Abstract

Is There a Relationship between Biofilm Forming-Capacity and Antibiotic Resistance in *Staphylococcus* spp.? In Vitro Results †

Matthew Gavino Donadu 1,2, Marco Ferrari 2, Vittorio Mazzarello 2, Stefania Zanetti 2, Ivan Kushkevych 3, Simon K.-M. R. Rittmann 4, Anette Stájer 5, Boglárka Önödi 5, Zoltán Baráth 6, Edit Urbán 7, Máríó Gajdács 8*

1 Hospital Pharmacy, Azienda Ospedaliero Universitaria di Sassari, 07100 Sassari, Italy; mdonadu@uniss.it
2 Department of Biomedical Sciences, University of Sassari, Sassari, 07100 Sassari, Italy; dr.marcoferrari@gmail.com (M.F.); vmazz@uniss.it (V.M.); zanettis@uniss.it (S.Z.)
3 Department of Experimental Biology, Faculty of Science, Masaryk University, 62500 Brno, Czech Republic; kushkevych@mail.muni.cz
4 Department of Functional and Evolutionary Ecology, Archaea Physiology & Biotechnology Group, Universität Wien, 1090 Wien, Austria; simon.rittmann@univie.ac.at
5 Department of Periodontology, Faculty of Dentistry, University of Szeged, Tisza Lajos körút 62-64, 6720 Szeged, Hungary; stajer.anette@stoma.szote.u-szeged.hu (A.S.); onodibogi0802@gmail.com (B.O.)
6 Department of Prosthodontics, Faculty of Dentistry, University of Szeged, Tisza Lajos körút 62-64, 6720 Szeged, Hungary; barath.zoltan@stoma.szote.u-szeged.hu (Z.B.)
7 Department of Medical Microbiology and Immunology, University of Pécs Medical School, Szigeti út 12, 7624 Pécs, Hungary; urban.edit@pte.hu
8 Department of Oral Biology and Experimental Dental Research, Faculty of Dentistry, University of Szeged
* Correspondence: mariopharma92@gmail.com


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Abstract: *Staphylococcus* species are considered as important members of the normal skin microbiota, in addition to being common pathogens in human and animal infections. In addition to *S. aureus*, other members of the genus are now widely-recognized as pathogens, especially in immunocompromised individuals. One of the most important virulence factors of staphylococci is the formation of biofilm (slime), which enhances their survival on inanimate surfaces, in addition to providing protection against immune cells and antibiotics in vivo. There has been considerable interest in the study of the relationship between biofilm formation and the antibiotic resistant phenotype, however, the results in the available literature are inconsistent. Thus, this study aims to investigate the correlation between biofilm formation and antibiotic resistance in *Staphylococcus* spp. isolates using phenotypic methods. One hundred and eighty (*n* = 180) isolates were included in the study, with *S. epidermidis* (40.0%) and *S. lugdunensis* (10.0%) being the most numerous. Biofilm-forming capacity was assessed by crystal violet micro-titer-plate-based (CV-MTP) method. MR was identified in 47.2% (*n* = 85) of isolates. Among the commonly-used antimicrobials, resistance was highest for clindamycin (51.1%), erythromycin (48.9%) and trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole (51.1%). Based on the CV-MTP method, *n* = 13 (7.2%), *n* = 13 (7.2%), *n* = 42 (23.3%) and *n* = 113 (62.3%) staphylococcal isolates were non-biofilm-producing, weak, moderate and strong biofilm producers, respectively. No significant differences in biofilm-formation were shown observed on the basis of MR (susceptible: 0.881 ± 0.309 vs. resistant: 0.890 ± 0.347; *p* = 0.133) and according to the resistance to most other antibiotics. Rifampin-resistant isolates were more potent biofilm-producers, than their susceptible counterparts (S: 0.802 ± 0.296 vs. R: 1.194 ± 0.221; *p* = 0.024). The association of the antibiotic-resistant phenotype and biofilm-formation is still inconclusive, due to the heterogeneity of the results in the presently available studies, however, the understanding of these mechanisms in *Staphylococcus* spp. is crucial to appropriately address the therapy and eradication of these pathogens.

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