UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

PATHOGENICITY AND CHARACTERISATION OF NEWCASTLE DISEASE VIRUS ISOLATED IN IRAN

MAHDI KIANIZ ADEH

FPV 2002 1
PATHOGENICITY AND CHARACTERISATION OF NEWCASTLE DISEASE VIRUS ISOLATED IN IRAN

By

MAHDI KIANIZADEH

Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Universiti Putra Malaysia

January 2002
This Thesis is dedicated especially to

My wife and children

Azam Sobhani

and

Hamid Farzaneh Hamed

Who have given me strength and courage with their patience

To carry-out this program of research.
PATHOGENICITY AND CHARACTERISATION OF NEWCASTLE DISEASE VIRUS ISOLATED IN IRAN

By
MAHDI KIANIZADEH

January 2002

Chairperson : Professor Aini Ideris, Ph.D.
Faculty : Veterinary Medicine

Nine Iranian Newcastle disease viruses were isolated from different Newcastle disease outbreaks during 1995 to 1999 across Iran. Characterization of the isolates was performed using three standard conventional methods such as mean death time (MDT), intracerebral pathogenicity index (ICPI) and intravenous pathogenicity index (IVPI) in embryonated specific pathogen free (SPF) chicken eggs, day old SPF chicks and 6–week old SPF chickens, respectively. Based on the overall results, all the nine Iranian isolates (MK7, MK12, MK13, MK14, Krd76, Kasra97, GH77, KH2/78 and ES1/99) belong to velogenic pathotype.

Following infection in 6-week old SPF chickens via intra-ocular route, regardless of the isolates, the infected chickens showed depression, ruffled feather and diarrhoea, ending in death. However, there were no obvious respiratory disorders. Meanwhile nervous signs were shown in chickens
inoculated with four isolates (MK7, GH77, MK13 and Kasra97) at the later stage of the infection. Grossly, the initial lesions such as haemorrhage and enlargement were observed in visceral organs including proventriculus, intestine and spleen. No significant changes were observed in the respiratory system. However in some cases, chickens infected with some isolates (MK7, MK12, MK13, Kasra97, KH2/78 and ES1/99) demonstrated limited congestion in the trachea and lungs. Microscopically, the earliest changes were observed in proventriculus, intestine, spleen and liver. Focal and diffuse haemorrhage (proventriculus and intestine), lymphoid depletion (spleen) and mononuclear cell infiltration (liver) were common features. Endotheliosis and malacia were seen in the brain. Based on the MDT results (39.6-56 hours) as well as the presence of lesions in the visceral organs, all the isolates can be grouped as viscerotrop velogenic Newcastle disease virus (VVNDV) pathotype.

The F protein cleavage site gene of all the nine isolates was amplified (242 bp) by RT-PCR and sequenced. Nucleotide and amino acid sequence analysis revealed that the cleavage site of all the isolates consisted of 2 pairs of basic amino acids (Arg) at positions 112,113, 115 and 116 forming the motif \textsuperscript{112}RRQRR\textsuperscript{116}, similar to motif in velogenic strains isolated from other countries. However, five amino acids substitutions were observed in isolate MK13 compared to other isolates of which 2 were in F\textsubscript{1} N-terminal, 2 upstream and one downstream of the cleavage site. Two of the amino acids differences in MK13 located at positions 108 and 132 were not observed in published sequence of NDV strains.
Hydropathy profiles were similar for all the isolates. They contained one major hydrophilic area at cleavage site and one major hydrophobic area extended between positions 117 to 142 corresponded to the F₁ N- terminal. This feature of hydropathy profile is similar to that of virulent NDV strains. In phylogenetic analysis, all Iranian isolates are grouped together with other virulent strains in group C. The Russian virulent strain, VOL 95, showed the same amino acid sequence with all the Iranian isolates except MK13 indicating a common origin of the viruses. The importance of these substitution remain to be studied. Finally, based on the results obtained, this study proved that all nine Iranian NDV isolates belonged to the velogenic pathotype.
Sembilan virus tempatan penyakit sampar Iran dipencilkan dari beberapa wabak penyakit sampar ayam di Iran dari tahun 1995 hingga 1999. Pencirian setiap isolat dijalankan berdasarkan tiga kaedah konvensional seperti MDT (Mean deat time), ICPI (Intracerebral pathogenicity index) dan IVPI di (Intravenous pathogenicity index) dalam telur ayam SPF (specific pathogen free) berembrio, anak ayam SPF berusia satu hari dan ayam SPF berusia 6 minggu. Berdasarkan keputusan keseluruhan yang didapati, kesemua sembilan isolat tempatan tersebut (MK7, MK12, MK13, MK14, Krd76, Kasra97, GH77, KH2/78 dan ES1/99) digolongkan dalam patotip velogenik.

Berikut daripada jangkitan pada ayam SPF berusia 6 minggu dengan kesemua isolat, melalui cara intra-okular, ayam yang dijangkiti menunjukkan kemurungan, bulu berserabut dan cirit-birit yang membawa kepada kematian. Walau bagaimanapun tiada masalah pernafasan yang ketara. Manakala, tanda kegugupan yang disebabkan oleh beberapa isolat (MK7, GH77, MK13 dan Kasra97) dapat dilihat pada fasa akhir jangkitan. Secara

Gen tapak belahan protein F bagi semua isolat diamplifikasi (242bp) melalui RT-PCR dan dijujuk. Analysis jujukan nukleotida dan asid amino mendedahkan bahawa tapak belahan bagi kesemua isolat terdiri daripada 2 pasang asid amino basik (Arg) pada kedudukan 112, 113, 115 dan 116 yang membentuk motif \(112\text{RRQRR}^{116}\), menyerupai motif strain velogenik yang dipencil dari negara lain. Walau bagaimanapun, penggantian lima asid amino diperhatikan dalam isolat MK13 berbanding kepada isolat lain yang mana 2 pada terminus-N F1, 2 di hadapan dan 1 dibelakang daripada tapak belahan. Perbezaan dalam 2 asid amino pada MK13 yang terletak pada kedudukan 108 dan 132 tidak diperhatikan dalam jujukan strain NDV yang pernah diterbitkan. Kepentingan penukaran asid amino ini perlu dibuat kajian.
Profil hidropati bagi kesemua isolat adalah serupa. Mereka mempunyai satu kawasan hidrofilik major pada tapak belahan dan satu kawasan hidrofobik major yang menganjur dari kedudukan di antara 117 hingga 142 yang berdekatan dengan terminus-N F1. Ciri profil hidropati ini adalah sama dengan strain NDV virulen. Dalam analisis filogen, kesemua isolat tempatan digolongkan bersama beberapa strain virulent yang lain dalam kumpulan C. Strain virulen Rusia, VOL95, menunjukkan jujukan asid amino yang sama dengan kesemua isolat tempatan kecuali MK13 menandakan persamaan asal-usul bagi virus-virus tersebut. Berdasarkan keputusan yang diperolehi, kajian ini membuktikan bahawa kesemua sembilan isolat NDV Iran tergolong dalam patotip velogenik.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author gives praises to the almighty Allah for leading him to get this far and making all these possible.

The author is pleased to express his respect, deepest sense and gratitude to Professor Dr. Aini Ideris, Chairperson of advisory committee for her guidance, support, valuable suggestions and encouragement throughout the study period and preparation of this thesis.

The author sincerely expresses his heartfelt gratitude to the members of the advisory committee, Associate Professor Datin Dr. Khatijah Yusoff, Department of Biochemistry and Microbiology, Universiti Putra Malaysia for her guidance and support during this research in her Lab, Dr. Abd Rahman Omar, Biologic Laboratory, Faculty Veterinary Medicine, Universiti Putra Malaysia, for his valuable guidance, constructive suggestions for completion of the research work.

The author wishes to thank co-advisory committee, Professor Dr. M. Shahrabadi, Department of Virology, Iran Medical Science University, Professor Dr. R. Kargar, Department of Virology, Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute of Iran, for their advice and assistance during this study.

The author would like thank to Mr. Rajab Beigi, General Director of Education Planning Office and his team in Foreign Students Affairs Department, Iran, for their continue support from the beginning of this study since1997.

The author expresses his thank to all the staff in Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute Iran, for providing facilities during this research.

The author is pleased to express his gratitude and thank to Assistant Professor Dr. Syed Ali Pourbakhash, Department of Poultry Diseases Diagnosis, Razi Institute, for his guidance and encouragement during this research.
The author extends his gratitudes to Associate Professor Dr. Mohd Hair Bejo, Faculty Veterinary Medicine, Universiti Putra Malaysia for his kind guidance and suggestions.

The author convey his heartfelt thank to his lab mate Omeima Salih, in 1997, for her advice and suggestion in the beginning of this study.

The author wishes to thank Associate Professor Dr. Naderishahab, Department of Plant Molecular Biology, Institute of Rangeland and Forestry in Iran, for his kind guidance and support.

The author expresses his thanks to Dr. Majid Eshaghi, for his kind supports for the phylogenetic analysis.

The author is also grateful to many other, whose names do not appear here, who have helped him in laboratory during the study period.

The author expresses his deepest respect and heartfelt gratitude to his wife for her sacrifices, patience and motivation.

Last but not least, the author owes his greatest gratitude to his beloved mother, father, brothers, sisters, mother and father in–law for their continue support, encouragement and prayers.
I certify that Examination Committee met on 29th November 2001 to conduct the final examination of Mahdi Kianizadeh on his Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled "Pathogenicity and Characterisation of Newcastle Disease Virus Isolated in Iran" in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.

MAHDI KIANIZADEH
16 JAN 2002
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<tr>
<td>A$_{260}$</td>
<td>Absorption at 260 nm</td>
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<td>AI</td>
<td>Avian Influenza</td>
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<td>Amp</td>
<td>Ampicillin</td>
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<td>Arg</td>
<td>Arginine</td>
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<td>bp</td>
<td>Base pairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAM</td>
<td>Chorioallantoic membrane</td>
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<td>CEC</td>
<td>Council of the economic community</td>
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<td>CEF</td>
<td>Chicken embryo fibroblast</td>
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<td>CPE</td>
<td>Cytopathic effect</td>
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<td>Da</td>
<td>Dalton</td>
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<td>DEPC</td>
<td>Diethyl pyrocarbonate</td>
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<td>Deoxynucleotide acid</td>
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<td>dNTP</td>
<td>Deoxynucleotide triphosphate</td>
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<td>ddNTP</td>
<td>Dideoxynucleotide triphosphate</td>
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<td>dpi</td>
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<td>EDTA</td>
<td>Ethylene diamine tetra acetate</td>
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<td>Haemagglutinin activity</td>
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<td>Haemagglutinin inhibition</td>
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<tr>
<td>HN</td>
<td>Haemagglutinin neuraminidase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hpi</td>
<td>Hours post infection</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICPI</td>
<td>Intra cerebral pathogenicity index</td>
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<td>IPTG</td>
<td>Isopropyl-thiogalactopyranoside</td>
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<td>IVPI</td>
<td>Intra venous pathogenicity index</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kb</td>
<td>Kilo base</td>
</tr>
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<td>KD</td>
<td>Kilo dalton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Large protein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB</td>
<td>Luria-bertani</td>
</tr>
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<td>M</td>
<td>Membrane protein</td>
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<td>Mabs</td>
<td>Monoclonal antibody</td>
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<td>MCS</td>
<td>Multi cloning site</td>
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<td>MLD</td>
<td>Minimum lethal dose</td>
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<td>mRNA</td>
<td>Messenger RNA</td>
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<td>nm</td>
<td>Nanometer</td>
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<td>NP</td>
<td>Nucleoprotein</td>
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<td>NTE</td>
<td>Natrium chloride-tris-EDTA buffer</td>
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<td>OIE</td>
<td>Office International Des Epizooties</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORF</td>
<td>Open reading frame</td>
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<td>OD</td>
<td>Optical density</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td>Phosphoprotein</td>
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<td>Pmol</td>
<td>Picomol</td>
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<td>RNA</td>
<td>Ribose nucleic acid</td>
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<td>Ribonuclease</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAE</td>
<td>Tris-acetate-EDTA buffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taq</td>
<td>Thermus aquaticus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Valine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VVNDV</td>
<td>Viscerotropic velogenic Newcastle disease virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X-gal</td>
<td>5-bromo-4-chloro-3-indolyl-β-D-galactopyranoside</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the past decades, the systems of poultry husbandry have changed greatly, from small units of birds which were allowed to range freely in fields, to the systems of very large-scale rearing in "broiler house" in which birds are reared intensively or in battery cages for layers. A broiler house may contain as many as 100,000 chickens and there may be a quarter of a million birds on one site. Breeding stocks are also kept intensively, in houses with deep litter.

Keeping such large numbers of birds in close proximity that is less coordinate with physiological system of poultry, adds greatly to the economic loss resulting from a rapid spreading of viral infection of the respiratory system. The control of disease among poultry is further complicated by the present easy transportation of birds and eggs. Among the respiratory diseases, Newcastle disease (ND) has been the major problem in the poultry industry.

Newcastle disease is an infectious ailment of poultry that manifests itself in severe respiratory and nervous conditions. Its causative agent is paramyxovirus, a highly contagious pathogen (Wehmann et al., 1997), known as Newcastle disease virus (NDV). It is an enveloped virus and has a non-segmented negative single stranded RNA genome of approximately 15 kb which codes for six major proteins (Seal et al., 1995).
Outbreaks of ND were first reported in poultry in Java, Indonesia and Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, England in 1926 (Alexander, 1988). From the literature, three panzootics of ND could be recognized. The first appeared in South East Asia in 1926 and spread to most countries of the world. The second panzootic began in the Middle-East in the late 1960s and spread quickly to the other countries by 1973. The third panzootic caused by neurotropic form of ND apparently also started in the Middle-East in the late 1970s, reached Europe by 1981 and spread rapidly worldwide (Alexander, 1988). The disease, currently, has a worldwide distribution with a wide host range in which all orders of birds have been reported to be infected by Newcastle disease virus (NDV). The infectious virus may be ingested or inhaled spreading from one bird to another. This is its major form of transmission and is the basis for mass application of live vaccines via the spray or drinking route (Alexander, 1991).

Isolates of NDV are categorized into three main pathotypes depending on the severity of the disease produced by the isolates in chickens. Lentogenic isolates do not usually cause any disease in adult birds and are considered avirulent. Viruses of intermediate virulence that cause respiratory disease are termed mesogenic while virulent viruses that cause high mortality are termed velogenic. Neurotropic and viscerotropic forms of velogenic viruses have been reported worldwide (Seal et al., 1995).

ND has now been with poultry industry for more than 70 years. Though vaccination for ND has been used successfully from the 1940s (Beard and
Hanson, 1987), its potential to cause great losses in the global poultry industry is probably going to continue as long as this virus can survive and replicate.

In routine diagnosis accessions, NDV isolates are readily identified by haemagglutination-inhibition (HI) with NDV antiserum, and pathogenicity study is often limited to determination of embryo death time (King and Seal, 1998). From the first report of the disease to date, many efforts have been made to develop methods to identify the NDV isolates and to determine their properties. Despite the large number of NDV strains, only minor antigenic differences can be detected with standard serological tests (Marin et al., 1996). Virulence is the main character of NDV that has attracted the attention of researchers in their studies. Among the paramyxoviruses, NDV is unique in that the significant variation in virulence within the same serotype has been described (Waterson et al., 1967).

The role of conventional tests in the determination of virulence of ND viruses is still significant but with some limitations. A source of eggs and chickens, which should preferably be from a specific-pathogen-free flock, is needed. Confirmed diagnosis may be slow, taking several days to isolate the virus and carry out the pathogenicity tests. In addition, the use of animals in this way is becoming increasingly unacceptable with the development of actual or potential alternatives (Aldous and Alexander, 2001). As a result from the progress made in molecular biological techniques especially after the invention of polymerase chain reaction (PCR) by Kary Mullis (1985), attempts have been focused on genetic studies of viral pathogens as well as ND