Isolation and Antimicrobial Susceptibility Pattern of Urinary Escherichia Coli in Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Bangladesh

*TA Binte Islam1, SM Shamsuzzaman2, I Rahman3, F Ferdous4

1Dr. Tashmin Afroz Binte Islam, Assistant Professor of Microbiology, Tairunnessa Memorial Medical College, Gazipur, Bangladesh
2Prof. S M Shamsuzzaman, Professor of Microbiology, Dhaka Medical College, Dhaka, Bangladesh
3Dr. Irin Rahman, Assistant Professor of Microbiology, Ashiyan Medical College, Dhaka, Bangladesh
4Dr. Faria Ferdous Assistant Professor of Microbiology, Tairunnessa Memorial Medical College, Gazipur, Bangladesh

*Corresponding Author

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ABSTRACT

Background: Escherichia coli is the major bacterial pathogen being isolated and reported from urine, globally. For these uropathogens the therapeutic management becomes limited, so knowledge about the antimicrobial resistance pattern of these agents at a specific area may help the doctors to choose correct treatment regimen. The aim of the current study was to detect the common uropathogens from urine and the antimicrobial susceptibility pattern of Escherichia coli in Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Methods: Samples were collected over a period of 12 months from July 2011 to June 2012 from the patients of DMCH irrespective of age and sex. Samples were cultured in blood agar and MacConkey agar media and organisms were identified by different biochemical tests such as oxidase test, reaction in MIU and simmon's citrate media and different sugar fermentation tests. Data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel (2007).

Results: From total 300 urine samples, 177 (59%) Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria were isolated. Among them, Esch. coli was the most predominant 112 (63.28%) organism followed by Enterobacter spp. (11.87%). The prevalence of Esch. coli was significantly higher in females (63.39%) of younger age group than in males (36.61%). Esch. coli was highly sensitive to imipenem (100%) followed by ceftriaxone (62.50%), ceftazidime (55.36%) and azitromycin (35.72%) respectively. Low sensitivity patterns were found against doxycycline (13.39%), co-trimoxazole (16.07%), amoxiclav (21.43%) and ciprofloxacin (23.22%) respectively.

Conclusion: The result of this study provides insight into the high proportion of multidrug resistant Escherichia coli and creates a need to report them routinely in laboratories.

Key Words: Escherichia coli, urine

Introduction

Antimicrobial resistance among bacterial strains is an emerging problem, worldwide. Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are one of the most common bacterial infections in humans both in the community and the hospital settings1-3. Escherichia coli are the pre-dominant pathogen commonly isolated in urine. These uropathogens have also developed resistance to commonly prescribed antimicrobial agents which severely limits the treatment options.

The prevalence of UTIs increases among patients from lower socio-economical group. UTIs including catheter related bacteriuria constitute the most common nosocomial bacterial infection with an average rate of 13.1 cases per 1000 hospital discharges4. Due to this high prevalence UTIs warrant careful consideration by the clinicians. More than 90% of all uncomplicated UTIs are caused by Esch. coli infection5. Esch. coli causes a wide range of UTIs, including uncomplicated urethritis or cystitis, symptomatic cystitis, pyelonephritis, acute prostatitis, prostatic abscess, and urosepsis6.

An increasing antimicrobial resistance in Esch. coli...
has been reported worldwide which is a crucial problem. The high consumption of often inappropriately prescribed broad spectrum antibiotics combined with overcrowding, multiple pathology and frequent use of invasive devices are the major factors contributing high level of resistance. A continuous rise of resistance to different antimicrobial drugs complicates the treatment strategy of urinary tract infections. The prevalence and antimicrobial susceptibility profile of Esch. coli show considerable topographical differences as well as significant variations in different environments and populations.

The present study has documented the distribution of urinary pathogens and multi drug resistance pattern of Esch. coli isolated from urinary tract infected patients in Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

**Materials and Methods**

**Study design and population:** It was a cross-sectional study. Urine samples were collected from the patients who were earlier admitted in inpatient department or visited the outpatient department of Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Clean catch mid stream urine samples were collected in sterile containers. The patients comprised both sexes and all the age groups.

**Bacterial isolates:** A total of 300 urine samples were collected during July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012 in the Department of Microbiology, Dhaka Medical College, Bangladesh. Approval was obtained from research review committee (RRC) and ethical review committee (ERC) of Dhaka Medical College according to declaration of Helsinki and national and institutional standards. Written consent was obtained from all participants.

**Isolation of gram-negative bacteria:** All the samples were inoculated on blood agar and MacConkey agar media and incubated at 37°C aerobically for 24 hours. The incubated plates were examined for bacterial growth and the organisms were identified by colony morphology, hemolytic criteria, staining character, pigment production and biochemical tests such as oxidase test, reaction in MIU and simmon's citrate media and different sugar fermentation tests.

**Table-I: Rate of isolation of bacteria from urine sample (n=300)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Isolated bacteria</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significant growth</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No growth</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>41.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Esch. coli* was the most predominant (63.28%) Gram negative urinary pathogens followed by *Enterobacter* spp. (11.87%), *Acinetobacter baumannii* (5.65%) and *Klebsiella pneumoniae* (3.96%). Of the Gram positive bacteria, *Enterococci* (8.47%) was the predominant. Other Gram positive isolates were *Staphylococcus aureus* (1.69%) and *Staphylococcus saprophyticus* (1.13%) (Table II).
This study found that most (63.39%) Esch. coli associated UTI cases were in the age group of 21-40 years followed by 41-60 years (24.11%) with male and female distribution were 36.61% and 63.39% respectively (Table III).

**Table-III:** Age and sex distribution of Esch. coli culture positive cases (n=112)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group in years</th>
<th>Male n (%)</th>
<th>Female n (%)</th>
<th>Total n (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≤ 20</td>
<td>2 (1.78)</td>
<td>8 (7.14)</td>
<td>10 (8.92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 40</td>
<td>20 (17.86)</td>
<td>51 (45.53)</td>
<td>71 (63.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 60</td>
<td>16 (14.29)</td>
<td>11 (9.82)</td>
<td>27 (24.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥ 60</td>
<td>3 (2.68)</td>
<td>1 (0.90)</td>
<td>4 (3.58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>41 (36.61)</td>
<td>71 (63.39)</td>
<td>112 (100.00)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Esch. coli* had been shown highly sensitive (100%) to imipenem followed by ceftriaxone (62.50%), ceftazidime (55.36%) and azitromycin (35.72%) respectively. Low sensitivity patterns were shown against doxycycline (13.39%), co-trimoxazole (16.07%), amoxiclav (21.43%) and ciprofloxacin (23.22%) respectively (Table IV).

**Table-IV:** Antimicrobial susceptibility pattern of *Esch. coli* (n=112)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antimicrobial Agents</th>
<th>Sensitive n (%)</th>
<th>Resistant n (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imipenem</td>
<td>112 (100.00)</td>
<td>0 (0.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azithromycin</td>
<td>40 (35.72)</td>
<td>72 (64.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciprofloxacin</td>
<td>26 (23.22)</td>
<td>86 (76.78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceftriaxone</td>
<td>70 (62.50)</td>
<td>42 (37.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentamycin</td>
<td>33 (29.47)</td>
<td>79 (70.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amoxiclav</td>
<td>24 (21.43)</td>
<td>88 (78.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-trimoxazole</td>
<td>18 (16.07)</td>
<td>94 (83.93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doxycycline</td>
<td>15 (13.39)</td>
<td>97 (86.61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceftazidime</td>
<td>62 (55.36)</td>
<td>50 (44.64)</td>
</tr>
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**Discussion**

Urinary tract infection is one of the most common infectious diseases encountered in the medical practices and only second to respiratory tract infections as a cause of hospital visit. *Esch. coli* is the leading cause of both community-acquired and nosocomial UTIs. The commonly prevailing factors like promiscuity, peer group influence, pregnancy, low socio-economic status which are common among young men and women living in urban centers play a vital role in causing UTI. It has been usually observed that UTI most commonly occurs in females and up to one-third of all women experience UTI at some point during their lifetimes.

In this study, urine samples from 300 subjects were cultured of which 177 (59%) showed significant growth. This correlates with the findings of other studies. Among the total 177 isolates, *Esch. coli* was the most predominant pathogen (63.28%) followed by Enterobacter spp. (11.87%), Acinetobacter baumannii (5.65%) and Klebsiella pneumoniae (3.96%). Of the Gram positive bacteria, Enterococci (8.47%) was the predominant followed by Staphylococcus aureus (1.69%) and Staphylococcus saprophyticus (1.13%). The predominance of *Esch. coli* associated UTI correlates with the findings of other studies. The reason of the highest rate of isolation of *Esch. coli* is that they are the normal fecal flora and uropathogenic strains of *Esch. coli* have an adherence factor called fimbrae, or pili, which mediate the attachment to uroepithelial cells.
In this study, UTI was found more in females (63.39%) than in males (36.61%). Maximum numbers of patients were found in age group 21-40 years. The findings are in agreement with the reports of other authors who found that 66%-71.1% cases were females and 28.9%-34% were males\textsuperscript{20,21}. The high prevalence of infection in females is usually related to anatomical and pathogenic factors, eg, the short length of the urethra and hence lesser distance for bacteria to ascend up the tract, hormonal changes and short distance of urethra to anus\textsuperscript{22}.

The antibiogram of isolated Esch. coli of the present study reveals that maximum resistance was found against doxycycline (86.61%) followed by cotrimoxazole (83.93%), amoxiclav (78.57%), ciprofloxacin (76.78%) respectively. 62.50% Esch. coli were sensitive to ceftriaxone. Imipenem was found to be 100% sensitive towards Esch. coli which correlates with the studies done by other authors\textsuperscript{16,23}.

These increasing resistance patterns against commonly used antibiotics may be due to the fact that the antibiotic is being overprescribed, handed out to patients who have no bacterial infections\textsuperscript{24}. The inappropriate usage of wide spectrum antibiotics, insufficient hygiene, immunosuppression, and a prolonged stay in the hospital are some other major etiological factors that elevate the chances of MDR infections\textsuperscript{25}. The rapid emergence of antibiotic resistant strains such as ESBL, MBL producing strains alert us that we should cautious with indiscriminate use of antibiotics as well as antibiotics should be prescribed with proper dose and duration after culture and sensitivity reports.

**Conclusion**

The data presented in this study may help the clinicians in the rational choice of antibiotic therapy and to prevent misuse, or over use of antibiotics. The disc diffusion method which was used to assess sensitivity and resistance may also be correlated clinically but further investigations for assessing the minimum inhibitory concentrations method will be needed to obtain more reliable and better results.

**Acknowledgement**

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**Conflict Of Interest** : Nothing to declare.

**References**


