



Derivation of Human Microglia from Pluripotent Stem Cells

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WARF: P140410US02

Inventors: James Thomson, Nicholas Propson, Michael Schwartz, Zhonggang Hou, Gene Uenishi, Igor Slukvin, William Murphy, Jue Zhang

The Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF) is seeking commercial partners interested in developing a highly efficient and reproducible method for obtaining human primitive macrophages and microglial cells suitable for clinical applications.

Overview

Microglia act as the first and main form of active immune defense in the central nervous system. They are the primary source of brain cytokines and have been implicated in chronic neuroinflammation (e.g., Alzheimer's disease), stroke and traumatic brain injury. Long thought to be derived from bone marrow, microglia have recently been shown to be derived from primitive macrophages in the earliest wave of blood cell formation in the yolk sac.

To date the majority of microglia studies have been performed in rodent models, with limited relevance to humans. Despite the intense interest to research and potential clinical applications there has been no known protocol for deriving microglia from human pluripotent stem cells, until now.

The Invention

UW-Madison researchers have discovered a primitive, macrophage-like cell type of the hematopoietic lineage that has the capability to develop ramified human microglia when added to a neural tissue construct. Accordingly, they have developed the first known protocol of its kind for differentiating and expanding microglia suitable for clinically relevant therapeutic applications.

Applications

- Production of microglia for predictive analysis of candidate neurotoxic agents and other human tissue modelling applications

Key Benefits

- First opportunity to study microglia in an *in vitro* human model
- Highly efficient and reproducible method

Stage of Development

Populations of primitive macrophages and human microglial cells have been obtained using the new method.

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For More Information About the Invention

- [James Thomson](#)
- [Igor Slukvin](#)

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WARF
Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation

| info@warf.org | 608.960.9850

- [William Murphy](#).

Related Technologies

- [WARF reference number P140400US02 describes the researchers' development of xenogen-free, 3-D neuronal tissue models derived from hPSCs.](#)
- [WARF reference number P140372US02 describes the researchers' method to make endothelial cells for the vascularization of this model.](#)

Tech Fields

- [Pluripotent Stem Cells : Differentiation](#)

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