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### **Oxygen Homeostasis: A Balancing Act**



Hypoxia-Inducible Factors

### Control of Red Blood Cell Production

### Cardiovascular Disease



Cancer





### **Control of Red Blood Cell Production**







### **Erythropoietin Controls Red Blood Cell Production**



O<sub>2</sub> delivery to every cell In the body

### **Erythropoietin Controls Red Blood Cell Production**



### Erythropoietin Controls Red Blood Cell Production What Controls Erythropoietin Production?



### Hypoxia-Inducible Factor 1 (HIF-1) Binds to the EPO Gene and Activates Transcription



G. L. Semenza and G. L. Wang, *Mol. Cell. Biol.* 12: 5447, 1992
G. L. Wang and G. L. Semenza, *J. Biol. Chem.* 270: 1230, 1995
G. L. Wang et al. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 92: 5510, 1995



HIF-1 $\alpha$  is Regulated by Oxygen-dependent Hydroxylation



PHDs = <u>Prolyl Hydroxylase</u> <u>Domain proteins target HIF-1 $\alpha$  for destruction when O<sub>2</sub> is available.</u>

HIF-1α Protein Accumulates in Response to Hypoxia Leading to Increased Transcription of HIF-1 Target Genes



HIF-1 Mediates Homeostatic Responses to Reduced O<sub>2</sub> Levels



### HIF-1 $\alpha$ is Required for Development of the Circulatory System





**Blood** 



N. V. lyer et al., Genes Dev. 12: 149, 1998



D. Yoon et al., J. Biol. Chem. 281:25703, 2006

# HIF-1 $\alpha$ , HIF-2 $\alpha$ and HIF-3 $\alpha$ Heterodimerize with HIF-1 $\beta$ and Activate Gene Transcription



# Congenital Polycythemia (Too Many Red Cells) is Caused by Mutations in the HIF Pathway



## **Control of Red Blood Cell Production**











### Cardiovascular Disease is the Leading Cause of Death In the Industrialized World

#### CORONARY ARTERY -----> CHEST PAIN HEART ATTACK

### PERIPHERAL ARTERY -----> LEG PAIN AMPUTATION



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### Critical Limb Ischemia: End-Stage Peripheral Arterial Disease

### **Critical Limb Ischemia**

Perfusion is not sufficient to maintain tissue viability, leading to:

Ischemic pain at rest

**Ischemic ulcers** 

Gangrene

Limb amputation



# Analysis of Vascularization after Femoral Artery Ligation in Wild-type (WT) and Heterozygous HIF-1 $\alpha$ -Null (HET) Mice



Circ. Res. 2007;101:1310

### Additive Effects of Aging and Hif1a Genotype on Limb Salvage



M. Bosch-Marcé et al., Circ. Res. 2007;101:1310

# Effects of Aging and *Hif1a* Genotype on Ischemia-induced HIF-1 $\alpha$ Protein Levels



### Improved Recovery of Perfusion in Mice by HIF-1 $\alpha$ Gene Therapy



M. Bosch-Marcé et al. *Circ. Res.* 2007;101:1310

P567T

P658Q

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### HIF-1 Regulates the Expression of Angiogenic Growth Factors



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## **Control of Red Blood Cell Production**







### Cancer

### Advanced Human Cancers Commonly Contain Regions of Intratumoral Hypoxia

Direct measurements of  $O_2$  concentration in human tumors have demonstrated that  $PO_2 < 10$  mm Hg is associated with a significantly increased risk of invasion, metastasis, and patient mortality.



expression by hypoxic cancer cells

### HIF-1a Overexpression is Associated with Patient Mortality

Bladder, transitional cell Bladder, superficial urothelial, p53 mutant Upper urinary tract, transitional cell Brain, astrocytoma, diffuse Brain, oligodendroglioma Breast, LN-positive Breast, LN-negative Breast, HER2-positive Breast, unselected Breast, ER-positive Cervical, early-stage Cervical, S/P RTX Cervical, IB-IIIB, S/P RTX Endometrial, stage I Ovarian, p53 mutant Ovarian, serous Colorectal Colorectal (Dukes B, s/p resection) Esophageal Gastric GI stromal tumor, stomach Hepatocellular Pancreatic Pancreatic Prostate Lung, NSCLC Laryngeal Oropharyngeal Soft tissue sarcoma

Theodoropoulos et al., Eur. Urol. 46:200, 2004 Theodoropoulos et al., BJU Int. 95:425, 2005 Nakanishi et al., Clin. Cancer Res. 11:2583, 2005 Korkolopoulou et al., Neuropathol. Appl. Neurobiol. 30:267, 2004 Birner et al., Cancer 92:165, 2001 Schindl et al., Clin. Cancer Res. 8:1831, 2002 Bos et al., Cancer 97:1573, 2003 Giatromanolaki et al., Clin. Cancer Res. 10:79772, 2004 Vleugel et al., J. Clin. Pathol. 58:172, 2005 Generali et al., Clin. Cancer Res. 12:4562, 2006 Birner et al., Cancer Res. 60:4693, 2000 Burri et al., Int. J. Radiat. Oncol. Biol. Phys. 56:494, 2003 Bachtiary et al., Clin. Cancer Res. 9:2234, 2003 Sivridis et al., Cancer 95:1055, 2002 Birner et al., Clin. Cancer Res. 7:1661, 2001 Daponte et all, BMC Cancer 8:335, 2008 Schmitz et al., Int. J. Colorectal Dis. 24:1287, 2009 Rajaganeshan et al., Int. J. Colorectal Dis. 23:1049, 2008 Tzao et al., Dis. Markers 25:141, 2008 Griffiths et al., Br. J. Cancer 96:95, 2007 Takahashi et al., Oncol. Rep. 10:797, 2003 Xie et al., *Dig Dis Sci* 53:3225, 2008 Shibaji et al., Anticancer Res. 23:4721, 2003 Sun et al., Int. J. Oncol. 30:1359, 2007 Nanni et al., J. Clin. Invest. 119:1093, 2009 Giatromanolaki et al., Br. J. Cancer 85:881, 2001 Schrijvers et al., Int. J. Radiat. Oncol. Biol. Phys. 72:161, 2008 Aebersold et al., Cancer Res. 61:2911, 2001 Shintani et al., Virchows Arch. 449:673, 2006

### HIF Inhibitor Acriflavine Inhibits Tumor Growth and Vascularization in a Mouse Model of Prostate Cancer





 $\begin{array}{l} \mbox{Acriflavine (ACF) inhibits} \\ \mbox{dimerization of HIF-} \alpha \\ \mbox{and HIF-} 1\beta \mbox{ subunits} \end{array}$ 

K. Lee et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 2009;106:2353



### HIF Inhibitor Digoxin Decreases Primary Tumor Growth and Metastasis in a Mouse Model of Breast Cancer



Lung metastasis



H. Zhang et al. *Oncogene* 2012;31:1757 L. Schito et al. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 2012;109:E2707 C.C. Wong et al. *J. Mol. Med.* 2012;90:803

### Treatment with Gemcitabine + HIF Inhibitor Digoxin Causes Tumor Eradication









## HIF Pathway in Biology and Medicine

- 1. <u>Development</u>: HIF-1 $\alpha$ , HIF-1 $\beta$ , HIF-2 $\alpha$ , PHD2, and VHL are all required for normal mammalian embryonic development.
- 2. <u>Physiology</u>: Even modest gain or loss of function of pathway components interferes with normal postnatal physiological responses to hypoxia (congenital polycythemia).
- 3. <u>Medicine</u>: HIFs play key roles in cancer and cardiovascular disease, the major causes of mortality in the U.S. population. Clinical trials are planned or underway to evaluate novel therapies that target HIFs for inhibition (cancer, retinopathy) or activation (anemia, cardiovascular disease).
- 4. Evolution: HIF-1 $\alpha$ , HIF-1 $\beta$ , PHD, and VHL homologs are found in all metazoan species. Genetic evidence implicates the HIF pathway as the critical genetic target for successful adaptation to high altitude in Tibetan and Andean populations.



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