ventricular hypertrophy was found and a small PDA was closed. She also had coeliac disease. II-2 has been in good health all his life. Because of the family history of patent duc tus arteriosus he sought a cardiology opinion at the age of 54 years. A PDA was found with moderate biventricular dilatation and he was operated on successfully. II-4 had been a sickly child throughout her life but became progressively less well in her teenage years. At the age of 18 years bacterial endocarditis and a PDA were diagnosed. Both were eventually successfully treated. In later life she developed myasthenia gravis, schizophrenia, and Reynaud's phenomenon. III-2 was referred to a cardiologist at the age of 7 years with an asymptomatic murmur. After two years of follow up, ventriculomegaly began to develop and the PDA was ligated. III-4 was diagnosed as having a PDA at the age of 5 years. She had been always mildly exercise restricted, had ventriculomegaly, and was operated on at 6 years. III-5 was found to have an asymptomatic murmur at the age of 6 years and her PDA was tied at 6 years. She also had coeliac disease. III-6 had frequent upper respiratory tract infections as a young child and was exercise restricted. At the age of 4 years he was referred to a cardiologist who found a typical PDA murmur. He was operated on at the age of 4 years. His karyotype is normal. III-17 was referred to a cardiologist at the age of 3 years for an asymptomatic murmur. A PDA was diagnosed and ligated forthwith. Family members are of normal appearance and intelligence and have no symptoms suggestive of a prostatic gland metabolitic defect, such as atopy or difficulties during labour. Although all occurrences of PDA have been inherited from an affected mother in this family, maternal-offspring transmission has been described previously. The PDAs found in this family were not unusual in their position and varied greatly in the symptomaticity they caused. The empirical recurrence risk for a PDA is 3% whether it is a parent or a sib that is affected. Most cases are thought to be the result of polygenic/multifactorial inheritance. In families such as this, where so many members are affected, autosomal dominant inheritance seems likely and the recurrence risk is probably 50%. In order to give realistic recurrence risks to a family where a child has a PDA, the familial phenotype described by Davidson should be sought, and both parent's cardiovascular systems should be examined. Referral to a cardiologist of any children born to a family with possible autosomal dominant PDA seems sensible whether or not they have a detectable murmur.

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Molecular basis of the common electrophoretic polymorphism (Fu1/Fu2) in human α-L-fucosidase

α-L-fucosidase (EC 3.2.1.51) is a lysosomal hydrolase involved in the catabolism of fucose-containing glycoproteins and glyco-proteins. A deficiency of this enzyme leads to the lysosomal storage disease, fucosidosis. α-L-Fucosidase exists as multiple molecular forms, which can be separated by various procedures. The precise molecular basis of this heterogeneity is not understood but it is probably post-translational. All the forms are encoded by a single locus on the short arm of chromosome 1 at 1p34.1-1p36.1 which encodes the structural gene for the enzyme, FUC1. The enzyme shows a genetically determined, common, electrophoretic polymorphism (Fu1/Fu2), which can be detected in blood and tissues and maps to the structural gene locus (FUC1). The minor allele, Fu2, produces more cathodal forms of the enzyme.

The structural gene for α-L-fucosidase has been isolated and sequenced. It is 23 kb in length and has eight exons. Two common RFLPs obtained with PvuII and BglII are in almost complete linkage disequilibrium and can be used to haplotype subjects. Several disease-causing mutations have been identified in patients with fucosidosis. In addition, an A to G transition in exon 5 causing substitution of an arginine for glutamine, Q281R, has been found homozogously in both patients and controls, indicating it is a polymorphism rather than a disease-causing mutation. All homozogous for this substitution showed the RFLP PvuII-BglII haplotype, 2-2, 2-2. It was postulated that Q281R might be the molecular basis of the Fu1/Fu2 electrophoretic polymorphism. Evidence to support that suggestion is presented in this paper.

The Q281R polymorphism creates a new site for the restriction enzymes DauI and BstII in exon 5. It is readily detected by modifying exon 5 with the two primers used for mutation analysis (F42 and F43 in reference 14), followed by digestion with DauI or BstII (fig 1). Analysis of the Fu1/Fu2 digestion products by electrophoresis in 3% agarose (BRL)/
Further family with autosomal dominant patent ductus arteriosus.

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