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Nucleotides as regulators of bone cell function and mineralisation

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A thesis submitted for the fulfilment of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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University College London

2014

Declaration of authorship

I, Mark Omar Raimes Hajjawi, declare that this thesis titled '**Nucleotides as regulators of bone cell function and mineralisation**' and the work presented in it are my own. I confirm that:

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Abstract

Most cells, including bone cells, release ATP into the extracellular environment. A considerable body of previous work has shown that ATP, acting through the P2 receptors, inhibits bone formation by osteoblasts and increases bone resorption by osteoclasts. This work focuses on the action of two key breakdown products of ATP, pyrophosphate and adenosine on bone cell function. Pyrophosphate, a ubiquitous physicochemical inhibitor of mineralisation, is formed from extracellular ATP by the action of ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase phosphodiesterases (NPPs); in bone these enzymes act in opposition to alkaline phosphatase. Adenosine, which can be generated in a number of ways from ATP, has been previously reported to stimulate both osteoblast and osteoclast function. However, using *in vitro* cultures, I found that it had little or no effect on the differentiation and bone forming capacity of rat osteoblasts, nor on the formation and resorptive function of mouse osteoclasts. I investigated the possibility that osteocytes, which form an interconnected cellular network within bone, might regulate mineralisation via NPPs. I found that cultured, primary osteocyte-like cells derived from mouse bone expressed *Enpp1* mRNA. Osteocyte lacunae in the femora of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice imaged by scanning electron microscopy were found to be reduced in area by about 35%; indirect estimates of lacunar size using microCT imaging were in agreement. These results are consistent with the notion that ATP-derived pyrophosphate is important for maintenance of osteocyte lacunae size. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse bones (humerus) were found to have reduced cortical bone diameter, reduced cortical porosity and an increased endosteal diameter compared to wild types, suggesting that the knockout phenotype also involves increased bone resorption and decreased bone formation. Histology and microCT of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice confirmed inappropriate joint mineralisation and showed that cartilage in the trachea and ear pinna was also mineralised, as were whisker sheaths. Osteoblasts, osteoclasts and osteocytes cultured *in vitro* from *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice were found to release less ATP compared to cells from *Enpp1*^{+/+} mice in static conditions and after fluid flow stimulation. *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts and osteoclasts also contained higher levels of intracellular ATP. *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts showed increased bone production *in vitro* compared to *Enpp1*^{+/+}; no effects of *Enpp1* knockout on the formation or resorptive activity of osteoclasts were noted. Sclerostin, an osteocyte-derived inhibitor of WNT signalling and bone formation, was found to increase *Enpp1* mRNA expression and NPP activity of osteoblasts, without affecting ALP *in vitro*. These results emphasise the importance of ATP and its breakdown product pyrophosphate in regulating mineralisation.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Prof Tim Arnett and Dr Isabel Orriss for giving me the opportunity, and allowing me the privilege, to undertake my PhD under their supervision. Both have given me more than I could ever repay and share a part in any successes I have from this day forwards.

I would also like to thank Prof Alan Boyde from QMUL for performing some of the electron microscopy in this thesis and offering sage words of advice, and Dr Chris Scotton from Exeter University for assisting me in the practical aspects of histology.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife Rachel.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The structure and composition of mammalian bone reflects its dynamic and varied functions. Bone requires mechanical strength because it has a major role in movement and locomotion, yet is also a key endocrine organ and regulator of calcium and phosphate homeostasis. Bone is also the primary site of haematopoiesis and has a key role within the immune system (Schwartz & Heath 1947; Meyer, Jr. *et al.* 1989; Le & Mougiakakos 2012).

Development of the skeleton

Each bone within the mammalian body is different. However, all bones of the mammalian skeleton are formed in one of two different ways, either by intramembranous ossification or endochondral ossification. The bones of the axial skeleton (vertebrae and ribs) and the bones of the appendicular skeleton (limbs) are formed by endochondral ossification. The flat bones of the skull are formed by the process of intramembranous ossification.

Endochondral ossification

Endochondral bone formation involves a cartilaginous template of the bone being created first, which then develops into mineralised bone. During development mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) condense, these cells then differentiate into chondrocytes. Chondrocytes proliferate and secrete type II collagen and aggrecan (chondroitin sulphate proteoglycan 1). Certain chondrocytes in the centre of this embryonic clustering stop proliferating, become hypertrophic, and begin to secrete a matrix rich in collagen type X. These hypertrophic chondrocytes signal to perichondral cells to influence their differentiation into osteoblasts. The osteoblasts begin to form a collar of bone. The hypertrophic chondrocytes also attract blood vessels and cause them to invade the tissue by releasing vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF). The hypertrophic chondrocytes then undergo

apoptosis, leaving behind a scaffold composed of type 2 collagen. There is evidence to suggest that these chondrocytes do not undergo apoptosis in a classical way, but undergo “chondroapoptosis”, which is preceded by an increase in the endoplasmic reticulum and Golgi apparatus of the cell (Roach & Clarke 2000). The chondrocytes further away from the hypertrophic chondrocytes continue to proliferate; this causes the bone to lengthen. As the bone enlarges further secondary ossification sites appear at the ends of the bone in a very similar process. In the long bones, the cartilage that remains between the primary and secondary ossification centres is called the growth plate (epiphyseal plate). In the growth plate below the secondary ossification centre, proliferating chondrocytes form orderly columns, these cells act to continue lengthening the bone postnatally (reviewed in Ortega *et al.* 2004).

Intramembranous ossification

Like endochondral ossification, intramembranous ossification starts with mesenchymal condensations. During intramembranous ossification MSCs differentiate directly into osteoblasts, without the intermediate collagen scaffold formation by chondrocytes. In the mammalian skull, neural crest derived MSCs proliferate and form the flat bones (Helms *et al.* 2005). The calvarial sutures form where two opposing bone formation fronts meet.

Bone cells

Osteoblasts

Osteoblasts are the bone forming cells; they are formed from MSCs by a multistep series of events. MSCs can differentiate into a number of different cell types, such as adipocytes (Friedenstein *et al.* 1976), chondrocytes (Mardon *et al.* 1987), myocytes (Wakitani *et al.* 1995) and fibroblasts (Friedenstein *et al.* 1987). MSCs are found in a wide variety of tissues: the Wharton’s jelly of an umbilical cord (Lee *et al.* 2004), adipose tissue (Zuk *et al.* 2002), amniotic fluid (Sessarego *et al.* 2008) and muscle (Jankowski *et al.* 2002). It has been suggested that MSCs can be found circulating in the blood (Eghbali-Fatourehchi *et al.* 2005; Kassis *et al.* 2006; He *et al.* 2007). Pools of MSCs reside in the bone marrow stroma; it is believed that it is

from these MSCs that osteoblasts develop (Haynesworth *et al.* 1992; Pittenger *et al.* 1999).

A number of studies have identified key genes which mediate the differentiation of MSCs. The formation of adipocytes is promoted by *PPAR γ* and *C/EBP α* (Mueller *et al.* 2002; Tang *et al.* 2003), the formation of chondrocytes from MSCs requires *Sox9* (de *et al.* 2000) and the formation of myocytes is under the control of *MyoD* (Emerson 1990). The formation of osteoblasts from MSCs requires a number of factors, including: *Runx2* (previously known as *cbfa1*) (Banerjee *et al.* 1997; Ducy *et al.* 1997; Komori *et al.* 1997), *Osterix* (Nakashima *et al.* 2002; Skillington *et al.* 2002), WNTs (Monroe *et al.* 2012) and bone morphogenic proteins (BMPs) (Urist 1965).

Runx2^{-/-} mice have been shown to have a normal cartilaginous skeleton at day 15 of gestation, but it was under mineralised compared to wild type skeletons (Komori *et al.* 1997; Otto *et al.* 1997). By day 18 of gestation, wild type mice tibias had developed a bone marrow cavity and were showing signs of vasculature invasion into the bone, whereas *Runx2*^{-/-} mice had neither of these developments, indicating the importance of *Runx2* in early bone formation and mineralisation. These *Runx2*^{-/-} mice did not form osteoblasts, had reduced alkaline phosphatase (ALP) activity and died immediately after birth. They died of asphyxiation due to the hypomineralisation of the rib cage; ribs lacking deposited mineral are not strong enough to provide the negative pressure needed for lung expansion (Komori *et al.* 1997; Otto *et al.* 1997). In addition to osteoblast formation, *Runx2* is required for osteoblast function. Osteocalcin, is an osteoblast specific calcium binding protein, the expression of which is under the control of *Runx2* (Ducy *et al.* 1997). Osteocalcin has been reported to be important in bone mineral deposition (Boskey *et al.* 2002) and induces chemotaxis in osteoclasts (Chenu *et al.* 1994). Further evidence is developing that shows decarboxylated-osteocalcin may stimulate the secretion of insulin from the pancreas (Lee *et al.* 2007; Ferron *et al.* 2008).

The expression of the zinc finger containing transcription factor *Osterix* (*Osx*) is under the control of *Runx2*; the expression of *Osterix* is reduced in *Runx2*^{-/-} mice (Nakashima *et al.* 2002). However, the expression of *Runx2* is not affected in *Osx*^{-/-}

mice (Nishio *et al.* 2006), indicating that Osterix acts downstream of *Runx2*. Similar to *Runx2*^{-/-} mice, *Osx*^{-/-} mice lack osteoblasts and have an unmineralised skeleton, but there are phenotypic differences between *Runx2*^{-/-} mice and *Osx*^{-/-} mice. Knockout of *Runx2* leads to an underdeveloped perichondrium (outer layer of connective tissue) in the mid shaft of long bones, whereas knockout of *Osx* causes ectopic cartilage formation beneath a thickened perichondrium (Nakashima *et al.* 2002). Osterix appears to work cooperatively with nuclear factor for activated T-cells 2 (NFAT2) to regulate the expression of extra cellular-matrix proteins, such as type I collagen, by osteoblasts (Koga *et al.* 2005).

Other transcription factors are needed for osteoblast differentiation. Activating transcription factor 4 (ATF4) plays a role in the late stage differentiation of osteoblasts. ATF4 is a member of the basic leucine zipper domain transcription factor family and is a substrate of ribosomal S6 kinase 2 (RSK2), a growth factor regulated kinase. A missense mutation in *ATF4* is the cause of Coffin-Lowry syndrome, which is characterised by skeletal abnormalities (Yang *et al.* 2004). People with this syndrome have incomplete closure of the fontanelles, the “soft spot” of the skull and delayed bone development (Lowry *et al.* 1971). *ATF4*^{-/-} mice have defects in long bone mineralisation; however, knock out of *ATF4* does not affect *Runx2* or *Osx* expression (Reimold *et al.* 1996). So it can be seen that ATF4 acts as an important transcription factor downstream of *Runx2* and *Osx*. *ATF4*^{-/-} mice also have reduced expression of osteocalcin and receptor activator of nuclear factor kappaβ ligand (RANKL), two osteoblast associated factors (Reimold *et al.* 1996). ATF4 promotes amino acid uptake into the osteoblast, a process that may support the protein synthesis function of osteoblasts (Yang *et al.* 2004). *ATF4* also interacts with Forkhead box O (FoxO) proteins in osteoblasts to regulate glucose homeostasis (Kode *et al.* 2012). Factor inhibiting activating transcription factor 4 (FIAT) is a leucine zipper protein which is an inhibitor of ATF4. When over-expressed in transgenic mice FIAT reduced osteocalcin, bone mineral density, bone volume and trabecular thickness (Yu *et al.* 2005).

MSCs that differentiate down the osteoblast lineage *in vivo* can give rise to preosteoblasts, mature osteoblasts, osteocytes and bone-lining cells. Preosteoblasts may express some of the phenotypic markers of osteoblasts, for example ALP, but at lower levels. However, they lack many of the defining characteristics of mature osteoblasts, such as a well-developed endoplasmic reticulum, necessary for its matrix secretory role. On quiescent surfaces where bone remodelling is not taking place, the osteoblasts flatten to become lining cells. The bone-lining cells form a barrier between the extracellular fluid and the bone. It is thought that the lining cells may play a role in regulating the movement of calcium and phosphate in and out of the local bone environment (Miller & Jee 1987). The mature osteoblasts synthesise and secrete an extracellular matrix, osteoid, which provides the site for mineral deposition (Komori *et al.* 1997).

Osteocytes

Some osteoblasts differentiate into osteocytes. Osteocytes are the most numerous bone cell; they reside within lacunae, bathed in fluid, surrounded by mineralised matrix. These cells are dispersed throughout bone and are connected to each other by dendritic processes that pass down thin canals, called canaliculi. These dendrites allow the osteocytes to communicate with each other and with other cells on the surface of the bone. The canaliculi allow osteocytes to communicate in a paracrine and endocrine manner by enabling hormones, and other signalling molecules to reach the circulatory system. The canaliculi system also results in the osteocyte having a large surface area of interaction with the bone (reviewed in Bonewald 2011).

The process by which an osteoblast is converted into an embedded osteocyte is not fully understood. Osteoblasts have a slightly different gene expression profile based on their age and location within bone, this may affect their chance of becoming an osteocyte (Candelieri *et al.* 2001). It has been shown that mouse osteocytes release osteoblast stimulating factor-1 (OSF-1) / heparin binding growth associated molecule (HB-GAM), possibly to recruit and further differentiate osteoblasts into osteocytes (Imai *et al.* 2009). The first step of this differentiation

process involves the osteoblast becoming passively buried under the matrix that it, or a neighbouring osteoblast has produced (Franz-Odenaal *et al.* 2006). However, the whole process of osteocytogenesis is not a passive one, the collagen-lytic activity of matrix metalloproteinase I is required to help embed the osteoblast (Holmbeck *et al.* 2005). The change from an osteoblast to an osteocyte is a gradual process, starting with the down-regulation of osteoblast specific genes such as: ALP, type I collagen and osteocalcin, and with the concordant up-regulation of osteocyte specific genes including: dentine matrix protein-1 (*DMP1*), *E11*, sclerostin (*Sost*) and fibroblast growth factor 23 (*FGF23*) (Schulze *et al.* 1999; Toyosawa *et al.* 2001; Winkler *et al.* 2003; Ubaidus *et al.* 2009). It is not clear if these factors “make an osteocyte”, or “define an osteocyte”. As the cell progresses from being an osteoblast to an osteocyte, it reduces in volume by approximately 70% (Palumbo 1986). The osteocyte also loses some of the osteoblast defining intracellular characteristics, such as the well-developed endoplasmic reticulum and Golgi apparatus (Dudley & Spiro 1961).

The *E11* gene is expressed by early, immature osteocytes; it is a hydrophobic membrane protein that appears to play a role in the formation of dendrites. The addition of the *E11* protein to the osteocyte-like cell line MLO-Y4 resulted in the elongation of the cell’s dendrites (Zhang *et al.* 2006). It was also seen that MLO-A5 osteocyte-like cells increase their expression of *E11* when they are surrounded by mineralised extracellular matrix (Prideaux *et al.* 2012). *E11* is also expressed in endothelial cells, kidney and lung, where it is known as GP38, podoplanin and T1 α , respectively. Knockout of the *E11* gene resulted in mice that died at birth of respiratory failure (Ramirez *et al.* 2003). Fluid shear stress upon MLO-Y4 cells resulted in increased expression of *E11*; prevention of *E11* translation using small interfering RNA resulted in decreased dendrite length (Zhang *et al.* 2006).

Dentine matrix protein-1 (*DMP1*) is an extracellular matrix protein that was first discovered in rat teeth (George *et al.* 1993). In postnatal mammals, *DMP1* is predominantly expressed by osteocytes (Toyosawa *et al.* 2001); prenatally, *DMP1* is also expressed by hypertrophic chondrocytes and osteoblasts (Fen *et al.* 2002).

DMP1 knockout mice had defects in their osteocyte canaliculi system and delayed osteocyte development (Lu *et al.* 2011). One of the main functions of *DMP1* may be as a regulator of matrix mineralisation (He & George 2004). Knockout of *DMP1* in mice increased the concentration of circulating FGF23, and resulted in hypophosphatemia, osteomalacia, and rickets (Feng *et al.* 2006). Conversely, over expression of *DMP1* in mice was shown to have no effect in some models (Lu *et al.* 2011), but was seen to increase bone mineral density in other mice models (Bhatia *et al.* 2012). Humans with loss-of-function mutations in *DMP1* suffer from autosomal recessive hypophosphatemic rickets (Feng *et al.* 2006).

Osteocytes and osteoblasts are the main source of the circulating hormone FGF23 (Ubaidus *et al.* 2009). FGF23 acts via the FGF receptor (FGFR) on the cell surface, its affinity for this receptor is increased by the protein cofactor klotho (Martin *et al.* 2012). The main role of FGF23 is to inhibit renal phosphate reabsorption by sodium phosphate transporters (type 2a), therefore increasing urinary phosphate loss (Shimada *et al.* 2005). FGF23 also inhibits the formation of 1,25-dihydroxyvitamin D from 25-hydroxyvitamin D, by suppressing the enzyme CYP27B1 in the kidney; this reduces the amount of the active form of vitamin D in the circulation (Shimada *et al.* 2005). FGF23 may also increase the amount of 24,25-dihydroxyvitamin D formed from 25-hydroxyvitamin D by up-regulating CYP24 in the proximal tubule of the kidney, resulting in a higher circulating amount of the inactive form of vitamin D (Shimada *et al.* 2005). In both humans and mice, over production or gain-of-function mutations in *Fgf23* leads to autosomal dominant hypophosphatemic rickets (ADHR) (White *et al.* 2000; Shimada *et al.* 2002). Tumour-induced osteomalacia may have symptoms very similar to ADHR, FGF23 secreted by the tumour can be a cause of a low plasma phosphate concentration in these patients (Zimering *et al.* 2005).

Matrix extracellular phosphoglycoprotein (MEPE) is a member of the small integrin-binding ligand N-linked glycoprotein (SIBLING) family of proteins; these are proteins that seem to have no similarities when their amino acid sequences are compared, but are all located in the same chromosomal region (4q.21 in humans

and 5q in mice), all display an arg-gly-asp motif that mediates cell binding and attachment and all are associated with bone and dentine (Huq *et al.* 2005). The members of the SIBLING family are osteopontin (OPN), bone sialoprotein (BSP), DMP1, dentine sialophosphoprotein and MEPE. MEPE is expressed by both osteoblasts and osteocytes; it plays an important role in the mineralisation of bone. Knockout of MEPE leads to an increased bone mass in mice and increased osteoblast number and activity in culture (Gowen *et al.* 2003). Mice that over-express MEPE form osteoblasts normally but have a mineralisation defect due to decreased osteoblast activity (David *et al.* 2009). Administration of the MEPE protein to mice leads to phosphaturia and decreased plasma phosphate levels (Rowe *et al.* 2004). MEPE is cleaved to release a peptide that contains an acid serine and aspartic acid-rich motif (ASARM) which inhibits mineralisation (Martin *et al.* 2008). Phosphate regulating endopeptidase x-linked (PHEX) interacts with MEPE to prevent the release of the ASARM peptide. Humans with X-linked hypophosphatemic rickets (XLH) and the *Hyp* mouse, have defects in the *Phex* gene, this results in an inability to prevent the release of ASARM and leads to impaired mineralisation (Bresler *et al.* 2004; Rowe *et al.* 2005).

Along with the control of mineralisation, one of the main functions of osteocytes is thought to be the detection of mechanical force on the bone. Under normal conditions the rate of bone formation and loss is balanced. However, the skeleton is able to remodel and adapt to its mechanical environment by adding or removing bone. So, a bone under a high amount of mechanical force will adapt by increasing its mineralised tissue volume and / or density, a bone under little mechanical force will lose mineralised tissue volume and / or density (Skerry *et al.* 1989; Burr *et al.* 2002; Tatsumi *et al.* 2007; Klein-Nulend *et al.* 2013).

Various studies have shown that when force is applied to a bone the osteocytes respond by increasing the expression of DMP1 (Gluhak-Heinrich *et al.* 2003; Yang *et al.* 2005a) and E11 (Zhang *et al.* 2006), which may result in bone formation. Mechanical loading has been shown to down-regulate the expression of sclerostin, an inhibitor of WNT signalling and bone formation (Robling *et al.* 2006), whereas

unloading of the hind limbs of a mouse has been shown to up-regulate the expression of sclerostin, which would inhibit bone formation (Lin *et al.* 2009). Targeted deletion of all of the osteocytes within bone using diphtheria toxin resulted in mice that were resistant to unloading-induced bone loss (Tatsumi *et al.* 2007). It has also been shown that unloading of mouse hind legs increased the osteocytes' expression of RANKL, a potent cytokine required for osteoclast formation, which can lead to bone loss (Xiong *et al.* 2011).

It is believed that osteocytes are able to dissolve the non-organic matrix of the internal wall of their own lacunae by a process of osteolytic osteolysis (Belanger *et al.* 1967; Qing & Bonewald 2009; Atkins & Findlay 2012). In support of this theory, osteocyte-like cell lines have been reported to express the genes for tartrate-resistant acid phosphatase (TRAP) and a lysosomal proton pump, both are associated with bone resorption (Tazawa *et al.* 2004; Bivi *et al.* 2009). It has been reported that both PTH treatment and lactation result in enlargement of the osteocyte lacunae; it is believed that this dissolution of the lacunae may contribute to net circulating calcium and phosphate concentrations (Tazawa *et al.* 2004; Qing *et al.* 2012). However, the theory of osteolytic osteolysis is disputed (Parfitt 1977; Boyde & Jones 1979).

It has also been reported that osteocytes can actively replace the mineral and matrix within their lacunae (Baylink & Wergedal 1971; Zamboni *et al.* 1983). It has been reported that the osteocyte lacunae size increased in lactating mice and then returned back to the baseline size with weaning (Qing *et al.* 2012), suggesting that osteocytes are able to remodel their lacunae.

Osteoclasts

Osteoclasts are bone resorbing cells; they are motile and usually multinucleated. Osteoclasts are required for breaking down bone, so it can be reformed and remodelled during skeletal development and throughout adult life. Osteoclasts are formed from monocyte / macrophage precursors (reviewed in Arnett 2013a). Unlike osteoblasts and osteocytes, osteoclasts are formed from the haemopoietic

stem cell lineage. The source of osteoclasts was first elucidated in the 1970s when mice suffering from osteopetrosis, a condition resulting in excess bone, caused by an osteoclast defect, were cured by a bone marrow transplant, a spleen graft or a temporary parabiosis, allowing the blood of a wild type mouse to be shared with an affected mouse (Walker 1973; Walker 1975a; Walker 1975b).

The formation of monocytes and macrophages, from which osteoclasts are derived, requires the transcription factor PU.1 (Scott *et al.* 1994; Anderson *et al.* 1998). Knockout of PU.1 in mice results not only in the inability to produce monocytes and macrophages, but also osteopetrosis due to a lack of osteoclasts (Tondravi *et al.* 1997). This form of osteopetrosis was cured in PU.1^{-/-} mice by a bone marrow transplant. In the initial stages of monocyte and macrophage development from haemopoetic stem cells, PU.1 stimulates the expression of C-fms, the macrophage colony-stimulating factor (M-CSF) receptor (DeKoter *et al.* 1998).

M-CSF is a critical cytokine for the generation of osteoclasts. The osteopetrotic mouse strain op/op has an inactivating mutation in the M-CSF gene. This lack of M-CSF results in a severe reduction in osteoclasts and in osteopetrosis, which cannot be overcome by a bone marrow transplant (Yoshida *et al.* 1990). However, injection of these mice with M-CSF restores the osteoclast defect and treats the osteopetrosis (Felix *et al.* 1990).

RANKL is a member of the tumour necrosis factor (TNF) cytokine family; it is expressed by osteoblasts, osteocytes, stromal cells and activated T-cells (Yasuda *et al.* 1998; Kong *et al.* 1999b; Nakashima *et al.* 2011; Xiong *et al.* 2011). RANKL exists in both soluble and membrane bound forms, it acts on osteoclast precursor cells, via its receptor, RANK, and via the TNF receptor associated proteins, TRAF2, TRAF5 and TRAF6. This activates the nuclear transcription factor nuclear factor $\kappa\beta$ (NF $\kappa\beta$), which in turn activates the transcription factor of activated T-cells (NFATc1) (Franzoso *et al.* 1997; Iotsova *et al.* 1997). Activation of RANK signalling by RANKL leads to an increase in multinucleated osteoclasts. RANKL up-regulates the expression of the genes that cause the fusion of preosteoclast precursors: dendritic

cell stimulatory transmembrane protein (DC-STAMP) and osteoclast stimulatory transmembrane protein (OC-STAMP) (Miyamoto *et al.* 2012). Loss of function mutations in human RANK (Guerrini *et al.* 2008) or RANKL (Sobacchi *et al.* 2007), and knockout of RANK (Dougall *et al.* 1999) or RANKL (Kong *et al.* 1999a) in mice leads to an inability to form osteoclasts and therefore causes severe osteopetrosis and failure of tooth eruption. Over-expression of RANKL in humans, caused by factors such as tumours, resulted in extensive pathological osteolysis (Grimaud *et al.* 2003).

The actions of RANKL are inhibited by osteoprotegerin (OPG), a soluble decoy receptor that binds to RANKL and prevents its interaction with RANK (Simonet *et al.* 1997). Inactivating mutations in the OPG gene (*Tnfrs11b*) in humans results in Paget's disease due to excessive osteoclast activity (Whyte *et al.* 2002). In mice, over-expression of OPG, or injection with recombinant OPG, reduced osteoclast formation and caused osteopetrosis (Simonet *et al.* 1997).

The RANK-RANKL-OPG axis is one of the most important signalling pathways in the development of osteoclasts. NFATc1 is the transcription factor most strongly induced by RANKL and may represent the master gene in osteoclast formation (Takayanagi *et al.* 2002). Knock out of NFATc1 in mice caused them to die *in utero* because the pulmonary and aortic valves did not develop (de la Pompa *et al.* 1998; Ranger *et al.* 1998). Osteoblast targeted ablation of NFATc1 in mice, which prevented the lethal defects, resulted in a reduction in osteoclast number and size, and severe osteopetrosis (Winslow *et al.* 2006). Over expression of NFATc1 in mice led to a large increase in the number of osteoclasts formed *in vivo* (Winslow *et al.* 2006).

Osteoclasts have to attach to the bone surface in order to resorb it. The attachment and binding of the osteoclast to the bone surface occurs primarily through the $\alpha\beta3$ integrin (vitronectin receptor) (Davies *et al.* 1989; Nakamura *et al.* 1999). This integrin forms part of a structure known as a podosome that contains actin filaments, cortactin, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome proteins and other attachment proteins such as vinculin and talin (Luxenburg *et al.* 2007). The $\alpha\beta3$

integrin recognises and binds to the arg-gly-asp (RGD) amino acid motif of proteins embedded in the matrix of bone (Horton *et al.* 1991). Knockout mice deficient in the $\beta 3$ integrin are able to form osteoclasts, yet these osteoclasts are not able to sufficiently bind to mineralised surfaces for resorption to occur (McHugh *et al.* 2000).

When an osteoclast attaches onto bone, the podosomes rearrange into a ring known as the sealing zone, which anchors the osteoclast onto the bone surface, and results in the formation of a compartment underneath the cell where bone resorption can take place. Podosome formation is under the control of c-Src, a tyrosine kinase and Rho (a GTPase) (Jurdic *et al.* 2006). Knock out of c-Src in mice resulted in osteopetrosis because the osteoclasts that these mice formed were unable to breakdown bone (Soriano *et al.* 1991). Src kinases phosphorylate many substrates, including cortactin and gelsolin, which regulate actin polymerisation and podosome turnover (De, V *et al.* 1997; Tehrani *et al.* 2007). Within the sealing zone, the cell membrane of the osteoclast develops the ruffled border. This highly convoluted folded membrane allows a large surface area of the osteoclast to interact with the bone.

The ruffled border of the osteoclast contains the vacuolar-type H^+ ATPase proton pump. This actively pumps protons out of the osteoclast, across the ruffled border, and into the sealed resorption compartment covering the surface of the bone (Blair *et al.* 1989). This acidifies the compartment and results in the “acid etching” of the bone. The protons secreted by the v-ATPase are mainly formed by the actions of carbonic anhydrase II; this also results in the formation of bicarbonate. This bicarbonate is passively exchanged for chloride ions at the basolateral membrane of the osteoclast (Blair *et al.* 1993). In order to maintain the intracellular pH and electrochemical charge of the osteoclast, these negatively charged chloride ions are expelled from the cells across the ruffled border into the resorption zone by the ClC-7 chloride channel (Brandt & Jentsch 1995). Knock out of ClC-7 channel in mice results in osteoclasts that are unable to resorb bone and severe osteopetrosis.

Defects in the CIC-7 Cl⁻ channel have been detected in humans, and shown to be a cause of malignant osteopetrosis (Kornak *et al.* 2001).

This acid environment that the osteoclast forms is able to dissolve hydroxyapatite, but for the complete destruction of bone, and the degradation of demineralised bone matrix, enzymatic digestion is required. Cathepsin K is an enzyme expressed by activated osteoclasts and secreted into the sealed resorption zone, where it cleaves all three chains of the type 1 collagen triple helix and the telopeptides (Costa *et al.* 2011a). A genetic defect in the gene encoding cathepsin K results in the rare condition pycnodysostosis. Humans with this loss of function mutation in cathepsin K have a short stature and skeletal malformations (Gelb *et al.* 1996). Cathepsin K knockout mice have increased bone mass due to impaired bone resorption; these mice formed osteoclasts which had little resorptive activity, resulting in impaired bone remodelling (Saftig *et al.* 1998; Li *et al.* 2006).

The matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs) are also secreted across the ruffled border of osteoclasts and degrade the organic component of bone (Delaisse *et al.* 2003). MMPs are generally regarded as contributing less to matrix degradation than cathepsin K; however, MMP knockout mice show skeletal defects. Knockout mice deficient in MMP9 and MMP13 have defects of the growth plate due to reduced osteoclast resorptive function (Vu *et al.* 1998; Inada *et al.* 2004). Osteoclasts express tartrate resistant acid phosphatase (TRAP). TRAP generates reactive oxygen species that may also aid in matrix degradation. TRAP knockout mice have reduced osteoclast activity and mild osteopetrosis (Hayman & Cox 2003). In histology and cell culture experiments, TRAP activity is used as a convenient marker for osteoclasts.

The activation of osteoclasts requires the up-regulation of key genes needed for resorption. The acidification of the osteoclast's extracellular environment is the key factor in the activation of resorption *in vitro* (Arnett & Dempster 1986). Extracellular acidification stimulates the formation of the podosome and the expression of the machinery needed for resorption: carbonic anhydrase II, v-type H⁺ ATPase, cathepsin K and TRAP (Teti *et al.* 1989; Murrills *et al.* 1993; Arnett

2010). After the initial activation by acidosis, other factors can influence the rate of resorption by osteoclasts, such as, PTH (Dempster *et al.* 2005), RANKL (Burgess *et al.* 1999), ATP / ADP (Morrison *et al.* 1998; Hoebertz *et al.* 2001). The key factor in the long term survival of the osteoclast is the RANKL / OPG ratio; reduction in RANKL or an increase in OPG leads to apoptosis (Lacey *et al.* 2000).

Bone matrix

Bone derives its strength by being a composite material of organic and non-organic factors. Type I collagen is the predominant structural protein in bone and provides the tensile strength (Vashishth 2007). This collagen provides the backbone for bone and is the site of initial mineral deposition. Osteogenesis imperfecta in humans and animals is caused by mutations in the genes encoding collagen; defective collagen is produced and results in brittle bones (Marini *et al.* 2007). Collagen is a trimeric molecule made up of three α -chain subunits. The amino acid sequence of each of these α -chains is made up of a repeating triplet sequence, gly-X-Y, where X is often proline and Y is often hydroxyproline. Collagenous proteins can be either homotrimeric, where all three α -chains are identical, or heterotrimeric, where the α -chains are different. These three chains coil together to form a triple helix. This structure is stabilised by hydrogen bonding between the OH groups of hydroxyproline (reviewed in Gordon & Hahn 2010). Collagen fibrils are formed by the collagen molecules lining up. Individual fibrils are aligned in a quarter-staggered way. As a result of this stagger there are gaps in the fibril structure; it is within these gaps that crystals of the bone mineral hydroxyapatite first appear in the extracellular environment (Traub *et al.* 1992).

Using proteomics and gene profiling it has shown that there are many thousands of different non-collagenous proteins in bone matrix, each with varying actions (Boskey 2013). Some of these proteins, such as albumin, are explanted into the bone from the blood plasma. Other proteins such as proteoglycans are assumed to become embedded during the bone formation process and may act to help stabilise the tissue integrity. Osteonectin is a phosphorylated glycoprotein found in bone that may regulate osteoblast proliferation and function. The SIBLING proteins may

play a role in the attachment of bone cells to the bone (reviewed in Robey & Boskey 2009).

The mineralisation of bone matrix

The inorganic mineral hydroxyapatite ($\text{Ca}_5(\text{PO}_4)_3\text{OH}$) provides the rigidity of bone. Unlike the naturally occurring geological form of this mineral, the biological form contains many other elements. These factors increase the solubility of the hydroxyapatite crystals, giving it an important role in Mg^{2+} , Ca^{2+} and phosphate homeostasis (McConnell *et al.* 1961; Hukins *et al.* 1986).

Collagen does not directly induce hydroxyapatite crystal deposition onto bone matrix. The first stages of mineralisation take place within matrix vesicles (Anderson 1969; Ali *et al.* 1970). These osteoblast organelles provide a site for Ca^{2+} and phosphate accumulation, which enables the formation of hydroxyapatite (Anderson *et al.* 1997). The matrix vesicle buds out from the osteoblast, next the matrix vesicle membrane is broken down releasing the hydroxyapatite into the extracellular matrix, where its crystal structure propagates further (Anderson *et al.* 2005a). A number of factors have been shown to be key regulators of mineralisation, these include three key enzymes: ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase / phosphodiesterase-1 (NPP1), alkaline phosphatase (ALP) and phosphatase orphan 1 (PHOSPHO1); the transport protein ANK and the pyrophosphate / phosphate ratio.

Ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase/phosphodiesterase-1 (NPP1) and mineralisation

The *Enpp1* gene, which encodes the membrane bound enzyme NPP1 is expressed in a wide variety of tissues including heart, kidney, vascular smooth muscle cells, osteoblasts and chondrocytes (Terkeltaub 2001; Johnson & Terkeltaub 2005; Johnson *et al.* 2005; Nitschke *et al.* 2011). NPP1 is a member of the NPP family of enzymes; it is highly expressed on the membrane of mineralising cells and within matrix vesicles. It acts to hydrolyse nucleotide triphosphates to their monophosphate form with the release of the inhibitor of mineralisation,

pyrophosphate (Fleisch & Bisaz 1962). For further details on its role in nucleotide hydrolysis see page 47.

NPP1 has been shown to have a role in extracellular matrix mineralisation (see section below on phosphate / pyrophosphate ratio) but there is also evidence to show that NPP1 plays a role in insulin signalling. Over expression of *Enpp1* in cultured fibroblasts inhibited insulin receptor tyrosine kinase, thereby reducing the actions of insulin on its receptor. Certain subpopulations of patients with non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus have been shown to over express NPP1 (Maddux *et al.* 1995; Frittitta *et al.* 1998). Further studies revealed that the actions of NPP1 on insulin signalling are not mediated by its actions on nucleotide breakdown; the abolition of NPP1's nucleotidase activity did not affect its actions on insulin signalling (Grupe *et al.* 1995). Subsequent work has shown that NPP1 directly interacts with the α -subunit of the insulin receptor; antibodies against NPP1 can prevent this interaction and restore insulin receptor signalling in cells over-expressing *Enpp1 in vitro* (Maddux & Goldfine 2000). Transgenic mice with liver specific over expression of *Enpp1* show impaired glucose tolerance, but not overt diabetes. However, mice with targeted over-expression of *Enpp1* in both the liver and muscle show fed and fasting hyperglycaemia and hyperinsulinemia (Maddux *et al.* 2006). A short hairpin RNA adenovirus has been used to reduce *in vivo* hepatic *Enpp1* mRNA expression in a *db/db* mouse model of diabetes. Knockdown of *Enpp1* expression in this mouse led to a reduction in fasting and fed plasma glucose levels and an improvement in glucose tolerance (Zhou *et al.* 2009).

Alkaline phosphatase and mineralisation

In humans there are four ALP isoenzymes: tissue non-specific (TNAP), placental, germ cell and intestinal ALP (Millan 2013). Tissue non-specific ALP is expressed only in the bone, liver and kidney. There are slight differences in the post-translational modification of the tissue non-specific form depending on the tissue source of the enzyme; this results primarily in variations in the type and amount of glycosylation and differences in the number of sialic acid side-chains (Schreiber & Whitta 1986; Magnusson & Farley 2002; Halling *et al.* 2009). Mice also have four separate genes

that express ALP: the tissue non-specific form (*Akp2*), duodenum specific intestinal form, embryonic and the global intestinal form (Millan 2013). Rats have three different ALP genes, the tissue non-specific form and two isoenzymes of the intestinal form (Millan 2006). In both the human and the rodent, only the tissue non-specific form has been implicated in tissue mineralisation.

Tissue non-specific ALP is found anchored to the surface of osteoblasts by glycosylphosphatidylinositol (Fedde *et al.* 1988; Hooper 1997). ALP is also found on the surface of matrix vesicles (Anderson *et al.* 2004). It was first suggested in 1923 that ALP may be significant in bone mineralisation (Robison 1923). Later work showed that the key role of tissue non-specific ALP on osteoblasts and within matrix vesicles is to hydrolyse the inhibitor of mineralisation pyrophosphate, to produce phosphate (Hessle *et al.* 2002).

Phosphatase orphan 1 (PHOSPHO1)

PHOSPHO1, a phosphoethanolamine / phosphocholine phosphatase, is a member of the haloacid dehalogenase superfamily of enzymes (Houston *et al.* 1999; Stewart *et al.* 2003). Experiments in chicks and mice have shown that PHOSPHO1 is found inside the matrix vesicles of osteoblasts and hypertrophic chondrocytes (Stewart *et al.* 2006). The expression of *Phospho1* is up-regulated in mineralising cells by approximately 100 fold compared to non-mineralising cells (Houston *et al.* 1999). PHOSPHO1 is important in the initial stages of mineralisation. TNAP knockout mice still produce hydroxyapatite and calcium phosphate crystals within their matrix vesicles, despite having a bone mineralisation defect. It has been shown that PHOSPHO1 hydrolyses the phosphate groups from both phosphoethanolamine and phosphocholine to produce ethanolamine and choline (Roberts *et al.* 2004). Phosphoethanolamine and phosphocholine are found within the membrane of matrix vesicles, the phosphate groups that PHOSPHO1 hydrolyses from them contribute towards the initial formation of hydroxyapatite within matrix vesicles (Yadav *et al.* 2011).

Phospho1^{-/-} mice have hypomineralised bones that are prone to spontaneous fracture (Huesa *et al.* 2011; Yadav *et al.* 2011). Experiments using *Akp2 / Phospho1* double knockout mice have shown that PHOSPHO1 plays a key role in the generation of phosphate and formation of hydroxyapatite within matrix vesicles, whereas TNAP predominantly undertakes this role outside of the matrix vesicles (Yadav *et al.* 2011). All mineralisation is impaired in *Akp2 / Phospho1* mice; these mice die by day 18 post birth (Yadav *et al.* 2011). PHOSPHO1 has also been implicated in the regulation of insulin signalling in osteoblasts (Oldknow *et al.* 2012).

Phosphate / pyrophosphate ratio

Pyrophosphate (PPi) is produced from ATP in the extracellular environment by the actions of some members of the NPP family (Terkeltaub 2001); PPi inhibits mineralisation of the extracellular matrix (Meyer 1984; Russell 2011). PPi is the body's natural "water softener", it is a physicochemical inhibitor of mineralisation that is believed to work by reducing the dissolution of hydroxyapatite crystals, by lowering the equilibrium concentrations of calcium and phosphate (Fleisch *et al.* 1966), thereby preventing the precipitation of mineral out of solution and onto bone surfaces.

In the extracellular environment ALP plays a key role in hydrolysing PPi; this results not only in the reduction of this inhibitor of mineralisation, but also releases two phosphate molecules that can contribute to the formation of hydroxyapatite. The actions of NPP and ALP are antagonistic: NPP acts to inhibit mineralisation by increasing the concentration of PPi, whereas ALP acts to promote mineralisation by hydrolysing PPi and releasing Pi (Millan 2013).

Enpp1^{-/-} mice develop soft tissue calcification, calcification of the aorta and calcification of the joints (hyperostosis); this is because the loss of NPP1 leads to a reduction in the PPi concentration and therefore less inhibition of calcification (Sakamoto *et al.* 1994; Johnson *et al.* 2003; Zhu *et al.* 2011). *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice also have significant defects in long bone mineralisation, 22 week old mice have been

shown to have reduced trabecular bone volume. This seems a counterintuitive finding, when removing an inhibitor of mineralisation it would be expected that mineralisation is increased (Mackenzie *et al.* 2012b). In humans, mutations that decrease or knock out the expression of NPP1 lead to generalised arterial calcification during infancy; severe cases usually result in death before 6 months of age (Nitschke *et al.* 2012).

Akp2^{-/-} mice lack tissue non-specific alkaline phosphatase. *Akp2*^{-/-} mice begin to display skeletal hypomineralisation at around day 6 after birth, until they die at approximately day 20 (Narisawa *et al.* 1997). The lack of TNAP results in an inability to hydrolyse PPI; this results in both an excess of this mineralisation inhibitor and a deficit in phosphate, which is required for hydroxyapatite formation (Fedde *et al.* 1999; Anderson *et al.* 2004). Osteoblasts from *Akp2*^{-/-} mice form matrix vesicles which contain hydroxyapatite crystals; however, these crystals fail to propagate and spread outside of the matrix vesicle environment, resulting in poorly mineralised bone *in vivo* (Anderson *et al.* 1997; Anderson *et al.* 2004). Mouse osteoblasts did form from *Akp2*^{-/-} precursors *in vitro*, yet they were not able to deposit mineral onto the extracellular matrix that they produced (Wennberg *et al.* 2000). In humans, TNAP is encoded by the *ALPL* gene. Hypophosphatasia is an inherited metabolic disease caused by mutations in the *ALPL* gene that reduce the activity of TNAP, leading to rickets and osteomalacia. Approximately 200 mutations in the *ALPL* gene have been found so far; some are transmitted in an autosomal recessive way, others in an autosomal dominant way (Mornet *et al.* 1998; Whyte 2010). Hypophosphatasia is characterised by hypomineralisation of bone and teeth, the severity of which can vary between mild teeth defects to perinatal and infantile death (reviewed in Orimo 2010; Whyte 2010).

Akp2^{-/-} mice have defective mineralisation of the calvaria, spine and long bones; this phenotype can be rescued by knockout of the *Enpp1* gene creating an *Akp2/Enpp1* double knockout mouse (Hessle *et al.* 2002). These double knockout mice have a normalised PPI/Pi ratio, permissive for mineralisation of the long bones, yet sufficient to inhibit soft tissue mineralisation (Hessle *et al.* 2002; Harme

et al. 2004; Murshed *et al.* 2005). However deletion of the *Enpp1* gene does not completely compensate for the knockout of *Akp2*. Although double knockout of TNAP and NPP1 restored the level of mineralisation in the calvaria and spine to levels comparable with wild types, double knockout did not fully restore the hypomineralisation defects seen in the long bones. It is believed that this is due to differences in the local levels of expression of TNAP and NPP1. The axial skeleton has been shown to have higher levels of *Enpp1* expression compared to the appendicular skeleton (Anderson *et al.* 2005b).

In order to permit the mineralisation of bone, but prevent the mineralisation of soft tissues, the PPI/Pi ratio must be finely balanced. Organ cultures of foetal chick long bones have shown that PPI can have a bimodal effect. At physiological concentrations up to 1 μM , PPI is rapidly hydrolysed by TNAP to produce two phosphate molecules, which positively contribute towards mineralisation. Concentrations of PPI greater than 1 μM inhibit mineralisation, because the excess PPI is not hydrolysed by the pyrophosphatases (Anderson & Reynolds 1973; Anderson *et al.* 2005a).

ANK

PPI is produced within cells by a number of different metabolic processes, and the hydrolysis of nucleotides. The trans-membrane transport protein, ANK, transports PPI from the intracellular to the extracellular environment; it is encoded by the progressive ankylosis gene (*ank*) (Ho *et al.* 2000). Mice deficient in the PPI transport protein ANK show defects similar to NPP1 knockout mice. They have defects in bone mineralisation and have pathological soft tissue calcification (Ho *et al.* 2000; Kim *et al.* 2010).

Factors that regulate bone cells and bone formation

The vascular system

The vascular supply to the bone can have an effect on bone cells. In a typical long bone there are three major classes of blood vessels. The nutrient artery and vein are major vessels that invade the diaphysis (shaft) of the bone and extend down its

length. Metaphyseal vessels supply blood to the diaphyseal (inner) surface of the growth plate. Periosteal vessels are incorporated into the outer surface of growing bone (Martini 1998). The vascular system is important for supplying oxygen and nutrients to the bone and removing waste metabolic products; alterations in the vascular supply can lead to bone loss and changes in bone cell activity. Hypoxia due to a reduction in the vascular perfusion of bone can be caused by many factors; these include, fracture of the bone, infection, inflammation, cigarette smoking, pulmonary disease and sickle cell anaemia (reviewed in Arnett 2010).

Oxygen tension is a major regulator of osteoclast formation. Hypoxia stimulates mouse and human osteoclast formation *in vitro* (Arnett *et al.* 2003; Utting *et al.* 2010). Osteoclast formation may be mediated by hypoxia inducible factors (HIFs) 1 α and 2 α (Knowles & Athanasou 2009). Normal human bone marrow aspirates have a pO₂ of between 44 to 47 mmHg (Harrison *et al.* 2002), healthy mandible marrow has been shown to have a pO₂ of 61 mmHg. However, measurements have shown that diseased mandible and fracture haematomas have pO₂ levels of 11 to 6 mmHg (reviewed in Arnett 2010).

Chronic hypoxia inhibits the growth, differentiation and bone forming activity of rodent osteoblasts *in vitro*. ALP activity and collagen production were both decreased in osteoblasts cultured in a 2% pO₂ environment. The decreased collagen production may have been due to the decreased expression of the oxygen sensitive enzymes prolyl-hydroxylase and lysyl oxidase (Utting *et al.* 2006).

In contrast with osteoblasts, osteocytes reside in lacunae that may be hypoxic due to their distance away from the blood supply and closed structure. It has been suggested that bone loading may result in enhanced nutrient diffusion to the osteocytes; bone unloading has been reported to result in osteocyte hypoxia (Dodd *et al.* 1999; Gross *et al.* 2001).

Hydrogen ions

Impairment of the vascular supply to bone can result in an acidotic environment forming. The vascular system is required to transport acidic waste products such as

CO₂ and lactic acid to the kidneys and lungs for excretion. Failure to do so will result in a systemic acidosis. Under hypoxic conditions the mitochondria are unable to provide the ATP the body requires. This shortfall is compensated for by an increase in glycolysis. The pyruvate produced during glycolysis is converted to lactic acid; resulting in an acidosis. It has long been known that an acidosis, of any origin, can have detrimental effects on the bone (Goto 1918).

For many years it was thought that an acidosis resulted in a physicochemical etching of the bone, resulting in mineral release (Bushinsky *et al.* 1985; Barzel 1995). It was subsequently demonstrated that a reduction in the pH of the cell culture media was necessary to activate osteoclast resorptive activity *in vitro* (Arnett & Dempster 1986; Arnett & Dempster 1987; Brandao-Burch & Arnett 2004). Acidification was shown to increase the expression of mRNA for carbonic anhydrase II (Biskobing & Fan 2000) and increase cathepsin K activity (Muzylak *et al.* 2007) by osteoclasts. This indicated that osteoclasts are key mediators of the decrease in bone quality seen in acidosis.

In vitro experiments using mouse osteoblasts found that acidifying the growth media from pH 7.5 to pH 7.1 on day 8 of culture resulted in less mineralised bone nodule formation and prevented the normal developmental increase in the expression of matrix GLA protein and osteopontin mRNAs compared to non-acidified osteoblasts (Frick & Bushinsky 1998). However, work undertaken in the Arnett laboratory yielded slightly different results. They found that acidification of the culture media from pH 7.4 to pH 6.9 resulted in the inhibition of bone matrix mineralisation by rat osteoblasts, but these osteoblasts still formed collagenous extracellular matrix. They did not find that acidification led to a decrease in matrix GLA protein and osteopontin mRNA expression, but did observe an 8 fold decrease in ALP activity by osteoblasts when the pH was reduced to 6.9 (Brandao-Burch *et al.* 2005).

Glucocorticoids

High glucocorticoid levels, due to either administration as medicines or due to pathological conditions, cause bone loss (reviewed in Weinstein 2012). Mice administered with glucocorticoids for 28 days were reported to have a decrease in their bone vasculature (Weinstein *et al.* 2010). It has also been reported that glucocorticoids act directly on osteoclasts and inhibit their apoptosis, resulting in increased bone resorption (Jia *et al.* 2006). Additionally, glucocorticoids have been reported to suppress osteoblast activity by down regulating WNT signalling (WNT signalling is discussed below) (Ohnaka *et al.* 2004).

Endocrine and paracrine regulators of bone cells

The formation and resorption of bone, and the differentiation and activity of osteoblasts, osteocytes and osteoclasts needs to be tightly regulated; a number of signalling molecules fulfil this role.

Bone morphogenetic protein signalling

The family of bone morphogenetic proteins (BMPs), were originally identified as proteins with the ability to form ectopic bone when injected subcutaneously (Urist 1965). The 20 known BMPs are members of the transforming growth factor- β (TGF- β) super-family; the other members of the TGF β family are the activin / nodal proteins (reviewed in Sieber *et al.* 2009). There are two types of BMP receptors; each type is a serine-threonine kinase (reviewed in Rosen 2006). The main functions of BMP signalling are to initiate the differentiation of MSCs towards the osteoblast lineage and to promote osteoblast activity (Gitelman *et al.* 1995; Yamaguchi *et al.* 1996). BMPs also increase chondrocyte maturation and function, increasing the expression of type II and type X collagens (De *et al.* 2001; Grimsrud *et al.* 2001).

The antagonists, noggin, chordin and gremlin inhibit the interaction of BMP with its receptors, preventing BMP signalling (Piccolo *et al.* 1996; Brunet *et al.* 1998; Hsu *et al.* 1998). BMP3 can block signalling through the type II BMP receptor. Knock-in

mice that over-expressed BMP3 were more prone to fractures; BMP3 knockout mice formed more bone than wild types (Kokabu *et al.* 2012).

When BMP signalling is blocked in early chick limbs, the condensation of mesenchymal cells fails to occur, indicating that BMP signalling is necessary for endochondral ossification and chondrocyte generation (Pizette & Niswander 2000). Knock out of BMP2 and BMP4 in a mouse model leads to a complete failure of osteoblast differentiation from MSCs (Bandyopadhyay *et al.* 2006). The knockout of BMP2 within the post natal, formed limb of a mouse resulted in an inability to initiate fracture healing and repair after trauma, yet the limbs of the knockout mice formed normally (Tsuji *et al.* 2006).

Vitamin D

Vitamin D is a major regulator of calcium and phosphate homeostasis in the body. It exists in two different forms, vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol), the animal form, and vitamin D2 (ergocalciferol), the plant form. In mammalian skin, ultraviolet B rays convert 7-dehydrocholesterol into vitamin D (Holick *et al.* 1980). Vitamin D is transported to the liver where is converted by the enzyme 25-hydroxylase into 25-hydroxyvitamin D, the major form of vitamin D in the circulation. In the kidney 25-hydroxyvitamin D is converted into $1\alpha,25$ -dihydroxyvitamin D ($1,25(\text{OH})_2\text{vitD}$) by the actions of the enzyme 25(OH) vitamin D 1α -hydroxylase. $1\alpha,25$ -dihydroxyvitamin D, also known as calcitriol is the active form of vitamin D (reviewed in Haussler *et al.* 2011).

The classical actions of $1,25(\text{OH})_2\text{vitD}$ are to increase dietary calcium and phosphate absorption by the intestine, in order to maintain their plasma concentrations. $1,25(\text{OH})_2\text{vitD}$ can have a direct action on bone cells; it has been reported to decrease proliferation and increase differentiation of human osteoblast-like cells *in vitro* (Van Driel *et al.* 2006; Atkins *et al.* 2007). $1,25(\text{OH})_2\text{vitD}$ has also been reported to indirectly stimulate mouse osteoclastogenesis by up-regulating RANKL mRNA expression by osteoblasts *in vitro* (Takeda *et al.* 1999). Inadequate vitamin D production or intake, mutations in

the vitamin D receptor, or mutations in the enzymes required for 1,25(OH)₂vitD production leads to rickets in children and osteomalacia in adults (reviewed in Bikle 2012).

Parathyroid hormone

Parathyroid hormone (PTH) has been known for many years to play a major role in the control of calcium and phosphate homeostasis (Collip 1925). The chief cells of the parathyroid gland secrete PTH in response to a decrease in the ionised calcium concentration in blood (Potts 2005). When rats were infused with PTH *in vivo* it was reported that the RANKL / OPG ratio was increased. The number of osteoclasts seen histologically was increased and an increase in blood serum calcium also was detected (Ma *et al.* 2001).

PTH reduces the reabsorption of phosphate in the proximal convoluted tubule of the kidney (Kempson *et al.* 1995; Keusch *et al.* 1998; Traebert *et al.* 2000) and also increases renal calcium reabsorption in the ascending limb of the loop of Henle and the distal convoluted tubule (Friedman & Gesek 1993), in doing so it is able to regulate their concentrations in blood.

PTH also increases the production of the enzyme 25(OH) vitamin D-1 α -hydroxylase in the proximal tubule of the kidney, this leads to an increase in the production of 1,25(OH)₂vitD, which increases calcium absorption by the intestines (Fraser & Kodicek 1973; Kremer & Goltzman 1982).

Intermittent PTH administration to people or animals results in an increase in osteoblast numbers and anabolic bone formation. *In vitro* experiments on rodent and human osteoblasts and osteoblast-like cells have shown that intermittent low dose PTH administration increases the formation of osteoblasts from precursors (MacDonald *et al.* 1986; Ishizuya *et al.* 1997; Schiller *et al.* 1999). Intermittent PTH administration in rodents has also been shown to down-regulate two negative regulators of the WNT signalling pathway, dickkopf-1 (DKK-1) (Kulkarni *et al.* 2005) and sclerostin (Bellido *et al.* 2005; Keller & Kneissel 2005). Down-regulation of these two factors will result in increased bone formation. Intermittent PTH

administration has also been shown to decrease the rate of *in vitro* and *in vivo* osteoblast apoptosis in rodents (Jilka *et al.* 1999; Wang *et al.* 2007).

WNT signalling

The WNT acronym is derived from the combination of the gene names *wingless* type and *int-1* (Nusse *et al.* 1991). The WNT signalling pathways can be separated into two distinct groups; the canonical pathway, in which the actions are mediated by β -catenin; the non-canonical pathway, in which the effects are independent of β -catenin.

β -catenin is an intracellular signalling molecule. In the absence of any WNT proteins binding to their receptors, β -catenin is associated with an intracellular destruction complex. This destruction complex contains axin, adenomatous polyposis coli (APC), casein kinase 1 (CK1) and glycogen synthase kinase 3 (GSK3); the ubiquitin-mediated proteolysis activity of this complex degrades β -catenin and prevents signalling (Aberle *et al.* 1997). The T-cell specific transcription factor / lymphoid enhancer-binding factor (Tcf/Lef) transcription factor in the nucleus remains bound to Groucho, a transcriptional co-repressor, so it cannot affect gene expression.

When WNT proteins bind to the Frizzled (FZD) and LRP5/6 cell surface receptors a FZD-LRP5/6 co-receptor complex recruits and activates the cytoplasmic signalling protein dishevelled (Dvl) (Bilic *et al.* 2007). Dvl recruits the axin-GSK3 complex; this complex phosphorylates the LRP5/6 receptor and leads to the inhibition of the β -catenin destruction complex, resulting in increased β -catenin levels in the cytoplasm (Zeng *et al.* 2005). β -catenin then translocates to the nucleus, where it displaces Groucho, freeing the Tcf/Lef transcription factors to activate target genes (Figure 1.1) (reviewed in Monroe *et al.* 2012).

Figure 1.1. The WNT β -catenin signalling pathway

(A) Inhibition of WNT signalling. The WNT protein is prevented from binding to the Frizzled / LRP co-receptor on the surface of the cell by sFZP or Wif-1 binding to it, or by sclerostin or DKK binding to the receptor. WNT signalling is inhibited, resulting in the formation of an intracellular destruction complex containing axin, APC, GSK3 and CK1. This destruction complex promotes phosphorylation and ubiquitin mediated breakdown of β -catenin. WNT related genes remain suppressed by Groucho. **(B)** Activation of WNT signalling. The binding of WNTs to the Frizzled / LRP co-receptor lead to the phosphorylation of the receptor and the recruitment of the Dvl proteins. Dvl inhibits the formation of the destruction complex and the phosphorylation of β -catenin. The un-phosphorylated β -catenin is free to translocate to the nucleus, where it displaces the inhibitor of transcription, Groucho, and interacts with Tcf/Lef to regulate gene expression.

APC = adenomatous polyposis coli, CK1 = casein kinase 1, Dvl = dishevelled, GSK3 = glycogen synthase kinase 3, P = phosphate, sFZP = secreted frizzled related proteins, Wif-1 = WNT inhibitory factor-1. (Adapted from (Goltzman 2011; Monroe *et al.* 2012).

The non-canonical WNT signalling pathways include: the WNT/Ca²⁺ pathway, the WNT/planar cell polarity (PCP) pathway, the WNT/JNK pathway, WNT/Rho-Rac and the WNT/Ror pathways. In non-canonical signalling, WNT proteins bind to FZD or co-receptor complexes of FZD/Ror2 or Ryk. WNT proteins bind to the FZD receptors and activate Dvl, Dvl acts independently of β -catenin to affect gene transcription. WNT proteins may also bind to Ror2 and Ryk receptors on the surface of the cell. Within these pathways, WNT signalling occurs independently of Dvl and β -catenin (Monroe *et al.* 2012).

WNTs are a family of 19 secreted glycoproteins, they are classified as either canonical or non-canonical depending on their ability to mobilise β -catenin. There is a considerable amount of functional overlap between the two groups. Wnt3a is considered to be a canonical WNT, yet may also activate WNT/G-protein coupled receptors (Tu *et al.* 2007), Wnt5a is considered to be predominantly a non-canonical WNT, but under specific circumstances it may activate canonical signalling (Mikels & Nusse 2006).

The name Frizzled was used to describe the tightly coiled hairs of the *FZD*^{-/-} *Drosophila Melanogaster* fly, before the receptor was discovered (Gubb & Garcia-Bellido 1982). There are currently 10 known FZD receptors; all are 7-transmembrane domain receptors and each different FZD receptor regulates a different intracellular signalling cascade depending upon the nature of the co-receptor (Schulte 2010). LRP5 and LRP6 are low-density-lipoprotein receptors (Rey & Ellies 2010). LRP5 and LRP6 have distinct functions, LRP6^{-/-} mice die at birth, yet LRP5^{-/-} mice do not (Pinson *et al.* 2000; Kato *et al.* 2002).

WNT signalling can be antagonised in a number of different ways. Sclerostin, DKK and Wise all down-regulate WNT signalling by interacting with the LRP5/6 co-receptor complex. There are four DKK proteins; DKK1 and DKK4 always act as antagonists, DKK2 may act as an antagonist or an agonist depending on whether it is bound to kremen, a co-receptor for antagonism (Zorn 2001; Mao & Niehrs 2003; Semenov *et al.* 2008). Sclerostin is encoded by the *Sost* gene; it is produced

primarily by osteocytes (Van Bezooijen *et al.* 2004). However, sclerostin may also be produced by hypertrophic chondrocytes in the growth plate and cementocytes in teeth (Van Bezooijen *et al.* 2009; Chan *et al.* 2011). Sclerostin is a member of the Dan family of glycoproteins; like many members of this family, sclerostin can inhibit BMP signalling (Winkler *et al.* 2003). However, sclerostin's main mechanism of action is by binding to the LPR5/6 receptors and preventing WNT signalling (Semenov *et al.* 2005; Li *et al.* 2005b). Wise also belongs to the Dan family of proteins; it acts to inhibit WNTs binding to LRP5/6 and down-regulates WNT signalling (Itasaki *et al.* 2003; Ahn *et al.* 2010). Wise can also bind BMPs and inhibit their signalling (Laurikkala *et al.* 2003; Yanagita *et al.* 2004).

WNT signalling may also be antagonised by factors that bind to the WNT ligands directly, interfering with their ability to bind to receptors. The secreted frizzled related proteins (sFZPs) family has five members that have a high structural similarity with FZD, allowing them to bind to WNTs (Bovolenta *et al.* 2008). WNT inhibitory factor-1 (Wif-1) has a high structural similarity with the WNT receptor Ryk, this means that like sFZPs, it is able to bind to and inhibit WNTs (Malinauskas *et al.* 2011).

Both canonical and non-canonical WNT signalling plays a key role in the development of bone and bone cells. WNTs are required for both osteoblast and chondrocyte differentiation in the developing bone, and for the maintenance of mature bone. Knockout of *Wnt5a* is embryonically lethal in mice, *Wnt5a*^{+/-} mice have reduced bone mass. *Wnt5a* was found to down-regulate *PPAR γ* expression; this repressed the conversion of MSCs to adipocytes, so MSCs in *Wnt5a*^{+/-} mice favoured an osteoblastic lineage (Takada *et al.* 2007). β -Catenin has been shown to down regulate *Sox9* expression, the transcription factor necessary for the differentiation of MSCs into chondrocytes; WNT signalling therefore pushes MSCs towards a more osteoblastic phenotype (Akiyama *et al.* 2004). In mice and human cell cultures *Wnt3a* has been shown to increase MSC proliferation, increase the differentiation of MSCs into osteoblasts and prevent osteoblast apoptosis (Boland *et al.* 2004; Almeida *et al.* 2005; Tu *et al.* 2007).

Inactivating mutations in the LRP5 gene in humans leads to osteoporosis pseudoglioma syndrome, an autosomal recessive disorder characterised by reduced bone mass and early onset osteoporosis (Gong *et al.* 2001). Mutations in LRP5 resulting in a high bone mass have also been reported. Mutations to the LRP5 co-receptor can result in a decreased binding affinity of the WNT inhibitors DKK and sclerostin, resulting in less WNT inhibition and a greater bone mass (Boyden *et al.* 2002; Little *et al.* 2002). Mouse models with loss of function and gain of function mutations in LRP5 have similar bone phenotypes to affected people. Overall the animal studies show that LRP5 regulates bone formation by affecting osteoblast proliferation, apoptosis and the bone formation rate (Kato *et al.* 2002; Babij *et al.* 2003).

WNT signalling increases osteoblast formation and has an anabolic effect on bone; however, it may also decrease osteoclast formation via an indirect mechanism. Wnt3a was seen to act on osteoblasts *in vitro* to down regulate RANKL expression; this decrease in RANKL concentration led to a reduction in the formation of osteoclasts from precursors in osteoblast / osteoclast co-cultures *in vitro* (Spencer *et al.* 2006).

Extracellular nucleotide signalling

The nucleotide adenosine triphosphate (ATP) is a well-known unit of energy currency; however, its ability to act as an extracellular signalling molecule is less well known. The P2 receptors are located on the surface of most cells and are activated by the nucleotides: ATP, adenosine diphosphate (ADP), uridine triphosphate (UTP), uridine diphosphate (UDP) and their synthetic derivatives. The P2 receptors are subdivided into the P2X ligand gated ion channel receptors and the P2Y G-protein coupled receptors. The P2X receptors are trimeric ion channels assembled as homo- or heteromers from seven different gene products (P2X₁₋₇) (Kaczmarek-Hajek *et al.* 2012). There are eight (P2Y_{1,2,4,6,11-14}) genes encoding the P2Y receptors. Of the naturally occurring P2 receptor ligands, only ATP acts through the P2X receptors; ATP, ADP, UTP, UDP and UDP-glucose all activate one or all of the P2Y receptors. Purinergic signalling has been shown to have physiological

and pathological effects in numerous tissues (Kennedy & Burnstock 1985; Abbracchio & Burnstock 1994; Burnstock 2007). Purinergic signalling also plays a significant role in the regulation of bone cell function.

ATP may be released from cells in a number of different ways. ATP may be packaged into secretory granules along with neurotransmitters or other extracellular signal mediators and released by vesicular exocytosis. ATP is packaged into these granules from the cytoplasm by vesicular nucleotide transporter (VNUT). Alternatively ATP may be released from cells by large conductive anion channels such as the volume regulated anion channel. Other transmembrane channels such as connexins and pannexins may also facilitate release ATP. P2X7 receptor stimulation results in a large pore formation that allows ATP release (reviewed in Lazarowski 2012).

Purinoceptor signalling and osteoblasts

The expression of the P2Y receptors by osteoblasts has been studied by many groups. It has been shown that primary rat osteoblasts in culture express mRNAs for the P2Y_{1,2,4,6,12-14} receptors in a differentiation dependent manner (Hoebertz *et al.* 2000; Orriss *et al.* 2006; Orriss *et al.* 2010). In contrast, the rat osteoblast-like cell lines ROS17/2.8 and UMR 106 do not express the P2Y₂ receptor (Jorgensen *et al.* 1997; Buckley *et al.* 2001). Primary rat osteoblasts in culture have been shown to express mRNA for all seven P2X receptors (Orriss *et al.* 2010). The human osteosarcoma cells lines Mg-63, SaOS-2, OHS-4, SaM-1 have between them been shown to express P2Y_{1,2,4,6,12}, and the P2X_{2,4-7} receptors (Bowler *et al.* 1995; Maier *et al.* 1997; Nakamura *et al.* 2000; Gartland *et al.* 2001; Ihara *et al.* 2005; Alqallaf *et al.* 2009). There can be considerable variation in the expression of the P2 receptors by osteoblasts depending on the source of cells and stage of maturation (Orriss *et al.* 2006).

ATP is found in the cytoplasm of osteoblasts, and other mammalian cells, at concentrations between 2 - 5mM (Orriss *et al.* 2010; Rumney *et al.* 2012). This ATP is released by the cell into the extracellular compartment via a number of different

mechanisms. ATP may be released due to cell membrane damage or necrosis; alternatively, the ATP may exit the cell in a controlled way (Buckley *et al.* 2003; Orriss *et al.* 2013). Fluid shear stress upon *in vitro* osteoblasts has been shown to increase the rate of ATP release (Genetos *et al.* 2005). Other factors that have been shown to increase ATP release from osteoblasts *in vitro* are hypoxia (Orriss *et al.* 2009) and 1,25(OH)₂vitD3 (Biswas & Zanello 2009). ATP can be released by vesicles; when osteoblast-like cells were subjected to fluid shear stress, ATP release was inhibited by the presence of the vesicle inhibitors brefeldin A, monensin and n-ethylmaleimide (Genetos *et al.* 2005). There is also evidence that the P2X₇ receptor may mediate ATP release. HEK293 cells that were made to overexpress the P2X₇ receptors showed increased ATP release (Pellegatti *et al.* 2005). Primary rat osteoblasts grown *in vitro* released less ATP into their extracellular environment in the presence of P2X₇ inhibitors (Brandao-Burch *et al.* 2012). However, osteoblasts from P2X₇^{-/-} mice did not show any difference in amplitude or timing of ATP release compared to wild type cells *in vitro* (Li *et al.* 2005a).

Osteoblasts respond to extracellular nucleotides with a prompt increase in intracellular calcium (Kumagai *et al.* 1989; Schofl *et al.* 1992; Orriss *et al.* 2006; Orriss *et al.* 2012a). Importantly, exogenous ATP, UTP and other nucleotide analogues also potently inhibit mineralisation of bone nodules formed by osteoblasts in culture (Hoebertz *et al.* 2002; Orriss *et al.* 2007; Orriss *et al.* 2010; Orriss *et al.* 2012a). Moreover, endogenous ATP also appears to act as a significant local inhibitor of mineralisation by osteoblasts (Orriss *et al.* 2013).

It has been shown that ATP and UTP act via the P2Y₂ receptor on osteoblasts to inhibit mineralisation of deposited osteoid *in vitro*. ATP and UTP elicit this inhibitory effect by inhibiting ALP activity (Orriss *et al.* 2007). P2Y₂ receptor knockout mice skeletons have increased trabecular and cortical bone mineral content, most notably in the hind limbs (Orriss *et al.* 2007). Later work showed that ATP signalling through the P2Y₂ receptor on osteoblast-like cells increased ERK1/2, P38 mitogen activated protein kinase and JNK1 signalling (Katz *et al.* 2006; Katz *et al.* 2008).

Stimulation of the P2X receptors has also been shown to inhibit mineralisation by osteoblasts *in vitro*. Used in conjunction with receptor antagonists, the P2X₁ receptor agonist α,β -methylene adenosine 5'-triphosphate was found to inhibit mineralisation by primary rat osteoblasts *in vitro*, as did the P2X₃ agonist β,γ -methylene adenosine 5'-triphosphate and the P2X₇ agonist 2'(3')-O-(4-benzoylbenzoyl) adenosine 5'-triphosphate (Bz-ATP) (Orriss *et al.* 2012a).

Clopidogrel is a P2Y₁₂ receptor antagonist used in the treatment of myocardial infarction and stroke; it works by preventing platelet aggregation. Exposure of primary rat osteoblasts *in vitro* to clopidogrel resulted in decreased ALP expression, decreased collagen production and inhibited the formation of mineralised bone nodules. Mice dosed with clopidogrel for four weeks had reduced trabecular bone volume in the tibia and femur compared to controls (Syberg *et al.* 2012).

Knockout of the P2Y₁₃ receptor in mice led to a decrease in both osteoblasts and osteoclasts *in vivo*; this resulted in a reduced rate of bone turnover (Wang *et al.* 2012). Follow-on work showed that the P2Y₁₃ receptor is important for the development of osteoblasts and adipocytes from MSCs. *In vitro* stimulation of the P2Y₁₃ receptor with ADP resulted in a greater number of osteoblasts forming from MSCs, knockout of P2Y₁₃ led to a greater number of adipocytes forming (Biver *et al.* 2013).

In addition, ATP acting via the P2X₅ receptors has also been shown to increase proliferation of human osteoblast-like cells *in vitro* (Nakamura *et al.* 2000). It has also been reported that ATP increased the expression of RANKL by human osteoblast-like cells *in vitro*, this elevated RANKL in turn led to increased osteoclast formation within a cell co-culture system (Buckley *et al.* 2002).

Purinoceptor signalling and osteoclasts

Nucleotides also have a direct effect on osteoclasts. It has been shown that *in vitro* mouse osteoclasts express mRNAs for the P2X_{1-5,7} receptors and the P2Y_{1,2,6,12-14} receptors (Orriss *et al.* 2010). *In vitro* human osteoclasts have been shown to express mRNAs for the P2X_{1,4,7} and the P2Y_{1,2,4,6,11} receptors (Bowler *et al.* 1995;

Buckley *et al.* 2002; Gartland *et al.* 2003a). Like osteoblasts, osteoclasts constitutively release ATP into their extracellular environment. Also like osteoblasts it has been shown that P2X₇ receptor antagonists reduce the rate of ATP release per cell, however, unlike osteoblasts, vesicle inhibitors do not affect the rate of ATP release from primary rodent osteoclasts *in vitro* (Brandao-Burch *et al.* 2012).

ATP and ADP have been shown to stimulate the formation of rodent osteoclasts from precursors *in vitro* and increase the rate of resorption per osteoclast. Using a selective agonist (2-methylthioADP) and antagonist (MRS2179), it was determined that the P2Y₁ receptor mediates the response of osteoclasts to ATP and ADP (Hoebertz *et al.* 2001).

The P2Y₆ receptor has also been shown to play a role in osteoclast function. A selective P2Y₆ agonist was shown to induce the translocation of NFκβ from the cytoplasm to the nucleus of *in vitro* rodent osteoclasts (Korcok *et al.* 2005). This increase in NFκβ caused by P2Y₆ signalling suppressed apoptosis and increased the survival time of the osteoclasts in culture (Korcok *et al.* 2005).

Stimulation of the P2X₇ receptor in macrophages has been shown to promote multinuclear giant cell formation (Chiozzi *et al.* 1997). This led to the idea that it may be important in the formation of multinuclear osteoclasts. It has been shown that the formation of osteoclasts from human peripheral blood monocytes was inhibited by an antibody blocking the P2X₇ receptor (Gartland *et al.* 2003a). In support of this observation, RAW 264.7 cells which lacked the P2X₇ receptor failed to form multinucleated osteoclast-like cells when exposed to RANKL (Hiken & Steinberg 2004). P2X₇ antagonists have also been shown to induce apoptosis in human osteoclasts *in vitro* (Penolazzi *et al.* 2005). However, in contradiction to these results, P2X₇ receptor knockout mice have been histologically shown to form osteoclasts *in vivo*, and precursors from these mice have been shown to develop into viable osteoclasts *in vitro* (Ke *et al.* 2003; Gartland *et al.* 2003b).

Ecto-nucleotidases

Ecto-nucleotidases are cell surface enzymes that hydrolyse nucleotides, these enzymes act to reduce the concentration of ATP in the extracellular compartment, and therefore modulate purinergic signalling. There are four major families: ecto-nucleoside triphosphate diphosphohydrolase (NTPdase), ALP, NPP and ecto-5'nucleotidase (eN). There are also a number of other enzymes that may metabolise nucleotides. These include prostatic acid phosphatase (PAP) (Zylka *et al.* 2008), TRAP (Mitic *et al.* 2005), the calcium activated nucleotidase (CAN) (Smith & Kirley 2006), α -sarcoglycan (Sandona *et al.* 2004) and the neural cell adhesion molecule (NCAM) (Dzhandzhugazyan & Bock 1993).

Ecto-nucleoside triphosphate diphosphohydrolase (NTPdase)

NTPdases hydrolyse ATP to ADP and then AMP with the release of Pi at each stage (Figure 1.2). NTPdases represent one of the major classes of nucleotidases; however, they are unable to hydrolyse the dinucleoside polyphosphates, ADP-ribose or AMP.

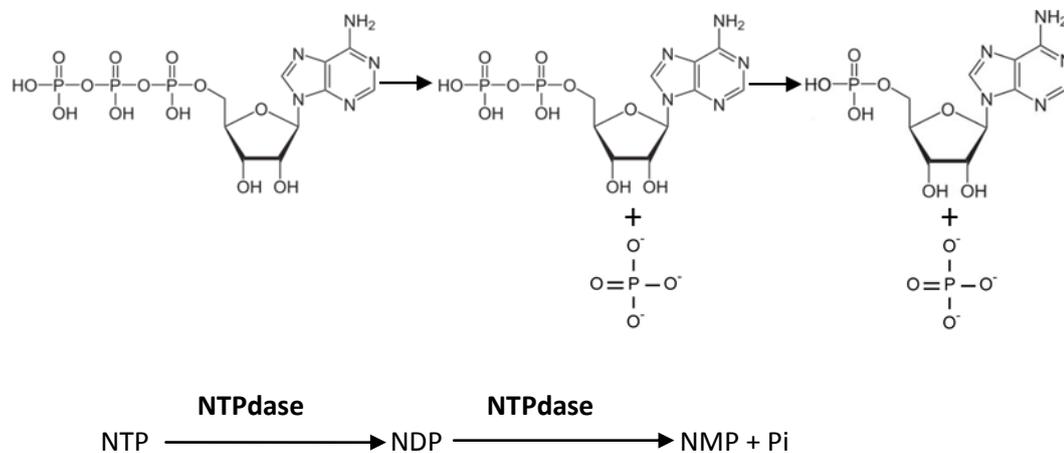


Figure 1.2. The actions of ecto-nucleotidase triphosphate diphosphohydrolase (NTPdase)

NTPdase hydrolyses nucleoside triphosphates (NTP) to nucleoside diphosphates (NDP) and nucleoside monophosphates (NMP) with the release of phosphate (Pi).

There are currently eight known NTPdases, four of these enzymes: NTPdase1-3 and NTPdase8 are cell surface bound, NTPdase4-7 are located on the membranes of intracellular organelles, NTPdase5 and 6 are found in the cytosol and in a secreted form (Grinthal & Guidotti 2006; Robson *et al.* 2006; Knowles 2011). NTPdase1-3

and NTPdase8 hydrolyse nucleoside triphosphonucleosides and diphosphates; the other NTPdases do not show activity for the full possible range of triphosphonucleosides and diphosphonucleosides; for example, NTPdase6 shows activity against UDP but not ATP (Zimmermann *et al.* 2012).

NTPdases are expressed in most tissues (Zimmermann *et al.* 2012). NTPdase1, also known as CD39, was first characterised on the surface of B-cells and activated natural killer cells (Maliszewski *et al.* 1994). An NTPdase1 knockout mouse model has been developed. The major and most notable defect in these mice is their prolonged coagulation / bleeding times (Enjoji *et al.* 1999; Pinsky *et al.* 2002). ADP increases platelet aggregation, in wild type mice NTPDase1 will break down ADP and prevent clotting. In *NTPdase*^{-/-} mice the coagulation time was prolonged because the P2Y₁ receptor, which is involved in the regulation of platelet function, became desensitised to the excess nucleotides. *NTPdase*^{-/-} mice also show disordered cellular migration of monocytes and macrophages and defective angiogenesis. This is believed to be due to impaired breakdown of nucleotides and P2 receptor desensitisation (Goepfert *et al.* 2001).

In vitro, mouse osteoblasts and the mesenchymal stem cells from which they form have been shown to express mRNA for *NTPdase1* (Roszek *et al.* 2013). Primary mouse osteoblasts have been cultured from the bone marrow of *NTPdase*^{-/-} mice *in vitro*. No difference was seen between knockout and wild type osteoblasts in the amount of mineralised bone formed and the ALP activity *in vitro*, although it was not explicitly shown that the wild type form of these cells expressed NTPdase1, (He *et al.* 2013a).

Ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase/phosphodiesterase (NPP)

There are seven structurally related members of the NPP, of which NPP1 is a member (Stefan *et al.* 2005). These seven isoenzymes can be divided into two families based on their structural domains and orientation within the cell membrane. Most of the NPPs are membrane bound. NPPs4-7 have a C-terminal transmembrane domain and are referred to as type 1 enzymes; NPP1 and 3 are

type 2 enzymes and have an N-terminal transmembrane domain (Nishimasu *et al.* 2012). NPP2 is different to the other NPPs in that it is secreted as a pre-pro-enzyme and only exists in the secreted form; it is not membrane bound (Jansen *et al.* 2005; Nishimasu *et al.* 2012).

The NPP1-3 enzymes contain between 863–925 amino acid residues and have a molecular mass of approximately 115 to 125 kDa. At the protein level they have approximately 40–50 % similarity (Zimmermann *et al.* 2012). NPP1, previously named PC-1, was first discovered on the plasma cell membrane of B-lymphocytes (Takahashi *et al.* 1970). Its structure was further characterised (Goding & Shen 1982) and it was then purified from murine cells (Stearne *et al.* 1985) and human cDNA libraries (Buckley *et al.* 1990).

NPPs hydrolyse nucleoside triphosphates, nucleoside diphosphates, dinucleoside polyphosphates, ADP ribose, NAD^+ , but not AMP; some NPPs hydrolyse phospholipids (Figure 1.3 -1.9) (Umezu-Goto *et al.* 2002; Zimmermann *et al.* 2012). All of the NPP enzymes possess a similar catalytic domain, but only NPP1-3 have been shown to have nucleotidase activity (Stefan *et al.* 2005). Further studies have shown that molecules other than nucleotides with a pyrophosphate or a phosphodiester bond may be substrates for NPPs (Umezu-Goto *et al.* 2002). NPP1-3 can hydrolyse ATP to AMP, with the release of pyrophosphate, or ADP to AMP with the release of Pi. NPP1-3 can also hydrolyse PPi to release two Pi molecules (Clair *et al.* 1997; Ciancaglini *et al.* 2010).

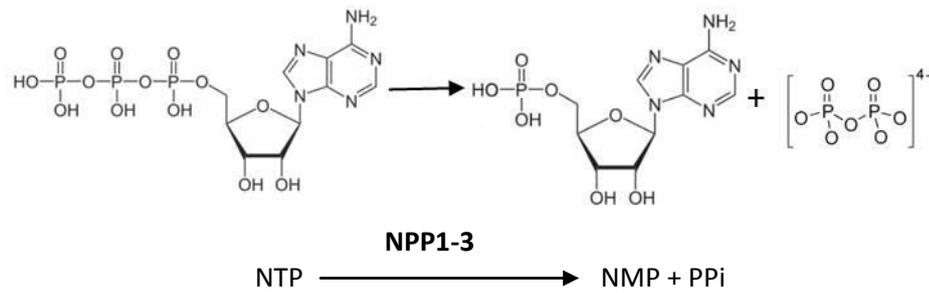


Figure 1.3. The actions of ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase / phosphodiesterase (NPPs) on nucleoside triphosphates

NPPs hydrolyse nucleoside triphosphates (NTP) to nucleoside monophosphates (NMP) with the release of pyrophosphate (PPi).

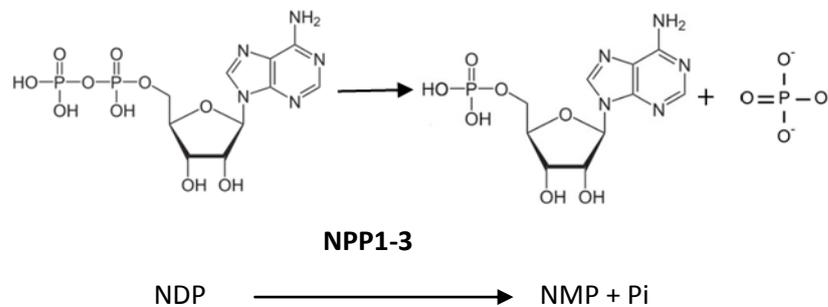


Figure 1.4. The actions of ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase / phosphodiesterase (NPPs) on nucleoside diphosphates

NPPs hydrolyse nucleoside diphosphates (NDP) to nucleoside monophosphates (NMP) with the release of phosphate (Pi).

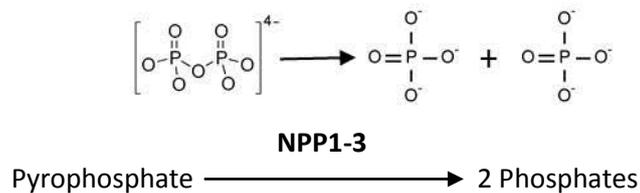
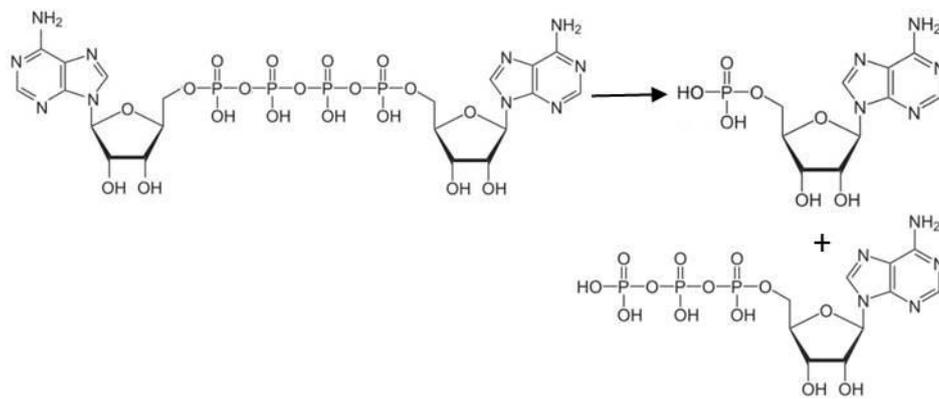


Figure 1.5. The actions ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase / phosphodiesterase (NPPs) on pyrophosphate

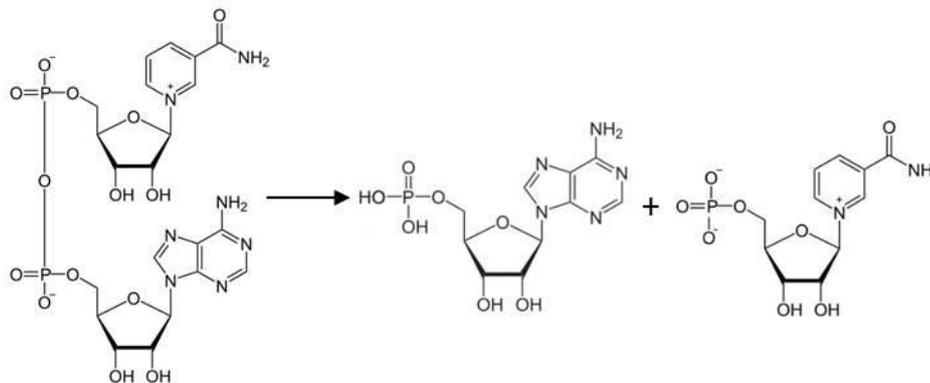
NPPs can hydrolyse pyrophosphate, releasing two phosphate molecules.

**NPP1-3**

Dinucleoside polyphosphate \longrightarrow NMP + nucleoside 5'(N-1) polyphosphate ($N_{p_{n-1}}$)

Figure 1.6. The actions of ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase / phosphodiesterase (NPPs) on dinucleoside polyphosphates

NPPs hydrolyse dinucleoside polyphosphates with the release of nucleoside monophosphates (NMP) and a nucleoside with the remaining phosphates attached, in this case, three phosphates (NTP).

**NPP1-3**

NAD+ \longrightarrow AMP + nicotinamide mononucleotide

Figure 1.7. The actions of ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase / phosphodiesterase (NPPs) on nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide

NPPs hydrolyse nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide to adenosine monophosphate (AMP) and nicotinamide mononucleotide.

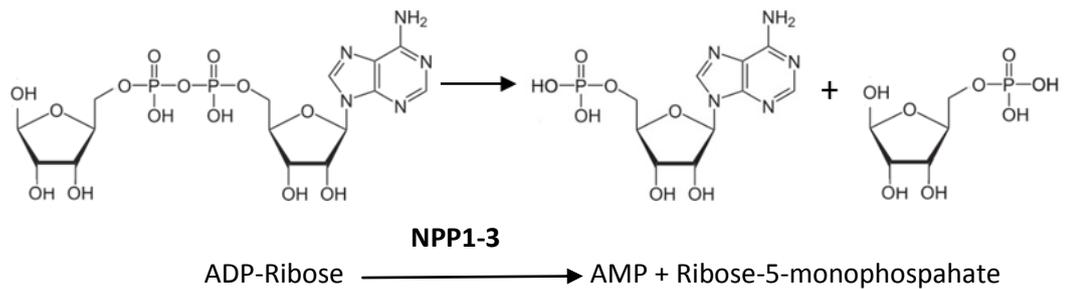


Figure 1.8. The actions of ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase/phosphodiesterase (NPPs) on adenosine diphosphate - ribose

NPPs hydrolyse adenosine diphosphate ribose to adenosine monophosphate (AMP) and ribose-5-monophosphate.

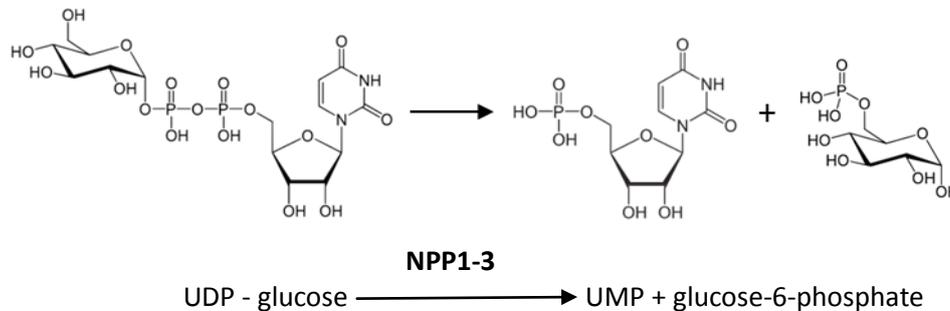


Figure 1.9. The actions of ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase / phosphodiesterase (NPPs) on uridine diphosphate glucose

NPPs hydrolyse uridine diphosphate (UDP) glucose to uridine monophosphate (UMP) and glucose-6-phosphate.

NPP2, also known as autotaxin, has nucleotidase activity and is a lysophospholipase-D that hydrolyses albumin-bound or membrane-bound lysophosphatidylcholine, to produce lysophosphatidic acid and choline. Lysophosphatidic acid can then act on G-protein coupled receptors (LPA1-6) to produce a cellular response (Noguchi *et al.* 2009). It has been shown *in vitro* that lysophosphatidic acid can increase tumour cell growth; *in vivo*, lysophosphatidic acid dysregulation has been shown to affect the differentiation and proliferation of neural cells and cause craniofacial dysmorphism (Umezu-Goto *et al.* 2002; Noguchi *et al.* 2009). NPP2 also hydrolyses sphingosylphosphorylcholine to produce sphingosine-1-phosphate (S1P), which has been shown to regulate angiogenesis and cell motility *in vitro* (Clair *et al.* 2003). S1P has been reported to induce mouse

osteoclast chemotaxis *in vitro* and *in vivo* by acting via G-protein coupled receptors (Ishii *et al.* 2009). It has also been reported that S1P increases human and rat osteoblast proliferation and induces heat shock protein 27 expression *in vitro* (Kozawa *et al.* 1999). *Enpp2*^{-/-} mice are not viable past day 10 of gestation; it has been assumed that this was due to a defect in lipid signalling, related to blood vessel formation (Tanaka *et al.* 2006). Although NPP2 is a weak nucleotidase compared to NPP1 and NPP3, there is evidence that it plays a greater role in the hydrolysis of phospholipids than nucleotides (Gijsbers *et al.* 2003).

NPP6 and NPP7 are both choline phosphate esterases (Duan *et al.* 2003; Sakagami *et al.* 2005). NPP6 hydrolyses p-nitrophenyl phosphorylcholine but not p-nitrophenyl thymidine 5'-monophosphate, indicating it has phospholipase C activity but not nucleotide phosphodiesterase activity. NPP6 has lysophospholipase-C activity; unlike NPP2 when it hydrolyses lysophosphatidylcholine it produces monoacylglycerol and phosphorylcholine (Sakagami *et al.* 2005).

NPP7 has been shown to possess alkaline sphingomyelin phosphodiesterase (sphingomyelinase) activity, generating ceramide from sphingomyelin in the intestinal tract (Duan *et al.* 2003). It is believed that NPP7 may play a role in the pathogenesis of inflammatory bowel disease by affecting the activity of platelet activating factor with its phospholipase activity (Wu *et al.* 2006).

Ecto-5'nucleotidase (eN)

Ecto-5'nucleotidase (eN), also referred to as CD73, is a glycosylphosphatidylinositol (GPI) cell surface anchored enzyme that hydrolyses the remaining phosphate group from nucleoside monophosphate to produce phosphate and a nucleoside. EN hydrolyses ribonucleoside 5'-monophosphates and deoxyribonucleoside 5'-monophosphates including AMP, CMP, UMP, IMP, and GMP (Figure 1.10). AMP is the most effectively hydrolysed nucleotide by eN, it has much lower activity with deoxyribonucleotides as substrates (Zimmermann *et al.* 2012). ATP and ADP are competitive inhibitors of eN. These nucleotides bind to the catalytic site of eN, but

apparently without being hydrolysed, thereby blocking the binding for AMP and preventing its hydrolysis (Grondal & Zimmermann 1987).

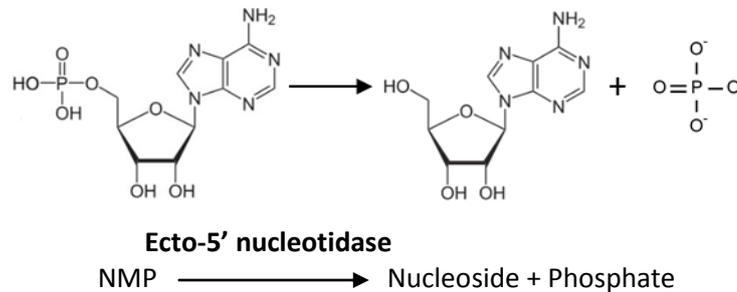


Figure 1.10. The actions of ecto-5' nucleotidase (eN)

Ecto-5' nucleotidase hydrolyses nucleoside monophosphates (NMP) to their constituent nucleoside and phosphate. Shown here is the conversion of AMP to adenosine and phosphate.

The production of adenosine from AMP is considered to be one of the key roles of eN. Dependent upon the supply of the substrate AMP, eN activity could have a significant effect on the extracellular adenosine concentration. An ecto 5'-nucleotidase knockout mouse ($eN^{-/-}$) has been developed. $eN^{-/-}$ mice were reported to be healthy, gain weight normally and have a normal immune system; however, when subjected to hypoxia, $eN^{-/-}$ mice developed vascular leakage, perivascular oedema and inflammatory infiltrates (Thompson *et al.* 2004). These symptoms were considered to be due to the lack of adenosine, the addition of adenosine receptor agonists and soluble eN partially rescued this phenotype. Further experiments showed that the $eN^{-/-}$ mice had a defective renal response to NaCl at the glomerulus due to a presumed lack of adenosine in the kidney (Castrop *et al.* 2004). It has also been shown that $eN^{-/-}$ mice have increased platelet aggregation, increased adhesion of leucocytes to the vascular endothelium and a decrease in vascular tone (Koszalka *et al.* 2004).

Alkaline phosphatase (ALP)

The alkaline phosphatase isoenzymes and their roles in P_{ii} metabolism and mineralisation of the extracellular matrix have been discussed on page 29. ALP also plays a role in the hydrolysis of nucleotides that is intimately related to the regulation of mineralisation. ALP can hydrolyse NTP to NDP and NMP (Figure 1.11); unlike the NPPs and the NTPdases, ALP may also remove the phosphate group from NMP to produce a nucleoside and a phosphate (Figure 1.12) (Ciancaglini *et al.* 2010; Simao *et al.* 2010).

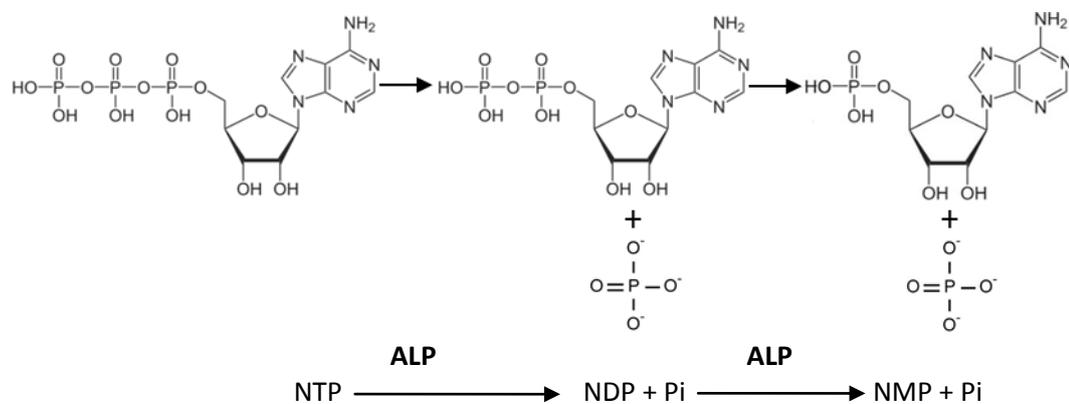


Figure 1.11. The actions of alkaline phosphatase on nucleotides

ALP hydrolyses nucleoside triphosphates (NTP) to nucleoside diphosphates (NDP) and nucleoside monophosphates (NMP) with the release of phosphate (Pi).

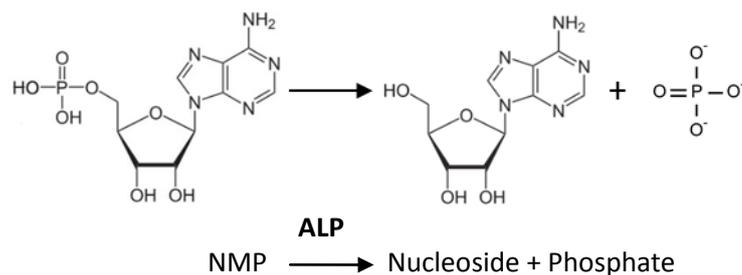


Figure 1.12. The actions of alkaline phosphatase on nucleoside monophosphates

Alkaline phosphatase (ALP) hydrolyses nucleoside monophosphates (NMP) to their constituent nucleoside and phosphate.

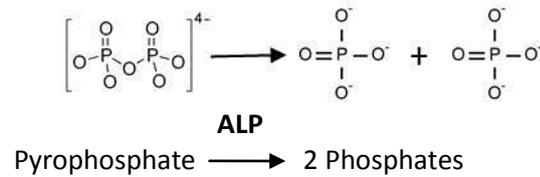


Figure 1.13. The actions of alkaline phosphatase on pyrophosphate

Alkaline phosphatase (ALP) hydrolyses pyrophosphate to produce two phosphate molecules.

The ability of ALP to hydrolyse ATP and AMP means that it can modulate P2 signalling by hydrolysing ATP, and it can influence adenosine signalling by affecting the rate of adenosine formed from AMP. It has been shown in the airway tissues, that where both eN and ATP are expressed in one tissue, eN may predominate in the breakdown of AMP at low concentrations, and ALP may predominate at high concentrations (Picher *et al.* 2003). The ALPs have a pH optimum of approximately 8; TNAP has been shown to hydrolyse ATP at both pH 7.4 and 9.4 (Demenis & Leone 2000). The neuronal like cells NG108-15 are able to hydrolyse AMP at pH 8.5, this nucleotidase activity is markedly decreased at pH 8.5. In the presence of the non-competitive ALP inhibitor levamisole, NG108-15 cells are unable to hydrolyse AMP (Ohkubo *et al.* 2000).

Nucleoside mono/di/tri-phosphate inter-conversion

Hydrolysis to adenosine is not the only fate that may befall nucleotides; they may also be re-phosphorylated to produce ATP. ATP, ADP or GDP may also be used in the production of dinucleoside polyphosphates. These molecules consist of two nucleosides joined by a chain of between two and seven phosphate molecules between their 5' carbon molecules (McLennan 2000). The enzyme glycyl-tRNA synthetase can cause the condensation of two ATP molecules, with the release of P_i to produce diadenosine 5',5'''P¹,P⁴-tetrphosphate (Ap₄A) (Guo *et al.* 2009). The function of Ap₄A is not truly known, but it has been implicated in a number of functions, including: regulation of the cell cycle in mouse liver cell lines (Rapaport & Zamecnik 1976), as an extracellular signalling molecule in the cardiovascular system (Stavrou 2003) and as a neurotransmitter (Pintor *et al.* 2000)

Adenosine kinase

Adenosine kinase phosphorylates adenosine to produce AMP (Figure 1.14). When the adenosine concentration in the extracellular environment is high it is transported by the ENT transporters into the intracellular environment, where adenosine kinase is located (Lloyd & Fredholm 1995).

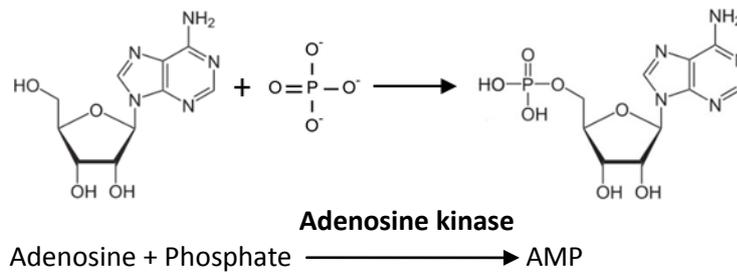


Figure 1.14. The actions of adenosine kinase

Adenosine kinase adds a phosphate onto adenosine to produce adenosine monophosphate.

Adenosine kinase knockout mice showed a delay in development from day 3 after birth, and die within approximately one week of birth of a grossly fatty liver and vascular stenosis. These mice also had reduced levels of all the adenine nucleotides and elevated levels of S-adenosyl-homocysteine. It is believed that the formation of a fatty liver in these mice is due to a decrease in transmethylation reactions, caused by a disruption in the conversion of S-adenosylmethionine to S-adenosylhomocysteine (Boison *et al.* 2002).

Adenylate kinase

Adenylate kinase is expressed in both the intracellular and extracellular compartments. In the intracellular compartment, adenylate kinase has been found in the cytosol, the mitochondria and the nucleus, it is believed to play a key role in energy transfer and distribution (reviewed in Yegutkin 2008). In the extracellular environment adenylate kinase has been shown to be expressed on: the vascular endothelium cells (Yegutkin *et al.* 2001), lymphocytes and leukemic cell lines (Yegutkin *et al.* 2002), hepatocytes and hepatic cell lines (Fabre *et al.* 2006), airway epithelia (Donaldson *et al.* 2002; Picher & Boucher 2003) and keratinocytes (Burrell

et al. 2005). Adenylate kinase transfers a phosphoryl group from ATP to AMP to produce two ADP nucleotides, by regulating AMP and ADP levels, adenylate kinase may play a role in purinergic signalling.

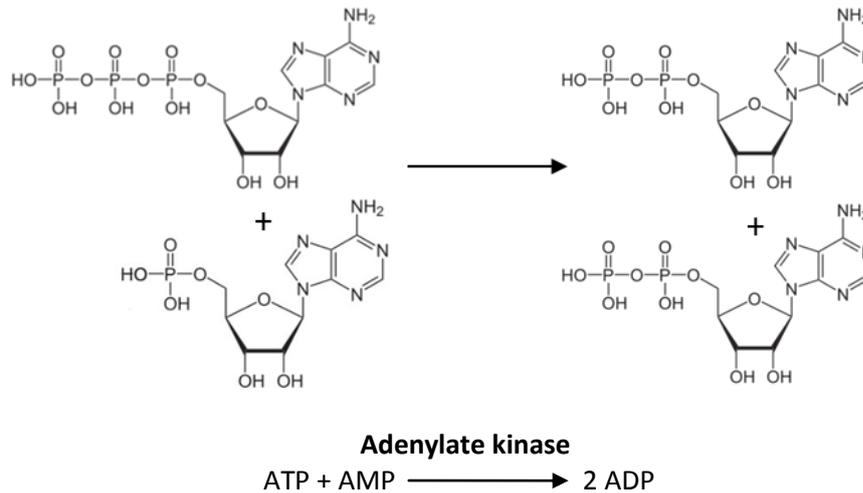


Figure 1.15. The actions of adenylate kinase

Adenylate kinase is a phosphotransferase that catalyses the conversion of ATP and AMP into two ADP molecules.

Adenylate kinase-1 knockout mice had reduced energy efficiency in their muscles. Enzyme kinetics show that these mice used ATP in a less efficient way, resulting in a greater *de novo* synthesis of ATP needed per muscle contraction because it could not be synthesised from other nucleotides efficiently (Janssen *et al.* 2000).

Nucleoside diphosphate kinase

Nucleoside diphosphate kinase (NDPK) catalyses the transfer of a phosphate group from a nucleoside triphosphate to a nucleoside diphosphate (Figure 1.16) (Yegutkin 2008).

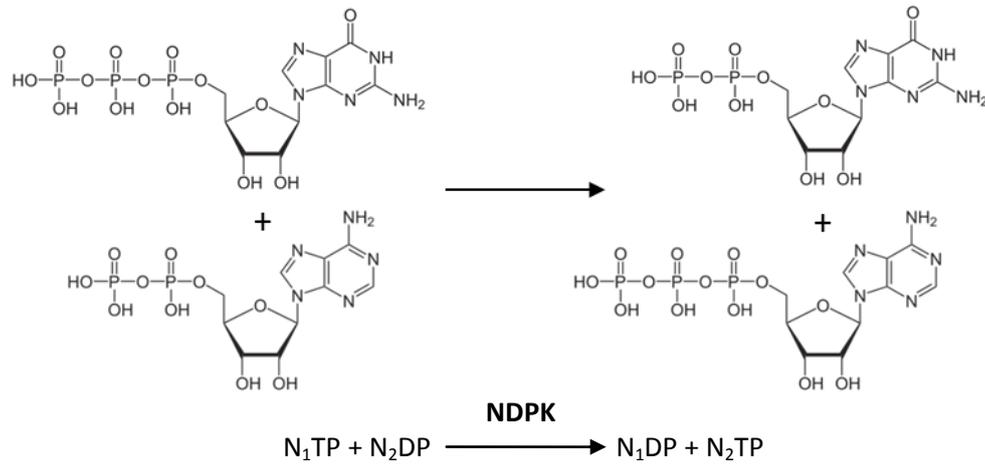


Figure 1.16. The actions of nucleoside diphosphate kinase (NDPK)

NDPK catalyses the transfer of a phosphate group from one nucleotide to another. Here NDPK transfers a phosphate group from nucleoside triphosphate 1 (N_1TP), here represented by GTP, to nucleoside diphosphate 2 (N_2DP), represented by ADP. Nucleotide 1 loses a phosphate group and nucleotide 2 gains a phosphate group, resulting in the formation of GDP and ATP.

Extracellular ATP synthesis via the NDPK enzyme has been reported (Ronquist 1968; Agren *et al.* 1974). This may involve the transfer of a phosphate group from GTP onto ADP to produce ATP (Figure 1.16). Expression of NDPK has been shown on the cell surface of a number of cell types, including, erythrocytes (Ronquist 1968), glioma and glia cell lines (Agren *et al.* 1974), astrocytoma cells (Lazarowski *et al.* 1997), vascular endothelium cells (Yegutkin *et al.* 2001), lymphocytes (Yegutkin *et al.* 2002) and hepatocytes (Fabre *et al.* 2006). NDPK plays a role in maintaining the balance of ATP within the cell; it is also involved in growth and developmental control, signal transduction and tumour metastasis suppression (Otero 2000; Okabe-Kado & Kasukabe 2003).

Adenosine triphosphate synthase

ATP synthase (also known as F_1F_0 ATP synthase) catalyses the formation of ATP from ADP and P_i . Located within the mitochondria, ATP synthase consists of two regions, the F_0 portion is within the membrane of the mitochondria, the F_1 portion (also called H^+ ATPase) is located in the matrix of the mitochondria (Yoshida *et al.* 2001).

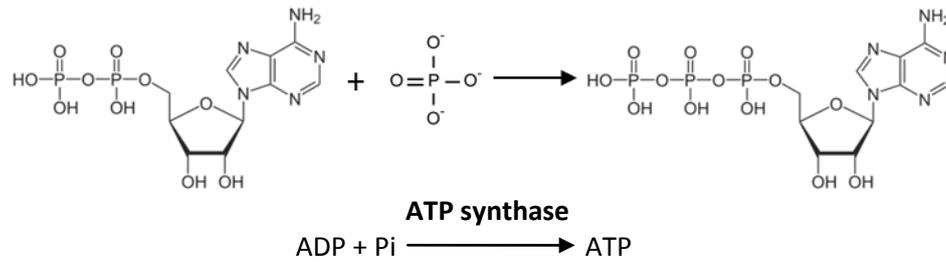


Figure 1.17. The actions of adenosine triphosphate synthase

Adenosine triphosphate synthase catalyses the formation of adenosine triphosphate (ATP) from adenosine diphosphate (ADP) and phosphate (Pi).

Although generally expressed in mitochondria, there is evidence that ATP synthase may also be an ecto-enzyme expressed on the outer surface of the plasma membrane (Das *et al.* 1994). It has been shown that at least some of the catalytic subunits of the enzyme are expressed on the cell surface of: vascular endothelial cells (Yamamoto *et al.* 2007), adipocytes (Kim *et al.* 2004), keratinocytes (Burrell *et al.* 2005) and various tumour cell lines (Chi & Pizzo 2006). However, it is not clear if this ecto-ATP synthase is enzymatically active, or if the metabolic effects seen using cells *in vitro* could be due to adenylate kinase and NDPK (Yegutkin 2008).

Adenosine and adenosine receptors

All of the above mentioned ecto-nucleotidases, ALP, NPP, NTPdase and eN act together to hydrolyse extracellular ATP and produce adenosine. Adenosine is an endogenous nucleoside widely distributed in all body fluids and tissues. It is continuously formed in both the intra- and extracellular compartments of most cells (Schubert *et al.* 1979; Zimmermann 2000). The intracellular production of adenosine is by either de-phosphorylation of AMP by ecto-5' nucleotidase / ALP or by hydrolysis of S-adenosyl-homocysteine (Broch & Ueland 1980).

Intracellular adenosine is transported to the extracellular compartment by an equilibrative nucleoside transporter, of which there are four (ENT1-4), or by a concentrative nucleoside transporter, of which there are three (CNT1-3) (Baldwin *et al.* 1999; Young *et al.* 2013). Adenosine cannot freely cross the cell membrane because nucleosides are hydrophilic molecules (Baldwin *et al.* 1999). Under normal conditions the extracellular concentration of adenosine in the human body is 30 -

300 nM (Ballarin *et al.* 1991; Fredholm *et al.* 2001); under physiological stress, extracellular adenosine can rise to concentrations of approximately 1 μ M (Fredholm & Sollevi 1981; Zetterstrom *et al.* 1982).

The physiological actions of adenosine have been studied for over 80 years after its cardiovascular actions were first demonstrated by Drury & Szent-Gyorgyi (1929). Adenosine acts via the G-protein coupled P1-receptors, found on the surface of many cell types. The P1 receptor family can be further subdivided into the A_1 , A_{2A} , A_{2B} and A_3 receptors (Fredholm *et al.* 2001; Fredholm *et al.* 2011). The A_{2A} and A_{2B} adenosine receptors are predominantly stimulatory and are coupled to G_s to stimulate cAMP signalling, the A_1 and A_3 receptors are predominantly G_i coupled and act to inhibit cAMP signalling (Freissmuth *et al.* 1991; Pierce *et al.* 1992; Palmer *et al.* 1995; Olah 1997).

Adenosine plays a key role in many tissue types. In the heart, adenosine has been shown to have a key role in the control of coronary blood flow. Decreased coronary blood flow, hypoxia, or increased oxygen utilisation by the myocardial cells leads to a drop in myocardial oxygen tension (pO_2). Decreased pO_2 causes myocardial cells to release adenine nucleotides; adenosine is formed from these nucleotides in the extracellular compartment. Adenosine then acts on the coronary arterioles, causing them to dilate. This dilation results in a greater coronary blood flow and a normalisation of the pO_2 level, thereby reducing the release of nucleotides. This feedback mechanism allows adenosine to control the blood flow and pO_2 level in the heart (Berne 1963; Gerlach & Deuticke 1966). It has been shown using *in vivo* animal models that the coronary vasodilatory effect of adenosine is mediated predominantly by the A_{2A} and A_{2B} adenosine receptors (Morrison *et al.* 2002; Frobert *et al.* 2006).

The administration of adenosine either prior to myocardial ischemia or during reperfusion has been shown to reduce both the reversible and irreversible tissue damage and apoptosis this condition may cause. Adenosine A_1 receptor agonists, or receptor over-expression, reduced myocardial tissue damage and contractile dysfunction in rat hearts when they were subjected to hypoxia *in vitro* (Matherne *et*

al. 1997; Cerniway *et al.* 2002). It has also been reported that infusion of adenosine A_{2A} receptor agonists into rats *in vivo* during reperfusion decreases myocardial infarct size (Norton *et al.* 1992; Yang *et al.* 2005b).

Adenosine has been shown to have potent anti-inflammatory and pro-inflammatory functions. Adenosine reduces neutrophil mediated injury to the vascular endothelium during inflammation by inhibiting the adhesion of neutrophils to the endothelium (Cronstein *et al.* 1986). Adenosine acting via the A_{2A} receptor reduced phagocytosis by neutrophils and also reduced the production of potentially pathogenic oxygen radicals *in vitro* (Taylor *et al.* 2005). Adenosine has also been shown to reduce the inflammatory effects of macrophages by suppressing the production of pro-inflammatory chemokines and cytokines such as IL-12, nitric oxide and TNF α (Hasko *et al.* 1996; Ryzhov *et al.* 2008). Adenosine acting via the A_{2B} receptor can increase the release of the anti-inflammatory cytokine IL-10 from mice cells *in vitro* (Nemeth *et al.* 2005).

VEGF is released by macrophages; it is a potent stimulator of angiogenesis, it causes the differentiation of endothelium cells, and promotes the growth of new capillaries from existing blood vessels. It has been shown that adenosine acting via the A_{2A} receptor stimulates *in vitro* human and rodent macrophage production of VEGF, and therefore it may promote angiogenesis (Ramanathan *et al.* 2007; Ernens *et al.* 2010; Gessi *et al.* 2010).

Adenosine is neither stored nor released as a classical neurotransmitter, yet it may influence synaptic transmissions. Early work showed that adenosine inhibited neuromuscular transmission *in vitro*, as a consequence of its inhibition of acetylcholine release from the presynaptic nerves (Ginsborg & Hirst 1971). Adenosine is also implicated in the regulation of glycogen metabolism, glutamate transporters, cell proliferation and cellular swelling in astrocytes and glial cells (Dare *et al.* 2007). Adenosine has a key role in sleep homeostasis; experiments performed in cats showed that adenosine levels in the basal forebrain rise during wakeful periods, and leads to a decrease in neuronal activity, after which sleep is induced (Porkka-Heiskanen *et al.* 1997). Caffeine and other adenosine

receptor antagonists increase wakefulness (Landolt *et al.* 1995). In mice and humans the actions of adenosine and adenosine receptor antagonists on sleep are mediated through the A₁ and A_{2A} receptors (Elmenhorst *et al.* 2007; Retey *et al.* 2007).

Although adenosine is found ubiquitously throughout the human body, pharmacological intervention with adenosine is mainly directed towards the cardiovascular system, such as treatment of supraventricular arrhythmia, congestive heart failure, controlling blood pressure and attenuating reperfusion injury (Neubauer 2007; Peart & Headrick 2007).

Adenosine deaminase

Adenosine deaminase (ADA) catalyses the deamination of adenosine to inosine (Figure 1.18). It is found in the extracellular and intracellular environment (Lloyd & Fredholm 1995). ADA has a K_m of 2-100 μM, meaning it has a lower affinity for adenosine than adenosine kinase (K_m, 100nM) (Arch & Newsholme 1978; Lloyd & Fredholm 1995; Sychala *et al.* 1996).

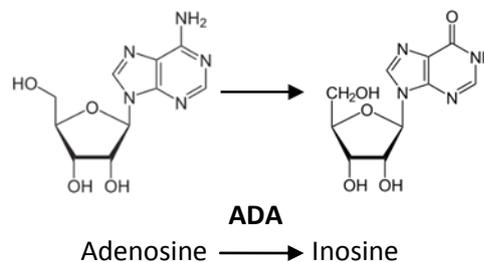


Figure 1.18. The actions of adenosine deaminase (ADA)

ADA irreversibly removes an amine group from adenosine and replaces it with a hydroxyl group, forming inosine.

ADA knockout mice died of hepatocellular impairment within 3 weeks of birth (Wakamiya *et al.* 1995). This liver phenotype was attributed to the formation of toxic 2-deoxyadenosine metabolites (Hershfield 1979); these can inhibit S-adenosylhomocysteine hydrolase and alter the ratio of S-adenosylmethionine to S-adenosylhomocysteine (Migchielsen *et al.* 1995; Wakamiya *et al.* 1995).

$ADA^{-/-}$ mice were studied at day 19 post birth and found to have a bone defect. $ADA^{-/-}$ mice had shorter femora and tibiae, and a reduced volume of trabecular bone. $ADA^{-/-}$ mice also have reduced levels of circulating RANKL and normal levels of OPG, this may lead to reduced osteoclast formation. $ADA^{-/-}$ osteoblasts *in vitro* proliferated significantly less than wild types and the expression of collagen type I and osteocalcin was reduced (Sauer *et al.* 2009).

In humans, ADA deficiency is a major cause of severe combined immunodeficiency (ADA-SCID). In patients who have ADA-SCID, the main symptoms are related to immune defects such as: lymphopenia, severely impaired cellular and humoral immunity, failure to thrive, and recurrent infections (Sauer *et al.* 2012). People with ADA-SCID may also suffer from skeletal, hepatic, renal, lung, and neurologic abnormalities (Ratech *et al.* 1985). Patients with ADA-SCID may have a short stature, femora bowing and disorganised chondrocyte arrangement in the growth plates, however, symptoms can be variable (Cederbaum *et al.* 1976; MacDermot *et al.* 1991).

Adenine and adenine receptors

Although it has long been known that nucleotides and nucleosides act as extracellular signalling molecules, it is only recently that it has been shown that the nucleobase adenine can act in this capacity. Adenine was shown to be an agonist of the Mas-related gene receptor A (MrgA) in rats, this receptor was soon renamed the rat adenine receptor (Bender *et al.* 2002), it has been suggested that adenine receptors could form the P0 class of purinergic receptors (Thimm *et al.* 2013). This would result in a family of purinoceptors as shown in Table 1. Two mouse adenine receptors have been identified, mAde1R and mAde2R, these have been shown to be activated by nano-molar concentrations of adenine (von Kugelgen *et al.* 2008). Analysis of the sequences of these rodent adenine receptors has not identified an equivalent receptor in humans. However, there is pharmacological evidence to suggest that a human adenine receptor may exist (Slominska *et al.* 2002; Gorzalka *et al.* 2005; Borrmann *et al.* 2009; Knospe *et al.* 2013).

Receptor	Natural agonist	References
P0	Adenine	(Thimm <i>et al.</i> 2013)
P1 (A _{1A} , A _{2A} , A _{2B} and A ₃)	Adenosine	(Fredholm <i>et al.</i> 2011)
P2 (P2X ₁₋₇ & P2Y _{1,2,4,6,11-14})	ATP, ADP, UTP, UDP	(Abbracchio & Burnstock 1994)
P3	Adenosine / ATP	(Smith <i>et al.</i> 1997; King <i>et al.</i> 1998)
P4	Dinucleotides	(Pintor & Miras-Portugal 1995)

Table 1. The proposed purinoceptor family

More recent work casts doubt on the existence of a separate P3 receptor and suggests the actions seen *in vivo* are due to ATP sensitive P1 receptors or adenosine sensitive P2 receptors (Morikawa *et al.* 2007; Tautenhahn *et al.* 2012).

Purine salvage pathway

Intracellular ADA converts adenosine into inosine, which may then have its ribose group removed by purine nucleoside phosphorylase, converting it into hypoxanthine. Xanthine oxidase converts hypoxanthine to xanthine, the enzyme then further adds oxygen to xanthine, forming uric acid. This uric acid is then excreted by the kidneys.

An alternative fate may await purines; they can be salvaged and reused. Hypoxanthine-guanine phosphoribosyltransferase (HGPRT) forms inosine monophosphate from hypoxanthine. HGPRT also catalyses the conversion of guanine to guanine monophosphate. Adenine phosphoribosyltransferase (APRT) is an enzyme that is functionally similar to HGPRT. APRT catalyses the formation of AMP from adenine. This AMP may be deaminated to form inosine monophosphate or converted to adenosine by eN (Figure 1.19). During *de novo* synthesis of purines, IMP is the first nucleotide formed (Berg *et al.* 2002).

Mild deficiency of HGPRT in humans leads to an over production of uric acid, kidney stones and gout. Total loss of HGPRT function in people results in Lesch-Nyhan syndrome, the symptoms of which are: mental retardation, self-harm, and the muscle conditions of dystonia (sustained torsion), choreoathetosis (contractions, twisting, writhing) and ballismus (rapid irregular movements) (Torres & Puig 2007).

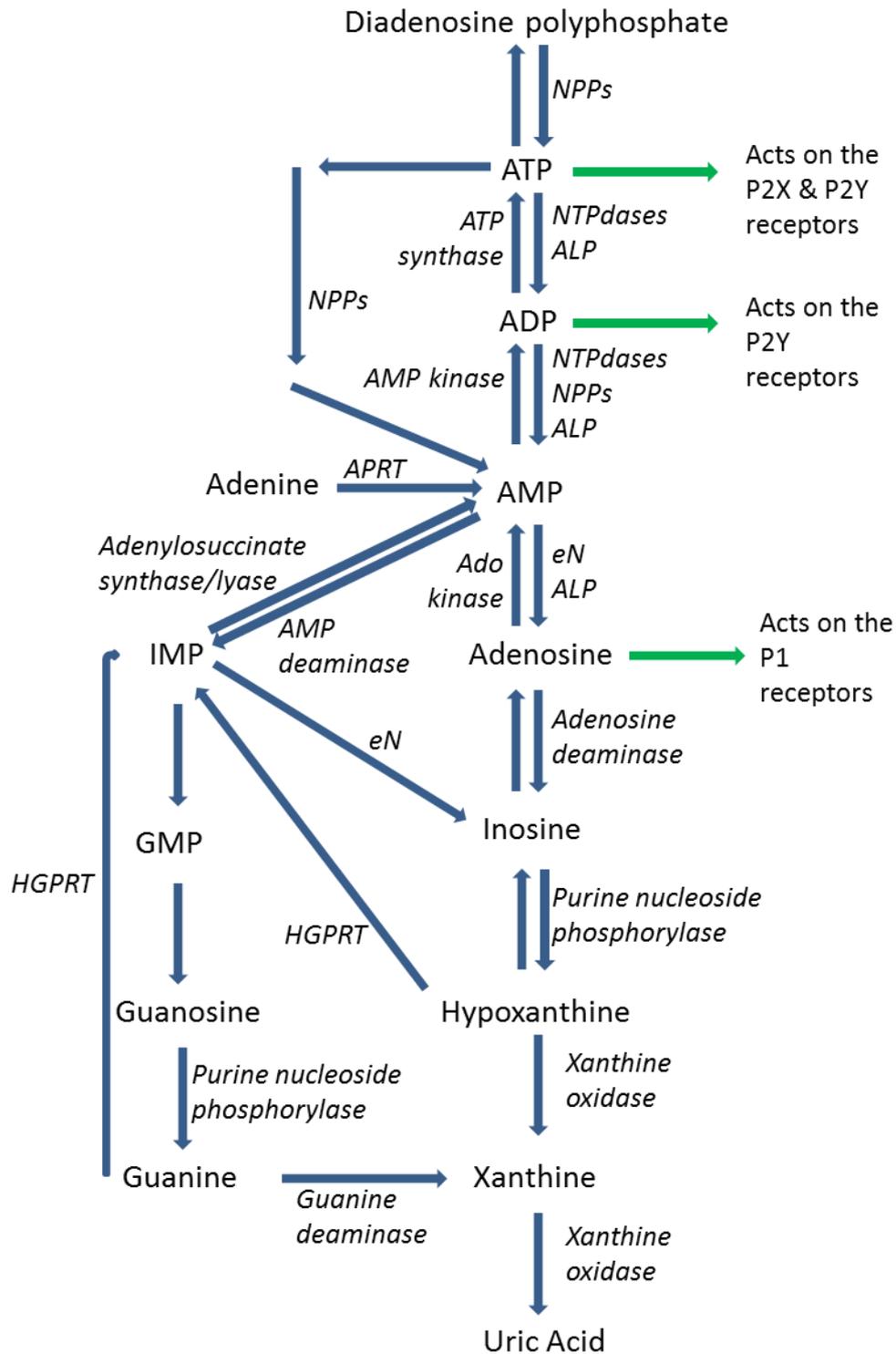


Figure 1.19. The fate of nucleotides and nucleosides

Summary diagram showing the possible fates of nucleotides and nucleosides in the intra- and extracellular environment of the cell. See text for more details on specific enzymes. Enzymes are italicised; APRT, adenine phosphoribosyltransferase; HGPRT, hypoxanthine guanine phosphoribosyltransferase; IMP, inosine monophosphate.

Aims

The work in this thesis relates to the topic of tissue mineralisation and its control, with particular emphasis placed on the role of the hydrolysis products of ATP. I investigated what effects the products of ATP breakdown have on bone and tissue mineralisation, independent of nucleotide signalling through P2 receptors.

- In Chapter 3, I address the question of what role do NPP1, an enzyme that hydrolyses ATP, and PPi, the hydrolysis product, play in the maintenance of cortical bone structure, osteocyte lacunae size and endocrine function; I also investigated their roles in preventing soft tissue mineralisation.
- In Chapter 4, I investigated the role NPP1 plays in regulating osteoblast and osteoclast function and formation, with particular emphasis on the latter cell.
- In Chapter 5, I studied the effects of adenosine, a hydrolysis product of ATP, on rodent osteoblasts and osteoclasts *in vitro*.
- In Chapter 6, I examined the actions of sclerostin on rodent osteoclasts and osteoblasts *in vitro*, and show a potential link with NPP1, nucleotide signalling and nucleotide hydrolysis.

Chapter 2

Materials and methods

Reagents

All tissue culture and molecular biology reagents were purchased from Life Technologies (Paisley, UK), unless stated otherwise. Chemical reagents and adenosine were purchased from Sigma Aldrich (Pool, Dorset, UK). 2-chloroadenosine and ATP were purchased from Tocris (Bristol, UK). Nucleotides and nucleosides were stored protected from light as per the manufactures instructions and solubilised in PBS. Sclerostin and an anti-sclerostin antibody were provided by Amgen (Thousand Oaks, California, US).

Transgenic animals

Enpp1^{-/-} mice were generated by Dr José Luis Millán and colleagues (Sandford Burnham Institute, La Jolla, US) (Sali *et al.* 1999). A breeding colony of *Enpp1*^{+/-} was maintained within the UCL Biological Services animal facility. Genotyping was performed by Mr Stuart Martin at the UCL genotyping service. *Sost*^{-/-} bone marrow was provided by Amgen (Thousand Oaks, California, US).

Cell culture

Rat and mouse calvarial osteoblast culture

Primary rat or mouse osteoblasts of calvarial origin were obtained by sequential digestion of the calvarial bones dissected from 2 day old Sprague-Dawley rats or C57BL/6 - 129/SvTerJ crossed mice. In this three-step process, calvariae were digested using 0.25% trypsin for 10 minutes, followed by 0.2% collagenase in Hank's buffered salt solution (HBSS) for 30 minutes and finally 0.2% collagenase in HBSS for 60 minutes all at 37°C. The first two digests were discarded and the remaining rat cells were suspended in Dulbecco's modified essential medium supplemented with 10% foetal calf serum (FCS), 2 mM L-glutamine, 100 U/ml penicillin, 100 µg/ml

streptomycin, 0.25 µg/ml amphotericin (mixture abbreviated to DMEM). Mouse cells were obtained by an identical digestion procedure and then suspended in α -modified essential medium supplemented with 10% FCS, 70 µg/ml gentamicin, 50 U/ml penicillin, 50 µg/ml streptomycin, 0.125 µg/ml amphotericin (mixture abbreviated to α -MEM). Rat and mouse cells were cultured for 4 days in 75 cm² or 25 cm² flasks in a humidified atmosphere of 5% CO₂ at a temperature of 37°C until confluent. Upon confluence rat cells were cultured into 6, 12 or 24 well trays in DMEM further supplemented with 2 mM β -glycerophosphate, 50 µg/ml ascorbate and 10 nM dexamethasone (mixture abbreviated to supplemented DMEM) (Orriss *et al.* 2012b) at a cell density of 1×10^5 , 5×10^4 , or 2.5×10^4 cells per well respectively. When confluent, mouse cells were cultured into 6 well trays in α -MEM further supplemented with 2 mM β -glycerophosphate and 50 µg/ml ascorbate (mixture abbreviated to supplemented α -MEM) at a density of 1×10^5 cells per well. Half media changes were performed every third day of culture. The culture media was supplemented with adenosine, 2-chloroadenosine, ATP, sclerostin, anti-sclerostin antibody or phosphate buffered saline (PBS) (for controls) when the cells were cultured into plates and at each media change. Experiments were terminated by fixing the cells in 2% glutaraldehyde buffered in PBS for 5 minutes. α -MEM contains phenol red; the effects this has on oestrogen and P2 receptors was considered.

Rat bone marrow osteoblast culture

Primary rat osteoblasts of bone marrow / stromal cell origin were obtained by dissecting the long bones from 6 week old Sprague-Dawley rats. The epiphyses were cut across and the marrow was flushed out of the bones using PBS. The collected cells were suspended in α -MEM within a 75 cm² flask at 37°C and 5% CO₂. After 24 hours the α -MEM was removed and all cells that had not adhered to the wall of the flask were discarded; the adherent stromal cells were cultured for a further 2 days in fresh α -MEM until confluent. Upon confluence cells were cultured into 6 well trays with supplemented α -MEM at a density of 1×10^5 cells per well. Experiments were terminated by fixing the cells in 2% glutaraldehyde for 5 minutes.

Mouse osteoclast culture

Primary mouse osteoclasts were formed from precursors obtained from the bone marrow of 8 and 15 week old mice. The precursor cells were incubated in a 75cm² flask containing modified essential medium (MEM) supplemented with 10% FCS, 2mM L-glutamine , 100 U/ml penicillin, 100 µg/ml streptomycin, 0.25 µg/ml amphotericin, 100 nM prostaglandin E₂ and 50 ng/ml macrophage colony stimulating factor (M-CSF) within a humidified atmosphere of 5% CO₂ at 37°C. After 24 hours the non-adherent cells were collected from the flask, the stromal cells which had adhered to the flask were discarded. The cells were re-suspended in MEM supplemented with: 10% FCS, 2 mM L-glutamine, 100 U/ml penicillin, 100 µg/ml streptomycin, 0.25 µg/ml amphotericin, 100 nM prostaglandin E₂ (PGE₂), 150 ng/mL M-CSF, and 3 ng/mL receptor activator of NF-κB (RANKL). Cells were seeded (10⁶) onto 5 mm-diameter ivory discs in a 96 well tray. After a further 24 hours the ivory discs were transferred into 6 well trays for a further 6 days. For the final 2 days of the culture the media was acidified to pH 6.9 by the addition of HCl to activate osteoclast resorption (Orriss & Arnett 2012). At the end of the culture cells were fixed in 2% glutaraldehyde and treated to detect the presence of TRAP activity. Cells were deemed to be osteoclasts if they were multinucleated (≥3 nuclei) and stained positive for TRAP. The number of osteoclasts per dentine disc was manually counted “blind” using transmitted light microscopy and the total plan area of resorption per disc was quantified “blind” using reflective light microscopy and dot-counting morphometry.

In vitro osteoclasts used in the *Sost*^{-/-} experiments, and the wild type controls to which they were compared, were grown from frozen bone marrow, stored at -80°C, provided by Amgen (Thousand Oaks, California, US). Bone marrow was defrosted in MEM supplemented with 20% FCS at 37°C, the cells solution was centrifuged and the cells were seeded onto dentine discs, the experiments then proceeded as per the osteoclast experiments stated above.

Mouse osteocyte-like cell culture

This primary mouse osteocyte isolation method is based on previously published methods (Van Der Plas & Nijweide 1992; Stern *et al.* 2012). Primary mouse osteocytes were obtained from the long bones of 15 week old C57BL/6 - 129/SvTerJ crossed *Enpp^{-/-}* and wild type mice. The long bones were dissected out of the mice, the soft tissues were removed and the marrow was flushed out from them. The remaining bones were cut into small pieces using a scalpel. This bone was digested using 0.2% collagenase for 30 min at 37°C, this process was repeated three times, the cells and digested materials obtained were discarded; the bones were washed in HBSS between each digestion step. Next, the bones were digested using 5 mM EDTA in a 1% BSA solution for 30 minutes; they were then washed in HBSS, and then digested in collagenase for 30 min as previously. The collagenase and EDTA digestion steps were repeated alternately and the bones were washed in HBSS between each digestion step. After the first eight digestion steps the cell solution and digested material obtained was discarded, these were considered to contain osteoblasts, fibroblasts and other unwanted cell types. After the ninth digestion step the cells obtained were retained and washed in HBSS. These cells were seeded into collagen coated 6 well trays at a density of 2×10^5 cells per well with α MEM. Half media changes were performed on every third day; the cells were used for experimental procedures on day 7. The first eight digestion steps were intended to remove any cells resident on the surface of the bones and hydrolyse the collagen bonds within the bone, to reveal the inner structure of the bone. The ninth digestion was intended to release osteocytes from the bone.

Quantification of *in vitro* bone nodule formation

The cell layers in osteoblast cell culture experiments at time points from 4 - 29 days were fixed in 2.5% glutaraldehyde for 5 min, then washed with 70% ethanol and allowed to air dry. The cell culture plates were imaged at 800dpi using a flatbed scanner (Epson, Hemel Hempstead, UK) in reflected light mode. The images so generated were converted to binary form using Adobe Photoshop (San Jose,

California, US) and the plan surface area of bone nodules (now appearing as black areas) were quantified by automated analysis using Image J (NIH, USA) (**Figure 2.1**).

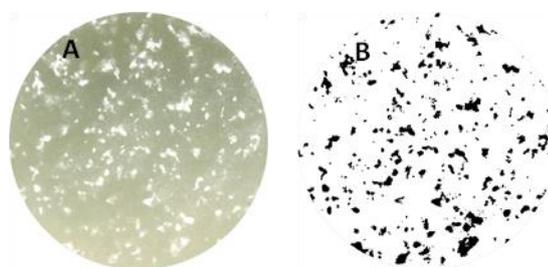


Figure 2.1. The quantification of the total area of bone formed by rodent osteoblasts *in vitro*

Images of the cell layers within the culture plates underwent an automated multistep process which allows the quantification of the area of mineralised bone formed. **(A)** Original image of bone within the cell culture plate; **(B)** final binary image used for bone quantification.

Biochemical assays

Alkaline phosphatase (ALP) activity measurement

The ALP activity of cell lysates was determined colorimetrically using a commercially available kit (Biotron Diagnostics, California, USA) and a Bio-Tek EL x800 plate reader (Fisher Scientific, Loughborough, UK). This assay measures the hydrolysis by cell lysates of a p-nitrophenyl phosphate substrate to p-nitrophenol, a yellow dye, the absorbance of which is measured at 405 nm. ALP activity was calculated using the molar absorption coefficient and a p-nitrophenol standard curve. ALP activity was normalised to the cell protein content (see below).

Total NPP activity measurement

Total NPP activity was measured spectrophotometrically using the method first described by Razzell & Khorana (1959); this method measures total NPP activity, not NPP1 activity. Cells were lysed in a buffer containing 1% triton X100 and 1.6 mM MgCl in a 0.2 M Tris base at pH 8.1. After centrifugation at 500 g for 5 minutes, the NPP activity of the supernatant was measured by its ability to hydrolyse p-nitrophenyl-thymidine 5'-monophosphate, again yielding a yellow dye

which was quantified at 405 nm. NPP activity was normalised to the protein concentration.

Measurement of intra- and extracellular ATP

Cell culture media were aspirated from the plates and cell layers were washed with PBS. Next 1 ml of serum-free DMEM was added to each well of the cell culture plate. For the experiments measuring the breakdown of ATP, this serum-free DMEM was spiked with exogenous ATP (100 nM – 1 μ M). In the experiments examining the effects of adenosine on ATP release the serum-free medium was spiked with adenosine (1 - 100 μ M). Extracellular ATP released into the serum-free medium by the cells was measured using a commercially available luciferin-luciferase based kit ('Cell Titre Glo', Promega, Southampton, UK). Luminescence was measured in a luminometer (Promega GloMax 2020) and values were normalised to cell number, quantified using an assay which measures lactate dehydrogenase (LDH) release from lysed cells. To determine the intracellular ATP concentration, cells were lysed using a 1% solution of Triton X-100. Standard curves were constructed by spiking cell culture media with ATP (100pM – 1 μ M). The coefficient of variation of the ATP assay was found to be less than 2.5% regardless of ATP concentration measured. PPI up to a concentration of 1 μ M was found to have little interfering effect on the measurement of ATP.

Protein measurement (Bradford assay)

The Bradford assay (Bradford 1976; Compton & Jones 1985) was used to measure protein levels within cell lysates against a bovine serum albumin standard, according to the manufacturer's instructions (Sigma-Aldrich, Gillingham, UK).

Cell number and viability assays

Osteoblast cell number and viability were measured using the CytoTox 96 nonradioactive cytotoxicity assay (Promega UK, Southampton UK). This assay measures the activity of LDH, a cytosolic enzyme that is released on cell lysis. LDH in the cell lysate oxidises lactate into pyruvate, generating NADH from NAD⁺, which

is then used to convert a tetrazolium salt into a red formazan product, which was quantified photometrically at 490 nm.

To determine cell viability, the LDH activity in the cell culture media was measured. All of the culture medium was removed and the cells were washed with PBS. Next 1 ml of serum free DMEM was added to each well of the cell culture plate and LDH activity measured. The cells were then lysed using 1% Triton X-100 in water and the LDH activity determined. A standard curve for the determination of cell numbers was constructed using cells seeded at 10^3 to 10^6 /well. Measurement of the total cellular LDH allows us to calculate the total cell number. The ratio of LDH in the cell supernatant to total cellular LDH allows us to calculate the cell viability.

Serum sclerostin measurement

Blood was collected from 8 and 15 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice by cardiac puncture immediately after killing by cervical dislocation. Blood from 22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice was provided by Dr. Vicky MacRae (Roslin Institute, University of Edinburgh) because the development of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice beyond 15 weeks was not permitted under UCL veterinary advice. Blood was collected into plain tubes and allowed to clot; samples were then centrifuged at 500 g for 25 min, the serum was separated and frozen at -20°C until analysis. Serum sclerostin was measured using a commercially available ELISA kit (R&D Systems, Abingdon, UK), according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Molecular Biology

Total RNA extraction, DNase treatment and complimentary DNA synthesis

Osteoblasts were cultured in 6 well trays for up to 28 days; total RNA was extracted using TRIzol reagent according to the manufacturer's instructions. Osteoclasts were cultured on dentine discs for up to 10 days before mRNA was extracted using TRIzol. Extracted RNA was treated with RNase-free DNase I (Promega, Southampton, UK) for 30 min at 37°C to remove contaminating genomic DNA. The

reaction was terminated by heat inactivation at 65°C for 10 min. Total RNA was quantified spectrophotometrically by measuring absorbance at 260 nm. cDNA was synthesised from approximately 1µg of mRNA using Superscript 3 reverse transcriptase, oligo dT, RNasin and a deoxyribo-nucleotide mix.

RT-PCR

The cDNA produced from osteoblast and osteoclast mRNA was amplified by PCR using 1U GoTaq DNA polymerase, 1.5 mM MgCl, 0.8 µM nucleotide mix (Promega, Southampton, UK) and 0.5 µM primers (MWG Biotech, Ebersberg, Germany). The primer sequences used for rat and mouse RT-PCR are shown in Appendix 1. This mixture was placed in a thermal cycler and heated to 94°C for 5 minutes. Next the sample was cycled through a three different temperatures approximately 30 times (primer dependent cycle number). The temperatures cycled through were 94°C for 30 seconds, approximately 53°C for 30 seconds (the exact temperature is primer specific) and 72°C for 45 seconds. After the sample had passed through this cycling process the desired number of times it was heated to 72°C for 5 minutes. Next, electrophoresis was used to quantify the amount of cDNA present in the sample in relation to standards of known weight. 10µl of the amplified cDNA solution was placed into a 1.5% agarose gel containing 10 mg/ml ethidium bromide and electrophoresis was performed for 25 minutes at 100v. The cDNA was visualised under UV light.

Imaging techniques

Computed tomography

Micro-computed tomography (microCT) was performed on the left humerus, head and lungs of *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice. All scans were performed using a Skyscan 1172 microCT scanner (Bruker, Kontich, Belgium), and all data analyses were performed using Skyscan proprietary software.

The left humerus bone was dissected from 8 and 15 week old male and female *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice. Humerus bones from 22 week old female *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice were provided by Dr. Vicky MacRae (Roslin Institute, University of

Edinburgh) for reasons stated above. All outer soft tissues were removed from the bones; the bones were then fixed in formaldehyde for 24 hours and then transferred to 75% ethanol. After 1 week the bones were removed from the ethanol and allowed to air dry. The humerus bones were scanned using the following microCT parameters: the x-ray generation energy was 50 kv and 200 μ A; a 0.25 mm aluminium filter was placed in the X-ray path; the image pixel size was 0.9 μ m; the sample was rotated 0.3 degrees between images; and each image was averaged from two separate exposures. To analyse the cortical bone a 0.25 mm region of interest was selected 0.5 mm below the deltoid tuberosity. This was to ensure that the same region of cortical bone in all the samples was compared.

The heads were dissected from wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice, fixed in formaldehyde for 24 hours and then transferred to 75% ethanol. All soft tissues were left attached *in situ*. MicroCT scans were performed on hydrated samples with the following scan parameters: the x-ray generation energy was 50 kv and 200 μ A; a 0.5 mm aluminium filter was placed in the x-ray path; the image pixel size was 10 μ m; the sample was rotated 0.4 degrees between images; and each image was averaged from two separate exposures. All skull measurements were performed on a region of interest 4 mm in height, 2 mm from the back of the skull.

Scanning electron microscopy

The femur from the right leg was dissected out from wild type and knockout mice; the soft tissues were removed using a scalpel. The bones were then cut along their longitudinal axis using a low-speed diamond saw (Isomet, Buehler, Düsseldorf, Germany). The bone marrow and any remaining soft tissues were then digested using a protease based detergent, Tergazyme (Alconox, New York, US) at a concentration of 6% in water; this solution had a pH of 8.0. After three weeks the bones were removed from the Tergazyme solution and placed in 50 and 70% ethanol solutions for 2 hours each, and then transferred to 100% ethanol and left overnight. Finally the bones were left to air dry. Images from 22 week old animals, both wild type and knockout, were generated using a JEOL 7401 scanning electron microscope (Tokyo, Japan) at UCL, with the kind assistance of Mr Mark Turmaine.

Images of bones from 15 week old animals were kindly generated by Prof Alan Boyde using a Zeiss EVO MA10 SEM (Oberkochen, Germany) at Queen Mary, University of London. Bones from 22 week old animals were gold coated before imaging using an ion beam coater; bones from 15 week old animals were not gold coated. Image analysis of all bones was performed using Image J.

Histology

Histological analysis of the lungs, ear and the muzzle / whisker follicles of *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice was performed. The lungs were removed and fixed using the procedure detailed above in the microCT section. After microCT analysis, the lungs were processed for histology. For whisker follicle analysis, mice were culled and the muzzle was dissected away from the head and fixed in 10% neutral buffered formalin. An automated tissue processor (Leica microsystems, Wetzlar, Germany) was used to prepare all of the samples. The samples were passed through an increasing series of ethanol baths until dehydrated in 100% ethanol; they were then infiltrated with paraffin wax. The samples were then manually set within paraffin wax blocks. The set paraffin wax block was next placed face down on an ice block, when cool, 3µm sections were cut using a microtome and mounted onto microscope slides coated with poly-l-lysine. Before staining, the slides were deparaffinised using xylene, then rehydrated through a series of decreasing ethanol solutions and finally water. After staining, the samples were covered with a glass cover slip. Ear tissues were prepared for histological examination as per the muzzle / whisker tissues. The kind assistance of Dr Chris Scotton (Exeter University) is gratefully acknowledged.

Staining of tissues and cells

Alizarin red staining

The Alizarin red S stain binds to calcium. Histological sections were prepared as stated above and then immersed in a 1% w/v solution of Alizarin red S in glass Coplin jars for 5 minutes to demonstrate the presence of calcium deposits. After 5

minutes the slides were washed three times in deionised water and then counter-stained for 5 minutes with 1% w/v Fast green.

Osteoblasts cultured *in vitro* were fixed in glutaraldehyde as stated above and then washed three times with 70% ethanol. The cell monolayer was covered with a 1% Alizarin red S solution for 5 minutes. After 5 minutes the Alizarin red S was discarded and each well was washed three times with 70% ethanol and left to air dry.

ALP activity

Cell associated ALP activity was measured using a commercially-available leukocyte alkaline phosphatase kit (Sigma-Aldrich, Gillingham, UK) according to the manufacturer's instructions. Osteoblast cell layers were fixed in glutaraldehyde, as described above, washed with PBS and deionised water and incubated with the ALP reagent in the dark for 30 minutes, followed by washing with deionised water and air drying. This reaction involves the liberation of naphthol AS-BI from its phosphate ester by cell surface ALP, leading to the formation of an insoluble blue diazonium salt.

Tartrate resistant acid phosphatase (TRAP) activity

Cell-associated TRAP activity was measured using a commercially-available leukocyte tartrate resistant acid phosphatase kit (Sigma-Aldrich, Gillingham, UK) according to the manufacturer's instructions. Osteoclast-forming mouse marrow cells, grown on dentine discs were fixed in glutaraldehyde as described above and then washed with 70% ethanol. Each dentine disc was covered with the TRAP reagent and incubated in the dark at 37°C for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes the TRAP reagent was discarded and the dentine discs were washed with 70% ethanol. Cells that have TRAP activity are able to hydrolyse phosphoric acid from naphthol AS-BI; this produces a maroon / purple coloured dye deposit.

Haematoxylin and eosin staining

All histological samples were stained and examined using haematoxylin and eosin (H&E) staining, as well as other specialist stains. Haematoxylin is a basic dye that stains acidic structures purple / blue; eosin is an acidic dye that stains basic structures pink.

Statistics

Statistical comparisons were made using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and adjusted using the Bonferroni method. Calculations were performed using In Stat 3 software (GraphPad, San Diego, CA). All data are presented as means \pm SEM for between 6 - 12 replicates. Results are representative of experiments performed at least three times, unless otherwise stated.

Chapter 3

***Enpp1* is important for the prevention of soft tissue mineralisation and for regulating the size of osteocyte lacunae in mice**

Introduction

Ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase/phosphodiesterase-1 (NPP1)

There are seven structurally related members of the NPP family, of which NPP1 is a member (Stefan *et al.* 2005). NPP1 (previously called PC-1), encoded by the *Enpp1* gene, was first discovered during the study of surface antigens on plasma cells (Takahashi *et al.* 1970), it was later purified and its gene sequence determined (Stearne *et al.* 1985; Van Driel & Goding 1987). NPP1 is a trans-membrane enzyme orientated with its amino terminal within the cytoplasm of the cell, and its carboxyl terminal and active site in the extracellular environment (Singer *et al.* 1987; Van Driel & Goding 1987). Crystal structure analysis of the NPP1 enzyme showed that its preferred substrate is ATP, and that unlike some of its family members, it is unable to hydrolyse lipids (Kato *et al.* 2012).

The development of an *Enpp1* knockout mouse was prompted by observations in the pathological condition of ossification of the posterior longitudinal ligament (OPLL) (Sali *et al.* 1999). In OPLL, the ligaments surrounding the spinal cord calcify; OPLL is commonly found in elderly Asian men (Saetia *et al.* 2011). The tiptoe walking mouse has a naturally occurring autosomal recessive mutation that results in OPLL; it also has an unusual gait when walking due joint calcification (Hosoda *et al.* 1981; Okawa *et al.* 1998). The mutation in the tiptoe walking mouse was eventually found to be due to a solitary G to T nucleobase substitution, resulting in

a nonsense stop mutation in the *Enpp1* gene (Okawa *et al.* 1998). This discovery prompted the development of the *Enpp1* knockout mouse.

NPP1 has been shown to be expressed in a wide variety of tissues including the heart, kidney, vascular smooth muscle cells, osteoblasts and chondrocytes (Terkeltaub 2001; Johnson & Terkeltaub 2005; Johnson *et al.* 2005; Nitschke *et al.* 2011). NPP1 hydrolyses ATP to produce AMP and PPI (Terkeltaub *et al.* 1994), a potent inhibitor of mineralisation (Fleisch & Bisaz 1962; Addison *et al.* 2007). Extracellular PPI is hydrolysed by ALP to produce phosphate (Pi), thereby removing the inhibitor of mineralisation (Hessle *et al.* 2002).

NPP1 and soft tissue mineralisation

In children, mutations in the *Enpp1* gene have been shown to lead to the autosomal recessive condition of generalised arterial calcification of infancy (GACI); infants with this condition often die before they are 6 months old (Rutsch *et al.* 2003). GACI has been suggested to be due to reduced circulating levels of PPI and thus decreased inhibition of aortic calcification (Rutsch *et al.* 2000; Ruf *et al.* 2005).

It has been shown that *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have severe calcification of the aortic arch by the time they are 5 weeks old (Johnson *et al.* 2005; Zhu *et al.* 2011). Using *in vitro* mouse vascular smooth muscle cells, it was also seen that calcifying vascular smooth muscle cells up-regulate the osteocyte associated genes for sclerostin, DMP1 and E11 (Zhu *et al.* 2011).

Glycosylated end-products that accumulate in diabetic and aged tissues are detected by the receptor for advanced glycation end products (RAGE). Double knockout of *Rage*^{-/-} and *Enpp1*^{-/-} in mice reportedly reduced the *in vivo* arterial calcification seen compared to *Enpp1*^{-/-} alone, but did not restore the defects seen in the skeleton of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice. This suggests that the *Rage-Enpp1* axis may only have effects in vascular smooth muscle cells (Cecil & Terkeltaub 2011). RAGE promotes atherosclerosis, osteoclastogenesis, calcification of smooth muscle cells, and is a key mediator of inflammation (Zhou *et al.* 2006; Ramasamy *et al.* 2008; Soro-Paavonen *et al.* 2008; Yan *et al.* 2008; Basta *et al.* 2010). Aortic explants from

Enpp1^{-/-} released less of the RAGE inhibitor, sRAGE, when stimulated by phosphate (Cecil & Terkeltaub 2011). *Ex vivo* aortas from *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice are therefore more prone to the damage caused by RAGE signalling.

Mutations in *Enpp1* have also been detected in some patients with pseudoxanthoma elasticum, an autosomal recessive disorder associated with soft tissue mineralisation of the eyes, kidneys and skin (Li *et al.* 2012; Nitschke *et al.* 2012). Pseudoxanthoma elasticum has previously been linked to defects in the ATP-binding cassette subfamily-C member 6 gene (*ABCC6*), encoding the MRP6 transport protein (Le *et al.* 2000; Ringpfeil *et al.* 2000). *ABCC6*^{-/-} mice have ectopic mineralisation in the kidneys, skin, and mineralisation of whisker follicles (Klement *et al.* 2005). Mutations in *ABCC6* have been detected in patients with GACI (Nitschke *et al.* 2012). This suggests a close genetic relationship, and common downstream mediators of calcification in these two diseases (Rutsch *et al.* 2011). Recent work has additionally described a reduction in the serum PPI concentration of *ABCC6*^{-/-} mice compared to wild types (Jansen *et al.* 2013).

Genome-wide analysis in a highly consanguineous family found that mutations in *eN* resulted in arterial and joint calcification (St Hilaire *et al.* 2011). Cultured *eN*^{-/-} fibroblasts were reported to have reduced extracellular adenosine levels, increased TNAP activity and increased PPI hydrolysis. Adenosine supplementation was reported to suppress TNAP activity in *eN*^{-/-} cells (St Hilaire *et al.* 2011).

Osteopontin is also, like PPI, a direct inhibitor of bone mineralisation, vascular smooth muscle cell mineralisation and hydroxyapatite crystal formation (Wada *et al.* 1999; Boskey *et al.* 2002). The PPI generated by NPP1 is believed to increase the expression of OPN by rat calvarial osteoblasts *in vitro* (Johnson *et al.* 2003). *In vitro* osteoblasts from *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice expressed less osteopontin than wild type osteoblasts (Johnson *et al.* 2003). Supplementing the media in which these *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts were grown with PPI restored the osteopontin expression back to levels analogous with the wild type cells (Johnson *et al.* 2003). Later work showed that *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have a decreased serum osteopontin concentration, *Akp2*^{-/-} mice have an increased serum OPN concentration, and *Akp2*^{-/-} *Enpp1*^{-/-} double knockout mice

have levels of serum osteopontin similar to wild type mice (Harmey *et al.* 2004). Osteopontin also promotes bone resorption by osteoclast, by acting as a binding site for $\alpha v\beta 3$ integrins (Yoshitake *et al.* 1999; Ihara *et al.* 2001).

NPP1 and bone mineralisation

Hessle and colleagues studied the effects of gene deletion on the calvariae of 20 day old mice using histology and staining techniques. They found that knockout of *Akp2*, the mouse tissue non-specific ALP gene, led to hypomineralisation of the calvariae, compared to wild type mice (Hessle *et al.* 2002). Double knockout of *Akp2* and *Enpp1* in mice rescued the calvarial hypomineralisation phenotype. Knockout of *Enpp1* alone did not have any effect on the mineralisation of the calvariae in 20 day old mice (Hessle *et al.* 2002). Hessle *et al.* also studied the spines of the 20 day old knockout mice. They found that knockout of *Enpp1* led to pathological mineral deposits in the vertebrae, which were again corrected by double knockout with the *Akp2* gene. Knockout of *Akp2* alone led to decreased mineralisation of the vertebrae (Hessle *et al.* 2002). Hessle *et al.* found that osteoblasts grown in culture from *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice produced less PPI than wild type cells. Extracellular PPI levels in osteoblast cultures from *Akp2*^{-/-} mice were greater than in wild type cultures but this difference was eliminated in cultures from *Enpp1/Akp2* double knockout mice (Hessle *et al.* 2002). These results indicated that NPP1 and TNAP have antagonistic actions that are central to the control of mineralisation. Similar experiments were performed on the metatarsals and tibia bones; however, knockout of *Enpp1* did not completely rescue the hypomineralisation phenotype of the bone, as it did in the calvaria (Anderson *et al.* 2005b). It was hypothesised that these site-specific differences in mineralisation were due to local differences in TNAP and NPP1 expression.

Using microCT analysis it was reported that *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have reduced mineralised bone volume in the tibiae and femora at 6 and 22 weeks. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice were also reported to have a lower body weight and shorter femurs (Mackenzie *et al.* 2012b). It was surprising that the loss of NPP1 and a reduction in PPI, which is an inhibitor of mineralisation, would lead to a reduction in mineralised bone

volume. It was hypothesised that the knockout of NPP1 resulted in a reduction in the PPi concentration, which cumulated in there not being enough PPi to provide the Pi required for normal mineralisation (Anderson *et al.* 2005b; Mackenzie *et al.* 2012a). However, both the tiptoe walking mouse and the *Enpp1* knockout mouse have been shown to have hyperostosis of the spine and joints (Okawa *et al.* 1998; Sali *et al.* 1999).

NPP1 and osteocyte lacunae

It is widely accepted that osteocytes play an active role in regulating mineral accretion and removal from lacunae (Bonewald 2011; Atkins & Findlay 2012; Arnett 2013b). This topic and the wider biology of osteocytes were covered in detail in the introduction.

Aims

Taken together, the previous studies discussed above all indicate that NPP1 and PPi are important for the maintenance and formation of bone, and in preventing soft tissue mineralisation. In order to further elucidate this role; the aims of the work in this chapter were to:

- Investigate any previously unreported soft tissue mineralisation in mice due to *Enpp1*^{-/-}.
- Determine if cultured primary osteocyte-like cells express *Enpp1* and release ATP.
- Examine the cortical bone of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice in greater detail than has been previously reported and determine if NPP1 and PPi are important in maintaining the size of the osteocyte lacunae. I hypothesise that PPi produced by NPP1 on osteocytes is involved in maintaining the lacunae.
- Investigated whether the circulating sclerostin concentration in mice, which is determined by osteocytes, is influenced by the knockout of *Enpp1*.
- Examine the skulls of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice to determine if a reduction in PPi has any effect on intramembranous bone formation.

Results

Enpp1^{-/-} mice weigh less than wild type mice

Female *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice weighed approximately 12% less than age and sex matched wild types by 8 weeks. However, wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice increased in weight by approximately 18% between 8 and 15 weeks of age.

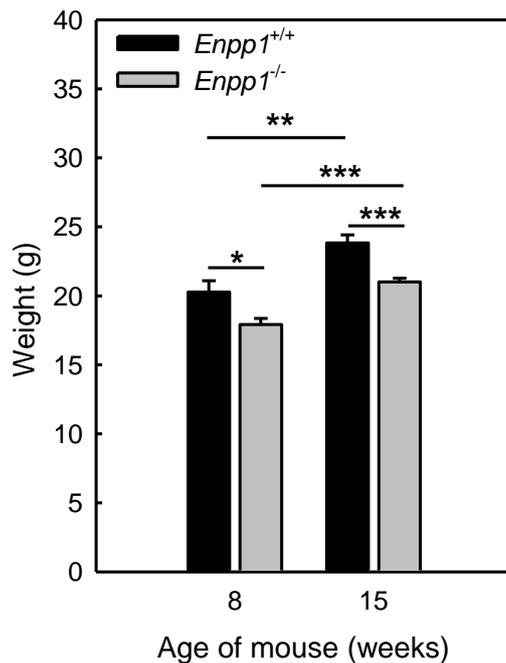


Figure 3.1. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have a lower body weight than wild type mice

Results shown are from female mice. Male wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice show a similar trend in weight. (*, $p < 0.05$; **, $p < 0.01$; ***, $p < 0.001$; $n = 9$).

Enpp1^{-/-} mice exhibit ectopic mineralisation and hyperostosis in the spine, knee joints and paws

As previously observed, *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have defective mineral deposition (Hessle *et al.* 2002; Anderson *et al.* 2005b; Mackenzie *et al.* 2012b). In the present study microCT was used to visualise the aberrant mineralisation in these mice in greater detail. In *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice pathological mineralisation was observed between the vertebra (**Figure 3.2A & B**), within the knee joint capsule (**Figure 3.2C & D**), and in the capsule surrounding the joints of each digit on all four paws (**Figure 3.2E & F**). *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice were unable to grip the bars of their cages due to inflexibility in their fingers and toes caused by ectopic mineralisation.

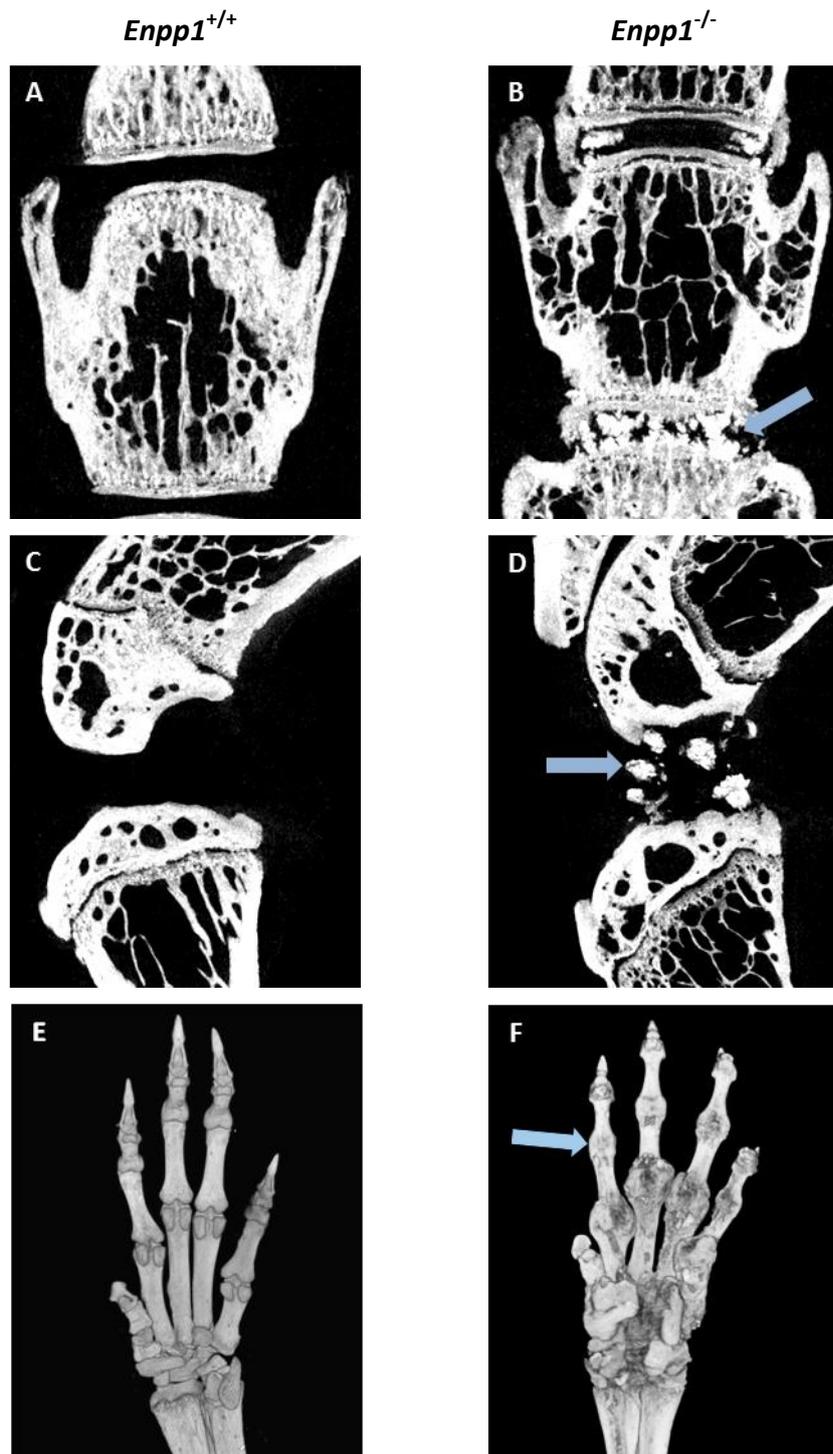


Figure 3.2. Pathological mineralisation of the vertebra, knee and paw of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice
 MicroCT images of the 3rd lumbar vertebra (A, B), knee joints (C, D) and paws (E, F) of wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice. Images are transverse sections (A, B, C, D) and 3D models (E, F). Dystrophic mineralisation is evident between the vertebrae (B), within the knee joint (D) and surrounding the joints of the paw (F) in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice (blue arrow). Note: inflexibility of *Enpp1*^{-/-} toe joints.

Mineralisation of whisker follicles in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice

The heads were dissected from 8, 15 and 22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice. The heads, including all attached soft tissues were fixed in neutral buffered formalin (NBF) and scanned by microCT. Surprisingly, microCT analysis showed that from week 8 onwards, all *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice examined exhibited a striking x-ray opaque substance around their whisker follicles. In the configuration used for this investigation, the x-ray energy of the microCT scanner used does not allow the visualisation of soft tissues, only hard mineral deposits are detected. This indicates that the whisker follicle was mineralised. This mineralisation was sub-dermal and not visible to the naked eye. No whisker follicle mineralisation was evident in *Enpp1*^{+/+} mice (**Figure 3.3**).

22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice had the tissue across their left premaxilla bone of the skull dissected away and fixed in neutral buffered formalin (this is the tissue from which most of the whiskers protrude). Alizarin red histological staining showed that the collagen rings surrounding the whisker follicles in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice contained a calcium mineral. There was no other mineralisation detected in this tissue, the smaller hair follicles that do not have a surrounding collagen ring were not mineralised (**Figure 3.4**).

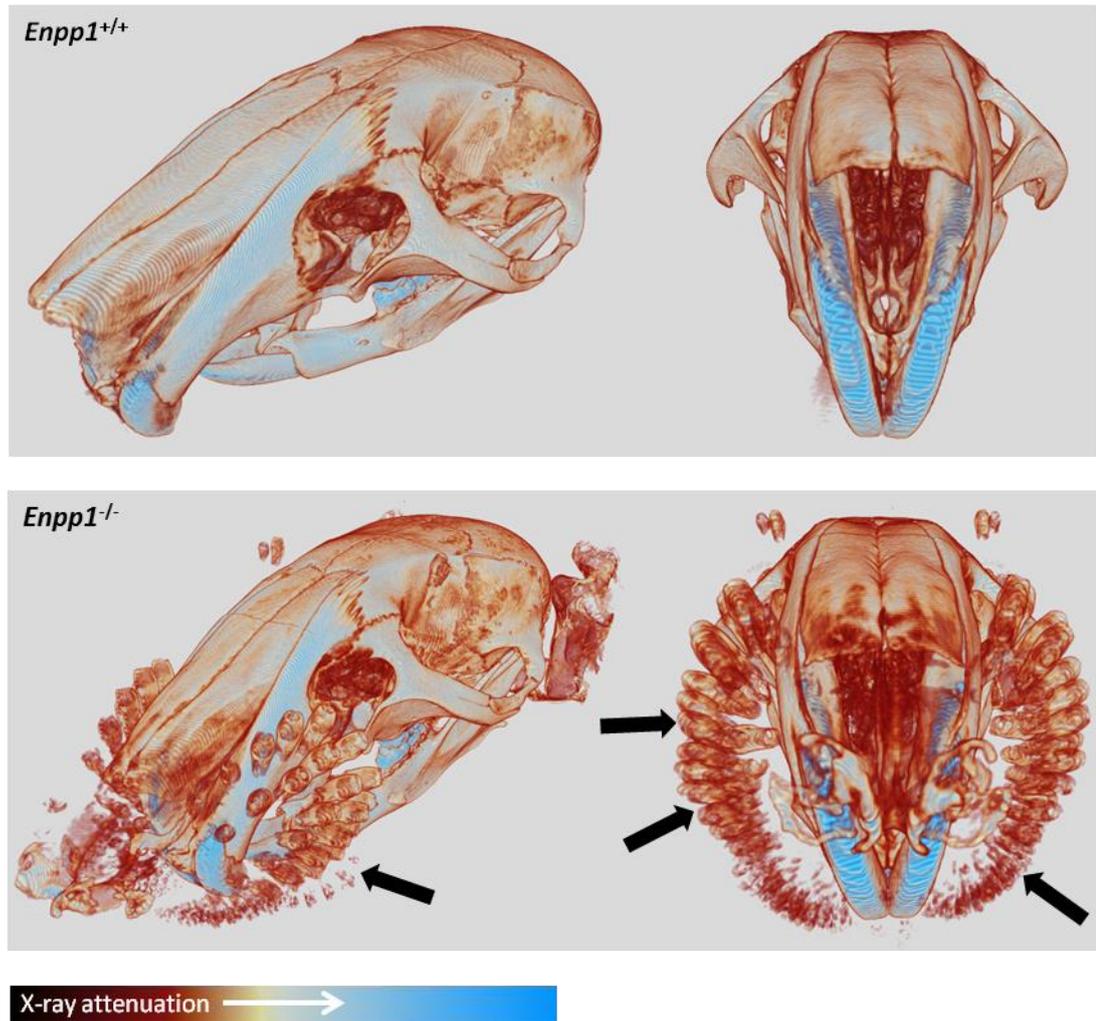


Figure 3.3. MicroCT imaging of mineralised whisker follicles of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice

Coronal microCT images of the non-embedded hydrated heads with all of the soft tissues still attached; 3D reconstructed images shown are representative of 22 week old animals and have false colour added based on x-ray attenuation (see scale). Mineralised whisker follicles on the *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse are indicated by the arrows. The enamel on the incisors is dense and appears blue; the mineralisation around the whisker follicle is of a similar density to bone.

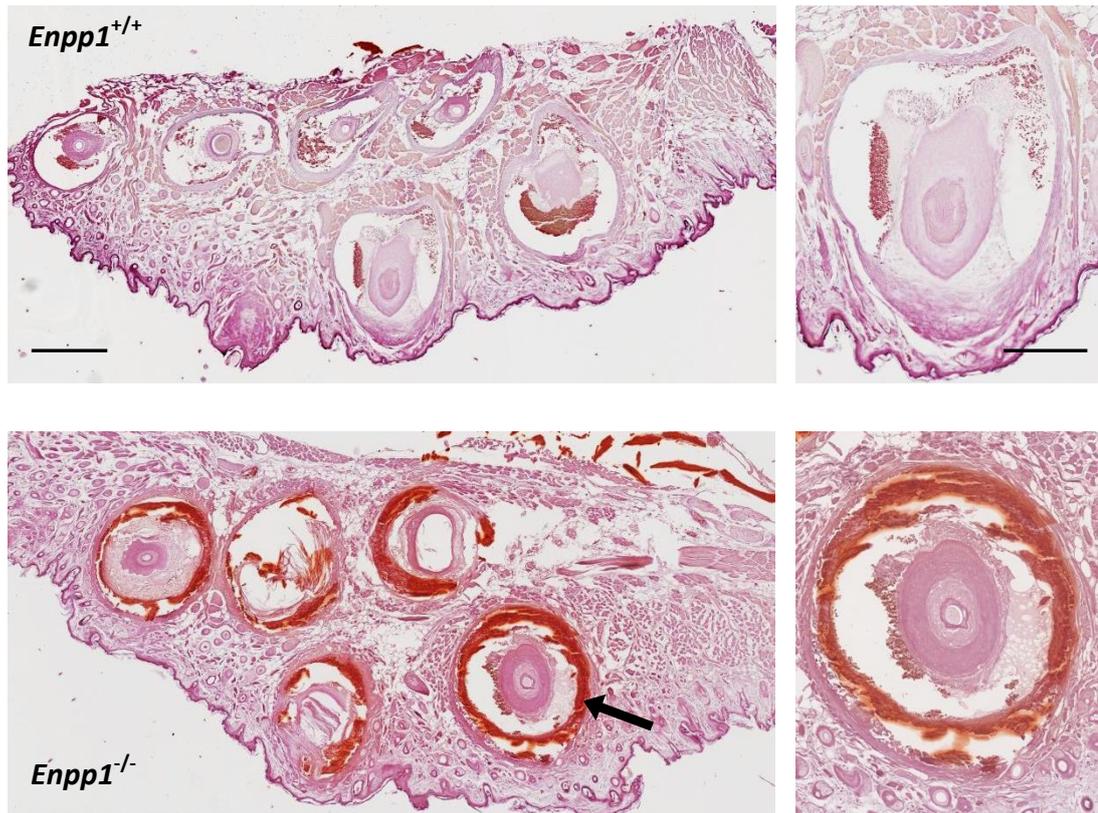


Figure 3.4. Mineralised whisker follicles in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice

Sections (3 μ m) across the soft tissue over the premaxilla of wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice (22 weeks), stained with alizarin red and fast green. Mineralisation of the collagenous sheath around the large whisker follicles of *Enpp1*^{-/-} animals is indicated by arrows. (Scale bars; left, 0.5 mm; right, 0.25mm)

***Enpp1*^{-/-} mice show tracheal mineralisation**

The tracheas of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice were examined to determine if this large collagen containing structure was mineralised. The tracheas were dissected from 15 week old wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice and fixed in NBF. MicroCT analysis showed that the cartilage rings of the tracheas from *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice had greater x-ray attenuation than the cartilage rings of the tracheas from wild type mice. This suggested that the tracheal rings of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice were mineralised (**Figure 3.5**).

Histological examination using alizarin red staining showed that the cartilage rings of the tracheas of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice contained a calcium containing mineral; wild type mice tracheas were not mineralised (**Figure 3.5**).

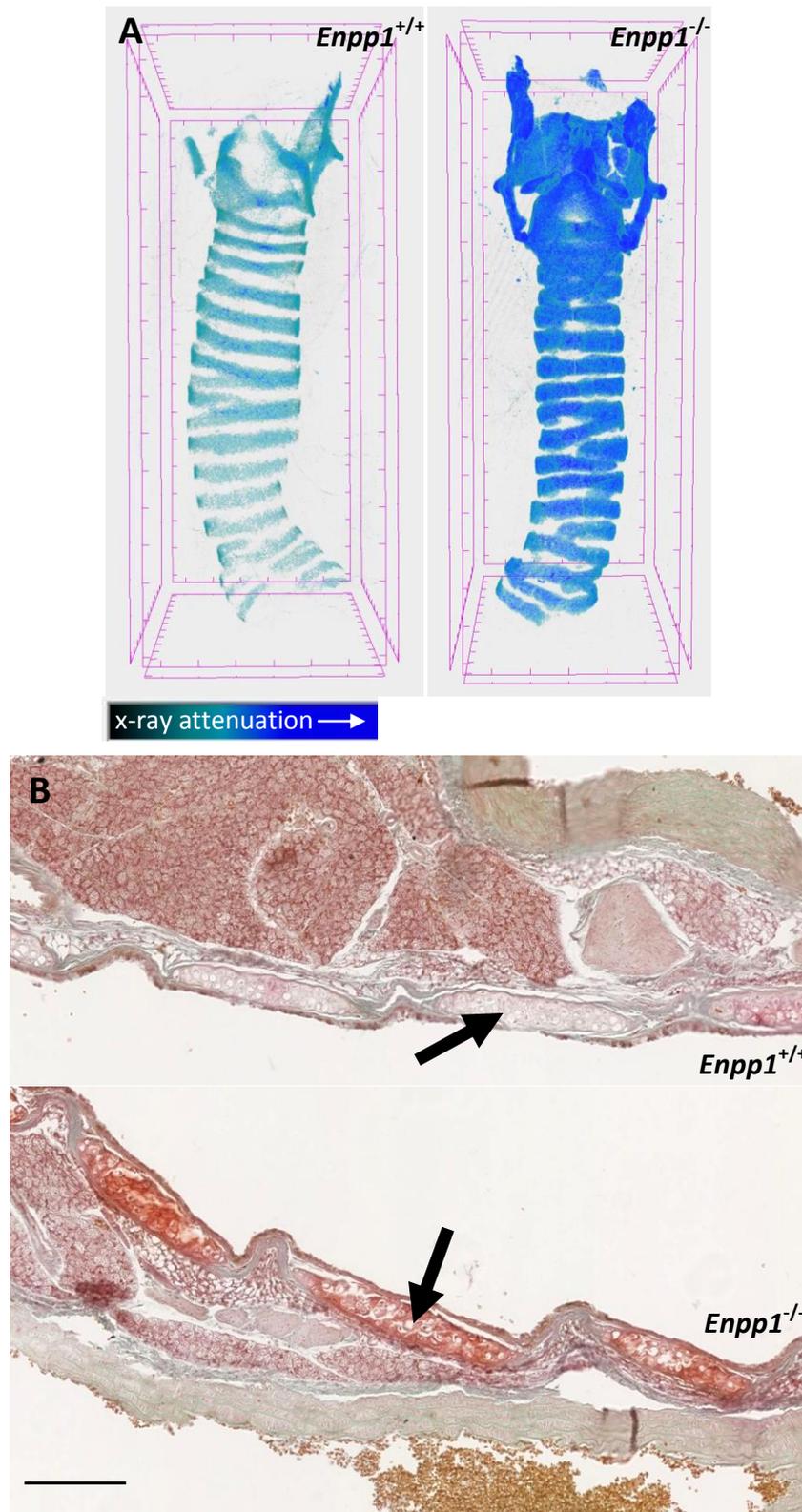


Figure 3.5. Tracheal mineralisation in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice

Tracheas were dissected out of wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice and fixed in NBF. **(A)** The tracheas were scanned by microCT. Scale bar A = 500 μ m per mark. **(B)** Alizarin red stained histological sections (3 μ m). MicroCT shows that the tracheas of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice attenuate x-rays more. The arrow points to the cartilage rings of the trachea in cross section, which have stained red for calcium in the *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse. Scale bar B = 250 μ m.

Ear pinna mineralisation in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice

The heads from 8, 15 and 22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice were scanned using microCT with all soft tissues still attached. MicroCT analysis showed that from 8 weeks onwards, all *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice had greater x-ray attenuation in the pinna of the ear (**Figure 3.6A**). Histological examination using alizarin red staining showed that the hyaline cartilage within the pinna of the ears of *Enpp1*^{-/-} but not wild-type mice contained a calcium mineral (**Figure 3.6B**).

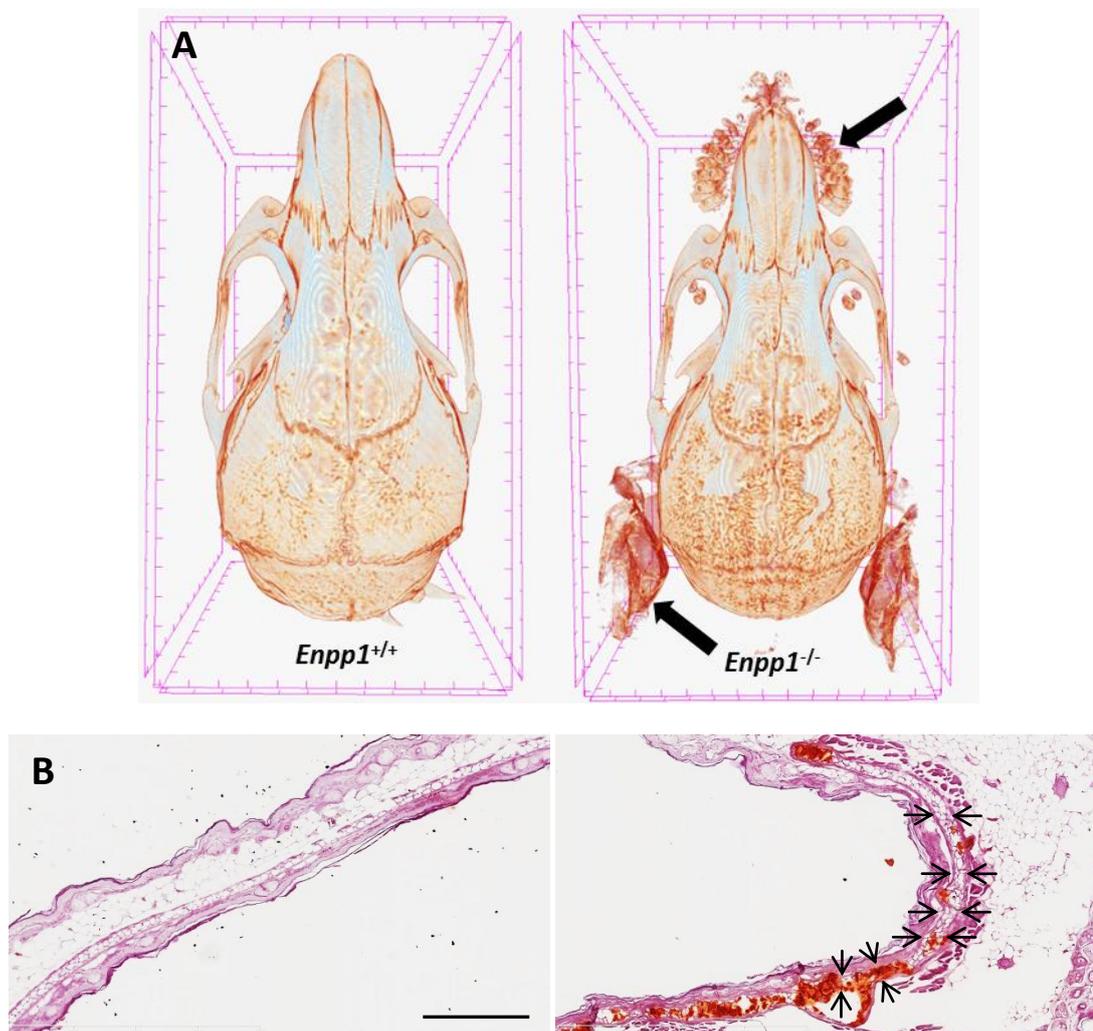


Figure 3.6. Mineralised ear pinnas in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice

Wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice heads were fixed in NBF. **(A)** The heads were scanned by microCT. The arrows point to the mineralised ears and whiskers. Scale bar = 1 mm. **(B)** The ears were then sectioned for histology (3 μ m), and stained with alizarin red. The arrows point to the cartilage within the ear pinna, which has partially stained red, indicating the presence of calcium deposits in the *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse ear. Scale bar B = 250 μ m.

Mouse primary osteocyte-like cells express mRNA for *Enpp1* *in vitro*

Mouse osteocyte-like cells were extracted from the long bones of 15 week old wild type mice using collagenase and EDTA, and grown *in vitro* for 7 days within a collagen coated plate. Microscopic examination revealed that these cells had the characteristic dendritic processes of osteocytes (**Figure 3.7A**). RT-PCR showed that these cells express mRNA for the osteocyte specific gene *DMP1* and mRNA for *Enpp1* (**Figure 3.7B**).

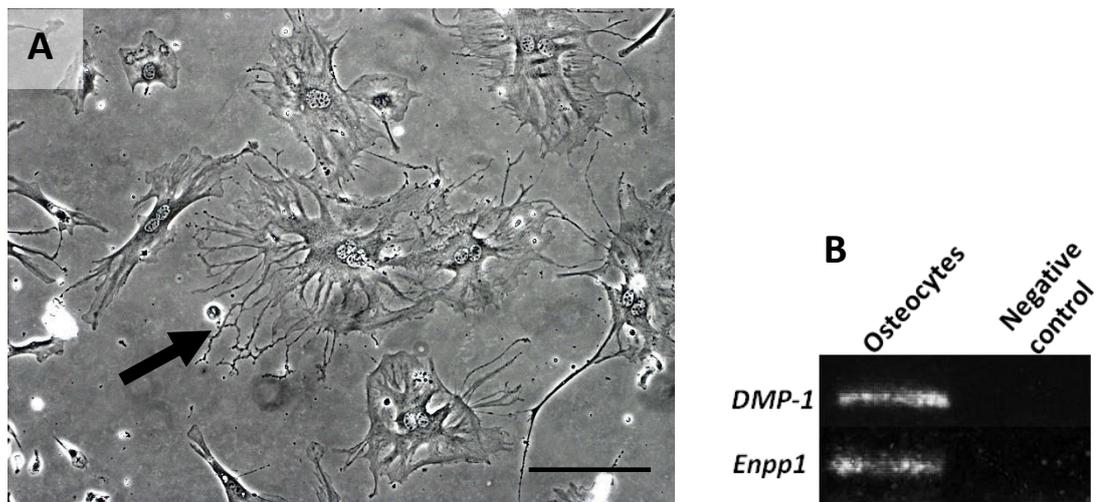


Figure 3.7. Primary osteocyte-like cells express mRNA for *DMP-1* and *Enpp1*

(A) Osteocyte-like cells were extracted from the long bones of wild type mice using repeated digestion by collagenase EDTA solutions and seeded onto collagen-coated plates. The cells can be seen to have dendritic processes, characteristic of osteocytes (arrow); scale bar = 100 μ m. **(B)** RT-PCR shows that these cells express *DMP-1* and *Enpp1*.

Osteocyte-like cells cultured from *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice show reduced viability and release less ATP than wild types

Mouse osteocyte-like cells were seeded at 1×10^5 cells per well in a collagen-coated 6 well plate and cultured for 7 days *in vitro*. There was no significant difference in the number of cells initially obtained from wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} bones, but after 7 days in culture, there were 48% fewer cells in *Enpp1*^{-/-} cultures, compared to wild types, as determined by manual counting ($p < 0.05$; $n = 6$) (**Figure 3.8A**).

On day 7 of culture the ATP release per osteocyte-like cell was measured by luminescence. It was found that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteocyte-like cells release less ATP per cell than wild type cells ($p < 0.05$; $n = 6$) (Figure 3.8B).

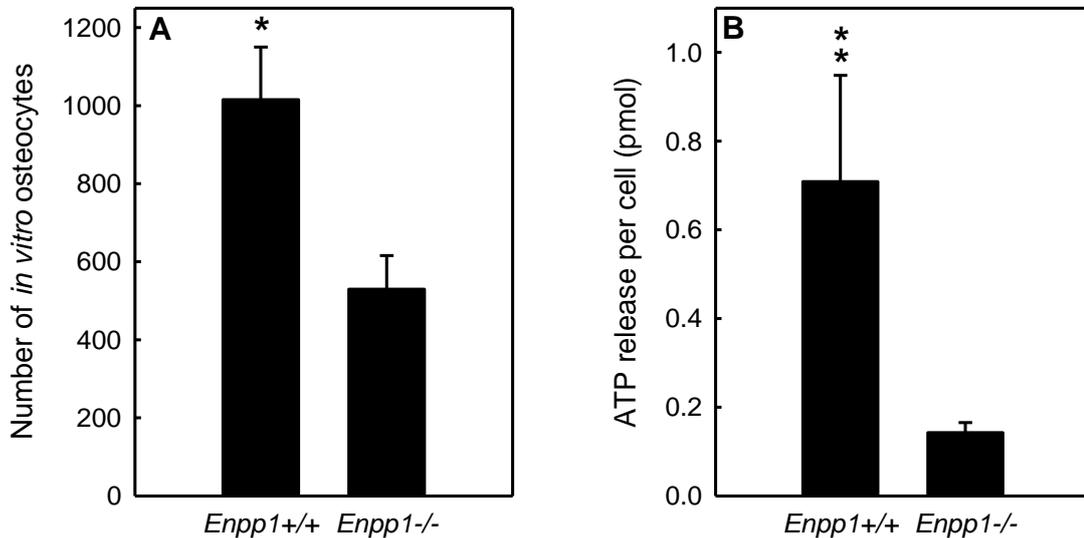


Figure 3.8. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse long bone osteocyte-like cells are less viable than wild type cells *in vitro* and release less ATP

Osteocyte-like cells were extracted from the long bones of wild type mice using collagenase and EDTA, they were then seeded onto collagen coated plates. On day 7 of culture the number of cells was counted (A), and the mean ATP release per cell was measured (B). (*, $p < 0.05$; **, $p < 0.01$; data are means \pm SEM; $n = 6$)

Enpp1^{-/-} mice have less porous cortical bone than wild type mice

MicroCT image analysis of a specific region of interest, 0.25 mm long, 0.5 mm below the deltoid tuberosity in the cortical bone of the left humerus from 8, 15 and 22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice was performed. The total porosity of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice bones was found to be reduced by 30% ($p < 0.001$) at 15 weeks and by 60% ($p < 0.001$) at 22 weeks, compared to wild types (Figure 3.9 & 3.10).

22 week old wild type bones were also 34% ($p < 0.001$) less porous than 15 week old bones. Total porosity is a measurement of all of the space within the cortical bone not filled by mineral, for example, a blood vessel channel, a large osteocyte lacuna or a crack. This pore space may contain a soft tissue or cell, but it is not detectable by microCT when used with these settings.

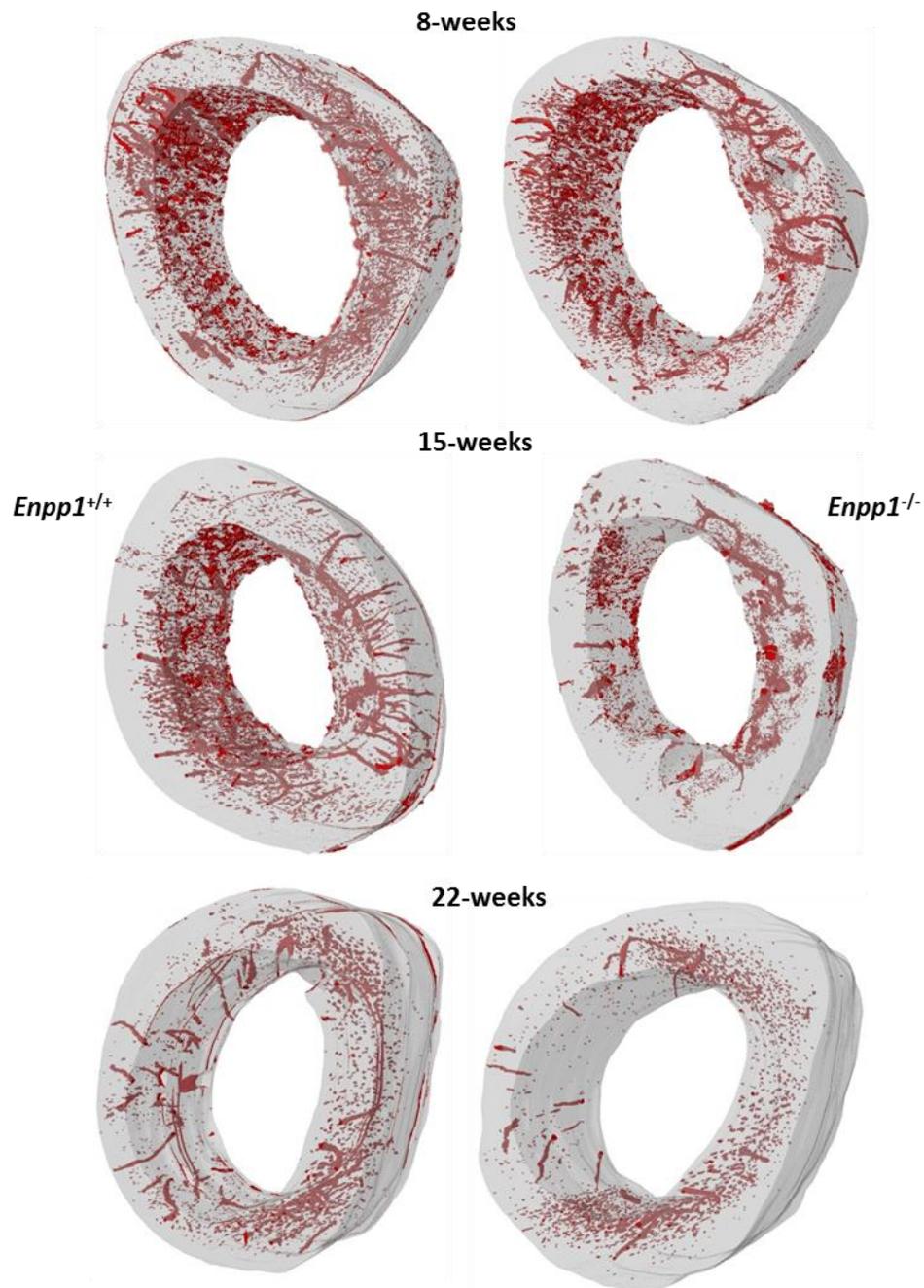


Figure 3.9. MicroCT cross sections of the diaphysis of the humerus bones of *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice

Humerus bones from 8, 15 and 22 week old mice were scanned by microCT. The images shown represent a region 0.25 mm in length, 0.5 mm below the deltoid tuberosity. Red = empty space within the cortical bone, grey = bone. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice show reduced porosity (space) within their cortical bone compared to age and sex matched wild types (see Figure 3.10).

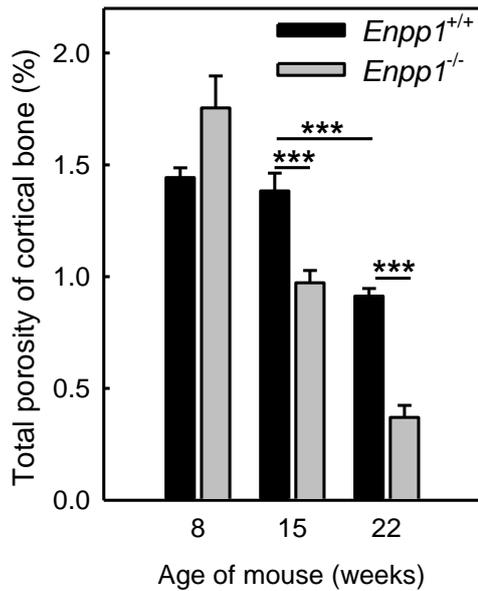


Figure 3.10. The total porosity of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse humerus bone is reduced

Ex vivo humerus bones from 8, 15 and 22 week old female mice were scanned by microCT and the region of interest was analysed. “Total porosity” is a composite measurement that will include any space within the cortical bone (blood vessel channels, large osteocyte lacunae, cracks). (Data are means \pm SEM; ***, $p < 0.001$; $n = 5$).

***Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have fewer and smaller “closed pores” in their cortical bone compared to wild types**

The microCT data was further analysed to determine what factors contribute to the decrease in total porosity of the cortical bone in the humerus of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice. Each individual pore within the region of interest in the cortical bone was classified as either a “closed pore” or an “open pore”. “Open pores” were spaces within the bone which opened onto the periosteal or endosteal surface, or are pores that were bisected by the region of interest. A blood vessel channel running longitudinally within the bone from the proximal to the distal end would be bisected by the region of interest, so would be classified as an open pore. A crack that runs laterally from either the endosteal surface to the periosteal surface would also be classified as an “open pore”. A “closed pore” was classified as a space within the cortical bone than was fully enclosed by mineral. A crack within the bone that does not reach the surface, or get bisected by the perimeter of the region of interest would be classified as a closed pore. The osteocyte canaliculi are too small to be detected by this method of microCT; this means that larger sized osteocyte lacunae may be one of the contributing factors to the “closed pore” measurements within the cortical bone.

All “open pore” results from the data sets were discarded. Any “closed pore” with a total volume of less than $22 \mu\text{m}^3$ was discarded as it was deemed to be below the accurate limit of detection of the microCT. This value represents 30 individual voxels (3D pixels). Any closed pore with a volume greater than $950 \mu\text{m}^3$ was also excluded.

MicroCT analysis of the *ex vivo* humerus bones from 8 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice showed that there was no difference between the two groups in the number and volume of closed pores within the cortical bone (**Figure 3.11**). MicroCT analysis showed that at 15 weeks, the cortical bone of the humeri in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice contained 50% ($p < 0.05$ $n=5$) fewer closed pores than wild type mice, had a 41% ($p < 0.001$) reduction in the total closed pore volume and each individual pore was reduced in diameter by an average of 10% ($p < 0.05$) (**Figure 3.11**). At 22 weeks of age, microCT analysis showed that the cortical bone of the humerus in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice contained 55% ($p < 0.001$ $n=5$) fewer closed pores than wild type mice, had a 59% reduction in closed pore volume ($p < 0.05$) and each individual pore was reduced in diameter by an average of 15% ($p < 0.001$) (**Figure 3.11**).

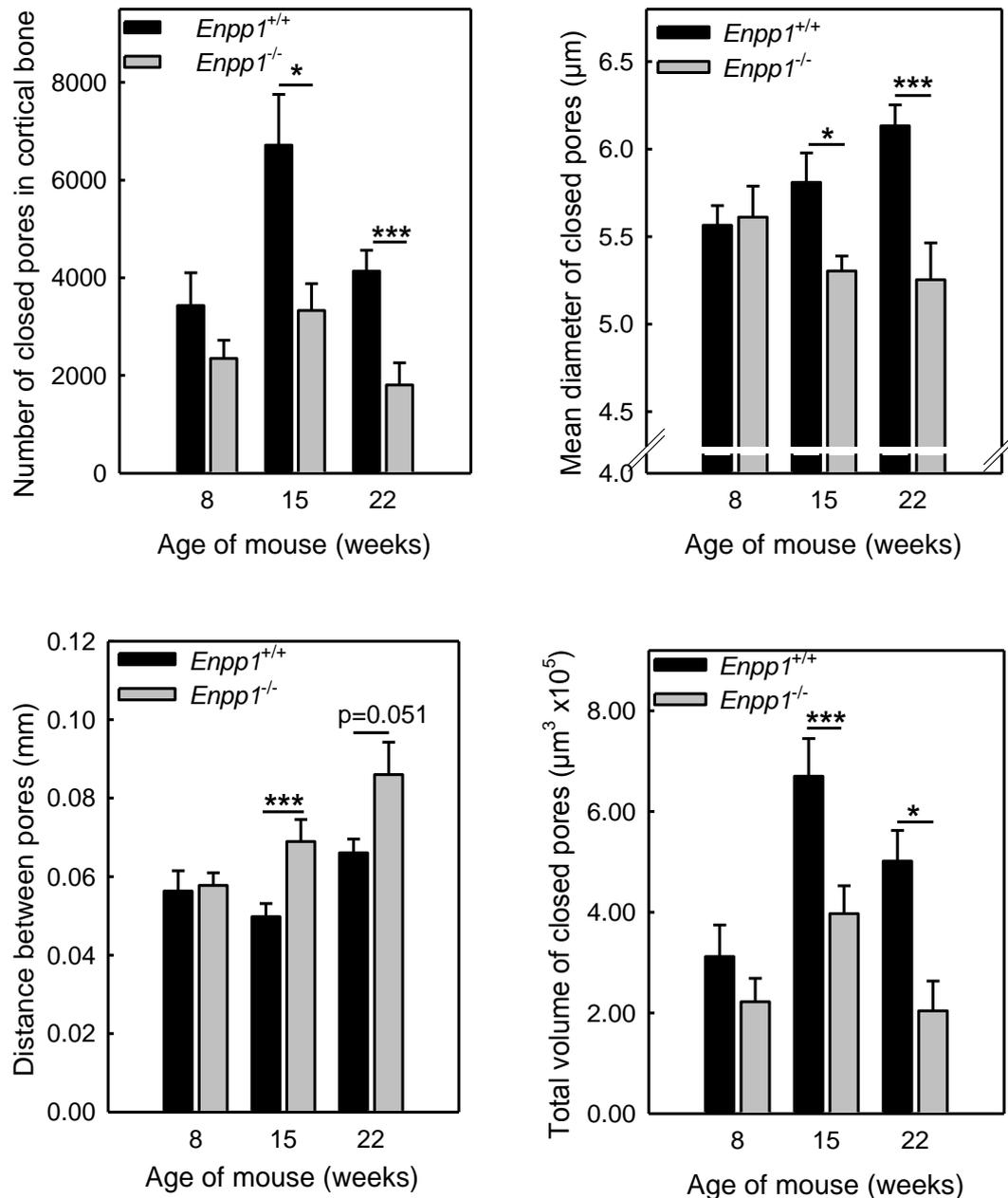


Figure 3.11. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse humerus cortical bones have a reduced number of ‘closed pores’, reduced closed pore diameter and volume compared to wild type bone

Ex vivo humerus bones from 8, 15 and 22 week old mice were scanned by microCT and the region of interest was analysed. A “closed pore” is a space within the cortical bone that is completely encapsulated by bone when imaged by microCT. (Data are means ± SEM; n = 5 bones, individual pore values are based on calculations on all pores in each bone; *, p<0.05; ***, p<0.001).

Osteocyte lacunae are smaller in the femurs of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice compared to wild types

The left femur was dissected from the legs of 15 and 22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice. The bones had all of the soft tissues digested from them before being dehydrated and air dried. The diameter of the osteocyte lacunae along its longest axis and the plan surface area were measured using SEM imaging.

SEM showed that the osteocyte lacunae of 15 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice were 25% shorter than wild type osteocyte lacunae ($p < 0.001$) and had a 35% ($p < 0.001$) reduction in their plan surface area. SEM also revealed that 22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice had osteocyte lacunae that were 22% ($p < 0.001$) shorter than wild type osteocyte lacunae, with a 39% ($p < 0.001$) reduction in their plan surface area (Figure 3.13).

SEM analysis also showed 27% and 23% reductions in the length of wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteocyte lacunae, respectively between the ages of 15 and 22 weeks ($p < 0.001$ in each case) (Figure 3.12).

***Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have fewer open blood vessel channels on the endosteal surface of their cortical bone**

Bone samples for SEM were prepared as detailed above. Low resolution SEM (x 16 magnification) showed that *ex vivo* femur bones from 15 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice appear to have fewer blood vessel channels opening at the endosteal surface than wild type mice (Figure 3.13). However, this methodology does not allow quantification of this difference.

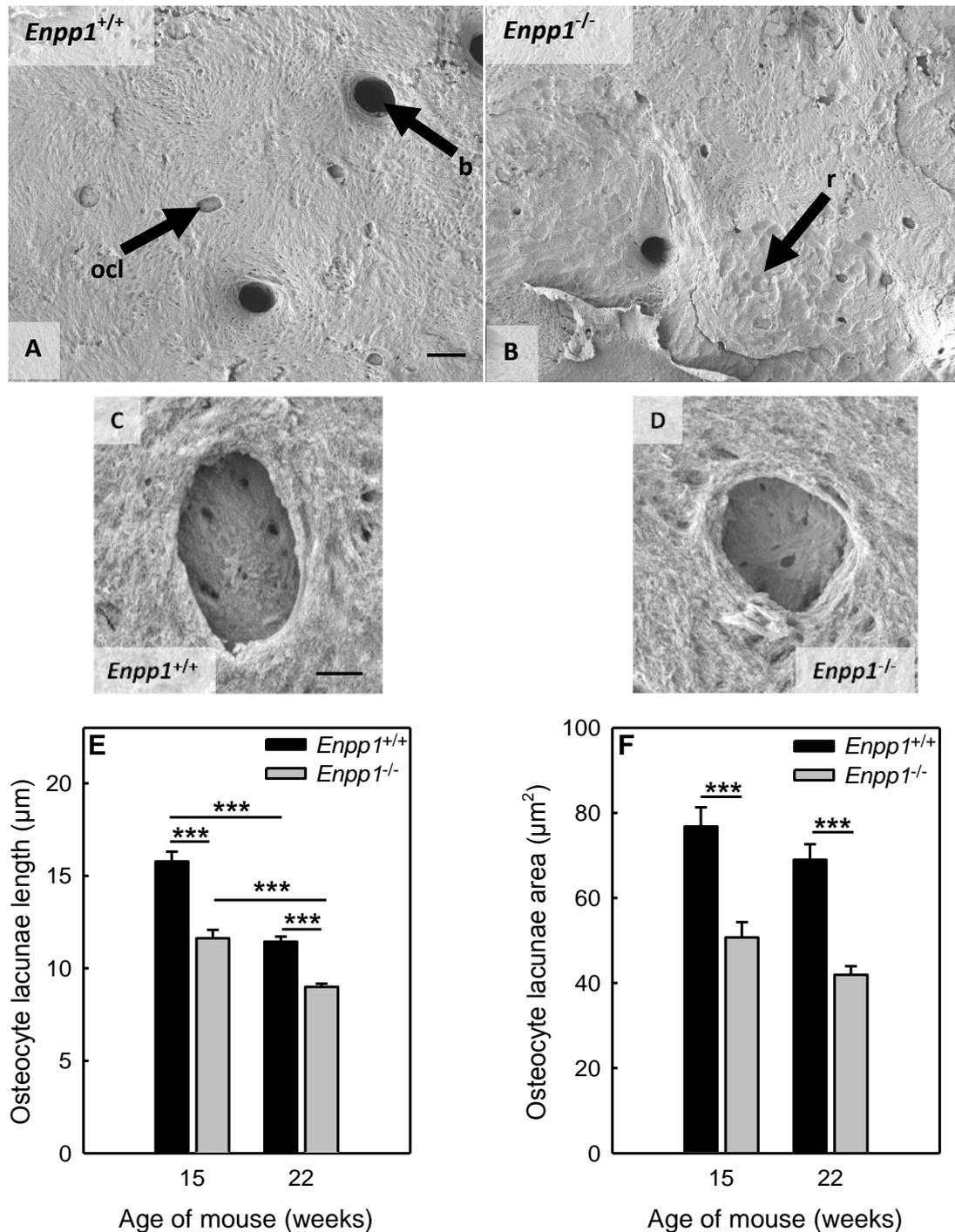


Figure 3.12. The osteocyte lacunae in 15 and 22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse femurs are shorter and have a reduced plan surface area compared to wild types

(A, B) Representative SEM images of the endosteal surface of mouse femurs from 22 week old mice at x400 magnification. The arrows point to (ocl) an osteocyte lacuna, (b) a blood vessel channel and (r) resorption pits on the surface of bone. (C, D) Images of an osteocyte lacunae. Lacunae diameter was measured along the longest axis. Quantitative analysis of osteocyte lacunae SEM images based on n = 60 measurements per group (E, F). Scale bar A = 20 μm , C = 5 μm ; data are means \pm SEM ***, $p < 0.001$.

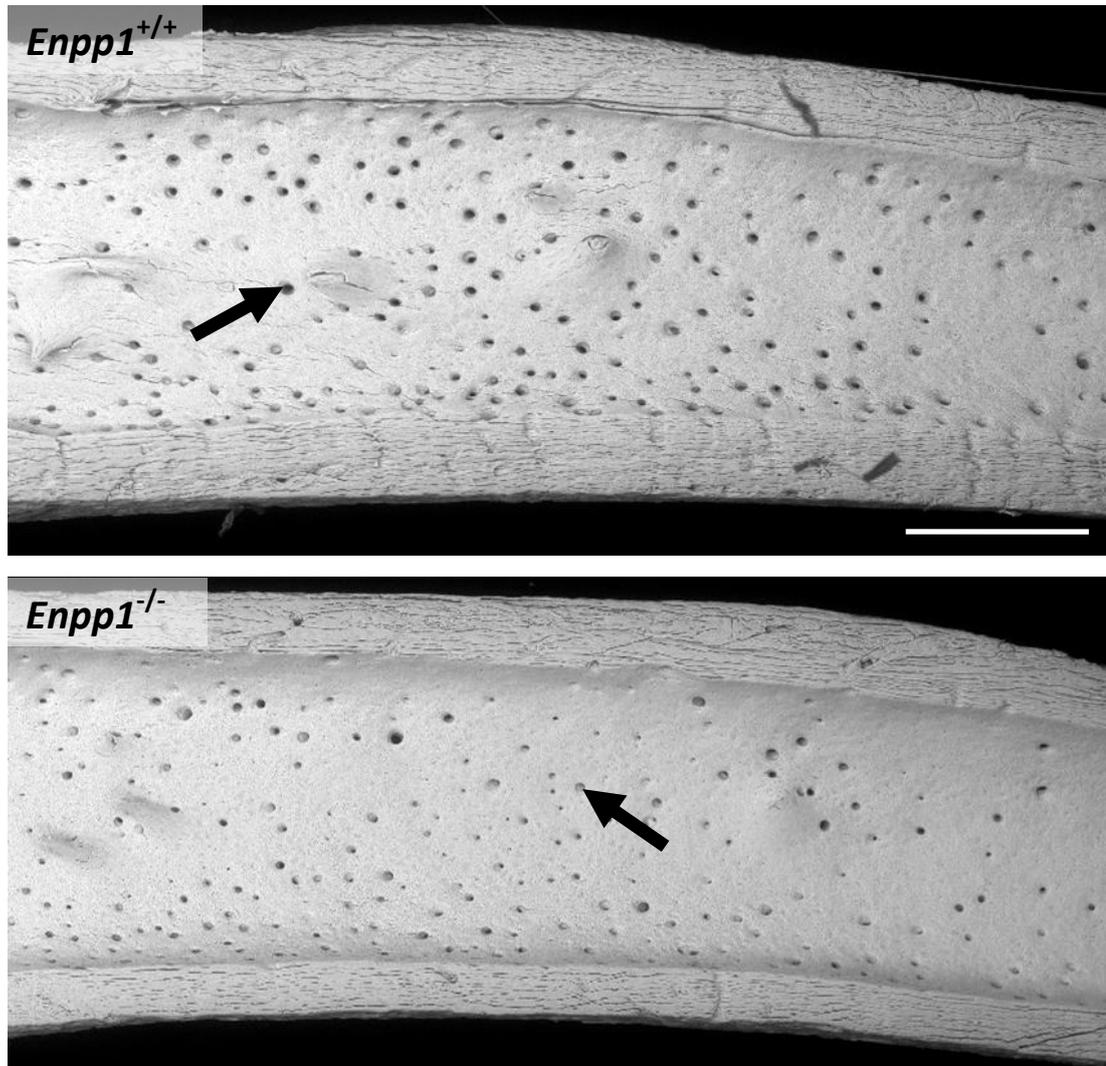


Figure 3.13. SEM shows that the endosteal bone surface of 15 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse femurs contains fewer open blood vessel channels than wild type bone

The arrows point to blood vessel channels; scale bar = 0.5 mm. These images were generated by Prof Alan Boyde, QMUL.

Increased serum sclerostin in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice

Blood was collected by terminal cardiac puncture from 8, 15 and 22 week old wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice. The serum sclerostin concentration, measured by ELISA, of wild type mice decreased by 37% ($P < 0.01$) between the ages of 8 and 15 weeks, and 62% ($p < 0.001$) between 8 and 22 weeks (**Figure 3.14**). There was no difference in the serum concentration of sclerostin between wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice at 8 weeks. At 15 and 22 weeks, however, serum sclerostin was 75% ($p < 0.001$) and 52% ($p < 0.01$) higher in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice, compared to wild types (**Figure 3.14**).

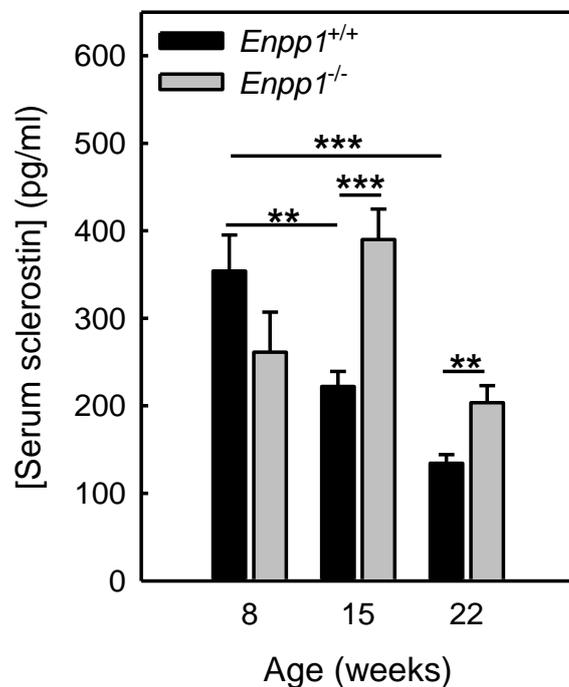


Figure 3.14. Knockout of *Enpp1* leads to an increase in serum sclerostin

Sclerostin was measured by ELISA in serum collected from 8, 15 and 22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice. (**, $p < 0.01$; ***, $p < 0.001$; data are means \pm SEM; $n = 5$).

***Enpp1*^{-/-} humerus bones have reduced cortical bone thickness and a wider bone marrow cavity**

Outer soft tissues were removed from 8, 15 and 22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice left humerus bones; the bones were fixed and then left to air dry. MicroCT measurements of the cortical bone width (thickness), bone marrow cavity diameter (endosteal diameter) and bone diameter (periosteal diameter) were undertaken in a specific region of interest, 0.25 mm long, 0.5 mm below the deltoid tuberosity (**Figure 3.15**).

There was no difference in any of these measured parameters between *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice at 8 weeks. There was no difference in the periosteal diameter between *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice at any time point. In wild type mice the thickness of the cortical bone increased with age. The cortical bone thickness of 15 and 22 week old wild type mice was 34% ($p < 0.001$) and 57% ($p < 0.001$) greater than that of 8 week old bone respectively. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice showed no increase in cortical bone thickness with age (**Figure 3.15**).

15 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice had a 16% ($p < 0.05$) thinner cortical bone thickness and a 22% ($p < 0.001$) larger endosteal diameter compared to wild type mice. 22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice had a 35% ($p < 0.001$) reduction in their cortical bone thickness and a 23% ($p < 0.05$) increase in their endosteal diameter compared to wild type mice. When combined, these results indicate that from 15 weeks onwards, the humerus bones of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have a similar total diameter to wild type mice, but their bone marrow cavity has a greater diameter and their cortical bone is thinner (**Figure 3.15**).

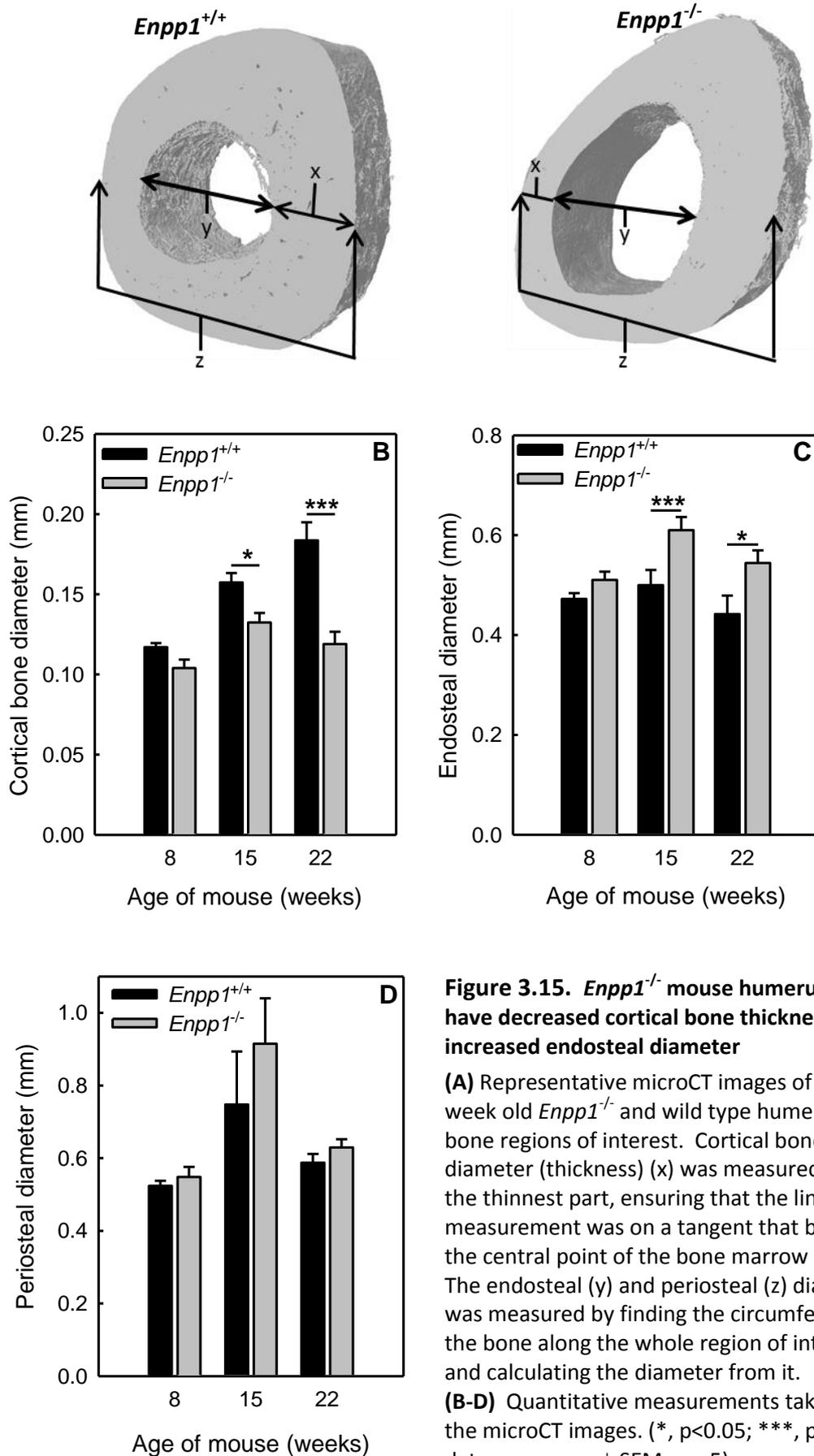


Figure 3.15. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse humerus bones have decreased cortical bone thickness and increased endosteal diameter

(A) Representative microCT images of 22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type humerus bone regions of interest. Cortical bone diameter (thickness) (x) was measured across the thinnest part, ensuring that the line of measurement was on a tangent that bisected the central point of the bone marrow cavity. The endosteal (y) and periosteal (z) diameter was measured by finding the circumference of the bone along the whole region of interest and calculating the diameter from it.

(B-D) Quantitative measurements taken from the microCT images. (*, p<0.05; ***, p<0.001; data are means ± SEM; n = 5).

***Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse skulls are similar in size and shape to wild type skulls**

Humerus bones are made by the process of endochondral ossification. The skull, which is made by intramembranous ossification, was examined to detect differences between *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice.

The heads from 8, 15 and 22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice were scanned by microCT. The lengths of the skulls were measured from the tip of the nasal plate to the occipital condyle along the medial axis (**Figure 3.16a**). The widths of the skulls were measured at a point 6 mm forward from the back of the skull, at an axis point spanning the parietal bones (**Figure 3.16b**). The height from the most dorsal point of the parietal bone (top) to the most distal point (bottom) was measured at a site exactly 6 mm forwards from the back of the skulls, to determine the depth of the calvariae (**Figure 3.16c**). A 4 mm wide strip of bone, 2 mm from the back of the skull, across the whole calvaria was analysed to determine calvarial bone volume in *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice (**Figure 3.16d**).

At 22 weeks, the skulls of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice were 10% longer than those of wild type mice ($p < 0.05$). *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice were also found to have 10% ($p < 0.05$) less calvarial bone compared to wild type mice at 15 weeks. No other significant differences were observed (**Figure 3.17**).

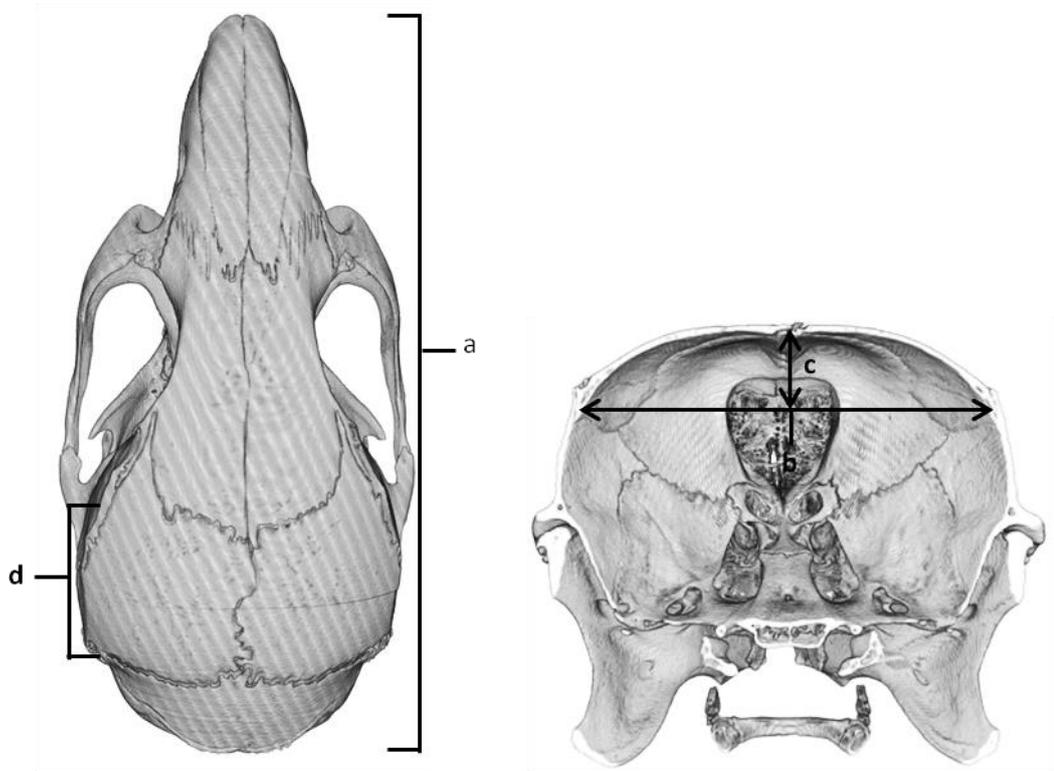


Figure 3.16. MicroCT images of a mouse skull showing the parameters examined as part of the morphological examination of skull dimensions

MicroCT images were evaluated to determine if there were any skull morphological differences between wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice. See figure 3.18 for results. **(a)** Length of skull, **(b)** diameter of skull, **(c)** depth of calvaria and **(d)** calvarial volume, were measured.

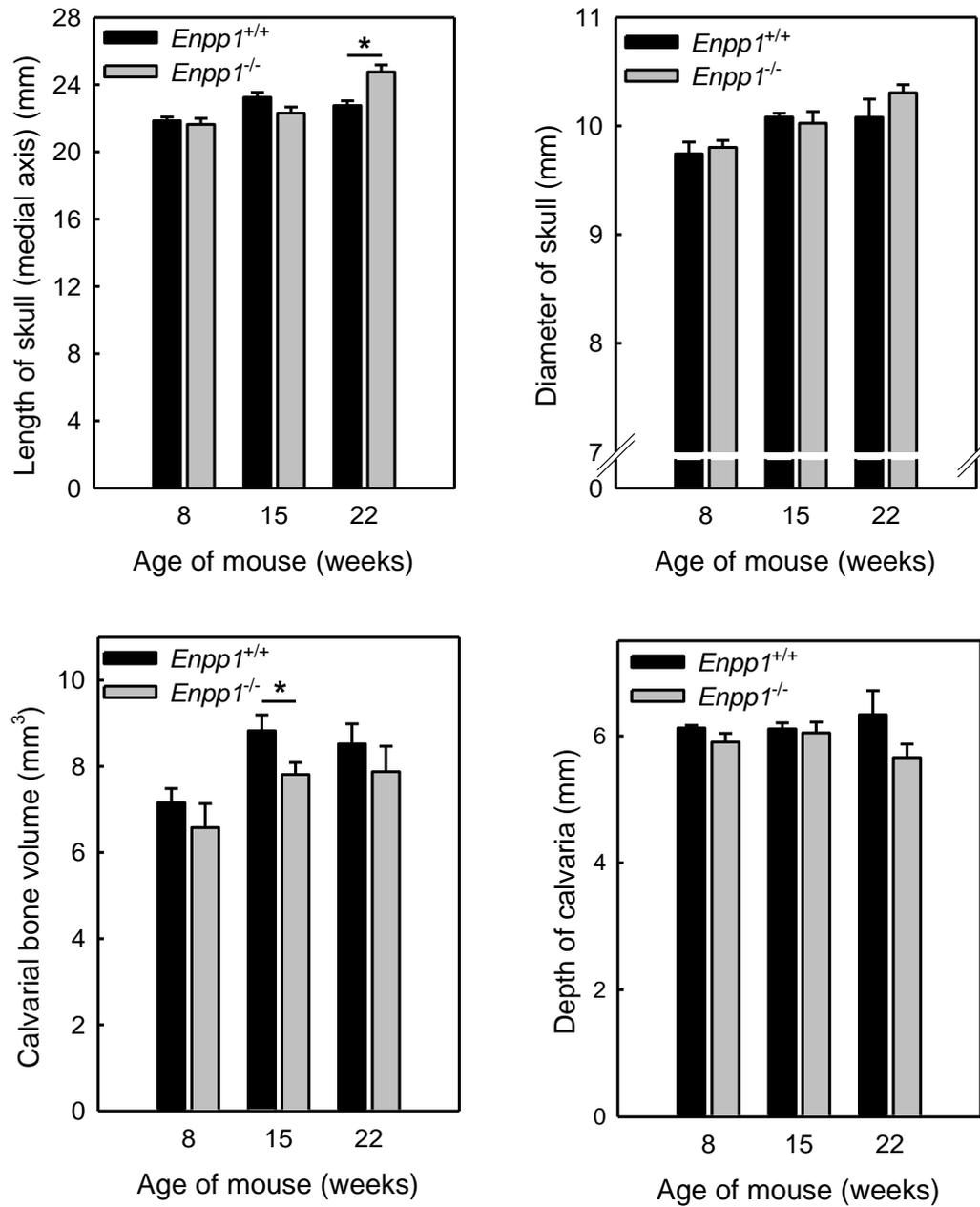


Figure 3.17. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse skulls are morphometrically similar to wild type skulls
Data are derived from microCT scans (Data are means ± SEM; *, p < 0.05; n = 5).

Discussion

This work showed that NPP1 is vital to prevent soft tissue calcification in the whisker follicles, the ear pinna and the trachea. The strikingly high levels of mineralisation seen in these tissues have not been previously reported. SEM analysis demonstrated for the first time that *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have fewer open blood vessel channels on the endosteal surface of their femurs, compared to wild type mice. SEM analysis also revealed that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteocyte lacunae are reduced in size compared to wild types. MicroCT analysis demonstrated that the knockout of *Enpp1* results in thinner, less porous cortical bone; however, no effects on the skull bones were noted. Long bone porosity and osteocyte lacunar size also decreased with age in control mice. It has also been shown here for the first time that primary mouse osteocyte-like cells release ATP and express mRNA for *Enpp1* *in vitro*. Moreover, it was demonstrated here that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteocytes are less viable and release less ATP in culture. Furthermore, *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have a greater circulating sclerostin concentration than wild type mice.

Histological and x-ray studies more than 40 years ago showed that hypercalcaemic rats developed hair follicle mineralisation when their skin was subjected to a mild crush injury (Pearce *et al.* 1972). Rat hair follicles grown in a high calcium and phosphate media *in vitro* also showed spontaneous mineralisation (Pearce & Smillie 1973). In the present study, whisker follicles in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice may have mineralised before the much smaller hair follicles because the large collagen sheath around the whisker follicle acted as a preferential nucleation site for mineral deposition. These results suggest that *Enpp1* hydrolysis of ATP could be involved in the prevention of inappropriate mineralisation of the hair follicle. Most cell types release ATP; although there has been no specific evidence of ATP release from hair follicles. However, hair follicles grown *in vitro* have been shown to express P2X₅, P2X₇, P2Y₁ and P2Y₂ receptors on which local ATP may act (Greig *et al.* 2008).

Calcification of the hyaline cartilage of the ear pinna is rare; however, it occurs in Primrose syndrome (Dalal *et al.* 2010; Carvalho & Speck-Martins 2011) and very occasionally it is seen in cases of frost bite (Lautenschlager *et al.* 1994; Stites *et al.*

2003), Addison's disease (Cohen *et al.* 1991), inflammatory states (Chopra *et al.* 2013), pituitary insufficiency (Gogate *et al.* 2012), diabetes (Strumia *et al.* 1997) and trauma (Gordon 1964). Anecdotal evidence suggests that calcification of the ears is more frequent in older people, especially those who had worked out-doors (Bowers & Gould 1998). My results suggest the possibility that alterations in *Enpp1* expression may play a role in calcification of ear pinna cartilage.

Histological and microCT analysis showed that the hyaline cartilage rings were also mineralised along the entire length of the trachea and the primary and secondary bronchi in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice. No mineralisation of adjacent soft tissues such as arterioles, bronchioles or smooth muscle was detected. It has been reported that in healthy human subjects with a mean age of 70, approximately 50% showed signs of tracheal cartilage mineralisation (Kusafuka *et al.* 2001). The present results suggest the possibility that decreased expression of *Enpp1*, leading to a reduction in the production of PPi may play a role in the mineralisation of the tracheal cartilage with age. Cartilaginous mineralisation of the trachea has been reported in patients on long term warfarin anticoagulant therapy (Moncada *et al.* 1992; Thoongsuwan & Stern 2003). The effect of warfarin on vascular calcification has been suggested to be mediated by its actions on the vitamin K-dependent proteins matrix gla protein and osteocalcin (Gundberg *et al.* 2012; Kruger *et al.* 2013), but could also be due to a NPP1 mediated mechanism.

An important finding in this chapter is that the osteocyte lacunae in the cortical bone of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice had a surface area that was 35 - 39% smaller than wild types. Further extrapolation of this data suggests that the volume of the prolate spheroid shape of the *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteocyte lacunae could be approximately 60% less than the wild type lacunae. The "closed pore" data generated by microCT suggests that there may also be a reduction in the total number of osteocyte lacunae, because large osteocyte lacunae could be one of the factors contributing to this parameter. The most obvious explanation for this reduced lacunae size is related to PPi formation by osteocytes. Osteocytes release ATP; this ATP may be broken down by NPP1 to produce PPi; this PPi then inhibits the further mineralisation of the

osteocyte lacunae. Knockout of *Enpp1* would decrease this process and result in greater lacunar mineralisation and decreased lacunar size. In support of this theory it was shown that primary mouse osteocyte-like cells release ATP and express mRNA for *Enpp1* *in vitro*, so may be capable of generating P_{Pi}. It has previously been shown that the MLO-Y4 osteocyte-like cells release ATP (Genetos *et al.* 2007; Kringelbach *et al.* 2013). It should be noted, however, that the methods used in this study cannot distinguish between mineral deposition and true bone formation (which would also involve collagenous matrix deposition by osteocytes).

It was also observed that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteocyte-like cells release less ATP *in vitro* than wild type cells; this is potentially a second factor contributing towards a reduction in P_{Pi} concentrations within the osteocyte lacunae *in vivo*. Mouse osteocyte-like cell lines have been shown to express mRNA for some of the P_{2Y} receptors (Kringelbach *et al.* 2013); although it is unknown what, if any effects purinergic signalling has on osteocytes. The reduction in ATP release found here may lead to changes in autocrine purinergic signalling.

The simplest interpretation of my results is that P_{Pi} is acting in a mainly physicochemical manner on the inner surface of the osteocyte lacunae to prevent mineral encroachment. This mechanism could also be seen to be involved in the still-controversial process of 'osteocytic osteolysis' (which is thus being reduced in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice). Increased osteocyte lacunae size has been reported in rats infused with PTH (Tazawa *et al.* 2004), as well as during lactation (Qing *et al.* 2012). Humans with *Enpp1* gene defects have been found to have normal serum PTH and calcium concentrations and a low phosphate concentration (Lorenz-Depiereux *et al.* 2010). *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have previously been shown to have low blood serum calcium and phosphate concentrations and a high blood serum FGF23 concentration (Mackenzie *et al.* 2012b). Circulating PTH was not measured in the present study, but these results suggest that it could be elevated in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice, as part of a homeostatic response to normalise the blood calcium concentration. The change in osteocyte lacunae size I found in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice is unlikely to be due to a high PTH

concentration because that would result in an increased lacunae size not decreased.

SEM measurements also revealed that the osteocyte lacunae of 22 week old wild type mice were smaller than those of 15 week old mice. A number of reports have also shown a reduction in osteocyte lacunae size with age in human and rodent bones (Mullender *et al.* 1996; Mori *et al.* 1997; Power *et al.* 2002; Qiu *et al.* 2002; Busse *et al.* 2010; Torres-Lagares *et al.* 2010; Carter *et al.* 2013), presumably as a consequence of continuing secondary mineralisation. It is not known what effect ageing has on the activity of NPP1 in humans and mice. A reduction of NPP1 activity with age may permit the secondary mineralisation seen.

In young adults, exercise and hypoxia lead to increased ATP release from red blood cells (RBCs); this ATP release has been reported to be attenuated with age (Kirby *et al.* 2012). This released ATP is believed to cause vasodilation and relieve the hypoxia (Sprague *et al.* 2011). Reduced ATP release with ageing might thus be expected to result in decreased relief of hypoxia. Reduced ATP release from RBCs might also lead to decreased circulating PPI, which could contribute to the secondary mineralisation seen with age.

From 15 weeks onwards, *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice had thinner and less porous cortical bone in the humerus than wild types. The *Enpp1*^{-/-} bones had the same diameter as those of wild type mice, but a bigger marrow cavity. This increase in the endosteal / periosteal diameter ratio is indicative of increased osteoclast activity in the bone. Mackenzie and colleagues saw histological evidence of increased *in vivo* osteoclast activity on the bones of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice (Mackenzie *et al.* 2012b). A possible explanation as to why *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have altered bone structure may be related to acidosis and hypoxia. The knockout of NPP1 leads to a reduction in PPI; this reduction in PPI has been shown to lead to arterial blood vessel calcification (Villa-Bellosta *et al.* 2011). These vessels may have reduced capacity for transporting oxygenated blood; this may result in tissue hypoxia and acidosis. Results presented here show a reduction in the number of open blood vessels channels in *Enpp1*^{-/-} bone (**Figure 3.13**), and a reduction in the total pore / channel space in bone

(Figure 3.10), which may result in hypoxia and acidosis in the bone environment. Acidosis and hypoxia have been shown to increase osteoclast formation and resorption rate (Arnett & Dempster 1986; Arnett *et al.* 2003) and inhibit bone mineralisation (Brandao-Burch *et al.* 2005; Utting *et al.* 2006). This increase in osteoclast activity may be responsible for the changes seen in the diameter of the cortical bone of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice reportedly have an increased serum K⁺ concentration (Mackenzie *et al.* 2012b); increased serum K⁺ may be an indicator of an acidosis (Nyirenda *et al.* 2009).

No large changes in skull dimensions were detected at 8, 15 and 22 weeks in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice compared to wild types. This finding aligns with previous work which found that 20 day old *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice did not have any calvarial defects (Hessle *et al.* 2002). The skull is different to the long bones in that it is formed by intramembranous ossification and develops from the neural crest cells (Santagati & Rijli 2003); the long bones (axial skeleton) are formed by the process of endochondral ossification from the sclerotome compartment of the somite (Fan & Tessier-Lavigne 1994). This may be a reason why *Enpp1*^{-/-} had no effect on the skull bones, but a dramatic effect on the long bones.

Enpp1^{-/-} mice had a higher serum sclerostin concentration than wild type mice. A possible explanation for this may be found in their decreased mobility (Okawa *et al.* 1998; Sali *et al.* 1999). It has previously been reported that *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have a raised blood serum creatine kinase concentration (Mackenzie *et al.* 2012b), this indicates that they have muscle damage. MicroCT data presented here shows mineralisation of the knees and toes; coupled with the reported muscle damage, the *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse may be attempting to put as little force as possible through their limbs when moving, this would result in unloading of the long bones. Unloading of the bones can result in increased expression of sclerostin by osteocytes (Lin *et al.* 2009; Macias *et al.* 2013; Spatz *et al.* 2013) and may be a reason why *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice have increased blood serum sclerostin.

A further explanation for the elevated sclerostin concentration seen in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice may be related to their reduced PPI production (Hessle *et al.* 2002). It is

possible that the increased sclerostin concentration may be a homeostatic response by the osteocyte to the hypermineralisation of their lacunae caused by the decrease in PPI. It has been reported that sclerostin increased the expression of carbonic anhydrase 2 in osteocyte-like cell lines *in vitro*. It has been suggested that this carbonic anhydrase 2, through its production of carbonic acid, enables the osteocyte to dissolve the mineralised lacunae wall and increase the lacunae size (Kogawa *et al.* 2013). The increased blood sclerostin concentration seen in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice may be due to the osteocytes' attempts to reduce the mineral encroachment into the lacunae.

Increased differentiation of osteoblasts to osteocytes may also be reason for the increased sclerostin concentration detected in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice. Increased mineralisation of the extracellular matrix has been shown to up-regulate the osteocytic differentiation of MLO-A5 osteocyte-like cells and increase their expression of E11 *in vitro* (Prideaux *et al.* 2012). This suggests the possibility that increased mineralisation in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice bones may also act to increase osteocyte differentiation.

Increased sclerostin could provide another explanation for the increased osteoclast function seen *in vivo*. Sclerostin has been shown to increase the expression of RANKL by osteoblasts and osteocytes, and therefore increase osteoclast formation (Wijenayaka *et al.* 2011). Along with hypoxia discussed above, the increased blood sclerostin levels seen in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice may stimulate osteoclast formation and bone resorption, and be responsible for some of the changes seen in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse bones. My observation that blood sclerostin decreased with age in wild type mice contrasts with the results of a number of studies in humans showing that circulating sclerostin increases with age (Modder *et al.* 2011; Bhattoa *et al.* 2013; Roforth *et al.* 2014). The reason for this difference is not clear.

In summary, the work presented in this chapter provides significant new evidence of the important role of *Enpp1* and PPI in regulating the mineralisation of soft tissues and bone.

Chapter 4

Effects of *Enpp1* knockout on osteoclasts and osteoblasts *in vitro*

Introduction

Enpp1^{-/-} osteoclasts

The previous chapter showed that the bone marrow cavity is enlarged in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice (**Figure 3.16**), with prominent resorption pits on the endosteal surface (**Figure 3.12B**), suggesting that these mice have increased osteoclastic resorptive activity. Mackenzie and colleagues saw an increased number of osteoclasts on the *ex vivo* bone surfaces of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice, compared to age-matched, wild type mouse bones (Mackenzie *et al.* 2012b). They also found that the blood serum concentration of C-terminal telopeptides of type I collagen (CTX), a marker of osteoclast activity, was increased by 364% in 22 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice compared to wild types. They observed that the concentration of blood serum CTx decreases with age in wild type but not *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice. It was suggested that *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice failed to appropriately down-regulate osteoclast numbers and activity with age. Mackenzie *et al.* hypothesised that the increased number of osteoclasts in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse bones may be due to the increased circulating creatine kinase activity they found in these animals. It has been reported that brain-type creatine kinase (CK-BB) is up-regulated during osteoclastogenesis and that knockout of CK-BB reduced osteoclast formation *in vitro*, and decreased bone loss in ovariectomised mice and rats *in vivo* (Chang *et al.* 2008).

One of the main biological functions of calcitonin is to suppress osteoclast resorptive activity by binding to receptors on their surface (Chambers & Moore 1983; Shyu *et al.* 2007; Hamdy & Daley 2012). Administration of calcitonin for 4 weeks to the tiptoe walking mouse partially corrected the low bone volume seen in the cervical vertebrae (Okawa *et al.* 1999). This suggests that tiptoe walking mice,

have increased osteoclast activity; it also suggests that the *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice, which have a similar genetic abnormality, may have an osteoclast related defect. However, calcitonin has not been shown to reduce the number of osteoclasts in bone (Ikegame *et al.* 2004; Karsdal *et al.* 2008; Hamdy & Daley 2012).

ATP and ADP have been shown to increase the formation rate and resorptive activity of mouse osteoclasts formed from precursors *in vitro*, by signalling through the P2Y₁ and P2Y₆ receptors; whereas AMP has no effect (see chapter 1, for a detailed review). This suggests that an additional potential reason for the increased number or resorptive activity of osteoclasts in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice may be due to a decrease in the rate of extracellular nucleotide hydrolysis, leading to increased extracellular ATP and ADP (and reduced AMP).

***Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts**

Osteoblasts cultured from precursor cells obtained from *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice calvariae produced more mineralised bone nodules than wild types. Conversely, osteoblasts formed from precursor cells from *Enpp1*^{-/-} bone marrow produced less mineralised bone nodules than wild types *in vitro*. No differences were detected in the rate of cell proliferation between wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts in culture (Anderson *et al.* 2005b).

It has been reported that when *Enpp1* expression was suppressed by shRNA in the mouse osteoblast-like cell line MC3T3, these cells were unable to mineralise the matrix they deposited. Confusingly, it was also reported that *Enpp1*^{-/-} primary mouse calvarial osteoblasts, when grown from precursors *in vitro*, were less differentiated than *Enpp1*^{+/+} cells, resulting in decreased ALP and OCN expression and produced less mineralised bone than wild type cells (Nam *et al.* 2011). These results are not consistent with those reported by (Anderson *et al.* 2005b). It was also reported that catalytically inactive NPP1 enhanced the differentiation of precursor cells into osteoblasts and increased mineral production (Nam *et al.* 2011). It has also been proposed that NPP1 may modulate insulin signalling. NPP1 may be able to bind to the insulin receptor (Maddux & Goldfine 2000) and block osteoblast

bone formation by preventing insulin from suppressing the *Runx2* inhibitor *Twist2* (Fulzele *et al.* 2010).

Previous reports have shown that over-expression of *Enpp1* inhibited adipogenesis and the expression of adipocyte associated genes, *PPAR γ* , *adipsin* and *C/EBP β* in the adipocyte-like cell line 3T3-L1. Knockout of *Enpp1* reportedly increased adipogenesis in primary mesenchymal precursor cells, and increase expression of the adipocyte associated genes *in vitro* (Liang *et al.* 2007). This suggests that *Enpp1* may play a role in the differentiation of MSCs to osteoblasts and adipocytes. Increased adipose tissue expression of *Enpp1* in humans has been shown to be linked with decreased expression of adiponectin, a hormone secreted by adipocytes that can lead to increased liver triglyceride deposition (Chandalia *et al.* 2012).

The PPI generated by NPP1 reportedly increased the expression of OPN by rodent *in vitro* osteoblasts in a phosphate independent way (Boskey *et al.* 2002; Johnson *et al.* 2003; Addison *et al.* 2007). OPN, like PPI, is a direct inhibitor of mineralisation (Wada *et al.* 1999; Boskey *et al.* 2002). *In vitro* osteoblasts from *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice expressed less OPN than wild type cells (Johnson *et al.* 2003), the addition of PPI or soluble NPP1 to the cell culture media increased OPN expression (Boskey *et al.* 2002; Johnson *et al.* 2003; Addison *et al.* 2007; Nam *et al.* 2011). This indicated that *Enpp1* can regulate the mineralisation process in a dual inhibitory way by either a PPI or OPN mediated mechanisms.

PPI has been shown to inhibit mineralisation by osteoblasts *in vitro* by either a physicochemical method or increasing the expression of OPN. In addition, PPI has also been reported to decrease the expression of ALP by the osteoblast-like cell line MC3T3-E1. This decrease in ALP activity resulted in the reduced hydrolysis of phosphate from β -glycerophosphate *in vitro*, therefore resulting in less available phosphate for the formation of mineral (Addison *et al.* 2007).

Aims

The aim of the experiments in this chapter was to determine if the knockout of *Enpp1* affects the function of osteoclasts and osteoblasts *in vitro*.

Results

Enpp1 and osteoclasts

Osteoclasts express mRNA for ecto-nucleotidases and related proteins *in vitro*

On ivory discs, primary mouse osteoclasts were formed from precursors flushed from the bone marrow of wild type mice (see chapter 2). On day 8 the cells were acidified to pH 6.90 to activate resorption. TRIZOL was used to collect mRNA from the osteoclasts on days 3, 6, 8 and 10 of culture, these represent: immature, maturing, mature and mature resorbing osteoclasts respectively (**Figure 4.1**). RT-PCR showed that osteoclasts express mRNAs for *Enpp1*, *Enpp3*, *NTPdase1*, *NTPdase3* and the PPI transport protein *Ank*. These *in vitro* mouse osteoclasts did not to express mRNAs for *Enpp2* and *NTPdase2* (**Figure 4.2**).

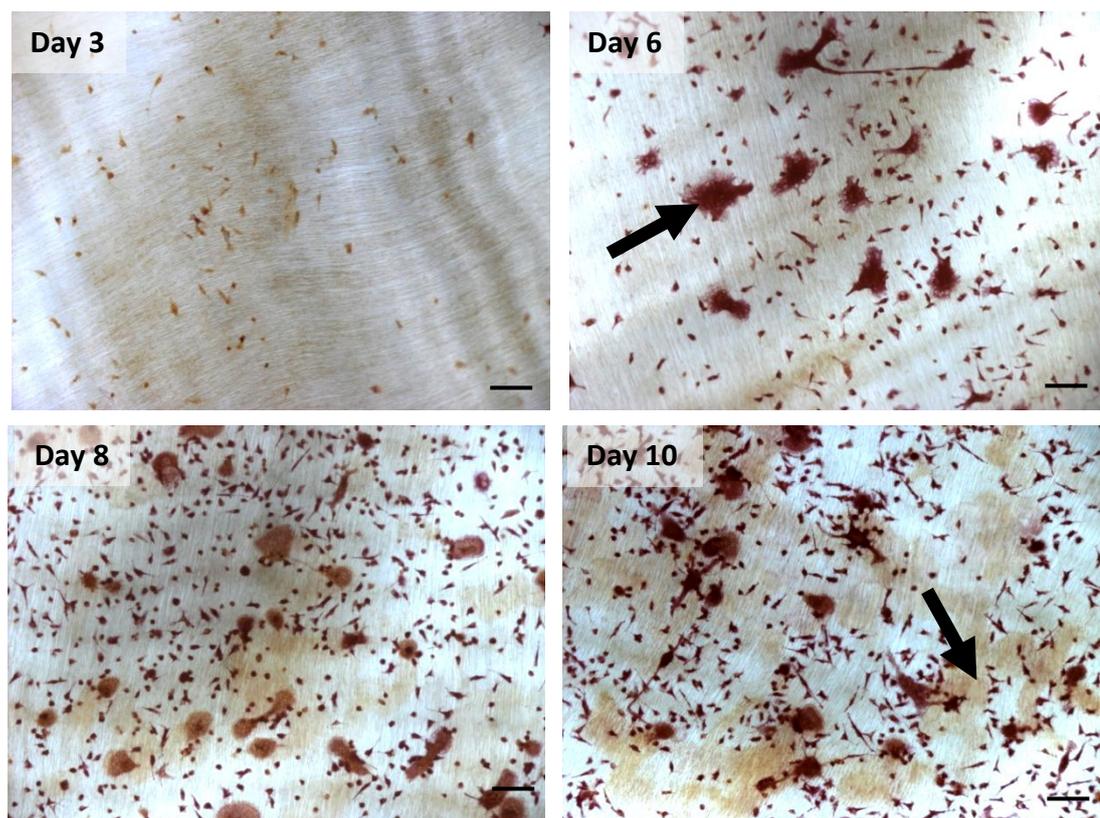


Figure 4.1. Transmitted light microscopy images of mouse osteoclasts grown *in vitro*

Osteoclast precursors were seeded onto dentine discs on day 2. The culture medium was acidified to pH 6.9 on day 8 to activate resorption; no resorption was visible on day 6. TRAP-stained osteoclasts (red) and resorption pits (tan); scale bar = 50 μm .

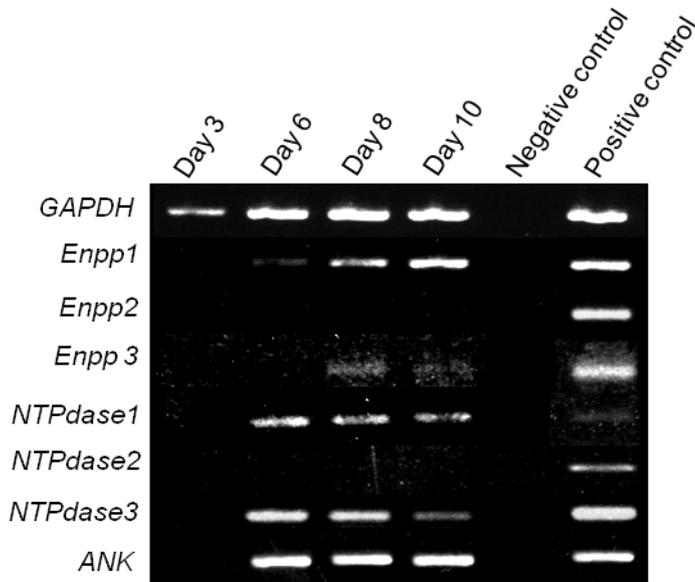


Figure 4.2. Ecto-nucleotidases expression by differentiating mouse osteoclasts *in vitro*

RT-PCR showed that mouse osteoclasts expressed mRNAs for the nucleotidases *Enpp1*, *Enpp3*, *NTPdase1*, *NTPdase3* and the *PPI* transport protein *ANK* from day 6 of culture onwards. mRNAs for *Enpp2* and *NTPdase2* were not detected. *Enpp1* expression increased throughout the culture; *NTPdase3* expression decreased in mature resorbing osteoclasts; positive control = mouse brain.

Mouse osteoclasts have NPP activity *in vitro*

Osteoclasts were grown from precursors obtained from the bone marrow of *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice on ivory discs for 10 days. On day 8 the cells were acidified to pH 6.90 to activate resorption. The total NPP activity of the cells was measured photometrically using p-nitrophenyl-thymidine 5'-monophosphate on days 6, 8 and 10. It was found that osteoclasts have functional NPP enzyme activity, which decreased throughout the duration of the experiment. *Enpp1* knockout resulted in a 25% reduction in the total NPP activity of osteoclasts at days 6 and 8 of culture, and a 70% decrease in the total NPP activity on day 10 of culture (Figure 4.3).

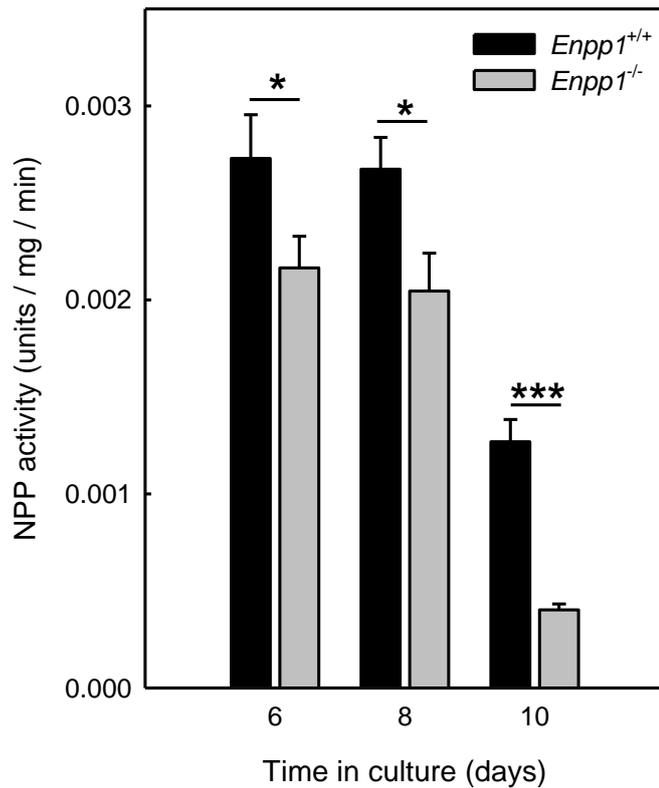


Figure 4.3. NPP activity of mouse osteoclasts *in vitro*

Osteoclasts were grown from precursors on ivory discs. Total NPP activity was determined by the osteoclasts' ability to hydrolyse p-nitrophenyl-thymidine 5'-monophosphate. (Data are means \pm SEM; *, $p < 0.05$; ***, $p < 0.001$; $n = 12$).

Acid activation of mouse osteoclasts increases NPP activity and *Enpp1* mRNA expression

Wild type mouse osteoclasts were grown from precursors, on ivory discs for 10 days. On day 8 of culture one group of cells was acidified to pH 6.90 ($n = 12$ discs), a second group was maintained at pH 7.30. On day 10 the experiment was terminated, NPP activity was measured and mRNA was collected. Osteoclasts which were acidified had increased mRNA expression of *Enpp1* and greater total NPP activity compared to non-acidified cells (**Figure 4.4**).

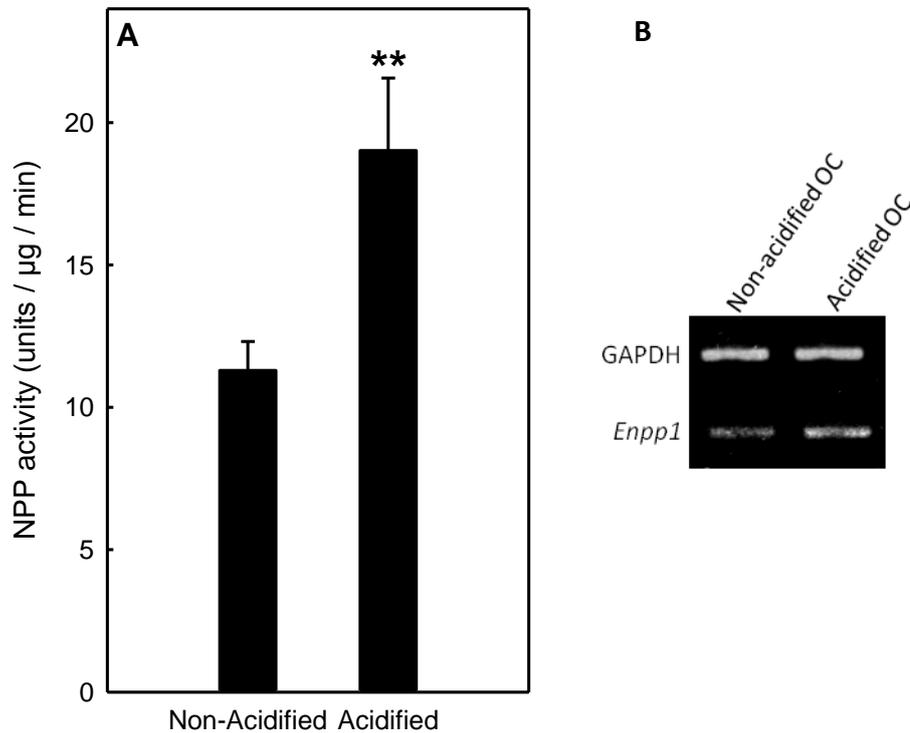


Figure 4.4. Increased *Enpp1* mRNA expression and NPP activity in acid-activated mouse osteoclasts *in vitro*

Osteoclasts were grown from precursors on ivory discs. On day 8 the test group osteoclasts were acidified to pH 6.90, the control group was maintained at pH 7.30. On day 10 of culture **(A)** the total NPP activity was measured in cell lysates; **(B)** mRNA was collected for RT-PCR analysis. (Data are means \pm SEM; **, $p < 0.01$; $n = 12$).

The effect of *Enpp1*^{-/-} on osteoclast mRNA expression

Osteoclasts were grown from precursors obtained from the bone marrow of *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice on ivory discs for 8 days. On day 8 of culture TRIzol was used to collect mRNA from the osteoclasts. RT-PCR demonstrated that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts have increased expression of mRNAs for *NTPdase1*, *Enpp3* and *Ank* compared to wild type cells **(Figure 4.5)**.

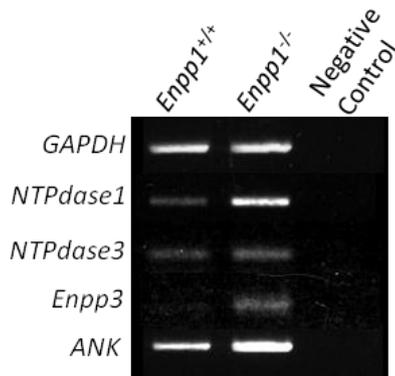


Figure 4.5. Altered expression of mRNAs for nucleotidase-related genes in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteoclasts *in vitro*

Mouse osteoclasts were grown from precursors on ivory discs. On day 8 of culture mRNA was collected for RT-PCR analysis.

Reduced ATP release and increased intracellular ATP in *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts

As described previously, osteoclasts were formed from precursor cells on ivory discs that were obtained from the bone marrow of 8 and 15 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice. The amount of ATP released per cell, and the intracellular ATP concentration were measured on days 6, 8 and 10 of culture. It was found that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts formed from precursors obtained from both 8 and 15 week old mice released less ATP per cell than wild type cells (**Figure 4.6A & B**). It was also found that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts grown from precursors from 8 week old mice had a higher intracellular ATP concentration than wild type cells from day 6 onwards (**Figure 4.6C**). *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts grown from precursors from 15 week old mice had a higher intracellular ATP concentration than wild type cells from day 8 onwards (**Figure 4.6D**).

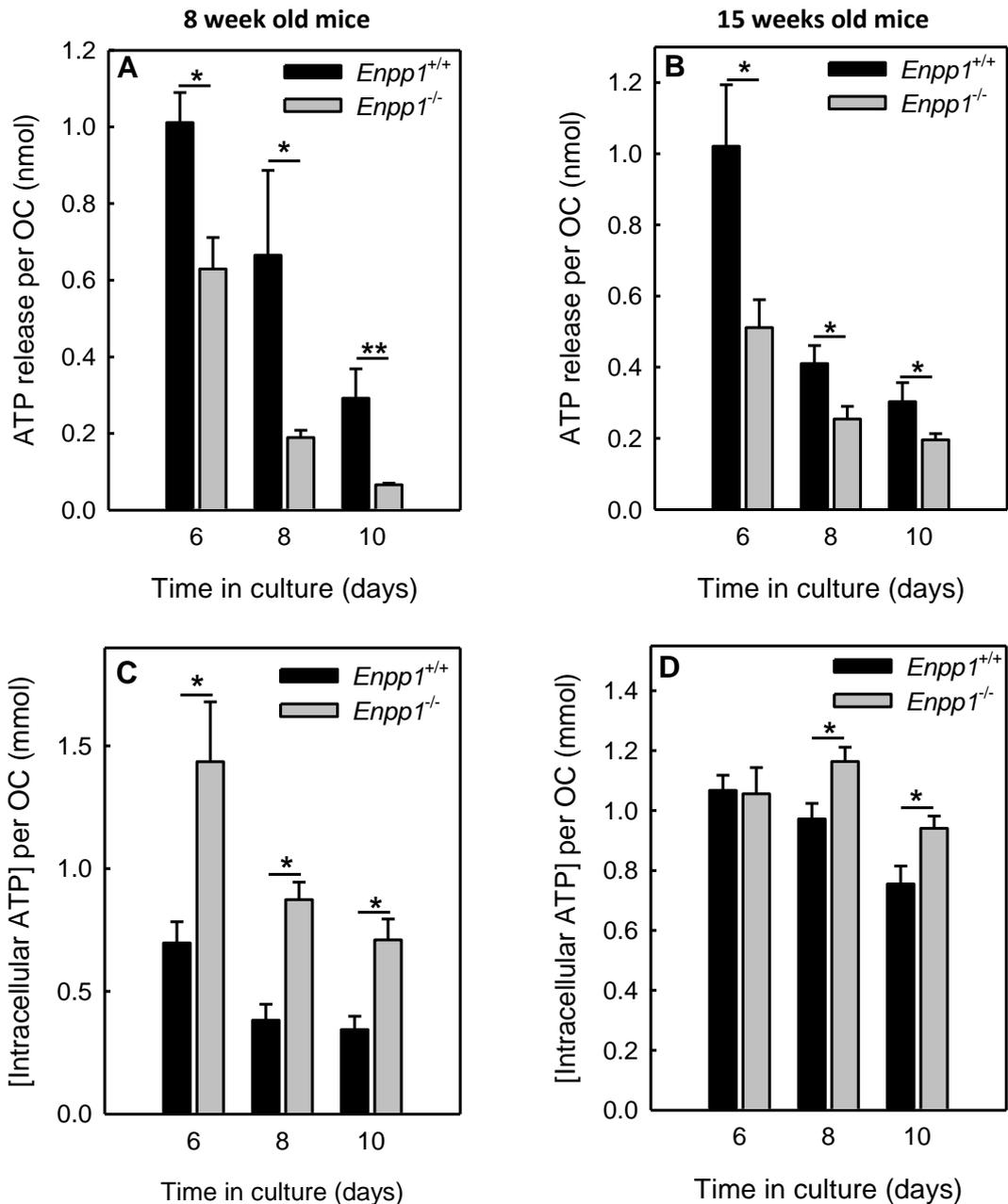


Figure 4.6. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteoclasts release less ATP and have a higher intracellular ATP concentration compared to wild types *in vitro*

Osteoclasts were grown from precursors obtained from the bone marrow of 8 (A, C) and 15 (B, D) week old mice. To determine the rate of ATP release, medium was replaced with fresh serum free medium, after 1 hour the ATP concentration in the medium was measured. To determine the intracellular ATP concentration the osteoclasts were lysed using Triton X-100 before the ATP concentration was measured. Cell viability was found to be above 90% in all groups, with no significant differences seen. (**, $p < 0.01$; *, $P < 0.05$; data are means \pm SEM; $n = 12$).

***Enpp1* knockout does not affect extracellular ATP hydrolysis by cultured osteoclasts**

Experiments were performed to determine if the knockout of *Enpp1* resulted in a decreased rate of ATP breakdown. On ivory discs, osteoclasts were grown from precursor cells obtained from the bone marrow of 8 and 15 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice. On day 8, all of the cell culture media were removed from the cells and replaced with serum free media containing 100 nM ATP. The rate of ATP hydrolysis in the cell culture media was measured using a luminescent method described on page 72. Using precursors from both 8 and 15 week old mice, it was found that knockout of *Enpp1* in osteoclasts did not reduce the rate of extracellular ATP hydrolysis (**Figure 4.7**).

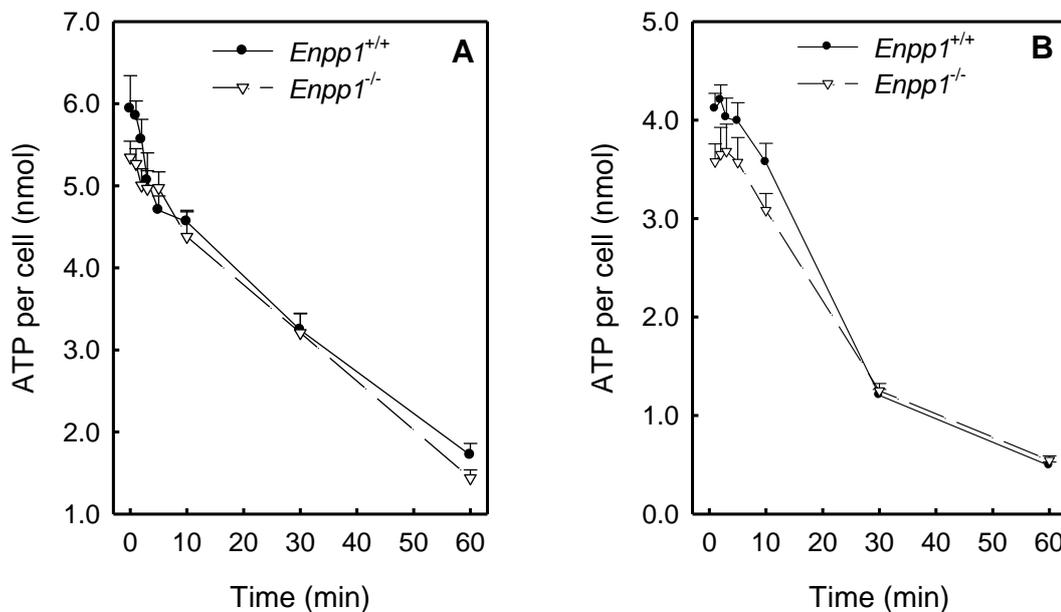


Figure 4.7. Knockout of *Enpp1* does not affect the rate of extracellular ATP hydrolysis by mouse osteoclasts *in vitro*

In vitro osteoclasts were cultured from the bone marrow of 8 (**A**) and 15 (**B**) week old mice. On day 8, all of the culture media were removed and replaced with fresh media containing 100 nM ATP ($t = 0$). The concentrations of ATP in the culture media were measured using a luminescent method from when the media was added. Cell viability was measured using LDH and found to be above 90%, with no significant differences seen; data are means \pm SEM; $n = 12$.

Reduced ATP release from *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts stimulated by fluid flow

Mechanical stimulation of osteoblasts and osteocyte-like cells *in vitro* by the flow of fluid across their surface increases ATP release (Romanello *et al.* 2001; Genetos *et al.* 2005; Genetos *et al.* 2007). However, there are currently no published papers showing ATP release by primary osteoclasts in response to fluid flow. Because it was found that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts release less ATP compared to wild types, and have a greater intracellular ATP concentration, their response to fluid flow *in vitro* was investigated.

Osteoclasts were cultured as described above. On day 8, cell culture medium was removed from the ivory discs and replaced with serum free medium, the cells were then left undisturbed. After 1 hour the cells were stimulated by removing 85% of the cell culture media, tilting the culture plate to 45° and running the same culture media over the cells with a Gilson pipette at a fixed rate of 50µl per second until the entire medium was reintroduced to the well. This procedure was carried out twice in total. The concentrations of ATP and LDH (to determine cell viability) in the cell culture media were measured for 30 minutes. Osteoclasts released ATP in response to fluid flow. It was also found that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts formed from precursors from 8 and 15 week old mice released less ATP when stimulated by fluid flow than wild types (**Figure 4.8**).

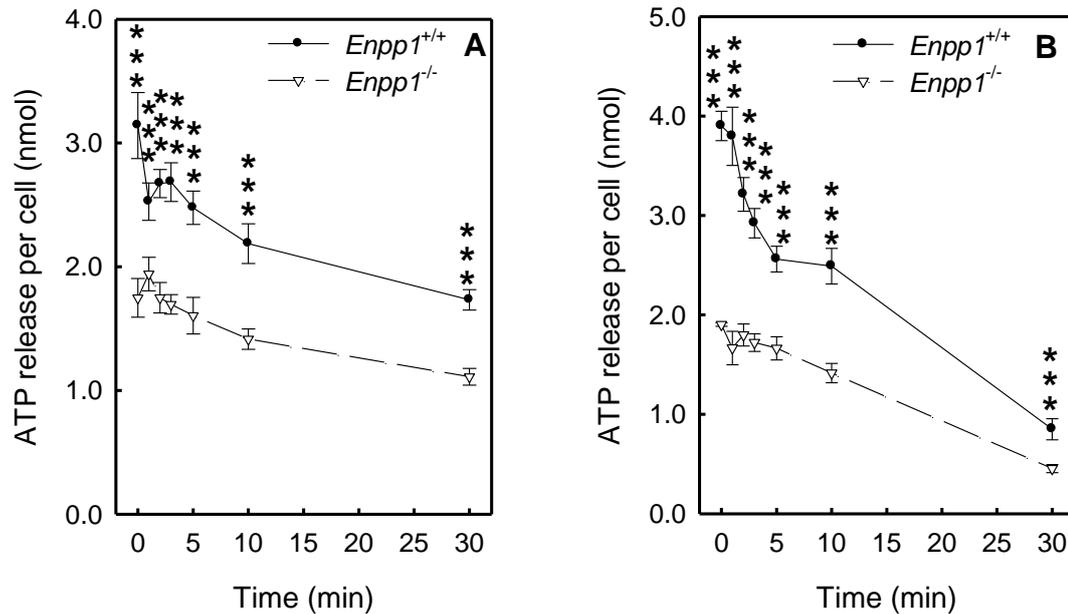


Figure 4.8. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteoclasts released less ATP under fluid flow stimulation than wild types *in vitro*

Osteoclasts were generated from the bone marrow of 8 (A) and 15 (B) week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice. Osteoclasts were subjected to flow fluid and their ATP release into serum free medium was measured by luminometry. Cell viability determined by LDH assay was $\geq 85\%$ with no significant differences seen. (***, $p < 0.001$; data are means \pm SEM; $n = 12$.)

Knockout of *Enpp1* has no effect on the formation or resorptive activity of mouse osteoclasts *in vitro*

Osteoclasts were cultured on ivory discs from precursors that were collected from the bone marrow of 8 and 15 week old *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mice. On day 8 of culture the cells were acidified to pH 6.90 to activate resorption. It was found that knockout of *Enpp1*^{-/-} had no effect on the formation, or the rate of resorption, of mouse osteoclasts *in vitro* (Figure 4.9).

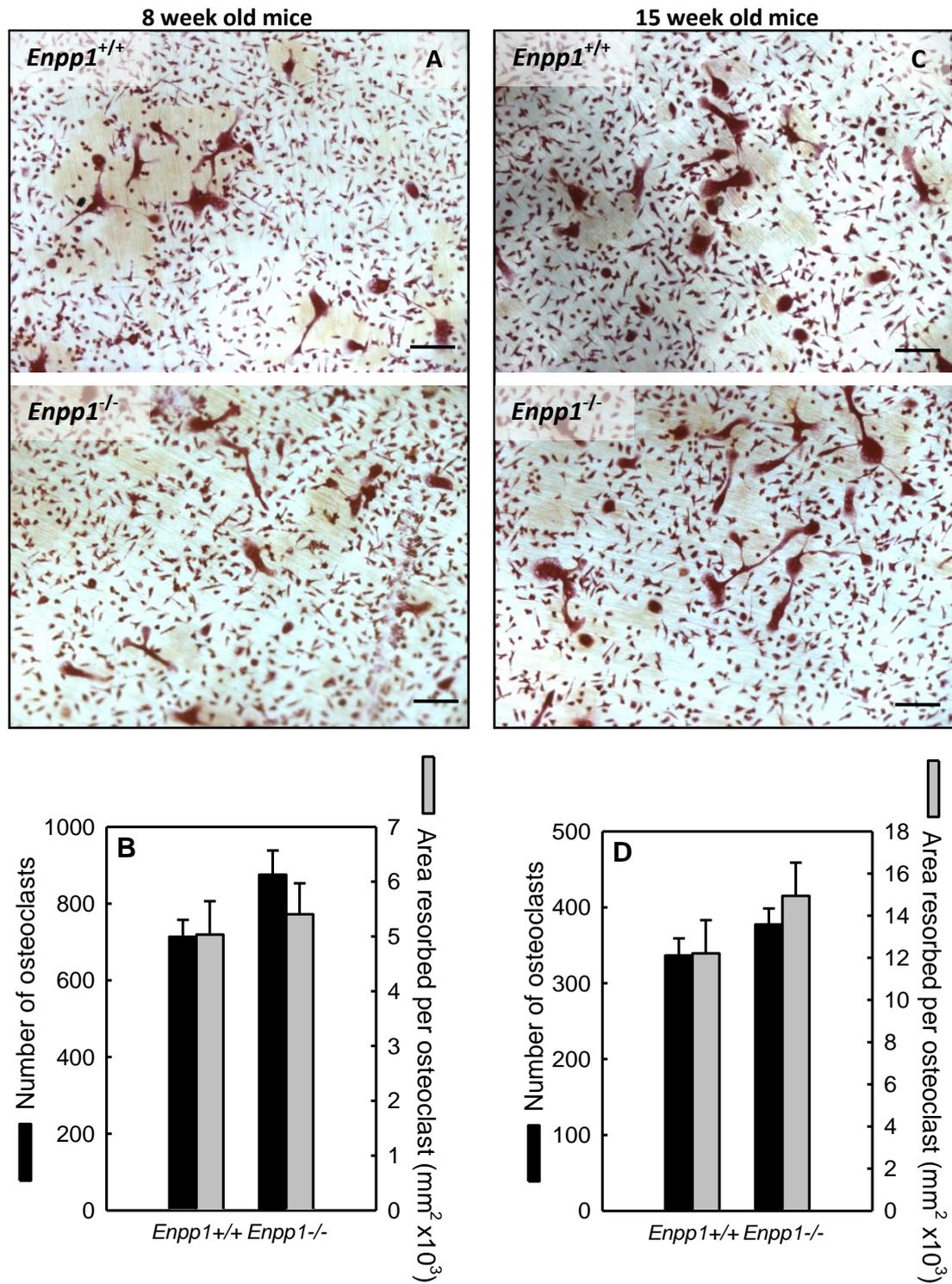


Figure 4.9. Knockout of *Enpp1* has no effect on the formation or resorptive activity of mouse osteoclasts *in vitro*

Osteoclasts were formed from the bone marrow of 8 (**A, B**) and 15 (**C, D**) week old mice and cultured on ivory discs for 10 days; scale bar = 50 μ m. On day 8 of culture the osteoclasts were acidified to pH 6.90 to activate resorption. (Data are means \pm SEM; n = 8)

***Enpp1* and osteoblasts**

***Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteoblasts formed more mineralised bone *in vitro* than wild type osteoblasts**

Wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse calvarial osteoblasts were cultured for up to 28 days in supplemented α MEM. The experiments were terminated and the amount of mineralised bone formed in the cell culture plates was quantified by automated image analysis. It was found that cultured mouse *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts produce approximately 32% ($p < 0.001$) more bone than wild type cells (**Figure 4.10A-C**).

***Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteoblasts proliferated at the same rate as wild type osteoblasts**

To determine if the knockout of *Enpp1* affects the rate of osteoblast proliferation *in vitro*, wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse calvarial osteoblasts were cultured for up to 14 days in α MEM. 10^5 cells were seeded into each well of a six well cell culture plate, the number of cells within each well was determined spectrophotometrically at specific time points using an LDH method. *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts proliferated at the same rate as wild type osteoblasts, resulting in no significant difference in the number of osteoblasts formed at each time point (**Figure 4.10D**).

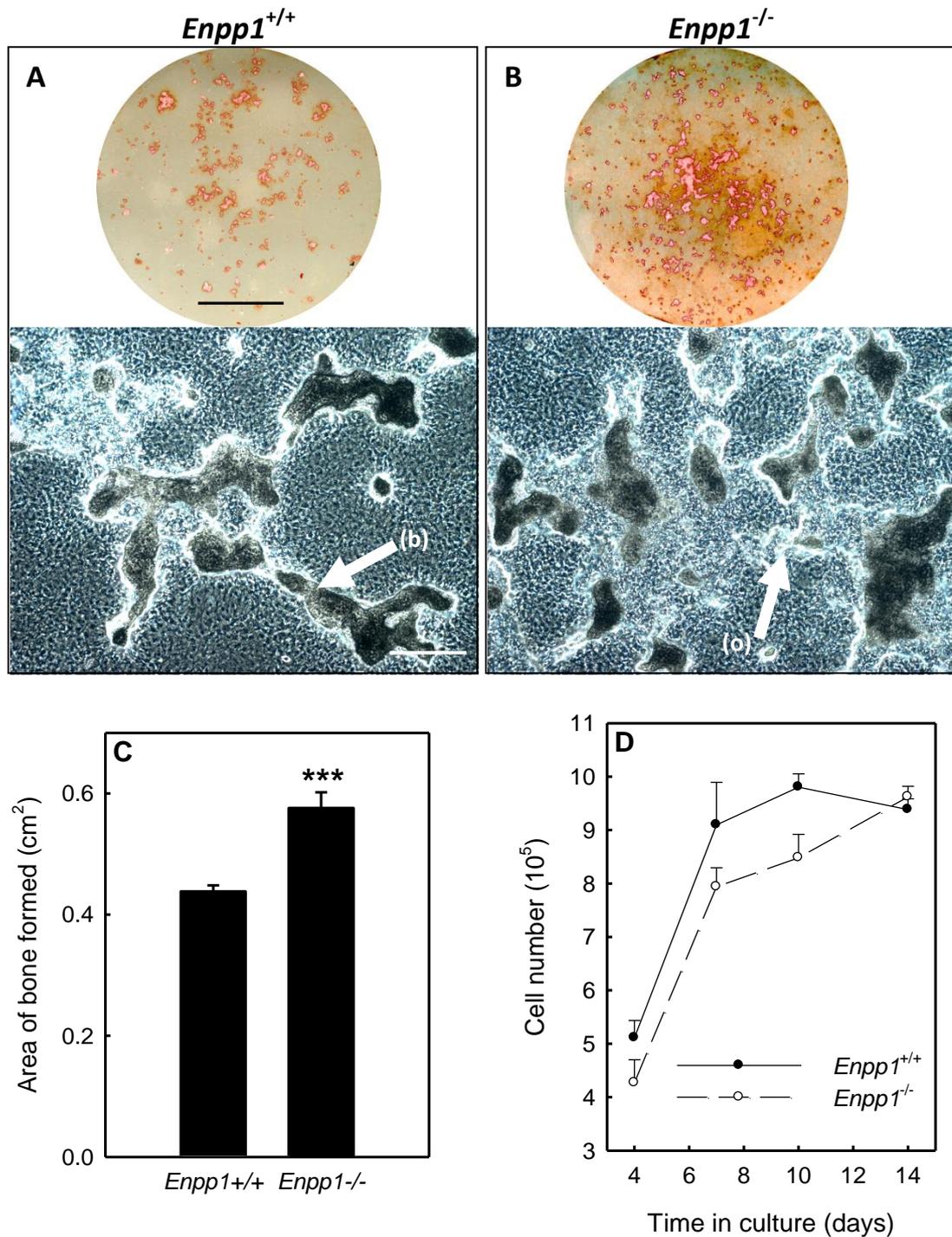


Figure 4.10. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteoblasts form more mineralised bone than wild types *in vitro*, but proliferate at the same rate

Osteoblast precursors from the calvariae of wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice were seeded at 10⁵ cells / well into 6 well trays. Images of the bone formed by **(A)** wild type and **(B)** *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts by day 28; top image, scanned well stained with alizarin red; lower image, phase contrast microscopy of unstained bone nodules (b). Note: *Enpp1*^{-/-} cultures appear to contain more unmineralised matrix than wild types (o); Scale bar top = 1 cm, bottom = 500 μ m. **(C)** Bone formation was quantified using 28 day unstained cultures. **(D)** Cell number was determined using an LDH based method. (***, $p < 0.001$; data are means \pm SEM; $n = 6$.)

Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts had decreased NPP activity, but not ALP activity compared to wild types *in vitro

Wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse calvarial osteoblasts were cultured for up to 28 days in supplemented α MEM. The total NPP and ALP enzymatic activity of the osteoblasts were measured by spectrophotometry at 4 time points during the experiment. It was found that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts had approximately 50% ($p < 0.001$) less total NPP activity than wild type osteoblasts (**Figure 4.11A**), with no change in ALP activity (**Figure 4.11B**).

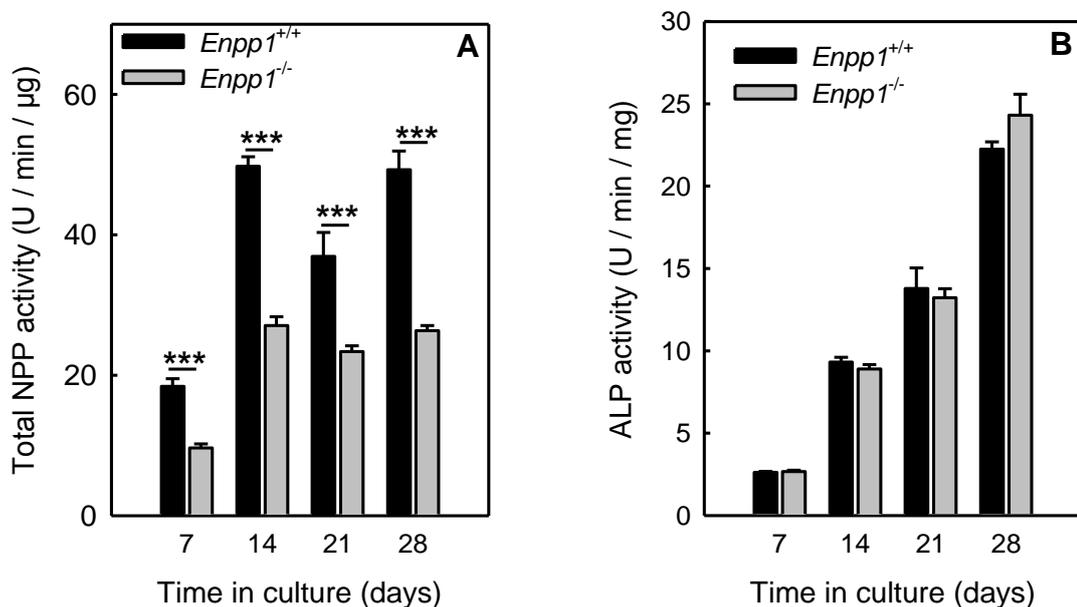


Figure 4.11. *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts had reduced total NPP activity, but unchanged ALP activity compared to wild types *in vitro*

Osteoblasts precursors for the calvariae of wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice were seeded at 10^5 cells / well into 6 well trays. **(A)** The total NPP and **(B)** ALP activity of the cells was normalised to the cell protein concentration. (Data are means \pm SEM; $n = 6$; ***, $p < 0.001$).

Exogenous ATP inhibited mineralised bone formation by *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mouse osteoblasts *in vitro*

Wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse calvarial osteoblasts were cultured for up to 28 days in supplemented α MEM with 10 and 100 μ M ATP. The experiments were terminated, and automated image analysis revealed that ATP inhibited the mineralisation of deposited matrix by both *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type osteoblasts (**Figure 4.12**).

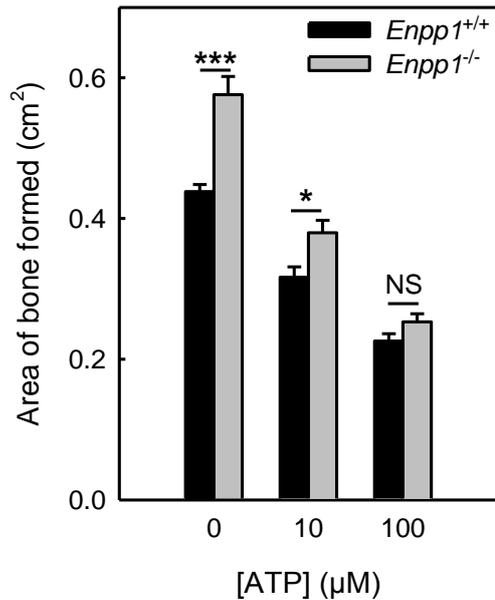


Figure 4.12. Exogenous ATP inhibited bone formation by *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mouse osteoblasts *in vitro*

Osteoblasts precursors for the calvariae of wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice were seeded at 10⁵ cells / well into 6 well trays. ATP was added from the start of the culture and at each medium change. (Data are means ± SEM; n = 6; NS, not significant; *, p<0.05; ***, p<0.001.)

Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteoblasts had lower ATP release and higher intracellular ATP concentration than wild types *In vitro

As described above, wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse calvarial osteoblasts were cultured for 28 days. The amount of ATP released per cell, and the intracellular ATP concentration were measured using a luciferase based method on days 7, 14 and 21 of culture. The cell number and cell viability were measured using an LDH assay. It was found that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts released between 50 – 70 % (p<0.001) less ATP per cell than wild type cells (**Figure 4.13A**). *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts also had intracellular ATP levels that were 60 – 350% (p<0.001) greater than wild types (**Figure 4.13B**).

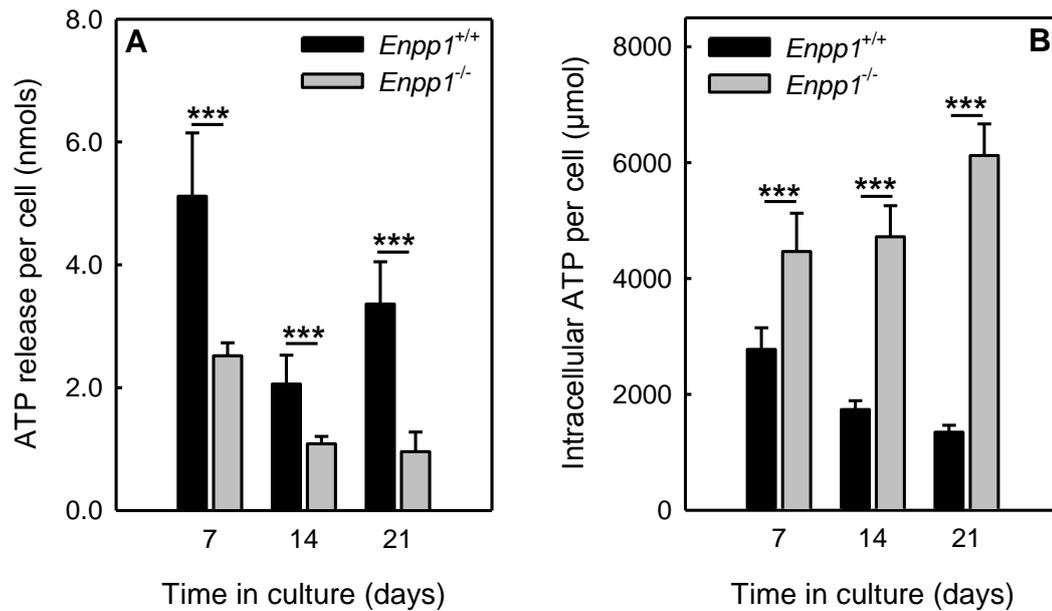


Figure 4.13. *In vitro* *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteoblasts had an increased intracellular ATP concentration and decreased basal ATP release compared to wild types

Osteoblasts precursors for the calvariae of wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice were seeded at 10⁵ cells / well into 6 well trays. To determine basal ATP release (A), media was removed from the cells and replaced with fresh serum free media, after 1 hour the ATP concentration in the media was measured. To determine the intracellular ATP concentration (B) the osteoclasts were lysed before the ATP concentration was measured. All of the cells were found to be 95% viable by LDH measurement. (Data are means ± SEM; ***, p<0.001.)

***In vitro* *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts released less ATP per cell when stimulated compared to wild type osteoblasts**

Similar to the *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts, it was found that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts released less ATP compared to wild types, and had a greater intracellular ATP concentration than wild type. The response of *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mouse osteoblasts to fluid flow across their surface *in vitro* was investigated.

Enpp1^{-/-} and wild type osteoblasts, developed from calvarial precursors, were cultured in 6 well trays. On day 14, all of the cell culture media was removed from the culture plate and replaced with serum free media, the cells were then left undisturbed. After 1 hour the cells were stimulated by removing 85% of the cell culture media, tilting the cell culture plate to 45° and running the same culture media over the surface of the cells at a fixed rate using a graduated pipette until all of the culture media was reintroduced. The concentration of ATP in the cell culture

media was measured at fixed time points for 30 minutes. The LDH concentration was also measured to determine if the viability of the cells was affected by the fluid flow, and to calculate the number of cells. It was found that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts released less ATP when stimulated by fluid flow than wild type osteoblasts (**Figure 4.14A**).

Knockout of *Enpp1* does not affect the rate of extracellular ATP hydrolysis by osteoblasts *in vitro*

Osteoblasts were cultured in 6 well trays as described. On day 14 all of the cell culture media was removed and replaced with serum free media containing 1 μM ATP. The rate of ATP hydrolysis of the in the cell culture media was measured using a luciferase method as described. The LDH concentration was also measured to determine the viability of the osteoblasts, and to calculate the number of cells. There was no significant difference in the rate of extracellular ATP hydrolysis between cultured *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type mouse osteoblasts (**Figure 4.14B**).

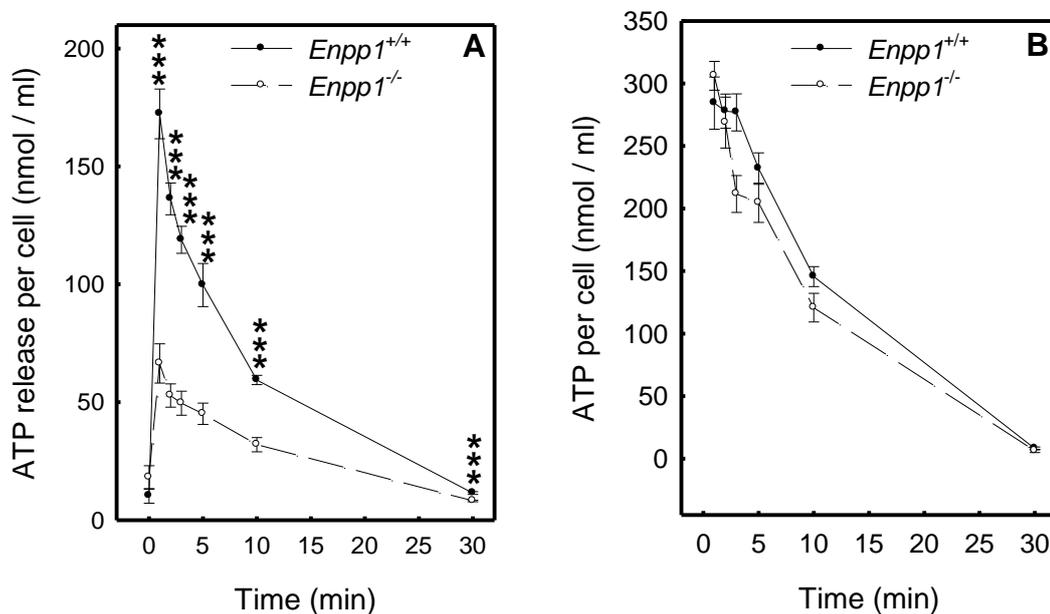


Figure 4.14. Cultured *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts release less ATP in response to fluid flow than wild type cells, but hydrolyse extracellular ATP at a similar rate

Osteoblasts precursors were seeded at 10⁵ cells / well into 6 well trays. **(A)** Culture media was removed and replaced with serum free media. After 1 hour cells were stimulated by fluid flow. **(B)** Culture media was replaced with media containing 1 μM ATP (t = 0) and the ATP concentration determined. Cell viability was found to be >85% by LDH measurement for all groups. (***, p<0.001; n = 12).

Discussion

The work presented in this chapter found that cultured *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts differentiate from precursor cells, and resorbed mineralised tissue at the same rate as wild types. *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts showed reduced ATP release and increased intracellular ATP compared to wild types, but with no change in the rate of extracellular ATP hydrolysis. *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts were found to have 50% less NPP activity compared to wild types and produce approximately 30% more bone *in vitro*. *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts were also found to have a higher intracellular ATP concentration and a lower rate of ATP release than wild types, with no change in the rate of extracellular ATP hydrolysis.

This study of *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts was undertaken because evidence of increased activity was seen *in vivo* (see chapter 3). This work showed for the first time that cultured osteoclasts expressed mRNA for ecto-nucleotidases and had NPP activity. *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts had greater mRNAs expression for *Enpp3* and *NTPdase1* than wild types; this may be a compensatory mechanism to counteract the loss of NPP1 and may be a reason why extracellular ATP hydrolysis was unchanged in *Enpp1*^{-/-} cells.

Extracellular ATP and ADP, signalling through the P2 receptors, stimulate osteoclasts to resorb mineralised tissues *in vitro* (Hoebertz *et al.* 2001). It was therefore expected that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts might resorb fewer pits *in vitro* due to their reduced release of ATP into the extracellular environment. However, no difference was observed between *Enpp1*^{-/-} and wild type osteoclasts. *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts were found to release approximately 50% less ATP than wild types; this is equivalent to approximately 0.5 nmol / cell (**Figure 4.6**). Each ivory disc had approximately 700 individual cultured osteoclasts on it; therefore the total difference in ATP released was 350 nmol per replicate. Work within Chapter 5 of this thesis and previous work has shown that an exogenous ATP concentration of 2 - 10 μ M is required to stimulate formation and resorption by osteoclasts (Morrison *et al.* 1998). Taken together, these data indicates that the difference in ATP release

between wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts is 5 - 28 times lower than what would be required to stimulate an observable effect *in vitro*.

ATP and P_i both inhibit the formation of bone by rodent osteoblasts *in vitro* (Hoebertz *et al.* 2002; Orriss *et al.* 2007). *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts produced more mineralised bone than wild type cells *in vivo*. The most obvious explanations for this are the 50% reduction in NPP activity, leading to reduced P_i formation, and the 50 – 70% reduction in endogenous ATP release seen (Orriss *et al.* 2013). *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts released approximately 1 - 2 nmol / cell less ATP than wild types *in vitro*. The large number of cells within each well of the cell culture plate means that differences of up to 1µM could arise; which is the concentration needed to significantly reduce matrix mineralisation (Orriss *et al.* 2007). Wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblast cultures were found to have equal ALP rates of activity; therefore any P_i that is formed will be hydrolysed at similar rates.

A higher concentration of intracellular ATP was seen in both *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts and osteoclasts compared to wild types. This may be due to the decreased release of ATP by these cells. However it is not clear if the rate of ATP synthesis by *Enpp1*^{-/-} cells is altered compared to wild types. The P_{2X}₇ receptor has been implicated as a mechanism for the release of ATP from osteoblasts (Romanello *et al.* 2001; Buckley *et al.* 2003; Genetos *et al.* 2005) and osteoclasts (Suadicani *et al.* 2006; Pellegatti *et al.* 2011). P_{2X}₇ receptor antagonists have been shown to reduce the rate of ATP release by osteoblasts and osteoclasts (Brandao-Burch *et al.* 2012). Reduced stimulation of the P_{2X}₇ receptor on the surface of *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts and osteoclasts, due to the lower extracellular concentration of ATP, may lead to a feedback loop resulting in lower ATP release. Also, inhibitors of vesicular exocytosis can reduce ATP release from osteoblasts by up to 90% (Orriss *et al.* 2009). Knockout of *Enpp1*^{-/-} in osteoblasts *in vitro* may interfere with the vesicular release of ATP.

Enpp1^{-/-} osteoblasts released less ATP than wild type cells when stimulated by fluid flow. In the previous chapter, *Enpp1*^{-/-} primary osteocyte-like cells were shown to release less ATP than wild types. Together, these results suggest the

possibility that *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice may be less sensitive to the fluid flow induced by mechanical strain upon bones *in vivo*. It has been suggested that fluid flow through the osteocyte canaliculi and lacunae is important in load sensing (Bonewald 2011; Price *et al.* 2011).

In summary, cultured *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoclasts are not more active and do not form faster than wild type osteoclasts. This indicates that the increased osteoclast activity seen *in vivo* (Chapter 3) is due to an undetermined factor, such as a hormone, cytokine or physiological parameter acting upon the osteoclasts. *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteoblasts produced more bone than wild type osteoblasts, but differentiate from precursors at the same rate as wild type cells. Surprisingly, *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteoblasts and osteoclasts had a higher intracellular ATP concentration and a reduced rate of ATP release compared to wild type cells *in vitro*.

Chapter 5

Lack of effect of adenosine on rodent osteoblasts and osteoclasts *in vitro*

Introduction

Adenosine

Adenosine is a hydrolysis product of ATP. It is formed in both the intra and extracellular compartments by the orchestrated actions of multiple enzymes (see page 60). Adenosine acts via the G-protein coupled P1-receptors, found on the surface of many cell types. Both osteoblasts and osteoclasts have been reported to express all four P1 receptor subtypes (Kara *et al.* 2010a; Gharibi *et al.* 2011; Pellegatti *et al.* 2011; Vincenzi *et al.* 2013). However, the actions of extracellular adenosine on bone cells are not clear.

Osteoblasts and adenosine

Synthetic adenosine analogues were shown to elicit a receptor-mediated rise in cAMP levels in calvarial osteoblast-like cells (Lerner *et al.* 1987) but adenosine itself had no effect on intracellular calcium levels in these cells (Orriss *et al.* 2006). Two independent groups failed to find an effect of adenosine on the formation of mineralised bone nodules by rat calvarial osteoblasts *in vitro* (Jones *et al.* 1997; Hoebertz *et al.* 2002). However, a more recent study has indicated that adenosine, acting via the A_{2B} receptor, may increase the osteogenic differentiation of rat long bone mesenchymal stem cells *in vitro* (Gharibi *et al.* 2011). Bone nodule formation by osteoblasts cultured from the bone marrow of A_{2B} receptor knockout mice has also been shown to be reduced (Carroll *et al.* 2012); the same authors also found that a synthetic adenosine receptor agonist increased bone nodule formation by wild type osteoblasts. It has been reported that adding the adenosine A₁ or A_{2B} receptor agonists to cultures increased human osteoblast ALP activity, but A_{2A} agonists decreased it and A₃ agonists were without effect (Costa *et al.* 2011b).

Bone nodule formation by osteoblasts from mice lacking ecto-5′nucleotidase (eN) (which may result in reduced endogenous adenosine) also showed reductions, along with decreased ALP expression (Takedachi *et al.* 2012). Conversely, others have reported that adenosine decreases alkaline phosphatase activity and mineralised bone produced by *eN*^{-/-} human fibroblasts *in vitro* (St Hilaire *et al.* 2011).

Osteoclasts and adenosine

The study of Lerner and colleagues (1987) found that adenosine analogues had no effect on the resorption of cultured mouse calvarial bones. Adenosine was subsequently reported to be without effect on the formation or resorptive activity of primary rodent osteoclasts *in vitro* (Morrison *et al.* 1998; Hoebertz *et al.* 2001). However, more recent work has indicated that adenosine, acting through the A_{2A} receptor may stimulate the formation of osteoclasts from human peripheral blood cells (Pellegatti *et al.* 2011). In contrast, Mediero *et al.* (2012) found that A_{2A} receptor agonists inhibited mouse osteoclast formation *in vitro*. Blockade or deletion of the A₁ receptor has additionally been reported to reduce the formation of mouse osteoclasts in culture (Kara *et al.* 2010b); however, the same group also found that stimulation of the A₁ receptor had no effect on mouse osteoclasts (He & Cronstein 2012). In the *eN*^{-/-} mouse no change in the circulating levels of the osteoclast markers TRAP5b and CTX were observed (Takedachi *et al.* 2012), although osteoclastogenesis *in vitro* was reduced (He *et al.* 2013b).

Caffeine

Caffeine is a non-specific adenosine receptor antagonist (Degubareff & Sleator 1965; Fredholm 1982). It has been reported that caffeine increased rodent osteoclast differentiation and formation in both a direct (Choi *et al.* 2013), and osteoblast mediated way *in vitro* (Liu *et al.* 2011) and inhibited the formation of rodent osteoblasts, and osteoblast like cells *in vitro* (Tsuang *et al.* 2006; Su *et al.* 2013). A number of clinical trials have investigated the effect of caffeine on fracture risk. Some studies demonstrated a mild risk of fracture in certain specific bones due to caffeine (Kiel *et al.* 1990; Hernandez-Avila *et al.* 1991; Hansen *et al.*

2000; Hallstrom *et al.* 2006); others found no association (Holbrook *et al.* 1988; Fujiwara *et al.* 1997; Huopio *et al.* 2000). It has been suggested that this risk highlights an important role of adenosine receptors in bone formation (Ham & Evans 2012).

Aims

The aim of the work in this chapter was to determine the direct actions of adenosine on normal osteoblasts and osteoclasts, using well-characterised assays that measure the accepted physiological functions (i.e., bone formation and bone resorption) of these cells. This work also examined the effects of the synthetic universal adenosine receptor agonist 2-chloroadenosine, which is more resistant to hydrolysis, on osteoblasts and osteoclasts *in vitro*.

Results

Rodent osteoblasts and osteoclasts express P1 receptors *in vitro*

On days 14, 16 and 28 of culture mRNA was collected from rat calvaria, rat bone marrow and mouse calvarial osteoblasts respectively using TRIzol. RT-PCR showed that rat calvarial osteoblasts expressed mRNA for the A₁ and A_{2B} adenosine receptors. Rat bone marrow osteoblasts were shown to express mRNAs for the A₁, A_{2A}, A_{2B} and A₃ adenosine receptors. When normalised to β -actin, RT-PCR showed that rat bone marrow osteoblasts expressed less A₁ and A_{2B} receptor mRNA compared to rat calvarial osteoblasts (**Figure 5.1A**). Mouse calvarial OB expressed mRNA *in vitro* for A₁, A_{2A} and A_{2B} adenosine receptors, but not mRNA for the A₃ receptor (**Figure 5.1B**).

On day 10 of culture, mRNA was collected from mouse osteoclasts *in vitro*. RT-PCR showed that mouse osteoclasts express A_{2A}, A_{2B} and A₃ adenosine receptor mRNA *in vitro* (**Figure 5.1C**).

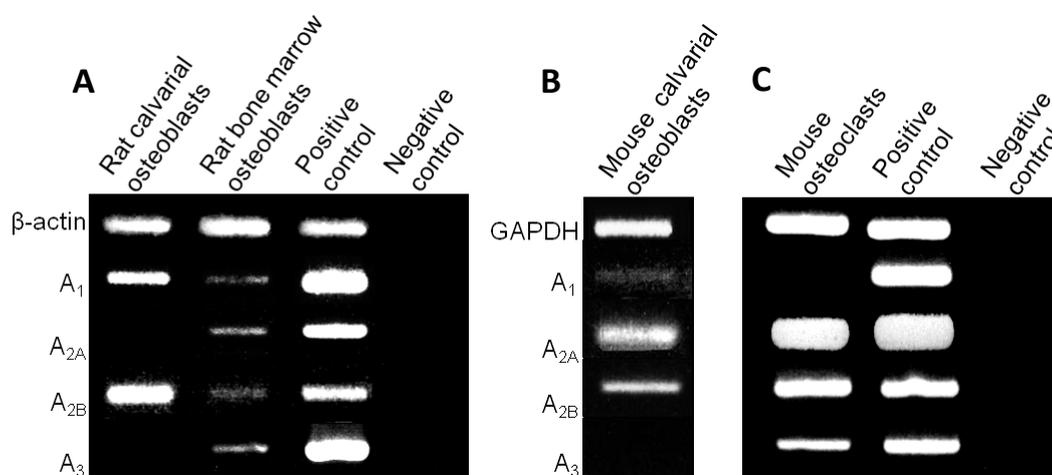


Figure 5.1. Expression of mRNAs for adenosine receptors by rodent bone cells *in vitro*

(A) Rat calvarial osteoblasts expressed mRNAs for the A₁ and A_{2B} adenosine receptors. Rat bone marrow osteoblasts showed weak expression of mRNAs for all of the adenosine receptors. **(B)** Mouse calvarial osteoblasts expressed mRNA for the A₁, A_{2A} and A_{2B} adenosine receptors. **(C)** Mouse osteoclasts strongly expressed mRNA for the A_{2A}, A_{2B} and A₃ adenosine receptors. Positive control: rat / mouse brain.

Adenosine and 2-chloroadenosine have no effect on bone formation by mouse or rat calvarial osteoblasts *in vitro*

Rat calvarial osteoblasts were cultured for up to 14 days in the presence of 1 nM – 100 µM adenosine or 100 pM – 10 µM 2-chloroadenosine *in vitro*. Mouse calvarial osteoblasts were cultured for up to 28 days in the presence of 1 nM – 100 µM adenosine or 1 nM – 1 µM 2-chloroadenosine. No differences were seen in the amount of bone formed between the control and the adenosine or 2-chloroadenosine treated groups (**Figures 5.2 & 5.3**).

2-Chloroadenosine, but not adenosine, increases bone formation by rat bone marrow osteoblasts *in vitro*

Rat bone marrow osteoblasts were cultured with 1 nM – 1 µM 2-chloroadenosine or 1 nM – 100 µM adenosine for up to 16 days. 1 µM 2-chloroadenosine increased the total amount of bone formed by rat bone marrow osteoblasts *in vitro* by approximately 50% ($p < 0.001$) (**Figure 5.2 & 5.3**). Concentrations of 10 µM 2-chloroadenosine and above were toxic; concentrations of less than 1 µM had no effect on the amount of bone formed. Adenosine had no effect on the amount of bone formed by rat bone marrow osteoblasts compared to the control group (**Figure 5.2 & 5.3**).

ATP inhibits bone formation *in vitro* by rodent osteoblasts

Rat osteoblasts were cultured for up to 16 days in the presence of 10 and 100 µM ATP. Mouse calvarial osteoblasts were cultured for up to 28 days in the presence of 10 and 100 µM ATP. ATP was found to inhibit mineralisation of deposited collagen by >50% ($p < 0.001$) in both rat and mouse osteoblasts *in vitro* when at a concentration of 100 µM (**Figure 5.3**).

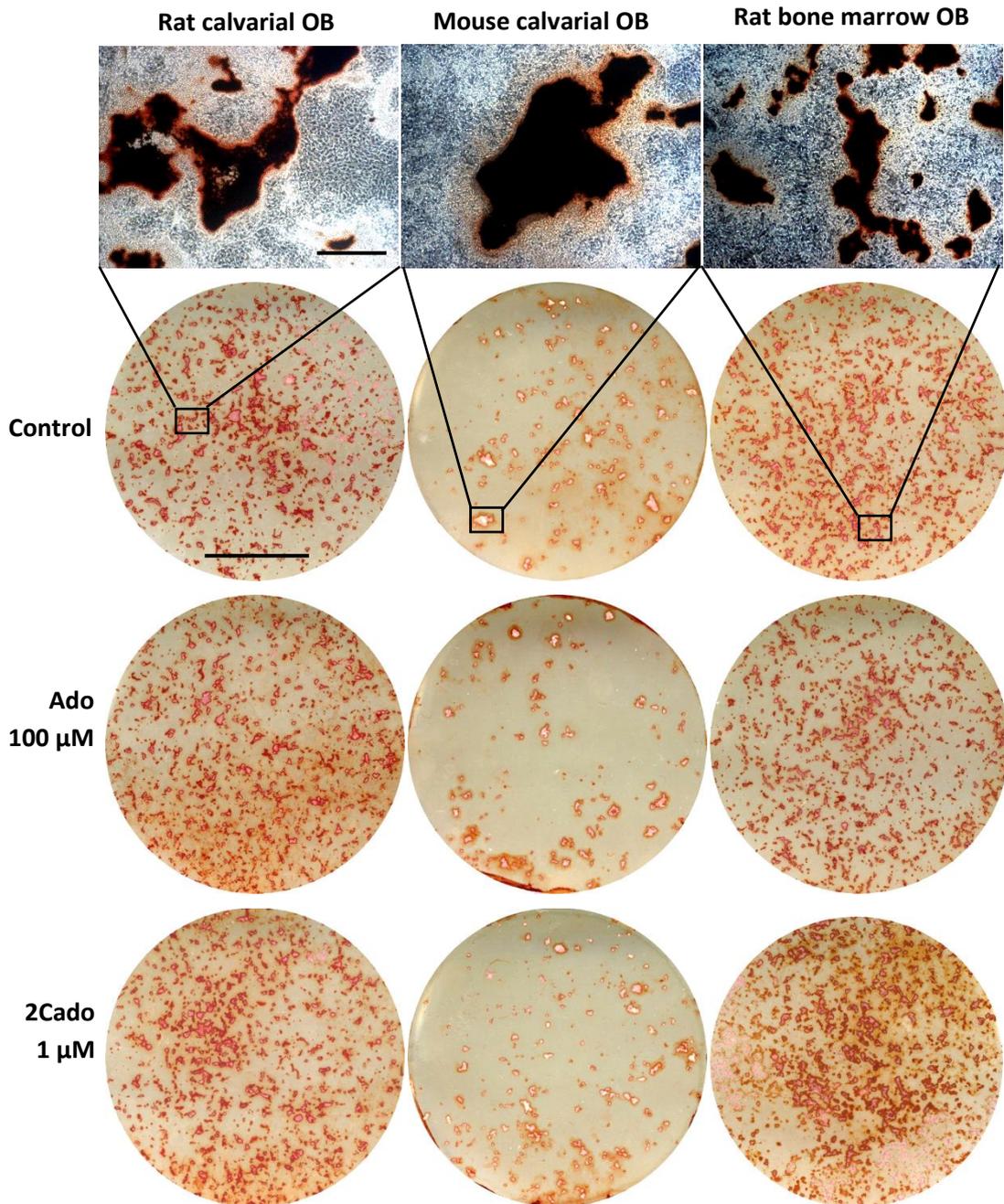


Figure 5.2. Effects of adenosine and 2-chloroadenosine on mineralised bone nodule formation by rodent osteoblasts *in vitro*

Images show alizarin red-stained mineralised bone nodules, viewed by phase contrast microscopy (top) and low power reflected light scans. Adenosine, at a concentrations of 100 μM had no effect on bone formation by rat calvarial, mouse calvarial or rat bone marrow osteoblasts (cultured on plastic for 14, 28 and 16 days, respectively). 2-chloroadenosine at a concentration of 1 μM appeared to cause a modest increase in bone formation by rat bone marrow osteoblasts. Scale bar top = 100 μm , bottom = 1cm; Ado, adenosine; 2Cado, 2-chloroadenosine.

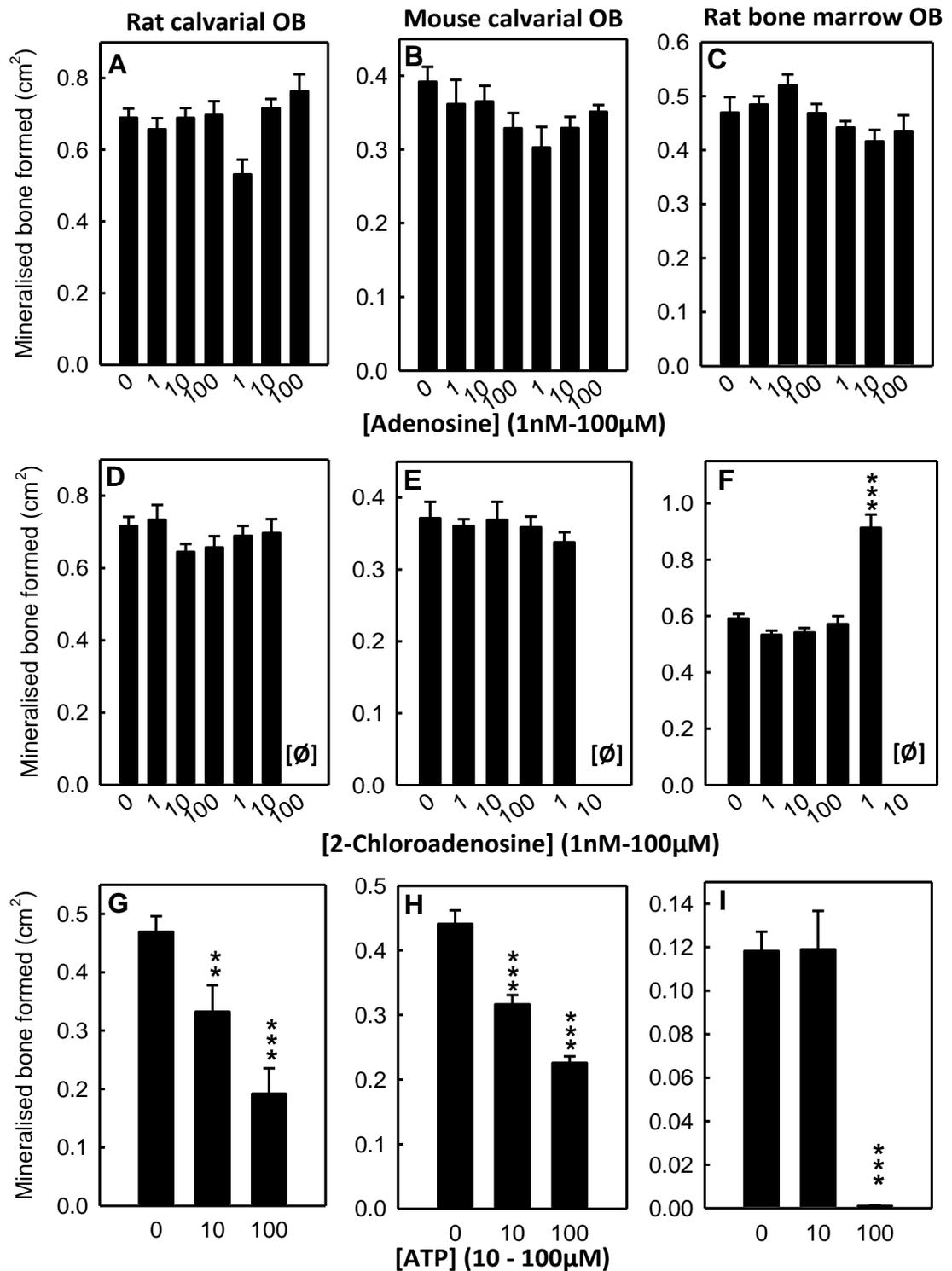


Figure 5.3. Lack of effect of adenosine on the formation of mineralised bone nodules by cultured rodent osteoblasts; modest stimulatory action of 2-chloroadenosine on rat bone marrow osteoblasts

Adenosine and 2-chloroadenosine had no effect on rat calvarial (A, D) or mouse calvarial (B, E) osteoblasts. 1 µM 2-chloroadenosine increased bone nodule formation by rat bone marrow osteoblasts ($p < 0.001$) (F); note toxicity [∅] of 2-chloroadenosine at 10 µM (E, F) and 100 µM (D). ATP inhibited bone formation by rat calvarial (G), mouse calvarial (H) and rat bone marrow (I) osteoblasts (**, $p < 0.01$; ***, $p < 0.001$). Data are means \pm SEM for 6 replicate determinations.

Adenosine and 2-chloroadenosine do not affect the number of osteoblasts formed from precursors *in vitro*

Rat calvarial osteoblast precursors were seeded into 24 well trays, rat bone marrow osteoblast precursor cells were seeded into 12 well trays and mouse calvarial osteoblast precursors were seeded into 6 well trays. Osteoblasts were cultured with 1 – 100 μM adenosine or 100 nM – 10 μM 2-chloroadenosine for 14, 17 or 28 days respectively. Using an LDH assay as described, it was found that adenosine and 2-chloroadenosine had no effect on the number of mouse or rat calvarial osteoblasts formed from precursors *in vitro* (**Figure 5.4**).

2-chloroadenosine increases the ALP activity of *in vitro* rat bone marrow osteoblasts, but not *in vitro* calvarial osteoblasts

Rat bone marrow osteoblast precursor cells were seeded into 12 well trays with 10 μM adenosine or 1 μM 2-chloroadenosine. 1 μM of 2-chloroadenosine increased the ALP activity of *in vitro* rat bone marrow osteoblasts by approximately 48% ($p < 0.01$) from day 10 of culture and was seen to have an effect until day 16, when the experiment was terminated (**Figure 5.5D**). Adenosine had no effect on rat bone marrow osteoblasts *in vitro* (**Figure 5.5D**).

Rat calvarial osteoblast precursors were seeded into 24 well trays with 1 μM - 100 μM adenosine or 10 nM - 1 μM 2-chloroadenosine. Mouse calvarial osteoblast precursors were seeded into 6 well trays, in the presence of 10 μM adenosine or 1 μM 2-chloroadenosine. Adenosine and 2-chloroadenosine had no effect on the ALP activity of rat or mouse calvarial osteoblasts *in vitro* (**Figure 5.5**).

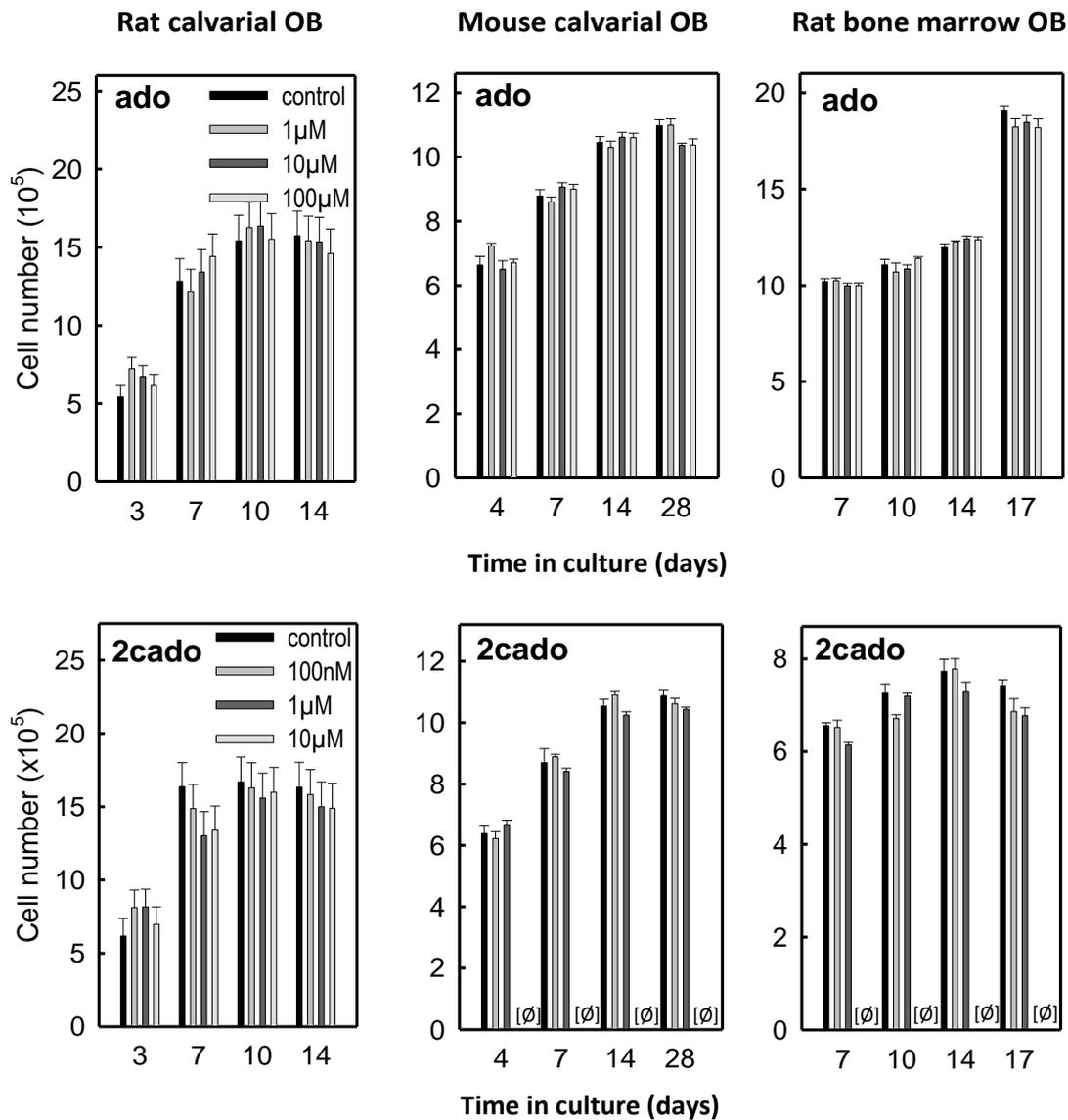


Figure 5.4. The number of rodent osteoblasts formed from precursors *in vitro* is not affected by adenosine or 2-chloroadenosine

Adenosine (ado) and 2-chloroadenosine (2cado) had no effect on numbers of rodent calvarial osteoblasts or rat marrow osteoblasts in culture. Cell numbers were estimated using a LDH assay. ∅ symbol indicates cell toxicity of 10 μM 2cado. Data are means ± SEM for 6 replicate determinations.

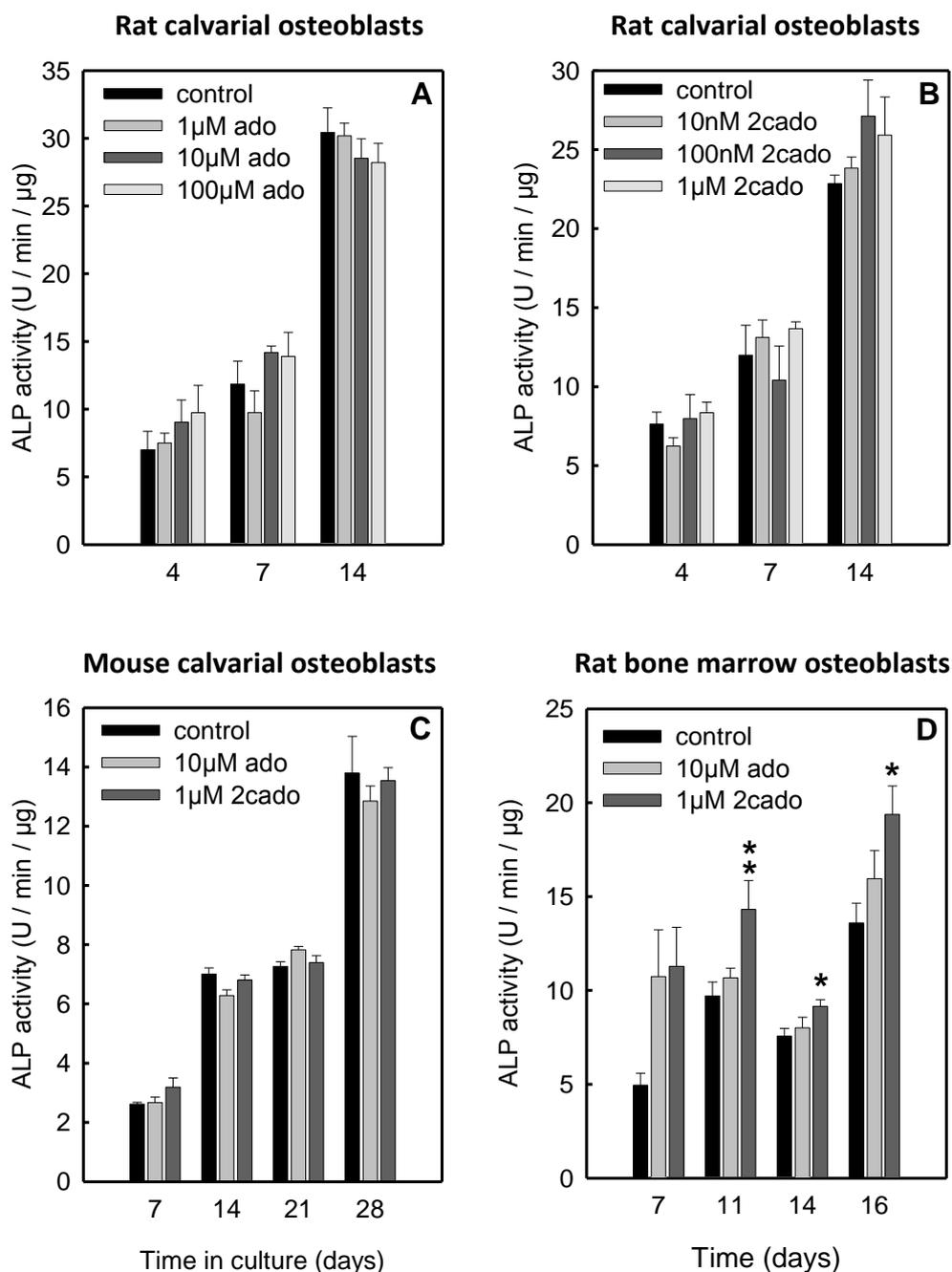


Figure 5.5. Effects of adenosine and 2-chloroadenosine on alkaline phosphatase (ALP) activity of rodent osteoblasts

Adenosine had no effect on the ALP activity of rodent osteoblasts (A, C, D). 2-chloroadenosine also was without effect on rat and mouse calvarial osteoblasts (B, C) but caused mild stimulation of rat bone marrow osteoblast ALP activity (D). Data are means \pm SEM for 6 replicate determinations; *, $p < 0.05$; **, $p < 0.01$; Ado, adenosine; 2Cado, 2-chloroadenosine.

Adenosine and 2-chloroadenosine do not affect mouse osteoclast formation or resorptive activity *in vitro*.

Mouse mononuclear cells from the bone marrow of 8 week old mice were cultured in osteoclastogenic media on ivory discs for 10 days. Adenosine (10 nM – 100 μ M), 2-chloroadenosine (10 nM- 1 μ M) or ATP (1 μ M – 100 μ M) was added to the cell culture media from day 3 onwards. Cells were acidified to pH 6.90 on day 8 of the culture to activate osteoclastic resorption. Neither adenosine nor 2-chloroadenosine affected the number of multinucleated osteoclasts formed from precursors by day 10 of culture or the amount of resorption per osteoclast (**Figures 5.6 & 5.7**). ATP was seen to increase the number of osteoclasts and resorption (**Figures 5.6D & 5.7C**).

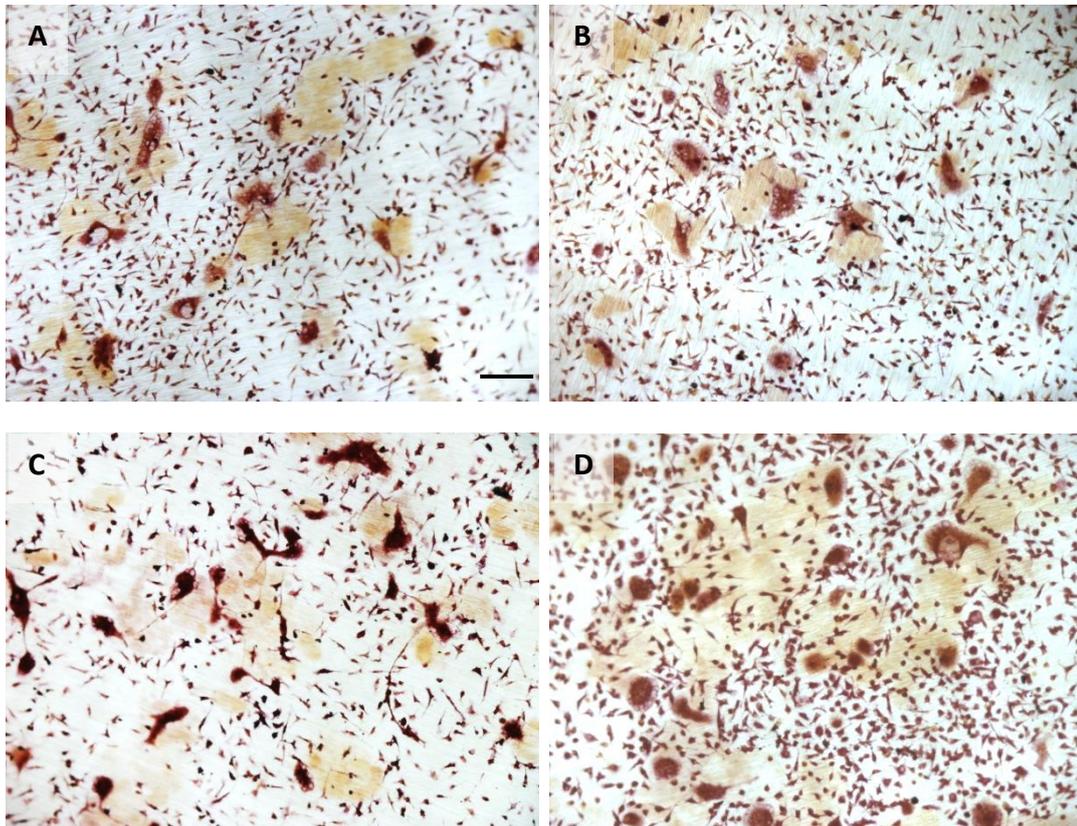


Figure 5.6. Effect of P1 and P2 receptor agonists on osteoclasts

Osteoclasts were generated in 10 day cultures of mouse marrow cells on ivory discs. There was no difference in osteoclast number or resorptive activity between **(A)** control **(B)** adenosine, **(C)** 2-chloroadenosine or **(D)** ATP. Cells were acidified to pH 6.90 on day 8 of culture to activate resorption. Representative transmitted light images of cultures, showing TRAP-positive multinucleated osteoclasts (large red cells) and resorption pits (tan areas); scale bar, 50 μ m.

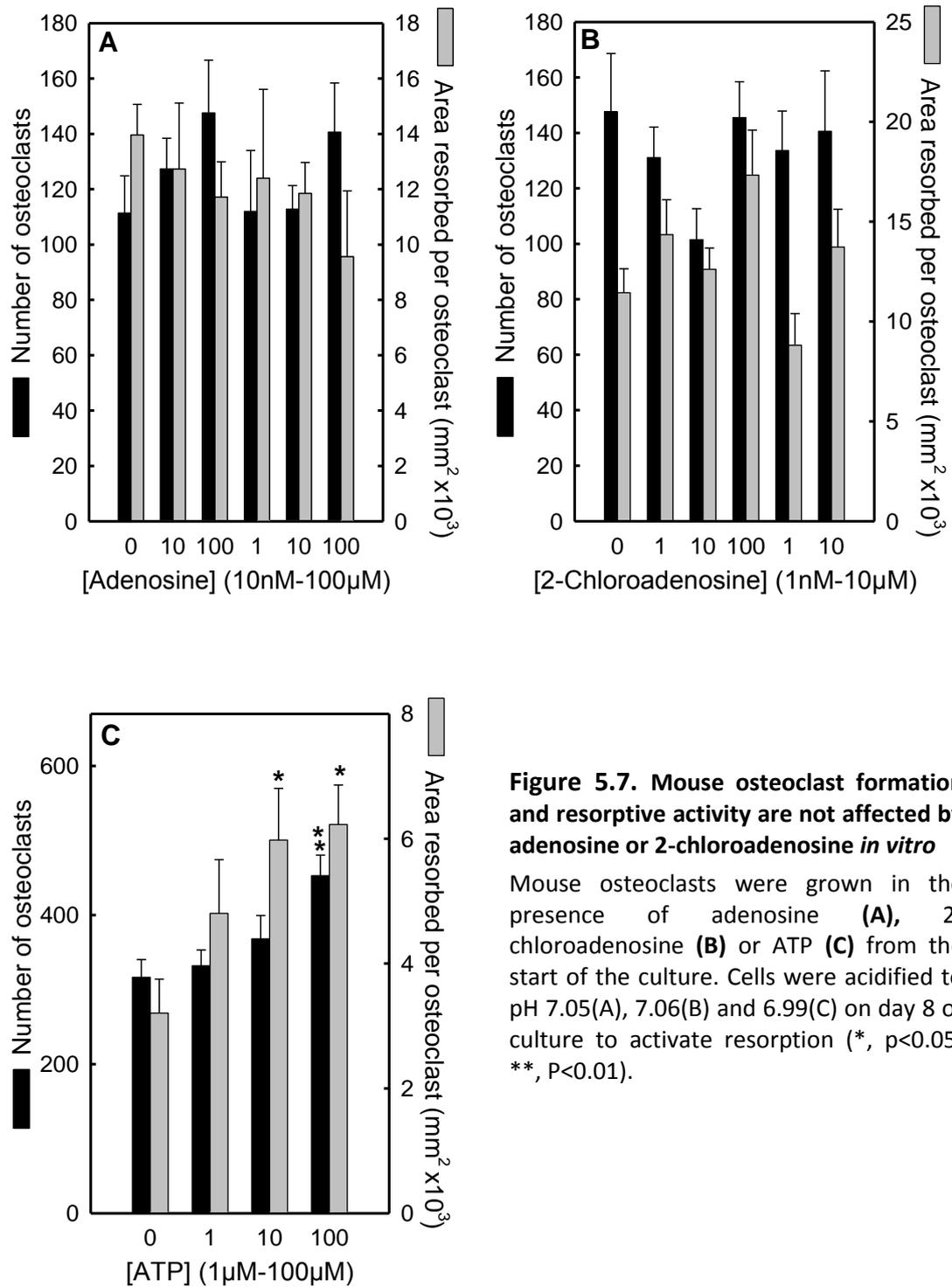


Figure 5.7. Mouse osteoclast formation and resorptive activity are not affected by adenosine or 2-chloroadenosine *in vitro*

Mouse osteoclasts were grown in the presence of adenosine (A), 2-chloroadenosine (B) or ATP (C) from the start of the culture. Cells were acidified to pH 7.05(A), 7.06(B) and 6.99(C) on day 8 of culture to activate resorption (*, p<0.05; **, P<0.01).

Discussion

The results presented in this chapter show that adenosine had no effect on rat and mouse osteoblasts or mouse osteoclasts *in vitro*. However, the synthetic universal adenosine receptor agonist, 2-chloroadenosine, modestly increased ALP activity and the amount of bone formed by rat bone marrow osteoblasts *in vitro*, but did not affect rat and mouse calvarial osteoblasts or mouse osteoclasts. In contrast, the established osteogenic inhibitory effects and osteoclastic stimulatory effects of ATP (Orriss *et al.* 2010) were observed.

It is possible that the stimulatory effects of 2-chloroadenosine on rat bone marrow osteoblasts may be related to the greater potency of this synthetic analogue compared to adenosine (Daly *et al.* 1993; Van Galen *et al.* 1994; Yan *et al.* 2003); moreover, it is not as quickly hydrolysed (Abdel-Hamid *et al.* 2000). One explanation why 2-chloroadenosine had no effect on rat and mouse calvarial osteoblasts may be due to the observed differences in adenosine receptor mRNA expression (**Figure 5.1**). Rat bone marrow osteoblasts expressed mRNA for all four P1 receptors; rat calvarial osteoblasts lacked A_{2A} and A_3 mRNA expression, but expressed A_1 and A_{2B} at higher concentrations than rat bone marrow osteoblasts; mouse calvarial osteoblasts expressed the A_1 , A_{2A} and A_{2B} receptors, but not the A_3 . The A_{2A} and A_{2B} adenosine receptors are predominantly linked to Gs and stimulate cAMP signalling; A_1 and A_3 are predominantly Gi associated and act to inhibit cAMP (Freissmuth *et al.* 1991; Pierce *et al.* 1992; Palmer *et al.* 1995; Olah 1997). There is evidence to suggest that adenosine receptors can form homomers between two A_1 receptors (Ciruela *et al.* 1995), or between two A_{2A} receptors (Canals *et al.* 2004). Adenosine receptor A_1 - A_{2A} heteromers have been reported (Ciruela *et al.* 2006), along with A_1 -P2Y₁ and A_1 -P2Y₂ adenosine-receptor-ATP-receptor G-protein heteromers (Yoshioka *et al.* 2001; Suzuki *et al.* 2006). This dimerisation of receptors may lead to alterations in the response of osteoblasts to P1 receptor agonists and could be a reason for the differences seen between cell types.

It is possible that the differences in responsiveness of osteoblasts to 2-chloroadenosine between rat calvarial and bone marrow cells could be related to

the age of the animals. Rat bone marrow osteoblasts were obtained from 6 week old animals, whereas the rodent calvarial osteoblasts were collected from 2 day old animals. It has been reported that MSCs from older mice have a much higher expression of ecto-5'-nucleotidase, an enzyme responsible for converting AMP to adenosine, than younger mice (Katsara *et al.* 2011) and reduced viability and differentiation potential (Kretlow *et al.* 2008; Choudhery *et al.* 2014).

In the results reported here, no expression of mRNA encoding the A₁ receptor by mouse osteoclasts was detected. Pellagatti *et al.* (2011) reported very weak mRNA expression for the A₁ receptor by human osteoclasts *in vitro*, but suggested that it did not play a significant role in regulating osteoclast formation. However, other workers have reported the A₁ receptor to be vital (Merrill *et al.* 1997; Kara *et al.* 2010b; He & Cronstein 2012). My own results suggest that the adenosine A₁ receptor is unlikely to be of importance in regulating osteoclast function.

The expression of ecto-nucleotidases by osteoblasts and osteoclasts may also be an additional factor in determining the actions of adenosine on these cells. These enzymes could alter the rates of ATP hydrolysis and adenosine formation in the experiments reported here (Zimmermann *et al.* 2012). In chapter 4, some factors that affect the expression of ecto-nucleotidases by osteoclasts were investigated (**Figures 4.2 - 4.5**). The expression of adenosine deaminase, which converts adenosine to inosine, may play a key role in these experiments; a previously unknown factor regulating its expression is reported in chapter 6 (**Figure 6.5**). Future work should examine the potential role of ecto-nucleotidases on adenosine signalling. The possibility that these cultures contained saturating concentrations of adenosine cannot be ruled out.

Knockout mouse models for each of the adenosine receptors exist. Knockout of the adenosine A₁ receptor reportedly increased cortical and trabecular bone volume of in the femurs of 6 month old mice (Kara *et al.* 2010b). Four month old mice with the A_{2A} receptor knocked-out were also reported to have decreased cortical and trabecular bone in the femur (Mediero *et al.* 2012). Based on three samples, knockout of the A_{2B} receptor resulted in a decrease in the cortical bone

volume, with no change in the trabecular bone volume of the femurs of mice, but only after 15 weeks (Carroll *et al.* 2012). The effects of adenosine A₃ receptor knockout on the bones of mice have not been specifically investigated; however, no overt changes have been noted (Salvatore *et al.* 2000). Mice with the adenosine transport protein ENT1 knocked out reportedly had reduced trabecular bone in the femur and increased trabecular bone in the cervical and upper thoracic vertebrae at 7 months (Hinton *et al.* 2014). Mouse models have shown that adenosine acting via the A_{2A} and A_{2B} receptors induced coronary vasodilation (Morrison *et al.* 2002; Frobert *et al.* 2006). Adenosine has also been reported to stimulate human and rodent macrophage production of VEGF *in vitro*, and could thereby promote angiogenesis (Ramanathan *et al.* 2007; Ernens *et al.* 2010; Gessi *et al.* 2010). Therefore, the global knockout of adenosine receptors in mouse models *in vivo* could affect bone indirectly by inducing a hypoxic / acidotic state which can result in increased osteoclast formation and activity, and decreased osteoblast activity (Arnett *et al.* 2003; Brandao-Burch *et al.* 2005; Arnett 2010; Utting *et al.* 2010). It is suggested that further histomorphometric examination of mice with targeted conditional P1 receptor knockout in osteoblasts and osteoclasts should be performed.

In conclusion, supraphysiological concentrations of adenosine did not have an effect on rodent osteoblasts or mouse osteoclasts *in vitro*. 2-Chloroadenosine did not have any effect on mouse osteoclasts or rodent osteoblasts obtained from the calvaria, but did increase ALP expression and bone formation by rat bone marrow osteoblasts *in vitro*, but only when added to cell cultures in extremely high concentrations. Using state of the art assays for measuring the accepted cell functions, these data suggest that adenosine has very little effect on osteoblasts and osteoclasts.

Chapter 6

The actions of sclerostin on osteoblasts and osteoclasts *in vitro*

Introduction

The discovery of sclerostin

Sclerosteosis is a rare autosomal recessive condition that mainly affects Afrikaners. Syndactyly, the fusion of the second and third fingers, is a common symptom of the condition, and one of the few that occurs prenatally (Beighton 1988). All of the symptoms of sclerosteosis that develop throughout the life of affected humans are due to the over production of bone (Hamersma *et al.* 2003). Radiographs show that sufferers have abnormally large and dense bones (Beighton *et al.* 1976). Bone constricting the cranial nerves leads to facial palsy and deafness (Robinson *et al.* 2013), and sufferers usually die in their mid-30's due to complications related to high intracranial pressure caused by over-growth of the calvaria (Hamersma *et al.* 2003; Robinson *et al.* 2013). Van Buchem disease is also a condition characterised by an over-production of bone, but its symptoms are less severe than those of sclerosteosis. Most cases of Van Buchem disease are found localised to a small Dutch fishing village. It was later shown that sclerosteosis was due to a defect in the *Sost* gene (Brunkow *et al.* 2001) and Van Buchem disease was due to a deletion in one of the promoter elements that drive expression of the *Sost* gene (Van Hul *et al.* 1998; Balemans *et al.* 1999; Staehling-Hampton *et al.* 2002).

Sclerostin and WNT signalling

Sclerostin, the product of the *Sost* gene, inhibits bone formation. It is produced primarily by osteocytes (Van Bezooijen *et al.* 2004), but may also be produced by hypertrophic chondrocytes in the growth plate and cementocytes in teeth (Van Bezooijen *et al.* 2009; Chan *et al.* 2011). Sclerostin is a member of the Dan family of

glycoproteins, many members of which inhibit BMP signalling (Winkler *et al.* 2003). However, the main mechanism of action for sclerostin is by binding to the LPR5/6 cell surface receptors and blocking WNT signalling (Semenov *et al.* 2005; Li *et al.* 2005b). WNT signalling is of vital importance for bone development and maintenance (see introduction).

Knock out models designed to mimic sclerosteosis and Van Buchem disease have been developed; histological analysis of their bones indicated that the high bone mass was due to increased osteoblast activity (Li *et al.* 2008). Transgenic mice over-expressing human sclerostin have been produced. These mice were reported to have an osteopenic phenotype; histological analysis revealed these mice had reduced cortical and trabecular bone volume (Winkler *et al.* 2003). Transgenic over expression of sclerostin in human osteoblast-like cells *in vitro* decreased the expression of ALP and reduced mineralised bone nodule formation (Winkler *et al.* 2003).

Loading of bones and sclerostin

Using immunohistochemistry, it was shown that mechanically loading the limbs of mice inhibits sclerostin expression by osteocytes *in vivo* and resulted in increased bone formation. Mechanical unloading of the limbs resulted in a slight increase in sclerostin expression and the loss of bone volume (Robling *et al.* 2008). *Sost*^{-/-} mice that were suspended by their tails so that their hind limbs could not touch the floor did not display the trabecular bone loss in the femora typically seen with unloading experiments (Lin *et al.* 2009). Mice under general anaesthesia that were forced to exercise by electrical muscle stimulation had a greater tibiae cortical bone volume and reduced sclerostin expression (Macias *et al.* 2012). Along with other factors such as nitric oxide (Pitsillides *et al.* 1995), prostacyclin (Rawlinson *et al.* 1993) and prostaglandin E₂ (Thorsen *et al.* 1996), sclerostin may be important in mediating the response of bone to mechanical stress.

Sclerostin is produced by mature osteocytes

In situ hybridisation has been used to demonstrate that rat osteocytes only start secreting sclerostin when they are mature and buried within mineralised matrix (Irie *et al.* 2008). Using human iliac bone samples and anti-sclerostin antibodies, it has been reported that the deeper an osteocyte is buried within the bone, the greater its probability of actively secreting sclerostin. It was hypothesised that this is a mechanism by which bone that is well mineralised prevents further osteoblast activity (Poole *et al.* 2005).

Anti-sclerostin antibodies

The apparent role that sclerostin has as a regulator of bone mass made it a clear therapeutic target. A number of anti-sclerostin antibodies have been developed: AMG785 (Amgen/UCB), AMG167 (Amgen/UCB), BPS804 (Novartis) and LY2541546 (also known as blosozumab, Eli Lilly) (Paszty *et al.* 2010; Robinson *et al.* 2013). Aged, ovariectomised rats were treated with the anti-sclerostin antibody in the first *in vivo* experiments. Ovariectomy of rodents mimics postmenopausal osteoporosis and is a standard *in vivo* model that results in bone loss (Iwaniec *et al.* 2006). Administration of the anti-sclerostin antibody resulted in increased bone mass and bone strength (Li *et al.* 2009). Histological analysis of the bones from these rats revealed evidence of increased osteoblast activity, and decreased osteoclast activity (Li *et al.* 2009); this is similar in phenotype to *Sost*^{-/-} mice, they also displayed histological evidence of increased osteoblast activity and decreased osteoclast activity (Li *et al.* 2008). Unlike other antiresorptive agents such as bisphosphonates, which decrease osteoclast and osteoblast activity, anti-sclerostin antibodies increase the “anabolic window” by decreasing osteoclast activity and increasing osteoblast activity (Li *et al.* 2009; McClung *et al.* 2014).

In the first clinical trial, a single dose of the anti-sclerostin antibody AMG785/CDP785, now called romosozumab, led to an increase in the bone formation markers P1NP, bone specific ALP, and osteocalcin; and a decrease in the marker of bone breakdown, CTx (Padhi *et al.* 2011). A larger, follow-on study confirmed these results (McClung *et al.* 2014). Based on the concentrations of

P1NP and CTx in the blood, this year-long clinical trial found that the initial response to the anti-sclerostin antibody was mediated predominantly by up-regulation of osteoblast function, after 6 months any further improvements in bone quality were mediated mainly by down-regulation of osteoclasts (McClung *et al.* 2014). It is not clear if the changes observed in osteoclast activity in this *in vivo* study were due to a direct or indirect action of sclerostin.

The direct effects of sclerostin on bone cells

There is little doubt about the effects that sclerostin has on bone mass in both rodents and humans; however its effects at the cellular level are less well defined. *In vitro* experiments have shown that sclerostin prevents the incorporation of calcium into the matrix produced by human osteoblasts and increases the expression of the mineralisation inhibitors MEPE and osteopontin (Atkins *et al.* 2011). Sclerostin has also been shown to decrease the expression of osteocalcin and *Runx2*, a key osteogenesis transcription factor, in human osteoblast-like cell lines (Vincent *et al.* 2009) and decrease ALP expression in a mouse osteoblast-like cell line (Winkler *et al.* 2003).

Further *in vitro* experiments using primary human osteoblasts have shown that sclerostin increases the expression of RANKL, and has no effect on the expression of OPG (Wijenayaka *et al.* 2011). Similar effects were also seen when sclerostin was added to cultures of mouse osteocyte-like MLO-Y4 cells *in vitro* (Wijenayaka *et al.* 2011). This alteration in the RANKL / OPG ratio *in vivo* would lead to an increase in the formation of osteoclasts.

Sclerostin and PTH

Intermittent dosing of mice with PTH, either directly onto the calvaria or infused into the blood, led to a decrease in *Sost* expression by osteocytes in bone (Bellido *et al.* 2005; Keller & Kneissel 2005). Intermittent PTH administration has potent anabolic effects on bone *in vivo*. Administration of PTH caused a significant increase in mouse vertebrae bone mineral density and femoral cortical and trabecular bone volume; however, sclerostin over-expressing mice had a blunted

response when PTH was administered to them (Kramer *et al.* 2010). Transgenic mice engineered to express a constitutionally active form of the PTH receptor on their osteocytes have reduced expression of *Sost*, and increased bone mass (O'Brien *et al.* 2008).

PTH reportedly reduces the expression of *Sost* by the MLO-A5 osteocyte-like cell-line (Bellido *et al.* 2005). In osteoblast-like cells PTH seemingly acts to suppress MEF2, and in doing so it down regulates *Sost* expression (Leupin *et al.* 2007). PTH may induce the PTH receptor, PTH1R, to interact with the LRP6 WNT receptor; this complex then activates canonical WNT signalling, leading to an increase in bone formation, irrespective of sclerostin (Wan *et al.* 2008). Further reports show PTH still retains its normal anabolic actions in LRP5 knockout mice (Sawakami *et al.* 2006; Iwaniec *et al.* 2007).

Tcf/lef transcription factor

The Tcf/Lef transcription factors play an important role in the WNT / β -catenin signalling pathway. Tcf/Lef is functionally inactive unless bound to β -catenin (reviewed in Brantjes *et al.* 2002). When β -catenin is bound to Tcf/Lef they form a bipartite transcription factor which activates target genes.

The enzymes ecto 5'-nucleotidase (eN) and adenosine deaminase (ADA) have been previously discussed. The expression of the genes for both eN and ADA has been shown to be under the control of the regulatory transcription factor Tcf/Lef in mammalian cell lines (Aronow *et al.* 1992; Spychala & Kitajewski 2004). Using mammalian tumour cell lines, it has been shown that WNT signalling can up-regulate eN expression and down regulate ADA expression. These results indicate that WNT signalling can play a role in the hydrolysis of nucleotides and the formation and breakdown of adenosine.

Aims

The aim of the experiments in this chapter was to investigate for the first time the direct effects of sclerostin and an anti-sclerostin antibody on osteoblast function and osteoclast formation and resorption *in vitro* using assays of true bone formation and resorption[§].

§ NOTE: The bone formation assays predominantly used precursor cells from neonatal rat calvariae; the osteoclast resorption assay used precursor cells from juvenile mouse bone marrow. These are the most efficient and best validated cell culture systems presently available for bone formation and resorption studies *in vitro*.

Results

Sclerostin and an anti-sclerostin antibody have no effect on the formation and resorptive activity of mouse osteoclasts *in vitro*

As described, mouse mononuclear cells from the bone marrow were cultured in osteoclastogenic media on ivory discs for 9 days. Either sclerostin (10 pg/ml – 500 ng/ml) or an anti-sclerostin antibody (10 pg/ml – 5000 ng/ml) was added to the cell culture media at each media change, from day 3 onwards. Cells were acidified to pH 6.90 on day 7 of the culture to activate osteoclastic resorption. No difference was seen in the number of osteoclasts formed or the amount of mineralised tissue resorbed per osteoclast compared to controls (**Figure 6.1**).

Knockout of *Sost* has no effect on mouse osteoclast formation or resorptive activity *in vitro*

Osteoclasts were formed *in vitro* from precursors obtained from wild type and *Sost*^{-/-} mouse bone marrow. Cells were cultured on elephant ivory for 9 days; on day 7 cells were acidified to pH 6.90 to activate resorption. No difference was seen in the number of osteoclasts formed from precursors, or the amount of mineral resorbed per osteoclast, between wild type and *Sost*^{-/-} cells (**Figure 6.2**).

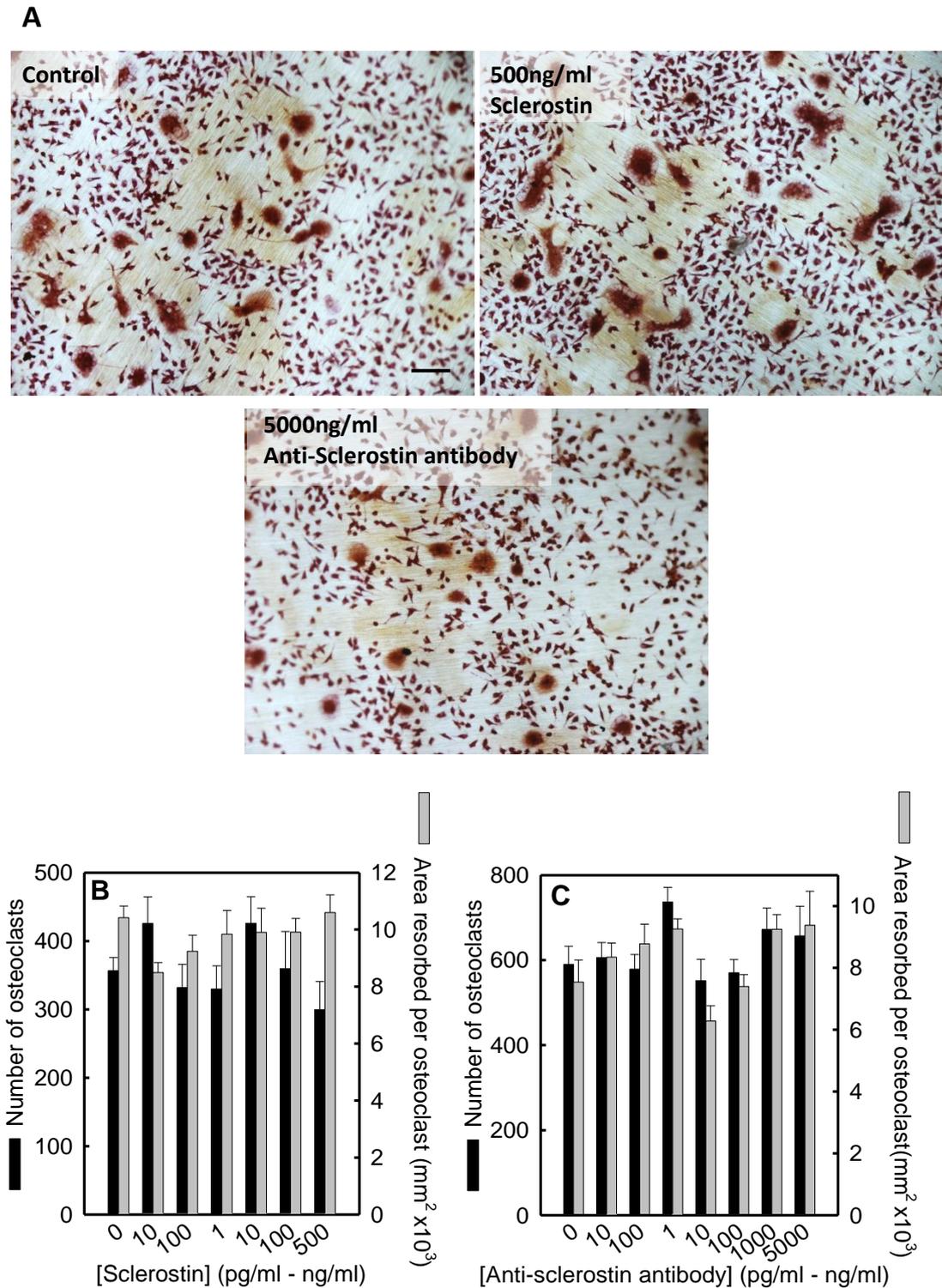


Figure 6.1. Sclerostin and an anti-sclerostin antibody do not affect mouse osteoclast formation or resorption *in vitro*

(A) Transmitted light images of TRAP-stained osteoclasts (red) and resorption pits (tan). (Scale bar = 50 μ m). Osteoclasts were cultured in the presence of (B) sclerostin or (C) an anti-sclerostin antibody. On day 7 of culture the cells were acidified to pH 6.90; n = 8.

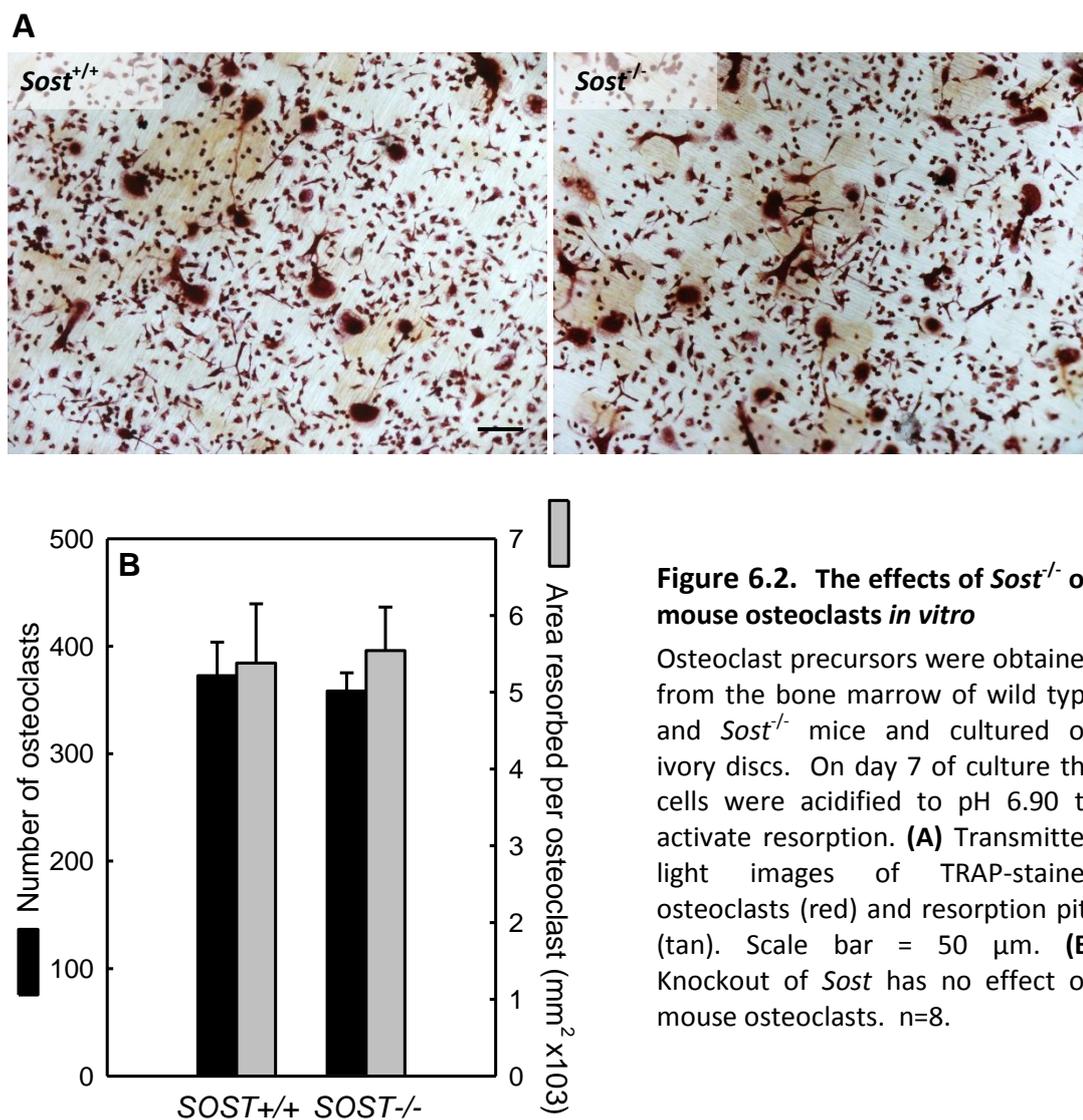


Figure 6.2. The effects of *Sost*^{-/-} on mouse osteoclasts *in vitro*

Osteoclast precursors were obtained from the bone marrow of wild type and *Sost*^{-/-} mice and cultured on ivory discs. On day 7 of culture the cells were acidified to pH 6.90 to activate resorption. **(A)** Transmitted light images of TRAP-stained osteoclasts (red) and resorption pits (tan). Scale bar = 50 μ m. **(B)** Knockout of *Sost* has no effect on mouse osteoclasts. n=8.

Sclerostin reduces bone formation by rat osteoblasts *in vitro*

Bone forming osteoblasts were cultured from rat calvarial precursor cells for 14 days with sclerostin (10 – 500 ng/ml). Sclerostin at concentrations greater than 100 ng/ml inhibited the amount of mineralised bone formed by up to 100% compared to controls in a dose dependent manner ($p < 0.001$) (Figures 6.3, 6.4A).

Anti-sclerostin antibody has no effect on mineral formation by rat osteoblasts *in vitro*

Rat calvarial osteoblasts were cultured for 14 days with anti-sclerostin antibody (10 – 500 ng/ml). Anti-sclerostin antibody had no effect on the amount of bone formed compared to controls (Figures 6.3, 6.4B).

An anti-sclerostin antibody inhibited the effects of sclerostin on rat osteoblasts *in vitro*

Rat calvarial osteoblasts were grown in the presence of either 100 ng/ml sclerostin, 100 ng/ml sclerostin + 500 ng/ml anti-sclerostin antibody, or neither (control) for 14 days. Sclerostin at a concentration of 100 ng/ml reduced the amount of mineralised bone nodules formed by rodent osteoblasts *in vitro* ($p < 0.01$); 500 ng/ml of the anti-sclerostin antibody inhibited the effects of 100 ng/ml of sclerostin and restored the amount of mineralised bone formed (**Figures 6.3, 6.4C**).

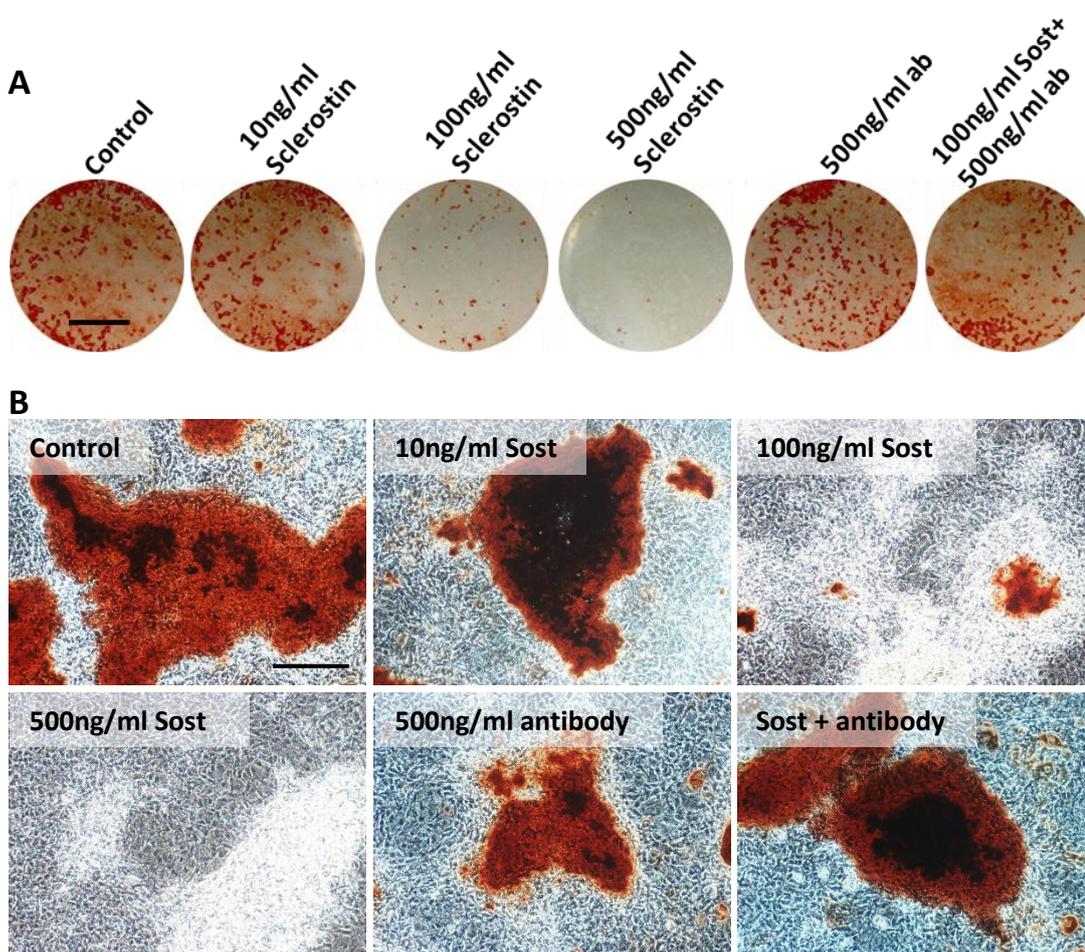


Figure 6.3. Images of the bone formed by rat osteoblasts cultured in the presence of sclerostin, anti-sclerostin antibody, or both

Rat osteoblasts were cultured in 24 well trays. On day 14 cultures were terminated and the bone nodules were stained with alizarin red. **(A)** Scanned images of the wells of the cell culture plates. **(B)** Transmitted light images of bone nodules. Sclerostin inhibits bone formation; anti-sclerostin antibody alone has no effect on the amount of bone formed per well, the anti-sclerostin antibody inhibits the actions of sclerostin. (Scale bar = 0.5 cm (A), 100 μ m (B).) (Sost = sclerostin, ab = antibody.)

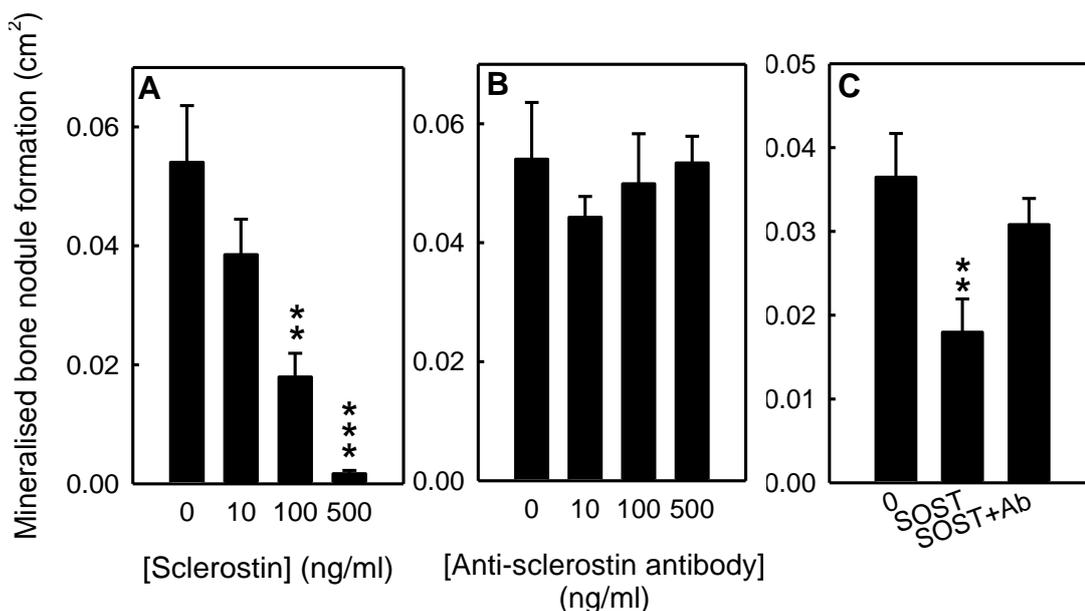


Figure 6.4. Sclerostin inhibits mineralised bone formation by rat osteoblasts *in vitro*, anti-sclerostin antibody prevents this effect

On day 14 the cultures were terminated and the total area of unstained mineralised bone formed was quantified. **(A)** Sclerostin added from the start of the culture reduced the amount of mineralised bone formed. **(B)** An anti-sclerostin antibody had no direct effect on osteoblasts. **(C)** 500 ng/ml anti-sclerostin antibody blocked the effect of 100 ng/ml sclerostin on osteoblasts. (**, $p < 0.01$; ***, $p < 0.001$, $n = 6$).

Sclerostin affected the expression of ecto-nucleotidase related mRNAs by rat osteoblasts *in vitro*

Rat osteoblasts were grown *in vitro* with or without 500 ng/ml sclerostin. On day 14 the cultures were terminated and mRNA was collected. RT-PCR showed that sclerostin up-regulated *Enpp1*, *NTPdase1*, *ADA*, *eN* and *ANK* gene expression but had no effect on the expression of *ALP* (**Figure 6.5**).

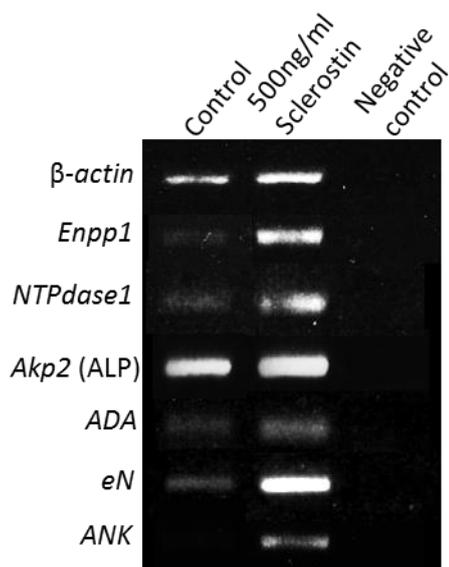


Figure 6.5. Sclerostin affects ecto-nucleotidase and ecto-nucleotidase related mRNAs expression by rat osteoblasts *in vitro*

Rat calvarial osteoblasts, grown from precursors, were cultured for 14 days with or without 500 ng/ml sclerostin. RT-PCR showed that 500 ng/ml sclerostin increased the expression of mRNAs for *Enpp1*, *NTPdase1*, *ADA*, *eN* and *ANK* by rat osteoblasts.

Sclerostin increased the total NPP activity of rat osteoblasts *in vitro*

Rat calvarial osteoblasts were cultured with sclerostin (500 ng/ml) or an anti-sclerostin antibody (1 μ g/ml). On day 14 the cultures were terminated and the total NPP activity of the osteoblasts was measured. Sclerostin increased the NPP activity of the osteoblasts by approximately 150% ($p < 0.001$); the anti-sclerostin antibody had no direct effect on osteoblast NPP activity (**Figure 6.6A**).

Sclerostin has no effect on the ALP activity of rat osteoblasts *in vitro*

Rat calvarial osteoblasts were grown in culture for 14 days with sclerostin (500 ng/ml) or an anti-sclerostin antibody (1 μ g/ml). Neither sclerostin, nor the anti-sclerostin antibody, had an effect on the *in vitro* ALP activity of rat osteoblasts (**Figure 6.6B**).

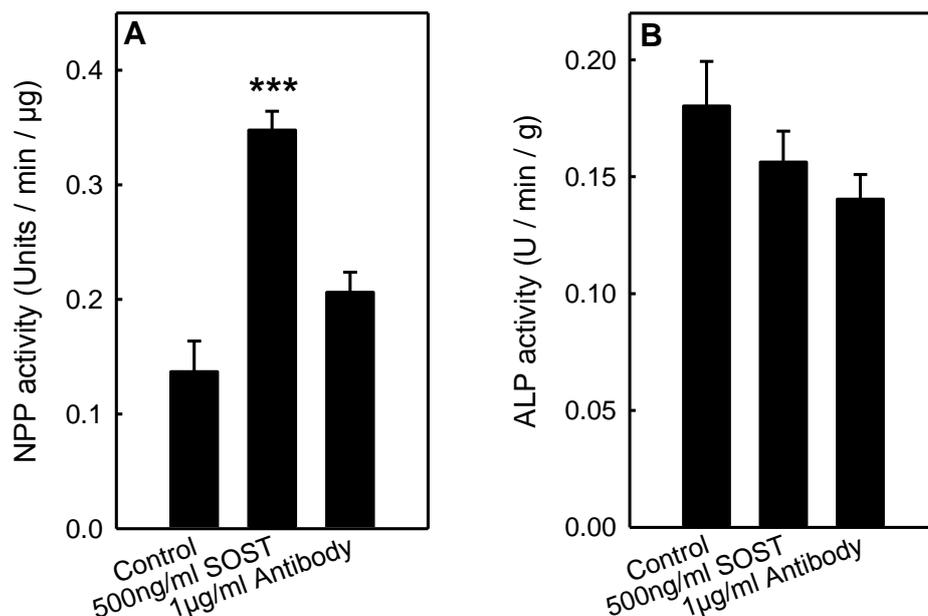


Figure 6.6. Sclerostin increases total NPP activity of rat osteoblasts *in vitro*, but has no effect on ALP activity

On day 14 of culture, the NPP and ALP enzyme activity of rat osteoblasts was measured. **(A)** NPP activity of *in vitro* rat osteoblasts. **(B)** ALP activity of *in vitro* rat osteoblasts. (***, $p < 0.001$ $n=6$).

Sclerostin inhibits mineralisation by *in vitro* *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteoblasts

In order to determine if the actions of sclerostin are mediated by NPP1, wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse calvarial osteoblasts were grown in culture for 28 days in the presence of 100 - 500 ng/ml sclerostin. Cultured *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts produced more bone than wild type osteoblasts (see chapter 4). Sclerostin inhibited mineralised bone nodule formation by both wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts *in vitro* (**Figure 6.7**).

Effects of sclerostin on expression of RANKL and OPG by rat osteoblasts *in vitro*

It was investigated whether sclerostin could act indirectly through osteoblasts to affect osteoclasts. Rat osteoblasts were cultured with or without 500 ng/ml sclerostin. On day 14 cultures were terminated and the osteoblast mRNA was collected. RT-PCR showed that sclerostin moderately increased the expression of

RANKL (*TNFSF11*) mRNA by rat calvarial osteoblasts *in vitro*, but had little effect on the expression of *OPG* (*TNFRSF11B*) mRNA (Figure 6.8).

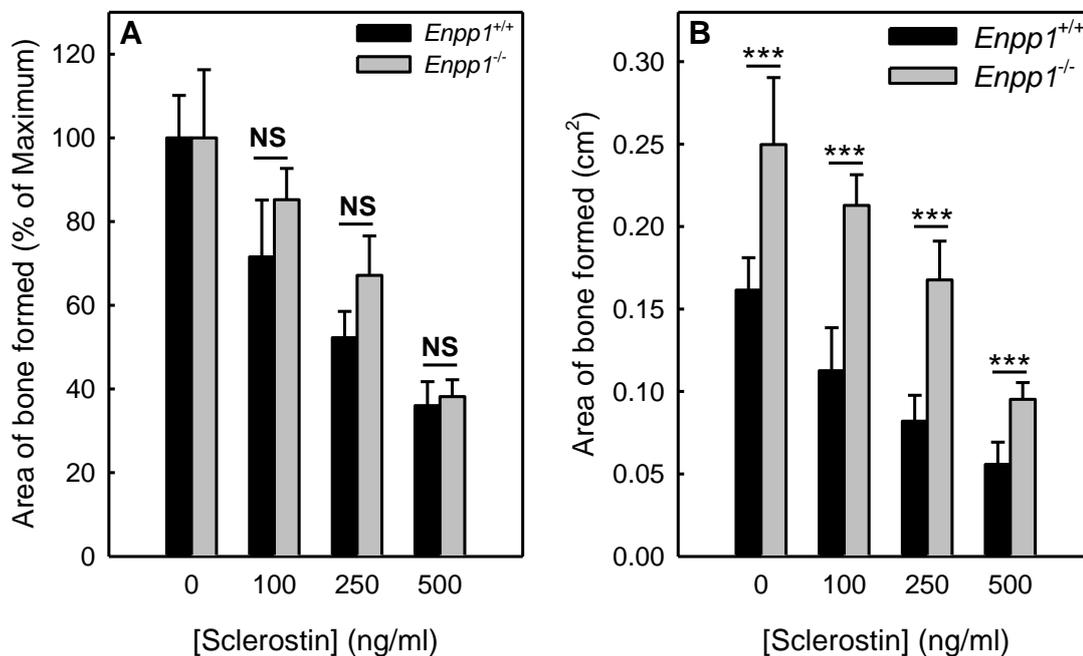


Figure 6.7. Sclerostin decreased the amount of mineralised bone formed by wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteoblasts *in vitro*

Wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse calvarial osteoblasts were cultured for 28 days with sclerostin. Sclerostin inhibited the formation of mineralised bone by wild type and *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts. (A) Results expressed as percentage of maximum bone formed. (B) Total area of bone formed. (NS = not significant; ***, p < 0.001).

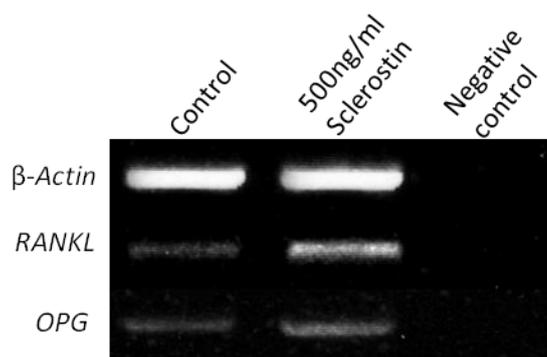


Figure 6.8. Sclerostin affects osteoclast related mRNAs expression by rat osteoblasts *in vitro*

Rat calvarial osteoblasts grown from precursors, were cultured for 14 days with or without 500 ng/ml sclerostin. RT-PCR shows that when normalised against β -actin, 500 ng/ml sclerostin increased the expression of mRNA for *RANKL* by rat osteoblasts but did not affect *OPG* expression.

Discussion

Data presented in this chapter show that exogenous sclerostin had no direct effect on the formation or resorptive activity of mouse osteoclasts *in vitro*. It was also shown that the knockout of the *Sost* gene, or the blocking of potential sclerostin activity using an antibody had no effect on osteoclast formation and activity. However, the same preparation of sclerostin elicited a strong, dose-dependent inhibition of bone formation by rodent osteoblasts *in vitro*; this inhibition was abrogated by an anti-sclerostin antibody. The anti-sclerostin antibody alone was without effect on osteoblast function, indicated that within this cell culture system there is little or no sclerostin inhibiting mineralisation. Sclerostin was also seen to effect the expression of genes related to ATP and adenosine hydrolysis by osteoblasts.

The primary action of sclerostin is to inhibit WNT signalling (Semenov *et al.* 2005; Li *et al.* 2005b). The lack of effect of sclerostin on osteoclasts observed here is consistent with Spencer *et al.* (2006), who showed that *Wnt3a* has no direct inhibitory or stimulatory effects on the formation of osteoclasts from human peripheral blood cells. Gain of function mutations in LRP5, a key receptor in the WNT signalling pathway, also have no effects on human and rodent osteoclast function *in vitro* and *in vivo* (Boyden *et al.* 2002; Babij *et al.* 2003), as is the case for loss of function mutations in LRP5 (Gong *et al.* 2001; Yadav *et al.* 2008). It was not determined if the targets of sclerostin, the LRP5/6 receptors, were expressed by osteoclasts in these experiments, but previous works have only found their expression on osteoblasts (Gong *et al.* 2001; Kato *et al.* 2002; Williams & Insogna 2009). Clinical trials have indicated that anti-sclerostin antibodies decrease resorption *in vivo*, as shown by a decreased circulating concentration of CTx (McClung *et al.* 2014). My own results show that sclerostin does not act directly on osteoclast formation and activity, indicating that the *in vivo* effects of sclerostin depletion on osteoclast function are likely to occur via indirect mechanisms.

RT-PCR showed that sclerostin increased the expression of RANKL mRNA by rat osteoblasts *in vitro*, but had no effect on OPG mRNA expression. These results

demonstrate a mechanism by which sclerostin may affect osteoclast formation and activity indirectly via osteoblasts. In support of this, previous studies using co-cultures have shown that WNT signalling affects osteoclasts indirectly via osteoblasts (Spencer *et al.* 2006; Wijenayaka *et al.* 2011).

Exogenous sclerostin increased not only the expression of *Enpp1* mRNA but also the total NPP enzymatic activity of rat osteoblasts *in vitro*, without affecting ALP mRNA expression or activity. An increase in NPP without a corresponding increase in ALP may lead to an up-regulation in the formation of PPi without affecting its rate of hydrolysis; this will produce an environment that is inhibitory to mineralisation (Millan 2013). This may be one of the mechanisms by which sclerostin inhibits bone nodule formation. Sclerostin also increased the expression of mRNA for the PPi transport protein ANK. However, it should be noted that knockout of the *Enpp1* gene did not significantly affect the inhibitory action of sclerostin on mineralised bone formation by osteoblasts *in vitro*, indicating that ENPP1 is unlikely to be a primary target for the action of sclerostin.

Sclerostin also increased rat osteoblast expression of mRNAs for *NTPdase1*, *ADA* and *eN* *in vitro*. This suggests that since both NPP1 and NTPdase1 hydrolyse ATP (Zimmermann *et al.* 2012); sclerostin may act to increase the rate of ATP hydrolysis and AMP formation by osteoblasts. Increased expression of eN could lead to an increase in the rate of adenosine formation from AMP (Zimmermann *et al.* 2012) and by increasing the expression of ADA by rat osteoblasts *in vitro*, sclerostin may also increase the rate of adenosine conversion to inosine (Lloyd & Fredholm 1995). These data indicate that sclerostin and WNT signalling may have the potential to interact with purinergic and adenosine signalling.

Rat NPP1 has a Km value of 0.281mM when acting on ATP, and requires Mg²⁺ and Zn²⁺ as co-factors; it is active between pH 6.5 – 11.0, with an optimum working pH around pH 9.5. NTPdase1 has a Km value of 0.234mM and requires Mg²⁺ and Ca²⁺ as co-factors; its optimum pH at around 7.7 is less alkaline than that for NPP1 (International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Database, accessed 02/06/2014). The very similar Km values of these enzymes suggest that the biggest

determinants of their relative ability to hydrolyse ATP will be their levels of expression and the pH of the environment they are working in. Sclerostin increased the expression of both NPP1 and NTPdase1 (**Figure 6.5**), although it is not clear if this affected the relative activity ratio between the two enzymes.

In conclusion, sclerostin (and anti-sclerostin antibodies) had no direct effect on osteoclast formation or resorption. It was seen that sclerostin could affect osteoclasts *in vivo* by altering mRNA expression of RANKL by osteoblasts. Sclerostin also inhibited mineral formation by osteoblasts and increased total NPP activity. Sclerostin may also regulate PPi levels around osteoblasts and could potentially have effects on purinergic signalling by altering the expression of ecto-nucleotidases.

Chapter 7

General discussion and future work

Nucleotide signalling has been known for many years to affect the *in vitro* function of osteoblasts (Kumagai *et al.* 1989; Schofl *et al.* 1992; Orriss *et al.* 2007; Orriss *et al.* 2012a) and osteoclasts (Hoebertz *et al.* 2001; Korcok *et al.* 2005). The work in this thesis focused on PPi and adenosine, the hydrolysis products of ATP. I also investigated the effects of sclerostin on osteoclasts and osteoblasts, and the potential links between the WNT signalling pathway and ATP hydrolysis. The findings of this work suggest further important questions.

The work presented here has shown that it is possible using the established SEM and CT technologies to quantify osteocyte lacunar size and mineralisation. This approach can now be applied to a whole range of pathologies and knockout models. Advances in bench-top microCT technologies also make it possible to study osteocyte lacunae in whole specimens. A study of 100 randomly selected mouse genes found that 10% had effects on the bone when knocked-out (Bassett *et al.* 2012). It is unknown what effect many of these genes have on osteocytes. Although osteocytes themselves are difficult to investigate, the changes that they make to their lacunae are relatively easy to study. The techniques I have demonstrated here could provide a practical basis for future studies of osteocyte function in experimental animals or humans – for example, in diverse settings such as ageing, menopause, renal disease, respiratory disease and vitamin D deficiency, as well as in response to therapeutic interventions such as bisphosphonate treatment.

Further work using synchrotron radiation-based CT or nanoCT could also be used to image osteocyte lacunae in 3-dimensions and overcome the methodological problems discussed in Chapter 3. Lacunae and possibly canaliculi could be imaged at resolutions down to 100 nm. However, both of these methods present practical

problems. Synchrotron CT is relatively difficult to gain access to, and nanoCT is currently only able to image a very small volume of bone ($\sim 200 \text{ mm}^3$). A drawback of CT imaging systems in general is that they allow only the visualisation of mineralised bone, not unmineralised collagenous matrix. This is a potentially important shortcoming because it is possible that a thin layer of demineralised matrix lining osteocyte lacunae could act as a site for rapid remineralisation (Arnett 2013b). SEM in backscattered mode, which provides high-resolution information about mineral density, could offer one approach to studying the more subtle changes in mineralisation around osteocytes.

I found that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteocytes were less viable than wild types *in vitro*. Fluid flow stimulation has been reported to increase WNT signalling and prevent osteocyte apoptosis (Bakker *et al.* 2004; Santos *et al.* 2009). I detected an increased circulating level of sclerostin, an inhibitor of WNT signalling, and an alteration in ATP release from osteoblasts and osteoclasts in response to fluid flow stimulation in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice. It will clearly be of interest to determine whether osteocyte viability or apoptosis *in vivo* is different between *Enpp1*^{-/-} (or indeed other ecto-nucleotidase knockout mouse models such as eN, NTPdase1 that might affect hydrolysis of extracellular ATP) and wild type mice. Reductions in osteocyte viability *in vivo*, either due to an inherent cellular defect or to increased mineral encroachment might be expected to impact on the sensing of mechanical strain and on the production of key paracrine / endocrine factors such as sclerostin, FGF23 and RANKL.

I reported in Chapter 3 that the bones of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice showed an increased endosteal diameter and an increase in resorption pits on their endosteal surfaces. These signs of increased osteoclast activity *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice are consistent with other reports (Okawa *et al.* 1999; Mackenzie *et al.* 2012b). However, I found that *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse osteoclasts did not resorb more bone than wild type osteoclasts *in vitro*. I hypothesised that the increased osteoclast activity seen *in vivo* in knockouts may be due to either the increased sclerostin concentration I detected, or hypoxia and acidosis in the bone environment due to vascular calcification (Rutsch *et al.* 2003;

Villa-Bellosta *et al.* 2011; Mackenzie *et al.* 2012b) and thus impaired blood flow. Doppler ultrasound imaging could be used to determine if significant reductions in bone perfusion are indeed occurring in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice. It would also be useful to measure the pH and the partial pressure of O₂ and CO₂ in the arterial blood of these mice would to determine whether systemic acidosis or hypoxia were present.

I found *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice had a greater bone marrow cavity volume than wild types. It has previously been reported that *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice do not have a different number of platelets or red blood cells compared to wild type mice (Mackenzie *et al.* 2012b), suggesting that *Enpp1*^{-/-} mouse bone is not haematopoietically more active. This suggests the possibility that the increased bone marrow cavity volume in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice may have been primarily occupied with adipose tissue. It has previously been reported that the knockout of *Enpp1* induces MSCs to differentiate into adipocytes (Liang *et al.* 2007; Nam *et al.* 2011). Changes in the bone marrow fat volume have been linked with ageing (Hardouin *et al.* 2014). Further analysis of the bone marrow composition of *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice is now clearly warranted.

The present work has emphasised the key role played by NPP1 and PPi in soft tissue mineralisation such as the ear pinna and whisker follicles. This can be demonstrated by microCT and relatively simple histological methods. NPP1 has already been shown to play a role in the calcification of the kidney and the aortic arch (Mackenzie *et al.* 2012a). The formation of kidney or salivary duct stones may also be potentially affected by NPP1 or PPi (Moochhala *et al.* 2008; Pradeep *et al.* 2011). Further investigation is clearly now needed on the role of NPP1 in in the pathological calcification of soft tissues. For example, mineralisation of nodules within the lungs is common in patients who have lung cancer (Khan *et al.* 2010). It is known that lung cancer patients may have increased NTPdase activity in their platelets, with no change in NPP activity (Zanini *et al.* 2012). This suggest the possibility that a higher percentage of ATP would be broken down by NTPdase than NPPs, resulting in less PPi being formed and less inhibition of mineralisation. NPP1 may also play key roles in preventing the calcification of tissues which normal express high levels of ALP such as the liver and bile duct (Millan 2013).

As discussed previously, calcification of the cartilage of the knee and trachea has been reported to increase with age (Teale *et al.* 1989; Kusafuka *et al.* 2001; Mitsuyama *et al.* 2007), as has the hyper-mineralisation of osteocyte lacunae (Busse *et al.* 2010; Carter *et al.* 2013). *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice consistently showed these symptoms, raising the possibility that these mice may represent a model of accelerated ageing. The tide mark zone of mineralised articular cartilage, which advances with age (Goldring & Goldring 2010), should also be examined in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice. It could be of interest to determine whether NPP activity in circulating blood changes (decreases?) with age in human patients.

Unexpectedly, I found that *Enpp1*^{-/-} osteoblasts and osteoclasts had a higher concentration of intracellular ATP, and a lower rate of ATP release. Further work should be carried out to elucidate the mechanism behind these differences. ATP release from osteoblasts may occur via vesicular exocytosis (Orriss *et al.* 2009). The P2X₇ receptor has been implicated as a mechanism for the release of ATP from osteoblasts and osteoclasts (Romanello *et al.* 2001; Buckley *et al.* 2003; Genetos *et al.* 2005; Suadicani *et al.* 2006; Pellegatti *et al.* 2011). Initial experiments should determine if *Enpp1* can influence the P2X₇ receptor or vesicular exocytosis. Further experiments should be performed to determine if the knockout of other ecto-nucleotidases also effects ATP release and the intracellular ATP concentration.

Very little is known about the environmental, chemical or physiological factors that may affect NPP1 activity. Although the phenotype of the *Enpp1* knockout mouse represents an extreme example, it highlights the importance of NPP1 for the healthy functioning of many tissues. It is conceivable that even moderate chronic reductions in NPP1 activity could eventually cause significant disturbances.

In conclusion, the work presented here revealed a number of important new findings relating to role of NPP1 in the mineralisation of osteocyte lacunae and soft tissues. It also highlighted a potential new link between sclerostin and ecto-nucleotidases and further clarified the role that adenosine and sclerostin have on bone cells *in vitro*. Additionally, this work emphasised the greater role that

extracellular nucleotides play in the control of *in vitro* bone cells compared to nucleosides.

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Appendix 1 – PCR primer sequences

Rattus norvegicus gene	Sense 5' – 3'	Anti-sense 5' – 3'
<i>A₁ receptor</i>	CTCCATTCTGGCTCTGCTCG	CTCCATTCTGGCTCTGCTCG
<i>A_{2A} receptor</i>	CCATGCTGGGCTGGAACA	GAAGGGGCAGTAACACGAACG
<i>A_{2B} receptor</i>	TGGCGCTGGAGCTGGTTA	GCAAAGGGGATGGCGAAG
<i>A₃ receptor</i>	AGAGCTAGGTCCACTGGC	GCACATGACAACCAGGGGGATGA
<i>β-actin</i>	GTTCCGCATGGATGACGAT	TCTGGGTCATCTTTTCACGG
<i>Sost</i>	CTCCTGAGAACAACCAGAC	TGGAGAACGCCTATAGAG
<i>DMP1</i>	AAGTCAAGCTAGCCGAGA	CGATGAGGACAATGATCTAG
<i>ADA</i>	TCCTGGCCAAGTTCGATTCA	AGCGAACTTCCACGTACACC
<i>Enpp1</i>	GTCAGTATGCGTGCTAAC	TGGCACACTGAACTGTAG
<i>ALP (TNAP)</i>	CTCATTGTGCCAGAGAA	GTTGTACGTCTTGGAGAG
<i>ANK</i>	AAGGCAGCCAGATACAGGAA	CATCACCAACATAGCCATGC
<i>NTPdase1</i>	AGATGAACAGCCCTGTGA	GGGTTTCACTTCTGGGTCT
<i>Ecto-5-nucleotidase</i>	CAGGAAATCCACCTTCCAAA	AACCTTCAGGTAGCCAGGT
<i>OPG</i>	GCAACACATGACAATGTATG	CAAGCTCTCCATCAAGATGC
<i>RANKL</i>	CGAGCGCAGATCGATCCTAAC	GACTTTATGGGAACCCGATGG

Table 2. The primer sequences used for RT-PCR analysis of rat mRNAs expression

Mus musculus gene	Sense 5' – 3'	Anti-sense 5' – 3'
<i>A₁ receptor</i>	CTACCTTCTGCTTCATCGTA	ACAAGACAGTGGTGACTCAG
<i>A_{2A} receptor</i>	CTATTGCCATCGACAGATAC	GAACAACTGCAGTCAGAAAG
<i>A_{2B} receptor</i>	CCACCAACTACTTTCTGGTA	AACAGTAAAGACAGTGCCAC
<i>A₃ receptor</i>	TCATTGTCTCCCTAGCACT	GACARCRRCRACARCARCCG
<i>GAPDH</i>	CTCACTCAAGATTGTCAGCA	GTCATCATACTTGGCAGGTT
<i>Enpp1</i>	ACAGCTTAATCTGACCACAG	GATCCTGGTACAGACAGTTG
<i>Enpp2</i>	GTATGACCCTGTCTTTGATG	GAAAGCCACTGAAGGATAGT
<i>Enpp3</i>	CTGCTGACTGTGGTTTTACT	CTGTGGTAAAGGAGACAGTG
<i>NTPdase1</i>	CTTTGGCGCTTTGGATCTCG	TCTGGTGGCACTGTTCGTAG
<i>NTPdase2</i>	CTGGAGGCAGTGACACAGAC	TGGGTGGAGTAGCCCTTTGG
<i>NTPdase3</i>	GTGAGCATTGTGGTACTTGT	TGACCACTCCTGTGTTATTC
<i>ANK</i>	CAGTTTCCTGGTGGGATGTG	TTGATGTGGGCTGAGGTG
<i>ADA</i>	AAGCATTGGCATCAAGGTC	CATAGCCACCACGGTCTTCT

Table 3. The primer sequences used for RT-PCR analysis of mouse mRNAs expression

GAPDH=glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase.

Appendix 2 – Abbreviations

2-Cado	2-Chloroadenosine
A₁ receptor	Adenosine receptor A ₁
A_{2A} receptor	Adenosine receptor A _{2B}
A_{2B} receptor	Adenosine receptor A _{2B}
A₃ receptor	Adenosine receptor A ₃
Ab	Antibody
ABAM	Antibiotic – antimycotic
ABCC6	ATP-binding cassette subfamily-C member 6 gene
ADA	Adenosine deaminase
ADA-SCID	ADA - severe combined immunodeficiency
ADHR	Autosomal dominant hypophosphatemic rickets
Ado	Adenosine
ADP	Adenosine diphosphate
Akp2	Mouse tissue non-specific alkaline phosphatase gene
ATF4	Activating transcription factor 4
ALP	Alkaline phosphatase
α-MEM	α-modified essential medium supplemented with 10% foetal calf serum, 70 µg/ml gentamicin, 50 U/ml penicillin, 50 µg/ml streptomycin, 0.125 µg/ml amphotericin

AMP	Adenosine monophosphate
Ank	Progressive ankylosis gene
ANOVA	Analysis of variance
Ap4A	Diadenosine 5',5'''P ¹ ,P ⁴ -tetrphosphate
APC	Adenomatous polyposis coli
APRT	Adenine phosphoribosyltransferase
Arg-Gly-Asp	Arginine – glycine – aspartic acid
ASARM	Acid serine and aspartic acid-rich
ATP	Adenosine triphosphate
BGP	β - glycerophosphate
BMP	Bone morphogenetic protein
BSA	Bovine serum albumin
BSP	Bone sialoprotein
Bz-ATP	2'(3')-O-(4-benzoylbenzoyl) adenosine 5'-triphosphate
CAN	Calcium activated nucleotidase
CCAAT	Cytidine-cytidine-adenosine-adenosine-thymidine
CD39	Ecto-nucleoside triphosphate diphosphohydrolase (NTPdase)
CD73	Ecto-5'nucleotidase (eN)
cAMP	Cyclic adenosine monophosphate
cDNA	Complimentary deoxyribonucleic acid
C/EBPα	CCAAT-enhancer-binding proteins

CK	Creatine kinase
CK1	Casein kinase 1
CK-BB	Creatine kinase brain type
CK-MB	Creatine kinase cardiac type
CK-MM	Creatine kinase muscle type
CO₂	Carbon dioxide
DC-STAMP	Dendritic cell stimulatory transmembrane protein
DKK	Dickkopfs
DMEM	Dulbecco's modified essential medium supplemented with 10% foetal calf serum, 2 mM L-glutamine, 100 U/ml penicillin, 100 µg/ml streptomycin, 0.25 µg/ml amphotericin
DMP1	Dentine matrix protein-1
DNase	Deoxyribonuclease
DPCPX	P1 receptor antagonist 8-cyclopentyl-1,3-dipropylxanthine
Dpi	Dots per inch
Dvl	Dishevelled
EDTA	Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid
ELISA	Enzyme linked immunosorbent assay
eN	Ecto-5'nucleotidase
ENT	Equilibrative nucleoside transporter
FCS	Foetal calf serum

FGF23	Fibroblast growth factor 23
FGFR	Fibroblast growth factor receptor
FIAT	Factor inhibiting activating transcription factor 4
FoxO	Forkhead box O
FZD	Frizzled
GACI	Generalised arterial calcification of infancy
GAPDH	Glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase
GDP	Guanosine diphosphate
GMP	Guanosine monophosphate
GPI	Glycosylphosphatidylinositol
GSK3	Glycogen synthase kinase 3
GTP	Guanosine-5'-triphosphate
HB-GAM	Heparin binding growth associated molecule
HBSS	Hank's buffered salt solution
HGPRT	Hypoxanthine-guanine phosphoribosyltransferase
HIFs	Hypoxia inducible factors
IMP	Inosine monophosphate
I-Smads	Inhibitory Smads
JNK	C-Jun N-terminal kinases
LDH	Lactate dehydrogenase
LPA1-6	Lysophosphatidic acid receptors 1 - 6

LRP5/6	Low-density-lipoprotein receptor 5 / 6
MC3T3	Mouse osteoblast cell line
M-CSF	Macrophage colony-stimulating factor
MEM	Modified essential medium
MEPE	Matrix extracellular phosphoglycoprotein
MicroCT	Micro – computed tomography
MLO-Y4	Mouse long bone osteocytes cell line Y4
MMPs	matrix metalloproteinases
MrgA	Mas-related gene receptor A (adenine receptor)
mRNA	Messenger ribonucleic acid
MRP6	Multi-drug resistant protein 6
MSCs	Mesenchymal stem cells
MTT	3-(4,5-dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-2,5-diphenyltetrazolium bromide
NAD⁺	Nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide
NBF	Neutral buffered formalin
NCAM	Neural cell adhesion molecule
NDP	Nucleoside diphosphates
NDPK	Nucleoside diphosphate kinase
NECA	5' -N- Ethylcarboxamidoadenosine
NFAT2	Nuclear factor for activated T-cells 2
NFκβ	Transcription factor nuclear factor κβ

NMP	Nucleoside monophosphates
Np_{n-1}	Nucleoside 5'(n-1) polyphosphate (n = number of phosphates)
NPP	Ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase / phosphodiesterase
NPP1	Ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase / phosphodiesterase - 1
NTP	Nucleoside triphosphates
NTPdase	Ecto-nucleoside triphosphate diphosphohydrolase
OCN	Osteocalcin
OC-STAMP	Osteoclast stimulatory transmembrane protein
OPG	Osteoprotegerin
OPLL	Ossification of the posterior longitudinal ligament
OPN	Osteopontin
ORF-1	Osteoblast stimulating facto-1
Pi	Inorganic phosphate
PC-1	Ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase / phosphodiesterase - 1
PAP	Prostatic acid phosphatase
PBS	Phosphate buffered saline
PCP	Planar cell polarity pathway
PHOSPHO1	Phosphatase orphan 1
PPARγ	Peroxisome proliferator-activated receptors γ
PPi	Pyrophosphate
PPi/Pi ratio	Pyrophosphate / phosphate ratio

PTH	Parathyroid hormone
QMUL	Queen Mary, University of London
RAGE	Receptor for advanced glycation end products
RANK	Receptor activator of nuclear factor $\kappa\beta$
RANKL	Receptor activator of nuclear factor $\kappa\beta$ ligand
RGD	Arginine – glycine – aspartic acid
RT-PCR	Reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction
SEM	Scanning electron microscopy
SIBLING	Small integrin-binding ligand N-linked glycoprotein
<i>Sost</i>	Sclerostin gene
SOST	Sclerostin
Sox9	SRY sex determining region Y box 9
sRAGE	Receptor for advanced glycation end products inhibitor
sFZP	Secreted frizzled related proteins
Tcf/Lef	T-cell specific transcription factor / lymphoid enhancer-binding factor transcription factor
TGF-β	Transforming growth factor- β
TNAP	Tissue non-specific alkaline phosphatase
TNAP	Tissue non-specific alkaline phosphatase (human gene)
TNF	Tumour necrosis factor
TNFRSF11B	Tumour necrosis factor receptor super-family member 11b (OPG)

TNFSF11	Tumour necrosis factor ligand super-family member 11 (RANKL)
TRAF	TNF receptor associated proteins
TRAP	tartrate resistant acid phosphatase
TRPV5	Transient receptor potential, vanilloid, members 5
TRPV6	Transient receptor potential, vanilloid, members 6
Ttw	Tiptoe walking mouse
UDP	Uridine diphosphate
UTP	Uridine triphosphate
VDREs	Vitamin D response elements
VEGF	Vascular endothelial growth factor
Vit D2	Ergocalciferol
Vit D3	Cholecalciferol
Wif-1	WNT inhibitory factor-1
WNT	<i>Wingless</i> type and <i>int-1</i>
w/v	Weight per volume
XLH	X-linked hypophosphatemic rickets

Appendix 3 – Publications

The following is a list of publications produced during the course of this thesis.

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles

Hajjawi MOR, Boyde A, Huesa C, MacRae V, Millán JL, Arnett TR, Orriss IR (2014) Hyper mineralisation of collagen rich soft tissues and osteocyte lacunae in *Enpp1*^{-/-} mice. Submitted to *Bone* June 2014

Hajjawi MOR, Orriss IR, Arnett TR (2014) Lack of effect of adenosine on the function of rodent osteoblasts and osteoclasts *in vitro*. Submitted to *J. Endocrinol.* June 2014

Wornham DP, **Hajjawi MO**, Orriss IR, Arnett TR (2012) Strontium potently inhibits mineralisation in bone-forming primary rat osteoblast cultures and reduces osteoclastogenesis in mouse marrow. Accepted to *Osteoporos. Int.* June 2014

Davey T, Lanham-New SA, Shaw AM, Cobley R, Allsopp AJ, **Hajjawi MOR**, Arnett TR, Taylor P, Cooper C, Fallowfield JL (2014) Fundamental differences in axial and appendicular bone density and markers of bone resorption in stress fractures and uninjured royal marine recruits – a matched case control study. Submitted to *J. Bone Miner. Res.* April 2014

Orriss IR, Key ML, **Hajjawi MOR**, Arnett TR (2013) Extracellular ATP released by osteoblasts is a key local inhibitor of mineralisation. *PLoS One* 8 e69057

Syberg S, Brandao-Burch A, Patel JJ, **Hajjawi M**, Arnett TR, Schwarz P, Jorgensen NR, Orriss IR (2012) Clopidogrel (Plavix®), a P2Y₁₂ receptor antagonist, inhibits bone cell function *in vitro* and decreases trabecular bone *in vivo* *J. Bone Miner. Res.* 27 2373 - 2386

Xirouchakis E, Marelli L, Cholongitas E, Manousou P, Calvaruso V, Pleguezuelo M, Guerrini GP, Maimone S, Kerry A, **Hajjawi M**, Nair D, Thomas M, Patch D, Burroughs AK (2011) Comparison of cystatin C and creatinine-based glomerular filtration rate formulas with ⁵¹Cr-EDTA clearance in patients with cirrhosis. *Clin. J. Am. Soc. Nephrol.* 6: 84-92

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Hajjawi MOR, Huesa C, MacRae VE, Millan JL, Boyde A, Arnett TR, Orriss IR (2013) μ CT as tool to study cortical porosity and soft tissue calcification in *Enpp1* knockout mice. *Skyscan user meeting Hasselt Belgium* ISSN:2033-8031. 160 - 166

Orriss IR, **Hajjawi MOR**, Millan JL, Poulet B, Arnett TR (2013) μ CT as a tool for investigating structural changes in the knees of *Enpp1* knockout mice. *Skyscan user meeting Hasselt Belgium* ISSN:2033-8031. 228-231

Hajjawi MOR, MacRae VE, Huesa C, Millan JL, Poulet B, Boyde A, Arnett TR, Orriss IR (2013) Regulation of skeletal and soft tissue mineralisation by NPP1 (ecto-nucleotide pyrophosphatase / phosphodiesterase) *Bone Res. Soc. Abstracts* ISBN: 978-2-88919-174-1

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