



## Review Article

### Bats Oxidative Stress Defense (Pertahanan Stres Oksidatif pada Kelelawar)

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#### Abstract

*Antioxidants and free radicals have long been known to be the main factors in the occurrence of degenerative diseases. Various studies related to antioxidants and free radicals which have implications for oxidative stress have increased in the last decade. Knowledge of stress oxidative physiology in various animals help in understanding the pathophysiology of diseases associated with oxidative stress. Bats are claimed to be the best known animals in term of survival compared to other mammals. Bats are reported to produce low reactive oxygen species (ROS) but high endogenous antioxidants that can prevent oxidative stress. Bats high defense against oxidative stress has implications for their extreme longevity, the role as a reservoir of viruses, and the potential as experimental animals.*

**Key words:** aging, animal model, antioxidant, comparative physiology, free radical

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#### Introduction

Oxidative stress has been a scourge for the health world for more than three decades (Sies, 2015). Research on oxidative stress status related to disease pathogenesis is increasing every year. The knowledge of the oxidative stress process in the species other than human is very important in order to understand the process of oxidative stress associated with the homeostasis process. Bats are the most successful mammals regarding survival and have an outstanding defense mechanism against oxidative stress (Brunet-Rossinni & Austad, 2004; Hanadhita, Rahma, Prawira, Sismin Satyaningtyas, & Agungpriyono, 2018; Wang, Walker, & Poon, 2011; Wilhelm Filho, Althoff, Dafré, & Boveris, 2007). Bats are scattered all over the world with various latitude, climates, and habitats. There are 1240 species of bats in the world that represent more than 20% of mammal species (Calisher, Childs, Field, Holmes, & Schountz, 2006; Wang et al., 2011). Bats (Chiropteran order) is traditionally divided into two suborders based on their morphology, Megachiroptera which consists of frugivorous bats and distributed only in the old world, and Microchiroptera which includes of other bats and can be found both in the old world and new world (Simmons, 2000). Megachiropteran or megabats have a large body size (20-1500 grams), while Microchiroptera or microbats usually small-sized (1.5-150 grams) (Altringham, 2011). Classification of the taxonomy of bats based solely on morphology is no longer relevant, nowadays the order of Chiroptera consists of two suborders Yinpterochiroptera and Yangochiroptera (M. Lei & Dong, 2016; Teeling et al., 2005).

Yinpterochiroptera unites Pteropodidae families that do not have echolocation ability with the Rhinolophoidea family that has excellent echolocation abilities (M. Lei & Dong, 2016).

Bats, as the only flying mammal, experience a daily metabolic surge of up to 10-17 times (O'Shea et al., 2014). As stated in the free radical theory of aging, high metabolic rate will induce high free radicals production. High amounts of free radicals that are not balanced by antioxidants neutralization can cause damage to several cells components such as lipids, proteins, and DNA and often lead to cancer and degenerative diseases (Buffenstein, Edrey, Yang, & Mele, 2008; Harman, 2006). However, bats have a unique mechanism for preventing oxidative stress. This paper will discuss the uniqueness of oxidative stress defenses in bats and their implications for their life history.

## Oxidative Stress Defense of Bats

Bats have flying behavior to forage and roaming around the area from dusk to night (Basri et al., 2017; Hengjan et al., 2018). Bats have an extensive home range and can fly relatively far, up to hundreds of kilometers in one time (Breed, Field, Smith, Edmonston, & Meers, 2010; Hengjan et al., 2018; Norquay, Martinez-Nunez, Dubois, Monson, & Willis, 2013; Roberts, Catterall, Eby, & Kanowski, 2012). Large bat species such as the flying foxes can even travel between continents (Breed et al., 2010). Their flying behavior makes bats have experience with high metabolic spikes than same-sized terrestrial mammals (O'Shea et al., 2014).

In bats metabolism, energy production in the form of adenine triphosphate (ATP) also produces by-products in the form of reactive oxygen species (ROS) (Figure 1). Increased metabolic rate will have a direct impact on increasing ROS production. A radical form of ROS can cause damage to cellular components related to the aging process, degenerative diseases, and even cancer formation (Birben, Sahiner, Sackesen, Erzurum, & Kalayci, 2012; Buffenstein et al., 2008). Intracellular ROS is mainly produced by electron transport metabolism in the inner membrane of mitochondria. Besides, intracellular ROS comes from the metabolic processes of long fatty acids and proteins in peroxisomes and endoplasmic reticulum (ER), as well as other enzymes such as NADPH oxidase, xanthine oxidase, nitric oxide synthase, cyclooxygenase, cytochrome P450 enzymes, and lipoxygenase (Holmström & Finkel, 2014).

Despite high metabolism, bats are reported to have minimal adverse effects due to oxidative stress (Brunet-Rossinni, 2004; Brunet-Rossinni & Austad, 2004; Podlutzky, Khritankov, Ovodov, & Austad, 2005; Ungvari et al., 2008). Oxidative stress is a condition of imbalance between ROS and antioxidants which can be caused by a lack of antioxidants or too high ROS production (Birben et al., 2012). MDA is one of the metabolic products of lipid peroxidation by ROS (Figure 1). MDA is often used as a biological marker of stress oxidative (Grotto et al., 2009; Ho, Karimi Galougahi, Liu, Bhindi, & Figtree, 2013; Kwiecien et al., 2014; Wresdiyati et al., 2007). SOD is one of the endogenous antioxidant enzymes that function as superoxide ( $O_2^-$ ) scavenger.

Superoxide is one of radical ROS formed from electron transport. SOD along with other antioxidant enzymes such as catalase, glutathione peroxidases, and peroxiredoxins become common defenses to detoxify free radicals into less radical forms (Figure 1) (Fukai & Ushio-Fukai, 2011; X. G. Lei et al., 2016). Hanadhita et al. (2017) analyzed malonaldehyde (MDA) and superoxide dismutase (SOD) levels in the spleen and liver organ of the lesser short-nosed bat (*Cynopterus brachyotis*). *C. brachyotis* spleen was reported to have higher levels of MDA than liver, even though the liver is generally the largest ROS producing organ. These results are thought to be related to cellular activity in the spleen that might be associated with the active immune activity (Hanadhita, Rahma, et al., 2018). Comparison between liver and spleen levels

of MDA and SOD in *C. brachyotis* and *R. norvegicus* showed that *C. brachyotis* produced less MDA and SOD compared to *R. norvegicus* although *C. brachyotis* had a higher basal metabolism rate than *R. norvegicus* (Hanadhita, Rahma, Prawira, Satjaningtyas, & Agungpriyono, 2017). Other researchers have also reported low production of ROS by bats. Little Brown Bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) was reported produce less than half the amount of free radical per unit of oxygen consumed compared to the short-tailed shrew (*Blarina brevicauda*) and white-footed mice (*Peromyscus leucopus*) (Brunet-Rossinni, 2004). Ungvari et al. (2008) also stated that endothelial cells from the arteries of *M. lucifugus* generate fewer ROS and are more resistant to oxidative damage than *P. leucopus* cells. Study of comparison of the ROS releasement by the Big Brown Bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), and mice (*Mus musculus*) also shows that *E. fuscus* produce the lowest ROS up to 67% below the mice (Brown, McClelland, Faure, Klaiman, & Staples, 2009).

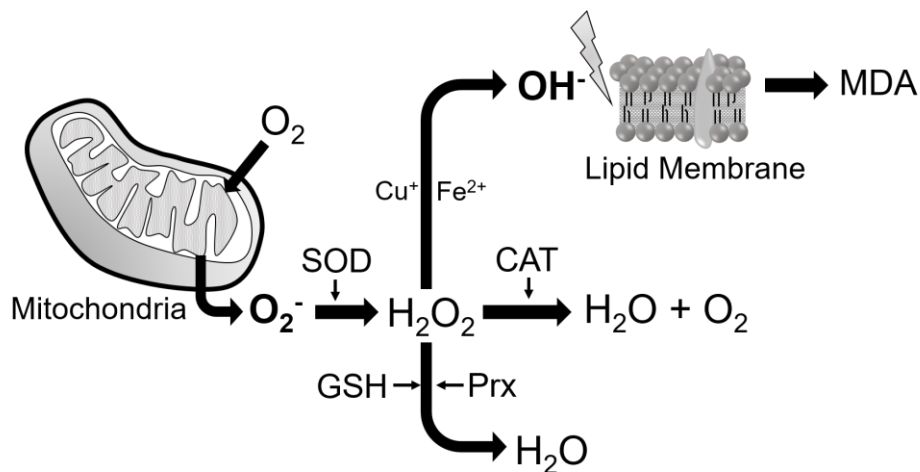


Figure 1 Production of reactive oxygen species (ROS) from cell respiration and antioxidants neutralization pathway. Superoxide ( $O_2^-$ ) produced by mitochondrial respiration, is converted to hydrogen peroxide ( $H_2O_2$ ) by superoxide dismutase (SOD).  $H_2O_2$  is converted by catalase (CAT), glutathione peroxidase (GSH), and peroxiredoxins (Prx).  $H_2O_2$  can be converted spontaneously to hydroxyl radical ( $OH^-$ ) when interacting with reduced transition metal ( $Cu^+ / Fe^{2+}$ ).  $OH^-$  is very radical and can oxidize cells lipid membranes and produce secondary metabolites such as aldehyde and malondialdehyde (MDA) (modified from Fukai and Ushio-Fukai 2011; X. G. Lei *et al.* 2016).

Besides producing low ROS, bats are reported to bring high endogenous antioxidants. Bats deliver endogenous antioxidants such as SOD, glutathione peroxidases, catalase,  $\alpha$ -tocopherol, and  $\beta$ -carotene that are higher than sheep, rats, and mice (Filho, Althoff, Dafré, & Boveris, 2007; Reinke & O'Brien, 2006). The high yield of endogenous antioxidants protects red blood cells from oxidative damage that might occur when flying (Reinke & O'Brien, 2006). One species of bat, white bat Honduran (*Ectophylla alba*), has a unique ability which is not found in other mammals. They can store carotenoid antioxidants on its skin. Therefore it appears as a bright yellow color (Galván et al., 2016).

Low production of ROS in bats is a result of mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) evolution that prevents oxidative stress. Bats mitochondrial genes that play a significant role in energy metabolism (e.g., cytochrome B and oxidative phosphorylation gene) experience adaptive evolution with a high evolutionary rate compared to other mammals. Bats also have a low mtDNA mutation rate which allows low ROS production (Nabholz, Glémin, & Galtier, 2008). The concentration of bats endogenous antioxidant was closely related to hibernation and feeding habits. Hibernating bats have higher antioxidants than non-hibernating bats (Yin et al., 2016) and frugivorous bats have the highest antioxidants followed by omnivorous and

animalivorous species (Schneeberger, Czirják, & Voigt, 2014). Redox status balance between free radicals and antioxidants is essential to prevent a surge in oxidative stress levels (Birben et al., 2012). Low generation of free radicals and high production of antioxidants are two critical powers of bats in fighting against oxidative stress.

## Implications of Stress Oxidative Defense

### Extreme Longevity

The disposable soma theory at the cellular levels predicts that cellular maintenance and repair processes will directly impact longevity (Thomas B L Kirkwood & Austad, 2000). This factor can be related to the mitochondria function that produces fewer free radicals, or the body produces or acquires more antioxidants, which of these two factors occur in bats (Harman, 2006; T. B.L. Kirkwood, 1989; Thomas B L Kirkwood & Austad, 2000). Bats have 3-10 times greater lifespan than other mammals with similar size (Table 1) (Ball, levari-Shariati, Cooper, & Aliani, 2018; Podlutzky et al., 2005; Wilkinson & South, 2002). The most extended lifespan reported in *Myotis brandtii* with recorded longevity for more than 40 years (Podlutzky et al., 2005). Hibernation behavior that has an impact on increasing endogenous antioxidant production and minimal production of ROS seems to have implications for the long lifespan of bats (Podlutzky et al., 2005; Yin et al., 2016). However, homeothermic bats that do not have the habit of hibernation also have a longer life than same sized mammals (Jürgens & Prothero, 1987; Wilkinson & South, 2002). Extreme survival compared to other mammals with the same body size makes bats placed above the regression line in studies that link body mass and durability in mammals and birds (Healy et al., 2014).

Table 1 The maximum lifespan of bats

Bats Species	Maximum Lifespan (years)	Reference
<i>Plecotus auritus</i> <sup>1</sup>	> 30	Wilkinson & South, (2002)
<i>Myotis lucifugus</i> <sup>1</sup>	> 30	Wilkinson & South, (2002)
<i>Rhinolopus ferrumequinum</i> <sup>1</sup>	> 30	Wilkinson & South, (2002)
<i>Pteropus giganteus</i> <sup>2</sup>	>30	Wilkinson & South, (2002)
<i>Myotis brandtii</i> <sup>1</sup>	>40	Podlutzky et al. (2005)

<sup>1</sup>Heterothermic <sup>2</sup>Homeothermic

### Bats as Reservoir Virus

Bats have been known to be a reservoir of various viruses that are harmful to humans but not damaging to bats (Anindita et al., 2015; Dharmayanti & Sendow, 2015; Kobayashi et al., 2015; Sasaki et al., 2016, 2014, 2012, Sendow et al., 2010, 2013; Wada et al., 2018). Bats have a unique immune component that prevents damage due to viral infections (Hanadhita, Satyaningtijas, & Agungpriyono, 2018; Pavlovich et al., 2018; Schountz, Baker, Butler, & Munster, 2017). The high production of antioxidants in bats can also support their resistance to viruses. Antioxidants treatment can significantly reduce replication of flavivirus in vitro studies (Gullberg, Steel, Moon, Soltani, & Geiss, 2015). An understanding of oxidative stress status in bats can help reveal the pattern of transmission of the virus from bats to other vulnerable hosts. Exposure to toxins, ectoparasites, weather changes, and physiological cycles can interfere with bat oxidative homeostasis and result in oxidative stress (Lilley et al., 2013; Oliveira et al., 2018; Ruiz, Eeva, Kanerva, Blomberg, & Lilley, 2019). The use of pesticides (e.g., Deltamethrin) on fruit plantations impacts the increase in stress oxidative markers in fruit bats (Oliveira et al., 2018). Heavy metal contamination in bat habitat also impact on decreasing endogenous antioxidants and increasing ROS in bats (Ruiz et al., 2019). Stress on bats due to the infection of white-nose syndrome, which is highly pathogenic to bats, can causes increased viral replication and viral shedding from bats (Davy et al., 2018). Environmental stressors and

changes in the ecological habitat of bats may have a contribution to the spread of the virus and the incidence of zoonotic outbreaks.

### The Potential Use as Animal Model

The bat's barrier to oxidative damage can be used as creature models of various degenerative diseases, including cardiovascular degeneration (Ungvari et al., 2008). Induction of oxidative stressors against animal models often increases cancer risk. Wang et al. (2011) have conducted extensive research to identify the presence of tumors in bats on the Australia, Asia, and Africa continent then failed to find cancer incidence. It is suspected that the bat's mitochondrial defense against oxidative damage results in a decrease of cancer cells formation. *E. alba*, the only mammal that can store carotenoids, has the potential to be an animal model for the study of macular degeneration therapy in humans (Galván et al., 2016).

Bats can be maintained in captivity despite the need for long acclimatization (Crichton & Krutzsch, 2000). The breeding of bats in captivity is difficult, although it is not impossible (Brunet-Rossinni & Austad, 2004). In vitro experiments using cell lines from bats have also been developed by several researchers. Cramer et al. (2009) have established a method for making cell lines from various bat organs *Pteropus alecto* which is expected to be applied to other bat species. Commercial bats cell line Tb 1 Lu (ATCC® CCL-88TM) has also been available and accessible for interested researchers.

### Conclusion

Bats produce low free radicals but high antioxidants which allow them to be resistant to oxidative stress. High resistance to oxidative stress has implications for their long lifespan, role as reservoir virus, and potential as animal models. The mechanism of bat's resistance on oxidative stress is expected in understanding the pathophysiology of degenerative diseases, aging processes, and zoonotic diseases originating from bats.

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