Pilot investigation of intramyocellular and abdominal lipid contents by 2D MR Spectroscopy and MRI in patients with Type2 Diabetes and Impaired Fasting Glucose

A. Singhal1, P. Srikanthan2, N. Wilson1, A. Sosa3, V. Velan1, N. Ragavendra1, R. S. Rathore1, R. K. Gupta1, and M. A. Thomas1
1Radiology, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA, United States, 2Endocrinology, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA, United States, 3Radiology, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV, United States, 4IT, Kanpur, UP, India, 5Radiodiagnosis, Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences, Lucknow, UP, India

Introduction: Insulin resistance (IR) and cardiovascular disease (CVD) have been linked by inflammation (the “common soil” hypothesis). Attempts to construct CVD risk prediction models utilizing inflammatory biomarkers and vascular imaging have remained imperfect. Work in the last decade has emphasized the importance of abdominal visceral fat deposits and intramyocellular lipid (IMCL) in metabolic syndrome and IR development. MRI enables localization, and quantification of lipid deposits and localized 2D MR Spectroscopy (MRS) approaches have been implemented recently to overcome limitations of inadequate spectral dispersion in localized 1D MRS (1). Use of MRI fat localization techniques and myocellular lipid estimation using MRS, if correlated with biomarkers of CVD, would allow us to understand the roots of development of IR and CVD risk. Our aim was to assess the relative relationship between visceral fat and IMCL deposits, and (a) hs-CRP: a well validated biomarker of inflammation; (b) Carotid intimal thickness (IMT) by ultrasonography (US): the gold standard for assessment of subclinical atherosclerosis; (c) HOMA IR (homeostasis model of insulin resistance).

Methods: We recruited 10 subjects (age 18-65 years), with impaired fasting glucose/early diabetes, all with glucose levels <140 mg/dL (Table 1). Anthropometry, venous blood testing and US of carotid arteries was performed. MRI was done by the standard T1-weighted spin-echo imaging with respiratory compensation and calf muscle spectroscopy using a 3T MRI scanner. Abdominal fat distribution was determined by a Java based fuzzy c-means (FCM) clustering fat segmentation program running on a PC (2). MRS data was processed using Felix-2000 (Felix NMR Inc., San Diego, CA) and expressed as ratios of the volume under each peak to the diagonal _d creatine peak volume. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated.

Results and Discussion: A representative 2D L-COSY spectrum is shown in Fig.1 (Peaks (F2, F1): Car_8: Carnosine (8, 8), Car_7: Carnosine (7, 7), Unsat_d: Unsaturated fatty acids (5.4, 5.4), TGFR: Triglyceryl backbone protons (4.3, 5.4), Ch_d: Choline (3.2, 3.2), Cr_d: Creatine (3, 3). MethylFat /FAT: Methyl/polyethylene protons of saturated/unsaturated fat (0.9, 0.9) /(1.4, 1.4), EMCL2 (5.5, 2.2) and IMCL2 (5.2, 2.0) arise from spin-spin coupling between olefinic and allylic methylene protons and EMCL1 (5.5, 2.9) and IMCL1 (5.2, 2.7) arise from indirect spin-spin coupling between respective olefinic and allylic methylene protons of extra-myocellular lipids (EMCL) and IMCL (3)]. The results are summarized in Tables 2 and 3 where IMCL and EMCL positively correlated with the IMT and thus development of atherosclerosis whereas inflammation and visceral fat are not closely related to fat deposition, atherosclerosis or IR whereas inflammation and visceral fat are more closely related to the extent of atherosclerosis and IR whereas inflammation and visceral fat are not closely related to fat deposition, atherosclerosis or IR. We infer that inflammation plays a minor role in initial development of metabolic derangements related to IR and atherosclerosis, and intramyocellular lipids are more significantly associated with IR and atherosclerosis than extramyocellular and visceral fat in early diabetes.