

Lincoln University Digital Dissertation

Copyright Statement

The digital copy of this dissertation is protected by the Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand).

This dissertation may be consulted by you, provided you comply with the provisions of the Act and the following conditions of use:

- you will use the copy only for the purposes of research or private study
- you will recognise the author's right to be identified as the author of the dissertation and due acknowledgement will be made to the author where appropriate
- you will obtain the author's permission before publishing any material from the dissertation.

Novel food gelling agent as a topical probiotic delivery system

A Dissertation
submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in food innovation

at
Lincoln University
by
Yamuna Gopan

Lincoln University
2021

Abstract of a Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in food innovation.

Novel food gelling agent as a topical probiotic delivery system

by

Yamuna Gopan

Probiotics are certain living microorganisms that have to be in the human body for health benefits. The administration of probiotics can treat different metabolic disorders and other health issues. Bacteria are sensitive to their environment. The viability of probiotics is affected by adverse conditions such as pH and temperature. Probiotic delivery can be in different modes. Nowadays, food products containing probiotic mixtures are of great interest by consumers. These products are for the administration of probiotics to improve the gut microflora. Oral administration of probiotics can improve not only the gut health, but it is a holistic approach of health improvement also. The immunomodulation ability of probiotics is beneficial for treatments of a number of disorders and skin improvement. Objective of this research was to study the effects of a novel food gel (NG) on the viability of *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and antimicrobial activity against acne-causing bacteria *Propionibacterium acnes*. An acne treatment ointment was taken as a control to compare the microbial analysis. The results showed a negative effect of gel on the viability of *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, but a positive result was obtained for the antimicrobial activity of gel against *Propionibacterium acnes*. The flow characteristics were dependent on the temperature and were suitable for a topical gel formulation. Further studies must be done to formulate a new food gel as a topical acne treatment ointment.

Keywords: probiotics, probiotic delivery system, novel gel, cell viability, antimicrobial activity, *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, *Propionibacterium acnes*, flow characteristics.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Dr. Venkata Chelikani, course co-ordinator, Department of Agriculture and Life Sciences for giving me an opportunity to do FOOD660 Research Dissertation and supervising me in the research dissertation.

Thanks to Ms. Letitia Stipkovitis, lab technician for assisting me in handling and conducting the experiments and all the lecturers and technicians for right advice and encouragement.

Thanks to Mr. Piyush Bharadhwaj for helping me in this research dissertation.

Sincere thanks to Ms. Hinal Suresh Gala and Jithin Kandanchirakkal for the support and assistance for completing the research dissertation work.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Review of literature	2
1.1.1 Probiotics.....	2
1.1.2 <i>Lactobacillus acidophilus</i>	2
1.1.3 Probiotic delivery and matrices.....	3
1.1.4 Topical administration of probiotics.....	3
1.1.5 <i>Propionibacterium acnes</i> and acne treatment.....	4
1.1.6 Food gels as a probiotic delivery system.....	4
1.2 Aims.....	5
1.3 Hypothesis.....	5
Chapter 2 Materials and methods	6
2.1 Experimental design.....	6
2.2 Gel preparation.....	7
2.3 Experimental set up for microbiological analysis.....	8
2.3.1 Viability of <i>Lactobacillus acidophilus</i>	8
2.3.2 Antimicrobial activity against <i>Propionibacterium acnes</i>	8
2.4 Flow characteristics.....	8
2.5 Statistical analysis.....	9
Chapter 3 Results and discussion	10
3.1 Viability of <i>Lactobacillus acidophilus</i>	10
3.2 Antimicrobial activity of gel against <i>Propionibacterium acnes</i>	12
3.3 Flow characteristics.....	13
Chapter 4 Conclusion	14
Reference	15
Appendix A	18
A.1 Composition of samples for microbiological analysis.....	18
A.2 Viability of <i>Lactobacillus acidophilus</i>	19
A.3 Antimicrobial activity against <i>Propionibacterium acnes</i>	23

List of Tables

Table 2.2.1	Composition of samples and controls	7
Table 3.1.1	Mean and Standard deviation of CFU of <i>Lactobacillus acidophilus</i>	10

List of Figures

Figure 2.1.1 Experimental plan.....	6
Figure 3.1.1 Graph of mean and standard deviation cfu of <i>Lactobacillus acidophilus</i>	11
Figure 3.2.1 Graph showing the mean and standard deviation of CFU/ml in different samples.....	12
Figure 3.3.1 Graph showing the flow characteristics of gel 2 at 22°C and 4°C.....	13

Chapter1

Introduction

Probiotics are of great interest nowadays because interaction between the microbiota and humans is studied and explained as beneficial to holistic health of human body. Probiotics maintains microbial gut balance and prevent and combat on pathogenic microbes and infections(Kobyliak et al., 2018). Administration of probiotics in a sufficient amount and as combinations of different bacteria are proved as efficient disease control strategies.

The stability and viability of probiotic bacteria are the important factor for their functionality in the animal system and it could be hindered by undesirable process conditions such as high temperature, oxygen, acidity, and humidity during the manufacture and storage. Moreover, probiotics are subjected to critical issues of low pH, bile salts, osmotic stresses, and oxidation while administered orally through the passage of gastrointestinal tract. These could affect the viability and thereby functionality of probiotics prior to reach the target site (D'Orazio et al., 2019).

To limit the loss of viability and to ensure stability and functionality, micro-encapsulation techniques are used for probiotic delivery. Nonetheless, the research on finding novel probiotic delivery systems is to be conducted which are biocompatible, more efficient and consumer friendly. Alginate based microcapsules are widely used as delivery agents, but these are sensitive to harsh acidic condition in gut region. The inability of these gelling polymers to withstand negative factors limit their use as encapsulating agent (D'Orazio et al., 2019). Not only the sensitivity of gel system, but also the antimicrobial activity of delivery agent is important to ensure safe and stable probiotic administration. Orally disintegrating films which act as bioactive compound carriers and mouth fresheners can also be suitable strategy for oral probiotic delivery. This can be a better alternative for capsules and tablets (Heinemann, Carvalho, & Favaro-Trindade, 2013). There are studies explaining the topical administration of probiotics for disease treatment. Topical probiotics application balances the skin microbiota and alleviate the symptoms and risks associated with the skin conditions due to immune responses like an anti-inflammatory drug or gel (Oelschlaeger, 2010).

Substances having viscoelastic nature especially polysaccharides or proteins used in foods for gelation are known as food gels or gelling agents. Due to the ability of forming three dimensional networks, these gels can be carriers of probiotic bacteria. This research investigates that, whether the novel gel prepared by combining citric acid (CA) and disodium 5-guanylate (DG) can be developed as a good probiotic delivery system or not.

1.2 Review of literature

1.2.1 Probiotics

Microorganisms that are essential for animal health and present in the gut region are commonly known as probiotics. These microorganisms are non-pathogenic but have protective function on the metabolism and physiology of the host. Administration of probiotic bacteria have been reported as effective treatments for different diseases. The colonisation of probiotic bacteria in animal gut can effectively prevent the colonisation of pathogenic microbes using the mechanism of competition as well as by producing bacteriocins against pathogens (Smith & Jones, 2012).

Modes of action of probiotics are mainly three include host immune modulation, direct action towards pathogens, and detoxification of host body (Oelschlaeger, 2010). Derivatives or cell components of probiotics can modulate the immune system of host by stimulating the cellular receptors in host gut epithelium.

Probiotics, which are formulated as food supplements contain yeast or beneficial gut bacteria. They are marketed as capsules or powders and are included in fermented food products mainly in dairy products such as yogurt and processed milk drinks. In probiotic products either a single probiotic bacteria or mixture of different species may present (Williams, 2010).

1.2.2 *Lactobacillus acidophilus*

L. acidophilus is a probiotic bacterium that is extensively used in the production of dairy products and is widely applied in health sector, for improving immunity and boosting up the gut health. This bacterium is administered to humans and animals as a part of the diet in the form of dairy foods and dietary supplements. *L. acidophilus* is a potential vaccine-delivery agent to the gastrointestinal tract. The health improving effects of *L. acidophilus* include the treatment of diarrhoea, and other enteric diseases, diabetes treatment and balancing of gut microflora through the growth modulation mechanism in gastrointestinal tract. This bacterium was isolated from mouth as well as vaginal microflora also (Kim, Perl, Park, Tandianus, & Dunn, 2001).

The ability to adhere to the intestinal epithelium is a vital requirement for a probiotic bacterium to colonize and grow in the gastrointestinal tract which is important to prevent its peristaltic elimination and to adapt in the competitive environment. *L. acidophilus* is resistant to bile juice and resist digestion. *L. acidophilus* can aggregate themselves and have the ability of adhesiveness by the help of the proteinaceous cell surface component (Kos et al., 2003).

1.2.3 Probiotic delivery and matrices

probiotic delivery is important for the effective application of probiotic bacteria for alleviation of a disease condition. If probiotics are delivered efficiently to the target, only the administration will be successful. Generally, probiotic delivery systems are nutraceutical products which supplement the probiotic microorganisms to the intestinal environment. The delivery systems influence the effectiveness of treatment and health improvement of a patient. Therefore, selection of a probiotic delivery agent is important. There are different categories of probiotic delivery systems, which include conventional, pharmaceutical formulations, and non-conventional food-based products. The effectiveness of delivery system is based on the ability of delivering viable cells in large amount and the capacity to protect the cells from adverse components of gastric region(Govender et al., 2014).

Because of the extensive health benefits of probiotic bacteria, these are added to the food products especially the fermented milk products, ice creams, and dairy drinks. When the product is consumed, the bacteria should be viable and metabolically stable in the product, should pass through the digestive tract from the mouth, and should reach the target area, that is intestine. According to FAO/WHO, when food is manufactured as a probiotic delivery system it must contain at least 10^6 – 10^7 cfu of viable probiotic bacteria per gram of food. However, the low viability of probiotics in dairy foods is common and is due to several factors. The fermentation requirements like titratable acidity, pH, dissolved oxygen, temperature, strains of microbes, and organic acids used for fermentation. Survival of the probiotic bacteria is the most essential thing for the provision of health benefits to human body(Anal & Singh, 2007). Food matrix with protective nature towards probiotic bacteria is reported as an alternative strategy for efficient delivery of bacteria(Possemiers, Marzorati, Verstraete, & Van de Wiele, 2010). A research study in 2007 reported that the lipid fraction of cocoa butter can be a protective delivery agent for bifidobacteria (Lahtinen, Ouwehand, Salminen, Forssell, & Myllärinen, 2007).

Encapsulation of probiotic bacteria is another mode of delivery which can prevent the exposure of bacteria to adverse process conditions and environments and can reduce the loss of microbial cells. Several researchers have reported their success in microencapsulation of bacteria with different matrices. For Lactic acid bacteria, alginate a non-toxic chemical is widely used to immobilize and deliver. Alginate is reported as a simple, cost effective, but effective encapsulating material(Sultana et al., 2000).

1.2.4 Topical administration of probiotics

Probiotics can be administered externally on skin also for the improvement of skin conditions. A study investigated the effects of ointment derived from *Lactobacillus reuteri* as a probiotic bacterial topical delivery system for the wound healing process. They used rat skin as a model and found that there is significant accelerating effect of probiotic derived ointment on wound healing (Khodaii, Afrasiabi, Hashemi, Ardeshirylajimi, & Natanzi, 2019).

Kefir cream which contains prebiotics and probiotics is reported as an effective topical ointment for the healing of dorsal lesions. A common inflammation of foreskin of dog's genital tract was also reported as treated when 70% kefir-lanette based ointment (Schneedorf, 2012).

Exogenous application of lactobacilli for the treatment of vaginal infection was studied as an alternative for the antimicrobial chemicals and drugs and it is reported that, this application can confer benefits to women for the vaginal infection(Reid, 2002).

1.2.5 Propionibacterium acnes and acne treatment

Propionibacterium acnes is a non-spore-forming, Gram-positive, pleomorphic bacteria which grow in anaerobic conditions. The end products of anaerobic fermentation of *Propionibacterium* include propionic acid. It is a common bacteria present in the normal microflora of oral cavity, large intestine, eyes, ear canal, and skin(Brook & Frazier, 1991). It has a major role in acne vulgaris, and associated with conditions sarcoidosis and synovitis, acne, pustulosis, hyperostosis and osteitis (SAPHO).

Propionibacterium acnes can produce different virulence factors and leads to inflammation and allergic reactions(Perry & Lambert, 2006). Acne is a common skin problem which may worsen sometime. Acne treatment is widely conducted all over the world, but modes of treatments are different. Antibiotic therapy is the most common acne treatment which has specifically focused on *Propionibacterium acnes* elimination and has been active for more than 40 years. But the antibiotic resistance of *Propionibacterium acnes* against tetracyclines and erythromycin was reported from USA due to the widespread use. These findings enlightened the path of new strategies for the acne treatment (Eady, Gloor, & Leyden, 2003).

1.2.6 Food gels as probiotic delivery system

Polysaccharide hydrogels have extensive applications in various fields. polysaccharide-based hydrogels are common components of food products as thickeners and gelling agents. Due to the

sensitivity of probiotics to certain environments, encapsulating agents or coating materials are used as probiotic delivery systems. Polysaccharide hydrogels provide a physical barrier between probiotic bacterial cell and the adverse environment which enhance cell viability rate. Hydrogels can protect cells from heating process also. Alginate, κ-carrageenan, xanthan, pectin and chitosan are hydrogels used in food industry and can act as probiotic delivery agents(Kwiecień & Kwiecień, 2018).

1.3 Aims

This study aims mainly at the microbiological parameters of the novel gel, to find out whether the gel is suitable for the growth of *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and to investigate the antimicrobial activity of this new gel against *Propionibacterium acnes*. If the gel allows *Lactobacillus acidophilus* to grow, the gel can be developed into a probiotic delivery system. If there is any antimicrobial property against *Propionibacterium acnes* the gel can be efficiently applied in acne treatment.

1.4 Hypothesis

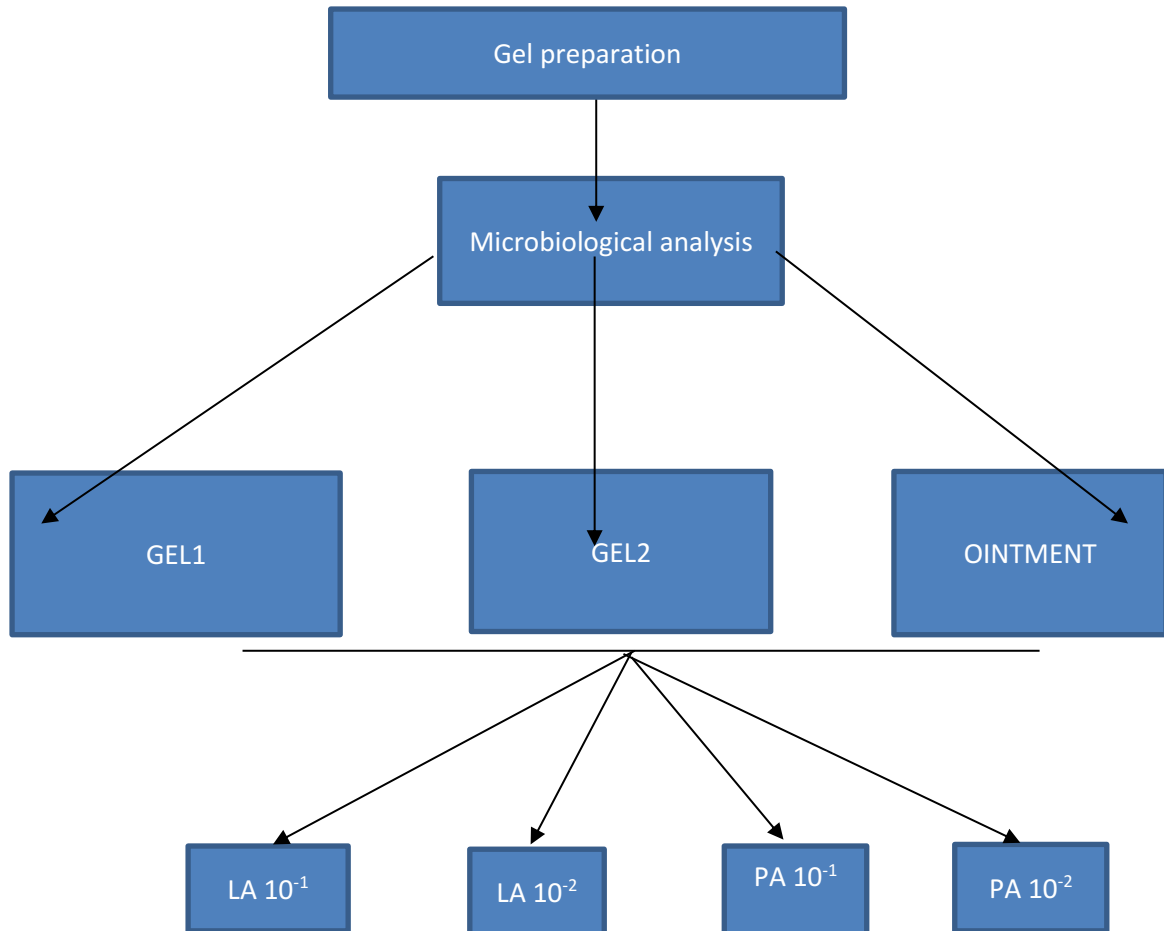
- *Lactobacillus acidophilus* will grow and will be viable in novel gel.
- There will be antimicrobial activity for the novel gel against *Propionibacterium acnes*.

Chapter 2

Materials and methods

2.1 Experimental design

2.1.1 Figure 2.1.1 experimental plan



*GEL1= 1M CA + 0.25M DG

*GEL2= 0.5M CA + 0.25M DG

*LA= *Lactobacillus acidophilus*

*PA= *Propionibacterium acnes*

2.2 Gel preparation

Two gels were prepared in different concentrations. Both gels contained same concentration of DG, only CA was differed. To prepare gels, DG and CA solutions were prepared in equal amount by dissolving in RO water separately. 0.25M concentration of DG, 1M, and 0.5 M citric acid solutions were prepared for two gels. The prepared DG was at 0.25 M concentration, CA at two concentrations such as 1M (gel1) and 0.5M (gel2). DG solution was mixed with two concentrations of CA to form two different gels. The mixture of CA and DG was mixed thoroughly using vortex for 15 seconds and kept in water bath for 10 minutes. These two gels were used for the microbiological experiments, and the gel 2 was used for flow characteristics analysis, as it appeared to be thin and good consistency.

Benzac AC from Galderma Australia private Ltd 60g(2.5%) ointment was purchased from Wecare pharmacy, Lincoln and used a control for the microbial analysis. It is an aid in the acne treatment.

2.2.1 Table 2.2.1 showing the composition of samples and controls.

SAMPLES	COMPOSITION
T1	GEL1+ (10^{-1}) LA / PA
T2	GEL1 + (10^{-2}) LA / PA
T3	GEL2 + (10^{-1}) LA / PA
T4	GEL2 + (10^{-2}) LA / PA
C1	OINTMENT + (10^{-1}) LA / PA
C2	OINTMENT + (10^{-2}) LA / PA
C3	MRS/BLOOD AGAR WITHOUT CULTURE

2.3 Experimental set up of microbiological analysis

2.3.1 Viability of *Lactobacillus acidophilus* in gel

Gels in room temperature were heated up to 37°C using water bath and 950µL of gel was taken in 1ml Eppendorf tube. Eppendorf tubes with 950 µL gel were prepared for all samples for analysis. Two dilutions of *Lactobacillus acidophilus* culture were prepared (10^{-1} , 10^{-2}) using 9ml sterile 0.1% (w/v) peptone water. 50 µL bacterial dilutions was added to the respective tubes with gel and tubes were vortexed until the bacterial culture and gel were mixed and kept for incubation at 37°C for 1 hour. De Man, Rogosa, and Sharpe (MRS) agar plates received from Fort Richards Laboratories limited, Auckland, New Zealand were used for doing spread plate method for bacterial colony formation. 100 µL gel-bacteria mixture were poured and spread on MRS agar plates using sterile disposable L-rods. Spread plates were incubated at 37°C for 48 hours under anaerobic condition (Dave & Shah, 1996). After 48 hours, colonies were counted, and CFU/ml was calculated.

2.3.2 Antimicrobial activity of novel gel against *Propionibacterium acnes*

950 µL gel was taken in 1 ml Eppendorf tube. Two dilutions of *Propionibacterium acnes* were prepared (10^{-1} , 10^{-2}) using 9ml sterile 0.1% (w/v) peptone water. The initial culture of *Propionibacterium acnes* was obtained from ESR was used for the experiment. 50 µL bacterial dilutions was added to the properly labelled tubes with gel and tubes were vortexed until the bacterial culture and gel were mixed. Blood agar for the analysis was purchased from Fort Richards Laboratories Ltd, Auckland, New Zealand. 100 µL gel-bacteria mixture were poured and spread on blood agar plates using sterile disposable L-rods and the plates were incubated at 37°C for 48 hours under anaerobic condition. Colonies were counted after 48 hours and CFU/ml was calculated.

2.4 Flow characteristics

The rheological properties of gel2 (0.25DG+0.5 CA) in 22°C and 4°C were measured to characterize flow properties of gel. For the rheology analysis a concentric cylinder viscometer was used which was made of an inner co-axial cylinder which was rotating within a stationary cylinder. Viscosity measurements were taken at shear rates from 19.3 to 161s⁻¹ for 60 seconds. Gel 2 kept in 4°C and kept in water bath at 22°C for 10 minutes were used for the analysis.

2.5 Statistical analysis

Mean and standard deviation of CFU/ml were calculated using Microsoft Excel and graphs also plotted using it. Statistical analysis, ANOVA was performed using Minitab 2019 version. Tukey comparison was done to evaluate significant differences between the samples.

Chapter 3

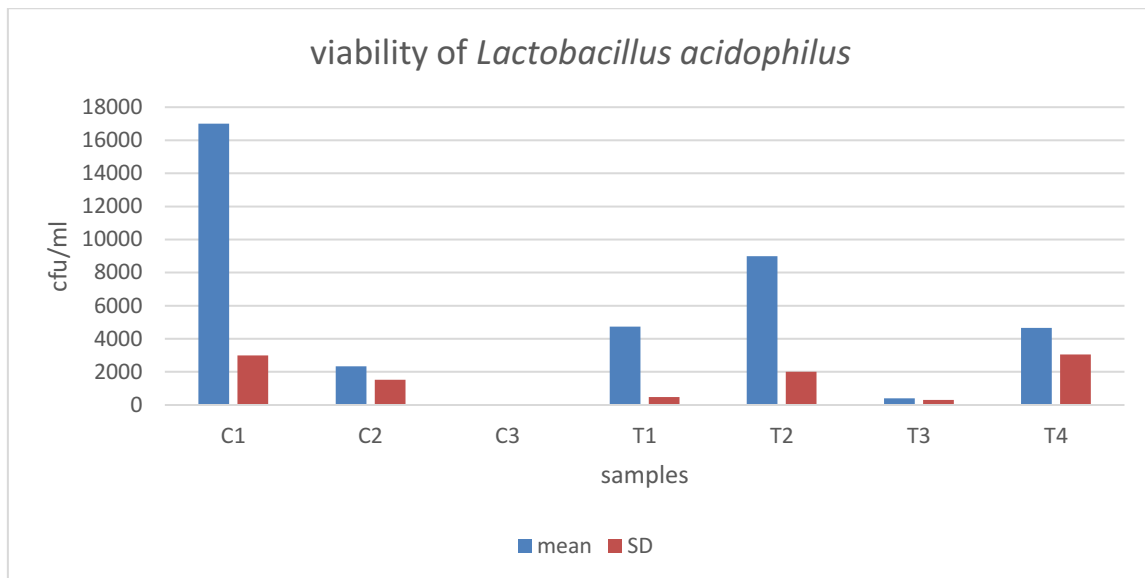
Results and discussion

3.1 Viability of *Lactobacillus acidophilus*

Enumeration of *Lactobacillus acidophilus* has done to find out the effect of novel food gel on the viability of the probiotics. The counts of colonies in MRS agar were converted to CFU/ mL and a graph was plotted to show the difference in different samples. All the samples were done in triplicates.

3.1.1 Table3.1.1

sample	mean	SD
C1	17000	3000
C2	2333	1528
C3	0	0
T1	4733	473
T2	9000	2000
T3	400	300
T4	4667	3055



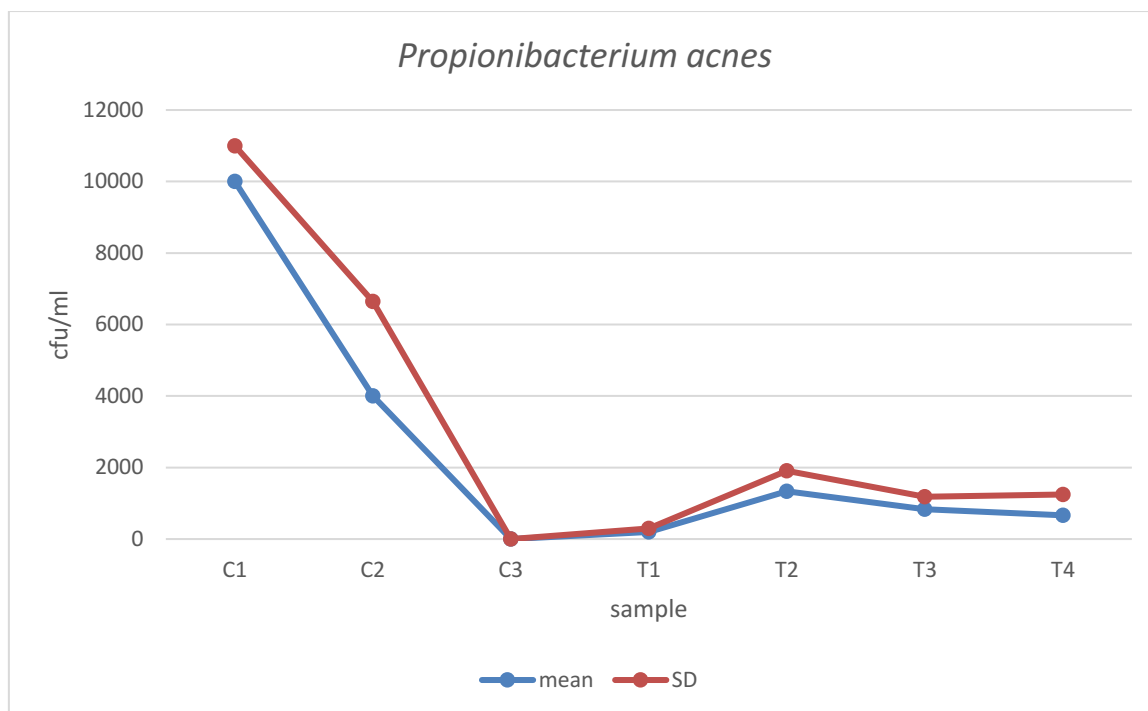
3.1.2 Figure 3.1.1 graph showing the mean and standard deviation cfu of *Lactobacillus acidophilus*.

C1 is the control ointment with 10^{-1} *L. acidophilus* dilution and CFU/ml was highest in C1 control. T2 was the sample with Gel1 and 10^{-2} dilution which showed the second higher CFU/ml value. T1 and T4 showed almost same CFU/ml value in which the former was gel1 with 10^{-1} and the latter was gel2 with 10^{-2} dilution. In sample T3 with gel2 and 10^{-1} dilution the CFU/ml value was the lowest.

From the statistical analysis, it could be clearly observed that, the CFU/ml were significantly different among the 4 samples and 3 controls as the $p < 0.05$. From these results, the gel samples showed relatively low CFU values compared to the C1 ointment control. This indicated any gel component can be the reason behind the low viability of cells in gel. A previous study on a DNA-based complex gel used for microencapsulation reported that, the starch and protein fraction of the gel composition might be provided a favourable environment for bacterial growth and even in adverse condition made up by neutral simulated intestinal juice. Therefore, the DNA-based complex gel can be a protective covering to the bacteria (Jonganurakkun, Liu, Nodasaka, Nomizu, & Nishi, 2003), but in this study an opposite effect has occurred. Another study of microencapsulation using hydrogel beads, also reported the survival of the encapsulated *Lactobacillus plantarum* cells at 72°C for 9 seconds during juice processing, the hydrogel was a hybrid gel of alginate and soy protein isolate (Praepanitchai, Noomhorm, & Anal, 2019), this study also reported that, unencapsulated cells died at 50°C . This indicated that reason behind the low viability of cells in gel can be either the cells did not entrap in the gel networks or effect of any of the components of the novel gel. When talking about Citric acid in the gel, citric acid has antimicrobial effect on few bacteria like *E. coli* (In, Kim, Kim, & Oh, 2013), but citrate is required for the metabolism of lactic acid bacteria (Drinan, Robin, & Cogan, 1976) and *L. acidophilus* is capable of surviving in acidic conditions (Sinn et al., 2008).

3.2 Antimicrobial effect of gel on *Propionibacterium acnes*

The enumeration of propionibacterial colony on blood agar was conducted for investigating the antimicrobial effect of novel gel on *Propionibacterium acnes*.



3.1.3 Figure 3.2.1 graph showing the mean and standard deviation of CFU/ml in different samples.

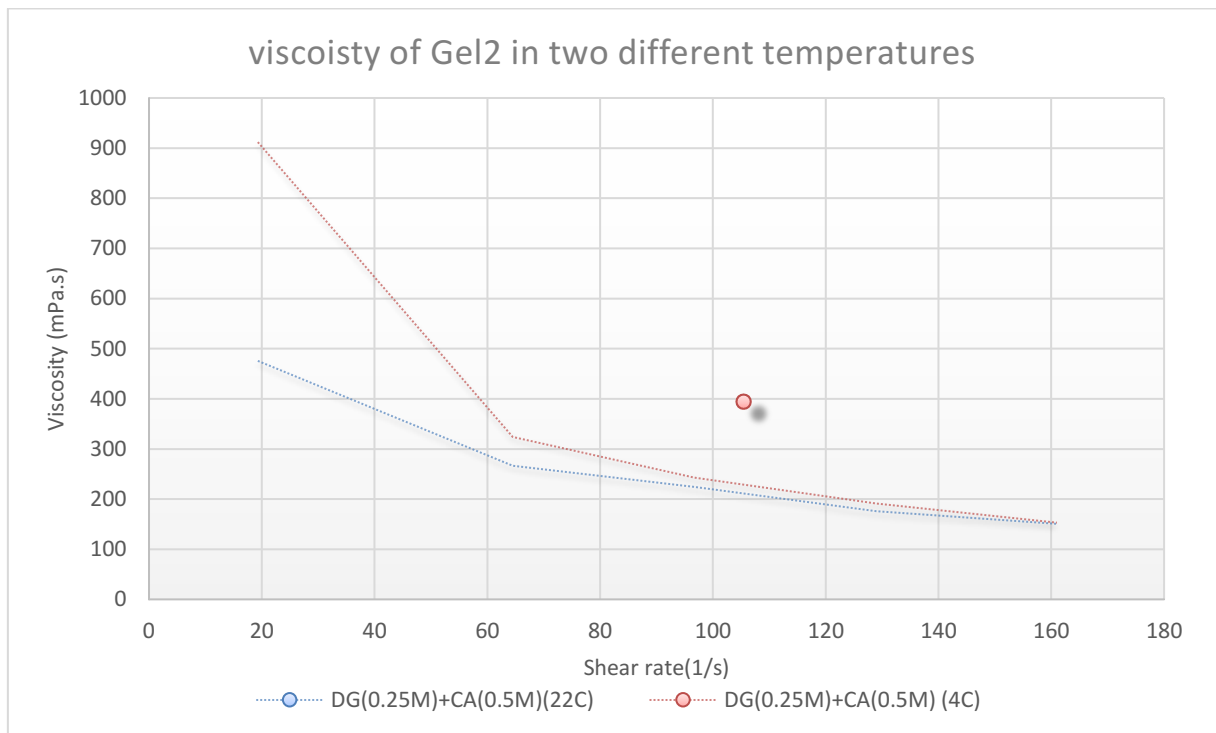
The graph shows the highest CFU value for the control C1 with ointment and 10^{-1} *P.acnes* dilution. The control C2 with ointment with 10^{-2} dilution shows second higher CFU value. T1 which is the Gel1 with 10^{-1} dilution showed the least CFU value, T3 and T4 showed almost same CFU values. T2 sample showed higher CFU than T3 and T4.

The statistics depicts that, there is a significant difference in CFU values among the samples and controls ($p < 0.05$).

The highest CFU value of *P.acnes* in the controls of ointments showed the ineffectiveness of the ointment against *P.acnes*. All gel samples showed relatively very less CFU of *P.acnes* in the experiment. This is a positive result for the novel gel as it has an antimicrobial effect against pathogenic bacteria. This result is comparable with a study done on Indian herbal plants with

antimicrobial effect against acne inducing bacteria, because the plant origin of DG can be a reason for the antimicrobial effect (Kumar et al., 2007) as well as the antimicrobial effect of citric acid against *P.acnes* (Bae & Park, 2016). A study of antimicrobial effect of marine microalgae fractions, it is reported that, water soluble fractions and fat-soluble fractions showed above 90% antimicrobial activity against pathogenic bacteria (S.-K. Kim et al., 2001). This supports the antimicrobial activity of DG in gel against pathogens, as it is a water-soluble fraction of marine microalgae. A previous study on the novel gel for shelf-life study of meat products reported, the novel gel confer antimicrobial activity against certain bacteria and extended shelf life (Chelikani et al., 2021).

3.3 Flow characteristics



3.3.1 Figure 3.3.1 graph showing the flow characteristics of gel2 at 22°C and 4°C.

the effect of temperature influences the flow characteristics of the gel. Gel2 (DG-0.25M + CA 0.5M) was prepared and kept under 4° C and compared with gel at 22° C. the results showed significant difference in flow characteristics between the gels at two temperatures. Gel at 4° C showed higher viscosity at low shear rate. Gel at 22°C also showed the same trend. Both gels became less viscous when the shear rate increased. In high temperature, viscosity of gel is less. A relatable results can be seen in a research paper, shows that cooking temperature reduced the viscosity of carrageenan (Bono, Anisuzzaman, & Ding, 2014).

Chapter 4

Conclusion

Probiotic delivery agent has significant role in the effective administration and efficiency of probiotic to confer health benefits to human body. Studies reported that skin ailments can be treated by administrating single or mixture of probiotics orally or exogenously. Lot of acne treatment ointments and therapeutics are available in the market, but most of them are antibiotic based or antimicrobial chemical-based ointments. A better alternative for the antibiotic therapy is application of probiotics. This study aimed to prove that; the novel gel can be formulated as a topical probiotic delivery agent.

In this present study, the viability of *Lactobacillus acidophilus* in the novel gel prepared by Disodium 5- guanylate and Citric acid, the antimicrobial activity of the gel against *Propionibacterium acnes*, and the flow characteristics of the gel were analysed. The result showed, a negative effect of gel on the viability of *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, but a positive result was obtained for the antimicrobial activity of gel against *Propionibacterium acnes*. The flow characteristics were depended on the temperature and was suitable for a topical gel.

This study will give an insight for further research on the application of novel gel for the treatment of broad spectrum of bacterial infections. A major drawback in this study that, we did not try to analyse the effect of gel on microorganisms after a long-term storage.

Reference

- Anal, A. K., & Singh, H. (2007). Recent advances in microencapsulation of probiotics for industrial applications and targeted delivery. *Trends in Food Science & Technology*, 18(5), 240-251.
- Bae, J., & Park, S. (2016). Evaluation of anti-microbial activities of ZnO, citric acid and a mixture of both against *Propionibacterium acnes*. *International journal of cosmetic science*, 38(6), 550-557.
- Bono, A., Anisuzzaman, S., & Ding, O. W. (2014). Effect of process conditions on the gel viscosity and gel strength of semi-refined carrageenan (SRC) produced from seaweed (*Kappaphycus alvarezii*). *Journal of King Saud University-Engineering Sciences*, 26(1), 3-9.
- Brook, I., & Frazier, E. H. (1991). Infections caused by *Propionibacterium* species. *Reviews of infectious diseases*, 13(5), 819-822.
- Chelikani, V., Bhardwaj, P., Kumar, L., On, S. L., Mohan, M. S., Olivero, A., . . . Olejar, K. J. (2021). Novel viscoelastic gelling agent with unique physico-chemical properties. *Food Chemistry*, 344, 128715.
- D'Orazio, G., De Giani, A., Zampolli, J., Zeaiter, Z., Di Gennaro, P., & La Ferla, B. (2019). PVP-co-DMAEMA as Novel Polymeric Coating Material for Probiotic Supplements Delivery. *Macromolecular Chemistry and Physics*, 220(21), 1900291.
- Dave, R. I., & Shah, N. P. (1996). Evaluation of Media for Selective Enumeration of *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Lactobacillus delbrueckii* ssp. *bulgaricus*, *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, and *Bifidobacteria*. *J Dairy Sci*, 79(9), 1529-1536. doi:10.3168/jds.S0022-0302(96)76513-X
- Drinan, D., Robin, S., & Cogan, T. (1976). Citric acid metabolism in hetero- and homofermentative lactic acid bacteria. *Applied and Environmental Microbiology*, 31(4), 481-486.
- Eady, E., Gloor, M., & Leyden, J. (2003). *Propionibacterium acnes* resistance: a worldwide problem. *Dermatology*, 206(1), 54-56.
- Govender, M., Choonara, Y. E., Kumar, P., du Toit, L. C., van Vuuren, S., & Pillay, V. (2014). A review of the advancements in probiotic delivery: Conventional vs. non-conventional formulations for intestinal flora supplementation. *Aaps PharmSciTech*, 15(1), 29-43.
- Heinemann, R. J., Carvalho, R. A., & Favaro-Trindade, C. S. (2013). Orally disintegrating film (ODF) for delivery of probiotics in the oral cavity—development of a novel product for oral health. *Innovative Food Science & Emerging Technologies*, 19, 227-232.
- In, Y. W., Kim, J. J., Kim, H. J., & Oh, S. W. (2013). Antimicrobial activities of acetic acid, citric acid and lactic acid against *S. higella* species. *Journal of Food Safety*, 33(1), 79-85.

- Jonganurakkun, B., Liu, X. D., Nodasaka, Y., Nomizu, M., & Nishi, N. (2003). Survival of lactic acid bacteria in simulated gastrointestinal juice protected by a DNA-based complex gel. *Journal of Biomaterials Science, Polymer Edition*, 14(11), 1269-1281.
- Khodaii, Z., Afrasiabi, S., Hashemi, S. A., Ardeshirylajimi, A., & Natanzi, M. M. (2019). Accelerated wound healing process in rat by probiotic *Lactobacillus reuteri* derived ointment. *Journal of Basic and Clinical Physiology and Pharmacology*, 30(3). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1515/jbcpp-2018-0150>. doi:doi:10.1515/jbcpp-2018-0150
- Kim, S.-K., Jeon, Y.-J., Kim, W.-S., Back, H.-C., Park, P.-J., Byun, H.-G., & Bai, S. C. (2001). Biochemical composition of marine microalgae and their potential antimicrobial activity. *Fisheries and aquatic sciences*, 4(2), 75-83.
- Kim, W. S., Perl, L., Park, J. H., Tandianus, J. E., & Dunn, N. W. (2001). Assessment of stress response of the probiotic *Lactobacillus acidophilus*. *Current Microbiology*, 43(5), 346-350.
- Kobyliak, N., Falalyeyeva, T., Boyko, N., Tsyryuk, O., Beregova, T., & Ostapchenko, L. (2018). Probiotics and nutraceuticals as a new frontier in obesity prevention and management. *diabetes research and clinical practice*, 141, 190-199.
- Kos, B., Šušković, J., Vuković, S., Šimpraga, M., Frece, J., & Matošić, S. (2003). Adhesion and aggregation ability of probiotic strain *Lactobacillus acidophilus* M92. *Journal of applied microbiology*, 94(6), 981-987.
- Kumar, G., Jayaveera, K., Kumar, C., Sanjay, U. P., Swamy, B., & Kumar, D. (2007). Antimicrobial effects of Indian medicinal plants against acne-inducing bacteria. *Tropical journal of pharmaceutical research*, 6(2), 717-723.
- Kwiecień, I., & Kwiecień, M. (2018). Application of polysaccharide-based hydrogels as probiotic delivery systems. *Gels*, 4(2), 47.
- Lahtinen, S., Ouwehand, A., Salminen, S., Forsell, P., & Myllärinen, P. (2007). Effect of starch-and lipid-based encapsulation on the culturability of two *Bifidobacterium longum* strains. *Letters in applied microbiology*, 44(5), 500-505.
- Oelschlaeger, T. A. (2010). Mechanisms of probiotic actions—a review. *International journal of medical microbiology*, 300(1), 57-62.
- Perry, A., & Lambert, P. (2006). *Propionibacterium acnes*. *Letters in applied microbiology*, 42(3), 185-188.
- Possemiers, S., Marzorati, M., Verstraete, W., & Van de Wiele, T. (2010). Bacteria and chocolate: a successful combination for probiotic delivery. *International journal of food microbiology*, 141(1-2), 97-103.
- Praepanitchai, O.-A., Noomhorm, A., & Anal, A. K. (2019). Survival and behavior of encapsulated probiotics (*Lactobacillus plantarum*) in calcium-alginate-soy protein isolate-based hydrogel

- beads in different processing conditions (pH and temperature) and in pasteurized mango juice. *BioMed research international*, 2019.
- Reid, G. (2002). Probiotics for urogenital health. *Nutrition in Clinical Care*, 5(1), 3-8.
- Schneedorf, J. M. (2012). Kefir D'Aqua and its probiotic properties. *Intech open science, Brazil*, 53-76.
- Sinn, D. H., Song, J. H., Kim, H. J., Lee, J. H., Son, H. J., Chang, D. K., . . . Rhee, P.-L. (2008). Therapeutic effect of Lactobacillus acidophilus-SDC 2012, 2013 in patients with irritable bowel syndrome. *Digestive diseases and sciences*, 53(10), 2714-2718.
- Smith, A., & Jones, C. L. (2012). *Probiotics sources, types and health benefits*. Hauppauge, NY: Hauppauge, NY : Nova Science Publishers.
- Sultana, K., Godward, G., Reynolds, N., Arumugaswamy, R., Peiris, P., & Kailasapathy, K. (2000). Encapsulation of probiotic bacteria with alginate–starch and evaluation of survival in simulated gastrointestinal conditions and in yoghurt. *International journal of food microbiology*, 62(1-2), 47-55.
- Williams, N. T. (2010). Probiotics. *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy*, 67(6), 449-458.
Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2146/ajhp090168>. doi:10.2146/ajhp090168

Appendix A

Primary data

A.1 Composition of samples for microbiological analysis

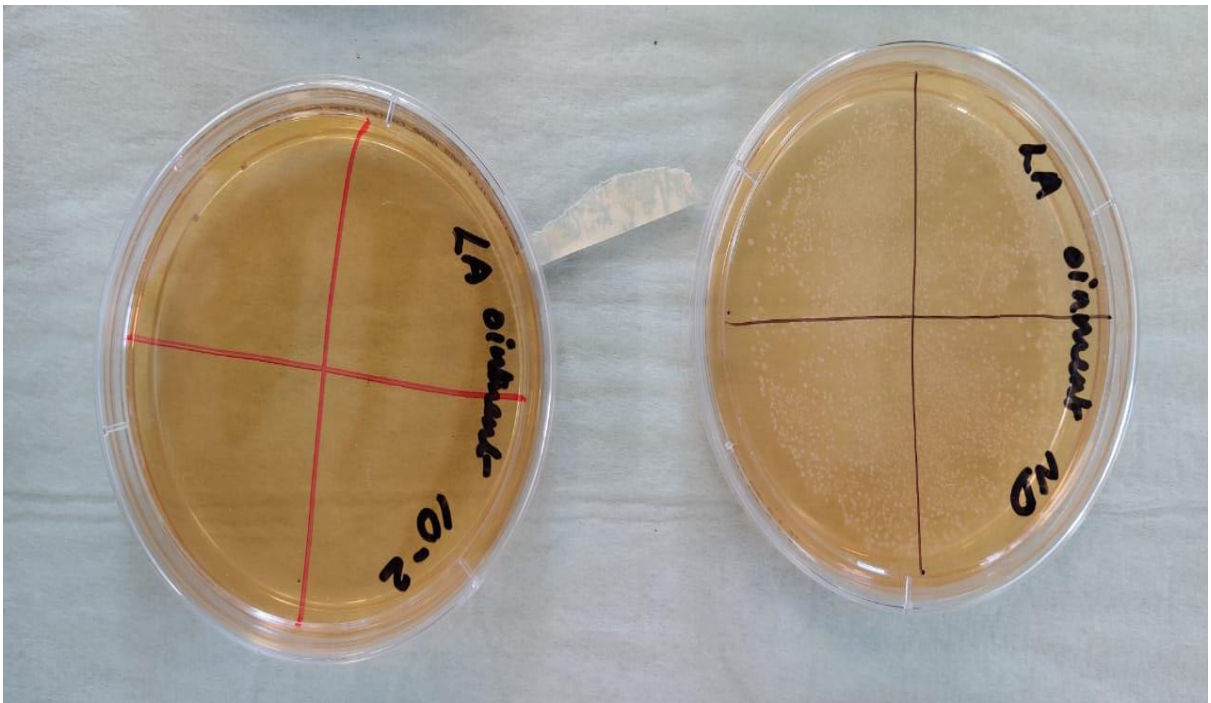
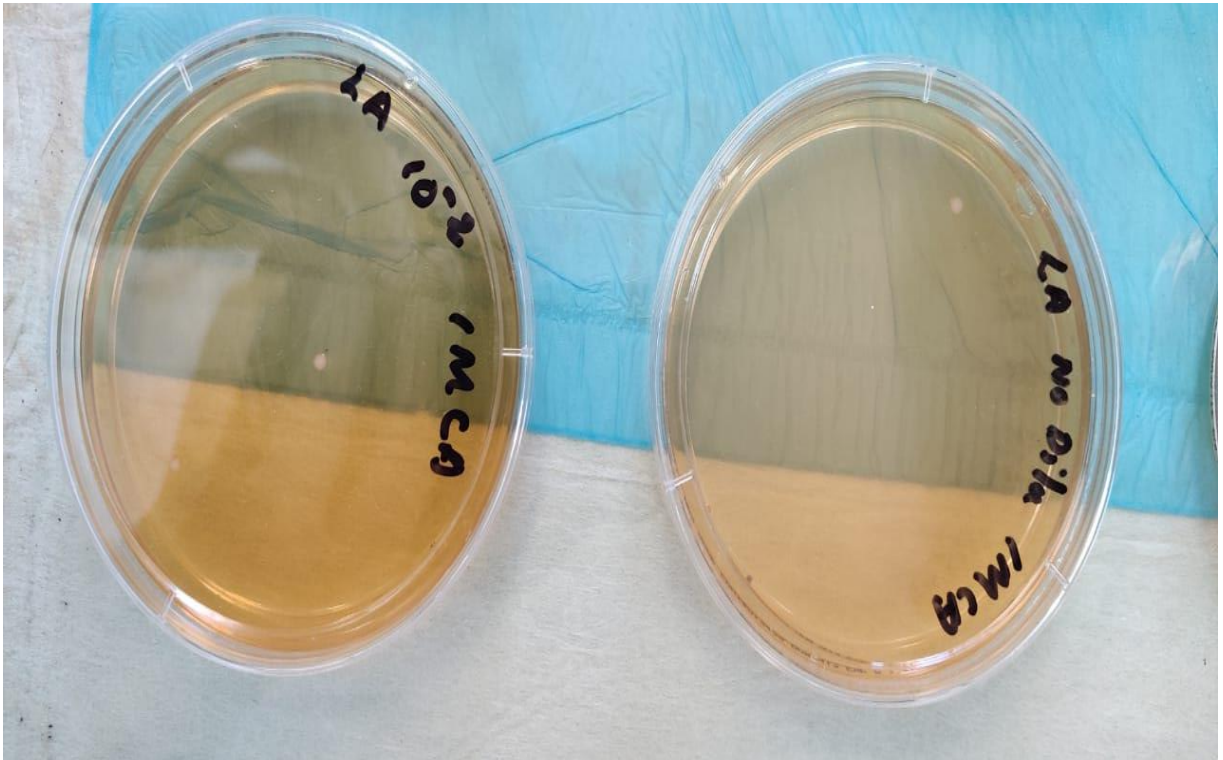
SAMPLES	COMPOSITION
T1	GEL1+ (10^{-1}) LA / PA
T2	GEL1 + (10^{-2}) LA / PA
T3	GEL2 + (10^{-1}) LA / PA
T4	GEL2 + (10^{-2}) LA / PA
C1	OINTMENT + (10^{-1}) LA / PA
C2	OINTMENT + (10^{-2}) LA / PA
C3	MRS/BLOOD AGAR WITHOUT CULTURE

A.2 Viability of *Lactobacillus acidophilus*

CFU/ml in MRS agar plate

SAMPLE	CFU
T1	4200
T1	5100
T1	4900
T2	7000
T2	9000
T2	11000
T3	100
T3	400
T3	700
T4	2000
T4	8000
T4	4000
C1	17000
C1	20000
C1	14000
C2	4000
C2	1000
C2	2000
C3	0
C3	0
C3	0

A 2.1 *Lactobacillus acidophilus* colony visualization on MRS agar



Descriptive Statistics: CFU

Statistics

Variable	SAMPLE	N	N *	SE			Minimum				
				Mean	Mean	StDev	m	Q1	Median	Q3	
CFU	C1	3	0	17000	1732	3000	14000	14000	17000	20000	
	C2	3	0	2333	882	1528	1000	1000	2000	4000	
	C3	3	0	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.000000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	
				0	0	0			0	0	0
	T1	3	0	4733	273	473	4200	4200	4900	5100	
	T2	3	0	9000	1155	2000	7000	7000	9000	11000	
	T3	3	0	400	173	300	100	100	400	700	
	T4	3	0	4667	1764	3055	2000	2000	4000	8000	

Variable	SAMPLE	Maximum
CFU	C1	20000
	C2	4000
	C3	0.000000
	T1	5100
	T2	11000
	T3	700
	T4	8000

General Linear Model: CFU versus SAMPLE

Method

Factor (-1, 0,
coding +1)

Factor Information

Factor	Type	Levels	Values
SAMPLE	Fixed	7	C1, C2, C3, T1, T2, T3, T4

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	Adj SS	Adj MS	F-Value	P-Value
SAMPLE	6	636152381	106025397	29.71	0.000
Error	14	49960000	3568571		
Total	20	686112381			

Model Summary

S	R-sq	R-sq(adj)	R-sq(pred)
1889.07	92.72%	89.60%	83.62%

Coefficients

Term	Coef	SE Coef	T-Value	P-Value	VIF
Constant	5448	412	13.22	0.000	
SAMPLE					
C1	11552	1010	11.44	0.000	1.71
C2	-3114	1010	-3.08	0.008	1.71
C3	-5448	1010	-5.40	0.000	1.71
T1	-714	1010	-0.71	0.491	1.71
T2	3552	1010	3.52	0.003	1.71
T3	-5048	1010	-5.00	0.000	1.71

Regression Equation

$$\text{CFU} = 5448 + 11552 \text{ SAMPLE_C1} - 3114 \text{ SAMPLE_C2} - 5448 \text{ SAMPLE_C3} - 714 \text{ SAMPLE_T1} + 3552 \text{ SAMPLE_T2} - 5048 \text{ SAMPLE_T3} - 781 \text{ SAMPLE_T4}$$

Fits and Diagnostics for Unusual Observations

Obs	CFU	Fit	Resid	Std Resid
11	8000	4667	3333	2.16 R

R Large residual

Comparisons for CFU

Tukey Pairwise Comparisons: SAMPLE

Grouping Information Using the Tukey Method and 95% Confidence

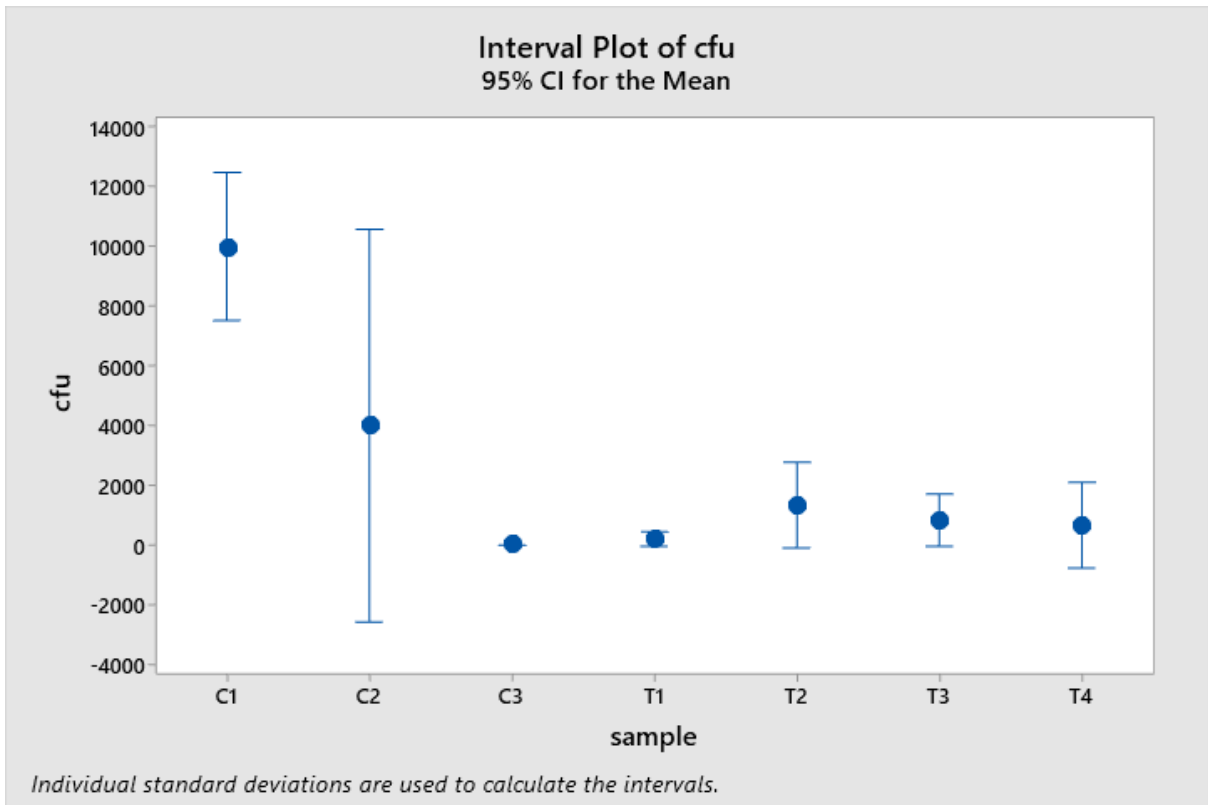
SAMPLE	N	Mean	Grouping
C1	3	17000.0	A
T2	3	9000.0	B
T1	3	4733.3	B C
T4	3	4666.7	B C
C2	3	2333.3	C
T3	3	400.0	C
C3	3	0.0	C

Means that do not share a letter are significantly different.

A3 Antimicrobial activity against *Propionibacterium acnes*

A3.1 CFU in blood agar

Sample	cfu
T1	200
T1	100
T1	300
T2	2000
T2	1000
T2	1000
T3	500
T3	800
T3	1200
T4	1000
T4	1000
T4	0
C1	10000
C1	11000
C1	9000
C2	5000
C2	1000
C2	6000
C3	0
C3	0
C3	0



Descriptive Statistics: cfu

Statistics

Variable	Sample	N	N*	Mean	SE Mean	StDev	Minimum	Q1	Median	Q3
cfu	C1	3	0	10000	577	1000	9000	9000	10000	11000
	C2	3	0	4000	1528	2646	1000	1000	5000	6000
	C3	3	0	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000
				0	0	0		0	0	0
	T1	3	0	200.0	57.7	100.0	100.0	100.0	200.0	300.0
	T2	3	0	1333	333	577	1000	1000	1000	2000
	T3	3	0	833	203	351	500	500	800	1200
T4	3	0	667	333	577	0	0	1000	1000	

Variable	Sample	Maximum
cfu	C1	11000
	C2	6000
	C3	0.000000
	T1	300.0
	T2	2000
	T3	1200
	T4	1000

WORKSHEET 2

General Linear Model: cfu versus sample

Method

Factor (-1, 0,
coding +1)

Factor Information

Factor Type Levels Values

sample Fixed 7 C1, C2, C3, T1,
T2, T3, T4

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	Adj SS	Adj MS	F-Value	P-Value
sample	6	232526667	38754444	30.83	0.000
Error	14	17600000	1257143		
Total	20	250126667			

Model Summary

S	R-sq	R-sq(adj)	R-sq(pred)
1121.22	92.96%	89.95%	84.17%

Coefficients

Term	Coef	SE Coef	T-Value	P-Value	VIF
Constant	2433	245	9.95	0.000	
sample					
C1	7567	599	12.63	0.000	1.71
C2	1567	599	2.61	0.020	1.71
C3	-	599	-4.06	0.001	1.71
T1	2433	599	-3.73	0.002	1.71
T2	2233	599	-1.84	0.088	1.71
T3	1100	599	-2.67	0.018	1.71
T4	1600				

Regression Equation

cfu = 2433 + 7567 sample_C1 + 1567 sample_C2
 - 2433 sample_C3 - 2233 sample_T1
 - 1100 sample_T2 - 1600 sample_T3
 - 1767 sample_T4

Fits and Diagnostics for Unusual Observations

Obs	cfu	Fit	Resid	Std Resid
17	1000	4000	-	-3.28 R
			3000	
18	6000	4000	2000	2.18 R

R Large residual

Comparisons for cfu

Tukey Pairwise Comparisons: sample

Grouping Information Using the Tukey Method and 95% Confidence

<u>sample</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Grouping</u>
C1	3	10000.0	A
C2	3	4000.0	B
T2	3	1333.3	B C
T3	3	833.3	C
T4	3	666.7	C
T1	3	200.0	C
C3	3	0.0	C

Means that do not share a letter are significantly different.

A3.2 *Propionibacterium acnes* colony visualization on blood agar

