Recombinant HNP-1 produced by *Escherichia coli* **triggers bacterial apoptosis and exhibits anti-bacterial activity against drug-resistant bacteria**

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Supplementary Materials and Methods

E. coli **strains and plasmids.** *E. coli* strain BL21 (DE3), *E. coli* strain DH5α and vector pET-28a(+) were stored at −80 °C in our laboratory. The DNA sequence of preproHNP-1 and flanked with *EcoR* I and *Xho* Iwas generated from synthetic oligonucleotides according to a reference sequence (NM_004084.3). The products were ligated into the $pET-28a(+)$ vector encoding a fragment with six histidine (His₆) at the N-terminus.

The resulting vectors were transformed into the *E. coli* DH5α cells and after isolation and purification, they were subjected to the DNA sequence analysis. After verifying the sequence, the vectors were transformed into *E. coli* BL21 (DE3) competent cells to obtain XPX-1, which was used to express the recombinant protein preproHNP-1. The cells were streaked on a Luria−Bertani (LB) plate containing 50 μg/mL of kanamycin as a selective marker and grown overnight at 37 °C. Overnight cultures were prepared by inoculating LB medium containing 50 μg/mL of kanamycin with a single colony. Additionally, the empty vector $pET-28a(+)$ was transformed into *E. coli* BL21 (DE3) competent cells to obtain the strain XPX-2.

Growth rate assessment. The *E. coli* strain XPX-1 was activated overnight by inoculating single colony to 5 mL of LB liquid medium containing 50 μg/mL of kanamycin. The culture was diluted 1:100 diluted with fresh LB liquid medium containing 50 μg/mL of kanamycin to continue growing to an A_{600} between 0.4 and 0.6. Then the culture was split into two parts. One continued to grow while the other was treated with 1mM isopropyl-*β*- D-1-thiogalactopyranoside (IPTG) for the collection of A_{600} and survival (CFU/mL) samples. Cultures were grown to an A_{600} between 0.4 and 0.6 before treatment, and samples were respectively collected at 90, 180 and 270 min after 1mM IPTG treatment. A⁶⁰⁰ measurements were performed with a Biospec-mini spectrophotometer (Shimadzu, Kyoto, Japan). Fresh LB liquid medium was used as control.

The same overnight culture was used for CFU/mL measurements. One hundred microliters of culture was collected, washed twice with $1 \times PBS$ (pH 7.2), then diluted 1:1000 in $1 \times$ PBS. Ten microliters of each dilution was plated onto Petri dishes containing 20 mL of LB agar, and incubated at 37°C overnight before colony counting. Measurements were taken from at least three different experiments. The mean survival and the standard deviation were calculated across all experiments for each treatment.

Protein extraction, purification of recombinant preproHNP-1 and RecA interacting proteins. The protein purification procedure was based on the method used in our laboratory (1, 2). In brief, after 180 min of IPTG induction, the cells were harvested by centrifugation using a J6-MI centrifuge (Beckman, Brea, CA, USA) at 4,500 \times g for 30 min at 4 °C. The XPX-1 cell pellet was resuspended in PBS and lysed by high-pressure homogenization on an APV 1000 homogenizer (SPX, Charlotte, NC, USA) for three times at 800 bar. The inclusion bodies were collected by centrifugation at 4,500 \times g for 30 min at 4 °C. The pellet was washed with PBS containing 2 M urea for 2 h with stirring. The suspension was centrifuged $(4,000 \times g,$ 20 min) to obtain the preproHNP-1 inclusion bodies.

The inclusion bodies were solubilized in denaturing solution (20 mM Tris, 8 M urea, 20 mM DTT, pH 8.5) ata ratio of 1:20 (grams of inclusion body wet weight: mL of volume) and the suspension was shaken gently for 4 h at room temperature. After centrifugation at 12,000 \times g for 15 min, the supernatant was diluted directly into refolding buffer (20 mM Tris,1 mM cystine, 3 mM cysteine, 2 M urea, pH 10.0). After refolding at 4°C overnight, the sample pH was adjusted to 4.5 and the sample was centrifuged at $4,000 \times g$ for 20 min.

The solubilized protein samples were loaded onto a pre-equilibrated HiTrap Chelating HP (5mL, GE Healthcare, Chicago, IL, USA) at a flow rate of 10 mL/min in buffer A (20 mM Tris, 2 M NaCl, pH 7.5). The column was then washed with five column volumes (CV) of buffer A followed by a linear gradient to 2% buffer B (20 mM Tris, 2 M NaCl, 0.5 M imidazole, pH 7.5) in 5 CV. The active fraction was eluted with a linear gradient of 2-100% buffer B in 10CV. Based on SDS-PAGE, the fractions containing preproHNP-1 were pooled together. The purified preproHNP-1 was quantified with BCA according to standard procedures.

To identify the HNP-1 interacting proteins, the XPX-1 and XPX-2 cells containing histidine-tagged preproHNP-1 and vector respectively were grown at 37°C in Luria−Bertani to A⁶⁰⁰ = 0.4 before 1 mM IPTG induction for 1 h. The cell lysates were prepared with PBS as described above. The supernatant was loaded onto a homemade column packed with 20 µL Ni-NTA beads (Qiagen, Hilden, Germany), washed three times with 1 mL of buffer A (20 mM imidazole) and buffer B (40 mM imidazole). The protein targets were eluted with buffer C (250 mM

imidazole) and analyzed by a 12% Tris-Tricine gel followed by Coomassie brilliant blue G-250 staining. The whole lanes were cut into 3-5 pieces for further LC-MS/MS analysis. To identify the RecA interacting proteins, the similar method was used except the Ni-NTA beads replaced with anti-RecA antibody (Abcam, Cambridge, UK) and protein G beads (Thermo, Waltham, MA, USA).

Proteomics analysis. For the global proteomics study, the same amount of total cell lysate $(\sim 120 \text{ µg})$ extracted from the XPX-1 and XPX-2 was incubated with 5 mM DTT at 37 °C for 30 min and alkylated with 20 mM IAA in the dark at room temperature for 30 min before run on a 12% Tris-Tricine gel. After the electrophoresis, the gel was stained with Coomassie brilliant blue G-250, and cut into 4 slices based on protein amount and the molecular weight markers. After in-gel digestion by trypsin, the samples were analyzed by LC-MS/MS using a homemade column (75 μm internal diameter ×15 cm long) packed with 3 μm C18 reverse phase beads (Michrom Bioresources, Inc., Auburn, CA, USA), a 60 min gradient was performed on an LTQ-Orbitrap Velos mass spectrometer (Thermo Fisher Scientific, San Jose, CA, USA). MS full scans were performed in an m/z range of 300-1,600 with a resolution of 30,000 at m/z 400. The maximum injection time (MIT) was 150 ms, and the automatic gain control (AGC) was set to 1×10^6 . The top 20 intense ions were subjected to Orbitrap for further fragmentation via collision induced dissociation (CID) with the normalized collision energy (NCE) of 35%. For each scan, the AGC was set at 1×10^4 and the MIT was 25 ms. The dynamic exclusion was set 35 s to suppress repeated peak fragmentation.

MS/MS raw files were processed with MaxQuant (version 1.5.6.0, Martinsried, Germany) against a composite target/decoy *E. coli* database (Elias and Gygi, 2007). The target *E. coli* strain K12 complete proteome sequences obtained from UniProt (version from January 2016) plus the $6\times$ his-tagged preproHNP-1 (Uniprot ID: 59665) and common contaminations (3). The parameters for database searching were set as follows: cysteine carbamidomethyl was specified as a fixed modification and oxidation of methionine was set as variable modification. The tolerances of precursor and fragment ions were set at 20 ppm and 0.5 Da, respectively. For digestion, trypsin was set as protease with two missed cleavage permitted. Peptide matches were filtered by a minimum length of seven amino acids. The assigned peptides and proteins were filtered until a false discovery rate lower than 1% was achieved. The quantification of proteins was based on the reporter ion intensity of the identified unique and razor peptides. The global normalization was based on the assumptions that the total intensity of each sample was approximately equal. The value of LFQ was defined as the quantitative value of each protein (4).
The same method was applied for the interacting protein analysis with the

enriched protein samples.

Parameter description of the top-down mass spectrometry sample. The same LC-MS/MS platform was used for the full-length mature HNP-1 and its commercially available standard (Sigma, St. Louis, MO, USA). The samples were loaded and eluted with a 60 min liner gradient ramped from 4% to 35% of buffer B (buffer A, 0.1 % acetic acid, 2 % acetonitrile; buffer B, 0.1 % acetic acid, 100 %

acetonitrile) at a flow rate of $0.3 \mu L/min$, as previously described (5). Then eluted HNP-1 molecules were measured in the Orbitrap analyzer at 30000 resolution (at 400 m/z) and a target value of 10^6 ions with a maximum injection time of 150 ms. The 3 most intense ions were isolated within a window of 2 m/z, fragmented under a collision energy of 32-34% and measured in the linear Orbitrap, fragmented and measured in liner ion trap. AGC target was set to 1 ×10 ⁴ within a maximum injection time of 25 ms. The precursor ion peaks were manually assigned according to the charge state, derived mass and LC retention time.

Preparation of the HNP-1 liposomes. Soybean lecithin was purchased from Taiwei Medicine (Shanghai, China), Cholesterol was purchased from Sinopharm Reagent (Shanghai, China), and chemosynthetic mature HNP-1 and N-[1-(2,3-Dioleoyloxy)propyl]-N,N,N-trimethy-lammonium (DOTAP) were purchased from Sigma (St. Louis, MO, USA). HNP-1 liposomes were prepared with the reverse-evaporation method (6). Briefly, soybean phospholipid, cholesterol and the cationic lipid DOTAP (10:1:1, w/w) were dissolved in dimethyl chloride with ultrasound dissolution. Then HNP-1 dissolved in PBS (pH 6.8) was added. The lipid solutions were mixed in required ratios and the solvent was evaporated under vacuum overnight to leave lipid films. The appropriate amount of PBS were added to hydrate the film with rotation to allow liposome formation. The liposomes were filtrated three times through 0.45 μm sterile membranes (Pall, New York, NY, USA) followed by storage at 4° C.

Preparation of pneumonic modelrats and medicine administration. The clinically isolated bacterial strain MRSA was cultivated in LB medium at 37 °C with continuous shaking (200 rpm) overnight. Then, the concentration of MRSA was determined by the optical density (OD) at 600 nm based on the turbidity of the cell suspension. Subsequently, the bacterial suspension was diluted with LB medium, and a final density of 108 CFU/mL was obtained for animal testing. Male Sprague-Dawley (SD) rats (190–200 g) were provided by Vital River Experimental Animal Technology (Beijing, China). The handlingof the animals and the surgical processes were conducted in accordance with the Guidelines for the Use of Laboratory Animals of Beijing Institute of Radiation Medicine (BIRM) and the animal experiments were approved by the Animal Subject Review Committee. Peripheral blood was collected via tail veins before sacrifice of the animals, then the lung bronchoalveolar lavage fluids (BALFs) were collected and the lung tissues were excised followed by hematoxylin and eosin (H&E) staining.

Bacterial pneumonic rats were prepared by spraying MRSA suspensions into the lung through tracheal routes with a soft long plastic tube as in our previous research (7). The rats were inoculated using tracheal intubation with 0.2 mL of 10^8 CFU/mL MRSA suspensions. After 8 h, the rats were given medications. Twenty-one rats were equally divided into seven groups, including the healthy rats as the controls; the pneumonic rat models treated with saline; the pneumonic rat models treated with blank liposome group; the pneumonic rats treated with 0.1mL 20 μg/mL HNP-1 solutions; the pneumonic rats treated with 0.1 mL 5 μg/mL of HNP-1 liposomes; the

pneumonic rats treated with the 0.1 mL 10 μg/mL of HNP-1 liposomes; the 12 μg/mL sodium penicillin solutions as the quality controls for ensuring the strains resistant to penicillin. All the medicines were sprayed into the rat lungs through the trachea using an intratracheal MicroSprayer Aerosolizer (IA-1B; PennCentury Inc., Wyndmoor, PA, USA) once daily for three days without anaesthesia.

Scanning electron microscopy analysis. Samples were prepared as previously described in the literature (8, 9). Briefly, approximately 5×10 ⁸ cells were collected and washed in phosphate buffer (0.1 M, pH 7.2). The cells were fixed overnight at 4°C in 2.5% glutaraldehyde, washed with same phosphate buffer for three times. Then the fixed cells were postfixed with 0.1 M phosphate buffer containing 2% osmium tetroxide (OsO4) (pH 7.2) for 20 min. After dehydration with a stepwise series of ethanol solution with increasing concentration $(50\% \, 70\% \, 85\% \, \text{and} \, 95\%)$ for 20 min respectively, the cells were coated with platinum by standard procedures. Samples were examined using an EVO LS10 scanning electron microscope (ZEISS, Jena, Germany), and images were processed by SmartSEM (ZEISS, Jena, Germany).

Analysis of DNA fragmentation by TUNEL. The DNA fragments were labeled using the Apo-Direct Kit (BD Bioscience, Oakland, CA, USA), which employs FITC-conjugated deoxyuridine triphosphate (FITC-dUTP) for staining and propidium iodide as a counterstain to characterize the dead cells. Sample preparation methods were performed according to the previous literature (10). Approximately 10 ⁶ cells were collected,washed once and resuspended in 500 µL cold PBS (pH 7.2). 1 mL of 4% paraformaldehyde was added to each sample for 30 min on ice to fix

cells. Cells were collected by centrifugation at 8,000 rpm for 5 min, washed once and resuspended in PBS. Then 1 mL of ice cold 70% ethanol was added to each sample to store at -20 °C overnight to increase cell permeability.

For staining, samples were spun down at $4 \degree C$ 8,000 rpm for 5 min in a refrigerated microcentrifuge to remove the ethanol. Samples were washed twice in 1 mL wash buffer (kit component), and removed the supernatant after the second wash. The cells were resuspended with 50 μ L DNA labeling solution (kit components), and then incubated for 60 min at 37°C. To stop the staining reaction, 1 mL of rinse buffer (kit components) was added followed by centrifugation at 8,000 rpm for 5 min. The rinsing step was repeated, the cell pellet was resuspended in 500 µL of propidium iodide staining buffer, and the cells were incubated in the dark for 30 min at room temperature. Next, analyzed the cells in staining buffer by flow cytometry (BD Bioscience, Oakland, CA, USA).

Analysis of phosphatidylserine exposure by flow cytometry. At each time point, approximately 10 ⁶ cells were collected, washed once and resuspended in 1 mL sterile distilled water. Samples were spun down at 3,000 g for 5 min in a refrigerated microcentrifuge, then resuspended in 100 μ L of 1 \times annexin- binding buffer. Five microliters of FITC-conjugated annexin V and $5 \mu L$ of propidium iodide (DOJINDO, Kumamoto-ken, Japan) were added to each sample followed by incubation in the dark for 15 min at room temperature. Samples were diluted by adding 400 μ L 1 \times annexin-binding buffer. Then detected phosphatidylserine exposure by flow cytometry.

Western blot analysis. Equal amounts of eluted proteins (HNP-1 and vector) were separated by 12% Tris-Tricine gel, transferred to 0.2 μm nitrocellulose blotting membranes (Merck Millipore, Darmstadt, Germany) blocked with 5% non-fat milk powder in TBS-T (20mM Tris-HCl, 150mM NaCl and 0.05% Tween-20). Primary antibodies of preproHNP-1 were purchased from Santa Cruz Biotechnology (Dallas, TX, USA) and primary antibodies against RecA were purchased from Abcam (Cambridge, UK). The primary antibodies were detected using horseradish peroxidase (HRP)-conjugated secondary antibodies (Abcam, Cambridge, UK) and a chemiluminescent detection reagent (Thermo, Waltham, MA, USA).

Immunofluorescence staining. Immunofluorescence (IF) staining was performed using an anti-Annexin V rabbit polyclonal antibody (Abcam, Cambridge, UK) and an anti-Staphylococcus aureus mouse monoclonal antibody (Abcam, Cambridge, UK) to determine the bacterial apoptosis. The secondary antibodies used were Alexa Fluor 594 goat anti-rabbit IgG (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA, USA) and Alexa Fluor 488 goat anti-mouse IgG (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA, USA). IF staining was performed according to standard procedures. Briefly, the frozen slices were incubated with goat serum for 40 min at 37 \degree C after washing with phosphate buffered saline (PBS). Subsequently, slices were stained with 1:100 dilution of anti-Annexin V and anti-S. aureus antibodies overnight at 4 °C. Secondary antibodies were added for staining at 37 °C for 40 min. The slices were then analyzed with a Zeiss LSM 880 confocal laser scanning microscope (Zeiss, Oberkochen, Germany).

Analysis of gene expression by real-time RT-PCR. mRNA from RecA and LexA was measured by real-time PCR (RT-PCR). XPX-1 cells harvested 3 h after induction and the total RNA was extracted with the TRIzol® Reagent (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA, USA) according to the manufacturer's instruction. Reversed transcription was performed with the ReverTra Ace qPCR RT Kit (TOYOBO, Osaka, Japan). The primer sequence of RecA and LexA was as follows: RecA (forward 5'-GAAATCTTTCGGTAAAGGTGCC-3', reverse 5'-CGCCTAATGCTTGAGCATATTC-3'); LexA (forward 5'-GCACGTAGCGTATCAACAGCT-3 ' , reverse 5 -AGAGAATTTAGCATATGGTC-3'). The relative expression level of RecA and LexA was normalized to 16s by using the $2-\alpha$ CT method(11).

Measurement of IL-6 and IFN-γ. Serum was separated by centrifugation of the blood samples from seven groups rats Interleukin-6 (IL-6) and Interferon-γ (IFN-γ) in the rats were measured with the commercial ELISA assay kits (Neobioscience Technology Co., Ltd., Shenzhen, China). The absorbance of IL-6 and IFN- γ was measured at 450 nm, and quantification was conducted according to the manufacturers' instructions. All procedures were performed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

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TABLE S1 Strains used in this study.

TABLE S2 MS information of the preproHNP-1 and HNP-1.

TABLE S3 The list of differentially expressed proteins.

The list of upregulated proteins.

The list of downregulated proteins.

TABLE S4 The list of HNP-1 interacting proteins.

	Protein	Unique	Sequence coverage		Intensity MS/MS count	
		peptides	$\lceil\% \rceil$			
TEST1 RecA		14	47.30	9333111	21	
TEST2 RecA		15	50.40	13341111	24	

TABLE S5 The identification of RecA protein by MS.

Protein	Unique peptides MW [kDa]		Sequence coverage		MS/MS
			$[\%]$	Intensity	count
rpmB	1	9	12.8	247140	$\mathbf{1}$
rpmJ	1	4.4	21.1	583940	$\mathbf{1}$
rpmC	1	7.3	22.2	121300	$\mathbf{1}$
ECBD_1968	1	8.3	19.9	146440	1
Mature HNP-1	$\overline{2}$	3.4	60	1208400	$\overline{2}$

TABLE S6 MS information of proteins which molecular weight less than 10 kDa.

HNP-1

FIGURE S1. (A) Top-down analysis for the standard HNP-1 by LTQ-Orbitrap-Velos. The inset shows the MS spectrum and monoisotopic m/z values of the detected HNP-1 protein. **(B)** Top-down analysis of the purified HNP-1 by LTQ-Orbitrap-Velos. The inset shows the MS spectrum and monoisotopic m/z values of the detected HNP-1 protein.

FIGURE S2. Tris-Tricine gel analysis of the HNP-1 interacting proteins. Cell lysates containing the HNP-1 sequence and vector sequence were prepared with PBS, loaded onto a homemade column packed with 20-µL Ni-NTA beads, washed three times with 1 mL of buffer 1 (20 mM imidazole) and wash buffer 2 (40 mM imidazole). Then the protein targets were eluted with elution buffer (250 mM imidazole), and all samples were analyzed by a 12% Tris-Tricine gel followed by silver staining.

FIGURE S3. Hypothesized pathways of bacterial apoptosis caused by HNP-1. HNP-1 interferes with the binding of RecA and ssDNA, thereby disrupting the DNA damage repair response during bacterial apoptosis.

in vitro anti-MSRA effect of penicillin, HNP-1, and liposomal HNP-1 with gradient concentrations. Data were analyzed using a two-tailed Student's *t* test and are plotted as the mean \pm SD for each condition.

FIGURE S5. Effects of the medicines on the innate immunity. Twelve hours after the final administration of the treatments, tail vein blood (20 μL) was collected. The number of leukocytes (**A**) and neutrophils (**B**) were counted an automated hematology analyzer. Interleukin-6 (IL-6) (**C**) and interferon- γ (IFN- γ) (**D**) levels were measured with commercial ELISA assay kits. Data were analyzed using a two-tailed Student's *t* test and are plotted as the mean ± SD for each condition. **P* $< 0.05, **P < 0.01,$ and $***P < 0.001$.

FIGURE S6. Quantitative HPLC analysis of HNP-1. The same HPLC platform was

used to examine mature HNP-1 after ultrafiltration and the commercially available

HNP-1 standard.