

Ohnologs in the human genome are dosage balanced and frequently associated with disease

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About 30% of protein-coding genes in the human genome are related through two whole genome duplication (WGD) events. Although WGD is often credited with great evolutionary importance, the processes governing the retention of these genes and their biological significance remain unclear. One increasingly popular hypothesis is that dosage balance constraints are a major determinant of duplicate gene retention. We test this hypothesis and show that WGD-duplicated genes (ohnologs) have rarely experienced subsequent small-scale duplication (SSD) and are also refractory to copy number variation (CNV) in human populations and are thus likely to be sensitive to relative quantities (i.e., they are dosage-balanced). By contrast, genes that have experienced SSD in the vertebrate lineage are more likely to also display CNV. This supports the hypothesis of biased retention of dosage-balanced genes after WGD. We also show that ohnologs have a strong association with human disease. In particular, Down Syndrome (DS) caused by trisomy 21 is widely assumed to be caused by dosage effects, and 75% of previously reported candidate genes for this syndrome are ohnologs that experienced no other copy number changes. We propose the remaining dosage-balanced ohnologs on chromosome 21 as candidate DS genes. These observations clearly show a persistent resistance to dose changes in genes duplicated by WGD. Dosage balance constraints simultaneously explain duplicate gene retention and essentiality after WGD.

whole genome duplication | copy number variation | Down Syndrome | trisomy 21

Early in the vertebrate lineage the genome of our simple ancestor experienced radical upheaval from two rounds of whole genome duplication (WGD) and the subsequent chromosomal rearrangement and loss of many of the duplicate copies (“ohnologs”) (1–3). Although only about 20–30% of the protein-coding genes in the human genome can be traced back to these events (ref. 3 and this study), the two tetraploid episodes in vertebrate history have frequently been credited with creating the conditions for the evolution of vertebrate complexity. Understanding the patterns of ohnolog retention is crucial to develop a unified model for the evolutionary impact of WGD and many groups have uncovered significant trends such as enrichment for developmental genes (4–6) and protein complex membership (7).

Recently it was shown that mammalian ohnologs are more essential (i.e., knockout of one copy is more likely to lead to sterility or inviability) than paralogs generated by small-scale duplication (SSD) and are equally as essential as singleton genes (7). A prevalence of dosage-balanced genes among ohnologs was proposed to explain this contradiction of the theoretical, expected backup role of duplicated genes, which should buffer against such effects. Dosage balance may exist between two or more genes whose products interact or participate in the same pathway or process (8–10). According to the dosage balance hypothesis, changes in the relative dosage of gene product, such as would occur through duplication of some but not all of the balanced gene set, should be deleterious (11). WGD creates a unique opportunity for the duplication of dosage-balanced genes because it guarantees the simultaneous duplication of all components of a balanced gene set (10, 12). Furthermore, once the genes have

been duplicated by WGD, subsequent loss of individual genes would result in a dosage imbalance due to insufficient gene product, thus leading to biased retention of dosage-balanced ohnologs. In fact, evidence for preferential retention of dosage-balanced genes after WGD is accumulating (4, 7, 11–20). Copy number variation [copy number polymorphism (CNV)] describes population level polymorphism of small segmental duplications and is known to directly correlate with gene expression levels (21–24). Thus, CNV of dosage-balanced genes is also expected to be deleterious. This model predicts that retained ohnologs should be enriched for dosage-balanced genes that are resistant to subsequent SSD and to CNV in human populations.

We track SSD events in vertebrate ohnologs after WGD and in sister lineages that did not experience WGD (Fig. 1 and *SI Materials and Methods*) in order to test the dosage-balance hypothesis and show the first large-scale evidence that ohnologs are resistant to fluctuations in relative quantities by SSD and CNV. We propose that ohnologs that have experienced neither SSD nor CNV are dosage-balanced and find that, consistent with this, they are strongly associated with disease. In particular, Down Syndrome (DS) caused by trisomy 21 appears to be caused in large part by the deleterious effects of the 1.5-fold increase in dosage of ohnologs on that chromosome.

Results and Discussion

To compare the frequency of SSD of different genes over a comparable period of time, we inferred the set of genes present just after the fish-tetrapod divergence and clustered all paralogs generated by subsequent duplications into “tetrapod gene families” (Fig. 1 and *SI Materials and Methods*). Only 6.7% of ancient ohnologs have experienced SSD in this time frame (449/6,742; blastp hit with E-value < 10^{-7} and alignable region > 30%), compared to 10.1% (1,109/10,976) of ancient nonohnologs ($P = 4.8 \times 10^{-15}$, χ^2 test). This observation demonstrates that ohnologs experienced SSD less frequently than other genes in the human genome. Furthermore, when we examine genes in the ascidian (*Ciona intestinalis*) genome, a lineage that did not experience WGD, we find that genes that have not experienced lineage-specific SSD in ascidian are more likely to be orthologs of human ohnologs (30.1%; 1,804/5,998) than ascidian genes that did experience lineage-specific SSD (20.6%; 649/3,147; $P < 2.2 \times 10^{-16}$, χ^2 test). We observe the same trend for fly (31.6% vs. 20.0%; $P < 2.2 \times 10^{-16}$), worm (31.6% vs. 21.1%; $P < 2.2 \times 10^{-16}$) and sea anemone (24.6% vs. 14.6%; $P < 2.2 \times 10^{-16}$). The resistance of retained ohnologs to the otherwise prevalent process of SSD, even in distantly-related lineages that did not experience WGD,

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Table 1. Dosage-balanced ohnologs and Down Syndrome-related genes on chromosome 21

Ensembl id	Gene symbol	Full name	Reference
ENSG00000188992	<i>LPI</i>	Lipase, member 1	
ENSG00000185272	<i>RBM11</i>	RNA binding motif protein 11	
ENSG00000155313	<i>USP25</i>	Ubiquitin specific peptidase 25	
ENSG00000154640	<i>BTG3</i>	BTG family, member 3	
ENSG00000154645	<i>CHODL</i>	Chondrolectin	
ENSG00000154654	<i>NCAM2</i>	Neural cell adhesion molecule 2	
ENSG00000154721	<i>JAM2</i>	Junctional adhesion molecule 2	
ENSG00000142192	<i>APP</i>	Amyloid β (A4) precursor protein	37
ENSG00000156253	<i>RWDD2B</i>	RWD domain containing 2B	
ENSG00000156256	<i>USP16</i>	Ubiquitin specific peptidase 16	
ENSG00000156273	<i>BACH1</i>	BTB and CNC homology 1	37
ENSG00000171189	<i>GRIK1</i>	Glutamate receptor, ionotropic, kainate 1	
ENSG00000156299	<i>TIAM1</i>	T-cell lymphoma invasion and metastasis 1	
ENSG00000142168	<i>SOD1</i>	Superoxide dismutase 1	37
ENSG00000159082	<i>SYNJ1</i>	Synaptojanin 1	37
ENSG00000159110	<i>IFNAR2</i>	Interferon receptor 2	37
ENSG00000142188	<i>TMEM50B</i>	Transmembrane protein 50B	
ENSG00000159200	<i>DSCR1</i>	Down syndrome critical region gene 1	36, 37
ENSG00000159212	<i>CLIC6</i>	Chloride intracellular channel 6	
ENSG00000159216	<i>RUNX1</i>	Runt-related transcription factor 1	
ENSG00000159263	<i>SIM2</i>	Single-minded homolog 2	36
ENSG00000157540	<i>DYRK1A</i>	Dual-specificity tyrosine-(Y)-phosphorylation regulated kinase 1A	36, 37
ENSG00000157542	<i>GIRK2</i>	Potassium inwardly-rectifying channel, subfamily J, member 6	36
ENSG00000157554	<i>ERG</i>	V-ets erythroblastosis virus E26 oncogene homolog	37
ENSG00000157557	<i>ETS2</i>	V-ets erythroblastosis virus E26 oncogene homolog 2	37
ENSG00000185658	<i>BRWD1</i>	Bromodomain and WD repeat domain containing 1	
ENSG00000205581	<i>HMG14</i>	High-mobility group nucleosome binding domain 1	37
ENSG00000157578	<i>LCASL</i>	Leber congenital amaurosis 5-like	
ENSG00000185437	<i>SH3BGR</i>	SH3 domain binding glutamic acid-rich protein	
ENSG00000183778	<i>B3GALT5</i>	β -1,3-galactosyltransferase 5	
ENSG00000171587	<i>DSCAM</i>	Down syndrome cell adhesion molecule	37
ENSG00000182240	<i>BACE2</i>	β -site APP-cleaving enzyme 2	37
ENSG00000183421	<i>RIPK4</i>	Receptor-interacting serine-threonine kinase 4	
ENSG00000157617	<i>C2CD2</i>	C2 calcium-dependent domain containing 2	
ENSG00000160179	<i>ABCG1</i>	ATP-binding cassette, sub-family G (WHITE), member 1	
ENSG00000160185	<i>UBASH3A</i>	Ubiquitin associated and SH3 domain containing, A	
ENSG00000160190	<i>SLC37A1</i>	Solute carrier family 37, member 1	
ENSG00000160199	<i>PKNOX1</i>	PBX/knotted 1 homeobox 1	37
ENSG00000184900	<i>SUMO3</i>	SMT3 suppressor of mif two 3 homolog 3	
ENSG00000197381	<i>ADARB1</i>	Adenosine deaminase, RNA-specific, B	
ENSG00000173638	<i>SLC19A1</i>	Solute carrier family 19, member 1	
ENSG00000183570	<i>PCBP3</i>	Poly(rC) binding protein 3	
ENSG00000160305	<i>DIP2A</i>	DIP2 disco-interacting protein 2 homolog A	
ENSG00000160307	<i>S100B</i>	S100 calcium binding protein B	37

Where a reference is provided, those genes were previously reported as candidate DS genes. Genes in bold are not dosage-balanced ohnologs.

many studies have reported a relationship between CNV and human disease (21, 28–32). The effect of duplicating a dosage-balanced gene should be deleterious and CNV of these genes is expected to lead to human disease (33). Consistent with this expectation, we find that DBOs are significantly enriched in human disease genes from Online Mendelian Inheritance in Man (34) (OMIM; 15.9%, 736/4,638) compared to other genes (11.1%, 1,812/16,269; $P < 2.2 \times 10^{-16}$, χ^2 test), as are all ohnologs (16.5%, 1,201/7,294, of ohnologs are disease genes; $P < 2.2 \times 10^{-16}$). This suggests the generality of a strong relationship between ohnologs and human disorders, including several genes causing conditions that have previously been reported to be specifically due to dosage imbalance such as the genes coding for ABCA1, BMI1, CHRNB2, CHRNA4, CLOCK, NCAM1, NCAM2, NOTCH1, NOTCH2, NOTCH3, and PLP1 (35). Interestingly, the proportion of essential genes for DBOs (17.1%, 793/4,638) is significantly higher

than for other ohnologs (11.7%, 311/2,656; $P < 2.2 \times 10^{-16}$, χ^2 test) and nonohnologs (6.2%, 843/13,613; $P < 2.2 \times 10^{-16}$, χ^2 test), which possibly reflects a higher incidence of lethal phenotypes specifically associated with perturbation of DBOs.

Trisomy is an extreme example of CNV. Trisomy 21 results in DS, which is generally considered to be due to dosage imbalance caused by the extra copy of chromosome 21 and occurs at a frequency of more than 1/1,000 in human populations (36). Most trisomies are incompatible with life and are not observed in live births. Trisomy 21 has the least severe phenotypic consequences and is thus the most commonly observed human trisomy. In keeping with this, we observe that chromosome 21 has the smallest number of DBOs of any chromosome except the Y, and that DBOs are significantly underrepresented on chromosome 21 (observation 40 vs. expectation 56.1; $P = 0.010$), as are all ohnologs (observation 58 vs. expectation 88; $P = 4.8 \times 10^{-5}$).

Several genes on chromosome 21 have been identified as DS-related genes (36, 37). For example, a 1.5-fold increase in dosage of *DSCR1* and *DYRK1A* has been shown experimentally to lead to features of the DS phenotype (38). Table 1 lists all 40 DBOs from chromosome 21 and 16 candidate DS genes from the literature (36, 37). Strikingly, 75% (12/16) of reported DS candidates are also DBOs, whereas under a hypothesis of no association we would expect only two of the candidate genes to also be DBOs; this is a highly significant difference ($P = 5.9 \times 10^{-8}$, Fisher's exact test; Table 1). This result indicates that our results from a computational approach are consistent with previous reports based on experimental analysis. Only one previously reported DS candidate gene, *S100B*, displays CNV (gene gains: variation IDs 3,235 and 8,897). Interestingly, *S100B* is also a candidate gene for bipolar disorder where mutations in the promoter region leading to increased expression are linked to the disorder (39). In particular, duplication of a region on chromosome 21 known as the Down Syndrome critical region (DSCR) is thought to be a major determinant of the features of DS (38, 40–42), although it is still controversial (35, 43). We find significant overrepresentation of DBOs in the DSCR ($P = 0.0012$; Fig. 2). We propose that the contribution of the DSCR to the features of DS is determined by the enrichment of DBOs in the region (Fig. 2). A major goal of DS research is the identification of the particular genes on chromosome 21 and also genes on other chromosomes that contribute to the syndrome in order to advance detection and therapeutic strategies (36). We suggest that the DBOs on chromosome 21 are candidate DS genes worthy of further investigation. Furthermore, it is likely that ohnolog pairs of chromosome 21 DS candidates and DBOs (Table S3) are likely to participate in the same molecular processes and thus are candidate nonchromosome-21 genes involved in the DS phenotype.

As previously mentioned, a clear relationship has been demonstrated between gene copy number and expression level (e.g., ref. 21). However, it has been shown that a substantial proportion of triplicated genes in DS patients or DS model mice are automatically dosage-compensated (i.e., expressed at diploid levels (44–54); in Table S4) a phenomenon that would alleviate copy number constraints on dosage-balanced genes. However, their expression patterns are not consistent between studies or tissues (55). For example, the expression level of a DS gene *DYRK1A* (38) is increased 1.5-fold in DS brains but not increased in DS infants (56). Other experimentally verified, robust

DS candidates have 1.5-fold dosage in some tissues, but their dosages are compensated automatically in other tissues (Table S4). This expression variability may be at least partly responsible for variability in the DS phenotype (44). Overexpressed genes are considered to be likely DS candidate genes (44); however, measures of overexpression are hampered by the difficulty in comparing “like-with-like” caused by some global changes in the DS phenotype (55), and DBOs are not significantly over-represented among reported overexpressed genes (Table S5).

We present evidence for dosage-balance constraints acting on retained ohnologs based on their patterns of small-scale duplication over the vertebrate lineage and duplication/loss within human populations. Our results support the hypothesis that ohnologs are enriched for dosage-balanced genes (4, 7, 11–20) and shed light on duplicate gene retention and essentiality for vertebrate genomes (7). We have further shown that ohnologs are frequently associated with disease including conditions known to be caused by dosage-imbalance, and in particular we propose a significant role for DBOs on chromosome 21 in determining the features of DS and propose novel DS candidate genes based on their evolutionary patterns. Application of this methodology to other human diseases caused by dosage imbalance may be effective in identifying candidate disease genes.

Materials and Methods

Gene with Copy Number Variants. There are 20,907 protein-coding genes that have known genomic locations and that were not on alternative sequences such as chr6_COX in Ensembl release 52 were used in this study (57). We downloaded CNVs in the human genome from Database of Genomic Variants version 7 (<http://projects.tcag.ca/variation/>). When the entire coding-sequence of a gene is within one of the copy number variants, we defined the gene as a CNV gene. We used 6,136 CNV genes and 14,771 non-CNV genes in this study. Out of 6,136 CNV genes, 3,843 and 3,055 genes displayed copy loss and copy gain variants, respectively.

Ohnologs and SSD Duplicated Genes. A detailed description of the identification of ohnologs (Tables S6 and S7) and SSD duplicated genes can be found in *SI Materials and Methods*.

GO. GO ids and GO “slim” annotations for biological process and molecular function of human were downloaded from <ftp://ftp.geneontology.org/pub/go/gene-associations/> and ftp://ftp.geneontology.org/pub/go/GO_slims, respectively. We excluded the GO ids GO:0008150 (biological process unknown) and GO:0003674 (molecular function unknown). The frequency of each GO id assigned to DBOs or non-DBO ohnologs was counted. We calculated the

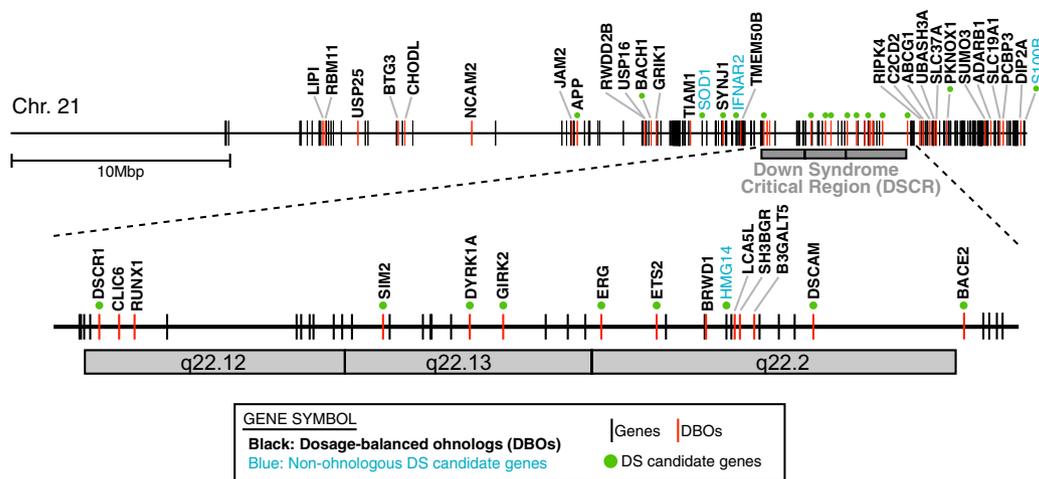


Fig. 2. Ohnologs and Down Syndrome (DS)-related genes on chromosome 21. Red and black vertical lines are ohnologs and other protein coding genes, respectively. Green dots mark reported DS candidate genes (Table 1). Gene symbols labeled in black and blue show dosage-balanced ohnologs (DBOs) and nonohnolog DS candidate genes, respectively. A gray rectangle indicates the Down Syndrome critical region covering 21q22.12, 21q22.13, and 21q22.2, which is shown in more detail below.

P value for each GO id by comparison of the observed frequency in the dataset with expectations based on a hypergeometric distribution using all genes with at least one GO id. The estimated *P* values were adjusted by Bonferroni correction. Significantly under- or overrepresented GO ids for DBOs and non-DBO ohnologs are shown in Table S1 and S2, respectively.

Members of Protein Complex. We obtained a list of members of human protein complex from Human Protein Reference Database (HPRD; <http://www.hprd.org>). We examined the enrichment for protein complex membership for DBOs.

Haploinsufficient Genes. As per Kondrashov and Koonin (26), we inferred haploinsufficient genes from genes with dominant-negative phenotypes (*SI Materials and Methods*). Disease gene lists were obtained from Lopez-Bigas et al. (58).

Underrepresentation of Dosage-Balanced Genes on Chromosome 21. We conducted simulations to investigate whether the number of DBOs on chromosome 21 was smaller than expected. We randomly shuffled gene locations of

all protein coding genes on the human genome 1,000 times, and counted the number of DBOs on chromosome 21.

Disease Genes. We obtained 2,548 disease genes from the “Morbiditymap” database produced by OMIM (<ftp://ftp.ncbi.nih.gov/repository/OMIM/morbiditymap>).

Essential Genes. Mouse essential genes are determined by phenotype data from Mouse Genome Informatics (MGI; <http://www.informatics.jax.org/>). Full details of the identification of mouse essential genes are given in Makino et al. (7). We infer human essential genes through one to one orthology relationships with the mouse genes as defined by Ensembl release 52. Finally, we defined 1,947 genes with lethal or infertile phenotypes as essential genes in human.

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