

Genetic Risk Factors of Inflammatory Bowel Disease

Author: Anja Ernst, Department of Health Science and Technology, Aalborg University

Increased intestinal permeability has been demonstrated in patients with chronic inflammatory bowel disease. A large group of enzymes, grouped as xenobiotica metabolizing enzymes, are involved in detoxification of substances potential of interrupting the epithelial barrier. These enzymes are highly polymorphic displaying changes in enzymatic activity. We investigated selected functional polymorphisms in xenobiotica metabolizing enzymes to see whether they were associated with chronic inflammatory bowel disease in Denmark, but the results revealed no association between the genetic polymorphisms and disease. A modifying effect of smoking on genotype was found for a few polymorphisms, revealing a different disease association between smokers and non-smokers. I.e. we found a strengthening of the protective effect smoking has developing on ulcerative colitis from a genetic polymorphism encoding an enzyme with no activity.

Center for Sensory-Motor Interaction

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PhD thesis by
Anja Ernst



River Publishers

e-ISBN: 9788792329905

Available From: December 2011

Price:

KEYWORDS:

978-87-92329-90-5



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