Genetic Testing: Understanding Definitions and Key Concepts

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<u>Genetics</u>: the study of heredity





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Gene: A region of DNA which represents a functional unit of inheritance

Chromosome: A highly ordered structure composed of DNA and proteins which carries the genetic information



Chromosomal Basis Officersity Inheritance

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Mutation

A permanent heritable change in the sequence of genomic DNA

Can be clinically significant

Important mechanism of population variation

Negative – disease

Benign – blue vs. brown eyes

Positive – sickle cell trait and malaria





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Structural



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Numerical

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Patterns of Inheritance

Dominant vs. Recessive

Autosomal vs. X-linked









Recessive: only expressed when 2 mutations are present



Dominant: expressed with a single mutation



 Males and females equally likely to be affected

X-linked

 males more commonly affected

 no male to male transmission



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AutosomerupRecessive



AutosomerupRecessive



Autosomal Recessive

Blue eyes

- Sickle Cell Anemia
- Cystic fibrosis

Tay Sachs disease

<u>Autosomal Dominant</u>



- Achondroplasia
- Neurofibromatosis
- Polydactyly





X-linked Recessive

- Hemophilia A/B
- Duchenne/Becker muscular dystrophies
- Colorblindness
- Hunter syndrome

Inherited vs. Acquired Disease

Inherited gene complement – genes transmitted from one or both parents

Typically called the constitutional genome

Acquired gene complement – a subset of cells in an individual that arose by clonal propagation from a single mutation in one cell

Goals of Medical Genetics

- Understand the inheritance of genes and disease
- Investigate genes associated with disease
- Identify disease causing mutations
- Apply knowledge to treat disease



Human Genes



Human Genome Project

- Goal: Sequencing of entire human genome
- Draft copy now done
- List of bases but little functional data
- Next step figure out what it means!

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Cloned Genes

Cystic fibrosis Phenylketonuria Duchenne/Becker dystrophy Prader-Willi syndrome Fragile X syndrome Hemophilia A,B Marfan syndrome

DiGeorge syndrome Familial hypercholesterolemia Retinoblastoma Medullary thyroid cancer Williams syndrome Tay Sachs disease Myotonic dystrophy Angelman syndrome Huntington disease Sickle cell anemia Osteogenesis imperfecta Hunter syndrome Familia polyposis coli **Neurofibromatosis** Breast and ovarian cancer

Genetic Testing

- Prenatal diagnosis
- Newborn screening
- Cytogenetics
- Cancer diagnosis
- Blood tests (ABO, Rh, histocompatibility)
- DNA fingerprinting

Clinical Laboratory Testing

- Cytogenetics
 - * Karyotype analysis
 - * FISH

Clinical Laboratory Testing Molecular - mutation analysis

Fragile X syndrome
Huntington disease
Duchenne muscular dystrophy
Cystic fibrosis
Sickle cell anemia
Breast cancer

Clinical Laboratory Testing Biochemical - Enzymes and proteins Tay Sachs PKU (phenylketonuria) Galactosemia

Benefits of Genetic Diagnosis

- * Confirm a diagnosis
- * Identify proper treatment
- * Provide a basis for risk assessment

* May eliminate the need for other, more invasive testing

Hereditary Hemochromatosis

- Iron storage disorder
- Incidence: 1 in 400
- Carrier frequency: 1 in 10
- Can lead to severe liver damage and death
- Other complications include diabetes, dark pigmentation of the skin, heart failure
 - Difficult to diagnosis

Hereditary Hemochromatosis

Get a direct diagnosis of disorder
Reduce need for liver biopsy
Identify at risk individuals earlier in life

Limitations of Genetic Tests

- Requires knowledge of disease specific mutations
- May not be possible to identify all mutations
- Unable to tell age of onset for late onset diseases







Molecular testing: Cystic Fibrosis







New York State Regulations

Patients must be informed of

- * the type of test being done
- ***** the limitations of the test
- ***** what benefit the results will have for them
- * What ramifications there may be with respect to insurance coverage, etc.
- Patients must sign an informed consent
- If no consent is obtained, no testing can be done

New York State Regulations

 All specimens from NYS residents must be processed by a laboratory that has been inspected and approved by the NYS Dept. of Health

 If genetic testing is performed by any laboratory that has not been approved, the results <u>cannot</u> be used for diagnosis and <u>cannot</u> be provided to the physician or the patient/subject, unless.....

New York State Regulations

"Orphan Disease Exemption"

 If testing for a genetic disorder is only done by a non-permitted laboratory, a request can be submitted to the NYS DOH to use that laboratory's results for clinical purposes

IRB Protocols

These must be written to meet:

IRB regulations

- NYS regulations
- HIPAA regulations

IRB Protocols

When do you need to be concerned about genetic regulations???

15. B. Does this study involved Genetic Testing? Yes No If yes, answer the following question:

1. Is the genetic variant inherited? Yes No

If YES (the variant IS inherited), additional consent document language is required. (See template for genetic research on the IRB web site.) **IRB**: Research subjects participating in an IRB approved research study involvoing genetic testing must be informed about:

- 1. Whether or not they or their physician will be told the test results.
- 2. The risk to insurability (the ability to get/keep insurance)
- **3.** Potential discovery of non-paternity (genetic tests may prove "dad" is not the biological father).
- **4.** If genetic counseling is provided (who pays?).
- 5. If a portion of the sample collected will be stored for future studies.

Research applications

What is genetic testing?

A study that investigates human DNA, chromosomes, genes, or gene products, including DNA profile analysis.

Research applications

Inherited vs. Acquired?

Only those disorders arising solely from a somatic mutation or mutations are exempt from current regulation.

Examples:

Leukemia, lymphoma, sporadic breast cancer, other types of sporadic solid tumors

Examples of types of studies not included

Techniques

Devices

Drug treatment protocols



What is included

Delineation of disease

- Population genetics and risk analysis
- Gene Therapy
- Pharmacogenetics
- Most family studies

Research Applications - <u>Delineation</u> of <u>Disease</u>

- Multiple members of several extended families with a known genetic disorder
 * Find the gene(s) responsible
- Multiple members of an extended family and/or multiple families with the same set of clinical abnormalities
 - * Is this a known clinical entity or can we define a new disease?
 - * What gene(s) is/are causing this to occur?

Example 1 - Drug Studies

 Random patients, same disease – OK comparison of drug effectiveness

Random patients with a known genetic disease (CF) – comparison of drug effectiveness
 OK

 Family members with and without a particular disease– comparison of drug effectiveness
 Genetics

Example 2 - Drug Studies

Random patients, same disease, one drug

Monitoring drug metabolism
 OK

 Using DNA studies to show the relationship between certain sets of genes and how the drug is metabolized.
 Requires genetic consent Pharmacokinetics vs. Pharmacogenomics

Pharmaco<u>Kinetics</u> - rate of drug metabolism

 Pharmaco<u>Genomics</u> - the relationship of genes to drug metabolism

Example 3 - Complex protocols

- Collection of blood/tissue for genetic studies is one element of protocol
- Different studies are being done at different sites.
- Local study only ascertains subjects and collects samples to be sent elsewhere.

Requires informed consent with genetics language HERE

Example 4 - Cancer

Leukemia/Lymphoma - acquired

Solid tumors

- * Treatment protocols, delineate clinical OK features for diagnosis, length of survival
- Inheritance of mutations, relationship of those mutations to severity of disease, relationship of those mutations to others that are related to disease Genetics

Example 5 - Known Genetic Disease

- Protocol is to further delineate the disorder to better understand it clinically
- Affected individuals and their unaffected family members will be recruited
- All subjects will be given a test to confirm their clinical status

Must inform subjects of the nature of the testing

Example 5 - Con't

- Protocol is to further delineate the disorder to better understand it clinically
- Affected individuals and their unaffected family members will be recruited
- All subjects will be given a test to confirm their clinical status - inform
- The results of the testing will be provided to the subjects' family physicians
- 1) Must get genetic informed consent
- 2) Must get "NYS DOH Orphan Disease Exemption"

Conclusions

- All IRB protocols must conform to IRB, NYS, and HIPAA requirements.
- Careful evaluation of the purpose of the study and the methods used must be done
- If the protocol includes genetic analysis of inherited genetic variants, subjects should be informed and appropriate language included in the IRB informed consent