

Research Project Proposal
Academic year 2015-2016

Project Nº 22
Title: Development of new treatments for chronic hepatitis delta infection
Department/ Laboratory <i>Laboratory of gene therapy for rare diseases. Gene Therapy and Regulation of gene expression. CIMA</i>
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<p>Summary</p> <p>HDV currently infects about 20 million people worldwide and is most common among populations using inject-able drugs particularly in countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. HDV frequently causes fulminant hepatitis in both human and nonhuman primate host. Hepatitis Delta virus (HDV) is a human sub viral pathogen which is able to infect only such individuals who were previously or are simultaneously infected with Hepatitis B virus. HDV is able to replicate its RNA within cells in the absence of hepatitis B virus but require hepatitis B antigen for packaging and release of HDV virion. Therefore immune prophylaxis against HDV is achieved by vaccination against hepatitis B virus. This mode of prevention is effective only in case of coinfections in hepatitis B virus susceptible individuals but it fails to show any significant effect in case of super-infection, which is more serious state of health. So there is an urgent need to identify the suitable therapeutic molecule for the treatment of HDV.</p> <p>Recently we have developed a new cell and animal model for chronic hepatitis Delta infection (manuscript in preparation), using this model we will identified small molecules with capacity to inhibit HDV replication.</p>
<p>POSSIBILITY OF PhD</p> <p>YES*</p> <p>* (PhD grant required)</p>