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# Mutations in Exon 4 of ESR1 Gene in Iraqi Women with Breast Cancer

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*The research is financed by Asian Development Bank. No. 2006-A171(Sponsoring information)* **Abstract** 

This study was aimed to determine the mutations and single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) in exon 4 in women with breast cancer from Iraq. Different samples (blood, fresh tissue with blood from same patient, and formalin fixed paraffin embedded, FFPE). Molecular analysis of exon 4 has been studied by using PCR. It was found that exon 4 appeared as a single band with size 370. Single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) were determined in exon 4 *ESR1* using DNA sequence. Then, nucleotide sequences of this exon were aligned with control group (healthy women) and with NCBI. It was detected five polymorphisms (AAA, TTT, AAA, CCG, AAA, and AAC) in exon 4 of *ESR1*; all of them were novel SNPs, all types of polymorphism in exon 4 of *ESR1* were substitution. **Keywords:** SNPs in *ESR1*, *ESR1* gene mutations, Breast cancer mutations

#### 1. Introduction

Breast cancer is the most common cause of cancer death and the most common form of cancer in women with a 9% incidence of being diagnosed during a lifetime (1). There was increasing in the incidence rates of breast cancer within the last two decades, which became one of the major threats to Iraqi female health. The estrogen receptor (ER) plays an important role in the pathogenesis and maintenance of breast cancer, it is a ligand-inducible transcription factor which regulates the expression of a variety of genes including some growth factors. The cellular signaling of estrogens mediated through two estrogen receptors, estrogen receptor -alpha (*ESR1*) and estrogen receptor- beta (*ESR2*), both belonging to the nuclear receptor (NR) family of transcription factors (2). The *ESR1* gene is located on chromosome 6q25-27, consists of eight exons and spans more than 140 kb (3). The expression of *ESR1* was studied as a predictive marker of treatment response, it status in breast tumors provided prognostic information and the primary target for endocrine therapy (4). Investigation of the molecular mechanisms of carcinogenesis and development of human breast cancer, the regulation of *ESR1* gene expression was an important issue in breast cancer, and the over expression of ESR1 was an initial significant event in its genesis (5).

#### 2. Materials and Methods

Different samples (blood, frozen tissue and blood from the same patients, and formalin fixed paraffin embedded) were collected from 50 women with breast cancer, with mean age  $55.00 \pm 10$  years, 24 samples recorded with estrogen receptor positive used in this study for detection of mutations in ESR2.Besides, 10 samples of blood from healthy women with median age 45 years as control. The DNA was extracted from blood samples using the Reliaprep blood genomic DNA MiniPrep system from Promega, USA, fresh tissue using Maxwell® 16 Tissue DNA Purification Kit from Promega, USA, and formalin fixed paraffin embedded (FFPE) samples using ReliaPrep<sup>™</sup> FFPE genomic DNA Miniprep from promega, USA. The extracted DNA from each sample used as a template for 20µl PCR reactions, and using 10µl Go Taq® Green PCR Master Mix fron Promega, USA, 1µl of primer: from forward ACCTGTGTTTTCAGGGATACGA primer: 10µm and reverse GCTGCGCTTCGCATTCTTAC for exon 4 of ESR alpha (6), and 3µl of DNA template. The mixture volume was completed to 20µl by adding free-nuclease water. PCR process was conducted through 30 cycles with the following steps: denaturation for 30 sec at 95°C, annealing for 30 sec at 57°C and elongation for 40 seconds at 72°C.In order to analyze the nucleotides sequences for all samples, DNA sequencing was performed at the national instrumentation center or environmental management (NICEM), using the ABI prism 3100 xl genetic analyzer from Applied from Biosystems, USA.

# 3. Result and discussion

#### • Amplification of exons in estrogen receptor alpha (ESR1) and beta (ESR2) genes

The exon 4 in estrogen receptor alpha (*ESR1*) gene was detected by using PCR and appeared as a band size with 370 bp (Fig. 1).

#### • Polymorphisms of exon 4 in ESR1

In exon 4 of *ESR1* gene, five polymorphisms (AAA, TTT, AAA, AAA, and AAC) were detected. The type of polymorphisms, position and their effects on gene expression (Table 1). All mutations in exon 4 of *ESR1* were

substitution polymorphisms that converted one base to another and then caused either no changing in the produced protein and this called silent polymorphism (sense mutation), or caused an exchange in the produced protein and this called missense mutation.

## Sequences profile and alignment of each polymorphism in exon 4 of ESR1

## 1-AAA

The sequencing result displayed the presence of SNP  $G \rightarrow A$  (Table 1). The identified SNP was missense mutation, it was substitution polymorphism. The common codon AGA was converted to AAA. This point mutation caused alteration in gene expression because of alteration in amino acid; the Arginine was converted to Lysine. This polymorphism found in one (4.1%) sample of FFBE. Then an alignment of nucleotides sequencing of exon 4 in ESR1 for women with breast cancer compared with control in NCBI center using automated sequencer and analyzed by BLAST data (Fig. 2).

## 2- TTT

The sequencing result illustrated the presence of SNP C  $\rightarrow$  T (Table 1). The identified SNP was missense mutation, it was substitution polymorphism. The common codon TCT was converted to TTT. This point mutation caused alteration in gene expression because of revision in amino acid; the Aspartic acid was converted to Asparagine. This polymorphism found in 3 (13%) samples of blood. An alignment of nucleotides sequencing of exon 4 in ESR1 for women with breast cancer was done and compared with control in NCBI center using automated sequencer and analyzed by BLAST data (Fig. 3).

## 3- AAA

The sequencing result exposed the presence of SNP G  $\rightarrow$  A (Table 1). The identified SNP was a silent polymorphism (sense mutation), it was substitution polymorphism. The common codon AAG was converted to AAA. This point mutation had no effect on gene expression in which the changing codon still encoded the same amino acid, Lysine. This polymorphism found in 1 (4.1%) sample from frozen tissue and it appeared in the blood of the same patient. Then nucleotides sequencing of exon 4 in ESR1 for women with breast cancer were aligned and compared with control in NCBI center using automated sequencer and analyzed by BLAST data (Fig. 4).

# 4- AAA

The sequencing result revealed the presence of SNP G  $\rightarrow$  A (Table 1). The identified SNP was a missense mutation, it was substitution polymorphism. The common codon AGA was converted to AAA. This point mutation altered the gene expression because of changing in amino acid has happened; the Arginine was converted to Lysine. This polymorphism found in 6 (25%) samples; 5 samples from blood and only one samples from frozen tissue and also appeared in the blood sample of the same patient. The alignment of nucleotides sequencing of exon4 in ESR1 for women with breast cancer was done and compared with control in NCBI center using automated sequencer and analyzed by BLAST data (Fig. 5).

## **5- AAC**

The sequencing result revealed the presence of SNP G  $\rightarrow$  A (Table 1). The identified SNP was missense mutation, it was substitution polymorphism. The common codon GAC was converted to AAG. This point mutation caused alteration in gene expression because of changing in amino acid; the Aspartic acid was converted Asparagine. This polymorphism found in 6 (25%) samples, 5 samples from blood and one sample from frozen tissue as well it appeared in the blood sample from the same patient. Then an alignment of nucleotides sequencing of exon 4 in ESR1 for women with breast cancer compared with control in NCBI center using automated sequencer and analyzed by BLAST data (Fig. 6).

The mutation and polymorphism of cancer-associated ESR1 gene found to predict tumor formation and prognosis (7). ERSI was representing a surrogate marker for predicting breast cancer developing later in life (8). Several functionally important intronic and exonic loci of ESR1 gene polymorphisms that are associated with breast cancer have been examined (9). As known, estrogen receptor (ER) activation participated in development and progression of breast cancer because of alteration in pathways of ESR1 occurred during development of breast cancer and that associated with breast cancer risk and investigation (10). The function of ER was as a hormone dependent transcriptional regulator that plays significant role in breast cancer development (11, 12). Identification of a novel acquired mutation of ESR1 gene in women with metastatic breast cancer may lead to develop resistance to endocrine treatment. The mutations cause a conformational change, which mimics the conformation of activated ligand-bound receptor that lead to change the ligand-independent activity then result in resistance to endocrine treatment (13). The relationship between ESR1 mutations and resistance to endocrine therapy remains to be investigated, however, there was a significant upregulation of estrogen receptor responsive genes in ESR1 mutations tumors, suggesting that estrogen receptor signaling was active and may play a role in conferring endocrine therapy resistance (14). The mutations in ESRI may prompt a clinician to change the treatment regimen from an aromatase inhibitor to an anti-estrogen, so women who developed resistance to aromatase inhibitors often responded to anti-estrogen therapy (15). Moreover, the SNPs that determined in this study may effect copy number of ESR1 gene and may cause resistant to treatment because amplification was an abnormal status and normal ER protein expression (ER +ve) was requisite for response to treatment (16, 17). The somatic mutation may increase sensitivity to estrogen and this may lead to increasing of proliferation at subphysiological level of estrogen and stimulated binding to transcription factor2 at low level of hormone (18). While other studies (19. 20) were showed no association between *ESR1* polymorphism and breast cancer. This may due to the small size of samples or chose only little SNPs.

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Table (1). I olymor puisins in exon 4 of ESAT gene in women with breast cancer									
No.	Mutation	Туре	Position	Wild type codon	Mutated codon	Chang of amino acid	Effect on translation	Kind of mutation	No. of patie- nts
1	G→A	Substitution	258777	AGA	AAA	$R \rightarrow K$	Missense mutation	Point mutation	1
2	C ⊥	Substitution	258762	ТСТ	TTT	$D \rightarrow N$	Missense mutation	Point mutation	3
3	G→A	Substitution	258826	AAG	AAA	$K \rightarrow K$	Sense mutation	Point mutation	1
4	G→A	Substitution	258920	AGA	AAA	$^{R} \rightarrow ^{K}$	Missense mutation	Point mutation	6
5	G→A	Substitution	258971	GAC	AAC	$^{\mathrm{D}} \rightarrow^{\mathrm{N}}$	Missense mutation	Point mutation	6

Notes Table (1): Polymorphisms in exon 4 of *ESR1* gene in women with breast cancer

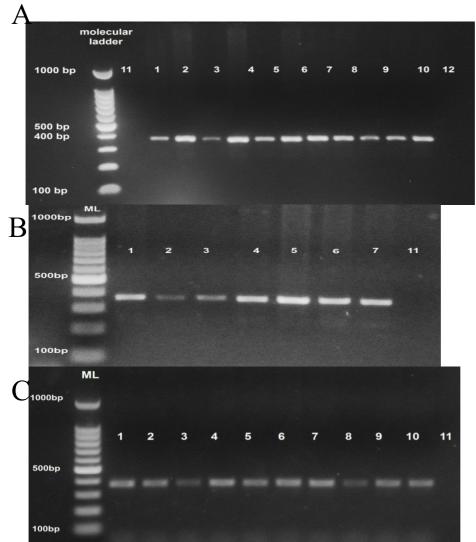


Figure (1): Amplification of exon 4 in estrogen receptor alpha set 1 primer with 370 bp. A: blood samples; Lanes 1-10 represent DNA from women with breast cancer, lane 11 represents DNA of negative control, lane 12 represents DNA from healthy subjects. B: frozen tissue samples; Lanes 1-7 represent samples from women with breast cancer, lane 11 represents DNA in negative control. C. FFPE samples; Lanes 1-10 represent DNA from women with breast cancer, lane 11 represents control negative. Agarose 1.5%, 5V/cm for 45 min, ML: molecular ladder

Length:419779	r U	•	· · · ·	
Score	Expect Identities	Gaps	Strand	
582 bits(315)	1e-162 323/325(99%)	2/325(0%)	Plus/Plus	
Query 15		•••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••	AGGGCAGGGGTGAAGTGGGGTCTGC	
Sbjct 258707	ATGTTGAAACACAAGCGCCA	.GAGAGATGATGGG	AGGGCAGGGGTGAAGTGGGGTCTGC	258766
Query 74			CCGCTCATGATCAAACGCTCTAAGAA	
Sbjct 258767	ggagacatg <mark>aGa</mark> gctgcca <i>i</i>	ACCTTTGGCCAAGC	CCGCTCATGATCAAACGCTCTAAGAA	258826
Query 134			TGGTCAGTGCCTTGTTGGATGCTGAC	
Sbjct 258827	AACAGCCTGGCCTTGTCCCT	GACGGCCGACCAGA	TGGTCAGTGCCTTGTTGGATGCTGA	258886
Query 194			GACCCTTCAGTGAAGCTTCGATGAT	
Sbjct 258887	CCCCCCATACTCTATTCCGA	GTATGATCCTACCA	GACCCTTCAGTGAAGCTTCGATGATG	258946
Query 254	GGCTTACTGACCAACCTGGC		TTCACATGATCAACTGGGCGAAGAGG	
Sbjct 258947	GGCTTACTGACCAACCTGGC	AGACAGGGAGCTGG	STTCACATGATCAACTGGGCGAAGAGG	259006
Query 314	GTGCCAGGTAAGAATGCGAA			
<u>Sbjct 259007</u>	GTGCCAGGTAAGAATGCGAA			

ref NG 008493.2 Homo sapiens estrogen receptor 1 (ESR1), RefSeqGene on chromosome6

Figure (2): Alignment of exon 4 in *ESR1* gene sequence of women with breast cancer using automated sequencer was analyzed by BLAST data, query number represents the current results while the subject represents the reference sequence. Blue color represents exon region, black color represented intron region while the single nucleotide polymorphism represents red color

Homo sapiens estrogen receptor 1 (ESR1), RefSeqGene on chromosome 6

Sequence ID: ref|008493.2|Length: 419779Number of Matches: 1

**Related Information** 

Map Viewer-aligned genomic context

Range 1: 258665 to 258986GenBankGraphics Next Match Previous Match First Match

Alignment statistics for match #1

Score	Expect	Identities		Gaps	Strand	
582bits(315)	1e-162	321/322(99	%)	1/322(0%)	Plus/Plus	
Query 4					TGAAACACAAGCGC	63
Sbjct 258665					TGAAACACAAGCGC	258724
Query 64	CAGAGAGATGATG			<mark></mark>	GACATGAGAGCTGCC	123
Sbjct 258725					GACATGAGAGCTGCC	258784
Query 124					AGCCTGGCCTTGTCC	183
Sbjct 258785					AGCCTGGCCTTGTCC	258844
Query 184					CCATACTCTATTCC	243
Sbjct 258845					CCATACTCTATTCC	258904
Query 244					TACTGACCAACCTG	303
Sbjct 258905					TACTGACCAACCTG	258964
Query 304	GCAGACAGGGAGC		324			
Sbjct 258965	GCAGACAGGGAGC	TGGTTCACA	258986			

Figure (3): Alignment of exon 4 in *ESR1* gene sequence of women with breast cancer using automated sequencer was analyzed by BLAST data, query number represents the current results while the subject represents the reference sequence. Blue color represents exon region, black color represented intron region while the single nucleotide polymorphism represents red color

Homo sapiens estrogen receptor 1 (*ESR1*), RefSeqGene on chromosome 6 Sequence ID: <u>ref[NG\_008493.2]</u>Length: 419779Number of Matches: 1 Related Information <u>Map Viewer</u>-aligned genomic context Range 1: 258714 to 259026<u>GenBankGraphics</u> Next Match Previous Match <u>First Match</u> Alignment statistics for match #1

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Score	Expect	Identities	Gaps	Strand				
544 bits(294)	8e-151	310/313(99%)	3/313(0%)	Plus/Plus				
Query 22		CAGAGAGATGATGGGGA			81			
Sbjct 258714	AACACAAGCGC	CAGAGAGATGATGGGGA	GGGCAGGGGTGAAGT	GGGGTCTGCTGGAGACA	258773			
Query 82		AACCTTTGGCCAAGCCC			141			
Sbjct 258774	TGAGAGCTGCCAACCTTTGGCCAAGCCCGCTCATGATCAAACGCTCTAAGA <mark>AGA</mark> ACAGCC 2							
Query 142		CTGACGGCCGACCAGAT			201			
Sbjct 258834	TGGCCTTGTCC	CTGACGGCCGACCAGAT	GGTCAGTGCCTTGTT	GGATGCTGAGCCCCCCA	258893			
Query 202		gagtatgatcctacca <mark>A</mark>			261			
Sbjct 258894	TACTCTATTCC	GAGTATGATCCTACCA <mark>G</mark>	ACCCTTCAGTGAAGC	TTCGATGATGGGCTTAC	258953			
Query 262				· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	321			
Sbjct 258954	TGACCAACCTG	GCAGACAGGGAGCTGGT	TCACATGATCAACTG	GGCGAA <mark>G</mark> AGGGTGCCAG	259013			
Query 322	GTAAGAATGGG							
sbjct 259014 B	 GTAAGAATGCG							
Homo sapiens estrogen receptor 1 ( <i>ESR1</i> ), RefSeqGene on chromosome 6 Sequence ID: <u>ref[NG_008493.2]</u> Length: 419779Number of Matches: 1 Related Information <u>Map Viewer</u> -aligned genomic context Range 1: 258700 to 259033 <u>GenBankGraphics</u> Next Match Previous Match <u>First Match</u>								
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Related Inform <u>Map Viewer</u> -al Range 1: 2587( Alignment stat Score 562 bits(304) Query 6 Sbjct 258700 Query 65 Sbjct 258757 Query 125 Sbjct 258817 Query 185 Sbjct 258877 Query 245	ation igned genomic 00 to 259033Gen istics for match Expect 2e-156 AGGGAGAAAA GGGGTCTGCTG CTCTAAGAAA IIIIIIII CTCTAAGAAA GGATGCTGAGG GGATGCTGAGG IIIIIIIIII GGATGCTGAGG GGCGAAGAGGG IIIIIIIIII	context <u>nBankGraphics</u> Next 1#1 Identities 332/337(98%) FCGTTGAAACACAAGCO GGAGACATGAGAGCTGC GGAGACATGAGAGCTGC ACAGCCTGGCCTTGTC ACAGCCTGGCCTTGTC CCCCCCATACTCTATTC CCCCCCATACTCTATTC GGCTTACTGACCAACCT	mber of Matches: Match Previous M Gaps 5/337(1%) CCAGAGAGAGATGATGA CCAGAGAGAGATGATGA CCAGACTTTGGCCAAG CCAGCTTTGGCCAAG CCAGCTTTGGCCAAG CCAGCTTTGGCCAAG CCAGCTTGGCCGACC CCGAGTATGATCCTAG CCGAGTATGATCCTAG CGGCAGACAGGGGAGC CGGCAGACAGGGGAGC CGGCAGACAGGGGAGC CGAGCGCAGC 333	1 Match First Match Strand Plus/Plus GGGAGGGCAGGGGTGAAGT GGCAGGGCAGGGGTGAAGT GCCGGCTCATGATCAAACG AGATGGTCAGTGCCTTGTT AGATGGTCAGTGCCTTGTT CCAACCCTTCAGTGAAGC TGGTTCACATGATCAACTG	258756 124 258816 184 258876 244 258930 304			

Figure (4): Alignment of exon 4 in *ESR1* gene sequence of women with breast cancer using automatedsequence (4): Alignment of exon 4 in *ESR1* gene sequence of women with breast cancer using automatedsequencer was analyzed by BLAST data, query number represents the current results while the subjectrepresents the reference sequence. Blue color represents exon region, black color represented intron regionwhile the single nucleotide polymorphism represents red color; A: blood sample, B: Frozen tissue sampleHomo sapiens estrogen receptor 1 (*ESR1*), RefSeqGene on chromosome 6Sequence ID: ref[NG 008493.2]Length: 419779Number of Matches: 1Related InformationMap Viewer-aligned genomic contextRange 1: 258700 to 259031GenBankGraphicsNext Match Previous MatchAlignment statistics for match #1ScoreExpectIdentitiesGapsStrand

574 bits(636)	3e-160	330/332 (99%)	2/332(0%)	Plus/Plus	
Query 5		AACACAAGCGCCAGAGAG			62
<u>Sbjct 258700</u>					258759
Query 63	GTCTGCTGGAGACA	TGAGAGCTGCCAACCTT	GGCCAAGCCCGCTCAT		122
<u>Sbjct 258760</u>	GTCTGCTGGAGACA	TGAGAGCTGCCAACCTT	GGCCAAGCCCGCTCAT	GATCAAACGCTC	258819
Query 123	TAAGAAGAACAGCC	TGGCCTTGTCCCTGACG		TGCCTTGTTGGA	182
<u>Sbjct 258820</u>	TAAGAAGAACAGCO	TGGCCTTGTCCCTGACG	GCCGACCAGATGGTCAG	TGCCTTGTTGGA	258879
Query 183		TACTCTATTCCGAGTATC		CAGTGAAGCTTC	242
<u>Sbjct 258880</u>	TGCTGAGCCCCCCA	TACTCTATTCCGAGTATC			258939
Query 243	GATGATGGGCTTAC	TGACCAACCTGGCA <mark>A</mark> AC	AGGGAGCTGGTTCACAI	GATCAACTGGGC	302
<u>Sbjct 258940</u>	GATGATGGGCTTAC	tgaccaacctggca <mark>G</mark> ac	AGGGAGCTGGTTCACAT	GATCAACTGGGC	258999
Query 303		GTAAGAATGCGAAGCGCA			

Sbjct 259000 GAAGAGGGTGCCAGGTAAGAATGCGAAGCGCA 259031

Figure (5): Alignment of exon 4 in *ESR1* gene sequence of women with breast cancer using automated sequencer was analyzed by BLAST data, query number represents the current results while the subject represents the reference sequence. Blue color represents exon region, black color represented intron region while the single nucleotide polymorphism represents red color

Homo sapiens estrogen receptor 1 (ESR1), RefSeqGene on chromosome 6

Sequence ID: ref[NG 008493.2]Length: 419779Number of Matches: 1

**Related Information** 

Map Viewer-aligned genomic context

Range 1: 258700 to 259031<u>GenBankGraphics</u> Next Match Previous Match

Alignment statistics for match #1								
Score	Expect	Identities	Gaps	Strand				
574 bits(636)	3e-160	330/332 (99%)	2/332(0%)	Plus/Plus				
Query 5		AACACAAGCGCCAGAGAG			62			
Sbjct 258700					258759			
Query 63	GTCTGCTGGAGACA	IGAGAGCTGCCAACCTTT	GGCCAAGCCCGCTC	TGATCAAACGCTC	122			
Sbjct 258760					258819			
Query 123		IGGCCTTGTCCCTGACGG			182			
Sbjct 258820					258879			
Query 183	TGCTGAGCCCCCA	TACTCTATTCCGAGTATG	ATCCTACCA <mark>A</mark> ACCC	TTCAGTGAAGCTTC	242			
Sbjct 258880			· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		258939			
200000	recremented		niceincen <mark>o</mark> nece.	10h010hh00110	200000			
Query 243		tgaccaacctggca <mark>àac</mark> a			302			
Sbjct 258940		igaccaacciggca <mark>Gac</mark> a			258999			
Query 303		GTAAGAATGCGAAGCGCA	334					
Sbjct 259000			259031					

Figure (6): Alignment of exon 4 in *ESR1* gene sequence of women with breast cancer using automated sequencer was analyzed by BLAST data, query number represents the current results while the subject represents the reference sequence. Blue color represents exon region, black color represented intron region while the single nucleotide polymorphism represents red color