



Attenuation of Endoplasmic Reticulum Stress, Impaired Calcium Homeostasis, and Altered Bioenergetic Functions in MPP⁺-Exposed SH-SY5Y Cells Pretreated with Rutin

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Abstract

Parkinson's disease (PD) is a common neurodegenerative disorder that affects approximately 1% of the population over the age of 65 years. While treatment options for PD are limited, reports show that plant-derived bioactive compounds such as rutin possess numerous pharmacological benefits, including antioxidant and antiapoptotic activities. This study aimed to investigate the potential role of rutin in MPP⁺-treated SH-SY5Y neuroblastoma cells, an established cell model of PD. Our findings reveal increased concentrations of Ca²⁺ and endoplasmic reticulum (ER) stress as well as impaired mitochondrial membrane potential and bioenergetic status in SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺ only. This is demonstrated by a significant reduction in the expression levels of BiP, significantly reduced basal respiration, maximal respiration, and spare respiratory capacity as well as a significant increase in the expression levels of CHOP; however, these effects were significantly attenuated following pretreatment with rutin. Also, rutin significantly improved basal and compensatory glycolysis as a response to an impaired oxidative phosphorylation system triggered by MPP⁺, characterized by deficient ATP production. In conclusion, our findings provide the first evidence on the ability of rutin to maintain Ca²⁺ homeostasis, inhibit ER stress, and protect the mitochondria in MPP⁺-treated SH-SY5Y cells.

Keywords Parkinson's disease · Rutin · ER stress · Oxidative phosphorylation · Glycolysis

Abbreviations

6-OHDA 6-Hydroxydopamine

ATP

Adenosine triphosphate

BiP

Binding immunoglobulin protein

Highlights

- Rutin protects against dysregulated Ca²⁺ homeostasis in SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺.
- Rutin maintains mitochondrial membrane potential in SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺.
- The protective effect of rutin against MPP⁺-induced toxicity involves the inhibition of ER stress.
- Rutin mitigates impaired oxidative phosphorylation in SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺.
- Rutin improves glycolysis in SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺.

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Ca ²⁺	Calcium
CHOP	CCAAT-enhancer-binding protein homologous protein
DMEM	Dulbecco's modified Eagle medium
ER	Endoplasmic reticulum
FBS	Fetal bovine serum
JC-1	5, 5', 6, 6' - Tetrachloro-1, 1', 3, 3' - tetraethylbenzimidazolocarbo-cyanine iodide
MMP	Mitochondrial membrane potential
MPP ⁺	1-Methyl-4-phenylpyridinium
MTT	3-(4,5-Dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-2,5-diphenyltetrazolium bromide
OXPHOS	Oxidative phosphorylation
PBS	Phosphate-buffered saline
PD	Parkinson's disease
SEM	Standard error of the mean
SNpc	Substantia nigra pars compacta
UPR	Unfolded protein response
UPS	Ubiquitin proteasome system

Introduction

Parkinson's disease (PD) is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder characterized by the loss of dopaminergic neurons in the substantia nigra pars compacta (SNpc) of the midbrain, resulting in depletion of dopamine in the striatum. Clinically, its cardinal motor symptoms include bradykinesia, tremor at rest, postural instability, and rigidity while non-motor symptoms include autonomic and sensory disturbances, cognitive, sleep, and neuropsychiatric disorders (Park and Stacy 2009). There are numerous reports on the epidemiology of PD, but most reports agree that PD prevalence increases with age. For example, it has been reported that approximately (all per 100,000) 41 cases occur in every 40–49-year-olds; 107 in every 50–59-year-olds; 173 in every 55–64-year-olds; 428 in every 60–69-year-olds; 425 in every 65–74-year-olds; 1087 in every 70–79-year-olds; and 1903 in ages older than 80 (Pringsheim et al. 2014).

It is thought that PD is caused by complex interactions between pathophysiological mechanisms that result in dopaminergic neuronal death (Michel et al. 2013). These proposed mechanisms include impairment of intracellular Ca²⁺ homeostasis, endoplasmic reticulum (ER) stress, and mitochondrial dysfunction. For example, it has been demonstrated that cytosolic Ca²⁺ levels have to be sustained within limited concentrations for optimal survival of dopaminergic neurons in the SNpc, whereas disruption of Ca²⁺ homeostasis resulting from ER and mitochondrial dysfunction reduce neuronal survival in PD (Bezprozvanny 2009; Michel et al. 2013). Moreover, a growing body of evidence indicates that the ER plays a vital role in cell signaling, thus mediating many neurodegenerative processes (Cai et al. 2016; Egawa et al. 2011; Ghribi et al.

2003). The ER is a large Ca²⁺-storing organelle essential for regulating protein translation, membrane folding, and protein secretion. An impairment of the ER or Ca²⁺ homeostasis leads to the accumulation of unfolded/misfolded proteins in the ER lumen, thereby causing ER stress (Paschen and Mengesdorf 2005). In response, cells activate the unfolded protein response (UPR), increasing ER chaperones such as binding immunoglobulin protein (BiP) which activates an ER-associated degradation pathway that is essential to alleviate ER stress and ultimately improve cell survival (Boyce and Yuan 2006; Hiller et al. 1996). However, sustained activation of the UPR due to severe ER dysfunction results in programmed cell death (Harding et al. 2002).

Similarly, it is well established that mitochondrial dysfunction plays a key role in the development of PD (Hang et al. 2015). Impairment of the mitochondrial electron transport chain and defects in the regulation of mitochondrial dynamics are widely reported in PD disease models (Koyano et al. 2013; McCoy and Cookson 2012; Requejo-Aguilar and Bolaños 2016; Schapira et al. 1990). These changes are associated with ATP deficiency; however, to compensate for mitochondrial dysfunction, neurons may upregulate glycolysis as a low-efficient mode of energy production in PD models (Requejo-Aguilar and Bolaños 2016). Thus, any process damaging mitochondria may lead to metabolic switching intended to compensate for their diminished ability to produce ATP.

Suitable models for investigating the pathobiological mechanisms of PD are necessary in the search for novel pharmacological targets and disease-modifying therapies. Although cellular models cannot fully reproduce the complexity of PD, the development of a stable and reliable cellular model that mimics the dopaminergic cell death in the SNpc is necessary to provide valuable insights for validation in animal models and/or PD patients (Blandini and Armentero 2012; Ravid and Ferrer 2012). In this regard, the human neuroblastoma SH-SY5Y cell line has been widely used in the field of neurodegeneration, mostly to generate various toxin-induced PD models (Korecka et al. 2013; Lopes et al. 2010; Xie et al. 2010). These toxins include 1-methyl-4-phenylpyridinium (MPP⁺) (Ito et al. 2017), paraquat (Van der Merwe et al. 2017), 6-OHDA (Magalingam et al. 2013), and rotenone (Li et al. 2012).

Several potentially therapeutic compounds targeting the proper regulation of Ca²⁺ homeostasis, ER stress, and mitochondrial functions have been investigated in numerous PD models (Song et al. 2010; Van der Merwe et al. 2017; Wang et al. 2018). One such compound is rutin, an antioxidant and bioflavonoid, widely found in many fruits and vegetables (Yang et al. 2008). Early studies reported that rutin strengthens the capillaries of blood vessels due to its high radical scavenging activity and antioxidant capacity (Couch 1943). Other pharmacological activities include cytoprotective (La Casa et al. 2000; Magalingam et al. 2016), anticarcinogenic (Perk

et al. 2014; Webster et al. 1996), anti-inflammatory (Guardia et al. 2001; Yoo et al. 2014), and antidiabetic effects (Ghorbani 2017).

Based on previous reports of the pharmacological effects of rutin and its potent antioxidant properties, for the first time, we provide evidence on the role of rutin on MPP⁺-induced changes in mitochondrial membrane potential and ER stress as well as impaired intracellular Ca²⁺ homeostasis and bioenergetic status in SH-SY5Y cells.

Materials and Methods

Cell Culture and Reagents

SH-SY5Y neuroblastoma cells, initially purchased from the American Type Culture Collection (ATCC, Rockville, MA), was kindly provided by Dr. AM Serafin (Division of Radiobiology, Stellenbosch University, South Africa). SH-SY5Y cells were maintained in Dulbecco's modified Eagle medium (DMEM) (Life Technologies, USA), supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS) (Life Technologies, USA), and 1% penicillin-streptomycin (Lonza, USA), at 37 °C and 5% CO₂ in a humidified incubator. In the cell culture experiments, fresh stock solutions of MPP⁺ (Sigma Aldrich, St. Louis, MO, USA) were prepared in unsupplemented DMEM and used at a final concentration of 1 mM. Rutin (C₂₇H₃₀O₁₆; purity ≥ 94% HPLC) was purchased from Sigma-Aldrich (St. Louis, MO, USA) without further purification, and fresh stock solutions were prepared in dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO, Life Technologies, USA) and diluted in culture media for final concentration ranges of 25 μM, 50 μM, and 100 μM.

Cell Viability and Toxicity Assays

The Cell Counting Kit-8 (CCK-8; Sigma Aldrich, St. Louis, MO, USA) was utilized in this study based on its ability to permit precise assays by employing extremely water-soluble tetrazolium salt WST-8 to produce a water-soluble formazan dye, thus allowing sensitive colorimetric assays for the determination of viable cells. SH-SY5Y cells were seeded at a density of 5×10^3 cells/well in 96-well plates and were allowed to attach for 24 h. Cells were pretreated with complete culture media supplemented with 25 μM, 50 μM, or 100 μM concentrations of rutin for 4 h and then treated with 1 mM of MPP⁺ for a total of 48 h. These concentrations and time period were selected based on our findings from cytotoxicity screening and dose–response curves (results not shown). After treatment, 20 μl of CCK-8 solution was added to each well of the plate and incubated for 4 h. The optical density (OD)

was obtained at 450 nm using a Glomax Multi-Detection Microplate Reader (Promega, USA).

The trypan blue dye exclusion assay was utilized in this study based on its ability to quantify the population of dead cells present in a cell suspension. In this assay, dead cells with damaged membranes permit entry of the dye and cell staining (Altman et al. 1993). SH-SY5Y cells were seeded at a density of 1.6×10^4 /cm² in 60-mm dishes and were allowed to attach for 24 h. After that, supernatants were discarded, and cells were treated as described in the “Cell Viability and Toxicity Assays” section. Adherent cells were detached by trypsinization, pelleted, and resuspended in fresh media. A total of 10 μl of cell suspension was added to an equivalent volume of 0.4% trypan blue dye (Sigma Aldrich, St. Louis, MO, USA) and loaded into a BioRad TC20™ automated cell counter. Toxicity was expressed as the percentage of total cell count that were dead cells.

Measurement of Intracellular Calcium

Fluo-4 Direct Calcium Assay Kit (Life Technologies, USA) was utilized to detect intracellular Ca²⁺ activity. SH-SY5Y cells were seeded at a density of 5.0×10^3 /well in 96-well plates and were allowed to attach for 24 h under standard incubation conditions. After that, supernatants were discarded, and cells were treated as described in “Cell Viability and Toxicity Assays” section. Measurements of intracellular Ca²⁺ were performed according to manufacturer's instructions with fluorescence intensity measured using the Glomax Multi-Detection Microplate Reader at the wavelength parameters of 490 nm excitation and 510–570 nm emission.

Mitochondrial Membrane Potential Analysis

JC-1

SH-SY5Y cells seeded at a density of 1.5×10^4 /cm² in 100-mm dishes were allowed to attach for 24 h. Following treatment with rutin and MPP⁺, adherent cells were dislodged with a cell scraper and centrifuged at 3000 rpm for 5 min, and the cell pellets were resuspended in DMEM. Cells were then incubated with 10 μg/ml of the diluted JC-1 solution (Life Technologies, USA) for 15 min at room temperature, centrifuged, and resuspended in 500 μl PBS. Stained cell suspensions were analyzed using a BD FACSCalibur flow cytometer (Becton Dickinson, Franklin Lakes, NJ, USA) and BD CellQuest PRO software (Becton Dickinson, Franklin Lakes, NJ, USA) to measure red and green fluorescence, with a total of 10,000 events collected for each sample. Fluorescence acquisition, compensation, and data analysis were performed according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Rhodamine123

Rhodamine123 was used as a complementary measurement of MMP. After rutin and MPP⁺ treatment, adherent cells were dislodged with a cell scraper and centrifuged, and the cell pellets resuspended in DMEM. Rhodamine 123 (Sigma Aldrich, St. Louis, MO, USA) was added at a final concentration of 10 μ M. After incubation for 15 min, cells were vortexed and centrifuged, and pellets were resuspended in 500 μ l PBS. Stained cell suspensions were analyzed using an Accuri flow cytometer (BD Biosciences Pharmingen, San Diego, CA, USA). A total of 10,000 events was collected for each sample.

Western Blot

Western blots were used to evaluate the effects of rutin treatment on protein markers of ER stress. Following the appropriate treatment regime, whole-cell lysates were extracted in passive lysis buffer and protein concentrations quantified with a Bradford protein assay. Equal protein amounts of cell lysates were electrophoresed on 4–20% Mini-Protean® SDS-PAGE gels (Bio-Rad, USA) followed by transfer to PVDF membranes. The membranes were blocked in 5% milk-TBST before incubation with the relevant primary antibody at 4 °C overnight. These included BiP rabbit monoclonal antibody (1:1000; Cell Signalling Technology, USA), CHOP mouse monoclonal antibody (1:1000, Cell Signalling Technology, USA), and loading control GAPDH rabbit polyclonal antibody (1:1000; Santa Cruz Biotechnology, USA). Thereafter, membranes were incubated with appropriate HRP-conjugated secondary antibodies (1:5000, Santa Cruz Biotechnology, USA) and visualized using a SuperSignal® West Pico Chemiluminescent Kit (Thermo Scientific, USA). ImageJ software (<http://imagej.nih.gov/ij/>) was utilized to quantify western blots by means of densitometric measurements.

The Seahorse XF Cell Mito Stress and Glycolysis Rate Assay

To evaluate the effect of rutin pretreatment on the bioenergetic status of SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺, the Seahorse extracellular flux (XF⁹⁶) analyzer (Agilent, Santa Clara, USA) was used to perform two different assays, namely the XF cell Mito stress test and the glycolytic rate assay. The Seahorse XF analyzer is capable of simultaneously measuring pH and oxygen in real-time to assess the extracellular acidification rate (ECAR) and oxygen consumption rate (OCR), indicators of glycolysis and oxidative phosphorylation (OXPHOS) respectively (Pelletier et al. 2014).

SH-SY5Y cells seeded at 3×10^3 cells/well were allowed to adhere to the XF cell culture plate overnight. The following day, cells were pretreated with rutin and then exposed to 1 mM of MPP⁺ for a total of 48 h. Thereafter, all cell culture media were

replaced with XF base medium (without phenol red) supplemented with 1 mM sodium pyruvate, 2 mM L-glutamine, and 10 mM glucose. The XF base media used for the Glycolytic Rate Assay were further supplemented with 5 mM HEPES. Following the exchange of media, plates were incubated for 1 h at 37 °C in a non-CO₂ incubator. Thereafter, the plate was loaded into the Seahorse XF⁹⁶ analyzer where standard procedures were followed for the individual assays, as recommended by the manufacturer.

For the Mito Stress Test, basal respiration was initially measured followed by successive injections of 1 μ M oligomycin (ATP synthase/complex V inhibitor), 0.25 μ M FCCP (uncoupling agent/MMP disruptor), and 1 μ M rotenone/antimycin A (complex I/III inhibitor). For the glycolytic rate assay, basal glycolysis was measured followed by two injections: firstly 1 μ M rotenone/antimycin A followed by 100 mM 2-deoxyglucose. Plates were normalized to cell number using the CyQUANT Cell Proliferation Assay kit (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, USA) according to the manufacturer's instructions. All data were processed using Wave version 2.40 and Seahorse XF report generators were used to calculate various mitochondrial parameters, including basal respiration, maximum respiration, ATP-coupled respiration, and spare respiratory capacity according to established protocols (Brand and Nicholls 2011).

Statistical Analysis

GraphPad Prism Software V7 was used for all statistical analyses (www.graphpad.com/scientific-software/prism/). Data are expressed as mean with standard error of mean (SEM). One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) followed by Tukey's multiple comparisons post hoc test was performed to determine statistical significance ($p < 0.05$).

Results

Rutin Attenuates Cell Toxicity in MPP⁺-Treated SH-SY5Y Cells

To evaluate the protective activity of rutin on MPP⁺-induced SH-SY5Y cell toxicity, cells were pretreated with three concentrations of rutin (25, 50, and 100 μ M) before being exposed to 1 mM MPP⁺ as described earlier. Our findings show that whereas treatment with MPP⁺ significantly decreased cell viability ($p < 0.0001$), all concentrations of rutin significantly enhanced ($p < 0.0001$, Fig. 1A) cell viability. Also, our findings showed that treatment of SH-SY5Y cells with MPP⁺ resulted in a significant increase ($p < 0.0001$, Fig. 1B) in cell toxicity; however, pretreatment of SH-SY5Y cells with rutin significantly reduced toxicity at concentrations of 25 μ M ($p = 0.0016$), 50 μ M ($p = 0.0025$), and 100 μ M ($p = 0.0001$), respectively.

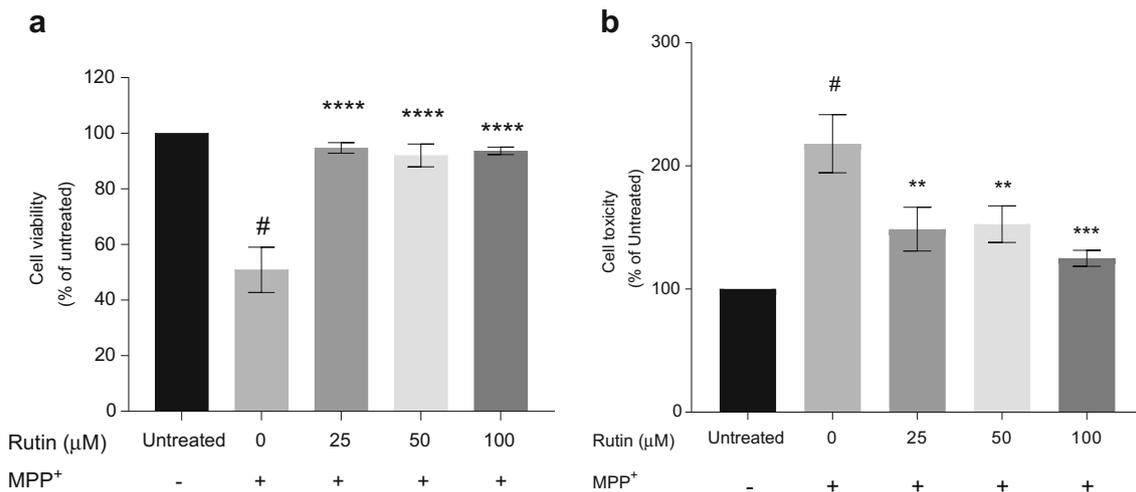


Fig. 1 Cell viability (A) and toxicity (B) in treated and untreated SH-SY5Y cells. Bars represent the mean \pm SEM from three independent experiments. # $p < 0.0001$ vs untreated SH-SY5Y cells; ** $p < 0.005$, *** $p < 0.0005$, and **** $p < 0.0001$ vs SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺ only

Rutin Attenuates MPP⁺-Induced Dysregulation of Calcium Homeostasis in SH-SY5Y Cells

Previous reports indicated that Ca²⁺ dysregulation is associated with PD pathogenesis (Surmeier et al. 2012; Zaichick et al. 2017). To gain a better understanding on the role of rutin in the regulation of Ca²⁺ homeostasis, the level of intracellular Ca²⁺ in treated and untreated SH-SY5Y cells was investigated. Results showed that treatment of SH-SY5Y cells with MPP⁺ resulted in a significant increase in intracellular Ca²⁺ levels ($p < 0.0001$, Fig. 2). However, this increase in Ca²⁺ levels was significantly attenuated following pretreatment with rutin at 25 μ M ($p = 0.0004$), 50 μ M ($p = 0.0004$), and 100 μ M ($p < 0.0001$), respectively.

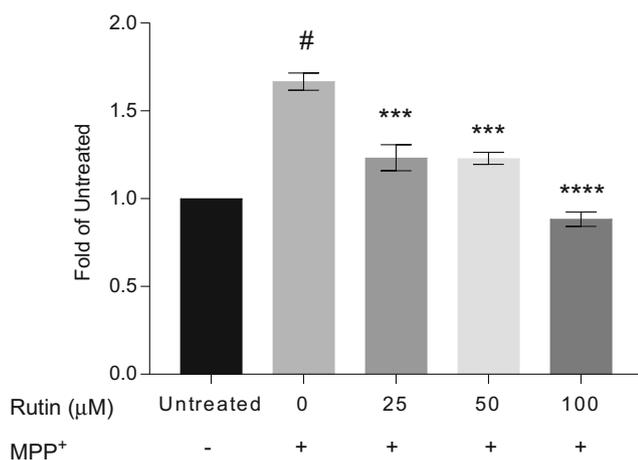


Fig. 2 Effect of rutin on MPP⁺-induced dysregulation of Ca²⁺ homeostasis in SH-SY5Y cells. Bars represent the mean \pm SEM from three independent experiments. # $p < 0.0001$ vs untreated SH-SY5Y cells; *** $p < 0.0005$ and **** $p < 0.0001$ vs SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺ only

Rutin Attenuates ER Stress in SH-SY5Y Cells Treated with MPP⁺

To detect levels of ER stress in SH-SY5Y cells, we measured two protein markers of ER stress, namely BiP and C/EBP homologous protein (CHOP). Activation of BiP is essential for regulating protein folding and the initiation of UPR signaling in the ER (Gorbatyuk and Gorbatyuk 2013). Findings revealed that treatment of SH-SY5Y cells with MPP⁺ resulted in a significant decrease in the expression of BiP ($p = 0.0019$, Fig. 3A). Conversely, the expression levels were significantly increased following pretreatment with rutin at 25 μ M ($p = 0.0082$), 50 μ M ($p = 0.0370$), and 100 μ M ($p = 0.0078$), respectively.

Similarly, CHOP is a transcription factor generally activated during ER stress (Choi et al. 2011). Findings showed that treatment of SH-SY5Y cells with MPP⁺ resulted in a significant increase ($p < 0.0001$, Fig. 3B) in the expression of CHOP, indicating a marked elevation of MPP⁺-induced ER stress. In SH-SY5Y cells pretreated with rutin, the expression level of CHOP was significantly decreased at concentrations of 25 μ M ($p < 0.0001$), 50 μ M ($p < 0.0001$), and 100 μ M ($p < 0.0001$), respectively, signifying that rutin pretreatment prevented against ER stress in the cells.

Rutin Rescues Mitochondrial Membrane Potential in SH-SY5Y Cells Treated with MPP⁺

Having established that rutin attenuates Ca²⁺ dysregulation and ER stress, the effect of rutin and MPP⁺ treatment on mitochondrial membrane potential (MMP) was investigated, given that rutin might protect cells from MPP⁺ toxicity at the mitochondrial level owing to its established antioxidant effects (Magalingam et al. 2013). MMP was assayed in SH-

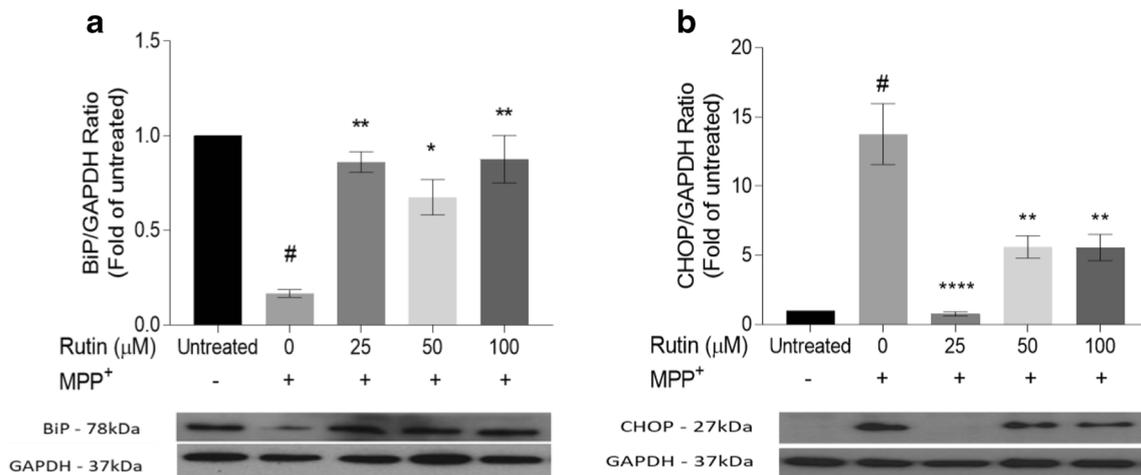


Fig. 3 Rutin prevents MPP⁺-induced ER stress in SH-SY5Y cells. **(A)** Protein expression of BiP following treatment. **(B)** Protein expression of CHOP following treatment. Data is presented as the ratio of the target protein and GAPDH loading control. Bars represent the mean relative

band intensity \pm SEM for three independent experiments. # $p < 0.0001$ vs untreated cells; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.005$, and **** $p < 0.0001$ vs cells treated with MPP⁺ only

SY5Y cells by means of two complementary potentiometric mitochondrial probes, JC-1 and Rhodamine 123.

JC-1 When added to live cells, the JC-1 dye enters mitochondria in an MMP-dependent manner where it forms red-fluorescing aggregates. Disaggregated JC-1 and cytosolic JC-1 fluoresce green following loss of MMP; hence, the ratio of red to green fluorescence can be used as a sensitive gauge of MMP (Smiley et al. 1991). Findings revealed a significant decrease in the red to green ratio in MPP⁺-treated SH-SY5Y cells ($p < 0.0001$, Fig. 4), indicating loss of MMP and mitochondrial dysfunction. Conversely, pretreatment with rutin significantly prevented the decrease in MMP at 25 μ M ($p < 0.0001$) and 100 μ M ($p = 0.0010$), respectively. The increase in MMP following pretreatment with rutin at 50 μ M was however not significant ($p = 0.2189$).

For Rhodamine 123, a decrease in fluorescence intensity indicates a loss of MMP (Wang and Xu 2005). Findings further confirmed the observation of lower MMP in MPP⁺-treated cells, as the fluorescence intensity in MPP⁺-treated SH-SY5Y cells was significantly decreased ($p < 0.0001$, Fig. 5), thus confirming the loss of MMP and possible mitochondrial dysfunction. However, the MMP was significantly increased following pretreatment with rutin at 25 μ M ($p = 0.0057$), 50 μ M ($p = 0.0458$), and 100 μ M ($p = 0.0179$), respectively.

Rutin Improves Basal and Maximal Respiration as well as Spare Respiratory Capacity in SH-SY5Y Cells Treated with MPP⁺

The mitochondrial stress test was measured under four conditions: (i) basal respiration (basal measurement without the oligomycin, FCCP, rotenone/antimycin A response); (ii) ATP-coupled respiration (reduction in OCR after the injection

of oligomycin); (iii) maximal respiration (OCR response after the injection of FCCP); and (iv) spare respiratory capacity (difference between maximal respiration and basal respiration). Non-mitochondrial respiration (OCR response after the injection of rotenone and antimycin A) was subtracted from all other parameters. The overall mitochondrial respiration results for SH-SY5Y cells are shown in Fig. 6.

Basal respiration indicates the energetic need of the cell under baseline conditions. Findings showed that MPP⁺ treatment resulted in a significant decrease in basal respiration in SH-SY5Y cells ($p < 0.0001$, Fig. 7), whereas all concentrations of rutin significantly increased basal respiration ($p < 0.0001$) in pretreated SH-SY5Y cells. ATP-coupled respiration indicates the ATP generated by the mitochondria that contributes to the energetic demand of the cell. Our findings revealed that treatment of SH-SY5Y cells with MPP⁺ resulted in a significant decrease ($p < 0.0001$) in ATP-coupled respiration; however, there were no significant changes ($p > 0.05$) following pretreatment with rutin.

Also, maximal respiration indicates the maximum capacity of the electron transport chain when provided with sufficient substrates. Following treatment and after the addition of FCCP (stimulates the respiratory chain to function at maximum capacity), it was observed that MPP⁺ caused a significant decrease ($p < 0.0001$), whereas rutin pretreatment resulted in a significant increase ($p < 0.0001$) in maximal respiration in SH-SY5Y cells. Furthermore, spare respiratory capacity indicates the ability of the cell to respond to an energetic need. After addition of FCCP to treated SH-SY5Y cells, MPP⁺ treatment caused a significant decrease ($p < 0.0001$) in spare respiratory capacity. However, this reduction in spare respiratory capacity was significantly increased ($p < 0.05$) in SH-SY5Y cells pretreated with rutin. These findings indicate a potential protective effect of rutin on impaired mitochondria.

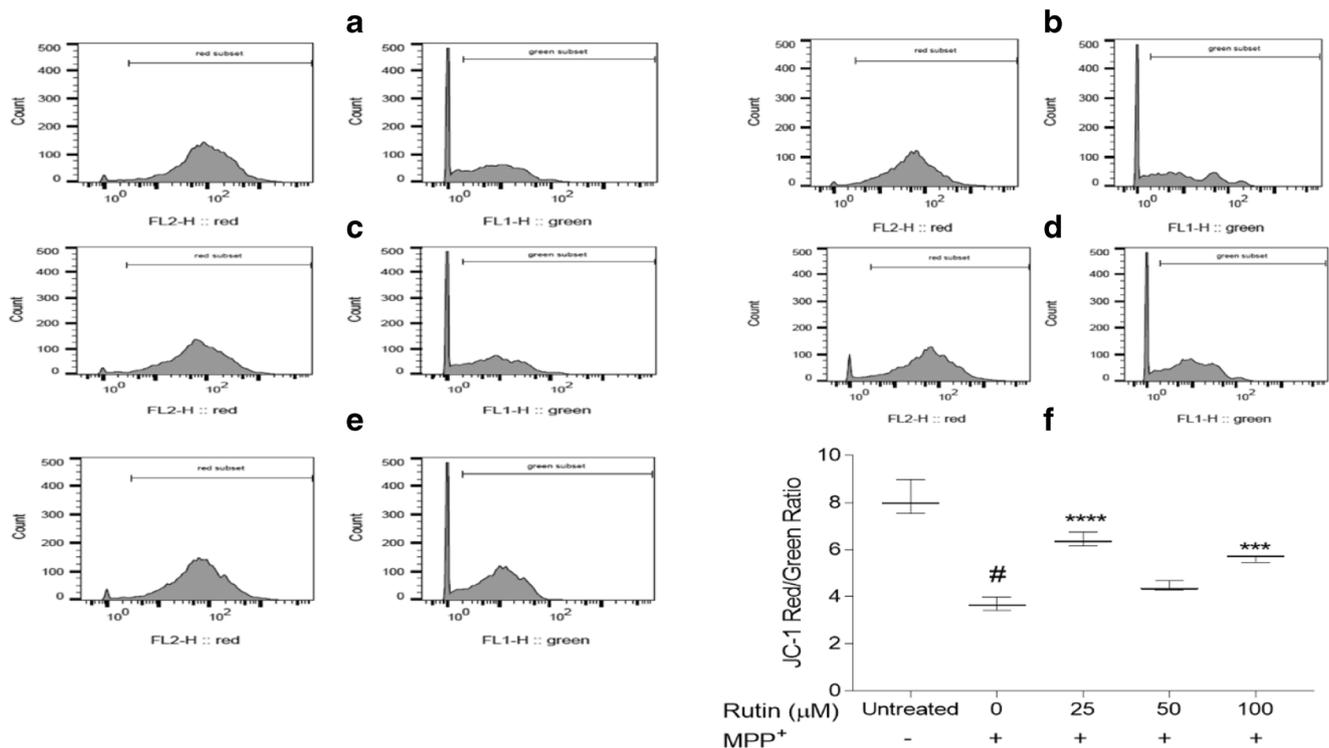


Fig. 4 Mitochondrial membrane potential shown by a ratio of red to green fluorescence intensity of JC-1. (A) Control SH-SY5Y cells. (B) SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺ only. (C) SH-SY5Y cells treated with 25 μM rutin and then treated with MPP⁺. (D) SH-SY5Y cells treated with 50 μM rutin and then treated with MPP⁺. (E) SH-SY5Y cells treated with

100 μM rutin and then treated with MPP⁺. (F) Box and whisker plot showing the mitochondrial membrane potential in untreated and treated SH-SY5Y cells. Bars represent the mean ± SEM from three independent experiments. #*p* < 0.0001 vs untreated SH-SY5Y cell; *****p* < 0.0005 and ****p* < 0.0001 vs SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺ only

Rutin Improves Basal and Compensatory Glycolysis in SH-SY5Y Cells Treated with MPP⁺

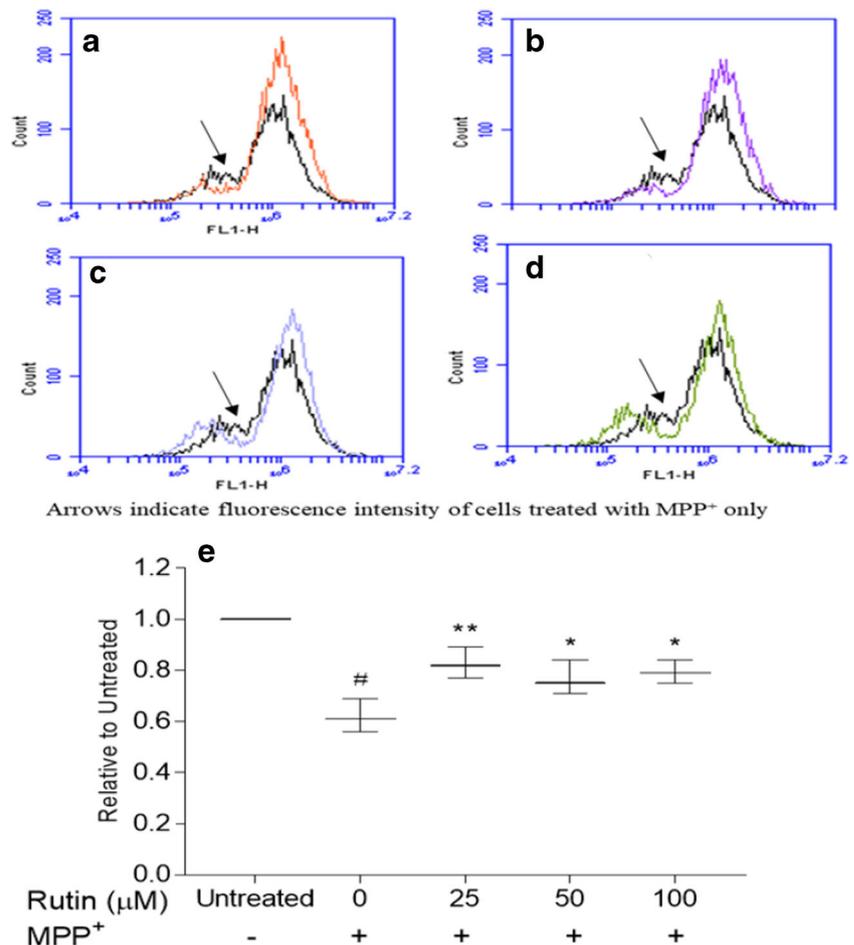
OXPPOS is primarily responsible for the production of ATP through a process of mitochondrial respiration. However, when OXPPOS is impaired, glycolysis becomes primarily responsible for the production of ATP (Keuper et al. 2014; Ozawa et al. 2015). It is thus essential to examine glycolytic function for an in-depth understanding of cellular energy demands. The glycolytic rate assay assessed basal glycolysis and compensatory glycolysis in treated and untreated SH-SY5Y cells. Our findings show that treatment of SH-SY5Y cells with MPP⁺ reduced basal (*p* = 0.2439, Fig. 8) and compensatory glycolysis (*p* < 0.0001), while rutin pretreatment significantly improved basal glycolysis and compensatory glycolysis (*p* < 0.0001).

Discussion

There is currently renewed interest in the search for potential neuroprotective compounds from plant materials. We report that rutin is a promising neuroprotective agent that prevents cell toxicity in a toxin-induced model of PD, in agreement

with previous publications (Magalingam et al. 2013, 2016; Park et al. 2014). In order to investigate the mechanism(s) underlying this protective effect, we investigated the ability of rutin to protect against MPP⁺-induced dysregulation of Ca²⁺ homeostasis, ER stress, and bioenergetic deficits in SH-SY5Y cells. Ca²⁺ is a common second messenger that regulates an array of cellular signaling pathways (Petersen et al. 2005). For optimal survival and functioning of dopaminergic neurons, it is essential for Ca²⁺ levels to be sustained within a low range of concentrations (Michel et al. 2013). Our current study showed that MPP⁺ induced a significant increase in Ca²⁺ levels in the cells, and further demonstrated that rutin significantly reduced Ca²⁺ levels, thus preventing the deleterious effects associated with excessive Ca²⁺. We hypothesize that the observed dysregulation of Ca²⁺ is driven by MPP⁺-induced impairments of mitochondrial function and ATP generation, as maintenance of neuronal Ca²⁺ homeostasis is energetically demanding (Surmeier and Schumacker 2013). MMP is essential to the organelle's several functions (Nicholls and Ferguson 2013) and is responsible for driving ATP synthesis by OXPPOS. The magnitude of MMP is determined by the equilibrium between its production and utilization by processes such as ATP synthesis. The quantification of changes in MMP enables mechanistic insights into mitochondrial and

Fig. 5 Mitochondrial membrane potential shown by the fluorescence intensity of Rhodamine 123. Histogram showing SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺ only vs (A) untreated SH-SY5Y cells. (B) SH-SY5Y cells pretreated with 25 μ M rutin. (C) SH-SY5Y cells pretreated with 50 μ M rutin. (D) SH-SY5Y cells pretreated with 100 μ M rutin. (E) Box and whisker plot showing the MMP in untreated and treated SH-SY5Y cells. Bars represent the mean \pm SEM from three independent experiments. # p < 0.0001 vs untreated SH-SY5Y cells; * p < 0.05 and ** p < 0.01 vs SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺ only



cellular function. In our study, we observed that MPP⁺ caused a significant reduction in MMP in SH-SY5Y cells, indicating mitochondrial dysfunction. However, this loss in MMP was significantly attenuated by rutin, suggesting that rutin was able to prevent the harmful activities associated with a decline in MMP.

The present study also provides the first research evidence on the ability of rutin to inhibit ER stress in SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺. BiP is activated in response to ER stress (Ghribi et al. 2003; Kaufman 1999), and its activation during the UPR protects neurons against metabolic/excitotoxic damage (Lowenstein et al. 1991; Yu et al. 1999) helps in sustaining proper ER function and enables proper protein folding (Ghribi et al. 2003). Accordingly, reports show that the UPR is a therapeutic target for proper protein homeostasis during inhibition of neurodegeneration. For example, the drug valproate increases BiP levels and other ER chaperones (Bown et al. 2000; Wang et al. 1999), while MPP⁺ resulted in a down-regulation of BiP mRNA in MN9D cells (Holtz and O'Malley 2003). We hypothesized that BiP is responsible for the main chaperone action in our PD model and that

its upregulation would possibly improve proper protein folding, attenuate ER stress, and protect against apoptosis in SH-SY5Y cells. Our results show that rutin significantly increased the expression of BiP, thus suggesting that a “stress response” may trigger the protective activity of rutin in this model of PD, thereby enabling proper function of the UPR and alleviating ER stress.

Upregulation of BiP is linked to the inhibition of ER stress-induced activation of CHOP (Oyadomari et al. 2001; Wang et al. 1996). CHOP/GADD153 is a 29-kDa protein that has been associated with the control of processes necessary for cellular differentiation, proliferation, expression, and energy metabolism of specific genes (Birkenmeier et al. 1989; Umek et al. 1991). Normally, the expression of CHOP is extremely low; however, it is upregulated in the nucleus following ER stress where it contributes to apoptosis (Lu et al. 2014). Reports show that MPP⁺ increases the expression of CHOP in SH-SY5Y cells (Conn et al. 2002; Zhao et al. 2016), and authors have observed a correlation between cell death induced by 6-OHDA and CHOP induction (Ryu et al. 2002). The present study found comparable upregulation

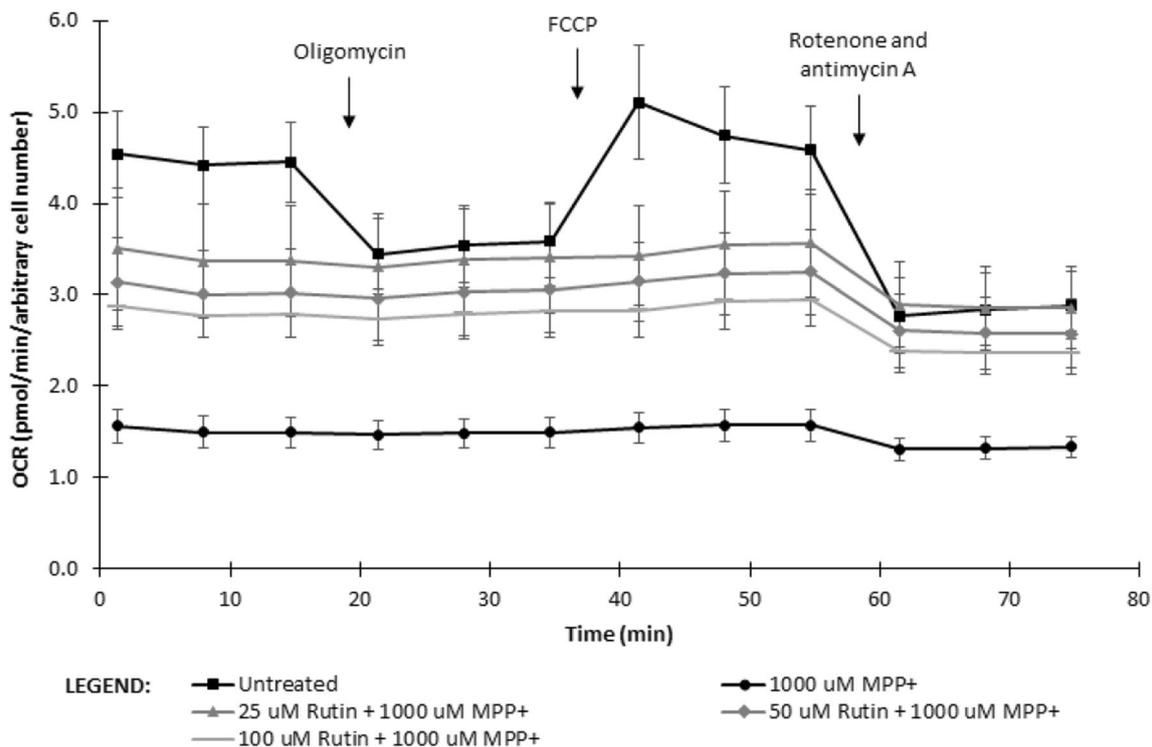


Fig. 6 Seahorse XF Mito stress test line graph depicting the oxygen consumption rate (OCR), as determined by the Seahorse XF analyzer, following the injection of oligomycin, FCCP, and rotenone/antimycin A with three measurements per condition (3 min measure and 3 min mix per measurement)

of CHOP following MPP⁺ exposure. Additionally, rutin pretreatment prevented this MPP⁺-induced CHOP accumulation, possibly via the upregulation of BiP. These findings suggest that neuroprotective agents aimed at targeting proper regulation of these proteins would be a worthwhile therapeutic option in PD.

In our study, different aspects of cellular bioenergetic status were investigated in SH-SY5Y cells following treatment with MPP⁺. A range of human pathologies associated with mitochondrial dysfunction frequently arises as a result of OXPHOS impairment (Koopman et al. 2013; Koopman et al. 2012). A dysfunction in OXPHOS initiates adaptive cellular responses that may inhibit cell death or alternatively contribute to further dysfunction (Benard et al. 2013; Germain et al. 2012; Hao et al. 2010). The adaptive responses may include alterations in redox state and antioxidant reactions, upregulation of glycolysis, and initiation of mitochondrial biogenesis (Koopman et al. 2010). Thus, evaluation of bioenergetic status provides critical insight into the energetic demands and metabolic flexibility achieved by the cells in normal and stressed conditions.

Findings from this study show a significant reduction in the basal respiration in SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺. We also observed that rutin did not improve ATP-coupled respiration but significantly improved spare respiratory capacity and maximal respiration in pretreated SH-SY5Y cells when compared to those treated with MPP⁺ only. These findings are important

because maximal respiration indicates the maximum capacity operated by the respiratory chain arising from substrate oxidation to meet its metabolic challenges; thus, a reduction in maximal respiration is a strong measure of an impairment to the mitochondria (Brand and Nicholls 2011). Additionally, the mitochondrial spare respiratory capacity is considered as a vital aspect of mitochondrial function, and its measurement signifies the cell's ability to respire maximally as well as its capability to react to an energetic demand (Yamamoto et al. 2016). When cells are exposed to stress conditions, more ATP is needed to maintain normal functions. Thus, cells with higher spare respiratory capacity are capable of producing more ATP to overcome stress (Hill et al. 2009). Consequently, our observation that rutin significantly increases maximal respiration and spare respiratory capacity confirms its role in protecting mitochondrial function.

Inhibition of OXPHOS is often linked with the stimulation of glycolysis as a compensatory response to damages in mitochondrial ATP synthesis (Keuper et al. 2014; Ozawa et al. 2015). While neurons have a limited capacity for glycolysis, increase in glycolysis is known to attenuate mitochondria-associated energy failure and cell death (Chaudhuri et al. 2015; Hong et al. 2016). Reports show that sustaining cellular ATP concentrations through glycolysis inhibits toxicity induced by MPP⁺ (Chalmers-Redman et al. 1999; Maruoka et al. 2007; Mazzi and Soliman 2003). This is in line with our

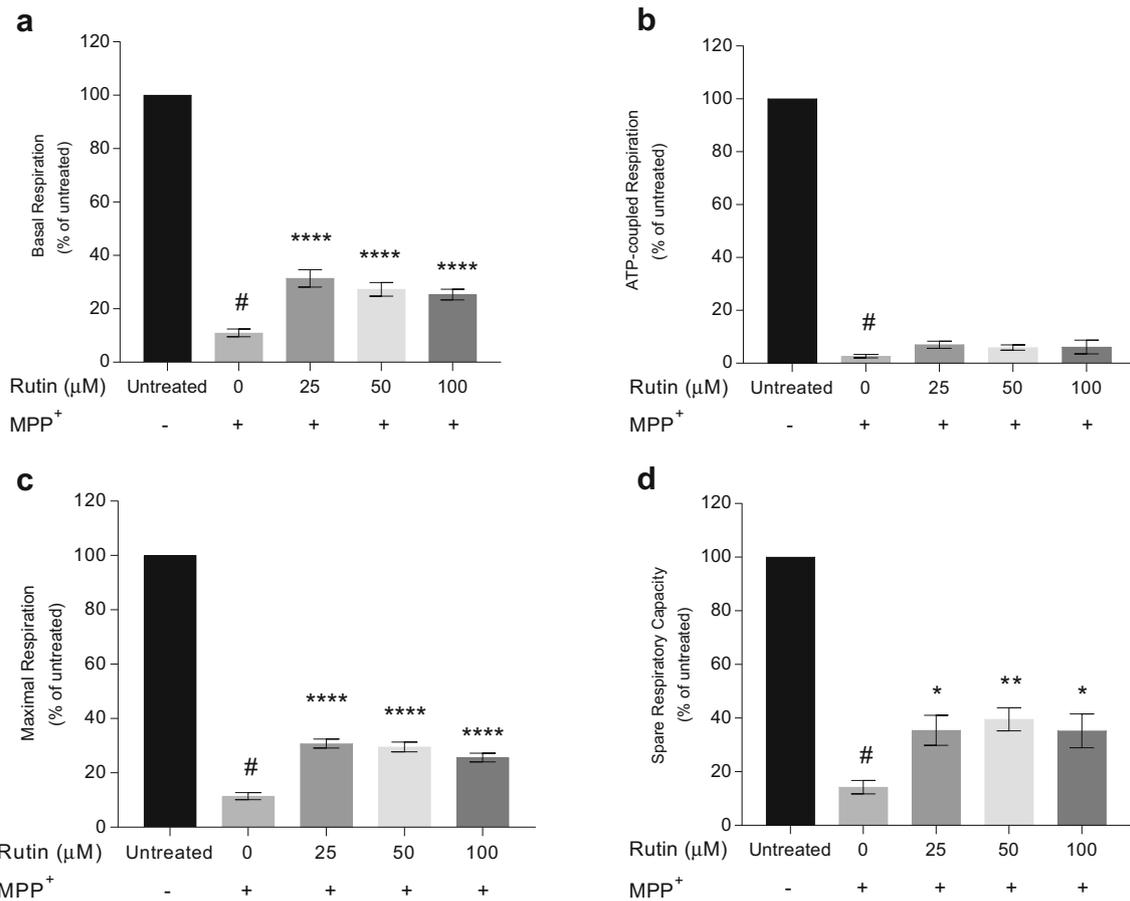


Fig. 7 Rutin mitigates impaired oxidative phosphorylation in SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺. **(A)** Basal respiration. **(B)** ATP-coupled respiration. **(C)** Maximal respiration. **(D)** Spare respiratory capacity. Each bar

represents mean ± SEM (*n* = 15). #*p* < 0.0001 vs untreated SH-SY5Y cells; **p* < 0.05, ***p* < 0.005, and *****p* < 0.0001 vs SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺ only

observations that rutin significantly increased basal and compensatory glycolysis in the SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺, and to our knowledge, the current study provides the first research evidence on the activity of rutin on cellular bioenergetic status in SH-SY5Y cells.

In conclusion, our findings demonstrate the ability of rutin to maintain Ca²⁺ homeostasis, inhibit ER stress, and protect the mitochondria in MPP⁺-treated SH-SY5Y cells, thus highlighting its potential as a promising neuroprotective compound in the treatment of PD.

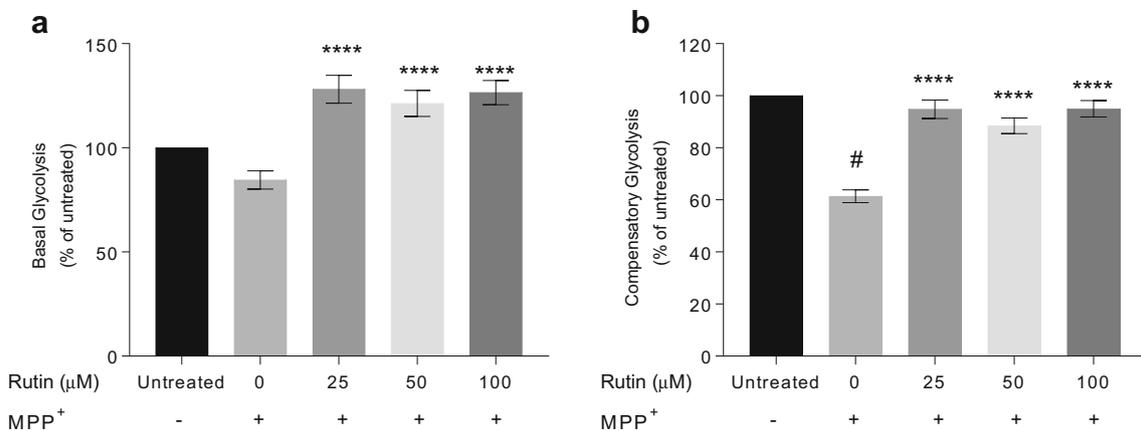


Fig. 8 Glycolytic parameters in treated and untreated SH-SY5Y cells. **(A)** Basal glycolysis. **(B)** Compensatory glycolysis. Each bar represents mean ± SEM (*n* = 15). #*p* < 0.0001 vs untreated SH-SY5Y cells; *****p* < 0.0001 vs SH-SY5Y cells treated with MPP⁺ only

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Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of Interest The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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