Partial trisomy 22 (q11.2–q13.1) as a result of duplication and pericentric inversion

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Abstract

A case of a 27 year old male with a duplication of part of the long arm of chromosome 22 (22q11.2–q13.1) together with a pericentric inversion of the same chromosome is reported. Particular phenotypic features of note include absence of speech, persistent self-injury, lack of daily living skills, colobomata, and very poor vision. Similarities between this case and other case reports of duplications of the long arm of chromosome 22 are discussed.


Complete trisomy 22 has very rarely been reported in live births, although it is a common finding in spontaneous abortions. The existence of such a chromosomal abnormality has, however, been questioned although there have been a number of recent reports of trisomy 22 confirmed by in situ hybridisation techniques. Partial trisomies for both the proximal and distal segments of the long arm of chromosome 22 have been described by a number of authors. We report a case of a duplication of part of the long arm of chromosome 22 (22q11.2–q13.1) together with a pericentric inversion of the same chromosome.

Case report

The proband was a 27 year old male who had a moderate degree of learning disability and at the time of reporting was residing in a long stay unit for people with such impairment. Pregnancy and delivery had been normal, and although he was cared for at home for the first 11 years of his life, he spent subsequent years in long stay residential units. He had limited communication skills, poor mobility, and required help with all daily living skills. There was a longstanding history of persistent self-injury and hyperoral activity.

On physical examination he was less than 150 cm tall (<3rd centile) and weighed 70 kg (<50th centile). His head circumference was 52 cm, proportional for his height. He had a prominent forehead, low posterior hairline, prognathism of the lower jaw, tongue protrusion, and thick fleshy lips. In both eyes he had ectopic pupils with "pear shaped" colobomata with an abnormally pigmented retina and persistent pupillary membrane remnants. Vision was extremely poor in both eyes. His ears and nose appeared normal (figs 1 and 2).

He had bilateral single transverse palmar...
creases with short hands and fingers; the distal phalanx of both thumbs was particularly short. He also had short feet and toes. There was a moderate thoracic kyphosis. The distribution of body hair was normal with a normal male pattern of pubic hair growth, although he had a small penis and testes.

He had three sibs, aged 31, 31, and 19 years, who were well. There was no family history of any mental or physical disorder. He was prescribed no medication and had no psychiatric disorder associated with his learning disability.

Discussion
The majority of reported duplications of chromosome 22 involve the proximal segment of chromosome 22. Duplications of the distal segment have been reported in only a few cases, but these cases have allowed the delineation of a distal 22q syndrome. Our patient appears to represent a duplication of 22q11.1 to q13, which has only been reported once previously to our knowledge.

The phenotypic features of the present case have a number of similarities with the case of Taylor et al, notably absence of speech, persistent self-injury, lack of daily living skills, and poor vision. The case of Taylor et al has some features not present in our case, which may be accounted for by (1) slight differences in the apparent breakpoints or (2) a larger duplication in the former.

However, the phenotypic features in our patient also overlap to some extent those reported in a case by Abeliovich et al and the duplication present in that case may also overlap the region duplicated in the present case. As in that case, our patient represents a "pure" duplication of 22q, in this case from q11.2 to q13.1, without involvement of any other chromosome segment. It is noteworthy that both our patient and that reported by Abeliovich et al have colobomatous, which has been commonly reported in the "cat eye" syndrome (assigned to 22pter→q11). As suggested by Rivera, this case may represent a further case allowing the assignment of coloboma to the 22q11–12 interface. Other features in common with the case report by Abeliovich et al include prominent forehead and single transverse palmar crease. The case reported by Abeliovich et al also has a number of features in common with other reported cases of distal trisomy 22q (cleft lip and palate, micrognathia, etc) which was not observed in the present case and may therefore be accounted for by duplication of the region 22q13.1–qter.

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