

# A dual role of protein kinase C in insulin signal transduction via adenylyl cyclase signaling system in muscle tissues of vertebrates and invertebrates

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## Abstract

Further decoding of a novel adenylyl cyclase signaling mechanism (ACSM) of the action of insulin and related peptides detected earlier (Pertseva *et al.* Comp Biochem Physiol B Biochem Mol Biol 1995;112:689–95 and Pertseva *et al.* Biochem Pharmacol 1996;52:1867–74) was carried out with special attention given to the role of protein kinase C (PKC) in the ACSM. It was shown for the first time that transduction of the insulin signal via the ACSM followed by adenylyl cyclase (AC, EC 4.6.1.1) activation was blocked in the muscle tissues of rat and mollusc *Anodonta cygnea* in the presence of pertussis toxin, inducing the impairment of G<sub>i</sub>-protein function, wortmannin, an inhibitor of phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase (PI3-K), and calphostin C, a blocker of PKC. The cholera toxin treatment of muscle membranes led to an increase in basal AC activity and a decrease in enzyme insulin reactivity. Phorbol ester and diacylglycerol activation of PKC (acute treatment) induced the inhibition of the insulin AC activating effect. This negative influence was also observed in the case of the AC system activated by biogenic amines. It was first concluded that the ACSM of insulin action involves the following signaling chain: receptor tyrosine kinase  $\Rightarrow$  G<sub>i</sub> ( $\beta\gamma$ )  $\Rightarrow$  PI3-K  $\Rightarrow$  PKC $\zeta$  (?)  $\Rightarrow$  G<sub>s</sub>  $\Rightarrow$  AC  $\Rightarrow$  adenosine 3',5'-cyclic monophosphate. It was also concluded that the PKC system has a dual role in the ACSM: (1) a regulatory role (PKC sensitive to phorbol esters) that is manifested as a negative feedback modulation of insulin signal transduction via the ACSM; (2) a transducing role, which consists in direct participation of atypical PKC (PKC $\zeta$ ) in the process of insulin signal transduction via the ACSM. © 2001 Elsevier Science Inc. All rights reserved.

**Keywords:** Adenylyl cyclase; Insulin; Protein kinase C; Rat and mollusc muscles

## 1. Introduction

In the last decade, there has been an accumulation of data showing the existence in the cell of functional cross-talk between the hormone-regulated AC signaling system and PKC, which plays a key role in a number of lipid-dependent path-

ways of hormonal signal transduction. A modulating influence of PKC on the AC system regulated by catecholamines, vasopressin, histamine, and other hormones in different objects and tissues was shown [1–7]. The results of these investigations were very contradictory: in some cases, PKC activation by DAG and PE led to intensification of hormonal action on the AC system, in others to its weakening. Such a picture of cross-talk between the PKC and AC systems was ascribed by the authors to two circumstances: (1) The existence of different patterns of AC and PKC isoforms in various cells and tissues. Many molecular isoforms of PKC (at least 12) [8] and AC (at least 10) [9] possessing different properties have been identified. Specifically, they differ in their ability to interact with each other. The presence of the key enzyme's isoforms in cell is suggested to be of great importance in the signal processing realized in a tissue/cell-specific manner. (2) The existence of several targets for PKC action in the hormone-sensitive AC system at different levels, namely receptor, G-protein, and AC.

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**Abbreviations:** PKC, protein kinase C ( $\alpha$ ,  $\lambda$ ,  $\epsilon$ ,  $\phi$ ,  $\zeta$ , its isoforms); AC, adenylyl cyclase (EC 4.6.1.1); AC I, II, etc. (isoforms of AC); ACSM, adenylyl cyclase signaling mechanism; DAG, diacylglycerol; PE, phorbol esters; PMA, phorbol 12-myristate 13-acetate; PI3-K, phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase; G<sub>s</sub>-protein, stimulatory GTP-binding protein; G<sub>i</sub>-protein, inhibitory GTP-binding protein;  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$ , the subunits of G-proteins; IGF-I, insulin-like growth factor-I; PT, pertussis toxin; ChT, cholera toxin; Gpp[NH]p, 5'-guanylylimidodiphosphate; DTT, dithiothreitol; and cAMP, adenosine 3',5'-cyclic monophosphate.

Hence, the problem of functional cross-talk between these two signaling systems is very complicated. Some aspects of the problem, such as the points of interaction and the mechanisms of its realization, remain unclear. The available data in the literature are concerned with hormones acting via receptors penetrating the membrane seven times (serpentine receptors) and coupled with the AC system [1–7]. It is commonly accepted that the AC system is not involved in the mechanisms of action of hormones possessing receptors with intrinsic tyrosine kinase activity. However, our recent discovery of the participation of the ACSM in the regulatory action of insulin superfamily peptides (insulin, IGF-I, relaxin, and others) via signaling chain: receptor tyrosine kinase  $\Rightarrow$  G<sub>s</sub>-protein  $\Rightarrow$  AC [10–12] has changed the situation.

The present work is devoted to the further deciphering of this ACSM and the role of PKC system in it, in particular. Proceeding from data in the literature demonstrating the activating effect of insulin on PKC [13,14] on the one hand, and the ability of PKC to phosphorylate the main components of the hormone-regulated AC system (receptor, G-protein, AC) [6,15] on the other, an attempt was made to answer the question as to whether PKC is a necessary link in the ACSM or a regulator of the process of insulin signal transduction via the AC system.

First, the role of lipid-activated, serine/threonine-specific PKC in the realization or modulation of the AC-stimulating action of insulin in rat skeletal muscles and in smooth muscles of the freshwater bivalve mollusc *Anodonta cygnea* was studied. In these muscles, the ACSM of insulin action *in vitro* and *in vivo* was revealed for the first time [10–12, 16]. The activation of PKC by insulin is realized, as was established earlier, not along the classic phosphoinositide pathway, but through the hydrolysis of phosphatidylinositol glycans and phosphatidylcholines, leading to the formation of DAG and activation of DAG- and PE-sensitive isoforms of PKC in a number of target tissues [11,13,17,18]. Atypical DAG- and PE-insensitive isoforms of PKC, specifically PKC $\zeta$  regulated by insulin, are activated by lipid products of the PI3-K reaction triggered by this hormone [19–21].

To account for the role of phorbol-sensitive PKCs, the dependence of the AC-stimulating effect of hormone on their activation by DAG and its lipid-soluble analog, PMA (acute treatment imitating the insulin effect), was studied. The targets of PKC action in the insulin-regulated AC system were determined by studying the effect of the activators on different links of this signaling system, at the level of: (1) AC catalytic activity; (2) functional coupling of AC and G<sub>s</sub>-protein as estimated by the stimulating effect on the enzyme of the non-hydrolyzable GTP analog, Gpp[NH]p; and (3) receptor tyrosine kinase and the initial postreceptor links as estimated by the functional state of the insulin-activated AC signaling system as a whole.

To answer the question as to whether the influence of activated PKC on the AC system is hormone- and receptor-specific, the effect of PKC activators on the AC system regulated by biogenic amines (serotonin in the case of mollusc and isoproterenol in the case of rat) via receptor of

the serpentine type was also studied. Besides transduction of the stimulatory hormonal signal, transmission via the ACSM of the inhibitory signal under the condition of PKC activation was investigated.

We next studied the role of atypical molecular isoforms of PKC in the insulin-stimulated AC system using wortmannin, a specific inhibitor of PI3-K. The latter, when stimulated by insulin, generates phosphatidylinositol-3,4,5-triphosphate, which in turn activates PKC $\zeta$ . Thus far, it is not clear whether PKC $\zeta$  participates in the regulation of insulin signaling or if it is directly engaged in one of the insulin-inducible signaling pathways, likely the ACSM.

As is known, PI3-K is activated by  $\beta\gamma$ -subunits of heterotrimeric G-proteins (with G<sub>i</sub> their main donor) [22] that are released as a result of G-protein activation by different hormones [23]. Proceeding from this information, we attempted to show an involvement of G<sub>i</sub>-protein in insulin-stimulated AC signaling using PT (as a tool for G<sub>i</sub>-protein identification), which induces specific ADP-ribosylation of  $\alpha_i$ -subunits resulting in G<sub>i</sub>-protein inactivation [24]. In addition, the influence of ChT treatment on the insulin-stimulated AC system was investigated to reveal the involvement of G<sub>s</sub>-protein in ACSM as suggested by us previously [10,11]. Finally, we studied the effect of calphostin C, a highly selective inhibitor of different isoforms of PKC [25], on transduction of the insulin signal via the ACSM.

Unlike many investigations devoted to this problem, our study was carried out not on whole cells, but on plasma membrane fractions isolated from rat and mollusc tissues. Membrane fraction was chosen due to the following considerations: first, the main components of the hormone-sensitive AC system (receptor, G-proteins, AC) are connected with the plasma membrane; second, according to data in the literature [15,26–29], in membrane fractions of different cells and tissues (including muscles), a number of PKC isoforms sensitive to insulin are present in the basal (non-stimulated) state, specifically PKC  $\alpha$ ,  $\lambda$ ,  $\epsilon$ , and  $\varphi$ , and atypical PKC $\zeta$ . Thus, both partners (AC and PKC isoforms) whose interaction was under study are present in the same cell fraction. Third, the use of membrane fraction as compared to a whole cell has some advantages. It allowed us to study the cross-talk between AC- and PKC-dependent signaling systems at the level of cell membrane, thereby avoiding more complex intracellular processes, specifically PKC translocation. This will render interpretation of the obtained data easier. Such an approach finds confirmation in the studies of some authors [15,27] who detected interaction between AC and PKC systems in the membrane fractions of some tissues and cells.

## 2. Materials and methods

### 2.1. Chemicals and radiochemicals

Creatine phosphate, creatine phosphokinase, GTP, Gpp[NH]p, Tris-HCl, alumina for column chromatography,

ATP, cAMP, NAD, NADP, thymidine, DTT, EDTA, and imidazole were obtained from Sigma Chemical Co. [ $\alpha$ - $^{32}$ P]ATP (4 Ci/mmol) was from Isotope.

## 2.2. Hormones

Mammalian insulin (24 IU) was obtained from Eli Lilly and Co. and human recombinant IGF-I from Amersham. Isoproterenol and serotonin were obtained from Sigma.

## 2.3. Activators and inhibitors

DAG is a natural and PMA (both from Sigma) a synthetic activator of PKC isoforms belonging to the classical PKC and novel PKC, but they have no effect on phorbol-insensitive atypical PKC. The activating effect of DAG and PMA is likely to be realized via a common mechanism responsible for a highly selective increase in PKC affinity to phosphatidylserine-containing membranes [30].

Calphostin C (Sigma) is a perylenequinone isolated from *Cladosporium cladosporioides*. It is a potent selective inhibitor of PKC showing at least 1000-fold greater potency against this enzyme than that obtained against a range of other protein kinases [25]. The mechanism of PKC inhibition by calphostin C is suggested to involve photoactivation of the drug, resulting in the formation of a short-lived species that interacts with the cysteine-rich zinc-finger structure of the PKC regulatory domain. This results in irreversible inactivation of PKC.

Wortmannin (Sigma) isolated from *Penicillium wortmannii* is a fungal metabolite that acts as a potent selective and irreversible inhibitor of PI3-K [31]. The mechanism of its action consists in blocking the activity of PI3-K as a result of direct interaction with its catalytic subunit. Wortmannin also inhibits other kinases, such as myosine light chain kinase and PI4-K, but at a concentration 100-fold higher than that required for inhibition of PI3-K.

The effects of insulin and the activators and blockers mentioned above were studied *in vitro*. The agents were added to the samples for determination of AC activity. Insulin was dissolved in 0.01 N HCl, serotonin and isoproterenol were dissolved in Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), and DAG, PMA, and calphostin C in DMSO. Stock solutions of these agents were diluted with Tris-HCl (pH 7.5) to necessary concentrations immediately before use. The activators and blockers were preincubated with the samples for 10 min (DAG, PMA, calphostin C) and for 5 min (wortmannin) followed by addition of insulin or other hormones (serotonin, isoproterenol) at the concentration giving a maximal AC-stimulating effect [10]. The duration of action of insulin was limited to 2.5 min, a time sufficient for the AC effect to reach its peak [10]. In the case of serotonin or isoproterenol, the duration of action was limited to 10 min. Samples treated in the same manner with the medium used to dissolve the hormones, activators, and blockers served as control.

## 2.4. Bacterial toxins

PT (Sigma), an exotoxin isolated from the culture of *Bordetella pertussis*, has proved to be an invaluable tool in the characterization of  $G_i$ - and  $G_o$ -proteins associated with different signaling systems. The toxin catalyzes the ADP-ribosylation of  $G_{i\alpha}$  (cysteine residue), leading to its inactivation and blockade of hormonal inhibition of AC activity [24,32].

ChT A subunit (Sigma) was isolated from *Vibrio cholerae*. This agent induces the ADP-ribosylation of arginine residue in  $G_{s\alpha}$ . Such modification inactivates the GTPase and maintains  $G_{s\alpha}$  in a permanently active state. As a result, cholera toxin treatment enhances the catalytic activity of AC and decreases its response to the regulatory effects of hormones acting via  $G_s$  [24,32].

## 2.5. Membrane preparation

Sarcolemma membrane fractions were isolated from the foot (smooth) muscle of the freshwater bivalve mollusc *Anodonta cygnea* and the leg skeletal muscle of the rat *Rattus norvegicus* (for each fraction 25–30 molluscs and 4–6 rats were used) according to the method of Kidwai *et al.* [33], with our modifications. Pieces of muscle tissue were homogenized in 0.25 M sucrose/40 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5) buffer (buffer A). Homogenate was centrifuged at  $1000 \times g$  for 10 min. Supernatant was centrifuged at  $100,000 \times g$  for 1 hr. The supernatant was then removed and the pellet resuspended in buffer A and centrifuged in sucrose density gradient (0.25 M : 0.8 M) at  $100,000 \times g$  for 1.5 hr. Vesicles located between 0.25 and 0.8 M sucrose were collected and washed with 40 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5) buffer using centrifugation at  $100,000 \times g$  for 1 hr. Pellet was resuspended in 50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5) buffer and used for AC activity assay.

The membrane fractions were characterized by the activity of marker enzymes such as 5'-nucleotidase (EC 3.1.3.5) and Na,K-ATPase (EC 3.6.1.3) and by electron microscopy (data are not shown). According to these criteria, the obtained preparations are fractions enriched in external membranes of the muscle cell. As a result, 12- to 15-fold purification of AC was achieved. These data are consistent with our data described earlier [34]. The membrane preparations were very similar in terms of protein concentration (nearly 3 mg/mL) and enrichment with marker enzymes.

## 2.6. Adenylyl cyclase assay

AC (EC 4.6.1.1) activity was measured using the method of Salomon *et al.* [35], with some modifications. The reaction mixture (final volume 50  $\mu$ L) contained 50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), 5 mM  $MgCl_2$ , 0.1 mM ATP, 1  $\mu$ Ci [ $\alpha$ - $^{32}$ P]ATP, 1 mM cAMP, 20 mM creatine phosphate, 0.2 mg/mL of creatine phosphokinase, and 15–20  $\mu$ g of the

membrane protein. Incubation was carried out at 37° (rat) and 30° (mollusc) for 2.5 min (insulin) and 10 min (serotonin and isoproterenol). The reaction was initiated by addition of the membrane protein and terminated by adding 100  $\mu$ L of 0.5 N HCl and immersing the tubes in a boiling water bath for 7 min. One hundred microliters of 1.5 M imidazole was added to each tube. Under the assay condition, the AC activity was linear. cAMP formed as a result of the enzyme reaction was separated according to White's method [36], using alumina for column chromatography. The samples were placed on neutral alumina columns and cAMP was eluted by 8 mL of 10 mM imidazole–HCl buffer (pH 7.4). The eluates were collected in scintillation vials and counted using an LKB 1209/1215 RackBeta scintillation counter. Each assay was carried out in triplicate at least three times, and the results were expressed as pmol cAMP/min per mg of membrane protein.

### 2.7. ADP-ribosylation procedure

The samples of membrane fraction (concentration of the membrane protein was 0.95–1.0 mg/mL) were incubated at 30° (for mollusc) or 37° (for rat) for 45 min with or without 10  $\mu$ g/mL of PT or 100  $\mu$ g/mL of ChT in 400  $\mu$ L of 50 mM Tris–HCl (pH 7.8), 2 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 1 mM EDTA, 10 mM DTT, 0.1 mM NAD, 1 mM NADP, 0.1 mM GTP (for PT) or Gpp[NH]p (for ChT), 1 mM ATP, and 10 mM thymidine. The toxins were previously activated in the presence of DTT and ATP for 15 min at 37°. After ADP-ribosylation, the suspension was diluted to a final volume of 5 mL with an ice-cold 50 mM Tris–HCl (pH 7.5) buffer and centrifuged at 100,000  $\times$  g for 30 min. Pellets were resuspended in 50 mM Tris–HCl (pH 7.5) buffer and immediately used for determination of AC activity.

### 2.8. Protein assay

The protein content was determined according to the method of Lowry *et al.* [37] using BSA as a standard.

### 2.9. Statistical analysis

All data are presented as the means  $\pm$  SEM. Differences between control and the hormone-, activator-, and blocker-treated groups were statistically assessed using one-way ANOVA and considered significant at  $P < 0.05$ .

## 3. Results

### 3.1. The effect of DAG and PMA on basal, Gpp[NH]p-, and hormone-regulated AC activity

At the concentrations of  $10^{-10}$ – $10^{-7}$  M, both agents (DAG and PMA) *in vitro* stimulated the catalytic activity of AC in rat muscle membranes by 34–140% over the control

and in mollusc membranes by 39–140% (Fig. 1). The effect was most pronounced in the concentration range of  $10^{-9}$ – $10^{-8}$  M and diminished at a larger dose ( $10^{-7}$  M). PMA stimulation of AC basal activity in rat skeletal muscle was also observed by other investigators [38]. However, activation of PKC by DAG (Fig. 2) and PMA (data not shown) in rat and mollusc muscle membranes led to complete inhibition of Gpp[NH]p-stimulated AC activity. This provides evidence for the impairment of functional interaction between G<sub>s</sub>-protein and AC.

In the case of PMA addition ( $10^{-10}$ – $10^{-7}$  M), the AC-stimulating effect of insulin (*in vitro*,  $10^{-8}$  M, 2.5 min) signal transduction via the AC system is decreased in rat (Fig. 3) (from 100% to 46–54%) and in mollusc (Fig. 3) (from 100% to 38–19%) muscles. An analogous phenomenon was observed in the mollusc and rat muscles in the presence of DAG (data not given).

To establish the specificity of the effect of PKC activation induced by PMA and DAG on insulin signal transduction, the AC-stimulating effect of the other hormones mediated via serpentine receptors (serotonin for mollusc, isoproterenol for rat) was studied under the same conditions. As is shown in Fig. 4, in the presence of DAG and PMA the effect of biogenic amines vanished in mollusc and rat. Consequently, PKC inhibition of stimulatory signal transduction via the AC system is not hormone- or receptor-specific.

In the following series of experiments, the influence of PKC activators on inhibitory signal transmission was investigated. The AC inhibitory effect of isoproterenol in the muscle tissue of the mollusc *Anodonta cygnea* was taken as a model. There, we found that unlike the vertebrate tissues,  $\beta$ -adrenergic agonist (isoproterenol) induces inhibition of AC activity through the  $\beta_2$ -adrenergic receptor and G<sub>i</sub>-protein (G<sub>i2</sub>) [39]. As is shown in Fig. 5, the AC inhibitory effect of isoproterenol in the mollusc muscle membranes (white bars without and with isoproterenol) is virtually the same in the case of DAG and PMA activation of PKC. This result is in good agreement with the data of Morimoto and Koshland [3], which suggests that the interaction between the PKC- and AC-dependent signaling systems takes place only in the case of transduction of a stimulatory signal via G<sub>s</sub>-AC. It was concluded that the cross-talk between these signaling systems occurs only when they both are in the activated state.

### 3.2. The effect of wortmannin, bacterial toxins, and calphostin C on insulin-signal transduction via the AC system

Wortmannin *in vitro* ( $10^{-8}$  M) slightly reduced basal AC activity in mollusc muscle membranes (Fig. 6). In the presence of wortmannin, the AC-stimulating effect of insulin was not found. A similar picture was observed in rat muscles (data not shown).

PT treatment of the muscle membranes of mollusc and



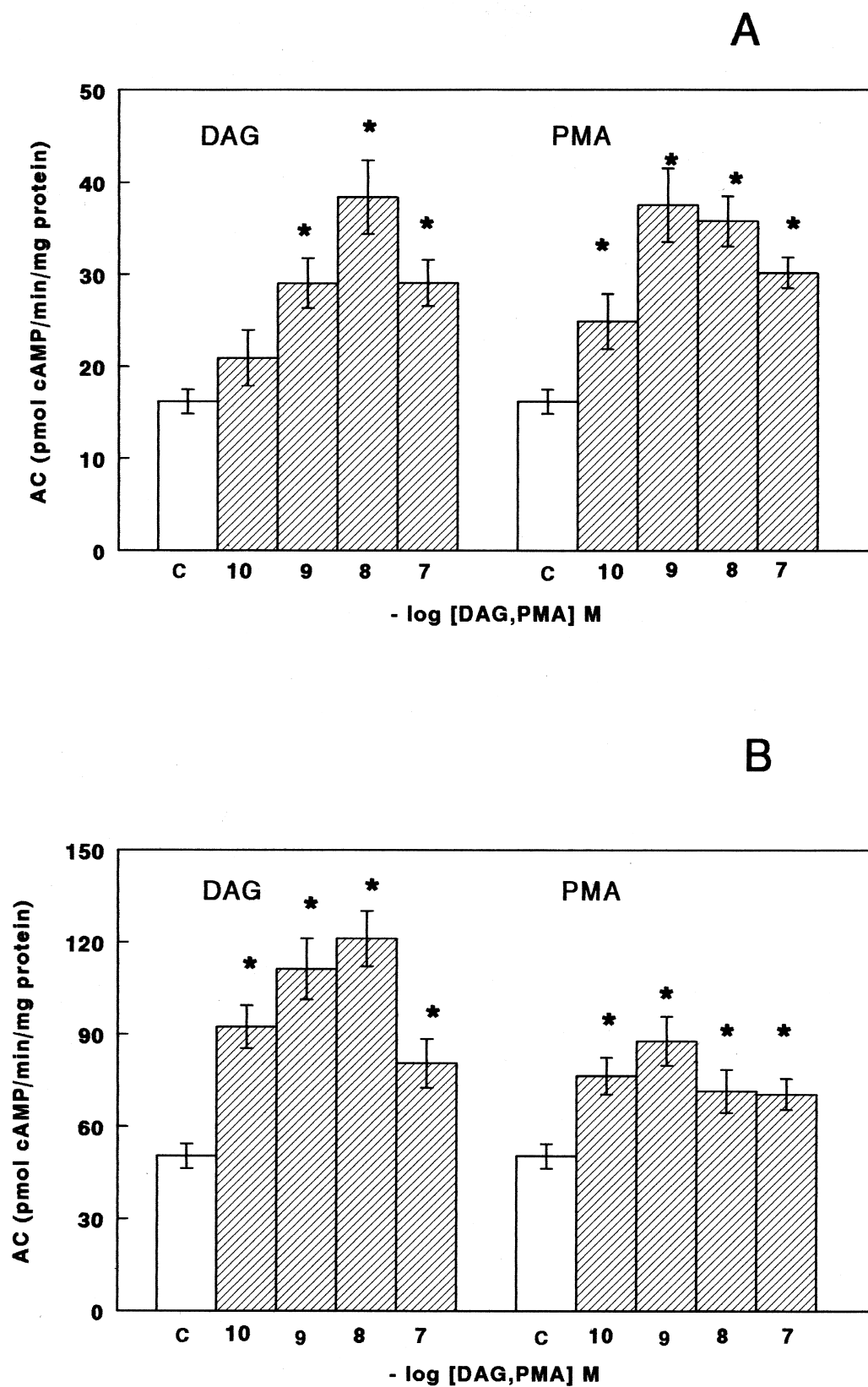
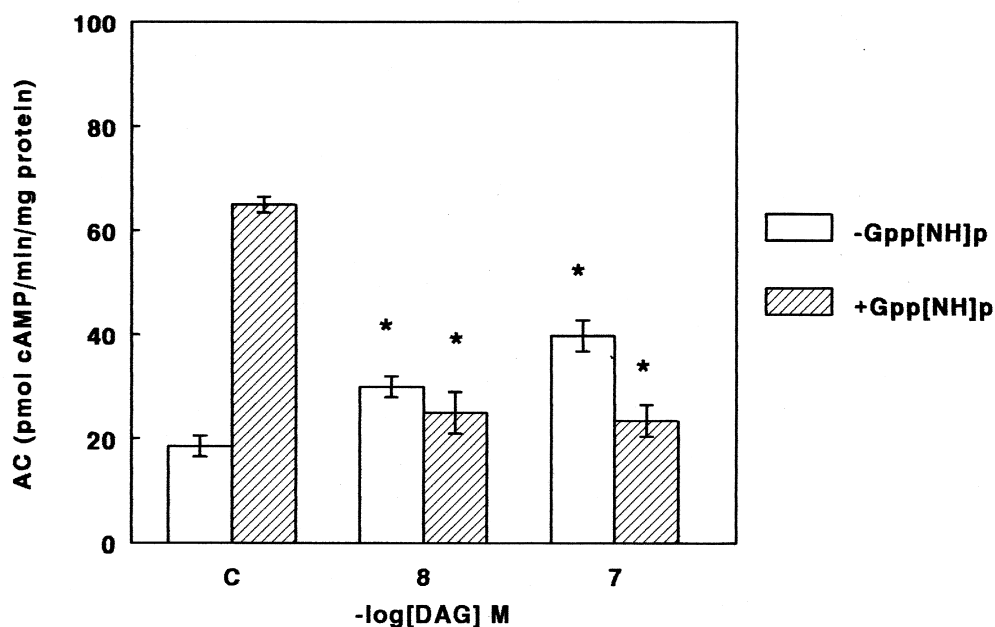


Fig. 1. Influence of DAG ( $10^{-10}$ – $10^{-7}$  M) and PMA ( $10^{-10}$ – $10^{-7}$  M) on basal AC activity in muscle membranes of (A) rat and (B) mollusc. Vertical axis (here and in the other figures): AC activity in pmol cAMP/min/mg of protein; Horizontal axis: (–) log of DAG or PMA concentration (M). C: control (white bars) without DAG and PMA. Statistical significance of differences from the controls is indicated by  $*P < 0.05$ . Here and in the other figures, each point represents the mean  $\pm$  SEM for 4 values. The plotted data are from a typical experiment. N = 3–4.

A



B

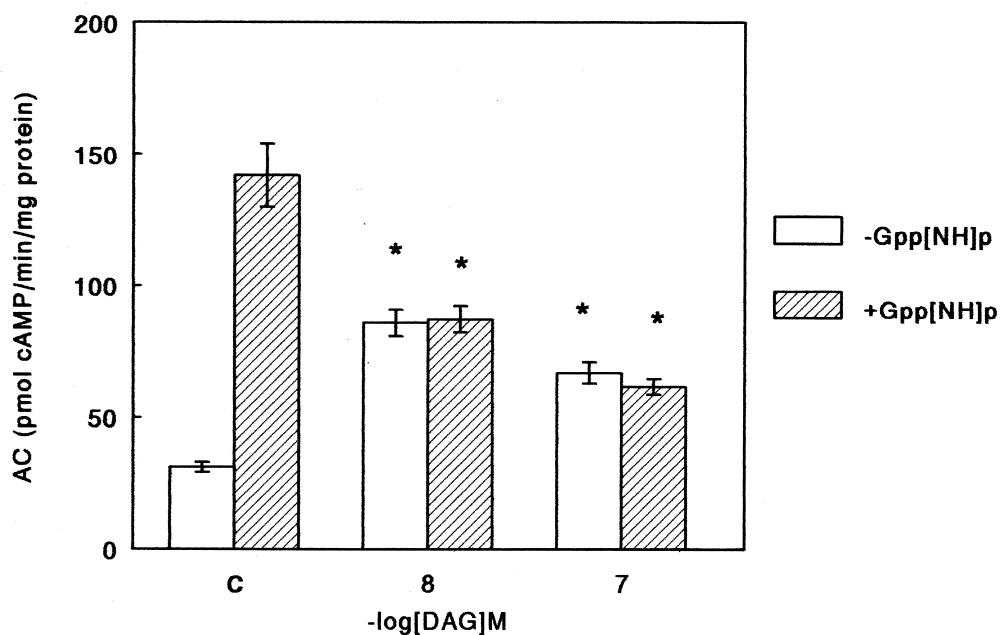


Fig. 2. Influence of DAG ( $10^{-8}$ – $10^{-7}$  M) on Gpp[NH]p-stimulated AC activity in the muscle membranes of (A) rat and (B) mollusc. Vertical axis as in Fig. 1. Horizontal axis: (–) log of DAG concentration (M). C: control group without DAG. Concentration of Gpp[NH]p used was  $10^{-6}$  M. Statistical significance of differences between white and hatched bars in the control and DAG treatment groups is indicated by \* $P < 0.05$ .

rat (Table 1) led to a slight increase in AC basal activity (+9–22%) and to a significant decrease in the AC-stimulating effect of insulin ( $10^{-9}$  M) (from 282% to 8% in mollusc and 71% to 2% in rat) in the absence and presence

of PT, respectively. Analogous data were obtained in the case of the AC-stimulating effect of IGF-I (Table 1). According to the mechanism of PT action [24,32], its effect is induced via ADP-ribosylation of  $G_i$ -protein and is followed

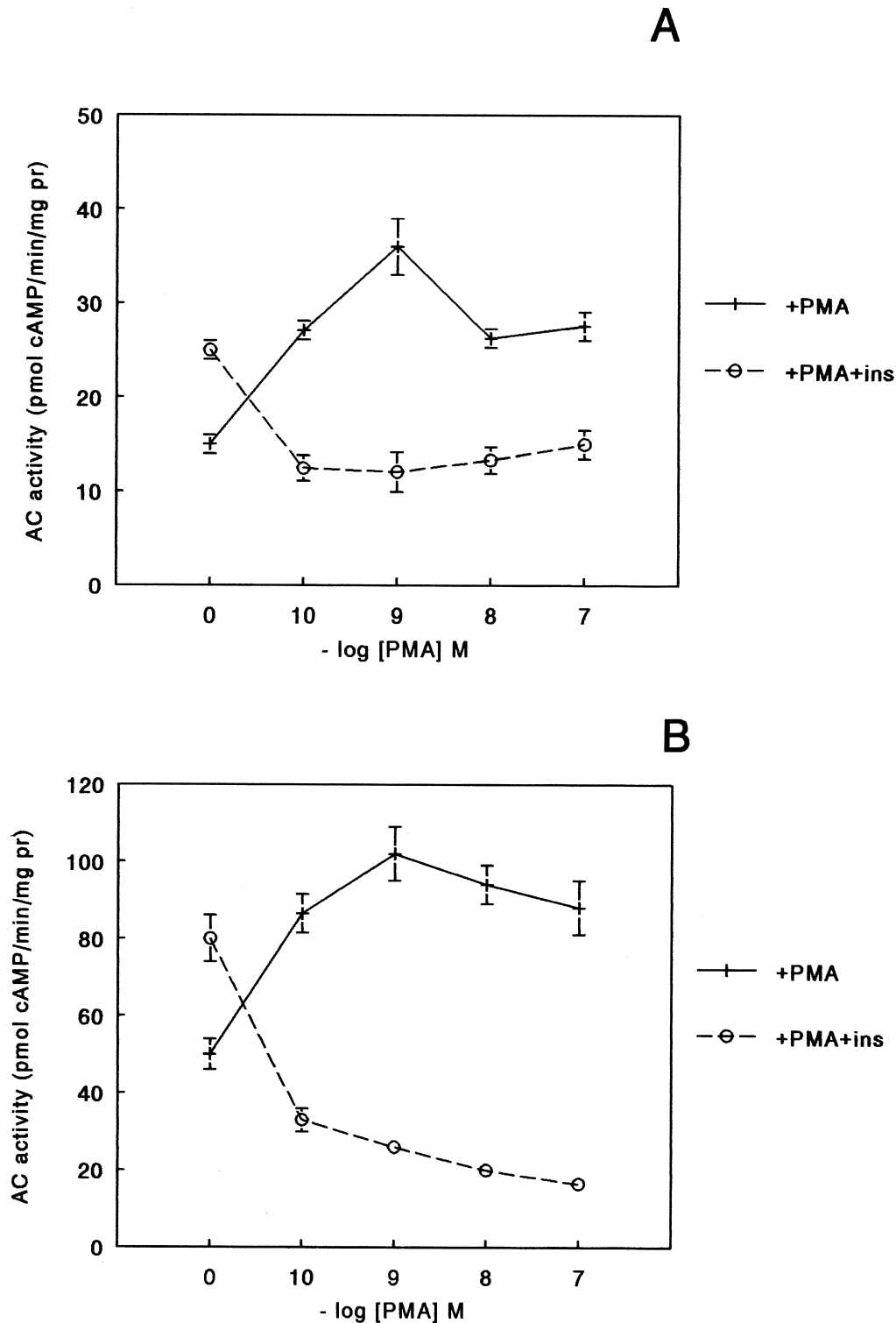


Fig. 3. Effect of PMA ( $10^{-10}$ – $10^{-7}$  M) on insulin-stimulated AC activity in the muscle membranes of (A) rat and (B) mollusc. Vertical axis as in Fig 1. Horizontal axis: (–) log of PMA concentration (M). Concentration of insulin used was  $10^{-8}$  M. A statistical significance of differences for each curve from the control was found ( $P < 0.05$ ).

by loss of its functional activity. As a result, the  $G_i$ -protein inhibitory influence on basal AC activity is abolished, and its function in hormone signal transduction is impaired. However, the latter effect of PT is usually associated with

transduction of inhibitory signals. In our case, PT treatment led quite unexpectedly to the blockade of stimulatory signal transmission, likely connected with the loss of ability of  $G_i$ -protein subunits to dissociation and release of  $\beta\gamma$ -dimer.

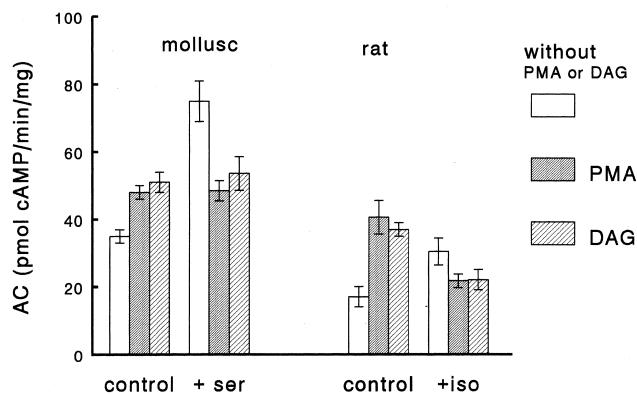


Fig. 4. Effect of PMA ( $10^{-8}$  M) and DAG ( $10^{-8}$  M) on serotonin and isoproterenol AC-stimulated activity in the muscle membranes of mollusc and rat. Vertical axis as in Fig 1. Horizontal axis: effect of PMA and DAG in the absence (control) and presence of serotonin ( $10^{-5}$  M) (for mollusc) or isoproterenol ( $10^{-5}$  M) (for rat).

As is known,  $\beta\gamma$ -dimer mediates a number of stimulatory signals, e.g. the activating effect on PI3-K [9,21].

ChT treatment of mollusc and rat muscle membranes led to an increase in AC basal activity (+99% and +101%, respectively; Table 1), which is ascribed [24,32] to stabilization of the GTP-binding form of  $G_{s\alpha}$  subunit and to inhibition of its GTPase activity, both leading to the permanently activated state of  $G_s$ -protein. Being highly activated, AC then loses reactivity to the hormone. Indeed, in our experiments with ChT (Table 1), the insulin- and IGF-I-AC-stimulating effect was weaker compared to the control (without toxin). It should be pointed out that the combined effect of ChT and insulin on AC was less than additive (Table 1). This implies that the target for ChT and insulin action was the same G-protein, namely the  $G_s$ -protein, which supports our idea about the involvement of this G-protein in the ACSM of insulin action.

Calphostin C *in vitro* ( $10^{-11}$ – $10^{-7}$  M) (Table 2) increased AC basal activity in the muscle membranes of

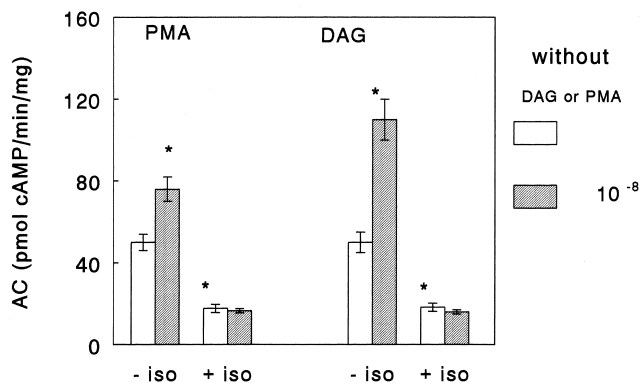


Fig. 5. Effect of PMA and DAG ( $10^{-8}$  M) on isoproterenol-inhibited AC activity in mollusc muscle membranes. Vertical axis as in Fig 1. Horizontal axis: effect of PMA and DAG in the absence (control) and presence of isoproterenol ( $10^{-5}$  M). \* $P < 0.05$ .

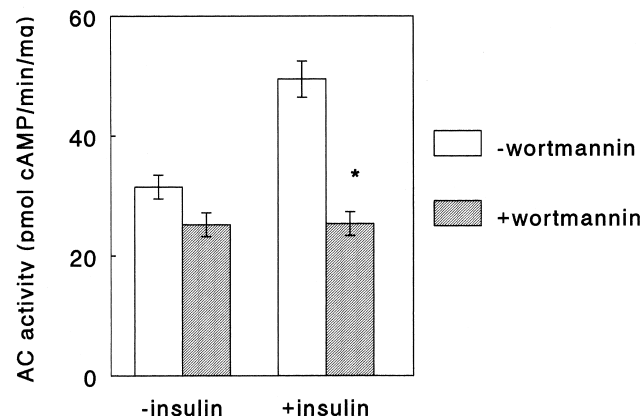


Fig. 6. Effect of wortmannin ( $10^{-8}$  M) on insulin-stimulated AC activity in mollusc muscle membranes. Vertical axis as in Fig 1. Horizontal axis: effect of wortmannin in the absence (control) and presence of insulin ( $10^{-5}$  M). Statistical significance of differences between white and hatched bars in the group with insulin is indicated by \* $P < 0.05$ .

mollusc and rat, but decreased insulin-stimulated AC activity in a dose-dependent manner. The most pronounced effect was observed at the concentration of  $10^{-8}$  M. That calphostin C indeed inhibits the insulin AC effect is confirmed by the negative values of the calphostin C effect (Table 2) in a number of experiments (six out of ten). If calphostin as an inhibitor did not block the insulin AC effect, then the stimulating effect of this agent and insulin must be additive, i.e. the total effect will be positive. Calphostin C also had an inhibitory action on Gpp[NH]p- and insulin+Gpp[NH]p-stimulated AC activity (data not shown). Thus, the blockers of PI3-K,  $G_i$ -protein, and PKC used in our study exercised an inhibitory influence on insulin signal transduction via the ACSM.

#### 4. Discussion

To begin with, there is a great similarity in the data obtained in all experiments on the muscle tissues of the representatives of mammals (rat) and molluscs (*Anodonta cygnea*), which renders the discussion easier. This is in good agreement with the statement concerning the common principles of the structural-functional organization of AC- and PKC-dependent signaling systems in vertebrates and invertebrates [40,41].

It follows from the facts obtained in this work that the DAG- and PMA-activated PKC system has several targets of action in the insulin-regulated AC system. The first is at the level of AC, whose catalytic activity was appreciably intensified under the condition of PKC activation by DAG and PMA. According to data in the literature, PMA can either increase the catalytic activity of AC or decrease it. The direction of the effect depends on the type of isoforms of PKC and AC in the tissue under study. An increase in the AC catalytic activity (AC isoforms I, II, and III) in response



Table 1

Effect of bacterial toxin treatment of muscle membranes of mollusc and rat on basal, insulin-, and IGF-I stimulated AC activity

	AC activity (pmol cAMP/min/mg of protein)			
	Mollusc		Rat	
	–PT	+PT	–PT	+PT
Basal	63.2 ± 4.1	69.1 ± 9.6 [+ 9%]	Basal	39.7 ± 3.4 48.5 ± 2.0 [+ 22%]
Insulin 10 <sup>–9</sup> M	241.5 ± 18.1 (+ 282%)	74.2 ± 7.6 [+ 8%]	Insulin 10 <sup>–9</sup> M	67.9 ± 3.6 48.2 ± 2.7 [+ 2%]
IGF1 10 <sup>–9</sup> M	139.2 ± 12.4 (+ 120%) –ChT	76.8 ± 7.3 [+ 11%] +ChT	IGF1 10 <sup>–9</sup> M	57.4 ± 2.1 43.1 ± 1.6 [– 11%] +ChT
Basal	17.4 ± 1.0	34.6 ± 3.6 [+ 99%]	Basal	39.6 ± 2.6 79.7 ± 2.7 [+ 101%]
Insulin 10 <sup>–9</sup> M	65.6 ± 4.8 (+ 276%)	48.9 ± 2.5 [+ 42%]	Insulin 10 <sup>–9</sup> M	69.3 ± 2.8 105.8 ± 7.4 [+ 33%]
IGF1 10 <sup>–9</sup> M	36.7 ± 2.4 (+ 111%)	45.0 ± 1.6 [+ 30%]	IGF1 10 <sup>–9</sup> M	56.7 ± 4.2 106.2 ± 6.5 [+ 33%]

Values are expressed as means ± SEM for six experiments. Figures in round brackets represent the stimulating effect of peptides in %, those in square brackets the effect of insulin and IGF-I in % in the presence of the toxins.

to the action (10 min) of PMA was observed in different cells, while AC isoforms IV, V, and VI showed weak or no response [9,42,43]. PKC $\alpha$  was found to be capable of increasing the catalytic function of AC isoform II [44]. There is a tendency to consider an increase in the catalytic activity of some AC isoforms as the result of elimination of the G<sub>i</sub>-protein inhibitory effect on AC caused by the loss of  $\alpha_i$ -subunit function due to PKC phosphorylation [9]. It has been reported that  $\alpha$ -subunits of two G-proteins, G<sub>i</sub> and transducin, as well as the  $\beta$ -subunit of the latter are all substrates of the phosphorylation of Ca<sup>2+</sup>-phospholipid-dependent PKC [45].

The second target is at the level of G<sub>s</sub>-protein and its interaction with AC as estimated by the stimulatory Gpp[NH]p effect on the enzyme. This effect was weaker after DAG and

PMA treatment of the muscle membranes. The available data shows that PKC $\alpha$ , whose effect in cell is dependent on the type of AC isoforms, regulates their reactivity to G-proteins in different ways [44]. Interaction between PKC $\alpha$  and AC isoform II leads to an increase in G-protein  $\beta\gamma$ - and  $\alpha$ -subunit AC-regulated activity. On the contrary, PKC $\alpha$  has a weak influence on the G-protein  $\beta\gamma$ -stimulated activity of AC isoform IV, but markedly decreases the G-protein  $\alpha$ -subunit-stimulatory effect on the enzyme. It is via these AC isoforms that the integration of hormonal signals generated by receptors coupled with G<sub>s</sub>-, G<sub>i</sub>-, and G<sub>q</sub>-proteins and mediated through their  $\alpha$ - and/or  $\beta\gamma$ -subunits and PKC occurs.  $\alpha$ -Subunits of some G-proteins (G <sub>$\alpha$ 15</sub> and G <sub>$\alpha$ 16</sub>) belonging to the G<sub>q</sub>-protein family were shown to be targets for the modifying action of PKC, which leads to their

Table 2

The AC-stimulating effect of insulin (10<sup>–8</sup> M) in the presence of different concentrations (10<sup>–11</sup>–10<sup>–7</sup> M) of calphostin C

Calphostin concentration (M)	AC activity (pmol cAMP/min/mg of protein)			
	Mollusc		Rat	
	–insulin	+insulin	–insulin	+insulin
0	11.8 ± 1.1	41.3 ± 2.1 [+ 250%]	11.1 ± 1.3	17.8 ± 1.1 [+ 60%]
10 <sup>–11</sup> M	23.9 ± 1.8 (+ 102%)	37.6 ± 2.7 [+ 57%]	23.4 ± 1.1 (+ 111%)	15.7 ± 1.4 [– 33%]
10 <sup>–10</sup> M	25.3 ± 2.2 (+ 114%)	34.3 ± 2.6 [+ 36%]	25.7 ± 1.2 (+ 132%)	16.6 ± 1.4 [– 35%]
10 <sup>–9</sup> M	29.6 ± 1.7 (+ 151%)	37.5 ± 1.6 [+ 27%]	24.3 ± 2.4 (+ 119%)	14.6 ± 1.0 [– 40%]
10 <sup>–8</sup> M	37.7 ± 1.3 (+ 220%)	33.4 ± 1.7 [– 11%]	31.1 ± 2.4 (+ 180%)	17.5 ± 1.7 [– 44%]
10 <sup>–7</sup> M	28.9 ± 2.5 (+ 145%)	29.3 ± 1.5 [+ 2%]	22.1 ± 2.0 (+ 99%)	14.8 ± 1.0 [– 33%]

Values are expressed as means ± SEM for four experiments. Figures in round brackets represent the stimulating effect of calphostin C in %, those in square brackets the effect of insulin in the presence and absence of calphostin C.

phosphorylation [46]. PKC serine/threonine phosphorylation of G-proteins occurs in the  $\beta\gamma$ -binding region of its  $\alpha$ -subunit. This process results in inhibition of hormone-induced signaling by the prevention of G-protein trimer association.

The third target of activated PKC such as insulin receptor tyrosine kinase could not be excluded either. PMA-activated PKC induces a reduction in the tyrosine kinase activity of insulin receptor that weakens the tyrosine phosphorylation of the receptor protein and its substrates [47,48]. In a study carried out on the culture of CHO (Chinese hamster ovary) cells with over-expressed PKC $\alpha$  [48], activation of the latter led to the inhibition of signal transduction induced by insulin and other insulin superfamily peptides (e.g. IGF-I). This antagonism manifests itself on the stage of ligand-stimulated tyrosine phosphorylation of several endogenic substrates of insulin receptor such as IRS 1–4 (insulin receptor substrate), PI3-K, GAP (GTPase-activating protein), and Shc (protein related to endogenic substrate for insulin receptor). It follows that in our study the blockade of insulin signal transduction via the AC system in the case of PKC activation most likely occurs at the level of  $G_s$ -protein and hormonal receptor. The functions of these signaling molecules are suggested to be impaired due to their serine/threonine phosphorylation [45–47].

According to the data presented here and the results obtained by other authors [4,27,49], inhibition of stimulatory signal transmission also takes place in the AC system regulated by hormones acting via serpentine receptors. It was suggested that in these signaling systems there are several points of PKC negative influence such as receptor,  $G_s$ -protein, AC, and the interaction between them. The negative effect is likely to involve  $G_i$ -protein, since it is eliminated as a result of PT treatment of the cells. Thus, insulin and other hormones activating PMA-sensitive isoforms of PKC induce (according to the principle of feedback regulation) the process of phosphorylation of the molecular components of the hormone-sensitive AC system, which results in a blockade of stimulatory signal transduction. The cross-talk for both partners, PKC and AC, is isoenzyme-specific [9]. Below, isoenzyme specificity will be discussed from the point of view of investigations on mammalian skeletal muscles, because there are few data on PKC and AC isoenzyme spectra in mollusc tissues.

In rat skeletal muscles, four isoforms of PE-sensitive PKC have been identified, i.e. PKC $\alpha$ , PKC $\beta$ , PKC $\epsilon$ , and PKC $\phi$ ; these are present both in the basal and hormone-stimulated state in membrane and cytosolic fractions [28]. The insulin-induced formation of DAG and the activation of these PKC isoforms were shown in rat skeletal muscles [28,50]. The fact that the insulin effect on PKC took a short time (1–5 min) to be felt *in vitro* is probably due to the direct interaction of PKC with insulin receptor and the tyrosine phosphorylation of the enzyme [28,29,38,51,52]. In the nervous tissue of marine mollusc *Aplysia californica*, two insulin-activated forms of PKC have been identified:

Ca<sup>2+</sup>-activated PKC (Apl I), an analog of conventional PKC isoforms ( $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\gamma$ ); and Ca<sup>2+</sup>-independent PKC (Apl II), similar to the novel PKC ( $\delta$ ,  $\epsilon$ ,  $\eta$ , and  $\phi$  isoforms) of vertebrates [41,53].

As far as the isoenzyme spectrum of AC in the skeletal muscles of rodents (mouse) is concerned, the predominant AC isoforms are II (53%) and VI (16%), whereas AC isoform V is present only in low quantity [54]. In the peripheral tissues, AC isoforms II and V are regulated by PMA-sensitive PKC (specifically PKC $\alpha$ ) [55]. Here, our attention was focused on the insulin-regulated AC isoforms. After our discovery of the novel ACSM of insulin action, other authors showed that the target of the stimulating effect of this hormone is AC isoform V, which can be phosphorylated with PE-sensitive PKC $\alpha$  and PE-insensitive PKC $\zeta$  [6,55,56]. In addition, AC isoform II, which serves as integrator of different hormonal and growth factor signals passing through the heterotrimeric G-proteins and PKC system, cannot be excluded either [57]. It follows that cross-talk between the insulin-regulated PKC and AC systems the muscle tissues may involve (on the PKC side) PE-sensitive PKC $\alpha$ , PKC $\beta$ , and PKC $\phi$  isoforms, and (on the AC side) AC isoform V and possibly AC isoform II. Taking into account the well-known facts concerning the ability of all AC isoforms to be activated with  $G_s$ -protein [9], it is possible that some other molecular variants of the enzyme are also targets for the insulin-stimulating effect, mediated, as we suggest, via  $G_s$ -protein.

Some results of our study of wortmannin and bacterial toxin effects on the insulin-stimulated AC system are worthy of discussion. Wortmannin, being a selective inhibitor of PI3-K, blocks transduction of the insulin signal via the AC system in rat and mollusc muscle tissues. At the same time as slightly inhibiting AC basal activity, this agent distinctly suppresses insulin-stimulated AC activity. According to data in the literature [31,58], wortmannin directly interacts with the 110-kDa catalytic subunit of PI3-K, thereby preventing production of lipid-signaling molecules and thereby weakening the insulin activation of atypical PKC $\zeta$ . It was shown that other insulin-signaling pathways leading to the metabolic (glucose transport) and mitogenic effects of the hormone are also blocked [14,59]. Weakening of insulin activation of Ca<sup>2+</sup>-independent PKC (isoform Apl II) by wortmannin was observed in the nervous tissue of the mollusc *Aplysia californica* [53].

In discussing our data on wortmannin inhibition of the AC insulin effect in muscle membrane fraction, it should be taken into account, that PI3-K, in the non-stimulated state, is localized for the most part within the cell [19,20]. However, data in the literature suggest the existence of PI3-K isoforms that are initially connected with the structural elements of plasma membrane, in particular with cytoskeleton underlying the membrane and therefore co-purifying with it [60]. In our experiments, the inhibitory effect of wortmannin detected in the membrane fractions confirms such a suggestion. This is in good agreement with observa-

tions showing a close functional connection of PI3-K and its products with plasma membrane [60].

The inhibition of insulin signal transduction via the AC system as a result of PT treatment of muscle membranes found in the present study implies the involvement of  $G_i$ -protein in this process. Published data show that receptors coupled with  $G_i$ -protein can exercise a stimulating action on effector proteins due to liberation of  $G_i$ -protein  $\beta\gamma$ -subunits [9,61]. This pathway was shown for PI3-K and other downstream stages of mitogenic signaling. Moreover, activation of the receptor/ $G_i$ -protein system ( $\alpha_2$ -adrenoreceptor) was shown to lead to potentiation of  $G_s$ -stimulated AC activity, specifically AC isoform II [62]. These data support our suggestion concerning the participation of  $G_s$ -protein in the AC signaling mechanism of action of insulin and other peptides of the insulin superfamily [10–12]. The classic effect of ChT on the  $G_s$ -AC system, which we observed in our experiments (Table 1), speaks in favor of such suggestion. The surprising discovery of inhibition by PT of the insulin stimulatory effect on AC observed in the present study and our interpretation of this fact find confirmation in the work of Marjamaki *et al.* [63]. Investigating the integration of different signals directed to AC (AC II, IV, and other enzyme isoforms) revealed that ligand activation of  $\alpha_2$ -adrenoreceptor induces both positive ( $G_{\beta\gamma}$ ) and negative ( $G_{i\alpha}$ ) signals that act on  $G_{s\alpha}$ -stimulated AC and that both signals are blocked by PT.

The facts obtained in the present work suggest the involvement of the following additional components in the ACSM:  $G_i$ -protein, PI3-K, and PKC $\zeta$ . This finds support in studies showing that among PKC isoforms insensitive to PE, the target for the activating action of insulin and other growth factors is PKC $\zeta$ , whose activation occurs via the PI3-K-signaling pathway [14,17,56]. It deserves mention at this point that in the case of combined expression in the cell of PKC $\zeta$  and AC isoform V, the stimulating effect of insulin on the process of cAMP formation is potentiated [6].

The results of experiments with calphostin C also support this view. Calphostin C is likely to be an inhibitor of all groups of PKC known so far (both PE-sensitive and atypical isoforms) [25]. Indeed, it has been shown that in human dermal fibroblasts PKC $\zeta$  is sensitive to the blocking action of calphostin C [64]. In our experiments, calphostin C interrupted insulin signal transduction through the AC system (Table 2). Since this agent increased the basal AC activity, the target of its inhibitory influence, i.e. PKC, must be located upstream in the insulin-regulated AC signaling system.

As for PKC isoforms that can be directly involved in AC-mediated insulin signaling, the group of PE-sensitive PKC is to be excluded. We have shown in the present study a negative influence of PE and DAG activation of these PKC isoforms on the insulin-stimulated AC system. If the calphostin C inhibitory effect were directed only to PE-sensitive PKC isoforms that exercise a negative influence on the AC system, then the AC-stimulating action of insulin

would remain unchanged. Consequently, the inhibitory action of calphostin C may also be extended to PE-insensitive isoforms of PKC. Among them, the first candidate that may be involved in the insulin ACSM is PKC $\zeta$ , which is activated by the products of the PI3-K reaction triggered by insulin [58] and is present in almost all tissues [18]. Reinforcing our argument are our data on wortmannin inhibition of insulin signal transduction via the AC system (Table 2). Taking into account the ability of PKC, PKC $\zeta$ , in particular, to phosphorylate both  $G_s$ -protein and AC [55,56], PKC $\zeta$  should be located upstream of  $G_s$ -protein in the AC-signaling cascade. The supposition that growth factors, including insulin, can regulate AC activity (specifically AC isoform V) through PKC $\zeta$  was also voiced by other authors [56]. Taking into account that our data concerning the involvement of PKC $\zeta$  in the ACSM of insulin action are indirect, we are in the process of planning a study using specific antibodies for PKC $\zeta$  or specific inhibitor of the enzyme, which would allow us to obtain the necessary confirmation.

All the data obtained lead to the following conclusion. The ACSM of insulin action in all probability includes, in addition to previously identified functional blocks such as receptor tyrosine kinase,  $G_s$ -protein, and AC [10,11], other components such as  $G_i$ -protein, PI3-K, and PKC $\zeta$ . On the basis of our data and those in the literature, the following insulin signal transduction cascade via the AC system may be suggested. In the first stage, insulin-induced activation of receptor tyrosine kinase leads to activation of  $G_i$ -protein accompanied by dissociation and liberation of its  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta\gamma$ -subunits. There is theoretical and experimental evidence in favor of a direct interaction of insulin receptor with  $G_{i/o}$ -proteins [65–67] as well as of participation of  $G_i$ -protein in the hormone action [68]. In the second stage,  $\beta\gamma$ -dimer activates PI3-K, which catalyzes phosphoinositide phosphorylation followed by the formation of 3-phosphoinositides [56,69]. In the third stage, the lipid messengers activate atypical PKC isoforms including PKC $\zeta$  [58]. In the final stage, PKC $\zeta$  phosphorylates and, as a result, activates alternatively either  $G_s$ -protein or directly AC (e.g. AC isoform V).

The total result of the above events is stimulation of AC activity and intensification of cAMP formation. Thus, the discovery and deciphering of a novel signaling mechanism of insulin action involving the AC system which had been denied in the literature will add missing knowledge to the current picture of the insulin-signaling network concerning the role of cAMP in the regulatory effects of insulin and related peptides. There are grounds to believe that this ACSM is involved, first, in the action of insulin and other insulin superfamily peptides [10–12] and second, according to our hypothesis [10,11], in the mitogenic rather than metabolic action of these peptides. Data in the literature concerning the key role of PI3-K and PKC $\zeta$  in mitogenic signaling [70,71] serve as additional evidence in favor of our hypothesis.

In conclusion we tried, on the basis of the literature and our

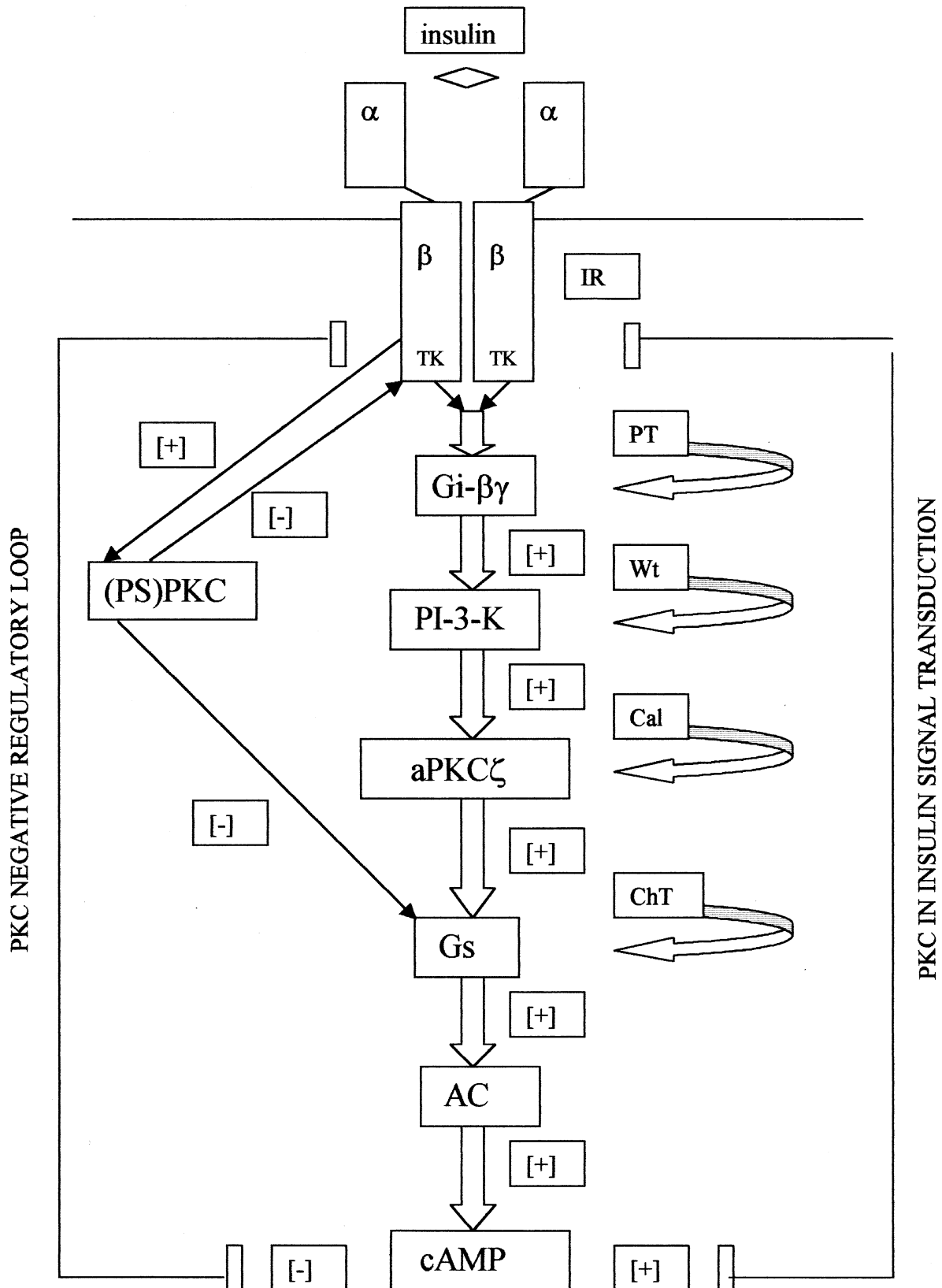


Fig. 7. Hypothetical scheme of the dual role of protein kinase C in transduction of insulin signal via the adenylyl cyclase signaling mechanism. The spatial arrangement of the ACSM is represented as a simplified linear chain of signaling blocks and events. In reality, under the condition of insulin action in a cell, the ACSM components interact with each other in the plasma membrane and/or premembrane regions where they form temporary functional complexes. IR, insulin receptor;  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ , subunits of IR; TK, tyrosine kinase domain of IR; (PS)PKC, phorbol-sensitive PKC; aPKC $\zeta$ , atypical phorbol-insensitive PKC isoform; Wt, wortmannin; Cal, calphostin C; [-], inhibition; [+], activation.



data, to build a hypothetical scheme showing a dual role of the PKC system in insulin signal transduction via the ACSM (Fig. 7). The regulatory role is to secure negative regulation (modulation) of this signaling system via the feedback loop: insulin, through receptor tyrosine kinase phosphorylation, activates conventional PE- and DAG-sensitive PKC isoforms, which in turn phosphorylate the insulin receptor and  $G_s$ -protein at serine/threonine, reducing their signal transduction functions. This regulatory mechanism is neither hormone- nor receptor-specific, since it operates when the AC system is regulated by other hormones (e.g. biogenic amines) via serpentine receptors. It very likely represents the universal mechanism of desensitization of the hormone-regulated AC system that blocks signal transmission [46,72]. In the case of the insulin-reactive AC system, this mechanism may be the cause of cell insulin resistance [26,50,73]. The second role of PKC in the insulin-regulated AC system, which we refer to as transducing, is performed by atypical isoforms of PKC, apparently PKC $\zeta$ . It is a direct participation of PKC in transduction of the insulin signal from the receptor to AC.

A similar idea about the dual isoform-specific role of PKC in insulin signaling was put forward by Formisano *et al.* (1998) [52], who showed its regulatory role on the initial stages of insulin action: insulin-inducible activity of receptor tyrosine kinase, IRS-signaling functions, and intracellular routing of insulin receptor. The transducing role of PKC is manifested in its participation in transmission of the insulin signal to the systems of glucose transport and metabolism.

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