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Pharmacogenomics Informational Brochure



for IRBs/IECs & Investigational Site Staff



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PHARMACOGENOMICS WORKING GROUP

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This Informational Brochure is intended for IRBs/IECs & Investigational Site Staff. The brochure was developed to address issues relevant to DNA collection and research in the context of pharmaceutical drug development.

Developed by

The Industry Pharmacogenomics Working Group (I-PWG)

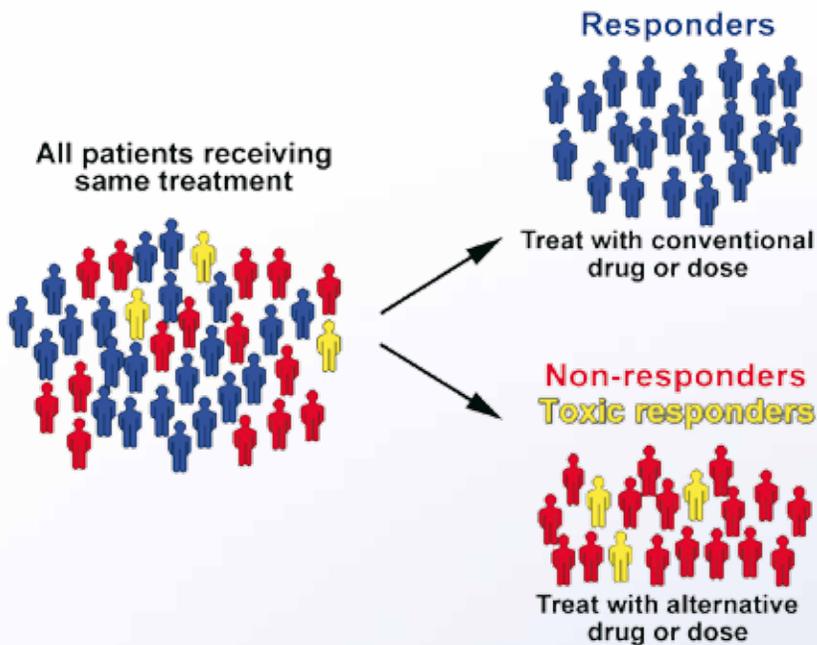
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What is DNA and What is Pharmacogenomics?

The cells of the body contain **deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA)**. DNA is inherited, and carries a code (in the form of **genes**), which determines physical appearance and other personal features. In a process called gene transcription, DNA is copied into a related molecule, ribonucleic acid (RNA), before ultimately being translated into proteins, which determine cellular function. Naturally-occurring variation in DNA is a major determinant of differences among people. This variation, referred to as **genetic polymorphism**, occurs both within genes and outside of genes throughout the entire **human genome**. This variation partly explains why some people develop certain diseases and others do not, why some people respond better than others to certain drugs, and why some people develop side effects while others do not.

Pharmacogenomics (PGx) is a branch of science that uses genetic/genomic information to better understand why people respond differently to drugs. The terms **pharmacogenomics** and **pharmacogenetics** are often used interchangeably, although pharmacogenetics generally refers to the study of DNA, while pharmacogenomics is a broader term encompassing the study of both DNA and RNA¹, and generally on a larger scale. Pharmacogenomic research is different from **genetic**

testing done for the purpose of diagnosing a person with a certain disease or for risk for developing a certain disease (e.g., genetic testing for Huntington's Disease). PGx focuses on genetic variability that affects response to drugs. This primarily occurs through pathways related to drug metabolism, drug mechanism of action, disease etiology or subtype, and adverse events. PGx overlaps with **disease genetics** research since different disease subtypes can respond differently to drugs.



Why is Pharmacogenomics Important?

PGx is one approach to explore whether a drug will be useful or harmful in certain people. By identifying genetic polymorphisms that are associated with drug efficacy and safety, PGx is allowing for more individualized drug therapies based on the genetic makeup of patients. This is sometimes referred to as **personalized medicine**. By better understanding dis-

and samples back to individual subjects through the coding key(s). Anonymization is intended to prevent subject re-identification.

Anonymous Data and Samples: Anonymous data and samples are never labeled with personal identifiers when originally collected, nor is a coding key generated. Therefore, there is no potential to trace back genomic data and samples to individual subjects. Due to restrictions on the ability to correlate clinical data with such samples, they are generally of little use to PGx research. (Not generally applicable to PGx in pharmaceutical clinical trials).

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research. The Group's activities focus on non-competitive educational, informational, ethical, legal, and regulatory topics. The Group provides information and expert opinions on these topics and sponsors educational/informational programs to promote better understanding of PGx research for key stakeholders. The I-PWG interacts with regulatory authorities and policy groups to ensure alignment. More information about the I-PWG is available at: <http://www.i-pwg.org>

Glossary

Identified Data and Samples: Identified data and samples are labeled with personal identifiers such as name or identification numbers (e.g., social security or national insurance number). The use of identified data and samples allows for clinical monitoring and subject follow-up and are generally not considered appropriate for purposes of clinical trials in drug development. (Not generally applicable to PGx in pharmaceutical clinical trials).

Coded Data and Samples: Coded data and samples are labeled with at least one specific code, and do not carry any personal identifiers.

Single-Coded Data and Samples: are usually labeled with a single specific code. It is possible to trace the data or samples back to a given individual with the use of a single coding key.

Double-Coded (De-Identified) Data and Samples: are initially labeled with a single specific code and do not carry any personal identifiers. The data and samples are then relabeled with a second code, which is linked to the first code via a second coding key. It is possible to trace the data or samples back to the individual by the use of both coding keys. The use of the second code provides additional confidentiality and privacy protection for subjects over the use of a single code.

Anonymized Data and Samples: Anonymized data and samples are initially single or double coded but the link between the subjects' identifiers and the unique code(s) is subsequently deleted. Once the link has been deleted, it is no longer possible to trace the data

eases at the molecular level, PGx is opening opportunities for the discovery of novel drugs. PGx has the overarching goal of developing safer, more effective drugs, and ensuring that patients receive the correct dose of the correct drug at the correct time.

How is Pharmacogenomics Being Used in Drug Development?

PGx is increasingly becoming a core component of drug development programs. By using PGx to determine how drugs work differently in subgroups of patients, drug developers are making better decisions about which drugs to develop and how best to develop them. Technologies are now available to simultaneously analyze over 1 million genetic polymorphisms in the human genome. This is allowing for the identification of novel genetic markers of drug response and of disease in absence of pre-existing knowledge of the involvement of specific pathways.

PGx research is currently being used in drug development to:

- Explain variability in response among subjects in clinical trials
- Address emerging clinical issues, such as unexpected adverse events
- Determine eligibility for clinical trials (pre-screening) to optimize trial design
- Develop drug-linked diagnostic tests to identify patients who are more likely or less likely to benefit from treatment or who may be at risk of adverse events
- Better understand the mechanism of action or metabolism of new and existing drugs
- Provide better understanding of disease mechanisms
- Allow physicians to prescribe the right drugs at the optimal dose for individual patients

Pharmacogenomics Already a Reality in Drug Labels

A number of drugs now have instructions in their labels either recommending or requiring a PGx test when prescribing a drug or when making dosing decisions. A well-known example is the anti-coagulant drug *warfarin*. The drug label for warfarin now includes a recommended PGx test to minimize the risk of excessive bleeding (US label). There are currently three categories of PGx information in drug labels according to the FDA:

- i) tests **required** for prescribing
- ii) tests **recommended** when prescribing
- iii) PGx information **for information only**

For a current list of examples of how PGx is impacting drug labeling see: <http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ScienceResearch/ResearchAreas/Pharmacogenetics/ucm083378.htm>

DNA Samples from Clinical Trials An Invaluable Resource

Adequate sample sizes and high-quality clinical data are key to advancements in the field of PGx. Drug development programs are therefore an invaluable resource and a unique opportunity for highly productive research in PGx. Although PGx is a rapidly evolving branch of science, the complexities of the genetic code are only beginning to be understood. As scientific discoveries continue to be made, samples collected today will become a valuable resource for future research. This may lead to the future development of new drugs that are better targeted to certain individuals and to disease subtypes.

Regulatory Authorities

The use of PGx information to improve the risk: benefit profile of drugs is increasingly being encouraged by regulatory health authorities. Authorities such as the FDA (USA), EMEA (European Union), MHLW (Japan), and ICH (International) are playing a key role in advancing this scientific field as it applies to pharmaceutical development. A significant number of regulatory guidances and concept papers have already been issued^{1, 3, 7-18}, and are available through: <http://www.i-pwg.org>. DNA sample collection has become a key component of clinical development. It is anticipated that regulatory authorities eventually may require relevant PGx data with drug submissions¹⁹.

Where to Get More Information

Several expert organizations are helping to advance the adoption of PGx in clinical development and in medical care. A vast array of educational resources related to PGx that cater to health care professionals, IRBs/IECs, scientists, and patients have been created and are publicly available. Many of these organizations and resources are available through the I-PWG website: <http://www.i-pwg.org>

What is the Industry Pharmacogenomics Working Group (I-PWG)?

The Industry Pharmacogenomics Working Group (I-PWG) (formerly the Pharmacogenetics Working Group) is a voluntary association of pharmaceutical companies engaged in PGx

usually cannot be used to make clinically meaningful or reliable decisions about a subject's health or health risks. Furthermore, confidentiality protections described above serve to guard against inappropriate disclosure of these data. For these reasons, the potential risk to a subject's employment or health/life insurance is considered to be minimal. The measures taken to protect subjects against reasonably foreseeable risks should be addressed in the informed consent form².

iii) Legislation on Genetic Discrimination

Many countries and regions have enacted legislation to protect individuals against discrimination based on their genetic information. For example, the USA Genetic Nondiscrimination Act (GINA)^{5, 6} serves to protect patients against health insurance and employment discrimination based on an individual's genetic make-up. Legislation continually evolves based on social, ethical, and legal considerations. A list of examples is periodically updated on the I-PWG website: <http://www.i-pwg.org>

Country-Specific Laws and Regulations on DNA Collection

DNA sampling in clinical trials is straightforward in most jurisdictions. However, some countries have specific laws and regulations regarding collection, labeling, storage, export, return of results, and/or use of DNA samples. Processes for the collection of DNA samples should always adhere to the regulations of the country/region in which those samples are collected. Efforts are currently underway toward improving harmonization and standardization of regulations and practices applicable to collection of DNA samples. However, it may be well into the future before there is consensus across nations. Because country-specific local and regional laws and regulations continually evolve, it is advisable to regularly verify these laws and regulations for the jurisdiction in which approval for DNA collection is being given.

For these reasons, it is vital to systematically collect DNA samples across all centers recruiting subjects into clinical trials that include a PGx component (where local regulations permit). Consent for storage of samples for future research should also be obtained if maximum benefit is to be derived from DNA samples donated by subjects. The scope of the research that may be performed both during the trial and in the future should be clearly defined in the informed consent form.

Informed Consent

Policies and regulations for legally effective informed consent vary on national, state, and local levels. There currently are no internationally recognized regulations that dictate the basic elements of informed consent for PGx research. The I-PWG has published an article on the elements of informed consent to be considered in PGx research studies². These elements build upon existing basic elements of informed consent for clinical research on human subjects³.

Return of Genomic Research Results to Study Subjects

Policies for the return of genomic results to study subjects vary among pharmaceutical companies. There are many considerations that pharmaceutical companies weigh when determining their policy regarding the return of PGx research results to study subjects. These include i) the conditions under which genomic results were generated (i.e., research laboratory environment versus accredited diagnostic laboratory), ii) whether the results will have an impact on patient medical care, iii) whether genetic counseling is necessary, and iv) international, national, and local guidelines, policies, legislation, and regula-

tions regarding subjects' rights to access data generated on them. These considerations are addressed in detail in Renegar et al. 2006⁴.

Privacy, Confidentiality, and Patient Rights

An issue that is generally perceived to be of relevance to clinical genetic research is the risk associated with inadvertent or intentional disclosure and misuse of genetic data. Although coded specimens generally have been considered adequate to protect patient privacy in most clinical development, companies and other institutions involved in PGx research have historically applied a variety of additional safeguards that can be used alone, or in combination, to further minimize the potential risk of disclosure and misuse of genetic data. These include:

i) Sample Labeling

DNA samples and corresponding clinical data can be labeled in several ways to achieve different levels of patient privacy and confidentiality. Definitions of labeling methods are provided in the glossary and are described in greater detail in the ICH Guidance E15¹. It is important to recognize that there is a trade-off between the level of patient privacy protection and the ability to perform actions related to withdrawal of consent, data return, clinical monitoring, subject follow-up, and addition of new data (see Table 1)¹. The *Identified* and *Anonymous* labeling categories described in the table are generally not applicable to pharmaceutical clinical trials.

ii) Separation of Data and Restricted Access

- Maintaining PGx-related documentation separate from other medical records.
- Restricting access to data and samples by means of password-protected databases and locked sample storage facilities.

PGx studies in pharmaceutical development are generally conducted in research laboratories that are not accredited diagnostic laboratories. Therefore, PGx research data

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Table 1

Sample Coding Category	Link Between Subject's Personal Identifiers and Genomic Biomarker Data	Traceability back to the Subject (Actions Possible, Including e.g., Sample Withdrawal or Return of Individual Genomic Results at Subject's Request)	Ability to Perform Clinical Monitoring, Subject Follow-up, or Addition of New Data	Extent of Subject's Confidentiality and Privacy Protection
Identified	Yes (Direct) Allows for Subjects to be Identified	Yes	Yes	Similar to General Healthcare Confidentiality and Privacy
	Yes (Indirectly) Allows for Subjects to be Identified (via Single, Specific Coding Key)	Yes	Yes	Standard for Clinical Research
Coded	Yes (Very Indirectly) Allows for Subjects to be Identified (via the Two Specific Coding Keys)	Yes	Yes	Added Privacy and Confidentiality Protection over Single Code
	No Does not Allow Subject to be Re-Identified as the Coding-Key(s) Have Been Deleted	No	No	Genomic Data and Samples no Longer Linked to Subject as Coding Key(s) have been Deleted
Anonymous	No – Identifiers Never Collected and Coding Keys Never Applied. Does not Allow for Subjects to be Identified	No	No	Genomic Data and Samples Never Linked to Subject

Table adapted from ICH Guidance E15