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ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Immunological effects of autohemovaccination and autogenous vaccination in cattle infected with cutaneous papillomatosis virus

Efectos inmunológicos de la autohemovacunación y la vacunación autógena en bovinos infectados con el virus de la papilomatosis cutánea

Efeitos imunológicos da auto-hemovacinação e vacinação autógena em bovinos infectados pelo vírus da papilomatose cutânea

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29

30 **Abstract**

31 **Background:** Papillomavirus is known to induce the development of benign tumors in
32 hosts that could progress to malignant cancers. Therapeutic strategies for treating
33 cutaneous papilloma resulting from bovine papillomavirus (BPV) are particularly
34 interesting. **Objective:** This study aimed to investigate the immunological effects of
35 Autohemovaccination (AHV) and Autogenous Therapeutic Vaccine (ATV) in cattle in
36 Ecuador. **Methods:** 150 animals with clinical symptoms of BPV were diagnosed using
37 PCR and distributed among different groups. To create the vaccines, a total of 50 animals
38 were used in AHV protocol n=25 with 20 mL and n=25 with 10 mL blood doses
39 administered to them, in ATV protocol were used another 50 animals, n=25 animals with
40 10 mL and n=25 with 20 mL. The vaccines were stored at 4°C until used. Vaccines (AHV
41 and ATV) were administered 4 times subcutaneous at 1 week times at 20 and 10 mL
42 dosages, respectively. Hematological and immunological analyses involved the collection
43 of blood samples both before and after each vaccination. The remaining subjects (n=50)
44 will function as the positive control group. (C). **Results:** The findings demonstrated a
45 significant increase in leukocyte count (14.5; 14; 15.4; 16 x 10³/mm³), lymphocyte
46 percentage (55; 52; 58; 62%), and interleukin-6 levels (0.85; 0.80; 0.95; 0.97 ng/L) in
47 both autogenous vaccination (ATV) at 10 and 20 mL doses and autohemovaccination
48 (AHV) at 10 and 20 mL doses compared to the positive control (C) group (Leu: 13 x
49 10³/mm³; Lym: 50%; IL-6: 0.54 ng/L). Notably, neutrophil (33; 35; 44; 40%) and
50 monocyte (5; 8; 12; 13%) percentages also increased in AHV and ATV. Encouragingly,
51 within the initial month post-vaccination, both AHV and ATV exhibited signs of
52 regression in cutaneous papilloma. **Conclusions:** In conclusion, bovine papillomatosis
53 emerges as a condition with significant economic implications in the realm of dairy
54 farming. This study underscores autogenous vaccination as a practical therapeutic
55 approach, demonstrating its effectiveness in inducing lesion regression, notably by
56 stimulating interleukin-6 (IL-6) and lymphocyte production in cattle infected with
57 papillomavirus.

58 **Keywords:** *autogenous; autohemovaccine; bovine papillomavirus; cattle; IL-6;*
59 *immunological effects; leucocyte; papillomavirus; PCR; vaccine.*

60

61 **Resumen**

62 **Antecedentes:** El Papillomavirus es conocido por inducir el desarrollo de tumores
63 benignos en los hospedadores, los cuales podrían progresar a cánceres. Existen diversos
64 enfoques terapéuticos para tratar la papilomatosis cutánea resultante del virus de la
65 papilomatosis bovina (VPB), y la autohemovacuna (AHV) y la vacuna autógena (ATV)
66 son métodos que se destacan entre todos ellos. **Objetivo:** El objetivo fue examinar los
67 efectos inmunológicos de AHV y ATV en el ganado bovino en el Ecuador. **Métodos:** Se
68 diagnosticaron 150 bovinos con síntomas de papilomatosis cutánea mediante PCR y se
69 distribuyeron en diferentes grupos. Para crear las vacunas, se utilizaron un total de 50
70 animales en el protocolo AHV, n=25 con dosis de 20 mL y n=25 con dosis de 10 mL de
71 sangre. En el protocolo ATV se utilizaron otros 50 animales, n=25 animales con 10 mL y
72 n=25 con 20 mL. Las vacunas se almacenaron a 4°C hasta su uso. Las vacunas (AHV y
73 ATV) se administraron 4 veces de forma subcutánea con intervalos de 1 semana en dosis
74 de 20 y 10 mL, respectivamente a cada grupo tratamiento. Se realizaron análisis
75 hematológicos e inmunológicos de muestras de sangre bovinas antes y después de cada
76 vacunación. **Resultados:** Los resultados demostraron en ATV (10 y 20 mL) y AHV (10 y
77 20 mL) un aumento en leucocitos (14,5; 14; 15,4; 16 103/mm³), linfocitos (55; 52; 58;
78 62 %), e interleucina-6 (0,85; 0,80; 0,95; 0,97 ng/L), neutrófilos (33; 35; 44; 40%) y
79 monocitos (5; 8; 12; 13 %) en comparación con C+ (Leu: 13 103/mm³; Lym: 50 %; IL-
80 6: 0,54 ng/L; Neu: 34%; Mon: 6,5%). En las vacunas AHV y ATV, De manera alentadora,
81 durante el primer mes después de la vacunación, se observaron signos clínicos que indican
82 regresión en el papiloma cutáneo. **Conclusiones:** En conclusión, la papilomatosis bovina
83 representa una condición de considerable importancia económica en la ganadería lechera.
84 El estudio destaca la vacunación autógena como una intervención terapéutica práctica y
85 efectiva, que promueve eficazmente la regresión de las lesiones, especialmente mediante
86 la estimulación de la producción de IL-6 y linfocitos en bovinos infectados con
87 papilomavirus.

88

89 **Palabras clave:** *autógeno; autohemovacuna; efectos inmunológicos; ganado; IL-6;*
90 *leucocito; papilomavirus; PCR; vacuna; virus del papiloma bovino.*

91

92 **Resumo**

93 **Antecedentes:** Papilomavírus é conhecido por induzir o desenvolvimento de tumores
94 benignos nos hospedeiros, que poderiam progredir para cânceres malignos. Existem
95 diversas abordagens terapêuticas para tratar a papilomatose cutânea resultante do vírus da
96 papilomatose bovina (VPB), e a auto-hemovacina (AHV) e a vacina autógena (ATV)
97 destacam-se entre todas elas. **Objetivo:** O objetivo da pesquisa foi examinar os efeitos
98 imunológicos da AHV e da ATV no gado bovino no Equador. **Métodos:** Foram
99 diagnosticados 150 bovinos com sintomas de papilomatose cutânea por PCR e
100 distribuídos em diferentes grupos. Para criar as vacinas, um total de 50 animais foi
101 utilizado no protocolo AHV, n=25 com doses de 20 mL e n=25 com doses de 10 mL de
102 sangue. No protocolo ATV foram utilizados outros 50 animais, n=25 animais com 10 mL
103 e n=25 com 20 mL. As vacinas foram armazenadas a 4°C até o uso. As vacinas (AHV e
104 ATV) foram administradas 4 vezes de forma subcutânea com intervalos de 1 semana em
105 doses de 20 e 10 mL, respectivamente, para cada grupo de tratamento. Foram realizadas
106 análises hematológicas e imunológicas coletando amostras de sangue antes e depois de
107 cada vacinação. **Resultados:** Os resultados demonstraram em ATV (10 e 20 mL) e AHV
108 (10 e 20 mL) um aumento notável em leucócitos (14,5; 14; 15,4; 16 103/mm³), linfócitos
109 (55; 52; 58; 62 %), e interleucina-6 (0,85; 0,80; 0,95; 0,97 ng/L), neutrófilos (33; 35; 44;
110 40%) e monócitos (5; 8; 12; 13 %) em comparação com C+ (Leu: 13 103/mm³; Lym: 50
111 %; IL-6: 0,54 ng/L; Neu: 34%; Mon: 6,5%). Nas vacinas AHV e ATV, de maneira
112 encorajadora, no primeiro mês após a vacinação, evidenciaram-se sintomas clínicos de
113 regressão no papiloma cutâneo. **Conclusão:** Em conclusão, a papilomatose bovina
114 representa uma condição de considerável importância econômica na pecuária leiteira. O
115 estudo destaca a vacinação autógena como uma intervenção terapêutica prática e eficaz,
116 que promove efetivamente a regressão das lesões, especialmente mediante a estimulação
117 da produção de IL-6 e linfócitos em bovinos infectados com papilomavírus.

118

119 **Palavras-chave:** *autógeno; auto-hemovacina; efeitos imunológicos; gado; IL-6;*
120 *leucócito; papilomavírus; papilomavírus bovino; PCR; vacina.*

121

122 **Introduction**

123 Papillomaviruses (PVs) are DNA viruses that specifically infect epithelial cells and are
124 characterized by the absence of an envelope. (Aksoy *et al.*, 2017). The PV family
125 comprises five genera that affect cattle, namely Deltapapillomavirus, Xipapillomavirus,

126 Epsilonpapillomavirus, Dyoxipapillomavirus, and Dyokappapapillomavirus. To date, 27
127 bovine papillomavirus (BPV) types have been identified with four of them present in
128 Ecuador: BPV-1, BPV-2, BPV-6, and BPV-10 (Daudt *et al.*, 2018; Méndez *et al.*, 2021).
129 It has been observed that lesions caused by BPV Types 1, 2, 13, and 14
130 (Deltapapillomavirus) pose a higher risk (Daudt *et al.*, 2018).

131 The prevalence of BPV infections is global. Cutaneous papillomas manifest as typically
132 benign tumors characterized by complicated etiology and pathogenesis, marked by
133 epithelial proliferation. The various transmission pathways of BPV (direct and indirect
134 contact) significantly contribute to the transmission of cutaneous papillomatosis,
135 incorporating a myriad of risk factors (Atasever *et al.*, 2005; Dagalp *et al.*, 2017; Daudt
136 *et al.*, 2018; Saied *et al.*, 2021). Papilloma infections, particularly, tend to spread among
137 animals with compromised immune systems (Alcigir *et al.*, 2016; Alcigir and Timurkan,
138 2018). Various treatment approaches for BPV infection encompass antimony
139 preparations, homeopathic drugs, ivermectin, and autogenous vaccination (Ranjan *et al.*,
140 2013; Saied, 2021).

141 The objective of this study was to examine the immunological effects of autohemovaccine
142 (AHV) and Autogenous Vaccine (ATV) in cattle infected with bovine papillomavirus
143 (BPV) in Ecuador.

144

145 **Material and Methods**

146 All experiments were carried out in strict accordance with the principles of animal welfare
147 and were approved by the Committee of Ethics in Animal Experimentation of the
148 GIEMSA Welfare Department (protocol No. PI01/2023).

149 The experimental design involved 150 owned cattle exhibiting symptoms of cutaneous
150 papilloma disease, diagnosed through Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) analysis
151 described by Mendez *et al.* (2021) method. To extract DNA from the collected samples,
152 25 mg of tissue was processed using the DNeasy Blood & Tissue kit (Qiagen, Valencia,
153 California, USA) following the established procedure. The extracted DNA was stored at
154 -80°C until use.

155 The DNA samples were subjected to PCR using the primer pairs FAP-59/FAP-64
156 (Macrogen, Seoul, Republic of Korea) (FAP-59: 5'-TAACWGTIGGICAYCCWTATT-3';
157 FAP-64: 5'-CCWATATCWVHCATITCICCATC-3') and MY-09/MY-11 (IDT, San Diego,
158 California, USA) (MY-09: 5'-CGTCCAAAAGGAAACTGAGC-3'; MY-11: 5'-
159 GCACAGGGACATAACAATGG-3'). The primer pairs were designed to target the open

160 reading frame of the major capsid protein L1 gene, which is highly conserved across all
161 types of bovine and human papillomaviruses.

162 This protocol was based on the study by Aydin *et al.*, (2020) and Doğan *et al.*, (2021).
163 For AHV, a total of 50 cattle were utilized. Among them, n=25 animals received 20 mL
164 blood doses, while another n=25 received 10 mL blood doses. Simultaneously, in ATV,
165 another set of 50 cattle were included. Among these, n=25 cattle were administered 20
166 mL doses, and the remaining n=25 received 10 mL doses of autogenous vaccines; the
167 control group (C) was n=50 animals with positive BPV and without vaccine doses.

168 The AHV involves collecting 10 and 20 mL of blood from each animal, treating it with
169 0.5% formalin to inactivate any present pathogens and maintain the stability of the
170 suspension (Fernandes *et al.*, 2022); The preparation of ATV vaccines involved 5g of
171 papilloma tumor collected from the animals, were brought to the laboratory under a cold
172 chain. The samples were prepared based on the protocol of Yildirim *et al.*, (2023). The
173 vaccines were then stored at 4°C until their use.

174 The administration of vaccines (AHV and ATV) occurred subcutaneously, with four doses
175 given at one-week intervals. Two dosages were employed, 20 mL and 10 mL, representing
176 the treatment groups.

177 Hematological and immunological analyses were carried out through the collection of 20
178 mL blood samples. Parameters examined included leukocyte count, lymphocyte count,
179 interleukin-6 concentration, neutrophil count, and monocyte count. The data were
180 presented as mean values with standard error. Statistical comparisons were performed
181 between the treatment groups and the C group.

182 The results were analyzed using appropriate statistical methods, highlighting significant
183 increases in leukocytes, lymphocytes, interleukin-6, neutrophils, and monocytes in both
184 AHV and ATV groups to the C group. Additionally, observations of lesion regression in
185 cutaneous papilloma were noted within the first-month post-vaccination in AHV and ATV
186 groups.

187

188 *Statistical analysis*

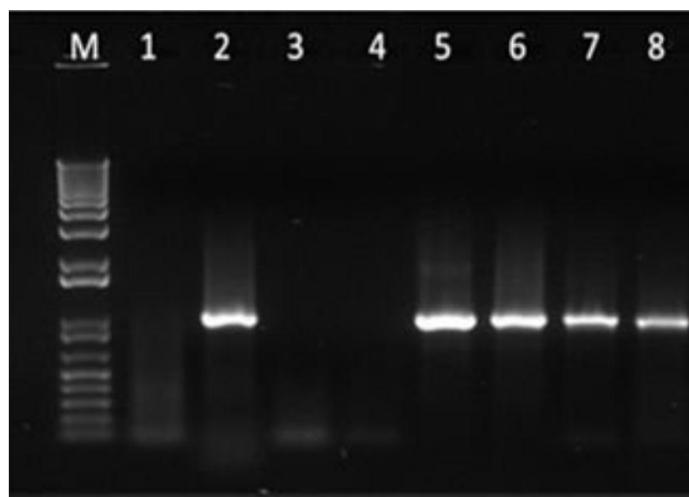
189 All statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS v. 26. Categorical variables were
190 examined through cross-tabulation, and percentages were compared using Pearson's χ^2
191 test. Quantitative variables were presented as mean \pm standard error (SE). ANOVA was
192 utilized to compare the Control and Treatment groups, considering fixed effects.

193 Additionally, a non-parametric test (Mann–Whitney U test) was employed for comparing
194 the Control and Treatment groups. Differences were deemed significant at $p < 0.05$.

195

196 **Results**

197 Figure 1 illustrates a portion of the PCR results, where analyses were conducted on 150
198 bovines distributed into one control group and four treatment groups. (AHV T1, n=25 ;
199 AHV T2, n=25 ; ATV T1, n=25 and ATV T2, n=25, respective).



200

201 **Figure 1.** The electrophoresis results on a 1% agarose gel depict the detection of BPV by
202 PCR. Lane M: Molecular weight marker 1kb plus DNA Ladder. Lane 1: negative control.
203 Lane 2: positive control. Lanes 3-8 correspond to BPV samples.

204 Table 1 shows the hematological and immunological parameters analyzed included
205 leukocyte count, lymphocyte count, interleukin-6 concentration, neutrophil count, and
206 monocyte count.

207

208 **Table 1.** Hematological and immunological parameters of ATV and AHV vaccines.

| Variable | C | AHV T1 (10mL) | AHV T2 (20 mL) | ATV T1 (10 mL) | ATV T2 (20 mL) | p-value |
|--------------------------------|------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------|
| | n=50 | n=25 | n=25 | n=25 | n=25 | |
| Leukocyte ($10^3/\text{mL}$) | 13 | 14.5* | 14* | 15.4* | 16* | 0.04 |
| Lymphocyte (%) | 50 | 55 | 52 | 58 | 62 | 0.08 |
| interleukin-6 (ng/L) | 0.54 | 0.85* | 0.80* | 0.95* | 0.97* | 0.02 |
| Neutrophil (%) | 34 | 33 | 35 | 44 | 40 | 0.15 |
| Monocyte (%) | 6.5 | 8* | 8* | 12* | 13* | 0.03 |

209 * Significant differences ($p < 0.05$).

210
211 The analysis of the results reveals statistically significant differences in several measured
212 variables between the C group and the treatment groups (AHV T1, AHV T2, ATV T1,
213 ATV T2). Specifically, the concentration of Leukocyte ($p=0.04$), Monocyte ($p=0.03$), and
214 interleukin-6 ($p=0.02$) exhibits statistically significant differences with a significance
215 level of 5%. These findings suggest that the administration of different volumes and types
216 of treatment significantly impacts immune responses and interleukin-6 concentration
217 compared to the C group.

218 On the other hand, although the differences in Lymphocyte (%) and Neutrophil (%)
219 Variables did not achieve statistical significance at the 0.05 level. ($p=0.08$ and $p=0.15$,
220 respectively), they may still indicate trends that could be relevant in a clinical context.
221 These results emphasize the importance of considering multiple variables and their
222 interaction when assessing the impact of various treatments on the immune system.

223

224 **Discussion**

225 Papillomavirus, a viral pathogen notorious for triggering benign tumors in mammals, has
226 garnered extensive attention due to its implications for animal health and the livestock
227 economy (Ugochukwu *et al.*, 2019). Notably, BPV-induced cutaneous papillomatosis has
228 driven investigations into effective therapeutic strategies, with a focus on AHV and ATV
229 as promising approaches to manage the infection (Skeate *et al.*, 2016). This study
230 contributes to investigating the immunological effects of AHV and ATV in cattle,
231 particularly in the context of the Ecuadorian livestock, where dairy production holds
232 significant importance.

233 The relevance of this study aligns with previous research emphasizing the efficacy of
234 autogenous vaccines in controlling bovine papillomatosis (Skeate *et al.*, 2016). Studies
235 like that of Tozato *et al.*, (2013) underscore the economic relevance of bovine
236 papillomatosis in dairy production, emphasizing the urgency of developing therapies that
237 not only alleviate symptoms but also promote the regression of cutaneous lesions.

238 Our findings, demonstrating significant increases in leukocytes, lymphocytes,
239 interleukin-6, neutrophils, and monocytes in both the AHV and ATV groups ($P<0.05$)
240 compared to the control group (C), provide novel insights into the immunological
241 responses induced by these vaccines (Fernandes *et al.*, 2022; Khattab *et al.*, 2023).
242 Consistent with existing literature, ATV was found to increase leukocyte counts,
243 particularly lymphocyte and ratios. It was concluded that ATV promoted tumor tissue

244 regression by elevating the levels of lymphocyte cells, which are pivotal for cellular
245 immunity, and neutrophil cells, which are responsible for phagocytic activity (Aydin *et*
246 *al.*, 2020).

247 The experimental design, involving 150 cattle diagnosed with cutaneous papilloma
248 through Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) analysis, adhered to ethical standards for
249 animal welfare. Our study employed two dosages, 20 mL, and 10 mL, for AHV and ATV,
250 demonstrating lesion regression within the first month post-vaccination (Lacey *et al.*,
251 1999; Pathania *et al.*, 2011; Salib and Farghali, 2011). These results corroborate with prior
252 investigations of the implications of bovine papillomatosis disease and underline the
253 importance of refining immunotherapeutic strategies for managing papillomavirus
254 infections in cattle (Dal Pozzo and Thiry, 2014; Knight, 2015; Marć *et al.*, 2015). Overall,
255 our study contributes valuable data to the field, enhancing our understanding of the
256 immunological effects of AHV and ATV in the context of bovine papillomatosis.

257 In conclusion, this study delved into the immunological effects of AHV and ATV in cattle
258 infected with BPV in the context of the Ecuadorian livestock industry. The investigation,
259 grounded in the significant implications of papillomavirus for animal health, particularly
260 in the dairy sector, addressed the pressing need for effective therapeutic interventions
261 against bovine papillomatosis. The research, building upon previous studies on
262 autogenous vaccines, demonstrated that AHV and ATV induced statistically significant
263 increases in immune system. The results contribute novel insights into the immunological
264 responses induced by AHV and ATV, providing valuable data for the refinement of
265 therapeutic interventions against bovine papillomatosis and reinforcing the importance of
266 considering multiple variables in assessing the impact of treatments on the immune
267 system.

268

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275

276 *Conflicts of interest*

277 The authors have read the journals policy and have the following competing interest: The
278 authors have no competing interests.

279

280 *Author contributions*

281 Conceptualization, A.S.-U.; methodology, A.S.-U.; software, M.T.T.; validation, V.P.,
282 V.A. C.A. and M.T.T.; formal analysis, M.T.T.; investigation, A.S.-U; resources, A.S.-U;
283 data curation, A.S.-U. and M.T.T.; writing original draft preparation, A.S.-U., V.P., V.A.
284 C.A. and M.T.T; project administration, A.S.-U.

285

286 *Use of artificial intelligence (AI)*

287 No AI or AI-assisted technologies were used.

288

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