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PharmGKB and Pharmacological Reviews

The Pharmacogenetics Research Network and Knowledge Base (PharmGKB), supported by the National Institutes of Health with the National Institute of General Medical Sciences taking the lead, is an extramural research network charged with the mission of identifying phenotype-genotype correlations. The goal is to develop a knowledge base that displays data describing the variability in genes coding for proteins of importance for drug disposition and drug effect. (More information on the network can be accessed at the PharmGKB website, www.pharmgkb.org.) To provide the widest access to this database, PharmGKB has entered into an agreement with *Pharmacological Reviews* to have notices of the deposit of data describing the variability of such genes published electronically and in print. Electronic links to the database will be provided to further enhance ease of use of the genetic variability information. The initial note describing the data is considered a "notification of availability" to the research community, and it is expected that a more extensive paper describing the real or potential functional importance of the variability will be published at a later date.

The first of these notifications of availability appears in this issue of *Pharmacological Reviews*. It describes the genomic variability identified from part of the sequence of the organic cation transporter 2 (OCT2) found in the genomic DNA of 247 individuals. From this sample, 27 variants were identified. Such a finding reinforces the importance of the development of this database, as the extent of variation in genes relevant to pharmacological action is much greater than was anticipated before the completion of the Human Genome Project. A major research effort emanating from this understanding will be to study, and later predict, the functional consequences of the described variants.

Pharmacological Reviews believes this series is entirely consistent with the journal's mission of providing archival resources for such valuable databases, as well as its longstanding role of providing comprehensive and authoritative review of topics covering the breadth of the pharmacological sciences. We collectively celebrate the initiation of this series.

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