

The Small G Protein Rac1 Activates Phospholipase C δ 1 through Phospholipase C β 2*

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Rac1, which is associated with cytoskeletal pathways, can activate phospholipase C β 2 (PLC β 2) to increase intracellular Ca²⁺ levels. This increased Ca²⁺ can in turn activate the very robust PLC δ 1 to synergize Ca²⁺ signals. We have previously found that PLC β 2 will bind to and inhibit PLC δ 1 in solution by an unknown mechanism and that PLC β 2-PLC δ 1 complexes can be disrupted by G $\beta\gamma$ subunits. However, because the major populations of PLC β 2 and PLC δ 1 are cytosolic, their regulation by G $\beta\gamma$ subunits is not clear. Here, we have found that the pleckstrin homology (PH) domains of PLC β 2 and PLC β 3 are the regions that result in PLC δ 1 binding and inhibition. In cells, PLC β 2-PLC δ 1 form complexes as seen by Förster resonance energy transfer and co-immunoprecipitation, and microinjection of PH β 2 dissociates the complex. Using PH β 2 as a tool to assess the contribution of PLC β inhibition of PLC δ 1 to Ca²⁺ release, we found that, although PH β 2 only results in a 25% inhibition of PLC δ 1 in solution, in cells the presence of PH β 2 appears to eliminate Ca²⁺ release suggesting a large threshold effect. We found that the small plasma membrane population of PLC β 2-PLC δ 1 is disrupted by activation of heterotrimeric G proteins, and that the major cytosolic population of the complexes are disrupted by Rac1 activation. Thus, the activity of PLC δ 1 is controlled by the amount of bound PLC β 2 that changes with displacement of the enzyme by heterotrimeric or small G proteins. Through PLC β 2, PLC δ 1 activation is linked to surface receptors as well as signals that mediate cytoskeletal pathways.

Mammalian phospholipase Cs (PLCs)² are critical signaling enzymes whose activity results in an increase in intracellular Ca²⁺ through the hydrolysis of PI(4,5)P₂. There are now nine known types of mammalian PLCs that vary in their tissue distribution and their cellular regulation (for review see Refs. 1, 2). Most PLCs have established protein regulators, and many appear to have multiple mechanisms of regulation that, in principle, may connect different signaling pathways. It is possible

that, under some circumstances, different PLC isozymes coordinate to elicit a specific cellular response. As described below, we have recently found that PLC β and PLC δ couple to synergize Ca²⁺ responses by surface receptors.

The PLC β family is activated by heterotrimeric G proteins, which respond to extracellular agonists such as hormones and neurotransmitters through transmembrane G protein-coupled receptors (see Ref. 3). All four known PLC β (β 1–4) are strongly activated by G α_q , and PLC β 2–3 are also activated by G $\beta\gamma$ subunits. Additionally, PLC β 2 is activated by members of the Rho family of small G proteins; most strongly by Rac1 (for review see Ref. 4). Rac1 is activated by the phosphoinositide 3-kinase pathway to initiate events leading to cytoskeletal rearrangements (5, 6).

Although PLC β has well characterized protein regulators, protein regulators of PLC δ are less established. Unlike other PLC families, PLC δ enzymes are inactive at basal calcium concentrations but become active upon the rise in intracellular Ca²⁺ brought about by the activity of other PLCs. Two of the three reported PLC δ regulators, RhoA and transglutaminase, lower the amount of Ca²⁺ required for activation (7, 8). Recently, our laboratory discovered a third PLC δ regulator, PLC β 2 and - β 3 (9). These enzymes were found to bind to PLC δ 1 and inhibit its activity. Association between PLC β 2–3 and PLC δ 1 can be disrupted by the addition of G $\beta\gamma$ subunits in solution, and preliminary studies in cultured cells suggest that the same association may occur in cells. These results suggested a model in which, upon release of G $\beta\gamma$ subunits after stimulation, PLC β becomes activated by G $\beta\gamma$ subunits, and concomitantly activates PLC δ through a combination of increased level of Ca²⁺ and loss of inhibition by PLC β 2 and - β 3.

To better understand the linkage between PLC δ and cell surface receptors, we have found that the pleckstrin homology (PH) domain of PLC β 2 and - β 3 is responsible for binding and inhibition of PLC δ 1 and have used this as a reagent to study the importance of PLC β inhibition of PLC δ 1 in cells. We first found that a significant population of PLC β 2 and PLC δ 1 associate in cells. Stimulation by carbachol reduces the association of the plasma membrane-localized population, whereas microinjection of activated Rac1 reduces the association in the cytosolic population. Microinjection of the PH domain of PLC β 2 (PH β 2) resulted in a decrease in FRET between PLC β 2 and PLC δ 1 suggesting that the interaction between these two proteins in cells is achieved through the PH domain. Moreover, microinjection of PH β 2 resulted in a greatly reduced Ca²⁺ release after stimulation with carbachol suggesting that the extent of a Ca²⁺ response is directly related to the level of unbound PLC δ 1.

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² The abbreviations used are: PLC, phospholipase C; PI(4,5)P₂, phosphatidylinositol 4,5-bisphosphate; PH, pleckstrin homology; CPM, 7-diethylamino-3-(4'-maleimidylphenyl)-4-methylcoumarin; eCFP, enhanced cyan fluorescent protein; eYFP, enhanced yellow fluorescent protein; eGFP, enhanced green fluorescent protein; GTP γ S, guanosine 5'-3-O-(thio)triphosphate; Ins(1,4,5)P₃, inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate; PI, phosphatidylinositol; FRET, Förster resonance energy transfer.

Rac1 Activates PLC δ 1 through PLC β 2

These studies link PLC δ 1 regulation to surface receptors and cytoskeletal movement through PLC β 2.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In Vitro Studies—His₆-PLC β 2 was expressed in Sf9 cells using a baculovirus system with minor modifications (see Ref. 10 for details about the expression and purification). His₆ proteins PLC δ 1, PH β 2, PH β 3, Δ PH-PLC1, and Rac1 were expressed in *Escherichia coli* and purified on a Ni²⁺ column using previously reported methods (see Refs. 9, 11–14). Expression and purity was assessed by Western blot analysis using commercial antibodies purchased from Santa Cruz Biochemicals, and by SDS-PAGE electrophoresis. PH β 2 C18S was prepared by the Molecular Cloning Facility at Stony Brook University.

PLC activity was assessed by measuring the hydrolysis of [³H]PI(4,5)P₂ dispersed on sonicated phosphatidylserine:phosphatidylethanolamine:PI(4,5)P₂ (2:1:0.5, v/v) membranes as described previously (15). Note that the assays are carried out at a total lipid concentration of 2 mM giving a large excess of PI(4,5)P₂ substrate as compared with the nanomolar amount of protein. For the inhibition studies, we used the protein concentrations above the dissociation constant.

Protein association was measured by labeling one of the proteins by the addition of a 4:1 probe:protein molar ratio of the thiol-reactive probe 7-diethylamino-3-(4'-maleimidylphenyl)-4-methylcoumarin (CPM) in the absence of reducing agents (for details see Ref. 16). After labeling, a small amount of protein ranging in concentration from 1 to 20 nM was placed in a microcuvette and reconstituted on large unilamellar vesicles composed of PI(4,5)P₂, palmitoyl oleoyl phosphatidylethanolamine and palmitoyl oleoyl phosphatidylserine prepared by extrusion through a 100-Å membrane according to the manufacturer's instructions (Avanti Biochemicals, Alabaster, AL). Protein association was assessed by plotting the increase in integrated intensity of CPM as the second protein was incrementally added and fitting the curve to a biomolecular association (see Ref. 17). Measurements were taken on an ISS PC1 spectrofluorometer using $\lambda(\text{ex}) = 360$ nm and scanning the fluorescence emission from $\lambda(\text{em}) = 390$ –590 nm.

Cell Culture and Overexpression of PLCs—HEK293 cells were maintained in Dulbecco's modified Eagle's medium supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum, 50 units/ml penicillin, and 50 μ g/ml streptomycin sulfate at 37 °C in 5% CO₂. For fluorescence studies, HEK293 cells were transfected with eYFP-PLC β 2 and eCFP-PLC δ 1 vectors or eGFP-PLC δ 1 vector (5–10 μ g/10⁶ cells in 60-mm dish) by calcium phosphate coprecipitation (9). The protein expression of endogenous PLC δ 1 was knocked down using small interference RNA PLC δ 1 (Dharmacon Inc.) according to the manufacturer's instructions along with the negative control purchased from the manufacturer. Western blot analysis showed this procedure produces ~80% knock down.

Co-immunoprecipitation—HEK293 cells were lysed in buffer containing 1% Triton X-100, 0.1% SDS, 20 mM phenylmethylsulfonyl fluoride, 5 μ g/ml leupeptin, 5 μ g/ml aprotinin, 6 mM dithiothreitol, and 10 mM Tris, pH 7.4. 200 μ g of soluble protein was incubated with 2 μ l of PLC δ 1 antibody overnight at 4 °C.

After addition of 20 mg of protein A-Sepharose beads, the mixture was gently rotated for 4 h at 4 °C. Beads were washed three times with lysis buffer, and bound proteins were eluted with sample buffer for 5 min at 95 °C. Precipitated proteins were loaded onto 8% polyacrylamide gel. For purified protein co-immunoprecipitation instead of cell lysate the same amount PLC β 3 and PLC δ 1 was added. After SDS-PAGE and transfer to polyvinylidene difluoride membranes, protein were detected by immunoblotting with anti-PLC β 3 (Santa Cruz Biotechnology, Santa Cruz, CA) antibody.

Imaging of Fluorescence in Living Cells—24 h after transfection, cells from 60-mm dishes were plated onto glass bottom culture dishes (MatTek). Images of fluorescent cells were collected 48–72 h after transfection on an Olympus Fluoview1000 confocal microscope equipped with a 40 \times 1.4 numerical aperture oil immersion objective. Analysis of the FRET images was performed using standard routine incorporated into software provided for the Olympus microscope. The FRET analysis used in this report differs slightly from our previous analysis (e.g. Refs. 18, 19) where the efficiency, *E*, is calculated using Equation 1,

$$E = 1 - \epsilon / (\epsilon + \text{nFRET} * r\psi * rQ) \quad (\text{Eq. 1})$$

where ϵ is the fluorescence through the CFP channel, and nFRET is equal to the image obtained through the FRET channel minus the CFP and YFP bleedthrough (*a* and *b*, respectively), and in Equation 2,

$$\text{nFRET} = \text{FRET} - \text{aCFP} - \text{bYFP} \quad (\text{Eq. 2})$$

r ψ is the ratio of the detector response of the CFP and YFP channels, and *rQ* is the ratio of the quantum yields of the CFP and YFP.

Microinjection Samples and Conditions—Transfected cells were grown in MatTek dishes for 48 h to achieve 50–60% confluence. Prior to microinjecting, the medium was changed to phenol-free Leibovitz L-15 medium. PH β 2 (50 nM) was microinjected with solution containing 0.2% deoxycholic acid, 20 mM Hepes, 150 mM NaCl, pH 7.2, and trace amounts of the red dye Cy5 (Invitrogen). The control solution did not contain PH β 2. Prior to microinjections, PH β 2 S18C was labeled with Alexa546, which served as a acceptor for GFP-PLC δ 1.

Rac1 was activated using the procedure described in a previous study (13). Briefly, the sample was dialyzed against 20 mM Hepes, 150 mM NaCl, 1 mM dithiothreitol, pH 7.2, for 3 \times 15 min at 4 °C, and then incubated with reaction buffer containing 50 mM HEPES (pH 8.0), 1 mM dithiothreitol, 2 mM EDTA, 0.1% Lubrol, and 1 μ M GTP γ S at 30 °C for 15 min. The reaction buffer was used as the control solution for microinjections.

Microinjections were performed on an Axiovert 200M from Zeiss using InjectMan NI2 with a FemtoJet pump from Eppendorf. Samples were microinjected into cytoplasm. We typically set the injection pressure *P*_i = 30 hPa and kept the compensation pressure (*P*_c) at 15 hPa. The injection time (*t*) was 0.4 s. Typically, we injected ~10–25 cells within a 10- to 20-min period. We examined the microinjected cells under the phase microscope (Axiovert 200M from Zeiss with a 40 \times phase 2 objective) to select viable cells. Cells were then transferred to

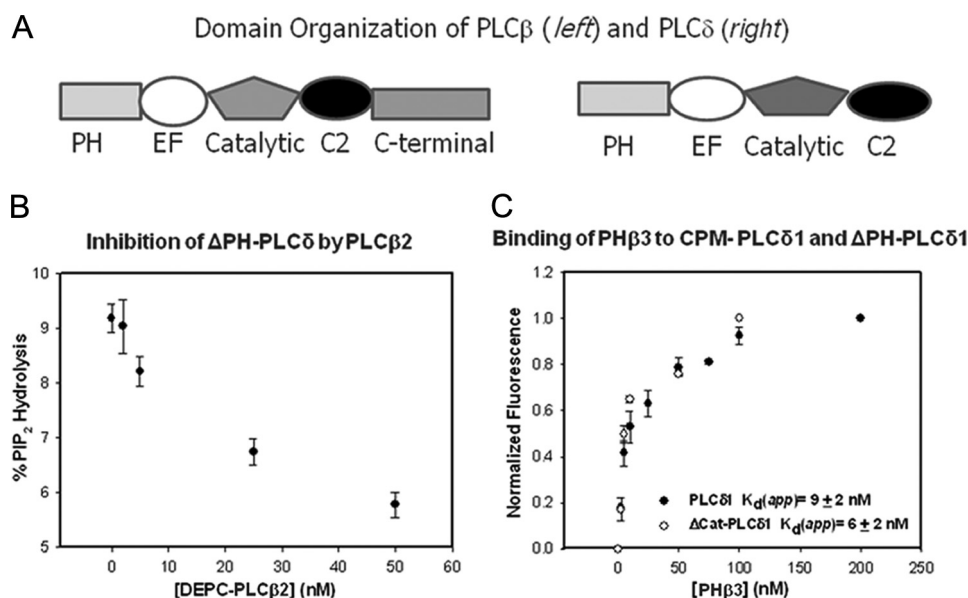


FIGURE 1. *A*, domain organization of PLC β and PLC δ enzymes. *B*, a graph illustrating the inhibition of PLC δ 1 with PLC β 2. This experiment shows the decrease in the activity of 10 nM Δ PH-PLC δ 1 with the addition of full-length PLC β 2 where the substrate, PI(4,5)P $_2$, was dispersed in 20 mM sonicated vesicles composed of phosphatidylcholine:phosphatidylethanolamine:phosphatidylserine with 5% PI(4,5)P $_2$. *C*, a graph illustrating the binding of PH β 3 to full-length CPM-PLC δ 1 and CPM- Δ PH-PLC δ 1, where association was assessed by the normalized change in fluorescence intensity, which averaged 18% for CPM-PLC δ 1 and 11% for CPM- Δ PH-PLC δ 1. For both sets of data, $n = 3$ and standard deviation is shown. A compilation of these data can be found in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Binding and inhibition of PLC δ 1 proteins by PLC β proteins

Binding studies were carried out by adding unlabeled protein (listed leftmost), to CPM-labeled protein partner. CPM-labeled protein was prebound to 200 μ M phosphatidylserine:phosphatidylcholine (2:1, v/v). Activity measurements were conducted as described under "Materials and Methods." Mean values and standard deviations are given. Activity measurements were carried out using 2 nM PLC δ 1 and 5 nM Δ PH-PLC δ 1 and adding excess inactive (i.e. DEPC-treated) PLC β 2/ β 3 or PH β 2/ β 3 so that all of the proteins should be associated. The initial k_{cat} of PLC δ 1 under our experimental conditions was $140 \pm 12 \text{ s}^{-1}$ and $47 \pm 10 \text{ s}^{-1}$ for Δ PH-PLC δ 1.

Proteins	Apparent K_d <i>nM</i>	Inhibition %
PLC β $_2$ /PLC δ $_1$	$11.3 \pm 2.1, n = 8$	$42 \pm 4, n = 3$
PLC β $_2$ / Δ PH-PLC δ $_1$	$16.8 \pm 2.2, n = 3$	$29 \pm 1, n = 6$
PH β $_2$ /PLC δ $_1$	$1.7 \pm 0.8, n = 3$	$25 \pm 4, n = 9$
PH β $_2$ / Δ PH-PLC δ $_1$	$11.1 \pm 4.0, n = 3$	0
PLC β $_3$ /PLC δ $_1$	$1.5 \pm 0.3, n = 5$	$46 \pm 5, n = 6$
PLC β $_3$ / Δ PH-PLC δ $_1$	$6.0 \pm 1.8, n = 3$	$28 \pm 3, n = 3$
PH β $_3$ /PLC δ $_1$	$9.4 \pm 2.1, n = 3$	$34 \pm 4, n = 3$
PH β $_3$ / Δ PH-PLC δ $_1$	$6.4 \pm 1.6, n = 5$	0
PH β $_2$ /PH δ $_1$	No binding	
PH β $_3$ /PH δ $_1$	No binding	

the Olympus Fluoview1000 for viewing, which was carried out within 2 h after microinjection.

Measurement of Cellular $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ —For single cell Ca^{2+} measurements, cells were labeled with 1 μ M Calcium Orange or Calcium Green (Invitrogen) for 45 min at room temperature, washed 3 times with Leibovitz L-15 medium, kept at room temperature in the dark without dye for 30 min, and then washed again three times with Leibovitz L-15 medium. The additional washes are required to remove dye that is nonspecifically bound to the plasma membrane. Cells were imaged on a Zeiss LSM510 laser scanning confocal microscope. Calcium Green was excited at 488 nm with an argon ion laser, Calcium Orange was excited with a 543 nm HeNe laser line, and the emission spectrum was recorded using a long pass

560 nm filter. Images were analyzed using Zeiss software. Images were collected every 20 s over a 5-min period. Data were analyzed by comparing the change in intensity of a selected cell or group of cells over the time period. This selection insures that dark pixels are not considered. Usually, five or six cells or cell groups were selected in each experiment.

RESULTS

The PH Domain of PLC β 2/3 Is Responsible for PLC δ Inhibition—Before studying the regulation of PLC δ 1 by PLC β 2 in cells, we set out to identify the region of PLC β 2 that is responsible for PLC δ 1 inhibition with the goal of developing a reagent to inhibit association of the enzymes. Mammalian PLCs have a modular structure that are generally composed of an N-terminal PH domain followed by two EF hands, a catalytic domain, and a C2 domain

(Fig. 1*A*). PLC β enzymes have a distinct C-terminal region that is required for activation by $G\alpha_q$ subunits (see Refs. 2, 20). Several years ago, Nagano and coworkers demonstrated that the PH domain of an inactive variant of PLC δ 4 could inhibit PLC δ 4 activity (21). Therefore, we wondered whether the PH domain of PLC β 2 could be involved in PLC δ 1 inhibition. Additionally, we have found that $G\beta\gamma$, which makes a primary binding contact with the PH domain of PLC β 2 (11), disrupts PLC β 2·PLC δ 1 association, also suggesting that association may occur through this region.

We measured the ability of the PH domains of PLC β 2 and - β 3 to inhibit PLC δ 1 and its isolated catalytic domain (Table 1). To compare the PH domains to the full-length enzymes, we inactivated PLC β 2 and PLC β 3 by covalently modifying the catalytic His residue with diethyl pyrocarbonate as in previous studies (9). Activity measurements were carried out at high PI(4,5)P $_2$ levels to avoid competition between the two PLCs for substrate. Similar to our earlier work (9), we found that the full-length PLC β enzymes are able to inhibit PLC δ by 40% (e.g. Fig. 1*B*). A similar inhibition was observed when we substituted the catalytic domain of PLC δ for the full-length enzyme. These data suggest that PLC δ inhibition is caused by contacts between PLC β 2 and the catalytic domain of PLC δ 1 but not other PLC δ 1 domains.

We then measured the inhibition of PLC δ 1 by the PH domains of PLC β 2 and - β 3. Although the amount of PLC δ 1 inhibition by the PH domains was reduced as compared with the full-length enzyme (i.e. 25–30% see Table 1), it was still significant. We note that, unlike the full-length enzyme, the PH domains were unable to inhibit the isolated catalytic domain of PLC δ 1. These results fit well with the idea that the PH domain

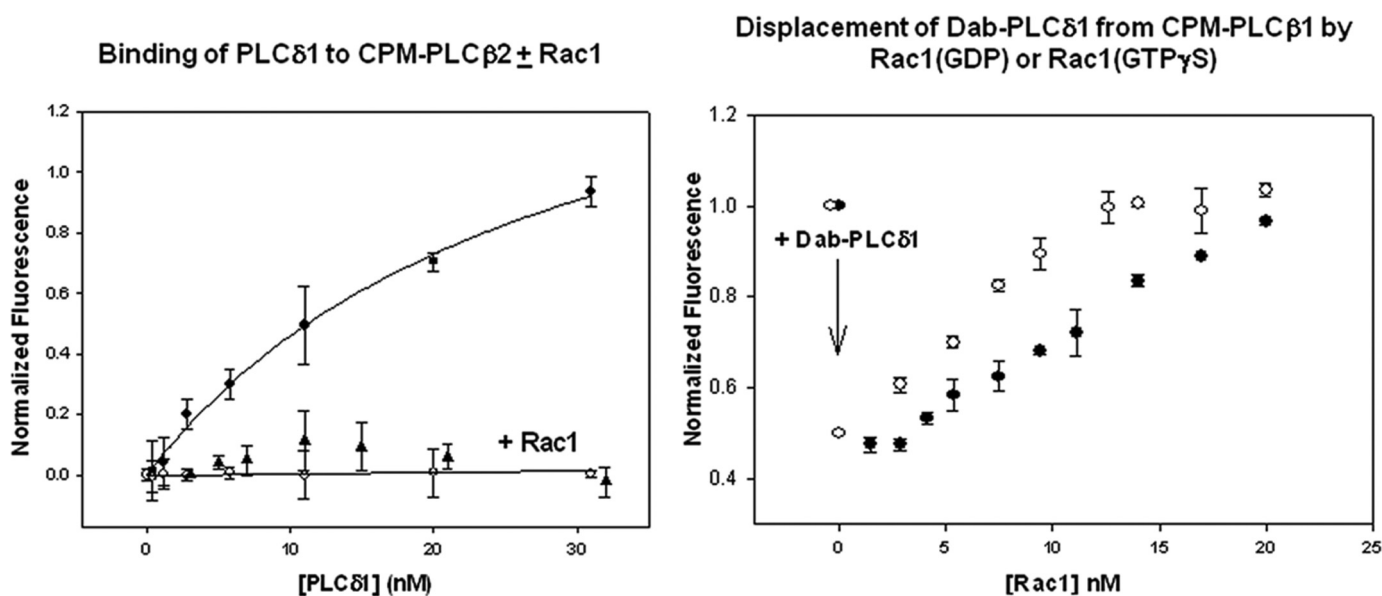


FIGURE 2. *Left*, binding of PLC δ 1 to CPM-PLC β 2 in the absence (●) and presence (▲) of 5 nM Rac1 (GTP γ S) or 10 nM Rac1 (GDP) (○), $n = 4$, where the total change in CPM fluorescence ranged from 40 to 80% in each of the studies. *Right*, disruption of PLC β 2-PLC δ 1 complexes by Rac1. Here, Dab-PLC δ 1 was added to CPM-PLC β 2 so that 50% of the FRET complex was formed as indicated by the arrow and shown by the loss in CPM donor fluorescence to the non-fluorescent Dab acceptor. Afterward, either activated (○) or deactivated (●) Rac1 was added until the full, dissociated CPM-PLC β 2 fluorescence intensity was recovered.

of PLC δ 1 plays an active role in regulating catalysis (see “Discussion”).

To determine whether differences in PLC δ 1 inhibition by full-length PLC β 2/ β 3 and its PH domains are due to differences in their binding strength, we measured the affinity of the enzymes and their constructs using fluorescence spectroscopy. Specifically, we labeled one of the protein constructs with an environmentally sensitive fluorophore, CPM, and measured the changes in its fluorescence as the unlabeled binding partner was incrementally added (see Ref. 17). An example of a titration is shown in Fig. 1C, and the results are tabulated in Table 1. We found that the PH domains of PH β s and PH δ did not appear to interact while the other constructs all showed a strong and similar affinity whose apparent dissociation constants (K_d) ranged from 1.5 to 15 nM. The similarities in affinities suggest that binding occurs between the PH domains of PLC β 2/ β 3 and the catalytic domain of PLC δ 1. We note that, in general, PLC β 3 and its PH domain bound to PLC δ 1 and Δ PH-PLC δ 1 with a slightly stronger affinity than PLC β 2.

Rac1 Disrupts PLC β 2/ β 3 and PLC δ 1 Association—The structure of a large portion of PLC β 2, including the PH and catalytic domains, bound to activated Rac1 has been solved (22). This structure shows that Rac1 associates with the PH domain of PLC β 2. Thus, if PLC β 2 associates with PLC δ 1 through its PH domain, then addition of Rac1 would be expected to disrupt that association. We measured the binding between PLC β 2 and PLC δ 1, and between PH β 2 and PLC δ 1 in the absence and presence of Rac1(GDP) and Rac1(GTP γ S). We found that, even in the deactivated form, Rac1 inhibited association between the enzymes (Fig. 2 left).

In a separate study, we added Dabcyl-Cl-labeled PLC δ 1 to a solution of CPM-PLC β 2. Dabcyl is a non-fluorescent FRET acceptor, and a loss in CPM fluorescence has been observed due to transfer of CPM emission to this non-fluorescent probe (see Ref. 17). We added Dab-PLC δ 1 to CPM-PLC β 2 at a concentra-

tion so that 50% of the proteins were associated. We then measured the ability of deactivated and activated Rac1 to disrupt the PLC β 2-PLC δ 1 complex. We found that activated Rac1 was better able to dissociate the two PLCs (Fig. 2, right). These results support the idea that the PH domain of PLC β 2 is responsible for interaction with PLC δ 1.

Association between PLC β 2 and PLC δ 1 in Cells—We studied the association between PLC β 2 and PLC δ 1 in HEK293 cells by co-transfecting the cells with fluorescence-tagged chimeras. It has been previously shown that GFP tags on the C terminus of PLC δ 1 do not affect its cellular localization (22). In Fig. 3A we compare the localization of untagged and eYFP-tagged PLC β 2 expressed in HEK293 cells where the untagged protein was detected by immunofluorescence. We also present images of endogenous PLC β 2, which is expressed at low levels in these cells. These results suggest that the eYFP tag does not affect cellular localization of PLC β 2. Western blot analysis of untagged and eYFP-PLC β 2 from the soluble and membrane fractions of HEK293 cells gave identical results (data not shown).

Expression of eCFP-PLC δ 1 in HEK293 cells showed the enzyme to be widely dispersed with a distinct plasma membrane localization as well as populations in the cytosol and nucleus (Fig. 3, top). This distribution has been previously observed (23, 24). Similar to previous reports (23), stimulation of the cells with carbachol caused translocation of a population of the enzyme to edges of the cell. In contrast, eYFP-PLC β 2 was almost entirely cytosolic without a distinct plasma membrane component and no nuclear localization (Fig. 3, bottom). Unlike PLC δ 1, stimulation of the cells with carbachol did not significantly change localization of overexpressed or endogenous PLC β 2 (Fig. 3, top and middle panels).

We have previously found that PLC β 2 and PLC δ 1 associate in cells using biomolecular fluorescence complementation (see Ref. 9). In this method, two portions of eYFP are attached to

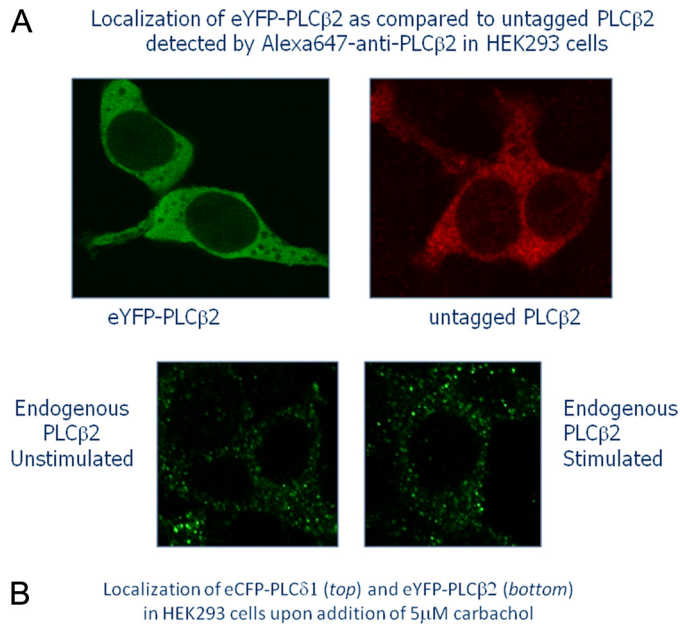


FIGURE 3. Top four panels, the eYFP tag on PLC β 2 does not affect its cellular localization. The upper left panel shows HEK293 cells expressing eYFP-PLC β 2 and the upper right panel shows cells expressing untagged PLC β 2 as detected by immunostaining with Alexa647-anti-PLC β 2. The middle panels show the low amount of endogenous PLC β 2 in HEK293 cells under basal and stimulated conditions (5 μ M carbachol) in fixed cells as detected using Alexa647-anti-PLC β 2. Bottom, changes in the localization of eCFP-PLC δ 1 (top panels) and eYFP-PLC β 2 (bottom panels) expressed in HEK293 cells with 5 μ M carbachol stimulation. Although some movement of eCFP-PLC δ 1 toward the plasma membrane occurs in a time-dependent manner, eYFP-PLC β 2 remains cytosolic. All images were viewed through a 60 \times objective (see “Materials and Methods”).

potential protein partners, and association of these partners reconstitutes the eYFP generating a fluorescent signal. However, this method only detects associated proteins, and non-associated proteins are optically silent. Therefore, we used FRET, which detects the fluorescence of the individual proteins as well as the amount of energy transfer from the associated species (25). This method allows us to identify regions of the cell where both the unassociated and associated enzymes are localized.

We transfected HEK293 cells with eYFP-PLC β 2 and CFP-PLC δ 1, viewed the localization of the fluorescent proteins, and measured the degree of FRET in the localized areas (Fig. 4A),

where all of the FRET data presented are corrected for bleedthrough and the small amount of photobleaching (<5%) that is sometimes observed (see “Materials and Methods”). Keeping in mind that the eYFP label is on the N terminus of PLC β 2 and the eCFP label is on the C terminus of PLC δ 1, and that association is through the PH β 2, then a crude estimate of the distance between the two probes is $<\sim 100$ Å when the enzymes are associated. The R_0 , or the distance in which 50% of light is lost to FRET, is ~ 50 Å for this pair of fluorophores (26). Thus, the presence of FRET observed should be directly related to the physical association between the two enzymes. Using a positive control where eCFP and eYFP are attached through a dodecapeptide flexible linker, and a negative control consisting of free eCFP and free eYFP, we found that $\sim 20\%$ of the enzymes in the cytosol were associated as estimated by FRET (Fig. 4C). We supported this result by co-immunoprecipitation studies of endogenous PLC δ 1 and PLC β 3, which is expressed at a higher level than PLC β 2 in these cells allowing for more accurate detection (Fig. 4B). These studies support the idea that PLC β and PLC δ associate in cells.

Changes in PLC β 2-PLC δ 1 Association with Stimulation—We determined whether stimulation would affect the association of the two enzymes. We first monitored the amount of FRET between eYFP-PLC β 2 and CFP-PLC δ 1 when we activated muscarinic acid receptors by the addition of carbachol. Although carbachol stimulation did not significantly change the amount of FRET in the cytosol, we found that it reduced the amount of FRET from the small plasma membrane fraction in a time-dependent manner supporting the observation that released G $\beta\gamma$ subunits can dissociate the complexes (Fig. 5). We interpret the residual FRET as due to the inability to generate enough G $\beta\gamma$ subunits to completely disrupt the complexes.

We then tested whether another activator of PLC β 2, the small GTPase, Rac1, disrupts the association between the two PLCs. To this end, we monitored the amount of FRET between eYFP-PLC β 2 and CFP-PLC δ 1 when activated Rac1 was microinjected into the cells. We identified microinjected cells by including trace amounts of the red dye Cy5, which will not interfere with the absorption or fluorescence of the eCFP or eYFP probes, into the microinjection solution (Fig. 6, top). We found that microinjection of activated Rac1 abolishes FRET between the two PLCs (Fig. 6, bottom). Identical studies that substitute buffer or deactivated Rac1 did not affect the FRET (Fig. 6, bottom).

Association of PH β 2 to PLC δ 1 Diminishes the Ca $^{2+}$ Response to Stimulation—Because we found that PH β 2 is the main region of interaction between PLC β 2 and PLC δ 1, we used this domain as a reagent to determine whether the associated enzymes in the cytosol contribute to Ca $^{2+}$ release with carbachol stimulation. To carry out these studies, we introduced a Cys residue into PH β 2 (C18A) on an external site, which allowed us to specifically label the domain with Alexa546. We then monitored FRET from GFP-PLC δ 1 donors to microinjected Alexa546-PH β acceptors (Fig. 7). As with the full-length proteins, FRET was localized in the cytosol (Fig. 7A). The FRET value obtained for this combination is within error of the value seen for the full-length proteins supporting the idea

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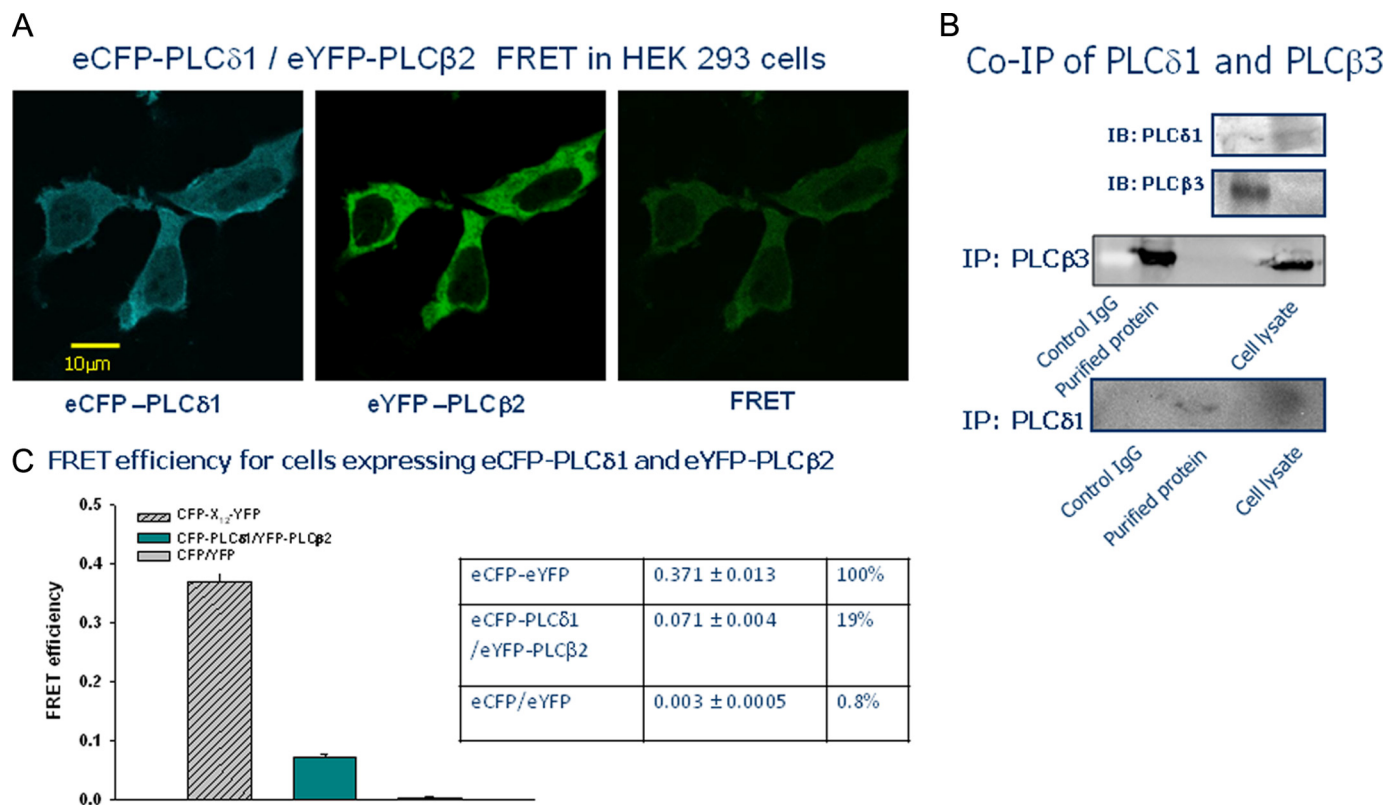


FIGURE 4. Association of PLC δ 1 and PLC β 2 in HEK293 cells. *A*, HEK293 cells co-transfected with eCFP-PLC δ 1 and eYFP-PLC β 2 and imaged through the CFP filter, the YFP filter, and the FRET filter, which filters CFP exciting wavelengths and YFP-emitting wavelengths. The FRET image shown is corrected for bleedthrough from the CFP and YFP channels. *B*, co-immunoprecipitation of PLC β 3 as pulled down with PLC δ 1. *C*, bar graph and corresponding table showing the FRET values from an eCFP-X-eYFP-positive control ($n = 19$), the eCFP-PLC δ 1/eYFP-PLC β 2 sample ($n = 22$), and free eCFP- and free eYFP-negative control ($n = 5$).

Decrease in FRET between eCFP-PLC δ 1 and eYFP-PLC β 2 of the plasma membrane population

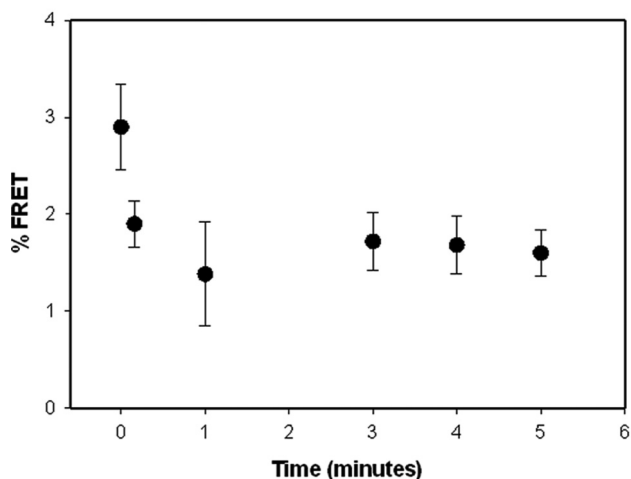


FIGURE 5. Decrease in FRET between eCFP-PLC δ 1 and eYFP-PLC β 2 in the plasma membrane region of HEK293 cells with the addition of 5 μ M carbachol. These data were generated by selecting the region of interest around the plasma membrane and averaging the FRET over five cells (\pm S.D. is shown).

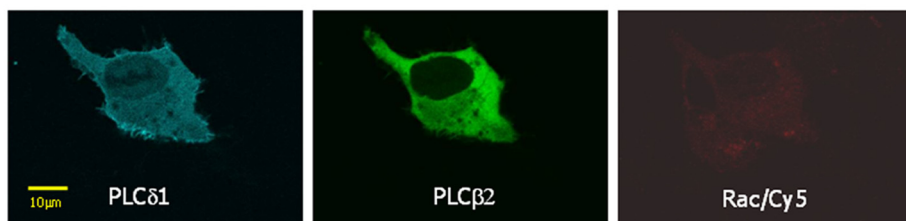
that a significant fraction of PLC β 2 and PLC δ 1 are associated (Fig. 7*B*).

Because PH β 2 binds to PLC δ 1 and inhibits its activity, we tested whether this association could quench Ca²⁺ signals generated with carbachol stimulation. We microinjected

unlabeled PH β 2 into untransfected HEK293 cells treated with a Ca²⁺ indicator and measured the amount of Ca²⁺ released upon carbachol stimulation at 20 s. Our control studies showed a lack of Ca²⁺ response with epidermal growth factor stimulation (see Ref. 27). We note that PH β 2 does not specifically bind to PI(4,5)P₂ or Ins(1,4,5)P₃ and should not interfere with substrate or product binding of PLC δ 1 (11). We found a statistically significant reduction in the amount of released Ca²⁺ in the microinjected cells as compared with non-injected cells, and to cells that were microinjected only with microinjection buffer (Fig. 8, *A* and *B*). This result correlates well with our observation that PLC δ 1 small interference RNA treatment, which results in \sim 80% reducing in the level of protein, abolishes a significant calcium response as detected by calcium green (Fig. 8*C*). These results suggest that the amount of Ca²⁺ released is directly related to the amount of free PLC δ 1.

The lack of Ca²⁺ response with microinjected PH β 2 could be a result of it binding to its G $\beta\gamma$ subunits, which would prevent PLC β 2 activation and leave the basal level of Ca²⁺ below the threshold needed for PLC δ 1 activity. Although this possibility is unlikely given the cytosolic localization of PH β 2 as opposed the plasma membrane-localized G $\beta\gamma$, we microinjected Alexa546-PH β 2 into cells expressing eGFP-G $\beta\gamma$ subunits. We could not detect FRET between these two proteins, but this did not exclude the possibility that microinjected PH β 2 binds to G $\beta\gamma$ subunits.

Images of co-transfected HEK293 cells that were microinjected with Rac1(GDP)



DISCUSSION

The regulation of calcium signals in cells involves a complex series of events that are mediated by PLC activity. PLC δ 1 is activated by the rise in intracellular Ca²⁺ generated by other PLCs in response to signaling events, such as G protein activation and receptor tyrosine kinase activation, and can be thought of as a Ca²⁺ signal amplifier. The PLC δ effectors, RhoA and transglutaminase, reduce the levels of Ca²⁺ needed to activate PLC δ (7, 8). We have previously uncovered a novel regulator of PLC δ 1, namely PLC β 2 (9). PLC β 2 inhibits PLC δ 1, and this inhibition is reversed when G $\beta\gamma$ displaces PLC β 2 from PLC δ 1. This mechanism of regulation directly connects PLC δ 1 activity to surface receptors. In this study, we connect PLC δ 1 activity with Rac1 activation of PLC β 2.

Our experiments show that the PH domains of PLC β 2 and - β 3 are responsible for binding and inhibition of PLC δ 1. This novel function of the PH β domains adds to the two established roles that PH β plays:

Change in FRET between eCFP-PLC δ 1 / eYFP-PLC β 2 with microinjection of Rac1

Injected activated Rac reduce membrane FRET between eCFP-PLC δ 1 and eYFP-PLC β 2

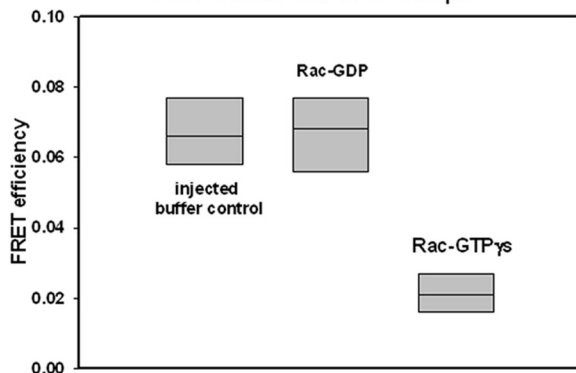
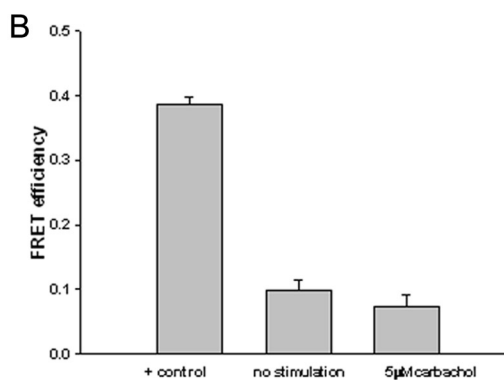
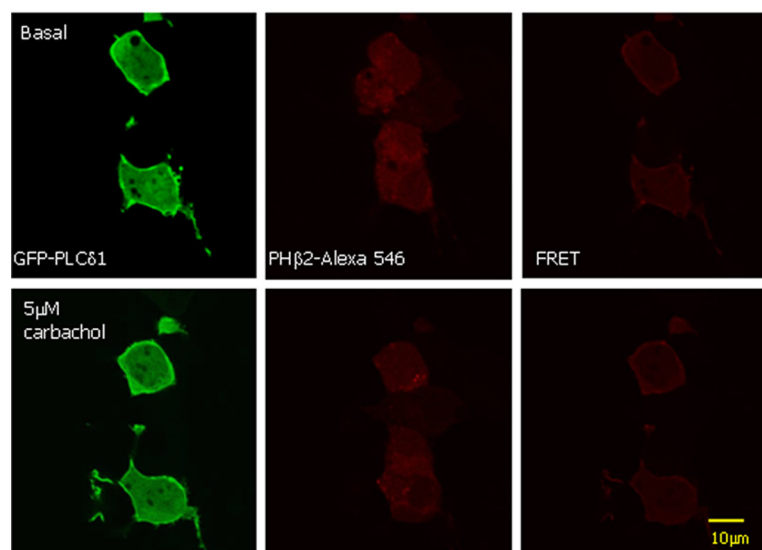


FIGURE 6. Change in FRET between eCFP-PLC δ 1 and eYFP-PLC β 2 in HEK293 cells with microinjection of Rac1. Top, images a cell showing expression of eCFP-PLC δ 1 (left), eYFP-PLC β 2 (middle) that has been microinjected with Rac1(GDP) as seen by the fluorescence of the Cy5 tracer dye (right). Note that, although two cells in the image were microinjected, only one shows fluorescent PLC expression. Bottom, compilation of data showing a lack of change in eCFP-PLC δ 1/eYFP-PLC β 2 FRET with microinjection of buffer or Rac1(GDP) but a loss in FRET with microinjection of Rac1(GTP γ S). In the plot shown, the boxes contain 25 and 75% of the data, whereas the vertical line shows 5 and 95% of the data. The points are the absolute high and absolute low points. The line in the box is the median of the data, where $n = 7-12$.

A FRET between eGFP-PLC δ 1 and PH β 2(S18C)-Alexa546



Positive control eGFP-PH δ 1-Alexa 546	0.390 ± 0.014	100%
eGFP-PLC δ 1/PH β 2-Alexa546 Before stimulation	0.098 ± 0.017	25%
eGFP-PLC δ 1/PH β 2-Alexa546 5uM carbachol	0.074 ± 0.019	19%

FIGURE 7. Demonstration of FRET between eGFP-PLC δ 1 expressed in HEK293 cells and microinjected PH β 2(S18C)-Alexa546. A, images showing cells expressing eGFP-PLC δ 1 (left panels) that were microinjected with PH β 2(S18C)-Alexa546 (middle panels). The right panels are the FRET images corrected for GFP and Alexa546 bleedthrough. The bottom panels show the cells 60 s after addition of 5 μ M carbachol suggesting a lack of movement of the PH β 2 domain with stimulation and a lack of significant changes in FRET. B, compilation of values in the bar graph and table form where $n = 5$ and \pm S.D. is shown.

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anchoring the host enzyme to the surface of membranes and docking the host enzyme to G $\beta\gamma$ and to RhoGTPase proteins (11, 28). Here, we found that the PH domain of PLC δ 1 does not participate in the association with PLC β 2, suggesting that its functional role is solely to bind PI(4,5)P₂ and Ins(1,4,5)P₃ (12) thereby promoting membrane association and dissociation, respectively, of the host enzyme (see below). Although we followed the association of full-length PLCs and their PH domains bound to a model membrane, we have previously shown that these proteins will associate in the absence of membranes but with a reduced affinity (9, 29).

It is well established that activation of PLC δ 1 occurs through specific binding to PI(4,5)P₂ on the membrane surface (12). Not only does the PH domain anchor the enzyme to the membrane surface allowing it to access substrate, but this interaction has been suggested to reorient the catalytic site with respect to the membrane surface to allow more effective product release. Activation of PLC β 2 is thought to occur by a similar mechanism in which the binding of G $\beta\gamma$ to the PH domain mediates changes in membrane orientation of the catalytic domain (see Refs. 16, 30).³ Interestingly, the PH domains of PLC β 2 and PLC δ 1 can be swapped to produce chimeric enzymes that are activated by either PI(4,5)P₂ or G $\beta\gamma$ subunits (31, 32). Because activation occurs through interdomain movement between the PH and catalytic domains, then it is possible that PH β 2 binds to an auxiliary site on the PLC δ 1 catalytic domain that contacts its own PH domain and the catalytic domains upon enzyme activation.

Our previous studies indicated that PLC β 2 almost completely inhibited PLC δ 1 activity toward PI (9). Here we observed a 40% inhibition under assay conditions that employ a large excess of PI(4,5)P₂. This difference in inhibition can be traced to the weak binding of PI by PH δ 1, which does not allow enzyme activation through interdomain movement, *versus* excess PI(4,5)P₂ where interdomain PLC δ 1 movement is operative. The observation that the PH β 2/3 constructs cannot inhibit Δ PH-PLC δ 1, which cannot be activated by its own PH domain, supports the idea that PLC β 2 and - β 3 are inhibiting the interdomain movement needed for full PLC δ 1 activity.

Our *in vitro* studies suggest that PLC β 3 interacts with PLC δ 1 with a somewhat stronger affinity than PLC β 2. PLC β 2 is expressed at low levels in many cell lines but is highly expressed in cells of hematopoietic origin (33). In contrast, tissue expression of PLC β 3 is more ubiquitous and follows PLC δ 1 expression more closely (34, 35). We focused our studies on PLC β 2, because it is not well expressed in HEK293 cells to minimize the detrimental effects of its overexpression. The regulation of PLC δ 1 through PLC β 2 and - β 3 is expected to have a range of importance that depends on the tissue type.

We found that PLC β 2 and PLC δ 1 are mainly cytosolic in HEK293 cells despite evidence that the majority of PI(4,5)P₂, their major substrate, is found on the plasma membrane. We note that the cells were in media containing serum until viewing thereby maintaining basal level activity. The localization pattern we observed here for PLC δ 1 is similar to that observed by

Rebecchi and coworkers (23). These authors found both active PLC δ 1 and a catalytically inactive mutant localized to the cytosol with significant concentration in membrane ruffles, and in the nucleus where it plays a critical role in cell cycle progression (24). Our images suggest that PLC β 2 does not localize to the nucleus.

We previously found that the majority of PLC β 1 is localized on the plasma membrane of PC12 and HEK293 cells where it is complexed with G α_q (18). In sharp contrast, very little PLC β 2 localizes to the plasma membrane. Instead, PLC β 2 is found predominantly in the cytosol. Previous studies of GFP-PLC β 2 expressed in COS cells show that it is also cytosolic, but a small portion localizes to the plasma membrane when co-expressed with membrane-bound Rac2(12V) (36). Surprisingly, we found that PLC β 2 remains in the cytosol even when the cells are stimulated with carbachol to activate G α_q and G $\beta\gamma$. Although the lack of movement of PLC β 2 to the membrane may be due to a number of experimental factors, such as expression level, cell type, etc., it could suggest that PLC β 2 is activated by G protein subunits that internalize in early endosomes after receptor activation. Although we and others found that G α_q and G $\beta\gamma$ remain on the plasma membrane after stimulation (37, 38), G $\beta\gamma$ subunits released by G α_s have been shown to internalize (39).

A second and more plausible explanation for the cytosolic localization of PLC β 2 is that the enzyme is functionally important in this compartment. Our studies suggest that a significant fraction of cytosolic PLC δ 1 is associated with PLC β 2. Specifically, we found that the amount of FRET between the two PLCs is ~20% of the positive control and approximately half the amount seen when similar FRET studies are carried out using eCFP/eYFP-tagged G protein subunits. Because the labels on the proteins are at opposite termini, we cannot exclude the possibility that most of the proteins are associated, but the fluorophores are too far apart to engage in FRET. We can only be certain that at least 20% of PLC δ 1 population is associated to PLC β 2 suggesting that the remaining populations are either free or have other interacting partners. Support for this association comes from co-immunoprecipitation studies.

We also found that PLC β 2-PLC δ 1 association is disrupted by activated Rac1 (for review see Ref. 4). Rac1 integrates diverse signals that can involve integrins, stress factors, cytokines, as well as growth, and neurotropic agents, and its activation is associated with lamellipodia formation. It is plausible that the cytosolic PLCs are distributed on intracellular membranes and associated with actin structures via Rac1. Thus, cytosolic Rac1 has the potential to be a more important cellular regulator of PLC β 2 than G protein subunits. It is possible then that the cytosolic PLCs regulate the amount of PI(4,5)P₂ available for cytoskeletal proteins such as cofilin and actin.

PLC β 2 is most sensitive to Rac1 but can be activated by other members of this family (see Ref. 4). In contrast, PLC δ 1 is inhibited by RhoA (40) suggesting that its regulation by PLC β 2 might be synergistic with release of RhoA. It is interesting to note that the PLC ϵ enzymes are regulated by RasGTPases (41), and their potential regulation of PLC δ 1 has not been determined.

³ D. Han, U. Golebiewska, S. Stolzenberg, S. Scaelata, and H. Weinstein, submitted for publication.

HEK293 cells before (left) and 20s after (right) carbachol addition

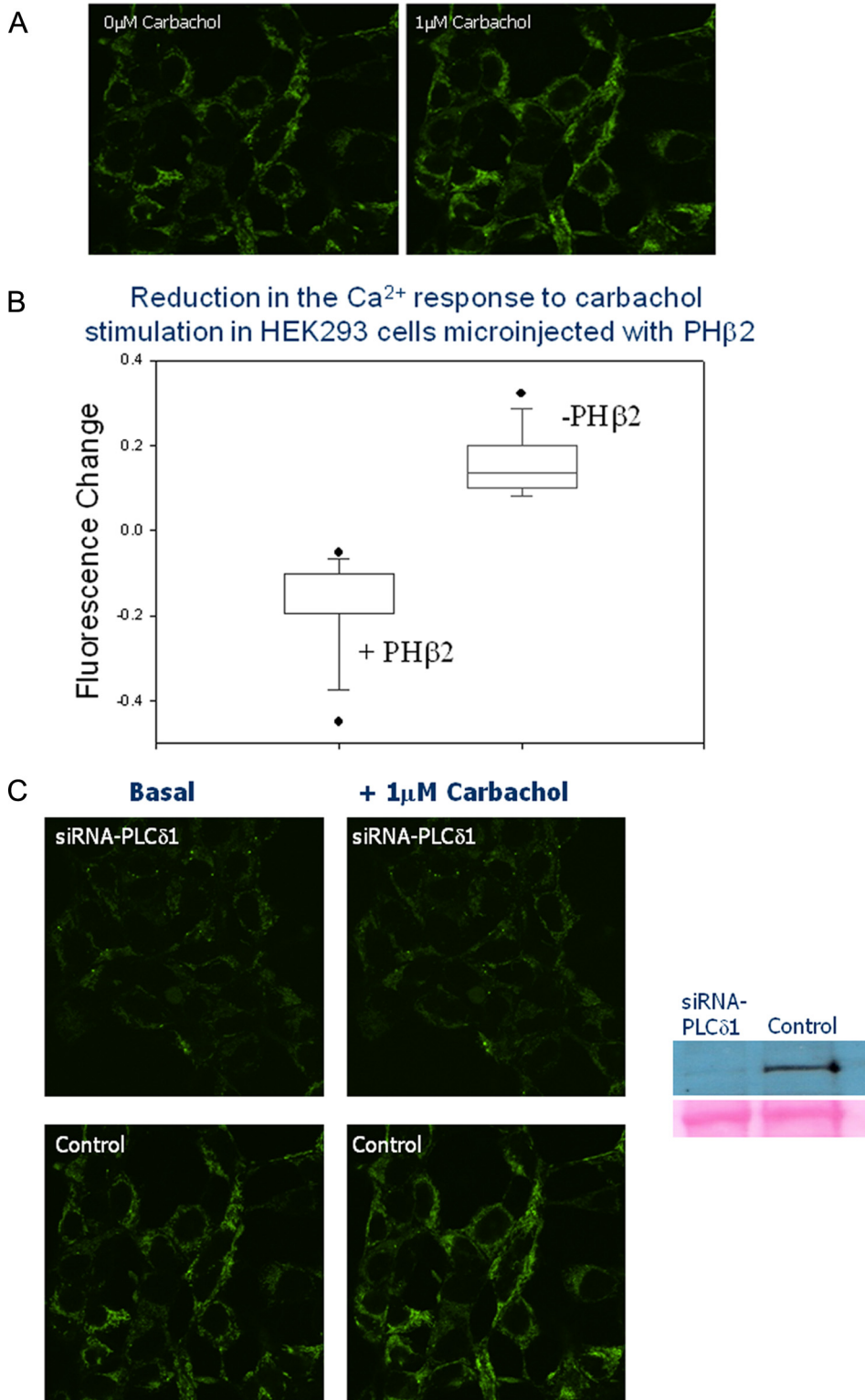


FIGURE 8. *A*, example of the change in Calcium Green intensity of a HEK293 cells 20 s after stimulation. *B*, the response of untransfected HEK293 cells that were either not microinjected ($n = 12$) or microinjected only with tracer dye (Cy5) in buffer ($n = 5$) (these data were indistinguishable), as compared with cells that were microinjected with unlabeled PH β 2 and Cy5 tracer ($n = 13$). *C*, small interference RNA-PLC δ 1 treatment of HEK293 cells results in an approximate 80% reduction of endogenous PLC δ 1 as seen by Western blotting, and elimination of a significant response of Calcium Green intensity to 1 μ M carbachol where cells were imaged 10 s after stimulation.

Previously, we used bimolecular fluorescence complementation to show that PLC β 2 and PLC δ 1 can associate in cells (9). Although this method only detects associated species, we note that the localization of the bimolecular fluorescence complementation fluorescence is identical to the localization of FRET, which should be the case. We had observed a reduction in bimolecular fluorescence complementation when we focused on the bottom plasma membrane upon carbachol stimulation. In parallel, we find a decrease in the FRET from the plasma membrane fraction with stimulation. Based on our previous studies, we interpret this decrease as being due to the displacement of plasma-membrane localized PLC β 2 from PLC δ 1 by G β γ subunits released during stimulation.

We used the PH domain of PLC β 2 as a reagent that should allow us to isolate the importance of PLC β inhibition of PLC δ 1 activity in cells. This reagent remained in the cytosol after microinjection where it bound to PLC δ 1. (We note that microinjection of this reagent also appeared to reduce eCFP-PLC δ 1/eYFP-PLC β 2 FRET, but the sampling population for this study is small, because these experiments were technically challenging.) The association between PH β 2 and PLC δ 1 does not change with carbachol stimulation as expected from the observation that only the plasma membrane population of the associated PLCs is affected by stimulation. Interestingly, we found that association of PH β 2 and PLC δ 1 in the cytosol inhibits the release of Ca²⁺ (Fig. 8). This inhibition is not due to binding of PH β 2 to substrate, because we have found the PH β 2 does not bind specifically to PI(4,5)P₂ (11). Inhibition of Ca²⁺ release may be due to the inability of G β γ to activate PLC β 2, because the microinjected PH β 2 bound to the G protein. A lack of PLC β 2 activation in turn may not allow the cellular Ca²⁺ concentration to rise high enough to activate PLC δ 1. We tested this possibility by measuring

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FRET between PH β 2 and G $\beta\gamma$ subunits, but no FRET could be detected. Thus, we conclude that PH β 2 is quenching PLC δ 1 activity to a low enough level that second messengers cannot be generated. Thus, the amount of Ca²⁺ generated may be proportional to the amount of unbound PLC δ 1.

It is notable that PH β 2 significantly reduced the amount of released Ca²⁺, even though our *in vitro* assays only show an inhibition of ~25% for PLC δ 1 rather than 40% for the full-length enzyme. This seeming discrepancy may be due to one or a combination of possible reasons. The first is technical. As shown in Fig. 8, there is considerable spread in the single cell calcium measurements, and so the effect of microinjected PH β 2 on calcium release may be in the lower range of the data. Also, the integrity of PH β 2 might have diminished in the labeling and microinjection steps. It is also possible that the degree of inhibition varies with the membrane surface. As noted, PLC δ 1 is activated by specific binding of the PH domain to PI(4,5)P₂, and our inhibition assays are carried out using excess PI(4,5)P₂. As discussed above, PH β 2 appears to inhibit PI(4,5)P₂-induced interdomain movement that allows for PLC δ 1 activation. Therefore, a large excess of PI(4,5)P₂ would effectively compete with PH β 2 inhibition. In contrast, in a cellular setting where the relative concentration of PI(4,5)P₂ is very low, then PH β 2 inhibitory interactions could dominate.

The most likely reason for the apparent enhanced inhibition of PLC δ 1 by PH β 2 in cells stems from the requirement of PLC δ 1 for calcium. After a lag concentration, PLC δ 1 follows an exponential activation curve with Ca²⁺ concentration, and inhibition of a significant population PLC δ 1 may not generate enough Ca²⁺ to result in activation of the entire cellular PLC δ 1 population. Thus, the microinjected PH β 2 can effectively keep Ca²⁺ levels below the threshold needed to activate PLC δ 1.

The results here suggest that PLC β 2 may function to keep PLC δ 1 inhibited in the basal state. The strong affinity and the degree of FRET suggest association between the two enzymes, which in turn serves to keep a significant population of PLC δ 1 inhibited. Because PLC δ 1 has very low activity at basal Ca²⁺, then the combination of a loss of PLC β 2 inhibition and the increased Ca²⁺ provide large scale PLC δ 1 activation.

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