

Muscle tissue- part 3

Cardiac muscle

- ✓ Cardiac muscle cells are striated (composed of repeating units of sarcomeres inside the myofibril as in skeletal muscle cells)
- ✓ Self excitatory and electrically coupled: this means that these cardiac muscle cells are able to initiate contraction without nerve input (no motor end plate). This is called **Myogenic activity of the cardiac cells**
- ✓ **Myogenic activity:** they generate their own electrical impulses (pacemaker). Cardiac muscle fiber contraction is intrinsic and spontaneous, as evidenced by the continued contraction of the cells in tissue culture.
- ✓ Force of contraction is modulated by autonomic nervous system (sympathetic and parasympathetic) (only to control the force of contraction not to initiate it).
- ✓ Sympathetic: increases the force of contraction.
Para sympathetic: decreases the force of contraction.

The main similarities between cardiac and skeletal muscle are:

1. Both are striated.
2. Both are composed of myofibrils, each myofibril is surrounded by a network of sarcoplasmic reticulum
3. Almost the same contraction mechanism.

The main differences between cardiac and skeletal muscle cells are:

1. The cardiac muscle cell is also called muscle fiber, but compared with the skeletal fibers, cardiac muscle cells are shorter and interconnected (branched, to provide waves of contraction).
2. Cardiac muscle cell is single-nucleated but sometimes it is bi-nucleated while skeletal muscle cell is multi-nucleated.
3. The single nucleus in the cardiac muscle cell is located in the center, while the multi-nuclei of skeletal muscle cell are found under the sarcolemma (at the periphery).
4. The striations of cardiac muscle cells are less distinct (obvious), while they are more obvious in skeletal muscle cells. **Why?**

Because cardiac muscle cells have higher number of mitochondria than skeletal muscle cells and larger in size, these mitochondria are located between the myofibrils. In addition, heart muscle cells store glycogen so the

higher number of mitochondria, glycogen, lipid inside the cytoplasm results in less obvious striations, while in the skeletal muscle, the sarcomeres are arranged above each other with little spaces in between the myofibrils, so it appears uniformly striated, more obvious than the cardiac muscle. (But both skeletal and cardiac muscles are striated)

- ✓ The stored lipids and glycogen are used as a fuel for the cardiac muscle cells
- ✓ The heart muscle contracts all the time so it needs large number of mitochondria (up to 40% of cell volume) in order to produce ATP for muscle contraction.

5. The sarcolemma of the cardiac muscle cell also has invaginations. T-tubules also surround the myofibrils, but instead of having triads (as in skeletal muscle) we have diads. Diad (or dyad) is one T-tubule with one tubular end of SR. The sarcoplasmic reticulum of cardiac muscle cells is less extensive (smaller in size and less branched) than in skeletal muscle cells.

- ✓ In general T tubules in cardiac muscle are larger and occur near to the Z line of sarcomere.
- ✓ The cardiac muscle cells are branched, short and connected to each other by step-like lines called intercalated discs.

Intercalated discs:

Zigzag- like structure, Step-like structure connecting two cardiac muscle cells together, it has two parts:

1. Horizontal Part
2. Vertical part

It contains 3 types of junctions:

A. **Gap junctions** (not exclusive to epithelial cells, we have them also between cardiac muscle cells). Gap junctions are located in the horizontal part of intercalated disc. Gap junctions allow movement of ions between cardiac muscle cells; this allows contraction of the whole muscle uniformly as one unit (although it's composed of many cells)

B. It also contains **desmosomes** and **fascia adherens** (located in the vertical part of intercalated disc), to anchor cardiac cells together mechanically and prevent detachment and pulling apart forces between cells when the heart is contracting.

NOTE:

1. The fascia adherens has the same concept as Zonula adherens which is found between epithelial cells. In epithelium it is called zonula because it forms a belt like structure around epithelial cells. But between the heart muscle cells, it forms spot-like areas like the desmosomes)

2. The difference between desmosomes and fascia adherens: (desmosomes are associated with intermediate filaments while fascia adherens are associated with actin filaments).

- Cardiac muscle cells don't contain satellite cells; therefore, these cells are not able to regenerate in case of injury. They have very poor capacity for regeneration

- Hyperplasia doesn't happen in cardiac muscle, cardiac muscle cells don't regenerate, they have No satellite cells (skeletal muscles have limited ability to regenerate because they contain few satellite cells).

- They are trying to use stem cells inside the heart in order to regenerate cardiac cells, to replace the damaged area instead of heart implant (stem cell technology).

- The cardiac muscle cells can undergo hypertrophy (increase in the cell size).
تضخم عضلة القلب

Smooth muscle:

✓ Smooth muscle cells are called smooth because they don't have any striations, but this doesn't mean they don't have actin and myosin, they do have, but they are not arranged into sarcomeres. Therefore, they don't appear striated (non-striated cells)

✓ Cardiac and skeletal muscle cells contain actin and myosin arranged into sarcomeres – striations

✓ FOUND INSIDE THE WALLS OF HOLLOW ORGANS AND TUBES IN THE BODY

6 major locations:

Inside the eye, wall of vessels, respiratory tubes, urinary organs, digestive tubes, reproductive organs.

Now, what is the importance of smooth muscles?

Note: the wall of bronchi is composed of smooth muscles.

The smooth muscles in the bronchi can control the diameter of these tubes. So, when you are exercising you need more oxygen, so these muscles (of the bronchi) are going to relax in order to increase the diameter and to get more oxygen. At the same time the blood vessels that supply skeletal muscles (also have smooth muscles in their wall) will increase in diameter (vasodilation). They are going to relax, because you need more blood flow to supply your muscles.

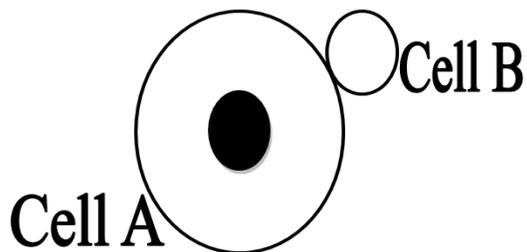
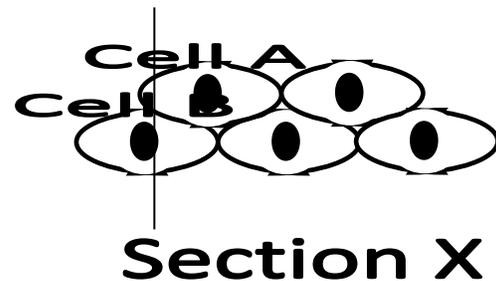
What about the blood vessels of the GI tract?

The smooth muscles in their walls are going to constrict because it is not important to supply the GI tract with blood during exercise.

(Contraction decreases the diameter while relaxation increases the diameter)

- ✓ Smooth muscles contraction is involuntary (not under our conscious control)
- ✓ They are spindle (fusiform) in shape, broad in the center and narrow at the periphery.
- ✓ Smooth muscle cells can be called also fibers (although they don't look like fibers, but in general all muscle cells are called muscle fibers).
- ✓ Smooth muscle cells are single-nucleated (one nucleus in the center of the cell)
- ✓ The smooth muscle cells are arranged into sheets (above each other), the narrow area of one smooth muscle cell is above the broad area of another smooth muscle cell (to have minimal spaces between the cells)
- ✓ They are tightly packed with small amount of loose connective tissue (endomysium)
- ✓ Usually, the sheets are perpendicular to each other (at right angles to each other).
- ✓ Smooth muscles don't get fatigue (the contractions are slow, sustained, and resistant to fatigue)

- ✓ If we look at a longitudinal section along the long axis of the smooth muscle cells, the previous features (spindle-shaped, tapering, single-nucleated) would be visible.
- ✓ If we take a cross section through smooth muscle cells, we'll see different rounded profiles with different diameters, some containing the nucleus and some do not (each cell contains a nucleus, but it depends on the plane of the cut, if it's in the middle of the cell, the nucleus would be visible, if it's in the periphery, we wouldn't see the nucleus). In addition, if the section is in the middle of the cell, the circle would be big, but if it's on the periphery, the circle would be small.



- ✓ Smooth muscle cells produce peristalsis movement (الحركة المَعَوِيَّة) which is a continuous movement.
- ✓ Smooth muscle cells are connected by gap junctions, which allow small ions and molecules to pass from one cell to the next allowing the spread of depolarization, and acting as a single unit
- ✓ Smooth muscle cells in certain locations have high synthetic activity, like in the wall of blood vessels; they synthesize the components of ECM

Do smooth muscle cells need nerve supply in order to contract?

In general, we say that smooth muscles are controlled by neuro-endocrine impulses (neuro: receives nerve supply, endocrine: affected by local hormones) that increase or decrease the contraction and they are sensitive to stretch.

Examples:

1) They can be activated by stretch, when stretch happens in the urinary bladder for example (because of the accumulation of urine), the reflex of the muscles is to contract, Which means that smooth muscles don't always require a nervous signal (have Myogenic activity), they may be stimulated by stretching or hormones. Note that gap junctions also present between smooth muscle cells and allow the multicellular tissue to contract as a single unit, providing better efficiency and force.

2) Smooth muscles in the walls of blood vessels for example receive nerve supply to contract and cause constriction

Refer to powerpoint slide:

- ✓ Notice: actin, myosin and intermediate filaments inside the smooth muscle cell.
- ✓ Dense bodies: are equivalent to Z-lines in the striated muscle cell
- ✓ Dense bodies are composed of α - actinin, the actin filaments are attached to dense bodies.
- ✓ Dense bodies have two types:
 - Dense bodies close to the plasma membrane (submembranous dense bodies)
 - Dense bodies within the cytoplasm, called "intra-cytoplasmic dense bodies".
- ✓ Instead of having Z-lines, we have dense bodies, actin filaments are attached to dense bodies and in between we find myosin filaments.
- ✓ When the cell contracts, the dense bodies get closer to each other, the overlap between actin and myosin increases
- ✓ Refer to PowerPoint slide: notice the difference in shape between the contracted muscle cell (scalloped) and the flattened (relaxed) muscle cell. When the cell contracts, it becomes rounded with scalloped surface.

Filaments inside the smooth muscle cell consist of 3 types:

- ✓ Actin
- ✓ Myosin
- ✓ Intermediate filaments (like desmin and vimentin) which connect dense bodies together.

- ✓ Intermediate filaments are the cytoskeleton of the smooth muscle cell; the intermediate filaments are connected to each other via dense bodies. The dense bodies (near the plasma membrane) are attached by desmosome junctions to other smooth muscle cells

- ✓ No troponin in thin filaments of smooth muscle (instead they have calmodulin-Calcium binding protein)
- ✓ Has scattered smooth endoplasmic reticulum (SR)
- ✓ On the plasma membrane of smooth muscle cells, we find certain structures called caveolae, short depressions of the sarcolemma (short and shallow invaginations of the plasma membrane) of the smooth muscle.
- ✓ The importance of these caveolae: They have high concentration of receptors (proteins and lipids) because these cells can be controlled by hormones, so we find this high concentration of receptors that have several functions in signal transduction and act as stretch sensors that can sense the stretching of the organ itself (these cells are easily activated).
- ✓ Smooth muscles can undergo Hypertrophy and Hyperplasia.

Example: the wall of the uterus, which is composed of smooth muscle cells, gets larger in size during pregnancy because these cells can undergo mitosis and increase in number (hyperplasia), in addition, they increase in size (hypertrophy).

- Smooth muscles are the only type that has high regeneration power. Why? The reason is because these cells are less differentiated and can undergo mitosis (cells have not lost the capacity to divide by mitosis)
- When the cells are less differentiated, they are able to divide. Skeletal muscle cells are highly differentiated (can't undergo division) and if regeneration of skeletal muscles occurs, it would be because of the satellite cells (myoblasts that remain inside the muscle tissue).

- Which type of muscles can undergo Hypertrophy? All types
- Which type of muscles can undergo Hyperplasia? Smooth muscles and rarely skeletal muscle

Note: in extreme cases like in highly-muscular bodies, Hyperplasia might happen in skeletal muscles. But normally it's hypertrophy that occurs.

So, the three types of adult muscle have different potentials for regeneration after injury

- 1- Repair and regeneration can occur in skeletal muscle because of a population of reserve muscle satellite cells that can proliferate, fuse, and form new muscle fibers.
 - 2- Cardiac muscle lacks satellite cells and has little capacity for regeneration.
 - 3- Regeneration is rapid in smooth muscle because the cells/fibers are small and relatively less differentiated, which allow renewed mitotic activity after injury.
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- ✓ All muscle cells in the 3 types are surrounded by loose type of connective tissue that contains high number of reticular fibers (endomysium)
 - ✓ Remember that reticular fibers support individual cells