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The role of disulfide-bridge on the activities of H-shape gemini-like cationic

lipid based siRNA delivery

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Abstract

In our previous study, a H-shape gemini-like cationic lipid (ssGLCL, formerly named as CLD), composed of two hydrophilic lysine heads and two hydrophobic oleyl alcohol tails with a bridge of the redox-active disulfide-bond, had been synthesized and used as a nanocarrier for delivering small interfering RNAs (siRNAs) into cells. In order to further elucidate the role of disulfide (-S-S-) bridge on the activity of ssGLCL based siRNA delivery, a comparable ccGLCL bridged with a non-reducible carbon-carbon bond was synthesized and used as control in this study. Both two H-shape GLCL molecules could individually self-assemble into cationic nanoparticles in water phase and complex with negatively-charged siRNA into nanoplexes with particle size of ~ 200 nm and zeta potential of ~ +30 mV, and exhibit effective siRNA delivery both in vitro and in vivo. Investigation of internalization pathway displayed that both ssGLCL/siRNA and ccGLCL/siRNA nanoplexes were predominantly internalized into MCF-7 cells by the clathrin-mediated endocytosis pattern. Although a lower cellular uptake of siRNA was found in the human breast cancer MCF-7 cells, the ssGLCL/siRNA nanoplexes could exhibit similar or even stronger down-regulation effects on the targeted EGFR mRNA and protein in MCF-7 cells when compared to the ccGLCL/siRNA nanoplexes. Furthermore, mechanistic study showed that the enhanced down-regulation effects of ssGLCL/siRNA nanoplexes on targeted mRNA and protein were probably attributed to the increased release of siRNA from lysosomes to cytoplasm following the cleavage of redox-active disulfide-bridge in ssGLCL. Therefore, we believed that the redox-active H-shape ssGLCL could be a potential nanocarrier towards improving siRNA delivery.

Keywords: siRNA delivery, gemini-like lipid, disulfide bond, biodegradation, nanocarrier.

1. Introduction.

Nowadays small interference RNA (siRNA) is regarded as a significant potential therapeutic agent for diverse diseases, especially tumors [1-4]. However, its inherent defects

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