

## **The cardiovascular effects of central hydrogen sulphide are related to $K_{ATP}$ channels activation**

Wen-Qing LIU<sup>1,2</sup>, Chen CHAI<sup>3</sup>, Xiao-Yun LI<sup>1</sup>, Wen-Jun YUAN<sup>4,5</sup>, Wei-Zhong WANG<sup>4</sup>, Yan LU<sup>1</sup>

1. Department of Clinical Laboratory, San Ai Tang Hospital, 74 Jing-Ning Road, Lanzhou 730030, China; 2. Department of Anus & Intestine Surgery, Daxing Hospital Affiliated to Capital Medical University; 26 Huang-Cong West Road, BeiJing, 102600; 3. Department of General Surgery, First Hospital of Lanzhou University, 1 Dong-Gang West Road, Lanzhou, 730000, China; 4. Department of Physiology, Second Military Medical University, 800 Xiang-Yin Road, Shanghai 200433, China; 5. Department of Physiology, Ningxia Medical University, 692 Sheng-Li Southern Road, YinChuan, 750004, China.

**Running Head:** central H<sub>2</sub>S and cardiovascular effects

**Total number of pages:** 29

**Total number of figures:** 5

**Co-correspondence:** Dr. Yan LU, Department of Clinical Laboratory, San Ai Tang Hospital, 74 Jing-Ning Road, Lanzhou 730030, China; Tel: +86-931-8933092, Fax: +86-931-8451146, E-mail: [lu73free@yahoo.com.cn](mailto:lu73free@yahoo.com.cn), and Dr. Wei-Zhong Wang Department of Physiology, Second Military Medical University, 800 Xiang-Yin Road, Shanghai 200433, China. Email: [wangwz68@hotmail.com](mailto:wangwz68@hotmail.com)

## **The cardiovascular effects of central hydrogen sulphide are related to $K_{ATP}$ channels activation**

Summary: Hydrogen sulphide ( $H_2S$ ), an endogenous “gasotransmitter”, exists in the central nervous system. However, the central cardiovascular effects of endogenous  $H_2S$  are not fully determined. The present study was designed to investigate the central cardiovascular effects and its possible mechanism in anesthetized rats. Intracerebroventricular (icv) injection of NaHS (0.17 ~ 17  $\mu$ g) produced a significant and dose-dependent decrease in blood pressure (BP) and heart rate (HR) ( $P < 0.05$ ) compared to control. The higher dose of NaHS (17  $\mu$ g, n=6) decreased BP and HR quickly of rats and 2 of them died of respiratory paralyse. Icv injection of the cystathionine beta-synthetase (CBS) activator s-adenosyl-L-methionine (SAM, 26  $\mu$ g) also produced a significant hypotension and bradycardia, which were similar to the results of icv injection of NaHS. Furthermore, the hypotension and bradycardia induced by icv NaHS were effectively attenuated by pretreatment with the  $K_{ATP}$  channel blocker glibenclamide but not with the CBS inhibitor hydroxylamine. The present study suggests that icv injection of NaHS produces hypotension and bradycardia, which is dependent on the  $K_{ATP}$  channel activation.

Keywords: rat, hydrogen sulfide, blood pressure, heart rate, central

## Introduction

Hydrogen sulphide ( $H_2S$ ), which was originally considered as a toxic gas with the smell of rotten eggs (Reiffenstein *et al.* 1992; Beauchamp *et al.* 1984), has been found in most of tissues in mammalian and produces profound influences on nervous system (Eto *et al.* 2002; Kimura. 2002), vascular (Beltowski. 2004; Tang *et al.* 2005), and gastrointestinal smooth muscles (Teague *et al.* 2002; Gallego *et al.* 2008). It has been demonstrated that endogenous  $H_2S$  is produced from L-cysteine metabolism mainly by cystathionine beta-synthetase (CBS), cystathionine gamma-lyase (CSE), or 3-mercaptosulfur-transferase (MST)(Lowicka and Beltowski. 2007; Yang *et al.* 2005). The vascular  $H_2S$  is mostly generated by CSE, while the central  $H_2S$  including brainstem is mainly produced by CBS from cysteine (Hosoki *et al.* 1997; Abe and Kimura. 1996). The brainstem containing cardiovascular centers displays the greatest uptake of sulfide (Warenycia *et al.* 1989). Previous studies show that  $H_2S$  modulates vasodilatation by endothelium- dependent (Distrutti *et al.* 2006) and endothelium-independent mechanism (Wang. 2002), but also regulates neuronal functions in the CNS, including the induction of hippocampal long-term potentiation (Hosoki *et al.* 1997; Abe and Kimura. 1996; Eto *et al.* 2002) and the release of the corticotrophin-releasing hormone from the hypothalamus (Lowicka and Beltowski. 2007; Boehning and Snyder. 2003; Wang. 2002). Therefore,  $H_2S$  has been proposed to be an endogenous “gasotransmitter” besides nitric oxide (NO) and carbon monoxide (CO)(Wang. 2003; Laggner *et al.* 2007; Chen *et al.* 2007).

It has been found that  $H_2S$  contributes to cardiovascular regulation. For example, intravenous injection of  $H_2S$  induces a transient hypotension in anesthetized rats, which can be mimicked by the  $K_{ATP}$  channel opener pinacidil and effectively antagonized by the  $K_{ATP}$  channel blocker glibenclamide (Wang. 2002; Zhao *et al.* 2001). *In vitro*,  $H_2S$  can relax aortic tissue or hyperpolarize membrane in isolated vascular smooth muscle cells (VSMC) (Tang *et al.* 2005; Wang. 2002). In the central

nervous system (CNS), H<sub>2</sub>S induces a hyperpolarization and reduces an input resistance of CA1 neurons or dorsal raphe neurons in K<sub>ATP</sub> channels-dependant manner(Reiffenstein *et al.* 1992). Recently, Dawe et al report that microinjection of NaHS into the hypothalamus reduces BP and HR in rats, which could be effectively antagonized by prior application of the K<sub>ATP</sub> channel blocker gliclazide (Dawe *et al.* 2008). In the waked Wistar Kyoto rats, however, intracerebroventricular (icv) injection of NaHS produces a significant pressor effect (Ufnal *et al.* 2008). It is not clear whether this cardiovascular effect of icv H<sub>2</sub>S is dependent on the K<sub>ATP</sub> channel activation. Hence, in the present study, the main aim was to determine the relationship between the central effect of H<sub>2</sub>S and the functional state of the K<sub>ATP</sub> channel.

## **Materials and Methods**

### **General procedure**

Male Sprague-Dawley (SD) rats (weighing 200 to 250 g) were employed in this study. Each animal experimentation was in accordance with the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (1985), NIH, Bethesda, or European Guidelines on Laboratory Animal Care. The methods for animal preparation, icv injection and histological procedures were similar to those described previously (Lu *et al.* 2005; Lu *et al.* 2007). In brief, rats were anesthetized with urethane (1.3 g/kg, i.p.). For direct measurement of BP, a catheter was inserted into the right femoral artery. BP was sequentially measured and displayed on a channel of a recording system (XJH, 2007, China) by a computer and HR was computed from the BP waveforms and displayed on another channel of the recording system. BP and HR were recorded continuously. Another catheter was inserted into right femoral vein for drug administration. Following tracheotomy, 30 rats (for determination of dose-dependent effects of NaHS or SAM) were spontaneously ventilated. The other rats (pretreatment with hydroxylamine, glibenclamide or vehicle) were paralyzed with triethiodide (10 mg/kg initially and 4mg/kg every 30min, i.v.) and artificially ventilated with oxygen-enriched room air. Adequacy of anesthesia was assessed by monitoring the stability of BP, and BP response to noxious stimulation. Body temperature was maintained at about 37 °C with an infrared heating lamp.

### **Icv injection**

The rats were fixed on a stereotaxic frame (MP8003, China) and received a limited craniotomy. Icv injection was performed by a microsyringe (5  $\mu$ l). The stereotaxic coordinates of lateral cerebral ventricle (LCV) were determined according to the Paxinos and Watson rat atlas (1.0 mm lateral to medial line, 1.5 mm caudal to bregma, and 4.5 mm deep from the bone surface). All chemicals were obtained from Sigma Corporation (America). NaHS, hydroxylamine and SAM was dissolved in artificial cerebrospinal fluid (aCSF, in mM: 133.3 NaCl, 3.4 KCl, 1.3 CaCl<sub>2</sub>, 1.2 MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 0.6 NaH<sub>2</sub> PO<sub>4</sub>, 32.0 NaHCO<sub>3</sub>, and 3.4 glucose, pH to 7.4 by 0.5 M hydrochloric acid). The NaHS solution was strictly temporary prepared in an enclosed vital before microinjection, which made NaHS solution less dissociated. Glibenclamide was initially dissolved in dimethylsulfoxide (DMSO) and diluted with aCSF to the final concentration (the final percentage of DMSO in aCSF is not more than 1%). The dose of NaHS, SAM, HA and glibenclamide was based on our preliminary experiment and previous studies (Dawe *et al.* 2008; Nishimura *et al.* 1995b; Nishimura *et al.* 1995a; Lin *et al.* 1999). The volume of drug injection was 5  $\mu$ l, and delivered over a period of approximately 30 s. At the end of each experiment, 5  $\mu$ l of 2% Pontamine sky blue solution was injected into LCV to identify the injection area. The brain was removed and sectioned to determine the injection area. Histological examination revealed that the dye was correctly injected into the LCV in all experimental rats.

## **Experimental protocol**

First, NaHS ( 0.17-17  $\mu\text{g}$  ) , a donor of  $\text{H}_2\text{S}$ , was injected into LCV in 19 rats to observe the dose-dependent effects of central  $\text{H}_2\text{S}$ . In another 7 rats, the cardiovascular functions of central NaHS were determined by increased the concentration of endogenous  $\text{H}_2\text{S}$  by icv application of the allosteric CBS activator SAM (26  $\mu\text{g}$ ). ACSF (5  $\mu\text{L}$ ) was injected (icv) in 4 rats as control. The responses to icv injection of NaHS, SAM, or aCSF were followed at least 1 hour. HA(n=7), an inhibitor of CBS , was prior respectively applied into LCV of rats, and NaHS (1.7  $\mu\text{g}$ ) was injected after 10 min, BP and HR response was followed at least 1 hour after NaHS injection to observe the  $\text{H}_2\text{S}$  central cardiovascular responses after CBS was inhibited. Furthermore, to determine whether the cardiovascular effects of central  $\text{H}_2\text{S}$  was mediated by  $\text{K}_{\text{ATP}}$  channels (n=7), the  $\text{K}_{\text{ATP}}$  channel blocker glibenclamide was prior icv injected, and NaHS (1.7  $\mu\text{g}$ ) was centrally applied after 10 min. The mixed solution of aCSF and DMSO (100:1, n=4) was applied as vehicle group.

### **Statistical analysis**

All values are presented as mean  $\pm$  SE. The magnitudes of the changes in mean arterial pressure (MAP) and HR at the different times after injection of agents were compared with a one-way repeated-measures ANOVA followed with the Newman-Keuls test for post hoc analysis was used when multiple comparisons were made. Pre- vs. post-injection comparisons in same animal were evaluated by Student's t-test. The criterion for statistical significance was set at  $P < 0.05$ .

## Results

### Effects of icv injection of NaHS or SAM on BP and HR

Fig. 1 presented the representative original tracings of BP and HR in response to icv injection of NaHS (0.17 ~ 17  $\mu$ g), SAM (26  $\mu$ g) or aCSF. Injection of aCSF did not change MAP ( $96 \pm 5$  vs.  $94 \pm 4$  mmHg,  $P > 0.05$ ,  $n=4$ ) and HR [ $481 \pm 30$  vs.  $461 \pm 43$  beats per min (bpm),  $P > 0.05$ ,  $n=5$ ]. Central application of NaHS (0.17 ~ 17  $\mu$ g) produced a significant and dose-dependent decrease in BP (0.17  $\mu$ g: from  $92 \pm 4$  to  $67 \pm 7$  mmHg,  $n=7$ ; 1.7  $\mu$ g: from  $89 \pm 4$  to  $49 \pm 4$  mmHg,  $P < 0.05$ ,  $n=6$ ) and HR (0.17  $\mu$ g: from  $440 \pm 8$  to  $382 \pm 8$  bpm,  $P < 0.05$ ,  $n=7$ ; 1.7  $\mu$ g: from  $449 \pm 8$  to  $376 \pm 16$  bpm,  $P < 0.05$ ,  $n=6$ ). The hypotension and bradycardia occurred 5 min after administration of NaHS, followed by a sustained decrease, and reached the nadir after 40 min. BP and HR didn't return to the baseline levels within 60 min. Icv injection of NaHS (17  $\mu$ g,  $n=4$ ) produced rapidly hypotension (from  $97 \pm 2$  to  $57 \pm 9$  mmHg,  $P < 0.05$ ) and bradycardia (from  $415 \pm 14$  to  $368 \pm 24$  bpm,  $P < 0.05$ ,  $n=5$ ). In 6 rats, 2 of them died of respiratory paralysis within 15 min because of no artificial ventilation promptly. The central cardiovascular effects of endogenous H<sub>2</sub>S were further determined by application of SAM, an activator of CBS, into LCV of rats. Icv injection of SAM (26  $\mu$ g,  $n=7$ ) elicited a significant decrease in BP and HR, which was similar to those of icv NaHS. The hypotension (from  $94 \pm 6$  to  $71 \pm 10$  mmHg,  $n=8$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) and bradycardia (from  $444 \pm 35$  to  $385 \pm 64$  bpm,  $n=7$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) induced by icv injection of SAM also occurred 5 min after administration, followed a sustained decrease in BP and HR, and didn't return to baseline within 60 min. The changes in MAP and HR in



response to icv injection of NaHS or SAM were summarized in Fig.2.

### **Effects of pretreatment with HA on the cardiovascular effects of icv injection of NaHS**

Fig.3 presented the representative original tracings of the effect of prior application of vehicle (aCSF, 5  $\mu$ L, n=5) or the CBS inhibitor HA (0.7 mg, n=7) on the BP and HR responses to icv injection of NaHS. Pretreatment with aCSF neither altered the basal BP ( $92 \pm 4$  mmHg vs.  $97 \pm 8$  mmHg,  $P > 0.05$ ) and HR ( $437 \pm 37$  vs.  $446 \pm 41$  bpm,  $P > 0.05$ ) nor influenced the responses of BP (from  $97 \pm 7$  to  $63 \pm 13$  mmHg,  $P < 0.05$ ) and HR (from  $446 \pm 41$  to  $416 \pm 36$  bpm,  $P < 0.05$ ) to icv injection of NaHS (Fig.4). Icv injection of HA produced a significant decrease in BP (from  $93 \pm 3$  to  $76 \pm 5$  mmHg,  $P < 0.05$ ) but didn't influence HR ( $433 \pm 5$  vs.  $418 \pm 9$  bpm,  $P > 0.05$ ). Prior icv injection of HA didn't alter the BP (aCSF pretreatment:  $-28 \pm 12$  vs. HA pretreatment:  $-21 \pm 9$  mmHg,  $P > 0.05$ ) or HR (aCSF pretreatment:  $-30 \pm 10$  vs. HA pretreatment:  $-45 \pm 28$  bpm,  $P > 0.05$ , Fig.5) responses to icv NaHS. The influences of prior application of HA on the BP or HR response to NaHS were summarized in Fig. 5.

### **Effects of pretreatment with the $K_{ATP}$ channels blocker glibenclamide on the cardiovascular response to icv injection of NaHS**

Fig.4 presented the representative original tracings of the effect of prior application of vehicle (aCSF, 5  $\mu$ L, n=5) or the  $K_{ATP}$  channels blocker glibenclamide

(0.5  $\mu\text{g}$ ,  $n=7$ ) on the BP and HR responses to icv injection of NaHS. Icv injection of vehicle didn't alter the basal BP ( $93 \pm 9$  vs.  $93 \pm 11$  mmHg,  $P>0.05$ ) and HR ( $465 \pm 28$  vs.  $462 \pm 22$  mmHg,  $P>0.05$ ), but also didn't influence hypotension (from  $93 \pm 11$  to  $79 \pm 18$  mmHg,  $P<0.05$ ) and bradycardia (from  $462 \pm 22$  vs.  $410 \pm 49$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) of icv application of NaHS (1.7  $\mu\text{g}$ ) on BP. Central application of glibenclamide (0.5  $\mu\text{g}$ ,  $n=7$ ) produced no significant influences on the basal BP (from  $103 \pm 5$  to  $99 \pm 5$  mmHg,  $P>0.05$ ) and HR ( $437 \pm 39$  vs.  $435 \pm 36$  bpm,  $P>0.05$ ), but significantly decreased the hypotension ( $-14 \pm 9$  vs.  $-5 \pm 4$  mmHg,  $P<0.05$ ) and bradycardia ( $-52 \pm 33$  vs.  $18 \pm 27$  bpm,  $P<0.05$ ) induced by icv injection of 1.7  $\mu\text{g}$  NaHS (Fig.5).

## Discussion

In the present study, our important findings were: 1. central application of the endogenous H<sub>2</sub>S donor NaHS or the activator of CBS SAM produced hypotension and bradycardia; and 2. the central cardiovascular effects of endogenous H<sub>2</sub>S were dependent on the K<sub>ATP</sub> channel activation.

In the present study, we found that icv application of NaHS (0.17 ~ 17 µg) produced a sustained and marked hypotension and bradycardia. It is known that the cerebral spinal fluid (CSF) of rat is about 250 µL. The final concentration of H<sub>2</sub>S in CSF in present study is about 40-400 µmol/L, does not exceed twice of the physiological concentration level, under the lethal concentration of H<sub>2</sub>S in the brain(Warenycia *et al.* 1989).

More recently, it is reported that the concentration of tissue free hydrogen sulfide is only on the order of 15 nM, which is very lower than the presently accepted values (Furne *et al.* 2008), implicating that H<sub>2</sub>S might serve as an endogenously gaseous messenger in very low concentration. H<sub>2</sub>S dissociates to H<sup>+</sup> and HS<sup>-</sup> in solution. In physiologic conditions (37°C, pH 7.4), only a little of H<sub>2</sub>S (less than one fifth) exists as the undissociated form (H<sub>2</sub>S), and the remaining four fifths exist as HS<sup>-</sup> plus a trace of S<sup>2-</sup> at equilibrium with H<sub>2</sub>S(Dombkowski *et al.* 2004; Webb *et al.* 2008). Although which active form of H<sub>2</sub>S (H<sub>2</sub>S, HS<sup>-</sup>, or S<sup>2-</sup>, the mix of free inorganic sulfides) has not been determined, Ondrias, K et al assumed that HS<sup>-</sup> (but not H<sub>2</sub>S or S<sup>2-</sup>) is probably the active form of 'H<sub>2</sub>S' because the effects of NaHS on stimulating NO release from NO donors depend on the pH (Ondrias *et al.* 2008). The higher dose (17 µg ) produced obviously toxic responses because the rats died for respiratory inhibition if not artificial ventilation promptly. It is hypothesized that the hypotension and bradycardia of H<sub>2</sub>S (0.17 ~ 17 µg) are the physiological responses rather than toxic responses. However, our results are different from the results reported by Ufnal M et al (Ufnal *et al.* 2008). It may be due to following reasons: 1. In our study, the rats

were anaesthetized; 2. NaHS was administrated by an bolus injection (20 mM) in our study, while it was administrated by continuously infusion (100~400 nM of NaHS/h) in Ufnal M's study(Ufnal *et al.* 2008). 3. The doses of NaHS used in Ufnal M's study (100~400 nM of NaHS/h) were significantly lower than those in our present study. In a thesis (Huang, et al, published in Chinese), Huang et al reported that electrophoresis NaHS (-60 nA, -90 nA or -120 nA) produced exciting-inhibiting biphasic responses in presympathetic neurons in rats (Huang. 2008). Based on their results, we supposed that H<sub>2</sub>S probably produced different responses in BP of rats, low concentration mainly produced hypertension while high dose produced hypotension. Our study didn't found significant hypertension in any time point probably because of the differences in the way of administration and anesthetized rats.

Our conclusion is also supported by icv injection of CBS activator SAM. Previous studies have demonstrated that SAM is an allosteric regulator of CBS, which activates CBS by approximately two-fold (Finkelstein. 2007; Abe and Kimura. 1996). We found that central application of SAM (26 µg) produced such a significant decrease in BP and HR as those of central application of NaHS, strongly supporting that central H<sub>2</sub>S produces a decrease in BP and HR in anesthetized rats.

Besides, our study shows that HA, an inhibitor of CBS, significantly decreased basal BP but didn't influence basal HR. It has been reported that HA is a donor of NO. Central application of HA can efficiently decrease BP by increasing the central concentration of NO (Lin *et al.* 1999). Additionally, HA effectively inhibits the production of endogenous H<sub>2</sub>S as an allosteric inhibitor of CBS(Abe and Kimura. 1996; Han *et al.* 2005).However, in our study we observed that HA didn't influence the cardiovascular effects of central application of NaHS, suggesting that HA doesn't affect the conversion between H<sub>2</sub>S and NaHS. Previous studies also indicate that the

release of NO was stimulated by NaHS not only from NO donors but also from rat brain homogenate and from L1210 cells (Ondrias *et al.* 2008). This may be supported by numerous reports showing that 'H<sub>2</sub>S' shares many biological effects with NO. (Cabrera and Bohr. 1995). It is assumed that the hypotension and bradycardia induced by icv injection of NaHS probably be the consequence of increase in the release of NO in central system because icv injection of S-nitrosothiols, a donor of NO, produces the similar hypotension and bradycardia as NaHS. HA as a kind of donor of NO has been well accepted (Lin *et al.* 1999). In addition, HA can inhibit nitric oxide synthase (Abe and Kimura. 1996; Han *et al.* 2005). In our present study, however, icv injection of HA, an inhibitor of nitric oxide, didn't alter the hypotension and bradycardia induced by icv injection of NaHS. The data shown above argue against the opinion that the cardiovascular functions of icv injection of NaHS might be the results of increase in the release of NO by H<sub>2</sub>S.

To address the question whether the cardiovascular effects of central H<sub>2</sub>S are mediated by K<sub>ATP</sub> channels activation, the blocker of K<sub>ATP</sub> glibenclamide was applied to observe whether the cardiovascular effects of central H<sub>2</sub>S is effectively attenuated by blocking of K<sub>ATP</sub> channel. Our data indicates that glibenclamide completely abolishes the hemodynamic effects induced by icv injection of NaHS. Hence, it suggests that the central hemodynamic effects of NaHS are mediated by K<sub>ATP</sub> channels activation. It has been reported that glibenclazide effectively antagonizes the depressor effects within posterior hypothalamus and vasorelaxation of smooth muscles (Geng *et al.* 2007; Dawe *et al.* 2008) as a selective blocker of K<sub>ATP</sub> channels.

In our present study, we found that the cardiovascular effects of icv injection of NaHS were effectively antagonized by glibenclamide. However, we didn't know the exact role of  $K_{ATP}$  channel activation in mediating central cardiovascular effects of  $H_2S$ . In CNS,  $K_{ATP}$  channels consist of the Kir6.x potassium channel subunits and the sulfonylurea receptor subunits (Kang *et al.* 2004; Babenko *et al.* 1998), similar to those in heart and muscle (Liss and Roeper. 2001). KIR6.x subunits belong to the inward rectifier potassium channel family, while SUR subunits belong to the ATP-binding cassette protein superfamily (Aguilar-Bryan and Bryan. 1999). Previous studies show that the central  $K_{ATP}$  channels, which play a vital role in glucose homeostasis, might be independent on cytosolic second messengers (Minami *et al.* 2003; Minami *et al.* 2004). Although the existence of  $K_{ATP}$  channels in brainstem has been determined by previous studies (Ferreira *et al.* 2001; Dallaporta *et al.* 2000), the signaling pathway of  $K_{ATP}$  involved in regulation of cardiovascular effects is not clear.

It has been well known that activation of  $K_{ATP}$  channels is crucial to keep neuronal excitability in chemoreflex pathways in NTS (nucleus tractus solitarii, NTS) level (Zhang *et al.* 2008). However, whether the hypotension induced by central  $H_2S$  is dependent on chemoreflex are not clear. Because the cardiovascular responses to application of NaHS or SAM into LCV might be mediated by integrative interactions between different central cardiovascular regions, no evidence is available to determine which regions are involved in mediating the cardiovascular functions of central  $H_2S$ . Perhaps the reduction of the release of several neurotransmitters,

including excitatory transmitter glutamate (Soundarapandian *et al.* 2007) and inhibitory transmitter GABA (Avshalumov and Rice. 2003) as well as the functions of NMDA receptors by activation of  $K_{ATP}$  channels is involved in the hypotension of central  $H_2S$ . The exact cardiovascular mechanism of central  $H_2S$  needs to be further determined.

### **Acknowledgments**

This work was supported by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (No. 30700266). We thank Prof. Ya-Na BAI for her expert statistical assistance.

## References

- ABE K, KIMURA H: The possible role of hydrogen sulfide as an endogenous neuromodulator *J Neurosci* **16**: 1066-1071, 1996.
- AGUILAR-BRYAN L, BRYAN J: Molecular biology of adenosine triphosphate-sensitive potassium channels *Endocr Rev* **20**: 101-135, 1999.
- AVSHALUMOV M V, RICE M E: Activation of ATP-sensitive K<sup>+</sup> (K(ATP)) channels by H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> underlies glutamate-dependent inhibition of striatal dopamine release *Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A* **100**: 11729-11734, 2003.
- BABENKO A P, AGUILAR-BRYAN L, BRYAN J: A view of sur/KIR6.X, KATP channels *Annu Rev Physiol* **60**: 667-687, 1998.
- BEAUCHAMP R O, JR., BUS J S, POPP J A, BOREIKO C J, ANDJELKOVICH D A: A critical review of the literature on hydrogen sulfide toxicity *Crit Rev Toxicol* **13**: 25-97, 1984.
- BELTOWSKI J: [Hydrogen sulfide as a biologically active mediator in the cardiovascular system] *Postepy Hig Med Dosw (Online)* **58**: 285-291, 2004.
- BOEHNING D, SNYDER S H: Novel neural modulators *Annu Rev Neurosci* **26**: 105-131, 2003.
- CABRERA C, BOHR D: The role of nitric oxide in the central control of blood pressure *Biochem Biophys Res Commun* **206**: 77-81, 1995.
- CHEN C Q, XIN H, ZHU Y Z: Hydrogen sulfide: third gaseous transmitter, but with great pharmacological potential *Acta Pharmacol Sin* **28**: 1709-1716, 2007.
- DALLAPORTA M, PERRIN J, ORSINI J C: Involvement of adenosine



- triphosphate-sensitive K<sup>+</sup> channels in glucose-sensing in the rat solitary tract nucleus *Neurosci Lett* **278**: 77-80, 2000.
- DAWE G S, HAN S P, BIAN J S, MOORE P K: Hydrogen sulphide in the hypothalamus causes an ATP-sensitive K<sup>+</sup> channel-dependent decrease in blood pressure in freely moving rats *Neuroscience* **152**: 169-177, 2008.
- DISTRUTTI E, SEDIARI L, MENCARELLI A, RENGÀ B, ORLANDI S, ANTONELLI E, ROVIEZZO F, MORELLI A, CIRINO G, WALLACE J L, FIORUCCI S: Evidence that hydrogen sulfide exerts antinociceptive effects in the gastrointestinal tract by activating K<sub>ATP</sub> channels *J Pharmacol Exp Ther* **316**: 325-335, 2006.
- DOMBKOWSKI R A, RUSSELL M J, OLSON K R: Hydrogen sulfide as an endogenous regulator of vascular smooth muscle tone in trout *Am J Physiol Regul Integr Comp Physiol* **286**: R678-685, 2004.
- ETO K, OGASAWARA M, UMEMURA K, NAGAI Y, KIMURA H: Hydrogen sulfide is produced in response to neuronal excitation *J Neurosci* **22**: 3386-3391, 2002.
- FERREIRA M, JR., BROWNING K N, SAHIBZADA N, VERBALIS J G, GILLIS R A, TRAVAGLI R A: Glucose effects on gastric motility and tone evoked from the rat dorsal vagal complex *J Physiol* **536**: 141-152, 2001.
- FINKELSTEIN J D: Metabolic regulatory properties of S-adenosylmethionine and S-adenosylhomocysteine *Clin Chem Lab Med* **45**: 1694-1699, 2007.
- FURNE J, SAEED A, LEVITT M D: Whole tissue hydrogen sulfide concentrations are

- orders of magnitude lower than presently accepted values *Am J Physiol Regul Integr Comp Physiol* **295**: R1479-1485, 2008.
- GALLEGO D, CLAVE P, DONOVAN J, RAHMATI R, GRUNDY D, JIMENEZ M, BEYAK M J: The gaseous mediator, hydrogen sulphide, inhibits in vitro motor patterns in the human, rat and mouse colon and jejunum *Neurogastroenterol Motil* **20**: 1306-1316, 2008.
- GENG B, CUI Y, ZHAO J, YU F, ZHU Y, XU G, ZHANG Z, TANG C, DU J: Hydrogen sulfide downregulates the aortic L-arginine/nitric oxide pathway in rats *Am J Physiol Regul Integr Comp Physiol* **293**: R1608-1618, 2007.
- HAN Y, QIN J, CHANG X, YANG Z, TANG X, DU J: Hydrogen sulfide may improve the hippocampal damage induced by recurrent febrile seizures in rats *Biochem Biophys Res Commun* **327**: 431-436, 2005.
- HOSOKI R, MATSUKI N, KIMURA H: The possible role of hydrogen sulfide as an endogenous smooth muscle relaxant in synergy with nitric oxide *Biochem Biophys Res Commun* **237**: 527-531, 1997.
- HUANG Y 2008 Hydrogen Sulfide Affects Presympathetic Neurons in RVLM in Rats  
Second Military Medical University
- KANG Y, LEUNG Y M, MANNING-FOX J E, XIA F, XIE H, SHEU L, TSUSHIMA R G, LIGHT P E, GAISANO H Y: Syntaxin-1A inhibits cardiac KATP channels by its actions on nucleotide binding folds 1 and 2 of sulfonylurea receptor 2A *J Biol Chem* **279**: 47125-47131, 2004.
- KIMURA H: Hydrogen sulfide as a neuromodulator *Mol Neurobiol* **26**: 13-19, 2002.

- LAGGNER H, HERMANN M, ESTERBAUER H, MUELLNER M K, EXNER M, GMEINER B M, KAPIOTIS S: The novel gaseous vasorelaxant hydrogen sulfide inhibits angiotensin-converting enzyme activity of endothelial cells *J Hypertens* **25**: 2100-2104, 2007.
- LIN M T, PAN S P, LIN J H, YANG Y L: Central control of blood pressure by nitregeric mechanisms in organum vasculosum laminae terminalis of rat brain *Br J Pharmacol* **127**: 1511-1517, 1999.
- LISS B, ROEPER J: Molecular physiology of neuronal K-ATP channels (review) *Mol Membr Biol* **18**: 117-127, 2001.
- LOWICKA E, BELTOWSKI J: Hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S) - the third gas of interest for pharmacologists *Pharmacol Rep* **59**: 4-24, 2007.
- LU Y, WANG L G, LIAO Z, TANG C S, WANG W Z, YUAN W J: Cardiovascular effects of centrally applied endothelin-1 1-31 and its relationship to endothelin-1 1-21 in rats *Auton Neurosci* **133**: 146-152, 2007.
- LU Y, WANG W Z, LIAO Z, YAN X H, TANG C S, YUAN W J: Blood pressure responses of endothelin-1 1-31 within the rostral ventrolateral medulla through conversion to endothelin-1 1-21 *J Cardiovasc Pharmacol* **46**: 823-829, 2005.
- MINAMI K, MIKI T, KADOWAKI T, SEINO S: Roles of ATP-sensitive K<sup>+</sup> channels as metabolic sensors: studies of Kir6.x null mice *Diabetes* **53 Suppl 3**: S176-180, 2004.
- MINAMI K, MORITA M, SARAYA A, YANO H, TERAUCHI Y, MIKI T, KURIYAMA T, KADOWAKI T, SEINO S: ATP-sensitive K<sup>+</sup>

- channel-mediated glucose uptake is independent of IRS-1/phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase signaling *Am J Physiol Endocrinol Metab* **285**: E1289-1296, 2003.
- NISHIMURA M, NANBU A, SAKAMOTO M, NAKANISHI T, TAKAHASHI H, YOSHIMURA M: Role of cerebral ATP-sensitive K<sup>+</sup> channels in arterial pressure regulation during acute cerebral ischaemia in SHR and WKY rats *Clin Exp Pharmacol Physiol Suppl* **22**: S70-72, 1995a.
- NISHIMURA M, TAKAHASHI H, NANBU A, SAKAMOTO M, NAKANISHI T, YOSHIMURA M: Cerebral ATP-sensitive potassium channels during acute reduction of carotid blood flow *Hypertension* **25**: 1069-1074, 1995b.
- ONDRIAS K, STASKO A, CACANYIOVA S, SULOVA Z, KRIZANOVA O, KRISTEK F, MALEKOVA L, KNEZL V, BREIER A: H<sub>2</sub>S and HS(-) donor NaHS releases nitric oxide from nitrosothiols, metal nitrosyl complex, brain homogenate and murine L1210 leukaemia cells *Pflugers Arch* **457**: 271-279, 2008.
- REIFFENSTEIN R J, HULBERT W C, ROTH S H: Toxicology of hydrogen sulfide *Annu Rev Pharmacol Toxicol* **32**: 109-134, 1992.
- SOUNDARAPANDIAN M M, WU D, ZHONG X, PETRALIA R S, PENG L, TU W, LU Y: Expression of functional Kir6.1 channels regulates glutamate release at CA3 synapses in generation of epileptic form of seizures *J Neurochem* **103**: 1982-1988, 2007.
- TANG G, WU L, LIANG W, WANG R: Direct stimulation of K(ATP) channels by exogenous and endogenous hydrogen sulfide in vascular smooth muscle cells

- Mol Pharmacol* **68**: 1757-1764, 2005.
- TEAGUE B, ASIEDU S, MOORE P K: The smooth muscle relaxant effect of hydrogen sulphide in vitro: evidence for a physiological role to control intestinal contractility *Br J Pharmacol* **137**: 139-145, 2002.
- UFNAL M, SIKORA M, DUDEK M: Exogenous hydrogen sulfide produces hemodynamic effects by triggering central neuroregulatory mechanisms *Acta Neurobiol Exp (Wars)* **68**: 382-388, 2008.
- WANG R: Two's company, three's a crowd: can H<sub>2</sub>S be the third endogenous gaseous transmitter? *FASEB J* **16**: 1792-1798, 2002.
- WANG R: The gasotransmitter role of hydrogen sulfide *Antioxid Redox Signal* **5**: 493-501, 2003.
- WARENYCIA M W, GOODWIN L R, BENISHIN C G, REIFFENSTEIN R J, FRANCOM D M, TAYLOR J D, DIEKEN F P: Acute hydrogen sulfide poisoning. Demonstration of selective uptake of sulfide by the brainstem by measurement of brain sulfide levels *Biochem Pharmacol* **38**: 973-981, 1989.
- WEBB G D, LIM L H, OH V M, YEO S B, CHEONG Y P, ALI M Y, EL OAKLEY R, LEE C N, WONG P S, CALEB M G, SALTO-TELLEZ M, BHATIA M, CHAN E S, TAYLOR E A, MOORE P K: Contractile and vasorelaxant effects of hydrogen sulfide and its biosynthesis in the human internal mammary artery *J Pharmacol Exp Ther* **324**: 876-882, 2008.
- YANG W, YANG G, JIA X, WU L, WANG R: Activation of KATP channels by H<sub>2</sub>S in rat insulin-secreting cells and the underlying mechanisms *J Physiol* **569**:

519-531, 2005.

ZHANG W, CARRENO F R, CUNNINGHAM J T, MIFFLIN S W: Chronic sustained and intermittent hypoxia reduce function of ATP-sensitive potassium channels in nucleus of the solitary tract *Am J Physiol Regul Integr Comp Physiol* **295**: R1555-1562, 2008.

ZHAO W, ZHANG J, LU Y, WANG R: The vasorelaxant effect of H<sub>2</sub>S as a novel endogenous gaseous K(ATP) channel opener *EMBO J* **20**: 6008-6016, 2001.

## Figure legends

**Figure 1.** The representative tracings showing the effects of injection (icv) of artificial cerebrospinal fluid (aCSF, 5  $\mu$ L, A), hydrogen sulphide (NaHS, 0.17 ~ 17  $\mu$ g, B) or S-adenosyl- L- methionine (SAM, 26  $\mu$ g, C) on the blood pressure (BP) and heart rate (HR) response. The arrow point indicated the time point of icv injection of aCSF, NaHS or SAM.

**Figure 2.** The effects of icv injection of artificial cerebrospinal fluid (aCSF, 5  $\mu$ L), hydrogen sulphide (NaHS, 0.17 ~ 17  $\mu$ g) or S-adenosyl- L- methionine (SAM, 26  $\mu$ g) on blood pressure (A) and heart rate (B) of rats (n=4-7). \*  $P < 0.05$ , compared with preinjection of aCSF, NaHS, or SAM by Student's *t*-test statistical test.

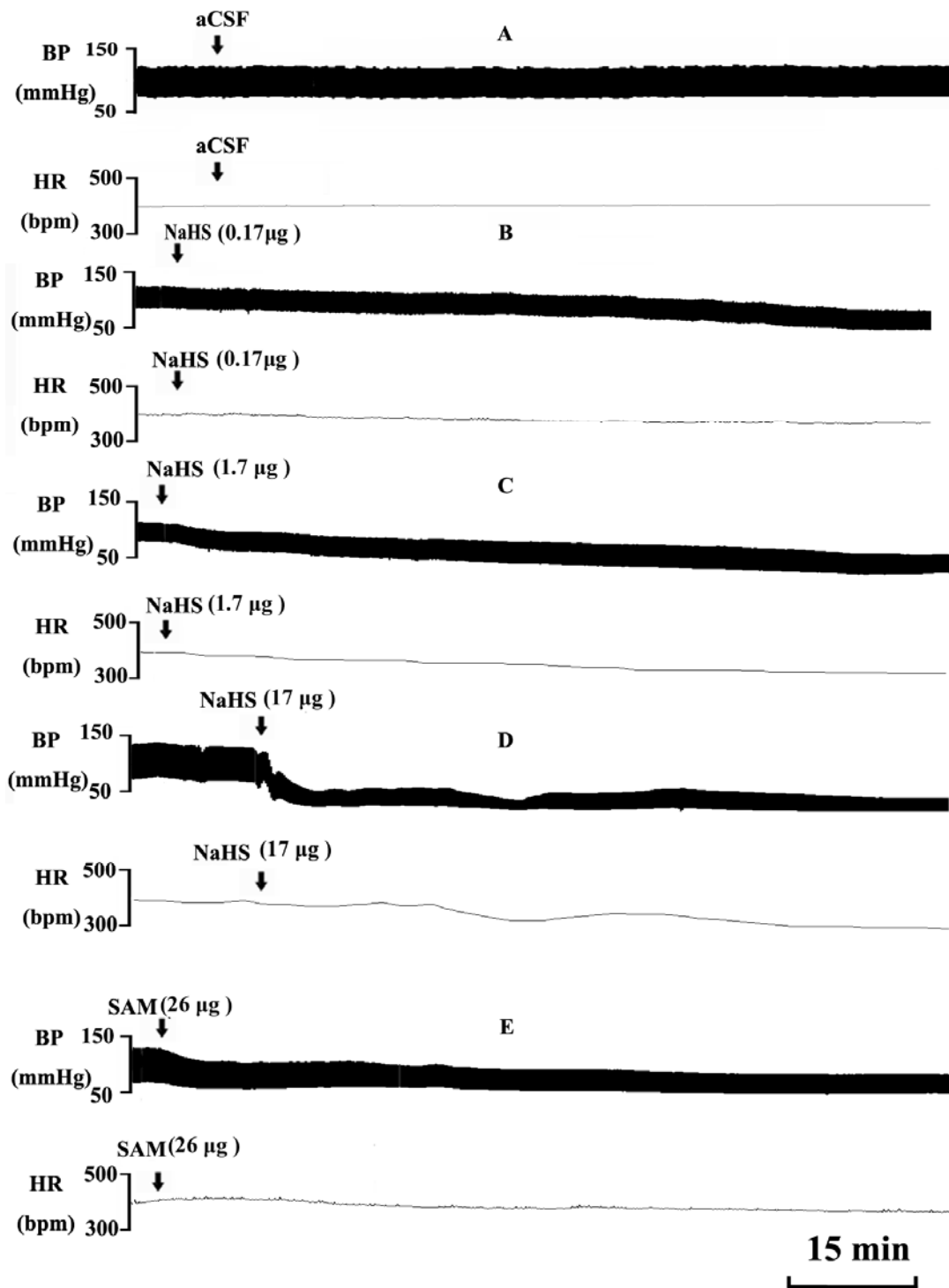
**Figure 3.** The representative tracings showing the effects of prior administration of vehicle (aCSF, 5  $\mu$ L, A) or hydroxylamine (HA, 0.7 mg, B) on blood pressure (BP) and heart rate (HR) response to icv application of hydrogen sulphide (NaHS, 1.7  $\mu$ g) in rats. The arrow indicated the time point of prior injection of vehicle (aCSF) or HA. NaHS was injected after 10 min.

**Figure 4.** The representative tracings showing the effects of prior administration of vehicle (aCSF, 5  $\mu$ L, A) or glibenclimide (0.5  $\mu$ g, B) on blood pressure (BP) and heart rate (HR) response to icv application of hydrogen sulphide (NaHS, 1.7  $\mu$ g) in

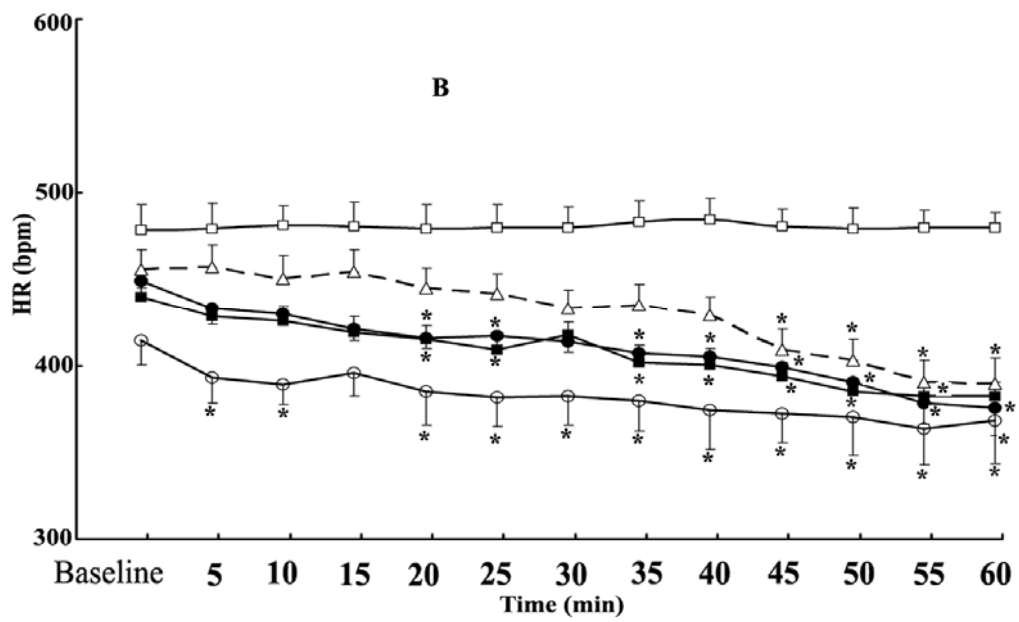
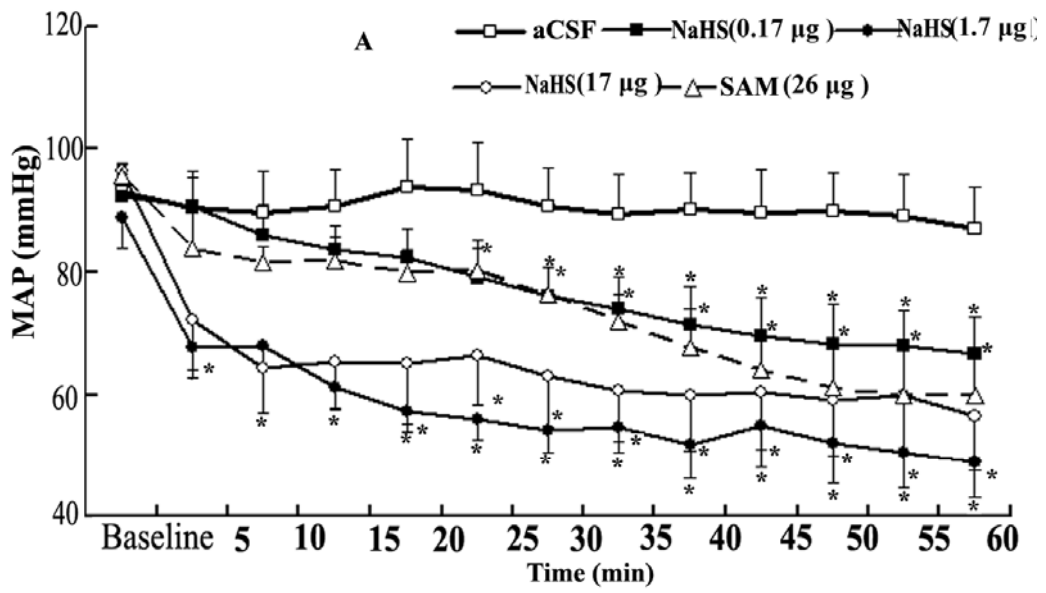
rats. The arrow indicated the time point of prior injection of vehicle (aCSF) or glibenclamide. NaHS was injected after 10 min.

**Figure 5.** Bar graphs showing the effects of pretreatment with hydroxylamine (HA, 0.7 mg ) or glibenclamide (0.5  $\mu$ g ) on blood pressure (BP) and heart rate (HR) response to icv injection of NaHS (1.7  $\mu$ g). ACSF + NaHS: pretreatment with aCSF; HA+NaHS: pretreatment with hydroxylamine (HA); aCSF/DMSO + NaHS: pretreatment with mix solution of aCSF and DMSO (the concentration of DMSO was not more than 1%); glibenclamide + NaHS: pretreatment with glibenclamide.  $P < 0.05$ , compared with pretreatment vehicle (aCSF, ANOVA test).

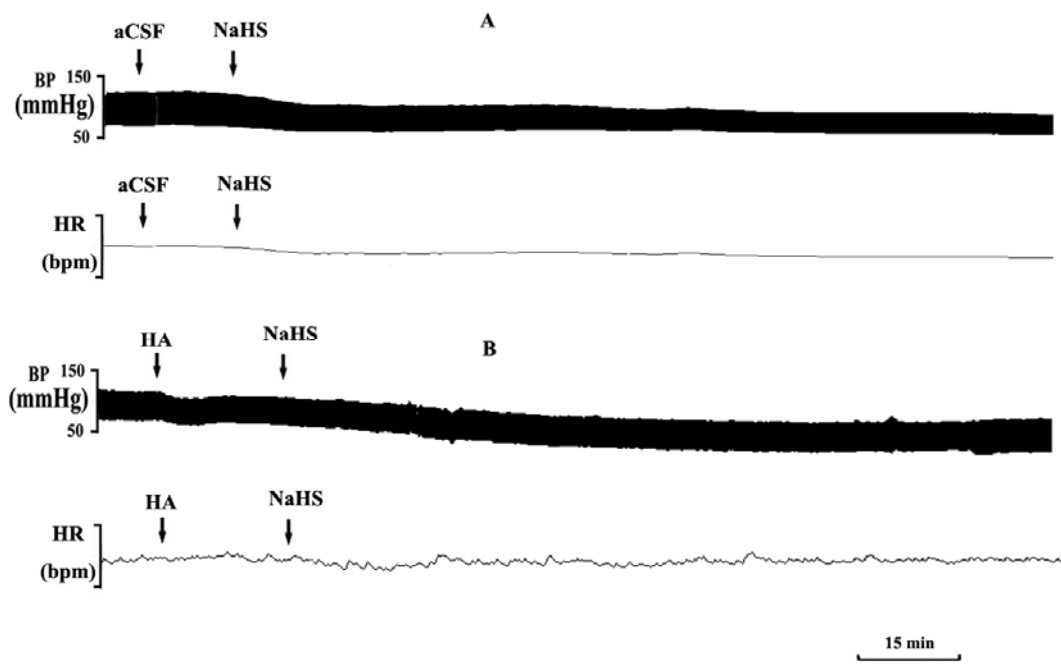




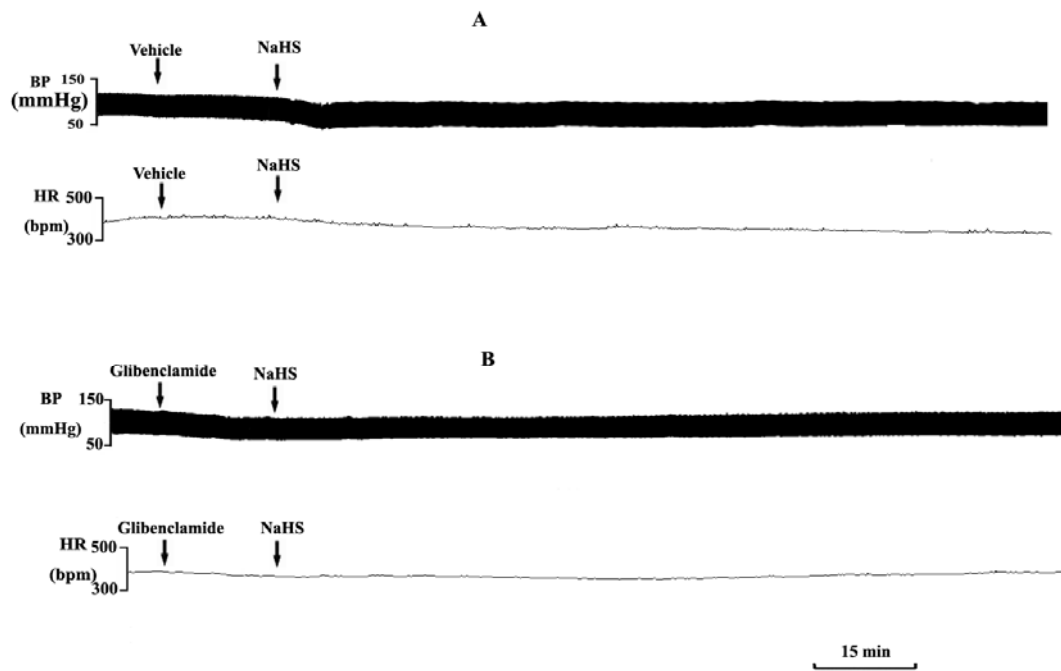
**Fig.1**



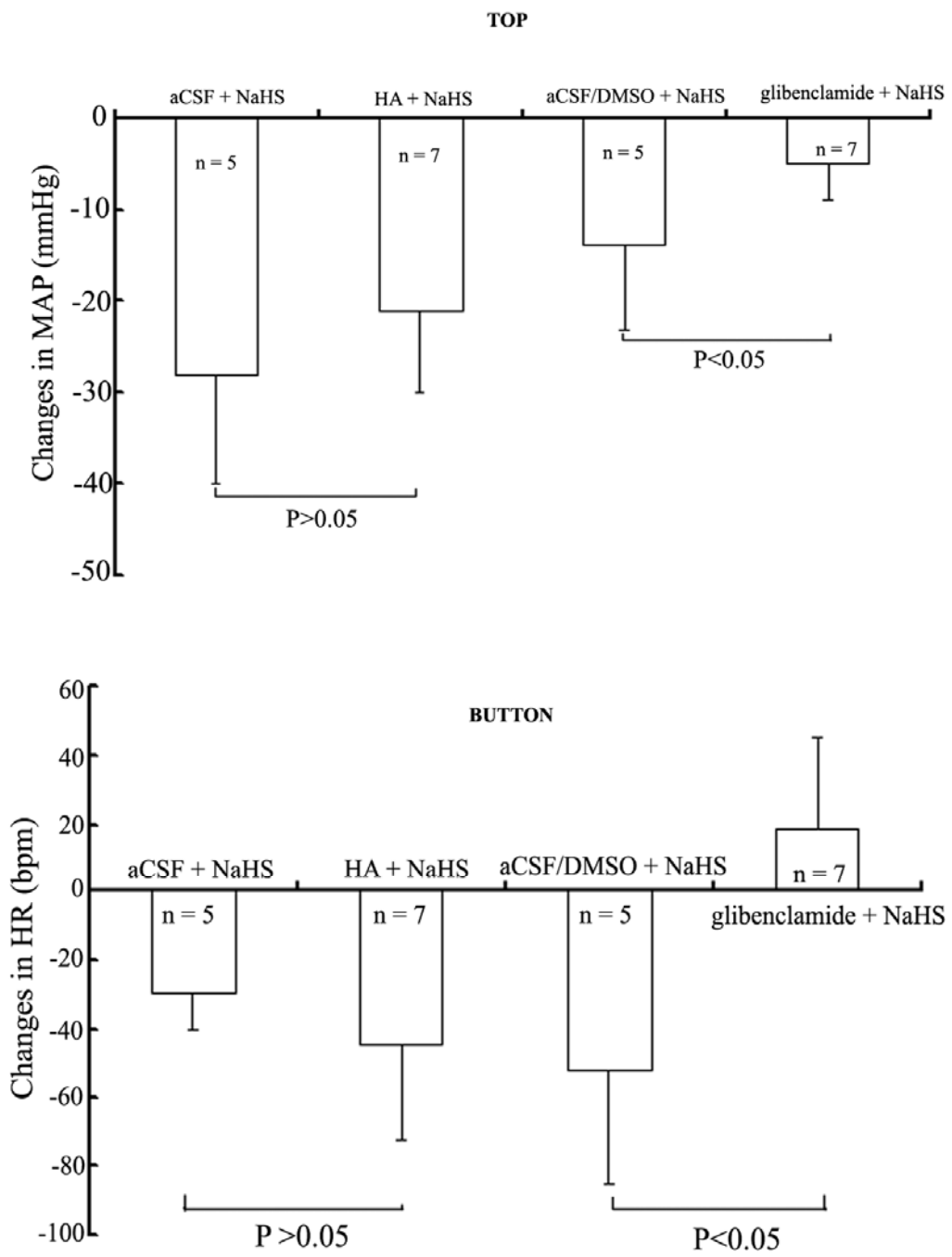
**Fig.2**



**Fig.3**



**Fig.4**



**Fig.5**