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Research Interest:

Control of memory viral immune responses by CD4⁺ T cell antigen presentation

It has been shown by others that during the formation of the immunological synapse, peptide:MHC complexes along with costimulatory molecules are transferred from the antigen-presenting cell (APC) surface to T cells, allowing the latter to function as APCs (T-APCs). In some instances, the transfer of peptide:MHC complexes from APCs to T cells has been proposed, in the mouse system, to stimulate CD8⁺ CTL responses. In other cases, captured peptide:MHC complexes have been found to have feedback inhibitory effects on the immune response such as fratricide killing, anergy or immunoregulation.

Using retrovirally driven expression of model viral antigens (CMV pp65 and LMP2a) in human activated CD4⁺ T cells (CD4⁺ T-APCs) as a surrogate system for viral epitopes presentation by human activated CD4⁺ T cells, we further investigate the biological consequences of antigen presentation by CD4⁺ T-APCs in the context of a viral infection.

Selected publications

Adamopoulou, E., Diekmann, J., Tolosa, E., Kuntz, G., Einsele, H., Rammensee, HG., and Topp, MS. (2007).

Human CD4⁺ T cells displaying viral epitopes elicit a functional virus-specific memory CD8⁺ T cell response.

Journal of Immunology. In press.