

## **Role of the Redox Protein Thioredoxin in Cytoprotective Mechanism Evoked by (-)-Deprenyl**

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Abbreviations:

MPTP, 1-methyl-4-phenyl-1,2,3,6-tetrahydropyridine; MPP<sup>+</sup>, 1-methyl-4-phenylpyridinium ion; Trx, thioredoxin; MnSOD, Mn-superoxide dismutase; MAO-B, monoamine oxidase type B, PKA, cAMP dependent protein kinase; MAP, mitogen-activated protein

## ABSTRACT

Through the inhibition of monoamine oxidase type B (MAO-B), (-)-deprenyl (selegiline) prevents the conversion of 1-methyl-4-phenyl-1,2,3,6-tetrahydropyridine (MPTP) to the toxic metabolite 1-methyl-4-phenylpyridinium ion (MPP<sup>+</sup>) and also dopaminergic neurotoxicity in animal models. Cumulative observations suggest that selegiline may also protect against MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced neurotoxicity, possibly through the induction of pro-survival genes.

Recently, we observed that thioredoxin (Trx) mediates the induction of mitochondrial MnSOD and Bcl-2 during preconditioning-induced hormesis. We therefore investigated whether the redox protein Trx plays any role in the neuroprotective mechanism of selegiline against MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced cytotoxicity in human SH-SY5Y neuroblastoma cells and also in primary neuronal cultures of mouse midbrain dopaminergic neurons. After confirming selegiline protects against MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced cytotoxicity, we observed further that selegiline, at 1  $\mu$ M or less, induced Trx for protection against oxidative injury caused by MPP<sup>+</sup>. The induction of Trx was blocked by PKA inhibitor and mediated by a PKA-sensitive phospho-activation of MAP kinase Erk1/2 and the transcription factor c-Myc.

Selegiline-induced Trx and associated neuroprotection were concomitantly blocked by the antisense against Trx mRNA but not the sense or antisense mutant phosphorothionate oligonucleotides in not only human SH-SY5Y cells but also mouse primary neuronal culture of midbrain dopaminergic neurons. Furthermore, the redox cycling of Trx may mediate the protective action of selegiline because the inhibition of Trx reductase by 1-chloro-2, 4-dinitrobenzene ameliorated selegiline's effect. Consistently, Trx (1  $\mu$ M) increased the expression of mitochondrial proteins MnSOD and Bcl-2 supporting cell survival (Andoh et al., 2002). In conclusion, without modifying MAO-B activity, selegiline augments the gene induction of Trx leading to elevated expression of antioxidative MnSOD and antiapoptotic Bcl-2 proteins in the mitochondria for protecting against MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced neurotoxicity.

(-)-Deprenyl (selegiline) was originally developed in Hungary (for review see Knoll, 2000) and pharmacologically classified as a selective MAO type B (MAO-B) inhibitor with a broad spectrum in clinical uses including antiparkinsonism and antidepressant activities (Birkmayer et al., 1983; Murphy et al., 1983). The initial use of selegiline in Parkinson's patients is aimed at increasing brain dopamine levels through the inhibition of MAO-mediated oxidative deamination of dopamine during the treatment of patients with levodopa. Clinical observations infer that selegiline might have additional neuroprotective properties reflected by slowing the progression in clinical deterioration (Heinonen and Lammintausta, 1991; LeWitt, 1991). Subsequent clinical trials of selegiline in the DATATOP Parkinson study and in Alzheimer's dementia indicate that this elusive neuroprotective effect of selegiline is observed only in early clinical phases (Tariot et al., 1987; Shoulson et al., 2002). Selegiline is known to delay the time until enough disability developed to warrant the initiation of levodopa therapy in early Parkinson's patients. It has been suggested that this beneficial effect of selegiline is largely sustained during the overall 8.2 years of the DATATOP clinical trial (Shoulson, et al., 2002). Moreover, a short-term cognitive effect of selegiline in helping Alzheimer's dementia was also reported (Tariot et al., 1987). Furthermore, selegiline has an additional clinical indication for ameliorating depression (Murphy et al., 1983). This possible anti-depressive action of selegiline may be useful in the treatment of depressed patients suffering chronic neurodegenerative disorders including Alzheimer's dementia and Parkinson's disease.

During the past two decades, basic studies revealed that selegiline prevents the parkinsonism phenomena caused by MPTP and nigral injury evoked by MPP<sup>+</sup> in cells and animal models (Burns et al., 1983; Cohen et al., 1984; Mytilineou and Cohen, 1985; Wu et al., 1995). Similar neuroprotective effects of selegiline have been observed in animals and cells treated with other neurotoxins, such as methyl- $\beta$ -acetoxyethyl-2-chloroethylamine (AF64A), 6-hydroxydopamine, *N*-(2-chloroethyl)-*N*-ethyl-2-bromobenzylamine (DSP-4), 5,6-dihydroxyserotonin and 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA), by a mechanism that cannot be explained solely by its inhibitory effect on MAO-B (Heinonen and Lammintausta, 1991; Sprague and Nichols, 1995).

We, among other research groups, investigated further this elusive neuroprotective mechanism of selegiline. For instance, selegiline scavenges reactive oxygen species and

suppresses the generation of cytotoxic hydroxyl radicals and the peroxidation of brain lipids produced by MPP<sup>+</sup> in the rat brain *in vivo* (Wu et al., 1995). It also prevents the iron-catalyzed auto-oxidation of dopamine to melanin. Furthermore, selegiline protection of brain neurons could be augmented by its unique capacity to induce Cu/ZnSOD, MnSOD, catalase, Bcl-2, GDNF, and NGF (Carrillo et al., 1991; Vizuete et al., 1993; Kitani et al., 1994; Semkova et al., 1996; Tatton et al., 1996; Revuelta et al., 1997; Kunikowska et al., 2002). Selegiline may also bind to glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase, which is known to be associated with apoptotic cell death (Tatton et al., 2003). However, molecular mechanisms underlying the gene induction caused by selegiline are not fully understood.

Recently, we reported that the redox protein thioredoxin (Trx) mediates the induction of MnSOD and Bcl-2 during preconditioning-induced hormesis (Andoh et al., 2003) thus antagonizing MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced cyto- and neuro-toxicity (Andoh et al., 2002b; Bai et al., 2002). Trx contains two redox-active cysteine residues that can be oxidized to form intra-molecular disulfide bonds. Reduction of the oxidized Trx is catalyzed by Trx reductase with NADPH as electron donor. The thiol oxidoreductase activity of Trx, when coupled with either methionine sulfoxide reductase or Trx peroxidases, functions as a potent antioxidant via removing H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> (Kang et al., 1998; Moskovitz et al., 1999). In addition, the reduced form of Trx is known to inhibit the apoptosis signaling-regulating kinase 1 (Saitoh et al., 1998) and to enhance DNA binding to transcription factors, such as NF- $\kappa$ B and AP-1; the later is achieved in conjunction with the redox protein Ref-1 by reducing a specific cysteine residue in the DNA binding domain of Jun and Fos dimmers (Abate et al., 1990). Thus, Trx may act as an effective neuroprotector by suppressing hydroxyl radical generation, lipid peroxidation, caspase activation, cytochrome c release, and thus apoptosis (Andoh et al., 2002a; 2003). In this study, human neuroblastoma SH-SY5Y cells were employed to investigate the mechanism by which selegiline exerts its neuroprotective effect, other than its capacity to inhibit MAO-B.

## Materials and Methods

**Materials.** The human neuroblastoma SH-SY5Y cells were kindly provided by Dr. Carol Thiele (NCI, NIH). Dulbecco's modified Eagle medium, penicillin/streptomycin and heat inactivated bovine serum were purchased from GIBCO (Grand Island, NY). Hoechst 33258 (bisbenzimidazole), 1-chloro-2,4-dinitrobenzene (DNCB), H-89 and bisindolylmaleimide were ordered from Sigma Chemical Company (St. Louis, MO). Oxidized *Escherichia coli* Trx and human catalase antibody were purchased from Calbiochem (San Diego, CA). Sense, antisense, and antisense mutant for human Trx mRNA (nucleotide sequences: antisense, 5'-TCTGCTTCACCATCTTGGCTGCT-3'; sense, 5'-AGCAGCCAAGATGGTGAAGCAGA-3'; mutant antisense, 5'-TCGTTCTCACCATCTTGGTCCGT-3') and mouse Trx mRNA (nucleotide sequences: antisense, 5'-TCAGCTTCACCATTTTGGCTGTT-3'; sense, 5'-AACAGCCAAAATGGTGAAGCTGA-3'; mutant antisense, 5'-TCCATGTCACCATTTTGGTGTCT-3') were synthesized as S-oligo by GIBCO and by Hokkaido Biosci. (Hokkaido, Japan), respectively. Human Trx and mouse Trx antibody were obtained from MBL Intl. (Watertown, MA) and Redox Bioscience (Kyoto, Japan), respectively. Antibodies against phosphorylated and nonphosphorylated c-Jun, MEK1/2, MAPK/Erk1/2, and c-Myc were obtained from Cell Signaling Technology Inc. (Beverly, MA) and BD PharMingen (San Diego, CA). A horseradish peroxidase-linked antibody against IgG was obtained from Amersham Pharmacia Biotech (Piscataway, NJ).

**Cell culture.** Human neuroblastoma SH-SY5Y cells ( $\sim 10^6$  cells) were plated and cultured in 1 ml Dulbecco's modified Eagle's medium containing 10% fetal bovine serum. These neurotrophic cells were incubated in 5% CO<sub>2</sub> at 37° C for 2-3 days before use. The mouse (C57BL/6J, Japan SLC., Shizuoka, Japan) dopaminergic neuron in primary culture prepared according to Gille et al., (2002). Ten days after the primary culture, we used these cells for experiments. MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced oxidative stress such as lipid peroxidation was assayed fluorometrically. Moreover, oxidative stress-mediated apoptotic cell death was assessed using Hoechst 33258 fluorescent dye after exposing these neurotrophic cells to MPP<sup>+</sup> (1 mM) for 24 h ( $n=6$ ). In some experiments these human neuroblasts were transfected with S-oligo probes against human Trx mRNA for 48 h prior to the experiments. Following administration cells with selegiline and MPP<sup>+</sup> Western blotting was used to

detect the induction of Trx, phospo-activation of transcription factors and MAPK caused by selegiline ( $n=3-6$ ).

**Staining of nuclear DNA in apoptotic cells with Hoechst 33258.** At the end of 24-h MPP<sup>+</sup> treatment, cells were harvested and fixed with 4% paraformaldehyde in ice-cold phosphate buffered saline for 30 min. After rinsing with saline, nuclear DNAs were stained with 1  $\mu$ M Hoechst 33258 fluorescent dye for 5 min at room temperature and observed with a fluorescent microscope (excitation/emission wavelength = 365/420 nm). Apoptotic cells were identified on the basis of the presence of highly condensed and/or fragmented nuclei.

**Lipid peroxidation assay.** Cells were harvested 24 h after MPP<sup>+</sup> application (1 mM) in the presence or absence of Trx (1  $\mu$ M). These collected cells were washed twice with ice-cold phosphate-buffered saline. After sonicating in 200  $\mu$ l of saline, the protein concentration was determined using a protein assay kit (Bio-Rad). Fluorescent products of lipid peroxidation were extracted from homogenates using solvent extraction procedure. The fluorescent conjugated products of malondialdehyde and amino acids (excitation/emission wave lengths = 356/426 nm) were measured using a Luminescent Spectrometer (PerkinElmer Life Sciences) (Andoh et al., 2002b). Results presented as relative fluorescent intensity. Experimental data were defined as relative fluorescent units per mg protein.

**Transfection of cells with antisense, antisense mutant, and sense phosphorothionate oligonucleotides.** *S*-oligo probes of sense, antisense, and antisense mutant designed by Saitoh and co-workers for hybridizing human Trx mRNA were used (Saitoh et al., 1998). For transfection, 2  $\mu$ M of each *S*-oligo were mixed with 2  $\mu$ l of transfection reagent TM-50 (Promega, Madison, WI) in medium (800  $\mu$ l) with 10% fetal bovine serum for 15 min at room temperature, and then the mixture was added to cells and incubated for 24 h. On the second day, cells were incubated with new freshly prepared medium containing *S*-oligo and transfection reagent and incubated for additional 24-h. After the second incubation, the culture medium was changed again with freshly prepared medium containing *S*-oligo and transfection reagent before the routine MPP<sup>+</sup> experiments with or without selegiline pretreatment.

**Western blotting of pro-survival proteins.** Cells were homogenized in cell lysis buffer that contained 20 mM Hepes-KOH pH 7.5, 10 mM KCl, 1.5 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 1 mM EDTA, 1 mM EGTA, 1mM dithiothreitol, and 1 mM phenylmethylsulfonyl fluoride. The protein concentration was quantified using a Bio-Rad protein assay kit. Cell protein (20 µg) was separated by electrophoresis using a 4-20% gradient SDS-polyacrylamide gel and then transferred to a polyvinylidene difluoride membrane (Millipore, Bedford, MA). The membrane was blotted with a 5% skim milk solution for 1 h at room temperature. It was then incubated overnight at 4°C with a 1/2000 dilution of designated antibody ( $n>3$ ). Subsequently, blots were incubated with a horseradish peroxidase-linked antibody against mouse or rabbit IgG (1:2000) for 1 h at room temperature. Membrane-bound horseradish peroxidase-labeled protein bands were monitored with chemiluminescent reagents (Amersham Biosciences). Chemiluminescent signals were detected using x-ray film. The autoradiographic images of protein bands were analyzed and semi-quantified using NIH Image software provided by Dr. Wayne Rasband (NIMH, NIH).

**Data processing.** Data are presented as mean  $\pm$  S.E. of the results obtained from the average of at least 3 independent experiments. Results were analyzed by one-way analysis of variance, and  $P$  values were determined using the Student-Newman-Keuls post-hoc test. Differences among means were considered statistically significant when the  $P$  value was less than 0.05.



## Results

**Effects of selegiline on MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced apoptotic cell death.** When human SH-SY5Y cells were incubated in culture medium for 24 h as controls, less than 5% of total cells underwent apoptosis as indicated by chromatin condensation and nuclear fragmentation, revealed by the Hoechst 33258 dye-staining method. We first confirmed that when these neurotrophic cells were treated with MPP<sup>+</sup> (1 mM) for 24 h, the population of apoptotic cells increased from  $2.5 \pm 0.7$  % to  $71.0 \pm 3.6$  % (**Table 1**) due to elevated reactive oxygen species, lipid peroxidation, and oxidative stress (Andoh et al., 2003). The application of selegiline (0.03-1  $\mu$ M) protected these human neuroblastoma cells from apoptotic cell death induced by MPP<sup>+</sup> in a concentration-dependent manner (**Fig 1**, IC<sub>50</sub>~250 nM). We further investigated molecular mechanisms underlying this unique neuroprotective property of selegiline which may not be produced by its selective inhibitory action on MAO-B.

**The role of Trx mRNA induction in selegiline protection against MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced cytotoxicity in SH-SY5Y cells.** Interestingly, selegiline (1  $\mu$ M) elevated intracellular levels of the redox protein Trx. The time course of Trx expression induced by selegiline is depicted in **Fig 2**. It shows that increased levels of Trx peaked at 8 h following the incubation of cells with 1  $\mu$ M selegiline. To investigate whether the endogenous Trx synthesis induced by selegiline is involved in the protection against MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced neurotoxicity, we transfected the SH-SY5Y cells with human Trx mRNA *S*-oligonucleotides including sense, antisense, and antisense mutant. Selegiline-induced expression of endogenous Trx was blocked if the SH-SY5Y cells were first transfected with antisense Trx mRNA but not with *S*-oligos of sense and antisense mutant (**Fig 3**). In this particular study both the survival experiment and the antisense experiment were performed in the same cell groups. The increase in the endogenous Trx levels seems to correlate with the extent of cellular protection from MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced apoptosis. Furthermore, the observed protective effect of selegiline was prevented by incubating with a specific inhibitor of Trx reductase, 1-chloro-2,4-dinitrobenzene (DNCB, 10  $\mu$ M) (**Table 1**). DNCB, at 10  $\mu$ M or less, does not induce apoptosis in SH-SY5Y cells. These results indicate that the endogenous protective species induced by selegiline is likely Trx, which is known to play

an important role in inhibiting apoptosis induced by MPP<sup>+</sup> (Andoh et al., 2002b; Bai et al., 2002).

**Effects of selegiline on expression of c-Jun, phosphorylation of MAPK/Erk1/2, and phospho-activation of c-Myc.** In this study, we investigated whether any of these MAPK cascades and related transcription factors was involved in the selegiline-induced gene expression of Trx. Selegiline (1  $\mu$ M) elevated levels of c-Jun that peaked at about 2 h, without altering levels of phosphorylated c-Jun (**Fig 4A**). These findings suggest that selegiline may induce the transcription factor AP-1. However, selegiline did not alter protein levels of MEK1/2 and MAPK/Erk1/2. Unexpectedly, without altering phosphorylation of MEK1/2, selegiline increased levels of the phosphorylated MAPK/Erk1/2, which were detected within 30 min and peaked between 2 and 4 h (**Fig 4A**). Moreover, selegiline had no effect on the expression of the transcription factor c-Myc while it increased the phospho-activation of c-Myc that peaked at 4 h following the administration of selegiline (1  $\mu$ M) (**Fig 4A**). These findings are in accord with a prior proposal that the elevation of Trx biosynthesis in response to preconditioning stress is mediated by enhanced biosynthesis of c-Jun and phosphor-activation of MAPK/Erk1/2 and c-Myc (Andoh et al., 2003).

**Role of protein kinase A and C in phospho-activation of MAPK/Erk1/2 and the expression of Trx induced by selegiline.** It is known that phosphorylated MEK elicits the activation or phosphorylation of Erk1/2 members of MAPK. However, the levels of MEK and phosphorylated MEK did not change following the application of selegiline (1  $\mu$ M) in the human SH-SY5Y cells (**Fig 4A**). In our attempt to identify which protein kinase (i.e. PKA and PKC) is responsible for the phosphorylation of MAPK/Erk1/2, we investigated the effects of specific protein kinase inhibitors, H-89 (K<sub>i</sub> for PKA=48 nM; K<sub>i</sub> for PKC=32  $\mu$ M) and bisindolylmaleimide (BIM) (K<sub>i</sub> for PKC=10 nM; K<sub>i</sub> for PKA=2  $\mu$ M) that are highly selective inhibitors of protein kinase A and C, respectively. Pre-incubation of SH-SY5Y cells with H-89 (4  $\mu$ M) but not BIM (1  $\mu$ M) inhibited selegiline-induced MAPK/Erk1/2 phosphorylation by approximately 60% (**Fig 4B**). In contrast, BIM--a protein kinase C inhibitor--failed to alter the basal protein levels of the phosphorylated MAPK/Erk1/2. Together, these results indicate that selegiline activates a PKA-dependent

pathway which leads to phospho-activation of MAKP/Erk1/2. Moreover, protein kinase A inhibitor, but not protein kinase C inhibitor, inhibited the expression of Trx induced by selegiline (**Fig. 4C**).

**Trx prevents MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced lipid peroxidation and cell death.** A recent *in vivo* study indicated that induction of Trx and related pro-survival proteins (SOD, catalase, and GSH peroxidase) protect midbrain nigral neurons from MPTP-induced neurotoxicity (Kojima et al., 1999). Our previous *in vivo* data also indicate that selegiline protects A9 dopaminergic nigral neurons from oxidative injury caused by the toxic metabolite of MPTP, MPP<sup>+</sup> (Wu et al., 1995). It has been shown to increase levels of reactive oxygen species such as reactive hydroxyl radicals, which can react with polyunsaturated fatty acids to generate peroxy lipid radicals and the related toxic species, malondialdehyde and 4-hydroxy-2, 3-nonenal (Chiueh et al., 1994; Rauhala et al., 1998). Malondialdehyde reacts with amino acids to form a fluorescent complex that is a reliable marker for lipid peroxidation. The application of MPP<sup>+</sup> (1 mM) causes a 2.7-fold increase in malondialdehyde adducts over controls; exogenously administered Trx (1  $\mu$ M) significantly suppressed the formation of malondialdehyde (**Fig 5A**) and apoptosis (**Fig 5B**) caused by MPP<sup>+</sup> ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Selegiline induces Trx expression that prevents MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced cell death in primary cultures of mouse dopaminergic neurons.** In the above study, human neuroblastoma SH-SY5Y cells were used. The expected neuroprotective effect of selegiline was also confirmed in mouse midbrain dopaminergic primary neuronal cultures (Fig. 6). Selegiline (1  $\mu$ M) induced the expression of Trx; this endogenous Trx expression was inhibited accordingly by pretreatment of antisense, but not sense and antisense mutant, *S*-oligonucleotides against mouse Trx mRNA. Furthermore, increases in endogenous Trx levels seem to correlate with the extent of cellular protection from MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced apoptosis in primary neuronal cultures of mouse midbrain dopaminergic neurons. These findings are in accord with prior reports that selegiline protects nigrostriatal dopaminergic neurons from oxidative injury caused by MPP<sup>+</sup> in both *in vitro* preparations (Mytilineous and Cohen, 1985; Vizuite et al., 1993) and *in vivo* (Wu et al., 1995).

## Discussion

Mytilineou and Cohen (1985) proposed a direct neuroprotective action of selegiline against MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced neurotoxicity in midbrain dopamine cell cultures. However, this proposal was supplanted by a more prominent hypothesis that selegiline protects against MPTP-induced nigral degeneration simply through its known inhibitory action on MAO-B, which participates in converting MPTP to its toxic metabolite MPP<sup>+</sup> (Cohen et al., 1984; Heikkila et al., 1991; Chiueh, 1988). A decade later, this direct neuroprotection hypothesis of selegiline was substantiated by *in vivo* studies that selegiline indeed prevent MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced neurotoxicity (Wu et al., 1995; Vizuete et al., 1993). However, some of the *in vivo* results suggest that selegiline protects and rescues A9 nigral neurons against oxidative stress and degeneration caused by MPP<sup>+</sup> via mechanisms independent of its capacity to inhibit MAO-B enzymatic activity. Prior studies also indicated that selegiline may induce antioxidative and neurotrophic genes for enhancing neuronal survival *in vivo* (Carrillo et al., 1991; Vizuete et al., 1993; Kitani et al., 1994; Semkova et al., 1996; Tatton et al., 1996; Revuelta et al., 1997; Kunikowska et al., 2002). Nevertheless, it should be noted that selegiline rescues only moderately affected midbrain dopamine neurons *in vivo* (Wu et al., 1995). Clinical efficacy of selegiline may be hampered by the fact that it may be too late for any drug to rescue severely damaged brain neurons.

The present *in vitro* results obtained from both neuroblasts and primary neuronal cultures imply that Trx may play a pivotal role in the induction of antioxidative and antiapoptotic proteins in the mitochondria by selegiline for promoting cell vitality and survival. PKA rather than PKC may be involved in the phospho-activation of MAPK and c-Myc for the induction of Trx by selegiline at or below micromolar concentrations. Experimental data obtained from the use of human Trx antisense S-oligonucleotides and Trx reductase inhibitor indicate that selegiline-induced cytoprotection against MPP<sup>+</sup> is probably mediated by elevated expression of Trx genes and proteins. A similar conclusion is drawn by recent studies of the induction of Trx gene (Kojima et al., 1999; Andoh et al., 2002). These new findings support a notion that MAO-B inhibition plays no role in the mechanism underlying selegiline-induced neuroprotective and/or neurorescue properties (Mytilineou and Cohen, 1985; Vizuete et al., 1993; Wu et al., 1995; Tatton et al., 1996). This new selegiline hypothesis of a Trx-mediated neuroprotective mechanism may explain

why in addition to its inhibition of neurotoxicity produced by MPTP, selegiline also protects against brain injury caused by 6-hydroxydopamine, DSP-4, AF64A, 5,6-dihydroxyserotonin, MDMA and MPP<sup>+</sup> (Mytilineou and Cohen, 1985; Vizuete et al., 1993; Wu et al., 1995; Tatton et al., 1996; Ebadi et al., 2002).

Earlier studies indicate that selegiline may induce several cytoprotective genes such as NGF and GDNF from non-neuronal cells such as astroglia cells; GDNF is known to protect nigral neurons against MPTP-induced neurotoxicity (Kordower et al., 2000). The present results indicate that selegiline's neuroprotective action may be, at least in part, acting through the induction of Trx and MnSOD, but not Cu/ZnSOD and catalase, in SH-SY5Y neuroblastoma cells that can differentiate into dopaminergic, serotonergic and cholinergic neurons following the incubation with phorbol ester. Our results also provide critical evidence demonstrating that selegiline induced a redox protein Trx, which has recently been shown to mediate preconditioning-induced hormesis (Andoh et al., 2003). Moreover, this notion is also supported by the fact that Trx-dependent neuroprotective effects of selegiline against MPP<sup>+</sup> were reduced by approximately 80% following the transfection of cells with Trx antisense but not sense and antisense mutant S-oligonucleotides.

In preconditioned cells, Trx mediates the induction of Bcl-2 and MnSOD leading to a compensatory increase in cellular defense against oxidative stress caused by either serum withdrawal or MPP<sup>+</sup> (Andoh et al., 2002). It is also known that selegiline induces the biosynthesis of Bcl-2 (Tatton et al., 1996) and MnSOD (Kunikowska et al., 2002). Our results further suggest that selegiline rapidly induces elevation of Trx, subsequently followed by the increases in both Bcl-2 and MnSOD levels (Andoh et al., 2002b). Over-expression of Bcl-2 increases resistance against MPTP (Yang et al., 1998). The induction of Bcl-2 by Trx leads to the suppression of the release of mitochondrial cytochrome c and the protection of SH-SY5Y cells from MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced apoptosis (Andoh et al., 2002, 2003). Moreover, increased expression of MnSOD is known to enhance neuronal resistance to oxidative brain injury produced by MPTP/MPP<sup>+</sup> in both in vitro and in vivo preparations (Andrews et al., 1996; Andoh et al., 2002b). Increased expression of mitochondrial MnSOD leads to removal of reactive superoxide radical anions, minimizing the generation of cytotoxic peroxynitrite and terminating lipid peroxidation-induced chain reactions. In fact, the induction of Trx among other antioxidative proteins increases the

resistance of brain dopamine neurons against oxidative insults caused by MPTP in mice (Kojima et al., 1999). These findings suggest that Trx-mediated expression of both MnSOD and Bcl-2 by selegiline plays a pivotal role in protecting mitochondria and nuclei against lipid peroxidation and DNA damage/apoptosis caused by MPTP/MPP<sup>+</sup> and perhaps other neurotoxins as well. A possible molecular mechanism underlying the induction of the Trx gene and proteins by selegiline is summarized in **Fig 7**. The phospho-activation of the 44- and 42-kDa MAP kinases or Erk1/2 may contribute to selegiline-induced neuroprotection against MPP<sup>+</sup>-evoked neurotoxicity because it has been suggested that Erk1/2 phosphorylation can activate a dual survival mechanism. In fact, selegiline increased the expression of c-Jun within 30 min that peaked at 2 h and thus could lead to increased levels of the redox sensitive transcription factor AP-1. Interestingly, levels of phosphorylated MAPK/Erk1/2 were induced by selegiline, appearing within 30 min and lasting for more than 4 h following treatment. The inhibition of PKA but not PKC blocked approximately 60% of the phosphorylation of MAPK/Erk1/2 induced by selegiline; these results suggest that activation of MAPK/Erk1/2 by selegiline may involve the PKA-mediated signaling pathway, whereas the preconditioning-induced hormetic pathway is mediated by PKG-mediated pathway (Andoh et al., 2003). Selegiline-activated MAPK/Erk1/2 can then be translocated into the nucleus to regulate transcription factors such as c-Myc (Davis, 1995). Activation of either c-Myc or c-Jun has been proposed to modulate stress-induced gene induction. The PKG-mediated phospho-activation of c-Myc by phosphorylated Erk1/2 is known to induce the Trx gene in preconditioned SH-SY5Y cells (Andoh et al., 2003). As discussed above, selegiline-induced MAPK cascades appear to involve the PKA pathway; however, the mechanistic nature of this selegiline-induced gene induction remains to be elucidated. In perspective, selegiline may become a lead drug that can open a new research field of chemical preconditioning to mimic non-lethal oxidative stress-induced adaptation for awaking genes and their proteins in modulating cellular functioning (Chiueh and Andoh, 2002). In addition to human neuroblastoma cells, selegiline also protected the MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced cell death in primary neuronal cultures of mouse dopaminergic neuron through the expression of Trx (Fig. 6); our new finding supports a early notion that selegiline rescues midbrain dopamine neurons in mice via a MAO-independent mechanism (Wu et al., 1995). Therefore, the modification of selegiline

structure by retaining its capacity of induction of survival genes/proteins may lead to new pharmaceutical lead compounds targeting neuroprotective therapeutics. The development of new drugs which induce multiple pro-survival genes and proteins for enhancing cellular defense against progressive neurodegenerative brain disorders may be a key contribution to the rescue and repair of brain neurons following prolonged oxidative injury.

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## Footnotes

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## Figure legends

**Fig 1. Effect of selegiline on MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced apoptosis in SH-SY5Y cells.** Human SH-SY5Y cells were plated and cultured for 2 days before MPP<sup>+</sup> treatment (1 mM for 24 h)--the toxic MAO-B metabolite of MPTP. Several of the MPP<sup>+</sup>-treated groups were pretreated with selegiline (0 to 1  $\mu$ M, n = 6) 5 min prior to MPP<sup>+</sup> addition. The incubation was carried out at 37° C. The apoptotic cell nuclei were stained with fluorescent DNA dye (Hoechst 33256) and quantified as described in experimental procedures. The dashed line depicts the level of apoptotic cells in the non-treated serum control groups.  $P < 0.05$  significantly decreased following treatments with 0.1 to 1  $\mu$ M selegiline. EC<sub>50</sub> of selegiline is estimated approximately 250 nM.

**Fig 2. Time course of Trx expression induced by selegiline.** SH-SY5Y cell cultures were treated with selegiline (1  $\mu$ M) for up to 24 h at 37°C. Protein in three dishes of the cell cultures were harvested at different time points for detecting Trx expression by Western blotting using anti-human Trx monoclonal antibody (n = 3 per time point). The auto-radiographic imaging data were quantified using the NIH Image software provided by Dr. Wayne Rasband (NIMH, NIH) and presented as % of the control level.

**Fig 3. Effects of sense, antisense and antisense mutant phosphorothionate oligonucleotides of human Trx on the expression of Trx and the suppression of MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced apoptosis produced by selegiline.** SH-SY5Y cells were transfected with S-oligo probes against human Trx mRNA including sense (S), antisense (Anti-S), and antisense mutant (Anti-S mutant) probes prior to the exposure of these human neurotrophic cells to MPP<sup>+</sup> neurotoxin (1 mM for 24 h). Selegiline (1  $\mu$ M for 24 h) was applied immediately before MPP<sup>+</sup> in some experimental groups to induce Trx and to inhibit MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced apoptosis. Cells were harvested and analyzed for the expression of endogenous Trx using Western blotting analysis (upper panel) and apoptosis (n = 6).

**Fig 4. Effects of selegiline on protein kinase-mediated phosphorylation of c-Jun, MAPK/Erk1/2 and c-Myc.** (A) SH-SY5Y cells were treated with Selegiline (1  $\mu$ M) for up to 24 h at 37°C; cells were harvested at different time points for determining the expression and phospho-activation of c-Jun, MEK1/2, MAPK/Erk1/2, and c-Myc by Western blotting procedures. These data represent a typical result of the experiment that was repeated three times to measure the indicated proteins and phosphorylated-c-Jun (p-c-Jun), MEK1/2, MAPK/Erk1/2, phosphorylated-MAPK/Erk1/2 (p-MAPK/Erk1/2), c-Myc, and phosphorylated-c-Myc (p-c-Myc). Because MEK1/2 was not altered by selegiline treatment, we used selective protein kinase inhibitors to determine whether the phospho-activation of MAPK/Erk 1/2 was mediated by which protein kinase. **In other experiments (B & C)** SH-SY5Y cells were pretreated with PKA inhibitor H-89 (4  $\mu$ M) and PKC- inhibitor BIM (1  $\mu$ M) 1 h prior to the administration of selegiline (1  $\mu$ M). Open column and hatched column in panel (B) show the data of p42 Erk 1 and p44 Erk 2, respectively. Panel (C) shows the results of the expression of Trx. The auto-radiographic data was quantified using NIH Image software and presented as % of the non-treated control. This experiment was repeated three times and every result showed the same tendency.

**Fig 5. Effect of exogenously administered Trx on (A) lipid peroxidation, and (B) apoptosis.** SH-SY5Y cells were incubated with the oxidized protein Trx (1  $\mu$ M), which is membrane permeable and it can be reduced intracellularly to active form by Trx reductase (see Table 1). (A) Lipid peroxidation and (B) apoptotic cell death induced by MPP<sup>+</sup> (1 mM) were also determined before and after the pre-incubation of SH-SY5Y with Trx (1  $\mu$ M) 10 min prior to MPP<sup>+</sup> application. (n = 4).

**Fig 6. Effects of sense, antisense and antisense mutant phosphorothionate oligonucleotides of mouse Trx on (A) the expression of Trx and (B) the suppression of MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced apoptosis produced by selegiline in primary cultures of mouse midbrain dopaminergic neurons** Primary neuronal cultures of mouse midbrain dopaminergic neurons were transfected with S-oligo probes against mouse Trx mRNA



including sense (S), antisense (Anti-S), and antisense mutant (Anti-S mutant) probes prior to the exposure of these human neurotrophic cells to MPP<sup>+</sup> neurotoxin (1 mM for 24 h). Selegiline (1  $\mu$ M for 24 h) was applied immediately before MPP<sup>+</sup> in some experimental groups to induce Trx and to inhibit MPP<sup>+</sup>-induced apoptosis. Cells were harvested and analyzed for the expression of endogenous Trx using Western blotting analysis (upper panel) and apoptosis (n = 6).

**Fig 7 Schematic diagram of proposed Trx-mediated cytoprotective mechanism(s) of selegiline.** (i) Inhibition of MAO-B: At relatively higher concentrations selegiline inhibits MAO-B and prevents the conversion of MPTP to the toxic metabolite, MPP<sup>+</sup>. (ii) Signal cascades and gene induction: Selegiline induces thioredoxin (Trx) transcription at or below 1  $\mu$ M concentrations via its c-Myc, AP-1, and PEA3 binding sites. (iii) Trx-mediated antioxidative and antiapoptotic mechanisms: Selegiline induces MnSOD and Bcl-2. (iv) Neuroprotection: Selegiline protects against oxidative stress and apoptosis caused by MPTP and MPP<sup>+</sup> in both in vitro and in vivo preparations.

TABLE 1

Effects of Trx reductase inhibition on selegiline-induced anti-apoptosis.

Treatments					
DNCB ( $\mu$ M)	Selegiline ( $\mu$ M)	MPP <sup>+</sup> (mM)	Apoptosis (%)		
0	0	0	2.5	$\pm$ 0.7	
0	0	1	71.0	$\pm$ 3.6	*
0	1	1	14.2	$\pm$ 3.4	**
10	1	1	71.3	$\pm$ 6.3	*
10	0	0	5.1	$\pm$ 1.0	

The redox cycle of endogenous Trx is sensitive to the inhibition of the selenium containing Trx reductase by DNCB (10  $\mu$ M), which was administered to SH-SY5Y cells 5 min prior to the 24 h incubation at 37°C in the absence or presence of both selegiline (1  $\mu$ M) and MPP<sup>+</sup> (1 mM), the toxic metabolite of a dopaminergic neurotoxin MPTP.  $n = 6$ , ANOVA  $F=95$ ,  $t$ -test \*  $P<0.05$  significantly increased over respective control group. \*\* $P<0.05$  significantly decreased from other MPP<sup>+</sup>-treated groups

Fig. 1 (MOL Manuscript #12302)

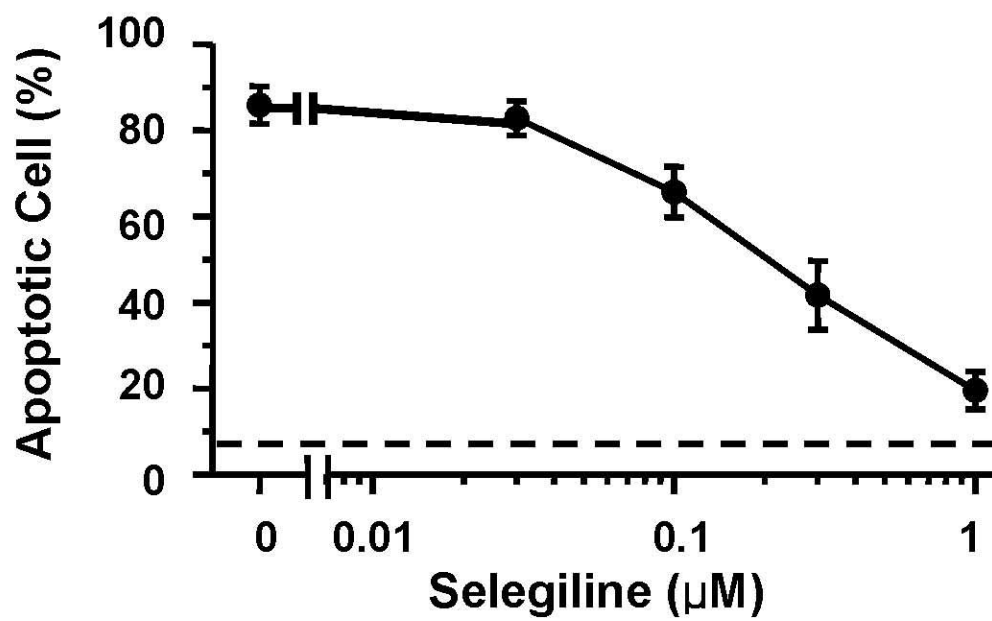


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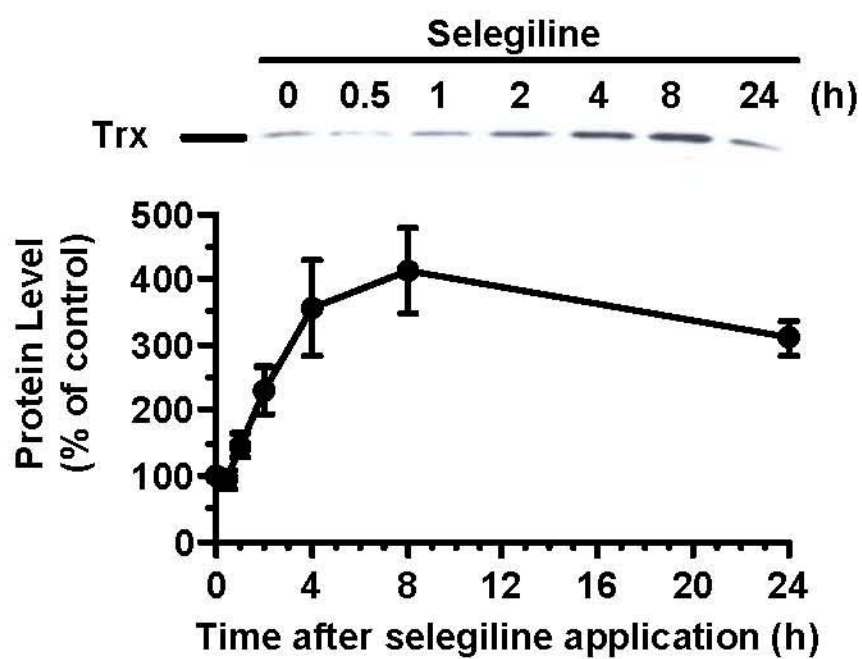
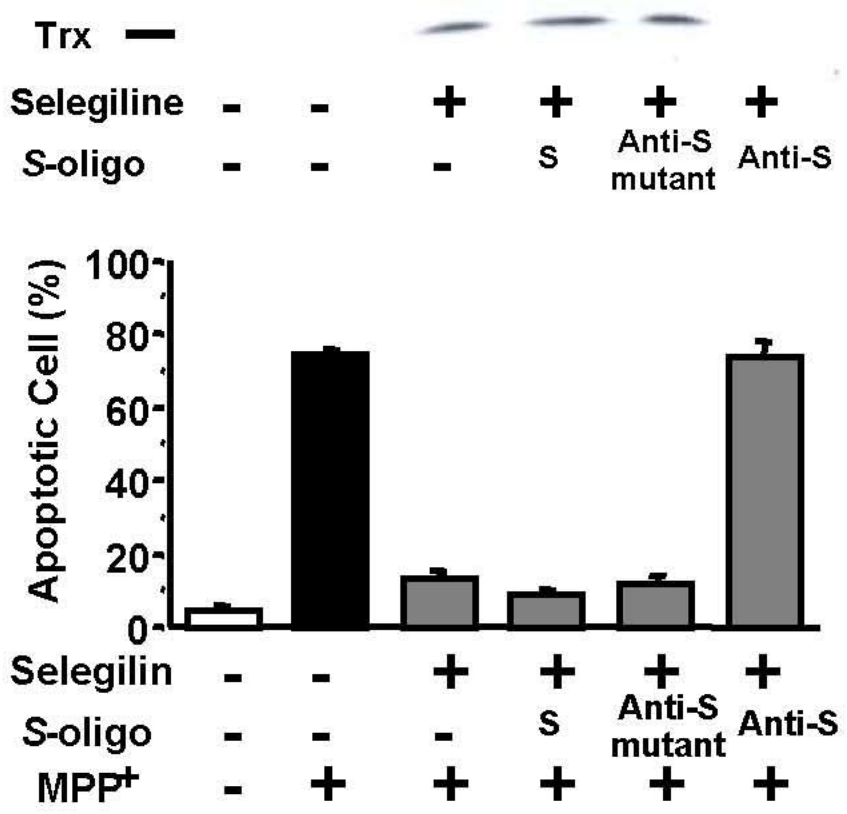
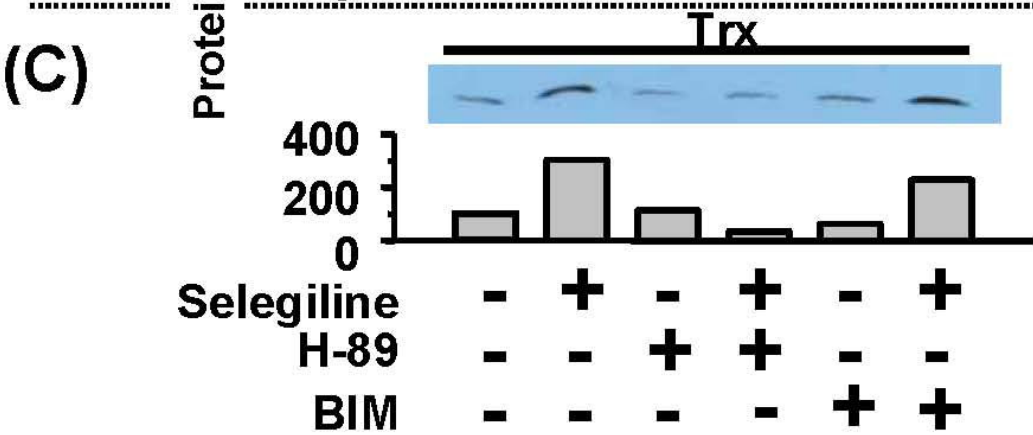
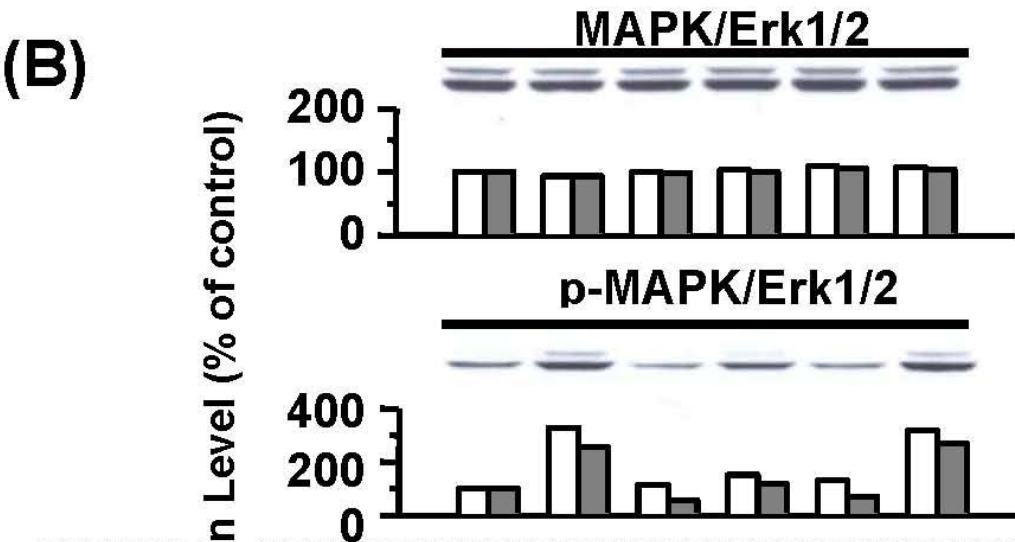
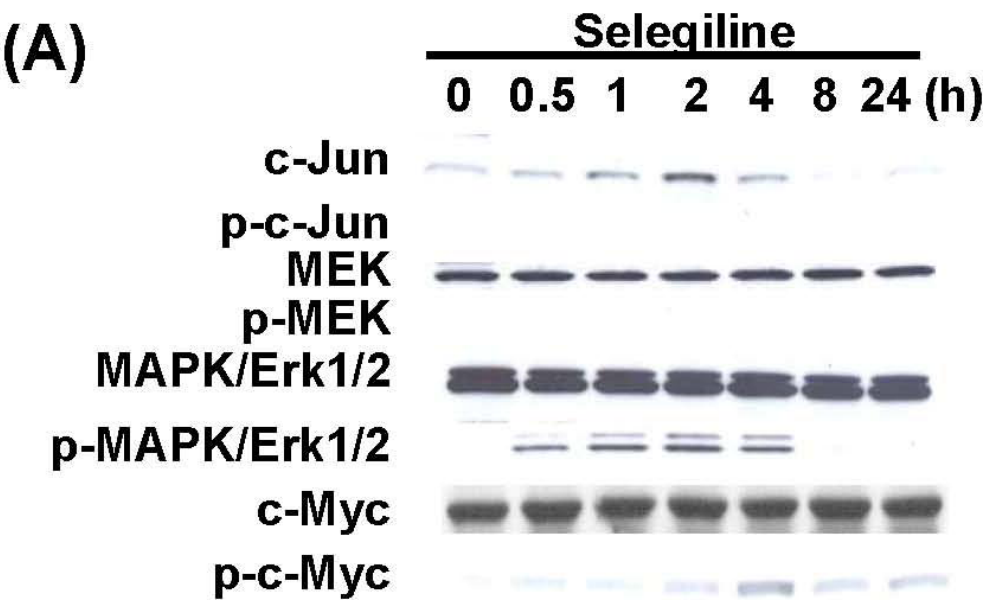


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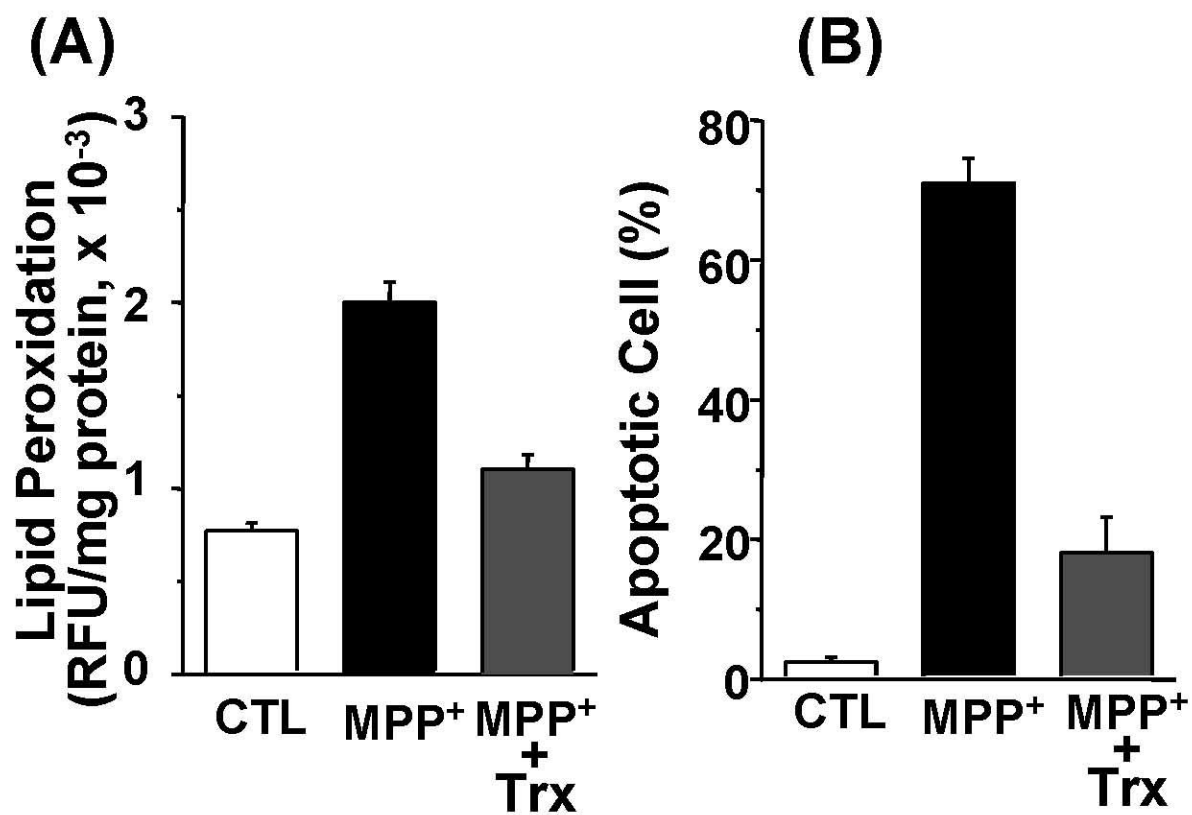


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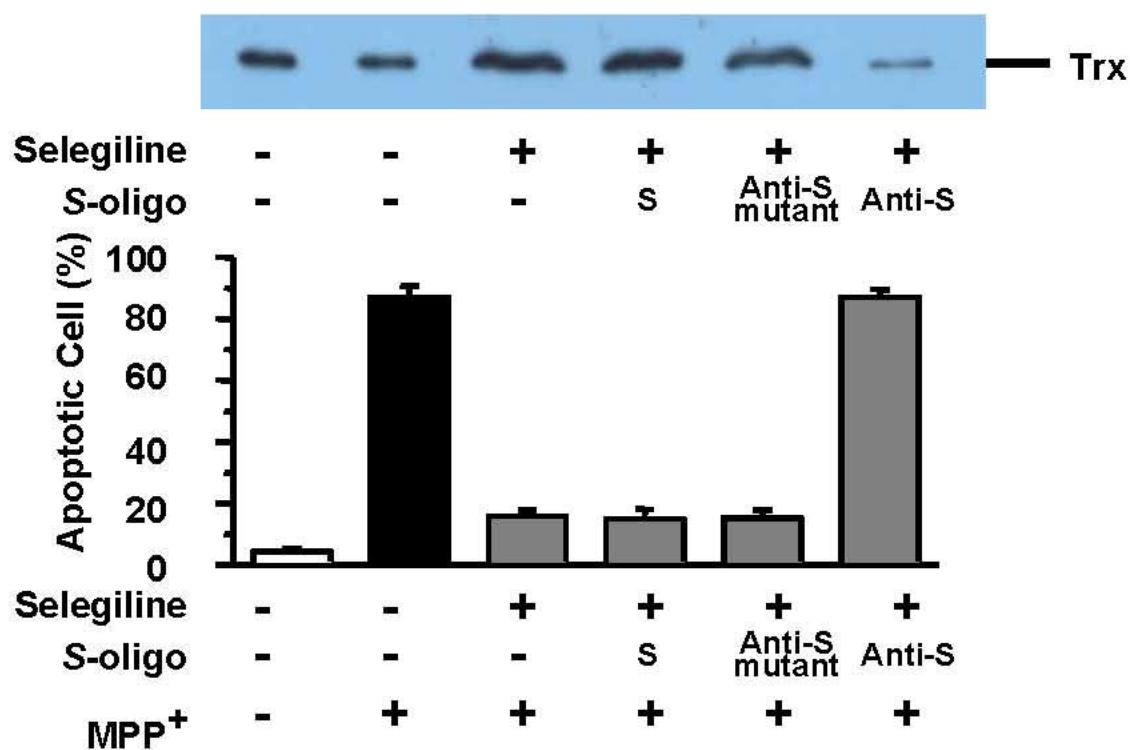




Fig. 7 (MOL Manuscript #12302)

