

Resistance of microorganisms isolated from patients with COVID-19

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Abstract

The rational use of antibiotics plays a crucial role in slowing the spread of resistant strains of pathogens. Excessive use of antibiotics, combined with reduced surveillance capabilities for the formation of antibiotic-resistant microorganisms, may lead to an increase in antibiotic resistance as a long-term consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study of antibiotic resistance of microbes will allow the rational use of antibacterial drugs.

The aim of the study was to study the antibiotic resistance of pathogens isolated from the respiratory tract in patients with confirmed COVID-19 in the period from 2020 to 2022.

Methods. A retrospective study was conducted on the medical records of patients undergoing inpatient treatment with a diagnosis of COVID-19 in 2020-2022. The antibioticogram was presented by the following groups of antibacterial drugs: Gentamicin, Ceftriaxone, Amoxiclav, Ofloxacin, Cefazolin, Cefuroxime, Cefoperazone.

Results. *Candida*, *S.Pneumoniae*, *S.Haemolyticus*, *S.Pyogenes*, *S.Aegeis*, *Ps.Aeruginosae* were isolated in the structure of pathogens obtained from patients with coronavirus infection. The highest sensitivity to antibiotics was found in gentamicin 53 (70.7%), slightly less than 37 (49.3%) in ceftriaxone, sensitivity to amoxiclav was detected in 26 (34.7%) cases. The lowest sensitivity was found to cefoperazone 7 (9.3%). Statistically significant antibiotic sensitivity to *Candida* 10*6, *S.Pneumoniae* 10*6, *S.Haemolyticus* 10*7, *S.Pyogenes* 10*7 was revealed. There was no statistically significant sensitivity to *S.Aegeis* 10*5, *Ps.Aeruginosae* 10*6 of any of the antibiotics used.

Conclusions. The results of a retrospective study confirmed the need for microbiological monitoring of pathogens affecting the respiratory tract and changes in the tactics of antibiotic therapy based on an assessment of the antibioticogram of the microorganisms prevalent in the region isolated during COVID-19.

Keywords: antibiotic resistance, coronavirus infection.

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Introduction

Antibiotic resistance of microbes is related to the frequency and quantity of used antibacterial drugs. The rational use of antibiotics plays a crucial role in slowing the spread of resistant strains of pathogens. 2020 year marked the beginning of a new coronavirus infection. The lack of etiopathic therapy, the rapid progression and unfavorable outcome of the infection forced doctors to look for various therapeutic approaches and drugs [1]. Antibiotics have become a group of drugs that have become widely used to treat COVID-19. The assumption about their possible effectiveness was based on the information that antibiotics can be effective in the treatment of bacterial complications [2-5]. According to literature data, up to 74.6% of hospitalized patients with COVID-19 received antimicrobial therapy [6]. At the same time, data on the prevalence of

bacterial coinfection in such patients vary significantly. Documented bacterial coinfection has been reported in hospitalized patients with COVID-19 in the range from 8 to 81% [7]. Excessive use of antibacterial drugs combined with reduced surveillance capabilities over the formation of antibiotic-resistant microorganisms can lead to an increase in antibiotic resistance as long-term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic [8,9]. The study of antibiotic resistance of microbes will allow rational use of antibacterial drugs.

The aim of the study was to study the antibiotic resistance of pathogens isolated from the respiratory tract in patients with confirmed COVID-19 in the period from 2020 to 2022.

Material and methods

In the infectious diseases hospital in Semey, a retrospective study was conducted on the medical records of patients undergoing inpatient treatment with a diagnosis of COVID-19 in 2020-2022 years. The study included cases with documented confirmation of the diagnosis of COVID-19. Sputum samples were collected from patients during the first 24 hours upon admission to the hospital. The results of bacteriological examination of sputum from patients by the disco-diffusion method of 74 patients were analyzed. The analysis of the results was carried out by measuring the diameter of the growth suppression zone, the interpretation of the data obtained was carried out based on the criteria of the European Committee for the Determination of Antimicrobial Sensitivity (EUCAST). The isolated strains were recorded using the microbiological monitoring programs WHONET and AMRcloud.

Male are prevailed - 46 men (61.3%), women – 29 (38.7%). Representatives of the Kazakh population were 60 (80.0%) people, other nationalities made up 15 (20.0%). The average age of patients was 56.0 (95%CI:52.5-59.4) years, CO=15.06. The youngest patient was 19 years old, the

oldest 92 years old. At the same time, the average age of men was 55.3 (95%CI:50.3-60.3) years, CO=16.83. The youngest man was 19 years old, the oldest 92 years old. The average age of women was 57.1 (95%CI:52.5-61.6) years, CO=11.92, the youngest woman was 32 years old, the oldest was 83 years old. The age group under 29 years was 4 (5.3%), 30-39 years - 6 (8.0%), 40-49 years – 14 (18.7%), 50-59 years - 17 (22.7%), over 60 years -34 (45.3%). Concomitant diseases were present in 22 (29.3%) patients. Arterial hypertension was present in 9 (12.0%) people. 4 (5.3%) people had diabetes mellitus. Bilateral pneumonia was diagnosed in 36 (48.0%) patients, COVID-19 pneumonia was diagnosed in 20 (26.7%) people, right-sided pneumonia in 8 (10.7%) patients, left-sided pneumonia in 2 (2.7%) people, acute bronchitis in 4 (5.3%) patients, in 5 (6.7%) patients with acute pharyngitis. Statistical data processing was carried out using Microsoft Office Excel software, Statistica 10.

The antibioticogram was presented by the following groups of antibacterial drugs: Gentamicin, Ceftriaxone, Amoxiclav, Ofloxacin, Cefazolin, Cefuroxime, Cefoperazone.

Results

Candida, *S.Pneumoniae*, *S.Haemolyticus*, *S.Pyogenes*, *S.Aegeis*, *Ps.Aeruginosae* were isolated in the structure of pathogens obtained from patients with coronavirus infection.

The results of bacteriological examination of sputum revealed the following sensitivity to antibiotics (Table 1).

Table 1 - Antibiotic sensitivity

| Nº | Antibiotic | abs | % |
|----|--------------|-----|------|
| 1 | Gentamicin | 53 | 70,7 |
| 2 | Ceftriaxone | 37 | 49,3 |
| 3 | Amoxiclav | 26 | 34,7 |
| 4 | Ofloxacin | 17 | 22,7 |
| 5 | Cefazolin | 13 | 17,3 |
| 6 | Cefuroxime | 4 | 5,3 |
| 7 | Cefoperazone | 7 | 9,3 |

As can be seen from Table 1, the greatest sensitivity to antibiotics was found in gentamicin 53 (70.7%), slightly less than 37 (49.3%) in ceftriaxone, sensitivity to amoxiclav was detected in 26 (34.7%) cases. The lowest sensitivity to cefoperazone was detected in 7 (9.3%).

At the same time, sensitivity was not determined in 11 (14.7%) cases, sensitivity to one antibiotic was

determined in 49 (65.3%) patients, to two antibiotics in 13 (17.3%) patients, to three antibiotics in 2 (2.7%) patients.

The sensitivity of the pathogen to antibiotics is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 - Sensitivity of pathogens to antibiotics

| Nº | Pathogens | Antibiotics | χ^2 , df, p |
|----|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Candida 10 ^{*6} | Gentamicin | $\chi^2=1,497$, df=1, p=0,221 |
| 2 | Candida 10 ^{*6} | Amoxiclav | $\chi^2=0,343$, df=1, p=0,591 |
| 3 | Candida 10 ^{*6} | Ofloxacin | $\chi^2=4,675$, df=1, p=0,031 |
| 4 | Candida 10 ^{*6} | Ceftriaxone | $\chi^2=4,078$, df=1, p=0,043 |
| 5 | Candida 10 ^{*6} | Cefazolin | $\chi^2=0,104$, df=1, p=0,748 |
| 6 | Candida 10 ^{*6} | Cefuroxime | $\chi^2=1,536$, df=1, p=0,215 |
| 7 | Candida 10 ^{*6} | Cefoperazone | $\chi^2=2,807$, df=1, p=0,094 |
| 8 | S.Pneumoniae 10 ^{*6} | Gentamicin | $\chi^2=9,228$, df=1, p=0,002 |
| 9 | S.Pneumoniae 10 ^{*6} | Amoxiclav | $\chi^2=30,56$, df=1, p=0,000 |
| 10 | S.Pneumoniae 10 ^{*6} | Ofloxacin | $\chi^2=3,332$, df=1, p=0,068 |
| 11 | S.Pneumoniae 10 ^{*6} | Ceftriaxone | $\chi^2=9,723$, df=1, p=0,002 |
| 12 | S.Pneumoniae 10 ^{*6} | Cefazolin | $\chi^2=0,632$, df=1, p=0,427 |
| 13 | S.Pneumoniae 10 ^{*6} | Cefuroxime | $\chi^2=0,871$, df=1, p=0,351 |
| 14 | S.Pneumoniae 10 ^{*6} | Cefoperazone | $\chi^2=11,84$, df=1, p=0,001 |
| 15 | S.Haemolyticus 10 ^{*7} | Gentamicin | $\chi^2=7,783$, df=1, p=0,005 |
| 16 | S.Haemolyticus 10 ^{*7} | Amoxiclav | $\chi^2=0,530$, df=1, p=0,467 |
| 17 | S.Haemolyticus 10 ^{*7} | Ofloxacin | $\chi^2=6,161$, df=1, p=0,013 |
| 18 | S.Haemolyticus 10 ^{*7} | Ceftriaxone | $\chi^2=0,053$, df=1, p=0,817 |
| 19 | S.Haemolyticus 10 ^{*7} | Cefazolin | $\chi^2=1,140$, df=1, p=0,286 |
| 20 | S.Haemolyticus 10 ^{*7} | Cefuroxime | $\chi^2=0,066$, df=1, p=0,797 |
| 21 | S.Haemolyticus 10 ^{*7} | Cefoperazone | $\chi^2=1,930$, df=1, p=0,165 |
| 22 | S.Pyogenes 10 ^{*7} | Gentamicin | $\chi^2=3,039$, df=1, p=0,081 |
| 23 | S.Pyogenes 10 ^{*7} | Amoxiclav | $\chi^2=0,011$, df=1, p=0,916 |
| 24 | S.Pyogenes 10 ^{*7} | Ofloxacin | $\chi^2=1,674$, df=1, p=0,196 |
| 25 | S.Pyogenes 10 ^{*7} | Ceftriaxone | $\chi^2=6,607$, df=1, p=0,010 |
| 26 | S.Pyogenes 10 ^{*7} | Cefazolin | $\chi^2=0,586$, df=1, p=0,444 |
| 27 | S.Pyogenes 10 ^{*7} | Cefuroxime | $\chi^2=0,255$, df=1, p=0,614 |
| 28 | S.Pyogenes 10 ^{*7} | Cefoperazone | $\chi^2=0,017$, df=1, p=0,897 |
| 29 | S.Aureus 10 ^{*5} | Gentamicin | $\chi^2=0,081$, df=1, p=0,776 |
| 30 | S.Aureus 10 ^{*5} | Amoxiclav | $\chi^2=0,032$, df=1, p=0,859 |
| 31 | S.Aureus 10 ^{*5} | Ofloxacin | $\chi^2=0,028$, df=1, p=0,868 |
| 32 | S.Aureus 10 ^{*5} | Ceftriaxone | $\chi^2=0,502$, df=1, p=0,479 |
| 33 | S.Aureus 10 ^{*5} | Cefazolin | $\chi^2=0,367$, df=1, p=0,544 |
| 34 | S.Aureus 10 ^{*5} | Cefuroxime | $\chi^2=0,505$, df=1, p=0,478 |
| 35 | S.Aureus 10 ^{*5} | Cefoperazone | $\chi^2=0,922$, df=1, p=0,337 |
| 36 | Ps.Aeruginosae 10 ^{*6} | Gentamicin | $\chi^2=0,038$, df=1, p=0,845 |
| 37 | Ps.Aeruginosae 10 ^{*6} | Amoxiclav | $\chi^2=2,242$, df=1, p=0,134 |
| 38 | Ps.Aeruginosae 10 ^{*6} | Ofloxacin | $\chi^2=1,238$, df=1, p=0,266 |
| 39 | Ps.Aeruginosae 10 ^{*6} | Ceftriaxone | $\chi^2=0,001$, df=1, p=0,978 |
| 40 | Ps.Aeruginosae 10 ^{*6} | Cefazolin | $\chi^2=0,886$, df=1, p=0,347 |
| 41 | Ps.Aeruginosae 10 ^{*6} | Cefuroxime | $\chi^2=0,238$, df=1, p=0,626 |
| 42 | Ps.Aeruginosae 10 ^{*6} | Cefoperazone | $\chi^2=0,435$, df=1, p=0,510 |

As can be seen from Table 2, statistically significant sensitivity to Candida 10^{*6} of the following antibiotics was revealed: Ofloxacin ($\chi^2=4,675$, df=1, p=0.031), Ceftriaxone (p=0.043). Statistically significant sensitivity to S.Pneumoniae 10^{*6} was revealed: Gentamicin (p=0.002), Amoxiclav (p=0.000), Ceftriaxone (p=0.002), Cefoperazone (p=0.001). Statistically significant sensitivity

to S.Haemolyticus 10^{*7} of the following antibiotics was revealed: Gentamicin (p=0.005), Ofloxacin (p=0.013). Statistically significant sensitivity to S.Pyogenes 10^{*7} of the antibiotic Ceftriaxone was revealed (p=0.010). At the same time, there was no statistically significant sensitivity to S.Aegeis 10^{*5}, Ps.Aeruginosae 10^{*6} of any of the antibiotics used.

Discussion

A study by Turkish scientists showed that 28.2% of patients diagnosed with COVID-19 had a clinical diagnosis of bacterial infection, while only in 7.1% of cases the diagnosis was confirmed bacteriologically [10]. In a systematic review in 2021y, it was reported that in patients with COVID-19, the average frequency of prescribing antibiotics was 74.0%, antiviral drugs - 56.9%, glucocorticoids - 36.9% of cases [11]. In a study by American scientists, it was found that more often patients with COVID-19 were prescribed ceftriaxone, vancomycin, doxycycline, cefepim, azithromycin. The authors noted that in 25.8% of cases, patients were

prescribed antimicrobial drugs active against Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), and in 26.3% of cases – against *P. aeruginosa* [12]. In a study conducted in Nepal, the prevalence of antibiotic use in patients with COVID-19 reached 98.1%. About 71.15% of patients were treated with two or more antimicrobial drugs. The average duration of antibiotic use was 6.33 days. The most common class of antibiotics used were cephalosporins (81.73%) and macrolides (54.81%) [13].

The most common gram-negative microbes of coinfections in patients with COVID-19 were K. pneumoniae, P. aeruginosa, A. baumannii, E. coli, St. maltophilia and E. Cloacae, gram-positive ones were S. hominis, S. epidermidis, E. faecium, E. Faecalis and S. aureus [14]. The presence of coinfection increased the risk of an adverse outcome in patients with COVID-19 [15]. According to S.S.

Conclusions

The results of a retrospective study confirmed the need for microbiological monitoring of pathogens affecting the respiratory tract and changes in the tactics of antibiotic therapy based on an assessment of the antibioticogram of the microorganisms prevalent in the region isolated during COVID-19.

Conflict of interest. No conflicts of interest have been declared.

Authors' Contributions. All authors participated equally in the writing of this article. This material has

Adeiza et al. [16], the average incidence of S. aureus and COVID-19 coinfection in the world is 25.6%. In our study, S.Pneumoniae, S.Haemolyticus, S.Pyogenes, S.Aegeis, Ps.Aeruginosae prevailed. A study conducted by Russian scientists showed that the overall prevalence of coinfections caused by resistant bacterial and fungal microorganisms is 24% [17].

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COVID-19 пациенттерінен оқшауланған микроорганизмдердің төзімділігі

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Түйіндеме

Антибиотиктерді ұтымды қолдану қоздырыштардың төзімді штамдарының таралуын бәсекедету үшін шешуші рөл атқарады. Антибиотиктерді шамадан тыс қолдану антибиотиктерге төзімді микроорганизмдердің пайды болуын қадағалау мүмкіндіктерінің төмендеуімен бірге COVID-19 пандемиясының ұзақ мерзімді салдары ретінде антибиотикке төзімділіктің есүіне әкелуі мүмкін. Микробтардың антибиотикке төзімділігін зерттеу Бактерияға қарсы препараттарды ұтымды пайдалануға мүмкіндік береді.

Зерттеудің мақсаты. 2020 және 2022 жылдар аралығында COVID-19 расталған науқастарда тыныс алу жолдарынан оқшауланған патогендердің антибиотикке төзімділігін зерттеу.

Әдістері. Антибиотикограмма Бактерияға қарсы препараттардың келесі топтарымен ұсынылды: Гентамицин, Цефтриаксон, Амоксициллин, Офлоксацин, Цефазолин, Цефуроксим, Цефоперазон.

Нәтижелері. Коронавирустық инфекциясы бар науқастардан алынған патогендердің құрылымында *Candida*, *S. Pneumoniae*, *S. Haemolyticus*, *S. Pyogenes*, *S. Aigeis*, *Ps. оқшауланған.aeruginosae*. Н. антибиотиктерге ең жоғары сезімталдық гентамицинде 53 (70,7%), цефтриаксонда 37-ден (49,3%) сал тәмен, амоксициллақ сезімталдық 26 (34,7%) жағдайда анықталды. Цефоперазонға ең тәменегі сезімталдық 7 (9,3%) анықталды. Антибиотиктердің *candida* 10⁶, *S. Pneumoniae* 10⁶, *S. Haemolyticus* 10⁷, *S. Pyogenes* 10⁷-ге статистикалық маңызды сезімталдық анықталды. Статистикалық маңызды сезімталдық анықталған жоқ. *S. Aigeis* 10⁵, *Ps.aeruginosae* 10⁶ қолданылған антибиотиктердің ешқайсысы жоқ.

Қорытынды. Ретроспективті зерттеудің нәтижелері тыныс алу жолына асер ететін қоздырыштарға микробиологиялық мониторинг жүргізу және covid-19 кезінде бөлінген аймақта басым микроорганизмдердің антибиотикограммасын бағалауға негізделген антибиотикалық терапия жүргізу тактикасына өзгерістер енгізу қажеттілігін раставы.

Түйін сөздер: антибиотикке төзімділік, коронавирустық инфекция.

Резистентность микроорганизмов, выделенных от пациентов с COVID-19

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Резюме

Рациональное использование антибиотиков играет решающую роль для замедления распространения устойчивых штаммов патогенов. Чрезмерное применение антибиотиков в сочетании со снижением возможностей эпиднадзора над формированием устойчивых к антибиотикам микроорганизмов могут привести к росту антибиотикорезистентности как долговременным последствиям пандемии COVID-19. Исследование антибиотикорезистентности микробов позволит рационально использовать антибактериальные препараты.

Цель исследования – изучить антибиотикорезистентность возбудителей, выделенных из дыхательных путей у больных с подтвержденным COVID-19 в период с 2020 по 2022 год.

Методы. Проведено ретроспективное исследование по историям болезни пациентов, проходящих стационарное лечение с диагнозом COVID-19 в 2020-2022гг. Антибиотикограмма была представлена следующими группами антибактериальных препаратов: Гентамицин, Цефтриаксон, Амоксиклав, Офлоксацин, Цефазолин, Цефуроксим, Цефоперазон

Результаты. В структуре патогенов, полученных от пациентов с коронавирусной инфекцией было выделены *Candida*, *S.Pneumoniae*, *S.Haemolyticus*, *S.Ruogenes*, *S.Aureus*, *Ps.Aeruginosae*. Наибольшая чувствительность к антибиотикам была обнаружена у гентамицина 53 (70,7%), чуть меньше 37 (49,3%) у цефтриаксона, чувствительность к амоксиклаву было выявлено в 26 (34,7%) случаях. К цефоперазону была выявлена самая низкая чувствительность 7 (9,3%). Была выявлена статистически значимая чувствительность антибиотиков к *Candida* 10^6 , *S.Pneumoniae* 10^6 , *S.Haemolyticus* 10^7 , *S.Ruogenes* 10^7 . Не выявлена статистическая значимая чувствительность к *S.Aureus* 10^5 , *Ps.Aeruginosae* 10^6 ни одного из использованных антибиотиков.

Выводы. Результаты ретроспективного исследования подтвердили необходимость проведения микробиологического мониторинга возбудителей, поражающих респираторный тракт и внесения изменений в тактику проведения антибиотикотерапии, основанной на оценке антибиотикограммы, преобладающих в регионе микроорганизмов, выделенных при COVID-19.

Ключевые слова: антибиотикорезистентность, коронавирусная инфекция.