



UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DA PARAÍBA  
CENTRO DE CIÊNCIAS EXATAS E DA NATUREZA  
PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM BIOLOGIA CELULAR E MOLECULAR



**THAÍS BEZERRA MANGEON HONORATO**

**EFEITO DA SALINIDADE EM CÉLULAS DO SISTEMA IMUNE DO OURIÇO-DO-  
MAR *Echinometra lucunter***

**JOÃO PESSOA – PB  
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Dissertação apresentada ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Biologia Celular e Molecular do Centro de Ciências Exatas e da Natureza, da Universidade Federal da Paraíba, como parte dos requisitos para obtenção do título de **MESTRE EM BIOLOGIA CELULAR E MOLECULAR**

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**EFEITO DA SALINIDADE EM CÉLULAS DO SISTEMA IMUNE DO OURIÇO-DO-MAR *Echinometra luncunter***

Dissertação de Mestrado avaliada em \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

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“Você vai ser uma revolucionária porque qualquer mulher que está sendo autêntica em seu trabalho trará ideias e formas de trabalho que vão contra o *status quo* de sua empresa, indústria, comunidade - um status quo definido por valores masculinos e modos masculinos de trabalho”

Tara Mohr

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## RESUMO

As atividades humanas têm causado mudanças climáticas e alterado a salinidade dos oceanos. A salinidade é um dos fatores que limitam a distribuição e sobrevivência de organismos marinhos. Celomócitos são as células do sistema imune dos equinodermos e têm sido estudados como biomarcadores em situações de estresse. O objetivo do presente estudo foi investigar o efeito da salinidade em celomáticos do ouriço-do-mar tropical *Echinometra lucunter*. Os animais foram coletados na costa de João Pessoa (Nordeste do Brasil). Os animais ou os celomócitos foram expostos a diferentes salinidades (25‰ e 45‰) e parâmetros fagocíticos, produção de espécies reativas de oxigênio (ROS), atividade mitocondrial e atividade dos transportadores ABC analisados. Os parâmetros fagocíticos não alteraram quando os animais ou as células foram expostos a 25‰ ou 45‰ nos intervalos de tempo monitorados. Porém, foi observado um aumento na concentração de celomócitos quando os animais foram expostos a 25‰. Os níveis de ROS foram maiores quando as células foram incubadas a 25‰, e menores quando as células foram cultivadas a 45‰. Foi observada uma perda do potencial de membrana mitocondrial interna quando os celomócitos foram incubados a 45‰. A atividade dos transportadores ABC diminuiu quando as células foram incubadas a 25‰ e aumentou quando as células foram incubadas a 45‰. O presente trabalho demonstra que o sistema imune do ouriço-do-mar *E. lucunter* tolera mudanças de salinidade (25‰ até 45‰), e sugere dois parâmetros celulares (níveis de ROS e atividade de transportadores ABC) como potenciais biomarcadores no monitoramento de mudanças na salinidade ambiental.

**Palavras-Chave:** salinidade, ouriço-do-mar, sistema imune, celomócitos

## ABSTRACT

Human activities have caused climate changes and altered the salinity of the oceans. Salinity is one of the factors that limit the distribution and the survival of marine organisms. Coelomocytes are the immune system cells of the echinoderms and have been studied as biomarkers in stress situations. The aim of the present study was to investigate the effect of the salinity in the immune system cells of the tropical sea urchin *Echinometra lucunter*. Animals were collected in João Pessoa coast (Brazilian Northeast). Animals or coelomocytes were exposed to different salinity (25‰ to 45‰) and phagocytic parameters, production of reactive oxygen species (ROS), mitochondrial activity and ABC transporter activity analyzed. The phagocytic parameters did not change when animals or cells were exposed to low or high salinity in any time intervals monitored. However, our data showed an increase in the coelomocytes concentration when animals were exposed to 25‰. ROS levels were higher when cells were incubated at 25‰ and lower when cells were cultured at 45‰. We noted a loss of the mitochondrial inner membrane potential when coelomocytes were incubated at 45‰. The activity of ABC transporters decreased when cells were incubated at low salinity and increased when cells were incubated at high salinity. Our work shows that the immune system of the tropical sea urchins *E. lucunter* tolerates salinity changes from 25‰ to 45‰ and suggests two cellular parameters (ROS levels and ABC transporters activity) as potential biomarkers on the monitoring of the impact of environmental salinity changes.

**Keywords:** salinity, sea urchin, immune system, coelomocytes

## LISTA DE ABREVIATURAS E SIGLAS

<b>TLR</b>	Receptores do tipo Toll (do inglês, Toll-like receptors)
<b>PAMPS</b>	Padrões moleculares associados a patógenos (do inglês, Pathogen-associated molecular patterns)
<b>SRCR</b>	Receptores scavenger com domínio rico em cisteína (do inglês, Scavenger receptor cysteine-rich protein domain)
<b>PRR</b>	Receptores de reconhecimento de padrão (do inglês, Pattern recognition receptors)
<b>ROS</b>	Espécies reativas de oxigênio (do inglês, reactive oxygen species)
<b>ABC</b>	(do inglês, ATP-binding cassette transporter)
<b>MDR</b>	Resistência a múltiplas drogas (do inglês, Multiple drug resistance)
<b>MXR</b>	Resistência a múltiplos xenobióticos (do inglês Multiple xenobiotic resistance)
<b><math>\Delta\Psi_m</math></b>	Potencial de membrana mitocondrial
<b>FSW</b>	Água-do-mar filtrada (filtered seawater)
<b>ASW</b>	Água-do-mar artificial (artificial seawater)
<b>DiOC6(3)</b>	(3,3' iodeto diexiloxacarbocianina)
<b>C-AM</b>	Calceína-AM
<b>CCCP</b>	Carbonilcianeto m-clorofenil-hidrazona
<b>H<sub>2</sub>DCFDA</b>	2',7'-dihidro-diclorofluoresceína
<b>H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub></b>	Peróxido de Hidrogênio
<b>MFI</b>	Média da intensidade de fluorescência (mean of fluorescence intensity)
<b>UV</b>	Radiação ultravioleta
<b>CNPq</b>	Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico
<b>CAPES</b>	Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior

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## 1. Introdução

### 1.1 Histórico

Os celomócitos foram primeiramente estudados em 1880, onde Geddes analisou a coagulação no plasma e a formação de corpúsculos em células amebóides de diversos invertebrados, como: a minhoca *Lumbricus terrestris*, os moluscos *Patella vulgata* e *Buccinum undatum*, os caranguejos *Cancer paguru*, *Pagurus bernhardus* e *Carcinus maenas*, a estrela-do-mar *Asteracantion vulgare*, o ouriço-do-mar *Echinus esphaera* e o inseto *Phonergates vorax* (GEDDES, 1880). Com o advento da microscopia de contraste de fase, Boolootian e Giese (1958) puderam estudar com mais detalhes os subtipos celulares de celomócitos de 15 espécies de equinodermos (BOOLOOTIAN; GIESE, 1958). Em 1969, Johnson publicou o primeiro de quatro artigos que descrevem a morfologia e dinâmica dos celomócitos (JOHNSON, 1969a). Porém a existência de um sistema imune foi primeiramente descrita por Elie Metchnikoff em 1882 e anunciada a partir da teoria celular da imunidade em 1884, onde este analisou principalmente a patologia de processos inflamatórios e pôde então observar pela primeira vez o fenômeno da fagocitose. Metchnikoff dedicou parte do seu trabalho aos equinodermos, utilizou estrelas-do-mar no estudo do fenômeno da fagocitose. Os achados de Metchnikoff foram publicados pelo Instituto Pasteur, no ano de 1891, no livro "Lectures on the comparative pathology of inflammation", onde o autor discorre sobre patologia e inflamação. Após observar que um dos traços mais característicos entre organismos distintos era o seu sistema imune, Metchnikoff passou a estudar esse sistema em invertebrados marinhos, quando descreveu mecanismos efetores de eliminação de antígenos e cunhou o termo fagócito (do grego *fagos*, comer e *kytos*, compartimento), denominando, assim, as células com a capacidade de eliminar o não próprio. Metchnikoff demonstrou esse mecanismo através de um experimento onde inseriu pequenos espinhos em uma larva de estrela-do-mar e observou que algumas células migravam para o local, engolfando-os (METCHNIKOFF, 1968; TAN; DEE, 2009; TAUBER, 2003). Logo depois, ele observou a resposta de fagócitos de uma pulga d' água (*Daphnia*) contra uma infecção natural com levedura (METCHNIKOFF, 1968). Assim, os conceitos de defesa imune inata do hospedeiro por mecanismos celulares, tais como o recrutamento de fagócitos durante a inflamação aguda e crônica, e a própria fagocitose, foram vigorosamente promovidos por Metchnikoff (GORDON, 2008). Em 1908, Metchnikoff, juntamente com Paul Erich, ganhou o Prêmio Nobel de Fisiologia e Medicina.

## 1.2 Imunidade inata

Atualmente tem-se o conhecimento de que a imunidade consiste em uma reação contra elementos não próprios, incluindo células, macromoléculas - tais como proteínas e polissacarídeos - e substâncias químicas que podem ser reconhecidas como elementos estranhos ao organismo. O sistema imune adaptativo apresenta uma resposta imune mais rápida e mais específica em invasões recorrentes, o que ocorre graças a uma vasta variedade de tipos celulares e de receptores de antígenos, além da produção de anticorpos com especificidade de ligação ao antígeno. Porém, antes da evolução para um sistema imune adaptativo, mecanismos inatos de autodefesa foram adquiridos. A estratégia básica da imunidade inata é que o organismo produza, constitutivamente, receptores genéricos que reconheçam padrões conservados em diferentes patógenos, sendo assim capazes de desencadear uma resposta que limita a invasão do patógeno (JANEWAY; MEDZHITOV, 2002). Essas moléculas alvo são componentes indispensáveis dos microrganismos e, por isso, não são facilmente alteradas por mutação e seleção. O reconhecimento e a resposta imune ocorrem para que a interdição da infecção seja possível antes que os microrganismos possam proliferar, disseminar e debelar o hospedeiro (BEUTLER, 2004). Assim, a base da imunidade inata é a diferenciação entre o próprio e o não próprio a partir do reconhecimento de padrões conservados em patógenos.

Os organismos invertebrados desenvolveram uma variedade de reações imunológicas contra agentes externos. Diferente dos vertebrados, os invertebrados apresentam uma resposta imune inata, não adaptativa, não clonal e não antecipatória (COOPER, 1996). Os mecanismos de defesa comuns, usados pela maioria dos invertebrados para proteger-se contra os agentes infecciosos, são a síntese e secreção de proteínas com atividade antimicrobiana, a aglutinação, o encapsulamento de partículas estranhas, e a fagocitose (CERVELLO et al., 1996; GERARDI; LASSEGUES; CANICATTI, 1990; ITO et al., 1992; LI et al., 2014; MAJESKE; BAYNE; SMITH, 2013; PORCHET-HENNER et al., 1987; STABILI; PAGLIARA; ROCH, 1996; TAHSEEN, 2009). Em relação aos metazoários, a imunidade adaptativa está presente apenas em Agnatos e Gnatostomados, já a imunidade inata é compartilhada entre esses organismos e em grupos que tem o seu sistema imune composto exclusivamente por mecanismos inatos de defesa como os Cnidários, Artrópodes, Nematódeos, Moluscos, Anelídeos, Equinodermos, Urocordados e Cefalocordados (COOPER; ALDER, 2006). Tendo em vista a sua proximidade filogenética com os Cordados, tem-se proposto que os mecanismos efetores da imunidade inata de equinodermos, com destaque para os ouriços-do-mar, sejam conservados em organismos superiores.

### 1.2.1 Receptores de Reconhecimento de Padrão (PRR)

O ouriço-do-mar tem uma alta diversidade de receptores envolvidos na imunidade inata em relação a outras espécies de animais já caracterizados (SODERGREN et al., 2006). O sequenciamento genômico do ouriço-do-mar *Strongylocentrotus purpuratus* demonstrou que estes animais possuem um sistema imune bastante diversificado e mediado por um repertório surpreendente de genes que codificam proteínas de reconhecimento de patógenos (SODERGREN, 2006). Uma das características mais marcantes do genoma de *S. purpuratus*, no que diz respeito à imunidade, é uma enorme expansão de três classes de genes que codificam proteínas de reconhecimento inato do sistema imunológico que compõem os receptores Toll-like (TLRs, do inglês “Toll-like receptors”), NACHT e genes que codificam proteínas contendo repetições ricas em leucina (NLR) e receptor *scavenger* com domínios ricos em cisteína (SRCR). Cada um desses receptores de reconhecimento padrão (do inglês PRR) participa do reconhecimento de potenciais agentes patogênicos através de ligação direta ou indireta a padrões moleculares associados a patógenos (PAMPs) (HIBINO et al., 2006b). Foram identificados, ainda, genes homólogos dos reguladores imunológicos e hematopoiéticos, muitos dos quais foram previamente identificados somente em cordados, bem como genes que são fundamentais na imunidade adaptativa de vertebrados com mandíbula (RAST et al., 2006). Acredita-se que cerca de 4 a 5% dos genes identificados no genoma do *S. purpuratus* estejam envolvidos diretamente com o sistema imune (HIBINO et al., 2006a), o que aponta estes organismos como excelentes modelos para o estudo das funções imunológicas.

Os receptores do tipo Toll são elementos cruciais da imunidade inata que interagem com PAMPs para iniciar uma resposta antimicrobiana que culmina na fagocitose do organismo. Os TLRs são evolutivamente conservados, sendo encontrados desde o nematódeo *Caenorhabditis elegans* até os mamíferos (AKIRA; TAKEDA, 2004; BEUTLER, 2004; HOFFMANN, 2003; JANEWAY; MEDZHITOV, 2002). Os PAMPs reconhecidos pelos TLRs incluem lipídeos, lipoproteínas, proteínas e ácidos nucleicos derivados de uma vasta gama de microrganismos como bactérias, vírus, parasitas e fungos. O reconhecimento de PAMPs por TLRs ocorre em diversas estruturas celulares, incluindo a membrana plasmática, os endossomos e os lisossomos (KAWAI; AKIRA, 2010).

Além dos TLRs, foi identificada uma grande família de receptor *scavenger* de proteínas ricas em cisteína (RAST et al., 2006). Mais recentemente, foi demonstrado que os receptores *scavengers* desempenham um papel importante na defesa imune inata, atuando como receptores de reconhecimento padrão (PRR). Esses receptores reconhecem vários PAMPs, incluindo lipopolissacarídeo (LPS), ácido lipoteicóico (LTA), DNA bacteriano com sítios CpG e  $\beta$ -glucano (ARESCHOUG; GORDON, 2008; MUKHOPADHYAY; GORDON, 2004), mas evidências recentes sugerem que, para muitas proteínas scavengers de superfície, os

microrganismos são os principais ligantes (ARESCHOUG; WALDEMARSSON; GORDON, 2008; JEANNIN et al., 2005; PEISER et al., 2006; PLÜDDEMANN et al., 2009). A função mais conhecida dos receptores *scavengers* é sua atuação no reconhecimento e fagocitose, além de atuar como co-receptores para os receptores de tipo Toll modulando respostas inflamatórias (ARESCHOUG; GORDON, 2009).

### 1.2.2 Fagocitose e a imunidade inata

A fagocitose é um mecanismo em que as células migram, reconhecem e englobam partículas (partículas inertes ou vivas). Organismos unicelulares usam a fagocitose para a captação de nutrientes, porém, a fagocitose em metazoários ocorre principalmente nas células fagocíticas do sistema imune e se tornou um mecanismo de eliminação de partículas não-próprias ao organismo (ADEREM; UNDERHILL, 1999). Receptores, como os TLRs e scavengers, citados anteriormente, são responsáveis pelo reconhecimento e iniciação da fagocitose, causando aumento na taxa fagocítica dessas células especializadas (ADEREM; UNDERHILL, 1999).

Inúmeros estudos demonstram que células fagocíticas respondem a estresses fisiológicos e ambientais (BACCAN; OLIVEIRA; MANTOVANI, 2004; RIBAS et al., 2011; SESTI-COSTA et al., 2010; TSUKAMOTO; MACHIDA, 2014). Alterações na taxa de fagocitose em animais marinhos vem sendo observadas mediante agentes estressores (BRANCO et al., 2013; MALAGOLI et al., 2007; MATOZZO; MARIN, 2011). Assim, estudos sobre os fagócitos têm sido utilizados como uma ferramenta para avaliação do sistema imune de invertebrados.

As espécies reativas de oxigênio (ROS) são produzidas durante a fagocitose e estes dois mecanismos trabalham juntos para degradar partículas internalizadas (FORMAN; TORRES, 2002). Em organismos marinhos, tais como bivalves, células fagocíticas são ativadas por partículas ou organismos para produzir substâncias oxidativas, tais como ROS (BUGGÉ et al., 2007; DONAGHY et al., 2012). Esta resposta é chamado "explosão oxidativa" e é essencial para a degradação de partículas internalizadas (BUGGÉ et al., 2007). A produção de ROS ocorre pela redução univalente do oxigênio molecular ao ânion superóxido ( $O_2^-$ ) (DUPRÉ-CROCHET; ERARD; NÜ, 2013). Este radical livre, por sua vez, produz vários radicais oxidantes ou radicais não oxidantes, tais como o radical hidroxila ( $\cdot OH$ ), peróxido de hidrogênio ( $H_2O_2$ ) ou oxigênio singlete ( $^1O_2$ ). A redução de peróxido de hidrogênio pela enzima mieloperoxidase (MPO) pode também levar à formação de ácido hipocloroso (HClO). Sendo assim, ROS são derivados parcialmente reduzidos de oxigênio, altamente reativos com os principais componentes celulares, tais como proteínas, lipídeos e DNA. Em invertebrados, como em hemócitos de moluscos, foi sugerido que a produção de ROS também está relacionada a NADPH-oxidase (BUGGÉ et al., 2007; LAMBERT et al., 2007; MANDUZIO;

ROCHER; DURAND, 2005). Espécies reativas de oxigênio são continuamente gerados como subprodutos de uma série de processos celulares e também são produzidos quando as células são expostas a vários estímulos externos, tais como: citocinas, radiação ultravioleta (UV), agentes quimioterápicos, hipertermia e até mesmo fatores de crescimento (CHEN, 2014; MENG; LV; FANG, 2008; WANG et al., 2013). Além disso, são necessárias para a função celular adequada devido ao seu papel na sinalização celular e a resposta imunitária, no entanto, quando ROS excede um nível de homeostase ocorre estresse oxidativo (KOHCHI et al., 2009; SCHIEBER; CHANDEL, 2014; THANNICKAL; FANBURG, 2000). O estresse oxidativo é o resultado de um desequilíbrio entre a produção de ROS e a capacidade da célula para mitigar os danos através de vias antioxidantes, mecanismos de reparo ou eliminação das moléculas danificadas (SCHIEBER; CHANDEL, 2014). A produção de ROS foi documentada em invertebrados marinhos como ouriços-do-mar (DU et al., 2013), pepino-do-mar (SUN et al., 2008), e ostras (DONAGHY et al., 2012). Estudos em hemócitos da ostras *Crassostrea gigas*, mostraram que a produção de ROS em hemócitos não estimulados possui origem mitocondrial. Nesse caso, espécies reativas de oxigênio são geradas através da redução do oxigênio que ocorre nos Complexos I, II e III da cadeia transportadora de elétrons (LAMBERT et al., 2012). A avaliação de ROS tem sido utilizada no monitoramento do efeito de fatores exógenos sobre o sistema imune de ouriços-do-mar, tais como: choque térmico agudo, redução do pH ou exposição à compostos tóxicos (COTEUR; DANIS; DUBOIS, 2005; MATRANGA; BONAVENTURA; DI BELLA, 2002; MATRANGA et al., 2000). Esse conjunto de dados ressalta a importância da investigação da produção de ROS em situações de estresse em células somáticas de ouriços-do-mar e a sua correlação com a atividade mitocondrial.

### **1.2.3 Transportadores ABC como mecanismo de defesa**

Outro importante mecanismo de defesa, presente em invertebrados deuterostomados, que atua contra estressores físicos e químicos, é a atividade dos transportadores ABC (BONAVENTURA et al., 2005; COLE; HAMDOUN; EPEL, 2013; GOLDSTONE et al., 2006; HAMDOUN; EPEL, 2007; LEITE et al., 2014; SMITAL et al., 2004). As proteínas da superfamília ABC (do inglês, *ATP binding-cassette*) têm recebido bastante destaque na literatura científica desde que foi estabelecida uma relação direta entre a superexpressão de alguns transportadores ABC com o fenômeno de resistência a múltiplas drogas (MDR, do inglês, *multidrug resistance*) em células tumorais humanas. O fenótipo MDR é responsável pela falência terapêutica no tratamento de diversos tipos de tumores e tem sido uma das maiores barreiras na oncofarmacologia (GOTTESMAN; FOJO; BATES, 2002). Os transportadores ABC formam um grande grupo de proteínas integrais de membrana que promove o transporte acoplado de um substrato, através da membrana, a partir da hidrólise

do ATP. Em eucariotos, os transportadores ABC são encontrados na membrana plasmática e nas membranas que constituem o sistema de endomembranas (TER BEEK; GUSKOV; SLOTBOOM, 2014), como, por exemplo, na membrana do retículo endoplasmático, nas membranas de peroxissomos, na membrana mitocondrial e no envelope nuclear. (BABAKHANI; BENDAYAN; BENDAYAN, 2007; BURKE; ARDEHALI, 2007; GIBBONS et al., 2003; KIM et al., 2013; MORITA; IMANAKA, 2012; ZUTZ et al., 2009) Todos os transportadores ABC apresentam um núcleo com a mesma arquitetura modular: dois domínios transmembrana (DTM) e dois domínios de ligação de nucleotídeos (NBDs) (TER BEEK; GUSKOV; SLOTBOOM, 2014). Estas proteínas estão envolvidas no transporte de peptídeos, aminoácidos, polissacarídeos, drogas, antibióticos e toxinas (DEAN; RZHETSKY; ALLIKMETS, 2001). Em ouriços-do-mar a família de transportadores ABC divide-se em oito subfamílias (ABCA a ABCH), comparado com as sete subfamílias presentes em mamíferos (ABCA a ABCG) (SHIPP; HAMDOUN, 2012).

A diversidade na especificidade de substratos reflete a heterogeneidade funcional dos transportadores ABC na fisiologia celular (BURKE; ARDEHALI, 2007; GADSBY; VERGANI; CSANÁDY, 2006; HARTZ, 2010; HO; PIQUETTE-MILLER, 2006; JONKER et al., 2000; LIPTROTT et al., 2009; MARQUES-SANTOS et al., 1999; RUSSEL, 2010; SARKADI; HOMOLYA, 2006; SCHINKEL et al., 1995; ZHOU; SCHUETZ; BUNTING, 2001). Recentemente, os transportadores ABC foram associados a desintoxicação celular, estando relacionados com a proteção de organismos marinhos contra xenobióticos (MXR; do inglês *multi-xenobiotic resistance*) (FERREIRA; COSTA; REIS-HENRIQUES, 2014; KURELEC; PIVČEVIĆ, 1989, 1991; KURELEC, 1992).

Dois processos celulares inerentes aos celomócitos, a fagocitose e a migração celular, têm sido correlacionados com proteínas da superfamília ABC. Dados da literatura demonstram o envolvimento de transportadores ABC na fagocitose mediada por macrófagos (IWAMOTO et al., 2006; JEHLE et al., 2006; LUCIANI; CHIMINI, 1996) e na fagocitose de células tumorais por células dendríticas (KOPECKA et al., 2011). Proteínas da superfamília ABC também têm sido descritas em processos de migração celular em diversos organismos e tipos celulares, tais como: células germinativas de *Drosophila melanogaster* (RICARDO; LEHMANN, 2009); células dendríticas humanas (RANDOLPH et al., 1998); linfócitos T (HONIG et al., 2003); e mastócitos (MITRA et al., 2006).

A atividade dos transportadores ABC em equinodermos foi descrita, inicialmente, em gametas e células embrionárias do ouriços-do-mar *S. purpuratus* (HAMDOUN et al., 2004), e posteriormente em ovócitos de estrelas-do-mar (*Asterina miniata* e *Pisaster ochraceus*) (ROEPKE; HAMDOUN; CHERR, 2006). A atividade destes transportadores parece ser crucial durante a embriogênese destes organismos (CAMPANALE; HAMDOUN, 2012; SHIPP; HAMDOUN, 2012). O nosso grupo caracterizou a atividade funcional de duas proteínas da

superfamília ABC (ABCB1 e ABCC1) em gametas e células embrionárias do ouriço-do-mar *Echinometra lucunter* (DE SOUZA et al., 2010). Dados mais recentes do nosso grupo demonstram que estas proteínas se encontram funcionais nos estágios mais tardios do desenvolvimento, apresentando um claro padrão de expressão diferencial em larva plúteos (TORREZAN; FIGUEIREDO; MARQUES-SANTOS, 2012), esses mesmos transportadores são capazes de proteger gametas e embriões de ouriços-do-mar contra os efeitos nocivos da radiação ultravioleta (LEITE et al., 2014). Estes trabalhos sugerem que a expressão dos transportadores ABC em invertebrados marinhos seja crucial na proteção contra estressores físicos e químicos. Além disso, nosso grupo identificou a presença de transportadores ABC em celomócitos de ouriços-do-mar *E. lucunter* (dados não publicados).

Este conjunto de dados encoraja o desenvolvimento de estudos sobre a atividade de transportadores ABC em celomócitos de equinodermos. O fato destas células estarem em contato direto com estressores ambientais, e proteínas da superfamília ABC estarem diretamente envolvidas na resistência a estressores químicos e físicos torna ainda mais interessante a investigação da correlação entre os transportadores ABC e os processos fisiológicos mediados pelos celomócitos.

### 1.3 Celomócitos

O sistema imune de ouriços-do-mar atua a partir de resposta celular e/ou humoral (BRANCO; FIGUEIREDO; SILVA, 2014). As células responsáveis pelo reconhecimento de patógenos e pela resposta do sistema imune em ouriços-do-mar são denominadas celomócitos. Os celomócitos são comumente encontrados nos espaços celômicos de equinodermos, principalmente a cavidade celômica perivisceral, sistema hemal e sistema vascular de água e também são encontrados no tecido conjuntivo, porém, frequentemente, infiltram outros tecidos e órgãos (GLIŃSKI; JAROSZ, 2000; MUNOZ-CHAPULI et al., 2005; SMITH et al., 2006). Os celomócitos são divididos em quatro subpopulações com diferentes funções, são estas: fagócitos, células vibráteis, esferulócitos vermelhos e esferulócitos incolores (BOOLOOTIAN; GIESE, 1958; GEDDES, 1880; SMITH et al., 2006).

Os fagócitos são células que não possuem grânulos, podem emitir projeções citoplasmáticas e apresentam diferentes morfologias: fagócitos petaloides, fagócitos poligonais, fagócitos discoidais e fagócitos pequenos (BOOLOOTIAN; GIESE, 1958; BORGES et al., 2005; BRANCO et al., 2013; JOHNSON, 1969a; LIMA-SANTOS, 2015). Uma característica única dos fagócitos é a presença de corpos intranucleares de ferro (BORGES et al., 2002; MANGIATERRA; SILVA, 2001; MILLOT; VEVERS, 1968). Esse tipo celular é o único dos celomócitos capaz de realizar fagocitose (BORGES et al., 2005; METCHNIKOFF, 1968) e constitui a maior população de celomócitos (SMITH; BRITTEN; DAVIDSON, 1992). Apesar da fagocitose ser o principal mecanismo efetor da imunidade dos fagócitos, eles

também podem estar envolvidos em outros processos celulares como: quimiotaxia, aglutinação e reações de coagulação (HILLIER; VACQUIER, 2003; SMITH et al., 2006), migração celular (METCHNIKOFF, 1968) , produção de ROS (DOLMATOVA et al., 2013; ITO et al., 1992; JOHNSON, 1969b), encapsulamento (COFFARO; HINEGARDNER, 1977). Além de participar também dos processos humorais: citotoxicidade (BERTHEUSSEN, 1979), opsonização e produção de substâncias antibacterianas (GERARDI; LASSEGUES; CANICATTI, 1990). Assim, estudos sobre os fagócitos têm sido utilizados como uma ferramenta para avaliação do sistema imune de invertebrados.

As células vibráteis são células flageladas que se deslocam em movimento rotacional (BORGES et al., 2005; SMITH et al., 2006). Essas células compõe o segundo tipo celular mais populoso de celomócitos (BERTHEUSSEN; SELJELID, 1978; JOHNSON, 1969b; SMITH; BRITTEN; DAVIDSON, 1992). Foram inicialmente descritas como responsáveis por movimentar o fluido celômico, porém Johnson (1969) ao observar essas células em uma gota em suspensão não detectou nenhuma movimentação do fluido. (JOHNSON, 1969b). Adicionalmente as células vibráteis também foram associadas à reações de coagulação (BERTHEUSSEN; SELJELID, 1978).

Os esferulócitos representam a menor população de celomócitos (SMITH; BRITTEN; DAVIDSON, 1992). Apresentam dois tipos celulares, os esferulócitos vermelhos e os esferulócitos incolores. São células arredondadas, com grânulos intracelulares e movimento ameboide (JOHNSON, 1969b). Os esferulócitos vermelhos diferem dos incolores pela presença de uma substância chamada equinocromo A, o que lhe dá a coloração vermelha (JOHNSON, 1969b). Equinocromo A é um pigmento de naftoquinona e já foi descrito apresentando atividade antibacteriana em esferulócitos vermelhos (GERARDI; LASSEGUES; CANICATTI, 1990; JOHNSON, 1969b; SERVICE; WARDLAW, 1984). Os esferulócitos incolores não tem uma função conhecida (JOHNSON, 1969b; SMITH et al., 2006).

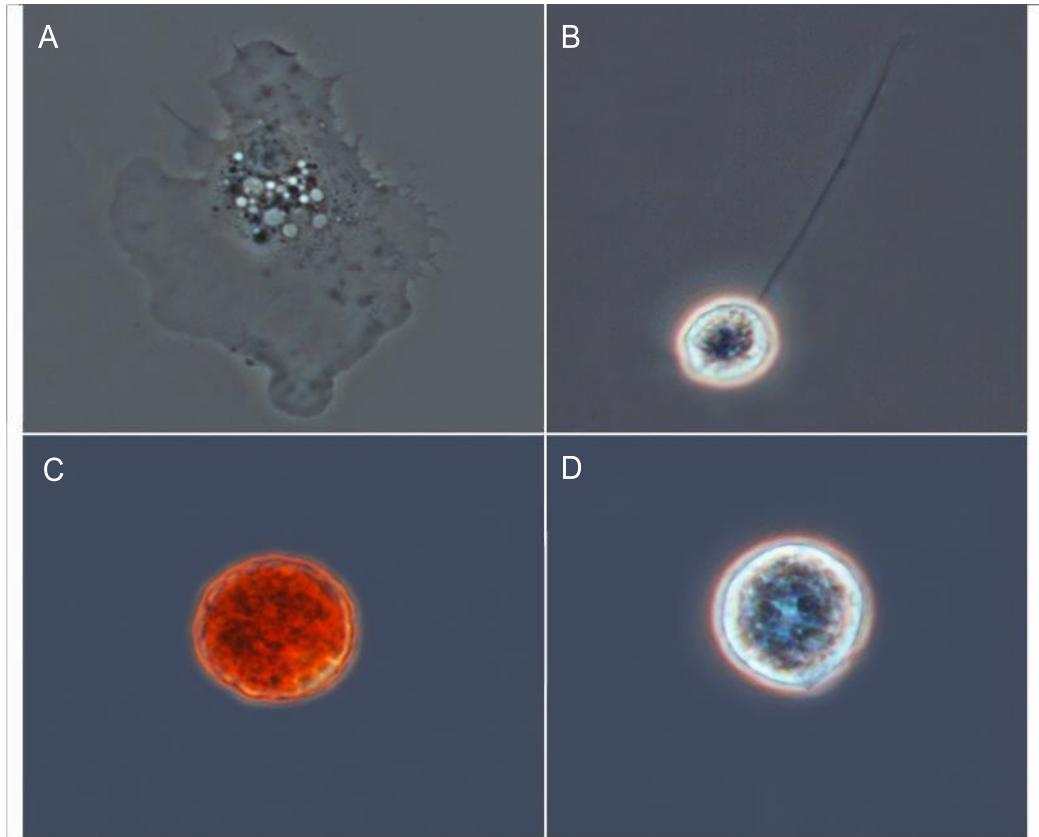


Figura 1. Tipos celulares de celomócitos do ouriço-do-mar *Echinometra lucunter*. (A) Fagócito; (B) Célula vibrátil; (C) Esferulócito incolor; (D) Esferulócito vermelho. Fonte: Lima-Santos, dados não publicados. Aumento 1000x.

#### 1.4 Equinodermos e a salinidade

Os ecossistemas marinhos têm um papel ecológico fundamental para o planeta. As atividades humanas têm causado mudanças climáticas que alteraram o ciclo hidrológico do planeta, incluindo: aumento da incidência de radiação ultravioleta, aumento da temperatura da superfície do mar, a aceleração na precipitação global, mudanças na taxa de evaporação e mudanças na salinidade da oceanos (HAERTER; BERG; HAGEMANN, 2010; SEMENOV; MOKHOV; LATIF, 2012; TALLEY et al., 2002; TRENBERTH, 1998; WILLIAMSON et al., 2014). Os invertebrados marinhos, inclusive os equinodermos, são essencialmente isomóticos em relação ao meio, o que significa que seus fluidos corpóreos e a água do mar possuem a mesma pressão osmótica. Diante de variações da salinidade do meio externo, o meio interno dos animais osmoconformadores passa a apresentar as mesmas condições do meio externo (SANTOS; CASTELLANO; FREIRE, 2013). Adicionalmente, os equinodermos são considerados animais estenohalinos, não suportando, assim, amplas variações de salinidade (FREIRE; SANTOS; VIDOLIN, 2011). Esses animais são estenohalinos devido à elevada permeabilidade da parede do corpo e do sistema de pés ambulacrais, e outros epitélios, bem como da falta de um sistema excretor capaz de realizar o transporte ativo

vetorial de sal (BINYON, 1966; HYMAN, 1955; SANTOS-GOUVEA; FREIRE, 2007; WARNAU et al., 1998). Equinodermos não possuem, aparentemente, qualquer órgão excretor específico (BOOLOOTIAN, 1966; DIEHL, 1986; HYMAN, 1955), e a amônia facilmente atravessa a parede do corpo do animal, sendo o método essencial de excreção de nitrogênio, como é típico da maior parte dos animais aquáticos (BOOLOOTIAN, 1966). No entanto, apesar de serem considerados osmoconformes estenohalinos, os equinodermos frequentemente suportam variações de salinidade, quer em seus ambientes (especialmente intertidal), ou experimentalmente em laboratório (BINYON, 1966).

A redução da salinidade é um dos principais fatores que limita a distribuição e a sobrevivência de espécies marinhas (LI et al., 2013). Curry e colegas (2003) relataram que o aquecimento global e as mudanças no ciclo hidrológico têm alterado a distribuição de água nos oceanos de todo o mundo (CURRY; DICKSON; YASHAYAEV, 2003). Estas mudanças têm efeitos sobre a sobrevivência e fisiologia de muitos organismos (ALLEN; PECHENIK, 2010; CARBALLEIRA; MARTÍN-DÍAZ; DELVALLS, 2011; CHOI et al., 2013; KUMAR et al., 2010; LUO; LIU, 2011). Alguns relatos têm descrito que a taxa de fertilização, de clivagem embrionária e da ocorrência de polispermia - em equinodermos - são sensíveis às variações de salinidade. No entanto, alguns estudos têm mostrado que as espécies de Echinoidea são capazes de tolerar mudanças de salinidade moderadas (DROUIN; HIMMELMAN; BÉLAND, 1985; STICKLE; DENOUX, 1976; WOLFF, 1968).

Os Echinoideas do gênero *Echinometra* são comumente relatados em águas rasas, entre a maré baixa e média, em profundidade de aproximadamente 10 m (MCCLANAHAN; MUTHIGA, 2007). Muitos são interditais ou vivem próximos a estuários, toleram mudanças de salinidade e apresentam gradientes extracelulares para diluir a água do mar (SANTOS; CASTELLANO; FREIRE, 2013). A espécie *E. lucunter* é encontrada em clima tropical na costa brasileira e habita cavidades em pedras, expostas ao ar e ao sol durante a baixa maré, e à água do mar durante a maré alta (DE FARIA; MACHADO; DA SILVA, 2008; Fig. 2). Ouriços-do-mar da espécie *E. Lucunter* são animais bentônicos, com capacidade de movimentação limitada (PEARSE, 2013), desta forma, alterações ambientais podem afetar esses organismos, tornando-os excelentes bioindicadores. Por isso, o estudo da ação de estressores químicos e físicos sobre a fisiologia das células somáticas de equinodermos pode contribuir para a compreensão dos efeitos das mudanças climáticas sobre as populações de invertebrados marinhos.



Figura 2. *Echinometra lucunter* em seu habitat. Fonte: Marques-Santos, dados não publicados.

## **2. Objetivos**

### **2.1 Objetivo Geral**

Investigar o efeito da salinidade nas células do sistema imune do ouriço-do-mar *E. lucunter*.

### **2.2 Objetivos Específicos**

Os objetivos específicos foram caracterizar o efeito da salinidade na:

- Fagocitose de celomócitos de ouriços-do-mar *in vivo e in vitro*;
- Produção de espécies reativas de oxigênio em celomócitos de ouriços-do-mar *in vitro*;
- Potencial de membrana mitocondrial interna em celomócitos de ouriços-do-mar *in vitro*
- Atividade de transportadores ABC em celomócitos de ouriços-do-mar *in vitro*;

### 3. Resultados

#### **JOURNAL OF EXPERIMENTAL MARINE BIOLOGY AND ECOLOGY**

EFFECT OF SALINITY ON IMMUNE SYSTEM CELLS OF SEA URCHIN *Echinometra lucunter*

Thaís Mangeon Honorato<sup>a</sup>, Raianna Boni<sup>a</sup>, Patricia Mirella da Silva<sup>a</sup> and Luis Fernando Marques-Santos<sup>a</sup>

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Celomócitos são células do fluido celômico de equinodermos responsáveis pela imunidade inata, sendo constituídas por quatro subpopulações: fagócitos; células vibráteis; esferulócitos vermelhos; e esferulócitos incolores. Atualmente, os celomócitos têm sido estudados como bioindicadores em situações de estresse. O objetivo do presente trabalho foi investigar o efeito da salinidade nas células do sistema imune do ouriço-do-mar *Echinometra lucunter*. Observamos alterações fisiológicas nos celomócitos submetidos a alterações de salinidade em parâmetro como: contagem celular total, produção de ROS, potencial de membrana mitocondrial interna e atividade de transportadores ABC. Esse é o primeiro relato da resposta de celomócitos de *E. lucunter* à diferentes salinidade.

#### 4. Artigo

EFFECTS OF SALINITY ON THE IMMUNE SYSTEM CELLS OF THE TROPICAL SEA URCHIN *Echinometra lucunter*

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**Abbreviations:** ROS, reactive oxygen species; FSW, filtered seawater; ASW, artificial seawater; M.F.I., mean of fluorescence intensity; LB, latex beads; MK, MK-571; Rev, Reversin 205;  $\Delta\Psi_m$ , mitochondrial inner membrane potential.

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## ABSTRACT

Human activities have caused climate changes and altered the salinity of the oceans. The reduction of the salinity is one of the factors that limit the distribution and the survival of marine organisms. Coelomocytes are the immune system cells of the echinoderms and have been studied as stress biomarkers. The aim of the present study was to investigate the effect of the salinity on the immune system cells of the tropical sea urchin *Echinometra lucunter*. Animals were collected in João Pessoa coast (Brazilian Northeast). Animals or coelomocytes were exposed to different salinity (25‰, 35‰, 45‰) and times. Phagocytic parameters, production of reactive oxygen species (ROS), mitochondrial activity and ABC transporter activity were analyzed. The phagocytic parameters did not change when animals or cells were exposed to 25‰ or 45‰ in any time intervals monitored. However, our data showed an increase in the coelomocytes concentration when animals were exposed to 25‰. Reactive oxygen species levels were higher when cells were incubated at 25‰ and lower when cells were kept at 45‰. We noted a loss of the mitochondrial inner membrane potential when coelomocytes were incubated at 45‰. The activity of ABC transporters decreased when cells were incubated at the lowest salinity and increased when cells were incubated at the highest salinity tested. Our work shows that the salinity does not compromise the immune system of sea urchin *E. lucunter* and suggests two cellular parameters (ROS levels and ABC transporters activity) as potential biomarkers for the monitoring of the impact of environmental salinity changes.

**Keywords:** salinity; sea urchin; immune system; phagocytosis; ROS; ABC transporter.

## Highlights

- . Effect of the salinity on sea urchin coelomocytes
- . Low salinity increased coelomocytes concentration in the coelomic fluid
- . Salinity altered ROS levels,  $\Delta\Psi_m$  and ABC transporters activity in coelomocytes
- . Salinity did not affect the phagocytic activity

## 1. Introduction

Deuterostome invertebrates have developed a variety of immune responses against foreign pathogens and molecules (Gross et al., 1999). The genomic sequencing of the sea urchin *Strongylocentrotus purpuratus* revealed that these animals have a robust immune system which is comprised by a vast repertoire of genes involved in the innate recognition of pathogen molecules (Sodergren et al., 2006). The main mechanisms of immune defense against infectious agents used by most of the invertebrates are: the synthesis and secretion of recognition, neutralizing and lytic proteins/molecules, which participate in nodule formation; encapsulation, cell lysis, and phagocytosis of foreign particles (Cervello et al., 1996; Gerardi et al., 1990; Li et al., 2014; Loker et al., 2004; Majeske et al., 2013; Stabili et al., 1996; Tahseen, 2009).

In echinoderms, the immune response is divided into humoral (mediated by molecules present in the body fluids) and cellular (cell mediated). The cells responsible for the innate immunity are known as coelomocytes. The coelomocytes are found in the coelomic perivisceral cavity, vascular water system, circulatory system, connective tissue and the tissues of various organs (Tahseen, 2009), and consist of four subpopulations: phagocytes; vibratile cells; red spherule cells and colorless spherule cells (Johnson, 1969). The phagocytes are involved in cell migration and phagocytosis, and represent the major subpopulation of the coelomocytes. In addition, phagocytosis is the main immune defense mechanism of the marine invertebrates (Ellis et al., 2011). Phagocytosis is a mechanism in which immune cells migrate to the infected site, recognize, ingest and destroy the foreign particle (inert or alive). A variety of phagocytic receptors, such as Toll-like receptors and scavengers receptors are responsible for the phagocytic process in the specialized cells (Aderem e Underhill, 1999). It is estimated that about 4 to 5% of the genes in the genome of *S. purpuratus* are directly involved with the immune system (Hibino et al., 2006).

The production of reactive oxygen species (ROS) is a cellular process associated with phagocytosis and response to stress (Buggé et al., 2007; Coteur, 2004; Forman e Torres, 2002; Lesser, 2006). The reactive oxygen species are produced during phagocytosis to

destroy the internalized particles (Forman e Torres, 2002). The process starts on the cell or phagosome membranes by activating NADPH oxidase, with a strong oxygen consumption, a mechanism called *oxidative burst*, causing the reduction of molecular oxygen to superoxide anion ( $O_2^-$ ); which can be spontaneously or enzymatically (superoxide dismutase) converted into hydrogen peroxide ( $H_2O_2$ ). Others reactive radicals such as hydroxyl radical ( $\cdot OH$ ), or singlet oxygen ( $^1O_2$ ) are also produced (Dupré-crochet et al., 2013). In addition, ROS are also produced by the mitochondrial electron transport chain under physiological or stress conditions (Banh et al., 2016; Bhat et al., 2015; Figueira et al., 2013; Kandola et al., 2015; Orrenius et al., 2007). When an imbalance between ROS production and ROS scavenger occurs, cells enter a condition named oxidative stress (Costantini e Verhulst, 2009). Several works have been using ROS levels of the sea urchins immune system cells as indicative of stress from different sources, such as: UV radiation, acute heat shock, pH reduction or exposure to heavy metals (Coteur et al., 2005; Lu e Wu, 2005; Matranga et al., 2000).

Another important defense mechanism present in deuterostome invertebrates which acts against physical and chemical stressors is the activity of the ABC transporters (Bonaventura et al., 2011, 2005; Dean, 2001; Miller, 2010; Russo et al., 2010). The ABC transporters constitute a large group of integral membrane proteins that promotes the active transport of a substrate across the membrane coupled to ATP hydrolysis. In eukaryotes, ABC transporters are found in the plasma membrane, and membranes that constitute the endomembrane system (Babakhanian et al., 2007; Burke e Ardehali, 2007; Gibbons et al., 2003; Higgins e Gottesman, 1992; ter Beek et al., 2014; Zutz et al., 2009). ABC proteins are widely distributed - from microorganisms to human - and their structures are highly conserved (Dean et al., 2001). ABC transporters were firstly associated with the multidrug resistance phenomenon in cancer cells (Gottesman et al., 2002; Rumjanek et al., 2001). Recently, ABC transporters have been linked to cellular detoxification and associated with the protection of marine organisms against xenobiotics (multixenobiotic resistance, also known as MXR) (Ferreira et al., 2014; Kurelec e Pivčević, 1991, 1989; Branko Kurelec, 1992). The sequenced genome of *S. purpuratus* indicated that sea urchins have a wide range of ABC transporter

genes (65 genes) (Sodergren et al., 2006). ABC transporters expression is modulated in response to xenobiotics, stress and diseases (Bonaventura et al., 2005; de Araujo Leite et al., 2014; Felix e Barrand, 2002; Miller, 2010). Recently, it has been reported that ABC transporters can also play an important role in the immune system processes, such as phagocytosis and cell migration (Hinz e Tampé, 2012; Seyffer e Tampé, 2014; van de Ven et al., 2009).

Marine ecosystems play a key role for the ecology of the planet. Human activities have caused climate changes that have altered the hydrological cycle of the planet, including: increase of ultraviolet radiation incidence, increase in the sea surface temperature, acceleration in the global rainfall, changes in the rate of evaporation and changes in the salinity of the oceans (Haerter et al., 2010; Semenov et al., 2012; Talley et al., 2002; Trenberth, 1998; Williamson et al., 2014). The reduction of the salinity is one of the main factors that limits the distribution and the survival of marine species (Kaiser, 2011; Li et al., 2013; Russell, 2013; Tomanek et al., 2012). Curry and colleagues (2003) reported that global warming and changes in the hydrological cycle have altered the distribution of water in the oceans all over the world (Curry et al., 2003). These changes have effects on the survival and physiology of many organisms (Allen e Pechenik, 2010; Carballeira et al., 2011; Choi et al., 2013; Kumar et al., 2010; Luo e Liu, 2011). Some reports have described that fertilization rate, embryo cleavage and polyspermy occurrence - in echinoderms - are sensitive to salinity variations (Allen e Pechenik, 2010; Allen et al., 2015; Carballeira et al., 2011). In spite of being an osmoconformer, varying their internal medium according to the external environmental, echinoderms are stenohaline animals and do not tolerate large variations in the salinity of the environment (Freire et al., 2011). For a sea urchin, fluctuations in environmental salinity may be reflected in the coelomic fluid and impact the physiology of the coelomocytes. However, some studies have shown that Echinoidea species are able to tolerate moderate salinity changes (Drouin et al., 1985; Stickle e Denoux, 1976; Wolff, 1968).

Benthonic marine organisms can act as excellent biosensors for the monitoring of stress effects on the marine ecosystem. Several studies have demonstrated that sea urchins immune cells respond to environmental stressors, such as: temperature (Borges et al., 2002;

Pinsino et al., 2008), UV radiation (Matranga et al., 2006) and pollutants (Pinsino et al., 2008). It has been also described that salinity can affect the immune system of marine invertebrate, reducing the immune response to foreign agents (Fisher et al., 1987). The tropical sea urchin *Echinometra lucunter* inhabits intertidal areas and is subject to environmental changes such as temperature and salinity (Lima et al., 2009). The investigation of the status of sea urchin immune system cells under different salinity conditions may help in the understanding the effects of environmental changes in the marine ecosystem. Adding to this, sea urchin reproduction play an important role in the marine ecosystem, contributing to the marine food chain. So, the aim of the present study was to investigate the effect of salinity on immune system cells of the tropical sea urchin *E. lucunter*, contributing to the knowledge about the effects of climate change on marine invertebrates.

## **2. Material and Methods**

### **2.1 Drugs**

Calcein-AM (C/AM), carbonyl cyanide *m*-chlorophenyl hydrazone (CCCP), 2',7'-dichlorodihydrofluorescein diacetate (H2DCFDA), MK571, reversin 205, hydrogen peroxide (H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>) and DiOC6(3) (3,3'-Dihexyloxacarbocyanine,iodide) were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich (St. Louis. USA). Fluorescent latex beads were purchased from Polysciences, Inc. (Pennsylvania, USA). NaCl, KCl, CaCl<sub>2</sub>·2H<sub>2</sub>O, MgCl<sub>2</sub>·6H<sub>2</sub>O, MgSO<sub>4</sub>·7H<sub>2</sub>O and NaHCO<sub>3</sub> were purchased from VETEC Química Fina (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil).

### **2.2 Animals Capture and Maintenance**

Adult sea urchins *E. lucunter* (Linnaeus, 1758) were sampled at Ponta do Seixas, João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil (7°08'54.1"S; 34°47'43.2"W). Animals were transported to the laboratory in plastic containers filled with local seawater. They were extensively washed with filtered local seawater (FSW, 80 µm), 35‰ to remove gross biological organisms and disposed in a glass tank (80 L; 4 L/ per animal), with FWS, under constant aeration. The animal capture

was authorized by ICMBio (Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade/Authorization code number: 32105-1).

### **2.3 *In vivo* exposure to different salinities**

Before the assay, sea urchins were acclimatized in a glass tank containing FSW (35‰, ambient salinity) at 25°C and under constant aeration.

For the assay, animals were distributed into plastic tanks (20 L; 4 L per animal; N = 2 sea urchin per tank), containing FSW with different salinities (2 replicates per condition): 25‰ (low salinity), 35‰ (ambient salinity; control group), and 45‰ (high salinity). To adjust the salinities, synthetic sea salt (Tetra Marine Salt Pro) was added to FSW. To prepare the ambient salinity and low salinity, FSW was firstly diluted with distilled water. All tanks received constant aeration and the water temperature was 25°C. The experiment was repeated twice.

The analyses of coelomocyte phagocytosis activity and total and differential coelomocytes concentration were performed 6h and 24h after salinity challenge.

### **2.4 *Coelomocytes sampling and preparation***

First, the coelomic fluid was withdrawn through a puncture in the peristomial membrane by inserting a needle (21 gage) coupled to a sterile syringe (3 mL) containing anticoagulant solution ISO-EDTA (20 mM Tris, 0.5 M NaCl, 70 mM EDTA, pH 7.5) at a ratio of 1:1 (ISO-EDTA : coelomic fluid).

Coelomocytes were obtained by centrifugation of the coelomic fluid, at 600 x g for 5 minutes, at 4° C. The pelleted cells were resuspended in coelomic fluid previously prepared (see item 2.5), at each salinity, and the concentration of cell suspension adjusted to 5 x 10<sup>5</sup> cells/ml.

### **2.5 *Coelomic fluid preparation***

The coelomic fluid was obtained through a puncture in the peristomial membrane by inserting a needle (21 gage) coupled to a sterile syringe (3 mL) and immediately centrifuged

at 1067 x g for 20 minutes, at 4° C. The supernatant was filtered (0.22 µm) and stored at -20°C until use. Before the assay, the salinity of the coelomic fluid was adjusted to 25‰, 35‰ and 45‰ by addition of salts according to ASW formula (artificial seawater; Vogel et al., 1999) or by dilution with distilled water.

### **2.6 *In vitro* exposure of coelomocytes to different salinities**

Coelomocytes (N = 5) were separately resuspended in the coelomic fluid adjusted to the three salinities (25‰, 35‰, and 45‰) for all *in vitro* assays. Cells were then incubated in flow cytometry tubes (500 µL/tube, 3 replicates) at 25°C.

Analyses of four cell parameters were performed at time 0h, 4h, 8h or 24h after salinity challenge. The following cell parameters were analysed by flow cytometry: phagocytic activity, reactive oxygen species production, mitochondrial inner membrane potential, and ABC transporters activity.

### **2.7 Total and differential coelomocytes concentration**

Total and differential coelomocytes concentrations were analyzed under phase-contrast microscopy by using a Neubauer chamber.

### **2.8 Flow cytometry analyses**

Flow cytometry analyses were performed using a FACSCalibur flow cytometer (BD Biosciences, San Jose, California, USA). All cell parameters were analyzed using FL1 detector (green fluorescence, 530 nm). Fluorescence intensity was acquired in a total of 10,000 events per sample. The results were represented by the mean of fluorescence intensity (M.F.I.) in arbitrary units (a.u.).

### **2.9 Phagocytic capacity**

After salinity exposure - *in vivo* (6h and 24h) or *in vitro* (4h, 8h, 24h) - coelomocytes were incubated for 1h, at 25 °C, with fluorescent latex microspheres (2.0 micrometers,

Fluoresbrite® Yellow Green, final concentration 2% in MilliQ water) in the ratio of 1:10 (cells:beads; 3 technical replicates). The samples were immediately fixed in 4% formaldehyde (1:1) and preserved at 4 °C for a maximum of 2 days.

Two phagocytic activity parameters were calculated: the phagocytic capacity and the phagocytic index. The phagocytic capacity expresses the percentage of cells from the whole cell population, which internalized at least one fluorescent microsphere. The phagocytic index indicates the capacity of the cells to internalize more than one fluorescent microspheres (see below).

$$\text{Phagocytic capacity (\%)} = \frac{\text{number of phagocytes containing engulfed beads}}{100 \text{ coelomocytes}}$$

$$\text{Phagocytic index} = \frac{\text{number of microspheres internalized}}{\text{number of phagocytes containing engulfed beads}}$$

### **2.10 Investigation of ROS production**

After *in vitro* salinity exposure (4h) coelomocyte suspensions were harvested from wells and incubated with dichlorofluorescein diacetate (DCFH-DA, final concentration 10 µM) for 30 min, at 25 °C, in flow cytometry tubes protected from light (2 technical replicates). Hydrogen peroxide (H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>, final concentration 1 mM) was used as a positive control.

### **2.11 Mitochondrial inner membrane potential**

After *in vitro* salinity exposure (4h), coelomocyte suspensions were harvested from wells and incubated with 3,3'-dihexyloxacarbocyanine iodide (DiOC6(3), final concentration 20 nM) for 30 min, at 25 °C, in flow cytometry tubes protected from light (2 technical replicates). The protonophore carbonyl cyanide *m*-chlorophenyl hydrazone (CCCP, final concentration 200 µM) was used as a positive control.

## **2.12 ATP-binding cassette (ABC) transporters activity**

After *in vitro* salinity exposure (4h), coelomocyte suspensions were harvested from wells and incubated with calcein-AM (final concentration 100 nM) for 30 min, at 25 °C, in flow cytometry tubes protected from light (2 technical replicates). Two ABC transporters blockers, reversin 205 (ABCB1 blocker; final concentration 10 µM) and MK-571 (ABCC1 blocker; final concentration 10 µM) were used as positive controls and separately added 30 minutes before calcein-AM incubation.

Calcein-AM is a non-fluorescent ABC transporters substrate. When entering the cell, the acetomethoxy (AM) group is cleaved by esterases, making calcein a fluorescent molecule. As calcein-AM is pumped out of cells by ABC transporters, the level of fluorescence is inversely proportional to the activity of the transporters.

## **2.13 Statistical analysis**

All results are expressed as mean  $\pm$  standard error of the mean (SEM). Percentage data were transformed to arcsin before analysis. All data were analyzed by one-way ANOVA followed by Tukey's post-test. A statistically significant difference was determined when  $P < 0.05$ .

## **3. Results**

### **3.1 Effect of salinity on the phagocytosis capacity at different time spans - *in vivo* assays**

To study the effect of the salinity on the sea urchin immune system, we firstly investigated the phagocytic capacity of coelomocytes from animals exposed to different salinities. The analysis was performed immediately before the exposure to different salinities (0h) and 6h and 24h after the exposure to low or high salinities. The basal phagocytosis (time 0h) ranged from  $51.03 \pm 2.69$  to  $61.73 \pm 3.41$  according to the treatment group (Fig. 1). The phagocytic capacity of the sea urchin coelomocytes did not change when animals were kept at different salinities in the monitored time intervals (25‰ to 45‰; Fig. 1). When animal were

maintained at 35‰ - ambient salinity - the phagocytic capacity ranged from  $63.27 \pm 3.10\%$  (6h) to  $52.52 \pm 4.61\%$  (24h; Fig. 1). At low salinity (25‰), the phagocytic capacity ranged from  $57.58 \pm 4.22\%$  (6h) to  $62.46 \pm 3.15\%$  (24h; Fig. 1). The phagocytic capacity of coelomocytes from animals kept at high salinity (45‰) ranged from  $62.91 \pm 4.91\%$  (6h) to  $56.67 \pm 5.83\%$  (24h; Fig. 1).

The phagocytic index also did not change when animals were maintained at different salinities (25‰ to 45‰; Fig. 2). The basal phagocytic index (time 0h) ranged from  $2.18 \pm 0.15$  to  $2.78 \pm 0.53$  according to the treatment group (Fig 2). The phagocytic index ranged from  $5.96 \pm 0.83$  to  $3.55 \pm 1.10$  when animals were kept at ambient salinity (6 and 24h, respectively; Fig 2). When animals were exposed to the lowest salinity (25‰), the phagocytic index ranged from  $4.25 \pm 1.42$  to  $4.35 \pm 1.35$  (6 and 24h, respectively; Fig 2); and phagocytic index ranged from  $6.56 \pm 0.25$  to  $6.87 \pm 1.73$  when animals were exposed to the highest salinity (45‰) (6 and 24h, respectively; Fig 2).

### **3.2 Effect of salinity on the cell concentration of sea urchin coelomocytes at different time spans - *in vivo* assays**

Coelomocytes concentration may alter under stress conditions due to cell migration to the peristomial membrane (de Faria e Machado; da Silva, 2008). Therefore, we evaluated the total (TCC) and differential (DCC) coelomocyte count when animals were exposed to different salinities. The analysis was performed immediately before (time 0h) and 6h and 24h after the exposure to different salinities. The total cellular concentration from sea urchins kept at ambient salinity was  $9.70 \pm 1.62$  and  $10.04 \pm 1.50$  (6h and 24h, respectively) (Tab. 1). However, TCC increased when animals were exposed to low salinity for 24h ( $6.72 \pm 0.58$  to  $14.95 \pm 2.47$ , 0h and 24h, respectively; Tab. 1). No difference was observed in TCC when animals were exposed to high salinity in the monitored time intervals.

We then analyzed the DCC from animals exposed to different salinities for 6h and 24h. The phagocytes were the most abundant cell type in the coelomic fluid, followed by vibratile

cells, red spherule cells and colorless spherule cells. No difference was observed in the DCC from animals exposed to low or high salinity in the monitored time intervals (Tab. 1).

**Table 1 - *In vivo* effect of salinity on the total and differential coelomocytes concentration at different time spans.** Ambient: Ambient salinity: 35‰; Low: Low salinity: 25‰; High: High salinity: 45‰. TCC: total coelomocyte count. Data are expressed as the mean (cells/ml x 10<sup>6</sup>, total coelomocytes count; %, coelomocytes subpopulations) and standard error of the mean (SEM) of four independent experiments performed in duplicate (N = 4). \*p<0.05 when compared to low salinity (basal cellular concentration and 6h) (One-way ANOVA followed by Tukey's post-test).

Salinity	TCC		Phagocytes		Vibratile cells		Red spherule cells		Colorless spherule cells	
	Media	SEM	Media	SEM	Media	SEM	Media	SEM	Media	SEM
<b>0h</b>										
<b>Ambient</b>	6.84	0.34	51.63	2.43	43.50	2.53	4.50	2.08	1.62	0.56
<b>Low</b>	6.72	0.58	45.25	9.39	45.75	7.60	8.00	3.69	1.00	0.70
<b>High</b>	8.05	0.28	54.50	7.05	35.50	4.27	6.50	2.50	3.50	1.55
<b>6h</b>										
<b>Ambient</b>	9.70	1.62	61.75	2.44	34.50	2.45	2.62	0.41	1.37	0.41
<b>Low</b>	8.16	1.23	55.75	11.21	34.25	8.45	7.25	3.11	2.50	0.64
<b>High</b>	9.47	0.87	58.75	8.25	37.75	7.20	4.75	1.88	1.50	0.64
<b>24h</b>										
<b>Ambient</b>	10.04	1.50	58.63	6.38	37.75	5.39	3.37	1.06	0.25	0.16
<b>Low</b>	14.95*	2.47	50.00	2.38	34.75	2.17	15.00	2.44	1.75	0.75
<b>High</b>	11.46	1.96	53.00	8.72	36.25	7.33	8.75	1.93	2.00	0.70

### 3.3 Effects of salinity on the phagocytosis of sea urchin coelomocytes at different time spans - *in vitro* assays

We then evaluate the effect of salinity on cell parameters when the assay was carried out *in vitro* (coelomocytes incubated in coelomic fluid with different salinities). We firstly investigated the effect of different salinities on the phagocytosis. The phagocytic capacity decreased according to the increasing in the incubation time (from 0h to 24h) to all salinities tested. However, there was no difference between the treatments (Fig. 2A). After 24h of cell exposure to different salinities, the decrease in the phagocytic capacity ranged from 40.41% to 56.13% (25‰ and 45‰, respectively; Fig. 2A).

The phagocytic index also decreased throughout the time of cell culture to all salinities. After 24h of cell exposure to different salinities, the phagocytic index was reduced in 17.18%, 16.15% and 26.35% when compared to time 0h (25‰, 35‰, 45‰, respectively; one way ANOVA followed by Tukey's post-test; Fig. 2B).

### 3.4 *In vitro* effect of salinity on coelomocytes ROS production

Since our results showed a similar phagocytosis behavior under different salinities - both *in vivo* and *in vitro* assays - corroborating the osmoconformer behavior of the sea urchin *E. lucunter* (Freire et al., 2011), we decided to investigate the other cellular parameters directly exposing the coelomocytes to coelomic fluid with different salinities (*in vitro* assays).

Therefore, we analyzed the effect of different salinities on ROS production. The basal ROS levels (time 0h) were  $26.25 \pm 0.86$ ,  $37.99 \pm 4.62$  and  $24.09 \pm 1.55$  (M.F.I.) when the assays was carried out in ambient, low or high salinity, respectively. The M.I.F. of coelomocytes stained with DCF and kept at ambient salinity for 4h was  $37.69 \pm 0.88$  (Fig. 3). However, the level of DCF fluorescence increased when cells were incubated for 4h at low salinity ( $49.48 \pm 5.27$ , Fig. 3). In contrast, DCF fluorescence was lower when cells were incubated for 4h at high salinity ( $26.30 \pm 0.58$ , Fig. 3). Hydrogen peroxide (1 mM) was used as positive control, and the M.F.I. were  $100.30 \pm 8.06$  (0h) and  $118.00 \pm 8.97$  (4h) (data not shown).

### 3.5 *In vitro* effect of salinity on the $\Delta\Psi_m$ of coelomocytes

We then investigated if changes in ROS production were followed by alterations in the mitochondrial activity. The basal  $\Delta\Psi_m$  (time 0h) was similar when the assay was performed at ambient or low salinity ( $276.10 \pm 16.01$  and  $249.70 \pm 20.03$ , respectively, M.F.I.). However, we observed a slight decrease in the M.F.I. of cells stained with DiOC6(3) when the assay was performed at high salinity ( $231.10 \pm 10.02$ ).

The M.I.F. of coelomocytes exposed at ambient salinity for 4h was  $265.40 \pm 5.80$  (Fig. 4). The incubation of cells for 4h - at low salinity - did not alter the  $\Delta\Psi_m$  (M.F.I. =  $248.70 \pm 14.88$ , Fig 4). However, the M.F.I. also showed a slight decreased when cells were incubated at high salinity for 4h ( $225.60 \pm 11.35$ , Fig. 4). The depolarizing agent CCCP ( $200 \mu\text{M}$ ) was used as positive control, and the M.F.I. were  $55.24 \pm 3.12$  (0h) and  $54.71 \pm 2.10$  (4h) (data not shown).

### 3.6 *In vitro* effect of salinity on ABC transporters activity.

Subsequently, we evaluated the effect of salinity on ABC transporters activity with the calcein intracellular accumulation assay. The basal calcein level (time 0h) was higher when the assay was performed at the lowest salinity ( $677.30 \pm 43.89$  against  $407.20 \pm 12.75$ , ambient salinity; M.F.I.; Fig. 5A) and lower when the assay was performed at the highest salinity ( $265.30 \pm 7.46$  against  $407.20 \pm 12.75$ , ambient salinity; M.F.I.; Fig. 5A). Similar results were obtained when cells were incubated for 4h (Fig. 5B).

Two ABC transporters blockers (reversin 205, ABCB1 blocker; and MK-571, ABCC1 blocker) were used as positive control. The increase in calcein fluorescence was higher when cells were incubated at low salinity in the presence of MK-571 ( $1,177.00 \pm 54.34$  against  $830.90 \pm 51.97$  and  $611.00 \pm 25.86$ , ambient salinity and high salinity, respectively, time 0h). Similar results were obtained when cells were previously incubated for 4h at low salinity and then treated with MK-571 and stained with calcein-AM (Fig. 5B). On the other hand, the treatment with the ABCB1 blocker Rev did not increase calcein accumulation at any salinity or time interval (Fig 5A and B).

#### 4. Discussion

In the present study, we investigated the effect of salinity on sea urchin immune system cells. The sea urchins - whole animals - or coelomocytes were exposed to ambient (35‰), low (25‰) and high salinity (45‰) in order to assess their sensitivity to the abiotic factor. Our results showed that changes in the salinity did not affect the phagocytic capacity, but ROS production and ABC transporters activity were sensitive to different salinities.

Firstly, we investigated the effect of animal exposures to different salinities (25‰, 35‰ and 45‰) on the immune system response to foreign particles. In sea urchins, the phagocytes are the only cells that perform phagocytosis (Borges et al., 2005; Metchnikoff, 1968). In *E. lucunter*, these cells represent around 50% of the coelomocytes (Table 1). The phagocytosis of inert particles is a non-specific process mediated by the extension of specialized areas of the cell membrane, named filopodia (Aderem e Underhill, 1999). We did not observe differences in the phagocytic parameters of coelomocytes when animals (*in vivo* assay) were exposed up to 24h to low or high salinity (25‰ and 45‰, respectively; Fig. 1A and B). It was not possible to increase the exposure time to low or high salinity since animals exhibited signs of health impairments, such as loss of spines, loss of attachment to the substrate and gamete spawning, after 48 hours of exposure to these salinities (data not shown). We also addressed the phagocytic parameters of coelomocytes that was directly exposed to different salinities (*in vitro* assays). No alteration in the phagocytic parameters was observed to any salinity conditions (Fig. 2A and B).

Other authors have also investigated the phagocytosis in marine organisms exposed to different salinities. Studies with the sea cucumber *Apostichopus japonicus* demonstrated that hemocyte's phagocytic capacity was higher after 0.5 and 1h at low (25‰) or high salinity (35‰) (F. Wang et al., 2008). Gagnaire et al. (2006) reported that the exposure of the oyster *Crassostrea gigas* to low (15‰) but not to high (45‰) salinity, for 24h, reduced the phagocytic capacity of the hemocytes. Matozzo et al. (2007) reported a decrease in the phagocytic index of immune system cells from the clams *Chamelea gallina* exposed to low (28‰) and high (40‰) salinity. Studies with the sunray venus clam *Macrocallista nimbosa* also showed that

phagocytosis exhibited a salinity-dependent behavior, ranging from 20% at 18‰, to 46.5% at 38‰ (Jauzein et al., 2013). Nevertheless, our data showed that the phagocytic parameters of *E. lucunter* coelomocytes were not affected when animals or coelomocytes were exposed to lower or higher salinity up to 24h. Therefore, this data set corroborates the osmoconformer behavior to the sea urchin *E. lucunter*.

In echinoderms under stress conditions, changes in coelomocytes concentration can occur due to cell migration from the perivisceral coelom to the peristomial membrane (de Faria e Machado; da Silva, 2008). We then investigated if salinity affects the total and differential concentration of sea urchin coelomocytes. Other studies have addressed this question in marine organisms exposed to different salinities. A study with the shrimp *Litopenaeus vannamei* showed that the total hemocyte count of shrimps kept at 2.5‰ and 5‰ salinities was lower than those kept at higher salinities (15‰, 25‰, and 35‰) (Lin et al., 2012). Jauzein et al. (2013) observed that the sunray venus clam *M. nimbosa* kept at 18‰ for 7 days exhibited a lower concentration of circulating hemocytes. The authors suggest that the reduction in the concentration of circulating hemocytes may be due to a massive infiltration of hemocytes in tissues that are in direct contact with the seawater. In contrast, our data showed an increase in coelomocytes concentration (122.47%) when animals were kept at low salinity up to 24h (Tab. 1), suggesting a recruitment of cells from peripheral tissues to the coelomic fluid or incorporation of new cells from the axial organ. Further studies must be conducted to address this point.

Some works have shown that sea urchin coelomocytes subpopulations are altered under stress environments. Particularly, authors have reported changes in red spherule cells concentration in animals from polluted sites (Matranga et al., 2000; Pinsino et al., 2008). Red spherule cells are involved in the cytotoxicity response, which includes the release of substances with antibacterial and antifungal properties (Arizza et al., 2007). In our work, we did not observe changes in coelomocytes subpopulations when animals were exposed to low or high salinity in any time intervals monitored (Tab. 1), showing that salinity changes do not alter the immune system to a more cytotoxic profile.

The oxidative stress is an important component of the response to environmental changes in marine organisms (Coteur et al., 2005; Lesser, 2006). The increase in ROS levels is a common feature observed in animals exposed to abiotic stress (Apel e Hirt, 2004); and many studies have identified high levels of ROS in organisms under salt stress (Borsani et al., 2001; Pérez-López et al., 2009; Schwarzländer et al., 2009; Skopelitis et al., 2006). In addition, ROS generation is an essential mechanism during the phagocytosis (Buggé et al., 2007; Forman e Torres, 2002). So, we investigated the effect of different salinities on coelomocytes's ROS levels. Our results showed that ROS levels increased 31.28% at low salinity (25‰) and decrease 30.22% at high salinity (45‰) after 4h of exposure (Fig. 3). Our data suggest that alterations in ROS levels are not associated to the phagocytosis process since we did not observed any changes in the phagocytic parameters when coelomocytes were exposed to different salinities.

The effect of salinity on ROS production has been investigated *in vivo* in other marine organisms. Study with *M. nimbosa* observed that the level of ROS from hemocytes was twice higher when animals were kept at low salinity (18‰) for 7 days (Jauzein et al., 2013). In contrast, Perrigault et al. (2011) observed a lower generation of ROS in hemocytes from the clam *Mercenaria mercenaria* kept at low salinity (17‰) for 2 weeks and a higher production of ROS in hemocytes from clams kept at high salinity (30‰). To prevent oxidative damage caused by ROS, cells possess antioxidants systems, including enzymes (i.e., catalase and superoxide dismutase) and non-enzymatic antioxidants (glutathione) (Pamplona e Costantini, 2011). It has been demonstrated that antioxidant enzymes play an important role in reducing the oxidative stress during salinity changes in marine organisms as the ark shell *Scapharca broughtonii* (An e Choi, 2010) and the olive flounder fish *Paralichthys olivaceus* (Choi et al., 2008). At the same time, it is known that salinity changes can affect the antioxidant system. In coelomocytes from the sea cucumber *A. japonicus*, the antioxidant enzyme superoxide dismutase exhibited an increased activity at low (20‰ and 25‰) and high salinity (35‰) when animals were kept up to 72h; but it was observed a decrease in the activity of catalase at low salinity (20‰) just after 1h (F. Wang et al., 2008). So, changes in ROS levels from *E. lucunter*

coelomocytes exposed to 25‰ or 45 ‰ may be due to changes in the status of the antioxidant systems.

Since mitochondria are an important ROS source under stress conditions (Orrenius et al., 2007), we decided to investigate if salinity alters coelomocytes's mitochondrial activity. Previous studies have reported that mitochondria can be affected by salinity alterations (Gao et al., 2011; Jacoby et al., 2011). Paital and Chainy (2014), studying salinity effects on gills mitochondria of the mud crab *Scylla serrata*, showed alterations on the mitochondria respiration according to the salinity conditions. Authors suggested that high salinity (35‰) causes a hypoxic state in mitochondria and, consequently, the generation of ROS. Hypoxia can lead to the disruption of mitochondrial inner membrane potential ( $\Delta\psi_m$ ) (Solaini et al., 2010). Our results showed a slight decrease (16.29%) in mitochondrial activity (loss of  $\Delta\psi_m$ ) when *E. lucunter* coelomocytes were exposed to high salinity (45‰) (Fig. 4). However, under the same salinity, we observed a decrease in coelomocytes ROS generation (Fig. 3). Adding to this, we also showed that the increase in coelomocytes ROS levels - when cells were exposed to 25 ‰ - is not related to mitochondrial activity since no change in  $\Delta\psi_m$  was observed. Therefore, we discard an association between mitochondrial activity and ROS generation in *E. lucunter* coelomocytes. So, further studies must be conducted to address the antioxidant mechanism under salt-stress in sea urchin coelomocytes.

We also investigated the effect of salinity in the activity of ABC transporters of coelomocytes exposed to different salinities. These proteins have been considered the first line of cell defense against environmental stressors and several works have highlighted the relevance of ABC transporters in the protection against physical and chemical agents in marine organisms, a phenomenon known as multidrug resistance (MDR) (Cole et al., 2013; de Araujo Leite et al., 2014; Fischer et al., 2013; Hamdoun e Epel, 2007; B. Kurelec, 1992; Migliaccio et al., 2015; Todgham e Hofmann, 2009). Furthermore, the ABCG2 transporter - also known as MRP (multiresistance protein) - is involved in the efflux transport of glutathione and glutathione disulfide conjugates (Cole e Deeley, 2006). Glutathione is the most abundant endogenous antioxidant molecule (Espinosa-Diez et al., 2015); and some works have reported

that the blockade of ABCC1 leads to a decrease in ROS levels due to the accumulation of glutathione into the cells (Muanprasat et al., 2013; Mueller et al., 2010). However, our results showed that the activity of ABC transporters was reduced (increased calcein accumulation) around 40% when coelomocytes were exposed, for 4h, to 25‰ (Fig. 5B), but at the same condition, we observed an increase in ROS production (Fig. 4). Similarly, we observed an increase in ABC transporters activity (decreased calcein accumulation) around 50% when coelomocytes were incubated at 45‰ for 4h (Fig. 5B), but a decrease in ROS level when cells were exposed to the same salinity (Fig. 4). So, our data suggest that the activity of ABC transporters - in sea urchin coelomocytes - is not related to ROS levels as observed by other authors. Additionally, the results obtained with MK-571 treatment (increased calcein accumulation) confirmed that calcein fluorescence levels reflect ABC transporters activity. Previous works from our group have shown that reversin 205 - or even verapamil, another ABCB1 blocker - do not increase calcein accumulation in *E. lucunter* coelomocytes (unpublished data).

Most studies of ABC transporter activity through salinity changes were achieved in plants. These studies have been focused in ABC transporters gene expression under salt-stress and the reestablishment of ionic and osmotic homeostasis (Peng et al., 2014). Gu et al. (2004) reported the down-regulated of an ABC transporter gene (clone 253) in the plant *Populus euphratica* under high salinity salt-stressed conditions. Peng et al. (2014) reported that key ABC transporter genes, such as *abcb21*, *abcc10*, *abcg39*, were significantly up-regulated at 4h and 24h of salt treatment in the cotton *Gossypium hisurtum*. In contrast, Van der Heide and Poolman (2000) showed that the activity of the ABC transporter related protein OpuA is increased under hyperosmotic situations and decreased under hypoosmotic conditions. The protein OpuA is involved in the uptake of the osmoprotectant glycine betaine and prevents cells against hyperosmotic stress and plasmolysis. The authors suggested that the osmotic stress could induce conformational changes in OpuA protein and regulate its activity. Similarly, we also observed a higher activity of ABC transporter at high salinity and a lower activity of ABC transporters at low salinity. These data suggest that the salinity directly

affect the activity of ABC transporters in coelomocytes, since it was observed even at time 0h in which cells were exposed to low or high salinity for a short time interval (30 min - calcein staining). Moreover, we also observed an increase in the cell size (FSC parameter - flow cytometry analyses - data not shown) and a decrease in the ABC transporter activity when coelomocytes were incubated for 4h at low salinity (hypoosmotic condition). Nevertheless, cell exposure to 45‰, for the same time interval, did not alter cell size. So, additional studies must be performed to elucidate the mechanisms that control the activity of ABC transporters under different salinities and their effects on MXR phenotype in sea urchin coelomocytes.

In conclusion, our work demonstrates that phagocytic capacity was not affected by salinities changes. However, two cell parameters - ROS levels and ABC transporters activity - were altered according to salinity variations and are potential biomarkers in the monitoring of environmental changes. The present work is the first report about the effect of salinity on the physiology of sea urchin immune system cells. These results also provide a basis for further studies to investigate the immune response of coelomocytes against immune challenges triggered by microorganisms or inflammatory process under environmental stress conditions.

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**Author Contribution**

Luis Fernando Marques-Santos defined the research theme, designed the protocols, performed all data analyzes, analyzed the results and wrote the manuscript. Thais Mangeon Honorato designed the protocols, performed all data analyzes, analyzed the results and wrote the manuscript. Patricia Mirella da Silva co-designed the protocols, co-discussed all results and wrote the manuscript. Thais Mangeon Honorato and Raianna Boni de Vasconcelos carried out the experiments.

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## FIGURE CAPTIONS

**Figure 1 - Effect of salinity on the phagocytic capacity and phagocytic capacity of sea urchin coelomocytes at different time spans - *in vivo* assay.** (A) Phagocytic capacity. The % Coelomocytes indicates the percentage of cells that internalized at least 1 fluorescent bead. (B) Phagocytic capacity. Ambient: ambient salinity, 35‰; Low: low salinity, 25‰; High: high salinity, 45‰. Data are expressed as the mean and standard error of the mean of two independent experiments performed in triplicate for each salinity (N = 4). (One-way ANOVA followed by Tukey's post-test).

**Figure 2 - Effect of salinity on the phagocytic capacity and phagocytic capacity of sea urchin coelomocytes at different time spans - *in vitro* assay.** (A) Phagocytic capacity. The % Coelomocytes indicates the percentage of cells that internalized at least 1 fluorescent bead. (B) Phagocytic capacity. Ambient: ambient salinity, 35‰; Low: low salinity, 25‰; High: high salinity, 45‰. Data are expressed as the mean and standard error of the mean of two independent experiments performed in triplicate for each salinity (N = 4) \* $p < 0.05$  when compared to the same salinity (ambient, low or high) at time 0h (One-way ANOVA followed by Tukey's post-test).

**Figure 3 - *In vitro* effect of salinity on coelomocytes ROS production.** Ambient: ambient salinity, 35‰; Low: low salinity, 25‰; High: high salinity, 45‰. DCF Fluorescence represents the mean of fluorescence intensity in arbitrary units. Data are expressed as the mean and standard error of the mean of five independent experiments performed in duplicate (N = 5). \* $p < 0.05$  when compared to the ambient salinity (control group) at the same time interval (One-way ANOVA followed by Tukey's post-test).

**Figure 4 - *In vitro* effect of salinity on the  $\Delta\Psi_m$  of coelomocytes.** Ambient: ambient salinity, 35‰; Low: low salinity, 25‰; High: high salinity, 45‰. DiOC6(3) Fluorescence represents the

mean of fluorescence intensity in arbitrary units. Data are expressed as the mean and standard error of the mean of five independent experiments performed in duplicate (N = 5). \* $p < 0.05$  when compared to the ambient salinity (control group) at the same time interval (One-way ANOVA followed by Tukey's post-test).

**Figure 5 - In vitro effect of salinity on ABC transporters activity.** (A) Calcein fluorescence (0h). (B) Calcein fluorescence (4h). Ambient: ambient salinity, 35‰; Low: low salinity, 25‰; High: high salinity, 45‰. Calcein Fluorescence represents the mean of fluorescence intensity in arbitrary units. Data are expressed as the mean and standard error of the mean of five independent experiments performed in duplicate (N = 5). M.F.I.: mean of fluorescence intensity. CTL: control group; MK: MK-571; Rev: reversin 205. \* $p < 0.05$  when compared to the ambient salinity (control group) (One-way ANOVA followed by Tukey's post-test).

## FIGURES

FIGURE 1A

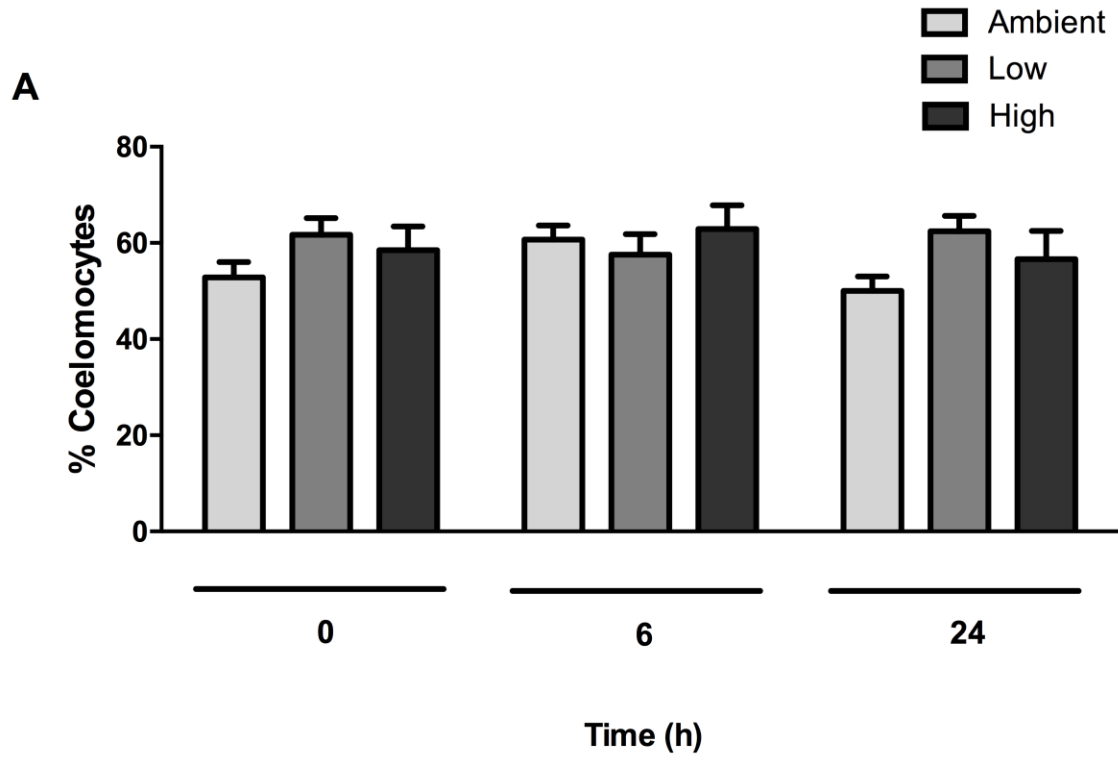


FIGURE 1B

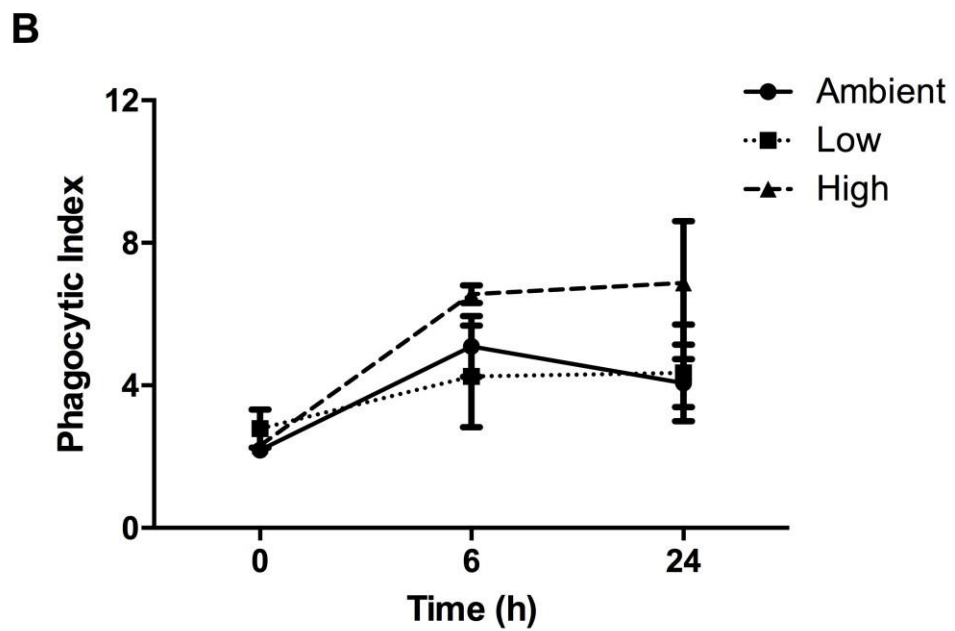


FIGURE 2A

A

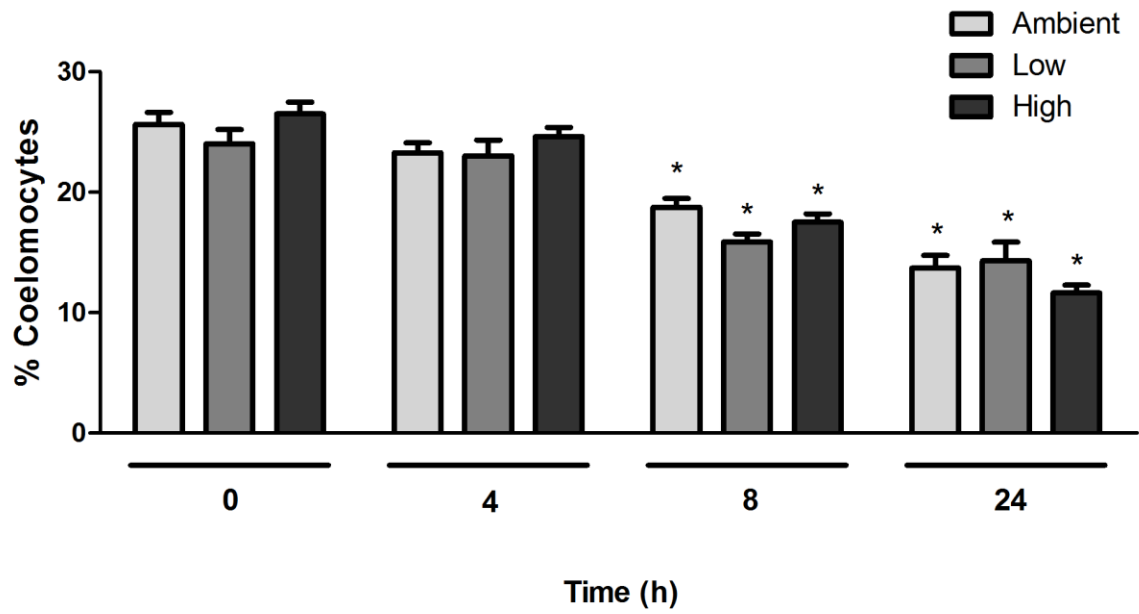


FIGURE 2B

B

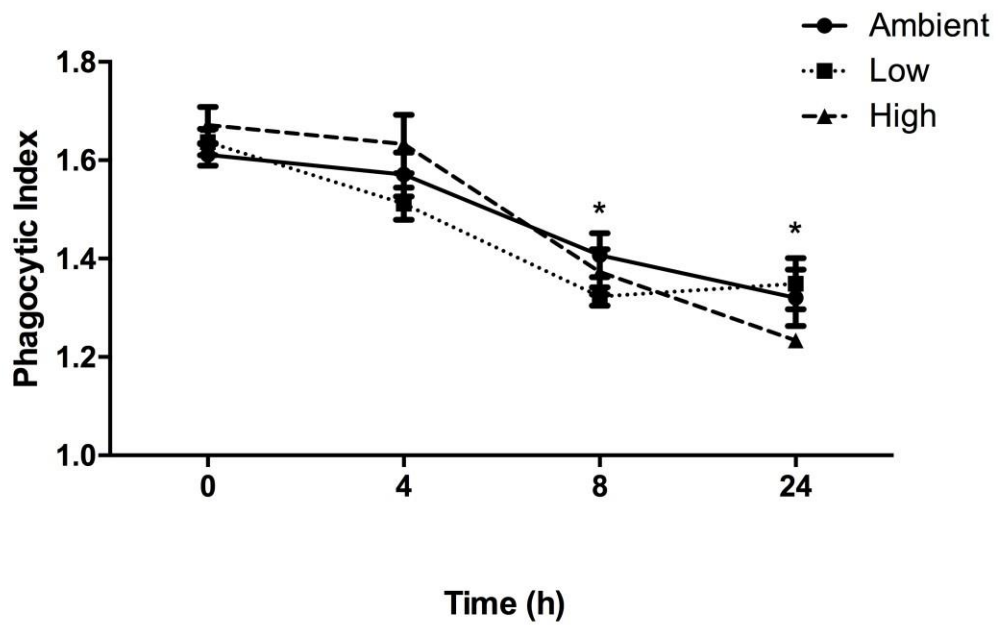


FIGURE 3

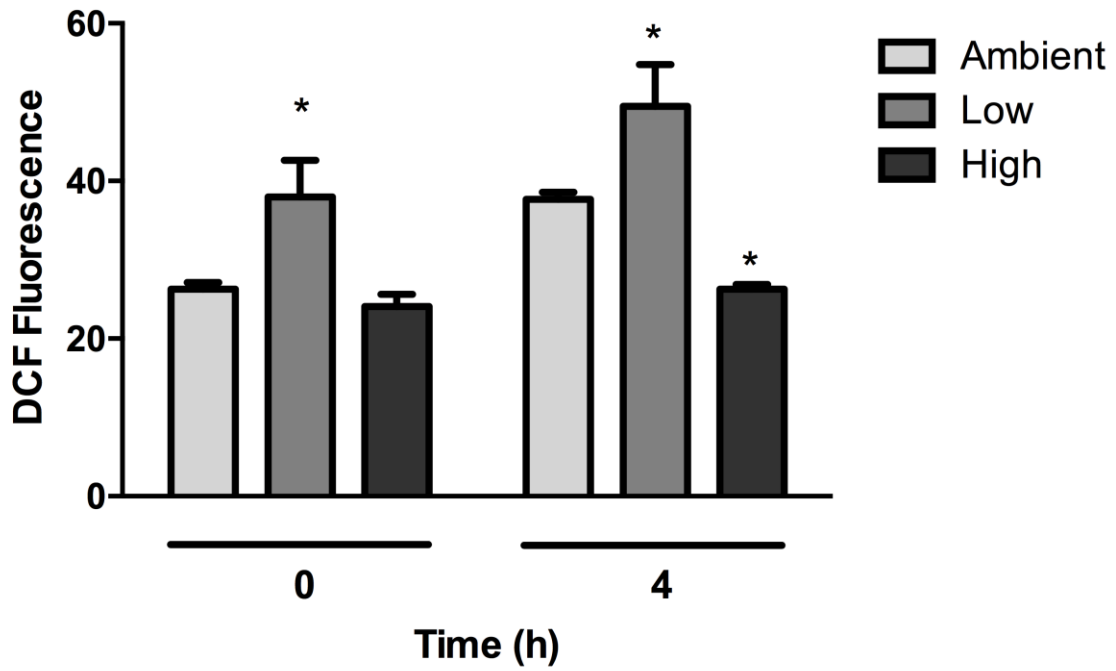


FIGURE 4

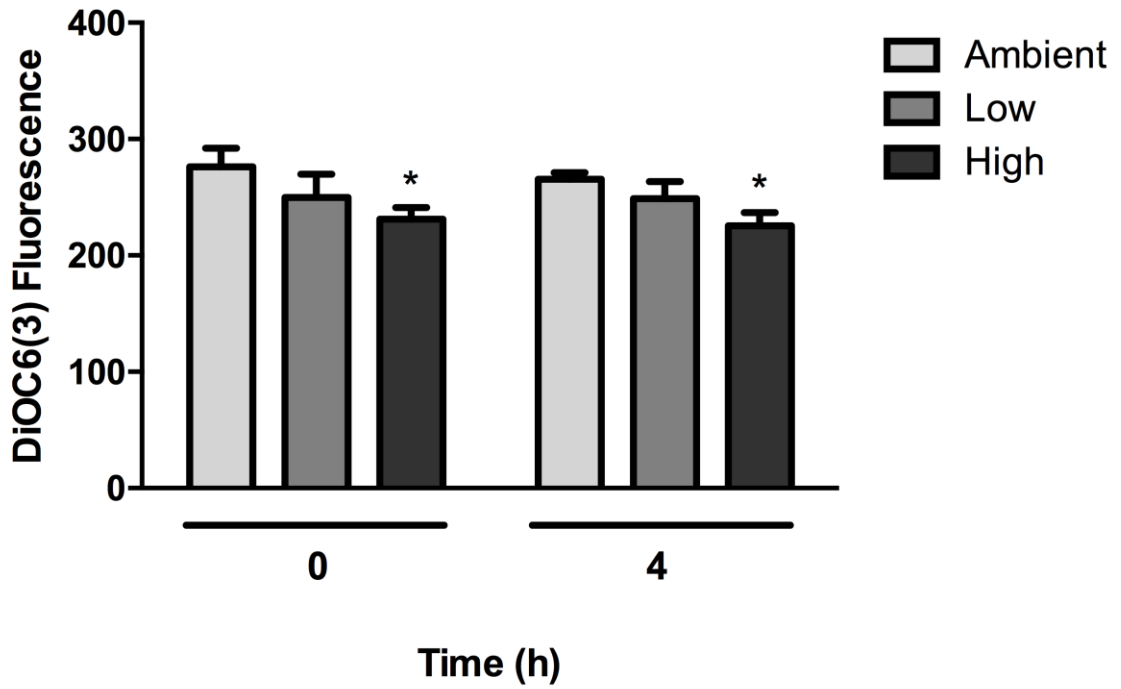


FIGURE 5A

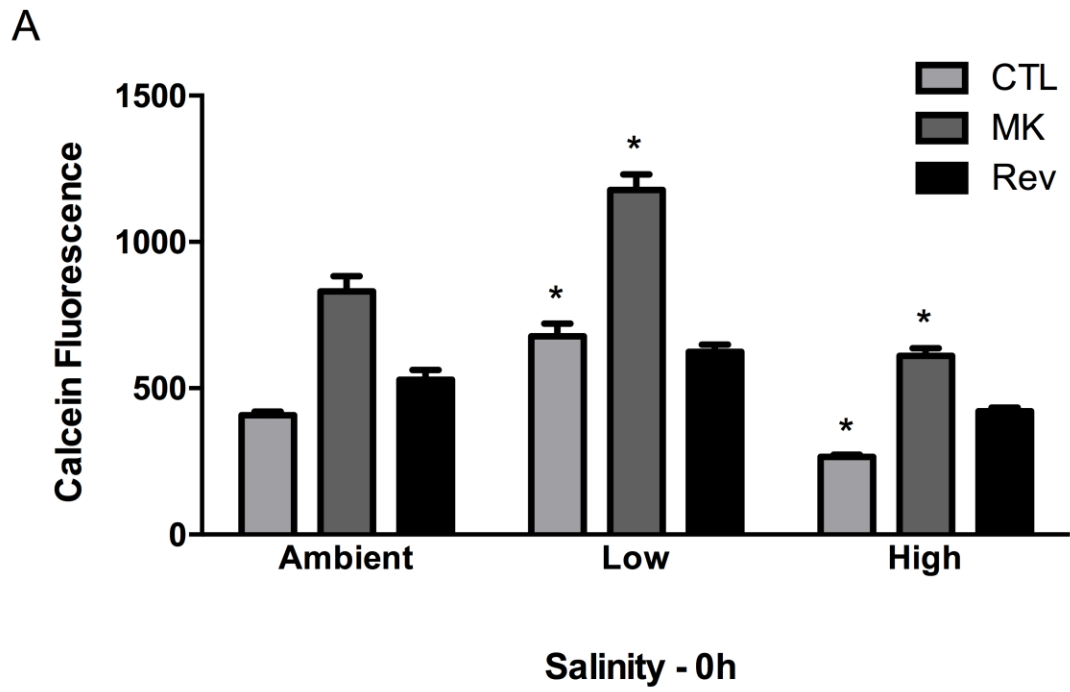
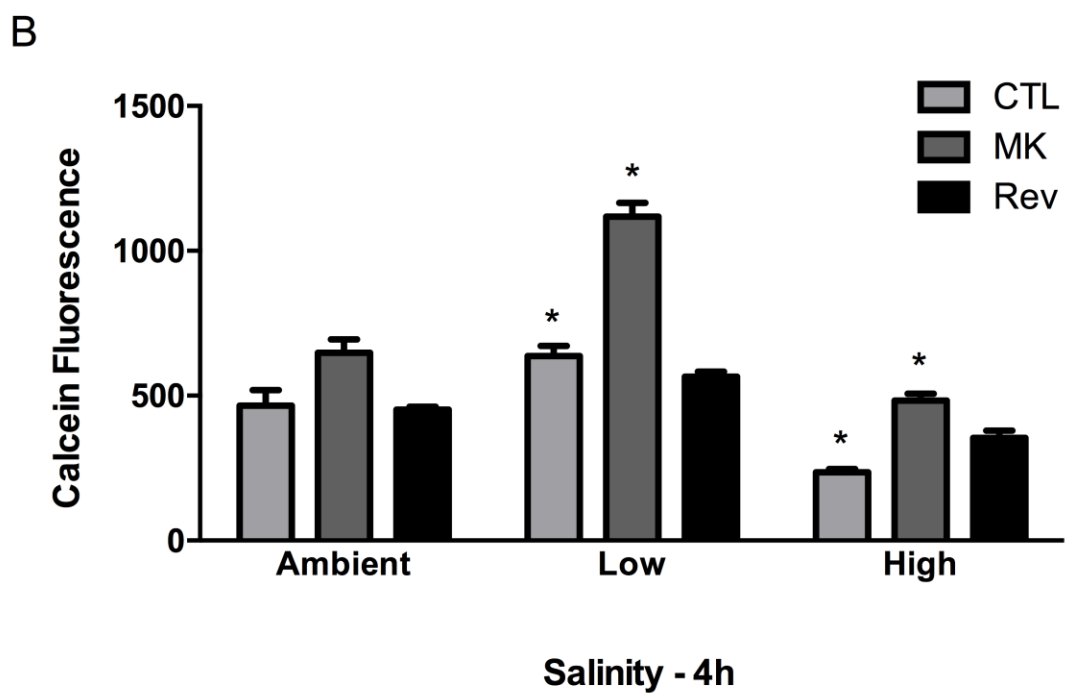


FIGURE 5B



## 5. Conclusão

O presente trabalho demonstrou que as alterações na salinidade provocam mudanças em processos celulares dos celomócitos do ouriço-do-mar *E. lucunter* - desde alterações na concentração celular, até variações nos níveis de ROS, no potencial de membrana mitocondrial e na atividade dos transportadores ABC. No entanto, não foi observado um comprometimento funcional dos celomócitos, uma vez que a salinidade não afetou a fagocitose, tanto em ensaios *in vivo* quanto em ensaios *in vitro*. A compreensão do comportamento celular de celomócitos de ouriços-do-mar, na resposta à mudanças de salinidade, pode contribuir para o entendimento dos mecanismos celulares e moleculares de adaptação à mudanças ambientais, assim como na identificação de biomarcadores em estudos ambientais. Estes resultados estimulam a realização de novos estudos para a avaliação da resposta imune de celomócitos de *E. lucunter* frente a desafios imunológico, como infecção e inflamação, sob condições de estresse ambiental.

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*Anexos*



Thaís Honorato &lt;thaismangeon@gmail.com&gt;

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### Dados do titular

Nome: Luis Fernando Marques dos Santos	CPF: 984.341.017-34
Título do Projeto: Estudo dos Aspectos Celulares e Moleculares do Desenvolvimento Embrionário de Echinometra lucunter	
Nome da Instituição : UFPB - UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DA PARAÍBA	CNPJ: 24.098.477/0001-10

### Cronograma de atividades

#	Descrição da atividade	Início (mês/ano)	Fim (mês/ano)
1	Estudo do efeito de radiações ultravioleta no desenvolvimento embrionário de Echinometra lucunter	01/2012	10/2016
2	Estudo do papel biológico do cálcio no desenvolvimento embrionário de Echinometra lucunter	01/2012	10/2016
3	Estudo do papel de proteínas ABC do desenvolvimento embrionário de Echinometra lucunter	01/2012	10/2016
4	Estudo da distribuição mitocondrial no desenvolvimento embrionário de Echinometra lucunter	01/2012	10/2016
5	Estudo do papel de proteínas ABC na fertilização de gametas de Echinometra lucunter	01/2012	10/2016
6	Estudo da expressão de proteínas ABC em celomócitos de E. lucunter	01/2012	10/2016

### Observações e ressalvas

1	As atividades de campo exercidas por pessoa natural ou jurídica estrangeira, em todo o território nacional, que impliquem o deslocamento de recursos humanos e materiais, tendo por objeto coletar dados, materiais, espécimes biológicos e minerais, peças integrantes da cultura nativa e cultura popular, presente e passada, obtidos por meio de recursos e técnicas que se destinem ao estudo, à difusão ou à pesquisa, estão sujeitas a autorização do Ministério de Ciência e Tecnologia.
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3	Este documento somente poderá ser utilizado para os fins previstos na Instrução Normativa ICMBio nº 03/2014 ou na Instrução Normativa ICMBio nº 10/2010, no que especifica esta Autorização, não podendo ser utilizado para fins comerciais, industriais ou esportivos. O material biológico coletado deverá ser utilizado para atividades científicas ou didáticas no âmbito do ensino superior.
4	A autorização para envio ao exterior de material biológico não consignado deverá ser requerida por meio do endereço eletrônico <a href="http://www.ibama.gov.br">www.ibama.gov.br</a> (Serviços on-line - Licença para importação ou exportação de flora e fauna - CITES e não CITES).
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7	Este documento não dispensa o cumprimento da legislação que dispõe sobre acesso a componente do patrimônio genético existente no território nacional, na plataforma continental e na zona econômica exclusiva, ou ao conhecimento tradicional associado ao patrimônio genético, para fins de pesquisa científica, bioprospecção e desenvolvimento tecnológico. Veja maiores informações em <a href="http://www.mma.gov.br/cgen">www.mma.gov.br/cgen</a> .
8	Em caso de pesquisa em UNIDADE DE CONSERVAÇÃO, o pesquisador titular desta autorização deverá contactar a administração da unidade a fim de CONFIRMAR AS DATAS das expedições, as condições para realização das coletas e de uso da infra-estrutura da unidade.

### Equipe

#	Nome	Função	CPF	Doc. Identidade	Nacionalidade
1	Leonardo Lima dos Santos	Estudante de Iniciação Científica	096.522.354-07	3160396 SSP-PB-PB	Brasileira
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3	Jocelmo Cássio de Araujo Leite	Estudante de Doutorado	052.828.554-88	2896986 SSP-PB	Brasileira
4	DALLIANE MACEDO LOPES DE OLIVEIRA	Estudante de Mestrado	064.921.644-07	1933428 itep-RN	Brasileira
5	Raianna Saskia Boni de Vasconcelos Mendes	Estudante de Iniciação Científica	074.458.864-27	3271701 ssp-PB	Brasileira
6	Ricardo Aurelio Floriano da Silva	Estudante de Iniciação Científica	008.445.145-94	0623874245 MEX-CE	Brasileira

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## Autorização para atividades com finalidade científica

<b>Número: 32105-5</b>	<b>Data da Emissão: 19/12/2014 10:57</b>	<b>Data para Revalidação*: 18/01/2016</b>
* De acordo com o art. 28 da IN 03/2014, esta autorização tem prazo de validade equivalente ao previsto no cronograma de atividades do projeto, mas deverá ser revalidada anualmente mediante a apresentação do relatório de atividades a ser enviado por meio do Sisbio no prazo de até 30 dias a contar da data do aniversário de sua emissão.		

### Dados do titular

Nome: Luis Fernando Marques dos Santos	CPF: 984.341.017-34
Título do Projeto: Estudo dos Aspectos Celulares e Moleculares do Desenvolvimento Embrionário de Echinometra lucunter	
Nome da Instituição : UFPB - UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DA PARAÍBA	CNPJ: 24.098.477/0001-10

7	Thyago Fernandes dos Santos	Estudante de Iniciação Científica	084.359.904-94	2923803 SSP-PB	Brasileira
8	Andreza Araújo do Nascimento	Estudante de Iniciação Científica	009.826.944-58	2056073 SSP-RN	Brasileira
9	Tainá Myra Xavier de Castro	Estudante de Iniciação Científica	087.054.194-33	3348380 ssp/pb-PB	Brasileira

### Locais onde as atividades de campo serão executadas

#	Município	UF	Descrição do local	Tipo
1		PB	Litoral da Cidade de João Pessoa	Fora de UC Federal

### Atividades X Táxons

#	Atividade	Táxons
1	Coleta/transporte de espécimes da fauna silvestre in situ	Echinometra lucunter (*Qtde: 160)
2	Manutenção temporária (até 24 meses) de invertebrados silvestres em cativeiro	Echinometra lucunter

\* Quantidade de indivíduos por espécie, por localidade ou unidade de conservação, a serem coletados durante um ano.

### Material e métodos

1	Método de captura/coleta (Invertebrados Aquáticos)	Coleta manual
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### Destino do material biológico coletado

#	Nome local destino	Tipo Destino
1	UFPB - UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DA PARAÍBA	

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