Rhabdomyosarcoma-associated locus and *MYOD1* are syntenic but separate loci on the short arm of human chromosome 11

(muscle-associated genes/mapping)

Heidi J. Scrable*, Dabney K. Johnson[†], Eugene M. Rinchik[†], and Webster K. Cavenee^{*‡}

*Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, 687 Pine Avenue West, Montreal, PQ Canada H3A-1A1; and [†]Biology Division, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, P.O. Box 2009, Oak Ridge, TN 37831-8077

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ABSTRACT The MYOD1 locus is preferentially expressed in skeletal muscle and at higher levels in its related neoplasm, rhabdomyosarcoma. We have combined physical mapping of the human locus with meiotic and physical mapping in the mouse, together with synteny homologies between the two species, to compare the physical relationship between MYOD1 and the genetically ascertained human rhabdomyosarcomaassociated locus. We have determined that the myogenic differentiation gene is tightly linked to the structural gene for the M (muscle) subunit of lactate dehydrogenase in band p15.4 on human chromosome 11 and close to the p and Ldh-1 loci in the homologous region of mouse chromosome 7. Because the rhabdomyosarcoma locus maps to 11p15.5, MYOD1 is very unlikely to be the primary site of alteration in these tumors. Further, these analyses identify two syntenic clusters of muscleassociated genes on the short arm of human chromosome 11, one in the region of rhabdomyosarcoma locus that includes IGF2 and TH and the second the tightly linked MYOD1 and LDHA loci, which have been evolutionarily conserved in homologous regions of both the mouse and the rat genomes.

A major effort in contemporary cancer research is to identify loci that contribute to tumorigenesis only when both cellular alleles are inactivated (1). The paradigm of this approach is the childhood eye tumor, retinoblastoma. In this case, cytogenetic (2, 3) and molecular genetic (4) analyses targeted attention to the 13q14 region of the human genome and resulted in isolating a gene of aberrant (*i*) genomic structure (5), (*ii*) expressed transcript (6), or (*iii*) protein product (7) in tumors. Further, the introduction of a wild-type copy of the gene into tumors could suppress tumorigenecity (8).

Another tumor to which this approach may be extended is embryonal rhabdomyosarcoma, a pediatric tumor that resembles embryonic striated muscle and that may be clinically associated with the congenital malformation disorder known as the Beckwith-Wiedemann syndrome (BWS, refs. 9, 10). Some patients with BWS have constitutional cytogenetic alterations of chromosome 11 band p15 (11, 12), and subsequent genetic linkage studies indicated that predisposition to BWS resides in the same region (13, 14). This map location overlaps precisely with the smallest region of somatic reduction to homozygosity accomplished by mitotic recombination (11p15.5-pter) in embryonal rhabdomyosarcoma tumors (15). Thus, it appears that mutations that either cause or contribute to the appearance of generalized hyperplasia (BWS) or tissue-specific neoplasia (rhabdomyosarcoma) colocalize to this same limited region.

The striking histological resemblance of rhabdomyosarcoma to fetal striated muscle extends to the genes they express. Several genes have been isolated that appear to play pivotal roles in the establishment and maintenance of the myogenic phenotype. Two of these are Myod-1 (16) and myogenin (17, 18), which are preferentially expressed in skeletal muscle in the mouse and are uniquely expressed in human rhabdomyomatous neoplasms (19). In most of these tumors, the abundance of corresponding RNA transcripts from both genes is considerably larger than at any stage of human fetal striated-muscle development so far analyzed. Thus, it was of interest to learn that one of these genes, MYOD1, mapped to human chromosome 11 (20).

We have recently suggested (21) that one step in the etiology of embryonal rhabdomyosarcoma may involve inactivation of loci on the short arm of chromosome 11, perhaps by gamete-specific modification. One consequence of such an inactivation process might be deregulation of expressed genes in this chromosomal region. This recognition raised the possibility that overexpression of the myogenic gene MYOD1 and loss of function by homozygosis at the rhabdomyosarcoma locus (RdL) might be two aspects of the same step in tumorigenesis and that MYOD1 and RdL might be the same locus. As a first test of this hypothesis, we sought to determine the physical relationship between the two genes by using a combination of physical mapping to human chromosomes coupled with meiotic and physical mapping in the mouse. We report here the identification of an evolutionarily conserved muscle-specific linkage group comprising MYOD1 and the gene for the M (muscle) subunit of lactate hydrogenase (LDHA), which in humans is syntenic with, but distinct from, the RdL and discuss the possible implications of muscle-specific gene clusters on the same chromosome.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Hybridization Probes. Human MYOD1 was isolated from a cDNA library constructed from rhabdomyosarcoma RNA by hybridization at reduced stringency to the mouse Myod-1 cDNA provided by A. B. Lassar (16). The source RNA was extracted from an alveolar rhabdomyosarcoma that expresses myogenic differentiation protein (MYOD1) at a high level. The poly(A)⁺ RNA was reverse-transcribed, ligated to synthetic *Eco*RI linkers, and inserted into the *Eco*RI site of λ gt11. The 1.9 kilobase (kb) human MYOD1 cDNA was subcloned into the *Eco*RI polylinker site of the plasmid vector, Bluescript (Stratagene).

Data for marker loci on human chromosome 11 were obtained by using the following recombinant DNA probes: pINT800 (22), which reveals alleles of 2.6 and 1.0 kb in *Msp* I-digested DNA at the catalase locus in 11p13 (our results); pLDH-1, with *Thermus aquaticus* (*Taq*) I alleles of 2.3 and 1.9 kb at *LDHA* (23); p20.36, with *Pst* I alleles of 2.6 and (1.9

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Abbreviations: BWS, Beckwith-Wiedemann syndrome; RFLP, restriction fragment length polymorphism; RdL, rhabdomyosarcomaassociated locus; MYOD1, myogenic differentiation 1 protein; cM, centimorgan.

[‡]To whom reprint requests should be addressed.

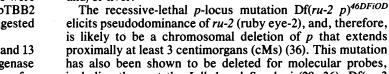
+ 0.7) kb at the *PTH* locus (24); and JW151, which gives *Hind*III restriction fragment length polymorphisms (RFLPs) at both the γ^{G} (8.0 and 7.2 kb) and γ^{A} (3.5 and 2.7 kb) loci in the β -globin cluster in 11p15.5 (25). Probe pADJ-762, an arbitrary DNA segment, reveals RFLPs at the *D11S12* locus in *Bcl* I-, *Msp* I-, and *Taq* I-digested DNA (26). Alleles with *Bcl* I are 11.6 and 4.2 kb. Alleles at the *HRAS1* locus were determined by hybridizing *Taq* I-digested DNA with pTBB2 (27) and at the insulin locus by hybridizing *Rsa* I-digested DNA with the probe pHins310 (28).

Informative RFLPs (*EcoRI*; 16 kb in *Mus musculus* and 13 kb in *Mus spretus* DNA) for the mouse lactate dehydrogenase A (*Ldh-1*) locus were followed in a backcross by use of a 1.7-kb *EcoRI-HindIII* fragment derived from the 5'-end of the pUCLD14 clone containing the *Ldh-1* gene (29).

Southern Blotting. DNA (5 μ g) was size fractionated, transferred, and hybridized as described (19). Probes were prepared by random priming (30, 31).

Somatic-Cell Hybrid Mapping Panels. The cell hybrids designated with GM prefaces were obtained from the Human Genetic Mutant Cell Repository (Camden, NJ); those designated with A₃ were from P. Pearson (University of Leiden); and those designated with WC came from this laboratory (32). Hybrids H126 (chromosome 11 only), H127 $[del(11)p15.5 \rightarrow pter]$, and H128 $[del(11)p13 \rightarrow p15.3]$ were a gift from C. H. Scoggin (University of Colorado) (33). NYX3.1, a mouse myeloma/human lymphoblastoid hybrid, with del(11)p13 \rightarrow p15.3, was a gift from E. van Heyningen (MRC Unit, Edinburgh) (34). 517B-D3-D2a, a mouse T-cell lymphoma/human 8511 leukemia cell hybrid carrying del(11)p13→pter, was a gift from C. M. Croce (Temple University) (35). Before use, deletion hybrids were typed at all available marker loci on chromosome 11 to confirm the presence or absence of corresponding DNA segments.

Mice. All mice were bred at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. For the linkage-backcross analysis, $p \ c^{ch}/p \ c^{ch}$ (p, pink-eyed dilution; c^{ch} , chinchilla) females of the 129/R1 – $p \ c^{ch}/p \ c$ segregating inbred strain were crossed to males of a closed-colony outbred M. spretus (+ +/+ +) stock. [Nuclei of a breeding colony of M. spretus (chromosomes



and/or liver.

including those at the Ldh-1 and Saa loci (29, 36). Df(ru-2p)^{46DFiOD} was placed opposite a *M. spretus* chromosome 7 (for rapid RFLP analysis) by a progeny-testing protocol. Female *M. musculus* deletion carriers [+ +/Df(ru-2p)^{46DFiOD}] were crossed to a wild-type *M. spretus* male. F₁ females that carried the *M. musculus*-derived p lethal, as opposed to the *M. musculus*-derived wild-type (+) balancer chromosome, were identified by a progeny-test cross to males of the outbred T stock (a/a, b/b, $p c^{ch}/p c^{ch}$, d se /dse, s/s). F₁ females that produced pink-eyed progeny were considered to carry a *M. spretus* chromosome opposite the lethal Df(ru-2 p)^{46DFiOD} mutation.

RESULTS

The MYOD1 Locus Maps to Human Chromosome 11p15.4. To ensure that the chromosomal position of the human MYOD1 locus detected by the 1.9-kb human cDNA was consistent with previous studies (20) using mouse Myod-1 cDNA, the former was hybridized to HindIII-digested DNA from several human-hamster somatic cell hybrids, each of which carried a different complement of human chromosomes. There was a perfect concordance of MYOD1 hybridization with the presence of human chromosome 11. To sublocalize the locus, similar analyses were performed with other human-rodent cell hybrids, four of which carry chromosomes 11 with deletions of portions of the short arm. Fig. 1A shows a Southern blot of HindIII-digested DNA hybrid-

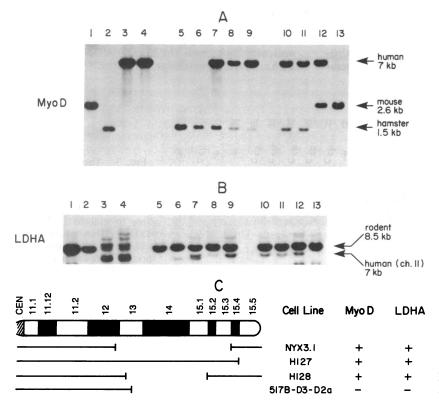


FIG. 1. The human MYOD1 and LDHA loci map to chromosome 11 band p15.4. (A) Humanrodent hybrid mapping panel used to subregionalize the locus for MYOD1 to the short arm of chromosome 11. Lanes: 1, mouse; 2, hamster; 3 and 4, human; 5 and 6, chromosome 11-deficient hybrids A₃ADA₁-D-12 and A₃G1; 7 and 8, chromosome 11-containing hybrids A₃G14 and GM7300; 9, chromosome 11-only hybrid H126; 10, deletion hybrid H127; 11, deletion hybrid H128; 12, deletion hybrid NYX3.1; 13, deletion hybrid 517B-D3-D2a. (B) Mapping panel rehybridized to the LDHA cDNA. (C) Diagram showing extent of 11p deletions in hybrids in lanes 10-13 of A, and concordance of chromosome (ch) 11 band p15.4 with the loci for MYOD1 and LDHA. MyoD, MYOD1.

denoted by SPT superscripts) were provided in 1986 by V.

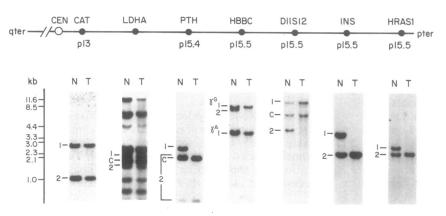
Chapman, Roswell Park Memorial Institute.] F1 females

were then crossed to $129/R1 - p c^{ch}/p c^{ch}$ males; each segregant from this cross was classified for p and c^{ch} pheno-

types encoded by the chromosome 7 loci p and c (albino), and

DNA was prepared by standard methods from its spleen

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ized to the human MYOD1 cDNA. Lanes 1-4 are control DNAs from mouse (lane 1), hamster (lane 2), and human (lanes 3 and 4), which show species-specific HindIII restriction fragments of 2.6, 1.5, and 7 kb, respectively. Lanes 5-8 are analyses of portions of the hybrid panel used in Fig. 1: A₃ADA₁-D12 (lane 5) and A₃G1 (lane 6) are missing human chromosome 11, whereas A₃G14 (lane 7) and GM7300 (lane 8) contain it. H126 (lane 9) is a hybrid with chromosome 11 as its only human chromosome. H127, H128, NYX3.1, and 517B-D3-D2a (lanes 10-13) contain DNA from hybrids with deleted chromosomes 11, missing the regions shown schematically in Fig. 1C. The 7-kb human sequence is absent in the cells missing all of human chromosome 11 (lanes 5 and 6) or carrying the largest 11p deletion (lane 13; 517B-D3-D2a) but is present in each cell carrying an entire chromosome 11 (lanes 7 and 8) and in each of the smaller 11p deletions (lanes 10-12; H127, H128, and NYX3.1, respectively). The location of MYOD1 on chromosome 11 that is consistent with these data is band p15.4, as illustrated in Fig. 1C.

A Second Muscle Locus (*LDHA*) Is Physically Colocated with MYOD1. The structural gene coding for the M (muscle) subunit of lactate dehydrogenase has been shown by genetic linkage studies to map between catalase in 11p13 and the β -globin complex in 11p15.5 (23). Because the location of MYOD1 in 11p15.4 falls within this region, we tested whether these two muscle-related genes colocalized. We rehybridized the panel of somatic cell hybrids shown in Fig. 1A to an LDHA cDNA (23); the results are shown in Fig. 1B. This cDNA hybridizes to the structural gene for lactate dehydrogenase, muscle A subunit (LDHA) as well as to its several FIG. 2. Mitotic recombination mapping positions *LDHA* proximal to *PTH* in 11p15.4. RFLP analysis at marker loci on the short arm of chromosome 11 of normal (leukocyte) (N) and tumor (T) DNA from a 6-year-old boy with a retroperitoneal embryonal rhabdomyosarcoma. Alleles at each locus are designated 1 or 2; 1 is the longer allele. A common, invariant band is designated by C. γ^{G} and γ^{A} , loci in the β -globin cluster. The marker ladder at left is derived from standards run with each gel. Spacing of marker loci in the diagram at top is not reflective of the physical distances between them. CEN, centromere.

pseudogenes scattered throughout the genome (23). However, the band specific to chromosome 11 (7 kb) is clearly present, albeit at variable intensity, in all but the largest deletion, identical to the pattern for MYODI, indicating that LDHA also cosegregates with band p15.4.

A Taq I polymorphism in LDHA (23) was used to refine the map position by mitotic recombination mapping (15). RFLP analysis of DNA from an embryonal rhabdomyosarcoma carrying a mitotic-recombinant chromosome 11 and DNA from the patient's normal peripheral blood leukocytes revealed that the recombinational event occurred in the tumor chromosomes between the marker loci CAT in 11p13 and PTH in 11p15.4, as reported (15), such that the tumor was isodisomic at all informative markers distal to and including PTH. Taq I-digested normal and tumor DNA from this patient was hybridized to the LDHA cDNA. Fig. 2 shows that both normal and tumor DNA were heterozygous at the LDHA locus, placing this locus proximal to the site of recombination in 11p15.4.

The Linkage Between MYOD1 and LDHA Is Conserved in the Mouse and Maps to a Homologous Region on Chromosome 7. The map position for the human MYOD1 locus suggested that the cognate gene in the mouse might map to one of several regions on mouse chromosome 7 known to exhibit significant conserved linkage homologies with human chromosome 11. To test this hypothesis, the human 1.9-kb MYOD1 cDNA clone was used as a hybridization probe in Southern blot analysis of segregants from a M. spretus-M. musculus backcross. The MYOD1 cDNA recognizes a 17.4kb EcoRI fragment (designated Myod-1^s) in M. spretus DNA

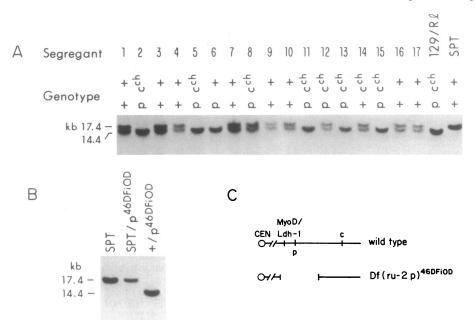


FIG. 3. The Myod-1 locus is closely linked to the p locus on mouse chromosome 7. (A) Southern blot of DNA from M. spretus-M. musculus backcross segregants hybridized to the human MYOD1 cDNA, which recognizes a 17.4-kb EcoRI fragment in M. spretus DNA and a 14.4-kb fragment in M. musculus DNA. Each segregant carries a $p c^{ch}$ chromosome in addition to the chromosome shown above each lane. (B)Hybridization of the human MYOD1 cDNA to EcoRI-digested DNA from a M. spretus-balanced lethal p-locus deletion. (C) The extent of the $Df(ru-2 p)^{46DFiOD}$ deletion around the p locus on mouse chromosome 7. SPT, M. spretus.

and a 14.4-kb EcoRI fragment (designated Myod-1^m) in M. musculus domesticus 129/R1-p c^{ch}/p c^{ch} DNA. One hundred and thirty segregants from the cross (129/R1-p c^{ch}/p c^{ch} × M. spretus) $F_1 \times 129/R1$ -p c^{ch}/p c^{ch} were typed for the chromosome 7 anchor loci p and c^{ch} (an allele of the albino locus) by inspection and for Myod-1 alleles by hybridization of EcoRI-digested splenic DNA with the MYOD1 cDNA clone. A representative blot demonstrating segregation of the Myod-1^s allele along with alleles at the p and c loci is presented in Fig. 3A. Genotypes for the entire panel of 130 segregants indicate that Myod-1 is closely linked to p; only six Myod-1-p recombinants, in addition to 20 p-c recombinants, were identified among 130 segregants. The observed recombinant classes were consistent with the gene order: centromere-Myod-1-p-c, with a Myod-1-p distance of 4.6 ± 1.8 cM (and a p-c distance of 15.4 ± 3.2 cM).

An informative EcoRI RFLP for Ldh-1 (M. musculus allele, 16 kb; M. spretus allele, 13 kb) was also followed in this cross. No recombinants were found between Myod-1 and Ldh-1 in this group of 130 segregants, implying a map distance of <1 cM (two-sided 95% confidence limits 0-2.8 cM).

These M. spretus-M. musculus backcross data were confirmed by deletion mapping. The MYOD1 cDNA clone was again used to probe EcoRI-digested DNAs from a M. spretusbalanced lethal p-locus mutation. This particular F_1 construction $[+^{SPT} + ^{SPT}/Df(ru-2 p)^{46DFiOD}]$ carries, opposite a M. spretus chromosome, a radiation-induced, prenatally lethal mutation of p (46DFiOD), which extends at least 3 cM proximal to ru-2. Fig. 3B demonstrates that the Myod-1^m allele contributed by the *M. musculus* + +/Df(ru-2p)^{46DFiOD} parent is absent in +^{SPT} + ^{SPT}/Df(ru-2p)^{46DFiOD} F₁ DNA, indicating that Myod-1 resides within the limits of the Df(ru-2 $p)^{46DFiOD}$ deletion. [The Myod-1 allele in the + +/Df(ru-2 $p)^{46DFiOD}$ parental DNA is derived from the nondeleted M. musculus balancer chromosome.] Consequently, the map position for Myod-1 within the proximally extending deletion $Df(ru-2 p)^{46DFiOD}$ is consistent with the placement of Myod-1 4.6 ± 1.8 cM proximal to the p locus in mouse chromosome 7

DISCUSSION

We have used a panel of somatic-cell hybrids to localize MYOD1 to human chromosome 11 band p15.4. We then mapped Myod-1 with respect to two anchor loci on mouse chromosome 7 by a standard three-point genetic cross to 4.6 \pm 1.8 cM proximal to p and demonstrated that Myod-1 is included in a radiation-induced, lethal-deletion mutation of p. By linking Myod-1 genetically to Ldh-1 in the mouse, we could use information from RFLP analysis of DNA from a mitotic recombinant rhabdomyosarcoma chromosome at the homologous locus (LDHA) in human DNA to position the LDHA/MYOD1 linkage group with respect to other marker loci at the proximal side of 11p15.4.

We have taken advantage of conserved syntenic groups in mouse and man to integrate the results of these several interdependent mapping experiments, each of which provided some information about the chromosomal localization and genomic environment of the *MYOD1* locus. We found that *MYOD1* is tightly linked to the gene for the M (muscle) subunit of lactate dehydrogenase, which also maps to homologous regions of mouse and human genomes, ≈ 24 cM proximal to the β -globin cluster on mouse chromosome 7 and in band p15.4, ≈ 20 cM proximal to the homologous cluster on human chromosome 11. This places this locus adjacent to the subband of 11p that harbors the putative RdL (11p15.5).

MYODI has no known RFLP in human DNA that would allow its unequivocal separation from the putative RdL by mitotic recombination mapping. However, the colocalization

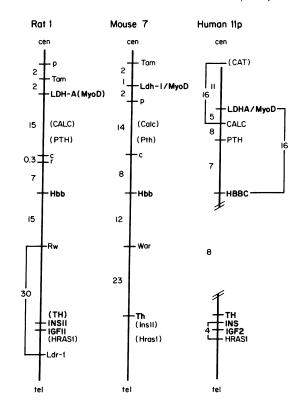


FIG. 4. Comparative maps of rat chromosome 1, mouse chromosome 7, and human chromosome 11p. p, pink-eyed dilution; Tam, tamase (rat), tosyl arginine methylesterase (mouse); LDH-A/MyoD, Ldh-1/MyoD, lactate dehydrogenase, muscle (A) subunit/MYOD1 (ref. 23; G. V. Stolc, personal communication); CALC, Calc, calcitonin (37, 38); PTH, Pth, parathyroid hormone (37, 38); c, albino; r, ru-2, ruby eye-2; Hbb, HBBC, β -hemoglobin cluster; Rw, War, warfarin resistance; TH, Th, tyrosine hydroxylase (39, 40); INS, Ins, insulin; IGFII, IGF2, insulin-like growth factor 2 (41-43); HRAS1, Hras1, Harvey rat sarcoma virus oncogene; Ldr-1, lactate dehydrogenase regulatory gene. Unless otherwise noted, these maps are based on information in refs. 44 and 45 for rat chromosome 1, refs. 46 and 47 for mouse chromosome 7, and refs. 48 and 49 for human chromosome 11p. cen, centromere; tel, telomere; numbers indicate relative distance between loci in cM.

of MYOD1 with LDHA to 11p15.4 on human chromosome 11, the reiteration of its association with Ldh-1 in the mouse, where the genes are tightly linked genetically, and the physical separation of LDHA and RdL by mitotic recombination mapping in human tumor DNA (Fig. 2) make it highly unlikely that MYOD1 is the primary site of alteration in rhabdomyosarcoma.

There are striking structural similarities between mouse chromosome 7 and rat chromosome 1 that extend to regions of the short arm of human chromosome 11 and which are illustrated in Fig. 4. Homologous genes localized in humans and at least one of the other two species are shown in boldface; homologous genes that have been chromosomally assigned but for which precise map positions are only inferred from strong interspecies homologies are indicated in parentheses. Three conserved structural pillars are apparent: *HBBC (Hbb)*, flanked by *LDH-A (Ldh-1)* towards the centromere, and the tightly linked *TH-INS-IGF2-HRAS* gene cluster towards the telomere.

The analyses described here cannot, of course, address the functional significance of the physical clustering of cell-type-specific genes such as these. It is tempting to speculate that the physical structure of these genomic regions may play a role in their specific expression. Perhaps this may function analogously to the transvection effect in *Drosophila melanogaster*, a clear example of an epigenetic mechanism in-

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volving the physical pairing of alleles on homologous chromosomes that modulates gene expression at the locus (50, 51). Certainly, our finding (15) of frequent mitotic recombination between chromosome 11 homologues in embryonal rhabdomyosarcoma supports the idea that pairing does occur in somatic cells. Furthermore, the observation that heterozygous loci that undergo loss of an allele in pediatric tumors become homozygous (i.e., pseudodiploid) rather than hemizygous suggests that two copies of the locus, even if they are identical, must be maintained for a cell to remain viable. This is consonant with the recent suggestion that the maintenance of a normal diploid cell depends on the presence of two copies of specific genes (52). Whether this specificity varies according to cell type may be reflected in synteny relationships of genes that contribute to a specific phenotype and the maintenance of certain chromosomes in clones of mutant cells that mimic this phenotype but which have otherwise unstable karyotypes.

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