

1           **IDENTIFICATION OF ANTIOXIDANT PEPTIDES OF HEN EGG WHITE**  
2           **LYSOZYME AND EVALUATION OF INHIBITION LIPID PEROXIDATION AND**  
3           **CYTOTOXICITY IN THE ZEBRAFISH MODEL**

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## 31 **Abstract**

32 Hen egg lysozyme was hydrolyzed with pepsin in situ on a cation-exchange column to  
33 isolate antioxidant peptides. The most cationic fraction was eluted with 1 M NaCl. Five  
34 positively charged peptides f(109-119) VAWRNRCCKGTD, f(111-119) WRNRCKGTD,  
35 f(122-129) AWIRGCRL, f(123-129) WIRGCRL and f(124-129) IRGCRL were identified  
36 using tandem mass spectrometry. Using ORAC-FL, all five peptides presented  
37 antioxidant activity with values of (1,970; 3,123; 2,743; 2,393 and 0.313  $\mu\text{mol Trolox}/$   
38  $\mu\text{mol peptide}$ ) respectively. Using method TBARS in zebrafish larvae, all five synthetic  
39 peptides were found to efficiently inhibit lipid peroxidation (36.8; 51.6;55.56; 63.2;  
40 61.0 % inhibition of lipid peroxidation) respectively. None of the five peptides were  
41 toxic in zebrafish eggs and larvae at concentrations lower than 50  $\mu\text{g}/\text{ml}$ .  
42 Concentrations higher than 50 $\mu\text{g}/\text{ml}$  were toxic for both zebrafish eggs and larvae.

43

44 **Keywords:** lysozyme, antioxidant activity in zebrafish larvae, bioactive peptides,  
45 hydrolysate, cation exchange column and toxicity in zebrafish egg.

46

## 47 **Introduction**

48 Lysozyme is a basic protein consisting of 129 amino acids with a molecular weight of  
49 14.3 kDa. These amino acid residues are cross-linked by four disulfide bridges, and  
50 have an isoelectric point of 10.7. Hen egg is the richest source of lysozyme, accounting  
51 for 3.5% of total egg white proteins [1]. Lysozyme belongs to a type of enzymes that  
52 lyses the cell wall of certain Gram-positive bacteria by splitting  $\beta$  (1-4) linkages  
53 between N-acetylmuramic acid and N-acetylglucosamine of the peptidoglycan [2]. As a  
54 well-known antimicrobial protein, hen egg white lysozyme has been commercialized  
55 for applications as a natural preservative to control lactic bacteria in meat products  
56 such as sausages, salami, pork, beef or turkey. Lysozyme has also been used to prevent  
57 growth of *Clostridium tyrobutyricum* in cheese production or to control lactic bacteria  
58 in wine and beer production [3, 4, 5, 6, 7]. Lysozyme can also be used in other  
59 pharmaceutical and cosmetics applications [3, 7]. Moreover, lysozyme is an enzyme  
60 widely used as food additive (E1105) due to its numerous properties [8]. Lysozyme has  
61 many other functions, including antiviral [9, 10], immune modulatory [11], anti-

62 inflammatory [12] and antitumor [13] activities. At pH 7.0, lysozyme is positively  
63 charged, whereas the rest of the proteins of the egg white are negatively charged.  
64 Many cationic proteins such as lactoferrin, lactoperoxidase and lysozyme may be  
65 purified using ion exchange, as this fact has already been demonstrated [14]. Lysozyme  
66 has also been purified with cation-exchange membranes and resins [15, 16].  
67 Bioactive peptides have between 3-20 amino acid residues; their bioactivity depends  
68 on the sequence and amino acid compositions [17-19]. Recently, attention has mainly  
69 focused on the antioxidant peptides generated from food proteins, being these  
70 peptides safer and healthier than synthetic drugs [20]. Antioxidant peptides contain 5-  
71 16 amino acid residues. Their antioxidant activities can be related to ion chelating,  
72 radical scavenging and inhibition of lipid peroxidation. The importance of positively  
73 charged amino acids in determining the strength of peptides as antihypertensive and  
74 antioxidants has been indicated in different studies. Strong antimicrobial peptides are  
75 cationic charged. Those cationic charged peptides content amino acids as Lys, Arg and  
76 His [21, 3]. Lysozyme has an isoelectric point of 10.7, with a high content of positively  
77 charged amino acids. Lysozyme may be a great substrate for production of bioactive  
78 peptides with antioxidant activity. You et al., (2010)[3] have described two  
79 antioxidants fractions of hydrolysate of lysozyme with pepsin containing positively  
80 charged amino acids such as f(13-20)KRHGLDNY, f(14-23)RHGLDNYRGY and f(13-  
81 23)RHGLDNYRGY. Moreover, many researchers have reported that peptides and  
82 protein hydrolyzed from various food sources have significant antioxidant activity [22].  
83 Furthermore, hen egg white lysozyme suppresses reactive oxygen species (ROS)  
84 generation and protects against acute and chronic oxidant injuries [20, 23]. Some  
85 peptides have shown to have multifunctional activities [3, 24]. Different bioactive  
86 peptides from lysozyme have been reported with antimicrobial, antioxidant and  
87 antihypertensive activities [25-29].  
88 The zebrafish (*Danio rerio*) has become a promising model organism for experimental  
89 studies in different biomedical areas. Zebrafish is an ideal animal model for laboratory  
90 research. These animals are inexpensive, low-maintenance, and abundantly produced  
91 all year round [30-33]. Zebrafish genes are highly conserved sharing a 70 – 80%  
92 homology to those of humans [34]. The transparent embryos rapidly develop  
93 externally. Organogenesis is completed within the first 48 hours of development. Since

94 zebrafish embryos develop externally, changes in development may be continuously  
95 monitored and observed, which greatly facilitates developmental time course studies.  
96 Zebrafish development has been well characterized and therefore results from  
97 zebrafish are comparable to mammalian developmental studies [35-37]. Moreover,  
98 zebrafish is a vertebrate model for modeling behavioral and functional parameters  
99 related to human pathogenesis and for clinical treatment screening. More recently,  
100 zebrafish has become also a valuable model to environmental and toxicological  
101 studies. Therefore, zebrafish model can be an interesting model to evaluate toxicology  
102 of new ingredients of functional foods such as antioxidant peptides.

103 In this study, ion-exchange chromatography has been used to isolate the bioactive  
104 peptides from hen egg white lysozyme. Lysozyme was hydrolyzed in situ with pepsin to  
105 generate positive charged peptides. Those peptides were separated on a cation-  
106 exchange column by selective elution. The objective was to identify new antioxidant  
107 peptides and evaluate their toxicity in the Zebrafish model (*Danio rerio*).

108

## 109 **Materials and methods**

### 110 **Chemicals**

111 Hen egg white lysozyme 58,000 U/ml, pepsin crystalline 3,440 U/mg obtained from  
112 porcine stomach mucus, 2,20-azobis (2-methylpropionamide)-dihydrochloride (AAPH),  
113 6-hydroxy-2,5,7,8-tetramethylchroman- 2-carboxylic acid (Trolox), fluorescein  
114 disodium (FL), and dithiothreitol (DTT) were obtained from Sigma Chemical (Saint  
115 Louis, MO, USA). The rest of chemicals used were of HPLC grade.

116

### 117 **Pepsin hydrolysis of lysozyme in situ on an ion-exchange column and isolation of** 118 **peptides**

119 Denaturation of lysozyme was performed as previously described by Carrillo et al.,  
120 2014 [38]. Lysozyme was denatured using heat treatment. Lysozyme at 5mg/ml was  
121 suspended in buffer phosphate pH 6.0 and heat at 95°C during 20 minutes. Then,  
122 lysozyme was lyophilized and stored at -20°C. To carry out the hydrolysis of column-  
123 bound native and denatured lysozyme, 1000 ml of a 0.1 mg/ml solution of protein in  
124 10 mM NaCl, adjusted to pH 2.0 with HCl, were pumped through a column cation-

125 exchange column. The binding of native and denatured lysozyme was carried out at  
126 room temperature (25°C) with at a flow rate of 20 ml/min, which was generated by a  
127 peristaltic pump (Verder-Vleuten, Vleuten, The Netherlands). The process was  
128 monitored by a UV detector with a 2 mm light path flow cuvette (Model EM-1 Econo  
129 UV Monitor, Bio-Rad) at 280 nm. Prior to be used, the ion-exchange column was pre-  
130 equilibrated with water acidified with HCl (pH 2.0). The native and denatured lysozyme  
131 bound to the column were hydrolyzed at 37°C by recycling with 100 ml of an aqueous  
132 solution (pH 2.0) of porcine pepsin (25 mg/ml) at 20 ml/min during 6 hours. The  
133 column was washed sequentially with acidified water at pH 2.0. Solvent A was 10 mM  
134 ammonium hydrogen carbonate acidified to pH 7 with formic acid, and solvent B was  
135 3M and 5M of ammonia solution and finally the column was treated with 1 M NaCl to  
136 remove more cationic peptides. The effluent was monitored at 280 nm. All fractions  
137 were collected with Fast Protein Liquid Chromatography (FPLC) of GE-Pharmacia,  
138 freeze-dried, and analyzed with a high-performance liquid chromatography-  
139 electrospray ionization-tandem mass spectrometry (HPLC-ESI-MS-MS).

140

#### 141 **Identification of peptides by ESI-MS/MS**

142 The selected fractions separated and collected from FPLC were analyzed by RP-HPLC-  
143 ESI-MS/MS, on an Agilent 1100 HPLC System (Agilent Technologies, Waldbron,  
144 Germany) connected on-line to an Esquire 3000 ion trap (Bruker Daltonik GmbH,  
145 Bremen, Germany) and equipped with an electrospray ionization source, as described  
146 by López-Expósito et al. (2006) [39]. The variable-wavelength detector was set at 214  
147 nm. A C18-guard column (Nova-Pak® 20 mm × 2826 x 3.9 × 4 µm of particle size;  
148 Waters Corp., Milford, MA, USA) was used to protect the analytical column (HiPore®  
149 RP318 C18 column 250×4.6 mm and 5 µm of particle size; Bio-Rad, Richmond, CA,  
150 USA). The samples were eluted at 0.8 ml/min with a linear gradient from 0 to 45% of  
151 solvent B (acetonitrile and TFA, 1,000:0.270, v/v) in solvent A (water and TFA,  
152 1,000:0.370, v/v) in 60 minutes. The injection volume was 50 µl and duplicate of  
153 injection was made for each point of the standard curve and the samples. The flow  
154 from HPLC was divided approximately 1:3 previous to ionization source, and the first 6  
155 min of the eluent flow was directed to waste to reduce salt deposit on the transfer  
156 capillary of the MS instrument and to reduce interferences. For HPLC-MS, spectra were

157 recorded over the mass-to-charge (m/z) range of 100 to 1,500. Helium was used as  
158 collision gas with an estimated pressure of  $5 \times 10^{-3}$  bar. About 15 spectra were  
159 averaged in the MS analyses and about five spectra in the tandem MS analyses. Using  
160 Data Analysis™ (version 3.0; Bruker Daltoniks), the m/z spectral data were processed  
161 and transformed to spectra representing mass values. The acquired MS/MS spectra  
162 were interpreted using BioTools (version 2.1; Bruker Daltoniks).

163

#### 164 **Peptide synthesis**

165 The synthetic peptides from lysozyme VAWRNRCCKGTD, f(109-119), WRNRCKGTD,  
166 f(111-119) AWIRGCRL, f (122-129), WIRGCRL, f (123-129) and IRGCRL, f (124-129)  
167 were prepared using a conventional Fmoc solid-phase synthesis method with a 431A  
168 peptide synthesizer (Applied Biosystems Inc. Überlingen, Germany).

169

#### 170 **Oxygen radical absorbance capacity-fluorescein (ORAC-FL) assay**

171 The ORAC-FL assay was based on the assay proposed by Ou, Hampsch- Woodill, & Prior  
172 (2001) and Dávalos et al., 2004[40, 41]. The reaction was made at 40°C in 75 mM  
173 phosphate buffer (pH 7.4). The final assay mixture (200 µL) contained FL (70 nM),  
174 AAPH (14 mM), and antioxidant [Trolox (0.2-1.6 nmol) or samples of the five synthetic  
175 peptides (at different concentrations)]. The fluorescence was recorded during 137 min  
176 (104 cycles). A FLUOstar OPTIMA plate reader (BMG Labtech, Offenburg, Germany)  
177 with 485 nm excitation and 520 nm emission filters was used. The equipment was  
178 controlled by the FLUOstar Control software version (1.32 R2) for fluorescence  
179 measurement. Black polystyrene 96-well microplates (Nunc, Denmark) were used.  
180 AAPH and Trolox solutions were prepared daily and FL was diluted from a stock  
181 solution (1.17 mM) in 75 mM phosphate buffer (pH 7.4). All reaction mixtures were  
182 prepared in duplicate and at least three independent runs were performed for each  
183 sample. Final ORAC-FL values were expressed as µmol of Trolox equivalent/ µmol of  
184 peptide [42].

185

#### 186 **Thiobarbituric acid reactive substances (TBARS)**

187 The thiobarbituric acid reactive species method was used as described by Westerfield,  
188 1995 [43]. The Zebrafish colony was established in the laboratory, in a glass aquarium,

189 containing an internal filter and an activated carbon aerator for water oxygenation.  
190 The population of animals was fed three times a day with food chips for fish. Adult fish  
191 were kept on 16 hours light and 10 hours dark cycles. Embryos were obtained by  
192 photo-induced spawning over green plants and cultured at 28°C in a fish tank water. 5  
193 days post fecundation (dpf) larvae were then incubated in 24-well plates, 30 larvae per  
194 well, with 50 µg/ml of lysozyme peptide in each well. Lipid peroxidation was initiated  
195 by adding 1 ml 500 µM H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> and incubated during 8 hours at 28°C. Groups from 30  
196 larvae/well in aquarium water were used as controls. Then, H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> was removed with a  
197 micropipette and 500 µl of Tween 0.1% was added. All groups were mixed and  
198 homogenized with a T25 Ultra turrax IKA. Then, absorbance of the solution of zebrafish  
199 larvae and peptides was measured at 532 nm. The decrease of absorbance indicates an  
200 increase of antioxidant activity. The values of antioxidant activity were expressed as  
201 the percentage inhibition of lipid peroxidation in larvae homogenate as follows:

202 The total antioxidant activity % Inhibition of lipid peroxidation =  $[(A_b - A_s) / A_b] \times 100$

203 where A<sub>b</sub> is the absorbance of blank and A<sub>s</sub> is the absorbance the sample.

204

#### 205 **Test of toxicity in the Zebrafish model**

206 Zebrafish of the AB strain (wild-type, wt) embryos were obtained from natural  
207 spawning. Embryos were raised and fish were maintained as described by Westerfield,  
208 (1995) [43]. After collection and disinfection, eggs were placed in 24-well microplates  
209 with 1 mL of water. To study the in vivo toxicity of all peptides coming from lysozyme  
210 with the zebrafish model, the FET test was employed.

211

#### 212 **FET Test**

213 The assay was based on the OECD draft guideline on Fish Embryo Toxicity (FET) Test  
214 [44] and is described in detail by (Domingues et al., 2010) [45]. The Test Guideline is  
215 based on chemical exposure of newly fertilized zebrafish eggs for up to 48 hours and is  
216 expected to reflect acute toxicity in fish in general. After 24 and 48 hours of exposure  
217 to the peptides, four apical endpoints were recorded as indicators of acute lethality in  
218 fish: coagulation of fertilized eggs, lack of somite formation, lack of detachment of the

219 tail-bud from the yolk sac and lack of heart-beat. The eggs were considered dead when  
220 they exhibit at least one of the previous mentioned indicators.

221 In the control wells, there should be less than 10% of the eggs with one of the  
222 mentioned indicators after 48 hours, (29) [46]. Ten eggs per treatment (3 replicates)  
223 were selected and distributed in 24-well microplates. The test started with newly  
224 fertilized eggs exposed to the nominal concentrations of 50; 156; 312; 625; 1250; 2500  
225 and 5000 µg/ml of peptides and run during 2 days. Embryos were observed at 24 and  
226 48 hours under a stereomicroscope (magnification used in the stereomicroscope for  
227 observations was 40X).

228

## 229 **Results and discussion**

### 230 **Hydrolysis in situ from lysozyme with pepsin in a cation-exchange column.**

231 Hen egg white lysozyme was subject to hydrolysis in situ with pepsin in a cation-  
232 exchange column (Figure 1). The objective was to obtain, in one step, rich peptides  
233 with positively charged amino acids derived from the hydrolysis of lysozyme and, to  
234 assess whether denatured lysozyme could generate peptides other than native  
235 lysozyme. It is known that lysozyme has resistance to the hydrolysis with pepsin, but it  
236 has been recently described that lysozyme at pH 1.2 has total susceptibility to the  
237 hydrolysis with pepsin [39, 47-49]. Fu, Abbott, and Hatzos (2002) [50] have reported  
238 that lysozyme resisted more than 60 minutes at pH 1.2, at an E: S of (13:1) wt:wt.  
239 Thomas et al., (2004) [49] described that hen egg white lysozyme is resistant to  
240 hydrolysis with pepsin at pH 2.0. Ibrahim et al. (2005)[51] found that 40% of the  
241 original lysozyme was hydrolyzed after 120 minutes of digestion at an E: S of 1:50  
242 (wt:wt) and pH 4.0. There is then controversy about the hydrolysis of hen egg white  
243 lysozyme and this can be due to the different methods used. In this study, lysozyme  
244 was hydrolyzed at pH 2.0 with an excess of pepsin.

245 Many antimicrobial and antioxidant peptides contain positively charged amino acids  
246 thus determining the strength of their activity [21, 52, 53]. Lysozyme has an isoelectric  
247 point of 10.7 with a high content of positively charged amino acids. Hen egg white  
248 lysozyme has 17 positively charged (6 Lys, 11 Arg) and nine negatively charged residues  
249 (7 Asp, 2 Glu), thus leading to a net positive charge at pH below the isoelectric point



250 (10.7). This positive charge makes hen egg white lysozyme even more attractive for  
251 investigation with the negative charged peptides [54].

252 Therefore, lysozyme may be a good substrate for production of antimicrobial and  
253 antioxidant peptides. You et al., 2010 [53] have reported antioxidant hydrolysates  
254 from lysozyme obtained with alcalase. They found that the fractions were rich in  
255 cationic peptides with high percentage of Arg and Lys (positively charged amino acids).  
256 Samples of native and denatured lysozyme were loaded in the cation-exchange  
257 column. Then, those samples were treated over night at 37°C with recirculation of  
258 pepsin solution. Immediately after, the hydrolysate was eluted with a gradient of 3 M  
259 and 5 M of ammonia. Two different fractions were successively collected respectively,  
260 and then a third fraction was eluted with sodium chloride (NaCl) 1 M. This fraction  
261 contained the peptides with maximum net positive charge and, therefore, those with  
262 the highest affinity for the cation-exchange column (Figure 2).

263

#### 264 **Identification of peptides sequences**

265 After treatment with dithiothreitol all fractions from native and denatured lysozyme  
266 were analyzed with RP-HPLC-ESI-MS-MS to characterize their molecular mass and  
267 amino acid sequences. Table 1 shows the identified peptides eluted with NaCl 1 M. The  
268 peptides from 3 M and 5 M ammonia fractions were discarded as those peptides are  
269 less cationic. Both fractions were very complex with high content of peaks. As  
270 expected, this fraction contained peptides with abundant positively charged amino  
271 acids (Arg and Lys). For this reason, it was decided to work with this fraction. All  
272 sequences are located in the C-terminus of lysozyme, in the  $\alpha$ -dominium in the zone of  
273 helix 90-129. It can be seen that there was no difference between the peptides  
274 identified in both hydrolysates, indicating that the process of heat denaturation of  
275 lysozyme results in a lack of production of new hydrolysis sites in the protein. Ibrahim  
276 et al., (2001, 2005) [51, 55] have reported antimicrobial peptides with high activity  
277 present in the  $\alpha$ -dominium (1-40 and 90-129), specifically in the regions 1-38 and 87-  
278 114 from the lysozyme. However, we only found peptides located in the  $\alpha$ -dominium  
279 C-terminal 90-129. This could be caused by the ionic separation performed, where  
280 cationic peptides have predominantly been recovered. The peptides identified were  
281 synthesized to be used in the antioxidant assay.

## 282 **Antioxidant peptides sequences**

283 Five peptides from the fraction NaCl were assayed for their antioxidant activity, against  
284 peroxy radicals, by using ORAC-FL assay. Table 2 shows results of antioxidant activities  
285 for the five peptides assayed. ORAC-FL values of peptides from hen egg white lysozyme  
286 were very high, indicating very high antioxidant activity. Four peptides f(109-119)  
287 VAWRNRCKGTD, f(111-119) WRNRCKGTD, f(122-129) AWIRGCRL and f(123-129)  
288 WIRGCRL (1,970; 3,123; 2,743 and 2,393  $\mu\text{mol Trolox}/\mu\text{mol peptide}$ ) respectively were  
289 more active than vitamin C (1.65  $\mu\text{mol Trolox equivalents}/\mu\text{mol vitamin C}$ ). Peptides  
290 f(122-129) AWIRGCRL and f(123-129) WIRGCRL were more active than synthetic  
291 antioxidant peptide named butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA) (2,430  $\mu\text{mol Trolox}$   
292  $\text{equivalents}/\mu\text{mol BHA}$ ) used in food industry for its high antioxidant activity [56,42].  
293 Only the peptide f(124-129) IRGCRL presents low activity with 0.313  $\mu\text{mol Trolox}/\mu\text{mol}$   
294  $\text{peptide}$ , this might be due to the absence of Trp in its sequence. As shown in the ORAC  
295 database prepared by Li and Li (2013) [57], the length of peptides derived from food  
296 sources with peroxy radical scavenging activity, ranges from 4 to 20 amino acids.  
297 Peptides described in our study with peroxy radical scavenging activity have between  
298 1 to 11 amino acids. Peptides of our study are small peptides with high antioxidant  
299 activity using ORAC-FL. On the other hand, Hernández-Ledesma et al., (2005) [58] have  
300 described a peptide from soybean named lunasin with high antioxidant activity  $3.44 \pm$   
301  $0.07 \mu\text{mol Trolox equivalents}/\mu\text{mol lunasin}$ . Potent activity of lunasin was attributed to  
302 the presence of amino acids Trp, Cys, and Met in its sequence. All peptides in our study  
303 contain in their sequence Trp, Cys or both. Possibly, the higher antioxidant activity of  
304 peptides in this study is explained by the presence of Trp and Cys amino acids in a  
305 particular site of their sequence. Peptide number 2 IRGCRL was compared to peptide  
306 number 3 WIRGCRL. We observed that IRGCRL peptide has not Trp (W) in its sequence,  
307 and a value of ORAC-FL of 0.311  $\mu\text{mol Trolox}/\mu\text{mol peptide}$  was detected. On the  
308 other hand, peptide number 3 WIRGCRL presented antioxidant activity with a value of  
309  $2,393\mu\text{mol Trolox}/\mu\text{mol peptide}$ . The difference in the antioxidant activity can be  
310 related to the presence of Trp in peptide number 3 WIRGCRL sequence.

311 The molecular weight of the identified peptides are in the range of most of the  
312 antioxidant peptides derived from food sources isolated previously of 4 to 20 residues  
313 amino acids [59]. Moreover, antioxidant peptides often possess hydrophobic amino

314 acid residues such as Pro, His, Tyr, Trp, Met, or Cys in their sequences and Val or Leu at  
315 the N-terminus [60]. One of our peptides showed Val at the N-terminus.

316

### 317 **Potential of synthetic peptides from lysozyme to inhibit lipid peroxidation**

318 The antioxidant action is assessed by inhibiting the damage caused by free radicals and  
319 the mechanisms involved in many human diseases such as hepatotoxicities,  
320 hepatocarcinogenesis, diabetes, and skin cancer to include lipid peroxidation as a main  
321 source of cellular damage. Lipid peroxidation in biological systems has been thought to  
322 be a toxicological phenomenon leading to various pathological consequences. MDA  
323 formed from lipid peroxidation of unsaturated phospholipid reacts with TBA to  
324 produce a pink MDA-TBA adducts. MDA is reactive and active in crosslinking with DNA  
325 and proteins and damages liver cells [61]. Phospholipids are believed to be present in  
326 high amounts in cell membranes [62]. Lipid peroxidation has been a major contributor  
327 to the loss of cell function under oxidative stress [63, 64]. To determine oxidative  
328 stress, inhibition of lipid peroxidation in zebrafish larvae model was used to determine  
329 damage cellular in vivo. Figure 3A presents the inhibition of lipid peroxidation by  
330 synthetic peptides from lysozyme at a concentration of 50 µg/ml. This assay confirmed  
331 that these synthetic peptides were not toxic for zebrafish larvae. Zebrafish larvae  
332 presented normal aspect after 24 hours of assay. When zebrafish larvae were  
333 examined, no morphological abnormalities are shown such as crooked bodies, spinal  
334 deformities or any significant effects in the growth of the body (Figure 3B). The values  
335 of percentage inhibition of lipid peroxidation indicated that all synthetic peptides were  
336 efficient to inhibit the lipid peroxidation in zebrafish larvae. For example peptide P4  
337 (AWIRGCRL) had a result of 63.2 % TBARS inhibition, (Figure 3A). The antioxidant  
338 results showed the higher activity of peptides 3, 4 and 5 in both assays. The presence  
339 of tryptophan seems important for the ORAC activity. However, in the case of the  
340 TBARS inhibition, the peptide size is probably contributing to the increased values of  
341 activity in peptides P2 to P5.

342

343

344

### 345 **Test in Zebrafish embryo**

346 Based on the in vitro studies antioxidant activity described above, we decided to  
347 evaluate the toxicity of the peptides in a model of zebrafish eggs. Zebrafish has  
348 become a widely used model organism for studies of developmental biology and drug  
349 discovery. This model helps drug development by combining the tools of medicinal  
350 chemistry and zebrafish biology.

351 Figure 4 shows a representative curve doses-response result of FET test for AWIRGCRL  
352 peptide, this peptide presents the highest TBARS inhibition percentage. This sample  
353 was only taken as an example as all samples presented identical results. The test was  
354 carried out for all peptides of this study, however, no significant differences were  
355 observed in the rest of peptides. Again, as in the zebrafish larvae test, the AWIRGCRL  
356 peptide does not present toxicity at a concentration of 50 µg/ml for zebrafish eggs.  
357 However, concentrations higher than 50 µg/ml of peptides were cytotoxic to zebrafish  
358 egg after 24 hours of incubation. Mortality was identified with an absence of  
359 embryonic development and coagulation of nuclear material of eggs. The control eggs  
360 were totally normal in their development (Figure 5A). However, eggs treated with the  
361 peptides of this study presented no embryonic development and coagulation total of  
362 nuclear material of eggs. Around the eggs, material of the chorion due to ruptures of  
363 the eggs was observed (Figure 5B).

364

365 As a conclusion, hen egg lysozyme was hydrolyzed with pepsin in situ using a cation-  
366 exchange. Hen egg white lysozyme is a good source of antioxidant peptides using  
367 pepsin for hydrolysis at low pH. The zebrafish model was efficient to measure the  
368 inhibition of lipid peroxidation and cytotoxicity of synthetic peptides from lysozyme.  
369 Development of zebrafish is sensitive to the exposure to all lysozyme synthetic  
370 peptides used in this study at concentrations higher than 50µg/ml. However, further  
371 investigations would need to be carried out to evaluate the death mechanisms of  
372 these peptides on zebrafish embryos, for eventual pharmaceutical and medical  
373 applications.

374

#### 375 **Conflict of interest**

376 The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

377

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386

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622 **List of figures and tables**

623 **Table 1. Identification of the molecular mass and amino acid sequence of the fraction eluted**  
 624 **with 1 M NaCl using LC-ESI-MS/MS.**

N°	Fragment	Mass Obs.	Mass Calc. <sup>a</sup>	m/z <sup>b</sup>	Sequence <sup>c</sup>	NLZ	LZ95°C
1	f(109-119)	1306,0	1306,0	653,5 (2)	VAWRNRCKGTD	+	+
2	f(124-129)	716,6	717,6	717,6 (1)	IRGCRL	+	+
3	f(123-129)	902,7	903,7	903,7 (1)	WIRGCRL	+	+
4	f(122-129)	973,7	974,7	974,7 (1)	AWIRGCRL	+	+
5	f(111-119)	1134,7	1135,7	1135,7 (1)	WRNRCKGTD	+	+

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626

627 **Table 2. In vitro antioxidant activity of peptides from lysozyme.**

N°	Peptides	ORAC (micromol Trolox equivalents/micromol peptide) ± SD	628 630
1	VAWRNRCKGTD	1.970 ± 0.171	630
2	IRGCRL	0.313 ± 0.029	631
3	WIRGCRL	2,393 ± 0.280	632
4	AWIRGCRL	2,743 ± 0.193	633
5	WRNRCKGTD	3,123 ± 0.266	634 635

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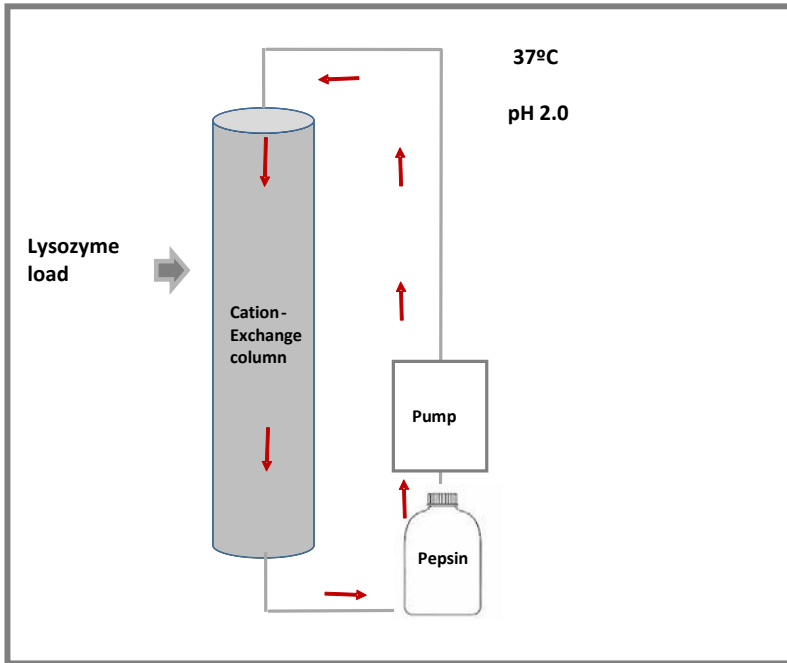
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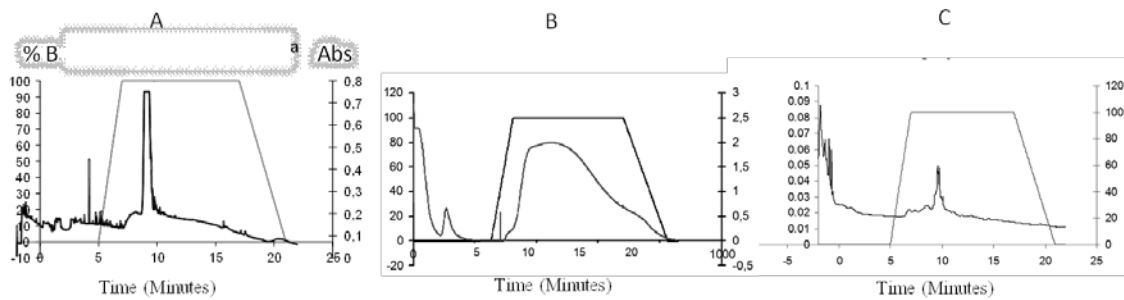
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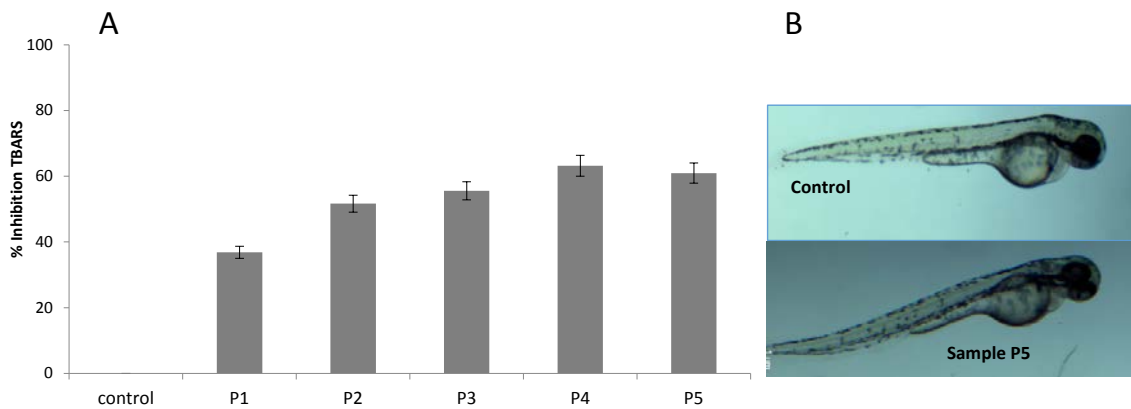
648 **Figure 1. Hydrolysis in situ from lysozyme with pepsin in a cation exchange column inside of**  
649 **oven at 37°C over night.**

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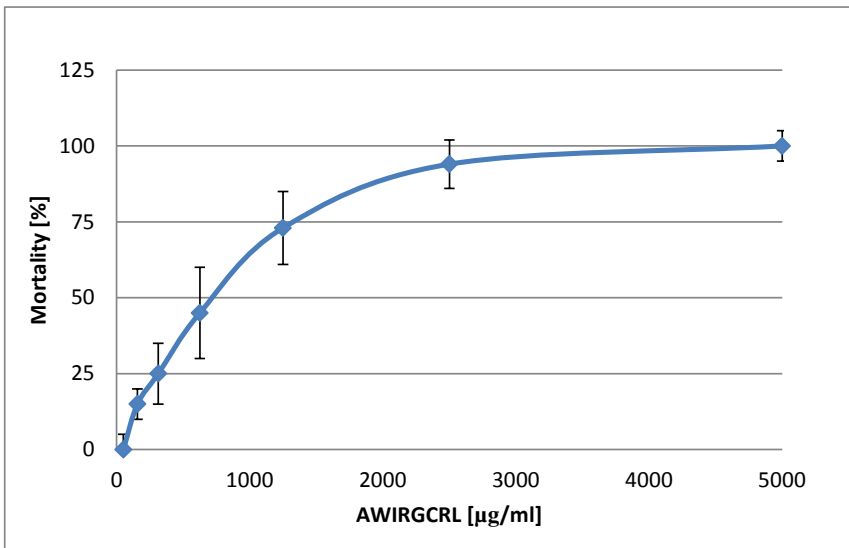
652 **Figure 2. Fractions of FPLC obtained with: A) 3 M ammonia, B) 5 M ammonia, C) NaCl 1 M**



653

654 **Figure 3. A) TBARS result of synthetic peptides from lysozyme. Data is expressed as % TBARS**  
655 **inhibition compared to positive control (error bars expressed as  $\pm$  SD). P1= VAWRNRCCKGTD;**

656 P2= IRGCRL; P3= WIRGCRL; P4= AWIRGCRL; P5= WRNRCKGTD. B) Photography of zebrafish  
657 larvae with peptide and without peptide after assay. All peptides were assay at 50 µg7ml.  
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659  
660 **Figure 4. Mortality percentage of Zebrafish embryo treated with AWIRGCRL peptide from**  
661 **lysozyme at different concentrations at 48 hours for three replicates.**

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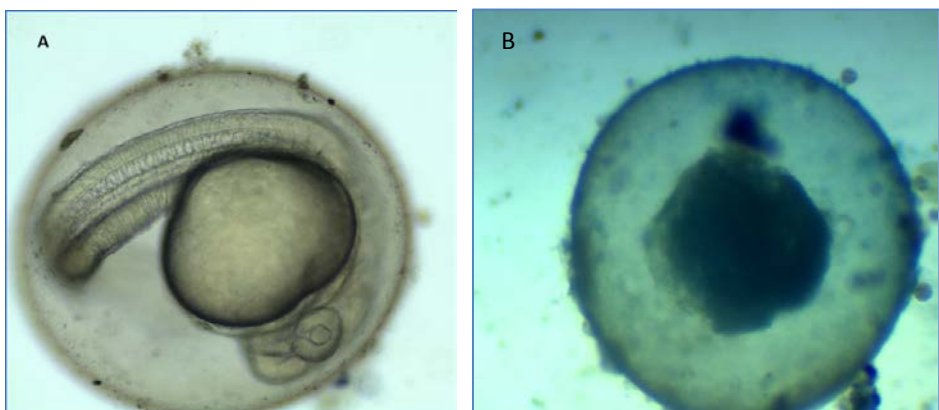
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672 **Figure 5. Peptides from lysozyme induced inhibition cellular in embryo Zebrafish. A) Control**  
673 **without peptides and B) embryo with AWIRGCRL peptide from lysozyme. Magnification was**  
674 **of 40X. AWIRGCRL peptide was incubated with zebrafish eggs during 24 hours at 26°C.**

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