Supplemental Information

Experimental Procedures:

Measurement of bacterial growth curve

Bacterial cells were initially cultured in LB broth at 37°C for 16 hours. At the next day, the overnight cultures were adjusted to $O.D_{.600} = 1.2$ and inoculated into 5 mL fresh LB broth with 1:500 dilution. The $O.D_{.600}$ values for the bacterial growth curve were automatically measured every 30 min using an OD-Monitor C&T (Taitec, Saitama, Japan) as described (1).

Construction of EHEC deletion mutants

The isogenic gene deletion mutants were constructed by the Lambda Red-mediated recombination system as described (2, 3). The Lambda Red recombinase expression plasmid pKD46 is a temperature-sensitive plasmid, and the lambda red proteins were induced with 10 mM L-arabinose. This method was performed using primers containing the sequence for 30 bp homology to the target gene and 20 bp to amplify a kanamycin or chloramphenicol resistance gene from pKD4 or pKD3. The primers used in the mutant construction are listed in Table S2. The antibiotic resistance genes were flanked by recombinase FLP recognition target (FRT) sites, and directly repeated FRT sites were used for antibiotic resistance gene removal with pCP20. For generation of the EHEC strain EDL933 deletion mutants, the purified DNA fragments were electroporated into EDL933 harboring pKD46 cells. After electroporation, cells were incubated with 2XYT at 37°C for 1 hour, and plated on an LB agar plate containing kanamycin or chloramphenicol. The plates were incubated at 37°C for antibiotic screening and to induce the loss of pKD46. In order to generate EDL933 multiple gene mutants or prevent the polar effects on upstream and downstream gene expression of target genes, it is necessary to remove the resistance cassette with pCP20. The Flp recombinase expression plasmid pCP20 is also a temperature-sensitive plasmid, and the expression of Flp recombinase is induced at 43°C (2-4). Flp recombinase recognizes the FRT sites and removes the FRT site-flanked antibiotic resistance gene, generating an in-frame deletion mutant. The selected colonies were sensitive to Ampicillin and Kanamycin or chloramphenicol for absence of pCP20 and the resistance gene.

Figures

Figure S1. Screening of the EDL933 transposome mutant library.

C. elegans glp-4 (bn2) L1 stage larvae were cultured on the Enriched Nematode Growth (ENG) medium plates at the restrictive temperature (25°C) at Day 1. At the same day, the EDL933 transposome mutant library, stored in 96-well plates and in -80°C freezers, was replicated in LB broth containing 50 μ g/mL Kanamycin (Kan) and put in a 37°C incubator for 16 to 18 hours. At Day 2, the entire library was triplicated in 96-well plates containing LB broth with 50 µg/mL Kan and cultured at 37 °C for another 16 to 18 hours. At Day 3, when *C. elegans glp-4 (bn2)* animals reached to L4 larvae/young adult stage, the worms were washed off from ENG plates by M9 buffer and collected. These worms were mixed with each transposon mutant clones in 96-well plated, which was centrifuged and resuspended in S medium. Each well contained approximately 20 worms. Then, the 96-well plates were placed at 25°C with shaking at 70 rpm. After 8 days, the O.D. $_{595}$ values of each well were measured. The O.D. $_{595}$ value was close to 0.5 when worms were cultured with *E. coli* strain OP50 (as negative control). In contrast, the O.D.595 value was around 1.0 when the worms were fed with EHEC wildtype EDL933 (as positive control). The hits/candidates with a decreased pathogenic phenotype toward *C. elegans* were selected with the O.D. value that was significantly lower compared to the EHEC wild-type EDL933 positive controls (*P*<0.05).

Figure S2. **Growth curves of the EHEC strains.**

The growth curves of the wild-type EHEC strain EDL933 (EDL933), the isogenic *sdhA* transposon mutant [YQ413 (*sdhA::*Tn*5*)], and the isogenic *sdhA* deletion mutant (EDL933*:*Δ*sdhA*) were measured.

Anaerobic metabolism is dispensable for the full virulence of EHEC in *C. elegans*

 During anaerobic metabolism, the TCA cycle is repressed and nitrate catalyzed by nitrate reductase (Nar) and fumarate catalyzed by fumarate reductase (Frd) can both act as the alternative terminal electron acceptors other than oxygen (5); or alcohol dehydrogenase, encoded by the *adhE* gene, can regenerate NAD⁺ for glycolysis and control fermentation in *E. coli* (6). Moreover, the transcriptional regulator Fnr (fumarate/nitrate reduction regulator) is required for anaerobic respiration and controls the switch from aerobic to anaerobic respiration (7), and the ribonucleotide reductase class III, encoded by *nrdD* and *nrdG*, is essential for a strictly anaerobic environment in *E. coli* (8). To test whether anaerobic metabolism, including anaerobic respiration and fermentation, also plays roles in the pathogenesis of EHEC in *C. elegans,* five isogenic mutants with *narHJI, frdA, adhE, fnr*, and *nrdDG* deletion (EDL933:Δ*narHJI*, EDL933:Δ*frdA*, EDL933:Δ*adhE*, EDL933:Δ*fnr,* and EDL933:Δ*nrdDG)* were generated and tested. We noted that these isogeneic mutants were as toxic as the parental wildtype EDL933 (Figure S3). Given the potential redundancy of these genes in controlling anaerobic metabolism, a compound mutant was also generated. Our results showed that the isogeneic EDL933:Δ*narHJI*Δ*frdA*Δ*adhE*Δ*fnr*Δ*nrdDG* mutant strain was as toxic as the wild-type EDL933 (Figure S3). Together, our current data suggested that anaerobic metabolism is dispensable for the full virulence of EHEC in *C. elegans*.

Figure S3. **Deletion of genes involved in anaerobic metabolism did not alter EHEC toxicity in** *C. elegans***.**

The survival of N2 worms fed with the wild-type EDL933 (EDL933) and the isogenic deletion strains of *narHJI* (EDL933:Δ*narHJI*), *frdA* (EDL933:Δ*frdA*), *adhE* (EDL933:Δ*adhE*), *fnr* (EDL933:Δ*fnr*), and *nrdDG* (EDL933:Δ*nrdDG*) were examined. Deletion of *narHJI* (median N2 lifespan = 6.0 ± 0.1 days, *P*=0.205), *frdA* (median N2 lifespan = 6.7 ± 0.6 days, P=0.129), *adhE* (median N2 lifespan = 6.0 ± 0.1 days, *P*=0.413), *fnr* (median N2 lifespan = 6.0 ± 0.1 days, *P*=0.448), and *nrdDG* (median N2 lifespan = 6.5 ± 0.7 days, $P=0.908$) were as toxic as the parental wild-type EDL933 (median N2 lifespan = 6.2 ± 0.5 days). "ns" represents no statistically significant difference examined by the Log-rank test.

The effect of fumarate is specific to EHEC

 The survival curves of *C. elegans* animals did not change when fed on the succinate or fumarate treated OP50 (Figure S4A). These results suggested that the effect of fumarate was on EDL933:Δ*sdhA* mutant directly. We also generated the isogeneic *sdhA* mutant strain of *E. coli* OP50 (OP50:Δ*sdhA*) to examine whether the effect of fumarate is specific to EHEC. Our results showed that the survival curves of *C. elegans* animals fed on the wild-type OP50 and the OP50:Δ*sdhA* mutant were similar (Figure S4B). Moreover, the survival curves of *C. elegans* animals fed on succinate or fumarate treated OP50:Δ*sdhA* were similar to the untreated control, which suggested that the *sdhA* gene is specifically required for the pathogenesis of EHEC in *C. elegans*.

Figure S4. **Supplement of** *E. coli* **OP50 and OP50:**Δ*sdhA* **with succinate or fumarate did not alter** *C. elegans* **lifespan.**

(A) The survival curves of worms fed with the wild-type OP50 strain cultured with 2.5 mM succinate (OP50+Succinate) or fumarate (OP50+Fumarate) were examined. Animals on OP50 treated with succinate (OP50+Succinate, N2 median lifespan = $18.5 \pm$ 1.5 days, $P=0.72$) or fumarate (OP50+Fumarate, N2 median lifespan = 17.8 \pm 0.49 days, *P*=0.40) shown a similar lifespan compared to that on OP50 (OP50, N2 median lifespan = 18.67 ± 0.42 days). (B) The survival curves of worms fed with the wild-type OP50 strain, and OP50 with isogenic deletion strain of *sdhA* (OP50:Δ*sdhA*) cultured with 2.5 mM succinate (OP50:Δ*sdhA*+Succinate) or fumarate (OP50:Δ*sdhA*+Fumarate) were examined. Worms on the OP50:Δ*sdhA* strain (OP50:Δ*sdhA,* N2 median lifespan = 20.0 ± 1.4 days, *P*=0.627) exhibited similar lifespan compared to the wild-type OP50

strain (OP50, N2 median lifespan = 20.5 ± 0.7 days) toward *C. elegans* animals. Worms on succinate-treated OP50:Δ*sdhA* strain (OP50:Δ*sdhA*+Succinate*,* N2 median lifespan = 20.0 ± 0.1 days, *P*=0.842) and fumarate-treated OP50:Δ*sdhA* strain (OP50:Δ*sdhA*+Fumarate, N2 median lifespan =20.5 ± 0.7 days, *P*=0.878) all exhibited similar lifespan compared to the untreated control (OP50:Δ*sdhA,* N2 median lifespan = 20.0 ± 1.4 days). "ns" represents no statistically significant difference examined by the Log-rank test.

The three putative C4-dicarboxylates sensor-regulator systems are dispensable

 The *dcuSR* operon (also known as *yjdHG*) encodes a two-component sensorregulator system (DcuS-DcuR) which can sense fumarate and lead to activation of the fumarate-succinate antiporter DcuB expression in *E. coli* (9, 10). If fumarate restores *sdhA* mutant toxicity/virulence through the DcuSR two-component system, deletion of *dcuSR* in the *sdhA* mutant background cannot restore its toxicity after supplement of fumarate. We therefore generated the *sdhAdcuSR* isogenic mutant and examined its toxicity to *C. elegans* under fumarate supplement. As shown in Figure S5A, the toxicity of *sdhAdcuSR* mutant to *C. elegans* was significantly attenuated compared with wildtype EHEC (*P*<0.0001) but was similar to the *sdhA* single mutant (*P*=0.151). Moreover, addition of 2.5 mM fumarate not only restored the toxicity of *sdhA* mutant but also the *sdhAdcuSR* mutant which suggested that the *dcuSR* two-component system is not involved in sensing fumarate to regulate the virulence of EHEC.

Another DctS-DctR two-component system, which encoded by *dctS* and *dctR* genes, is required for high-affinity C4-dicarboxylate transport in *Rhodobacter capsulatus* (9, 11)*.* We blasted the amino acid sequence of DctS and DctR to the EDL933 amino acid sequence and identified YhiF (Z4909, *yhiF*) as a close homolog of DctR, but could not identify any homolog of DctS. The DctB-DctD sensor-regulator controls the expression of the *dctA* gene encoding C4-dicarboxylate transporter DctA in *Rhizobia* (11). We also blasted the amino acid sequence of DctB and DctD to EDL933 protein sequence and identified HyfR (Z3751, *hyfR*) as having the closest homology to DctD. However, we could not identify any DctB homolog in EDL933. Therefore, we generated the isogenic mutant of *dctR* (*yhiF)* and *dctD* (*hyfR)* in the *sdhA* mutant background to examine whether fumarate regulates EDL933 virulence through SdhA via these twocomponent systems. As shown in Figure S5B, *dctRsdhA* double mutant is less toxic to *C. elegans* compared with wild-type EHEC (*P* < 0.0001) but is similar to the *sdhA* single mutant (*P*=0.96). Supplement of 2.5 mM fumarate to the *dctRsdhA* double mutant restored its toxicity to that of the *sdhA* single mutant (*P*=0.57), suggesting that the DctS-DctR two-component sensing pathway is not required for fumarate to regulate EHEC toxicity.

We also generated *dctD* isogenic mutant in the *sdhA* mutant background and examined its toxicity toward *C. elegans* when supplied with 2.5 mM fumarate. In the same manner as the *dctRsdhA* double mutant, addition of fumarate to the *dctDsdhA* double mutant rescued its toxicity to that of the *sdhA* single mutant (P=0.86) (Figure S5C).

Figure S5. **Deletion of the putative two-component systems in C4 dicarboxylates regulation did not affect the capability of fumarate to restore the toxicity of the EHEC** *sdhA* **mutant.**

(A) The survival of N2 worms fed with the wild-type strain (EDL933) and the isogenic deletion strains of *sdhA* (EDL933:Δ*sdhA)*, the *sdhA* and *dcuSR* triple mutant (EDL933:Δ*sdhA*Δ*dcuSR*) and mutants treated with 2.5mM fumarate, respectively (EDL933:Δ*sdhA+*Fumarate and EDL933:Δ*sdhA*Δ*dcuSR*+Fumarate), were examined. The virulence of *sdhA* and *dcuSR* triple mutant treat with 2.5mM fumarate (EDL933:Δ*sdhA*Δ*dcuSR*+Fumarate, median N2 lifespan = 9 days) was similar to *sdhA* mutant treated with 2.5 mM fumarate (EDL933:Δ*sdhA*+Fumarate, median N2 lifespan = 8 days, *P*=0.52*)*. (B) The survival of N2 worms fed with the wild-type strain (EDL933)

and the isogenic deletion strains of *sdhA* (EDL933:Δ*sdhA)*, the *sdhA* and *dctR* double mutant (EDL933:Δ*sdhA*Δ*dctR*) and mutants treated with 2.5mM fumarate, respectively (EDL933:Δ*sdhA+*Fumarate and EDL933:Δ*sdhA*Δ*dctR*+Fumarate) were examined. The virulence of *sdhA* and *dctR* double mutant treated with 2.5 mM fumarate (EDL933:Δ*sdhA*Δ*dctR*+Fumarate, median N2 lifespan = 7.3 ± 0.6 days) was similar to *sdhA* mutant treated with 2.5mM fumarate (EDL933:Δ*sdhA*+Fumarate, median N2 lifespan = 7.4 ± 0.5 days, $P=0.57$). (C) The survival of N2 worms fed with the wild-type strain (EDL933) and the isogenic deletion strains of *sdhA* (EDL933:Δ*sdhA)*, the *sdhA* and *dctD* double mutant (EDL933:Δ*sdhA*Δ*dctD*) and mutants treated with 2.5 mM fumarate, respectively (EDL933:Δ*sdhA+*Fumarate and EDL933:Δ*sdhA*Δ*dctD*+Fumarate), were examined. The virulence of *sdhA* and *dctD* double mutant treat with 2.5 mM fumarate (EDL933:Δ*sdhA*Δ*dctD*+Fumarate, median N2

lifespan = 8 days) was similar to *sdhA* mutant treated with 2.5 mM fumarate (EDL933:Δ*sdhA*+Fumarate, median N2 lifespan = 8 days, *P*=0.86*)*. "ns" represents no statistically significant difference examined by the Log-rank test.

Tables

Table S1. Nematode strains used in this study.

Table S2. Bacterial strains used in this study.

Strain	Description	Source or
		reference
OP50	uracil auxotroph and laboratory food source for C. elegans	(12)
EDL933	E. coli O157:H7 isolated from raw hamburger meat	(14)
HER1266	E. coli O157:H7 isolated from human stool	(15)
YQ413	sdhA::Tn5, Tn5 transposon mutant inserted in the sdhA gene of EDL933	this study
EDL933: AsdhA	EDL933 isogenic mutant with sdhA gene deleted; Kan ^R kick out	this study
EDL933:∆sdhC	EDL933 isogenic mutant with sahC gene deleted; Kan ^ĸ	this study
EDL933: AsdhD	EDL933 isogenic mutant with sdhD gene deleted; KanR	this study
EDL933: AsdhB	EDL933 isogenic mutant with sdhB gene deleted; Kan ^R	this study
EDL933: AsdhCAsdhD ∆sdhA∆sdhB	EDL933 isogenic mutant with sdhCDAB operon deleted; Kan ^R	this study
EDL933-pQE30	EDL933 transformed with pQE30; Amp ^R	(16)
EDL933: AsdhA-pQE30	EDL933 isogenic mutant with sdhA gene deleted; Kan ^R kick out, and transformed with pQE30; Amp ^R	this study
EDL933: AsdhA-pWF134	EDL933 isogenic mutant with sdhA gene deleted; KanR kick out, and transformed with pWF134; Amp ^R	this study
EDL933: AsdhA-pWF134	EDL933 isogenic mutant with sdhA gene deleted; Kan ^R , and complement with sdhCDAB by transformation with pWF134; Amp ^R	this study
EDL933: AsdhCDAB- pWF134	EDL933 isogenic mutant with sdhCDABgene deleted; Kan ^R , and complement with sdhCDAB by transformation with pWF134; Amp ^R	this study
EDL933 sdhA::Tn5 -pWF134	EDL933 transposon inserted in sdhA gene; Kan ^R , and complemented with sdhCDAB by transformation with pWF134; Amp ^R	this study
OP50:∆sdhA	OP50 isogenic mutant with sdhA gene deleted; Kan ^R	this study

Table S4. Primers used in cloning, mutant construction, and qRT–PCR in this study.

Table S5. Proteins with differential expression in the wild-type EHEC strain (EDL933), the isogenic *sdhA* **deletion mutant (EDL933***:*Δ*sdhA***), and the** *sdhA* **gene complementation strain (EDL933:**Δ*sdhA***-pWF134).**

Down regulation in Δ*sdhA***-***pWF134* **VS. Δ***sdhA*

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