

Oxidation of cholesterol in mayonnaise during storage

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Abstract

The oxidative stability of cholesterol in commercial mayonnaise under different storage conditions was evaluated by measuring cholesterol oxides (COs), 7-ketocholesterol (7-Keto), 25-hydroxycholesterol (25-OH), 7 α -hydroxycholesterol (7 α -OH) and 7 β -hydroxycholesterol (7 β -OH) using HPLC. Oxidation of cholesterol was indicated within about 15 days after manufacture by the presence of 7-Keto. Oxidation increased during storage at 4 and 25 °C (being greater at 25 °C) for 165 days in darkness, as indicated by the presence of 7-Keto, 25-OH, 7 α -OH and 7 β -OH. There was a strong correlation between COs and PV (peroxide value) [$r^2 = 0.95$ (4 °C) and $r^2 = 0.96$ (25 °C)] during the process of oxidation. The pattern of fatty acids was not affected during the period of the experiment. Temperature and time were important factors in the oxidative stability of cholesterol. Total formation of COs during 165 days was 20.3 $\mu\text{g/g}$ at 4 °C and 30.2 $\mu\text{g/g}$ at 25 °C.

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1. Introduction

Cholesterol is a monounsaturated lipid with a double bond on carbon-5, and is susceptible to oxidation in the presence of oxygen, light, heat, radiation, free radicals, metal ions, and other factors. The resulting cholesterol oxides, COs, are of clinical interest, especially due to their association with cytotoxicity (Sevanian & Peterson, 1986), atherogenesis (Peng, Hu, & Morin, 1991), mutagenesis (Sevanian & Peterson, 1986) and carcinogenesis (Kendall, Koo, Sokoloff, & Kesava-Rao, 1992; Petrakis, Gruenke, & Craig, 1981; Sporer, Brill, & Schaffner, 1982).

There is abundant evidence that the COs (mentioned here by their common, systematic and trivial names), 7-ketocholesterol (3 β -hydroxycholest-5-en-7-one) (7-Keto), 20-hydroxycholesterol (cholest-5-en-3 β , 20-diol) (20-OH), 25-hydroxycholesterol (cholest-5-en-3 β , 25-diol) (25-OH), 7 α -hydroxycholesterol (cholest-5-en-3 β , 7 α -diol) (7 α -OH), 7 β -hydroxycholesterol (cholest-5-en- β , 7 β -diol)

(7 β -OH), cholesterol-5,6 α -epoxyde (5,6 α -epoxi-5 α -cholestan-3 β -ol) (5,6-epoxide), cholesterol-5,6 β -epoxide (5,6 β -epoxi-5 β -cholestan-3 β -ol) (5,6 β -epoxide) and cholestanotriol (5 α -cholestan- β , 5,6 β -triol) (Triol) are cytotoxic and atherogenic to different extents (Bösinger, Luf, & Brandl, 1993). By contrast, cholesterol shows little cytotoxicity or atherogenicity (Imai et al., 1980; Imai, Werthessen, Taylor, & Lee, 1976; Peng et al., 1991).

Many oxidation products of cholesterol have been identified (Tai, Chen, & Chen, 1999). Those most frequently found in foods are 7-Keto, 20-OH, 25-OH, 7 α -OH, 7 β -OH, 5,6 α -epoxide, 5,6 β -epoxide and Triol. Of these, 7-Keto occurs in relatively high concentrations in many foods (Guardiola, Codony, Rafecas, & Boatella, 1995; Nielsen, Olsen, Lyndon, Sorensen, & Skibsted, 1996; Novelli et al., 1998; Pie, Spahis, & Seillan, 1991), with the content varying, depending on the type of matrix (Lercker & Rodriguez-Estrada, 2000), and it has been proposed as an indicator of cholesterol oxidation (Galina Toschi & Caboni, 1992; Zunin et al., 1995). By comparison, 25-OH occurs in smaller concentrations (Guardiola et al., 1995); however, 25-OH and Triol are considered to be the most atherogenic of these products (Addis, 1986; Peng et al., 1991).

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Occurrence of total COs at up to 443 µg/g in foods of animal origin has been reported in the literature (Tai, Chen, & Chen, 2000), accounting for 1–2% to 10% of total cholesterol (Paniangvait, King, Jones, & German, 1995). COs can enter the circulation as food contaminants (Lin & Morel, 1996); however, the contribution of these exogenous oxides relative to the endogenous oxides in plasma has yet to be clarified. It is necessary to evaluate the bioavailability of each of the COs before toxicological evaluation (Linseisen & Wolfram, 1998), given that their percentages of absorption differ (Osada, Sasaki, & Sugano, 1994).

Mayonnaise is a widely consumed food product. Being made with eggs, it contains significant quantities of cholesterol. Therefore, the potential for cholesterol oxidation cannot be ignored, especially when the long shelf-life of the product (6 months) is considered. The objective of the present study was to investigate the oxidative stability of cholesterol in commercial mayonnaise by analyzing effective oxidation with formation of 7-Keto, 25-OH, 7 α -OH and 7 β -OH, during storage for 165 days at 4 and 25 °C in the dark.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Materials

A brand of mayonnaise available commercially in São Paulo, Brazil was selected at random, with the samples being provided directly by the manufacturer. There was a total of 45 samples of 500 g each from five different lots with manufacturing dates spanning approximately 15 days, and one sample from each lot was analyzed. The remaining samples were stored in the laboratory at 4 ± 1 °C or at 25 ± 1 °C in the dark, and examined during 165 days. The hexane (Aldrich) and isopropanol (Sigma) used were of HPLC grade; the other chemicals were ACS reagent grade. Cholesterol (5-cholesten-3 β -ol), 6-ketocholestanol (3 β -hydroxy-5 α -cholestan-6-one), 7-Keto, 25-OH and 7 α -OH were obtained from Sigma Chemical Co. and 7 β -OH was obtained from Steraloids Inc.

2.2. Measurement of cholesterol and cholesterol oxides

2.2.1. Extraction of total lipid and saponification

Mayonnaise samples (0.25–1.0 g), reconstituted to 80% moisture by adding distilled water and homogenized, were transferred to a separating funnel with 50 ml of distilled water and extracted three times in succession with 20 ml of chloroform/methanol (v/v, 2:1) (Csallany, Kindom, Addis, & Lee, 1989). After separation and evaporation of the chloroform under vacuum, the residue was saponified by adding 20 ml of 1 M KOH in methanol and holding the mixture for 18 h at 25–30 °C, with mechanical agitation especially dur-

ing the first 2 and last 2 h of the process. Ten milliliters of distilled water were added to the mixture and the unsaponified fraction was extracted three times in succession with 10 ml of hexane using a separating funnel. The organic fraction was washed with 10 ml of 1 M KOH in methanol and then three times in succession with 10 ml of distilled water. The resulting extract was filtered using Whatman No. 1 filter paper containing anhydrous sodium sulfate, and the material retained after filtration was washed with 20 ml of hexane (Chen & Chen, 1994).

2.2.2. Assay

The hexane extract obtained above (2.2.1) was evaporated under vacuum in a rotary evaporator at 40 °C. The residue was suspended in 1–2 ml of mobile phase, filtered through a 0.45-µm Durapore membrane (Millex-Millipore) and injected automatically (20–50 µl) onto an HPLC system (Shimadzu, LC-10 ADVP). A 30 × 0.39 cm column of µ-Porasil of pore diameter 10 µm (Waters Associates) was used in normal phase. The mobile phases used were mixtures of hexane/isopropanol at 96:4 (v/v) for cholesterol, 97:3 for 25-OH and 93:7 for 7-Keto with a flow rate of 1 ml/min, and at 91:9 (v/v) for 7 α -OH and 7 β -OH with a flow rate of 0.8 ml/min. Cholesterol and COs were detected at 206 nm, except for 7-Keto, which was detected at 233 nm, using a photodiode detector. Peaks for cholesterol and COs were identified by comparison of retention times with those of the corresponding reference standards. External standards were used in measuring cholesterol and 25-OH, and internal and external standards were used for 7-Keto, 7 α -OH and 7 β -OH, with 6-ketocholestanol being used as the internal standard (Csallany et al., 1989; Maerker, Nunguesser, & Zulak, 1988). Oxidative stability of cholesterol during the assay was confirmed. The cholesterol was added to commercial soy oil (peroxide value of 4.34 ± 0.11 meq O₂/kg) and there was no formation of 7-Keto, 7 α -OH, 7 β -OH or 25-OH.

2.2.3. Validation of the method

Recovery of analytes (added to samples of mayonnaise before the lipid extraction) was 90–96% ($n = 6$); repeatability represented by the coefficients of variation, was 7.25–11.95% ($n = 8$), and the linearity of the calibration curves (0.2–1.2 µg), represented by the correlation coefficients (r^2), was 0.993–0.999. The limits of detection and quantitation were 1.09×10^{-8} and 3.62×10^{-8} g for cholesterol, 6.67×10^{-9} and 2.22×10^{-8} g for 25-OH, 2.02×10^{-9} and 6.73×10^{-9} g for 7-Keto, 3.11×10^{-8} and 1.03×10^{-7} g for 7 α -OH and 6.90×10^{-8} and 2.30×10^{-7} g for 7 β -OH, respectively (Long & Winefordner, 1983; Novelli et al., 1998; Razzazi-Fazeli, Kleineisen, & Luf, 2000). The structures of the COs were confirmed by gas chromatography/mass spectrometry (Sevanian et al., 1994).

2.3. Moisture content, peroxide value, pH, total lipids and fatty acids

Moisture and peroxide value (PV) were determined by the methods of the AOCS (1987) and total lipids and fatty acids by the methods in Brasil (1981) and Hartman and Lago (1973), respectively. The pH of the homogenized sample was measured directly, using a Procyon, model SA 720 potentiometer.

2.4. Statistical analyses

The data was subjected to classical regression analysis, descriptive univariate analysis, descriptive multivariate analysis (Microsoft Excel for Windows version 1997), analysis of variance (Graphpad Instat Tm 1990–93, version 2.01), mixed model analysis of variance (Minitab for Windows, version 11.12) and explanatory coefficient R^2 (SPSS for Windows, version 8.0) (Bussab & Morettin, 1986; Neter, Kutner, Nachtsheim, & Wasserman, 1996; Singer & Andrade, 1986).

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Recently manufactured mayonnaise

The results (Table 1) for moisture (16.97 ± 0.14 g/100 g) and total lipids (75.75 ± 0.77 g/100 g) obtained for the different lots of recently manufactured mayonnaise (approximately 15 days), agree with the results reported by Chirife, Vigo, Gomez, and Favetto (1989) and Stauffer (1996). The lipid content was also in accord with Brazilian legislation regarding the minimum content (65 g/100 g sample) (Brasil, 1978). The results for PV (0.75 ± 0.01 meq O_2 /kg) were low; pH (3.68 ± 0.01) was adequate as regards the microbiological stability of the product (Jacobsen et al., 2001).

The concentrations of cholesterol (71.4 ± 5.49 mg/100 g) were close to those reported by Feeley, Criner, and Watt (1972) (50–70 mg/100 g), while those of 7-Keto (1.99 ± 0.59 μ g/g), the only oxide detected, accounted for no more than 0.5% of cholesterol (Table 1). According to Paniangvait et al. (1995), total COs in foods can account for 1–2% to 10% of cholesterol.

3.2. Stored mayonnaise

With the exception of 7-Keto, none of the oxides studied was detected in the control sample or during storage for up to 75 days at 25 °C or up to 135 days at 4 °C (Table 2). In most cases, formation of 7-Keto was more elevated during the experimental period. At the end of the experiment, 7-Keto was 3.7 and 3.6 times higher than the control at 4 and 25 °C, respectively.

25-OH, 7 α -OH and 7 β -OH were only detected after 135 days at 25 °C (Table 2). The occurrence of 25-OH toward the end of the experimental period is in agreement with the report of Maerker (1987), who considered that COs as products of oxidation of carbon-7 such as 7-Keto are formed more readily than products of side-chain oxidation such as 25-OH, which occur by transfer of free radicals. The predominance of 7-Keto, compared with 7-OH (α and β) during storage suggests that dehydration is more important than reduction in the oxidation of cholesterol. Toward the end of storage at 25 °C, 25-OH exceeded 7-Keto, with a decrease in the rate of formation of 7-Keto.

The quantities of 7-Keto measured after 165 days of the experiments at 4 and 25 °C amounted to about 1% of those for cholesterol (Table 1), and the sum of 25-OH, 7 α -OH and 7 β -OH amounted to 2.9% (4 °C) and 4.2% (25 °C), respectively. These values can be considered significant, given that total COs content measured in different foods has been reported to be 1–2% to 10% of cholesterol content (Paniangvait et al., 1995). The results in Table 2 very probably underestimate the degree of oxidation of cholesterol in mayonnaise, since they present only values for 7-Keto, 25-OH, 7 α -OH and 7 β -OH. At least four other oxides – 20-OH, 5,6 α -epoxide, 5,6 β -epoxide and Triol – could also be present as mentioned previously.

The pH remained stable and suitable for maintaining the microbiological stability of the product and the PV within acceptable limits. According to Jacobsen et al. (2001), the pH should not be above 4.2. Brazilian legislation (São Paulo, 1992) stipulates a maximum tolerated value for PV of 10 meq O_2 /kg. Fatty acids content was not affected by storage conditions, irrespective of the small quantities of peroxide.

Table 1
Moisture, total lipids, peroxide value (PV), pH, cholesterol and 7-Keto in recently manufactured mayonnaise (approximately 15 days)

| Lots | Moisture (g/100 g) | Total lipids (g/100 g) | VP (meq O_2 /kg) | pH | Cholesterol (mg/100 g) | 7-Keto (μ g/g) |
|---------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | 17.04 | 75.64 | 0.75 | 3.68 | 66.6 | 2.87(0.43) |
| 2 | 16.96 | 75.27 | 0.74 | 3.67 | 69.3 | 1.28(0.18) |
| 3 | 16.91 | 74.88 | 0.75 | 3.68 | 66.8 | 2.18(0.33) |
| 4 | 16.79 | 76.86 | 0.75 | 3.68 | 74.9 | 1.94(0.26) |
| 5 | 17.15 | 76.09 | 0.74 | 3.67 | 79.2 | 1.69(0.21) |
| Mean \pm SD | 16.97 \pm 0.14 | 75.75 \pm 0.77 | 0.75 \pm 0.01 | 3.68 \pm 0.01 | 71.4 \pm 5.49 | 1.99 \pm 0.59 |

(% relative to cholesterol); SD – standard deviation ($n = 5$).

Table 2
COs ($\mu\text{g/g}$), PV (meq O_2/kg), pH^a and fatty acids ($\text{g}/100\text{g}$)^b in mayonnaise stored at 4 and 25 °C for up to 165 days in the dark

| | Control | 45 days | | 75 days | | 135 days | | 165 days | |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | | 4 °C | 25 °C | 4 °C | 25 °C | 4 °C | 25 °C | 4 °C | 25 °C |
| 7-Keto | 1.99 ± 0.59 | 3.16 ± 0.27 | 5.76 ± 1.22 | 4.41 ± 0.81 | 5.72 ± 0.73 | 5.78 ± 0.61 | 7.61 ± 1.14 | 7.38 ± 1.14 | 7.15 ± 1.61 |
| 25-OH | nd | nd | nd | nd | nd | nd | 2.02 ± 0.73 | 6.72 ± 0.66 | 9.13 ± 1.44 |
| 7 α -OH | nd | nd | nd | nd | nd | nd | 5.43 ± 1.29 | 2.32 ± 0.42 | 6.84 ± 0.39 |
| 7 β -OH | nd | nd | nd | nd | nd | nd | 5.23 ± 1.13 | 3.93 ± 0.75 | 7.02 ± 0.17 |
| Total COs | 1.99 ± 0.59 | 3.16 ± 0.27 | 5.76 ± 1.22 | 4.41 ± 0.81 | 5.72 ± 0.73 | 5.78 ± 0.61 | 20.20 ± 2.58 | 20.34 ± 1.34 | 30.16 ± 1.13 |
| PV | 0.74 ± 0.00 | 0.78 ± 0.00 | 0.78 ± 0.00 | 0.80 ± 0.00 | 0.86 ± 0.00 | 0.83 ± 0.00 | 2.52 ± 0.12 | 0.92 ± 0.00 | 5.03 ± 0.49 |
| pH | 3.68 ± 0.01 | 3.66 ± 0.01 | 3.65 ± 0.01 | 3.67 ± 0.01 | 3.67 ± 0.01 | 3.67 ± 0.01 | 3.69 ± 0.01 | 3.66 ± 0.02 | 3.77 ± 0.04 |
| SFA | 14.6 | – | – | 14.5 | 14.5 | – | – | 14.1 | 14.2 |
| MUFA | 25.2 | – | – | 25.3 | 25.3 | – | – | 24.9 | 25.3 |
| PUFA | 58.5 | – | – | 59.0 | 59.2 | – | – | 58.7 | 59.0 |

Control – recently manufactured mayonnaise (approximately 15 days); nd – not detected; SFA – saturated fatty acids; MUFA – monounsaturated fatty acids; PUFA – polyunsaturated fatty acids.

^a Mean of five different samples ($n = 5$) ± SD.

^b Sample 5 (Table 1) analyzed in duplicate.

COs content was strongly correlated with PV, both at 4 °C ($r^2 = 0.95$) and at 25 °C ($r^2 = 0.96$). Adjusted regression models showed that COs content tended to increase during the period of the experiment after 75 days of storage with the rate being faster at 25 °C, showing the same trend as PV. Thus, decreasing storage temperature and time is an important factor in suppressing the oxidation of cholesterol in mayonnaise. There was no concrete justification of the increase in COs after 165 days/4 °C without significant increase in PV.

We have not found any information in the literature relating to the stability of cholesterol in mayonnaise to oxidation during storage. Sarantinos, O'Dea, and Sinclair (1993) appear to be the only workers to have measured COs in mayonnaise. In a relatively small number of samples ($n = 3$) these authors found 7-Keto at $13 \pm 13 \mu\text{g/g}$, 25-OH at $9 \pm 4 \mu\text{g/g}$, 7 α -OH at $5 \pm 5 \mu\text{g/g}$, 4 β -OH (4 β -hydroxycholesterol) at $32 \pm 5 \mu\text{g/g}$, 20 α -OH (20 α -hydroxycholesterol) at $7 \pm 7 \mu\text{g/g}$ and Triol at $2 \pm 2 \mu\text{g/g}$. The quantities of oxides found by Sarantinos et al. (1993) are significant, especially those for 4 β -OH, but at the same time they show substantial variation.

Further studies are necessary in order to reach a better understanding of the oxidative stability of cholesterol in mayonnaise. These studies should focus on the quality of the egg used as starting material, the efficiency of the antioxidant systems used and the form, temperature and time of storage of products produced on an industrial scale.

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