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A REVIEW ON DNA MICROARRAY TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Microarray analysis allows scientists to understand the molecular mechanisms underlying normal and dysfunctional biological processes. It has provided scientists with a tool to investigate the structure and activity of genes on a wide scale. Microarray technology could speed up the screening of thousands of DNA and protein samples simultaneously.

DNA microarrays have been used for clinical diagnosis and for studying complex phenomena of gene expression patterns. Present review article focus on history, technique and future applications of DNA microarray technology.

Key Words: Microarray, DNA, Technology

INTRODUCTION

DNA microarray technology emerged in the early 1990s by convergence of two advances. DNA sequencing efforts and focused on the expressed component of the genome, provided DNA sequence information and physical clones for thousands of human genes. Technical advances provided methods to manufacture slides or chips containing thousands of DNA probes arrayed within a small surface area by Dr. Patrick Brown and colleagues at Stanford University¹. A DNA microarray is composed of pieces of DNA ranging from 20-5000 base pairs concentrated into specific areas on a solid support such as a glass chip.² DNA microarrays are used for the investigation of prokaryotic biology because they allow the simultaneous monitoring of the expression of all genes in any bacterium. They offer a more holistic approach to study cellular physiology and therefore complement the traditional “gene-by-gene” approaches.³ The location of a specific probe on the array is termed spot or feature. Whereas the probes are immobilized on a solid support, the targets are applied as a solution onto the array for hybridization after fluorescent

labeling.⁴ Microarray analysis allows scientists to understand the molecular mechanisms underlying normal and dysfunctional biological processes. It has provided scientists with a tool to investigate the structure and activity of genes on a wide scale. Microarray technology could speed up the screening of thousands of DNA and protein samples simultaneously.⁵

HISTORY

The idea of performing chemical or biological reactions with one reagent spatially immobilized is not new. Southern's 1975 paper described a technique that needs no introduction, and forever altered molecular biology.⁶ DNA arrays are logical extension of the method described by Gillespie and Spiegelman in 1965, in which DNA immobilized on a membrane can bind a complementary RNA or DNA strand through specific hybridization and the methods described for applying DNA to a treated cellulose surface⁷ and DNA blotting hybridization.⁶ Several publications from the 1980s describe the use of such arrays in DNA mapping and sequencing.^{8,9} Scientists at the California-based biotech company

Affymax produce the first DNA chips.¹⁰ Miniaturized microarrays for gene expression profiling was used in 1995.¹ A complete eukaryotic genome (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) on a microarray was published in 1997.¹¹ A DNA microarray which is used to follow changes in gene expression as *Deinococcus radiodurans* recovers from a sub-lethal dose (3000Gy) of ionizing radiation was constructed in 2002.¹²

DNA Microarray Technique

In DNA Microarray collection of DNA probes that are arrayed on a solid support and are used to assay, through hybridization in the presence of complementary DNA that is present in a sample.¹³ DNA Microarray is a chip of size of fingernail having 96 or more tiny wells and each well has thousands of DNA probes or oligonucleotides arranged in a grid pattern on the chip.^{14, 15} Thousands of different genes are immobilized at fixed locations on chip and it means that a single DNA chip can provide information about thousands of genes simultaneously by base pairing and hybridization. There are two types of DNA microarray: cDNA microarrays and oligonucleotide arrays.^{16,17, 18} cDNA arrays are produced by printing a double stranded cDNA on a solid support (glass or nylon) using robotic pins.¹⁹ Oligonucleotide arrays are made by synthesizing specific oligonucleotides in a specific alignment on a solid surface using photolithography.¹⁹ The labeled cDNAs are applied to the microarray and allowed to hybridize under conditions analogous to those established for Southern blotting. After the slide is washed to remove nonspecific hybridization, it is read in a laser scanner that can differentiate between Cy3- and Cy5-signals, collecting fluorescence intensities to produce a separate 16-bit TIFF image for each channel.^{20, 21} Cy3 and Cy5 fluorescent dyes are used to distinguish cDNA pools which is reverse transcribed from different mRNA samples which have been isolated from cells or tissues.¹⁹ Quantification of results is done by measuring the

intensity of fluorescence, which corresponds to the amount of gene expressed in the sample.^{22, 23} The three major steps of a microarray technology are preparation of microarray, preparation of labeled probes and hybridization and finally, scanning, imaging and data analysis.^{24, 25} Using this technique, a comprehensive understanding of the cell can be achieved.^{26,27}

Applications of DNA Microarray Technology

DNA microarray technology has been used to study many bacterial species which include *Escherichia coli*^{28, 29}, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*^{30,31}, *Streptococcus pneumonia*^{32, 33} and *Bacillus subtilis*^{34,35, 36}. With DNA microarray entire microbial genome can be easily represented in a single array and it is feasible to perform genome-wide analysis³⁷. Microarray technique is used in medicine development by providing microarray data of a patient which could be used for identifying diseases.³⁸ DNA microarray technology has been used for analyses of natural and anthropogenic factors in yeast and analyzed how the whole genome of yeast is respond to environmental stressors such as temperature, pH, oxidation, and nutrients^{39,40,41}. Microarray analysis has been applied to identify molecular markers of pathogen infection in salmon.⁴² DNA microarray has been used for studying gene expression analysis in neurological disorders.⁴³ DNA microarray experiments are carried out to find genes which are differentially expressed between two or more samples of cells.^{44,45,46,47} cDNA microarrays provide a powerful tool for studying complex phenomena of gene expression patterns in human cancer.^{1,48,49} DNA microarrays has been used for clinical diagnosis such as histopathology and molecular pathology e.g. Microarray technique has been identified for analysis of *AMACR* (α -methylacyl-CoA racemase in prostate cancer compared with normal prostate.^{50, 51,52}

CONCLUSION

DNA Microarray analysis has provided scientists with a tool to screen thousands of DNA and protein samples. After the completion of Human Genome Project, DNA Microarrays have been used for clinical diagnosis of gene expression patterns. DNA Microarray technology has proved boon to industrial fields serving in clinical diagnosis.

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