

## **Leu505 of neutrophil Nox2 is crucial in the NADPH-binding process during NADPH oxidase activation**

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**ABSTRACT**

The role of Leu<sup>505</sup> of Nox2 on NADPH oxidase activation process was investigated. An X-CGD PLB-985 cell line expressing Leu505Arg Nox2 mutant was obtained, exactly mimicking the phenotype of a previously published X91<sup>+</sup>-CGD case. While the NADPH oxidase activity of mutant transfected cells was abolished, translocation of p67<sup>phox</sup> and p47<sup>phox</sup> to the plasma membrane occurred normally. In a reconstituted cell-free system (CFS), NADPH oxidase and isonicotinic acidadenine dinucleotide (INT) reductase activities were partially maintained, suggesting that assembly and electron transfer from NADPH could take place in the Leu505Arg Nox2 mutant. However, in a simplified CFS using purified mutant cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> and recombinant p67<sup>phox</sup>, p47<sup>phox</sup> and Rac1 proteins, we found that the *K<sub>m</sub>* for NADPH and for NADH was about three times higher than those of purified WT cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub>, indicating that Leu505Arg mutation slightly decreases the affinity for NADPH and NADH. In addition, oxidase activity can be extended by increasing the amount of p67<sup>phox</sup> in the simplified CFS assay. However, the maximal reconstituted oxidase activity using WT purified cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> could not be reached using mutant cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub>. In a three-dimensional model of the C-terminal tail of Nox2, Leu<sup>505</sup> appears to have a strategic position just at the entry of the NADPH binding site and at the end of the  $\alpha$ -helical loop (residues 484–504), a potential binding region of cytosolic factors. Leu505Arg mutation could alter the  $\alpha$ -helical loop position, thus affecting NADPH access to its binding site. However, Leu<sup>505</sup> seems not to be directly involved in the binding of NADPH.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Professional phagocytes generate high levels of reactive oxygen species (ROS) by activating a superoxide-generating NADPH oxidase, one of the crucial elements of microbicidal mechanisms. The NADPH oxidase is a multi-component enzyme composed of a membrane-associated flavocytochrome  $b_{558}$  and cytosolic proteins  $p67^{phox}$ ,  $p47^{phox}$ ,  $p40^{phox}$  and Rac [1-2]. Flavocytochrome  $b_{558}$ , the catalytic center of the NADPH oxidase, consists of a heavily glycosylated large  $\beta$ -subunit ( $gp91^{phox}$ , Nox2) and a small  $\alpha$  subunit ( $p22^{phox}$ ). In resting cells,  $p67^{phox}$ ,  $p40^{phox}$  and/or  $p47^{phox}$  form a cytosolic complex dissociated with cytochrome  $b_{558}$  [3-4]. In resting neutrophils, this oxidase is inactive in a dissociated state and becomes assembled and activated by exposure to microorganisms or inflammatory mediators. Indeed, upon activation,  $p47^{phox}$  is highly phosphorylated and mediates  $p67^{phox}$  and/or  $p40^{phox}$  translocation to the plasma membrane as an organizer.  $P67^{phox}$ , which is essential for oxidase activation, serves as an activator. However, the small GTP-binding protein Rac (Rac1/2) translocates independently of the other cytosolic components [5].  $P22^{phox}$  seems to play a docking site role for the cytosolic oxidase components and especially for  $p47^{phox}$  [6-7], while Nox2 is the only catalytic element of the NADPH oxidase complex. It contains six  $\alpha$ -helix transmembrane domains in the N-terminus in which two hemes [8] and the glycosylation sites are localized [9].

The C-terminus of Nox2 is a cytosolic sequence supporting the NADPH and FAD binding sites. Based on sequence alignments of  $gp91^{phox}$  with flavoproteins and reductases, two regions,  $^{338}HPFTL TSA^{345}$  and  $^{355}IRIVGD^{360}$ , are proposed as binding sites for FAD. In addition, four cytosolic sequences, namely  $^{405}MLVGAGIGVTPF^{416}$ ,  $^{442}YWLCRD^{447}$ ,  $^{504}GLKQ^{507}$  and  $^{535}FLCGPE^{540}$ , are considered to be binding sites for pyrophosphate, ribose, adenine and the nicotinamide unit of NADPH, respectively [10-12]. In the predicted three-dimensional structure model of Nox2, another intriguing sequence composed of residues 484–504 and localized near the potential adenine of the NADPH binding site has been proposed to form an  $\alpha$ -helical loop covering the cleft in which NADPH binds in the inactive state of the enzyme [13]. Upon oxidase activation, access of NADPH to the binding site could potentially be regulated by the interaction of this loop with oxidase cytosolic factors. This  $\alpha$ -helical loop is specifically found in the Nox-Duox family and ferric reductase (FRE1) but not in other FNR reductases [13].

Chronic granulomatous disease (CGD), a rare congenital disorder in which the phagocytic cells fail to generate superoxide ( $O_2^-$ ) and characterized by severe recurrent bacterial and fungal infections,

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results from mutations in one of the four subunits of NADPH oxidase [14-16]. X91<sup>+</sup>-CGD cases, characterized by normal expression of a nonfunctional Nox2 protein, are rare and useful CGD variants to study functional domains of Nox2. Indeed, the missense mutations Gly408Glu and Asp500Gly, located in the pyrophosphate-binding site for NADPH and in the C-terminal  $\alpha$ -helical loop, respectively, disturb the NADPH oxidase assembly and electron transfer [17-18]. This suggests that an intimate relation exists between the electron transfer and the oxidase assembly processes in certain Nox2 domains. In addition, in transgenic X-CGD PLB-985 cell models, we demonstrated that point mutations in Asp<sup>484</sup> and Asp<sup>500</sup>, located in the  $\alpha$ -helical loop, were essential to the oxidase assembly and to maintaining the electron transfer from NADPH to FAD [19]. Recently, Stasia *et al.* [20] have reported a new X91<sup>+</sup>-CGD case characterized by a missense mutation Leu505Arg in the potential NADPH-binding site of Nox2 close to the predicted cytosolic C-terminal  $\alpha$ -helical loop.

In this study, transfected PLB-985 cells mimicking the previously reported X91<sup>+</sup>-CGD case were used to elucidate the impact of Leu505Arg mutation on NADPH oxidase activation. Purified Leu505Arg mutant and wild-type (WT) cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> purified from transfected PLB-985 cells were used in a simplified cell-free system (CFS) with recombinant proteins p67<sup>phox</sup>, p47<sup>phox</sup> and Rac1 to study the effect of increasing the amount of NADPH and p67<sup>phox</sup> on NADPH oxidase activity. The three-dimensional model of the C-terminal tail of Nox2 was used to determine the strategic importance of the Leu<sup>505</sup> position on the NADPH oxidase activation process.

## **EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE**

### **Materials**

Diisopropylfluorophosphate (DFP), leupeptin, tosyl-L-lysine chloroethyl ketone (TLCK), dimethylformamide (DMF), Luminol (5-amino-2,3-dihydro-1,4-phthalazinedione), Phorbol 12-myristate 13-acetate (PMA), horse-radish peroxidase (HRPO), cytochrome *c* (from horse heart, type VI), latex beads (3  $\mu$ M), heparin-agarose and L- $\alpha$ -phosphatidylcholine type II-S were obtained from Sigma Chemical Co. (St Louis, MO, USA). Taq DNA polymerase, ATP, guanosine 5'-3-*O*- (thio) triphosphate (GTP $\gamma$ S), NADPH, pepstatin, phenylmethyl sulfonyl fluoride (PMSF) and N-octyl glucoside were from Roche (Meylan, France). Endofree Plasmid Maxi Kit was purchased from QIAGEN (Courtaboeuf, France). The Sephaglas kit and molecular weight markers were from Amersham (Buckinghamshire UK). ECL Western blotting detection reagents, CM Sepharose CL-6B, DEAE Sepharose CL-6B, octyl Sepharose CL-4B and Sephacryl S-300 HR were from Amersham Biosciences, Biotechnology (Uppsala, Sweden). Geneticin (G418) was purchased from Gibco (Cergy Pontoise, France). Monoclonal antibodies mAb449 and mAb48 were kindly provided by Dr. D. Roos (CLB, Amsterdam, the Netherlands). Polyclonal antibody anti-p47<sup>phox</sup> was purchased from Upstate Biotechnology, Inc. (New York, NY, USA). Monoclonal antibody anti-gp91<sup>phox</sup>, 7D5 was purchased from MBL Medical & Biological Laboratories Co., Ltd. (NaKa-ku Nagoya, Japan). Fetal bovine serum and RPMI 1640 were from Life Technologies, Inc. (Paisley, Scotland, UK). The cDNA encoding p47<sup>phox</sup> cloned into the plasmid pGEX-2T was kindly provided by A.W. Segal and F. Wientjes (Department of Medicine, University College London, London, UK).

### **Culture and differentiation of PLB-985 cells**

WT, X-CGD and transfected PLB-985 cells expressing WT or the mutant Nox2 were grown in RPMI-1640 medium supplemented with 2 mM glutamine, 10% (v/v) fetal bovine serum, penicillin (100 U/ml), streptomycin (100  $\mu$ g/ml) in a humidified incubator at 37°C in an atmosphere of 5% CO<sub>2</sub> in air. After selection, 0.5 mg/ml G418 was added to maintain the selection pressure. For granulocytic differentiation, WT or derivative PLB-985 cells (5 $\times$ 10<sup>5</sup> cells/ml) were exposed to 0.5% DMF for 5–7 days [19, 21].

### **Construction of transfected PLB-985 cell line**

Leu505Arg mutation was generated by the replacement of thymine1526 with guanine in the wild-type (WT) Nox2 cDNA in pBluescript II KS (+) vector using the QuikChange site-directed mutagenesis kit

(Stratagene) according to the manufacturer's instructions and subcloned into the mammalian expression vector pEF-PGKneo [19, 21]. The Leu505Arg Nox2 expression construct was sequenced to confirm the mutation and was electroporated into X-CGD PLB-985 cells. Following electroporation, clones were selected by limiting the dilution in 1.5 mg/ml G418.

### **Cytosol and membrane fraction preparation**

After being treated with 3 mM DFP for 15 min on ice, PLB-985 cells or human neutrophils were resuspended at a concentration of  $5 \times 10^8$  cells/ml in PBS containing 1 mM PMSF, 2  $\mu$ M leupeptin, 2  $\mu$ M pepstatin and 10  $\mu$ M TLCK. Cells were disrupted by sonication  $3 \times 10$  s at 40 W using a Branson sonifier. The homogenate was centrifuged at 1,000 g for 15 min at 4°C to remove unbroken cells and nuclei. The postnuclear supernatant was centrifuged at 200,000 g for 1 h at 4°C. This high-speed supernatant was referred to as the cytosol and the pellet consisting of crude membranes was suspended in the same buffer [22-27].

### **Purification and relipidation of cytochrome $b_{558}$ from transfected PLB-985 cells**

Cytochrome  $b_{558}$  was purified [24]. Briefly, crude membrane pellets from  $1.5 \times 10^{10}$  WT or mutant Nox2-transfected PLB-985 cells were treated with 1 M NaCl to eliminate the contamination of myeloperoxidase and solubilized in 2% N-octyl glucoside (w/v). After a centrifugation at 200,000 g for 60 min at 4°C, the supernatant was submitted to three successive chromatographic steps [24, 25]. Purified cytochrome  $b_{558}$  was relipidated with L- $\alpha$ -phosphatidylcholine II-S [25-26]. Cytochrome  $b_{558}$  purity was assessed by silver-stained SDS-PAGE and Western blotting. Cytochrome  $b_{558}$  was quantified by reduced-minus-oxidized difference spectroscopy using Soret band absorption at 426 nm. Liposomes were stored at  $-80^\circ\text{C}$ .

### **Purification of recombinant p67<sup>phox</sup>, p47<sup>phox</sup>, and Rac1**

Full-length cDNAs encoding p67<sup>phox</sup>, p47<sup>phox</sup>, and Rac1 were expressed in *Escherichia coli* as a glutathione S-transferase fusion protein using pGEX-3X (p67<sup>phox</sup>) or pGEX-2T (p47<sup>phox</sup> and Rac1). Fusion proteins were purified by affinity glutathione-Sepharose and were incubated with Xa factor for p67<sup>phox</sup> or thrombin for p47<sup>phox</sup>. Rac1 was cleaved directly on the affinity column [26-27]. Recombinant proteins were stored at  $-20^\circ\text{C}$ .

### **FACS analysis, Western blotting and spectral assessment of Nox2 expression in PLB-985 cells**

Nox2 expression in intact PLB-985 cells was assessed by using mAb 7D5 (5  $\mu$ g/ml) [28] or control monoclonal IgG1 (Immunotech, Marseille, France). The expression of cytochrome  $b_{558}$  was examined by Western blot using mAb 48 and mAb 449 directed against Nox2 and p22<sup>phox</sup>, respectively [19, 21].

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The WT or mutant Nox2 expression was further detected indirectly by cytochrome  $b_{558}$  differential spectral analysis. A molecular absorption coefficient of  $\Sigma 426 \text{ nm} = 106 \text{ mM}^{-1} \times \text{cm}^{-1}$  for the Soret band was used for calculations [29]. All experiments were done in triplicate.

### **NADPH oxidase activity in intact cells**

$\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  production was measured by chemiluminescence [19, 21]. Granulocyte-differentiated PLB-985 cells ( $5 \times 10^5$  cells/well in a 96-well plate) in PBS containing 0.9 mM  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ , 0.5 mM  $\text{Mg}^{2+}$ , 20 mM glucose, 20  $\mu\text{M}$  luminol and 10 U/ml HRPO were stimulated with PMA (80 ng/ml). Relative light units (RLU) were recorded at 37°C over a time course of 60 min in a luminoscan luminometer (Labsystem, Helsinki, Finland), connected to a computer.

### **NADPH oxidase and iodonitrotetrazolium (INT) reductase activities in a cell-free-system (CFS) assay**

*In vitro* NADPH oxidase activity was measured using plasma membranes (30  $\mu\text{g}$ ) obtained from transfected PLB-985 cells and cytosol (300  $\mu\text{g}$ ) from human neutrophils in a reaction mixture containing 20 mM Glucose, 20  $\mu\text{M}$  GTP $\gamma$ S, 5 mM  $\text{MgCl}_2$ , and an optimal amount of arachidonic acid in a final volume of 100  $\mu\text{l}$  [30]. INT reductase activity was performed as described above except that cytochrome  $c$  was replaced by INT whose reduction was SOD-insensitive [19]. In some experiments, plasma membranes of PLB-985 cells and cytosol of neutrophils were replaced by purified cytochrome  $b_{558}$  (0.2 pmol) and purified recombinant proteins, 300 nM p67<sup>phox</sup>, 323 nM p47<sup>phox</sup> and 100 nM Rac1. We added 10  $\mu\text{M}$  FAD to the reaction medium when purified cytochrome  $b_{558}$  was used.

### **P47<sup>phox</sup> translocation in transfected PLB-985 cells**

P47<sup>phox</sup> translocation in transfected PLB-985 cells was detected by confocal microscopy analysis. The polyclonal anti-p47<sup>phox</sup> antibody and mAb 7D5 were used as primary antibodies, Alexa Fluor® 488 F(ab')<sub>2</sub> goat anti-rabbit IgG (H+L) and Alexa Fluor® 546 F(ab')<sub>2</sub> goat anti-mouse IgG (H+L) (Molecular Probes, Eugene, OR, USA) were added to the system as secondary antibodies. Nuclei were visualized by TO-PRO 3 iodide. Cells were examined with a confocal laser scanning microscope and analyzed with Leica confocal software (Heidelberg, Germany) [19].

### ***In vitro* translocation of cytosolic NADPH oxidase proteins**

The translocation of p67<sup>phox</sup>, p47<sup>phox</sup> and Rac to the plasma membrane was studied using a classical method [19, 21]. Briefly, partially purified PLB-985 cell membranes (100  $\mu\text{g}$ ) and human neutrophil cytosol (1000  $\mu\text{g}$ ) were stimulated with or without 100  $\mu\text{M}$  SDS and 20  $\mu\text{M}$  GTP $\gamma$ S. The re-isolated membrane fraction from a discontinuous sucrose gradient was analyzed by immunoblot with

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anti-peptide polyclonal antibodies directed against p67<sup>phox</sup>, p47<sup>phox</sup> and Rac, respectively [26, 31]. Polypeptides corresponding to the C-terminal regions of p47<sup>phox</sup> (residues 371–390) and of p67<sup>phox</sup> (residues 511–526), and to a peptide (residues 123–145) of Rac1 or Rac2, were synthesized by Neosystem (Strasbourg, France) [31].

#### **Kinetic analysis**

Kinetic parameters of NADPH oxidase were determined by a nonlinear regression fit of the data to the Michaelis-Menten equation.

#### **Protein determination**

Protein content was estimated using the Bradford assay [32] or the Pierce<sup>R</sup> method [33].

#### **The three-dimensional (3D) model of the cytosolic part of gp91<sup>phox</sup>**

With the program PyMol, a picture of the 3D model from the C-terminal domain of gp91<sup>phox</sup> was made and the C-terminal  $\alpha$ -helix (residues 483–507) was highlighted [13].



## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

A rare X-linked CGD variant resulting from a missense mutation Leu505Arg has recently been reported [20]. This mutant was characterized by a normal level of a nonfunctional cytochrome  $b_{558}$  in the patient's neutrophils, with a totally abolished NADPH oxidase activity. Homologous sequence analysis showed that Leu<sup>505</sup> is highly conserved in the human Nox-Duox family, except in Nox2 of *Dictyostelium discoideum* and plants in which Leu<sup>505</sup> is replaced by Phe and Thr (Figure 1A). The conserved characterization of Leu<sup>505</sup> suggests that this amino acid residue has a common function. According to the sequence alignment of the ferredoxin-NADP<sup>+</sup> reductase family (FNR), Leu<sup>505</sup> is located in the potential adenine-binding motif of NADPH of Nox2. Interestingly, the Nox-Duox family possesses an additional sequence (residues 484–504) just above this amino acid compared to most FNR members (Figure 1B). This region has an  $\alpha$ -helical loop structure predicted by the 3D model of the Nox2 C-terminal tail. It has been proposed that it is involved in the binding of cytosolic factors during the time course of oxidase activation, promoting the NADPH access to its binding site [13]. To investigate the molecular mechanism by which the Leu505Arg mutant inhibits the NADPH oxidase activity, a cellular model of this X<sup>+</sup>-CGD case was built in the X-CGD PLB-985 cell line previously used to study other X91<sup>+</sup>-CGD mutations [19, 21].

### **Leu505Arg Nox2 transfected X-CGD PLB-985 cells mimic X91<sup>+</sup>-CGD neutrophils**

As shown in Figure 2A, FACS analysis showed that the expression level of WT and mutant Nox2 in transfected X-CGD PLB-985 cells was similar to that of the original WT PLB-985 cells [28]. A similar amount of cytochrome  $b_{558}$  was observed by immunoblotting (Figure 2B). In addition, the reduced-minus-oxidized difference spectrum of transfected PLB-985 cells was similar to that of WT PLB-985 cells (Figure 2C and Table1), suggesting that the mutant cytochrome  $b_{558}$  was correctly processed and targeted to the plasma membrane with heme incorporation. While no Nox2 and cytochrome  $b_{558}$  was detected in X-CGD PLB-985 cells or empty vector transfected cells (Figure 2), consistent with the hypothesis that the two subunits of cytochrome  $b_{558}$  can co-stabilize each other in the granulocytic cell line [19, 21]. The NADPH oxidase activity of the Leu505Arg Nox2 transfected PLB-985 cells was determined in intact cells. After DMF-induced granulocytic differentiation, H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> production was measured by luminol-amplified chemiluminescence after activation with 80 ng/ml PMA. WT Nox2 transfected PLB-985 cells had an H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> production comparable to the original WT PLB-985 cells, as illustrated in Table 1. Even though the expression of Leu505Arg Nox2 was normal,

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this mutant was unable to generate H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>, as observed in X-CGD PLB-985 cells or empty vector transfected cells (Table 1). In conclusion, Leu505Arg Nox2 transfected PLB-985 cells mimic the phenotype of X91<sup>+</sup>-CGD neutrophils [20]. Transfected X-CGD PLB-985 cells had been previously used to study successfully the impact of three Nox2 mutations ( $\Delta$ 488–497, His303Gln/Pro304Arg and Asp500Gly), resulting in X91<sup>+</sup>-CGD on the NADPH oxidase activation [19, 21, 34]. This confirms that the X-CGD PLB-985 cell line is a useful cellular model to express recombinant Nox2 mutant forms for its structure-function analysis [19, 21, 34].

### **NADPH oxidase and INT reductase activities in a CFS**

Roughly 50% of the NADPH oxidase activity reconstituted with in membranes from WT PLB-985 cells was obtained with membranes from Leu505Arg Nox2 mutant cells. Similarly, INT reductase activity was half of the activity measured in WT PLB-985 cell membranes (Figure 3). In a previous study investigating several Nox2 mutants with the same approach, we found that for most of the mutants, results obtained *in vitro* were correlated with those obtained in intact cells, although residual oxidase activity (20% of the original WT PLB-985 cells) was observed in some mutants that had no oxidase activity *in vivo* [19]. Arachidonic acid probably leads to a conformational change in cytosolic proteins, promoting higher protein–protein interactions than occurs *in vivo*. This suggests that in a CFS assay, the oxidase complex of the Leu505Arg Nox2 assembled and the electron transfer from NADPH to molecular oxygen occurs but under optimal efficiency.

### **Translocation of cytosolic components of the NADPH oxidase complex**

Because Leu<sup>505</sup> is located near the C-terminal  $\alpha$ -helical loop, a potential binding site for p47<sup>phox</sup> and/or p67<sup>phox</sup> in Nox2, p47<sup>phox</sup> translocation was studied in intact transfected PLB-985 cells [19]. As shown in Figure 4A, red and green fluorescence, representing Nox2 and p47<sup>phox</sup>, respectively, surrounded phagosomal membranes around latex beads in both Leu505Arg and WT Nox2 transfected cells. However, it seems that the yellow merged image of the p47<sup>phox</sup> and Nox2 co-localization was more intense in WT Nox2 transfected PLB-985 cells than in Nox2 mutant cells. Two series of experiments were done with the same result. No p47<sup>phox</sup> translocation occurred in the X-CGD PLB-985 cells (data not shown) or empty vector transfected cells, demonstrating that this translocation is cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub>-dependent. Similar results were obtained from *in vitro* oxidase cytosolic component translocation experiments. Translocation of p47<sup>phox</sup> or p67<sup>phox</sup> to the plasma membrane is visible in both mutant and WT Nox2 transfected cells (Figure 4B), while the efficiency of p67<sup>phox</sup> translocation seems to be lower in mutated than in WT plasma membrane. These results suggest that in Leu505Arg Nox2 cells, p47<sup>phox</sup>

and p67<sup>phox</sup> translocation occurred but probably with a lower level of efficiency than in WT Nox2 PLB-985 cells, especially for the p67<sup>phox</sup> translocation. This can explain the diminished oxidase activity in the *in vitro* reconstituted CFS from Leu505Arg Nox2 mutant membranes. However, in some X91<sup>+</sup>-CGD cases, cytosolic factor translocation can occur normally even if oxidase activity is abolished [34, 35]. As shown in Figure 4B, Rac translocation is normal in plasma membranes from empty vector transfected X-CGD PLB-985 cells, suggesting that its translocation is independent of the presence of cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub>, as has been observed before [5].

### **Turnover and $K_m$ for NADPH of WT and Leu505Arg mutant cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub>**

According to the sequence alignment study in the FNR reductase family, Leu<sup>505</sup> is potentially located in the adenine of NADPH-binding site of Nox2 (Figure 1A) [2, 12]. It was of interest to investigate the affinity of the purified mutant flavocytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> for NADPH. Cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> was purified to homogeneity from 1.5×10<sup>10</sup> intact WT or mutant Nox2 transfected PLB-985 cells after three successive chromatographic steps. Crude membranes from WT or mutant Nox2-transfected PLB-985 cells contain about 70 pmol of cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub>/mg of proteins, seven times less than what is found in human neutrophils (460 pmol/ mg). This result is consistent with the amount of cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> found in soluble extract from WT or Leu505Arg transfected PLB-985 cells of 25 pmol/mg versus 170 pmol/mg in human neutrophils [20]. These results suggest that the level of membrane-bound cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> in PLB-985 cells is about seven times less than in neutrophils. The purified preparation was enriched in cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> (2800–3500 pmol/mg protein) with a purification factor of 47–50 and a yield of 4–7% (Figure 5C). In the purified proteins, two major bands corresponding to the large and small subunits of cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub>, were observed using immunoblot analysis (Figure 5A). Reduced minus oxidized difference spectra of purified cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> from both mutant and WT transfected PLB-985 cells possess the three characteristic peaks at 426 nm, 530 and 558 nm (Figure 5B).

The  $K_m$  for NADPH and NADH was determined using purified cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> in presence of neutrophil cytosol or recombinant proteins p67<sup>phox</sup>, p47<sup>phox</sup> and Rac1, as detailed in “Experimental Procedure”. The  $K_m$  of purified WT and Leu505Arg mutant cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> for NADPH and NADH was determined using increasing NADPH concentrations with optimal conditions in a CFS assay. As shown in Figure 6, the  $K_m$  for NADPH of WT cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> in a CFS assay using neutrophil cytosol and recombinant proteins was 42.2 μM and 46.7 μM, respectively (Figure 6A and 6B, Table 2). Like several FNR reductases, the phagocytic oxidase can utilize NADH as substrate but with a lower affinity

than for NADPH [36]. Indeed the  $K_m$  for NADH of purified WT cytochrome  $b_{558}$  was 490.1  $\mu\text{M}$ . Our  $K_m$  values for NADPH and NADH are in agreement with those obtained by several groups [26, 37-38]. However, the  $K_m$  for NADPH and NADH of the purified mutant cytochrome  $b_{558}$  was approximately threefold higher than those of the purified WT cytochrome  $b_{558}$  (Figure 6A and 6B, Table 2). These data suggest that Leu505Arg mutation disturbed the affinity of the mutant cytochrome  $b_{558}$  for NADPH and NADH, while we cannot conclude that this amino acid is directly involved on the binding of these nucleotides. Generally, mutations of an amino acid directly involved in the substrate binding has a dramatic effect on its  $K_m$ . This is also true of the Pro415His mutation found in an X91<sup>+</sup>-CGD patient [39]. The binding of the photoaffinity ligand 2-azido-NADP<sup>+</sup> was decreased in the neutrophil membrane from the patient [11]. According to Taylor's model of the C-terminal tail of Nox2, Pro<sup>415</sup> is the equivalent of Pro<sup>176</sup> in FNR, lying in the cleft between the NADP and flavin-binding domains to approach the flavin ring involved in electron transfer [10-12]. In our case, there is an electron transfer between NADPH and FAD in the mutant cytochrome  $b_{558}$  according to the INT and cytochrome *c* reduction assay (Figure 3).

The turnover of the WT and mutant Leu505Arg purified cytochrome  $b_{558}$  in a CFS assay was measured with optimal conditions, as previously described [27, 31]. The oxidase turnover of the purified mutant Leu505Arg cytochrome  $b_{558}$  was  $112 \pm 8$  and  $63 \pm 7$  mol O<sub>2</sub><sup>-</sup>.s<sup>-1</sup>. mol<sup>-1</sup> heme *b* when cytosol or recombinant proteins p67<sup>phox</sup>, p47<sup>phox</sup> and Rac1 were used, respectively (Figure 6A and 6B). This represents a loss of 35–45% of the oxidase turnover of WT cytochrome  $b_{558}$  in a reconstituted CFS using human neutrophil cytosol or recombinant cytosolic factors. This suggests that 1) Part of the NADPH oxidase activity of the purified mutant Leu505Arg cytochrome  $b_{558}$  can be restored using neutrophil cytosol or recombinant proteins p67<sup>phox</sup>, p47<sup>phox</sup> and Rac1; and 2) The Leu505Arg mutation affects the cytochrome  $b_{558}$ , leading to a decrease in maximal specific oxidase activity. We can note that the oxidase turnover was higher when human neutrophil cytosol was used instead of purified recombinant cytosolic factors. Perhaps new partners of oxidase-like MRP8/MRP14 (myeloid-related proteins) present in cytosol improved the NADPH oxidase activity [22].

#### **Effect of increasing the amount of recombinant p67<sup>phox</sup> on purified Leu505Arg cytochrome $b_{558}$**

According to the slight but reproducible defect of p67<sup>phox</sup> translocation to the plasma membrane from the mutant transfected PLB-985 cells, the effect of increasing the amount of recombinant p67<sup>phox</sup> was evaluated on NADPH oxidase activity in a simplified CFS assay using an optimal concentration of purified WT and Leu505Arg mutant cytochrome  $b_{558}$ , recombinant proteins Rac1 and p47<sup>phox</sup> in the

presence of NADPH. As shown in Figure 7, a concentration of 900 nM p67<sup>phox</sup> was needed to reach optimal NADPH oxidase activity for the Leu505Arg mutant, while only a concentration of 300 nM was sufficient for the WT flavocytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub>. In addition, the maximal turnover of NADPH oxidase was 120 mol O<sub>2</sub><sup>-</sup>.s<sup>-1</sup>. mol<sup>-1</sup> heme *b* for the WT cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub>, while this turnover was 90 mol O<sub>2</sub><sup>-</sup>.s<sup>-1</sup>. mol<sup>-1</sup> heme *b* for the mutant. It was concluded that the binding efficiency of p67<sup>phox</sup> on the mutant cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> was diminished by the Leu505Arg mutation. It appears that more p67<sup>phox</sup> protein is needed to obtain an active conformation of mutant Nox2 and of the flavocytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub>.

### **Structural context of the Leu<sup>505</sup> in gp91<sup>phox</sup>**

According to the sequence alignment of cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> with members of the FNR family, it was generally admitted that the <sup>504</sup>GLKQ<sup>507</sup> sequence was a potential site for the adenine-binding site of NADPH [5, 12, 13, 40]. However, Taylor *et al.* (1993) emphasized that despite a high similitude of sequences between the FNR family and the flavocytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub>, the most remarkable difference was the addition of a large insertion of 20 residues 484–504, forming an  $\alpha$ -helical loop lying directly over the nucleotide-binding cleft. According to the 3D model of the C-terminal tail of Nox2, which was built from the atomic structure of ferredoxin-NADP<sup>+</sup> reductase [41], the location of the large insert impaired accessibility to the nucleotide-binding site from the cytosol (Figure 8A and 8B).

This structural element (484–504) contains a highly charged sequence <sup>494</sup>HHDEEKD<sup>500</sup>. In addition to Leu505Arg, two other mutations leading to X91<sup>+</sup>-CGD have been mapped in this region. They correspond to the deletion of the lower part of the helical insertion,  $\Delta$ 488–497, and to an amino acid substitution, Asp500Gly, in its middle (Figure 8C) [18, 34]. Moreover, we have recently reported that other mutations (notably Asp484Thr, His490Thr and Asp500Gly/Ala/Arg) impair the electron transfer process from NADPH to FAD [19] (Figure 8C). For all the mutants reported in this inserted sequence (associated or not to a known X91<sup>+</sup>-CGD), the expression level of membrane cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> as well as the heme difference spectra were comparable to that of WT gp91<sup>phox</sup> [18, 19, 34]. This indicates that this insertion is not of structural importance for gp91<sup>phox</sup> integrity. The defective electron transfer from NADPH to FAD in Asp500Gly/Ala/Arg mutants may result from the disrupted interaction between the cytosolic factors with these mutants. Interestingly, Leusen *et al.* [17] found that Asp<sup>500</sup> was involved in the binding of cytosolic components. A synthetic peptide mimicking domains 491–504 of Nox2 inhibited NADPH oxidase activity in the CFS assay. These data provided evidence that these residues are indispensable for NADPH oxidase assembly related to electron transfer. Monoclonal antibody NL7, which binds the <sup>498</sup>EKDVTGLK<sup>506</sup> region of gp91<sup>phox</sup>, inhibits the NADPH

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oxidase activity before or during the initial stages of electron transfer [42]. These data suggest that residues 498–506 of gp91<sup>phox</sup> participate in the oxidase activation and influence electron transport during superoxide generation.

On the basis of the 3D model analysis, Leu<sup>505</sup> is at the end of this strategic helix in the C-terminal of gp91<sup>phox</sup> that may control the entry of NADPH into the cleft of the NADPH-binding site (Figure 8C). Leu<sup>505</sup> seems not to be directly involved in the binding of the adenine moiety of NADPH but rather a residue located on the protein surface and probably important for some molecular interactions in the activated complex. The conformational change caused by the Leu505Arg may disturb the final oxidase complex assembly. The observation that this Leu505Arg mutant needs larger amounts of p67<sup>phox</sup> to reach its maximal turnover suggests a possible role in p67<sup>phox</sup> interaction during activation. In p67<sup>phox</sup>, region 199–210 was defined from functional studies of various truncated forms of p67<sup>phox</sup> as an NADPH oxidase activation domain [43]. This domain has been extended, on the basis of structural studies, to the amino acids 187–210 [44] and was reported to be involved in the regulation of the electron transfer [45]. On the gp91<sup>phox</sup> counterpart, to activate the electron flow, it has been suggested that the movement of the  $\alpha$ -helical insertion would be necessary for NADPH entry. A direct link of a conformational change during the oxidase assembly, such as a consequence of an interaction with p67<sup>phox</sup>, and more precisely its activation domain, can be hypothesized. The Leu505Arg mutant properties are in agreement with such an activation scheme.

## **FOOTNOTES**

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**Abbreviations used:** CGD, chronic granulomatous disease; PMA, Phorbol 12-myristate 13-acetate; fMLP, formyl-methionylleucyl-phenylalanine; DMF, dimethylformamide; SOD, superoxide dismutase; DFP, diisopropylfluorophosphate; PMSF, phenylmethyl sulfonyl fluoride; mAb, monoclonal antibody; FNR, ferredoxin-NADP<sup>+</sup> reductase; cyt *b*, cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub>; RP, recombinant protein; Mem, membrane.

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## FIGURE LEGENDS

### Figure 1 Amino acid sequence alignment of the potential NADPH-binding sites of Nox2 in the Nox/Duox and FNR reductase families

(A) The amino acid residues involved in adenine binding are shown in the light shaded column. Leucine 505 is shown in the dark shaded column. (B) The putative adenine-binding site in the FNR family from the sequence alignment of Taylor *et al.* Helix- $\alpha$  is shown in the shaded column. YSCFREIA = Essential for ferric reductase activity - *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*; NIA.ASPNI = Nitrate reductase (EC 1.6.6.1) - *Aspergillus nidulans*; NIA.NEUCR = Nitrate reductase (NADPH) (EC 1.6.6.3) - *Neurospora crassa*; B26616 = Cytochrome b5 reductase; NIA.SPIOL = Nitrate reductase (EC 1.6.6.1) (NR) - *Spinacia oleracea* (spinach); S15959 = Nitrate reductase (NAD(P)H) (EC 1.6.6.2) - European white birch; MZENAR = NADH:nitrate reductase (AA at 1) (EC 1.6.6.1) - *Zea mays*; DMPP.PSEPU = Hydroxylase P5 protein (EC 1.14.13.7) phenol 2-mono-oxygenase P5 component - *Pseudomonas*; S15303 = Hypothetical protein 7.6-*Salmonella typhimurium*; MEMC.METCA = Methane monooxygenase component C (EC 1.14.13.25) methane hydroxylase - *Methylococcus capsula*; XYLZ.PSEPU = E 1.2-dioxygenase electron transfer component contains ferredoxin and ferredoxin-NAD(+); PSENAPDOXA = DOXA locus PSENAPDOXA - *Pseudomonas putida*; FENR.ANASO = Ferredoxin-NADP reductase (EC 1.18.1.2) (FNR) - *Anabaena* spp.; SYONDHF = F N-terminal domain homologous to CpcD proteins of *Synechococcus* spp.; N.IFNR = Ferredoxin:NADP<sup>+</sup> oxidoreductase (ferredoxin reductase) (EC 1.18.1.2) - *Spinacia oleracea* (spinach)

### Figure 2 Expression of WT and mutated Nox2 in transfected X-CGD PLB-985 cells

(A) Flow cytometry analysis of Nox2 expression.  $5 \times 10^5$  differentiated WT or transfected X-CGD PLB-985 cells were incubated with the Nox2 mAb 7D5, as described in “Experimental procedures”. Mouse IgG1 isotype was used as an irrelevant mAb. (B) Immunoblot analysis of the two subunits of cytochrome  $b_{558}$  (Nox2/p22<sup>phox</sup>) was performed with 50  $\mu$ g of 1% Triton X100 soluble extracts from WT or transfected PLB-985 cells, subjected to SDS-PAGE (10% acrylamide gel), blotted onto a nitrocellulose sheet, and detected with mAb 48 and mAb 449. (C) Cytochrome  $b_{558}$  differential spectra were performed with the same extract as described in (B). Results are from one experiment representative of three.

**Figure 3 NADPH oxidase and INT reductase activity in a cell-free system assay**

Cytochrome *c* and INT reduction were measured using crude membranes (30 µg) isolated from transfected PLB-985 cells in the presence of neutrophil cytosol (300 µg) and activated with GTPγS, MgCl<sub>2</sub> and arachidonic acid, as described in “Experimental procedures”. The data represent mean ± SD of three separate experiments.

**Figure 4 Analysis of the NADPH oxidase assembly in transfected PLB-985 cells**

(A) Localization of p47<sup>phox</sup> and Nox2 during activation of transfected PLB-985 cells. A total of 5 × 10<sup>5</sup> transfected PLB-985 cells were activated with PMA-treated latex-beads for 15 min on day 6 after 0.5% DMF differentiation. Nox2 and p47<sup>phox</sup> translocation was followed by confocal microscopy analysis, as described in “Experimental procedures”. Polyclonal anti-p47<sup>phox</sup> antibody and mAb 7D5 were used as primary antibodies, Alexa Fluor® 488 F(ab')<sub>2</sub> fragments of goat anti-rabbit IgG (H+L) and Alexa Fluor® 546 F(ab')<sub>2</sub> fragments of goat anti-mouse IgG(H+L) were used as second antibodies. Empty vector transfected X-CGD PLB-985 cells were used as the negative control. (B) *In vitro* the translocation of p47<sup>phox</sup>, p67<sup>phox</sup> and Rac to the plasma membrane of transfected PLB-985 cells. NADPH oxidase was activated *in vitro* in presence (+) or in absence (–) of SDS and GTPγS, using crude membrane from transfected PLB-985 cells as described in “Experimental procedures”. P47<sup>phox</sup>, p67<sup>phox</sup> and Rac were detected in the plasma membranes by Western blot after discontinuous sucrose gradient purification.

**Figure 5 Purification of cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> from transfected PLB-985 cells**

(A) Immunodetection of cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> was performed with the membrane fractions isolated at each purification step, 3 µg proteins were used for Western blotting with mAb 48 and mAb 449. (B) Differential spectral analysis of cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> purified from transfected PLB-985 cells. Reduction was achieved by adding a few grains of sodium dithionite to the sample, and the reduced-minus-oxidized difference spectra were recorded at room temperature with a DU 640 Beckman spectrophotometer. (C) Purification table of cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> from transfected PLB-985 cells.

**Figure 6 Effect of Leu505Arg mutation on *K*<sub>m</sub> for NADPH in the cell-free reconstituted system**

(A) Activation of NADPH oxidase in a CFS assay using purified cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> (0.2 pmol) from transfected PLB-985 cells and neutrophil cytosol (300 µg) according to NADPH increasing

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concentration (0–1000  $\mu$ M). **(B)** Activation of NADPH oxidase in a CFS assay was performed as in **(A)**, except that neutrophil cytosol was replaced by recombinant cytosolic proteins, p67<sup>phox</sup> (300 nM), p47<sup>phox</sup> (323 nM), and Rac1 (100 nM). Data are representative of three independent experiments.

**Figure 7 Effect of Leu505Arg mutation on the affinity of cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> for p67<sup>phox</sup> in the cell-free reconstituted system**

Activation of NADPH oxidase in a CFS assay using purified cytochrome *b*<sub>558</sub> (0.2 pmol) from transfected PLB-985 cells and recombinant cytosolic proteins, p47<sup>phox</sup> (323 nM), Rac1 (100 nM) and increasing concentrations of p67<sup>phox</sup> (0–1500 nM) in the presence of 300  $\mu$ M NADPH. Data are representative of three independent experiments.

**Figure 8 Surface representation of the 3D model of the cytosolic part of gp91<sup>phox</sup>**

**(A)** The surface drawn in blue is a top view from the inside of the membrane. FAD and NADPH are represented as sticks using the CPK color code. The surface of the additional  $\alpha$ -helix (residues 483–507), closing access to the NADPH binding-site, is sand-colored. **(B)** The surface structure viewed from the cytoplasm after a 90° rotation in the upper direction of the surface structure presented in **(A)**. **(C)** Zoom on the  $\alpha$ -helix (residues 483–507) orientated as in **(B)**. Leu<sup>505</sup>, Asp<sup>500</sup>, His<sup>490</sup> and Asp<sup>484</sup> are represented as sticks. The figures were drawn with PyMol.

**Table 1**

**Cytochrome  $b_{558}$  amount and NADPH activity in WT and transfected X-CGD PLB-985 cells**

The Cytochrome  $b_{558}$  concentration in 1% Triton-X100 soluble extracts was quantified using Soret band absorption for WT, X-CGD, and transfected PLB-985 cells, considering that cytochrome  $b_{558}$  contains two hemes.

H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> production was measured by luminol-amplified chemiluminescence in differentiated WT and transfected X-CGD PLB-985 cells after PMA activation. RLU represents the sum of relative luminescence units measured in 60 min. Values in this table represent the mean  $\pm$  SD of triplicate determinations.

Transfected PLB-985 cells	Cytochrome $b_{558}$ pmol/mg (n=3)	Chemiluminescence	
		H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> production (RLU)	% of control
WT PLB-985	25.05 $\pm$ 3.43	384.04 $\pm$ 10.71	100
WT-Nox2	24.19 $\pm$ 1.55	368.81 $\pm$ 3.37	96
X-CGD PLB-985	0	0.34 $\pm$ 0.07	0
Empty vector	0	0.33 $\pm$ 0.06	0
Leu505Arg	28.88 $\pm$ 0.61	0.10 $\pm$ 0.03	0



**Table 2**

**Specific NADPH oxidase activity and  $K_m$  for NADPH and NADH of WT and Leu505Arg cytochrome  $b_{558}$**

*In vitro* NADPH oxidase activity was reconstituted using purified cytochrome  $b_{558}$  (0.2 pmol) and neutrophil cytosol (300  $\mu$ g) or purified recombinant proteins (RP), 300 nM p67<sup>phox</sup>, 323 nM p47<sup>phox</sup> and 100 nM Rac1. We added 10  $\mu$ M FAD to the reaction medium containing 20 mM glucose, 20  $\mu$ M GTP $\gamma$ S, 5 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, and an optimal amount of arachidonic acid in a final volume of 100  $\mu$ l.

Transfected PLB-985 cells	Specific activity (300 $\mu$ M NADPH)		$K_m$		
	Turnover (mol O <sub>2</sub> /sec/mol heme <i>b</i> )		NADPH		NADH
	Cyt <i>b</i> + Cytosol	Cyt <i>b</i> + RP	Cyt <i>b</i> + Cytosol	Cyt <i>b</i> + RP	Cyt <i>b</i> + RP
WT-Nox2	171 $\pm$ 3	119 $\pm$ 9	42 $\mu$ M	47 $\mu$ M	490 $\mu$ M
Leu505Arg	112 $\pm$ 8	63 $\pm$ 7	142 $\mu$ M	147 $\mu$ M	1284 $\mu$ M



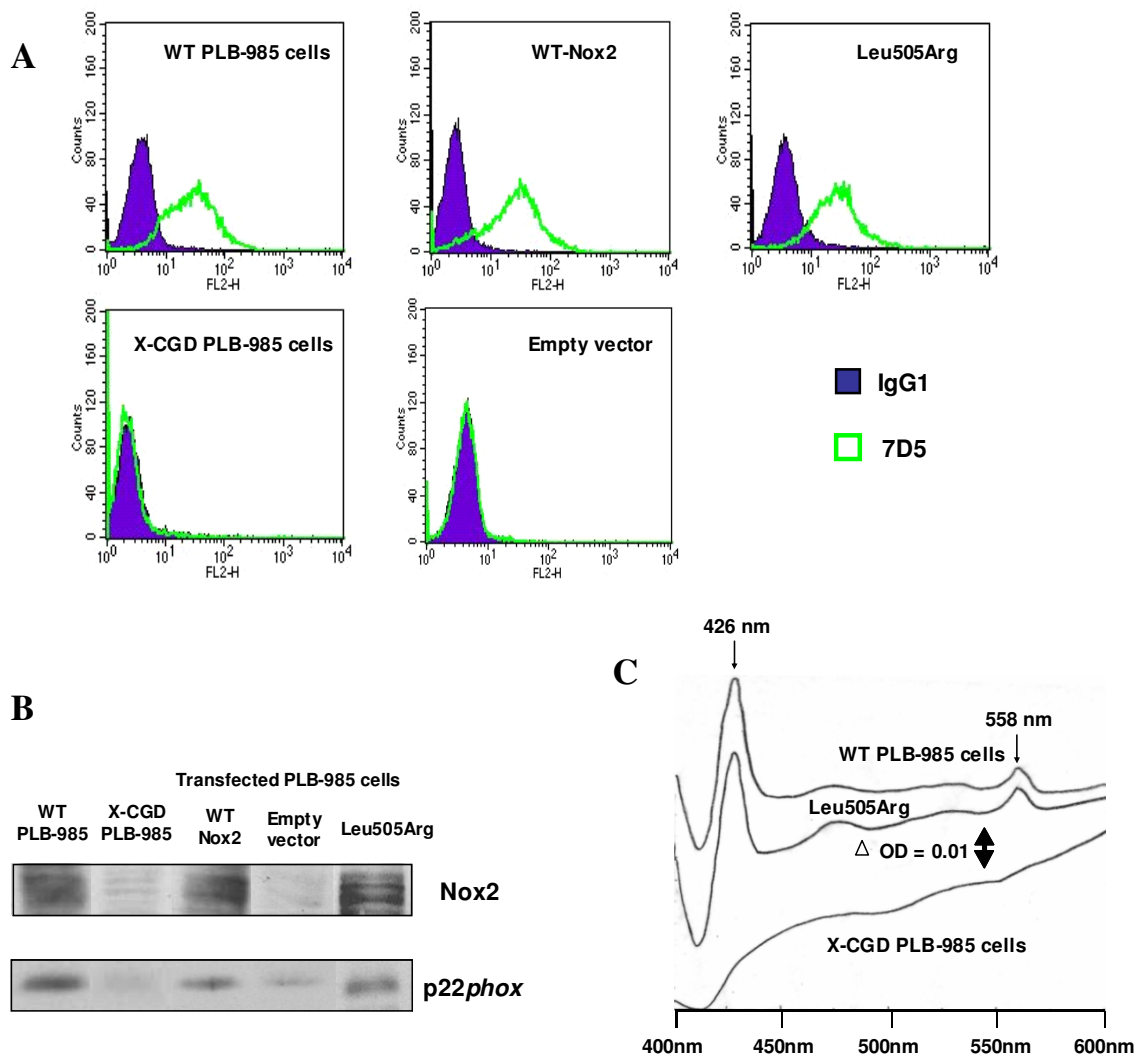
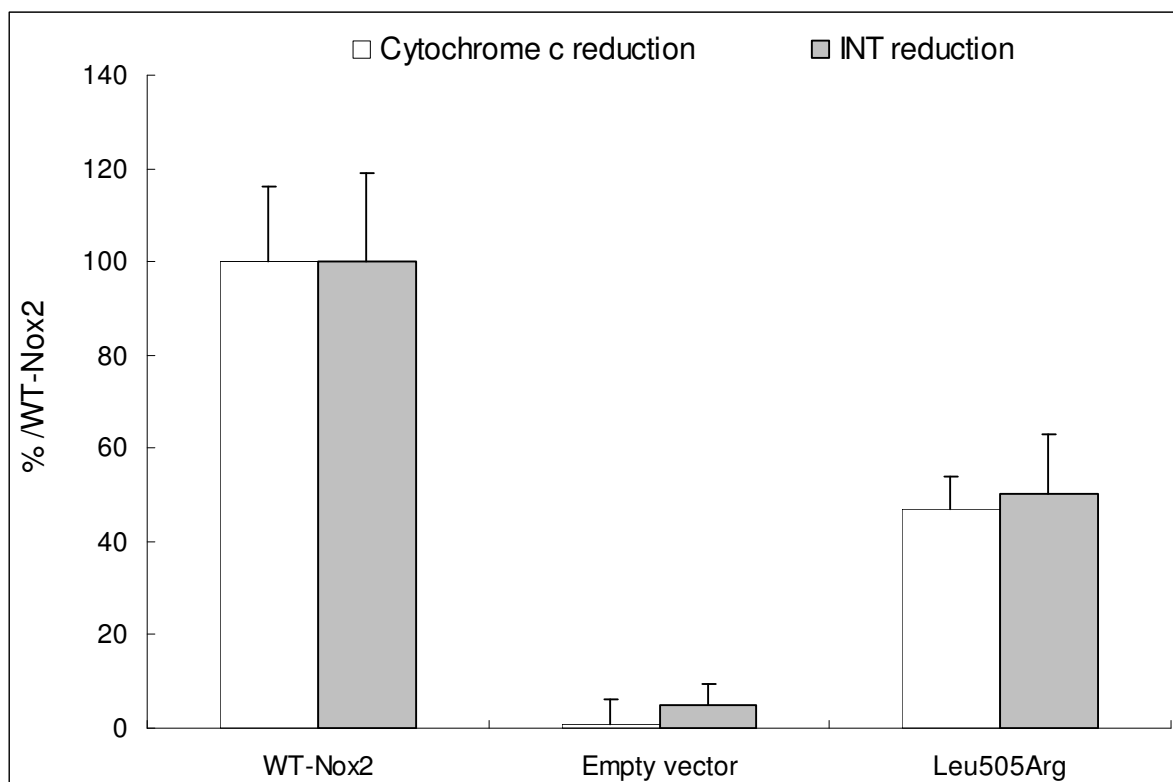


Figure 2



**Figure 3**

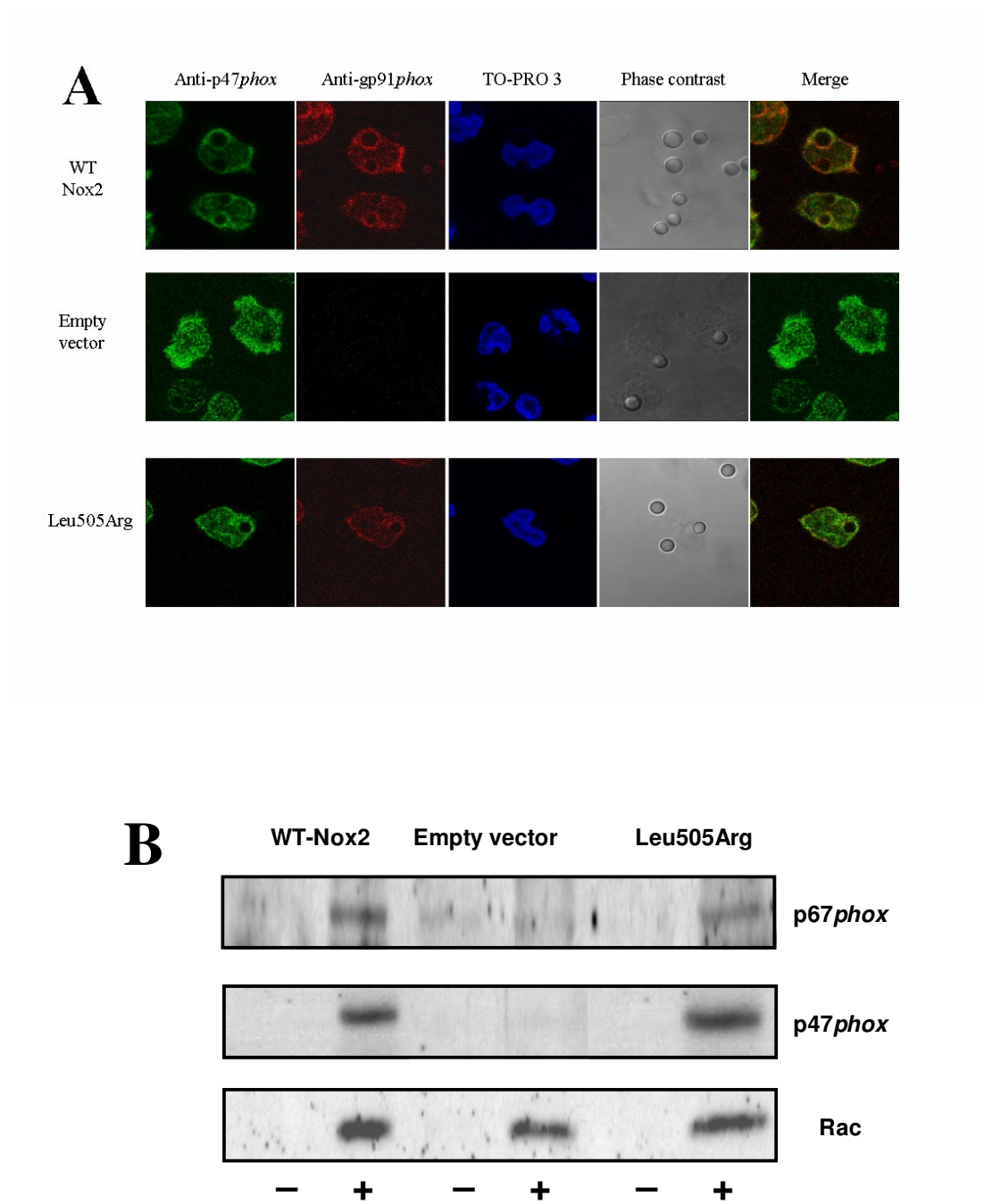


Figure 4

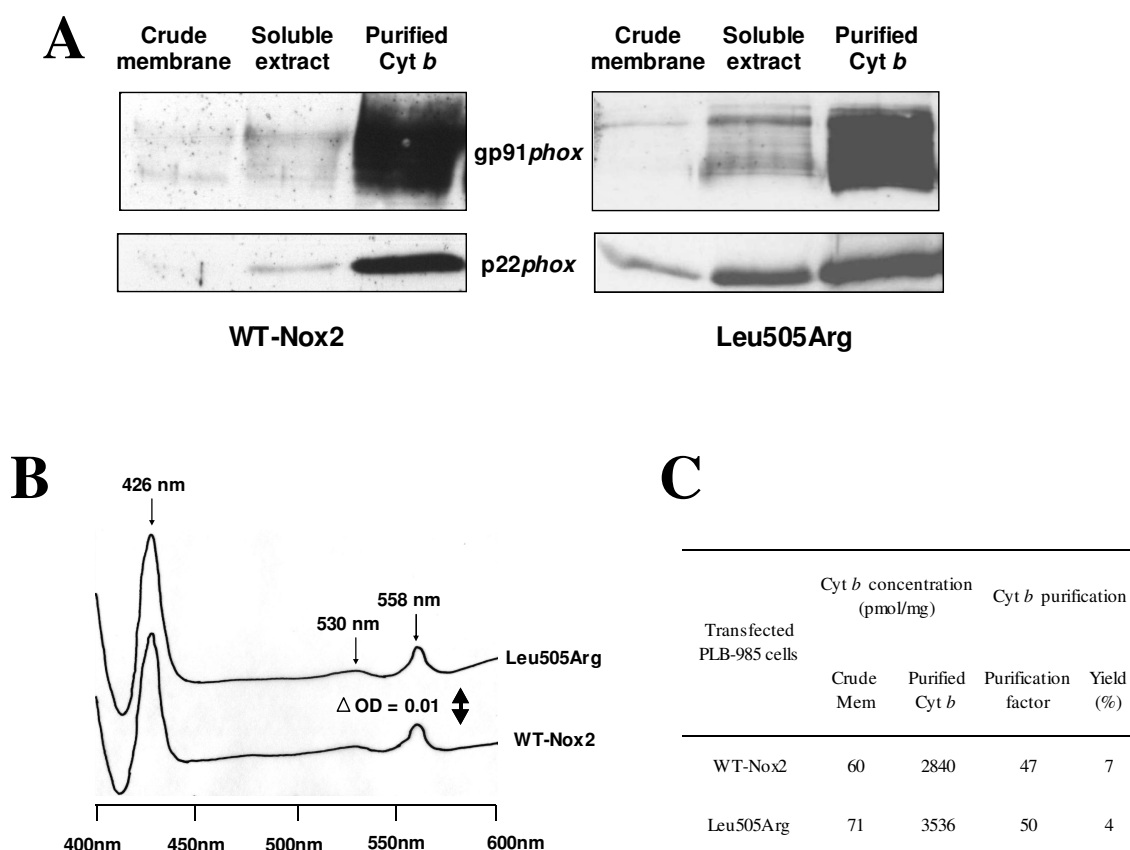
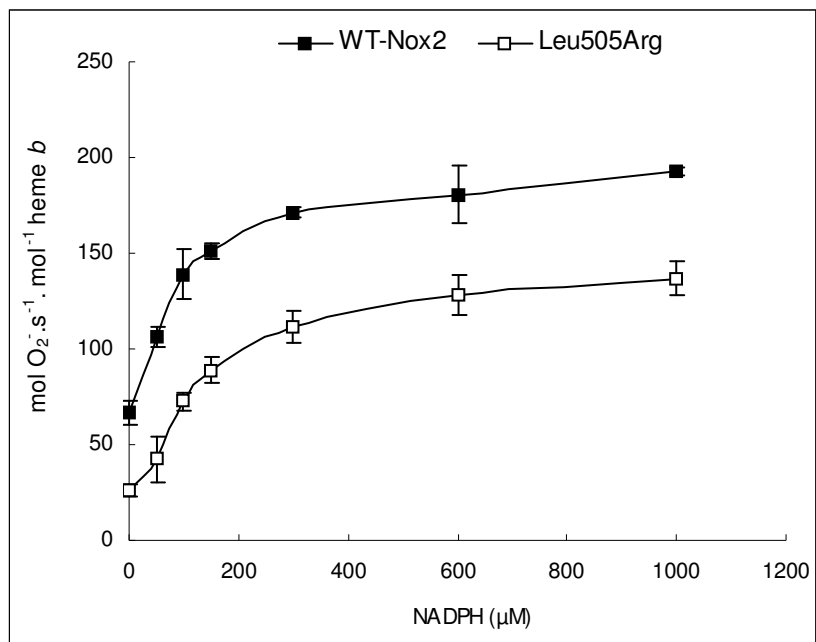


Figure 5

A



B

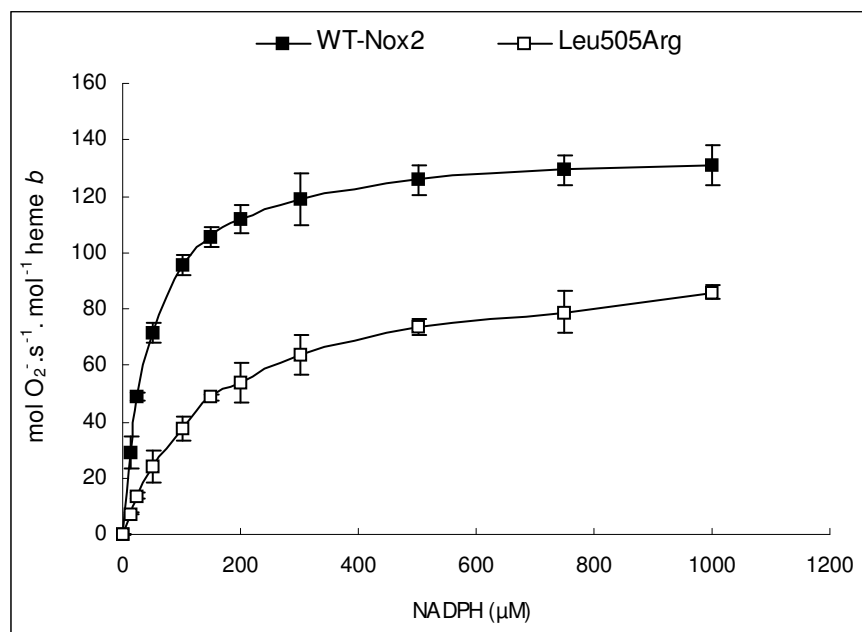
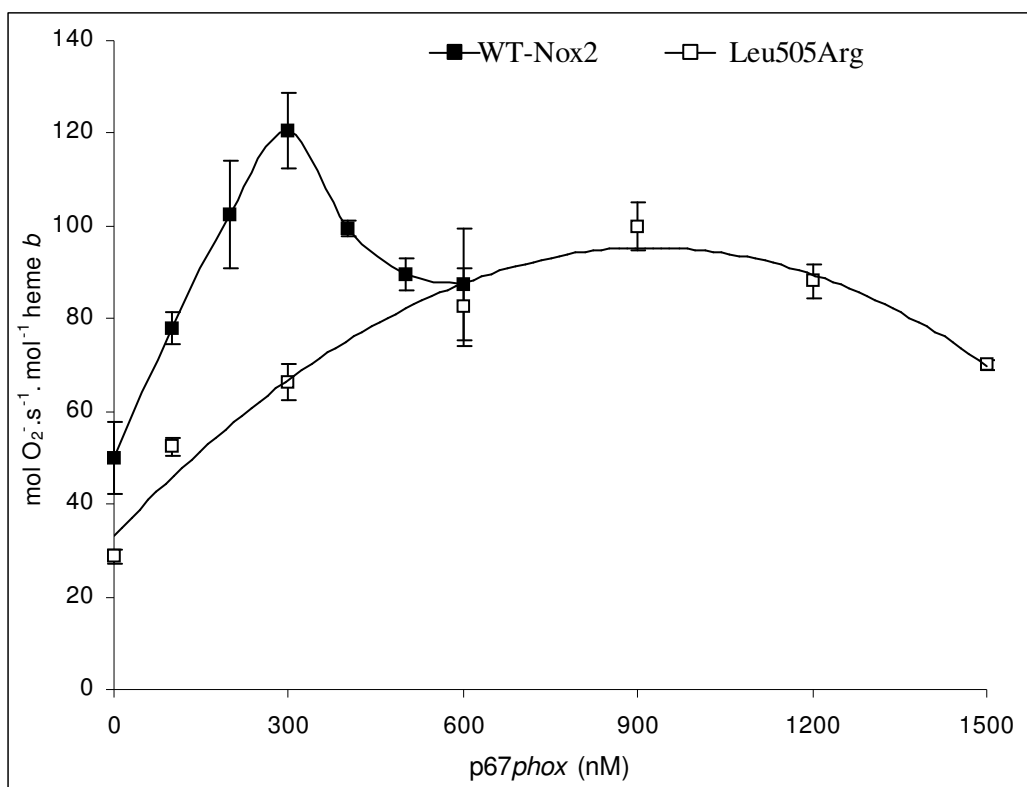
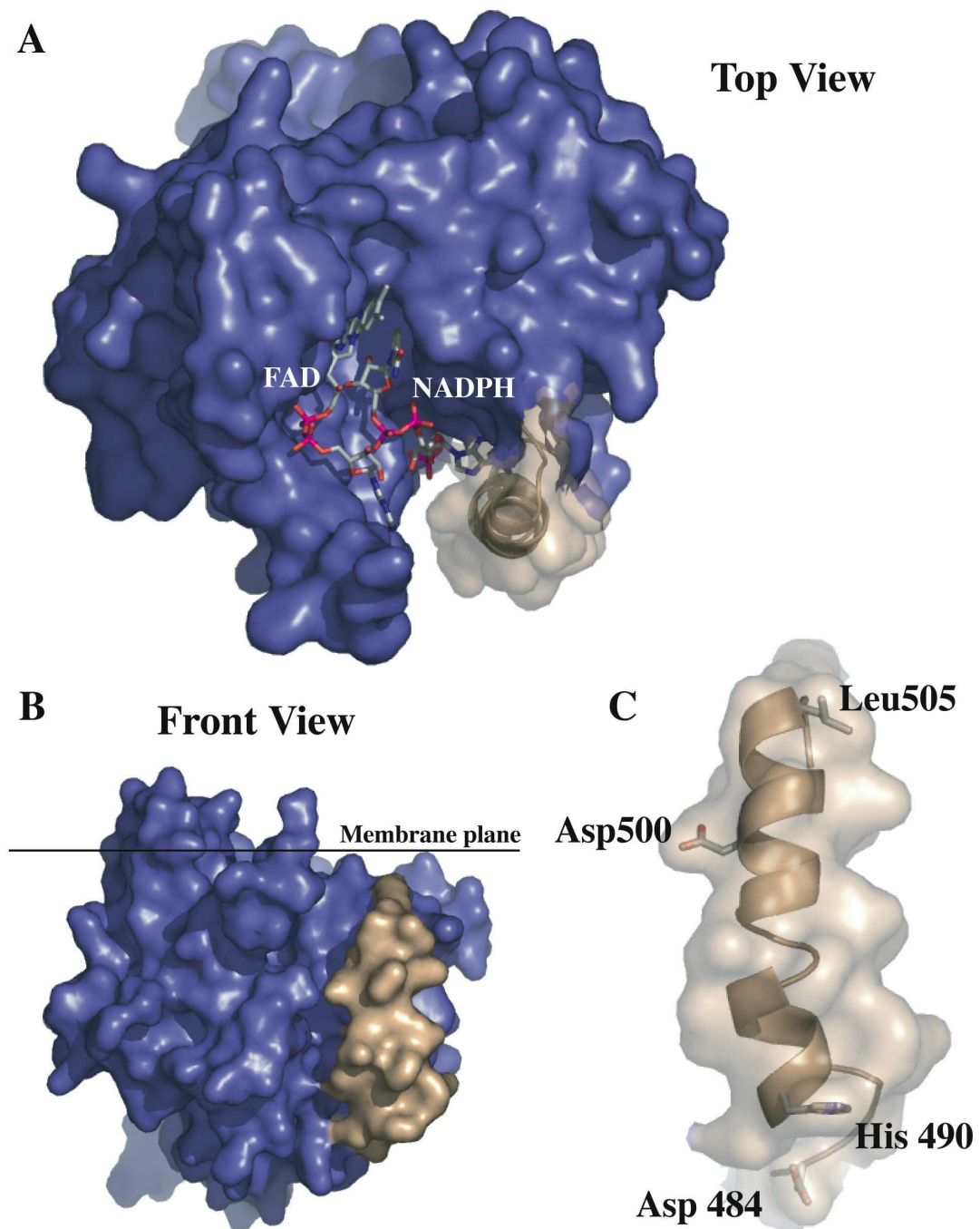


Figure 6



**Figure 7**





**Figure 8**