Integrative Transcriptomic Analysis Reveals the Immune Mechanism for A CyHV-3-Resistant Common Carp Strain

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ABSTRACT

Anti-disease breeding is becoming the most promising solution to cyprinid
herpesvirus-3 (CyHV-3) infection, the major threat to common carp aquaculture.
Virus challenging studies suggested that a breeding strain of common carp is resistant
to this disease. This study illustrates the immune mechanisms involved in anti-CyHV-
3 ability. An integrative analysis of the protein-coding genes and long non-coding
RNAs (lncRNAs) using transcriptomic data was performed. Tissues from the head
kidney of common carp were extracted at day 0 (the healthy control) and day 7 after
CyHV-3 infection (the survivors), and used to analyze the transcriptome through both
Illumina and PacBio sequencing. Following analysis of the GO terms and KEGG
pathways involved, the immune-related terms and pathways were merged. In order to
dig out details in the immune aspect, The DEGs were filtered using the current
common carp immune gene library. Immune gene categories and their corresponding
genes in different comparison groups were revealed. Also, the immunological Gene
Ontology terms for lncRNA modulation were retained. The weighted gene co-
expression network analysis was used to reveal the regulation of immune genes by
lncRNA. The results demonstrated that the breeding carp strain develops marked
resistance to CyHV-3 through a specific innate immune mechanism. The featured
biological processes were autophagy, phagocytosis, cytotoxicity, and virus blockage
by lectins and MUC3. Moreover, the immune suppressive signals, such as suppression
of IL21R on STAT3, PI3K mediated inhibition on inflammation by dopamine upon
infection, as well as the inhibition of NLRC3 on STING during a steady state.
Possible susceptible factors for CyHV-3, such as ITGB1, TLR18, and CCL4, were
also revealed from the non-breeding strain. The results of this study also suggested
that Nramp and PAI regulated by LncRNA could facilitate virus infection and
proliferation for infected cells respectively, while T cell leukemia homeobox 3
(TLX3) as well as galectin 3 function by lncRNA may play a role in the resistance
mechanism. Therefore, immune factors that are immunogenetically insensitive or
susceptible to CyHV-3 infection have been revealed.

INTRODUCTION

Cyprinid herpesvirus-3 (CyHV-3) infection is a major threat to common carp
aquaculture (1), leading to widespread mortality and substantial economic loss.
CyHV-3 is thought to cause death by weakening the host's immune system, resulting
in susceptibility to pathogenic microbes (1). In common carp, clinical signs of the
disease develop rapidly and may induce morbidity and mortality within a period of 6
to 10 days following infection (2).

Carp that survive a primary infection with CyHV-3 can be resistant to future infection
with this virus. Since latency and persistent carrying of CyHV-3 exist in carp (2-4),
genetic backgrounds are crucial in developing an understanding resistance against the

virus. Experimental infections of carp from pure lines or crosses have indicated the
existence of genetic background of resistance by divergent survival rates (2). For
example, a markedly higher expression of immune-related genes involved in pathogen
recognition, complement activation, major histocompatibility complex class I (MHC
I)-restricted antigen presentation, and the development of adaptive mucosal immunity
was noted in the more resistant R3 line. Higher activation of CD8$^+$ T cells was also
observed (5). The diallelic cross of four European carp lines, including Polish 'K' and
'R6', Hungarian 'R7' and French 'F' also has been down in order to select the
resistant fish, and then found that MH class II B genes of carp can have an effect on
immunity against CyHV-3 infection (6).Additionally, carp strains of Asian origin,
particularly Amur wild carp, were shown to be more resistant to CyHV-3 than strains
originating from Europe, such as the Prerov scale carp or koi carp from a breed in the
Czech Republic (7).
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The immune response of carp to CyHV-3 involves both innate and adaptive aspects
with the outcome of the disease largely depending on whether the balance is tipped in
favor of the host's immune response or virus's evasion strategy (2). In general,
transcriptomic analysis has revealed that three immune-related pathways, namely the
mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK) signaling pathway, the innate immune
response, and the cytokine-mediated signaling pathway, were highly involved in the
infection with CyHV-3 (8). In red common carp × koi, the expression of interleukin
12 (IL12) p35, interferon (IFN) αβ, and toll-like receptor 9 (TLR9) may provide
potential genes related to resistance against KHV (another term for CyHV-3) (9).
However, the magnitude of type I IFN response did not correlate with a higher
resistance in CyHV-3-infected carp, during the challenge test among different strains,
although CyHV-3 infection can induce type I IFNs (7, 10). Regarding the innate
resistance in carp, the mapped CyHV-3 survival quantitative trait loci have been
reported mainly in *IL10* and *MHC II* (11). Recently, by quantitative trait locus
mapping and genome-wide association study, *tumor necrosis factor-alpha* (*TNFA*),
hypoxia inducible factor 1 subunit alpha (*HIF1A*), *galectin-8* (*LGALS8*), *rootletin*,
and *paladin*, have also been related to resistance against CyHV-3 (12). Adaptive
immunity through both cytotoxicity and immunoglobulin (Ig) secretion may be
involved in resistance. Matthew et al. revealed that, in the anterior kidney, Ig secretion
plays an important role in the resistance during the persistent infection or reactivation
phases of CyHV-3 (1). In addition, CyHV-3 profoundly influences the expression of
host miRNA, although the regulation of immune processes by miRNA in the clinical
and latent phases differs (4). This suggests an important role of non-coding RNAs in
anti-CyHV-3 immunity.
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The first transcriptional analysis of carp anterior kidney mainly pointed out the
important role of humoral immune responses, especially those related to
immunoglobulin (1). Spleen transcriptomic analyses comparing the susceptible and

resistant common carp revealed that the susceptible fish elicited a typical anti-viral
interferon response, while the upregulated IL-8 attracted innate immune cells and
related response may play an essential role in resistant fish (13).

German mirror carp selection G_4 is a strain of common carp cultivated widely in
China, yet with a high mortality caused by CyHV-3 virus. Based on our previous
study, a strain of common carp from German mirror carp selection G_4 has already
shown a higher survival rate after breeding for three generations. Among fish from the
G_3 generation, 1000 individuals were genotyped by four SNP loci, including
carp065309, carp070076, carp183811 and carp160380, and then four main groups,
with genotypes of GG/GT/GG/AA, GG/TT/TT/AA, AG/TT/AG/AT and
GG/GG/GG/AA, whose survival rates were 89.9%, 94.7%, 88.0% and 92.7%
respectively, were propagated (14). While the unselected mirror carp were 62.6%.
Since decreased viral load in tissues directly indicate the resistance to CyHV-3 (15),
the fact that it has displayed a better immunological index as well as a reduced virus
load in immune organs, such as the kidneys and spleen (16, 17), strongly suggests the
resistance to CyHV-3 in current used breeding strain. In detail, acid phosphatase in the
spleen, glutathione and total antioxidation capacity in the kidney, lysozyme and
immunoglobulin M in the serum, and alkaline phosphatase in the spleen and kidney
also showed significant differences between G_1 and G_3 or G_1 and G_2/G_3. Meanwhile,
the survival rate after CyHV-3 challenge increased generation by generation. The
strong resistance to CyHV-3 has been stable for G_3 (16). Recently, Sun has revealed
that virus genes *TK* and *ORF72* in the G_4 were expressed at levels significantly lower
than those in the non-breeding strain (17). Thus, the resistance to CyHV-3 in G_4 was
strongly deduced.

However, there is a lack of systemic studies focusing on a detailed network of the
immune system for the anti-CyHV-3 immune mechanism in this resistant strain. The
third-generation sequencing method, such as PacBio, can decode the genetic
sequences that are markedly longer compared with the second-generation method,
such as Illumina (18). Therefore, a higher quality assembly of transcripts, including
both mRNA and non-coding RNAs, may provide a more detailed understanding of the
mechanism of genetic resistance.

In this study, in order to reveal the immune mechanisms involved in anti-CyHV3
breeding for common carp, integrative transcriptomic analysis was performed for both
mRNA and long non-coding RNA (lncRNA) during the CyHV-3 challenge, using
strategy as shown in Fig. 1. Immune-related transcripts, from both survivors and
healthy controls of either breeding or non-breeding strains, were analyzed. By
comparing data from different groups for different strains obtained through both
Illumina (New England Biolabs, Ipswich, MA, USA) and Pacific Biosciences
(PacBio) sequencing, both immune-related differentially expressed genes (DEG) and

lncRNA have been revealed for the Kyoto Encyclopedia of Genes and Genomes
(KEGG) pathways and/or Gene Ontology (GO) terms involved. The immune gene-
related lncRNA was also explored. This study may shed some light on fish breeding
for virus-resistant strains, and facilitate disease control after CyHV-3 infection.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Ethics Statement
All procedures involving animals in this study were conducted according to the
guidelines for the care and use of laboratory animals of Heilongjiang River Fisheries
Research Institute, Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences (Harbin, China). The
studies involving animals were reviewed and approved by the Committee for the
Welfare and Ethics of Laboratory Animals of Heilongjiang River Fisheries Research
Institute, Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences.
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Animals and Virus Challenge
German mirror carp selection G_4 used in this study were obtained from Kuandian
Research Base of Heilongjiang River Fisheries Research Institute (Liaoning, China).
The breeding strain was the fourth generation after the selection of resistance to
CyHV-3 (17). Two G_4 groups with survival rates of 94.7% and 92.7% were mixed
with the ratio 1:1 and used as the experimental populations in this study. Both the
breeding strain G_4 and non-breeding strain were used for the virus challenge. Since
CyHV-3 has a mucosal route of infection mainly via the skin rather than the gut (2),
this study induced infection with CyHV-3 by adding the homogenate solution of
internal organs from sick fish into the water of the tanks following the previously
published methods (16, 17, 19). The homogenate solution was prepared using organs
from 10 severely sick fish, which swam very slowly, or even floated on the water.
Before using the homogenate to infect fish, the head kidney tissues from those sick
fish were checked for the CyHV-3 infection by PCR of virus genes *TK* and *Sph*
following the method described in the industry standard SC/T 7212.1-2011 (20). To
separate the control and experimental groups from either the breeding or non-breeding
strains, four tanks (1.6 m × 1.2 m × 0.6 m) containing healthy juvenile common carp
(~70 g; N=300 fish per tank), were used. The water temperature during the
experiment was maintained at $25\pm1^{\circ}C$.
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Sampling and pathological analysis
A selection of common carp, from either the breeding or non-breeding strains, were
sacrificed. Head kidney samples were obtained at days 0 and 7 after challenge,
representing the control and survivor carp. The samples (N=3) were collected
immediately and soaked in 10 volumes of RNAlater (Qiagen, Hilden, Germany), for
sequencing using Illumina (New England Biolabs). To better sequence and generate
the lncRNAs, PacBio sequencing was applied to analyze the mixture of liver, spleen,
and kidney, with two replicates. The number of dead fish during the experiment was

counted daily to calculate the mortality rate. Meanwhile, in order to analyze the
swelling degree of inner organs, the proportion of trunk kidney to the whole trunk
area was calculated by ImageJ (https://imagej.en.softonic.com/). In detail, the area of
both trunk kidney and trunk regions were selected and measured, and the percentages
between them was calculated based on 8 survivors of breeding or non-breeding strain.
T-test was used to judge the significance of the difference.
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RNA Extraction
RNA was isolated using the AllPrep DNA/RNA FFPE Kit (Qiagen, Hilden,
Germany), according to the instructions provided by the manufacturer. RNA
degradation and contamination were monitored on 1% agarose gels. RNA purity was
checked using the NanoPhotometer spectrophotometer (Implen Inc., Westlake Village,
CA, USA). RNA concentration was measured using the Qubit RNA Assay Kit in a
Qubit 2.0 Flurometer (Life Technologies, Carlsbad, CA, USA). RNA integrity was
assessed using the RNA Nano 6000 Assay Kit of the Agilent Bioanalyzer 2100 system
(Agilent Technologies, Santa Clara, CA, USA).
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Library Preparation and Sequencing for Transcriptomic Analysis
Optimized RNA-Seq strategies, including both PacBio and Illumina (New England
Biolabs) sequencing (21), were used to more precisely resolve the sequence of
transcripts. Firstly, the total RNA isolated from the head kidney was used to construct
the cDNA library. Subsequently, the library was sequenced on a PacBio RS II
platform (Biomarker Technologies, Beijing, China). For the PacBio Long Read
Processing, raw reads were processed into error-corrected reads of insert using Iso-seq
pipeline with minFullPass = 0 and minPredictedAccuracy = 0.90. Next, full-length,
non-chemiric transcripts were determined by searching for the polyA tail signal and
the 5' and 3' cDNA primers in reads of insert. Iterative Clustering for Error Correction
was used to obtain consensus isoforms, and full-length consensus sequences from
Iterative Clustering for Error Correction were polished using Quiver. High-quality
transcripts with post-correction accuracy of >99% were retained for further analysis.
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The illustration of transcripts obtained from the results of PacBio could provide
reference transcriptional sequences for the assembly of Illumine sequencing data, to
improve sequencing quality. Therefore, Illumina (New England Biolabs) sequencing
was performed on all head kidney samples. The procedure used for the preparation of
the gene library and sequencing of the transcriptome followed previously published
methods (22). Briefly, sequencing libraries were generated using the NEBNext
UltraTM RNA Library Prep Kit for Illumina (New England Biolabs), and the library
quality was assessed on the Agilent Bioanalyzer 2100 system. The library
preparations were sequenced on an Illumina platform, and 150 bp paired-end reads
were generated.
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Annotation and Functional Analysis of Transcripts by Public Databases
All reads in the transcriptome data were mapped on the common carp genome
(https://asia.ensembl.org/Cyprinus_carpio_german_mirror/Info/Index) (23) for
annotation. The data from the Illumina platform were also used to check and replace
errors in the data from the PacBio platform. Both the annotation of genes and
lncRNAs were subsequently generated. The protein coding transcripts were annotated
by NR, swissprot and Pfam database. DEGs were detected from five comparison
groups, including intra-strain comparison groups A (survivors vs. controls in the
breeding strain) and B (survivors vs. controls in the non-breeding strain), inter-strain
comparison groups C (the comparison between survivors at day 7 for the two strains)
and D (the comparison between control fish at day 0 for the two strains), and group E.
The vital genes for survival were investigated through group E, in which the genes
without significant differences ($p > 0.05$) between the survivors from the breeding and
non-breeding strains were compared with the transcripts from severely sick fish. The
revealed DEGs were annotated by GO terms and KEGG pathways, following a
previously published protocol (22, 24). In brief, functional annotation and the
classification of genes were determined by both employing local genes blasts against
GO Consortium (http://geneontology.org/) and KEGG
(https://www.kegg.jp/kegg/pathway.html). Enrichment of the KEGG pathways was
carried out for both upregulated and downregulated genes for all comparison groups.
Then in order to demonstrate the immune DEGs involved pathways more clearly, the
gene list of the current construct common carp immune gene library was used as
follows. In addition, the LncRNAs were also annotated by GO terms.
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Construction of the Common Carp Immune Gene Library
The common carp immune library was constructed by following our previously
published method, which was applied to grass carp (22) and tilapia (24), with some
adjustment for viral infection-related immune genes. The modifications were based on
gene information obtained by blasting each sequence to databases, including NCBI
NR database, as well as Swiss-Prot and Pfam databases. The common carp immune
gene library contained information for immune genes at two levels. For the first level,
nine categories of immune processes, namely "acute phase reactions", "pattern
recognition", "antigen processing and regulators", "complement system",
"inflammatory cytokines and receptors", "adapters, effectors and signal transducers",
"innate immune cells related", "T/B cell antigen activation", and "other genes related
to immune response", were proposed. Subsequently, many categories of immune
genes for each immune process (detailed in Table S1) were applied for the second
level. The library was used to filter transcriptome data and obtain details of the
immune processes and particular immune genes for each comparison group, during
the GO term and KEGG pathway enrichment.
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Statistics Analysis

The DEG were generated by comparing the RPKM (Reads Per Kilobase of transcript,
per Million mapped reads) using the DESeq2 R package (1.16.1). The resulting *p*
values were adjusted using the Benjamini and Hochberg approach for controlling the
false discovery rate. Genes with an adjusted *p* < 0.05 found by DESeq2 were assigned
as being differentially expressed. The following bioinformatics analysis was
performed to select immune-related transcripts from the common carp immune gene
library, and construct the barplots for the major immune processes and immune
categories. The t-test was used to assess differences, with a false discovery rate
adjusted *p* < 0.05. Qualitative comparisons were performed between samples by
counting the number of DEG. The data were rearranged in Microsoft EXCEL, and
applied to plot charts by ggplot2 (2.2.1) using R language.
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Correlation Analysis between LncRNA and Genes Involved in Immune-related
GO Terms
The weighted gene co-expression network analysis (WGCNA) was performed using
the R package "WGCNA" (25). Specifically, all genes with an expression variance
ranked in the top 75 percentile of the data set were retained (26). The R package
WGCNA was used to construct the weighted gene co-expression network (27). A
matrix of signed Pearson correlations between all gene pairs was computed, and the
transformed matrix was used as input for linkage hierarchical clustering. Genes with
similar expression patterns were clustered together as one module. Subsequently,
using R package clusterProfiler (28), enriched GO terms for lncRNA-related protein-
coding genes were generated for the gene list of every module. The *p* values of
enriched GO terms were produced from Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. In order to
elucidate the detail lncRNA-mRNA network, the immune-related GO term containing
module were selected, and the relationship of involved genes and related lncRNAs
were shown by the cystoscope software. In addition, the immune genes in immune
related module were classified into different comparison groups.
305
Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR)
The mRNA samples used for transcriptome sequencing were also subjected to real-
time quantitative RT-PCR validation (n = 3), following a previously published
protocol [14, 16]. After RNA isolation, reverse transcription and quantitative PCR
(qPCR) experiments were carried out for 11 genes. Gene expression levels were
determined using TaqMan-based qPCR (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA,
USA), which was performed on the RotorGene system (Qiagen, Hilden, Germany).
The total RNA was reverse transcribed, and 60 ng were used for the One Taq RT PCR
Kit (New England Biolabs) according to the instructions provided by the
manufacturer for mRNA quantification and reverse transcription (Thermo Fisher
Scientific, Waltham, MA, USA). For mRNA quantification, the resulting cDNA was
pre-amplified using a TaqMan PreAmp Master Mix Kit (Thermo Fisher Scientific,
Waltham, MA, USA). The relative levels of mRNA were determined from diluted

cDNA and pre-amplified cDNA using qPCR and appropriate TaqMan probes. The
expression levels were calculated after an efficiency correction (based on the results
of a serial dilution) relative to those of endogenous controls.

RESULTS
Virus identification, Mortality Rate and Pathological Appearance
The successful infection of CyHV-3 has been validated using PCR, in order to check
the expression of virus genes (*TK* and *Sph*), in randomly sampled severely sick fish
(N=10) at day 7 after challenge (Figure 2A). Further, to reveal the mortality, the
number of dead fish was recorded from day 1 to day 15 after challenge (Table S1),
and then the mortality rate was calculated for all groups (Table S2). For the
challenged non-breeding strain (Figure 1B), the mortality rate increased daily, except
for a decrease observed on day 5. Mortality peaked at day 7 (69%) and decreased to a
markedly low level thereafter. For the challenged breeding strain (Figure 2B), the
mortality rate remained at a markable low level, with the highest value (11%)
recorded at day 7. The mortality rates of the two challenged groups were very
significantly different ($p < 0.01$). The number of dead fish for each day is listed in
Table 1 for the breeding or non-breeding strain, while in the two unchallenged
controls, there were no dead fish (data not shown). Compared with the organs in
survivors of the breeding strain, pathological swelling and hyperemia of the internal
organs (particularly the kidney) was obvious in survivors from the non-breeding strain
on day 7 (Figure 2C). In detail, the proportion of kidney area to the whole trunk area
in the breeding strain was significantly different from that of the non-breeding strain
($p < 0.01$) (Figure 2D). The reduced immune organ swelling was reflected by the ratio
of 0.44 comparing the proportions between the breeding and non-breeding strains
(Table S2).
344
Quality and Validation of Transcriptomic Data
Sequencing was performed with both the PacBio RS II and Illumina platforms to
analyze the gene information of the common carp. Through PacBio sequencing, 19.49
G data were obtained. Of the 258,346 ccs, 79.79% were full-length sequences, and
17,769 polished high-quality isoforms were also revealed (Table S3, sheet 1).
Meanwhile, the Illumina data were also characterized by high quality, and the
information for each sample is provided in Table S3 (sheet 2). In order to validate the
transcriptomic data, qPCR was conducted. A total of 24 reactions were performed to
validate the transcripts of 11 genes, most of which were immune genes. The
correlation analysis showed that fold changes between transcriptome and qPCR
results correlated well (R^2=0.929718564). The gene ID, annotation, primers, and fold-
change information are listed in Table S4.
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GO Analysis of DEGs among Tested Fish
According to the enriched general GO terms (Figure 3) of immune related DEGs,

there are "immune system process" and "antioxidant activity" for all comparison

groups, "chemoattractant activity" only in comparison group A, "rhythmic process"

only in comparison group B, "cell killing"in both comparison groups A and C, and

"virion" in both comparison groups B and C. The detail significant enriched GO terms

involved in biological processes (BP), cellular components (CC), and molecular

functions (MF) were detailed in Table S5-S9 for all comparison groups.

The featured BP terms ($p < 0.01$) include "phagocytosis", "positive regulation of

immune system process", "positive regulation of I-kappa B kunase/NF-kappaB

signaling", "integrin-mediated signaling pathway", "regulation of B cell activation",

"macrophage activation", "lymphocyte mediated immunity" in immune aspect in

group A. In group B, the BP terms include "response to lipopolysaccharide",

"regulation of granulocyte differentiation", "toll-like receptor signaling pathway",

"positive regulation of immune system process", "macrophage differentiation",

"phagocytosis", "engulfment", "lymphocyte activation", "integrin-mediated signaling

pathway" and "leukocyte activation". In group C, the BP terms include "Response to

lipopolysaccharide", "negative regulation of B cell apoptotic process", "positive

regulation of TOR signaling", "macrophage differentiation", "endosome to lysosome

transport", "regulation of granulocyte differentiation", "toll-like receptor signaling

pathway", "defense response to fungus", "phagocytosis" , "engulfment", "T cell

proliferation", "mast cell activation", "myeloid cell activation involved in immune

response", "regulation of T cell differentiation in thymus", "phagosome maturation",

and "positive regulation of T cell activation". In group D, the BP terms include

"Phagocytosis", "positive regulation of immune system process", "positive regulation

of I-kappaB kinase/NF-kappaB signaling", "integrin mediated signaling pathway",

"regulation of B cell activation", "lymphocyte mediated immunity", "macrophage

activation", and "response to lipopolysaccharide". In group D, the BP terms include

"Phagocytosis", "positive regulation of cell migration", "positive regulation of I-

kappaB kinase/NF-kappaB signaling", "positive regulation of myeloid leukocyte

differentiation", "integrin-mediated signaling pathway", "regulation of B cell

activation", "leukocyte activation", "regulation of immune response", and

"macrophage activation".

Meanwhile, several immune related BP terms ($p < 0.01$) were also revealed, including

"positive regulation of cell migration" in group A; "activation of MAPK activity",

"regulation of protein ubiquitination involved in ubiquitin-dependent protein catabolic

process", "oxication-reduction process", "positive regulation of cell migration" in

group B; "activation of MAPK activity", "dopaminergic neuron differentiation" in

group C. Besides, the CC terms ($p < 0.01$) includes "Pre-autophagosomal structure

membrane" in group A, B, D and E, and the MF terms ($p < 0.01$) includes "NF-

KappaB binding" and "lysozyme activity" in group B; "cytokine activity" in group C;

"Lysozyme activity", "MAP kinase activity" and "ubiquitin-like protein binding" in

group D.
KEGG Analysis of DEGs among Tested Fish
Compared with group A (survivors vs control in the breeding strain), there were
markedly more genes involved in immune and related pathways in groups B
(survivors vs control in the non-breeding stain). Current revealed immune pathways in
group A were "phagosome", "regulation of autophagy", "ubiquitin mediated
proteolysis", and "plant-pathogen interaction" (Figure 4Aa). Meanwhile, there are
four immune pathways, including "endocytosis", "phagosome", "FoxO signaling
pathway", "ubiquitin mediated proteolysis", "DNA replication", "fructose and
mannose metabolism", "oxidative phosphorylation", and "plant-pathogen interaction"
in group B (Figure 4Ab). To get better understanding of the different survival
mechanism, the pathways revealed in group C (DEG, obtained from comparing
survivors from the non-breeding to breeding strain) includes "endocytosis",
"phagosome", "ubiquitin mediated proteolysis", "DNA replication", "fructose and
mannose metabolism", and "oxidative phosphorylation" in group C (Figure 4Ac, left).
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In order to better illustrate the immune and related pathways more clearly, the filtering
of DEG was conducted using the gene list of the common carp immune gene library
(Table S1), and then bubble chart was used to clarify both the enrichment factors and
gene numbers for revealed immune pathways. For group C, which reflected
differential surviving mechanism (Figure 4A (c, right)), the revealed immune
pathways include "TNF signaling pathway", "T cell receptor signaling pathway",
"inflammatory mediator regulation of TRP channels", "Epstein-Barr virus infection",
"Toll-like receptor signaling pathway", "NOD-like receptor signaling pathway" and
"cytokine-cytokine receptor interaction". In addition, "dopaminergic synapse" was
also found. While, groups D (DEG, obtained from compared controls of both stains)
and E (DEG obtained from comparing similar genes of survivors from both strains
with protein coding transcripts of severely sick fish), revealed the difference and
similarity for maintaining basic homeostasis, respectively. The most enriched immune
pathways were "p53 signaling pathway", "NOD-like receptor signaling pathway",
"lysosome", "oxidative phosphorylation", and "proteasome" in group D (Figure 4Ba),
yet only "phagosome" in group E (Figure 4Bb).
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Classification of DEG from Different Comparison Groups into Immune Process
and Immune Gene Category
The current construction of the common carp immune gene library (Table S4) was
used to classify the revealed immune transcripts and refine the involved immune
processes and immune gene categories. The details for comparison groups A–E were
provided in Tables S5–S9, respectively. At the level of immune process, in group A
(Figure 5A, Table 2A and Table S5), most immune mRNAs were upregulated in the
immune processes of "pattern recognition", "inflammatory cytokines and receptors",
and "T/B cell antigen activation", while downregulated in the immune process of

"inflammatory cytokines and receptors", "complement system", "adapters, effectors
and signal transducers", and "pattern recognition". Interestingly, there were no genes
in "antigen processing and regulators" for group A. In addition, there were only
downregulated genes in "acute phase reactions", as well as only upregulated genes in
"innate immune cells related" in group A. In group B (Figure 5A, Table 2A and Table
S6), immune genes were upregulated in the immune processes, such as "other genes
related to immune response", "inflammatory cytokines and receptors", and "adapters,
effectors and signal transducers". Meanwhile, the downregulated genes were involved
in the immune processes, such as "pattern recognition", "inflammatory cytokines and
receptors" and "other genes related immune response". The largest number of
immune mRNAs was observed in group C (Figure 5A, Table 2A, and Table S7). The
upregulated genes were mainly involved in "inflammatory cytokines and receptors",
"other genes related to immune response", "T/B cell antigen activation", "pattern
recognition", and "adapters, effectors and signal transducers", whereas the
downregulated genes were mainly involved in "other genes related to immune
response", "adapters, effectors and signal transducers", "inflammatory cytokines and
receptors", "T/B cell antigen activation", "pattern recognition", and "antigen
processing and regulators". Meanwhile, in group D (Figure 5A, Table 2B and Table
S8), the only upregulated genes were reported in "antigen processing and regulators"
and "T/B cell antigen activation", while downregulated genes were noted in
"complement system". The upregulated genes in group D were mostly involved in
"adapters, effectors and signal transducers", and few in "inflammatory cytokines and
receptors", whereas the downregulated genes were mostly involved in "inflammatory
cytokines and receptors". In group E (Figure 5B, Table 2B and Table S9), among
revealed six processes, "T/B cell antigen activation" and "other genes related to
immune response" exhibited the greatest DEG number. To illustrate the immune
process, the involved immune gene categories of the immune-related DEG in all
comparisons were listed in Table 2.
472
Venn-regional Analysis of Immune-related DEG from Different Comparison
Groups
A Venn diagram was created to demonstrate the relationship between the immune-
related DEG among groups A-E (Figure 5C). The details for all regions were in Table
S10. Though the region-specific DEGs accounted for a large proportion of each
comparison group, with immune gene categories for region-specific DEG underlined
in Table 2, the overlapping DEGs (Table 3), which contained important genes, were
listed with the corresponding immune process and immune gene category in Table 4.
481
Immune related GO Terms as well as Network Correlation between LncRNAs
and Genes in Immune Related Module
The results of "WGCNA" were selected to determine the biological processes
involved in CyHV-3-induced modulation of genes by lncRNAs, from an immune

perspective. Among the currently divided 35 gene modules (Figure 6A), 12 modules
were found with immune-related GO terms (Figure S1). Generally, "double-stranded
DNA binding", "receptor-mediated endocytosis", "response to bacterium",
"lysosome", "defense response to fungus", "killing of cells of other organism",
"oxygen carrier activity", "oxygen binding", "defense response to bacterium", "killing
of cells of other organism", "NuA4 histone acetyltransferase complex", "defense
response to gram-negative bacterium", "defense response to gram-positive
bacterium", "immune response", "regulation of cytokine secretion", "cytolysis",
"execution phase of apoptosis", "cellular response to gamma radiation", "nucleic acid
metabolic process", "TOR signaling", "DNA replication", "ubiquitin-dependent
protein catabolic process", "granulocyte differentiation", and "macrophage
differentiation" were revealed after the "WGCNA" analysis. The top five immune-
related modules containing most immune-related GO terms (Figure 6B) were
analyzed for the relationship between LncRNA and transcripts by PPI networks in
cystoscope (Figure 6C, with details in Table S11). The LncRNA regulated genes,
which upregulated in group C, such as Semaphorin-4E in the blue module, can be the
factor associated with the resistance in the breeding strain. The LncRNA regulated
genes, which downregulated in group C, such as Lgals3l in the grey60 module, can be
the factor associated with less accessible to CyHV-3 in the breeding strain. The
LncRNA regulated genes, which was upregulated in group B and downregulated in
group C, such as natural resistance-associated macrophage protein (Nramp),
plasminogen activator inhibitor (PAI) in the brown module, could be the key clues for
susceptibility of CyHV-3 in the non-breeding strain. Specifically, for detailed
correlations of lncRNAs and DEG in groups A to C (Table S12), T cell leukemia
homeobox 3 (TLX3) and LGALS3 were revealed, respectively, in the survivors of the
breeding strain.

DISCUSSION
This study demonstrated the anti-CyHV-3 immune mechanisms of a breeding strain of
common carp. Current revealed dramatically decreased mortality and less inner
tissues swelling together with the previously revealed reduced virus load of tissues
(16, 17), proved the resistance to CyHV-3. Current found biological processes and
pathways by transcriptomic analysis has been merged to improve clarity. Afterwards,
by comparing the survivors and healthy fish in either breeding or non-breeding
strains, key genes and related lncRNAs involved in immune processes were also
revealed. Accordingly, the immunogenetically insensitive or susceptible factors to
CyHV-3 infection were determined.
522
Based on data of the healthy state, the current results suggested potential components
involved in the entry of the virus. Firstly, integrin acts as a herpesvirus receptor (29),
and the integrin-dependent signalosome in herpesvirus-infected cells mediated or
coactivated numerous inflammatory responses and signaling transductions (29).

Therefore, the current finding that integrin beta 1 (ITGB1) was significantly
downregulated in the breeding strain compared with the non-breeding strain, even
during the steady status, may indicate that ITGB1 facilitates the binding of herpes
virus glycoprotein for entry (30). This coincides with the finding that integrin
signaling promotes the release of intracellular calcium stores and contributes to viral
entry and cell-to-cell spreading via glycoprotein H, during herpes simplex virus
infection in humans (31). Recent reports have also demonstrated that some integrins
on lymphocytes, such as B cells, could facilitate the mucosa-specific homing (32).
Secondly, higher TLR expression in survivors of the non-breeding strain compared
with that of the breeding strain also indicated its role in virus entry and downstream
proinflammatory signaling. Of note, TLR4 signaling leads to the production of
proinflammatory cytokines in human lymphatic endothelial cells (29). In addition,
fish-specific and virus-responding TLR18 (33, 34) (the most overlapping gene among
groups) was downregulated in survivors of the breeding strain, whereas it was
upregulated in those of the non-breeding stain. This suggested its potential ability to
facilitate CyHV-3 infection. MAPK signaling, as the downstream process of pattern
recognition receptors, could facilitate the tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNFA)-induced
suppressor of cytokine signaling 3 (SOCS3) expression. This can lead to both pro-
inflammatory immune response and failure in growth (35), according to the
upregulated genes upon infection observed in the non-breeding strain in the
comparison group B.

Further, by comparing the survivors from different stains, DEGs of the inflammatory
status also provide clues for how to block virus. Non-specific binding of the virus by
lectins played a protective role in preventing virus entry. Both upregulated
ladderlectins and higher galectin expression were detected in survivors of breeding
strains compared with non-breeding strains. This is suggestive of their blocking
ability for viral proteins (36, 37), such as glycoprotein (38). Moreover, as the head
kidney is one of the major reticuloendothelial systems in fish (39), mucin was also
found to be upregulated as the anti-virus barrier. This was shown in the comparison
group B as the gel-forming mucin 5B (MUC5B) (40) was upregulated in the survivors
of the non-breeding strain. However, higher expression levels of membrane-bound
MUC3 (41) were found in survivors of the breeding strain versus the non-breeding
strain. Additionally, in the comparison group C, which comparing the survivors from
both strains, the upregulated chemokine CCL4 homologues, may indicate that CCL4
in the breeding strain may bind the virus and be a restrictor of virus infection, as the
reported function in human (42). These findings suggested that more mucus was
secreted, thereby causing tissue swelling upon CyHV-3 infection in the non-breeding
strain. For the survivors of the breeding strain, the membrane-bound mucin could
effectively bind the virus with no gel.

Lectins are involved in the clearance of apoptotic cells via the complement pathway.

Hence, in survivors, the complement components reported in the acute phase in
common carp during CyHV-3 infection (43), could facilitate the phagocytic process
via binding of MRC (Mannose-Receptor C) in fish (44). In the comparison of the
survivors from both strains for group C, the observed difference in the phagocytic
process suggested the clearance of apoptosis cells, which was indicated by the
upregulated ubiquitin ligase in the survivors of breeding strain. Meanwhile, IL-1, IL-
6, and IL-8 were upregulated in group B. With regard to cytokine signaling, there
were less proinflammatory cytokines and immune regulation-related cytokine
receptors upregulated in the survivors of the breeding strain compared with the non-
breeding strain. The interleukin 21 receptor (IL21R), which was found regulated in
the survivors of the breeding strain for group A and the healthy control of the non-
breeding strain for group B, indicated the control of inflammation by suppressing
STAT3 signaling (45). The upregulated IL23R in the survivors of the breeding strain
for group A can promote cytotoxic ability (46), which may immediately kill infected
cells. The lack of antigen presentation in comparison group A suggested that the
infection was overcome before the amplification of CyHV-3 in the breeding strain. In
contrast, in group B, numerous upregulated genes were involved in antigen
presentation in the non-breeding strain. Therefore, the survivors from breeding strains
overcame the infection mainly through phagocytosis and cytotoxicity at the cellular
level, without activating the typical process of proinflammation as in survivors from
the non-breeding strain.
590
Thus, there are different signatures between the two strains, regarding to the survival
strategy. For the survivors in the breeding strain, self-repairing related autophagy was
detected as both the KEGG pathways "regulation of autophagy" and autophagy-
related fish antiviral tripartite motif (TRIM) protein (47) were found in group A.
These findings were in line with TRIMs, which were found regulated in the survivors
of breeding strain for group A and in the healthy control of non-breeding strain for
group B. The above finding of TRIM is coincident with one of recent revealed CyHV-
3 resistant related DEGs with identified QTLs (13). In the survivors from the breeding
strain, the higher PI3K also suggests higher autophagy, since the PI3K/AKT/mTOR
pathway enhances this process (48). Also, in the breeding strain the suppressed IFN
activation was also suggested, for that fish TRIM may inhibit the activation of IFN
and attenuate IFN regulatory factor (IRF) (49, 50). The factor that there was more
expression of TRAF6 in survivors of breeding strain compared with those of non-
breeding strain, is in line with the resistant related SNP on TRAF6 (51), and suggests
the possible repression on production of type I IFN (52). In addition, nuclear factor,
interleukin 3 regulated (NFIL3) can control Treg cell function via directly binding to
and negatively regulates the expression of Foxp3 (53), and has been revealed
stimulating both proinflammatory (e.g., NF-kappa B [NF-κB]) and anti-inflammatory
factors (e.g., IL10) in carp (54). Thus, the upregulated NFIL3 in the survivors of the
breeding strain for group A may suggested the extensive activation of immune cells,

with diminished immune regulation. The directed lymphocytes response could be
present as there was upregulation of IL23R, which significantly enhances the
expression of cytotoxic mediators (46), as well as cathepsin L (a component of
lysosomes) (55). This indicated an enhanced activation of the cytotoxic ability of T
cells in survivors from the breeding strain. For B cells, the secretion of Ig-related
genes (e.g., polymeric immunoglobulin receptor [PIGR], Ig heavy chain and light
chain) was also upregulated in the survivors of breeding strain for group A. To fight
the virus, the survivors from the non-breeding strain developed typical inflammatory
cascades, including pro-inflammatory cytokines (e.g., IL-1, IL-6, and IL-8), as well as
MAPK signaling, which are profoundly involved in cell survival functions during
viral infection (56). For the control of inflammation, the survivors from the common
strain exhibited suppression of the IFN response, which was also reflected by the
upregulated IRF8, the inhibitor of the MYD88-mediated NF-κB signaling pathway
(57). Downstream hypoxia was also found, as indicated by the "p53 signaling
pathway" and "oxidative phosphorylation". The hypoxic status could also protect
survivors of the non-breeding strain from death, since p53 suppresses cell apoptosis
(58), and HIF1A regulates virus-induced glycolytic genes (59).
628
Furthermore, the advantages of disease-resistant genes were reflected by comparing
the survivors from the two strains in comparison group C, which can provide clues for
how to develop resistance to CyHV-3. There was more semaphorin, which is related
to immunoregulation (60, 61), in survivors from breeding strains than non-breeding
strains, and was also regulated by LncRNA. This indicated a possible tolerance of
viral replication or latency after a primary infection in the survivors (2), while had no
negative effects on the proliferation of host cells (62). There was less cyclin-
dependent kinase inhibitor 1D (CDKN1D) in survivors from the breeding strain
compared with the non-breeding strain. This indicated that there was an interrupted
circadian cell-cycle timing in the survivors from non-breeding strains (63). The higher
levels of STAT3 and possible its upregulated integrins (64) in survivors from the non-
breeding strain may facilitate the effect of enhanced IL6 signaling. Apart from the
typical immune signals in comparison group C, there was relatively higher PI3K
activity, which was involved in the KEGG pathway "dopaminergic synapse". This
indicated that dopamine inhibited inflammation (65) in survivors from the breeding
strain. This is because PI3K is dependent on the accumulation of DOPA
decarboxylase, the enzyme involved in the production of dopamine, which is reduced
by a viral infection (66). Additionally, genes responsive to the secretion of
immunoglobulin (e.g., PIGR and Ig light chain), which is important for anti-virus
immunity, were common (in comparison group E) between the two strains.
649
The comparison of two strains with healthy status in group D suggested a basal anti-
virus immunity. Among the upregulated genes in the healthy control of breeding strain
for comparison group D, the expression of NACHT, LRR, and PYD domains-

containing protein 3 (NALP3) indicated a stronger ability to form the inflammasome
in the breeding strain. The higher levels of NLR family CARD domain containing 3
(NLRC3), which is a negative regulator of the DNA sensor STING, suggest less
sensitivity to the DNA virus in the breeding strain. The higher levels of MHC I
indicate greater potential to activate response by cytotoxic CD8$^+$ T cells upon herpes
virus infection, as previously revealed in the resistant strain R3 (67). For the potential
T helper cell differentiation-related JAK/STAT pathway, the upregulation of both
STAT3 and histone deacetylase (HDAC) indicated an easier differentiation of both T
helper 17 and regulatory T directions (68), respectively, in the breeding strain even in
the steady state (69, 70). Upregulation of HDAC in the healthy control of breeding
strain for group D, that could inhibit the function of macrophages in fish (71), also
suggests a more delicate immune regulation during the steady state in the breeding
strain. However, among the downregulated genes, which indicated higher expression
in the non-breeding stain at a steady state, TLR18 and ITGB1 suggested susceptibility
to virus binding. Moreover, C-C motif chemokine ligand 4 (CCL4), which can protect
infected cells with viral burden (72), may be a risk factor for the non-breeding strain.
669
The revealed regulation of resistance to CyHV-3 by lncRNA involved numerous
biological processes. Among the revealed GO terms in comparison group B, "DNA
replication" could possibly indicate virus proliferation in the non-breeding strain. In
survivors from the non-breeding strain, the lncRNA-regulated genes were mainly
involved in innate immune cell function (e.g., macrophage protein and cathepsin, as
components of lysosomes) and cell apoptosis. Nramp and PAI were found regulated
by LncRNA in comparison groups B (up) and C (down). This finding indicates the
more expression of Nramp and PAI in the survivors of non-breeding strain, could
facilitate virus infection and proliferation for infected cell respectively, since that
Nramp may serve as virus receptor (73), meanwhile PAI can inhibits apoptosis in cell
lines infected with viruses (74). While, in survivors from the breeding strain, the only
lncRNA-modulated gene, TLX3, has been shown to be strongly methylated. This
indicates that TLX3 expression was suppressed during hepatitis B virus-related cancer
(75). This suggests that TLX3 in survivors from the breeding strain may play a
protective role, and participate in lymphocyte proliferation in the head kidney.
Meanwhile, echoing with recent finding of the participation of zebrafish galectin
proteins in immunity against viral infection (38, 76), in comparison group C the
LncRNA regulated transcripts Lgals3l (down) and Lgals3bpa (up), as well as the
upregulated galectin 3 suggested the regulation of galectin-3 related biological
activities could be related to reduce the viral attachment for survivors of the breeding
strain.
691
Therefore, based on the present findings, a hypothesis has been proposed for the
immune mechanisms involved in both healthy controls and survivors from infection
in both strains (Figure 7). In conclusion, the breeding strain of common carp showed a

better ability to maintain immune homeostasis in both steady and inflammatory states,
and displayed enhanced blockage of CyHV-3 infection compared with the non-
breeding strain. Thus, this strain could be termed as a resistant strain accordingly.
Since the modulation of mRNA and lncRNA expression dynamics currently remains a
hypothesis, further molecular evidence is needed to elucidate the mechanism of both
resistance and susceptible. In addition, the finding that both the inhibition of
inflammation by dopamine in the breeding strain and the disrupted bio-clock in the
non-breeding strain upon CyHV-3 infection suggested better growth performance for
the breeding strain. Therefore, the possible advantage in this resistant strain for
growth performance warrants further study.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS
Lianyu Shi and Zhiying Jia conceived the project and designed the experiments. Nan
Wu and Zhying Jia wrote the manuscript. Zhying Jia performed the experiments.
Zhying Jia and Jiaxin Sun conducted the CyHV-3 infection experiment and collected
samples. Chitao Li, Xuesong Hu and Yanlong Ge performed fish propagation and
culture. Xiaona Jiang conducted the RT-PCR experiment. Nan Wu and Xiao-Qin Xia
coordinated the data analysis tasks. Nan Wu, Heng Li, Mijuan Shi, Xiaona Jiang,
Weidong Ye, Ying Tang, and Yingyin Cheng analyzed the data. The manuscript was
revised and approved by Xiao-Qin Xia and Lianyu Shi.

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in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as
a potential conflict of interest.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD STATEMENT

Cyprinid herpesvirus-3 (CyHV-3) is the major threat to common carp aquaculture.
Experimental infections of carp from pure lines or crosses have indicated the
existence of genetic background of resistance by divergent survival rates. The
immune response of carp to CyHV-3 involves both innate and adaptive aspects. Even
non-coding RNAs play an important role in anti-CyHV-3 immunity. However, there
is a lack of systemic studies focusing on a detailed network of the immune system for
the anti-CyHV-3 immune mechanism in common carp. Benefiting from a strain of
common carp which has already shown a higher survival rate in CyHV-3 infection,
this study systematically illustrated the immune mechanisms involved in anti-CyHV-3

ability on both mRNA and non-coding RNA levels, demonstrated that the carp may

obtain significant resistance to CyHV-3 through a specific innate immune mechanism,

and revealed the involved biological processes including autophagy, phagocytosis,

cytotoxicity, blocking of the virus by lectins and MUC 3, and the immune suppressive

signal transduction. The immune factors involved in resistant or susceptible to the

disease shed light on prevention of CyHV-3 infection genetically.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The datasets, containing all clean data of this transcriptomic analysis, can be found in

the Genome Sequence Archive (GSA) database (http://gsa.big.ac.cn/index.jsp) with

the BioProject identifier <CRA003105>.

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FIGURE LEGENDS

Figure 1 The strategy of integrative transcriptomic analysis for revealing immune

mechanisms involved for resistance or sensitivity for current anti-CyHV3 breeding in

common carp. During stage I, the disease modelling for CyHV3 infection was

established using immersion of virus containing tissue homogenate, and then

validated by checking the expression of virus genes. The transcriptomic sampling was

done at day 7 post infection for sequencing using both Illumina and Pac-Bio

platforms. In stage II, the bioinformatic analysis was carried out for the transcriptomic

data. On one hand, DEG was generated from five comparison groups, including intra-

strain comparison groups A (survivors vs. controls in the breeding strain) and B

(survivors vs. controls in the non-breeding strain), inter-strain comparison groups C

(the comparison between survivors at day 7 for the two strains) and D (the

comparison between control fish at day 0 for the two strains), and group E. The vital

genes for survival were investigated through group E, in which the genes, without

significant differences between the survivors from the breeding and non-breeding

strains, were compared with the genes from severely sick fish, which swam very

slowly, or even floated on the water. The revealed DEGs were annotated by GO terms

and KEGG pathways. On the other hand, a common carp immune gene library was

constructed for further immune related analysis. Additionally, in order to reveal the

LncRNA regulation, WGCNA was used to reveal the interaction between differential

expressed transcripts and LncRNA in immune related module. Thereafter, the

resistance or sensitivity related immune mechanisms involved in common carp anti-

CyHV3 breeding could be enlightened accordingly.

1014

Figure 2 Differential appearance of general mortality and pathology between fish

from the breeding and non-breeding strains. (A) The PCR validation of the CyHV-3

virus genes *TK* and *Sph*. The lane 1-2 represents the negative control, and afterwards

lane 3-22 represents the result for tested 10 virus infected fish. The lanes of odd and

even numbers showed the PCR result of *TK* and *Sph* genes, respectively. M is the

abbreviation of "marker". (**B**) Comparison of daily mortality between the breeding

and non-breeding strains. The mortality was monitored within 15 days post challenge.

N=300 per group. (**C**) The degree of swelling trunk kidney was limited in the

survivors from the breeding strain (a) compared with the markedly enlarged trunk

kidney observed in fish from the non-breeding strain (b). The arrow indicates the

trunk kidney region.

1026

Figure 3 GO (Gene Ontology) terms of comparison groups A, B, and C. The different
colors of bar indicate the comparison of the GO terms between all genes and immune
related genes. In detail, red and pink bars represent all genes and immune related
genes respectively for the biological process (BP), green and light green bars
represent those for the cellular component (CC), blue and light blue bars represent
those for the molecular function (MF). The immune-related terms are labeled with
stars.

1034

Figure 4 KEGG (Kyoto Encyclopedia of Genes and Genomes) pathways revealed for
comparison groups A-E. In part A, the enriched pathways for comparison group A (a),
B (b) and C(c) were showed mainly in bar plots. In addition, for the comparison group
C, the babble plot of pathways for immune related DEG was also given in the right in
order to illustrate the rich factor. In part B, the pathways of immune related DEG for
both comparison group D(a), which compared controls of both stains, and group E(b),
which has compared similar genes of survivors from both strains with protein coding
transcripts of severely sick fish, were demonstrated in babble plots. The immune-
related terms are labeled with arrows. Red and purple arrows indicate the immune and
related pathways representatively.

1045

1046   **Figure 5** The analysis of immune processes of DEG among different comparison
1047   groups. (A) The barplots of gene number for the involved immune processes of up or
1048   down regulated DEGs in groups A-D; (B) The barplot of gene number for the
1049   involved immune processes in group E; (C) The Venn diagram of gene number for
1050   groups A-E. DEG, differentially expressed gene.

1051

Figure 6 Gene ontology analysis and cystoscopes of key matched lncRNA and
transcripts in the immune related module. (A) the cluster dendrogram of all gene
module. (B) The GO terms involved in immune-related module, including the blue,
brow, and the grey60 module, which contain the matched lncRNA and transcripts
involved in current analyzed comparison groups. The star, triangle, and arrow
represent the revealed GO term for comparison group A, B, and C, respectively. (**C**)
cystoscopes of key matched lncRNA and transcripts in the immune related module, as
shown for blue, brow and grey60 module, respectively.

1060

Figure 7 Hypothesis of the carp immune mechanism in both breeding (resistant) and
non-breeding (normal) strains, either at the steady state or upon surviving for CyHV-3
infection. (A) healthy control in the steady state in the breeding strain. (B) survivors
in an inflammatory state in the breeding strain. (C) healthy control in the steady state
in non-breeding strain. (D) survivors in an inflammatory state in the non-breeding
strain. The words in italics, bold, and green represent the biological process, cell type,
and lncRNA-modulated immune genes, respectively. The arrow denotes facilitation or

promotion, and ---| denotes inhibition. The dashed line indicates a possible
correlation.
Table 1 The number of dead fish for each day during the CyHV-3 challenging for breeding or
non-breeding stain

Stain	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10	D11	D12	D13	D14	D15
Breeding	0	0	0	0	1	3	11	4	5	5	3	3	3	0	0
Non-breeding	0	2	5	11	3	9	69	6	4	4	0	0	0	0	0

1072

1073   **Table 2A** Immune gene categories involved in differentially expressed mRNA for
1074   comparison groups A, B and C

Compared group	Immune gene category	
	1<FC<2	2<FC
Up-regulated in group A (26)	LRR-containing proteins, MRC, NFIL3, perforin, UBE, PIGR, TRIM, TLX.	CSF, UBE, C3, GVIN, IL21R, IL23R, integrin alpha, MMR, NCAM, cathepsin, ubiquitin ligase ladderlectin, LRR-containing proteins, Ig heavy chain, Ig light chain, PIGR, SEMA.
Down-regulated in group A (23)	CXCL, integrin alpha, myeloid cell related, galectin.	Fibrinogen, NALP12, NLRC3, C3, GVIN, IFI, IL1R, C-type lectin, galectin, TLR18, Ig light chain, TIP.
Up-regulated in group B (155)	FBXL, fucolectin, MPR, nattectin, TLR1, TLR5, CDK, CDK related, CDKIs, HA, MHC I, MHC II, TGFB, TNF, TNFAIP3-interacting protein, C3aR, C7, CCL, CCR, CFLAR, CXCL, CXCR, cytokine receptor, IFI, IFIT, IL1R related, IRF8, NFIL3, MAPK, MAPKKK, NALP12, NLRC3, programmed cell death protein, SOCS1, SOCS3, SOCS7, TRAF, TTRAP, UBE, MIF, NCF, NCK and related, BCL, BLNK, FCR, HDAC, HMG, Ig light chain, PBX, TAGAP, AP-3, CARD, cathepsin, CEBP, hepcidin, HSP, lymphocyte antigen, myeloid cell related, PIN1, platelet related, TMED, ubiquitin ligase, ubiquitin related, TRIM, UBL.	MAPK, MAPKKK, NLRC3, MHC II, C3, CCL, CXCL, CXCR, IL-1, IL1R, IL-6, IL6R, IL-8, IRF8, MX, NRAMP, AP-3, cathepsin, HSP5, HSP70, mucin, myeloid cell related, platelet related, ubiquitin ligase, NITR, TLR18, TLR22, TLR25, CD22, HMG, TCIRG1,
Down-regulated in group B (102)	Plasminogen, C-type lectin, Hepatic lectin, LRR-containing proteins, RBL, SITR, TLR13, CD22, Ig heavy chain, Ig light chain, SEMA, TCR, CDK, VEGF, VEGFR, C3aR, ACRs, CCR, EGFR, FGFR, GVIN, IL17R, IL21R, IL2R, integrin alpha, integrin beta, ACTININ, MALT1, paladin, RTK, TRIM, ubiquitin ligase, UBL, granzyme, MAPKKK, NALP12, NALP3, perforin, UBE, CDK, TRIM.	perforin, CD59, CCL, IL6R, IL-8, IRF related, TITIN, NCAM, CD33, HSP90, Kruppel-like factor, ubiquitin ligase, UBL, collectin, galectin, LRR-containing proteins, B-cell CLL/lymphoma, JAG, NFAT, SEMA
Up-regulated in group C (357)	Fibrinogen, MBL, collectin, C-type lectin, FBXL, fucolectin, galectin, intelectin, LRR-containing proteins, RBL, TLR8, TLR13, TLR3, TLR9, CDKIs, CIITA, LRMP, TGBR, VEGF, C3, C5, ACRs, CCL, CCR, CXCR, EGF, FGFR, GVIN, IFI, IL10R, IL13R, IL17R, IL1R related, IL21R, IL23R, IL2R,	Fibrinogen, CSF, granzyme, MAPKKK, NALP12, NALP3, NLRC3, EGF, perforin, TRAF, UBE, CDK, LRMP, MHC I, MHC II, C3aR, C8, CCL, CCR, FGFR, GVIN, IFI, IFIT, IL17R, IL1R related, IL21R, IL23R, IL2R, IL6R, IL-8, integrin alpha, integrin

	IL6R, IL-8, integrin alpha, integrin beta, IRF4, IRF5, IRF7, MX, XCR, CBX4, CSFR, granzyme, MAPK, MAPKKK, NALP12, NALP3, NDRG1, perforin, Programmed cell death protein, TRAF, TRAIL, UBE, MMR, NCAM, B-cell CLL/lymphoma, CD2, CD22, CD276, CD6, FCR, GATA and related, Ig heavy chain, Ig light chain, immunoglobulin superfamily, JAG, LAG, MAL, NFAT, PIGR, PKC, SEMA, T-bet, VTCN, ZAP, ACTININ, cathepsin, CD302, lymphocyte antigen, lymphocyte related, myeloid cell related, nectin, palladin, PI3K, TIAM, ubiquitin ligase, ubiquitin related, TRIM.	beta, NFIL3, TITIN, MCP, NCAM, cathepsin, HSPb1, lymphocyte antigen, mucin, PI3K, rootletin, RTK, TRIM, ubiquitin ligase, ubiquitin related, UBL, collectin, c-type lectin, fucolectin, Lgals3bpa, galectin, Hepatic lectin, ladderlectin, LRR-containing proteins, MRC, NITR, scavenger receptor, SIGLEC, CD22, CD4, FCR, HDAC, Ig heavy chain, Ig light chain, immunoglobulin superfamily, JAG, NFAT, PIGR, PKC, SEMA, VSIG.
Down-regulated in group C (303)	c-type lectin, FBXL, LPS-anchor protein, LRR-containing proteins, MPR, TLR1, TLR22, CDK, CDK related, CDKIs, HA, MHC II, TGFB, TNFAIP3-interacting protein, C3, C3aR, C4, C7, ACRs, CD11, CFLAR, CXCR, cytokine receptor, FAM, GVIN, HB-EGF, IL12R, IL1R related, IL-6, IL6R, integrin alpha, integrin beta, IRF1, IRF8, NFIL3, CSFR, JAK1, MAPK, MAPKKK, NALP12, NALP3, NLRC3, Programmed cell death protein, SOCS1, SOCS3, SOCS7, STAT3, UBE, MIF, NCF, NCK and related, BAFF, B-cell CLL/lymphoma, BCL, BLNK, CD22, CD276, FCR, HDAC, HMG, Ig light chain, PBX, PIGR, SEMA, TAL, VSIG, WWP, AP-3, CARD, cathepsin, CEBP, HSP, HSP4, HSP5, HSP70, HSP90, Kruppel-like factor, lymphocyte antigen, MALT1, mucin, myeloid cell related, PAXILLIN, PIN1, platelet related, TMED, ubiquitin ligase, ubiquitin related, TRIM, UBL.	Macroglobulin, CSF, MAPK, MAPKKK, NALP12, NALP3, NLRC3, SOCS3, UBE, CDK, CDKIs, MHC II, TNF, FGF, TNFAIP3-interacting protein, C3, C3aR, C7, CD59, CCL, CCR, CXCL, CXCR, GVIN, IL-1, IL-12, IL1R, IL1R related, IL2R, IL-6, IL-8, integrin alpha, IRF8, NFIL3, NRAMP, ACTININ, AP-3, caspase, cathepsin, CEBP, hepcidin, HSP70, lymphocyte antigen, ubiquitin ligase, UBL, CD209, C-type lectin, galectin, intelectin, LRR-containing proteins, TLR18, TLR25, TLR4, TLR5, BCL, CD22, CD276, HDAC, Ig light chain, PIGR, SEMA, TAGAP, TCIRG1, TCIRG2, TCIRG3.

1075

1076　**Table 2B** Immune gene categories involved in differentially expressed mRNA each

1077　comparison group D and E

Compared group	Immune gene category
Up-regulated in group D (12)	1<FC<2: MHC I, GVIN, IL21R, NLRC3; 2<FC: NALP3, perforin, STAT3, integrin alpha, platelet related, ubiquitin related, MRC, HDAC.
Down-regulated in group D (7)	1<FC<2: TLR18, C3, CCL, integrin beta. 2<FC: perforin, IFI, myeloid cell related
All in group E (48)	LRR-containing proteins, VEGFR, VEGF, CDKIs, CDK, NFIL3, LIFR, integrin beta, FAM, CCR, CD166, MAPK, CD97, SEMA, PIGR, NFAT, Ig light chain, HMG, HDAC, BTG, BCL, ubiquitin ligase, platelet related, HIF1a, CEBP.

1078　Notes: the number (>1) of DEG is shown in the brackets. The full names of all gene

1079　abbreviations could be found in the Tables S5–S9. The underlined up or down

1080　regulated immune gene categories are the regional specific in the Venn diagram for

1081　every groups (detailed in Table S10).

1082

1083   **Table 3** The immune process and immune gene category for overlapping genes in the Venn
1084   regional analysis

Overlapping regions	Immune process	Immune gene category
Group A & C (23)	pattern recognition (7), complement system (4), inflammatory cytokines and receptors (3), adapters, effectors and signal transducers (4), innate immune cells related, T/B cell antigen activation (2), other genes related to immune response (2)	CSF, NALP12, UBE, C3, GVIN, IL23R, integrin alpha, NCAM, ubiquitin ligase, C-type lectin, galectin, ladderlectin, LRR-containing proteins, MRC, PIGR
Group A & D (1)	inflammatory cytokines and receptors	IFI
Group B & C (176)	pattern recognition (18), antigen processing and regulators (14), complement system (4), inflammatory cytokines and receptors (38), adapters, effectors and signal transducers (23), innate immune cells related (8), T/B cell antigen activation (24), other genes related to immune response (47)	Granzyme, MAPK, MAPKKK, NALP12, NALP3, NLRC3, perforin, Programmed cell death protein, SOCS1, SOCS3, SOCS7, UBE, CDK, CDK related, CDKIs, HA, MHC II, TGFB, TNF, TNFAIP3-interacting protein, VEGF, C3aR, C7, ACRs, CCL, CCR, CFLAR, CXCL, CXCR, cytokine receptor, FGFR, GVIN, IL1, IL17R, IL1R related, IL2R, IL6, IL6R, IL8, integrin alpha, IRF8, NFIL3, TITIN, MIF, NCAM, NCF, NCK and related, NRAMP, ACTININ, AP-3, CARD, cathepsin, CEBP, hepcidin, HSP, HSP5, HSP70,lymphocyte antigen, paladin, PIN1, platelet related, RTK, TMED, TRIM, ubiquitin ligase, ubiquitin related, UBL, collectin, C-type lectin, FBXL, galectin, LRR-containing proteins, MPR, RBL, TLR1, TLR13, TLR22, TLR25, TLR5, BCL, BLNK, CD22, FCR, HDAC, HMG, Ig heavy chain, Ig light chain, JAG, NFAT, PBX, SEMA, TAGAP, TCIRG1
Group B & E (4)	antigen processing and regulators (3), other genes related to immune response	CEBP, VEGFR
Group B & D (1)	inflammatory cytokines and receptors	integrin alpha
Group C & D (1)	inflammatory cytokines and receptors	CCL
Group A & B & C (5)	pattern recognition, inflammatory cytokines and receptors (3), adapters, effectors and signal transducers	LRR-containing proteins, CXCL, IL1R, perforin
Group A & B & D (1)	complement system	C3
Group B & C & D (2)	adapters, effectors and signal transducers (2)	perforin
Group A & B & C & D (2)	pattern recognition, inflammatory cytokines and receptors,	TLR18, IL21R

1085

A

A

B

the blue module

- renal absorption
- convergent extension
- fibroblast growth factor binding
- ★ ▲ → receptor–mediated endocytosis
- determination of pancreatic left/right asymmetry
- determination of liver left/right asymmetry
- determination of heart left/right asymmetry
- ciliary basal body organization
- protein tyrosine kinase activity
- coenzyme A biosynthetic process

p.adjust
0.002
0.004
0.006

the brow module

- ATP hydrolysis coupled proton transport
- endosome
- iron ion transmembrane transporter activity
- ★ ▲ → lysosome
- iron ion transmembrane transport
- ▲ → response to bacterium
- notochord cell vacuolation
- proton–exporting ATPase activity, phosphorylative mechanism
- endosome membrane
- eye pigment granule organization

p.adjust
0.001
0.002
0.003

the grey60 module

- → killing of cells of other organism
- → defense response to fungus
- erythrocyte differentiation
- DNA recombination
- nucleosome
- nucleosome assembly
- defense response to bacterium
- hemoglobin complex
- oxygen binding
- oxygen carrier activity

p.adjust
0.01
0.02
0.03
0.04

C

the blue module

the brow module

the grey60 module