Unique Regulation Profile of Prostaglandin E₁ on Adhesion Molecule Expression and Cytokine Production in Human Peripheral Blood Mononuclear Cells

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ABSTRACT

In the present study, we examined the effects of prostaglandin E₁ (PGE₁) on the expression of intercellular adhesion molecule (ICAM)-1, B7.1, B7.2, CD40, and CD40 ligand (CD40L) on peripheral blood mononuclear cells (PBMC) using fluorescence-activated cell sorting analysis as well as its effects on cytokine production using enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay. Whereas no inhibitor of spontaneous expression of adhesion molecules was reported, we found that PGE₁ inhibited spontaneous ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 expression on monocytes in a concentration-dependent manner but had no effect on the expression of B7.1 and CD40L. Although interleukin (IL)-18 induced the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, CD40, and CD40L, PGE₁ prevented IL-18-induced expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40. We examined the involvement of five subtypes of PGE₁ receptors (IP, EP1, EP2, EP3, and EP4) in the effect of PGE₁ on the expression of these adhesion molecules using subtype-specific agonists. Among EP receptor agonists, EP2 and EP4 receptor agonists inhibited IL-18-elicited ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 expression. ONO-1301 (IP receptor agonist) prevented the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 regardless of the presence of IL-18 with the same potency as PGE₁. The effect of a combination of ONO-1301 and 11-deoxy (D)-PGE₁ (EP2/EP4 receptor agonist) on ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 expression mimicked that of PGE₁. Moreover, PGE₁ inhibited the production of IL-12 and interferon-γ in PBMC in the presence and absence of IL-18, whereas PGE₁ induced IL-10 production. In conclusion, IP receptor and EP2/EP4 receptor play an important role in the action of PGE₁ on the expression of adhesion molecules on monocytes and cytokine production.

ABBREVIATIONS: ICAM, intercellular adhesion molecule; CD40L, CD40 ligand; IL, interleukin; IFN, interferon; NF-κB, nuclear factor-κB; PI, phosphatidylinositol; PGE₁, prostaglandin E₁; ONO-1301, 7,8-dihydroxy-5-[(E)-[α-(3-pyridyl)benzylidene]aminoxy]ethyl]-1-naphthoxy)acetic acid; ONO-DI-004, 17S,2,5-ethano-6-oxo-17,20-didehydro prostaglandin E₀; ONO-AE1-259-01, 11,15-O-dimethyl prostaglandin E₀; ONO-AE1-248, 16S-9-deoxy-9β-chloro-15-deoxy-16-hydroxy-17,17-trimethylene-19,20-didehydro prostaglandin F₂; ONO-AE1-329, 16-(3-methoxymethyl)phényl-ω-tetranor-3,7-dithia prostaglandin E₂; CHO: Chinese hamster ovary; TNF, tumor necrosis factor; PBMC, peripheral blood mononuclear cells; 11-D-PGE₁, 11-deoxy-PGE₁; FITC, fluorescein isothiocyanate; mAb, monoclonal antibody; PE, phycoerythrin; CMC, class-matched control; Ab, antibody; fr., fraction; ELISA, enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay; LPS, lipopolysaccharide.

The induction of an immune response requires a coordinated collective cell-cell interaction, including ICAM-1/lymphocyte function-associated antigen-1, B7/CD80, and CD40/CD40L. The interactions between these molecules are important for the development of innate immune responses. It has been reported that IL-18 induces ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 expression in a concentration-dependent manner but had no effect on the expression of B7.1 and CD40L. Although interleukin (IL)-18 induced the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, CD40, and CD40L, PGE₁ prevented IL-18-induced expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40. We examined the involvement of five subtypes of PGE₁ receptors (IP, EP1, EP2, EP3, and EP4) in the effect of PGE₁ on the expression of these adhesion molecules using subtype-specific agonists. Among EP receptor agonists, EP2 and EP4 receptor agonists inhibited IL-18-elicited ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 expression. ONO-1301 (IP receptor agonist) prevented the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 regardless of the presence of IL-18 with the same potency as PGE₁. The effect of a combination of ONO-1301 and 11-deoxy (D)-PGE₁ (EP2/EP4 receptor agonist) on ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 expression mimicked that of PGE₁. Moreover, PGE₁ inhibited the production of IL-12 and interferon-γ in PBMC in the presence and absence of IL-18, whereas PGE₁ induced IL-10 production. In conclusion, IP receptor and EP2/EP4 receptor play an important role in the action of PGE₁ on the expression of adhesion molecules on monocytes and cytokine production.

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clearly showed that PGE$_1$ had high affinity for IP receptor in addition to EP1, EP2, EP3, and EP4 receptors, whereas PGE$_2$ had a high affinity for FP, EP1, EP2, EP3, and EP4 receptors (Narumiya et al., 1999). The EP2 and EP4 receptors are coupled to G$_s$ and mediate the increase in cAMP (Namba et al., 1994). In fact, PGI$_2$, an IP receptor agonist, has been demonstrated to induce the elevation of free Ca$^{2+}$ concentration in several cultured cell lines (Watanabe et al., 1991). Despite the clear difference in the receptor activation profile of PGE$_1$ and PGE$_2$, there is little information about the action characteristics of PGE$_1$ on particular immune responses. Previously, we reported that PGE$_2$ inhibited IL-18-induced expression of ICAM-1 and B7.2 on human monocytes through the stimulation of EP2 and EP4 receptors (Takahashi et al., 2002a). These effects of PGE$_2$ on adhesion molecules in turn modulated the production of IL-12, tumor necrosis factor (TNF)-$\alpha$, and IFN-$\gamma$ in PBMC (Takahashi et al., 2002a); however, little is known about the pharmacological action of PGE$_1$ on adhesion molecule expression on monocytes and the differences between the effects of PGE$_1$ and PGE$_2$ on the cell-cell interaction and cytokine production profiles.

In the present study, we examined the effect of PGE$_1$ on the expression of ICAM-1, B7.1, B7.2, CD40, and CD40L as well as the production of IL-12, IFN-$\gamma$, and IL-10 in human PBMC in the presence or absence of IL-18 to clarify a functional role of PGE$_1$ and the differences between PGE$_1$ and PGE$_2$ using prostaglandin receptor subtype-selective agonists. Interestingly, we found that PGE$_1$ had a distinct action profile compared with that of PGE$_2$. We also found that the stimulation of IP receptor had a unique effect on adhesion molecule expression and cytokine production.

**Materials and Methods**

**Reagents and Drugs.** Recombinant human IL-18 was purchased from Medical & Biological Laboratories, Inc. (Nagoya, Japan). PGE$_1$, ONO-1301, ONO-D1-004, ONO-AE1-259-01, ONO-AE-248, ONO-AE1-329, and 11-deoxy (D)-PGE$_1$ were kindly provided by Ono Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd. (Tokyo, Japan). For flow cytometric analysis, FITC-conjugated mouse IgG1 mAb against ICAM-1/CD54 (6.5B5) and PE-conjugated anti-CD14 mAb were purchased from DAKO (Glostrup, Denmark). FITC-conjugated mouse IgG1 mAb against B7.1 (MAB104) was purchased from Immunotech (Marseille, France). FITC-conjugated mouse IgG1 mAb against B7.2 (2331FUN-1) and CD40 (5C3) were purchased from BD Pharmingen (San Diego, CA). FITC-conjugated mouse IgG1 mAb against CD40L/CD154 was purchased from Ancel (Bayport, MN). FITC-conjugated MOPC 21, an IgG1 class-matched control (CMC), was purchased from Sigma-Aldrich (St. Louis, MO).

**Isolation of PBMC.** Normal human PBMC were obtained from volunteer donors with their oral informed consent. Samples of $50\,ml$ of peripheral blood were withdrawn from a forearm vein. PBMC were isolated from the buffy coat of $10$ healthy volunteers by centrifugation on Ficoll-Paque (Pharmacia AB, Uppsala, Sweden) then washed three times in RPMI 1640 medium (Nissui Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd., Tokyo, Japan) supplemented with $10\%$ (v/v) heat-inactivated fetal calf serum, $20\,\mu g/ml$ kanamycin, and $100\,\mu g/ml$ streptomycin and penicillin (Sigma-Aldrich). PBMC were suspended at a final concentration of $1 \times 10^6$ cells/ml in RPMI 1640 medium supplemented with $10\%$ (v/v) heat-inactivated fetal calf serum.

**Preparation of Isolated Monocytes.** PBMC were prepared as described under Isolation of PBMC. Separation of monocytes from PBMC was conducted by counterflow centrifugal elutriation using the SRR6Y elutriation system and a rotor equipped with a $4.5$-ml chamber (Hitachi Koki Co., Ltd, Tokyo, Japan). PBMC resuspended at $5$ to $10 \times 10^7$ cells in $10 \, ml$ of PBS supplemented with $1\%$ (v/v) fetal calf serum were injected at an initial flow rate of $10 \, ml/min$ at $4^\circ C$ with a rotor speed of $2000 \, rpm$. The flow rate was gradually increased, and the cell fractions were collected serially as follows: fraction 1 (fr. 1), $200 \, ml$ at $10 \, ml/min$; fr. 2, $200 \, ml$ at $12 \, ml/min$; fr. 3, $200 \, ml$ at $14 \, ml/min$; fr. 4, $200 \, ml$ at $16 \, ml/min$; and fr. 5, $5 \, ml$ at $18 \, ml/min$. The cell population of each fraction was determined by flow cytometry with FITC-conjugated anti-CD14 Ab (monocytes), PE-conjugated anti-CD3 Ab (T-cells) and PE-conjugated anti-CD19 Ab (B-cells). Fraction 2 contained $65\%$ T-cells and $20\%$ B-cells but less than $5\%$ monocytes. Both fr. 3 and 4 contained $85\%$ monocytes but less than $5\%$ T- and B-cells. These two fractions were used as the monocyte-rich fractions. The other fractions contained less than $5\%$ monocytes and T- and B-cells.

**Flow Cytometric Analysis.** PBMC and isolated monocytes ($1 \times 10^6$ cells/ml) were incubated with IL-18, PGE$_1$, and IP and EP receptor agonists for $24\, h$ at $37^\circ C$ in a $5\%$ CO$_2$/air mixture under different conditions. The cells ($5 \times 10^5$ cells/sample) were washed once with washing buffer (PBS supplemented with $2.5\%$ normal horse serum, $0.1\%$ NaN$_3$, and $0.01\, M$ HEPES, pH 7.3). The changes in expression of human leukocyte antigens (ICAM-1, B7.1, B7.2, CD40, and CD40L) on monocytes were examined by double-labeling flow cytometry using a combination of anti-CD14 Ab with anti-ICAM-1 Ab, anti-B7.1 Ab, anti-B7.2 Ab, anti-CD40 Ab, or anti-CD40L Ab. Then, the cells were incubated with $1\, \mu g$ of FITC-conjugated anti-ICAM-1 Ab, anti-B7.1 Ab, anti-B7.2 Ab, anti-CD40 Ab or anti-CD40L Ab or CMC, and PE-conjugated anti-CD14 Ab for $20\, min$ at $4^\circ C$. After washing, the cells were fixed with $2\%$ paraformaldehyde and analyzed with FACS Calibur (BD Biosciences, San Jose, CA), and data were processed using the CELL QUEST program (BD Biosciences). The data are expressed as the relative fluorescence intensities against CMC. The results are the means $\pm$ S.E.M. of five donors.

**Cytokine Assay.** PBMC ($1 \times 10^6$ cells/ml) were incubated with PGE$_1$, PGE$_2$, and IP and EP receptor agonists in the presence or absence of IL-18 for $24\, h$ at $37^\circ C$ in a humidified atmosphere of $5\%$ CO$_2$ in air. After culture, the cell-free supernatant fractions were assayed for IL-12 (p70), IFN-$\gamma$, and IL-10 protein as described previously (Takahashi et al., 2002a, b).

**Statistical Analysis.** The statistical significance of differences was evaluated by analysis of variance followed by Tukey’s test. $P < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

**Results**

**Dose-Response Relationship of the Effects of PGE$_1$ on ICAM-1, B7.2, CD40, and CD40L Expression on Human Monocytes.** The effects of PGE$_1$ ($0 – 10^{-6}$ M) on the changes in expression of ICAM-1, B7.1, B7.2, CD40, and CD40L on monocytes in the presence and absence of IL-18 ($100$ ng/ml) were determined by double-staining flow cytometry $24\, h$ after the incubation of PBMC (Fig. 1A). PGE$_1$ concentration-dependently inhibited the spontaneous expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 on monocytes (Fig. 1A) but had no effect on the expression of B7.1 and CD40L (data not shown). IC$_{50}$ values for the inhibitory effect of PGE$_1$ on the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 were estimated to be $10, 3$, and $7\, nM$, respectively. IL-18 ($100$ ng/ml) up-regulated the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 on monocytes. PGE$_1$ inhibited IL-18-induced ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 expression in a concentration-dependent manner (Fig. 1A).

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Effects of IP and EP Receptor Agonists on ICAM-1, B7.1, B7.2, CD40, and CD40L Expression on Human Monocytes. To determine which PGE1 receptor subtypes (IP, EP1, EP2, EP3, EP4) are involved in the effects of PGE1 on ICAM-1, B7.1, B7.2, CD40, and CD40L expression, we examined the effects of EP receptor agonists (0–10^{-6} M) on ICAM-1, B7.1, B7.2, CD40, and CD40L expression on monocytes in the presence and absence of IL-18 (100 ng/ml) after a 24-h incubation of PBMC (Fig. 2). ONO-1301 (0–10^{-8} M) and absence of ONO-1301, 11-D-PGE1 (0–10^{-6} M) concentration-dependently suppressed the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40. At the concentration (10^{-6} M) of ONO-1301, 11-D-PGE1 had no effect on the expression of these adhesion molecules (Fig. 4A). On the other hand, ONO-1301 (0–10^{-6} M) adhesion molecules regardless of the presence of IL-18 (data not shown).

ONO-AE1-259-01 (EP2 receptor agonist) and ONO-AE1-329 (EP4 receptor agonist) (Suzawa et al., 2000; Kitagawa et al., 2001) also had no effect on the expression of these five adhesion molecules in the absence of IL-18 (Fig. 2, A–C). ONO-AE1-259-01 and ONO-AE1-329 inhibited ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 expression on monocytes in the presence of IL-18 (Fig. 2, D–F) but had no effect on the expression of B7.1 and CD40L (data not shown). IC_{50} value for the inhibitory effect of ONO-AE1-259-01 on the expression of ICAM-1 was estimated to be 3 nM (Fig. 2). Moreover, we found that ONO-1301 (IP receptor agonist) (Hayashi et al., 1997; Imawaka and Sugiyama, 1998) strongly prevented the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 in the presence and absence of IL-18 (Fig. 2) but had no effect on the expression of B7.1 and CD40L (data not shown). IC_{50} value for the inhibitory effect of ONO-1301 on the expression of ICAM-1 was estimated to be 3 nM (Fig. 2).

Effect of PGE1, IP, EP2, and EP4 Agonist on ICAM-1 Expression on Isolated Monocytes. The effects of PGE1, IP, EP2, and EP4 agonist (10^{-6} M) on the expression of ICAM-1 on isolated monocytes were examined (Fig. 3). ONO-1301 as well as PGE1 prevented the expression of ICAM-1 in the presence and absence of IL-18 (100 ng/ml). Although EP2 and EP4 agonists inhibited the expression of ICAM-1 in the presence of IL-18, these two agonists did not do so in the absence of IL-18.

Effect of ONO-1301 and 11-Deoxy-PGE1 on ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 Expression on Human Monocytes. We examined the effects of ONO-1301 and 11-D-PGE_1 (EP2/EP4 receptor agonist) on IL-18-induced ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 expression (Fig. 4). In the presence (10^{-8} M) and absence of ONO-1301, 11-D-PGE_1 (0–10^{-6} M) concentration-dependently suppressed the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40. At the concentration (10^{-6} M) of ONO-1301, 11-D-PGE_1 had no effect on the expression of these adhesion molecules (Fig. 4A). On the other hand, ONO-1301 (0–10^{-6} M)
inhibited the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 in the presence (10⁻⁸ and 10⁻⁶ M) and absence of 11-D-PGE₂ (Fig. 4B).

**Dose-Response Relationship of the Effects of PGE₁ and PGE₂ on Cytokine Responses in PBMC.** The effect of PGE₁ and PGE₂ (0–10⁻⁶ M) on the production of IL-12, IFN-γ, and IL-10 in PBMC treated with and without IL-18 was determined by ELISA after 24 h of culture (Fig. 5). In the absence of IL-18 stimulus, PGE₁ prevented the spontaneous production of IFN-γ and IL-10 in a concentration-dependent manner, but had no effect on the production of IL-12. PGE₂ induced the production of IFN-γ without IL-12 production but inhibited the production of IL-10. The same concentration of PGE₁ and PGE₂ inhibited IL-12 and IFN-γ production in IL-18-stimulated PBMC, but induced IL-10 production. The IC₅₀ value for the inhibitory effect of PGE₁ on the production of IL-12 induced by IL-18 was estimated to be 5 nM.

**Inhibition of IL-18-Induced Cytokine Responses in PBMC by IP and EP Receptor Agonists.** We examined the effect of IP, EP₁, EP₂, EP₃, and EP₄ receptor agonist on the production of IL-12, IFN-γ, and IL-10 in PBMC in the presence and absence of IL-18 (Fig. 6). Whereas ONO-AE₁-259-01 and ONO-AE₁-329 inhibited the production of IFN-γ in the absence of IL-18, ONO-1301 inhibited it. ONO-1301, ONO-AE₁-259-01, and ONO-AE₁-329 inhibited IL-10 production but did not affect IL-12 production. In IL-18-treated PBMC, ONO-1301, ONO-AE₁-259-01, and ONO-AE₁-329 prevented the production of IL-12 and IFN-γ but induced IL-10 production. ONO-DI-004 and ONO-AE-248 had no effect on the expression of these cytokines regardless of the presence of IL-18 (data not shown).

**Effect of ONO-1301 and 11-Deoxy-PGE₂ on Cytokine Responses in PBMC.** The effect of ONO-1301 and 11-D-PGE₂ on IL-18-induced IL-12, IFN-γ, and IL-10 production was investigated (Fig. 7). In the presence (10⁻⁶ M) and absence of ONO-1301, 11-D-PGE₂ (0–10⁻⁶ M) concentration-dependently inhibited IL-12 and IFN-γ production but induced IL-10 production. At the concentration (10⁻⁶ M) of ONO-1301, 11-D-PGE₂ did not affect the production of IL-12, IFN-γ, and IL-10 (Fig. 7A). In the presence (10⁻⁸ and 10⁻⁶ M) and absence of 11-D-PGE₂, ONO-1301 (0–10⁻⁶ M) inhibited IL-12 and IFN-γ production (Fig. 7B).

**Discussion**

In vascular endothelial cells, PGE₁ suppressed TNF-α-induced ICAM-1 and vascular cell adhesion molecule-1 expression, leading to the inhibition of interaction between leukocytes and endothelial cells (Weiss et al., 1995; Natori et al., 1997; Iwata et al., 1999). However, little is known about the effect of PGE₁ on the cell-cell interaction between monocytes and natural killer cells. In the present study, we found that PGE₁ concentration-dependently inhibited the spontaneous expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 on monocytes 24 h after the start of incubation (Fig. 1A). PGE₂ also prevented the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 in the presence of IL-18 (Fig. 1B). Previously, we found that PGE₂ inhibited the IL-18-induced expression of ICAM-1 and B7.2, but had no effect on the expression of ICAM-1, B7.1, and B7.2 in the absence of IL-18 (Takahashi et al., 2002a). The effects of PGE₁ on the spontaneous expression of the three adhesion molecules were in contrast to those of PGE₂.

It was reported that PGE₁ binds to EP₂ and EP₄ receptor (Fan and Chapkin, 1998), whereas earlier studies suggested the existence of distinct receptors for PGE₁ from those for PGE₂ (Datta-Ray et al., 1983; Kanba et al., 1991). The IP receptor-selective agonist ONO-1301, whose affinity for IP receptor was expressed in CHO cells, was reported to be almost the same as that of PGE₁ (Narumiya et al., 1999). In the present study, we found that ONO-1301 (IP receptor agonist) suppressed the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 in the absence of IL-18; however, EP receptor agonists had no effect on these adhesion molecules' expression (Fig. 2). ONO-1301, ONO-AE₁-259-01 (EP₂ receptor agonist), and ONO-AE₁-329 (EP₄ receptor agonist) inhibited IL-18-induced ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 expression (Fig. 2), but ONO-DI-004 (EP₁ receptor agonist) and ONO-AE-248 (EP₃ receptor agonist) had no effect on the expression of adhesion molecules (data not shown). The affinity of PGE₂ for IP receptor is higher than that for EP₂ and EP₄ receptor (Narumiya et al., 1999). The inhibitory effect of ONO-1301 (10⁻⁶ M) on the expression of ICAM-1 showed a significant difference from that of ONO-AE₁-259-01 (10⁻⁶ M) and ONO-AE₁-329 (10⁻⁶ M) (Tukey's test). As shown in Fig. 4, increasing concentrations of 11-D-PGE₂ had no additive inhibitory effect on the expression of adhesion molecules in the presence of ONO-1301 (10⁻⁶ M), whereas ONO-1301 additively inhibited the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 in the presence of 11-D-PGE₂ (10⁻⁸ M). Therefore, the stimulation of IP receptor might be involved in the effect of PGE₁ both in the presence and absence of IL-18, and the stimulation of EP₂...
**Fig. 5.** The dose-response relationship for the effects of PGE1 and PGE2 on cytokine responses in PBMC. PBMC (1 x 10^6 cells/ml) were incubated with increasing concentrations of 11-D-PGE1 (EP2/EP4 receptor agonist) for 24 h in the presence and absence of IL-18 (100 ng/ml) and three different concentrations (0, 10^-8, 10^-7, and 10^-6 M) of ONO-1301 (IP receptor agonist) and were stained with antibodies (ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40) or CMC. The results are the means ± S.E.M. of five donors. *, P < 0.05, **, P < 0.01 compared with the corresponding value in the presence of IL-18 alone. The error bars smaller than the symbols are not shown.
and EP4 receptor might be involved in the effect of PGE1 in the presence of IL-18 as in the case of PGE2 (Takahashi et al., 2002a) (Fig. 2). Although the expression of IP receptor on human monocytes was observed (Li et al., 1997), it remained unclear whether the direct stimulation of IP receptors on monocytes caused the change in adhesion molecules expression on monocytes in PBMC preparation. In the present study, we found for the first time that the stimulation of IP receptor on isolated monocytes suppressed the expression of ICAM-1 (Fig. 3).

The effects of exogenous PGE1 and PGE2 on cytokine production in human PBMC stimulated with concanavalin A or LPS were reported (Dooper et al., 2002). The production of TNF-α, IFN-γ, and, to a lesser extent, IL-10 was inhibited by PGE1 and PGE2 in concanavalin A-stimulated PBMC concomitant with unaffected IL-2 levels (Dooper et al., 2002). In LPS-stimulated PBMC, TNF-α production was inhibited by PGE1 and PGE2, whereas IL-6 remained unaffected and IL-10 production was increased (Dooper et al., 2002). In the previous (Takahashi et al., 2002a) and the present study (Fig. 5), both PGE2 and PGE1 inhibited IL-18-induced IL-12 and IFN-γ production but induced IL-10 production. In IL-18-treated PBMC, ONO-1301, ONO-AE1-259-01, and ONO-AE1-329 suppressed the production of IL-12 and IFN-γ (Fig. 6), whereas ONO-DI-004 and ONO-AE-248 did not (data not shown). Therefore, the stimulation of IP, EP2, and EP4 receptor might contribute to the inhibition of IL-18-elicited cytokine production. In the experiment on the effect of ONO-1301 and 11-deoxy-PGE1 on IL-18-induced cytokine production in human PBMC. A, PBMC (1 × 10^6/ml) were incubated with increasing concentrations of 11-D-PGE1, (EP2/EP4 receptor agonist) for 24 h in the presence of IL-18 (100 ng/ml) and two different concentrations (0, 10^{-5}, 10^{-6} M) of ONO-1301 (IP receptor agonist). At the end of the culture, the levels of IL-12 (p70), IFN-γ, and IL-10 in the conditioned media were determined by ELISA. The results are the means ± S.E.M. of five donors.*, P < 0.05, **, P < 0.01 compared with the corresponding value in the medium. #, P < 0.05, $$, P < 0.01 compared with the corresponding value in the presence of IL-18 alone. The error bars smaller than the symbols are not shown.
production (data not shown), suggesting that PGE₁ might inhibit IL-18-initiated cytokine production through regulating the expression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 as suggested for PGE₂ action (Takahashi et al., 2002a) (Fig. 5).

It is known that IP receptor shows a high affinity for PGE₁ but not for PGE₂ (Narumiya et al., 1999). The biological effects of IP receptor stimulation include anti-thrombosis (Murata et al., 1997) and vasodilator actions, which have been targeted therapeutically to treat pulmonary hypertension (Tuder et al., 1999; Hoeper et al., 2000). The expression of IP-receptor mRNA has been shown in various mouse organs, including neurons, megakaryocytes, and the smooth muscles of arteries (Oida et al., 1995). However, the function of IP receptor in monocytes remains unknown. The IP receptor is coupled to Gₐ and Gₚ proteins, leading to not only a rise in cAMP levels but also PI responses in CHO cells (Namba et al., 1994). The elevation of cAMP inhibits NF-κB activation in the human monocytic cell line THP-1 (Delgado and Ganea, 2001). Dibutyryl cAMP, a membrane-permeable cAMP analog, inhibited the expression of ICAM-1 and B7.2 on IL-18-treated monocytes; however, it had no effect on the expression of ICAM-1 and B7 in the absence of IL-18 (Takahashi et al., 2002a). Thus, there might be IP-receptor signaling other than the regulation of activity of NF-κB by cAMP in the absence of IL-18.

On the other hand, PGE₁ suppressed the production of IFN-γ even in the absence of IL-18, whereas under the same condition PGE₂ stimulated the production of IFN-γ (Fig. 5). ONO-1301 also inhibited the spontaneous production of IFN-γ, whereas ONO-AE-259-01 and ONO-AE-329 inhibited the production of IFN-γ (Fig. 6), suggesting that the effect of PGE₁ on the production of IFN-γ in the absence of IL-18 might depend on the stimulation of IP receptor. PGE₁ is reported to stimulate cAMP production more effectively than PGE₂ (Knudson et al., 1986; Salvatori et al., 1992). Dibutyryl cAMP induced the production of IFN-γ in the absence of IL-18 (data not shown). These results suggested that the regulation of production of IFN-γ by PGE₁ might be in a cAMP-independent manner. Because anti-ICAM-1, anti-B7.2, and anti-CD40 antibodies had no effect on production of cytokines in the absence of IL-18 (data not shown), it is unclear whether the inhibitory effect of ONO-1301 or PGE₁ on IFN-γ production in the absence of IL-18 depends on the suppression of ICAM-1, B7.2, and CD40 expression.

IL-18 has been considered a mediator of inflammatory disease such as allograft rejection after organ transplantation, rheumatoid arthritis, or hepatitis (Saha et al., 1999; Affleck et al., 2001; Yamoto et al., 2002). Using a mouse model, recent studies reported that PGE₁ reduced ischemia-reperfusion injury following lung transplantation (de Perrot et al., 2001), collagen induced arthritis (Moriuchi-Murakami et al., 2001; Yumoto et al., 2002). Using a mouse model, recent studies reported that PGE₁ reduced ischemia-reperfusion injury following lung transplantation (de Perrot et al., 2001), collagen induced arthritis (Moriuchi-Murakami et al., 2001; Yumoto et al., 2002). Using a mouse model, recent studies reported that PGE₁ reduced ischemia-reperfusion injury following lung transplantation (de Perrot et al., 2001), collagen induced arthritis (Moriuchi-Murakami et al., 2001; Yumoto et al., 2002).
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