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(54) **DIAGNOSIS, PREVENTION AND
TREATMENT OF DISORDERS
CHARACTERIZED BY UNDESIRABLE CELL
PROLIFERATION**

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(60) Continuation-in-part of application No. 13/073,838, filed on Mar. 28, 2011, which is a continuation-in-part of application No. 12/770,487, filed on Apr. 29, 2010, now Pat. No. 7,914,781, which is a division of application No. 12/033,193, filed on Feb. 19, 2008, now Pat. No. 7,732,410, which is a continuation-in-part of application No. 10/952,003, filed on Sep. 28, 2004, now Pat. No. 7,335,638, which is a continuation-in-part of application No. PCT/BR03/00049, filed on Mar. 28, 2003.

(57) **ABSTRACT**

The present invention relates to compositions and methods for the reduction of atherosclerotic plaques and the decrease in the level of total serum cholesterol, triglycerides, serum LDL cholesterol, and serum HDL cholesterol. The present invention also relates to methods for the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of atherosclerosis and mycoplasma associated diseases, cardiotoxicity related to cancer treatment, and Chagas disease related cardiomyopathies.

Figure 1

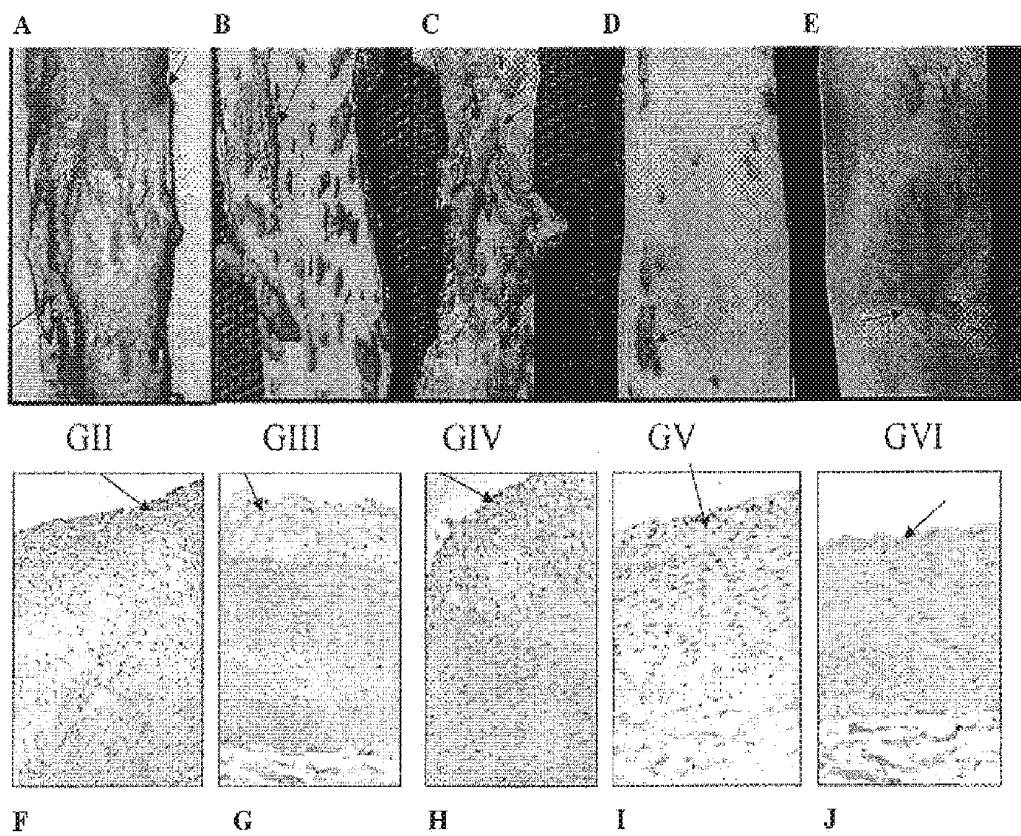


FIGURE 2
SEQ. ID. NO. 3

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acgtcgcatg gtgatgcgag agactgggat attctgcttg ccgttggtga ggtcacgaag 480
tcactgcgg gcgcaagat aactgcgagt atcaaatggg ggagccccgt gtcactgaag 540
gaattttttc cggcgaaat ggaaggaatg cacacaaaatc aattctctgg cggtgcaggt 600
gtgccattg tggcgtccaa cggaactct gtgtaccctg tgcaggttac gaacaaaaag 660
aagcaagttt tttccaagat cttctactcg gaagacgagg gcaagacgtg gaagttggg 720
gagggtagga gtgatttgg ctgctgaa cctgtggccc ttgagtggga ggggagctc 780
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gaaagaagta cgcccGGATC CGGCTGCTAA 2010

FIGURE 3
SEQ. ID. NO. 4

Met	Gly	Ser	Ser	His	His	His	His	His	Ser	Ser	Gly	Leu	Val	Pro	Arg	Gly	Ser	His
1				5				10					15					20
Met	Ala	Pro	Gly	Ser	Arg	Val	Glu	Leu	Phe	Lys	Arg	Gln	Ser	Ser	Lys	Val	Pro	Phe
				25				30					35					40
Glu	Lys	Gly	Gly	Lys	Thr	Glu	Arg	Val	Val	His	Ser	Phe	Arg	Leu	Pro	Ala	Leu	Val
				45				50					55					60
Asn	Val	Asp	Gly	Val	Met	Ala	Ile	Ala	Asp	Ala	Arg	Tyr	Glu	Thr	Ser	Asn	Asp	Asn
				65				70					75					80
Ser	Leu	Ile	Asp	Thr	Val	Ala	Lys	Tyr	Val	Asp	Asp	Gly	Glu	Thr	Trp	Glu	Thr	Gln
				85				90					95					100
Ile	Ala	Ile	Lys	Asn	Arg	Ala	Ser	Ser	Val	Ser	Arg	Val	Val	Asp	Pro	Thr	Val	Ile
				105				110					115					120
Val	Lys	Gly	Asn	Lys	Tyr	Val	Leu	Val	Gly	Ser	Tyr	Asn	Ser	Ser	Arg	Ser	Tyr	Trp
				125				130					135					140
Thr	Ser	His	Gly	Asp	Ala	Arg	Asp	Trp	Ile	Leu	Leu	Ala	Val	Gly	Glu	Val	Thr	Lys
				145				150					155					160
Ser	Thr	Ala	Gly	Gly	Lys	Ile	Thr	Ala	Ile	Lys	Trp	Gly	Ser	Pro	Val	Ser	Leu	Lys
				165				170					175					180
Glu	Phe	Phe	Pro	Ala	Glu	Met	Glu	Gly	Met	His	Thr	Asn	Phe	Leu	Gly	Gly	Ala	Gly
				185				190					195					200
Val	Ala	Ile	Val	Ala	Ser	Asn	Gly	Asn	Val	Val	Tyr	Pro	Gln	Val	Thr	Asn	Lys	Lys
				205				210					215					220
Lys	Gln	Val	Phe	Ser	Lys	Ile	Phe	Tyr	Glu	Asp	Glu	Gly	Lys	Thr	Trp	Lys	Phe	Gly
				225				230					235					240
Glu	Gly	Arg	Ser	Asp	Phe	Gly	Cys	Ser	Glu	Pro	Val	Ala	Glu	Trp	Glu	Gly	Lys	Leu
				245				250					255					260
Ile	Ile	Asn	Thr	Arg	Val	Asp	Tyr	Arg	Arg	Leu	Val	Tyr	Glu	Ser	Ser	Asp	Met	Gly
				265				270					275					280
Asn	Ser	Trp	Val	Glu	Ala	Val	Gly	Thr	Leu	Ser	Arg	Val	Trp	Pro	Ser	Pro	Lys	Ser

Asn	Gln	Pro	Gly	Ser	285	Gln	Ser	Phe	Thr	Ala	Val	Thr	Ile	Glu	295	Gly	Met	Arg	Val	300
Leu	Phe	Thr	His	Pro	305	Leu	Asn	Phe	Lys	Gly	Thr	Leu	Arg	Asp	315	Arg	Leu	Asn	Leu	320
Leu	Thr	Asp	Asn	Gln	325	Arg	Ile	Tyr	Asn	Val	Gln	Val	Ser	Ile	335	Gly	Asp	Glu	Asn	340
Ala	Tyr	Ser	Ser	Val	345	Leu	Tyr	Lys	Asp	Lys	Leu	Tyr	Cys	Leu	355	His	Glu	Ile	Asn	360
Asn	Glu	Val	Tyr	Ser	365	Leu	Val	Phe	Ala	Arg	Val	Gly	Glu	Leu	375	Arg	Ile	Lys	Ser	380
Val	Leu	Gln	Ser	Trp	385	Lys	Asn	Trp	Asp	His	Leu	Ser	Ser	Ile	395	Cys	Thr	Pro	Ala	400
Pro	Ala	Ala	Ser	Ser	405	Ser	Glu	Arg	Gly	Cys	Pro	Ala	Val	Thr	415	Thr	Val	Gly	Leu	420
Gly	Phe	Leu	Ser	His	425	Ser	Ala	Thr	Lys	Glu	Trp	Glu	Asp	Ala	435	Tyr	Arg	Cys	Val	440
Ala	Ser	Thr	Ala	Asn	445	Ala	Glu	Arg	Val	Pro	Asn	Gly	Leu	Lys	455	Phe	Ala	Val	Gly	460
Gly	Ala	Leu	Trp	Pro	465	Val	Ser	Gln	Gln	Gln	Asn	Gln	Arg	Tyr	475	His	Phe	Ala	Asn	480
Ala	Phe	Thr	Leu	Val	485	Ala	Ser	Val	Thr	Ile	His	Glu	Pro	Ser	495	Val	Ala	Ser	Pro	500
Leu	Gly	Ala	Ser	Leu	505	Asp	Ser	Ser	Gly	510	Lys	Leu	Leu	Gly	515	Leu	Ser	Tyr	Asp	520
Lys	His	Gln	Trp	Gln	525	Pro	Ile	Tyr	Gly	530	Thr	Val	Thr	Pro	535	Thr	Gly	Ser	Trp	540
Met	Gly	Lys	Arg	Tyr	545	His	Val	Val	Leu	550	Met	Ala	Lys	Ile	555	Gly	Ser	Val	Tyr	560
Asp	Gly	Glu	Pro	Leu	565	Glu	Gly	Ser	Gly	570	Thr	Val	Pro	Asp	575	Gly	Arg	Thr	Pro	580
Ile	Ser	His	Phe	Tyr	605	Val	Gly	Gly	Tyr	610	Arg	Ser	Asp	Met	615	Thr	Ile	Ser	His	620

Figure 4

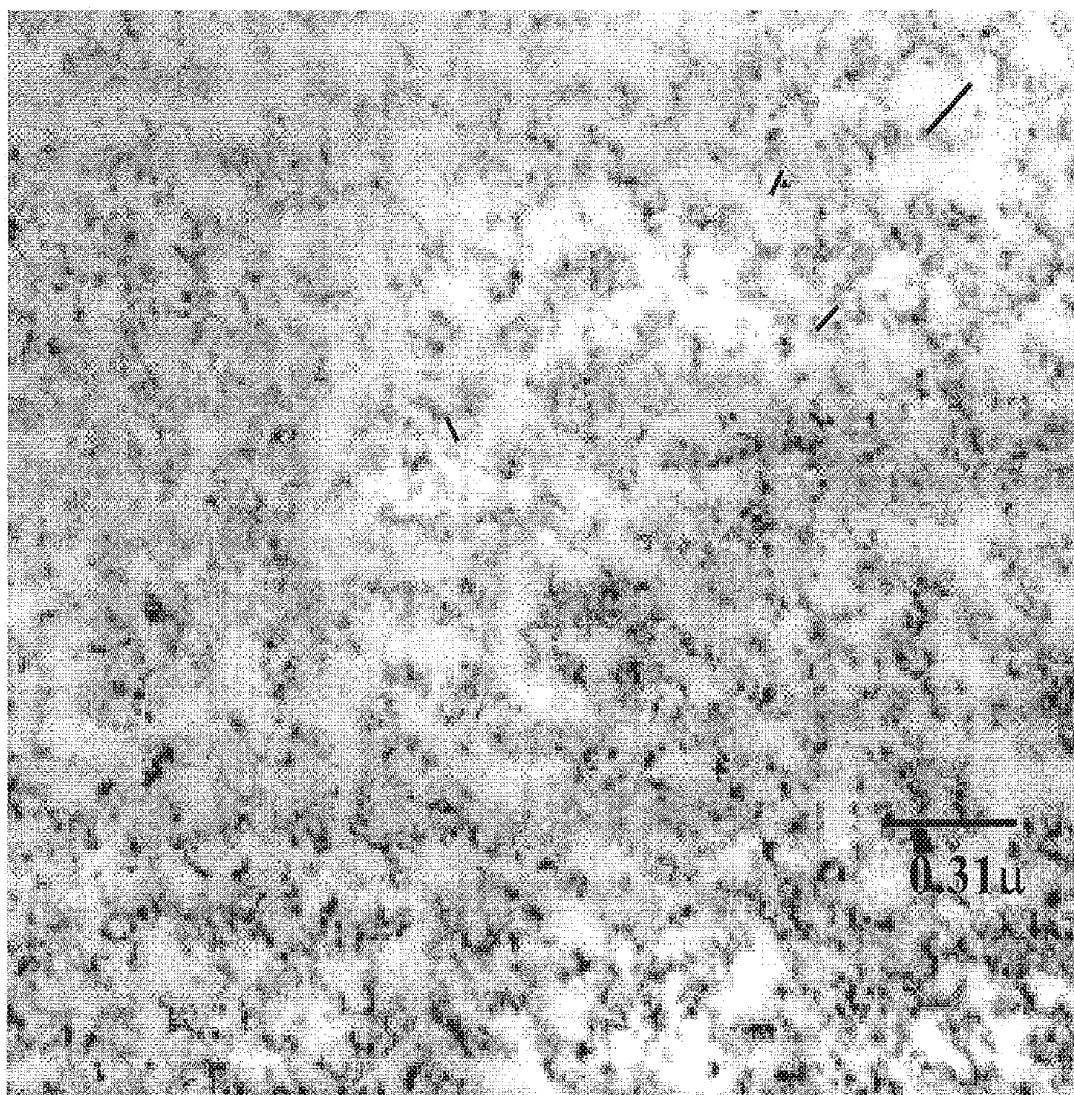


Figure 5

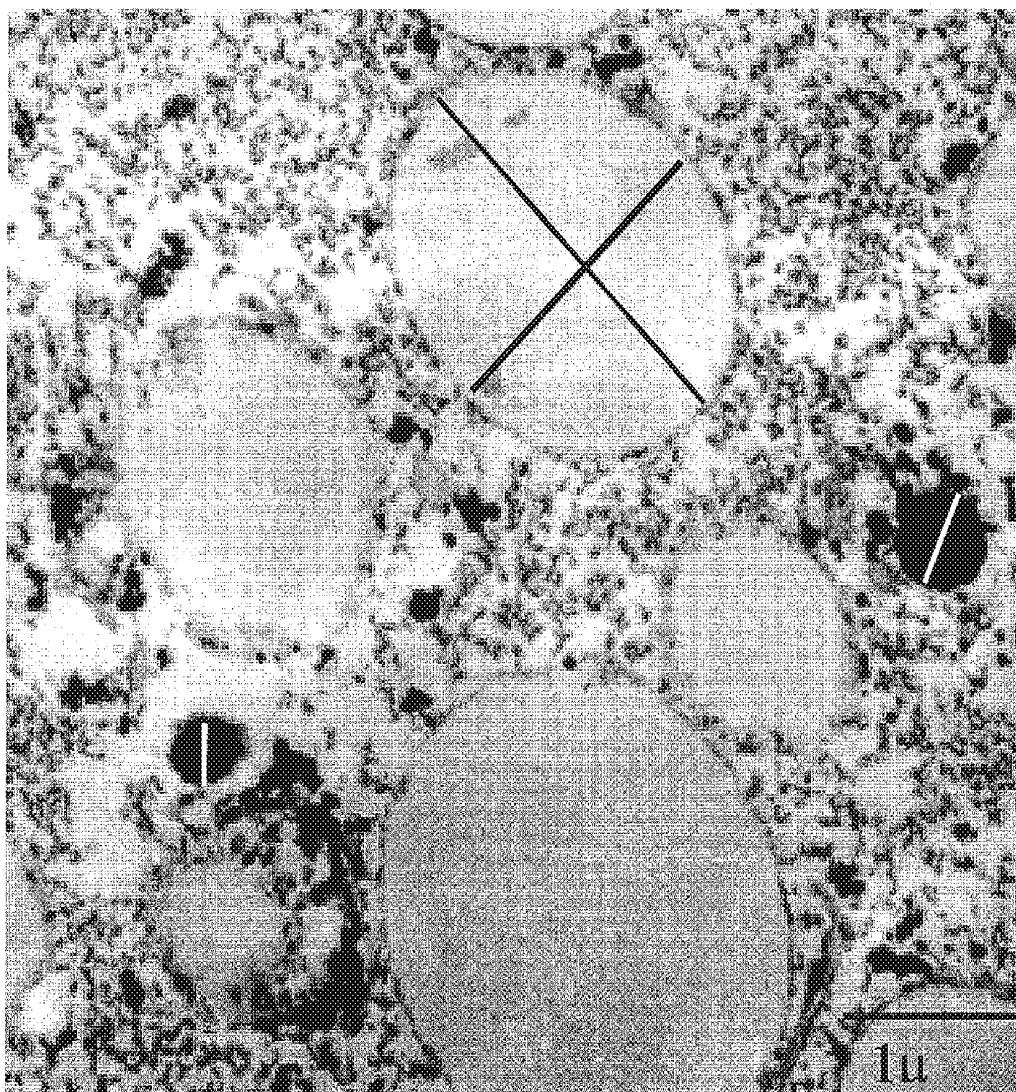


Figure 6

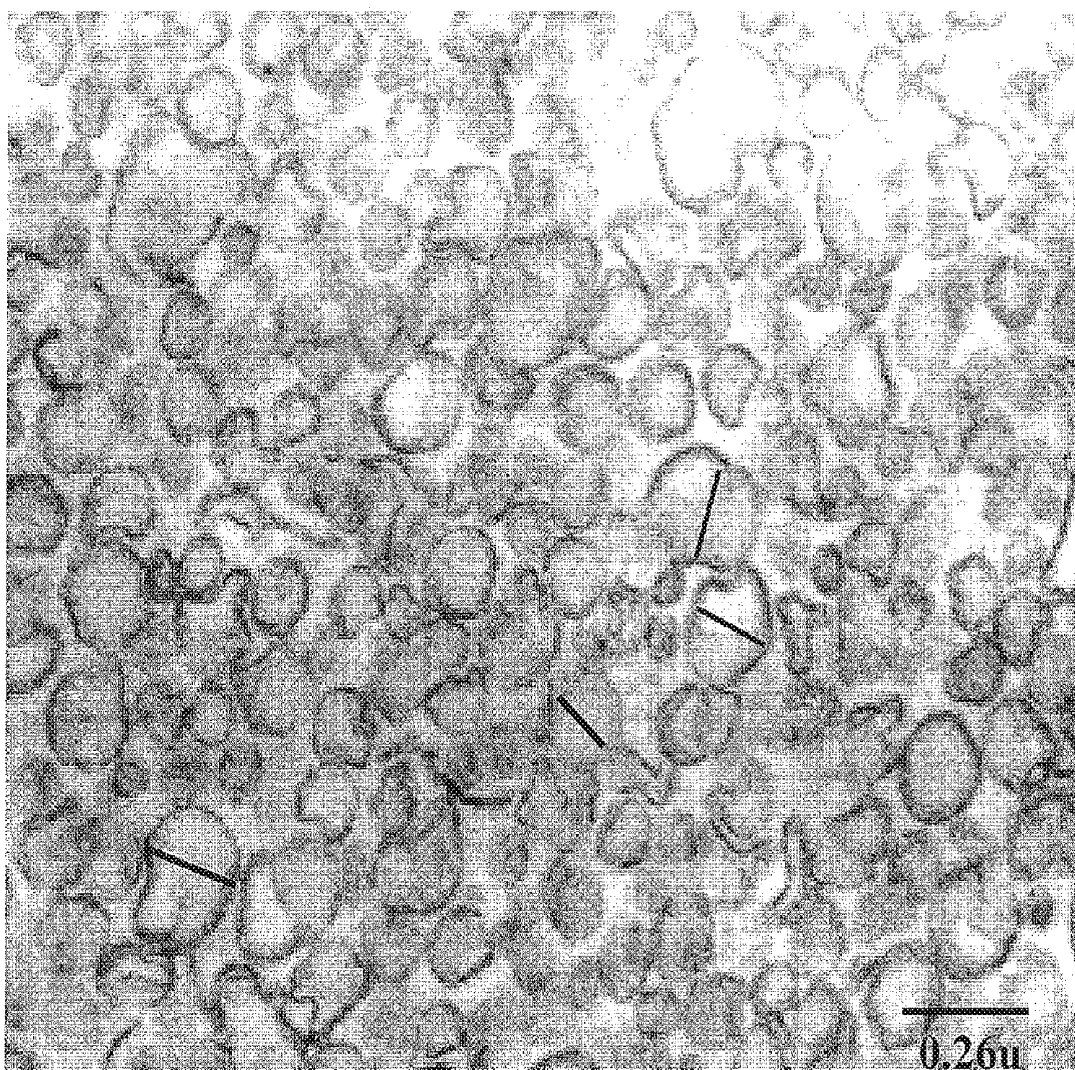


Figure 7



Figure 8

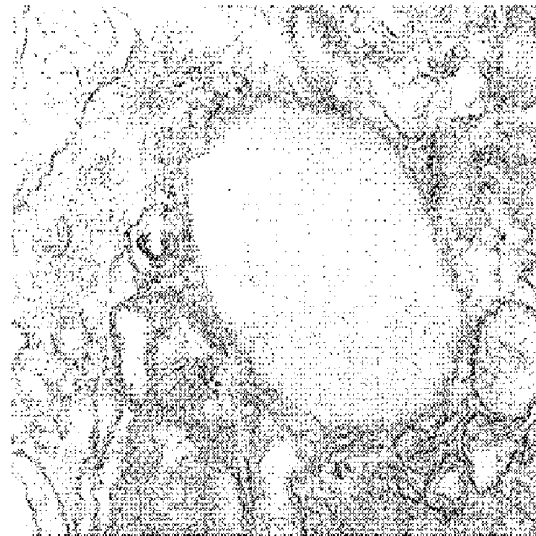


Figure 9

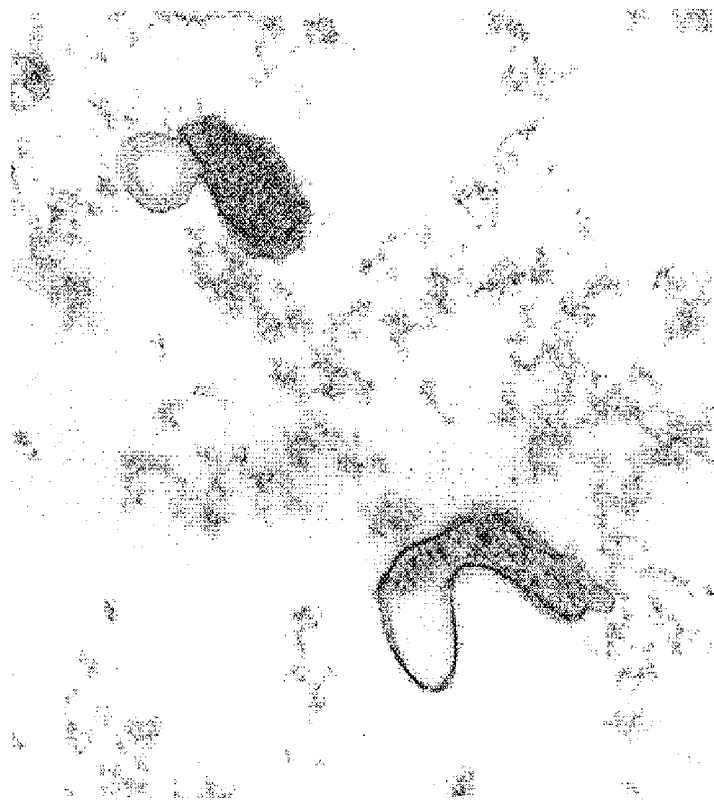


Figure 10

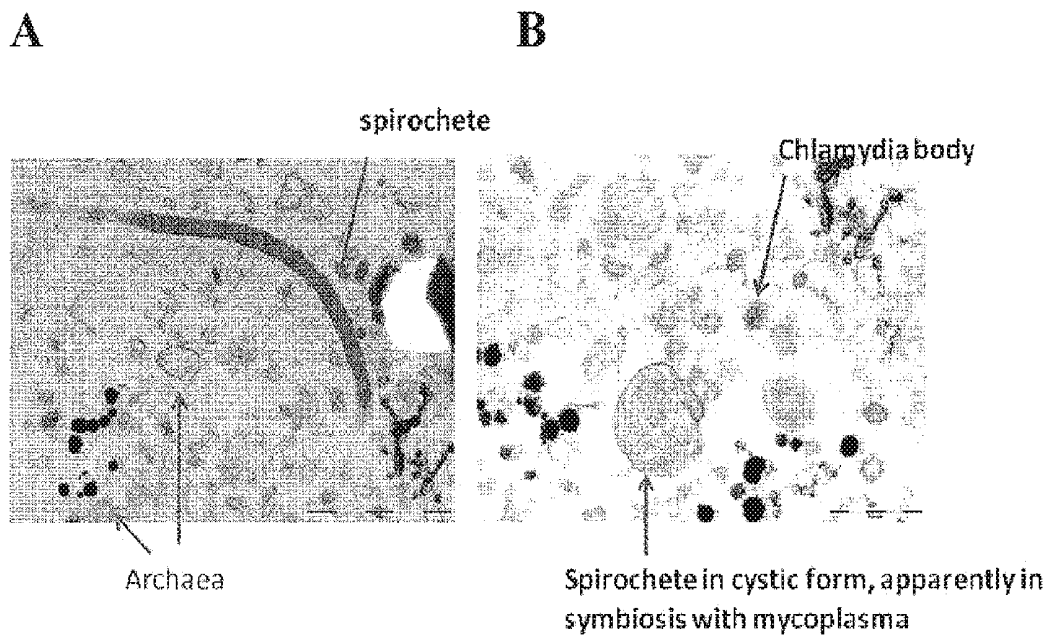


Figure 11

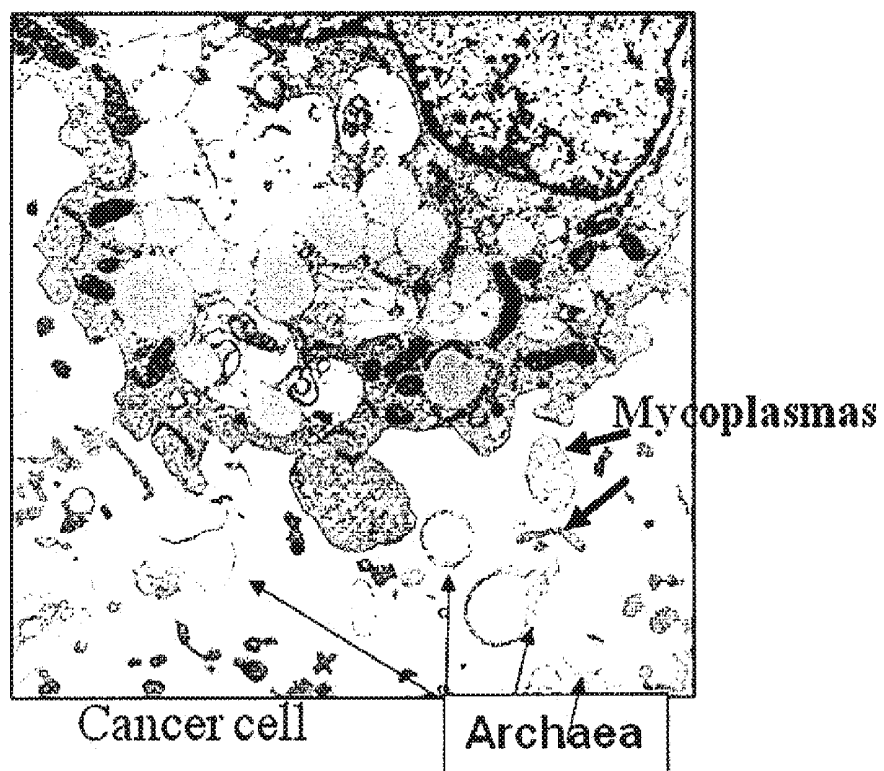


Figure 12

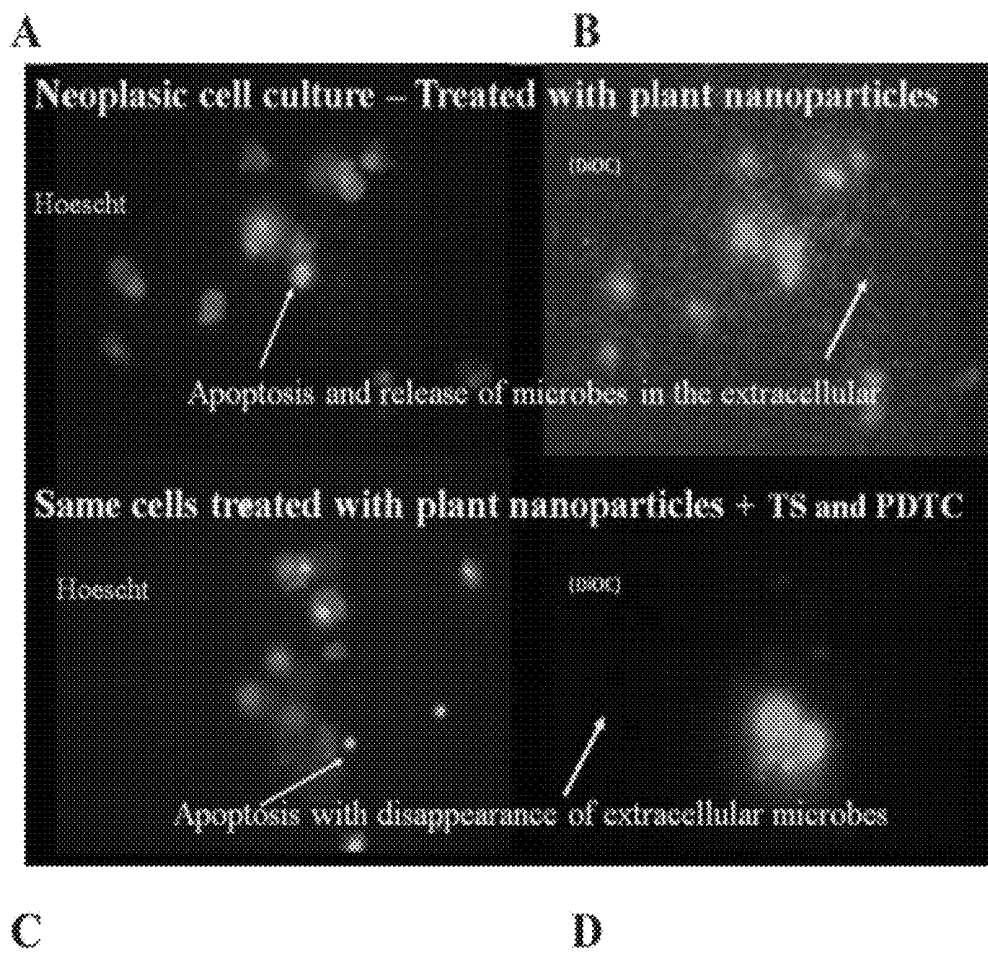
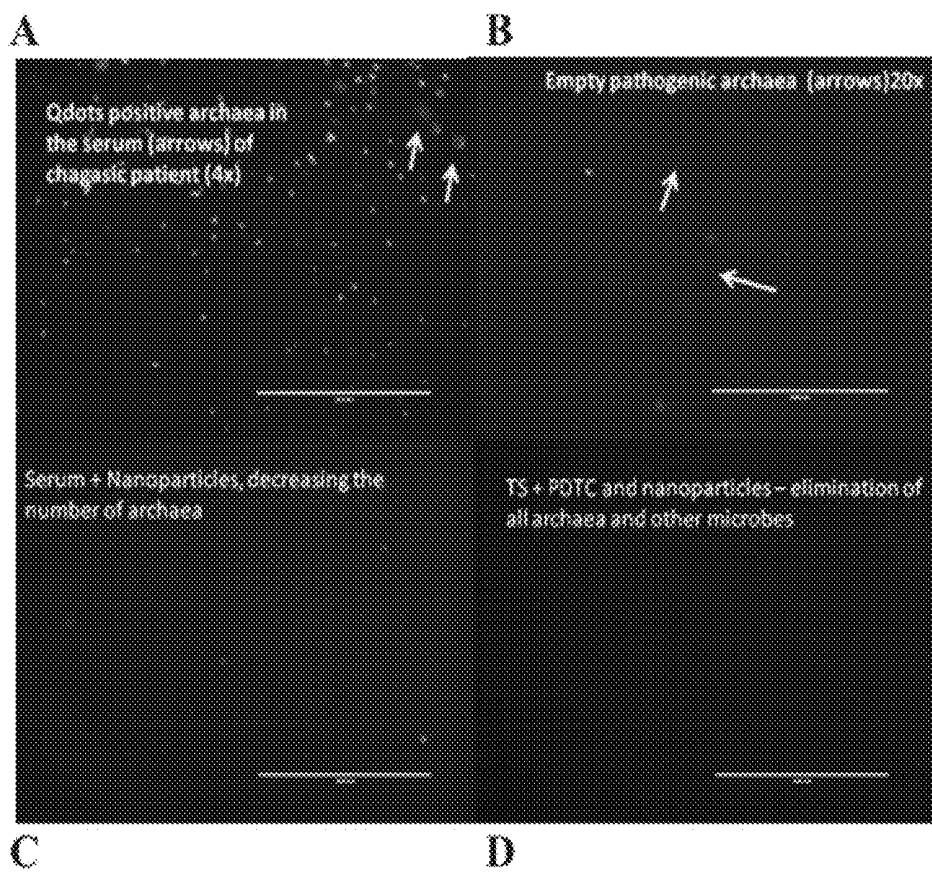


Figure 13



**DIAGNOSIS, PREVENTION AND
TREATMENT OF DISORDERS
CHARACTERIZED BY UNDESIRABLE CELL
PROLIFERATION**

PRIORITY CLAIM

[0001] This application is a continuation in part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/073,838, filed Mar. 28, 2011, which is a continuation in part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 12/770,487, filed Apr. 29, 2010, and issued as U.S. Pat. No. 7,914,781 on Mar. 29, 2011, which is a divisional of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 12/033,193, filed Feb. 19, 2008, and issued as U.S. Pat. No. 7,732,410 on Jun. 8, 2010, which is a continuation in part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/952,003, filed Sep. 28, 2004, and issued as U.S. Pat. No. 7,335,638 on Feb. 26, 2008, which is a continuation in part of International Patent Application No. PCT/BRO3/0049, filed Mar. 28, 2003 and published in English on Oct. 9, 2003 as WO 03/082324, and further claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/890,977, filed Feb. 21, 2007. This application also claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 61/471,653, filed Apr. 4, 2011, and to Brazilian Application No. INPI-RJ 020100110632, filed Nov. 26, 2010. This application claims priority to all the applications and patents recited in this paragraph and all of the applications and patents recited in this paragraph are incorporated by reference in their entireties herein.

INTRODUCTION

[0002] The present invention relates to compositions and methods for the reduction of atherosclerotic plaques and the decrease in the level of total serum cholesterol, triglycerides, serum LDL cholesterol, and/or serum HDL cholesterol. The present invention also relates to methods for the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of disorders characterized by undesirable cell proliferation, such as atherosclerosis and mycoplasma associated diseases. The present invention also relates to methods for the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of heart disease, for example, cardiomyopathies resulting from Chagas disease or from the treatment of cancer.

BACKGROUND

[0003] Current treatment for atherosclerosis involves lipid-lowering medications and drugs that affect lipid metabolism, including statins, bile acid absorption inhibitors, cholesterol absorption inhibitors, fibrates and antioxidants such as probucol, among others. (Zipes et al. Eds., 2005, Braunwald's Heart Disease, Elsevier Saunders, Philadelphia). These treatment regimens are based, at least in part, on the theory that oxidized lipoproteins are the main causative factor of atherosclerosis. However, the exact mechanism by which cholesterol oxidizes is still not fully understood.

[0004] Archaea are the most ancient microorganisms existing in nature, but have been characterized only recently. See, Woese et al., Proc Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A. 74: 5088-5090 (1977). They inhabit extreme environments and are constituted by lipid monolayer membranes. Rich alkaline atmosphere with sodium ions and metals prevents proliferation of other bacteria, but is favorable to archaea's growth. Archaea have been isolated from alkaline waters from the Dead Sea, the Great Salt Lake and Yellowstone National Park. They have a small size, can—just barely—be viewed with an optical microscope, and observation of structural details requires

electron microscopy. See, Howland et al., The surprising archaea. Discovering another domain of life, Oxford University Press (New York, 2000). Some are considered hyperthermophilic as they survive in very high temperatures.

[0005] Another unusual characteristic of some archaea is that they appear to use metal as an energy source. See, Amend et al., F.E.M.S. Microbiol. Rev. 25: 175-243 (2001). It is considered that archaea usually need an anaerobic or nearly anaerobic environments to carry out oxidation-reduction reactions with participation of different chemical compounds, including metals.

[0006] Recently, a new kind of extremely small archaea, which is dependent on bigger archaea, was described and named nanoarchaea. See, Huber J et al., Nature 417: 63-67 (2002). With the exception of archaea that reside in the mammalian intestine and produce methane gases, there is no report of archaea existing within plants or animals. See, Florin T H J et al., Am. J. Gastroenterol. 95: 2872-2879 (2000).

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] The present invention relates to compositions and methods for the reduction of atherosclerotic plaques. Without being limited by theory, it is based on the hypothesis that the presence of mycoplasma and one or more other microorganism promotes atheroma formation. The compositions and methods of the invention may also be used to decrease the level of one or more of total serum cholesterol, triglycerides, serum LDL cholesterol, and/or serum HDL cholesterol. In one non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the composition comprises an agent that removes sialic acid residues, a metal chelator, and optionally one or more purified plant extracts.

[0008] In certain embodiments of the invention, the composition comprises a protein capable of removing sialic acid residues, such as a neuraminidase enzyme and/or a trans-sialidase enzyme; a metal chelator, preferably pyrrolidine dithiocarbamate (PDTC), along with one or more purified plant extracts. The purified plant extract may be derived from a plant selected from the group consisting of *Allium sativum* (garlic), *Ginkgo biloba*, tomato, orchids of the genus *Cymbidium* and *Dendrobium*, for example, *Cymbidium* ssp, *Dendrobium nobile* and *Dendrobium moschatum*; guava, ginseng, for example, *Pfaffia paniculata* (Brazilian ginseng); *Zingiber officinale* (ginger), and tobacco, wherein the purified extract comprises particles containing DNA or RNA, such as an archaea or a nanoarchaea.

[0009] The present invention also provides methods for increasing the number of non-pathogenic archaea in a plant extract, while also decreasing the number of pathogenic archaea in the plant extract. In one embodiment, the non-pathogenic archaea in a plant extract are increased and the pathogenic archaea in the plant extract are decreased by aging the plant extract, and then diluting the plant extract with thermal water, followed by an additional aging period.

[0010] The present invention also provides for methods for the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of disorders characterized by undesirable cell proliferation, for example, atherosclerosis and mycoplasma associated diseases. In one embodiment, such diagnosis includes detecting the presence of a microorganism or microbe in the serum, blood or plasma, or an atherosclerotic lesion of a subject. In other embodiments, such diagnosis includes detecting mycoplasma or mycoplasma lipoprotein in the serum, blood or plasma, or an atherosclerotic lesion of a subject. In other embodiments,

diagnosis includes detecting chlamydia or chlamydia lipopolysaccharide (LPS) in the serum, blood or plasma, or an atherosclerotic lesion of a patient. In other embodiments, diagnosis includes detecting pathogenic archaea in the serum, blood or plasma, or an atherosclerotic lesion of a subject. In other embodiments, diagnosis includes detecting C reactive protein (CRP) in the serum, blood or plasma, or an atherosclerotic lesion of a patient.

[0011] In some embodiments, the methods of treating disorders characterized by undesirable cell proliferation, for example, atherosclerosis and mycoplasma associated diseases, according to the present invention comprise administering an amount of a composition according to the present invention to a patient in need of such treatment in an amount effective to reduce or inhibit one or more symptoms of the disorder characterized by undesirable cell proliferation.

[0012] The present invention also provides for methods for the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of cancer. In one embodiment, such diagnosis includes detecting the presence of a microorganism or microbe in the serum, blood or plasma, or neoplasia intima of a subject. In other embodiments, such diagnosis includes detecting mycoplasma or mycoplasma lipoprotein, in the serum, blood or plasma, or neoplasia intima of a subject. In other embodiments, diagnosis includes detecting chlamydia or chlamydia lipopolysaccharide (LPS) in the serum, blood or plasma, or neoplasia intima of a subject. In other embodiments, diagnosis includes detecting pathogenic archaea in the serum, blood or plasma, or neoplasia intima of a subject. In other embodiments, diagnosis includes detecting the presence of mycoplasma or mycoplasma lipoprotein, chlamydia or chlamydia lipopolysaccharide, or pathogenic archaea in a cell culture of a subject sample.

[0013] In some embodiments, the methods of treating cancer according to the present invention comprise administering an amount of a composition according to the present invention to a patient in need of such treatment in an amount effective to reduce or inhibit the presence of cancer or tumor cells.

[0014] The present invention also provides for methods for the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of cardiotoxicity, heart disease or heart failure in cancer patients undergoing treatment for cancer. In one embodiment, such diagnosis includes detecting the presence of a microorganism or microbe in the serum, blood or plasma of a patient. In other embodiments, such diagnosis includes detecting mycoplasma or mycoplasma lipoprotein in the serum, blood or plasma of a patient. In other embodiments, diagnosis includes detecting chlamydia or chlamydia lipopolysaccharide (LPS) in the serum, blood or plasma of a patient. In other embodiments, diagnosis includes detecting pathogenic archaea in the serum, blood or plasma of a patient.

[0015] In some embodiments, the methods of treating cardiotoxicity, heart disease or heart failure in cancer patients undergoing treatment for cancer, according to the present invention, comprise administering an amount of a composition according to the present invention to a patient in need of such treatment in an amount effective to reduce or inhibit one or more symptoms of cardiotoxicity, heart disease or heart failure.

[0016] The present invention provides for methods for the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of heart disease, for example, cardiomyopathies resulting from Chagas disease, for example, dilated cardiomyopathy or chronic cardiopathy.

In one embodiment, diagnosis of chagasic cardiomyopathies includes the detection of a microorganism or microbe in the serum, blood or plasma of a subject. In other embodiments, diagnosis of chagasic cardiomyopathies includes the detection of mycoplasma or mycoplasma lipoprotein, chlamydia or chlamydia lipopolysaccharide in the serum, blood or plasma of a subject. In further embodiments, the microorganism or microbe is associated with pathogenic archaea, for example, empty pathogenic archaea, archaea with electron dense content or archaea with electron lucent content.

[0017] In some embodiments, the methods of treating cardiomyopathies resulting from Chagas disease, according to the present invention comprise administering an amount of a composition according to the present invention to a patient in need of such treatment in an amount effective to reduce or inhibit one or more symptoms of a cardiomyopathy resulting from Chagas disease.

[0018] In other embodiments, diagnosis includes detecting archaeal-like organelles and/or archaeal nucleic acid in a sample from a patient, for example, an endomyocardial biopsy (EB), serum, blood or plasma sample. In one embodiment, diagnosis includes detecting electron dense lipidic organelles in the sample. In other embodiments, the diagnosis further includes detecting archaeal nucleic acid in the sample. In further embodiments, the microbes are associated with pathogenic archaea, for example, empty pathogenic archaea, or archaea with electron lucent content.

[0019] In other embodiments of the present invention, diagnosing includes, detecting archaeal-like organelles and/or archaeal nucleic acid in a sample from a subject, for example, an endomyocardial biopsy (EB), serum, blood or plasma sample.

[0020] In some embodiments of the present invention, diagnosis comprises detecting the presence of mycoplasma or mycoplasma lipoprotein, chlamydia or chlamydia lipopolysaccharide, or pathogenic archaea antigen in a serum, blood or plasma sample from a subject.

[0021] In some embodiments of the present invention, diagnosis comprises detecting the presence of mycoplasma, chlamydia, or pathogenic archaea nucleic acid in a serum, blood or plasma sample from a subject.

[0022] The present invention also provides for in vitro methods for selecting a composition of the present invention for use in treating a disorder characterized by undesirable cell proliferation, heart disease or heart failure caused by injury or Chagas disease, dilated cardiomyopathy, cancer, cardiotoxicity, and heart disease or heart failure during cancer treatment. In one embodiment, the in vitro method comprises assaying the effect of a composition of the present invention in reducing the presence of a microorganism or microbe in a sample from a subject, for example, a serum, blood or plasma sample, or a cell culture of a subject sample, for example, a cancer cell sample. In one embodiment, the composition that is most effective in reducing the presence of microorganisms or microbes in the sample is selected for use in treating a subject in need of such treatment.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0023] FIG. 1A-J. (A-E) shows macroscopic aortic atheroma plaques (arrows) and (F-J) shows *Chlamydia pneumoniae* positive antigen expression in aortal intimal areas (arrows) of rabbits fed a 1% cholesterol diet and submitted to different anti-atherosclerotic treatments. Group II (A, F) received no treatment, Group III (B, G) was treated with

trans-sialidase (“TS”)+pyrrolidine dithiocarbamate (“PDTC”), Group IV (C, H) was treated with TS+PDTC+*Allium sativum* (“AS”), Group V (D, I) was treated with TS+PDTC+AS+*Ginkgo biloba* (“GB”), and Group VI (E, J) was treated with TS+PDTC+AS+GB+*Zingiber officinale* (“ZO”).

[0024] FIG. 2 shows the nucleotide sequence of a plasmid encoding the catalytic trans-sialidase unit of trans-sialidase from *Trypanosoma cruzi* (SEQ ID NO: 3). The letters in capital represent the pET14b plasmid and the underlined letters correspond to the position of the oligonucleotides used to amplify the *Trypanosoma cruzi* clone.

[0025] FIG. 3 shows the amino acid sequence of the protein encoded by the nucleic acid sequence depicted in FIG. 2.(SEQ ID NO: 4). In bold are the amino acids not found in the original clone.

[0026] FIG. 4 shows small dark electron-dense nanoarchaea of between 0.03-0.15 μm in diameter.

[0027] FIG. 5 shows dark medium sized electron-dense archaea of between 0.5-1.1 μm in diameter, and large clear, empty archaea of between 1.0-2.4 μm in diameter.

[0028] FIG. 6 shows clear, empty archaea of between 0.15-2.0 μm in diameter.

[0029] FIG. 7 shows an electron micrograph of a human aortic aneurysm. The aortic aneurysm exhibits many round lipidic bodies in both the cytoplasm of macrophages and in the extracellular matrix. The round lipidic bodies are surrounded by immunogenic lymphocytes.

[0030] FIG. 8 shows a high magnification view of the round lipidic body described in FIG. 7. The round lipidic body exhibits a clear external membrane corresponding to the morphology of the large lipidic archaea microbes shown in FIGS. 5 and 6 (and also isolated from tobacco).

[0031] FIG. 9 shows an electron micrograph of the serum of a patient with symptoms of Lyme disease, but negative for *Borrelia burgdorferi*, showing two mycoplasmas that have one envoltory membrane and granulous electron dense material inside. On the top the mycoplasma in intimal contact with a structure with morphology of archaea characterized by thin delicate envoltory lipidic monolayer membrane and having an internal empty space, which is characteristic of the archaea present in tissue lesions.

[0032] FIG. 10A-B shows the presence of different primitive microbial bodies associated with empty pathogenic archaea in the serum of patients with dilated chagastic cardiomyopathy.

[0033] FIG. 11 shows that lysing neoplastic cells in vitro results in the release of intracellular infectious agents that are morphologically characteristic of mycoplasmas and archaeas.

[0034] FIG. 12A-D shows that the addition of a composition comprising nanoparticles to a cancer cell culture results in apoptosis of the neoplastic cells (A) and release of microbes into the extracellular medium from the apoptotic neoplastic cells (B). Addition of a composition comprising nanoparticles, trans-sialidase and PDTC increased the amount of neoplastic cell apoptosis (C), and reduced the amount of microbes released into the extracellular medium from the apoptotic neoplastic cells (D).

[0035] FIG. 13A-D shows the presence of archaea and other microbes present in a serum sample from a Chagas disease patient (A) and (B). The addition of a composition comprising nanoparticles from *Ginkgo biloba*, *Zingiber officinalis*, Golden root and orchid (*Dendrobium moschatum*), to

the serum sample reduced the amount of archaea and other microbes present in the sample (C), and that the addition of 3 μl of trans-sialidase diluted 1,000,000 fold in association with PDTC to the nanoparticles further reduced the amount of archaea and other microbes present in the sample (D). The presence of archaea were determined using fluorescent Qdots.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0036] For purposes of clarity, and not by way of limitation, the detailed description of the invention is divided into the following subsections:

[0037] (i) Methods of Diagnosis;

[0038] (ii) Therapeutic compositions;

[0039] (iii) Therapeutic uses; and

[0040] (iv) in vitro assay.

METHODS OF DIAGNOSIS

Diagnosis of Diseases Associated with Undesirable Cell Proliferation and Fibrosis

[0041] The present invention provides for methods of diagnosing, preventing and treating a disorder characterized by undesirable cell proliferation and fibrosis, for example, atherosclerosis and mycoplasma associated diseases. In one embodiment of the invention, diagnosis of atherosclerosis and/or a mycoplasma associated disease is performed by detecting the presence of an agent in the serum, blood or plasma of a patient, wherein detection of the agent indicates the existence or likelihood of developing atherosclerosis and/or a mycoplasma associated disease. In other embodiments of the invention, diagnosis is performed by detecting the presence of the agent in an atherosclerotic lesion.

[0042] The presence of the agent may be detected, for example, using electron microscopy, fluorescence microscopy, immunohistochemistry, polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or any other method known in the art.

[0043] In some non-limiting embodiments, the agent is a microbe or a microbe antigen. In other embodiments, the agent is a nucleic acid, for example, a nucleic acid from a microbe.

[0044] In one non-limiting embodiment, the agent is mycoplasma or a mycoplasma lipoprotein, for example, *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* lipoprotein. In certain embodiments, the agent is *Mycoplasma pulmonis* lipoprotein.

[0045] In other non-limiting embodiments, the agent is chlamydia or a chlamydia lipopolysaccharide (LPS), for example, *Chlamydia pneumoniae* or *Chlamydia pneumoniae* LPS.

[0046] In other non-limiting embodiments, the agent is a pathogenic archaea.

[0047] In other non-limiting embodiments, the agent is C reactive protein (CRP).

[0048] In other non-limiting embodiments, the agent is spirochete.

[0049] In one non-limiting embodiment of the present invention, detecting the presence of mycoplasma, mycoplasma lipoprotein, CRP, or a combination thereof, in serum of a patient indicates a diagnosis of atherosclerosis, coronary artery disease (CAD), or the presence of a stable atheroma in the patient.

[0050] In other non-limiting embodiments of the present invention, detecting the presence of chlamydia, chlamydia LPS, pathogenic archaea, or a combination thereof, in serum

of a patient indicates a diagnosis of acute myocardial infarction (AMI), or the presence of an unstable or ruptured atheroma in the patient.

[0051] In one non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the agent can be concentrated from the serum and plasma of a subject (e.g., a human patient) before detecting the presence of the agent. For example, serum can be separated from blood by incubating a blood sample in a water bath to form a blood clot. The serum can be isolated from the blood clot by centrifuging the sample to obtain a supernatant comprising the serum. The serum can then be prepared for electron microscopy analysis by fixing the serum (e.g., by combining 1 ml of serum with 1.0 ml of glutaraldehyde fixative and 1.0 ml of Osmium tetroxide), centrifuging the treated serum, and sectioning the resulting pellet. The supernatant can also be analyzed using electron microscopy for agent detection.

Diagnosis of Cancer or Cardiotoxicity in Cancer Patients Undergoing Treatment for Cancer

[0052] The present invention also provides for compositions and methods for the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of cancer and cardiotoxicity, heart disease or heart failure in cancer patients undergoing treatment for cancer. In one embodiment of the invention, diagnosis of cancer or cardiotoxicity, heart disease or heart failure in cancer patients undergoing treatment for cancer is performed by detecting the presence of an agent in the serum, blood or plasma of a patient, wherein detection of the agent indicates the existence or likelihood of developing cancer or cardiotoxicity, heart disease or heart failure. In other embodiments of the invention, diagnosis is performed by detecting the presence of the agent in a neoplasia intima of a patient.

[0053] In other embodiments, diagnosis includes detecting the presence of the agent in a cell culture of a patient sample, for example a cell culture of a cancer cell sample from the patient.

[0054] The presence of the agent may be detected, for example, using electron microscopy, fluorescence microscopy, immunohistochemistry, polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or any other method known in the art.

[0055] In some non-limiting embodiments, the agent is a microbe or a microbe antigen. In other embodiments, the agent is a nucleic acid, for example, a nucleic acid from a microbe.

[0056] In one non-limiting embodiment, the agent is mycoplasma or a mycoplasma lipoprotein, for example, *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* or *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* lipoprotein. In certain embodiments, the agent is *Mycoplasma pulmonis* lipoprotein.

[0057] In other non-limiting embodiments, the agent is chlamydia or a chlamydia lipopolysaccharide (LPS), for example, *Chlamydia pneumoniae* or *Chlamydia pneumoniae* LPS.

[0058] In other non-limiting embodiments, the agent is a pathogenic archaea.

[0059] In other non-limiting embodiments, the agent is spirochete.

[0060] In one non-limiting embodiment of the present invention, detecting the presence of mycoplasma, mycoplasma lipoprotein or a combination thereof, in serum of a patient or in a neointima sample from a patient indicates a diagnosis of cancer or cardiotoxicity, heart disease or heart failure.

[0061] In one non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the agent can be concentrated from the serum and plasma of a subject (e.g., a human patient) before detecting the presence of the agent. For example, serum can be separated from blood by incubating a blood sample in a water bath to form a blood clot. The serum can be isolated from the blood clot by centrifuging the sample to obtain a supernatant comprising the serum. The serum can then be prepared for electron microscopy analysis by fixing the serum (e.g., by combining 1 ml of serum with 1.0 ml of glutaraldehyde fixative and 1.0 ml of Osmium tetroxide), centrifuging the treated serum, and sectioning the resulting pellet. The supernatant can also be analyzed using electron microscopy for agent detection.

Diagnosis of Chagasic Cardiomyopathy

[0062] Chagas disease is a tropical parasitic disease caused by the flagellate protozoan *Trypanosoma cruzi*. While most Chagas disease patients remain asymptomatic during their lifetimes, about 30% of infected patients develop dilated cardiomyopathy related to an apparently autoimmune myocarditis.

[0063] Archaea-like bodies have been found in association with Chagas disease, in two morphological types: one with electron dense lipidic content (EDL) and other with electron lucent content (ELC) (Higuchi et al. Mem Inst Oswaldo Cruz 2009; 104 (Suppl 1): 199-207.) Additionally, trypanosoma have been discovered to carry proteasomes from archaea, which has been hypothesized to have occurred through an evolutionary endosymbiotic mechanism. Proteasomes are organelles that degrade unneeded or damaged proteins by proteolysis.

[0064] The present invention provides for methods for the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of heart disease, for example, cardiomyopathies resulting from Chagas disease. In one embodiment, such diagnosis includes detecting the presence of an agent in the serum, blood or plasma of a patient with Chagas disease, wherein detection of the agent indicates the existence or likelihood of developing heart disease, for example, cardiomyopathies resulting from Chagas disease.

[0065] The presence of the agent may be detected, for example, using electron microscopy, fluorescence microscopy, immunohistochemistry, polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or any other method known in the art.

[0066] In some non-limiting embodiments, the agent is a microbe or a microbe antigen. In other embodiments, the agent is a nucleic acid, for example, a nucleic acid from a microbe.

[0067] In one non-limiting embodiment, the agent is mycoplasma or a mycoplasma lipoprotein, for example, *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* or *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* lipoprotein. In certain embodiments, the agent is *Mycoplasma pulmonis* lipoprotein.

[0068] In other non-limiting embodiments, the agent is chlamydia or a chlamydia lipopolysaccharide (LPS), for example, *Chlamydia pneumoniae* or *Chlamydia pneumoniae* LPS.

[0069] In other non-limiting embodiments, the agent is a pathogenic archaea.

[0070] In other non-limiting embodiments, the agent is spirochete.

[0071] In some embodiments, the agent is an archaeal-like organelles and/or archaeal nucleic acid in a sample from a patient.

[0072] In one embodiment, diagnosis includes detecting electron dense lipidic (EDL) archaeal organelles in a sample from a patient. In other embodiments, the diagnosis further includes detecting archaeal nucleic acid in the sample. In certain embodiments, the archaeal nucleic acid is present within the EDL organelle.

[0073] In other embodiments, diagnosis includes detecting electron lucent content (ELC) archaeal organelles in a sample from a patient. In other embodiments, the diagnosis further includes detecting archaeal nucleic acid in the sample. In certain embodiments, the archaeal nucleic acid is present within the ELC organelle.

[0074] In one embodiment, the sample is serum, blood or plasma. In other embodiments, the sample is an endomyocardial biopsy (EB).

[0075] In one non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the agent can be concentrated from the serum and plasma of a subject (e.g., a human patient) before detecting the presence of the agent. For example, serum can be separated from blood by incubating a blood sample in a water bath to form a blood clot. The serum can be isolated from the blood clot by centrifuging the sample to obtain a supernatant comprising the serum. The serum can then be prepared for electron microscopy analysis by fixing the serum (e.g., by combining 1 ml of serum with 1.0 ml of glutaraldehyde fixative and 1.0 ml of Osmium tetroxide), centrifuging the treated serum, and sectioning the resulting pellet. The supernatant can also be analyzed using electron microscopy for agent detection.

[0076] In one embodiment, detecting a negative correlation between the number of electron dense organelles versus the amount of archaeal nucleic acid outside of the electron dense organelles (for example, in the extracellular matrix) in a sample is indicative of a diagnosis of indeterminate asymptomatic form (IF) of Chagas disease.

[0077] In one embodiment, detecting a positive correlation between the number of electron dense organelles versus the amount of archaeal nucleic acid outside of the electron dense organelles (for example, in the extracellular matrix) in a sample is indicative of a diagnosis of Chagas disease related heart disease.

[0078] The present invention also provides for methods of diagnosing chagasic cardiomyopathies in a patient, for example, dilated cardiomyopathy or chronic cardiopathy. In one embodiment, diagnosing includes comparing a sample from a first patient with Chagas disease with a sample from a second patient with Chagas disease who does not have a chagasic cardiomyopathy, wherein the sample from the first patient comprises smaller archaeal organelles, for example electron dense archaeal organelles, than the sample from the second patient. In other embodiments, the sample from the first patient comprises less archaeal nucleic acid present outside of the archaeal organelles than the sample from the second patient. In other embodiments, the sample from the first patient comprises smaller archaeal organelles and less archaeal nucleic acid outside of the archaeal organelles than the sample from the second patient.

[0079] In one embodiment, the second patient has indeterminate asymptomatic form (IF) of Chagas disease.

[0080] In one embodiment, the samples from the first patient and second patient are endomyocardial biopsy samples.

[0081] In other embodiments, the samples from the first patient and second patient are serum, blood or plasma samples.

[0082] In other embodiments, diagnosis of chagasic cardiomyopathies includes the detection of microbes in the serum, blood or plasma of a patient. In further embodiments, the microbes are associated with empty pathogenic archaea.

[0083] In one embodiment, the empty pathogenic archaea comprise organelles that are electron lucent content bodies (ELC).

[0084] In other embodiments of the present invention, detection of pathogenic archaea, archaea nucleic acid, mycoplasma, spirochete and/or Chlamydia in the serum and/or myocardium of a heart transplant donor indicates a greater risk of mortality in the heart transplant recipient of the donor heart than a recipient who receives a heart from a donor with less pathogenic archaea, archaea nucleic acid, mycoplasma, spirochete and/or Chlamydia in the donor's serum and/or myocardium.

[0085] In other embodiments, the presence of lymphocytic infiltrate in the myocardium of a donor heart indicates a higher risk of mortality in the recipient of the donor heart than a recipient who receives a heart from a donor with less lymphocytic infiltrate in the myocardium of the donor heart.

Therapeutic Compositions

[0086] The present invention provides for compositions and methods that prevent or treat diseases associated with undesirable cell proliferation and fibrosis. For example, the compositions and methods of the invention inhibit the narrowing of blood vessels and reduce atherosclerosis. The compositions and methods of the present invention also decrease the level of total serum cholesterol as well as serum LDL, serum HDL and triglyceride levels in a treated patient.

[0087] In certain embodiments, administration of the compounds of the invention has the effect of reducing the presence of atherosclerotic plaques on a blood vessel, and decreasing the level of one or more of blood serum lipids, total serum cholesterol, serum LDL, serum HDL, and/or triglycerides of a treated individual.

[0088] The present invention also provides for compositions and methods that prevent or treat cancer and cardiotoxicity, heart disease or heart failure in cancer patients undergoing treatment for cancer. For example, the compositions and methods of the invention inhibit or reduce symptoms of cardiovascular toxicity, for example, QT prolongation and arrhythmias, myocardial ischemia and infarction, hypertension, venous and arterial thrombo-embolism, cardiac dysfunction, heart failure or combinations thereof.

[0089] The present invention also provides for compositions and methods that prevent or treat heart disease, for example, cardiomyopathies resulting from Chagas disease. For example, the compositions and methods of the invention inhibit or reduce the occurrence of dilated cardiomyopathy and heart rhythm abnormalities.

[0090] In particular embodiments of the invention, the composition comprises a protein capable of removing sialic acid residues, wherein removal of the sialic acid residues inhibits or prevents the attachment of a mycoplasma and one or more non-mycoplasma microorganism to a host cell. Preferred non-limiting embodiments further comprise a metal chelator and/or one or more purified plant extracts.

[0091] The term "composition" as used herein means agents or mixtures or combinations thereof effective to prevent or reduce the ability of the mycoplasma and non-mycoplasma to associate with a substrate, for example, but not limited to, a blood vessel. In certain embodiments, the com-

position reduces the amount of an agent, for example, a microbe or microbe nucleic acid, present in the serum, blood or plasma of a subject. In certain embodiments, the composition reduces the amount of an agent, for example, a microbe or microbe nucleic acid, present in a cell culture of a sample from a patient, for example, a cancer cell sample.

[0092] In certain embodiments, the composition reduces or inhibits the rate of growth of an atherosclerotic lesion and/or to decreases the presence of a mycoplasma and non-mycoplasma microorganism with an atherosclerotic plaque. In certain embodiments, the composition inhibits the association of a mycoplasma and a non-mycoplasma microorganism. In certain embodiments, the composition reduces or inhibits the presence of pathogenic archaea and/or microbes in the serum, blood or plasma of a subject administered the composition. In certain embodiments, the composition reduces the symptoms of cardiomyopathies resulting from Chagas disease. In certain embodiments, the composition reduces the presence of cancer cells in a subject treated with the composition.

[0093] The term “atherosclerosis,” “atherosclerotic plaque,” “plaque,” or “atheroma” as used herein refers to the accumulation of one or more of lipids, cholesterol, collagen, and macrophages on the walls of a subject’s blood vessel. The presence of plaques in a blood vessel can also be associated with ossification and calcification of the blood vessel walls.

[0094] The term “blood serum lipids” as used herein refers to HDL and LDL lipoproteins.

[0095] The term “HDL” as used herein means high density lipoprotein.

[0096] The term “LDL” as used herein means low density lipoprotein.

[0097] In further non-limiting embodiments of the invention, the mycoplasma may be *Mycoplasma (M.) buccale*, *M. faucium*, *M. fermentans*, *M. genitalium*, *M. hominis*, *M. lipophilum*, *M. oral*, *M. penetrans*, *M. pneumoniae*, *M. salivarium*, or *M. spermatophilum*, wherein the mycoplasma is associated with one or more additional non-mycoplasma microorganisms. The one or more additional non-mycoplasma microorganism may be a bacteria, archaea or virus, for example, but not limited to, spirochete or chlamydia such as *Chlamydia pneumoniae*. According to the invention, the mycoplasma and non-mycoplasma may be attached to a substrate, for example, but not limited to, a blood vessel or an atherosclerotic plaque. In a further non-limiting embodiment, the mycoplasma and non-mycoplasma are attached to the substrate by sialic acid. In other embodiments, the mycoplasma and/or non-mycoplasma may be present in the serum, blood or plasma of a subject. In certain embodiments, the mycoplasma and/or non-mycoplasma may be present in a cell culture of a sample from a subject, for example, a cancer cell sample.

[0098] In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the protein capable of removing sialic acid residues is a trans-sialidase or neuraminidase enzyme. A combination of such enzymes or an enzyme having both activities may also be used.

[0099] In certain non-limiting embodiments, the composition comprises a neuraminidase enzyme of, for example but not limited to, *Bacteroides fragilis*, *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Streptococcus oralis*, *Arthrobacter ureafaciens*, *Clostridium perfringens*, *Mycoplasma alligatoris*, *Arcanobacterium pyogenes*, *Clostridium sordellii*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Micromonospora viridifaciens*, *Vibrio cholerae*.

Streptomyces avermitilis, Influenza virus, *Streptomyces coelicolor*, *Flavobacteriales bacterium*, and *Solibacter usitatus*.

[0100] In other non limiting embodiments, the protein is a trans-sialidase, for example, the trans-sialidase enzyme of *Trypanosoma brucei*.

[0101] In a preferred embodiment, the composition is the trans-sialidase enzyme of *Trypanosoma cruzi*, or a portion or variant of the native enzyme which has trans-sialidase activity.

[0102] Alternatively, the trans-sialidase enzyme can be a recombinant trans-sialidase enzyme.

[0103] In specific non-limiting embodiments, the recombinant trans-sialidase is as described in International Patent Publication WO 2002/002050 by Higuchi et al., published Jan. 10, 2002; and U.S. Pat. No. 7,108,851 by Higuchi et al., issued Sep. 19, 2006. For example, the trans-sialidase gene may be obtained from a genomic clone, isolated from a commercially available lambda Zap®II library (Stratagene, <http://www.stratagene.com>) of *T. cruzi* Y strain (Silva and Nussenzweig, 1953, Folia Clin Biol 20: 191-203), as described in Uemura et al. (Uemura et al., 1992, EMBO J 11: 3837-3844). From the original lambda clone, which expresses enzymatic activity, an SK plasmid containing the trans-sialidase gene may be generated (SK-154-0). The preferred plasmid used is pTSII, which corresponds to a fragment of the original gene (clone 154-0) amplified through PCR, and inserted into the sites NdeI and BamHI of the vector pET14b (Novagen- <http://www.novagen.com>). The PCR product may be amplified using SK-154-0 as a template with the following primers:

(SEQ ID NO: 1)
a) TSPET14: 5'-GGAATTCATATGGCACCCGGATCGAGC

(SEQ ID NO: 2)
b) RT154: 5'-CGGATCCGGGCGTACTTCTTCTACTGGTCCCGGT

[0104] The resulting PCR product should have a nucleic acid sequence as set forth in FIG. 2 (SEQ ID NO: 3), and a corresponding amino acid sequence as depicted in FIG. 3 (SEQ ID NO: 4). The resulting plasmid may be transformed into the *Escherichia coli* BLB21 DE3. The construct can be made in two steps due to an internal BamHI site in the trans-sialidase gene. The PCR product may be treated with BamHI and NdeI enzymes, and the resulting fragments fractionated by electrophoresis on an agarose gel. The separated fractions may then be purified from the gel with the Sephaglass purification kit (Amersham-Pharmacia). The 5' NdeI-BamHI digestion fragment may be ligated into the pET14b vector which has been pre-digested with BamHI and NdeI. The ligation products may be used to transform K12 DH5a *E. coli* cells. The plasmid containing *E. coli* cells may be selected and the plasmid purified by methods known in the art. The purified construct may be treated with BamHI, shrimp alkaline phosphatase, and ligated with the BamHI-BamHI-3' fragment purified from the fractionation gel. The ligation products may then be used to transform K12 DH5a *E. coli* cells, from which clones expression of trans-sialidase may be selected and purified. The final plasmid may be confirmed by restriction analysis and used to transform the BLB21 DE3 pLys strain of *E. coli*, from which recombinant trans-sialidase enzyme can be purified, as described in International Patent

Publication WO/2002/002050 by Higuchi et al., published Jan. 10, 2002; and U.S. Pat. No. 7,108,851 by Higuchi et al., issued Sep. 19, 2006.

[0105] Alternatively, the trans-sialidase enzyme may be purified from a culture of *Trypanosoma cruzi*, such as, for example, a culture according to Kloetzel et al. (Kloetzel et al., 1984, Rev. Inst. Med. Trop. Sao Paulo., 26:179-85). Supernatant from the culture may be filtered through a 1 μ m pore filter in a vacuum chamber. The enzyme may be further purified by filtering the supernatant through a 0.22 μ m filter and then precipitating the filtrate with a 50% $(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{SO}_4$ solution. The precipitates may then be dialyzed against phosphate-buffered saline, and passed through a tressyl-agarose column comprising an immobilized anti-trans-sialidase monoclonal or polyclonal antibody. The column may be washed with phosphate-buffered saline, followed by an additional wash with 10 mM sodium phosphate, pH 6.5. The trans-sialidase may then be eluted with a 3.5 mM MgCl_2 , 10 mM sodium phosphate, pH 6.0 solution. The fractions eluted from the column may be filtered through a Sephadex G-25 column equilibrated with 20 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.0, to remove the MgCl_2 . The trans-sialidase may be further purified by passage through a Mono Q column equilibrated in 20 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.0, and eluted with a linear gradient from 0 to 1 mM NaCl in the same buffer.

[0106] The purified enzyme derived from the culture should comprise 400 kDa multimeric aggregates. The enzymatic activity of the purified trans-sialidase may be measured according to methods described in International Patent Publication WO 2002/002050 by Higuchi et al., published Jan. 10, 2002; and U.S. Pat. No. 7,108,851 by Higuchi et al., issued Sep. 19, 2006.

[0107] In non-limiting embodiments, the purified trans-sialidase has an enzymatic activity of between 0.1 and 10 U/ml, more preferably between 1.0 and 5.0 U/ml, and most preferably 1.3 U/ml.

[0108] In certain non-limiting embodiments, the composition comprises a metal chelator, for example, but not limited to, Nitriolotriacetate (NTA), diphenylthiocarbazone (di-thizon), histidine, the lipophilic metal chelator DP-109, ethylene glycol tetraacetic acid (EGTA), ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA), DMPS (2,3-dimercapto-1-propanesulfonate), Lysinoalanine, Synthetic lysinoalanine (N-E-DL-(2-amino-2-carboxyethyl)-L-lysine), tetracycline, alpha lipoic acid (ALA), Dimercaptosuccinic acid, (DMSA), 2,3-Dimercapto-1-propanesulfonic acid (DMPS), Calcium disodium versante (CaNa_2 -EDTA), D-penicillamine, Deferoxamine, Defarasirox, Dimercaprol (BAL), the calcium salt of diethylene triamine pentaacetic acid (DTPA), or any other metal chelator known in the art. In a preferred non-limiting embodiment, the metal chelator is pyrrolidine dithiocarbamate (PDTC). The composition of the invention may comprise the metal chelator in a concentration of between about 0.01 and 10 mg/ml, more preferably between about 0.5 and 5 mg/ml, more preferably between about 1 and 2 mg/ml, and most preferably about 1.5 mg/ml.

[0109] In a further non-limiting embodiments, the plant extract may be derived from, for example but not limited to, *Allium sativum* (garlic), *Ginkgo biloba*, tomato, orchid, guava, ginseng, for example *Pfafia paniculata* (Brazilian ginseng); *Zingiber officinale* (ginger); or tobacco, wherein the orchid is preferably of the genus *Cymbidium*, for example, yellow or green orchids from the genus *Cymbidium* (*Cym-*

bidium ssp). Alternatively, the orchid may be of the genus *Dendrobium*, for example, *Dendrobium nobile* or *Dendrobium moschatum*.

[0110] The extract from plants may be obtained by adding a solvent, such as, for example, alcohol, to the plant tissue, for example, but not limited to, roots, cloves, flower petals, or leaves which may be chopped, or macerated prior to mixture with the solvent. The solvent may be mixed with the plant tissue in a proportion of between 1:99 and 60:40, more preferably between 15:85 and 50:50 and most preferably between 30-40:70-60 of plant mass:alcohol. The solvent can be an alcohol, for example, ethanol, methanol, or grain alcohol, and can have a concentration of between 60% and 100%, more preferably between 70% and 95%, and most preferably 92% alcohol. The plant/alcohol mixture may be aged in a dark, anaerobic environment for a period of time between 15 days and 24 months, more preferably between 1 and 15 months, and most preferably 12 months.

[0111] According to the invention, the extract derived from plant comprises particles containing nucleic acid (DNA or RNA), wherein the particle is an archaea (preferably non-pathogenic) and/or a nanoarchaea, and further wherein the particle is present in an amount effective to prevent or inhibit the growth of a mycoplasma and one or more non-mycoplasma microorganisms. Aging of the plant/alcohol mixture increases the concentration of particles in the mixture.

[0112] The plant/alcohol mixture may be purified, and the concentration of nanoparticles may be increased through one or more filtrations. The mixture may be filtered through pores of between 0.5 μ m and 50 μ m, more preferably between 5 μ m and 20 μ m, and most preferably 11 μ m., for example, but not limited to Whatman qualitative filter paper grade 1, diameter 24 cm, pore size 11 μ m. Vacuum chambers can also be used separately, or in addition to other filtration methods. Additionally, glass microfiber filters may be used for filtration, for example, but not limited to, a 47 mm diameter glass microfiber filter with a pore size of 1.1 μ m. Any filtration methods known in the art may be used to filter the aged plant/alcohol mixture.

[0113] In a non-limiting embodiment, the plant/alcohol mixture can be subjected to additional aging during the filtration process. For example, olive oil may be added to the filtrate to create a 1% olive oil filtrate mixture, followed by an additional month of storage in a dark anaerobic environment.

[0114] According to the methods of the present invention, aging a plant extract increases the proportion of non-pathogenic archaea to pathogenic archaea in the plant extract.

[0115] In one embodiment, aging the plant extract increases the number of non-pathogenic archaea in the plant extract.

[0116] In another embodiment, aging the plant extract decreases the number of pathogenic archaea in the plant extract.

[0117] In another embodiment, an aged plant extract, or alternatively, a plant extract that has not been aged, can be diluted with a dilutant and aged for an additional period of time.

[0118] In a further non-limiting embodiment, the dilutant can be thermal water, oil, for example, olive oil, or any other dilutant known in the art.

[0119] In another non-limiting embodiment, the plant extract or the diluted plant extract can be aged for between 15 days and 24 months.

[0120] In another non-limiting embodiment, the plant extract or the diluted plant extract, can be aged for 30 days.

[0121] Furthermore, the composition may comprise particles and/or nanoparticles containing DNA or RNA, wherein the particles are a non-pathogenic archaea and/or a nanoarchaea, and further wherein the particle is present in amounts effective to prevent or inhibit the growth of a mycoplasma and one or more non-mycoplasma microorganisms. The nanoparticles may be between 5-500 nm, more preferably between 15-250 nm, and most preferably between 30-150 nm in diameter. Alternatively, the composition may comprise medium particles of between 500 nm and 1.1 μm in diameter. Additionally, the compositions may comprise one or a combination of both small and medium particles. The size of a particle can enlarge or decrease depending on the concentration of water and ions in a solution comprising the particles, such as, for example, Na^+ or Ca^+ .

[0122] According to the invention, the purity of the plant extract may be determined by microscopic examination of the filtered, aged, plant extract, as described in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 20050142116. For example, the filtered, aged plant extract can be stained with any DNA or RNA dye known in the art, such as acridine orange, bisbenzimidazole H 33342 (Hoechst), or 4',6-diamidino-2-phenylindole, dihydrochloride (DAPI); and viewed with an immunofluorescence optical microscope, an electron microscope, or any other microscope known in the art. Two forms of archaea, having different morphological characteristics may be identified. One type comprising an electron-dense content may be between about 0.03-0.15 μm (nanoparticle) and about 0.5-1.1 μm in diameter (medium particle) (FIGS. 4 and 5, respectively). A second type may comprise a clear, empty content, and may be about 0.15-2.4 μm in diameter (FIGS. 5 and 6). The clear, empty archaea are similar in morphology to the pathogenic archaea associated with lesions, while the electron dense archaea comprise the non-pathogenic archaea and nanoarchaea comprising DNA or RNA. Brilliant red particles, which may comprise metallic ions, may also adhere to the surface of the archaea. Optimum purity may be achieved when predominantly, preferably essentially, only fast moving electron-dense nanoparticles are visible. The presence of clear, empty archaea or large brilliant red particles of about 0.15-0.24 μm and at a concentration of, for example, ≥ 1.0 large brilliant red particle/visual field, indicates suboptimal purity. In cases of suboptimal purity, the filtered aged plant extract is subjected to additional filtration, for example, tangential flow filtration in the Minitan Ultrafiltration System (Millipore, Bedford, Mass., USA), using the microporous membrane packet (30,000 NMWL). In preferred embodiments, the compositions of the invention comprise a greater number of electron dense archaea (nanoparticles and medium particles) than empty, clear archaea; and a greater number of archaea not associated with large brilliant red particles than those associated with large brilliant red particles.

[0123] According to the invention, the purified plant extract may comprise an enriched population of particles. The concentration of particles may be between 1×10^5 and 1×10^{10} particles/ml, more preferably between 1×10^6 and 1×10^9 particles/ml, and most preferably about 1×10^7 particles/ml.

[0124] In a non-limiting embodiment, the compositions of the invention comprise combinations of trans-sialidase, a metal chelator, and one or more purified plant extracts as shown in Table I.

TABLE I

Combinations of trans-sialidase, a metal chelator, and one or more purified plant extracts encompassed by the invention. Combinations of trans-sialidase (TS), pyrrolidine dithiocarbamate (PDTC), and purified plant extracts
TS
TS + PDTC
TS + PDTC + <i>Allium sativum</i> (AS)
TS + PDTC + <i>Ginkgo biloba</i> (GB)
TS + PDTC + <i>Zingiber officinale</i> (ZO)
TS + PDTC + orchid extract (OE)
TS + PDTC + AS + GB
TS + PDTC + AS + ZO
TS + PDTC + AS + OE
TS + PDTC + AS + GB + ZO
TS + PDTC + AS + GB + OE
TS + PDTC + AS + GB + ZO + OE
TS + PDTC + AS + ZO + OE
TS + PDTC + GB + ZO
TS + PDTC + GB + OE
TS + PDTC + GB + ZO + OE
TS + PDTC + ZO + OE
TS + AS
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TS + AS + GB + ZO
TS + AS + GB + OE
TS + AS + GB + ZO + OE
TS + AS + ZO + OE
TS + GB + ZO
TS + GB + OE
TS + GB + ZO + OE
TS + ZO + OE

Therapeutic Uses

[0125] The present invention provides for compositions and methods for reducing the presence of atherosclerotic plaques in a blood vessel. The compositions and methods of the invention further provide for reducing the level of total serum cholesterol in a treated subject, as well as serum LDL, HDL and triglyceride levels.

[0126] In certain embodiments, the present invention provides for compositions and methods for inhibiting or reducing symptoms of cardiotoxicity, heart disease or heart failure in cancer patients undergoing treatment for cancer, for example, QT prolongation and arrhythmias, myocardial ischemia and infarction, hypertension, venous and arterial thrombo-embolism, cardiac dysfunction, heart failure or combinations thereof.

[0127] In certain embodiments, the present invention provides for compositions and methods for treating cancer in a subject, for example, by inhibiting or reducing the presence of cancer cells in a subject.

[0128] In certain embodiments, the present invention provides for compositions and methods for preventing or treating heart disease, for example, cardiomyopathies resulting from Chagas disease, for example, inhibiting or reducing the occurrence of dilated cardiomyopathy and heart rhythm abnormalities.

[0129] In certain embodiments, the composition of the invention comprises a trans-sialidase enzyme, PDTC, and one or more purified plant extracts.

[0130] In one embodiment, the composition of the invention may be administered in an amount effective to reduce the presence of an atherosclerotic plaque.

[0131] In other embodiments, the composition of the invention may be administered in an amount effective to inhibit or reduce QT prolongation, heart arrhythmias, myocardial ischemia, myocardial infarction, hypertension, venous and/or arterial thrombo-embolism, cardiac dysfunction, the occurrence of dilated cardiomyopathy, heart failure or combinations thereof.

[0132] In certain embodiments, the composition of the invention is administered to a subject diagnosed with Chagas disease or with cardiomyopathies resulting from Chagas disease.

[0133] In certain embodiments, the composition of the invention is administered to a subject diagnosed with cancer. In certain embodiments the subject is a cancer patient receiving treatment for cancer, for example, chemotherapy. In certain embodiments, the cancer patient receiving cancer treatment has been diagnosed as having cardiotoxicity, heart disease or heart failure.

[0134] In a non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the composition may be administered systemically, for example, as an injection. In another preferred embodiment of the invention, the composition may be administered orally. According to the invention, the composition is effective to promote a reduction in the presence of one or more mycoplasma and one or more non-mycoplasma microorganism on a blood vessel wall as compared to a subject not treated with the composition. For example, the presence of *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* and *Chlamydia pneumoniae* is reduced in atherosclerotic plaques.

[0135] In certain embodiments, the composition is effective to promote a reduction in the presence of one or more agent, for example, a microbe or microbe nucleic acid, in the serum, blood or plasma as compared to a subject not treated with the composition.

[0136] In certain embodiments, the composition is effective to promote a reduction in the presence of one or more agent, for example, a microbe or microbe nucleic acid, in cell culture of a sample, for example, a cancer cell sample from a subject, as compared to a cell culture not treated with the composition.

[0137] In another series of non-limiting embodiments, the composition may be administered as a single dose, or at regular intervals so that the composition is effective to promote a reduction in the presence or level of atherosclerotic plaques, total serum cholesterol, serum LDL, serum HDL, triglyceride, QT prolongation, heart arrhythmias, myocardial ischemia, myocardial infarction, hypertension, venous and/or arterial thrombo-embolism, cardiac dysfunction, the occurrence of dilated cardiomyopathy, heart failure or combinations thereof, in a subject as compared to a subject not treated with the composition.

[0138] In a non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the composition may be administered in an amount effective to reduce the surface area of a blood vessel covered by an atherosclerotic plaque. The composition may decrease the percentage of a blood vessel's surface area occupied by a plaque to between about 0% and 75%, more preferable between 2% and 50%, more preferably between 5% and 60%, more preferably between 10% and 25% and most preferably about 11% of the total surface area of the blood vessel.

[0139] In another non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the composition may be administered in an amount effective to reduce the level of total serum cholesterol in a subject in need of treatment. The composition may reduce the level of total serum cholesterol of the subject by about 5%, 10%, 20%, 50%, 90% or 95% such that the level of total cholesterol is reduced to about the normal level found in a subject not in need of treatment.

[0140] In another non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the composition may be administered in an amount effective to reduce the level of serum LDL cholesterol in a subject in need of treatment. The composition may reduce the level of serum LDL cholesterol of the subject by about 5%, 10%, 20%, 50%, 90% or 95% such that the level of serum LDL cholesterol is reduced to about the normal level found in a subject not in need of treatment.

[0141] In another non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the composition may be administered in an amount effective to reduce the level of serum HDL cholesterol in a subject in need of treatment. The composition may reduce the level of serum HDL cholesterol of the subject by about 5%, 10%, 20%, 50%, 90% or 95% such that the level of serum HDL cholesterol is reduced to about the normal level found in a subject not in need of treatment.

[0142] In another non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the composition may be administered in an amount effective to reduce the level of triglycerides in a subject in need of treatment. The composition may reduce the level of triglycerides of the subject by about 5%, 10%, 20%, 50%, 90% or 95% such that the level of triglycerides is reduced to about the normal level found in a subject not in need of treatment.

[0143] In a further non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the normal level of total serum cholesterol is about 200 mg/dl or less, the normal level of serum LDL cholesterol is about 100 mg/dl or less, the normal level of serum HDL cholesterol is about 60 mg/dl or more, and the normal level of triglycerides is about 150 mg/dl or less (American Heart Association website, Jan. 30, 2007).

[0144] In another non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the composition may be administered in an amount effective to reduce the presence of one or more microorganism with an atherosclerotic plaque, for example, but not limited to *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* and *Chlamydia pneumoniae*, wherein the reduction in microorganism presence is indicated by a reduction in the detection of the microorganisms' antigens. According to the invention, the reduction in antigen detection is between about 0.1 and 100%, and most preferably 99% as compared to the antigen detection in an untreated subject.

[0145] In another non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the composition may be administered in an amount effective to reduce the amount of an agent, for example a microbe or microbe nucleic acid, in the serum, blood or plasma of a subject in need of treatment. The composition may reduce the amount of agent in the serum, blood or plasma by about 5%, 10%, 20%, 50%, 90% or 95% such that the amount of agent is reduced to about the normal level found in a subject not in need of treatment.

[0146] In another non-limiting embodiment of the invention, the composition may be administered in an amount effective to reduce the amount of an agent, for example a microbe or microbe nucleic acid, in a cell culture of a sample, for example, a cancer cell sample, from a subject in need of

treatment. The composition may reduce the amount of agent in the cell culture by about 5%, 10%, 20%, 50%, 90% or 95% such that the amount of agent is reduced to about the normal level found in a subject not in need of treatment.

[0147] The composition may be administered locally or systemically, for example, by injection, orally, occularly, rectally, topically, or by any other means known in the art. The composition may be ingested as a liquid, a pill, or a capsule (e.g. liquid or powder-filled).

[0148] In one non-limiting embodiment, the composition may comprise a trans-sialidase, a metal chelator, for example, but not limited to, PDTC, NTA, diphenylthiocarbazone(dithizone), histidine, DP-109, EGTA, EDTA, DMPS, Lysinoalanine, Synthetic lysinoalanine, tetracycline, ALA, Dimercaptosuccinic acid, DMSA, Calcium disodium versante, D-penicillamine, Deferoxamine, Defarasirox, Dimer-caprol, and DTPA; and one or more purified plant extract. The trans-sialidase may have an enzymatic activity of between about 0.01 and 10 U/ml, more preferably between about 0.2 and 5 U/ml, more preferably between about 0.5 and 2 U/ml and most preferably about 1.0 U/ml. The metal chelator may have a concentration of between about 0.01 and 10 mg/ml, more preferably between about 0.5 and 5 mg/ml, more preferably between about 1 and 2 mg/ml, and most preferably 1.5 mg/ml. The purified plant extract may comprise a particle concentration of between about 1×10^5 and 1×10^7 particles/ml, more preferably between about 5×10^6 and 9×10^6 particles/ml, more preferably between about 2×10^6 and 3×10^6 particles/ml, and most preferably about 1.0×10^5 particles/ml.

[0149] In a specific non-limiting embodiment, the composition is administered as an injection, wherein the composition comprises a trans-sialidase, PDTC and one or more purified plant extract, further wherein the trans-sialidase has an enzymatic activity of 1.04 U/ml, the PDTC has a concentration of 1.5 mg/ml, and the purified plant extract has a particle concentration of 1.0×10^6 particles/ml.

[0150] In an alternative non-limiting embodiment, the composition may comprise a trans-sialidase, a metal chelator, and one or more purified plant extract, wherein the trans-sialidase comprises an enzymatic activity of between about 1×10^{-8} and 1×10^{-4} U/ml, more preferably between about 1×10^{-7} and 1×10^{-5} U/ml, more preferably between about 1×10^{-6} and 5×10^{-6} U/ml and most preferably about 1.5×10^{-6} U/ml. The metal chelator may have a concentration of between about 0.01 and 10 mg/ml, more preferably between about 0.5 and 5 mg/ml, more preferably between about 1 and 2 mg/ml, and most preferably 1.5 mg/ml. The purified plant extract may comprise a particle concentration of between about 1×10^5 and 1×10^7 particles/ml, more preferably between about 2×10^6 and 9×10^6 particles/ml, more preferably between about 3×10^6 and 7×10^6 particles/ml, and most preferably about 5×10^6 particles/ml.

[0151] In a specific non-limiting embodiment, the composition is administered orally as a liquid, wherein the composition comprises a trans-sialidase and one or more purified plant extract, further wherein the trans-sialidase has an enzymatic activity of 1.3×10^{-6} U/ml and the purified plant extract has a particle concentration of 5.0×10^6 particles/ml.

[0152] In another non-limiting embodiment, the composition is administered in an amount of between 0.002 and 5.0 ml/kg, more preferably between 0.1 and 2.0 ml/kg, more preferably between 0.2 and 1.0 ml/kg, and most preferably about 0.25-0.5 ml/kg.

[0153] In a further non-limiting embodiment, the composition may be administered once, twice, three, four, five, or six or more times per day during the treatment period. Alternatively, the composition may be administered once every two, three, four, five, six or seven or more days.

[0154] In a non-limiting example of the invention, the composition is a mixture of trans-sialidase and PDTC, wherein the trans-sialidase has an activity of about 1.04 U/ml and the PDTC is at a concentration of 1.5 mg/ml, and wherein the composition is administered via intraperitoneal or intravenous injection at a volume of about 25-0.5 ml/kg every other day.

[0155] In a further non-limiting example of the invention, the mixture of trans-sialidase and PDTC is supplemented with a purified plant extract diluted 1:10 in purified water, and containing an average of 1.0×10^6 nanoparticles/ml. The plant extract dilution is administered through intraperitoneal injections once per day for a four week treatment period. Examples of mixtures include, but are not limited to, TS+PDTC, TS+PDTC+AS extract, TS+PDTC+AS+GB extracts, and TS+PDTC+AS+GB+ZO extracts. For each of the mixtures, the TS+PDTC may be injected intravenously or ingested orally in an amount of 0.25-0.5 ml/kg every other day during a 12 week treatment session, wherein the mixture comprises 1.04 U/ml TS activity and 1.5 mg/ml PDTC. Each of the plant extracts comprise a 1:10 plant extract:water dilution which further comprise 1.0×10^6 nanoparticles/ml. A total volume of 1 ml of diluted plant extract is injected intraperitoneally once daily during the 12 week treatment period. When more than one diluted plant extract is used, the different extracts are mixed in equal volumes.

[0156] In other non-limiting embodiments of the invention, success of treatment for atherosclerosis and/or a mycoplasma associated disease, cardiotoxicity, heart disease or heart failure in a cancer patient receiving treatment for cancer, or Chagas disease cardiomyopathy can be determined by detecting archaea and/or mycoplasma and/or chlamydia and/or spirochete forms or their products in the serum or atherosclerotic lesions of a patient. In one non-limiting embodiment, a decrease in the number of archaea and/or mycoplasma and/or chlamydia and/or spirochete forms or their products in the serum or in the atherosclerotic lesions of a patient indicates successful treatment.

[0157] In one non-limiting embodiment, a method for monitoring success of treatment for a disorder characterized by undesirable cell proliferation in a subject, cardiotoxicity, heart disease or heart failure in a cancer patient receiving treatment for cancer, or Chagas disease cardiomyopathy comprises obtaining a first sample from the subject; obtaining a second sample from the subject, wherein the second sample is obtained after the first sample; and detecting the presence of an agent (e.g., archaea and/or mycoplasma and/or chlamydia and/or spirochete) in the first and second samples, wherein a decrease in the number or concentration of agent in the second sample compared to the first sample indicates treatment success.

in vitro Assay

[0158] The present invention also provides for in vitro methods for selecting a composition of the present invention for use in treating a disorder characterized by undesirable cell proliferation, heart failure caused by injury or Chagas disease, dilated cardiomyopathy, cancer or cardiotoxicity during cancer treatment. In one embodiment, the in vitro method

comprises assaying the effect of a composition of the present invention in reducing the presence of an agent in a sample from a patient, for example, a serum, blood or plasma sample, or a cell culture of a patient sample, for example, a cancer cell sample. In certain embodiments, the agent is a microbe or microbe nucleic acid. In one embodiment, the composition that is most effective in reducing the presence of the agent in the sample is selected for use in treating the patient.

EXAMPLES

Example 1

Treatment of Aortic Atherosclerotic Plaques in Rabbits with Trans-Sialidase, PdTC, and Plant Extracts

[0159] The present study compares the effects of trans-sialidase (TS) enzyme derived from *Trypanosoma cruzi*, PDTC and one or more aged plant extracts derived from *Allium sativum* (AS), *Ginkgo biloba* (GB) and *Zingiber officinale* (ZO), on the reduction of aortic atherosclerotic plaques, lipid serum levels and infectious agent antigens at intima in rabbits receiving cholesterol-rich-diet.

Material and Methods

[0160] White New Zealand male rabbits of approximately 2 months in age, weighing 2.2±0.5 kg were included in the study. The study lasted 12 weeks. The rabbits were divided into six different treatment groups. Group I animals received normal rabbit chow, while Groups II-VI received normal rabbit chow supplemented with 1% cholesterol. Animals received the diets for a period of 12 weeks. Groups III-VI also received anti-atherosclerotic treatment during the final 4 weeks of the study. The feeding and treatment schedule is shown in Table II.

TABLE II

Feeding and treatment schedule for the six study Groups.			
Group	Number of Rabbits in Group	Diet	Anti-Atherosclerotic Treatment (final 4 weeks of study)
GI.	13	Normal rabbit chow	None
GII.	13	Normal rabbit chow + 1% cholesterol	None
GIII.	5	Normal rabbit chow + 1% cholesterol	TS + PDTC
GIV.	5	Normal rabbit chow + 1% cholesterol	TS + PDTC + AS extract
GV.	5	Normal rabbit chow + 1% cholesterol	TS + PDTC + AS + GB extracts
GVI.	5	Normal rabbit chow + 1% cholesterol	TS + PDTC + AS + GB + ZO extracts

Diet Preparation

[0161] Nuvilab® (Nuvital. Curitiba, PR. Brazil) was used as the normal rabbit chow in the study. Normal rabbit chow supplemented with 1% cholesterol was prepared by adding 10 g of cholesterol powder (Sigma—C 8503) dissolved in a solution of 50 ml ethyl ether and 100 ml 70% ethanol, to each Kg of normal rabbit chow

Trans-Sialidase (TS) Preparation

[0162] *Trypanosoma cruzi* were cultured according to Kloetzel et al. (Kloetzel et al., 1984, *Trypanosoma cruzi* interaction with macrophages: differences between tissue culture

and bloodstream forms. Rev. Inst. Med. Trop. Sao Paulo., 26:179-85). Supernatant from the culture was filtered through a 1 µm pore filter in a vacuum chamber, or the supernatant was filtered through a 0.22 µm filter and concentrated by precipitation with 50% (NH₄)₂SO₄. The precipitates were dialyzed against phosphate-buffered saline, and then passed through a tressylarose column containing an immobilized anti-trans-sialidase monoclonal antibody. The column was washed with phosphate-buffered saline, followed by a 10 mM sodium phosphate, pH 6.5 wash. The trans-sialidase was eluted with a 3.5 mM MgCl₂, 10mM sodium phosphate, pH 6.0 solution. The fractions eluted from the column were immediately filtered through a Sephadex G-25 column equilibrated with 20mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.0, to remove MgCl₂. The trans-sialidase was further purified by passage through a Mono Q column equilibrated in 20 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.0, and eluted with a linear gradient from 0 to 1 M NaCl in the same buffer.

[0163] The purified enzyme derived from the culture comprises a 400 kDa multimeric aggregate. The enzymatic activity of the purified trans-sialidase was measured according to methods described in International Patent Application No. PCT/BR01/00083, filed Jul. 3, 2001. Purified trans-sialidase used in the study had an enzymatic activity of 1.3 U/ml.

Plant Extract Preparation

[0164] Plant (*Allium sativum* (AS) cloves, *Ginkgo biloba* leaves (GB) and *Zingiber officinale* (ZO) raw) extracts were prepared by introducing sliced plant tissue into a 10-20% aqueous ethanol solution. The plant/ethanol mixture was adjusted to a final proportion of 40:60 plant weight:ethanol and stored for up to 12 months at room temperature in a dark, anaerobic environment (in a sealed bottle). Following storage, the plant mass/alcohol mixture was passed through Whatman qualitative filter paper grade 1, diameter 24 cm, pore size 11 µm. The liquid filtrate was then filtered again in a vacuum chamber with a 47 mm diameter glass microfiber filter, pore size 1.1 µm. Then filtrate was next filtered through successively smaller pores, in a tangential flow device (Minitan Ultrafiltration Millipore System -Millipore, Bedford, Mass., USA), using the microporous membrane packet (30, 000 NMWL) that concentrates large particles. The filtrated portion of the extract was used in the study.

Trans-Sialidase (TS)+PDTC Anti-Atherosclerotic Treatment

[0165] Rabbits were treated with 0.25-0.5 ml/kg of a trans-sialidase+PDTC mixture injected intraperitoneally on alternative days. 1 ml of the treatment mixture comprised 0.8 ml of *Trypanosoma cruzi* culture supernatant (enzymatic activity of 1.3 U/ml) and 1.5 mg of PDTC (pyrrolidine dithiocarbamate ammonium salt from ICN Biomedicals Inc., Aurora, Ohio, USA.) dissolved in 0.2 ml of saline.

Trans-Sialidase (TS)+PDTC+Plant Extract Anti-Atherosclerotic Treatment

[0166] Animals were treated with the trans-sialidase+PDTC solution as described above along with 1 ml of a purified plant extract dilution containing an average of 1×10⁶ nanoparticles. The plant extract dilution was administered through intraperitoneal injections once per day during the four week treatment period. The purified plant extract dilution was generated by diluting an aged ethanolic plant extract 1:10 in water.

Serum Lipid Analysis

[0167] Serum lipid analysis was performed at the beginning and end of the 12 week experiment. To obtain the blood

serum, a 10 ml blood sample was taken from each animal through cardiac puncture, and centrifuged at 1500 g for 15 min at 4° C. Total cholesterol, high-density lipoprotein (HDL) and triglycerides concentrations were determined by enzymatic methods (CHOD-PAP Merck®, USA. and GPO-PAP Cobas Mira, Roche®).

Aortic Atherosclerotic Lesions Analysis

[0168] To analyze aortic atherosclerotic lesions, rabbits were euthanized with an intramuscular injection of 25 mg/kg Ketamine and 2-5 mg/kg Xilazina. Aorta were excised and opened longitudinally along the anterior wall, washed in saline, stretched on cardboard, and placed in 10% buffered formalin. Aorta were then stained with Sudan IV. Intimal positive areas stained in red by Sudan IV were measured by automatic detection using an image analysis system (Quantimet 500, Leica).

[0169] Histological examination of the aorta were also performed. A 1 cm thickness cross-section of the initial descending thoracic aorta were taken and embedded in paraffin. 5 µm serial sections of the cross-section were submitted to H&E stain and immunohistochemical detection of *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* (MP) and *Chlamydia pneumoniae* (CP) antigens, as previously described. (Fagundes RQ. Study of co-participation of natural infection by *Chlamydia pneumoniae* and *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* in experimental atherogenesis in rabbits. Doctoral thesis presented at the Heart Institute of Clinical Hospital, in the Cardiology Sciences Post graduation Program of Sao Paulo University School of Medicine, Mar. 17, 2006). The percentage of area positive for infectious agent antigens on the immunostained slides was determined using an automatic color detection system (Image Analysis System Quantimet 500, Leica, Germany).

Results

[0170] The mean and standard deviation values of percentage areas of fat plaques (macroscopically) and of MP and CP

antigens at intima, and intimal area in 1 cm cross section are shown at table III. Lipid levels in the serum are reported at table IV.

Atherosclerotic Plaques and Lipid Levels

[0171] The control group, Group I, which received normal rabbit chow and no anti-atherosclerotic treatment, did not develop plaques on the aortal walls. Trace amounts of MP and CP antigens on the aorta wall were detected, but in all cases, without development of atheroma plaques.

[0172] Group II, which received normal food supplemented with 1% cholesterol and no anti-atherosclerotic treatment, presented 75% coverage of the aorta intimal surface by severe lipid atheroma plaques stained with Sudan IV. (FIG. 1). The histology revealed that the plaques were comprised of 89% fat.

[0173] Group III, which received normal food supplemented with 1% cholesterol and treatment with TS+PDTC, exhibited 50% coverage of the aorta intimal surface by severe lipid atheroma plaques stained with Sudan IV. (FIG. 1).

[0174] Groups IV, V and VI, which received normal food supplemented with 1% cholesterol and treatment with TS+PDTC+Plant extracts, presented progressively smaller areas of atherosclerotic plaque coverage of the aorta wall (Table III). The addition of AS to the treatment regime reduced the levels of total cholesterol and HDL in the blood serum (Table IV), but did not reduce the % plaque area of atheroma (Table III), and induced a decrease in aorta perimeter, indicating a negative remodeling of the vessel. The addition of AS+GB to the treatment led to a significant reduction in both % area of intimal plaques and cholesterol levels in the serum. The most effective anti-atherosclerotic effect was observed with a complex of plant extracts from AS, GB and ZO, which reduced the area of the aorta wall covered by plaque to 11%, and returned lipid levels in the serum to normal levels (Table IV). Most of the remaining intimal plaques were fibrotic, largely free of foam cells (FIG. 1). Treatment with AS, GB and ZO extracts reduced both intimal area and % of intraplaque fat (Table III).

TABLE III

Intimal Area and Percentage Areas of Aorta Atheroma Plaques, Fat and Infectious Agents in Aortic Plaques of 1% Cholesterol-Fed Rabbits Submitted to Different Treatments.					
Group	% area <i>C. pneumoniae</i> + Mean (SD)	% area <i>M. pneumoniae</i> + Mean (SD)	% Plaque area - macroscopic Mean (SD)	% plaque fat Mean (SD)	Intima area (mm ²) Mean (SD)
GI	0.007 (0.005)	0.013 (0.012)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
GII	23.50 (5.66)	25.60 (3.96)	75 (9)	89 (5)	75 (7)
GIII	16.04 (0.60)	12.81 (1.27)	50 (3)	50 (3)	65 (4)
GIV	12.60 (0.85)	10.53 (0.51)	67 (14)	61 (10)	61 (8)
GV	8.60 (0.21)	4.57 (0.51)	42 (8)	40 (14)	39 (6)
GVI	0.022 (0.005)	0.02 (0.005)	11 (1)	17 (10)	17 (2)

TABLE IV

Cholesterol Fractions and Triglycerides Serum Levels of 1% Cholesterol-Fed Rabbits Submitted to Different Treatments.								
Group	Total cholesterol		Triglycerides		HDL		LDL	
	Mean (SD)	p	Mean (SD)	p	Mean (SD)	p	Mean (SD)	p
GI	67 (31)	0.17	64 (13)	0.01	42 (7)	<0.01	33 (24)	0.09
GII	1029 (237)	<0.01	115 (55)	<0.01	210 (52)	<0.01	775 (227)	<0.01

TABLE IV-continued

Cholesterol Fractions and Triglycerides Serum Levels of 1% Cholesterol-Fed Rabbits Submitted to Different Treatments.								
Group	Total cholesterol		Triglycerides		HDL		LDL	
	Mean (SD)	p	Mean (SD)	p	Mean (SD)	p	Mean (SD)	p
GIII	873 (82)	0.09	95 (10)	0.22	175 (17)	0.08	743 (92)	0.38
GIV	778 (58)	0.02	86 (9)	0.13	115 (11)	<0.01	635 (60)	0.10
GV	408 (69)	<0.01	51 (6)	<0.01	90 (6)	<0.01	335 (29)	<0.01
GVI	53 (6)	<0.01	47 (8)	0.26	36 (3)	<0.01	18 (6)	<0.01

Values shown are in mg/dl.

GI—control group not receiving cholesterol diet; GII—non treated; GIII—received trans-sialidase (TS) and pyrrolidine dithiocarbamate (PDTC); GIV—received TS + PDTC + *Allium Sativum* extract (AS); GV—treated with TS + PDTC + AS + *Ginkgo biloba* extract (GB) and GVI—received TS + PDTC + AS + GB + *Zingiber officinale* extract; SD—standard deviation
p—represents difference regarding the respective values of the above group, except GI values which were compared with group GVI (level of significance 5%)

Mycoplasma pneumoniae and *Chlamydia pneumoniae* Antigens

[0175] Treatment with TS+PDTC (Group III) reduced the percent area of MP antigen expression from 25.6 ± 3.96 to 12.81 ± 1.27 ($p < 0.01$) and CP antigen expression from 23.50 ± 5.66 to 16.04 ± 0.60 ($p < 0.001$) as compared to Group II animals that received no anti-atherosclerotic treatment. Addition of plant extracts caused a progressively more significant decrease in percentage area positive for CP and MP antigens at intima. When all three plant extracts were used in the anti-atherosclerotic treatment, the reduction was more effective. Use of all three extracts reduced the percentage of total area expressing MP antigen to 0.022 ± 0.005 and CP antigens to 0.022 ± 0.005 . These values were similar to the control group (Group I) (Table III). Macroscopic and microscopic aspects of different groups are exemplified at the FIG. 1.

Conclusion

[0176] In conclusion, the present study indicates a new formulation for the treatment of atherosclerosis, using a combination of *T. cruzi* trans-sialidase, PDTC and three aged plant extracts: *Allium sativum*, *Ginkgo biloba* and *Zingiber officinale*. Treatment with these compounds was effective in reducing intimal accumulation of both fat and *C. pneumoniae* plus *M. pneumoniae* antigens. The lipid serum levels returned to normal levels even in the permanence of a cholesterol rich diet.

Example 2

Treatment of Human Patients Exhibiting High Total Cholesterol and LDL Levels with Trans-sialidase and Plant Extracts

[0177] Three volunteers who presented high levels of total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol fraction in blood serum were treated with purified trans-sialidase and aged plant extracts.

Materials and Methods

Plant Extract Preparation

[0178] Plant (*Allium sativum* (AS) cloves, *Ginkgo biloba* leaves (GB), *Zingiber officinale* raws (ZO) and *Pfafia paniculata* (Brazilian ginseng) roots (GS)) extracts were prepared by introducing sliced plant tissue into a 10-20% aqueous ethanol solution. The plant/ethanol mixture was adjusted

to a final proportion of 40:60 plant weight:ethanol and stored for up to 12 months at room temperature in a dark, anaerobic environment (in a sealed bottle). Following storage, the plant mass/alcohol mixture was passed through Whatman qualitative filter paper grade 1, diameter 24 cm, pore size 11 μ m. The liquid filtrate was then filtered again in a vacuum chamber with a 47 mm diameter glass microfiber filter, pore size 1.1 μ m. Then filtrate was next filtered through successively smaller pores, in a tangential flow device (Minitan Ultrafiltration Millipore System, Millipore, Bedford, Mass., USA), using the microporous membrane packet (30,000 NMWL) that concentrates large particles. The filtrated portion of the extract was used in the experiments.

Recombinant Trans-Sialidase Purification

[0179] Recombinant trans-sialidase was produced and purified from the *Escherichia coli* strain BLB21 DE3 inserted with a pTSII plasmidium comprising the *T. cruzi* trans-sialidase gene as described in International Patent Publication WO/2002/002050 by Higuchi et al., published Jan. 10, 2002.

[0180] The protein concentration of 5 mg/ml was produced as measured with a spectrophotometer. The recombinant trans-sialidase was diluted in a buffer liquid (TBS+BSA 0.2%), and the activity was measured according to previously described methods (International Patent Publication WO/2002/002050). The purified enzyme was diluted 1:10,000 and 1:100,000 resulting in enzymatic activities of 15,000 and 5,000 CPM, respectively. For human oral administration, the trans-sialidase was diluted 1:1,000,000 (0.005 mg/ml) in MilliQ purified water, and stored at 4° C.

Preparation and Administration of Oral Drug

[0181] Equal proportions of pure extracts from *Allium sativum* (AS); *Ginkgo biloba* (GB) *Zingiber officinale* (ZO) and ginseng (GS) were mixed. The mixture was then diluted 1:1 in thermal water (from Irai, RS, Brazil), which was previously boiled and filtered.

[0182] Trans-sialidase diluted 1:1,000,000 (0.005 mg/ml) was administered to the subjects. A mean of 200 μ l to 500 μ l (4-10 drops) of diluted trans-sialidase was added in a glass of water and ingested daily.

[0183] Three volunteers who presented high levels of total cholesterol and serum LDL cholesterol were treated with the oral compositions for a minimum of 30 days to over one year.

The volunteers were administered orally 200 ul of the diluted plant extract composition 2x/day, and 200 ul of the diluted trans-sialidase composition 1 x/day. The patients were also being treated with other anti-cholesterol drugs (statins). Following treatment, the volunteers presented normal total cholesterol and serum LDL cholesterol levels, wherein the mean level of decrease in serum cholesterol levels following treatment was 20%. This decrease was observed even if statins had been previously used to lower serum cholesterol levels.

Example 3

Tobacco Extracts Contain Large Lipidic Pathogenic Archaea that can be Removed by Incubation in Thermal Water

[0184] Tobacco extracts:

[0185] Tobacco extracts were obtained by removing the contents from a packet of commercial tobacco cigarettes, and adding the contents to 80 ml of water. The tobacco/water mixture was then mixed with 500 ml of ethanol (92% ethanol). The tobacco/water/alcohol mixture was then aged in a sealed bottle for 12 months. Following 12 months of aging, the mixture was filtered through Whatman qualitative filter paper (grade 1, diameter 24 cm, pore size 11 μm). The filtrate was then filtered a second time through vacuum chambers comprising a 47 mm diameter glass microfiber filter with a pore size of 1.1 μm .

[0186] The filtrate was analyzed with fluorescent and electron microscopy as described in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 20050142116. Fluorescent microscopy of filtrate stained with acridine orange showed a large number of both large particles and nanoparticles containing DNA or RNA, but the filtrate was predominated by the large particles.

[0187] Analysis of the filtrate with electron microscopy showed that the two particles were the two types of archaea described previously: very small and clear structures of about 0.03-0.15 μm in diameter (see FIG. 4), which correspond to non-pathogenic archaea; and large particles (0.15-0.24 μm), along with other electron dense lipidic structures, which correspond to pathogenic archaea (see FIG. 5). The large archaea particles may also be observed as round brilliant red particles under fluorescent microscopy.

[0188] The pathogenic large particle archaea are also found in human periadventitial adipose tissue of atherosclerotic aortic aneurysms. Analysis of human periadventitial adipose tissue of atherosclerotic aortic aneurysms with electron microscopy showed that this tissue contained a large number of the large lipidic particles surrounded by inflammatory infiltrate archaea surrounded by inflammatory lymphocytes (FIGS. 6) suggesting that the particles are recognized as foreign structures by the immune system. High magnification of these lipidic particles (FIG. 7) shows that the particles contain a clear external membrane, indicating that these particles correspond to microbes (large lipidic archaea), and not to lipidic droplets in the cytoplasm. These lipidic large archaea have the same morphology as the large particles that predominate tobacco extract, and as shown in FIGS. 5 and 6. Preparation of the Therapeutic Extract from Tobacco:

[0189] As described previously, diluting and aging plant ethanolic extracts results in an extract enriched with non-pathogenic archaeas (see U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 20050142116). For example, diluting an ethanolic plant extract with thermal medicinal water (from Iran city in South of Brazil) in a proportion of 1:10 (extract/water), and aging

the mixture for 30 days, results in a reduction of the large lipidic archaea particles, while retaining the small non-pathogenic archaea. Extracts with enriched non-pathogenic archaea have been shown to be useful in the treatment of atherosclerosis and lowering serum lipids. Accordingly, tobacco extract prepared as described above and aged for 12 months was diluted 1:10 in thermal water, and aged for an additional 30 days.

[0190] Atherosclerosis was induced in a rabbit by feeding the rabbit with a high cholesterol diet (5% cholesterol) for 12 weeks. Following the 8 weeks of the feeding period, 0.5 ml samples of the aged 1:10 tobacco extract/thermal water mixture (which was enriched with non-pathogenic archaea) was subcutaneously injected into the rabbit's ear, twice a week, during the last 4 weeks of cholesterol enriched diet program. The animal was then sacrificed followed by macroscopic and microscopic analysis of the ascending and descending thoracic aorta. Both analyses did not show any atheroma plaques in the ascending or descending thoracic aorta, which are normally present following a cholesterol enriched feeding program (see FIG. 1).

Conclusion

[0191] The use of thermal medicinal water to dilute aged ethanolic plant extracts is effective in eliminating undesirable pathogenic large particle archaea, and preserving non-pathogenic archaea present in the extracts. Such an observation is observable by direct visualization of the plant extract mixture with fluorescent microscopy before and after diluting the extract with thermal water. Thus, the use of thermal water to purify plant extracts may increase the therapeutic and medicinal properties of the extracts. For example, non-pathogenic archaea present in tobacco extract may be enriched through purification with thermal water, and used to treat cholesterol induced atherosclerosis. One hypothetical mechanism of the success of such a treatment is that in human atherosclerotic lesions, such as aneurysms or unstable plaques that cause myocardial infarction, there are higher numbers of pathogenic archaea. These pathogenic archaea in the lesions may be increased by the use of tobacco products. Surprisingly, increasing the non-pathogenic archaea present in tobacco extracts by diluting the extracts with thermal water, may enable tobacco to be used as a treatment to combat the pathogenic archaea and atherosclerosis.

Example 4

Evaluation of Serum Sample from Patient with Coronary Artery Disease (CAD)

[0192] Lipoprotein from *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* and lipopolysaccharide (LPS) from *Chlamydia pneumoniae* were detected in the serum, by immunoelectron microscopy.

[0193] One ml of serum from the patient was processed to detect lipid particles, such as archaea. Lipoprotein from *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* was in greater amount in the serum of atherosclerotic patients and LPS from *Chlamydia pneumoniae* was increased in the serum of patients with acute myocardial infarction. Particles of C reactive protein (CRP) were also detectable by immunoelectron microscopy and their number increased in correlation with the number of mycoplasmal lipoprotein. The mean numbers of CRP and *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* particles/ mm^2 of electron microscopy photos were higher in CAD patients (1.45+/-0.50 and 1.32+/-1.35) than in healthy subjects with similar age

(1.05 ± 0.29 and 0.26 ± 0.20) ($p<0.01$), and were correlated with each other only in atherosclerotic patients group. The success of treatment may therefore be determined by measuring the particles of lipoprotein from mycoplasma, LPS from *Chlamydia pneumoniae* or pathogenic archaea in the serum, as shown in FIG. 9.

Example 5

Detection of Archaea and Microbes in Serum

[0194] Archaea and other microbes were concentrated from human serum and plasma using a modified technique for separating mitochondria and other organelles from tissue (Bustamante et al., Biochemical and Biophysical Research Communications. 334:907-910, 2005).

[0195] To separate serum from blood, 10 ml of blood was incubated for 1 hour in a water bath to form a blood clot that could be separated from the supernatant. Serum was isolated from the supernatant and blood clot by centrifuging the mixture at 2000 rpm for 5 minutes.

[0196] 1 ml of serum was then prepared for electron microscopy by adding 1.0 ml of glutaraldehyde fixative and 1.0 ml of Osmium tetroxide to the serum. The treated serum was then centrifuged, and the resulting pellet was processed and embedded in glutaraldehyde. Thin sections of the pellet were prepared and examined under an electron microscope.

[0197] H medium (200 mM D-mannitol, 70 mM sucrose, 2 mM Hepes and 0.5 g/L defatted BSA, pH 7.2) was added to the remaining serum and centrifuged at 11400 rpm for 12 minutes at 4° C. The resulting supernatant and pellet were collected. The pellet was resuspended in H medium, and both the pellet and supernatant were analyzed using electron microscopy and PCR.

Results

[0198] The supernatants of the serum were predominantly rich in clear double membrane surrounding vesicles containing archaeal DNA, while the pellets contained mainly electron dense structures suggestive of rickettsia, Chlamydia, spirochete, and mycoplasma bodies.

Example 6

Chagas Cardiopathy is Associated with Archaea

[0199] Archaea-like bodies were found in association with Chagas' disease in two morphological types: one with electron dense lipidic content (EDL) and other with electron lucent content (ELC) (Higuchi et al. Mem Inst Oswaldo Cruz 2009; 104 (Suppl 1): 199-207). *T. cruzi* is the aetiological agent of Chagas' disease, but most of the patient become asymptomatic during all their lives, only around 30% of the infected patients develop Dilated Cardiomyopathy related to an apparently autoimmune myocarditis. Proteasomes are organelles that rid the cells of abnormal proteins and trypsinosomes has been discovered to carry proteasomes from archaea, and it has been considered an evolutionary endosymbiotic mechanism.

[0200] Archaeal-like organelles and archaeal genome were present in all endomyocardial samples. Electron microscopy electron dense lipidic (EDL) organelles containing archaeal DNA in chagasic endomyocardial biopsies (EB) were observed. There was a significant negative correlation between numbers of ED organelles vs. amount of archaeal DNA dots outside of ED in IF (indeterminate asymptomatic

form) ($r=-0.46$), and lack of correlation in HF (heart failure) group ($r=-0.11$), suggesting that EDL archaea-like organelles are associated with IF patients.

[0201] Patients with chagasic cardiomyopathy had smaller archaeal organelles (0.10 ± 0.08 vs. 0.24 ± 0.12 μm , $p<0.05$) and lower number of archaeal genome dots (0.07 ± 0.07 vs. $0.28\pm 0.10/\mu\text{m}^2$, $p<0.05$), as compared to patients without chagasic cardiomyopathy. In patients without heart disease there was a negative correlation between numbers of archaeal organelle bodies and the number of archaeal genome dots in the extracellular matrix ($r=-0.77$); in patients with heart disease there was a positive correlation ($r=0.69$).

[0202] The control normal case did not show intramyocyte archaeal-like organelles. Scarce archaeal DNA points were seen in foci of extracellular matrix (mean of $0.41/\mu\text{m}^2$).

[0203] Thus, archaeal DNA and different types of archaeal-like bodies are present in chagasic patients that may be related with prevention of "autoimmune" myocarditis in indeterminate form or inducing inflammation and fibrosis in heart failure CC (chronic cardiopathy) form.

Example 7

Archaea and Microbes may be Detected in the Serum of Chagas Disease Patients

[0204] The serum of 3 patients with dilated chagasic cardiomyopathy were analyzed. A large amount of different primitive microbial bodies associated with empty pathogenic archaea were observed, as demonstrated in FIG. 10. This amount of microbial bodies was not seen in chronic atherosclerotic patients, nor in healthy individuals. This finding strongly suggests that the analysis of the serum may be an important biomarker for specific therapeutic proposals.

Example 8

Histology of the Myocardium from "Normal" Donor Hearts vs. Dysfunction of the Organ after Heart Transplantation

[0205] Donor heart myocardial histology were evaluated, focusing on inflammation which may correlate with mortality after heart transplantation (HT) within 30 days after HT.

[0206] Methods—20 donor hearts were biopsied at the right ventricle immediately before the HT surgery and analyzed histologically and by immunohistochemistry (T cells and CD68 macrophages). The myocardial histology of patients who died due to dysfunction of the transplanted organ was compared with the others.

[0207] Results—Patients with heart dysfunction had a significant higher amount of lymphocytic infiltrate in the myocardium previously to the HT (12 ± 4.6 cells/ mm^2) compared with those who did not die (3.75 ± 3.57 cells/ mm^2) ($p<0.011$).

[0208] In conclusion, the inflammatory infiltrate in the myocardium may be a risk biomarker for early mortality after HT.

[0209] Additionally, studies at the electron microscopy level in an ongoing study suggests the presence of pathogenic

archaea in the serum and in the myocardium of the donor hearts who died in the period of 30 days after HT.

Example 9

The Associate of Archaea, Mycoplasma and Chlamydia with Cancer Cells

[0210] Intimal association of three different microorganisms in human cancer cells have been observed in morphological studies. The three microorganisms were mycoplasmas, chlamydias and archaeas.

[0211] *Chlamydia pneumoniae*, *Mycoplasma pneumoniae*, *Mycoplasma pulmonis* and archaeas were detected in 22 of 23 different malignant neoplasias using immunohistochemistry, in situ hybridization, confocal laser microscopy, immunofluorescence and electron microscopy techniques. Similarly, analysis of primary cell cultures of colon adenocarcinoma cells using immunofluorescence, electron microscopy and PCR showed that the microorganisms were also present. Except for one renal clear cell carcinoma without nuclear aberration, all of the neoplasias were highly positive for mycoplasmal antigens. In situ hybridization revealed *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* DNA in the cytoplasm and nuclei of most of the malignant cells. Additionally, the *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* DNA was also observed to be present in inflammatory cells adjacent to the malignant cells.

[0212] Electron microscopy showed filifoiui prolongings on the neoplastic cell surface and rounded tubule structures. Such structures are morphologically characteristic of mycoplasmas and archaeas (e.g., the presentation of double evolutory membrane, rounded electron dense vesicles resembling lysosome, and other irregularly shaped vesicles with electron lucent content, see FIG. 11). Furthermore, *C. pneumoniae* elementary bodies were detected in the cytoplasm of the neoplastic cells.

[0213] As such, malignant pleomorphic cells contain different species of mycoplasma, *Chlamydia pneumoniae* and archaeas. The intimal association of these agents may result in an increased virulence of these agents, promoting cellular invasion. Accordingly, detection of such agents in tissue sample from a subject can be used as a means for diagnosing cancerous cells, or for monitoring the success of a cancer treatment.

Example 10

Archaea as a Biomarker of Cardiotoxicity in Cancer

[0214] Many anti-cancer agents may have significant potential for cardiovascular toxicities that include QT prolongation and arrhythmias, the induction of myocardial ischemia and infarction (e.g., resulting from treatment with antimetabolites), hypertension or venous and arterial thrombo-embolism (e.g., resulting from treatment with the anti-angiogenic agents bevacizumab, sorafenib, sunitinib, and pazopanib), and cardiac dysfunction or heart failure. The latter is variable in severity, may be reversible or irreversible, can occur immediately or as a delayed consequence of treatment, and may involve diastolic as well as systolic dysfunction. Biomarkers that precociously indicate the potential of cardiotoxic side effects of cancer treatment would be beneficial (see, Eschenhagen et al., "Cardiovascular side effects of cancer therapies: a position statement from the Heart Failure Association of the European Society of Cardiology." *European Journal of Heart Failure*, 13:1-10, 2011).

[0215] The presence of archaea in the serum of cancer patients, as well as the presence of pathogenic electron lucent archaea, similar to those described above in chagasic patients, in cancer patient serum, are associated with cancer treatment cardiotoxicity. The detection of these biomarkers can be used to diagnose the presence or likelihood of developing cardiotoxicity in cancer patients receiving cancer treatment.

[0216] The sera of 5 cancer patients was examined using the same technique as described above in the analysis of the sera of atherosclerotic patients. Fluorescent Qdots were used to observe numerous brilliant rounded microvesicle at 20x magnification. Analysis of these structures using electron microscopy showed the structures to be electron dense archaea-like bodies. The morphology of the structures was similar to those seen in the cancer biopsies described above in Example 9. One of 5 patients studied exhibited heart failure due to cardiotoxicity related to cancer treatment. This patient's serum presented many electron lucent archaea. Accordingly, electron lucent archaea, as seen in chagasic cardiopathy, may be important for the pathogenesis of cardiotoxicity heart failure in cancer patients and may be used as a biomarker for diagnosing the presence, or risk of developing cardiotoxicity.

Example 11

In Vitro Treatment of Cancer Cells and Serum from Heart Failure Patients using Transialidase and Nanoparticles Purified from Plant Extracts

[0217] An in vitro assay was developed for identifying compositions effective for treating a subject diagnosed with or at risk for developing a disease associated with undesirable cell proliferation and fibrosis, such as atherosclerosis, high total serum cholesterol, serum LDL, serum HDL or triglyceride levels, cancer or cardiotoxicity due to cancer treatment, heart disease, for example, cardiomyopathies resulting from Chagas disease.

[0218] The in vitro assay utilizes cell cultures of a sample derived from a patient, for example, a cancer cell sample. The cell culture is then contacted with a test composition to determine if the test composition reduces the amount of microbes, microbe-like particles or microbe nucleic acid present in the culture following cell lysis, for example, following apoptosis, compared to cells lysed that are not contacted with the test composition. The assay can also be used to select compositions that both lyse the cells and reduce the amount of microbes, microbe-like particles or microbe nucleic acid present in the culture following cell lysis.

[0219] The in vitro assay can also utilize a serum, blood or plasma sample from a subject, wherein a test composition is contacted to the sample to determine if the test composition reduces the amount of microbes, microbe-like particles or microbe nucleic acid present in the sample compared to a sample not contacted with the test composition.

[0220] The in vitro assay is useful for determining what combinations and concentrations of protein capable of removing sialic acid residues, metal chelator and one or more purified plant extracts comprising therapeutic nanoparticles are most effective for inducing a therapeutic response in a subject.

Treatment of Cancer Cell Culture

[0221] Slides containing 8 wells were prepared with primary cultures of adenocarcinoma cells (containing 5×10^4 cells in 2.2 ml of culture medium). 50 ul of nanoparticles (a mixture of nanoparticles prepared from Ginkgo biloba, Zingiber officinalis, Golden root (*Scutellaria baicalensis*) and *Dendrobium moschatum*, prepared as previously described), were added to each well. Addition of the nanoparticles resulted in apoptosis of the neoplastic cells and release of microbes into the extracellular medium. The microbes were detected with the use of DIOC, which stains mitochondria (see FIG. 12A and B).

[0222] In a second set of wells, 50 ul of the nanoparticles were added along with 45 ul of a solution comprising trans-sialidase (TS) (prepared as described previously with TS 1:1000+2 mg/ml PDTC). The composition comprising the nanoparticles and TS solution resulted in a higher level of apoptosis compared to use of nanoparticles alone, and further, the composition reduced the amount of microbes present in the extracellular medium following apoptosis (see FIG. 12C and D).

Treatment of Serum Archaea from Patients with Heart Failure

[0223] Plant extract nanoparticle combinations were tested in the in vitro assay system for the ability of the combinations to reduce archaea present in serum samples from chagasic patients and patients with cardiotoxicity due to cancer treatment.

[0224] The effect of nanoparticles on sera from chagastic patients and treated cancer patients with cardiotoxicity was examined according to the following procedure: 1 ul of Qdot (Invitrogen) and 3 ul of nanoparticles were added to 20 ul of serum in individual wells of an 8 well slide. Each sample was observed using undirected fluorescent microscopy.

[0225] The composition most effective in reducing the amount of microbes present in the sera samples was a composition comprising nanoparticles derived from the extract of

the following plants: *Ginkgo biloba*, *Zingiber officinalis*, Golden root (*Scutellaria baicalensis*) and orchid (*Dendrobium moschatum*) in combination with 3 ul of trans-sialidase diluted 1,000,000 fold in association with PDTC (see Example 13A-D).

[0226] The in vitro assay system described herein can therefore be used to detect the presence of microbes, for example, archaea, microbe-like particles, and/or microbe nucleic acid in a serum, blood or plasma sample, or in cell culture, and to assay compositions comprising nanoparticles prepared from plant extracts, trans-sialidase and PDTC for their effectiveness in reducing the presence of such microbes, microbe-like particles, and/or microbe nucleic acid in the samples. Compositions effective in reducing the amount of microbes, microbe-like particles, and/or microbe nucleic acid in the samples are selected for use as therapeutic agents for the treatment of a disease associated with undesirable cell proliferation and fibrosis, such as atherosclerosis, high total serum cholesterol, serum LDL, serum HDL or triglyceride levels, and heart disease or heart failure. Heart disease or heart failure may be caused by injury, for example, by Chagas disease, dilated cardiomyopathy or cardiotoxicity during cancer treatment.

[0227] The present invention is not to be limited in scope by the specific embodiments described herein. Indeed, various modifications of the invention in addition to those described herein will become apparent to those skilled in the art from the foregoing description and the accompanying figures. Such modifications are intended to fall within the scope of the appended claims.

[0228] Patents, patent applications, publications, product descriptions and protocols that may be cited throughout this application, the disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference in their entireties for all purposes.

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What is claimed is:

1. A method of diagnosing heart disease in a subject comprising detecting the presence of an agent in a sample from the subject, wherein the agent is selected from the group consisting of mycoplasma, chlamydia, pathogenic archaea, pathogenic archaea nucleic acid, spirochete, and combinations thereof, wherein presence of the agent indicates diagnosis of heart disease.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the heart disease is chagasic cardiomyopathy.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the sample is selected from the group consisting of serum, blood, plasma and an endomyocardial sample.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the archaea comprises an electron dense lipidic organelle, an electron lucent lipidic organelle, or combinations thereof.

5. A method for diagnosing Chagasic cardiomyopathy in a subject diagnosed with Chagas disease comprising:

- (a) obtaining a first sample from the subject;
- (b) obtaining a second sample from a second subject diagnosed with Chagas disease, wherein the second subject does not have a Chagasic cardiomyopathy;
- (c) detecting the presence of an electron dense lipidic organelle in the first and second samples, wherein the

presence of smaller electron dense lipidic organelles in the first sample compared to the second sample indicates a diagnosis of chagasic cardiomyopathy.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the sample is an endomyocardial sample, and wherein the first sample comprises a lower concentration of archaea genomic nucleic acid present in the extracellular matrix compared to the second sample, or wherein there is a positive correlation between the number of electron dense lipidic organelles and the concentration of archaea genomic nucleic acid in the extracellular matrix in the first sample.

7. A method for determining the quality of a donor heart for a heart transplantation surgery comprising detecting the presence of an agent in a sample from the heart donor, wherein the agent is selected from the group consisting of pathogenic archaea, pathogenic archaea nucleic acid, mycoplasma, chlamydia, spirochete, and combinations thereof, wherein presence of the agent indicates an increased risk of mortality in a recipient of the donor heart

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the heart disease is cardiotoxicity associated with the treatment of cancer.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the sample is selected from the group consisting of serum, blood, plasma and cell culture of a cancer cell sample.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein the archaea comprises an electron dense lipidic organelle, an electron lucent lipidic organelle, or combinations thereof.

11. A method for diagnosing heart disease in a subject being treated for cancer comprising:

- (a) obtaining a first sample from the subject;
- (b) obtaining a second sample from a second subject, wherein the second subject does not have heart disease;
- (c) detecting the presence of an agent in the first and second samples, wherein the agent is selected from the group consisting of pathogenic archaea, pathogenic archaea

nucleic acid, mycoplasma, chlamydia, spirochete, and combinations thereof, wherein a higher concentration of agent in the first sample compared to the second sample indicates a diagnosis of heart disease.

12. An in vitro method for selecting a composition for use in treating a subject diagnosed with or at risk for developing a condition selected from the group consisting of a disorder characterized by undesirable cell proliferation, heart disease, and cardiotoxicity resulting from cancer treatment comprising:

- (a) contacting a first sample from the subject with a test composition;
- (b) detecting the presence of an agent in the first sample, wherein the agent is selected from the group consisting of pathogenic archaea, pathogenic archaea nucleic acid, mycoplasma, chlamydia, spirochete, and combinations thereof; and
- (c) detecting the presence of the agent in a second sample from the subject, wherein the second sample is not contacted with the test composition, wherein a lower concentration of agent in the first sample compared to the second sample indicates that the composition is suitable for use in treating the subject diagnosed with or at risk for developing the condition.

13. A method for treating a disorder in a subject selected from the group consisting of chagasic cardiomyopathy and heart disease associated with cancer treatment by administering a composition to the subject comprising an agent that can remove sialic acid residues and one or more plant extracts comprising nucleic acid-containing particles selected from the group consisting of archaea, nanoarchaea, and a mixture thereof.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the compositor further comprises a metal chelator.

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摘要(译)

本发明涉及用于减少动脉粥样硬化斑块和降低总血清胆固醇，甘油三酯，血清LDL胆固醇和血清HDL胆固醇水平的组合物和方法。本发明还涉及用于诊断，预防和治疗动脉粥样硬化和支原体相关疾病，与癌症治疗有关的心脏毒性和与恰加斯病相关的心肌病的方法。

Figure 1

