

**Utilising Quantitative Immunoproteomics To Reveal
Differential Autoantibody Biomarker Panels In Serous
Ovarian Cancer Patients**

A thesis submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

as a combination of conventional narrative and portfolio of publications by

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Table of Contents

List of Figures	VI
List of Tables	XIII
Abstract	XVII
Declaration	XIX
Acknowledgement of Help	XX
Acknowledgements	XXI
Publications	XXII
Presentations	XXIII
Abbreviations	XXIV
Chapter 1 Manuscript Context	XXVIII
Chapter 1 Manuscript 1	XXIX
Statement of authorship for manuscript 1	XXX
Chapter 1 Manuscript 2	XXXII
Statement of authorship for manuscript 2	XXXIII
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Ovarian Cancer	1
1.1.1 Detection of Ovarian Cancer.....	4
1.1.2 Potential Biomarkers of Ovarian Cancer.....	7
1.2 Immunity and Cancer	11
1.2.1 Immune Response to Cancer.....	11
1.2.2 Humoral Immune Response to Cancer Antigens.....	12
1.2.3 Autoantibodies as Novel Biomarkers for Ovarian and Other Cancers.....	16
1.3 Proteomics and Immunoproteomics	18
1.4 Immunoproteomics	19
1.4.1 Serological Analysis of Recombinant cDNA Expression Libraries (SEREX).....	19

1.4.2 Page Display.....	26
1.4.3 Protein Microarray	29
1.4.4 Serological Proteome Analysis (SEBRA)	33
1.4.5 Immunoaffinity Purification Methods	36
1.4.6 Investigated Autoantibodies Based Upon Identified Antigens	43
1.5 Mass Spectrometry.....	48
1.5.1 Ionisation Methods.....	48
1.5.2 Mass Analyser.....	51
1.5.3 Ion Detector.....	57
1.5.4 High Performance Liquid Chromatography	58
1.6 Quantitative Proteomics	60
1.6.1 Gel Based	60
1.6.2 Stable Isotope-Based Quantitative Proteomics	63
1.6.3 Label-Free Approaches	71
1.7 Thesis synopsis	75
Chapter 2: General Materials and Methods	76
2.1 Materials.....	76
2.1.1 General Materials	76
2.1.2 Chemical Reagents	79
2.1.3 Buffers and Solutions.....	81
2.1.4 Commercial Kits.....	82
2.1.5 Recombinant Proteins	83
2.1.6 Antibodies	85
2.1.7 Instruments	86
2.1.8 Computer Software	87
2.1.9 Web Resources	88
2.2 General Methods.....	89
2.2.1 Protein Techniques	89
2.2.2 Gel-Based Techniques	90
2.2.3 Protein Visualisation.....	93
2.2.4 Clinical Material	94

2.2.5 Sample Preparation	94
2.2.6 Low Salt In-Gel Tryptic Digest with Reduction and Alkylation	95
2.2.7 Nano-LC-MS/MS	96
Chapter 3: Development of an approach for the identification of ovarian cancer	
autoantibody biomarkers	98
3.1 Background	98
3.2 Specific Methods	100
3.2.1 Small-Scale Immunoaffinity Chromatography Using Protein G-Sepharose Support or Hydrazide Gel	100
3.2.2 Large-Scale Immunoaffinity Chromatography Using Affi-Gel® Hz or Affi-Gel® 10 Gel ..	102
3.2.3 Differential Gel Electrophoresis (DIGE).....	103
3.3 Results and Discussion	105
3.3.1 1D SEPPRA	105
3.3.2 Two-dimensional SEPPRA	122
3.3.3 Immunoaffinity Chromatography	135
3.3.4 Immunoaffinity chromatography: Discovery Phase.....	162
3.4 Conclusion.....	169
Chapter 4: Identification of differential autoantibody signatures in serous ovarian	
cancer patients	170
4.1 Background	170
4.2 Specific Methods	173
4.2.1 ICPL.....	173
4.2.2 Protein Identification and Relative Quantification	173
4.2.3 Verification Protein Microarray and Statistical Analysis	174
4.3 Results and Discussion	176
4.3.1 Establishing Experimental Conditions.....	176
4.3.2 Identification and Relative Quantification of Immunoprecipitated Autoantigens	182
4.3.3 Biomarker Candidate Prioritisation	188
4.3.4 Verification of Autoantibody Biomarker Candidates	203
4.4 Conclusion.....	240

Chapter 5: Validation of anti-ARP3, anti-SAHH and anti-ANXA1 as potential autoantibody biomarkers for early stage serous ovarian cancer.....	242
5.1 Background	242
5.2 Specific Methods	243
5.2.1 Indirect Enzyme Linked Immunosorbent Assays.....	243
5.2.2 Validation Protein Microarray	244
5.3 Results and Discussion	245
5.3.1 Orthogonal Verification	245
5.3.2 Biomarker Validation Using Protein Microarray	263
5.4 Conclusion.....	311
Chapter 6: Final Discussion and Future Directions	313
6.1 Discussion	313
6.2 Future Directions	318
6.3 Broader Significance	322
Chapter 7: Appendix.....	323
Chapter 8: References	368

List of Figures

Figure 1: Graphical representation of immunoglobulin G structure.....	14
Figure 2: Schematic outlining autoantibody identification by SEREX.	23
Figure 3: Schematic outlining autoantibody identification by phage display.	28
Figure 4: Schematic outlining autoantibody identification by reverse-phase protein microarray.....	32
Figure 5: Schematic outlining autoantibody identification by SEPRA.	35
Figure 6: Purification of TAAs from cancer tissue lysates using two-dimensional affinity chromatography.....	37
Figure 7: Immunoprecipitation method employed by Philip and colleagues to identify ovarian cancer specific TAAs ¹³⁰	39
Figure 8: Immunoprecipitation method employed by Gagnon and co-workers to identify autoantigens and their respective autoantibodies in ovarian cancer patients ¹³¹	42
Figure 9: Formation of gaseous molecular ions by ESI.	49
Figure 10: Formation of molecular ions by MALDI.	50
Figure 11: Schematic representation of the linear ion trap mass analyser.	52
Figure 12: Schematic representation of the Orbitrap mass analyser.	54
Figure 13: Schematic representation of the TOF reflectron mass analyser.	56
Figure 14: Molecular structures of ICPL Nic-NHS tags.	67
Figure 15: Label-free peak detection strategy.	73
Figure 16: Comparison of ovarian tissue protein lysates extracted under native or denaturing conditions.....	107
Figure 17: Optimisation of 1D SEPRA wet Western transfer conditions for the detection of autoantigens in native and denatured ovarian tissue lysates.	109
Figure 18: Optimisation of serum and secondary antibody dilution for the detection of autoantigens in native ovarian tissue lysates by 1D-SEPRA.....	111
Figure 19: Optimisation of Western blotting conditions for the detection of autoantigens in native ovarian tissue lysates by 1D-SEPRA.....	113

Figure 20: Representative strip blots showing the optimisation of serum and secondary antibody dilution for optimal ECL Western blotting.....	117
Figure 21: Representative blot showing the optimisation of serum antibody dilution for optimal ECL Western blotting.	119
Figure 22: Analysis of the Immobilon Western Chemiluminescent HRP ECL substrate for Western blotting detection.....	121
Figure 23: SEPRA using ECL for the detection of autoantibodies in ovarian cancer patient serum.....	123
Figure 24: Optimisation of 2D-SEPRA Western blot transfer conditions for the detection of autoantigens by ovarian cancer serum autoantibodies.	125
Figure 25: Optimisation of 2D SEPRA Western blot transfer conditions for the detection of autoantigens by healthy and benign serum autoantibodies.	128
Figure 26: Identification of serum antibody-independent interactions of secondary antibody with antigens in ovarian tissue lysates.	131
Figure 27: 2D SEPRA for the detection of ovarian cancer specific autoantibodies.	132
Figure 28: Protein spots excised from replicate SDS-PAGE gel for identification of target autoantigens.	133
Figure 29: Ovarian tissue protein lysates extracted under native conditions.	137
Figure 30: Purified P288 IgG from serum (representative gels).	139
Figure 31: Purified IgG from pooled healthy and benign serum (representative gel).	140
Figure 32: Autoantibody profile of patient serum or purified IgG as determined by SEPRA.	142
Figure 33: Immunoaffinity support cross-linking reagents.	144
Figure 34: Immunocaptured autoantigens using protein-G sepharose immunoaffinity support (small scale).	145
Figure 35: Immunocaptured autoantigens using Affi-Gel® Hz hydrazide gel immunoaffinity support (small scale).	146
Figure 36: Immunocaptured autoantigens using Affi-Gel® Hz hydrazide gel immunoaffinity support (Large scale).	148

Figure 37: 2-DE profile of immunocaptured autoantigens.	149
Figure 38: Relative quantification of P7 cancer and control immunocaptured autoantigens by DIGE (representative gel).	150
Figure 39: Antibody cross-linking using Affi-Gel® Hz hydrazide gel immunoaffinity support.	153
Figure 40: P385 Immunocaptured autoantigens using Affi-Gel® 10 gel immunoaffinity support.....	156
Figure 41: Optimisation of immunoaffinity column washes and non-specific protein binding to the Affi-Gel® 10 gel immunoaffinity support.	157
Figure 42: P544 Immunocaptured autoantigens using Affi-Gel® 10 gel immunoaffinity support.....	159
Figure 43: P376 Immunocaptured autoantigens using Affi-Gel® 10 gel immunoaffinity support.....	161
Figure 44: Immunoaffinity chromatography using Affi-Gel® 10 gel immunoaffinity support (representative gel).	166
Figure 45: Immunocaptured autoantigens from patient derived and paired control immunoaffinity columns.	168
Figure 46: Fractionation of ICPL labelled test samples and excision of protein bands.....	177
Figure 47: Fractionation of ICPL labelled analytical samples and excision of protein bands.....	182
Figure 48: Representative LC-MS/MS analysis of ICPL samples.....	183
Figure 49: Enriched autoantigens across multiple ovarian cancer patients.	187
Figure 50: Molecular function of enriched autoantigens.	189
Figure 51: Cellular component of enriched autoantigens	190
Figure 52: Cancer functional network protein relationships.	192
Figure 53: Autoantigens with a biological function associated with the proliferation of cells.	195
Figure 54: Autoantigens associated with the actin cytoskeleton signaling canonical pathway.	197
Figure 55: Protein-protein interactions between identified autoantigens.	200

Figure 56: Representative protein microarrays demonstrating differential serum levels of two autoantibody candidates.....	205
Figure 57: Percentage of analytical spots containing saturated pixels in 62 protein microarrays.....	206
Figure 58: Deviation between the mean and median spot pixel intensity.	207
Figure 59: Variance-mean dependence of raw and transformed protein microarray intensity data.	209
Figure 60: Autoantibody binding signal intensity for all antigens in the healthy and benign cohort.....	211
Figure 61: Comparison of the autoantibody signal intensity for all antigens in the serum of early stage patients and controls.....	212
Figure 62: Box-and-whisker plots representing the normalised signal intensity of samples from each cohort for the top 9 autoantibody biomarker candidates.	218
Figure 63: ROC curves generated from the normalised protein microarray data for the top 9 autoantibody candidates when differentiating early stage (n=18) patients from controls (n=60).....	219
Figure 64: ROC curves generated from the normalised protein microarray data for the top 9 autoantibody candidates when differentiating all cancer (n=38) patients from controls (n=60).....	221
Figure 65: ROC curves generated from the LDA of the normalised protein microarray data for the top 3 autoantibody candidates.....	224
Figure 66: ROC curves generated from the normalised protein microarray data for the top 3 autoantibody candidates and combined biomarker panel.....	227
Figure 67: ROC curves generated from the immunoassay for CA125 concentration in patient serum/plasma samples.....	229
Figure 68: ROC curves generated from the LDA of the top 3 autoantibody candidates with CA125 for discriminating all cancer cases from controls.....	231
Figure 69: ROC curves generated from the LDA of the top 3 autoantibody candidates with CA125 for discriminating early stage cancer cases from controls.	235

Figure 70: Background absorbance for different concentrations of BSA in the blocking solution.	246
Figure 71: Optimisation of serum and secondary antibody dilution for the detection of autoantibodies in serum by ELISA.	249
Figure 72: Examination of the anti-ARP3 autoantibody levels in serum by ELISA.	251
Figure 73: Negative controls employed for the detection of target autoantibodies in serum by ELISA.	254
Figure 74: Background absorbance level for the exclusion of recombinant protein negative control.	255
Figure 75: Examination of the ELISA system using various amounts of anti-ARP3 monoclonal antibody.	256
Figure 76: Representative ELISA positive and negative controls.	258
Figure 77: Box-and-whisker plots representing the absorbance (delta) level of samples from each cohort for autoantibodies (A) anti-ANXA1, (B) anti-SAHH and (C) anti-ARP3.	259
Figure 78: Box-and-whisker plots representing the absorbance (delta) level of control and cancer samples for autoantibodies (A) anti-ANXA1, (B) anti-SAHH and (C) anti-ARP3.	260
Figure 79: Box-and-whisker plots representing the absorbance (delta) level of healthy individuals and early stage cancer cases for autoantibodies (A) anti-ANXA1, (B) anti-SAHH and (C) anti-ARP3.	261
Figure 80: Number of microarrays containing analytical spots with saturated pixels.	265
Figure 81: Frequency of the percentage of saturated pixels across the 169 spots.	266
Figure 82: Validation protein microarray deviation between the mean and median spot pixel intensity.	267
Figure 83: Validation microarray variance-mean dependence of raw and transformed protein microarray intensity data.	268

Figure 84: Parallel coordinates plots comparing autoantibody binding signal intensity for target antigens in various cohorts.	270
Figure 85: Parallel coordinates plots comparing autoantibody binding signal intensity for target antigens in early stage cancer samples from various centres.	271
Figure 86: Parallel coordinates plots comparing the split in autoantibody binding signal intensity for early stage cancer samples with healthy, benign and late stage cancer cohorts.	272
Figure 87: Box-and-whisker plots representing the normalised signal intensity of samples from each cohort for autoantibodies (A) anti-ANXA1, (B) anti-ARP3 and (C) anti-SAHH.	275
Figure 88: Box-and-whisker plots representing the normalised signal intensity of samples for autoantibodies (A) anti-ANXA1, (B) anti-ARP3 and (C) anti-SAHH in cancer stage-specific cohorts compared to healthy and benign controls.	275
Figure 89: Box-and-whisker plots representing the anti-ANXA1 normalised signal intensity of samples from different collection centre.	277
Figure 90: Box-and-whisker plots representing the anti-SAHH normalised signal intensity of samples from different collection centre.	278
Figure 91: Box-and-whisker plots representing the normalised signal intensity of samples from the IMU.	279
Figure 92: Box-and-whisker plots representing the normalised signal intensity of samples within the specified collection centre.	281
Figure 93: Box-and-whisker plots representing the anti-ANXA1 normalised signal intensity of samples from validation protein microarray.	283
Figure 94: Box-and-whisker plots representing the anti-SAHH normalised signal intensity of samples from validation protein microarray.	285
Figure 95: ROC curves generated from the normalised protein microarray data for autoantibody candidates anti-ANXA1 (A) and anti-SAHH (B) when differentiating early stage cancer samples from controls.	286

Figure 96: ROC curve generated from the LDA of dual-biomarker panel anti-ANXA1 and anti-SAHH for differentiating early stage cancer cases from controls.	289
Figure 97: Analysis of CA125 serum concentration in patients included in the validation cohort.	291
Figure 98: ROC curves generated from the LDA of the top 2 autoantibody candidates with CA125 for discriminating early stage I ovarian cancer patients from healthy and benign cases.	294
Figure 99: Box-and-whisker plots representing the anti-ANXA1 raw signal intensity of samples from the verification and validation protein microarray.	300
Figure 100: ROC curves generated from the anti-ANXA1 raw signal intensity when differentiating cancer samples from controls analysed in the verification and validation protein microarray.	301
Figure 101: Box-and-whisker plots representing (A) the anti-ANXA1 raw signal intensity (CA125-matched cohort) and (B) CA125 concentration of samples from the verification and validation protein microarray.	303
Figure 102: ROC curves generated from the raw intensity data and LDA of anti-ANXA1 with CA125 for discriminating early stage ovarian cancer patients from healthy and benign controls.	305
Figure 103: ROC curve generated from the raw intensity data and LDA of anti-ANXA1 with CA125 for discriminating early stage I ovarian cancer patients from healthy individuals.	307

List of Tables

Table 1: Incidence of cancer arising from different ovarian histological types (table adapted from ³).	1
Table 2: Incidence of cancer arising from different histological subtypes of ovarian carcinoma (table adapted from ¹).	2
Table 3: Stage of ovarian cancer at detection and the respective survival outcome (table adapted from ⁹).	3
Table 4: Biological, structural and functional characteristics of the five immunoglobulin isotypes. Table adapted from ⁸³ .	13
Table 5: Characteristics of the four IgG subtypes. Table adapted from ^{81,83} .	14
Table 6: Identified ovarian cancer autoantibodies and applied technique.	24
Table 7: Autoantibodies to known cancer antigens in ovarian cancer.	46
Table 8: Formulas used for the determination of an ion's <i>m/z</i> by a TOF mass analyser.	55
Table 9: Different modes of separation by HPLC.	59
Table 10: Spectral properties of the CyDyes implemented in DIGE.	63
Table 11: Studies utilising ICPL to relatively quantify different proteomes.	69
Table 12: Protocol parameters employed for IEF of protein samples on an 11 cm immobilized DryStrip gel.	91
Table 13: Protocol parameters employed for IEF of protein samples on a 24 cm immobilized DryStrip gel.	104
Table 14: Approximate detection limit of tested ECL substrates.	120
Table 15: Protein identifications for spots detected by 2D-SEPRA.	134
Table 16: Experimental parameters for generating immunoaffinity columns with Affi-Gel [®] Hz gel.	152
Table 17: Experimental parameters for generating immunoaffinity columns with Affi-Gel [®] 10 gel.	152
Table 18: Discovery cohort demographics.	163
Table 19: Immunoaffinity chromatography parameters employed for the analysis of the discovery cohort.	164

Table 20: Number of identified and relatively quantified proteins in representative gel slice #14.....	178
Table 21: Variance of commonly quantified proteins between ICPL control experiments (representative gel slice #14).....	180
Table 22: Identified and relatively quantified proteins in OVCA immunoprecipitation samples.	185
Table 23: Enriched autoantigens quantified using more than one or two doublets.	186
Table 24: Proteins identified in the top 4 functional networks. Candidate autoantigens are bold (gene names).	191
Table 25: Number of autoantigens associated with the top 5 disease networks.	193
Table 26: Enriched autoantigens associated with the malignant ovarian neoplasm network. Bold: Proteins common to the cancer functional network;.....	193
Table 27: Number of autoantigens associated with the top 5 biological functions.	194
Table 28: Top 5 significant canonical pathways.	196
Table 29: Comparative analysis of GO annotations for all and selected candidate biomarkers derived from the PANTHER database.	202
Table 30: Verification cohort demographic information.	204
Table 31: Collated analysis of variance for top 11 autoantibodies ($p < 0.001$).....	214
Table 32: Significant difference (p -value) between cohorts from <i>post-hoc</i> (Tukey's HSD) analysis for the top 11 autoantibody candidates.	217
Table 33: ROC AUC for the top 9 autoantibody candidates.	220
Table 34: Sensitivity and specificity of the top 3 autoantibody candidates for early stage ovarian cancer as determined by ROC curve analysis.	220
Table 35: Sensitivity and specificity of various autoantibody biomarker panels for ovarian cancer as determined by ROC curve analysis of LDA generated data.	225
Table 36: Sensitivity and specificity of various autoantibody biomarker panels for early ovarian cancer as determined by ROC curve analysis of LDA generated data.	226

Table 37: Sensitivity and specificity of CA125 for ovarian cancer as determined by ROC curve analysis.	228
Table 38: Sensitivity and specificity of various biomarker panels for ovarian cancer (n=37) compared to controls (n=55) as determined by ROC curve analysis of LDA generated data.	230
Table 39: Sensitivity and specificity of various biomarker panels for early stage ovarian cancer (n=17) compared to controls (n=55) as determined by ROC curve analysis of LDA generated data.	233
Table 40: Various descriptors of the top 3 autoantibody-target antigens.	238
Table 41: Autoantibody signal in samples analysed by protein microarray and ELISA.	247
Table 42: Anti-ARP3 autoantibody signal in samples analysed by protein microarray and ELISA.	251
Table 43: Validation cohort demographic information.	263
Table 44: Validation microarray ANOVA for autoantibodies anti-ARP3, anti-SAHH and anti-ANXA1.	273
Table 45: Significant difference (<i>p</i> -value) between cohorts from <i>post-hoc</i> (Tukey's HSD) analysis for anti-ANXA1 autoantibody.	273
Table 46: Sensitivity and specificity of anti-ANXA1 and anti-SAHH for early stage ovarian cancer as determined by ROC curve analysis.	287
Table 47: Sensitivity and specificity of CA125 for early ovarian cancer as determined by ROC curve analysis.	292
Table 48: Sensitivity and specificity of various autoantibody biomarker panels for early stage I ovarian cancer (n=11) from healthy and benign controls (n=57) as determined by ROC curve analysis of LDA generated data.	295
Table 49: Comparison of the verification (PM1) and validation (PM2) protein microarray as determined by ROC curve analysis of LDA generated data for discriminating early stage I ovarian cancer (n=10) from healthy and benign controls (n=55).	297
Table 50: Comparison of biomarker effectiveness from PM1 and PM2 at a similar percentage of sensitivity or specificity for early stage I ovarian cancer.	299

Table 51: Sensitivity and specificity of anti-ANXA1 for ovarian cancer as determined by ROC curve analysis of both the verification and validation cohort. 302

Table 52: Sensitivity and specificity of CA125 and/or anti-ANXA1 for early stage ovarian cancer as determined by ROC curve analysis of both the verification and validation cohort. 304

Table 53: Sensitivity, specificity, PPV and NPV of CA125 and/or anti-ANXA1 for stage I ovarian cancer as determined by ROC curve analysis of both the verification and validation cohort. 308

Abstract

Epithelial ovarian cancer accounts for 5% of all cancer deaths and greater than 50% of all gynaecological cancer deaths. It presents at a late clinical stage in more than 60% of patients, and is associated with a 5-year survival of only 30% in this group. In contrast, the 5-year survival for patients with organ-confined stage I ovarian cancer exceeds 90%, and most patients are cured of their disease. Thus, the detection of early stage ovarian cancer is the best way to improve survival. No clinically applicable method exists for the early detection of ovarian cancer. Hence, there is an unmet medical need for an accurate screening test.

Most scientific efforts towards early detection are focused on the discovery of tumour-associated antigens (TAA). Autologous antibodies against TAAs, however, may serve as more sensitive diagnostic markers. They circulate in the blood before TAAs and are usually more abundant than the TAAs themselves as a result of amplification through the humoral immune response. Accumulating evidence also suggests that a humoral response already exists during malignant transformation when aberrant gene expression is translated into premalignant cellular changes.

In this thesis, potential autoantibody biomarkers for ovarian cancer were discovered, verified and validated as an early detection test. A new immunoproteomic strategy was developed to identify novel autoantibodies that were elevated in serous ovarian cancer patients. Lysate extracted from the ovarian tissue of a patient was applied to an immunoaffinity column generated with autologous antibodies and a paired control immunoaffinity column. Relative quantification of captured autoantigens was performed using isotope coded protein label (ICPL) technology coupled with high resolution LC-MS. At a protein ratio cut-off of 1.45-fold, 148 autoantibodies were found to be enriched in ovarian cancer patients compared to the corresponding controls.

Upon bioinformatic prioritisation 50 autoantibody candidates were selected for verification. Protein microarray analysis of 98 samples revealed 9 autoantibody candidates to be significantly different in early stage cancer patients compared to healthy and benign controls. Biomarker candidates anti-ANXA1, anti-SAHH and anti-ARP3 showed the greatest potential where each marker achieved greater than 90% specificity at 83.3% sensitivity. As a 4-biomarker panel with the 'gold standard' for ovarian cancer detection, cancer antigen (CA)125, a sensitivity of 76.5% at 100% specificity was attained. These values of sensitivity and specificity for early stage ovarian cancer surpassed the minimum requirements for an implementable screening test and showed great promise as a diagnostic tool.

Validation of the top three autoantibody candidates using protein microarray revealed anti-ANXA1 to be the most robust and effective biomarker for stage I cancer detection. As a single biomarker anti-ANXA1 had 81.8% sensitivity and 71.9% specificity for stage I cancer compared to healthy and benign controls. Excitingly, in combination with CA125, a sensitivity of 71.4% at 100% specificity was achieved when differentiating stage I cancer patients from healthy individuals. For this level of effectiveness a positive and negative predictive value of 100% and 99.99% was achieved, respectively. Therefore, a biomarker panel containing anti-ANXA1 and CA125 may enable the development of a detection test that can be used to screen for stage I serous ovarian cancer in the general population. This promising discovery demands further investigation where continuing analysis in prospective samples is essential.

The discovery of a screening test is crucial to reduce the morbidity and mortality caused by ovarian cancer. This study investigates the presence of differential autoantibody signatures in serous ovarian cancer patients as potential biomarkers. Additionally, those identified TAAs that are functionally involved in carcinogenesis could also serve as therapeutic targets. Finally, the immunoproteomic approach developed here could be used in studies aiming to discover novel autoantibody biomarkers for other asymptomatic malignancies.

Declaration

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution to Karina Martin and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

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Karina Martin

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Publications

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Arising from thesis:

Meding, S., Martin, K., Gustafsson, O.J.R., Eddes, J.S., Hack, S., Oehler, M.K., Hoffmann, P. *Tryptic Peptide Reference Data Sets for MALDI Imaging Mass Spectrometry on Formalin-fixed Ovarian Cancer Tissues*. J. Prot. Res. 2013, 12 (1), 308-315

Presentations

Martin, K., Ricciardelli, C., Hack, S., Oehler, M.K., Hoffmann, P. *Identification and relative quantification of autoantibody biomarker candidates for early ovarian cancer*. **Oral** and **poster** presentation delivered at the 18th Lorne Proteomics Symposium, Lorne, VIC, February, 2013

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Martin, K., Ricciardelli, C., Oehler, M.K., Hoffmann, P. *Utilising quantitative immunoproteomics to reveal differential autoantibody signatures in serous ovarian cancer patients*. **Oral** presentation delivered at the Adelaide Protein Group Awards Event, Adelaide, SA, June, 2012

Martin, K., Ricciardelli, C., Oehler, M.K., Hoffmann, P. *Mining the serous ovarian cancer immunoproteome for autoantibody biomarkers*. **Poster** presentation delivered at the 17th Lorne Proteomics Symposium, Lorne, VIC, February, 2012.

Martin, K., Ricciardelli, C., Oehler, M.K., Hoffmann, P. *Immunoproteomic approach toward biomarker discovery for ovarian cancer*. **Poster** presentation delivered at the 9th Annual HUPO World Congress, Sydney, NSW, September, 2010.

Abbreviations

µl	Microlitre
1-DE	One-dimensional poly-acrylamide gel electrophoresis
2-DE	Two-dimensional poly-acrylamide gel electrophoresis
AA	Amino acid
Ab	Antibody
ACN	Acetonitrile
ANOVA	Analysis of variance
AU	Absorbance units
BSA	Bovine serum albumin
CHAPS	3[(3-Cholamidopropyl)dimethylammonio]-propanesulfonate
CID	Collision induced dissociation
Da	Dalton
DIGE	Difference gel electrophoresis
DMP	Dimethyl pimelimidate dihydrochloride
DSS	Disuccinimidyl suberate
DTT	Dithiothreitol
ECL	Enhanced chemiluminescence
ESI	Electrospray ionisation
ETD	Electron transfer dissociation
FA	Formic acid
Fab	Fragment antigen binding

Fc	Crystallisable fragment
FDA	Food and Drug Association
FIGO	International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics
fmol	Femtomole
G-250	Colloidal Coomassie
HCCA	α -cyano-4-hydroxy cinnamic acid
HCl	Hydrochloric acid
HEPES	2-[4-(2-hydroxyethyl)piperazin-1-yl]ethanesulfonate
HPLC	High performance liquid chromatography
hr	Hour
HRAM	High resolution, accurate mass
I.D.	Inner diameter
IAA	Iodoacetamide
ICAT	Isotope coded affinity tags
ICPL	Isotope coded protein labels
IEF	Isoelectric focusing
Ig	Immunoglobulin
IHC	Immunohistochemistry
IP	Immunoprecipitation
IPA	Ingenuity pathway analysis
IT	Ion trap
iTRAQ	Isotope tagging for relative and absolute quantitation
LC	Liquid chromatography

LIT	Linear ion trap
m	Mass
m/z	Mass-to-charge
MALDI	Matrix assisted laser desorption/ionization
min	Minute
Mr	Molecular Weight
MS	Mass spectrometry
MS/MS	Tandem MS
Nd:YAG	Neodymium-doped yttrium aluminium garnet
NHS	N-hydroxysuccinimide
nLC	Nano-LC
OCS	Ovarian cancer screening
OVA	Ovalbumin
PA	Phosphoric acid
PAGE	Poly-acrylamide gel electrophoresis
PBS	Phosphate buffered saline
pI	Isoelectric point
pmol	Picomole
PMSF	Phenylmethanesulfonylfluoride
PMT	Photon multiplier tube
PTMs	Post-translational modifications
PVDF	Polyvinylidene fluoride
Q	Quadrupole

RCT	Randomised controlled trial
rf	Radio frequency
roc	Risk of ovarian cancer
ROC	Receiver operating characteristic
RP	Reverse-phase
SD	Standard deviation
SDS	Sodium dodecyl sulphate
sec	second
SILAC	Stable isotope labeling by amino acids in cell culture
S/N	Signal-to-noise
t	Time
TAA	Tumour associated antigen
TBST	Tris-buffered saline Tween-20
TFA	Trifluoroacetic acid
TIC	Total ion chromatogram
TOF	Time-of-flight
T _R	Retention time
Tris	Tris(hydroxymethyl)-aminomethane
VSN	Variance stabilisation and normalisation
XIC	Extracted ion chromatogram
z	charge

Chapter 1 Manuscript Context

A deep understanding of ovarian cancer, the immune system, biomarkers as well as proteomics and mass spectrometry was essential to perform the quality of research presented in this thesis. To this end a comprehensive literature review on ovarian cancer autoantibody biomarkers and discovery techniques was performed. Furthermore, an appreciation of the current 'gold standard' biomarker for ovarian cancer, cancer antigen (CA)125 was critical in order to understand the current challenges, requirements and need for a screening test for ovarian cancer. In joint authorship, mining of the literature was performed to produce an extensive review on the structure and function of CA125. These two reviews, which form parts of chapter 1, summarise the current knowledge and challenges faced in the field of ovarian cancer detection and screening.

Chapter 1 Manuscript 1

Exploring the Immunoproteome for Ovarian Cancer Biomarker Discovery

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Review

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Certification that the statement of contribution is accurate

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Chapter 1 Manuscript 2

Deciphering the Molecular Nature of Ovarian Cancer Biomarker CA125

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Review

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