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Andrographolide blocks 50-kHz ultrasonic vocalizations, hyperlocomotion and oxidative stress in an animal model of mania

Luiz K.S. Kanazawa^a, Débora R. Radulski^b, Gabriela S. Pereira^b, Jos Prickaerts^c, Rainer K. W. Schwarting^d, Alexandra Acco^b, Roberto Andreatini^{a,*}

^a Laboratory of Physiology and Pharmacology of the Central Nervous System, Department of Pharmacology, Federal University of Paraná, Centro Politécnico, 81540-990, Curitiba, PR, Brazil

^b Laboratory of Pharmacology and Metabolism, Department of Pharmacology, Federal University of Paraná, Centro Politécnico, 81540-990, Curitiba, PR, Brazil

^c Department of Psychiatry and Neuropsychiatry, School for Mental Health and Neuroscience (MHeNS), Maastricht University, Universiteitssingel 50, 6229 ER Maastricht, the Netherlands

^d Behavioural Neuroscience, Experimental and Biological Psychology, and Center for Mind, Brain, and Behavior (CMBB), Philipps-Universität Marburg, Marburg, 35032, Germany

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ABSTRACT

In rats, lisdexamfetamine (LDX) induces manic-like behaviors such as hyperlocomotion and increases in appetitive 50-kHz ultrasonic vocalizations (USV), which are prevented by antimanic drugs, such as lithium. Inhibition of glycogen synthase kinase 3 beta (GSK3 β) and antioxidant activity have been associated with antimanic effects. Thus, the aim of the present study was to evaluate the possible antimanic-like effects of andrographolide (ANDRO), a GSK3 β inhibitor, on LDX-induced hyperlocomotion and 50-kHz USV increases. In addition, the effect of ANDRO was studied on LDX-induced oxidative stress. Lithium was used as positive control. Adult Wistar rats were treated with vehicle, lithium (100 mg/kg i.p., daily) or ANDRO (2 mg/kg i.p., 3 times a week) for 21 days. On the test day, either 10 mg/kg LDX or saline was administered i.p. and USV and locomotor activity were recorded. LDX administration increased the number of 50-kHz calls, as well as locomotor activity. Repeated treatment with lithium or ANDRO prevented these effects of LDX on 50-kHz USV and locomotor activity. LDX increased lipid peroxidation (LPO) levels in rat striatum and both lithium and ANDRO prevented this effect. LPO levels in rat striatum were positively correlated with increases in 50-kHz USV emission as well as hyperlocomotion. In conclusion, the present results indicate that ANDRO has antimanic-like effects, which may be mediated by its antioxidant properties.

1. Introduction

Manic episodes of bipolar disorder consist of elevated or irritable mood with enhanced energy, psychomotor agitation, risk behavior, pressured speech and tachylalia, for example (American Psychiatry Association, 2013). The pharmacological treatments for the management of manic phases include mood stabilizers, such as lithium (an enzyme modulator) or sodium valproate, as well as antipsychotics (dopamine D2 receptor antagonist or partial agonist) and tamoxifen (Geddes and Miklowitz, 2013). However, these treatments are associated with the occurrence of several adverse effects, which negatively affect treatment adhesion (Baldessarini et al., 2019).

Oxidative stress has been associated with mania and antimanic drugs

(Li et al., 2010; Malhi et al., 2013; Saxena et al., 2017). Machado-Vieira et al. (2007) found an increase in thiobarbituric acid reactive substances (TBARS) in manic non-medicated patients, which was reduced after lithium treatment. Lv et al. (2020) observed that plasma malondialdehyde level is higher in manic patients, decreasing after 6 weeks of effective electroconvulsive therapy. Moreover, increased oxidative stress was found in different animal models of mania and treatment with lithium, valproate or antipsychotics reduced oxidative stress parameters (Frey et al., 2006; Brocardo et al., 2010; Arunagiri et al., 2014; Gazal et al., 2014; Valvassori et al., 2017, 2019; Hodes et al., 2018; Dal-Pont et al., 2019; de Souza et al., 2015; Menegas et al., 2020). Therefore, oxidative stress is an interesting target for new antimanic drugs.

Oxidative stress has been linked to the enzyme glycogen synthase

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: randreatini@gmail.com (R. Andreatini).

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kinase β (GSK3 β), which is proposed as the target of the antimanic effects of lithium (Li et al., 2010; Malhi et al., 2013; Valvassori et al., 2017; Dandekar et al., 2018; Dal-Pont et al., 2019). Furthermore, mice that overexpressed GSK3 β showed manic-like behaviors (Prickaerts et al., 2006). In this line, it had been suggested that lithium and valproic acid prevented ouabain-induced manic-like behavior in rats through GSK3 β inhibition (Valvassori et al., 2017). Moreover, the antimanic-like effect of GSK3 β inhibition was associated to an antioxidant effect (Machado-Vieira et al., 2007; Dal Pont et al., 2019). Andrographolide (ANDRO) possesses anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and neuroprotective effects (Lim et al., 2012; Serrano et al., 2014; Mittal et al., 2016; Tan et al., 2016). Importantly, ANDRO also inhibits GSK3 β (Serrano et al., 2014; Varela-Nallar et al., 2015). Thus, it can be hypothesized that ANDRO might display antimanic-like effects.

Psychostimulant administration is the animal model of mania most frequently used (Young et al., 2011; de Miranda et al., 2017). This model is based on the drug-induced increase in locomotor activity mainly (Young et al., 2011; de Miranda et al., 2017). More recently, we proposed that 50-kHz ultrasonic vocalizations (USV), which are related to positive affect, could be an additional readout for manic-like states (Pereira et al., 2014; Wendler et al., 2016, 2019; Engelhardt et al., 2017). In this line, lisdexamfetamine (LDX), a pro-drug of amphetamine, induces increased locomotor activity and 50-kHz USV that are prevented by lithium or valproate administration (Macêdo et al., 2013; de Souza et al., 2015; Wendler et al., 2016; Bristot et al., 2019). According to their spectrogram shapes, 50-kHz USV can be classified into different subtypes (Costa et al., 2020; Mulvihill and Brudzynski, 2020; Wright et al., 2010) and we have applied a rather common classification into four subtypes: trill, step, mixed and flat (e.g. Pereira et al., 2014; Wöhr et al., 2015). The trill subtype has been related to positive affect, while the flat subtype is probably associated to social communication (Wöhr and Schwarting, 2013; Simola and Brudzynski, 2018). Moreover, the trill subtype is more affected by psychostimulant drugs and sensitive to antimanic drugs in animal models of mania (Pereira et al., 2014; Rippberger et al., 2015; Wöhr et al., 2015; Simola, 2018; Wendler et al., 2019).

The aim of the present study was to evaluate the possible antimanic-like effect of repeated treatment with ANDRO on LDX-induced increases in 50-kHz USV and locomotor activity of rats. In addition, the effect of ANDRO was studied on LDX-induced decreases in reduced glutathione (GSH) levels and increases in lipid peroxidation (LPO) levels in rat prefrontal cortex (PFC) and striatum. Lithium was used as a positive control.

Briefly, we found that repeated treatment with ANDRO prevented the effects of LDX on 50-kHz USV, locomotor activity, and increased lipid peroxidation (LPO) levels in rat striatum. Moreover, these LPO levels in rat striatum were positively correlated with the increases in 50-kHz USV emission as well as with hyperlocomotion. Collectively, the present data suggest that ANDRO has an antimanic-like effect in LDX-induced manic-like behaviors.

2. Experimental procedures

2.1. Animals

Adult Wistar male rats (90 days old, weighing between 280 and 300 g), provided by the animal facility of Federal University of Parana, were socially housed (3–4 rats per cage) in polycarbonate cages (41 × 34 × 16 cm). The rats were maintained in a room with controlled temperature (22 ± 2 °C) and constant 12 h:12 h light/dark cycle (with lights on between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.); water and standard laboratory chow were available ad libitum. The experiments started one week after the rats arrived in our facility. All experiments were performed in accordance with the Brazilian Law for Animal Experimental Ethics and Care (11.794/October 8, 2008) and the Local Committee on the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. The Institutional Ethics Board approved the

experimental procedures (CEUA/BIO– protocol #1109). All efforts were made in order to minimize the number of animals used and their suffering.

2.2. Drugs and treatment protocol

ANDRO (Sigma, São Paulo, Brazil) was administered at a dose of 2 mg/kg, intraperitoneally (i.p.) (Chan et al., 2010; Niranjana et al., 2010). ANDRO was dissolved in saline with dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO, 2%, v/v). The repeated treatment was performed throughout 21 days, 3 times/week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday). Lithium carbonate (Eurofarma, Itapevi, Brazil) was used as positive control at a dose of 100 mg/kg. Lithium was dissolved in saline and the pH was adjusted to 7.4 by adding 2 N HCl. Repeated treatment was performed throughout 21 days, once a day. LDX (Venbanse®, Shire, São Paulo, Brazil) was dissolved in saline at a dose of 10 mg/kg. All drugs were administered i.p. in a volume of 1 ml/kg body weight.

The animals were treated with vehicle (saline + DMSO), 100 mg/kg lithium or 2 mg/kg ANDRO for 21 days. On the test day, 10 mg/kg LDX or saline was administered (i.p.). One hour after LDX administration, the rats were placed individually in an acrylic box (40 × 40 × 40 cm) for the recording of USV calls and locomotor activity, as shown in Fig. 1.

2.3. Screening test

In order to control for inter-individual variability that could affect USV, the rats were tested for their levels of spontaneous USV in a polycarbonate cage with clean bedding as a screening test (Natusch and Schwarting, 2010). This test was performed on two consecutive days (5 min each) and the number of spontaneous 50-kHz USV calls were recorded. Then, rats were distributed in a balanced way into the experimental groups (vehicle + saline, lithium + saline, ANDRO + saline, vehicle + LDX, lithium + LDX, ANDRO + LDX) according to the average number of 50-kHz USV emitted in the two days. Lights were dimmed to 4 lux for all tests.

2.4. Locomotor activity test

USV calls and locomotor activity were recorded simultaneously. On the test day (day 30), 1 h after LDX (or saline) injection, the rats were placed individually into an acrylic box (40 × 40 × 40 cm), with fresh bedding, and observed for 20 min. Recordings of the locomotor activity were made by a camera placed on top of the acrylic box. On the monitor screen, the box image was divided virtually into 9 equally sized squares and a blind observer counted the number of squares crossed by the rats.

2.5. Ultrasonic vocalizations and analysis

USV calls were recorded by an UltraSound Gate Condenser

Fig. 1. Experimental protocol. ANDRO: andrographolide; LDX: lisdexamfetamine; USV: ultrasonic vocalizations recording. Screening test: individual USV recording in a clean home cage.

Microphone (CM16; Avisoft Bioacoustics, Berlin, Germany), sensible to frequencies between 15 and 180-kHz, which was placed 45 cm above the acrylic box and connected to a computer with the Avisoft Recorder 2.7 software. Spectrograms from the USV recordings were generated at a frequency resolution of 488 Hz and a time resolution of 0.512 ms and were manually quantified and classified into flat, trill, step and mixed subtypes, according to previous studies (Pereira et al., 2014). USV emitted with frequencies over 33 kHz were considered as 50-kHz USV. The acrylic box was located in an experimental room and the Avisoft system, computer and experimenter were in an adjacent room. Data represent the sum of the USV emitted during the first 20s period of each 1-min interval of the 20-min test length.

2.6. Evaluation of oxidative stress parameters in the rat brain

2.6.1. Brain samples

The rats were euthanized by decapitation immediately after the recording of USV calls and locomotor activity. The PFC and striatum were dissected, frozen in liquid nitrogen, and stored at -80°C until further analysis. The brain samples were homogenized in potassium phosphate buffer (0.1 M, pH 6.5) in a 1:10 dilution. One part of the homogenate was used to determine the GSH levels, and the other was centrifuged at $9000\times g$ in a micro-high-speed refrigerated centrifuge (NT805 Micro Centrífuga Refrigerada, Novatecnica, Piracicaba, Brazil) for 20-min. The supernatant was used to evaluate LPO.

2.6.2. Evaluation of GSH levels

To measure GSH levels, 100 μl of the homogenate was mixed with 80 μl of 12.5% trichloroacetic acid and centrifuged at $7600\times g$ for 15 min at 4°C . Next, 20 μl of the supernatant was mixed with 280 μl of Tris buffer (0.4 M, pH 8.9) and 5 μl of DTNB (5,5'-dithiobis-[2-nitrobenzoic acid]) in methanol following the protocol originally described by Sedlak and Lindsay (1968), with minor modifications. Absorbance was read at 415 nm using a multi-mode microplate reader (BioTek Synergy HT, BioTek Instruments, Highland Park, VT, USA). The individual values were interpolated in a standard curve of GSH (0.375–3 μg) to corroborate the linearity of the reaction (r^2 must be > 0.99), and the values were divided by a correction factor. The results are expressed as $\mu\text{g/g}$ of tissue.

2.6.3. Evaluation of LPO levels

Lipid peroxidation was determined according to the protocol described by Jiang et al. (1992), with minor modifications. First, 100 μl of the supernatant was suspended in 100 μl of methanol, vortexed, and centrifuged at $5400\times g$ 5 min at 4°C . Next, 100 μl of the supernatant was added to 900 μl of FOX2 reagent (Wolff's reagent; 4 mM BHT, 250 μM FeSO_4 , 250 mM H_2SO_4 , and 100 mM xylene orange). The samples were then vortexed and incubated for 30 min in the dark at room temperature. Absorbance was read at 560 nm using a multi-mode microplate reader (BioTek Synergy HT, BioTek Instruments, Highland Park, VT, USA). The results are expressed as nmol/mg protein.

2.6.4. Quantification of proteins

The quantification of proteins in the PFC and striatum samples was performed according to the method designed by Bradford (1976). The reaction was examined at 595 nm in a microplate reader (BioTek Synergy HT, BioTek Instruments, Highland Park, VT, USA) using bovine serum albumin (BSA) as protein standard.

2.7. Statistical analysis

Data were analyzed by two-way ANOVA (factor LDX treatment: saline or LDX; factor repeated treatment: vehicle, lithium or ANDRO) followed by the Newman-Keuls test. Since some variables (number 50-kHz USV and number of trill and flat subtypes) did not show homoscedasticity, the raw data were transformed in square root before statistical analysis. Differences were considered statistically significant when $p <$

0.05. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to evaluate the degree of association between variables. Data was expressed as mean $\pm$ SD of raw data for clarity. Statistica 7.0, StatSoft (Tulsa, USA) was used for the statistical analysis.

3. Results

3.1. Repeated ANDRO and lithium treatment reversed LDX-induced increases in 50-kHz USV

Two-way ANOVA of the number of USV showed effects of LDX administration ($F_{1,37} = 8.57$, $p < 0.001$), repeated treatment ($F_{2,37} = 13.88$, $p < 0.001$) and LDX administration $\times$ repeated treatment interaction ($F_{2,37} = 4.43$, $p < 0.05$; Fig. 2A). The post hoc test indicated that LDX administration increased the number of calls ($p < 0.001$). Treatment with lithium and ANDRO prevented the increases in the number of 50-kHz calls induced by LDX ($p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.01$, respectively). Lithium or ANDRO alone did not reduce the number of calls ($p > 0.05$).

Call subtypes: Regarding flat calls, there was an effect of LDX administration ($F_{1,37} = 14.24$, $p < 0.001$), repeated treatment ($F_{2,37} = 9.17$, $p < 0.001$) and an interaction between LDX administration $\times$ repeated treatment ($F_{2,37} = 3.93$, $p < 0.05$; Table 1). LDX increased flat calls ($p < 0.001$) and repeated lithium and ANDRO prevented this effect (both $p < 0.01$). On trill calls, there was an effect of LDX administration ($F_{1,37} = 6.36$, $p < 0.001$), repeated treatment ($F_{2,37} = 11.02$, $p < 0.01$) and an LDX administration $\times$ repeated treatment interaction ($F_{2,37} = 5.06$, $p < 0.05$). LDX increased trill calls ($p < 0.001$) and repeated lithium and ANDRO prevented this effect ($p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.05$, respectively). On step calls, there was an effect of LDX treatment ($F_{1,37} = 9.29$, $p < 0.01$), repeated treatment ($F_{2,37} = 3.27$, $p < 0.05$) but not for LDX administration $\times$ repeated treatment interaction ($F_{2,37} = 2.89$, NS). LDX increased step calls ($p < 0.01$; saline = 4 ± 6 and LDX = 12 ± 12 , mean $\pm$ SD; $n = 22$ and 21 , respectively) independently from repeated treatment (Table 1).

3.2. Repeated ANDRO and lithium treatment prevented LDX-induced hyperlocomotion

There were effects of LDX administration ($F_{2,37} = 19.81$, $p < 0.001$), repeated treatment ($F_{1,37} = 9.36$, $p < 0.001$) and LDX administration $\times$ repeated treatment interaction ($F_{2,37} = 4.08$, $p < 0.05$). LDX administration increased locomotor activity ($p < 0.001$; Fig. 2B), and treatment with lithium and ANDRO prevented such hyperlocomotion ($p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.01$, respectively). Lithium or ANDRO alone did not reduce locomotor activity (both $p > 0.05$).

3.3. Repeated ANDRO administration prevented LDX-induced lipid peroxidation in rat striatum

3.3.1. Lipid peroxidation

In the striatum, two-way ANOVA showed effects of repeated treatment ($F_{2,37} = 6.34$, $p < 0.01$), LDX administration ($F_{1,37} = 71.53$, $p < 0.001$) and LDX administration $\times$ repeated treatment interaction ($F_{2,37} = 13.95$, $p < 0.001$) in LPO levels. The Newman-Keuls test indicated that LDX administration increased LPO levels ($p < 0.001$) and lithium and ANDRO repeated treatment prevented LDX-induced increases in LPO levels ($p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.05$, respectively; Fig. 3A).

In the PFC, two-way ANOVA indicated that there were no effects of repeated treatment ($F_{2,37} = 2.39$, NS), LDX administration ($F_{1,37} = 0.22$, NS) or LDX administration $\times$ repeated treatment interaction ($F_{2,37} = 1.09$, NS) in the levels of LPO (Fig. 3B).

3.3.2. GSH

In the striatum, two-way ANOVA did not indicate effects of repeated treatment ($F_{1,37} = 0.06$, NS), LDX administration ($F_{1,37} = 0.02$, NS) or LDX administration $\times$ repeated treatment interaction ($F_{1,37} = 0.02$, NS).

Fig. 2. Effects of 21 days treatment with lithium (100 mg/kg i.p.), andrographolide (ANDRO, 2 mg/kg i.p.) or vehicle on lisdexamphetamine (LDX, 10 mg/kg i.p.)-induced increase in the number 50-kHz USV calls (A) and locomotor activity (B). Vehicle: saline + DMSO. Data are expressed by mean $\pm$ SD. $n = 5-8$ rats/group. *** $p < 0.001$, compared with rats treated with vehicle + saline; ## $p < 0.01$ and ### $p < 0.001$, compared to the vehicle + LDX (two-way ANOVA followed by the Newman-Keuls test).

Table 1

Effects of repeated Lithium and Andrographolide (ANDRO) on acute effects of lisdexamphetamine on the number of call subtypes of 50-kHz ultrasonic vocalizations.

	Saline			Lisdexamfetamine		
	Vehicle	Lithium	ANDRO	Vehicle	Lithium	ANDRO
Call subtypes						
Flat	40 $\pm$ 45	13 $\pm$ 13	28 $\pm$ 38	204 $\pm$ 110 ^a	26 $\pm$ 38	84 $\pm$ 89
Trill	6 $\pm$ 10	4 $\pm$ 5	10 $\pm$ 14	49 $\pm$ 32 ^a	3 $\pm$ 5	22 $\pm$ 22
Step	4 $\pm$ 4	3 $\pm$ 5	4 $\pm$ 8	20 $\pm$ 10	5 $\pm$ 7	10 $\pm$ 13

Data represent mean $\pm$ SD of the sum of USV emitted during the first 20s period of each 1-min interval of the 20-min test length.

^a $p < 0.05$ compared to all other groups.

in the levels of GSH (Fig. 3C).

In the PFC, two-way ANOVA showed effects of repeated treatment ($F_{2,37} = 3.36$, $p < 0.05$) and LDX administration ($F_{1,37} = 7.59$, $p < 0.01$) but not repeated treatment-LDX administration interaction ($F_{1,37} = 0.20$, NS). The Newman-Keuls test indicated that LDX administration decreased GSH levels in rat PFC independently from ANDRO or lithium treatment ($p < 0.01$; saline = 28 ± 23 and LDX = 14 ± 9 , mean $\pm$ SD, $n = 22$ and 21, respectively; Fig. 3D).

3.4. Correlations

The Pearson's correlation coefficient showed positive correlations between LPO levels in rat striatum with 50-kHz USV calls ($r = 0.62$, $p <$

0.001) and with locomotor activity ($r = 0.61$, $p < 0.001$; Fig. 4). Moreover, there was also a positive correlation between locomotor activity and 50 kHz USV ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.001$). On the other hand, no correlation was observed between LPO levels in PFC with 50-kHz USV calls ($r = -0.11$, NS) and with locomotor activity ($r = -0.03$, NS; data not shown).

4. Discussion

The present study showed that repeated treatment with ANDRO prevented LDX-induced manic-like behaviors (hyperlocomotion and increases in 50-kHz USV) and striatal LPO levels. Similar results were obtained with repeated treatment with lithium, a clinically effective antimanic drug, which was used as a positive control. These results suggest that ANDRO possesses an antimanic-like behavioral effect and exerts antioxidant activity in the LDX model of mania.

The administration of psychostimulants (e.g., d-amphetamine) is a common method for inducing manic-like behavior in animal models, such as hyperlocomotion and increases in 50 kHz USV (Young et al., 2011; Sharma et al., 2016; de Miranda et al., 2017). LDX is a long-acting pro-drug of d-amphetamine employed in the therapeutic management of attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (Ermer et al., 2016). LDX administration has also been used to mimic manic-like behavior in animals (Macêdo et al., 2013; de Souza et al., 2015; Eger et al., 2016; Wendler et al., 2016; Ascoli et al., 2017; Bristot et al., 2019). These manic-like behaviors were reversed or prevented by treatment with lithium or valproate (Macêdo et al., 2013; de Souza et al., 2015; Wendler et al., 2016; Ascoli et al., 2017; Bristot et al., 2019). LDX administration also increases oxidative stress (Macêdo et al., 2013; de Souza et al.,

Fig. 3. Effects of 21 days treatment with Lithium (100 mg/kg i.p.), Andrographolide (ANDRO, 2 mg/kg i.p.) or vehicle on lisdexamphetamine (LDX, 10 mg/kg i.p.) induced changes in reduced glutathione (GSH) and lipid peroxidation (LPO) levels in the prefrontal cortex (PCF) and striatum, respectively. (A) LPO levels in the striatum. (B) LPO levels in the PFC; (C) GSH levels in the striatum; (D) GSH levels in the PFC. Data are expressed by mean $\pm$ SD. $n = 5-8$ rats/group. *** $p < 0.001$, compared with rats treated with vehicle + vehicle; # $p < 0.05$ and ### $p < 0.001$, compared with rats treated with vehicle + LDX. Two-way ANOVA followed by the Newman-Keuls test.

2015; Eger et al., 2016), as observed in plasma as well as serum of bipolar patients in manic state (Machado-Vieira et al., 2007; Caldiroli et al., 2020). Thus, the LDX model is a valid procedure for the study of mania and antimanic-like drugs. In the present study, repeated ANDRO and lithium administration prevented LDX-induced hyperlocomotion at a dose that did not affect spontaneous locomotor activity, a profile suggestive of an antimanic-like effect (Young et al., 2011).

In addition to hyperlocomotion, LDX administration also induced an increase in 50-kHz USV. Juvenile and adult rats emit high-frequency 50-kHz USV in appetitive situations, such as playing with other rats, mating or after psychostimulant administration (e.g. Burgdorf et al., 2011; Rippberger et al., 2015). Therefore, it is proposed that 50-kHz can represent a positive affective state in rats (Wöhr and Schwarting, 2013; Barker, 2018; Simola, 2018), and that they can be used to monitor hedonic states in animal models of various psychiatric disorders (Burgdorf et al., 2011). In this line, 50-kHz USV were found to be increased in different animal models of mania such as amphetamine or LDX administration, and sleep deprivation (Pereira et al., 2014; Wendler et al., 2016, 2019; Engelhardt et al., 2017). This increase in 50-kHz USV was blocked by the antimanic drugs lithium, tamoxifen and antipsychotics (Wintink and Brudzynski, 2001; Pereira et al., 2014; Barker et al., 2015; Wendler et al., 2016, 2019). Thus, 50-kHz USV have been proposed as a new marker in animal models of mania, representing the increase in the positive affect and/or elevated mood (Wendler et al., 2016; Engelhardt et al., 2017; de Miranda et al., 2017; Wendler et al., 2019; for review, see Wöhr, 2021). In the present study, repeated treatment with ANDRO and lithium prevented LDX effects in the number of 50-kHz calls, and in the number of trill and flat calls subtypes. ANDRO and lithium alone did not affect 50-kHz USV. These results indicate an antimanic-like effect of ANDRO on 50-kHz USV.

Considering some similarities between the effects of LDX on locomotor activity and USV (e.g. increase after LDX administration,

blockade by lithium and ANDRO pretreatment) and close correlation coefficients with LPO, it could be hypothesized that locomotor and USV responses to psychostimulant are redundant and interchangeable variables. However, in the present study USV and locomotor activity showed a moderate coefficient of correlation ($r = 0.62$) and previous studies showed that USV and locomotor activity peaked differently after amphetamine administration and showed a different pattern after repeated administration of amphetamine (Natusch and Schwarting, 2010; Simola, 2018). Thus, these variables can be considered different facets of manic-like behavior (Wendler et al., 2019).

The present study also shows that LDX administration can lead to increased LPO in striatum and decreased GSH levels in PFC. Repeated lithium and ANDRO treatment prevented LDX-induced increases in LPO in rat striatum. Increased generation of reactive oxygen species and free radicals are involved in the pathophysiology of bipolar disorder, as increases in serum/plasma LPO occur in different phases and are associated to illness severity and/or the number of manic episodes (Andreazza et al., 2007; Machado-Vieira et al., 2007; Brown et al., 2014; Sowa-Kućma et al., 2018; Akarsu et al., 2018). In this line, high concentrations of phospholipids make brain tissues more vulnerable to oxidative stress induced by LPO (Banerjee et al., 2012). Lipid hydroperoxide chain reactions eventually cause the formation of reactive aldehydes and this can damage lipid membranes (Maes et al., 2018). Increased oxidative stress leads to derangement of signal transduction, structural plasticity and cellular resilience in brain tissue (Schäfer et al., 2004). Lv et al. (2020) showed that LPO levels were higher in the plasma of treatment-resistant bipolar disorder patients and decreased after 6 weeks of electroconvulsive therapy.

Oxidative stress in the brain was observed in different models of mania such as psychostimulants (Frey et al., 2006; Sharma et al., 2016; Hodes et al., 2018; Valvassori et al., 2019; Chaves Filho et al., 2020), ouabain (Valvassori et al., 2017; Dal Pont et al., 2019), sleep deprivation

Fig. 4. Correlations between locomotor activity, 50-kHz ultrasonic vocalization (USV) and striatal lipid peroxidation (LPO) in the lisdexamfetamine model of mania. (A) USV and LPO; (B) Locomotor activity and LPO; (C) USV and locomotor Activity. Acute treatment: vehicle: open symbols; lisdexamfetamine (10 mg/kg): closed symbols. Repeated treatment: vehicle: triangle; lithium (100 mg/kg): square; andrographolide (2 mg/kg): circle. Pearson correlation coefficient, *** $p < 0.001$.

(Kanazawa et al., 2016) and ketamine (Garzal et al., 2014). The observation that mood stabilizing agents such as lithium and sodium valproate also exert antioxidant effects, reinforces the idea that oxidative stress is involved in the pathophysiology and treatment of mania (Andreazza et al., 2007; Banerjee et al., 2012; Brown et al., 2014; Kanazawa et al., 2016; Valvassori et al., 2017; de Queiroz et al., 2018). However, the antioxidant effects of lithium may be specific to certain brain regions and these can vary depending on experimental variables including type of drug and age of animals (Chaves Filho et al., 2020; Schmitz et al., 2012). Particularly to LDX, it increased LPO in rat PFC, hippocampus and striatum, and lithium and valproate prevented and reversed the effects of repeated LDX administration on LPO in these brain areas (Macêdo et al., 2013; de Souza et al., 2015). In the present study, acute LDX administration increased LPO levels in the striatum, but not in the PFC. Treatment with ANDRO and lithium reduced this effect of LDX in striatal LPO levels. In addition, there was a positive correlation between LPO levels in rat striatum and increases in 50-kHz USV, as well as LDX-induced hyperlocomotion. Menegas et al. (2020), using the methamphetamine administration model of mania, also observed correlations between hyperlocomotion and lipid damage parameters in the striatum of rats. Clinically, a positive correlation between mania severity (Young Mania Rating Scale) and peripheral oxidative stress index was also (Akarsu et al., 2018) observed which supports the relevance of our pre-clinical approach.

GSH is a non-enzymatic antioxidant molecule and its depletion can lead to neuronal dysfunctions and various disorders (Gaucher et al., 2018). In the present study, LDX administration reduced GSH levels in rat PFC. ANDRO and lithium treatment, however, had no effects on LDX-induced decrease on GSH level. Studies also showed divergent results regarding GSH levels in the brain. Macêdo et al. (2013), for example, showed that LDX administration induced hyperlocomotion and decreased GSH content in rat PFC and striatum, which was prevented by lithium in both brain areas. However, only lithium reversed the reduction of GSH in the PFC. These heterogeneous results can be dependent of methodological differences including subjects, experimental protocol or acute/repeated drug administration.

The antimanic effect of lithium has been partly related to its inhibitory activity on the enzyme GSK3 β , which has been linked to oxidative stress in mania models (Dal Pont et al., 2019). AR-A014418, a GSK3 β inhibitor, reverted ouabain-induced hyperlocomotion and oxidative stress in frontal cortex and hippocampus of rats (Dal Pont et al., 2019). In this line, ANDRO also inhibits GSK3 β (Serrano et al., 2014; Varela-Nellar et al., 2015) and, thus, inhibition of GSK3 β may also contribute to the antimanic-like effect of ANDRO observed in the present study.

In conclusion, the present results suggest that ANDRO possesses antimanic-like effects in the LDX-administration model of mania, preventing LDX-induced increases in 50-kHz USV and hyperlocomotion, and its antioxidant effects may mediate these effects.

Author statement

Luiz KS Kanazawa: conceptualization; methodology; performing experiments; data analysis; writing, reviewing and editing the manuscript. Débora R Radulski: performing experiments. Gabriela S. Pereira: performing experiments. Jos Prickaerts: data interpretation; writing, reviewing and editing the manuscript. RKW Schwarting: conceptualization; methodology; data interpretation; writing, reviewing and editing the manuscript. Alexandra Acco: data analysis and interpretation; writing, reviewing and editing the manuscript. Roberto Andreatini: conceptualization, methodology, data analysis and interpretation; writing, reviewing and editing the manuscript.

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Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest related to this study.

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