Science Advances NAAAS

Supplementary Materials for

Fetal hypoplastic lungs have multilineage inflammation that is reversed by amniotic fluid stem cell extracellular vesicle treatment

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Sci. Adv. **10**, eadn5405 (2024) DOI: 10.1126/sciadv.adn5405

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Supplementary Text

In vivo AFSC-EV administration routes

Pulmonary hypoplasia was induced in rat fetuses as described (*68-70*) with nitrofen (2,4- Dichloro-1-(4-nitrophenoxy)benzene) administration to dams by oral gavage on embryonic (E) 9.5. Three routes of administration were used to administer AFSC-EVs in vivo in rats 1) intratracheal: dams were anesthetized at E18.5, uterine horns were exposed through a midline laparotomy, and the head of the fetus was exposed through a prolene 6.0 purse string suture. The fetal trachea was dissected and intra-tracheal injection of 5 μL of AFSC-EVs or saline was conducted with a 30G needle to reach fetal lungs as in (*71-73*). The fetus was then returned to the amniotic sac and the purse string suture was closed. 2) intra-amniotic: dams were anesthetized at E18.5, a timepoint with ~40 fetal breathing movements/hour in rats (*74*), uterine horns were exposed through a midline laparotomy, and intra-amniotic injections of 100 μL of AFSC-EVs or saline were conducted randomly with a 30G needle, away from the body but close to the face of the fetus. No sutures were required, and sacs were returned into the dam. 3) maternal intra-venous: dams were anesthetized at E18.5, tail vein was identified and 100 μL of AFSC-EVs or saline were injected with a 25G needle. Samples were harvested at E21.5 for all three routes of administration and CDH presence was confirmed. To remove red blood cells, the lungs were perfused with saline, and the left lungs from CDH+ were harvested. The left lung was divided into four equal sized pieces, and the left lower lobe was reserved for snRNAseq in selected samples. The rest of the pieces were immediately frozen and stored at -80°C or placed in 4% paraformaldehyde for fixation.

RNA expression

Harvested fetal lungs were frozen at -80 °C until analysis. Total RNA was isolated using Trizol reagent following supplier recommended protocols. Purified RNA was quantified using a NanoDrop™ spectrophotometer and cDNA synthesis was performed with 500 ng quantified RNA (superscript VILO cDNA synthesis kit). qPCR experiments were conducted with SYBR™ Green Master Mix for 45 cycles (denaturation: 95 °C, annealing: 58 °C, extension: 72 °C) using the primer sequences reported in table S7. Melt curve plots were used to determine target specificity of the primers. ΔΔCT method was used to determine normalized relative gene expression.

Immunofluorescence

Fetal rat lungs were fixed using 4% paraformaldehyde for 18 hours, paraffin-embedded, sectioned into 4 μm slices, and stained with primary antibodies reported in table S8, as reported previously (*6*). A Leica SP8 lightning confocal microscope (Wetzlar, Germany) was used to image samples using the same laser power and exposure between conditions. For human autopsy samples, two independent researchers differentiated between red blood cells and macrophages to quantify $CD68⁺$ cells.

Protein expression

Protein from fetal rat lungs was isolated by incubation with cell extraction buffer supplemented with protease inhibitors, and sonication for 3 cycles of 10 seconds each. 20 μg of purified protein from each sample, quantified using the Pierce Bradford Assay, was probed for SPC and PDPN (table S8). ß-Actin was used as a loading control.

In vivo AFSC-EV tracking

For tracking the location of AFSC-EVs following administration in vivo, a subset of experiments was conducted with either IA or IV injection of 100 μL of fluorescently labeled AFSC-EVs (ExoGlow™-Vivo) at E18.5. Each dose was 250 μg protein equivalent of AFSC-EVs stained with 2 μL of ExoGlow™-Vivo Near IR EV Labeling Kit (784 nm excitation, 820 nm emission), as per manufacturer's instruction. At E21.5, the whole body of the fetus or individually harvested organs were imaged using the IVIS® Spectrum In Vivo Imaging System – PerkinElmer (CFI Facility, University of Toronto). Briefly, whole fetuses were covered in talc powder to ensure optimal contrast and imaged with 2D fluorescence and 3D bioluminescence systems. Individual organs were reconstructed and imaged with 2D fluorescence using automatic exposure within an optimal range for quantification, avoiding overexposure during image acquisition, as recommended by the manufacturer. Saline-injected fetuses served as control. IVIS system was calibrated using 2 μL of ExoGlow™-Vivo. 3D reconstructions were generated using Living Image Software (version 4.7).

Lung morphometry

For lung morphometry, fixed sections of lungs were paraffin-embedded, stained with hematoxylin and eosin, and analyzed for radial airspace count as we previously described (*6*, *9*) and as recommended by the American Thoracic Society (*75*).

Flow cytometry

Total cells from fetal lungs were obtained using the Miltenyi Lung Dissociation Kit. Cells were fixed with 4% paraformaldehyde at 37°C for 10 min and resuspended in an HBSS sorting buffer containing 1-2% FBS. Following permeabilization cells were stained first for extracellular targets ADGRE-1 and CD43, and then for CD68 using primary antibodies reported in table S8. Cells were acquired using the Gallios 10/3 Flow cytometer (Beckman Coulter) and data was analyzed with the Kaluza software suite (Beckman Coulter). Data is representative of $n \geq 3$ rat fetuses.

Single nucleus RNA-sequencing experiments

Nuclei were extracted from frozen lung tissue using Singulator TM 100 (S2 Genomics), with the following settings: nuclear reagent, S2; incubation temp, cold; mixing type, top; mixing speed, fastest; disruption type, default; disruption speed, medium. RNase inhibitor was added to the Singulator Cartridge to reach a final concentration of 0.2 U/μl. Nuclei collected from the Singulator was spun at 800 g, at 4 °C for 10 min. Supernatant was removed, following by resuspending nuclei in freshly made cold Wash and Resuspension Buffer (1X saline, 1% bovine serum albumin, 0.2 U/μ . The wash was repeated twice before proceeding into the 10X Genomics single-cell 3' v3.1 assay and processed as described by the protocol provided by 10X Genomics. Libraries construction and library sequencing were proceeded as described in the 10X Genomics protocol using NovaSeq 6000. FastQ files were obtained using Cell Ranger (10X Genomics, cellranger-6.0.0), aligned to the Rattus norvegicus version 6 genome, and quantified with Cell Ranger count function using default settings. Sequencing data is available online at NCBI GEO, GSE211914. Further downstream analysis was performed in R (version 4.0.2) and bioinformatics tool Seurat (version 4.0.3), with default settings unless specified otherwise. Data were analyzed either by replicate or by pooling reads by condition. Filtering of data was performed to remove cells with raw data was log normalized and scaled using default values. Variable features and principal components were then calculated using default values. Ribosomal genes were removed with pattern = "^Rp[sl][[:digit:]]|^Rplp[[:digit:]]|^Rpsa" from normalized data. UMAP dimensionality reductions were performed with default values. Batch effects were not evident in the dimensionality reductions, and therefore, the data was then analyzed as-is without further corrections. We used LungMAP, LungCellMap, Tabula Muris, and Human Protein Atlas annotations from mouse and human lungs to assign cell type identity based on gene expression enrichment of key marker genes (*18-22*). For each major cell type, we performed differential expression analysis using bioinformatics tool Seurat with MAST method between different conditions (e.g., Control+saline vs CDH+saline). We used Benjamini Hochberg corrected p-values for assessing statistical significance. Genes with p-value ≤ 0.05 were considered as differentially expressed. Ligand-receptor analysis was performed using CellChat (Version 1.1.3, *76*) with default parameters. Gene set enrichment analysis was conducted using g:Profiler (version 0.7.0, *77*) and Reactome (*78*). To further delineate the specific macrophage subtypes contained in cluster 1, 2 and 5, we used scPred, a validated machine-learning probability-based prediction method and trained the machine algorithm on single cell data from adult rat lungs (*79, 80*).

Inhibition studies of macrophage activation

We performed intra-amniotic injections of GW2580 (15mg/kg) in nitrofen-exposed fetuses at E18.5 as described above. Fetuses were harvested at E21.5 and assessed for presence of CDH. Lungs from fetuses with CDH were used for analysis of RAC, as described above.

In vitro assay for macrophage activation

RAW264.7 cells were seeded onto a 6-well tissue culture plate (300,000 cells) and grown in $DMEM/F12 + 10\% FBS + 1\% Penicillin/Streptomycin using culture media for 18 hours. The$ following day, differentiation medium (DMEM/F12 + 10% FBS + 1 ng/mL LPS + 1%) Penicillin/Streptomycin) was added to stimulate RAW264.7 cells towards a pro-inflammatory phenotype for 24 hours. Following stimulation, 10% v/v of AFSC-EVs was added to the culture medium (50 μL of rat AFSC-EVs in 450 μL of DMEM/F12 + 10% FBS + 1% Penicillin/Streptomycin) for an additional 24 hours. RNA was extracted, quantified, and analyzed using ΔΔCT method relative to normalized gene expression, as described above, for *TNFa* and *Lcn2*.

miRNA-mRNA regulatory network analysis

It is well known that lung developmental processes are regulated at least in part by multiple miRNAs (*10*), whose expression is missing or dysregulated in experimental and human CDH lungs, as shown by several studies (*6, 11, 81-91*). Our previously published dataset of AFSC-EV miRNA cargo (*6*) was used to interrogate possible regulatory networks that were downregulated following AFSC-EV administration. We used miRNAs that were overexpressed in AFSC-EV cargo compared to another source of EVs from mesenchymal stromal/stem cells (*6*, data available in ArrayExpress E-MTAB-8921). Significantly downregulated genes in CDH+AFSC-EVs vs. CDH+saline groups were considered targets of AFSC-EV cargo miRNA. MultiMiR (v1.16.0, *92*) was used to link miRNAs from predicted and validated databases (miRecords, miRTarBase, TarBase) with targets. miRNA-mRNA pairs were visualized and shown as an interaction network generated using Cytoscape (3.8.2, *93*).

Comparison with EVs from other sources

In the context of other stem cell sources of EVs, we assessed mesenchymal stromal cells (MSCs) and HEK293 cells, an immortalized human embryonic kidney cell line.

MSC-EVs were chosen as they have been employed in a clinical trial for acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) and were shown be safe and efficacious in restoring oxygenation, downregulating cytokine levels, and restoring immunity (*49*). Moreover, there has been ample evidence that stem cell-derived EVs have a beneficial effect also in premature lungs in several experimental studies (*94-101*). In these studies, MSC-EVs administered to different models of experimental BPD showed improvement in lung function, reversal of lung vascular remodeling and fibrosis, and attenuation of lung inflammation. MSC-EV beneficial effects to BPD lungs were found to be due to the epigenetic and phenotypic reprogramming of myeloid cells and modulation of lung macrophage phenotype (*99, 102*). While we had previously shown that MSC-EV administration partially promoted epithelial cell homeostasis and differentiation in CDH lungs, we did not observe an improvement in several biological pathways and key phenotypic aspects of lung development, such as branching morphogenesis and alveolarization (*6, 8*). Conversely, we found that AFSC-EVs were a better candidate than MSC-EVs for reversing key features of pulmonary hypoplasia in CDH, likely due to their RNA cargo that was enriched with miRNAs responsible for lung developmental processes at a comparative analysis (*6*).

We also tested HEK293 cells as a non-stem cell source of EVs. Using the same methodology for isolation, characterization, and intra-amniotic administration as reported for AFSC-EVS, we observed that CDH fetal lungs treated with HEK293 cell-derived EVs did not have improvement in lung growth or maturation (fig. S8).

Statistical analysis

All statistical analyses were produced using GraphPad Prism® software version 6.0. Differential gene expression analysis was conducted using BioConducter R (3.15) package MAST (1.22.0) between two conditions, with adjusted p-value <0.05 and log₂(fold change) > $|0.5|$ considered as significant for snRNA-seq experiments.

Fig. S1. In vivo effects on individual fetal organs. (**A**) Three representative 2-dimensional bioluminescence IVIS images of organs harvested from embryonic day E21.5 fetal rats following maternal intravenous injection of ExoGlowVivo-stained AFSC-EVs in control pups (left), or pups exposed to nitrofen and treated with AFSC-EVs (right), compared to nitrofen-exposed pups that received saline alone (middle). Control+saline (n=3), Nitrofen+saline (n=3), Nitrofen+AFSC-EVs (n=3). (**B**) Representative bioluminescence IVIS image of a nitrofen-exposed fetus treated with ExoGlowVivo-stained AFSC-EVs via intra-amniotic injection. Left side indicates all organs (n=10 biological replicates), right side shows fetal lungs from six different biological replicates. (**C**) Representative IVIS Spectrum instrument cross-sectional images of negative control from 3D bioluminescence reconstructions of whole fetuses at E21.5 that received intra-amniotic injection of free ExoGlowVivo-stained saline (n=3) at E18.5. Scale bar shows background-corrected

fluorescence in pmol M-1 cm-1. Representative 2D optical image of a dissected fetal lung from the same condition (right, n=4).

Fig. S2. Selection criteria for single nucleus RNA sequencing experiments. Quantification of radial airspace count and gene expression differences in lung developmental markers from the three experimental groups. Control+saline (n=2), CDH+saline (n=3), and CDH+AFSC-EV (n=3).

Fig. S3. Quality control metrics of single nucleus RNA-sequencing data. Plots of genes per nucleus and unique molecular identifiers (UMI) per nucleus in the final dataset (top) and subset of data that did not include cluster 1 and 2 from **Fig. 5F** (bottom).

Fig. S4. UMAP depicting major cell types split by condition. Individual UMAPs of epithelial (top), mesenchymal (middle), and endothelial (bottom) cell types split by conditions: Control+saline (left), CDH+saline (middle), and CDH+AFSC-EVs (right). Colors indicate subgroups. Dotted lines outline the nuclei that are uniquely expressed in CDH+saline lungs.

Fig. S5. Global UMAP of predicted subtypes in cluster 1 and 2. scPred tool was used to predict subtypes using machine learning on adult rat lung single cell data (*79, 80*). Colors indicate subgroups.

Fig. S6. Predicted miRNA-mRNA signaling pathways activated by AFSC-EVs. (**A**) Bar graph indicating number of miRNA-mRNA interactions (y-axis) between AFSC-EV cargo miRNAs and

down-regulated genes in CDH+AFSC-EV lungs (x-axis). Predicted miRNA-target interactions obtained from publicly available datasets (tarbase, MicroCosm, miRanda, miRDB, miRecords, miRTarBase). (**B**) Heatmap of specific AFSC-EV miRNAs (x-axis) and their redundant roles in downregulating genes in CDH+AFSC-EV lungs (y-axis). (**C**) Gene set enrichment analysis of the downregulated genes using g:Profiler. (**D**) Network of validated miRNA-mRNA pairs showing downregulated genes (blue nodes) and AFSC-EV miRNAs (purple nodes).

Fig. S7. Characterization of rat AFSC-EVs used in this study. (**A**) Representative plot of the average size distributions of AFSC-EVs using nanoparticle tracking analysis. Data are representative of five 30 second videos. (**B**) Representative photos of AFSC-EV morphology analyzed by transmission electron microscopy at two different magnifications (top, individual AFSC-EVs at near field; bottom population of AFSC-EVs at far field). Scale bar = 200 nm and 1 µm. (**C**) Expression of canonical markers of EVs (CD63 and TSG101) in a Western blotting experiment with two replicates of AFSC-EVs. AFSC-EV preparations are free of cellular debris as shown by lack of Calnexin (CANX) protein expression (negative control).

Representative histology images (hematoxylin/eosin) of fetal lungs from Control+saline, CDH+saline, CDH+AFSC-EV, and CDH+HEK-EV fetuses. Scale bar = 50 μm. (**B**) Differences in number of alveoli (radial alveolar count, RAC) in Control+saline (n=5), CDH+saline (n=5), CDH+AFSC-EVs (n=5), and CDH+HEK-EVs (n=5) quantified in at least 5 fields per fetal lung. (**C**) Gene expression changes in lung developmental markers *Fgf10*, *Pdpn*, *Sftpc* and *Sftpa*. Control+saline (n=10), CDH+saline (n=10), CDH+AFSC-EVs (n=10), CDH+HEK-EVs (n=10).

Table S1: Number of nuclei in each cluster for snRNA-sequencing data analysis.

Table S2: Selected inflammatory genes that were upregulated in CDH fetal lungs compared

to control.

Gene	Name	Function	Role during lung development and CDH (if known)	References
Calcrl	Calcitonin receptor-like	Receptor of adrenomedulin (AM), which plays a key role in endothelial growth and development. AM is ubiquitously expressed, including in blood vessels and lungs.	AM has potential anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, angiogenic, and vasodilatory properties in the lungs. AM was found to increase pulmonary angiogenesis and attenuate alveolar simplification and pulmonary hypertension in a rat model of hyperoxia-induced BPD.	$(112 - 114)$
c -Kit	Tyrosine- protein kinase KIT, CD117	Proto-oncogene that interacts with cell growth factors and plays a role in cell survival, multiplication, and differentiation.	In the lung, c-Kit is responsible for maintenance of normal alveolar architecture, regulation of epithelial cell clonal expansion, and vascular formation.	(115, 116)
Igf	Insulin-like growth factor	Protein-coding gene that is involved in mediating growth and development in many cells and tissues.	The Igf system plays a pivotal role in the development and differentiation of the fetal lung. IGF receptor type 1 and type 2 are downregulated in nitrofen-induced hypoplastic lungs.	$(117 - 121)$
Vegf	Vascular endothelial growth factor	Potent mitogenic and angiogenic factor that is responsible for differentiation and proliferation of endothelial cells during embryogenesis.	Vegf plays a key role in the development of the pulmonary capillary bed. Experimental studies have suggested that changes in the Vegf signaling pathway are associated with pulmonary hypoplasia in CDH.	$(122 - 125)$
Fgf	Fibroblast growth factor	Regulates a broad spectrum of biological functions, including cellular proliferation, survival, migration and differentiation.	Fgf signaling plays a key role for branching morphogenesis during lung development, injury, and repair.	$(126-129)$
Egf	Epidermal growth factor	Plays an important role in the growth, proliferation and differentiation of numerous cell types.	Egf enhances alveolar type II cell differentiation and stimulates surfactant protein A synthesis. Its receptor is found in the alveolar epithelium during differentiation, suggesting an important role for Egf during human fetal lung development. Exogenous EGF	(130, 131)

Table S3: Genes upregulated in fetal lungs following in vivo AFSC-EV administration.

Table S4: Predicted cell types from cluster 1 and 2 of CDH+saline lungs

Table S5: Number of nuclei within each condition of predicted cell types from cluster 5 (immune cells).

Case #	CDH	Age (Gestational weeks)	Description
1	$+$	19	Left-sided CDH, pulmonary hypoplasia
$\overline{2}$	$+$	20	Left-sided CDH, pulmonary hypoplasia
$\overline{3}$	$^{+}$	26	Absence of left diaphragm, pulmonary hypoplasia
$\overline{4}$	$+$	27	Left-sided CDH, pulmonary hypoplasia, intrauterine growth restriction, stillborn
5		19	Elected termination of pregnancy
6		20	Elected termination of pregnancy
$\overline{7}$		18.4	Elected termination of pregnancy
8		19	Elected termination of pregnancy

Table S6: Details from human lung autopsy specimens used in this study.

Table S7. Primer sequences used in this study for rat qPCR.

Table S8: Details of antibodies used in this study.

Movie S1. Representative 3-dimensional image of in vivo AFSC-EV tracking experiments for Control+AFSC-EVs.

Movie S2. Representative 3-dimensional image of in vivo AFSC-EV tracking experiments Nitrofen+AFSC-EVs.

Movie S3. Representative 3-dimensional image of in vivo AFSC-EV tracking experiments Nitrofen+saline (negative control).

Data file S1. Differentially expressed genes between Control+saline, CDH+saline, and

CDH+AFSC-EVs by major cell type in fetal rat lungs.

Data file S2. Gene set enrichment analysis of differentially expressed genes between

Control+saline vs. CDH+saline and CDH+saline vs. CDH+AFSC-EVs.

Data file S3. Unstained controls for flow cytometry. Flow cytometry analysis of unstained controls

for ADGRE-1 (EMR-1), CD43, CD68 triple stain experiment. Panels are representative of $n \ge 3$ pups per group.

Data file S4. Gene set enrichment analysis of differentially expressed genes in CDH+saline lungs. Data file S5. Data for Western blotting experiments.

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