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Identification and characterization of a B-type mannose-binding lectin from Nile tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*) in response to bacterial infection

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ABSTRACT

Lectins are a group of carbohydrate-binding proteins, which play an important 6 role in innate immune system against pathogen infection. In this study, a B-type 7 mannose-binding lectin (OnBML) was identified from Nile tilapia (Oreochromis 8 niloticus), and characterized at expression patterns against bacterial infection and 9 10 capability to promote phagocytosis by macrophages. The open reading frame of OnBML is 354 bp of nucleotide sequence encoding polypeptides of 117 amino acids. 11 The deduced protein is highly homologous to other teleost BMLs, containing two 12 repeats of the conserved mannose-binding motif QXDXNXVXY. Expression of 13 OnBML was widely exhibited in all examined tissues, with the most abundance in 14 spleen and following gill, peripheral blood, and head kidney. The *OnBML* expressions 15 were significantly up-regulated following two major bacterial infections including a 16 Gram-positive bacterium (Streptococcus agalactiae) and a Gram-negative bacterium 17 (Aeromonas hydrophila) in vivo and in vitro. Recombinant OnBML protein possessed 18 capacities of mannose-binding and calcium-dependent agglutination to S. agalactiae 19 and A. hydrophila, and promoted the phagocytosis by macrophages. Taken together, 20 the present study indicated that OnBML is likely to get involved in host defense 21 against bacterial infection in Nile tilapia. 22

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