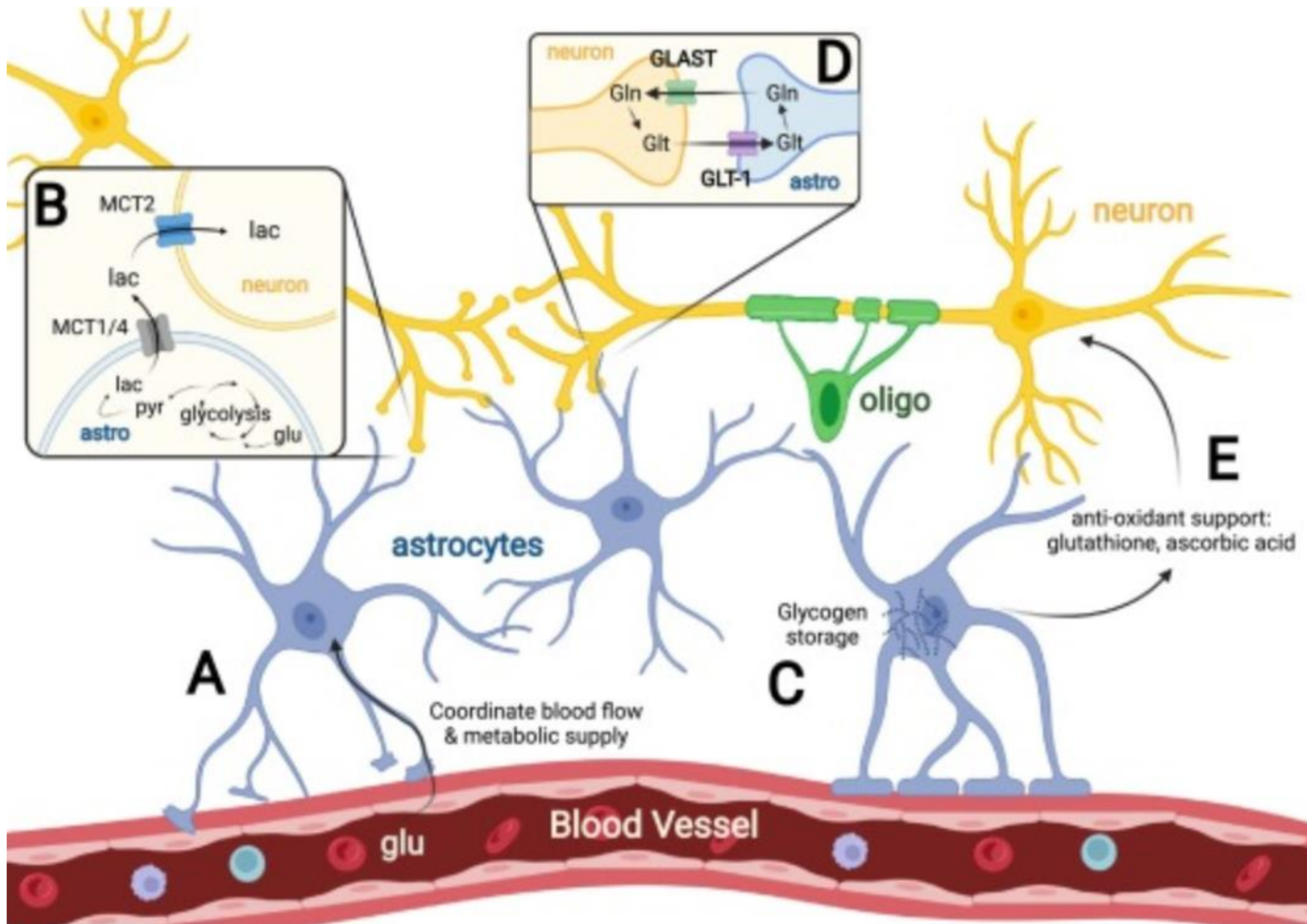




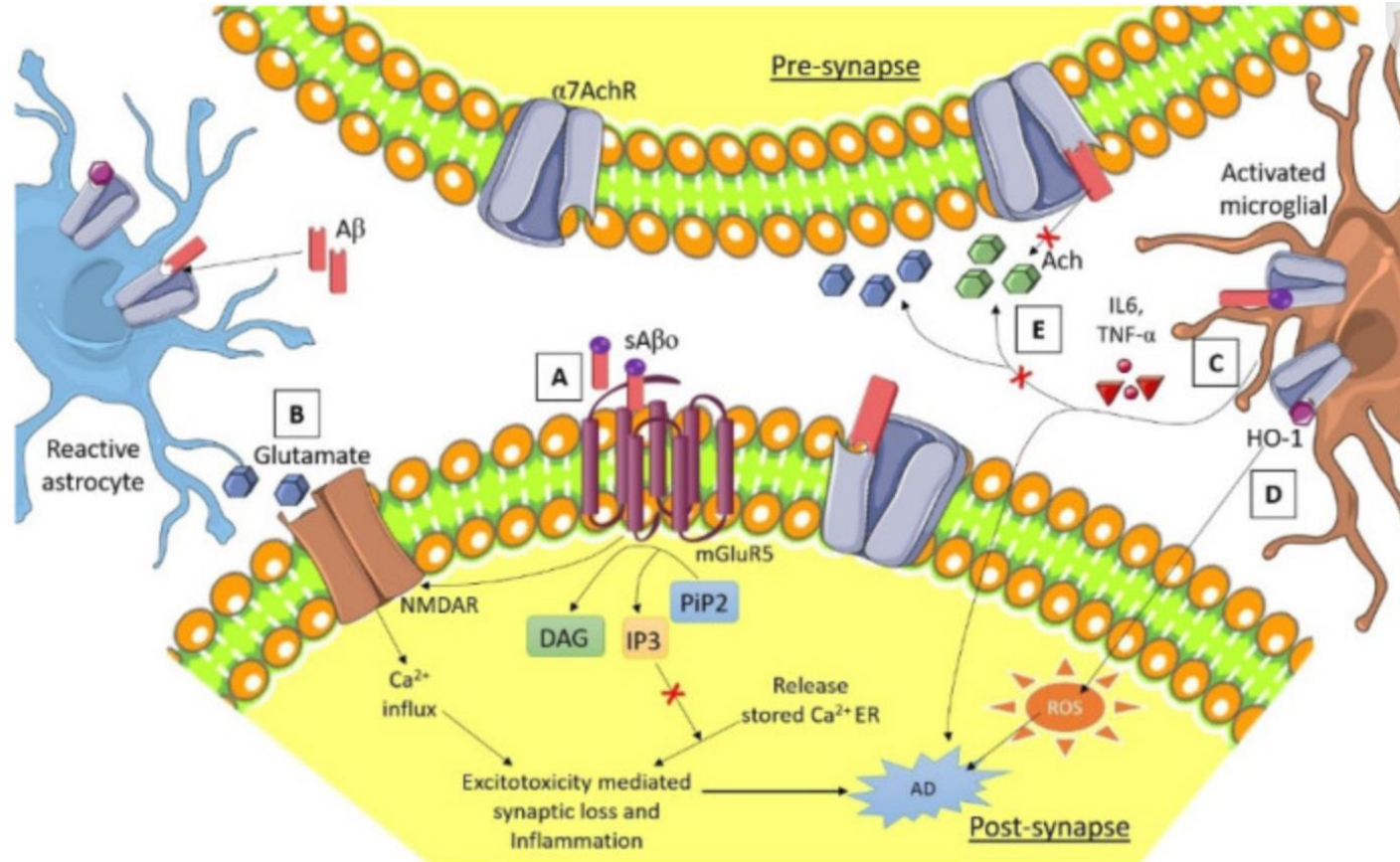
# **Cross-talk fra neuroni e cellule della mielina: neurotrasmissione o gliotrasmissione ?**

*Valerio MAGNAGHI, PhD  
Dept. of Pharmacological and Biomolecular Sciences «R. Paoletti»  
University of Milan, Italy*



Neurobiology of Disease 2022  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nbd.2022.105766>

# neuron-astrocyte cross-talk and calcium homeostasis .....*pathological implications*

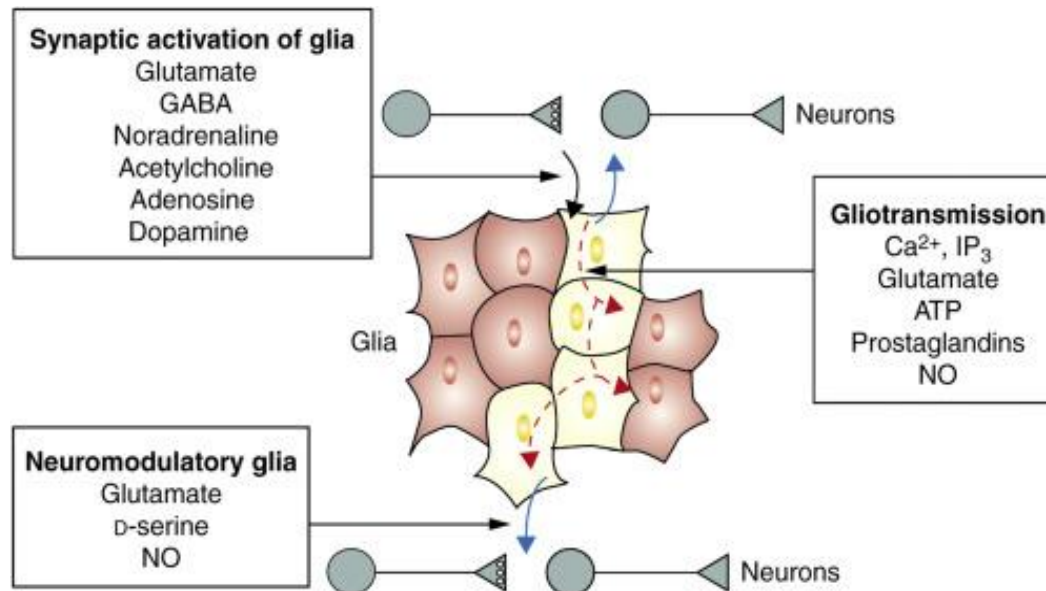


Chavda et al. Brain Sci. 2022 Jan; 12(1): 75

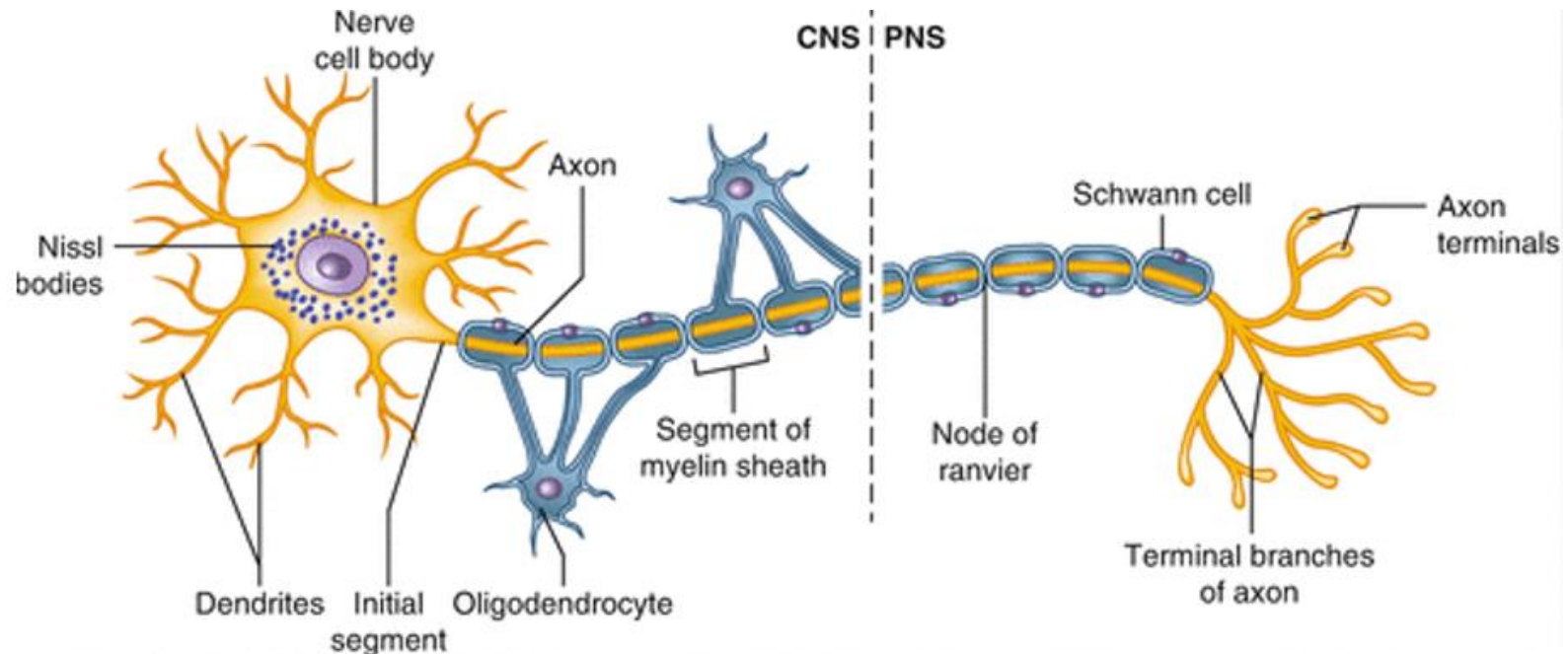
## Roles for gliotransmission in the nervous system

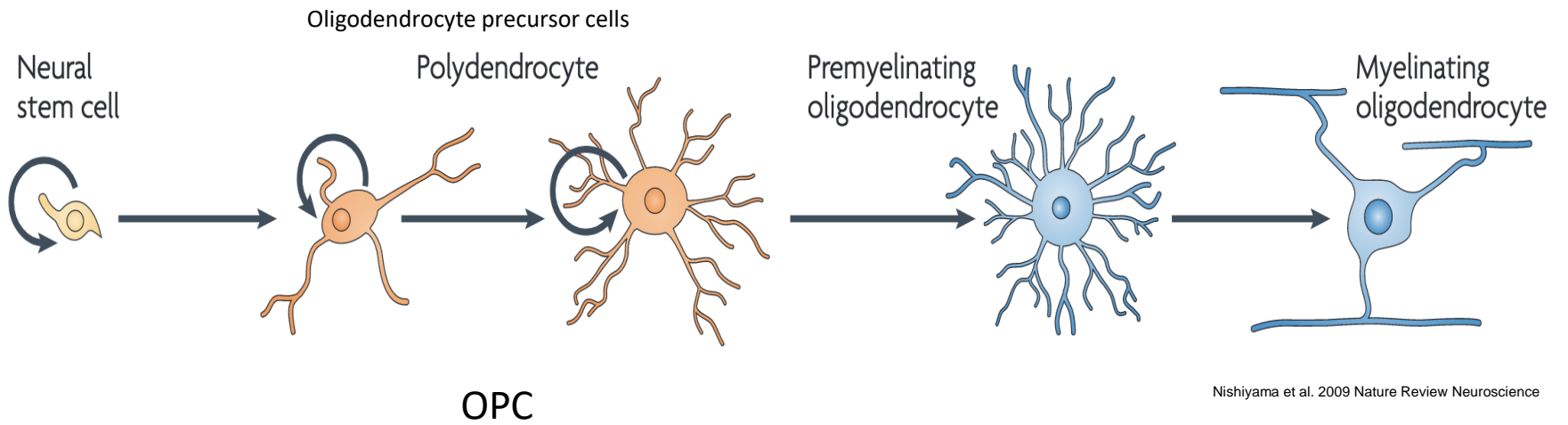
Q. Zhang and P. G. Haydon

Department of Neuroscience, School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania,  
Philadelphia, PA, USA



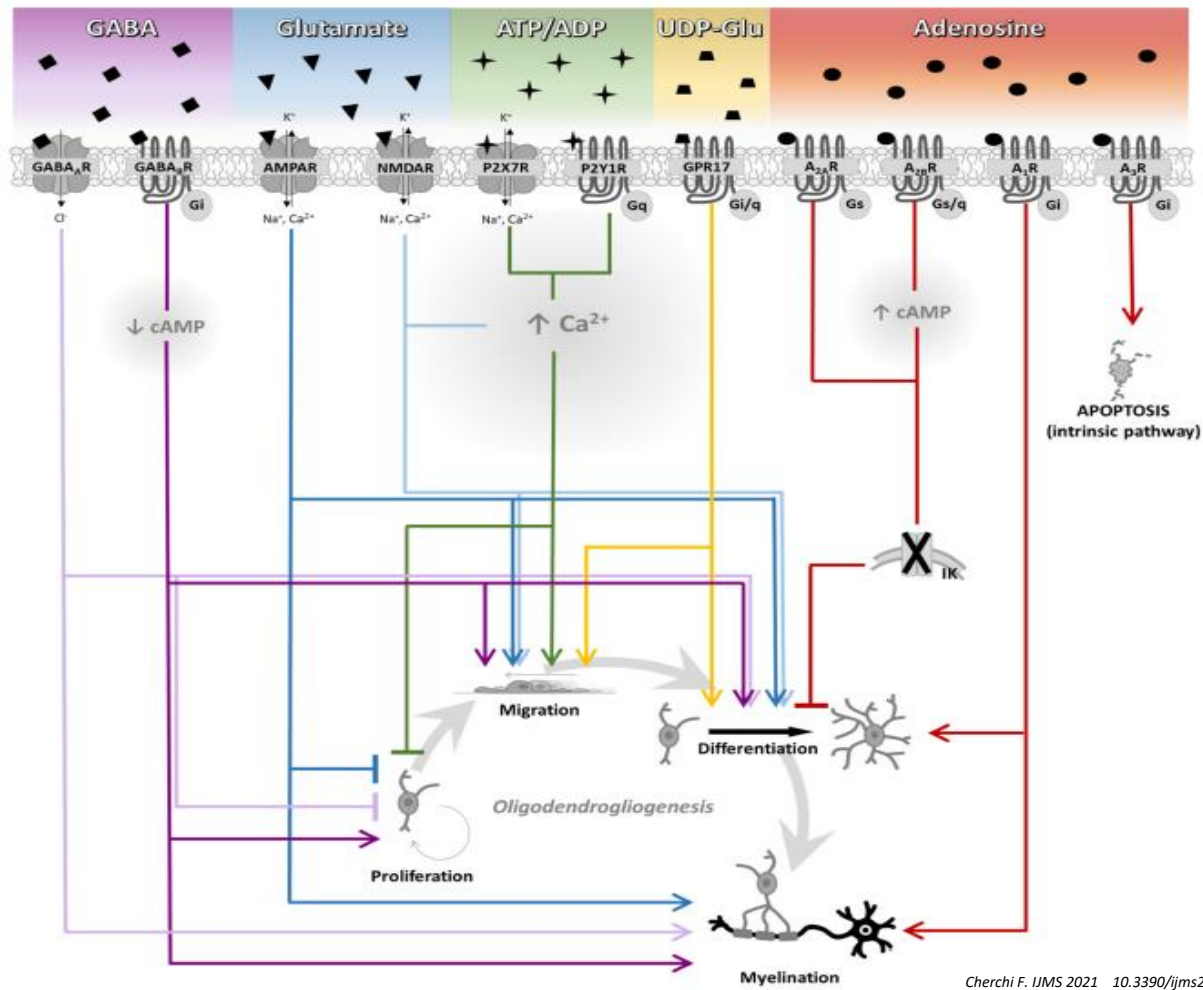
**Glial cells forming myelin** (oligodendrocytes in CNS and Schwann cells in PNS, respectively) play key roles during development and in the adult life, in health and disease, also interacting with other cells, mainly neurons.





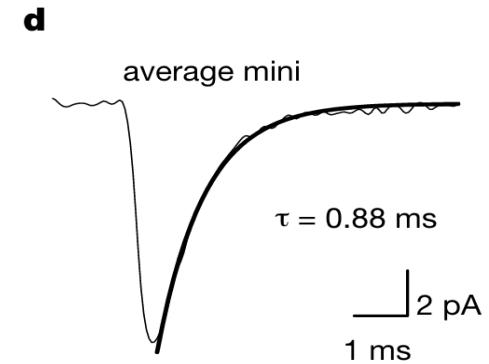
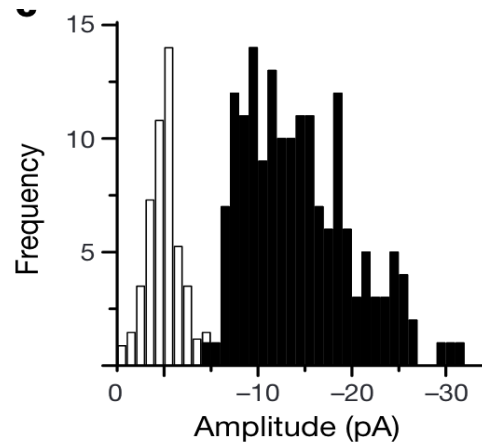
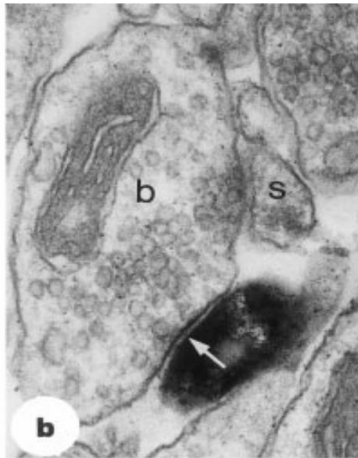
Nishiyama et al. 2009 Nature Review Neuroscience

Oligos



Cherchi F. *IJMS* 2021 10.3390/ijms22147277

# Neurons make bona fide synaptic connections with OPCs



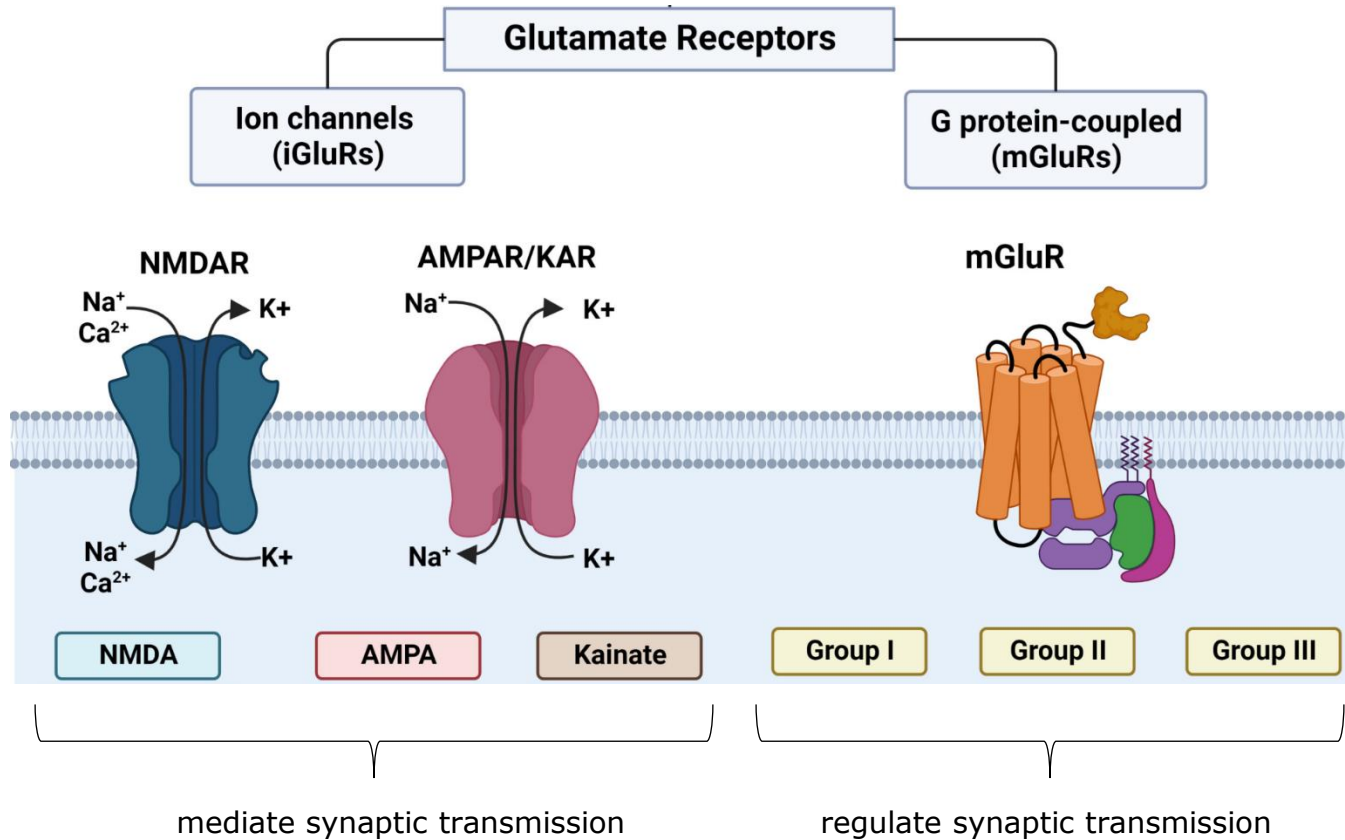
Bergles et al. *Nature* 2000

Neuron-OPC synapses (**GLUTergic** and **GABAergic**) exist in both white matter and grey matters

Bergles et al. *Nature* 2000  
Lin et al. *Nat Neurosci* 2004  
Lin et al. *Neuron* 2005  
Jabs et al. *J Cell Sci* 2005  
Ge et al. *Science* 2006  
Kukley et al. *Nat Neurosci* 2007  
Zinski et al. *Nat Neurosci* 2007  
Karadottir et al. *Nat Neurosci* 2008  
Velez-Fort et al. *J Neurosci* 2010

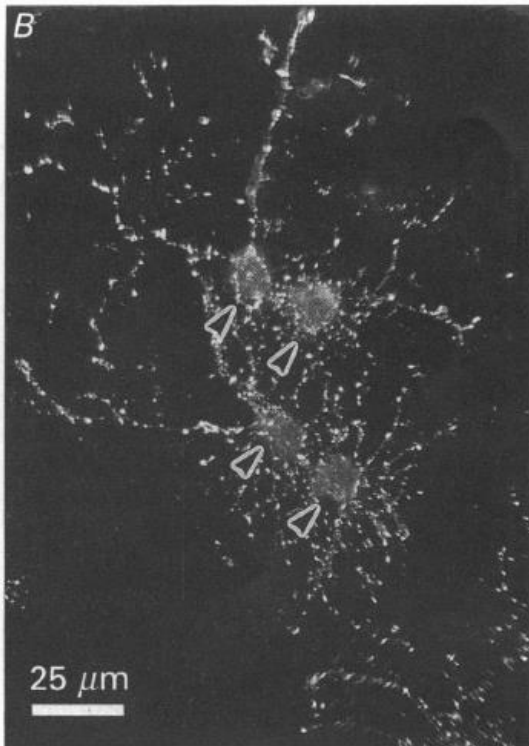


# Glutamate receptors are important for synaptic transmission



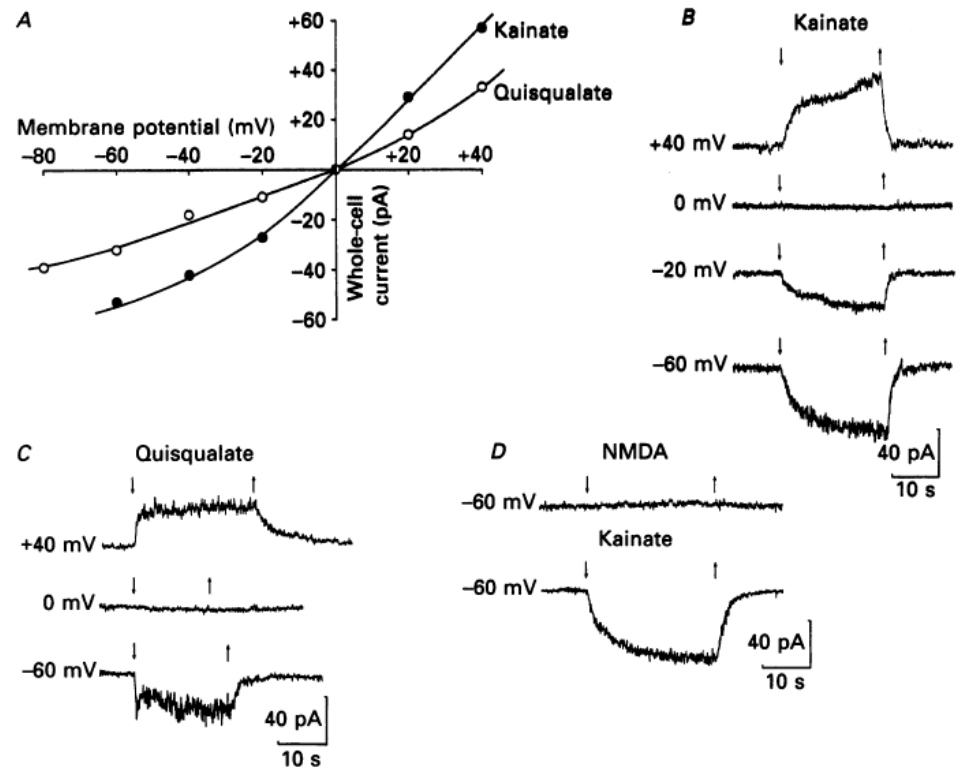
# Functional glutamate receptors in oligodendrocytes

O2-A progenitor cells



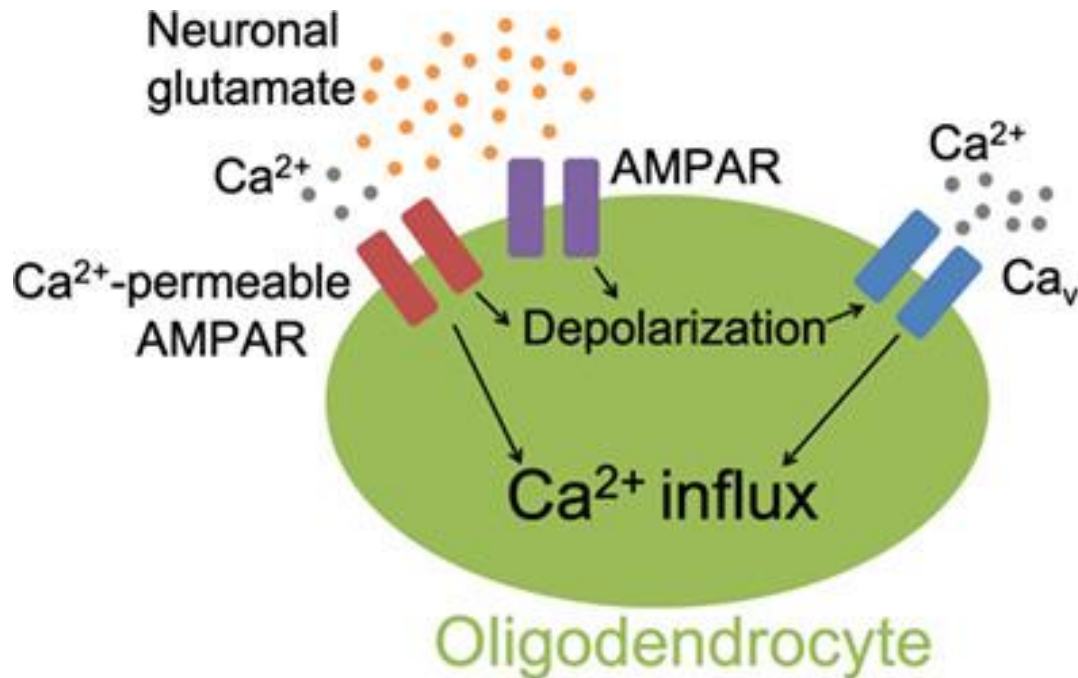
1-day old rat,  
cerebellar culture

Currents mediated by AMPA/kainate receptors



O2-A progenitors from cerebellum or optic nerve

# What is the function of glutamate receptors in OLIGO cells?



*dominating concept for many years:  
Glutamate receptors mediate damage of  
OLIGO during diseases*

# Damage to oligodendrocytes mediates/triggers/accompanies many diseases

## Demyelinating Disorders (CNS)

```
graph TD; A[Demyelinating Disorders (CNS)] --- B["(1) Inflammatory/immune disorders"]; A --- C["(2) Infectious diseases"]; A --- D["(3) Granulomatous diseases"]; A --- E["(4) Myelin disorders"]; A --- F["(5) Toxic/metabolic disorders"];
```

### (1) Inflammatory/ immune disorders

- MS
- Optic Neuritis
- ADEM
- Paraneoplastic encephalomyelitis
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Systemic lupus erythematosus
- Behçet's disease
- Sjögren disease

### (2) Infectious diseases

- HIV
- PML
- Lyme disease
- Neurosyphilis
- HTLV-1

### (3) Granulomatous diseases

- Sarcoidosis
- Wegner granulomatosis
- Lymphoid granulomatosis

### (4) Myelin disorders

- Metachromatic leukodystrophy
- Adrenoleukodystrophy/adrenomyeloneuropathy
- Globoid cell (Krabbe's) leukodystrophy
- Alexander disease
- Canavan disease

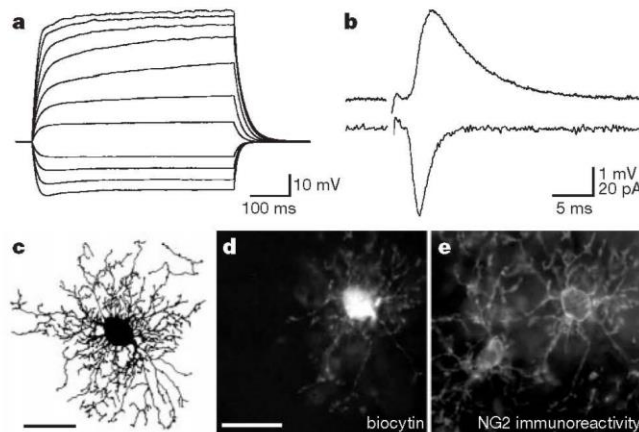
### (5) Toxic/ metabolic disorders

- B12 deficiency
- Central pontine myelinolysis
- Carbon monoxide
- Radiation
- PRES

# AMPA receptors mediate synaptic input between neurons and OPCs in grey and white matter of the brain

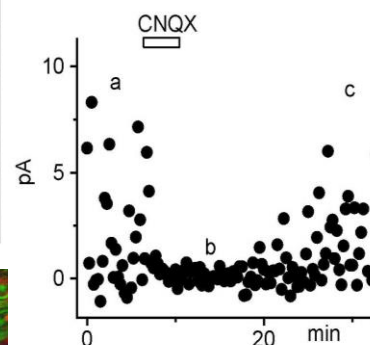
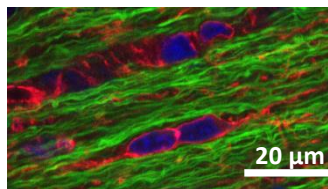
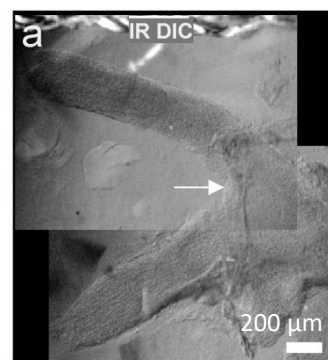
OPCs receive glutamatergic synaptic input from neurons in different brain areas including:

- cerebral cortex
- hippocampus
- cerebellum
- brain stem
- ventrobasal thalamus
- corpus callosum
- optic nerve

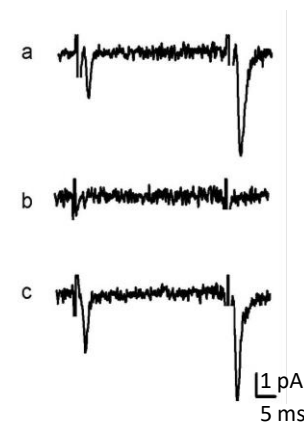


Hippocampus

*Bergles et al, Nature, 2000*



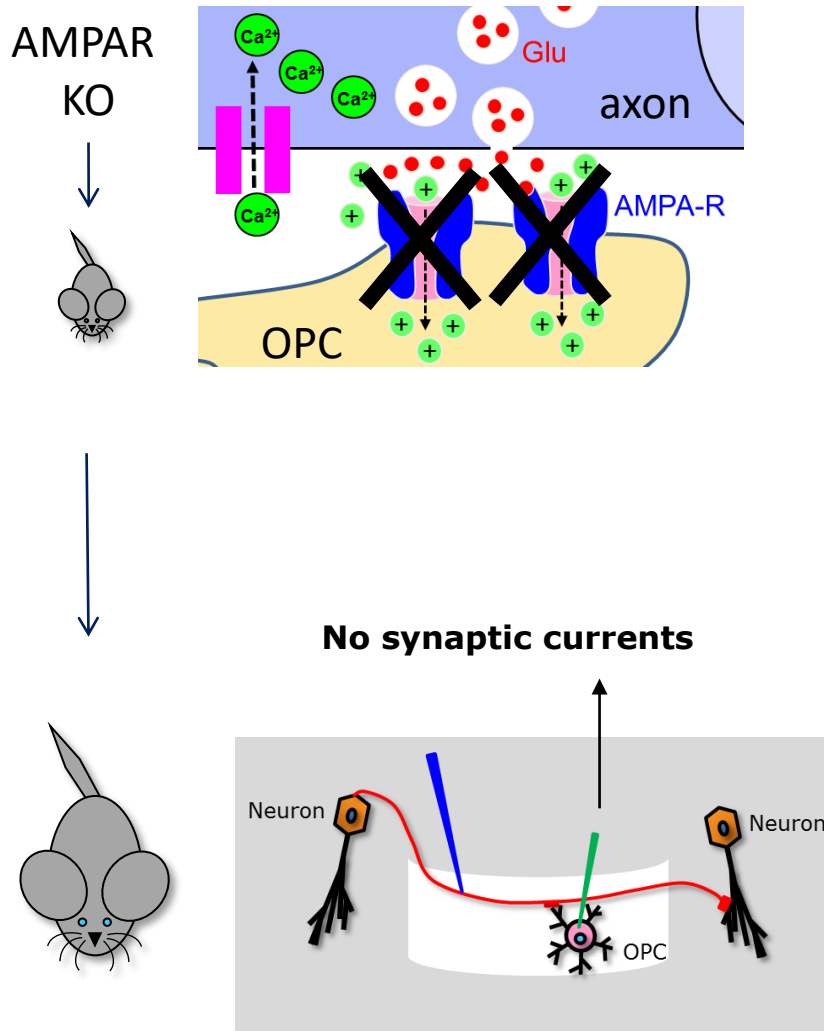
Optic nerve



*Kukley et al, Nat Neurosci, 2007*

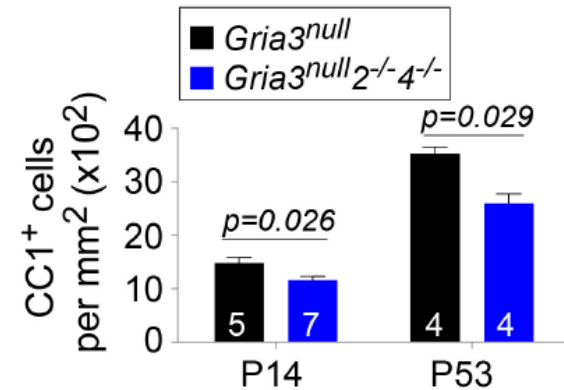
# Knockout of the GluA2, GluA3, & GluA4 subunits of AMPARs in OPCs in vivo results in loss of oligodendrocytes

Experimental paradigm:

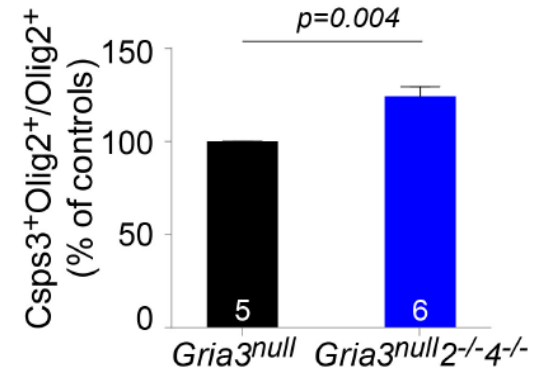


Result:

**Reduced** number of oligodendrocytes



Increased number of **apoptotic** oligodendrocyte lineage cells



## SUMMARY of GLUTAMATE and AMPAr in OLIGO

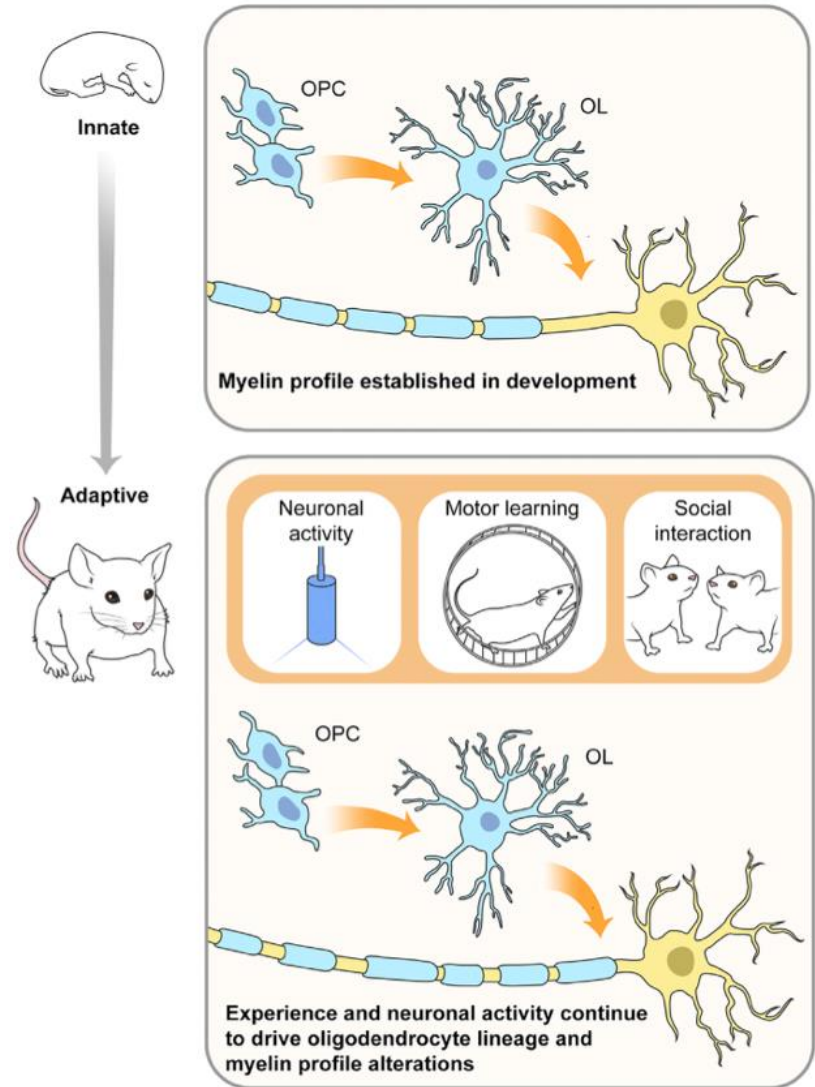
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- Regulate balance proliferation/differentiation of OPCs in developing and adult brain
- Regulate survival of oligodendrocytes
- Contribute to damage of oligodendrocytes and axons in multiple sclerosis model

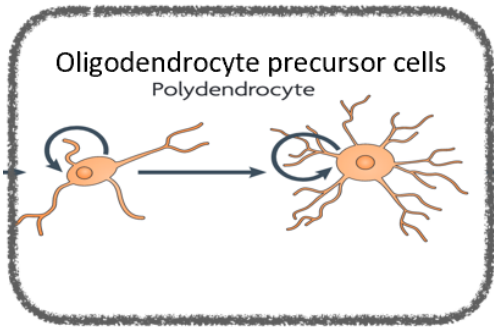
*.....role in CNS myelination???*

# hypothesis of Activity-Dependent Myelination in the CNS

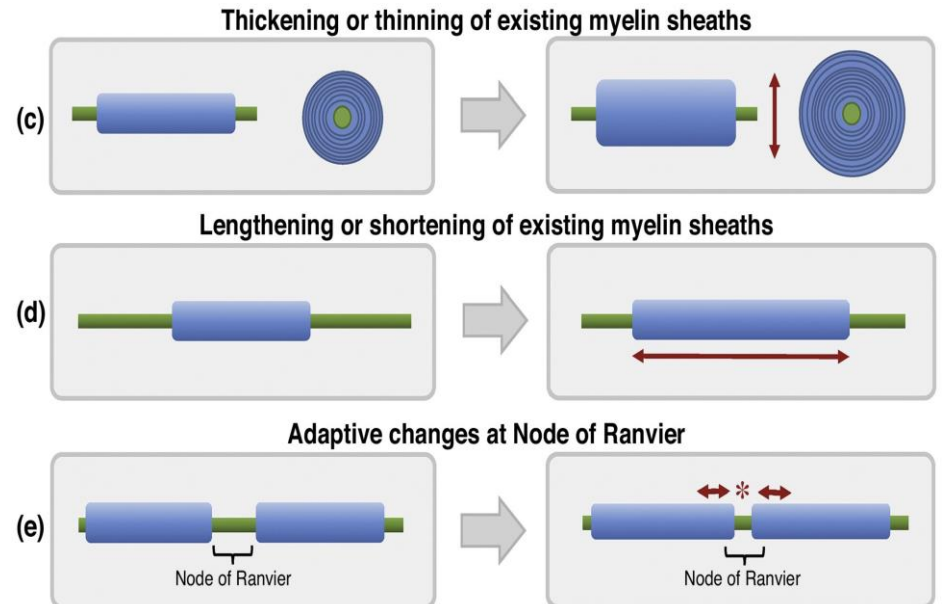
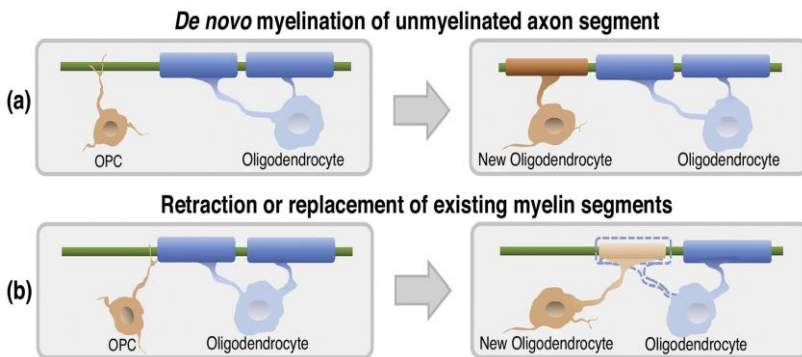
- An intrinsic and innate program can initial myelination
- Throughout the life span myelin remodeling in the CNS is a dynamic process, modulated by learning and social interaction
- Neuronal activity induces myelin remodeling







## Myelination is a multi-step process and can be remodeled in various forms



Kellar et al., 2017 Current Opinion in Neurobiology

- Manipulations of the neuron-OPC synaptic transmission directly impact the proliferation, differentiation of OPCs..... **and subsequent myelination ??**
- Neuron-OPC synaptic networks are critical in mediating neuronal Activity-Dependent Myelination

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Cell Reports  
Report

### ***In Vivo* Regulation of Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cell Proliferation and Differentiation by the AMPA-Receptor Subunit GluA2**

Ting-Jiun Chen,<sup>1,2</sup> Bartosz Kula,<sup>1,2</sup> Bálint Nagy,<sup>1,2,3</sup> Ruxandra Barzan,<sup>1,2,8</sup> Andrea Gall,<sup>4,5,6</sup> Ingrid Ehrlich,<sup>4,5,6</sup> and Maria Kukley<sup>1,7,8,\*</sup>

## How do OPCs integrate neuronal synaptic inputs?

Eleni Kougioumtzidou<sup>1</sup>, Takahiro Shimizu<sup>1†</sup>, Nicola B Hamilton<sup>2†</sup>, Koujiro Tohyama<sup>3†</sup>, Rolf Sprengel<sup>4</sup>, Hannah Monyer<sup>5</sup>, David Attwell<sup>2\*</sup>, William D Richardson<sup>1\*</sup>

ARTICLE

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-18984-7>

OPEN

Myelination of parvalbumin interneurons shapes the function of cortical sensory inhibitory circuits

Najate Benamer<sup>1✉</sup>, Marie Vidal<sup>1</sup>, Maddalena Balia<sup>1,3</sup> & María Cecilia Angulo<sup>1,2✉</sup>

## NG2 glial cells integrate synaptic input in global and dendritic calcium signals

Wenjing Sun<sup>1\*</sup>, Elizabeth A Matthews<sup>1</sup>, Vicky Nicolas<sup>1</sup>, Susanne Schoch<sup>2</sup>, Dirk Dietrich<sup>1\*</sup>

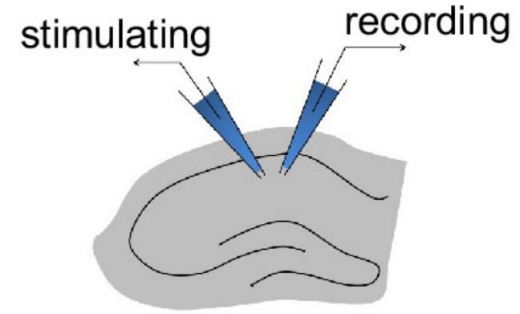
<sup>1</sup>Department of Neurosurgery, University Clinic Bonn, Bonn, Germany; <sup>2</sup>Department of Neuropathology, University Clinic Bonn, Bonn, Germany

**Abstract** Synaptic signaling to NG2-expressing oligodendrocyte precursor cells (NG2 cells) could be key to rendering myelination of axons dependent on neuronal activity, but it has remained unclear whether NG2 glial cells integrate and respond to synaptic input. Here we show that NG2 cells perform linear integration of glutamatergic synaptic inputs and respond with increasing dendritic calcium elevations. Synaptic activity induces rapid Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals mediated by low-voltage activated Ca<sup>2+</sup> channels under strict inhibitory control of voltage-gated A-type K<sup>+</sup> channels. Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals can be global and originate throughout the cell. However, voltage-gated channels are also found in thin dendrites which act as compartmentalized processing units and generate local calcium transients. Taken together, the activity-dependent control of Ca<sup>2+</sup> signals by A-type channels and the global versus local signaling domains make intracellular Ca<sup>2+</sup> in NG2 cells a prime signaling molecule to transform neurotransmitter release into activity-dependent myelination.

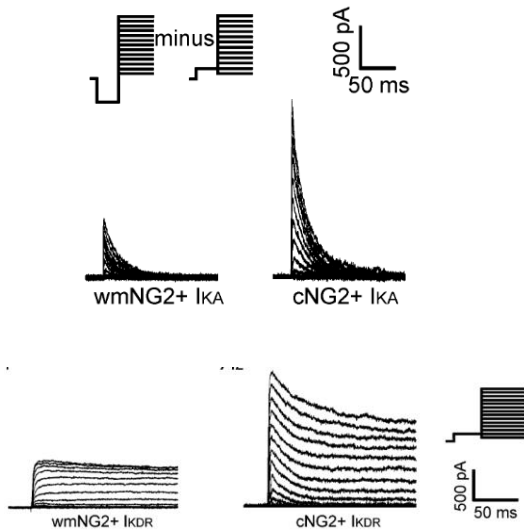
DOI: [10.7554/eLife.16262.001](https://doi.org/10.7554/eLife.16262.001)

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# OPCs express substantial amount of voltage-gated ion channels

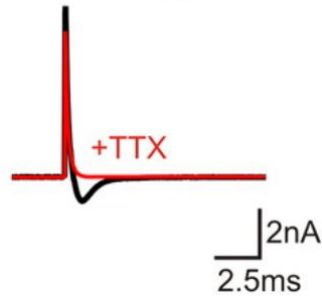


## K<sup>+</sup>



Chittajallu et al. *J Physiol* 2004

Callosal NG2<sup>+</sup> Cell

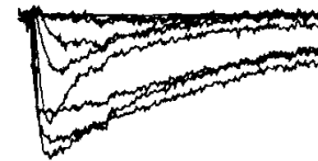


De Biase et al. *J Neurosci* 2010

## Na<sup>+</sup>



4 min



Akopian et al. *Glia* 1996

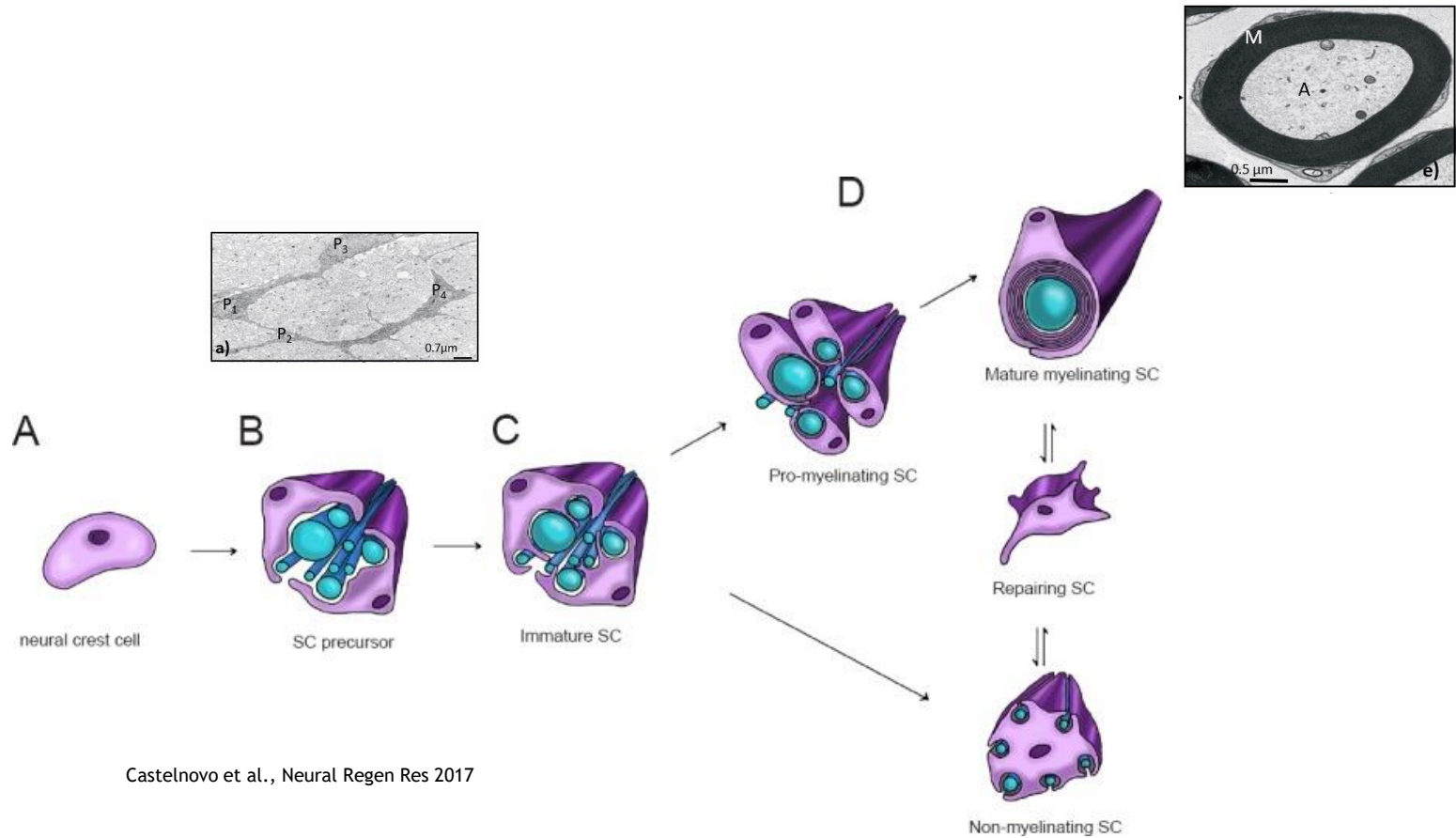
## SUMMARY

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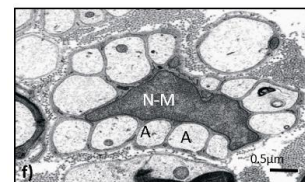
- OPCs are effective integrators of synaptic activity
- OPCs exhibit  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  excitability in two forms:
  - a local synaptic depolarization resulting in compartmentalized dendritic  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  signaling
  - a large somatic depolarization-induced global integration leading to massive  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  influx throughout the entire dendritic arbor

*The activity-dependent control of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  signals by ion channels makes intracellular  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  in OPCs a prime signaling molecule to transform neurotransmitter release into **Activity-Dependent Myelination***

# Schwann cells development, maturation and differentiation



Castelnovo et al., Neural Regen Res 2017



# Response of Schwann Cells to Action Potentials in Development **ATP/P2Y**

Beth Stevens and R. Douglas Fields\*

Sensory axons become functional late in development when Schwann cells (SC) stop proliferating and differentiate into distinct phenotypes. We report that impulse activity in premyelinated axons can inhibit proliferation and differentiation of SCs. This neuron-glia signaling is mediated by adenosine triphosphate acting through P2 receptors on SCs and intracellular signaling pathways involving  $Ca^{2+}$ ,  $Ca^{2+}$ /calmodulin kinase, mitogen-activated protein kinase, cyclic adenosine 3',5'-monophosphate response element binding protein, and expression of *c-fos* and *Krox-24*. Adenosine triphosphate arrests maturation of SCs in an immature morphological stage and prevents expression of O4, myelin basic protein, and the formation of myelin. Through this mechanism, functional activity in the developing nervous system could delay terminal differentiation of SCs until exposure to appropriate axon-derived signals.

www.sciencemag.org SCIENCE VOL 287 24 MARCH 2000

## Rat Schwann Cells Express M1–M4 Muscarinic Receptor Subtypes

Simona Loreti,<sup>1</sup> M. Teresa Vilaró,<sup>2</sup> S. Visentin,<sup>3</sup> H. Rees,<sup>4</sup> Allan I. Levey,<sup>4</sup> and Ada Maria Tata<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Cell and Developmental Biology, University "La Sapienza," Rome, Italy

<sup>2</sup>Department of Neurochemistry, Institut d'Investigacions Biomèdiques de Barcelona, CSIC, IDIBAPS, Barcelona, Spain

<sup>3</sup>Department of Cell Biology and Neuroscience, Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome, Italy

<sup>4</sup>Department of Neurology, Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia

The expression of different muscarinic receptor subtypes was analyzed in immature Schwann cells obtained from sciatic nerve of 2-day neonatal rats. By using RT-PCR analysis, we demonstrated the presence of M1, M2, M3, and M4 receptor subtypes in cultured Schwann cells, with M2 displaying the highest expression levels. Muscarinic subtypes were also quantified by immunoprecipitation and [<sup>3</sup>H]QNB binding. With this approach, we found the levels of receptor expression to be M2 > M3 > M1. M4 is expressed at very low levels, and M5 receptor was not detectable. Moreover, we also demonstrated that stimulation of the receptors by muscarinic agonists activates previously described signal transduction pathways, leading to a decrease of cAMP and an increase of IP<sub>3</sub> levels not associated with an efficient intracellular Ca<sup>2+</sup> release. The presence and activity of particular muscarinic receptors in immature Schwann cells suggest that ACh may play an important role in Schwann cell development. © 2006 Wiley-Liss, Inc.

**Ach/Musc**

Journal of Neuroscience Research 84:97–105 (2006)

Journal of  
Neuroscience  
Research

## Purinergic Signaling Mediated by P2X<sub>7</sub> Receptors Controls Myelination in Sciatic Nerves

A. Faroni,<sup>1,2\*</sup> R.J.P. Smith,<sup>1,2</sup> P. Procacci,<sup>3</sup> L.F. Castelnovo,<sup>4</sup> E. Puccianti,<sup>3</sup> A.J. Reid,<sup>1</sup> V. Magnaghi,<sup>4</sup> and A. Verkhratsky<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Biond Melndoc Laboratories, Institute of Inflammation and Repair, University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom

<sup>3</sup>Dipartimento di Scienze Biomediche per la Salute, Università degli Studi di Milano, Milan, Italy

<sup>4</sup>Dipartimento di Scienze Farmacologiche e Biomolecolari, Università degli Studi di Milano, Milan, Italy

Journal of Neuroscience Research 92:1259–1269 (2014)

**P2X7/P2X4**

Received: 22 March 2014 | Revised and accepted: 10 August 2014  
DOI: 10.1002/glia.22527

GLIA

WILEY

RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Overexpression of P2X4 receptor in Schwann cells promotes motor and sensory functional recovery and remyelination via BDNF secretion after nerve injury

Wen-Feng Su<sup>1†</sup> | Fan Wu<sup>2†</sup> | Zi-Han Jin<sup>1†</sup> | Yun Gu<sup>1</sup> | Ying-Ting Chen<sup>1</sup> | Ying Fei<sup>1</sup> | Hui Chen<sup>1</sup> | Ya-Xian Wang<sup>1</sup> | Ling-Yan Xing<sup>1</sup> | Ya-Yu Zhao<sup>1</sup> | Ying Yuan<sup>1,3</sup> | Xin Tang<sup>1</sup> | Gang Chen<sup>1,4</sup>✉

<sup>1</sup>Key Laboratory of Neuroregeneration of Jiangsu and Ministry of Education, Co-Innovation Center of Neuroregeneration, Nantong University, Nantong, China

<sup>2</sup>Medical School of Nantong University, Nantong, China

<sup>3</sup>Affiliated Hospital of Nantong University, Nantong, China

<sup>4</sup>Department of Anesthesiology, Affiliated Hospital of Nantong University, Nantong, China

Correspondence: Gang Chen, Key Laboratory of Neuroregeneration of Jiangsu and Ministry of Education, Co-Innovation Center of Neuroregeneration, Nantong University, Nantong 226001, China. Email: chenpan626@ntu.edu.cn

Funding Information: The National Key Research and Development

### Abstract

Of the seven P2X receptor subtypes, P2X4 receptor (P2X4R) is widely distributed in the central nervous system, including in neurons, astrocytes, and microglia. Accumulating evidence supports roles for P2X4R in the central nervous system, including regulating cell excitability, synaptic transmission, and neuropathic pain. However, little information is available about the distribution and function of P2X4R in the peripheral nervous system. In this study, we find that P2X4R is mainly localized in the lysosomes of Schwann cells in the peripheral nervous system. In cultured Schwann cells, TNF- $\alpha$  not only enhances the synthesis of P2X4R protein but also promotes P2X4R trafficking to the surface of Schwann cells. TNF- $\alpha$ -induced BDNF secretion in Schwann cells is P2X4R dependent. *In vivo* experiments reveal that expression of P2X4R in Schwann cells of injured nerves is strikingly upregulated following nerve crush injury. Moreover, overexpression of P2X4R in Schwann cells by genetic manipulation promotes motor and sensory functional recovery and accelerates nerve remyelination via BDNF release following nerve injury. Our results suggest that enhancement of P2X4R expression in Schwann cells after nerve injury may be an effective approach to facilitate the regrowth and remyelination of injured nerves.

1204 • The Journal of Neuroscience, January 27, 2010 • 30(4):1204–1212

Cellular/Molecular

## Proteasomal Degradation of Glutamine Synthetase Regulates Schwann Cell Differentiation

Fuminori Saitoh and Toshiyuki Araki

Department of Peripheral Nervous System Research, National Institute of Neuroscience, National Center of Neurology and Psychiatry, Kodaira, Tokyo 187-8502, Japan

Rapid saltatory nerve conduction is facilitated by myelin structure, which is composed of Schwann cells in the peripheral nervous system. Schwann cells drastically change their phenotype following peripheral nerve injury. These phenotypic changes are required for efficient degeneration/regeneration. We previously identified ZNRF1 as an E3 ubiquitin ligase containing a RING finger motif, whose expression is upregulated in the Schwann cells following nerve injury. This suggested that posttranscriptional regulation of protein expression in Schwann cells may be involved in their phenotypic changes during nerve degeneration/regeneration. Here we report the identification of glutamine synthetase (GS), an enzyme that synthesizes glutamine using glutamate and ammonia, as a substrate for E3 activity of ZNRF1 in Schwann cells. GS is known to be highly expressed in differentiated Schwann cells, but its functional significance has remained unclear. We found that during nerve degeneration/regeneration, GS expression is controlled mostly by ZNRF1-dependent proteasomal degradation. We also found that Schwann cells increase oxidative stress upon initiation of nerve degeneration, which promotes carboxylation and subsequent degradation of GS. Surprisingly, we discovered that GS expression regulates Schwann cell differentiation; i.e., increased GS expression promotes myelination via its enzymatic activity. Among the substrates and products of GS, increased glutamate concentration inhibited myelination and yet promoted Schwann cell proliferation by activating metabotropic glutamate receptor signaling. This would suggest that GS may exert its effect on Schwann cell differentiation by regulating glutamate concentration. These results indicate that the ZNRF1-GS system may play an important role in correlating Schwann cell metabolism with its differentiation.

**GS/mGluR**

SCIENTIFIC REPORTS

OPEN

## Glutamate signals through mGluR2 to control Schwann cell differentiation and proliferation

Received: 01 October 2015

Accepted: 27 June 2016

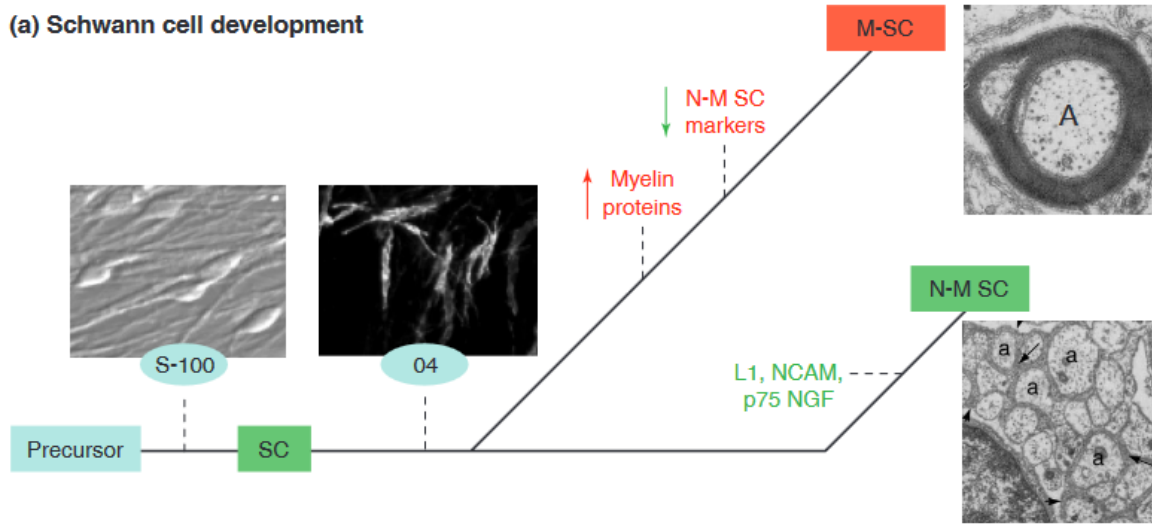
Published: 19 July 2016

Fuminori Saitoh<sup>1,2</sup>, Shuji Wakatsuki<sup>1</sup>, Shinji Tokunaga<sup>1</sup>, Hiroki Fujieda<sup>2</sup> & Toshiyuki Araki<sup>2</sup>

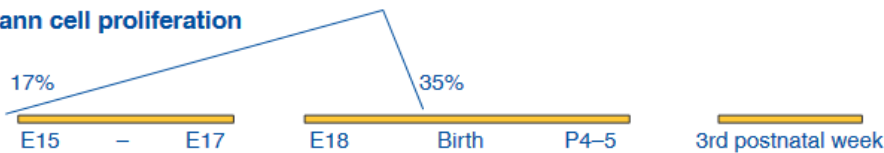
Rapid saltatory nerve conduction is facilitated by myelin structure, which is produced by Schwann cells (SC) in the peripheral nervous system (PNS). Proper development and degeneration/regeneration after injury requires regulated phenotypic changes of SC. We have previously shown that glutamate can induce SC proliferation in culture. Here we show that glutamate signals through metabotropic glutamate receptor 2 (mGluR2) to induce Erk phosphorylation in SC. mGluR2-elicited Erk phosphorylation requires ErbB2/3 receptor tyrosine kinase phosphorylation to limit the signaling cascade that promotes phosphorylation of Erk, but not Akt. We found that G $\beta$  and 5 $\alpha$  are involved in subcellular signaling downstream of mGluR2. We also found that glutamate can transform myelinating SC to proliferating SC, while inhibition of mGluR2 signaling can inhibit demyelination of injured nerves *in vivo*. These data suggest pathophysiological significance of mGluR2 signaling in PNS and its possible therapeutic importance to combat demyelinating disorders including Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease.

SCIENTIFIC REPORTS | 6:29856 | DOI: 10.1038/srep29856

**(a) Schwann cell development**



**(b) Schwann cell proliferation**



**(c) Action potentials**



trends in Neurosciences

**ATP: an extracellular signaling molecule between neurons and glia**

R. Douglas Fields and Beth Stevens

Recent studies on Schwann cells at the neuromuscular junction and non-synaptic regions of premyelinated axons indicate that extracellular ATP can act as an activity-dependent signaling molecule in communication between neurons and glia. Several mechanisms have been observed for the regulated release of ATP from synaptic and non-synaptic regions, and a diverse family of receptors for extracellular ATP has been characterized. The findings suggest functional consequences of neuron-glia communication beyond homeostasis of the extracellular environment surrounding neurons, including regulating synaptic strength, gene expression, mitotic rate, and differentiation of glia according to impulse activity in neural circuits.

*Trends Neurosci.* (2000) 23, 625–633

**Fig. 2. Correlation between Schwann cell development and changes in neural impulse activity in dorsal root ganglion neurons of mouse during the perinatal period.** (a) Schwann cell precursors migrate out with the neural crest and begin to express the S-100 antigen. As they develop into immature Schwann cells they begin to express the O4 antigen, and then differentiate into either myelinating (M-SC) or non-myelinating phenotypes (N-M SC). (b) The rate of Schwann cell proliferation increases in late fetal development and begins to decrease near the time of birth. (c) Action potentials from dorsal root ganglion (DRG) neurons show the onset of active spontaneous and sensory-evoked activity in DRG neurons coincides with the decrease in Schwann cell proliferation and differentiation. ATP that is released by DRG neurons in culture inhibits Schwann cell proliferation and arrests development at a stage before development of the O4 antigen. These correlations have yet to be tested in vivo, but suggest that impulse activity could stop proliferation and prevent terminal differentiation of Schwann cells until exposure to appropriate axon-specific differentiation signals. Adapted, with permission, from Ref. 51 and Ref. 68.



## GABA<sub>B</sub> receptors in Schwann cells influence proliferation and myelin protein expression

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**Keywords:** GABA<sub>B</sub> receptors, myelin, peripheral glia, rat, sciatic nerve

### Abstract

The location and the role of  $\gamma$ -aminobutyric acid type B (GABA<sub>B</sub>) receptors in the central nervous system have recently received considerable attention, whilst relatively little is known regarding the peripheral nervous system. In this regard, here we demonstrate for the first time that GABA<sub>B</sub> receptor isoforms [i.e. GABA<sub>B1</sub> and GABA<sub>B2</sub>] are specifically localized in the rat Schwann cell population of the sciatic nerve. Using the selective GABA<sub>B</sub> agonist [i.e. (–)-baclofen] and the antagonists [i.e. CGP 62349, CGP 55845A, CGP 55851A], such receptors are shown to be functionally active and negatively coupled to the adenylyl cyclase system. Furthermore, exposure of cultured Schwann cells to (–)-baclofen inhibits their proliferation and reduces the synthesis of specific myelin proteins [i.e. glycoprotein P0, peripheral myelin protein 22, myelin-associated glycoprotein, connexin 32], providing evidence for a physiological role of GABA<sub>B</sub> receptors in the glial cells of the peripheral nervous system.

GABA

### Introduction

$\gamma$ -Aminobutyric acid (GABA) is the main inhibitory neurotransmitter in the central nervous system (CNS), where it interacts with both ionotropic (GABA<sub>A</sub> and GABA<sub>C</sub>) and metabotropic (GABA<sub>B</sub>) receptors (Bele et al., 1998; Bowery & Ems, 2000). The GABA<sub>B</sub> receptor was first identified approximately 20 years ago as a metabotropic receptor with a pharmacological profile distinct from that of the GABA<sub>A</sub> receptor, being insensitive to the GABA<sub>A</sub> receptor antagonist bicuculline, but activated by certain GABA analogues, for example (–)-baclofen, which is inert at the GABA<sub>A</sub> receptor (Hill & Bowery, 1981). GABA<sub>B</sub> receptors are members of the seven transmembrane G-protein-coupled receptor super-family (Bowery et al., 2002), which may influence presynaptic neurotransmitter release and cause postsynaptic “silencing” of excitatory neurotransmission via the activation of second messenger systems, mainly by adenylyl cyclase and by modulation of calcium and potassium channel activity (Manshall et al., 1999; Bowery & Ems, 2000). The molecular structure of metabotropic GABA<sub>B</sub> receptors remained elusive until 1997, when the first cDNAs encoding two GABA<sub>B</sub> receptor proteins initially named GABA<sub>B1</sub> and GABA<sub>B2</sub> (Knausman et al., 1997) were identified. Subsequently, novel GABA<sub>B</sub> receptor isoforms were cloned (Jovanovic et al., 1998; Pfaff et al., 1999). Of particular interest, a number of laboratories independently identified a cDNA coding for the GABA<sub>B</sub>

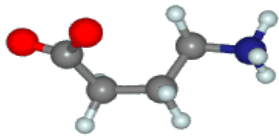
receptor isoform 2 [GABA<sub>B2</sub>] (Jones et al., 1998; Knausman et al., 1998; White et al., 1998; Kaner et al., 1999). The GABA<sub>B1</sub> is mainly found in the endoplasmic reticulum and is transported to the cell surface only in the presence of the GABA<sub>B2</sub>, allowing the formation of a functional heteromeric complex (Jones et al., 1998; Knausman et al., 1998; White et al., 1998; Kaner et al., 1999; Ng et al., 1999; Caher et al., 2000). Detailed analysis has indicated that GABA<sub>B</sub> heterodimer component proteins [i.e. GABA<sub>B1</sub> and GABA<sub>B2</sub>] are expressed widely throughout the neuronal compartment of the brain, spinal cord as well as in dorsal root ganglia (Magotta-Mitrovic et al., 1999; Towers et al., 2000; Charles et al., 2001). However, recent observations suggest that certain types of glial cells (i.e. astrocytes and activated microglia) from the CNS exhibit GABA<sub>B</sub> receptor immunoreactivity (Charles et al., 2003) and might be considered a possible target for the action of GABA<sub>B</sub> receptor agonists (Kang et al., 1998; Clark et al., 2000). Although GABA<sub>B</sub> receptors were first identified in the peripheral nervous system (PNS), and in particular at autonomic nerve terminals (Bowery et al., 1981), information regarding their putative presence and function in the glial cells of PNS (i.e. Schwann cells) are still lacking. Our previous studies had suggested Schwann cells to be a target for the action of GABA, as they express mRNAs coding for a number of GABA<sub>A</sub> receptor subunits (i.e.  $\alpha_2$ – $\alpha_5$ ,  $\beta_1$ – $\beta_3$ ) (Melcangi et al., 1999; Magnaghi et al., 2001).

The main aim of the present study was to investigate GABA<sub>B</sub> receptor localization in the glial cells of a peripheral nerve, e.g. the rat sciatic nerve, and to determine the functional consequences of receptor activation, which may clarify their putative physiological role.

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Received 27 November 2003; revised 3 March 2004; accepted 5 March 2004

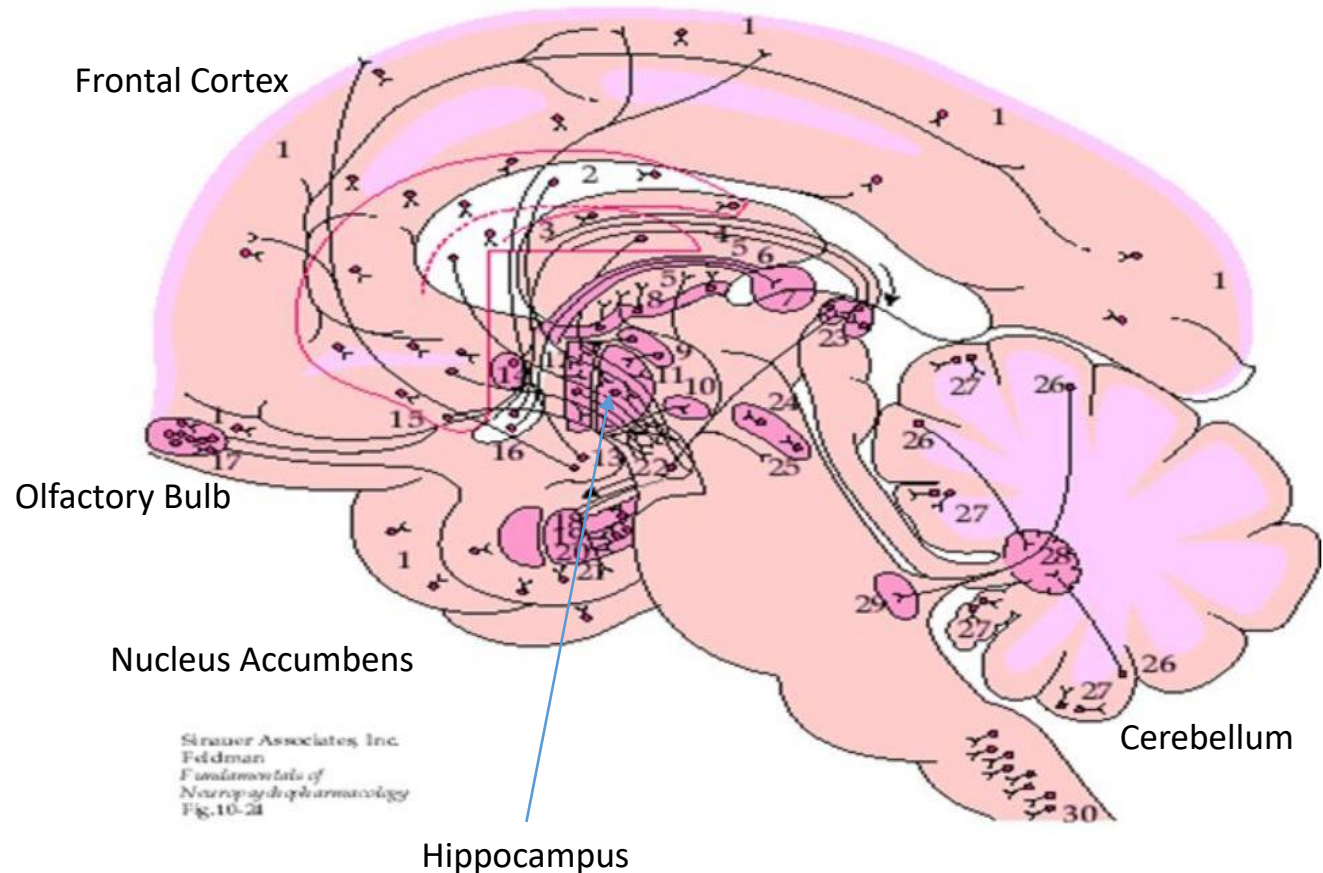


# GABA is the main NT in CNS at least mM conc !

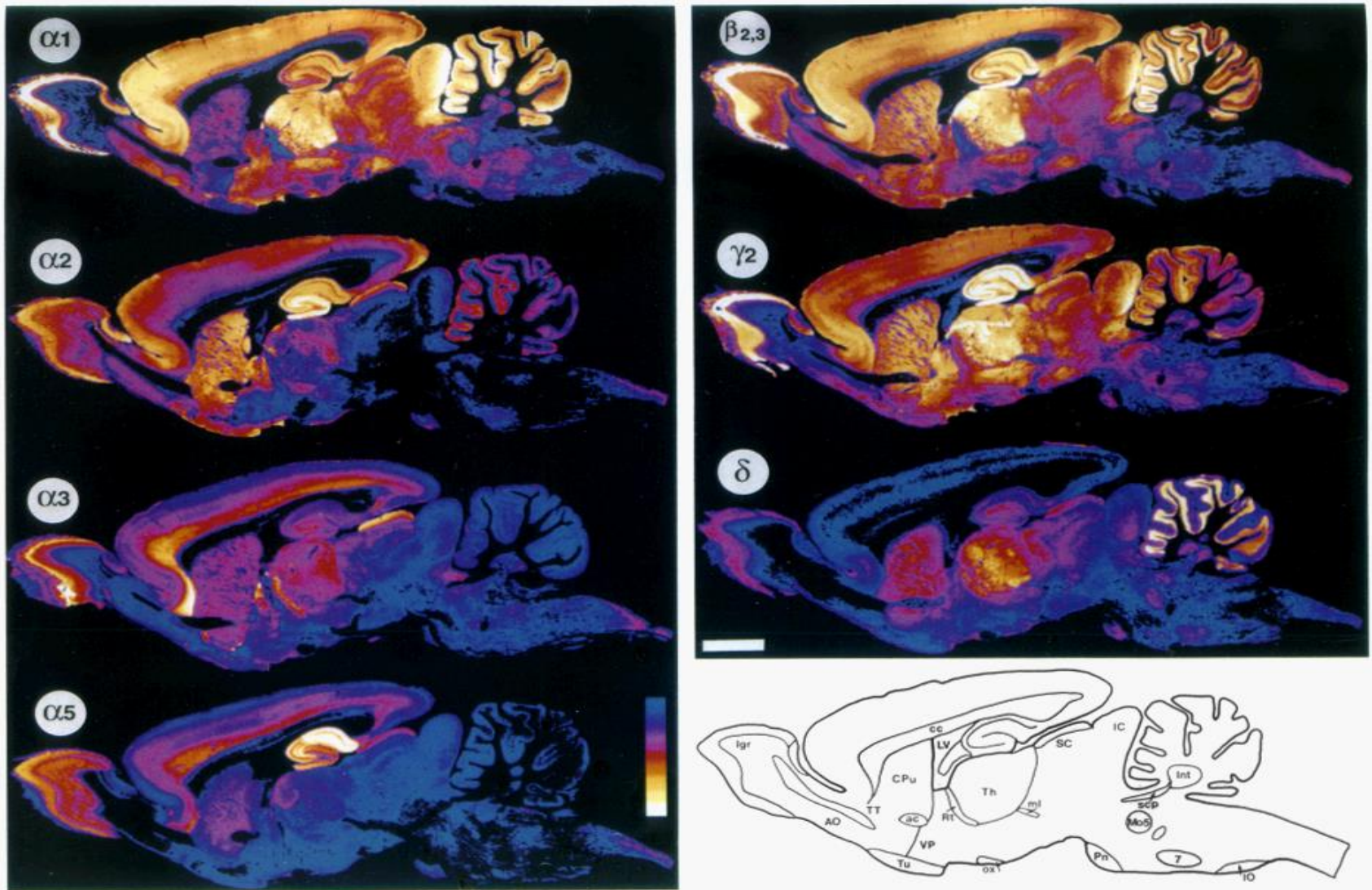


## GABA PATHWAY

- *Substantia nigra*
- *Globus pallidum*
- Corpi quadrigemini
- Corteccia cerebrale
- Cervelletto
- Ippocampo
- Ponte/bulbo
- Sostanza bianca



# GABA<sub>A</sub> subunits are differentially distributed in the brain



Reproduced from Fritschy & Mohler 1995

# GABA may be a neurotransmitter in the vertebrate peripheral nervous system

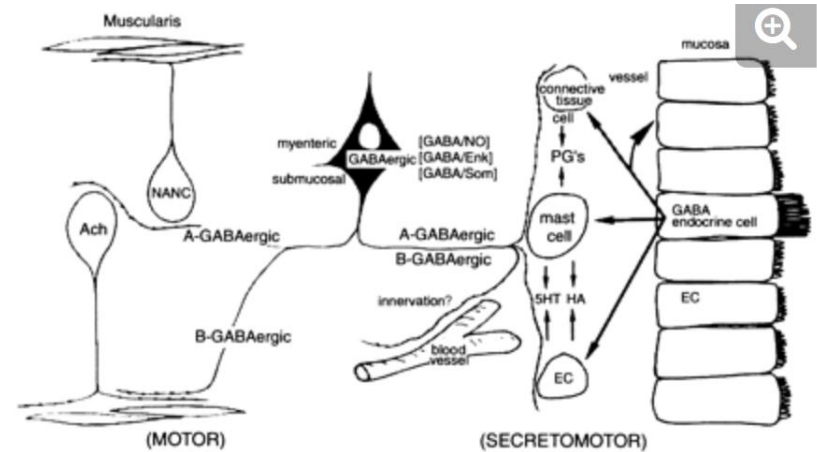
Kristján R. Jessen, Rhona Mirsky, Marion E. Dennison & Geoffrey Burnstock

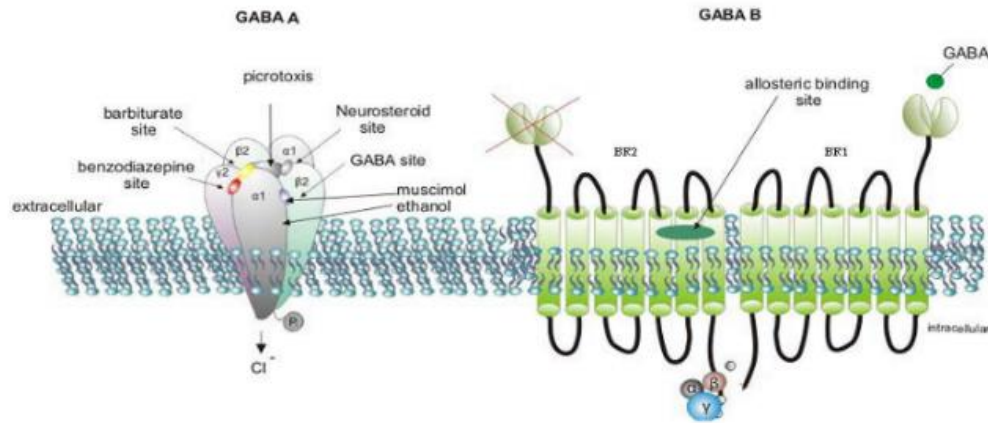
*Nature* 281, 71–74 (1979) | [Cite this article](#)

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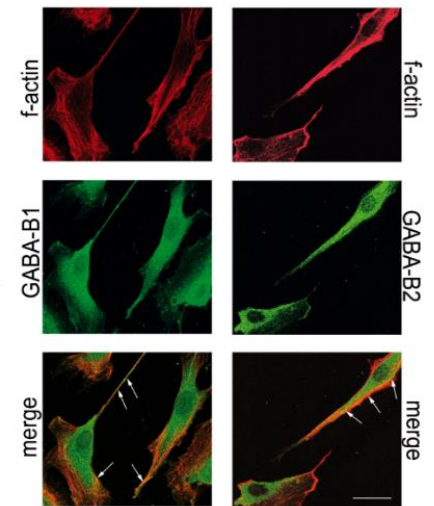
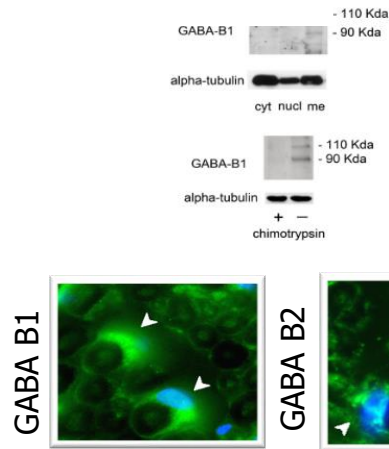
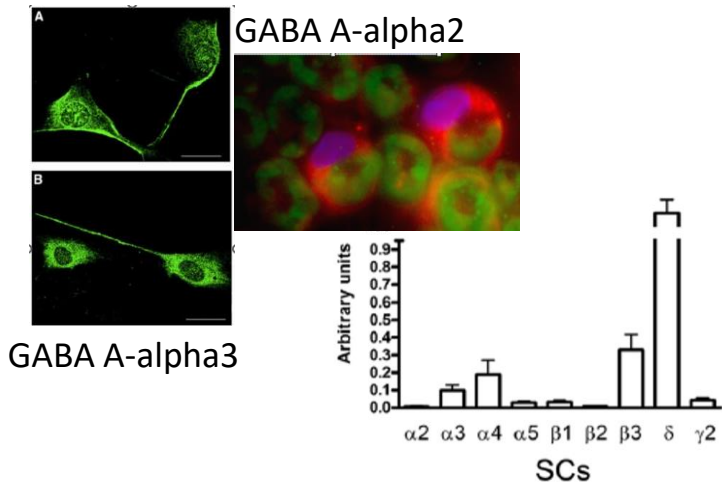
## Abstract

γ-Aminobutyric acid (GABA) is an inhibitory neurotransmitter in the peripheral nervous system of certain invertebrates and is thought to be a major transmitter in the vertebrate central nervous system<sup>1–3</sup>. In this report we present evidence that GABA may also be a neurotransmitter in the vertebrate peripheral autonomic nervous system. We have used light and electron microscopic autoradiography to analyse high-affinity uptake of <sup>3</sup>H-GABA into the myenteric plexus of the guinea pig taenia coli, both *in situ* and in a tissue culture preparation. In the isolated myenteric plexus, we have measured the specific activity of glutamic acid decarboxylase (GAD; EC 4.1.1.15), the enzyme responsible for conversion of glutamic acid to GABA in GABAergic neurones<sup>4,5</sup>, and assessed the ability of this tissue to accumulate <sup>3</sup>H-GABA newly synthesised from <sup>3</sup>H-glutamic acid. Furthermore, we have measured the levels of endogenous GABA in strips of taenia coli containing the myenteric plexus.

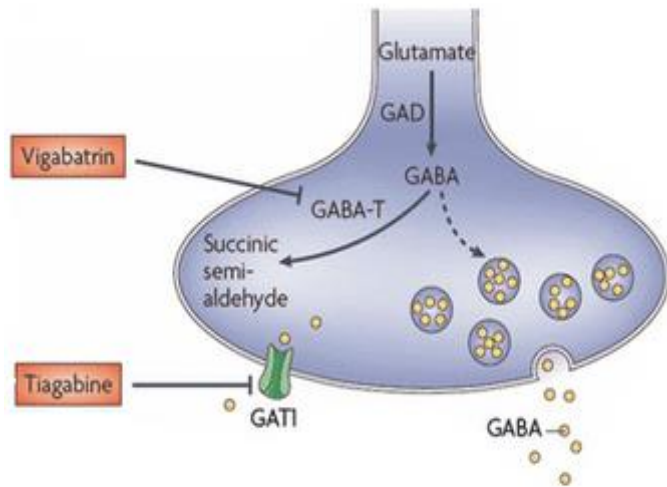
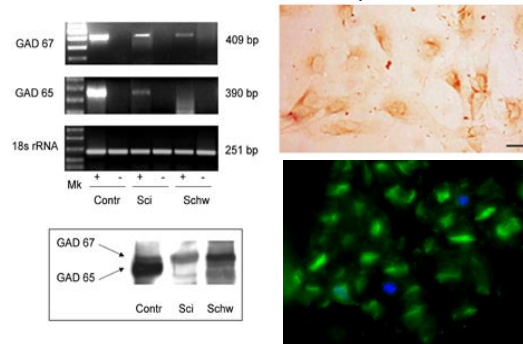




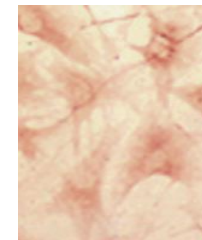
Melcangi RC et al, JNR 1999  
 Magnaghi V. et al, E.J.N. 2004  
 Magnaghi V. et al, Brain Res. Rev. 2005  
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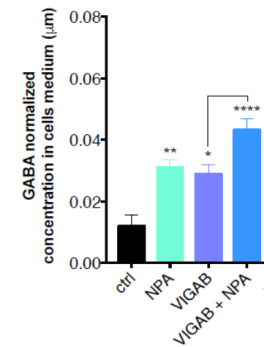
# GAD65/GAD67



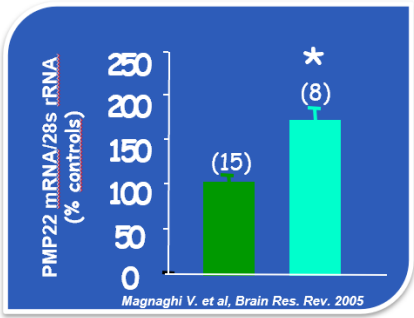
# GABA



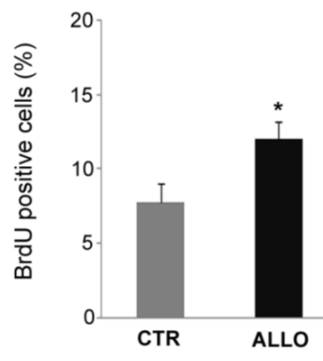
released from SCs



Magnaghi et al.. GLIA 71:2023  
DOI: 10.1002/glia.24419

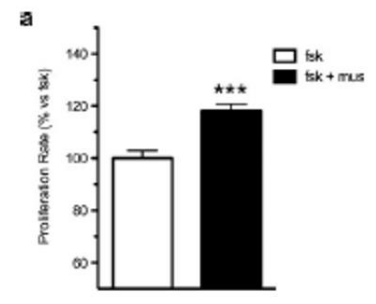


PMP22 GENE EXPRESSION IN SCHWANN CELL 24 h AFTER EXPOSURE TO GABA-A RECEPTOR AGONIST **MUSCIMOL**



SCHWANN CELL PROLIFERATION AFTER EXPOSURE TO GABA-A RECEPTOR AGONIST **MUSCIMOL**

**GABA-A rec (medium/long-term) increases the proliferation and the myelin proteins expression in Schw cells**



### conditional KO GABA-B1

GABA-B1<sup>fl/fl</sup>

P0-GABA-B1<sup>fl/fl</sup>

3mo

6mo

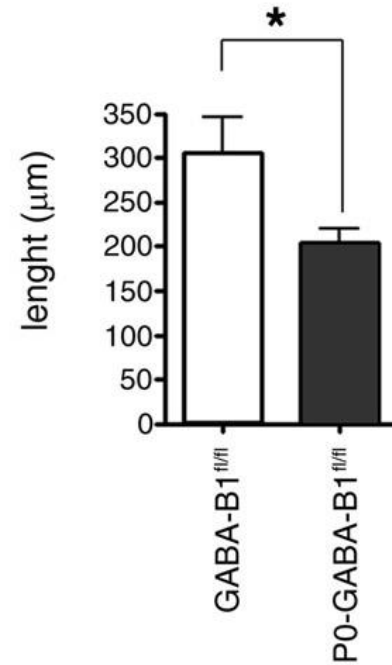
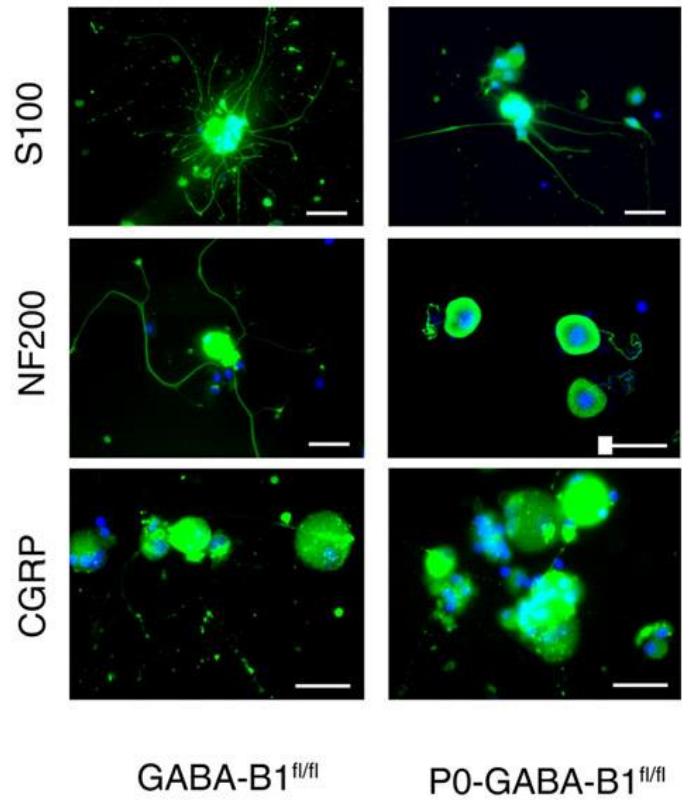
3mo

6mo

**b**

.....shift myelinated Abeta/delta vs C fibers

DRGs of P0-GABA-B1<sup>fl/fl</sup> mice showed less sprouting



Assessment of neurites outgrowth (length in μm) by using a mouse anti-βIII-tubulin antibody. Average neurite length was significantly reduced ( $p < 0.05$ ) in DRG neurons from P0-GABA-B1<sup>fl/fl</sup> mice. Values are means  $\pm$  SEM (n = 6)

Melfi S. et al. *Molec. Neurobiol.* 2018

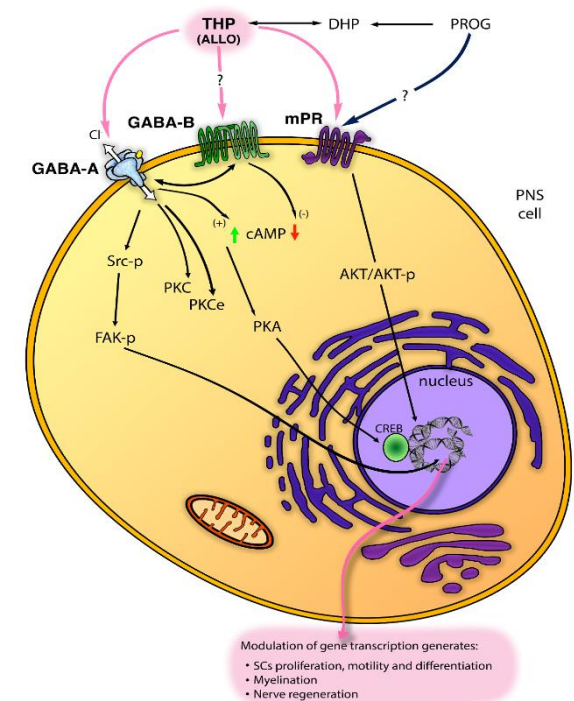


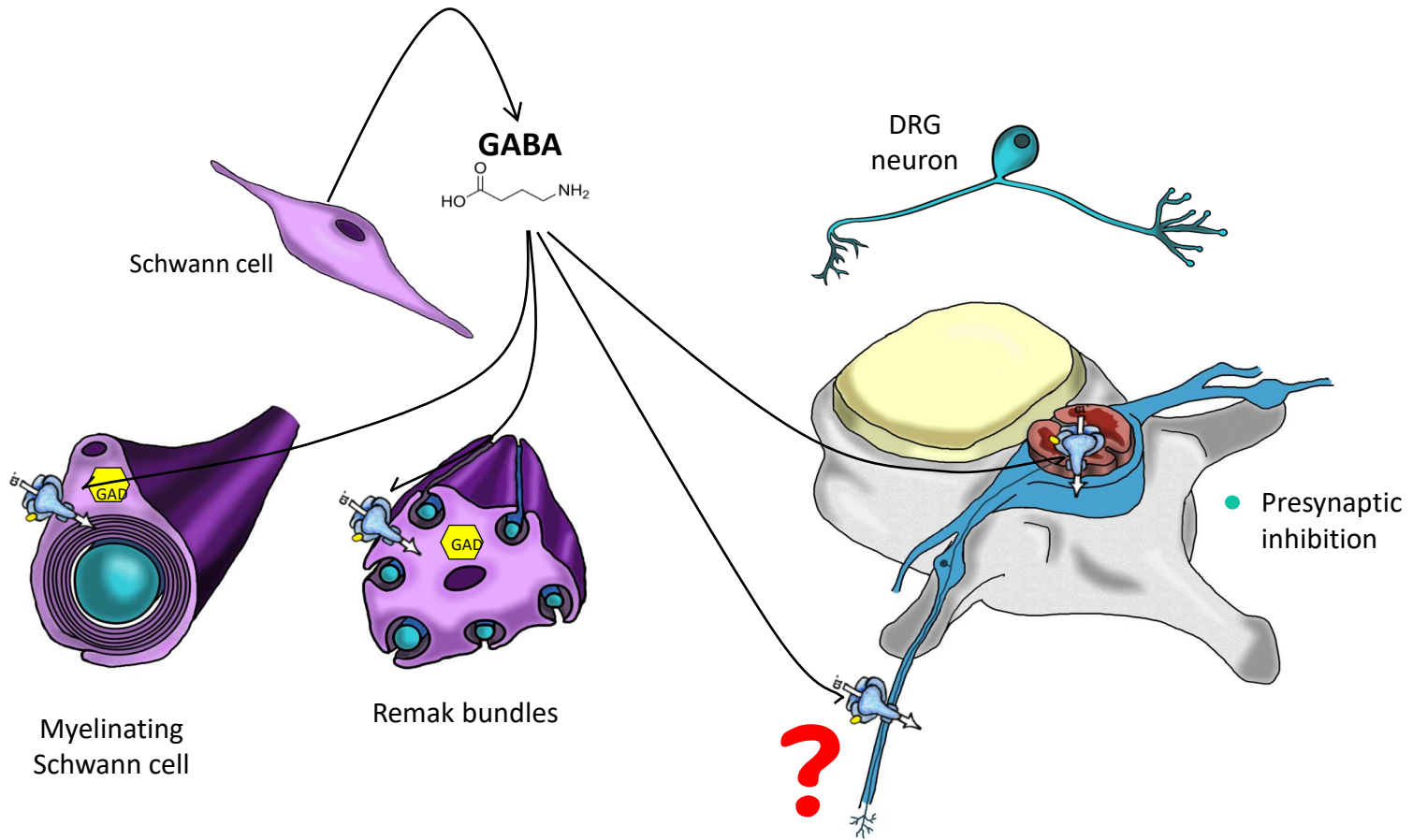
## **GABA machinery** is present in the Schwann cells of the PNS

The Schwann cells are a target but also a source of GABA (synthesis, uptake and release)

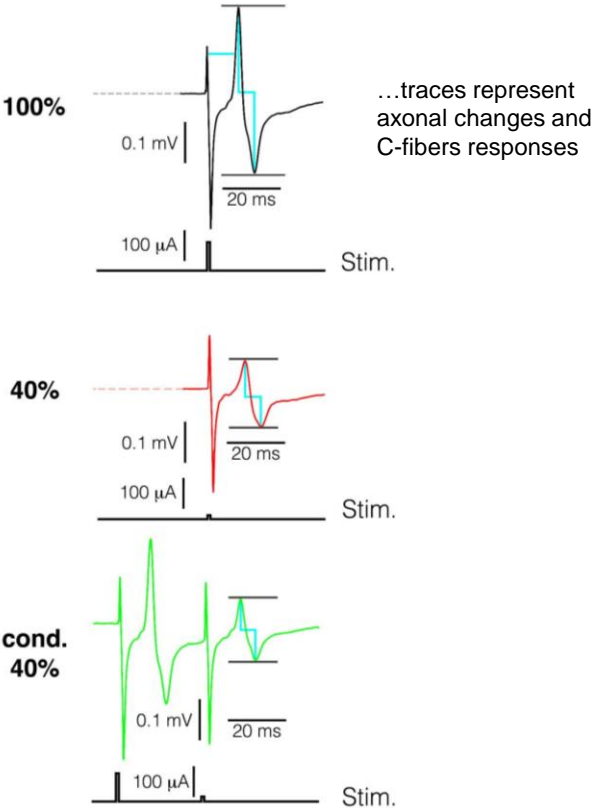
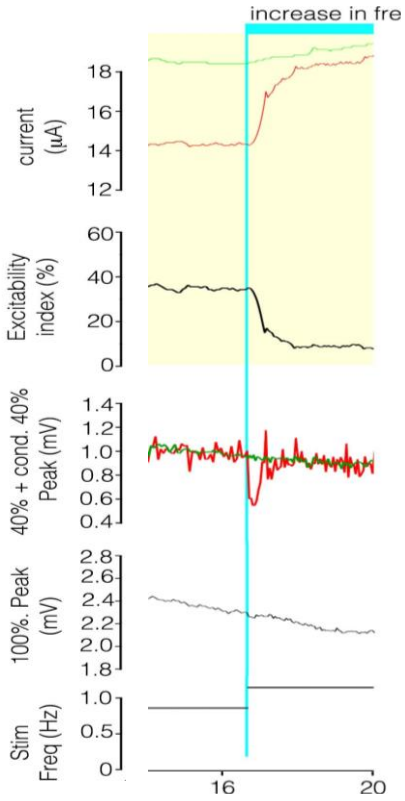
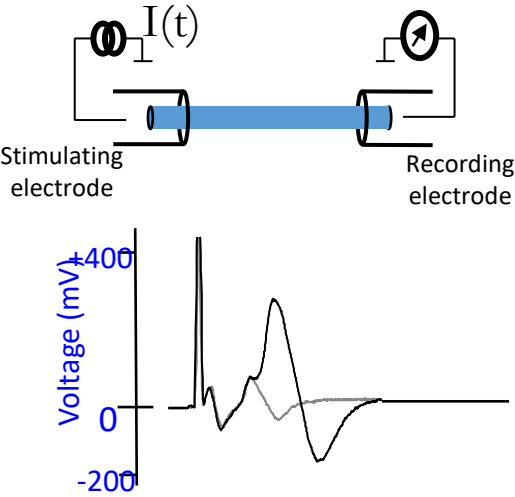
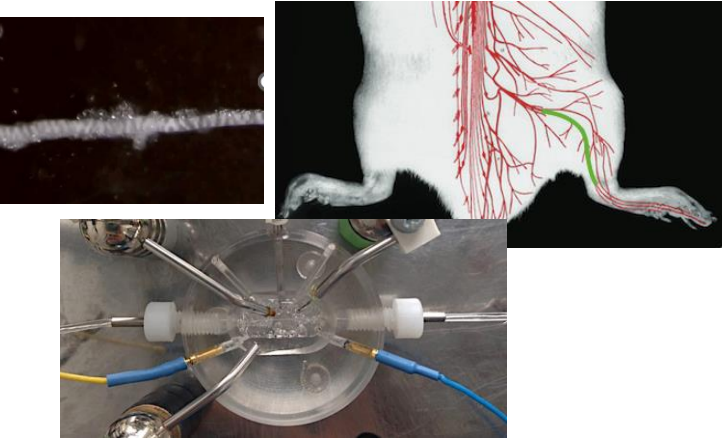
GABA-A rec, via PK-A and PK-C signalling, controls the GABA synthesis and supplies an autocrine loop that in turn regulates proliferation and myelination

GABA-B rec, NRG1-3/Erb signaling, controls the number of unmyelinated fibers likely participating in axonal sorting and nociception



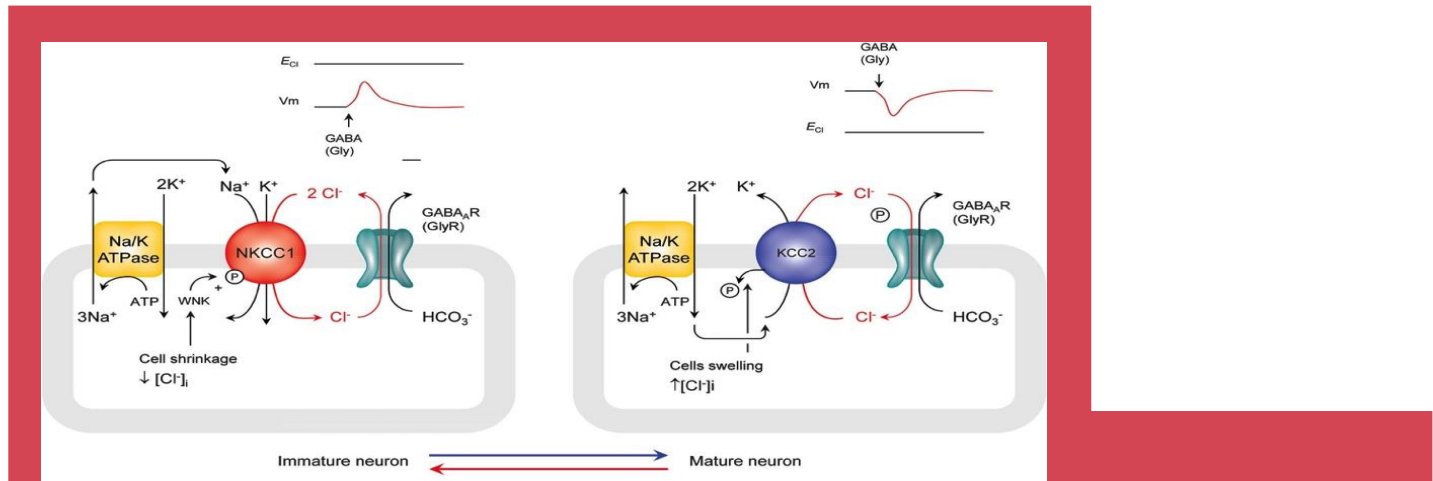
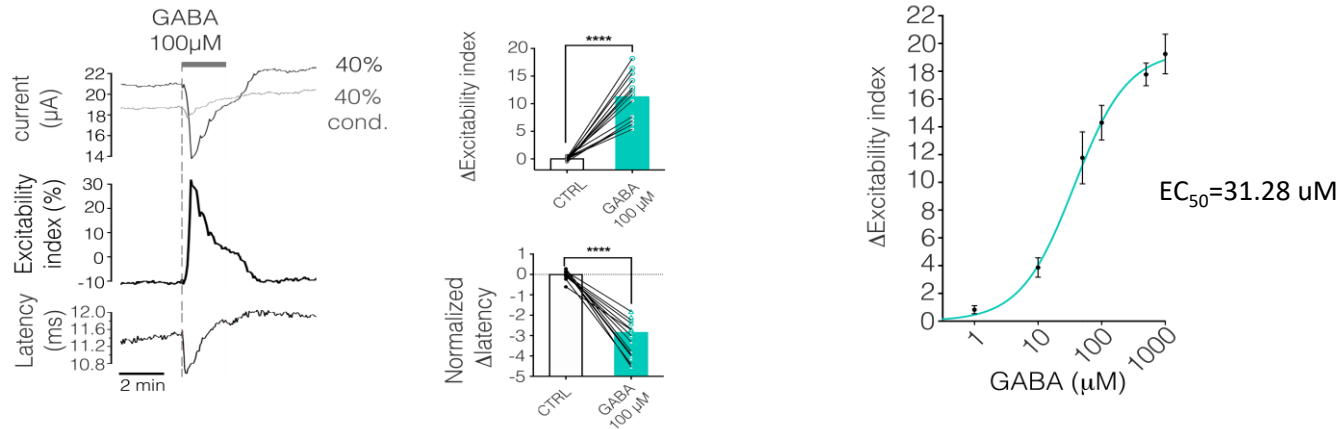


# extracellular recording of Compound Action Potential (CAP) from sural nerve



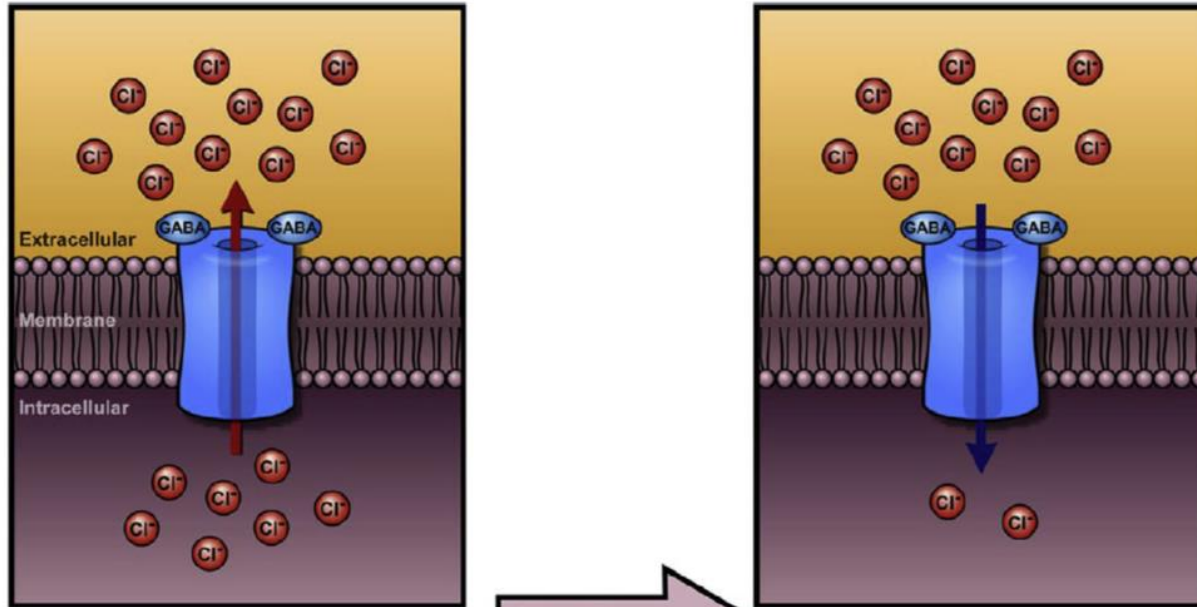
Bonalume et al. J Physiol 2021

# GABA generates an **axonal depolarization** in peripheral sensory C fibers



Bonalume et al. J Physiol 2021

**A**

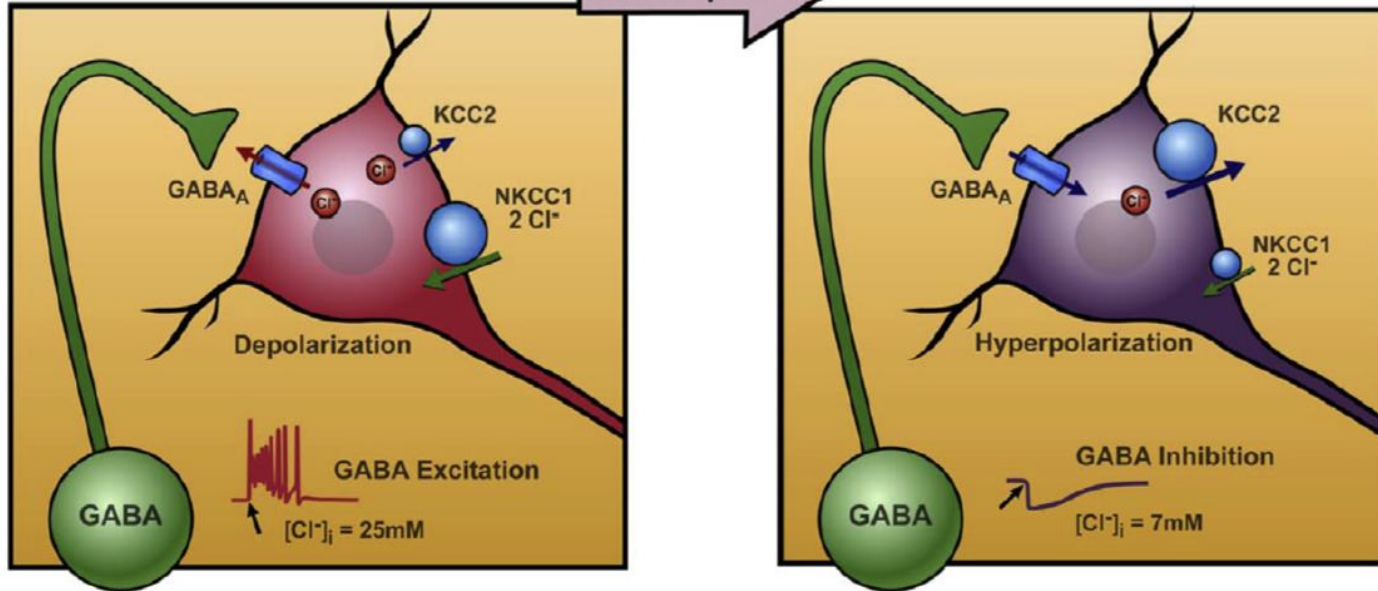


Immature neuron  
GABA **excitatory**

Mature neuron  
GABA **inhibitory**

Development

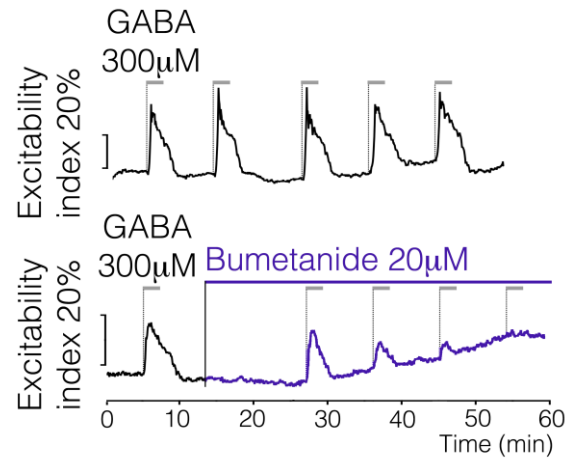
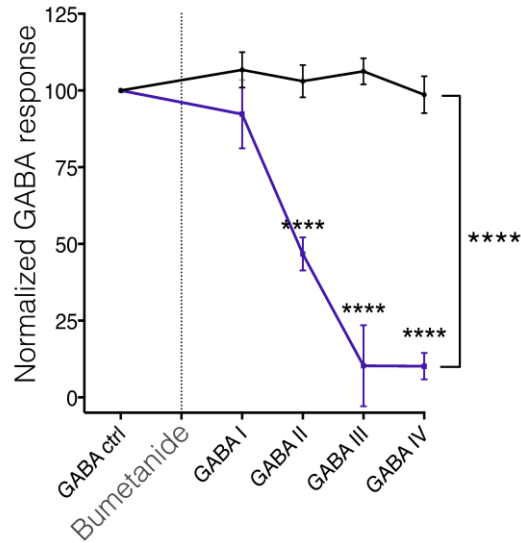
**B**



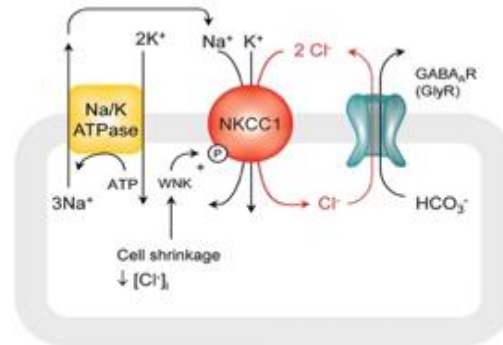
Depolarization & Excitation of immature neurons

Hyperpolarization & Inhibition of adult neurons

# GABA-evoked depolarization, in peripheral sensory C fibers, involves NKCC1

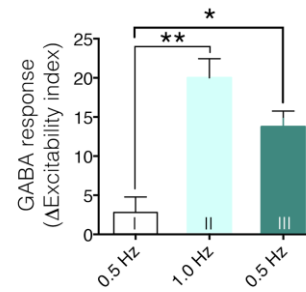
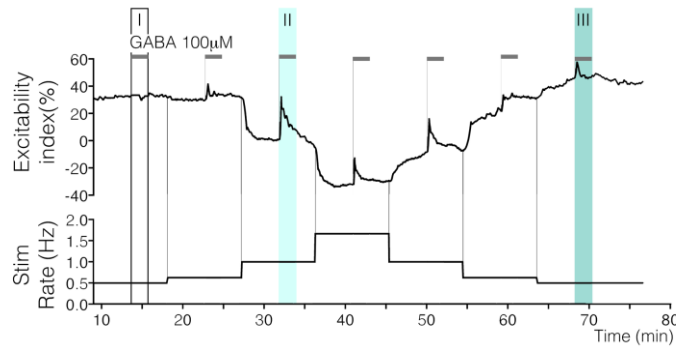


- GABA 300 µM
- GABA 300 µM + Bumetanide 20 µM

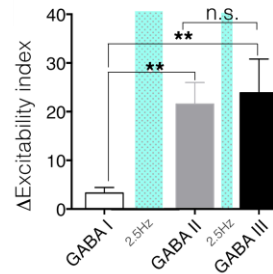
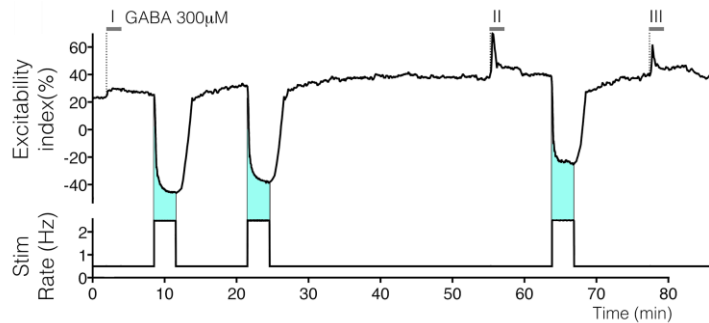


Bonalume et al. *J Physiol* 2021

## GABA depolarization is activity dependent and long-lasting



The high-freq stimulation (up to 2.5 Hz) potentiates the GABA-evoked currents

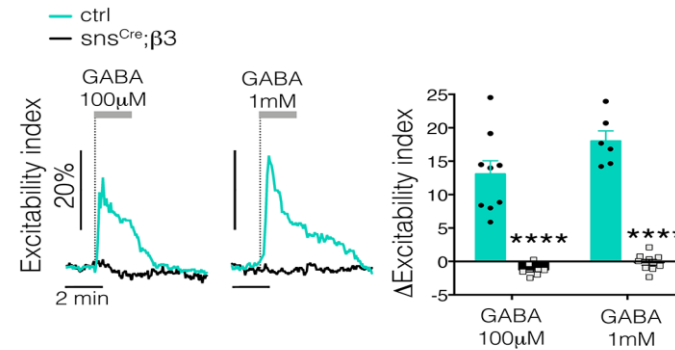
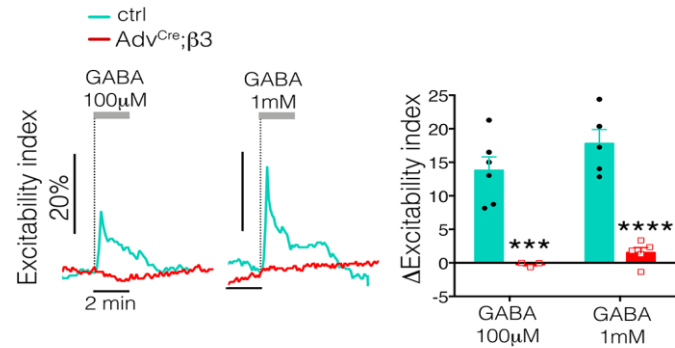
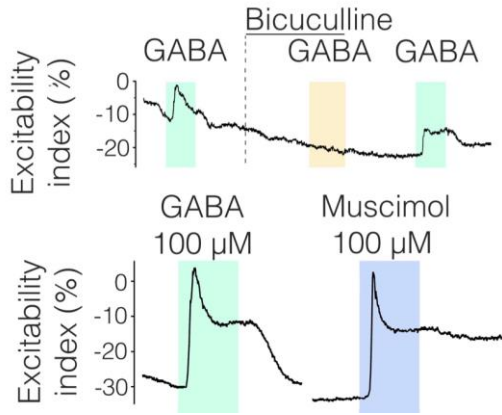


This activity dependent sensitization to GABA is long-lasting

**.....GABA-evoked TONIC depolarization along C-fibers!!**

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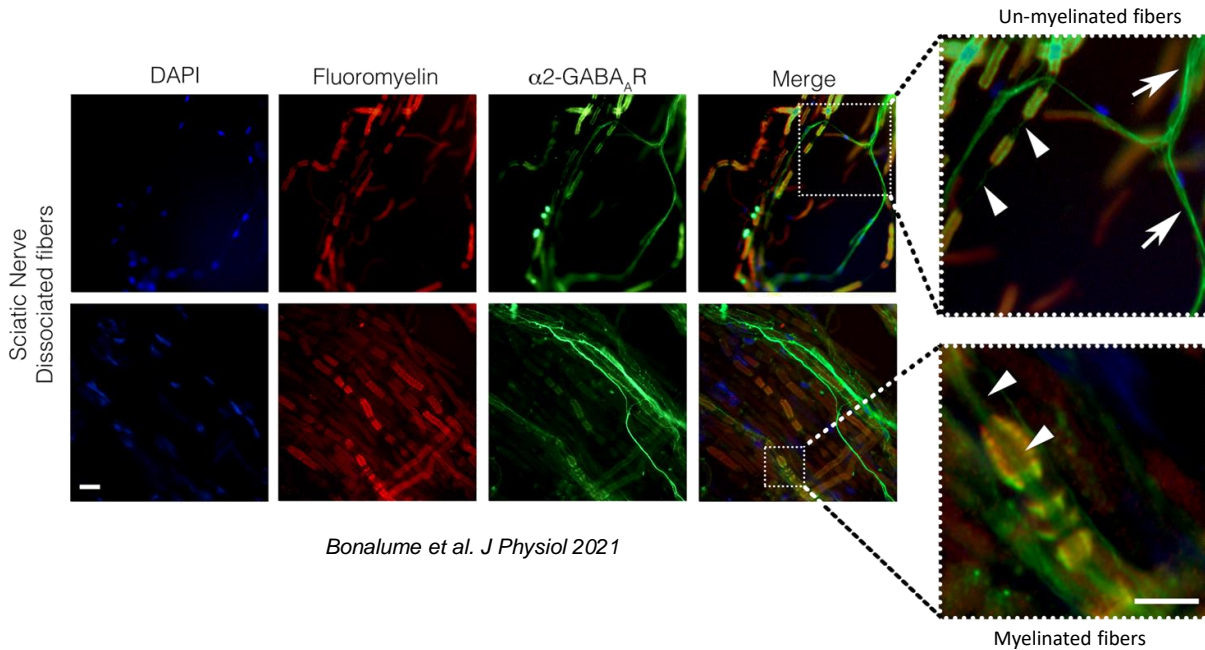
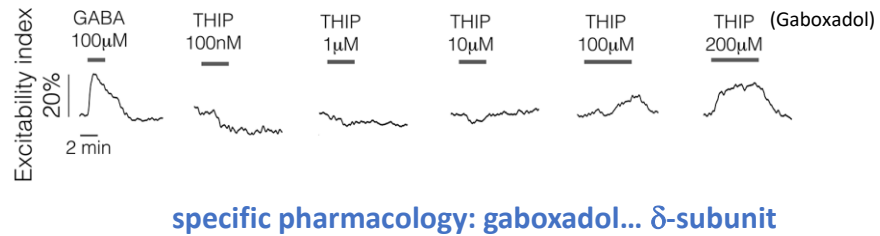
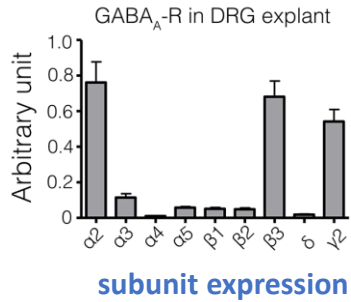
## GABA generates a depolarization in peripheral sensory C fibers



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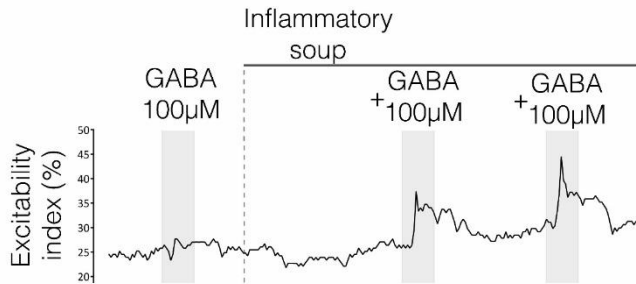
# Axonal GABA<sub>A</sub>R composition in PNS



the peripheral axonal GABA<sub>A</sub>R in nociceptor is mainly formed by a **α2β3γ2** constellation

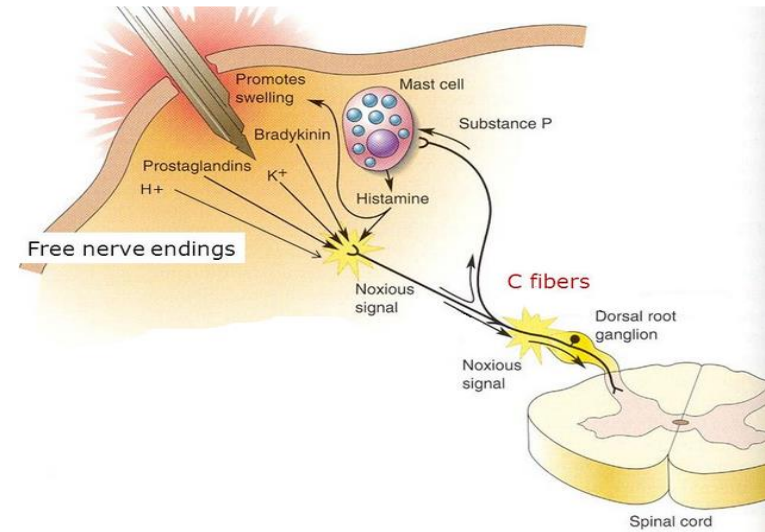
# GABA-evoked depolarization is potentiated by inflammation:

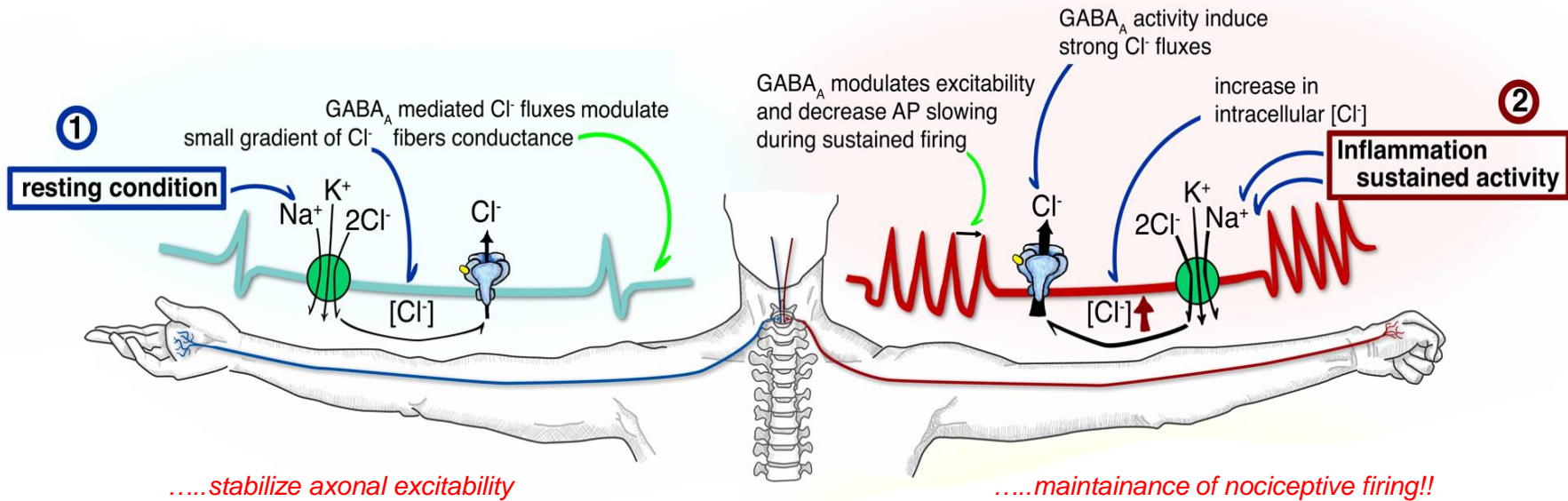
evident and fast depolarization ...



Bonalume et al. J Physiol 2021

## INFLAMMATION: acute and chronic pain





Bonalume and Magnaghi, Neural Reg Res 2023

## SUMMARY of GABA cross-talk in PNS

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- GABA is synthesized and released by Schwann cells
- GABA depolarizes nerve axons and enhances C-fiber excitability via GABA-A rec
- Action potential activity in unmyelinated C-fiber is coupled to NKCC1 activity and Cl<sup>-</sup> flux
- NKCC1 maintains feedforward stabilisation of C-fiber excitability and allows sustained firing, even during inflammation