



รายงานวิจัยฉบับสมบูรณ์

โครงการการตรวจวินิจฉัยโรคอัลฟาและบี่ต้าชาลัส ซีเมีย

ระยะก่อนการฝั่งตัว

PREIMPLANTATION GENETIC DIAGNOSIS OF ALPHA- AND BETA-THALASSAEMIAS

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บทคัดย่อ

วัตถุประสงค์ ธาลัสซีเมียเป็นโรคที่ถ่ายทอดทางพันธุกรรมที่พบบ่อยและเป็นปัญหาใหญ่ที่สุดปัญหา หนึ่งในประเทศไทยและทั่วโลก ยุทธศาสตร์ในการแก้ไขปัญหาโรคธาลัสซีเมียที่ใช้ได้กว้างขวางที่สุดใน ปัจจุบันคือการควบคุมจำนวนการเกิดผู้ป่วยรายใหม่โดยการตรวจคัดกรองหาครอบครัวคู่เสี่ยงที่เป็น พาหะ ให้คำปรึกษาด้านพันธุกรรม ให้บริการการตรวจวินิจฉัยก่อนคลอดและสิ้นสุดการตั้งครรภ์ให้ใน กรณีที่ทารกเป็นโรคชนิดรุนแรง ทางเลือกใหม่นอกเหนือจากการตรวจวินิจฉัยก่อนคลอดคือการวินิจฉัย ก่อนการฝั่งตัวของทารกซึ่งเป็นการเลือกตัวอ่อนที่ปราศจากโรคตั้งแต่ก่อนการตั้งครรภ์ช่วยให้คู่สมรสมี โอกาสเริ่มต้นการตั้งครรภ์ด้วยทารกที่ไม่เป็นโรค การวินิจฉัยก่อนคลอดต้องอาศัยการทำงานร่วมมือกัน ของผู้เชี่ยวชาญเฉพาะทางจากสาขาต่าง ๆ รวมถึง นรีแพทย์ผู้เชี่ยวชาญในการทำทารกหลอดแก้ว นักวิทยาศาสตร์ผู้เชี่ยวชาญในการดูแลตัวอ่อน นักอณูพันธุวิทยาผู้เชี่ยวชาญในการตรวจวิเคราะห์ดีเอ็น เอจากเซลล์เดียว และสูติแพทย์ผู้เชี่ยวชาญในการดูแลครรภ์ วัตถุประสงค์ของการศึกษานี้คือการพัฒนา เทคนิคปฏิกิริยาลูกโซ่เพื่อตรวจวิเคราะห์ดีเอ็นเอจากเซลล์เดียวสำหรับโรคบีตำธาลัสซีเมียที่มีความ รวดเร็ว ความไวสูง และถูกต้องแม่นยำ และทำการวินิจฉัยก่อนการฝังตัวให้กับผู้ป่วย

วิธีการ ครอบครัวคู่เสี่ยงที่อาจมีทารกเป็นโรคบีต้าธาลัสซีเมียชนิดรุนแรงจำนวน 14 คู่ได้รับการให้ คำปรึกษาในรายละเอียดเกี่ยวกับโครงการนี้ ครอบครัวจำนวน 2 ครอบครัวที่เป็นพาหะโรคบีต้าธาลัสซี เมียชนิดโคดอน 41-42 ตัดสินใจเข้าร่วมโครงการและผ่านการกระตุ้นรังไข่และการปฏิสนธิตัวอ่อนใน ห้องปฏิบัติการที่โรงพยาบาลมหาราชนครเชียงใหม่ ตัวอ่อนได้รับการตัดตรวจในวันที่ 3 หลังการ ปฏิสนธิโดยใช้ลำแสงเลเซอร์ ดีเอ็นเอจากเซลล์เดียวได้รับการตรวจวิเคราะห์เทคนิคปฏิกิริยาลูกโซ่ชนิด เรื่องแสงโดยอิเล็กโตรโฟรีซิส ช่วยให้สามารถวิเคราะห์โรคบีต้าธาลัสซีเมียและตำแหน่ง microsatellite ซึ่งบอกการปนเปื้อนและการวินิจฉัยกลุ่มอาการดาวน์ได้พร้อมกัน

ผลการศึกษา ในการวินิจฉัยก่อนการฝังตัวครอบครัวแรก ตัวอ่อน 8 ตัวได้รับการตรวจ ตัวอ่อนที่ตรวจ พบว่าปกติ 2 ตัวได้รับเลือกเพื่อใส่เข้าในโพรงมดลูก ทำให้เกิดการตั้งครรภ์ทารกปกติ 1 ครรภ์ ได้รับ การยืนยันว่าทารกปกติจากการตรวจทั้งก่อนและหลังคลอด ทารกรายนี้คลอดสุขภาพสมบูรณ์ในเดือน มิถุนายน พ.ศ.2548 ที่โรงพยาบาลมหาราชนครเชียงใหม่ ในการวินิจฉัยก่อนการฝังตัวครอบครัวที่สอง ตัวอ่อน 9 ตัวได้รับการตรวจ ตัวอ่อนปกติ 1 ตัวและตัวอ่อนที่เป็นแฝง 1 ตัวได้รับเลือกเพื่อใส่เข้าใน โพรงมดลูก แต่ไม่มีการตั้งครรภ์เกิดขึ้น มีตัวอ่อน 2 ตัวที่ให้ผลการตรวจเป็นกลุ่มอาการดาวน์ ทำให้ อุบัติการณ์ของกลุ่มอาการดาวน์ในกรณีนี้เป็นร้อยละ 22.2 (2/9) ข้อมูลนี้ยิ่งเป็นที่น่าสนใจอย่างยิ่ง เนื่องจากมารดามีอายุเพียง 24 ปี

บทสรุป การศึกษานี้ชี้ให้เห็นว่าการประสานงานกันของความรู้ทางอณูพันธุวิทยาระดับนาโน (หนึ่ง เซลล์มีดีเอ็นเอ 5 พิโคกรัม) และเทคโนโลยีช่วยการเจริญพันธุ์สามารถให้ประโยชน์ในทางคลินิกต่อ ผู้ป่วยอย่างมหาศาล ช่วยให้ทางเลือกใหม่กับครอบครัวที่มีความเสี่ยงที่อาจมีบุตรเป็นโรคพันธุกรรม ร้ายแรงและอาจจำเป็นต้องทำแท้งบุตร การศึกษานี้ได้สร้างโปรโตคอลใหม่ขึ้นมา 2 โปรโตคอลสำหรับ การตรวจโรคบีต้าธาลัสซีเมียโดยใช้ปฏิกิริยาลูกโซ่ชนิดเรื่องแสง โปรโตคอลทั้งสองได้ใช้ในการวินิจฉัย ก่อนการฝังตัว ได้ความสำเร็จเป็นทารกปลอดโรคจากการวินิจฉัยโรคพันธุกรรมชนิดยีนเดี่ยวก่อนการ ฝังตัวคนแรกในประเทศไทยและภาคพื้นเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้

Abstract

Objectives Thalassaemias are prevalent and cause one of the biggest health problems in Thailand and world-wide. The most widely applicable strategy for dealing with thalassaemias has been to control the incidence of new cases by offering screening for heterozygotes, genetic counseling, and prenatal diagnosis (PND) with termination of pregnancy in affected cases. An alternative to routine PND is preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) which allows selection of unaffected embryos prior to pregnancy establishment providing couples the chance to start a pregnancy with a disease-free baby. PGD requires a collaboration of specialists from different fields including a gynaecologist who performs *in vitro* fertilization (IVF), an embryologist who takes care of preimplantation embryos, a molecular biologist who is responsible for the diagnosis from single biopsied blastomeres and a perinatologist who looks after the pregnancy. The aim of this study was to develop and apply quick, sensitive and accurate single cell PCR protocols for PGD of beta-thalassaemia.

Methods Fourteen couples at risk of having an affected fetus with severe beta-thalassaemia were counseled regarding the project. Two couples carrying beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation decided to join the project and underwent routine superovulation and intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) at Maharaj Nakorn Chiang Mai Hospital. Cleavage stage embryo biopsy was performed using laser on Day-3 post-fertilisation and DNA from single cells was analysed using multiplex fluorescent PCR on a capillary electrophoresis. This permitted beta-thalassaemia mutation analysis and a microsatellite marker allowing contamination detection and diagnosis of trisomy 21 cases caused by meiosis I error.

Results In the first PGD case, eight embryos were tested and two normally diagnosed embryos were transferred. This resulted in an unaffected pregnancy, confirmed to be homozygous normal by pre- and post-natal testing. The baby was born healthy in June 2005 at Maharaj Nakorn Chiang Mai Hospital. The second PGD case involved analysis of nine embryos. One normal and one heterozygous embryo was transferred, however no pregnancy resulted. Two embryos were shown to be affected by Down's syndrome. These made the prevalence of trisomy 21 embryos be 22.2% (2/9) in this PGD cycle, interesting given that the mother was just 24 years old.

Conclusion This study indicates that the integration of molecular biology nano-techniques (single cell contains 5 picogrammes of DNA) and advanced reproductive technology (ART) can be clinically useful giving a new choice to the family at risk of having an affected child with serious disease without facing immoral pregnancy termination. Two novel PGD protocols for beta-thalassaemia using multiplex fluorescent single cell PCR were developed and optimised. The protocols were applied in two clinical PGD cycles and resulted in the first disease-free baby following PGD for a single gene disorder in Thailand and South East Asia.

Executive Summary

Introduction Thalassaemias are prevalent and cause one of the biggest health problems in Thailand and worldwide. The most widely applicable strategy for dealing with thalassaemias has been to control the incidence of new cases by offering screening for heterozygotes, genetic counseling, and prenatal diagnosis (PND) with termination of pregnancy in affected cases. An alternative to routine PND is preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) which allows selection of unaffected embryos prior to pregnancy establishment providing couples the chance to start a pregnancy with a disease-free baby. PGD requires a collaboration of specialists from different fields including a gynaecologist who performs in vitro fertilization (IVF), an embryologist who takes care of preimplantation embryos, a molecular biologist who is responsible for the diagnosis from single biopsied blastomeres and a perinatologist who looks after the pregnancy. PGD involves the sampling and testing of a single cell from cleavage stage embryos generated using IVF technology. For the diagnosis of single gene disorders it is necessary to amplify DNA from the cell using the polymerase chain reaction (PCR). Amplification failure (AF), allele drop-out (ADO) and contamination are major problems encountered during PCR at the single cell level. As well as the limited amount of material available for testing (only 1-2 cells) a further challenge is that diagnoses must be completed within 24 hours. Therefore, the diagnostic techniques need to be quick, sensitive and accurate. The aim of this study was to develop a multiplex fluorescent PCR protocol for PGD of betathalassaemia and perform clinical PGD cases for couples at risk. Additionally, chromosome 21 microsatellite marker was utilised in order to detect cases of Down's syndrome.

Patients and methods Fourteen couples at risk of having an affected fetus with severe beta-thalassaemia were counseled regarding the project. Two couples carrying beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation decided to join the project and underwent routine superovulation and intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) at Maharaj Nakorn Chiang Mai Hospital. Cleavage stage embryo biopsy was performed using laser on Day-3 post-fertilisation and DNA from single cells was analysed using multiplex fluorescent PCR on a capillary electrophoresis. This permitted beta-thalassaemia mutation analysis and a microsatellite marker allowing contamination detection and diagnosis of trisomy 21 cases caused by meiosis I error.

Results A new set of PCR primers was designed for mutation analysis of beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation. In addition to amplifying the beta-globin gene region, a polymorphic marker was incorporated in the PGD protocol for beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation as multiplex PCR to serve as a very basic form of DNA fingerprint. The compatibility of each pair of primers was assessed and optimised using single buccal cells and single blastomeres from

spare embryos donated for research before clinical application. In the first PGD case, eight embryos were tested and two normally diagnosed embryos were transferred. This resulted in an unaffected pregnancy, confirmed to be homozygous normal by pre- and post-natal testing. The baby was born healthy in June 2005 at Maharaj Nakorn Chiang Mai Hospital. The second PGD case involved analysis of nine embryos. One normal and one heterozygous embryo was transferred, unfortunately, no pregnancy resulted. Two embryos were shown to be affected by Down's syndrome. These made the prevalence of trisomy 21 embryos be 22.2% (2/9) in this PGD cycle, interesting given that the mother was just 24 years old.

Discussion This study indicates that the integration of modern molecular biology nanotechniques and advanced reproductive technology (ART) can be clinically useful giving a new choice to the family at risk of having an affected child with serious disease without facing immoral pregnancy termination. Two novel PGD protocols for beta-thalassaemia using multiplex fluorescent single cell PCR were developed and optimised. Compared to previously reported restriction fragment length polymorphism (RFLP) protocols, the use of multiplex fluorescent PCR in this study offers the advantage of increased sensitivity. Fewer PCR cycles are necessary for PCR product detection and the size of the fragments generated can be determined with high accuracy using fluorescent DNA sequencing apparatus. This means that the speed of diagnosis is accelerated a key factor for PGD. The protocols were applied in two clinical PGD cycles and resulted in a disease-free baby. Therefore, the first success of PGD of beta-thalassaemia in Thailand and South East Asia was reported here.

Conclusion In conclusion, novel PGD protocols for beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation using multiplex fluorescent single cell PCR were developed and optimised. A new set of primers for detecting beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation was designed for effective mutation detection and informative microsatellite markers on chromosome 21 were incorporated for detection of contamination and instances of Down's syndrome caused by malsegregation of chromosome 21 during meiosis I. The protocols were applied in two clinical PGD cycles and resulted in the first birth following PGD for a single gene disorder in Thailand and South East Asia. Two preimplantation embryos affected with Down's syndrome detecting by multiplex fluorescent PCR were also reported here.

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เนื้อหางานวิจัย

INTRODUCTION

Thalassaemias, the world's most common single gene disorders (Weatherall, 1996), are prevalent and cause one of the biggest health problems in Thailand. Babies with the most severe form of beta-thalassaemia develop severe transfusion dependent anemia 6 months after birth. Regular blood transfusion may lead to infection with HIV or Hepatitis B or C and iron overloading. The only means of curing this condition, bone marrow transplantation, is still expensive and risky. Therefore, the most widely applicable strategy for dealing with thalassaemias has been to control the incidence of new cases by offering screening for heterozygotes, genetic counseling, and prenatal diagnosis (PND) with termination of pregnancy in affected cases (Tongsong *et al.*, 2000).

An alternative to routine PND is preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD), which allows selection of unaffected embryos prior to establishment of a pregnancy, thus providing couples with the chance to start a pregnancy knowing that the fetus is unaffected and eliminating the need for pregnancy termination (Handyside *et al.*, 1989). PGD involves the sampling and testing of a single cell from cleavage stage embryos generated using IVF technology. For the diagnosis of single gene disorders it is necessary to amplify DNA from the cell using the polymerase chain reaction (PCR). A variety of modified PCR techniques have been developed, however, amplification failure, allele drop-out (ADO) and contamination are still major problems encountered during PCR at the single cell level (Wells and Delhanty, 2001). As well as the limited amount of material available for testing (only 1-2 cells) a further challenge is that diagnoses must be completed within 24 hours. Therefore, the diagnostic techniques need to be quick, sensitive and accurate. PGD of single gene disorders have been done in western countries (Kanavakis *et al.*, 1999; Kuliev *et al.*, 1998), but thus far there has not been a report from a country in South East Asia.

The aim of this study was to develop single cell PCR protocols for PGD of betathalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation and perform clinical PGD cases for couples at risk. Additionally, we utilized chromosome 21 microsatellite markers in order to detect cases of Down's syndrome.

PATIENTS AND METHODS

Patient details

Fourteen couples at risk of having an affected fetus with beta-thalassaemia were counseled regarding the project, two decided to join the project. The mother and father of family 'A' were 32 and 35 years old respectively. The mother and father of family 'B' were 24 and 25 years old respectively. The parents of both families were carriers of beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation and experienced one termination of pregnancy following positive prenatal diagnosis of beta-thalassaemia.

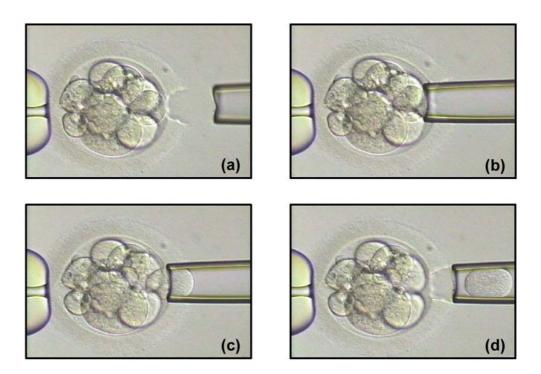
ICSI procedure and cleavage stage embryo biopsy

The patients underwent routine superovulation using Puregon[®] Pen (Organon Thailand Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand) and Orgalutran[®] (Organon Thailand Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand) and oocytes were fertilised using intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI). ICSI is used as a precaution to reduce the risk of sperm DNA contamination in subsequent PCR amplifications. Laser biopsy was performed on Day 3 post-fertilisation (4–9 cell stage), allowing two blastomeres to be removed from embryos consisting of 6+ cells and one blastomere from embryos with 4–5 cells (Figure 1). Cleavage stage embryos were graded 1, 2⁻, 2, 2⁺ and 3 where grade 1 had the best morphology and grade 3 was a highly fragmented, poor quality embryo (Staessen *et al.*, 1992).

Single cell isolation

Buccal cells, isolated by micromanipulation, and biopsied blastomeres were transferred into droplets of phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) (Gibthai Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand) with 4% bovine serum albumin (BSA) (Sigma®, S.M. Chemical Supplies Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand) on a 5 cm Petri dish in a laminar flow cabinet. Cells were washed in a minimum of four fresh PBS droplets, while visualising under a dissecting microscope, and were then transferred to thin-wall microcentrifuge tubes. A 2-µl aliquot of the last washing drop was also taken as a blank for each single blastomere. Cell lysis was carried out as described previously (El-Hashemite and Delhanty, 1997).

Figure 1 Cleavage stage embryo biopsy in this study: (a) the embryo is stabilised by a holding pipette (left) with negative pressure, a hole is created in the zona pellucida (zona drilling) using laser, (b), (c) and (d) a blastomere is gently pulled away from the embryo using a biopsy pipette (right) with negative pressure through the hole in the zona pellucida. Procedure performed by TV.



Multiplex fluorescent PCR

Extracted DNA from single cells was amplified using a combination of PW007 primers (forward 5'-ATT TTC CCA CCC TTA CCG TG-3', reverse 5'-GCA GCT CAC TCA GTG TCC G-3') covering beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation and a microsatellite D21S1411 (Sherlock *et al.*, 1998) or D21S11 (Sharma, Litt, 1992) primers (Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand). The PCR mixture consisted of 200 μM of each primer, 0.2 mM deoxynucleoside triphosphates (dNTPs) (Eppendorf, Bangkok, Thailand), 1 x GeneAmp[®] Buffer (10 x GeneAmp[®] Buffer contains 100 mM Tris-HCl pH 8.3, 500 mM KCl, 15 mM MgCl₂) (Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand) and 1.5 U AmpliTaq Gold[®] (Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand) and was made up to a total volume of 25 μl with distilled deionised water. The amplifications were performed with the conditions: 94°C 45 s (96°C for the first ten cycles), annealing at 60°C 45 s and extension at 72°C 1 min for 40 cycles. These were preceded by denaturation at 94°C for 12 min to activate the AmpliTaq Gold[®] enzyme. The multiplex amplified products from single cells were each tagged with two different

fluorochromes using labeled primers. This allowed analysis to be performed on an automated laser fluorescent sequencer ABI Prism[®] 310 (Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand). PW007 and D21S11 fragments were labeled with the blue fluorescent dye (6-FAM[®]), D21S1411 fragments were labeled with the yellow fluorescent dye NED[®].

Fragment analysis on ABI Prism[®] 310

A mixture of 1 µl fluorescent PCR products, 12 µl deionised formamide and 0.5 µl size standard (GenescanTM-500 [ROX]; Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand) was prepared and denatured at 95°C for 5 min. The denatured sample was subjected to capillary electrophoresis using Performance Optimised Polymer 4 (POP-4[®], Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand; 5 s injection time, 15,000 V, 60°C, 24 min). The data was analyzed by GeneScanTM analysis software (Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand).

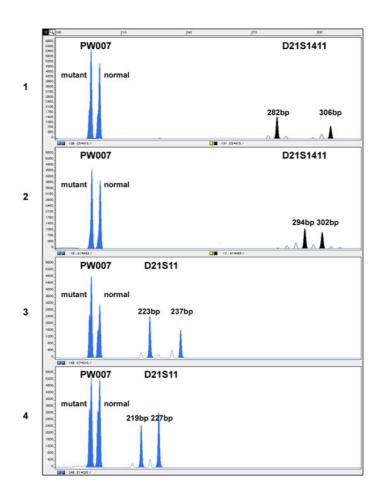
RESULTS

Single cell PCR protocols for beta-thalassaemia condon 41-42 mutation were developed and tested specifically for each couple. A new set of PCR primers (PW007) was designed for mutation analysis of beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation. In addition to amplifying the beta-globin gene region, a polymorphic marker, D21S1411 or D21S11, was incorporated in the PGD protocol as multiplex PCR to serve as a very basic form of DNA fingerprint. Both couples are fully informative for each marker used, in other words the parents of each couple share no alleles in common, therefore their embryos can only inherit one of four possible genotypes. Any deviation from these combinations of alleles, such as the detection of alleles not derived from either parent, is indicative of contamination. The compatibility of each pair of primers was assessed and optimised using single buccal cells derived from each patient and single blastomeres from embryos donated for research prior to clinical application. Genotyping of the couples 'A' (PW007 and D21S1411 primers) and 'B' (PW007 and D21S1411 primers) is demonstrated in Figure 2.

Preclinical assessment of methodology

From 60 single buccal cells of couple 'A', multiplex fluorescent PCR protocol gave an amplification efficiency (AE) of 86.7% and 83.3% for PW007 and D21S1411 primers respectively and allele dropout (ADO) rates of 21.2% and 26% for PW007 and D21S1411 primers respectively. The application of this single cell PCR protocol to 45 spare single human blastomeres donated for research exhibited an acceptable AE rates of 86.7% for PW007 and 88.9% for D21S1411 primers. The optimised protocol for family 'B' showed AE of 87.5% and 90% for PW007 and D21S11 primers respectively and ADO rates of 2.9% and 13.9% for PW007 and D21S11 primers respectively from 40 single heterozygous buccal cells. This protocol demonstrated AE of 92.3% and 88.5% for PW007 and D21S11 primers respectively on 26 single human blastomeres.

Figure 2 Results from GeneScanTM analysis on ABI Prism[®] 310 for PW007, D21S1411 and D21S11 primers multiplex amplified from single buccal cells of the mother (lane 1) and the father (lane 2) of the family A and the mother (lane 3) and the father (lane 4) of the family B. The blue peaks in lane 1, 2, 3 and 4 show mutant and normal beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation (PW007) alleles, the black peaks in lane 1 and 2 show microsatellite (D21S1411) alleles and the black peaks in lane 3 and 4 show microsatellite (D21S11) alleles. The x and y axes are base-pairs and fluorescence units, respectively.



Preimplantation diagnosis results

PGD cycle 1 for family 'A' gave 14 oocytes, 10 were sperm-injected and eight embryos were of sufficient quality for biopsy on Day 3 post-fertilisation, yielding 13 cells. Molecular analyses using multiplex fluorescent PCR revealed three embryos (embryos A1, A5 and A6) to be affected, two normal (embryos A4 and A7, Figure 3), one heterozygous (embryo A8), one with ambiguous result (embryo A2) and one with no results (embryo A3) (Table 1). No DNA contamination was detected. Follow-up analyses were performed on the embryos that had been diagnosed affected, or were unsuitable for transfer for embryological reasons. For this purpose whole embryos were transferred to PCR tubes and subjected to the same protocol as used for the actual PGD. The initial diagnoses of heterozygous and affected results were confirmed in all cases, but one (embryo A5). Embryo A5 was found to be heterozygous rather than affected as originally thought. The most likely explanation for this error is ADO affecting the normal allele in both analyzed blastomeres. Embryo A2 had given ambiguous results, one of the blastomeres tested showing only a mutant allele, while the second blastomere analysed displayed only a normal allele. The analysis of the rest of the embryo showed a heterozygous genotype, suggesting that the disparity in genotype of the two cells was due to ADO affecting a different allele in each cell. The blastomere A3.1 that failed to give results was from a heterozygous embryo. Both normally diagnosed embryos were transferred and one clinical pregnancy (singleton) was obtained. Prenatal diagnosis by fetal blood sampling at 19 weeks of gestation confirmed the homozygous normal beta-globin gene genotype of the fetus. A disease-free baby boy was born in June 2005.

During PGD cycle 1 for family 'B' 20 oocytes were collected, 11 were successfully sperm-injected. After oocyte retrieval the patient encountered ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome, therefore nine embryos with good development were kept frozen on Day 2. Two months after freezing embryos were thawed and culture resumed. All nine embryos were of sufficient quality for biopsy on Day 3 and yielded 16 cells. Multiplex fluorescent PCR protocol for family 'B' showed three embryos (embryos B1, B5 and B9) to be normal, three heterozygous (embryos B2, B6 and B7), two with ambiguous results (embryos B4 and B8) and one with tri-allelic of D21S11 marker (embryo B3, Figure 3). No DNA contamination in negative control samples was detected. Follow-up study on un-transferred embryos confirmed the initial diagnoses in all normal and heterozygous embryos. Embryos B4 and B8 with initially discordant results between two blastomeres appeared to be heterozygous from the untransferred embryos analyses, like embryo A2. Interestingly the tri-allelic result of D21S11 marker from the initial diagnosis was also found when the remainder of the embryo was analysed (Figure 3), indicating that the additional allele was due to trisomy 21 rather than

contamination. Moreover, tri-allelic result of D21S11 marker on chromosome 21 was also found in embryo B4, suggestive of trisomy 21 embryo. These made the prevalence of trisomy 21 embryos be 22.2% (2/9) in this PGD cycle, surprising given that the mother was just 24 years old. Most of the embryos were arrested on Day 4, therefore one normal (embryo B1) and one heterozygous (embryo B2) were transferred. Unfortunately, no pregnancy resulted on this occasion.

Figure 3 Results from GeneScanTM analysis on ABI Prism[®] 310 for PW007, D21S1411 and D21S11 primers multiplex amplified from single blastomeres and embryo of clinical PGD cycles. Lanes 1 and 2 are PW007 (blue peaks) and D21S1411 (black peaks) results of the normal blastomeres A4.1 and A7.1 respectively, which were chosen for embryo transfer. Lane 3 and 4 shows PW007 (blue peaks) and D21S11 (blue peaks) of trisomy 21 blastomere B3.1 and un-transferred embryo B3 respectively. The x and y axes are base-pairs and fluorescence units, respectively.

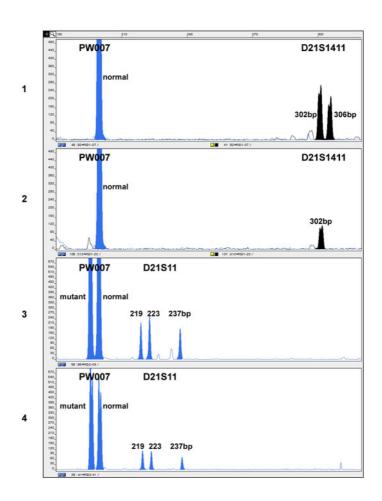


Table 1 Preimplantation genetic diagnosis results of family 'A', cycle 1 (embryos A1-A8) and family 'B', cycle 1 (embryos B1-B9).

Embryo	Embryo	Cells	Cell	beta-	Microsatellite	Diagnosis	Outcomes	Confirmatory
no.	grade (no. of	taken	no.	thalassaemia	markers results			results
	cells) before	(n)		results	(D21S1411 for			
	biopsy (Day				family 'A' and			
	3)				D21S11 for			
					family 'B')			
A1	2 (8)	2	A1.1	Affected	NC*	Affected	Untransferred	Affected
			A1.2	Affected	NC			
A2	2 (8)	2	A2.1	Affected	No result	Ambiguous,	Untransferred	Heterozygous
			A2.2	Normal	No result	likely to be		
						heterozygous		
A3	2 (5)	1	A3.1	No result	No result	No result	Untransferred	Heterozygous
A4	2 (8)	2	A4.1	Normal	NC	Normal	Embryo	-
		(1 lysed)					transferred	
A5	2(8)	2	A5.1	Affected	NC	Affected	Untransferred	Heterozygous
			A5.2	Affected	NC			
A6	1(8)	2	A6.1	Affected	NC	Affected	Untransferred	Affected
		(1 lysed)						
A7	2(8)	2	A7.1	Normal	NC	Normal	Embryo	-
			A7.2	No result	No result		transferred	
A8	2(8)	2	A8.1	Heterozygous	NC	Heterozygous	Untransferred	Heterozygous
			A8.2	Heterozygous	NC			
B1	2 ⁺ (7)	2	B1.1	Normal	NC	Normal	Embryo	-
			B1.2	Normal	NC		transferred	
B2	2 ⁺ (8)	2	B2.1	Heterozygous	NC	Heterozygous	Embryo	-
			B2.2	Heterozygous	NC		transferred	
В3	2 ⁺ (8)	2	B3.1	Heterozygous	C*	Heterozygous	Untransferred	Heterozygous
			B3.2	Heterozygous	NC		(arrested)	with trisomy 21
В4	2 ⁺ (6)	2	B4.1	Affected	No result	Ambiguous,	Untransferred	Heterozygous
			B4.2	Heterozygous	No result	likely to be		with trisomy 21
						heterozygous		
В5	2(7)	2	B5.1	Normal	NC	Normal	Untransferred	Normal
			B5.2	Normal	NC		(arrested)	
В6	2 ⁺ (7)	2	B6.1	Heterozygous	NC	Heterozygous	Untransferred	Heterozygous
-	. ,		B6.2	Heterozygous	NC		(arrested)	
В7	2 ⁺ (5)	1	B7.1	Heterozygous	NC	Heterozygous	Untransferred	Heterozygous
	` '			,,			(arrested)	,,
В8	2 ⁺ (6)	2	B8.1	Heterozygous	NC	Ambiguous,	Untransferred	Heterozygous
			B8.2	Normal	NC	likely to be		
						heterozygous		
В9	2 ⁺ (6)	1	B9.1	Normal	NC	Normal	Untransferred	Normal
							(arrested)	

^{*}NC = No contamination detected

^{*}C = Contamination or aneuploidy detected

DISCUSSION

Thalassaemia is prevalent and causes an enormous financial burden in Thailand and throughout South East Asia (Tongsong *et al.*, 2000). Carrier screening, providing PND for couples at risk and termination of affected pregnancy, is the most applicable solution at present. For parents who are carriers of thalassaemia mutations a quarter of all pregnancies will, on average, be affected. Sadly, some couples have multiple consecutive affected fetuses. PGD is an alternative to PND that provides couples with a chance to start a pregnancy knowing that the baby will be unaffected, eliminating the need for termination of pregnancy (TOP). The application of PGD for single gene disorders represents an integration of modern artificial reproductive technology (ART) techniques with molecular genetic diagnosis techniques. The development of such protocols is known to be challenging and labor intensive, often necessitating the collaboration of several organisations.

Here we report the first successful clinical PGD pregnancy for a single gene disorder in Thailand. Specific single cell multiplex fluorescent PCR protocols were developed for these families. Compared to the restriction fragment length polymorphism (RFLP) technique used in some PGD protocols for beta-thalassaemia, the use of multiplex fluorescent PCR in this protocol offers the advantage of increased sensitivity. Fewer PCR cycles are necessary for PCR product detection and the size of the fragments generated can be determined with high accuracy using fluorescent DNA sequencing apparatus. This means that the speed of diagnosis is accelerated a key factor for PGD. Moreover, a new set of primers was designed in this study for a shorter amplified DNA product specific for the diagnosis of beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation (Piyamongkol *et al.*, 2003), in order to have a more efficient set of primers than previously developed protocol (Piyamongkol *et al.*, 2001a). In one clinical PGD cycle (PGD cycle 1 for family 'B'), the amplification efficiency of PW007 met 100% in a duplex single cell PCR.

Contamination of a homozygous affected blastomere with maternal DNA or paternal DNA (derived from cumulus cells or surplus sperm attached to the zona pellucida respectively) can lead to a heterozygous (unaffected) diagnosis, and subsequent transfer of an affected embryo. Therefore, in addition to direct amplification of the causative mutation the protocol described included a highly polymorphic marker for contamination detection (D21S1411 for family 'A' and D21S11 for family 'B'). The embryos produced by a given couple can only inherit a limited combination of alleles (one allele from each parent). If any biopsied blastomeres do not give one of these predictable combinations it is likely that they are contaminated. In previous PGD cases this strategy has allowed us to detect contamination restricted to a single PCR tube (Piyamongkol *et al.*, 2001b). The use of a microsatellite marker on chromosome 21

also permits evaluation of the copy number of this chromosome, revealing monosomy and trisomy due to malsegregation during meiosis I. The three alleles detected for the D21S11 marker in embryo B3, which had no contamination detectable in the corresponding negative control blank, indicated the presence of trisomy 21. Three copies of chromosome 21 were also evident during analysis of embryo B4. Given that most of our patients seek PGD in order to avoid a pregnancy termination, the detection of Down's syndrome prior to initiation of a pregnancy is highly desirable. Furthermore, many aneuploid pregnancies (e.g. monosomy 21) spontaneously abort, thus the pregnancy rates following PGD can be improved by identifying and preferentially transferring embryos with a normal chromosome number. To date few PGD tests have provided a combination of single gene analysis and chromosomal ploidy information (Katz et al., 2002).

From the confirmatory analysis of the untransferred embryos, the ambiguous (Embryo A2, B4 and B8) and incorrectly genotyped (Embryo A5) results in this study were due to ADO. ADO of a heterozygous cell leads to a homozygous normal or homozygous affected result. Therefore, the presence of ADO in beta-thalassaemia analysis where both parents carry the same mutation (as in the cases presented here) cannot lead to the transfer of a homozygous affected embryo. However, incorrect diagnosis of unaffected heterozygous embryos as affected leads to a reduced number of embryos available for transfer as demonstrated in Embryo A2 and A5 of this study, which in turn leads to reduced pregnancy rates. On the other hand, a homozygous normal result of a single blastomere may be from a heterozygous blastomere with ADO of the mutant allele. Therefore it is possible that the transferred Embryos A4, A7 and B1 might be normal or heterozygous, however both cases are clinically unaffected and therefore acceptable for PGD.

In conclusion, PGD protocols for beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation using multiplex fluorescent single cell PCR were developed and optimised. A new set of primers for detecting beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation was designed for effective mutation detection and coupled with co-amplification of an informative microsatellite marker (D21S1411 for family 'A' and D21S11 for family 'B') for detection of contamination and instances of Down's Syndrome caused by malsegregation of chromosome 21 during meiosis I. The protocols were applied in two clinical PGD cycles and resulted in the first clinical pregnancy following PGD for a single gene disorder in Thailand.

ผลผลิตที่ได้จากโครงการ

- 1. โดยการสนับสนุนของคณะแพทยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเชียงใหม่ ได้มีการจัดเตรียมและทดสอบ ห้องปฏิบัติการ clean-room สำหรับการเตรียมสารละลายในการตรวจปฏิกิริยาลูกโซ่จากเซลล์เดียว ซึ่งไม่เคยมีการทำงานในลักษณะเช่นนี้ที่คณะแพทยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเชียงใหม่มาก่อนที่จะมี โครงการนี้
- 2. การจัดเตรียมและทดสอบการทำงานปฏิกิริยาลูกโซ่ชนิดเรื่องแสงบนเครื่องวิเคราะห์ลำดับเบสของ ยืนอัตโนมัติ ซึ่งก่อนที่จะมีโครงการนี้ไม่เคยมีการทำงานในลักษณะเช่นนี้ที่คณะแพทยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเชียงใหม่มาก่อน
- 3. สร้างโปรโตคอลใหม่ 2 โปรโตคอลในการตรวจวิเคราะห์ดีเอ็นเอจากเซลล์เดียวโดยปฏิกิริยาลูกโซ่ ชนิดเรื่องแสงสำหรับโรคบีตัวชาลัสซีเมียชนิดโคดอน 41-42
- 4. ทำการวินิจฉัยก่อนการฝังตัวสำหรับโรคบีตัวธาลัสซีเมียให้กับ 2 ครอบครัวที่มีความเสี่ยงที่บุตรอาจ เป็นโรคบีตัวธาลัสซีเมียชนิดรุนแรงโดยใช้โปรโตคอลที่สร้างขึ้นมาใหม่ ซึ่งก่อนที่จะมีโครงการนี้ไม่ เคยมีการตรวจในลักษณะเช่นนี้ที่คณะแพทยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเชียงใหม่มาก่อน
- 5. ได้ทารกปราศจากโรคจากการประสบความสำเร็จการวินิจฉัยก่อนการฝั่งตัวสำหรับโรคพันธุกรรม ชนิดยีนเดี่ยวคนแรกในประเทศไทยและภาคพื้นเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้
- 6. พบข้อมูลใหม่ที่น่าสนใจว่าในการวินิจฉัยก่อนการฝังตัวของครอบครัวที่ 2 พบว่ามีตัวอ่อน 2 ตัวที่ ได้รับการวินิจฉัยว่าเป็นกลุ่มอาการดาวน์จากตัวอ่อนที่ได้รับการตรวจทั้งหมด 9 ตัวอ่อน ทำให้ อุบัติการณ์ของกลุ่มอาการดาวน์ในครั้งนี้สูงถึงร้อยละ 22.2 แม้ว่ามารดาจะมีอายุเพียง 24 ปี ซึ่ง ตามทฤษฎีแล้วครอบครัวนี้มีความเสี่ยงที่อาจจะมีบุตรเป็นกลุ่มอาการดาวน์เพียงร้อยละ 0.1
- 7. รางวัลโปสเตอร์การวิจัยทางคลินิก ประเภทชมเชย จำนวน 2 รางวัล จากการนำเสนอผลงานทาง วิชาการในการประชุมวิชาการวันมหิดล คณะแพทยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเชียงใหม่ ครั้งที่ 29 ประจำปี 2548 วันที่ 19-23 กันยายน 2548
- 8. การจัดเตรียมต้นฉบับจากการรวบรวมการทำงานและผลผลิตที่ได้จากโครงการนี้เพื่อส่งไปยัง วารสารทางวิชาการระดับนานาชาติเพื่อรับการพิจารณาการตีพิมพ์เผยแพร่
- 9. ผลความสำเร็จของโครงการนี้ได้รับความสนใจและนำเสนอข่าวโดยสื่อมวลชนโดยทางโครงการ ไม่ได้เสียค่าใช้จ่าย โดยได้รับการนำเสนอในข่าวภาคค่ำและข่าว Hot News ของสถานีโทรทัศน์ไอ ทีวี ข่าวเที่ยงวันทันเหตุการณ์ ของสถานีโทรทัศน์ช่อง 3 หัวข้อข่าวหน้าหนึ่งหนังสือพิมพ์เดลินิวส์ ข่าวสด เชียงใหม่นิวส์ และไทยนิวส์ หัวข้อสนทนาใน www.sanook.com รับเชิญสัมภาษณ์รายการ Health Station ของสถานีโทรทัศน์ไอทีวี รายการสร้างเสริมสุขภาพกับหมอสวนดอกของสถานีวิทยุ FM100 เชียงใหม่ ในการนี้ ผู้วิจัยได้กล่าวขอบคุณผู้สนับสนุนโครงการ โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่ง คณะ แพทยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเชียงใหม่, สกอ. และ สกว. ทุกครั้ง หากจะนับเป็นค่าใช้จ่ายในการ ประชาสัมพันธ์องค์กรและโครงการก็จะเป็นมูลค่าหลายล้านบาท ซึ่งในความเป็นจริง แม้จะมี โครงการและมีงบประมาณที่ต้องการจะประชาสัมพันธ์ในลักษณะนี้ ก็ไม่สามารถกระทำได้เองหาก สื่อมวลชนไม่ให้ความสนใจ

- การนำเสนอข่าวความสำเร็จของโครงการการวินิจฉัยก่อนการฝังตัวของทารกสำหรับโรค บีตัำธาลัสซีเมียโดยสื่อมวลชน
 - รับเชิญสัมภาษณ์ร**ายการร่วมด้วยช่วยกัน จ.เชียงใหม่ ช่วงห้องแพทย์ สถานีวิทยุ FM100** เชียงใหม่ วันพุธที่ 11 มกราคม 2549 เวลา 11.00-12.00 น. หัวข้อ "แพทย์เชียงใหม่ประสบ ความสำเร็จในการวินิจฉัยก่อนการฝังตัวของทารกสำหรับโรคบีตำธาลัสซีเมีย" (ภาคผนวก 5)
 - รับเชิญสัมภาษณ์ร**ายการ Health Station สถานีโทรทัศน์ใอทีวี** วันจันทร์ที่ 19 ธันวาคม 2548 เวลา 9.00 น. หัวข้อ "แพทย์เชียงใหม่ประสบความสำเร็จในการวินิจฉัยก่อนการฝังตัวของ ทารกสำหรับโรคบีตัวธาลัสซีเมีย" (ภาคผนวก 5)
 - รับเชิญสัมภาษณ์ร**ายการสร้างเสริมสุขภาพกับหมอสวนดอก สถานีวิทยุ FM100 เชียงใหม่** วันอาทิตย์ที่ 18 ธันวาคม 2548 เวลา 14.00-15.00 น. หัวข้อ "แพทย์เชียงใหม่ประสบ ความสำเร็จในการวินิจฉัยก่อนการฝังตัวของทารกสำหรับโรคบีตำธาลัสซีเมีย" (ภาคผนวก 5)
 - หัวข้อข่าว**หน้าหนึ่ง หนังสือพิมพ์เดลินิวส์** ฉบับวันศุกร์ที่ 16 ธันวาคม 2548 "แพทย์ไทยสำเร็จ พ่อแม่โลหิตจางแต่ลูกปลอดเชื้อ" (ภาคผนวก 4)
 - หัวข้อข่าว**หน้าหนึ่ง หนังสือพิมพ์ข่าวสด** ฉบับวันศุกร์ที่ 16 ธันวาคม 2548 "มช.เจ๋ง-ขจัดโรคเด็ก ในหลอดแก้ว" (ภาคผนวก 4)
 - หัวข้อ**พาดหัวข่าว หน้าหนึ่ง หนังสือพิมพ์เชียงใหม่นิวส์** ฉบับวันศุกร์ที่ 16 ธันวาคม 2548 "แพทย์มช.วิจัยเด็กหลอดแก้วคนแรกในเอเชีย" (ภาคผนวก 4)
 - หัวข้อข่าว**หน้าหนึ่ง หนังสือพิมพ์ไทยนิวส์** ฉบับวันพฤหัสที่ 15 ธันวาคม 2548 "แพทย์เชียงใหม่ ประสบความสำเร็จในการวินิจฉัยก่อนการฝังตัวของทารกสำหรับโรคบีตำธาลัสซีเมีย" (ภาคผนวก 4)
 - หัวข้อข่าวหน้าหนึ่ง **www.sanook.com** website วันที่ 15 ธันวาคม 2548 "แพทย์ไทยสำเร็จพ่อ แม่โลหิตจางแต่ลูกปลอดเชื้อ" (ภาคผนวก 4)
 - ข่าวเที่ยงวันทันเหตุการณ์สถานีโทรทัศน์ช่อง 3 วันพฤหัสที่ 15 ธันวาคม 2548 เวลา 11.55 น. หัวข้อ "แพทย์เซียงใหม่ประสบความสำเร็จ ตรวจพบโรคโลหิตจางในตัวอ่อน" (ภาคผนวก 5)
 - ข่าวภาคค่ำสถานีโทรทัศน์ใอทีวี วันพุธที่ 14 ธันวาคม 2548 เวลา 19.07 น. หัวข้อ "แพทย์ เชียงใหม่ประสบความสำเร็จ ตรวจพบโรคโลหิตจางในตัวอ่อน" (ภาคผนวก 5)
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 - รับเชิญให้เข้าร่วมการแถลงข่าวการดำเนินงานและความก้าวหน้าทางวิทยาการของคณะ แพทยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเชียงใหม่ ห้องประชุมชั้น 15 อาคารสุจิณโณ คณะแพทยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเชียงใหม่ วันพุธที่ 14 ธันวาคม 2548 เวลา 10.00-12.00 น. ในหัวข้อย่อย "การ ประสบความสำเร็จในการวินิจฉัยโรคบีตัำธาลัสซีเมียก่อนการฝังตัวของทารก"

รับเชิญบรรยาย/การนำเสนอผลงานวิจัยนี้ในการประชุมวิชาการ

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- Wirawit Piyamongkol, Teraporn Vutyavanich, Sirivipa Piyamongkol, Dagan Wells, Chairat Kunaviktikul, Theera Tongsong, Somsak Chaovisitsaree, Rattika Saetung, Torpong Sanguansermsri. First birth following preimplantation genetic diagnosis in Thailand: successful diagnosis of beta thalassaemia and simultaneous detection of Down's syndrome using multiplex fluorescent PCR. การประชุมนักวิจัยรุ่นใหม่ พบ เมธีวิจัยอาวุโส สกว. วันที่ 13-15 ตุลาคม 2548 ณ โรงแรมรีเจ้นท์ ชะอำ จ.เพชรบุรี (ภาคผนวก 2)
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- วิทยากรรับเชิญในการบรรยายเรื่อง "Recent advances in thalassaemia Preimplantation diagnosis" ในการประชุมธาลัสซีเมียแห่งชาติ ครั้งที่ 11 วันที่ 1-2 กันยายน 2548 ณ โรงแรมมิ ราเคิลแกรนด์ กรุงเทพฯ (ภาคผนวก 3)
- วิทยากรรับเชิญในการบรรยายเรื่อง "Preimplantation Diagnosis" ณ คณะแพทยศาสตร์ โรงพยาบาลรามาธิบดี มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล ในวันที่ 2 กันยายน 2548 เวลา 14.00-16.00 น.
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- รางวัลโปสเตอร์การวิจัยทางคลิหิก ประเภทชมเชย ในการนำเสนอผลงานทางวิชาการในการ ประชุมวิชาการวันมหิดล คณะแพทยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเชียงใหม่ ครั้งที่ 29 ประจำปี 2548 วันที่ 19-23 กันยายน 2548 เรื่อง "First birth following preimplantation genetic diagnosis in Thailand" (ภาคผนวก 2)

ภาคผนวก 1

Manuscript

FULL TITLE: A successful strategy for preimplantation genetic diagnosis of beta-thalassemia and simultaneous detection of Down's syndrome using multiplex fluorescent PCR

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Keywords: beta-thalassemia, Down's syndrome, embryo selection, preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD), prenatal diagnosis (PND), multiplex fluorescent single cell PCR, trisomy 21

Synopsis: Novel preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) protocols were introduced for simultaneously detecting beta-thalassemia and Down's syndrome using single cell multiplex fluorescent PCR.

ABSTRACT:

Objectives: Preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) is an alternative to prenatal diagnosis providing couples the chance to start a pregnancy with an unaffected fetus. The aim of this study was to develop and apply quick, sensitive and accurate single cell PCR protocols for PGD of beta-thalassemia and simultaneous Down's syndrome detection.

Methods: Two couples carrying beta-thalassemia codon41-42 mutation underwent routine IVF procedures. Embryo biopsy was performed on Day-3 post-fertilisation and single cell multplex fluorescent PCR was employed for mutation analysis and simultaneous contamination detection and diagnosis of trisomy 21 cases.

Results: Seventeen embryos were tested in two clinical PGD cycles, resulted in the first birth following PGD for a single gene disorder in Thailand and South East Asia, confirmed by prenatal testing. Two embryos were shown to be affected by Down's syndrome.

Conclusion: Successful strategy for PGD of beta-thalassemia and simultaneous Down's syndrome detection using multiplex fluorescent PCR was introduced here.

INTRODUCTION

Thalassemias, the world's most common single gene disorders [1], are prevalent and cause one of the biggest health problems in Thailand. Babies with the most severe form of beta-thalassemia develop severe transfusion dependent anemia 6 months after birth. Regular blood transfusion may lead to infection with HIV or Hepatitis B or C and iron overloading. The only means of curing this condition, bone marrow transplantation, is still expensive and risky. Therefore, the most widely applicable strategy for dealing with thalassemias has been to control the incidence of new cases by offering screening for heterozygotes, genetic counseling, and prenatal diagnosis (PND) with termination of pregnancy in affected cases [2].

An alternative to routine PND is preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD), which allows selection of unaffected embryos prior to establishment of a pregnancy, thus providing couples with the chance to start a pregnancy knowing that the fetus is unaffected and eliminating the need for pregnancy termination [3]. PGD involves the sampling and testing of a single cell from cleavage stage embryos generated using IVF technology. For the diagnosis of single gene disorders it is necessary to amplify DNA from the cell using the polymerase chain reaction (PCR). A variety of modified PCR techniques have been developed, however, amplification failure, allele drop-out (ADO) and contamination are still major problems encountered during PCR at the single cell level [4]. As well as the limited amount of material available for testing (only 1-2 cells) a further challenge is that diagnoses must be completed within 24 hours. Therefore, the diagnostic techniques need to be quick, sensitive and accurate. PGD of single gene disorders have been done in western countries [5;6], but thus far there has not been a report from a country in South East Asia.

The aim of this study was to develop single cell PCR protocols for PGD of betathalassemia codon 41-42 mutation and perform clinical PGD cases for couples at risk. Additionally, chromosome 21 microsatellite markers were utilized in order to detect cases of Down's syndrome and extraneous DNA contamination.

PATIENTS AND METHODS

Patient details

Fourteen couples at risk of having an affected fetus with beta-thalassemia were counseled regarding the project, two decided to join the project. The mother and father of family 'A' were 32 and 35 years old respectively. The mother and father of family 'B' were 24 and 25 years old respectively. The parents of both families were carriers of beta-thalassemia codon 41-42 mutation and experienced one termination of pregnancy following positive prenatal diagnosis of beta-thalassemia.

ICSI procedure and cleavage stage embryo biopsy

The patients underwent routine superovulation using Puregon[®] Pen (Organon Thailand Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand) and Orgalutran[®] (Organon Thailand Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand) and oocytes were fertilized using intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI). ICSI is used as a precaution to reduce the risk of sperm DNA contamination in subsequent PCR amplifications. Laser biopsy was performed on Day 3 post-fertilization (4–9 cell stage), allowing two blastomeres to be removed from embryos consisting of 6+ cells and one blastomere from embryos with 4–5 cells (Figure 1). Cleavage stage embryos were graded 1, 2⁻, 2, 2⁺ and 3 where grade 1 had the best morphology and grade 3 was a highly fragmented, poor quality embryo [7].

Single cell isolation

Buccal cells, isolated by micromanipulation, and biopsied blastomeres were transferred into droplets of phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) (GibcoBRL®, Gibthai Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand) with 4% bovine serum albumin (BSA) (Sigma®, S.M. Chemical Supplies Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand) on a 5 cm Petri dish in a laminar flow cabinet. Cells were washed in a minimum of four fresh PBS droplets, while visualizing under a dissecting microscope, and were then transferred to thin-wall microcentrifuge tubes. A 2-µl aliquot of the last washing drop was also taken as a blank for each single blastomere. Cell lysis was carried out as described previously [8].

Multiplex fluorescent PCR

Extracted DNA from single cells was amplified using a combination of PW007 primers (forward 5'-ATT TTC CCA CCC TTA CCG TG-3', reverse 5'-GCA GCT CAC TCA GTG TCC G-3') covering beta-thalassemia codon 41-42 mutation and a microsatellite D21S1411 [9] or D21S11 [10] primers (Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand). The PCR mixture consisted of 200 μM of each primer, 0.2 mM deoxynucleoside triphosphates (dNTPs) (Eppendorf, Bangkok, Thailand), 1 x GeneAmp[®] Buffer (10 x GeneAmp[®] Buffer contains 100 mM Tris-HCl pH 8.3, 500 mM KCl, 15 mM MgCl₂) (Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok,

Thailand) and 1.5 U AmpliTaq Gold[®] (Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand) and was made up to a total volume of 25 µl with distilled deionized water. The amplifications were performed with the conditions: 94°C 45 s (96°C for the first ten cycles), annealing at 60°C 45 s and extension at 72°C 1 min for 40 cycles. These were preceded by denaturation at 94°C for 12 min to activate the AmpliTaq Gold[®] enzyme. The multiplex amplified products from single cells were each tagged with two different fluorochromes using labeled primers. This allowed analysis to be performed on an automated laser fluorescent sequencer ABI Prism[®] 310 (Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand). PW007 and D21S11 fragments were labeled with the blue fluorescent dye (6-FAM[®]), D21S1411 fragments were labeled with the yellow fluorescent dye (NED[®]).

Fragment analysis on ABI Prism[®] 310

A mixture of 1 μl fluorescent PCR products, 12 μl deionized formamide and 0.5 μl size standard (GenescanTM-500 [ROX]; Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand) was prepared and denatured at 95°C for 5 min. The denatured sample was subjected to capillary electrophoresis using Performance Optimized Polymer 4 (POP-4[®], Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand; 5 s injection time, 15,000 V, 60°C, 24 min). The data was analyzed by GeneScanTM analysis software (Gene Systems Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand).

RESULTS

Single cell PCR protocols for beta-thalassemia condon 41-42 mutation were developed and tested specifically for each couple. A new set of PCR primers (PW007) was designed for mutation analysis of beta-thalassemia codon 41-42 mutation. In addition to amplifying the beta-globin gene region, a polymorphic marker, D21S1411 or D21S11, was incorporated in the PGD protocol as multiplex PCR to serve as a very basic form of DNA fingerprint. Both couples are fully informative for each marker used, in other words the parents of each couple share no alleles in common, therefore their embryos can only inherit one of four possible genotypes. Any deviation from these combinations of alleles, such as the detection of alleles not derived from either parent, is indicative of contamination. The compatibility of each pair of primers was assessed and optimized using single buccal cells derived from each patient and single blastomeres from embryos donated for research prior to clinical application. Genotyping of the couples 'A' (PW007 and D21S1411 primers) and 'B' (PW007 and D21S11 primers) is demonstrated in Figure 2.

Preclinical assessment of methodology

From 60 single buccal cells of couple 'A', multiplex fluorescent PCR protocol gave an amplification efficiency (AE) of 86.7% and 83.3% for PW007 and D21S1411 primers respectively and allele dropout (ADO) rates of 21.2% and 26% for PW007 and D21S1411 primers respectively. The application of this single cell PCR protocol to 45 spare single human blastomeres donated for research exhibited acceptable AE rates of 86.7% for PW007 and 88.9% for D21S1411 primers. The optimized protocol for family 'B' showed AE of 87.5% and 90% for PW007 and D21S11 primers respectively and ADO rates of 2.9% and 13.9% for PW007 and D21S11 primers respectively from 40 single heterozygous buccal cells. This protocol demonstrated AE of 92.3% and 88.5% for PW007 and D21S11 primers respectively on 26 single human blastomeres.

Preimplantation diagnosis results

PGD cycle 1 for family 'A' gave 14 oocytes, 10 were sperm-injected and eight embryos were of sufficient quality for biopsy on Day 3 post-fertilization, yielding 13 cells. Molecular analyses using multiplex fluorescent PCR revealed three embryos (embryos A1, A5 and A6) to be affected, two normal (embryos A4 and A7, Figure 3), one heterozygous (embryo A8), one with ambiguous result (embryo A2) and one with no results (embryo A3) (Table 1). No DNA contamination was detected. Follow-up analyses were performed on the embryos that had been diagnosed affected, or were unsuitable for transfer for embryological reasons. For this purpose whole embryos were transferred to PCR tubes and subjected to the same protocol as used for the actual PGD. The initial diagnoses of heterozygous and affected results were

confirmed in all cases, but one (embryo A5). Embryo A5 was found to be heterozygous rather than affected as originally thought. The most likely explanation for this error is ADO affecting the normal allele in both analyzed blastomeres. Embryo A2 had given ambiguous results, one of the blastomeres tested showing only a mutant allele, while the second blastomere analyzed displayed only a normal allele. The analysis of the rest of the embryo showed a heterozygous genotype, suggesting that the disparity in genotype of the two cells was due to ADO affecting a different allele in each cell. The blastomere A3.1 that failed to give results was from a heterozygous embryo. Both normally diagnosed embryos were transferred and one clinical pregnancy (singleton) was obtained. Prenatal diagnosis by fetal blood sampling at 19 weeks of gestation confirmed the homozygous normal beta-globin gene genotype of the fetus. A disease-free baby boy was born in June 2005.

During PGD cycle 1 for family 'B' 20 oocytes were collected, 11 were successfully sperm-injected. After oocyte retrieval the patient encountered ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome, therefore nine embryos with good development were kept frozen on Day 2. Two months after freezing embryos were thawed and culture resumed. All nine embryos were of sufficient quality for biopsy on Day 3 and yielded 16 cells. Multiplex fluorescent PCR protocol for family 'B' showed three embryos (embryos B1, B5 and B9) to be normal, three heterozygous (embryos B2, B6 and B7), two with ambiguous results (embryos B4 and B8) and one with tri-allelic of D21S11 marker (embryo B3, Figure 3). No DNA contamination in negative control samples was detected. Follow-up study on un-transferred embryos confirmed the initial diagnoses in all normal and heterozygous embryos. Embryos B4 and B8 with initially discordant results between two blastomeres appeared to be heterozygous from the untransferred embryos analyses, like embryo A2. Interestingly the tri-allelic result of D21S11 marker from the initial diagnosis was also found when the remainder of the embryo was analyzed (Figure 3), indicating that the additional allele was due to trisomy 21 rather than contamination. Moreover, tri-allelic result of D21S11 marker on chromosome 21 was also found in embryo B4, suggestive of trisomy 21 embryo. These made the prevalence of trisomy 21 embryos be 22.2% (2/9) in this PGD cycle, surprising given that the mother was just 24 years old. Most of the embryos were arrested on Day 4, therefore one normal (embryo B1) and one heterozygous (embryo B2) were transferred. Unfortunately, no pregnancy resulted on this occasion.

DISCUSSION

Thalassemia is prevalent and causes an enormous financial burden in Thailand and throughout South East Asia. Carrier screening, providing PND for couples at risk and termination of affected pregnancy, is the most applicable solution at present [2]. For parents who are carriers of thalassemia mutations a quarter of all pregnancies will, on average, be affected. Sadly, some couples have multiple consecutive affected fetuses. PGD is an alternative to PND that provides couples with a chance to start a pregnancy knowing that the baby will be unaffected, eliminating the need for termination of pregnancy (TOP). The application of PGD for single gene disorders represents an integration of modern artificial reproductive technology (ART) techniques with molecular genetic diagnosis techniques. The development of such protocols is known to be challenging and labor intensive, often necessitating the collaboration of several organizations.

The first successful clinical PGD pregnancy for a single gene disorder in Thailand and South East Asia was reported here. Specific single cell multiplex fluorescent PCR protocols were developed for these families. Compared to previous reported PGD protocols for betathalassemia, i.e. restriction fragment length polymorphism (RFLP) technique [6;11;12], DGGE [5], the use of multiplex fluorescent PCR protocols in this study offers the advantage of increased sensitivity. Fewer PCR cycles are necessary for PCR product detection and the size of the fragments generated can be determined with high accuracy using fluorescent DNA sequencing apparatus. This means that the speed of diagnosis is accelerated a key factor for PGD. Moreover, a new set of primers was designed in this study for a shorter amplified DNA product specific for the diagnosis of beta-thalassemia codon 41-42 mutation [13], in order to have a more efficient set of primers than previously developed protocol [14]. In one clinical PGD cycle (PGD cycle 1 for family 'B'), the amplification efficiency of PW007 met 100% in a duplex single cell PCR. The use of sequencing [15] and whole genome amplification [16] protocols are expensive, labor-intensive, time consuming and sometimes unnecessary.

Contamination of a homozygous affected blastomere with maternal DNA or paternal DNA (derived from cumulus cells or surplus sperm attached to the zona pellucida respectively) can lead to a heterozygous (unaffected) diagnosis, and subsequent transfer of an affected embryo. Therefore, in addition to direct amplification of the causative mutation the protocol described included a highly polymorphic marker for contamination detection (D21S1411 for family 'A' and D21S11 for family 'B'). The embryos produced by a given couple can only inherit a limited combination of alleles (one allele from each parent). If any biopsied blastomeres do not give one of these predictable combinations it is likely that they are contaminated. In previous PGD cases this strategy has allowed us to detect contamination restricted to a single PCR tube [17]. The use of a microsatellite marker on chromosome 21 also permits evaluation

of the copy number of this chromosome, revealing monosomy and trisomy due to malsegregation during meiosis I. The three alleles detected for the D21S11 marker in embryo B3, which had no contamination detectable in the corresponding negative control blank, indicated the presence of trisomy 21. Three copies of chromosome 21 were also evident during analysis of embryo B4. Discordant results of chromosome 21 markers in blastomeres B3.1, B3.2, B4.1, B4.2 and embryos B3, B4 might be from amplification failure, ADO or chaotic division of the embryos [18]. Given that most of the patients seek PGD in order to avoid a pregnancy termination, the detection of Down's syndrome prior to initiation of a pregnancy is highly desirable. Furthermore, many aneuploid pregnancies (e.g. monosomy 21) spontaneously abort, thus the pregnancy rates following PGD can be improved by identifying and preferentially transferring embryos with a normal chromosome number. To date few PGD tests have provided a combination of single gene analysis and chromosomal ploidy information [19].

From the confirmatory analysis of the untransferred embryos, the ambiguous (Embryo A2, B4 and B8) and incorrectly genotyped (Embryo A5) results in this study were due to ADO. ADO of a heterozygous cell leads to a homozygous normal or homozygous affected result. Therefore, the presence of ADO in beta-thalassemia analysis where both parents carry the same mutation (as in the cases presented here) cannot lead to the transfer of a homozygous affected embryo. However, incorrect diagnosis of unaffected heterozygous embryos as affected leads to a reduced number of embryos available for transfer as demonstrated in Embryo A2 and A5 of this study, which in turn leads to reduced pregnancy rates. On the other hand, a homozygous normal result of a single blastomere may be from a heterozygous blastomere with ADO of the mutant allele. Therefore it is possible that the transferred Embryos A4, A7 and B1 might be normal or heterozygous, however both cases are clinically unaffected and therefore acceptable for PGD.

In conclusion, novel PGD protocols for beta-thalassemia codon 41-42 mutation and simultaneous Down's syndrome detection using multiplex fluorescent single cell PCR were developed and optimized. A new set of primers for detecting beta-thalassemia codon 41-42 mutation was designed for effective mutation detection and coupled with co-amplification of an informative microsatellite marker (D21S1411 for family 'A' and D21S11 for family 'B') for detection of contamination and instances of Down's syndrome caused by malsegregation of chromosome 21 during meiosis I. The protocols were applied in two clinical PGD cycles and resulted in the first clinical pregnancy following PGD for a single gene disorder in Thailand and South East Asia. Two preimplantation embryos diagnosed as Down's syndrome were also reported supporting the benefit of the successful strategy in simultaneous detection of beta-thalassemia and Down's syndrome using multiplex fluorescent single cell PCR.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Figure 1 Cleavage stage embryo biopsy in this study: (a) the embryo is stabilized by a holding pipette (left) with negative pressure, a hole is created in the zona pellucida (zona drilling) using laser, (b), (c) and (d) a blastomere is gently pulled away from the embryo using a biopsy pipette (right) with negative pressure through the hole in the zona pellucida. Procedure performed by TV.

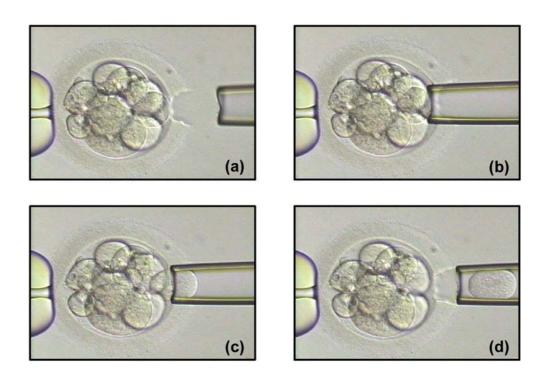


Figure 2 Results from GeneScanTM analysis on ABI Prism[®] 310 for PW007, D21S1411 and D21S11 primers multiplex amplified from single buccal cells of the mother (lane 1) and the father (lane 2) of the family A and the mother (lane 3) and the father (lane 4) of the family B. The left blue peaks in lane 1, 2, 3 and 4 show mutant and normal beta-thalassemia codon 41-42 mutation (PW007) alleles, the black peaks in lane 1 and 2 show microsatellite (D21S1411) alleles and the right blue peaks in lane 3 and 4 show microsatellite (D21S11) alleles. The x and y axes are base-pairs and fluorescence units, respectively.

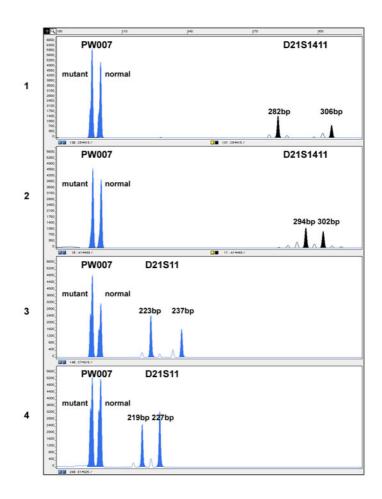


Figure 3 Results from GeneScan[™] analysis on ABI Prism[®] 310 for PW007, D21S1411 and D21S11 primers multiplex amplified from single blastomeres and embryo of clinical PGD cycles. Lanes 1 and 2 are results of normal beta-thalassemia codon 41-42 mutation allele (PW007, blue peaks) and microsatellite alleles (D21S1411, black peaks) from the normal blastomeres A4.1 and A7.1 respectively, which were chosen for embryo transfer. Lane 3 and 4 shows results of mutant and normal beta-thalassemia codon 41-42 mutation alleles (PW007, left blue peaks) and microsatellite alleles (D21S11, right blue peaks) of the trisomy 21 blastomere B3.1 and un-transferred embryo B3 respectively. The x and y axes are base-pairs and fluorescence units, respectively.

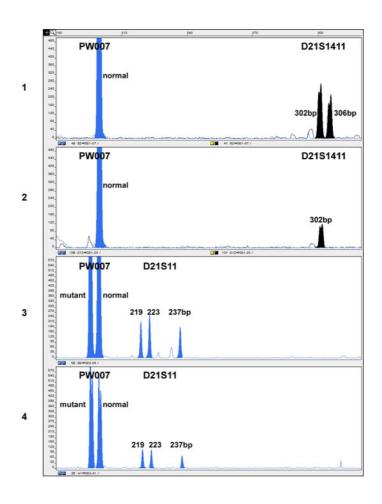


Table 1 Preimplantation genetic diagnosis results of family 'A', cycle 1 (embryos A1-A8) and family 'B', cycle 1 (embryos B1-B9).

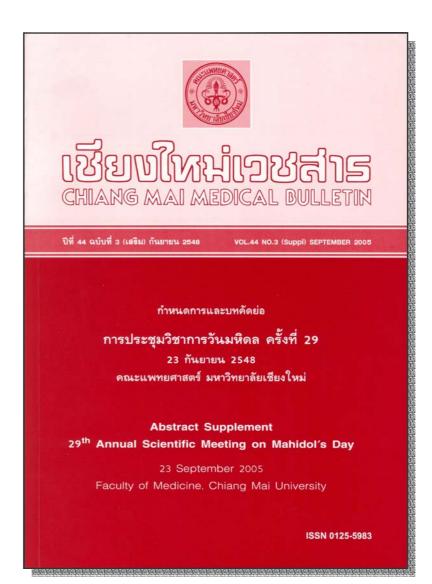
Embryo	embryo grade (no. of cells) before biopsy (Day 3)	Cells taken (<i>n</i>)	Cell no.	beta- thalassemia results	Microsatellite markers results (D21S1411 for family 'A' and D21S11 for family 'B')	Diagnosis	Outcomes	Confirmatory results
A1	2-(8)	2	A1.1 A1.2	Affected Affected	NC* NC	Affected	Untransferred	Affected
A2	2-(8)	2	A2.1 A2.2	Affected Normal	No result No result	Ambiguous, likely to be heterozygous	Untransferred	Heterozygous
A3 A4	2 ⁻ (5) 2 ⁻ (8)	1 2 (1 lysod)	A3.1 A4.1	No result Normal	No result NC	No result Normal	Untransferred Embryo transferred	Heterozygous -
A 5	2(8)	(1 lysed) 2	A5.1 A5.2	Affected Affected	NC NC	Affected	Untransferred	Heterozygous
A6	1(8)	2 (1 lysed)	A6.1	Affected	NC	Affected	Untransferred	Affected
A7	2(8)	2	A7.1 A7.2	Normal No result	NC No result	Normal	Embryo transferred	-
A8	2(8)	2	A8.1 A8.2	Heterozygous Heterozygous	NC NC	Heterozygous	Untransferred	Heterozygous
B1	2+(7)	2	B1.1 B1.2	Normal Normal	NC NC	Normal	Embryo transferred	-
B2	2+(8)	2	B2.1 B2.2	Heterozygous Heterozygous	NC NC	Heterozygous	Embryo transferred	-
В3	2+(8)	2	B3.1 B3.2	Heterozygous Heterozygous	C* NC	Heterozygous	Untransferred (arrested)	Heterozygous with trisomy 21
B4	2+(6)	2	B4.1 B4.2	Affected Heterozygous	No result No result	Ambiguous, likely to be heterozygous	Untransferred	Heterozygous with trisomy 21
B5	2(7)	2	B5.1 B5.2	Normal Normal	NC NC	Normal	Untransferred (arrested)	Normal
B6	2+(7)	2	B6.1 B6.2	Heterozygous Heterozygous	NC NC	Heterozygous	Untransferred (arrested)	Heterozygous
B7	2+(5)	1	B7.1	Heterozygous	NC	Heterozygous	Untransferred (arrested)	Heterozygous
B8	2+(6)	2	B8.1 B8.2	Heterozygous Normal	NC NC	Ambiguous, likely to be heterozygous	Untransferred	Heterozygous
В9	2+(6)	1	B9.1	Normal	NC	Normal	Untransferred (arrested)	Normal

^{*}NC = No contamination detected

^{*}C = Contamination or aneuploidy detected

ภาคผนวก 2

การประชุมวิชาการ



26 เชียงใหม่เวชสาร

PREIMPLANTATION GENETIC DIAGNOSIS OF BETA-THA-LASSAEMIA AND SIMULTANEOUS DETECTION OF DOWN'S SYNDROME USING MULTIPLEX FLUORESCENT PCR

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Objectives Thalassaemias are major health problems worldwide. Preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) allows selection of unaffected embryos before pregnancy establishment providing couples the chance to start a pregnancy knowing that the fetus is unaffected and eliminating the need for pregnancy termination. The aim of this study was to develop a quick, sensitive and accurate multiplex fluorescent PCR protocol for PGD of beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation and perform clinical PGD cases for couples at risk.

Methods Couple 'B' who experienced one termination of pregnancy following positive prenatal diagnosis for beta-thalassaemia and decided to join the project underwent routine ovulation induction and intracytoplasmic sperm injection procedures at Maharaj Nakorn Chiang Mai Hospital. Laser biopsy was performed on day-3 post-fertilisation and multiplex fluorescent PCR was used for beta-thalassaemia mutation analysis on the biopsied blastomeres. In addition to the beta-globin gene region, a highly polymorphic marker was also amplified to serve as a basic form of DNA fingerprint for contamination detection and diagnosis of trisomy 21 cases caused by meiosis I error.

Results In the clinical PGD cycle for family 'B', all embryos were frozen due to maternal ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome. Nine embryos were subsequently thawed, biopsied and subjected to DNA analysis. Three embryos were found to be normal, three heterozygous, two ambiguous and one tri-allelic for chromosome 21 results. One normal and one heterozygous embryo with good quality on day-4 was transferred, however no pregnancy resulted. Two embryos were shown to be affected by Down's syndrome. These made the prevalence of trisomy 21 embryos to be 22.2% (2/9) in this PGD cycle, surprising given that the mother was just 24 years old.

Conclusion A novel multiplex fluorescent single cell PCR protocol for beta-thalassaemia incorporating a highly polymorphic marker on chromosome 21 was developed and optimised. A clinical PGD cycle was carried out, no pregnancy was obtained. Two preimplantation embryos affected with Down's syndrome detecting by multiplex fluorescent PCR were reported here.

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ปีที่ 44 ฉบับเสริม กันยายน 2548

27

FIRST BIRTH FOLLOWING PREIMPLANTATION GENETIC DIAGNOSIS IN THAILAND

Wirawit Piyamongkol,¹ Teraporn Vutyavanich,¹ Sirivipa Piyamongkol,² Dagan Wells,² Chairat Kunaviktikul,¹ Theera Tongsong,¹ Somsak Chaovisitsaree,¹ Rattika Saetung,³ Torpong Sanguansermsri³

¹Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Faculty of Medicine, ²Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Faculty of Pharmacy, ³Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai 50200, Thailand

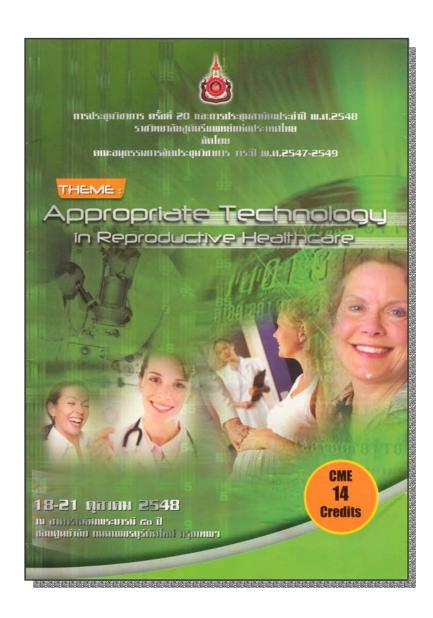
Objectives Thalassaemias are prevalent and cause one of the biggest health problems in Thailand and worldwide. The most widely applicable strategy for dealing with thalassaemias has been to control the incidence of new cases by offering screening for heterozygotes, genetic counseling, and prenatal diagnosis (PND) with termination of pregnancy in affected cases. An alternative to routine PND is preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) which allows selection of unaffected embryos prior to pregnancy establishment providing couples the chance to start a pregnancy with a disease-free baby. The aim of this study was to develop and apply a quick, sensitive and accurate single cell PCR protocol for PGD of beta-thalassaemia.

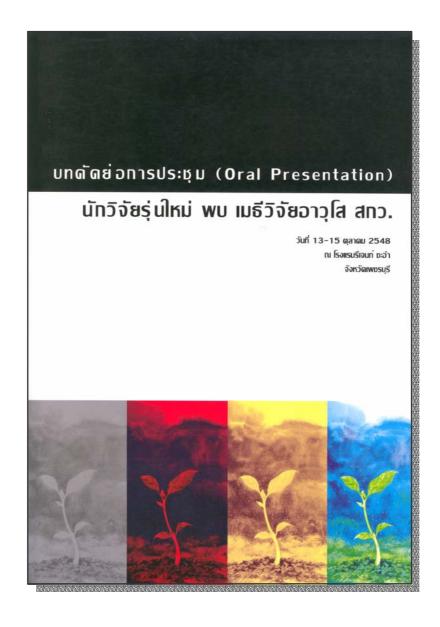
Methods Fourteen couples at risk of having an affected fetus with beta-thalassaemia were counseled regarding the project. One couple carrying beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation decided to join the project and underwent routine superovulation and intracytoplasmic sperm injection at Maharaj Nakorn Chiang Mai Hospital. Cleavage stage embryo biopsy was performed using laser on day-3 post-fertilisation and DNA from single cells was amplified using fluorescent PCR for beta-thalassaemia mutation analysis.

Results In the clinical PGD cycle of family 'A', 14 oocytes were collected, 10 were sperminjected. Eight embryos were of sufficient quality for biopsy. Fluorescent PCR analysis revealed three embryos to be affected, two normal, one heterozygous, one with ambiguous result and one with no results. No DNA contamination was detected. Both normally diagnosed embryos were transferred. This resulted in a singleton pregnancy, confirmed to be unaffected by prenatal testing. The baby was born healthy in June 2005.

Conclusion A novel PGD protocol for beta-thalassaemia using fluorescent single cell PCR was developed and optimised. The protocol was applied in one clinical PGD cycle and resulted in the first successful clinical pregnancy following PGD for a single gene disorder in Thailand and South East Asia.

Acknowledgement Supported by Thailand Research Fund (MRG4680173), the Faculty of Medicine Endowment Fund for Research, Chiang Mai University (13/46) and, Organon (Thailand).





การประชุม นักวิจัยรุ่นใหม่...พบ...เมธีวิจัยอาวุโส สกว.

13-R5-S1-MRG4680173/2

First birth following preimplantation genetic diagnosis in Thailand: successful diagnosis of beta-thalassaemia and simultaneous detection of Down's syndrome using multiplex fluorescent PCR

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Abstract—Objectives Thalassaemias are prevalent and cause one of the biggest health problems in Thailand and worldwide. The most widely applicable strategy for dealing with thalassaemias has been to control the incidence of new cases by offering screening for heterozygotes, genetic counseling, and prenatal diagnosis (PND) with termination of pregnancy in affected cases. An alternative to routine PND is preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) which allows selection of unaffected embryos prior to pregnancy establishment providing couples the chance to start a pregnancy with a disease-free baby. The aim of this study was to develop and apply quick, sensitive and accurate single cell PCR protocols for PGD of beta-thalassaemia.

Methods Fourteen couples at risk of having an affected fetus with severe beta-thalassaemia were counseled regarding the project. Two couples carrying beta-thalassaemia codon 41-42 mutation decided to join the project and underwent routine superovulation and intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) at Chiang Mai University Hospital. Cleavage stage embryo biopsy was performed using laser on Day-3 post-fertilisation and DNA from single cells was amplified using multiplex fluorescent PCR. This permitted beta-thalassaemia mutation analysis and a microsatellite allowing contamination detection and diagnosis of trisomy 21 cases caused by meiosis I error.

Results In the first PGD cycle, eight embryos were tested and two normally diagnosed embryos were transferred. This resulted in an unaffected pregnancy, confirmed to be homozygous normal by prenatal testing. The baby was born healthy in June 2005. The second PGD cycle involved analysis of nine embryos. One normal and one heterozygous embryo was transferred, however no pregnancy resulted. Two embryos were shown to be affected by Down's syndrome. These made the prevalence of trisomy 21 embryos be 22.2% (2/9) in this PGD cycle, interesting given that the mother was just 24 years old.

Conclusion Two novel PGD protocols for beta-thalassaemia using multiplex fluorescent single cell PCR were developed and optimised. The protocols were applied in two clinical PGD cycles and resulted in the first successful clinical pregnancy following PGD for a single gene disorder in Thailand and South East Asia.

Keywords—beta-thalassaemia, designer baby, embryo selection, preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD), prenatal diagnosis (PND), multiplex fluorescent single cell PCR

Output

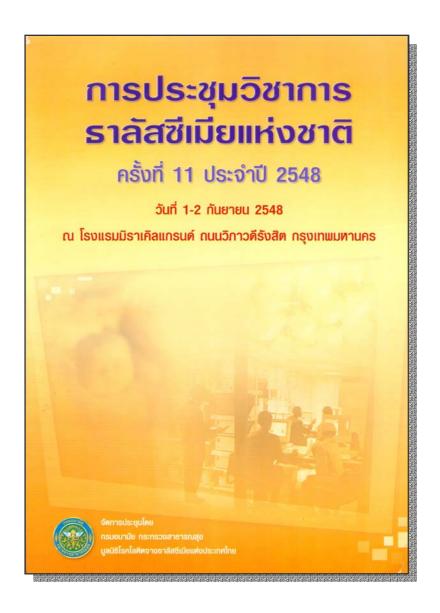
 Piyamongkol, W., Vutyavanich, T., Piyamongkol, S., Wells, D., Kunaviktikul, C., Tongsong, T., Chaovisitsaree, S., Saetung, R. and Sanguansermsri, T. Prenat Diagn, 2005. (submitted)

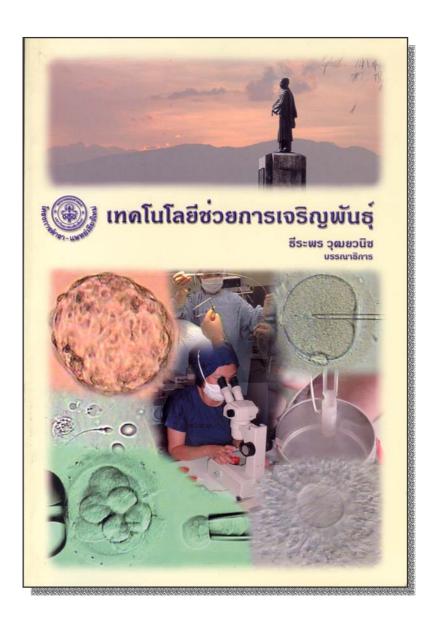
^{*} Corresponding author. Tel.: 0-5394-5552-5; fax: 0-5394-6428; e-mail: wpiyamon@mail.med.cmu.ac.th

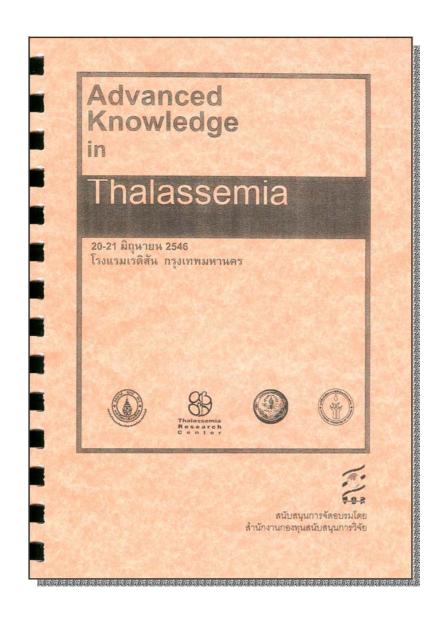
ภาคผนวก 3

หนังสือและตำรา













ชมรมเวชศาสตร์การเจริญพันธุ์แห่งประเทศไทย Thai Society for Reproductive Medicine; TSRM ร่วมกับ

ราชวิทยาลัยสูตินรีแพทย์แห่งประเทศไทย Royal Thai College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

> การอบรมระยะสั้น เวษศาสตร์การเจริญพันธุ์ ครั้งที่ 2

> > 31 มีนาคม - 1 เมษายน 2546 ณ หองสยามมกุฎราชกุมาร อาคารเฉลิมพระบารมี 50 ปี ชอยสูนย์วิจัย ถุนนเพชรบุรีตัดใหม่ กรุงเทพมหาษอร

