



Title	N-linked glycan in tick-borne encephalitis virus envelope protein affects viral secretion in mammalian cells, but not in tick cells
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1 **N-linked glycan in tick-borne encephalitis virus envelope protein affects viral**
2 **secretion in mammalian cells, but not in tick cells**

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Abbreviations

24 Baby hamster kidney: BHK

25 brefeldin A: BFA

26 fetal bovine serum: FBS

27 minimal essential medium: MEM

28 monoclonal antibody: MAb

29 parent: pt

30 Tick-borne encephalitis: TBE

31 Tick-borne encephalitis virus: TBEV

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33

34

Summary

35

36 Tick-borne encephalitis virus (TBEV) is a zoonotic disease agent that causes severe encephalitis in
37 humans. The envelope protein E of TBEV has one N-linked glycosylation consensus sequence, but
38 little is known about the biological function of the N-linked glycan. In this study, the function of
39 protein E glycosylation was investigated using recombinant TBEV with or without the protein E
40 N-linked glycan. Virion infectivity was not affected after removing the N-linked glycans using
41 N-glycosidase F. In mammalian cells, loss of glycosylation affected the conformation of protein E
42 during secretion, reducing the infectivity of secreted virions. Mice subcutaneously infected with
43 TBEV lacking protein E glycosylation showed no signs of disease, and viral multiplication in
44 peripheral organs was reduced relative to that with the parental virus. In contrast, loss of
45 glycosylation did not affect the secretory process of infectious virions in tick cells. Furthermore,
46 inhibition of transport to the Golgi apparatus affected TBEV secretion in mammalian cells, but not in
47 tick cells, indicating that TBEV was secreted through an unidentified pathway after synthesis in
48 endoplasmic reticulum in tick cells. These results increase our understanding of the molecular
49 mechanisms of TBEV maturation.

50

51

Introduction

Tick-borne encephalitis virus (TBEV), a member of the genus Flavivirus within the family Flaviviridae, causes tick-borne encephalitis (TBE) in humans. TBE is endemic in Europe, Russia, and Far-East Asia, including Japan (Blaskovic *et al.*, 1967; Korenberg & Kovalevskii, 1999; Suss, 1999). TBEV can be divided into three subtypes: the Far-Eastern subtype (known as Russian spring-summer encephalitis virus), the European subtype, and the Siberian subtype (Ecker *et al.*, 1999; Gritsun *et al.*, 1993; Gritsun *et al.*, 1997; Wallner *et al.*, 1995). TBE remains a significant public health problem in these endemic regions.

Flavivirus virions are spherical with diameters of 40-50 nm and contain a nucleocapsid and envelope. The envelope has two viral proteins: the major envelope protein E and the small membrane protein prM/M. Both proteins are synthesized as part of a polyprotein precursor, which is co- and post-translationally cleaved into the individual proteins (Lindenbach *et al.*, 2007). Protein E has been well characterized and mediates viral entry via receptor-mediated endocytosis; in addition, it contains major antigenic epitopes that generate protective immune responses (Heinz & Allison, 2003). The X-ray crystallographic structure of TBEV protein E ectodomain revealed that protein E forms head-to-tail homodimers that lie parallel to the viral envelope (Rey *et al.*, 1995). In low-pH conditions, as in endocytic vesicles, the homodimers dissociate, followed by the irreversible formation of homotrimers (Allison *et al.*, 1995; Stiasny *et al.*, 2001; Stiasny *et al.*, 2002).

In the majority of TBEV strains, as in other flaviviruses, protein E contains a conserved N-linked glycosylation site. It has been reported that the deglycosylation of TBEV by endoglycosidase F does not impair infectivity (Winkler *et al.*, 1987), but the inhibition of N-linked glycosylation reduces the secretion of subviral particles from cells expressing the viral proteins prM and E (Goto *et al.*, 2005; Renz *et al.*, 2003). However, as functional analyses of the N-linked glycan on protein E have been limited to inhibitor treatment or subviral particle systems, little is known regarding the effects of

77 glycosylation on the biological properties of infectious virions, including replication in the tick
78 vector and pathogenicity in mammals.

79 In this study, we used an infectious TBEV cDNA clone to generate infectious virus containing
80 protein E with or without the N-linked glycan and directly examined specific phenotypic changes.
81 Recombinant virus characteristics were examined in mammalian and tick cells as well as in a mouse
82 model. The results suggest that glycosylation is critical for virus activity in mammals, but not in tick
83 vectors.

84

85 Results

86

87 **Generation of glycosylation-deficient TBEV**

88 TBEV protein E has one N-linked glycosylation site at amino acids 154-156. To examine the
89 role of the N-linked glycan, recombinant TBEV expressing protein E that lacks the N-linked glycan,
90 designated Oshima-IC-ΔEg, was constructed using an infectious cDNA clone of Oshima 5-10 TBEV
91 strain. The asparagine at position 154 of protein E was mutated to glutamine to avoid recognition by
92 oligosaccharyltransferase (Fig. 1a).

93 To confirm the absence of protein E glycosylation, the nucleotide sequences of the recovered
94 Oshima-IC-ΔEg virus were examined. The introduced mutation was conserved even after 10
95 passages in BHK cells, and no complementary mutation was found in the coding sequence of any
96 structural protein.

97 BHK cells were infected with the Oshima-IC-parent (pt) or -ΔEg virus, and intracellular protein E
98 was immunoprecipitated with anti-E monoclonal antibody and analyzed on Western blots and lectin
99 blots. As shown in Fig. 1b, protein E was detected in immunoprecipitated eluates from cells infected
100 with either Oshima-IC-pt or -ΔEg, but the band for protein E from Oshima-IC-ΔEg migrated faster
101 than that of protein E from Oshima-IC- pt (left panel). Protein E from Oshima-IC-pt was detected by

102 concanavalin A, which binds specifically to high-mannose type N-linked glycans, whereas no band
103 from cells infected with Oshima-IC- Δ Eg was detected by concanavalin (Fig. 1b, right panel). These
104 data indicate that as expected, mutated protein E encoded by Oshima-IC- Δ Eg virus was not
105 glycosylated.

106

107 **Characteristics of glycosylation-deficient TBEV in mammalian cells**

108 To examine the effect of glycosylation of protein E on viral multiplication, BHK cells were
109 infected with Oshima-IC-pt or - Δ Eg at a multiplicity of infection of 0.01. Virus was harvested 12 to
110 72 h post-infection, and the yield was quantified using a plaque assay. As shown in Fig. 2a, a lower
111 titer of infectious virus was secreted from cells infected with Oshima-IC- Δ Eg compared with
112 Oshima-IC-pt. The plaque size in BHK cells was also smaller for Oshima-IC- Δ Eg than for
113 Oshima-IC-pt. These data indicate that glycosylation of protein E affects viral multiplication in BHK
114 cells.

115 To further characterize the role of glycosylated protein E, the secretion of viral particles was
116 analyzed. BHK cells were infected with Oshima-IC-pt or - Δ Eg at a multiplicity of infection of 0.01.
117 At 48 h post-infection, cell lysates and culture supernatants were prepared, and the levels of
118 intracellular and secreted protein E were quantified. With the ELISA using polyclonal anti-E
119 antibodies, the levels of intracellular and secreted protein E were similar between cells infected with
120 Oshima-IC-pt and with Oshima-IC- Δ Eg (Fig. 3a). However, based on the ELISA using monoclonal
121 antibodies specific for protein E conformational epitopes, low levels of protein E were detected in
122 the culture supernatant of cells infected with Oshima-IC- Δ Eg compared with Oshima-IC-pt, while
123 the levels of protein E in cell lysates were similar between the cells infected with Oshima-IC-pt and
124 with Oshima-IC- Δ Eg (Fig. 3b). These data show that the lack of protein E glycosylation did not
125 affect the production or secretion of protein E, but did affect the conformation of secreted protein E.

126 Next, we examined whether the N-linked glycan on protein E of secreted TBEV was involved in

127 viral entry. A total of 100 pfu of Oshima-IC-pt or -ΔEg was treated with serially diluted
128 N-glycosidase F, which cleaves all types of asparagine-bound glycans, and the infectivity of the
129 resultant virus was analyzed using a plaque assay (Fig. 4). There was no reduction of the virus titer
130 of Oshima-IC-pt or -ΔEg even after treatment with 1 U ml⁻¹ of N-glycosidase F, indicating that the
131 cleavage of N-linked glycans on secreted TBEV does not directly affect viral entry processes such as
132 receptor binding and membrane fusion.

133 These results demonstrate that the conformational structure of protein E during secretion was
134 affected by the lack of N-linked glycosylation and this reduced virion infectivity, although the
135 N-linked glycan was not required for viral entry.

136

137 Characteristics of glycosylation-deficient TBEV in tick cells

138 The effect of the absence of protein E glycosylation was examined in the tick cell line ISE6.
139 As was observed with BHK cells, protein E of Oshima-IC pt was glycosylated, and protein E of
140 Oshima-IC-ΔEg was not (Fig. 5a). In contrast to BHK cells, ISE6 cells infected with Oshima-IC-pt
141 and with -ΔEg showed no difference in viral multiplication (Fig. 5b) or the amount of secreted
142 protein E detected using anti-E monoclonal antibodies recognizing protein E conformational epitopes
143 (Fig. 5c). To investigate whether the different incubation temperature between mammalian cells
144 (37°C) and tick cells (34°C) affected the stability of the unglycosylated E protein, the virus
145 multiplication was examined in BHK cells at 34°C. As was observed with the incubation at 37°C
146 (Fig. 2a), a lower titer of infectious virus was secreted from cells infected with Oshima-IC-ΔEg
147 compared with Oshima-IC-pt in BHK cells at 34°C (supplementary figure 1). These results indicate
148 that the glycosylation of protein E was not important for viral multiplication or secretion in tick cells.
149 Flaviviruses are generally thought to bud into the ER of virus-infected cells, followed by transport in
150 vesicles to the Golgi complex and release by exocytosis via the *trans*-Golgi network (Lindenbach *et*
151 *al.*, 2007; Mackenzie & Westaway, 2001). To analyze the differences in the roles of TBEV

152 glycosylation in maturation and secretory processes between BHK and ISE6 cells, the effects of
153 inhibitors of cellular secretory mechanisms were investigated in virus-infected cells. Tunicamycin
154 was used to inhibit the glycosylation of newly synthesized glycoproteins (Elbein, 1987).
155 Tunicamycin treatment of BHK cells infected with Oshima-IC-pt or -ΔEg reduced the secreted virus
156 titer, and the reduction was the same for Oshima-IC-pt and -ΔEg (Fig. 6a). In ISE6 cells infected
157 with Oshima-IC-pt or -ΔEg, tunicamycin treatment did not reduce the virus titer of Oshima-IC-pt or
158 ΔEg (Fig. 6b). This suggests that the glycosylation of newly synthesized glycoproteins, including
159 protein E and other glycoproteins such as protein prM or NS1, is important for the maturation and
160 secretion of TBEV in mammalian BHK cells, but not in tick ISE6 cells. The secretion of infectious
161 virions was further analyzed using brefeldin A (BFA), which interferes with anterograde transport
162 from the endoplasmic reticulum to the Golgi apparatus (Fujiwara *et al.*, 1988). BFA treatment of
163 infected BHK cells significantly reduced the titers of secreted Oshima-IC-pt and -ΔEg, whereas BFA
164 treatment of infected ISE6 cells did not reduce the virus titers (Fig. 6a and b). The glycosylation of
165 the E proteins of Oshima-IC-pt was examined in ISE6 cells treated with tunicamycin or BFA (Fig.
166 6c). Tunicamycin treatment inhibited the glycosylation of the E proteins while The E proteins were
167 still glycosylated after BFA treatment. Thus, the E proteins were naturally glycosylated in ER after
168 synthesis in ISE6 cells, but it was not necessary for virus secretion. Furthermore, the secretion of
169 TBEV in tick ISE6 cells was independent of the traditional secretory pathway through the Golgi
170 apparatus.

171

172 **The effect of the glycosylation on the virulence in mice**

173 The effect of glycosylation on pathogenicity was examined in a mouse model. Five-week-old
174 female C57BL/6J mice were infected subcutaneously with Oshima-IC-pt or -ΔEg at 10^5 pfu/mouse
175 and monitored for 28 days (Fig. 7). All mice infected with Oshima-IC-pt showed general signs of
176 illness such as hunched posture, ruffled fur, and general malaise; one mouse died. However, no mice

177 infected with Oshima-IC-ΔEg showed signs of illness or died.

178 To examine the correlation between disease development and viral replication in organs, viral
179 loads in the blood, spleen, and brain were compared between mice inoculated with 10^5 pfu of
180 Oshima-IC-pt and 10^5 pfu of Oshima-IC-ΔEg (Fig. 8). The levels of transient viremia and
181 multiplication in the spleen were lower in mice infected with Oshima-IC-ΔEg than in those infected
182 with Oshima-IC-pt. In the brain, the virus was detected from 6 days post-infection in mice infected
183 with Oshima-IC-pt, while a low titer of virus was detected in only one mouse at 12 days
184 post-infection with Oshima-IC-ΔEg. These data indicate that the Oshima-IC-ΔEg virus cannot
185 multiply efficiently in organs, leading to a loss of virulence in mice.

186 Similar high titers of neutralizing antibodies (>320) were observed in mice infected with
187 Oshima-IC-pt or with Oshima-IC-ΔEg at 12 days post-infection (data not shown), suggesting that
188 lack of the N-linked glycan on protein E did not affect the induction of neutralizing antibodies.

190 Discussion

191
192 N-linked glycans on viral glycoproteins play important roles in viral multiplication,
193 immunogenicity, and pathogenicity (Vigerust & Shepherd, 2007). In this study, we used an infectious
194 TBEV cDNA clone to generate infectious virus with or without protein E N-linked glycan and
195 investigated specific phenotypic changes in mammalian and tick cells.

196 The defect in protein E glycosylation reduced the secretion of infectious virions in mammalian
197 cells. In studies of West Nile virus and dengue virus, a defect in glycosylation caused similar
198 reductions in the release of infectious virions (Hanna *et al.*, 2005; Lee *et al.*, 2010; Li *et al.*, 2006).
199 Although the total level of secreted protein E remained constant, the conformational structure of
200 protein E was affected by the lack of glycosylation, resulting in reduced virion infectivity. However,
201 cleavage of the N-linked glycan after secretion did not affect virion infectivity in mammalian cells.

202 These results indicate that glycosylation is important in retaining the conformational structure of
203 protein E, which is necessary for virion infectivity during the intracellular secretory process in
204 mammalian cells. In the endoplasmic reticulum, two homologous resident lectins (calnexin and
205 calreticulin) bind N-linked core glycans and promote proper folding of glycoproteins (Ellgaard *et al.*,
206 1999). It is known that the loss of glycosylation alters West Nile virus virion stability at mildly acidic
207 pHs (Beasley *et al.*, 2005). Defects in protein E glycosylation may affect the proper folding and/or
208 stability of virions, reducing the infectivity of TBEV in mammalian cells.

209 In the mouse model, protein E glycosylation affected TBEV pathogenicity. TBEV without
210 protein E glycosylation did not multiply efficiently in peripheral organs, and eventually the virus
211 could not enter the brain or cause disease in mice. Similarly, reduced neuroinvasiveness due to a
212 defect in glycosylation was reported in a West Nile virus study (Beasley *et al.*, 2005; Shirato *et al.*,
213 2004). The mechanism of neuroinvasiveness of TBEV is unclear, but it has been reported that
214 efficient viral multiplication in peripheral organs is required for TBEV entry into the brain (Mandl,
215 2005). Reduced infectivity of secreted virions owing to a defect in the glycosylation of protein E, as
216 observed in cultured cells, is thought to reduce viral multiplication in peripheral organs and to reduce
217 neuroinvasiveness.

218 TBEV with non-glycosylated protein E could efficiently induce neutralizing antibodies against
219 TBEV without any clinical symptoms. Also, no revertant or compensatory mutation occurred during
220 passaging. These data suggest that deletion of the protein E glycosylation site could attenuate TBEV.

221 The lack of protein E glycosylation did not affect the TBEV secretory process in tick cells, unlike
222 in mammalian cells. Furthermore, the inhibition of transport from the endoplasmic reticulum to the
223 Golgi apparatus did not affect TBEV multiplication in tick cells. In a previous report, nascent TBEV
224 particles were observed inside vacuoles, and free nucleocapsids were seen in the cytosol or attached
225 to the membrane of virus particle-containing vacuoles in tick cells, whereas viral particles appeared
226 in the endoplasmic reticulum, Golgi apparatus, and secretory pathway in mammalian cells (Senigl *et*

227 *al.*, 2006). Taken together, our data suggest that TBEV secretion in tick cells occurs through an
228 unidentified mechanism different from the traditional secretory pathway through the Golgi apparatus.

229 Glycosylation-independent virus secretion was observed only in TBEV-infected tick cells.
230 However, studies of mosquito-borne flavivirus have shown that glycosylation of protein E is
231 important in both mammalian and mosquito cells (Hanna *et al.*, 2005; Lee *et al.*, 2010). The
232 difference in virus maturation between arthropod vectors may be associated with the different
233 ecology of tick-borne and mosquito-borne flaviviruses in their arthropod vectors. Unlike
234 mosquito-borne flaviviruses, tick-borne flaviviruses establish and maintain a persistent infection
235 across the various life-stages of the tick vector, through transstadial and transovarial transmission in
236 nature (Nuttall & Labuda, 2003). In persistent tick infections, viruses are thought to multiply
237 regardless of the glycosylation of the E proteins. It is possible that because TBEV with glycosylated
238 protein E has more effective transmission from tick vectors to mammals, it had a selective advantage
239 during viral evolution.

240 In summary, we generated recombinant TBEV with or without glycosylated protein E. Deletion
241 of the glycosylation site affected the maturation of TBEV infectious virions in mammalian cells and
242 reduced TBEV virulence in mice. Our results suggest that TBEV is secreted in a
243 glycosylation-independent manner in tick cells. Overall, these results increase our understanding of
244 the molecular mechanism of TBEV maturation and can be applied to attenuate TBEV infection.

245

246

Methods

247

248 **Cells**

249 Baby hamster kidney (BHK) cells were grown at 37°C in Eagle's MEM supplemented with 8%
250 fetal bovine serum (FBS) and L-glutamine. The ISE6 cell line from *Ixodes scapularis* was grown at
251 34°C in L-15B medium with 10% FBS and 5% tryptose phosphate broth.

252

253 **Virus**

254 TBEV Oshima-IC was prepared from infectious cDNA clones of Oshima 5-10 strain (accession
255 No. AB062003) (Hayasaka *et al.*, 2004), isolated in Hokkaido, Japan in 1995 (Takashima *et al.*,
256 1997). Standard PCR mutagenesis techniques were used to construct the Oshima-IC-ΔEg virus, in
257 which nucleotides for the glycosylation site in protein E were mutated as shown in Fig. 1a.

258 RNA was transcribed from the Oshima-IC plasmid using a mMESSAGE mMACHINE SP6 kit
259 (Life Technology, Carlsbad, CA, USA) and was transfected into BHK cells using TransIT-mRNA
260 (Mirus Bio, Madison, WI, USA), as described previously (Yoshii *et al.*, 2011; Yoshii *et al.*, 2004).

261

262 **Reagents**

263 N-glycosidase F (Roche, Basel, Switzerland) was used to cleave protein E N-linked glycan in
264 infectious virions. A total of 100 TBEV plaque forming units (pfu) were treated with serially diluted
265 N-glycosidase F (10 µU ml⁻¹ to 1 U ml⁻¹) for 1 h at 37°C, and the virus was titrated.

266 The effects of tunicamycin (Sigma-Aldrich, St. Louis, MO, USA), and brefeldin A (Wako, Osaka,
267 Japan) on the secretion of viral particles were examined. At the indicated times post-infection,
268 virus-infected cells were treated with 2 µg ml⁻¹ of tunicamycin, or 2 µg ml⁻¹ of brefeldin A, and the
269 secreted virus was titrated after 12 h.

270

271 **Immunoprecipitation, SDS-PAGE, immunoblotting and lectin-blotting**

272 BHK cells were infected with Oshima-IC-parent (pt) or ΔEg. At 48 h post-infection, the cells
273 were lysed with 1% Triton X-100 in 10 mM TBS, incubated on ice for 20 min, and centrifuged
274 (16,000 × g, 20 min). The supernatant (excluding the nuclear fraction) was precleared on protein
275 G-Sepharose beads (Amersham Pharmacia Biotech) for 2 h at 4°C. The precleared lysates were
276 precipitated with protein G-Sepharose beads with mouse monoclonal anti-E antibody 1H4 (Komoro

277 *et al.*, 2000) for 2 h at 4°C. Immune complexes were collected by centrifugation (10,000 × g, 10 s)
278 and washed four times with 1% Triton X-100 in 10 mM TBS. Protein samples were electrophoresed
279 through 12% (w/v) polyacrylamide-SDS gels. Protein bands were transferred onto PVDF membranes
280 and incubated with 1% (w/v) gelatin in 25 mM TBS containing 0.01% (v/v) Tween 20. After a wash
281 with 25 mM TBS containing 0.01% (v/v) Tween 20, the membranes were reacted with rabbit
282 polyclonal anti-E antibodies (Yoshii *et al.*, 2004) or biotinylated lectin concanavalin A (J-Oil Mills,
283 Tokyo, Japan), followed by alkaline phosphatase-conjugated secondary antibody or streptavidin
284 (Jackson ImmunoReserach, West Grove, PA, USA), respectively. Protein bands were visualized
285 using an alkaline phosphatase detection kit (Merck, Darmstadt, Germany) according to the
286 manufacturer's protocol.

287

288 **ELISA**

289 The TBEV protein E was detected by sandwich-ELISA using a set of anti-E polyclonal
290 antibodies or monoclonal antibodies recognizing conformational epitopes of protein E. Briefly, to
291 prepare samples, virus-infected cells were lysed with 1% (v/v) Triton X-100 in 10 mM TBS, and the
292 supernatants were treated with 1% Triton X-100.

293 For ELISA using a set of anti-E polyclonal antibodies, Triton X-100-solubilized samples were
294 added to 96-well microtiter plates coated with rabbit polyclonal anti-E antibodies. After blocking
295 with 3% (w/v) bovine serum albumin, protein E was detected by incubation with TBEV-infected
296 mouse serum and horseradish peroxidase-conjugated anti-mouse IgG antibody (Jackson
297 ImmunoResearch).

298 For ELISA using monoclonal antibodies recognizing conformational epitopes of protein E,
299 samples were added to wells coated with mouse monoclonal anti-E antibody 1H4, previously
300 blocked with 3% (w/v) bovine serum albumin. Protein E was detected by incubation with
301 biotinylated monoclonal antibody (MAb) 4H8 and peroxidase-conjugated streptavidin (Sigma).

302 Peroxidase activity was detected by adding *o*-phenylenediamine dihydrochloride (Sigma) in the
303 presence of 0.03% (v/v) H₂O₂, and the absorbance was measured at 450 nm.

304

305

306 ***Virulence in mouse***

307 Viruses were inoculated subcutaneously into 5-week-old female C57BL/6J mice (Charles River
308 Laboratories International, Inc., Wilmington, MA, USA). Morbidity was defined as >10% weight
309 loss. The mice were monitored for 28 days post-infection determine the survival curve and mortality
310 rate. To analyze the virus distribution in tissues, the serum, brains, and spleens were collected from
311 mice 3, 6, 9, and 12 days post-infection. The organs were weighed individually, homogenized, and
312 prepared as 10% suspensions in PBS (w/v) containing 10% FBS. The suspensions were clarified by
313 centrifugation (4,000 rpm for 5 min, 4°C), and the supernatants were titrated using plaque assays in
314 BHK cells.

315

316 ***Titration and neutralization test***

317 For titration, cell monolayers prepared in 12-well plates were incubated with serial dilutions of
318 the virus for 1 h, overlaid with minimal medium containing 2% FBS and 1.5% carboxymethyl
319 cellulose, and incubated for 5 days. After incubation, the cells were fixed and stained with 0.25%
320 crystal violet in 10% buffered formalin. Plaques were counted and expressed as pfu ml⁻¹. For the
321 neutralization test, serum samples that induced a 50% reduction in Oshima-IC-pt plaque formation
322 were examined.

323

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325

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330

331

Author Disclosure Statement

332

333 No competing financial interests exist in this paper.

334

335

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336

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425 reduction of virus particle secretion. *The Journal of general virology* **85**, 3049-3058.
- 426

427

428 **Figure legends**

429 **Fig.1. Construction of recombinant TBEV containing protein E with or without its N-linked**
430 **glycan.**

431 (a) Schematic of recombinant TBEV. The symbol Y shows the predicted glycans on TBEV envelope
432 proteins. The amino acid sequence of the protein E glycosylation site is expanded at the bottom of
433 the figure for Oshima-IC-pt. In Oshima-IC-ΔEg, the glycosylation site of protein E contains a
434 mutation (bold).

435 (B) Confirmation of protein E glycosylation in recombinant viruses. BHK cells were infected with
436 Oshima-IC-pt (pt) or Oshima-IC-ΔEg (ΔEg). At 48 h post-infection, intracellular protein E was
437 immunoprecipitated using anti-E antibodies. Precipitated protein E was detected using anti-E
438 antibodies (left panel) or concanavalin A (right panel).

439

440 **Fig. 2. Effect of protein E glycosylation on viral replication in BHK cells.**

441 (a) BHK cells were infected with Oshima-IC-pt or ΔEg at a multiplicity of infection of 0.01. At each
442 time point, medium was harvested, and virus titers were measured using plaque assays in BHK cells.
443 (b) Plaques of Oshima-IC-pt and ΔEg in BHK cells at 4 days post-infection.

444

445 **Fig. 3. Effect of protein E glycosylation on synthesis and secretion of protein E in BHK cells.**

446 BHK cells were infected with Oshima-IC-pt (pt) or Oshima-IC-ΔEg (ΔEg) at a multiplicity of
447 infection of 0.01. At 48 h post-infection, cell lysates and culture supernatants were harvested. Levels
448 of intracellular and secreted protein E were measured by ELISA using anti-E polyclonal (a) or
449 monoclonal antibodies recognizing conformational epitopes of protein E (b). The percentage of
450 protein E was calculated from the calibration curve for the amount of pt in each experiment.

451

452 **Fig. 4. Infectivity of TBEV after cleavage of the N-linked glycan on the virion.**

453 A total of 100 pfu of Oshima-IC-pt (pt) or Oshima-IC-ΔEg (ΔEg) was treated with serially diluted
454 N-glycosidase F, and the virus titers were determined using plaque assays in BHK cells. The pfu of
455 mock-treated virus was set at 100%.

456

457 **Fig. 5. Effect of protein E glycosylation on viral replication in ISE6 cells.**

458 ISE6 cells were infected with Oshima-IC-pt or Oshima-IC-ΔEg at a multiplicity of infection of 0.01.
459 (a) Intracellular protein E was immunoprecipitated using anti-E antibodies. Precipitated protein E
460 was detected using anti-E antibodies (upper panel) or concanavalin A (lower panel). (b) At each time
461 point, the medium was harvested, and virus titers were determined using plaque assays in BHK cells.
462 (c) At 48 h post-infection, cell lysates and culture supernatants were harvested. The levels of
463 intracellular and secreted protein E were measured by ELISA using an anti-E monoclonal antibody
464 recognizing conformational epitopes of protein E. The percentage of protein E was calculated from
465 the calibration curve for the amount of pt in each experiment.

466

467 **Fig. 6. The effect of inhibitors on the secretion of infectious virus.**

468 BHK (a) and ISE6 (b) cells were infected with Oshima-IC-pt or Oshima-IC-ΔEg at a multiplicity of
469 infection of 0.01. At 24 h post-infection for BHK and 72 h for ISE6 cells, the medium was replaced
470 with fresh medium containing 2 µg ml⁻¹ of tunicamycin (Tuni), 2 µg ml⁻¹ of brefeldin A (BFA), or
471 DMSO (Mock). After 12 h, the medium was harvested, and virus titers were determined using plaque
472 assays in BHK cells. (c) After the treatment of tunicamycin (Tuni), brefeldin A (BFA) or DMSO
473 (Mock), Intracellular protein E in ISE6 cells infected with Oshima-IC-pt was immunoprecipitated
474 using anti-E antibodies. Precipitated protein E was detected using anti-E antibodies (left panel) or
475 concanavalin A (right panel). NC: uninfected negative control cell.

476

477 **Fig. 7. Survival rate (a), morbidity (b), and weight change (c) following infection with TBEV.**

478 B6 mice were subcutaneously infected with 10^5 pfu of Oshima-IC-pt (closed circles) or
479 Oshima-IC- Δ Eg (open squares) and monitored for 28 days. Mouse morbidity was estimated based on
480 >10% weight loss. The average daily weight change was calculated based on the ratio of the daily
481 weight to the weight at day 0. Error bars represent standard deviations.

482

483 **Fig. 8. Virus replication in organs.**

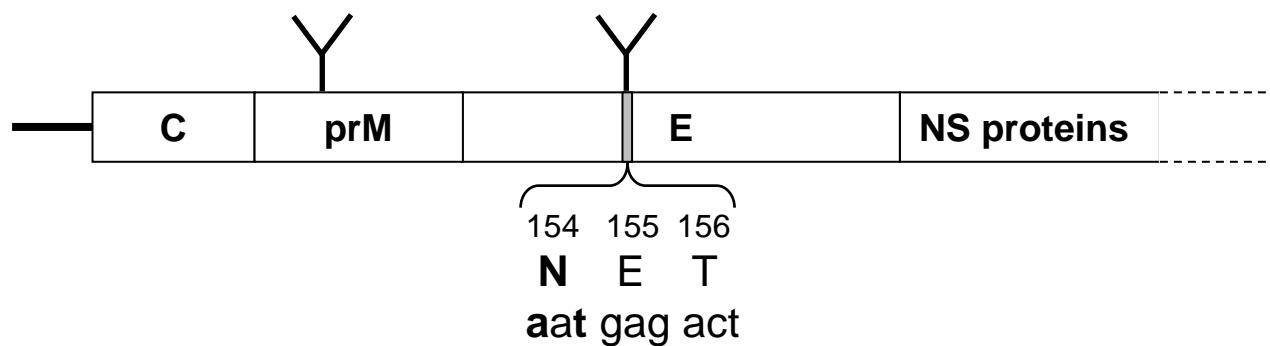
484 Mice were subcutaneously infected with 10^5 pfu of Oshima-IC-pt (closed circles) or Oshima-IC- Δ Eg
485 (open squares). At the indicated days after infection, virus titers in blood (a), spleen (b), and brain (c)
486 were determined using plaque assays. Error bars represent standard deviations (n = 3).

487

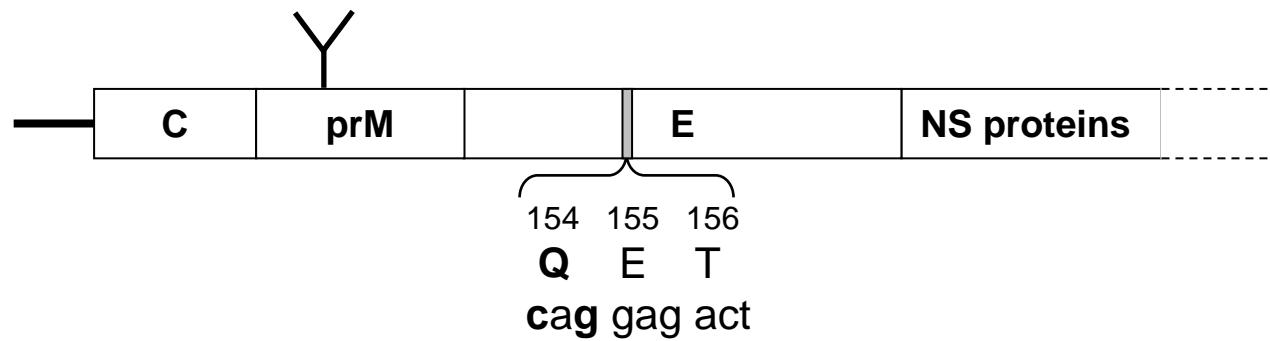
Figure 1

a

TBEV Oshima-IC-pt

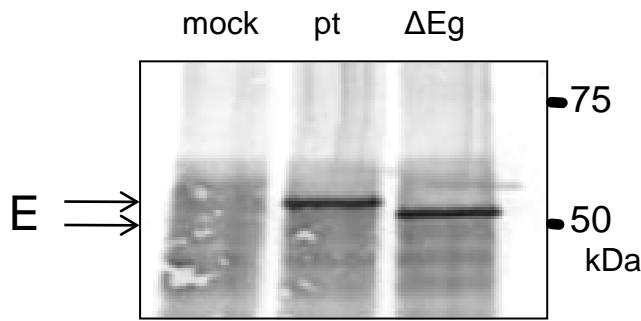


TBEV Oshima-IC-ΔEg



b

Anti-E antibodies



concanavalin A

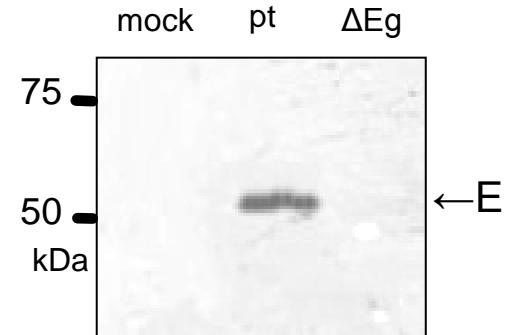
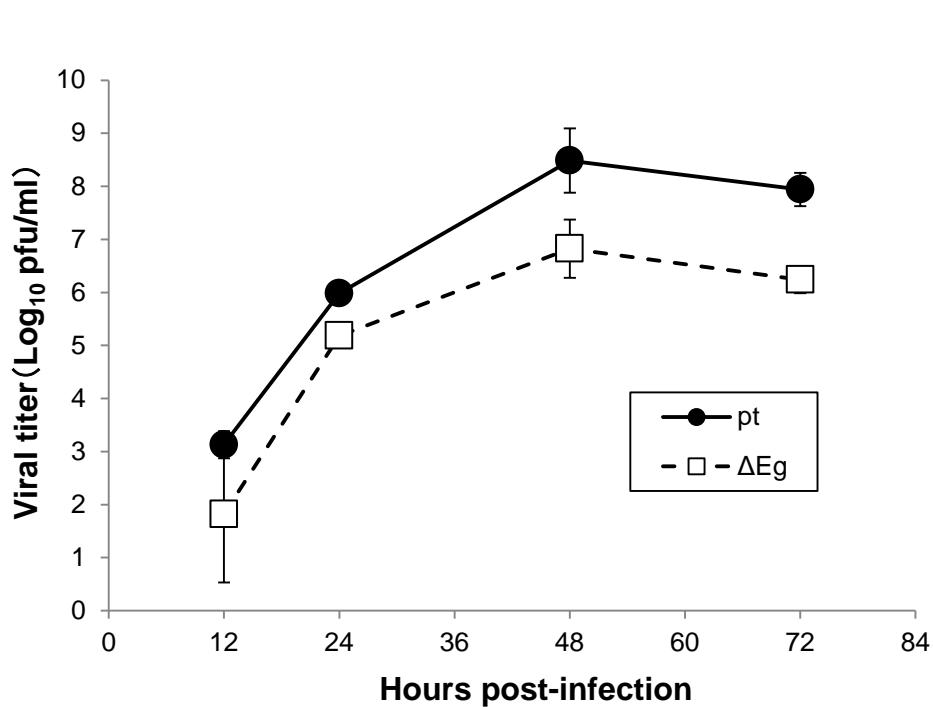


Fig.1. Construction of recombinant TBEV containing protein E with or without its N-linked glycan.

a. Schematic of recombinant TBEV. The symbol Y shows the predicted glycans on TBEV envelope proteins. The amino acid sequence of the protein E glycosylation site is expanded at the bottom of the figure for Oshima-IC-pt. In Oshima-IC-ΔEg, the glycosylation site of protein E contains a mutation (bold). b. Confirmation of protein E glycosylation in recombinant viruses. BHK cells were infected with Oshima-IC-pt (pt) or Oshima-IC-ΔEg (ΔEg). At 48 h post-infection, intracellular protein E was immunoprecipitated using anti-E antibodies. Precipitated protein E was detected using anti-E antibodies (left panel) or concanavalin A (right panel).

Figure 2

a. growth curve



b. plaque

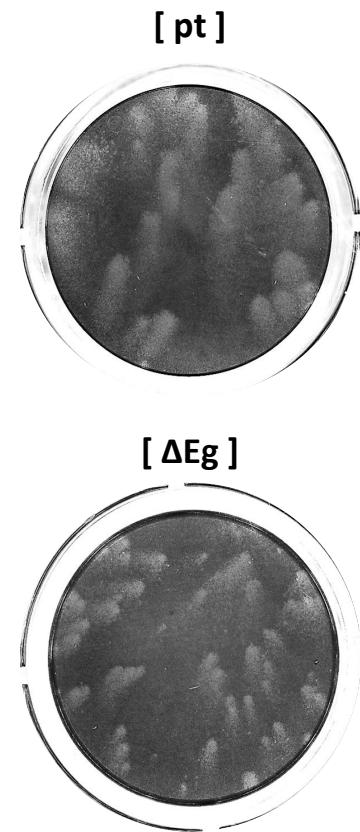
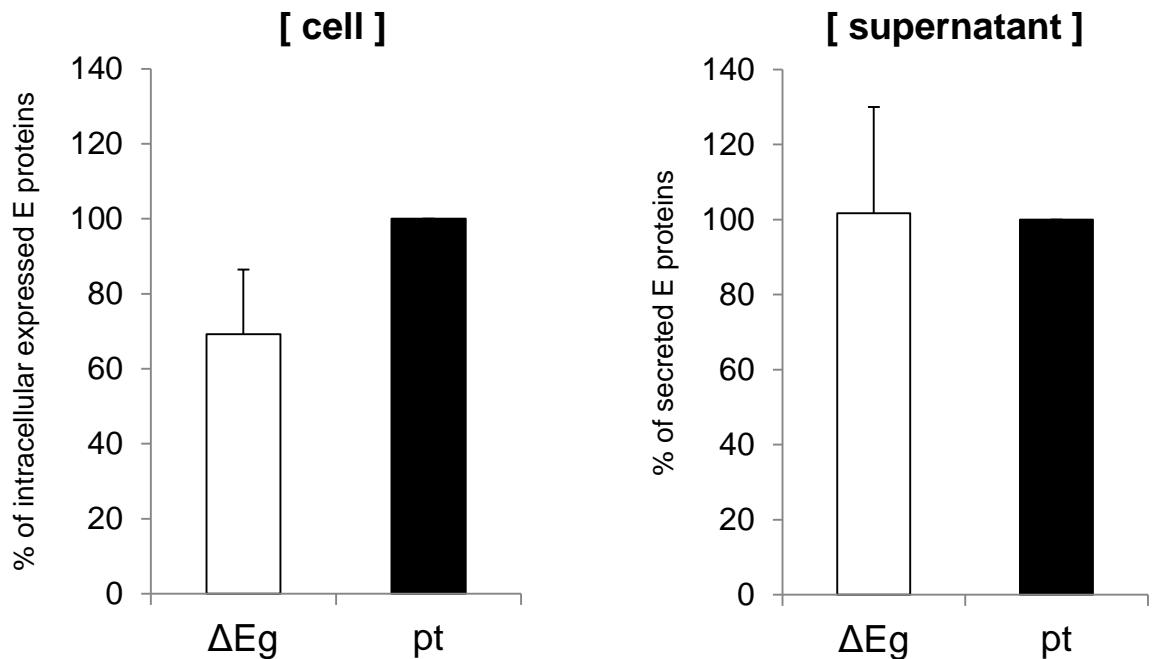


Fig. 2. Effect of protein E glycosylation on viral replication in BHK cells.

(a) BHK cells were infected with Oshima-IC-pt or ΔEg at a multiplicity of infection of 0.01. At each time point, medium was harvested, and virus titers were measured using plaque assays in BHK cells. (b) Plaques of Oshima-IC-pt and ΔEg in BHK cells at 4 days post-infection.

Figure 3

a. ELISA using anti-E pAb



b. ELISA using MAb recognizing conformational epitope of E

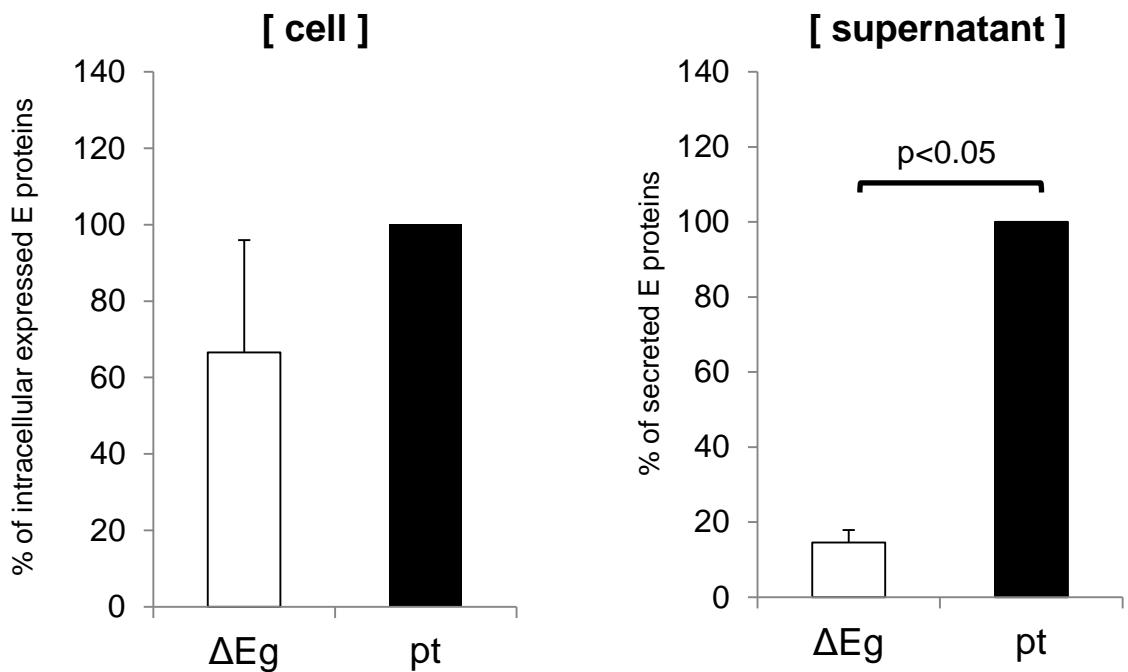


Fig. 3. Effect of protein E glycosylation on synthesis and secretion of protein E in BHK cells.

BHK cells were infected with Oshima-IC-pt (pt) or Oshima-IC-ΔEg (ΔEg) at a multiplicity of infection of 0.01. At 48 h post-infection, cell lysates and culture supernatants were harvested. Levels of intracellular and secreted protein E were measured by ELISA using anti-E polyclonal (a) or monoclonal antibodies recognizing conformational epitopes of protein E (b). The percentage of protein E was calculated from the calibration curve for the amount of pt in each experiment.

Figure 4

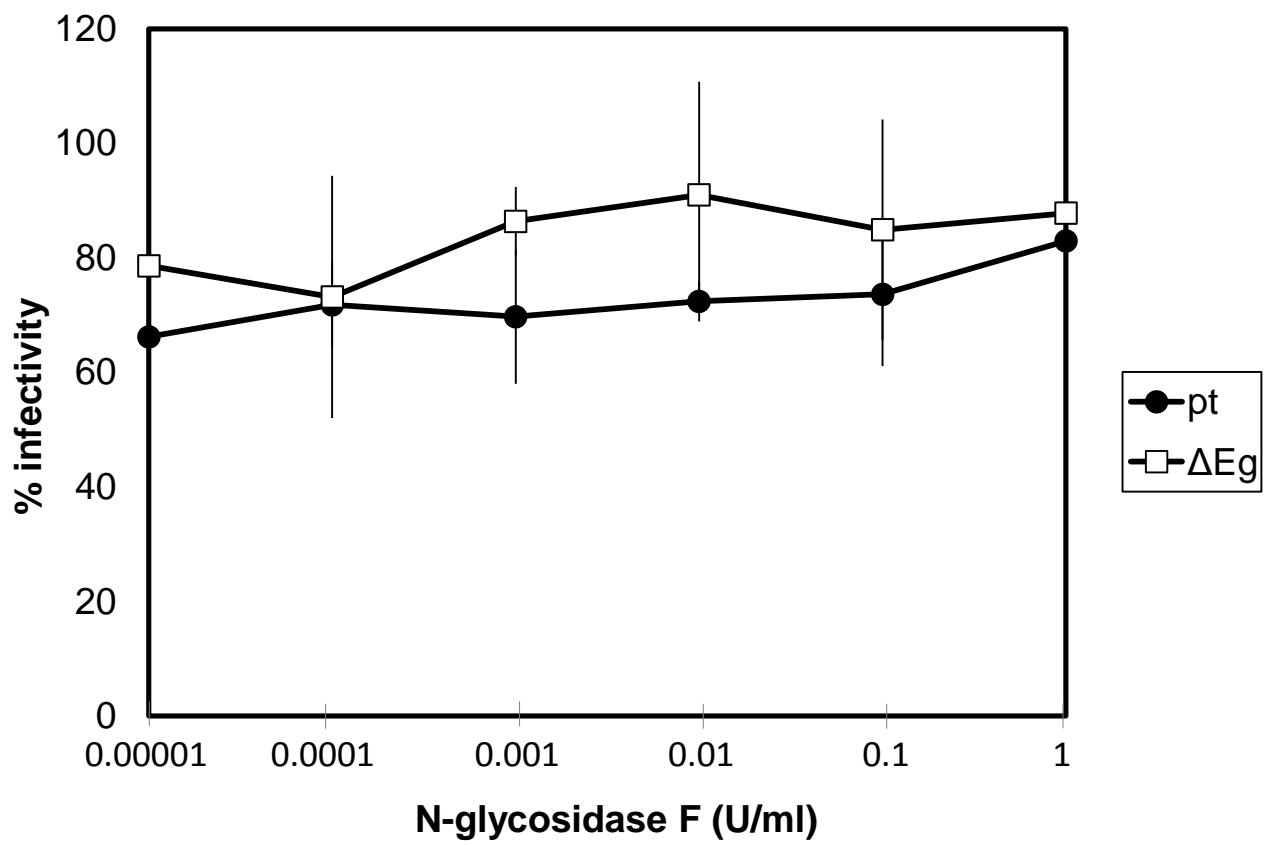


Fig. 4. Infectivity of TBEV after cleavage of the N-linked glycan on the virion.

A total of 100 pfu of Oshima-IC-pt (pt) or Oshima-IC- ΔE_g (ΔE_g) was treated with serially diluted N-glycosidase F, and the virus titers were determined using plaque assays in BHK cells. The pfu of mock-treated virus was set at 100%.

Figure 5

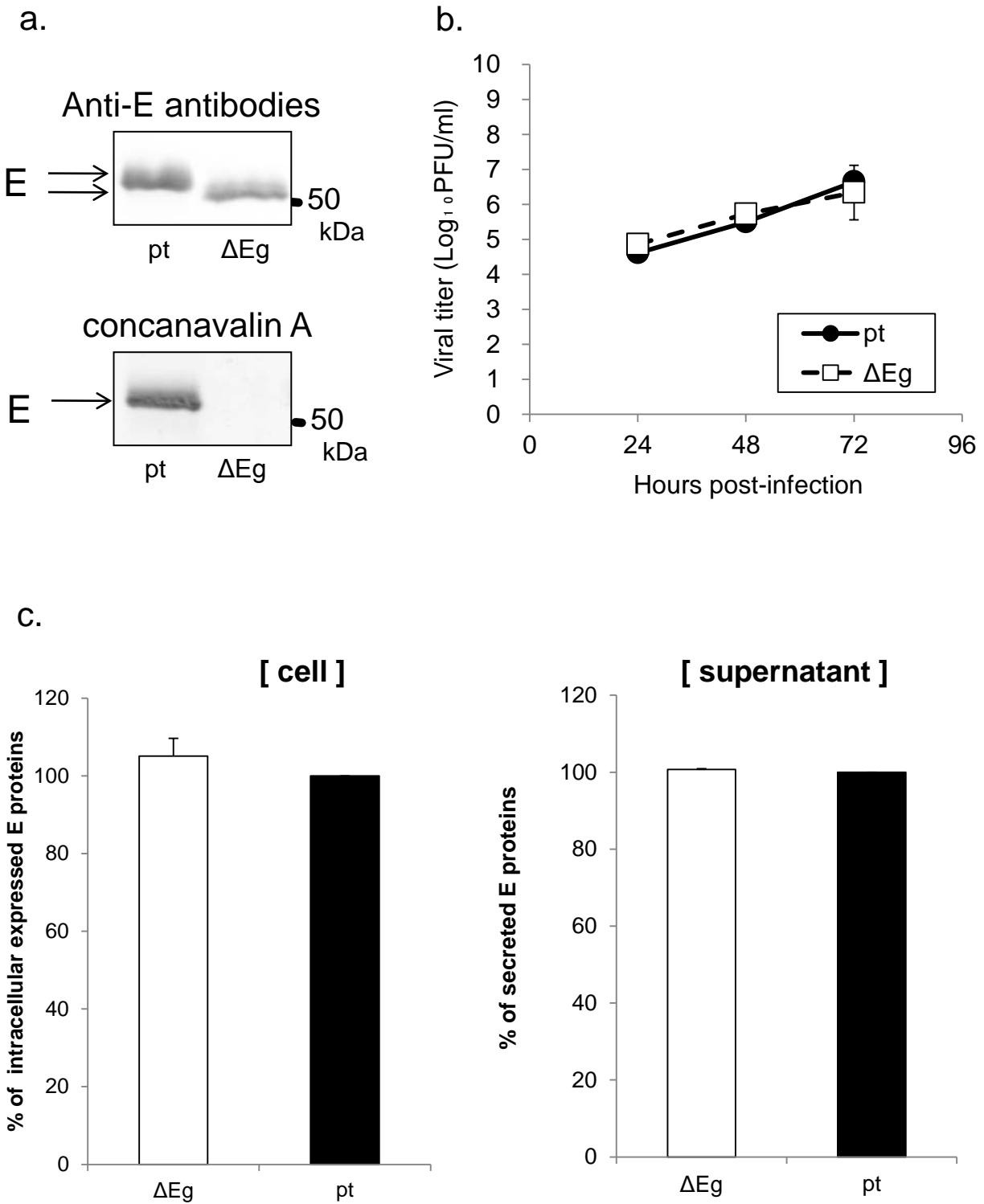


Fig. 5. Effect of protein E glycosylation on viral replication in ISE6 cells.

ISE6 cells were infected with Oshima-IC-pt or Oshima-IC- Δ Eg at a multiplicity of infection of 0.01. (a) Intracellular protein E was immunoprecipitated using anti-E antibodies. Precipitated protein E was detected using anti-E antibodies (upper panel) or concanavalin A (lower panel). (b) At each time point, the medium was harvested, and virus titers were determined using plaque assays in BHK cells. (c) At 48 h post-infection, cell lysates and culture supernatants were harvested. The levels of intracellular and secreted protein E were measured by ELISA using an anti-E monoclonal antibody recognizing conformational epitopes of protein E. The percentage of protein E was calculated from the calibration curve for the amount of pt in each experiment.

Figure 6

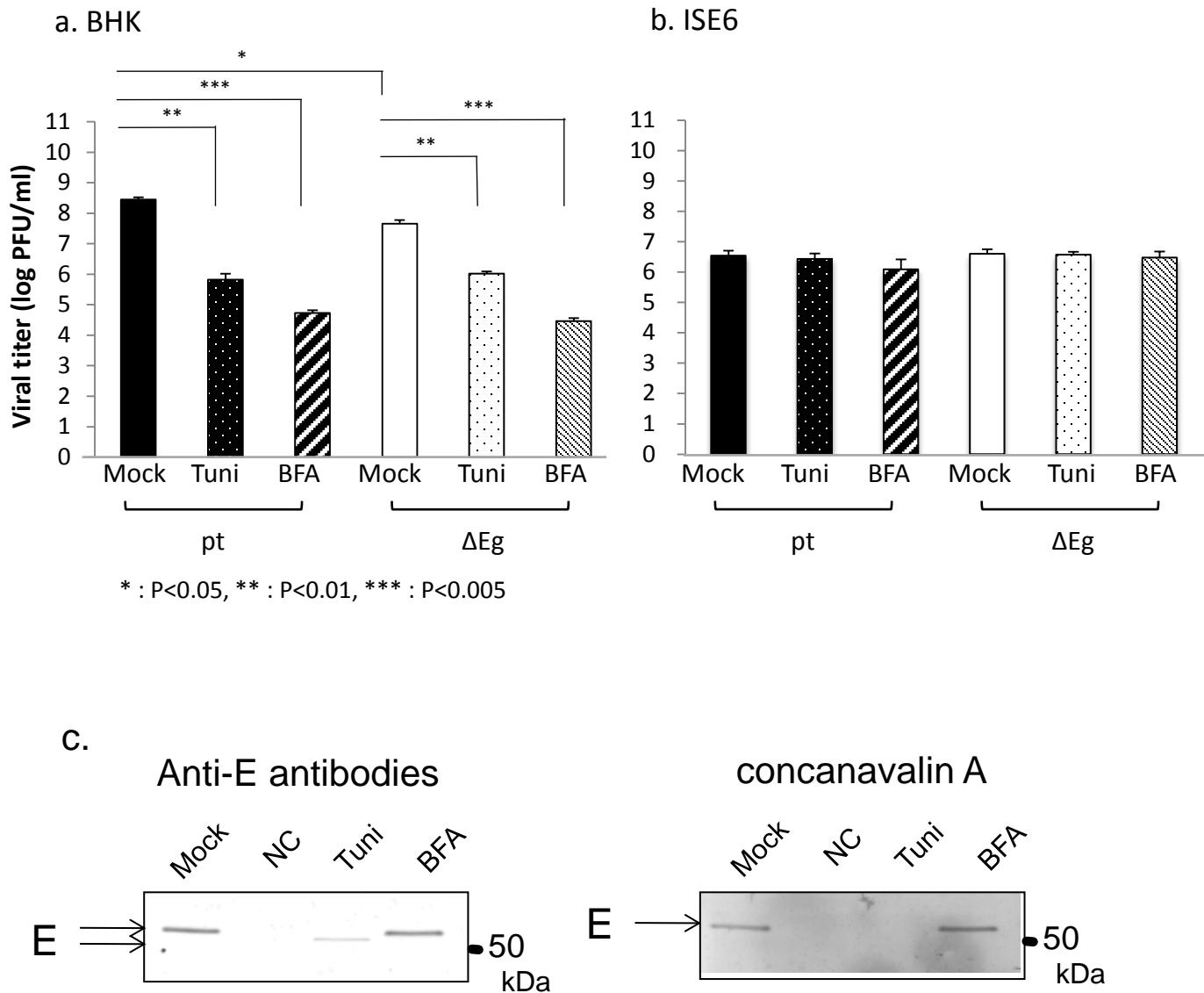
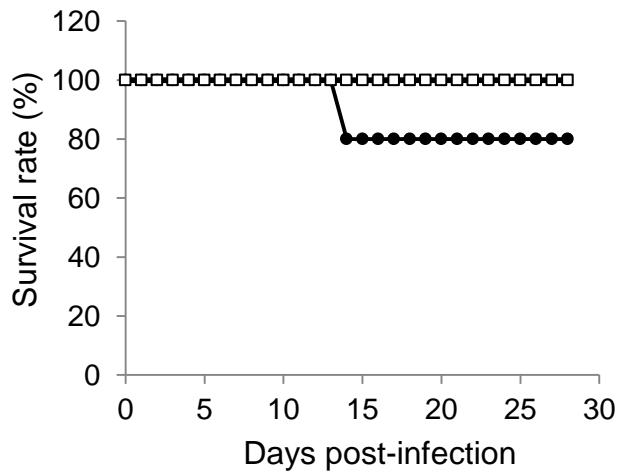


Fig. 6. The effect of inhibitors on the secretion of infectious virus.

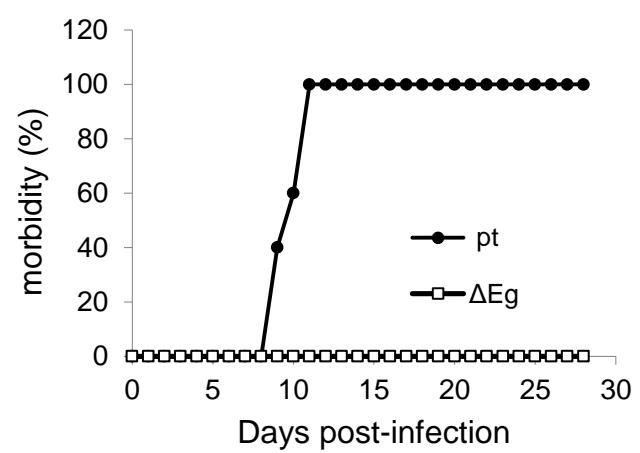
BHK (a) and ISE6 (b) cells were infected with Oshima-IC-pt or Oshima-IC-ΔEg at a multiplicity of infection of 0.01. At 24 h post-infection for BHK and 72 h for ISE6 cells, the medium was replaced with fresh medium containing 2 µg ml⁻¹ of tunicamycin (Tuni), 2 µg ml⁻¹ of brefeldin A (BFA), or DMSO (Mock). After 12 h, the medium was harvested, and virus titers were determined using plaque assays in BHK cells. (c) After the treatment of tunicamycin (Tuni), brefeldin A (BFA) or DMSO (Mock), Intracellular protein E in ISE6 cells infected with Oshima-IC-pt was immunoprecipitated using anti-E antibodies. Precipitated protein E was detected using anti-E antibodies (left panel) or concanavalin A (right panel). NC: uninfected negative control cell.

Figure 7

a. Survival rate



b. Morbidity



c. Weight change

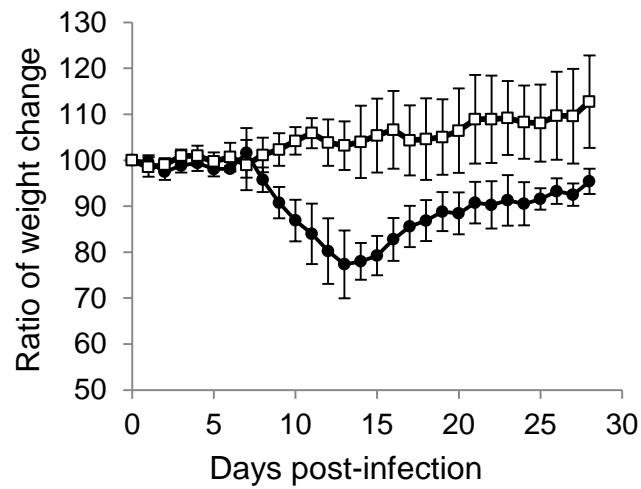


Fig. 7. Survival rate (a), morbidity (b), and weight change (c) following infection with TBEV.
B6 mice were subcutaneously infected with 10^5 pfu of Oshima-IC-pt (closed circles) or Oshima-IC- Δ Eg (open squares) and monitored for 28 days. Mouse morbidity was estimated based on $>10\%$ weight loss. The average daily weight change was calculated based on the ratio of the daily weight to the weight at day 0. Error bars represent standard deviations.

Figure 8

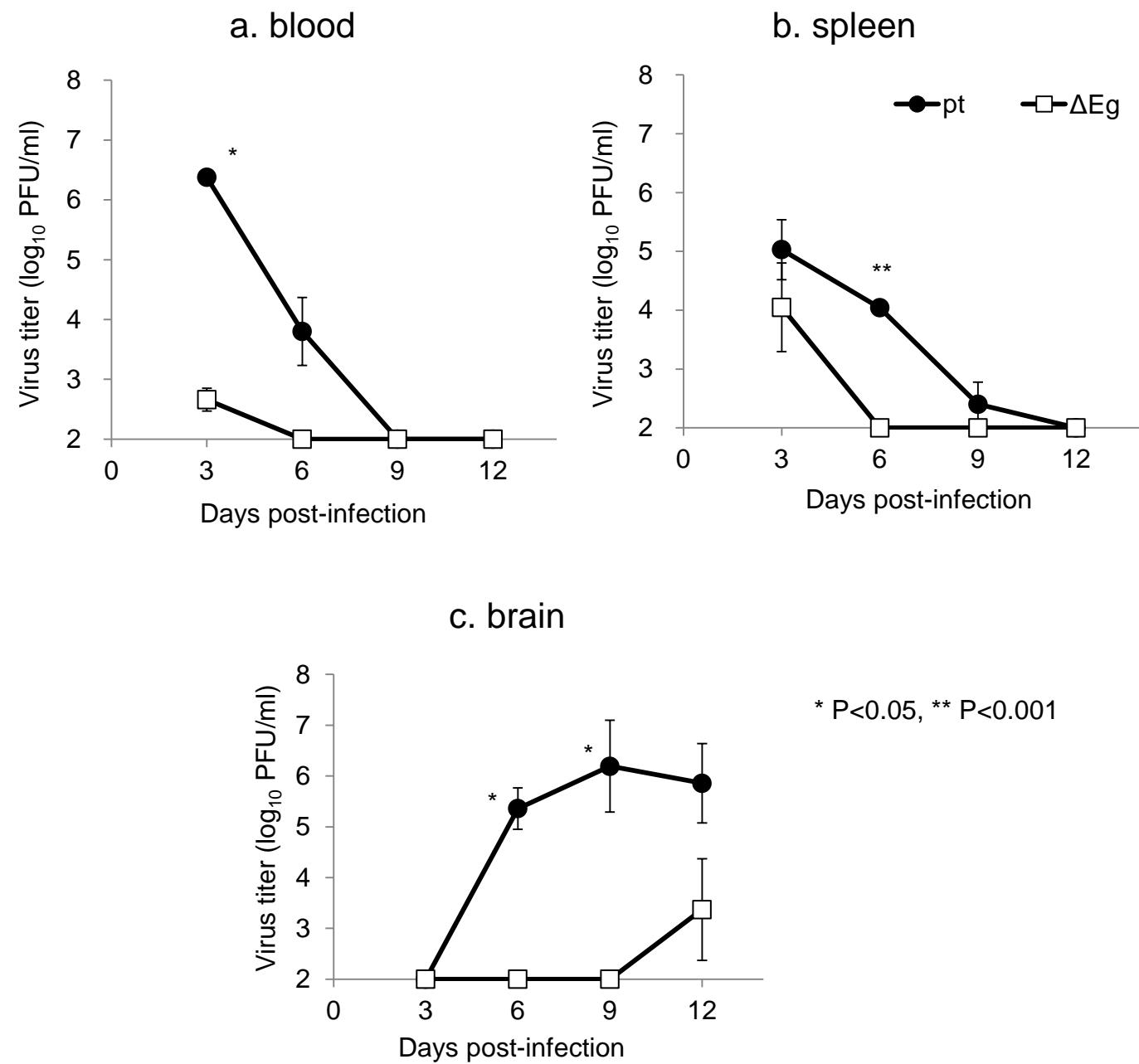


Fig. 8. Virus replication in organs.

Mice were subcutaneously infected with 10^5 pfu of Oshima-IC-pt (closed circles) or Oshima-IC- Δ Eg (open squares). At the indicated days after infection, virus titers in blood (a), spleen (b), and brain (c) were determined using plaque assays. Error bars represent standard deviations ($n = 3$).