

## Succinate-CoA ligase deficiency due to mutations in *SUCLA2* and *SUCLG1*: phenotype and genotype correlations in 71 patients

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## Abstract

### Background

The encephalomyopathic mtDNA depletion syndrome with methylmalonic aciduria is associated with deficiency of succinate-CoA ligase, caused by mutations in *SUCLA2* or *SUCLG1*. We report here 25 new patients with succinate-CoA ligase deficiency, and review the clinical and molecular findings in these and 46 previously reported patients.

### Patients and results

Of the 71 patients, 50 had *SUCLA2* mutations and 21 had *SUCLG1* mutations. In the newly-reported 20 *SUCLA2* patients we found 16 different mutations, of which nine were novel: two large gene deletions, a 1 bp duplication, two 1 bp deletions, a 3 bp insertion, a nonsense mutation and two missense mutations. In the newly-reported *SUCLG1* patients, five missense mutations were identified, of which two

were novel. The median onset of symptoms was two months for patients with *SUCLA2* mutations and at birth for *SUCLG1* patients. Median survival was 20 years for *SUCLA2* and 20 months for *SUCLG1*. Notable clinical differences between the two groups were hepatopathy, found in 38 % of *SUCLG1* cases but not in *SUCLA2* cases, and hypertrophic cardiomyopathy which was not reported in *SUCLA2* patients, but documented in 14 % of cases with *SUCLG1* mutations. Long survival, to age 20 years or older, was reported in 12 % of *SUCLA2* and in 10 % of *SUCLG1* patients. The most frequent abnormality on neuroimaging was basal ganglia involvement, found in 69 % of *SUCLA2* and 80 % of *SUCLG1* patients. Analysis of respiratory chain enzyme activities in muscle generally showed a combined deficiency of complexes I and IV, but normal histological and biochemical findings in muscle did not preclude a diagnosis of succinate-CoA ligase deficiency. In five patients, the urinary excretion of methylmalonic acid was only marginally elevated, whereas elevated plasma methylmalonic acid was consistently found.

## Conclusions

To our knowledge, this is the largest study of patients with *SUCLA2* and *SUCLG1* deficiency. The most important findings were a significantly longer survival in patients with *SUCLA2* mutations compared to *SUCLG1* mutations and a trend towards longer survival in patients with missense mutations compared to loss-of-function mutations. Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy and liver involvement was exclusively found in patients with *SUCLG1* mutations, whereas epilepsy was much more frequent in patients with *SUCLA2* mutations compared to patients with *SUCLG1* mutations. The mutation analysis revealed a number of novel mutations, including a homozygous deletion of the entire *SUCLA2* gene, and we found evidence of two founder mutations in the Scandinavian population, in addition to the known *SUCLA2* founder mutation in the Faroe Islands.

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