Drancourtella massiliensis gen. nov., sp. nov. isolated from fresh healthy human faecal sample from South France

G. A. Durand1,2, J.-C. Lagier1,2, S. Khelaifi1, N. Armstrong1, C. Robert1, J. Rathored1, P.-E. Fournier1,2 and D. Raoult1,2,3
1) URMITE UM63, CNRS7278, INRS108, Faculté de Médecine, Aix Marseille Université, 2) Pôle des Maladies Infectieuses, Hôpital La Timone, Assistance Publique-Hôpitaux de Marseille, Marseille, France and 3) Special Infectious Agents Unit, King Fahd Medical Research Center, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Abstract

Strain GD1T gen. nov., sp. nov., is the type strain of the newly proposed genus and species Drancourtella massiliensis, belonging to the Clostridiales order. This strain, isolated from the stool of a healthy person, is a Gram-positive rod, oxygen intolerant and nonmotile, with spore-forming activity. The features of this organism and its genome sequence are described. The draft genome is 3 057 334 bp long with 45.24% G + C content; it contains 2861 protein-coding genes and 64 RNA genes.

Keywords: Anaerobe, culturomics, Drancourtella massiliensis gen. nov. et sp. nov., gut microbiota, taxonogenomics

Original Submission: 14 November 2015; Revised Submission: 30 January 2016; Accepted: 3 February 2016

Article published online: 10 February 2016

Material and Methods

Ethics approval and sample collection

After receiving signed informed consent, approved by the Institut Fédéral de Recherche 48 (Faculty of Medicine, Marseille, France) under agreement 09-022, a stool specimen was collected at La Timone Hospital Marseille (France) in January 2015. The specimen was from a healthy French man (body mass index 23.2 kg/m²), 28 years old, with no current treatment, especially no antibiotics.
Isolation and growth conditions of strain
The stool specimen was incubated at 37°C into an anaerobic blood bottle Bactec Lytic/10 Anaerobic/F (Becton Dickinson, Le Pont de Claix, France) supplemented with 5% sheep’s blood, after a thermal shock of 20 minutes at 80°C. Then dilution cultures were performed, and characterization of growth conditions was tested as previously described [10]. Finally, sporulation, different pH levels and NaCl concentrations were tested in the agar plate under the best culture conditions [11].

Strain identification
Identification of colonies was performed by matrix-assisted laser desorption/ionization time-of-flight mass spectrometry (MALDI-TOF) Microflex spectrometer (Bruker Daltonics, Leipzig, Germany) as previously described, and the spectrum was compared with our database (which includes the Bruker database and our own collection) [10,12]. In case of non-identification, i.e. if the spectrum did not find a match in the database (score <1.7), we proceeded to spectrum verification. If the spectrum was without background noise, and after exclusion of culture contamination, 16S rRNA was sequenced as previously described [10]. In case of a sequence similarity value lower than 96%, the species is considered to be a new genera without performing DNA-DNA hybridization, as suggested by Stackebrandt and Ebers [13].

Morphologic and biochemical characterization
Morphologic characterization was first performed by observation of Gram staining and motility of the fresh sample. Negative staining was then performed using bacteria fixed with 2.5% glutaraldehyde, deposited on carbon formvar film and then incubated for 1 second on ammonium molybdate 1%, dried on blotting paper and finally observed using a TECNAI G20 transmission electron microscope (FEI, Limeil-Brevannes, France) at an operating voltage of 200 kV. Biochemical features, such as oxidase, catalase, API 50CH, 20A and ZYM strips (bioMérieux, Marcy l’Étoile, France), were investigated according to the manufacturer’s instructions. Cellular fatty acids were analysed from two samples prepared with approximately 10 mg of bacterial biomass each collected from several culture plates. Fatty acid methyl esters were prepared as described [14] and gas chromatography mass spectrometry (GC/MS) analyses were carried out as described previously [15].

Antibiotic susceptibility
Antibiotic susceptibility was tested with the diffusion method according to the CASFM/EUCAST 2015 recommendations for fastidious anaerobes (http://www.sfm-microbiologie.org/UserFiles/files/casfm/CASFM_EUCAST_V1_2015.pdf) using a suspension of 1 McFarland on Wilkins Chalgren agar (Sigma using a bacterial dilution with a turbidity equivalent to the McFarland 1.0 standard. Wilkins Chalgren agar (Sigma, Aldrich, Steinheim, Germany) supplemented with 5% sheep blood was used for the experiment. Incubations were done in anaerobic conditions at 37°C, and reading was done at 48 hours using the Sirscan system (i2a, Montpellier, France) and eye controlled.

Genome sequencing, annotation and comparison
DNA extraction, in view of whole-genome sequencing, consisted of growing the species on Columbia agar supplemented with 5% sheep’s blood (bioMérieux) at 37°C in an anaerobic atmosphere. Bacteria grown on three petri dishes were collected and resuspended in 4 × 100 μL Tris-EDTA (TE) buffer. Then 200 μL of this suspension was diluted in 1 mL TE buffer for lysis treatment that included a 30-minute incubation with 2.5 μg/μL lysozyme at 37°C, followed by an overnight incubation with 20 μg/μL proteinase K at 37°C [16]. As previously described [10,15,17], our genomic platform uses a protocol including proteinase K incubated overnight in order to digest contaminating proteins. Extracted DNA was then purified using three successive phenol–chloroform extractions and ethanol precipitations at −20°C overnight. After centrifugation, the DNA was resuspended in 160 μL TE buffer. The whole genome was then sequenced using the MiSeq Technology (Illumina, San Diego, CA, USA) with the mate-pair strategy as previously described [17]. Open reading frames (ORFs) were predicted using Prodigal [18] with default parameters, but the predicted ORFs were excluded if they were spanning a sequencing gap region (contain N). The predicted bacterial protein sequences were searched against the Clusters of Orthologous Groups (COGs) database using BLASTP (E value 1e-03, coverage 0.7 and identity percentage 30%). If no hit was found, a search was performed against the NR database using BLASTP with an E value of 1e-03, coverage 0.7 and identity percentage of 30%. If the sequence lengths were smaller than 80 aa, we used an E value of 1e-05. The tRNAscanSE tool [19] was used to find tRNA genes, whereas ribosomal RNAs were found by using RNAmmer [20]. Lipoprotein signal peptides and the number of transmembrane helices were predicted using Phobius [21]. ORFans, sequences that did not blast in the BLASTP program to a known sequence, have been defined by sequences with an E value smaller than 1e-3 in case of a sequence length higher than 80 aa, and an E value smaller than 1e-5 in case of a sequence length smaller than 80 aa. Such parameter thresholds have already been used in previous works to define ORFans [22]. For each selected genome, the complete genome sequence, proteome genome sequence and Orfeome genome sequence were retrieved from the National Center for Biotechnology Information (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/news/08-26-2014-new-genomes-FTP-live/). All proteomes were
analysed with proteinOrtho [23]. Then for each couple of genomes a similarity score was computed. This score is the mean value of nucleotide similarity between all couples of orthologues between the two genomes studied (AGIOS) [24]. An annotation of the entire proteome was performed to define the distribution of the functional classes of predicted genes according to the COGs of proteins (using the same method as for the genome annotation). Annotation and comparison processes were performed in the Multi-Agent software system DAG-OBAH [25], which include Figenix libraries [26] that provide pipeline analysis.

Results

Classification and features

Type strain GD1\textsuperscript{T} was first isolated after 10 days’ anaerobic incubation of the stool sample in the presence of sheep’s blood, after thermal shock, and then cultivated on Columbia agar supplemented with 5% sheep’s blood under anaerobic conditions. MALDI-TOF spectrum of GD1\textsuperscript{T} did not match anything in our database or Brucker’s database, even though there was no background noise (Figs. 1 and 2). 16S sequencing of the subunit of rRNA shows complete sequence of 1476 pb, with nucleotide BLAST results indicating \textit{Ruminococcus torques} JCM6553 as the most closely cultured species, at 93.8% (Fig. 3). This result allowed us to define a new genus according to the thresholds delimited by Stackebrandt and Ebers [13]. The GD1\textsuperscript{T} 16S rRNA accession number from the EBI Sequence Database is LN828944. A gel view was performed in order to observe the spectra differences of \textit{Drancourtella massiliensis} with other close bacteria (Fig. 2).

Tested culture conditions have identified optimal growth at 37°C after 48 hours under anaerobic conditions, but a little growth appeared in microaerophilic conditions, suggesting a relative oxygen tolerance. The pH range for growth is 6.5 to 7.0, and NaCl concentration needs to be lower than 10 g/L. The GD1\textsuperscript{T} strain appears to be approximately 2 mm in size, homogeneous, translucent and smooth, nonhemolytic, nonmotile, with spore-forming activity colonies. Gram colouration was

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{mass_spectrum}
\caption{Reference mass spectrum from \textit{Drancourtella massiliensis} strain GD1\textsuperscript{T}. Spectra from 12 individual colonies were compared and reference spectrum generated.}
\end{figure}
positive, and bacteria demonstrated a bacilli aspect under the microscope (Fig. 4). Electronic microscopy revealed small rods about 500 nm in size (Fig. 5). Classification and principal phenotypic features are listed in Table 1. Catalase and oxidase production reactions were negatives. Using an API 50CH strip, positive reactions were observed for D-ribose, methyl-α-D-glucopyranoside and D-turanose and for potassium 5-ketogluconate. Negative reactions were observed for all others. Using an API 20A strip, all reactions were negative. Using an API ZYM strip, reactions were positive for leucine arylamidase, valine arylamidase, cysteine arylamidase, naphthol-AS-BI-phosphohydrolase, β-galactosidase and N-acetyl-β-glucosaminidase and were negative for others. The differences of characteristics compared with other representatives of the family Ruminococcaceae are detailed in Table 2. The major fatty acids detected (16:0 and 14:0) are saturated species. The GC/MS results indicated lower amounts of unsaturated acids and other saturated compounds (Table 3).

Concerning susceptibility on β-lactam, the GD1T strain was susceptible to gentamicin and resistant to tobramycin and amikacin. GD1T strain was resistant to sulfamethoxazole, aztreonam, ciprofloxacin and ofloxacin, and susceptible to imipenem, fosfomycin, clindamycin, metronidazole, rifampicin and colistin.

Genomic characterization and comparison

The genome is 3 057 334 bp long with 45.24% G + C content (Table 4). It is composed of seven scaffolds (composed of seven contigs). On the 2925 predicted genes, 2861 were protein-coding genes, and 64 were RNAs (two genes are 5S rRNA, two genes are 16S rRNA, three genes are 23S rRNA and 57 genes are tRNA genes). A total of 1969 genes (68.82%) were assigned as putative function (by COGs or by NR BLAST). Seventy-eight genes (2.73%) were identified as ORFans. The remaining genes (703 genes, 24.57%) were annotated as hypothetical proteins. Table 5 summarizes the distribution of genes into COGs functional categories. The genome sequence has been deposited in GenBank under accession number CVPG00000000.

The draft genome sequence of Drancourtella massiliensis (3.05 Mb) is smaller than those of Ruminococcus gnavus, Clostridium scindens, Coprococcus comes and Dorea formicigenerans (3.72, 3.62, 3.24 and 3.19 Mb respectively) but larger than those of...
Eubacterium ventriosum (2.87 Mb). The G + C content of Drancourtella massiliensis is smaller than those of Clostridium scindens (45.24 and 46.35% respectively), but larger than those of Ruminococcus gravis, Coprococcus comes, Dorea formicigenerans and Eubacterium ventriosum (42.52, 42.49, 40.97 and 34.92% respectively). The gene content of Drancourtella massiliensis is smaller than those of Ruminococcus gravis, Clostridium scindens, Coprococcus comes and Dorea formicigenerans (2861, 3762, 3995, 3913 and 3277 respectively) but larger than those of Eubacterium ventriosum (2802). Figures 6 and 7.
Differential characteristics of Nucleotide content and gene count levels of Drancourtella massiliensis strain GD1\textsuperscript{T}, Ruminococcus torques ATCC27756 and Ruminococcus lactaris ATCC29176

| Property                  | Term                        | Current classification | Domain: Bacteria | Phylum: Firmicutes | Class: Clostridia | Order: Clostridales | Family: Ruminococcaceae | Genus: Drancourtella |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Gram stain                |                             | Positive               |                  |                   |                   |                   |                        |                     |
| Cell shape                |                             | Rod                    |                  |                   |                   |                   |                        |                     |
| Motility                  |                             | Nonmotile              |                  |                   |                   |                   |                        |                     |
| Sporulation               |                             | Sporulating            |                  |                   |                   |                   |                        |                     |
| Temperature range         |                             | Mesophilic             |                  |                   |                   |                   |                        |                     |
| Optimum temperature       |                             | 37°C                   |                  |                   |                   |                   |                        |                     |

**TABLE 2.** Total cellular fatty acid composition

| Fatty acids | IUPAC name                   | Mean relative %a         |
|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 16:0        | Hexadecanoic acid            | 39.5 ± 4.1               |
| 16:1n9      | 9-Octadecenoic acid          | 21.4 ± 9.6               |
| 16:1n7      | 9-Hexadecenoic acid          | 8.2 ± 5.2                |
| 18:0        | Octadecenoic acid            | 6.3 ± 0.9                |
| 18:1n7      | 11-Octadecenoic acid         | 6.2 ± 1.6                |
| 13:0        | Tridecanoic acid             | 3.8 ± 0.5                |
| 12:0        | Dodecanoic acid              | 3.3 ± 1.8                |
| 12:4        | 9,12-Octadecadienoic acid    | 3.2 ± 0.8                |
| 14:1n9      | 9-Tetradecenoic acid         | 2.7 ± 0.4                |
| 12:0        | Dodecanoic acid              | 1.4 ± 0.8                |
| 15:0        | Pentadecanoic acid           | 1.4 ± 0.8                |
| 5:0 anteiso  | 2-methyl-butanolic acid      | TR                       |
| 15:0n13     | 12-methyl-tetradecenoic acid | TR                       |
| 14:1n5      | 10-Pentadecenoic acid        | TR                       |
| C14:03OH    | 3-hydroxy-Tridecanoic acid   | TR                       |
| 17:0        | Heptadecanoic acid           | TR                       |

TR, trace amounts (<1%).

*Mean peak area percentage calculated from analysis of FAMEs in three sample preparations ± standard deviation (n = 3).

**TABLE 3.** Number of genes associated with 25 general COGs functional categories

| Code | Value | % of total* | Description |
|------|-------|-------------|-------------|
| J    | 744   | 28.38       | Translation |
| A    | 390   | 14.53       | RNA processing and modification |
| K    | 354   | 13.11       | Transcription |
| L    | 60    | 2.35        | Replication, recombination and repair |
| B    | 54    | 2.08        | Chromatin structure and dynamics |
| D    | 43    | 1.64        | Cell cycle control, mitosis and meiosis |
| Y    | 10    | 0.39        | Nuclear structure |
| V    | 27    | 1.04        | Defense mechanisms |
| T    | 26    | 0.98        | Signal transduction mechanisms |
| M    | 5     | 0.21        | Cell wall/membrane biogenesis |
| N    | 1     | 0.04        | Cell motility |
| Z    | 1     | 0.04        | Cytoskeleton |
| W    | 1     | 0.04        | Extracellular structures |
| U    | 1     | 0.04        | Intracellular trafficking and secretion |
| O    | 1     | 0.04        | Post-translational modification, protein turnover, chaperones |
| C    | 1     | 0.04        | Energy production and conversion |
| G    | 1     | 0.04        | Carbohydrate transport and metabolism |
| E    | 1     | 0.04        | Amino acid transport and metabolism |
| F    | 1     | 0.04        | Nucleotide transport and metabolism |
| H    | 1     | 0.04        | Coenzyme transport and metabolism |
| I    | 1     | 0.04        | Lipid transport and metabolism |
| P    | 1     | 0.04        | Inorganic ion transport and metabolism |
| Q    | 1     | 0.04        | Secondary metabolites biosynthesis, transport and catabolism |

**TABLE 4.** Nucleotide content and gene count levels of genome

| Attribute                  | Value | % of total* |
|----------------------------|-------|-------------|
| Size (bp)                  | 3 057 334 | 100        |
| G + C content (bp)         | 1 383 137 | 45.24      |
| Coding region (bp)         | 2 772 730 | 90.7       |
| Total genes                | 2992   | 100         |
| RNA genes                  | 64     | 2.18        |
| Protein-coding genes       | 2861   | 97.81       |
| Genes with function prediction | 1763   | 61.62  |
| Genes assigned to COGs     | 425    | 8.56        |
| Genes with peptide signals | 664    | 23.2        |
| Genes with Pfam domains    | 2693   | 92.0        |

COGs, Clusters of Orthologous Groups database.

*Total is based on either the size of the genome in base pairs or the total number of protein coding genes in the annotated genome.
Conclusion

Anaerobic conditions of culturomics have permitted the culture of the first strain of the new genus Drancourtella. Taxogenomics studies confirmed this species to be Drancourtella massiliensis gen. nov., sp. nov.

Taxonomic and nomenclatural proposals

Description of Drancourtella {text cut Here}
Oxidase and catalase were negative. Positive reactions were observed for D-ribose, methyl-α-D-glucopyranoside, D-turanose and for potassium 5-ketogluconate, leucine arylamidase, valine arylamidase, cysteine arylamidase, naphthol-AS-BI-phosphohydrolase, β-galactosidase and N-acetyl-β-glucosaminidase. Resistance for ceftriaxone, ceftazidime, tobramycin, amikacin, sulfamethoxazole, aztreonam, ciproflaxacin and ofloxacin was observed.

**TABLE 6.** Pairwise comparison of *Drancourtella massiliensis* (upper right) with eight other species using GGDC, formula 2 (DDH estimates based on identities/HSP length)*a*

|                  | *D. formicicierenans* | *E. ventriosum* | *C. comes* | *R. gnavus* | *C. scindens* | *Drancourtella massiliensis* |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| *D. formicicierenans* | 100% ± 00             | 32.8% ± 2.56    | 39.4% ± 2.70 | 25.6% ± 2.59 | 22.8% ± 2.62  | 22.9% ± 2.56                |
| *E. ventriosum*    | 100% ± 00             | 38.9% ± 2.56    | 32.2% ± 2.55 | 28% ± 2.54   | 25.5% ± 2.53   | 21.5% ± 2.56                |
| *C. comes*         | 100% ± 00             | 23.1% ± 2.58    | 25.7% ± 2.58 | 22.2% ± 2.56 |                |                            |
| *R. gnavus*        | 100% ± 00             | 20% ± 2.58      | 22.2% ± 2.57 |                |                |                            |
| *C. scindens*      | 100% ± 00             | 22.2% ± 2.57    |              |                |                |                            |
| *Drancourtella massiliensis* | 100% ± 00          | 100% ± 00      |              |                |                |                            |

DDH, DNA-DNA hybridization; GGDC, Genome-to-Genome Distance Calculator; HSP, high-scoring segment pairs.

*a*Confidence intervals indicate inherent uncertainty in estimating DDH values from intergenomic distances based on models derived from empirical test data sets (which are always limited in size). These results are in accordance with 16S rRNA (Fig. 3) and phylogenomic analyses as well as GGDC results.

Oxidase and catalase were negative. Positive reactions were observed for D-ribose, methyl-α-D-glucopyranoside, D-turanose and for potassium 5-ketogluconate, leucine arylamidase, valine arylamidase, cysteine arylamidase, naphthol-AS-BI-phosphohydrolase, β-galactosidase and N-acetyl-β-glucosaminidase. Resistance for ceftriaxone, ceftazidime, tobramycin, amikacin, sulfamethoxazole, aztreonam, ciproflaxacin and ofloxacin was observed.

**TABLE 7.** Numbers of orthologous protein shared between genomes (upper right) and average percentage similarity of nucleotides corresponding to orthologous protein shared between genomes (lower left) and numbers of proteins per genome (bold)

|                  | *D. formicicierenans* | *E. ventriosum* | *C. comes* | *R. gnavus* | *C. scindens* | *Drancourtella massiliensis* |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| *D. formicicierenans* | 3277                  | 987             | 1194        | 1234         | 1337           | 1235                        |
| *E. ventriosum*    | 2802                  | 870             | 954         | 946          | 922            | 902                         |
| *C. comes*         | 71.29                 | 65.98           | 3913        | 1075         | 1144           | 1082                        |
| *R. gnavus*        | 69.73                 | 65.47           | 70.00       | 3763         | 1269           | 1202                        |
| *C. scindens*      | 70.87                 | 63.52           | 68.76       | 69.15        | 3995           | 1266                        |
| *Drancourtella massiliensis* | 68.07              | 63.73           | 68.96       | 69.31        | 68.68          | 2861                        |

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This strain exhibited a G + C content of 45.24%. Its 16S rRNA sequence was deposited in GenBank under accession number LN828944, and the whole genome shotgun sequence was deposited in GenBank under accession number CVPG00000000. The type strain GD1T (= CSUR P1506 = DSM 100357) was isolated from the fecal flora of a healthy patient in France.

Acknowledgements

The authors thank the Xegen Company (http://www.xegen.fr) for automating the genomic annotation process. This study was funded by the Fondation Méditerranée Infection. We thank K. Griffiths for English-language review and C. Andrieu for administrative assistance.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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