Whole-body Autoradiographic Study of Vitamin K Distribution in Rat

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(Received July 3, 1972)

Vitamin K group is known as an anti-haemorrhagic vitamin and has a common skeleton of 2-methyl-1,4-naphthoquinone. There are several homologs which differ in the alkyl side chain at 3-position of naphthoquinone ring. Of these homologs, vitamin K₂₍₂₀₎ (K₂) which has a geranyl-linalyl side chain is considered to be a physiologically active type of this vitamin, since Martius, *et al.*²⁾ reported that the administered vitamins K is converted to this type of homolog in pigeon chicken and rat.

We reported the tissue distribution and metabolic fate of K₂ by isotopic tracer techniques.³⁾ However, the determination of radioactivity by combustion method⁴⁾ is technically difficult for several tissues. In the present paper, we report the distribution of K₂ in rats by whole-body autoradiography which is advantage in determining the intuitively fine distribution of radioactivity. And the results are compared with those of naturally occurring vitamin K₁ and synthetic vitamin, vitamin K₃.

We also studied the bile excretion of these vitamins, because of their less urinary excretion and high radioactivity in intestinal content.

Material and Method

Materials—Vitamin K₁-(2-methyl-¹⁴C) (3.3 mCi/mmole) and vitamin K₂₍₂₀₎-(2-methyl-¹⁴C) (4.3 mCi/mmole) were synthesized from menadione-(2-methyl-¹⁴C) with specific radioactivity of 5.8 mCi/mmole which was purchased from Radiochemical Center (England).

Vitamin K₂₍₂₀₎-(6-³H) (41.2 mCi/mmole) was synthesized from 2-methylnaphthalene-(6-³H) which was obtained by tritiation of 2-methyl-6-bromonaphthalene.⁵⁾

Animals—Male rats of Wistar strain, weighing from 100 to 110 g were used for the whole-body autoradiography and these of 170 to 190 g for bile excretion experiment.

Preparation of Whole-body Autoradiogram—The autoradiogram preparation was carried out by the method of Matsuoka, *et al.*⁶⁾ Each ¹⁴C labeled vitamin K was dissolved in water with nonionic detergent, HCO-60, and the volume corresponding to 0.1 μCi/g of body weight of each sample was injected into the tail vein. At a definite period of time, the rat was killed with chloroform and fixed with acetone-dry ice. Thin sections were prepared with a microtome 1111 model (Yamato Koki Co., Ltd.) and contacted with Sakura N type X-ray film for 2 weeks. The exposed film was developed with Konidol (Konishiroku) for 4 min and fixed with Konifix (Konishiroku Co., Ltd.) for 20 min at 20°.

Measurement of Biliary Excretion—The biliary cannulation was performed in rats under ether anesthesia and 1 μmole of each sample (¹⁴C labeled K₁, K₃ and ³H labeled K₂) was injected intraperitoneally. The bile juice was collected every 2 hours.

1) Location: 3-20-1 Kitashinjuku Shinjuku-ku Tokyo.

2) C. Martius and H.O. Esser, *Biochem. Z.*, **331** 1 (1958); M. Billeter and C. Martius, *Biochem. Z.*, **333** 430 (1960); M. Billeter, W. Dolliger, and C. Martius, *Biochem. Z.*, **340**, 270 (1964).

3) K. Kinoshita, K. Katayama, T. Horie, T. Matsuura, T. Takamatsu, J. Tsutsumi, C. Yamato, T. Fujita, K. Miyao, S. Baba, and T. Konishi, *Oyo Yakuri*, **5**, 505 (1971); S. Baba and T. Konishi, Abstracts of paper, 89th Annual Meeting of Pharmaceutical Society of Japan, Nagoya, April, 1969.

4) S. Baba, S. Iwahara, and H. Ogino, *Yakugaku Zasshi*, **88**, 635 (1968).

5) T. Konishi, S. Baba, and T. Matsuura, *Radioisotopes*, **20**, 31 (1971).

6) O. Matsuoka and M. Kashima, *Radioisotopes*, **15**, 196 (1966).

Result and Discussion

Previous report revealed that the K_2 administered orally or intraperitoneally was concentrated in lungs, liver, pancreas and adrenal gland shortly after the administration and then spread over the whole body.³⁾ These results, however, were obtained by determining the radioactivity in the isolated tissues by combustion method. The radioactivity in several tissues, such as lymph node, bone marrow, and intestinal mucosa could not be determined by this method because of the technical difficulties. The autoradiography technique gave us informations of more fine distribution in these tissues.

Fig. 1 shows the whole-body autoradiogram of K_1 at 1 hr and 24 hr after the administration. The highest radioactivity of K_1 is found in the liver 1 hr after administration.

Fig. 1. Whole-body Autoradiogram of Vitamin K_1 -(2-methyl- ^{14}C) 1 hr (upper two) and 24 hr (lower two) after Intravenous Administration

Adrenal gland, lungs, bone marrow, kidney, and lymph node subsequently show rather high radioactivity. Spleen also shows the radioactivity. After 24 hr, the radioactivity tends to spread over the whole body. While the radioactivity in blood and liver decreases, it is recognized that the radioactivity in adrenal gland, spleen, gastrointestinal mucosa and pancreas is higher at 24 hr after the administration than at 1 hr.

On the other hand, the 1 hr autoradiogram of K_2 given in Fig. 2 shows the highest radioactivity in intestinal content. Liver also shows as higher radioactivity as in the case of K_1

Fig. 2. Whole-body Autoradiogram of Vitamin $K_{2(20)}$ -(2-methyl- ^{14}C) 1 hr (upper two) and 24 hr (lower two) after Intravenous Administration

at 1 hr. The radioactivity in lungs, spleen, adrenal gland, kidney, and bone marrow is high next to that in liver. Even 1 hr after the administration, a higher K_2 incorporation than K_1 is found in gastrointestinal mucosa and spleen compared with the heart blood of each radiogram as standard. The distribution pattern of K_2 at 24 hr is very similar to that of K_1 . There seems to be no essential difference in the distribution pattern at 24 hr after the administration between K_1 and K_2 . The decreasing rate of K_2 in liver seems to be much faster than that of K_1 but the residual radioactivity in intestinal content after 24 hr is high. These results are consistent with the data in which the turnover rate of K_2 in liver is faster than that of K_1 .⁷⁾

The autoradiogram of K_3 is shown in Fig. 3. Because the urinary excretion of K_3 which is about a half of the administered dose during the first 24 hr, is faster than K_1 and K_2 ,⁷⁾ the autoradiogram at 24 hr could not be obtained under this experimental condition. It appears that the tendency of K_3 to spread over the whole body is faster than the other two homologs, but the total incorporation is not so high. The highest radioactivity of K_3 is found in the

7) T. Konishi and S. Baba, *Chem. Pharm. Bull.* (Tokyo), in press.

Fig. 3. Whole-body Autoradiogram of Vitamin K_3 -(2-methyl- ^{14}C) 1 hr after Intravenous Administration

bladder and this result is in good agreement with the fast urinary excretion of this homolog. The very high radioactivity in intestinal content may indicate that K_3 is also excreted in bile. Relatively low incorporation in other tissues is also observed.

The biliary excretion of these vitamins K was also studied, because the autoradiogram of these homologs showed rather high radioactivity in intestinal content. Fig. 4 shows the biliary excretion of vitamins K after intraperitoneal injection. During the first 12 hr, only 8.5% of administered dose was excreted in the case of K_1 , while K_2 and K_3 were more recovered than K_1 , being 74.1% and 36.6% respectively. These results are consistent with those of autoradiogram which showed a rather high radioactivity in intestinal content 1 hr after the administration of K_2 and K_3 , while relatively low radioactivity is found in the case of K_1 . It is interesting that both homologs, K_2 , which differs from K_1 only in the number of double bond in the side chain at 3-position of naphthoquinone ring, and K_3 , which has no side chain, are excreted in bile much more than K_1 .

The present experiments revealed some difference between the behavior of K_1 and that of K_2 in rat as follows: the clearance of K_2 from liver is faster than that of K_1 , radioactivity in intestinal content of K_2 is higher than that of K_1 after 24 hr, the incorporation of K_2 in gastrointestinal mucosa and spleen is higher than that of K_1 , but there seems to be no essential difference in the distribution pattern between K_1 and K_2 24 hr after the administration.

There seems to be a positive relationship between the liver clearance and the biliary excretion rate in K_1 and K_2 , and so it would be interesting to compare the biliary metabolites of K_1 and K_2 . Otherwise, it is also in good agreement with other experimental results^{7,8)}

Fig. 4. Biliary Excretion of Vitamins K after *i.p.* Administration

The results are shown by mean value of three or four experiments and standard deviation.

8) E.A. Doisy, Jr. and J.T. Matschiner, "Fat-Soluble Vitamins," ed. by R.A. Morton, Pergamon Press, 1970, p. 293.

that vitamin K₃ is excreted in urine faster and that the tissue incorporation is low compared with the other two homologs.

It is also interesting that vitamin K is incorporated into the tissues such as spleen, lymph node, and bone marrow which are responsible for lymphatic cell generation, but the relatively high radioactivity found in lymph node 1 hr after the administration may be related to the lymphatic absorption of these vitamins.⁹⁾

The autoradiogram presented a good advantage for finding the radioactivity in intestinal mucosa, lymph node, and brown fat in which determination of radioactivity by combustion method had some technical difficulties.

- 9) R. Blomstrand and L. Forsgren, *Internat. Z. Vit. forschung*, **38** 45 (1968); Y. Aso, K. Mishima, T. Arikawa, and H. Kitagawa, Abstracts of paper, 1st Sym. on Drug Metabolism and Action, November 14 to 15, 1969 in Chiba, Japan.

[Chem. Pharm. Bull.
21(1) 224-227 (1973)]

UDC 547.597'457.1.02.05 : 581.192 : 615.322.011.5

A New Diosgenin Glycoside, Aspidistrin, from *Aspidistra elatior* BLUME

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(Received July 20, 1972)

The air-dried underground parts of *Aspidistra elatior* BLUME (Liliaceae) (Japanese name, haran) have been known in Japan as a folk medicine,²⁾ for instance as expectorant, diuretic and tonic. Concerning their steroidal constituents Takeda and his coworkers reported³⁾ diosgenin, a sapogenin (markogenin -), a phytosterol and an unidentified amorphous saponin in the material collected in February.

This paper describes the isolation of a new diosgenin glycoside named aspidistrin (I) and the characterisation as 3-O-β-D-glucopyranosyl-(1→2)-[β-D-xylopyranosyl-(1→3)]-β-D-glucopyranosyl-(1→4)-β-D-galactopyranoside (3-O-β-lycotetraoside).

An examination of the underground parts collected in April for the steroidal constituents showed the existence of β-sitosterol and stigmasterol in a free state or as esters and of diosgenin along with a trace amount of unknown compound in the acid hydrolysate of the glycoside fraction. Therefore the major glycosidal steroidal compounds in the plants were thought to be the glycosides of diosgenin or the corresponding furostanol derivatives.⁴⁾

Extraction and separation of the glycosides in conventional way as shown in Chart 1 gave a fraction (Fr. 4) which afforded on recrystallization a pure compound (I) as colorless needles, mp 265—267° (decomp.), [α]_D -68°. I was accompanied in the Fraction A by several more polar compounds which were positive to the Ehrlich reagent and presumed to be furostanol bisglycosides.⁴⁾ The Fraction C consisting of the Ehrlich positive compounds was

1) Location: a) Nanakuma, Fukuoka; b) Katakasu, Fukuoka.

2) T. Kariyone and K. Kimura (eds.), "Dictionary of Japanese Medicinal Plants," Hirokawa Publishing Co., Tokyo, 1963, p. 296.

3) K. Takeda, T. Okanishi, and A. Shimaoka, *Yakugaku Zasshi*, **76**, 445 (1956).

4) S. Kiyosawa, M. Hutoh, T. Komori, T. Nohara, I. Hosokawa, and T. Kawasaki, *Chem. Pharm. Bull.* (Tokyo), **16**, 1162 (1968).