

# 5. The Influence of Colony-Stimulating Factors on Neutrophil Production, Distribution, and Function

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## Introduction

The colony-stimulating factors (ie. interleukin 3, granulocyte-macrophage colony-stimulating factor, granulocyte colony-stimulating factor and monocyte/macrophage colony stimulating factor) are a group of glycoproteins that regulate the proliferation and differentiation of hematopoietic precursor cells<sup>1-4</sup>. In addition to their effects on hematopoiesis, colony-stimulating factors (CSFs) modulate the function of fully mature cells and therefore play an important role in regulating inflammatory responses vital to host defense. Here we review recent information that describes the biological activity of CSFs, particularly focusing on their modulation of neutrophil production, distribution, and function. The spectrum of biological activity of granulocyte colony-stimulating factor (G-CSF) and granulocyte-macrophage colony-stimulating factor (GM-CSF) is summarized in Table 1.

## Differential effect of G-CSF and GM-CSF on neutrophil function.

*In vitro* marrow culture studies have furthered our understanding of the different effects of CSFs on hematopoietic proliferation and differentiation. For instance, when hematopoietic stem cells were cultured in the presence of 100 U/mL of IL-3, a 100-fold increase in cell number was seen within 7 days. Throughout this time course, more than 95% of the cells exhibited a primitive blast morphology. Very little spontaneous differentiation was observed, but when present, the maturing cells consisted of metamyelocytes<sup>8,9</sup>. When the IL-3 concentration was reduced to 1 U/mL, only limited proliferation was observed, but a greater proportion of mature cells was present following 7 days of culture, including some mature neutrophils. When cells were grown with GM-CSF only, little increase in cell number was seen after 7 days, but the cultures contained more mature neutrophils and macrophages. These data indicate that IL-3 supports the maintenance and proliferation of early cells, whereas GM-CSF acts predominantly as a differentiation factor<sup>8</sup>.

Recent studies have shown that a combination of early acting factors affecting the kinetics of cell cycle-dormant primitive stem cells is necessary to stimulate the proliferation and differentiation of primitive hematopoietic stem/progenitor cells. Combinations of stem cell factor (SCF; c-kit ligand) or a ligand for type III receptor tyrosine kinase (flt3 RTK; FL) with IL-3 or GM-CSF showed a distinct synergistic effect on primitive stem cells<sup>10,11</sup>. Furthermore, the combination of three signals through the activation of gp130 (a signal-transducing receptor), c-kit, and IL-3 receptor (IL-3R) exerted a dramatic synergistic action on hematopoietic colony formation<sup>12</sup>. In the presence of these three signals, multipotential progenitors and committed cells could proliferate and differentiate to form colonies in the absence of terminally acting

**Table 1. Effects of G-CSF and GM-CSF on Neutrophil Distribution and Function**

	IN VITRO		IN VIVO	
	G-CSF	GM-CSF	G-CSF	GM-CSF
Adhesion	↑ 60, 61 n 57, 58	↑ 57,58,62,63	↑ 64,65,66, 67	↑ 63
Chemotaxis	↑ 68, 69 n 70 ↓ 72, 73	↑ 69,74 ↓ 70-72, 75	↑ 85 n 80-83 ↓ 39, 65-67, 76, 77	n 71, 83, 84 ↓ 23, 78, 79
CD11b/CD18	↑ 57, 58, 60, 70, 72	↑ 57, 58, 62, 63, 70, 72, 87, 88	↑ 64, 66, 84, 90, 91	↑ 23, 57, 92
L-selectin	↓ 57, 58, 70, 96, 97	↓ 57, 58, 70	↓ 57, 96, 97	↓ 57
Phagocytosis	↑ 69, 77, 90, 102, 104	↑ 69, 87, 90, 102, 103, 105	↑ 66,77,85,90,107,108 n 82,106	↑ 78
FcγRI	↑ 109 n 69, 88, 110, 111	↑ 69 n 88	↑ 65,66,110,112,113	n 23, 112
FcγRII	↑ 109		↑ 66	n 23
FcγRIII	↑ 88, 89	n 88 ↓ 115	n 66 ↓ 65,73,89,113,115	n 23 ↓ 116
CR 1	n 69	↑ 69	↑ 66,67	
Respiratory Burst	↑ 60,70,72,117,118, 122,143 ↓ 136	↑ 70,72,87,102,117, 119,120, 121,122	↑ 38,66,67,91,124-126, 127,130-134 n 66 ↓ 137	↑ 128-130, 132, 133, 135
Microbicidal Activity	↑ 69,72,105,109, 142,143 n 140	↑ 69,138,139 n 103,119	↑ 140,144 n 136,145	↑ 146
ADCC	↑ 27,145,147,148	↑ 27,147,148,149	↑ 93,112	↑ 150
Degranulation	↑ 131	↑ 101,102, 121,139, 151	↑ 89,154	↑ 154
CD14	↑ 92	↑ 92	↑ 65,73,92,93,115	n 92
Apoptosis	↓ 165,166,168,176	↓ -165-170	↓ 177,178	↓ 178

↑ - increased; ↓ - decreased; n – no effect.

lineage-specific factors, such as G-CSF, erythropoietin, and thrombopoietin. Moreover, data from single-cell suspension cultures suggested that IL-3 support was important for survival and initial proliferation, whereas SCF was important for enhancement of progenitor cell proliferation<sup>12,13</sup>.

Because of the known synergistic activities of hematopoietic growth factor combinations<sup>14,15</sup> and based on the assumption that normal hematopoiesis is regulated

by such combinations, *in vitro* studies have been conducted to stimulate cell proliferation and simultaneously facilitate differentiation and maturation. *In vitro* expansion of progenitors and neutrophil precursors from enriched CD34<sup>+</sup> marrow cells has been achieved by the combination of IL-3, GM-CSF and G-CSF, which also increased the proportion of cells expressing the myeloid antigens CD13, CD15, CD11b and CD14<sup>13</sup>. Addition of SCF to this mixture of factors further increased the production of progenitors and precursors and helped to maintain the cells at a less differentiated stage early in the cultures<sup>13</sup>.

*In vivo*, human studies have shown that IL-3 is a powerful activator of the proliferation of all myelopoietic progenitors. The effect is dose dependent, and the various progenitors have different degrees of sensitivity; megakaryocyte progenitors appear to be the most sensitive, followed by erythroid and granulocyte/monocyte progenitors, orderly<sup>16</sup>. Furthermore, IL-3 acts as a primer for the action of other cytokines. Purified marrow progenitors obtained at the end of 7 days of IL-3 administration are more sensitive *in vitro* to the effect of optimal doses of G-CSF. This priming effect, also observed *in vivo* in the presence of physiological concentrations of G-CSF, could explain the modest increase in the proliferative activity of the morphologically recognizable granulocyte progenitors induced by IL-3<sup>17</sup>. The same priming effect is seen with GM-CSF, which induces simultaneous stimulation of granulopoiesis, eosinophilopoiesis, and monocytopoiesis<sup>18,19</sup>. Clinical trials with IL-3 alone, however, have resulted in significant side effects with only very modest changes in blood cell counts<sup>20-22</sup>. Likewise, *in vivo* studies in healthy volunteers showed that GM-CSF at a dose of 250 mcg/m<sup>2</sup> causes neutrophilia mainly by accelerating delivery of neutrophils from the bone marrow to the blood and by decreasing migration from the blood to the tissues, with only a modest effect on neutrophil production and blood half-life<sup>23</sup>. Combinations of IL-3 and GM-CSF have been used in an attempt to better stimulate granulopoiesis. A study in cancer patients, showed a 3.2-fold amplification in neutrophil production, which required at least 2 extra divisions in the marrow<sup>19</sup>. The results were comparable with those of a previous trial using GM-CSF alone, but significant ineffective granulopoiesis developed in this earlier study<sup>24</sup>. These findings further suggest that IL-3 serves as a priming factor to increase the proliferative activity of precursors, while GM-CSF functions primarily as a differentiation factor. Similar results were seen in patients after bone marrow transplantation<sup>25,26</sup>.

Like other growth factors, G-CSF stimulates cell proliferation and function by interacting with a specific cell surface receptor<sup>27,28</sup>. The G-CSF receptor is a 140-kDa homodimer, similar in structure to the receptors for erythropoietin and some interleukins. In contrast, other hematopoietic growth factor receptors are composed of two or three dissimilar components. Although G-CSF receptors may be found in other tissues, biologic functions are largely limited to hematopoietic cells. Experimental evidence indicates that G-CSF is necessary not only for the maintenance of normal neutrophil levels but also for the development of neutrophilia with infections.

Hammond et al. showed that dogs given repeated injections of human G-CSF produced antibodies that cross-reacted with recombinant canine G-CSF. Dogs with the anti-G-CSF antibodies developed sustained neutropenia that lasted until the antibodies had declined to undetectable levels, suggesting that G-CSF is necessary for the maintenance of a normal neutrophil count<sup>29</sup>. However, the bone marrow of these

animals showed neutrophil development that appeared normal in its early stages, suggesting that other cytokines may support the earlier phases of neutrophil formation. Lieschke et al. reported the presence of chronic neutropenia (with levels 20%-30% of normal) in G-CSF knockout mice, with marrow histology similar to that of dogs with G-CSF deficiency<sup>30</sup>. The mice responded to G-CSF administration by developing normal blood neutrophil levels. It is noteworthy that dogs repeatedly injected with human GM-CSF and mice rendered deficient in GM-CSF by "gene knockout" experiments are not neutropenic<sup>31,32</sup>.

Circulating G-CSF levels rise promptly as an acute-phase response to endotoxin injections and in various infectious diseases<sup>33-35</sup>. A dramatic example of this response was reported in a patient who self-injected 1 mg of *Salmonella minnesota* endotoxin and subsequently developed hypotension and sepsis syndrome. Twenty two hours later, the G-CSF level was 277 ng/mL, equivalent to the levels achieved after intravenous injection of approximately 25 mcg/kg recombinant G-CSF<sup>36</sup>. Cebon et al. examined the level of G-CSF, interleukin-6 (IL-6), GM-CSF, and monocyte/macrophage colony-stimulating factor (M-CSF) in normal subjects, febrile neutropenic patients, and bacteremic patients who were not neutropenic<sup>37</sup>. G-CSF, IL-6, and M-CSF levels were elevated with fever, but GM-CSF levels were not. In multiple regression analysis, the investigators showed that G-CSF levels correlated with fever, neutropenia, and pathogen type (higher levels in patients with gram-negative infections compared to those with gram-positive infections). Thus, a growing body of evidence suggests that G-CSF is necessary not only for the maintenance of normal neutrophil levels but also for the development of neutrophilia with infections.

Normally, neutrophil development requires approximately 6 days from the last stage of cell division, the myelocyte stage, before entry into the blood, as measured by *in vivo* labeling with <sup>3</sup>H-TdR<sup>38</sup>. Daily injection of G-CSF (30 mcg/day) to healthy young and elderly volunteers reduced this interval to approximately 4.5 days. A higher dose of G-CSF (300 mcg/day) further reduced the transit time to approximately 3 days and expanded the neutrophil mitotic pool, without significantly affecting blood neutrophil circulatory half-life or the distribution of blood neutrophils between the marginal and circulating pools<sup>38,39</sup>. A single injection of G-CSF (300 mcg) increased the blood neutrophil count about 4 fold<sup>40</sup>. Repeated administration of G-CSF over several days in hematologically healthy volunteers causes sustained neutrophilia<sup>39-42</sup>. Thus, daily subcutaneous G-CSF injection induces a progressive elevation of the base line count to a plateau, with superimposed acute increases in the count after each dose is given, which far exceeds the normal variation. On the basis of the observation that the percentage of circulating band neutrophils is increased, the acute neutrophilia after G-CSF administration is generally attributed to the release of maturing cells from bone marrow neutrophil reserves resulting from the dose-dependent shortening of the marrow transit time<sup>38-40</sup>.

G-CSF also causes neutrophilia by stimulating proliferation of all stages of neutrophil development through the myelocyte stage<sup>39,41,43</sup>. Cells of the neutrophil lineage, including undifferentiated cells (CD34<sup>+</sup> CD33<sup>-</sup>), have receptors for G-CSF and respond to this cytokine with increased proliferation<sup>44</sup>. G-CSF is also able to raise circulating CD34<sup>+</sup> hematopoietic progenitor cells in peripheral blood of healthy volunteers, cancer patients and severely ill patients with the acquired

immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) <sup>45</sup>. Histologically, a prompt increase in the percentage of cells engaged in active DNA synthesis is present in marrow aspirate and biopsy samples <sup>46</sup>. Marrow cells exhibit features arising from both stimulated production and accelerated marrow release <sup>38-40</sup>. With aging, there seems to be no apparent difference in the hematopoietic-precursor response to factors that are regarded as early multilineage regulators (i.e., IL-3 and GM-CSF). In addition, bone marrow hematopoietic progenitors from healthy elderly subjects have reduced sensitivity, but similar absolute responsiveness to G-CSF compared to healthy young subjects <sup>39,40,44,47,48</sup>.

M-CSF exerts its physiologic activity on cells committed to the monocyte/macrophage lineage, enhancing their replication, differentiation, and protein synthesis. Early clinical studies with M-CSF reported amelioration of neutropenia induced by conventional dose chemotherapy for solid tumors <sup>49</sup>, and a more rapid neutrophil recovery in patients undergoing bone marrow transplantation (BMT) <sup>50</sup>. However, more recent clinical studies have been unable to demonstrate any effect of M-CSF on neutrophil recovery after BMT <sup>51-53</sup>. Current available data suggest that this growth factor has no significant activity on neutrophils <sup>54</sup>.

### Effects of Colony-Stimulating Factors on Neutrophil Distribution

Neutrophils leave the marrow storage compartment and enter the blood, and there is no evidence that they re-enter the marrow or recirculate once they leave the blood and enter the tissues<sup>55</sup>. The total blood neutrophil pool consists of all the neutrophils in the vascular spaces. A substantial percentage of these neutrophils do not circulate freely but adhere to the endothelium of blood vessels. These adherent cells constitute the marginated neutrophil pool, which accounts for approximately half of the total number of neutrophils <sup>56</sup>. The behavior of neutrophils in the blood appears to be controlled predominantly by two classes of membrane-bound adhesion proteins, L-selectin (LAM-1) and the  $\beta_2$  integrin receptor CD11b/CD18, which regulate neutrophil rolling and transendothelial migration, respectively <sup>57-59</sup>.

The mature neutrophil lacks IL-3 receptors and, thus, is not affected by IL-3. However, *in vitro* stimulation of peripheral blood neutrophils with either G-CSF or GM-CSF leads to rapid (maximal by 30 min) up-regulation of CD11b/CD18 and down-regulation of L-selectin (LAM-1) <sup>57,58</sup>. Early *in vitro* studies reported increased neutrophil adherence after treatment with G-CSF <sup>60,61</sup>, but recent investigators have failed to detect an effect of G-CSF on neutrophil adherence <sup>57,58</sup>. In contrast, GM-CSF has consistently been shown to increase neutrophil adherence to vascular endothelium <sup>57,58,62,63</sup>. In addition, GM-CSF is also able to down-regulate neutrophil L-selectin (LAM-1) expression <sup>57</sup>. When G-CSF was administered to healthy volunteers, neutrophils displayed enhanced expression of CD11b/CD18 and increased adhesion to E-selectin and ICAM-1 (CD54) <sup>64</sup>. G-CSF treatment of patients with cancer and severe neutropenia also resulted in an increased adherence of the induced neutrophils to plastic surfaces <sup>65</sup>. Yong et al. demonstrated that GM-CSF enhances neutrophil adherence to human endothelial monolayers *in vitro*, while G-CSF, despite producing a rise in CD11b expression of similar magnitude to that of GM-CSF, had no effect on neutrophil adherence <sup>57</sup>. G-CSF administered to healthy volunteers and patients with

aplastic anemia caused increased neutrophil adhesion to nylon wool, which peaked on day 4 or 5 of treatment<sup>64,66,67</sup>. *In vivo*, although the time course and magnitude of the margination responses are similar for G-CSF and GM-CSF, the kinetics of margination differ. Following G-CSF, neutrophils marginate earlier with complete recovery of counts by 60 minutes, whereas at 2 hours after GM-CSF, peripheral cell counts were still at 50 percent of preinfusion levels<sup>57</sup>.

## Effects of Colony-Stimulating Factors on Neutrophil Function

Neutrophil chemotaxis and tissue migration. Chemotaxis refers to the directed migration of neutrophils along a concentration gradient of a particular stimulus, known as a chemotactic factor. G-CSF has been shown to serve as a chemotactic agent for neutrophils *in vitro*<sup>68</sup>. Checkerboard experiments performed using polycarbonate filters showed that maximal induction of migration occurred in the presence of a positive concentration gradient<sup>68</sup>. Bober et al. showed that pre-exposure of neutrophils to G-CSF or GM-CSF for 15 minutes stimulated the motility of the cells toward soluble stimuli such as formyl-methionyl-leucyl-phenylalanine (FMLP)<sup>69</sup>. However, other *in vitro* experiments have yielded contrasting results, including a dose-related inhibition of neutrophil chemotaxis after priming with GM-CSF<sup>70-72</sup>. Other studies have shown no effect or inhibition of chemotaxis after priming with G-CSF<sup>70,72,73</sup>. In general, the balance of data indicates that both G-CSF and GM-CSF enhance neutrophil chemotaxis *in vitro* at low concentrations and inhibit neutrophil motility at high concentrations<sup>68,70,71,74,75</sup>. This biphasic response presumably serves to attract and immobilize neutrophils at sites of inflammation. Chemokinesis, which refers to the random migration of neutrophils in response to a particular stimulus, is stimulated *in vitro* by both G-CSF<sup>58,68</sup> and GM-CSF<sup>58</sup>.

*In vivo* experiments in healthy volunteers<sup>65,66</sup>, patients with cancer<sup>65,66</sup>, patients with aplastic anemia<sup>67</sup>, and patients following bone marrow transplantation<sup>76</sup> have demonstrated decreased neutrophil chemotaxis after administration of G-CSF. In one study, chemotaxis toward FMLP was decreased after 2-3 d of treatment and returned to normal values 3-5 d after cessation of G-CSF therapy<sup>65</sup>. Furthermore, studies performed in our laboratory in healthy volunteers showed decreased neutrophil migration after administration of 300 mcg/d of G-CSF for 5 days, as demonstrated by the lack of proportional increase in neutrophil count in skin chambers and buccal neutrophils<sup>39</sup>. Similar results were observed after daily administration of GM-CSF (250 mcg/m<sup>2</sup>)<sup>23</sup>. Other *in vivo* studies investigating neutrophil function in G-CSF-treated healthy volunteers and patients with cancer have shown decreased neutrophil migration into tissues<sup>65,66,76,77</sup>. During continuous intravenous infusion of GM-CSF, a markedly reduced neutrophil migration was found in a skin chamber assay<sup>78,79</sup>. However, other studies have not shown impairment of neutrophil migration *in vivo* after treatment with G-CSF<sup>80-82</sup> or GM-CSF<sup>83,84</sup>. Lieschke et al. evaluated the presence of neutrophils in the oral cavity in patients after bone marrow transplantation using a mouth rinse assay<sup>80</sup>. The percentage of neutrophils recovered from the oral cavity was not altered by G-CSF administration, suggesting that G-CSF did not impair tissue migration of primed neutrophils. In addition, another study demonstrated that G-CSF was able to improve abnormal neutrophil chemotaxis when given to patients with

myelodysplastic syndrome<sup>85</sup>. Factors that might be responsible for the variable results on neutrophil chemotaxis and tissue migration include the use of different assays, different doses and routes of administration, and different intervals between administration of the growth factor and blood collection.

**Integrins and selectins.** The  $\beta_2$  integrin subfamily of adhesion molecules play an important role in the regulation of neutrophil adhesion and migration into tissues<sup>86</sup>. Expression of CD11b, an  $\alpha$ -subunit of the  $\beta_2$  integrin subfamily, is up-regulated on neutrophils by G-CSF<sup>57,58,60,70,72</sup> and GM-CSF<sup>57,58,62,63,70,72,87,88</sup> *in vitro*. Up-regulation of CD11b has been observed following administration of G-CSF to healthy volunteers<sup>64,66,89</sup> and patients with malignancy<sup>90,91</sup>. Likewise, GM-CSF administered *in vivo* stimulated CD11b expression in healthy volunteers<sup>23</sup> and cancer patients<sup>57,92</sup>. Up-regulation of CD11b is a very early event after administration of G-CSF, with maximal expression levels seen approximately 1 hour after administration<sup>90,91,93</sup>. These changes in surface expression of adherence molecules may represent the mechanism underlying the acute but transient neutropenia observed following the administration of either G-CSF<sup>41,94</sup> or GM-CSF<sup>23</sup>.

*In vitro* studies performed in healthy volunteers have shown that both G-CSF and GM-CSF down-regulate expression of L-selectin (LAM-1) on neutrophils<sup>58,70</sup>. Also, both colony stimulating factors have been reported to initially increase the affinity of L-selectin (LAM-1) for its ligand<sup>95</sup>, then to decrease L-selectin (LAM-1) surface expression via shedding<sup>57,95,96,97</sup>. Serum concentrations of soluble L-selectin (sL-selectin) and sE-selectin were elevated after administration of G-CSF to healthy volunteers and patients with cancer<sup>98</sup>. sL-selectin retained functional activity and inhibited L-selectin-dependent leukocyte attachment to endothelial cells<sup>99,100</sup>. Conceivably, altered L-selectin expression may play a role in the regulation of the adhesive functions of primed neutrophils.

**Phagocytosis.** *In vitro*, GM-CSF<sup>69,87,101-104</sup> and G-CSF<sup>69,101,105</sup> stimulate phagocytic activity of normal neutrophils. The phagocytic activity of neutrophils stimulated with GM-CSF<sup>78</sup> and G-CSF<sup>66,77,82,90,106,107</sup> *in vivo* was enhanced or normal in most studies. G-CSF has been found to enhance the abnormal phagocytic activity of neutrophils in patients with myelodysplastic syndrome<sup>85</sup> and chronic graft-versus-host disease<sup>108</sup>. The enhancement of neutrophil phagocytosis by GM-CSF and G-CSF is related to increased expression of Fc receptors for IgG (Fc $\gamma$ R) [known as the high-affinity receptor Fc $\gamma$ RI (CD64) and the low-affinity receptors Fc $\gamma$ RII (CD32) and Fc $\gamma$ RIII (CD16)], and receptors for the C3b and C3bi complement fragments known as complement receptor 1 (CR1; CD35) and CR3 (CD11b/CD18)<sup>74,109</sup>.

**Immunoglobulin and complement receptors.** Under natural conditions, expression of Fc $\gamma$ RI (CD64) is restricted to monocytes in various stages of development and early precursors of the myelocyte lineage<sup>110</sup>. With maturation into band forms and polymorphonuclear cells, Fc $\gamma$ RI (CD64) expression diminishes strongly. Studies have shown that GM-CSF and G-CSF have only a marginal effect *in vitro* on CD64 expression by mature neutrophils<sup>69,88,110,111</sup>. However, during G-CSF-induced *in vitro* myeloid differentiation, the CD64 receptor remains expressed during final maturation<sup>110</sup>. Sullivan et al. reported increased expression of Fc $\gamma$ RI (CD64) after *in vitro* stimulation of mature neutrophils with G-CSF<sup>109</sup>. A strong induction of Fc $\gamma$ RI (CD64)

on mature neutrophils has been observed after administration of G-CSF to healthy volunteers<sup>65,66,110</sup> and patients with cancer<sup>65,112,113</sup>, cyclic neutropenia<sup>112</sup> and AIDS<sup>113</sup>. Administration of GM-CSF to healthy volunteers failed to affect on expression of FcγRI (CD64)<sup>23</sup>.

Mature neutrophils constitutively express low affinity receptors for multimeric IgG, [FcγRII (CD32) and FcγRIII (CD 16)] which mediate binding and lysis of cells coated with IgG, in a process known as antibody-dependent cellular cytotoxicity (ADCC), as well as binding and phagocytosis of immune complexes<sup>114</sup>. *In vitro*, G-CSF stimulates the expression of FcγRII (CD32)<sup>109</sup> and FcγRIII (CD16)<sup>88,89</sup>, while expression of FcγRIII (CD16) is either decreased or unaltered by GM-CSF<sup>88,115</sup>. In studies conducted in healthy volunteers, administration of G-CSF increased neutrophil expression of FcγRII (CD32), whereas FcγRIII (CD16) expression did not differ from base line<sup>66</sup>. Others have found the expression of FcγRIII to be strongly decreased after G-CSF administration to healthy volunteers<sup>65,89</sup>, patients following cancer chemotherapy<sup>65,113</sup>, and patients with congenital neutropenias<sup>73,115</sup>. GM-CSF *in vivo* produced decreased neutrophil expression of FcγRIII (CD16) in one study<sup>115</sup> and no effect in expression of FcγRII (CD32) and FcγRIII (CD16) in another study<sup>23</sup>.

The decreased expression of FcγRIII (CD16) after administration of G-CSF and GM-CSF may be related to either their respective actions on neutrophil precursors, favoring the release of partially immature granulocytes from the marrow, or shedding of the receptor. Kerst et al. found that levels of soluble FcγRIII (sFcγRIII; sCD16) were increased for as long as 10 days in healthy volunteers after a single dose of G-CSF<sup>93</sup>. Similar results have been published by others<sup>113</sup>. More research is needed to clarify the biological and clinical relevance of these changes on neutrophil function.

*In vitro* studies have shown that expression of CR1 (CD35) and CR3 (CD11b/CD18) is increased in GM-CSF-primed neutrophils. In contrast, G-CSF reportedly does not enhance expression of these cell-surface receptors<sup>69</sup>. Nevertheless, when neutrophil microbicidal activity against *S. aureus* was evaluated, no difference was seen between GM-CSF- or G-CSF-primed neutrophils. In a different set of studies, increased expression of CR1 (CD35) and CR3 (CD11b/CD18) was observed after G-CSF treatment of healthy volunteers and patients with cancer or aplastic anemia<sup>66,67</sup>.

Respiratory oxidative burst. *In vitro* stimulation with G-CSF or GM-CSF fails to activate the respiratory burst of neutrophils in suspension, but induces a delayed but substantial respiratory burst in adherent neutrophils<sup>117</sup>. Although the maximal response to both CSFs is roughly equivalent, it is noteworthy that GM-CSF is the more potent stimulus when compared on the basis of weight<sup>117</sup>. After a short incubation time (15 min) with either GM-CSF or G-CSF, neutrophils demonstrate a marked enhancement in their ability to undergo a respiratory burst in response to FMLP or zymosan-activated serum<sup>60,70,72,87,102,117-122</sup>. Although both agents exert similar priming effects on neutrophils, their respective signal transduction pathways differ<sup>123</sup>.

We have previously shown that *in vivo* administration of G-CSF<sup>38,124,125,126</sup> and GM-CSF<sup>23</sup> to healthy volunteers primed neutrophils for an enhanced production of reactive oxygen species (ROS). The neutrophil respiratory burst is increased after administration of GM-CSF and G-CSF to patients with cancer<sup>66,91,127-130</sup>, myelodysplasia<sup>131-133</sup>, aplastic anemia<sup>67</sup>, diabetes<sup>134</sup> and after bone marrow trans-



plantation<sup>135</sup>. Other studies, however, have failed to demonstrate this priming effect. Höglund et al. found that G-CSF *in vivo* did not stimulate the neutrophil respiratory burst in healthy volunteers<sup>66</sup>. Others have found a decreased production of ROS by neutrophils of patients with severe congenital neutropenia (SCN) after priming with G-CSF and stimulation with FMLP, but normal values after stimulation with the direct activator, phorbol myristate acetate (PMA)<sup>136,137</sup>. The balance of experimental evidence indicates that GM-CSF and G-CSF enhance the respiratory burst of normal and dysfunctional neutrophils both *in vitro* and *in vivo*.

**Microbicidal activity.** *In vitro*, G-CSF significantly enhanced the microbicidal activity of normal neutrophils and defective neutrophils from HIV-1-infected patients against *Staphylococcus aureus*<sup>105,109</sup>, while GM-CSF stimulated the bactericidal activity of neutrophils obtained from patients following allogeneic bone marrow transplantation against *Staphylococcus aureus*<sup>138</sup>. Other *in vitro* studies showed that GM-CSF and G-CSF were able to correct the decreased neutrophil killing of *S. aureus* in patients with myelodysplasia<sup>72</sup> and in dexamethasone-suppressed neutrophils<sup>69</sup>. However, in other studies GM-CSF failed to augment bactericidal activity of neutrophils *in vitro* despite increasing phagocytic activity and stimulating production of ROS<sup>103,119</sup>. GM-CSF enhanced the fungicidal activity of normal neutrophils *in vitro* against blastospores of *Torulopsis glabrata*<sup>139</sup> and *Candida albicans*<sup>69</sup>. Conflicting results have been reported with G-CSF, however, which failed *in vitro* to enhance the fungicidal activity of neutrophils against *C. albicans* blastospores<sup>69,140</sup>, despite its ability to augment the neutrophil respiratory burst in response to blastoconidia and pseudohyphae of the yeast<sup>141</sup>. In contrast, other *in vitro* studies conducted with neutrophils obtained from healthy volunteers showed that neutrophils stimulated with G-CSF had enhanced fungicidal activity against different *Candida* species<sup>142</sup> and *Aspergillus fumigatus*<sup>143</sup>.

Administration of G-CSF to HIV-1-infected patients caused significant enhancement of neutrophil fungicidal activity against *C. albicans* and *C. neoformans*<sup>140</sup>. Furthermore, treatment with G-CSF enhanced neutrophil bactericidal activity in cancer patients<sup>144</sup>. However, in a group of patients with SCN<sup>136</sup> or hairy cell leukemia<sup>145</sup>, treatment with G-CSF resulted in normal neutrophil bactericidal activity. Non-human primates treated with GM-CSF showed enhanced neutrophil bactericidal activity against *E. coli*<sup>146</sup>.

**Antibody-dependent cellular cytotoxicity (ADCC).** Both G-CSF and GM-CSF are capable of stimulating neutrophil ADCC *in vitro* as well as *in vivo*. G-CSF has been shown to enhance *in vitro* neutrophil ADCC in healthy volunteers<sup>27,147,148</sup>, HIV-infected patients<sup>147</sup> and hairy-cell-leukemia patients<sup>145</sup>. *In vitro*, GM-CSF also enhanced ADCC of neutrophils from healthy volunteers<sup>27,102,147-149</sup> and patients with chronic granulomatous disease (CGD)<sup>147</sup>. Furthermore, G-CSF stimulated *in vivo* ADCC when given to healthy volunteers<sup>93</sup> and cancer patients<sup>112</sup>. A similar effect was observed following administration of GM-CSF to HIV-infected patients<sup>150</sup>.

**Degranulation.** *In vitro* assays have shown that GM-CSF primes neutrophils for an augmented release of constituents from both specific and azurophil granules in response to *C. albicans*<sup>101</sup>, *Torulopsis glabrata*<sup>139</sup>, Sephadex particles<sup>151</sup>, opsonized inflammatory microcrystals<sup>121</sup> and FMLP<sup>102</sup>. *In vitro*, G-CSF is able to induce leukocyte alkaline phosphatase (LAP) mRNA<sup>152</sup> and to increase LAP activity in

neutrophils<sup>153</sup>. Furthermore, G-CSF has been shown to increase LAP activity in neutrophils from patients with myelodysplastic syndrome and chronic myelogenous leukemia (CML)<sup>131</sup>. G-CSF also induces *in vivo* activation of neutrophils, as demonstrated by the mobilization and release of secretory vesicles (LAP and CD11b), specific granules (lactoferrin, CD11b, and CD66b), and azurophil granules (elastase and  $\alpha$ -1 antitrypsin)<sup>89</sup>. Administration of GM-CSF or G-CSF, but not M-CSF, to patients recovering from autologous bone marrow transplantation primed neutrophils for enhanced neutrophil degranulation<sup>154</sup>.

Other receptor expression and function. The receptor for lipopolysaccharide (LPS) and LPS-binding protein (LBP) known as CD14 is expressed by neutrophils at low levels under natural conditions<sup>155</sup>. *In vitro*, both G-CSF and GM-CSF stimulated expression of CD14 antigen in mature neutrophils<sup>92</sup>. Increased surface expression of CD14 on neutrophils has been found after administration of G-CSF to healthy volunteers<sup>65,92,93</sup>, patients post-chemotherapy<sup>65</sup> and patients with congenital neutropenias<sup>73,115</sup>. In contrast, GM-CSF failed to alter CD14 expression on neutrophils<sup>92</sup>. In addition, the level of soluble CD14 (sCD14) rose in plasma after healthy volunteers received G-CSF<sup>93</sup>.

Apoptosis. Programmed cell death or apoptosis refers to the non-pathologic or physiological mode of cell death, which occurs via a characteristic sequence of events with morphologic features distinct from necrosis<sup>156</sup>. Because apoptosis induces the recognition and phagocytosis of senescent neutrophils by monocyte-derived macrophages and phagocytes, death via apoptosis results in the removal of intact neutrophils at tissue sites, presumably preventing the release of their toxic compounds into the tissues<sup>157,158</sup>. Apoptosis is now recognized to play a fundamental role in the regulation of the immune system and the inflammatory response<sup>159,160</sup>. As neutrophils proceed through apoptosis, functional activity declines. Apoptotic neutrophils lose Fc $\gamma$ RIII (CD16) expression<sup>161,162</sup> and demonstrate a reduced ability to degranulate, generate respiratory burst, or undergo shape changes in response to external stimuli such as FMLP<sup>163,164</sup>.

Recent evidence indicates that the functional life span of mature human neutrophils can be significantly extended *in vitro* by incubation with pro-inflammatory mediators, including G-CSF, GM-CSF, interferon- $\gamma$  (IFN- $\gamma$ ), tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$  (TNF- $\alpha$ ), IL-1 $\beta$ , IL-2, endotoxic lipopolysaccharide (LPS) and complement factor 5a (C5a)<sup>165-168</sup>, or adenosine triphosphate (ATP) and the diadenosine polyphosphates Ap<sub>3</sub>A, Ap<sub>4</sub>A, Ap<sub>5</sub>A and Ap<sub>8</sub>A<sup>169-171</sup>, or dexamethasone<sup>166</sup>. *In vitro* studies have shown that the combination of GM-CSF together with ATP and diadenosine polyphosphates results in more pronounced protection from apoptosis than that of any of the components alone<sup>169,170</sup>.

Niessen et al. showed that G-CSF delays spontaneous neutrophil apoptosis in part by activation of the vacuolar proton ATPase (v-ATPase) which plays a role in maintaining cellular pH balance. G-CSF may stimulate v-ATPase synthesis or its translocation to the plasma membrane<sup>171</sup>. Other laboratories, including ours, have studied another important mechanism involved in the regulation of spontaneous neutrophil apoptosis, the Fas (APO-1; CD95)/Fas-ligand (FasL) pathway, showing that neutrophils are highly susceptible to death through this system<sup>166,172,173</sup>. Although Fas

is constitutively expressed on human neutrophils, monocytes and eosinophils, constitutive expression of cell surface FasL is relatively restricted to neutrophils<sup>166,172-174</sup>. As a result of constitutive co-expression of both Fas and FasL, neutrophils may be destined to undergo rapid cell death via the Fas apoptotic pathway. *In vitro* experiments have shown that G-CSF, GM-CSF, IFN- $\gamma$ , TNF- $\alpha$ , or dexamethasone can suppress Fas-mediated neutrophil apoptosis and partly maintain neutrophil function<sup>166,168,175</sup>.

Neutrophil apoptosis has been found to be accelerated in patients with advanced HIV infection (AIDS)<sup>176</sup>. The defect appears to be intrinsic and not related to serum factors. *In vitro* incubation of neutrophils from AIDS patients with G-CSF significantly delayed apoptosis<sup>176</sup>. *In vivo* administration of G-CSF to healthy volunteers and cancer patients increased subsequent neutrophil survival *ex vivo* by approximately 24 hours longer than that observed in controls which did not receive G-CSF<sup>177</sup>. Other studies examining neutrophil apoptosis in the acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) have shown that the proportion of apoptotic neutrophils recovered from the lungs of patients with ARDS is low throughout the course of ARDS. In addition, the alveolar microenvironment of patients with established ARDS contains factors that prolong the survival of normal human neutrophils *in vitro*. G-CSF and GM-CSF appear to account for the majority of anti-apoptotic activity detected in the bronchoalveolar fluid from patients with ARDS<sup>178</sup>.

## Summary

Scientific data support the concept that IL-3 in combination with other early acting factors (SCF; c-kit ligand and flt3 RTK; FL) are required to stimulate the proliferation and differentiation of primitive hematopoietic stem/progenitor cells. GM-CSF, on the other hand, acts predominantly as a differentiation factor for granulocyte/monocyte progenitors. G-CSF has a more restricted activity, limited mainly to the granulocyte lineage, where it is necessary not only for the maintenance of normal neutrophil level but also for the development of neutrophilia with infections. In contrast, M-CSF exerts its activity on the committed monocyte/macrophage cell lineage, with very little or no activity on the granulocyte cell lineage. Mature neutrophils lack IL-3 receptors and are, therefore, not affected by IL-3. In contrast, GM-CSF and G-CSF act on mature neutrophils modulating not only their distribution in blood and tissues but also their function.

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