



## Terapija matičnim stanicama u liječenju akutnog infarkta miokarda

## Stem cells therapy in treatment of acute myocardial infarction

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**Sažetak:** Ishemijska bolest srca, akutni infarkt miokarda, akutno i kronično ishemično zatajivanje srca predstavljaju vodeće javnozdravstvene probleme razvijenih zemalja. Usprkos velikom napretku invanzivnih i interventnih tehnika u kardiologiji, liječenje takvih bolesnika predstavlja i dalje izazov u svakodnevnoj kliničkoj praksi, poglavito s obzirom na morbiditet i mortalitet tih bolesti. Terapija matičnim stanicama u cilju postizanja regeneracije srčanog mišića novo je područje istraživanja znanstvenika diljem svijeta, a mnogobrojne studije koje se u ovom trenutku provode pokazat će jesmo li na pragu novog revolucionarnog otkrića medicinskih znanosti i može li takva terapija zaista promijeniti tijek kliničke prakse u kardiologiji u, nadajmo se, ne tako dalekoj budućnosti.

**Ključne riječi:** ishemijska bolest srca, akutni infarkt miokarda, srčano zatajivanje, terapija matičnim stanicama.

**Abstract:** Ischaemic heart disease, acute myocardial infarction, acute and chronic ischaemic heart failure are leading public health problems in the developed world. Despite a great progress of invasive and interventional methods in cardiology, the treatment of these patients even today represents a challenge in everyday clinical practice, mainly regarding the morbidity and mortality caused by such diseases. Stem cells therapy aimed at regeneration of heart muscle is a new field of research of scientists all around the world, and various studies that are being conducted nowadays will show whether we are facing a new revolutionary breakthrough in medical sciences and if such a therapy in reality can change the course in clinical cardiology in hopefully not so distant future.

**Keywords:** ischaemic heart disease, acute myocardial infarction, heart failure, stem cells therapy.

Ishemijska bolest srca predstavlja danas veliki javnozdravstveni problem u industrijaliziranim i razvijenim zemljama svijeta. Usprkos napretku u tehnici reperfuzije miokarda i novim farmakološkim spoznajama liječenje posljedica akutnog i kroničnog ishemijskog oštećenja miokarda ostaje insuficijentno. Do danas liječenje se bazira na kombiniranom farmakološkom, invanzivnom kardiološkom i kardiokirurškom liječenju (trombolitici, inhibitori glikoproteina IIb/IIIa, acetilsalicilna kiselina, klopidogrel, statini, perkutana koronarna intervencija, aortokoronarno premoštenje, transplantacija srca i ugradnja biventrikularnih srčanih stimulatora i kardioverter defibrilatora). Međutim, čini se da je na pomolu novi način liječenja koji se bazira na teoriji "popravka" oštećenog miokarda uz pomoć matičnih stanica.<sup>1</sup>

U proteklih par godina sve više se razmatra o srcu kao "postmitotičnom organu"<sup>2</sup>. Samo srce kao organ ima sposobnost regeneracije putem aktivacije vlastitih matičnih stanica miokarda ili putem regrutiranja matičnih stanica drugih organa, npr. iz koštane srži<sup>3</sup>. Replikacija miocita i regeneracija miokarda dokazani su u ljudskom srcu nakon infarkta miokarda i kroničnog ishemijskog srčanog zatajivanja. Iako točan mehanizam njihovog djelovanja nije još definiran, brojne eksperimentalne studije na životinjama i klinički pokusi dokazali su da transfer matičnih i progenitornih stanica u miokard ima povoljan učinak na reperfuziju miokarda i mišićni kontraktilitet. Također, opisana je neovaskularizacija i formacija miocita, a od nedavno se is-

chaemic heart disease is a major public health problem in the industrialized and developed world. Despite a progress in myocardial reperfusion techniques and new pharmacological advances, the treatment of acute and chronic ischaemic heart damage remains insufficient. Until today, the treatment of such diseases has been based on combined pharmacological therapy, invasive cardiological and cardiosurgical procedures (trombolysis, glycoproteine IIb/IIIa inhibitors, aspirin, clopidogrel, statins, percutaneous coronary intervention, coronary artery bypass grafting, heart transplantation and implantation of biventricular cardiac pacemakers and cardioverter defibrillators). However, we seem to be witness of the development a new way of treatment based on a theory of myocardial "repair" using stem cells.<sup>1</sup>

In the past few years the heart has more frequently been discussed as "postmitotic organ"<sup>2</sup>. The heart itself as an organ able to be regenerated through resident myocardial stem cells or through recruiting stem cells from other organs, eg. bone marrow.<sup>3</sup> Myocyte replication and myocardial regeneration were proven in human heart after myocardial infarction and chronic ischaemic heart failure. Even though the exact mechanism of its effect has not been yet defined, various animal experimental studies and clinical experiments have showed that a transfer of stem and progenitor cells in myocardium has a beneficial effect on myocardial reperfusion and muscle contractility. Also, neovascularization and myocyte formation has been described



tražuje i proces mobilizacije endogenih matičnih stanica kao mogućnost reparacije miokarda. Trenutno se također istražuju mehanizmi diferencijacije, stanične fuzije i otpuštanja injiciranih matičnih stanica putem parakrinih signala<sup>2,3</sup>.

Glavna hipoteza za srčanu terapiju matičnim stanicama sastoji se u spoznaji da oslabljeno srce ima smanjeni broj miocita koji posljedično reducira kontraktilnu funkciju. Osiguravajući novi izvor potrebnih stanica, u ovom slučaju matičnih, ta funkcija se može poboljšati. Same matične stanice su karakterizirane mogućnošću samoobnove ili mogućnošću proizvodnje diferenciranih progenitornih stanica. Do danas, tri kategorije stanica korištene su u pokusima: srčani miociti, skeletni mioblasti i pluripotentne matične stanice. Fetalne stanice imaju najveće prednosti za korištenje u svrhu regeneracije miokarda jer posjeduju sposobnost integracije u stanični ciklus stanice domaćina, ali glavni nedostatak zbog kojeg se ne koriste u velikim kliničkim pokusima je potreba za imunosupresivnom terapijom i brojna etička ograničenja<sup>1</sup>.

Skeletni mioblasti su matične stanice mišića koje reagiraju na ozljedu proliferacijom i fuzijom sa drugim stanicama, a za razliku od matičnih stanica koštane srži već posjeduju diferencijalno obilježje i usmjerenje. Prednost im je što se lako izoliraju, autolognog su podrijetla i posjeduju sposobnost *in vitro* proliferacije. Prvi rezultati pokazali su poboljšanje funkcije lijeve klijetke, no njihova diferencijacija u kardiomiocite nije dokazana, a zamijećena je i povezanost sa induciranim aritmijama koje se objašnjavaju pomanjkanjem električne integracije. U slučaju matičnih stanica koštane srži, bilo u vidu *in situ* korištenih stanica ili onih iz cirkulirajuće krvi stimuliranih faktorom stimulacije granulocitnih kolonija (G-CSF), brojni dosadašnji pokusi pokazali su poboljšanje srčane funkcije, a u animalnim modelima dokazana je njihova diferencijacija u miocite. Međutim, jedna od zamijećenih nuspojava bila je i miokardijalna kalcifikacija<sup>1</sup>.

U jednoj od dosada najvećih studija koja je uključivala MEDLINE, EMBASE, Cochrane Library i Current Controlled Trials Register u periodu do kolovoza 2007. godine za randomizirane kontrolirane studije u vezi sa terapijom matičnim stanicama iz koštane srži u akutnom infarktu miokarda, 13 studija (14 komparacija) sa ukupno 811 ispitanika, bilo je predmetom istraživanja. Podaci su analizirani putem randomiziranog efekta modela. U globalu je dokazano da terapija matičnim stanicama u usporedbi sa kontrolnim skupinama poboljšava ejskcijsku frakciju lijevog klijetke za 2,99% ( $p=0.0007$ ), signifikantno reducira završni sistolički volumen lijeve klijetke za 4,74 ml ( $p=0.003$ ) i reducira leziju miokarda za 3,51% ( $p=0.004$ )<sup>4</sup>.

Daljnja istraživanja zahtijevaju definiranje optimalnog izvora stanica koje bi osiguravale optimalni efekt, izbora kandidata i bolesti, najboljeg načina primjene (do sada

and recently a process of mobilization of endogenous stem cells as a possibility of myocardial repair is being investigated. Additionally, for the time being, mechanisms of differentiation, cell fusion and release of injected stem cells via paracrine signals are being explored<sup>2,3</sup>.

The main hypothesis for cardiac stem cells therapy lies in a knowledge that a failing heart has a reduced number of myocytes thus reducing the contractile function. By ensuring a new source of needed cells, in this case stem cells, the reduced function can improve. The stem cells themselves are characterized by the ability of self-repair or the ability of differentiated progenitor cells production. Three categories of cells have been used in experiments: cardiac myocytes, skeletal myoblasts and pluripotent stem cells. Fetal cells have major advantages for usage in myocardial regeneration because of their ability of integration into hosts' cell cycle, but the main disadvantage and the reason of their not being used in major clinical trials lies in the necessity for immunosuppressive therapy and various ethical limitations<sup>1</sup>.

Skeletal myoblasts are muscle stem cells that react to injury by proliferating and fusing with other cells and unlike bone marrow stem cells, they possess differential lineage. Their advantage is that they are easily isolated, they are of autologous origin and they are able of *in vitro* proliferation. Initial results have showed an improvement of left ventricular function but their differentiation into cardiomyocytes has not been proved and the connection with induced arrhythmias due to a lack of electrical integration has been detected. In case of bone marrow stem cells, either of those *in situ* or those mobilized with granulocyte — colony — stimulating factor (G-CSF), various experiments have shown improvement in cardiac function and in animal models their differentiation into myocytes has also been shown. However, one of the noticed disadvantages was myocardial calcification<sup>1</sup>.

In one of largest studies conducted so far which included MEDLINE, EMBASE, Cochrane Library and Current Controlled Trials Register during the period by August 2007 for randomized controlled trials of bone marrow stem cells in acute myocardial infarction, thirteen trials (14 comparisons) with a total of 811 participants were included in the research. Data were analysed using a random effects model. Generally, the study has showed that the therapy with stem cells compared to control groups ameliorates ejection fraction of left ventricle by 2.99% ( $p=0.0007$ ), significantly reduces end systolic volume of left ventricle for 4.74 ml ( $p=0.003$ ) and reduces myocardial lesion by 3.51% ( $p=0.004$ )<sup>4</sup>.

Further investigations demand defining an optimal source of cells which would ensure an optimal effect, the selection of candidates and diseases, the optimal way of application (the most frequently used transcatheter intracoronary infusion so far) and eventually defining its mechanism



najčešće korišteni transkateterski intrakoronarni pristup infuzijom) i u konačnici definiranja njihovog mehanizma djelovanja<sup>1,4</sup>. Dodatno, još veće studije trebaju definirati upotrebu optimalnih doza apliciranih matičnih stanica, dulje vremenske analize ishoda istraživanja, kao i pouzdanije i pacijentu orijentirane načine istraživanja<sup>4</sup>. Tek će se tada moći sa sigurnošću utvrditi jesmo li na pragu još jednog revolucionarnog medicinskog otkrića i može li takva terapija zaista promijeniti tijek kliničke prakse u kardiologiji, u nadajmo se, ne tako dalekoj budućnosti.

of effect<sup>1,4</sup>. Additionally, even more extensive studies should define the usage of optimal dosages of applied stem cells, longer research outcome analysis, along with more reliable and patient — centered modes of research<sup>4</sup>, and only then it will be possible to determine whether we are facing another revolutionary medical breakthrough and whether such a therapy in reality may change the course of clinical practice in cardiology in, hopefully, not so distant future.

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