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Characterisation of cell wall proteins, virulence factor maturation and invasive disease trigger of Group A Streptococcus

Jason Nicklaus Cole
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**Characterisation of Cell Wall Proteins, Virulence
Factor Maturation and Invasive Disease Trigger of
Group A *Streptococcus***

A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements

For the Award of the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

From the

University of Wollongong

By

Jason Nicklaus Cole

2006

**School of Biological Sciences
University of Wollongong**



DECLARATION

This thesis is submitted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the University of Wollongong in fulfilment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). It does not include any material previously published by another person, except where due reference is made in the text. The experimental work described in this thesis is original work and has not been submitted for a degree in any University.

Jason Cole

May 11, 2006

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ABSTRACT

Streptococcus pyogenes (group A *Streptococcus*; GAS) is a Gram-positive human pathogen responsible for numerous life-threatening diseases, including necrotising fasciitis and streptococcal toxic shock syndrome (STSS). The non-suppurative sequelae of acute rheumatic fever (ARF) and acute post-streptococcal glomerulonephritis (APSGN) may develop upon repeated exposure to GAS. Over the last two decades, there has been a world-wide resurgence in GAS infection. In this study, a proteomic analysis was undertaken to identify the major cell wall-associated proteins of GAS. Mutanolysin cell wall extracts from GAS strain NS931 (serotype M69), NS13 (serotype M53) and S43 (serotype M6) were separated by two-dimensional gel electrophoresis and the landmark proteins identified by matrix-assisted laser desorption ionisation time-of-flight (MALDI-TOF) mass spectrometry. A total of 155 protein spots representing 74 distinct cell wall-associated proteins were identified, with molecular masses ranging from 14.4 to 77.5-kDa and a pI range of 4.4 to 7.9. Of these 74 proteins, nine putative virulence determinants (including M protein, SpeB, SpeM, FcrA, arginine deiminase, superoxide dismutase, C3-degrading protease and the two plasminogen-binding proteins SEN and Plr/GAPDH), eight glycolytic enzymes, eight carbohydrate metabolism enzymes, two chaperonins and four proteins with transporter function were detected in one or more of the GAS strains examined. Two-dimensional immunoblot analysis with pooled GAS-reactive human antisera revealed that thirty-three of these proteins were immunoreactive. Biotinylation of the GAS cell surface prior to two-dimensional western blotting identified a subset of twenty-three cell wall-associated proteins that are surface-exposed. These data illustrate the usefulness of proteomics in analysing the cell surface topology of GAS, which lays the

foundation for future work identifying new GAS virulence determinants and vaccine antigens.

The multifunctional chaperone and serine protease HtrA (DegP) is involved in the refolding and degradation of aberrant proteins destined for secretion. In numerous pathogenic organisms HtrA is required for thermostability, resistance to oxidative stress and full virulence. The HtrA of human pathogen *S. pyogenes* influences the maturation of secreted virulence factors streptolysin S and streptococcal pyrogenic exotoxin B (SpeB), and is localised at the ExPortal secretory microdomain. In this study, we examined the role of HtrA in regulating expression of GAS virulence phenotypes. An in-frame *htrA* deletion mutant displayed similar growth kinetics to the wild-type (wt) in the presence of paraquat-induced oxidative stress. Lack of HtrA did not influence capsule production or GAS adherence and invasion of human epithelial cells. Two-dimensional gel electrophoresis detected elevated levels of cleaved M protein fragments in the *htrA* mutant culture supernatant. The HtrA-mutant also had higher levels of cell wall-associated M protein than the wt. Time-course analysis of culture supernatant showed that the degradation rate of several virulence factors, including M protein, streptokinase, streptococcal enolase, superoxide dismutase A and glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase, was reduced in the *htrA* mutant. This degradation corresponded to a lag in the processing of the 40-kDa SpeB zymogen to the active 28-kDa form. *In vitro* protease assays demonstrated that proteolytically active HtrA was unable to process SpeB zymogen to the active protease. These data indicate that HtrA is essential for the efficient maturation of SpeB zymogen into the active protease and the subsequent SpeB-mediated degradation of surface and secreted GAS virulence factors.

The globally disseminated *S. pyogenes* M1T1 clone causes a number of highly invasive human diseases. The transition from local to systemic infection occurs by an unknown mechanism; however invasive M1T1 clinical isolates are known to express significantly less of the cysteine protease SpeB than M1T1 isolates from local infections. Here, we show that in comparison to the M1T1 strain 5448, the isogenic mutant $\Delta speB$ accumulated 75-fold more human plasmin activity on the bacterial surface following incubation in human plasma. SpeB was shown to degrade several bacterial and host molecules that contribute to the accumulation of bacterial surface plasmin activity. Human plasminogen was an absolute requirement for M1T1 strain 5448 virulence following subcutaneous infection of humanised plasminogen transgenic mice. *S. pyogenes* M1T1 isolates from the blood of infected humanised plasminogen transgenic mice expressed reduced levels of SpeB in comparison with the parental 5448 used as inoculum. The M1T1 mutant $\Delta speB$ displayed markedly reduced virulence in this transgenic model, demonstrating a requirement for SpeB at the site of infection. We propose that the human plasminogen system plays a critical role in group A streptococcal M1T1 systemic disease initiation. Although SpeB is required for *S. pyogenes* M1T1 survival at the site of local infection, it also disrupts the interaction of *S. pyogenes* M1T1 with the human plasminogen activation system. Therefore, loss of SpeB activity in a sub-population of *S. pyogenes* M1T1 at the site of infection results in accumulation of surface plasmin activity thus triggering systemic spread.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Title	i
Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
Table of Contents	vii
List of Figures	xvi
List of Tables	xx
Abbreviations	xxii
Publications	xxvii
Conference Presentations	xxviii
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Overview	1
1.2 The Genus <i>Streptococcus</i>	3
1.3 Group A Streptococcal Infection and Sequelae	3
1.3.1 Non-Invasive Diseases	5
1.3.1.1 Pharyngitis	5
1.3.1.2 Scarlet Fever	6
1.3.1.3 Impetigo.....	6
1.3.2 Invasive Diseases.....	7
1.3.2.1 Streptococcal Toxic Shock Syndrome (STSS).....	8
1.3.2.2 Bacteremia	8
1.3.2.3 Necrotising Fasciitis	9
1.3.2.4 Cellulitis and Erysipelas	10
1.3.3 Post-Infection Sequelae	10
1.3.3.1 Acute Rheumatic Fever (ARF).....	10
1.3.3.2 Acute Post-Streptococcal Glomerulonephritis (APSGN)	13
1.4 Classification of GAS	14
1.4.1 Serological Typing	14
1.4.1.1 Lancefield Classification	14

1.4.1.2 M Typing	15
1.4.1.3 Serum Opacity Factor (SOF) Typing	17
1.4.2 Molecular Typing	17
1.4.2.1 <i>emm</i> Sequence Typing	17
1.4.2.2 <i>emm</i> Patterning	18
1.4.2.3 Vir Typing	20
1.4.2.4 T Typing	21
1.4.2.5 Additonal Typing Methods	21
1.5 GAS Virulence Determinants	22
1.5.1 Adhesion and Entry into Host	22
1.5.2 Extracellular Matrix-, Fibronectin- and Fibrinogen-Binding Proteins	24
1.5.2.1 M Protein	27
1.5.2.2 Protein F1/SfbI	30
1.5.2.3 Protein F2 (PrtF2)	32
1.5.2.4 <i>S. pyogenes</i> Fibronectin-Binding Protein (PFBP)	33
1.5.2.5 Fibronectin-Binding Protein B (FbaB)	34
1.5.2.6 Fibronectin-Binding Protein (FBP54)	35
1.5.2.7 28-kDa Fibronectin-Binding Protein	36
1.5.2.8 Streptococcal Surface Dehydrogenase (SDH/GAPDH)	36
1.5.2.9 Serum Opacity Factor (SOF)	36
1.5.2.10 Streptococcal Fibronectin-Binding Protein X (SfbX)	38
1.5.2.11 Fibronectin-Binding Protein A (FbaA)	39
1.5.2.12 Lipoteichoic Acid (LTA)	39
1.5.2.13 R Proteins	40
1.5.3 Collagen-Binding Protein of Group A Streptococci (Cpa)	40
1.5.4 The Role of Vitronectin	41
1.5.5 Laminin-Binding Proteins	42
1.5.5.1 Streptococcal Pyrogenic Exotoxin B (SpeB)	42
1.5.5.2 Laminin-Binding Protein (Lbp)	47
1.5.6 Other Adherence Molecules	48
1.5.6.1 Hyaluronic Acid Capsule	48
1.5.6.2 Streptococcal Collagen-Like Surface Proteins (SclA, SclB)	49

1.5.6.3 GRAB Protein	50
1.6 Colonisation, Invasion and Host Response	51
1.6.1 M Proteins	52
1.6.2 Streptococcal Inhibitor of Complement (SIC)	52
1.6.3 IgG-Degrading Enzyme of <i>Streptococcus pyogenes</i> (IdeS)	54
1.6.4 Immunoglobulin (Ig)-Binding Proteins	55
1.6.5 C5a Peptidase	56
1.6.6 Toxins	57
1.6.6.1 Streptolysin S (SLS)	57
1.6.6.2 Streptolysin O (SLO)	58
1.6.6.3 Streptococcal Pyrogenic Exotoxins and Superantigens	59
1.6.6.4 Streptokinase	62
1.6.7 Internalisation	64
1.7 The Plasminogen Activation System (PAS)	65
1.7.1 Physiology of the PAS	65
1.7.2 Plasminogen and Plasmin	66
1.7.3 <i>S. pyogenes</i> and the PAS	68
1.7.3.1 Plasminogen-Binding Proteins	68
1.7.3.1.1 Streptococcal Surface Enolase (SEN)	69
1.7.3.1.2 Streptococcal Surface Dehydrogenase (SDH/GAPDH)	70
1.7.3.1.3 Nephritogenic Plasminogen-Binding Protein (NPBP)	71
1.7.3.1.4 Plasminogen-Binding GAS M-Like Protein (PAM)	71
1.7.3.2 Plasminogen Activation by Streptokinase and Fibrinogen	73
1.8 HtrA Family of Serine Proteases	76
1.8.1 Temperature-Dependent Switch from Chaperone to Protease	77
1.8.2 <i>S. pyogenes</i> HtrA	78
1.9 Summary and Conclusions	79
1.10 Project Aims	80

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS	81
2.1 Bacterial Strains, Plasmids and Media	81
2.2 Extraction of Plasmid DNA	83
2.2.1 QIAprep™ Spin Miniprep Kit®	83
2.2.2 Wizard® Plus SV Minipreps DNA Purification System	84
2.2.3 QIAGEN Midi Plasmid Extraction	85
2.2.4 QIAGEN HiSpeed™ Plasmid Midi Kit.....	87
2.2.5 Amersham FlexiPrep™ Kit.....	88
2.3 Purification of <i>S. pyogenes</i> Chromosomal DNA	89
2.4 Amplification and Cloning of <i>S. pyogenes</i> Chromosomal DNA	90
2.4.1 Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)	90
2.4.2 Invitrogen TA Cloning® System	93
2.5 DNA Manipulations	94
2.5.1 Restriction Enzyme Digestion.....	94
2.5.2 Agarose Gel Electrophoresis.....	95
2.5.3 Purification of DNA from Agarose Gels.....	96
2.5.3.1 Bresa-Clean™ Purification Kit	96
2.5.3.2 GenElute™ Gel Extraction Kit	97
2.5.3.3 Wizard® SV Gel and PCR Clean-Up System	98
2.5.4 PCR Product Purification.....	99
2.5.5 Ligation of DNA	99
2.5.6 Ethanol Precipitation of DNA	100
2.5.7 Determining DNA Concentration and Purity.....	101
2.5.7.1 Spectrophotometric Quantification	101
2.5.7.2 Agarose Gel Quantification.....	101
2.5.8 DNA Sequence Analysis.....	102
2.5.8.1 Sequencing of Plasmids and PCR Products	103
2.5.8.2 Purification of Extension Products.....	103
2.5.8.3 Sample Electrophoresis.....	104
2.6 Bacterial Transformation	105
2.6.1 Preparation of Chemically Competent Cells	105
2.6.2 Transformation of Chemically Competent Cells	105
2.6.3 Preparation of Electro-Competent Cells	106

2.6.4	Electro-Transformation Procedure	106
2.7	The QIAexpress[®] Protein Purification System	107
2.7.1	Small-Scale Expression Cultures	107
2.7.2	Preparation of Whole-Cell Lysates for SDS-PAGE	108
2.7.3	Analysis of Growth Kinetics	108
2.7.4	Large-Scale Expression of 6×His-Tagged Proteins	109
2.7.5	Ni-NTA Column Assembly	110
2.7.6	Purification of 6×His-Tagged Proteins	110
2.7.7	Preparation of Guanidine-Containing Samples for SDS-PAGE	111
2.7.8	Dialysis and Concentration of 6×His-Tagged Proteins	112
2.7.9	Purification of Recombinant M1, SEN and SodA Proteins	113
2.7.10	Commercially Purified Proteins	114
2.8	Protein Quantitation	114
2.8.1	Bicinchoninic Acid (BCA) Protein Assay Kit	114
2.8.2	Bradford Assay	115
2.9	SDS-Polyacrylamide Gel Electrophoresis (SDS-PAGE)	116
2.10	Rabbit Polyclonal Antisera Production	117
2.10.1	Dose and Route of Injection	117
2.10.2	Test Bleeds	118
2.10.3	Serum Preparation	118
2.10.4	Monitoring Antibody Response	119
2.11	Western Blot Analysis	119
2.11.1	Transfer onto PVDF	119
2.11.2	Transfer onto Nitrocellulose	121
2.11.3	Immunological Reagents	122
2.11.4	Western Blot Development	123
2.12	Mutanolysin Extraction of GAS Cell Wall Proteins	124
2.13	Biotin Labelling of GAS Cell Surface Proteins	125
2.14	Preparation of GAS Culture Supernatant Proteins	126
2.15	Two-Dimensional Gel Electrophoresis	127
2.15.1	Casting of 2D Gels	127
2.15.2	Precipitation of Cell Wall and Culture Supernatant Proteins	128

2.15.3	Sample Preparation	129
2.15.4	Rehydration of IPG Strips	129
2.15.5	First Dimension Isoelectric Focusing (IEF)	130
2.15.6	Second Dimension Electrophoresis.....	131
2.15.7	Protein Detection.....	133
2.15.8	Western Transfer Analysis of 2D Gels	133
2.15.8.1	Development of 2D Western Blots.....	134
2.15.8.2	SA-HRP Conjugate Preparation	136
2.16	Peptide Mass Fingerprinting (PMF) Analysis	137
2.16.1	Spot Excision.....	137
2.16.2	Tryptic Digestion.....	137
2.16.3	MALDI-TOF Mass Spectrometry	138
2.17	<i>S. pyogenes</i> Growth Curves	139
2.18	Hyaluronic Acid Capsule Determination	139
2.19	SpeB Activity Assays	140
2.20	Electron Microscopic Analyses.....	141
2.20.1	Immunogold Electron Microscopy.....	141
2.20.2	Field Emission Scanning Electron Microscopy (FESEM).....	142
2.21	Plasminogen-Binding and Cell Surface Plasmin Activity	142
2.22	Protease Assays	144
2.23	Chaperone Assays.....	144
2.24	HtrA Challenge Studies.....	145
2.24.1	Immunisation and Challenge of Mice	145
2.24.2	Detection of Murine Antibodies and Bactericidal Assay.....	146
2.24.3	Statistical Analyses	147
2.25	Humanised Plasminogen Transgenic Mouse Infection Model	148
2.25.1	Infection of Mice	148
2.25.2	Dissemination of GAS During Infection.....	148
2.25.3	Genotyping of Transgenic Mice.....	149
2.25.4	Statistical Analyses	150

3. SURFACE ANALYSES AND IMMUNE REACTIVITIES OF GAS CELL WALL-ASSOCIATED PROTEINS	153
3.1 Introduction	153
3.2 Results	155
3.2.1 2D-PAGE Analysis of Mutanolysin Cell Wall Extracts	155
3.2.2 Identification of Immunogenic Cell Wall Proteins	167
3.2.3 Identification of Putative Cell Surface Proteins	170
3.3 Discussion.....	174
 4. ROLE OF PROTEASE HTRA IN THE MATURATION OF GAS VIRULENCE DETERMINANTS	 188
4.1 Introduction.....	188
4.2 Results	190
4.2.1 HtrA Expression Plasmid Construction.....	190
4.2.1.1 PCR Amplification of <i>S. pyogenes</i> NS931 <i>htrA</i>	190
4.2.1.2 Cloning of <i>htrA</i> into pCR® 2.1	190
4.2.1.3 Cloning of <i>htrA</i> into pQE-9.....	192
4.2.1.4 DNA Sequence Analysis of <i>htrA</i>	196
4.2.2 Pilot Expression of Recombinant HtrA Protein	207
4.2.2.1 Effect of Expression on Growth Kinetics.....	207
4.2.2.2 Small-Scale Expression Studies	207
4.2.3 Purification of 6×His-Tagged HtrA.....	209
4.2.4 Production of Polyclonal HtrA Antisera	211
4.2.5 HtrA Protease Activity	211
4.2.6 HtrA Chaperone Activity	213
4.2.7 HtrA Challenge Studies.....	214
4.2.8 Oxidative Stress Tolerance.....	217
4.2.9 Capsule Production.....	217
4.2.10 HEp-2 Eukaryotic Cell Binding and Invasion Capacity.....	219
4.2.11 2D-PAGE of Cell Wall and Culture Supernatant Proteins.....	220
4.2.12 Western Blot Analysis of Cell Wall Proteins	223
4.2.13 Western Blot Analysis of Secreted Proteins.....	226

4.2.14 Role of HtrA in SpeB Protease Maturation	228
4.2.15 Proteolytic Processing of SpeB by HtrA	230
4.3 Discussion.....	231
5. TRIGGER FOR GROUP A STREPTOCOCCAL M1T1 INVASIVE DISEASE.....	241
5.1 Introduction	241
5.2 Results	242
5.2.1 Characterisation of M1T1 Strain 5448 and $\Delta speB$	242
5.2.1.1 2D-PAGE of Mutanolysin Cell Wall Extracts	242
5.2.1.2 Identification of Putative Cell Surface Proteins	249
5.2.2 <i>In Vitro</i> Studies of 5448 and $\Delta speB$	252
5.2.3 Analysis of Plasminogen Activation System Components	254
5.2.4 Infection of Humanised Plasminogen Transgenic Mice	254
5.2.5 Putative Model of GAS Invasive Disease Initiation.....	259
5.3 Discussion.....	262
6. CONCLUSION	267
7. REFERENCES.....	269
8. APPENDICES	332
Appendix I: Media, Solutions and Reagents	332
Appendix II: PMF Database Search Parameters	354
Appendix III: Example MALDI-TOF Mass Spectrum	355
Appendix IV: Example PeptIdent PMF Data.....	356

Appendix V: Standard Curves and Calculations	360
Determination of DNA Size.....	360
Determination of Protein Size.....	361
Appendix VI: Plasmids Used in this Study	362

LIST OF FIGURES	Page
1.1 Schematic illustration of the fibrillar α -helical coiled-coil streptococcal M protein	16
1.2 Chromosomal arrangement of <i>emm</i> genes in <i>S. pyogenes</i>	19
1.3 Schematic representation of the two-step model proposed for GAS adherence to host cells.	25
1.4 Schematic representation of the <i>S. pyogenes</i> M protein	28
1.5 Schematic representation of the zymogen form of SpeB (proSpeB) secreted by GAS	44
1.6 Schematic illustration of the plasmin(ogen) protein	68
1.7 Schematic diagram of direct and indirect plasminogen-binding by GAS	74
2.1 Assembly of the gel sandwich for a western transfer onto PVDF or nitrocellulose membrane using the Mini Trans-Blot [®] Electrophoretic Transfer Cell.	121
2.2 Two-dimensional gel electrophoresis configuration	132
2.3 Schematic illustration of two-dimensional western transfer analysis using the Hoefer SemiPhor [™] semi-dry transfer unit	135
3.1 Two-dimensional gel electrophoresis profiles of GAS mutanolysin cell wall extracts	157
3.2 Two-dimensional western blot analysis of GAS mutanolysin cell wall extracts with pooled human sera	169
3.3 Identification of putative cell surface proteins in GAS mutanolysin cell wall extracts	173

4.1	PCR amplification of the <i>htrA</i> gene from the chromosome of <i>S. pyogenes</i> strain NS931 with the non-proofreading <i>Taq</i> DNA polymerase.....	191
4.2	Strategy for the cloning of the <i>htrA</i> gene of <i>S. pyogenes</i> NS931 into plasmid pCR® 2.1	193
4.3	Restriction enzyme analysis of pCR® 2.1 (<i>htrA</i>).....	194
4.4	Schematic representation of the pQE-9 cloning strategy	195
4.5	Restriction enzyme analysis of expression plasmid pHTRA	197
4.6	DNA sequence analysis of expression plasmid pHTRA	198
4.7	Multiple sequence alignment of the <i>S. pyogenes</i> NS931 <i>htrA</i> nucleotide sequence	204
4.8	Multiple sequence alignment of the deduced <i>S. pyogenes</i> NS931 HtrA amino acid sequence.....	206
4.9	Growth curve analysis of <i>E. coli</i> M15 (pREP4) (pQE-9) and <i>E. coli</i> M15 (pREP4) (pHTRA).....	208
4.10	Time-course of recombinant 6×His-tagged HtrA protein expression	209
4.11	Purification of recombinant 6×His-tagged HtrA by Ni-NTA affinity chromatography.....	210
4.12	Generation of polyclonal rabbit HtrA antibodies	212
4.13	<i>In vitro</i> protease activity of purified recombinant 6×His-tagged HtrA in the native conformation.....	213
4.14	Chaperone assays of purified recombinant <i>S. pyogenes</i> HtrA	215
4.15	Immunisation of mice with purified 6×His-tagged HtrA and subsequent challenge with GAS strain NS13.....	216

4.16	Comparative growth of HSC5 and $\Delta htrA$ under conditions of paraquat-induced oxidative stress	218
4.17	Analysis of HSC5 and $\Delta htrA$ hyaluronic acid capsule production.....	219
4.18	Capacity of HSC5 and $\Delta htrA$ to bind and invade of HEp-2 cells	220
4.19	Comparison of cell wall and secreted proteomes of HSC5 and $\Delta htrA$	221
4.20	HtrA is required for the efficient degradation of cell wall-anchored M protein, but not SodA, GAPDH or SEN	225
4.21	Western blot analysis of HSC5 (wt) and HTR10 ($\Delta htrA$) culture supernatants following growth for 7, 10, 16 and 26 h in the absence of E64, or for 16 h in the presence of E64	227
4.22	<i>S. pyogenes</i> HtrA is indispensable for the efficient conversion of SpeB zymogen (proSpeB) to the active form	229
4.23	The absence of HtrA slows the conversion of SpeB zymogen to the mature protease.....	231
4.24	HtrA does not directly process SpeB zymogen (proSpeB) or several secreted GAS virulence factors	232
5.1	Two-dimensional gel electrophoresis profiles of mutanolysin cell wall extracts from GAS strains 5448 and $\Delta speB$ grown in the absence and presence of cysteine protease inhibitor E64	244
5.2	Two-dimensional gel electrophoresis profiles of biotinylated cell wall-associated proteins from GAS strains 5448 and $\Delta speB$ grown in the absence and presence of cysteine protease inhibitor E64	250
5.3	Identification of cell surface-associated proteins in mutanolysin cell wall extracts from GAS M1T1 strains 5448 and $\Delta speB$ grown in the absence and presence of cysteine protease inhibitor E64	251

5.4	<i>In vitro</i> characterisation of M1T1 <i>S. pyogenes</i> strain 5448 (wt) and the isogenic $\Delta speB$ mutant.....	253
5.5	Western blot analysis and <i>in vitro</i> SpeB protease assays	255
5.6	Representative agarose gel electrophoresis of humanised plasminogen transgenic mice genotyping.....	257
5.7	Survival curves, bacterial counts and SpeB expression phenotype following subcutaneous infection of humanised plasminogen transgenic mice (Tg^+) and non-transgenic control mice (Tg^-) with <i>S. pyogenes</i> strain 5448 (wt) or the isogenic $\Delta speB$ mutant.	258
5.8	Representative skim milk agar plate assays showing the SpeB protease activity of colonies isolated from the lesions and blood of humanised plasminogen transgenic mice infected with <i>S. pyogenes</i> strain 5448	260
5.9	Proposed model for group A streptococcal systemic disease initiation	261
8.1	Representative MALDI-TOF mass spectrum of streptococcal enolase (SEN) isolated from the cell wall of <i>S. pyogenes</i>	355
8.2	Percent coverage of streptococcal enolase (SEN) by MALDI-TOF peptide mass fingerprinting analysis	359
8.3	Standard curve of \log_{10} molecular weight (kb) of <i>Hind</i> III digested λ DNA fragments versus distance travelled (mm).....	360
8.4	Standard curve of \log_{10} molecular weight (kDa) of low-range molecular weight protein standards versus distance travelled (mm)	361
8.5	The plasmids used in this study	362

LIST OF TABLES	Page
1.1 Four categories of human diseases caused by <i>S. pyogenes</i>	4
1.2 Putative adhesions and host receptors for <i>S. pyogenes</i>	23
2.1 Bacterial strains and plasmids used in this study	82
2.2 Oligonucleotide primers used for PCR in this study	92
2.3 Components of a typical PCR and their final concentration	92
2.4 General guide to temperature cycles used for the PCR	92
2.5 Components of the TA Coning [®] Kit ligations.....	94
2.6 The sizes and mass ratios of λ HindIII molecular weight markers	102
2.7 Oligonucleotide primers for the DNA sequence analysis of <i>S. pyogenes</i> <i>htrA</i>	102
2.8 Temperature cycle parameters used for automated fluorescent DNA sequencing reactions.....	103
2.9 Typical dialysis scheme for recombinant HtrA following Ni-NTA affinity chromatography.....	113
2.10 Volume of antisera required for specific dilutions in 10 mL of 1X PBS	119
2.11 Oligonucleotide primers used for REExtract-N-Amp [™] Tissue PCR amplification.....	151
2.12 Components of the RedExtract-N-Amp [™] Tissue PCR amplification	151
2.13 Thermal cycling parameters for RedExtract-N-Amp [™] Tissue PCR Amplification.....	151

3.1	Major cell wall-associated proteins identified in the mutanolysin extracts of GAS strains NS931, NS13 and S43 by MALDI-TOF peptide mass fingerprinting analysis	158
3.2	Cell wall-associated proteins with putative secretion signal sequences.....	165
3.3	Cell wall-associated proteins previously characterised as cellular or secreted in GAS	168
3.4	Percent identity of immunoreactive and/or surface-associated cell wall proteins of GAS with human homologs	171
4.1	Cell wall-associated proteins identified by MADLDI-TOF peptide mass fingerprinting or 2D western blot analysis for GAS strains HSC5 (wt) and HTR10 ($\Delta htrA$).....	222
4.2	Culture supernatant proteins identified by MALDI-TOF peptide mass fingerprinting analysis for GAS strains HSC5 (wt) and HTR10 ($\Delta htrA$)	224
5.1	Peptide mass fingerprinting identification of cell wall- and cell surface-associated proteins of <i>S. pyogenes</i> 5448 and $\Delta speB$ in the presence and absence of E64.....	245
8.1	Preparation of BSA standards for the Bradford protein assay	348
8.2	Experimental peptide masses manually selected for streptococcal enolase (SEN).....	355
8.3	Example of PeptIdent PMF input data for streptococcal enolase (SEN)	356
8.4	PeptIdent database search results for streptococcal enolase (SEN)	357
8.5	Matching peptides for streptococcal enolase (SEN)	358
8.6	Distances migrated by λ HindIII molecular weight markers	360
8.7	Distances migrated by the low-range molecular weight protein markers	361

ABBREVIATIONS

ADP	adenosine diphosphate
ANGIS	Australian National Genomic Information Service
Ap	ampicillin
APAF	Australian Proteome Analysis Facility
APC	antigen presenting cell
APS	ammonium persulfate
APSGN	acute post-streptococcal glomerulonephritis
ARF	acute rheumatic fever
ATP	adenosine triphosphate
bp	base pairs
BSA	bovine serum albumin
°C	degrees Celsius
C3	complement component 3
CHAPS	3-[3-(cholamidopropyl)-dimethyl-ammonio]-1-propane sulfonate
cm	centimetre
Cpa	collagen-binding protein
CRS	closely related to SIC
C-terminal	carboxy-terminal
DAB	3,3'-diaminobenzidine
dH ₂ O	sterile glass distilled water
DMF	N,N-dimethylformamide
DMSO	dimethylsulfoxide
DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
dNTP	deoxynucleotide triphosphate
DRS	distantly related to SIC
DTT	dithiothreitol
<i>E. coli</i>	<i>Escherichia coli</i>
ECM	extracellular matrix
EDTA	ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid
ELISA	enzyme linked immunosorbent assay
ExPASy	expert protein analysis system
FAFLP	fluorescent amplified fragment length polymorphism
FbaA	fibronectin-binding protein A

FbaB	fibronectin-binding protein B
FBP54	fibronectin-binding protein 54
g	acceleration due to gravity 9.8 ms^{-2}
g	gram
GAPDH	glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase
GAS	group A <i>Streptococcus</i>
GBS	group B <i>Streptococcus</i>
GRAB	G-related α_2 -macroglobulin-binding protein
GTP	guanosine triphosphate
h	hour
HCl	hydrochloric acid
HDL	high density lipoprotein
HRG	histidine-rich glycoprotein
HRP	horseradish peroxidase
HtrA	high temperature requirement protease A
H_2O_2	hydrogen peroxide
IdeS	IgG-degrading enzyme of <i>Streptococcus pyogenes</i>
IEF	isoelectric focusing
Ig	immunoglobulin
IPG	immobilised pH gradient
IPTG	isopropyl- β -D-thiogalactoside
kb	kilo bases
kDa	kilo-Dalton
Km	kanamycin
kV	kilo volts
L	litre
LB	Luria Bertani
LTA	lipoteichoic acid
M	molar
m	milli
mA	milliamps
MAC	membrane attack complex
MALDI-TOF	matrix-assisted laser desorption ionisation time-of-flight
MHC	major histocompatibility complex
min	minutes

MLEE	multilocus enzyme electrophoresis
Mlp	M-like proteins
MLST	multilocus sequence typing
MOPS	3-(N-morpholino)propanesulfonic acid
Mrp	M-related proteins
MS	mass spectrometry
MSCRAMM	microbial surface component recognising adhesive matrix molecule
MWCO	molecular weight cut off
μ	micro
n	nano
N-terminal	amino terminal
NADP	nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate
NADP-GAPDH	NADP-dependent glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase
NCBI	National Centre for Biotechnology Information
Ni-NTA	nickel-nitrilotriacetic acid
nm	nanometres
NPBP	nephritis plasmin-binding protein
NT	Northern Territory
OD	optical density
Ω	ohm
PAGE	polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis
PAI-1	plasminogen activator inhibitor type 1
PAI-2	plasminogen activator inhibitor type 2
PAM	plasminogen-binding group A streptococcal M-like protein
PBS	phosphate buffered saline
PCR	polymerase chain reaction
PFBP	<i>S. pyogenes</i> fibronectin-binding protein
pI	isoelectric point
Plr	plasmin receptor
PMN	polymorphonuclear leukocytes
pmol	pico moles
PMSF	phenylmethylsulfonyl fluoride
PrtF2	protein F2
PVDF	polyvinylidene difluoride
r	resistant

®	registered
RFLP	restriction fragment length polymorphism
RGD	arginine-glycine-aspartic acid
RHD	rheumatic heart disease
RNA	ribonucleic acid
RNase A	ribonuclease A
rpm	revolutions per minute
s	sensitive
SA	streptavidin
<i>S. agalactiae</i>	<i>Streptococcus agalactiae</i>
SAGP	streptococcal acid glycoprotein
<i>S. aureus</i>	<i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>
ScIA/ScIB	streptococcal collagen-like protein
SCPA	streptococcal C5a peptidase
SDH	streptococcal surface dehydrogenase
SDS	sodium dodecyl sulfate
sec	seconds
SEN	streptococcal surface enolase
SfbI	streptococcal fibronectin-binding protein I
SfbII	streptococcal fibronectin-binding protein II
SfbX	streptococcal fibronectin-binding protein X
SibA	secreted immunoglobulin-binding protein from GAS
SIC	streptococcal inhibitor of complement
<i>ska</i>	streptokinase gene
SLS	streptolysin S
SLO	streptolysin O
SMEZ	streptococcal mitogenic exotoxin Z
SOF	serum opacity factor
Spe	streptococcal pyrogenic exotoxin
<i>S. pneumoniae</i>	<i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i>
<i>S. pyogenes</i>	<i>Streptococcus pyogenes</i>
SSA	streptococcal superantigen
SSS	standard sample solubilisation solution
STSS	streptococcal toxic shock syndrome
TCA	trichloroacetic acid

TEMED	N,N,N',N'-Tetramethylethylenediamine
TF	trigger factor
THBY	Todd Hewitt broth, yeast supplemented
™	trade mark
tPA	tissue-type plasminogen activator
Tris-HCl	Tris(hydroxymethyl)aminomethane hydrochloride
Triton [®] X-100	t-octylphenoxyethoxyethanol
2D	two-dimensional
uPA	urokinase-type plasminogen activator
UV	ultraviolet
V	volt
v/v	volume/volume
Vir	virulence type
W	watts
wt	wild-type
w/v	weight/volume
X	times
X-Gal	5-bromo-4-chloro-3-indolyl- β -D-thiogalactopyranoside

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