



Evaluation of Conventional, Immunological and Molecular Methods for the Diagnosis of Human Giardiasis

Thesis

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Abstract

The present study was carried out on a total of 85 cases presenting with symptoms that might be suggestive of intestinal giardiasis. All stool samples were subjected to: a) microscopical examination using direct wet smear, concentration technique and Iron Hematoxylin (Fe-Hx) staining. b) Direct immunofluorescent assay (DFA). c) DNA extraction followed by a PCR, using nested primers specific for *Giardia*.

Considering the nested PCR (nPCR) as the gold standard test, sensitivity of stool microscopy using the direct examination and concentration technique and that of stool microscopy using permanent Iron Hematoxylin stain was found to be 66.7% and 72.9% respectively with a statistically significant difference. While the sensitivity of DFA was 85.4% in detection of *Giardia* infection with a statistically significant difference compared with the nested PCR. No false positive results were recorded; therefore, specificity for all tests used was 100%.

Key Words:

Giardia, microscopy, stain, DFA, nested PCR.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ab	antibody
Ag	antigen
bg	β- giardin
bp	Base pair
cDNAs	Complementary Deoxyribonucleic acid
CTC	5-cyano-2, 3-ditolyl tetrazolium chloride
CVID	common variable immunodeficiency
DFA	direct immunofluorescent assay
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
DNase	Deoxyribonuclease
dNTP	deoxynucleotide triphosphates
EB dye	Ethidium bromide
EDTA	ethylenediaminetetraacetate
Ef-1α	elongation factor-1alpha
EIA	Enzyme immunoassay
ELISA	enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay
EPCR	extended PCR
ER	endoplasmic reticulum
ES	Ecostain
ESV	encystation-specific secretory vesicles
Fe-Hx	Iron haematoxylin stain
FITC	Fluorescein isothiocyanate
G	<i>Giardia lamblia</i>
G+, P-	Positive <i>Giardia</i> , Negative Parasites

G-, P+	Negative <i>Giardia</i> , Positive Parasites
G-, P-	Positive <i>Giardia</i> , Negative Parasites
gdh	glutamate dehydrogenase
glorfc4	G. lamblia open reading frame c4
gp60	glycoprotein 60
GSA	<i>Giardia</i> stool antigen
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus/ cquired immunodeficiency syndrome
IFA	Immunofluorescence assays
IFN- γ	interferon- γ
IC	Immunochromatography
Ig	Immunoglobulin
IIF	Indirect immunofluorescence assay
IL	Interleukin
KCB	Chlorazol black E stain
LAMP	Loop-Mediated Isothermal Amplification
mAbs	Monoclonal antibodies
MIF	Merthiolate (thimerosal)-iodine-formalin
N	Nuclei
n	number
NO	Nitric oxide
n(PCR)	Nested PCR
O&P	Ova and Parasite
P	Parasite
pAbs	Polyclonal antibodies
PBS	phosphate buffered saline

PCI	phenol/chloroform/isoamyl alcohol
PCR	Polymerase chain reaction
PCR-RFLP	PCR-restriction fragment length polymorphism
PVA	Polyvinyl alcohol
PVs	peripheral vacuoles
qPCR	Quantitative Polymerase Chain Reaction
RFLP	Restriction fragment length polymorphism
RNase	Ribonuclease
ROS	Reactive oxygen species
RT-PCR	Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction
SAF	Sodium acetate-acetic acid-formalin
ssu-rRNA	small subunit ribosomal RNA
TAE buffer	Tris-Acetate EDTA buffer
TNF α	Tumor necrosis factor α
tpi	Triose phosphate isomerase
Tris-HCl	Tris Hydrochloride Buffer
TRITC	Tetra methyl rhodamine isothiocyanate
UV	Ultra-violet
VSPs	Variant specific surface proteins
WHO	World health Organization
WT	Wheatley trichrome stain
XLA	X-linked agammaglobulinemia

List of Figures

Figure 1: <i>Giardia intestinalis</i> trophozoites in a Giemsa stained mucosal imprint (x1000).....	8
Figure 2: Schematic diagram showing the arrangements of cell structures in the interphase <i>Giardia</i>	9
Figure 3: <i>Giardia</i> trophozoites observed by scanning electron microscopy (SEM).	10
Figure 4: Routine preparation for transmission electron microscopy of <i>G. lamblia</i> trophozoite.....	12
Figure 5: Cyst of <i>Giardia lamblia</i> stained with iodine	13
Figure 6: Life cycle of <i>Giardia duodenalis</i>	16
Figure 7: Mucosal surface of the small intestine of a gerbil infested with <i>Giardia</i> protozoa.....	17
Figure 8: The ultrastructural morphology of a <i>Giardia</i>	18
Figure 9: High-power of small bowel mucosa showing <i>Giardia</i> trophozoites.....	46
Figure 10: Schematic diagram of direct and indirect labeled fluorescent antibody techniques.....	53
Figure 11: Schematic diagram of PCR.....	64
Figure 12: Nested PCR.	68
Figure 13: photograph showing the used electric centrifuge apparatus.....	80
Figure 14: Iron Hematoxylin stain solutions.....	82
Figure 15: <i>Cryptosporidium/Giardia</i> Fecal DFA Kit.	88
Figure 16: Fluorescent Microscope Olympus BH 2.	88
Figure 17: photograph showing patient's stool specimen spreaded to the slide area using the transfer loop.	91
Figure 18: photograph showing three tested samples after addition of the conjugate and counter stain before incubation in a light-protected area	91

Figure 19: photograph showing Microcentrifuge used for DNA extraction.	101
Figure 20: photograph showing Hot plate used for DNA extraction.....	101
Figure 21: QIAamp DNA Stool Mini Kit.	102
Figure 22: The supernatant and the InhibitEX Tablet after being vortexed together until the tablet was completely suspended.	102
Figure 23: The sample after been centrifuged to pellet stool particles and inhibitors bound to InhibitEX matrix.	103
Figure 24: photograph showing thermal cycler used in DNA amplification.....	105
Figure 25: photograph showing Ultra-violet transillumination lamp.	110
Figure 26: photograph showing gel electrophoresis apparatus used for separation of DNA fragments	111
Figure 27: Sex distribution among different patient groups according to microscopic fecal examination.....	114
Figure 28: Age distribution among group I patients (G+, P-) according to microscopic fecal examination (n=35).....	115
Figure 29: Age distribution among group II patients (G-, P+) according to microscopic fecal examination (n=27).....	116
Figure 30: Age distribution among group III (G-P-) according to microscopic fecal examination (n=23).	117
Figure 31: Clinical presentations of all cases (n=85).....	119
Figure 32: Clinical presentations in group I (G+, P-) (n=35).	119
Figure 33: Clinical presentations in group II (G-, P+) (n=27).....	120
Figure 34: Clinical presentations in group III (G-, P-) (n=23).	121
Figure 35: <i>Giardia trophozoite</i> stained with iodine as detected in stool sample (x400)	123
Figure 36: <i>Giardia cyst</i> stained with iodine as detected in stool sample (x400)..	123

Figure 37: <i>Giardia</i> trophozoite stained with Iron Hematoxylin stain as detected in stool sample (x1000).	124
Figure 38: <i>Giardia</i> cyst stained with Iron Hematoxylin stain as detected in stool sample (x1000).	124
Figure 39: Parasites detected in fecal samples of group II (G-, P+) using parasitological examination.	126
Figure 40: <i>Giardia</i> cysts as detected by IFA in stool sample (x400).	127
Figure 41: <i>Giardia</i> positive cases detected by IFA in group I.	129
Figure 42: An ethidium bromide stained agarose electrophoresis showing the extended PCR product of <i>Giardia lamblia</i> .	130
Figure 43: An ethidium bromide stained agarose electrophoresis showing the nested PCR product of <i>Giardia lamblia</i> .	131
Figure 44: An ethidium bromide stained agarose electrophoresis showing the extended and nested PCR product respectively	132
Figure 45: <i>Giardia</i> positive cases detected by Nested PCR in group I	134
Figure 46: Positivity of giardiasis among the study population (n=85) as detected by parasitological, immunological and molecular methods.	139
Figure 47: Sex distribution among <i>Giardia</i> positive cases using PCR.	141
Figure 48: Age distribution among the <i>Giardia</i> positive cases using PCR.	142
Figure 49: Clinical presentation in <i>Giardia</i> positive cases (n=48) using PCR.	143

List of Tables

Table 1: <i>Giardia duodenalis</i> assemblages and their distribution in mammalian	6
Table 2: List of the targets, type of assay and main use of amplification-based techniques for <i>Cryptosporidium</i> and <i>Giardia</i>	67
Table 3: Sex distribution among different patient groups according to microscopic fecal examination.	113
Table 4: Age distribution among group I patients (G+, P-) according to microscopic fecal examination.....	115
Table 5: Age distribution among group II patients (G-, P+) according to microscopic fecal examination.....	116
Table 6: Age distribution among group III (G-P-) according to microscopic fecal examination.	117
Table 7: Clinical presentations among different patient groups.	118
Table 8: Parasites detected in fecal samples of group II (G-, P+) using parasitological examination.....	125
Table 9: IFA results showing <i>Giardia</i> positive and <i>Giardia</i> negative cases among different groups of stool samples according to parasitological examination.....	128
Table 10: Nested PCR results showing <i>Giardia</i> positive and <i>Giardia</i> negative cases	133
Table 11: Demographic data, clinical data and results of conventional stool examination, IFA and Nested PCR assays of group I (n=35).....	135
Table 12: Demographic data, clinical data and results of conventional stool examination, IFA and Nested PCR assays of group II (n=27).	137
Table 13: Demographic data, clinical data and results of conventional stool examination, IFA and Nested PCR assays of group III (n=23).	138
Table 14: Sex distribution among <i>Giardia</i> positive and negative cases using PCR.	140

Table 15: Age distribution among <i>Giardia</i> positive and negative cases using PCR.	142
Table 16: Results of <i>Giardia</i> detection using the direct and concentration technique	144
Table 17: Results of <i>Giardia</i> detection using the permanent Iron Hematoxylin stain	145
Table 18: Results of <i>Giardia</i> detection using DFA	146
Table 19: Results for <i>Giardia</i> detection using the permanent Iron Hematoxylin stain	147

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Aim of Work	3
Review of literature	4
<i>Giardia</i> classification	4
<i>Giardia</i> species.....	5
Morphology.....	8
Life cycle.....	15
Pathophysiology.....	17
Clinical features	20
Epidemiology of Giardiasis	22
Immunology	25
Diagnosis of Giardiasis	34
Patients and Methods	74
Results	112
Discussion	149
Conclusion.....	185
Recommendations	187
Summary	189
References	192
Arabic Summary.....	227

Introduction

Giardia intestinalis (syn. *G. duodenalis*, *G. lamblia*) is flagellated, protozoan parasite and a leading cause of a human diarrheal disease worldwide (Asher *et al.*, 2012). The prevalence of giardiasis is 2 to 5% in developed countries and 20 to 30% in developing countries (Júlio *et al.*, 2012).

Infection is transmitted by the ingestion of cysts, which are the parasitic stages that resist chlorination and can remain viable for several weeks (Nguyen *et al.*, 2012). Most infected people remain asymptomatic, which contributes to the spread of the disease. In some cases, especially in children, infection can lead to a wide range of symptoms, including abdominal discomfort and watery diarrhea; in severe cases, malnutrition, malabsorption and disruption of the weight curve may be observed (Escobedo and Cimerman, 2007).

Traditional diagnostic methods are fecal smears and must include concentration procedures along with specific staining techniques for proper microscopic detection and identification of the parasite. However, these methods are laborious, time consuming and require specialized trained personnel. In addition, microscopic examination of three consecutive samples on different days is required to achieve sensitivity up to 85% (Schuurman *et al.*, 2007; Chakarova, 2010 and Goñi *et al.*, 2012).

In recent years, antigen detection immunoassays, such as enzyme immunoassays (EIAs) and immunochromatography (IC) and immunofluorescence assays (IFA) to detect *Giardia* have been developed. IFA have the advantage of improving the sensitivity for detection of

giardiasis however, they are expensive and are not routinely applied in all laboratories (**Chavez, 2008**).

Molecular techniques to detect *Giardia* are now available for research purposes and several studies recommended their use to diagnose giardiasis (**Goñi *et al.*, 2012**).

Aim of Work

The aim of the present work was to evaluate different laboratory investigative methods for diagnosis of giardiasis in human cases.

Objectives:

- 1- Evaluate the usefulness of different diagnostic techniques; Conventional microscopy, Immunodiagnosis by Direct immnnofluorescent assay (DFA) and Molecular diagnosis using the nested PCR for identification of giardiasis.
- 2- Compare the sensitivity, specificity, cost and feasibility of each method.