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Mathematical modelling of energy demand and supply in the cardiac myocyte

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Abstract

The mechanisms that regulate the control of energy demand and energy supply in the heart muscle are crucial for maintaining normal cardiac function, yet they are not very well understood. Although a number of mechanisms have been proffered by which mitochondrial supply of ATP can change to match varying workload in the myocardium, identifying the underlying regulatory pathways remains controversial.

In this study, we have developed mathematical models of the sarcoplasmic endoplasmic reticulum Ca^{2+} ATPase (SERCA) pump and the acto-myosin cross-bridge cycle which, along with the Na^+/K^+ pump, are the key energy-consuming processes in the cardiomyocyte. These models encapsulate both thermodynamic considerations and metabolite sensitivity into a cycle-based framework. The parameters of these models are constrained by experimental data which characterise their physiological behaviour. These models are then placed within the context of a whole-cell electrophysiological framework, alongside a model of mitochondrial energy supply, to investigate the mechanisms that regulate energy control and to shed light on two experimental observations which, for many decades, have evaded a mechanistic explanation: the apparent linearity of the $\text{VO}_2 - \text{PVA}$ (pressure-volume area) relationship and the metabolic stability hypothesis, wherein demand-supply homeostasis is maintained despite negligible variation in metabolite concentrations at varying workloads.

The predictions from our model simulations indicate that, under constant metabolite concentrations, the ATP-FTI (force-time integral) relationship is linear, while the ATP-

FLA (force-length-area, cellular equivalent of $\text{VO}_2 - \text{PVA}$) relationship is linear only at low work rates. The linearity of the ATP-FTI relationship is found to arise from kinetic properties of the cross-bridge model. This property is not retained in the ATP-FLA relationship and is lost when metabolite concentrations are allowed to vary, as during normal variation with changing workload. This suggests that FTI and FLA are not equivalent, and that the $\text{VO}_2 - \text{PVA}$ relationship may only be approximately linear.

Finally, we show that metabolite concentrations change significantly with increasing workload if Pi feedback onto mitochondrial oxidative phosphorylation is removed from the model, suggesting that Pi-regulation alone is sufficient to maintain metabolic homeostasis in the absence of other regulatory mechanisms.

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Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	iii
List of Figures	xvii
List of Tables	xx
Acronyms and Abbreviations	xxi
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Myocyte physiology	3
1.1.1 Structure	3
1.1.2 Function	4
1.2 Mitochondrial physiology	13
1.2.1 Structure	13
1.2.2 Function	14

1.3	Thesis summary	17
1.4	Publications from this Thesis	18
1.4.1	Journal articles	18
1.4.2	Abstracts	18
2	Development of cardiac SERCA pump model	21
2.1	Introduction	21
2.2	Methods	24
2.2.1	Ca ²⁺ binding mechanism	24
2.2.2	Ca ²⁺ / H ⁺ Counter-transport	27
2.2.3	Competitive H ⁺ binding	27
2.2.4	Metabolite binding	28
2.2.5	Thermodynamic constraints	28
2.2.6	Model simplification: Rapid equilibrium assumptions	30
2.2.7	Data set to constrain parameters	32
2.2.8	Parameter optimisation	33
2.3	Results	34
2.3.1	Cooperativity of Ca ²⁺ binding	34
2.3.2	Ca ²⁺ / H ⁺ counter transport	35
2.3.3	Metabolite dependence	36

2.3.4	Thermodynamic properties of the model	38
2.3.5	Simplifying to a two state model	41
2.4	Discussion	41
2.4.1	Ca ²⁺ binding	44
2.4.2	Variable stoichiometry of Ca ²⁺ transport	45
2.4.3	H ⁺ binding	46
2.4.4	Binding order of partial reactions	47
2.4.5	Reversal of the pump	47
2.4.6	Data selection	48
2.4.7	Parameter sensitivity	49
3	Mechanistic model of cross-bridge cycling	51
3.1	Introduction	51
3.2	Methods	53
3.2.1	MgATP binding	55
3.2.2	Inorganic Phosphate release	56
3.2.3	H ⁺ regulation and release	57
3.2.4	MgADP binding and release	59
3.2.5	Parameter estimation and model selection	60
3.3	Results	62

3.3.1	MgATP perturbation	62
3.3.2	Sinusoidal length perturbations	66
3.3.3	Force development during ischaemia: sensitivity analysis	69
3.4	Discussion	71
3.4.1	Data selection	72
3.4.2	Parameter estimation and modelling assumptions	73
3.4.3	Inversion of the force-MgADP relationship	75
3.4.4	Reversibility	80
3.4.5	Model limitations	80
3.4.6	Implications for ischaemia	81
4	Whole-cell modelling of cardiac ATP consumption under varying work loads	83
4.1	Introduction	83
4.2	Methodology	88
4.2.1	Whole-cell model	88
4.2.2	Incorporating a biophysical model of Ca^{2+} handling	92
4.3	Simulation results	94
4.3.1	Cell model validation	94
4.3.2	Effects of increasing energy demand by varying sarcomere length	97

4.3.3	Effects of increasing load by varying stimulus frequency	99
4.3.4	Simulating the FLA work loop	104
4.3.5	Comparing the ATP-FLA and ATP-FTI relationships	107
4.4	Discussion	112
4.4.1	Linearity of the ATP-FTI and ATP-FLA relationships	113
4.4.2	Dominance of cross-bridge cycling	114
4.4.3	Other modelling studies	115
5	Coupling mitochondrial energy supply to the myocyte model	117
5.1	Introduction	117
5.2	Methodology	119
5.2.1	Description of the mitochondrial model	119
5.2.2	Integrating the mitochondrial model into the whole-cell model	124
5.3	Simulation results	125
5.3.1	Validation of the fully integrated model	125
5.3.2	Effects of increasing work load on ATP-FTI and ATP-FLA	127
5.3.3	Dynamic metabolite concentrations	131
5.3.4	Investigating the regulation of energy supply by Pi	134
5.4	Discussion	137

5.4.1	Implications of the mitochondrial model for the ATP-F ₁ F ₀ and ATP-FLA relationships	138
5.4.2	Comparing the model predicted ATP consumption rates to experimental data	139
5.4.3	P _i -regulation of mitochondrial respiration	141
5.4.4	Other mitochondrial models	142
5.4.5	Mitochondrial Ca ²⁺	144
6	Discussion	145
6.1	Summary of major findings of this thesis	145
6.2	Model limitations	148
6.3	Future directions	149
	Appendices	151
A	Accounting for [H⁺] in the free energy change of ATP hydrolysis	153
B	Cardiac SERCA pump model	155
B.1	Equations for the three-state SERCA model	155
B.2	Equations for the two-state SERCA model	156
C	Cross-bridge model	159
C.1	Model equations	159

C.2 Derivation of rapid equilibrium MgADP binding	162
D Hinch model of Ca²⁺ handling	165
D.0.1 Rate constants of the CaRU model	171
E Mitochondrial model of oxidative phosphorylation	173
E.1 Differential equations	173
E.2 Mitochondrial reaction fluxes	176
E.3 Cytoplasmic reaction fluxes	178
E.4 Parameter values	178

List of Figures

1.1	Schematic of a cardiac myocyte.	3
1.2	Schematic of a four-state enzymatic cycle.	10
1.3	Structure of a mitochondrion	13
1.4	Schematic of the TCA cycle	15
1.5	Schematic of mitochondrial oxidative phosphorylation	16
2.1	Schematic of a twelve-state model of the cardiac SERCA pump	25
2.2	Schematic of cardiac SERCA model with fully cooperative Ca^{2+} binding .	26
2.3	Schematic of the simplified three-state cardiac SERCA model	31
2.4	Model fit of three-state model to pH-dependent Ca^{2+} binding data	35
2.5	Model fit of three-state model to pH data	36
2.6	Model fit of three-state model to Pi phosphorylation data	37
2.7	Model fit of three-state model to ADP and ATP-dependent data	38
2.8	The effect of changes in the net free energy on the cycle pump rate at varying $[\text{Ca}^{2+}]_{sr}$	39

2.9	Reversal point of the SERCA pump as a function of metabolites	40
2.10	Schematic of a two-state model of the cardiac SERCA pump	42
2.11	Expansion of the two-state SERCA model to an eight-state model	42
2.12	Simulations comparing the two- and three-state SERCA models	43
2.13	Simulation of the SERCA cycling rate as a function of $[Ca^{2+}]_{sr}$	48
3.1	Schematic of the original and new models of the three-state cross-bridge model	55
3.2	Schematic of the competitive binding of H^+ to the Ca^{2+} binding site on troponin C	58
3.3	Cross-bridge model fit of Pi binding step	61
3.4	Simulation of H^+ binding in the cross-bridge model	63
3.5	Simulation of MgATP and MgADP binding in the cross-bridge model	65
3.6	Simulation of the sinusoidal protocol in the cross-bridge model as a function of MgATP	67
3.7	Simulation of the sinusoidal protocol in the cross-bridge model as a function of Pi	68
3.8	Simulation of cross-bridge force production during ischaemia	70
3.9	Simulation of force as a function of MgADP	76
3.10	Schematic of the metabolite-sensitive extended model of cross-bridge kinetics.	77

4.1	Selected experimental data showing the relationship between energy consumption and PVA , FLA and FTI	85
4.2	Stylised representation of a cardiac <i>PV</i> loop during a single cardiac cycle	86
4.3	Stylised representation of the $VO_2 - PVA$ relationship	88
4.4	Schematic of the myocyte model.	89
4.5	Simulated steady-state traces of the action potential and Ca^{2+} transient .	94
4.6	Steady-state transients of the three ATPases simulated at a SL of $2.3 \mu m$ and stimulation frequency of 2 Hz.	96
4.7	Stylised representation of a force transient and its components	97
4.8	Steady-state force transients as a function of SL at a stimulation frequency of 2 Hz	98
4.9	Contribution of each of the ATPases to total energy consumption as a function of the force-time integral at a stimulating frequency of 2 Hz.	99
4.10	Simulation of the effect of increasing stimulation frequencies on ATP consumption rate, force production and $[Ca^{2+}]_i$	100
4.11	Contribution of the ATPases to average ATP consumption rate as a function of FTI	102
4.12	Contribution of the ATPases to <i>total</i> ATP consumption over a beat as a function of FTI	103
4.13	Cross-bridge model simulation of two isotonic and physiologic work loop protocols	105

4.14	Experimental data on force and length transients reported for isotonic and physiologic work loop protocols	107
4.15	Comparison of ATP consumption rates produced by the isotonic and physiologic protocols	108
4.16	Model simulation of the end-systolic curve at 2 Hz stimulation frequency .	109
4.17	Model simulation of the ATP-FTI and ATP-FLA relationships	110
4.18	Model simulation of the end-systolic relationship at stimulus frequencies of 2 Hz, 3 Hz and 4 Hz	111
4.19	Parameteric relationship between the instantaneous ATP consumption rate and total active force over the duration of a beat.	112
5.1	Schematic of the major components of the electron transport system in the mitochondrial matrix	120
5.2	Substrate transport processes in the mitochondrial model	123
5.3	Transporters for H ⁺ and K ⁺ located on the inner membrane	123
5.4	Schematic representation of the full myocyte model including mitochondrial oxidative phosphorylation	125
5.5	Contribution the ATPases to average ATP consumption rate as a function of FTI in the Mito-Cell model	129
5.6	Contribution the ATPases to <i>total</i> ATP consumption over a beat as a function of FTI in the Mito-Cell model	130
5.7	Simulation of of the ATP-FLA and ATP-FTI relationships in the Mito-Cell model	131

5.8	Steady-state metabolites predicted by the Mito-Cell model as a function of ATP consumption rate	132
5.9	Parametric relationship between the instantaneous ATP consumption rate and total active force over the duration of a beat at different sarcomere lengths	133
5.10	The effect of Pi regulation on metabolite concentrations upon an instantaneous increase in SL from 1.8 μm to 2.3 μm at a stimulation frequency of 2 Hz.	136
5.11	The effect of Pi control on metabolite concentrations upon an instantaneous increase of stimulus frequency from 2 Hz to 3 Hz at a SL of 2.3 μm	137
5.12	Comparison of $\Delta\text{Pi}/\text{CrP}$ predicted by the Mito-Cell model to experimental data	141
D.1	Schematic representation of the geometry of 3 CaRUs	165
D.2	Schematic of the CaRU model	167

List of Tables

2.1	Description of the data used to constrain the parameters in the three-state cardiac SERCA model	33
2.2	Parameters for the three-state cardiac SERCA model	34
2.3	Sensitivity analysis of the cardiac SERCA model parameters	50
4.1	Comparison of ATP consumption rates predicted by the model to experimental data	96
5.1	Steady-state values of the metabolite and ion concentrations in the Mito-Cell model at a stimulation frequency of 2 Hz and $SL = 2.3 \mu\text{m}$	126
5.2	Comparison of the ATP consumption rates predicted by the Mito-Cell model to experimental data	127
D.1	Parameters of the Hinch model	170
E.1	Mitochondrial model variables	179
E.2	Mitochondrial model parameters.	180
E.3	Mitochondrial model parameter values continued.	181

E.4 Mitochondrial model fluxes. 181

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Cellular compartments

<i>i</i>	Intracellular/cytosolic compartment
<i>e</i>	Extracellular medium
<i>sr</i>	Sarcoplasmic reticulum
<i>im</i>	Intermembrane space of the mitochondria
<i>x</i>	Mitochondrial matrix

Abbreviations

αKG	α -ketoglutarate
ADP	Adenosine diphosphate
AM1	Fractional occupancy within state XB_{PostR} , where no MgADP is bound
AM2	Fractional occupancy within state XB_{PostR} , where MgADP is bound
ANT	Adenosine nucleoside translocase
ATP	Adenosine triphosphate
CaRU	Ca ²⁺ release unit
CICR	Ca ²⁺ -induced-Ca ²⁺ -release
CoA	Co-enzyme A

EC	Excitation-contraction
FAD	Flavin adenine dinucleotide
FADH₂	Reduced form of FAD
FLA	Force-length area
FTI	Force-time integral
GTP	Guanosine triphosphate
JSR	Junctional sarcoplasmic reticulum
LCC	L-type Ca ²⁺ channel
MgADP	Magnesium-bound adenosine diphosphate
MgATP	Magnesium-bound adenosine triphosphate
MVO₂	Rate of myocardial oxygen consumption
N_{XB}	Fractional occupancy of the non-permissive state, where no Ca ²⁺ is bound
NAD⁺	Nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide
NADH	Reduced form of NAD⁺
NSR	Network sarcoplasmic reticulum
OAA	Oxaloacetate
P_{XB}	Fractional occupancy of the permissive state, where Ca ²⁺ is bound
P-MRS	Phosphate magnetic resonance spectroscopy
Pi	Inorganic phosphate
<i>P_i</i>	Proportion of complexes in state <i>i</i>
PCr	Phosphocreatine
PVA	Pressure-volume area
P_{XB}	Fractional occupancy of the permissive cross-bridge state
RyR	Ryanodine channel receptors
SERCA	Sarcoplasmic/endoplasmic reticulum Ca ²⁺ ATPase
SL	Sarcomere length
SR	Sarcoplasmic reticulum
TCA	Tricarboxylic cycle
VO₂	Rate of oxygen consumption

$\mathbf{XB}_{\text{PostR}}$	Fractional occupancy of the bound cross-bridge state, post rotation
$\mathbf{XB}_{\text{PreR}}$	Fractional occupancy of the bound cross-bridge state, pre rotation

