

# Chapter 3

## Regulation of HSF Activation and Repression

Eiichi Takaki and Akira Nakai

**Abstract** Heat shock response (HSR) is characterized by robust induction of heat shock proteins (HSPs) during heat shock and is regulated mainly at the level of transcription by heat shock factor (HSF). Preexisting inert HSF monomers undergo conformational change to form trimers that bind to DNA and to acquire transcriptional activity during heat shock and other stimuli. These two steps are separated processes and are induced by release from feedback repression by HSPs, direct effects of stimuli, posttranslational modifications, and others. Basal activity of HSF is also regulated in unstressed conditions. In this chapter, we review molecular mechanisms of activation and repression of HSF and describe stimuli that activate HSF by controlling these mechanisms.

**Keywords** Conformational change • Feedback repression • Posttranslational modification • Small compound • Transcriptional activity • Trimerization

### 3.1 Introduction

Eukaryotic cells respond to elevated temperatures by a rapid increase in the synthesis of heat shock proteins (HSPs) that facilitate protein folding and non-HSP proteins with diverse functions including protein degradation (Lindquist 1986; Richter et al. 2010). This adaptive response called as the heat shock response (HSR) is regulated mainly at the transcriptional level by heat shock factor (HSF), which is conserved in all eukaryotic species (Wu 1995; Morimoto 1998). HSF preexists mostly as an inert state in unstressed cells and is converted quickly to an active state to induce the heat shock genes including *HSP* genes during heat shock. HSF is also activated at different levels by a variety of environmental and pathophysiological stresses. Thus, regulation of HSF activity plays a pivotal role in controlling proteostasis capacity in a cell (Balch et al. 2008; Morimoto 2011; Wolff et al. 2014; Hipp et al. 2014).

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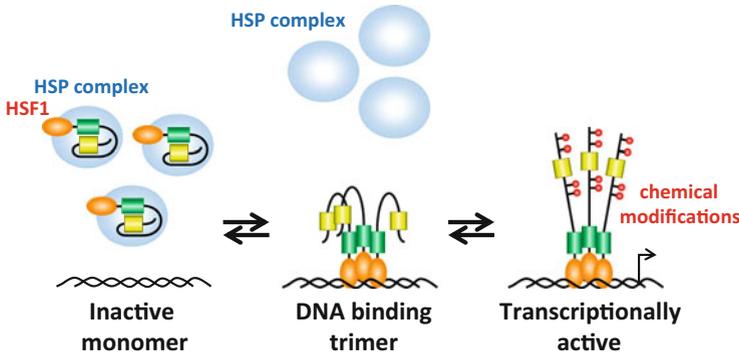
A single HSF exists in yeast, fly, and worm, while vertebrate cells possess four HSFs (HSF1 to HSF4). Among them, HSF1 is a master regulator of the HSP expression during heat shock in mammalian cells (Akerfelt et al. 2010; Fujimoto and Nakai 2010). In this chapter, we principally describe molecular mechanisms of activation and repression of orthologs of mammalian HSF1 and summarize stimuli that activate them.

### 3.2 Trimer Formation and the Acquisition of Transcriptional Activity

HSF in budding yeasts constitutively forms a trimer that binds to the HSE (Sorger et al. 1987). Heat shock induces extensive phosphorylation of HSF, which is correlated with the transcriptional activation of *HSP* genes (Sorger and Pelham 1988). It turned out that this hyperphosphorylation serves as a regulatory mechanism to deactivate HSF, rather than being involved in its activation (Høj and Jakobsen 1994). However, these observations indicate that the trimerized HSF should be modified to acquire potent transcriptional activity during heat shock.

Mammalian HSF1 and HSF in fission yeast *Schizosaccharomyces pombe* and *Drosophila* stay mostly as an inactive monomer and are converted to a DNA-binding trimer upon heat shock (Gallo et al. 1991; Clos et al. 1990; Sarge et al. 1991, 1993; Baler et al. 1993). However, the acquisition of the DNA-binding activity is not sufficient for HSF1 to activate *HSP70* gene in some cell lines such as murine erythroleukemia (MEL) and human Y79 retinoblastoma cells (Hensold et al. 1990; Mathur et al. 1994). Furthermore, treatment of human cells with sodium salicylate, an anti-inflammatory agent, induces the DNA-binding activity of HSF1 and its occupancy on *HSP70* promoter in vivo. Nevertheless, sodium salicylate does not induce the transcription of *HSP70* gene (Jurivich et al. 1992, 1995). It also induces the DNA binding of *Drosophila* HSF and puff formation in the polytene chromosomes, but does not induce the transcription of *HSP70* gene (Winegarden et al. 1996). These observations indicate that the trimer formation of HSF1 and its acquisition of transcriptional activity are separated processes (Fig. 3.1).

Mammalian HSF1, like yeast HSF, is hyperphosphorylated upon heat shock. Human HSF1 isolated from heat-shocked cells is more extensively phosphorylated than HSF1 activated in vitro, suggesting that the hyperphosphorylation is associated with transcriptional activity of HSF1 (Larson et al. 1988). However, it is dispensable for the acquisition of the transcriptional activity (Newton et al. 1996; Budzyński et al. 2015). Rather, specific residues in HSF1 are covalently modified by thiol oxidation, sumoylation, and acetylation as well as phosphorylation (Björk and Sistonen 2010). Therefore, HSF1 activation including the acquisition of transcriptional activity should be regulated multistep modifications as described below (see Sect. 3.5).



**Fig. 3.1** HSF1 activation involves two distinct steps. Metazoan HSF1 stays as an inactive monomer by binding to chaperone machineries (*HSP complex*). It is converted to a DNA-binding trimer upon heat shock and then acquires transcriptional activity by unmasking the activation domain. DNA-binding domain (*orange circle*) and hydrophobic heptad repeats, HR-A/B (*green box*) and HR-C (*yellow box*), are shown (see Chap. 2). Chemical modifications are indicated by flags (*red*)

### 3.3 Release from Feedback Repression by HSPs

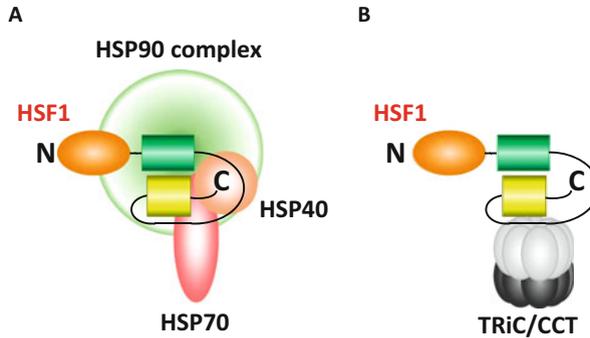
HSR or the accumulation of HSPs is quantitatively related to the degree of heat stress such as heating temperature and duration. How do cells sense these changes in the severity of temperature upshift? The concept that the free pool of HSP70 and other chaperones serves as a cellular sensor or a thermometer that regulates the HSR has been proposed for a long time (Craig and Gross 1991). Lindquist group originally showed that HSP70 expression was proportional to the degree of stress in *Drosophila* cells, and the elevated expression of HSP70 continued when the accumulation of functional HSP70 is blocked (DiDomenico et al. 1982). The bacterium *E. coli* harboring DnaK (HSP70 homolog) mutation failed to turn off the HSR (Tilly et al. 1983). Furthermore, yeast *S. cerevisiae* expressed a high level of HSP90 or activity of the heat shock element (HSE)-driven reporter at normal growth temperature when two *HSP70* genes were mutated (Craig and Jacobsen 1984; Boorstein and Craig 1990). These observations suggest that HSP70 acts as a negative regulator of the HSR.

In *E. coli*, *HSP* genes are under the control of the  $\sigma^{32}$  transcription factor, whose level and activity increase during heat shock (Straus et al. 1989; Tilly et al. 1989). DnaK functions as molecular chaperone in cooperation with DnaJ (HSP40 homolog) and GrpE (HSP110 homolog, a nucleotide exchange factor). As was expected, strains carrying mutations in DnaJ and GrpE as well as DnaK enhanced the synthesis of HSPs at normal growth temperature and failed to shut off the HSR, in part by increased synthesis and stabilization of  $\sigma^{32}$  (Straus et al. 1990). Furthermore, the overexpression of DnaK and DnaJ reduced not only the level of  $\sigma^{32}$  but

also its activity in response to heat shock (Tomoyasu et al. 1998). Thus, the amount of functional DnaK (HSP70) chaperone machinery provides tight control of the level and activity of the  $\sigma^{32}$  transcription factor. The GroEL/S chaperonin also controls the  $\sigma^{32}$  and HSR (Guisbert et al. 2004, 2008).

In mammalian cells, the activity of HSF1 and transcription level of *HSP70* gene are linked to the accumulation of proteins denatured by heat shock. When human HeLa cells grown at 37 °C were exposed to continued heat shocked at 42 °C, HSF1 was modestly activated and attenuated soon. In contrast, the high level of HSF1 activation continued when cells were heat shocked at 43 °C (Abravaya et al. 1991). Furthermore, the threshold temperature for HSF1 activation was decreased when cells were treated with an inhibitor of the synthesis of nascent polypeptides, which consist of major nonfolded proteins present in cells (Baler et al. 1992). Taken together with the fact that HSF1 interacted with HSP70, a product of its target gene, it was suggested that HSP70 acts as an autoregulatory factor of the HSR (Abravaya et al. 1992; Baler et al. 1992).

To understand molecular mechanisms of the autoregulation by HSP70, profiles of HSF1 activation and deactivation were monitored in cells overexpressing HSP70. The acquisition of the DNA-binding activity of HSF1 during heat shock was reduced in human T-cell leukemia cell line by the overexpression of HSP70 (Mosser et al. 1993), whereas it was not affected in rat fibroblasts at all (Rabindran et al. 1994; Kim et al. 1995). Rather, the shutdown of the DNA-binding activity during recovery period was accelerated in common in these cells. Morimoto group analyzed the mechanism in more detail and revealed that HSP70 and HSP40 (HDJ1) interact with the C-terminal activation domain of HSF1 and negatively regulate its transcriptional activity in vivo during attenuation of the HSR (Shi et al. 1998). HSP90 also interacts with HSF1 (Nadeau et al. 1993; Nair et al. 1996), suggesting its inhibitory role in the HSR. Using in vitro HSF1 activation system, Voellmy group found that the treatment of cells with geldanamycin, an inhibitor of HSP90, induced the DNA-binding activity of HSF1 in vitro and demonstrated that HSP90 inhibited the acquisition of the DNA-binding activity in vitro, but HSP70 did not (Zou et al. 1998a). It is proposed later that the HSP90 chaperone machinery including p23 and FKBP52 binds to the regulatory domain of HSF1 and negatively regulates both the monomer-to-trimer transition of HSF1 and its transcriptional activity (Ali et al. 1998; Duina et al. 1998; Bharadwaj et al. 1999; Guo et al. 2001). Analysis in *Drosophila* cells further shows that the synergistic interaction of HSP70 and HSP90 chaperone machineries modulates HSF activity by feedback repression (Marchler and Wu 2001) (Fig. 3.2). Moreover, TRiC/CCT chaperonin complex also interacts and represses the activity of HSF1 (Neef et al. 2014). Taken together, HSF1 is activated by the release from feedback repression by chaperone machineries during heat shock, and the activated HSF1 is subsequently repressed by the increased free pool of chaperones during recovery period.



**Fig. 3.2** HSF1 is maintained as an inactive state by chaperone machineries. (a) HSP90 chaperone machinery including p23 and FKBP52 binds to the regulatory domain of HSF1, while HSP70 chaperone machinery containing HSP40 interacts with the C-terminal activation domain. These chaperone machineries may cooperatively inhibit the trimerization of HSF1 and suppress its transcriptional activity. (b) Chaperonin TRiC/CCT also binds to HSF1 and represses its activity

### 3.4 HSF Directly Senses Heat and Stimuli

After the development of a cell-free system that exhibits heat-induced activation of human HSF1 *in vitro* (Larson et al. 1988), signaling pathways that induce the DNA-binding activity have been extensively studied. The DNA-binding activity of human HSF1 in unstressed HeLa cytoplasmic extract was induced *in vitro* not only by heat shock but also by low pH (pH 6.0), Nonidet P-40, and urea, which affected protein conformation (Mosser et al. 1990). The *in vitro* HSF1 activation by these reagents was inhibited by glycerol, which stabilized protein structure. Furthermore, the treatment of *Drosophila* SL2 cytoplasmic extract with polyclonal antiserum against *Drosophila* HSF also induced the HSF DNA-binding activity *in vitro* (Zimarino et al. 1990). These observations suggest that HSF1 or HSF can be activated directly by undergoing a conformational change, without a covalent modification of protein.

Does purified HSF undergo a conformational change in response to heat? Kingston group purified *in vitro* heat-activated human HSF1 in the HeLa cytoplasmic extract by using an HSE oligonucleotide affinity column and deactivated it by denaturation using guanidine and subsequent renaturation (Larson et al. 1995). They showed that the DNA-binding activity of purified HSF1 was induced by heat shock, and the acquisition of its DNA-binding activity is accompanied with a monomer-to-trimer transition of oligomeric structure, like that in heat-shocked HeLa cells. Mouse HSF1 synthesized in *E. coli* was purified, and its DNA-binding activity was also induced *in vitro* by heat shock (Goodson and Sarge 1995; Farkas et al. 1998). These observations demonstrate that HSF1 can directly sense temperature upshift. Wu group carefully analyzed kinetics of the dissociation of

*Drosophila* HSF trimer (Zhong et al. 1998). They infected a baculovirus overexpressing *Drosophila* HSF into insect Sf9 cells and purified it (bac-HSF). A high concentration of bac-HSF solution contained predominantly trimers, which dissociated to monomers when the solution was diluted. The population of trimers reversed upon reconcentration. Furthermore, the dissociation of bac-HSF trimers was inhibited by heat, H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>, and low pH, but not by 2,4-dinitrophenol, ethanol, arsenite, indomethacin, and salicylate, which induce HSF trimerization in intact cells (Zhong et al. 1998, 1999). Thus, some inducers of the HSR act directly to HSF, while others do indirectly.

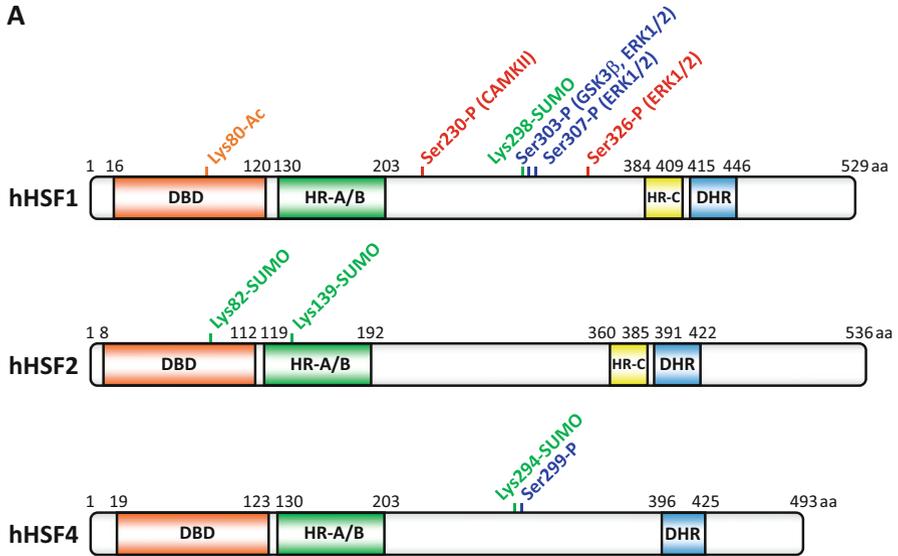
## 3.5 Posttranslational Modifications

### 3.5.1 Phosphorylation

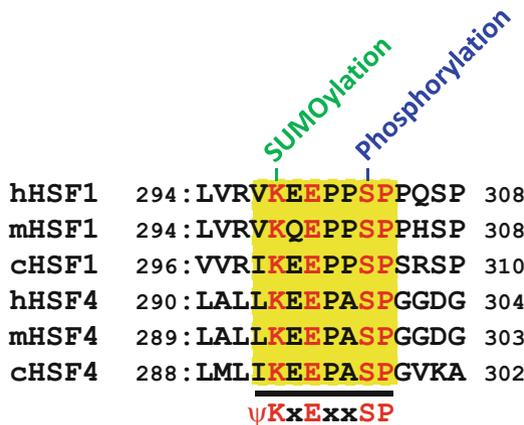
When cells are heat shocked, an apparent molecular weight of mammalian HSF1 on SDS-polyacrylamide gel dramatically increases due to multisite phosphorylation, which is called as hyperphosphorylation (Sorger et al. 1987; Larson et al. 1988; Sarge et al. 1993; Baler et al. 1993). HSF1 becomes hyperphosphorylated by heat shock, heavy metals, and amino acid analogs, but not by anti-inflammatory drugs that induce trimerization but not transcriptional activity (Cotto et al. 1996). Thus, the acquisition of transcriptional activity of HSF1 is generally correlated with its hyperphosphorylation. However, mutation analyses of multi-phosphorylation sites in HSF1 show that the hyperphosphorylation is not necessary for HSF1 to acquire full transcriptional activity during heat shock (Newton et al. 1996; Budzyński et al. 2015). It would be possible that the hyperphosphorylation facilitates dissociation of active HSF1 trimers during recovery period (Xia and Voellmy 1997).

Is there a specific phosphorylation site that promotes HSF1 transcriptional activity? Sistonen group identified that Ser230 was constitutively and stress-inducibly phosphorylated by calcium/calmodulin-dependent protein kinase II (CaMKII) (Holmberg et al. 2001) (Fig. 3.3). Phosphorylation of Ser230 and CaMKII enhanced HSF1 transcriptional activity in response heat shock. Voellmy group carried out an alanine scan of all serines, threonines, and tyrosines in human HSF1 using a reporter assay and also identified phosphorylation sites of exogenously expressed HSF1 in HeLa cells (Guettouche et al. 2005). They found that phosphorylation of only Ser326 contributed to HSF1 activation during heat shock. Phosphorylation on Ser326 increased rapidly during heat shock. It promoted the transcriptional activity of HSF1, but did not affect the DNA-binding activity. It turned out that Ser326 is phosphorylated by ERK1/2, and its phosphorylation promotes carcinogenesis (Dai et al. 2007, 2012). HSF1 activity may also be enhanced by polo-like kinase 1 (PLK1) and protein kinase A (PKA) during heat shock through phosphorylation of Ser216/419 and Ser320, respectively (Kim et al. 2005; Lee et al. 2008; Murshid et al. 2010).

**A**



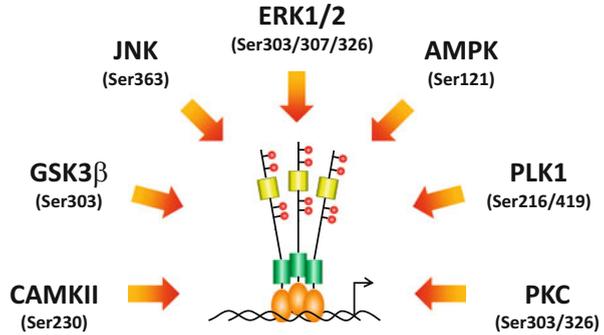
**B**



**Fig. 3.3** Posttranslational modification of HSF family members. (a) Major phosphorylation sites that activate HSF1 are shown in red, and those repress it are in blue. Protein kinases that phosphorylate each amino acid are indicated in parentheses. Acetylation sites (orange) and sumoylation sites (green) are also shown. (b) Phosphorylation-dependent sumoylation motif (PDSM) in HSF1 and HSF4. Amino acid sequences containing the PDSM motif (yellow box) in human, mouse, and chicken HSF1 and HSF4 are aligned, and a consensus sequence is indicated (ψ is acceptable for all hydrophobic amino acids). Numbers indicate position of amino acids

In unstressed condition, the regulatory domain represses activity of the C-terminal transcriptional activation domain of human HSF1 (a.a. 221–310) (Green et al. 1995). Ser303 and Ser307 in the regulatory domain of human HSF1 are constitutively phosphorylated, and phosphorylation of these sites is required for

**Fig. 3.4** HSF1 is phosphorylated by various kinases. Protein kinases that phosphorylate HSF1 and phosphorylation sites of each kinase are indicated (see text)



the repression of HSF1 transcriptional activity at control temperature (Knauf et al. 1996; Chu et al. 1996; Kline and Morimoto 1997). Ser307 is first phosphorylated by ERK1/2, and this modification is required for phosphorylation of Ser303 by glycogen synthase kinase 3 (GSK3) (Knauf et al. 1996; Chu et al. 1996). Ser303/307 not only regulates the transcriptional activity but also stability of HSF1. Phosphorylated Ser303/307 is recognized by an FBXW7 $\alpha$  ubiquitin ligase, which results in degradation of HSF1 (Kourtis et al. 2015). Regulation of Ser303/307 phosphorylation could modulate HSF1 activity in response to growth control signals.

Effects of protein kinases on HSF1 activity in unstressed condition are complex. GSK3 represses not only transcriptional activity of HSF1 but also the trimer formation by unknown mechanisms (Xavier et al. 2000). ERK1/2 represses the activity of HSF1 through phosphorylation of Ser307, but activates it through that of Ser326 as described above. Protein kinase C (PKC) and c-Jun N-terminal kinase (JNK) repress HSF1 activity through Ser363 phosphorylation (Chu et al. 1998; Dai et al. 2000), and AMP-activated protein kinase (AMPK) does so through Ser121 phosphorylation (Dai et al. 2015) (Fig. 3.4).

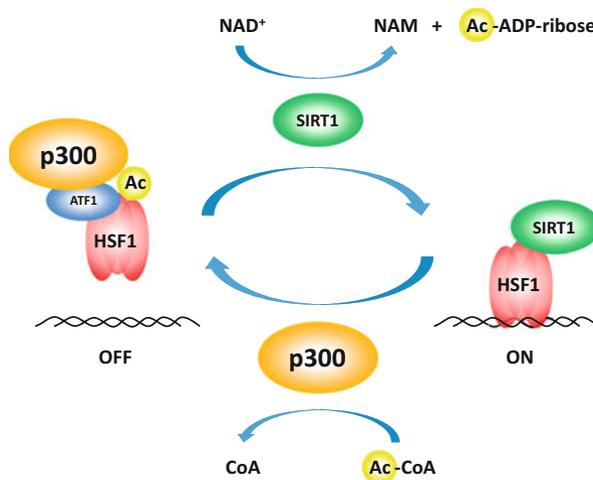
### 3.5.2 Sumoylation

Sarge group first found that HSF2, another member of the HSF family, interacted with the SUMO-conjugating (E2) enzyme Ubc9 (Goodson et al. 2001). They showed that HSF2 was constitutively modified by SUMO-1 at Lys82 in the DNA-binding domain, whereas HSF1 underwent heat shock-inducible SUMO-1 modification at Lys298 in the regulatory domain (Hong et al. 2001) (Fig. 3.3). Sistonen group further studied roles of sumoylation in HSF1 function and showed that phosphorylation of Ser303 was prerequisite for the sumoylation of Lys298 (Hietakangas et al. 2003). Phosphorylation of Ser303 in HSF1 is markedly induced during heat shock, which allows Lys298 to be inducibly modified by sumoylation. A motif combining a SUMO consensus site to an adjacent proline-directed

phosphorylation site is generally conserved in other factors including HSF4, GATA1, and MEF2 (Hietakangas et al. 2006) (Fig. 3.3). Sumoylation of Lys298 of HSF1 and Lys294 of HSF4 represses the transcriptional activity of these factors. Effects of sumoylation on the DNA-binding activity are unclear (Goodson et al. 2001; Hong et al. 2001; Anckar et al. 2006), but structural analysis at least demonstrates that SUMO attachment at Lys82 of HSF2 negatively modulates the formation of protein-DNA complex (Tateishi et al. 2009).

### 3.5.3 Acetylation

Stress resistance and metabolic regulation are coupled to protein homeostasis, and key regulatory factors for these mechanisms including HSF1 and a  $\text{NAD}^+$ -dependent lysine deacetylase SIRT1 are involved in lifespan extension in *C. elegans* (Hsu et al. 2003; Morley and Morimoto 2004). Therefore, Morimoto group examined the regulation of HSF1 by SIRT1 and found that HSF1 was inducible acetylated at Lys80 by p300 during heat shock, whereas it was deacetylated by SIRT1 (Westerheide et al. 2009) (Fig. 3.3). The HSF1-DNA complex dissociates by the acetylation of Lys80. Thus, SIRT1 inhibits the attenuation of the HSR, and p300 promotes it (Fig. 3.5). SIRT1 modulators also regulate HSF1 activity (Raynes



**Fig. 3.5** Acetylation and deacetylation of HSF1. HSF1 is largely deacetylated by SIRT1 in unstressed condition. SIRT1 cleaves  $\text{NAD}^+$  and produces nicotinamide (*NAM*). Simultaneously, the acetyl group is transferred from HSF1 to the ADP-ribose moiety of  $\text{NAD}^+$  to generate O-acetyl-ADP ribose. In response to heat shock, HSF1 binds to the DNA and recruits p300 in a manner that is dependent on ATF1. p300 acetylates HSF1 by transferring an acetyl group from acetyl CoA. Acetylated HSF1 dissociates from the DNA

et al. 2013). In some condition, acetylation by p300 may also control stability of HSF1 through proteasomal degradation (Raychaudhuri et al. 2014).

In general, chromatin-modifying enzymes such as lysine acetyltransferases are enriched in active genes and are correlated with gene expression in the whole genome (Wang et al. 2009). Previous studies suggested that p300, one of histone acetyltransferases, might promote heat-inducible HSP70 expression in *Xenopus* oocytes and mammalian cells (Li et al. 1998; Xu et al. 2008). Does p300 enhance heat shock-inducible expression of HSP70 or inhibit it by deactivating HSF1? Nakai group found that the HSF1-ATF1 complex promoted the recruitment of p300 to the HSP70 promoter during heat shock (Takii et al. 2015). Inhibition of p300 accumulation by disconnecting the interaction delayed the shutdown of HSF1 DNA-binding activity during recovery period, but did not affect histone acetylation on HSP70 promoter in MEF cells. Depletion of a *Drosophila* ortholog of p300 also inhibited only the shutdown of the HSR during recovery period (Ghosh et al. 2011). These observations indicate that p300 negatively regulates the HSR by inhibiting HSF1 activity through acetylation.

### 3.5.4 Thiol Oxidation

Human and mouse HSF1 possesses five cysteine residues, and redox-dependent regulation of HSF1 activity through these residues has been analyzed. Liu group first showed that trimerization of human HSF1 in the cytoplasmic extracts from HeLa cells during in vitro heat shock was inhibited by diamide, a reagent that promotes disulfide bond formation (Manalo and Liu 2001). Mutation of Cys36 and Cys103 in the DNA-binding domain did not affect sensitivity to diamide, while HSF1 having mutated Cys153 in the HR-A/B domain or Cys373/378 just upstream of the HR-C domain was insensitive to diamide (Manalo et al. 2002). They proposed from these in vitro studies that disulfide bond formation between Cys153 and Cys373 or Cys378 in HSF1 inhibited the trimerization during in vitro heat shock. Thiele group showed another mechanism of redox regulation. They showed that a purified mouse HSF1 underwent a monomer-to-trimer transition by heat and hydrogen peroxide (Ahn and Thiele 2003), like *Drosophila* HSF (Zhong et al. 1998). Mutation of Cys35 and Cys105 (Cys36 and Cys103 in human HSF1, respectively) in the DNA-binding domain inhibited the trimerization and acquisition of DNA-binding activity in vitro by heat shock and hydrogen peroxide. Furthermore, these HSF1 mutants were defective in heat-inducible trimerization and activation of *HSP* genes in vivo in cells (Ahn and Thiele 2003). The heat-induced bonding between Cys36 and Cys103 in human HSF1 may form an intermolecular disulfide bond and is required for trimerization (Lu et al. 2008).

## 3.6 Other Regulations

Many studies have been conducted to identify proteins interacting HSF1 and regulate its activity. Many of these proteins are involved in regulation of chromatin and HSF1 transcription complexes (see Chap. 4) and in feedback repression and chemical modifications as described above (see Sects. 3.3 and 3.5). We here explain roles of some other factors that regulate the trimerization and DNA-binding activity of HSF1.

CHIP (C-terminus of HSP70-interacting protein) is one of the co-chaperones for HSP70 chaperone machinery and also has ubiquitin ligase activity (Murata et al. 2003). It turned out that overexpression of CHIP, but not other co-chaperones, uniquely induced the HSF1 DNA-binding activity and expression of HSP70 (Dai et al. 2003). Furthermore, CHIP was required for maximal HSP70 induction in cells and tissues. CHIP seems to affect complex formation of HSF1 with chaperone machineries.

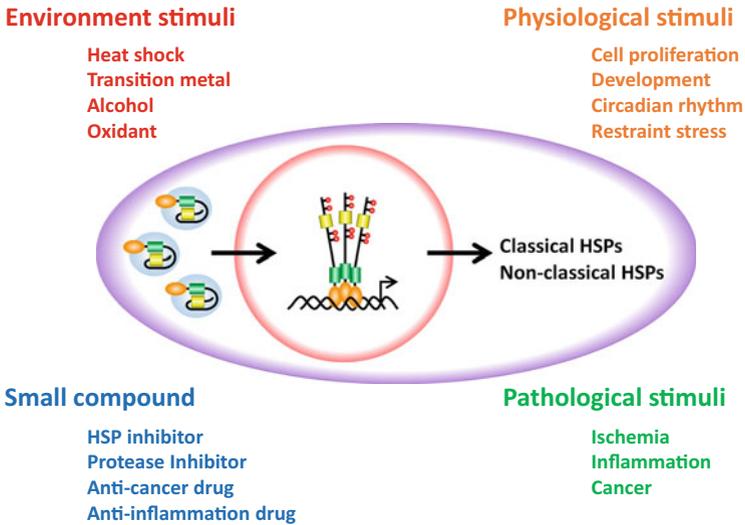
HSF1 activity is repressed by DAF-2 or an insulin/IGF-1-like signaling (ILS), which is one of the major regulatory pathways for longevity in *C. elegans* (Hsu et al. 2003; Morley and Morimoto 2004). DDL-1 and DDL-2 are also involved in longevity pathways and form a complex that interacts with and stabilizes HSF1 monomers (Chiang et al. 2012). Increased ILS signaling promotes the formation of this complex, whereas reduction of this signaling results in disruption of the complex and increase in the trimerization of HSF1.

Remarkably, it is proposed that a noncoding RNA regulates the trimerization and DNA-binding activity of HSF1. Nudler group identified a translation elongation factor eEF1A as one of HSF1-interacting proteins (Shamovsky et al. 2006). eEF1A induced the HSF1 DNA-binding activity by recruiting noncoding RNA consisting of ~600 nucleotides, termed as heat shock RNA-1 (HSR1). Both eEF1A and HSR1 were required for induction of the HSF1 DNA-binding activity in vitro and in vivo and for the expression of HSP70. eEF1A also promoted the HSR in part by enhancing the transcriptional activity of HSF1 and by binding to and stabilizing HSP70 mRNA (Vera et al. 2014).

## 3.7 HSF Activation by Diverse Stresses

### 3.7.1 *Environmental Stimuli*

HSR was originally detected as heat-induced puffs in *Drosophila*, and an identical set of puffs could be induced by other agents (Ritossa 1962). Inducers of the heat-induced puffs are inhibitors of oxidative phosphorylation and electron transport (azide, dinitrophenol, rotenone, valinomycin); an inducer of reactive oxygen species (ROS) (menadione), anoxia, and a thiol-reactive reagent (arsenite); and an inhibitor of the synthesis of inflammatory mediators (salicylate) (Ashburner and



**Fig. 3.6** HSF1 can be activated by diverse stimuli. Activity of HSF1 can be induced by environmental, physiological, and pathological stimuli or by the treatment with small compounds, which results in enhanced synthesis of HSPs

Bonner 1979). However, the synthesis of HSPs is not always induced in *Drosophila* and other species by these induces including oxidants and inhibitors of respiration. In mammalian and avian cells, the synthesis of HSPs is strongly induced by environmental stimuli such as heat shock, transition metals (copper, cadmium, zinc, and mercury), arsenite, and ethanol (Levinson et al. 1980; Johnston et al. 1980; Li 1983), which activate HSF1 (Fig. 3.6).

### 3.7.2 Physiological Stimuli

Activity of HSF1 is regulated during development. In *Drosophila*, the expression of HSPs is induced during development (Zimmerman et al. 1983) and is tightly correlated with the nuclear localization of HSF (Wang and Lindquist 1998). Regulation of HSF activity is complex in mammals because members of HSF family are involved in development (Abane and Mezger 2010) (see Chaps. 6, 7 and 8). Correlation between HSF1 activation and the induction of HSP expression during organogenesis have been shown. DNA-binding activity of HSF1 and the expression of HSPs were markedly induced in the pubertal olfactory epithelium, and HSF1 deficiency resulted in decreased expression of HSPs and impaired olfactory neurogenesis (Takaki et al. 2006). In response to the immunization of mice with sheep red blood cells, B cells proliferate in germinal center in the spleen. Simultaneously, HSF1 was activated and elevated the expression of HSPs (Inouye

et al. 2004). HSF1 deficiency impaired the proliferation of B cells in the germinal center. Mechanisms of HSF1 activation during early development and organogenesis are not known.

HSF1 is one of circadian transcription factors. Activated HSF1 induces the expression of HSPs at the onset of dark phase in mice, when they start to be behaviorally active (Reinke et al. 2008) (see Chap. 10). HSF1 is also activated *in vivo* by neurohormonal stimuli. Restraint stress or immobilization stress induced the HSP70 expression in the rat adrenal by activating HSF1 (Blake et al. 1991; Fawcett et al. 1994). Hypophysectomy prevented HSF1 activation, and administration of adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH) to hypophysectomized rats induced it. Thus, activity of HSF1 is under hormonal control *in vivo*.

### 3.7.3 Pathological Stimuli

The expression of HSPs in a tissue is markedly elevated under pathological conditions such as ischemia, trauma, and inflammation. It was shown that HSF1 in the cerebral neocortex was activated *in vivo* by focal cerebral ischemia, which was produced by occluding the middle cerebral and common carotid arteries in rats (Higashi et al. 1995). A high DNA-binding activity of HSF1 appeared soon after the ischemic treatment and then gradually decreased. HSF1 activation by ischemia and reperfusion was further monitored in isolated rat hearts (Nishizawa et al. 1996). Rat hearts were isolated and perfused with a buffer by the Langendorff method. In the ischemia/reperfusion experiments, isolated hearts were subjected to global ischemia by clamping the aortic cannula and then reperfused. HSF1 was slightly activated at 10 min and quickly attenuated, and reperfusion activated HSF1 again. Furthermore, repetitive ischemia/reperfusion induced a robust activation of HSF1, while its effect was inhibited in the presence of scavengers of reactive oxygen species (ROSs) (Nishizawa et al. 1999). Thus, ROSs may play an important role in the activation of HSF1 in organs by the ischemia/reperfusion injury.

Inflammation is caused by physical, chemical, infectious, and some immunological agents and is associated with increased production of various kinds of mediators (Polla et al. 1998) (see Chap. 9). Among them, proinflammatory cytokines including TNF- $\alpha$ , IL-1 $\alpha$ , and IL-6 activated HSF1 in synovial fibroblast-like cells (Schett et al. 1998). HSF1 activation by TNF- $\alpha$  may be in part due to the TNF- $\alpha$ -mediated induction of ROSs (Goossens et al. 1995). HSF1 is also activated by cyclopentenone prostaglandins (PGs) including PGA<sub>1</sub>, PGA<sub>2</sub>, and PGJ<sub>2</sub>, which possess anti-inflammatory, antitumor, and antiviral activities (Holbrook et al. 1992; Amici et al. 1992). These PGs exert biological effects in part through its reaction with cysteine residues of many cellular proteins (Straus and Glass 2001), which could then activate HSF1 (Santagata et al. 2012). Furthermore, a prostaglandin precursor, arachidonic acid, also activates HSF1 and induces the expression of HSPs (Jurivich et al. 1994).

HSF1 facilitates malignant transformation and cancer cell survival (Dai et al. 2007; Min et al. 2007). Protein level of HSF1 is elevated in some cancer cells (Hoang et al. 2000), and high levels of HSF1 is associated with poor prognosis in various cancers originating from the breast, colon, lung, prostate, and pancreas (Santagata et al. 2011; Mendillo et al. 2012). The upregulation of HSF1 in cancer cells is in part due to activation of mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK) signaling, which phosphorylates HSF1-Ser326 (Dai et al. 2012; Chuma et al. 2014) (see Chap. 13).

HSF1 inhibits progression of aging and age-related protein misfolding disease models (Hsu et al. 2003; Morley and Morimoto 2004; Fujimoto et al. 2005; Hayashida et al. 2010) (see Chap. 11). However, it is still unclear whether HSF1 is activated by the accumulation of misfolded proteins in the brain of protein misfolding diseases including polyglutamine diseases. HSF1 was not activated by aggregation-prone, polyglutamine-expanded fragments even in cells selected for the highest expression levels (Bersuker et al. 2013).

### 3.7.4 *Small Compounds*

HSF1 is activated by a variety of small compounds. Because HSF1 is usually repressed by chaperone machineries, compounds that inhibit chaperone activity may release HSF1 from the feedback repression. In fact, HSF1 is robustly activated when cells are treated with geldanamycin, a benzoquinone ansamycin antibiotic, that inhibits HSP90 function by binding to its ADP/ATP-binding pocket (Zou et al. 1998a, b). Geldanamycin and its derivatives including 17-allylamino-17-demethoxygeldanamycin (17-AAG) could be candidates of therapeutic drug for neurodegenerative disease and cancer (see Chap. 14). Geranylgeranylacetone (GGA), an acyclic polyisoprenoid, is known as an antiulcer drug and also induces the HSR (Hirakawa et al. 1996), in part by binding to HSP70 and disrupting the HSF1-HSP70 interaction (Otaka et al. 2007). Furthermore, HSF1 is activated by proteasome inhibitors including lactacystin and MG132 and amino acid analogs, azetidine, and canavanine (proline and arginine analogs, respectively), by inducing the accumulation of misfolded proteins in cells (Kelley and Schlesinger 1978; Kawazoe et al. 1998; Mathew et al. 1998; Pirkkala et al. 2000). Moreover, a lot of thiol-reactive compounds including natural product celastrol, a quinone methide triterpene, also activate HSF1 probably through modification of cysteines in cellular target proteins (Westerheide et al. 2004; Trott et al. 2008; Santagata et al. 2012). Bimoclolmol, a nontoxic hydroxylamine derivative, is a co-inducer of HSPs that elevates levels of HSPs under stress conditions (Víggh et al. 1997; Kieran et al. 2004), in part by binding to HSF1 complex directly (Hargitai et al. 2003). Furthermore, HSF1 is activated by anticancer drugs including 1,3-bis(2-chloroethyl)-1-nitrosourea (BCNU) (an alkylating drug), vincristine (a microtubule-damaging drug), and bleomycin (a DNA-damaging drug) by unknown mechanisms (Kroes et al. 1991; Kim et al. 1999). BCNU strongly induces

the HSR, while the latter two drugs induce only the expression of mitochondrial HSPs. Moreover, anti-inflammatory drugs, sodium salicylate and indomethacin, induce the HSF1 DNA-binding activity without upregulation of the HSP expression (Jurivich et al. 1992; Lee et al. 1995).

### 3.8 Future Perspectives

In response to proteotoxic stresses including heat shock and proteasome inhibition, the activation of HSF1 is triggered by the rapid elevation of misfolded proteins within cells, which leads the release from feedback repression of HSF1 by HSPs. Heat shock also promotes the monomer-to-trimer transition of HSF1 directly. Furthermore, the activation and shutdown of HSF1 activity are associated with posttranslational modifications including phosphorylation and acetylation. Because these posttranslational modifications are complex, impact of each modification on the regulation of HSF1 activity in response to a specific proteotoxic stress is not well understood. Furthermore, it is still unclear whether there is any other factor than HSPs that directly regulates HSF1 activation during proteotoxic stress.

It is proposed that each cell possesses a unique proteostasis capacity or a buffering capacity against protein misfolding, which is determined by the balance of protein synthesis, folding, and degradation (Gidalevitz et al. 2010). Not only the status of protein folding and degradation but also that of protein synthesis regulates HSF1 activity (Santagata et al. 2013), indicating a tight link between the proteostasis capacity and HSF1 activity even in unstressed conditions. The basal HSF1 activity is required for maintenance of the proteostasis capacity in unstressed conditions and delays physiological aging and the progression of a model of misfolding diseases (Hsu et al. 2003; Morley and Morimoto 2004; Hayashida et al. 2010). Thus, regulation of the basal HSF1 activity may modulate aging and age-related protein misfolding diseases. It should be clarified how HSF1 activity is strictly regulated by metabolic signaling pathways under physiological conditions in future.

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