

Table of contents

| | | |
|-------|--|----|
| 1 | Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1.1 | Alzheimer's Disease..... | 1 |
| 1.2 | The APP gene family..... | 3 |
| 1.2.1 | Structure and processing..... | 3 |
| 1.2.2 | Physiological functions of the APP gene family in CNS and PNS..... | 9 |
| 1.2.3 | Dimerization and metal ion interaction..... | 12 |
| 1.3 | Astrocyte-mediated synaptogenesis..... | 14 |
| 1.4 | The function of thrombospondins in CNS and PNS..... | 15 |
| 2 | Aim of the study..... | 17 |
| 3 | Results..... | 18 |
| 3.1 | Astrocyte-derived thrombospondin-1 accelerates <i>trans</i> -directed dimerization of APP | 18 |
| 3.1.1 | The factor of interest mediating APP dimerization is an astrocyte-secreted protein | 18 |
| 3.1.2 | Heparan sulfate proteoglycans do not modulate APP dimerization in a bead aggregation assay..... | 20 |
| 3.1.3 | Establishment of an elution strategy to enrich the factor of interest..... | 22 |
| 3.1.4 | Identification of APP-interacting proteins derived from conditioned medium of astrocytes..... | 24 |
| 3.1.5 | APP forms dimers in conditioned medium of HEK293 cells that secrete TSP-1 | 26 |
| 3.1.6 | TSP-1 is the astrocyte-secreted protein in ACM that drives APP dimerization | 29 |
| 3.1.7 | Astrocyte-derived TSP-1 interacts with the ectodomain of APP and induces dimerization of its subdomains E1 and E2 when overexpressed | 32 |
| 3.1.8 | TSP-1 has no impact on APP dimerization in a <i>trans</i> co-immunoprecipitation..... | 36 |
| 3.1.9 | Analysis of TSP-1-mediated presynaptic differentiation in dependence on APP ... | 37 |
| 3.2 | Negatively charged cyclic molecules modulate APP <i>trans</i> dimerization..... | 40 |
| 3.2.1 | Cyclic peptides carrying a negatively charged phosphonate group induce dimerization of APP..... | 40 |

| | | |
|-------|---|----|
| 3.2.2 | The cyclic peptide SK-28 does not modulate <i>trans</i> -oriented dimerization of APP overexpressed in HEK293 cells..... | 42 |
| 3.2.3 | Cyclization of SK-28 is a prerequisite to promote APP dimerization..... | 43 |
| 3.2.4 | APP dimerization is regulated by molecules that consist of negatively charged groups bound to a cyclic backbone..... | 45 |
| 3.2.5 | Heparin inhibits SC ₄ mediated but not SK-28 mediated APP dimerization..... | 47 |
| 3.3 | Zinc ions bind to the APP E1 domain, thereby inhibiting copper binding..... | 49 |
| 4 | Discussion..... | 52 |
| 4.1 | Identification of thrombospondin-1 as an astrocyte-secreted factor that promotes APP dimerization..... | 52 |
| 4.1.1 | Astrocytes secrete a proteinaceous factor other than an HSPG that facilitates <i>trans</i> -directed dimerization of APP..... | 52 |
| 4.1.2 | Identification of astrocyte-derived APP-interacting proteins..... | 54 |
| 4.1.3 | Thrombospondin-1 is the astrocyte-secreted factor that promotes <i>trans</i> -directed dimerization of APP..... | 55 |
| 4.1.4 | TSP-1 binds to the E1 and E2 domain of APP and facilitates their dimerization.... | 57 |
| 4.1.5 | The physiological function of an interaction between TSP-1 and APP..... | 58 |
| 4.2 | Cyclic molecules carrying negatively charged groups modulate APP dimerization <i>in-vitro</i> | 59 |
| 4.3 | Zinc ions bind with a nanomolar affinity to the E1 domain and modulate the dimerization of APP..... | 61 |
| 4.4 | Outlook..... | 62 |
| 5 | Materials..... | 64 |
| 5.1 | List of materials used..... | 64 |
| 5.2 | Recipes for buffers and solutions..... | 69 |
| 5.3 | Cell lines, bacterial strains, yeast strains and mouse strains..... | 72 |
| 5.4 | Cultivation media..... | 73 |
| 5.5 | Antibodies..... | 75 |
| 5.6 | Plasmids..... | 75 |
| 5.7 | Oligonucleotides and siRNAs..... | 76 |
| 6 | Methods..... | 78 |

| | | |
|--------|---|----|
| 6.1 | Molecular biology | 78 |
| 6.1.1 | Restriction digestion of DNA..... | 78 |
| 6.1.2 | Agarose gel electrophoresis..... | 78 |
| 6.1.3 | PCR purification..... | 78 |
| 6.1.4 | Gel extraction..... | 78 |
| 6.1.5 | DNA ligation | 78 |
| 6.1.6 | Retransformation..... | 79 |
| 6.1.7 | Transformation of ligated DNA | 79 |
| 6.1.8 | Site directed mutagenesis..... | 79 |
| 6.1.9 | Small scale (Miniprep) DNA preparation..... | 79 |
| 6.1.10 | Large scale (Maxiprep) DNA preparation..... | 80 |
| 6.1.11 | DNA sequencing..... | 80 |
| 6.2 | Protein biochemistry..... | 80 |
| 6.2.1 | Expression of APP E1 in <i>Pichia pastoris</i> | 80 |
| 6.2.2 | Purification of APP E1 | 81 |
| 6.2.3 | Expression and purification of APPex-Fc..... | 81 |
| 6.2.4 | Expression and purification of APLP2ex-Fc..... | 82 |
| 6.2.5 | SDS-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis (SDS-PAGE)..... | 82 |
| 6.2.6 | Coomassie staining | 83 |
| 6.2.7 | Colloidal Coomassie staining..... | 83 |
| 6.2.8 | Silver staining | 83 |
| 6.2.9 | Western blot..... | 83 |
| 6.2.10 | Mass spectrometry and data analysis..... | 84 |
| 6.2.11 | Isothermal titration calorimetry (ITC)..... | 85 |
| 6.2.12 | Bead aggregation assay with purified APPex-Fc or APLP2ex-Fc | 85 |
| 6.2.13 | Bead aggregation assay with transiently expressed APPex-Fc..... | 86 |
| 6.2.14 | Pulldown assay with coated paramagnetic protein A beads | 86 |
| 6.2.15 | <i>Cis</i> and <i>trans</i> co-immunoprecipitation (co-IP)..... | 87 |
| 6.2.16 | Immunocytochemistry..... | 87 |

| | | |
|--------|--|-----|
| 6.2.17 | Quantification of synapses in neuronal cultures..... | 88 |
| 6.2.18 | Statistical analysis..... | 88 |
| 6.3 | Cell biology..... | 88 |
| 6.3.1 | Cultivation of cell lines..... | 88 |
| 6.3.2 | Preparation and cultivation of astrocytes..... | 89 |
| 6.3.3 | Preparation and cultivation of primary cortical neurons..... | 89 |
| 6.3.4 | Freezing of cells..... | 90 |
| 6.3.5 | Thawing of cells..... | 90 |
| 6.3.6 | DNA or siRNA transfection using jetPRIME..... | 90 |
| 6.3.7 | DNA transfection using PEI..... | 90 |
| 7 | References..... | 91 |
| 8 | Appendix..... | 116 |
| | List of Abbreviations..... | 131 |
| | List of Figures..... | 134 |
| | List of Tables..... | 136 |
| | Danksagung..... | 137 |
| | Lebenslauf..... | 138 |
| | Erklärung zur Beteiligung Dritter..... | 140 |
| | Eidesstattliche Erklärung..... | 141 |