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Taking a 'POP' at inflammation

Nature Immunology

February 17, 2014



Molecular sensors detect viruses that enter cells and trigger defensive inflammatory responses-- how these sensors are controlled is discussed in a paper published online this week in Nature Immunology. This study may point to potential means by which responses to certain viruses can be modulated therapeutically.

The detection of DNA viruses inside a cell can result in the assembly of a molecular sensor called the 'AIM2-like inflammasome'. Christian Stehlik and colleagues find that a human protein called POP3 interferes specifically with the formation of these inflammasomes and therefore reduces inflammatory responses. The scientists created a transgenic mouse where POP3 expression could be enforced in macrophages - an important type of immune cell - which enabled in vivo analysis of the effects of this protein. They find that, similar to the data in human cells, POP3 in mice dampens inflammation as well as anti-viral responses. This suggests that POP3 may be a useful tool in development of new anti-inflammatory or antiviral therapeutics.

DOI:10.1038/ni.2829 | [Original article](#)

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