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### ORIGINAL RESEARCH

# **Identification of Differentially-expressed Genes** in Intestinal Gastric Cancer by Microarray **Analysis**



Shizhu Zang <sup>1,#,§</sup>, Ruifang Guo <sup>1,#,‡</sup>, Rui Xing <sup>1,#</sup>, Liang Zhang <sup>2</sup>, Wenmei Li <sup>1</sup>, Min Zhao <sup>1</sup>, Jingyuan Fang <sup>3</sup>, Fulian Hu <sup>4</sup>, Bin Kang <sup>1</sup>, Yonghong Ren <sup>2</sup>, Yonglong Zhuang <sup>2</sup>, Siqi Liu <sup>5</sup>, Rong Wang <sup>6</sup>, Xianghong Li <sup>7</sup>, Yingyan Yu <sup>8</sup>, Jing Cheng <sup>2</sup>, Youyong Lu <sup>1,\*</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Laboratory of Molecular Oncology, MOE Key Laboratory of Carcinogenesis and Translational Research, Peking University Cancer Hospital & Institute, Beijing 100142, China
- <sup>2</sup> National Engineering Research Center for Beijing Biochip Technology and Tsinghua University School of Medicine, Beijing 102206, China
- <sup>3</sup> Department of Gastroenterology, Renji Hospital of Shanghai Second Medical University, Shanghai 200001, China
- <sup>4</sup> Department of Gastroenterology, Peking University First Hospital, Beijing 100034, China
- <sup>5</sup> Beijing Institutes of Genomics, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100101, China
- <sup>6</sup> Department of Genetics and Genomic Sciences, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York 10029, USA
- <sup>7</sup> Department of Pathology, MOE Key Laboratory of Carcinogenesis and Translational Research, Peking University Cancer Hospital & Institute, Beijing 100142, China
- <sup>8</sup> Shanghai Ruijin Hospital, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, School of Medicine, Shanghai 200025, China

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#### **KEYWORDS**

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Abstract Gastric cancer (GC) is one of the most frequent malignant tumors. In order to systematically characterize the cellular and molecular mechanisms of intestinal GC development, in this study, we used 22 K oligonucleotide microarrays and bioinformatics analysis to evaluate the gene expression profiles of GC in 45 tissue samples, including 20 intestinal GC tissue samples,

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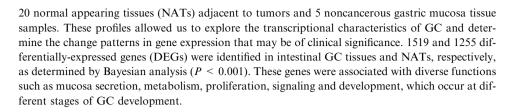
Corresponding author.

E-mail: youyonglu@bjmu.edu.cn (Lu Y).

<sup>#</sup> Equal contribution.

<sup>§</sup> Current address: Biotechnology Department, Dalian Medical University, Dalian 116044, China.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>‡</sup> Current address: Gastroenterology Department, Inner Mongolian People's Hospital, Hohhot 010017, China.



#### Introduction

Gastric cancer (GC) is one of the most common malignant tumors. It is estimated that one million new cases are reported worldwide each year [1], with around two-thirds of GC occurring in developing countries. Although considerable effort has been directed toward the development of surgical and chemotherapeutic interventions, the prognosis for patients with advanced stages of GC remains poor. Thus, a major challenge toward assessing and, perhaps, improving the clinical outcome of the treatment of GC patients is to better understand the molecular basis of the disease and its development, i.e., the key changes of gene expression patterns in gastric tumorigenesis. The relationship between specific gene expression patterns and certain properties of GC have been previously described, including resistance to chemotherapeutics [2], metastatic potential [3,4] and prognosis following a particular treatment [5,6]. However, to understand the underlying mechanisms of gastric tumorigenesis, it is essential to characterize the biological processes that initiate the development of GC and its subsequent progression, especially, to document the gene expression pattern from a high-risk population of GC. In this study, we have characterized the transcriptional profiles of GC in Chinese patients by using 22 K oligonucleotide microarrays and have identified differentially-expressed genes (DEGs) within GC, GC adjacent and normal tissues. These expression patterns were further examined by identifying molecular pathways associated with GC development.

#### Results

## Genes differentially expressed between intestinal GC and normal gastric mucosa tissues

To understand the expression profile of intestinal GC, we collected 45 tissue samples, including 20 intestinal GC tissue samples, 20 normal appearing tissues (NATs) adjacent to tumors and five noncancerous gastric mucosa tissue samples, and performed microarray study to evaluate the gene expression profile. After normalization, a Bayesian analysis of gene expression level (BAGEL) was used to characterize differential gene expression between intestinal GC tissue samples and noncancerous gastric mucosa tissue samples with a significance cutoff of P < 0.001. A total of 1519 genes were recognized to be differentially expressed in intestinal GC when compared to normal gastric mucosa tissue (Figure S1). These included 593 upregulated and 926 downregulated genes. Hierarchical clustering of these DEGs demonstrated a dramatic variation in gene expression in tumors compared with normal gastric mucosa tissue. Tables S1 and S2 list P value, fold change and name of each DEG. Among these DEGs, 11 and 29 genes were upregulated and downregulated with fold change > 10, respectively. The annotation analysis from GoMiner indicated that some of these genes were related with gastric physiological function, such as ATPase, somatostatin and gastrin.

## Prediction of tumor-specific biological characteristics associated with DEGs in intestinal GC

Based on gene expression profile of GC, we were able to identify tumor-specific biological characteristics that correlate with DEGs. Using currently available chip annotation tools, including DAVID, SOURCE and the high-throughput GoMiner, we obtained the functional description, classification and location of the DEGs. Annotation results showed that these 1183 DEGs were known genes associated with a diverse set of biological pathways and functions in both cell-and organ-specific physiological processes (Table 1).

# Prediction of tumor-specific pathways associated with gene expression profiling in intestinal GC

Signal transduction pathways associated with gene expression changes were analyzed and defined using the bioresource for array genes (BioRag, www.biorag.org). A total of 143 signal transduction pathways contained genes that were differentially expressed. Among them, 14 pathways showed altered expression of at least three up-regulated genes within each (Table 2). These pathways include the MAPK signaling pathway, inflammatory response pathway,  $TGF-\beta$  pathway and pathways associated with extracellular matrix synthesis and regulation of gluconeogenesis. Six pathways were changed with at least three downregulated genes (Table 3).

## Genes differentially expressed between NATs and normal gastric mucosa tissues

Although NATs appear morphologically normal, Figure S2 demonstrated that the gene expression pattern of these tissues is very different from that of normal gastric mucosa tissues. A total of 1255 DEGs, including 561 upregulated and 694 down-regulated genes, were identified with a P < 0.001 significance cutoff. The detailed information describing the upregulated and downregulated genes is presented in Table S3 and Table S4.

## Comparison of gene expression patterns between GC tumors and NATs

The number of DEGs in GC and NATs is shown and clustered according to different fold changes in Figure 1. Our data above

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