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Title: Functional characterization of Helicobacter pylori TlyA: Pore-forming hemolytic activity and

cytotoxic property of the protein

Authors: Lata, K. (/jspui/browse?type=author&value=Lata%2C+K.)

Paul, Karan (/jspui/browse?type=author&value=Paul%2C+Karan)

Chattopadhyay, K. (/jspui/browse?type=author&value=Chattopadhyay%2C+K.)

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Abstract:

Helicobacter pylori is a human specific gastric pathogen. H. pylori pathogenesis process involves a number of well-studied virulence factors that include the 'vacuolating cytotoxin' and the 'cytotoxin associated gene A'. Analysis of the H. pylori genome, however, indicates presence of additional virulence factors that are yet to be characterized in molecular detail. For example, H. pylori genome harbors a gene that has potential to encode a protein with sequence similarity to those of the TlyA-like proteins of several pathogenic bacteria. Earlier studies have indicated potential association of this H. pylori tlyA gene in the virulence mechanism of the organism. Despite such notions, however, the TlyA-like protein of H. pylori has not been studied previously in molecular detail. In particular, purified form of H. pylori TlyA has never been studied before toward exploring its functional properties. Here, we report characterization of the H. pylori TlyA protein purified from the recombinant over-expression system in Escherichia coli. Purified form of the recombinant TlyA exhibits prominent hemolytic activity against human erythrocytes, presumably via formation of pores of specific diameter in the cell membrane. Purified TlyA also triggers prominent cytotoxic responses in human gastric adenocarcinoma cells. Altogether, our study establishes H. pylori TlyA as a potential virulence factor of the organism.

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