

ENHANCING HUMAN BREAST CANCER CELLS DESTRUCTION USING
COMBINATION OF ADENOVIRUS EXPRESSING P53 AND HYPERTHERMIA
TREATMENT

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Specially for my beloved parents, Elengoe and Thavamani
My lovely sister, Suguna and Vaani
&
My wonderful brother, Tevanraj.

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ABSTRACT

In Malaysia, breast cancer is the most common cancer where 1 in 19 Malaysian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer by the age of 85. Moreover, lack of specific symptoms in the early stage of disease leading to delay in diagnosis. Unfortunately, current treatments by chemotherapeutic agents, surgery and radiation are not fully effective for the treatment of breast cancer. Thus, there is an urgency in developing new approaches for the treatment of breast cancer patients. In this study, a novel therapeutic regimen, combining the effects of recombinant adenovirus and hyperthermia was investigated. Firstly, Adenovirus serotype 5 was constructed by cloning of p53 gene into a defective recombinant adenovirus vector, Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1. The Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 (MOI of 100) was then used to infect breast cancer cells (MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7) with or without combination of hyperthermia treatment (42°C for 2 hours). The cell killing and viral concentration were then determined by MTT assay and viral plaque formation assay respectively. After that, the heat shock protein (Hsp70) and p53 protein expression in transfected cells were quantitated using ELISA assay. Activated-Caspase 3/7, 8 and 9 were also evaluated to study the apoptotic pathway of cancer cells. Furthermore, the novel protein interaction between nucleotide binding domain (NBD) Hsp70 and human Ad5 E1A 32 kDa motif (PNLVP); and NBD and p53 motif (SCMGGMNR) were investigated through bioinformatics tools such as Gromacs and Autodock softwares. It was found that MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 cells infected with virus Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 alone resulted in 46.77±2.74% and 42.26±1.78% cell killing respectively while hyperthermia in combination with virus were 84.82±1.64% and 80.13±3.30% respectively. The Hsp70 expression of both cancer cells was also increased to 170.57% (MDA-MB 231) and 169.83% (MCF-7). Moreover, p53 expression in MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 cells by virus combined with heat treatment (85.72 ng/L and 79.05 ng/L respectively) could lead to enhanced oncolytic property compared to virus treatment alone (47.82 ng/L and 40.54 ng/L respectively). In addition, caspase activity was first time reported that apoptosis process started at very early stage of infection in breast cancer cells with hyperthermia compared to virus alone. This was due to the evident that the highest kinetic energy was found in caspase 3 whereas virus alone the highest in caspase 8. In conclusion, Hsp70 induction by hyperthermia treatment enhanced Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 replication and oncolysis in MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 cells through apoptotic pathway. Besides that, NBD of Hsp70 had the best interaction with PNLVP motif at 42°C. Thus, combining Ad5-p53 with hyperthermia treatment could be a potential approach for breast cancer treatment.

ABSTRAK

Di Malaysia, kanser payudara adalah kanser yang paling umum dimana 1 dalam 19 wanita Malaysia akan didiagnosis dengan kanser payudara menjelang usia 85. Tambahan pula, kekurangan tanda-tanda spesifik di peringkat awal penyakit yang membawa kepada kelewatan dalam diagnosis. Malangnya, rawatan semasa dengan agen kemoterapi, pembedahan dan radiasi tidak berkesan sepenuhnya untuk merawat kanser payudara. Oleh itu, strategi baru diperlukan dengan segera untuk merawat pesakit kanser payudara. Dalam kajian ini, potensi untuk menggabungkan regimen terapeutik novel adenovirus rekombinan dan 'hyperthermia' telah dikaji. Pertamanya, Adenovirus jenis 5 telah dibangunkan dengan pengklonan gen p53 ke dalam vektor adenovirus rekombinan, Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1. Kepekatan 100 PFU bagi Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 telah digunakan untuk menjangkiti sel-sel kanser payudara (MDA-MB 231 dan MCF-7) dengan atau tanpa digabungkan dengan rawatan hyperthermia (42°C selama 2 jam). Kemudian, tahap kemusnahan sel dan kepekatan virus telah ditentukan dengan asai MTT dan asai pembentukan plak virus. Selepas itu, pengekspresan protein kejutan haba (Hsp70) dan p53 dalam sel telah dianalisis dengan menggunakan asai ELISA. 'Caspase' teraktif 3/7, 8 dan 9 juga telah dikaji untuk tapak jalan apoptosis sel kanser. Tambahan pula, interaksi protein novel di antara domain pengikat nukleotida (NBD) bagi Hsp70 dan motif Ad5 E1A 32 kDa (PNLVP); dan NBD dan motif p53 (SCMGGMNR) telah dikaji dengan kaedah bioinformatik seperti perisian Gromacs dan Autodock. Kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa MDA-MB 231 dan MCF-7 yang dijangkiti virus Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 sahaja menyebabkan $46.77 \pm 2.74\%$ dan $42.26 \pm 1.78\%$ sel musnah manakala 'hyperthermia' dengan virus adalah $84.82 \pm 1.64\%$ dan $80.13 \pm 3.30\%$ masing-masing. Pengekspresan protein Hsp70 bagi kedua-dua sel kanser juga meningkat kepada 170.57% (MDA-MB 231) dan 169.83% (MCF-7). Selain itu, pengekspresan protein p53 dalam MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 bagi gabungan virus dan 'hyperthermia' adalah 85.72 ng/L dan 79.05 ng/L masing-masing manakala perlakuan virus sahaja adalah 47.82 ng/L dan 40.54 ng/L masing-masing. Aktiviti 'caspase' telah dilaporkan kali pertamanya bahawa proses apoptotik bermula pada peringkat yang sangat awal bagi gabungan virus dan 'hyperthermia' berbanding dengan virus sahaja. Ini dibuktikan melalui tenaga kinetik yang paling tinggi didapati dalam caspase 3 manakala virus sahaja yang tertinggi dalam caspase 8. Kesimpulannya, induksi Hsp70 oleh perlakuan 'hyperthermia' meningkatkan replikasi Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 dan 'oncolysis' dalam sel MDA-MB 231 dan MCF-7 melalui proses apoptotik. Selain itu, NBD bagi Hsp70 mempunyai interaksi yang terbaik dengan PNLVP motif pada 42°C. Oleh itu, penggabungan Ad5-p53 dengan 'hyperthermia' mungkin boleh menjadi pendekatan bagi rawatan kanser payudara.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE
	DECLARATION	ii
	DEDICATION	iii
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
	ABSTRACT	v
	ABSTRAK	vi
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
	LIST OF TABLES	xv
	LIST OF FIGURES	xviii
	LIST OF ABBREVIATION	xxv
	LIST OF SYMBOLS	xxviii
	LIST OF APPENDICES	xxx
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Background of study	1
	1.2 Problem statement of research	3
	1.3 Hypotheses of study	4
	1.3 Objectives of study	4
	1.4 Scope of research	5
	1.5 Significance of study	5
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	7
	2.1 Breast cancer	7
	2.1.1 Morphology and function of the breast	7
	2.1.2 Classification of breast tumours	8

2.1.3	Etiology of breast tumours	8
2.1.4	Genetic alteration in breast tumours	9
2.1.5	Diagnosis and current treatment	9
2.1.6	Tumour protein p53	11
2.2	Adenovirus	13
2.2.1	Structure, function and replication mechanism	13
2.2.2	Oncolytic adenovirus	17
2.2.3	Clinical applications of adenovirus-mediated tumour protein p53 (Ad-p53)	18
2.3	Hyperthermia	20
2.3.1	Principles of hyperthermia	20
2.3.2	Modes of application	21
2.3.3	Mechanism of hyperthermia in combination with radiotherapy, and chemotherapy	21
2.3.4	Integration of hyperthermia with other therapies under development	23
2.3.5	Current approach of hyperthermia	25
2.3.6	Heat shock 70 kDa protein (Hsp70)	26
2.4	Bioinformatics applications	27
2.4.1	Protein modelling	27
2.4.2	Homology modelling	28
2.4.3	Protein validation tools	29
2.4.4	Current computational approaches in cancer treatment	31
2.4.5	Structure of Hsp70	33
2.4.6	Structure of E1A 32 kDa of human Ad5	34
3	MATERIALS AND METHODS	35
3.1	Materials	35
3.1.1	Chemicals and reagents	35
3.1.2	Vectors	36
3.1.3	Bacterial strain	37

3.1.4	Cell culture	37
3.1.5	Standard solutions and buffers	37
3.1.5.1	Bacterial growth media	37
3.1.5.2	Solutions for agarose gel electrophoresis	38
3.1.5.3	Antibiotic stock solutions	38
3.1.5.4	Transformation buffers	39
3.1.5.5	Solutions for cell viability assay	39
3.1.5.6	Cell cultures growth media	40
3.2	Methods	41
3.2.1	Wet lab experimental design	41
3.2.2	Dry lab experimental design	42
3.2.3	Construction of Ad-p53-DsRed Monomer N1	43
3.2.3.1	Small scale preparation of plasmid DNA	43
3.2.3.2	Agarose gel electrophoresis	44
3.2.3.3	Determination of plasmid DNA concentration	44
3.2.3.4	Design primers of p53 gene	44
3.2.3.5	Amplification of p53 gene using Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)	45
3.2.3.6	Restriction endonucleases digestion and alkaline phosphatases treatment for vector plasmid DNA	47
3.2.3.7	Extraction of DNA fragments from agarose gel	48
3.2.3.8	Ligation of plasmid vector into insert fragment	49
3.2.3.9	PCR product purification	50
3.2.3.10	Preparation of chemically competent <i>E.coli</i> DH5 α	50
3.2.3.11	Transformation of plasmid DNA	51
3.2.3.12	LR recombination reaction	

between pAd/CMV/V5-DEST™ vector and entry clone	51
3.2.3.13 Analysis of transformants using PCR	52
3.2.3.14 Glycerol stock of plasmid DNA in <i>E.coli</i>	53
3.2.4 Production of Ad-p53-DsRed Monomer N1	53
3.2.4.1 DNA transfection using Lipofectamine™ reagent	53
3.2.4.2 Preparation of crude viral lysate	54
3.2.4.3 Amplification of adenovirus stock	55
3.2.4.4 Determination of titre of adenovirus stock	55
3.2.4.5 Calculation of multiplicity of infection (MOI)	56
3.2.5 MTT assay	56
3.2.6 Hyperthermia treatment alone	57
3.2.6.1 Optimisation of temperature and duration of heat exposure on MCF-10A, MCF-7 and MDA-MB 231	57
3.2.7 Ad-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 treatment alone	57
3.2.8 Combination of hyperthermia and Ad-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 treatment	58
3.2.9 Calculation of synergism	58
3.2.10 Viral replication assay	59
3.2.11 Measurement of Hsp70 by enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA)	59
3.2.12 Quantitation of p53 protein expression using enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA)	60

3.2.13	Apoptosis assay	60
3.2.14	Statistical analysis	61
3.2.15	Bioinformatics tools	61
3.2.15.1	Target sequence (RCSB Protein Databank)	61
3.2.15.2	<i>In-silico</i> mutagenesis of NBD	61
3.2.15.3	Physiochemical characterisation	62
3.2.15.4	Secondary structure prediction	62
3.2.15.5	Protein model simulation and evaluation	62
3.2.15.6	Active site identification	64
3.2.15.7	Homology modeling of E1A 32 kDa of human adenovirus serotype 5 (Ad5)	64
3.2.15.8	Molecular docking	64
3.2.15.9	Molecular dynamics (MD) simulation of protein-ligand complex	66
3.2.15.10	Identification of protein interaction between HSPA1A/Hsp70 and p53	67
3.2.15.11	Homology modeling of DNA binding domain of p53 motif	67
3.2.15.12	Protein-protein docking	68
3.2.15.13	Molecular dynamics (MD) simulation of the NBD-p53 motif complex	68
4	CONSTRUCTION OF AD5-P53-DSRED MONOMER N1	69
4.1	Construction of p53-DsRed Monomer N1	69
4.1.1	Verification of plasmid DNA	70
4.1.1.1	Isolation of plasmid DNA	70
4.1.1.2	Determination of plasmid DNA	

	concentration and purity	71
4.1.2	PCR amplification of p53	71
	4.1.2.1 Primer design of p53	73
	4.1.2.2 PCR production of p53	73
4.1.3	Restriction endonuclease (RE) digestion of pDsRed Monomer N1 vector	75
4.1.4	Ligation of full length p53 and pDsRed Monomer N1	76
4.1.5	Analyse transformants (p53-DsRed Monomer N1) using PCR amplification and RE digestion	77
4.1.6	DNA sequencing analysis of p53-DsRed Monomer N1	80
	4.1.6.1 Sequencing of PCR product of p53	80
4.2	Construction of Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1	84
	4.2.1 RE digestion of pENTR3C TM	84
	4.2.2 RE digestion of p53-DsRed Monomer N1	85
	4.2.3 Ligation of p53-DsRed Monomer N1 and pENTR3C TM	88
	4.2.4 Analyses transformants using PCR amplification	88
	4.2.5 DNA sequencing analysis of transformants of pENTR3C TM -p53-DsRed Monomer N1	91
	4.2.6 Ligation of p53-DsRed Monomer N1 with pAd/CMV/V5-DEST TM vector through the entry clone (pENTR3C TM)	93
	4.2.7 DNA sequencing analysis of transformants of Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1	94
4.3	DNA transfection using Lipofectamine TM reagent	97

5 HYPERTHEMIA ALONE, AD5-P53-DSRED MONOMER N1 ALONE AND

	COMBINATION OF HYPERTHERMIA AND AD5-P53-DSRED MONOMER N1 TREATMENTS ON BREAST CANCER CELLS (MDA-MB 231 AND MCF-7)	98
5.1	Optimisation of temperature and duration of heat shock on viability of MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 cell lines	98
5.2	Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 infection efficiency	103
5.3	Cytotoxicity of hyperthermia alone, Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 alone and the combination of Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 and hyperthermia	106
5.4	Morphology of MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 cell changes under a phase-contrast microscope	110
5.5	Effect of hyperthermia on viral replication	113
5.6	Induction of Hsp70 expression after hyperthermia treatment	114
5.7	Expression of p53 in MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 cells	118
5.8	Apoptosis	121
6	MOLECULAR DYNAMICS (MD) SIMULATION AND DOCKING STUDIES ON NUCLEOTIDE BINDING DOMAIN (NBD) OF <i>HOMO SAPIENS</i> HSP70	126
6.1	Protein interaction between NBD of <i>Homo sapiens</i> Hsp70 and Ad5	126
6.1.1	Structure of NBD of human Hsp70	126
6.1.2	Physiochemical characterisation of NBD	127
6.1.3	Secondary structure prediction of NBD	129
6.1.4	Structural analysis of NBD	131
	6.1.4.1 Molecular dynamics (MD) simulation of NBD at different temperatures to determine its	

	stability	131
	6.1.4.2 Identification of active sites	136
	6.1.4.3 Molecular docking	138
	6.1.4.4 Model simulation and evaluation of protein-ligand complex	145
6.1.5	<i>In silico</i> mutagenesis of NBD protein	153
	6.1.5.1 Mutations of NBD	153
	6.1.5.2 Physiochemical characterisation of NBD mutants	155
	6.1.5.3 Secondary structure prediction of NBD mutants	160
	6.1.5.4 Molecular dynamics (MD) simulation and evaluation of NBD mutants	169
	6.1.5.5 Active site identification of NBD mutants	193
	6.1.5.6 Molecular docking of NBD mutants	196
	6.1.5.7 Model simulation and evaluation of protein-ligand complex	204
6.2	Protein interaction between NBD of <i>Homo sapiens</i> Hsp70 (HSPA1A) and p53 motif	217
	6.2.1 Protein-protein docking	219
	6.2.2 Model simulation and evaluation of protein-ligand complex	220
7	CONCLUSION	225
8	FUTURE WORK	228
	REFERENCES	229
	Appendices A-E	251

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	The seven domains of tumour protein p53	11
2.2	The common features of the most commonly used vectors (Benjamin <i>et al.</i> , 2001)	16
2.3	Oncolytic adenoviruses under <i>in-vitro</i> stages	18
2.4	Clinical trials using Ad-p53 alone for cancer therapy	19
2.5	Clinical trials using Ad-p53 with chemotherapy or radiotherapy for cancer treatment	20
3.1	Specific primers designed for PCR amplification	45
3.2	Mixture for PCR reactions	45
3.3	The optimal conditions for PCR reactions used for DNA amplification	46
3.4	The optimal conditions for PCR reactions used for DNA amplification of pAd5	46
3.5	The primers used for PCR amplification	46
3.6	Reaction conditions for single and double digestion of plasmid DNA samples	47
3.7	Mixture of RE single digestion	48
3.8	Mixture of RE double digestion	48
3.9	The reaction mixture for ligation	49
3.10	LR recombination reaction mixture	52
3.11	Reaction mixture of PCR of 2X Top Taq Polymerase	53
3.12	Details of proteins obtained from MD simulations	64
3.13	Affinity maps of proteins	66
3.14	Details of protein-ligand complexes obtained from MD	

	simulations	67
4.1	Plasmid DNA concentration and purity	71
4.2	Forward and reverse primers	73
5.1	Results of MTT assay for MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 cell lines at optical density of 570 nm ^a	104
5.2	MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 cells after treated with Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 alone (MOI of 100) and the combination of hyperthermia (42°C for 2 hours) and virus (Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1, MOI of 100) were photographed by inverted fluorescent microscope (Nikon Ti Eclipse) (magnification 20X)	108
5.3	Pictures of MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 after hyperthermia alone (42°C for 2 hours), Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 alone (MOI of 100) and the combination of hyperthermia (42°C for 2 hours) and virus (Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1, MOI of 100) treatment compared with control at 37°C (untreated cells) were photographed by inverted phase microscope (Nikon Ti Eclipse) (magnification 20X)	112
6.1	Amino acid composition of NBD was predicted by Expasy's Prot-Param program	128
6.2	Hydrophobic, hydrophilic, positive, negative, aromatic and hydroxyl residues NBD was predicted by Color Protein Sequence analysis	128
6.3	Presence of disulphide (ss) bond in NBD predicted by Cys_Rec server	129
6.4	Predicted active sites of the NBD protein at 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44°C	137
6.5	Docking results of NBD protein at temperatures of 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44°C with the PNLVP motif	139
6.6	Hydrogen bonds interaction studies of the NBD protein at temperatures of 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44°C with PNLVP motif	140
6.7	The NBD protein with change in chemical properties	153

6.8	The physiochemical characters of T11V, T12P, D364S, K69L, T202V, E229V, H225P and D230C mutants as predicted by Expasy's Prot-Param program	156
6.9	Amino acid composition of T11V, T12P, D364S, K69L, T202V, E229V, H225P and D230C mutants was predicted by Expasy's Prot-Param program	157
6.10	Hydrophobic, hydrophilic, positive, negative, aromatic and hydroxyl residues of T11V, T12P, D364S, K69L, T202V, E229V, H225P and D230C mutants was predicted by Color Protein Sequence analysis	158
6.11	Presence of disulphide (ss) bond predicted by Cys_Rec server	159
6.12	Secondary structures of T11V, T12P, D364S, K69L, T202V, E229V, H225P and D230C mutants	160
6.13	The composition of α helix in mutants of NBD	168
6.14	Potential energy of NBD protein, T11V, T12P, D364S, K69L, T202V, E229V, H225P and D230C mutants in unbound state	174
6.15	Validation of NBD protein, T11V, T12P, D364S, K69L, T202V, E229V, H225P and D230C mutants using PROCHECK and ProQ	177
6.16	Predicted active sites of the T11V, T12P, D364S, K69L, T202V, E229V, H225P and D230C mutants	195
6.17	Docking results of T11V, T12P, D364S, K69L, T202V, E229V, H225P and D230C mutants with the PNLVP motif	198
6.18	Hydrogen bonds interaction studies of T11V, T12P, D364S, K69L, T202V, E229V, H225P and D230C mutants with PNLVP motif	199
6.19	Potential energy of NBD protein, T11V, T12P, D364S, K69L, T202V, E229V, H225P and D230C mutants in bound state	214
6.20	Hydrogen bonds interaction study of the NBD protein with p53 motif (SCMGGMNR)	219

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	p53 pathway in normal and cancer cell (Lo <i>et al.</i> , 2006)	13
2.2	Structure of adenovirus (Zubeita <i>et al.</i> , 2005)	14
2.3	Schematic diagram of oncolytic virotherapy (Cross and Burmester, 2006)	17
2.4	Steps in homology modeling (Madhusudhan <i>et al.</i> , 2005)	28
4.1	Electrophoretic analysis of pDsRed Monomer N1, p53 and pENTR3C TM plasmid DNA amplification	70
4.2	A schematic representation of restriction map and Multiple Cloning Site (MCS) of pDsRed Monomer N1 vector (Adapted from Clontech TAKARA BIO Company, 2006)	72
4.3	Electrophoretic analysis of p53 PCR amplification	74
4.4	Electrophoretic analysis of single and double digestion of pDsRed Monomer N1 vector	75
4.5	A schematic representation of the steps involve in the construction of p53-DsRed Monomer N1	77
4.6	Screening of the insert (p53) from selective transformant colonies using amplification of PCR	78
4.7	Electrophoretic analysis of single and double digestion of p53-DsRed Monomer N1 recombinant	80
4.8	Alignment of forward and reverse sequencing of nucleic acid of the p53 PCR product (p53-DsRed Monomer N1) and <i>Homo sapiens</i> tumour protein p53 gene (Entrez Gene ID: 7157)	83

4.9	Electrophoretic analysis of double digestion of pENTR3C™	85
4.10	Electrophoretic analysis of double digestion of p53-DsRed Monomer N1 recombinant	87
4.11	A schematic representation of the steps involve in the ligation of p53-DsRed Monomer N1 with the entry clone (pENTR3C™)	88
4.12	Screening of the insert (p53) from selective transformant colonies using amplification of PCR	90
4.13	Alignment of forward and reverse sequencing of nucleic acid of the p53 (pENTR3C™-p53-DsRed Monomer N1) PCR product and human tumour protein p53 gene (Entrez Gene ID: 7157)	92
4.14	Electrophoresis analysis of p53 and Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 PCR amplification	94
4.15	Alignment of forward and reverse sequencing of nucleic acid of the p53 (Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1) PCR product and <i>Homo sapiens</i> tumour protein p53 gene (Entrez Gene ID: 7157)	96
4.16	(A) Non-transfected and (B) transfected Vero cell with the Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 plasmid was observed after 24 hours using inverted fluorescent microscope (Nikon Ti Eclipse) (magnification 40X)	97
5.1	Percentage viability of (A) MCF-10A, (B) MDA-MB 231 and (C) MCF-7 cell line after hyperthermia treatment for 0.5, 1, 2, 3 and 4 hours at temperatures of 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44°C was determined using MTT assay	100
5.2	(A) MDA-MB 231 and (B) MCF-7 cells infected with Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 virus were observed after 24 hours using inverted fluorescent microscope (Nikon Ti Eclipse) (magnification 40X)	104
5.3	Cell viability of MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 after treated with various MOI (0, 25, 50, 100, 200 and 500) of Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1	106

5.4	Percentage of cytotoxicity of MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 cells after treated with hyperthermia alone (42°C for 2 hours), Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 alone (MOI of 100) and the combination of Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 (MOI of 100) and heat exposure at 42°C for 2 hours	107
5.5	Percentage of synergistic effect of one and two hours hyperthermia (42°C) combined with various MOI of Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 on the growth of (A) MDA-MB 231 and (B) MCF-7 cell lines	110
5.6	Infection of (A) MDA-MB 231 and (B) MCF-7 cells with the same dose of Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 (MOI of 100) combined with hyperthermia for 1, 2, 3 and 4 hours resulted in formation of viral plaques, as measured after 24 hours of infection	113
5.7	Hsp70 expression after treated (A) MDA-MB 231 and (B) MCF-7 cells with Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 (MOI of 100) combined with hyperthermia at temperature of 42°C for 2 hours	116
5.8	p53 protein expression in (A) MDA-MB 231 and (B) MCF-7 cells, infected with Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 (MOI of 100) and treated with heat at 42°C for 2 hours	120
5.9	Activities of caspase 3/7, 8 and 9 were expressed in (A) MDA-MB 231 and (B) MCF-7 cells for Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 alone (MOI of 100) and the combination of Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 (MOI of 100) and hyperthermia (42°C for 2 hours) treatment after 6 hours	123
6.1	Three dimensional structure of NBD coloured by chain bows, which was viewed using PyMol software	126
6.2	Secondary structure of the NBD was predicted using SOPMA server	130
6.3	Root mean square deviations (RMSD) of NBD at different temperatures of 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44°C	132

6.4	Backbone atomic fluctuations (RMSF) of NBD at a variety of temperatures (37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44°C)	132
6.5	Radius gyration of NBD at temperatures of 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44°C	133
6.6	Secondary structure analysis for NBD at temperatures of (A) 37°C; (B) 38°C; (C) 39°C; (D) 40°C; (E) 41°C; (F) 42°C; (G) 43°C and (H) 44°C	134
6.7	Projection of the predicted active sites for NBD protein at (A) 37°C; (B) 38°C; (C) 39°C; (D) 40°C; (E) 41°C; (F) 42°C; (G) 43°C and (H) 44°C obtained using Q-SiteFinder web server (shown as red colour)	136
6.8	Docking of NBD protein with the PNLVP motif at (A) 37°C; (B) 38°C, (C) 39°C; (D) 40°C; (E) 41°C; (F) 42°C; (G) 43°C and (H) 44°C	141
6.9	Root mean square deviations (RMSD) of the NBD-PNLVP motif complex structures at a variety of temperatures (37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44°C)	147
6.10	Backbone atomic fluctuations (RMSF) of the NBD-PNLVP motif complex structures at 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44°C	147
6.11	Salt bridge of the NBD-PNLVP motif complex structures at 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44°C	148
6.12	Hydrogen bond autocorrelation of the NBD-PNLVP motif complex structures at different temperatures (37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44°C)	148
6.13	Number of hydrogen bonds for NBD-PNLVP motif complex structures at (A) 37°C; (B) 38°C; (C) 39°C; (D) 40°C; (E) 41°C; (F) 42°C; (G) 43°C and (H) 44°C	149
6.14	Secondary structure analysis for NBD-PNLVP motif complexes at temperatures of (A) 37°C; (B) 38°C; (C) 39°C; (D) 40°C; (E) 41°C; (F) 42°C; (G) 43°C and (H) 44°C	151
6.15	Secondary structures of the (A) T11V; (B) T12P;	

	(C) D364S; (D) K69L; (E) T202V; (F) E229V; (G) H225P and (H) D230C were predicted using SOPMA server	161
6.16	Root mean square deviations (RMSD) of the NBD mutants (T11V, T12P, D364S, K69L, T202V, E229V, H225P and D230C)	170
6.17	Backbone atomic fluctuations (RMSF) of the NBD mutants (T11V, T12P, D364S, K69L, T202V, E229V, H225P and D230C)	171
6.18	Radius gyration of the NBD mutants (T11V, T12P, D364S, K69L, T202V, E229V, H225P and D230C)	171
6.19	Secondary structure analysis for (A) T11V; (B) T12P; (C) D364S; (D) K69L; (E) T202V; (F) E229V; (G) H225P and (H) D230C	172
6.20	Ramachandran plots generated via PROCHECK for (A) NBD protein; (B) T11V; (C) T12P; (D) D364S; (E) K69L; (F) T202V; (G) E229V; (H) H225P and (I) D230C mutants	175
6.21	ERRAT plots for (A) NBD protein; (B) T11V; (C) T12P; (D) D364S; (E) K69L; (F) T202V; (G) E229V; (H) H225P and (I) D230C mutants	178
6.22	Verify 3D plots for (A) NBD protein; (B) T11V; (C) T12P; (D) D364S; (E) K69L; (F) T202V; (G) E229V; (H) H225P and (I) D230C mutants	181
6.23	Protein quality scores for (A) NBD protein; (B) T11V; (C) T12P; (D) D364S; (E) K69L; (F) T202V; (G) E229V; (H) H225P and (I) D230C mutants generated through ProSA web server	185
6.24	Evaluation of (A) NBD protein; (B) T11V; (C) T12P; (D) D364S; (E) K69L; (F) T202V; (G) E229V; (H) H225P and (I) D230C protein models using ANOLEA and GROMOS analysis	189
6.25	Projection of the predicted active sites for (A) T11V; (B) T12P; (C) D364S; (D) K69L; (E) T202V; (F) E229V;	

	(G) H225P and (H) D230C mutants obtained using Q-SiteFinder web server (shown as red colour)	194
6.26	Docking of the (A) T11V; (B) T12P, (C) D364S; (D) K69L; (E) T202V; (F) E229V; (G) H225P and (H) D230C	200
6.27	Root mean square deviations (RMSD) of the (A) T11V; (B) T12P; (C) D364S; (D) K69L; (E) T202V; (F) E229V; (G) H225P and (H) D230C-PNLVP motif complex structures	205
6.28	Backbone atomic fluctuations (RMSF) of the (A) T11V; (B) T12P; (C) D364S; (D) K69L; (E) T202V; (F) E229V; (G) H225P and (H) D230C-PNLVP motif complex models	206
6.29	Salt bridge of the (A) T11V; (B) T12P; (C) D364S; (D) K69L; (E) T202V; (F) E229V; (G) H225P and (H) D230C-PNLVP motif complex structures	206
6.30	Hydrogen bond autocorrelation of the (A) T11V; (B) T12P; (C) D364S; (D) K69L; (E) T202V; (F) E229V; (G) H225P and (H) D230C-PNLVP motif complex models	207
6.31	Number of hydrogen bonds for the (A) T11V; (B) T12P; (C) D364S; (D) K69L; (E) T202V; (F) E229V; (G) H225P and (H) D230C-PNLVP motif complex structures	208
6.32	Secondary structure analysis for the (A) T11V; (B) T12P; (C) D364S; (D) K69L; (E) T202V; (F) E229V; (G) H225P and (H) D230C-PNLVP motif complex models	210
6.33	Solvent accessible surface area (SASA) analysis for the (A) NBD protein; (B) T11V; (C) T12P; (D) D364S; (E) K69L; (F) T202V; (G) E229V; (H) H225P and (I) D230C-PNLVP motif complex structures	212
6.34	Distance matrices analysis for the (A) NBD protein; (B) T11V; (C) T12P; (D) D364S; (E) K69L; (F) T202V; (G) E229V; (H) H225P and (I) D230C-PNLVP motif complex structures	215

6.35	Protein interaction of HSPA1A with p53 was found through STRING version 9.1 program	218
6.36	Docking of the NBD protein with p53 motif (SCMGGMNR)	220
6.37	Root mean square deviations (RMSD) of the NBD-p53 motif complex structure at temperature of 42°C	221
6.38	Backbone atomic fluctuations (RMSF) of the NBD-p53 motif complex model at 42°C	222
6.39	Salt bridge of the NBD-p53 motif complex model at 42°C	222
6.40	Number of hydrogen bonds for the NBD-p53 motif complex structure at 42°C	223
6.41	Hydrogen bond autocorrelation of the NBD-p53 motif complex structure at 42°C	223
6.42	Secondary structure analysis for the NBD-p53 motif complex structure	224

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

AAV	-	Adeno-associated viral
Ad5	-	Adenovirus serotype 5
Akt	-	Serine or threonine kinase
Ala	-	Alanine
Arg	-	Arginine
Asn	-	Asparagine
Asp	-	Aspartic acid
ATP	-	Adenosine triphosphate
BLAST	-	Basic Local Alignment Search Tool
BLASTP	-	Protein BLAST
CAR	-	Coxsackie adenovirus receptor
CCSB	-	Center for Cancer Systems Biology
CO ₂	-	Carbon dioxide
CTLs	-	Cytotoxic T-lymphocytes
Cys	-	Cysteine
DC	-	Dendritic cells
dH ₂ O	-	Distilled water
DNA	-	Deoxyribonucleic acid
dNTPs	-	Deoxyribonucleotide triphosphates
<i>E.coli</i>	-	<i>Escherichia coli</i>
Eg.	-	Example
ELISA	-	Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay
GRAVY	-	Grand average of hydropathicity
G-factor	-	Goodness factor
Gln	-	Glutamine
Glu	-	Glutamic acid

Gly	-	Glycine
GUI	-	Graphical User Interface
HDACs	-	Histone deactylases
HIF	-	Hypoxia-inducible factor
HILP	-	Hyperthermic isolated limb perfusion
HIPEC	-	Hyperthermic intraperitoneal chemotherapy
His	-	Histidine
HLS	-	Helical lid subdomain
Hsp	-	Heat shock protein
Hsp70	-	Heat shock 70 kDa protein
HSV	-	Herpes simplex virus
Ile	-	Isoleucine
IPHC	-	Intraperitoneal hyperthermic chemotherapy
ITR	-	Inverted terminal repeat
LB	-	Luria-Bertani
Leu	-	Leucine
Lys	-	Lysine
MD simulation	-	Molecular dynamics simulation
MgCl ₂	-	Magnesium chloride
MDM2	-	Murine double minute gene 2
M.wt	-	Molecular weight
NaCl	-	Sodium chloride
NBD	-	Nucleotide binding domian
NCBI	-	National Center for Biotechnology Information
NLS	-	Nuclear localization signal
PBC	-	Periodic boundary condition
PBS	-	Phosphate buffer saline
PCR	-	Polymerase Chain Reaction
PDB	-	Protein Data Bank
PDF	-	Probability density function
Phe	-	Phenylalanine
pI	-	Isoelectric point
PKB	-	Protein kinase B
PME	-	Particle Mesh Ewald

Pro	-	Proline
ProSA	-	Protein Structure Analysis
PTEN	-	Phosphatase and tensin homolog deleted on chromosome ten
RF	-	Radiofrequency
RMSD	-	Root mean square deviation
RMSF	-	Root mean square fluctuation
SBD	-	Substrate binding domain
SBSD	-	Substrate-binding subdomain
Ser	-	Serine
SPC	-	Simple point charge
TAE	-	Tris-Acetate electrophoresis buffer
Thr	-	Threonine
Trp	-	Tryptophan
Tyr	-	Tyrosine
UV	-	Ultraviolet
Valine	-	Valine
WBH	-	Whole-body hyperthermia
WHO	-	World Health Organization
3-D	-	Three-dimensional

LIST OF SYMBOLS

cm	-	Centimetre
cm ²	-	Square centrimetre
g	-	Gram
h	-	Hour
K	-	Kelvin
kDa	-	Kilo Dalton
Kcal/mol	-	Kilocalorie per mole
L	-	Litre
M	-	Molarity
M ⁻¹ cm ⁻¹	-	Molar absorptivity
mg	-	Miligram
mg/ml	-	Miligram/mililitre
mM	-	Mili molar
nm	-	Nano metre
ns	-	Nano second
ps	-	Pico second
rpm	-	Rounds per minute
s	-	Second
μl	-	Microlitre
μM	-	Micro molar
v	-	Volt
Å	-	Angstrom
α	-	Alpha
β	-	Beta
°C	-	Degree Celsius
ΔG _{bind}	-	Binding energy

- > - Greater than
- < - Less than

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX	TITLE	PAGE
A	Cell viability percentage of MCF-7-10A, MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 following heat treatment ^a	251
B	Standard curve of human Hsp70	252
C	Results of Hsp70 ELISA assay for MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 cell lines at optical density of 570 nm ^a	253
D	Standard curve of human p53	255
E	List of publications	256

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

Currently, breast cancer is the fifth leading cause of cancer-related deaths for both men and women in the worldwide, accounting for 521,000 deaths in 2012 (World Health Organization, 2014). In Malaysia, breast cancer is the most common cancer where 1 in 19 Malaysian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer by the age of 85 (National Cancer Registry of Malaysia, 2014). Most cases occur during age 45-55. It is the most common cancer diagnosed in women (25.2% of all new cases in women) (World Health Organization, 2014). In addition, 10-15% of women treated for early breast cancer suffer a local recurrence (locally recurrent breast cancer, LRBC) within 10 years (Clemons *et al.*, 2001). Local failure causes significant physical and psychosocial morbidity (van der Zee *et al.*, 1999), and the majority of these patients die of their disease within 5 years of recurrence (Clemons *et al.*, 2001). This is due to the poor prognosis such as lack of specific symptoms in the early stage of disease leading to delays in diagnosis, the aggressive nature of disease, as evidenced by the high rate of local spread and/or distant metastasis at the time of diagnosis, diagnosis techniques that lack sufficient sensitivity and specificity to support screening for breast cancer. At present, the cancer treatment by chemotherapeutic agents, surgery and radiation has not been fully effective against the high incidence or low survival rate of breast cancer. Furthermore, these treatments cause negative side effects such as liver failure, cardiomyopathy and an increased risk of developing other types of cancer (Hawkins and Hermiston, 2001).

Thus, the development of a new therapeutic approach to breast cancer remains one of the most challenging area in cancer research.

Gene therapy is a new therapeutic approach for breast cancer. It specifically targets the tumour cells including metastatic cells in the body (Abaan and Criss, 2002). It has been shown to be effective with different types of diseases (Rubanyi, 2001). Therefore, it may be applicable for the treatment of breast cancer patients. Oncolytic adenoviruses are a class of promising anti-cancer agents, which are engineered to infect, replicate within, and lyses cancer cells (Yamamoto and Curiel, 2009). However, these agents alone failed to generate sustained clinical responses or to cause complete tumour regressions. This is because heterogeneity or indeed lack of expression of receptors (coxsackie adenovirus receptor, CAR) and co-receptors (integrin $\alpha_v\beta_3$ and $\alpha_v\beta_5$ classes) in tumours can be implicated in the poor efficiency of infectivity by adenovirus (Bauerschmitz *et al.*, 2002; Kanerva and Hemmiki, 2004). In addition, many tumour cells fail to support adenovirus replication because of its replication deficiency. Thus, combination treatment is needed to improve the clinical outcome in breast cancer treatment.

Hyperthermia has been explored intensively to treat cancer patients. It is used to raise the temperature of a region of the body affected by cancer up to 41.5-43°C with minimal or no damaging healthy tissues (van der Zee, 2002). Several investigators suggested that hyperthermia might enhance viral replication, particularly in tumour cells (Thorne *et al.*, 2005). Heat shock protein (Hsp) is the key player for the hyperthermia hypothesis. Glotzer *et al.* (2000) described that Hsp may play a vital role in the adenovirus life cycle because genome replication, synthesis of protein and virion assembly which are vital for viral replication, is dependent on the host cell. Hsp especially Hsp70 is the main responsible for import and colocalizes viral proteins in the nucleus with E1A gene products of adenovirus (Kao *et al.*, 2005). Furthermore, Wickner *et al.* (1992) documented that bacterial DNAJ and DNAK, which are important for bacteriophage DNA replication, may depend on Hsp70 induction. Hsp40 and Hsp70 induction promotes production of viral proteins for avian adenovirus CELO (Glotzer *et al.*, 2000).

Hyperthermia induces transgene expression, represents a promising strategy using the combination of hyperthermia with virotherapy (Huang *et al.*, 2000; Lohr *et al.*, 2000; Walther and Stein, 2009). Nevertheless, there are only few studies on this combination treatment against cancer. Based on Eisenberg *et al.* (2010) study, it has been demonstrated that the combination of hyperthermia and NV1066 (a recombinant herpes simplex virus-1) infection significantly increased the pancreatic cancer cell kill to approximately 80% without damaging normal cells. Therefore, adenovirus in combination with hyperthermia can be a potential treatment for breast cancer patients.

1.2 Problem statement of research

There have been numerous strategies attempted in the past to treat breast cancers with limited success. One of the latest approaches is adenovirus gene therapy. Although the oncolytic adenoviruses are promising anti-cancer agents, clinical studies demonstrated that viral therapy alone failed to produce sustained clinical responses or to destroy tumour completely. This is due to lack of expression of coxsackie adenovirus receptor and co-receptors in tumour cells which is crucial for adenovirus infection. Therefore, tumour cells hinder replication of adenovirus.

While the treatment effects of hyperthermia as a single agent are limited, its ability to potentiate the effects of standard chemo-radiotherapies has generated lasting interest. Yet, combination of hyperthermia with either chemotherapy, radiotherapy or both, led to improved clinical outcome in treatment of breast cancer; they have been shown potential side effects, such as impotence or incontinence that can greatly impair life quality (van der Zee, 2002). Thus, a novel approach of combining gene therapy and hyperthermia will be explored to be a new way to treat breast cancer cells.

1.3 Hypotheses of study

The hypotheses of this study are:

1. Can coupling of hyperthermia and Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 enhances killing of breast cancer cells (MCF-7 and MDA-MB 231)?
2. Can heat treatment induced Hsp70 and p53 expression in breast cancer cells?
3. Does the combination of hyperthermia and Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 involved in apoptosis pathway?
4. Is there any protein interaction between nucleotide binding domain (NBD) of Hsp70 and E1A 32 kDa motif (PNLVP)?
5. Is there any protein interaction between NBD of Hsp70 and p53 motif (SCMGGMNR)?

1.4 Objectives of study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To determine the cytotoxic effects of hyperthermia alone, Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 alone and combination of hyperthermia and Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 on breast cancer lines (MCF-7 and MDA-MB 231).
2. To determine the expression of Hsp70 in breast cancer cells after treated with Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 in combination with hyperthermia.
3. To determine p53 expression in breast cancer cells for combination treatment of Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 and hyperthermia.
4. To determine the possible pathway involved in apoptosis for MDA-MB 231 and MCF-7 cells after treated with the combination of Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 and hyperthermia.

5. To identify novel protein interaction between NBD of Hsp70 and E1A 32 kDa of human adenovirus serotype 5 motif (PNLVP).
6. To identify novel protein interaction between NBD of Hsp70 and p53 motif (SCMGGMNR).

1.5 Scope of research

This study involves construction of recombinant adenovirus, cytotoxicity, quantitation of viral replication, protein expression, protein modeling, molecular dynamic (MD) simulation of protein and protein-protein docking. Firstly, Ad5-p53 will be constructed by cloning p53 gene into defective recombinant adenovirus vector containing red fluorescent protein (DsRed Monomer N1). Then, Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1 (multiplicity of infection of 100 PFU per cell, MOI of 100) will be infected with MCF-7 and MDA-MB 231 breast cancer cells. Cells will be treated at 42°C for 2 hours prior to viral treatment. The formation of viral plaques and cell survival (MTT assay) will be measured. After that, Hsp70 and p53 protein expression will be quantitated using ELISA assay. Activated-Caspase 3/7, 8 and 9 will also be performed to study the apoptotic pathway of cancer cells. Besides that, the novel protein interaction between NBD of Hsp70 and E1A 32 kDa of human Ad5 motif (PNLVP); and NBD and p53 motif (SCMGGMNR) will be investigated through bioinformatics tools such as Gromacs version 4.6.3 and Autodock version 4.2.

1.6 Significance of study

The beneficial outcome of this study is that the novel therapeutic regimen, combining the effects of recombinant adenovirus (Ad5-p53-DsRed Monomer N1) and hyperthermia (42°C for 2 hours) can be explored as a potential breast cancer treatment. Furthermore, this combination treatment could be a useful application to develop adenovirus-based gene transfer to breast cancer cells. In spite of that, understanding the stability of Hsp70; the preferred sites of interaction between

Hsp70 and E1A 32 kDa of human Ad5; and the binding affinity and stability Hsp70-p53 motif complex structure through bioinformatics tools is the key to design rational drugs and vaccines in breast cancer treatment.

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