Habil, M. R., Salazar-González, R. A., Doll, M. A., & Hein, D. W. (2022). N-acetyltransferase 2 acetylator genotype-dependent N-acetylation and toxicity of the arylamine carcinogen β-naphthylamine in cryopreserved human hepatocytes. *Archives of Toxicology*, *96*(12), 3257-3263. https://doi.org/10.1007%2Fs00204-022-03381-4

Definitions

- **N-acetyltransferase 2 (NAT2)**: An enzyme that helps process and detoxify certain chemicals, including carcinogens.
- **Genotype**: The genetic makeup of an individual.
- **β-naphthylamine (BNA)**: A carcinogenic chemical found in cigarette smoke and industrial processes.
- **Genotoxicity**: The ability of a substance to damage genetic information in cells, leading to cancer.
- **Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS)**: Chemically reactive molecules containing oxygen that can damage cells.

Key Findings

- Rapid acetylators have higher NAT2 activity for processing BNA compared to intermediate and slow acetylators.
- Rapid acetylators experience more DNA damage and oxidative stress from BNA than intermediate and slow acetylators.
- NAT2 genetic variations significantly affect how the body processes BNA and the resulting toxicity.

Introduction

This study explores how different genetic versions (genotypes) of the NAT2 enzyme affect the processing and toxicity of β-naphthylamine (BNA), a carcinogenic chemical. The research aims to understand how these genetic differences influence the risk of cancer, especially from exposure to BNA.

Main Content

Background

N-acetyltransferase 2 (NAT2) is an enzyme that detoxifies harmful chemicals, including carcinogens like BNA. Genetic variations in NAT2 can result in different levels of enzyme activity, affecting how well these chemicals are processed and detoxified.

Methods

- **Source and Processing of Hepatocytes**: Human liver cells were obtained and stored in liquid nitrogen. They were thawed and prepared for experiments according to standard procedures.
- **Determination of NAT2 Genotype**: DNA was extracted from the liver cells to determine the NAT2 genotype using specific tests.
- **Measurement of BNA N-acetyltransferase Activity**:
    - **In Vitro**: Enzyme activity was measured by mixing liver cell lysates with BNA and analyzing the products using high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC).
    - **In Situ**: Liver cells were cultured and exposed to BNA to measure enzyme activity within the living cells.
- **DNA Damage and ROS Assays**: Tests were conducted to measure DNA damage and ROS levels in the cells after BNA exposure.

Results

- **N-acetylation Activity**:
    - Rapid acetylators had significantly higher NAT2 activity for processing BNA compared to intermediate and slow acetylators.
    - BNA N-acetylation rates were 3-4 times higher in rapid acetylators than in slow acetylators.
- **DNA Damage**:
    - Rapid acetylators showed 2-3 times more DNA damage from BNA exposure compared to slow acetylators.
    - Intermediate acetylators also had more DNA damage than slow acetylators but less than rapid acetylators.
- **ROS/RNS Levels**:
    - ROS levels were highest in rapid acetylators, followed by intermediate and then slow acetylators.
    - BNA-induced ROS/RNS levels were concentration-dependent and significantly different among the genotypes.

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that genetic variations in the NAT2 enzyme significantly affect the metabolism and toxicity of BNA in human liver cells. Rapid acetylators are more efficient at processing BNA but also experience higher levels of DNA damage and oxidative stress, increasing the risk of cancer. Understanding these genetic differences can help in assessing individual cancer risk and developing personalized prevention strategies.

Word Count: 465