

Colistin susceptibility, pharmacokinetics, and residues in broiler and laying hens.

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Abstract

One hundred and twenty four *Escherichia coli* isolates were obtained from autopsied chickens showing lesions of avian colibacillosis in Egypt. Antibiograms showed that the majority of *E. coli* isolates were highly susceptible to colistin sulphate (65.3%) and neomycin (54.8%). Opposite all isolates were resistant to oxytetracycline and amoxicillin (100% resistance).

After single i.v. (1 mg/kg) or oral (5 mg/kg b.w.) administration of colistin sulphate to broiler and laying hens, colistin could be detected in broiler plasma longer than in laying hen plasma. Following i.v. injection of colistin sulphate, elimination half-lives ($t_{0.5 \beta}$) were 1.82 and 2.61 hours in broiler and laying hens, respectively. Total body clearances (Cl_{tot}) were 0.21 and 0.18 L/h.kg in broiler and laying hens respectively. Areas under curve (AUC) were 2.93 and 2.75 $\mu\text{g/ml.h}$ in broiler and laying hens respectively. After oral administration of colistin sulphate to broiler and laying hens, absorption half-lives ($t_{0.5 ab}$) and elimination half-lives ($t_{0.5 \beta}$) were 0.41 and 0.41, & 1.19 and 1.21 hours respectively. Oral bioavailabilities ($F_{0.5}$) were 11.48 and 10.29% in broiler and laying hens respectively. Detectable levels of colistin could be measured in muscles or eggs at single oral administration of colistin.

Key words: chicken, colistin, *Escherichia coli*, pharmacokinetic, residue susceptibility.

Introduction:

Colistin, also known as polymyxin E, is polypeptide antibiotic that was first isolated in Japan from *Bacillus colistinus* in 1947, and became available for clinical use. The bactericidal action of colistin takes place through its binding to membrane phospholipid of Gram-negative bacteria such as *Escherichia coli*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Salmonella*, and *Haemophilus*, leading to leak out of bacterial cell (Rastogi et al. 1987; and Li et al. 2005).

Colistin is widely used in many countries for treatment of Gram-negative infections (mainly Colibacillosis and Salmonellosis) in broilers and laying hens. Because colistin was introduced into clinical practice over 45 years ago, it is not subject to the regulations those modern drugs are subject to. Therefore, neither standardized dosing of colistin nor detailed pharmacokinetics information is available for chickens. Furthermore, there are no confirmed data about colistin oral bioavailability in chickens; especially that colistin has shown no virtual systemic absorption after oral administration in most of mammalian species (Escoula et al. 1981; and Menal et al. 1997). Moreover, the prolonged and massive use of colistin in chicken farming has increased bacterial resistance against it.

The objective of the present study was to study the susceptibility of virulent colistin, to examine the pharmacokinetic of colistin in chickens, and to determine possible residues of colistin in chicken's meat and eggs after its oral administration.

Materials and methods

Drugs:

1) Antibiotic disks: oxytetracycline (OT30) lot 410988, doxycycline hydrochloride (Do30) lot 391249, amoxicillin (AML10) lot 371513, neomycin (N30), colistin (CT25) lot 370571, enrofloxacin (ENR5), ciprofloxacin (CIP5) lot 4161, spiramycin (SP100) lot 404338 were purchased from Oxoid Ltd (Basingstoke, Hampshire, England).

2) Colistin sulphate: obtained from Sigma Chemicals (St. Louis, Mo.), with a potency of 19,740 IU/mg. Drug was dissolved in sterile pyrogen-free saline for i.v. injection and distilled water for oral administration.

Bacterial isolates:

One hundred and twenty four isolates of *Escherichia coli* were obtained from commercial broiler flocks located in Egypt (Ismailia governorate) throughout the year from July to November, 2006. Specimens were isolated from heart and liver of broiler chicken (2-6 weeks age) those had died from Colisepsis. Specimens were cultured on McConkey and EMB agar, the suspected *E. coli* colonies were identified by standard biochemical methods according to Cruickshank et al. (1979). Fifty *E. coli* were isolated and identified; then the antibiograms of the isolated *E. coli* were performed using the disk diffusion method described by Bauer and Luther (1980).

Birds for pharmacokinetics and residues study:

Experiments were conducted using 2 commercial breeds of female chickens: broilers (22 birds) and white leghorn laying hens (15 birds). Every 5 birds were kept in individual wire cage, while broilers were housed on deep litter (2 m²). The animal house temperature was maintained at 25 ± 3 °C and humidity 60-70%. All birds were fed on antibacterial-free commercial diet and had a free access to drinking water. The birds were allowed to settle one week before starting the experiment. At the start of experiment, ages and body weights of broilers and hens were 6 and 56 weeks, 1948 ± 56 and 2374 ± 49 gm, respectively.

Experiments design, grouping of animals and sample collection:

Chickens were randomly grouped into 6 groups and treated as follows: Group 1 (broiler, n=5) and 2 (layers, n=5) were used to study colistin disposition after i.v. administration. Groups 3 (broiler, n=5) and 4 (layers, n=5) were used for the study of colistin pharmacokinetic after oral administration, while groups 5 (broiler, n=5) and 6 (layers, n=5) were used for estimating colistin residues in meat and eggs, respectively after oral administration of colistin.

In order to study colistin disposition after i.v. administration, chickens of groups 1 and 2 were administered single i.v. dose of 0.25% watery solution of colistin in a dose of 1mg/kg body weight. Drug was injected in the left cutaneous vein using 1-ml plastic syringe with 26G needle. Blood samples (not more than 0.5 ml) from both groups were collected from the right cutaneous ulnar vein at 0.17, 0.5, 1, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, 4, and 5 hours after dosing.

For studying of colistin pharmacokinetics after oral administration, chicks groups 3 and 4 were administered colistin sulphate in a single oral dose colistin sulphate/kg body weight (equivalent to 98,700 IU/kg) as 1% watery Drug was administered directly into chicken crop using flexible rubber tubing. Samples from both groups were collected from the cutaneous ulnar vein at 0.2, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 hours after dosing.

All blood samples were collected using heparinized 1-ml plastic syringe and needle, blood sample was immediately transferred to 1.5-ml Eppendorf tube and refrigerated for 1 hour, then centrifuged at 2600 g (relative centrifugation force) for 10 minutes, the clear plasma was collected and stored at -20 °C until assaying. In order to estimate colistin residues in chicken's meat and eggs, single oral colistin sulphate was administered to groups 5 and 6 in the same route and dose as group 3. Four birds from group 5 were slaughtered 1, 2, and 3 days after colistin administration. Ten gm from right breast muscle of each slaughtered bird was homogenized with 10 ml of extraction solvent (4 volume methanol 50% / 1 volume trichloroacetic acid 25%) using Polytron ® homogenizer (Kinematica, Switzerland). Homogenized sample was centrifuged (4000 g for 10 minutes at room temperature), pH was adjusted to 6.0, diluted with phosphate buffers and re-centrifuged. 1 ml supernatant aseptically separated in clean screw-capped tube, and stored at -20 °C until assaying. For assaying of colistin residues in eggs, 4 eggs (from group 5) were collected daily for 3 successive days after colistin oral administration, albumin of each egg were homogenized with equal amount of phosphate buffer solution (pH 6.0) using Polytron ® homogenizer. Sample was heated to 70 °C for 20 minutes to eliminate the inhibitory effect of egg albumin on the test microorganism, 5 ml supernatant fluids was collected and centrifuged at 4000 g for 10 minutes, 1 ml supernatant aseptically separated in screw-capped tube, and stored at -20 °C until assaying (Roudaut 1989).

Quantitative assay of colistin:

Colistin concentrations were assayed microbiologically with agar diffusion using nutrient meat-peptone agar media and *E. coli* ATCC 25922 as microorganism (Lin et al. 2005). Colistin sulphate standard solutions were prepared in plasma from untreated chickens as a reference. The detection limit of the assay was 0.05 µg/ml. The standard curve showed linear relationship over the range of 0.05 to 10 µg colistin sulphate/ml with correlation coefficient (*r*) of 0.991. Intra- and inter-assay coefficients of precision were 3.6% and 5.2%, respectively. Similarly, colistin was assayed in meat and eggs with sensitivity limit of 1 µg/gm and 2 µg/gm and percent of 76 and 68%, respectively. Intra- and inter-assay coefficients of precision were 5.8% and 7.3%, respectively.

Pharmacokinetical and statistical analysis:

Compartmental analysis of colistin in plasma was performed using a nonlinear regression analysis program WinNonlin (Version 1.1, Pharsight Inc., NC). Classical pharmacokinetic parameters were calculated using standard equations (Gibaldi and Perrier 1982).

For statistical analysis of pharmacokinetic parameters, data of broilers and layers were initially analyzed for homogeneity of variance using Bartlett's test (Sokal and Rohlf 1981). If there were no significant variances (homogeneity) at *P* = 0.05, Dunnett's multiple comparison procedure was used (Dunnett 1964). If variances were significant (heterogeneity), data were analyzed using the nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis test.

test. P value less than 0.05 was considered significant. The arithmetic mean and standard deviation were calculated for all parameters except for half-live value. Harmonic mean values and standard deviation were calculated according to Lacey (1985).

Results

1) Antimicrobial susceptibility study:

The in vitro antibiograms of isolated *E. coli* against 7 commonly used antimicrobial agents (Table 1 and Fig. 1) showed that, the majority of strains were highly susceptible to colistin sulphate (65.3%) and neomycin (54.8%). On the other hand, isolates were resistant to oxytetracycline and amoxicillin. Concerning other antimicrobial agents, *E. coli* isolates showed moderately to low susceptibility. Prevalence of resistance was: amoxicillin and oxytetracycline (100%), doxycycline, enrofloxacin (50%), neomycin, ciprofloxacin and colistin (< 5%).

2) Pharmacokinetics and residues study:

Colistin plasma concentrations following single intravenous administration in broilers and laying hens are shown in Figure 2, the concentrations decreased biexponentially suggesting two-compartmental open model. In four chickens out of five in each group, colistin could be detected in plasma and 4 hours in case of broilers and laying hens, respectively.

The pharmacokinetic parameters describing colistin disposition after i.v. administration are listed in Tables 2 and 3, respectively. Rapid distribution phase was achieved in broilers and laying hens ($t_{0.5 \alpha} = 0.40 \pm 0.09$ and 0.34 ± 0.09 minutes, respectively) after i.v. administration of colistin. Elimination half-lives ($t_{0.5 \beta}$) in broilers and laying hens were 1.82 ± 0.29 and 2.61 ± 0.42 hours, respectively. The state distribution volumes (V_{ss}) were 0.88 ± 0.16 and 0.78 ± 0.12 L/kg, while body clearances (Cl_{tot}) were 0.21 ± 0.04 and 0.18 ± 0.03 L/h.kg in broilers and laying hens, respectively. Pharmacokinetic analysis of colistin after i.v. administration showed no significant difference ($P \leq 0.05$) between broilers and laying hens.

After single oral administration of colistin sulphate (5 mg/kg b.w.) in broilers and laying hens, colistin plasma concentrations versus time were best described by a single-compartment open model with a first order absorption (Fig. 3). Colistin could be detected in broiler plasma longer than in laying hen plasma (6 and 4 hours, respectively). In 2 laying hens out of 5, colistin was detectable up to 4 hours. In contrast, in one broiler chicken, colistin could be detected in plasma up to 7 hours.

After oral administration of colistin sulphate in broilers and laying hens, plasma concentrations (C_{max}) of 0.66 ± 0.12 and 0.50 ± 0.09 $\mu\text{g/ml}$, were achieved at a time of maximum concentrations (T_{max}) of 1.18 ± 0.07 and 0.86 ± 0.07 hours, respectively. T_{max} was significantly ($P \leq 0.05$) shorter in laying hens than in broilers. Except for T_{max} , no significant difference was found between broilers and laying hens in colistin pharmacokinetics after oral administration. Interestingly, colistin showed a bioavailability of 11.48 and 10.29% after oral administration in broilers and laying hens, respectively.

Concerning colistin residues in chicken's muscles and eggs after oral administration, all samples were free from any detectable concentrations of colistin.

Discussion

1) Antimicrobial susceptibility study:

In this study, the majority of *E. coli* isolates (65.3%) were highly susceptible resistance (2.4%) to colistin, similar results were recorded by Gyurov (1985) studied the susceptibility of 223 strains of *Escherichia coli* (isolated from organs and bone marrow of birds died of colisepticaemia) to therapeutic age author found that, the highest number of strains (96.06%) were sensitive to colistin. In other study, Orden et al. (2000) found the most of *E. coli* strains isolated from diarrhoeic calves were highly susceptible (99–100 %) to polymyxin. In more recent study, Kilonzo-Nthenge et al. (2008) who studied the incidence of antibiotic resistance in microorganisms isolated from chickens and guinea fowl, stated that, *E. coli* were sensitive to colistin. Although colistin is widely used for treatment of colibacillosis in chickens as one of the first choice antibiotics, resistance against colistin is commonly acquired (Catchpole et al. 1997).

Also, the antibiograms showed that, all of the *E. coli* isolates were resistant to oxytetracycline and amoxicillin. Concerning oxytetracycline, Cloud et al. (1985), Gyurov (1985), and Kilonzo-Nthenge et al. (2008) reported that, *E. coli* isolates resistant to oxytetracycline. Inconsistent with our results, Gyurov (1985) and Ghamdi et al. (1999) found most of *E. coli* isolates were sensitive to amoxicillin. In a more recent study, Diarrassouba et al. (2007) reported that, 55 out of 74 isolates were resistant to amoxicillin. Moreover, Oteo et al. (2008) recorded in a study on amoxicillin-clavulanic acid resistance in *E. coli* isolated from human blood in Sidi Barrani, Egypt, oxytetracycline and amoxicillin had been extensively used in poultry farming for many years, which may explain the development of resistance against these antibiotics in our study. These results suggest that universal susceptibility to amoxicillin should not be assumed, particularly for *E. coli*.

Regarding to the other tested antimicrobials, antibiogram results are in agreement with most other researchers. The presented antibiogram pattern can be used for adequate selection of antimicrobial agents for treatment of colibacillosis in chickens as a sensitivity test can't be done.

2) Pharmacokinetics and residues study:

Following single intravenous administration of colistin in a dose of 1mg/kg, rapid distribution was achieved in broilers and laying hens ($t_{0.5 \alpha} = 0.40 \pm 0.03$ and 0.34 ± 0.03 hour, respectively), similar short distribution half-life (0.3 hours) was recorded in pig by Mengelers et al. (1997). Elimination half-lives ($t_{0.5 \beta}$) showed no significant difference ($P \leq 0.05$) between broilers and laying hens (1.82 ± 0.29 and 1.78 ± 0.42 hours, respectively). Compared with pigs and calves, colistin half-life in chickens was similar to that reported in pigs (2.2 hours) and about half of that recorded in calves (4.5 hours) by Mengelers et al. (1997) and Ziv et al. (1982), respectively. Matching pharmacokinetic parameters with those obtained in calves by Ziv et al. (1982), colistin to total body clearance (Cl_{tot}) in chicken was similar to that registered in calves (0.20 L/kg/h). Meanwhile, volume of distribution (V_{ss}) of colistin in chicken (0.88 and 0.78 L/kg in broilers and layers, respectively) was about two thirds of that listed in calves (1.32 L/kg) and about four fifths of that reported in pigs (1.02 L/kg). Volume of distribution less than 0.7 L/kg could be due to wide colistin distribution into total body fluids, high plasma protein binding, or both. As residual study revealed no detectable level of colistin in chicken muscles, it could be suggested that, the high volume of distribution of colistin in chicken is due to high drug distribution in chicken body fluids.

After oral administration of colistin in broilers and laying hens, maximum concentrations (C_{max}) of 0.66 ± 0.12 and 0.50 ± 0.09 µg/ml, were achieved a 1.18 ± 0.07 and 0.86 ± 0.05 hours, respectively. T_{max} was significantly (P < 0.05) shorter in laying hens than in broiler; comparable differences in pharmacokinetics between broilers and layers were recorded by other investigators and attributed to the laying process (Bintvihok et al. 2002; and Pirard & De Pauw, 2006). Interestingly, colistin showed oral bioavailability of 11.48 and 10.29% after oral administration in broilers and laying hens, respectively. That oral absorption of colistin in broilers and laying hens indicates limited oral absorption of colistin in chicken, still colistin oral absorption in chicken is much higher than that in mammals; which showed no virtual oral absorption of colistin after oral administration (Escoula et al. 1981; and Menon et al. 1997). Compared with mammals, similar relatively high oral drug absorption in chicken was reported by other researchers who estimated apramycin oral bioavailability in chickens and calves (Shikha, 1987; Afifi and Ramadan, 1997). Concerning colistin residues in muscles and eggs, all chicken samples were found to have no detectable concentrations of colistin. These data are in agreement with those reported by Roudaut (1989) who found no detectable colistin residue in eggs after oral administration of 90,000 IU colistin/kg b.w. for 5 days.

Conclusion: *Although colistin sulphate was used in Egypt and many other countries for several decades for treatment of Colibacillosis and Salmonellosis in poultry farms, most of E. coli isolates were either highly or moderately susceptible to colistin, which indicated low resistance of E. coli against colistin. On the other hand, while colistin sulphate is an effective and safe drug for oral and topical use in poultry, veterinarians must draw attention not to exceed the recommended therapeutic doses in chickens, as about 10% of the administered oral dose could be absorbed. That the systemic use of colistin was associated with considerable toxicity, including nephrotoxicity and neurotoxicity, including neuromuscular blockade (Walkden et al. 2008).*

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Table 1 Comparative efficacy of 7 antimicrobials against *Escherichia coli* isolated from chicken showing lesions of avian colibacillosis (n=124)

Antibiotic	Disk potency	Degree of susceptibility				R
		Number (%)				
		+++	++	+		
Oxytetracycline (OT 30)	30 µg	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	124 (100)	
Doxycycline (Do 30)	30 µg	32 (25.8)	16 (12.9)	16 (12.9)	60 (48.3)	
Amoxicillin (AML 10)	10 µg	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	124 (100)	
Neomycin (N 30)	30 µg	68 (54.8)	48 (38.7)	4 (3.2)	4 (3.2)	
Colistin Sulphate (CT 25)	25 µg	81 (65.3)	28 (22.6)	12 (9.7)	3 (2.4)	
Enrofloxacin (ENR 5)	5 µg	12 (9.7)	32 (25.8)	20 (16.1)	60 (48.3)	
Ciprofloxacin (CIP 5)	5 µg	44 (35.5)	56 (45.2)	20 (16.1)	4 (3.2)	

+++ = high susceptible, ++ = moderate susceptible, + = low susceptible, R = resistant.

Table 2 Pharmacokinetic parameters of colistin following single intrav administration of 1mg colistin sulphate/kg body weight in broilers and hens.

Parameter	Unit	Mean \pm SE	
		Broiler chickens	Laying hens
A	$\mu\text{g/ml}$	1.33 \pm 0.43	2.64 \pm 0.53
α	h^{-1}	2.03 \pm 0.41	2.14 \pm 0.21
$t_{0.5}(\alpha)$	h	0.40 \pm 0.09	0.34 \pm 0.03
B	$\mu\text{g/ml}$	0.82 \pm 0.22	0.47 \pm 0.08
β	h^{-1}	0.38 \pm 0.05	0.34 \pm 0.04
$t_{0.5}(\beta)$	h	1.82 \pm 0.29	2.61 \pm 0.42
K12	h^{-1}	0.58 \pm 0.20	0.70 \pm 0.11
K21	h^{-1}	1.09 \pm 0.27	0.64 \pm 0.09
Kel	h^{-1}	0.74 \pm 0.08	1.15 \pm 0.12
Cl tot	L/h.kg	0.21 \pm 0.04	0.18 \pm 0.03
MRT	h	2.20 \pm 0.17	1.99 \pm 0.37
Vss	L/kg	0.88 \pm 0.16	0.78 \pm 0.12
AUC	$\mu\text{g/ml.h}$	2.93 \pm 0.66	2.75 \pm 0.57
AUMC	$(\mu\text{g/ml})\text{h}^2$	6.57 \pm 1.60	6.07 \pm 2.37

A & B = zero-time plasma drug concentration intercepts of biphasic dispersion curve; α & β = distribution and elimination rate constants respectively; $t_{0.5}(\alpha)$ & $t_{0.5}(\beta)$ = distribution and elimination half-lives respectively; K12 & K21 = diffusion rate constant from the central compartment to the peripheral compartment and vice versa; Cl tot = total body clearance; MRT = residence time of drug molecules in chicken body; Vdss = volume of distribution at steady state; AUC & AUMC = area under the drug plasma concentration curve and area under the moment curve, respectively

Table 3 Pharmacokinetic parameters of colistin after single oral administration of 5 mg colistin sulphate/kg body weight in broilers and laying hens. * indicates significant difference at $P \leq 0.05$.

Parameter	Unit	Mean \pm SE	
		Broiler chickens	Laying hens
Cmax	$\mu\text{g/ml}$	0.66 ± 0.12	0.50 ± 0.09
Tmax	h	1.18 ± 0.07	$0.86 \pm 0.05^*$
t0.5 (ab)	h	0.60 ± 0.08	0.41 ± 0.10
t0.5 (β)	h	1.19 ± 0.13	1.21 ± 0.25
Kab	h^{-1}	1.25 ± 0.17	2.18 ± 0.46
Kel	h^{-1}	0.58 ± 0.08	0.65 ± 0.15
AUC	$\mu\text{g/ml/h}$	1.74 ± 0.24	1.39 ± 0.26
Foral	(%)	11.48 ± 3.23	10.29 ± 3.28

Cmax = maximum drug concentration; Tmax = time at which was achieved; t0.5 (ab) & t 0.5(β)= absorption and elimination half-lives respectively; Kab & kel = absorption and elimination rate constants, respectively; AUC = area under the drug plasma concentration-time curve; Foral = oral bioavailability.

Fig. 1 Comparative efficacy of 8 antimicrobials against *Escherichia coli* from chicken showing lesions of avian colibacillosis (n=124).

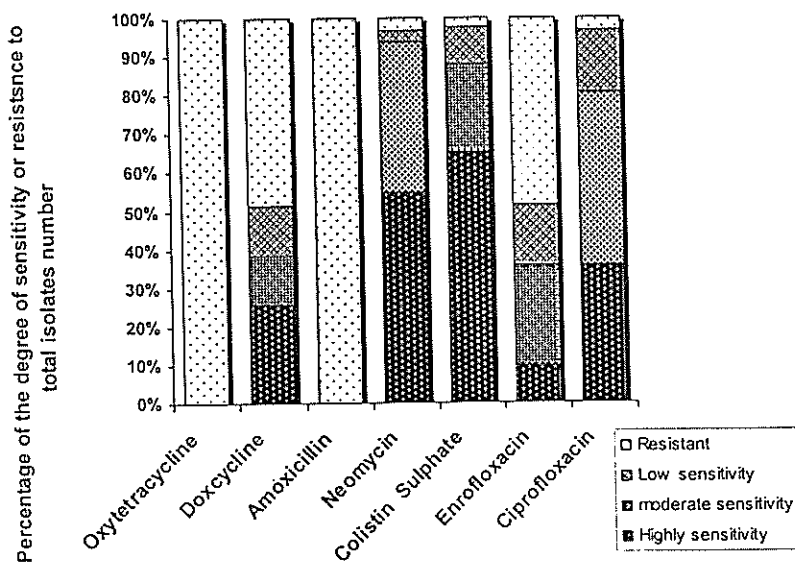
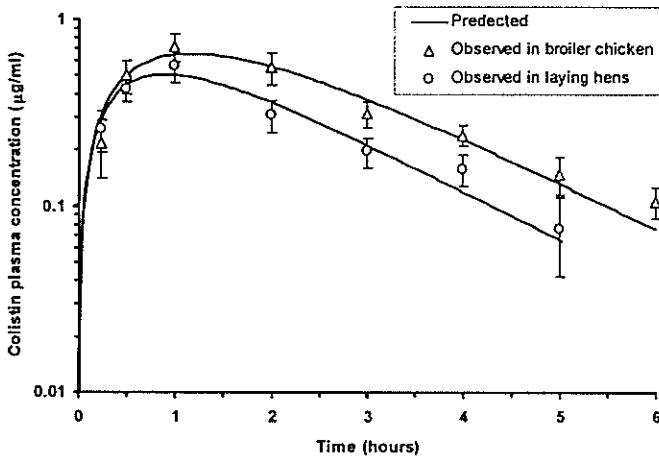
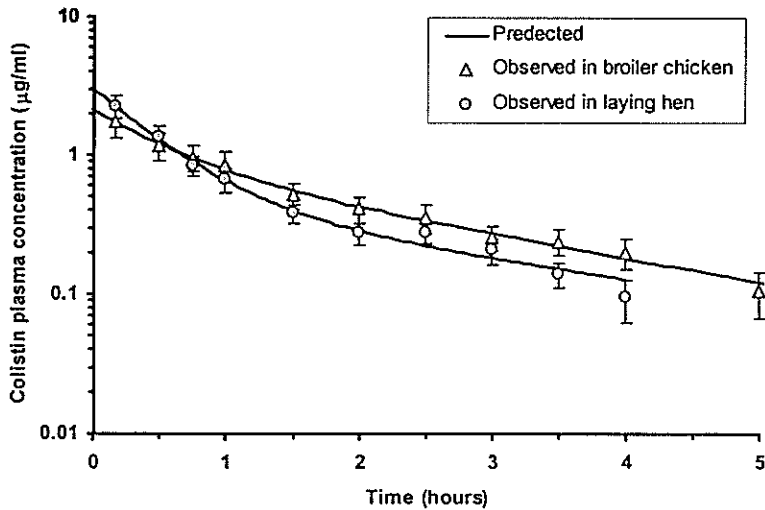


Fig. 2 Semilogarithmic plot of colistin concentrations in plasma after single intravenous administration of 1mg colistin sulphate/kg body weight in broiler and laying hens..



fig

Fig.3 Semilogarithmic plot of colistin concentrations in plasma following oral administration of 5 mg colistin sulphate/kg body weight in broilers and laying hens.

حساسية والحركة الدوائية والبقايا الدوائية لدواء الكولستين في دجاج اللحم البياض

خليل ١ و داليا حامد منصور. ٢
لوجي ١- قسم أمراض الدواجن ٢ ، كلية الطب البيطري، جامعة قناة السويس.

جميع عدد ١٢٤ عينة من دجاج نافق نتيجة عدوي الميكروب القولوني (إشيرشيا كولاي) في سماعيلية. و عند إختبار حساسية الميكروب القولوني المعزول من الدجاج لسبعة مضادات رت النتائج أن ٦٥,٣% من العينات كانت شديدة الحساسية للكولستين و أن ٥٤,٨% من ت شديدة الحساسية نيومايسين، في حين أن كل العينات كانت مقاومة للاوكسيتراسيكلين و لين.

كولستين وريديا (بجرعة ١ مليجرام لكل كجم من وزن الجسم) أو إعطاه عن طريق الفم مليجرام لكل كجم من وزن الجسم)، إستمر وجود الكولستين في بلازما دجاج اللحم لفترة جوده في بلازما الدجاج البياض. فعند حقن الكولستين وريديا، كانت فترة عمر النصف في دجاج اللحم ١,٨٢ ساعة و في الدجاج البياض ٢,٦١ ساعة. كما قدرت المساحة تحت المنحنى (AUC) بـ ٢,٩٣ و ٢,٧٥ ميكروجرام لكل ميلتر في الساعة في كل من البياض على التوالي.

لكولستين عن طريق الفم، كانت فترة عمر النصف لمرحلتي الامتصاص و الإخراج (t_{0.5} ab) ٠,٦ و ١,١٩ ساعة في دجاج اللحم و ٠,٤١ و ١,٢١ ساعة في الدجاج البياض على سجلت الدراسة معدل إتاحة حيوية فمية تراوحت من ١١,٤٨% (في دجاج اللحم) إلى في الدجاج البياض). في حين لم يتم قياس أي بقايا دوائية في عضلات أو بيض الدجاج بعد تين عن طريق الفم في جرعة ٥ مليجرام لكل كجم من وزن الجسم.