

CHARACTERISATION OF THE BINDING OF LEUKOTRIENE B₄ TO MACROPHAGES OF THE RAINBOW TROUT *ONCORHYNCHUS MYKISS*

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Summary

The binding of leukotriene B₄ (LTB₄) to macrophages from the head kidney of the rainbow trout *Oncorhynchus mykiss* was measured. Binding of [³H]LTB₄ achieved a steady state after approximately 30 min of incubation and was 30% reversible in the presence of a minimum of 1000-fold excess of LTB₄. Scatchard analysis of the kinetics of LTB₄ binding over a range of [³H]LTB₄ concentrations indicated the existence of only a single class of receptor with a dissociation constant, K_D , of 0.14 nmol l⁻¹ and a maximum receptor density, B_{max} , of approximately 17 800 sites per macrophage. The LTB₄ receptor antagonist LY223982 was ineffective in inhibiting the binding of [³H]LTB₄ to trout macrophages, although another receptor

antagonist, LTB₄-dimethylamide, displaced a maximum of 25% of the total binding. LTB₅ was equally effective as LTB₄ at displacing [³H]LTB₄, while other eicosanoids tested were without significant effect. It is suggested that the putative receptors for LTB₄ on trout macrophages are similar to the high-affinity receptors for this compound reported to occur on mammalian granulocytes, although any structural similarities of the binding sites await further investigation.

Key words: leukotriene receptor, rainbow trout, macrophage, eicosanoids, LY223982, *Oncorhynchus mykiss*.

Introduction

Leukotriene B₄ [5(*S*),12(*R*)-8,10-*trans*-6,14-*cis*-eicosatetraenoic acid, LTB₄] is a key pro-inflammatory compound in mammals promoting leucocyte chemotaxis, aggregation, superoxide anion generation and degranulation (Samuelsson *et al.* 1987). Production of LTB₄ has been found in several cell types, including granulocytes, lymphocytes, mononuclear phagocytes and keratinocytes in which the required 5-lipoxygenase and LTA₄ hydrolase activities are found (Samuelsson *et al.* 1987; Ford-Hutchinson *et al.* 1994). LTB₄ interacts with a number of target cells *via* a single type of receptor, termed B-LT (Metters, 1995). This can exist in two states, at least in some cell types. First, high-affinity receptors which are coupled to guanine-nucleotide-binding G-proteins and are involved in chemotactic and chemokinetic responses in granulocytes (Sherman *et al.* 1988; Mong, 1991). The second state is represented by the low-affinity forms which are uncoupled from G-proteins and are associated with degranulation and secretion events in human granulocytes (e.g. Kreisle *et al.* 1985; Mong, 1991). Both forms of the receptor are interconvertible; for example, the receptor can be converted from high to low affinity by treatment with GTP analogues (Sherman *et al.* 1988; Slipertz *et al.* 1993). The B-LT protein

has been identified as having an M_r of either 60 kDa (Goldman *et al.* 1991) or 70–80 kDa (Harvey *et al.* 1992), although further structural elucidation is still awaited.

Significantly less is known about LTB₄ generation and its biological activities in non-mammalian vertebrates. In amphibians, LTB₄ and LTB₅ (the latter derived from eicosapentaenoic acid) cause contraction of bullfrog (*Rana catesbeiana*) lung (Andazola *et al.* 1992) but their potential pro-inflammatory ability is apparently untested. The generation and biological activities of leukotrienes in fish, in particular the rainbow trout *Oncorhynchus mykiss*, are well studied. LTB₄ biosynthesis occurs both in macrophages and in platelet equivalent cells, termed thrombocytes, in rainbow trout (Pettitt *et al.* 1991; Lloyd-Evans *et al.* 1994). As eicosapentaenoate (20:5, *n*-3) is a common fatty acid in trout phospholipids, LTB₅ is also generated in similar amounts to LTB₄ by these cells. Unspecified cell types in the brain, skin, ovary, heart and alimentary canal also have LTB_{4/5} biosynthetic capacity (Knight *et al.* 1995). Functional studies have demonstrated that LTB₄ is a chemotactic agent for trout leucocytes (Sharp *et al.* 1992), causes transient increases in intracellular [Ca²⁺] in macrophages (Knight *et al.* 1993) but

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does not affect enzyme secretion from trout macrophages (Knight, 1995; Rowley, 1996) or the uptake of foreign test particles by these cells (Knight *et al.* 1993). Experimentally induced inflammatory exudates in the peritoneal cavity of rainbow trout exhibit enhanced levels of LTB₄ and other eicosanoids, including prostaglandin E₂ and lipoxin A₄ (Rowley, 1996). Despite this knowledge of the biosynthesis and functioning of LTB₄ in trout, nothing is known about its binding to target cells and the specificity of this reaction. Therefore, the present study characterises the binding of LTB₄ to rainbow trout macrophages. This work is the first report of eicosanoid binding sites on non-mammalian leucocytes.

Materials and methods

Chemicals

[³H]LTB₄ (specific activity 193 Ci mmol⁻¹; 7.14 TBq mmol⁻¹) was obtained from Amersham Life Sciences (Little Chalfont, UK), while LTB₄, LTB₄-dimethylamide, LTB₅, LTC₄, lipoxin A₄ (LXA₄), 12(*S*)-hydroxyeicosatetraenoic acid [12(*S*)-HETE] and 12(*S*)-hydroxyeicosapentaenoic acid [12(*S*)-HEPE] were obtained from Cascade Biochem Ltd (Reading, UK). LY223982, an LTB₄ receptor antagonist, was kindly provided by Lilly Research Laboratories (Indianapolis, USA). All other reagents were obtained from the Sigma Chemical Co. Ltd (Poole, UK), unless otherwise stated, and were the highest grade available.

Fish

Adult triploid rainbow trout, *Oncorhynchus mykiss* (Walbaum), approximate mass 200–250 g, were obtained from Pontlliw Trout Farm, (South Wales, UK), maintained in outdoor freshwater concrete tanks at 10–15 °C and fed *ad libitum* on Mainstream expanded diet (B.P. Nutrition Ltd, Cheshire, UK) prior to use.

Macrophage isolation and maintenance

Trout were killed by immersion in a lethal dose of ethyl *p*-aminobenzoate (0.1 g l⁻¹), exsanguinated and the head kidneys removed into Ca²⁺/Mg²⁺-free Hanks balanced salt solution (HBSS). Each kidney was disrupted through a fine plastic mesh and the resulting cell suspension centrifuged (1500 *g* for 5 min at 4 °C) to remove soluble material and cell debris. The cell pellet was resuspended, layered onto a preformed 55 % Percoll gradient prepared as described previously (Pettitt *et al.* 1991) and centrifuged at 3000 *g* for 30 min at 4 °C. The layer containing macrophages and other contaminating leucocytes (mainly lymphocytes) was removed and the cells washed by centrifugation in Ca²⁺/Mg²⁺-free HBSS. The cells obtained from approximately six fish were then pooled and approximately 2 × 10⁷ adherent cells were placed in 9 cm tissue-culture-grade Petri dishes (Nunc, Paisley, UK) containing 5 ml of HBSS and left to attach for 30–60 min. The dishes were then gently agitated to resuspend any non-adherent cells, which were discarded. The remaining adherent cells were incubated in 5 ml of RPMI (Gibco, Paisley, UK) containing 5 % heterologous fish serum overnight at 18 °C. After incubating

the cells for approximately 15 min at 18 °C with Ca²⁺/Mg²⁺-free HBSS containing 5 mmol l⁻¹ EDTA, the remaining cells were resuspended by gentle aspiration, washed once with Ca²⁺/Mg²⁺-free HBSS and counted using a haemocytometer. Typically in excess of 90 % of the recovered cells re-adhered to glass and were judged to be macrophages on the basis of their morphology.

Binding time-course experiments

Macrophages (2 × 10⁷ ml⁻¹) in Ca²⁺/Mg²⁺-containing HBSS ([Ca²⁺] 1.3 mmol l⁻¹; [Mg²⁺] 0.4 mmol l⁻¹) were incubated at less than 4 °C in a salt ice-water bath in parallel with either 0.03 nmol l⁻¹ [³H]LTB₄ alone or 0.03 nmol l⁻¹ [³H]LTB₄ together with a 10⁴-fold excess of LTB₄ to establish the levels of total and non-specific binding respectively. At designated time intervals (1, 5, 10, 30 and 60 min), samples (0.5 ml) were removed from both incubations and layered onto 350 μl of silicone oil (relative density 1.03) in Eppendorf tubes which were centrifuged (10 000 *g* for 1 min) to pellet the cells, isolating them from the unbound label. The upper aqueous phase was removed with a small amount of the silicone oil and the tube and oil interface were washed with methanol (750 μl) which was drawn off with the remainder of the oil. The pellet was then disrupted with 30 % ethanol, 20 % trichloroacetic acid in Ca²⁺/Mg²⁺-free HBSS (200 μl) and the tube and contents mixed with 5 ml of Pico Fluor 40 (Packard Instruments B.V., Groningen, The Netherlands). The radioactivity associated with the pellet was determined over a 5 min counting period using a 1217 Rackbeta liquid scintillation counter (LKB, Pharmacia, Milton Keynes, UK).

Determination of the quantity of cold homoligand required to displace specific binding

Macrophages (2 × 10⁷ ml⁻¹) in Ca²⁺/Mg²⁺-containing HBSS were incubated with 0.03 nmol l⁻¹ [³H]LTB₄ and a range of concentrations between 0.3 nmol l⁻¹ and 0.3 μmol l⁻¹ of cold homoligand (LTB₄) for 30 min at less than 4 °C. Samples (0.5 ml) of the incubation mixture were then layered onto cushions of silicone oil and treated as described above.

Scatchard analysis of LTB₄ binding to macrophages

Macrophages (2 × 10⁷ ml⁻¹) in Ca²⁺/Mg²⁺-containing HBSS were incubated with a range of concentrations of [³H]LTB₄ (0.05, 0.1, 0.3, 0.6, 0.9 and 1.2 nmol l⁻¹) both in the presence and in the absence of a 1000-fold excess of cold LTB₄ for 30 min at less than 4 °C. Samples (0.5 ml) of the cell suspension were then removed and layered onto a silicone oil cushion and centrifuged to separate the cells from the unbound label. The upper aqueous phase was carefully removed, mixed with scintillation fluid and the quantity of label present was determined. The tube was then washed, the cell pellet disrupted and the quantity of label present was determined.

Determination of the specificity of the LTB₄ binding sites

Macrophages (2 × 10⁷ ml⁻¹) in Ca²⁺/Mg²⁺-containing HBSS were incubated with a variety of related eicosanoids [LTB₄,

LTB₅, LXA₄, LTC₄, 12(*S*)-HETE, 12(*S*)-HEPE] or the LTB₄ receptor antagonists LY223982 and LTB₄-dimethylamide, at three different concentrations (3×10^{-8} , 3×10^{-9} or $3 \times 10^{-10} \text{ mol l}^{-1}$) together with 0.03 nmol l^{-1} [³H]LTB₄ for 30 min at less than 4 °C. The results were expressed as a percentage of the label bound to cells incubated with radioactive ligand in the absence of a competing compound.

Results

The non-specific association of the radioactive label with trout macrophages with time was established by incubating the cells with both [³H]LTB₄ and a 10^4 -fold excess of cold LTB₄. Such conditions have been calculated to prevent 99.9% of receptor occupancy by the radiolabel (Hulme and Birdsall, 1992), thereby identifying the quantity of radioactivity that had partitioned into the membrane or other hydrophobic areas, had become entrapped in the cell pellet or had become associated with the microcentrifuge tube. Throughout the incubation, the levels of non-specific binding did not exceed $8.2 \pm 1.0\%$ (mean \pm s.d., $N=6$) of the total binding. The level of specific binding was calculated by subtracting the non-specific binding from the total amount of label associated with the cell pellet.

Both the total and specific binding of [³H]LTB₄ achieved a steady state at approximately 30 min (Fig. 1). A 30 min incubation time was therefore used subsequently to ensure that a suitable concentration of unlabelled (cold) homoligand had been used to determine non-specific binding. At least a 1000-fold excess of cold LTB₄ was required to compete with the specifically bound radioactive ligand to display a constant level of non-specific binding. Furthermore, once at equilibrium, this binding was partially reversible with approximately 30%

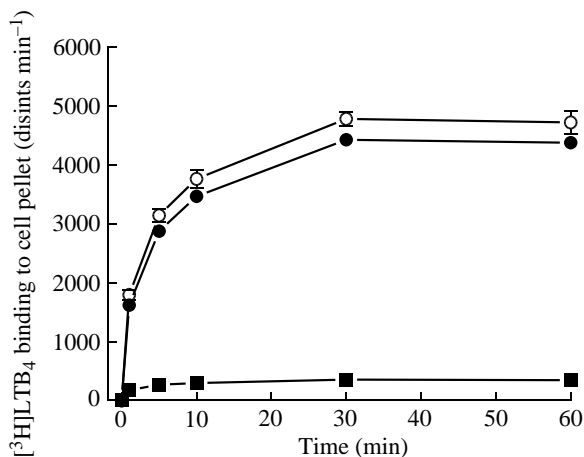


Fig. 1. Time course of [³H]LTB₄ binding to trout macrophages determined at less than 4 °C. Macrophages (2×10^7) were incubated with 0.03 nmol l^{-1} [³H]LTB₄ in the absence (○) or presence (■) of a 10^4 -fold excess of cold homoligand. Specific binding (●) was calculated by subtracting the non-specific bound label from the total radiolabel. Results shown are means \pm s.e.m. of three separate experiments using different batches of cells performed with duplicate determinations at each time interval.

reduction in binding following the addition of a 1000-fold excess of cold LTB₄ after 20 min of incubation. As shown in Fig. 2A, as the concentration of [³H]LTB₄ increased, the specific binding approached saturation. When replotted as a Scatchard plot (Fig. 2B), linear regression analysis indicated that there is a single class of receptor sites with a K_D of $0.14 \pm 0.003 \text{ nmol l}^{-1}$ and a B_{max} of $0.295 \pm 0.006 \text{ pmol per } 10^7$ macrophages or 17800 ± 3600 binding sites per cell (mean values \pm s.e.m., $N=3$). The linear nature of the Scatchard plots

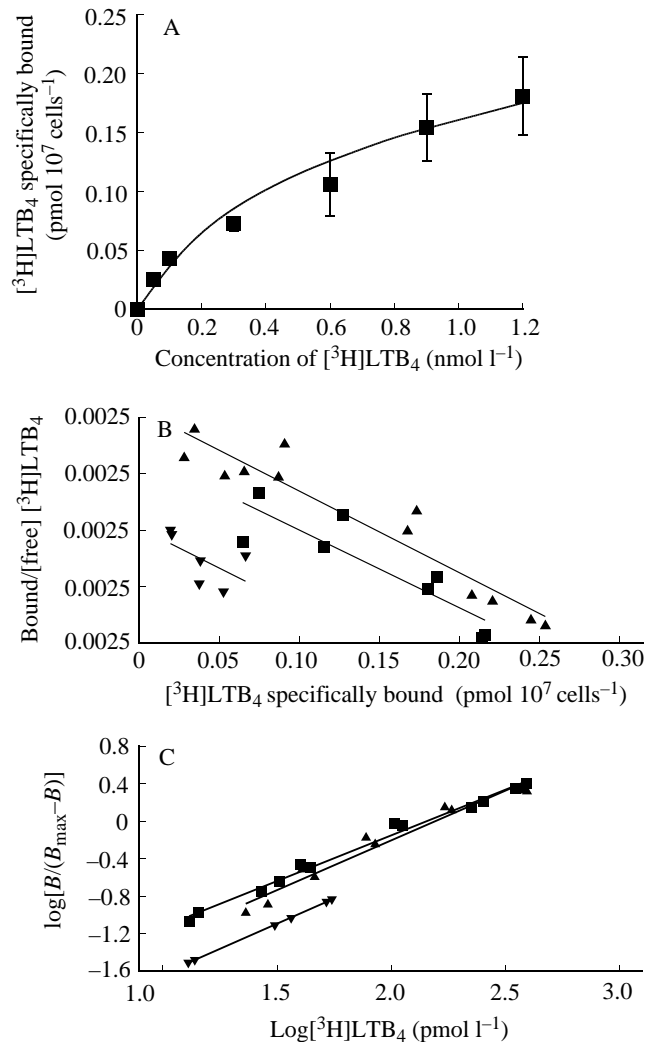


Fig. 2. (A) Saturation analysis of [³H]LTB₄ binding to rainbow trout macrophages. Values are means \pm s.e.m. of three separate experiments each performed in duplicate. (B) Scatchard analysis of [³H]LTB₄ binding to rainbow trout macrophages. The lines represent linear regression analyses of data from three separate experiments where $r = -0.887$ (■), -0.953 (▲) and -0.585 (▼). The linear nature of these plots suggests a single binding site with a mean K_D of 0.14 nmol l^{-1} and B_{max} of approximately 17800 binding sites per cell. (C) Hill analysis of [³H]LTB₄ binding to rainbow trout macrophages. The lines represent linear regression analyses of three experiments where $r = 0.994$ (■), 0.979 (▲) and 1.00 (▼). The mean Hill coefficient was determined to be 1.03.

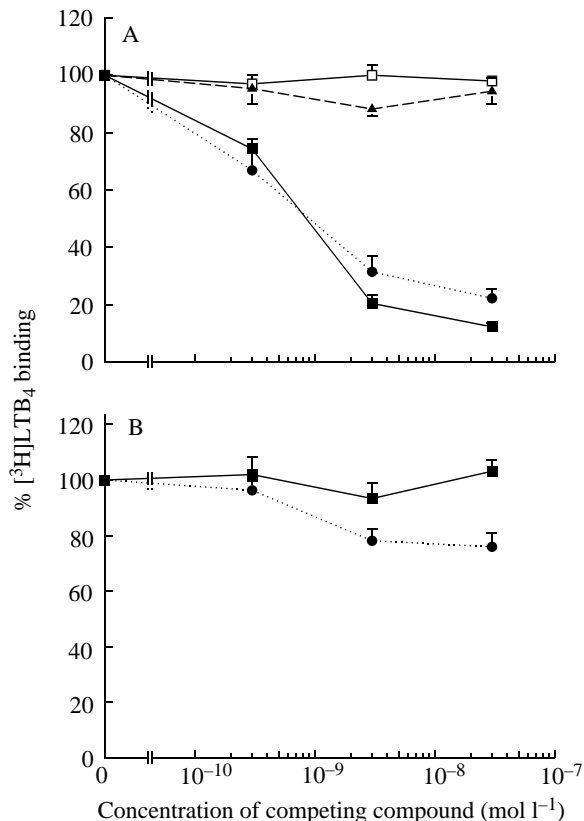


Fig. 3. (A) Competition of $[^3\text{H}]\text{LTB}_4$ binding with structurally related compounds: LTB_4 (■), LTB_5 (●), 12-(S)HETE (□) and LXA_4 (▲), and (B) with the known LTB_4 mammalian receptor antagonists LY223982 (■) and LTB_4 -dimethylamide (●). The results are expressed as a percentage of total binding in the absence of any competing compound and represent the mean \pm S.E.M. of 3–4 separate experiments. For the sake of clarity, the results for two other compounds, 12-(S)HEPE and LTC_4 , are not shown, but they were not significantly different from those shown for LXA_4 and 12-(S)HETE.

did not suggest the existence of cooperativity, and the Hill plot, which yielded a coefficient of 1.03, confirmed this (Fig. 2C).

Fig. 3 demonstrates the ability of several other lipoxygenase products previously shown to be generated by trout macrophages [LXA_4 , 12-(S)HETE, 12-(S)HEPE, LTB_5 , LTC_4 ; Pettitt *et al.* 1991; Knight *et al.* 1995] to antagonise the binding of $[^3\text{H}]\text{LTB}_4$ to macrophages. It was found that LTB_5 interacted with the binding site in a similar manner to LTB_4 , with an estimated IC_{50} value of $8 \times 10^{-10} \text{ mol l}^{-1}$. The other predominant trout macrophage-derived lipoxygenase products had no significant effect upon the ability of the putative receptor to bind radiolabelled LTB_4 at the concentrations tested. The LTB_4 receptor antagonist LY223982 had no significant displacement effect on $[^3\text{H}]\text{LTB}_4$ binding to macrophages over the concentration range used, although LTB_4 -dimethylamide, a partial LTB_4 receptor antagonist in mammals (Falcone and Aharony, 1990), did displace over 25% of the total binding ($\text{IC}_{50} > 1 \times 10^{-8} \text{ mol l}^{-1}$).

Discussion

The results of the present work demonstrate that LTB_4 binding to rainbow trout macrophages is structurally specific, apparently saturable, but only approximately 30% reversible after 20 min in the presence of a 1000-fold excess of unlabelled homoligand. Whilst under ideal conditions binding would be fully reversible to non-specific binding levels, other authors have also reported similar difficulties with human granulocytes with levels of displacement of approximately 70% (Goldman and Goetzl, 1982). This non-displacement may be due to internalisation of the label similar to that described by Lin *et al.* (1984) and is usually prevented in studies with mammalian cells by lowering the temperature sufficiently to prevent possible internalisation and metabolism of the label. The fish used in these experiments were maintained at temperatures between 10 and 15 °C and the experiments were performed at approximately 2 °C. Consequently, the temperature difference between the two conditions may not have been sufficient to prevent internalisation of the label especially as fish leucocytes show a high degree of homeoviscous adaptation, allowing them to maintain cellular processes, such as endocytosis, at low environmental temperatures (Bowden *et al.* 1996). The label may also have been internalised by a transport system similar to that described for LXA_4 (Simchowicz *et al.* 1994), although the only similar system identified for LTB_4 in humans results in the release of this compound from cells (Lam *et al.* 1990) and no import systems have been described.

Analysis of the kinetics of LTB_4 binding over the $[^3\text{H}]\text{LTB}_4$ concentration range used indicated that only a single class of receptor was present with a K_D of 0.14 nmol l^{-1} and a B_{max} of 17 800 binding sites per macrophage. This does not appear to resemble the high- and low-affinity B-LT states found in some mammalian neutrophils and eosinophils (e.g. Goldman and Goetzl, 1984; Goldman *et al.* 1986; Maghni *et al.* 1991; Sehmi *et al.* 1992), although Kreisle *et al.* (1985) were able to identify only one high-affinity LTB_4 receptor type on rat neutrophils.

The putative rainbow trout LTB_4 receptors most closely resemble the mammalian high-affinity receptors, which transduce the chemotactic response to LTB_4 (Sehmi *et al.* 1992). Trout head kidney leucocytes display both a chemotactic response to LTB_4 (Sharp *et al.* 1992) and an increase in the intracellular concentration of Ca^{2+} ($\text{EC}_{50} = 1.2 \text{ nmol l}^{-1}$) in the presence of this eicosanoid (Knight *et al.* 1993). It is also interesting that Knight (1995) was unable to demonstrate an increase in degranulation of these cells in response to LTB_4 at concentrations above $10^{-5} \text{ mol l}^{-1}$, which is a cellular response attributed to the mammalian low-affinity receptors (Goldman and Goetzl, 1984). Whilst it is tempting to speculate that only one receptor state exists, and that receptor occupancy may result in a rise in intracellular $[\text{Ca}^{2+}]$ and induce a chemotactic response, further work demonstrating the antagonistic effects of certain compounds on both these responses and on receptor binding is required.

In the present study, it was not possible to demonstrate the inhibition of $[^3\text{H}]\text{LTB}_4$ binding by LY223982, although LTB_4 -

dimethylamide was a partial antagonist and may demonstrate further inhibition at higher concentrations. The ineffectiveness of a further mammalian LTB₄ receptor antagonist, LY255283, was also reported by Andazola *et al.* (1992) whilst characterising the bullfrog lung LTB₄ receptor and together these results suggest that the piscine and anuran leukotriene receptors are both different from their mammalian counterparts in terms of their structure. Further insight into the potential dissimilarity between eicosanoid receptors in fish and mammals is reflected in the finding that the human cDNA probe for the LXA₄ receptor on human granulocytes (Fiore *et al.* 1994) did not hybridize with trout macrophage mRNA (S. Fiore, C. N. Serhan, L. A. Bowden and A. F. Rowley, unpublished observations), suggesting that sequence homology between these two 'receptors' in fish and humans may be limited.

Finally, the structural specificity of this binding site elucidated by the competition studies is also similar to that for bullfrog lung (Andazola *et al.* 1992). Both display a higher affinity for the eicosapentaenoic-acid-derived lipoxigenase product LTB₅ than for the equivalent mammalian receptor (Falcone and Aharony, 1990) and neither interacts with peptido-leukotrienes. This former observation is not unexpected since membranes of trout macrophages contain a high proportion of eicosapentaenoic acid and consequently produce similar amounts of LTB₅ and LTB₄ (Pettitt *et al.* 1989, 1991). Furthermore, both 4- and 5-series leukotrienes have similar biological potency in fish (Secombes *et al.* 1994), unlike the situation in mammals where LTB₅ is a weak chemotactic factor in comparison with LTB₄ (e.g. Lee *et al.* 1984). The similarity in receptor occupancy by LTB₄ and LTB₅ reported in the present study with trout is therefore not surprising and may reflect an evolutionary adaptation to the situation where both 4- and 5-series lipoxigenase products naturally exist in these animals.

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