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Short title : Macrophages from genome edited rhesus macaque iPSC

Abstract

 Because of their close biological similarity to humans, non-human primate (NHP) models are very useful for the development of induced pluripotent stem cell (iPSC)-based cell and regenerative organ transplantation therapies. However, knowledge on the establishment, differentiation and genetic modification of NHP-iPSCs, especially rhesus macaque iPSCs, is limited. We succeeded in establishing iPSCs from the peripheral blood of rhesus macaques (Rh-iPSCs) by combining the Yamanaka reprograming factors and two inhibitors (GSK-3 inhibitor (CHIR 99021) and MEK1/2 inhibitor (PD0325901)) and differentiated the cells into functional macrophages through hematopoietic progenitor cells. To confirm feasibility of the Rh-iPSC-derived macrophages as a platform for bioassays to model diseases, we knocked out *TRIM5* gene in Rh-iPSCs by CRISPR/Cas9, which is a species-specific HIV resistance factor. *TRIM5* KO iPSCs had the same differentiation potential to macrophages as Rh-iPSCs, but the differentiated macrophages showed a gain of sensitivity to HIV infection in vitro. Our reprogramming, gene editing, and differentiation protocols used to obtain Rh-iPSC-derived macrophages can be applied to other gene mutations, expanding the number of NHP gene therapy models.

Introduction

 Induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) are expected to have many clinical applications in regenerative medicine because of their unlimited self-renewal ability and potential to 58 differentiate into any type of cell or tissue $¹$. Several groups including ours are preparing</sup> iPSCs from mature blood cells and differentiating them into hematopoietic stem cells, lymphocytes, and macrophages with the aim of treating a wide variety of diseases 61 including cancer and viral infections $2-4$. In addition, iPSCs are an ideal platform to perform genetic engineering such as genome editing technology and viral gene transduction, because the genomic integrity of the edited cells can be thoroughly assessed due to their high cloning efficiency. The utility of iPSC-based regenerative medicine is further augmented when combined with gene engineering. In fact, the possibility of HIV treatment with macrophages derived from iPSCs transfected with shRNA targeting the HIV promotor has been reported⁵. Functional immune cells induced by genome editing 68 at the iPSC stage have also been reported $6.7.8$.

 The in vivo evaluation of the efficacy and safety, including tumorgenicity and immunogenicity in preclinical models, is essential for the clinical application of iPSC products, but most reports have evaluated safety in immunodeficient mice only. Non-human primate (NHP) models are preferred preclinical animal models because of the

 stronger similarities between NHPs and humans compared with mice and humans. Accordingly, NHP-iPSCs for the treatment of retinal disease, Parkinson's disease, heart disease and hereditary bone disease have been reported, as have their use for the 76 production of myocardial and bone cells and myocardial allogeneic transplantation⁹⁻¹³. NHPs are phylogenetically very close to humans in their size, lifespan, and immune $12,14.15$ system $12,14.15$. Additionally, the adaptive and innate immune responses to antigens in NHPs are very similar to those in humans. Among NHPs, rhesus macaques (Rh) are suitable for immunological analysis, including studies investigating viral infections and allogeneic transplantations, because their major histocompatibility complexes (MHCs) 82 have been analyzed in detail¹⁶⁻¹⁸. Accordingly, iPSCs of reprogrammed Rh cells (Rh- iPSCs) and Rh-iPSC-derived immune cells may be useful tools for studying immune responses in vitro and in vivo. In addition, Rh-iPSCs resemble human iPSCs in terms of 85 morphology, marker expression, and growth factor dependency . In this study, as a proof of concept for the gain or loss of function in cells differentiated from gene-edited Rh-iPSCs, we knocked out *TRIM5* in Rh-iPSCs by the CRISPR/Cas9

also reported that the HIV resistance of Rh CD4 lymphocytes is lost in vitro by the

88 system. TRIM5α is known to be a species-specific HIV resistance factor in Rh²⁰⁻²². It is

90 knockout (KO) of TRIM5 α in peripheral blood CD4 lymphocytes with TALEN ²³. We

Results

1 Generation of Rh-iPSCs from Rh peripheral blood mononuclear cells

 Rh-iPSCs have been established from fibroblasts, bone marrow stromal cells, and 112 CD34(+) hematopoietic stem/progenitor cells (HSPCs) ^{11,12,19,27,28,29}, but not from peripheral blood mononuclear cells (PBMCs), which has become mainstream from the viewpoints of invasiveness, sterility, and ease of collection for generation of human iPSCs 115 $(ref)^{2,3,7}$.

116	In this study, following the reprogramming protocol for human iPSCs, we transfected Rh
117	PBMCs with a Sendai virus (SeV) vector encoding the Yamanaka factors (OCT3/4, SOX2,
118	KLF4, c-MYC) ³⁰ to establish Rh-iPSCs. Notably, no colonies were observed if medium
119	including bFGF, which is typically used to reprogram Rh fibroblasts, was used for the
120	reprogramming. Therefore, we applied 2i medium, which adds GSK-3 inhibitor (CHIR
121	99021) and MEK1/2 inhibitor (PD0325901) ³¹ to the original iPSC maintenance medium.
122	In this case, dome-shaped colonies were observed about 25-30 days after the transfection
123	(Figure 1a,b). The reprogramming was confirmed using cells from three Rh (animal ID:
124	R1863, R1887, R1889)(Figure 1c). Residual SeV was detected in one Rh-iPSC clone
125	prepared from one individual, but not in any of the remaining clones (Figure 1d). We
126	confirmed that the Rh-iPSCs expressed Nanog, KLF4, POU5F1, SOX2, and c-Myc by

 RT-PCR and SSEA4, a marker of undifferentiated iPSCs, by FACS (Figure1 e,f). We also verified pluripotency by detecting teratoma that could differentiate into the three germ layers (Figure 1g). Finally, Rh-iPSCs could be maintained for more than 50 passages with normal karyotype (Figure 1h).

2 Differentiation of Rh-iPSCs into HPCs

133 By applying a reported human iPSC differentiation protocol^{2,5} (Figure 2a), we could differentiate all Rh-iPSC clones into CD34(+) cells (Figure 2b,c). To improve the 135 efficiency of the CD34(+) cell induction, we added BMP4, which is reported to promote 136 mesoderm differentiation³²⁻³⁴, on day 0 of the protocol (Figure 2d). Table 1 shows a summary of the number of CD34(+) cells. A colony-forming unit assay (CFU assay) was performed to evaluate if the CD34(+) cells represent HPCs. We confirmed colonies containing CFU-M (macrophage), CFU-GM (granulocyte/macrophage), CFU-G (granulocyte) and CFU-E (erythroid) at an efficiency of about 0.6% (Figure 2e). These results indicate that CD34(+) cells differentiated from Rh-iPSCs were multipotential HPCs.

3 Differentiation of Rh-iPSCs into macrophages

and p27 protein was measured by ELISA on days 1, 4, and 7. The production of p27

 protein was observed in the SIVmac316 co-culture but not the SIVmac239 co-culture (Figure 3e). These results suggest that functional macrophages with SIV sensitivity can be differentiated from Rh-iPSCs by our protocol.

4 Generation of TRIM5 KO Rh-iPSCs by CRISPR/Cas9

168 We next used CRISPR/Cas9 to genome edit the Rh-iPSCs. TRIM5 α is an HIV resistance factor in Rh. It has a PRYSPRY region at its C-terminal that is connected via a long link to the N-terminal, which includes three motifs: a RING domain, B-box2 domain, and coiled-coil domain. We knocked out TRIM5α using the CRISPR/Cas9 system in Rh- iPSCs. Candidate sequences for the sgRNA were selected using CRISPOR [\(http://crispor.tefor.net/crispor.py\)](http://crispor.tefor.net/crispor.py). The target sequence is shown in Figure 4a. We transfected sgRNA and Cas9 protein into Rh-iPSCs by electroporation and picked up 24 colonies manually without drug selection. An analysis of the genomic sequences of *TRIM5* in the 24 clones revealed mutations in 7 clones, with 3 of them showing homozygous mutations in *TRIM5* (Figure 4b). These clones had an in-frame mutation in a single allele. By randomly selecting one clone from the heterozygous clones and performing additional genome editing, we were able to create TRIM5αKO Rh-iPSCs, in which the stop codon due to a frameshift mutation was confirmed (Figure 4c). The

5 Deletion of TRIM5a enables HIV-1 virus infection

Discussion

 As the first step in creating an NHP model for evaluating the efficacy and safety of genome edited iPSC-derived cells, we established a method to generate iPSCs from Rh PBMCs, induce their differentiation to HPCs/macrophages, and edit target genes using the CRISPR/Cas9 system. As a proof of concept, we showed that macrophages from 222 iPSCs in which TRIM5 α was deleted lost their resistance in the early stage of HIV infection. By adding GSK-3 inhibitor (CHIR 99021) and MEK1/2 inhibitor (PD0325901) (i.e. '2i') to the iPSC medium, we could generate iPSCs from Rh PBMCs that can be collected aseptically and relatively easily. 2i was originally reported to maintain mouse embryonic 227 stem cells $(ESCs)^{31}$, but has since been applied to maintain iPSCs from various 228 species^{39,40,41}. Interestingly, Rh-iPSCs have been established and maintained without 2i, 229 but from fibroblasts, bone marrow stromal cells, and CD34(+) HPCs, all of which are shallowly differentiated cells. We found 2i was required for reprogramming more differentiated cells such as PBMCs. In this study, we show that BMP4 improved the efficiency to induce HPCs from Rh-iPSCs. 233 This effect is consistent with human $iPSCs³³$ and pigtail macaque $iPSCs³⁴$. In order to

- acquire a massive amount of HPCs for transplantation experiments, it is essential to
	-

 optimize the differentiation induction conditions. With our culture method, we could 236 generate about $1-2 \times 10^7$ HPCs from rh-iPSCs cultivated on a 6-cm dish (Table 1). This massive amount is expected to achieve long-term engraftment by autologous or allogenic transplantation when supported by the appropriate environment such as niche and cytokines.

 Macrophages are immune cells that play an important role in eliminating pathogens and dying cells. They also express CD4 and CCR5, which are HIV/SIV receptors, and act as HIV/SIV virus reservoirs. The possibility of treating HIV infection with macrophages regenerated from human iPSCs transfected with shRNA targeting HIV-1 promotor or with 244 CCR5 KO has been reported^{5,8}. By using genome-edited Rh-iPSC-derived macrophages, the findings of human iPSC-derived macrophages can be verified with an NHP model, advancing research on viral infections including HIV/SIV and corresponding treatments. Following this approach, we confirmed that HIV could infect TRIM5αKO iPSC-derived 248 macrophages, not CD4(+) T cells. A protocol to induce CD4(+) T cells is for future work. Gene transfer by homology directed repair using the CRISPR/Cas9 system for Rh-iPSCs 250 has been reported²⁹, but the present study is the first to report functional loss due to non- homologous end joining. We found poor efficiency for the genome editing of Rh-iPSCs by the conventional CRISPR/Cas9 system using plasmid DNA (Table S1). Furthermore,

Material & Methods

Animal Use

 All animals used in this study were housed and handled in accordance with protocols approved by Primate Research Institute, Kyoto University (2016-C-5).

Generation of Rh-iPSCs from rhesus macaque PBMCs

277 Rh-iPSCs were generated from rhesus macaque PBMCs. PBMCs were stimulated by α - CD2/3/28-coated beads (Miltenyi Biotech Cat no: 130-092-919). After 4 days, the PBMCs were transduced with Sendai virus (SeV) vectors harboring OCT3/4, KLF2, SOX2, c-MYC and SV40 large T antigen, and then seeded onto inactivated mouse embryonic feeder cells (MEFs). The cultured medium was gradually replaced with Rhesus iPSC medium (Dulbecco's modified Eagle's medium/F12 HAM (SIGMA) supplemented with 20% knockout serum replacer (Thermo Fischer Scientific), 1% L- Glutamine–Penicillin–Streptomycin solution (SIGMA), 1% nonessential amino acids (Thermo Fischer Scientific), 10 mM 2-mercaptoethanol, and 5 ng/ml bFGF (Wako), in addition to 3 μM GSK-3 inhibitor CHIR 99021 (Tocris) and 2 μM MEK1/2 inhibitor PD0325901 (Wako). The established iPSC clones were transfected with small interfering 288 RNA L527 using Lipofectamine RNAi Max (Invitrogen) to remove the SeV vectors

from the cytoplasm.

Rh-iPSC maintenance and passage

 Rh-iPSC medium was replaced with 1 ml per 60-mm dish of dissociation solution consisting of 20 ml 2.5% Trypsin (Invitrogen), 40 ml Knockout Serum Replacement 294 (Invitrogen), and 2 ml 100 mM CaCl₂ to 138 ml D-PBS (-) (Nacalai; Japan), and the cells 295 were then incubated at 37° C in a CO_2 incubator for 5 min. After the incubation, MEFs and dissociation solution were removed, and 1 ml of Rh-iPSC culture medium was added. The colonies were broken up into small cell clumps by pipetting. About one-fifth of the cell suspension was transferred to a new MEF dish, although the split ratio may require adjustment depending on the iPSC line. The medium was replaced with fresh medium every day.

Teratoma formation

303 Rh-iPSCs at a confluency of 70-80% were harvested by using Trypsin EDTA, and $2 \times$ 10⁶ iPSCs were suspended with 100 μl of Matrigel and 100 μl of cold PBS. Rh-iPSCs 305 were injected subcutaneously into 6-week-old female NOD.Cg-Prkdc^{scid} Il2rg^{tm1Wjl}/SzJ (NSG) mice, and 8-10 weeks later, teratomas were dissected and fixed in formaldehyde.

 To induce hematopoietic differentiation from Rh-iPSCs, we slightly modified a 310 previously described human iPSC method². In brief, small clumps (<100 cells) of Rh- iPSCs maintained on MEFs were collected and co-cultured on C3H10T1/2 feeder cells in EB medium (Iscove's modified Dulbecco's medium (SIGMA) containing of 20% FBS, 1% L-Glutamine–Penicillin–Streptomycin solution (SIGMA), 100x Insulin-Transferrin- Selenium solution (Thermo Fisher Scientific), 450 µM monothioglycerol (Nacalai), 50 µg/ml Ascorbic acid 2-phosphate (Nacalai)), in addition to 20 ng/ml VEGF (R&D systems). On day 0, 20 ng/ml BMP4 (R&D Systems), and on days 7,10, and 12, 30 ng/ml SCF (R&D systems) and 10 ng/ml FLT-3L (Peprotech) were added to EB medium. Hematopoietic cells generated in iPSC sacs were collected on day 14.

Differentiation of Rh-iPSCs into macrophages

Differentiation of Rh-iPSCs into HPCs

 On day 14, the collected hematopoietic cells were transferred onto newly prepared C3H10T1/2 feeder cells in EB medium containing 50 ng/ml M-CSF (Peprotech) and 25 ng/ml GM-CSF (Peprotech). On day 24, after the floating and loosely adherent cells were removed, firmly adherent cells were collected and transferred to low-attachment six-well

Colony forming unit assay

 CD34(+) cells were sorted using a FACS AriaⅡflow cytometer (BD Biosciences) from day 14 of the hematopoietic differentiation culturing. A total of 5000 cells per 35-mm dish were seeded in Methocult (H4435; STEMCELL TECHNOLOGIES) containing 1%

Candidate sequences targeting rhesus *TRIM5* were selected using CRISPOR

 [\(http://crispor.tefor.net/crispor.py\)](http://crispor.tefor.net/crispor.py). The designed gRNAs were synthesized by *in vitro* transcription using a MEGAshortscript kit (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Cat. No. AM1354) according to the instruction manual.

CRISPR-Cas9 genome editing experiments

366 Transfection was performed by using MaxCyte STx (MaxCyte). 1.5×10^6 iPSCs were transfected with an RNP (ribonucleoprotein) complex consisting of 10 μg recombinant Cas9 (IDT, Cat. No. 1074181) and 2.5 μg of IVT gRNA in 50 μl hyclone electroporation buffer. After electroporation, the cells were transferred to a MEF-coated plate in Rh-iPSC medium containing ROCK inhibitor Y-27632 for 3 days and then passaged to a new MEF-coated plate. Without drug selection, single colonies were manually picked up and cloned.

SIV infection and viral quantification

375 A total of 1×10^5 differentiated macrophages were infected with SIV mac 316 or SIV mac 239 for 2 hours at 37 ℃, washed 2 times with PBS to remove the free virus, and cultured for 10 days. The culture supernatants were collected at days 1, 4, and 7 and measured for p27 antigen by ELISA according to the manufacturer's instruction (Zeptmetrix, CatNo:

382 For VSV-G-pseudotyped lentivirus vector expressing luciferase (NL43- Luci/VSV-G)³⁸ preparation, human embryonic kidney cells (293T cells) were transfected with 15 mg of pNL4-3-Luc-R-E- plasmid and 5 mg of VSV-G-encoding plasmid, and viruses were harvested 48 h later. Differentiated macrophages were infected with NL43- Luci/VSV-G for 2 hours in a 37℃ incubator, washed 2 times with PBS to remove the free virus, and cultured for 4 days in the presence or absence of 2 μM of an anti-HIV drug, Nevirapine (SIGMA). At days 2, 3, and 4, luciferase activity in the cell lysate was measured by using a Luciferase Assay System (Promega, Cat.No.E1500) and Lumat LB 9507 (Berthold). **Statistics** GraphPad PRISM (GraphPad Software) was used for all statistical analyses. Paired or unpaired Student's t-tests or two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparison test were performed to assess the statistical significance of differences between groups.

Author Contribution

- Y.I., Y.S., E.N., T.S., H.A., and S.K. conceived and designed the experiments. Y.I., Y.S.,
- K.T., and M.T. performed the experiments or analyzed the data. T.S., H.A., A. T-K., and
- S.K. drafted and edited the manuscript. S.I., Y.M., E.N, and T.M. provided technical
- support. T.S. provided critical materials, including HIV virus. All authors reviewed the
- manuscript.
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Disclosure/ Conflicts of Interest

Shin Kaneko is a founder, shareholder, and chief scientific officer at Thyas Co., Ltd., and

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Figure Legends

Figure1. Generation of Rh-iPSCs from Rh PBMCs

Figure2. Differentiation of Rh-iPSCs into HPCs

- (a) Schematic illustration showing Rh-iPSC differentiation to HPCs. (b) Phase contrast
- images of Sac differentiation on days 0, 4, 8, and 14. Scale bars, 200 μm. (c) Flow-
- cytometric analysis of the HPC phenotypes 14 days after starting the differentiation.
- Upper panels, unstained cells; lower panels, stained cells. (d) Dot plots show the

Figure3. Differentiation of Rh-iPSCs into macrophages

control. Replication was monitored by determining the amount of p27 in the culture

- 611 supernatant at days 1, 4, and 7 after the incubation. Data are plotted as the mean \pm SD of
- triplicate samples. * p <0.05, **** p <0.0001 for comparisons between SIV mac 316
- and SIV mac 239. :iMac, iPSC-derived macrophages.

Figure4. Generation of TRIM5α-KO Rh-iPSCs

- expression in TRIM5**α** homo-KO iPSC clones and parental iPSC clone was evaluated
- with real-time PCR. Fold changes relative to primary Rh T cells are shown. (e) The
- differentiation efficiency to CD34(+) cells of parental and TRIM5**α**-KO iPSCs. Three
- independent experiments. (f) Flow-cytometric analysis of macrophage-marker
- expression in macrophages generated from parental and TRIM5**α**-KO iPSCs.

Figure5. Deletion of TRIM5a enables HIV-1 virus infection

Table 1. Summary of CD34(+) cells from rh-iPSCs (confluent in 6-cm dish)

Data shown are mean ± SE from three independent experiments.

654 **Table2.** Results of off-target sequence analysis of top five off-target candidates

655 determined by the CFD score of TRIM5 gRNA

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Figure 5

- (a)Flow-cytometric analysis of the macrophage generated from other Rh-iPSC clones phenotypes 34
- days after the differentiation.
- (b)Flow-cytometric analysis of macrophage-marker expression in macrophages generated from Rh-
- iPSCs and monocytes (MDM).
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706 **Table S1**

707 Results of CRISPR/Cas9 genome editing by using Cas9 and gRNA expression plasmid (Exp1,2) or

708 Cas9 protein and sgRNA (Exp3,4)

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