Supplemental Materials

Rare human nicotinic acetylcholine receptor alpha 4 subunit (*CHRNA4*) variants affect expression and

function of high affinity nicotinic acetylcholine receptors

McClure-Begley, TD, Papke, RL, Stone, KL, Stokes, C, Levy, AD,Gelernter, J, Xie P, Lindstrom J, Picciotto,

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Supplemental Methods

cDNA Preparations:

Mutagenesis primers were:

α4R336C: 5'-CGCTCGCCATGCACGCACACC-3'

5'-GGTGTGCGTGCATGGCGAGCG-3'

α4P451L: 5'-CCCTGCCGCCTGCCCCACGGC-3'

5'-GCCGTGGGGCAGGCGGCAGGG-3'

α4R487Q: 5'-GCCGGTCTCAGAGCATCCAG-3'

5'-CTGGATGCTCTGAGACCGGC-3'.

Top10 competent bacteria were transformed with 1 μl of the PCR product and streaked onto LB agar plates supplemented with 100u/ml ampicillin. Individual colonies were picked from the plate and used to inoculate 5 ml cultures of Luria broth (LB) supplemented with 100u/ml ampicillin and grown at 37°C with agitation overnight. A 1 ml aliquot of each culture was used for DNA purification (Qiagen Miniprep). DNA was sequenced (WM Keck Foundation Genomics Services, Yale University School of Medicine) and confirmation of the mutagenesis primer sequence in the proper orientation was performed with 4Peaks (4peaks.en.softonic.com) and

BLASTn (blast.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov). For expression studies in HEK293 cells, the α 4 cDNA was excised from psp64 by restriction digestion with BamH1 and HindIII (NEB) and ligated into identical restriction sites in pcDNA3.1 Hygro (Invitrogen) with T4 DNA ligase (Invitrogen). Human β2 cDNA for HEK 293 cell transfection was kindly provided by Dr. Jon Lindstrom (University of Pennsylvania) in a pRc/CMV expression vector (Invitrogen), cloned as described previously (Wang et al, 1998). Verified mutants were amplified by inoculating 400 ml of sterile LB supplemented with 100u/ml ampicillin with 1 ml of the verified culture. cDNA was purified from the large cultures with a Qiagen Endo-free Maxi-prep kit.

Cell Culture and Transfection:

Transient transfections were performed with Lipofectamine 2000 (Invitrogen) according to the manufacturer's instructions. Briefly, cells were plated at an initial density of $50,000/cm^2$ in DMEM+10% heat-inactivated fetal bovine serum (FBS), 100u/ml penicillin, 100 µg/ml streptomycin, and 0.25 μ g/ml amphotericin B and maintained at 37°C and 5% CO₂. Cells were allowed to reach ~90% confluence before transfection (typically ~96 hours). On the day of transfection, media was removed and cells rinsed once with warm DMEM+10% FBS, and covered with fresh DMEM+10% FBS. cDNA was mixed with Lipfectamine 2000 (7 µl/μg cDNA) in Optimem (200 μl/μg cDNA) and incubated at room temp for 30 min. The Optimem:Lipofectamine:cDNA mixture was gently layered onto the media and cells were returned to the incubator. Cells were harvested 24 hr following transfection.

[3 H]-Epibatidine Binding:

Cell membranes were collected by scraping the cells into 1 ml of 0.1X binding buffer (in mM: 14 NaCl, 0.15 KCl, 0.2 CaCl₂, 0.1 MgSO₄7H2O, 2.5 HEPES hemi-Na) and aspirating from the culture surface with a pipette. The lysed cell suspension was centrifuged at 10,000g for 10 min, and frozen under a fresh volume of $0.1X$ binding buffer at -80 $^{\circ}$ C until assay. On assay day, cell

membranes were thawed and resuspended in $0.1X$ binding buffer. A 10 μ l aliquot of membrane suspension was incubated with 10 μ l of [³H]-epibatidine in ddH2O and 10 μ l 3X binding buffer to yield a final reaction volume of 30 μ . Nonspecific binding was determined in the presence of 200 μ M (-)-cytisine. For most binding studies, the final concentration of $[^3H]$ -epibatidine was 2 nM, and was varied linearly from 10 nM-4.9 pM for estimation of binding kinetic parameters. Binding took place either at 23°C for 4 hr, or overnight at 4° C. Binding was terminated by filtering the labeled cell membrane suspension onto a glass fiber filter sandwich (Pall type A/D and A/C) presoaked in 0.5% polyethylinimine. The filter was rinsed 3 times with ice-cold binding buffer, individual filters were picked and bound radioactivity was measured by scintillation counting in a Beckmann LS6000LL at 45% efficiency. Total protein content was determined by the method of Lowry (1954).

Cell surface biotinylation and biotinylated nAChR capture:

Briefly, HEK 293 cells were grown to ~80% confluence in 6-well culture plates and transfected as described above. Cells were rinsed twice with 2ml of ice-cold PBS(in mM: 136.89 NaCl, 2.68 KCl, 10.14 Na₂HPO₄, 1.76 KH₂PO₄; pH 7.4), and 1ml of PBS containing 0.25mg/ml sulfo-NHS-SS-biotin added to each well. Cell surface proteins were biotinylated by incubating with gentle agitation at 4° C for 30 minutes. Biotinylation was quenched by the addition of 10µl/well of 1mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.4; 10mM final concentration) and further incubation for 5 minutes at 23 $^{\circ}$ C. Cells were collected from the wells by gentle suction and centrifuged at 800xG for 2 minutes. The supernatant was removed and the cells gently resuspended in 1ml of TBS (in mM: 50 Tris, 150 NaCl; pH 7.5). The cells were rinsed once more with PBS and then the resulting pellet resuspended in 135 μ l of PBS and frozed at -80°C until further use. On assay day, cell samples were thawed at 23° C and vigorously resuspended in 0.1x binding buffer. Aliquots of this suspension were taken for measurement of $[^3$ H]-epibatidine binding sites and determination of total protein content. The remaining cell sample was mixed 1:1 with PBS

supplemented with 4% Triton X-100, 2mM PMSF, and 20µg/ml each of aprotonin, leupeptin, and pepstatin A to effectively solubilize all proteins. Extraction in Triton X-100 took place with gentle agitation at 23[°]C for one hour, and samples were clarified by centrifugation at 4[°]C for two minutes at 10,000xG. Aliquots of clarified detergent extracts were taken to measure total protein content. Measurement of biotinylated nAChRs was achieved by incubating 10µl of detergent extract labeled with 2nM [³H]-epibatidine with avidin-coated sepharose beads with gentle agitation for one hour at room temperature. Beads were recovered by filtering the suspension onto glass fiber filters and cpm captured was quantified by liquid scintillation counting.

Specific Immunocapture of β2* nAChRs for Proteomic Analysis:

M270-mAb295 beads were generated by reacting 0.5 µg mAb/mg of beads according to the manufacturer's instructions and stored in PBS+0.5% Triton/0.02% NaN₃ at 4°C until use. HEK 293 cells were grown and transfected as described above. For identification of the nAChRassociated proteome following IP, cells were grown in 10 cm culture plates at an initial density of 50,000 cells/cm², and protein:protein interactions were stabilized by crosslinking with dithiobis(succinimidyl)proprionate (DSP; Pierce). 24 hr following transfection, cells were dissociated from the culture surface by incubation with ice-cold PBS and gentle agitation. Cells were aspirated and placed in a 15 ml sterile conical tube and centrifuged at 800g for two minutes. The supernatant was removed and the cells resuspended in 5ml of PBS with 10% (v/v) DMSO and 1 mM DSP (final concentration). The cells were incubated with DSP on ice for 30 min, and crosslinking was terminated by the addition of 10 μ l of 1M Tris-HCl, and incubation on ice for an additional 15 min. The crosslinked cells were centrifuged at 800g for 2 min, the supernatant was removed and the cells washed gently with 5 ml of ice-cold PBS. The cells were rinsed with PBS an additional two times before being resuspended in 500 µl of extraction buffer

(PBS supplemented with 2% Triton X-100, 1 mM phenylmethane sulfonyl fluoride, and 10 μ g/ml each of aprotonin, pepstatin and leupeptin). Solubilization of nAChRs was achieved by 27 passages through a sterile 200 µl pipette tip. The solubilized protein was clarified by centrifugation at 20,000g for 20 min. The supernatants were collected and a 40 µl aliquot of extract was taken to quantify $[^{3}H]$ -epibatidine binding sites. Two 500 μ l extracts were pooled for immunocapture by M270-mAb295 Dynabeads. An aliquot of 400 µl of bead suspension (10 mg/ml) was placed in a clean 1.5 ml Eppendorf tube and the beads were separated by placing the tube in a magnetic rack. The storage buffer was aspirated and the beads rinsed with 1 ml PBS by gentle pipetting. The clarified cell extract was then transferred to the tube containing the rinsed beads and placed in a rotating tube rack at 4° C overnight. The following morning, beads were separated by placing the tube in a magnetic rack, and the supernatant was collected. A 40 µl aliquot of supernatant was collected following incubation with M270-mAb295 Dynabeads to quantify the amount of remaining $[^{3}H]$ -epibatidine binding and to quantify captured nAChRs. The beads were rinsed twice with 1.0ml PBS+0.1% Tween-20 and once with 1.0ml PBS. Proteins were eluted from the beads by the addition of 500 μ of elution buffer (500 mM NH₄OH, 500 μ M EDTA, pH 11) and incubated at 23°C with gentle rotation for 20 min. This step was repeated once to ensure complete removal of the receptor complex from the beads. The eluant was lyophilized under vacuum overnight in a DNA120 Speedvac and this dried protein was used for peptide/protein identification by LC-MS/MS.

Enzyamtic digestion, LC-MS/MS, and Phosphopeptide analysis:

The dried protein pellet was dissolved in 12 µl 8M urea, 0.4M ammonium bicarbonate (pH 8.0) prior to reduction using 1.2µl 45mM dithiothreitol (DTT- Thermo Scientific Pierce) and incubating at 37°C for 20 minutes. Alkylation was performed with 1.2µl of 100 mM iodoacetamide (IAN-Sigma-Aldrich) and incubating at ambient temperature for 20 minutes. The urea concentration

was decreased to 2M with water and the samples were digested with 3µg lysyl endopeptidase (Wako Chemicals) for 4 hours at 37°C, and then with 3µg of Promega sequencing grade trypsin for 16 hours at 37°C . After digestion, the digests were desalted using UltraMicroSpin™ C18 columns (#SUM SS18V The Nest Group Inc.) and dried under vacuum. The peptide pellets were dissolved in 50µl 0.5% TFA, 50% acetonitrile for phosphopeptide enrichment using titanium dioxide TopTips (Glygen). Each TopTip was washed 3 times (at 2,000 rpm for 1 minute each spin) with 40µl 100% acetonitrile, followed with a 0.2M sodium phosphate pH 7.0, and 0.5% TFA, 50% acetonitrile washes. The digests were then loaded and spun at 1,000 rpm for 1 minute, and then 3,000 rpm for 2 minutes. The phosphopeptides were eluted using 3 washes of 30µl 28% ammonium hydroxide. Both the enriched (Phospho) and non-bound or flow through (FT) peptide fractions were desalted using a C18 ZipTip® (Millipore). The Phospho fraction was dissolved in 3µl 70% formic acid, plus 9µl 50mM sodium phosphate; the FT fraction was dissolved in 5µl 70% formic acid, plus 20µl 50mM sodium phosphate, and 5µl of each was analyzed by LC-MS/MS. This analysis was performed on a Thermo Scientific LTQ Orbitrap Elite equipped with a Waters nanoACQUITY UPLC[®] system. Trapping was done at 5µl/min, 99% Buffer A (100% water, 0.1% formic acid), 1% Buffer B(100% acetonitrile, 0.1% formic acid) for 3 minutes on a Waters Symmetry® C18 180µm x 20mm trap column. Peptide separation was performed on a 1.7 µm, 75 µm x 250 mm nanoACQUITY UPLC[®] column (35°C) at 300 nl/min using a 91 minute linear gradient with 5% buffer B at initial conditions, 40% B at 90 minutes, and 85% B at 91 minutes. MS/MS was performed using higher-energy collisional dissociation (*HCD*) in order to get higher-quality MS/MS spectra. All MS/MS spectra were searched against the NCBInr human database using the Mascot algorithm (Matrix Science) and the Mascot Distiller program to generate Mascot compatible files. Search parameters included a peptide mass tolerance of 15 ppm with a fragment mass tolerance of 0.2Da and variable modifications of carbamidocysteine, methionine oxidation, and serine, threonine and tyrosine phosphorylation. Peptides used for protein identification had a confidence interval greater than

95%. For inclusion in subsequent analysis, a protein had to be present in at least one biological replicate and be identified by more than one unique peptide.

Electrophysiological Recording of Macroscopic Currents from α4β2 nAChRs Expressed in Xenopus Oocytes:

cRNA was prepared from cDNA clones of human $α$ 4 and $β$ 2 nAChR subunits in psp64 poly-A vectors. Subunit cRNAs (20 ng each) were injected into stage 5 oocytes and recordings were obtained within 7 days. Voltage-clamp recordings were made using OpusExpress 600A, with 300 µM acetylcholine (ACh) used as a control concentration. Raw data was processed with pClamp10 (Molecular Devices).

Figure S 1. Assembly of nicotinic binding sites is dependent on the concentration of α4 and β2 nAChR subunit-encoding cDNAs. [³H]-Epibatidine binding increases with the concentration of α 4 cDNA transfected along with 1 μg of the β2 cDNA. The amount of binding sites produced is saturable, with 1/2 maximal α4 cDNA concentration identical across α4 variants examined. Estimated maximal binding site production with respect to the common variant of α4 (black circles), is slightly elevated for α4R487Q (white triangles), decreased for α4P451L (black triangles) and identical for α4R336C (white circles).

Figure S2. α4 rare variants do not affect nicotinic binding affinity of nAChRs. Saturation of [3H] epibatidine binding illustrates that the calculated Kd for [3H]-epibatidine is not affected by any of the α4 polymorphisms examined. The Bmax (relative to common variant; black circles), is significantly lower for α4P451L (black triangles), and slightly higher for α4R487Q (white triangles). The Bmax of α4R336C variant (white circles) is identical to the common variant.

Figure S3. The α4P451L variant does appreciably affect the subcellular distribution of [³H]-epibatidine binding sites expressed as percent of total compared to the common hα4 variant.

Figure S4. Electrophysiological recordings of concatenated α4 variants expressed in Xenopus oocytes activated by acetylcholine. A. The concentration-response curve for α4R336C-β2 + α4R336C to produce LS receptors (black circles) and α4R336C-β2 + β2 to produce HS receptors (white circles) both show the presence of two distinct activation components. B. The concentrationresponse curve for α4P451L-β2 + α4P451L to produce LS receptors (black circles) shows the presence of two distinct activation components, while the concentration-response curve for α4P451L-β2 + β2 is dominated by a single HS component (white circles). C. Acetylcholine evoked responses from α4R487Q-β2 + α4R487Q are monophasic and indicative of a single LS activation component (black circles), while α4R487Q-β2 + β2 evidences a single HS activation component (white circles).

Figure S5. Electrophysiological recordings of concatenated α4 variants expressed in Xenopus oocytes activated by nicotine. A. Expression of α4R336C-β2 + α4R336C produces a monophasic concentrationresponse curve indicative of a single LS component (black circles), while expression of α 4R336C- β 2 + β 2 produces a monophasic HS curve (white circles). B. The concentration-response profile of α4P451L-β2 + α4P451L activated by nicotine is monophasic and LS (black circles) while $α4P451L-β2 + β2$ is monophasic and HS (white circles). C. Activation of α4R487Q-β2 + α4R487Q by nicotine yields a monophasic LS concentration-response profile (black circles), and nicotine activation of $α4R487Q-β2 + β2$ is monophasic and HS in nature (white circles).

Functional Characterization of hα4β2 Rare Variants as Concatamers

Since the functional parameters of α 4 β 2 nAChRs are strongly dependent on the pentameric arrangement in which they assemble, we tested the three rare α 4 variants as components of nAChR concatamers. Concatenated subunit dimers (α4-β2) expressed in *Xenopus* oocytes either alone or with additional free α or β subunits reliably assemble into defined stoichiometries. We expected that constraining nAChR stoichiometry by expressing the rare α 4 variants as part of a concatenated dimer with β2 would allow measures of functional parameters of HS and LS forms in isolation. Surprisingly, curve-fit calculations of the concentration-response relationships for ACh were not uniform, and under certain conditions the presence of two distinct activation components were observed. For (α4R336C-β2)+β2, the ACh concentration-response curve shows the presence of both HS and LS components, even though the mix of concatamer with free β2 typically produces a pure HS population of nAChRs (Table S3A). For (α4R336C- β 2)+ α 4R336C, again we observed a concentration-response profile with both HS and LS components (Figure S4A). Instead, (α4P451L-β2)+β2, reliably produced a single HS activation profile, whereas $(\alpha$ 4P451L- β 2)+ α 4P451L, resulted in both HS and LS ACh responses (Figure S4B). Finally, either $(\alpha 4R487Q) + \alpha 4R487Q$ or $+\beta 2$, produces a uniform population of LS or HS activation components, respectively (Figure S4C). In contrast, there was only a single activation component in response to nicotine challenge for each α 4 rare variant (Figure S5, Table S3B). Concatenated $α4$ - $β2$ dimers with the addition of free $α4$ or $β2$ subunits normally produce highly constrained expression of LS or HS receptors (as it did in the case of α 4R487Q). With activation of α4R336C and α4P451L concatamers by ACh, there was still a significant biphasic concentration-response profile. This effect was absent when nicotine was applied as the agonist, probably because of greater channel blockade by nicotine at concentrations >30μM. We

hypothesize that assembly of α 4P451L is so inefficient that a significant portion of the concatamers form dipentamers rather than incorporate free $α$ 4P451L subunit. When free $β$ 2 is added to the α4P451L-β2 concatamer, by contrast, HS receptors are assembled as expected.

Table S1

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Table S2

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Table S3

\overline{a}

$\bf b$

Section S1:

- 1. Main effect of [α4 cDNA]: One-way ANOVA, [α4 cDNA]: α4: $F_{(2,11)} = 251.2$, p<0.0009; α4R336C: F_(2,11)=183.4, p<0.0009; α4P451L: F_(2,11)=20.5, p<0.0009; α4R487Q: $F_{(2.11)} = 161.1$, p<0.0009
- 2. Main effect of hα4 Variant on ½ max [α4 cDNA]: One-way ANOVA,1/2max [cDNA]: $F_{(3.15)} = 1.71$, p=0.22
- 3. Main effect of hα4 Variant on estimated max [³H]-epibatidine binding: One-way ANOVA Max Expression: $F_{(3,15)} = 5.2$, p=0.016
- 4. Main effect of hα4 Variant on [³H]-epibatidine Bmax: One-way ANOVA Bmax: $F_{(3,11)}$ =29.14, p<0.0009; Dunnett's post-hoc: Bmax: control vs P451L, p=0.001
- 5. Main Effect of hα4 Variant on [³H]-epibatidine Kd: One-way ANOVA Kd: F_(3,11)=1.25, p=0.35
- 6. Main effect of 24hr nicotine treatment on $[^3H]$ -epibatidine binding: one-way ANOVA, [Nicotine]: α 4control: $F_{(5,47)} = 7.72$, p<0.0009; α 4R336C: $F_{(5,47)} = 19.42$, p<0.0009; α 4P451L: $F_{(5,47)}$ =13.52, p<0.0009; α4R487Q: $F_{(5,47)}$ =4.22, p=0.003
- 7. Main effect of hα4 Variant on estimated max upregulation: one-way ANOVA, MaxUpregulation: $F_{(3,29)}=0.8$, p=0.5
- 8. Main effect of hα4 Variant on estimated nicotine EC₅₀ for upregulation: one-way ANOVA NicEC₅₀: $F_{(3,29)}=1.03$, p=0.4
- 9. Main effect of hα4 Variant on fold change following 24hr nicotine: one-way ANOVA, Max Fold Change: $F_{(3,29)}=8.24$, p=0.001; Dunnett's post-hoc: control vs P451L: p=0.002

Section S2

- 1. Main effect of hα4 Variant on total membrane [³H]-epibatidine binding: one-way ANOVA, F(3,23)=12.6, p<0.0009; Dunnett's post-hoc: control vs P451L: p<0.0009
- 2. Main effect of hα4 Variant on plasma membrane binding: one-way ANOVA, $F_{(3,23)}=1.82$, p=0.18
- 3. Main effect of hα4 Variant on percent plasma membrane [³H]-epibatidine binding: oneway ANOVA, $F_{(3,23)} = 2.81$, p=0.07; Dunnett's post-hoc control vs P451L: p=0.04
- 4. Main Effect of nicotine on total and plasma membrane $[{}^{3}H]$ -epibatidine binding: Total Binding, one-way ANOVA: α4control $F_{(1,11)} = 98.30$, p<0.0009; α4R336C $F_{(1,11)} = 44.50$, p<0.0009; α4P451L F_(1,11)=58.50, p<0.0009; α4R487Q F_(1,11)=56.10, p<0.0009; Surface Receptor Binding, one-way ANOVA: α 4control F_(1,11)=22.40, p<0.0009; α 4R336C $F_{(1,11)}$ =7.90, p=0.02, α4P451L $F_{(1,11)}$ =154.50, p<0.0009; α4R487Q $F_{(1,11)}$ =60.70, p<0.0009Main effect of hα4 Variant on fold change in [³H]-epibatidine binding following 24hr nicotine: Total Binding, one-way ANOVA: $F_{(3,23)}$ =17.10, p<0.0009; Dunnett's posthoc control vs P451L: p<0.0009; Surface Receptor Binding, one-way ANOVA: $F_{(3,23)} = 9.44$, p<0.0009; Dunnett's post hoc WT vs P451L: p=0.007