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(54) **Title:** AGENTS AND METHOD FOR TREATING INFLAMMATION-RELATED CONDITIONS AND DISEASES

(57) **Abstract:** Gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes that comprise a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene, where the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is expressed to produce functional 1-alpha-hydroxylase enzyme when the monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages. Gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages that comprise a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. A method for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease, the method comprising administering gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes that comprise a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene, where the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is expressed to produce functional 1-alpha-hydroxylase enzyme when the monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages.



5 mercaptopurine). Disadvantageously, however, these therapeutic agents can have severe side effects including increased risks for infectious diseases, malignancies and osteoporosis.

Further, many patients do not respond to these therapeutic agents. Additionally, many of these therapeutic agents do not provide long term efficacy.

[0005] One therapeutic agent known to be effective in the treatment of inflammation-related
10 conditions and diseases is calcitriol, the active form of vitamin D that is partially responsible for the regulation of calcium levels in humans. While the systemic administration of calcitriol has been shown to be effective in treatment of various autoimmune inflammation-related conditions and diseases in animal models, disadvantageously, the dosage of calcitriol needed to be effective was high enough to cause hypercalcemia in the treated animal limiting
15 the potential use of calcitriol as a therapeutic agent. Further, there is evidence that deficient levels of calcitriol is a significant factor to the pathogenesis of sepsis in that there is evidence that an impairment of the production of calcitriol is associated with low serum calcium and high parathyroid hormone, and there is evidence polytrauma is frequently associated with hypocalcemia and increasing parathyroid hormone, which could also be related to impaired
20 vitamin D metabolism.

[0006] Therefore, there is a need for a new method for treating inflammation-related conditions and diseases which is not associated with these disadvantages.

SUMMARY

[0007] According to one embodiment, there is provided gene-modified, inflammation-specific
25 monocytes suitable for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease; the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprising a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene that produces functional 1-alpha-hydroxylase when the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages. In one embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is a
30 human 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. In one embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on a viral vector. In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes further comprise a growth factor gene that produces functional growth factor when the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific
35 macrophages. In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is a human growth factor gene. In

5 one embodiment, the growth factor gene is on plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the growth factor gene is on a viral vector. In another embodiment, the growth factor gene is selected from the group consisting of insulin-like growth factor 1 and a transforming growth factor beta gene. In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes further comprise a macrophage-specific promoter that limits expression of the
10 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene until the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages. In one embodiment, the macrophage-specific promoter is selected from the group consisting of CD11b, CD14, c-fms, Lysozyme M and Scavenger Receptor Class A. In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes further comprise both a growth factor
15 gene that produces functional growth factor when the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages, and a macrophage-specific promoter that limits expression of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene until the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages. In one
20 embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes are CD14-positive and CD16-negative monocytes.

[0008] According to another embodiment of the present invention, there is provided gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages suitable for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease; the gene-modified, inflammation-specific
25 macrophages comprising a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene that produces functional 1-alpha-hydroxylase. In one embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is a human 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. In one embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on a viral vector. In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes further comprise a growth
30 factor gene that produces functional growth factor when the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages. In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is a human growth factor gene. In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is on plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the growth factor gene is on a viral vector. In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is selected from
35 the group consisting of insulin-like growth factor 1 and a transforming growth factor beta

5 gene. In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes further
comprises a macrophage-specific promoter that limits expression of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase
gene until the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-
modified, inflammation-specific macrophages, where the promoter is functional under
10 conditions of inflammation. In one embodiment, the macrophage-specific promoter is
selected from the group consisting of CD11b, CD14, c-fms, Lysozyme M and Scavenger
Receptor Class A CD14. In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific
macrophages further comprises both a growth factor gene that produces functional growth
factor, and a macrophage-specific promoter. In one embodiment, the gene-modified,
15 inflammation-specific macrophages are M2 macrophages, such as for example M2
macrophages Type A, and M2 macrophages Type B. In another embodiment, the gene-
modified, inflammation-specific macrophages are Gr1-positive M2 macrophages. In another
embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages are Mac1-positive
macrophages. In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages
20 have transdifferentiated from gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes according to
the present invention.

[0009] According to another embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a
pharmaceutical suitable for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or
disease. The pharmaceutical comprises gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes
according to the present invention. In one embodiment, the pharmaceutical further comprises
25 one or more than one substance selected from the group consisting of an anti-inflammatory
agent, a cell growth media, an immunosuppressant, a monoclonal antibody and a
preservative.

[0010] According to another embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a
pharmaceutical suitable for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or
30 disease. The pharmaceutical comprises gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages
according to the present invention. In one embodiment, the pharmaceutical further comprises
one or more than one substance selected from the group consisting of an anti-inflammatory
agent, a cell growth media, an immunosuppressant, a monoclonal antibody and a
preservative.

35 **[0011]** According to another embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a method

5 for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease. The method comprises: a) identifying a patient with an inflammation-related condition or disease, where the inflammation-related condition or disease is caused by the inappropriate initiation of inflammation or the inappropriate lack of cessation of inflammation; b) obtaining inflammation-specific monocytes; c) producing gene-modified, inflammation-specific
10 monocytes from the inflammation-specific monocytes, where the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprise a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene, where the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is expressed to produce functional 1-alpha-hydroxylase enzyme when the monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages; d) administering an amount of the gene-modified, inflammation-specific
15 monocytes to the patient; e) allowing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes to locate and enter into the inflamed organ or tissue affected by the condition or disease; f) allowing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes to transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages; and g) allowing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages to produce 1-alpha-hydroxylase, where production of the
20 1-alpha-hydroxylase causes the localized production of calcitriol in the inflamed organ or tissue from circulating calcidiol which is present in body fluids of the patient, thereby treating the inflammation-related condition or disease by suppressing inflammation while limiting side effects from systemic hypercalcemia. In one embodiment, the patient is a human. In one embodiment, the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease involves
25 simultaneous inflammation of a plurality of body tissues or organs. In another embodiment, the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease that involves simultaneous inflammation of a plurality of body tissues or organs is selected from the group consisting of sepsis and polytrauma. In another embodiment, the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease lacks an autoimmune component. In another embodiment, the
30 one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease that lacks an autoimmune component is selected from the group consisting of sepsis and polytrauma. In another embodiment, the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease involves inflammation limited to one specific body tissue or organ. In another embodiment, the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease is an autoimmune disease. In
35 another embodiment, the condition or disease is selected from the group consisting of

5 Alzheimer's disease, antiphospholipid syndrome, atherosclerosis, autoimmune
encephalomyelitis, autoimmune hepatitis, celiac disease, Graves' disease, inflammatory
10 bowel disease, multiple sclerosis, myasthenia gravis, myositis, polymyositis, Raynaud's
phenomenon, rheumatoid arthritis, scleroderma, Sjogren's syndrome, systemic lupus, type 1
diabetes and uveitis. In one embodiment, identifying the patient comprises diagnosing the
15 patient with one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease. In one
embodiment, diagnosing the patient comprises performing one or more than one of action
selected from the group consisting of performing a physical examination, performing a non-
invasive imaging examination, and identifying one or more than one marker for the
inflammation-related condition or disease in the blood or other body fluid of the patient. In
20 another embodiment, identifying the patient comprises consulting patient records to determine
if the patient has an inflammation-related condition or disease. In one embodiment, the
inflammation-specific monocytes obtained are CD14-positive and CD16-negative monocytes.
In one embodiment, obtaining inflammation-specific monocytes comprises procuring
embryonic stem cells and differentiating the embryonic stem cells into the inflammation-
25 specific monocytes. In another embodiment, obtaining inflammation-specific monocytes
comprises extracting a body fluid or body tissue containing inflammation-specific monocytes
from the patient. In one embodiment, extracting a body fluid or body tissue containing
inflammation-specific monocytes from the patient comprises obtaining venous blood from the
patient by performing venipuncture on the patient and extracting the inflammation-specific
30 monocytes from the venous blood. In another embodiment, extracting a body fluid or body
tissue containing inflammation-specific monocytes from the patient comprises performing
adsorptive apheresis on the blood of the patient and extracting the inflammation-specific
monocytes from the blood of the patient. In another embodiment, extracting a body fluid or
body tissue containing inflammation-specific monocytes from the patient comprises obtaining
35 bone marrow from the patient by performing a bone marrow biopsy on the patient and
extracting the inflammation-specific monocytes from the bone marrow of the patient. In
another embodiment, extracting a body fluid or body tissue containing inflammation-specific
monocytes from the patient comprises obtaining preserved cord blood of the patient and
extracting the inflammation-specific monocytes from the preserved cord blood. In one
embodiment, obtaining a body fluid or body tissue containing inflammation-specific

5 monocytes comprises extracting patient-specific induced pluripotent stem cells from the patient and performing a reprogramming factors-mediated de-differentiation of stem cells from the patient and extracting the inflammation-specific monocytes from the patient-specific induced pluripotent stem cells of the patient. In one embodiment, the method further comprises purifying the inflammation-specific monocytes from the body fluid or body tissue
10 containing inflammation-specific monocytes, after obtaining the inflammation-specific monocytes. In one embodiment, purifying the inflammation-specific monocytes comprises performing fluorescence-activated cell sorting. In another embodiment, purifying the inflammation-specific monocytes comprises performing magnetic-activated cell sorting. In another embodiment, the method further comprises expanding and storing at least some of the
15 isolated inflammation-specific monocytes for multiple repeated infusions. In one embodiment, expanding and storing at least some of the isolated inflammation-specific monocytes comprises freezing the isolated inflammation-specific monocytes. In one embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is a human 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. In one embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the
20 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on a viral vector. In one embodiment, producing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprises transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. In one embodiment, transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes is accomplished by electroporation with one or more than one plasmid DNA or one or more than one viral vector comprising the
25 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes further comprise one or more than one growth factor gene, where the one or more than one growth factor gene is expressed to produce a functional growth factor when the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages, and where the growth factor enhances the function of the
30 calcitriol. In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is a human growth factor gene. In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is on plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the growth factor gene is on a viral vector. In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is selected from the group consisting of insulin-like growth factor 1 and transforming growth factor beta gene. In another embodiment, the method further comprises transducing the purified inflammation-
35 specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene. In one embodiment,

5 producing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprises transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene; and where transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene is done simultaneously with transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. In another embodiment, where producing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprises transducing the purified
10 inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene; and where transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene is done serially with transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. In one embodiment, transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene comprises using the one or more than one plasmid DNA or one or more than one viral vector comprising the one or more than one growth factor gene. In another embodiment, transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene is done by electroporation with the one or more than one plasmid DNA or the one or more than one
20 viral vector, where the one or more than one plasmid DNA or the one or more than one viral vector comprises the one or more than one growth factor gene. In one embodiment, the plasmid DNA comprises both the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one growth factor gene. In another embodiment, the viral vector comprises both the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one growth factor gene. In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes further comprise one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter, where the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter tends to limit the expression of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene to macrophages that transdifferentiate from the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes, where the promoter is functional under conditions of inflammation. In one
25 embodiment, the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter is a human macrophage-specific promoter. In another embodiment, the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter is on plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter is on a viral vector. In one embodiment, one or more than one of the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter is selected from the
35 group consisting of CD11b, CD14, c-fms, Lysozyme M and Scavenger Receptor Class A. In

5 one embodiment, producing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprising the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter comprises transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the
1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter. In
one embodiment, transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the
10 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter
comprises using one or more than one plasmid DNA comprising both the
1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter. In
one embodiment, transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the
1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter
15 comprises using one or more than one viral vector comprising both the 1-alpha-hydroxylase
gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter. In one embodiment,
administration comprises a route selected from the group consisting of intraperitoneal
administration, intramuscular administration, and intravenous infusion. In another
embodiment, administration comprises infusion of the gene-modified, inflammation-specific
20 monocytes into or adjacent to the inflamed tissue or organ. In one embodiment, the amount
is between one hundred thousand and one billion cells. In another embodiment, the amount
is between one million and one billion cells. In another embodiment, the amount is between
one million and one hundred million cells. In another embodiment, the amount is between
one million and ten million cells. In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-
25 specific macrophages comprise one or more than one growth factor gene, and the method
further comprises allowing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages to produce
one or more than one growth factor from the one or more than one growth factor gene.

DESCRIPTION

[0012] According to one embodiment of the present invention, there is provided gene-
30 modified, inflammation-specific monocytes suitable for treating one or more than one
inflammation-related condition or disease. According to another embodiment of the present
invention, there is provided gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages suitable for
treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease. In one embodiment,
the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages are produced by transdifferentiation of
35 gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes according to the present invention.

5 According to another embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a pharmaceutical suitable for treating inflammation-related conditions and diseases. The pharmaceutical comprises gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes according to the present invention or comprises gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages according to the present invention. According to one embodiment of the present invention, there
10 provided a method for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease. The method comprises generating calcitriol directly within the organ or tissue affected by the inflammation-related condition or disease by causing expression of the gene for the enzyme 1-alpha-hydroxylase, the rate-limiting step in humans for synthesizing calcitriol, to the affected organ or tissue using gene-modified, inflammation-specific
15 monocytes that specifically home to sites of inflammation. The calcitriol that is generated suppresses the inflammation by regulating the development and function of cell types involved in producing the inflammation. In a preferred embodiment, the method comprises adoptive transfer of gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes that overexpress the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and that are controlled by a promoter that limits expression of the
20 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene to the inflamed organ or tissue. Generating calcitriol directly within the inflamed organ or tissue advantageously decreases the systemic side effects of direct calcitriol administration, including eliminating systemic hypercalcemia associated with present methods of systemic administration of calcitriol directly. The monocytes, macrophages, pharmaceuticals and method will now be disclosed in detail.

25 **[0013]** As used in this disclosure, except where the context requires otherwise, the term “comprise” and variations of the term, such as “comprising,” “comprises” and “comprised” are not intended to exclude other additives, components, integers or steps.

[0014] As used in this disclosure, except where the context requires otherwise, the method steps disclosed are not intended to be limiting nor are they intended to indicate that each step
30 is essential to the method or that each step must occur in the order disclosed.

[0015] As used in this disclosure, except where the context requires otherwise, “tissue” includes both one histological type of tissue, as well as a plurality of histological types of tissue forming an organ or organ system, such as for example ‘pancreatic tissue,’ as will be understood by those with skill in the art.

35 **[0016]** As used in this disclosure, “calcidiol” means

5 (6R)-6-[(1R,3aR,4E,7aR)-4-[(2Z)-2-[(5S)-5-Hydroxy-2-methylidene-cyclohexylidene]ethylidene]-7a-methyl-2,3,3a,5,6,7-hexahydro-1H-inden-1-yl]-2-methyl-heptan-2-ol (also known as vitamin D2, 25-hydroxycholecalciferol; 25-hydroxyvitamin D3; 25(OH)D; 25(OH)D2; 25(OH)D3; and calcifediol, among other names.

[0017] As used in this disclosure, “calcitriol” means

10 (1R,3S)-5-[2-[(1R,3aR,7aS)-1-[(2R)-6-hydroxy-6-methyl-heptan-2-yl]-7a-methyl-2,3,3a,5,6,7-hexahydro-1H-inden-4-ylidene]ethylidene]-4-methylidene-cyclohexane-1,3-diol (also known as vitamin D3; 1,25-dihydroxyvitamin D; 1,25-dihydroxyvitamin D2; 1,25-dihydroxyvitamin D3; 1,25-dihydroxycholecalciferol; 1,25(OH)2D; 1,25(OH)2D2; and 1,25(OH)2D3), among other names.

15 [0018] As used in this disclosure, “1-alpha-hydroxylase gene” encodes the enzyme 1-alpha-hydroxylase, also known under the following alternate names and forms: calcidiol 1-monooxygenase; CYP1alpha; CYP27B1; CP2B; CYP27B; cytochrome P450VD1-alpha; cytochrome p450 27B1; cytochrome P450, family 27, subfamily B, polypeptide 1; cytochrome P450 subfamily XXVIIB polypeptide 1; cytochrome P450, subfamily XXVIIB
20 (25-hydroxyvitamin D-1-alpha-hydroxylase), polypeptide 1; cytochrome p450 27B1; cytochrome P450C1 alpha; cytochrome P450 VD1-alpha; cytochrome P450 27B1; 1alpha(OH)ase2; 25-hydroxyvitamin D-1 alpha hydroxylase, mitochondrial; 25 hydroxyvitamin D3-1-alpha hydroxylase2; 25-hydroxyvitamin D(3) 1-alpha-hydroxylase; and 25-OHD-1 alpha-hydroxylase; and VD1 hydroxylase, among other names.

25 [0019] As used in this disclosure, the enzyme “1-alpha-hydroxylase” catalyzes the hydroxylation of “calcidiol” to “calcitriol” which is the rate-limiting step in the production of calcitriol in humans.

[0020] As used in this disclosure, “inflammation-related” in connection with “condition or disease” or “conditions and diseases” means “caused by the inappropriate initiation of
30 inflammation or the inappropriate lack of cessation of inflammation” rather than merely associated with inflammation.

[0021] As used in this disclosure, “inflammation-specific monocytes” are monocytes that home specifically to inflamed tissues.

[0022] As used in this disclosure, “inflammation-specific macrophages” are macrophages that
35 home specifically to inflamed tissues.

5 [0023] As used in this disclosure, “GFP” means green fluorescent protein.

[0024] According to one embodiment of the present invention, there is provided gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes suitable for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprise any of the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes disclosed for
10 use in the present methods. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprise a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene that produces functional 1-alpha-hydroxylase when the monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages. In a preferred embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is a human 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. In one embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the
15 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on a viral vector. In a preferred embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes further comprise a growth factor gene that produces functional growth factor when the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages. In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is a human growth factor gene. In one embodiment, the
20 growth factor gene is on plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the growth factor gene is on a viral vector. In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is selected from the group consisting of insulin-like growth factor 1 (IGF-1) (also known as somatomedin C) and a transforming growth factor beta gene (TGF- β); however, other growth factor genes can be used, as will be understood by those with skill in the art with respect to this disclosure. In
25 another preferred embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes further comprise a macrophage-specific promoter that limits expression of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene until the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages. In one embodiment, the macrophage-specific promoter is selected from the group consisting of CD11b (Mac-1), CD14, c-fms, Lysozyme
30 M and Scavenger Receptor Class A (SRA). In a particularly preferred embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprise a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene that produces functional 1-alpha-hydroxylase when the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages, and further comprise a growth factor gene that produces functional growth factor when the gene-
35 modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified,

5 inflammation-specific macrophages, and further comprises a macrophage-specific promoter that limits expression of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene until the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages. In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes are CD14-positive and CD16-negative (+CD16-; CD14+CD16-) monocytes.

10 **[0025]** According to one embodiment of the present invention, there is provided gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages suitable for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages comprise any of the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages disclosed for use in the present method. In one embodiment, the gene-modified,
15 inflammation-specific macrophages have transdifferentiated from gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes according to the present invention. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages comprise a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene that produces functional 1-alpha-hydroxylase. In a preferred embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is a human 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. In one embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on
20 plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on a viral vector. In a preferred embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages further comprise a growth factor gene that produces functional growth factor. In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is a human growth factor gene. In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is on plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the growth factor gene is on a viral
25 vector. In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is selected from the group consisting of insulin-like growth factor 1 (IGF-1) (also known as somatomedin C) and a transforming growth factor beta gene (TGF- β); however, other growth factor genes can be used, as will be understood by those with skill in the art with respect to this disclosure. In another preferred embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages further comprise a
30 macrophage-specific promoter that limits expression of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene to macrophages. In one embodiment, the macrophage-specific promoter is selected from the group consisting of CD11b (Mac-1), CD14, c-fms, Lysozyme M and Scavenger Receptor Class A (SRA) CD14. In a particularly preferred embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages comprise a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene that produces
35 functional 1-alpha-hydroxylase, and further comprises a growth factor gene that produces

5 functional growth factor, and further comprises a macrophage-specific promoter. In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages are M2 macrophages, such as for example M2 macrophages Type A, and M2 macrophages Type B. In another embodiment, the modified M2 macrophages are Gr1-positive M2 macrophages (Gr-1 + macrophages). In another embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific
10 macrophages are Mac1-positive macrophages (Macrophage-1 antigen macrophages; integrin alphaMbeta2 macrophages).

[0026] According to another embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a pharmaceutical suitable for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease. In one embodiment, the pharmaceutical comprises gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes according to the present invention. In another embodiment, the
15 pharmaceutical comprises gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages according to the present invention. In another embodiment, the pharmaceutical comprises both gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes according to the present invention and comprises gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages according to the present invention. In
20 one embodiment, the pharmaceutical comprises one or more than one substance selected from the group consisting of an anti-inflammatory agent (such as for example a 5-aminosalicylates and a corticosteroid), a cell growth media, an immunosuppressant (such as for example azathioprine, cyclosporine and mercaptopurine), a monoclonal antibody (such as for example infliximab and vizilizumab) and a preservative.

[0027] According to one embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a method for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease. The method comprises, first, identifying a patient with an inflammation-related condition or disease suitable for treatment by the present method, where the inflammation-related condition or disease is caused by the inappropriate initiation of inflammation or the inappropriate lack of
25 cessation of inflammation. In a preferred embodiment, the patient is a human. In one embodiment, the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease involves simultaneous inflammation of a plurality of body tissues or organs. In a preferred embodiment, the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease that involves simultaneous inflammation of a plurality of body tissues or organs is selected from
30 the group consisting of sepsis and polytrauma. In a preferred embodiment, the one or more

5 than one inflammation-related condition or disease lacks an autoimmune component. In a preferred embodiment, the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease that lacks an autoimmune component is selected from the group consisting of sepsis and polytrauma. In another embodiment, the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease involves inflammation limited to one specific body tissue or organ. In
10 another embodiment, the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease is an autoimmune disease. In a preferred embodiment, the condition or disease is selected from the group consisting of Alzheimer's disease, antiphospholipid syndrome, atherosclerosis, autoimmune encephalomyelitis, autoimmune hepatitis, celiac disease, Graves' disease, inflammatory bowel disease (Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis), multiple sclerosis,
15 myasthenia gravis, myositis, polymyositis, Raynaud's phenomenon, rheumatoid arthritis, scleroderma, Sjogren's syndrome, systemic lupus, type 1 diabetes and uveitis. In one embodiment, identifying the patient comprises diagnosing the patient with one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease suitable for treatment by the present method. In one embodiment, diagnosing the patient comprises performing one or more than one of
20 action selected from the group consisting of performing a physical examination, performing a non-invasive imaging examination (such as for example computerized tomography, magnetic resonance imaging and ultrasound), and identifying one or more than one marker for the inflammation-related condition or disease in the blood or other body fluid of the patient. In another embodiment, identifying the patient comprises consulting patient records to determine
25 if the patient has an inflammation-related condition or disease suitable for treatment by the present method.

[0028] Next, the method comprises obtaining inflammation-specific monocytes (ISMs). Inflammation-specific monocytes home to inflamed tissue, but not to uninfamed tissue. In one embodiment, the inflammation-specific monocytes are CD14-positive and CD16-negative
30 (+CD16-; CD14+CD16-) monocytes. In one embodiment, obtaining inflammation-specific monocytes (ISMs) comprises procuring embryonic stem cells, such as for example by isolating embryonic stem cells from fertilized eggs, and differentiating the embryonic stem cells into the inflammation-specific monocytes, as will be understood by those with skill in the art with respect to this disclosure. In another embodiment, obtaining inflammation-
35 specific monocytes (ISMs) comprises extracting a body fluid or body tissue containing

5 inflammation-specific monocytes (ISMs) from the patient. In one embodiment, extracting a
body fluid or body tissue containing inflammation-specific monocytes from the patient
comprises obtaining venous blood from the patient by performing venipuncture on the patient
and extracting the inflammation-specific monocytes from the venous blood. In another
embodiment, extracting a body fluid or body tissue containing inflammation-specific
10 monocytes from the patient comprises performing adsorptive apheresis on the blood of the
patient and extracting the inflammation-specific monocytes from the blood of the patient. In
another preferred embodiment, extracting a body fluid or body tissue containing
inflammation-specific monocytes from the patient comprises obtaining bone marrow from the
patient by performing a bone marrow biopsy on the patient and extracting the inflammation-
15 specific monocytes from the bone marrow of the patient. In another preferred embodiment,
extracting a body fluid or body tissue containing inflammation-specific monocytes from the
patient comprises obtaining preserved cord blood of the patient and extracting the
inflammation-specific monocytes from the preserved cord blood. In another preferred
embodiment, obtaining a body fluid or body tissue containing inflammation-specific
20 monocytes comprises extracting patient-specific induced pluripotent stem cells, such as for
example blood cells or skin cells, from the patient and performing a reprogramming factors-
mediated de-differentiation of stem cells from the patient and extracting the inflammation-
specific monocytes from the patient-specific induced pluripotent stem cells of the patient, as
will be understood by those with skill in the art with respect to this disclosure. Any other
25 suitable method can also be used for obtaining a body fluid or body tissue containing
inflammation-specific monocytes, as will be understood by those with skill in the art with
respect to this disclosure.

[0029] In one embodiment, the method further comprises purifying the inflammation-specific
monocytes (ISMs). In one embodiment, purifying the inflammation-specific monocytes
30 comprises performing fluorescence-activated cell sorting. In another embodiment, purifying
the inflammation-specific monocytes comprises performing magnetic-activated cell sorting.

[0030] In one embodiment, the method further comprises expanding and storing at least some
of the isolated inflammation-specific monocytes for multiple repeated infusions, as will be
understood by those with skill in the art with respect to this disclosure. In one embodiment,
35 expanding and storing at least some of the isolated inflammation-specific monocytes

5 comprises freezing the isolated inflammation-specific monocytes.

[0031] Then, the method comprises producing gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes from the inflammation-specific monocytes, where the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprise a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene, where the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is expressed to produce functional 1-alpha-hydroxylase enzyme

10 when the monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages. In one embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is a human 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. In one embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on a viral vector. In a preferred embodiment, producing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes

15 comprises transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. In one embodiment, transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes is accomplished by electroporation with one or more than one plasmid DNA or one or more than one viral vector comprising the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene.

[0032] In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes further

20 comprise one or more than one growth factor gene, where the one or more than one growth factor gene is expressed to produce a functional growth factor when the monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages, and where the growth factor enhances the function of calcitriol (the product of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene). In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is a human growth factor gene. In one

25 embodiment, the growth factor gene is on plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the growth factor gene is on a viral vector. In one embodiment, the growth factor gene is selected from the group consisting of insulin-like growth factor 1 (IGF-1) (also known as somatomedin C) and transforming growth factor beta gene (TGF- β), though other growth factor genes can be used, as will be understood by those with skill in the art with respect to this disclosure. In a

30 preferred embodiment, producing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprising the one or more than one growth factor gene comprises transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene. In one embodiment, transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene is done simultaneously with transducing the purified inflammation-

35 specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. In another embodiment, transducing

5 the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene is done serially with transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene. In another embodiment, transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene comprises using the one or more than one plasmid DNA or one or more than one viral vector comprising the one or more than one growth factor gene. In a preferred embodiment, transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene is done by electroporation with the one or more than one plasmid DNA or the one or more than one viral vector, where the one or more than one plasmid DNA or the one or more than one viral vector comprises the one or more than one growth factor gene. In a preferred embodiment, the plasmid DNA comprises both the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one growth factor gene. In another preferred embodiment, the viral vector comprises both the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one growth factor gene.

[0033] In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes further comprise one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter, where the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter tends to limit the expression of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene, and when present, the one or more than one growth factor gene, to macrophages that transdifferentiate from the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes. In one embodiment, the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter is a human macrophage-specific promoter. In one embodiment, the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter is on plasmid DNA. In another embodiment, the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter is on a viral vector. In one embodiment, one or more than one of the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter is selected from the group consisting of CD11b (Mac-1), CD14, c-fms, Lysozyme M and Scavenger Receptor Class A (SRA). Other macrophage-specific promoters can also be used, as will be understood by those with skill in the art with respect to this disclosure. In a preferred embodiment, producing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprising the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter comprises transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter. In one embodiment, transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the

5 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter
comprises using one or more than one plasmid DNA comprising both the
1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter. In
another embodiment, transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the
1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter
10 comprises using one or more than one viral vector comprising both the 1-alpha-hydroxylase
gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter.

[0034] Next, the method comprises administering an amount of the gene-modified,
inflammation-specific monocytes to the patient. In one embodiment, administration
comprises a route selected from the group consisting of intraperitoneal administration,
15 intramuscular administration, and intravenous infusion. In another embodiment,
administration comprises infusion of the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes into
or adjacent to the inflamed tissue or organ. In one embodiment, the amount is between one
hundred thousand and one billion cells. In another embodiment, the amount is between one
million and one billion cells. In another embodiment, the amount is between one million and
20 one hundred million cells. In another embodiment, the amount is between one million and
ten million cells.

[0035] Then, the method comprises allowing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific
monocytes to locate and enter into the inflamed organ or tissue affected by the condition or
disease. Next, the method comprises allowing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific
25 monocytes to transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages.

[0036] Then, the method comprises allowing activation of the one or more than one
macrophage-specific promoter, thereby causing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific
macrophages to produce 1-alpha-hydroxylase, where production of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase
causes the localized production of calcitriol in the inflamed organ or tissue from circulating
30 calcidiol which is present in body fluids of the patient, thereby treating the inflammation-
related condition or disease by suppressing inflammation while limiting side effects,
especially systemic hypercalcemia. In one embodiment, the gene-modified, inflammation-
specific macrophages comprise one or more than one growth factor gene, and the method
further comprises allowing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages to produce
35 one or more than one growth factor from the one or more than one growth factor gene.

5 Production of the one or more than one growth factor acts synergistically with the localized
production of calcitriol to suppress inflammation, thereby further treating the inflammation-
related condition or disease. The activation of the macrophage-specific promoter to turn on
the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene, and the growth factor gene if present, occurs automatically in
the affected tissue without additional intervention. Once the treatment is complete, the gene-
10 modified, inflammation-specific macrophages undergo apoptosis leading to termination of
gene expression and preventing long term side effects of the treatment.

EXAMPLE I

Demonstration of Efficacy of Agents According to the Present Invention to Produce Calcitriol
in Vivo from Exogenous Calcidiol

15 **[0037]** The efficacy of agents according to the present invention to produce calcitriol *in vivo*
was demonstrated as follows. First, bicistronic lentiviral construct which was used to express
human 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene (CYP) under the control of the macrophage-specific Mac1
promoter was prepared. GFP or mCherry expressed under the control of the universal PGK
promoter was added to the construct to aid simultaneous monitoring of effective transduction
20 efficiency. Then, 293T cells were transiently transfected with either Mac1-GFP-PGK-
mCherry (negative control) or Mac1-CYP-PGK-GFP plasmid DNA. At 24 hours post-
transfection, the 293T cells were incubated with 2.5 μ M calcidiol to provide substrate for the
1-alpha-hydroxylase enzyme. After 12 hours incubation, conditioned medium was collected
and calcitriol levels were measured by radioimmunoassay (RIA) after removal of binding
25 proteins. In the presence of the substrate calcitriol, 293T cells transfected with the Mac1-
CYP-PGK-GFP plasmid synthesized calcitriol at a concentration of about 16,000 pg/mL,
while production of calcitriol was negligible in the absence of the substrate demonstrating that
agents according to the present invention exhibited a very high capacity to synthesize
calcitriol from exogenous calcidiol.

30 EXAMPLE II

Demonstration of Efficacy of Agents and Method According to the Present Invention

[0038] The efficacy of the agents and the method according to the present invention was
demonstrated as follows. First, a bone marrow transplantation approach was used to generate
Gr1 + monocytes comprising a Mac1-CYP (Mac1-1-alpha-hydroxylase gene) transgene for
35 adoptive transfer. Eight-week-old C57BL/5 (B6) female mice were subjected to gamma-

5 irradiation (10 Gy) to ablate endogenous hematopoietic cells. Next, one million Sca1-positive hematopoietic stem cells (HSCs) were transduced with either Mac1-GFP or Mac1- CYP lentiviral vector. Then, one million of the Sca1-positive hematopoietic stem cells transduced with Mac1-GFP (the controls) or Mac1- CYP lentiviral vector were transplanted to each of the irradiated mice through injection via tail. Over 70% of monocytes isolated from the bone
10 marrow transplants was derived from the donor Sca1 + HSCs.

[0039] Four weeks after marrow transplantation, Gr1-positive monocytes were isolated from bone marrow transplants taken from the mice. Another groups of B6 recipient mice were divided into four groups, where one group was untreated (the control group), and three groups had inflammatory bowel disease induced by oral administration of dextran sodium sulfate (3% DDS in drinking water) for six days. Of the induced groups, one group was
15 untreated, one group was treated with one million of the isolated Gr1-positive monocytes comprising Mac1-GFP transgene, the other group was treated with one million of the isolated Gr1-positive monocytes comprising Mac1-CYP transgene. The mice were sacrificed at twelve days after induction of inflammatory bowel disease.

[0040] The one-time infusion of monocytes comprising Mac1-CYP transgene nearly completely ameliorated inflammatory bowel disease as evidenced by the following: 1) mice treated with the monocytes comprising Mac1-CYP transgene not only prevented further body weight loss but essentially regained the body weight lost during the disease induction phase ending with a body weight about 95% of that of the non-induced mice; 2) all mice treated
25 with the monocytes comprising Mac1-CYP transgene survived while 30% of untreated mice died during the test period; and 3) mice treated with the monocytes comprising Mac1-CYP transgene had increased colon length and robust regeneration of the lost colonic crypts similar to non-induced mice. Additionally, mice treated with the monocytes comprising Mac1-CYP transgene did not show a significant increase in serum calcium levels confirming the
30 macrophage specificity of the promoter Mac1. By comparison, mice treated with the monocytes comprising Mac1-GFP moderately reduced further body weight loss during the recovery phase but did not regain the body weight already lost, and had about the same mortality rate, colonic length and mucosal damage as untreated mice.

[0041] Therefore, the agents and method according to the present invention demonstrated the
35 high efficiency of the present invention to treat inflammatory bowel disease without the side

5 effect of systemic hypercalcemia.

EXAMPLE III

Demonstration of Efficacy of Agents and Method According to the Present Invention

[0042] The efficacy of the agents and the method according to the present invention was demonstrated as follows. First, Gr1+ monocytes were isolated from bone marrow cells of
10 C57BL/6 mice and treated with M-CSF (100 ng/mL) for seven days to induce formation of premature M2 macrophages. These M2 monocytes stained positively for both CD11b and Gr1. These M2 macrophages were effectively transduced by the lentiviral vector in that approximately 70% of these transduced cells expressed the GFP transgene. The M2 macrophages were isolated and then were transduced with the lentiviral vector expressing
15 either the human 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene driven by the Mac1 promoter (Mac1-CYP) or the green fluorescent protein gene driven by the Mac1 promoter (Mac1-GFP) (the control). Inflammatory bowel disease was induced in B6 mice by oral administration of dextran sodium sulfate for six days (3% DDS in drinking water). The one million of the genetically modified M2 macrophages were then injected per mouse via tail vein to each inflammatory bowel
20 disease induced mouse at day seven. The mice were sacrificed seven days after infusion of the genetically modified M2 macrophages.

[0043] As seen with Mac1- CYP Gr1+ monocytes, Example II above, inflammatory bowel disease induced mice treated with a single infusion of Mac1-CYP M2 macrophages showed substantial repair of the severely damaged mucosa, the prevention of body weight loss and
25 increased colon length. Further as seen with Mac1- CYP Gr1+ monocytes, Example II above, inflammatory bowel disease induced mice treated with a single infusion of Mac1-CYP M2 macrophages did not develop systemic hypercalcemia.

[0044] Therefore, the agents and method according to the present invention demonstrated the high efficiency of the present invention to treat inflammatory bowel disease without the side
30 effect of systemic hypercalcemia.

EXAMPLE IV

Demonstration of Efficacy of Agents and Method According to the Present Invention

[0045] The efficacy of the agents and the method according to the present invention was demonstrated as follows. Sca1-positive hematopoietic stem cells (HSCs) were transduced
35 with either Mac1-CYP-PGK-GFP (Mac1-1-alpha-hydroxylase-phosphoglycerate kinase-green

5 fluorescent protein gene) lentiviral vector or with SFFV-CYP (spleen focus-forming virus-
alpha-hydroxylase gene) lentiviral vector. Eight-week old B6 recipient mice were subjected
to whole body lethal gamma ray irradiation (10 Gy). Immediately after irradiation, one
million of the Sca1-positive transduced hematopoietic stem cells were transplanted to each of
the irradiated mice through injection via tail. Engraftment was confirmed by determining the
10 percentage of GFP+ cells in the circulation. After full engraftment, Experimental
Autoimmune Encephalomyelitis (EAE) was induced by subcutaneous injection of the myelin
specific antigens (MOG) 35-55 peptide, which initiated the peripheral activation of myelin
specific CD4+ T cells, which then migrated to the central nervous system and induced an
immune reaction. Clinical scores that describe the relative severity of Experimental
15 Autoimmune Encephalomyelitis were monitored on a daily basis for four weeks. Recipient
mice transplanted with hematopoietic stem cells that were transduced with the Mac1-CYP-
PGK-GFP lentiviral vector exhibited delayed onset of symptoms (sixteen days compared with
six days) and a reduction in peak disease activity (clinical score of between 1.0 and 1.5,
compared with a clinical score of between 3.0 and 3.5). Therefore, the agents and method
20 according to the present invention demonstrated the high efficiency of the present invention to
treat inflammatory bowel disease without the side effect of systemic hypercalcemia.

EXAMPLE V

Demonstration of Efficacy of Agents and Method According to the Present Invention

[0046] The efficacy of the agents and the method according to the present invention was
25 demonstrated as follows. First, specific targeting of inflamed tissues by CD11b+/Gr1+
monocytes in mice, which correspond to human CD14+CD16- monocytes, was
demonstrated. Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) was induced in 8-week-old C57BL/6 (B6)
female mice by oral administration of dextran sodium sulfate (DSS) (3% in drinking water for
7 days and 1% thereafter), which is a generally accepted mouse model for human
30 inflammatory bowel disease. At day 5, 0.1 mL of clodronate-lyposome complex was injected
intravenously to reduce endogenous monocytes. At day 7, the inflammatory bowel disease
mice or healthy control mice were injected intravenously with CD11b+/Gr1+ monocytes (2
million cells/mouse) isolated from green fluorescent protein (GFP) transgenic mice. Green
fluorescent protein produced in these monocytes allowed localization of the position of the
35 infused monocytes. At day 10, the mice were perfused with phosphate-buffered saline (PBS)

5 to remove un-engrafted exogenous monocytes. Tissues were collected for detection of the green fluorescent protein marker in collected tissues and it was found that injected Gr1 + monocytes migrated only to the inflamed colon of inflammatory bowel disease mice but not to the colon of healthy mice.

[0047] Second, the agents and method according to the present invention were used to treat
10 dextran sodium sulfate-induced inflammatory bowel disease in mice as a model for human inflammatory bowel disease to test the efficacy of the agents and method according to the present invention. CD11b+/Gr1 + monocytes were isolated from the bone marrow or blood of the mice using magnetic-activated cell sorting (CD11b+/Gr1 + monocytes correspond to human CD14+CD16- monocytes). The isolated monocytes were electroporated with either
15 CD14-mCherry-PGK-GFP plasmid DNA or CD14-CYP27b1-PGK-GFP plasmid DNA. The electroporated monocytes were injected systemically in the inflammatory bowel disease mice. Migration of injected monocytes to inflamed colon was demonstrated by green fluorescent protein staining of colon sections upon histological examination. Severe mucosal damage and inflammatory cell infiltration occurred in the colon of the dextran sodium sulfate-treated
20 mice. These pathologic damages were significantly reduced by intravenous injection of monocytes expressing the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene, but not reduced by injection of monocytes expressing only a non-therapeutic marker gene.

[0048] Then, the efficacy of the agents and method according to the present invention was confirmed in an additional study. Six groups of animals were used in this study: Group 1:
25 control healthy mice; Group 2: mice that were treated with dextran sodium sulfate to induce inflammatory bowel disease but that did not receive any therapy; Group 3: mice that were treated with dextran sodium sulfate to induce inflammatory bowel disease and that received intraperitoneal injections with calcitriol (200 ng/day/mouse) (the positive control group); Group 4: mice that were treated with dextran sodium sulfate to induce inflammatory bowel
30 disease and that received intravenous injections with monocytes electroporated with CD14 promoter-mCherry plasmid (the negative control group); Group 5: mice that were treated with dextran sodium sulfate to induce inflammatory bowel disease and that received intravenous injections with monocytes electroporated with CD14 promoter-1-alpha-hydroxylase gene plasmid (the treatment group); Group 6: mice that were treated
35 with dextran sodium sulfate to induce inflammatory bowel disease and that received

5 intravenous injections with monocytes electroporated with plasmids expressing both 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and transforming growth factor beta gene (a second treatment group). Injections were made at day 7 post-disease induction by dextran sodium sulfate. All mice were sacrificed at day 10.

10 **[0049]** At day 7 post-dextran sodium sulfate treatment, mice lost 20-25% of their body weight. In the absence of any therapeutic treatment (Group 2), these inflammatory bowel disease mice lost an additional 15-18% of their body weight by Day 8-10. About 50% of mice receiving no treatment had to be sacrificed in order to obtain blood and live tissue samples, as they were too weak to survive by Day 10. Systemic calcitriol injections failed to prevent body weight loss. While injection of monocytes expressing non-therapeutic genes 15 (mCherry) reduced body weight loss, injection of monocytes expressing 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene alone or together with transforming growth factor beta gene was more effective in reducing weight loss. In contrast to a more than 30% increase in serum calcium in the calcitriol-treated inflammatory bowel disease mice, no hypercalcemia occurred in inflammatory bowel disease mice receiving injection of monocytes expressing 20 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene alone or in combination with transforming growth factor beta gene. Thus, the method for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease according to the present invention prevented body weight loss in dextran sodium sulfate mice but did not cause hypercalcemia. Injection of monocytes overexpressing non-therapeutic mCherry marker gene did not markedly reduce the severity of colon lesions. In contrast, 25 injection of monocytes overexpressing the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene not only prevented body weight loss but also dramatically reduced the lesion area. Systemic calcitriol injections failed to prevent body weight loss, however, it did improve colon mucosal integrity. This discrepancy is probably due to the suppression of inflammation by the high dose of calcitriol, while the severe hypercalcemia it caused led to a deterioration of the overall health of the 30 mice. Therefore, inflammation-specific monocytes-based 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene adoptive therapy according to the present invention is highly effective in treating inflammatory bowel disease without producing a general systemic hypercalcemia.

35 **[0050]** The method for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease according to the present invention has several advantages compared with other cell-based gene therapies. First, the present method does not require prolonged ex-vivo cell

5 culture and expansion, thereby substantially reducing the cost of the treatment. Second,
based on the animal studies above, a single injection of gene-modified, inflammation-specific
monocytes was sufficient to treat the disease, though the present invention includes the use of
multiple doses if needed. Third, the only product of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene in humans
is calcitriol, which is harmless to the body as long as the overexpression of calcitriol is
10 limited to the diseased tissue preventing systemic hypercalcemia. Fourth, transduction of the
monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene can be made by electroporation of naked
plasmic DNA which does not involve the use of any viral vector for gene transfer, thereby
eliminating any risk associated with the use of viral vectors, though the present method
includes the use of viral vectors when warranted.

15 **[0051]** Although the present invention has been discussed in considerable detail with
reference to certain preferred embodiments, other embodiments are possible. Therefore, the
scope of the appended claims should not be limited to the description of preferred
embodiments contained in this disclosure.

5 WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. Gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes suitable for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease; the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprising a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene that produces functional 1-alpha-hydroxylase when the monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages.

2. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes of claim 1, where the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is a human 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene.

3. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes of claim 1, where the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on plasmid DNA.

4. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes of claim 1, where the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on a viral vector.

5. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes of claim 1, further comprising a growth factor gene that produces functional growth factor when the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages.

6. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes of claim 5, where the growth factor gene is a human growth factor gene.

7. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes of claim 5, where the growth factor gene is on plasmid DNA.

8. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes of claim 5, where the growth factor gene is on a viral vector.

9. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes of claim 5, where the growth factor gene is selected from the group consisting of insulin-like growth factor 1 and a transforming growth factor beta gene.

10. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes of claim 1, further comprising a macrophage-specific promoter that limits expression of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene until the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages, where the promoter is functional under conditions of inflammation.

11. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes of claim 10, where the

5 macrophage-specific promoter is selected from the group consisting of CD11b, CD14, c-fms, Lysozyme M and Scavenger Receptor Class A.

12. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes of claim 1, further comprising both a growth factor gene that produces functional growth factor when the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific
10 macrophages, and a macrophage-specific promoter that limits expression of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene until the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages.

13. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes of claim 1, where the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes are CD14-positive and CD16-negative
15 monocytes.

14. Gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages suitable for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease; the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages comprising a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene that produces functional
1-alpha-hydroxylase.

15. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 14, where the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is a human 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene.

16. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 14, where the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on plasmid DNA.

17. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 14, where the
25 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on a viral vector.

18. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 14, further comprising a growth factor gene that produces functional growth factor.

19. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 18, where the growth factor gene is a human growth factor gene.

20. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 18, where the
30 growth factor gene is on plasmid DNA.

21. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 18, where the growth factor gene is on a viral vector.

22. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 18, where the
35 growth factor gene is selected from the group consisting of insulin-like growth factor 1 and a

5 transforming growth factor beta gene.

23. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 14, further comprising a macrophage-specific promoter that limits expression of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene until the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages, where the promoter is functional under conditions of inflammation.

10 24. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 23, where the macrophage-specific promoter is selected from the group consisting of CD11b, CD14, c-fms, Lysozyme M and Scavenger Receptor Class A.

15 25. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 14, further comprising both a growth factor gene that produces functional growth factor, and a macrophage-specific promoter.

26. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 14, where the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages are M2 macrophages.

27. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 14, where the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages are Gr1-positive M2 macrophages.

20 28. The gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages of claim 14, where the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages are Mac1-positive macrophages.

29. Gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages that have transdifferentiated from gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes according to claim 1.

25 30. A pharmaceutical suitable for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease, the pharmaceutical comprising gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes according to claim 1.

31. The pharmaceutical according to claim 30, further comprising one or more than one substance selected from the group consisting of an anti-inflammatory agent, a cell growth media, an immunosuppressant, a monoclonal antibody and a preservative.

30 32. A pharmaceutical suitable for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease, the pharmaceutical comprising gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages according to claim 14.

35 33. The pharmaceutical according to claim 32, further comprising one or more than one substance selected from the group consisting of an anti-inflammatory agent, a cell growth media, an immunosuppressant, a monoclonal antibody and a preservative.

- 5 34. A method for treating one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease, the method comprising:
- a) identifying a patient with an inflammation-related condition or disease, where the inflammation-related condition or disease is caused by the inappropriate initiation of inflammation or the inappropriate lack of cessation of inflammation;
 - 10 b) obtaining inflammation-specific monocytes;
 - c) producing gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes from the inflammation-specific monocytes, where the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprise a 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene, where the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is expressed to produce functional 1-alpha-hydroxylase enzyme when the monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-
 - 15 modified, inflammation-specific macrophages;
 - d) administering an amount of the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes to the patient;
 - e) allowing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes to locate and enter into the inflamed organ or tissue affected by the condition or disease;
 - 20 f) allowing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes to transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages; and
 - g) allowing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages to produce 1-alpha-hydroxylase, where production of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase causes the localized production of calcitriol in the inflamed organ or tissue from circulating calcidiol which is present in body fluids of the patient, thereby treating the inflammation-related condition or disease by suppressing inflammation while limiting side effects from systemic hypercalcemia.
- 25 35. The method of claim 34, where the patient is a human.
36. The method of claim 34, where the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease involves simultaneous inflammation of a plurality of body tissues or
- 30 organs.
37. The method of claim 34, where the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease that involves simultaneous inflammation of a plurality of body tissues or organs is selected from the group consisting of sepsis and polytrauma.
38. The method of claim 34, where the one or more than one inflammation-related
- 35 condition or disease lacks an autoimmune component.

- 5 39. The method of claim 34, where the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease that lacks an autoimmune component is selected from the group consisting of sepsis and polytrauma.
40. The method of claim 34, where the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease involves inflammation limited to one specific body tissue or organ.
- 10 41. The method of claim 34, where the one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease is an autoimmune disease.
42. The method of claim 34, where the condition or disease is selected from the group consisting of Alzheimer's disease, antiphospholipid syndrome, atherosclerosis, autoimmune encephalomyelitis, autoimmune hepatitis, celiac disease, Graves' disease, inflammatory
15 bowel disease, multiple sclerosis, myasthenia gravis, myositis, polymyositis, Raynaud's phenomenon, rheumatoid arthritis, scleroderma, Sjogren's syndrome, systemic lupus, type 1 diabetes and uveitis.
43. The method of claim 34, where identifying the patient comprises diagnosing the patient with one or more than one inflammation-related condition or disease.
- 20 44. The method of claim 43, where diagnosing the patient comprises performing one or more than one of action selected from the group consisting of performing a physical examination, performing a non-invasive imaging examination, and identifying one or more than one marker for the inflammation-related condition or disease in the blood or other body fluid of the patient.
- 25 45. The method of claim 34, where identifying the patient comprises consulting patient records to determine if the patient has an inflammation-related condition or disease.
46. The method of claim 34, where the inflammation-specific monocytes obtained are CD14-positive and CD16-negative monocytes.
47. The method of claim 34, where obtaining inflammation-specific monocytes
30 comprises procuring embryonic stem cells and differentiating the embryonic stem cells into the inflammation-specific monocytes.
48. The method of claim 34, where obtaining inflammation-specific monocytes comprises extracting a body fluid or body tissue containing inflammation-specific monocytes from the patient.
- 35 49. The method of claim 48, where extracting a body fluid or body tissue containing

5 inflammation-specific monocytes from the patient comprises obtaining venous blood from the patient by performing venipuncture on the patient and extracting the inflammation-specific monocytes from the venous blood.

10 50. The method of claim 48, where extracting a body fluid or body tissue containing inflammation-specific monocytes from the patient comprises performing adsorptive apheresis on the blood of the patient and extracting the inflammation-specific monocytes from the blood of the patient.

15 51. The method of claim 48, where extracting a body fluid or body tissue containing inflammation-specific monocytes from the patient comprises obtaining bone marrow from the patient by performing a bone marrow biopsy on the patient and extracting the inflammation-specific monocytes from the bone marrow of the patient.

52. The method of claim 48, where extracting a body fluid or body tissue containing inflammation-specific monocytes from the patient comprises obtaining preserved cord blood of the patient and extracting the inflammation-specific monocytes from the preserved cord blood.

20 53. The method of claim 34, where obtaining inflammation-specific monocytes comprises extracting patient-specific induced pluripotent stem cells from the patient and performing a reprogramming factors-mediated de-differentiation of stem cells from the patient and extracting the inflammation-specific monocytes from the patient-specific induced pluripotent stem cells of the patient.

25 54. The method of claim 48, further comprising purifying the inflammation-specific monocytes from the body fluid or body tissue containing inflammation-specific monocytes, after obtaining the inflammation-specific monocytes.

55. The method of claim 54, where purifying the inflammation-specific monocytes comprises performing fluorescence-activated cell sorting.

30 56. The method of claim 54, where purifying the inflammation-specific monocytes comprises performing magnetic-activated cell sorting.

57. The method of claim 34, further comprising expanding and storing at least some of the isolated inflammation-specific monocytes for multiple repeated infusions.

35 58. The method of claim 57, where expanding and storing at least some of the isolated inflammation-specific monocytes comprises freezing the isolated inflammation-specific

5 monocytes.

59. The method of claim 34, where the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is a human 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene.

60. The method of claim 34, where the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on plasmid DNA.

61. The method of claim 34, where the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene is on a viral vector.

10 62. The method of claim 54, where producing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprises transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene.

63. The method of claim 54, where transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes is accomplished by electroporation with one or more than one plasmid DNA or 15 one or more than one viral vector comprising the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene.

64. The method of claim 34, where the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes further comprise one or more than one growth factor gene, where the one or more than one growth factor gene is expressed to produce a functional growth factor when the monocytes transdifferentiate into gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages, and where the 20 growth factor enhances the function of the calcitriol.

65. The method of claim 64, where the growth factor gene is a human growth factor gene.

66. The method of claim 64, where the growth factor gene is on plasmid DNA.

67. The method of claim 34, where the growth factor gene is on a viral vector.

25 68. The method of claim 34, where the growth factor gene is selected from the group consisting of insulin-like growth factor 1 and transforming growth factor beta gene.

69. The method of claim 54, where the method further comprises transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene.

70. The method of claim 69, where producing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific 30 monocytes comprises transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene; and

where transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene is done simultaneously with transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene.

35 71. The method of claim 69, where producing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific

5 monocytes comprises transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene; and

where transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene is done serially with transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene.

10 72. The method of claim 70, where transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene comprising using the one or more than one plasmid DNA or one or more than one viral vector comprising the one or more than one growth factor gene.

15 73. The method of claim 70, where transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with one or more than one growth factor gene is done by electroporation with the one or more than one plasmid DNA or the one or more than one viral vector, where the one or more than one plasmid DNA or the one or more than one viral vector comprises the one or more than one growth factor gene.

20 74. The method of claim 66, where the plasmid DNA comprises both the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one growth factor gene.

75. The method of claim 67, where the viral vector comprises both the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one growth factor gene.

25 76. The method of claim 34, where the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes further comprise one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter, where the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter tends to limit the expression of the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene to macrophages that transdifferentiate from the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes, and where the promoter is functional under conditions of inflammation.

30 77. The method of claim 76, where the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter is a human macrophage-specific promoter.

78. The method of claim 76, where the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter is on plasmid DNA.

79. The method of claim 76, where the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter is on a viral vector.

35 80. The method of claim 76, where one or more than one of the one or more than one

5 macrophage-specific promoter is selected from the group consisting of CD11b, CD14, c-fms, Lysozyme M and Scavenger Receptor Class A.

81. The method of claim 74, where producing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes comprising the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter comprises transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter.

82. The method of claim 81, where transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter comprises using one or more than one plasmid DNA comprising both the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter.

83. The method of claim 81, where transducing the purified inflammation-specific monocytes with the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter comprises using one or more than one viral vector comprising both the 1-alpha-hydroxylase gene and the one or more than one macrophage-specific promoter.

84. The method of claim 34, where administration comprises a route selected from the group consisting of intraperitoneal administration, intramuscular administration, intravenous infusion.

85. The method of claim 34, where administration comprises infusion of the gene-modified, inflammation-specific monocytes into or adjacent to the inflamed tissue or organ.

86. The method of claim 34, where the amount is between one hundred thousand and one billion cells.

87. The method of claim 34, where the amount is between one million and one billion cells.

88. The method of claim 34, where the amount is between one million and one hundred million cells.

89. The method of claim 34, where the amount is between one million and ten million cells.

90. The method of claim 34, where the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages comprise one or more than one growth factor gene, and the method further comprises allowing the gene-modified, inflammation-specific macrophages to produce one or

5 more than one growth factor from the one or more than one growth factor gene.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US2013/025986

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(8) - A61K 48/00 (2013.01)

USPC - 424/93.21

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC(8) - A61K 48/00; C12N 5/0786, 15/86 (2013.01)

USPC - 424/93.21; 435/372, 456, 458, 459, 461

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

CPC- A61K 48/0066; C12N5/0645, 15/86, 2502/1157 (2013.01)

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

Patbase, Google Patent, PubMed, Google Scholar, Google

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	WO 2010/125115 A1 (GASSULL et al) 04 November 2010 (04.11.2010) entire document	1-11, 13-26, 28-33
Y	US 6,274,359 B1 (ANAZAWA et al) 14 August 2001 (14.08.2001) entire document	1-11, 13-26, 28-33
Y	US 2010/0003272 A1 (SIEWEKE) 07 January 2010 (07.01.2010) entire document	5-9, 18-22, 25, 28
Y	WANG et al. 'Macrophages in Renal Disease.' Journal of Am. Soc. Nephrol. 22: Pages 21-27. 2011. entire document	26
A	BURKE et al. 'Macrophages in gene therapy: cellular delivery vehicles and in vivo targets.' Journal of Leukocyte Biology, Volume 72: Pages 417-428. September 2001. entire document	1-90

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

* Special categories of cited documents:

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