

LMN Homunculus Supplementary Material: Methods Used in Determining Homunculi Sizes

1. Overview

Heights are based on measurements of length and somatic girths are based on motor neuron density. The homunculi are drawn as close to actual measurements as reasonable, allowing the artist (JK) esthetic leeway.

2. Demographics

All nervous systems had been acquired with an Investigational Review Board and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act compliant informed consent process in the Benaroya Research Center ALS CNS repository as previously published [1].

3. Length Measurements Used to Estimate Homunculi Height

Methods: Fresh brains and spinal cords were measured at autopsy using pliant tape measures. Cortical determinations were measured from the Sylvian fissure to the vertex and vertex to cingulate gyrus [2]. Rostral-caudal brainstem and spinal cord determinations were estimated for midbrain, pons, medulla, upper cervical segment above the cervical enlargement, cervical enlargement, thoracic segment, lumbosacral enlargement, and sacral segment below the enlargement. Up to 11 determinations were obtained and averaged.

Results (Supplementary Materials page 2): The average lateral-medial spans along the motor gyrus from Sylvian fissure to vertex is ~10-12 cm and vertex to cingulate gyrus is ~2-3 cm. These are comparable to published data [2]. The average brainstem and spinal cord rostral-caudal spans are: pons, ~3-3.5 cm; medulla, ~1.5-2.5; cervical cord, 10-13 cm; thoracic cord, ~20-25 cm; and lumbosacral cord, ~ 5-8 cm [see Figure on page 2]. For homunculus characterizations, arm lengths (estimated at the cortex to be ~1/3 overall span and cervical enlargement) are not calculated in estimations of height.

4. Neuron "Particle" Counting Used to Estimate Girth of Somatic Regions of LMN Homunculus

Comment: Girths of the homunculi are based on motor neuron density, the technical challenges of which have been recently reviewed [3]. For the lower motor neuron homunculus, these are based on measurements of alpha motor neuron density as previously published [1]; for the upper motor neuron homunculus, these reflect what are presumed to be density of Betz cells at the cortex relatively commensurate to length, recognizing this complexity [4].

Methods: We used the control data from our previously described series [1]. There were 8 control nervous systems, 7 male and 1 female. The mean age was 63 years (range 38-80 years). None had known neurological diseases. Post-mortem intervals averaged 5.25 hours (range 2.0-12 hours). The published method is restated here for convenience.

Histological Sampling: We used 6 µm thick sections from formalin-fixed paraffin-embedded tissues stained with cresyl violet acetate. We studied 4 neuraxis levels: hypoglossal nucleus at the mid-medulla, mid-cervical spinal enlargement, mid-thoracic spinal region, and mid-lumbar spinal enlargement. We standardized rostral-caudal sampling of the hypoglossal nucleus by its relation to the medial longitudinal fasciculus and by the morphology of the 4th ventricle [5]. We standardized rostral-caudal sampling of spinal cord regions by choosing middle segments—the cervical region has uniform counts between C4-C8 [6,7], the lumbar region has uniform neuron counts between L3-S2 [8,9,10], and we assume the mid-thoracic region has uniform counts. Since motor neuron presence varies from one histological section to another [6,11], we evaluated a total of 8 sections from each neuraxis level, choosing every 10th section for a sampling interval of 60 µm from a series of 84 consecutive sections spanning 504 µm, a sampling technique modified from Method 1 of Tomlinson et al [11]. We separately imaged each side of the spinal anterior horns and hypoglossal nucleus under 50X with a Leica DM2500 microscope with a Spot Insight 4 digital camera and Spot Advanced V4.5.7 software (Diagnostic Instruments, Inc., Sterling Heights, MI) and stored each image in Tagged-Image File Format.

Counting: To meet the realities of the counting task, we devised a method of counting neuron "particles" to index relative neuron presence rather than determining absolute neuron counts [3,12]—stereology technologies do not readily apply to the motor neurons [13] and automated particle counting software was inefficient, experience reported by others [14]. Our method had 3 observers independently count motor neuron particles in each image file according to the following criteria learned in training sessions to standardize counting: neurons were located in the anterior portion of the anterior horns of the spinal cord segments or in the hypoglossal nucleus [5], had relatively deep Nissl staining, were generally multi-concave, and were larger than 25 µm in diameter in cervical and lumbar regions and larger than 15-20 µm in thoracic and hypoglossal regions. Both right and left sides were counted. Counting neurons in the perihypoglossal nuclei, the intermediolateral cell column, and Clarke's column was avoided. Because we were not concerned with pathological change or cell shrinkage, we did not correct for split cell error [15,16].

Statistics and Calculations: We compiled particle counts in a spreadsheet and collated and processed them with simple statistics.

Results (Supplementary Materials Page 3): Hypoglossal nucleus in medulla = 32 motor neuron particles/cross-sectional area/side; cervical level = 33 motor neuron particles/cross-sectional area/side; thoracic level = 10 motor neuron particles/cross-sectional area/side; lumbar level 48 motor neuron particles/cross-sectional area/side. Neuron counts, contrary to other reports [7,8,17], did not have pronounced age-related changes. The ratio of medulla:cervical:thoracic:lumbar = ~3:3:1:5.

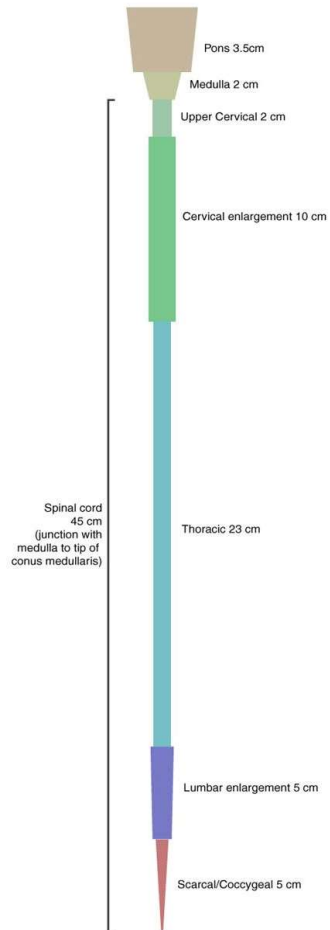
5. References

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Homunculi Height Determinations

Supplemental Table 1: Motor Cortex, Cranial, and Spinal Lengths (cm)

CNS#	Age	Sex	Dx	Motor Cortex	Pons	Med-ulla	Cervical Cord		Thor-acic Cord	Lumbo-sacral Cord
							(Upper)	Cervical (main)		
25	53	M	SALS	10	3.5	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
28	49	F	SALS	10.5	3.5	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
37	57	M	Control	10.7	3.5	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
39	77	M	Control	10	NA	NA	NA	NA	21	5
40	76	F	Control	9.5	3.5	1.5	NA	10	24.5	5.5
41	81	M	Control	9.5	3.5	NA	NA	11	24	7
42	61	M	Control	10	3.2	1.5	2.5	10	21	8
43	74	M	SALS	9.5	NA	1.8	2	10	25	5
44	80	F	Control	9.5	3.1	NA	NA	10	23	6
46	51	F	SALS	10	NA	NA	NA	10.5	20	5
47	65	F	SALS	10.7	3.5	2.5	2.5	10.5	24	6



Lower Motor Neuron Counts (reproduced from supplementary reference 1)

CNS#	Dx	Age	Sex
7	Control	61	M
10	Control	78	M
19	Control	80	F
20	Control	38	M
22	Control	77	M
26	Control	49	M
31	Control	67	M
37	Control	57	M

Region	Observer: JR	Observer: YF	Observer: PL	AVERAGE
Medulla AVE	33	36	25	32
Medulla SD	12	11	9	10
Cervical AVE	30	37	32	33
Cervical SD	18	19	18	19
Thoracic AVE	8	13	9	10
Thoracic SD	3	4	4	4
Lumbar AVE	43	53	48	48
Lumbar SD	10	10	9	10

Region	Observer: YF			Observer: PL			Observer: JR			Observer: YF			Observer: PL		
	JR	YF	PL	JR	YF	PL	JR	YF	PL	JR	YF	PL	JR	YF	PL
Medullas	10	19	8	Cervical	2	4	3	Thoracic	2	4	2	Lumbar	16	31	29
Medullas	12	19	11	Cervical	2	6	3	Thoracic	2	5	3	Lumbar	21	33	30
Medullas	14	20	11	Cervical	2	6	3	Thoracic	3	6	3	Lumbar	22	35	32
Medullas	15	20	12	Cervical	3	7	3	Thoracic	3	6	4	Lumbar	22	35	33
Medullas	16	21	12	Cervical	3	7	3	Thoracic	3	7	4	Lumbar	23	36	34
Medullas	17	22	13	Cervical	4	7	4	Thoracic	3	7	4	Lumbar	23	36	34
Medullas	18	22	13	Cervical	4	7	5	Thoracic	4	7	4	Lumbar	23	37	34
Medullas	18	23	13	Cervical	5	7	5	Thoracic	4	7	4	Lumbar	24	37	35
Medullas	19	24	14	Cervical	5	8	6	Thoracic	4	7	5	Lumbar	25	37	35
Medullas	19	24	14	Cervical	6	8	6	Thoracic	4	7	5	Lumbar	26	39	35
Medullas	19	24	14	Cervical	6	8	6	Thoracic	4	7	5	Lumbar	26	39	35
Medullas	20	24	15	Cervical	6	8	6	Thoracic	4	7	5	Lumbar	27	40	36
Medullas	20	25	15	Cervical	7	9	6	Thoracic	4	8	6	Lumbar	28	40	36
Medullas	20	25	15	Cervical	7	9	6	Thoracic	4	8	6	Lumbar	29	41	36
Medullas	21	26	15	Cervical	8	9	7	Thoracic	4	8	6	Lumbar	32	41	36
Medullas	21	26	16	Cervical	8	9	7	Thoracic	5	8	6	Lumbar	32	41	37
Medullas	21	26	16	Cervical	8	10	8	Thoracic	5	8	6	Lumbar	33	42	37
Medullas	22	27	16	Cervical	9	11	9	Thoracic	5	9	6	Lumbar	33	42	37
Medullas	22	27	16	Cervical	9	11	9	Thoracic	5	9	6	Lumbar	34	42	37
Medullas	22	27	16	Cervical	10	12	10	Thoracic	5	9	6	Lumbar	34	43	38
Medullas	22	27	17	Cervical	11	12	11	Thoracic	5	10	7	Lumbar	34	44	38
Medullas	23	27	17	Cervical	11	13	11	Thoracic	5	9	6	Lumbar	35	44	39
Medullas	23	28	18	Cervical	11	14	12	Thoracic	5	9	6	Lumbar	35	44	39
Medullas	23	28	18	Cervical	13	17	13	Thoracic	5	9	6	Lumbar	35	44	39
Medullas	24	28	18	Cervical	15	17	17	Thoracic	5	9	6	Lumbar	35	44	40
Medullas	24	28	18	Cervical	16	18	18	Thoracic	5	9	6	Lumbar	35	45	40
Medullas	24	28	19	Cervical	16	22	18	Thoracic	5	9	6	Lumbar	35	45	40
Medullas	25	29	19	Cervical	18	27	19	Thoracic	5	10	7	Lumbar	36	45	41
Medullas	25	29	19	Cervical	20	28	21	Thoracic	5	9	6	Lumbar	37	45	41
Medullas	25	29	19	Cervical	20	29	22	Thoracic	5	10	7	Lumbar	37	46	41
Medullas	25	29	19	Cervical	20	31	24	Thoracic	5	10	7	Lumbar	37	46	41
Medullas	25	29	19	Cervical	22	32	24	Thoracic	5	10	7	Lumbar	38	46	42
Medullas	26	29	19	Cervical	22	33	26	Thoracic	5	10	7	Lumbar	38	46	42
Medullas	26	29	19	Cervical	23	33	26	Thoracic	5	10	7	Lumbar	38	46	42
Medullas	26	29	20	Cervical	23	34	26	Thoracic	6	10	7	Lumbar	38	46	43
Medullas	26	29	20	Cervical	24	35	27	Thoracic	6	10	7	Lumbar	38	47	43
Medullas	26	29	20	Cervical	24	36	27	Thoracic	6	10	7	Lumbar	39	47	43
Medullas	26	29	20	Cervical	25	37	28	Thoracic	6	10	7	Lumbar	39	48	43
Medullas	27	30	21	Cervical	25	37	28	Thoracic	6	10	7	Lumbar	39	49	43
Medullas	27	30	21	Cervical	26	37	29	Thoracic	6	10	7	Lumbar	39	49	43
Medullas	28	31	21	Cervical	26	38	29	Thoracic	6	11	7	Lumbar	39	49	44
Medullas	28	31	21	Cervical	27	38	30	Thoracic	6	11	8	Lumbar	40	49	44
Medullas	29	31	21	Cervical	27	38	30	Thoracic	6	11	8	Lumbar	40	49	44
Medullas	29	31	21	Cervical	28	39	31	Thoracic	6	11	8	Lumbar	41	49	44
Medullas	29	32	21	Cervical	29	39	32	Thoracic	6	11	8	Lumbar	41	50	44
Medullas	30	32	22	Cervical	29	39	33	Thoracic	6	11	8	Lumbar	41	50	45
Medullas	30	32	22	Cervical	29	40	34	Thoracic	7	11	8	Lumbar	42	50	45
Medullas	30	32	22	Cervical	30	40	34	Thoracic	7	11	8	Lumbar	42	50	45
Medullas	30	32	22	Cervical	30	40	34	Thoracic	7	11	8	Lumbar	42	50	45
Medullas	30	32	22	Cervical	31	40	34	Thoracic	7	11	8	Lumbar	42	50	45
Medullas	31	32	22	Cervical	31	41	35	Thoracic	7	12	8	Lumbar	42	50	45
Medullas	31	33	23	Cervical	32	41	35	Thoracic	7	12	8	Lumbar	43	51	45
Medullas	31	33	23	Cervical	32	41	35	Thoracic	7	12	8	Lumbar	43	51	45
Medullas	31	33	23	Cervical	33	42	35	Thoracic	7	12	8	Lumbar	43	51	45
Medullas	31	33	23	Cervical	33	42	36	Thoracic	7	12	8	Lumbar	43	51	45
Medullas	31	33	23	Cervical	33	42	36	Thoracic	7	12	8	Lumbar	43	51	45
Medullas	31	33	23	Cervical	33	43	37	Thoracic	7	12	8	Lumbar	44	52	46
Medullas	32	34	24	Cervical	34	43	37	Thoracic	7	12	8	Lumbar	44	52	46
Medullas	32	34	24	Cervical	35	43	38	Thoracic	7	12	8	Lumbar	44	52	46
Medullas	32	34	24	Cervical	37	43	38	Thoracic	7	12	8	Lumbar	44	52	46
Medullas	32	34	24	Cervical	37	44	40	Thoracic	7	12	9	Lumbar	44	53	47
Medullas	33	34	25	Cervical	38	44	41	Thoracic	8	13	9	Lumbar	45	53	47
Medullas	33	34	25	Cervical	38	44	41	Thoracic	8	13	9	Lumbar	45	53	47
Medullas	34	35	25	Cervical	40	45	42	Thoracic	8	13	9	Lumbar	45	54	48
Medullas	34	35	25	Cervical	40	47	42	Thoracic	8	13	9	Lumbar	45	54	48
Medullas	34	35	25	Cervical	41	47	42	Thoracic	8	13	9	Lumbar	45	54	48
Medullas	34	35	26	Cervical	41	48	42	Thoracic	8	13	9	Lumbar	46	54	48
Medullas	35	36	26	Cervical	41	48	42	Thoracic	8	14	9	Lumbar	46	55	48
Medullas	35	36	26	Cervical	42	49	43	Thoracic	8	14	9	Lumbar	46	55	48
Medullas	35	36	26	Cervical	42	49	43	Thoracic	8	14	9	Lumbar	46	55	49
Medullas	36	36	26	Cervical	43	49	44	Thoracic	8	15	9	Lumbar	46	56	49
Medullas	36	36	26	Cervical	44	51	46	Thoracic	8	15	9	Lumbar	47	56	50
Medullas	37	37	27	Cervical	44	51	46	Thoracic	8	15	9	Lumbar	47	56	50
Medullas	37	37	27	Cervical	45	52	48	Thoracic	8	15	10	Lumbar	47	56	50
Medullas	37	37	27	Cervical	45	52	49	Thoracic	8	15	10	Lumbar	48	57	50
Medullas	37	38	28	Cervical	47	53	50	Thoracic	8	16	10	Lumbar	48	57	50
Medullas	37	38	28	Cervical	47	54	51	Thoracic	8	16	10	Lumbar	48	57	51
Medullas	37	39	28	Cervical	47	56	51	Thoracic	9	16	10	Lumbar	48	57	51
Medullas	38	39	28	Cervical	48	56	52	Thoracic	9	16	10	Lumbar	48	58	52
Medullas	38	39	29	Cervical	49	57	53	Thoracic	9	16	10	Lumbar	48	58	52
Medullas	38	39	29	Cervical	50	58	53	Thoracic	9	16	10	Lumbar	48	58	52
Medullas	38	40	29	Cervical	51	58	54	Thoracic	9	16	11	Lumbar	48	58	52
Medullas	38	40	29	Cervical	52	59	54	Thoracic	9	16	11	Lumbar	48	58	52
Medullas	39	40	29	Cervical	52	59	56	Thoracic	9	16	11	Lumbar	49	58	53
Medullas	39	41	30	Cervical	54	60	56	Thoracic	9	16	11	Lumbar	49	59	54
Medullas	39	41	31	Cervical	56	60	57	Thoracic	9	16	11	Lumbar	49	59	54
Medullas	39	41	31	Cervical	56	60	59	Thoracic	10	16	11	Lumbar	49	59	54
Medullas	40	41	32	Cervical	57	61	60	Thoracic	10	16	11	Lumbar	50	59	55
Medullas	40	41	32	Cervical	58	62	60	Thoracic	10	16	11	Lumbar	50	60	55
Medullas	40	42	33	Cervical	58	63	61	Thoracic	10	17	12	Lumbar	51	60	55
Medullas	41	42	33	Cervical	61	64	61	Thoracic	10	17	12	Lumbar	51	61	55
Medullas	41	43	33	Cervical	62	68	62	Thoracic	10	17	12	Lumbar	51	61	55
Medullas	41	43	34	Cervical	64	70	62	Thoracic	10	17	12	Lumbar	51	61	56
Medullas	41	44	34	Cervical	68	73	66	Thoracic	10	17	13	Lumbar	52	62	57
Medullas	42	44	34	Cervical	74	84	70	Thoracic	11	17	13	Lumbar	52	62	57
Medullas	42	45	35	AVE	30.06930693	36.65346535	31.91069109	Thoracic	11	17	13	Lumbar	53	62	57
Medullas	42	45	36	SD	17.90489175	19.21532495	18.35979249	Thoracic	11	17	13	Lumbar	53	62	57
Medullas	43	46	36												