

## Regulation of the $K_{v4.2}$ complex by $Ca_{v3.1}$ calcium channels

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**A**-type potassium current generated by the  $K_{v4}$  family of channels is an important factor regulating the frequency, latency and dendritic backpropagation of spike discharge. The  $K_{v4.2}$  complex of  $K_{v4.2}$ -KChIP3-DPP10c was recently shown to form a novel signaling complex through its association with T-type  $Ca_{v3.2}$  or  $Ca_{v3.3}$  calcium channel isoforms.  $Ca_{v3}$ -mediated calcium entry was shown to selectively right-shift the inactivation voltage of  $K_{v4.2}$  into the physiological range to modulate cerebellar stellate cell latency and gain. We now show that  $Ca_{v3.1}$  calcium channels can also associate with the  $K_{v4.2}$  complex to effect similar regulation of  $K_{v4.2}$  inactivation voltage. By comparison, no calcium-dependent shift in  $K_{v4.2}$  inactivation properties was elicited by any of  $Ca_{v1.4}$ ,  $Ca_{v2.1}$  or  $Ca_{v2.3}$  calcium channels coexpressed with the  $K_{v4.2}$  complex, emphasizing the important role for low voltage-activated  $Ca_{v3}$  channels in this signaling complex.

recently determined that  $Ca_{v3}$  and  $K_{v4}$  channels form a signaling complex that allows for calcium-dependent regulation of  $K_{v4}$  inactivation.<sup>11</sup> Specifically, T-type mediated calcium influx in cerebellar stellate cells selectively right-shifts the inactivation profile of  $I_A$ , with no effects on parameters of activation or recovery from inactivation. The function of this complex proves to be critical in shifting the  $K_{v4}$  inactivation profile into the physiological range of membrane potentials to control first spike latency and gain of stellate cell firing.<sup>3,11</sup>

The  $K_{v4}$  complex is known to contain four  $K^+$  Channel Interacting Proteins (KChIPs1-4) that represent members of a calcium sensor family,<sup>5,12</sup> as well as dipeptidyl-peptidase-like-proteins (DPLPs).<sup>13-16</sup> Despite a wealth of information on the structural and functional relationships between members of the  $K_{v4}$  complex,<sup>13,17,18</sup> little progress had been made on identifying a physiological source of calcium that might modify  $K_{v4}$  function. We found that  $K_{v4.2}$  channels co-immunoprecipitate with  $Ca_{v3.2}$  or  $Ca_{v3.3}$  channels and are pulled down by GST fusion proteins of the  $Ca_{v3.2}$  or  $Ca_{v3.3}$  C-terminus.<sup>11</sup> Recapitulation of the stellate cell  $K_{v4.2}$  complex in the tsA-201 expression system revealed that  $K_{v4}$  modulation occurs upon co-expression of KChIP3 as a calcium sensor and  $Ca_{v3.2}$  or  $Ca_{v3.3}$  channels, but not with the high voltage-activated (HVA)  $Ca_{v2.2}$  (N-type) calcium channel.<sup>11</sup>

The tests conducted in Anderson et al.<sup>11</sup> focused on a subset of proteins representative of those expressed in cerebellar stellate cells:  $K_{v4.2}$ ,  $Ca_{v3.3}$ , KChIP3 and DPP10c.<sup>19,20</sup> However,  $K_{v4.2}$  channels might also be subject to regulation

**Key words:** A-type, T-type,  $Ca_{v3}$ ,  $K_{v4}$ , gain, first spike latency

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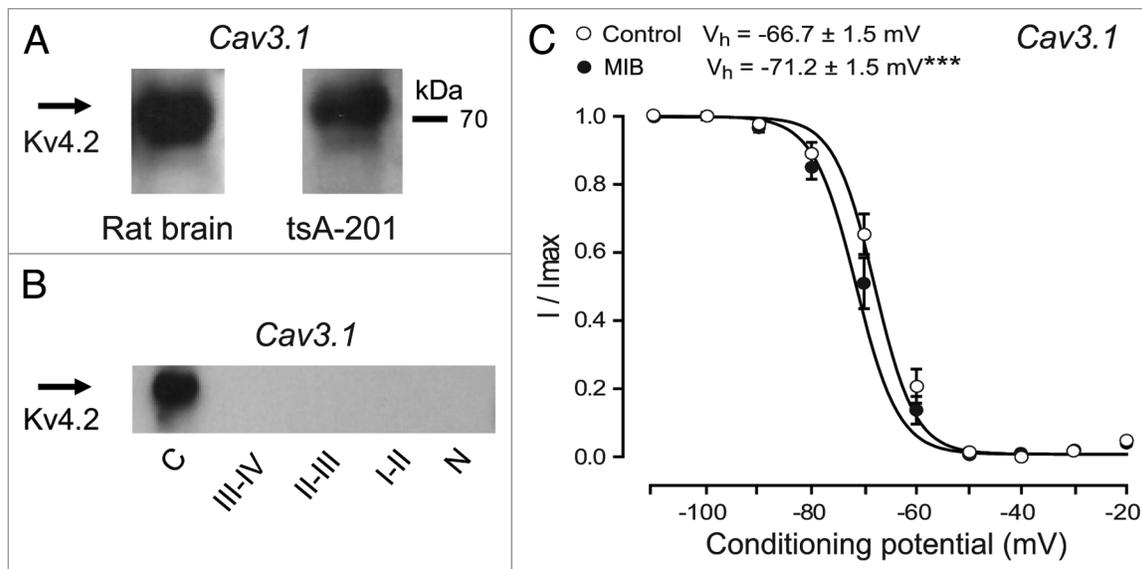
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### Introduction

Action potential discharge is highly regulated by inward and outward currents that activate at subthreshold membrane potentials. Two currents that operate in this range arise from transiently activated A-type potassium channels of the  $K_{v4}$  family and  $Ca_{v3}$  T-type calcium channels. A-type currents ( $I_A$ ) are known to influence first spike latency, spike frequency and the amplitude of backpropagating dendritic spikes.<sup>1-6</sup> T-type currents ( $I_T$ ) have a wide range of functions based on their immediate depolarizing action on membrane potential as well as second messenger regulation of biochemical pathways.<sup>7-10</sup> We



**Figure 1.**  $Ca_v3.1$  channels link to the  $K_v4.2$  channel complex to produce calcium-dependent modulation of the  $K_v4.2$  inactivation profile. (A)  $K_v4.2$  channels co-immunoprecipitate with  $Ca_v3.1$  channels from either rat brain homogenate or lysate of tsA-201 cells co-transfected with  $K_v4.2$  and  $Ca_v3.1$ . (B) Pulldown of  $K_v4.2$  channels from whole brain homogenate with immobilized GST fusion proteins of the intracellular regions of  $Ca_v3.1$  channels reveals a specific association with the  $Ca_v3.1$  C-terminus. (C) The voltage-inactivation profile for  $K_v4.2$  current in tsA-201 cells co-expressing  $Ca_v3.1$  channels with  $K_v4.2$ -KChIP3-DPP10c is left-shifted upon application of 0.5  $\mu$ M mibefradil to block  $Ca_v3$  calcium influx ( $n = 12$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ).

by calcium influx through the  $Ca_v3.1$  channel isoform or other HVA calcium channels. Here we extend the results of Anderson et al.<sup>11</sup> by presenting unpublished data on the potential for  $Ca_v3.1$  and other HVA calcium channels to modulate  $K_v4$  inactivation when co-expressed in tsA-201 cells with KChIP3 as the calcium sensor.

## Results

**$Ca_v3.1$  and  $K_v4.2$  channels coimmunoprecipitate.** We found that the  $K_v4.2$  channel co-immunoprecipitated with the  $Ca_v3.1$  calcium channel isoform from rat brain homogenate and from lysate of  $Ca_v3.1/K_v4.2$  transfected tsA-201 cells (Fig. 1A). We further used GST fusion proteins of the intracellular regions of  $Ca_v3.1$  channels (C-terminus, linkers I-II, II-III, III-IV and N-terminus) to perform pulldown experiments for  $K_v4.2$  from rat brain homogenate. In line with our previous results, we found that the C-terminal region of  $Ca_v3.1$  but none of the other regions pulled down  $K_v4.2$  channels from rat brain homogenate (Fig. 1B). In all, these data indicate that all T-type channel family members are capable of associating with  $K_v4.2$  channels.

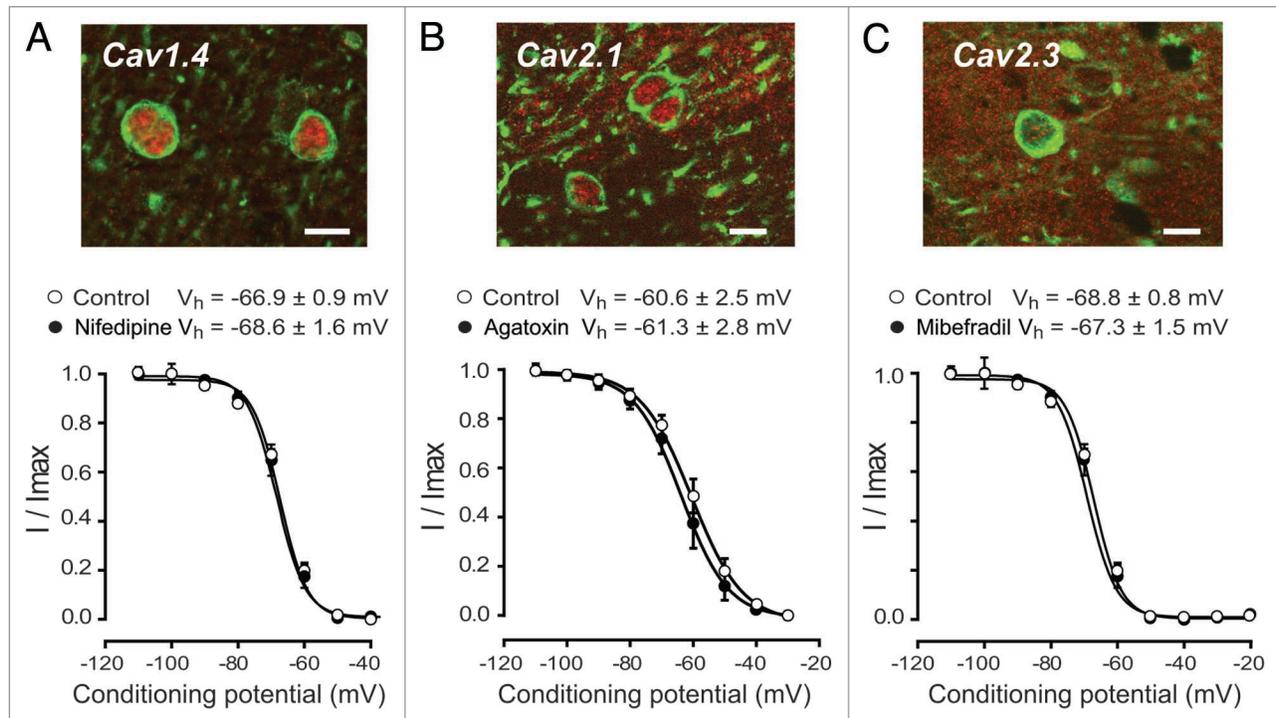
Anderson et al.<sup>11</sup> showed that calcium influx through  $Ca_v3.2$  or  $Ca_v3.3$  calcium channels can modulate  $K_v4.2$  steady-state inactivation in tsA-201 cells providing they are co-expressed with KChIP3. Here we tested if  $Ca_v3.1$  channels can regulate  $K_v4$  inactivation in tsA-201 cells when co-expressed with  $K_v4.2$ , KChIP3 and DPP10c as a representative  $K_v4$  complex. We previously determined that the half-inactivation potential ( $V_h$ ) of the  $K_v4.2$  complex alone is not affected by mibefradil application<sup>11</sup> (data not shown). However, application of the T-type channel blocker mibefradil (0.5  $\mu$ M) produced a small (-4.5 mV) but significant shift in  $K_v4.2$   $V_h$  when co-expressed with  $Ca_v3.1$  (from  $-66.7 \pm 1.5$  mV to  $-71.2 \pm 1.5$  mV;  $p < 0.001$ ;  $n = 12$ ) (Fig. 1C) without affecting  $K_v4.2$  voltage for activation or rate of inactivation (data not shown).

**HVA calcium influx does not alter the  $V_h$  of  $K_v4$  channel gating.** In our previous study we demonstrated that cerebellar stellate cells exhibit  $Ca_v2.2$  channel immunolabel, but that calcium influx through  $Ca_v2.2$  channels coexpressed in tsA-201 cells with the same representative  $K_v4$  complex examined here did not modulate  $K_v4$  steady-state inactivation.<sup>11</sup> Here we tested whether other members of the HVA

families of calcium channels are capable of modulating  $K_v4.2$   $V_h$ . These tests are also relevant to cerebellar stellate cells in that immunocytochemistry revealed immunolabel for L-type ( $Ca_v1.4$ ), P-type ( $Ca_v2.1$ ) and R-type ( $Ca_v2.3$ ) calcium channels (Fig. 2A–C). Voltage-clamp recordings were conducted on tsA-201 cells co-expressing  $K_v4.2$ , KChIP3, DPP10c and one of these HVA calcium channels to assess their ability to modulate  $K_v4$  properties. The expression of HVA calcium channels in each case was confirmed by the presence of inward current during depolarizing prepotentials or following drug application to block calcium current (data not shown). Despite the expected overexpression of HVA calcium channels in this assay, application of blockers or toxins specific to each of the HVA channels produced no shift in  $K_v4.2$   $V_h$  (Fig. 2A–C).

## Discussion

The current study extends the work of Anderson et al.<sup>11</sup> on the link between  $Ca_v3$  calcium channels and the  $K_v4$  potassium channel complex that confers calcium-dependent regulation of  $I_A$ . Here we establish that  $Ca_v3.1$  channels also link to the  $K_v4.2$  complex and can induce a selective



**Figure 2.** HVA calcium channels expressed in stellate cells do not modulate  $K_v4.2 V_h$  when co-expressed with a  $K_v4.2$  complex in tsA-201 cells. (A–C) Shown in the top panels are stellate cells dual immunolabeled for MAP-2 (green) and the indicated HVA calcium channel (red). The lower panels illustrate the effects of specific HVA calcium channel blockers on  $K_v4.2 V_h$  when each HVA calcium channel is co-expressed with a combination of  $K_v4.2$ -KChIP3-DPP10c. No effect on  $K_v4.2 V_h$  was detected upon application of (A) 5  $\mu$ M nifedipine to block  $Ca_v1.4$  channels (L-type;  $n = 6$ ), (B) 200 nM  $\omega$ -agatoxin IVA to block  $Ca_v2.1$  channels (P-type;  $n = 5$ ), or (C) 0.5  $\mu$ M mibefradil to block  $Ca_v2.3$  channels (R-type;  $n = 7$ ). Scale bars = 10  $\mu$ m.

calcium-dependent shift in  $K_v4 V_h$ , indicating that this form of modulation can occur between all members of the  $Ca_v3$  family and  $K_v4.2$  channels. These data further indicate a common site for the association at the  $Ca_v3$  C-terminus that enables calcium-dependent interaction through KChIP3 proteins. In contrast, co-expression studies now indicate that calcium influx through any of four different HVA calcium channels (L, N, P, R) cannot modulate  $K_v4.2$  inactivation even when overexpressed in tsA-201 cells (Fig. 2).<sup>11</sup> The selective ability for  $Ca_v3$  channels to modulate  $I_A$  at the nanodomain level even when each of these HVA calcium channels are also expressed in these small diameter cells supports the specificity of the association between  $Ca_v3$  and  $K_v4.2$  ion channels. Indeed, the members of this signaling complex seem well suited given the distinctive but similar activation/inactivation profiles of T-type and A-type channels, allowing calcium entry to closely match the activity of A-type potassium channels even at subthreshold potentials.

The finding that the  $K_v4.2$  complex can associate with  $Ca_v3.1$  channels, as well as with  $Ca_v3.2$  and  $3.3$  isoforms, greatly increases the potential for modulation of  $I_A$ , as  $Ca_v3$  channel isoforms are differentially distributed in CNS neurons. In situ hybridization studies first established a differential distribution for  $Ca_v3$  mRNA expression,<sup>21–23</sup> while immunocytochemical studies of  $Ca_v3$  channel isoforms indicated that most cells exhibit immunolabel for at least two if not all three of the  $Ca_v3$  isoforms.<sup>19,24</sup> However, specific expression patterns can be found, with a combination of  $Ca_v3.2$  and  $Ca_v3.3$  but not  $Ca_v3.1$  in cerebellar stellate cells.<sup>19</sup> This compares to a prominent  $Ca_v3.1$  label in some cells (i.e., Transient Burst deep cerebellar cells, lateral habenular neurons) to cases in which only  $Ca_v3.1$  immunolabel is detected (i.e., cerebellar Golgi cells).<sup>19,24</sup> In the case of cerebellar stellate cells, we found that the calcium-dependent shift in  $V_h$  establishes a novel voltage-first spike latency relationship.<sup>3</sup> Blocking  $I_A$  in these cells revealed the capacity to otherwise generate rebound frequency increases in firing, demonstrating

that  $I_A$  can offset burst capability. A previous study of inhibitory interneurons of rat thalamus also reported that an  $I_T$ -driven form of burst discharge was attenuated by  $I_A$ .<sup>25</sup> The extent to which this might reflect a simple co-expression and activation of these opposing currents in the same cell or an active shift in  $I_A V_h$  by  $Ca_v3$ -mediated calcium current remains to be seen.

The expression pattern of  $Ca_v3.1$  protein immunolabel is also interesting in showing a correlation to cells that have the ability to generate rebound bursts following membrane hyperpolarizations.<sup>19</sup> Burst discharge in thalamic relay cells that express  $Ca_v3.1$ ,<sup>21,22</sup> is thus blocked in  $Ca_v3.1$  knockout animals,<sup>26</sup> while all cerebellar cells that express  $Ca_v3.1$  exhibit rebound bursts under normal conditions.<sup>19</sup> In this regard, it is interesting that the extent of the shift in the  $V_h$  of  $K_v4$  current inactivation by  $Ca_v3.1$ -mediated calcium influx (4.5 mV) is approximately half of that produced by  $Ca_v3.2$  and  $Ca_v3.3$  (~7–9 mV).<sup>11</sup> It is thus possible that  $Ca_v3.1$ -dominated cell types experience less calcium-dependent shift in  $I_A V_h$  than

those with prominent  $Ca_v3.2$  or  $Ca_v3.3$  expression. We also found a pattern in the relative distribution of immunolabel for  $Ca_v3$  channel isoforms over the soma-dendritic axis of many central neurons.<sup>24</sup> In general,  $Ca_v3.1$  immunolabel was predominantly located near the soma,  $Ca_v3.2$  immunolabel over the soma and proximal dendritic regions, and  $Ca_v3.3$  over most of the soma-dendritic axis. The possibility then exists for the subcellular distribution of  $Ca_v3$  calcium channel isoforms in somatic and dendritic regions to exert differential control of membrane excitability through  $I_A$ .<sup>2,5</sup>

It is important to stress that calcium-dependent modulation of  $I_A$  by this signaling complex requires the co-expression of not only  $Ca_v3$  and  $K_v4.2$  channels but also KChIP3 as the critical calcium sensor. Nevertheless, it is not currently known if co-expression of these proteins guarantees a functional association as a  $Ca_v3$ - $K_v4$  signaling complex. Moreover,  $Ca_v3$  and  $K_v4$  channels may not always be co-expressed within the same neuron. For instance, deep cerebellar nuclear neurons label differentially for  $Ca_v3.1$  or  $Ca_v3.3$  channels but neither express an A-type potassium current.<sup>27</sup> The pattern of expression for the  $K_v4.2$  isoform and that of KChIP3 also exhibit greater variation than that of  $Ca_v3$  channels.<sup>4,20,28-31</sup> In particular, the brain regions for which this signaling complex controls neuronal activity will presumably show a dependence on the distribution of KChIP3.

Finally, we have not assessed whether other sources of calcium influx are capable of regulating  $K_v4.2$   $V_h$  through KChIP3. Thus, it is possible that calcium influx through NMDA or CP-AMPA receptors, mGluRs, TRP channels, or calcium release from internal stores<sup>32-36</sup> are capable of controlling membrane excitability through the  $Ca_v3$ - $K_v4$  signaling complex.

## Materials and Methods

**Co-immunoprecipitation and GST pull-down assays.** Co-immunoprecipitation and GST pull-down assays were performed as described in Anderson et al.<sup>11</sup>

**Immunocytochemistry.** Immunocytochemical sections were prepared as described in Anderson et al.<sup>11</sup>

Polyclonal primary antibodies were rabbit polyclonal anti- $Ca_v1.4$  (1:2,000; gift of T. Snutch, Vancouver, BC), anti- $Ca_v2.1$  (1:50; Alomone, Jerusalem), and anti- $Ca_v2.3$  (1:100; Sigma-Aldrich, Oakville, ON) applied overnight at 4°C in a working solution of 3% normal donkey serum (Jackson, West Grove, PA), 0.1% TWEEN, and 1% DMSO in phosphate buffer. Anti-MAP-2 antibodies were monoclonal MAP-2 (1:1,000) or polyclonal MAP-2 (1:250) (AbCam, Cambridge, MA). Secondary antibodies (1:1,000) were Alexa Fluor-488 or -594 conjugated donkey or goat anti-rabbit or anti-mouse IgGs (Molecular Probes, Eugene, OR). Immunoreactivity was assessed using a Zeiss AxioImager microscope and Apotome grid illumination system. All immunoblot data and immunocytochemistry shown is representative of 2–3 separate experiments.

**tsA-201 cell electrophysiology.** cDNA for a representative  $K_v4$  complex of  $K_v4.2$ , KChIP3 and DPP10c was co-transfected in tsA-201 cells as previously described.<sup>11</sup> cDNA (2.5 µg/µl) for  $Ca_v3.1$ ,  $Ca_v1.4$ ,  $Ca_v2.1$ ,  $Ca_v2.3$  and the associated  $\beta 1b$  and  $\alpha 2-\delta$  subunits were cotransfected with those of the representative  $K_v4$  complex and  $K_v4.2$  current recorded at room temperature.<sup>11</sup> Mibefradil (0.5 µM) and nifedipine (5 µM) were bath applied and  $\omega$ -agatoxin IVA (200 nM) were focally ejected in a carrier medium containing (in mM): 120 NaCl, 3 NaHCO<sub>3</sub>, 4.2 KCl, 1.2 KH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>, 1.5 MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 10 D-Glucose, 10 HEPES, 1.5 CaCl<sub>2</sub>. Steady-state  $K_v4$  inactivation was determined from a holding potential of -110 mV and test potential of 0 mV (1 s) following 1 s voltage presteps from -110 mV in 10 mV increments. Slope factors ranged between 4.5 and 7 for all recordings (data not shown). The difference in slope factors was likely due to the variable expression of the various  $K_v4$  complex members and not the co-expression of calcium channels. All values reported are mean ± s.e.m and statistical significance determined using Student's t-test.

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