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Opinion Article

Signal Transduction Navigating Non-Coding RNAs Microgravity Challenges and Mechanical Forces

Sidra Tabassum*

Department of Life Sciences, University of Lincoln, Lincoln, UK

ABOUT THE STUDY

Signal transduction serves as the dynamic language of cellular communication, orchestrating complex molecular dialogues that dictate cellular behaviors and responses. Beyond a mere relay of biochemical signals, it embodies the complex exchange of receptors, second messengers, and effector molecules across diverse cellular contexts. This fundamental process not only governs basic physiological functions but also basis cellular decision-making in development, homeostasis, and disease. From deciphering how environmental cues are sensed and translated into cellular responses to unravelling the nuances of cross-talk between signalling pathways, the study of signal transduction unveils the inner workings of biological systems with extreme implications for medicine and biotechnology. Signal transduction emerges not just as a series of molecular events but as a dynamic nexus driving cellular diversity and adaptability.

Emerging role of non-coding RNAs in signal transduction pathways

The emerging role of non-coding RNAs (ncRNAs) in signal transduction pathways represents a paradigm shift in molecular biology. Previously considered "junk DNA," ncRNAs are now recognized as pivotal regulators in cellular signaling networks. MicroRNAs (miRNAs), long non-coding RNAs (lncRNAs), and circular RNAs (circRNAs) modulate signal transduction by targeting key components such as receptors, kinases, and transcription factors. They influence pathway activation, attenuation, and cross-talk through mechanisms like post-transcriptional gene silencing, RNA-protein interactions, and scaffold formation within signaling complexes. Moreover, ncRNAs exhibit tissue-specific expression patterns and dynamic responses to environmental stimuli, underscoring their versatility in fine-tuning cellular responses. Understanding their complex roles in signal transduction not only deepens our knowledge of cellular communication but also holds potential for novel therapeutic strategies targeting diseases driven by dysregulated signaling pathways. As discoveries continues to uncover their complexities, ncRNAs are poised to revolutionize our understanding of cellular dynamics and their implications for health and disease.

Signal transduction in microgravity environments

Its presents a compelling frontier in space biology research. Gravity plays a fundamental role in shaping cellular behaviors on Earth, including mechanosensitive pathways and cytoskeletal dynamics that influence signal transduction. In microgravity, alterations in these gravitational cues can disrupt normal cellular signaling processes, impacting cellular differentiation, proliferation, and gene expression. Analysing signal transduction under these conditions offers insights into how gravity influences biological systems at the molecular level.

Research aboard space missions and in simulated microgravity settings has revealed adaptations in signal transduction pathways, such as changes in receptor activation, intracellular signaling cascades, and transcriptional responses. These findings not only inform our understanding of human adaptation to space but also have implications for biomedical research on Earth, particularly in fields like tissue engineering, regenerative medicine, and aging-related diseases. By elucidating the effects of microgravity on signal transduction, scientists aim to enhance space exploration and unlock new therapeutic strategies for terrestrial health challenges.

Mechanical forces in signal transduction pathways

The role of mechanical forces in signal transduction pathways highlights a fascinating exchange between physical stimuli and biochemical responses within cells. Cells are not just passive recipients of signals but actively respond to their mechanical microenvironment through mechanotransduction. Mechanical forces, such as shear stress, tension, and compression, exerted by the extracellular matrix or neighboring cells, trigger conformational changes in membrane receptors and cytoskeletal elements. These changes initiate signaling cascades that regulate cellular functions, including growth, differentiation, and migration.

Correspondence to: Sidra Tabassum, Department of Life Sciences, University of Lincoln, Lincoln, UK, E-mail: tabasidra89@lsbu.ac.uk

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Mechanical cues influence key signaling molecules like integrins, focal adhesion kinases, and mechanosensitive ion channels, altering gene expression patterns and cellular behavior. Understanding these mechanisms is important in diverse fields such as tissue engineering, where mimicking physiological mechanical environments enhances cell function and tissue formation. Moreover, aberrant mechanotransduction is implicated in various diseases, highlighting its therapeutic potential. Researchers want to use this understanding of how mechanical forces affect signal transduction pathways to improve the cellular responses to physical stimuli and to develop novel biological therapies.