

US007537894B2

c12) **United States Patent**

Weichselbaum et al.

(54) **METHODS AND KITS FOR MONITORING BARRETT'S METAPLASIA**

- (75) Inventors: **Ralph Weichselbaum,** Chicago, IL (US); **Nikolai Khodarev,** Villa Park, IL (US); **Eric Kimchi,** Hershey, PA (US); **Mitchell Posner,** Chicago, IL (US)
- (73) Assignee: **The University of Chicago,** Chicago, IL (US)
- $(*)$ Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 91 days.
- (21) Appl. No.: **11/367,602**
- (22) Filed: **Mar. 2, 2006**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2006/0199210Al Sep. 7,2006

Related U.S. Application Data

- (60) Provisional application No. 60/658,424, filed on Mar. 2, 2005.
- (51) **Int. Cl.** *C12Q 1168* (2006.01)
- (52) **U.S. Cl.** **435/6;** 536/24.5 (58) **Field of Classification Search** None
- See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Reid et al. Gastrointest Endosc. Clin. N. Am. vol. 13(2), pp. 369-397, 2003). Abstract only.*

Tockman et al. Cancer Research, vol. 52, pp. 27lls-2718s, 1992.* Chang et al. (World J. Gastroenterol, vol. 10(21), pp. 3194-3196, 2004 .

Yoshida et al. (FEBS Letter, vol. 414(2), pp. 333-337, 1997) Abstract only.*

Kimos et al. (Int. J. Cancer, vol. 111, pp. 415-417, 2004).*

Barrett, M.T. et al., "Transcriptional analyses of Barrett's metaplasia and normal upper GI mucosae," Neoplasia (2002) 4:121-128.

Basson, C.T. et al., "Identification, characterization, and chromosomal localization of the human homolog (hES) of ES/130," Genomics (1996) 35:628-631.

Capo-Chichi, C.D. et al., "Anomalous expression of epithelial differentiation-determining GATA factors in ovarian tumorigenesis," Cancer Res. (2003) 63:4967-4977.

Care, A. et al., "HOXB7: a key factor for tumor-associated angiogenic switch," Cancer Res. (2001) 61:6532-6539.

Chen, Y.J. et al., "Loss of heterozygosity of chromosome lq in gastrinomas: occurrence and prognostic significance," Cancer Res. (2003) 63:817-823.

Dahlberg, P.S. et al., "Gene expression profiles in esophageal adenocarcinoma," Ann. Thorac. Surg. (2004) 77:1008-1015.

Devesa, S.S. et al., "Changing patterns in the incidence of esophageal and gastric carcinoma in the United States," Cancer (1998) 83:2049- 2053.

Ding, M. et al., "C. elegans ankyrin repeat protein VAB-19 is a component of epidermal attachment structures and is essential for epidermal morphogenesis," Development (2003) 130:5791-5801. Draghici, S. et al., "Global functional profiling of gene expression," Genomics (2003) 81:98-104.

(10) **Patent No.: US 7,537,894 B2** (45) **Date of Patent: May 26, 2009**

Elder, J.T. et al., "Evidence for local control of gene expression in the epidermal differentiation complex," Exp. Dermatol. (2002) 11 :406- 412.

Garcia-Cao, M. et al., "Epigenetic regulation of telomere length in mammalian cells by the Suv39hl and Suv39h2 histone methyltransferases," Nat. Genet. (2004) 36:94-99.

Goldblum, J.R. et al., "Dysplasia arising in Barrett's esophagus: diagnostic pitfalls and natural history," Semin. Diag. Pathol. (2002) 19:12-19.

Hitomi, K. et al., "Analysis of epidermal-type transglutaminase (transglutaminase 3) in human stratified epithelia and cultured keratinocytes using monoclonal antibodies," J. Dermatol. Sci. (2003) 32:95-103.

Kalinin, A.E. et al., "Epithelial barrier function: assembly and structural features of the cornified cell envelope," Bioessays (2002) 24:789-800.

Kaufman, C.K. et al., "GATA-3: an unexpected regulator of cell lineage determination in skin," Genes Dev. (2003) 17:2108-2122.

Khodarev, **N.N.** et al., "Interaction of amifostine and ionizing radiation on transcriptional patterns of apoptotic genes expressed in human microvascular endothelial cells (HMEC)," Int. J. Rad. Oncol. Biol. Phys. (2004) 60:553-563.

Khodarev, N.N. et al., "Method of RNA purification from endothelial cells for DNA array experiments" Biotechniques (2002) 32:316-320. Khodarev, N.N. et al., "Receiver operating characteristic analysis: a general tool for DNA array data filtration and performance estimation," Genomics (2003) 81:202-209.

Khodarev, N.N. et al., "STAT1 is overexpressed in tumors selected for radioresistance and confers protection from radiation in transduced sensitive cells," PNAS USA (2004) 101: 1714-1719.

Kitajima, Y., "Mechanisms of desmosome assembly and disassembly," Clin. Exp. Dermatol. (2002) 27:684-690.

Koh, K. et al., "ELT-5 and ELT-6 are required continuously to regulate epidermal seam cell differentiation and cell fusion in C. elegans," Development (2001) 128:2867-2880.

Koon, N. et al., "Clustering of molecular alterations in gastroesophageal carcinomas," Neoplasia (2004) 6:143-149.

La Celle, P.T. et al., "Human homeobox HOXA7 regulates keratinocyte transglutaminase type 1 and inhibits differentiation," J. Biol. Chem. (2001) 276:32844-32853.

Lagergren, J. et al., "Symptomatic gastroesophageal reflux as a risk factor for esophageal adenocarcinoma," N. Eng. J. Med. (1999) 34:825-831.

Luo, A. et al., "Discovery of Ca2+-relevant and differentiation associated genes downregulated in esophageal squamous cell carcinoma using cDNA microarray," Oncogene (2004) 23: 1291.

Mahy, N.L. et al., "Gene density and transcription influence the localization of chromatin outside of chromosome territories detectable by FISH," J. Cell Biol. (2002) 159:753-763.

Marenholz, I. et al., "Identification of human epidermal differentiation complex (EDC)-encoded genes by substractive hybridization of entire YACs to a gridded keratinocyte cDNA library," Genome Res. (2001) 11:341-355.

(Continued)

Primary Examiner-Larry R. Helms

Assistant Examiner-Meera Natarajan

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm-Michael* Best & Friedrich LLP

(57) **ABSTRACT**

Disclosed are methods and kits for assessing risk of progression of Barrett's esophagus to adenocarcinoma.

7 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

McManus, D.T. et al., "Biomarkers of esophageal adenocarcinoma and Barrett's esophagus," Cancer Res. (2004) 64:1561-1569.

Merrill, B.J. et al., "Tcf3 and Lefl regulate lineage differentiation of multipotent stem cells in skin," Genes Dev. (2001) 15: 1688-1705.

Naora, H. et al., "A serologically identified tumor antigen encoded by a homeobox gene promotes growth of ovarian epithelial cells," Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA (2001) 98:4060-4065.

Neglia, M. et al., "Amplification of the pericentromeric region of chromosome 1 in a newly established colon carcinoma cell line," Cancer Genet. Cytogenet. (2003) 142:99-106.

Pantou, D. et al., "Cytogenetic profile of unknown primary tumors: clues for their pathogenesis and clinical management," Neoplasia (2003) 5:23-31.

Sarkar, S. et al., "A novel ankyrin repeat-containing gene (Kank) located at 9p24 is a growth suppressor of renal cell carcinoma," J. Biol. Chem. (2002) 277 :36585-36591.

Seery, J.P., "Stem cells of the oesophageal epithelium," J. Cell Sci. (2002) 115:1783-1789.

Shaheen, N. et al., "Gastroesophageal reflux, Barrett esophagus and esophageal cancer," JAMA (2002) 287: 1972-1981.

Shaheen, N.J. et al., "Is there publication bias in the reporting of cancer risk in Barrett's esophagus?" Gastroenterology (2000) 119:333-338.

Stein, H.J. et al., Barrett's esophagus: pathogenesis, epidemiology, function abnormalities, malignant degeneration, and surgical management, Dysphagia (1993) 8:276-288.

Stelnicki, E.J. et al., "HOX homeobox genes exhibit spatial and temporal changes in expression during human skin development," J. Invest. Dermatol. (1998) 110:110-115.

Swisher, S.G. et al., "Changes in the surgical manangement of esophageal cancer from 1970 to 1993," Am. J. Surg. (1995) 169:609- 614.

Sy, S.M. et al., "distinct patterns of genetic alterations in adenocarcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma of the lung," Eur. J. Cancer (2004) 40:1082-1094.

Tusher, V.G. et al., "Significance analysis of microarrays applied to the ionizing radiation response," PNAS USA (2001) 98:5116-5121.

Volpi, E.V. et al., "Large-scale chromatin organization of the major histocompatibility complex and other regions ofhuman chromosome 6 and its response to interferon in interphase nuclei," J. Cell Sci (2000) 113:1565-1576.

Williams, R.R. et al., "Subchromosomal positioning of the epidermal differentiation complex (EDC) in keratinocyte and lymphoblast interphase nuclei," Exp. Cell Res. (2002) 272: 163-175.

Wong, N. et al., "Positional mapping for amplified DNA sequences on 1 q2 l-q22 in hepatocellular carcinoma indicates candidate genes over-expression," J. Hepatol. (2003) 38:298-306.

Xu, Y. et al., "Artificial neural networks and gene filtering distinguish between global gene expression profiles of Barrett's esophagus and esophageal cancer," Cancer Res. (2002) 62:3493-3497.

* cited by examiner

FIGS. 1A & B

FIGS. 1C & D

METHODS AND KITS FOR MONITORING BARRETT'S METAPLASIA

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/658,424, filed Mar. 2, 2005.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

The invention was made with U.S. Government support under Grant No. CA071933, awarded by The National Institutes of Health. The U.S. Government may have certain rights ¹⁵ to this invention.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

of normal squamous to colunmar epithelium, which is thought to be a premalignant transformation and which is found in 80-100% of esophageal adenocarcinoma of the distal esophagus (1). The etiology of Barrett's esophagus is not well understood, but chronic gastroesophageal reflux is con-²⁵ sidered to be a major contributing factor (2). The presence of Barrett's esophagus increases the risk of developing adenocarcinoma 40 to 125-fold (3). The incidence of adenocarcinoma has increased 3.5-fold over the past 3 decades, which exceeds that of all other types of cancer $(4, 5)$. Patients with adenocarcinomas of the esophagus present with advanced disease, and 5-year survival is approximately 25% (6). Currently, endoscopic surveillance is the only method of identifying patients with early-stage esophageal cancers arising in Barrett's esophagus.

Identification of biological markers of Barrett's esophagus progression may identify high risk patients for whom endoscopy would be indicated (8). Expressional profiling represents one method of identifying biological markers of Barrett's esophagus (9-12). However, no molecular markers that can be used to identify patients at higher risk for subsequent transformation of Barrett's esophagus to adenocarcinoma have been reported.

There exists a need in the art for new methods of evaluating 45 the risk of progression of Barrett's esophagus to adenocarcinoma.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In one aspect, the present invention provides methods of assessing risk of adenocarcinoma in a mammal with Barrett's esophagus. The method involves measuring the level of expression of at least two markers listed in Table 2 in a sample prepared from Barrett's esophageal cells. The level of expression in Barrett's esophageal cells is compared to that of a reference, a difference in the level of expression of a marker being indicative of increased risk of adenocarcinoma.

In another aspect, the invention provides kits for performing the methods of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **lA-D** shows plots of expression levels of markers as a function of sample type.

FIG. **2** shows a plot of the ratio of expression levels of two markers as a function of sample type.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The Examples below describe the identification of molecular markers differentially expressed in normal esophageal 5 epithelium, Barrett's esophagus, and esophageal adenocarcinoma. Measuring the level of expression of these markers allows discrimination between normal esophageal epithelium, Barrett's esophagus, and esophageal adenocarcinoma. Quantitation of these markers can be used to identify patients 10 with Barrett's esophagus at increased risk for subsequent progression to adenocarcinoma.

DNA microarrays were used to evaluate differential gene expression patterns in resected esophageal specimens composed of normal esophageal epithelium, Barrett's esophagus, and adenocarcinoma obtained from the same individual patients. Based on this analysis, 96 genes that are differentially expressed in both Barrett's esophagus and adenocarcinoma were identified (Supplemental Table 2).

Barrett's esophagus is a specialized intestinal metaplasia ²⁰ esophagus and adenocarcinoma, 21 genes (Table 2) were Of the 96 genes differentially expressed in Barrett's identified as being potentially useful for evaluating risk of progression from Barrett's esophagus to esophageal adenocarcinoma. These 21 genes were chosen because the change in expression is in the same direction (i.e., up-regulation or down-regulation) in both Barrett's esophagus and to esophageal adenocarcinoma, and because the change in expression is progressive from Barrett's esophagus to esophageal adenocarcinoma (i.e., the markers are up- or down-regulated to a greater degree in esophageal adenocarcinoma than in Barrett's esophagus). Because the change in expression from Barrett's esophagus to esophageal adenocarcinoma is progressive, is reasonably expected that the markers can be used to monitor progression from Barrett's esophagus to esophageal adenocarcinoma.

> 35 Of the 21 genes, six selected genes (GATA6, HOXB7, TCF3, Sl00A2, SCCAl and SPRR3) were further evaluated. The level of expression of these genes, as measured by quantitative reverse transcription-PCR (QRT-PCR), discriminated between normal epithelium, Barrett's dysplasia and esophageal adenocarcinomas. It is possible to discriminate between normal epithelium and Barrett's esophagus or esophageal adenocarcinomas using any one of the 21 markers. Analysis of two or more markers permits discrimination Barrett's esophagus and esophageal adenocarcinomas. In the 45 Examples, expression levels of GATA6/SPRR3, HOXB7/ SPRR3, and GAT6/HOXB7/SPRR3 were evaluated and found to discriminate between Barrett's esophagus and esophageal adenocarcinomas. Additionally, it is specifically envisioned that any combination of two or more of the 21 markers provided in Table 2 will be useful in the methods of the invention. The markers may be analyzed individually or together in a multiplex.

> In the methods of the invention, the level of gene expression was performed by indirectly measuring the mRNA by 55 quantitative PCR, as described in the Examples. It is envisioned that mRNA, or cDNA prepared from mRNA, could be quantified through standard hybridization techniques using an oligonucleotide complementary to at least a portion of the mRNA or cDNA. Alternatively, the level of gene expression 60 could be assayed using antibody detection methods and an antibody specific for an epitope of one of the gene products (i.e., mRNA or protein) of the 21 markers.

> In the Examples, gene expression was evaluated by comparing expression levels of the 21 markers in normal esoph-65 ageal epithelium, cells characteristic of Barrett's esophagus, and esophageal adenocarcinoma using resected esophagus samples. It is envisioned that any sample containing cells

characteristic of Barrett's esophagus could be used. For example, such cells may be obtained by an esophageal lavage, or scraping or biopsying a portion of the esophagus during endoscopy.

Marker expression levels in Barrett's esophagus can be 5 evaluated by comparison to a reference. The reference may be normal esophageal epithelium obtained from the same individual, at the same time or at a different time. Alternatively, the reference may be marker expression levels in a sample comprising cells characteristic of Barrett's esophagus 10 obtained from the same individual at a different time, which would permit changes in marker expression levels to be monitored over time. It is also envisioned that comparison of marker expression levels may be made with reference to a normal range established using normal cells from a popula- 15 tion of individuals.

Differences in expression levels between Barrett's esophagus and a reference may be evaluated using any suitable statistical test. As one of skill in the art will appreciate, interpretation of results may be evaluated using different P values, depending on importance of minimizing false positives relative to the importance of minimizing false negatives in a particular application.

The methods of the invention may conveniently be performed using a kit. The kit may optionally comprise one or more probes for measuring expression at least one marker of Table 2. A probe may include, for example, a primer pair for performing quantitative PCR, an oligonucleotide that hybridizes to an mRNA or cDNA corresponding to one of the markers ofTable 2, or an antibody specific for an epitope of an expression product (i.e., mRNA or protein) of a marker listed in Table 2. The kit may include instructions for performing a method according to the present invention.

EXAMPLES

The following non-limiting Examples are intended to be purely illustrative.

Clinical samples. Samples of normal, Barrett's, and adenocarcinoma were obtained from fresh pathological specimens of patients with known Barrett's esophagus and esophageal adenocarcinoma who had undergone esophagectomy. These specimens were processed by pathology within 15 minutes of resection. Samples representative of the various gross histologic types were obtained from experienced gastrointestinal pathologists. These samples were labeled and snap frozen in liquid nitrogen and stored at -80° C. for future RNA extraction.

Preparation of RNA and hybridizations. RNAs were puri- $_{50}$ fied by combination of column chromatography and TRizol (GIBCO BRL, MD) purification, as described previously (15). Preparation of labeled cRNA and hybridization with Ul 33A chips was performed according to the manufacturer's instructions (Affymetrix, Calif.). Data were acquired using $_{55}$ where K is an even number of normal samples, and N_{jk} MAS 5.0 software (Affymetrix) and exported to MS Excel.

Submission of DNA array data. Data were submitted to the consider the Microarray Analysis and Data Management System (MADAM) database of the University of Chicago, and constructed according to the Minimum Information about a $_{60}$ Microarray Experiment (MIAME) recommendations. Data were also submitted to the GEO database (NCBI), with the accession number GSE1420.

Data analysis. Throughout this section, patients are denoted by the letter $i=1, \ldots 8$, genes by the letter j, and tissue 65 type by the letter $k=1, 2, 3$ (referring to normal (N) , Barrett's esophagus (BE), and adenocarcinoma tumor (ADC).

4

For data normalization, the expression levels of each array were multiplied by \overline{M}/M , where M is the median expression of the array, and \overline{M} is the overall median expression level. This resealing makes median expression levels equal across all arrays. For data filtration, genes were excluded based on present (P) or absent (A) calls as defined by MAS 5.0. Genes were excluded if $\Sigma_{i=1}^8 A_i \geq 3$ for all three tissue types, where A_i indicates whether a transcript is absent $(A_i=1)$ or present $(A, =0)$. The genes were further filtered based on signal intensities using ROC analysis as previously described (16, 17). The total number of remaining genes was 8636.

Next, Significance Analysis of Microarrays (SAM) (18) was used to identify genes significantly over- and underexpressed in the three pairwise comparisons of Barrett's/normal, adenocarcinoma/normal, and Barrett's/adenocarcinoma. Significance analysis of microarrays identified genes with statistically significant differences between groups by assigning each gene a score on the basis of the difference in gene expression between two groups (e.g. normal and Barrett's) relative to the adjusted pooled standard deviation of the multiple measurements from both groups. Permutations of the measurements were then used to estimate the false discovery ratio (FDR), the percentage of genes identified by chance. As the cut-off point, a Δ -value was chosen such that the estimated median number of falsely discovered (called) genes was less than or equal to 1, and required at least a 2-fold expression ratio. In contrast to using a cut-off point of a fixed FDR level, this approach resulted in different cut-off Δs and FDR levels for the three comparisons: Barrett's/normal $30 \text{ } (\Delta=1.270, \text{ } FDR=0.33\%), \text{ } adenocarcinoma/normal,$ $(\Delta=1.555, FDR=0.121\%)$ and Barrett's/adenocarcinoma $(\Delta=0.892, FDR=0.876%)$. Based on these criteria, 447 genes significantly expressed in adenocarcinoma compared with normal epithelium and 200 genes significantly expressed in 35 Barrett's esophagus compared with normal epithelium were selected. A set of 85 genes was found to have significantly different expression between adenocarcinoma and Barrett's esophagus, of which 45 genes overlapped with genes significantly different in adenocarcinoma versus normal epithelium. Next, expression ratios of all genes between two tissue groups were compared to the reference "same-to-same" distribution in order to identify genes for which the ratios are larger than expected. In a simple case with two normal samples, the "same-to-same" distribution is the distribution of over all 45 genes j (17). This concept was extended to a situation with more than two arrays by considering

$$
L_j = \log_2 \left[\left(\frac{N_{j_1} \cdot N_{j_2} \cdot ... \cdot N_{j, \frac{K}{2}}}{N_{j, \frac{K}{2} + 1} \cdot N_{j, \frac{K}{2} + 2} \cdot ... \cdot N_{jk}} \right)^{1/(K/2)} \right]
$$

represents the expression level of gene j. For every gene j, we

$$
C = \left(\frac{K}{K/2}\right)
$$

possible ways the samples can be separated into two groups, obtaining C=70 possible combinations for each gene based on the 8 arrays, hybridized with RNA from normal tissues. For each of the 70 distributions quantiles $q_{0.005}$, $q_{0.0025}$, 25

65

 $q_{0.0975}, q_{0.995},$ corresponding to nonparametric 95% and 99% confidence limits were computed. Averaging these over the 70 combinations provides cut-off points for where the bulk of the same-to-same log-ratios occur. For each gene j Barrett's/ normal and adenocarcinoma/normal ("different-to-same") 5 log-ratio

$$
L_j = \log_2 \left[\left(\frac{T_{j1} \cdot T_{j2} \cdot \ldots \cdot T_{jK}}{N_{j1} \cdot N_{j2} \cdot \ldots \cdot N_{jK}} \right)^{1/K} \right]
$$

was then compared to the reference "same-to-same" distributions, and genes with expression ratios outside the cut-off limits were considered to be differentially expressed. Using the geometric mean rather than the non-standardized ratio allowed direct comparisons of the distributions of the "sameto-same" and "different-to-same" hybridizations, adjusting for the fact that the "different-to-same" ratios are based on K pairs of tumor and normal expression levels, and that the "same-to-same" ratios are based only on K normal expression levels. Thus, L_i can be naturally interpreted as the per-patient log-ratio.

Functional selection and prognosticators analysis. To select functionally significant groups of genes, Onto Express software was used (19). Functional groups containing at least 3 genes were selected and analyzed using a binomial distribution with a significance level ≤ 0.05 . Combining results of functional and expression-based selections, 214 genes were selected for further study. Two-dimensional hierarchical clustering of these genes was performed based on the estimation of the Euclidian distances by Ward's method using $\log_2 X_{ijk}$ $\overline{X}_j^{(N)}$, the log-transformed expression levels normalized to the 35 average expression level in the normal tissues, \overline{X} ^(N). Samples T5 and NS were removed as outliers. For clustering and data presentation, JMP and TreeView software was used as described previously (20).

To define genes that correlate with the progression of Bar- $_{40}$ rett's esophagus to adenocarcinoma, the 96 genes expressed in both Barrett's esophagus and adenocarcinoma were considered. These genes were separated into two groups based on average between-patient expression: the first group contained genes which were up-regulated from normal to Barrett's $_{45}$ esophagus and further from Barrett's esophagus to adenocarcinoma, and the second group was defined similarly for down-regulated genes. All other potential patterns were excluded from this analysis. The significance of the difference in expression from normal to Barrett's esophagus and $_{50}$ from Barrett's esophagus to adenocarcinoma in each group was evaluated by a one-sided paired t-test using a p -value \leq 0.05 cut-off (taking into account that up- or downregulated genes in each group had been pre-selected).

Quantitative reverse-transcription-PCR. cDNA was syn- 55 thesized using Superscript II® reverse transcriptase (Invitrogen Life Technologies, Carlsbad, Calif., USA) following the manufacturer's instructions. cDNA was diluted 1: 10 in sterile nuclease free water (Ambion, Tex.). Quantitative PCR was performed on an ABI 7700 system (Applied Biosystems, 60 Foster City, Calif.) using SYBR Green PCR reagents in a 25 µI reaction mixture containing 2.5 µl l0xSYBR Green PCR buffer, 0.25 µ110 mM primers, 2 µI dNTP mix, 3 µ125 mM $MgCl₂$, 0.25 µl AmpErase, 0.125 µl Amplitaq Gold and 2.5 µl of the 1:10 diluted cDNA.

Primers for selected genes were designed based on Uni-Gene reference sequences using PrimerExpress software 6

(Applied Biosystems, Foster City, Calif.). For the internal control we used GAPDH. PCR was performed for 40 cycles at 95° C. for 15 seconds and 60° C. for one minute after initial incubations at 50° C. for 2 minutes and 95° C. for 10 min.

All samples were amplified in triplicate reactions. The expression of each individual gene was calculated based on the difference between amplification of the individual mRNA template and the internal control (GAPDH) mRNA template. These differences were measured by delta ct (dct) values as 10 described in the manufacturer's instructions (Applied Biosystems, Foster City, Calif.). dct values were calculated as (ct_x-ct_{GAPDH}) , where ct_x is the ct value of the specific gene X and *ct_{GAPDH}* is the amplification of the internal control. Fold induction was calculated as $2^{-\text{dct}}$ and therefore was equal to 15 $2^{-(ct)}$ _x-ct_{GAPDH}) Ratios of gene X relative to gene Y in the same samples was calculated as: $R_{xy} = 2^{-(ctX-ctY)}$. These ratios were multiplied by 100,000 to give a range greater than one. Finally, the data was converted to $Log₁₀$ format to present them in linear scale. The final expressional value (EV) was 20 calculated as:

$$
EV_{x/v}
$$
=Log₁₀[10⁵x{2-(ctX-ctY)}]

Discrimination between normal esophageal epithelium, Barrett's metaplasia and adenocarcinomas based on expressional profiling. Genes differentially expressed (either up- or down-regulated) in Barrett's esophagus and adenocarcinoma were selected based on the results of the statistical analysis. Compared with normal esophageal epithelium, 200 genes differentially expressed in Barrett's esophagus tissue and 447 genes differentially expressed in the Barrett's esophagusassociated adenocarcinoma were identified. The comparison of genes differentially expressed in Barrett's esophagus and adenocarcinoma showed that 96 genes were commonly overexpressed in Barrett's esophagus and adenocarcinoma. In adenocarcinoma, 351 genes were found to be differentially expressed that are not differentially expressed in Barrett's esophagus; in Barrett's esophagus, 104 genes were found to be differentially expressed that are not differentially expressed in adenocarcinoma. These non-overlapping genes were used in subsequent selection of significant functional groups using OntoExpress software (Table 1). Genes were also selected by comparison of the "same-to-same" and "different-to-same" hybridizations as described above using 99% confidence intervals based on the non-parametric quantile analysis. Combining both approaches, 214 genes (Supplemental Table 1) were selected for two-dimensional hierarchical clustering to show the actual discrimination between normal samples, Barrett's esophagus, and adenocarcinoma. The data were separated into three expressional clusters: cluster 1 (80 genes) contains the genes up-regulated in adenocarcinoma compared with normal epithelium; cluster 2 (63 genes) contains the genes which are sequentially suppressed in Barrett's esophagus and adenocarcinoma compared with the normal epithelium; cluster 3 (71 genes) contains the genes most drastically suppressed in adenocarcinoma compared with normal epithelium and Barrett's esophagus (data not shown).

Expressional patterns of normal epithelium, Barrett's esophagus and adenocarcinoma include different functional groups of genes. The major functional groups associated with the three major expressional clusters were identified. Cluster 1 was found to contain functional groups of genes associated with immune response, cell-cell signaling and cell-ECM interactions, control of cell cycle/growth/proliferation, and regulation of transcription and receptor activity (see Table 1).

Cluster 2 was also found to include genes involved in regulating cell cycle/proliferation, as well as genes involved in intracellular transport, bile acid transport, and aldehyde and lipid metabolism. Cluster 3 was found to contain functional groups of genes which may be specifically involved in the development of adenocarcinoma, including ectoderm development/epidermal differentiation, cytoskeleton, control of cell shape and cell-to-cell and cell-to-ECM interactions, ⁵ $Ca²⁺$ binding and metabolism, and a group of proteases and protease inhibitors. Many of these genes are specifically associated with epidermal differentiation and malignant transformation.

Analysis of genes common to Barrett's and adenocarci- ¹⁰ noma. Ninety-six genes were found to be differentially expressed (relative to normal esophageal endothelium) in both Barrett's esophagus and adenocarcinomas (Supplemental Table 2). Of those genes, a subset of 21 genes (Table 2) was chosen as prognostic or diagnostic markers because they are 15 differentially expressed in the same direction (i.e., up- or down-regulated) in both Barrett's esophagus and adenocarcinoma, relative to normal esophageal epithelium, and the changes in expression are progressive from Barrett's esophagus to adenocarcinoma (i.e., expression is up- or down-regu- 20 lated to a greater degree in adenocarcinoma relative than in Barrett's esophagus).

Analysis of expression by QRT-PCR. Differential expression as determined by DNA array-based analysis was confirmed for select markers within the group of markers shown 25 in Table 2 using QRT-PCR. Briefly, RNA was purified from surgical samples, and QRT-PCR was performed, as described above, for GATA6, HOXB7, TCF3, Sl00A2, SCCAl and SPRR3, with GAPDH as the internal control, using primer pairs having the sequences provided in Table 3. The results ³⁰ are shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. With reference to FIG. 1, panel A shows the expressional value (EV) calculated relative to GAPDH for three transcriptional factors (i.e., GATA6, HOXB7 and TCF3) for individual paired patient samples. Patient samples are identified by patient number and sample ³⁵ type, i.e., normal esophageal epithelium (n), Barrett's dysplasia (b), or esophageal adenocarcinoma (t). The results indicate that these genes are up-regulated in the progression from normal to Barrett's esophagus to adenocarcinoma. Panel B shows expressional value (EV) calculated relative to GAPDH $\,$ 40 for three genes related to keratinocyte differentiation (i.e., S100A2, SCCAl and SPRR3) for individual paired patient samples. The results indicate that these genes are down-regulated in the progression from normal to Barrett's esophagus to adenocarcinoma. Four samples $(n12, n14, nN17)$ and $t17)$ failed to amplify specific gene products by PCR and were

8

excluded. These data are consistent with the results from the entire set of tissue types in the microarray analysis, as shown in FIGS. **lC** and D, which show the corresponding average values, with the standard deviations indicated by the error bars.

To select expressional markers correlated with pre-malignant and malignant changes, p values and regression coefficients were calculated for six single genes and combinations of genes (Table 4). Each single marker can significantly discriminate normal esophageal epithelium from adenocarcinoma. However, only HOXB7 can discriminate normal tissues from Barrett's. None of the tested markers used alone can discriminate Barrett's from adenocarcinomas. However, as can be seen from Table 4, combinations of markers (GATA6/SPRR3, HOXB7/SPRR3 and GATA6+HOXB7/ SPRR3) permit discrimination of Barrett's from adenocarcinomas. Additionally, mixed effects analysis of variance (ANOVA) models were used to determine whether there are differences in expression of GATA6/SPRR3, HOXB7/ SPRR3 andGATA6+HOXB7/SPRR3 combinations between the three groups, accounting for the presence of intra-subject correlation due to the presence of several subjects with multiple samples. These analyses confirmed that the expression levels of these combination markers are significantly different between normal, Barrett and Tumor tissues types (data not shown). Also, for the combinations listed, the correlation between expression and tumor progression is higher than for either gene alone.

The GATA6/SPRR3 ratio was evaluated as marker of transformation (FIG. **2).** As can be seen in FIG. **2,** the ratio of GATA6 to SPRR3 progressively increases along the progression from normal epithelium to Barrett's dysplasia to adenocarcinomas. At the 95% confidence interval (dashed line, calculated as the mean of normal epithelium values+l.96 SD), the test has a specificity of 89% (8/9 negatives cases). For Barrett's esophagus, the sensitivity of the test, as measured by the percentage of positive cases, is 28.6% (2/9). For adenocarcinoma, the sensitivity is 100% (7/7). With a cut off level equal to 67% confidence interval (mean+1 SD), the specificity of the test is also equal to 89%, the sensitivity for Barrett's esophagus is 86% (6/7), and the sensitivity for adenocarcinoma is 100% (7/7).

Each reference cited herein is incorporated by reference in its entirety.

45 Table 1. Functional groups of genes selected for Barrett's and adenocarcinomas.

TABLE 1

TABLE I-continued

10

Selected functional groups for Barrett's and adenocarcinomas

Table 2. Genes progressively up- or down-regulated with the development of adenocarcinoma from Barrett's esophagus.

Genes with progressive changes of expression in Barretts and adenocarcinomas id symbol name Ratio (B/N) Ratio (T/N) up-regulated genes 201301 _s_at **ANXA4 ANNEXINA4** 2.28 3.13 $\begin{array}{lll} \mbox{201954}_\text{at} & \mbox{ARPC1B} & \mbox{ACTIN-RELATED PROTEN 2/3 COMPLEX, SUBUNIT 1B} & \mbox{3.20} & \mbox{5.42} \\ \mbox{214439$_\text{at}$\quad BIN1} & \mbox{BRIDGING INTEGRATOR 1} & \mbox{2.23} & \mbox{3.26} \\ \end{array}$ **BIN1 BRIDGING INTEGRATOR 1** 2.23 3.26 202901 **_X_** at CTSS CATHEPSIN S 3.08 5.26 210002 at GATA6 GATA-BINDING PROTEIN 6 6.27 10.77 221875_x_at HLA-F MAJOR HISTOCOMPATIBILITY COMPLEX, CLASS I, F 2.28 3.35 204806 **_x_** at HLA-F MAJOR HISTOCOMPATIBILITY COMPLEX, CLASS I, F 2.17 3.20 204779 s at HOXB7 HOMEO BOX B7 3.56 5.82 216973 _s_at HOXB7 HOMEOBOXB7 2.71 4.42 201422 at IFI30 INTERFERON-GAMMA-INDUCIBLE PROTEIN 30 2.23 4.11 212110 at KIAA0062 SLC39A14: solute carrier family 39 (zinc transporter), member 14 5.26 7.86 203943 at KIF3B KINESIN FAMILY MEMBER 3B 2.27 3.43 218376 _s_at **NICAL** NEDD9 interacting protein with calponin homology and LIM domains 2.03 3.12 219622 at RAB20 RAB20, member RAS oncogene family 2.90 4.66 201206 _s_at RRBPl RIBOSOME BINDING PROTEIN 1 4.02 5.80 201204_s_at RRBPl RIBOSOME BINDING PROTEIN 1 2.46 3.34 213811 **_X_** at TCF3 TRANSCRIPTION FACTOR 3 2.84 4.45 208998 at UCP2 UNCOUPLING PROTEIN 2 3.52 6.57 down-regulated genes 210020 **_X_** at CALML3 CALMODULIN-LIKE 3 0.40 0.11 203585 at ZNF185 **ZINC** FINGER PROTEIN 185 0.46 0.17 213005 _s_at **KANK** KIDNEY ANKYRIN REPEAT-CONTAINING PROTEIN 0.49 0.24 211734_s_at FCER1A Fc FRAGMENT OF IgE, HIGH AFFINITY I, RECEPTOR FOR, ALPHA 0.25 0.14 SUBUNIT 201848 $_s_at$ BNIP3 BCL2/ADENOVIRUS E1B 19-KD PROTEIN-INTERACTING PROTEIN 3 0.43 0.26 219100 at FLJ22559 hypothetical protein 0.48 0.29

9

TABLE 3

Primers for detection of genes progressively changing in Barrett's associated adenocarcinomas.

TABLE 3-continued

5	Primers for detection of genes progressively changing in Barrett's associated adenocarcinomas.				
	Gene	forward primer	reverse primer		
10		serpinb3 TTCATGTTCGACCTGTTCCA GCAGCTTTTCCTGTGGTGTT (SCCA1) SEQ ID NO: 9	SEO ID NO: 10		
	sprr3	ATCCCTGAGCAGCTGAAGAC SEO ID NO: 11	CTGCTGTTGAAGCTGAGGTG SEO ID NO: 12		
	tcf3	GTGACATCAACGAGGCCTTT SEO ID NO: 13	CTGCTTTGGGATTCAGGTTC SEO ID NO: 14		

TABLE4

SUPPLEMENTAL TABLE 1

SUPPLEMENTAL TABLE I-continued

SUPPLEMENTAL TABLE I-continued

SUPPLEMENTAL TABLE I-continued

SUPPLEMENTAL TABLE 2

SUPPLEMENTAL TABLE 2-continued

SUPPLEMENTAL TABLE 2-continued

Probe set ID	Gene name	Gene symbol	Log2 R (B/N)	Log2 R (T/N)
218484 at	NADH: ubiquinone oxidoreductase	LOC56901	-1.69	-2.66
221524 s at	Ras-related GTP binding D	RRAGD	-1.72	-2.42
220016 at	hypothetical protein MGC5395	MGC5395	-1.74	-2.20
211734 s at	Fc fragment of IgE, high affinity I, receptor	FCER1A	-2.03	-2.82

REFERENCES

- 1. Stein HJ, Siewert JR. Barrett's esophagus: pathogenesis, epidemiology, functional abnormalities, malignant degeneration, and surgical management. Dysphagia 1993; 8:276-88.
- 2. Lagergren J, Bergstrom R, Lindgren A, Nyren 0. Symptomatic gastroesophageal reflux as a risk factor for esophageal adenocarcinoma. N Engl J Med 1999; 34:825-31. 20
- 3. Shaheen N, RansohoffD F. Gastroesophageal reflux, Barrett esophagus and esophageal cancer. JAMA 2002; 287: 1972-81.
- 4. Shaheen N J, Crosby M A, Bozymski E M, Sandler R S. Is there publication bias in the reporting of cancer risk in 2^5 Barrett's esophagus? Gastroenterology 2000; 119:333-8.
- 5. Devesa S S, Blot W J, Fraumeni J F Jr. Changing patterns in the incidence of esophageal and gastric carcinoma in the United States. Cancer 1998; 83:2049-53.
- 6. Swisher S G, Hunt K K, Holmes EC, Zinner M J, McFaddwn D W. Changes in the surgical management of esophageal cancer from 1970to 1993.Am J Surg 1995; 169:609- 14.
- 7. Goldblum JR, Lauwers G Y. Dysplasia arising in Barrett's 35 esophagus: diagnostic pitfalls and natural history. Semin Diagn Pathol 2002; 19:12-19.
- 8. McManus D T, Olaru A, Meltzer S J. Biomarkers of esophageal adenocarcinoma and Barrett's esophagus. Cancer Res 2004; 64:1561-9.
- 9. Luo A, Kong J, Hu G, et al. Discovery of Ca2+-relevant and differentiation-associated genes downregulated in esophageal squamous cell carcinoma using cDNA microarray. Oncogene 2004; 23:1291.
- 10. Xu Y, Selaru F M, Yin J, et al. Artificial neural networks and gene filtering distinguish between global gene expression profiles of Barrett's esophagus and esophageal cancer. Cancer Res 2002; 62:3493-7.
- 11. Dahlberg P S, Ferrin L F, Grindle S M, et al. Gene expression profiles in esophageal adenocarcinoma. Ann Thorac Surg 2004; 77: 1008-15.
- 12. Barrett MT, Yeung KY, Ruzzo W L, et al. Transcriptional analyses of Barrett's metaplasia and normal upper GI mucosae. Neoplasia 2002; 4:121-8.
- 13. Williams RR, Broad S, Sheer D, Ragoussis J. Subchromosomal positioning of the epidermal differentiation complex (EDC) in keratinocyte and lymphoblast interphase nuclei. Exp Cell Res 2002; 272:163-75.
- 14. Marenholz I, Zirra M, Fischer D F, BackendorfC, Ziegler A, Mischke D. Identification of human epidermal differentiation complex (EDC)-encoded genes by subtractive hybridization of entire YACs to a gridded keratinocyte cDNA library. Genome Res 2001; 11:341-55.
- 15. Khodarev N N, Yu J, Nodzenski E, Murley J S, et al. Method of RNA purification from endothelial cells for DNA array experiments. Biotechniques 2002; 32:316-20.
- 30 16. Khodarev N N, Park J, Kataoka Y, et al. Receiver operating characteristic analysis: a general tool for DNA array data filtration and performance estimation. Genomics 2003; 81:202-209.
	- 17. Khodarev N N, Beckett M, Labay E, Darga T, Roizman B, Weichselbaum R R. STATl is overexpressed in tumors selected for radioresistance and confers protection from radiation in transduced sensitive cells. Proc Natl Acad Sci USA 2004; 101:1714-9.
	- 18. Tusher VG, Tibshirani R, Chu G. Significance analysis of microarrays applied to the ionizing radiation response. Proc Natl Acad Sci USA 2001; 98:5116-21.
	- 19. Draghici S, Khatri P, Martins R P, Ostermeier G C, Krawetz SA. Global functional profiling of gene expression. Genomics 2003; 81:98-104.
- 45 20. Khodarev N N, Kataoka Y, Murley J S, Weichselbaum R R, Grdina DJ. Interaction of amifostine and ionizing radiation on transcriptional patterns of apoptotic genes expressed in human microvascular endothelial cells (HMEC). Int J Radiat Oneal Biol Phys 2004; 60:553-63.

SEQUENCE LISTING

 40

<160> NUMBER OF SEQ ID NOS, 14

<210> SEQ ID NO 1 < 211 > LENGTH: 20 <212> TYPE, DNA <213> ORGANISM, Artificial <220> FEATURE, <223> OTHER INFORMATION, Synthetic oligonucleotide <400> SEQUENCE, 1

tgcaccacca actgcttagc

20

23

24

25

26

<400> SEQUENCE, 8 **ctcaaaggca tcaacagtcc t** <210> SEQ ID NO 9 $<$ 211> LENGTH; 20 <212> TYPE, DNA <213> ORGANISM, Artificial <220> FEATURE, -continued <223> OTHER INFORMATION, Synthetic oligonucleotide <400> SEQUENCE, 9 ttcatgttcg acctgttcca <210> SEQ ID NO 10 <211> LENGTH, 20 <212> TYPE, DNA <213> ORGANISM, Artificial <220> FEATURE, <223> OTHER INFORMATION, Synthetic oligonucleotide <400> SEQUENCE, 10 gcagcttttc ctgtggtgtt <210> SEQ ID NO 11 <211> LENGTH, 20 <212> TYPE, DNA <213> ORGANISM, Artificial <220> FEATURE, <223> OTHER INFORMATION, Synthetic oligonucleotide <400> SEQUENCE, 11 **atccctgagc agctgaagac** <210> SEQ ID NO 12 <211> LENGTH, 20 <212> TYPE, DNA <213> ORGANISM, Artificial <220> FEATURE, <223> OTHER INFORMATION, Synthetic oligonucleotide <400> SEQUENCE, 12 ctgctgttga agctgaggtg <210> SEQ ID NO 13 <211> LENGTH, 20 <212> TYPE, DNA <213> ORGANISM, Artificial <220> FEATURE, <223> OTHER INFORMATION, Synthetic oligonucleotide <400> SEQUENCE, 13 gtgacatcaa cgaggccttt <210> SEQ ID NO 14 <211> LENGTH, 20 <212> TYPE, DNA <213> ORGANISM, Artificial <220> FEATURE, <223> OTHER INFORMATION, Synthetic oligonucleotide <400> SEQUENCE, 14 ctgctttggg attcaggttc 21 20 20 20 20 20 20 The invention claimed is:

1. A method of assessing risk of adenocarcinoma in a mammal with Barrett's esophagus comprising:

(a) determining the ratio of the expression of GATA6 and SPRR3 in esophageal cells from the mammal; and
(b) comparing the ratio of step (a) to the ratio of expression

of GATA6 and SPRR3 in a reference selected from the group consisting of normal esophageal epithelium obtained from the mammal at the same or different time, cells characteristic of Barrett's esophagus obtained from 10 the mammal at a different time, and a normal range established using normal esophageal epithelium obtained from a population of individuals, an increase in the ratio of step (a) relative to the ratio of the reference being indicative of increased risk of adenocarcinoma. 15 of HOXB7, TCF3, S100A2, and SCCA.

2. The method of claim **1,** wherein the level of expression is measured by quantitative reverse transcription-PCR. * * * *

3. The method of claim **2**, wherein the level of expression is measured by real time PCR.

4. The method of claim **1,** wherein the reference is normal esophageal epithelium obtained from the mammal at essen-5 tially the same time as the Barrett's esophageal cells.

(b) comparing the ratio of step (a) to the ratio of expression **5.** The method of claim **1,** wherein the reference is normal esophageal epithelium or second Barrett's esophageal cells obtained from the mammal prior to obtaining the Barrett's esophageal cells of step (a).

6. The method of claim **1,** wherein the reference is a panel of normal esophageal epithelium obtained from a population of mammals.

7. The method of claim **1,** further comprising determining the expression of a marker selected from the group consisting