OBJECTIVE — Assignment of the correct molecular diagnosis in diabetes is necessary for informed decisions regarding treatment and prognosis. Better clinical markers would facilitate discrimination and prioritization for genetic testing between diabetes subtypes. Serum 1,5 anhydroglucitol (1,5AG) levels were reported to differentiate maturity-onset diabetes of the young due to HNF1A mutations (HNF1A-MODY) from type 2 diabetes, but this requires further validation. We evaluated serum 1,5AG in a range of diabetes subtypes as an adjunct for defining diabetes etiology.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS — 1,5AG was measured in U.K. subjects with: HNF1A-MODY (n = 23), MODY due to glucokinase mutations (GCK-MODY, n = 23), type 1 diabetes (n = 29), latent autoimmune diabetes in adults (LADA, n = 42), and type 2 diabetes (n = 206). Receiver operating characteristic curve analysis was performed to assess discriminative accuracy of 1,5AG for diabetes etiology.

RESULTS — Mean (SD range) 1,5AG levels were: GCK-MODY 13.06 μg/ml (5.74–29.74), HNF1A-MODY 4.23 μg/ml (2.12–8.44), type 1 diabetes 3.09 μg/ml (1.45–6.57), LADA 3.46 μg/ml (1.42–8.45), and type 2 diabetes 5.43 μg/ml (2.12–13.23). Levels in GCK-MODY were higher than in other groups (P < 10^-2 vs. each group). HNF1A-MODY subjects showed no difference in unadjusted 1,5AG levels from type 2 diabetes, type 1 diabetes, and LADA. Adjusting for A1C revealed a difference between HNF1A-MODY and type 2 diabetes (P = 0.001). The discriminative accuracy of unadjusted 1,5AG levels was 0.79 for GCK-MODY versus type 2 diabetes and 0.86 for GCK-MODY versus HNF1A-MODY but was only 0.60 for HNF1A-MODY versus type 2 diabetes.

CONCLUSIONS — In our dataset, serum 1,5AG performed well in discriminating GCK-MODY from other diabetes subtypes, particularly HNF1A-MODY. Measurement of 1,5AG levels could inform decisions regarding MODY diagnostic testing.

From the 1Diabetes Research Laboratories, Oxford Centre for Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism (OCDEM), University of Oxford, Oxford, U.K.; the 2Oxford National Institute of Health Research, Biomedical Research Centre, Churchill Hospital, Oxford, U.K.; the 3Department of Primary Care Medicine, University of Oxford, Oxford, U.K.; the 4Oxford National Institute of Health Research, Biomedical Research Centre, Churchill Hospital, Oxford, U.K.; and the 5Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics, University of Oxford, Oxford, U.K. Corresponding author: Katharine R. Owen, katharine.owen@drl.ox.ac.uk.

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compared with those with type 2 diabetes matched for glycemic control.

We sought to evaluate this hypothesis in a larger independent sample set with a wider range of diabetes subtypes and to assess the performance of serum 1,5AG levels as an adjunctive test in identifying subtypes of diabetes.

**RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS** — Subjects were collected in Oxford, U.K. The MODY samples comprise subjects with a confirmed mutation in either HNF1A (n = 23 from 12 families) or GCK (n = 23 from 10 families). Median family size was 2.5 members (range 1–6), and half the families comprised only one individual. Nineteen of the HNF1A-MODY subjects had diabetes, one had IGT, and three were normoglycemic. Oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT) data from the time of sampling were available for all nondiabetic subjects.

The remaining subjects were from the Young Diabetes in Oxford (YDX) study, comprising subjects diagnosed with diabetes ≤45 years of age recruited from either primary (n = 82) or secondary (n = 198) care. Within the group are cases of classical type 1 diabetes (n = 29), latent autoimmune diabetes in adults (LADA, n = 42), and type 2 diabetes (n = 209). Type 1 diabetes was defined as permanent insulin treatment since diagnosis with additional evidence of severe β-cell dysfunction (C-peptide undetectable or <0.33 μg/ml), or both. Median age at diagnosis was 14.5 years (range 12–19). Type 2 diabetes was diagnosed by criteria of age ≥30 years, diagnosis of diabetes with positive antibodies were classified as having type 2 diabetes. Subjects in the type 2 diabetic group did not meet current clinical criteria for MODY diagnostic testing (12) or had been tested and were negative for mutations in HNF1A/HNF4A (n = 9) or GCK (n = 4). Briefly, clinical criteria for HNF1A-MODY testing was young onset (<25 years) of familial non–insulin dependent diabetes and for GCK testing was young onset of mild fasting hyperglycemia (5.3–8 mmol/l).

Two of the LADA subjects and 31 of the type 2 subjects were of non-European ethnicity (14 Asian, 11 Black, 1 Chinese, and 7 mixed or other).

Clinical details, anthropometry, and fasting blood samples were collected for all subjects (Table 1). The study was approved by the Oxfordshire Local Research Ethics Committee, and all subjects gave informed consent.

1,5AG was measured using an enzymatic colorimetric assay (GlycoMark, GlycoMark, NY) (13). Intra-assay coefficient of variance (CV) was 0.46%, and inter-assay CV ranged from 1.74 to 2.37%. GADA was measured by a radioimmunoassay using 35S-labeled full-length GAD65, and results were expressed in WHO units per milliliter derived from a standard curve calibrated from international reference material (National Institute for Biological Standards and Control code 97/550). Samples were considered positive if they had levels above 14 WHO units/ml (97.5th percentile of healthy school children) (14).

Values for age of diagnosis, duration of diabetes, BMI, creatinine, A1C, fasting plasma glucose (FPG) and 1,5AG level were not normally distributed and were log10 transformed. Geometric mean and SD range were calculated. ANOVA was calculated across the groups. For 1,5AG levels, pairwise comparisons (using T test with Bonferroni correction for multiple testing) were also calculated between the different diabetes subtypes. We then examined the effect of correcting 1,5AG levels for A1C, and, in the type 2 diabetes and MODY subgroups, for the effects of treatment modality. As 1,5AG levels can be lowered in chronic renal failure (15), subjects with serum creatinine >150 μmol/l were excluded from the analysis (one subject with LADA and nine with type 2 diabetes).

Receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curve analysis was performed to assess the discriminative accuracy of 1,5AG with regard to diabetes etiology. The performance of 1,5AG level as a diagnostic discriminator was compared with A1C and FPG. All statistical analysis was performed in SPSS version 16, and P < 0.05 was assumed to be significant.

**RESULTS** — Table 1 shows the characteristics of the subjects and the results of the biochemical investigations. Geometric mean (SD range) 1,5AG levels were: GCK-MODY 13.06 ± 9.32 μg/ml (5.74–29.74), HNF1A-MODY 4.23 μg/ml (2.12–8.44), type 1 diabetes 3.09 μg/ml (1.45–6.37), LADA 3.46 μg/ml (1.42–8.45), and type 2 diabetes 5.43 μg/ml (2.12–13.23).

Upon first examination of the unadjusted data, we found no difference in mean 1,5AG levels between subjects with HNF1A-MODY and type 2 diabetes (P > 0.05). There was also no difference in 1,5AG levels between HNF1A-MODY and either of the autoimmune groups (P > 0.05). As previously reported (16), we found 1,5AG levels were higher in those with type 2 diabetes compared with those in the autoimmune groups (type 2 vs. type 1 diabetes, P = 0.011, type 2 diabetes vs. LADA, P = 0.015). After controlling for A1C, adjusted 1,5AG level was lower in HNF1A-MODY than in type 2 diabetic subjects (P = 0.001). Adjusting for A1C did not alter the relationships between 1,5AG levels in the other diabetic subgroups. Reanalysis adjusting for shared family membership in the MODY cases and excluding the non-European individuals had no effect on these findings (data not shown). Duration of diabetes also did not have a significant effect on 1,5AG levels, but in the type 2 diabetic subjects we observed a progressively lower 1,5AG level (and higher A1C) with escalating treatment requirement. This was not seen in the MODY subgroups. The three panels in Fig. 1 show scatter plots of unadjusted 1,5AG levels plotted against A1C. These illustrate the considerable overlap between HNF1A-MODY and common forms of diabetes at all values of A1C. This suggests that, in our dataset at least, 1,5AG levels will not be a very useful clinical indicator of HNF1A-MODY. We investigated this question further by constructing ROC curves. For HNF1A-MODY and type 2 diabetes, the area under the curve (AUC) was 0.60 (Fig. 2B), confirming that in our set of subjects unadjusted 1,5AG levels are poorly discriminative between HNF1A-MODY and type 2 diabetes. We then repeated the ROC curve analysis using 1,5AG levels adjusted for A1C. This improved the AUC to 0.75.

Our most striking finding was that subjects with GCK-MODY had a higher 1,5AG level than any of the other groups (P ≤ 0.0003 for all pairwise comparisons, both uncorrected and corrected for A1C). Figure 1 illustrates that the GCK-MODY cases show good separation from other kinds of diabetes. ROC curve analysis to examine the discriminative accuracy of 1,5AG level for GCK-MODY (from type 2 diabetes) gave an AUC of 0.79 in our subjects (Fig. 2A). Similarly for GCK-MODY versus HNF1A diabetic subjects, the AUC was 0.86 (Fig. 2C). Both of these estimates
Table 1— *Characteristics of the subjects studied*

|                      | Type 1 diabetes | LADA | Type 2 diabetes | Diabetic HNF1A-MODY | GCK-MODY | Nondiabetic HNF1A mutation carriers |
|----------------------|-----------------|------|-----------------|---------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| n                    | 29              | 42   | 209             | 19                  | 24       | 4                                 |
| % Male               | 55              |      | 61              | 56                  | 46       | 81                               |
| Diagnosis age (years) | 16.7 (7.2–38.5) | 32.9 (25–43.3) | 36.2 (29.1–45.1) | 21.5 (13.3–29.1) | 21.5 (11.6–40.0) | 30.0* (19.3–46.6) |
| Diagnosis age (years) | 17.8 (9.4–33.6) | 10.3 (3.2–33.2) | 11.7 (4.5–30.3) | 15.1 (6.1–37.2) | 12.3 (6.5–23.5) | NA |
| BMI (kg/m²)          | 26.9 (23.1–31.4) | 27.2 (22.4–33) | 33 (26.9–40.4) | 25.2 (21.1–30.3) | 27.7 (22–34.8) | 22.8 (20.2–25.8) |
| Serum creatinine (μmol/l) | 94 (83–106)   | 92 (76–110) | 96 (73–125) | 84 (75–95) | 87 (75–101) | 82 (78–86) |
| A1C (%)              | 7.9 (7.1–8.8)   | 7.9 (6.9–9.1) | 7.8 (6.5–9.3) | 7.2 (6.2–8.3) | 6.8 (5.6–8.3) | 5.2 (4.9–5.6) |
| Fasting glucose (mmol/l) | 9.5 (5.3–17.0) | 8.4 (5.6–12.7) | 8.2 (5.7–11.9) | 8.3 (5.9–11.5) | 7.7 (5.8–10.3) | 5.3 (4.3–6.4) |
| 1,5AG (μg/ml)        | 3.09 (1.45–6.57) | 3.46 (1.42–8.45) | 5.43 (2.12–13.23) | 4.23 (2.12–8.44) | 13.06 (5.74–29.74) | 18.03 (10.48–31.0) |
| Adjusted 1,5AG        | 4.09 ± 1.73     | 4.99 ± 2.38 | 7.58 ± 3.28 | 5.25 ± 2.50 | 15.84 ± 3.53 | 19.83 ± 0.70 |

Data are geometric means (SD range) and means ± SD adjusted for A1C. *P* value refers to ANOVA across the diabetic groups. Manufacturer's quoted reference range for 1,5AG: 10.7–32.0 μg/ml for male patients and 6.8–29.3 μg/ml for female patients.

Age at sampling.

Serum 1,5AG levels in subtypes of diabetes were improved by adjusting for A1C to values of 0.94 and 0.96, respectively. We calculated threshold values of 1,5AG designed to reflect maximum sensitivity and specificity in our dataset, and 1,5AG > 7.5 μg/ml were used as biochemical discriminators to identify GCK-MODY cases, while 70% of the type 2 diabetes cases fall below this cut-off. For GCK-MODY versus type 2 diabetes, a GCK-MODY > 11 μg/ml gave sensitivity of 86% and specificity of 64% for identifying GCK-MODY cases, while 89% of the type 1,5AG levels were above this threshold.

In the combined group with a 1,5AG value > 11 μg/ml, and using the threshold levels described above for identifying GCK-MODY cases, the criteria for identifying GCK-MODY cases, while 70% of the type 2 diabetes cases fall below this cut-off. For GCK-MODY versus type 2 diabetes, a GCK-MODY > 11 μg/ml gave sensitivity of 86% and specificity of 64% for identifying GCK-MODY cases, while 89% of the type 1,5AG levels were above this threshold.

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CONCLUSIONS — Identifying monogenic forms of diabetes and assigning the subtypes correctly currently depends on recognizing a clinical phenotype and arranging confirmatory molecular testing. Additional biochemical tests that aid prioritization of cases for genetic testing would have great clinical utility.

1,5AG is an attractive candidate marker for HNF1A-MODY because it utilizes the known characteristic of low renal threshold for glucose seen in HNF1A mutations. We confirm the previous finding (4) that 1,5AG levels are lower in HNF1A-MODY than type 2 diabetes, but this difference is only apparent after adjustment for A1C. This is necessary because the lower A1C in our HNF1A-MODY group (7.2 vs. 7.8%, P = 0.04) has the effect of diminishing the difference in unadjusted 1,5AG levels (the previous study was well matched at baseline for A1C). Adjusting for A1C increased the discriminative accuracy of 1,5AG to identify HNF1A-MODY from type 2 diabetes with the AUC of the ROC curve rising from 0.60 to 0.75. This is still of rather limited clinical utility (AUC of ≥0.8 representing a useful test) and would require further validation to design a suitable model that includes A1C. Ideally this validation would include more HNF1A-MODY cases with higher A1C, as we have limited data on A1C ≥9%. A further limitation for a role of 1,5AG in a diagnostic strategy to detect HNF1A-MODY is that we found no difference in 1,5AG levels between HNF1A-MODY and either form of autoimmune diabetes.

The most striking finding in our study was the higher 1,5AG levels in subjects with GCK-MODY compared with all other groups. This is likely to be explained by the known modest postchallenge glucose increment seen in those with GCK mutations (18). Postprandial glucose levels rarely rise high enough to cause glycosuria, resulting in levels of

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Figure 1.—Scatter plots of serum 1,5AG levels (μg/ml) versus A1C (%) for the different subtypes of diabetes. For clarity the data points are plotted on three panels with a filled symbol to emphasize a different diabetic subtype in each panel: lilac diamonds, subjects with autoimmune diabetes (type 1 + LADA combined); blue circles, type 2 diabetes; orange squares, HNF1A-MODY; and green squares, GCK-MODY. A: Distribution of autoimmune diabetes. B: Type 2 diabetes. C: Both MODY subtypes. Three subjects with A1C >12.5% are not shown for increased clarity of the figure but were included in the analysis.

Figure 2.—ROC curves illustrating discriminative capacity of unadjusted 1,5AG to distinguish between diabetes subgroups. A: GCK-MODY and type 2 diabetes. B: HNF1A-MODY and type 2 diabetes. C: GCK-MODY and HNF1A-MODY.
1,5AG that are mainly within the normal range. Our ROC curve analyses result in promising estimates for the ability of 1,5AG to discriminate GCK-MODY from both type 2 diabetes and HNF1A-MODY. Though 1,5AG levels are likely to be influenced by recent dietary intake, we made no attempt to adjust for this. The ROC curve results are reassuring that this test will perform well in routine clinical practice where prior dietary information is not likely to be available.

There are some limitations to extrapolating this finding to a general type 2 diabetes clinic population: The subjects in this study were selected for age of diagnosis ≤45 years, where the pretest probability of possessing a GCK mutation is likely to be higher than in an unselected group of patients with type 2 diabetes (GCK mutations in fasting hyperglycemia fall from a prevalence of 40% in children [19] to ~1% in adults diagnosed over 50 years of age [20]). In the <45 years of age range the likely prevalence of GCK mutations is difficult to estimate but probably in the range of 3–5%.

We found that duration of diabetes did not have a significant effect on 1,5AG level; however, the type 2 diabetic patients on diet treatment had a higher 1,5AG than those on oral hypoglycemic agents or insulin. This suggests that postprandial glucose excursion is not normalized by treatment of diabetes. Therefore, we would predict that 1,5AG levels might be less useful in discriminating GCK-MODY from those with type 2 diabetes who are well-controlled on diet treatment.

There was very little overlap between the 1,5AG levels in our GCK-MODY and HNF1A-MODY groups. This discriminative performance benefits from the fact that two major characteristics of these subtypes of MODY (low renal threshold and low postchallenge increment) have opposite effects on 1,5AG levels and suggest 1,5AG analysis might have the most potential as a discriminative test between these two MODY subtypes. Currently patients suspected of having MODY are frequently selected for GCK rather than HNF1A mutation testing on the basis of the characteristic pattern seen on OGTTs: In GCK-MODY a mild fasting hyperglycemia with a modest 2-h increment (90th centile <4.6 mmol/l) is observed [12], while in HNF1A-MODY FPG may be normal but with a high 2-h postchallenge level (mean >5 mmol/l) [18].

Although an OGTT is quoted as the gold standard investigation [12], it is time consuming, difficult to interpret in those on treatment, and has large day-to-day variability [21]. A 1,5AG measurement would in theory be a useful, more cost-effective, and practical alternative to an OGTT, as it reflects postprandial glucose excursion from a single nonfasting blood sample. OGTT data were not available on our GCK-MODY cases, so we were not able to directly assess the correlation with 2-h glucose. However, a relationship between 1,5AG levels and OGTT has been examined previously: in subjects with IGT 1,5AG levels were strongly correlated (r = −0.8) with 2-h glucose levels, and this was greater than the correlation seen with FPG and the correlation between A1C and either fasting or 2-h values (22). Similarly, 1,5AG levels showed good correlation with postprandial continuous glucose monitoring system readings [23] and 2-h postprandial capillary measurements [24]. This supports the use of 1,5AG as a surrogate for postchallenge glucose and merits further validation in GCK-MODY.

In conclusion, we suggest future research should focus on the role of the 1,5AG level as a tool to differentiate MODY subtypes in those already suspected of having a monogenic form of diabetes.

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