

Thymopoiesis independent of common lymphoid progenitors

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Early T-lineage progenitors (ETPs) in thymus are thought to develop from common lymphoid progenitors (CLPs) in bone marrow. We compared thymic ETPs to CLPs in bone marrow (BM), and found that they differed in several respects. Thymic ETPs generated B-lineage progeny with delayed kinetics, whereas BM CLPs rapidly generated B cells. ETPs sustained production of T-lineage progeny for longer periods of time than BM CLPs. Analysis of *Ikaros*-deficient mice that exhibit ongoing thymopoiesis without B lymphopoiesis revealed near-normal frequencies of thymic ETPs yet undetectable levels of BM CLPs. We conclude that ETPs can develop via a CLP-independent pathway.

