Hepcidin Gene Cloning and Expression Pattern in Turbot (*Scophthalmus maximus*) after *Vibrio. anguillarum* Infection

Ai-Fang Deng, Zhi-Hui Jiang, Bai-Lin Cong

1 First Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), Qingdao, China.
2 Ocean University of China, Qingdao, China.
3 Marine Ecology and Environmetal Science Laboratory, Qingdao, China.

*Corresponding author: Cong Bai-lin, First Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), Qingdao, China. No.6 Xianxialing Road, Laoshan District, Qingdao City, P.R China, Tel:+86-53266718261, Fax: +86-53266718261, E-mail: biolin@fio.org.cn

Background: Antimicrobial peptides play crucial roles in organisms as the first line of defense against invading pathogens.

Objective: To isolate the hepcidin (*hepc1*) gene from the liver of turbot (*Scophthalmus maximus*) challenged with *Vibrio anguillarum* (GenBank accession number: AM113708), characterize it, and assess its expression level in various tissues.

Materials and Methods: The DNA sequence of hepcidin from *S. maximus* was determined from the total RNA extracted and reverse transcribed from this fish. The expression levels of tissue-specific hepcidin transcripts were determined using reverse-transcriptase polymerase chain reactions.

Results: Hepcidin levels increased in the livers, head kidneys and spleens of the fish. The transcriptional increase was especially noticeable in the liver after bacterial infection commencement. The presence of hepcidin and interleukin-beta (*IL-1β*) in blood leukocytes was compared at the transcription level and hepcidin transcripts were detected earlier than *IL-1β* transcripts after infection, indicating that hepcidin might serve as the first line of defense to kill bacteria and may also play a more direct and effective role than that of *IL-1β* during the initial stage of the innate immune response when turbot are exposed to bacteria invasion.

Conclusions: Hepcidin might serve as the first line of defense to kill bacteria and may also play a more direct and effective role than that of *IL-1β* during the initial stage of the innate immune response when turbot are exposed to bacteria invasion.

Keywords: Hepcidin, Infection, Interleukin-beta, *Scophthalmus maximus*, Turbot, *Vibrio anguillarum*
Interleukin-beta (IL-1β), another pivotal innate immune factor that enables organisms to respond to pathogens, induces an inflammatory cascade, along with other defense responses against pathogen invasion (18-19). There is abundant evidence that fish immunocytes secrete IL-1β, a key modulator of the fish immune system, during bacterial infections, by enhancing leukocyte phagocytosis and bactericidal activity, as well as by stimulating tissue inflammation (20-21).

The antimicrobial activity of hepcidin may be useful in the fight against the bacterial and viral outbreaks that plague aquaculture species such as turbot, an important economic fish. However, little is understood about the mechanism of action of hepcidin in the immune system and its relationship with IL-1β in fish.

2. Objectives

Here, we report on the cloning of the hepcidin precursor (hepc1) from turbot, expression of the hepc1 gene in the tissues of the turbot at the transcription level, and make a comparison of hepc1 expression with that of IL-1β after Vibrio anguillarum infection.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Animals and Bacterial Infections

Healthy individuals of the marine teleost turbot (Scophthalmus maximus, 800 g mean weight) were obtained from an aquaculture farm in Qingdao (Shandong, China) and kept in a 260 L seawater tank at 20 °C for later studies. Fishes were infected with V. anguillarum by injecting a sublethal dose (10^8 cells.mL^−1) of this pathogen in 0.1 mL of NaCl buffer. Different tissue samples from the infected fish were collected at 0.5, 4, 24 h intervals post-infection and the tissues from uninfected fish were taken as the controls.

3.2. Leukocyte Collection

Turbot were anesthetized with benzocaine (Sigma, St. Louis, MO, USA) in 0.1 g.L^−1 water. Peripheral blood was collected by puncturing the caudal veins of the anesthetized turbots with a heparinized syringe. Blood leukocyte-enriched fractions were obtained via a 50% Percoll density gradient (Pharmacia, Baie d’Urfe, Quebec, Canada), following the manufacturer’s manual, and adjusted to 10^6 viable cells.mL^−1 in Leibovitz-15 medium (Gibco, Gaithersburg, MD, USA) supplemented with 10% newborn calf serum, (Gibco), 100 U. mL^−1 penicillin, 2.5 µg. mL^−1 amphotericin B, and 0.1 mg. mL^−1 streptomycin.

3.3. RNA Isolation and RT-PCR

Total RNA was isolated from leukocytes, head kidneys, spleens and livers using standard TRIzol Reagent (Invitrogen, USA). Bioscript M-MLV RNase H reverse transcriptase (200 U) was used to synthesize the first strand cDNA with an oligo (dT18) primer at 42 °C for 50 min. A pair of primers (WBHsp, WBHap) was designed based on the homology of known mammalian and fish hepcidin sequences (these sequences are NM_205583, MH588516, HQ711993, NM_032541, AF542965, KT990221, KJ890396) to obtain the complete coding sequence of the turbot hepcidin gene. Subsequently, hepcidin 1 precursor (Hepc1), IL-1β and β-Actin genes were PCR-amplified by reverse-transcriptase (RT)-PCR using the primers shown in Table 1 and taking the prepared tissue cDNAs as the templates, with the PCR-amplified β-Actin gene serving as the internal control. Amplifications were performed in 50 µL volumes, the conditions of which were as follows: one cycle at 94 °C for 2 min, 35 cycles at 94 °C for 30 s, annealing temperatures of 55 °C (β-Actin gene), 52 °C (hepc1 gene), or 50 °C (IL-1β gene) for 30 s, 72 °C for 1 min, followed by one cycle at 72 °C for 10 min. PCR products were separated on a 1.5% agarose gel containing 0.5 µg.mL^−1 ethidium bromide (Sigma) and visualized under UV light. The results were photographed with the Alpha IS12200 Image Acquisition System. Band signals were scanned on a densitometric scanner and statistically analyzed using the Bandscan 5.0 program (22). The ratio of the target gene to the internal control gene represented the relative gene expression level.

Table 1. Primers and their sequences used in this study

| Primers | Sequences (5’−3’) | Utilization |
|---------|------------------|-------------|
| ActinF  | CCCAGAGCAAGAGAGGTATC | Turbot β-Actin gene |
| ActinR  | GCTGTGGTGGTGAAGGATAG | Turbot β-Actin gene |
| WBHsp   | CAAACCTCCTAAGATGAAG | Turbot hepc1 gene |
| WBHap   | AATCCTCAGAACCCTACAGCA | Turbot hepc1 gene |
| IL1sp   | GCCAGAAATCTCCACCAAT | Turbot IL-1β gene |
| IL1ap   | TTGTAGACAGAAATCGCACC | Turbot IL-1β gene |
3.4. Sequencing and Bioinformatic Analysis
PCR products were characterized by agarose gel electrophoresis and purified using a gel extraction kit (TIANGENE, China). The recovered products were sequenced by the Shanghai Shenggong Co. The amino acid sequences were deduced from the sequencing results using DNASTar 5.0 software (23), which was also used to perform the multiple sequence alignments calculated by Clustal W (24). The secondary structure of the deduced protein was predicted by Omiga 2.0 software (25). Protein hydrophilicity was predicted by DNASTar (https://www.dnastar.com/) (23). The signal peptide cleavage site was predicted using the signalP 3.0 server (26) (http://www.cbs.dtu.dk/services/SignalP/). The molecular weight (MW) and isoelectric point (PI) of the protein was determined by the Compute pI/MW tool in the ExPASy sever (27) (http://au.expasy.org/tools/pi_tool.html).

4. Results

4.1. The Turbot hepc1 Sequence
The turbot hepcidin1 precursor (hepc1) cDNA was amplified from the liver of a turbot challenged with *V. anguillarum* after 24 h of infection (AM113708). The cloned hepcidin1 cDNA was 293 bp long with an ORF of 273 bases and a coding capacity of 90 amino acids (Fig. 1).

4.2. Bioinformatic Analysis of the Sequence
The deduced amino acid sequence of the turbot hepc1 cDNA was compared with hepcidin sequences from other fish species and mammals. The results indicate that the hepcidin sequences from the different sources had highly similar C-terminal end segments, all sharing the same feature of eight cysteine residues (Fig. 2, processing site 2). The highest amino acid sequence

![primer WBHsp](primer WBHsp)

cct cct aag aag att gtt gaa ggt 47

M K A F S I A V A V 10

5 ....aac primer WBHsp
cct cct aag aag att gtt gaa ggt gaa gga ggt 92

48 aca ctc gtg ccc gcc ttt gtt tgc att ctg gaa gag agc tct gcc gtc 92

11 T L V P A F V C I L E S S A V 25

93 ceg ttc cct ggg gta caa gag ctg gaa gga gag gea aat gac 137

26 P F P G V Q E L E A G S N D 40

138 aet cca gec gec gaa cat caa gag acg tea atg gaa ceg tgg aeg 182

41 T P A A A H Q E T S M E P W T 55

183 gtc ceg agt cac atcg aag cag aag gca cag age cac atc ctt 227

56 V P S H I R Q K R Q S H I S L 70

228 tgc ceg tgg tgc tge aac tge aag gec tac aag gge tgt gge 272

71 C R W C C N C C K A Y K G C G 85

![primer WBHap](primer WBHap)

273 ttc tgc tgt agg ttc tga gga tta... 293

86 F C C R F

Figure 1. Hepc1 cDNA and the predicted amino acid sequence.
identity score deduced for Hepc1 was 96.7% for the turbot (*Scophthalmus maximus*) hepcidin precursor (AY994074), and the cDNA sequence identity score between them was 98%. The RX(K/R)R structure, a motif typical of mammalian proprotein convertase active sites (22), was identified in most of the species listed in Figure 2 (processing site 1). The SignalP server predicted that approximately 24 amino acids at the N-terminal end of Hepc1 comprised the signal peptide domain. This region was predicted to be hydrophobic by DNASTar. About 21 amino acids at the C-terminus end were predicted by software Omiga2.0 as being capable of forming a β-sheet structure, and were designated as the mature peptide after comparison with those from other species.

4.3. Expression of hepc1 in the Tested Tissues and the IL-1β Gene in Leukocytes Based on RT-PCR Analysis

The transcriptional expression of hepc1 was analyzed by RT-PCR in leukocytes, head kidneys, livers and spleens of the fish after infection with *V. anguillarum*. Figure 3 shows a representative result from the RT-PCR tests. Prior to infection, hepc1 expression was almost at the same level in the livers, spleens and kidneys. After pathogen invasion, however, increased hepc1 expression was detected in all the tested tissues at 4 h post-infection, a trend that continued until 24 h. hepc1 was more abundant in the liver than in the spleens and head kidneys of the fish (Fig. 3). hepc1 expression was detected at increasing levels in the leukocytes during the time course after pathogen challenge (Fig. 4). The relative amount of hepc1 expression in the different tissues was liver > spleen > head kidney > leukocyte at 24 h post bacterial infection. However, leukocyte-specific *IL-1β* transcript levels remained constant at 0 h (uninfected) and 0.5 h post-infection in the host (Fig. 4). Surprisingly, the increasing hepc1 expression level was detected as early as 0.5 h post-infection, whereas the level of *IL-1β* remained unchangeable at this time (Fig. 4). Thereafter, both hepc1 and *IL-1β* expression levels continued to increase over time and the increase in *IL-1β* transcripts was more rapid than for hepc1 from 0.5 h to 4 h after bacteria invasion.
Figure 3. Hepcidin mRNA levels determined by semi-quantitative RT-PCR (A). Tissues assayed were head kidney (Hk), Liver (Li) and spleen (Sp) (B). Samples were taken 4 and 24 h after infection, with the uninfected fish as a control (denoted by 0). Quantitative densitometry of the specific Hepc1 bands are expressed as a percentage of the corresponding β-actin. Data shown are mean ± SEM of the three experiments.

Figure 4. The course of Hepc1 (B), IL-1β mRNA (C) expression in turbot leukocytes infected after 0.5, 4 and 24 h, with the uninfected fish as a control (denoted by 0) (A). Quantitative densitometry of the specific Hepc1 bands is expressed as a percentage of the corresponding β-actin. Data shown are mean ± SEM of the three experiments.
5. Discussion
Our results have shown that turbot Hepc1 shares strikingly similar amino acid sequences with hepcidin from several different mammals and fish, and that hepcidin from these different sources shares a high degree of homology in the eight-cysteine domain (Fig. 2). Preprohepcidin usually comprises three parts: a signal peptide, a proregion, and a mature peptide (28). A signal cleavage site in Hepc1 between Ala24 and Val25 was predicted by Signal P. The 1 to 25 amino acid region at the N-terminal end was predicted to be hydrophobic by DNAStar. The resulting signal peptide has a basic residue (Lys3) at the N-termini end, followed by a hydrophobic region containing Ala and Val, which is typical of a signal peptide (15). Similarly, a signal peptide cleavage site for white bass and zebrafish preprohepcidin was also predicted to occur between Ala24 and Val25 (15,29), suggesting that a conserved mechanism exists for proteolytic cleavage of the hepcidin signal peptide among fish. The NH2-termini of mature peptides have been assigned based on the amino acid sequence of human hepcidin (29), and the proximity to the RX(K/R)R motif is characteristic of processing sites in propeptide convertases (30). A similar cleavage site for Hepc1 was predicted in the present study (Fig. 2, processing site 1). With its high homology to bass and zebrafish hepcidin, the mature S. maximus Hepc1 peptide should comprise 21 amino acids starting at Leu70. But it is different from the predicted hepcidin mature peptide from turbot, which is a 26-amino acid peptide according to Chen SL et al (26). Other evidence supports our conclusion. For example, a 21 amino-acid mature hepcidin peptide was also predicted in hybrid striped bass and Japan sea bass (15,22). If this is correct, the predicted mature hepcidin peptide should have a MW of 9881.52 Da and pI of 7.64 based on the calculation by ExPASy. The mature peptide should confer a totally positive charge. This property enables antimicrobial peptides to permeate tissues resulting in the leakage of plasma membranes from the invading microorganisms (8). The 21 amino acid region in the C-terminal end was predicted by Omiga2.0 to form a β-sheet structure, thereby predicting the mature peptide exactly. The mature human hepcidin peptide forms a simple hairpin structure, where the two arms are linked by four disulfide bridges (27). The mature Hepc1 peptide appears to have the same eight-cysteine-like structure (Fig. 2, processing site 2). Chen, et al. also isolated a form of hepcidin from turbot (GenBank accession No. AY994074) (31). Their deduced hepcidin peptide differs from ours in having three different amino acids. The 14th, 81st, and 89th amino acids reported by Chen, et al. are Leu, Asn, and Lys, while in the present study the same sites in Hepc1 are Pro, Tyr, and Arg. The data from Chen et al. suggest that the mature hepcidin peptide they cloned consists of 26 amino acids, with the 81st and the 89th amino acids differing from our data for the mature peptide. These different results imply that the two hepcidin genes from turbot may be different members of the hepcidin family. Shi, et al. compared some hepcidin EST (expressed sequence tag) sequences from various fish and found that there was a CCR/KF structure at the C-terminal end of hepcidin (32). Although the amino acid composition of the hepcidin molecule cloned herein and the GenBank database hepcidin (AY994074) differ, each of the two sequences also conform to the above-mentioned structure. Three types of mature hepcidin peptides have been isolated from human urine. Their amino acid lengths are 25, 22 and 20. Their relative molecular weights are 2789Da, 2436Da and 2192Da (5). The mature peptides of our own (Hepc1) and the database hepcidin (AY994074) are 21 and 26 amino acids, respectively. According to this calculation, their molecular weights are 2468Da and 2943Da. The two different hepcidin sequences indicate the possible existence of hepcidin isomers in turbot. There is indirect evidence that hepc1 may be an essential element of the innate defense systems of turbot, because the expression of hepc1 in the liver and immune tissues can be induced dramatically by bacteria challenge. That the expression of hepc1 was detectable soon after the bacterial infection commenced in turbot suggests that the host may use hepcidin as the first line antimicrobial agent in vivo to directly kill invading microorganisms. However, direct evidence that fish hepcidin functions as an endogenous antimicrobial agent has yet to be established (33).
Like human and bass hepcidin, turbot hepcidin is expressed predominantly in the liver. Hecpidin is translated in the liver as a 84 amino-acid pre-pro-peptide and the 25 amino-acid peptide is the predominant form in the urine after processing and excretion through human kidneys (5,12). Pigeon et al. discovered that the 84 amino acid preprohepcidin synthesized in the liver was transported through the hepatocyte basolateral membrane into the blood stream (11). Our semi quantitative result suggests that expression of the hepc1 gene in the liver increased by almost 30 fold 24 h after infection. In contrast with the liver, the expression of hepc1 was relatively low in the immune tissues we tested. It is possible that as a precursor peptide, Hepc1
produced in turbot liver may be transported through the hepatocyte basolateral membrane into the blood stream. Hence, turbot hepcidin may exert antibacterial affects in other forms such as the predicted mature peptide in different immune tissues when pathogen invasion has occurred. The expression of hepc1 was higher in the spleen than in the head kidney and leukocytes at 24 h post-infection. This result is similar to that reported previously for hepcidin gene expression in bass induced by bacterial challenge (34).

IL-1β can be produced by monocytes, macrophages, polymorphonuclear phagocytes, fibroblasts and other cells. However, mature IL-1β is mainly secreted by blood macrophages (35). It has already been shown that leukocytes are responsible for secreting IL-1β into the turbot blood circulation (34). The expression of IL-1β was constant in the uninfected host and at 0.5 h in the infected host. Hepc1 expression was found to continually increase at 0.5 h post-infection. As an immune regulator, IL-1β can enhance leukocyte phagocytosis and anti-bacterial activity, inducing leukocyte proliferation and differentiation in response to infectious insults (36). IL-1β cannot kill pathogens directly, whereas hepcidin can exert antimicrobial activity, as has been shown in humans. Thus, it is possible that hepcidin performs its function earlier than IL-1β in activating the innate immune system in turbot, by performing a direct action that can kill bacteria during their invasion. In our experiments, the expression of IL-1β increased more rapidly than that of Hepc1 from 0.5 h to 4 h after bacterial challenge, suggesting that the immune defense effect would have been boosted in the fish.

6. Conclusion
Our vision is to constructed heterologous expression system in yeast, which can include several kinds of antimicrobial peptides sequences such as hepcidin, moronecadin, et al. Due to the antimicrobial peptides coming from kinds of fishes, it cannot produce resistance like antibiotics. Actually, the yeast have been widely used as a good feed additives in aquaculture. It could enhance the aquaculture disease resistance and nutrition.

Acknowledgments
The authors thank the financial support provided by the Basic Scientific Fund for National Public Research Institutes of China (2018Q03), the Chinese National Natural Science Foundation (41006102) and Qingdao Strategic Emerging Industry Cultivation Plan Project(14-9-1-8-hy).

References
1. Sapir RD, Beate S, Andreas K, Mirjam MN, Ayan S, Jaywant et al. 2016. Reduced cytotoxicity and enhanced bioactivity of cationic antimicrobial peptides liposomes in cell cultures and 3D epidermis model against HSV. J Control Release. 229:163-171. doi: 10.1016/j.jconrel.2016.03.025
2. Boman HG. Peptide antibiotics and their role in innate immunity. Annu Rev Immunol. 1995;13:61-92. doi: 10.1146/annurev.im.13.040195.000425
3. Zasloff M. Antimicrobial peptides of multicellular organisms. Nature. 2002;415(6870):389-395. doi:10.1038/415389a
4. Patrzkyat A, Douglas SE. Gone gene fishing: how to catch novel marine antimicrobials. Trends Biotechnol. 2003;21(8):362-369. doi:10.1016/s0167-7799(03)00145-8
5. Broekaert WF, Terras FR, Cammue BP, Osborn RW. Plant defensins: novel antimicrobial peptides as components of the host defense system. Plant Physiol. 1995;108(4): 1353-1358. doi:10.1073/pnas.151179498
6. Austin, B, McIntosh, D. Natural antibacterial compounds on the surface of rainbow trout, Salmo gairdneri Richardson. J Fish Dis.1988;11(3):275-277. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2761.1988. tb00550.x
7. Park CH, Valore EV, Waring AJ, Ganz T. Heparin, a urinary antimicrobial peptide synthesized in the liver. J Biol Chem. 2001;276(11):7806-7810. doi:10.1074/jbc.M008922200
8. Krause A, Neitz S, Magert HI, Schulz A, Forssmann WG, Schulz-Knappe P, Adermann K. LEAP-1, a novel highly disulfide-bonded human peptide, exhibits antimicrobial activity, FEBS Lett. 2000;480(2-3):147-150. doi: 10.1016/S0014-5793(00)01920-7
9. Ren HL, Wang KJ, Zhou HL, Yang M. Cloning and organisation of a hepcidin-like gene and cDNA from Japan sea bass, Lateolabrax japonicus. Fish Shellfish Immunol. 2006;21(3):221-227. doi: 10.1016/j.fsi.2005.10.011
10. Verga Falzacappa MV, Muckenthaler MU. Heparin: hormone and anti-microbial peptide. Gene. 2005;364:37-44. doi: 10.1016/j.gene.2005.07.020
11. Nicolas G, Bennoun M, Devaux I, Beaumont C, Grandchamp B, Kahn A, Vaulont S. Lack of hepcidin gene expression and severe tissue iron overload in upstream stimulatory factor 2 (USF2) knockout mice. Proc Natl Acad Sci USA. 2001;98(11):7806-7810. doi:10.1073/pnas.151179498
12. Weinstein DA, Roy CN, Fleming MD, Loda ME, Wolfsdorf JJ, Andrews NC. Inappropriate expression of hepcidin is associated with iron refractory anemia: implications for the anemia of chronic disease. Blood. 2002;100(10):3776-3781. doi: 10.1182/blood-2002-04-1260
13. Van Haehling S, Jankowska EA, Van Veldhuisen DJ, Ponikowski P, Anker SD. 2015. Iron deficiency and cardiovascular disease. Nat Rev Cardiol. 12:659-669. doi:10.1071/s11883-013-0358-0
14. Zhao N, Zhang AS, Enns CA. 2013. Iron regulation by hepcidin. J Clin Investig. 123:2337-2343.doi:10.1172/JCI69840
15. Pigeon A, Ilyin G, Courselaud B, Lortet P, Lortet T, Brissot P, Loring O. A new mouse liver-specific gene, encoding a protein homologous to human antimicrobial peptide hepcidin, is overexpressed during iron overload. J Biol Chem. 2001;276(11):7811-7819. doi: 10.1074/jbc.M008923200
16. Shike H, Lauth X, Westerman ME, Ostland VE, Carlberg JM, Van Olst JC, Shimizu C, Buleo P, Burns JC. Bass hepcidin is a novel antimicrobial peptide induced by bacterial challenge. Eur
Deng AF et al. 2002;269(8):2232-2237. PMID:11985602

17. Douglas SE, Gallant JW, Liebscher RS, Dacanay A, Tsoi SC. Identification and expression analysis of hepcidin-like antimicrobial peptides in bony fish. Dev Comp Immunol. 2003;27(6-7):589-601. doi: 10.1016/j.dci.2003.04.004

18. Shike H, Shimizu C, Lauth X, Burns JC. Organization and expression analysis of the zebrafish hepcidin gene, an antimicrobial peptide gene conserved among vertebrates. Dev Comp Immunol. 2004;28(7-8):747-754. doi: 10.1016/j.dci.2003.11.009

19. Huising MO, Stet RJ, Savelkoul HF, Verburg-van Kemenade et al. 2018. Organization and genetic interaction and diversity of the families Libellulidae and Gomphidae through COI gene from China and Pakistan. Acta Tropica. 2018;182:92-95. doi:99.10.1016/j.actatropica.2018.02.016

20. Matti BF, Saleem MA, Sabir SF. 2014. Assessment of interleukin-1beta serum level in different responder groups and stages of chronic myeloid leukemia patients on imatinib mesylate therapy. Indian J Hematol Blood Transfus. 2018;30:247-52. doi:10.1007/s12288-014-0339-7

21. Chai Y, Huang X, Cong B, Liu S, Chen K, Li G, Gaisano HY. A simplified system without purification for selection of aptamers against Vibrio alginolyticus. Afr J Microbiol Res. 2011;5(21):3594-3568. doi:10.5897/AJMR11.762

22. Li XP, Wu YD, Zhou J, Zhou LF, Fan K, Qian MM. VP1 Sequence Determination and Phylogenetic Analysis of Coxsackievirus A16 Strains. Chinese General Practice. 2018;21(5):3302-3314. doi:10.3864/j.issn.0578-1752.2018.17.006

23. Islam SU, Qasim M, Lin W, Islam W, Arif M, Ali H et al. Genetic interaction and diversity of the families Libellulidae and Gomphidae through COI gene from China and Pakistan. Acta Tropica. 2018;182:92-95. doi:99.10.1016/j.actatropica.2018.02.016

24. Charles S. OMIGA 2.0. Biotech Software & Internet Report. 2000;1(5):199-207. doi:10.1089/152791600750034721.

25. Jannick DB, Henrik N, Gunnar VH, Soren B. Improved Prediction of Signal Peptides: SignalP 3.0. J Mol Biol. 2004;340,783-795. doi:10.1016/j.jmb.2004.05.028

26. Elisabeth G, Alexandre G, Christine H, Ivan I, Ron DA, Amos B. ExPASy: the proteomics server for in-depth protein knowledge and analysis. Nucleic Acids Research. 2003;31(13):3784-3788. doi: 10.1093/nar/gkg563

27. Lee CR, Kang JA, Kim HE, Choi Y, Yang T, Park SG. 2016. Secretion of IL-1beta from imatinib-resistant chronic myeloid leukemia cells contributes to BCR-ABL mutation-independent imatinib resistance. FEBS Lett. 590:358-68. doi:10.1002/1873-3468.12057

28. Nakayama K. Furin: a mammalian subtilisin/Kex2p-like endoprotease involved in processing of a wide variety of precursor proteins. Biochem J. 1997;327(Pt 3):625-635. doi:10.1042/bj3270625

29. Vyorol D, Petrák J. Hepcidin: a direct link between iron metabolism and immunity. Int J Biochem Cell Biol. 2005;37(9):1768-1773. doi:10.1016/j.biocel.2005.02.023

30. Wise RJ, Barr PJ, Wong PA, Kiefer MC, Brake AJ, Kaufman RJ. Expression of a human proprotein processing enzyme: correct cleavage of the von Willebrand factor precursor at a paired basic amino acid site. Proc Natl Acad Sci USA. 1990;87(23):9378-9382. doi: 10.1073/pnas.87.23.9378

31. Chen SL, Li W, Meng L, Sha ZX, Wang ZJ, Ren GC. Molecular cloning and expression analysis of a hepcidin antimicrobial peptide gene from turbot (Scophthalmus maximus). Fish Shellfish Immunol. 2007;22(3):172-181. doi:10.1016/j.fsi.2006.04.004

32. Hunter HN, Fulton DB, Gant T, Vogel HJ. The solution structure of human hepcidin, a peptide hormone with antimicrobial activity that is involved in iron uptake and hereditary hemochromatosis. J Biol Chem. 2002;277(40):37597-37603. doi: 10.1074/jbc.M205305200

33. Shi J, Camus AC. Heparin in amphibians and fishes: antimicrobial peptides or iron-regulatory hormones? Dev Comp Immunol. 2006;30(9):746-755. doi:10.1016/j.dci.2005.10.009

34. Dunn E, Sims JE, Nicklin MJ, O’Neill LA. Annotating genes with potential roles in the immune system: six new members of the IL-1 family. Trends Immunol. 2001;22(10):533-536. doi: 10.1016/S1471-4906(01)02034-8

35. Dinarello CA. Interleukin 1 and interleukin 18 as mediators of inflammation and the aging process. Am J Clin Nutr. 2006;83(2):447S-455S. doi:10.1186/1743-7075-3-13