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Pathogenicity islands

Abstract: Recent studies on bacterial virulence mechanisms revealed that some virulence determinants are located within so-called pathogenicity islands (PAls). That term has been invented to describe large, often unstable DNA regions harboring virulence and mobility genes, usually flanked by direct repeats. PAls allow bacteria to acquire or lose large amounts of DNA, and are regarded as elements involved in bacterial macroevolution. The PAts of several bacterial species are reviewed herein.

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