

Radiolabeling of DOTA-conjugated Lintuzumab with ²²⁵Ac: Comparison of Th-229-produced and High-Energy Proton Accelerator-produced ²²⁵Ac

Lintuzumab is a humanized monoclonal antibody (mAb) against CD33, an antigen widely expressed on myeloid stem cells and leukemic blast cells in patients with Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML). Actinium Pharmaceuticals is advancing several targeted radio-immunotherapy programs utilizing Lintuzumab conjugated with the potent alpha emitting radionuclide Actinium-225 (²²⁵Ac) to treat cancer patients. Currently, the supply of ²²⁵Ac for clinical manufacturing is produced by a generator system from the decay of Thorium-229 (²²⁹Th); however, the capacity of ²²⁹Th generators to supply Ac-225 is limited (< 2 Ci/year). A highly promising source of Ac-225 supply is via high-energy linear proton accelerator (Linac) where ²²⁵Ac is produced via irradiation of Thorium-232. Linac-produced ²²⁵Ac, however, contains minor quantities (0.1-0.7% activity) of low energy ²²⁷Ac which has a half-life of 21.8 years. ²²⁵Ac has a half-life of 10 days. Because of the large differences in decay rates of these two isotopes, even at very low activity levels, the ²²⁷Ac molecule is present in high quantities in the mixture. For example, at 0.3% activity, the molar ratio of ²²⁷Ac to ²²⁵Ac is approximately 2.3. At this level, the ²²⁷Ac in linac preparations of ²²⁵Ac may have a negative impact on labeling efficiency, stability and potency.

In order to assess the potential impact of the ²²⁷Ac impurity on antibody labeling efficiency and other parameters, we conducted experimental studies where lintuzumab-DOTA conjugates were comparatively labeled with ²²⁵Ac produced by both ²²⁹Th generator and linac. In these studies, we compared radiolabeling efficiency and critical quality attributes of the radiolabeled finished drug product. Previously, in vivo mouse studies of linac-produced ²²⁵Ac, free or DOTA-chelated, demonstrated similar biodistribution/dosimetry/toxicity profiles to ²²⁹Th generated ²²⁵Ac [1]. In our experimental scheme, a preparation of lintuzumab-DOTA conjugate was first prepared using a qualified manufacturing process. The lintuzumab-DOTA conjugate was then divided into two parts, and one part was radiolabeled with ²²⁹Th generated ²²⁵Ac and the second part with Linac-generated ²²⁵Ac. Both ²²⁵Ac radioisotope lots were supplied by the Department of Energy (DOE). Post-labeling, the radiolabeled lintuzumab-DOTA-Ac-225 preparations were passed through separate size exclusion chromatography columns to remove unlabeled ²²⁵Ac from the preparation. The eluents were analyzed for radiochemical purity and immunoreactivity. Further, radiolabeling efficiency was determined for both ²²⁵Ac radionuclide preparations. For verification of results, the study was repeated a second time with new lots of ²²⁵Ac from each source. Our results demonstrated that, radiolabeling of lintuzumab-DOTA with ²²⁵Ac generated by high energy proton accelerator exhibited similar characteristics in terms of radiolabeling efficiency, immunoreactivity and radiochemical purity to ²²⁹Th generated ²²⁵Ac, suggesting that the elevated molar concentration of low energy ²²⁷Ac in linac preparations does not have a significant negative impact on the labeling of monoclonal antibodies for the generation of radioimmunoconjugates.

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Presentation Type

Poster

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