Efficiency of energy transfer, but not external work, is maximized in stunned myocardium

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Trines, Serge A. I. P., Cornelis J. Slager, Joost van der Moer, Pieter D. Verduw, and Rob Krams. Efficiency of energy transfer, but not external work, is maximized in stunned myocardium. Am J Physiol Heart Circ Physiol 279: H1264–H1273, 2000.—There is no evidence regarding the effect of stunning on maximization of regional myocardial external work (EW) or efficiency of energy transfer (EET) in relation to regional afterload (end-systolic stress, \( \sigma_{es} \)). To that end, we studied these relationships in both the left anterior descending coronary artery (LADCA) and left circumflex coronary artery regions in anesthetized, open-chest pigs before and after LADCA stunning. In normal myocardium, EET vs. \( \sigma_{es} \) was maximal at 75.4 (69.7–81.9)% of end-systolic stress, whereas EW vs. \( \sigma_{es} \) was submaximal at 12.0 (6.6–17.3) \( \times 10^2 \) J/m\(^3\). Increasing \( \sigma_{es} \) increased EW by 18 (10–27)%.

Regional myocardial stunning decreased EET (27%) and EW (36%) and caused the myocardium to operate both at maximal EW (EW\(_{max}\)) and at maximal EET (EET\(_{max}\)). EET and EW became also more sensitive to changes in \( \sigma_{es} \) in the stunned region. The situation remained unchanged. Combining the data from before and after stunning, both EW\(_{max}\) and EET\(_{max}\) displayed a positive relationship with contractility. In conclusion, the normal regional myocardium was submaximal at 12.0 (6.6–17.3) \( \times 10^2 \) J/m\(^3\), whereas EW vs. \( \sigma_{es} \) was submaximal at 12.0 (6.6–17.3) \( \times 10^2 \) J/m\(^3\). Increasing \( \sigma_{es} \) increased EW by 18 (10–27)%.

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ning of a region influences the nonstunned region. Hence, we evaluated the relationship of $\text{EW}-\sigma_{es}$ and $\text{EET}-\sigma_{es}$ for the nonstunned region after stunning another region. All of the above-proposed studies were conducted in open-chest pigs with a well-accepted protocol to induce myocardial stunning.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**General.** All experiments were performed in accordance with the “Guiding Principles for the Care and Use of Animals” as approved by the Council of the American Physiological Society and under the regulations of the Animal Care Committee of the Erasmus University Rotterdam.

**Instrumentation.** After an overnight fast, crossbred Yorkshire-Landrace pigs (30–39 kg, $n = 9$) were sedated with 20 mg/kg im ketamine (Apharm, Arnhem, The Netherlands), anesthetized with 15–20 mg/kg iv pentobarbital sodium (Apharm), intubated, and connected to a ventilator for intermittent positive-pressure ventilation with a mixture of oxygen and nitrogen (1:2 vol/vol). Arterial oxygen content and blood gases were kept within the normal range [$7.35 < \text{pH} < 7.45; 35 < \text{PCO}_2 (\text{mmHg}) < 45; 100 < \text{PO}_2 (\text{mmHg}) < 150$] by adjusting, when necessary, the respiratory rate and tidal volume. Three 7-French (Fr) fluid-filled catheters were placed in the superior caval veins for the continuous infusion of $10–15 \text{mg} \cdot \text{kg}^{-1} \cdot \text{h}^{-1}$ pentobarbital sodium, the continuous infusion of saline, the administration of 4 mg of the muscle relaxant pancuronium bromide (Organon Teknika, Boxtel, The Netherlands) prior to thoracotomy, and the administration of the specific negative chronotropic agent zatebradine (1–2 mg/kg, courtesy of Dr. J. W. Dämgen; Dr. Karl Thomae, Boehringer Ingelheim, Biberach a/d Riss, Germany). Central aortic blood pressure was monitored via an 8-Fr catheter positioned in the thoracic descending aorta, whereas left ventricular pressure and its first derivative were obtained with a 7-Fr micromanometer-tipped catheter (Braun Medical, Uden, The Netherlands), which was inserted via the left carotid artery. A latex balloon made in our laboratory was mounted on a 7-Fr fluid-filled catheter and inserted via the right femoral vein and positioned in the inferior caval vein just above the diaphragm. Inflation of this balloon reduced the preload for the left ventricle. A 7-Fr latex Fogarty catheter (Baxter Healthcare, Irvine, CA) was inserted via the right carotid artery and positioned in the ascending aorta. Inflation of this balloon gradually increased afterload for the left ventricle.

After a midline sternotomy and after ligation of the left mammarian artery and vein, a part of the second left rib was removed, and the heart was suspended in a pericardial cradle. An electromagnetic flow probe (Skalar, Delft, The Netherlands) was placed around the ascending aorta to measure aortic flow. A small segment of the proximal part of the left anterior descending coronary artery (LADCA) was dissected free for placement of an electromagnetic flow probe (Skalar) and an atraumatic clamp to occlude the LADCA. To obtain local coronary venous blood samples, a cannula was inserted into the great cardiac vein, which drains specifically the LADCA perfusion area (2). Pacing leads were attached to the right atrial appendage and connected to a pacing stimulator (model S9; Grass, Quincy, MA). Rectal temperature was monitored throughout the experiment and was maintained between 37°C and 38°C using external heating pads, warming of the saline infusion, and coverage of the animals with blankets.

Two ultrasonic crystals (Triton Technology, San Diego, CA) were positioned in the midmyocardium of both the anterior and posterior left ventricular wall to measure the diameter of the left ventricle. The diameter crystal in the anterior wall was positioned close to the LADCA segment length crystals. The diameter crystal in the posterior wall was positioned such as to optimize signal quality. Two pairs of ultrasonic crystals were implanted in the midmyocardium of the distribution area of the LADCA, each pair 10 mm apart, approximately at one-third of the distance from apex to base. One pair was positioned in the direction of the left ventricular outflow tract (as determined visually), whereas the other pair was placed perpendicular to this direction. The distance of 10 mm and the perpendicularity of the two pairs were assured using a homemade device consisting of two perpendicularly fixed pairs of needles. Similarly, two pairs of crystals were implanted in the midmyocardium of the distribution area of the midcircumflex coronary artery (LCXCA), approximately at half the distance from apex to base. One pair was positioned in the direction of the left ventricular outflow tract, and the other pair was placed in the perpendicular direction. The position of the crystals in the midmyocardium was verified at the end of the experiment.

**Experimental protocol.** After a 30- to 45-min stabilization period, steady-state recordings of hemodynamics and segment lengths in the two myocardial regions were made during 10 respiratory cycles, and global arterial and regional myocardial venous blood samples were collected. After these baseline recordings were made, heart rate was lowered below 70 beats/min by infusion of zatebradine and set at 100 beats/min with the external pacemaker to exclude effects of alterations in heart rate. The baseline measurements were repeated and followed by inflation of the balloon located in the inferior caval vein over a period of 15 s to create a series of 20–25 beats with a gradual reduction of end-systolic left ventricular pressure of $35–60 \text{mmHg}$. During the inflation of the balloon, the respirator was switched off. The period of 15 s is sufficiently short to prevent reflex-mediated changes in contractility (1). Moreover, before the heart was paced, systolic, diastolic, and total heart cycle duration did not change in our experiments up to 18 s (for definition of systole and diastole, see below). After hemodynamic variables had resumed preinflation values (differences in mean arterial pressure and in maximum left ventricular pressure rise smaller than 4 mmHg and 100 mmHg/s, respectively), the balloon located in the ascending aorta was then gradually inflated over a period of 10 s to create 10–20 beats with an increase of end-systolic left ventricular pressure of $30–40 \text{mmHg}$. The respirator was again switched off during this procedure. The order of inflating the two balloons was randomized for each measurement.

Subsequently, myocardial stunning was produced in the LADCA region by two coronary (LADCA) occlusions of 10 min, separated by 10 min of reperfusion. The last occlusion was followed by 30 min of reperfusion. After this period, the steady-state measurements and the balloon inflations as mentioned above were repeated. At the end of each experiment, methylene blue was infused into the LADCA, and the myocardium perfused by the LADCA was dissected and weighed. In addition, the myocardium inside the segment crystals in both LADCA and LCXCA regions was also dissected and weighed.

**Data acquisition and analysis.** Left ventricular pressure, its first derivative, central aortic pressure, aortic flow, coronary blood flow, left ventricular diameter, and the regional segment length signals were digitized (sample rate: 125 Hz) with a 12-bit analog-to-digital converter connected to an AT-based personal computer (AT-CODAS; Keithley Instruments, Gorinchem, The Netherlands) and stored on disk for
offline analysis. Mean arterial pressure, systolic arterial pressure, diastolic arterial pressure, maximum left ventricular pressure rise, left ventricular end-diastolic pressure, cardiac output, stroke volume, and systemic vascular resistance were calculated following standard procedures. Myocardial oxygen consumption of the LADCA perfusion area (MV_o2, in J·beat^{-1}·m^{-3}) was calculated as the product of coronary blood flow and the difference in arterial and coronary venous oxygen content divided by the heart rate and the mass of the LADCA perfusion area. The energy generated by 1 ml of O_2 was set equal to 20 J (22). Left ventricular wall stress (σ, in N/m²) and strain (ε, dimensionless) were calculated offline by applying the formulas described in the Appendix. End-systolic stress-strain relationships were determined from the combined pre- and afterload changes by determining left ventricular end-systolic stress-strain points using an iterative fitting algorithm, as described before (26). Briefly, to determine these points, a linear relationship was applied in which elastance was defined as σ(ε - ε_0), where ε_0 is the strain at zero wall stress. To initiate the iteration, ε_0 was set to zero and elastance was calculated. End-systolic stress-strain points were determined for each heartbeat as the point at which elastance was maximal. Subsequently, a new ε_0 value was calculated using a linear least-squares fit through the end-systolic points. The new ε_0 value was used to start a new cycle as described above. This procedure was repeated until ε_0 did not differ more than 1% from the ε_0 determined during the previous cycle. The stress and strain at these points were defined as end-systolic stress (σ_es) and end-systolic strain (ε_es).

As the end-systolic stress-strain relationship was often curvilinear, the end-systolic points were also fitted to the following second-order polynomial regression equation: \( \sigma = c_3 \cdot \varepsilon^3 + c_2 \cdot \varepsilon^2 + c_1 \cdot \varepsilon + c_0 \) (14, 26), using the least-squares technique. If the coefficient c_0 was not significantly different from zero (P \( \geq \) 0.05), the linear equation was selected. If c_3 was negative (convex to the strain axis), the second-order polynomial was selected. If c_3 was positive (convex to the strain-axis) and the fitted curve did not intersect the strain-axis, the data were fitted to the third-order polynomial \( \sigma = c_3 \cdot \varepsilon^3 + c_2 \cdot \varepsilon^2 + c_1 \cdot \varepsilon + c_0 \). The slope of the end-systolic stress-strain relationship, called the end-systolic elastance (E_es, in N/m²), was used as an index of contractility. As this slope is strain dependent, E_es was calculated as the local slope at a stress, corresponding to a left ventricular pressure of 80 mmHg at baseline. This value was identical during the experiment for each pig.

The area enclosed by the left ventricular stress-strain loop during a single heartbeat was calculated as the EW of the myocardial region (in J/m³), normalized per unit of volume (10, 19, 28). Stress-strain area (SSA, in J/m³), the regional equivalent of the pressure-volume area (PVA), an index of total ventricular work, was calculated as the area enclosed by the end-systolic and end-diastolic relations and the systolic trajectory of the stress-strain loop (14, 24). Potential energy (PE, in J/m³) was calculated by subtracting EW from SSA. The regional EET (in %) was calculated as (EW/SSA)\times100. The situation before pre- and afterload changes was called the working point, and σ_es, SSA, EW, PE, and EET at the working point were called σ_es,w,p, SSA,w,p, EW,w,p, PE,w,p, and EET,w,p.

Subsequently, for each animal, EW and EET were plotted versus σ_es, and the relationships were normalized such that EW_w,p, EET_w,p, and σ_es,w,p were equal to unity before stunning. To account for changes in the coordinates of the working point for σ_es, EW, and EET after stunning, the relationships were normalized such that the coordinates of the working point were equal to the ratio of the mean value after stunning and the mean value before stunning. Each relationship was linearly interpolated to obtain a range of equal σ_es coordinates for each animal. Maximal EW (EW_{max}), maximal EET (EET_{max}), and their respective σ_es values (σ_{es,EW_{max}} and σ_{es,EET_{max}}) were determined from the normalized curves. The respective differences between EW_{wp}, EET_{wp}, and σ_{es,wp} and EW_{max}, EET_{max}, σ_{es,EW_{max}} and σ_{es,EET_{max}} (ΔEW, ΔEET, Δσ_{es,EW_{max}}, Δσ_{es,EET_{max}}) were determined. Finally, the intervals on the σ_{es} axis (surrounding σ_{es,wp}), in which EW and EET did not decrease significantly from EW_{wp} and EET_{wp}, were determined using paired t-tests. The left and right borders of these intervals are referred to as left and right significance borders. To determine the dependence of EW and EET on σ_{es}, the slopes of the EW-σ_{es} and EET-σ_{es} relationships at these significance borders were calculated. The normalized curves from different animals were averaged at each normalized σ_{es} coordinate showing at least five EW or EET measuring values, and the average curve was filtered applying a moving average filter.

Statistics. For all hemodynamic, contractile, and energetic parameters, the effect of infusion of zatebradine and subsequent pacing at 100 beats/min and of LADCA stunning and, for the contractile and energetic parameters (except MV_o2), the difference between the LADCA and LCXCA regions was tested by a two-way ANOVA for repeated measurements, followed by Student-Newman-Keuls post hoc tests for multiple comparisons. As MV_o2 was only measured in the LADCA perfusion area, a one-way ANOVA for repeated measurements was performed. Because we could not describe the EW-σ_{es} and EET-σ_{es} relationships with a regression equation, we could not perform an ANOVA to test for changes in these relationships. To overcome this problem, we applied a three-way ANOVA for repeated measures, using σ_{es}, stunning, and myocardial region as within-subject factors. Because within-subject factors have to be discrete, we divided the range of σ_{es} values in six equal ranges, using the mid-σ_{es} value of each range and the mean of the accompanying EW or EET values. Next, paired t-tests were performed for both pressure areas to test whether ΔEW and ΔEET differed from zero. Paired t-tests were also performed to test the influence of LADCA stunning on the parameters of the EW-σ_{es} and EET-σ_{es} relationships.

The influence of E_es on the curve parameters EW_{max}, ΔEW, EET_{max}, and ΔEET was tested using linear regression on the pooled data of the LADCA and LCXCA perfusion areas before and after stunning. To validate pooling of the data, the two perfusion areas were encoded using a slope- and an intercept-dummy variable, and significance of these dummies was tested using an F-test. For the regressions, one data point with an E_es that was 3.7 standard deviations higher than the mean E_es was removed. No regression equations are given. All data have been expressed as means and 95% prediction intervals. P < 0.05 was considered significant. Unless stated otherwise, only significant changes are mentioned in the RESULTS.

RESULTS

Systemic hemodynamics. Lowering heart rate by zatebradine from 109 (99–118) beats/min to below 70 beats/min and subsequent pacing to 100 beats/min did not affect any hemodynamic parameter significantly, except for the maximum left ventricular pressure rise, which decreased by 13% (Table 1). Stun ning of the LADCA perfusion area decreased diastolic arterial pressure (15%) and the maximum left ventricular pres-
sure rise (18%). Cardiac output and stroke volume both decreased by 23%, and systemic vascular resistance increased by 17%.

**Regional contractile and energetic parameters.** At baseline, all contractile and energetic parameters were the same between the LADCA and LCXCA regions, except for SSA_{wp} in the LCXCA region, which was 89% of SSA_{wp} in the LADCA region. Lowering heart rate from 109 to below 70 beats/min and pacing at 100 beats/min had no effect on E_{es}, \varepsilon_0, \varepsilon_{es,wp}, EW_{wp}, PE_{wp}, and EET_{wp} in both the LADCA and the LCXCA perfusion area, except for SSA_{wp} of the LCXCA perfusion area, which decreased by 15% (Table 2). There was no difference between the LADCA and LCXCA region for any parameter, while M\dot{V}_O_2 of the LADCA perfusion area was also unaffected. In the LADCA perfusion area, stunning reduced E_{es} by 38%, whereas \varepsilon_0 increased by 10%. EW_{wp} decreased by 36%, causing a decrease in EET_{wp} of 27%. SSA_{wp} and PE_{wp} remained unchanged, although PE_{wp} tended to increase. Stunning did not affect M\dot{V}_O_2. Stunning the LADCA perfusion area had no effect on any of the contractile and energetic parameters of the LCXCA perfusion area, except for EW_{wp}, which decreased by 23%. Stunning also induced differences between the LADCA and LCXCA perfusion areas for E_{es}, \varepsilon_0, PE, and EET. 

**EW-\sigma_{es} relationships.** Before stunning, the individual EW-\sigma_{es} relationships displayed a maximum in EW at 14.1 (7.8–20.4) \times 10^{2} \text{ J/m}^3 at an \sigma_{es} of 15.3 (10.1–20.6) \times 10^{3} \text{ N/m}^2 (LADCA, before stunning; Fig. 1) and 11.9 (7.9–15.8) \times 10^{2} \text{ J/m}^3 at an \sigma_{es} of 15.9 (12.3–19.5) \times 10^{3} \text{ N/m}^2 (LCXCA, before stunning). There was no significant difference between the two curves. The normalized average curves of both the LADCA and LCXCA regions displayed a steep descending relationship during \sigma_{es} reduction; the slopes of these curves at the left significance border were 3.46 (0.63–6.29) (LADCA) and 2.62 (–0.06–5.30) (LCXCA) (Fig. 2, A and C). However, they displayed a flat relationship during \sigma_{es} increments; the slopes of the curves at the right nonsignificant maxima were –0.68 (–1.61–0.26) (LADCA) and –0.83 (–1.84–0.19) (LCXCA). Consequently, a decrease in \sigma_{es} had a strong influence on EW; only a 2.8% (LADCA) or 1.3% (LCXCA) decrease in \sigma_{es} from the working point already resulted in a significant decrease in EW. In contrast, an increase in \sigma_{es} did first result in an increase in EW, but a further increase in \sigma_{es} did not result in a significant decrease.

### Table 1. Systemic hemodynamics before and after LADCA stunning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Baseline [109 (99–118) beats/min]</th>
<th>Before Stunning (100 beats/min)</th>
<th>After Stunning (100 beats/min)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean arterial pressure, mmHg</td>
<td>92(82–102)</td>
<td>89(79–99)</td>
<td>78(67–88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systolic arterial pressure, mmHg</td>
<td>109(111–118)</td>
<td>110(86–116)</td>
<td>96(87–105)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diastolic arterial pressure, mmHg</td>
<td>77(68–85)</td>
<td>74(64–84)</td>
<td>63(53–73)‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum left ventricular pressure rise, mmHg/s</td>
<td>1,730(1,450–2,010)</td>
<td>1,510(1,350–1,660)</td>
<td>1,240(950–1,530)†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End-diastolic left ventricular pressure, mmHg</td>
<td>9.8(8.2–11.4)</td>
<td>9.2(7.8–10.8)</td>
<td>10.8(8.8–12.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiac output, l/min</td>
<td>2.9(2.3–3.5)</td>
<td>2.6(2.3–3.0)</td>
<td>2.0(1.5–2.4)†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroke volume, ml</td>
<td>27(22–31)</td>
<td>26(23–30)</td>
<td>20(15–24)†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic arterial resistance, mmHg·min^{-1}·l^{-1}</td>
<td>34(26–41)</td>
<td>35(28–41)</td>
<td>41(35–48)‡</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values are means, with 95% prediction interval in parentheses; n = 9 pigs. LADCA, left anterior descending coronary artery. *P < 0.05 vs. baseline. †P < 0.05 vs. before stunning at heart rate of 100 beats/min.

### Table 2. Regional contractile and energetic parameters before and after LADCA stunning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Baseline [109 (99–118) beats/min]</th>
<th>Before Stunning (100 beats/min)</th>
<th>After Stunning (100 beats/min)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E_{es}, \times 10^4 \text{ N/m}^2</td>
<td>LADCA: 10.8(7.17–14.4)</td>
<td>11.6(8.84–14.3)</td>
<td>7.21(5.16–9.26)†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LCXCA: 11.9(8.55–15.2)</td>
<td>12.0(8.43–15.5)</td>
<td>12.9(8.12–17.7)‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\varepsilon_0, %</td>
<td>LADCA: 0.81(0.78–0.83)</td>
<td>0.81(0.77–0.84)</td>
<td>0.89(0.86–0.92)†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LCXCA: 0.82(0.78–0.85)</td>
<td>0.81(0.77–0.86)</td>
<td>0.83(0.78–0.89)‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\sigma_{es,wp}, \times 10^4 \text{ N/m}^2</td>
<td>LADCA: 12.3(7.83–16.8)</td>
<td>11.4(7.45–15.4)</td>
<td>12.8(9.00–17.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LCXCA: 11.8(9.10–14.4)</td>
<td>11.0(7.94–14.1)</td>
<td>10.2(7.74–12.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA_{wp}, \times 10^2 \text{ J/m}^3</td>
<td>LADCA: 18.8(10.6–27.0)</td>
<td>16.3(8.70–23.8)</td>
<td>14.1(9.88–22.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LCXCA: 16.7(10.8–22.6)</td>
<td>14.9(9.15–19.2)</td>
<td>11.1(6.04–16.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EW_{wp}, \times 10^2 \text{ J/m}^3</td>
<td>LADCA: 13.7(8.00–19.4)</td>
<td>12.0(6.61–17.3)</td>
<td>7.9(2.86–12.5)§</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LCXCA: 11.8(7.35–16.2)</td>
<td>9.75(6.51–13.0)</td>
<td>7.5(4.01–11.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE_{wp}, \times 10^2 \text{ J/m}^3</td>
<td>LADCA: 5.10(2.41–7.78)</td>
<td>4.28(2.00–6.57)</td>
<td>6.38(2.65–10.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LCXCA: 4.93(3.05–6.82)</td>
<td>4.43(3.38–6.47)</td>
<td>3.55(1.95–5.16)‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EET_{wp}, %</td>
<td>LADCA: 70.8(65.1–75.5)</td>
<td>67.9(65.1–74.2)</td>
<td>67.2(61.4–73.0)†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LCXCA: 71.2(67.9–75.5)</td>
<td>67.9(65.1–74.2)</td>
<td>67.2(61.4–73.0)†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M\dot{V}_O_2, \times 10^2 \text{ J-beat}^{-1}·\text{m}^{-3}</td>
<td>LADCA: 112(73.9–150)</td>
<td>169(92.2–244)</td>
<td>157(89.9–245)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values are means, with 95% prediction interval in parentheses; n = 9 pigs. LADCA, end-systolic elastance; \varepsilon_0, strain at zero stress; subscript “wp” indicates working point; \sigma_{es}, end systolic stress; SSA, stress-strain area; EW, external work; PE, potential energy; EET, efficiency of energy transfer; M\dot{V}_O_2, myocardial oxygen consumption; LCXCA, left circumflex coronary artery. *P < 0.05 vs. baseline. †P < 0.05 vs. before stunning at 100 beats/min.
Because of this increase in EW, both $\Delta s_{EW}$ and $\Delta D_{EW}$ were different from zero; $\Delta s_{EW}$ being 0.35 (0.26–0.45) and 0.39 (0.15–0.64) and $\Delta D_{EW}$ being 0.18 (0.10–0.27) and 0.21 (0.07–0.34) for the LADCA and LCXCA regions, respectively.

Stunning the LADCA region changed the shape of the EW-$s_{es}$ curve and shifted it downward (Fig. 2B). Therefore, the curves became different between the LADCA and LCXCA regions. Now both a decrease (10%) and an increase (13%) in $s_{es}$ caused a significant reduction in EW in the LADCA region, whereas in the LCXCA region a 1.1% decrease in $s_{es}$ still caused a significant decrease in EW and an increase in $s_{es}$ did not cause a significant decrease in EW. The slopes at the left and right significance border for the LADCA region did not change significantly, however, and remained at 1.86 (1.07–2.65) (left) and $-1.06$ (–2.03 to –0.09) (right). Furthermore, $\Delta s_{EW}$ decreased to 0.08 ($-0.11$–0.27, $P > 0.05$ vs. zero), and $\Delta D_{EW}$ decreased to 0.07 (0.01–0.13, $P < 0.05$ vs. zero). In addition, the $s_{es}$ coordinate of the maximum showed a tendency to decrease by 11% [to 13.7 (8.37–19.0) $\times 10^{3}$ N/m²; $P = 0.09$], and the EW coordinate of the maximum of the EW-$s_{es}$ curve decreased by 39% to 8.65 (3.16–14.1) $\times 10^{2}$ J/m³. For the LCXCA region, the ANOVA showed a significant change in the curve due to LADCA stunning (Fig. 2D). However, only EW$_{max}$ decreased by 22% to 9.11 (5.11–13.1) $\times 10^{2}$ J/m³ at an unchanged $s_{es}$ of 13.1 (11.1–15.1) $\times 10^{3}$ N/m². The slopes of the curve at the left significance border and the right nonsignificant maximum also remained unchanged at 1.68 (0.27–3.08) and $-0.76$ (–1.49 to –0.01), respectively.

**EET-$s_{es}$ relationships.** The individual EET-$s_{es}$ relationships displayed a maximum in EET of 78 (74–83)% at an $s_{es}$ of 10.8 (7.56–14.0) $\times 10^{3}$ N/m² (LADCA, before stunning, Fig. 3) and at 74 (69–79)% also at an $s_{es}$ of 10.8 (6.89–14.6) $\times 10^{3}$ N/m² (LCXCA, before stunning) after changing $s_{es}$ over a large range of values. There was no significant difference between the two curves. The normalized average curves of both the LADCA and LCXCA regions displayed a flat profile over a relatively large range of $s_{es}$ values (Fig. 4, A and C). Outside this region EET decreased more sharply. Therefore, a 25% (LADCA) or 38% (LCXCA) reduction in $s_{es}$ was necessary to induce a significant decrease in

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**Fig. 1.** Example of an EW-$s_{es}$ relationship of the left anterior descending coronary artery (LADCA) perfusion area before stunning of the LADCA perfusion area. See text for details. EW, external work; $s_{es}$, regional end-systolic stress.

**Fig. 2.** Averaged curves of normalized EW-$s_{es}$ relationships. A: LADCA before stunning. B: LADCA after stunning. C: left circumflex coronary artery (LCXCA) before stunning. D: LCXCA after stunning. Solid curves are averaged curves; broken lines are 95% prediction intervals. The horizontal line denotes the part of the curve in which EW is not significantly decreased from EW at the working point. If this line extends to the end of the data, no significant decrease in EW was found. See text for details.
EET. Also, a 3% (LADCA) or 34% (LCXCA) increase in $\sigma_{es}$ resulted in a significant decline in EET. The slopes of the curves at the left significance border were 0.54 (0.07–1.02) (LADCA) and 1.01 (−0.15–2.17) (LCXCA). The slopes at the right significance border were 0.10 (−1.09–0.89) and −0.79 (−1.32 to −0.26), respectively.

The $\Delta E_{EET}$ was not significantly different from zero, at −0.04 (−0.11–0.04) (LADCA) and −0.04 (−0.17–0.10) (LCXCA). Although the EET coordinates of the working point were different from the maximum ($P < 0.05$), $\Delta E_{EET}$ was only 0.04 (0.02–0.06) (LADCA) and 0.08 (0.04–0.13) (LCXCA).

Stunning the LADCA region changed the shape of the EET-$\sigma_{es}$ curve and shifted it downward (Fig. 4B).

The curve now displayed a maximum at 58.9 (45.7–72.2)% (a decrease of 24%, $P < 0.05$ vs. before stunning), at an $\sigma_{es}$ of 10.8 (6.46–15.2) × 10³ N/m² ($P > 0.05$ vs. before stunning). Still, a 29% decrease in $\sigma_{es}$ and a 1% increase in $\sigma_{es}$ caused EET to decrease significantly. The shape of the EET-$\sigma_{es}$ curve changed in such a way that EET became more sensitive to both increments and decrements in $\sigma_{es}$ as the slope of the EET-$\sigma_{es}$ relationship at the right significance border increased 5-fold to 3.33 (1.33–5.34) and the slope at the right significance border increased 19-fold to −1.87 (−3.87–0.12). The $\Delta E_{EET}$ and $\Delta E_{EET}$ remained unaffected at −0.05 (−0.11–0.01) and 0.07 (0.03–0.12), however. In the LCXCA region, stunning had no significant effect on the EET-$\sigma_{es}$ curve (Fig. 4D). The curve displayed a maximum in EET at 76.6% (66.9–86.4) with an $\sigma_{es}$ coordinate of 7.86 (5.04–10.7) × 10³ N/m². A decrease in $\sigma_{es}$ did not cause a significant decrease in EET, but a 0.6% increase in $\sigma_{es}$ caused a significant decrease in EET. The slope at the left non-significant minimum was 1.26 (−3.78–6.30), and the slope at the right significance border was 0.07 (−3.07–3.22).

**Relationship with contractility.** In the regression between $E_{es}$ and the parameters $E_{W_{max}}$, $E_{ET_{max}}$, $\Delta E_{W}$, and $\Delta E_{ET}$, only $E_{W_{max}}$ and $E_{ET_{max}}$ showed a significant positive relationship with $E_{es}$ (Fig. 5). Further analysis revealed that both the relationships between $E_{W_{max}}$ and $E_{es}$ and between $E_{ET_{max}}$ and $E_{es}$ were different for the LADCA and LCXCA perfusion areas.

![Fig. 3. Example of an EET-$\sigma_{es}$ relationship of the LADCA perfusion area before stunning of the LADCA perfusion area. See text for details. EET, efficiency of energy transfer.](http://ajpheart.physiology.org/)

![Fig. 4. Averaged curves of normalized EET-$\sigma_{es}$ relationships. A: LADCA before stunning. B: LADCA after stunning. C: LCXCA before stunning. D: LCXCA after stunning. Solid curves are averaged curves; broken lines are 95% prediction intervals. The horizontal line denotes the part of the curve in which EET is not significantly decreased from EET at the working point. If this line extends to the end of the data, no significant decrease in EET was found. See text for details.](http://ajpheart.physiology.org/)
DISCUSSION

Normal myocardium. Our first aim was to evaluate whether regional EET and regional EW displayed a maximum in relation to regional afterload, defined as regional $E_s$. In a strict sense, only EET displayed a maximum in the LADCA and LCXCA perfusion areas, as the relationship between regional EW and afterload showed an increase in EW without a subsequent decrease after increments in afterload. These findings are therefore partly in accordance with earlier studies (5, 7), in which both global EW and EET displayed a maximum and decreased with increasing afterload. A possible explanation for this discrepancy is that in the present in vivo experiments, increments in afterload are accompanied by increments in preload. We investigated the effect of this possible pitfall by dividing EW at the working point and EW at the highest $E_s$ by their respective end-diastolic strains, a measure of regional preload. However, due to the small increments in strain (1.4%), we still could not find a significant decrease in EW at the highest $E_s$. Therefore, we have to conclude that in the present settings the relationship between EW and afterload increased to a plateau when afterload was increased.

The increase in EW with increasing afterload was $18–20\%$ of the EW at the working point, also when EW was corrected for preload changes. In contrast, maximal EET was only $4–8\%$ different from the EET at the working point, whereas the two $E_s$ values were not different. Therefore, we conclude that in our experiments normal myocardium operated at maximal EET rather than at maximal EW.

There is no consensus on whether global left ventricular power is maximal under physiological conditions. For instance, in a modeling study based on data of intact, conscious dogs, Burkhoff and Sagawa (5) predicted that power is likely to be submaximal. However, if they used data from anesthetized, open-chest dogs, then a maximization of power was predicted. In the present study measurements were performed in anesthetized, open-chest swine, and we therefore expected a maximization of power. However, in anesthetized patients undergoing abdominal surgery, Kadoi et al. (13) found a ventriculo-arterial coupling ratio in agreement with submaximal power. In the same study, patients undergoing coronary artery bypass surgery with a low ejection fraction had a ventriculo-arterial coupling ratio suggesting maximization of power. Consequently, these results indicate that, apart from myocardial dysfunction, species differences may play an important role. To our knowledge, in swine, ventriculo-arterial coupling has only been studied in the normal right ventricle, also suggesting submaximal power (3).

Stunned myocardium. Regional stunning of the LADCA perfusion area decreased contractility in accordance with former studies (14). In addition, end-systolic $e_0$ increased by $10\%$. In a former study, we have shown that stunning causes increases in left ventricular volume at zero pressure, independent of inotropic interventions (15). The increase in $e_0$ may therefore be attributed to a decrease in elastic restoring forces, probably induced by alterations in the extracellular collagen matrix and/or the cytoskeleton.
After stunning the LADCA perfusion area, both EW and EET displayed maxima in relation to $\sigma_{es}$. In accordance with decrements in EW and EET at the working point, the maxima in EW and EET were decreased compared with normal myocardium. The maximum of the EW-$\sigma_{es}$ relationship also tended to shift to the left, but this change was not significant ($P = 0.09$). $E_{\text{max}}$ was now only 7% higher than EW at the working point, and $\sigma_{es,E\text{max}}$ was no longer different from $\sigma_{es,wp}$ at the working point. As a consequence, the working point was now similar to $E_{\text{max}}$. To the best of our knowledge, only relative changes in ventriculo-arterial coupling ratio have been reported after regional stunning (30). From these data it cannot be concluded whether power was maximized before or after stunning.

A second effect of stunning was that both EW and EET became more sensitive to increments in afterload. This is in agreement with our former study in which we showed that both EW and EET, deduced from pressure-segment length relationships, decreased more with increasing afterload after myocardial stunning (9). As EET also became more sensitive to decrements in $\sigma_{es}$ afterload regulation became more critical in stunned myocardium. Changes in preload did not influence this difference, because preload maximally increased by 4% before stunning and 4.5% after stunning ($P = 0.41$). In the LCXCA perfusion area, however, the relationship between EW at the working point and $E_{\text{max}}$ remained unchanged. So, if we augment global afterload, then EW will increase in the LCXCA perfusion area and decrease in the LADCA perfusion area. Consequently, global afterload will not simultaneously maximize EW in both myocardial regions. Because EET at the working point does not change in relation to $E_{\text{max}}$, both regions still operate at $E_{\text{max}}$. However, small changes in afterload will immediately decrease EET in the stunned LADCA perfusion area. From these findings, we conclude that EW and EET are regulated separately in the two myocardial regions, and the LCXCA region does, at least in porcine myocardium, not adapt itself to compensate for the LADCA region.

In accordance with the oxygen consumption paradox of stunned myocardium (8), steady-state myocardial oxygen consumption was unchanged after myocardial stunning. In a former study we showed that two periods of 10 min of ischemia caused ATP, ADP, and total adenine nucleotides to decrease by 34%, 37%, and 33%, respectively, while energy charge [defined as $(\text{ATP} + 0.5\times\text{ADP})/\text{AMP}]^{-1}$ remained unchanged (17). This suggests an adequate ATP turnover despite a decrease in the concentrations of each high-energy phosphate.

Relationship with contractility. We studied the relationship between $E_{\text{es}}$ and $E_{\text{max}}$, $E_{\text{EET max}}$, $\Delta E$, and $\Delta E_{\text{EET}}$ in the LADCA perfusion area. Although $\Delta E$ was decreased in stunned myocardium, we could not show a positive relationship between $\Delta E$ and $E_{\text{es}}$. A possible explanation might be that the range in $\Delta E$ was too small, because we did find a positive relationship between $E_{\text{es}}$ and $E_{\text{max}}$. This latter result was to be expected, because, apart from $\Delta E$, $E_{\text{wp}}$ also decreased with myocardial stunning, in accordance with former results (16). In that particular study, we also showed a positive nonlinear relationship between $E_{\text{wp}}$ and $E_{\text{es}}$.

Underlying mechanism. It is well accepted that myocardial stunning is the result of disturbances in excitation-contraction coupling. As a consequence, $E_{\text{es}}$ is decreased in stunned myocardium. Because of the positive relationship between $E_{\text{es}}$ and $E_{\text{max}}$, the decrease in $E_{\text{es}}$ caused a reduction in $E_{\text{max}}$. $E_{\text{wp}}$, however, is not only dependent on contractility but also on the regional afterload, characterized by $\sigma_{es,wp}$. Because regional afterload did not decrease, due to a compensatory increase in systemic vascular resistance (Table 1), $E_{\text{wp}}$ decreased less than $E_{\text{max}}$, causing the reduction in $\Delta E$.

Limitations. The present study is based on the time-varying elastance concept, i.e., a single elastance changing over time as a model for the myocardium. Hence, visco-elastic properties, kinetic energy, and the history effect (4, 6, 18) are not accounted for. Although the effect of these properties is considered small under physiological circumstances, their contribution in stunned myocardium is presently unknown. In this respect, the results of this study should be interpreted with caution.

In our in vivo model, we were not able to change preload and afterload independently. Decreasing global left ventricular preload decreases not only regional preload but also regional afterload, because both regional wall thickness and curvature increase. On the other hand, increasing global left ventricular afterload by inflating an intra-aortic balloon decreases cardiac output and therefore increases preload for the next beat. However, changes in preload were small, and correcting for these increments in preload did not change our results significantly.

We used the posterior-anterior diameter to calculate regional stress in both the LADCA and LCXCA perfusion areas, which is not completely correct for the LCXCA perfusion area, especially after stunning. This diameter may increase after stunning, due to stretch of the LADCA perfusion area. Consequently, applying the curvature changes to the LCXCA perfusion area may not be fully correct. However, because $\sigma_{es}$ was unchanged after myocardial stunning in both perfusion areas and $E_{\text{es}}$ did not change in the LCXCA perfusion area, the error introduced was probably negligible.

We assumed that the myocardial volume between the LADCA crystals remained constant before and after induction of stunning. However, Jennings et al. (12) showed that stunning causes about 8% increase in myocardial cell volume due to increased water content. If we assume that in our preparation myocardial volume between the crystals increased by 8% as well, real wall thickness may have increased by 2%. If so, we underestimated stress, $E_{\text{es}}$, and EW before stunning by 2%. However, $\sigma_{es,wp}$ showed a nonsignificant increase due to myocardial stunning, which may be overesti-
mated due to this limitation. Also, the significant decrease in $E_w$ and EW due to myocardial stunning may be underestimated. Therefore, this limitation does not seem to affect the reported alterations caused by myocardial stunning.

As we measured regional $MV_O_2$ by sampling the great cardiac vein, this measurement only reflected tissue $MV_O_2$ during steady-state conditions, not allowing us to study the relationship between myocardial efficiency ($E_{ww}/MV_O_2$) and regional afterload on a beat-to-beat basis. Therefore, it remains unresolved whether in our study the myocardium operated at maximal myocardial efficiency.

This study was performed in pentobarbital-anesthetized swine. Because pentobarbital is known to decrease baseline myocardial contractility and to attenuate cardiovascular reflexes, caution is therefore warranted when the present results are extrapolated to the awake animal.

**Conclusions.** In this study, regional myocardium before stunning operated at maximal EET rather than at maximal EW, partially in accordance with findings in the global left ventricle. As a consequence, recruitment of EW was possible by increasing regional afterload. After myocardial stunning, the myocardium operated both at maximal EW and at maximal EET. In addition, both EW and EET became more sensitive to afterload. The reduced contractility of stunned myocardium is thought to have an important effect on these relationships.

**APPENDIX**

To calculate regional stress and regional strain, we used the following approach. We assumed a concentric spherical geometry of both the regional endocardium and epicardium.

**Fig. 6.** Schematic representation of the forces working on a block of myocardial tissue. $SL_L$, transversal segment length; $SL_T$, longitudinal segment length; $\bar{W}_{th}$, wall thickness; $A_T$, transversal segment area; $A_L$, longitudinal segment area; $F_T$, transversal force; and $F_L$, longitudinal force. For calculations, see APPENDIX.

Wall tension ($T$) for a sphere, according to Laplace, is

$$T = \frac{P \cdot r}{2}$$

in which $P$ is the cavity pressure and $r$ is the radius of the left ventricle. For a rectangular block of tissue in the ventricular wall between two perpendicularly oriented pairs of crystals, a longitudinal segment length ($SL_L$), which is in a plane through the long axis of the left ventricle), a transversal segment length ($SL_T$, perpendicular to $SL_L$), a force oriented parallel to $SL_L$ ($F_L$), and a force oriented parallel to $SL_T$ ($F_T$) are defined (Fig. 6). The equations for the two forces are then

$$F_L = T \cdot SL_T = \frac{P \cdot r \cdot SL_L}{2}$$

and

$$F_T = T \cdot SL_T = \frac{P \cdot r \cdot SL_L}{2}$$

Dividing these forces by the respective areas $A_L$ and $A_T$ delivers the wall stresses in both directions. As the number of fibers producing the forces $F_L$ and $F_T$ being present in the areas $A_L$ or $A_T$ will not change over the cardiac cycle, normalization to fiber stress would not be affected by the changes in the respective areas. We therefore defined a reference state (indicated by the subscript ref) on which all subsequent stress calculations were based. In formula

$$A_{L,ref} = SL_{T,ref} \cdot W_{th,ref}$$

and

$$A_{T,ref} = SL_{L,ref} \cdot W_{th,ref}$$

in which $W_{th,ref}$ is the reference wall thickness. As the volume of the block of tissue ($V_{ref}$) remains constant during the cardiac cycle, $W_{th,ref}$ can also be written as

$$W_{th,ref} = \frac{V_{ref}}{SL_{T,ref} \cdot SL_{L,ref}}$$

Dividing Eq. 2 by Eq. 4, and Eq. 3 by Eq. 5, and combining with Eq. 6 gives us

$$\sigma_L = \frac{P \cdot r \cdot SL_T \cdot SL_{L,ref}}{2 \cdot V_{ref}}$$

and

$$\sigma_T = \frac{P \cdot r \cdot SL_L \cdot SL_{T,ref}}{2 \cdot V_{ref}}$$

in which $\sigma_L$ and $\sigma_T$ are the longitudinal and transversal wall stress, respectively. Mean average wall stress was defined as the geometric mean (29) according to

$$\sigma_{mean} = \sqrt[2]{\sigma_L \cdot \sigma_T} = \frac{P \cdot r \cdot \sqrt{SL_{T,ref} \cdot SL_{T,ref} \cdot SL_{T,ref} \cdot SL_{L,ref} \cdot SL_{L,ref} \cdot SL_{L,ref}}}{\sqrt{SL_{T,ref} \cdot SL_{T,ref}} \cdot \sqrt{SL_{L,ref} \cdot \sqrt{SL_{T,ref} \cdot SL_{L,ref}}}}$$

Similarly, mean regional strain ($\epsilon$) was derived from the geometric mean according to

$$\epsilon = \sqrt[2]{\frac{\sqrt{SL_{T,ref} \cdot \sqrt{SL_{T,ref} \cdot SL_{L,ref} \cdot SL_{L,ref}}}}{\sqrt{SL_{T,ref} \cdot SL_{T,ref} \cdot SL_{L,ref} \cdot SL_{L,ref}}}}$$

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