Browsing Genomeswith Ensembl



www.ensembl.org www.ensemblgenomes.org

Coursebook v90

http://training.ensembl.org/events/2017/ 2017-11-06-VEPTC

Prague - 6th November 2017



Introduction to Ensembl

Getting started with Ensembl www.ensembl.org

Ensembl is a project based at the EBI (<u>European Bioinformatics Institute</u>) that annotates **chordate** genomes (i.e. vertebrates and closely related invertebrates with a notochord such as sea squirt). Gene sets from model organisms such as yeast and worm are also imported for comparative analysis by the Ensembl 'Compara' team. Most annotation is updated every two to three months to generate increasing Ensembl versions (84, 85, 86, etc.); however, the gene sets are determined less frequently. A sister browser at <u>www.ensemblgenomes.org</u> is set up to access non-chordates—namely, bacteria, plants, fungi, metazoa, and protists.

Ensembl provides genes and other **annotation** such as predicted regulatory regions, base pairs conserved across species, and observed sequence variations. The Ensembl gene set is based on protein and mRNA evidence in **UniProtKB** and **NCBI RefSeq** databases, along with manual annotation from the **VEGA/Havana** group. All the data are freely available and can be accessed via the web browser at www.ensembl.org. Perl programmers can directly access Ensembl databases through an Application Programming Interface (**Perl API**). Gene sequences can be downloaded from the Ensembl browser itself, or through the use of the **BioMart** web interface, which can extract information from the Ensembl databases without the need for programming knowledge on the part of the user.

Synopsis — What can I do with Ensembl?

- View genes, with other annotation, along the chromosome.
- View alternative transcripts (such as splice variants) for a given gene.
- For any gene, explore homologues and phylogenetic trees across more than 70 species.
- Compare whole genome alignments and conserved regions across species.
- View microarray sequences matching Ensembl genes.
- View ESTs, clones, mRNAs, and proteins for any chromosomal region.
- Examine single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) for a gene or chromosomal region.
- View SNPs across strains (rat, mouse), populations (human), or breeds (dog).
- View positions and sequences of mRNAs and proteins that align against Ensembl genes.
- Upload your own data.
- Use BLAST or BLAT against any Ensembl genome.
- Export sequence or create a table of gene information with BioMart.
- Determine how your variants affect genes and transcripts using the Variant Effect Predictor.
- Share Ensembl views with your colleagues and collaborators.

Need more help?

- Check Ensembl <u>documentation</u>
- Watch <u>video tutorials</u> on YouTube
- View the <u>FAQs</u>
- Try some <u>exercises</u>
- Read some <u>publications</u>
- Go to our <u>online course</u>

Stay in touch!

- <u>Email</u> the team with comments or questions at <u>helpdesk@ensembl.org</u>
- Follow the Ensembl blog
- Sign up to a mailing list
- Find us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter
- https://www.facebook.com/Ensembl.org/
- o @ensembl
- o @ensemblgenomes

Further reading

Aken, B et al.

Ensembl 2017

Nucleic Acids Research (Database Issue)

http://nar.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2016/11/28/nar.gkw1104.full

Kersey, PJ et al.

Ensembl Genomes 2013: scaling up access to genome-wide data

Nucleic Acids Research (Database Issue)

http://nar.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2015/12/19/nar.gkv1157.full

For a complete list of publications, visit:

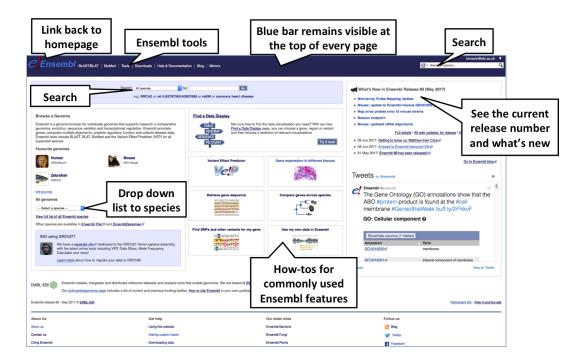
http://www.ensembl.org/info/about/publications.html

http://ensemblgenomes.org/info/publications

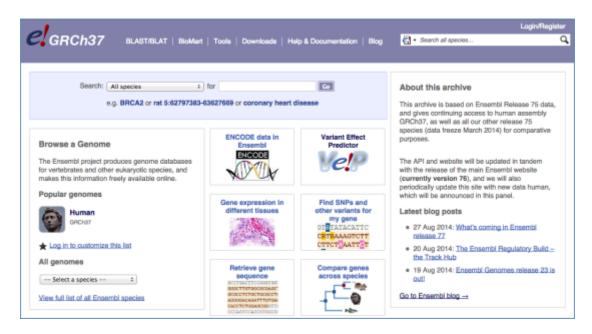
Exploring the Ensembl genome browser

Demo: Ensembl species

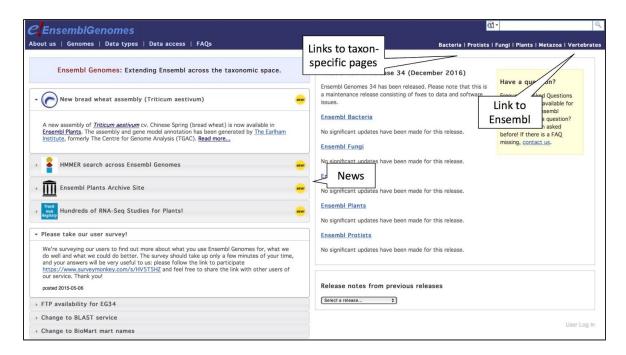
The front page of Ensembl is found at ensembl.org. It contains lots of information and links to help you navigate Ensembl:



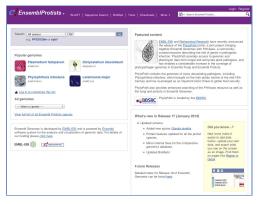
The current genome assembly for human is GRCh38. If you want to see the previous assembly, GRCh37, visit our dedicated site, grch37.ensembl.org.



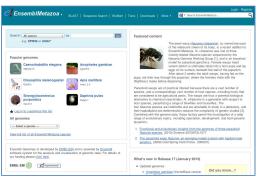
Let's take a look at the Ensembl Genomes homepage at ensemblgenomes.org.



Click on the different taxa to see their homepages. Each one is colour-coded.



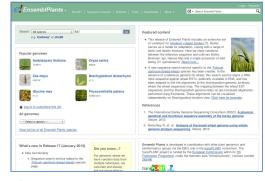
Protists



Metazoa



Fungi



Plants

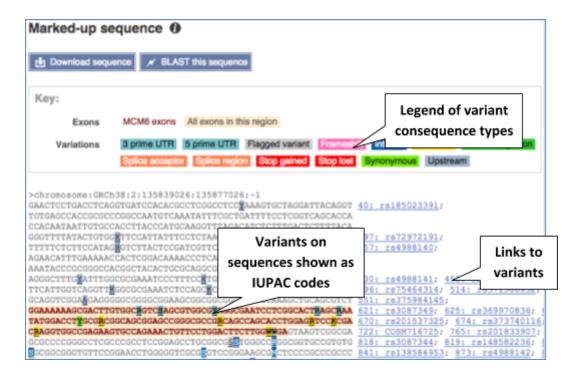


Bacteria

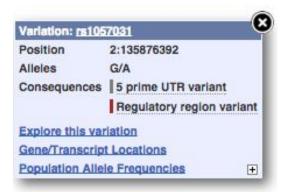
Exploring variants in Ensembl

Let's take a look at the Gene sequence view for *MCM6* in human. Search for *MCM6* and go to the Sequence view.

If you can't see variants marked on this view, click on Configure this page and select Show variants: Yes and show links.



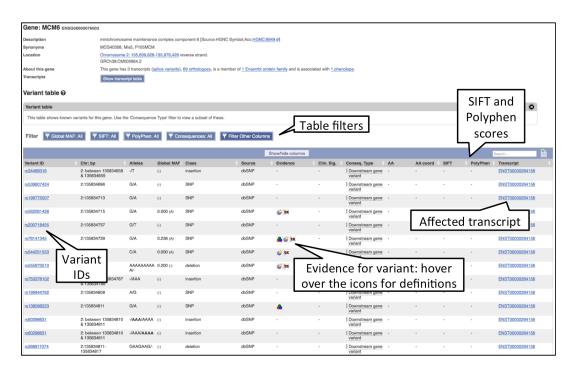
Find out more about a variant by clicking on it:



You can add variants to all other sequence views in the same way.

You can go to the Variation tab by clicking on the variant ID. For now, we'll explore more ways of finding variants.

To view all the sequence variations in table form, click the Variation table link at the left of the gene tab.

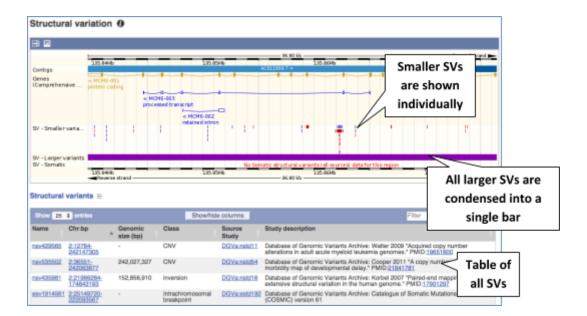


You can filter the table to show only the variants you're interested in by clicking on the filters (e.g. Consequences) and selecting appropriate filter options. You can add multiple filters at once, and remove filters by clicking the 'X' next to the active filter.



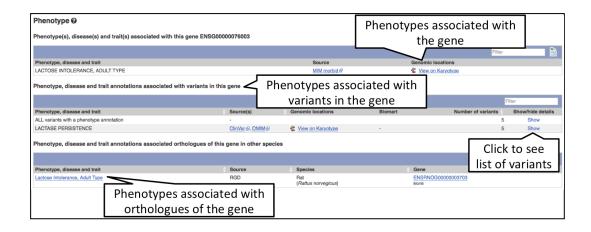
The table contains lots of information about the variants. You can click on the IDs here to go to the Variation tab too.

Let's look at Structural Variation in the Gene Tab. You'll find it in the left-hand menu.

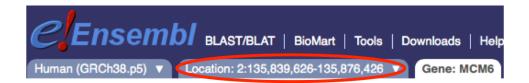


You can click on the structural variants (SVs) in the image, or on their IDs in the table, to go to the SV tab.

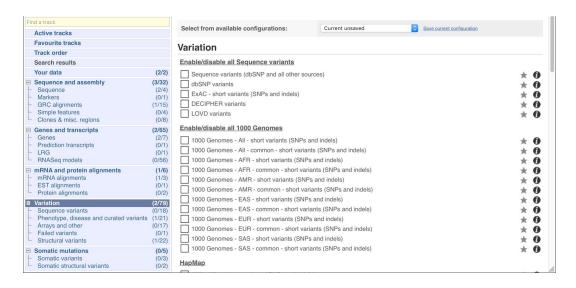
You can also see the phenotypes associated with a gene. Click on Phenotype in the left-hand menu.



Let's have a look at variants in the Location tab. Click on the Location tab in the top bar.



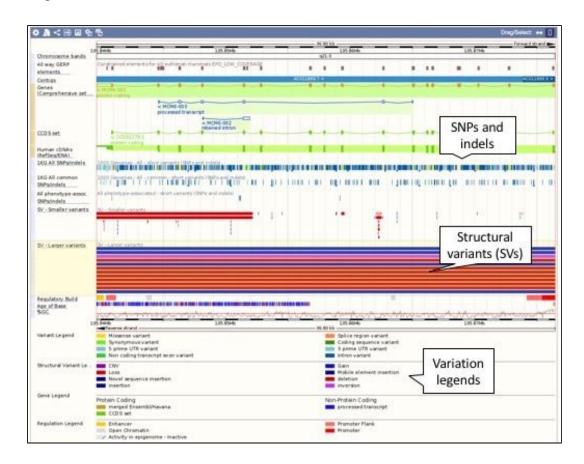
Configure this page and open Variation from the left-hand menu.



There are various options for turning on variants. You can turn on variants by source, frequency, presence of a phenotype, or the individual genome they were isolated from. Turn on the following sequence variants in Expanded with name.

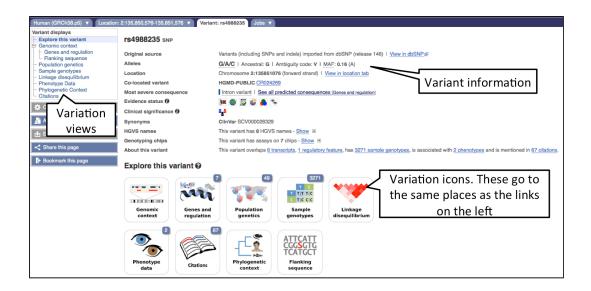
- 1000 genomes All
- 1000 genomes All common
- All phenotype-associated variants

Also turn on Larger and Smaller Structural variants (all sources) in Expanded.

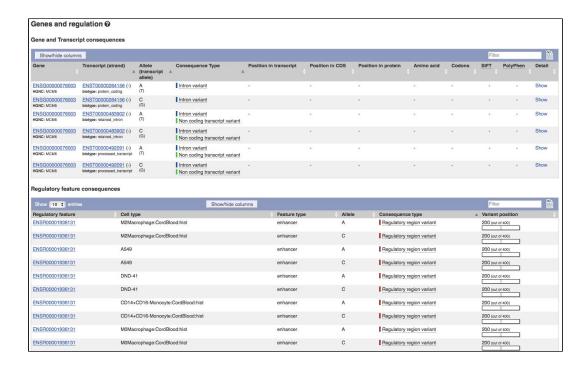


Click on a variant to find out more information. It may be easier to see the individual variants if you zoom in.

Let's have a look at a specific variant. If we zoomed in we could see the variant rs4988235 in this region, but it's easier to find if we put rs4988235 into the search box. Click through to open the Variation tab.

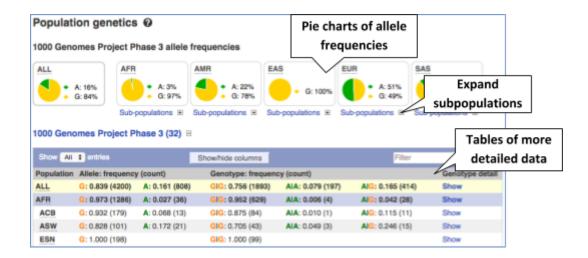


The icons show you what information is available for this variant. Click on Genes and regulation, or follow the link at left.



This variant is found in six transcripts of the *MCM6* gene. It has not been associated with any regulatory features or motifs.

Let's look at population genetics. Either click on Explore this variant in the left-hand menu and then on the Population genetics icon, or click on Population genetics in the left-hand menu.



These data are mostly from the **1000 Genomes** and **HapMap** projects in human.

There are big differences in allele frequencies between populations. Let's have a look at the phenotypes associated with this variant to see if they are known to be specific to certain human populations. Either click on Explore this variant in the left-hand menu and then on the Phenotype Data icon, or click on Phenotype Data in the left-hand menu.



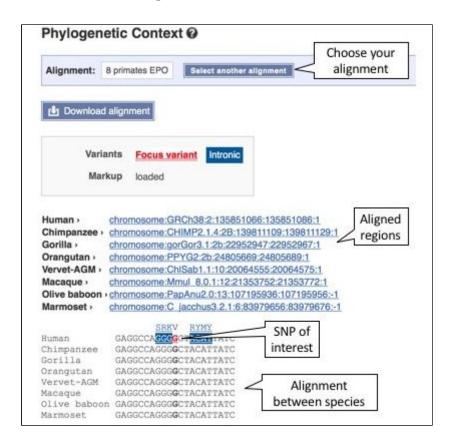
This variant is associated with lactase persistence, which is known to be common in European populations and rare in Asian populations, exactly as we saw in the allele frequencies in these populations. You can also check the population frequencies by clicking on the associated allele.

Are there other loci in the genome associated with lactase persistence? Click on LACTASE PERSISTENCE to find out.



Ten variants are known to be associated with this phenotype. They are all found with the *MCM6* gene.

Click back to the Variation Tab. Click on Phylogenetic Context to see the variant in other species.

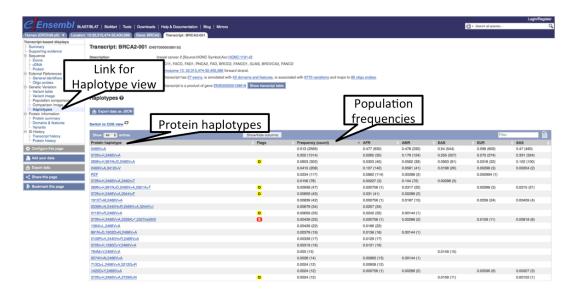


The variant is not marked in the other species. This means that the variant arose in humans.

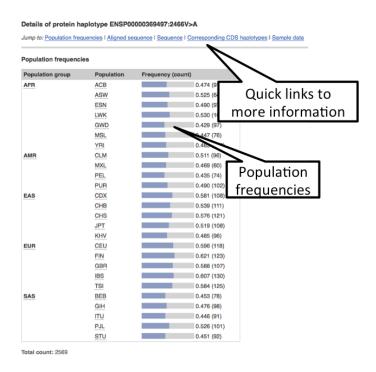
You can also analyse the effect of variants using the Transcript Haplotype view. The Transcript Haplotype view allows you to explore observed transcript sequences that result from variants identified by the **1000 Genomes Project**. Navigate to a transcript of interest and

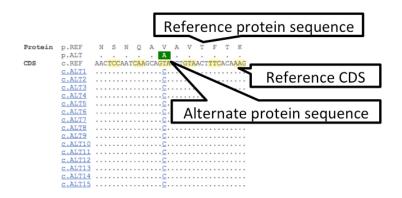
click on Haplotypes. I will use BRCA2-001 (ENST00000380152) as an example.

In the Transcript Haplotype view you can view protein consequences, population frequencies, and protein alignments for all the haplotypes for that particular transcript.



Click on Protein Haplotype 2466V>A to find out more information about this transcript variant, such as population frequencies and the aligned sequence.





Demo: The Variant Effect Predictor (VEP)

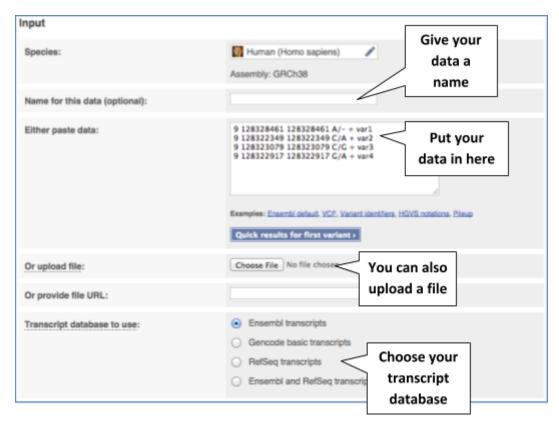
We have identified four variants on human chromosome nine, an A deletion at 128328461, C->A at 128322349, C->G at 128323079, and G->A at 128322917.

We will use the **Ensembl VEP** to determine:

- If the variants have already been annotated in Ensembl
- The genes affected by my variants
- If any of my variants affect gene regulation Go to the front page of Ensembl and click on the VEP button.



This page contains information about the VEP, including links to download the script version of the tool. Click on Launch VEP to open the input form.



The data are in the format: Chromosome Start End Alleles (reference/mutation) Strand

Put the following into the Paste data box:

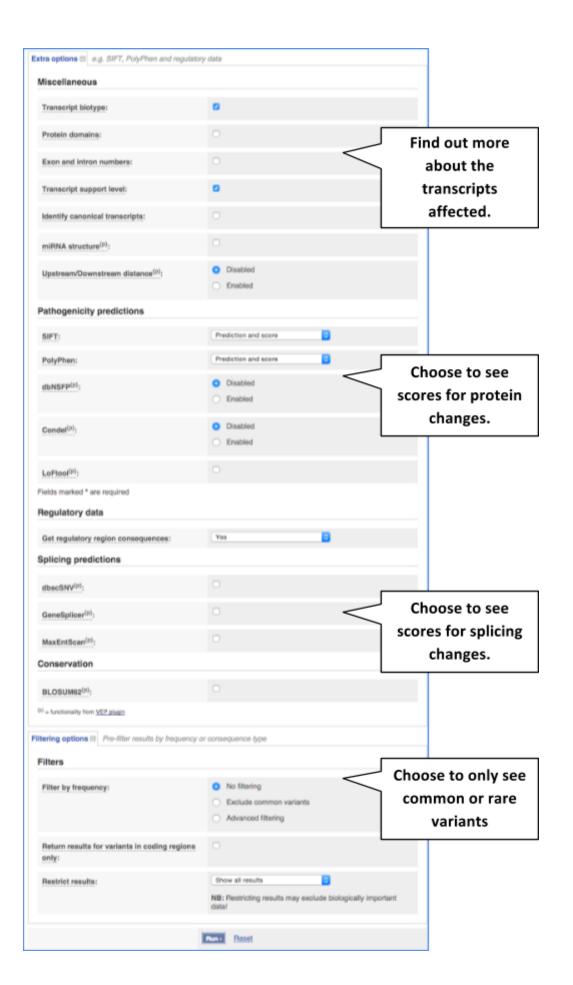
```
9 128328461 128328461 A/- + var1
9 128322349 128322349 C/A + var2
9 128323079 128323079 C/G + var3
```

9 128322917 128322917 G/A + var4

The VEP will automatically detect that the data are in Ensembl default format. (Note that the deletion in the first variant is indicated by "-".)

There are further options that you can choose for your output. These are categorised as Identifiers and frequency data, Filtering options, and Extra options. Let's open all the menus and take a look.





Hover over the options to see definitions.

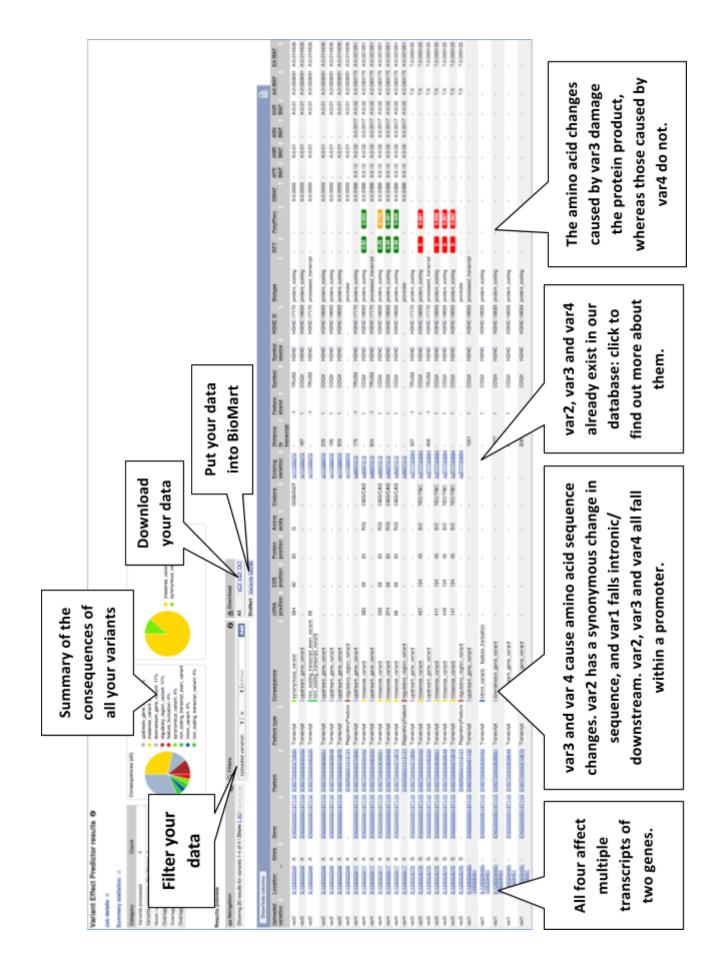
When you've selected everything you need, scroll right to the bottom and click Run.



The display will show you the status of your job. It will say Queued, then automatically switch to Done when the job is done: you do not need to refresh the page. You can edit or discard your job at this time. If you have submitted multiple jobs, they will all appear here.

Click View Results once your job is done.

In your results you will see a graphical summary of your data as well as a table of your results. (Note that some empty columns in the results table have been hidden in the following screenshot to save space.)



Exercises: Exploring variants in Ensembl

Exercise V1 - Human population genetics and phenotype data

The SNP rs1738074 in the 5' UTR of the human *TAGAP* gene has been identified as a genetic risk factor for a few diseases.

- (a) In which transcripts is this SNP found?
- (b) What is the least frequent genotype for this SNP in the Yoruba (YRI) population from the HapMap set?
- (c) What is the ancestral allele? Is it conserved in the 40 eutherian mammals?
- (d) With which diseases is this SNP associated? Are there any known risk (or associated) alleles?

Exercise V2 - Exploring a SNP in human

The missense variation rs1801133 in the human *MTHFR* gene has been linked to elevated levels of homocysteine, an amino acid whose plasma concentration seems to be associated with the risk of cardiovascular diseases, neural tube defects, and loss of cognitive function. This SNP is also referred to as 'A222V', 'Ala222Val', and other HGVS names.

- (a) Find the page with information for rs1801133.
- (b) Is rs1801133 a missense variant in all transcripts of the *MTHFR* gene?
- (c) Why are the alleles for this variant in Ensembl given as G/A and not as C/T, as in dbSNP and literature? (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/projects/SNP/snp_ref.cgi?rs=1801133)
- (d) What is the major allele in rs1801133?
- (e) In which paper(s) is the association between rs1801133 and homocysteine levels described?

(f) According to the data imported from dbSNP, the ancestral allele for rs1801133 is G. Ancestral alleles in dbSNP are based on a comparison between human and chimp. Does the sequence at this same position in other primates confirm that the ancestral allele is G?

Exercise V3 - Exploring a SNP in mouse

Madsen *et al.*, in the paper 'Altered metabolic signature in pre-diabetic NOD mice' (PloS One. 2012; 7(4): e35445), have described several regulatory and coding SNPs, some of them in genes residing within the previously defined *insulin dependent diabetes (IDD)* regions. The authors indicate that one of the identified SNPs, in the murine *Xdh* gene (rs29522348), would lead to an amino acid substitution and could be damaging, as predicted as by SIFT (http://sift.jcvi.org/).

- (a) Where is the SNP located (chromosome and coordinates)?
- (b) What is the HGVS recommendation nomenclature for this SNP?
- (c) Why does Ensembl put the C allele first (C/T)?
- (d) Are there differences between the genotypes reported in the ARK/J and C57BL/6NJ sample populations from the WTSI Mouse Genomes project?

Exercise: The Variant Effect Predictor (VEP)

Exercise V4 - VEP

Resequencing of the genomic region of the human *CFTR* (cystic fibrosis transmembrane conductance regulator (ATP-binding cassette sub-family C, member 7) gene (ENSG00000001626) has revealed the following variants (alleles defined in the forward strand):

- G/A at 7: 117,530,985
- T/C at 7: 117,531,038
- T/C at 7: 117,531,068

Use the VEP tool in Ensembl and choose the options to see SIFT and PolyPhen predictions. Do these variants result in a change in the

proteins encoded by any of the Ensembl genes? Which gene? Have the variants already been found?

Exercise V5 - viewing structural variants with the VEP

We have details of a genomic deletion in a breast cancer sample in VCF format:

13 32307062 sv1 . . . SVTYPE=DEL;END=32332466

- (a) What are the HGNC identifiers of the affected genes?
- (b) Does the SV cause deletion of any complete transcripts?
- (c) Display your variant in the Ensembl browser.

Quick Guide to Databases and Projects

Here is a list of databases and projects you will come across in these exercises. Google any of these to learn more. Projects include many species, unless otherwise noted.

Other help:

The Ensembl Glossary: http://www.ensembl.org/Help/Glossary

Ensembl FAQs: http://www.ensembl.org/Help/Faq

SEQUENCES

EMBL-Bank, NCBI GenBank, DDBJ – Contain nucleic acid sequences deposited by submitters such as wet-lab biologists and gene sequencing projects. These three databases are synchronised with each other every day, so the same sequences should be found in each.

CCDS – coding sequences that are agreed upon by Ensembl, VEGA-Havana, UCSC, and NCBI. (*Human and mouse*)

NCBI Entrez Gene – NCBI's gene collection.

NCBI RefSeq – NCBI's collection of "reference sequences", includes genomic DNA, transcripts, and proteins. NM stands for "Known mRNA" (e.g. NM_005476) and NP (e.g. NP_005467) are "Known proteins".

UniProtKB – the "Protein knowledgebase", a comprehensive set of protein sequences. Divided into two parts: Swiss-Prot and TrEMBL.

UniProt Swiss-Prot – the manually annotated, reviewed protein sequences in the UniProtKB. High quality.

UniProt TrEMBL – the automatically annotated, unreviewed set of proteins (EMBL-Bank translated). Varying quality.

VEGA – Vertebrate Genome Annotation, a selection of manually-curated genes, transcripts, and proteins. (*Human, mouse, zebrafish, gorilla, wallaby, pig, and dog*)

VEGA-HAVANA – The main contributor to the VEGA project, located at the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, Hinxton, UK.

GENE NAMES

HGNC – HUGO Gene Nomenclature Committee, a project assigning a unique and meaningful name and symbol to every human gene. (*Human*)

ZFIN – The Zebrafish Model Organism Database. Gene names are only one part of this project. (*Z-fish*)

PROTEIN SIGNATURES

InterPro – A collection of domains, motifs, and other protein signatures. Protein signature records are extensive, and combine information from individual projects such as UniProt, along with other databases such as SMART, PFAM, and PROSITE (explained below).

PFAM - A collection of protein families.

PROSITE – A collection of protein domains, families, and functional sites.

SMART - A collection of evolutionarily conserved protein domains.

OTHER PROJECTS

NCBI dbSNP – A collection of sequence polymorphisms, mainly single nucleotide polymorphisms, along with insertion-deletions.

NCBI OMIM – Online Mendelian Inheritance in Man – a resource showing phenotypes and diseases related to genes. (*Human*)

