

³H-3-*N*-Methylspiperone Labels D₂ Dopamine Receptors in Basal Ganglia and S₂ Serotonin Receptors in Cerebral Cortex

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Detailed studies of the properties of ³H-3-*N*-methylspiperone (NMSP) binding in rat and human brain homogenates were performed at 37°C. In homogenates of rat striatum and frontal cortex and human caudate and frontal cortex tissues, the specific binding was found to be saturable. Rat caudate contained 33.2 pmol/gm wet-weight tissue and displayed an equilibrium dissociation constant (K_d) of 8.7×10^{-11} M; rat frontal cortex contained 18.5 pmol/gm wet-weight tissue and displayed a K_d of 1.5×10^{-10} M. Human caudate contained 8.96 pmol/gm wet-weight tissue and displayed a K_d of 1.1×10^{-10} M; human frontal cortex possessed 9.8 pmol/gm wet-weight tissue and a K_d of 4.4×10^{-10} M. Kinetic studies revealed a very rapid rate of association in all the tissues studied. The rate of dissociation was relatively slow in all 4 tissue preparations; the dissociation rate was somewhat slower in rat striatum and human caudate relative to rat and human frontal cortex. This was consistent with the somewhat higher affinity, relative to frontal cortex, displayed by ³H-NMSP in rat striatal and human caudate tissue. The pharmacological properties of the specific binding in rat striatal and human caudate tissues were very similar and indicated the presence of brain D₂ dopamine receptors. In rat and human frontal cortex tissue homogenates, the pharmacological characteristics of the specific binding indicated the presence of 5-HT₂ receptors.

Dopamine and serotonin receptors have been studied biochemically in a large number of *in vitro* and *in vivo* receptor binding assays. Many radiolabeled ligands have been used in these studies (Creese et al., 1983; Titeler, 1983). 3-*N*-Methylspiperone (NMSP) containing ¹⁴C in the methyl group has been used as a receptor-labeling radioligand in positron emission tomographic (PET) studies in humans (Wagner et al., 1983; Wong et al., 1984). High levels of binding were detected in human caudate and putamen, and moderate levels in the frontal cortex. These results and the fact that NMSP is a derivative of spiperone, a well documented D₂ and 5-HT₂ receptor ligand, has led re-

searchers to conclude that NMSP is labeling predominantly D₂ dopamine receptors in the caudate and 5-HT₂ receptors in cerebral cortical areas in the PET scan studies (Wagner et al., 1983; Wong et al., 1984). Since kinetic constants are needed for modeling and for calculations in PET, the goal of this study was to characterize the interaction of NMSP with D₂ dopamine and S₂ serotonin receptors.

Materials and Methods

³H-NMSP (76.7 Ci/mmol) was synthesized and purified by New England Nuclear (Boston, MA). Serotonin, dopamine, and noradrenaline were purchased from Sigma. Other drugs were donated by pharmaceutical firms.

Membrane preparation

The rat tissue was obtained by rapid dissection of brain tissue from male Sprague-Dawley rats. Human tissue was obtained at autopsy from 4 male subjects who had no history of neurological or psychiatric disease and were not known to be taking any psychoactive medication. Their average age was 55 years, and the average postmortem delay between death and freezing of the brain was 11.3 hr. Neuropathological examination of the tissues verified the absence of neurological disease.

For the human tissues, 1 hemisphere was chosen at random for receptor studies, sliced coronally in 2 cm sections, frozen on dry ice and stored at -80°C until dissected further. The remaining hemisphere was placed in formalin for neuropathological analysis. The frontal cortex tissue was obtained from the most anterior coronal slice near the frontal pole. The caudate specimens were dissected from the anterior caudate nucleus, present in the third or fourth coronal slice.

Tissue preparation was performed as described by Leysen et al. (1982) for the rat and human frontal cortex and according to List and Seeman (1981) for the rat and human caudate, with minor modifications (Battaglia et al., 1984). The prefrontal and parietofrontal cortices and striata of male Wistar rats, and the frontal cortical and caudate tissue of post-mortem human brains were homogenized in 50 mM Tris-HCl buffer, pH 7.4 (1:40 wt/vol) and centrifuged at $35,000 \times g$ for 10 min. The pellets were resuspended in buffer and recentrifuged. The final suspension was in 50 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.4, at 37°C for the cortical tissue and 50 mM Tris-HCl, 140 mM NaCl, pH 7.4, at 37°C for the rat striatal and human caudate tissue. The addition of NaCl to frontal cortex tissue preparations has been found to be deleterious to 5-HT₂ receptor binding of ³H-ketanserin (Leysen et al., 1982); NaCl has been found to be useful in D₂ receptor binding studies, as well as being necessary in order to use sulpiride as the excess displacing nonradioactive ligand (List and Seeman, 1981; Woodruff and Freedman, 1981).

Radioligand binding assay

Assays were performed in triplicate (for saturation and competition studies) or sextuplicate (for kinetic studies) in 2.0 ml volume containing 4 mg wet-weight of tissue (which was added last) for rat and human cortical tissue, and 2.5 mg for rat striatal and human caudate tissue.

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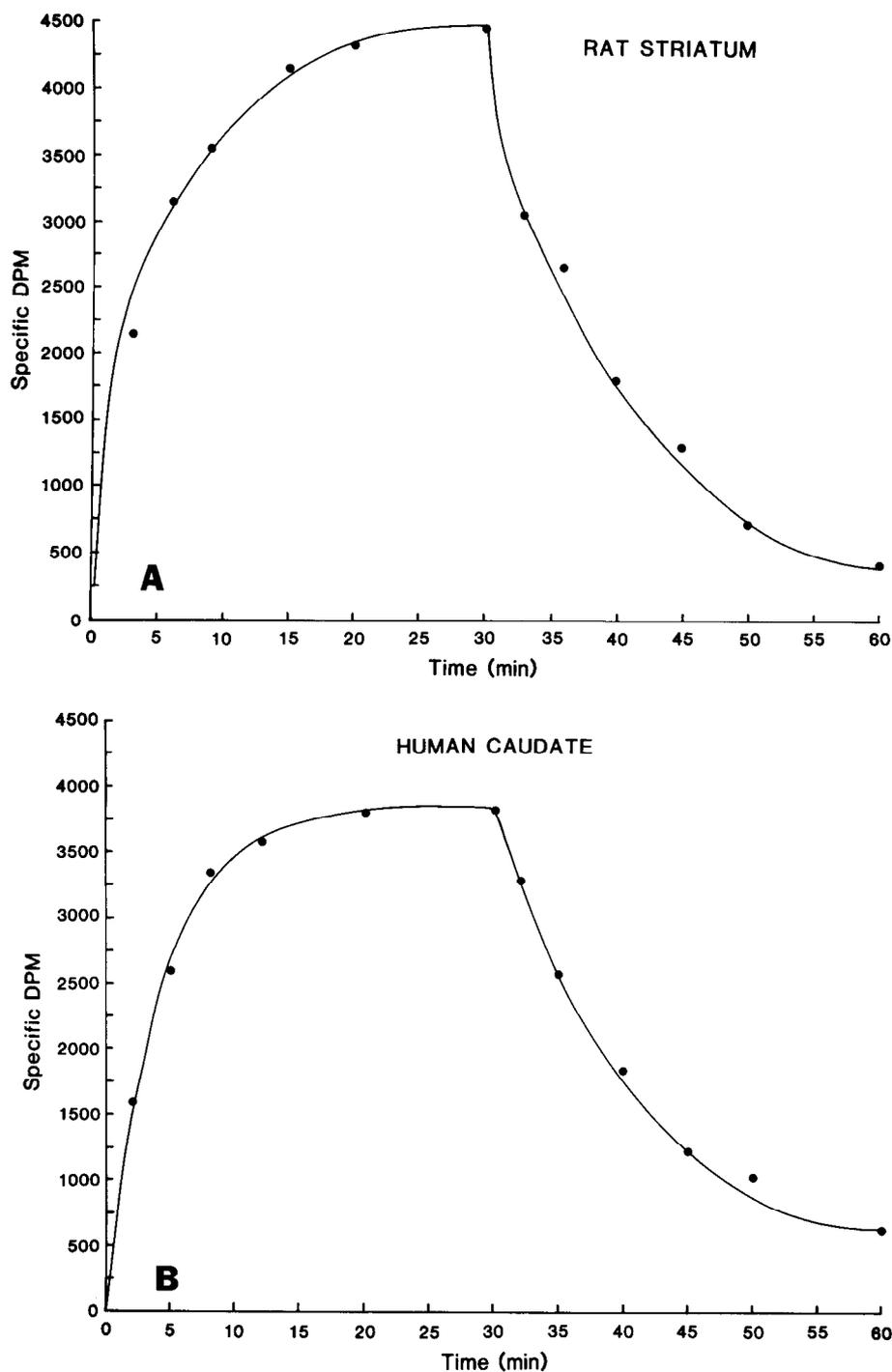


Figure 1. Association and dissociation of ³H-NMSP binding in rat striatum (A), human caudate (B), rat frontal cortex (C), and human frontal cortex (D). ³H-NMSP, 10⁻¹⁰ M, was coincubated with 2.5 mg of rat striatal or human caudate tissue or 4 mg of rat or human frontal cortex tissue. At 30 min, 10⁻⁶ M cinanserin (rat and human frontal cortex tissue) or 10⁻⁵ M sulpiride was added to the incubation mixture to initiate the dissociation phase of the experiments. Each point was performed in sextuplicate; all experiments were performed 3 × except that on the human cortex, which was performed twice. Data are means (n = 3). SEM of all points was less than 10%.

³H-NMSP saturation analyses were performed at varying concentrations of radioligand using 10⁻⁶ M cinanserin to define nonspecific binding in cortical tissue and 10⁻⁵ M (-)-sulpiride to define nonspecific binding in rat striatal and human caudate tissue. Competition and kinetic experiments were performed using 10⁻¹⁰ M ³H-NMSP; at this concentration, 74, 65, 89, and 60% of the total binding was specific in the rat striatal, rat cortical, human caudate, and human cortical tissue, respectively. Tubes were incubated for 15 min at 37°C, filtered on Whatman GF/B glass fiber filters, and washed with 10 ml buffer (50 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.4). The filters were counted by liquid scintillation spectrometry in 5 ml of aqueous counting scintillant (Scintiverse, Fisher) at an efficiency of 50%. In the kinetic studies, 10⁻⁶ M cinanserin (for 5-HT₂ studies) or 10⁻⁵ M sulpiride (for the D₂ studies) was added to the membranes at the 30 min time point to initiate the dissociation phase of the experiments.

Results

Figure 1 presents the kinetic characteristics of ³H-NMSP specific binding in rat and human tissues at 37°C. The rate of association in all 4 tissues is very rapid; measuring this parameter is difficult, since at the critical early time points, high levels of binding have already occurred. The dissociation rates in the rat striatum and human caudate appear to be very similar—7.82 and 6.23 × 10² min⁻¹, respectively. These kinetic studies are consistent with the results of the equilibrium studies shown in Figure 2.

Saturation studies in rat striatal and human caudate tissue reveal a similar affinity for specific ³H-NMSP binding, i.e., K_ds of 87 and 93 pM, respectively; however, there is significantly less binding in the human tissue (B_{max} = 8.96 pmol/gm wet-

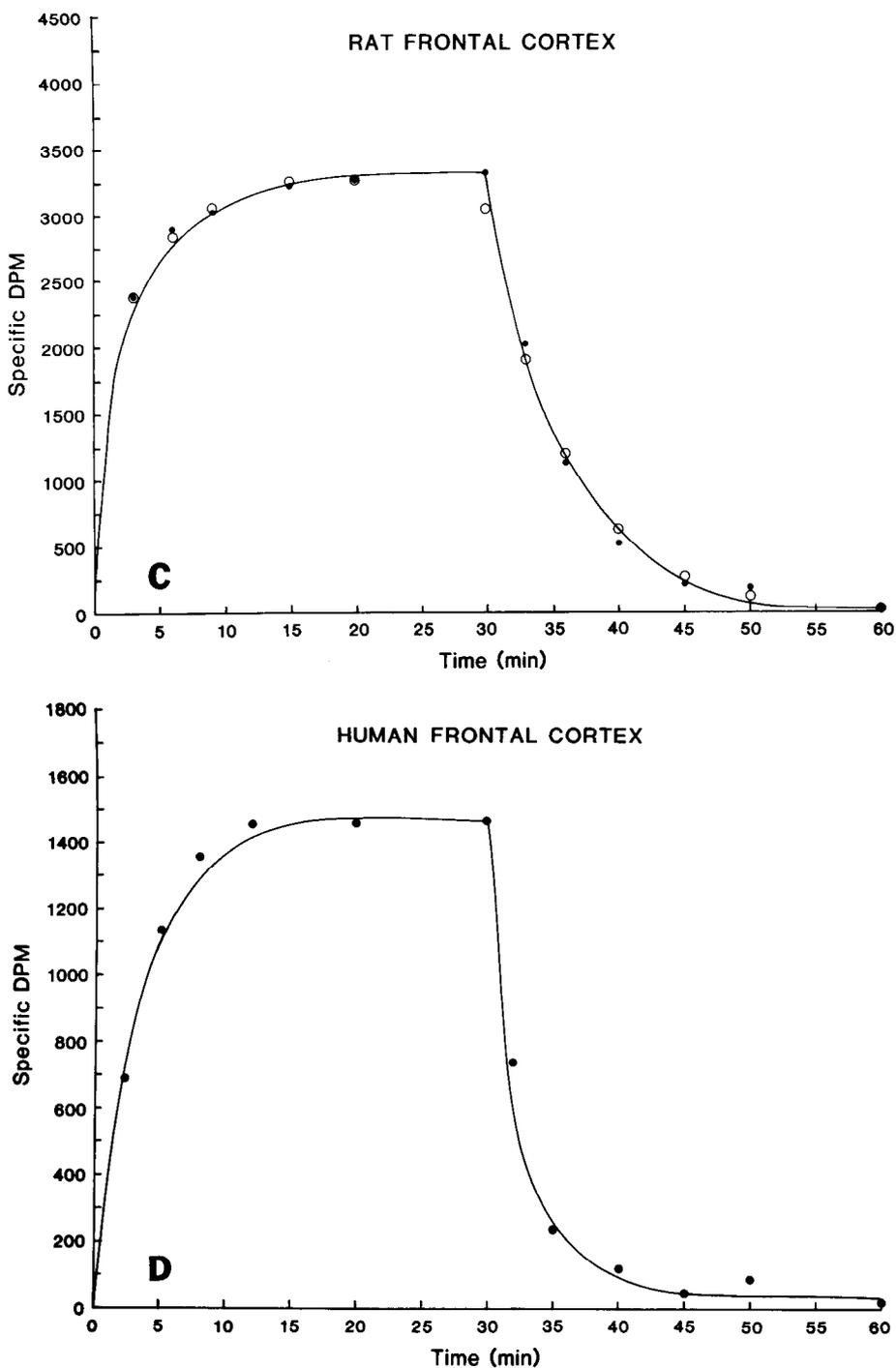


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weight) than in the rat ($B_{\max} = 33.2$ pmol/gm wet-weight). The saturation studies in rat and human frontal cortex tissue reveal high-affinity binding with a significantly lower affinity than that in the corresponding striatal or human caudate tissue (Fig. 2, *C* and *D*). Again, the level of binding in the human cortical tissue is lower ($B_{\max} = 9.8$ pmol/gm) than in the rat cortical tissue ($B_{\max} = 18.5$ pmol/gm). The lower affinity observed in the frontal cortex tissues is presumably due to the more rapid dissociation rate observed in the kinetic studies (Table 1).

In rat striatal and human caudate tissue, the pattern of affinities of a series of drugs is clearly indicative of a D_2 dopamine receptor (Fig. 3; Table 2). Sulpiride, a specific D_2 dopamine receptor blocker, potently inhibits the ³H-NMSP specific bind-

Table 1. Kinetic constants for ³H-NMSP

Region	k_1 ($\text{min}^{-1} \text{M}^{-1}$)	k_{-1} (min^{-1})
Rat striatum	$1.68 \times 10^9 (\pm 0.40)$	$7.82 \times 10^{-2} (\pm 0.30)$
Human caudate	$2.96 \times 10^9 (\pm 0.17)$	$6.23 \times 10^{-2} (\pm 0.46)$
Rat frontal cortex	$9.40 \times 10^8 (\pm 0.30)$	$1.56 \times 10^{-1} (\pm 0.20)$
Human frontal cortex	$1.60 \times 10^9 (\pm 0.10)$	$1.30 \times 10^{-1} (\pm 0.10)$

Kinetic rate constants for the association and dissociation of ³H-NMSP binding in the rat and human tissues. k_1 is the kinetic association constant, determined according to the formula $k_1 = (k_{\text{obs}} - k_{-1})/[^3\text{H-NMSP}]$ (Bennett and Yamamura, 1985), where k_{obs} is the experimentally observed association rate constant and k_{-1} is the dissociation rate constant.

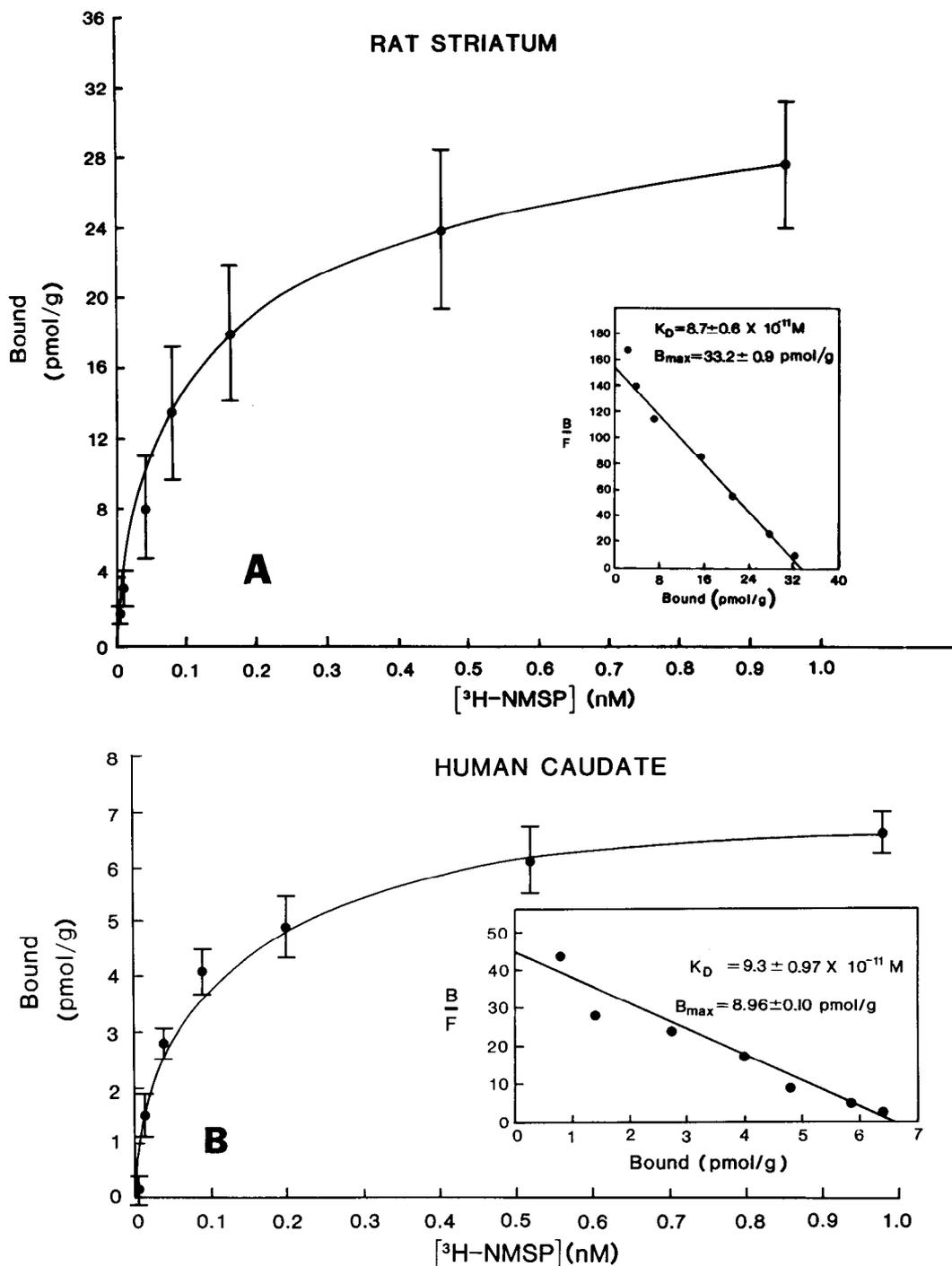


Figure 2. Saturable specific binding of ³H-NMSP to rat striatum (A), human caudate (B), rat frontal cortex (C), and human frontal cortex (D). Membranes were incubated with increasing concentrations of radioligand in the absence (total binding) or presence (nonspecific binding) of either 10⁻⁵ M sulpiride (striatal and caudate tissue) or 10⁻⁶ M cinanserin (frontal cortex tissue). Results are from 3 independent experiments, each point in each experiment being performed in triplicate. Error bars are SEM. Insets are the Scatchard transformations of the saturation data.

ing in both rat striatal and human caudate tissue (Fig. 3, A, B). Potent D₂ dopamine receptor blockers, such as spiperone, haloperidol, and chlorpromazine, inhibit the rat striatal and human caudate tissue binding with potencies clearly indicative of a D₂ dopamine receptor interaction (Seeman, 1980). Consistent with this interpretation are the results from competition studies using dopamine, serotonin, and noradrenaline (Fig. 3, A, B; Table 3). In rat striatal and human caudate tissue, dopamine is the only

one of these 3 neurotransmitters to compete for specific ³H-NMSP binding.

The competition studies in rat and human frontal cortex tissue revealed significantly different pharmacological properties of ³H-NMSP binding as compared to rat striatal and human caudate tissue (Fig. 3; Table 2). Sulpiride, the potent and specific D₂ dopamine receptor blocker, does not compete for ³H-NMSP binding in the rat or human frontal cortex tissue at 0.1 mM

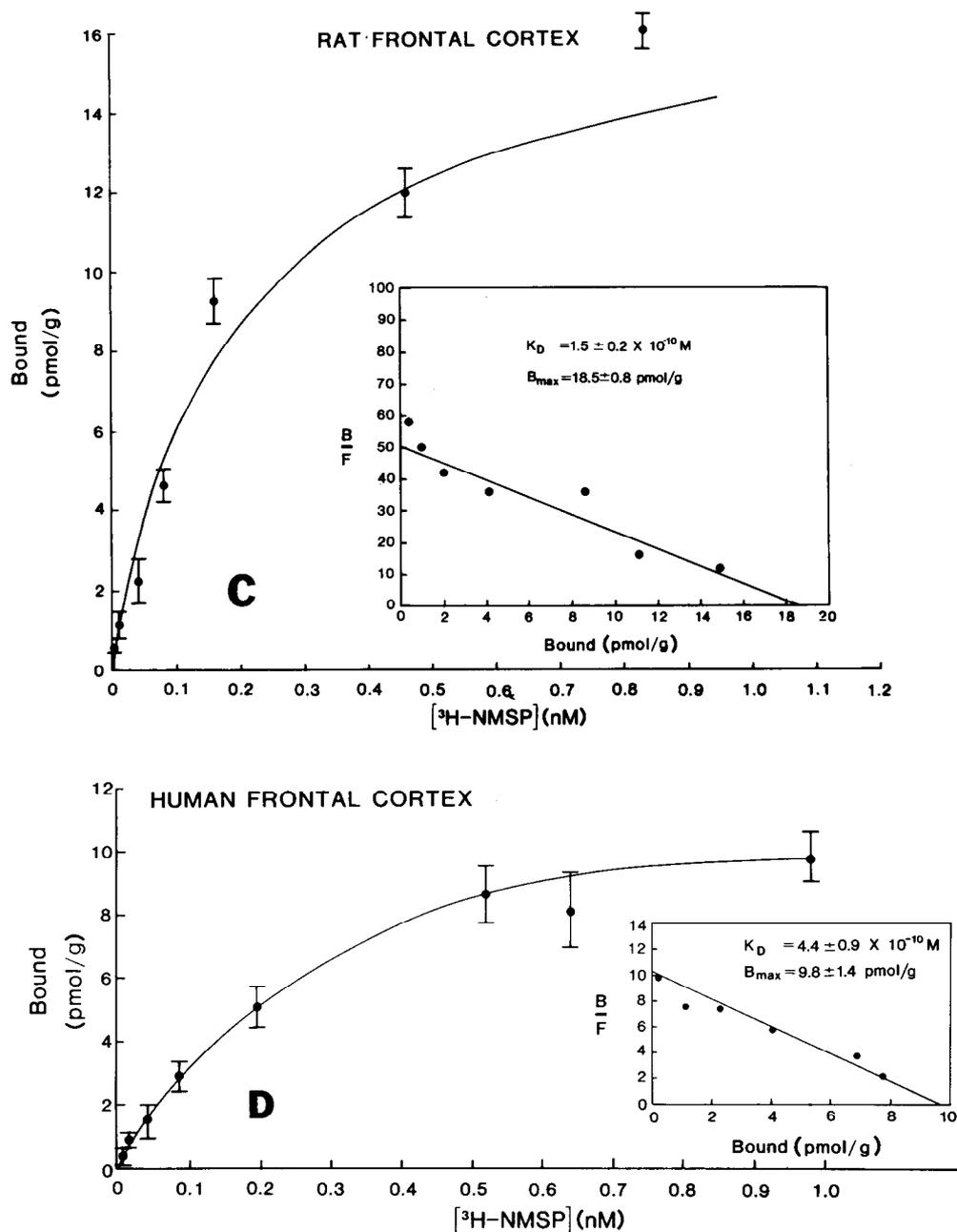


Figure 2. Continued.

concentration. Potent 5-HT₂ blockers, such as ketanserin and cinanserin, which display low affinity for rat striatal and human caudate binding, potently inhibit the binding in rat and human frontal cortex tissue. Serotonin, which does not inhibit the rat striatal or human caudate binding, inhibits the rat and human frontal cortex binding with a potency consistent with a 5-HT₂ receptor interaction. Neither dopamine nor noradrenaline inhibits the rat or human frontal cortex binding.

Table 3 lists the IC₅₀ values for unlabeled NMSP in competing for a series of radiolabeled receptors. The only receptor with an affinity at all approaching that of NMSP for D₂ or 5-HT₂ receptors is the alpha receptor. However, the affinity of NMSP for that receptor is approximately 10-fold lower than the affinity of NMSP for the 5-HT₂ receptor and approximately 30-fold

lower than the affinity of an NMSP for the D₂ receptor. Table 2 lists the K_i values for a series of drugs, as determined by competition assays in rat striatal, human caudate, rat frontal cortex, and human frontal cortex tissues. There is a very high degree of correlation between the rat striatal and human caudate affinities; there is a similar, high degree of correlation between the rat and human cortical tissue values.

Discussion

The similarity of the structure of ³H-3-N-methylspiperone to that of the compound spiperone would lead one to expect a similarity in the receptor binding profiles of the 2 drugs. Considering that NMSP is being used as a PET scan ligand (Wagner et al., 1983; Wong et al., 1984), it is clear that a detailed char-

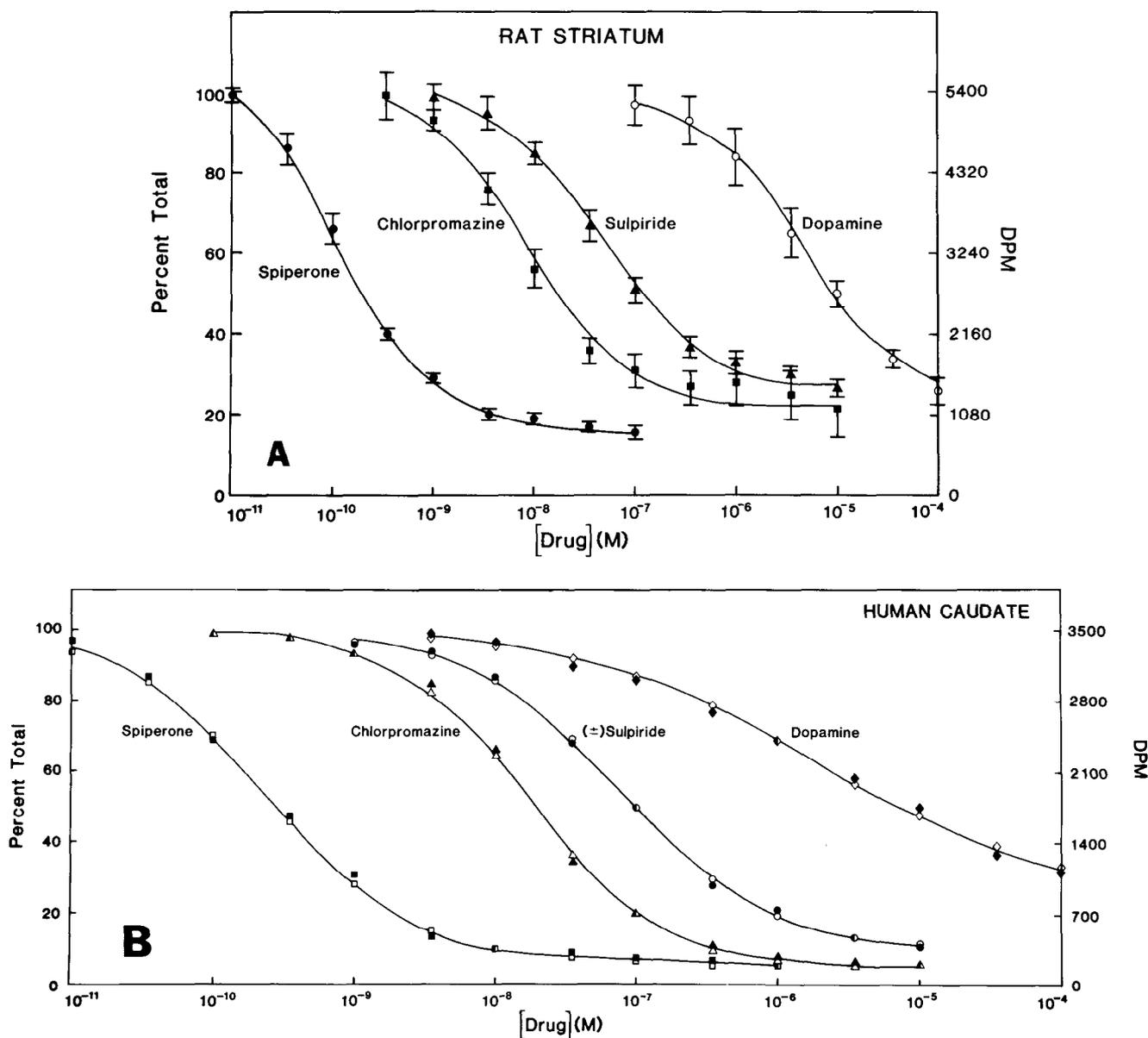


Figure 3. Competition curves of representative drugs competing for $^3\text{H-NMSP}$ binding to rat striatal (A), human caudate (B), rat frontal cortex (C), and human frontal cortex (D) tissue. Membranes were prepared as described in Materials and Methods and incubated with 10^{-10} M $^3\text{H-NMSP}$

acterization of the receptor binding properties of this compound is needed.

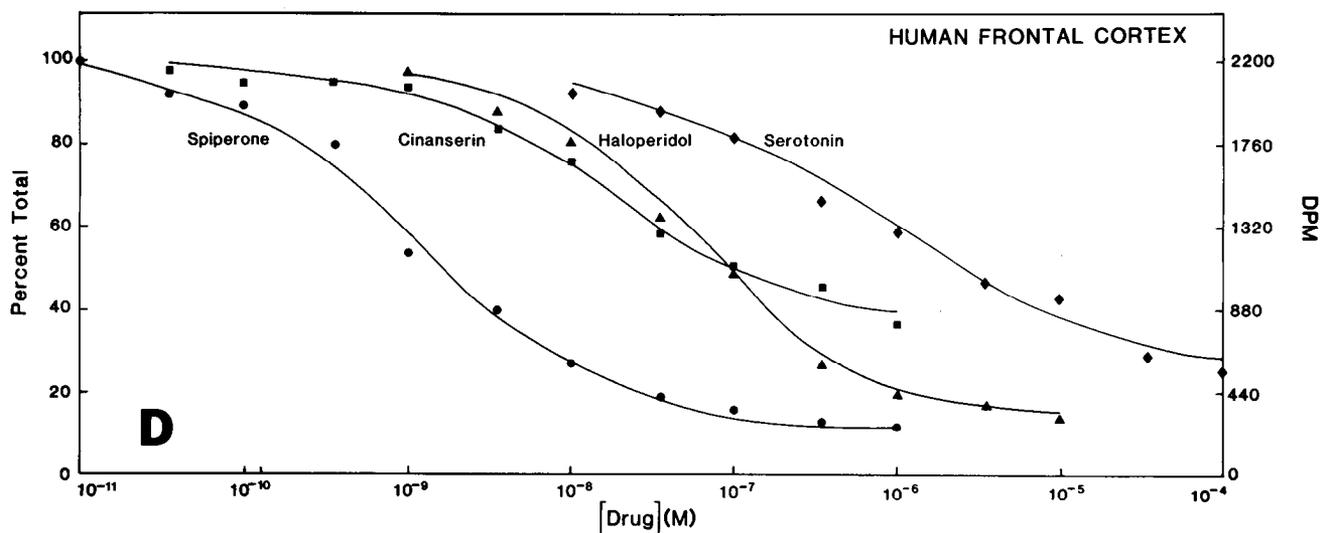
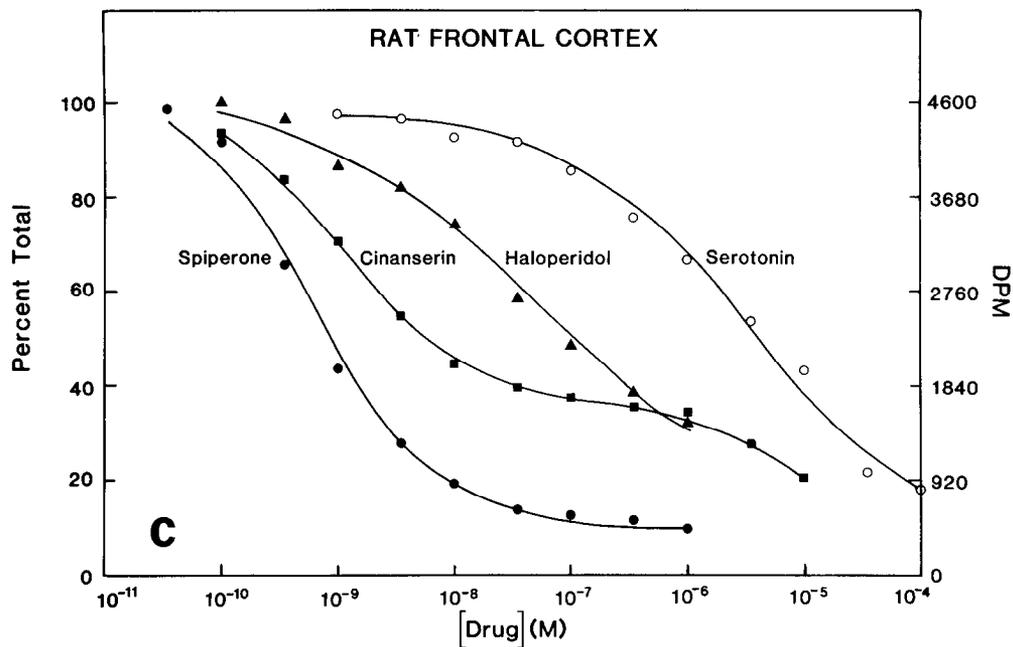
The studies presented herein in rat striatal and human caudate tissue clearly demonstrate a specific interaction with brain D_2 dopamine receptors (Seeman, 1980). The order of potencies of a series of antagonists and agonists is very similar in the rat striatal and human caudate tissue and indicative of an interaction with a D_2 dopamine receptor.

The results of the experiments in rat and human frontal cortex tissue indicate that the binding of $^3\text{H-NMSP}$ binding is to 5-HT_2 receptors. The order of potency of a series of drugs is very similar in rat and human cortex tissues. Effective 5-HT_2 receptor blockers such as ketanserin and cinnanserin potently inhibit the binding, while sulpiride, a specific D_2 dopamine receptor blocker, does not. Serotonin potently inhibited the binding, while dopamine and noradrenaline did not.

In general, the results of these studies with $^3\text{H-NMSP}$ are

similar to those reported using $^3\text{H-spiperone}$ as a radioligand for rat and human D_2 and 5-HT_2 receptors. For instance, Creese et al. (1979) compared the receptor-labeling properties of $^3\text{H-spiperone}$ in rat and human striatal tissues (calf tissue was also examined); the studies revealed that rat and human D_2 receptors appear to have very similar pharmacological properties, although some subtle differences in specific drug interactions could not be ruled out. Kinetic studies of rat D_2 dopamine receptors, using $^3\text{H-spiperone}$ as the radioligand (Leysen et al., 1978), revealed an association rate constant of $2.086 \times 10^9 \text{ min}^{-1} \text{ M}^{-1}$. This is similar to the k_1 of $1.68 \times 10^9 \text{ min}^{-1} \text{ M}^{-1}$ reported herein for $^3\text{H-NMSP}$. The dissociation rate constant for $^3\text{H-spiperone}$ was measured as 0.292 min^{-1} , as compared to 7.82×10^{-2} for the $^3\text{H-NMSP}$ binding to D_2 receptors reported herein. Overall, these values are similar, although the dissociation rate of $^3\text{H-NMSP}$ appears to be somewhat slower.

The B_{max} values obtained in the rat brain tissues in this study



and increasing concentrations of the drugs. The points represent experimental data determined from the means of 3 experiments, each point determined in triplicate. SEM were less than 5% for all points.

using ^3H -NMSP are in reasonable agreement with published values for D_2 receptors using ^3H -spiperone as the radioligand (Seeman, 1980), or for 5-HT_2 receptors using ^3H -ketanserin as the radioligand (Battaglia et al., 1984). The B_{max} values found here in the human tissues for both D_2 and 5-HT_2 receptors are slightly lower than previously reported for D_2 or 5-HT_2 receptors. For instance, Seeman et al. (1985) recently reported an overall average B_{max} value of 11.3 pmol/gm wet-weight of tissue in control postmortem caudate tissue; we report a B_{max} value of 8.96 pmol/gm wet-weight of tissue. One significant difference in the methodology used in this study was the use of sulpiride to define nonspecific binding. This ligand has been demonstrated to selectively reveal D_2 receptor binding, eliminating 5-HT_2 and spirodecane binding from the assay (List and Seeman, 1981). List and Seeman (1981) demonstrated that using sulpiride does indeed produce a lower B_{max} value than using another, less specific, ligand such as (+)-butaclamol. The B_{max} values for

5-HT_2 receptors in the human cortical tissue revealed with ^3H -NMSP are also slightly lower than a previously reported value (Schotte et al., 1983). Possible variables accounting for the lower B_{max} values could be tissue handling and postmortem delay, although efforts were made to reduce these problems by prompt freezing of tissue (Whitehouse et al., 1984).

We did not attempt to identify 5-HT_2 receptors in the caudate and striatum, or D_2 receptors in the cerebral cortex. List and Seeman (1981) and Schotte et al. (1983) found 5-HT_2 receptors in basal ganglia, but their levels were only a fraction of the D_2 receptor levels. Also, NMSP has a higher affinity for D_2 receptors so that lower levels of 5-HT_2 receptors would not readily be detected under the conditions of our assay. Conversely, D_2 receptor levels in cerebral cortex are very difficult to detect; only very sensitive autoradiographic assays have found very low levels of D_2 receptors in cerebral cortex (Martres et al., 1985).

Recent PET scanning studies have yielded D_2 receptor con-

Table 2. Pharmacological characteristics of ³H-NMSP binding

Drug	Rat striatum	Human caudate	Rat frontal cortex	Human frontal cortex
(+)-Butaclamol	1.4 ± 0.7	1.5 ± 0.1	4.2 ± 1.5	32 ± 3.5
(-)-Butaclamol	458 ± 25	228 ± 8	1312 ± 45	2597 ± 132
Chlorpromazine	6.8 ± 1.7	5.9 ± 2	4.6 ± 1.8	5.9 ± 0.3
Cinanserin	1811 ± 410	683 ± 24	1.1 ± 0.1	14.2 ± 1
Haloperidol	1.4 ± 0.1	2.7 ± 0.1	21 ± 9	45 ± 2
Ketanserin	1354 ± 288	1438 ± 124	0.5 ± 0.1	8.8 ± 0.6
N-Methylspiperone	0.2 ± 0.02	0.18 ± 0.1	0.6 ± 0.1	1.4 ± 0.1
Spiperone	0.2 ± 0.1	0.08 ± 0.1	0.7 ± 0.1	0.8 ± 0.1
(-)-Sulpiride	53 ± 17	31 ± 4	10,000	3886 ± 398
Dopamine	3750 ± 1685	710 ± 124	23,453 ± 4310	45,548 ± 2289
(-)-Noradrenaline	>10,000	3813 ± 319	10,000	6141 ± 1150
Serotonin	>10,000	7370 ± 33	1679 ± 290	560 ± 35

K_i values (nM) of a series of drugs determined in competition for ³H-NMSP binding in rat and human brain homogenates. Drugs were coincubated with 0.1 nM ³H-NMSP and tissue. Cinanserin, 10⁻⁶ M (rat and human frontal cortex studies) or 10⁻⁵ M sulpiride (rat striatum and human caudate) were used to define the level of nonspecific binding. Values shown are the means and SEM of 3 experiments, each point determined in triplicate. *K_i* values were calculated from experimentally determined IC₅₀ values according to Cheng and Prusoff (1973). The correlation coefficients, determined by linear regression, for the *K_i* values for rat striatum and human caudate were *r* = 0.92, and, for the *K_i* values for rat frontal cortex and human frontal cortex, were also 0.92.

Table 3. NMSP competition in radioreceptor assays

Receptor	Ligand	Tissue	IC ₅₀ (nM)	Ref.
D ₂ dopamine	³ H-Spiperone	Rat striatum	0.23	Creese et al., 1979
D ₁ dopamine	³ H-Flupenthixol	Rat striatum	350	Hyttel, 1981
D ₁ dopamine	(DA-stimulated cyclase)	Goldfish retina	1400	
S ₁ serotonin	³ H-5-HT	Rat hippocampus and striatum	>1000	Nelson et al., 1980
S ₂ serotonin	³ H-Spiperone	Rat frontal cortex	1.3	Leysen et al., 1978
Alpha-1 adrenergic	³ H-Prazosin	Rat cerebral cortex	10.1	Greengrass and Bremner, 1979
Alpha-2 adrenergic	³ H- <i>p</i> -Aminoclonidine	Rat cerebral cortex	>1000	Rouot and Snyder, 1979
Alpha-2 adrenergic	³ H-Rauwolcine	Rat cerebral cortex	155	Perry and U'Prichard, 1981
Beta-adrenergic	¹²⁵ I-Cyanopindolol	Rat cerebral cortex	>1000	Engel et al., 1981
Muscarinic cholinergic	³ H- <i>N</i> -Methylscopolamine	Rat cerebral cortex	>10,000	Hammer et al., 1980
Benzo-diazepine	³ H-Diazepam	Rat cerebral cortex	>10,000	Braestrup and Squires, 1977
Benzo-diazepine	³ H-Ro 15-1788	Rat cerebral cortex	>10,000	Mohler et al., 1981
Benzo-diazepine	³ H-Ro 5-4864	Rat adrenals	>100,000	Mohler et al., 1981
Calcium channel	³ H-Nitrendipine	Bovine cerebral cortex	217	Gould et al., 1982
Dopamine uptake	³ H-Mazindol	Rat striatum	>1000	Javitch et al., 1983

See references listed for details of assay conditions. IC₅₀ values were corrected for radioligand concentration according to Cheng and Prusoff (1973) in order to determine the reported *K_i*.

centrations in normal, young, healthy volunteers of 9–15 pmol/gm (Wong et al., 1986a, b). These values were calculated from a 3-compartment model and are in agreement with the values found here.

The results presented in this study indicate that, in rat striatal and human caudate tissue, ³H-NMSP predominantly labels D₂ dopamine receptors and that in rat and human frontal cortex, this ligand predominantly labels 5-HT₂ receptors. The availability of these quantitative binding data will aid in the evaluation of models for *in vivo* labeling of receptors in PET scanning.

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