A high throughput *in vivo* model to understand PAH toxicity

LISA TRUONG

Department of Environmental Molecular Toxicology Sinnhuber Aquatic Research Laboratory Environmental Health Sciences Center

Oregon State University TANGUAY LAB

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Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and human health effects

- PAHs are ubiquitous in the environment, fossil fuels, combustion, food etc.
- PAH exposures occur primarily via inhalation and ingestion
- Known carcinogens in humans
- PAHs measured in placental tissue
- Concern about developmental effects





Toxicity Mechanisms for Most PAHs are Unknown



- Environmental samples can contain 100' s PAHs
- Parent, substituted PAHs
- Toxicity data is limited but growing for substituted PAHs
- PAHs induce AHR-dependent and AHR-independent developmental toxicity, dependent on structure
- We lack the structural basis for developmental and neurotoxicity



Why Zebrafish?

- Molecular signaling is conserved with humans
- High degree of homology with humans
 - 71% human proteins have orthologue in zebrafish
- Well suited to <u>discover</u> gene functions
- Metabolically competent by 72 hpf
- Amendable to rapid whole animal mechanistic evaluations



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mRNA | miRNA | protein Expression/ Metabolomics Morphology/Functional/ Behavior/Epigentics





10 min



Specific Pathogen Free Facility



Truong et al. (2014) Toxicol Sci 137: 212-233.

Mandrell, D., Truong, L., et al . 2012. Automated zebrafish chorion removal and single embryo placement: Optimizing throughput of zebrafish developmental toxicity screens. Journal of Laboratory Automation 17 (1) 66-74.







10 min







10 min

6 hr















1 day

30 40 Time (s)



9



Chemical Exposure



10

Zebrafish Acquisition and Analysis (ZAAP)

- Custom-build laboratory information system (LIMS)
- Stores chemical inventory, and allows real-time data acquisition
- Tracks individual well information from 96-well plates
- Built in data analysis
- Ensures rigor in data generated





Comparative PAH Screening



Developed a Library of 123 PAHs for Comparative Analysis



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High Throughput Screening of PAH Library



Behavioral assay •

CYP1A Localization



• N=32

CYP1a Expression Pattern as a Biomarker of AHR Activation



None, **b** vasculature, **c** liver, **d** yolk, **e** skin and neuromasts, **f** skin

Comparative Profile of 123 PAHs



There are no association of morphological or behavioral endpoints and CYP expression



Differential responses in parent and derivatives



More mechanistic insight is need to explain why



Mechanistic insight of 16 PAHs (transcriptomics)



- 16 PAHs were selected from the screen by:
 - developmental bioactivity (morphological and behavioral)
 - their ability to activate AHR
 - the spatial expression of CYP1A
- Anchored to 120 hpf phenotype



Overview of Differentially Expressed Genes



Morphological and behavioral responses is not directly associated with # of DEGs

24



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No Association between DEGs, body burden and Log $K_{\rm ow}$





Embryos were exposed to 3 concentrations (5.39, 11.6, and 25 μ M) from 6 to 48 hpf. Using the measured values, a concentration uptake ratio was computed from the ratio of the concentration inside the embryo and to the nominal media concentration. The number of DEGs are annotated near the chemical name, along with the test concentration (in blue). Data points in red represent PAHs with <5.5 log Kow, and green being >5.5.

Comparing transcriptomic profiles

0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Retene Benzo[j]fluoranthene phenanthren-4-one Phenanthrene Dibenzo[a,h]pyrene Dibenzo[a,i]pyrene Carbazole Benzo[k]fluoranthene 4h-Cyclopenta[def] Benzo[b]fluoranthene Acenapthene Fluoranthene 9-methylanthracene

4h-Cyclopenta[def]phenanthren-4-one 9-methylanthracene Acenapthene Benzo[b]fluoranthene Benzo[j]fluoranthene Benzo[k]fluoranthene Carbazole Dibenzo[a,h]pyrene Dibenzo[a,i]pyrene Fluoranthene Phenanthrene

- Using Jaccard similarity analysis for DEGs >1.5 fold change, and p<0.05, a correlation matrix was generated. The lighter the color, the higher correlation.
- The black indicates overlap not significant by Fisher's exact test (pvalue > 0.05)



Transcriptomic clustering predicted adverse outcome later in development





Developed Tools to Measure Complex Central Nervous System Changes in Responses to Developmental PAH Exposures



Adult Behavioral Measures

- Fitness
- Swimming activity
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Social Interactions
- Learning



Fitness





∐B

IA

Swimming Activity Over Time





Anxiety







Learning





Determine which PAHs and Mixtures Produce Transgenerational Adverse Outcomes





Example Transgenerational Impacts – B[a]P



Figure 7. LPR graphs from Fo, F2 and F4 generations. At 120 hpf B[a]P-exposed generations (blue line) exhibit significant hyperactivity in the dark, when compared to vehicle controls (black line). Initial exposed generation (Fo) and two epigenetic generations shown.

F1 and F3 generations exhibited phenotype as well (data not shown).



Knecht AL, Truong L, Marvel SW, Reif DM, Garcia A, Lu C, Simonich MT, Teeguarden JG, Tanguay RL. Transgenerational inheritance of neurobehavioral and physiological deficits from developmental exposure to benzo[a]pyrene in zebrafish. Toxicology and applied pharmacology. 2017;329:148-57.

To Summarize

- Collect high content bioactivity data in a vertebrate model
- Phenotypic anchoring for pathway discovery
- Platform for structure-based predictions
- Rapid data for decision making
- Translating zebrafish data:
 - Prioritizing further testing
 - Highly amenable for mixture assessments Major effort of the OSU Superfund Research Program



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Engineering Team

Corwin Perrin Dylan Thrush David Mandrell Mushfiq Sarker Caleb Jephson Chris Lang Drew Gabler

Collaborators

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Questions?





Back up slides





16 EPA Priority PAHs Do Not Reflect Full Range of Effects





New Biomarkers for AHR2 Activation



GeneSymbol	Product	BbF I	BjF	BkF	DBahP	DBaiP	Retene
CYP1C1	cytochrome P450	2.38	2.51	3.10	1.40	1.36	4.15
CYP1C2	cytochrome P450	1.26	1.45	1.95	0.44	0.53	3.17
	WAP, follistatin/kazal,						
	immunoglobulin, kunitz						
MELVIN	and netrin domain	1.01	1.06	0.00	1 10	1.10	
WFIKKN1	containing 1	1.21	1.96	2.09	1.18	1.19) 2.63
CYP1B1	cytochrome P450	1.18	2.13	2.67	1.08	1.32	2.13
CYP1A	cytochrome P450	1.16	2.08	2.18	1.22	1.37	2.06
CABZ01103755.	ı N/A	0.59	1.10	1.61	0.62	0.84	2.05
	sulfotransferase family,						
SULT6B1	cytosolic, 6b, member 1	1.40	2.16	2.07	1.24	1.27	7 1.96
	glutathione Stransferase pi						
GSTP1	1	1.10	1.82	0.99	0.59	0.54	1.96
	dehydrogenase/reductase						
	(SDR family) member 13						
DHRS13L1	like	1.16	1.37	0.99	0.82	0.83	3 1.71
	arylhydrocarbon receptor						
AHRRB	repressor b	0.64	1.28	1.40	0.70	1.10	0 1.70



The AHR and PAH pathways of toxicity

Signaling functions:

- 1. Developmental & homeostatic
- 2. Adaptive (*cyp1a*)
- 3. Toxic (adverse effects)

Phenotypic impacts:

- 1. Development
- 2. Cardiac
- 3. Cognitive
- 4. Reproductive



3 Aryl Hydrocarbon Receptor (AHR) in Zebrafish

AHR	Role	CYP1A Expression					
AHR2	Primary mediator of toxicity	Vasculature					
AHR1A	Deficient in TCDD binding and transactivation activity	Liver					
AHR1B	Functional, but no known toxicological role	TBD					



Ahr2^{hu3335} Mutants are Resistant to TCDD-Induced Developmental Toxicity





ahr2 Mutants Are Resistant to TCDD-induced CYP Expression Changes



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AHR2 importance confirmed in CRISPR/Cas9 line

-11 bp deletion in exon 1

ahr2⁺	ATG TCG GCG GGT ATC GGT ACA TAT GCG GTC AAG AAA CGG AAG
ahr2 ^{osu1}	ATG TCG GCG GGT ATC GGTC AAG AAA CGG AAG (-11 bp)

В

42

1	Translation of mutant sequence predicts premature stop codon																
Γ	1	ATG	TCG	GCG	GGT	ATC	GGT	CAA	GAA	ACG	GAA	GAA	GCC	CGT	ТСА	GAA	45
	1	Met	Ser	Ala	Gly	lle	Gly	Gln	Glu	Thr	Glu	Glu	Ala	Arg	Ser	Glu	15
Γ	46	AAT	ACC	CAA	ACC	ACC	ACC	CCC	TGA	69							
	16	Asn	Thr	Gln	Thr	Thr	Thr	Pro	End	23							



Garcia GR, Bugel SM, Truong L, Spagnoli S, Tanguay RL. AHR2 required for normal behavioral responses and proper development of the skeletal and reproductive systems in zebrafish. PloS one. 2018;13(3)

