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Analysis of $\gamma\delta$ T Cell Functions in the Mouse

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Abstract

Mouse models of disease and injury have been invaluable in investigations of the functional role of $\gamma\delta$ T cells. They show that $\gamma\delta$ T cells engage in immune responses both early and late, that they can function both polyclonally and as peripherally selected clones, and that they can be effector cells and immune regulators. They also suggest that functional development of $\gamma\delta$ T cells occurs step-wise in thymus and periphery, and that it is governed by $\gamma\delta$ TCR-signaling and other signals. Finally, they indicate that $\gamma\delta$ T cell functions often segregate with TCR-defined subsets, in contrast to conventional T cells. From the functional studies in mice and other animal models, $\gamma\delta$ T cells emerge as a distinct lymphocyte population with a unique and broad functional repertoire, and with important roles in Ab responses, inflammation and tissue repair. They also are revealed as a potentially useful target for immune intervention.

Unlike B cells and $\alpha\beta$ T cells, $\gamma\delta$ T cells were discovered through molecular means instead of by way of their functions. Key questions remain concerning possible functional differences between $\alpha\beta$ T cells and $\gamma\delta$ T cells, the significance of the organization of $\gamma\delta$ T cells into a system of specialized subsets, and the function of the $\gamma\delta$ TCR. Explanations are needed for why $\gamma\delta$ T cells often respond faster than $\alpha\beta$ T cells and how sometimes in very small numbers they exert powerful effects on inflammatory responses and tissue physiologies. Answers to these questions could revise conventional immunological concepts, and they might open new avenues for immunotherapy. In this brief review, we examine in vivo $\gamma\delta$ T cell functions as revealed in mouse models.

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Development of $\gamma\delta$ T cell function

From the studies in mouse models, it appears that the development of $\gamma\delta$ T cell function begins in the thymus and continues in the periphery, where environmental influences modulate developmental pathways. Fig. 1 shows a speculative scenario of the development of $\gamma\delta$ T cell function in three major stages.

Early functional commitment in the thymus (stage 1)

The $\gamma\delta$ T lymphocytes arise from a common thymocyte progenitor for $\alpha\beta$ and $\gamma\delta$ T cells during development in the thymus. Lineage commitment and potential appear to be influenced by several factors (1, 2), and commitment may occur at more than one developmental stage (3). Although the TCR type per se does not determine the lineage decision, TCR signal strength appears to determine lineage fate and developmental stage of lineage choice (4, 5). TCR signals and their different strengths may continue to be important in subset-specific functional differentiation and commitment (Ref. 6 and below). Studies with $\gamma\delta$ TCR-expressing thymocytes indicated early on that certain subsets already acquire functional competence while in the thymus. Thus, thymocytes expressing TCR- $\gamma\delta$ and resembling NKT cells were found to produce IL-4 (7), and a subset of adult $\gamma\delta$ TCR⁺ thymocytes that expressed Thy-1 at low levels could be induced to secrete IL-3, IL-4, IL-10, and IFN- γ , in contrast to Thy-1^{hi} cells that only secreted IFN- γ (8). The Thy-1^{lo} thymocytes were barely detectable in newborn mice and increased during the first 2 wk after birth (8), but a later study suggested that most originated from fetal precursors (9). V γ 1⁺ $\gamma\delta$ T cells represent one of the major subsets in the secondary lymphoid organs and circulation of mice (10), and they are associated with distinct functional roles (see below). In keeping with the idea of subset-specific differentiation, the IL-4-producing thymocytes all express TCRs encoded by V γ 1 (8, 9). While investigating $\gamma\delta$ TCR⁺ thymocytes for their ability to regulate allergic airway hyperresponsiveness (AHR), we found that *in vivo*-transferred V γ 1⁺ thymocytes enhanced AHR, whereas V γ 4⁺ thymocytes had no effect (11), pre-empting at least in part the functional pattern we had noted for peripheral $\gamma\delta$ T cells (12). Interestingly, the $\gamma\delta$ lineage-derived AHR enhancers are not those that produce IL-4 and IL-13 (11), unlike the above-mentioned NKT-like $\gamma\delta$ T cell population. This indicates that the V γ 1⁺ thymocyte population contains more than functionally committed cell type.

Many $\gamma\delta$ TCR⁺ thymocytes are already capable of producing TNF- α and IFN- γ upon activation *in vitro* (11), a bias that is maintained in the periphery (13). Thymocytes expressing $\gamma\delta$ TCRs with a known specificity for the T10/T22 nonclassical class I molecules may express different V γ s and V δ s and only share a common D δ motif (14, 15). These cells were shown to differentiate into IFN- γ rather than IL-17 producers dependent on TCR-ligand interactions in the thymus (16). However, development of IL-17-producing $\gamma\delta$ T cells in the thymus has its own particular requirements (17). Finally, functional differentiation of thymocytes expressing the invariant V γ 5V δ 1 TCR of dendritic epidermal T cells (DETCs) in mice depends on thymic expression of Skint 1, an Ig-like molecule expressed on epithelial cells (18), which might be a ligand of this TCR.

These data in mice show that many, if not all, thymic precursors of peripheral $\gamma\delta$ T cells leave the thymus with a defined and limited functional potential.

Polyclonal functional induction in periphery (stage 2)

Many peripheral $\gamma\delta$ T cells in mice appear to be “resting yet activated” (19) (i.e., they acquire an intermediate state of activation from whence polyclonal responses might be elicited with little further stimulation). Perhaps this intermediate state depends on tonic signaling by cross-reactive $\gamma\delta$ TCRs, as envisaged some time ago for certain $\alpha\beta$ T cells (20). The unexplained “spontaneous” reactivity of hybridomas expressing $V\gamma 1^+$ $\gamma\delta$ TCRs described many years ago might be an in vitro correlate, at least for this subset (21). Peripheral $\gamma\delta$ T cells, which leave the thymus as functionally committed precursors, are either already functionally competent or can be induced to become competent in short order. With the exception of two related populations in mice that express invariant TCRs and directly colonize peripheral epithelia and mucosae (22), most peripheral $\gamma\delta$ T cells seem to recirculate and temporarily reside in the lymphoid tissues.

A detailed comparison of murine and human $\gamma\delta$ T cell populations is still lacking. We examined the mouse $V\gamma 1^+$ and $V\gamma 4^+$ $\gamma\delta$ T cells, because these subsets resemble the much-studied recirculating $\gamma\delta$ T cells present in human peripheral blood. Both reside in the murine spleen, and both depend for their functional development on $CD8^+$ dendritic cells (DCs) (11, 23), a cell type present in thymus and secondary lymphoid organs including the spleen, but not in peripheral nonlymphoid tissues (24). Our data suggest that although both of these $\gamma\delta$ T cell types are already functionally committed, they differ in their requirement for peripheral functional induction (12, 25).

When transferred into secondary recipients, splenic $V\gamma 1^+$ $\gamma\delta$ T cells can exert dramatic functional effects in various mouse models of disease (see Table I). In models of allergic AHR and in the primary IgE response to OVA/alum (a model of adjuvant-supported vaccination), where they have a response-enhancing effect, these cells do not need to be induced in any way (12, 42). In fact, even as HSA^{hi} thymocytes, they already have the ability to enhance AHR, following transfer into $\gamma\delta$ T cell-deficient recipients (11). Whereas the IgE-enhancing $\gamma\delta$ T cells may be contained within the NKT-like fraction of $V\gamma 1^+$ $\gamma\delta$ T cells (39), the AHR-enhancing cells are not (see below) (42). Nevertheless, the AHR-enhancing cells also do not require induction. However, AHR-enhancing $\gamma\delta$ T cells are functionally incompetent in mice lacking certain cytokines and receptors. In these mice, they can be induced to become fully functional by peripheral stimulation with OVA/alum (11), revealing some flexibility in their developmental pathway. It thus appears that several types of $V\gamma 1^+$ $\gamma\delta$ T cells, if not all, experience early intrathymic programming/functional induction.

$V\gamma 4^+$ $\gamma\delta$ T cells also affect disease outcome in various mouse models, but unlike the $V\gamma 1^+$ cells, they require peripheral signals to become functional. In contrast to $V\gamma 1^+$ cells, we observed that $V\gamma 4^+$ cells suppress AHR and the primary IgE response to OVA/alum but require immunization or repeated challenge with Ag to develop (25, 39, 43). Thus, $V\gamma 4^+$ cells might bypass some of the intrathymic programming that defines the $V\gamma 1^+$ cells.

However, their functional dependence on CD8⁺ DCs in donor mice suggests that they receive developmental signals as well, whether in thymus or periphery (23). Moreover, although V γ 4⁺ cells can be peripherally induced to suppress AHR and IgE, V γ 1⁺ cells cannot. Such suppressor-inducing conditions do not seem to have any effect on the V γ 1⁺ AHR enhancers but rendered V γ 1⁺ IgE enhancers nonfunctional, although they did not turn them into IgE suppressors (39). Thus, although there is some functional plasticity within either subset, the two do not functionally overlap. Both V γ 1⁺ and inducible V γ 4⁺ cell types are highly effective regulators of AHR and IgE in vivo (38, 39, 42) but appear to exert their functional effects as polyclonal unselected populations because they express diverse TCRs, and the treatments used to induce function do not lead to substantial changes in their TCR repertoires (25, 39).

Peripheral induction of Ag-presenting functions

Studies with ovine, human, and murine cells established that peripheral $\gamma\delta$ T cells can be induced to acquire Ag-presenting functions (44–46), and a recent report characterized human $\gamma\delta$ T cells as professional phagocytes (47). Because all of these studies were done in vitro, it remains to be seen whether Ag-presenting $\gamma\delta$ T cells develop in vivo and are capable of influencing Ag-specific immune responses.

In contrast to human $\gamma\delta$ T cells, which express MHC class II, in vitro expression of MHC class II molecules by murine cells $\gamma\delta$ T cells has been detected but is limited to recently activated cells (46). When highly enriched $\gamma\delta$ T cells were restimulated in vitro with plate-bound anti-CD3 ϵ and anti-CD28 mAbs, activated $\gamma\delta$ T cells lost surface $\gamma\delta$ TCR expression while gaining MHC class II. Because of the absence of surface TCR, these cells became essentially “invisible” but could be identified as $\gamma\delta$ Tcells by intracellular staining for TCR- δ (46). It is thus conceivable that MHC class II⁺ $\gamma\delta$ T cells in vivo have escaped investigator scrutiny because of a loss of TCR expression. Taken together with MHC class II, the in vitro-restimulated $\gamma\delta$ T cells expressed CD40 and CD80, and they were capable of presenting peptide Ags to MHC class II-restricted $\alpha\beta$ T cells with specificities for the uveitogenic peptide IRBP1–20 (48) and the encephalitogenic peptide MOG35–55 (49). These data suggest that stimulation of peripheral $\gamma\delta$ T cells via the TCR can induce an alternative functional program that converts them (transiently) to APCs. However, activation with cytokines might induce the conversion also (46), and the relative importance of these mechanisms remains to be determined.

Clonal selection in the periphery (stage 3)

Studies in humans (50, 51) and mice (34, 52, 53) suggest that functionally committed $\gamma\delta$ T cells can be peripherally selected via TCR-ligand interactions. The putative TCR ligands are still unknown. This peripheral selection appears to be a slow process, perhaps largely limited to chronic disease conditions, and less effective than clonal selection of Ag-specific $\alpha\beta$ T cells.

A recent study in the collagen-induced arthritis model in DBA/1 mice illustrates this process (34). In these mice, $\gamma\delta$ T cells responded to injections of collagen in CFA, V γ 4⁺ cells in particular became activated, expanded, infiltrated the joints, and were shown to exacerbate

the disease. Intracellular staining showed that the infiltrating V γ 4⁺ $\gamma\delta$ T cells expressed IL-17, a cytokine associated with T cell pathogenicity in several models of autoimmune disease. In the course of this response, the TCR repertoire within the V γ 4⁺ subset became much more focused, suggesting that the oligoclonal response was driven by a specific ligand (34). The putative ligand driving this peripheral response does not appear to be collagen, but it might be contained within CFA or be induced through inflammation (34).

Two TCR-defined $\gamma\delta$ T cell subsets in mice, the DETCs in the skin expressing invariant V γ 5V δ 1 TCRs and the $\gamma\delta$ T cells expressing the related invariant V γ 6V δ 1 TCRs, which colonize the mucosae of the female reproductive tract and the lung, resemble clonally expanded $\gamma\delta$ T cell populations (“I” in Fig. 1), although their invariant TCR appears to be selected in the thymus. These cells are activated by inducible autologous ligands (54, 55), and they exert relatively uniform functions. The activated DETCs promote epithelial repair and wound healing (26, 56). V γ 6V δ 1⁺ $\gamma\delta$ T cells seem to respond to inflammation (55, 57), might play an immune-regulatory role during pregnancy (58), exert antibacterial activities in the lung, and inhibit the development of pulmonary fibrosis (31). The evolutionary conservation of these pseudoclonal $\gamma\delta$ T cell populations in rodents—there is no human equivalent—might reflect a particular need for their rapid responses early in development.

Evidence that the TCR remains involved in all stages of functional development

At the onset of development, TCR-signaling supports the lineage decision between $\alpha\beta$ and $\gamma\delta$ T cells, with strong signals through the $\gamma\delta$ TCR favoring $\gamma\delta$ T cell development (3–5). Subsequently, innate TCR interactions with autologous ligands seem to play a role in the functional commitment of $\gamma\delta$ T cells (6, 16). It is not yet clear whether such TCR signals determine subset differences in functional commitment (19). However, although still in the thymus, cells expressing different $\gamma\delta$ TCRs already exhibit different functional potentials in vitro and in vivo (11). Autologous ligands and their in situ expression patterns in the thymus might be detectable using soluble versions of the $\gamma\delta$ TCRs in question, as has been demonstrated in principle in vitro (59, 60).

Polyclonal activation and functional induction of committed cells in the peripheral lymphoid organs do not necessarily involve the TCR and might be accomplished with cytokines alone. However, $\gamma\delta$ T cells at this stage can be activated via the TCR, with subsequent changes in function. Most obviously perhaps, the polyclonal conversion to Ag-presenting functions in vitro can be induced by TCR engagement (46). A role for poly- or oligoclonal TCR engagement is also suggested by data linking the expression of certain V γ V δ pairs with distinct functions. Thus, only V γ 1V δ 5⁺ cells promote AHR in mice hyper-sensitized to OVA, and V γ 1V δ 6⁺ $\gamma\delta$ T cells express a unique cytokine profile when compared with other V γ 1⁺ cells (8, 9). The ability of polyclonal V γ 1⁺ hybridomas to secrete cytokines “spontaneously” suggests that their TCRs might detect self-determinants (21, 61–64).

Finally, clonal expansion in the periphery implicitly involves TCR-ligand interactions, but putative ligands remain to be identified.

Terms of functional engagement

Early and very rapid responses of $\gamma\delta$ T cells were found both in models of infection and exposure to injury. Thus, the influence of $\gamma\delta$ T cells can be detected within a few hours of exposure to ozone, in this case mediating nonspecific AHR (41). In this short time frame, expansion of $\gamma\delta$ T cells is not expected to play a role in their function. In contrast, $\gamma\delta$ T cells can undergo large expansions, and the largest expansions were found relatively late in infectious and chronic inflammation, with several 100-fold increases of local $\gamma\delta$ T cell populations (31, 34). During inflammation, $\gamma\delta$ T cells often assume a regulatory role, as was first suggested in a model of pulmonary infection with influenza virus (65), and later demonstrated in mice infected with *Listeria monocytogenes* (66). In *Listeria* infection of the liver, $\gamma\delta$ T cells were found to be required for the resolution of neutrophilic inflammation and the subsequent infiltration of macrophages (67). However, the same $\gamma\delta$ T cell types that respond in infectious inflammation can also respond in sterile inflammation (55). Elegant studies with $\gamma\delta$ T cells in the skin expressing an invariant TCR revealed that these cells respond locally, and very rapidly, to tissue injury (27). Histological analyses of recent skin wounds showed activated $\gamma\delta$ T cells proximal to the wound edge, and further studies determined that the $\gamma\delta$ T cells must be able to recognize keratinocytes (68) and induce them to produce hyaluronan, which in turn attracts macrophages that are instrumental in the repair process (26, 69).

However, the influence of $\gamma\delta$ T cells is also evident in the absence of injury and inflammation, most notably perhaps in B cell development. That $\gamma\delta$ T cells can provide B cell help and support Ab production in immunized or infected mice has been known for some time (70, 71). There is also evidence that they might regulate peripheral levels of specific Abs (38, 72). More recently, it has come to light that they even support and regulate Abs that develop without intentional immunization (39, 73, 74).

Functional balance

Comparisons of the roles of $V\gamma 1^+$ and $V\gamma 4^+$ $\gamma\delta$ T cells now have been made in a number of mouse models of disease (Table I), and the functional contributions of these subsets often appear to be opposed. Thus, when cells contained within one subset exacerbate disease pathology, cells within the other diminish it (12, 28, 29, 32, 33, 37, 40) (Z. Yin, unpublished results). Functional equilibrium may be reached at different levels, depending on external influences. For example, we found that airway allergen challenge strengthens the IgE-suppressive capability of $V\gamma 4^+$ cells while at the same time diminishing the IgE-enhancing capability of $V\gamma 1^+$ cells (39). It is still unclear whether the example of $V\gamma 1^+$ and $V\gamma 4^+$ $\gamma\delta$ T cells can be generalized. Perhaps functional equilibrium is also achievable between cell types of less closely related lineages (e.g., $\gamma\delta$ T cells and $\alpha\beta$ T cells). In any case, one lesson from these studies is that depleting or reconstituting total $\gamma\delta$ T cells might reveal little in terms of functional effects when functions are balanced, and the full regulatory range of these populations can easily be missed (38, 39, 42, 75).

When and where $\gamma\delta$ T cell functions are needed

Because $\gamma\delta$ T cells are the first T lymphocytes to arise in ontogeny (76, 77), it seems likely that they play an important role in immune protection early in development. Studies in mouse models and with human cells support this notion. Specifically, in young mice infected with *Eimeria vermiformis*, an intestinal parasite responsible for coccidiosis, $\gamma\delta$ T cells were shown to be required for host resistance against this pathogen (78). In contrast, in adult mice, $\alpha\beta$ T cells are both necessary and sufficient for protection. The relative ineffectiveness of $\alpha\beta$ T cells in young mice might be due to an early Th2 bias of these cells so that $\gamma\delta$ T cells come to function as a Th1 substitute (79). Human neonates harbor highly active $\gamma\delta$ T cells. By comparison with $\alpha\beta$ T cells, these cells exhibit stronger, pleiotropic functional responsiveness, and they lack deficits in IFN- γ production present in neonatal $\alpha\beta$ T cells (80). The $\gamma\delta$ T cells in infants respond strongly to immunization with bacillus Calmette-Guérin vaccine (81), and environmental factors are likely to shape the neonatal repertoire of $\gamma\delta$ T cells (82), with possible long-term consequences for immune functions. Even prior to birth, $\gamma\delta$ T cells might protect the developing organism. The reproductive tract in female mice harbors a distinct population of $\gamma\delta$ T cells (83). During pregnancy in mice, $\gamma\delta$ T cells increase vastly in numbers as the placenta develops (58). At least some of these cells appear to be capable of recognizing determinants on trophoblasts (84). Whether such cells play an immune-regulatory role or perhaps protect the fetus against infections remains to be determined (85, 86).

Because $\gamma\delta$ T cell subsets are locally segregated, it seems likely that they also have specific functions related to the tissues in which they reside. Perhaps the most impressive example of this is the DETCs in rodents, which selectively colonize the epidermis and play a distinctive role in wound healing (26, 27, 56). Apparently, this function is so important that it justifies the existence of an entire $\gamma\delta$ T cell subset expressing an invariant $\gamma\delta$ TCR (V γ 5/V δ 1) (87). Whether these cells are also functionally homogeneous remains to be tested rigorously (88). A second type of $\gamma\delta$ T cell in mice and rats expressing an invariant TCR (V γ 6/V δ 1) also has local functions in the tissues. In contrast to the DETCs, however, these cells form smaller steady-state populations, which expand to a much larger size only when their functions are required (57). Cells expressing V γ 6/V δ 1 invariant $\gamma\delta$ TCRs in the lung (89) expand during chronic exposure with live bacteria (31). Importantly, cells within this subset help preventing pulmonary fibrosis (90). V γ 6/V δ 1 TCR⁺ cells also expand in nephritis of mice and rats (35, 36, 91) and in testicular inflammation in mice (55), in either tissue with a protective effect. The heterogeneous $\gamma\delta$ T cells in the lymphoid tissues likely have multiple functions. For example, V γ 1⁺ cells seem to play a role in driving and regulating background levels of B cell differentiation (39, 73, 74), without apparent need for stimulation. When the immune system is challenged through vaccination or during infections (70, 71), they continue to support B cell differentiation, but now the help from $\alpha\beta$ T cells becomes dominant (39). The $\gamma\delta$ T cells, which can be found in the lymphoid organs, reappear in the peripheral nonlymphoid tissues where they can be induced to engage functionally (Table I). V γ 4⁺ cells, for example, contain inducible regulators of lung function, capable of inhibiting bronchoconstriction (43). They also contain inducible proinflammatory effectors, as demonstrated in mouse models of coxsackievirus B3 infection (32, 92), of respiratory

syncytial virus infection of the lung (30), and of collagen-induced arthritis (34). V γ 1⁺ cells in the lymphoid tissues tend to oppose the effects of V γ 4⁺ cells in the tissues (12, 32, 39), though not always. Besides V γ 4⁺ and V γ 1⁺ $\gamma\delta$ T cells, there are other $\gamma\delta$ T cells in the lymphoid tissues (e.g., up to 50% of splenic $\gamma\delta$ T cells), whose functions have not yet been studied separately. Investigations of such cells in mice likely will broaden the perspective of distinct $\gamma\delta$ T cell functions. In contrast, the main experimental source of human $\gamma\delta$ T cells continues to be peripheral blood, which contains a more limited spectrum of $\gamma\delta$ T cells (93).

Is participation in the stress response a distinguishing function of $\gamma\delta$ T cells?

The idea that $\gamma\delta$ T cells play a key role in immune surveillance of stress in the tissues can be traced back to early days in this field of research (94), and it continues to stimulate speculation. A comprehensive analysis of this idea has been recently published by A. Hayday (19), who concluded that $\gamma\delta$ T cells indeed play a significant role in the immune responses to stress. However, $\gamma\delta$ T cells are by no means the only lymphocytes capable of recognizing and responding to cellular stress. Furthermore, there are constitutive $\gamma\delta$ T cell functions that are difficult to reconcile with a focus on cellular stress, because they occur under steady-state conditions. An example is the already mentioned role of $\gamma\delta$ T cells in B cell differentiation and the development of Abs. Although earlier studies showed an involvement of $\gamma\delta$ T cells in induced Ab responses (38, 70, 71, 95, 96), recent observations suggest a far more critical influence of $\gamma\delta$ T cells on the development of polyclonal noninduced Abs (39, 73, 74), with potential downstream effects on immune competence (97). Moreover, assuming that the immune responses to stress are immediate and polyclonal, the slow peripheral selection of oligo- or monoclonal $\gamma\delta$ T cells (34, 98) does not fit well either. However, the response to stress likely is one of several natural capabilities of $\gamma\delta$ T cells.

Why $\gamma\delta$ T cell functions are a potential target for immune intervention

The association of distinct functions with TCR-defined subsets of $\gamma\delta$ T cells invites the targeting of these subsets with Abs for immune intervention. Ab targeting of the TCR is nothing new, but $\gamma\delta$ T cells represent a special case. In this study, because the targeting can be limited to small subsets with distinct functions, undesirable side effects of the Ab treatment (“cytokine storm,” immune deficiency) are expected to be minimal, because relatively few cells are involved. Maximal regulatory effects might be achievable by inactivating one subset while stimulating another, when $\gamma\delta$ T cell subset functions are balanced. Furthermore, because distinct functions are associated with subsets instead of clones, the hurdle of developing clonotypic Abs does not exist, and a single Ab with a given subset specificity is likely to be useful in different diseases and many patients.

Conclusions

Animal models and especially mouse models of disease provide access to $\gamma\delta$ T cells and their functions in a manner that is not achievable with human beings. Studies in mice already have generated a far more comprehensive picture of $\gamma\delta$ T cell functions than could

be obtained with human cell culture, and they are likely to provide first-hand information in the future. Because differences between $\gamma\delta$ T cells in primates and rodents exist, any finding in mice must be validated in humans, but mice and other animal models remain irreplaceable as discovery tools.

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Abbreviations used in this paper

AHR	airway hyperresponsiveness
DC	dendritic cell
DETC	dendritic epidermal T cell

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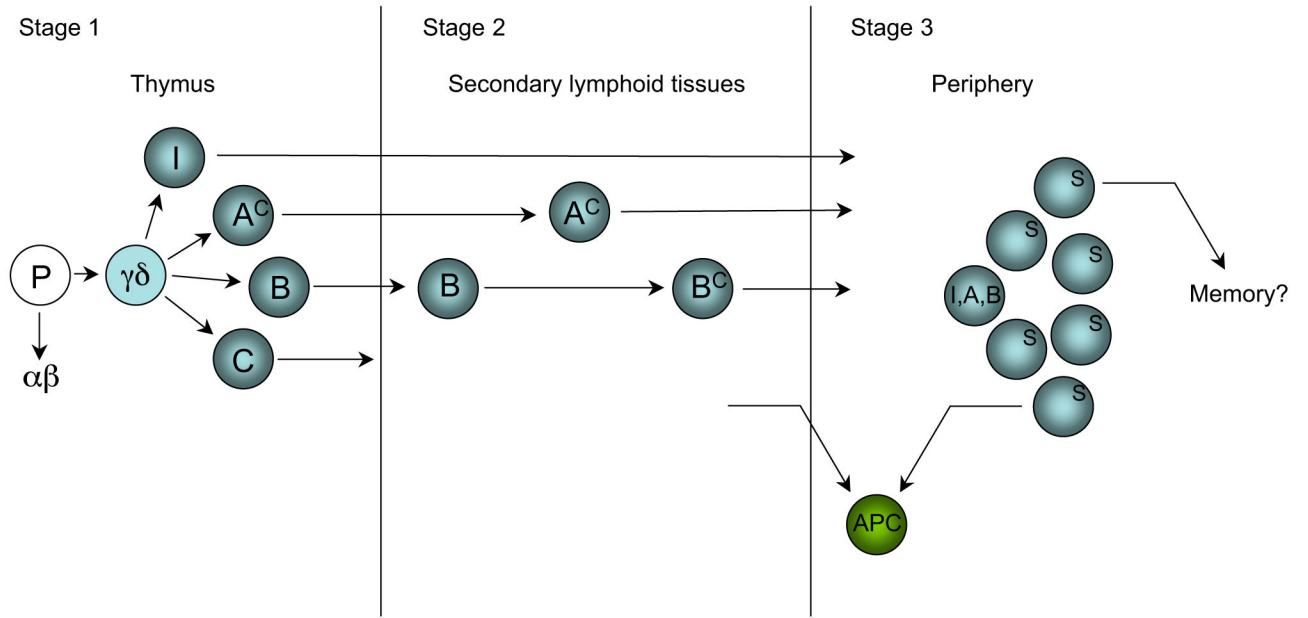


FIGURE 1.

Functional development of $\gamma\delta$ T cells in stages—a speculative scenario. Stage 1 represents intrathymic differentiation under the influence of the thymic environment into subset-segregated functionally committed $\gamma\delta$ thymocytes (I, A, B, and C); at least some cells reach functional competence already at this stage (A^C); cells expressing invariant $\gamma\delta$ TCRs (I) may follow an abbreviated path of differentiation. Stage 2 represents differentiation of some subsets within secondary lymphoid tissues, induced by other cell types (e.g., activated DCs). At this stage, functionally competent cells (I, A^C , and B^C) are capable of mounting polyclonal, subset-specific responses. Stage 3 represents TCR-dependent peripheral selection of clones (S) within subsets. Activated stages 2 and 3 $\gamma\delta$ T cells might transiently convert to APCs, and especially stage 3 $\gamma\delta$ T cells might be able acquire characteristics of memory cells.

Table 1

Contribution of murine $\gamma\delta$ T cells to pathogenesis and pathology

Model	$\gamma\delta$ T Cells (Net Effect)	V γ 1 ⁺	V γ 4 ⁺	V γ 5V δ 1 ⁺ (Invariant)	V γ 6V δ 1 ⁺ (Invariant)	References
Skin wound	Protective			Protective (promote wound healing)		26, 27
<i>L. monocytogenes</i> bacterial infection	Protective	Pathogenic (decrease resistance)	No effect			28
West Nile virus infection	Protective	Protective	Pathogenic (promote encephalitis)			29
Respiratory syncytial virus infection	Pathogenic		Pathogenic (proinflammatory)			30
<i>Bacillus subtilis</i> exposure; hypersensitivity pneumonitis	Protective				Protective, prevent lung fibrosis	31
Coxsackievirus B3-induced myocarditis	Protective	Protective (anti-inflammatory)	Pathogenic (proinflammatory)			32
Experimental autoimmune uveitis	Pathogenic					33
Collagen-induced arthritis	Variable	No effect	Pathogenic (proinflammatory)			34
Heymann's nephritis; adriamycin-induced nephritis	Protective				Protective (anti-inflammatory)	35, 36
Allergic AHR	Variable	Pathogenic (proinflammatory)	Protective (anti-inflammatory)			12, 37
Primary IgE response to OVA/alum (vaccination)	Variable	Enhancing	Inhibitory			38, 39
Subcutaneous melanoma	Protective	No effect	Protective			40; Z. Yin, personal communication
Environmental exposure (ozone)-induced AHR	Pathogenic	Pathogenic (mediate AHR)	No effect			41