

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 THE GREAT CHALLENGE OF ITCH AND PAIN	1
1.2 SENSORY FIBER CLASSES	2
1.3 SENSORY AFFERENT PATHWAY AND CENTRAL PROCESSING	7
1.4 HOW NEURONS SIGNAL ITCH – ITCH HYPOTHESES	8
1.4.1 Intensity hypothesis	9
1.4.2 Specificity “labeled-line” hypothesis.....	9
1.4.3 Spatial contrast hypothesis.....	9
1.4.4 Population coding hypothesis	10
1.4.5 Specific discharged pattern hypothesis	10
1.5 HISTAMINERGIC AND NON-HISTAMINERGIC ITCH.....	11
1.6 PRURITOGENS AND ALGOGENS	12
1.6.1 Beta Alanine (β -alanine).....	13
1.6.2 Bovine Adrenal Medulla (BAM8-22)	14
1.6.3 Cowhage and cowhage extract	15
1.6.4 Endothelin 1 (ET-1).....	16
1.6.5 Prostaglandin E2 (PGE2)	18
1.6.6 Adenosine triphosphate (ATP)	18
CHAPTER 2. AIM OF THE THESIS	20
CHAPTER 3. METHODS	21
3.1 PARTICIPANTS.....	21
3.2 SUBSTANCES AND APPLICATION.....	21
3.3 PREPARATION COWHAGE EXTRACT	22
3.4 PSYCHOPHYSICAL STUDY	22
3.4.1 Assessment of axon reflex erythema by Laser Speckle Contrast Imager	23
3.4.2 Assessment of itch/pain perception by using a numerical rating scale (NRS)	24
3.5 MICRONEUROGRAPHY	25
3.5.1 Microneurography experiments	25
3.5.2 Marking method	29
3.5.3 Biophysical properties protocols	29
3.5.4 Mechanical protocol	33
3.5.5 Thermal protocol.....	33
3.5.6 Chemical protocol	34

3.5.7	<i>C-fiber classification</i>	36
3.5.8	<i>“Spikelets” 2D-Heatmap</i>	36
3.6	DATA ANALYSES AND STATISTICS	37
CHAPTER 4. RESULTS		38
4.1	MICRONEUROGRAPHY.....	38
4.1.1	<i>Classification of C-fibers</i>	38
4.1.2	<i>Distinct substances stimulate various types of fibers</i>	38
4.1.3	<i>Duration of activation: β-alanine activates CM-fibers the longest</i>	47
4.1.4	<i>BAM 8-22, β-alanine and ET-1 induced a predominant sensation of itch</i>	48
4.1.5	<i>Endothelin causes the strongest itching, followed by BAM 8-22 and β-alanine</i> ...	52
4.1.6	<i>Distinct discharge patterns in human CM-fibers evoked by β-alanine, ET-1, BAM 8-22, and cowhage extract</i>	53
4.1.7	<i>The majority of the CM-fibers show a fiber-specific response pattern</i>	55
4.1.8	<i>Differences in biophysical properties of bursting versus non-bursting firing CM-fibers</i> 56	
4.1.9	<i>SB-fibers activated by β-alanine, BAM 8-22, and ET-1 caused bursts with long discharge pauses between 40 seconds and 2.5 minutes</i>	62
4.1.10	<i>NSB-fibers activated by β-alanine and BAM 8-22 caused irregular discharging without regular pauses</i>	67
4.1.11	<i>Differences and similarities in the discharge patterns observed in SB-fibers caused by BAM 8-22 injections</i>	70
4.1.12	<i>The discharge patterns within individual bursts induced by β-alanine, ET-1, and BAM 8-22 vary depending on the substance</i>	74
4.1.13	<i>Similarities and differences in the discharge patterns within four bursts of one single fiber induced by BAM 8-22</i>	77
4.1.14	<i>The “slow bursting firing” pattern is very regular compared to the “non-bursting firing” pattern</i>	78
4.1.15	<i>Temporal discharge patterns in human CM-fibers possibly shape itch versus pain sensation</i> 80	
4.2	PSYCHOPHYSICAL EXPERIMENT: PGE2 INCREASES PAIN INDUCED BY BAM 8-22 AND ITCH INDUCED BY COWHAGE SPICULES.....	81
CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION		89
5.1	ET-1, BAM 8-22, AND B-ALANINE PRIMARILY INDUCE SENSATIONS OF ITCH.....	90
5.2	PRURITOGENS ACTIVATE CM-FIBERS	90
5.3	DISCHARGE STRENGTH AND DISCHARGE PATTERNS VARY FOR THE DIFFERENT PRURITOGENS IN CM-FIBERS.....	91
5.4	BURSTING DISCHARGE PATTERN IN SENSORY NEURONS.....	94

5.5	SB-FIBERS MAY HAVE MORE $Na_v1.8$ CHANNELS.....	95
5.6	LIMITATIONS IN ANALYZING SINGLE BURST DISCHARGES IN SINGLE NERVE FIBERS IN MICRONEUROGRAPHY.....	96
5.7	DISCHARGE PATTERN CODING AND ITS ROLE IN DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN ITCHING AND PAIN.....	96
5.8	THEORIES OF ITCH AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO DIFFERENT SUBSTANCES.....	98
	CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION.....	105
	CHAPTER 7. REFERENCES.....	106
	CHAPTER 8. APPENDICES.....	123
8.1	SUBJECT INFORMATION.....	123
8.2	DECLARATION OF CONSENT.....	138