migration of leukocytes (including those possibly carrying virus) across the blood–brain barrier (Chen et al., 2000). Thus, once neural infection is initiated, the process could be amplified by the production of leukocyte-attracting chemokines at the site of infection.

VI. OTHER CELL SURFACE MACROMOLECULAR MODIFICATIONS TRIGGERED BY FLAVIVIRUS INFECTION

A. Complement Deposition

Complement activation is well documented in dengue disease (Nishioka, 1974; Phanichyakarn et al., 1977b; Russell et al., 1969), with peak activation and the production of C3a and C5a occurring at the time of vascular leakage and/or shock (Malasit, 1987). Complement activation is likely to be largely mediated by immune complexes consisting of IgG and virus (Bokisch et al., 1973a, 1973b; Shaio et al., 1992; Sobel et al., 1975), although the low levels of circulating immune complexes detected in patients have stimulated thought as to other possible mechanisms (Malasit, 1987). Receptors for C3a and C5a are found on a wide variety of cells, including many human peripheral blood leukocytes (Chenoweth and Hugli, 1978; Fureder et al., 1995; Kretzschmar et al., 1993; Nilsson et al., 1996; van Epps and Chenoweth, 1984). C5a receptors have been reported on endothelial cells, although at lower levels than myeloid cells (Zwirner et al., 1999).

Although endothelial cells do not appear to be major targets for dengue virus in vivo (Halstead, 1988, 1989; Sahaphong et al., 1980), endothelial cells infected with dengue virus in vitro can become a substrate for deposition of C3dg and C5b-9, provided the dengue antibody is present (Avirutnan et al., 1998). The presence of complement activation products on the endothelial cell surface could be a contributing factor to vascular permeability (Saadi et al., 1995). Furthermore, anaphylotoxins and/or deposition of sublytic C5b-9 on the endothelial cell surface has the potential to activate the expression of adhesion molecules (Foreman et al., 1994), cytokines (Saadi et al., 2000), chemokines (Selvan et al., 1998), cyclooxygenase-2
Thus, in addition to being activated by leukocyte-derived cytokines (Anderson et al., 1997), endothelial cells may also be coaxed toward a more permeability-enhancing state by virus infection and virus-mediated complement deposition. At present, the lack of evidence for in vivo infection of endothelial cells by dengue virus would suggest that the cytokine-mediated pathway is dominant. Figure 2 shows a model illustrating the potential role of endothelial cell perturbation by monocyte-derived cytokines and complement activation products in initiating vascular permeability and leukocyte extravasation in severe hemorrhagic flavivirus disease.
VII. Conclusions

Much remains to be learned about the primary receptors for flaviviruses, though much knowledge has been gained about the initial interactions of flaviviruses with cell surface structures. The ability of flaviviruses to affect cell entry through heparan sulfate–type proteoglycans, as well as their dexterity to adjust mutationally to different receptors, depending on host cell type, illustrates the plasticity of the viral E protein to adapt to changing conditions and to ensure successful virus replication. Beyond this, certain flaviviruses, notably dengue virus, are masters at exploiting host antibody and Fc receptor–bearing cells to dramatically amplify viral replication. Flavivirus replication is coupled to altered cellular expression of cytokines, chemokines, and cell surface molecules, which shape the host response and immunopathogenesis associated with flavivirus infections. Ongoing and future characterization of the cell surface structures that mediate these events will be helpful in understanding the mechanisms of flavivirus-induced disease and in developing therapeutic and/or preventive strategies.

Acknowledgments

Research in the author’s laboratory was supported by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. The author is grateful for the collaboration and advice of many past and present colleagues, including Y. Huang, C. King, A. Issekutz, J. Marshall, C. Osiowy, R. He, S. Wang, B. Innis, A. King, D. Vaughn, K. S. Myint, T. Endy, and M. Mammen.

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FLAVIVIRUS–CELL SURFACE INTERACTIONS 269
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