

Arctic Bioscience

Pioneers in the **natural
resolution of inflammation**

Webcast October 16th 2024



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Summary

- The ongoing phase IIb-trial (HeROPA) is a 52-week trial with 521 patients recruited, studying efficacy and safety of the medical candidate HRO350 in mild-to-moderate psoriasis
- The primary endpoint (PASI50 at 26 weeks) was not met, mainly due to a higher than expected Placebo response
- Secondary endpoints at week 52 will be critical to understand the potential of HRO350 and the long-term efficacy in mild-to-moderate psoriasis



HRO350

Role in the resolution of inflammation in Psoriasis

Properties of drug candidate HRO350

HRO350 is a first in class asset with phospholipid esters as API

HRO350 is a unique lipid matrix with biologically active phospholipids

API: PEHeRo (Phospholipid Esters from Herring Roe)

IRIS Substance ID: 300000046327

EV Medicinal Product Code: PRD9919073

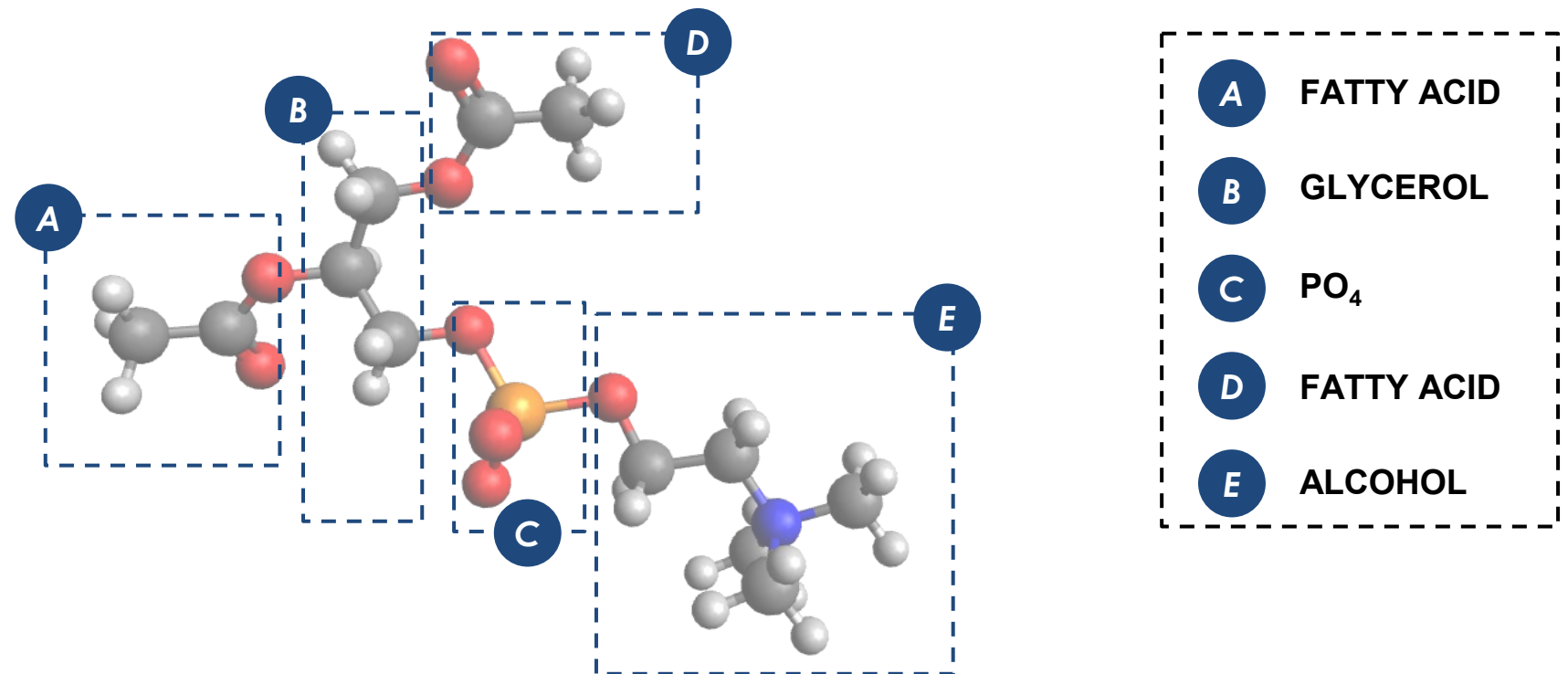
HRO350 is produced under **GMP conditions** and is planned marketed as a **per oral prescription medicine**

Herring roe is rich in polyunsaturated fatty acids with **high phospholipid content**

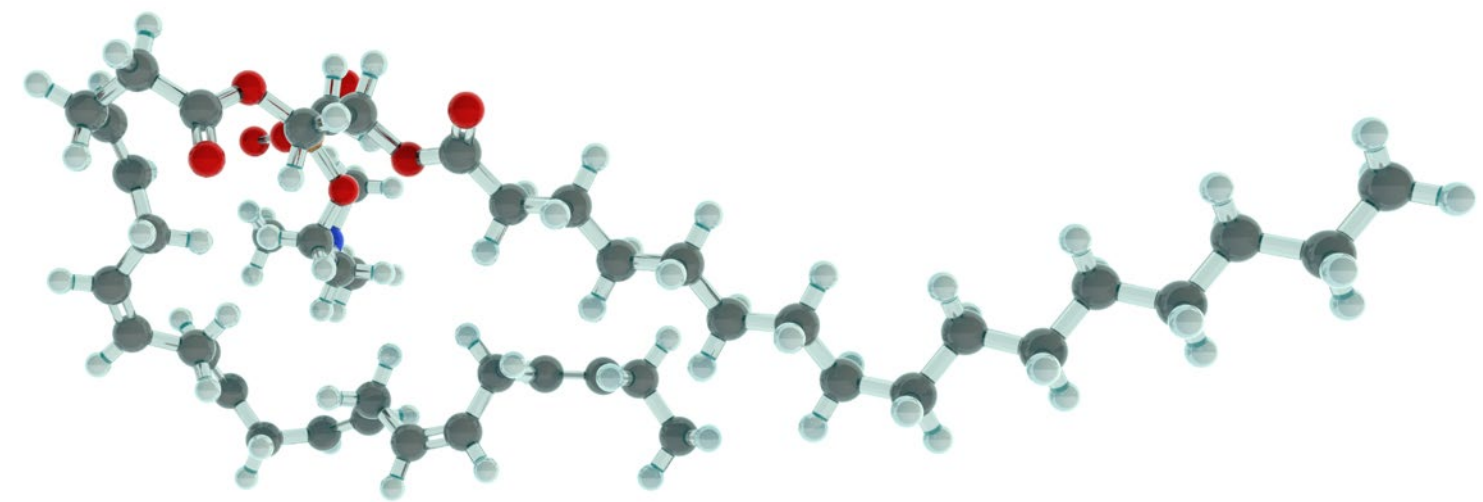
Phospholipids esters have metabolites with **immuno-modulatory properties**, and can function as both carriers and active molecules¹

Mode-of-action data in psoriasis from **cell studies**²

Core structure of phospholipid esters from herring roe



Example phospholipid: PC(22:6n3/16:0)



Bioactive lipids' role in inflammation mediation

Lipid-mediators, metabolic products of phospholipid esters from herring roe, are proposed to play a role in inflammatory diseases, including psoriasis

Phospholipid Esters from Herring Roe promotes SPM biosynthesis in human monocyte-derived macrophages with implications for the treatment of psoriasis

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Background

Phospholipid esters from Herring Roe (PEHeRo) are polar amphiphilic lipids naturally enriched in marine long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids (LC-PUFAs), Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) are the most abundant omega-3 LC-PUFAs in PEHeRo and have known involvement in the resolution of inflammation through specialized pro-resolving mediator (SPM) biosynthesis. Prior studies on Herring Roe Oil (HRO) containing PEHeRo (EIS ID: 300000404327) have displayed promising immunomodulatory functions in vivo, where HRO has been shown to improve mild-to-moderate psoriasis in a clinical trial in humans (n=64). Psoriasis is a multifactorial inflammatory disease associated with keratinocyte hyperproliferation and elevated inflammatory cytokine levels, where the IL-23/IL-17 axis is central.

Scope of current work:

We have investigated the effect of HRO and PEHeRo on pro-resolving biosynthetic pathways in interleukin-23 (IL-23) producing activated human monocyte-derived macrophages (MDM).

Results and conclusion

Key results:

1. Marked upregulation of SPM biosynthesis from EPA, DHA, and n-3 DPA in activated MDMs after stimulation with HRO and PEHeRo
2. Upregulation of SPMs reported to be relevant for resolution of inflammation on the IL-23/IL-17 axis
3. Overall composition of the oils influences the promotion of SPM biosynthesis

Chromatograms:

5) RvD2 in PEHeRo 0.25% + LPS 6) Pdx in PEHeRo 0.25% + LPS 7) RvE3 in HRO 0.05% + LPS 8) RvD5₁ DPA in HRO 0.05% + LPS

Conclusion:

Our findings support an anti-inflammatory action of HRO, and PEHeRo specifically, through upregulation of SPMs that promote a shift in the MDM phenotype towards a protective and possibly reparative one. This effect could be a promising treatment modality in inflammatory conditions, including psoriasis.

References

1) Serhan C. & Chiang N. Prostaglandins Other Lipid Mediat. 2023 166:106718. 2) Sorokin A. V. et al. J. Clin. Lipids. 12(6):1047-1060. 3) Xu J. et al. J. Dermatol. Sci. 2018 89(2):127-135. 4) Sorokin A. V. et al. J. Invest. Dermatol. 137(10):2048. 5) Saito M. et al. FASEB J. 2019 33(11):12750-12759.

Acknowledgements

This study was supported by a grant from the Norwegian Research Council (project no. 327953).

Materials and methods

Preparation of HRO: Immature herring roe (HRR) was dried under reduced pressure (until H₂O <20% w/w), then contacted with EtOH/H₂O to extract the lipids. Centrifugation of the resulting suspension yielded a clarified lipid extract which then was concentrated under reduced pressure, desolvated by crystallization in abs. EtOH and filtered to give a desolved lipid concentrate. The final HRO was prepared by standardization and viscosity modification through addition of a reconstituted triglyceride oil and evaporation under reduced pressure. **Purification of PEHeRo:** HRR was contacted with EtOH/H₂O to extract lipids, before the resulting mixture was clarified by centrifugation and dried under reduced pressure. The dried crude extract was then desolvated by crystallization in abs. EtOH and filtration. PEHeRo (>90% w/w dry matter) was purified from the desolvated extract using normal-phase flash column chromatography (EtOH/H₂O 88:12, 200 mm). **Oil preparation for cell treatment:** The oils were freshly prepared as aqueous emulsions (5% w/w) from dH₂O by stirring under inert atmosphere and poststabilized by sonication. **Cell Culture:** Buffy coats from 4 donors were obtained from the blood bank Ålesund (Helse Møre og Romsdal, Norway) with approval by the Regional Ethics Committee (REK, ref.: 230804). PBMC were isolated from buffy coats by a Lymphoprep[®] density gradient and monocytes were selected by plastic adherence in 6-well plates and differentiated into monocyte-derived macrophages (MDM), followed by incubation without growth factors and cytokines for 2 days. MDMs from each donor were treated in 1.5 ml per well with indicated final percentages (w/w) of the different oils. MDMs were either co-stimulated with 1 ng/ml lipopolysaccharide (LPS) for 24 h or treated with oils for 14 h, followed by change of medium with addition of LPS and Pdx for further 24 h. Supernatants were collected from 3 wells per condition and pooled, centrifuged and frozen at -80°C until analysis. **LC analysis:** Proteins were precipitated using two volumes of ice-cold methanol containing deuterated internal standards. The latter were employed to facilitate lipid mediator identification and quantitation. Lipid mediators were extracted using C18 SPM and identified and quantified using LC-MS/MS. Each lipid mediator was identified using the following criteria: (1) matching retention time to synthetic or authentic standards (±0.05 min), (2) signal-to-noise ratio ≥ 5 for a primary transition and (3) signal-to-noise ratio ≥ 3 for a secondary transition.

Specialized pro-resolving mediators (SPMs)

- Bioactive lipids that actively terminate inflammation and drive the restoration of tissue homeostasis through activating signs of resolution^{1,2}
- Lipid mediators are elevated in lesional psoriatic skin³
- SPMs' effects have been demonstrated in-vitro (e.g. Maresin-1 [MaR1]); MaR1 has been shown to suppress IL-17A production in a murine psoriasis model⁴

Cellular research on SPMs supports the anti-inflammatory mechanism of HRO350⁵

- HRO350 activates the production of SPMs that promote a shift towards a protective and possibly reparative phenotype of monocyte derived macrophages
- Data supports the anti-inflammatory actions of API PEHeRo specifically
- Data demonstrates a promising treatment modality in inflammatory conditions including psoriasis

References: 1) Basil MC, Levy BD. Specialized pro-resolving mediators: endogenous regulators of infection and inflammation. Nat Rev Immunol. 2016;16(1):51-67; 2) Chiurchiù V, Leuti A, Maccarrone M. Bioactive Lipids and Chronic Inflammation: Managing the Fire Within. Front Immunol. 2018;9:38. Published 2018 Jan 29; 3) O' Serhan CN, Levy BD. Resolvins in inflammation: emergence of the pro-resolving superfamily of mediators. J Clin Invest. 2018;128(7):2657-2669; 3) Sorokin AV, Norris PC, English JT, et al. Identification of proresolving and inflammatory lipid mediators in human psoriasis. J Clin Lipidol. 2018;12(4):1047-1060; 4) Saito-Sasaki N, Sawada Y, Mashima E, et al. Maresin-1 suppresses imiquimod-induced skin inflammation by regulating IL-23 receptor expression. Sci Rep. 2018;8(1):5522. Published 2018 Apr 3.

Ongoing research: Forskningsradet (Research Council of Norway), Properties of phospholipids d Herring Roe in Psoriasis, available [online](#) . 5) Ringheim-Bakka T, Mildenberger J, Dalli J, Saliani A, Petrucelli F, Busygina M, Mancinelli D, Gammelsæter R. Phospholipid Esters from Herring Roe promotes SPM biosynthesis in human monocyte-derived macrophages with implications for the treatment of psoriasis. Poster (37) at the 9th European Workshop on Lipid Mediators, June 26-28th, 2024.

Resolve - not block - inflammation: a therapeutic frontier

The API (PEHeRo) promotes SPM biosynthesis in immune cells with implications for the treatment of psoriasis

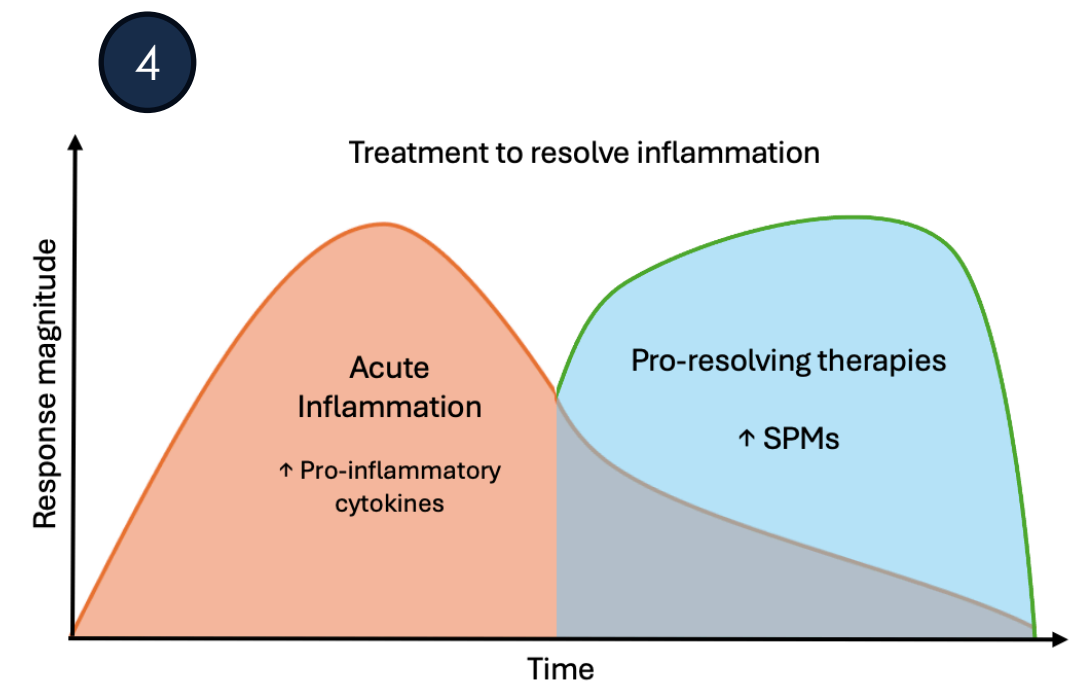
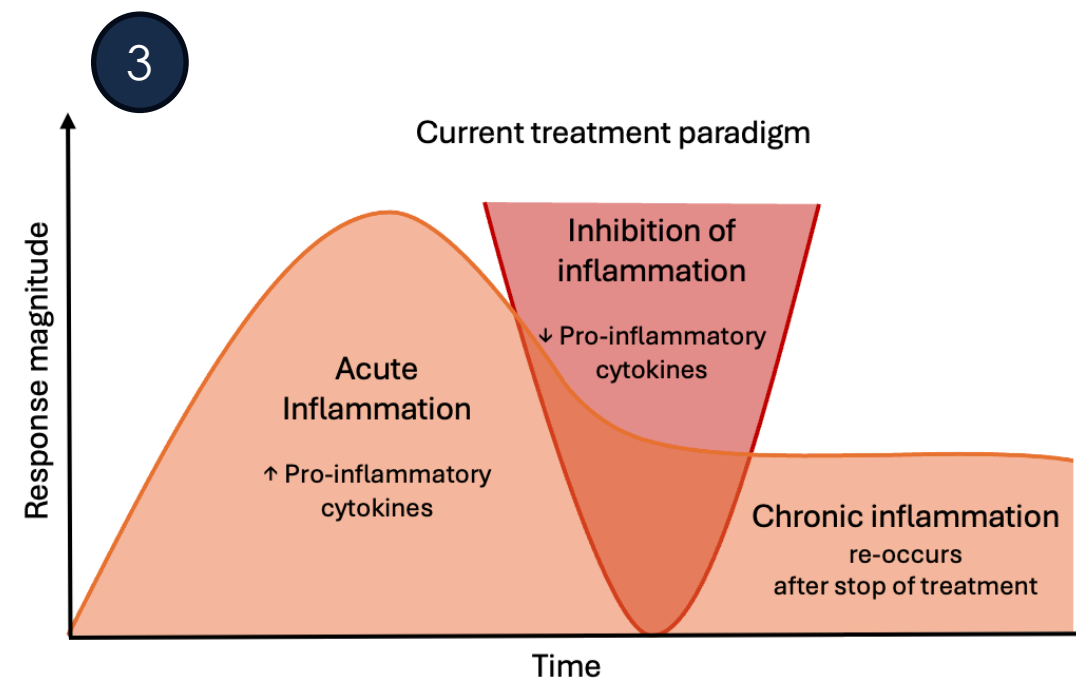
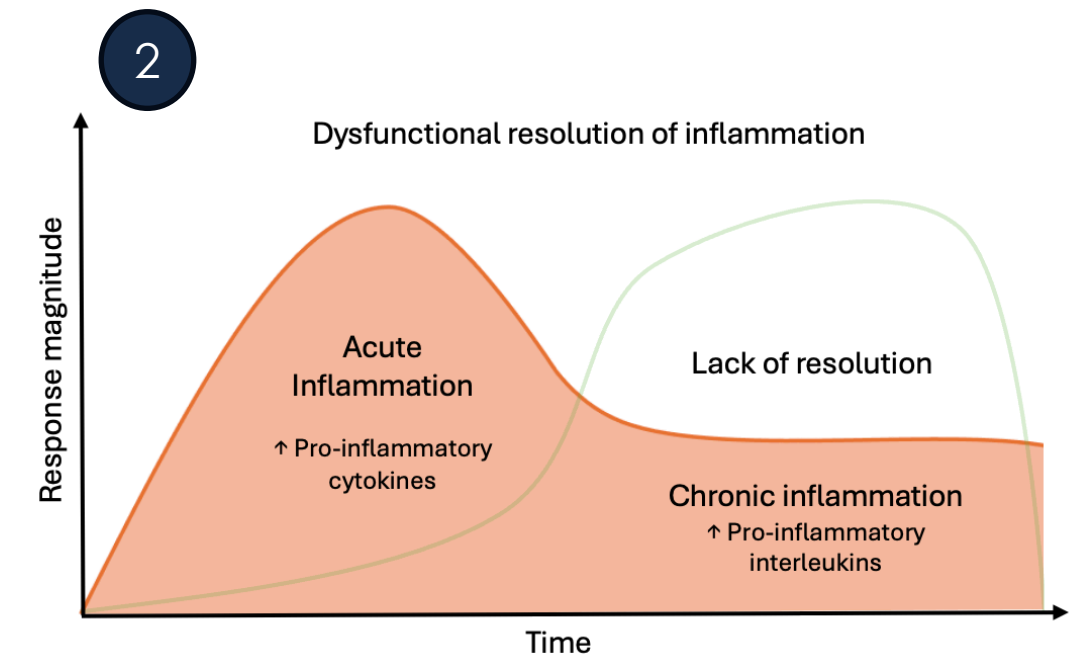
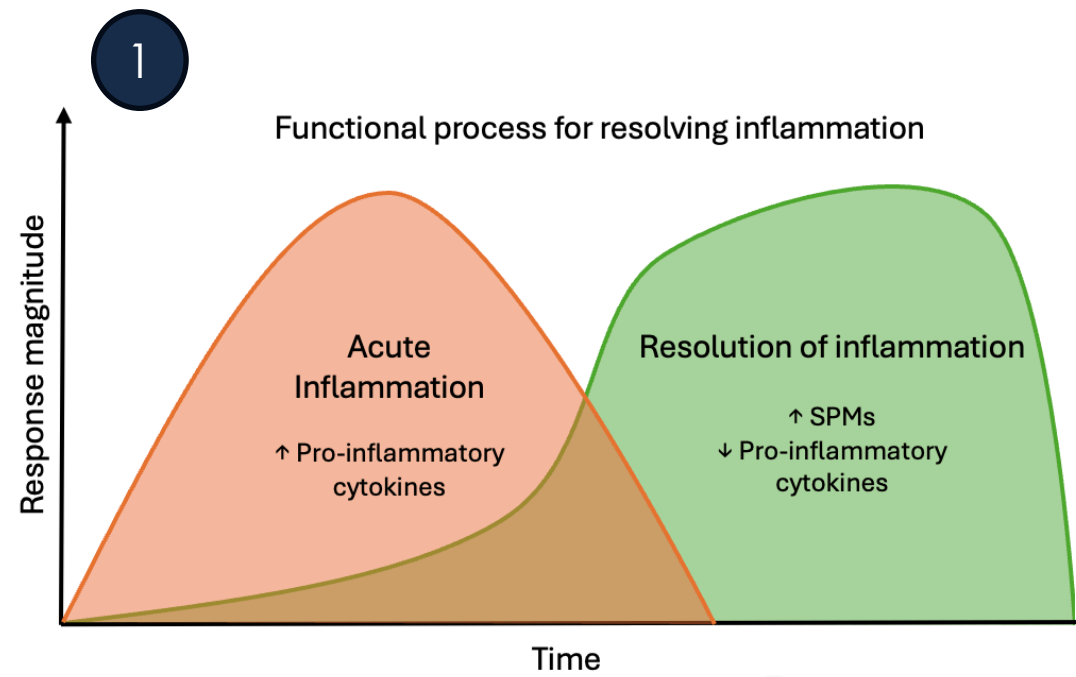
Specialized pro-resolving mediators (SPMs) are a type of bioactive lipids that actively terminate inflammation and drive the restoration of tissue homeostasis ¹

Lipid mediators are **elevated in lesional psoriatic skin**³.

Most existing drugs are designed to reduce inflammation by inhibiting pro-inflammatory cytokines

Data on SPMs supporting an **anti-inflammatory action of HRO350, and PEHeRo specifically**

- upregulating the production of SPMs which promote a shift towards a protective and possibly reparative phenotype of monocyte-derived macrophages



Anti-psoriatic effects of herring roe oil in immune cells and skin cells

Cellular studies show effects on the phospholipid esters from herring roe on signaling on the IL-17/23 axis in immune cells and psoriatic skin cell models

Phospholipid Esters from Herring Roe have immunomodulatory anti-psoriatic effects by affecting signaling on the IL-17/23 axis in immune cells and psoriatic skin cell models in vitro

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Introduction & objectives

Psoriasis is an inflammatory disease associated with elevated levels of IL-17 and IL-23. Phospholipid esters (PE) in Herring Roe Oil (HRO) (API PE-Hero) have immunomodulatory properties and are rich in marine omega-3 fatty acids, known for anti-inflammatory effects. HRO has previously shown effects on mild-to-moderate psoriasis (1). To elucidate immunomodulatory properties of HRO related to the IL-23/IL-17 axis, we investigated its effects on macrophages and T-cells, and a psoriatic skin cell model of keratinocyte and fibroblast co-culture.

Scope of current work

Investigate the potential MoA of HRO related to the IL-23/IL-17 axis in cell types central in psoriasis.

Results

Key results:

- HRO has a direct regulatory effect on immune cells, dampening expression and secretion of IL-23 and IL-17 in stimulated MDM and CD4+ T-cells respectively
- Psoriatic markers as IL-17 response gene NFKB2 and psoriatic marker S100A7 were downregulated with HRO in IL-17 stimulated skin cells

Cell models utilized:

PE-Hero contains a complex mixture of biologically relevant phospholipids

Results related to cellular effects on the IL-23/IL-17 axis:

IL-23 from dendritic cells and macrophages promotes a shift in T-cell activation in psoriasis. Pretreatment with HRO limited expression and secretion of IL-23 in a dose-dependent manner in stimulated MDM (Fig. 1A). Similarly, IL-17 secretion was reduced in stimulated CD4+ T-cells when co-treated with HRO (Fig. 1B), representing a direct effect on psoriatic T-cell responses, which impacts downstream stimulation of skin cells. In keratinocytes co-cultured with fibroblasts, HRO displayed a dampening effect on IL-17 induced, NFKB2 and S100A7 (Fig. 1 C, D). Thus, HRO dampened signaling on the IL-23/IL-17 axis through direct effects on innate and adaptive immune cells and skin cells which are involved in the inflammatory pathophysiology of psoriasis.

Materials & Methods

HRO containing PE-Hero (KAS ID: 300000046527) was supplemented in cell culture medium. Monocytes were isolated from peripheral blood and differentiated to macrophages (MDM). MDM were pretreated with HRO and then stimulated with lipopolysaccharide (LPS) and IFN-γ. CD4+ T-cells were isolated by magnetic bead separation. T-cells were co-treated with HRO and IL-17 inducing stimuli (CD3/CD28 beads with IL-18, IL-22 and IL-23) for 72 h, and IL-17 secretion analyzed by ELISA. Macat keratinocytes were co-cultured with human dermal fibroblasts to mimic signaling in vivo and stimulated with and without IL-17 and HRO for 96 h. mRNA expression of psoriasis marker psoriasis S100A7 and IL-17 responsive gene NFKB2 was measured by qPCR.

References

1) Teisk et al., Acta Dermatovenereologica 2020 (NCT03359677)

Acknowledgements

This study was supported by a grant from the Norwegian Research Council (project no. 327953).

Conclusion

Phospholipids from HRO display anti-inflammatory effects on cellular signaling relevant for psoriasis in macrophages and T-cell signaling through limiting secretion of IL-23 and IL-17, respectively. Reduction of IL-17 responsive marker NFKB2 and S100A7 of co-culture of keratinocytes with fibroblasts supports an anti-psoriatic effect of HRO on skin cells.

Psoriasis is an inflammatory disease associated with elevated levels of the cytokines IL-17 and IL-23

- Cellular studies were conducted to investigate effects of HRO on macrophages and T-cells, and a psoriatic skin cell model of keratinocyte and fibroblast co-culture.

Cellular research on support an anti-psoriatic mechanisms of HRO350

- Phospholipid Esters from Herring Roe can have immunomodulatory anti-psoriatic effects by affecting signaling on the IL-17/23 axis in immune cells and psoriatic skin cell models.

This increases the understanding of the potential mode-of-action of HRO350



HRO350 Drug Development Program

Large phase IIb study to investigate efficacy, safety, and dose of HRO350 versus placebo in mild-to-moderate psoriasis

- [illegible]

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Endpoints analysed at 26 and 52 weeks

HeROPA phase 2b clinical trial in mild-to-moderate psoriasis

Primary endpoint:

The proportion of patients with $\geq 50\%$ reduction in Psoriasis Area and Severity Index (PASI50). [From Baseline to Week 26]

Secondary endpoints at 52 weeks include:

Physical symptom assessments

Comparisons of Psoriasis Area and Severity Index (PASI) scores

Body Surface Area (BSA)

static Physician Global Assessment (sPGA)

Scalp PGA (ScPGA)

Patient Reported Outcomes

SF-36

Dermatology Life Quality Index (DLQI)

Safety

Treatment-emergent Adverse Events (TEAEs) and Serious Adverse Events (SAEs)



HeROPA Six-month read-out

Primary endpoint not met: PASI50 responders

The proportion of patients with $\geq 50\%$ reduction in Psoriasis Area and Severity Index (PASI) from baseline to week 26 was compared between HRO350 and placebo

Results of the readout

- The response rate in the HRO350 high dose group was close to the estimated effect level
- Number of patients with response in the placebo group was higher than predicted, thus no statistical difference demonstrating difference from placebo
- No safety concerns so far in the HeROPA trial, and no unexpected serious events related to the study medication have been reported to date.

Limitations on details from readout

- Numeric data results cannot be provided as the study is ongoing and patients are still being treated
 - International guidelines on conducting clinical trials dictates that patients and investigators should not be provided with information which may impact the integrity of treatment and avoid bias
 - For ethical reasons and to safeguard patients who are participating in the trial
 - Secondary endpoints at week 52 will be extremely important to understand the placebo rate
- Data will be disclosed after all patients have completed the trial and analysis has been conducted

Psoriasis is a disease with natural fluctuations

- Psoriasis is a chronic disease
- It is not uncommon for the symptoms of psoriasis to fluctuate through the seasons
- Spontaneous improvements in summer months can be observed – as for light treatment
- The HeROPA study was designed with 52 weeks of placebo control to address this

High placebo rates

- an inherent challenge in clinical trials in milder disease states

- In randomized parallel placebo-controlled trial, the observed relative treatment difference gives an estimate of an apparent treatment effect which does not reflect the full treatment effect due to the dilution resulting from the presence of placebo responders.
- High placebo rates of success can be related to:
 - Disease severity – more difficult to assess changes in mild disease states
 - Diseases with natural fluctuations – spontaneous improvements



Arctic Bioscience

The way forward

What it means for patients

HRO350 as a potential treatment option for mild-to-moderate psoriasis

Data after 52 weeks of treatment will give further information about the benefit-risk profile of HRO350 and long-term treatment results versus placebo in a population with fluctuating disease.

- No safety concerns so far in the HeROPA trial, and no unexpected serious events related to the study medication have been reported to date.

HRO350 could still be a unique oral treatment option for mild-to-moderate psoriasis

- New mode of action in resolution of inflammation
- Natural raw material

What it means for Arctic Bioscience

Considerations in continued development of HRO350 as a treatment option for mild-to-moderate psoriasis

- Analyse 52-week data to look at long term outcomes of HRO350 versus placebo in this patient population
- Wait with planning phase III clinical trial in mild-to-moderate psoriasis until 52 weeks data are evaluated
- Wait with setting up production line until the further drug development program is clarified
- Explore potential alternative routes (non-prescription) to market for HRO350

What it means for Arctic Bioscience

Financials

- The liquidity situation has been closely monitored over time and various financing alternatives are being considered to secure the future funding of the company's activities - post the primary data readout
- Cash preservation initiatives are implemented to ensure that the available financial resources will sustain the company into 2025, enabling the achievement of upcoming key inflection points in Q1
- The company will perform a full strategic and organizational assessment to secure a sustainable financial platform going forward
- The Company expect to continue delivering double digit annual nutra revenue growth towards profitability in 12-18 Months

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