ICRU Report 86: A Consideration of Low-Dose Metrics

Leslie A Braby\(^1\) and Barry D Michael\(^2\)

\(^1\)Texas A&M University, Texas, USA

\(^2\)University of Oxford, Gray Institute for Radiation Oncology and Biology, Oxford, UK
ICRU REPORT 86
Quantification and Reporting of Low-Dose and other Heterogeneous Exposures
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   Low Dose Radiation Research Program
Background to the report

- Work on the report was stimulated by observations from laboratory studies that certain low-dose radiobiological responses were influenced by the proportions of hit and non-hit cells.
- Some low-dose effects involving cell signalling show appreciable non-linear dose-effect behaviour (“non-targeted effects”).

See also at IRPA13:

- **TS1a.6** Possible Consequences of Inhomogeneous Sub-organ Distribution of Dose and the Linear No-Threshold Dose-Effect Relationship, Madas, BG*; Balásházy, I
- **TS11a.3** Emerging Issues in Radiation Protection of Biota – The Impact of Non-Targeted Radiobiological Effects, Mothersill, CE*; Smith, RW; Seymour, CB
Non-targeted effects of radiation

**Photobiology:** Wood & Hutchinson, 1984; Tyrrell, 1984. (Also “untargeted effects”)

**Radiation biology:** Ward, 2000

*Responses that are not initiated by direct energy deposition in nuclear DNA, or by indirect attack on it by primary radicals, such as •OH*
Classical (targeted) effects

DNA dsb \rightarrow \text{cell kill}

mutation
chromosomal damage
malignant transformation

Non-targeted effects

target/lesion? \rightarrow \text{bystander effects}

- cell kill
- mutation
- chromosomal damage
- malignant transformation
- genomic instability
- induced oxidative stress
- gene induction
- adaptive responses
BYSTANDER EFFECT

ADAPTIVE RESPONSE

GENOMIC INSTABILITY

Morgan, 2003

priming dose

test dose

dose (single)

low-dose hypersensitivity

effect

Ionizing Radiation

Cell Death
- Lethal Mutation
- Delayed Reproductive Cell Death

First Instability Event Occurs

Second Instability Event Occurs

Multiple "subpopulations" appear within a colony normally expanded from a single irradiated cell
Nagasawa and Little, 1992 *Cancer Res.* **52**, 6394-6396

- CHO cells irradiated with low doses of $\alpha$-particles
- $\leq 40\%$ of the cells showed sister chromatid exchanges
- Less than 1% were traversed by an $\alpha$-particle
- With X-rays, 1-2 Gy required to give similar response (RBE>100)
• Bystander effects include
  - cell kill
  - mutation
  - chromosomal damage
  - malignant transformation

• Other effects show a bystander-mediated component
  - genomic instability
  - adaptive responses
  - radiation-stimulated differentiation

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Quantification and Reporting of Low-Dose and other Heterogeneous Exposures

1. Introduction
2. Heterogeneity: Physical, Chemical and Biological Considerations
3. Radiation Exposure from Internally Deposited Radionuclides
4. Heterogeneous Energy Deposition from External Radiations
5. Heterogeneity Induced for Mechanistic Studies
6. Options for Characterising Energy Deposition
7. Recommendations
   Appendix: Examples of Recommended Approaches to Specifying and Reporting Irradiations
Heterogeneity: Physical, Chemical and Biological Considerations

- Heterogeneity of Energy Deposition by Particles
- Heterogeneity in Starting Points of Tracks
- Dimensions of Chemical and Biological Targets Relevant to Heterogeneity
- Heterogeneity Related to Low-Level Irradiation
- Biological and Physical Observations Suggesting a Need for Alternative Descriptions of Radiation Exposure
Radiation Exposure from Internally Deposited Radionuclides

- Sources of Incorporated Radionuclides
- Heterogeneity of Energy Deposition
- Radiobiological Use of Incorporated Radionuclides
- Heterogeneity from Internally Deposited Radionuclides Used for Clinical Diagnosis
- Internally Deposited Radionuclides for Therapy.
Heterogeneous Energy Deposition from External Radiations

- Tracks from High-Z, High-Energy Particles
- HZE Environment in Space
- Characteristics of Accelerator-Based HZE-Particle Irradiations
- Neutron-Capture Therapy
- Photon Microplanar Radiation Therapy Research
- Medical Applications of Ion Beams
Heterogeneity Induced for Mechanistic Studies

• Broad-Beam and Stripe-Filter Techniques
• Microbeam Exposures
• Incorporated Radionuclides
• Photon-Induced Auger Effect
• Summary of Irradiations with External Beams and Incorporated Radionuclides
Options for Characterising Energy Deposition

- Absorbed dose
- Energy imparted per event
- Radiometric quantities
Absorbed dose

**Exposure:** ionisation in air (ICRU, 1928)

**“Energy units”:** a measure of the energy imparted (Zimmer, 1938; Gray and Read, 1939)

**Absorbed dose:** mean energy imparted per mass at a point (ICRU, 1954; 1962; Taylor, 1958)

\[ D = \frac{dE}{dm} \]

Use in radiation protection requires a system of radiation quality and weighting factors

Use in radiotherapy requires a different system of factors to allow for fractionation, time, tissue type and radiation quality, generally based on L-Q formalism

+ Can be measured directly by calorimetry
+ Wide selection of measurement techniques
+ Can be used for low-dose/low-dose-rate, also heterogeneous irradiations if extra information is provided
- Does not describe interactions; inadequate for mixed fields
- “Low” dose values suggest doses are low in all targets – this may be erroneous
Energy imparted per event

\[
\text{lineal energy} \quad y = \frac{\varepsilon_s}{l}
\]

\[
\text{specific energy} \quad z = \frac{\varepsilon}{m}
\]

+ Ready-to-operate systems that measure probability density, \( f(y) \)
+ \( y \) and \( n \) can be measured in nearly any radiation field
+ Possible to determine proportions of sites with different \( n \), also the event rate in sites with multiple hits
+ Useful for characterizing fields with two or more types of radiation present
- Requires the use of multiple site geometries to predict biological effect
- Limited range and number of site sizes that can be employed
- Not possible to unambiguously unfold particle ranges and velocities from the measured spectra
Radiometric quantities

Energy distribution of particle radiance

\[ \Phi_{\Omega,E} = \frac{\text{d} \Phi_{\Omega}}{\text{d}E} \]

Descriptor of field either at the source or at point in receptor

Transport and track structure calculations required to determine products in receptor

Must specify particle type(s) – different particles of same LET have different effects

+ Relates directly to proposal for risk cross section – e.g., in space

+ Fluence and fluence rate relate directly to dose and dose rate

- Problematic to calculate products from fluence
  
  (a) use of analytic transport equations only suits simple products
  
  (b) use of MC hampered by poor knowledge of cross sections, e.g., of ionisation and excitation in condensed media
Recommendations

The first priority is to describe the irradiation, the irradiated object and its environment so that the conditions can be reproduced exactly.

The most complete description of the radiation field is the energy distribution of particle radiance as a function of particle type and of time, $\Phi_{\Omega,E,Z_p,m_p,t}$.

Together with information about the geometry and composition of the target, this can in principle, be used to calculate any interaction between the radiation and the target.

The radiation spectrum can be easily characterised in certain cases, e.g., orthovoltage x-ray sources and radioisotopes with well known emission spectra.

In microdosimetric measurements using a TEPC and in mixed fields it is preferable to use a range of simulated site sizes. However, the measurements do not provide information on the angular distributions or the energies of the incident particles.
### Recommendations

Table 7.1. Appropriate descriptive quantities for radiation exposure in different situations.

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<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Additional specifications</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heterogeneous radiation</td>
<td>Low-fluence particle beam</td>
<td>$\phi_{x,y,m_1}$</td>
<td>Reference position</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characterized (isotropic or parallel-beam) geometry</td>
<td>Charged particles from an accelerator</td>
<td>$\phi_{x,y,m_2}$</td>
<td>Reference position</td>
<td>Isotopic field or parallel beam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncharacterized field</td>
<td>Secondary radiation around a high-energy accelerator</td>
<td>$f(y)$</td>
<td>Temporal distribution</td>
<td>Limited to measurement point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homogeneous irradiation (high dose)</td>
<td>Radiation-therapy beam</td>
<td>$D$</td>
<td>Temporal distribution</td>
<td>Limited to measurement point</td>
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