Response to Letter by Lee Regarding Article, “Multi-Analyte Profiling Reveals Matrix Metalloproteinase-9 and Monocyte Chemotactic Protein-1 as Plasma Biomarkers of Cardiac Aging”

In the August 2011 issue of Circulation: Cardiovascular Genetics, we reported our findings on plasma biomarkers of cardiac aging phenotypes. We thank Dr. Lee for the questions regarding the plasma collection procedure used in our study.

Different anticoagulants (e.g., EDTA, heparin, and citrate) are available and used in blood sampling. Every anticoagulant has its own advantages and disadvantages. Heparin has been shown to increase matrix metalloproteinase (MMP)-9 levels when added to the heparinized plasma after blood collection (postanalytical phase). Adding heparin in the tube for blood collection (preanalytical) reduces the release of MMP-9 from platelet and leukocytes, and results in a lower concentration of MMP-9 compared with serum but similar levels compared with those found using EDTA and citrate as anticoagulants.

Our study was a blinded study to screen for potential plasma biomarkers of 69 analytes and was not a targeted study for MMP-9 plasma levels. We used heparin because an injectable anticoagulant is preferred in our study to prevent blood clotting during the tissue collection procedure. Because heparin was injected before blood collection, there should be no postanalytical MMP-9 increase.

For the plasma separation procedure, 2100g was used for the centrifugation speed. This speed is comparable to most of the widely used plasma collection protocols and is higher than the 150g speed used to prepare platelet-rich plasma.

The most important point is that all samples in the study were handled under the exact same conditions (anticoagulant and centrifugation); thus, the changes observed were not attributed by prior postanalytical determinants. We appreciate the comments raised by Dr. Lee that help to clarify the issues.

Sources of Funding

Y.A.C. received funding from the Translational Science Training Across Disciplines program at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, with funding provided by the University of Texas System’s Graduate Programs Initiative; S.S.A. received support from National Institutes of Health (NIH) AI48644 and AR052755 and the Veteran’s Administration (Merit); M.L.L. received support from National Heart, Blood and Lung Institute (NHBLI) HHSN 268201000036C (N01-HV-00244) for the UTHSCSA Cardiovascular Proteomics Center and R01 HL-075360, the Max and Minnie Tomerlin Voelcker Fund, Health Resources and Services Administration, and the Veteran’s Administration (Merit); and Y.-F.J. received support from National Science Foundation (NSF) 0649172, NIH EB009496, and NIH 1SC2 HL101430.

Disclosures

None.

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References

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*Circ Cardiovasc Genet.* 2011;4:e31
doi: 10.1161/CIRCGENETICS.111.961581

*Circulation: Cardiovascular Genetics* is published by the American Heart Association, 7272 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, TX 75231
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Print ISSN: 1942-325X. Online ISSN: 1942-3268

The online version of this article, along with updated information and services, is located on the World Wide Web at:
http://circgenetics.ahajournals.org/content/4/6/e31

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