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Journal of Andrology, Vol 3, Issue 5 269-280, Copyright $^{\odot}$ 1982 by <u>The American</u> Society of Andrology

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Comparative C₁₉-Radiosteroid Metabolism in Primary Monolayer Cultures of Epithelial Cells and Fibroblasts from Rat Ventral Prostate, Canine Prostate, and Rat Lung

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Stromal-epithelial cell interactions may be important for the regulation of normal and abnormal prostatic growth. While androgen transformation by rat ventral

prostate and canine prostate has been investigated *in vivo* and in organ culture, little is known about metabolic pathways in cultures of epithelial cells and fibroblasts. Metabolism of radioisotope-labeled 17^β-hydroxy C₁₀-steroids

was studied in primary cultures of highly-enriched rat ventral prostate and canine prostate epithelial cells and fibroblasts isolated by selectiveattachment procedures. The fibroblasts contained little testosterone 5α -reductase in contrast to high activity in epithelial cells. We found high levels of 5α -androstane- 3α , 17β -diol (3α -diol) dehydrogenase and the terminal 5α -androstane- 3β , 17β -diol (3β -diol) hydroxylases in both cell types; 3α -diol was a more effective precursor of 5α -dihydrotestosterone than was testosterone. For prostatic fibroblasts these pathways seem to be differentiated functions, since rat-lung fibroblasts converted 3β -diol to 5α -dihydrotestosterone and 3α diol. We conclude that epithelial cells and fibroblasts make interactive contributions to prostatic androgen metabolism.

Key words: rat ventral prostate, canine prostate, epithelial cells, fibroblasts, primary cell culture, testosterone 5_{α} -reductase, 3_{α} -hydroxysteroid oxidoreductase, 3^{β} -hydroxy 5_{α} -C₁₉-steroid hydroxylases

Submitted on September 3, 1981 Revised on November 30, 1981 Accepted on January 20, 1982

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