Multiple Regions of NSR1 Are Sufficient for Accumulation of a Fusion Protein within the Nucleolus

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Abstract. NSR1, a 67-kD nucleolar protein, was originally identified in our laboratory as a nuclear localization signal binding protein, and has subsequently been found to be involved in ribosome biogenesis. NSR1 has three regions: an acidic/serine-rich NH$_2$ terminus, two RNA recognition motifs, and a glycine/arginine-rich COOH terminus. In this study we show that NSR1 itself has a bipartite nuclear localization sequence. Deletion of either basic amino acid stretch results in the mislocalization of NSR1 to the cytoplasm. We further demonstrate that either of two regions, the NH$_2$ terminus or both RNA recognition motifs, are sufficient to localize a bacterial protein, β-galactosidase, to the nucleolus. Intensive deletion analysis has further defined a specific acidic/serine-rich region within the NH$_2$ terminus as necessary for nucleolar accumulation rather than nucleolar targeting. In addition, deletion of either RNA recognition motif or point mutations in one of the RNP consensus octamers results in the mislocalization of a fusion protein within the nucleus. Although the glycine/arginine-rich region in the COOH terminus is not sufficient to bring β-galactosidase to the nucleolus, our studies show that this domain is necessary for nucleolar accumulation when an RNP consensus octamer in one of the RNA recognition motifs is mutated. Our findings are consistent with the notion that nucleolar localization is a result of the binding interactions of various domains of NSR1 within the nucleolus rather than the presence of a specific nucleolar targeting signal.

The majority of nuclear proteins contain nuclear localization sequences (NLSs)$^1$ that are required for their entry into the nucleus. The sequence fits the consensus Lys-Arg/Lys-X-Arg/Lys (Chelsky et al., 1989). Nuclear transport is saturable (Goldfarb et al., 1986), occurs by selective entry, and requires energy (Newmeyer et al., 1986; Markland et al., 1987; Newmeyer and Forbes, 1988; Richardson et al., 1988). Once nuclear proteins enter the nucleus, they are found in different subnuclear regions; their final destination is most likely defined by their structural and functional interactions with proteins or nucleic acids; some examples are: the nuclear filament proteins (lamins) that play a role in nuclear cytoarchitecture are thought to attach to the nuclear envelope by binding to the surface of the inner nuclear membrane via a 54-kD protein (Bailer et al., 1991); transcription factors that activate expression of genes interact with specific DNA sequences; ribosomal proteins are found in the nucleolus where ribosomal DNA genes encoding ribosomal RNA (rRNA) are located. Although the notion of functional interactions being the major determinant of the localization of splicing or transcription factors is widely accepted, some have suggested that the localization of nucleolar proteins may be due to the presence of specific nucleolar targeting sequences (NOS) (Garcia-Bustos et al., 1991). Our manuscript addresses this question for the nucleolar protein NSR1, a nuclear signal binding protein in the yeast, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.

Transcription of ribosomal RNA and subsequent assembly of ribosomes has long been associated with the nucleolus. However, understanding how ribosome assembly is carried out and in what regions of the nucleolus the various steps take place has remained largely enigmatic. Seminal experiments in *Drosophila* showed that the transcription of a single rRNA gene is sufficient to organize a nucleolus, even if this gene is transcribed from a euchromatic region (Karpen et al., 1988). These studies suggest that all the machinery for processing the precursor rRNA, for attracting ribosomal proteins, and for recruiting proteins involved in assembly of the mature ribosome is available to the misplaced gene. Thus, it seems reasonable to propose that nucleolar proteins are recruited to the nucleolus on the basis of interactions required for their function, rather than by a specific targeting sequence. Indeed, reports from several different laboratories studying the sequences required for the localization of a vari-

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1. Abbreviations used in this paper: ASR, acidic serine region; DAPI, 4',6-diamidino-2-phenylindole; GAR, glycine-arginine rich; HTLV-I, human T cell leukemia virus type I; NLS, nuclear localization sequence; NOS, nucleolar targeting sequence; RRM, RNA recognition motif.

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The Journal of Cell Biology, Volume 123, Number 5, December 1993 1081-1091 1081
ety of proteins that function in the nucleolus (viral proteins, an amphibian and two mammalian nucleolar proteins) have found no common motif (Dang and Lee, 1989; Nosaka et al., 1989; Maeda et al., 1992; Peculis and Gall, 1992; Schmidt-Zachmann and Nigg, 1993). More importantly, there is evidence that some of the sequences identified are part of the functional domains of the various proteins.

The arginine-rich consensus motif: Arg/Lys-X-X-Arg-Arg-X-Arg-Arg is required for the nucleolar accumulation of the viral proteins human immunodeficiency virus (HIV-1) Tat and Rev, and the human T cell leukemia virus type I (HTLV-I) rex-encoded protein (Rex), and is sufficient to direct bacterial or cytoplasmic fusion proteins into the nucleolus (Sionti et al., 1988; Dang and Lee, 1989; Subramanian et al., 1991). However, further analysis identified the NOS of HIV Tat as necessary for its ability to transactivate genes expressed from the viral LTR (Hauber et al., 1989; Kuppuswamy et al., 1989; Ruben et al., 1989). Likewise, an alteration of the NOS in Rex abolishes both its nucleolar localization and its biological function (Nosaka et al., 1989). Therefore, the NOS likely targets these viral proteins to the nucleolus by serving as functional domains for these proteins to interact with other macromolecules within the nucleolus.

The arginine-rich consensus, however, is not present in endogenous nucleolar proteins that have been identified thus far, including: No38, a nucleolar protein found in amphibian oocytes; UBF, a mammalian nucleolar transcription factor required for ribosomal RNA gene expression; and nucleolin, a mammalian nucleolar protein involved in ribosome biogenesis.

A deletion of 24 amino acids in the COOH-terminal domain of No38 results in the inability of this protein to sort to the nucleolus (Peculis and Gall, 1992). However, the 24 amino acids are not sufficient to target a nonnucleolar protein to the nucleolus, suggesting that other domains of No38 may be required for proper nucleolar localization. Deletion of the RNA recognition motifs and glycine/arginine-rich domain prevented nucleolin from accumulation in the nucleolus, while the absence of the acidic NH2-terminal region of the RNA recognition motifs and glycine/arginine-rich domain may be required for proper nucleolar localization. Deleting the RNA recognition motifs and glycine/arginine-rich domain prevented nucleolin from accumulation in the nucleolus, while the absence of the acidic terminal region had no effect (Schmidt-Zachmann and Nigg, 1993). However, neither of the regions were sufficient to direct the cytoplasmic protein, pyruvate kinase, to the nucleolus. A similar analysis of UBF has shown that at least two regions are required for nucleolar accumulation, the HMG-box (necessary for rDNA binding), and an acidic area within the COOH terminus of the protein (Maeda et al., 1992). It was not determined if these two regions are sufficient to direct a nonnucleolar protein to the nucleolus.

The idea that functional domains rather than nucleolar targeting signals determine subnuclear localization of a few viral, as well as higher eucaryotic nucleolar proteins, led us to examine the sequences involved in the nucleolar localization of NSRI, a yeast nucleolar protein originally defined by our laboratory as a nuclear signal binding protein and subsequently shown to be involved in pre-rRNA processing and proper ribosome assembly (Lee and Melese, 1989; Kondo and Inouye, 1992; Lee et al., 1992). NSRI has three major regions: an acidic-serine-rich NH2-terminus, two RNA recognition motifs (RRM), and a COOH-terminus rich in glycine/arginine residues (GAR domain). The various regions of NSRI were individually fused to a bacterial protein (β-galactosidase) to test whether they could support the accumulation of the hybrid protein within the nucleolus. Using this approach, we have identified two regions of NSRI that were sufficient: the NH2-terminus and both RRMs. Thus, our data are consistent with the view that multiple regions determine the presence of a protein in the nucleolus.

Materials and Methods

Construction of NSRI Hybrid Derivatives

DNA manipulations and microbiological techniques were carried out according to the method of Sambrook et al. (1989). The plasmids used in all the β-galactosidase fusion constructs were derived from pLG6692 (Guarente and Prashne, 1981). All constructs are shown in Fig. 1. In the initial construct, pN1Kpn (described as N), the CYC1 promoter in pLG6692 was replaced with a 1.3-kb XhoI-BamHI fragment containing the GALI-GALI0 bidirectional promoter and a 663-bp KpnI-EcoRI fragment from pWLI (Lee et al., 1991) coding for the NH2-terminal residues 1-187 of NSRI. The GALI promoter is oriented in front of the NSRI fragment.

Previously described nested deletions of the NH2-terminus of NSRI in pWLI, spanning 16 amino acids, were cloned in front of the β-galactosidase gene by modifying the KpnI site of pN1Kpn as template: deletion of NLSI (residues 139-142) AGAGTCTAAGCAT (deletion)-TCTGAGACGCC; deletion of NLS2 (residues 159-162) GAGTCTTCCAC-(deletion)-AATGAAGAAACC. NSRIΔKKKR was constructed by replacement of a 60-bp Accl-BamHI fragment from NΔKKKR by a 1.0-kb Accl-BamHI fragment from pHLI containing the distal portion of NSRI.

β-galactosidase fusion constructs lacking the NH2-terminus of NSRI were made by fusing both NLS1 and NLS2 of NSRI to either the RRM domain or the GAR domain using a nested deletion of pWLI that deletes amino acid residues 1-133 (Fig. 1 B, 134-414). NLS/RRM1-2 deletes the sequences after an internal BstEI site in NSRI. NLS/RRM2 deletes the sequences after a HpsiI site. Both the BstEI and HpsiI sites, respectively, were modified to BamHI sites using linkers. Both the BstEI and HpsiI sites, respectively, were modified to BamHI sites using linkers, and the resulting Spbl-BamHI fragments were cloned into pNISph. Using NLS/RRM1-2, NLS/RRM1Δ was generated by deleting the sequences between two internal Accl sites. Point mutations in the RNP consensus octamer of RRM1 were made by oligonucleotide-directed in vitro mutagenesis, described above, using the oligonucleotide TAAAGGCTACCATGATC-CAAGTTTTGGTTACGT. The nucleotide changes are underlined and italicized. Parallel constructs of NLS/RRM1-2 containing only NSRI sequences were made by insertion of a stop codon after amino acid 367. To obtain NLS/GAR, the XbaI site in NSRI was modified to a MboI site using linkers and MboI-BamHI fragments containing the GAR domain was isolated and inserted into pNISph behind the GAR domain.

Strains and Media Preparation

The haploid strains W303-1A (Mat a, ade2-1, can1-100, ara3-1, leu 2-3, 112, trp 1-1, his3-11,15) or WLY253 (same as W303-1A except nar1::HIS3) (Lee et al., 1992), were used in all experiments. Either W303-1A or WLY253 harboring pWLI0 (Lee et al., 1991), was used as a control strain for wild-type NSRI protein expression. Standard media preparation and yeast cell culture were carried out according to Sherman et al. (1986). Yeast transformation was done using the lithium acetate procedure of Ito et al. (1983).
Figure 1. (A) and (B) Hybrid constructs containing NSR1 deletions fused to the β-galactosidase gene and NSR1 deletion mutants containing only NSR1 sequences. The intracellular distribution of all the constructs are shown. The protein domains of the deduced NSR1 sequence are displayed on top. The first four light gray boxes represent the acidic/serine-rich regions (ASR1--4); two shaded boxes in the middle denote the two RRM s; the GAR domain is shown as a black box. The sizes of the boxes are roughly proportional to their length in the protein. Small internal deletions and point mutations in several constructs are displayed directly above the affected domains. An * next to RRM1 indicates the amino acid changes Arg(R) → Gln(Q), Tyr(Y) → Leu(L), as described in Results. ◆ Indicates constructs in which immunofluorescence data are shown. Immunofluorescence data are not shown for the other constructs in which similar results were obtained. (C) The deduced amino acid sequence of the NH2 terminus of NSR1. ASR1--4 are underlined. NLS1 and NLS2 are denoted by four asterisks (*).

Expression of NSR1 Hybrid Proteins and Deletion Constructs Containing Only NSR1 Sequences from the GAL1 Promoter; Preparation of Whole Cell Lysates and Subcellular Fractionations

The yeast strain W303-1A was transformed to URA+ with the plasmids containing the β-galactosidase fusion constructs. NSR1 deletion constructs containing only NSR1 sequences were transformed into the nsrl- strain, WLY353. To induce expression, cells were first grown overnight in liquid synthetic media containing 2% raffinose and lacking uracil to OD~0.3. They were then switched into rich media+2% raffinose media (YPR) for 2 h, and 2% galactose (induced) or 2% glucose (repressed) were added. Cells were grown for 5 h and harvested. In the case of strains containing the NSR1 deletion constructs, since these proteins are greatly overexpressed, at 2 h after galactose induction, 1% glucose was added to decrease expression; cells were grown for an additional 3 h and harvested. Cells were washed with 10 mM Tris/1 mM EDTA, pH 8, containing protease inhibitors (0.5 mM PMSF, 5 µg/ml leupeptin, 5 µg/ml pepstatin, 1 mM aminocaproic acid). Whole cell lysates were prepared by dissolving cells in Laemmli buffer (containing 6 M urea and 0.5 mM PMSF). Subcellular fractionations were carried out using a method developed by Baker et al. (1988) to obtain pure cytosol. Fractions were then dissolved in Laemmli buffer. Samples from both these procedures were analyzed on a 10.5% SDS–polyacrylamide gel and transferred onto nitrocellulose paper as described previously (Lee et al., 1991).

Immunoblotting and Immunofluorescence Microscopy

Immunoblotting was performed as described by Lee et al. (1991). The primary antisera used were either monoclonal anti-β-galactosidase antibody (Promega Corp., Madison, WI) at 2 µg/ml or 1:200 dilution of an affinity-purified polyclonal antibody against NSR1.
Figure 2. Immunofluorescence localization of NSR1, N, NΔKKQK, and NSR1ΔKKRK. The constructs are shown in Fig. 1A. Indirect immunofluorescence was performed on the yeast strains WLY353 (the nsrl strain) expressing NSR1ΔKKRK and W303-1A expressing NSR1 or the hybrid proteins, as described in Materials and Methods. Antibody against NSR1 was used to detect the localization of NSR1 in a wild-type haploid strain, W303-1A (a-c), and the NSR1 deletion mutant lacking residues 139-142 (NLSI), NSR1ΔKKRK (j-l). Anti-β-galactosidase antibody was used to detect the intracellular distribution of the hybrid proteins, N (d-f) and NΔKKQK (g-i). Arrows are used to indicate the position of the nucleolar region within the nucleus. DAPI staining of DNA (a, d, g, j); FITC staining (b, e, h, k); phase contrast (PH) (c, f, i, l). Bar, 2 μm.
After 3-h galactose induction, cells were prepared for indirect immunofluorescence by following published procedures for spheroplasting using Zymolase 100T (ICN Biomedicais, Inc., Costa Mesa, CA) (Pringle et al., 1989). First antibody incubations were performed overnight at 4°C using a monoclonal anti-β-galactosidase antibody diluted at 6.8 μg/ml in blocking buffer, or using a 1:30 dilution of an affinity-purified polyclonal antibody against NSR1. As secondary antibody, FITC-conjugated affinity-purified goat anti-mouse IgG diluted at 4.5 μg/ml, was used to visualize the cellular localization of the proteins. In the case of 1-82/NLS construct where the hybrid protein was underexpressed, a tertiary antibody, FITC-conjugated affinity-purified donkey anti-goat IgG (goat anti-mouse, goat anti-rabbit, and donkey anti-goat; Jackson Immunoresearch Labs., Inc., West Grove, PA) diluted at 4.5 μg/ml was used. 1 μg/ml of DAPI was used to visualize nuclear staining. Slides were viewed with a fluorescence microscope (Optiphot; Nikon Inc., Garden City, NY). Kodak TMAX 400 film was used for all photomicroscopy.

Cells containing the NSRI deletion constructs, in contrast, were harvested after 5 h in 2% galactose/1% glucose, as discussed in the previous section, since overexpression of the proteins resulted in protein levels greatly higher than the expression of NSRI or the hybrid proteins by immunoblotting analysis, and by indirect immunofluorescence, total cell staining was observed (data not shown).

Results

**NSRI Contains a Bipartite NLS**

Since NSRI is a nucleolar protein (Fig. 2, a–c), we wondered whether the subnuclear distribution of the protein could be attributed to a specific nucleolar signal, or to two overlapping or distinct signals for its nuclear versus nucleolar localization.

Between the NH2-terminal domain and the domain containing the RNA recognition motifs are two putative NLS's, (KKRKKS and KKQKK), that fit the highly basic consensus sequence for an NLS assigned by Chelsky et al. (1989). To determine if either of the NLSs were functional, we tested whether they were necessary for the localization of a NSRI/β-galactosidase fusion protein. A hybrid protein was constructed that contained the NH2 terminus of NSRI (including the KKKRK and KKQKK sequences) and the bacterial protein, β-galactosidase. By indirect immunofluorescence, this protein was found in the nucleus (Fig. 2, d–f). Deletion of either the KKKRK or the KKQKK sequence by in vitro mutagenesis resulted in mislocalization of the hybrid protein to the cytoplasm (Fig. 2, g–i), suggesting that NSRI contains a bipartite NLS (Robbins et al., 1991).

A deletion of the KKKRK sequence was also made in the NSRI protein, and like the hybrid proteins, was found to be cytoplasmic. NSRI is highly stable in the cytoplasm when it is mislocalized as analyzed by both immunofluorescence (Fig. 2, j–l) and cellular fractionation (data not shown).

**A Combination of Different Regions within the NH2 Terminus, Rather Than a Specific Sequence, Is Required for Nucleolar Localization**

NSRI has three well defined regions: an acidic/serine-rich NH2 terminus, a middle region containing two RNA recognition motifs, and a COOH-terminal region containing a sequence abundant in arginine/glycine repeats. We decided to test each region separately for its ability to target β-galactosidase to the nucleus.

Our assay for determining nucleolar localization was indirect immunofluorescence. In yeast, the nucleolus forms a crescent that lines the nuclear envelope and occupies a sizeable volume of the nucleus. In some visual planes the nucleolus will wrap around the nucleus such that viewed from above it will appear to lay on top of the nucleus. In a field of cells, those having this orientation will show overlap of the DNA (stained by DAPI) and the nucleolar antigen (stained by FITC). In most cases the orientation of the cells will be such that the nucleolar antigen will not overlap the DNA, and because the nucleolar region is not stained well by DAPI, the two staining patterns will be nearly independent. Our criterion for nucleolar staining is that most of the cells in a particular field show distinct FITC and DAPI staining, while in the case of nuclear staining all cells in the field show an overlap between DAPI and FITC staining.

A hybrid protein containing the NH2 terminus of NSRI, (residues 1–187, including the nuclear localization sequences), fused to β-galactosidase was observed in the nucleolus as discussed in the previous section (Fig. 2, d–f). The nucleolar localization of the fusion protein, despite the absence of the RNA recognition motifs (RRMs) and the GAR domain, suggested that a nucleolar targeting sequence may exist within the NH2 terminus of NSRI. We then carried out an extensive deletion analysis of the NSRI NH2 terminus to determine if a specific amino acid sequence was responsible for the correct localization of the hybrid protein. A series of existing deletions of the NH2-terminal domain of NSRI, made during the sequencing of the protein, were used for this study (Lee et al., 1991). Expression of the hybrid proteins was confirmed by immunoblotting using anti-β-galactosidase antibody (Fig. 3).

The NSRI NH2 terminus is highly repetitive and contains four separate clusters of acidic/serine-rich residues (ASR or

![Figure 3](image-url)
acidic-serine regions 1-4, Fig. 1 C), defined by us, as a stretch of serines and acidic amino acids lacking any basic residues and containing consensus casein kinase II sites. In fact, NSR1 is phosphorylated in vitro by casein kinase II (unpublished results). Separating the first acidic-serine cluster from the second, and the second cluster from the third is the repeat TKKEESK. The third and fourth acidic-serine clusters are separated by one of the nuclear localization sequences, KKKK.

Initially, we decided to delete the beginning of the NSR1 NH2 terminus just prior to ASR1 because it was highly basic and such regions had been proposed to be involved in the nucleolar localization of other proteins (Dang and Lee, 1989). However, the loss of amino acids 1-39 (NΔ39) from the NSR1 NH2 terminus still resulted in the nucleolar localization of the hybrid protein (Fig. 4, a and b). Deletion of an additional 15 amino acids (NΔ54), which removed approximately half of ASR1 resulted in the hybrid protein being distributed between the nucleolus and the nucleus (Fig. 4, c and d). Complete removal of ASR1 was accomplished by deleting an additional 37 amino acids (NΔ91), and resulted in predominately nuclear staining, though exclusion from the nucleolus was not observed (Fig. 4, e and f). It was interesting that despite the continued presence of the three remaining acidic-serine clusters (ASR2-4), total removal of ASR1 resulted in nuclear rather than nucleolar localization of the hybrid protein.

Since the constructs above, except for the one lacking residues 1-91, all contain a small part of one of the RNA recognition motifs, we could not rule out the possibility that the observed nucleolar localization was due solely to the incomplete RRM. However, addition of this small region of the RRM to a hybrid protein that does not confer the ability to localize to the nucleolus (see Fig. 1 A, NLS:SphI-Alul versus NLS:SphI-BamHI; immunofluorescence data not shown).

To test if ASR1 is sufficient for β-galactosidase to be maintained in the nucleolus, a hybrid protein (1-82/NLS) composed of the first 82 amino acids of the NSR1 NH2 terminus (containing the entire ASR1) and the NSR1 NLS within residues 134-168 fused to β-galactosidase was made, and was predominantly nucleolar (Fig. 4, g and h). Unfortunately, to maintain the internal bipartite NLS, ASR4 must be included in the hybrid protein. However, since a fusion protein with ASR2-4 is not found in the nucleolus, we assume that this region is not required for nucleolar localization.

We were surprised to find that when we deleted residues 1-39 in the shortened construct containing ASR1 and ASR4, it dramatically lowered the amount of β-galactosidase in the nucleolus (see Fig. 1 A, 39-82/NLS; immunofluorescence data not shown). We had already shown that residues 1-39 are dispensable if the rest of the NH2 terminus is present, but these residues clearly become important for nucleolar localization in the shortened construct that contains the first 82 amino acids of the NSR1 NH2 terminus and residues 134-168 of NSR1 containing the NLS. We interpret this as an indication that residues 1-39 have the ability to enhance binding within the nucleolus as compensation for the loss of binding interactions normally facilitated by the distal half (82-168) of the NH2 terminus. Thus, different combinations of regions within the NH2 terminus can result in the ability of β-galactosidase to reside in the nucleolus.

Both RNA Recognition Motifs Are Required for the Nucleolar Localization of NSR1

To assess whether the other regions of NSR1 (the RRMs and the GAR domain) could influence the subnuclear localization of β-galactosidase, hybrid proteins lacking the NH2 terminus but containing the NLS of NSR1 (residues 134-168) with either the RRMs or the GAR domain and deletion mutants containing only NSR1 sequences. Whole cell lysates were prepared from the yeast strains W303-1A expressing the hybrid proteins or WLY353 expressing the NSR1 deletion mutants. The proteins were resolved on a 10.5% SDS-polyacrylamide gel, transferred onto two nitrocellulose filters, and one filter was stained with india ink. The second filter was blotted with anti-β-galactosidase antibody (lanes 1-5) or antibody against NSR1 (lanes 6-9). The constructs are shown on Fig. 1 B. NLS/RRM4 +2 (lane 1); NLS/RRMΔ2 (lane 2); NLS/RRMΔ1 (lane 3); NLS/RRM4 +2 (lane 4); NLS/GAR (lane 5); 134-414 (lane 6); 134-414:RRM4 +2 (lane 7); 134-367 (lane 8); 134-367:RRM4 + (lane 9).

Figure 4. Immunofluorescence localization of NΔ39, NΔ54, NΔ91, and 1-82/NLS. Indirect immunofluorescence was performed on the wild-type haploid strain, W303-1A, expressing the hybrid proteins. Anti-β-galactosidase antibody was used to detect the intracellular distribution of the β-galactosidase fusion constructs NΔ39 (a and b), NΔ54 (c and d), NΔ91 (e and f), and 1-82/NLS (g and h), as described in Materials and Methods. The small inset shown in d was added to more clearly show the difference in staining between NΔ54 versus NΔ39 and NΔ91. Arrows are used to indicate the position of the nucleolar region within the nucleus. DAPI staining of DNA (a, c, e, g); FITC staining (b, d, f, h). Bar, 2 μm.
Figure 6. Immunofluorescence localization of 134-414, NLS/RRM1+2, NLS/RRMΔ1, NLS/RRM1*+2, and NLS/GAR. Indirect immunofluorescence was performed on WLY353 expressing the NSR1 deletion mutant, 134-414, which lacks the NH₂-terminal residues 1-133, and on W303-1A expressing the hybrid proteins, as described in Materials and Methods. Antibody against NSR1 was used to detect
Deletion of the second RRM, leaving only the first RRM (RRM1), resulted in localization of the hybrid protein to the nucleus (see Fig. 1B, NLS/RRM2; immunofluorescence data not shown). To ensure that the amino acid requirements for nucleolar localization were not contained within the second motif, a deletion of the first RRM, leaving only the second RRM (RRM2), was constructed and was also found in the nucleus as analyzed by indirect immunofluorescence (Fig. 6, e and f). Although RRMs are defined as loose consensus sequences that extend over an 80 amino acid area, the RNP consensus octamer lies within this region and is highly conserved. The alignment of RRM sequences by Kenan et al. (1991) indicate the conserved amino acids in RNP1 at positions 52, 54, and 56. An Arg52→Gln change in the UI-A protein was found to abolish RNA binding (Nagai et al., 1990). Based on these observations, we decided to mutate the first RNP consensus octamer (*Arg-Gly-*Tyr-Gly-Tyr-Val-Asp-Phe) changing *Arg52--Gln and *Tyr54~Leu. A hybrid protein containing the mutated RNP1 and the wild-type RNP2 fused to β-galactosidase accumulated in the nucleus (Fig. 6, g and h).

Our next series of experiments was directed at asking if the subnuclear localization of NSR1 itself would be similar to the NSR1/β-galactosidase hybrid protein if the same deletions and mutations of the RRMs were made. To observe the localization of these mutant NSRII proteins, they were expressed in an nsrl- strain and their cellular localization was detected using antibody against NSR1. NSR1 lacking only the NH2 terminus, released in the bacterial fusion protein, was still located in the nucleolus (Fig. 6, a and b, and Fig. 1B, 134-414). However, the NSR1 protein carrying the identical point mutations within RNP1 was still predominantly nucleolar, not nuclear (see Fig. 1B, 134-414:RRM1*; immunofluorescence data not shown). This result was unexpected given the strong nuclear accumulation of the fusion protein carrying the same mutation. The major difference in the two constructs was that the GAR domain was present in the NSR1 protein but absent from the fusion protein. When an additional NSR1 construct was made that lacked approximately two thirds of the GAR domain, but still contained the point mutations in RNP1, it was not unusual in the nucleolus (see Fig. 1B, 134-367:RRM1*; immunofluorescence data not shown).

Despite the fact that the presence of the GAR domain was able to compensate for a mutation in RNP1, it was not sufficient, when fused to β-galactosidase, to localize the hybrid protein to the nucleolus (Fig. 6, i and f).

Discussion

NSR1 is a nucleolar protein which was originally identified by a ligand blot analysis in a search for proteins that specifically recognized nuclear localization sequences in our laboratory indicate that ASR1 is also the prime region for recognition of NLS peptide-conjugates in ligand blots (unpublished data).

Although the NH2 terminus of NSR1 is sufficient to localize β-galactosidase to the nucleolus, it is not necessarily required. A construct containing the two RNA recognition motifs and lacking the NH2-terminal domain is also found in the nucleolus. We found that deletion of either RRM resulted in the nuclear location of the fusion protein. Additionally, two point mutations in the RNA consensus octamer (RRN) of RRM1 resulted in the nuclear location of both a hybrid protein (NLS/RRM1*+2) and NSR1 lacking the NH2-terminal and GAR domains (134-367:RRM1*).

the localization of 134-414 (a and b). Anti-β-galactosidase antibody was used to detect the intracellular distribution of the hybrid proteins NLS/RRM1+2 (c and d), NLS/RRM1 (e and f), NLS/RRM1*+2 (g and h), and NLS/GAR (i and j). Arrows are used to indicate the position of the nucleolar region within the nucleus. DAPI staining of DNA (a, c, e, g, i); FITC staining (b, d, f, h, j). Bar, 2 µm.
The observation that in the absence of the NH₂ terminus both RRM s are required for the proper nucleolar localization of a hybrid protein as well as NRRI itself may imply, that like nucleolin (Bourbon et al., 1983; Herrera and Olson, 1986; Ghisolfi et al., 1990), NRRI recognizes a larger RNA, possibly ribosomal RNA. The disruption of NRRI, as well as GARI, NOP1, U3, and U4 result in improper processing of preribosomal RNA (Li et al., 1990; Hughes and Ares, 1991; Tollervey et al., 1991; Girard et al., 1992; Lee et al., 1992). Unlike these proteins, NRRI does not coimmunoprecipitate small nucleolar RNAs (snoRNAs). On the basis of the presence of snoRNAs immunoprecipitating with GARI, NOP1, and SSBI, it has been suggested that these proteins may form a snoRNP particle, similar to a small nuclear RNP (snRNP) particle, but involved with processing of preribosomal RNA rather than pre-mRNA (Tollervey et al., 1991; Girard et al., 1992). Nucleolin, an abundant mammalian nucleolar protein, is not thought to be a snoRNP protein and has been found to bind RNA in vitro (Bourbon et al., 1983; Herrera and Olson, 1986). Nucleolin has also been shown to shuttle between the nucleus and cytoplasm (Borer et al., 1989), and it has been proposed to play a role in the nucleocytoplasmic transport of ribosomal proteins. Nucleolin and NSRI share a similar organization of domains, and both have been shown to bind SV-40 T-antigen type NLSs in vitro (Xue et al., 1993) and to be involved in ribosome biogenesis (Bugler et al., 1982; Bourbon et al., 1983; Lee et al., 1992). Data on the localization of nucleolin corroborate our findings with NSRI in that a nucleolar targeting signal was not identified. Unlike NSRI, the RNA recognition motifs were not sufficient to target nonnucleolar proteins to the nucleolus (Schmidt-Zachmann and Nigg, 1993).

Finally, the highly basic residues interspersed with aromatic amino acids that constitute the GAR domain have been suggested to bind RNA or proteins (Ghisolfi et al., 1992a). In the studies by Ghisolfi et al., a polypeptide corresponding to the nucleolin GAR domain was synthesized in Escherichia coli (Ghisolfi et al., 1992b). The authors demonstrated that the GAR domain is required for the efficient binding of RNA by the RNA recognition motifs, although it does not contribute to the specificity of the interaction. We have shown that the native RRM of NSRI in the absence of the GAR domain are capable of allowing a fusion protein to accumulate in the nucleolus. Point mutations in the RNPI of a hybrid protein (NLS/RRMI*+2) or in NSRI lacking both the NH₂ terminus and the GAR domain (134-367:RRMI*), result in the distribution of these proteins to the nucleus. In other experiments we have also shown when the RNP octamer in RRMI is mutated, the GAR domain is necessary for the nucleolar accumulation of NSRI lacking the NH₂ terminus. These results support the idea that the GAR domain coupled with the mutant RRM are capable of stronger binding interactions within the nucleolus than either can carry out alone.

Ghisolfi et al. also suggest that the GAR domain may carry a nucleolar targeting signal since it has been found to date only in nucleolar proteins (Ghisolfi et al., 1992a). However, our results clearly show that the GAR domain itself is unable to direct a fusion protein to the nucleolus. A hybrid protein constructed by making a fusion of the GAR domain with ß-galactosidase was located in the nucleus. In conclusion, nucleolar signals were first suggested to be extended NLSs that contained longer arrays of basic amino acid stretches (Dang and Lee, 1989). However, extensive mutational analysis of a number of proteins found in the nucleolus have been carried out and no consensus nucleolar targeting sequence, or NOS, has as yet been identified. Additionally, the NOSs of the viral proteins, HIV Tat and the Rex protein of HTLV-I, and those of the higher eukaryotic nucleolar proteins UBF (a nucleolar transcription factor) and nucleolin (involved in ribosome biogenesis) were found to be functional domains necessary for their cellular activity (Hauber et al., 1989; Kuppuswamy et al., 1989; Nosaka et al., 1989; Ruben et al., 1989; Nai et al., 1992; Schmidt-Zachmann and Nigg, 1993). We have demonstrated that all three regions of the NSRI protein, depending on the circumstances, can contribute to its accumulation in the nucleolus. Our findings, and the lack of other common sequences between nucleolar proteins, lend increased support to the idea that unlike NLSs, nucleolar targeting does not occur via a specific consensus sequence. Like transcription factors that form protein complexes and bind to DNA, and proteins involved in the nuclear cytoarchitecture, the subnuclear accumulation of nucleolar proteins appears to occur through specific binding interactions with other proteins and/or nucleic acids.

We are grateful to Zhixiong Xue for fruitful discussions of the data. Special thanks to Jim Manley and Steve Mount, of our department, and members of our laboratory for critical reading of the manuscript.

This research was supported by a National Science Foundation Presidential Young Investigator Award grant DCB-88-58613, and a National Institutes of Health grant GM-44901-01.

Received for publication 7 July 1993 and in revised form 8 September 1993.

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