

ORTHODONTIC TOOTH MOVEMENT AND NEUROTROPHINS IN THE RAT DENTO-ALVEOLAR COMPLEX



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Thesis

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Figures and Tables	4
Glossary of Abbreviated Terms.....	6
Declaration.....	9
Acknowledgements.....	10
SECTION 1	12
Introduction	13
Literature Review.....	15
Embryology of the Periodontium.....	16
Neural crest formation	16
Formation of the enamel organ	16
Root formation.....	17
Periodontal ligament and alveolar bone proper formation	17
Histology of the Periodontium.....	18
Function.....	18
Structure.....	18
Cellular components.....	19
Non-cellular components.....	22
Vasculature of the Periodontium.....	22
Blood supply.....	22
Lymphatic supply.....	23
Nerve supply of the Periodontium.....	23
Classification	24
Function.....	24
Periodontal response to Orthodontic force	25
Histology of the Tension Zone	27
Histology of the Pressure Zone	28
Local inflammatory response to Orthodontic force	28
Molecular biological response to Orthodontic force	30
Cell matrix interactions	31
Cytoskeleton force transduction	31
Stretch-sensitive ion channels	32
Piezoelectric potentials.....	32
Signalling molecules.....	32
Neurotransmitters.....	33
Calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) and increased vascularity	35
CGRP and its role in bone remodelling	35
Growth factors	36
Conclusion	40
References	41
Statement of Purpose	46
SECTION 2.....	47
Article 1	48
Abstract.....	49
Introduction	51

Material and methods	53
Experimental groups.....	54
Harvesting of tissue.....	55
Section preparation	55
Immunohistochemistry.....	57
Results.....	60
General cellular and morphological changes.....	60
Immunohistochemistry.....	60
Discussion	65
Application of orthodontic force to rat molars	65
Perfusion	66
CGRP-immunoreactivity	67
Conclusion	69
Acknowledgements.....	70
References	71
Article 2.....	74
Abstract.....	75
Introduction	77
Materials and methods.....	78
Experimental groups.....	78
Measurement of tooth movement.....	79
Harvesting of tissue.....	80
Section preparation	80
Immunohistochemistry.....	81
Results.....	84
Immunohistochemistry.....	84
Tooth measurement results.....	85
Discussion	100
Application of orthodontic force to rat molars	100
CGRP-immunoreactivity	101
Conclusion	102
Acknowledgements.....	103
References	104
Summary	106
Appendix 1	109
The Application of Orthodontic force on the rat molars.....	109
Appendix 2.....	112
Measurement of tooth movement.....	112
Appendix 3.....	115
Tooth measurement results.....	115
Appendix 4.....	119
Harvesting of tissue.....	119
Appendix 5.....	122
Avidin-Biotin peroxidase complex immunolabelling protocol	122
Appendix 6.....	123
DAB and counter-staining protocol	123

Figures and tables

Literature review

Table 1: Molecules associated with orthodontic tooth movement38

Article 1

Figure 1: Schematic representation of section through maxillary molars56

Figure 2: Arrangement of specimen sections on slides.....56

Figure 3: An example of the DAB semi-quantification protocol59

Figure 4: Box plot graphs representing each of the animal sample groups62

Figure 5: Maxillary right first molar section photomicrographs64

Table 1: Sample size and categories54

Table 2: Results of Newman-Keuls Multiple Comparison test61

Article 2

Figure 1: Schematic representation of section through maxillary molars80

Figure 2: Arrangement of specimen sections on slides.....81

Figure 3: An example of the DAB semi-quantification protocol83

Figure 4: Maxillary right first molar section photomicrographs85

Figure 5: Scatter plot, Left M1-I, direct, day 0 – 7, saline.....86

Figure 6: Scatter plot, Right M1-I, direct, day 0 – 7, saline86

Figure 7: Scatter plot, Left M1-I, indirect, day 0 – 7, saline87

Figure 8: Scatter plot, Right M1-I, indirect, day 0 – 7, saline.....87

Figure 9: Scatter plot, Right M1-M2, indirect, day 0 – 7, saline.....88

Figure 10: Scatter plot, Left M1-I, direct, day 0 – 7, anti-NGF89

Figure 11: Scatter plot, Right M1-I, direct, day 0 – 7, anti-NGF89

Figure 12: Scatter plot, Left M1-I, indirect, day 0 – 7, anti-NGF90

Figure 13: Scatter plot, Right M1-I, indirect, day 0 – 7, anti-NGF90

Figure 14: Scatter plot, Right M1-M2, indirect, day 0 – 7, anti-NGF.....91

Figure 15: Scatter plot, Left M1-I, direct, day 0 – 14, saline.....92

Figure 16: Scatter plot, Right M1-I, direct, day 0 – 14, saline.....92

Figure 17: Scatter plot, Left M1-I, indirect, day 0 – 14, saline93

Figure 18: Scatter plot, Right M1-I, indirect, day 0 – 14, saline.....93

Figure 19: Scatter plot, Right M1-M2, indirect, day 0 – 14, saline.....94

Figure 20: Scatter plot, Left M1-I, direct, day 0 – 14, anti-NGF95

Figure 21: Scatter plot, Right M1-I, direct, day 0 – 14, anti-NGF95

Figure 22: Scatter plot, Left M1-I, indirect, day 0 – 14, anti-NGF96

Figure 23: Scatter plot, Right M1-I, indirect, day 0 – 14, anti-NGF.....96

Figure 24: Scatter plot, Right M1-M2, indirect, day 0 – 14, anti-NGF.....97

Table 1: Sample size and categories79

Table 2: Left & Right M1-I, direct, day 0 – 7, saline86

Table 3: Left & Right M1-I, indirect, day 0 – 7, saline.....87

Table 4: Right M1-M2, indirect, day 0 – 7, saline88

Table 5: Left & Right M1-I, direct, day 0 – 7, anti-NGF89

Table 6: Left & Right M1-I, indirect, day 0 – 7, anti-NGF90

Table 7: Right M1-M2, indirect, day 0 – 7, anti-NGF.....91

Table 8: Left & Right M1-I, direct, day 0 – 14, saline92

Table 9: Left & Right M1-I, indirect, day 0 – 14, saline.....	93
Table 10: Right M1-M2, indirect, day 0 – 14, saline.....	94
Table 11: Left & Right M1-I, direct, day 0 – 14, anti-NGF	95
Table 12: Left & Right M1-I, indirect, day 0 – 14, anti-NGF	96
Table 13: Right M1-M2, indirect, day 0 – 7, anti-NGF.....	97
Table 14: Summary of results of the linear regression analysis.....	98

Appendix 1

Figure 1: Animal was placed onto a purpose-built holding rack.....	110
Figure 2: Photograph of experimental spring set up with wire ligature.....	110
Figure 3: Injection of NGF into the gingival mucosa.....	111

Appendix 2

Figure 1: Direct measurement with digital calliper.....	112
Figure 2: Impression taken with special tray.....	113
Figure 3: Impression landmarks.....	114
Figure 4: Illustration of centroid determination	114

Appendix 3

Table 1: Tooth measurements of day 0	115
Table 2: Tooth movement measurements of day 3.....	116
Table 3: Tooth movement measurements of day 7.....	117
Table 4: Tooth movement measurements of day 10.....	118
Table 5: Tooth movement measurements of day 14.....	118

Appendix 4

Figure 1: Perfusion apparatus.....	119
Figure 2: Animal at completion of perfusion.....	120

Glossary of Abbreviated Terms

Ab	Antibody
Anti-NGF	Anti-Nerve growth factor
AP	Activator protein
ABC	Avidin-biotin complex
Ag	Antigen
cAMP	Cyclic adenosine monophosphate
CGRP	Calcitonin gene related peptide
CSF	Colony stimulating factor
DAB	3'-diaminobenzidine tetrahydrochloride
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
DPM2	Distopalatal root of second molar
ECM	Extracellular matrix
EDTA	Ethylenediaminetetra-acetic acid
H	Hydrogen
IFN	Interferon
Ig	Immunoglobulin
IGF	Insulin like growth factor
IL	Interleukin
IFN- γ	Interferon gamma
IMVS	Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science
IP3	Inositol triphosphate
IR	Immunoreactive
IU	International units
K	Potassium
M	Molar (molarity)
M1	Maxillary first molar
M2	Maxillary second molar
<i>mRNA</i>	Messenger ribonucleic acid
NGF	Nerve growth factor
NGFR	Nerve growth factor receptor
NGS	Normal goat serum

NHS	Normal horse serum
NO	Nitric oxide
NT	Neurotrophin
O.C.T.	Optimal cutting temperature
PBS	Phosphate buffered solution
PDL	Periodontal ligament
RNA	Ribonucleic acid
TBS	Tris Buffered Solution
TGF- β	Transforming growth factor – beta
TNF	Tumour necrosis factor
Trk	Tyrosine receptor kinase

Abbreviations of length

m	Metre
mm	Millimetre
μ m	Micron
nm	Nanometre

Abbreviations of time

d	Day
h	Hour
min	Minute
s	Second
wk	Week
y	Year

Abbreviations of volume

L	Litre
ml	Millilitre
μ l	Microlitre

Abbreviations of weight

g	Gram
kg	Kilogram
mg	Milligram
ng	Nanogram
Da	Dalton
kDa	KiloDalton

Declaration

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

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Introduction

During orthodontic tooth movement, stress is applied on the dento-alveolar complex, initiating a biological response. This response results in the remodelling of the periodontal ligament and the alveolar bone. When a force is placed on a tooth, the periodontal ligament is stretched and compressed depending on the direction of force. On the side where the ligament is stretched, a response resulting in bone deposition is initiated. On the opposite side, where the periodontal ligament is compressed, a response resulting in the resorption of bone begins¹.

These responses are believed to be modulated by factors that are derived from the immune or nervous systems. When stress is placed on the periodontal ligament, it is believed that nerve fibres and neuroreceptors within the tissue are distorted, leading to the release of neurotrophins and a common concomitant clinical response of pain and pressure. These neurotrophins may interact with cells within the dentoalveolar complex, including fibroblasts, endothelial and alveolar bone cells, resulting in the initiation of bone resorption via the activation of intracellular secondary messengers, which leads to cellular proliferation and differentiation².

Neurotrophin levels may play a role in the modulation of cellular activity in the periodontal ligament during orthodontic movement³. They are a family of protein polypeptides which are important in neural cell differentiation and survival³. One relatively well studied member of the family, Nerve Growth Factor (NGF), is a polypeptide essential for supporting cholinergic innervation in the brain and sympathetic and sensory innervation in the peripheral tissues⁴. Within the dento-alveolar complex, the function and localization of neurotrophins and their receptors are yet to be determined.

Previous studies have shown that there is an increase in NGF expression in tissues in response to injury, suggesting that NGF expression may increase in regions within the dento-alveolar complex where inflammation and bone remodelling are occurring⁵. A study showed elevated levels of NGF mRNA in human periodontal ligament cells *in vitro* during increased transcription and translation of the bone-related proteins

alkaline phosphatase and osteopontin, suggesting NGF facilitates bone formation³. The NGF may be modulating cellular activity within the periodontal ligament.

O'Hara et al. used immunohistochemical staining in the rat dento-alveolar complex to show that there was evidence of an increase in NGF synthesis and release by certain cells or tissues within the region of alveolar bone remodelling during the initial injury response period to orthodontic tooth movement^{5, 6}.

Ho used a similar model to test the hypothesis that there may be a positive relationship between the presence of osteoclasts and pre-osteoclasts with areas of NGF localisation. He found no relationship between osteoclasts and areas of NGF; however, his findings showed areas of unknown tissue within the periodontal ligament that were associated with NGF⁷.

To date, the relationship between NGF and the cellular process of orthodontic tooth movement remains unknown. Further studies are required to describe the distribution of neurotrophins and neurotrophic receptors and cellular interactions within the rat dento-alveolar complex.