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面向公共健康保障的水环境病毒管控路线图

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摘要

水是病毒传播的重要媒介,城市水系统的病毒监控不仅关乎生物安全,而且可以反映病毒在人群中的扩散情况。已有研究表明,无论在发达国家,还是发展中国家,都存在数量大、种类多且组成复杂的介水病原病毒,威胁公众健康。同时,水中病毒相关监测检测工作,已展现出在指示水系统生物安全、水处理工艺表现和社区居民健康等方面的应用潜力。当前,由 SARS-CoV-2 引起的新型冠状病毒肺炎疫情,使管控介水病毒与保障公众健康成为全球水环境科技领域的焦点议题。基于对介水病毒研究进展和科技需求的系统分析,本文提出了面向公共健康保障的水环境病毒(COVID-19 等)管控路线图。

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1. 引言

1892 年, Dmitri Ivanovsky 研究指出了烟草花叶致病因子的非细菌特性。1898 年, Martinus Beijerinck 发现了烟草花叶病毒[1]。此后,病毒学领域得以建立。然而,时至今日,已识别和报道的病毒仍不足 1% [2–3]。

病毒可以通过多种方式传播,例如,人类的呼吸道病毒可以通过咳嗽和打喷嚏传播;接触被病毒污染的器物,也可能是此类病毒的暴露与传播途径。截至 2020 年 9 月,仍在全球范围内持续的新型冠状肺炎(COVID-19)疫情,已扩散至 185 多个国家,感染人数超过 3100 万人[4–5]。关于肠道病毒,已有大量文献表明,饮用被污染的

水或吸入含病毒的气溶胶是其重要的传播途径[6]。

传统观念普遍认为,水中的病毒浓度很低,难以检测。然而,宏病毒组学技术的发展和运用使人们发现,水中病毒不仅浓度高(10^{11-13} 个 \cdot L⁻¹) [7],而且种类多样[3, 8],确认水中检出病毒是否具有存活能力和感染性,是评估病毒风险的关键。例如,城市生活污水已检出包含 SARS-CoV-2 在内的大量病毒,污水中 SARS-CoV-2 监测也在全球范围内被广泛应用于反馈病毒传播与感染状况[9]。基于对介水病毒研究进展和科技需求的系统分析,围绕现有问题、潜在应用和未来展望等,本文提出了面向公共健康保障的水环境病毒(COVID-19 等)管控路线图。

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2. 问题与挑战

2.1. 水源性疾病威胁人类健康

水中的病毒可以通过城市水系统和天然水环境扩散,影响人类和动植物健康[10]。大多数病毒具有高度宿主特异性,介水病毒对人类健康的最大威胁源自肠道病毒导致的相关水源性疾病。肠道病毒仅有纳米级尺寸,且感染力强,数个至数千个病毒颗粒即可导致感染[†][11–12]。感染病毒的患者,在一定时间内会向污水中排出大量病毒,其不仅存活时间长,而且有很强的抗消毒能力[13]。这些特性使许多肠道病毒能够穿透水处理工艺,并导致病毒性疾病的暴发[14]。其他流行病学重要性较低但也能够通过水传播的病毒还包括:人类呼肠孤病毒、细小病毒、副流感病毒、多瘤病毒、圆环病毒和冠状病毒等[15]。

自1941年首次分离出肠道病毒以来,在水环境中检测到的肠道病毒已超过140种,并且仍在逐年增加[16–18]。目前,美国40%以上的腹泻病例由未知病原体引起,众多学者认为这些病原体是尚未被诊断报道的病毒[19]。根据世界卫生组织(WHO)的分类,具有中-高度健康影响的病原病毒包括:腺病毒、天疱疮病毒、甲型和戊型肝炎病毒、轮状病毒、诺如病毒、肠道病毒和其他杯状病毒等。这些病毒通常与胃肠炎有关,引起腹泻、腹部痉挛、呕吐和发烧等症状[20]。而对于孕妇、幼儿、老人和免疫力低下的人群,这些病毒感染将引起更严重的疾病,如慢性腹泻、肝脏疾病或神经侵入性疾病[21]。

2012年,由轮状病毒引起的腹泻导致全球120万儿童死亡[22–23]。此外,由于卫生设施和安全饮用水匮乏、营养不良普遍、HIV阳性人群庞大等原因,发展中国家的疾病负担远高于发达国家[21],不过发达国家也时常暴发水源性病毒疫情,例如,在美国、法国、日本、瑞典、瑞士、英国和荷兰暴发的诺如病毒[24]。

2.2. 病毒安全性评估策略

2.2.1. 病毒检测

水中病毒的分析检测是检验病毒控制是否有效的重要手段。过去几十年,病毒检测技术研究经历了培养、免疫荧光、cDNA探针、PCR、RT-PCR、qPCR和微流控qPCR等阶段的不断革新[8,17,25]。目前,高通量测序和宏基因组测序等技术的引入,实现了病毒的快速准确检测,为水中病毒研究带来革命性改变[3,26–27]。然而,未来几年宏基因组学技术的应用仍将处于瓶颈期,需要着力提高原始

测序质量,并建立完善有效的生物信息学方法。此外,为保证宏基因组测序质量与研究结果的可比性,病毒浓缩、DNA/RNA提取等样品前处理阶段的流程也亟需优化与标准化。

2.2.2. 指示病毒

在实际应用中,通过逐一排查病原病毒以评估生物安全性的做法并不现实,而且成本高昂,同时目前仍没有被广泛认可的指示病毒。此外,基因组学多重定量方法在环境病毒检测方面的应用方兴未艾,全球环境病毒学实验室网络建设尚需时日,这些因素都制约了快速、精准病毒安全性评估技术的发展。因此,全球水系统的生物安全评估仍然在沿用100多年前的粪便指示细菌检测[大肠杆菌(*Escherichia coli*)] [28]。但众所周知,指示细菌无法表征病毒在环境中的归趋[29]。

为此,已有学者建议用噬菌体作为病原病毒的指示病毒,因为它们能在宿主排泄、环境传播和表观特征等方面,均比粪便指示细菌更具代表性,如雌性特异性RNA噬菌体MS2。其他针对指示病毒的提议,还包括在人类粪便样本中含量很高的辣椒青斑病毒(PMMoV, $10^5 \sim 10^{10}$ 个基因拷贝 $\cdot L^{-1}$)和交叉组装噬菌体(crAssphage, $10^9 \sim 10^{10}$ 个基因拷贝 $\cdot L^{-1}$)。但研究表明,噬菌体在水与水处理过程中的行为与人类病毒不尽相同[34–35]。

当前,宏病毒组学技术为筛选适当的指示病毒提供了新的机遇。研究发现,未经处理的污水病毒量高达 $0.4 \times 10^{13} \sim 1.5 \times 10^{13}$ 个病毒颗粒 $\cdot L^{-1}$ [2,7],并且包含与细菌、古菌和真核生物相关、种类多样的病毒[36–37]。因此通过污水的取样分析,可以获得浓度高、种类多的病毒数据库[2],筛选出其中丰度高(远高于人类病毒和大肠杆菌噬菌体)、检出率高(无处不在)的病毒作为指示病毒,可以避免使用外标指示物时常遇到的低估或高估病毒安全性问题[38–39]。此外,水系统指示病毒的筛选还需满足其在不同水处理过程中与病原病毒表现一致。

2.2.3. 卫生管理

人畜粪便中含有大量的病原病毒,污染水源后会造水质恶化和疾病暴发,因此卫生设施对于介水病毒管控非常重要,对于发展中国家和农村地区来说尤其如此[40]。Hofstra等[41–42]的模拟研究显示,2010年全球地表水接纳的病毒总量高达 2×10^{18} ,这一数字将随着人口增长和气候变化加剧而持续增加[43]。水处理过程可以成为水环境病毒安全屏障,可以有效阻断污水再生利用、景观娱乐用

[†]<http://qmrawiki.org/framework/dose-response>.

水和饮用水系统的病毒风险。Amarasiri等[44]比较并总结了膜生物反应器、传统活性污泥、微滤、超滤、人工湿地和池塘等污水处理过程的病毒对数去除率(LRV: 90%, LRV=1; 99%, LRV=2), 其值分别为1.5、2.0、1.4、3.7、0.9和2.3。

为保障水环境病毒安全性, 污水再生回用系统对病毒去除率要求严苛(LRV \geq 12) [45–46]。在供水系统中, 常规处理、超滤、臭氧或氯化消毒、紫外和反渗透等饮用水处理工艺的LRV分别为1.7~2.4、3~4、4~5、3.0~6.4和>7 [38,47–49]。

目前, 水处理工艺的LRV测定需要使用选定的模式病毒(如MS2和PMMoV) [50–51]。但已有研究表明, 相同工艺针对不同病毒的LRV存在显著差异 [47], 因此病毒去除机制有待深入挖掘。与此同时, 尽管病毒检测技术和水处理工艺都在不断进步, 但世界各地饮用水中病原病毒的检出和感染仍时有发生[14], 如美国[52]、韩国[53]、南非[54]、西班牙[55]、新西兰[56]和中国[57]等。卫生管理和水系统的病毒安全性保障仍然任重道远。

3. 未来展望

3.1. 完善病毒管控法规

为保障病毒安全性, 需要明确不同水系统的病毒去除标准, 并按照目标进行监管[58–59]。针对污水再生回用, 美国的标准要求使用污水原水和污水厂出水作为水源时, LRV需达到12和8 [46,60]。澳大利亚昆士兰州规定当污水处理的LRV达到6.5时可以被归类为高品质再生水, 污水回用做饮用水的LRV则需要达到9.5 [61]。不过, 最新的研究表明, LRV=12的阈值未能保证1/10 000感染的标准, 需增加2~3个LRV病毒去除率[62]。

各国针对饮用水也制定了相应的病毒标准, 如澳大利亚[63]、美国[64]和荷兰[65]。澳大利亚没有直接规定肠道病毒的限值, 而是选择了使用大肠杆菌噬菌体; 美国要求净水工艺的肠道病毒去除/灭活LRV达到4, 但未限定具体的病毒种类。澳大利亚和美国都要求在供水系统中必须维持适当的消毒剂余量。荷兰饮用水的输配不含氯或任何消毒剂, 但规定自来水公司必须每四年进行一次微生物风险定量评估(QMRA), 感染率阈值设定为1人/(10 000人·年)。

为保障再生水和饮用水系统病毒安全性, 既需要设定净水工艺的LRV阈值, 也需要选定适当的指示病毒并进行常规监测。此外, 在监测LRV和指示病毒时, 必须考虑到不同病毒在生存时间、环境耐力和感染风险等方面的差异。

3.2. 评估工艺处理效能

无论是否受到病毒污染, 监测水处理过程能否有效去除病毒都至关重要。以膜滤为例, 膜的完整性非常关键, 特别是在污水再生回用或饮用水系统中, 因为少量病原病毒穿透水处理过程可能导致严重的人类健康风险[38]。然而, 因为病原病毒在处理前与处理后的水中浓度极低, 对其直接检测非常困难。研究表明, 相比于总有机碳、浊度和MS2, 水中的天然病毒可以作为更好的指示剂以评估膜的完整性和净化效能。例如, 在扫描水中的病毒组后, Hornstra等选择水中浓度高于 10^8 个基因拷贝 $\cdot L^{-1}$ 的天然病毒, 通过目标病毒LRV > 7验证了RO膜的完整性。同理, 可以通过选择适当的指示病毒评估其他水处理过程的效能, 并验证工艺流程是否能够有效保障病毒安全性。

3.3. 支持公共卫生监测

无论是否出现感染症状, 感染者粪便中均有很高浓度的病毒, 例如, 每克粪便中约有 10^{11} 个诺如病毒和腺病毒颗粒[8]。本次新冠疫情初期的数据显示, 约一半病例中每克粪便中有 10^8 个COVID-19病毒基因拷贝[68–69]。因此, 监测污水中的目标病毒可以侧面反映人群感染和病毒传播状况。脊髓灰质炎病毒(PoV)的污水监测即是一个成功案例, 世界卫生组织已将其纳入全球根除脊髓灰质炎倡议的战略计划[70]。20世纪80年代, 当芬兰[71]、以色列[72]和荷兰[73]脊髓灰质炎疫情暴发时, 研究人员通过监测污水中的PoV报道了疫情的地理分布, 并在首例感染病例通报的几周前, 在污水中提前检测到病毒传播, 证明了污水病毒监测在预测流行病和反映病毒扩散方面的潜在贡献[74]。

在本次COVID-19疫情中, 荷兰学者Medema等[75]在当地报告COVID-19病例之前开始监测污水中的COVID-19病毒RNA。他们的结果显示, 2020年2月的样品全部阴性, 而在2020年3月初与3月中旬7座污水处理厂的样品中, 分别有5个和6个样品显示阳性。其中, 在阿姆斯特丹市污水处理厂检测到COVID-19病毒RNA的时间, 比报告首例病例的时间早了6天, 再次表明污水病毒监测可以成为反馈病毒传播状况的重要手段, 并为及时采取管控措施提供预警信息。疫情之下, 许多国家面临抗疫物资匮乏、病毒检测耗材紧缺、轻度病例和无症状感染者未检或漏报等情况, 污水COVID-19病毒核酸监测已成为公共健康保障强有力的补充。

在全球视角下, 各大洲不同国家面临不同的疫情管控阶段和抗疫条件, 污水病毒监测可以为无疫情国家提供早期预警, 反映疫情中国家的病毒扩散状况, 并为取得阶段

性疫情管控成果的国家及时反馈病毒是否卷土重来。对于后疫情阶段的国家和地区，在封控措施后亟需有序复工复产复学，精准控制疫情起伏风险至关重要，尤其是管控无症状感染者造成的病毒反复传播风险。从技术角度出发，综合污水处理厂、污水管网和社区排水管道的病毒监测，可以追溯感染者的潜在区域，及时防止病毒进一步扩散。

当然，将污水病毒监测作为一种公共卫生监测手段，仍需进一步开展患者感染情况与粪便排泄物中病毒水平相关性的临床研究，建立污水中病毒基因拷贝数与感染患者数量之间的量化关系。

4. 结论

为更加有效评估病毒风险和确保水环境生物安全，我们提出如下全球行动路线图（图1）：

（1）构建病毒库：参照全球介水病原体项目（GWPP[†]），亟需填补介水病毒来源、归趋和传播等方面空白；应用先进宏病毒组学技术，刻画介水病毒的时空分

布，构建国家和国际介水病毒库。

（2）筛选指示病毒：水环境生物安全的常规监测亟需筛选指示病毒，在构建病毒库的基础上，从污水病毒中选择适当病毒作为病原病毒的指示病毒，并从源水中选择天然病毒作为水处理性能的指示病毒。

（3）统一检测方法：在全球范围内统一并标准化水中病毒的取样和分析方法，包括样品浓缩、核酸提取、反转录、qPCR、测序和生物信息学等在内的取样、预处理、监测和数据处理等步骤。

（4）评估病毒风险：评估风险是病毒管理的基础。尽管QMRA方法已经很成熟，但荷兰仍是唯一将QMRA纳入饮用水法规的国家，建议将QMRA引进和推广至更多国家和地区，完善介水病原微生物的风险评估体系。

（5）设定监测框架：针对疫情发展的不同阶段，构建污水病毒监测行动框架。首先，明确病毒在污水中是否检出及感染风险；其次，判断病毒传播范围，并溯源感染者区域；最后，向政府提供及时的管控建议。此外，污水检测框架还可用于微生物抗性、药品使用、违禁药物等的管控与溯源。

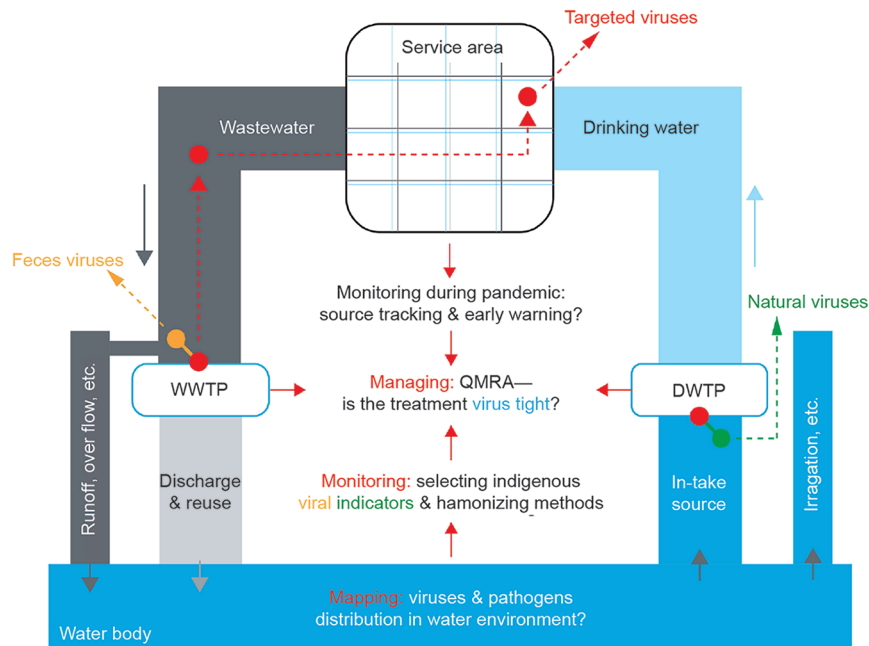


图1. 介水病毒传播路径，以及水环境病毒的识别、监测和管理亟需解决的关键问题。WWTP：废水处理厂；DWTP：饮用水处理厂。

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[†]<https://www.waterpathogen.org>.

Compliance with ethics guidelines

Gang Liu, Jiuhui Qu, Joan Rose, and Gertjan Medema declare that they have no conflict of interest or finan-

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