

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE MATO GROSSO
FACULDADE DE NURIÇÃO
PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM BIOCÊNCIAS

**EFEITOS DA RECUPERAÇÃO NUTRICIONAL COM DIETA À BASE DE
OKARA SOBRE O METABOLISMO HEPÁTICO DE LIPÍDEOS EM RATOS
SUBMETIDOS À RESTRIÇÃO PROTÉICA NA VIDA INTRAUTERINA E NA
LACTAÇÃO**

Ana Paula Carli de Almeida

CUIABÁ-MT
MARÇO/2013

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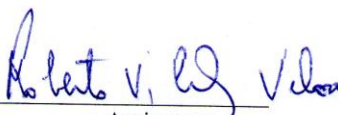
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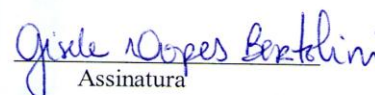
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Cuiabá, 19 de fevereiro de 2013.

"Você pode encarar um erro como uma besteira a ser esquecida, ou como um resultado que aponta uma nova direção".

Steve Jobs

Dedico

*Aos meus pais, Maria Eliane e Serafim que me deram a vida e que me ensinaram a
vivê-la com dignidade.*

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LISTA DE ABREVIATURAS

ACC	acetil coenzima A carboxilase
ACLY	adenosina trifosfato citrato liase
AMPK	proteína quinase ativada por adenosina monofosfato
ATP	adenosina trifosfato
BS	base seca
C	dieta controle
CC	grupo controle caseína
cDNA	ácido desoxirribonucleico complementar
CO	grupo controle <i>okara</i>
CoA	coenzima A
CPT-1	carnitina palmitoil transferase
DDT	ditiotreitol
FAS	ácido graxo sintase
GAPDH	gliceraldeído 3-fosfato desidrogenase
HDL	lipoproteína de alta densidade
IgG	imunoglobulina G
LC	grupo recuperado caseína
LDL	lipoproteína de baixa densidade
LL	grupo hipoproteico
LO	grupo recuperado <i>okara</i>
LP	dieta hipoproteica
mRNA	ácido ribonucleico mensageiro
NEFA	ácidos graxos não estereificados (livres)
PCR	reação em cadeia da polimerase
Phosphor	fosforilado
PPAR α	receptor ativado por proliferador do peroxissoma alfa
PPAR γ	receptor ativado por proliferador do peroxissoma gama
PUFA	ácidos graxos poliinsaturados
PUFA-RE	elemento responsivo a ácidos graxos poliinsaturados
SCD 1	estearoil coenzima A desaturase 1
Ser	serina
SREBP-1c	proteína ligadora de elementos regulados por esteróides

TG	triglicerídeos
TTBS	solução salina tamponada com Trisma base e Tween
v/v	volume de soluto por unidade de volume de solvente
VLDL	lipoproteína de muito baixa densidade

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RESUMO

O *okara* é o subproduto da industrialização do extrato aquoso de soja e sua indicação para utilização na alimentação humana é baseada no seu alto teor de fibras, proteínas de alto valor biológico, componentes bioativos provenientes do grão de soja e efeitos benéficos na prevenção da obesidade, esteatose hepática e desordens lipídicas avaliados em modelos experimentais. O modelo animal de programação metabólica propõe que restrições nutricionais durante fases críticas do desenvolvimento geram adaptações capazes de programar seu metabolismo com o intuito de conservar a homeostase intracelular. Essas alterações metabólicas são fortemente associadas ao desenvolvimento de doenças crônicas na vida adulta. Nosso objetivo foi avaliar os efeitos da dieta à base de *okara* na recuperação nutricional de ratos desnutridos em fases críticas do desenvolvimento sobre o metabolismo de lipídeos hepáticos e alguns fatores hormonais, bioquímicos e moleculares envolvidos. Proles de mães alimentadas com dietas contendo 17% ou 6% de proteína a base de caseína durante a gestação e a lactação, foram divididos em 5 grupos formando os grupos controle caseína (CC) e controle *okara* (CO) com 17% de proteína, e os grupos recuperado caseína (LC), recuperado *okara* (LO) e hipoprotéico (LL) mantidos com 6% de proteína. Foram registrados o consumo alimentar e o ganho de peso e determinadas as concentrações séricas de glicose, insulina e ácidos graxos livres. Uma fração do fígado foi coletada para determinação do conteúdo protéico e expressão gênica de enzimas envolvidas no metabolismo de lipídeos. Os animais alimentados com *okara* apresentaram consumo relativo semelhante aos demais grupos e apesar de terem consumido mais lipídeos, os grupos CO e LO tiveram menor peso corporal em relação ao CC e ao LC. O teor de lipídeos hepáticos foi semelhante entre LC e LO e menores que LL. O consumo de *okara* modulou negativamente a expressão gênica de SCD1, ACC1, ACC2 e ACLY, sendo que esses resultados podem, em parte, terem sido modulados pela maior expressão gênica de AMPK pelos animais CO e LO. Assim, a dieta à base de *okara* foi capaz de modular genes lipogênicos, resultando em efeito protetor hepático na recuperação nutricional de ratos previamente desnutridos.

Palavras-chaves: *Okara*, esteatose hepática, recuperação nutricional, ratos.

1 INTRODUÇÃO

Soja, okara e seus efeitos na saúde

A soja tem se tornado um produto de grande interesse devido a sua versatilidade industrial na fabricação de diversos produtos e por sua importância na alimentação humana e animal (SILVA *et al.*, 2006). O Brasil, e em especial o estado de Mato Grosso, figuram entre os maiores produtores de soja do mundo (MELLO FILHO *et al.*, 2004; CONAB, 2012).

Os efeitos do consumo de soja sobre a saúde humana estão associados aos componentes nutricionais dessa leguminosa, como o elevado teor de proteínas de qualidade nutricional adequada (MORAIS, 2001; MORAES & COLLA, 2006) e quantidade reduzida de lipídeos saturados e colesterol (MORAIS & SILVA, 2000).

Outra característica importante da composição do grão de soja é a presença de compostos polifenólicos como, por exemplo, as isoflavonas, compostos orgânicos naturais que possuem semelhança estrutural com os hormônios estrogênicos (BHATHENA & VELASQUEZ, 2002).

Apesar da elevada produção e das características nutricionais e funcionais, a soja é ainda pouco utilizada na alimentação do brasileiro. Algumas razões para o baixo consumo são atribuídas ao sabor e odor desagradáveis causados pela presença de compostos orgânicos que provocam flatulência e, aos seus componentes antinutricionais (MORAES & SILVA, 2000).

O *okara* é o subproduto da industrialização da soja e é obtido após a extração do extrato aquoso de soja ou como é popularmente conhecido o “leite de soja” (MATSUMOTO, WATANABE & YOKOYAMA, 2007). Considerado uma matéria-prima de qualidade nutricional, o *okara* contém proteínas (24,5 - 37,5 g/100g em base seca (BS)), lipídeos (9,3 - 22,3 g/100g BS), fibra dietética (14,5 - 55,4 g/100g BS) e isoflavonas (0,14 g/100g BS) (JIMÉNEZ-ESCRIG *et al.*, 2008).

Para cada quilograma de soja processada, é produzido um peso igual ou superior de *okara*, contendo 85% de umidade (VILLANUEVA *et al.*, 2011).

O *okara* tem sido comumente utilizado na alimentação animal, sendo que relatos indicam seu uso por humanos em dietas vegetarianas nos países orientais desde o século XX (O'TOOLE, 1999).

De acordo com o Guia Alimentar para a população brasileira (BRASIL, 2005), o consumo diário de 25g de fibra dietética pode ser uma estratégia eficiente no combate à

obesidade, porém para que esta meta seja alcançada, uma estratégia na produção de alimentos industrializados é a suplementação com ingredientes fontes de fibras, como o *okara* (JIMÉNEZ-ESCRIG *et al.*, 2008).

Turhan *et al.* (2007) sugeriram a adição de *okara* em hambúrgueres de carne e obtiveram um produto com menor teor de colesterol e calorias, tendo ótima aceitabilidade.

O efeito hipocolesterolêmico do *okara* tem sido atribuído ao elevado teor de fibras que contribui para a excreção de lipídeos pelas fezes e ao aumento da expressão de enzimas chaves que participam da biossíntese de ácidos biliares a partir do colesterol sérico (MATSUMOTO, WATANABE & YOKOYAMA, 2007; JIMÉNEZ-ESCRIG *et al.*, 2008).

Matsumoto, Watanabe & Yokoyama (2007) mostraram os efeitos benéficos do *okara* na prevenção da obesidade, esteatose hepática e desordens lipídicas por meio da redução na expressão de genes envolvidos na síntese de lipídeos no fígado e tecido adiposo.

O fenótipo econômico e a programação do organismo

Obesidade central, dislipidemia, hipertensão e resistência à insulina são parte dos componentes da síndrome metabólica, que a partir de evidências clínicas e epidemiológicas, tem como origem as anormalidades no período pré-natal (GLUCKMAN & HANSON, 2004).

A hipótese do fenótipo poupador propõe que restrições nutricionais durante fases críticas do desenvolvimento são fortemente associadas ao desenvolvimento de doenças crônicas na vida adulta (HALES & BARKER, 1992). De acordo com Lucas (1991), os tecidos fetais se adaptam às condições carenciais, programando seu metabolismo para um ambiente semelhante na vida adulta.

Nos estados de carência, a ausência de substratos específicos repercute a manutenção da homeostase do organismo (SILVA *et al.*, 1999). A partir do momento em que as fontes protéicas alimentares deixam de suprir as necessidades estruturais e funcionais, desencadeia-se no organismo uma sequência de mecanismos adaptativos, com o intuito de conservar a homeostase intracelular (CAMBRI, DALIA & MELLO, 2010).

Em modelos experimentais de programação metabólica têm sido observadas alterações hepáticas (SOUZA-MELO, MANDARIN-DE-LACERDA & AGUILA, 2007). Estudos com este modelo animal comprovam a alteração da atividade de enzimas como a redução da glicoquinase, e o aumento da fosfoenolpiruvato carboxiquinase hepáticas,

indicando que no metabolismo hepático de carboidratos prevalece a síntese ao invés de utilização da glicose, ou seja, um estado de resistência hepática à insulina (DESAI *et al.*, 1995). Este estado de resistência à insulina é acompanhado pelo acúmulo de lipídeos hepáticos progredindo para Doença Hepática Gordurosa Não-Alcoólica (SOUZA-MELO, MANDARIN-DE-LACERDA & AGUILA, 2007) como resultado do aumento da expressão de fatores de transcrição e outros componentes envolvidos na síntese de ácidos graxos (MAGEE *et al.*, 2008).

Adaptações do metabolismo hepático de lipídeos na recuperação nutricional

Uma alteração importante na síndrome metabólica é a modificação do perfil lipídico manifestada por aumentados níveis séricos de triglicerídeos e lipoproteínas de baixa densidade (LDL) e redução na concentração de lipoproteína de alta densidade (HDL) (RIBEIRO *et al.*, 2006).

O fígado é responsável por manter constante a concentração de triglicerídeos circulantes por meio do balanço entre as taxas de secreção e captação hepática. Quando ocorre um influxo aumentado de ácidos graxos, os hepatócitos aumentam a taxa de esterificação e oxidação; porém, se houver limitação nesta etapa e/ou na capacidade em secretar lipoproteína de muito baixa densidade (VLDL), a consequência será o aumento do armazenamento de triglicerídeos dentro do hepatócito, condição denominada esteatose hepática (FERREIRA, 2007).

O acúmulo de gordura hepática é determinado pelo balanço entre síntese e degradação de triglicerídeos, denominados respectivamente lipogênese e lipólise. O mecanismo de síntese de lipídeos hepáticos é controlado em parte, por fatores de transcrição como o fator denominado de proteína ligadora de elementos regulados por esteróides 1c (SREBP-1c). Este fator de transcrição responde a elevados níveis de insulina e, quando ativo, desencadeia um aumento da expressão de mRNA das demais enzimas envolvidas na via de síntese de lipídeos, como estearoil CoA dessaturase (SCD 1), acetil CoA carboxilase (ACC), enzima málica e ácido graxo sintase (FAS) (FREDERICO *et al.*, 2011).

Camundongos transgênicos com superexpressão de SREBP-1c no fígado tiveram um aumento na taxa de síntese de lipídeos *de novo* e desenvolvimento de fígado gorduroso (SHIMOMURA *et al.*, 1999). Outro estudo, mostra que ratos alimentados com dieta à base de proteína de soja apresentaram melhora no perfil lipídico por meio da regulação da expressão de SREBP1c (ASCENCIO *et al.*, 2004).

Também de grande importância para o metabolismo de lipídeos são os receptores ativados por proliferadores de peroxissomas (PPARs), fatores de transcrição que funcionam como sensores de lipídeos e tem a capacidade de estimular a síntese ou a degradação/oxidação.

Embora seja encontrado em baixas concentrações no fígado, o PPAR γ aumenta a expressão de enzimas lipogênicas tais como a FAS e ACC, aumentando a lipogênese (SCHADINGER *et al.*, 2005), sendo que sua superexpressão está associada a esteatose hepática (MATSUSUE *et al.*, 2003). Em modelo animal obeso, com resistência à insulina, esteatose hepática e administração de agentes ativadores gênicos, foi observado um aumento na expressão de PPAR γ no fígado quando comparado aos animais controle, mostrando a importância do PPAR γ na indução de genes lipogênicos (EDVARDSSON *et al.*, 1999). Outros estudos com animais obesos com deleção do gene de PPAR γ (ob/ob-) mostram modulação de genes hepáticos lipogênicos (FAS, ACC e SCD-1) e maiores concentrações de triglicerídeos (TG) e ácidos graxos livres (NEFA) no soro (MATSUSUE *et al.*, 2003).

Em oposição, o PPAR α regula a expressão gênica de algumas das enzimas-chave do sistema de oxidação de ácidos graxos no fígado como carnitina palmitoil transferase 1 (CPT-1) e outras enzimas envolvidas na via da β -oxidação (RAO & REDDY, 2004). Camundongos com deleção do gene de PPAR α apresentam esteatose hepática acentuada, diminuição dos níveis plasmáticos de glicose, corpos cetônicos e elevação dos níveis plasmáticos de NEFA (HASHIMOTO *et al.*, 2000).

Vários autores têm avaliado o metabolismo hepático de lipídeos investigando os mecanismos regulatórios a partir de genes e enzimas como a SCD1 que pode ser modulada por componentes da dieta, como os ácidos graxos (LADSCHULZ *et al.*, 1994; LEE, PARIZA & NTAMBI, 1998; NTAMBI, 1999; KIM, MIYAZAKI & NTAMBI, 2002).

A SCD1 é a enzima que catalisa um passo limitante na síntese de ácidos graxos monoinsaturados por meio da introdução de uma dupla ligação entre os carbonos saturados 9 e 10 (KIM, MIYAZAKI & NTAMBI, 2002; DOBRZYN *et al.*, 2004).

Os mecanismos de regulação da SCD1 por ácidos graxos poliinsaturados não estão totalmente esclarecidos. Efeitos inibitórios dos ácidos graxos poliinsaturados sobre a transcrição do gene de SCD1 podem estar relacionados com a posição e/ou orientação das duplas ligações presentes nestas moléculas, que se ligam na região do promotor do gene bloqueando a transcrição (NTAMBI, 1999). Outros estudos se baseiam na atuação

de um elemento responsivo a ácidos graxos poliinsaturados (PUFA-RE) atuando da mesma forma na regulação da transcrição de genes (SESSLER & NTAMBI, 1998).

Os mecanismos anti-esteatóticos observados em ratos com deficiência de SCD1 não são completamente compreendidos, porém observa-se ativação aumentada da proteína quinase dependente de adenosina monofosfato (AMPK), com consequente inativação da ACC, resultando em diminuição do conteúdo de malonil-CoA e ativação alostérica de CPT-1 (DOBRZYN *et al.*, 2004). Este mecanismo reduz o conteúdo de lipídeos hepáticos pelo aumento da oxidação e inibição da lipogênese. A AMPK é um complexo sensor de energia celular, que quando ativo regula vias catabólicas que geram ATP como a oxidação de ácidos graxos, a captação de glicose e a glicólise (DOBRZYN *et al.*, 2005).

Estudos experimentais utilizando dietas com diferentes concentrações de ácidos graxos poliinsaturados avaliaram a regulação gênica e protéica de SCD1, mostrando efeitos positivos de modo dose-dependente em relação à concentração de ácidos graxos poliinsaturados (SESSLER *et al.*, 1996).

Por mecanismos não totalmente claros, os ácidos graxos poliinsaturados também são responsáveis pela ativação de PPARs que atuam como fatores de transcrição e, portanto, tem sido investigado se a regulação endógena do gene de SCD1 é feita tanto por ácidos graxos poliinsaturados quanto pela regulação direta de PPARs ou outros genes envolvidos (MILLER & NTAMBI, 1996).

Modelos animais alimentados com dietas hiperlipídicas, porém com fonte protéica de soja, demonstraram maior taxa de oxidação de ácidos graxos pelo tecido adiposo, sendo essa uma das explicações para o controle de peso dos animais alimentados com proteína de soja (TORRE-VILLALVAZO *et al.*, 2008).

Ao avaliar a expressão gênica e o conteúdo protéico de enzimas do metabolismo lipídico hepático de ratos recuperados da desnutrição com dieta à base de soja, Milanski *et al.* (2009) observaram a redução da concentração de gordura hepática que foi acompanhada por diminuição da expressão do mRNA da ACC apesar do aumento da insulinemia. Aumento da concentração sérica de insulina e moderada resistência hepática à insulina são outros efeitos observados na recuperação nutricional com dieta à base de soja (OLIVEIRA, 2006) indicando uma situação que poderia interferir no metabolismo lipídico e na função hepática.

A utilização de uma dieta à base de *okara*, rica em proteínas, ácidos graxos poliinsaturados e fibra alimentar, poderia contribuir para a recuperação da desnutrição

na vida intrauterina e na lactação e reverter ou melhorar distúrbios do metabolismo de lipídeos hepáticos.

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3. OBJETIVOS

3.1 Geral

Avaliar os efeitos de dieta à base de *okara* na recuperação nutricional de ratos desnutridos em fases críticas do desenvolvimento sobre alguns fatores hormonais, bioquímicos e moleculares envolvidos no metabolismo de lipídeos no fígado.

3.2 Específicos

- Determinar o perfil nutricional dos animais por meio de:
 - consumo alimentar total;
 - consumo de macronutrientes (carboidrato, proteína e lipídeos);
 - consumo de ácidos graxos (saturados, monoinsaturados e poliinsaturados);
 - peso corporal;
 - peso do fígado;
 - conteúdo de lipídeos hepáticos.
- Verificar no fígado a transcrição de genes envolvidos no metabolismo de lipídeos a partir do conteúdo de RNA mensageiro das enzimas:
 - SCD-1;
 - ACC-1;
 - ACC-2;
 - AMPK- α ;
 - PPAR γ ;
 - SREBP-1c;
 - PPAR α ;
 - FAS.
- Verificar no fígado o conteúdo protéico das seguintes enzimas envolvidas no metabolismo de lipídeos:
 - ATP citrato liase;
 - ACC;
 - p-ACC;
 - AMPK;
 - enzima málica;

- PPAR α .
- Calcular a razão do conteúdo proteico de p-ACC/ACC.
- Determinar o conteúdo de ácidos graxos livres no soro.
- Analisar a concentração sérica de insulina.

4. ARTIGO

MODULATION OF GENES RESULTS IN ANTISTEATOTIC EFFECT BY THE USE OF OKARA DIET IN THE NUTRITIONAL RECOVERY OF MALNOURISHED ANIMALS DURING INTRAUTERINE LIFE

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ABSTRACT

The *okara* is a byproduct of the industrialization of the aqueous extract of soybean and its indication for use in human food is based on its high fiber content, high biological value proteins, bioactive components derived from soybeans and several beneficial effects on obesity prevention, hepatic steatosis and lipid disorders assessed in experimental models. The animal model of metabolic programming suggests that nutritional restrictions during critical phases of development generate able adaptations to program the metabolism in order to maintain intracellular homeostasis. These metabolic changes are strongly associated with the development of chronic diseases in adults. Our objective was to evaluate the effects *okara* diet in nutritional recovery of malnourished rats at critical stages of development on hormonal, biochemical and molecular factors involved in hepatic lipid metabolism. Male rats whose mothers were fed diets with 17% or 6% of the casein-based protein during pregnancy and lactation were divided into 5 groups and maintained on diet of 17% casein (CC, LC), 17% *okara* (CO, LO) or 6% casein diet (LL) after weaning. Food intake and weight gain were recorded and serum glucose, insulin, and free fat acids were determined. A fraction of the liver was collected for determination of protein content and gene expression of enzymes involved on the lipid metabolism. Animals fed *okara* showed similar relative intake to the other groups and despite having consumed more lipids, CO and LO groups had lower body weight compared to CC and LC. The hepatic lipid content was similar between LC and LO and smaller than LL. Consumption of *okara* modulates negatively the gene expression of SCD1, ACC1, ACC2 and ACLY, and these results, may in part, have been modulated by higher AMPK gene expression by the CO and LO groups. Thus, the *okara* diet was able to modulate lipogenic genes, resulting in a protective effect on the liver in the nutritional recovery of malnourished rats previously.

Keywords: *Okara*, fatty liver, nutritional recovery, rats.

INTRODUCTION

Several health beneficial effects are applied to soybeans consumption due to its nutritional characteristics (MORAIS, 2001; MORAES & COLLA, 2006) being that part of these effects are also found in models fed diet based *okara* (MATSUMOTO, WATANABE & YOKOYAMA, 2007; JIMÉNEZ-ESCRIG *et al.*, 2008). The *okara* is the byproduct of the industrialization of soybeans and is obtained after extraction of the aqueous extract of soybean or is popularly known as the "soy milk" (MATSUMOTO, WATANABE & YOKOYAMA, 2007). Because of its low cost and high nutritional beneficial the using of proposed *okara* is proposed as an alternative in the nutritional recovery of early malnutrition.

According to Lucas (1991), deficiency conditions at critical stages of development can program fetal tissues, being the most striking feature of this model increased uptake and storage of nutrients that functions as a survival strategy.

When evaluating gene expression and protein content of enzymes of hepatic lipids metabolism in rats recovered from malnutrition with soybeans based diet, Milanski *et al.* (2009) observed a reduction in fat liver concentration which was accompanied by decreased in mRNA expression of ACC despite the increased of insulin. Increased serum insulin and moderate hepatic resistance of insulin are other effects observed on nutritional recovery with soybeans based diet (OLIVEIRA, 2006) indicating a situation that could interfere with lipid metabolism and liver function.

Thus, we evaluated some aspects of hepatic metabolism of lipids in adult rats subjected to protein restriction during intrauterine life and lactation, which were kept with *okara* diet after weaning.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Animals and diets

The experimental procedures involving rats were performed in accordance with the guidelines of the Brazilian Society of Science in Laboratory Animals (SBCAL) and were approved by the ethics committee at the Federal University of Mato Grosso (process N° 23108.019180/10-3). Male and virgin female Wistar rats (85-90 days old)

were obtained from the university's breeding colony. Mating was performed by housing male rats with female rats overnight (one male and five female rats), and pregnancy was confirmed by the examination of vaginal smears for the presence of sperm. Pregnant females were separated at random and maintained from the first day of pregnancy until the end of lactation on isocaloric diets containing 6% (low protein [LP] diet) or 17% protein (control [C] diet). Spontaneous delivery took place at day 22 of pregnancy after which, at 3 days of age, large litters were reduced to eight pups to ensure a standard litter size per mother. After weaning (twenty-five days), the males were divided into five groups: CC, consisting of offspring born to and suckled by mothers fed a C diet and subsequently fed the same diet after weaning; CO, consisting of offspring born to and suckled by mothers fed a C diet and subsequently fed an *okara* diet with 17% protein after weaning; LL, consisting of offspring of mothers fed an LP diet and subsequently fed the same diet after weaning; LC, consisting of offspring of mothers fed an LP diet and a C diet after weaning; and LO, consisting of offspring of mothers fed an LP diet and fed an *okara* diet containing 17% protein after weaning.

The *okara* was produced in the laboratory from soybeans (*Glicine max*) obtained from a local market in Cuiabá, Brazil. Preparation of *okara* was performed according to the Lescano & Rocha method (2005), with minor modifications. The soybeans were cleaned, washed with tap water, cooked for 5 minutes (thermal process), drained and washed again with tap water. Water was added to the beans (ratio of 1 kg of soybean/5 L of water), which were then cooked for an additional 5 minutes, after which they were crushed. The next stage was to cook the soybeans at 100 °C for 10 minutes to elaborate the soymilk, followed by a sifting process to extract the *okara*. The *okara* extract was then dried in an oven at a temperature of 55 °C and ground to a powder. The compositions of the diets are presented in Table 1. In the *okara* diet, adjustments were made to equalize protein and lipid content to the casein diet, suppressing soybean oil and fiber and reducing carbohydrates. The control and *okara* diets were isoproteic, to the 17% protein composition, prepared in accordance with the recommendations of the American Institute of Nutrition AIN-93G (REEVES et al., 1993). The diets' fatty acids composition was determined by prior acid hydrolysis (method A) (ZENEBON & PASCUET, 2005). Nitrogen content was determined by micro-Kjeldahl method, using a nitrogen conversion factor of 6.25 (AOAC, 1995). Fiber content was determined by an enzyme-gravimetric method according to Prosky et al. (1985).

The rats were kept in collective cages, given free access to food and water and kept under standard lighting conditions (12 h light–12 h dark cycle) at 24°C throughout the experimental period. The rats were weighed once per week throughout the experimental period. Food intake was recorded three times per week, and the data are expressed in absolute and relative values. To assess the relative food intake, the total food intake during the experimental period after weaning was normalized per 100 g of body weight at age 90 d.

Determination of the metabolic, hormonal and biochemical profiles

The animals were anesthetized with a solution containing Xylazine (4 mg/kg), Ketamine (30mg/kg) and Diazepam (2mg/kg). After confirming the absence of certain signs reflecting the tail, palpebral and corneal reflexes animals underwent medial laparotomy. Blood samples were obtained from direct puncture of the hepatic portal vein to determine glucose concentrations (Accu-Chek[®] portable glucose meter, Roche Diagnostics, Germany), serum non-esterified fatty acids (NEFA) (Waco Pure Chemical Industries, Ltd., Japan) and serum insulin concentrations (SCOTT *et al.*, 1981). Liver were rapidly removed, fresh weight was determined and an aliquot was immersed in liquid nitrogen and stored at -80° C for determination of liver fat contents (FOLCH *et al.*, 1957), mRNA expression and protein content.

RNA preparation and real-time RT-PCR

Aliquots of liver were homogenized in Trizol reagent (In Vitrogen, São Paulo, Brazil) for 30s using a tissue homogenizer (Polytron Aggragate, Kinematica, Littau/Luzern, Switzerland) at speed 2. After centrifugation at 6.000g total RNA content was isolated according to the manufacturer's instructions and quantified by spectrophotometry. The RNA integrity was verified by agarose gel electrophoresis. The cDNA synthesis was performed with 3µg of total RNA using the cDNA-capacity High Reverse Transcription Kit (Applied Biosystems). Primers specific for rat ACC1 (Rn00573474_m1), ACC2 (Rn00588290_m1), AMPK α (Rn00576935_m1), fatty acid synthase (FAS) (Rn00685720_m1), PPAR α (Rn00566193_m1), PPAR γ (Rn00440945_m1), SCD-1 (Rn00594894_g1), Sterol regulatory element-binding protein (SREBP-1c) (Rn01446558_A1) and glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GAPDH) were obtained from Applied Biosystems. GAPDH were used as endogenous control. PCR was carried out in duplicate on a Step One using Taqman Gene Expression Master Mix

(Applied Biosystems). The cDNA was amplified under the following conditions: 95 °C for 10 min for denaturation and subjected to 40 cycles of 95 °C for 15s, 60 °C for 20 s, and 72 °C for 15 s, followed extension at 72 °C for 10 min. Real-time data were analyzed using the Step One System (Applied Biosystems).

Western Blot

Liver fractions were homogenized in a freshly prepared buffer (100mM-2-amino-2-hydroxymethyl-propane-1,3-diol (Tris)-HCl, pH 7.4; BioAgency Laboratorios); 100mM-sodium pyrophosphate (FisherScientific), 100mM-sodium fluoride (J.T. Baker), 10mMethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (Labsynth Produtos para laboratorio Ltda.), 10mM-sodium orthovanadate (Sigma-Aldrich), 2.0mM-phenyl methyl sulfonyl fluoride (Alexis Biochemicals) and 0.1mg aprotinin/ml (Sigma-Aldrich). Insoluble material was removed by centrifugation at 12 000 *g* at 4 °C for 30 min. The hepatic nuclear extracts to determination of PPAR α and PPAR γ were obtained as described by Siegrist-Kaiser et al. (1997). The protein concentrations of the supernatants and of the nuclear extracts were determined by the Bradford method (Bio-Rad Laboratories, Inc.) (BRADFORD, 1976). Samples containing *x* mg protein from each experimental group were incubated with 4 x Laemmli sample buffer containing 10 mM DDT and assayed on polyacrylamide (Acrylamide; BioAgency Laboratorios) gels at 120 V for 90 min (10% gels). Electrophoresis (Bio-Rad Laboratories, Inc.) of the proteins to nitrocellulose membranes (Bio-Rad Laboratories, Inc.) was performed for 90 min at 120 V in buffer containing methanol (Labsynth Produtos para laboratório Ltda.) and sodium dodecylsulfate (Bio-Rad Laboratories, Inc.). After checking transfer efficiency using Ponceau staining, the membranes were blocked with 5% albumin (Sigma-Aldrich) in Tween-Tris-buffered saline (TTBS; 10mM-Tris, 150mM-NaCl/l, 0.5% Tween 20 (Sigma- Aldrich) at 4°C for 2 h. AMPK α (2532 Cell Signalin), ACLY (4332 Cell Signalin), malic enzyme (WH0004199M3 Sigma), GAPDH (SC-25778 Santa Cruz Biotechnology), PPAR α (SC-9000 Santa Cruz Biotechnology) and PPAR γ (SC-7277 Santa Cruz Biotechnology) were detected in the membranes after a 2 h incubation at room temperature with primary antibodies (diluted 1:500, v/v, in TTBS containing 3% dry skimmed milk; Santa Cruz Biotechnology). The membranes were then incubated with a secondary specific IgG antibody (diluted 1:5000, v/v, in TTBS containing 3% dry skimmed milk) for 2 h at room temperature. After incubation with a horseradish peroxidase-conjugated secondary antibody. Enhanced chemiluminescence (Super Signal

West Pico; Thermo Scientific) was used to detect the signals. Specific band intensities were measured using the Scion Image Program for Windows.

Statistical analyses

The results were expressed as the mean $\pm$ standard deviation for the number of rats indicated. The casein and *okara* diets were compared with the unpaired Student's-*t* test. Two-way analysis of variance (effects of nutritional status and diet) was used to compare data from the CC, CO, LC and LO groups. The same data were analyzed by one-way analysis of variance when assessing whether diet was effective in improving the nutritional status in the LC, LO and LL groups. When necessary, these analyses were complemented by the least significant difference test to determine the significance of individual differences. Levene's test for homogeneity of variances was initially used to determine whether the data complied with the assumptions for parametric analysis of variance. $P < 0.05$ indicated statistical significance. All statistical comparisons were performed using the STATISTICA software package (StatSoft Inc., Tulsa, OK, USA).

RESULTS

The LO and CO groups exhibited relative intake (table 2) similar to CC and LC groups ($P < 0.001$), however the total lipids intake (table 2) ($F_{1,32} = 387.60$, $P < 0.0001$) and the intake of the fatty acids analyzed (table 3) (saturated $F_{1,32} = 691.48$, $P < 0.0001$; monounsaturated $F_{1,32} = 678.32$, $P < 0.0001$; polyunsaturated $F_{1,32} = 762.12$, $P < 0.0001$; omega-3 $F_{1,32} = 828.28$, $P < 0.0001$; omega-6 $F_{1,32} = 749.91$, $P < 0.0001$) had increased by the consumption of *okara*. The total carbohydrate intakes ($P < 0.001$) and total protein intake ($P < 0.001$) (table 2) was higher in the CC than those CO. In the nutritional recovery, the total carbohydrate intake was higher ($P < 0.001$) in the LC animals than those to LO, and this was higher ($P < 0.001$) than the LL group. Between the recovery groups, the total protein intake was same ($P < 0.001$) but, higher ($P < 0.001$) than the LL group. At the end of the recovery period, body weights (table 4) of rats from LC and LO groups were lower than those from CC and CO groups ($F_{1, 32} = 64.25$, $P < 0.0001$). Additionally, the final body weights of rats from LO group was lower than LC group ($P < 0.02$), but LO rats exhibited higher final body weights than LL rats ($P < 0.0001$). The absolute weight of livers (table 4) were lower in recovered rats than in control rats ($F_{1,28} = 26.87$, $P < 0.0001$). The LO and LC rats had similar absolute weight of livers but

higher in relation to LL rats ($P<0.0001$). When expressed per 100 g of body weight, liver weights (table 4) were higher in rats fed the *okara* diet than in rats fed the casein diet ($F_{1,28}=21.62$, $P<0.0001$) and LO lower compared to LL rats ($P<0.0001$). Liver fat content and NEFA levels (table 4) were higher in LO and CO rats compared to LC and CC rats ($F_{1,11}=59.10$, $P<0.05$; $F_{1,23}=4.44$, $P<0.05$, respectively). In LO and LC rats the liver fat content and NEFA levels were similar and both variable were lower in relation to LL rats. The basal serum glucose and insulin levels did not differ among groups (Table 4). The liver AMPK mRNA expression was higher in recovered rats than in control rats ($F_{1,11}= 6.00$, $P<0.05$), was higher too in rats fed the *okara* diet than in those maintained with the casein diet ($F_{1,11}= 7.85$, $P<0.02$) and was higher in the recovered groups compared with the LL group ($P<0.02$) (Figure 1A). Rats fed the *okara* diet exhibited lower liver SCD-1 ($F_{1,11}= 76.80$, $P<0.0001$), ACC1 ($F_{1,11}= 10.57$, $P<0.01$), ACC2 ($F_{1,11}= 9.72$, $P<0.01$) and higher PPAR γ ($F_{1,11}= 25.32$, $P<0.001$) mRNA expression than rats fed the casein diet. In LO and LC rats, liver AMPK mRNA expression were higher than in LL rats ($P<0.0001$ and $P<0.02$, respectively). Liver SCD-1 mRNA expressions were similar between LO and LL, and both groups had lower SCD-1 mRNA than LC rats ($p<0.001$). In LO rats, the liver PPAR γ mRNA expression was higher than in LC and LL rats ($P<0.02$). Liver ACC1 mRNA expression were lower in LO rats than in LL rats, but in LC rats the liver ACC1 mRNA expression was similar to LO and LL rats (Figures 1B-1E). In LO rats the liver ACC2 mRNA expression was higher than LL rats but lower in relation to LC rats. The liver PPAR α , SREBP-1c and FAS mRNA expression did not differ among groups (data not shown). The liver ACL protein content was lower in recovered rats than in control rats ($F_{1,12}= 5.46$, $P<0.05$) and was lower in rats fed the *okara* diet than in those maintained with the casein diet ($F_{1,12}= 12.10$, $P<0.02$). In LO rats the liver ACL protein content was lower in relation to LL and LC rats ($P<0.01$) (Figure 2A). The liver ACC content was reduced in rats fed the *okara* diet than in those maintained with the casein diet ($F_{1,15}= 4.84$, $P<0.05$), and no significant difference was observed among LC, LO and LL rats (Figure 2B). The liver phospho-ACC content was lower in rats fed the *okara* diet than in those maintained with the casein diet ($F_{1,15}= 7.14$, $P<0.02$). In LO rats the liver phospho-ACC content was lower in LC rats ($P<0.02$) than in LL rats but similar to LC rats (Figure 2C). The AMPK, PPAR α and malic enzyme content did not differ among groups (data not shown).

DISCUSSION

The animals maintained on *okara* diet, despite exhibiting similar relative intake to animals maintained on casein diet had lower body weight, confirming previous findings (MATSUMOTO, YOKOYAMA & WATANABE, 2007). Similarly to those found in soybeans, the consumption of *okara* by experimental models have shown beneficial effects to the prevention of obesity, fat liver and dyslipidemia (MATSUMOTO, YOKOYAMA & WATANABE, 2007). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that by holding the *okara* diet had higher lipid content (Table 01), and consequently higher consumption of this nutrient (Table 03). For these groups, the lowest weight gain observed may be associated with the consumption of bioactive elements as soybeans proteins of high biological value (JENKINS *et al.*, 1989; AOYAMA *et al.*, 2000). The mechanisms commonly cited to show the effects of soybeans on body weight control in humans include decreased appetite, increased satiety (ANDERSON & MOORE, 2004) and glycemic control (AZADBAKHT *et al.*, 2007).

In addition to the other components of soybeans, polyunsaturated fat acids also have biological effects associated with lipid metabolism. We observed that animals in *okara* group had showed a higher intake of omega 3, omega 6, monounsaturated, polyunsaturated and saturated fat acids compared to animals maintained on casein. Polyunsaturated fat acids exert their effect in increasing the expression of genes of lipolysis and simultaneously decreasing the expression of genes of lipogenesis (NTAMBI & BENE, 2001). Studies have linked consumption of polyunsaturated fat acids with the activation of AMPK and its pathway, which acts as a regulator of other catabolic pathways, such as fat acid oxidation (SUCHANKOVA *et al.*, 2005). Polyunsaturated fat acids may influence AMPK gene expression, and this molecule has inhibitory effects on the transcription of the SCD1 gene, even though a mechanism not fully understandable, it is believed that polyunsaturated fat acids act in blocking transcription in this gene (SESSLER & NTAMBI, 1998; NTAMBI, 1999). The SCD1 is an enzyme that catalyzes a rate-limiting step in the synthesis of monounsaturated fat acids by introduction of a double bond between carbons saturated (KIM, MIYAZAKI & NTAMBI, 2002; DOBRZYN *et al.*, 2004). Furthermore, it has been observed that rats deficient in SCD1 exhibit greater activation of AMPK and inactivation of ACC, resulting in the reduction of the content of malonyl-CoA and allosteric activation of carnitine palmitoyl transferase (CPT-1), again confirming the correlation antagonistic between these enzymes (DOBRZYN *et al.*, 2004). In this context, our results were

consistent by these researches. Animals maintained on a *okara* diet, regardless of nutritional status, showed higher expression of mRNA of hepatic AMPK, with consequent decrease in SCD-1 mRNA expression and decreased of ACC1 and ACC2 mRNA expression and protein content in the liver. However, we did not observe this association in animals recovered with casein from intrauterine malnutrition. Thus, the evidence reported above shows a decrease hepatic lipid by modulation of genes involved in pathways of oxidation and lipogenesis. The animals that consumed diet *okara* had showed an increase in the levels of lipids in the liver, but the animals recovered with this diet showed similar results to LC and LL below the liver is showing its protective effect of the *okara* diet.

To elucidate the metabolic changes that generated this protective effect in animals recovered from malnutrition with *okara* diet, we evaluated the PPAR γ mRNA expression and protein content of ATP citrate lyase and phospho ACC in the liver. The PPAR γ is found in low concentrations in the liver, and its over-expression is associated with hepatic steatosis, because it is a transcription factor in the induction of lipogenic genes (MATSUSUE *et al.*, 2003).

Thus, increased expression of mRNA of PPAR γ had shown in liver of animals maintained on a diet *okara*, can just justify the increase in the lipids content of liver by animals in these groups, however, does not provide the same pattern for the animals LL. Studies in vitro have demonstrated PPAR γ activation by isoflavones (RICKETTS *et al.*, 2005).

Evidence suggests that consuming a diet rich in carbohydrates can activate hepatic fat acid synthesis mediated by multiple mechanisms from glucose, which is degraded by ATP citrate lyase to oxaloacetate and acetyl CoA, and this is carboxylated by the ACC (BROWNING & HORTON, 2004). Thus, the low protein content of ATP citrate lyase in liver, as well as reducing the fat content presented by both groups recovered from intrauterine malnutrition by groups were maintained on a diet *okara* may be due to a lower consumption of carbohydrates on the animals diet. It is known that the activity of ACC is mainly regulated by its phosphorylation state than by changes in its content (DYCK *et al.*, 1999; MINOKOSHI *et al.*, 2002).

One way to dephosphorylation and activation of ACC occurs through the action of insulin (HARDIE & CARLING, 1997), in contrast, AMPK regulates the phosphorylation of this enzyme generating the inactivation its isoform in the liver (KIM *et al.*, 1989). The groups fed *okara* diet had lower phosphorylation of this enzyme,

accompanied by a lower total protein content when compared to other groups. These results cannot be explained by insulin levels which were similar between all groups, also considering that these animals did not have increased sensitivity to insulin (LEMES, 2012).

CONCLUSION

These results suggest that *okara* diet in nutritional recovery can reduced the content of liver lipids commonly observed in malnourished animals by modulation the gene expression of key enzymes of the lipogenic pathway such as ATP citrate lyase, ACC and SCD-1 resulting in a hepatic protective effect.

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CONTRIBUTORS

APCA, NCSP, SRLR and FML carried out the conducted experiments. APCA, NCSP and FML carried out the evaluation of diets. MQL contributed in the interpretation of data. BVL contributed equally to this paper in various aspects of this study. RVV and MQL conceived and designed in of the study. NCSP drafted the manuscript along with the other authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript. The authors have no conflict of interest.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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TABLES

Table 1. Composition of control, low-protein and *okara* diets

Ingredients	Control	Low-protein	<i>Okara</i>
(g/kg)	(17% protein)	(6% protein)	(17% protein)
Casein ($\geq 85\%$ protein)	202.0	71.5	-
<i>Okara</i> ($\geq 35\%$ protein)*	-	-	505.4
Cornstarch	397.0	480.0	279.8
Dextrinized cornstarch	130.5	159.0	93.3
Sucrose	100.0	121.0	71.0
Soybean oil	70.0	70.0	-
Fiber	50.0	50.0	-
Mineral mix (AIN-93)**	35.0	35.0	35.0
Vitamin mix (AIN-93)**	10.0	10.0	10.0
L-cystine	3.0	1.0	3.0
Choline bitartrate	2.5	2.5	2.5

**Okara* composition (%): protein 36, fat 19, carbohydrate 36, total fiber 32, humidity 6, ash 3.

**See Reeves et al., 1993.

Table 2. Total and relative food intake, total carbohydrate, protein and lipid intake from adult rats maintained on a control (CC and LC groups), *okara* (CO and LO groups), or low-protein (LL group) diet after weaning

Variables	Groups				
	CC (9)	CO (9)	LC (9)	LO (9)	LL (9)
Total food intake (g)	1256±95 ^A	1126±47 ^B	890±56 ^{Ca}	947±136 ^{Ca}	492±22 ^b
(g/100g WB)	292±31 ^A	284±19 ^{AB}	259±28 ^{Bc}	301±45 ^{Ab}	374±47 ^a
Total carbohydrate (g)	889±67 ^A	601±25 ^{A^B}	629±40 ^{Ba}	506±73 ^{Cb}	404±18 ^c
Total protein (g)	214±16 ^A	191±8 ^B	151±10 ^{Ca}	161±23 ^{Ca}	30±1 ^b
Total lipid (g)	92±7	164±7 [#]	65±4 ^{*b}	138±20 ^{*#a}	36±2 ^c

Values represent the mean ± standard deviation for the number of rats in parentheses. Means with different superscript uppercase letters are significantly different by two-way ANOVA, and those with superscript lowercase letters are significantly different by one-way ANOVA followed by LSD test ($p < 0.05$). *Indicates the difference between nutritional states, and # indicates the difference between diets.

Table 3. Relative saturated, monounsaturated, total polyunsaturated lipid, omega 3 and omega 6 polyunsaturated lipid intake obtained from adult rats maintained on a control (CC and LC groups), *okara* (CO and LO groups), or low-protein (LL group) diet after weaning

Variables	Groups				
	CC (9)	CO (9)	LC (9)	LO (9)	LL (9)
Saturated lipid (g/100g BW)	0.31±0.03	1.13±0.08 [#]	0.27±0.03 ^b	1.20±0.18 ^{#a}	0.37±0.05 ^b
Monounsaturated lipid (g/100g BW)	0.45±0.05	1.60±0.11 [#]	0.39±0.04 ^c	1.69±0.25 ^{#a}	0.57±0.07 ^b
Polyunsaturated lipid (g/100g BW)	0.70±0.07	2.97±0.20 [#]	0.62±0.08 ^b	3.15±0.47 ^{#a}	0.84±0.10 ^b
Omega 3 (g/100g BW)	0.050±0.005	0.24±0.02 [#]	0.045±0.005 ^b	0.26±0.04 ^{#a}	0.060±0.009 ^b
Omega 6 (g/100g BW)	0.65±0.07	2.73±0.18 [#]	0.58±0.06 ^b	2.89±0.43 ^{#a}	0.79±0.1 ^b

Values represent the mean ± standard deviation for the number of rats in parentheses. Means with different superscript lowercase letters are significantly different by one-way ANOVA followed by LSD test (p<0.05). [#]Indicates the difference between diets.

Table 4. Final body weight, absolute and relative weight of liver and fat liver content, serum glucose, insulin and non-esterified fatty acids (NEFA) obtained from adult rats maintained on a control (CC and LC groups), *okara* (CO and LO groups), or low-protein (LL group) diet after weaning

Variables	Groups				
	CC	CO	LC	LO	LL
Final body weight (g)	432±39 (9)	398±33 [#] (9)	346±1.9 ^{*a} (9)	315±22 ^{##b} (9)	134±19 ^c (9)
Liver (g)	15±1 (9)	16±2 (9)	12±2 ^{*a} (9)	13±2 ^{*a} (9)	8±1 ^b (9)
(g/100g BW)	3.5±0.2 (9)	4.1±0.4 [#] (9)	3.3±0.7 ^c (9)	4.3±0.4 ^{##b} (9)	5.4±1.4 ^a (9)
Liver fat content (g)	27±7 (3)	42±7 [#] (4)	31±6 ^b (4)	35±9 ^{##b} (4)	85±26 ^a (3)
Serum glucose (mmol/L)	5.0±1.6 (4)	5.9±0.2 (4)	5.9±1.4 (6)	5.2±0.5 (5)	5.4±0.7 (4)
Serum insulin (pmol/L)	112±76 (4)	93±18 (4)	126±77 (6)	64±24 (5)	75±9 (4)
NEFA (mmol/L)	0.26±0.08 (6)	0.40±0.10 [#] (7)	0.29±0.10 ^b (6)	0.30±0.10 ^{##b} (8)	0.47±0.14 ^a (6)

Values represent the mean ± standard deviation for the number of rats in parentheses. Means with different superscript lowercase letters are significantly different by one-way ANOVA followed by LSD test ($p < 0.05$). *Indicates the difference between nutritional states, and [#] indicates the difference between diets.

FIGURES

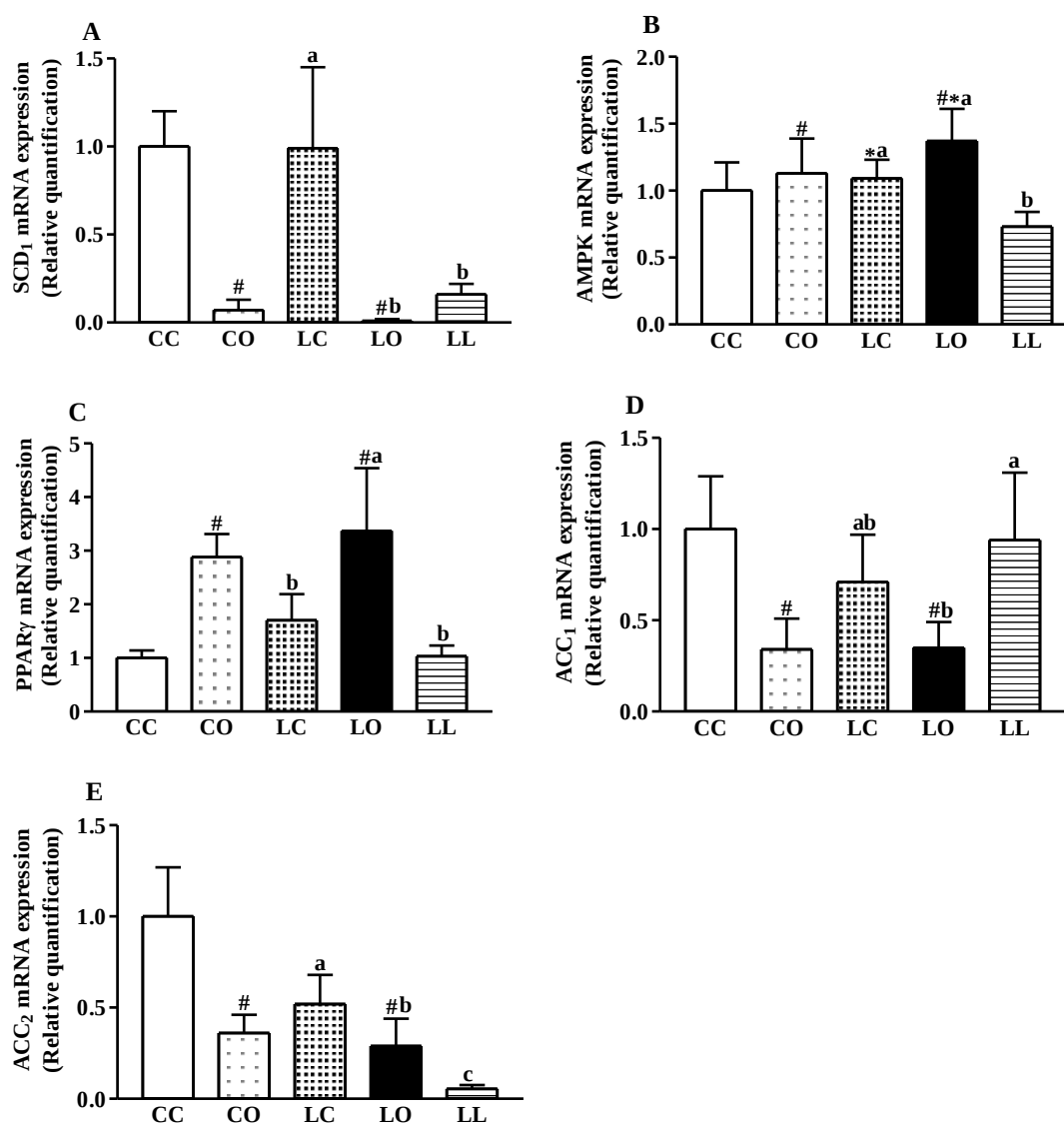


Figure 1. Hepatic SCD1 (A), AMPK (B), PPAR γ (C), ACC₁ (D), and ACC₂ (E) mRNA analyzed by real-time polymerase chain reaction. Data are expressed as mean $\pm$ SD of three to four rats per treatment group. Means with different superscript lowercase letters are significantly different by one-way ANOVA followed by LSD test (p < 0.05). *indicates the difference between nutritional states, and # indicates the difference between diets.

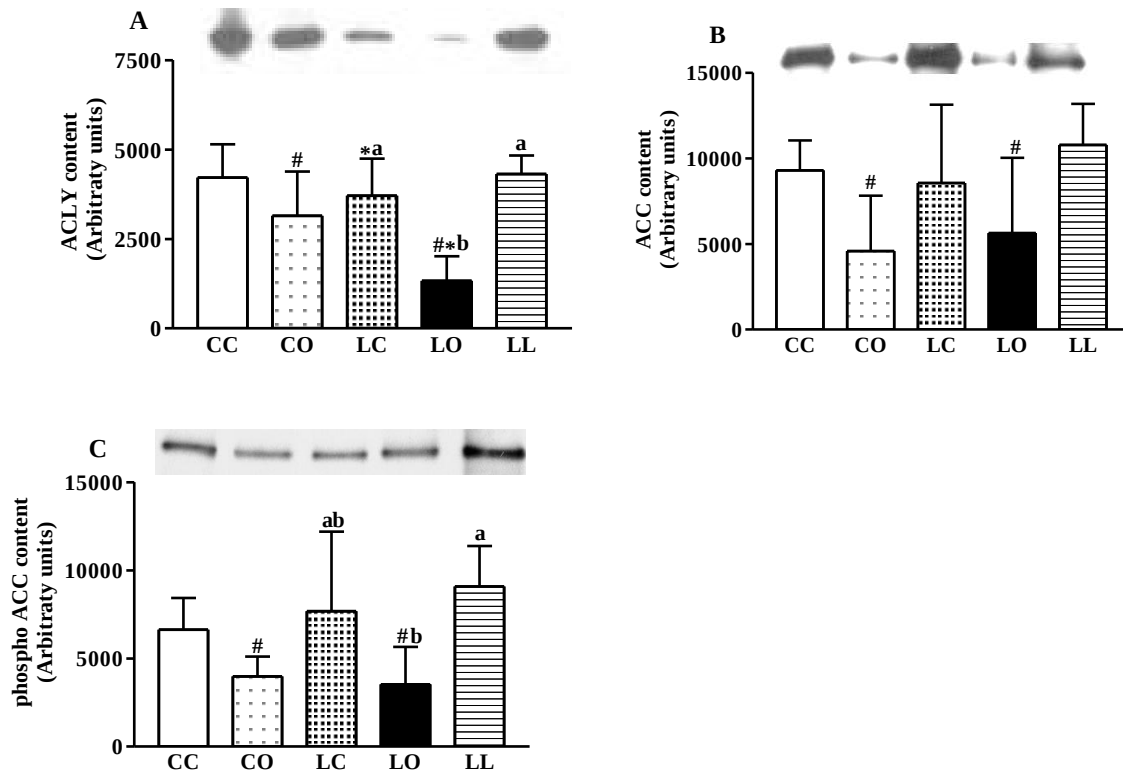


Figure 2. Representative western blots showing hepatic ACLY (A), ACC (B), phospho-ACC (C). Data are expressed as mean $\pm$ SD of three to four rats per treatment group. Means with different superscript lowercase letters are significantly different by one-way ANOVA followed by LSD test ($p < 0.05$). *indicates the difference between nutritional states, and # indicates the difference between diets.