

-continued

&lt;400&gt; SEQUENCE: 2

Ile Tyr Ser Val Ile Gln Ala Glu Ile Asn  
 1 5 10

Lys

&lt;210&gt; SEQ ID NO 3

&lt;211&gt; LENGTH: 15

&lt;212&gt; TYPE: PRT

&lt;213&gt; ORGANISM: Yersinia Pestis

&lt;220&gt; FEATURE:

&lt;223&gt; OTHER INFORMATION: V antigen epitope

&lt;400&gt; SEQUENCE: 3

Ala Tyr Glu Gln Asn Pro Gln His Phe Ile  
 1 5 10

Glu Asp Leu Glu Lys  
 15

What is claimed is:

1. An isolated monoclonal antibody specific for V-antigen of *Yersinia pestis* wherein said antibody passively protects mice from a lethal aerosol challenge with *Y. pestis* C12 strain when administered 18 hours prior to challenge.
2. The antibody according to claim 1, wherein said antibody is produced by any of hybridoma cell lines selected from the group consisting of 74-1, ATCC deposit PTA6289, 84-1, ATCC deposit PTA-6290, 125-1, ATCC deposit PTA 6291 and 141-1, ATCC deposit PTA-6292.
3. The antibody according to claim 1, wherein the antibody binds *Y. pestis* in vitro.
4. The antibody according to claim 3 wherein said antibody is selected from the group consisting of:
  - an antibody produced by hybridoma 74-1, ATCC deposit PTA6289,
  - an antibody produced by hybridoma 84-1, ATCC deposit PTA-6290,
  - an antibody produced by hybridoma 125-1, ATCC deposit PTA 6291; and
  - an antibody produced by hybridoma 141-1, ATCC deposit PTA-6292.
5. The antibody according to claim 1, wherein the antibody immunoprecipitates V antigen from supernatants or cell lysates of cell cultures infected with *Y. pestis*.
6. The antibody according to claim 5 wherein said antibody is selected from the group consisting of:
  - an antibody produced by hybridoma 74-1, ATCC deposit PTA6289,
  - an antibody produced by hybridoma 84-1, ATCC deposit PTA-6290,
- an antibody produced by hybridoma 125-1, ATCC deposit PTA 6291; and
- an antibody produced by hybridoma 141-1, ATCC deposit PTA-6292.
7. A composition comprising one or more isolated antibodies selected from the group consisting of:
  - an antibody produced by hybridoma 74-1, ATCC deposit PTA6289,
  - an antibody produced by hybridoma 84-1, ATCC deposit PTA-6290,
  - an antibody produced by hybridoma 125-1, ATCC deposit PTA 6291; and
  - an antibody produced by hybridoma 141-1, ATCC deposit PTA-6292.
8. An isolated hybridoma selected from the group consisting of: 74-1, ATCC deposit PTA6289, 84-1, ATCC deposit PTA-6290, 125-1, ATCC deposit PTA 6291 and 141-1, ATCC deposit PTA-6292.
9. A method of detecting, in a sample suspected of containing *Y. pestis*, said method comprising:
  - (i) incubating the sample with an effective amount of at least one monoclonal antibody according to claim 2, under conditions which allow the formation of antibody-*Y. pestis* complex and
  - (ii) detecting the complex wherein the presence or the absence of the complex indicates the presence or the absence of said *Y. pestis* in the sample.
10. The method according to claim 9, wherein said sample is a biological sample.

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