Dietary supplement attenuates radiation-induced osteoclastogenic and oxidative stress-related responses and protects adult mice from radiation-induced bone loss

Ruth Globus¹, Ann-Sofie Schreurs¹, Candice Tahimic¹, Yasaman Shirazi-Fard¹, Joshua Alwood¹, Mohammed Shahnazari², and Bernard Halloran¹,²
¹Space Biosciences Research Division, NASA Ames Research Center, ²Endocrine Research Unit, University of California, San Francisco

Abstract
Our central hypothesis is that oxidative stress plays a key role in cell dysfunction and progressive bone loss caused by radiation exposure during spaceflight. In animal studies, excess free radical formation is associated with pathological changes in bone structure, enhanced bone resorption, and decreased bone mineral density, which can lead to skeletal fragility. We previously reported that exposure to low or high LET radiation rapidly increases expression levels of pro-osteoclastogenic and oxidative stress-related genes in bone and marrow, followed by pathological changes in skeletal structure. To screen various antioxidants for radioprotective effects on bone, 4-month-old male C57Bl/6/J mice were treated with a dietary antioxidant cocktail, injectable α-lipoic acid, or a dried plum-enriched diet (DP). Mice were then exposed to 2 Gy ¹³⁷Cs total body radiation and one day later marrow cells were collected and the relevant genes analyzed for expression levels. Of the candidates tested, DP was most effective in reducing bone resorption-related gene expression. Microcomputed tomography revealed that DP also prevented the radiation-induced deterioration of skeletal microarchitecture, as indicated by percent bone volume, trabecular spacing, and trabecular number. DP had similar protective effects on skeletal structure after sequential exposure to protons (0.5 Gy, 150MeV/n) and ⁵⁶Fe 0.5Gy, 600 MeV/n). When cultured ex vivo under osteogenic conditions, bone marrow-derived cells from DP-fed animals exhibited increased colony numbers compared to control diet-fed animals. These findings suggest that DP exerted pro-osteogenic effects apart from previously identified anti-resorptive actions, which may contribute to radioprotection of skeletal tissue. In conclusion, a diet enriched in certain types of antioxidants and polyphenols such as DP may be useful as an intervention to protect tissues from degenerative effects of ionizing radiation.

Purpose of the study
- Assess the ability of selected antioxidants to mitigate radiation-induced bone loss
- Determine the mechanisms underlying radiation-induced bone loss

Overview
High doses of radiation lead to progressive bone loss

Results

Assessment of total antioxidant capacity

Figure 2. Dietary total antioxidant capacity (TAC) was measured in the diets used in the study. CD1 (Purina 5001) is the standard diet, CD22 (AIN-93G), is the control for the AOX-supplemented diet and CD33 (AIN-93M) is the control for DP. Data shown are mean ± S.D. from 3-4 separate aliquots.

Figure 1. Male mice were exposed to total body irradiation (TBI) at 16 weeks of age. Panel A shows the short-term gene expression experiment. Mice were pre-fed for 21 days with the diets (CD1, AOX, or DP), or injected twice a day with DHLA or ibuprofen starting one day prior to TBI. In Panel B, mice were pre-fed for 14 days with control diet (CD3) or DP diet and then irradiated at 16 weeks with 2 Gy Gamma. In Panel C Exp. 1, mice were pre-fed with CD1 or DP at 17 days before irradiation. DHLA was injected at 12-hour intervals one day before TBI until tissue harvest. In Exp. 2, mice were fed AOX or control diet 2 (CD2) beginning at 7 days before TBI. Tissues were harvested at time points indicated above.

DP diet mitigates radiation-induced up-regulation of pro-osteoclastogenic and oxidative response markers in bone marrow

Conclusions
- Radiation induces acute and persistent damage to bone and associated tissue.
- Radiation-induced bone loss is to some extent driven by the early increase in bone resorption response as well as oxidative stress and that and the capacity to prevent these early responses can effectively mitigate bone loss.
- These early markers are useful tools to assess and screen for candidate interventions against bone loss.
- Plumb supplementation can positively alter the skeletal response to radiation

Acknowledgement
This study is supported by NSBRI grant #MA02501 (PI: Globus) and the NASA Postdoctoral Program.