

Induction of tumor necrosis factor α gene expression by lipoprotein lipase

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Abstract In view of the suppressive effect of tumor necrosis factor α (TNF α) on lipoprotein lipase (LPL) and of the potential proatherogenic effects of these two macrophage secretory products, we have tested the possibility that LPL could modulate the production of TNF α . Treatment of macrophages with lipoprotein lipase induced tumor necrosis factor α gene expression and protein secretion. Maximal increase of TNF α mRNA levels occurred after a 3-h treatment with 200 ng/ml LPL. An additive effect of interferon γ (IFN γ) was observed on LPL-induced TNF α mRNA expression. De novo mRNA synthesis was required for induction of TNF α mRNA by LPL as no induction was observed when macrophages were pretreated with actinomycin D before adding LPL. We further established that LPL induced the transcription of the TNF α gene in macrophages. We also found that LPL caused the nuclear migration of one member of the NF κ B family that appears to bind to a site in the murine TNF α gene promoter. Furthermore, we demonstrated that the treatment of macrophages with LPL increased the stability of TNF α mRNA. ■ These results show that the TNF α gene induction in response to LPL involves both transcriptional activation and the enhancement of TNF α mRNA stability. Overall, our data demonstrate a new role for LPL, that of modulating macrophage TNF α gene expression. This effect may represent one of the mechanisms by which LPL may favor the development of atherosclerosis. — Renier, G., E. Skamene, J. B. DeSanctis, and D. Radzioch. Induction of tumor necrosis factor α gene expression by lipoprotein lipase. *J. Lipid Res.* 1994. 35: 271–278.

Supplementary key words gene expression • macrophage

TNF α is an important secretory product of macrophages directly involved in inflammatory reactions after a variety of bacterial infections (1). It has been well established that TNF α gene expression is tightly controlled both at the transcriptional and posttranscriptional levels (2, 3). Both the TNF α promoter and 3' untranslated region are involved in the response to lipopolysaccharide (LPS), the former at the transcriptional level and the latter at the translational level, leading to a synergistic effect on protein synthesis. LPS-mediated transcriptional activation of the TNF α gene has been shown to involve κ B-type enhancers (2). In addition to LPS effects on tran-

scriptional activation, cell stimulation with LPS is associated with a release from translational blockage (3). These data indicate that LPS is a very powerful TNF α inducer as it augments both the transcription and the stability of the TNF α messenger. The rapid down-regulation of TNF α receptor expression (4) and the release of several secretory products, such as prostaglandin E₂ (5), protect macrophages from the harmful effects of TNF α .

Lipoprotein lipase (LPL) is a key enzyme in the metabolism of lipoproteins (6). It is constitutively expressed by macrophages (7) and synthesized by the parenchymal cells of various tissues (8–12).

The demonstration of a suppressive effect of TNF α on LPL production (13) and the possibility that both macrophage cytokines may play a role in the development of atherosclerosis (14, 15) led us to investigate the possible effect of LPL on the regulation of TNF α mRNA gene expression in macrophages. Our results demonstrate that LPL can induce TNF α mRNA expression and that its effect involves transcriptional events as well as posttranscriptional modifications. These observations underline the importance of LPL in macrophage biology and define a novel mechanism of regulation of TNF α production.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Reagents

Fetal bovine serum (FBS) was purchased from Hyclone Lab. (Logan, UT). Dulbecco's minimal essential medium (DMEM) was obtained from ICN Biochemicals Inc., Costa Mesa, CA, and supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS), 2 mM L-glutamine (ICN, Biochemicals Inc.) and penicillin-streptomycin (Flow, McLean,

Abbreviations: LPL, lipoprotein lipase; TNF α , tumor necrosis factor α ; IFN γ , interferon γ ; LPS, lipopolysaccharide; GAPDH, glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase.

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VA). Actinomycin D (Dact), phospholipase A₂ (PLA₂) (200–400 U/mg protein) were purchased from Sigma Chemical Co. (St. Louis, MO). Recombinant murine IFN γ was obtained from Amgen Biologicals (Thousand Oaks, CA).

Purification of LPL

LPL was isolated from human postheparin plasma. The enzyme was purified as previously described (16) using two column steps of heparin-Sepharose affinity chromatography and elution with 2 M NaCl. Purity of the protein was tested by Western blot analysis as previously described (14).

Macrophages

Peritoneal exudate macrophages were harvested 4 days after C57BL/6 mice were injected intraperitoneally with 1 ml of 1% thioglycolate medium. For our studies on the stability of TNF α mRNA, run-on and DNA-binding protein assays, we used the ANA-1 macrophage line, established by infection of the normal bone marrow of C57BL/6 mice with the J2 recombinant retrovirus as previously described (17). Either macrophage lines or freshly harvested peritoneal macrophages were cultured in DMEM containing 10% FBS and treated for different time periods with the appropriate agents.

RNA extraction

Ten million macrophages were plated in 35-mm plastic petri dishes (Falcon, Lincoln Park, NJ). After the treatment of macrophages with activating agents, macrophages were lysed with guanidine isothiocyanate. Total RNA was purified by centrifugation through a cesium chloride gradient as previously described in detail by Chirgwin et al. (18).

Northern blot analysis

Fifteen μ g of total RNA was separated on a 1.2% agarose gel containing 2.2 M formaldehyde as previously described (19). The blots were prehybridized for 18 h in prehybridization buffer. The mRNA expression was analyzed by hybridization with [³²P]dCTP (sp act ca. 3000 Ci/mmol, Amersham Corp., Arlington Heights, IL), labeled purified TNF α , and glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GAPDH) DNA inserts. Hybridization was detected by autoradiography with Kodak X-Omat-AR films (Rochester, NY). RNA expression was quantified by high resolution optical densitometry (SciScan 5000, USB).

Nuclear run-on assay

Nuclear run-on experiments were performed as described by Greenberg and Ziff (20). α -³²P UTP-labeled RNA (2 \times 10⁶ cpm/ml) was hybridized to TNF α , IL-1 β , GAPDH, and pBR322 DNA linearized probes spotted on nitrocellulose.

DNA binding assays

The isolation of nuclei was performed as previously described (21). Briefly, 5 \times 10⁷ ANA-1 cells were collected, washed with cold PBS, and lysed in 1 ml ice-cold buffer A (15 mM KCl, 2 mM MgCl₂, 10 mM HEPES, 0.1 mM EDTA, 1 mM DTT, 2 μ g/ml aprotinin, 0.1% PMSF, and 0.5% Nonidet P-40). After 10 min incubation on ice, lysed cells were centrifuged and the nuclei were washed with buffer A without Nonidet P-40. The nuclei were then lysed in a buffer containing 2 M KCl, 25 mM HEPES, 0.1 mM EDTA, and 1 mM DTT. After a 15-min incubation period, a dialysis buffer (25 mM HEPES, 1 mM DTT, 0.1% PMSF, 2 μ g/ml aprotinin, 0.1 mM EDTA, 11% glycerol) was added to the nuclei preparation. Nuclei were collected by centrifugation for 20 min at 13000 *g*. Aliquots (50 μ l) of the supernatants were frozen at -70°C and protein concentration was determined.

DNA retardation (mobility shift) electrophoresis assays were performed as previously described by Fried and Crothers (22). Briefly, 5- μ g nuclear extracts were incubated for 15 min in the presence of 5 \times binding buffer (125 mM HEPES, pH 7.5, 50% glycerol, 250 mM NaCl 0.25% Nonidet P-40, 5 mM DTT). End-labeled double-stranded consensus sequences of the TNF α promoter NFkB-enhancing element (10,000 cpm per sample) were then added to the samples for 30 min. Samples were then analyzed on a 4% nondenaturing polyacrylamide gel, containing 0.01% Nonidet P-40.

DNA probes

The cDNA probe for murine tumor necrosis factor (TNF) was kindly provided by Dr. A. Cerami (Rockefeller University, NY). The murine GAPDH probe was prepared in our laboratory by polymerase chain amplification. cDNA was obtained from total RNA using a reverse transcription reaction. Two synthetic primers were used to enzymatically amplify a 456-bp of the GAPDH cDNA. The GAPDH probe was subsequently purified on a low melting agarose gel. For Northern blot analysis, purified DNA inserts were labeled with α -[³²P]dCTP using a nick translation DNA labeling kit (Boehringer-Mannheim). A 42-mer double-stranded oligonucleotide (5'-GATCCAAGGGGACTTTCCATG-3'; (5'-GATCCATGGAAAGTCCCCTTGGATCCATGGAAAGTCCCCTTG-3') containing the consensus sequence for the NFkB enhancer of the murine TNF α gene promoter was synthesized with the aid of an automated DNA synthesizer. After annealing, a double-stranded oligonucleotide was labeled with γ -[³²P]ATP using the Boehringer-Mannheim 5'-end-labeling kit.

Determination of TNF α protein content

A double-sandwich ELISA was used to determine the quantity of TNF α in the supernatants of macrophages as

described in detail by Sheehan, Ruddle, and Schreiber (23). Hamster monoclonal antibody to murine TNF α was purchased from Genzyme (Boston, MA), and rabbit polyclonal anti-murine TNF α was prepared and purified by standard procedures. Briefly, 2 μ g per well of a monoclonal antibody against TNF α was absorbed in 96-well plates and incubated in the presence of different dilutions of the test sample or with the murine recombinant TNF α standards (Genzyme). After washing, the polyclonal antibody to TNF α was added. Anti-rabbit IgG peroxidase was added to the wells and incubated for 1 h. The peroxidase reaction was developed by adding peroxidase substrate and analyzed in an automated plate reader (Dynatech, Chantilly, VA).

Determination of protein concentrations

Total protein content was estimated according to the Bradford method (24) using a colorimetric assay (Bio-Rad, Mississauga, ONT).

Determination of endotoxin concentrations

The endotoxin content of all media and LPL preparations was determined by a quantitative limulus amoebocyte lysate assay (Whittaker, Walkersville, MA). The endotoxin content in the LPL preparations and in the media was found to be lower than 0.007 ng/ml and 0.012 ng/ml, respectively.

RESULTS

The effects of LPL on the TNF α mRNA expression were studied in fresh peritoneal murine macrophages harvested from C57BL/6 mice and in the ANA-1 macrophage line derived from the bone marrow of C57BL/6 mice.

Treatment of macrophages with LPL (5–500 ng/ml) significantly augmented, in a dose-dependent manner, the expression of TNF α in macrophages (**Fig. 1**). The maximal effect was observed at the dose of 200 ng/ml LPL. The same RNAs were also tested for GAPDH mRNA expression. No modulation of the expression of this gene was observed after LPL treatment of the cells (**Fig. 1**). Exposure of macrophages to 500 ng/ml LPL and PLA₂ increased the TNF α mRNA expression to the same extent without affecting IL-1 β and GAPDH expression (**Fig. 2**). These results indicated that the expression of TNF α mRNA was selectively augmented in macrophages following LPL treatment.

To investigate the kinetics of the effect of LPL on TNF α mRNA induction, ANA-1 cells were treated with LPL for 1, 3, 6, 18, or 24 h and the expression of TNF α mRNA in response to LPL was measured. As shown in **Fig. 3**, a peak in TNF α mRNA expression occurred between 3 and 6 h after LPL treatment leading to a gradual return to the

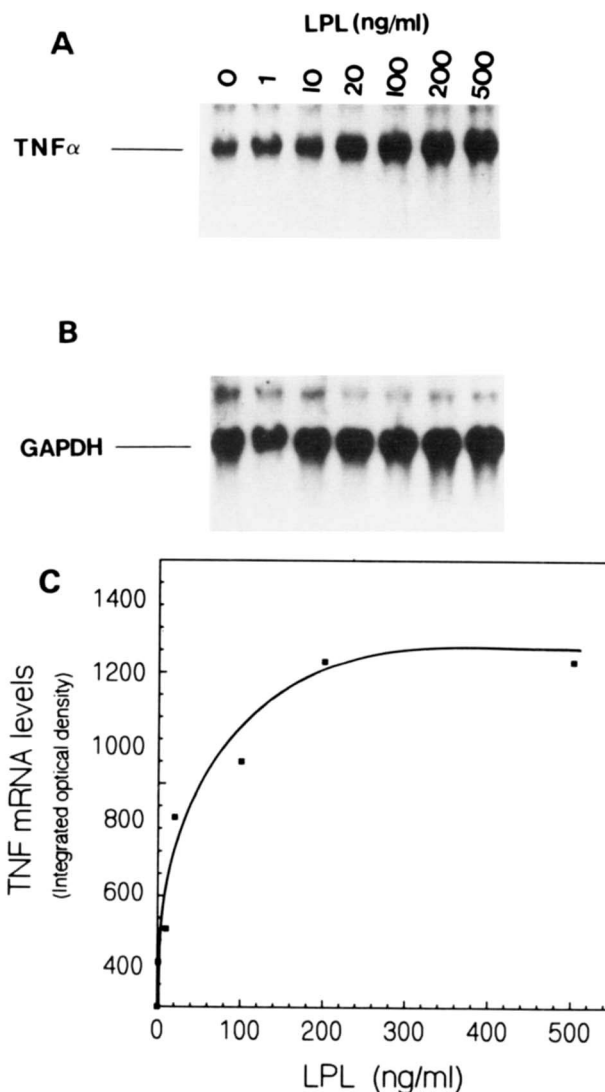


Fig. 1. Effect of LPL on the induction of TNF α mRNA expression. ANA-1 cells were cultured for 3 h with increasing concentrations of LPL (0–500 ng/ml). Total RNAs were extracted and analyzed by Northern blot for TNF α mRNA (A) and GAPDH mRNA expression (B). mRNA levels normalized to the levels of GAPDH mRNA are presented in panel C.

basal level. Similar kinetics were observed when the cells were exposed to IFN γ alone or to a combination of IFN γ and LPL. An additive effect of LPL and IFN γ on TNF α mRNA expression was observed. Similar results were observed when LPL and IFN γ were cultured with murine peritoneal macrophages isolated from C57BL/6 mice (data not shown). Recovery of enhanced amounts of TNF α from the culture media reflected the increase in TNF α mRNA expression in response to LPL. Macrophage treatment with IFN γ plus LPL enhanced the TNF α secretion even further (**Fig. 4**).

To establish whether or not the TNF α mRNA induction by LPL requires de novo RNA synthesis, we exam-

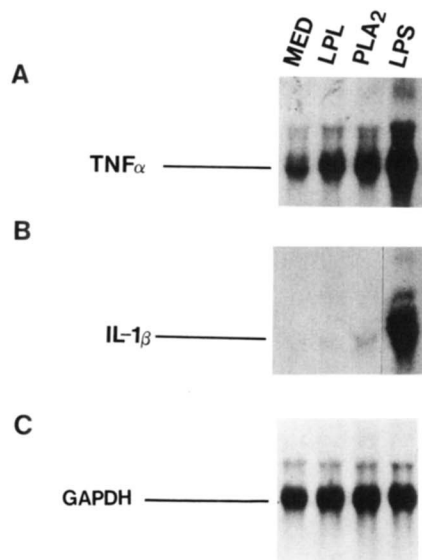


Fig. 2. Effect of LPL (500 ng/ml) or PLA₂ (500 ng/ml) on TNF α mRNA expression. Total RNAs were analyzed by Northern blot for TNF α mRNA (A), IL-1 β (B), and GAPDH (C) mRNA expression after a 3-h treatment of ANA-1 cells with either stimulus. Med, medium.

ined the effect of LPL on TNF α mRNA expression in cells treated with actinomycin D. No increase in TNF α mRNA was observed when actinomycin D was added to macrophages prior to the addition of LPL (**Fig. 5**), suggesting that LPL-induced TNF α gene augmentation requires active RNA synthesis.

To confirm that the increase in the level of TNF α mRNA was a direct consequence of augmented transcriptional activity in macrophages stimulated with LPL, we performed nuclear run-on assays. As shown in **Fig. 6**, the transcription of TNF α gene was augmented over levels

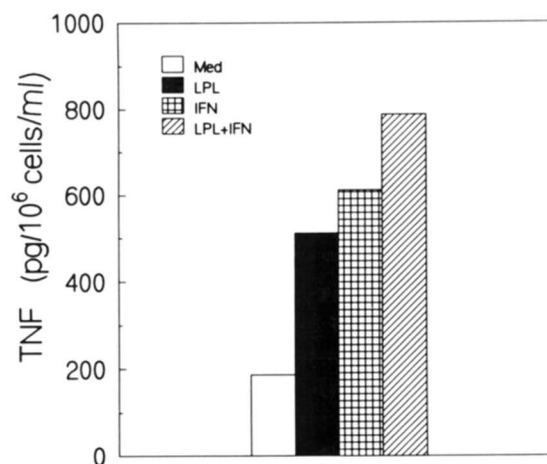


Fig. 4. TNF α secretion by ANA-1 cells after 24 h exposure to medium (Med), 100 ng/ml LPL (LPL), 100 U/ml IFN γ (IFN), or 100 ng/ml LPL in combination with 100 U/ml IFN γ (LPL+IFN). After the incubation period, supernatants were collected, centrifuged, and tested for TNF α protein content by ELISA. TNF α secretion is expressed in pg of protein released by 10⁶ cells per ml.

obtained in untreated macrophages: 1.64-fold in response to LPL, 2.59-fold after treatment with IFN γ , 2.19-fold in response to a combination of IFN γ and LPL, 4.93-fold in response to LPS. None of the treatments had any effect on the transcription rate of the macrophage IL-1 β and GAPDH genes. Under similar experimental conditions, the background hybridization of the transcripts with pBR322 was undetectable.

We also tested whether or not treatment of macrophages with LPL could induce changes at the level of TNF α gene promoter binding proteins. We found that LPL caused, in a time-dependent manner, the nuclear migration of one member of the NF κ B family, which ap-

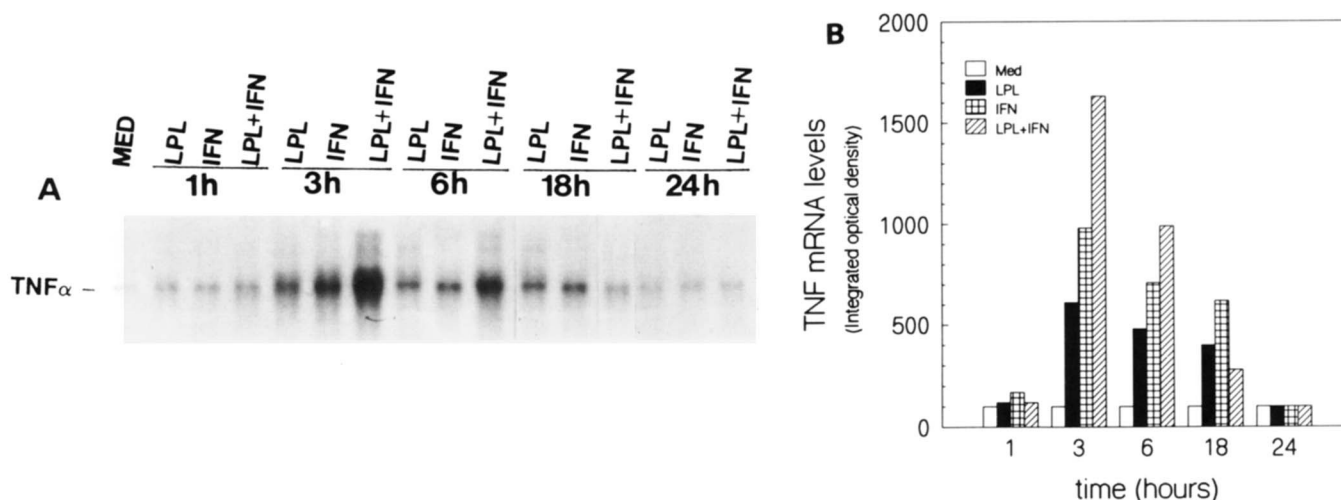


Fig. 3. Kinetics of TNF α mRNA induction by LPL in macrophages. ANA-1 cells were cultured for 1, 3, 6, 18, and 24 h in medium (Med) or in medium containing 100 ng/ml LPL (LPL), 100 U/ml IFN γ (IFN), or 100 ng/ml LPL in combination with 100 U/ml IFN γ (LPL+IFN). Total RNAs were isolated and were assessed by Northern blot analysis for TNF α mRNA expression (A). mRNA levels normalized to the levels of GAPDH mRNA expression in each sample are presented in panel B.

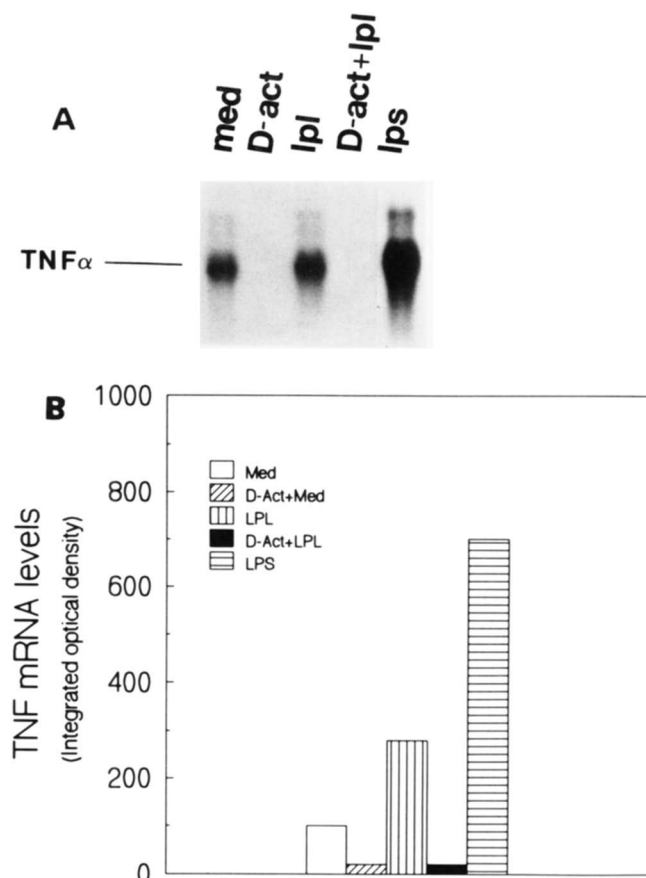


Fig. 5. Effect of actinomycin D on the induction of TNF α mRNA expression by LPL. ANA-1 cells were treated with 5 μ g/ml actinomycin D (D-act) or medium (Med) for 60 min prior to the addition of 100 ng/ml LPL (LPL) for 3 h. A 3-h treatment with LPS (100 ng/ml) was used as a positive control for the induction of TNF α . At the end of the incubation period, RNAs were extracted and mRNA levels were analyzed by Northern blot for TNF α mRNA expression (A). mRNA levels normalized to the levels of GAPDH mRNA expression in each sample are presented in panel B.

appears to bind to a site in the TNF α gene promoter (Fig. 7). The level of enhancement in the binding of nuclear proteins extracted from macrophages stimulated with LPL was consistently lower than that observed in macrophages stimulated with 1 μ g/ml of LPS, used as a positive control.

Although these observations were indicative of transcriptional activation taking place in response to stimulation of macrophages with LPL, they did not preclude the possibility that the mRNA half-life was affected as well. To investigate this possibility, we measured the half-life of TNF α mRNAs in untreated and LPL-treated macrophages after the addition of D-actinomycin. As shown in Fig. 8, the rate of decay of TNF α mRNA was slower in LPL-treated cells than in the controls (TNF α mRNA half-life: 22 ± 2 min vs. 13 ± 1 min). No significant difference in the half-life of TNF α mRNA in IFN γ - or IFN γ +LPL-treated cells was observed as compared to the

controls (TNF α mRNA half-life: IFN γ -treated cells: 13 ± 1 min; IFN γ +LPL treated cells: 17 ± 2 min; untreated cells: 13 ± 1 min).

DISCUSSION

Macrophages and monocytes secrete TNF α in response to bacterial infection or treatment with bacterial cell wall products, such as LPS (25). IFN γ was shown to enhance TNF α mRNA expression in macrophages (26) while TNF α protein secretion was not detectable or detected only at very low levels (< 50 U/ 10^6 cells/ml). Interestingly, it has been shown that TNF α inhibits LPL activity in macrophages (13) and LPL mRNA expression and secretion in adipocytes (27).

To investigate whether or not LPL can modulate macrophage gene expression, we have tested the effect of LPL on TNF α mRNA expression and protein secretion. We found that LPL alone or in association with IFN γ may act as a potent inducer of macrophage TNF α expression.

We have shown that the LPL effect was not due to any endotoxin contamination in the LPL preparation (level < 0.007 ng/ 10^6 cells/ml) and that LPL treatment did not augment other genes inducible by LPS, such as IL-1.

The demonstration that PLA $_2$ can also induce TNF α mRNA expression supports previous evidence that PLA $_2$ is directly involved in the transcriptional activation of the TNF α gene (28) and that lipases other than LPL may modulate TNF α gene expression.

Incubation of macrophages with LPL results in a dose-dependent TNF α mRNA induction. An increase in the level of TNF α mRNA expression was observed from 10 to 200 ng/ml of LPL. As the constitutive mass of LPL released from murine macrophages and ANA-1 cells is ap-

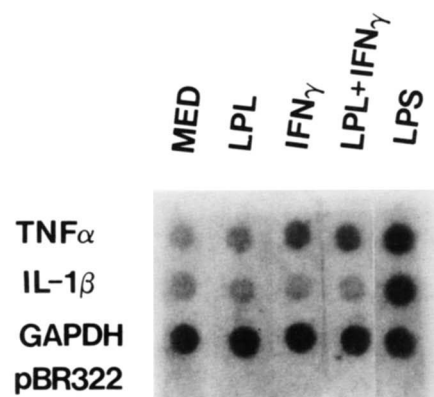


Fig. 6. Effect of LPL on the transcription of TNF α gene in the ANA-1 macrophage line. ANA-1 cells were treated for 3 h with 100 ng/ml LPL, 100 U IFN γ , 100 ng/ml LPL+100 U IFN γ , or 100 ng/ml LPS. Nuclei were isolated, and transcriptional activity was determined in run-on assays. pBR322-Linearized plasmid DNA was used as a control for nonspecific hybridization. MED, medium.

proximately 50 ng/ml per 24 h and as it may be further increased by exposure of the cells to interleukin-2 (G. Renier, unpublished observations), it is possible that LPL may modulate the TNF α gene expression under both physiological and pathophysiological conditions.

The enhancing effect of LPL on TNF α mRNA expression increases with time and maximal induction is observed after 3 h of treatment with LPL.

Our results indicate that the augmentation of TNF α gene expression at this specific time point takes place at the transcriptional and posttranscriptional levels. Our data support the hypothesis that LPL induces the TNF α gene at multiple levels. First, we have found that in the presence of actinomycin D, no induction of TNF α gene expression occurred in LPL-treated macrophages. Therefore, *de novo* mRNA synthesis is required in macrophages stimulated with LPL for TNF α mRNA induction to occur. Second, run-on experiments indicate that LPL induces the transcriptional activation of TNF α mRNA. These results demonstrate that, in LPL-treated macrophages, the observed increase in TNF α mRNA expression is at least partly due to an increase in the TNF α gene transcriptional activity. Finally, when untreated and LPL-treated macrophages were tested for binding to the

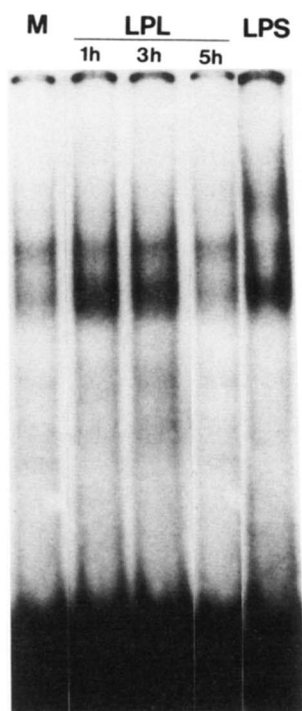


Fig. 7. Binding of nuclear proteins extracted from untreated (M) or LPL-treated cells (LPL) to the regulatory NF κ B sequence of the murine TNF α gene promoter. ANA-1 cells were treated for 1, 3, and 5 h with 100 ng/ml LPL. The nuclear proteins isolated from untreated, LPL-treated, and LPS-treated (positive control) were incubated with double-stranded NF κ B regulatory element of the TNF α gene. Retardation was assessed by gel electrophoresis in 4% polyacrylamide gels.

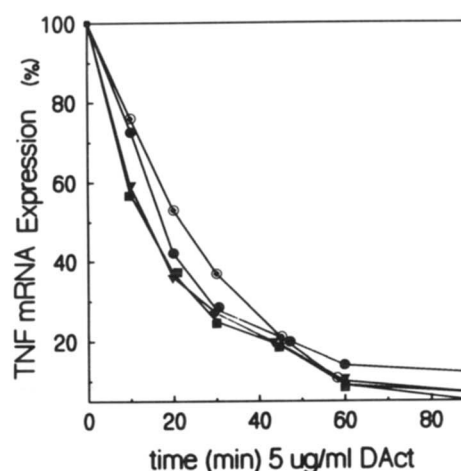


Fig. 8. Evaluation of the half-life of TNF α mRNA in ANA-1 macrophages cultured for 3 h in medium (Med) (■), in the presence of 1000 ng/ml LPL (LPL) (○), 100 U/ml IFN γ (IFN) (▼), or 1000 ng/ml LPL in combination with 100 U/ml IFN γ (LPL+IFN) (◆). Levels of TNF α mRNA expression after 10, 20, 30, 45, 60, and 90 min of actinomycin D treatment were calculated and plotted as percent expression compared to 100% of TNF α mRNA extracted from cells treated with appropriate stimuli or from untreated macrophages prior the addition of actinomycin D.

NF κ B consensus sequence of the TNF α promoter, a clear augmentation of protein binding was observed in LPL-treated macrophages as compared to untreated macrophages. These data suggest the involvement of the NF κ B-type enhancer element in LPL-mediated transcriptional activation of the TNF α gene.

The increase in the steady-state level of TNF α mRNA expression may be the result of augmented transcription of the gene and/or to an increase in TNF α mRNA stability. Evaluation of TNF α mRNA stability in actinomycin D-treated macrophages demonstrated increased stability of LPL-induced TNF α mRNA as compared to the stability of constitutive TNF α mRNA expression. While LPL and IFN γ both increase the steady-state levels of TNF α mRNA, they appear to exert their effect by different mechanisms. Indeed, while both transcriptional and post-transcriptional mechanisms are responsible for the increase in the steady-state levels of TNF α mRNA in LPL-treated macrophages, IFN γ treatment led to an increase in the transcriptional activity without affecting TNF α mRNA stability. Despite these differences, we speculate that LPL may play a role similar to that of IFN γ , acting as a priming stimulus for macrophage TNF α production.

Several mechanisms may be proposed which may account for the observed effect of LPL on TNF α gene expression. LPL has been shown to bind to cell-surface heparan sulfate proteoglycans (29, 30). It can therefore be proposed that LPL may act through LPL-binding protein(s) on the macrophage surface. Alternatively, LPL internalization could occur via a nonspecific receptor-mediated pathway, through the formation of endocytic

vesicles. Finally, LPL could act through the LDL receptor expressed on the macrophage surface (31).

The biological significance of our observation with regard to atherogenesis is uncertain. LPL has been shown to be expressed in the atherosclerotic plaque (32). It is widely believed that LPL may favor the development of atherosclerosis by promoting the formation of foam cells in the arterial wall (33, 34). It is tempting to speculate that LPL might also favor the atherosclerotic process by inducing the release of TNF α in the artery wall. TNF α has been detected and localized in the atheroma (15). A combination of the TNF α local vascular clotting and inflammatory effects might account for its potential pro-atherogenic effects. The mechanisms responsible for the induction of TNF α expression during atherogenesis are unknown. Both macrophage and T-lymphocyte secretory products, such as IL-1 and IFN γ , may be involved in the regulation of expression of this cytokine. We propose that LPL may represent one of these factors.

In conclusion, our study demonstrates a stimulatory effect of LPL on macrophage TNF α expression, suggesting a role of LPL as an autocrine mediator of macrophage activation, possibly involved in feedback regulation of the expression of the TNF α gene. ■

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