Molecular Cloning of a Full-Length cDNA for Dentatorubral-Pallidoluysian Atrophy and Regional Expressions of the Expanded Alleles in the CNS

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Summary

Dentatorubral-pallidoluysian atrophy (DRPLA) is an autosomal dominant neurodegenerative disorder characterized by genetic anticipation and variable combinations of symptoms including myoclonus, epilepsy, cerebellar ataxia, choreoathetosis, and dementia. Recently, we discovered that DRPLA is caused by unstable expansion of a CAG repeat of a gene on the short arm of chromosome 12. We determined the consensus DRPLA cDNA sequence containing the complete coding region for 1,185 amino acids. The CAG repeat, which is expanded in DRPLA, is located 1,462 bp downstream from the putative methionine initiation codon and encodes a poly-glutamine tract. Although poly-serine and proline tracts exist near the CAG repeats, these polyserine or proline tracts did not show any polymorphisms, which is in strong contrast to the high heterogeneity in the length of the CAG repeat. Northern blot analysis revealed a 4.7-kb transcript that is widely expressed in various tissues including heart, lung, kidney, placenta, skeletal muscle, and brain. Reverse transcription-PCR analysis revealed that the expanded alleles are transcribed to levels comparable to those of normal alleles. These results indicate that there is no difference in transcriptional efficiency between expanded and normal alleles. Furthermore, mRNA from cerebellar hemispheres of DRPLA patients showed smaller sizes of CAG repeats compared with other regions of the brain, which reflects somatic mosaicism of the expanded alleles of the DRPLA gene.

Introduction

Dentatorubral-pallidoluysian atrophy (DRPLA) is an autosomal dominant neurodegenerative disorder characterized by various combinations of ataxia, myoclonus, epilepsy, choreoathetosis, and dementia (Smith et al. 1958; Naito and Oyanagi 1982). Since the report by Naito and Oyanagi (1982) describing DRPLA in 16 patients of five Japanese families), DRPLA has predominantly been described in Japanese, and the prevalence rate of DRPLA in Japanese has been estimated to be 0.4-0.7/100,000 (Inazaki et al. 1990). The age at onset is quite variable, ranging from the 1st decade to the 6th decade with the mean age at onset being 32.1 years of age (Hirayama et al. 1990; Naito 1990). Recently, we and others identified unstable expansion of a CAG repeat in a gene on the short arm of chromosome 12 as the causative mutation for DRPLA (Koide et al. 1994; Nagafuchi et al. 1994b).

To date, five neurodegenerative diseases associated with CAG repeat expansions, spinal and bulbar muscular atrophy (SBMA) (La Spada et al. 1991), Huntington disease (HD) (The Huntington's Disaease Collaborative Research Group 1993), spinocerebellar ataxia type 1 (SCA1) (Orr et al. 1993), DRPLA (Koide et al. 1994; Nagafuchi et al. 1994b) and Machado-Joseph disease (MJD) (Kawaguchi et al. 1994) have been reported. There are a number of similarities in these disorders in terms of genetic as well as clinical features: (1) there are considerable heterogeneities in clinical presentations and ages at onset even in a single pedigree; (2) there is a strong inverse correlation between the age at onset and the degree of CAG-repeat expansion; (3) male meiosis seems to be the major source for larger intergenerational increase of CAG-repeat length (Igarashi et al. 1992; La Spada et al. 1992; Andrew et al. 1993; Duyao et al. 1993; The Huntington's Disaease Collaborative Research Group, 1993; Orr et al. 1993; Kawaguchi et al. 1994; Koide et al. 1994; Nagafuchi et al. 1994b; Ikeuchi et al. 1995). In light of the similarities between these diseases, there seems to be a common mechanism for selective neuronal cell loss caused by expansions of CAG repeats. The structures of cDNAs for SBMA (Chang et al. 1988), HD (The Huntington's Disease Collaborative Research Group 1993), SCA1 (Banfi et al. 1994), MJD (Kawaguchi et al. 1994) and DRPLA (Nagafuchi et al. 1994a) causative genes have been described. Except for the androgen receptor gene, the causative gene for SBMA, the deduced amino acid sequences of the cDNAs

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Figure 1 Schematic representation of the organization of DRPLA cDNA. Coding region is indicated by a box. The position of the CAG repeat is indicated by a blackened box. Restriction sites for *AccI* (A), *Bam*HI (B), and *PstI* (P) are shown below the box. The size and the position of each cDNA clone are shown below the restriction map. Stippled region in S4-800 indicates chimeric portion. Positions of probes A and B used for further screening of DRPLA cDNA are indicated below F1. The unblackened box at the 5' side of F5-1 indicates the portion that could not be confirmed by other independent cDNA clones.

for HD, SCA1, MJD, and DRPLA causative genes do not contain any domains suggesting the functions of the gene products (The Huntington's Disease Collaborative Research Group 1993; Banfi et al. 1994; Kawaguchi et al. 1994; Nagafuchi et al. 1994*a*).

As the first step toward a better understanding of the molecular mechanisms of the selective neuronal degeneration in DRPLA, we have undertaken molecular cloning of full-length cDNA clones of the DRPLA gene. We further analyzed the expression of mutant genes containing expanded CAG repeats as well as the wild-type gene in various regions of the CNS.

Material and Methods

Screening of cDNA Libraries

Approximately 1×10^6 phage clones from an adult human occipital cortex cDNA library (Stratagene) were screened with an oligonucleotide 5'-CACCAGTCT-CAACACATCACCATCATCA (Li et al. 1993) end-labeled with [γ 32-P]ATP. Hybridization was performed at 58°C for 18 h in 6 × SSC (1 × SSC = 0.5 M NaCl, 15 mM sodium citrate) containing 0.05% sodium pyrophosphate. Finally, filters were washed for 30 min at 58°C in 6 × SSC-0.05% sodium pyrophosphate. For screening of the overlapping clones, we screened 1 × 10⁶ phage clones from a fetal human brain cDNA library (Stratagene) and an adult human occipital cortex cDNA library (Stratagene) using the 843-bp EcoRI fragment of S4-800 (fig. 1), 648-bp AccI and EcoRI fragment of F1 (probe A, fig. 1), or 851-bp BamHI and EcoRI fragment of F1 (probe B, fig. 1) as the probe. The cDNA fragments were labeled using the random priming technique (Feinberg and Vogelstein 1983). Hybridization was performed at 42°C in a solution containing 50% formamide, $5 \times SSC$, $1 \times Denhardt's solution (50)$ \times Denhardt's solution = 1% Ficoll, 1% polyvinylpyrrolidone and 1% bovine serum albumin), 20 mM sodium phosphate (pH 7.0), 10% dextran sulfate and 50 ug/ml denatured salmon sperm DNA (Wahl et al. 1979). After hybridization, filters were washed to a final stringency of $0.1 \times SSC \ 0.1\%$ sodium dodecyl sulfate (SDS) at 60°C. The λ -ZAP II clones were self-excised into pBluescript SK(-) plasmid (Short al. 1988).

Screening for the Mouse Homologue of Human DRPLA Gene

Approximately 1×10^6 phage clones from mouse teratocarcinoma and brain cDNA libraries (Stratagene) were screened with the 648-bp AccI and EcoRI fragment of F1 (probe A, fig. 1) or 851-bp BamHI and EcoRI fragment of F1 (probe B, fig. 1) as the probe. The cDNA fragments were labeled using the random priming technique (Feinberg and Vogelstein 1983). Hybridization was performed as described above. After hybridization,

-168	CAGCAGGTTTCATTGAAAACAGATCCTGCAAAAGTTCCAGGTGCCCAC	841 281	GGTGGTGGGAACCTACCTTCTGCTCCACCAGCCAACTTCCCCCATGTGACACCGAAC G G G N L P S A P P P A N F P H V T P N
-120	ACTGGAAACTTGGAGATCCTGCTTCCCAGACCACAGCTGTGGGGAACTTGGGGTGGAGCA	901	CTGCCTTCCCCCCCTC2AG2AG2CCCCTTC2AG2AC2ATCC2ACCCTTCTCCCCCCTC2CCCCCCCCCC
-60	GAGAAGTTTCTGTATTCAGCTGCCCAGGCAGAGGAGAATGGGGTCTCCACAGCCTGAAGA	301	L P P P P A L R P L N N A S A S P P G L
1 1	ATGAAGACACGACAGAATAAAGACTCGATGTCAATGAGGAGTGGACGGAAGAAAGA	961	T GGGGCCCAACCACTACCTGGTCATCTGCCCTCTCCCCACGCCATGGGACAGGGTATGGGT
61	CCTGGGCCCCCGGGAAGAACTGAGATCGAGGGGCCGGGCCTCCCCTGGAGGGGGTCAGCACG	321	GAQPLPGHLPSPHAMGQGMG Y
41	FGFREELRSRGRASPGGVST	1021	GGACTTCCTCCTGGCCCAGAGAAGGGCCCAACTCTGGCTCCTTCACCCCACTCTCTGCCT
121	TCCAGCAGTGATGGCAAAGCTGAGAAGTCCAGGCAGACAGCCAAGAAGGCCCGAGTAGAG	341	G L P P G P E K G P T L A P S P H S L P
••	5 5 5 5 5 6 K A E K 5 K Q I A K K A K V E	1081	CCTGCTTCCTCTTCTGCTCCAGCGCCCCCATGAGGTTTCCTTATTCATCCTCTAGTAGT
181 61	GAAGCCTCCACCCCAAAGGTCAACAAGCAGGGTCGGAGTGAGGAGATCTCAGAGAGTGAA	361	P A S S S A P A P P M R F P Y S S S S S
		1141	AGCTCTGCAGCAGCCTCCTCTTCCAGTTCTTCCTCCTCTCCTCCTCCCCCCCTTCCCA
241 81	AGTGAGGAGACCAATGCACCAAAAAGACCAAAACTGAGCAGGAACTCCCTCGGCCACAG S E E T N A P K K T K T E O E L P B P O	381	8 8 A A A 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 A S P F P
		1201	GCTTCCCAGGCATTGCCCAGCTACCCCCACTCTTTCCCTCCC
301 101	TCTCCCTCCGATCTGGATAGCTTGGACGGGCGGAGCCTTAATGATGGCGGCGGAGCGGC S P S D L D S L D G R S L N D D G S S D	401	A S Q A L P S Y P H S F P P T S L S V
		1261	TCCAATCAGCCCCCCAAGTATACTCAGCCTTCTCTCCCATCCCAGGCTGTGTGGAGCCAG
361	CCTAGGGATATCGACCAGGACAACCGAAGCACGTCCCCCAGTATCTACAGCCCTGGAAGT	421	S N Q P P K Y T Q P S L P S Q A V W S Q
121	P R D I D Q D N R S T S P S I Y S P G S	1321	<u> </u>
421		441	G P P P P P P Y G R L L A N S N A H P G
141	V E N D S D S S S G L S Q G P A R P Y H	1381	
481	CCACCTCCACTTTTCCTCCTTCCCCTCAACACACACACCAC	461	PFPPSTGAQSTAHPPVSTHH
161	P P P L F P P S P O P P D S T P R O P E		
		1441	CATCACCACCAGCAACAGCAACAGCAGCAGCAGCAGCAGCAGC
541 181	GCTAGCTTTGAACCCCATCCTTCTGTGACACCCACTGGATATCATGCTCCCATGGAGCCC A S F E P H P S V T P T G Y H A P M E P	481	ннн ооооооооооо оннд
		1501	AACTCTGGGCCCCCTCCTCCTGGAGCATTTCCCCACCCAC
601	CCCACATCTCGAATGTTCCAGGCTCCTCCTGGGGCCCCTCCCCCCACAGCTCTAT	501	N S G P P P G A F P H P L E G G S S H
201	рт 5 кмг 0 крр 6 крр рн р 0 Г У	1561	CACGCACACCCTTACGCCATGTCTCCCTCCCTGGGGTCTCTGAGGCCCTACCCACCAGGG
	T	521	H A H P Y A M S P S L G S L R P Y P P G
661	CCTGGGGGCACTGGTGGAGTTTTGTCTGGACCCCCAATGGGTCCCAAGGGGGGGG		
221	P G G T G G V L S G P P M G P K G G G A	1621	CCAGCACACCTGCCCCCACCTCACAGCCAGGTGTCCTACAGCCAAGCAGGCCCCCAATGGC
	^	541	P A H L P P P H S Q V S Y S Q A G P N G
721	GCCTCATCAGTGGGGGGCCCTAATGGGGGTAAGCAGCACCCCCCACCCA	1681	<u>ĊĊŦĊĊ</u> & <u>ĠŦĊŦĊŦŦĊĊŦĊŦŦĊĊ</u> & <i>`</i> ĊŦĊŦŢĊĊŢĊŢŎĊŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎŎ
241	A S S V G G P N G G K Q H P P P T T P I	561	P P V S S S S N S S S S T S Q G S Y P C
781	TCAGTATCAAGCTCTGGGGGCTAGTGGTGCTCCCCCAACAAAGCCGCCTACCACTCCAGTG		
261	S V S S S G A S G A P P T K P P T T P V	1741	TCACACCCCTCCCCTTCCCAGGGCCCCTCAAGGGGCGCCCTACCCTTTCCCACCGGTGCCT
		281	S N F S F S Q G P Q G A P Y <u>P P P P V P</u>
		1801	ACGGTCACCACCTCTTCGGCTACCCTTTCCACGGTCATTGCCACCGTGGCTTCCTCGCCA
		601	TVTTSSATLSTVIATVAS <i>S</i> P
		1861	GCAGGCTACAAAACGGCCTCCCCACCTGGGCCCCCACCGTACGGAAAGAGAGCCCCGTCC
		621	A G Y K T A S P P G P P P Y G K R A P S

Figure 2 Consensus nucleotide sequence of DRPLA cDNA. The deduced amino acid sequence is shown below the nucleotide sequence. Boldfaced letters indicate homopolymeric amino acid tracts. Italic letters indicate direct repeats of amino acid sequences. Double underline indicates a potential SH3 binding domain. Differences between those reported by Nagafuchi et al. (1994a) and ours, in the nucleotide and amino acid sequences, are noted above and below the sequences, respectively. Gaps are represented by hyphens.

filters were washed to a final stringency of $0.1 \times SSC$ 0.1% SDS at 60°C. The cDNA inserts of λ -ZAP II clones were self-excised into pBluescript SK(-) plasmid (Short et al. 1988).

Nucleotide Sequence Analysis

Nucleotide sequences were determined by cycle sequencing or the dideoxynucleotide chain termination method using double-stranded plasmid DNAs as templates with an automated fluorescent DNA sequencer (Pharmacia P-L Biochemicals) (Sanger et al. 1977; Chen and Seeburg 1985; Murray et al. 1989). Every portion of the consensus DRPLA cDNA sequence was confirmed by at least two independent clones.

Database searches were carried out using the BLAST program through GenBank (release 83), European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) (release 38), DNA Data Bank of Japan (DDBJ) (release 17), SWISS (release 28), and Protein Information Resource (release 40). The nucleotide sequence described in this paper has been deposited in GSDB, DDBJ, EMBL, and National Center for Biotechnology Information nucleotide sequence databases under the accession number of D38529.

Analysis of Polymorphisms of Poly-Proline and Poly-Serine Stretches in DRPLA Gene

The primer sequences used for amplification of polyserine tracts at amino acid residues 376-382 and 386-395 were PSF: 5'-GCCTCCTGCTTCCTCTTCTGCTC and PSR: 5'-CTTGTTGGGGGGAGGGAAAGAGT. The primer sequences used for the amplification of the polyproline tract at amino acid residues 442-447 were PPF: 5'-CCTTCTCTCCCATCCCAGGCTGTG and PPR: 5'-TGGGCATTGCTGTTGGCTAAGAGG. PCR was conducted in a final volume of 25 μ l containing 20 ng of genomic DNA, 250 nmol of each primer, 10 mM Tris HCl, pH 8.3, 50 mM KCl, 1.5 mM MgCl₂, 0.001% (w/ v) gelatin, 10% (v/v) dimethylsulfoxide, 200 mM dATP, 200 mM dCTP, 200 mM TTP, 50 mM dGTP, 150 mM 7-deaza-dGTP and 0.75 U *Taq* DNA polymerase. PCR

1921 641	CCGG PG	GGGC A	:ста У	САА К	GAC	AGC	CAC T		ACC P	CGG Ø	ATA Y	CAA K	ACC P	CGG G	GTC S	GCC P	TCC P	CTC S	CTTC F
1981	CGAA	cege	GAC	ccc	ACC	GGG	CTA	TCG	AGG	AAC	стс	ecc	ACC	TGC	AGG	ccc	AGG	GAC	CTTC
661	RТ	G	т	P	Р	G	Y	R	G	т	S	Р	P	A	G	P	G	т	F
2041 681	AAGCO K P	CGGG G	S	GCC P	CAC T	CGT V	GGG G	P	TGG G	GCC P	L	GCC P	ACC P	TGC A	GGG G	GCC P	CTC S	AGG G	CCTG L
2101 701	CCATO P S	CGCI L	IGCC P	ACC P	ACC P	ACC P	TGC A	GGC A	CCC P	TGC A	CTC S	AGG G	GCC P	GCC P	CCT L	GAG S	CGC A	CAC T	GCAG Q
2161 721	ATCA I K	AACA Q	IGGA E	GCC	GGC A	TGA E	GGA E	GTA Y	TGA E	GAC T	CCC P	CGA E	GAG S	CCC P	GGT V	GCC P	CCC P	AGC A	CCGC R
2221	AGCC	сстс	GCC	ccc	TCC	CAA	GGT	GGT	AGA	TGT	ACC	CAG	CCA	TGC	CAG	TCA	GTC	TGC	CAGG
741	S P	S	P	P	P	K	v	v	D	v	P	S	н	A	s	Q	S	A	R
2281 761	TTCA F N	ACAA K	ACA H	CCT L	GGA D	TCG R	CGG G	CTT F	CAA N	CTC S	GTG C	CGC A	GCG R	CAG S	CGA D	CCT L	GTA Y	CTT F	CGTG V
2341	CCAC	TCCA		- നേന	~~~	CCT			GAA	ece	ccc	CG3		COM	663	23.3	വന	200	2000
781	PL	E	G	S	K	L	A	K	K	RG	A P	DT	L	V	ER	K	v	RG	R A
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801	EA	CCGA E	Q Q	GCG R	AGC A	GCG R	CGA E	AGA E	AAA K	GGA E	.GCG R	CGA E	GCG R	CGA E	GCG R	GGAI E	ACG R	CGA E	gaaa K
801	E A G	CCGA E R	Q Q A	GCG R A	AGC A R	GCG R A	CGA E R	AGA E R	AAA K K	GGA E G	A B A	CGA E R	GCG R A	CGA E R	GCG R A	ggai E	ACG R	E	GAAA K
801 2461	E A G GAGC	CCGA E R GCGA	IGCA Q A	GCG R A CGA	AGC A R GAA	GCG R A GGA	CGA E R .GCG	AGA E R	AAA K K CG GCT	GGA E G TGA	ACG	CGA R R CAG	GCG R A CGT	CGA E R GAA	GCG R A GTT	GGA E GGC	ACG R TCA	GGA	SAAA K GGGC
2401 801 2461 821	GAGC	CCGA E R GCGA E	IGCA Q A IGCG R	GCG R A CGA E	AGC A R GAA K	GCG R A GGA E	CGA E R GCG R	AGA E R CGA E D	AAA K CG GCT L V	GGA G TGA E	GCG R A ACG R	CGA R CAG S	GCG R A CGT V	CGA R R GAA K	GCG R A GTT L	GGA E GGC ⁴ A	R R ICA	CGA E GGA E	GAAA K GGGC G
2461 821 2521	E A G GAGCO E R CGTGO	CCGA E R GCGA E	IGCA Q A IGCG R	GCG R A CGA E GGA	AGC A R GAA K ATG	GCG R A GGA E CCC	CGA E R GCG R ATC	AGA E R CGA E D	AAA K CG GCT L V GGG	GGA G TGA E CCC	ACG R ACG R	CGA R CAG S GCC	GCG R A CGT V CCA	CGA R R GAA K TCG	GCG R A GTT L CCC	GGAI E GGC ⁴ A ICC2	ACG R ICA Q	CGA( E GGA( E FGA)	GAAA K GGGC G ACCG
2461 801 2461 821 2521 841	E A G GAGCO E R CGTGO R A	CCGA R BCGA E CTCC P	A A A GCG R GGT V	GCG R A CGA E GGA E	AGC R GAA K ATG C	GCG R A GGA E CCC P	CGA E R GCG R ATC S	AGA E R CGA E D TCT L	AAA K CG GCT L V GGG G	GGA G TGA E CCC P	ACG R ACG R AGT V	CGA R CAG S GCC P	GCG R A CGT V CCA	CGA R GAA K TCG R	GCG R A GTT L CCC' P	GGAI B GGC ¹ A ICC: P	ACG R ICA Q ATT F	CGA( E GGA( E FGA) E	GGGC G ACCG P
2461 801 2461 821 2521 841 2581	GAGGA E A G GAGCA E R CGTGA R A GGCAA	CCGA E R GCGA E CTCC P GTGC	A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A	GCG R A CGA E GGA GGC	AGC A R GAA K ATG C TAC	GCG R GGA GGA E CCC P AGT	CGA E R GCG R ATC S GCC	AGA E R CGA E D TCT L	AAA K CG GCT L V GGG G G CTA	GGA G TGA E CCC P CCT	ACG R ACG R AGT V GGG	CGA R CAG S GCC P	GCG R A CGT V CCA H TGA	CGA R GAA K TCG R CAC	GCG R A GTT L CCC P	GGAI GGC A ICC: P	ACG R ICA Q ATT F	CGA( E GGA( E FGA) E SCG(	GGGC G ACCG P CACT
2461 801 2461 821 2521 841 2581 861	GAGGG E R CGTGG R A GGCAG G S	CCGA E R GCGA E CTCC P GTGC A	A Q A A GCG R GGT V CGT V	GCG R A CGA E GGA E GGA A	AGC A R GAA K ATG C TAC T	GCG R A GGA E CCC P AGT V	CGA E R GCG R ATC S GCC P	AGA E R CGA E D TCT L CCC P	AAA K CG GCT L V GGG G G CTA Y	GGA G TGA E CCC P CCT L	ACG R ACG R AGT V GGG G	CGA R CAG S GCC P TCC P	GCG R A CGT V CCA H TGA D	CGA R GAA K TCG R CAC T	GCG R A GTT L CCC P TCC P	GGAI GGC ¹ A ICCI P AGC ¹ A	ACG R ICA Q ATT F CTT L	CGA( E GGA( E FGA) E SCG( R	SAAA K GGGC G ACCG P CACT T
2461 801 2461 821 2521 841 2581 861 2641	GAGGA GAGCA E R CGTGA R A GGCAA G S CTCAA	CCGA E R GCGA E CTCC P GTGC A GTGA	IGCA Q A IGCG R IGCG R V IGGT V V IATA	GCG R A CGA E GGA E GGC A TGC	AGC A R GAA K ATG C TAC T CCG	GCG R A GGA E CCCC P AGT V GCC	CGA E R GCG R ATC S GCCC P TCA	AGA E R CGA E D TCT L CCCC P TGT	AAA K K CG GCT L V GGGG G CTA Y CAT	GGA E G TGA E CCCC P CCT L GTC	GCG R A ACG R AGT V GGGG G TCC	CGA R CAG S GCCC P TCC P	GCG R A CGT V CCA H TGA D CAA	CGA R GAA K TCG R CAC T TCG	GCGC R A GTT L CCCC P TCCC P CAA	GGAI GGC' A ICCCI P AGCCA	ACG R ICA Q ATT F CTT L ICC.	CGA( E GGA( E GGG( R ATT(	SAAA K GGGC G ACCG P CACT T CTAC
2461 801 2461 821 2521 841 2581 861 2641 881	E A G GAGCO E R CGTGO R A GGCAO G S CTCAO L S	R R GCGA E CTCC P GTGC A GTGA E	AGCA Q A A GGCG R SGGT V V SGGT V AATA Y	GCG R A CGA E GGA E GGC A TGC A	AGC A R GAA K ATG C T ACC T CCG R	GCG R A GGA E CCCC P AGT V GCCC P	CGA E R GCG R ATC S GCC P TCA H	AGA E R CGA E D TCT L CCCC P TGT V	AAA K K CG GCT L V GGGG G CTA Y CAT M	GGA E G TGA E CCCT P CCT L GTC S	GCG R A ACG R AGT V GGGG G TCC P	CGA R CAG S GCCC P TCCC P TCCC G	GCG R A CGT V CCA H TGA D CAA'N	CGAA R GAAA K TCG4 R CACC T TCG4 R	GCGC R A GTT L CCCC' P TCCC P CAA( N	GGAI GGC A ICCCI P AGCC A CCA H	ACG R ICA Q ATT F CTT L ICC. P	CGA( E GGA( E GGA) E GCG( R R SCG( R R F	SAAA K GGGC G ACCG P CACT T T T CTAC Y
2461 801 2461 821 2521 841 2581 861 2641 881 2701	E A G GAGCO E R CGTGC G S CTCAO L S GTGCO	R R GCGA E CTCC P GTGC A GTGA E CCCT	AGCA Q A AGCG R CGGT V CGGT V V AATA Y Y GGGG	GCG R A CGA E GGA E GGC A TGC A GGC	AGC A R GAA K ATG C T T CCG R AGT	GCG R A GGA E CCCC P AGT V GCC P GGC	CGA E R GCG R ATC S GCC P TCA H CCC	AGA E R CGA E D TCT L CCCC P TGT V GGGG	AAA K K CG GCT L V GGGG G CTA Y CAT M GCT	GGA E G TGA E CCCC P CCT L GTC S CCT	GCG R A ACG R AGT V GGG G TCC P GGG	CGA R CAG S GCCC P TCCC P TCCC G TTGG	GCG R A CGT V CCA H TGA D CAA	CGAM R GAAM K TCG4 R TCG4 R TCG4 R TCG4	GCGC R A GTTV L CCCC' P TCCC P CAAV N CCCC	GGAI B GGC ⁽¹ A TCCL P A GCCA ⁽¹ H GGC ⁽¹ )	ACG R ICA Q ATT F CTT L ICC. P CCT	CGA( E GGA( E F GGA( R SCG( R F STA(	SAAA K GGGC G ACCG P CACT T T CACT Y CAGC
2461 801 2461 821 2521 841 2581 861 2641 881 2701 901	GAGGA G GAGCA E R CGTGA R A GGCAA G S CTCAA L S GTGCA V P	CCGA E R GCGA E CTCCC P GTGC A GTGC A GTGA E CCCCT L	AGCA A AGCG R CGGT V CGGT V V AATA Y CGGG G	GCG R A CGA E GGA E GGC A TGC A GGC A	AGC A R GAA K ATG C T T CCG R C C G R V	GCG R A GGA E CCCC P AGT V GCC P GGA D	CGA E R GCG R ATC S GCC P TCA H CCC P	AGA E R CGA E D TCT L CCCC P TGT V V CGGG G	AAA K K CG GCT L V GGGG G CTA Y CAT M GCT L	GGA E G TGA E CCCC P CCT L GTC S CCT L	GCG R A ACG R AGT V GGG G G TCC P GGG G G	CGA R CAG S GCCC P TCC P TCC G TTA Y	GCG R A CGT V CCAA H TGA D CAA N CAA	CGAN R GAAN K TCGI R TCGI R TCGI V	GCGC R A GTT L CCCC ^P P TCCC P CAA N CCCC ^Q	GGA GGC A ICCC P A A GCCA H GGC A	ACG R ICA Q ATT F CTT L CCT L	CGA( E GGA( E IGA) E 3CG( R STA( Y	GGGC G ACCG P CACT T CTAC Y CAGC S
2461 801 2461 821 2521 841 2581 861 2641 881 2701 901 2761	GAGGA G GAGCA E R CGTGA R A GGCAA G S CTCAA L S GTGCA V P AGTGA	CCGA E R GCGA E CTCC P GTGC A GTGC A CCCT L	AGCA A AGCG R CGGT V CGGT V X ATA Y Y CGGG G CAGC	GCG R A CGA E GGA E GGC A TGC A TGC	AGC A R GAA K ATG C TAC T CCG R AGT V CCG	GCG R A GGA E CCCC P AGT V GCCC P GGA D GGA	CGA E R GCG R ATC S GCC P TCA H CCCC P GAG	AGA E R CGA E D TCT L CCCC P TGT V CCCC Q GGGG GGGA	AAA K K CG GCT L V GGGG G CTA Y CAT M GCT L ACG	GGA E G TGA E CCCC P CCT L GTC S CCT L GGA	GCG R A ACG R AGT V GGG G G GGG G G GGG G AGC	CGA R CAG S GCCC P TCC P TCC G TTA Y CCG	GCG R A CGT V CCA H TGA D CAA N CAA N TGA	CGA R GAA K TCG R TCG R TCG R TCG R TCG R V ACG	GCGC R A GTT L CCCC' P TCCC P CAAC N CCCCC P AGAGA	GGAI B GGC ¹ A ICCCI P A A GCCA ¹ H GGC ¹ A CCT ¹	ACG R ICA Q ATT F CTT L CCT L CCG	CGA( E GGA( E F GGA( F STA( Y TGA(	GAAA K G G ACCG P CACT T T CACT Y CAGC S CCGC
2461 801 2461 821 2521 841 2581 861 2641 881 2701 901 2761 921	GAGGA G GAGCA E R CGTGG R A GGCAA G S CTCAA L S GTGCI V P AGTGCI S D	CCGA R 3CGA E CTCC P 3TGC A CCCT L ATCC P	AGCA A AGCG R CGGT V CGGT V ATA Y CGGG G CAGC A	GCG R A CGA E GGA E GGC A TGC A TGC A	AGC A R GAA K ATG C T ACT T CCG R AGT V CCG R	GCG R A GGA E CCCC P AGT V GCCC P GGA D GGA	CGA E R GCG R ATC S GCC P TCA H CCCC P GAG	AGA E R CGA E D TCT L CCCC P TGT V CGGG G GGA	AAA K K CG GCT L V GGGG G CTA Y CAT M GCT L ACG R	GGA E G TGA E CCCC P CCT L GTC S CCT L GGA	GCG R A ACG R AGT V GGGG G G GGGG G AGC A	CGA R CAG S GCCC P TCC P TGG G TTA Y CCCG R	GCG R A CGT V CCA H TGA D CAA N CAA N CAA E	CGAA R GAAA K TCGG R TCGG R TGT V ACGL R	GCGC R A GTT L CCCC P TCCC P CAA N CCCC N CCAA N D	GGAI GGC' A TCC2 P A A GCCA' H GGC' A CCT' L	ACG R ICA Q ATT F CTT L CCC R	CGA( E 3GGA( E TGA) E 3CG( R STA( Y 3TA( Y D	GGGC G ACCG P CACT T CTAC S CAGC S CCGC R
2461 801 2461 821 2521 841 2581 861 2641 881 2701 901 2761 921 2821 881	GAGGA G GAGCA E R CGTGA R A GGCAA G S CTCAA S D CTCAA	CCGA E R 3CGA E CTCCC P 3TGC A 3TGA E CCCT L A AGCC	AGCA A AGCG R CGGT V CGGT V ATA Y CGGG G C A TGG A	GCG R A CGA E GGA E GGC A TGC A TGC A CTT	AGC A R GAA K ATG C TAC T CCG R AGT V CCG R TGA	GCG R A GGA E CCCC P AGT V GCC P GGA D GGA <i>B</i> GGT	CCGA E R GCCG R ATC S GCC P TCA H CCCC P GAG R GAA	AGA E R CGA E D TCT L CCCC P TGT V V GGGG G GGA E GGC	AAA K K CG GCT L V GGGG G CTA Y CAT M GCT L ACG R TAG	GGA E G TGA E CCCC P CCT L GTC S CCT L GGA <b>E</b> TGA	GCG R A ACG R AGT V GGG G G G G G G G G G G G G G G G G	CGA R CAG S GCCC P TCC P TCC G TTA Y CCC R GGA	GCG R A CGT V CCA H TGA D CAA N CAA N TGA E ACC	CGA R GAA K TCG R TCG R TCG R TCG R V ACG R CCT	GCGC R A GTT L CCCC ^C P CAAC N CCAAC P AGACA	GGAI GGC ¹ P AGC ¹ A GCC ¹ L IGG ²	ACG R ICA Q ATT F CTI L CCG R CCG R SGT	CGA( E GGA( E FGA) E GGA( F GGA( D CCC ²	SAAA K GGGC G ACCG P CACT T TAC Y CAGC S CCGC R CGGG
2461 801 2521 841 2581 861 2641 881 2761 901 2761 921 2821 941	GAGCA G GAGCCI E R CGTGG G S CTCAA G G G G G G G G C C C CA G G S C C C G C G C G C G C G C G C G C	CCGA R B CTCC P CTCC P GTGC A CTCC P CTCC P CTCC P CTCC P CTCC P CTCC P CTCC P CTCC P CTCC P CTCC P CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C CTCC P C C CTCC P C C C C	AGCA A AGCG R CGT V CGT V CGT V CGT V CGT V CGT V CGT C V C C C C C C C C C C C C C C C C C	GCG R A CGA E GGA E GGC A TGC A TGC A CTT F	AGC A R GAA K ATG C TAC T CCG R AGT V CCG R TGA E	GCG R A GGA E CCCC P AGT V GCCC P GGA D GGA E GGA	CCGA E R GCCG R ATC S GCCC P TCA H CCCC P GAG R GAA K	AGA E R CCGA E D TCT L CCCC P TCT V CCCC P TGT V CCCC P CCCC P CCCC P CCCC P CCCC P CCCC P CCCC P CCCC P CCCCA P CCCA P CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCA P D CCCCA P D CCCCA P D CCCCA P D CCCCA P D CCCC P D CCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCC P D D C CCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCCC P D C CCCC P D C CCCCC P C CCCCC P D C CCCCC P D C CCCCC P D C CCCCC P C C CCCC P C C CCCCC P C CCCCC P C C CCCCC P C C CCCC P C C CCCCC P C C CCCCC P C C C C C C C C C C C C C C C C C C C C	AAA K K CG GCT L V GGGG G CTA Y CAT M GCT L ACG R TAG S	GGA E G TGA E CCCC P CCT L GGCC S CCT L GGA E TGA	GCG R A ACG R AGT V GGG G G G G G G G G G G G G G G G C L	CGA R R CAG S GCC ^C P TGG G TTA TGG G CCG ^C R GGA E	GCG R A CGT V CCA H TGA D CAA N CAA N TGA E ACC P	CGAA R GAA K CAC R CAC R TCG R TCG R TCG R TCG R CAC L	GCGC R A GTTV L CCCC ^P P CAAA N CCCC ^P P AGAA D ACA ¹ H	GGAI GGC' A ICCCI P AGCCI A CCA' H GGCI CCT' L IGGG	ACG R ICA' Q ATT F CTT' L CCC R CCCG R SGT' V	CGA( E GGA( E IGA) E SCG( F STA( P IGA( D CCC' P	GGGC G ACCG P CACT T CACC Y CAGC S CCGC R G G G

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2941 981	CTC L	GCA H	CCC P	TTT F	CCC P	CTI F	TCA H	TCC P	GAG S	CCI L	GGG G	GCC P	CCT L	GGA E	GCG R	AGA E	ACG R	TCT L	AGC A	GCTG
3001	GCZ	AGC	TGG	ecc	AGC	ccı	GCG	GCC	TGA	CAT	GTC	CTA	TGC	TGA	GCG	GCT	GGC	AGC	TGA	GAGG
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3121	ראא	r:GT	GAC	TCC	CCA	TCA	CCA	CCA	GCA	സ്റ	CCA	CAT	600	CTTC	602	ርርሞ	602	ററന	CC3	CCAG
1041	N	v	T	P	н	H	Н	Q	H	s	H	I	Н	s	Н	L	H	L	Н	Q
3181	CAA	GA	IGC	ТАТ	CCA	TGC	AGC	CTC	TGC	стс	GGT	GCA	ccc	TCT	CAT	TGA	ccc	CCT	GGC	CTCA
1061	Q	D	A	I	н	A	A	s	A	s	v	н	P	L	I	D	P	L	A	S
3241	GGG	STC	<b>FCA</b>	CCT	TAC	CCG	GAT	CCC	CTA	ccc	AGC	TGG	AAC	TCT	ccc	таа	ccc	CCT	GCT	TCCT
1081	G	S	н	L	T	R	I	P	Y	P	A 	G	т	L	P	N	P	L	L	P
1101	H	P	L	H	E	N	E	V	L	R	H	Q	L	F	A	A	P	Y	R	D
3361	CTG	cco	GC	CTC	ССТ	TTC	TGC	ccc	GAT	GTC	AGC	AGC	TCA	TCA	GCT	GCA	GGC	CAT	GCA	CGCA
1121	L	P	A	S	L	S	A	P	M	S	A	A	н	Q	L	Q	A	M	н	A
3424	CAG	TC	AGC	TGA	GCT	GCA	GCG	CTT	GGC	GCT	GGA	ACA	GCA	GCA	GTG	GCT	GCA	TGC	CCA	TCAC
1141	Q	s	A	Е	L	Q	R	L	A	L	E	Q	Q	Q	W	L	н	A	н	н
3481	CCG	CTO	3CA	CAG	IGT	GCC	GCT	GCC	TGC	CCA	GGA	GGA	CTA	CTA	CAG	TCA	CCT	GAA	GAA	GGAA
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3601	TGG	AGO	CAC	200	CAC	CCT	ccc	CCT	ACC	GTG	ccc	TTG	GCC	TGC	CAC	CCA	GAG	CCA	AGA	GGGT
3661	A GCT	GC	PCA	GTT	GCA	GGG	сст	CCG	CAG	CTG	GAC.	AGA	GAG	TGG	GGG.	AGG	GAG	GGA	CAG	ACAG
3721	AAG	GCO	CAA	GGC	CCG	ATG	TGG	TGT	GCA	GAG	GTG	GGG.	AGG	TGG	CGA	GGA	TGG	GGA	CAG	AAAG
3781	G A CGC	ACI	<b>G</b> A	ATC	<b>PT</b> G	GAC	CAG	GTC	TCT	CTT	сст	TGT	ccc	ccc	TGC	TTT	гст	сст	ccc	CCAT
3841	GCC	CAI	ACC	CCT	JTG	GCC	GCC	GCC	CCT	ccc	CTG	ccc	CGT	TGG	TGT	GAT	ГАТ	TTC.	ATC	IGTT
3901	AAT	GTO	GC	FGT	TTT	GCG	TAG	CAT	CGT	GTG	CCA	ccc	CTG	ccc	стс	ccc	GAT	ccc	TGT	GTGC
3961	GCG	cco	2001	ICTO	<b>GCA</b>	ATG	тат	GCC	ССТ	TGC	ccc	TTC	ccc	ACA	ста	ата	ATT	ТАТ	ата	тата
4021	AGA	TAT	сти	ATA'	rga	CGC	тст	TAA	AAA	ала	САТ	ccc	AAC	CAA	AAC	CAA	CCA	AAC	 AAA	AACA
4081	TCC	TC	CA	ACT	ccc	CAG	- G ( A	) n												

amplification consisted of 30 cycles of 2 min denaturation at 94°C, 30 s annealing at 57°C and 1 min extension at 72°C. PCR products were electrophoresed in 5% denaturing polyacrylamide gels and were autoradiographed.

#### Northern Blot Analysis

Northern blot filters of poly A(+) RNA from various human tissues were obtained from Clonetech. Hybridization was performed as described above using the 851bp BamHI and EcoRI fragment of F1 (probe B, fig. 1) or 2.0-kb human \beta-actin cDNA obtained from Clonetech as the probe. The radioactivities of the bands were measured using a laser image analyzer (Fuji BAS2000 system) (Amemiya and Miyahara 1988).

# Extraction of RNA from Autopsied Tissues of DRPLA Patients

Frozen autopsied tissues from three DRPLA patients were used for the analysis of DRPLA mRNAs. Case N 17-76 is that of a woman with age at onset of 13 years

and death at 26 years, who showed a progressive myoclonus epilepsy (PME) phenotype. Case N17-81 is that of a man with a PME phenotype with age at onset of 8 years and death at age 18 years. Case N17-88 is that of a woman with the non-PME phenotype with age at onset at 61 years and death at age 76 years. The following regions of the CNS were available for extraction of RNA: N17-76, frontal cortex and cerebellar hemisphere; N17-81, frontal cortex, frontal white matter, striatum, and cerebellar hemisphere; and N17-88, frontal cortex, temporal cortex, occipital cortex, striatum, cerebellar hemisphere, and dentate nucleus. Total RNA was extracted by the guanidinium thiocyanate procedure (Chirgwin et al. 1979). To avoid potential contamination of genomic DNA in the total RNA preparation, the RNA was treated with RNase-free DNase (Promega) (0.5 U/µg RNA) in 40 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.9, containing 10 mM NaCl and 6 mM MgCl₂ for 15 min at 37°C, and then the RNA was extracted with phenol/chloroform to remove the DNase activity.

#### Reverse Transcription (RT)-PCR

Ten micrograms of total RNA and 20 pmol of random hexamer primers were dissolved in distilled water in a final volume of 13.5  $\mu$ l. The solution was heated at 68°C for 5 min, and then the tube was quickly chilled on ice. The solution was adjusted to 50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 8.3), 3 mM MgCl₂, 75 mM KCl, and 0.5 mM each dNTP in a final volume of 20 µl and 200 U of recombinant Moloney-murine leukemia virus reverse transcriptase was added. The reaction was continued for 60 min at 37°C. An aliquot (1/25) of each RT reaction mixtures was subjected to PCR. The primer sequences and PCR conditions for amplification of the CAG repeat were the same as those as described elsewhere (Koide et al. 1994; Nagafuchi et al. 1994b). PCR was performed in a total volume of 25 µl containing 6.25 pmol of each primers, including 1.25 pmol of the reverse primer labeled with  $[\gamma 32-P]ATP$ , 250  $\mu$ M of each dNTP, 50 mM KCl, 10 mM Tris-Hcl (pH 8.4), 2 mM MgCl₂, 2.5 M N,N,Ntrimethylglycine and 1.25 U Taq DNA polymerase (Takara Syuzo). PCR products were electrophoresed in 5% denaturing polyacrylamide sequencing gels.

# Results

# Isolation of DRPLA cDNA Clone

We initially screened an adult human occipital cortex cDNA library (Stratagene) using a ³²P-labeled oligonucleotide, 5'-CACCAGTCTCAACACATCACCATCA-TCA, as the probe (Li et al. 1993). Through screening of  $1 \times 10^6$  clones, we identified one positive clone, S4. We subcloned the 843-bp *Eco*RI fragment of S4 into pBluescript SK(-) (S4-800). To obtain larger cDNA clones, we further screened  $1 \times 10^6$  clones from a fetal human brain cDNA library (Stratagene) using the S4-800 as the probe and selected four clones (F1, F6, N8, and N21) for the further analysis.

To isolate cDNA clones extending further toward the 5' and 3' side, we screened the same libraries using the probes A and B as shown in figure 1. We selected two cDNA clones from the fetal brain library (F5-1 and F5-20) and Br3-5 from a human occipital cortex cDNA library for further analysis (fig. 1).

#### Nucleotide Sequence of Human DRPLA cDNA

The complete nucleotide sequences of these cDNA clones (F1, F5-1, F5-20, and Br3-5) were determined for both strands, and a consensus nucleotide sequence consisting of 4,267 bp was determined (figs. 1 and 2). To confirm the consensus nucleotide sequence of the DRPLA cDNA, partial nucleotide sequences of N8, F6, and N21 were also determined. Every portion of the consensus sequence of the DRPLA cDNA was confirmed by at least two independent clones. Since the 756-bp segment on the 5' side of F5-1 could not be confirmed by other clones,

we did not include this portion in the DRPLA cDNA. The presence of a poly (A) tail at position 4099 was confirmed by independent cDNA clones, although the consensus sequence for the polyadenylation was not identified (Wickens and Stephenson 1984).

Compared with the nucleotide sequence recently reported by Nagafuchi et al. (1994a), there were substantial discrepancies. In particular, there were gaps at nt 2352, 2401, and 2449 in their sequence, which led to different reading frames at amino acid residues at 785–816. The last 49 bp in the DRPLA cDNA were absent in their sequence. In addition, there were four neutral and four missense single base substitutions in the coding region, and four single base substitutions in the noncoding region compared with their sequence.

Since there is an in-frame stop codon 6 bp upstream of the putative ATG initiation codon, the ATG at position 1 is most likely the translation initiation codon, although the flanking sequence of the ATG codon is not in good agreement with Kozak's consensus sequence (Kozak 1987). Assuming the ATG codon as the translation initiation codon, the DRPLA cDNA is predicted to code for 1185 amino acids with a predicted molecular mass of 125 kD, which was named "DRPLAP" (DRPLA protein) (fig. 2).

The CAG repeat, which is expanded in DRPLA patients, is located at position 1462 and is predicted to code for a poly-glutamine tract. Poly-proline and polyserine tracts were also identified in the deduced amino acid sequence at positions 442-447 (Pro6), 376-382 (Ser7), and 386-395 (Ser10). Analysis of amino acid composition of DRPLAP indicates high percentages of proline (18.8%), serine (12.9%) and alanine (9.1%) residues. A proline-rich motif of XpPpXP (X represents a nonconserved residue;  $\Phi$  represents a hydrophobic residue; and p represents a residue that tends to be proline), which has recently been identified as a ligand for Src homology 3 (SH3) domains (Yu et al. 1994), is located at amino acid residue 595 of DRPLAP (PFPPVP) (fig. 2). A direct amino acid repeat, SPXXYKTAXPPG, is present at positions 619 and 640. The amino acid sequence of RERERE is also present at positions 812 and 926. A hydropathy plot indicates that the protein is generally hydrophilic with no obvious hydrophobic membrane-spanning regions (fig. 3).

Homology searches revealed no significantly homologous sequences except for one human expressed sequence (M78755), which was located at chromosome 1p (Adams et al. 1992). The nucleotide sequence of M78755 shows high homology to human DRPLA cDNA (63.3% identity in nucleotide sequence).

# Polymorphism Analysis of a Poly-Glutamine, Poly-Serine, or Poly-Proline Tracts Lengths in DRPLA Gene

There are poly-serine and poly-proline tracts located upstream of the CAG repeat. The poly-serine tract oc-



**Figure 3** Kyte-Doolittle hydropathy profile of the deduced amino acid sequence of DRPLAP. The hydropathy plots of 11 residues were obtained using the algorithm of Kyte and Doolittle (1982).

curs at position 376 in the deduced amino acid sequence. The 17 serine residues are interrupted by three arginine residues at the eighth position. The six proline residues occur at position 442 in the deduced amino acid sequence. To investigate whether the poly-serine and poly-proline tracts exhibit length polymorphism, we analyzed the lengths of the poly-serine and poly-proline tracts in 20 normal subjects and 20 DRPLA patients. We did not find any length polymorphisms for poly-proline or poly-serine tracts in the normal and the DRPLA patients' chromosomes. These results are in striking contrast to the high heterozygosity of the length of the poly-glutamine tract (ranging in length from 8 to 35 repeat units with 87.1% heterozygosity; 140 normal chromosomes were analyzed).

# Comparison of the CAG Repeat and the Flanking Sequences between Mouse and Human DRPLA Genes

To isolate the mouse homologue of the human DRPLA gene, we screened mouse tetracarcinoma and brain cDNA libraries (Stratagene) using the probes A and B as shown in figure 1. We isolated 30 and 25 cDNA clones from the tetracarcinoma and the brain cDNA libraries, respectively. After confirming the restriction maps using *PstI* and *Bam*HI, we selected two cDNA clones from the fetal brain cDNA library (T5-2 and B8-1) for further analysis. The nucleotide sequences of these two clones flanking the CAG repeat were compared with the sequence of human DRPLA cDNA (fig. 4). Interestingly, the mouse homologue contained only four repeat units, interrupted by CCA between the third

and fourth triplets. The nucleotide sequence of the rest of the mouse DRPLA cDNA including the poly-serine stretch, however, showed high homology to that of the human DRPLA cDNA, except for the length of the CAG repeat (84.1% identity in nucleotide sequence and 82.6% identity in deduced amino acid sequence) (fig. 4).

#### Tissue Expressions of DRPLA Gene

Northern blot analysis of poly A(+) RNA isolated from various human tissues showed that the 4.7-kb mRNA is widely expressed in various tissues including heart, lung, kidney, placenta, skeletal muscle, and brain, and, to a lesser extent, in liver. The expression was higher in fetal tissues, especially in brain. In human adult brain, the transcript is broadly expressed in amygdala, caudate nucleus, corpus callosum, hippocampus, hypothalamus, substantia nigra, subthalamic nucleus, and thalamus, which indicates that the expression of the DRPLA gene is not restricted to the dentatorubral-pallidoluysian system, the most severely affected region in DRPLA (fig. 5).

# Regional Expression of Mutant DRPLA Gene Carrying Expanded CAG Repeat in CNS

As the first step to investigate how the mutant DRPLA gene containing an expanded CAG repeat is involved in the pathogenesis of DRPLA, we analyzed regional expressions of the mutant DRPLA genes in the CNS by RT-PCR. The expanded as well as wild-type DRPLA transcripts were observed in the frontal cortex, occipital

Human	1321	GGTCCCCACCACCTCCTCCCTATGGCCGCCTCTTAGCCAACAGCAATGCCCATCCAGGC
Mouse		GGTCCACCTCCTCCTCCCTATGGCCGCCTCTTGGCCAACAACAACACCCATCCAGGC
Human	1381	CCCTTCCCTCCTCTACTGGGGCCCAGTCCACCGCCCACCCA
Mouse		CCCTTTCCCTCTACTGGGGGTCAATCTACAGCCCACCCAGCAGCCCCTACACATCAC
Human	1441	CATCACCACCAGCAACAGCAACAGCAGCAGCAGCAGCAGCAGC
Mouse		CATCACCAGCAGCAGCACACAACAACATCATCATGGA
Human	1501	AACTCTGGGCCCCCCTCCTCGGAGCATTTCCCCACCCACTGGAGGGCGGT
Mouse		AACTCTGGGCCCCCTCCACCCGGAGCGTATCCTCACCCTCTAGAGAGCAGT
B) dedu	ced ami	no acid sequence
Human	441	GPPPPPPyGRLLANSNAHPGPFPPSTGAQSTAHPPVSTHHHHHQQQQQQQQQQQQQQHHG
Mouse		G <b>PPPPPP</b> YGRLLANNNTHPGPFPP-TGGQSTAHPAAPTHHHH <b>QQQ</b> P <b>QQQ</b> HHHG
Human	501	NSGPPPPGAFPHPLEGG

#### A) nucleotide sequence

**Figure 4** Comparison of the nucleotide sequence of human DRPLA cDNA with that of mouse homologue cDNA. *A*, Nucleotide sequence. *B*, Deduced amino acid sequence. Asterisks indicate identical sequence. Bold letters in panel B indicate long homopolymeric amino acid stretches.

********* ***** NSGPPPPGAYPHPLESS

cortex, white matter, striatum, cerebellar hemisphere, and dentate nucleus (fig. 6). Moreover, the amounts of RT-PCR products from the expanded alleles were comparable to the amount of those derived from the wildtype alleles. As shown in figure 6, there was considerable variation in the size of expanded alleles among various regions of the central nervous system. It should be noted that the cerebellar hemisphere showed the smallest size of expanded alleles. Size distributions of RT-PCR products were similar to those of PCR products of genomic DNA in the corresponding regions of the CNS. In contrast to RT-PCR products of expanded alleles, those of wild-type alleles did not show any differences in size among the various regions of the CNS.

Mouse

#### Discussion

In this study we determined the nucleotide sequence of human DRPLA cDNA containing the complete coding region. The nucleotide sequence of a DRPLA cDNA has recently been described by Nagafuchi et al. (1994a). Although our nucleotide sequence essentially agrees with theirs, there are disagreements at 15 regions. In addition, the 49 bp at the 3' noncoding region was absent in their sequence. In particular, there are gaps at nt 2352, 2401, and 2449 in their sequences, which leads to different deduced amino acid residues at 785–817. In the present study, every portion of the consensus nucleotide sequence of DRPLA cDNA was confirmed by at least two independent clones, thereby excluding the possibility of cloning artifacts such as chimeric clones. Moreover, we have cloned a full-length cDNA for the mouse DRPLA gene and compared the human and mouse DRPLA cDNA sequences. The comparison further confirmed our nucleotide sequence and the reading frame as shown in figure 2. The discrepancy is presumably due to errors in the nucleotide sequence published by Nagafuchi et al. (1994a). The other single base substitutions in the coding and noncoding regions might represent polymorphisms.

It is interesting that the CAG repeat in the mouse homologue cDNA is much shorter than that in the human DRPLA cDNA. The mouse DRPLA cDNA contains only three CAG repeat units followed by CAA, which is in striking contrast to human DRPLA cDNA, in which the CAG repeat length is quite variable ranging from 8 to 35 repeat units with a mean unit of 15.2. A stretch of only four CAG repeats is interrupted at the third triplet by CAA. The CAG repeats in mouse homologue genes for other triplet repeat diseases are also shorter than those of human cDNAs. There are two repeats in the mouse androgen receptor gene (He et al. 1990), two and four repeats interrupted by CAA at the third triplet in the mouse huntingtin gene (Lin et al. 1994), eight repeats in the mouse fmr-1 gene (Ashley et al. 1992) and five repeats, with two of the five CTG triplets being





**Figure 5** Northern blot analysis of human DRPLA mRNA in various human tissues. *A*, Northern blot analysis of human DRPLA mRNA expression in various human tissues. Each lane contains 2  $\mu$ g poly A(+) RNA. Hybridization was performed using 851-bp *Bam*HI and *Eco*RI fragment of F1 (probe B; fig. 1). *B*, The ratios of radioactivities of the human DRPLA mRNA to those of  $\beta$ -actin mRNA were measured using a Fuji Bioimaging Analyzer BAS2000.

replaced by CAG in the mouse myotonic dystrophy kinase gene (Jansen et al 1992). Thus, it seems to be a general rule that CAG repeats in mouse homologues are shorter than those in human genes.

As shown in figures 1 and 2, the DRPLA cDNA contains an open reading frame coding for 1,185 amino acids. The CAG repeat codes for a poly-glutamine tract, starting at amino acid residue 488 in the middle of the coding region. The localization of the CAG repeat in the DRPLA gene is in contrast to the localization of CAG repeats near the N-termini in causative genes for other neurodegenerative diseases associated with ex-



**Figure 6** Regional distribution of expanded and wild-type DRPLA gene expression. DRPLA mRNAs derived from expanded as well as normal alleles were analyzed by RT-PCR. DRPLA mRNA of expanded alleles were expressed in all the tissues we analyzed at levels comparable to those of mRNAs derived from normal alleles. RT-PCR products showed similar size distributions to those observed for PCR products derived from genomic DNA. As a negative control, PCR was performed using RNA that was not subjected to RT reaction. AN = normal allele; and AE = expanded allele.

panded CAG repeats; CAG repeats are located at amino acid residue 18 in HD (The Huntington's Disease Collaborative Group 1993), 197 in SCA1 (Banfi et al. 1994) and 58 in SBMA (Chang et al. 1988). In the gene for MJD, which has been most recently found to be associated with an expanded CAG repeat, however, the polyglutamine tract encoded by the CAG repeat is located near the carboxy-terminus (Kawaguchi et al. 1994). Although determination of the functional initiation codon in the DRPLA gene is required, these results indicate that poly-glutamine tracts are not necessarily located near the amino-terminus.

Homopolymeric stretches of glutamine or proline, or

proline-rich proteins have been found to occur predominantly in transcription factors (Ross et al. 1993). Recently, Gerber et al. (1994) reported evidence that the length of the poly-glutamine or poly-proline tract directly modulates transcriptional activity. A unique repeat of RERERE, which is present at amino acid residues 812 and 926 in DRPLAP, is frequently found in homeotic proteins with poly-glutamine tracts (S27806 [homeotic protein BarH2] [Higashijima et al. 1992], S03170 [homeobox protein cut] [Blochlinger et al 1988], and A43742 [fsh membrane protein] [Haynes et al. 1989]). It is interesting that the fsh membrane protein has polyserine tracts as well. These findings raise the possibility that DRPLAP is a transcriptional factor, though this hypothesis must be further tested experimentally.

An interesting proline-rich motif,  $Xp\Phi PpXP$ , has been recently described as a ligand for Src homology 3 (SH3) domains found in many intracellular signaling proteins (Yu et al. 1994). Recent investigations have revealed that the SH3 domains provide an effector function to link tyrosine kinase to specific target proteins (Koch et al. 1991). The Xp $\Phi$ PpXP motif is located at amino acid residue 595 of DRPLAP (PFPPVP) (fig. 2), which raises the possibility that DRPLAP acts as an SH3 ligand.

Despite these intriguing structures, the function of the DRPLAP still remains unknown. A homology search through databases did not reveal any domains suggesting the function of the DRPLAP, either. Establishment of expression systems of DRPLAP will be required to elucidate the functions.

In the HD chromosomes, a strong linkage disequilibrium at the polymorphic CCG repeat flanking the CAG repeat has been demonstrated, which suggests the possibility of predisposition of certain chromosomes to expansion of CAG repeats (Andrew et al. 1994; Squitieri et al. 1994). With this background we investigated whether poly-serine and poly-proline stretches located at positions 376–382, 386–395, and 442–447 are polymorphic. Interestingly, we did not find any length polymorphism in these repeats. This result strongly indicates that only the CAG repeats show intrinsic instabilities, with a heterozygosity of 87.1%.

From the northern blot analysis, wide distribution of expression of the DRPLA gene was observed (fig. 5A and B). Within the CNS, the DRPLA gene is also widely expressed. Thus, the distribution of DRPLAP mRNA expression does not account for the distribution of pathological lesions in DRPLA. These findings are quite similar to those observed for huntingtin (Li et al. 1993; Hoogeveen et al. 1993; Strong et al. 1993) and ataxin 1 (Banfi et al. 1994). Furthermore, high expression of DRPLA mRNA in fetal brain suggests that DRPLAP may play an important role in the development of the CNS.

As the first step toward understanding the molecular mechanisms involved in the pathology caused by the expanded allele, we investigated how the expanded allele is expressed in tissues by RT-PCR analysis. RT-PCR products showed similar patterns to those of PCR products obtained using genomic DNAs that were extracted from the same tissues simultaneously. These results indicate that expanded alleles are transcribed at an efficiency similar to those of wild-type allele. Recently, Yazawa et al. (1995) reported that mutant DRPLAP is present at a level to similar to that of wild-type DRPLAP by the western blotting analysis using polyclonal antibodies raised against synthetic peptide. Taken together, these results indicate that there are no abnormalities in the transcription and translation of the mutant DRPLA gene. In HD and SCA1, the expanded allele has been shown to be expressed as mRNA, but the regional distribution of the mutant mRNA has not been reported (The Huntington's Disease Collaborative Research Group 1993; Banfi et al. 1994). In this study we clearly demonstrated that DRPLA mRNA derived from the expanded alleles are widely expressed in patients' CNSs at levels comparable to those of mRNAs derived from wild-type alleles.

The most striking findings are the somatic mosaicism of DRPLA mRNA expression, and that as shown in figure 6. RT-PCR products derived from cerebellar hemisphere RNA were smaller and showed few bands compared with those derived from cerebral cortex. These differences presumably reflect somatic mosaicism of genomic DNAs in various tissues (H. Takano, O. Onodera, M. Yamada, S. Igarashi, K. Oyanagi, Y. Takiyama, H. Takahashi, et al., unpublished information).

In the present study we described the nucleotide sequence of human DRPLA cDNA containing the complete coding region and regional distribution of DRPLA mRNA of expanded alleles as well as normal alleles of the DRPLA gene. We still have many unanswered questions as to the mechanisms of selective neuronal degeneration in neurodegenerative diseases. The availability of a full-length DRPLA cDNA will be useful for investigating many hypotheses proposed for the potential functions of poly-glutamine tracts. The full-length cDNA will also be useful for creating animal models.

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