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Glycoviropology Protocols

Edited by

Richard J. Sugrue

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Cover Illustration. Background: Panel of Figure 5 from Chapter 5, "Functional Analysis of the *N*-Linked Glycans Within the Fusion Protein of Respiratory Syncytial Virus" by Ping Li, Helen W. McL. Rixon, Gaie Brown, and Richard J. Sugrue. Left inset: The morphology of mature respiratory syncytial virus particles. Virus particles were labeled with an antibody against the virus G (attachment) glycoprotein and visualized using electron microscopy. The location of the bound antibody was detected using a second antibody conjugated to 10-nm gold particles, which are visualized as black spots in the image. Right inset: Electron micrograph showing respiratory syncytial virus budding from the surface of infected Hep2 cells..

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Preface

The application of molecular biological techniques in the field of virology over the last 25 years has enhanced our understanding of how viruses interact with their hosts. Such studies have demonstrated that intimate interactions between virus and cell proteins occur during the virus replication cycle. Many of these interactions are mediated via posttranslational modifications, either of virus or host-cell proteins. The addition of carbohydrate molecules, also referred to as glycans, is one of the most important ways in which proteins are modified during virus infection. From the initial stages of cell attachment to the final stages of virus maturation, glycans are involved. Receptor specificity, which governs virus attachment to the host cell and is hence a major determinant of tissue tropism, is in many cases largely dependent on the structure of the glycan moieties present on the cell surface. Additionally, glycans mediate the interaction between many virus proteins and cellular chaperones during transport through the secretory pathway, thus preventing the formation of misfolded proteins during virus maturation.

Given the increasing importance of glycosylation to the field of virology, it is pertinent and timely to produce a book that describes, and collates, some of the strategies that have been used to study the glycobiology of viruses. The focus of *Glycoviropology Protocols* is restricted to glycoproteins, although it is acknowledged that other glycan-modified biomolecules, such as glycolipids, also play an important role during virus replication. The opening chapter provides an overview of glycosylation in relation to virus infection and the generic techniques that are used to analyze and characterize glycoproteins. However, many of these techniques cannot simply be taken “off the shelf,” rather they must be modified to suit the specific virus system in question. It is for this reason that expert virologists have been asked to contribute chapters that describe the application of these techniques to their own specific areas of interest. *Glycoviropology Protocols* is written for researchers with different levels of experience, from PhD students to senior scientists. It is intended that the information presented in this book will provide insight as to how the techniques of glycobiology can be applied in virology to answer questions that are of interest to the reader.

Richard J. Sugrue

Contents

Preface	v
Contributors	ix
1 Viruses and Glycosylation: <i>An Overview</i> Richard J. Sugrue	1
2 Interaction Between Respiratory Syncytial Virus and Glycosaminoglycans, Including Heparan Sulfate Louay K. Hallak, Steven A. Kwilas, and Mark E. Peeples	15
3 Expression of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 3a Protein and the Assembly of Coronavirus-Like Particles in the Baculovirus Expression System Sheaam Khan, Mah-Lee Ng, and Yee-Joo Tan	35
4 The C Type Lectins DC-SIGN and L-SIGN: <i>Receptors for Viral Glycoproteins</i> Pierre-Yves Lozach, Laura Burleigh, Isabelle Staropoli, and Ali Amara	51
5 Functional Analysis of the N-Linked Glycans Within the Fusion Protein of Respiratory Syncytial Virus Ping Li, Helen W. McL. Rixon, Gaie Brown, and Richard J. Sugrue	69
6 Expression and Purification of Viral Glycoproteins Using Recombinant Vaccinia Viruses for Functional and Structural Studies Zhu-Nan Li and David A. Steinhauer	85
7 The Use of Two-Dimensional SDS-PAGE to Analyze the Glycan Heterogeneity of the Respiratory Syncytial Virus Fusion Protein Terence P. McDonald and Richard J. Sugrue	97
8 The Use of Monoclonal Antibodies and Lectins to Identify Changes in Viral Glycoproteins That Are Influenced by Glycosylation: <i>The Case of Respiratory Syncytial Virus Attachment (G) Glycoprotein</i> Joanna Rawling and José A. Melero	109
9 Expression, Glycosylation, and Modification of the Spike (S) Glycoprotein of SARS-CoV Shuo Shen, Timothy H. P. Tan, and Yee-Joo Tan	127

10	Analysis of Glycoproteins of Viruses in the Family <i>Bunyaviridae</i> Xiaohong Shi and Richard M. Elliott	137
11	Secretion of Respiratory Syncytial Virus Fusion Protein From Insect Cells Using the Baculovirus Expression System Boon-Huan Tan, Gaie Brown, and Richard J. Sugrue	149
12	Characterization of the Dengue Virus Envelope Glycoprotein Expressed in <i>Pichia pastoris</i> Boon-Huan Tan, Jian Lin Fu, and Richard J. Sugrue	163
13	Cloning, Expression, and Functional Analysis of Patient-Derived Hepatitis C Virus Glycoproteins Alexander W. Tarr, Ania M. Owsianka, Alexandra Szwejk, Jonathan K. Ball, and Arvind H. Patel	177
	Index	199

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