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MOLECULAR BIOLOGY IN CLINICAL SETTINGS FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Mohammed Rizvana[1]*, Kadiyala Madhulika[1], Shaik Raziya[1], Adurthy Aditya[2], D. V. Madhavi Kumari[3] and K. Padmalatha[4]

[*1]V Year Pharm.D, Department of Pharmacy Practice, Vijaya Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences for Women, Department of Pharmacy Practice, Enikepadu, Vijayawada - 521 108,3 Andhra Pradesh, India.
[2]Senior Resident, Department of Neurology, Siddhartha Medical College (SMC), Government General Hospital, Vijayawada - 520 008, Andhra Pradesh, India.
[3]Head of Department, Department of Neurology, Siddhartha Medical College (SMC), Government General Hospital, Vijayawada - 520 008, Andhra Pradesh, India.
[4]Principal, Department of Pharmacology, Vijaya Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences for Women, Enikepadu, Vijayawada - 521 108, Andhra Pradesh, India.

***Corresponding Author: Mohammed Rizvana**

V Year Pharm.D, Department of Pharmacy Practice, Vijaya Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences for Women, Department of Pharmacy Practice, Enikepadu, Vijayawada - 521 108,3 Andhra Pradesh, India.

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ABSTRACT

Diagnostic microbiology has been transformed by molecular biological techniques for microbe detection and characterization, which are now a standard aspect of specimen processing. By enabling the quick identification of bacteria that were previously difficult or impossible to detect using conventional microbiological techniques, polymerase chain reaction (PCR) techniques have paved the way for this new era. Fastidious microbes may now be detected, and infections of public health relevance can now be detected more quickly using molecular techniques. Today, molecular techniques have advanced beyond identification to identify genes linked to antibiotic resistance and provide public health data, including strain characterization through genotyping. Viral resistance detection and viral load measurement for tracking antiviral therapy responses have revolutionized the treatment of several bacteria.

INTRODUCTION

Molecular biology has revolutionized the diagnosis, treatment, and management of infectious disease by providing highly sensitive and specific tools for detecting pathogens, understanding their genetic characteristics, and guiding targeted therapies. Traditional diagnostic methods, such as culture-based techniques and serological tests, often suffer from limitations in sensitivity, specificity and turnaround time. In contrast, molecular techniques enable rapid and precise identification of pathogens, drug resistance profiling, and epidemiological surveillance.

A variety of infectious agents can now be quickly identified using molecular techniques thanks to the development of nucleic acid amplification and detection, which has replaced traditional laboratory techniques that depend on the phenotypic expression of antigens or metabolic products. Clinical microbiology labs are increasingly using molecular techniques, especially for the diagnosis of diseases caused by fastidious bacteria and for the identification and characterization of viral infections. Although quick turnaround times, high sensitivity, and specificity are desirable, they must be accompanied by strict validation and quality control.

In the clinical microbiology lab, molecular detection has generally taken the form of PCR technique, which at first involved single-round or nested methods with detection by gel electrophoresis. Nevertheless, molecular laboratories will continue to get more productive and economical with the advent of automation for the several phases of DNA or RNA extraction, amplification, and product detection in addition to real-time PCR. The DNA chip and other microarray technologies will probably make molecular detection even more useful in clinical microbiology labs.

Tables 1 and 2 summarize the clinical uses of molecular techniques for infectious disorders, which will be covered in this work. Applications include the field of virology, where it has been used for regular viral detection as well as resistance testing, genotyping, and viral load measurement. Molecular techniques have been used in the field of bacteriology for resistance testing, the identification of infections caused by picky bacteria, the quicker identification of severe bacterial infections than traditional techniques, and the identification of bacterial infections following the administration of antibiotics. There have also been developments in the fields of mycology and parasitology, such as the quicker detection

of fungal infections in patients who are neutropenic. Additional uses, like identifying biosecurity.

Table 1: Lists instances of molecular techniques used to diagnose infectious illnesses.

Discipline	Examples
Virology	Human herpes virus types 6,7, and 8, cytomegalovirus, Epstein- Barr virus, varicella zoster, and respiratory viruses (including influenza, respiratory syncytial, parainfluenza, adenovirus, and rhinovirus), Enterovirus of virus, mulloscum contagiosum rotavirus, norovirus, HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and enteric adenoviruses
Bacteria	Non tuberculous mycobacteria, T.Whipplei, B. Henselae, genital Mycoplasmata, C. Trachomatis, N. gonorrhoeae, B. pertussis, C. pneumonia, N. meningitidis, and S. pneumoniae
Fungi	Aspergillus species and P. Jiroveci
Parasitology	Plasmodium spp and T. Gondil

Table 2: Lists some applications of molecular techniques in the clinical microbiology lab that go beyond microbe identification.

Test	Examples
Viral load monitoring	Epstein-Barr virus hepatitis B, hepatitis C, Cytomegalovirus, HIV
Viral genotyping	hepatitis B, hepatitis C, HIV, Human papillomavirus
Bacterial resistance detection	ESBL containing E. coli, K. pneumoniae, M. Tuberculosis, VRE and MRSA
Bacterial genotyping	M. Tuberculosis, N. Meningitidis
Broad-range	Infective endocarditic, bacterial meningitis

Virology

Because cell culture techniques are costly, time-consuming in the lab, and require skilled personnel, it has long been difficult to determine whether a person has a viral infection. Additionally, many viruses develop slowly on artificial media, making them challenging to detect. Clinical antibody detection is insufficiently accurate for many viruses, specific anti's eras are difficult to obtain, and serology is ineffective in the early stages of an infection. Virus detection is become simpler because to PCR technology. A brain sample was typically taken in order to diagnose HSV encephalitis because cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) culture and serology had limited accuracy. There is no requirement for a brain biopsy because 1 PCR can detect HSV DNA in CSF with a 95% accuracy rate.[2] Viral meningitis, which is caused by enteroviruses or HSV, can be detected more quickly and precisely by PCR than by culture3 (one day vs. five days). Multiplex PCR for meningitis-causing microorganisms, including HSV.[1]

The detection of blood-borne viruses is facilitated by both PCR and molecular techniques that do not employ PCR. HCV RNA is utilized to identify active infections since HCV antibodies are unable to distinguish between an active infection and a previous one. Blood transfers, organ gifts, needle stick injuries, and parent-to-child transmissions are the only ways that HCV RNA can spread to a kid. Prior to Western Blot serology confirming HIV infection, HIV pro-viral DNA may indicate early HIV infection.6 HIV pro-viral DNA detects vertical transmission in infants. The Australian Red Cross Blood Service uses the Chiron Procleix HIV-1/HCV transcription-driven amplification assay to check for HIV and HCV in samples from all donors. The potentially contagious window is shortened from 22 to 66 days to 9 and 7 days as a result.

PCR testing of amniocentesis fluid can identify intrauterine infection of the fetus with cytomegalovirus (CMV), rubella, and varicella zoster virus. Because PCR is more sensitive than viral culture, it is now frequently used in clinical microbiology labs to detect HSV-related genital ulcers, which is typically caused by an HSV type 2 infections.

Because it prevents hospitalization, reduces unnecessary testing and procedures, directs specific therapy, and uses fewer antibiotics, molecular detection of respiratory viral pathogens from both upper respiratory specimens-such as nasopharyngeal aspirates or throat swabs—and lower respiratory specimens-such as sputum or bronchoalveolar lavage fluid-is cost-effective.[2] It is now possible to test for all the major respiratory viruses and the picky bacterial drivers of pneumonia using large multiplex or tandem PCR tests, which offers a comprehensive yet affordable substitute for traditional detection techniques. These tests can also be used to detect respiratory viruses that are uncommon but important, such as influenza A/H5N1 (avian influenza virus) and the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) coronavirus (SARS-CoV).

PCR testing of respiratory materials for other respiratory viruses was essential during the SARS pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV in order to rule out some suspected cases that met the SARS case description. The capacity of PCR detection to quickly screen for several respiratory viruses made it the most beneficial method. A specialized SARS-CoV PCR has since been created to detect SARS-CoV infection early in the illness with a sensitivity of 50-87%.[3] Although SARS-CoV serology has a 100% sensitivity, its diagnostic utility is restricted in the early stages of the disease, when the danger of transmission is highest.[4]

The necessity of quick viral diagnosis has also been demonstrated by the current avian influenza (H5N1) outbreaks in South East Asia and elsewhere. The 1997 Hong Kong outbreak[5] prompted the development of molecular detection techniques, which have the benefit of being quick and accessible in a variety of clinical microbiology labs. For the micro neutralization assay, which is presently categorized as a Biosafety Level 4 organism in Australia, specific serology requires a live virus. Similarly, monoclonal antibodies specific to influenza type A/H5 are needed for direct immune fluorescence detection.[6]

More infectious diarrhea is caused by viruses than by bacteria or other organisms worldwide. The advancement of PCR detection has enhanced the diagnosis of viral diarrheal illness. PCR is the preferred technique for rotavirus microbiological diagnosis from stool samples. PCR is the most sensitive and quick technique for diagnosing norovirus, a calicivirus that was once known as Norwalk virus and causes widespread epidemics in both the community and medical facilities. Other methods of diagnosis include electron microscopy and enzyme immunoassay. The most sensitive technique for identifying enteric adenoviruses (serotypes 40 and 41) and astroviruses is PCR.[7]

Treatment monitoring

People who have chronic viral diseases now need to have their viral DNA or RNA monitored. The amount of virus can be determined by competitive PCR, real-time PCR, and branched chain DNA signal amplification. Viral load tests are necessary for HIV treatment. It is the primary method of assessing the effectiveness of antiretroviral medications and determining whether the virus is developing resistance, which is indicated by an increase in viral load despite ongoing therapy. HIV viral loads have an impact on outcome and development.18 highly sensitive tests, such as the Cobas Amplicor HIV1 Monitor Ultrasensitive Test, reduce detectable viral levels to 50 copies per milliliter.[8]

Viral load testing evaluates the effectiveness of therapies for persistent HCV and HBV infections. HCV patients with genotype 1 had their HCV RNA viral loads measured while receiving interferon-alpha and ribavirin treatment. In most cases, patients with HCV infection who have received six months of treatment with a combination of medications and are still free of HCV RNA have permanently eradicated the virus. We refer to this as a persistent virological reaction. There is a 75% chance that the virus will persist if, after 12 weeks, there is no HCV genotype 1RNA. After 12 weeks of treatment, if the viral load has decreased 100-fold, there is a 33% likelihood of a sustained virological reaction, even if HCV RNA is still detectable. To determine if patients require antiviral medications such as lamivudine or interferon-alpha and to assess their effectiveness, HBV carriers with active liver disease have their HBV DNA loads examined. Lamivudine-resistant virus types are revealed by increases in HBV viral loads. The detection of CMV infections in HIV-positive recipients of bone marrow or solid organ donations is not possible with conventional culture techniques. The usual method for detecting CMV infection in individuals with compromised immune systems is quantitative PCR, which also provides medication to prevent illness.

Viral Genotyping and Resistance Testing

In addition to viral load testing, HIV genotyping is the gold standard for guiding antiretroviral therapy and detecting drug resistance. Sequences can be examined for resistance mutations in a number of databases, including the Stanford reverse transcriptase and protease database.

The treatment of chronic viral hepatitis also depends on genotyping. Geographically, the six HCV genotypes are spread out across the globe. Every patient who wants to receive treatment must first have their HCV genotyped since it is the single most important factor in determining the efficacy of combination therapy. In contrast to people with genotype 1 HCV infection who receive 12 months of therapy, those with chronic genotype 2 or 3 HCV infections receive 6 months of therapy with a 76% chance of success.[9]

During lamivudine monotherapy, point mutations at the active site of the polymerase gene (YMDD variants) occur with a frequency of 14–32% after one year in phase III studies, and in 42% and 52% of Asian patients after two and three years of therapy, respectively.[10] The emergence of lamivudine resistance is detected by an increase in HBV viral load and confirmed by sequencing the active site of the DNA polymerase gene.[11] Active chronic infections with HBV treated with lamivudine necessitate surveillance for the emergence of lamivudine-resistant viral mutants.

Even when HBeAg, a frequent indicator of active hepatitis in hepatitis B infection, is absent, the presence of HBV pre-core mutations may result in active liver disease. This could be caused by a mutation in the basal core promoter region that down regulates the production of HBeAg or an early stop codon point mutation in the precore gene (G1896A), both of which are only reliably detectable by genotyping.[12]

Nearly all cervical malignancies are now thought to be caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), and HPV genotypes are now categorized as either low-risk or high-risk for causing these cancers. The Papanicaou (Pap) screen has historically been used to screen for pre-neoplastic cytological alterations, but it can also be used to detect high-risk HPV infection. Testing for the 15 high-risk HPV genotypes necessitates molecular techniques because HPV cannot be regularly cultivated in vitro. Signal amplification can be used for detection, as demonstrated by the Digene Hybrid Capture 2 assay, the first FDA-approved diagnostic in vitro test. Specific

RNA probes are used in this assay to target high-risk genotype DNA sequences, which are then identified by an antibody that targets the resulting DNA-RNA hybrids.[13] Target amplification techniques like multiplex PCR can also be used to identify high-risk genotypes, although commercial tests are not currently on the market. The evaluation of equivocal Pap smears to identify women at risk of cervical cancer can be aided by the molecular analysis of these genotypes.[14] On the other hand, a normal Pap smear combined with a negative genetic test for the high-risk genotypes might suggest a longer interval between tests.[15] The significance of this testing is expected to increase with the introduction of a genotype 16 HPV vaccination.

As a result, molecular techniques have advanced beyond the straightforward identification of viral infections to become a crucial part of treating blood-borne viruses and other viral infections.

Bacteriology

Fastidious bacteria

Molecular identification and virology can be used to diagnose diseases caused by difficult-to-find bacteria. Chlamydia trachomatis, Bordetella pertussis, Neisseria gonorrhoeae, and Mycobacterium TB are a few of the challenging microorganisms that negatively impact public health. Non-culture-based molecular testing can identify and address health issues more rapidly than traditional culture-based molecular testing, which can take days or weeks. There are assays for N. gonorrhoeae, C. trachomatosis, and M. tuberculosis for sale. Nucleic acids can be found using the Q replicase system, strand displacement amplification, ligase chain reaction, and transcription-based amplification. The number of sexually transmitted bacteria that have been confirmed in the lab has significantly grown because to molecular identification's greater sensitivity and improved contact tracking capabilities. Men require urine swabs for a sexual health examination, whereas women require speculum exams. People are embarrassed and offended by these, which reduces their likelihood of obeying. Urine from the first stream and self-taken vaginal swabs can be used for genetic testing. More people pass tests with these since they are simpler to use. Despite C. trachomatis. Tests for C. gonorrhoeae in urine are just as sensitive and specific as urethral swabs and invasive specimens for C. trachomatis and N. gonorrhoeae in men. The specificity of cervical and vaginal swabs and a U.S.-approved transcription-mediated amplification test for C. PCR. Trachomatis is the same, but the PCR tests for N. may be aided by self-administered vaginal tests.

The FDA is testing vaginal gonorrhea for C.N. trachomatis. Compared to samples in specialized transport media, molecular techniques that employ dry swabs are simpler to transport to distant locations. This is because it is more difficult to keep samples alive when they are being transported in specialized transport media. The same test can be used by molecular approaches to identify several vaginal illnesses, such as C. trachomatis N.[16]

Mycobacteriology

The advent of molecular technologies has benefited mycobacteriology. It's crucial to remember that molecular detection of M. tuberculosis is one of the rare instances in which traditional culture is still more sensitive. This can be because the extraction technique makes it difficult to remove the DNA from the bacterial cells. Notwithstanding this drawback, molecular detection of M. tuberculosis plays a significant role in pulmonary tuberculosis since it can confirm acid-fast bacilli observed on microscopy with up to 98% sensitivity in a day as opposed to two weeks or longer by culture. With reported sensitivity as low as 40%, smear-negative specimens have a significantly decreased chance of molecular confirmation.[17] Molecular techniques can confirm a positive culture in a day as opposed to roughly four weeks using phenotypic techniques, in addition to direct detection from clinical specimens. Even for smear-negative but culture-positive patients, this has reduced the time needed for laboratory confirmation of suspected tuberculosis.

Molecular techniques for the speciation of the numerous nontuberculous mycobacterial species have also contributed to the advancement of mycobacteriology. The few tests that are currently available are insufficient to distinguish between the many species, and phenotypic approaches are slow. In many labs, this procedure has been made simpler by the 16S rRNA gene's genetic sequencing.[18] Some species, like the quick growth group, need a multi-gene strategy that includes the hsp65, rpoB, and sod genes since they cannot be identified using 16S rRNA gene sequencing alone.[19]

The "gold standard" technique for detecting B. pertussis early in the illness process is PCR, which has supplanted direct fluorescent-antibody and culture due to its much higher sensitivity.[20] Using nasopharyngeal aspirates, PCR identified 48% of clinical patients in one school outbreak of pertussis, while culture verified 5% of cases.[21] Maximum case ascertainment for this pathogen of public health importance is achieved by combining serology for suspected cases late in the illness process with PCR detection early in the disease. Legionella species, Mycoplasma pneumonia, and Chlamydia pneumonia are many other picky respiratory pathogens that can be quickly identified using molecular techniques.

Certain bacteria can only be identified by molecular methods since cultivation is either very challenging or impossible for a standard microbiology lab, or it poses a serious risk to the workers in the lab. Previously, only characteristic histology and electron microscopy-often from post-mortem material-could be used to diagnose Whipple's illness, a rare but ultimately fatal infection caused by Tropheryma whipplei. By detecting T.

whipplei from noninvasive specimens, PCR has made it possible to diagnose endocarditic and neuro-Whipple's illness.[22] Additional instances of how molecular diagnosis might aid in the diagnosis of challenging or uncultivable bacteria include male urethritis caused by Mycoplasma genitalium, Q fever caused by Coxiella burnetii, and cat scratch illness caused by Bartonella henselae. Fenollar and Raoult provide a more thorough explanation of the molecular techniques for diagnosing picky bacteria.[23]

Fast diagnosis of bacteria

It is crucial to receive a prompt evaluation and administer chemoprophylaxis to close friends in order to treat meningococcal disease. PCR might now be able to provide same-day identification from clean site material when paired with culture and other laboratory procedures. Identifying N. meningitis and genotyping B/C strains of the pathogen. Clinical instances of N. meningitidis are categorized as either meningitidis or genosero. Meningitis-causing bacteria have also been swiftly identified. Haemophilus influenzae type B, Streptococcus pneumonia, and N. meningitidis are responsible for 90% of bacterial meningitis cases. They can be detected by multiplex PCR.[24]

Drug resistance

Because it circumvents issues like resistance that alters appearance, genotypic antibiotic resistance identification is attractive. The ability to swiftly and reliably determine the genotype of infection-causing bacteria, such as MRSA and VRE, may prove beneficial. This resistance is demonstrated by the mecA gene of MRSA and other S. aureus strains. By simultaneously examining the mecA and nuc genes, S can be swiftly located. MRSA and aureus from blood cultures that yield positive results. Knowing how to select a medication early on is crucial because MRSA infections cause more deaths than methicillin-sensitive S. aureus infections. Additionally, VRE can be found more quickly and precisely using DNA-based amplification techniques**.** There are currently 44 real-time PCR kits available that can detect VRE and MRSA. The extended spectrum β-lactamases (ESBL) of Klebsiella pneumonia and Escherichia coli are carried by plasmids and transposons. Bacteria containing ESBL can spread rapidly in hospitals, leading to septicemia, urinary tract infections, and wounds. Lab studies are required to identify organisms with the resistance gene because drug sensitivity tests may miss them. The majority of clinical microbiology labs employ quantitative techniques to detect ESBL; however, molecular identification of these point alterations at the -lactamase gene's active region can demonstrate ESBL and specify its kind for worldwide monitoring.[25]

Parasitology and Mycology

When it comes to fungal diseases, molecular testing can occasionally be helpful. Only by examining respiratory tract samples under a microscope can Pneumocystis jiroveci, formerly known as Pneumocystis carinii, be identified. It can cause deadly pneumonia in HIV-positive and immunocompromised individuals. P. jiroveci is frequently detected in samples of calcofluor white or methenamine silver used to designate forced phlegm or bronchoalveolar lavage. Although immunofluorescence is more sensitive than these stains, it is more costly and necessitates specialized equipment. Although PCR is dependable, particularly for those who are HIV-negative, it lacks specificity because the bacterium is a common companion and can be discovered in healthy individuals. Blood-related disorders caused by Aspergillus species can be identified using 18S rRNA gene PCR. Because tissue samples from patients with low platelet counts are difficult to obtain and culture is not good at detecting early indications of illness, this condition is difficult to detect. Antifungal medications are typically costly and hazardous, but the sooner you treat it, the better the results will be. Although it's unclear how Aspergillus PCR may enhance therapy and prognosis, it may make diagnosing the issue easier. Since most parasites cannot be cultured in a lab, they are found through genetic approaches. Toxoplasma gondii can be detected by PCR in amniocentesis fluid to demonstrate a fetal infection49 and in CSF to detect encephalitis. Plasmodium species. However, because PCR is more accurate than microscopy, it can detect malaria in patients whose thick and thin blood films are clear due to partial protection or chemoprophylaxis. Results from the Plasmodium species PCR test can sometimes be inconsistent.[26]

Broad range PCR

Broad-range PCR is more like fishing than focussed PCR when it comes to diagnosing infectious diseases. Primers that match a constant region are used by the 16S rRNA gene in bacteria and the 18S rRNA gene in fungi. A sequence is created from each amplification result and compared to over 9,000 species found online. Every day, the DNA Data Bank of Japan (www.ddbj.nig.ac.jp), EMBL Data Library (www.ebi.ac.uk/embl), and GenBank exchange data, and RIDOM is a top-notch library for mycobacterial speciation using bacterial rDNA sequences. Broad-range PCR and 16S rRNA sequences can be used to identify bacteria in clean samples, such as blood or cerebrospinal fluid, a "molecular petri dish." It was utilized to determine that the bacterium responsible for Whipple's disease in T. whipplei was B. henselae. It can be utilized to determine the cause of endocarditic that is infectious. The bacterial aetiology of this deadly disease must be identified in order to treat it with medicines. When routine blood cultures yield negative results due to the use of antibiotics, this can be challenging to accomplish. The results of a broad-range PCR on excised heart valves, plants, or peripheral blood may indicate a missed diagnosis. Bacterial meningitis is diagnosed using broad-range PCR. The novel SARS virus was discovered using broad-range PCR. Broad-based primers were used to identify unknown viruses in SARS clinical samples. Prior laboratory results that resulted in a particular SARS

CoV PCR within weeks of the initial illness report were supported by the sequences' similarity to the coronavirus genus. Wide-ranging False positive results may result from PCR's potential to amp up DNA from the sample or the PCR equipment, particularly the Tag DNA polymerases. The accuracy of the data while comparing an unknown sequence depends on the caliber of the sequences that have been uploaded to a public library. There is a chance that the matched code is incorrect or shared with an undocumented species.[27]

Community health

By rapidly and precisely determining the etiology of infectious diseases, molecular diagnostics aid in their control. You should rule out other respiratory infections, such as influenza, in order to promptly identify and isolate individuals who may have SARS. This stopped it, even though for a long time there was no method to determine whether someone had the condition. We will have numerous PCR-based testing kits to aid in the rapid detection of the virus in the event that the SARS CoV resurfaces. Though they may now be swiftly identified to separate cases, diarrhea viruses such as noroviruses spread swiftly in hospitals and residential care facilities. The threat of a virus that spreads through the blood can be determined by molecular testing. Healthcare professionals with hepatitis B or C can use PCR testing to determine whether they are at risk of exposure while performing procedures like surgery. Bacterial infections in the public health system are easier to treat using molecular techniques. Traditional and genetic tests are required to prevent the early spread of B. pertussis, M. tuberculosis, and N. meningitidis.

It's probable that point-of-care molecular diagnostics will become accessible in the future, enabling accurate results with quick turnaround times in the field.

Biosecurity

Clostridium botulinum, Yersinia pestis (plague), Bacillus anthracis, and variola major virus (smallpox) are all hazardous biological weapons since they can be undetectable, don't display symptoms for days, and can spread to a large number of people in very small amounts. As many people could be killed by a ton of sarin as by 10g of anthrax spores. We require monitoring systems that are swift, precise, and sensitive because this type of incident could soon get worse. These things are good candidates for real-time PCR because typical techniques are labor-intensive, sluggish, or need highly skilled personnel. For PCR machines, extracting DNA from cells without halting the PCR process might be challenging. In addition to battery-operated, small TaqMan real-time PCR equipment with processing speeds of 30 minutes, new hardware enables spores to be split up and PCR completed in 15 minutes. Although there is a lot of promise in this field, microarray technologies are limited by the requirement to prepare samples for microfluidic devices. It is possible that future technologies will solve these issues.

Molecular methods' limitations

Although molecular diagnostics has numerous benefits, it is still unable to completely replace traditional approaches for a variety of infectious diseases since many frequent tests carried out in clinical microbiology laboratories are quick and affordable. Current automated culture systems enable reasonably quick identification and susceptibility testing, and advances in conventional technology have led to the development of numerous rapid antigen assays that yield results in a matter of minutes. All PCR assays, with the exception of broad-range PCR, can only identify the organism whose DNA is complementary to the primers used, in contrast to bacterial culture, which can identify a vast number of cultivable bacteria without first identifying the precise organism in question. Therefore, it would be necessary to introduce currently unavailable, low-cost, and straightforward microarray technologies30 in order to cover a comparable range of potential organisms.

Inaccurate positive or negative findings

Both false positive and false negative results are limitations of molecular testing. Large labs with physically distinct sections for reagent preparation, material preparation, and product detection are necessary, as are highly skilled staffs, to prevent lab contamination from producing phony positive results. When exposed to UV radiation and having their surface treated with sodium hypochlorite, reagents in a laboratory are less prone to become contaminated. Using dUTP rather than dTTP for amplification and UNG treatment of beginning reactions that have already been assembled destroys amplicons. Cotton filter tips, gloves, gowns, and disposable helmets help prevent inter-sample contamination. Because the chemicals include foreign DNA, broad-range PCR may not operate even if you follow the instructions precisely. PCR tests need to include appropriate negative standards in order to identify contamination. This risk has been reduced by single-tube detection techniques and real-time PCR reactions.

Because different labs utilize different types of in-house PCR assays, molecular identification is challenging. Testing for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and HIV is done for financial gain. Trachomatis, N. due to their extreme rarity. Due to variations in primer selection (different genes or sequences within genes), amplification format (single round, nested, real-time, or other nucleic amplification methods), and product detection (ethidium bromide gel electrophoresis, DNA probes, or sequencing), it is challenging to compare sensitivity and specificity.

Virus vs. Bacteria

Unlike culture, nucleic acid does not necessarily indicate the presence of a living organism; hence PCR results can occasionally be misinterpreted. The presence of meningococcal DNA in an otherwise sterile area is a reliable sign of invasive meningitis.

Immunocompromised individuals who believe they have PCP may only have a 50% probability of being correct because P. jiroveci can spread and cause sickness. EBV, CMV, and HSV can occasionally be shed after the initial infection without producing any symptoms. Quantitative PCR might be more accurate than culture since more disease-specific viruses result in greater viral levels. For HIV, CMV, EBV, HBV, and HCV, it is easy to gauge the severity of the illness or the effectiveness of a treatment. Viral load assays that monitor viral load increases to cut-off levels or rates of viral load growth can increase the positive prediction value of clinical CMV illness. The virus may still be active and able to multiply if you discover RNA species that degrade minutes after a cell dies.[28]

The prospects for biotechnology

PCR and sequencing could assist epidemiologists investigate new infectious diseases and uncover bugs that haven't been discovered yet. More than 30 different varieties of bacteria can transform into ones that cannot be cultivated in unfavorable settings, according to molecular methods. It is impossible to determine whether or whether microorganisms like T cause illness using Koch's theories. Whipplei is the cause of Whipple's disease. Molecular technology is essential for studying how viruses evolve over time, how infectious cycles persist in nature, how new infections arise and how they work, how susceptible certain target groups are, and how DNA and RNA banks of genes that code for detrimental components are created. Molecular robotics, in situ PCR, microarrays, and microchips can all be used to do this. Tests using gene chips and microarrays were originally discussed in 1991. They combine the capacity to swiftly and precisely read vast amounts of precise genetic information with downsizing and the use of industrial robots to create the chips.

The microarray platform may accommodate up to 106 probes per cm2. Microarrays can identify genetic indicators of toxicity and medication susceptibility, as well as pathogens that cause illnesses such infectious diarrhea, asthma, and meningitis. Initially, an array was utilized to identify the HIV genes that exhibited protease resistance. Following the 2003 outbreak, the genome of the SARS virus was sequenced using microarrays. To identify and characterize biosecurity agents, the United States sequenced hundreds of variola major species. The CDC is who they are. However, it is somewhat costly and primarily used for studying.

Due to the sensitive nature of the technology and the need for stringent working conditions, repeatability issues must be resolved. Computer programs are required for data analysis because each array creates several data points. Biotechnology companies are already investigating the potential for microarray-based genetic diagnostics in infectious illness labs. Initially, people concentrated on how to identify mycobacteria and why medications were ineffective. Affymetrix GeneChip microarrays are used to identify virulence factors, pathogens, therapeutic mechanisms, and vaccine production. However, Prodesse's multiplex real-time PCR kits for lung pathogen identification will compete with these businesses. Testing procedures such as clinical chemistry lab tests will be computerized and less expensive as a result of the economy. The most time-consuming aspects of molecular technology are the extraction and purification of nucleic acids, as well as the actual loading of extracted nucleic acids and master mixes into PCR reaction tubes. However, Prodesse's multiplex real-time PCR kits for lung pathogen identification will compete with these businesses. Testing procedures such as clinical chemistry lab tests will be computerized and less expensive as a result of the economy. The most time-consuming aspects of molecular technology are the extraction and purification of nucleic acids, as well as the actual loading of extracted nucleic acids and master mixes into PCR reaction tubes.

These days, pipetting robots and automated extraction and cleaning systems handle these tasks. One of the earliest automatic extraction devices was Roche's COBAS AmpliPrep. The released DNA is captured by biotinylated oligonucleotide probes, which then affix it to streptavidin-coated magnetic beads. The MagNA Pure LC System was created by Roche for use in medical testing laboratories. This 60-minute system uses HEPA filtration, UV cleaning, and positive pressure pipetting to prevent cross-contamination. However, PCR may become less sensitive if extraction techniques are inferior than manual ones. The QIAGEN BioRobot EZ1 and M48/9604 systems, the Abbott m1000 system, the ABI PRISMTM 6100 Nucleic Acid PrepStation and 6700 Automated Nucleic Acid Workstation, and the Corbett Robotics X-tractor Gene. TM have different costs, sample sizes, and processing durations.[29]

Setting up PCR, preparing chemicals, creating a series of dilutions, and pipetting samples are all made simple with the Corbett CAS-1200TM Automated DNA Sample Setup. The molecular diagnostics lab will be able to test more data with fewer highly skilled employees and produce better results if these strategies are successful. Beyond only detecting and quantifying microorganisms, the clinical microbiology lab may be able to apply molecular techniques to address other issues. Every new technological advancement results in new test questions, which reduces the test's usefulness. What bodily fluids or organs should have DNA, and how long should it last following treatment or medication? How can we distinguish between an infection that is active and colonization? Is it typical for bacteria from hygienic environments to contain DNA? Molecular techniques have taken the place of several conventional procedures in the virology lab. They will still have to utilize conventional culture and susceptibility testing, though, until they can swiftly and affordably investigate a large number of genetic markers to determine the etiology and susceptibility.

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