

Basic and Applied Thermophysiology

**Edited by
V.N. Gourine**

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В.Н. Гурина
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DEVELOPMENT OF THE CENTRAL NO-ERGIC SYSTEMS IN ONTOGENESIS OF MATURENATE MAMMALS

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It has been demonstrated that nitric oxide (NO) synthesized by nerve cells performs various functions in the central nervous system and is involved in the central mechanisms of thermoregulation, in particular [1, 2, 5]. In different classes of endotherms NO-synthesizing neurons are known to be located in the hypothalamic and medullary nervous centres, which contribute to the regulation of thermoregulatory effector activity. The similarity in the distribution of NO-synthase-containing nerve cells in the hypothalamus and medulla of mammals and birds reflects the significance of NO-dependent systems represented in the higher thermoregulatory centres of two different endothermic classes. In immature-born mammals (rats) in early postnatal ontogenesis the appearance of NO-synthase-containing nerve cells in some structures of the hypothalamic area coincides with the establishment of thermoregulation as a systemic function [3].

The aim of the present work was to study maturation of the NOergic brain systems in early postnatal guinea pigs as representatives of mature mammals.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Experiments were performed on 20 guinea pigs. Group I were animals of 1 day of life, group 2–3 days, group 3–10 days, and group 4–20 days of age. The method of Scherer-Singler for identification of NOS/NADPH-diaphorase-containing neurons was used [6]. After craniotomy the brains were wholly removed. The hypothalamus and medulla were separated and fixed according to recommendations of Matsumoto et al. (1993) for 60–90 min in 4% paraformaldehyde on phosphate buffer (0.1 M, pH 7.4) [4]. Microtome sections (25 μm) were incubated in 0.1 M Tris-HCl (pH 8) containing NADPH (1 mM), tetrazolium nitroblue (0.5 mM), and Triton X-100 (0.3%) for 1–2 h at 22°C.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It was found that in guinea pigs in the first days after birth the hypothalamic area underwent considerable changes in the distribution of NADPH-diaphorase / NOS-containing cells. Thus, between 3 and 10 postnatal days the distribution pattern of NO-synthase-containing cells, characteristic of the adult, is mainly formed (Table). Another distinction is the absence of noticeable changes in the distribution of NO-synthesizing nerve cells in the medulla oblongata. These data suggest that in guinea pigs as mature-born mammals the formation of the NOergic

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system occurs at earlier stages of postnatal ontogenesis than in immature animals, e.g. rats [2].

Table. Distribution of NADPH-diaphorase / NOS-containing nerve cells in hypothalamic structures of guinea pigs at different postnatal days

No	Structures	Day 1	Day 3	Day 10	Day 20
1.	Medial preoptic area	-	+	+	+
2.	Lateral preoptic area	+	+	+	+
3.	Supraoptic nucleus	-	-	-	+
4.	Paraventricular nucleus	+	+	+	+
5.	Periventricular nucleus	-	-	+	+
6.	Lateral hypothalamic area	+	+	+	+
7.	Medial mammillary nucleus	-	+	+	+
8.	Supramammillary nucleus	+	+	+	+

"+" – the structure contains NADPH-diaphorase / NOS-positive nerve cells;

"-" – the structure does not contain NADPH-diaphorase / NOS-positive nerve cells

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