Molecular characterization of the human and sheep hydatid cyst strains in Chaharmahal va Bakhtiari province of Iran using restriction fragment length polymorphism (PCR RFLP)

M. Moazeni1, S. Taghipoor2, M. Abolhasani2, M. Hashemzadeh2, E. Zarean2, Hossein Yousofi Darani3*
1Dept of Surgery, Kashani hospital, Faculty of Medicine, Shahrekord University of Medical Sciences, Shahrekord, (IRAN)
2Cellular and molecular research center, Shahrekord University of Medical Sciences, Shahrekord, (IRAN)
3Dept of Parasitology & Mycology, Faculty of Medicine, Isfahan University of Medical Sciences, Isfahan, (IRAN)
E-mail: H_yousofi@yahoo.com; Yousofi@med.mui.ac.ir
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ABSTRACT

Background: Hydatidosis caused by larval stage of Echinococcus granulosus is a cosmopolitan zoonotic infection. In endemic area for this disease there is considerable genetic variation among different isolates of the parasite. These variations may affect the epidemiology, pathology and control of the disease. In this work strain identification of hydatid cysts isolated from human or sheep in Chaharmahal va Bakhtiari province of Iran has been investigated.

Method: Fertile sheep hydatid cysts were collected from several abattoirs in Chaharmahal va Bakhtiari province of Iran. Human isolates were obtained at surgery from Kashani hospital in the same area. DNA was extracted from preserved protoscoleces and Nested PCR was performed on the extracted DNA samples, the rDNA-ITS fragment was amplified subsequently. Using 4 restriction enzymes include RsaI, HpaI, AluI and TaqI, PCR-RFLP procedure was performed on the PCR products.

Results: The size of PCR product in this research was 1000bp in both human and sheep isolates. Using AluI enzyme; three fragments of 100, 180 and 720bp in human isolates and two fragments of 800bp and 200bp in sheep isolates were created. RsaI also revealed three segments of 150, 180 and 670bp in human samples and two fragments of 655bp and 345bp in sheep samples. After using HpaI enzyme three segments with 120, 200 and 680bp length in human isolates and two fragments with 700bp and 300bp in sheep isolates were detected. Finally using TaqI enzyme no digestion was occurred on human or sheep samples.

Conclusion: The result of this investigation showed that human hydatid cyst strain in Chaharmahal & Bakhtiari province of Iran is different from sheep ones, so it is recommended to recognize DNA sequence in this human samples in future studies.

KEYWORDS

Hydatid cyst; RFLP; Strain; Human; Sheep.
INTRODUCTION

Hydatidosis caused by larval stage of *Echinococcus granulosus*, affects man and livestock and considered as one of the most important cosmopolitan zoonotic infection with different mammalian hosts being involved in the life cycle[1-2]. Several genetically distinct strains differing in several characterizations have been identified[3]. In endemic area for this disease there is considerable genetic variation among different isolates of the parasite[4-5]. These variations may affect the epidemiology, pathology and control of the disease[6-8]. So the identification of the strains is considered a major requirement in the control and prevention of hydatid disease[2,7]. Moreover there are evidences indicating that some strains are more pathogenic[9]. So far 10 distinct strains of the parasite (G1-G10) have been recognized[10,11] from different parts of the world[3,10,12,13]. Hydatidosis is one of the most important zoonotic diseases prevalent in different parts of Iran[14,15]. Various surveys have indicated that hydatid cysts are commonly found in livestock throughout the country[14,16-18]. Human cases are also regularly reported from different parts of the country[4,14,15]. Molecular techniques have been applied successfully for distinguishing the different strains of *Echinococcus granulosus*[8]. In this study strain identification of hydatid cysts isolated from human or sheep in Chaharmahal va Bakhtiari province of Iran has been investigated using PCR-RLFP molecular method.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Hydatid cysts from 30 infected sheep were collected from several abattoirs in Chaharmahal va Bakhtiari province of Iran. Fifteen human isolates were obtained at surgery from Kashani hospital in Shahrekord, Iran. In the laboratory, cysts were tested for protoscoleces and any protoscoleces present were aspirated and collected. Protoscoleces from each cyst were washed in isotonic saline and then preserved in 75% ethanol.

DNA extraction: Preserved protoscoleces washed three times with distilled water and then digested with SDS and proteinase K. DNA was extracted using Pheno l Chloroform method.

The PCR reaction was performed in a final 25µl volume containing Taq DNA polymerase 1 unit, 3µl MgCl2, 1µl primers, 1µl DNA, 2.5µl PCR buffer and 1µl mix dTNP. The PCR conditions were as follows: an initial denaturing step (95°C for 3 min) followed by 33 cycles 95°C for 1 min (denaturation), 55°C for 1 min (annealing), and 72°C for 1 min (extension), and a final extension of 72°C for 3 min. PCR products were electrophoresed through polyacrylamide gel and stained with silver nitrate. The PCR products of each amplification were then digested with the 4-base cutter restriction endonucleases, Alul, HpaII, Rsal and TaqI, as per instruction of the manufacturer. The restriction fragments were separated by running through 6% polyacrylamid gels, and visualized after staining with nitrate silver.

![Figure 1: PCR amplified ITS1 region from sheep (A) or human (B) hydatid cyst protoscoleces isolates in acrylamide gel.](image-url)
RESULTS

In all human and sheep specimens, a fragment 1000bp was achieved after PCR amplification (figure 1 A&B). PCR products of hydatid cyst protoscoleces of sheep samples were digested with Alu1 enzyme, two bands with 800bp and 200bp were created (figure 2A). However digestion of PCR products of human samples with the same enzyme revealed 3 bands with size of 720bp, 180bp and 100bp (figure 2B).

![Figure 2: PCR-RFLP patterns of hydatid cyst protoscoleces DNA following digestion with Alu1 enzyme.](image)

![Figure 3: PCR-RFLP patterns of hydatid cyst protoscoleces DNA following digestion with Rsa1 enzyme.](image)
Using *RsaI* enzyme, two bands with size of 655bp and 345bp were detected in sheep isolates of hydatid cyst protoscoleces (Figure 3A), and three bands with the size of 670bp, 180bp and 150bp were detected in human isolates (figure 3B). *HpaII* enzyme digested 1000bp DNA of hydatid cyst protoscoleces to 700bp and 300bp in sheep isolates (Figure 4A) and to 680bp, 200bp and 120bp in human isolates (figure 4B). No digestion was happened in PCR products of hydatid cyst protoscolecs in sheep (figure 5A) or human (figure 5B) isolates when *TaqI* enzyme was used.

**DISCUSSION**

In this investigation nuclear rDNA-ITS1 region of sheep and human hydatid cysts protoscoleces was amplified. In stained polyacrylamide gel a band with
size of about 1000bp was detected. This is in agreement with what Ahmadi, Scott and Bowels detected in human or sheep isolates of hydatid cyst.[13,19,20]

PCR-RFLP technique provides a rapid method for discriminating Echinococcus strains[21]. In this work Alu1, Rsa1, HpaII and Taq1 were used for DNA digestion. Alu1 enzyme digested 1000bp DNA band to 800bp and 200bp bands in sheep isolates and to 720bp and 180bp in human isolates. These results are in agreement with Scott et al.’ findings. They showed that DNA of human isolates digested differently from sheep isolates[13]. With Rsa1 enzyme also different digestion pattern were detected in human and sheep isolates of hydatid cyst. Scott et al. also achieved different digestion pattern in animal and human isolates of hydatid cyst with this enzyme[13]. Gonzale et al. used Rsa1 enzyme on human and animal isolates of hydatid cyst. They showed that the pattern of digestion was not similar between animal and human isolates. Furthermore the pattern was not also similar among human isolates[22]. When HpaII enzyme was used the pattern of digestion again was different in human and sheep hydatid cyst isolates. Santivañez et al. showed that 95% of human isolates were G1 genotype[23].

In this research work we found that human hydatid cyst isolates in Chaharmahal va Bakhtiari province of Iran was very different from that of sheep strain. Further work is recommended to clarify genotype of human hydatid cyst isolates.

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