

Original Article

Association between T-cadherin gene (CDH13) variants and severity of coronary heart disease manifestation

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Abstract: Background: Recent data shows that T-cadherin (encoded by CDH13 gene) plays an important role in atherosclerosis and coronary heart disease (CHD) onset and development. Several single nucleotide polymorphisms in CDH13 gene are associated with T-cadherin, serum adiponectin and lipid levels, but their role in CHD development is not investigated. Materials and methods: The study sample included 187 men with CHD. Association between four SNPs (rs12051272, rs4783244, rs12444338 and rs11646213) variants and type of CHD onset (myocardial infarction or stable angina pectoris) was studied. Results: G/T genotype of rs12051272 is associated with type of CHD onset (for onset with myocardial infarction OR=0.13 (0.04-0.50)). This association was confirmed for patients with arterial hypertension without dyslipidemia and obesity and for smokers. No associations between genotype and type of CHD onset were found for rs4783244, rs12444338 and rs11646213. Conclusion: This study provides evidence that genetically predetermined changes in T-cadherin expression can influence atherogenesis and CHD development.

Keywords: T-cadherin, CDH13, coronary heart disease, myocardial infarction

Introduction

Coronary heart disease (CHD) is an important medical and social problem. Currently, it has become one of the leading causes of death and disability worldwide [1]. Moreover, myocardial infarction (MI) makes a significant contribution to the structure of mortality.

Sudden heart attack is often a primary manifestation of CHD. Intravascular thrombosis leading to MI usually occurs on damaged surface of existing atherosclerotic plaque [2]. Frequently, the vulnerable plaque is not occlusive and constricts the lumen of the artery by an average of 48% [3], so subjects with such plaques are considered healthy, but they have high odds of sudden MI without previous symptoms of angina. In the other case, atherosclerotic plaque and CHD develop slower, and the first symptom of the disease is the stable angina pectoris (SAP).

The mechanism of vulnerable plaque formation is not fully understood. Recent data shows that

T-cadherin (encoded by CDH13 gene) plays an important role in atherosclerosis and CHD development [4-7]. T-cadherin, a glycosylphosphatidylinositol (GPI)-anchored member of cadherin superfamily, is a receptor for low-density lipoprotein (LDL) [8] and high-molecular-weight forms of adiponectin, adipose tissue hormone [9]. The current opinion is that anti-atherosclerotic effects of adiponectin are realized by increased formation of high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol in the liver, reduction of cholesterol in atheromatous plaque [10-12] and suppression of transformation of macrophages into foam cells [13]. Joosten et al. have shown that low levels of adiponectin are associated with development of atherosclerosis: reduced concentration of adiponectin was associated with presence of multiple atherosclerotic vascular lesions [14, 15]. MI develops as a result of arterial thrombosis due to rupture of the thin fibrous cap of atherosclerotic plaque. Cai et al. have shown that adiponectin inhibits proliferation, migration and transformation of adventitial fibroblasts [16] and inhibition of these pro-

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Table 1. Clinical characteristics of the study population (data are presented as median (upper quartile; lower quartile))

Risk factors	MI (n=108)	SAP (n=79)	P
Age of CHD onset, years	46.7 (26.0; 55.0)	46.7 (28.0; 55.0)	0.23
Dyslipidemia, % (n)	26.8 (29)	30.3 (24)	0.35
Obesity, % (n)	26.8 (29)	36.7 (29)	0.10
BMI, kg/m ²	27.6 (12.6; 41.2)	28.6 (20.9; 37.1)	0.77
Smokers, % (n)	53.7 (58)	44.3 (35)	0.13
AH, % (n)	59.2 (64)	67.0 (53)	0.34

cesses may lead to a thinner cap of atherosclerotic plaque. T-cadherin also acts as an LDL receptor [8, 17], so it can play a role in vulnerable plaque formation independently from adiponectin.

Several studies have shown that single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) in T-cadherin gene (CDH13) may influence the level of adiponectin in blood, thus some CDH13 gene SNPs possibly may lead to the development of cardiovascular disease.

In the present study we selected four SNPs in CDH13 gene and investigated the association of these SNPs with the type of CHD onset. SNPs rs12051272 (G→T) [18, 19] and rs4783244 (G→T) [18, 19] are associated with serum adiponectin levels, and rs12444338 (G→T) is also associated with CDH13 promoter activity [20]. There are no data about on rs11646213 (A→T) [19, 21], but A-allele of this SNP is associated with decreased risk of arterial hypertension (AH) and increased risk of metabolic syndrome development [21, 22]. Also all selected SNPs are associated with plasma lipids levels [21, 23-25].

Materials and methods

This study was approved by Ethics Committee at Faculty of Fundamental Medicine, Lomonosov Moscow State University.

The study population included 187 men aged 26-55 years with CHD. Blood samples and clinical data were obtained from Faculty of Fundamental Medicine (Lomonosov Moscow State University) biobank. SAP was present in 42.3% (n=79) and MI without previously diagnosed CHD was present in 57.7% (n=108). The criterion for inclusion in the first group was SAP (confirmed by stress testing or coronary angiography) without MI. The criterion for inclusion in the second group was clinically, laboratory

and instrumentally confirmed MI (typical evaluation of cardiac biomarkers of necrosis combined with electrocardiographic signs or visualization of myocardial necrosis by echocardiography or radio-nuclide imaging) without previously diagnosed CHD. Exclusion criteria for both groups were impaired glucose tolerance and diabetes mellitus.

AH was defined as blood pressure $\geq 140/90$ mmHg, or current treatment for hypertension, dyslipidaemia was defined as total cholesterol >5.3 mmol/L or low-density lipoprotein cholesterol >3.0 mmol/L or current treatment for dyslipidaemia, obesity was defined as body mass index (BMI) ≥ 30 . Arterial hypertension was present in 62.5% (n=117), obesity was present in 31.0% (n=58), dyslipidemia was present in 28.3% (n=53), 93 (49.7%) participants were smokers.

Genomic DNA was extracted from EDTA-stabilized peripheral venous blood using QIAmp DNA Blood Mini Kit and QIAcube™ automatic station (QIAGEN). Genotyping was performed by SNP Genotyping TaqMan® Assays (Applied Biosystems®).

Group differences for categorical variables were assessed by χ^2 -test. Distributions of continuous variables were tested for normality by Shapiro-Wilk test. Normally distributed variables were examined by Student's t-test, other continuous variables were examined by Mann-Whitney U-test. A P-value less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant for all tests. Odds ratios (OR) and their corresponding 95% confidence interval (CI) were used for evaluation of associations between genotype and type of CHD onset. SNP data was evaluated by SNPStats online tool. Akaike information criterion (AIC) was used for choosing the inheritance model that best fits the data (co-dominant, dominant, recessive, over-dominant and log-additive) [26].

Results

Study groups (MI and SAP) were compared against each other, taking into account the major risk factors for cardiovascular diseases. **Table 1** shows that the frequency of major risk factors for cardiovascular disease did not differ between groups.

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Table 2. Association between genotype of rs12051272 and type of CHD onset (adjusted by AH + obesity + dyslipidaemia + smoking)

Model	Genotype	SAP, n (%)	MI, n (%)	OR (95% CI)	P-value	AIC
-	G/G	66 (83.5%)	105 (97.2%)	1.00	6e-04	250.9
	G/T	13 (16.5%)	3 (2.8%)	0.13 (0.04-0.50)		

Table 3. Association between genotype of rs12051272 and type of CHD onset in groups with presence and absence of major cardiovascular risk factors

Risk factor		rs12051272 genotype		SAP, n	MI, n	OR (95% CI)
		No	Yes			
AH	No	G/G	G/T	24	43	1.00
		G/G	G/T	2	1	0.30 (0.02-3.59)
	Yes	G/G	G/T	42	62	1.00
		G/G	G/T	11	2	0.10 (0.02-0.50)
Dyslipidaemia	No	G/G	G/T	44	76	1.00
		G/G	G/T	11	3	0.15 (0.04-0.57)
	Yes	G/G	G/T	22	29	1.00
		G/G	G/T	2	0	NA
Obesity	No	G/G	G/T	41	77	1.00
		G/G	G/T	9	2	0.11 (0.02-0.55)
	Yes	G/G	G/T	25	28	1.00
		G/G	G/T	4	1	0.21 (0.02-2.07)
Smoking	No	G/G	G/T	38	49	1.00
		G/G	G/T	6	1	0.12 (0.01-1.02)
	Yes	G/G	G/T	28	56	1.00
		G/G	G/T	7	2	0.15 (0.03-0.78)

Significant differences between groups with MI and SAP were found only for rs12051272 (G→T) (**Table 2**). Because no TT homozygous patients were found, OR calculations for rs12051272 GT genotype were performed without regard to the mode of inheritance. No relationship was found between type of CHD onset and rs4783244 (P=0.83), rs11646213 (P=0.39) and rs12444338 (P=0.49) (**Tables S1-S3**).

Further, associations between genotype of studied variants and type of CHD onset were analyzed taking into account presence of major cardiovascular risk factors. The sample of 187 patients was divided into subgroups according to presence of the major risk factors for myocardial infarction: AH, dyslipidemia, obesity and smoking. Associations were tested using the inheritance model with the lowest AIC value.

No differences were found for rs4783244, rs11646213, rs12444338, but significant dif-

ferences were discovered for rs12051272 in groups with AH, without dyslipidaemia and obesity and in smokers (**Table 3**).

Discussion

T-cadherin levels in human plasma is negatively associated with coronary lesion severity and acute coronary syndrome [7], so SNPs altering this levels can be associated with MI development and the type of CHD onset. rs12444-338 (G→T) is associated not only with adiponectin levels, but also with CDH13 promoter activity [20], so we suppose presence of the effect on CHD onset firstly for this SNP.

No relationship was found between type of CHD onset and presence of rs4783244, rs11646213 and rs12444338 variants. Similar data were obtained by Morisaki et al. for rs12444338: different

variants had no effect on the development of myocardial infarction, adiponectin and LDL levels [19].

Significant differences between groups with MI and SAP were found for SNP rs12051272 (G→T): GT genotype frequency in patients with MI was lower than in group with SAP, so it is possible to suggest a protective role for T-allele. This results may seem paradoxical because T-allele carriers have lower adiponectin levels [19].

There are various reasons for this discrepancy. Firstly, we should pay attention to difficulties in evaluation of circulating adiponectin levels in patients with MI. Adiponectin accumulates in the area of heart muscle damage, binding T-cadherin [27], so decreased levels of circulating adiponectin may be secondary to myocardial infarction [28]. Also, adiponectin may have ambiguous effects on atherosclerotic plaque formation and MI development. On the one

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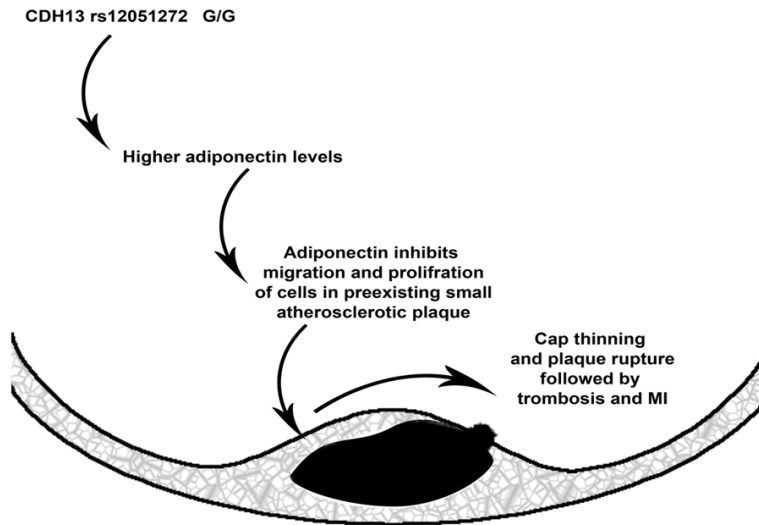


Figure 1. A possible mechanism of MI development in patients with rs12051272 G/G genotype.

hand, high adiponectin levels prevent the development of myocardial infarction due to normalization of lipid profile [10] and suppression of transformation of macrophages into foam cells [13]. On the other hand, some studies have shown that adiponectin suppresses the migration of fibroblasts and their transformation into myofibroblasts [16], so high levels of adiponectin may cause atherosclerotic plaque cap thinning and promote cap rupture with consequent arterial thrombosis. Possible mechanism of this effect is shown on **Figure 1**.

Statistically significant difference in frequencies of rs12051272 variants between groups with MI and SAP were found for patients with AH, without dyslipidemia and obesity and for smokers.

Statistically significant differences in patients without dyslipidemia and no difference in the group with dyslipidemia could be explained by larger number of patients in the first group. Nevertheless, high level of adiponectin associated with this SNP can lead to the normalization of the lipid profile. T-allele of rs12051272 is associated with higher HDL levels and lower triglycerides levels [25], and other CDH13 SNPs are associated not only with increased production of adiponectin but also with decreased levels of LDL [18, 21, 24].

Significant associations between rs12051272 variants and type of CHD onset in group of

smokers have no obvious explanation. Smoking is a risk factor for MI and may have synergic effect with G/T genotype on CHD development and atherosclerotic plaque stability.

Significant association also was discovered in the group with arterial hypertension. There are two possible explanations for such results: the prevalence of hypertensive patients in study group and effects of rs12051272 on development of AH or a synergic effect with BP level. In the present study no associations between CDH13 SNPs and AH were discovered, but Teng and

al. showed an association between rs12051272 and diastolic blood pressure [25]. Associations between other CDH13 SNPs and risk of hypertension or BP levels were also confirmed [18, 22, 29], so T-cadherin may be involved in BP regulation.

Significant differences were found in the group of patients without obesity. This result can be explained by a large number of non-obese patients. However, such association may be related to an excessive increment of plasma adiponectin levels in patients with G/G genotype and normal body weight, possibly leading to destabilization of atherosclerotic plaques.

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

None.

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Table S1. Effects of rs11646213 genotype on type of CHD onset (adjusted by AH + obesity + dyslipidaemia + smoking)

Model	Genotype	SAP, n (%)	MI, n (%)	OR (95% CI)	P-value	AIC
Codominant	T/T	35 (44.3%)	43 (39.8%)	1.00	0.33	262.3
	A/T	38 (48.1%)	50 (46.3%)	0.98 (0.53-1.84)		
	A/A	6 (7.6%)	15 (13.9%)	2.07 (0.72-5.99)		
Dominant	T/T	35 (44.3%)	43 (39.8%)	1.00	0.69	262.3
	A/T-A/A	44 (55.7%)	65 (60.2%)	1.13 (0.62-2.05)		
Recessive	T/T-A/T	73 (92.4%)	93 (86.1%)	1.00	0.14	260.3
	A/A	6 (7.6%)	15 (13.9%)	2.09 (0.76-5.75)		
Overdominant	T/T-A/A	41 (51.9%)	58 (53.7%)	1.00	0.6	262.2
	A/T	38 (48.1%)	50 (46.3%)	0.85 (0.47-1.55)		
Log-additive	-	-	-	1.25 (0.80-1.96)	0.32	261.5

Table S2. Effects of rs12444338 genotype on type of CHD onset (adjusted by AH + obesity + dyslipidaemia + smoking)

Model	Genotype	SAP, n (%)	MI, n (%)	OR (95% CI)	P-value	AIC
Codominant	T/T	21 (26.6%)	27 (25%)	1.00	0.8	264.1
	G/T	45 (57%)	59 (54.6%)	1.05 (0.52-2.12)		
	G/G	13 (16.5%)	22 (20.4%)	1.33 (0.54-3.28)		
Dominant	T/T	21 (26.6%)	27 (25%)	1.00	0.75	262.4
	G/T-G/G	58 (73.4%)	81 (75%)	1.12 (0.57-2.19)		
Recessive	T/T-G/T	66 (83.5%)	86 (79.6%)	1.00	0.52	262.1
	G/G	13 (16.5%)	22 (20.4%)	1.28 (0.60-2.76)		
Overdominant	T/T-G/G	34 (43%)	49 (45.4%)	1.00	0.82	262.5
	G/T	45 (57%)	59 (54.6%)	0.93 (0.52-1.69)		
Log-additive	-	-	-	1.14 (0.73-1.79)	0.56	262.2

Table S3. Effects of rs4783244 genotype on type of CHD onset (adjusted by AH + obesity + dyslipidaemia + smoking)

Model	Genotype	SAP, n (%)	MI, n (%)	OR (95% CI)	P-value	AIC
Codominant	G/G	17 (21.5%)	27 (25%)	1.00	0.88	264.2
	G/T	44 (55.7%)	57 (52.8%)	0.85 (0.41-1.76)		
	T/T	18 (22.8%)	24 (22.2%)	0.81 (0.34-1.95)		
Dominant	G/G	17 (21.5%)	27 (25%)	1.00	0.62	262.3
	G/T-T/T	62 (78.5%)	81 (75%)	0.84 (0.42-1.69)		
Recessive	G/G-G/T	61 (77.2%)	84 (77.8%)	1.00	0.8	262.4
	T/T	18 (22.8%)	24 (22.2%)	0.91 (0.45-1.85)		
Overdominant	G/G-T/T	35 (44.3%)	51 (47.2%)	1.00	0.83	262.5
	G/T	44 (55.7%)	57 (52.8%)	0.94 (0.52-1.70)		
Log-additive	-	-	-	0.90 (0.58-1.39)	0.64	262.3