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**LOPAP (*Lonomia obliqua* prothrombin activator protease):
clonagem e expressão em levedura *Pichia pastoris*,
obtenção de um peptídeo sintético, análise estrutural e
avaliação de suas potenciais aplicações**

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RESUMO

Carrijo Carvalho LC. LOPAP (*Lonomia obliqua* prothrombin activator protease): clonagem e expressão em levedura *Pichia pastoris*, obtenção de um peptídeo sintético, análise estrutural e avaliação de suas potenciais aplicações [Tese]. São Paulo: Programa de Pós-Graduação Interunidades em Biotecnologia da Universidade de São Paulo/Instituto Butantan/ Instituto de Pesquisas Tecnológicas; 2009.

O contato acidental com lagartas da mariposa *Lonomia obliqua* causa envenenamento caracterizado como síndrome hemorrágica devido a uma coagulopatia de consumo. O Lopap é uma das toxinas mais abundantes nas cerdas desta lagarta, caracterizado como uma serino protease que apresenta atividade ativadora de protrombina e atividade antiapoptótica. Esta proteína é o único membro descrito da família das lipocalinas com atividade proteolítica. Membros desta família são conhecidos como carreadores de moléculas lipofílicas, reguladores de processos metabólicos e homeostáticos, além do envolvimento na modulação de respostas celulares, tendo em comum a presença de três domínios conservados na estrutura primária. Tendo em vista potenciais aplicações terapêuticas e biotecnológicas do Lopap, este trabalho teve como objetivo a obtenção do Lopap recombinante (rLopap) por metodologia escalonável e a avaliação de sua atividade *in vivo* e *in vitro*. O Lopap foi clonado a partir do transcriptoma das cerdas de *L. obliqua* e expresso na levedura *Pichia pastoris*, sendo recuperado na forma enzimaticamente ativa e com capacidade procoagulante sobre plasma humano. Em modelo animal de controle sistêmico da hemostasia, o rLopap foi capaz de diminuir o tempo de sangramento em animais anticoagulados com enoxaparina. A partir de domínios conservados de lipocalinas encontrados na seqüência primária do Lopap, peptídeos sintéticos foram obtidos e testados em cultura de células endoteliais. Um peptídeo relacionado ao segundo domínio (*motif 2*), designado *antiapoptotic peptide* (AP), foi capaz de reproduzir os efeitos do Lopap na modulação da sobrevivência celular. Em cultura de

fibroblastos, AP foi capaz de induzir a síntese de proteínas de matriz extracelular como colágeno, fibronectina e tenascina. O aumento de colágeno foi observado também na derme de animais tratados localmente com AP, cujo efeito persistiu por mais de três meses. A ocorrência, em outras proteínas, de seqüências relacionadas a AP foi investigada através da busca em bancos de dados públicos por seqüência de proteínas (blastp) e por domínios conservados (*motif search library, blast conserved domain*). Os resultados obtidos mostraram a presença de seqüências similares em lipocalinas de origem humana e animal como purpurina, prostaglandina D sintase e apolipoproteína D e também em proteínas de vírus, bactérias, parasitas e insetos, muitas das quais não tem função descrita. O alinhamento do modelo tridimensional do Lopap com outras lipocalinas descritas com atividade antiapoptótica (purpurina e prostaglandina D sintase) mostrou que a localização e conformação tridimensional da região correspondente a AP têm padrão semelhante às seqüências da purpurina e prostaglandina D sintase. Os valores relativos de polaridade, hidropaticidade e exposição ao solvente dos aminoácidos desta região também foram semelhantes nestas proteínas. Através destes resultados, pode-se sugerir que a seqüência identificada confere uma propriedade comum e conservada em muitas lipocalinas. A desvinculação da ação procoagulante do Lopap através da obtenção de um peptídeo sintético abre perspectivas para seu uso em várias aplicações que se baseiam em sua ação na modulação celular, como um componente cosmético, no reparo e remodelamento tecidual e em várias disfunções que envolvem morte celular e perda de colágeno.

Palavras-chave: Bioquímica. Proteínas recombinantes. Peptídeos. Hemostasia. Biologia celular. Matriz extracelular.

ABSTRACT

Carrijo Carvalho LC. LOPAP (*Lonomia obliqua* prothrombin activator protease): cloning and expression in *Pichia pastoris* yeast, design of a synthetic peptide, structural analysis and evaluation of its potential applications [Doctoral thesis]. São Paulo: Programa de Pós-Graduação Interunidades em Biotecnologia da Universidade de São Paulo/Instituto Butantan/Instituto de Pesquisas Tecnológicas; 2009.

Accidental contact with the *Lonomia obliqua* moth caterpillar causes envenoming outcomes characterized as hemorrhagic syndrome due to a consumption coagulopathy. Lopap is one of the most abundant toxins in the caterpillar's bristles. This protein was characterized as a serine protease which displays prothrombin activation and antiapoptotic activities. Lopap is the only member of the lipocalin family with proteolytic activity. Members of lipocalins family are recognized as carriers of small lipophilic molecules, regulators of metabolic and homeostatic process, by their involvement in the modulation of cells responses, and share three characteristic conserved domains in their primary structure. In view of the potential therapeutic of biotechnological applications of Lopap, this work aimed to obtain recombinant Lopap (rLopap) by a scaled-up methodology and the evaluation of the rLopap's activity *in vivo* and *in vitro*. Lopap was cloned from the transcriptome of the *L. obliqua* bristles and expressed in the *Pichia pastoris* yeast. The recombinant protein was recovered in its enzymatic active form and displayed procoagulant effect on human plasma. rLopap was able to reduce the bleeding time in animals that was anticoagulated with enoxaparin in an experimental model to evaluate systemic hemostasis. Based on lipocalin conserved domains found in Lopap primary sequence, synthetic peptides were obtained and assayed on endothelial cell culture. A peptide related to the second domain (*motif* 2), called antiapoptotic peptide (AP), was able to reproduce the effects of Lopap in the modulation of cell survival. In fibroblast culture, AP was able to induce the synthesis of extracellular matrix proteins, such as collagen,

fibronectin and tenascin. The increase of collagen content was also observed in the dermis of animals locally treated with AP. This effect was observed up to three months after treatment. The presence of AP-related sequences in other proteins was investigated by search at public data banks considering complete protein sequences (blastp) and conserved domains (motif search library, blast conserved domain). Results showed the occurrence of similar sequences among human and animal lipocalins, such as purpurin, prostaglandin D synthase and apolipoprotein D, and also in proteins from virus, bacteria, parasites and insects, many of these have no functions described. Alignment of the Lopap tridimensional model with other antiapoptotic lipocalins (purpurin and prostaglandin D synthase) revealed that the region corresponding to AP sequence have similar tridimensional structures among these proteins. The relative polarity, hydrophobicity and solvent accessibility values observed for each amino acid residue of AP and related sequences in the tertiary structure of their proteins also had a similar pattern. These results suggest that AP-related sequence signatures confer a common property in many lipocalins. The trim of the Lopap procoagulant activity by means of obtaining a synthetic peptide open perspectives for its use in several applications that are based merely on its action via cell modulation, for example, as a cosmetic component, aiding tissue repair and remodeling, and in many dysfunctions involving cell death and loss of collagen.

Keywords: Biochemistry. Recombinant proteins. Peptides. Hemostasis. Cell biology. Extracellular matrix.

1 INTRODUÇÃO

Lonomia obliqua é uma espécie de mariposa comumente encontrada na região Sul do Brasil. Em sua fase larval são conhecidas como lagartas ou taturanas e apresentam o corpo coberto por cerdas, que ao contato com a pele secretam veneno com propriedades procoagulantes. O envenenamento causa uma síndrome hemorrágica devido à coagulação intravascular disseminada levando a coagulopatia de consumo (Zannin et al., 2003). O Lopap é uma das toxinas mais abundantes presente nas cerdas destas lagartas (Veiga et al., 2005; Ricci-Silva et al., 2008). Estudos com a proteína nativa demonstraram experimentalmente que o Lopap induz efeitos semelhantes aos observados com o extrato bruto das cerdas da lagarta em animais de laboratório e aos observados no envenenamento humano, causando depleção de fibrinogênio e incoagulabilidade sanguínea (Reis et al., 1999, 2001a). Neste sentido, o Lopap tem sido apontado como uma das principais toxinas presentes no veneno de *L. obliqua* (Carrijo-Carvalho e Chudzinski-Tavassi, 2007).

O Lopap foi inicialmente caracterizado como um ativador de protrombina com atividade do tipo serino protease (Reis et al., 2001b). Contudo, esta proteína não apresenta similaridade com nenhum ativador de protrombina ou serino proteases conhecidos, mas tem domínios conservados na seqüência primária característicos de lipocalinas e sua estrutura secundária e terciária segue padrão semelhante a membros desta família, com a predominância de folhas β -pregueadas formando uma estrutura molecular em forma de cálice ou barril (Reis et al., 2006). O envolvimento de algumas lipocalinas em mecanismos de reparo, remodelamento tecidual (Olsson, 1997; Rassart et al., 2000; Descalzi Cancedda et al., 2000; Sousa et al., 2005; Hemdahl et al., 2006) e sobrevivência celular (Schubert et al., 1986; Taniike et al., 2002; Tong et al., 2005) tem sido proposto. Em estudos prévios com o Lopap nativo em cultura de células endoteliais que inicialmente foram realizados para avaliar possíveis efeitos sobre a modulação da hemostasia independente

de fatores da coagulação, foi observado que o Lopap apresentava também uma atividade citoprotetora (Fritzen et al., 2005). Particularmente, a indução da sobrevivência celular não é uma propriedade esperada para uma toxina. Desta forma, todas estas características indicam que o Lopap representa uma molécula com características únicas, que despertam interesse tanto científico - relativo às particularidades bioquímicas e estruturais desta proteína, quanto terapêutico e biotecnológico, relacionado à caracterização das propriedades desta molécula e potenciais aplicações. No início deste trabalho, haviam três patentes depositadas no Instituto Nacional da Propriedade Industrial (INPI) com fase internacional (PCT) em co-titularidade com a FAPESP, com base nas diferenças estruturais que permitem enquadrar o Lopap como um novo ativador de protrombina, sua atividade procoagulante, em seu potencial desfibrinogenante, e em sua atividade citoprotetora (Chudzinski-Tavassi e Reis, 2002; Chudzinski-Tavassi et al., 2004, 2005).

Um dos fatores limitantes ao estudo do Lopap é sua obtenção. A obtenção do Lopap nativo é limitada a pequenas quantidades purificadas a partir do extrato das cerdas das lagartas de *L. obliqua*; à disponibilidade sazonal destas lagartas, restrita aos meses mais quentes do ano; e à coleta e transporte das mesmas, a partir de cidades da região Sul do Brasil. A obtenção do Lopap na forma recombinante é limitada pela possibilidade de manutenção das atividades enzimática e celular na proteína recuperada ao final dos processos de expressão e purificação, e pela necessidade de uma metodologia escalonável.

A partir de uma biblioteca de genes transcritos nas cerdas de *L. obliqua* (Reis, 2002), o Lopap foi clonado e obtido na forma recombinante (rLopap) monomérica pela expressão em cepa de *Escherichia coli* com cauda de poli-histidina, na forma de corpúsculos de inclusão (Reis et al., 2006). As limitações para obtenção do rLopap pelo sistema bacteriano descrito são: a obtenção da proteína com um enovelamento correto, pois a produção em corpúsculos de inclusão implica em uma fase de desnaturação seguida de renaturação *in vitro*; a baixa atividade catalítica

da proteína obtida; a ausência de processamentos pós-traducionais; a presença de uma cauda de poli-histidina na proteína recombinante recuperada. Todos estes aspectos mostram a importância do desenvolvimento e aprimoramento de metodologias de obtenção do rLopap com especial atenção quanto à estabilidade da molécula.

Este trabalho teve como objetivo geral o desenvolvimento do Lopap e o estudo de suas potenciais aplicações. Desta forma, nossos estudos foram dedicados à obtenção do Lopap recombinante em sistema de expressão na levedura *Pichia pastoris*, através de processo escalonável, em avaliar os efeitos desta proteína *in vitro* e *in vivo* e, por outro lado, através do mapeamento peptídico do Lopap, em identificar a região da molécula envolvida nos efeitos do Lopap ao nível celular, e caracterizá-la com relação à atividade catalítica do Lopap e com relação aos domínios conservados em outros membros da família das lipocalinas. Os objetivos específicos foram os seguintes:

- 1) expressar o Lopap na forma solúvel em *E. coli* Origami;
- 2) clonar e expressar o Lopap na levedura *Pichia pastoris*;
- 3) estabelecer um protocolo padrão de produção do rLopap na levedura *P. pastoris*, por um processo escalonável, com produção em alta densidade celular em biorreator;
- 4) estudar a estabilidade do rLopap;
- 5) avaliar a atividade procoagulante e antiapoptótica do rLopap;
- 6) avaliar experimentalmente a ação do rLopap como agente hemostático em animais;

- 7) entender como os domínios moleculares do Lopap estão envolvidos na sua ação celular - através da avaliação da atividade de peptídeos sintéticos derivados de domínios conservados da proteína;
- 8) avaliar a ação de peptídeos sintéticos derivados do Lopap sobre a síntese de moléculas de matriz extracelular em cultura de células e na derme de animais.

6 CONCLUSÕES

- A metodologia utilizada permitiu a obtenção do rLopap na levedura *P. pastoris*, com alta atividade específica, por um processo escalonável e reprodutível;
- O tratamento com o rLopap foi efetivo na diminuição do tempo de sangramento em coelhos anticoagulados com enoxaparina;
- A atividade procoagulante do Lopap foi desvinculada da atividade antiapoptótica através da obtenção de peptídeos sintéticos derivados da seqüência primária do Lopap;
- Uma seqüência peptídica de sete aminoácidos foi identificada como a região envolvida na ação do Lopap em células, promovendo a sobrevivência celular e induzindo a síntese de proteínas de matriz extracelular;
- A seqüência peptídica identificada está presente em outras lipocalinas e proteínas hipotéticas, as quais podem compartilhar propriedades biológicas comuns.

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