Expansion of Ocular Phenotypic Features Associated With Mutations in ADAMTS18

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IMPORTANCE We describe novel ocular phenotypic features caused by mutations in ADAMTS18. The exact role of ADAMTS18 in ocular disease is unclear, and our work further contributes to the understanding of this gene and its protein.

OBJECTIVE To expand the phenotypic characterization in patients with homozygous mutations in ADAMTS18 and report novel mutational data.

DESIGN, SETTING, AND PARTICIPANTS A case series with genetic investigations was conducted at tertiary referral clinical and university settings. Three families participated.

MAIN OUTCOME MEASURES Phenotype and genotype description of 3 families.

RESULTS Four affected patients from 3 families with an unusual ocular phenotype had full ophthalmic and systemic examination. A single affected individual in the first family had bilateral microcornea, ectopic pupils, and cone-rod dystrophy. In a second family, 2 brothers showed bilateral microcornea, childhood cataract, ectopia lentis, rhegmatogenous retinal detachment, and cone-rod dystrophy. In the third family, a single affected individual had the same features as those in family 2, without ectopia lentis. Causative mutations were sought using homozygosity mapping, Sanger sequencing, and massively parallel sequencing of the whole exome. Novel homozygous mutations in ADAMTS18 were identified, consisting of c.1067T>A [p.L356*] in the first proband, c.2159G>C [p.C720S] in the 2 affected brothers, and c.1952G>A [p.R651Q] in the third proband. All 3 mutations are predicted to be pathogenic.

CONCLUSIONS AND RELEVANCE Mutations in ADAMTS18 are associated with ocular developmental abnormalities including microcornea, ectopia lentis, and early onset of cone-rod dystrophy. This report provides further evidence that ADAMTS18 plays a key role in ocular development. Physicians should consider screening ADAMTS18 in patients with microcornea and cone-rod dystrophy.

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ix families with disease caused by mutation in AD-
AMTS18 (OMIM *607512) have been described; one had
early-onset retinal dystrophy, and the others had
features of a recently described group of abnormalities
including myopic chorioretinal atrophy, myopia, and
telecanthus.2

A 23-exon gene, ADAMTS18 is on chromosome 16q23.1. It
codes ADAMTS18, one of the 19 ADAM metallopeptidase
with thrombospondin type 1 motif proteins. These zinc-
dependent proteases play a role in cell migration, coagula-
tion, angiogenesis, and extracellular matrix regulation.3 The
present report describes 4 newly identified patients with mu-
tations in ADAMTS18 and presents novel clinical and muta-
tional data.

Methods

Institutional review board approval was received from local
committees (Moorfields Eye Hospital, London, England; Ed-
inburgh, Scotland; and Giessen, Germany), and written in-
formed consent was obtained from each patient. Three male
proband (family 1, 2, and 3) (Figure 1A, C, and E, respec-
tively) and 1 male sibling (family 2) (Figure 1C) underwent de-
tailed clinical assessment. This included visual acuity, slit-
lamp examination, fundus examination, refraction, and axial
length measurement (IOL Master; Carl Zeiss Meditec). Full-
field and pattern electroretinography were performed incor-
porating the International Society for Clinical Electrophys-
iology of Vision standards.4 Genomic DNA was extracted from
peripheral blood using standard procedures.

Trio-based whole exome sequencing using genomic DNA
from the affected son (IV:1) and unaffected parents (III:1 and
III:2) (Figure 1A) was performed in family 1 at the Wellcome
Trust Sanger Institute as part of the UK10K project (http://
www.uk10k.org.uk) as previously described.3 In summary,
sequence reads of genomic DNA enriched for targeted
sequences (SureSelect All Exon 50Mb; Agilent Technologies)
were sequenced with 75 base pair paired-end reads (HiSeq
Agilent) to investigate regions of homozygosity.5 Genomic
DNA from proband II:1 in family 2 (Figure 1C) was hybridi-
zed (Genome-Wide Human SNP Array 6.0; Affymetrix) to in-
vestigate regions of homozygosity. Bidirectional Sanger sequencing of
ADAMTS18 exon 7 was undertaken in family 1 for confirmation of next generation
sequencing. Bidirectional sequencing of all 23 exons was undertaken in family 2 and, based on the ocular phenotype,
the proband (II:1) and unaffected father (I:1) in family 3
(Figure 1E). Primers and conditions are available on request.

Results

Family 1

Clinical

The proband (IV:1) is the son of first cousins (Figure 1A) of Turkish
origin. He had a history of reduced vision from age 6
months. Anterior-segment examination revealed bilateral mi-
crocornea (horizontal corneal diameter 8.5 mm in each eye at
age 4 years) and ectopia pupillae. Fundus examination showed
peripheral retinal pigmentation. There was no significant re-
fractive error. The axial length was 23.04 mm in each eye when
measured at age 3 years. At that age best-corrected visual acu-
ity (BCVA) was 2.25 logMAR (<20/500 Snellen) OD and 1.43 log-
MAR (20/500) OS. Electroretinography performed at age 4 years
showed a cone-rod dystrophy (CRD) pattern of abnormality.
Systemic examination was unremarkable; there was no evi-
dence of any occipital defect. Other family members were un-
affected.

Genetic

An initial filter for homozygous nonsense mutations in the
whole-exome sequencing data revealed c.1067T>A [p.L356*]
in exon 7 of ADAMTS18. Bidirectional Sanger sequencing con-
firmed this mutation to be homozygous in the proband and het-
erozygous in both unaffected parents (Figure 1B).

Family 2 (GC14463)

Clinical

The male proband (II:1) is 1 of 6 siblings of Pakistani origin born
to parents who are first cousins once removed (Figure 1C). At
age 1 year he had reduced vision, a divergent squint, and nys-
tagmus. He was later found to have bilateral cataracts and un-
derwent bilateral cataract surgery at age 2 years. Strabismus
surgery was performed at the time of the second lens extrac-
tion. At age 10 years his BCVA was 1.0 logMAR (20/200 Snel-
len) OU. He had bilateral microcornea (8-mm horizontal di-
ameter at age 31 years), peripapillary atrophy, and peripheral
eretinal pigmentation (Figure 2A and B). Axial lengths were 26.06
mm (right eye) and 25.86 mm (left eye). Electroretinography
in age 21 years showed CRD.

The proband’s brother (Figure 1C) (II:2) presented at age 2
years with reduced vision. He developed a rhegmatogenous
retinal detachment in the right eye at age 11 years secondary
to multiple small dialyses in the anterior retina. Surgery was
unsuccessful and this eye eventually became phthisical. He
developed a rhegmatogenous retinal detachment in the second
eye at age 18 years, which was successfully repaired. When ex-
amined 1 year before the development of the retinal detach-
ments, his BCVA was 0.5 logMAR (20/63 Snellen) OD and 0.33
logMAR (20/40) OS. He was significantly hypermetropic (+6.25
diopters spheres [DS] bilaterally). He had bilateral microcor-
nea (8-mm horizontal diameter at age 24 years), ectopia len-
tis with mild lens opacities, and macular pigmentary abnor-
malities. Ultrasound A scan revealed an axial length of 21.7 mm
in the right eye and 29.5 mm in the left eye (with a posterior
staphyloma). At age 24 years his BCVA was 0.5 logMAR (20/63
Snellen) in the functioning left eye. Fundus examination re-

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Pedigrees and sequence chromatographs demonstrating mutations in family 1 (c.1067T>A [p.L356*]) (A and B), family 2 (c.2159G>C [p.C720S]) (C and D), and family 3 (c.1952G>A [p.R651Q]) (E and F). In the pedigrees, square symbols indicate males; circles, females; diamond, either sex; slashes within the squares and circles, individuals who have died; and double connecting lines, consanguinity. Black symbols indicate affected individuals and arrowheads indicate probands. The numbers within the circles, squares, and diamonds indicate the number of members of that sex. In the sequence chromatographs, arrowheads indicate mutations. WT indicates wild type.
revealed peripapillary choroidal atrophy. Systemic examination was unremarkable.

Genetic
The pedigree was consistent with AR inheritance (Figure 1C). Single-nucleotide polymorphism genotyping highlighted 8 regions of homozygosity covering 39.3 Mb. One homozygous region on 16q22.2-23.2 contained a candidate gene, ADAMTS18. Bidirectional Sanger sequencing revealed a missense mutation (c.2159G>C [p.C720S]) in exon 14 present in the homozygous state in both affected brothers and in the heterozygous state in their unaffected father (Figure 1D).

Family 3 (GC20482)
Clinical
The proband is the son of first-cousin parents of Pakistani origin. At age 6 years he had reduced vision (0.2 logMAR [20/32 Snellen] OD and 0.3 logMAR [20/40] OS), microcornea, and myopia (spherical equivalence −5 DS bilaterally). By age 8 years his myopia had increased (~8 DS bilaterally), with visual deterioration to 0.4 logMAR (20/50 Snellen). Electoretinography at this age revealed cone dysfunction but normal rod function. By age 13 years there was electoretinographic evidence of rod involvement and his refractive error had increased to ~14 DS. There was microcornea (7.5 mm horizontal bilaterally), central punctate lens opacities, smooth irides, and choriotretinal atrophy, with macula pigmentary changes in each eye (Figure 2C and D). He developed a total rhegmatogenous retinal detachment in the right eye at age 15 years, secondary to a giant retinal tear. The left eye was similarly affected a year later; both were successfully repaired. Axial lengths were 27.7 mm (right eye) and 29.0 mm (left eye) at age 15 years. Magnetic resonance imaging revealed no occipital defect. No other family members were affected.

Genetic
The pedigree (Figure 1E) was consistent with AR inheritance. Bidirectional Sanger sequencing of ADAMTS18 revealed a homozygous missense mutation (c.1952G>A [p.R651Q]) in exon 13, which was in the heterozygous state in the unaffected father (Figure 1F).

Genetic Summary
The mutations identified in all 3 families were absent from online databases (GenBank dbSNP library, 1000 Genomes,
and Exome Variant Server), and are predicted to be disease causing by in silico analysis (SIFT, PolyPhen, and MutationTaster) (Table). The affected residues are conserved in vertebrates.

The mutation in family 1 results in premature termination of messenger RNA at codon 356. This transcript is predicted to undergo nonsense-mediated decay because it is truncated early in the transcript. Hence, this mutation is predicted to result in a null phenotype.

The missense mutations found in families 2 and 3 occur in the cysteine-rich region of the ADAMTS18 protein spanning 644 to 749. The affected amino acid residues within the region show complete conservation throughout vertebrate orthologues, and the cysteine-rich region on the whole is highly conserved (Supplement eFigure), suggesting a possible structural role for this region of the protein.

### Discussion

This report describes the detailed phenotype in 4 patients with novel homozygous mutations in ADAMTS18. Anterior-segment findings included microcornea, early-onset cataracts, ectopia lentis, and ectopia pupillae. Aldahmesh and colleagues reported anterior segment features in all members of 5 families, regardless of which of the 4 mutations in ADAMTS18 they described. Microcornea is a rare ocular phenotype usually associated with other signs of anterior-segment dysgenesis. Our data confirm the role of ADAMTS18 mutations in the development of microcornea. Further characterization of anterior-segment features, including central corneal thickness, intraocular pressure, and angle structure, would be of interest in future evaluation of patients with mutations in this gene. All patients in the present series who underwent electroretinography had a CRD pattern of abnormality with macular involvement. Of the previous reports of mutations in ADAMTS18, Peluso et al described a patient with infantile-onset retinal dystrophy, and Aldahmesh and colleagues suggested scotopic and photopic dysfunction in the only patient who had electroretinography. We suggest that retinal dystrophy is a key feature in patients with ADAMTS18 mutations. There is some overlap of the phenotype associated with ADAMTS18 mutations and Knobloch syndrome, a rare autosomal recessive disorder associated with mutations in the COL18A1 gene. In Knobloch syndrome, there are several similar developmental abnormalities of the eye including retinal dystrophy and an increased risk of retinal detachment. One patient with Knobloch syndrome was described as having what appeared to be a causative mutation in ADAMTS18. This patient was later found to have a causative mutation in COL18A1. However, a key feature of Knobloch syndrome is occipital skull defects. No patient in the present series had any occipital abnormalities and that diagnosis was excluded.

The patients in our series did not manifest the telecanthus or posteriorly rotated ears described by Aldahmesh and colleagues. In addition, the finding of myopic chorioretinal atrophy was not a consistent feature in our patients.

Mutations in other members of the ADAMTS family cause early-onset cataract and ectopia lentis (ADAMTSL4, ADAMTS10, ADAMTS17, and ADAMTS17), and ectopia pupillae (ADAMTS4). It is evident that this family of genes plays a significant role in ocular development.

### Conclusions

This report describes the detailed ocular phenotype associated with mutations in ADAMTS18. Screening of this gene should be considered in patients presenting with microcornea and CRD.
Phenotypic Features of ADAMTS18 Mutations


