In Vitro Susceptibility of *Escherichia coli* O157 to Several Antimicrobial Agents

Shigeharu OIE*, Akira KAMIYA**, Masaaki TOMITA*, Shizue MATSUSAKI*  
Atsushi KATAYAMA*, and Akira IWASAKI*

Department of Pharmacy, Yamaguchi University Hospital*, 1144 Kogushi, Ube 755, Japan and  
Yamaguchi Prefectural Research Institute of Health*, 2-5-67 Aoi, Yamaguchi 753, Japan.  
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We evaluated the antimicrobial susceptibility of six strains of *Escherichia coli* O157 (*E. coli* O157) isolated from patients in Yamaguchi Prefecture between June and July, 1996. Seven antimicrobial agents that were expected to retain a high concentration in the intestine were selected. The minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) and the minimum bactericidal concentration (MBC) of ciprofloxacin, polymyxin B, cefoperazone, and kanamycin for each strain were ≤6.25μg/ml. However, the MIC of fosfomycin was 3.13-100μg/ml, and its MBC was ≥100μg/ml. The MIC of ampicillin and tetracycline was >100μg/ml in some strains. In a time-kill study of *E. coli* O157 at a drug concentration of 12.5μg/ml, about 10^6 colony forming units/ml of *E. coli* O157 were eradicated within 10 min by ciprofloxacin, within 30 min by polymyxin B, within 4h by cefoperazone, and within 16h by kanamycin. These results suggest that the new quinolones with a poor absorption rate in the intestine (such as ciprofloxacin and norfloxacin) are effective against *E. coli* O157. When oral administration is impossible, bile excreting cephal antibiotics (such as cefoperazone, ceftriaxone, and cefotetan) may be useful.

**Key words**  
*Escherichia coli* O157; enterohemorrhagic *E. coli*; antimicrobial susceptibility; ciprofloxacin; polymyxin B