

B7x: A novel, widely expressed B7 family member that inhibits T cell activation

Xingxing Zang*, P'ng Loke*, Jayon Kim*, Kenneth Murphy+, Rebecca Waitz*, and James P. Allison*

*HHMI, Department of Molecular and Cell Biology, University of California, Berkeley, CA94720; +HHMI, Department of Pathology & Immunology, Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, MO63110.

B7 family proteins provide costimulatory signals that regulate T cell responses. These signals can be either positive, as is the case of interactions of B7-1/2 with CD28 or B7h with ICOS, or inhibitory, as is the case for B7-1/2 with CTLA-4 or PD-L1/2 with PD-1. We have recently discovered the third set of B7 family-related T cell inhibitory molecules with the identification of a novel homologue of the B7 family, B7x. It is expressed in immune cells, non-lymphoid tissues and some tumor cell lines. B7x inhibits cell cycle progression, proliferation and cytokine production of both CD4+ and CD8+ T cells. B7x binds a receptor that is expressed on activated, but not resting T cells that is distinct from known CD28 family members. These studies identify a new costimulatory pathway that may have a unique function in downregulation of tissue-specific autoimmunity and anti-tumor responses.