

## Molecular detection of Contagious Pustular Dermatitis Virus (CPDV) isolated from infected Sheep and Goats in Qaliubeya Governorate, Egypt

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### Abstract

Contagious Pustular Dermatitis Virus (CPDV) of genus parapoxvirus, subfamily Chordopoxvirinae, family Poxviridae, causes Contagious Pustular Dermatitis in sheep and goats worldwide and in Egypt. Forty samples of skin lesions from suspected 30 sheep and 10 goats from different areas of Qaliubeya governorate were subjected to virus isolation on embryonated chicken eggs (ECE), antigen detection using agar gel immune-diffusion test (AGIDT) and indirect-Immunofluorescence assay (IFA) and molecular detection of viral DNA using PCR. Positive results were showed in 36 of samples (28/30 of sheep samples and 8/10 of goat samples) upon isolation on ECE by the 3<sup>rd</sup> passage and 22 of samples (17/28 of sheep isolates and 5/8 of goat isolates) using AGIDT and indirect-IFA. PCR detection showed positive results with 30 /40 of samples before isolation (23/30 and 7/10 of sheep and goat samples, respectively) while it showed positive results with 26 /36 of samples upon isolation (20/28 and 6/8 of sheep and goat samples, respectively). It was concluded that AGIDT and indirect-IFA were suitable methods for CPDV detection but PCR was most specific and sensitive diagnostic tool for rapid detection of CPDV.

### Introduction

Contagious Pustular Dermatitis Virus (CPDV) is the prototype of genus parapoxvirus, sub-family Chordopoxvirinae, family Poxviridae. It primarily causes Contagious Pustular Dermatitis (CPD) in goats, sheep, and other ruminants worldwide (Lojkic et al., 2010). CPD is also known as ORF, contagious ecthyma and scabby mouth (Haig and Mercer, 1998). It is characterized by maculopapular then vesicular pustules on the skin around the lips, mouth muzzle, nostrils, teats, and oral mucosa in sheep and goats. The economic loss of the disease is due to unthriftiness of lambs 3-6 months of age and severely affected adult animals (Radostits et al., 2008).

The disease is endemic around the world (Haig and Mercer, 1998 and Billinis et al., 2012). In Egypt CPDV infection occur wherever sheep and goats are found since it

was recorded for the first time (Sabban et al., 1961), then several outbreaks of variable severity were recorded up till now (Gabry, 1987, Ahmed et al., 2001, Eisa et al., 2003, Shemies, 2006 and Mahmoud et al., 2010). The viral genome consists of linear double-stranded DNA that measures 138 kbp in length and contains 132 putative genes most of them are located in the central part of the genome (Mercer et al., 2006). The late transcription factor (VLTF-1) gene has been successfully used for the detection, molecular characterization and phylogenetic analysis of ORFV [Mahmoud et al., 2010].

Laboratory diagnosis of CPDV is based on virus isolation on embryonated chicken egg then identification using electron microscopy, agar gel immune-diffusion (AGIDT) test, immunofluorescence assay (IFA) and Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay (ELISA) [Mangana et al. 2000, Christine et al., 2006, Abu Elzein

and Housawi, 2009 and Mahmoud et al., 2010]. Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) presented a reliable laboratory diagnostic tool for diagnosis of CPDV infections [Sullivan et al., 1994, Kottaridi et al., 2006 and Hosamani et al., 2007]. PCR was also successfully used for detection and molecular characterization of Egyptian CPDV isolates [Mahmoud et al., 2010].

The aim of this work is trying to isolate CPDV from the skin samples (scabs and nodules), obtained from suspected sheep and goats in Qaliubeya governorate, in embryonated chicken eggs (ECE) then identification of the isolates using AGIDT, IFA and detection of CPDV using PCR.

## 2. Material and Methods

### 2.1. Samples:

Forty samples were collected from grassing sheep and goats (30 from sheep and 10 from goats) from different localities in Qaliubeya governorate. Animals were suspected with CPDV infection due to the presence of skin lesions in the form of scabs and nodules on lips especially at its commissures and gums. Scab samples were collected on 50% glycerol buffered saline then kept in 4°C until samples prepared. A 10% suspension of scab in phosphate buffered saline containing 5% of stock antibiotic solution were homogenized with sterile sand in mortars, frozen and thawed for three successive times then centrifuged at 3,000 ×g for 10 minutes and supernatants were stored at -20 °C until used for virus isolation and PCR detection (OIE, 2008).

### 2.2. Embryonated Chicken Egg (ECE):

A total of 360 one day old specific pathogen free ECE were obtained from Koom Osheem farm, El-Fayom governorate, incubated at egg incubator for 9-11 days old and used for CPDV isolation on chorio-

allantoic membrane (CAM) (Tantawi et al., 1979).

### 2.3. Reference CPDV::

It was an ECE adapted virus with a titer of 5 log<sub>10</sub>EID<sub>50</sub>/ml, obtained from virology department, Animal Health Research Institute, Dokki, Egypt. It was used as positive control for both serological tests and PCR.

### 2.4. Reference CPDV antiserum:

Rabbit anti-serum against CPDV was obtained from virology department, Animal Health Research Institute, Dokki, Egypt. It was used for Agar Gel Immuno-Diffusion test (AGIDT) and indirect Immuno-Fluorescence Assay (IFA).

### 2.5. Anti- sheep and anti- goat IgG Conjugates:

Anti-sheep and anti-goat IgGs conjugated with fluorescein isothiocyanate, developed in rabbits were supplied by Sigma immune chemicals and used for indirect Immuno-Fluorescence Assay.

### 2.6. Agar Gel Immuno-Diffusion test (AGIDT):

It was used for detection of CPD viral antigen using reference CPDV antiserum according to Davis and Otema (1981).

### 2.7. Indirect Immuno-Fluorescence Assay (indirect-IFA):

Impression smears from CAM of the specific pathogen free ECE inoculated with the viral samples showing positive results were used for detection of CPD antigen using indirect-IFA. The technique was performed using reference CPDV antiserum and anti-sheep and anti-goat IgGs conjugated with fluorescein isothiocyanate according to Soad et al. (1996).

### 2.8. DNA extraction:

DNA was extracted from the prepared samples of scabs and from the inoculated ECE with pock lesions by using QIAamp DNA Mini kit (QIAGEN) according to the

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manufacturer's instructions, then the extracted DNA was eluted with 100 µl elution buffer and stored at -20 °C until used for PCR.

### 2.9. Polymerase chain reaction (PCR):

PCR was conducted in a 50 µl reaction mixture comprising 25 µl 2 X ReddyMix™ PCR Master mix containing: [75 mM Tris-HCl (pH 8.8), 20 mM (NH<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub> SO<sub>4</sub>, 1.5 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 0.01% Tween 20, 0.2 mM each of dATP, dCTP, dGTP, dTTP, 1.25 U Thermoprime Plus DNA polymerase and red dye for electrophoresis (ABgene)]; 20 pmol from each forward and reverse primer, 2 µl template DNA and appropriate amount of PCR grade water. The primers employed were VLTF-1 gene-F (5'-CCT ACT TCT CGG AGT TCA GC-3') and VLTF-1 gene-R (5'-GCA GCA CTT CTC CTC GTA G-3') according to (Kottaridi et al., 2006). The reaction mixture was subjected to 40 amplification cycles under the following conditions: denaturation at 95 °C for 10 seconds, annealing at 47°C for 10 seconds, extension at 72°C for 15 seconds. The amplification cycles were preceded by a

denaturation step at 95 °C for 5 minutes and followed by an extended elongation step at 72 °C for 10 minutes.

### 2.10. Detection of the PCR product:

Amplification products were analysed on 1.5% agarose gel, stained with GelRed™ Nucleic Acid Gel Stain, 10,000X in water (BIOTREND) and then visualized under UV trans-illuminator. A TrackIt™ 100 bp DNA ladder (Invitrogen) was used as DNA base pair marker.

## 3. Results:

### 3.1. Disease picture of suspected cases:

Grazing flocks of sheep and goats from different localities in Qaliubeya Governorate were suspected for CPDV infection during February to September 2012. Animals from both species and sexes between 20 days up to 2 years of age were showing nodules, pustules and scabs on lips, mouth commissures and gums. They suffered loss of appetite, illthriftiness and unwilling to eat or nurse and walk (Fig. 1 and 2).



Fig. (1): Nodule and scabs on the upper lip of CPD suspected sheep.



Fig. (2): scabs on the upper lip of CPD suspected goat.

### 3.2. Isolation on Embryonated Chicken Egg:

Inoculation of the prepared samples from skin lesions on CAM of ECE were positive in

28/30 samples from sheep (93.33%) and 8/10 samples from goats (80.00%) by the 3<sup>rd</sup> passage (Tables 1 and 2). The resulted

signs on inoculated CAM are thickening and presence of pock lesions on the CAM at 6 -7 days post-inoculation.

Table (1): isolation of CPDV suspected samples on Embryonated Chicken Egg (CAM)

Species	Total number of samples	Number of positive samples		
		1 <sup>st</sup> passage	2 <sup>nd</sup> passage	3 <sup>rd</sup> passage
Sheep	30	11	23	28
Goats	10	2	5	8
Total	40	13	28	36

Positive samples showed thickening and presence of pock lesions on the CAM

### 3.3. Serological detection of suspected CPDV isolates using Agar Gel Immuno-Diffusion Test (AGIDT):

Detection of CPD antigen in the suspected isolates using reference CPDV antiserum revealed that 22/36 (61.11%) isolates by embryonated chicken egg inoculation were positive for the presence of

CPD antigen by AGIDT in 17/28 for isolated sheep samples (60.71%) and 5/8 for isolated goat samples (62.50%), (Table 2). The positive result of AGIDT appeared as precipitin line between the CPDV antigen of the isolate and specific reference CPD antiserum.

Table (2): Detection of CPDV isolates from using AGID and IFA

Species	Number of collected samples	Positive samples					
		On ECE Isolation		AGIDT		Indirect IFT	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Sheep	30	28	93.33%	17	60.71%	17	60.71%
Goats	10	8	80.00%	5	62.50%	5	62.50%
Total	40	36	90.00%	22	61.11%	22	61.11%

### 3.4. Serological detection of suspected CPDV isolates using Indirect Immuno-Flourescence Assay (indirect-IFA):

Detection of CPDV proteins in impression smears from the CAM of ECE with suspected isolates using reference CPDV antiserum and anti-sheep and anti-goat IgG conjugates revealed that 22/36 (61.11%) isolates by ECE inoculation were

positive for the presence of CPD antigen by indirect-IFT in 17/28(60.71%) for isolated sheep samples and 5/8(62.50%) for isolated goat samples, (Table 2). Positive result of indirect-IFA appeared as specific yellow green emission form the rounded cells lining the CAM in the impression smears examined under the fluorescent microscope (Fig.3).



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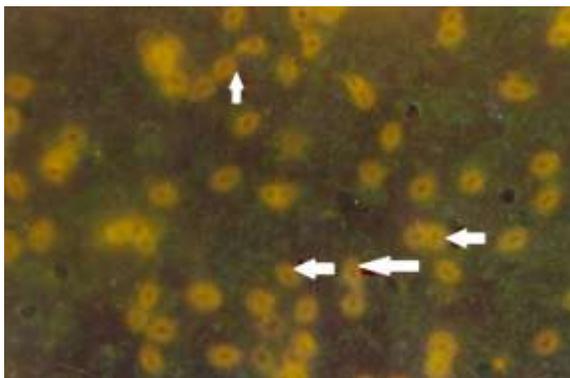


Fig. (3): Specific yellow green fluorescence of rounded cells infiltrated between and under epithelial cells lining CAM impression smears.



Fig. (4): Normal rounded cells infiltrated between and under epithelial cells lining CAM impression smears without any emission.

### 3.4. Detection of nucleic acid of suspected CPDV isolates using Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR):

Viral DNA was extracted from the samples collected from affected animals and also from the chorio-allantoic membranes were screened with PCR. The expected size of PCR product as 392 bp of the VLTF-1 gene of the CPDV was successfully detected in

30 /40 (75.00%) in total samples before isolation (23/30 of sheep samples with 76.66% and 7/10 goat samples with 70.00%) while the PCR detection of CPDV in positive samples upon isolation showed that 26 /36 (72.22%) in total samples after isolation (20/28 of sheep samples with 71.42% and 6/8 goat samples with 75.00%), (Table 3 and Fig. 5).

Table (3): Detection of CPDV using PCR on samples before and after isolation:

Species	Number of samples	Positive samples using PCR directly upon samples		Positive samples on isolation	Positive samples using PCR upon virus isolates	
		No.	%		No.	%
Sheep	30	23	76.66%	28	20	71.42%
Goats	10	7	70.00%	8	6	75.00%
Total	40	30	75.00%	36	26	72.22%

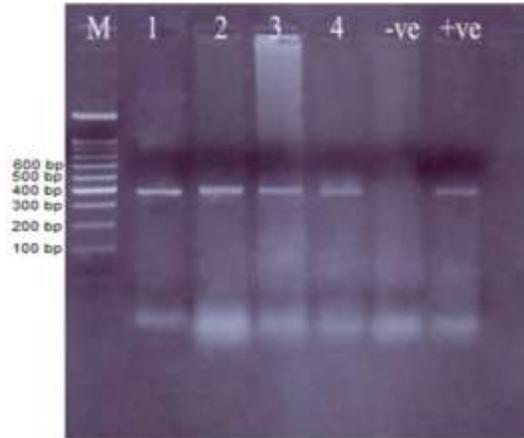


Fig. (5): Electrophoretic pattern of amplified product of VLTF-1 gene of CPDV using PCR in agarose gel (1.5%). Lane (M): 100 bp DNA marker. Lanes (1, 2) demonstrate the 392 bp amplification product from sheep samples. Lanes (3, 4) demonstrate the 392 bp amplification product from goat samples. Lane (-ve) refers to negative control sample of FMDV. Lane (+ve) refers to positive control sample of reference CPDV.

#### 4. Discussion

CPDV also known as Orf, contagious pustular stomatitis and contagious ecthymavirus is an epitheliotropic DNA parapoxvirus with a worldwide distribution that induces acute pustular lesions in the skin of sheep, goats and man (**Haig and Mercer, 1998**). CPDV belong to genus Parapoxvirus, family Poxviridae (**Robinson and Balassu, 1981**). The disease is characterized by Papules, pustules and scabs covering ulceration at oral mucocutaneous junction, oral commissures and spread to muzzle, oral cavity (**Radostits et al. 2008**). Many serological tests were used for diagnosis of CPDV include virus neutralization, complement fixation, and agar gel immunodiffusion (**Zarnke et al., 1983; Tryland et al., 2005**).

This work aimed to isolate CPDV from the scabs and nodules samples collected from infected sheep and goats from Qaliubeya Governorate in specific pathogen free-embryonated chicken eggs then its identification using agar gel immunodiffusion (AGID) test, immunofluorescence technique and PCR.

Virus isolation from prepared samples on CAM of ECE showed that 28/30 (93.33%) from sheep samples and 8/10 (80.00%) from goats samples were positive by the 3<sup>rd</sup> passage with the inoculated CAM showed thickening at 6 -7 days post-inoculation (Tables 1 and 2). These results agreed with (**Mangana et al., 1999, 2000**) who preferred isolation on ECE for its ease of use, simplicity of procedures and equipments required and rapidity with the result appeared within 5 days only, than using cell culture which need more than 14 days to develop a CPE.

Using of AGIDT and indirect-IFA for detection of CPDV antigen after being successfully isolated on ECE showed that 22/36 of the samples (61.11%) were positive for the presence of CPDV antigen, 17/28 (60.71%) for isolated sheep samples and 5/8 (62.50%) for isolated goat samples (Table 2 and Fig. 4 and 5). This result agreed with the results showed that the indirect IFA and AGIPT have been reported to be rapid confirmatory assays for the detection of CPDV inoculated on CAM of ECE that could be used routinely in diagnostic laboratories

(Mazur and Machado, 1990 and Mangana et al., 2000)).

Although virus isolation is considered a gold standard for CPDV detection and AGIDT is a useful method for confirmation of the virus, both are time consuming, laborious and sometimes show lack of sensitivity (Mazur and Machado, 1990, Wittek et al., 1980 and Mangana et al., 2000). Also cross-reactions of CPDV with sheep and goat poxviruses due to serological relationships between these viruses are considered a problem in diagnosis of CPDV (Kitching et al. 1986 and Chand et al. 1994). So, PCR is considered specific, sensitive and rapid tool for detection of CPDV that preferred than the conventional serological techniques.

CPDV genome consists of linear double-stranded DNA that measures 138 kbp in length and contains 132 putative genes most of them are located in the central part of the genome, well conserved and homologous to other poxvirus genes that encode products involved in replication, structure and morphogenesis of the virus. Other genes are located in the terminal regions and encode genes with no homology with other poxvirus sequences, whose products are involved in determination of virus virulence, host range and evasion of the immune response (Mercer et al., 2006). The late transcription factor (VLTF-1) gene has been successfully used for the detection, molecular characterization and phylogenetic analysis of Egyptian CPDV isolates. Phylogenetic analysis of 392 bp fragment of VLTF-1 gene revealed 99% identity with other ORFV strains reported worldwide [Mahmoud et al., 2010].

Viral DNA extracted from prepared samples collected from affected animals and also from that isolates on CAM of ECE were subjected to PCR using specific primers for

the late transcription factor (VLTF-1) gene of CPDV according to (Kottaridi et al., 2006). The expected size of PCR product as 392 bp of the VLTF-1 gene of the CPDV was successfully detected in 23/30 (76.66%) of sheep samples and in 7/10 (70.00%) of goat samples with 30 /40 (75.00%) in total samples before isolation, while the PCR detection of CPDV in positive samples upon isolation showed that 26 /36 (72.22%) in total samples after isolation (20/28 of sheep samples with 71.42% and 6/8 goat samples with 75.00%), (Table 3 and Fig. 5). These results proved superior PCR sensitivity than that of egg inoculation method then detection with indirect-IFT and AGIPT as it detected four more cases which gave negative results with egg inoculation. These results agreed with conclusion that the sensitivity and specificity of the PCR assay is 100% and have considerable potential as a specific, sensitive and rapid diagnostic approach for CPDV detection and differentiation from sheep pox and goat pox viruses directly from skin biopsy samples (Magnana et al., 2000, Kottaridi et al., 2006 and Mahmoud et al., 2010). In conclusion CPDV is best isolated on CAM of embryonated chicken egg and identified using AGID and indirect-IFT while PCR is the most specific and sensitive diagnostic tool for rapid detection of CPDV in skin biopsy samples.

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### الملخص العربي

أيمن سعيد الهبء

قسم الفيروسولوجيا-كلية الطب البيطري بجامعة بنها

ينتمي فيروس مرض التهاب الجلد النفطى المعدى (CPDV) الى جنس Parapoxvirus، تحت عائلة Chordopoxvirinae، عائلة الجدرى Poxviridae، وهو يسبب مرض التهاب الجلد النفطى المعدى فى الأغنام والماعز فى جميع أنحاء العالم وفى مصر. تم جمع ٤٠ عينة من الإصابات الجلدية من أغنام وماعز مشتبهى إصابتها بالمرض من مناطق مختلفة من محافظة القليوبية وأخذت العينات للعزل على بيض الدجاج المخصب (ECE)، والكشف عن أنتيجين الفيروس باستخدام إختبارى الانتشار المناعى الاجار (AGIDT) و الوميض الفلورسنتى المناعى الغير مباشر وكذلك الكشف الجزيئى عن الحمض النووى الفيروسى (DNA) باستخدام إختبار البلمرة المتسلسل (PCR). وقد ظهرت نتائج إيجابية مع ٣٦ عينة (٣٠/٢٨) من عينات الأغنام و ١٠/٨ من عينات الماعز للعزل على بيض الدجاج المخصب بعد التمريرة الثالثة، و مع ٢٢ عينة (٢٨/١٧) من معزولات الأغنام و ٨/٥ من معزولات الماعز) باستخدام إختبارى الانتشار المناعى الاجار (AGIDT) و الوميض الفلورسنتى المناعى الغير مباشر (IFA). أظهر الكشف باستخدام إختبار البلمرة المتسلسل (PCR) نتائج إيجابية مع ٤٠/٣٠ من العينات مباشرة قبل العزلة مع (٣٠/٢٣) من عينات الأغنام و ١٠/٧

من عينات الماعز)، في حين أنها أظهرت نتائج إيجابية مع ٣٦/٢٦ من العينات بعد العزل (٢٨/٢٠ من معزولات الاغنام و ٦/٨ من معزولات الماعز). وقد خلصت النتائج إلى أن إختبارى الانتشار المناعى الأجار (AGIDT) و الوميض الفلورسيتن المناعى الغير مباشر (IFA) من الطرق المناسبة للكشف عن فيروس مرض التهاب الجلد النفطى المعدى (CPDV) ولكن كان إختبار البلمرة المتسلسل (PCR) الأداة الأكثر تخصصا وحساسية للكشف السريع عن فيروس مرض التهاب الجلد النفطى المعدى (CPDV).