



## Expression of nitric oxide synthase protein and gene in the splanchnic organs of liver cirrhosis and portal hypertensive rats

Zhi-Jie Feng, Li-Ying Feng, Ze-Ming Sun, Mei Song, Xi-Xian Yao

Zhi-Jie Feng, Li-Ying Feng, Ze-Ming Sun, Mei Song, Xi-Xian Yao,  
Department of Gastroenterology, the Second Hospital of Hebei Medical  
University, Shijiazhuang 050000, Hebei Province, China

Author contributions: All authors contributed equally to the work.

Correspondence to: Dr. Zhi-Jie Feng, Department of Gastroenterology, the  
Second Hospital of Hebei Medical University, Shijiazhuang 050000, Hebei Prov-  
ince,  
China. pub@hb2h.he.cninfo.net  
Website: www.hb2h.he.cninfo.net  
Telephone: +86-311-7046901-8631  
Fax: +86-311-7834314

Received: June 6, 1999  
Revised: November 24, 1999  
Accepted: January 18, 2000  
Published online: September 15, 2000

### Abstract

**AIM:** To investigate the expression of endothelial NO synthase (eNOS), inducible NO synthase (iNOS) protein and eNOS mRNA gene in the splanchnic organs of liver cirrhosis and portal hypertensive rats.

**METHODS:** In control and CCl<sub>4</sub> induced liver cirrhotic rats, the expression of eNOS and iNOS proteins was detected by immunohistochemical method, and eNOS mRNA was detected by in

situ hybridization.

**RESULTS:** The expression of eNOS protein and eNOS mRNA increased in most organs of the cirrhotic rats, including bronchial and alveolar epithelial cells, renal tubular epithelial cells and mesenchyma, endothelial and adventitial cells of aorta and superior mesenteric artery, whereas no significant increase of iNOS protein was found. In the hepatic tissue, NOS protein and eNOS mRNA were present in mesenchymal cells and vessel adventitial cells, no difference was observed in the expression between control and cirrhotic rats.

**CONCLUSION:** The expression of NOS varied in region. In splanchnic organs and vasculars there was an increased expression of eNOS which induced aplanchnic vasodilation and increased the inflow of portal vein, while in the liver tissue and blood vessel showed no increased expression, which may be associated with increased intrahepatic vascular resistance.

**Key words:** Nitric oxide synthase; Liver cirrhosis; Hypertension, portal; Immunohistochemistry; Gene expression; Rats

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Feng ZJ, Feng LY, Sun ZM, Song M, Yao XX. Expression of nitric oxide synthase protein and gene in the splanchnic organs of liver cirrhosis and portal hypertensive rats. *World J Gastroenterology* 2000; 6(Suppl 3): 52 Available from: URL: <http://www.wjgnet.com/1007-9327/full/v3/iSuppl3/52.htm> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3748/wjg.v3.iSuppl3.52>

E- Editor: Hu S



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