

Murciano, C, Moyes, D.L., Runglall, M., Islam, A., Mille C., Fradin, C., Poulain, D., Gow, N.A.R. and Naglik J.R. (2011). *Candida albicans* cell wall glycosylation may be indirectly required for activation of epithelial cell proinflammatory responses. *Infection and Immunity* 79, 4902-4911.

Oral epithelial cells discriminate between the yeast and hyphal forms of *Candida albicans* via the mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK) signaling pathway. This occurs through phosphorylation of the MAPK phosphatase MKP1 and activation of the c-Fos transcription factor by the hyphal form. Given that fungal cell wall polysaccharides are critical in host recognition and immune activation in myeloid cells, we sought to determine whether β -glucan and *N*- or *O*-glycosylation was important in activating the MAPK/MKP1/c-Fos hypha-mediated response mechanism and proinflammatory cytokines in oral epithelial cells. Using a series of β -glucan and *N*- and *O*-mannan mutants, we found that *N*-mannosylation (via $\Delta och1$ and $\Delta pmr1$ mutants) and *O*-mannosylation (via $\Delta pmt1$ and $\Delta mnt1 \Delta mnt2$ mutants), but not phosphomannan (via a $\Delta mnn4$ mutant) or β -1,2 mannosylation (via $\Delta bmt1$ to $\Delta bmt6$ mutants), were required for MKP1/c-Fos activation, proinflammatory cytokine production, and cell damage induction. However, the *N*- and *O*-mannan mutants showed reduced adhesion or lack of initial hypha formation at 2 h, resulting in little MKP1/c-Fos activation, or restricted hypha formation/pseudohyphal formation at 24 h, resulting in minimal proinflammatory cytokine production and cell damage. Further, the α -1,6-mannose backbone of the *N*-linked outer chain (corresponding to a $\Delta mnn9$ mutant) may be required for epithelial adhesion, while the α -1,2-mannose component of phospholipomannan (corresponding to a $\Delta mit1$ mutant) may contribute to epithelial cell damage. β -Glucan appeared to play no role in adhesion, epithelial activation, or cell damage. In summary, *N*- and *O*-mannosylation defects affect the ability of *C. albicans* to induce proinflammatory cytokines and damage in oral epithelial cells, but this may be due to indirect effects on fungal pathogenicity rather than mannose residues being direct activators of the MAPK/MKP1/c-Fos hypha-mediated immune response.