



# PIP<sub>2</sub> hydrolysis is responsible for voltage independent inhibition of Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 channels in sympathetic neurons

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## ABSTRACT

GPCRs regulate Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 channels through both voltage dependent and independent inhibition pathways. The aim of the present work was to assess the phosphatidylinositol-4,5-bisphosphate (PIP<sub>2</sub>) as the molecule underlying the voltage independent inhibition of Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 channels in SCG neurons. We used a double pulse protocol to study the voltage independent inhibition and changed the PIP<sub>2</sub> concentration by means of blocking the enzyme PLC, filling the cell with a PIP<sub>2</sub> analogue and preventing the PIP<sub>2</sub> resynthesis with wortmannin. We found that voltage independent inhibition requires the activation of PLC and can be hampered by internal dialysis of exogenous PIP<sub>2</sub>. In addition, the recovery from voltage independent inhibition is blocked by inhibition of the enzymes involved in the resynthesis of PIP<sub>2</sub>. These results support that the hydrolysis of PIP<sub>2</sub> is responsible for the voltage independent inhibition of Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 channels.

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## 1. Introduction

Modulation exerted by calcium signaling is a major field in neurobiology. Conversely, calcium channel regulation leads to subsequent changes of related cellular responses such as short term plasticity [1–3]. Several neurotransmitters regulate voltage-gated calcium channels by activation of G-protein coupled receptors (GPCRs). Understanding the mechanisms by which calcium channels are regulated by G-proteins remains a major challenge since there are several molecular pathways upon GPCR activation, having pleiotropic effects [4,5]. The better understood pathway of calcium channel regulation, the so called voltage dependent inhibition, is mediated by G<sub>βγ</sub> subunits. It requires G-proteins of the G<sub>α<sub>i/o</sub></sub> family [6,7] and G<sub>βγ</sub> subunits [8,9] which subsequently bind to calcium channels in a membrane delimited mechanism [10]. Regulated calcium current by the voltage dependent pathway has particular features: the activation kinetic is slowed [11] and the voltage dependence of the channel is shifted to more positive values [12]. Also, binding between G<sub>βγ</sub> subunits and calcium channels is sensitive to strong and positive voltage changes [13,14].

In addition to this regulatory pathway, several authors have shown that there is a remaining fraction of inhibition after G<sub>βγ</sub> release, using a protocol in which a strong depolarizing pulse (voltages between +70 and +125 mV) was applied to release

transiently G<sub>βγ</sub> subunits [13,15,16]. This remaining inhibition was named as voltage independent inhibition. Resistance to strong membrane depolarization suggests that this remaining inhibition involve another mechanism to modulate calcium channels different than G<sub>βγ</sub> subunits. Previous research has focused on muscarinic inhibition of calcium channels since muscarinic agonists inhibit calcium channels in a completely different pathway of that mediated by G<sub>βγ</sub> subunits. This regulation is sensitive to calcium chelators such as BAPTA [17], is insensitive to toxins blocking G<sub>α<sub>i/o</sub></sub> proteins such as the toxin from *Bordetella Pertussis* [6,18], is slow and uses a diffusible second messenger [10], in contrast to the membrane delimited mechanism mediated by G<sub>βγ</sub> subunits. This slow and PTX-insensitive pathway induced by muscarinic agonists seems to be similar to that described as voltage independent inhibition [6]. Whether these two pathways correspond to the same molecular cascade, it has not been firmly established.

In addition, muscarinic agonists inhibit both calcium and M current in sympathetic neurons [18,19]. M current inhibition induced by muscarinic agonists, through activation of muscarinic receptor type 1 (M<sub>1</sub>R) [20,21], is also sensitive to calcium chelators [17] and PTX [22], is slow, uses a second messenger and is mediated by G<sub>q/11</sub> family proteins [23,24]. Now, it is well supported that KCNQ 2/3 channels, the molecular determinants for the M current [25], requires the phosphoinositide 4,5-bisphosphate (PIP<sub>2</sub>) to open and that muscarinic inhibition of KCNQ 2/3 channel is mediated by PIP<sub>2</sub> hydrolysis [26–30]. Calcium channels also require PIP<sub>2</sub> [31] and their sensitivity to PIP<sub>2</sub> depends on the specific β subunit

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[32]. Nevertheless, whether PIP<sub>2</sub> is the underlying molecule of voltage independent inhibition of Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 calcium channels, it has not been established yet.

In this study we used a double pulse protocol as an experimental approach to test whether PIP<sub>2</sub> is the signaling molecule underlying the voltage independent inhibition of Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 channel in superior cervical ganglion (SCG) neurons. We manipulated the hydrolysis and resynthesis of PIP<sub>2</sub> and dialyzed diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub> to prevent hydrolysis of endogenous PIP<sub>2</sub> upon PLC activation induced by oxotremorine (oxo-M). In an additional experiment we assessed the effect of exogenous PIP<sub>2</sub> dialysis on muscarinic inhibition of KCNQ 2/3 current to compare it with the effect on calcium channels.

## 2. Materials and methods

### 2.1. Cell culture and plasmids

SCG neurons were isolated from 5-week-old male Wistar rats [18]. Rats were obtained from the animal breeding facility of the School of Medicine at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) and were handled according to the Mexican Official Norm for Use, Care and Reproduction of Laboratory Animals (NOM-062-ZOO-1999). Rats were anaesthetized with CO<sub>2</sub> and decapitated with a guillotine. After dissection, ganglia were de-sheathed and sliced into eight pieces. The tissue was transferred to a tube containing modified Hank's solution supplemented with 20 U/ml papain and after 20 min at 37 °C, it was transferred to a solution containing 1 mg/ml collagenase type I and 10 mg/ml dispase for another 20 min before mechanically disaggregating the tissue. The cell suspension was centrifuged at 180g for 3 min and washed twice in Leibovitz's L-15 medium and once in Dulbecco's modified Eagle's medium (DMEM), both supplemented with 10% (v/v) heat-inactivated fetal bovine serum and 1% penicillin-streptomycin. Cells were then plated on polystyrene culture dishes coated with poly-L-lysine and incubated in a humidified atmosphere of 95% air and 5% CO<sub>2</sub> at 37 °C. Cells were used up to 24 h after plating. Reagents were obtained as follow: L-15 and DMEM (Invitrogen Corp., Carlsbad, CA, USA), U73122 and U73343 (Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany), diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub> (Echelon Biosciences Inc., Salt Lake City, UT, USA) and all other reagents were obtained from Sigma (St. Louis, MO, USA).

TsA-201 cells were grown in medium DMEM supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum and 2% of penicillin/streptomycin. Cultures at 60–70% confluency were transfected with 1 µg DNA and Lipofectamine 2000 (Invitrogen Corp., Carlsbad, CA, USA). KCNQ 2/3 currents were recorded 36–48 h after transfection. Mouse muscarinic receptor type 1 (M1R), human KCNQ 2, human KCNQ 3 and voltage sensitive phosphatase (VSP) coupled to GFP were provided by B. Hille (University of Washington, Seattle, WA).

### 2.2. Electrophysiology

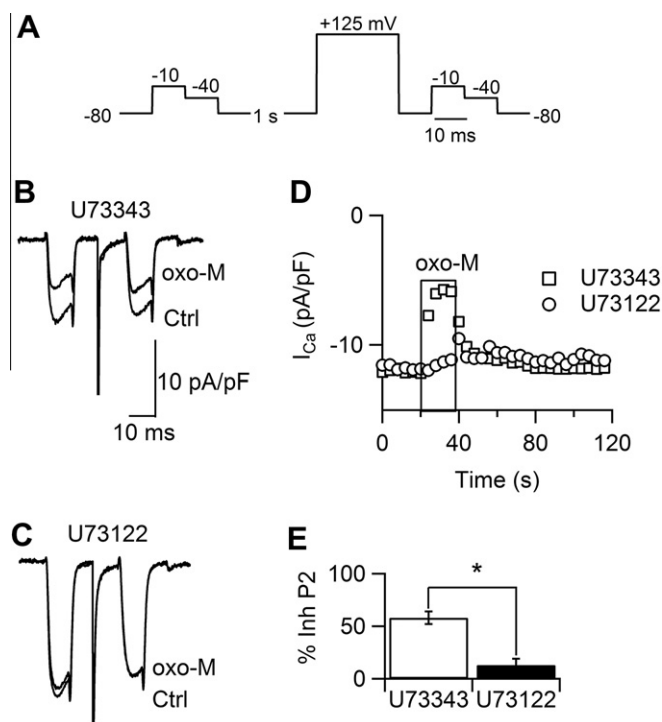
Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 current was recorded in the whole-cell configuration of the patch-clamp technique [19] with a HEKA EPC 9 amplifier (HEKA Elektronik, Lambrecht/Pfalz, Germany) at room temperature. We used pipettes of borosilicate glass (kimble chase, Vineland, NJ, USA) with a resistance of 1.6–2.2 MΩ. Series resistance was 3–7 MΩ and compensated to > 60%. Currents were sampled at 100 kHz. Current recordings were filtered at 2.9 kHz. Cells were continuously bathed with control or test solutions at 2 ml/min rate. The control bath solution contained (in mM): 160 NaCl, 2.5 KCl<sub>2</sub>, 10 HEPES, 8 glucose, 5 CaCl<sub>2</sub>, 1 MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 0.0001 TTX and 0.005 nifedipine, pH adjusted to 7.4 with NaOH. Oxo-M was diluted in bath solution to a final concentration of 10 µM. The pipette

solution contained (in mM): 140 CsCl, 32 TEA-Cl, 10 HEPES, 0.1 BAPTA-4 Cs, 1 MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 3 Na<sub>2</sub>ATP, 3 Na<sub>2</sub>GTP, and 0.1 leupeptin, pH adjusted to 7.4 with CsOH. Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 currents were defined as the component of the current sensitive to 100 µM CdCl<sub>2</sub> in the presence of 5 µM of nifedipine [10]. Calcium current was elicited with a double pulse protocol applied every 4 s. Steady-state current amplitude was calculated as the mean value of recorded points between 6 and 7 ms after the onset of the pulse. Percent of inhibition was calculated as the calcium current amplitude during oxo-M application subtracted from calcium current amplitude in control condition divided by calcium current amplitude in control condition. For KCNQ 2/3 recordings the pipette solution contained (in mM): 175 KCl, 5 MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 5 HEPES, 0.1 BAPTA-4K, 3 Na<sub>2</sub>ATP, 0.1 Na<sub>2</sub>GTP, and 0.1 leupeptin, pH adjusted to 7.4 with KOH. Results are presented as mean ± SEM.

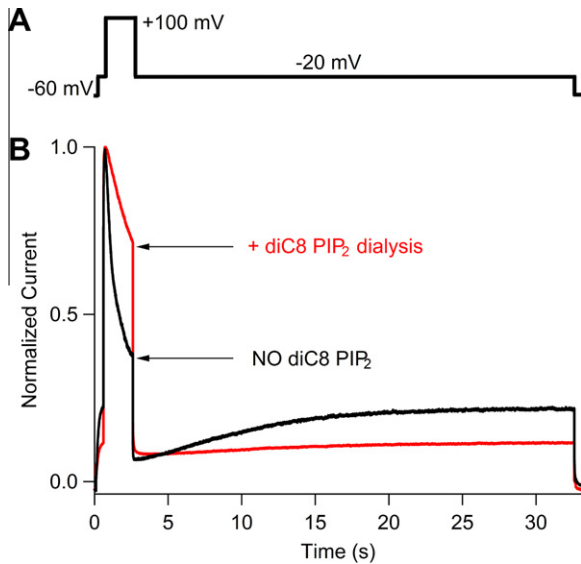
## 3. Results

### 3.1. Oxo-M inhibition requires PLC activation

Muscarinic agonists reduce calcium current by two different components: one, fast and PTX-sensitive and the other slow, PTX-insensitive and calcium-dependent. The latter seems not to shift voltage dependence of the channels [5,10]. The current modulated under this muscarinic component has similar characteristics of the current regulated by the voltage independent pathway [6]. However, whether or not these two pathways correspond to the same molecular cascade has not been firmly established. Here, we were interested in the molecule responsible for muscarinic inhibition remaining after a depolarized pulse, which corresponds to the voltage independent inhibition. The protocol we used to iso-



**Fig. 1.** PLC activation is required for muscarinic voltage independent inhibition of Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 calcium channel. (A) Double pulse protocol used to isolate voltage independent inhibition. (B and C) Representative superimposed currents under 10 µM oxo-M application and under control condition in neurons treated with U73343 (B) or U73122 (C). (D) Time course of calcium current amplitude in neurons treated with U73343 and U73122. (E) Summary of current inhibition in pulse 2 for each condition. Data plotted as mean ± SEM. \* indicates  $p < 0.05$ .



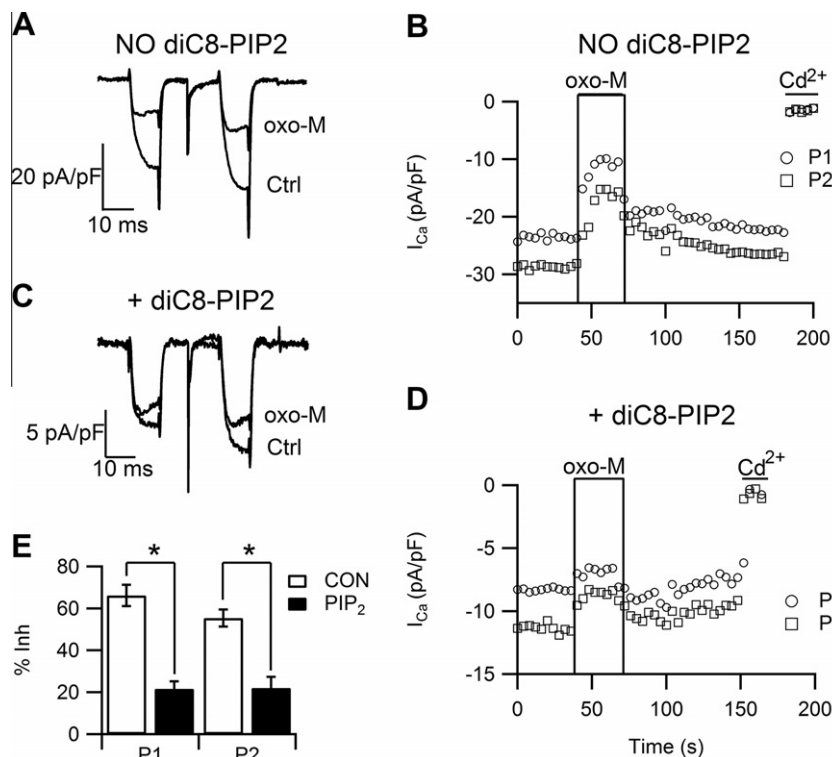
**Fig. 2.** Effect of diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub> dialysis on KCNQ 2/3 current. (A) Voltage protocol to activate KCNQ 2/3 channel and VSP. (B) Average superimposed currents in tsA-201 cells without (black,  $n = 8$ ) and with (red,  $n = 9$ ) 100  $\mu$ M diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub> dialysis. Currents were normalized to the maximal current. diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub> was dialyzed up to 7 min. (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

late the voltage independent inhibition consisted of two identical pulses from  $-80$  to  $-10$  mV for 10 ms, separated for 1 s each one, yet the second pulse was 10 ms anticipated by a 25 ms conditioning pulse to  $+125$  mV (Fig. 1A). Since oxo-M inhibits calcium current in SCG neurons by activation of  $G_{\alpha_{q/11}}$  subunits [23,24]

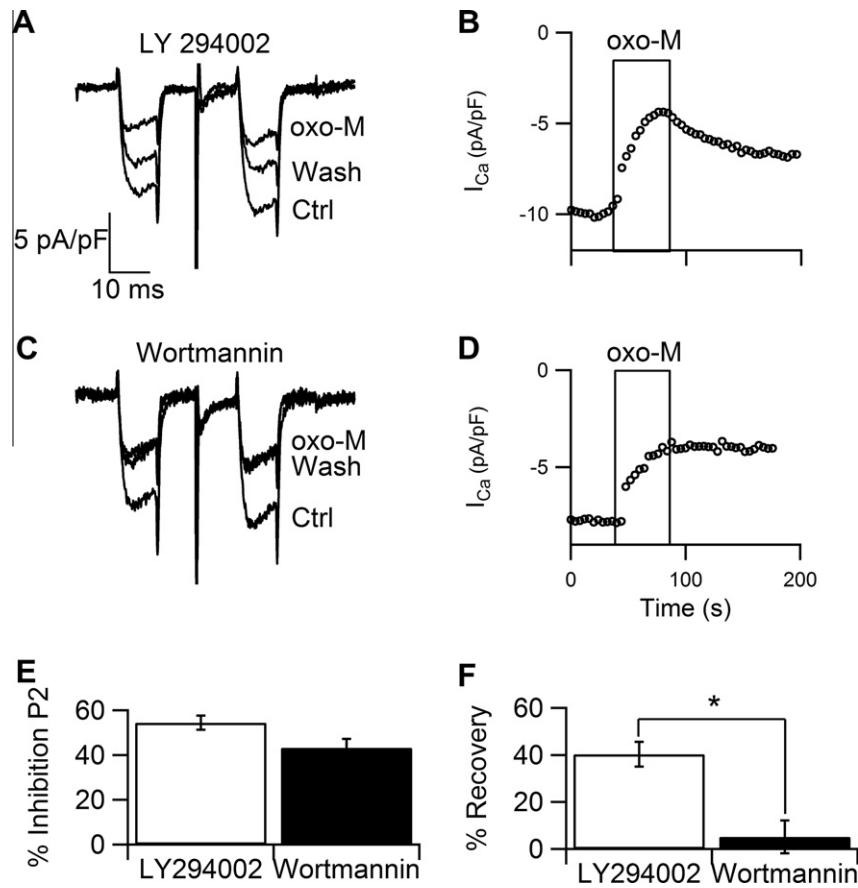
and since  $G_{\alpha_{q/11}}$  family activates phospholipase C (PLC), we tested the effect of an inhibitor of PLC, U73122, on voltage independent inhibition. Neurons were bathed with 5  $\mu$ M of U73122, or with 5  $\mu$ M of U73343, which is an inactive analogue, as negative control. Both compounds were diluted in DMSO. Final concentration (v/v) for DMSO was 0.2%. Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 current was not inhibited by oxo-M when cells were bathed with U73122 as can be seen in superimposed traces in Fig. 1C, whereas U73343 did not prevent current inhibition by oxo-M (Fig. 1B). Fig. 1D compares time courses for inhibition in pulse 2 between a cell in presence of U73343 and a cell in presence of U73122. In cells bathed with U73343 and exposed to oxo-M, calcium current was inhibited by  $58 \pm 6\%$  ( $n = 8$ ), however when cells were bathed with U73122 calcium current was inhibited by  $13 \pm 6\%$  ( $n = 6$ , Fig. 1E). Therefore U73122 reduced calcium current inhibition by oxo-M, suggesting that PLC activation is required for voltage independent inhibition.

### 3.2. PIP<sub>2</sub> underlies voltage-independent inhibition

PLC activation leads to PIP<sub>2</sub> hydrolysis. Also, PIP<sub>2</sub> is a necessary cofactor for KCNQ 2/3 channels [26–30] and high voltage activated calcium channels [31]. We tested whether PIP<sub>2</sub> is the molecule responsible for the voltage independent inhibition of endogenous calcium channels in SCG neurons. To this end we filled the cell with 100  $\mu$ M of diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub> through the recording pipette. This analogue of the endogenous PIP<sub>2</sub> is soluble in water at 1 mg/ml. The rationale of this experiment was that an extra source for the PLC substrate would hamper the hydrolysis of endogenous PIP<sub>2</sub> in the plasma membrane and therefore oxo-M could not inhibit calcium current. We first tested this experimental approach on the inhibition induced by oxo-M on KCNQ 2/3 channel. For this purpose KCNQ 2 and KCNQ 3 channels were transfected in TsA-201 cells. A voltage-sensitive phosphatase (VSP) was co-transfected to



**Fig. 3.** Effect of diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub> dialysis on voltage independent inhibition of Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 channel. (A and C) Representative superimposed currents under oxo-M application and under control conditions in neurons without (A) or with (C) dialysis of 100  $\mu$ M diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub>. (B and D) Time courses of calcium current amplitude in neurons without (B) or with (D) dialysis of diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub>. diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub> was dialyzed up to 7 min. (E) Summary of current inhibition in pulse 1 (P1) and pulse 2 (P2) in neurons without (CON) or with (PIP<sub>2</sub>) dialysis of diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub>. Data plotted as mean  $\pm$  SEM. \* indicates  $p < 0.05$ .



**Fig. 4.** Wortmannin inhibition of calcium current recovery. (A and C) Representative superimposed currents before (Ctrl), during (oxo-M) and after (Wash) 10  $\mu$ M oxo-M application in neurons treated with LY294002 (A) or Wortmannin (C). (B and D) Time courses calcium current amplitude in neurons treated with LY294002 (B) or Wortmannin (D). (E) Summary of current inhibition in pulse 2 (P2) for each condition. (F) Summary of current recovery for each condition. Data plotted as mean  $\pm$  SEM. \* indicates  $p < 0.05$ .

diminish  $\text{PIP}_2$  concentration at the plasma membrane. VSP was activated with a 2 s voltage pulse to +100 mV. KCNQ 2/3 current was recorded during a 30 s depolarizing pulse from  $-60$  to  $-20$  mV. After 500 ms at  $-20$  mV, it was applied the pulse to activate the VSP. In this protocol we observed two signs of KCNQ 2/3 current inhibition; KCNQ 2/3 current decays during the pulse to +100 mV and it is much reduced upon return to  $-20$  mV and recovered thereafter, as formerly reported [26]. In cells where diC8- $\text{PIP}_2$  was dialyzed ( $n = 9$ ), KCNQ 2/3 current were less inhibited upon VSP activation (Fig. 2). This result suggests that filling the cell with diC8- $\text{PIP}_2$  through the recording pipette can be used as an experimental approach to test the role of  $\text{PIP}_2$  in voltage independent inhibition of  $\text{Ca}_v2.2$  calcium channels and that diC8- $\text{PIP}_2$  serves as a substrate source for enzymes binding endogenous  $\text{PIP}_2$ . Then, we used the same approach to test calcium current inhibition in SCG neurons. In  $\text{PIP}_2$ -dialyzed neurons, oxo-M application inhibited calcium current by  $22 \pm 5\%$  ( $n = 9$ ), whereas calcium current was inhibited by  $55 \pm 4\%$  in non-dialyzed neurons ( $n = 9$ , Fig. 3). This reduction of muscarinic inhibition of  $\text{Ca}_v2.2$  current suggests that  $\text{PIP}_2$  hydrolysis is responsible of the voltage independent inhibition of  $\text{Ca}_v2.2$  channels.

### 3.3. Recovery from voltage independent inhibition is blunted with wortmannin

Accordingly with a mechanism involving hydrolysis of  $\text{PIP}_2$ , recovery from voltage independent inhibition would need the activation of the phosphatidylinositol 4-kinase (PI4K) and the phos-

phatidylinositol 4-phosphate 5-kinase (PI4P5K) to resynthesize  $\text{PIP}_2$  from phosphatidylinositol. Wortmannin inhibits PI4K along with the phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase (PI3K), preventing the resynthesis of  $\text{PIP}_2$  [33]. We bathed neurons with 10  $\mu$ M of wortmannin and applied oxo-M to inhibit calcium current. Inhibition of calcium current was similar to control cells, however recovery was only  $5 \pm 7\%$  ( $n = 7$ ). On the other hand 50  $\mu$ M LY294002, which inhibits specifically PI3K and should not affect  $\text{PIP}_2$  resynthesis, did not affect recovery ( $40 \pm 5\%$ ,  $n = 10$ ) from the voltage independent inhibition induced by oxo-M (Fig. 4). Therefore,  $\text{PIP}_2$  resynthesis is needed to recovery from voltage independent inhibition. All these results together suggest that the hydrolysis of  $\text{PIP}_2$  is responsible for the voltage independent regulation of  $\text{Ca}_v2.2$  channels after muscarinic signaling.

## 4. Discussion

In this paper we assayed  $\text{PIP}_2$  hydrolysis as a possible mechanism underlying voltage independent inhibition on  $\text{Ca}_v2.2$  channels induced by muscarinic activation. Voltage independent inhibition did not occur by preventing hydrolysis of phosphoinositides with a PLC inhibitor. As muscarinic PLC activation leads to phosphoinositide hydrolysis [34–36] and since we found that inhibition of PLC prevented oxo-M for inhibiting  $\text{Ca}_v2.2$  channels,  $\text{PIP}_2$  hydrolysis can explain voltage independent inhibition. Our result is in accordance with previous reports where PLC activation was required by oxo-M to inhibit M current [27], inhibition that is



mediated by PIP<sub>2</sub>, and by bradykinin to inhibit neurotransmitter release in rat superior cervical ganglion neurons [37].

We also showed that diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub> into the recording pipette hampered inhibition induced by oxo-M on KCNQ 2/3 and Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 channels, presumably by means of binding with the enzyme, VSP or PLC, to avoid dephosphorylation or hydrolysis of endogenous PIP<sub>2</sub>. DiC8-PIP<sub>2</sub> is a soluble phosphoinositide with two acyl chains composed with eight carbon atoms. The critical micellar concentration of PIP<sub>2</sub> in saline solutions is 30 μM [38]. Since we use 100 μM of diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub>, we speculate that phosphoinositides are organized mainly in micelles. Once diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub> is into the cell it is able to incorporate with plasma membrane [39]. Upon activation of VSP or PLC neither potassium nor calcium current is inhibited when cells are filled with diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub>, suggesting that this approach is blocking the effect of both enzymes acting on endogenous PIP<sub>2</sub>, and therefore supporting that PIP<sub>2</sub> is the responsible molecule of voltage independent inhibition of Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 channels by oxo-M. In addition, diC8-PIP<sub>2</sub> did not affect tonic inhibition. Accordingly, PIP<sub>2</sub> seems to not affect voltage dependent inhibition although we did not test this idea further. Future experiments will be focused on the effect of neurotransmitters which induce voltage dependent and independent components in order to test PIP<sub>2</sub> as general molecule of voltage independent inhibition.

Releasing of G<sub>βγ</sub> also occurs in physiological conditions after the neuron is stimulated with a train of action potentials [1,40]. This suggests that some extent of calcium channel inhibition at synapses depends on circuit activity, but the remaining fraction, the voltage independent inhibition, remains despite neuron activity. Thus, after G-protein coupled receptors are activated and concomitant burst stimulation arrived into synapse, Ca<sub>v</sub>2.2 channels might be still inhibited by voltage independent inhibition. Accordingly with our results, voltage independent inhibition is mediated by PIP<sub>2</sub> hydrolysis and the recover from inhibition need PIP<sub>2</sub> resynthesis. We propose that fine-tuning of PIP<sub>2</sub> concentration is a general mechanism to regulate synaptic transmission. In synapse, PIP<sub>2</sub> is located in microdomains and colocalized with syntaxin clusters [41]. Since neurotransmitter release occurs in functional microdomains, where synaptic molecules, such as syntaxin, and calcium channels are cluster together, and PIP<sub>2</sub> is also located at this microdomains, PIP<sub>2</sub> hydrolysis seems to be an important cue in regulating neurotransmitter release.

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