



MYELOPEROXIDASE AS A PREDICTIVE FACTOR FOR SYSTEMIC DISEASES: A MINI-REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Myeloperoxidase (MPO) is an enzyme stored in azurophilic granules of polymorphonuclear neutrophils and macrophages and released into extracellular fluid in the setting of inflammatory process. The observation that myeloperoxidase is involved in oxidative stress and inflammation has been a leading factor to study myeloperoxidase as a possible marker of plaque instability and a useful clinical tool in the evaluation of patients with coronary heart disease. The purpose of this review is to provide an overview of the pathophysiological, analytical, and clinical characteristics of MPO and to summarize the state of art about the possible clinical use of MPO as a marker for diagnosis and risk stratification of patients with acute coronary syndrome (ACS).

KEYWORDS: Myeloperoxidase(MPO), Atherosclerosis(ACS), biomarker.

INTRODUCTION

Myeloperoxidase (MPO) is the most abundant proinflammatory enzyme stored in the azurophilic granules of neutrophilic granulocytes, accounting for approximately 5% of their dry mass.^[1] It catalyzes the formation of hypochlorous acid from hydrogen peroxide, generates other highly reactive molecules such as tyrosyl radicals, and cross-links proteins.^[2] Recently, MPO has been found to be implicated in a multitude of diseases, including atherosclerosis^[3], myocardial infarction^[4,5], atrial fibrillation^[6], multiple sclerosis^[7], Alzheimer's disease^[8], lung cancer^[9], and transplant rejection.^[10] Recently, myeloperoxidase has been proposed as a useful risk marker and diagnostic tool in acute coronary syndromes and in patients admitted to emergency room for chest pain.^[11]

Synthesis of Myeloperoxidase

MPO is the product of a single gene, located on long arm of chromosome 17(17q23.1). Thus the mature enzyme is synthesized from a single polypeptide product spanning 14kb. It has 12 exons & 11 introns.^[12] The MPO gene encodes for a primary translational product (MW 80 KDa), which following proteolytic removal of the 41 amino acid signal peptide, undergoes N-linked glycosylation with the incorporation of mannose-rich side-chains to generate 90 KDa enzymatically inactive apo pro MPO. With the insertion of a heme, apo pro MPO is converted to the enzymatically active pro MPO. This conversion to pro MPO occurs in endoplasmic reticulum. The exact mechanism of conversion of Pro

MPO to mature MPO is not clearly understood.^[13] Mature MPO is covalently bound tetrameric complex of two glycosylated 467 amino acid heavy (alpha) chains (MW 59 64 KDa) and two glycosylated 112 amino acid light (beta) chains (MW 14 KDa) with total MW about 150 KDa.^[14] MPO is a strongly basic protein with isoelectric point >10 and thus binds avidly to negatively charged complex. Myeloperoxidase synthesis occurs during myeloid differentiation in bone marrow and is completed within granulocytes prior to their entry into the circulation. The enzyme is stored within primary granules of neutrophils and monocytes and is not released until leukocyte activation and degranulation.^[15]

Protective functions of MPO

Primary physiologic functions of MPO is to kill microorganisms in neutrophils and monocytes and to do this, it forms highly reactive HOCl in phagosomes for it to be responsible for killing. Other normal beneficial function of MPO is its protective role in infectious diseases by the detoxification of microbial toxins such as diphtheria or tetanus toxins. HOCl obtained from MPO also participates in activating neutrophil derived collagenase and gelatinase, both secreted as latent enzymes. At the same time, HOCl inactivates a α 1-antitrypsin.

PATHOPHYSIOLOGICAL ROLE OF MYELOPEROXIDASE IN CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES

Association between MPO and atherosclerosis

MPO, a member of the heme peroxidase superfamily, generates reactive oxygen species and diffuse radical species. It performs a physiological role as a part of the innate system. However, MPO also can apparently exert a deleterious impact on the anterior wall. Immunohistochemical studies demonstrate the presence of MPO, its oxidant products, and their colonization with macrophages, in human atheroma. Genetic studies support a protective role of MPO deficiency. MPO-deficient individuals have less coronary artery diseases (CAD). In addition, a functional polymorphism in the promoter of the gene, resulting in decreased enzyme expression, was associated with a decreased risk of CAD. Furthermore, systemic levels of MPO and its oxidant products are associated with the prevalence of atherosclerotic disease. Systemic levels of MPO predict the presence and extent of angiographic disease.^[3] Moreover, levels predict the risk of clinical events in both subjects presenting with chest pain^[5] or acute coronary syndromes.

MPO promotes Atherogenesis via a range of mechanisms

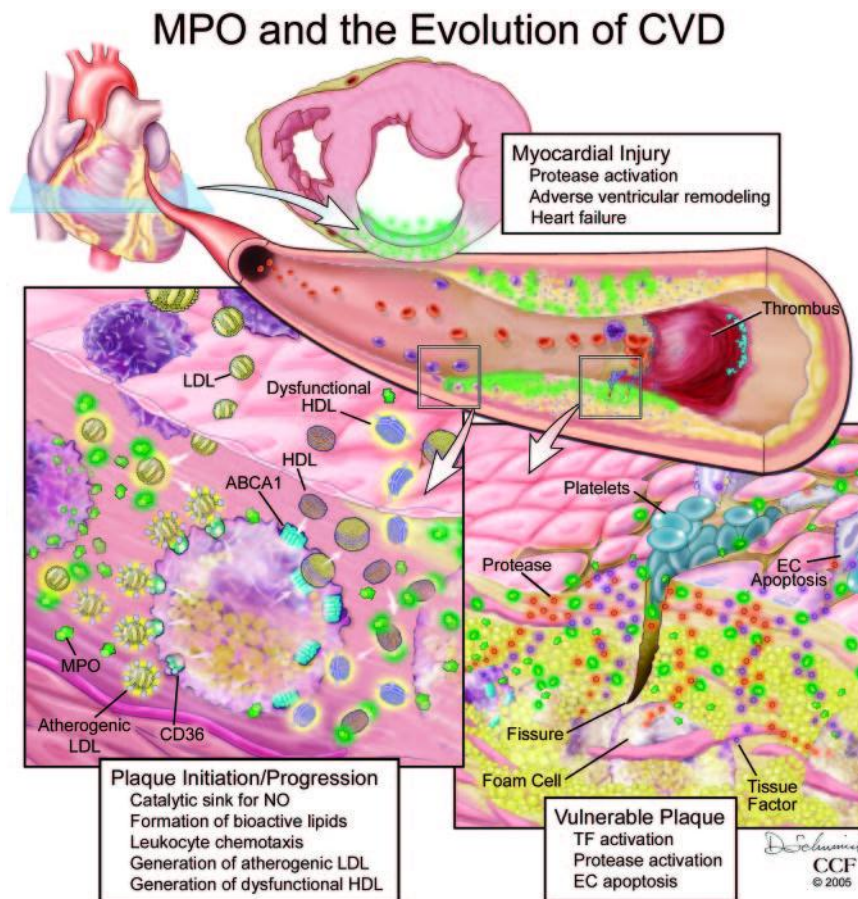
It appears that MPO, through the generation of nitric oxide (NO) derived oxidants, promotes numerous pathological events in the atherogenic cascade. In addition to generating potentially pro-atherogenic species, MPO utilizes the atheroprotective NO as a substrate. These factors have been implicated in the development of endothelial dysfunction, accumulation of foam cells in the arterial wall and the promotion of plaque vulnerability.^[16] In particular, substantial evidence suggests that MPO derived oxidants influence the net flux of cellular cholesterol, via both an increase in its cellular uptake and a reduction in its removal.

MPO promotes cellular accumulation of cholesterol

Oxidative modification of low density lipoprotein (LDL) is a key early event in the promotion of atherogenesis. Modification of LDL to a high uptake form allows for its internalization by macrophages, which undergo morphological changes to become foam cell, a major cellular component of the developing plaque. Evidence suggests that MPO-generated reactive nitrogen species convert LDL into high uptake foam, which is readily internalized by macrophages by a scavenger receptor mediated process. In addition to protein modification, MPO rapidly promotes the peroxidation of lipids. These modified lipids become attractive targets for uptake by macrophages and, in addition, promotes the elaboration of proinflammatory factors, including adhesion molecules and chemokines. Furthermore, MPO-generated nitrating species promotes the synthesis of cholesteryl esters and lipid loading of macrophages, resulting in the microscopic appearance of foam cells.

MPO impairs cholesterol efflux role density lipoproteins

It also appears that MPO promotes the oxidative modification of high density lipoproteins (HDL), influencing its ability to promote cholesterol efflux. Apolipoprotein A-I (apo A-I) modified by MPO-generated HOCl in vitro is less effective at promoting cholesterol efflux and more readily degraded by macrophages.^[17] It is possible that this chlorination impedes the interaction between apo A-I and the scavenger receptor SR-BI, which promotes cellular cholesterol flux.^[18] It was recently identified apo A-I as a selective target for MPO catalyzed nitration and halogenation in vivo, with accompanying functional impairment in vivo. MPO facilitated modification of either HDL or apo A-I reduced their ability to promote ABCA1 dependent cholesterol efflux from cholesterol-laden macrophages. Serum Apo A-I demonstrated ~100-fold higher levels of nitrotyrosine and chlorotyrosine compared to total serum proteins, and apoA-I isolated from patients with CAD contained increased levels of nitrotyrosine and chlorotyrosine compared to healthy controls.^[19] The greatest content of these species was found in apo A-I isolated from human atheroma, suggesting that this oxidative modification occurs preferentially in the arterial wall. In addition, MPO was found to directly associate with both intact HDL and apo A-I, with a specific contact site on the lipoprotein for interaction with MPO noted. These results provide a structural basis for the colocalization noted between epitopes specific for proteins exposed to HOCl and apo A-I within human atheroma.^[20]

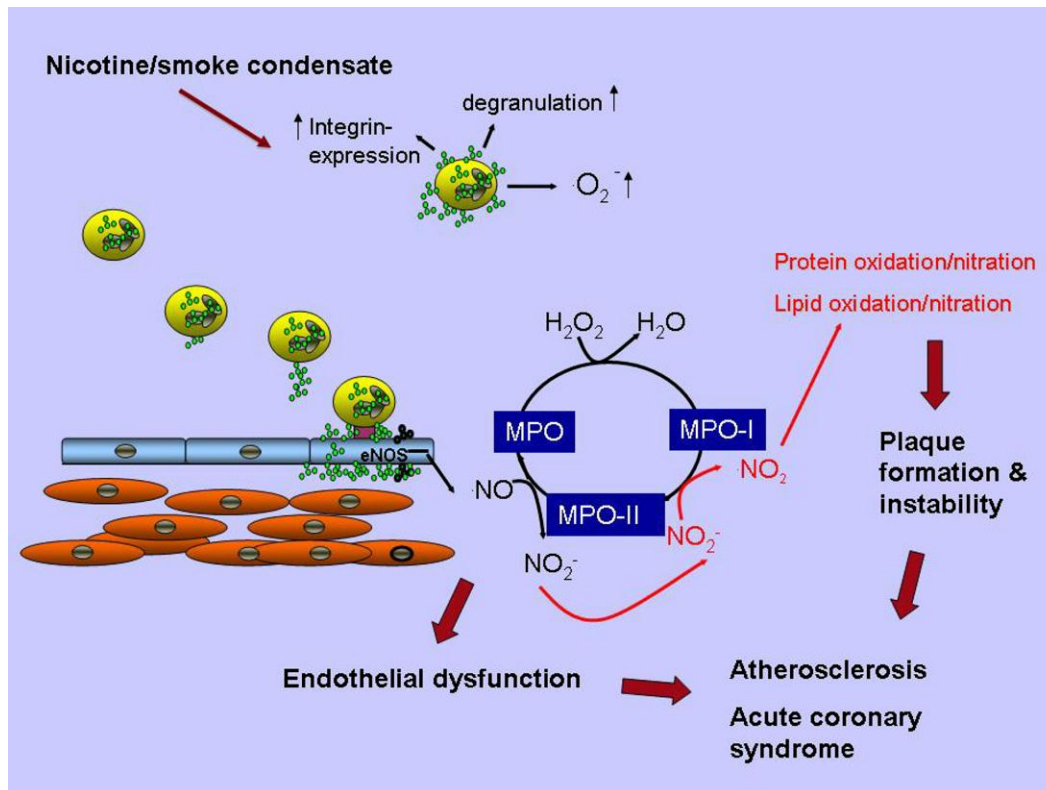


Scheme illustrating multiple processes throughout the evolution of atherosclerosis in which MPO is implicated. MPO has been linked to events that participate in the initiation and progression of plaque formation including lipid peroxidation, generation of atherogenic lipoproteins and dysfunctional HDL, and catalytic consumption of nitric oxide (NO). MPO may thus contribute to endothelial dysfunction, leukocyte transmigration, and accumulation of foam cells. MPO may participate in ischemic complications of atherosclerosis via activation of protease cascades and promotion of endothelial cell (EC) apoptosis, leading to breakdown of the fibrous cap. Mechanistic links with activation of tissue factor (TF) and the coagulation cascade are also reported. Studies with MPO knockout mice and models of myocardial infarction have supported a role for the heme protein in progression of myocardial necrosis to adverse ventricular remodeling and heart failure via its ability to activate proteases and promote degradation of the extracellular matrix.

Association of Myeloperoxidase and Smoking-dependent Vascular Inflammation

It has also been shown that the levels of myeloperoxidase (MPO), a neutrophil-derived enzyme, are significantly elevated in smokers compared with nonsmokers.^[21] Even previous smokers were indicative of higher circulating levels of MPO than never-smokers. Upon activation and degranulation, MPO is released into phagocytic vacuoles, into the extracellular space, and, in the case of PMN activation within the circulatory system, MPO can also be released into the blood stream. An important prerequisite for the effect of MPO on vascular inflammatory diseases is its ability to oxidize NO to nitrite, leading to a reduced vascular NO bioavailability.

MPO, which is highly cationic, is able to interact with the anionic-charged heparansulfate-glycosaminoglycans of the surface of endothelial cells. Upon binding to endothelial cells, catalytically active MPO reaches the subendothelial layer by transcytosis, and sequesters in the layer between endothelial cells and smooth muscle cells.^[22] Considering the anti-inflammatory properties of endothelial-derived NO, as evidenced by relaxation of smooth muscle cells, inhibition of smooth muscle cell proliferation, adhesion molecule expression, as well as platelet aggregation, MPO likely affects homeostasis and anti-inflammatory properties of the vessel wall.



Activation of Polymorphonuclear Neutrophils by Nicotine/Smoke condensate and its consequences in the vessel wall. MPO = myeloperoxidase; MPO-I = myeloperoxidase compound I; MPO-II = myeloperoxidase compound II; NO = nitric oxide; H_2O_2 = hydrogen peroxide; NO_2^- = nitrite; NO_2 = nitrogen dioxide; O_2^- = superoxide.

Association of Myeloperoxidase and Chaga's Disease

In vitro and in vivo studies with experimental models have shown that infection by *Trypanosoma cruzi* (T. cruzi) elicits both proinflammatory responses and reactive oxygen species (ROS) that appear essential for control of the parasite. Reactive oxidants are generated as a consequence of an "oxidative burst" of phagocytic cells (e.g., macrophages and neutrophils) activated by T. cruzi infection. NADPH oxidase, activated in all phagocytic cells, produces superoxide. Besides ROS, activated macrophages produce nitric oxide via the inflammatory activation of inducible nitric oxide synthase in response to T. cruzi infection. Nitric oxide produced in abundance by iNOS, directly reacts with O_2^- to form peroxynitrite and peroxynitrous acid, which have been shown to kill T. cruzi. The activated expression and activity of MPO is positively correlated with increased protein oxidation and nitration in seropositive subjects and MPO is the major cause of collateral damage through protein modification in humans with Chagas' disease.

Association of Myeloperoxidase and Carcinogenesis

A number of studies have implicated MPO in the development of malignancies. MPO system in stimulated neutrophils can catalyze the conversion of certain procarcinogens to carcinogenic form and in this way; it may contribute to the development of malignancies.^[23]

Association of Myeloperoxidase and Alzheimer's disease

MPO protein has been detected in microglia adjacent to senile plaques in the cerebral cortex of patients with Alzheimer's disease.^[24] Apo E which colocalizes with amyloid B in senile plaques of the patients with Alzheimer's disease is highly susceptible to oxidation by the MPO system. In addition MPO is shown to be involved in pathogenesis of brain infarction and Parkinson's disease.

Association of Myeloperoxidase and Renal Injury

MPO has been implicated in the pathogenesis of renal disease. A role of MPO in the glomerular injury observed in rapidly progressive glomerulonephritis in humans was suggested by the presence of MPO in the glomeruli of most patients with this condition in association with an increase in the titer of MPO specific, antineutrophil cytoplasmic antibody (MPO-ANCA).^[25]

Association of Myeloperoxidase and Multiple sclerosis

MPO has been detected in microglial macrophages in and around the lesions in multiple sclerosis suggesting its involvement in multiple sclerosis.^[26]

Association of Myeloperoxidase and Other diseases

Myeloperoxidase activity in leukocytes is significantly reduced in NIDDM patients, systemic vasculitis like Wegener's granulomatosis, microscopic polyangitis, and

Churg Strauss syndrome inflammatory bowel disease, and MPO is also risk stratification of major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE) in patients with Peripheral arterial diseases.^[27,28,29]

CLINICAL EVIDENCES FOR MPO AS A BIOMARKER OF CHRONIC INFLAMMATION IN VARIOUS SYSTEMIC DISEASES

A number of epidemiological studies have been reported that address the association of MPO with Cardio Vascular Diseases (CVD) and markers of atherosclerosis, chest pain in a wide range of patients populations.

Established Atherosclerosis

The first epidemiological report assessing the association between MPO and CVD was a case-control study published by Zhang and coworkers in 2001. Using an enzyme assay, Zhang et al showed that blood and leukocyte MPO activity were higher in patients with CAD than angiographically verified normal controls, and that this increased activity was significantly associated with presence of CAD (odds ratio, 11.9; 95% confidence interval (CI), 5.5–25.5).^[31]

Meuwese et al in the EPIC- (European prospective investigation into cancer and nutrition-) Norfolk prospective population study, have evaluated the association of MPO levels with the risk of future CAD in apparently healthy individuals.^[30] In a case-control study in 680 patients, 382 patients with stable CAD and 194 controls with normal coronary angiograms, MPO was higher in patients with CAD compared to controls.^[31] Biasucci et al first observed that circulating neutrophils in patients with acute myocardial infarction (AMI) and unstable angina (UA) have a low MPO content, and therefore high MPO levels in the circulation, as compared with those with chronic stable angina and variant angina.^[32] Stefanescu and coworkers found no independent association between MPO and all-cause mortality in 382 patients with stable CAD during 3.5 years of follow-up.^[33] In contrast to the above-mentioned studies, all of which had reported significant associations between MPO and CVD, 1 case-control study in HIV patients showed no significant independent association of MPO with CVD events.^[35]

ACUTE PRESENTATION WITH CHEST PAIN

In a cross-sectional study by Esporcatte et al., an MPO concentration higher than 100 pmol/L had a diagnostic sensitivity of 92% and specificity of 40% as a marker for identifying patients with an acute myocardial infarction (AMI) presenting with acute chest pain and non-ST elevation electrocardiogram findings. In this study, AMI was defined by troponin I concentration of >1.0 µg/L.^[30] In contrast, a study by Apple et al. found no additional diagnostic value of MPO (99th percentile) compared to troponin I in patients with clinically diagnosed acute coronary syndrome (ACS).^[36]

MPO Promotes Myocardial Dysfunction and Abnormal Ventricular Remodeling After Myocardial Infarction

Inflammation continues to play a central role in the pathological events that occur after rupture of the fibrous cap and luminal occlusion. Leukocyte migration to perinecrotic zones and reperfusion of an occluded artery exposes the ischemic territory to further inflammatory and oxidative stresses. It remains to be determined whether the increase in MPO activity that accompanies models of ischemia reperfusion injury contributes to the resulting tissue damage and infarct extension. However, recent studies have demonstrated that MPO contributes to adverse ventricular remodeling after myocardial infarction.^[31] Using a chronic coronary artery ligation model, MPO knockout mice demonstrated a marked reduction in leukocyte infiltration and left ventricular dilatation, associated with delayed myocardial rupture and preservation of systolic function.^[37] This benefit was associated with reductions in the oxidative inactivation of plasminogen activator inhibitor-1 and subsequent tissue plasmin activity. By promoting the development of abnormal ventricular geometry, MPO may thus play a role in the susceptibility to and progression of heart failure after myocardial infarction.

Development of MPO-Targeted Therapeutic Interventions

The many links between MPO and proatherogenic activities that might participate in many stages of cardiovascular disease has stimulated considerable interest in the development of therapeutic strategies to inhibit MPO catalysis. One potential difficulty with development of an MPO inhibitor is the concern that such a drug might have adverse effects related to impairment in the role of enzymes in innate host defenses. It should be noted, however, that only subjects with profound (near total or complete) deficiencies in MPO appear to have a significant increase in risk for infections, and only in the setting of concomitant factors that predispose to immunosuppression, such as diabetes. Moreover, whereas levels of MPO per leukocyte appear relatively stable in a given subject over time, there appears to be a wide range of MPO levels per leukocyte within populations of normal subjects, and thus a large potential therapeutic range may exist while maintaining MPO levels still within a functional range for host defenses. Finally, MPO stores within leukocytes may be relatively protected from inhibition because the enzyme is stored in a crystalline form within granules and only released into the phagolysosome compartment and extracellular space upon leukocyte activation. As a result, through use of more polar inhibitors, it may be possible to target extracellular MPO, such as enzyme trapped within the subendothelial space, and not to significantly impede leukocyte killing of phagocytosed pathogens. The development of MPO inhibitors awaits further investigation.

CONCLUSION

MPO is a marker of inflammation and oxidative stress that has been consistently demonstrated to be elevated in patients with ACS. However, the data so far available are relatively few; therefore, more studies are requested to precisely define the role of MPO. In particular all studies involving MPO assessment have used different methods, thus a standardization effort is needed. Furthermore, increased MPO is not likely to be specific for cardiac diseases, as activation of neutrophils and macrophages can occur in any infectious, inflammatory, or infiltrative process, therefore, more studies should address and clarify these points.

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