LETTER TO JMG

Assignment of the locus for ichthyosis prematurity syndrome to chromosome 9q33.3–34.13

J Klar, T Gedde-Dahl Jr, M Larsson, M Pigg, B Carlsson, D Tentler, A Vahlquist, N Dahl

Autosomal recessive congenital ichthyosis (ARCI) is a clinically and genetically heterogeneous group of inherited disorders of keratinisation, with an estimated incidence of one per 200 000 newborns. In Scandinavia, the prevalence is closer to one in 50 000. By electron microscopy, ARCI can be classified into four subgroups— ichthyosis congenita I–IV—and one so far undefined group. Six loci have been associated with ARCI: on chromosomes 2q34 (LI2 (MIM 601277)), 3p21 (NCIE2 (MIM 604780)), 14q11.2 (LI1 (MIM 242300) and NCIE1 (MIM 242100)), 17p13.1 (LI5 (MIM 606545)), 19p12–q12 (LI3 (MIM 190195)), and 19p13.1–p13.2 (NCNI (MIM 604781)).

Genes that correspond to four of these have been identified: the transglutaminase 1 gene (TGM1 (MIM 190195)) on chromosome 14q11, the comparative gene identification 58 (CGI-58 (MIM 604780)) on chromosome 3p21, two genes from the lipoxygenase (LOX) family—lipoxygenase-3 (ALOX3 (MIM 601277)), and 12(R)-lipoxygenase (ALOX12B (MIM 603741))—on chromosome 17p13.1, and, most recently, the adenosine triphosphate binding cassette 12A (ABCA12A (MIM 607800)) on chromosome 2q34.

The transglutaminase 1 protein takes part in the formation of the lipid envelope on the surface of epidermal keratinocytes. Cells with a disrupted TGM1 gene have a defective epidermal barrier function. TGM1 is altered in one third of patients with ichthyosis congenita type I and all patients with ichthyosis congenita type II.

Mutations in the CGI-58 gene on chromosome 3p21 cause Chanarin-Dorfman disease (CDS (MIM 275630)). The protein CGI-58 belongs to a large family of proteins characterised by an α/β hydrolase fold and contains three sequence motifs found in the esterase, lipase, and thioesterase subfamily. Affected patients have increased levels of triacylglycerol, and CGI-58 has been postulated to be involved in recycling of triacylglycerol derived monacylglycerol or diacylglycerol to specific phospholipids or in the catabolism of long chain fatty acids.

Mutations in either of the two lipoxygenase genes (ALOX3 and ALOX12B) on chromosome 17p13.1 result in a mild form of ARCI. The two genes are linked physically with a high sequence similarity, and they are related functionally. They are expressed mainly in epithelial cells, such as keratinocytes. LOX genes are involved in fatty acid metabolism and the maintenance of the cutaneous permeability barrier.

Ichthyosis prematurity syndrome (IPS) is a distinct form of ARCI that is reported almost exclusively in the Norwegian population. To date, the only exceptions are two Finnish families and one north Italian family. It was observed as a unique syndrome because of its ultrastructural features of the skin and was published as ichthyosis congenita type IV. The pattern on electron microscopy is characterised by membrane aggregations in the upper epidermal cells. Pregnancies with an affected foetus are complicated by polyhydramnion, and ultrasound shows opaque amniotic fluid. The birth is premature, and delivery usually takes place in weeks 30–32 of pregnancy. The child becomes severely asphyctic after delivery, probably because of aspiration of amniotic debris. At birth, the skin, particularly on the head and peripheral extremities, is covered by a thick, caseous, desquamating epidermis, which, within two weeks, improves to a benign dryness of the skin. Later, the phenotype is mild, with persisting dryness of the skin and white scaling of the capillii. The skin shows a cobblestone like surface, particularly

Key points

- Autosomal recessive congenital ichthyosis (ARCI) is a clinically and genetically heterogeneous group of inherited disorders of keratinisation. To date, five genes have been identified that underlie ARCI, and two additional gene loci for ARCI have been assigned.
- Ichthyosis congenita IV is a rare form of ARCI that clinically is known as ichthyosis prematurity syndrome (IPS). Key features are complications in the mid-trimester of pregnancy, with premature birth of a child with thick caseous desquamating epidermis, respiratory complications, and eosinophilia that recovers into a lifelong non-scaly ichthyosis with atopic manifestations. The prevalence is high in a region across mid-Scandinavia.
- Thirteen families with 1–2 members affected by IPS and at least one affected and one healthy or affected sibling were recruited for linkage analysis. Three families with one affected child but no siblings were included for haplotype analysis. Overall, 14 families originated from a defined region of middle Norway and two from the adjacent region of middle Sweden.
- Genomewide linkage analysis was performed in the 13 informative families affected by IPS. Significant linkage was found with the short tandem repeat D9S778 on chromosome 9q34, with a maximum logarithm of odds (LOD) score of 3.73 (θm = 0.00).
- Haplotype analysis and meiotic recombinants restricted the genetic interval to a 12 cm region between D9S250 and D9S63. Within this interval, a critical region was identified by allelic association. The combined results restrict the locus for IPS to a 1 Mb region at 9q33.3–34.13.
- The gene locus for IPS was mapped to a 1 Mb region with no indication of genetic heterogeneity. Haplotype analysis suggests one or two founder chromosomes in the population studied. Characterisation of the mutant gene may clarify the mechanisms behind normal skin formation.
on distal extremities, and a leathery like thickening of the skin on the lower back and rima. In addition, patients have hypereosinophilia. (14 and Gedde-Dahl Jr T, personal communication, 2003).

Ichthyosis prematurity syndrome segregates independently of the known ARCI loci and is more prevalent in a defined region in the adjacent middle parts of Norway and Sweden, with an estimated local heterozygote carrier frequency of one in 50, which suggests a prehistoric mutation. 15 We report the chromosomal mapping of the the IPS locus in 13 families informative for linkage analysis.

METHODS
Participants
We recruited 13 families with 1–2 members affected by IPS and at least one affected and one healthy or affected sibling. We also included three families with one affected child but no siblings for haplotype analysis. Altogether, 20 affected members and 13 healthy siblings were available for DNA studies (fig 1). Overall, 14 families originated from a defined region of middle Norway and two from the adjacent region of middle Sweden. None of the families were known to be related, and we ascertained no consanguinity. TG-D clinically examined the Norwegian families, who were all verified ultrastructurally by skin biopsies in Heidelberg. AV clinically examined the Swedish patients. Affected members of all families displayed the typical IPS phenotype, including premature birth with variable perinatal complications. Each patient’s skin was affected severely at birth, but this turned gradually into a milder phenotype, with characteristic flat follicular keratosis. Hypereosinophilia was verified in all patients at varying ages. In two of the informative families, an affected sibling died from neonatal complications (not shown in fig 1). The ultrastructural findings were consistent with ichthyosis congenita type IV in all patients and showed characteristic aggregations of bending membranes of the horn cells of epidermis. (14 and Gedde-Dahl Jr T personal communication, 2003).

Genotyping of families
We extracted genomic DNA from whole blood and genotyped it with radioactively or fluorescently labelled microsatellites. The initial genome scan consisted of 364 microsatellite it with radioactively or fluorescently labelled microsatellites. We extracted genomic DNA from whole blood and genotyped Genotyping of families

participants

RESULTS
Linkage and haplotype analysis
Genomewide scan
Genotype analysis excluded linkage to the known ARCI loci with markers that covered the six loci at chromosomes 2q34, 3p21, 14q11, 17p13, 19p12–q12, and 19p13.1–p13.2. An initial genomewide linkage analysis with 364 radioactively labelled markers was performed with four families affected by IPS. The markers were selected with an average distance

Figure 1 Pedigrees affected by IPS analysed in a study to assign the locus for IPS. All parents were obligate carriers and are numbered 1–1 and 1–2, respectively. A deceased father was not available for analysis, and deceased and unavailable children are not shown.

Figure 2 Two point LOD score calculations were made with the MLINK program of the LINKAGE package (version 5.1).

Association studies
For the association study, we used the allele sizes of genetically linked markers in the affected children and their parents to construct the parental “affected” and “unaffected” (control) haplotypes. The regional aggregation of families made the parental control haplotypes safer than non-regionally weighted control families. This corresponds to the transmission disequilibrium test (TDT). We calculated the association of allele sizes to the disease loci with the χ² distribution.

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Refinement of the interval

The family material was extended to 13 families affected by IPS from Norway and Sweden. We tested the power of our study by simulation analysis with all 13 families; this gave a maximum expected LOD score of 3.73 with marker D9S778 at \( \theta_{\text{max}} = 0 \). All families affected by IPS that we investigated supported linkage to chromosome 9q, yet with individually insignificant scores. Haplotype analysis showed key recombination events in two families. The IPS locus was restricted towards the centromere by a recombination event between markers D9S250 and D9S778. The telomeric border was defined by a recombination event between markers D9S61 and D9S63 (fig 2). This localised the IPS locus between the markers D9S250 and D9S63: a region of about 11 cm. A region consisting of 18 marker loci in the interval D9S250–D9S63 segregated completely with the phenotype in all families (table 1). This interval corresponded to a physical distance of approximately 9 Mb at 9q33.3–34.13 (table 2).

We performed association studies with the markers to identify a commonly shared haplotype in the families. This gave a positive \( \chi^2 \) score (p < 0.05) for three adjacent markers: D9S1798 (p = 0.0012), D9S1821 (p = 0.0286), and D9S112 (p = 1.1 × 10^{-7}) for allele sizes 240 bp (allele 3), 171 bp (allele 2), and 138 bp (allele 3), respectively. The results showed a possible common haplotype that consisted of these three markers. This region, however, was not shared by all individuals (loss of homozygosity). Investigation of the haplotypes that surrounded the three markers showed two possible core haplotypes, A and B, in the families. The central marker D9S904, which did not show association (p = 0.2142 for allele 1 and p = 0.4126 for allele 2), separated the two possible core haplotypes. The D9S904 marker allele was the only one shared by all individuals (13 families), which was illustrated in families IR61 and IR90 (fig 3). The two haplotypes were expanded with the centromeric markers D9S1789 and D9S1825 and the telomeric markers D9S918, D9S61, and D9S1795.

DISCUSSION

Autosomal recessive congenital ichthyosis is a heterogeneous group of disorders clinically and genetically. Ichthyosis prematurity syndrome seems to be a homogeneous subgroup clinically and from pathognomic ultrastructural features. A genomewide screen was initially performed on four families affected by IPS, and linkage to several chromosome regions was established. The material was extended to a total of 13 families, and linkage to all other chromosomes but 9q33.3–34.13 was not observed.
chromosome 9 could be excluded. Linkage to the six previously known ARCI loci was excluded with markers from each region. All families analysed in our study supported linkage to a single chromosome 9 region, and they proved linkage with a maximum cumulative LOD score of 3.73. The relatively high incidence of IPS at birth in the three counties of middle Norway with a population of 600,000 suggests a strong and ancient founder effect. Haplotype analysis of the 11 cM region on chromosome 9 showed two possible core haplotypes, A and B, in the 13 families. The central region of the two haplotypes, represented by marker D9S904, is shared in all affected individuals. We expected a single common ancestor haplotype for the mutation in all families, but the results showed two haplotypes that imply the presence of two founder mutations. One possible explanation is that historical recombination events have changed the original haplotype at a resolution beyond the markers used. Alternatively, a mutant allele may have shifted haplotype by a historic gene conversion that has resulted in two separate haplotypes for a single mutation. With the hypothesis of one or two common ancestral chromosomes, the region could be restricted by allelic association to a 1 Mb region between marker D9S112 and D9S918 (fig 3). This 9q region needs to be characterised with additional microsatellite and biallelic single nucleotide polymorphism markers in affected individuals to define and expand the possible core haplotypes.

Table 2

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Figure 3

Information on electronic databases

Accession numbers and URLs for data in this article are as follows:
- decode (http://www.decodegenetics.com/)
- Ensembl (http://www.ensembl.org/)
- Online Mendelian Inheritance in Man (OMIM) (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/omim/) (for ABCA12A (MIM 607800), ALOX12B (MIM 603741), ANGPTL2 (MIM 605001), CGI-58 (MIM 604780), LI1 (MIM 242300), LI2 (MIM 190195), LI5 (MIM 606545), LMX1B (MIM 602575), NCIE1 (MIM 242100), NCIE2 (MIM 604780), NNCI (MIM 604781), RPL12 (MIM 190195), STXBP1 (MIM 602926), TGM1 (MIM 190195), ZNF79 (MIM 194552)

Table 2: Positions for markers used on chromosome 9q33.3–34.13. Markers in the IPS locus are boxed. GenBank positions are from the Sequence Tagged Site map. The cM positions are sex averages.

**Family** | **R14** | **R15** | **R17** | **R95** | **R85** | **R90** | **R72** | **R96** | **R102** | **R108** | **S526** | **R8** | **R60** | **R91** | **S51** | **A** | **B**
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
D9S8125 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
D9S7179 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
D9S129 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
D9S1821 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
D9S112 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
D9S904 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
D9S918 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
D9S61 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
D9S1795 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |

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protein 79 (p79) (ZNF79 (MIM 194552)), ribosomal protein L12 (RPL12 (MIM 180475)), and syntaxin binding protein 1 (STXBP1 (MIM 602926)).

To further restrict the candidate region, samples from additional families affected by IPS are important for the identification of critical recombination events and common haplotypes. A future characterization of the gene responsible for IPS may lead to a better understanding of the mechanisms behind normal skin formation and possibly to a clarification of factors before premature birth and genetic predisposition to atopy.

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