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Cell & Developmental Biology

Perspective

Ependymal Cells: Understanding their Importance in the Brain

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DESCRIPTION

Ependymal cells are a type of glial cell found in the central nervous system. These cells line the ventricles of the brain and the central canal of the spinal cord. They are responsible for producing and Circulating Cerebrospinal Fluid (CSF), a clear liquid that surrounds the brain and spinal cord. Despite their essential role in maintaining the health of the brain, ependymal cells are often overlooked and understudied in comparison to their more well-known counterparts, such as neurons and astrocytes. In this article, we will explore the wonders of ependymal cells and why understanding their importance in the brain is crucial for advancing our knowledge of neurological disorders. Ependymal cells are unique because they have cilia, tiny hair-like structures that allow them to move and circulate CSF. This movement of CSF is vital for the brain because it helps to remove waste and toxins from the brain and deliver nutrients to the neurons. Additionally, ependymal cells are involved in the regulation of ion concentrations in the brain, which is critical for maintaining proper brain function. They also play a role in neurogenesis, the process of creating new neurons in the brain.Despite their essential role in maintaining the health of the brain, ependymal cells are often overlooked and understudied in comparison to their more well-known counterparts, such as neurons and astrocytes. This is because ependymal cells are difficult to study due to their location and the lack of specific markers to identify them. However, recent advances in technology, such as single-cell sequencing and imaging techniques, have allowed scientists to gain a better understanding of ependymal cells' function and importance in the brain. One area where ependymal cells have been studied extensively is in neurological disorders. For example, ependymal cells have been implicated in the development of hydrocephalus, a condition where there is an abnormal accumulation of CSF in the brain. In hydrocephalus, the ependymal cells may become damaged or dysfunctional, leading to an obstruction in the flow of CSF. This obstruction can cause an increase in pressure in the brain, leading to brain damage and neurological symptoms. Ependymal cells have also been studied in relation to brain tumours. In particular, ependymomas, a type of brain tumour that originates from ependymal cells, have been the focus of research. Studies have shown that ependymomas have distinct molecular characteristics compared to other types of brain tumours, and this knowledge has led to the development of new treatments that specifically target ependymomas. In addition to their role in neurological disorders, ependymal cells may also play a role in aging and neurodegeneration. Studies have shown that ependymal cells may be involved in the regulation of the immune system in the brain, and dysfunction of ependymal cells may contribute to neuroinflammation and neurodegeneration. Furthermore, ependymal cells have been shown to be involved in the production of growth factors that promote the growth and survival of neurons. Therefore, understanding the role of ependymal cells in aging and neurodegeneration may lead to the development of new treatments for these conditions.

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Received: 01-Mar-2023, Manuscript No. CDB-23-22709; **Editor assigned:** 03-Mar-2023, PreQC No. CDB-23-22709 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 17-Mar-2023, QC No.CDB-23-22709; **Revised:** 24-Mar-2023, Manuscript No. CDB-23-22709 (R); **Published:** 31-Mar-2023, DOI: 10.35248/2168-9296.23.12.274

Citation: Gao J (2023) Ependymal Cells: Understanding their Importance in the Brain. Cell Dev Biol. 12:274.