

Diabetic neuropathic pain improvement by inhibition of constitutive 5-HT 6 receptor activity in rats

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▶ To cite this version:

Nazarine Mokhtar, Marcin Drop, Frédéric Lamaty, Pawel Zajdel, Philippe Marin, et al.. Diabetic neuropathic pain improvement by inhibition of constitutive 5-HT 6 receptor activity in rats. Neuropathic Pain Special Interest Group (NeuPSIG) 2023 International Congress on Neuropathic Pain, Sep 2023, Lisbon, Portugal. hal-04324131

HAL Id: hal-04324131 https://hal.science/hal-04324131v1

Submitted on 5 Dec 2023 $\,$

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Background

Chronic neuropathic pain affects 20% of patients with type 1 and 2 diabetes mellitus. In these patients, neuropathic pain is often associated with cognitive deficits and decreased quality of life. The serotonin type 6 ($5-HT_6$) receptor has recently emerged as a modulator of chronic pain and cognitive functions. The 5-HT_c receptor interacts with intracellular proteins including **mTOR** (mechanistic Target Of Rapamycin), also involved in neuropathic pain and in the regulation of cognitive functions. The present study addresses the involvement of 5-HT₆ receptor constitutive activity and mTOR signaling in neuropathic pain in the experimental model of streptozocin (STZ)-induced diabetic (D) rats.





Figure 3. Intrathecal administration of Tat-VEPE attenuates mechanical hyperalgesia (paw pressure test) in STZ-D rats (n = 6-7 /group). ###P<0.001 vs. values measured before STZ. a.u., arbitrary units; **P<0.01, ***P<0.001 vs. values measured before the drug/vehicle injection (D21 Post-STZ), 2-way ANOVA.

Novel object recognition

test

Training

5min





These results suggest that the constitutive activity of the 5-HT₆ receptor has a harmful influence in diabetic neuropathic pain. Thus, targeting 5-HT_c receptor/mTOR complex activity or 5-HT_c receptors with inverse agonists represents new strategies to treat painful diabetic neuropathy and associated cognitive co-morbidities.



Figure 1. Intraperitoneal administration of 5-HT_c receptor inverse agonists PZ-1386 and PZ-1179 improves mechanical hyperalgesia to paw pressure in STZ-D rats (n = 11-15/group). ###P<0.001 vs. values measured before STZ; a.u., arbitrary units; *P<0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001 vs. values measured before the drug/vehicle (water) injection (D21 Post-STZ), 2-way ANOVA.



