The cAMP binding protein Epac regulates cardiac myofilament function. The effects of Epac activation on myofilament Ca\textsuperscript{2+} sensitivity and on cTnI and cMyBP-C phosphorylation were independent of PKA and were blocked by protein kinase C (PKC) and Ca\textsuperscript{2+} calmodulin kinase II (CaMKII) inhibitors. Altogether these findings identify Epac as a new regulator of myofilament function. calmodulin kinase II contraction exchange protein activated by cyclic AMP sarcomeric proteins protein kinase C

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HAL Id: hal-01824357
https://hal.umontpellier.fr/hal-01824357
Submitted on 27 Jun 2018
Olivier Cazorla, Alexandre Lucas, Florence Poirier, Alain Lacampagne, F. Lezoualc’h, et al.. The cAMP binding protein Epac regulates cardiac myofilament function. The effects of Epac activation on myofilament Ca^2+ sensitivity and on cTnI and cMyBP-C phosphorylation were independent of PKA and were blocked by protein kinase C (PKC) and Ca^2+ calmodulin kinase II (CaMKII) inhibitors. Altogether these findings identify Epac as a new regulator of myofilament function. calmodulin kinase II contraction exchange protein activated by cyclic AMP sarcomeric proteins protein kinase C. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, National Academy of Sciences, 2009, 106 (33), pp.14144 - 14149. 10.1073/pnas.0812536106. hal-01824357
The cAMP binding protein Epac regulates cardiac myofilament function

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Edited by Joseph A. Beavo, University of Washington School of Medicine, Seattle, WA, and approved July 7, 2009 (received for review December 11, 2008)

In the heart, cAMP is a key regulator of excitation–contraction coupling and its biological effects are mainly associated with the activity of protein kinase A (PKA). The aim of this study was to investigate the contribution of the cAMP-binding protein Epac (Exchange protein directly activated by cAMP) in the regulation of the contractile properties of rat ventricular cardiac myocytes. We report that both PKA and Epac increased cardiac sarcomere contracture but through opposite mechanisms. Differently from PKA, selective Epac activation by the cAMP analog 8-(4-chlorophenylthio)-2'-O-methyl-cAMP (8-pCPT) reduced Ca2+ transient amplitude and increased cell shortening in intact cardiac myocytes of myofilament Ca2+ sensitivity in permeabilized cardiomyocytes. Moreover, ventricular myocytes, which were infected in vivo with a constitutively active form of Epac, showed enhanced myofilament Ca2+ sensitivity compared to control cells infected with green fluorescent protein (GFP) alone. At the molecular level, Epac increased phosphorylation of 2 key sarcomeric proteins, cardiac Troponin I (cTnI) and cardiac Myosin Binding Protein-C (cMyBP-C). The effects of Epac activation on myofilament Ca2+ sensitivity and on cTnI and cMyBP-C phosphorylation were independent of PKA and were blocked by protein kinase C (PKC) and Ca2+ calmodulin kinase II (CaMKII) inhibitors. Altogether these findings identify Epac as a new regulator of myofilament function.

Epac Regulates Myofilament Ca2+ Sensitivity in a PKA-Independent Manner. To test the effect of Epac activation on cell contraction, we recorded simultaneously changes in sarcomere length (SL) and intracellular Ca2+ in indo-1-loaded intact cardiomyocytes stimulated at 1 Hz prior to and during treatment with the Epac selective activator 8-pCPT (1 μM) (Fig. 1A). SL shortening started to increase progressively ~1 min after addition of 8-pCPT to reach a plateau within 5 min. 8-pCPT increased SL shortening and decreased calcium transient in a concentration-dependent manner (Fig. 1 B and C). The steady-state maximal inhibition of Ca2+ transient could not be determined because arrhythmic events occurred at high concentrations (starting at 1 μM), probably because of the increase in the diastolic Ca2+ level (Fig. 1D). The gain of function (SL shortening–Ca2+ transient ratio) that is a good indicator of the myofilament Ca2+ sensitivity increased from 0.1 to 1 μM 8-pCPT (Fig. 1E). The speed of SL shortening increased [supporting information (SI) Fig. S1A] and diastolic SL decreased (Fig. S1C), both in a concentration-

Results

Author contributions: O.C., A. Lucas, A. Lacampagne, and F.L. designed research; O.C., A. Lucas, F.P. performed research; O.C., A. Lucas, F.P., A. Lacampagne, and F.L. analyzed data; and O.C., A. Lucas, F.P., A. Lacampagne, and F.L. wrote the paper.

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

This article is a PNAS Direct Submission.

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This article contains supporting information online at www.pnas.org/cgi/content/full/0812536106/DCSupplemental.
Epac activation on SR Ca\textsuperscript{2+} amplitudes (calcium independently of the amount released by SR (4, 5, 17, Fig. 2).

Epac and PKA have opposite effects on Ca\textsuperscript{2+} and membrane-permeant activator of PKA, showed a significant effect of Epac transient amplitude (Left perfusion on sarcomere shortening (Left, Lower) in intact ventricular cardiomyocytes stimulated at 1 Hz. Activation of Epac increased progressively SL shortening and reduced the amplitude of Ca\textsuperscript{2+} transient. The maximal effect was observed within 5 min. Right, a time control of SL shortening and calcium transient. (B–E) Concentration-dependent effect of 8-pCPT on SL shortening (B), Ca\textsuperscript{2+} transient amplitude (C), diastolic calcium level (D), and the gain of function (E), which corresponds to the ratio between SL shortening and calcium transient amplitudes (n = 11 cells). * P < 0.05 versus control.

Dependent manner. The speed of SL relaxation tended to increase with 8-pCPT but the differences did not reach significance (Fig. S1B). Altogether, these data suggest a dual effect of Epac activation on SR Ca\textsuperscript{2+} signaling (i.e., Ca\textsuperscript{2+} basal level and transient amplitude) and a direct effect on the contractile machinery (SL shortening).

To determine the effect of Epac activation on the contractile machinery properties, we measured the relationship between Ca\textsuperscript{2+}-activated tension and internal concentration of Ca\textsuperscript{2+} expressed as pCa (= −log[Ca\textsuperscript{2+}]) in permeabilized cardiomyocytes (Fig. 2A). Permeabilized cardiomyocytes allow us to study the properties of the contractile machinery and its relation to calcium independently of the amount released by SR (4, 5, 17, 18). After incubation with 8-pCPT (1 μM), the curve representing the tension–pCa relationship was significantly shifted to the left (i.e., increase in pCa\textsubscript{50}), indicating that for a given amount of Ca\textsuperscript{2+}, more force was produced by the myofilaments upon Epac activation. The other contractile parameters such as maximal active tension, passive tension, and the Hill coefficient were not affected by Epac activation (Table S1). Conversely, permeabilized cells incubated with either a recombinant catalytic subunit of PKA (200 UI) or 6-BrZ-cAMP (200 μM), a selective and membrane-permeant activator of PKA, showed a significant decrease in pCa\textsubscript{50} (Fig. 2A, Fig. S2). These data demonstrate that Epac and PKA have opposite effects on Ca\textsuperscript{2+}-activated force and myofilament Ca\textsuperscript{2+} sensitivity (Fig. 2A, Fig. S2). Similarly, we found that ventricular myocytes isolated from myocardial tissues with a constitutively active form of Epac1 and green fluorescent protein (GFP) (Ad-Epac\textsuperscript{AcAMP}) showed an increase in pCa\textsubscript{50} (Fig. 2B). The effect of Epac\textsuperscript{AcAMP} on pCa\textsubscript{50} was similar to the effect obtained with 8-pCPT (1 μM) and was not further increased by addition of this drug (Fig. 2B). Finally, we found that Epac effect on myofilament Ca\textsuperscript{2+} sensitivity was independent of PKA because a PKA inhibitor, PKI (5 μM), failed to inhibit the effect of 8-pCPT on pCa\textsubscript{50} (Fig. 2C). Altogether, our data show that Epac activation increases myofilament Ca\textsuperscript{2+} sensitivity in a PKA-independent manner in adult ventricular cardiac myocytes.

**Epac Regulates Phosphorylation of cMyBP-C and cTnI.** Myofilament Ca\textsuperscript{2+} sensitivity is regulated through phosphorylation of sarcomeric proteins, such as cTnI and cMyBP-C, which are known to mediate myocardial responses to cAMP via PKA (3). Therefore we checked whether activated Epac could also regulate the phosphorylation of such proteins. Indeed, activation of endogenous Epac by 8-pCPT (1 μM) increased phosphorylation of cMyBP-C at Ser\textsuperscript{222} (P-cMyBP-C) in freshly isolated adult cardiomyocytes (Fig. 3A). The level of P-cMyBP-C following Epac activation was comparable to that observed in cells treated with isoproterenol (ISO) (100 nM), the standard β-adrenergic receptor agonist (Fig. 3A). Similarly, infection of cardiomyocytes with adenoviruses expressing Epac\textsuperscript{AcAMP} increased phosphorylation of cMyBP-C (Fig. 3B) and of cTnI in permeabilized cells (Fig. 3C) suggesting an alternative PKA-independent pathway for myofilament Ca\textsuperscript{2+} sensitization that can be activated by Epac.
expression levels of Epac WT and Epac failed to induce cTnI phosphorylation at Ser22/23 even in cells regulate phosphorylation of cTnI. Differently from ISO, 8-pCPT from myocytes infected with either Ad-GFP or Ad-EpacWT and determine whether Epac activation could influence cTnI phosphorylation showed a decreased level of knock down its expression revealed a decreased level of cAMP, 1 band of 23 kDa showed a significant increase in phosphorylation, as determined with the ProQ phospho-protein stain (Fig. 4C). These results may explain the remaining increase in intact cell shortenings after ISO stimulation in the presence of a PKA inhibitor, KT5720 (Fig. S1D). Accordingly, myocytes treated with ISO (100 nM) and infected with a short hairpin RNA targeting Epac1 (Ad-shEpac) to knock down its expression showed a decreased level of P-cMyBP-C compared to cells infected with shRNA sequence control (Ad-shCT) and stimulated with ISO (Fig. S3A and B). Knockdown of Epac1 slightly decreased pCa50 in basal condition but this was not statistically significant as compared to Ad-shCT control cells (Fig. S3C). ISO decreased myofilament Ca2+ sensitivity in a similar fashion in Ad-shCT and Ad-shEpac cells (Fig. S3C).

Importantly, 8-pCPT failed to increase myofilament Ca2+ sensitivity in cells infected with Ad-shEpac, indicating that Epac specifically regulates the contractile properties of cardiomyocytes (Fig. S3C). We next investigated whether Epac activation could also regulate phosphorylation of cTnI. Differently from ISO, 8-pCPT failed to induce cTnI phosphorylation at Ser22/23 even in cells infected with Ad-EpacWT or Ad-EpacΔCAMP (Fig. A4). To determine whether Epac activation could influence cTnI phosphorylation at other sites, myofilament proteins were extracted from myocytes infected with either Ad-GFP or Ad-EpacWT and treated or not with 1 μM 8-pCPT or infected with Ad-EpacΔCAMP. In extracts from cells treated with 1 μM 8-pCPT or infected with Ad-EpacΔCAMP, 1 band of ~23 kDa showed a significant increase in phosphorylation, as determined with the ProQ phospho-protein stain (Fig. 4B). Tandem mass spectrometry revealed that this 23-kDa band corresponded to cTnI (MASCOT score: 196; number of identified peptides: 19). The effect of Epac activation on cTnI phosphorylation was not abolished by PKI (Fig. 4C), which, on the other hand, completely prevented PKA-dependent phosphorylation of cTnI (Fig. S4).

To confirm a change in the phosphorylation status of cTnI upon Epac activation, myocytes treated or not with 8-pCPT were processed for 2D electrophoresis and subjected to ProQ Diamond staining to reveal phosphoproteins. In an area of interest corresponding to a theoretical spot of cTnI (pI 9.57; M, 25 kDa), we identified 5 phosphorylated spots corresponding to cTnI by tandem mass spectrometry of peptides separated by reverse phase liquid chromatography (LC/MS/MS). Fig. 4D shows that cTnI was resolved as a train of 5 spots differing in their phosphorylation level in basal condition. The intensity of the train of phosphorylation was modified in the presence of 8-pCPT with spot 5 being the most phosphorylated. Altogether these data show that Epac induces a change in the phosphorylation status of cTnI and cMyBP-C in a PKA-independent manner.

Fig. 3. Epac regulates phosphorylation of the thick filament protein cMyBP-C. (A) Effect of 8-pCPT (1 μM) or ISO (100 nM) on cMyBP-C phosphorylation (P-cMyBP-C) in freshly isolated adult cardiomyocytes. Cells were incubated with the drugs for 10 min and P-cMyBP-C was determined by Western blotting using an anti-P-cMyBP-C (P-Ser282) antibody as described in SI Materials and Methods. Membranes were then stripped and probed for total cMyBP-C expression to confirm equivalent protein loading. Lower, immunoblots were quantified and data were normalized to total cMyBP-C expression. (B) Western blot analysis of P-cMyBP-C and total cMyBP-C from myocytes infected with Ad-GFP, Ad-EpacWT, Ad-EpacΔCAMP, or Ad-PKI (PKA inhibitor). Immunoblots against P-cMyBP-C and total cMyBP-C were performed as in A. (B) An anti-HA antibody was used to monitor the expression levels of EpacWT and EpacΔCAMP. (C and D) Immunoblots were quantified and data normalized to total cMyBP-C. Results are means ± SEM from 6 (A) or 4 (B–D) independent experiments. **P < 0.01; ***P < 0.001 compared with control or indicated values. CT, control.

**Signaling Pathways Involved in Myofilament Phosphorylation Induced by Epac.** Because the permeabilization process could induce a loss of Epac expression and its potential effectors, we first analyzed their expression in permeabilized cardiomyocytes. We found that all these proteins are present in permeabilized cardiomyocytes although some of them showed a decreased expression level as compared to intact cardiac myocytes (Fig. S4). We next investigated the signaling pathways involved in Epac-induced myofilament phosphorylation. The primary function of Epac is to act as GEFS for Rap GTPases (9). Thus, we examined whether Rap1 was involved in the effect of Epac on myofilament phosphorylation. A Rap1 GTPase activating protein (RapGAP), which was previously shown to abolish 8-pCPT-induced Rap1 activation in adult cardiac myocytes (19), failed to inhibit an Epac effect on P-cMyBP-C (Fig. S5). This finding demonstrates that Epac acts on myofilaments via another effector than Rap1.

Previous studies have suggested that phospholipase C (PLC) may be involved in Epac functional effects (16, 20). PLC hydrolyzes phosphatidylinositol bisphosphate (PIP2) to produce diacylglycerol (DAG) and inositol trisphosphate (IP3), leading to protein PKC activation or IP3 receptor-dependent Ca2+ release. The stimulating effect of 8-pCPT on myofilament Ca2+ sensitivity was blocked by treatment with U73122, a PLC inhibitor, or calphostin-C, a PKC inhibitor (Fig. 5B). Calphostin-C also decreased cTnI and cMyBP-C phosphorylation induced by 8-pCPT (Fig. 5C and E). Because we previously identified CaMKII as an effector of Epac in cardiac myocytes (15, 19), we also evaluated whether CaMKII played a role in Epac effect on Ca2+ sensitivity. We found that KN-93, a pharmacological inhibitor of CaMKII, significantly inhibited the 8-pCPT effect on Ca2+ sensitivity in myofilaments (Fig. 5B). Consistent with these data, 8-pCPT-induced cTnI and cMyBP-C phosphorylation was blocked when myocytes were preincubated with KN-93 or infected with adenoviruses coding for a CaMKII peptide inhibitor (Ad-CaMKII) (Fig. 5D and F, Fig. S6). Taken together, these data show that Epac regulates myofilament Ca2+ sensitivity and sarcomeric protein phosphorylation through PLC-, PKC-, and CaMKII-dependent pathways.

**Discussion**

In this study we demonstrate that Epac regulates the contractile properties of cardiomyocytes by modulating Ca2+ signaling and Ca2+ sensitivity of sarcomeric proteins. We report that both PKA and Epac, 2 major effectors of cAMP, increase cardiac myocyte contraction but through opposite mechanisms. Indeed, Epac decreases the amount of Ca2+ released by the SR and sensitizes myofilaments to Ca2+, whereas PKA does the opposite.

Epac activation increased rapidly the rate of SL shortening and reduced significantly Ca2+ transient amplitude, both in a concentration-dependent manner, thus suggesting that Epac
affects both myofilament properties and SR Ca\(^{2+}\) function independently. Similarly, we previously observed a decrease in SR Ca\(^{2+}\) load during diastole (15). These data could explain the reduced Ca\(^{2+}\) transient amplitude in the presence of 8-pCPT and the increase in diastolic Ca\(^{2+}\) level (Fig. 1C). Consistent with this finding, Curran and colleagues (21) also found that \(\beta\)-AR stimulation enhanced SR Ca\(^{2+}\) leak in ventricular myocytes in a CaMKII-dependent (and PKA-independent) manner. Conversely, Oestreich and colleagues (16) showed that acute treatment of single mouse ventricular cardiac myocytes with 8-pCPT increased Ca\(^{2+}\) transient amplitude in field-stimulated cells. This process was dependent on Rap1 and PLC-\(\gamma\) (16). The reasons for these discrepancies are unclear and may involve species differences and/or methodological approaches such as the frequency of cardiac myocyte electrical stimulation.

PKA-dependent phosphorylation of cTnI is known to reduce myofilament Ca\(^{2+}\) sensitivity and to shift the tension-pCa curve toward the right (22). This effect involves phosphorylation of cTnI at Ser\(^{22}/23\) (3) and cMyBP-C (5). Here, we report that activated Epac increases myofilament Ca\(^{2+}\) sensitivity and modulates phosphorylation of cTnI and cMyBP-C, both in a PKA-independent manner. We also show that a PLC inhibitor abolishes the stimulating effect of Epac on myofilament Ca\(^{2+}\) sensitivity, suggesting that a downstream effector of PLC is involved in Epac signaling leading to sarcomeric protein phosphorylation. Such a candidate could be PKC because inhibition of PKC decreased 8-pCPT-induced myofilament Ca\(^{2+}\) sensitization and cTnI and cMyBP-C phosphorylation. PKC activation has been reported to potentially induce phosphorylation of cTnI at Ser\(^{22/23}\), Ser\(^{43/45}\), and Thr\(^{144}\) (3). However, PKC-dependent phosphorylation of Ser\(^{22/23}\) is unlikely to be involved in an Epac effect because we did not detect increased cTnI phosphorylation at this site after Epac activation (Fig. 4A). Moreover, phosphorylation at this site would induce the same functional effects of PKA activation (i.e., decrease in myofilament Ca\(^{2+}\) sensitivity) (18, 23).

PKC phosphorylates also cMyBP-C but the functional significance of these phosphorylations in the control of cardiac function is unclear (22, 24). Interestingly, PKC leads to CaMKII activation upon Epac activation, suggesting that a linear cascade involving PLC, PKC, and CaMKII could be involved in Epac-dependent myofilament regulation (25) (Fig. S7). Alternatively, CaMKII could directly phosphorylate cTnI and cMyBP-C. Indeed, we found that inhibition of CaMKII activity blocked the effect of Epac on myofilament Ca\(^{2+}\) sensitivity and phosphorylation of sarcomeric proteins. The residual phosphorylation of cTnI and cMyBP-C could be because of PKC activation by Epac. Consistent with our study, cMyBP-C has also been reported to be phosphorylated by CaMKII (26–28), resulting in modulation of the rates of force development and relaxation (29). It is now known that cardiac contraction can be differentially regulated by a restricted

**Fig. 4.** Epac regulates phosphorylation of cTnI in a PKA-independent manner. (A) Representative Western blot showing cTnI phosphorylation (P-cTnI) at PKA sites (P-Ser\(^{22}/23\)) (Top). Isolated adult cardiac myocytes were infected with control Ad-GFP (CT), Ad-EpacWT, or Ad-Epac\(^{2/23}\)-AMP for 36 h. Cells were then treated, or not, with 1 \(\mu\)M 8-pCPT or 100 nM ISO for 10 min and P-Ser\(^{22}/23\) cTnI was determined by Western blotting as described in SI Materials and Methods. Total cTnI expression is shown (Middle), and anti-HA antibody was used to monitor the expression levels of EpacWT and Epac\(^{2/23}\)-AMP (Bottom). (B) Adult cardiac myocytes were infected for 36 h with control Ad-GFP (CT, lane 1), Ad-GFP treated with 1 \(\mu\)M 8-pCPT (lane 2), Ad-EpacWT treated with 1 \(\mu\)M 8-pCPT (lane 3), or Ad-Epac\(^{2/23}\)-AMP (lane 4). Myocytes were infected with Ad-PKI and were then treated or not with 1 \(\mu\)M 8-pCPT for 10 min as in A and B. Protein phosphorylation was visualized with ProQ Diamond phospho-protein gel stain, followed by total protein staining with Sypro Ruby to confirm equal loading. Right, protein phosphorylation was normalized to the total protein content revealed by SYPRO Ruby staining. Results are means ± SEM of 8 (B) or 4 (C) independent experiments. * P < 0.05; **, P < 0.01 compared with control values. Tandem mass spectrometry revealed that the phosphorylated 23-kDa band corresponded to cTnI. (D) ProQ Diamond and EZ Coomassie Blue staining of a representative 2D gel. Isolated cardiomyocytes were incubated in the absence or the presence of 8-pCPT (1 \(\mu\)M, 10 min). Protein extracts were separated by 2D electrophoresis using isoelectric focusing strips (18 cm, pH 3–11, nonlinear). A representative enlargement of the gel showing the marked region is illustrated. Five spots were excised and analyzed by LC/MS/MS to show the presence of cTnI. Densitometric analysis of intensities of protein spots was performed and ratios of volume values are indicated in the table. Changes in intensities of protein spots are indicated as increased (up) or decreased (down) in the stimulated 8-pCPT vs. control (CT). The 5 protein spots were identified using the MASCOT Search Engine. The score refers to the degree of similarity between a sample and a searched database match. A score of ≥65 is considered a properly identified match. ID, identity.
A n d 4 (phoprotein gel staining, followed by total protein staining with Sypro Ruby to reveal a 23-kDa band corresponding to P-cTnI was revealed by ProQ Diamond phos-

Methods

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myosin light chain 2 (Fig. S8). Consistent with our data on cTnI, MLC-2, and TnT (30, 31). In our study, we did not find any effect of Epac activation on the phosphorylation status of myosin light chain 2 (Fig. S8). Consistent with our data on PKC-dependent myofilament sensitization upon Epac activation, the PKC-dependent pathway involving the phosphorylation of cTnI has been previously shown to increase myofilament Ca\(^{2+}\) sensitivity (31, 32). At present, we still do not know which PKC isofrom(s) is (are) specifically involved in the regulation of myofilament protein phosphorylation induced by Epac. Further studies will be needed to identify the specific Epac-dependent phosphorylation sites in cTnI and cMyBP-C.

An important question concerns the physiological or pathophysiological relevance of Epac effects on the phosphorylation of myofilament protein. We show here that ISO increases cMyBP-C phosphorylation in a PKA-independent fashion, suggesting that β-AR may influence sarcomeric phosphorylation via Epac. It is therefore crucial to understand the context in which Epac is regulated by β-AR and the associated functional effects. Epac activity depends on the level of cAMP, which is in turn regulated by adenylyl cyclases and phosphodiesterases (PDE). Some PDE inhibitors, such as adibendan and saterinone referenced as Ca\(^{2+}\) sensitizers (33), behave like Epac. Because PDEs are key enzymes for the regulation of cAMP concentration and diffusion in cardiac cells (34), one can speculate that PDE inhibitors may influence the Epac signaling pathway to account for their Ca\(^{2+}\) sensitizing effects.

Chronic stimulation of β-AR causes hypertrophy in cardiac myocytes (35). Our previous work indicated that Epac contributes to the hypertrophic effect of β-AR in a CaMKII-dependent, but PKA-independent, fashion (19). Consistent with its role in cardiac remodeling, Epac is increased in different animal models of myocardial hypertrophy and upregulates markers of cardiac hypertrophy (12, 19, 36). Altogether these findings, combined with the observation that myofilament properties are altered in cardiac hypertrophy and heart failure, suggest that Epac may play a role in the changes of sarcomeric proteins observed in these pathologies (3).

In conclusion, our data show that the CAMP-binding protein Epac has an opposite effect from PKA on myofilament Ca\(^{2+}\) sensitivity. We demonstrate that Epac is a mediator of sarcomeric proteins’ phosphorylation and may contribute to the regulation of myofilament function. Our data suggest that altered Epac activity in disease may impact on contractile function.

Materials and Methods

Myocyte Preparation. All experiments were carried out according to the ethical principles laid down by the French (Ministry of Agriculture) and European Union Council Directives for the care of laboratory animals. Male Wistar rats (250–300 g) were anesthetized by sodium pentobarbital i.p. injection (2 g/kg). Cardiac tissue was then perfused with an enzyme-containing solution for 20–30 min (1.3 mM taurine) adjusted to pH 7.2 with NaOH and bubbled with 100% O\(_2\). The heart with attached great vessels was then perfused with an enzyme-containing solution for 117 mM NaCl, 5.7 mM KCl, 4.4 mM NaHCO\(_3\), 1.5 mM KH\(_2\)PO\(_4\), 1.7 mM MgCl\(_2\), 21 mM Hepes, 11 mM glucose, 20 mM taurine) adjusted to pH 7.2 with NaOH and bubbled with 100% O\(_2\). The heart was then perfused with an enzyme-containing solution for 20–30 min (1.3 mg/mL\(^{-1}\) collagenase type IV ( Worthington). Cells were then filtered and washed several times in the Hepes-buffered solution containing 0.3 mM Ca\(^{2+}\). Finally, myocytes were kept in Hepes-buffered solution containing 1 mM Ca\(^{2+}\) and 0.5% BSA. The specific relationship between the amount of Ca\(^{2+}\) and the force developed by myofilaments was studied in myocytes permeabilized with 0.3% Triton X-100 in relaxing solution, resulting in a full permeabilization of sarcolemmal, SR, nuclear, and mitochondrial membranes. Myofilaments are activated by perfusing the cell with an internal solution containing increasing amounts of Ca\(^{2+}\). With permeabilized myocytes it is thus possible to measure precisely the relationship between force developed by the myofilaments and the exact amount of Ca\(^{2+}\). Permeabilized cells were incubated with either 8-pCPT (1 μM, 10 min) or 6-BrZcAMP (200 μM, 60 min) in relaxing solution at room temperature (22 °C) to activate Epac and PKA, respectively. We also activated the PKA pathway, using the recombinant catalytic subunit of PKA. For that, permeabilized cells were preincubated for 50 min at room temperature with 200 U of recombinant catalytic subunits of PKA per milliliter of relaxing solution.

For a description of other methods, see SI Materials and Methods.
Chloé Godard, and Céline Boursier for their technical assistance. We acknowledge Bertrand Crozatier for the critical reading of the manuscript. This work was supported by grants from the Agence Nationale de la Recherche (Epac-06 to F-L.), the Association Fransaise Contre les Myopathies (AFM-11590 to O.C.), the Leducq Foundation (Caerus Network) (A.L.), and the Fondation pour la Recherche Médicale (équipe FRM) (F.L.).