Title: Cholinergic Modulation Shifts the Response of CA1 Pyramidal Cells to Depolarizing Ramps via

TRPM4 Channels with Potential Implications for Place Field Firing

Abbreviated Title: Cholinergic Modulation Shifts the Response of CA1 Pyramidal Cells

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Abstract

A synergistic combination of *in vitro* electrophysiology and multicompartmental modeling of rat CA1 pyramidal neurons identified TRPM4 channels as major drivers of cholinergic modulation of the firing rate during a triangular current ramp, which emulates the bump in synaptic input received while traversing the place field. In control, fewer spikes at lower frequencies are elicited on the down-ramp compared to the up-ramp due to long-term inactivation of the Na_V channel. The cholinergic agonist carbachol (CCh) removes or even reverses this spike rate adaptation, causing more spikes to be elicited on the down-ramp than the up-ramp. CCh application during Schaffer collateral stimulation designed to simulate a ramp produces similar shifts in the center of mass of firing to later in the ramp. The non-specific TRP antagonist flufenamic acid and the TRPM4-specific blockers CBA and 9-phenanthrol, but not the TRPC-specific antagonist SKF96365, reverse the effect of CCh; this implicates the Ca^{2+}-activated nonspecific cation current, I_{CAN}, carried by TRPM4 channels. The cholinergic shift of the center of mass of firing is prevented by strong intracellular Ca^{2+} buffering but not by antagonists for IP_3 and ryanodine receptors, ruling out a role for known mechanisms of release from intracellular Ca^{2+} stores. Pharmacology combined with modeling suggest that $[Ca^{2+}]$ in a nanodomain near the TRPM4 channel is elevated through an unknown source that requires both muscarinic receptor activation and depolarization-induced Ca^{2+} influx during the ramp. Activation of the regenerative inward TRPM4 current in the model qualitatively replicates and provides putative underlying mechanisms for the experimental observations.

Introduction

Release of the neuromodulator acetylcholine is thought to be correlated with certain brain states or functions (Pepeu and Giovannini, 2004). In the hippocampal formation, elevated acetylcholine is associated with exploration (Bianchi et al., 2003), particular memory processes (Micheau and Marighetto, 2011), REM sleep (Hutchison and Rathore, 2015), and response to novelty (Acquas et al., 1996; Thiel et al., 1998; Giovannini et al., 2001).

The major cholinergic input to the hippocampus is from the medial septum and diagonal band of Broca, which innervate all hippocampal subfields (Dutar et al., 1995). As for the degree to which acetylcholine release is spatially targeted, this is still under debate (Disney and Higley, 2020; Sarter and Lustig, 2020); however it has been shown that CA1 receives cholinergic afferents in all layers, although at different densities (Nyakas et al., 1987; Aznavour et al., 2002). Pyramidal neurons express G-protein-coupled metabotropic muscarinic acetylcholine receptors (mAChRs) (Levey et al., 1995), more so than they do ionotropic (nicotinic) receptors, which are primarily on interneurons in this region (Dani and Bertrand, 2007). M_1 mAChRs, in particular, are found on both dendritic shafts and spines of CA1 pyramidal neurons (Yamasaki et al., 2010).

Elevated acetylcholine in the hippocampal formation is thought to favor memory encoding, and modulates theta oscillations (Hasselmo, 2006), which in turn modulate place cell firing (Easton et al., 2012). There is evidence that cholinergic activity regulates long-term synaptic plasticity (Huerta and Lisman, 1995; Palacios-Filardo and Mellor, 2019; Fernández de Sevilla et al., 2021). Cholinergic activation also influences intrinsic properties of neurons, which result in membrane potential depolarization (Brown and Adams, 1980), increase in firing rate (Benardo and Prince, 1982), and modulation of input/output relationships, for example switching from burst to regular firing (Azouz et al., 1994).

In addition to suppressing several potassium currents (Brown and Adams, 1980; Hoffman and Johnston, 1998; Buchanan et al., 2010; Giessel and Sabatini, 2010), cholinergic stimulation has been linked to the activation of a calcium-activated, non-specific cation current, I_{CAN} (Colino and Halliwell, 1993; Egorov et al., 2002; Yoshida et al., 2012). I_{CAN} is attributed to current flowing through channels of the transient receptor potential (TRP) family (Guinamard et al., 2010; Reboreda et al., 2011). The canonical TRP channel, TRPC, has been implicated in cholinergic-mediated persistent firing ((Zhang et al., 2011; Arboit et al., 2020), but see (Egorov et al., 2019)). There is indirect evidence, however, of involvement of TRPM4 channels in the cholinergic activation of I_{CAN}. TRPM4 channel activation downstream of group I metabotropic glutamate receptors in pre-Botzinger cells (Mironov, 2008), implicates the $G_{q/11}$ pathway shared by $mGluR_{1/5}$ and mAChR $M_{1/3/5}$. Although TRPM4 channels are known to be expressed in the soma and apical dendrites of CA1 pyramidal dendrites (Riquelme et al., 2021), their known functions in these neurons are currently limited to a minor role in the afterdepolarization following action potential trains (Lei et al., 2014) and involvement in NMDA-mediated LTP (Menigoz et al., 2016).

Previously, we found that when triangular shaped current ramps intended to emulate the depolarizing input

received by a place cell during a place field traversal (Epsztein et al., 2011) were injected at the soma or

dendrites of CA1 pyramidal neurons, they elicited fewer spikes on the down-ramp than on the up-ramp

(Upchurch et al., 2022). In the current study, we investigated the effect of cholinergic modulation on this

firing pattern *in vitro* (slice electrophysiology) and *in silico* (multi-compartmental NEURON model). We

found that, at comparable maximum firing rates, cholinergic activation shifts the center of mass of firing to

the latter half of the ramp, both for current injection ramps as well as for synaptically-driven depolarizations.

Both CCh and sustained depolarization are required to produce the rightward shift in the center of mass

of firing along the ramp. This shift is blocked by antagonists specific for TRPM4 channels or by intracellular

Ca^{2+} buffering, but not by IP_3 or ryanodine receptor antagonists. The TRPM4 channels have a micromolar

half-activation concentration of Ca^{2+} (Nilius et al., 2004), which implies that a restricted Ca^{2+} nanodomain

near the channel mouth is required to elicit substantial opening of TRPM4 channels. Thus, whatever the

Ca^{2+} source that activates the TRPM4 channels, it is likely co-localized with them.

Results

Asymmetric firing on symmetric ramps is modulated by cholinergic activation

We have previously used 2 and 10 second long triangular-shaped current ramps (Upchurch et al., 2022)

to emulate the depolarizing input received by a place cell during a place field traversal (Epsztein et al.,

2011); the amplitude of the ramps was adjusted for each cell to produce peak frequencies between 10 and

25 Hz, as observed in place cells *in vivo* (Hargreaves et al., 2007; Resnik et al., 2012; Bittner et al., 2015).

Regardless of whether these ramps are injected at the soma or in the dendrites of CA1 pyramidal neurons,

they elicit fewer spikes on the down-ramp than on the up-ramp, due to adaptation mediated by long-term

sodium channel inactivation (Fernandez and White, 2010; Venkatesan et al., 2014; Upchurch et al., 2022).

Place cell firing is modulated by experience such that the center of mass of the place field shifts in a

direction opposite the direction of motion as the environment becomes more familiar (Mehta et al., 2000).

This modulation is strongest when animals are first introduced to a novel environment (Roth et al., 2012),

suggesting involvement of a novelty signal. Since elevated acetylcholine is thought to be such a signal

(Acquas et al., 1996; Giovannini et al., 2001), we investigated the effect of cholinergic neuromodulation on

this firing rate adaptation (Figure 1).

Figure 1A1 and 1E1 show typical voltage responses to two-second-long symmetric ramps injected in the

soma or dendrites (approximately 200 µm from soma) under control conditions. This type of response

results in a positive value for the normalized difference between spikes fired on the up-ramp versus the

down-ramp (we call this an adaptation index, see Methods for definition). A positive index means that

neurons fire more on the up-ramp than the down-ramp, whereas a negative value indicates the converse,

and is therefore a good metric to determine shifts in the center of mass of the firing of CA1 pyramidal
neurons in different conditions. In some trials, under control conditions we applied a baseline depolarization
prior to the ramp, in order to capture the variability observed *in vivo* (Harvey et al., 2009; Epsztein et al.,
2011). Application of the cholinergic agonist carbachol (CCh, 2 µM) caused a depolarization of 2-6 mV.
We compensated for this depolarization by injecting tonic hyperpolarizing current to reestablish the original
membrane potential (see also (Losonczy et al., 2008)), as indicated by an offset from the 0 pA current level
in the traces of the injected current ramps. The amplitude of background fluctuations in the resting
membrane potential increased from a few tenths of a mV in control to 2-4 mV in CCh. Moreover, the
threshold for action potential generation became more hyperpolarized. For all these reasons, we were not
able to consistently vary the membrane potential using baseline depolarizations in the presence of CCh,
because baseline depolarization alone frequently evoked spiking. As a result of the increased excitability
in CCh, smaller current ramps were sufficient to produce the same peak frequencies as in control (note
the difference in the injected ramp currents below the voltage trace in Figures 1A1 vs. 1B1 and 1E1 vs.
1F1). Under these conditions, CCh caused a shift of the center of mass of firing to later in the ramp (Figure
1B1 and 1F1), which resulted in a decreased value of the adaptation index which became negative for
most cells, as shown in the scatter plot of group data (Figure 1D and 1H). The shift is evident in the plots
of the frequency as a function of time (compare Figure 1A2 vs. 1B2 and 1E2 vs. 1F2). As in (Mainen and
Sejnowski, 1995), the raster plots of the spike times were characterized by variability in the timing of action
potentials among different trials in the same neuron (Figures 1A3, 1B3 and 1E3, 1F3). However, the
variability appears to be independent of the amount of current injected, as demonstrated by trials that are
grouped as a function of the injected peak current amplitude. Moreover, the raster plots show how the
center of mass of firing overall shifted from early in the ramp in control conditions to later in the ramp in the
presence of carbachol. This shift was significant for short (2 s) ramps in the soma (control 0.33 ± 0.02,
CCh -0.25 ± 0.03; t(20) = 16.741; p < 0.0005; n = 21), long (10 s) ramps in the soma (control 0.24 ± 0.02,
CCh -0.33 ± 0.06; t(18) = 9.854; p < 0.0005; n = 19), as well as for short and long ramps in the dendrites
(2 s ramps: control 0.49 ± 0.04, CCh -0.45 ± 0.07; t(18) = 12.529; p < 0.0005; n = 19; 10 s ramps: control
0.37 ± 0.02, CCh -0.16 ± 0.06; t(9) = 10.582; p < 0.0005; n = 10).

Plots of instantaneous frequency versus current injection are shown in Figure 1C1, 1C2, 1G1 and 1G2.
These plots provide a way to assess firing rate adaptation or acceleration when the injected current is not
a square pulse (Venugopal et al., 2015). In control (Figure 1C1 and 1G1), frequencies were higher on the
up-ramp (filled circles) and decreased on the down-ramp (open circles) at similar values of injected current.
This hysteretic clockwise motion corresponds to spike rate adaptation, in which the firing rate decreases
at a constant value of injected current. In contrast, in the presence of CCh, the motion was variable; it
could be essentially linear as shown in the somatic example in Figure 1C2 or even counter-clockwise as
in the dendritic example in Figure 1G2. The frequency/current (f/I) plots in Figure 1 – supplement 1 show
the clockwise hysteresis in control and different cases of reversal or removal of adaptation in the presence

of CCh for somatic recordings, with panels A and B showing acceleration, and panels C and D showing

linearization. A linear motion indicates no hysteresis, although often the neurons fire at lower current

injections on the down-ramp (defined as sustained linear in (Venugopal et al., 2015)), whereas counter-

clockwise motion corresponds to an acceleration of the firing rate that would be observed during injection

of a constant current. Both of these variants correspond to an effective removal of the spike rate adaptation

by cholinergic activation. These results also demonstrate that cholinergic activity shifts the center of mass

of firing to later times during a symmetric ramp. We speculate that the level of cholinergic modulation could

therefore be a source of rapid modification of the timing of place cell firing relative to position in the place

field. Our summary results in Figure 1 show that carbachol similarly affects 2 s and 10 s ramps, and we

present only the data for the 2 second ramps for subsequent figures.

Since the initial membrane potential and the amount of current injected could potentially affect the center

of mass of firing, confounding the effects of cholinergic modulation, we plotted the adaptation index as a

function of the initial membrane potential (Figure 1 – figure supplement 2A) and of injected current

amplitude (Figure 1 - figure supplement 2B), in control conditions and in the presence of carbachol (2 µM)

for each trial for all recorded neurons, both for somatic and dendritic recordings. Likewise, since the input

resistance of the neuron could potentially skew the center of mass of firing, we plotted the average

adaptation index as a function of the steady-state input resistance in control conditions and in the presence

of carbachol for each somatic and dendritic recording (Figure 1 - figure supplement 2C). In all cases, it is

apparent that the main factor determining the adaptation index, and therefore whether the center of mass

of firing occurs earlier or later in the ramp, is the presence or absence of carbachol rather than initial

membrane potential, current injection amplitude, or input resistance.

The later onset of spiking in CCh in the experiments described above may be attributable to the smaller

current ramps, but the persistence of spiking without adaptation is striking in comparison to control. The

use of smaller ramps to achieve similar firing rates may be justified by analogy with the presynaptic action

of ACh to reduce glutamate release (Hasselmo, 2006). Since the current injection protocols described

above only account for the effects of cholinergic agonists on the postsynaptic neuron, we examined the

effects of carbachol on synaptically-driven membrane potential ramps, where pre- and postsynaptic effects

can be probed at the same time. To this end, we stimulated the Schaffer collateral fibers with bipolar

electrodes and recorded the responses from the somata of CA1 pyramidal neurons (Figure 2). The

electrical stimulation consisted of 30 stimuli for a total duration of ~2 s. The stimulation pattern was adjusted

according to a linear, symmetric ramp as in (Hsu et al., 2018), such that the frequency increased and

decreased symmetrically, starting at 6.7 Hz and peaking in the middle of the ramp at 25 Hz, the target

peak frequency in the current injection experiments. The intensity of stimulation was adjusted such that

neurons would fire in response to 40-65% of the total inputs under control conditions, and was kept

constant in control conditions and in the presence of carbachol. In both conditions, firing was more frequent

in the middle of the ramp, because of the higher stimulation frequency. However, as in the current injection

protocols in Figure 1, some variability was observed in the timing of the spikes across trials, as can be

appreciated in the raster plots. In control conditions, the neurons tended to fire more in the first half of the

ramp (Figure 2A), whereas in the presence of carbachol they tended to fire more on the second half of the

ramp (Figure 2B). The adaptation index was calculated in a similar manner as in Figure 1, as the

normalized difference between the number of spikes in the first and the second half of the ramp. On

average, the adaptation index decreased from 0.18 ± 0.03 in control to -0.17 ± 0.04 in the presence of

carbachol, $t(10) = 6.873$, $p < 0.0005$, $n = 11$ (Figure 2C). This shift was partly due to a decrease in the

amplitude of the EPSPs (Figure 2D); the average amplitude of the first EPSP in control (8.83 ± 0.82 mV)

was significantly larger than the average first EPSP in CCh (6.81 ± 0.52 mV; $t(10) = 4.127$; $p = 0.002$; $n =$

11). In addition, the decay of the EPSPs appeared to slow down later in the ramp in the presence of CCh

(compare EPSPs indicated by diamonds in the two conditions), resulting in an increase in temporal

summation and excitability. These results show that carbachol tends to shift the center of mass of firing to

later in the ramp in the case of a synaptically-driven depolarization as well as in response to a ramp of

injected current.

Carbachol is often used to more easily study cholinergic signaling in biological tissues, because it is not

susceptible to hydrolysis by acetylcholinesterase, which is preserved and active in hippocampal slices

(Avignone and Cherubini, 1999). To verify that the effects of the endogenous neuromodulator were

comparable to those of its synthetic analog, we repeated the experiments in Figure 1 with different

concentrations of acetylcholine. In this and all following sets of experiments, the amplitude of current

injection was adjusted for each cell and condition to produce peak frequencies between 10 and 25 Hz as

described above. Acetylcholine caused a depolarization of the V_m in a dose-dependent manner. As before,

we compensated for this depolarization by injecting hyperpolarizing current to restore the initial V_m (Figure

3). Like carbachol, acetylcholine shifted the center of mass of firing to later in the ramp, albeit to a more

moderate degree (Figure 3A-D). A one-way repeated measures ANOVA was carried out to determine if

there was an effect on the adaptation index of three concentrations of ACh within the same neurons. The

assumption of sphericity was violated, so a Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied ($\varepsilon = 0.574$). There

was a significant effect of ACh on the adaptation index, plotted in Figure 3E (control 0.35 ± 0.04; 2 µM ACh

0.14 ± 0.04; 10 µM ACh 0.00 ± 0.06; 15 µM ACh -0.02 ± 0.06; $F(1.722, 20.665) = 44.360$; $p < 0.0005$, $n =$

13). Bonferroni-adjusted post hoc tests demonstrated significant differences between the control condition

and all concentrations of ACh (all comparisons $p < 0.0005$), and between the lowest concentration and the

subsequent higher concentrations (for 2 µM compared to 10 µM, $p = 0.001$; for 2 µM compared to 15 µM,

$p = 0.01$). There was not a significant difference between 10 µM and 15 µM ACh. Due to likely degradation

via acetylcholinesterase, we speculate that the actual concentration in the slices is lower than the applied

one. CCh is not susceptible to degradation by acetylcholinesterase, and its concentration, which in our

experiments is markedly lower than that used in many studies on cholinergic modulation of neuronal

activity (Bland et al., 1988; Fisahn et al., 1998; Knauer et al., 2013), is therefore more consistent, which

may explain the more pronounced shift in spiking in Figure 1 as compared to Figure 3. Nonetheless, our

results with ACh suggest that there are concentration-dependent effects of the endogenous

neuromodulator on firing rate adaptation. Fluctuations in ACh levels could therefore have implications for

the firing of a place cell within its place field.

Cholinergic-associated shift in the timing of firing during the ramp is mediated by TRPM4 channels

An increase in firing on the down-ramp compared to the up-ramp induced by cholinergic activation could

result from 1) a decrease in an outward current and/or 2) an increase in an inward current. The cascade

of events that follow cholinergic activation in these neurons includes the suppression of a number of

outward currents (Halliwell and Adams, 1982; Hoffman and Johnston, 1998; Buchanan et al., 2010; Giessel

and Sabatini, 2010), some of which are also involved in firing rate adaptation (Stocker et al., 1999; Gu et

al., 2005; Pedarzani et al., 2005; Otto et al., 2006; Chen et al., 2014). Although the SK channel clearly

contributes to adaptation when the dendrites are stimulated at high frequency (>50 Hz) (Combe et al.,

2018), we have previously examined the contribution of small-conductance calcium-activated potassium

(SK) current, M-type potassium current, and A-type potassium current with respect to the asymmetric firing

in response to symmetric current ramps (Upchurch et al., 2022). We found that, in the relatively low range

of firing frequencies evoked by this type of stimulation, the adaptation induced by these K^+ currents

(including SK) does not play a role in shifting action potentials to earlier times during the ramp. However,

cholinergic activation has also been shown to activate a non-specific inward cationic current, I_{CAN}, that is

thought to be carried by certain TRP channels (Guinamard et al., 2010; Reboreda et al., 2011). Flufenamic

acid (FFA) has been shown to block a variety of TRP channels in hippocampal neurons (Partridge and

Valenzuela, 2000) and elsewhere (Guinamard et al., 2013). After observing the typical response to CCh,

responses to symmetric ramps were recorded while FFA (100 µM) was applied along with CCh (Figure 4A

and 4B). FFA shifted most action potentials back to the up-ramp as shown in the examples in Figure 4A1-

4A3 and 4B1-4B3, effectively reversing the shift triggered by CCh. The differences in adaptation index

across the three conditions were found to be significantly different by repeated measures ANOVA in both

somatic recordings (control 0.35 ± 0.05, CCh -0.36 ± 0.09, CCh+FFA 0.25 ± 0.06; $F_{(2,16)}$ = 65.835; p <

0.0005; n = 9; Figure 4A4) and dendritic recordings (control 0.52 ± 0.02, CCh -0.54 ± 0.11, CCh+FFA 0.20

± 0.08; $F_{(2,16)}$ = 60.680; p < 0.0005; n = 9; Figure 4B4). Bonferroni-adjusted pairwise comparisons

indicated that for somatic recordings, the differences were significantly different between control and CCh

(p < 0.0005), and between CCh and CCh+FFA (p < 0.0005), but not between control and CCh+FFA (p =

0.43). For dendritic recordings, the differences were significantly different between control and CCh (p <

0.0005), CCh and CCh+FFA (p < 0.0005), and control and CCh+FFA (p = 0.02). In most cases, the

adaptation index reverted to a positive value with the application of FFA from a negative value in CCh

alone, and in all cases was closer to the control value with FFA than with CCh alone. The failure of the

adaptation index to return to control values in FFA may reflect an incomplete block of TRP channels or an

additional effect of CCh. Overall, these data suggest that the shift in the center of mass of firing to later

along the ramp that is associated with cholinergic activity is due, in large part, to activation of TRP

channels.

The TRPC subfamily has been implicated as being responsible for I_{CAN} in some neurons and is thought to

be activated by elements downstream of muscarinic acetylcholine receptor activation (Putney, 2005),

which makes it an attractive candidate, mechanistically, for this cholinergic-mediated shift in action

potential firing along the depolarizing ramp. Cholinergic stimulation of $G_{q/11}$-coupled mAChRs results in

phospholipase C hydrolysis of membrane constituent phosphatidylinositol 4,5-bisphosphate (PIP_2) into

inositol 1,4,5-trisphosphate (IP_3) and diacylglycerol (DAG). IP_3 stimulates IP_3 receptor (IP_3R) associated

Ca^{2+} release from the endoplasmic reticulum, regulating TRPC channel activity via calmodulin (Zhu, 2005),

while DAG activates TRPC channels directly (Hofmann et al., 1999; Mederos Y Schnitzler et al., 2018).

In a set of experiments similar to those above, the TRPC-specific antagonist SKF96365 (50 µM) was added

after CCh was applied (Figure 4C and 4D). The differences in adaptation index across the three conditions

were found to be significantly different by repeated measures ANOVA in somatic recordings (control 0.43

± 0.07, CCh -0.36 ± 0.09, CCh+SKF -0.24 ± 0.10; $F_{(2,14)}$ = 42.453; $p < 0.0005$; n = 8; Figure 4C4) and

dendritic recordings (control 0.47 ± 0.11, CCh -0.24 ± 0.07, CCh+SKF -0.23 ± 0.06; $F_{(2,14)}$ = 118.541; p

< 0.0005; n = 8; Figure 4D4). However, Bonferroni-adjusted pairwise comparisons demonstrated that the

significant differences lie both between control and CCh (soma $p < 0.0005$; dendrite $p < 0.0005$) and control

and CCh+SKF (soma $p = 0.001$; dendrite $p < 0.0005$), not between CCh and CCh+SKF (soma $p = 0.68$;

dendrite $p = 1.00$). Thus, SKF96365 did not significantly shift the adaptation index in the same manner as

did FFA, suggesting that the TRP channels involved in the CCh-mediated forward shift are not of the TRPC

subtype.

TRPM4 channels have likewise been implicated in downstream effects associated with G_q-coupled

signaling (Launay et al., 2002; Dutta Banik et al., 2018). TRPM4 channels are activated by Ca^{2+} binding to

the cytoplasmic side combined with depolarization (Nilius et al., 2003; Autzen et al., 2018), but these

channels are impermeable to Ca^{2+}. Instead, TRPM4 channels facilitate a rise in $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ indirectly, by

depolarizing the membrane potential (Launay et al., 2002) and therefore activating voltage-gated Ca^{2+}

channels (Li et al., 2021). Cationic current through these channels and the resulting $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ elevation has

been implicated in bursting, persistent firing, and oscillatory activity in some neurons (Lin et al., 2017;

O'Malley et al., 2020; Li et al., 2021). In order to investigate the involvement of TRPM4 channels in the

cholinergic-mediated shift in adaptation index, the TRPM4 channel antagonist CBA (50 µM) was added

after recording the response to CCh (Figure 5A and 5B). Repeated measures ANOVA showed significant

differences in the adaptation indices in somatic recordings (control 0.29 ± 0.05, CCh -0.37 ± 0.10,

CCh+CBA 0.17 ± 0.07; $F_{(2,16)}$ = 66.257; $p < 0.0005$; n = 9; Figure 5A4) and dendritic recordings (control
0.39 ± 0.07, CCh -0.41 ± 0.10, CCh+CBA 0.08 ± 0.05; $F_{(2,16)}$ = 34.848; $p < 0.0005$; n = 9; Figure 5B4).
Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons indicated that for somatic recordings, the differences were
significant between control and CCh ($p < 0.0005$), and between CCh and CCh+CBA ($p < 0.0005$), but not
between control and CCh+CBA ($p = 0.16$). For dendritic recordings, Bonferroni-corrected pairwise
comparisons showed that the differences were significant between control and CCh ($p < 0.0005$), between
CCh and CCh+CBA ($p = 0.002$), and between control and CCh+CBA ($p = 0.02$). In most cells, the
adaptation index became negative in CCh and reverted to a positive value with the addition of CBA, and
in all cases the adaptation index was higher in CCh+CBA than in CCh alone.

In order to corroborate that the effect of CBA is due to block of TRPM4 channels, we investigated the effect
of a second TRPM4 channel antagonist, 9-phenanthrol, added to CCh in somatic recordings. Figure 5C
illustrates the shift of most of the spiking activity towards the up-ramp, moving the adaptation index in the
positive direction, when 9-phenanthrol (100 µM) was applied on top of CCh. The differences in adaptation
index between groups are significant, as demonstrated by repeated measures ANOVA (control 0.40 ±
0.03, CCh -0.14 ± 0.06, CCh+9Ph 0.19 ± 0.06; $F_{(2,14)}$ = 57.640; $p < 0.0005$; n = 8; Figure 5C4). Bonferroni-
corrected pairwise comparisons indicated that the differences were significant between control and CCh
($p < 0.0005$), between CCh and CCh+9Ph ($p = 0.001$), and between control and CCh+9Ph ($p = 0.03$).

Taken together, these data with the non-selective TRP channel blocker FFA, the TRPC channel blocker
SKF96365, and two different TRPM4 channel antagonists suggest that the shift in adaptation index that
we see with CCh is largely mediated through activation of TRPM4, rather than TRPC, channels.

Does Ca^{2+} release from internal sources activate TRPM4 channels?

We next tried to determine the source of Ca^{2+} required to activate TRPM4 channels. We first focused on
IP_3 receptors (IP_3Rs), which are activated through mAChRs and G_q as described above, using the
antagonist Xestospongin C (Gafni et al., 1997) in the intracellular solution (Figure 6A). Since the
antagonists rapidly dialyzed into the cytosol, in this figure control data reflect the effect of the antagonists
before the addition of CCh. We initially used Xestospongin C at 1 µM, which was previously found to be
effective in inhibiting TRPM4 channel activation via mGluRs in neurons of the preBötzinger nucleus (Pace
et al., 2007). Since this concentration was not effective in preventing the cholinergic shift in the center of
mass of firing in our experiments, in six out of nine experiments we increased the concentration to 2 µM.
Neither concentration of intracellular Xestospongin C appeared to change the firing features in control
conditions. The shift induced by carbachol did not appear to depend on the concentration of Xestospongin
C (Figure 6A3), therefore we averaged the data in these two conditions. The adaptation index still
decreased significantly ($t_{(8)}$ = 10.574, $p < 0.0005$; n = 9, as per a paired t-test) from 0.31 ± 0.02 in control

conditions to -0.38 ± 0.07 in the presence of CCh (2 μM). This result argues strongly against the hypothesis that the effects of the activation of muscarinic receptors on the shift of the center of mass of firing are mediated by activation of IP_3Rs. Ryanodine receptors (RyRs) are also expressed on the endoplasmic reticulum in CA1 pyramidal neurons, and appear to contribute selectively to spine Ca^{2+} elevations during LTP at the CA3-CA1 synapses (Raymond and Redman, 2006). We therefore tested the hypothesis that the increase of $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ in a nanodomain leading to TRPM4 channel activation could be due to Ca^{2+}-induced Ca^{2+} release (CICR) through RyRs following Ca^{2+} influx through voltage-dependent Ca^{2+} channels. In these experiments, we included ryanodine at 40 μM, a concentration known to inhibit RyRs (Ehrlich et al., 1994; Isokawa and Alger, 2006), in the intracellular solution. Notably, one out of nine of the neurons recorded from in these conditions had a slightly negative adaptation index already under control conditions (Figure 6B3) when RyR were inhibited. Moreover, three more neurons appeared to fire irregularly, with some doublets, under control conditions (an example is shown in Figure 6C), a feature that was not observed in other experimental conditions. This change could be due to the close juxtaposition of RyRs in the endoplasmic reticulum and various K^+ channels on the membrane of CA1 neurons (Vierra et al., 2019; Tedoldi et al., 2020; Sahu and Turner, 2021). Upon addition of CCh in the bath, the adaptation index became significantly more negative in all nine neurons recorded with intracellular ryanodine, as per a paired t-test (control 0.28 ± 0.05, CCh -0.46 ± 0.07; t(8) = 11.99; p < 0.0005; n = 9), suggesting that RyRs also do not play a role in the cholinergic shift of the center of mass of firing.

Multicompartmental modeling of cholinergic modulation of asymmetric firing responses

We next turned to our detailed multicompartmental model, in order to help identify the underlying mechanisms that contribute to the cholinergic modulation that we observe experimentally *in vitro*. The model was implemented in a reconstructed morphology (Megías et al., 2001) with 144 compartments, each of which can be represented with an equivalent circuit with heterogeneous channel conductance densities and kinetics as described in the Methods. Previously (Upchurch et al., 2022), this model was used to capture the firing rate adaptation observed under control conditions as shown in Figure 7A1 for short triangular ramps of injected current. The model performs a material balance on Ca^{2+} ions to provide estimated free Ca^{2+} concentrations in concentric shells beneath the membrane, as shown in the top panels of Figure 7. The control simulation for a 2 second somatic ramp in Figure 7A1 captures the experimentally observed decrease in spike number and frequency on the down-ramp as compared to the up-ramp (adaptation index = 0.28), as well as a slight decrease in spike amplitude, previously shown to be due to a decrease in available Na_V channels (Upchurch et al., 2022). The plot of instantaneous frequency versus level of injected current at the right captures the clockwise pattern observed in Figure 1C1 and G1 corresponding to firing rate adaptation. Figure 7A2 shows the $[Ca^{2+}]$ in the outer shell of the soma in nM, Figure 7A3 replots this same concentration in μM (the nanodomain in this case is contiguous with the outer

shell so it is not actually a nanodomain), and Figure 7A4 shows that this concentration is insufficient to

activate TRPM4 channels. In order to model the effect of CCh, we added a nanodomain for the spatially

restricted Ca^{2+} concentration which we hypothesize is sensed by the Ca^{2+} binding site on TRPM4 channels;

also note that, as in the experiments, the amount of injected current is lower for the simulated CCh. We

showed in Figure 6 that TRPM4 channel activation is not affected by antagonists of IP_3Rs and RyRs,

excluding a contribution of Ca^{2+} release from the ER. Although the source of the Ca^{2+} increase that

activates TRPM4 channels is currently unknown, it likely depends in some way upon the activation of

voltage-gated Ca^{2+} channels during the ramp. We therefore made the Ca^{2+} influx in the nanodomain

proportional to the total instantaneous Ca^{2+} current across the membrane in the model, but only during

simulated activation of the muscarinic receptor. Adding the Ca^{2+} influx from an unknown source to a

nanodomain in order to simulate bath application of CCh (Figure 7B1) replicates the experimentally

observed shift in adaptation index, with more spikes occurring on the down-ramp as compared to the up-

ramp (adaptation index = -0.29). The plot of instantaneous frequency versus injected current captures the

more extreme observed effect of CCh as illustrated in Figure 1G2; the motion is counter-clockwise

corresponding to the acceleration of the firing rate. Figure 7B2 shows the Ca^{2+} concentration in the outer

shell of the soma in nM, Figure 7B3 shows the Ca^{2+} concentration in µM in the hypothesized nanodomain,

and Figure 7B4 shows that this concentration is sufficient to activate TRPM4 channels.

Figure 8 shows why spike rate adaptation is not observed in the simulated presence of CCh. Figure 8A

repeats the voltage and current traces from the previous figure, except that the simulated CCh traces

(magenta) are superimposed over the control traces (black). Our model includes a four state Markov model

of the Na_V channel (see Methods). Occupancy in the open state between action potentials is the substrate

for the persistent Na_V current during the interspike interval. Figure 8B shows that the occupancy in the

open state of the Markov model of the Na_V channel in the soma is not greatly different between the two

conditions, except for excursions produced by spiking, and Figure 8D shows the same result for the

somatic Na_V current. Our previous work (Upchurch et al., 2022) attributed spike rate adaptation to reduced

persistent Na_V current due to increased long-term inactivation. Figure 8C shows that although long-term

inactivation of the Na_V channel (occupancy in the I2 state) starts later in simulated CCh, it eventually

progresses to higher levels than in control because of the increased number of spikes. Nonetheless, no

spike rate adaption was observed in simulated CCh in Figure 7B1 because the TRPM4 current is about 4-

fold larger than the persistent Na_V current (compare Figures 8D and 8E). Figure 8F shows that the

additional TRPM4 current more than compensates for the smaller level of injected ramp current; as a

consequence, the net inward current is comparable on the up-ramp and larger in magnitude during the

down-ramp for the simulated CCh case than control. This causes spiking to persist longer despite higher

levels of Na_V channel inactivation.

When activated by Ca^{2+}, TRPM4 channels cause a depolarization and additional spiking that further
increases Ca^{2+} influx resulting in a positive feedback loop, with the regenerative inward TRPM4 current
contributing to action potential initiation. Figure 9 elaborates on the mechanisms by which Ca^{2+} and voltage
differentially contribute to TRPM4 channel activation in removing or reversing spike frequency adaptation.
It repeats the traces in control (black) and simulated CCh (magenta) from Figure 7 on an expanded scale
and adds two conditions as described below. The insets to the right in Figure 9A show f/I curves that
capture the qualitative features of the f/I curves shown in Figure 1C1, C2, G1 and G2. Qualitatively, in
control (black traces), there are more spikes on the up-ramp than on the down-ramp, and the instantaneous
frequency is lower on the down-ramp for similar values of injected current during the up- ramp. The
contribution of the increase in Ca^{2+} concentration in the nanodomain was examined by turning off the
voltage-dependence of the TRPM4 channel (light blue traces). In this case, the voltage component of
TRPM4 channel activation was set to its steady state value at the resting V_m (see Methods).

Simply adding the nanodomain accomplishes the shift in center of mass (compare blue trace in Figure 9A
to control trace in black) and removes the adaptation, with a very slight tendency to accelerate the firing.
However, without the contribution of the voltage-dependence of TRPM4 channels, the resulting Ca^{2+} influx
is lower than in the original simulation of the effects of CCh (compare the blue traces to the magenta traces
in Figure 9B and C), resulting in less TRPM4 channel activation (compare the blue trace to the magenta
trace in Figure 9D) and therefore fewer total spikes. To determine the contribution of the positive feedback
loop by which Ca^{2+} entry recruits more Ca^{2+} entry via additional spiking and depolarization, we recorded
the Ca^{2+} traces in each nanodomain (one for each segment of every section in NEURON, see Methods)
of the original CCh simulation (magenta trace in Figure 9C). We then used this Ca^{2+} trace as the $[Ca^{2+}]$ in
the nanodomain during simulations with the voltage dependence removed as described above. The purple
trace in Figure 9A shows that the positive feedback loop added two spikes (16 in the purple trace versus
14 in the blue trace) by slightly increasing the frequency during the spike train and allowing spiking to
continue longer. The f/I plot shows a little more acceleration of the firing rate. The purple trace in Figure
9B shows that $[Ca^{2+}]$ in the outermost shell is slightly different than both the blue and magenta traces,
reflecting the different numbers of spikes. Note that the purple and magenta traces in Figure 9C are
identical because the magenta trace for $[Ca^{2+}]$ in the nanodomain (original CCh simulation) was input to
the nanodomain in the simulations shown in purple in the other panels. The additional TRPM4 channel
activation (compare purple to blue trace in Figure 9D) results from the increased $[Ca^{2+}]$ in the nanodomain.
Adding the full voltage-dependence to the TRPM4 channel slightly raises the overall level of TRPM4
channel activation. The voltage-dependence also allows for fast excursions in channel activation that could
contribute to action potential initiation (compare magenta trace in Figure 9D to the blue and purple ones).
The voltage-dependence contributes one additional spike (17 in the magenta trace versus 16 in the purple
trace in Figure 9A) and accentuates spike rate acceleration due to the positive feedback loop, as shown
in the f/I curves.

Evidence for tight coupling between TRPM4 channels and the calcium source that activates them

In order to test experimentally the model prediction that the highly localized Ca^{2+} elevation in a nanodomain

next to the TRPM4 channels gives rise to the CCh-mediated shift in the center of mass of firing, the calcium

chelator BAPTA was included in the recording pipette, and somatic recordings obtained before and during

addition of CCh. In Figure 10, control data reflect the effect of BAPTA before the addition of CCh, rather

than control data such as in previous figures, because the dialysis occurred quickly. As in previous sets of

experiments, the amount of current injected was chosen in order to achieve a target firing frequency of 10-

25 Hz. With intracellular dialysis of BAPTA, the current needed to reach these frequencies was consistently

higher in these experiments (compare scale bars of injected current to those in previous figures). In

addition, intracellular dialysis with BAPTA tended to shift the firing earlier in the ramp, with fewer spikes on

the down-ramp, therefore making the adaptation index closer to 1. In Figure 10A, 10 mM BAPTA was

included in the internal solution. As previously noted, the addition of CCh in the bath caused a

depolarization that was compensated for by the injecting hyperpolarizing current. Moreover, despite the

presence of BAPTA, the adaptation index became significantly smaller in the presence of CCh, as per a

paired t-test (control 0.82 ± 0.05, CCh -0.12 ± 0.11; $t(9) = 8.594$; $p < 0.0005$; $n = 10$; Figure 10A3); therefore,

10 mM BAPTA did not prevent the cholinergic-mediated shift. It has been shown that a higher concentration

of BAPTA may be required to prevent TRPM4 channel activation in neurons of the preBötzinger nucleus

(Pace et al., 2007; Picardo et al., 2019), therefore, in Figure 10B, BAPTA in the internal solution was

increased to 30 mM. With a free $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ of 100 nM (see Methods), CCh never produced negative adaptation

indices that were seen in previous figures, although the V_m did depolarize and was restored by the injection

of tonic hyperpolarizing current. CCh still had a significant effect on the adaptation index, as per a paired

t-test (control 0.62 ± 0.05, CCh 0.37 ± 0.06; $t(7) = 5.069$; $p = 0.001$; $n = 8$; Figure 10B3). However, when

the free $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ was adjusted to 10 nM in the presence of intracellular 30 mM BAPTA (Figure 10C), the

adaptation index did not change significantly when CCh was applied in the bath (control 0.73 ± 0.03, CCh

0.76 ± 0.03; $t(11) = 0.776$; $p = 0.45$; $n = 12$; Figure 10C3). In addition, the depolarization normally observed

in the presence of CCh did not occur in these conditions, and the amount of injected current was

comparable to that injected in control. These data demonstrate that a concentration of BAPTA higher than

the typical value (10 mM) used to disrupt Ca^{2+}-dependent mechanisms (Harney et al., 2006) is required to

prevent TRPM4 channel activation, and that free $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ of <100 nM is necessary to disrupt TRPM4 channel

activation. Together, these data suggest a close physical relationship between the source of Ca^{2+} and

TRPM4 channels.

Discussion

Summary of major results

Whereas place cell firing can only be observed *in vivo*, our bidirectional approach of modeling place cell

firing *in vitro* and *in silico* can be precisely targeted to uncover molecular mechanisms responsible for

modulation of firing patterns that lead to place cell firing *in vivo*. Manipulations that are difficult or impossible

even in the *in vitro* preparation can be carried out *in silico* using our detailed multicompartmental model,

with the added benefit that the model is transparent. All underlying state variables (ion concentrations,

channel open fractions) are accessible so that mechanisms can be positively identified, facilitating design

of experiments to test the putative mechanisms.

In this study we show that: 1) muscarinic receptor activation shifts the center of mass of firing from earlier

to later during a depolarizing ramp, through 2) activation of I_{CAN} mediated by TRP channels, most likely of

the TRPM4 subtype; 3) the shift is not affected by the inhibition of either IP$_3$Rs or RyRs, arguing against a

role of Ca^{2+} released from the endoplasmic reticulum in this process; 4) multicompartmental modeling

suggests a close physical relationship between the source of Ca^{2+} increase and the TRPM4 channels; 5)

the model prediction is supported by recordings showing that a very high concentration of BAPTA (30 mM),

combined with buffering $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ at 10 nM are required to prevent the cholinergic-mediated rightward shift.

More broadly, our results suggest that some rapid changes to place cell firing could be triggered via

neuromodulation of intrinsic excitability, in addition to and distinct from longer lasting experience-

dependent changes that are brought about by synaptic and structural plasticity. Specifically, we speculate

that increasing levels of ACh could lead to forward shifts in place cell firing, whereas decreasing levels of

ACh could contribute to backwards shifts.

Mystery current identified

Muscarinic activation of a Ca^{2+}-dependent nonselective cation current in rat CA1 pyramidal neurons has

been known for nearly three decades (Colino and Halliwell, 1993; Fraser and MacVicar, 1996; Dasari et

al., 2017). A previous study (Yamada-Hanff and Bean, 2013) found that in mouse CA1 neurons as well,

muscarinic stimulation not only inhibits background potassium currents but also activates a nonselective

cation current. They found that the latter effect was dominant and in fact converted CA1 pyramidal neurons

into pacemakers with the application of 5-25 μM acetylcholine, 5-25 μM carbachol, or 5-10 μM

oxotremorine-M. They suggested TRPC channels might mediate this current but were unable to positively

identify the source of the nonselective cation current. Based on our results, this unidentified channel could

be the TRPM4 channel. We show that TRPM4 channels primarily mediate a nonspecific Ca^{2+}-activated

cation current evoked by cholinergic modulation in CA1 pyramidal neurons. Our model shows that the

activation of TRPM4 channels contribute an additional inward current that activates and deactivates slowly

upon depolarization. In the case of synaptically-driven depolarizations (Figure 2), this inward current, with

its slow kinetics (see Figures 8 and 9) is likely to cause an increased decay time of the EPSPs (see Figure

2). This aspect has likely implications for synaptic integration by these neurons, as shown by the
observation of an impairment of LTP in TRPM4 knockout mice (Menigoz et al., 2016).

One of our most surprising findings was that TRPC channels did not seem to play a role in cholinergic
modulation of the firing pattern along a triangular ramp. TRPC channels have been implicated in cholinergic
signaling via direct activation by DAG, one of the two bioactive molecules generated by PLC hydrolysis of
PIP_2 (the other being IP_3). Cholinergic-associated persistent firing, whereby neurons continue to fire after
a depolarizing stimulus has ceased, has been attributed to activation of TRPC channels (Zhang et al.,
2011; Arboit et al., 2020). However, the presence of cholinergic-induced persistent firing in TRPC knockout
mice has called this into question (Egorov et al., 2019). In a recent study, TRPM4 channels were found to
be involved in persistent firing generated upon Ca^{2+} influx via T-type channels in thalamic neurons
(O'Malley et al., 2020). Delayed bursting in a subtype of cerebellar granular cells was also shown to be
mediated by TRPM4 channels (Masoli et al., 2020). Our study therefore provides further evidence
regarding the role of these channels in the control of neuronal firing, possibly including persistent firing.

Nanodomain resulting from colocalization of cholinergic-induced increases in $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ and TRPM4 channels

In HEK cells transfected with cDNA encoding TRPM4 channels, and in cardiac myocytes, activation of
TRPM4 channels is secondary to IP_3 receptor activation (Launay et al., 2002; Gonzales et al., 2010;
Gonzales and Earley, 2012), suggesting that TRPM4 channels in myocytes are activated by Ca^{2+} release
from intracellular stores. Furthermore, in situ proximity ligation assay was used to demonstrate co-
localization of TRPM4 channels and IP_3Rs in human detrusor smooth muscle cells (Provence et al., 2017).
In addition, in neurons of the preBötzinger nucleus TRPM4 channels are recruited by metabotropic
glutamate receptors to generate robust inspiratory drive potentials through IP_3R activation (Pace et al.,
2007). Surprisingly, we found that Ca^{2+} release from the ER was not involved in the cholinergic shift of the
center of mass of firing, since neither the IP_3R antagonist Xestospongin C (1-2 μM) nor the RyR antagonist
ryanodine (40 μM) prevented the effects of carbachol. Therefore, although the mechanisms that
produce the micromolar $[Ca^{2+}]$ increases needed for TRPM4 channel activation are unknown, our results
point to these channels acting as coincidence detector, requiring both muscarinic receptor activation and
depolarization-induced Ca^{2+} influx during the ramp to be activated

Our modeling results imply that, upon activation of muscarinic receptors, TRPM4 channels have privileged
access to a nanodomain in order to achieve the micromolar concentrations of Ca^{2+} necessary for their
activation (Nilius et al., 2004), since microdomains (like the multicompartmental model's outer shell) only
achieve submicromolar concentrations (Fakler and Adelman, 2008). The affinity of TRPM4 channels for
Ca^{2+} is heavily dependent on the availability of PIP_2 (Nilius et al., 2006) and binding of ATP and calmodulin
or PKC-dependent phosphorylation (Nilius et al., 2005), which all function to increase the sensitivity of

TRPM4 channels for Ca^{2+}. If under our conditions, the dependence of TRPM4 channels on $[Ca^{2+}]$ has a

much lower EC_{50} and/or is much steeper than in the model we implemented (Nilius et al., 2004), perhaps

the nanomolar $[Ca^{2+}]$ in the outer shell could be sufficient to activate TRPM4 channels. However, the

experimental result that 30 mM BAPTA was required to block the TRPM4 channels' access to Ca^{2+} argues

for a spatially restricted nanodomain. In a previous study, we found that intracellular BAPTA at a

concentration 5 mM can mimic SK block (Combe et al., 2018), presumably by interfering with the calcium

activation of those channels. The requirement of using 30 mM BAPTA while buffering free $[Ca^{2+}]_i$ to 10

nM in order to prevent TRPM4 channel activation suggests that TRPM4 channels are activated by a more

spatially restricted Ca^{2+} domain than SK channels.

Convergence of pharmacological blockers

One caveat for our experimental results is that TRP channel blockers, like most drugs, have been reported

to have some non-specific effects. In cardiac cells, both CBA and 9-phenanthrol have been shown to

decrease the Ito1 potassium current, attributed to Kv4.3 (Veress et al., 2018; Dienes et al., 2021) and a

late sodium current (Hou et al., 2018; Dienes et al., 2021). Kv4.3 is likely more important in interneurons

than in pyramidal cells in the CA1 area (Martina et al., 1998), and neither of the two currents are affected

by FFA at the concentration we used here (Guinamard et al., 2013). The other reported non-specific effects

do not overlap between the three blockers, flufenamic acid, CBA and 9-phenanthrol (Simard et al., 2012;

Guinamard et al., 2013; Veress et al., 2018; Dienes et al., 2021). The convergent effects of these three

distinct drugs implicate TRPM4 channels as the most probable effector of the CCh-mediated modulation

of the center of mass of firing. A similar pharmacological approach was used to implicate TRPM4 channel

activation in subthreshold oscillations underlying pacemaker firing of chemosensory neurons in the

retrotrapezoid nucleus (Li et al., 2021).

Diverse cholinergic effects on CA1 pyramidal neurons

In CA1 pyramidal neurons, ACh binding to muscarinic receptors results in neuromodulation of neuronal

excitability and presynaptic release probability. In our study, focused mainly on intrinsic properties, the

predominant effect of ACh and CCh was to activate TRPM4 channels; however, the effect of ACh on CA1

pyramidal cells *in vivo* is multipronged. Muscarinic receptors are known to suppress several K^+ currents in

CA1 pyramidal neurons (Halliwell and Adams, 1982; Hoffman and Johnston, 1998; Buchanan et al., 2010;

Giessel and Sabatini, 2010). The effects of ACh on SK, M-type currents and I_{CAN} are mediated by M_1 (G_q-

coupled) receptors (Dasari and Gulledge, 2011). Synaptic depression of Schaffer collateral inputs to CA1

is mediated by M_4 (G_i-coupled) receptors (Dasari and Gulledge, 2011) located on presynaptic

glutamatergic terminals, and synaptic depression of temporoammonic pathway glutamatergic inputs to

CA1 is mediated by M_3 (G_q-coupled) receptors (Palacios-Filardo et al., 2021). When we used a synaptically-
driven depolarization (Figure 2), decreased release from Schaffer collateral was indicated by the smaller
amplitude EPSPs in the presence of CCh. In these experiments, as in the current injection protocols, the
center of mass of firing occurred earlier in the ramp in control and shifted to later in the ramp in the presence
of CCh, suggesting that a combination of pre- and postsynaptic effects of cholinergic agonists can
contribute to the shift. Moreover, the cholinergic down-regulation of these afferents justifies the use of
smaller depolarizing current injection ramps in our recordings in the presence of carbachol, because less
current injection is required to produce the same output frequencies due to enhanced intrinsic excitability
in carbachol.

In a model of place field formation (Savelli and Knierim, 2010), if a neuron randomly fires within a place
field (Bittner et al., 2015), its inputs from the currently active grid cells are strengthened and the input from
those grid cells onto silent cells are weakened. Previously, ACh was thought to act in a manner consistent
with volume transmission (Dannenberg et al., 2017). Recently, this view has been challenged by the finding
that all hippocampal cholinergic terminals form synapses (Takács et al., 2018), and vesicles dock only at
synapses. Since cholinergic neuromodulation of TRPM4 channels greatly increases excitability in CA1
pyramidal cells, selective synaptic ACh inputs may underlie the formation of place fields in a novel
environment. Moreover, (Takács et al., 2018) found that the ACh terminals co-released GABA in separate
vesicles, and that ACh acting on M_2 (G_i-coupled) autoreceptors on cholinergic terminals inhibited the
release of both ACh and GABA. Future work is required to disentangle the distinct effects of ACh acting at
the various muscarinic receptors (M_1-M_5).

Acetylcholine, Novelty and Place Field Shifts

Acetylcholine acting at muscarinic receptors has been hypothesized to be a global novelty signal in the
dentate gyrus (Gómez-Ocádiz et al., 2022), dorsal hippocampus (Huff et al., 2022), and the
parahippocampal gyrus (Frank and Kafkas, 2021). A novel unconditioned stimulus caused a large increase
in ACh extracellular levels in the hippocampus, but little locomotion (Acquas et al., 1996). On the other
hand, hippocampal ACh release in an animal placed in a novel environment has two components, one
related to novelty, that disappears in a familiar environment (Thiel et al., 1998), and one related to motor
activity, associated with increased exploration (Giovannini et al., 2001). Indeed, a recent fiber photometric
study showed that part of the population activity in medial septal cholinergic neurons is correlated with the
logarithm of running speed (Kopsick et al., 2022). We are primarily interested in the component of the ACh
signal related to novelty because of previous studies demonstrating modulation of place cell firing that was
more pronounced during the first day in a novel environment (Roth et al., 2012).

In vivo recordings in rats demonstrated that place fields expand and the center of mass shifts backward
with respect to the direction of travel on continuous tracks over several laps during each recording session
(Mehta et al., 2000). This phenomenon was predicted by modeling studies that implemented Hebbian
plasticity in the form of NMDA-mediated LTP (Abbott and Blum, 1996; Blum and Abbott, 1996), whereby
spatially tuned input gradually strengthens over repeated traversals of a place field, causing a CA1 place
cell to fire earlier in the place field. NMDA blockers were subsequently shown to occlude the backwards
shift of the place field (Ekstrom et al., 2001) and an NMDA agonist partially restored it in aged rats (Burke
et al., 2008). Calcium imaging in mice running on a treadmill in a virtual environment showed an abrupt
backward shift in place cell firing (relative to where the first episode of place field firing occurred) during
the first exposure to a novel environment (Priestley et al., 2022), as well as much smaller backward shifts
in place fields in novel environments that leveled off as the animals became more familiar with the
environment during subsequent exposures (Dong et al., 2021). These backwards shifts, which were much
larger than those observed previously and attributed to Hebbian plasticity, were ascribed to behavioral
time scale plasticity, which is also dependent on NMDA receptor activation, and strengthens glutamatergic
inputs active during an asymmetric seconds-long window skewed towards synapses activated before a
burst triggered by a dendritic plateau (Bittner et al., 2017).

Despite the ability of elegant theories of synaptic plasticity to account for backward shifts in the center of
mass of the place field, forward shifts have also been observed. Forward shifting of the center of mass of
place field firing occurred, shifting toward prospective goal locations in the continuous T-maze alternation
task as a reward was approached (Lee et al., 2006). Thus, task-specific demands may allow for the
modulation of firing fields by neuromodulators such as ACh and dopamine. In a study that did not involve
reward, but only exploration of a novel virtual linear maze (Dong et al., 2021), the center of mass of CA1
place fields in laps 2-4 were forward shifted compared to the first lap, for cells that already had a place
field on the first lap (a lap required approximately 25 seconds). Laps 5 and beyond were backward shifted
compared to the immediately preceding lap, so averaging over all runs, the place field was shifted
backwards. Perhaps the neuromodulatory environment, including cholinergic tone, was different during the
first four laps. The data in that study indicated that backward shifting in CA1 in a novel environment is due
to a combination of place field expansion, skewness and translation of the point at which peak firing occurs.
They suggested that since skewness and width dynamics are inconsistent across studies, multiple
mechanisms may be involved in place field shifting.

Ideas and Speculations: Implications of our results for place fields in intact rodents

Our results suggest that increasing levels of ACh could lead to forward shifts in place field center of mass
whereas decreasing levels of ACh could contribute to backwards shifts. Since cholinergic activity in CA1
is elevated when animals encounter novel environments, our results with CCh could correspond to an

initial encounter with a novel environment, where firing of an existing place cell is shifted "forward" or later
during the depolarizing ramp that simulates spatially-tuned input. Our control conditions, then, would be
analogous to lower cholinergic tone, occurring as an animal becomes familiar with an environment, and
the associated "backward" shift earlier in the depolarizing ramp. The rapid modulation of ion channels by
removal of cholinergic tone could therefore provide a possible mechanism for the rapid shifting of place
cell firing in a novel versus familiar environment, perhaps complementary to Hebbian plasticity that
develops over time.

If our hypothesis is correct, optogenetic silencing of medial septum cholinergic afferents to CA1 during
runs through a place field in a novel environment should partially occlude backwards shifts in place field
center on subsequent runs that are due to diminished ACh in a familiar environment. Optogenetic
stimulation of the same afferents during runs in a familiar environment should induce forward shifts in place
field centers. Behaviorally, it could be informative to design experiments to test the effects of these
manipulations on the animal's subjective sense of position, for example, demonstrated by overshoot or
undershoot locations where the animal has been trained to pause.

There is a growing realization that there may be multiple mechanisms for place field shifting in addition to
the well-known mechanisms for backwards shifts dependent on Hebbian plasticity (Blum and Abbott, 1996;
Ekstrom et al., 2001; Burke et al., 2008; Roth et al., 2012; Mehta et al., 2000) or, more recently, behavioral
timescale synaptic plasticity (Bittner et al., 2017; Priestley et al., 2022). We propose that neuromodulation
of intrinsic properties by ACh, and potentially other neuromodulators like dopamine, provide an additional
level of modulatory control in parallel with synaptic plasticity mechanisms, contributing to rapid place field
shifts.

Materials and Methods

Key Resources Table				
Reagent type (species) or resource	**Designation**	**Source or reference**	**Identifiers**	**Additional information**
Strain, strain background	Male Sprague Dawley rats	Envigo (Inovit)	Hsd:Sprague Dawley® SD®	7-12 weeks old when sacrificed for experiments
chemical compound, drug	NBQX	Alomone Labs	cat# N-186	AMPA receptor antagonist

chemical compound, drug	DL-APV	HelloBio	cat# HB0252	NMDA receptor antagonist
chemical compound, drug	Gabazine	Alomone Labs	cat# G-216	$GABA_A$ receptor antagonist
chemical compound, drug	CGP55845	Abcam	cat# ab120337	$GABA_B$ receptor antagonist
chemical compound, drug	Carbachol	Tocris	cat# 2810	Acetylcholine receptor agonist
chemical compound, drug	Acetylcholine,	Sigma-Aldrich	cat# A6625	Ligand for acetylcholine receptors
chemical compound, drug	flufenamic acid	Sigma-Aldrich	cat# F9005	TRP channel antagonist
chemical compound, drug	SKF96365	Alomone Labs	cat# S-175	TRPC channel antagonist
chemical compound, drug	CBA	Tocris	cat# 6724	TRPM4 channel antagonist
chemical compound, drug	9-phenanthrol	Tocris	cat# 4999	TRPM4 channel antagonist
chemical compound, drug	Xestospongin C	Abcam	cat# ab120914	IP_3R antagonist
chemical compound, drug	low molecular weight heparin	Sigma-Aldrich	cat# H3149	IP_3R antagonist
chemical compound, drug	D-myo-IP_3	Cayman Chemical	cat# 60960	IP_3R agonist
chemical compound, drug	Adenophostin A	MilliporeSigma	cat# 115500	IP_3R agonist
chemical compound, drug	Ryanodine	HelloBio	cat# HB1320	RyR antagonist at [μM]

chemical compound, drug	Ruthenium red	Tocris	cat# 1439	RyR antagonist
chemical compound, drug	Dantrolene	Tocris	cat# 0507	RyR antagonist
chemical compound, drug	caffeine	Tocris	cat# 2793	RyR agonist
chemical compound, drug	Thapsigargin	Alomone Labs	cat# T-650	SERCA inhibitor
chemical compound, drug	BAPTA tetra-potassium salt (K4-BAPTA)	Sigma-Aldrich	cat# A9801	fast Ca^{2+} chelator
Software, algorithm	MAXCHELATOR, WEBMAXC EXTENDED	https://somapp.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/pharmacology/bers/maxchelator/webmaxc/webmaxcE.htm		Online free metal calculator
Software, algorithm	SPSS	IBM	RRID:SCR_002865	Statistics software
Software, algorithm	NEURON	Hines and Carnevale, 1997; Carnevale and Hines, 2006	doi:10.1162/neco.1997.9.6.1179; doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511541612	Computational modelling and simulation software
other	Laerd Statistics	https://statistics.laerd.com/		Online tutorial and software guide

Experimental methods

Slice preparation. All the procedures described below were conducted according to protocols developed by following guidelines on the responsible use of laboratory animals in research from the National Institutes of Health and approved by the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center-New Orleans Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC, internal protocol numbers 3583 and 3851). Animals

were housed in pairs, whenever possible; in the event of single housing, Bed-r'nest pucks (Andersons Lab Bedding) were provided for enrichment purposes.

For these experiments, 400 µm-thick slices were prepared from 7 to 11-week-old male Sprague Dawley rats as previously described (Combe et al., 2018). Briefly, rats were deeply anesthetized via intraperitoneal injection of ketamine and xylazine (90 and 10 mg/kg, respectively), until the disappearance of the toe-pinch and palpebral reflexes. After trans-cardiac perfusion with ice-cold solution, decapitation, and rapid removal of the brains, transverse hippocampal slices were cut using a vibratome. Slices were then transferred to a chamber filled with an oxygenated artificial cerebro-spinal fluid (ACSF) containing, in mM: NaCl 125, $NaHCO_3$ 25, KCl 2.5, NaH_2PO_4 1.25, $MgCl_2$ 1, $CaCl_2$ 2, dextrose 25, ascorbate 1, sodium pyruvate 3.

Patch clamp electrophysiology. After recovery, individual slices were transferred to a submerged recording chamber, and superfused with ACSF at about 2 ml/min; the solution was warmed through an inline heater and measured to keep it at a temperature of 34-36°C in the chamber.

CA1 pyramidal cells were identified via differential interference contrast-infrared video microscopy. Whole-cell current clamp recordings were made using Dagan BVC 700A amplifiers in the active "bridge" mode. Recording pipettes were filled with an internal solution that contained, in mM: potassium methanesulphonate 125, KCl 20, HEPES 10, EGTA 0.5, NaCl 4, Mg_2ATP 4, $Tris_2GTP$ 0.3, phosphocreatine 14. The electrode resistance was 1-3 MΩ for somatic recordings and 3-5 MΩ for dendritic recordings. Series resistance was monitored throughout the recordings and was usually less than 20 MΩ; recordings were discarded when series resistance reached 25 MΩ or 30 MΩ, for somatic and dendritic recordings, respectively. Cells with resting membrane potentials depolarized beyond -60 mV at break-in were discarded.

To investigate the contribution of intracellular Ca^{2+} signaling to TRPM4 channel activation and the cholinergic shift in the center of mass of firing, in some sets of experiments, the internal patch clamp solution was modified as follows. In some experiments, EGTA was replaced by higher concentrations (10 or 30 mM) of the faster Ca^{2+} chelator BAPTA tetra-potassium salt. When 30 mM BAPTA was included, 0.69 mM or 5.7 mM Ca^{2+} was added to the internal solution to give 10 or 100 nM free $[Ca^{2+}]$, respectively, at 33°C, pH 7.3 and an overall ionic concentration of 300 mM, according to the online program MAXCHELATOR, WEBMAXC EXTENDED version (https://somapp.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/pharmacology/ bers/maxchelator/webmaxc/webmaxcE.htm). In other experiments, Xestospongin C (1-2 µM) or ryanodine (40 µM) were added to the internal patch clamp solution to block IP_3Rs and RyRs, respectively. Xestospongin C and ryanodine were dissolved in DMSO; in this case the [DMSO] in the final solution was ≤ 0.2% due to the limited solubility of these compounds. As in (Pace et al., 2007), Xestospongin C was added to the standard intracellular solution immediately prior to use and discarded after 2 hours. In all these cases, intracellular dialysis appeared to take effect quickly, so the control data refer to the effect of

the modified internal solution. Nonetheless, dialysis was allowed for at least 20 minutes in these
experiments to make sure that the drug could diffuse into distal compartments.

NBQX (10 µM), DL-APV (50 µM), Gabazine (12.5 µM) and CGP55845 (1 µM) were applied in the external
solution in all experiments, except those in which the Schaffer Collateral fibers were electrically stimulated
(Figure 2), to block glutamatergic and GABAergic neurotransmission, respectively, in order to isolate the
contribution of the intrinsic ion channels to the ramp responses. Carbachol (2 µM), acetylcholine (2, 10, or
15 µM), flufenamic acid (100 µM), SKF96365 (50 µM), CBA (50 µM), and 9-phenanthrol (100 µM) were
added to the external solution as needed, from stock solutions made with water, DMSO, or ethanol; the
concentration of ethanol or DMSO in the final solution was ≤ 0.1%. Carbachol, 9-phenanthrol, and CBA
were purchased from Tocris, CGP55845 and Xestospongin C from Abcam (Cambridge, MA), DL-APV and
ryanodine from HelloBio (Princeton, NJ), NBQX, Gabazine, and SKF96365 from Alomone Labs
(Jerusalem, Israel), and acetylcholine, flufenamic acid, and K4-BAPTA from Sigma (St. Louis, MO).

In order to approximate the depolarizing input that place cells receive as an animal traverses the place
field, ramp-shaped depolarizing current injections were applied via the recording electrode to CA1
pyramidal neurons at either the soma or the apical dendrite (150-250 µm from soma). Two second ramps
(1 s up, 1 s down) and ten second ramps (5 s up, 5 s down) were applied to simulate different running
speeds. Current amplitude was adjusted to evoke peak frequencies between 10 and 25 Hz, comparable
to place cell firing as recorded *in vivo* (Hargreaves et al., 2007; Resnik et al., 2012; Bittner et al., 2015).

Electrical stimulation was achieved by delivering constant current pulses through a tungsten bipolar
electrode placed in the stratum radiatum of area CA1 to stimulate the Schaffer collateral fibers from CA3
pyramidal neurons. The instantaneous input frequency of stimulation was adjusted according to a linear,
symmetric ramp (see also (Hsu et al., 2018). The total duration of the ramp was ~2 s and the peak
frequency at the center of the ramp was 25 Hz, our target for the maximum peak frequency in the ramp
current injections (see above). The intensity of stimulation was adjusted such that neurons would fire in
response to 50-70% of the total inputs and kept constant in control conditions and in the presence of
carbachol. For each neuron and condition, we averaged the trials where the neurons did not fire in
response to the first pulse in the synaptic ramp and the amplitude of the EPSPs was measured to estimate
the degree of cholinergic modulation of presynaptic release. Antagonists of synaptic transmitter receptors
were omitted in these experiments.

Experimental design and statistical analyses

Experimental data were recorded and analyzed with Igor Pro software (WaveMetrics). Left or rightward
shifts in firing along the current ramp were quantified as an adaptation index, as previously described
(Upchurch et al., 2022):

732
$$\frac{\#APs\ on\ up\text{-}ramp - \#APs\ on\ down\text{-}ramp}{\#APs\ on\ up\text{-}ramp + \#APs\ on\ down\text{-}ramp}$$

Positive values indicate firing predominantly on the up-ramp, while negative values indicate firing mostly
on the down-ramp. For synaptically driven membrane potential ramps, the adaptation index was calculated
in a similar manner, where the up-ramp consisted of the first 15 (out of 30) stimuli. An adaptation index of
zero indicates symmetry in the number of action potentials on the up-ramp and the down-ramp. Plots of
instantaneous frequency versus time (f/t) or current (f/I) use the time or current value at the midpoint of the
interspike interval (ISI), respectively. Current amplitude is relative to tonic baseline current. Raster plots in
Figures 1 and 2 show the timing of action potential firing for several trials in control conditions and in the
presence of carbachol, where time = 0 indicates the beginning of the ramp. The tick marks represent the
timing of each action potential (when the V_m crossed -40 mV).

An n = 6-12 is required for a typical patch clamp electrophysiology experiment that has a difference in
means of 1.3-2X and a standard deviation of 0.2-0.3 for p = 0.05 and a power of 0.9 (Cohen, 1977). Each
experimental group in this study is made up of n ≥ 8 recording sessions; the number of cells recorded for
each experiment is indicated in the Results section. Recordings were from one cell per slice; typically, a
maximum of three recordings were obtained for each animal. Biological replicates (recording from different
cells) were n ≥ 8 for each experiment and (recordings from different animals) n ≥ 6 for each experiment.

Statistical analyses were performed in SPSS (IBM, RRID:SCR_002865), following the tutorials and
software guide from Laerd Statistics (2015, https://statistics.laerd.com/). Comparisons were made in the
same cell before and during pharmacological treatment; the summary plots for these data include individual
points and means ± standard error of the mean. Parametric analyses (paired samples t-test and repeated-
measures ANOVA) were used to compare treatments in the same neurons, since data were normally
distributed as determined by the Shapiro-Wilk test for normality. Significant differences demonstrated by
repeated measures ANOVA were followed up by post-hoc analysis using Bonferroni-corrected pair-wise
comparisons. Differences were considered to be statistically significant when p < 0.05. Outliers, as
assessed by boxplots, were not removed from analysis. To check the effect of the outliers, analyses were
also performed after removing outliers, and with non-parametric tests keeping the outliers. The significance
did not change, and for consistency, the results of parametric tests are reported with all data included.

Data Availability

Data generated and analyzed during the study are included in the manuscript and supporting files. Source
data are provided for all experimental figures.

Computational Modeling

A multicompartmental CA1 pyramidal neuron model from our laboratory was used as a starting point
(Upchurch et al., 2022). This model was based on the model in the study by (Poirazi et al., 2003a), with
subsequent changes made in studies by (Shah et al., 2008), (Bianchi et al., 2012), and (Combe et al.,
2018). The model (Figure 11A) was created from a reconstructed morphology (Megías et al., 2001) with
144 compartments and implemented in the NEURON simulation software package (Hines and Carnevale,
1997; Carnevale and Hines, 2006). The following currents (Figure 11B) were modeled using Ohmic drive
and conductances in parallel with a membrane capacitance (C_M): a Na$^+$ current (I_{Na}), L-type (I_{CaL}), R-type
(I_{CaR}), and T-type (I_{CaT}) Ca^{2+} currents, two delayed rectifiers (I_{Kv1} and I_{Kv2}), an A-type K$^+$ current (I_A), an
inward rectifying potassium current (I_{KIR}), a nonspecific Ca^{2+}-activated current (I_{CAN}), a hyperpolarization-
activated mixed cationic h-current (I_h), and a leak current (I_L). All currents were as in the previous model
except (I_{CAN}), which was added to the model. In the soma and apical dendrites, we kept the Markov model
(Figure 11C) of the Na$_V$ channel that we modified from (Balbi et al., 2017). This Markov model was tuned
to replicate the distance-dependent long-term inactivation of Na$_V$1.6 found in the literature (Mickus et al.,
1999) that causes spike frequency adaptation and the difference in half activation between the soma and
dendrites supported by (Gasparini and Magee, 2002). The sevenfold gradient in the h-conductance
supported by (Magee, 1998), sixfold gradient in A-type potassium channels supported by (Hoffman et al.,
1997) and lower sodium conductance in the dendrites versus the soma (75% of somatic value) supported
by (Gasparini and Migliore, 2015) were also retained. A spine factor, to account for the additional
membrane area due a higher density of spines (Megías et al., 2001) was varied as described in (Upchurch
et al., 2022), and a sigmoidal decrease in membrane and axial resistance was implemented to account for
the decrease in input resistance along the apical dendrites (Magee, 1998; Poirazi et al., 2003b).

The calcium handling for the model (see top panels in Figure 7A1 and B1) was modified from (Ashhad and
Narayanan, 2013). The model performs a Ca^{2+} material balance on four shells in each compartment, and
incorporates radial and longitudinal diffusion ($D_{Ca}\nabla^2[Ca^{2+}]$), stationary and mobile Ca^{2+} buffers (R_{Buf}),
calcium leak through endoplasmic reticulum leak channels (J_{leak}), Ca^{2+} uptake from a
sarcoplasmic/endoplasmic reticulum Ca^{2+} ATPase pump (J_{SERCA}), IP$_3$-mediated Ca^{2+} release (J_{IP3R}), a
plasma membrane extrusion pump (J_{Pump}) and Ca^{2+} from voltage gated channels on the membrane (J_{VGCC}).
The latter two terms appear only in the outer shell. Details on the implementation of diffusion, the buffers,
calcium leak and the pumps are described in (Ashhad and Narayanan, 2013). The differential equation for
cytosolic calcium is described below.

793
$$\frac{\partial[Ca^{2+}]}{\partial t} = D_{Ca}\nabla^2[Ca^{2+}] + AJ_{IP3R} + B(J_{leak} - J_{SERCA}) + R_{Buf} + J_{VGCC} - J_{Pump}$$

795 We used an equation for Ca^{2+} dynamics in the nanodomain that is agnostic as to the source of the Ca^{2+}
796 contributing to the nanodomain:

$$797 \quad \frac{d[Ca^{2+}]_{ND}}{dt} = X * I_{Ca} + \frac{[Ca^{2+}]_{outer\ shell} - [Ca^{2+}]_{ND}}{400ms}$$

where X is a scale factor representing the effect of a small volume for Ca^{2+} accumulation in the restricted

nanodomain. The model is agnostic regarding the source of the Ca^{2+} entry into the nanodomain, which

was arbitrarily set to be proportional to the total Ca^{2+} current I_{Ca}. In the absence of simulated application of

CCh, $X = 0$ so that the TRPM4 channel senses the bulk Ca^{2+} concentration in the outer shell. To simulate

application of CCh, in contrast with our previous modeling efforts, based on a central role for IP_3R (see

Figure 11 – Figure supplement 1), [IP3] and therefore J_{IP3R} was not increased from baseline levels; instead,

influx to the nanodomain from an unknown source was simulated by setting $X = 500$. The relatively long

time constant reflected the spatially restricted nature of the nanodomain, with some postulated impediment

to diffusion between the nanodomain and the bulk cytosol. In one simulation (purple traces in Figure 9),

the $[Ca^{2+}]_{ND}$ for every segment in every section was recorded was recorded in the original CCh simulation

(magenta traces) and played back using NEURON's vector play method in the model lacking the voltage-

dependence of the TRPM4 channels in order to eliminate differences in $[Ca^{2+}]_{ND}$ between models and

focus solely on the contribution of the voltage-dependence unrelated to additional Ca^{2+} influx.

The TRPM4 model was modified from (Nilius et al., 2004) and assumes that the required binding of Ca^{2+}

to the channel precedes voltage-dependent channel activation. The model has three different states, an

unbound state, a Ca^{2+} bound closed state, and an open state.

$$815 \quad TRPM4 \Leftrightarrow TRPM4\ bound\ to\ Ca^{2+} \underset{\alpha(V),\beta(V)}{\Longleftrightarrow} Open\ TRPM4\ channel$$

816   Ca^{2+} binding is assumed to be much faster than the voltage dependent gating and is assumed to

817   instantaneously reach the steady state binding determined by the dissociation constant K_d (87 μM). The

818   fraction of open channels m relaxes to the steady state activation m_∞ with a time constant, τ, with first order

819   kinetics:

$$820 \quad \alpha' = \frac{\alpha}{1+\frac{Kd}{[Ca^{2+}]_{ND}}}, m_\infty = \frac{\alpha'}{\alpha'+\beta} \qquad \tau = \frac{1}{\alpha'+\beta}$$

where α is the forward rate of Ca^{2+} bound TRPM4 channel opening, $\alpha(V) = 0.0057\ exp(0.0060\ V)$, α' is the

forward rate scaled by the fraction of Ca^{2+} bound channels, β is the backward rate of TRPM4 channel

closing, $\beta(V) = 0.033\ exp(-0.019\ V)$ and $[Ca^{2+}]_{ND}$ is the Ca^{2+} concentration in the nanodomain. When

removing the voltage-dependence of TRPM4 channels, we set V in the equations above to the steady-

state value at -60 mV. We injected enough current into the model to hold the membrane potential at -60

mV long enough for all transients to equilibrate before injecting a two second temporally symmetric current

ramp in the soma. The amplitude of the ramp was adjusted to reach similar peak frequencies as in the

experiments, 10 to 25 Hz.

The persistent current during the interspike intervals determines the spike frequency. In order to focus on

the rate determining currents in Figures 8 and 9, we removed points from the traces during spiking by

eliminating points at which the absolute value of the first temporal derivative of the current trace exceeded

$0.005 \ \mu A/ms \cdot cm^2$ for the net current, $0.15 \ \mu A/ms \cdot cm^2$ for the TRPM4 current, and $0.2 \ \mu A/ms \cdot cm^2$ for the

NaV current. Points outside the range of -0.3 to $0.09 \ \mu A/cm^2$ in the net current trace, greater than $0 \ \mu A/cm^2$

in the TRPM4 trace and less than -10 µA in the Nav current were also removed. Points were removed from

the occupancy in O trace if the absolute value of the first temporal derivative of the O state exceeded

0.00002/ms or when occupancy exceeded 0.0002.

Software accessibility

Model code is freely available and can be downloaded from ModelDB at: http://modeldb.yale.edu/267599,

access code: cholinergicshift.

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Figure legends

Figure 1. Carbachol shifts the center of mass of firing in response to depolarizing current ramps.

A. Somatic recording, control. A1. Voltage trace for a two second triangular current ramp (represented

below) injected in the soma. A2. Instantaneous frequency for example in A1 as it changes along the ramp.

A3. Raster plot of different trials recorded from the same example neuron in A1. The trials are ordered by

the amplitude of the peak injected current, from lowest (bottom) to highest (top); trials with the same

amount of current injection are clustered together. B. Somatic recording, carbachol. B1, B2, and B3. Same

as A1, A2, and A3, but during superfusion with 2 µM CCh. C1. Instantaneous frequency for example in A1,

as it changes with injected current. Filled circles represent firing on the up-ramp; open circles, firing on the

down-ramp. C2. Instantaneous frequency for example in B1. A, B, and C are recordings from the same

cell. D. Summary data of the adaptation index for somatic recordings, before and during CCh, for two

second ramps (n = 21) and ten second ramps (n = 19). Open circles connected by gray lines represent

indices for individual cells, before and during CCh. Black squares with error bars represent group averages

± SEM. In control, all adaptation indices are positive, indicating more action potentials on the up-ramp. In

CCh, most adaptation indices are negative, indicating more action potentials on the down-ramp. E.

Dendritic recording, control. E1. Voltage trace for a two second triangular current ramp (represented below)

injected in the dendrite, approximately 200 µm from the soma. E2. Instantaneous frequency for E1 as it

changes along the ramp. E3. Raster plot of different trials recorded from same example neuron in E1. F.

Dendritic recording, carbachol. F1, F2, and F3. Same as E1, E2, and E3, but during superfusion with 2 µM

CCh. G1. Instantaneous frequency for example in E1, as it changes with injected current. G2.
Instantaneous frequency for example in F1. E, F, and G are from the same cell. H. Summary data of the
adaptation index for dendritic ramps, before and during CCh, for two second ramps (n = 19) and ten second
ramps (n = 10). *** p < 0.0005. Red dotted lines in the left panels mark the middle of the current injection
ramp. Source data in "Figure 1 - Source data". See also Figure 1 – supplement 1 and Figure 1 –
supplement 2.

Figure 2. Cholinergic modulation of the response to electrical stimulation of Schaffer collaterals, recorded
at the soma. A Top, synaptic response in control conditions to an input frequency that increases and
decreases symmetrically, from 6.7 to 25 Hz, as denoted by the pulses under the voltage trace. Bottom,
Raster plot of multiple trials repeated at the same stimulation intensity. B same as A during superfusion of
2 µM CCh. A and B are from the same neuron, and at the same stimulation intensity. Diamonds in A and
B point to a longer EPSP decay time in the presence of CCh. C. Summary data of the adaptation index for
synaptic ramps, before and during CCh. D. Summary data of the average EPSP amplitude measured
during trials where the cells did not fire in response to the first stimulus pulse, before and during CCh. In
both cases, open circles connected by gray lines represent indices for individual cells; black squares with
error bars represent group averages ± SEM *** p < 0.0005, ** p = 0.002. Red dotted lines in the panels on
the left mark the middle of the synaptic stimulation. Source data in "Figure 2 - Source data".

Figure 3. Modulation of response to symmetric ramps by acetylcholine is concentration dependent.
A. Voltage trace recorded in the soma for a two second triangular current ramp injected in the soma in
control. Current traces and instantaneous frequency plots are just below the voltage traces. B-D. Same as
A, during superfusion with 2 µM ACh (B), 10 µM ACh (C), and 15 µM ACh (D). A through D are from the
same cell. E. Summary data of the adaptation index for control and the three concentrations of ACh,
applied in order of increasing concentration (n = 13). Open circles connected by gray lines represent
indices for individual cells over all four conditions. Black squares with error bars represent group averages
± SEM. *** p < 0.0005, ** p = 0.001, * p = 0.01. Red dotted lines in the panels on the left mark the middle
of the current injection ramp. Source data in "Figure 3 - Source data".

Figure 4. Cholinergic-associated shift in the timing of firing on ramp is mediated by TRP channels, but
notably not TRPC channels. A. Somatic recordings for a two second triangular current ramp injected in the
soma in control (A1), CCh (2 µM, A2), and CCh + FFA (100 µM, A3) applied subsequently to the same
cell. Current traces and instantaneous frequency plots are just below the voltage traces. Summary data
(A4) of the adaptation index for control, CCh, and CCh + FFA (n = 9). B. Same as in A, but for dendritic
injection and recordings. Summary data (B4) of the adaptation index for control, CCh, and CCh + FFA (n
= 9). Open circles connected by gray lines represent indices for individual cells, over all three treatments.

Black squares with error bars represent group averages ± SEM. C. Somatic recordings for a two second
triangular current ramp injected in the soma in control (C1), CCh (2 μM, C2), and CCh + SKF96365 (50
μM, C3) applied subsequently to the same cell. Current traces and instantaneous frequency plots are just
below voltage traces. Red dotted line marks the middle of the ramp. Summary data (C4) of the adaptation
index for control, CCh, and CCh + SKF96365 (n = 8). D. Same as in C, but for dendritic injection and
recordings. Summary data (D4) of the adaptation index for control, CCh, and CCh + SKF96365 (n = 8). ***
p < 0.0005, ** p = 0.001, * p = 0.02, n.s. not significant. Source data in "Figure 4 - Source data".

Figure 5. Cholinergic-mediated shift in the center of mass of firing is mediated by TRPM4 channels.
A. Somatic recordings for a two second triangular current ramp injected in the soma in control (A1), CCh
(2 μM, A2), and CCh + CBA (50 μM, A3) applied subsequently to the same cell. Current traces and
instantaneous frequency plots are just below voltage traces. Red dotted line marks the middle of the ramp.
Summary data (A4) of the adaptation index for control, CCh, and CCh + CBA (n = 9). Open circles
connected by gray lines represent indices for individual cells, over all three treatments. Black squares with
error bars represent group averages ± SEM. B. Same as in A, but for dendritic injection and recordings.
Summary data (B4) of the adaptation index for control, CCh, and CCh + CBA (n = 9). C. Same as A, but
for control (C1), CCh (2 μM, C2), and CCh + 9-phenanthrol (100 μM, C3) applied subsequently to the same
cell. Summary data (C4) of the adaptation index for control, CCh, and CCh + 9-phenanthrol (n = 8). *** p
< 0.0005, ** p = 0.002, * p = 0.02, ## p = 0.001, # p = 0.03, n.s. not significant. Source data in "Figure 5 -
Source data".

Figure 6. Pharmacological block of IP$_3$R or RyRs has no effect on CCh-mediated shift in firing along ramp.
A. Somatic recordings during intracellular dialysis with Xestospongin C (2 μM), for a two second triangular
current ramp injected in the soma before (A1), and during superfusion with CCh (2 μM, A2). Current traces
and instantaneous frequency plots are just below voltage traces. Summary data (A3) of the adaptation
index for Xestospongin C (1-2 μM) and CCh (n = 9). Circles connected by gray lines represent ratios for
individual cells, before and during CCh. Filled circles represent cells dialyzed with 1 μM Xestospongin C
and open circles represent cells dialyzed with 2 μM Xestospongin C. Black squares with error bars
represent group averages ± SEM. B. Same as A, but intracellular dialysis is with ryanodine (40 μM).
Summary data (B3) of the adaptation index for ryanodine and CCh (n = 9). Individual cells represented by
open circles. *** p < 0.0005. In both sets of experiments, control data reflect the effect of either IP$_3$R or
RyR antagonist before the addition of CCh, because the dialysis started to be apparent quickly after break-
in. Red dotted lines in the left panels mark the middle of the ramp. C1 and C2. Same as B1 and B2; C3 is
an expanded version of the inset in C1. Source data in "Figure 6 - Source data".

Figure 7. A. Simulated control response to triangular current ramp. A1. Top. Simplified model calcium

handling schematic. For simplicity, only one annulus (shell) is shown, and the rest are represented as the

core. Ca^{2+} enters via voltage-gated Ca^{2+} channels (Ca_V) and is removed by the plasma membrane Ca^{2+}

ATPase (PMCA) pump. Inside the cell, buffering and the endoplasmic reticulum (ER) are also modeled.

The TRPM4 channel is not permeable to Ca^{2+} and senses $[Ca^{2+}]$ in a nanodomain (ND). In the control

simulation, the nanodomain is contiguous with the cytosol. Bottom trace shows the voltage responses,

plotted in the somatic compartment, to a triangular current ramp applied in the soma (shown below). A2.

Ca^{2+} concentration (in nM) in the outermost shell of the somatic compartment. A3. The nanodomain Ca^{2+}

concentration (same as the that of the outer shell in A2 in this case) is negligible when plotted in µM scale.

A4. TRPM4 activation is negligible in control. B. Simulated response to triangular current ramp during

simulated application of CCh. B1. As in A1 except for ligand (magenta dot) binding to the metabotropic

acetylcholine receptor (mAChR), triggering Ca^{2+} influx into a nanodomain linked to the TRPM4 channel.

The voltage trace shows that the center of mass of firing is shifted to later times. B2. Ca^{2+} concentration

(in nM) in the outermost shell of the somatic compartment. B3. In contrast to control, the addition of a

nanodomain with privileged Ca^{2+} access allows micromolar concentrations to be reached and sensed by

TRPM4 channels. B4. In contrast to control, TRPM4 is now activated during the ramp. Vertical dashed red

line shows the peak of the current ramp.

Figure 8. The model explains how simulated TRPM4 channel activation can reverse the adaptation

mediated by long-term inactivation of $Na_V1.6$ channels. A. Voltage traces from 7A1 and B1 overlaid; control

(in black), CCh (in magenta). The triangular current injection ramps are shown below. B. Occupancy of

$Na_V1.6$ channel in the open state (O) in the somatic compartment, with values during spikes removed. C.

Occupancy of $Na_V1.6$ channel in the long-term inactivated state (I2). D. Persistent Na_V current (spiking

values removed) E. TRPM4 current. F. Net ionic current. All values are shown for somatic compartment.

Figure 9. The model explains how activation of TRPM4 channels affects the firing pattern in response to

triangular ramps that evoke similar firing frequencies. A. Simulated voltage traces (top) during a two second

triangular current ramp (just below voltage traces). Insets show the reciprocal of the interspike interval (ISI)

plotted as the instantaneous frequency at the ISI midpoint. Vertical dashed red line shows the peak of the

current ramp. The slower frequencies at similar values of injected current and fewer ISIs on the down-

ramp (open circles) versus the up-ramp (closed circles) in control show hysteresis due to adaptation

mediated by long-term inactivation of the sodium channel. TRPM4 channel activation causes the center of

mass of firing to be shifted to the right in all other traces compared to control because a nanodomain for

TRPM4 activation with special access to Ca^{2+} was added in simulated CCh. The hysteresis is in the

opposite direction because the activation of TRPM4 channels by Ca^{2+} accumulation obscures and

overwhelms adaptation. In the light blue traces, the voltage-dependence of TRPM4 activation was not

included, so there is less Ca^{2+} accumulation in the outer shell in B and in the nanodomain in C, resulting

in less activation of TRPM4 channels in D. In order to isolate the effect of voltage-dependence from that

of Ca^{2+} dependence, the Ca^{2+} waveforms in all nanodomains were recorded during the full CCh simulation

shown in magenta, and played back into each nanodomain Ca^{2+} during the simulations shown in purple.

Figure 10. A high concentration of BAPTA is required to interfere with CCh-mediated shift in firing along

ramp.

A. Somatic recordings during intracellular dialysis with 10 mM BAPTA, for a two second triangular current

ramp injected in the soma before (A1), and during superfusion with CCh (2 µM, A2). Current traces and

instantaneous frequency plots are just below voltage traces. Red dotted line marks the middle of the ramp.

Summary data (A3) of the adaptation index for control and CCh (n = 10). Open circles connected by gray

lines represent ratios for individual cells, before and during CCh. Black squares with error bars represent

group averages ± SEM. B. Same as A, but intracellular dialysis is with 30 mM BAPTA and 100 nM free

$[Ca^{2+}]$. Summary data (B3) of the adaptation index for control and CCh (n = 8). C. Same as A, but

intracellular dialysis is with 30 mM BAPTA and 10 nM free $[Ca^{2+}]$. Summary data (C3) of the adaptation

index for control and CCh (n = 12). *** $p < 0.0005$, ** $p = 0.001$, n.s. not significant. Source data in "Figure

10 - Source data".

Figure 11. Model Schematics.

A. Reconstructed morphology ported to NEURON simulation program, with somatic and dendritic current

injection sites labeled. B. Equivalent circuit diagram, with the reversal potentials for each channel indicated

by E_X. The following currents were modeled using Ohmic drive and conductances in parallel with a

membrane capacitance (C_M): a Na^+ current (I_{Na}), L-type (I_{CaL}), R-type (I_{CaR}), and T-type (I_{CaT}) Ca^{2+} currents,

two delayed rectifiers (I_{Kv1} and I_{Kv2}), an A-type K^+ current (I_A), an inward rectifying K^+ current (I_{KIR}), a

nonspecific Ca^{2+}-activated current (I_{CAN}), a hyperpolarization-activated mixed cationic h-current (I_h), and a

leak current (I_L). C. Markov Model of the NaV channel with an open state (O), a closed state (C), a short-

term inactivated state (I1) and a long-term inactivated state (I2). See also Figure 11 – supplement 1.

Figure 1 – supplement 1. Plots of instantaneous frequency versus current injection showing different

effects of carbachol on firing rate adaptation. A and B. Two examples of somatic recordings where the

firing rate adaptation in control is reversed in the presence of CCh, such that the clockwise hysteresis

becomes counter-clockwise. C and D. Two examples of somatic recordings where the firing rate adaptation

in control is removed in the presence of CCh, such that the hysteresis disappears, and the motion becomes

linear. Filled circles represent the firing frequencies on the up-ramp and open circles represent firing

frequencies on the down-ramp.

Figure 1 – supplement 2. A. Adaptation index as a function of membrane potential. Index values for each
trial for all neurons are plotted against the membrane potential measured just before the current injection
ramp for that trial, both for somatic recordings (n = 132 in control conditions, filled circles; n = 144 in the
presence of CCh 2 μM, open circles) and for dendritic recordings (n = 135 in control conditions, filled
circles; n = 87 during CCh, open circles). B. Adaptation index as a function of the peak injected current.
Index values for each trial for all recorded neurons are shown plotted against the peak amplitude of the
triangular-shaped current injection for that trial, for both somatic and dendritic recordings (values for n and
symbols are the same as in A). C. Adaptation index as a function of input resistance. Average adaptation
index values per cell for both somatic recordings (n = 17) and dendritic recordings (n = 12) are plotted
against the average steady state input resistance measured during control conditions (filled circles) and
during perfusion with CCh (open circles). Source data in "Figure 1 supplement 2 - Source data".

Figure 11 – supplement 1. Old model in which the source of Ca2+ with privileged access to the nanodomain
required to activated TRPM4 channels is IP_3R. This model captures the responses seen with cholinergic
activation in the experiments. A. Simulated somatic recordings in control (low IP_3). A1. Voltage traces and
current ramp. A2. Nanomolar Ca^{2+} concentration in outer shell beneath the cell membrane. A3. The
nanodomain Ca^{2+} concentration is not elevated with low levels of IP_3 that simulate control. A4. There is
negligible TRPM4 activation. B. Simulated somatic recordings in CCh (high IP_3). B1. Voltage traces and
current ramp. B2. Nanomolar Ca^{2+} concentration in outer shell beneath the cell membrane is elevated due
to increased spiking on the down-ramp. B3. The nanodomain Ca^{2+} concentration reached micromolar
concentrations with high levels of IP_3 that simulate application of CCh. B4. TRPM4 is robustly activated.
Black dashed line marks the end of the injected current ramp, highlighting that the return to baseline of
Ca^{2+} and TRPM4 current lags behind injected current ramp. C. Simulated somatic recordings in CCh (high
IP_3) with no nanodomain. C1. Voltage traces and current ramp. Note that more ramp current is required to
achieve the same firing rates as were achieved in B1. C2. Nanomolar Ca^{2+} concentration in outer shell
beneath the cell membrane. C3. No nanodomain. C4. There is negligible TRPM4 activation. In A2 and C2,
the red arrows point to when the $[Ca^{2+}]$ in the outer shell starts decreasing while the neuron keeps firing,
as opposed to B2.

somatic injection

A1 control

-64 mV

0 pA

20 mV

200 pA

0.5 s

A2
Hz
20
0

B1 CCh (2 μM)

-65 mV

B2
20
0

A3

increasing I_ramp

0   1   2
time (s)

B3

increasing I_ramp

0   1   2
time (s)

C1
frequency (Hz)
20
10
0
140   180   220
injected current (pA)

C2
20
10
0
80   110   140
injected current (pA)
● up
○ down

D
adaptation index
1.0
0.5
0.0
-0.5
-1.0
2 s ramps   10 s ramps
***   ***
control CCh   control CCh

dendritic injection

E1 control

-63 mV

0 pA

20 mV

200 pA

0.5 s

E2
Hz
20

F1 CCh (2 μM)

-64 mV

F2
20

E3

increasing I_ramp

0   1   2
time (s)

F3

increasing I_ramp

0   1   2
time (s)

G1
frequency (Hz)
20
10
0
100   120   140
injected current (pA)

G2
20
10
0
0   20   40
injected current (pA)
● up
○ down

H
adaptation index
1.0
0.5
0.0
-0.5
-1.0
2 s ramps   10 s ramps
***   ***
control CCh   control CCh

Figure 1

synaptic stimulation

Figure 2

somatic injection

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5

Figure 6

control

A1

TRPM4   CaV   Ca²⁺   mAChR   PMCA

ND

shell

Ca²⁺ ER

cytosol core   buffers

Ca²⁺

20 mV

-60 mV

200 pA

0 pA

frequency (Hz)

injected current (pA)

[Ca²⁺] in outermost shell

A2

nM

[Ca²⁺] in nanodomain

A3

µM

TRPM4 Activation

A4

.014

simulated CCh

B1

TRPM4   Na⁺   CaV   Ca²⁺   mAChR   PMCA

ND

?   Ca²⁺   ?

shell

Ca²⁺ ER

cytosol core   buffers

Ca²⁺

-60 mV

0 pA

frequency (Hz)

injected current (pA)

B2

B3

B4

1 s

Figure 7

Figure 8

Figure 9

10 mM BAPTA

A1 control (w/ BAPTA)

A2 CCh (2 μM)

A3 10 nM BAPTA

20 mV

-63 mV

0 pA

400 pA

Hz 25 0

Hz 25 0

0.5 s

30 mM BAPTA and 100 nM free Ca^{2+}

B1 control (w/ BAPTA and free Ca^{2+})

B2 CCh (2 μM)

B3 30 nM BAPTA 100 nM free Ca^{2+}

20 mV

-58 mV

0 pA

400 pA

-57 mV

Hz 20 0

Hz 20 0

0.5 s

30 mM BAPTA and 10 nM free Ca^{2+}

C1 control (w/ BAPTA and free Ca^{2+})

C2 CCh (2 μM)

C3 30 nM BAPTA 10 nM free Ca^{2+}

20 mV

-52 mV

0 pA

400 pA

-52 mV

Hz 20 0

Hz 20 0

0.5 s

Figure 10

Figure 11

Figure 1 Supplement 1

A adaptation index as a function of initial membrane potential

B adaptation index as a function of current injection amplitude

C adaptation index as a function of input resistance

Figure 1 Supplement 2

Figure 11 Supplement 1