Application of the scanning ion-conductance microscopy (SICM) in study of voriconazole impact on Candida parapsilosis surface structure.

Nikita Savin1, Vasilii Kolmogorov2, Roman Timoshenko3, Alexander Vaneev4, Aleksei Iakovlev2, Oleg Suchalko2, Natalia Grammatikova5, Igor Levshin2, Natalia Klyachko6, Yurii Parkhomenko7, Sergei Salikhov1, Alexander Majouga8, Alexander Erofeev9, Peter Gorelkin9 and Yuri Korchev1

1National University of Science and Technology "MISIS", Moscow, Russia, 2National University of Science and Technology «MISiS», Moscow, Russia, Moskva, Russia, 3National University of Science and Technology "MISIS", Moscow, Moskva, Russia, 4National University of Science and Technology «MISiS», Russia, 5Gauze Research Institute for New Antibiotics, Moscow, Russian Federation, Russia, 6Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia, Russia, 7NUST MISiS, Moscow, Russian Federation, Russia, 8D. Mendeleev University of Chemical Technology, Russia, 9National University of Science and Technology «MISiS», Moscow, Russia, Russia

The studying of antifungal drugs effect on the surface structure by traditional microbiological methods is unobtainable. SICM method allows to obtain the topography of the surface structure and its mechanical properties of biological samples in non-contact mode (Clarke et al., 2016). Achievable to obtain a data of cells stiffness by applying pressure between of the nanopipette tip a sample surface. Azole drugs inhibit the synthesis of ergosterol (a component of the yeast membrane) (Ghannoum & Rice, 1999), which lead to destruction and softening of candida cell membrane. There are reports of the antifungal effect of caspofungin on elasticity of cell wall (Quilès et al., 2017); impact of azole drugs on Candida surface structure (Madhavan et al., 2018; Behbehani et al., 2019). However, the dynamic effect of azole drugs on the surface structure and mechanical properties of Candida yeast in physiological conditions has not been studied. In this work, an impact of fluconazole on Candida parapsilosis. To perform an experiment, yeast immobilized on a glutaraldehyde layer was treated with voriconazole at 40 μg/ml for 6 hours. Cell morphology alteration of the Candida cell have been observed by SICM (figure 1). In addition, displacement map indicates increase at 2.5 times (figure 2 (A, B)). The average value of the displacement of the control cell was 17 nm, the value after cell treatment was 41 nm, which is indicated that the cell has softened after voriconazole treatment. Figure 2 (C) presents a graph of the linear dependence of displacement value along the cell surface from the time of exposure with the drug. The curve of the graph does not reach a plateau due to the short exposure time of cells with drug (less than 24 hours). An increase in displacement value indicates a decrease in stiffness at the cell surface and, consequently, destruction of the Candida membrane. The data are consistent with theoretical concepts of the antifungal effect of the azole drugs on Candida yeast. However, this characteristic is indirect in determining the mechanical properties. Due to the relatively low pressure exerted on rigid yeast cells. Therefore, further refinement of the method for determining cell elasticity is relevant.

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Figure 1. SICM images of *Candida parapsilosis* (A) control, (B) after 6 hours voriconazole treatment at 40 μg/ml.

Figure 2. Surface displacement of *Candida* (A) control, (B) after 6 hours voriconazole treatment at 40 μg/ml. (C) Time dependence of *Candida* surface displacement treated with voriconazole at 40 μg/ml.

References