

Prof. Dr. M. Bader

Forschungsstelle des Max-Delbrück-Center, Berlin, an der Universität zu Lübeck

Kontakt:

Max-Delbrück-Centrum
für Molekulare Medizin
Berlin-Buch
Robert-Rössle-Str. 10
13092 Berlin

Phone: +49 (0)30 9406 0
Fax: +49 (0)30 949 4161

Universität zu Lübeck
Institut für Biologie
Ratzeburger Allee 160
23562 Lübeck

Phone: +49 (0) 451 500-4101 (Fr. Schweitzer)
Fax: +49 (0) 451 500-4815

Forschung:

Analysis of the specific functions of alpha-Importins

Importins are essential components of the machinery that transports proteins into the nucleus of eukaryotic cells. In the MDC-laboratory at the University of Lübeck we collaborate with other groups at the Institute for Biology to clarify the physiological functions of α importins. For this purpose, we have generated knockout mice for five paralogs of this protein family. The most obvious phenotype was discovered in mice lacking importin α7: Both sexes of these animals are infertile. The female infertility is based on an essential function of importin α7 during zygotic genome activation of developing embryos. The reason for the male infertility is still under investigation. Besides its function in fertility, importin α7 is pivotal for influenza virus infection of cells. In addition, we could show that the absence of importin α5 during mouse development does not significantly interfere with neuronal differentiation and proper brain development, in contrast to the prediction based on a study in cell culture. Furthermore, the fertility and cardiovascular phenotypes of importin α1, α3, and α4 deficient mice are analyzed.

In the frame of the German Centre for Cardiovascular Research we collaborate with other groups at the University of Lübeck (Institutes for Pharmacology and for Integrative and Experimental Genomics) on the functional characterization of proteins involved in cardiovascular and metabolic regulation using transgenic and knockout rodent models.

Publikationen:

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