

# **Mutation screening of pre-eclampsia candidate genes, *LEP (ob)* and *LEPR (obR)*.**

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Master of Science at the University of Stellenbosch.



Supervisors: Drs R. Hillermann-Rebello and G.S. Gebhardt

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## Declaration

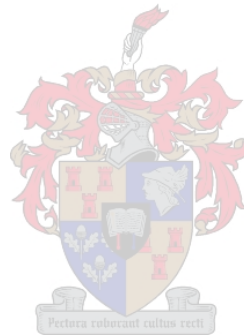
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Date

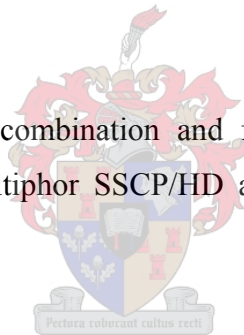


## Abstract

Pre-eclampsia is a multisystemic disorder with an incidence of ~6-8% in non-Caucasian women in the Western Cape. Trophoblast invasion is vital for adequate anchorage of the placenta to the uterine wall as well as for the optimisation of utero-placental blood flow in uncomplicated pregnancies. This process is facilitated by the fetal trophoblast cells that digest the extracellular matrix of the uterus by secreting various molecules, including the metalloproteinases (MMP), of which MMP-9 has an increased production during the first trimester. Leptin, an autocrine regulator of MMP-9 secretion, functions via the leptin receptor to prevent over-invasion of maternal tissues.

The aim of this study was to investigate the role of the leptin (*ob*) and leptin receptor (*obR*) genes in predisposition to pre-eclampsia and involved screening the genes in South African non-Caucasian cohorts and performing statistical analysis to determine whether any variants contributed to the disease profile.

Fifty-two mother/cord blood patient combination and forty-one matched control samples were screened using a combination of Multiphor SSCP/HD analysis, restriction enzyme analyses and sequencing techniques.



Two novel variants were identified in this study: a coding 107a/g (Lys36Arg) in the *ob* gene and an A→G transition 34 bp downstream of *obR* exon 14.

An additional five documented sequence variants were identified in the *ob* gene including a C→A transversion 188 bp upstream of untranslated exon 1, a G→A transition 19 bp into exon 1, a C→T transition 50 bp 3' to the start of exon 3, and the 280a/g (Val94Met) and 309c/t (Asn103Asn) variants in exon 3. No significant association was demonstrated between the control and patient genotypes, although in some cases (-188c/a and +19g/a) frequencies approached significance, but Hardy-Weinberg equilibrium deviations limited interpretation.

No associations were demonstrated for the *obR* Lys109Arg variant in exon 4, Gln223Arg variant in exon 6, Ser343Ser variant in exon 9 and the G→C loci 15 bp 3' of exon 18. However, an association

was demonstrated ( $p = 0.05$ ) at the 1986c/g (Lys656Asn) exon 14 locus between mother and infant genotypes aligned in the recessive model (C/C and C/G vs. G/G).

Genotype-phenotype comparisons were performed. The *obR* exon 14 Lys656Asn, exon 6 Gln223Arg and exon 9 Ser343Ser variants demonstrated weak association with poor clinical outcome in infants of pre-eclamptic pregnancies.

While no single *ob* and *obR* sequence variants could be shown to significantly increase susceptibility to pre-eclampsia in mothers or their infants, these genes may harbour variants which modulate the clinical severity of pre-eclampsia.



## Opsomming

Pre-eklampsie is 'n multisistemiese siekte met 'n voorkoms van ~6-8% in nie-Kaukasiese vroue in die Wes-Kaap. Trofoblastiese indringing is noodsaaklik vir geskikte verankering van die plasenta aan die baarmoederwand en vir die optimalisering van die utero-plasentale bloedvloei in ongekompliseerde swangerskappe. Hierdie proses word bemiddel deur fetale trofoblastiese selle wat die ekstrasellulêre matriks van die baarmoeder verteer deur verskeie molekules af te skei, insluitend die metalloproteïnases (MMPs), waarvan MMP-9 'n verhoogte produksie in die eerste trimester van swangerskap het. Leptin, 'n outokriene reguleerder van MMP 9-sekresie, funksioneer via die leptinreseptor om oormatige indringing van die moederweefsel te verhoed.

Die doel van hierdie studie was om die rol van leptin (*ob*) en die leptinreseptorgene (*obR*) in die vatbaarheid vir pre-eklampsie na te vors. Dit het die sifting van die gene in Suid-Afrikaanse nie-Kaukasiese groepe en die uitvoering van statistiese analyses ingesluit om te bepaal of enige variante tot die siekteprofiel bygedra het.

Twee-en-vyftig moeder/naelstringbloed pasiëntkombinasies en een-en-veertig ooreenstemmende kontrolemonsters is gesif deur gebruik te maak van die Multiphor ESKP/HD- (enkelstring konformasie polimorfisme/heterodupleks) analyse, restriksie-ensiemverteringanalise en volgordebepalingtegnieke.

Twee nuwe variante is geïdentifiseer in die studie: 'n koderende 107a/g (Lys36Arg) in die *ob*-geen en 'n A→G transisie 34 bp stroom-af van die *obR*-ekson 14.

'n Bykomende vyf gedokumenteerde volgordevariante is geïdentifiseer in die *ob*-geen, insluitende 'n C→A vervanging 188 bp stroom-op van die onvertaalde ekson 1, 'n G→A transisie 19 bp tot in ekson 1, 'n C→T vervanging 50 bp 3' van die begin van ekson 3, en die 280a/g (Val94Met) en 309c/t (Asn103Asn) variante in ekson 3. Geen betekenisvolle verband is tussen die kontrole- en pasiëntgenotipes vertoon nie, alhoewel die frekwensies in sommige gevalle (-188c/a en +19a/g) betekenisvol begin raak het, maar Hardy-Weinberg ekwilibriumaafwykings het die verklaring daarvan beperk.

Geen assosiasies is vertoon vir die *obR* Lys109Arg-variant in ekson 4, Gln223Arg variant in ekson 6, Ser343Ser variant in ekson 9 en die G→C lokus 15 bp 3' van ekson 18 nie. Nogtans is 'n assosiasie vertoon ( $p = 0.05$ ) vir die 1986c/g (Lys656Asn) ekson 14-lokus tussen moeder en baba genotipes wat in die ressesiewe model (C/C and C/G vs. G/G) inskakel.

Genotipe-fenotipe-vergelykings is uitgevoer. Die *obR*-ekson 14 Lys656Asn, ekson 6 Gln223Arg en ekson 9 Ser343Ser-variante het weinig assosiasie met swak kliniese uitkomstes in babas van pre-eklamptiese swangerskappe vertoon.

Alhoewel geen enkele *ob*- en *obR*-volgordevariante gewys kon word om die vatbaarheid vir pre-eklampsie betekenisvol in moeders en hul babas te verhoog nie, kan die gene dalk variante huisves wat die kliniese graad van erns van pre-eklampsie moduleer.



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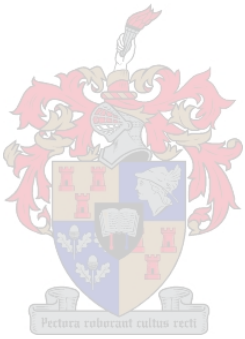
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# List of Contents

	page number
Title page	p. i
Declaration	p. ii
Abstract	p. iii
Opsomming	p. v
NRF Acknowledgement	p. vii
Acknowledgements	p. viii
List of Contents	p. ix
List of Figures	p. xiii
List of Tables	p. xv
List of Appendices	p. xvii
List of Abbreviations	p. xviii
	
1. Introduction	p. 1
1.1 Uncomplicated Pregnancy	p. 1
1.1.1 Fertilisation and early development	p. 1
1.2.1 Implantation	p. 1
1.2.2 Trophoblast Invasion	p. 2
1.2 Pre-eclamptic Pregnancy	p. 4
1.2.1 Hypertensive disorders in pregnancy	p. 4
1.2.2 Pathophysiology	p. 5
1.2.3 Aetiology	p. 6
i. Placental ischemia	p. 6

ii. Lipoproteins versus toxicity preventing activity	p. 6
iii. Immune maladaptation	p. 7
iv. Inadequate invasion	p. 7
1.3 Pre-eclampsia as a genetic disease	p. 7
1.3.1 Familial disposition	p. 7
1.3.2 Genetic investigations	p. 8
1.3.3 Candidate genes and association studies	p. 8
i. Haemodynamic candidate genes	p. 9
ii. Thrombophilia candidate genes	p. 9
iii. Oxidative stress candidate genes	p. 11
iv. Immunological candidate genes	p. 12
v. Pre-eclamptic susceptibility profile	p. 12
1.3.4 Microarray analysis	p. 13
1.4 Leptin	p. 14
1.4.1 <i>Ob</i> gene regulation	p. 14
1.5 Leptin Receptor	p. 15
1.6 Biological functions of leptin	p.16
1.6.1 Leptin and nutrition	p. 16
1.6.2 Leptin and the inflammatory response	p. 17
1.6.3 Leptin in pregnancy	p. 17
1.6.4 Leptin in intrauterine growth restriction and placental ischemia	p. 18
1.6.5 Leptin and pre-eclampsia	p. 19
1.7 <i>Ob</i> and <i>obR</i> variants	p. 20



1.8 Aim and objectives	p. 22
2. Materials and Methods	p. 23
2.1 Materials	p. 23
2.1.1 Study Cohort	p. 23
2.1.2 Control Cohort	p. 24
2.2 Methods	p. 24
2.2.1 DNA Extraction	p. 24
2.2.2 The Polymerase Chain Reaction	p. 24
i. Oligonucleotide Primers	p. 24
ii. PCR Amplification	p. 25
2.2.3 Agarose Gel Electrophoresis	p. 26
2.2.4 Mutation Detection Analysis	p. 30
i. Multiphor SSCP/HD Gel Electrophoresis	p. 30
ii. Automated DNA Sequencing Analysis	p. 30
iii. Restriction Enzyme Analysis	p. 30
2.2.5 Statistical Analysis	p. 31
3. Results	p. 33
3.1 Patient demographics	p. 33
3.2 Genetic Analysis	p. 34
3.2.1 <i>Ob</i> gene	p. 35
i. <i>Ob</i> promoter	p. 35
ii. <i>Ob</i> ex1	p. 37

iii. <i>Ob</i> ex2	p. 39
iv. <i>Ob</i> ex3	p. 40
3.2.2 <i>ObR</i> gene	p. 44
i. <i>ObR</i> ex4	p. 44
ii. <i>ObR</i> ex6	p. 45
iii. <i>ObR</i> ex9	p. 46
iv. <i>ObR</i> ex11	p. 47
v. <i>ObR</i> ex14	p. 48
vi. <i>ObR</i> ex18 (transmembrane-domain encoding)	p. 50
vii. <i>ObR</i> ex20	p. 51
3.2.3 In Summary	p. 53
3.4 Genotype: phenotype comparisons	p. 53
4. Discussion	p. 55
5. Future Studies	p. 61
6. References	p. 63
7. Appendices	p. 79
8. Raw data (on CD)	inner sleeve back page



## List of Figures

- Figure 1:** Structures involved in human implantation p. 3
- Figure 2:** The six isoforms of the leptin receptor p. 16
- Figure 3:** Schematic representation of the *ob* gene p. 25
- Figure 4:** Schematic representation of the *obR* gene p. 26
- Figure 5:** *Ob* promoter -188c/a variant: **a)** Multiphor SSCP/HD conformations  
**b)** Electropherogram (heterozygote status) p. 35
- Figure 6:** Agarose gel depicting REA products of the *ob* promoter -188c/a variant p. 36
- Figure 7:** *Ob* ex1 dbSNP: rs2167270g/a: **a)** Multiphor SSCP/HD conformations  
**b)** Electropherogram (heterozygote status) p. 37
- Figure 8:** Agarose gel depicting REA products of the *ob* ex1 dbSNP: rs2167270g/a p. 38
- Figure 9:** Novel *Ob* ex2 variant 107a/g: **a)** Multiphor SSCP/HD conformations  
**b)** Electropherogram (heterozygote status) p. 39
- Figure 10:** Electropherogram of intronic *obR* ex4 variant dbSNP: rs17151914c/t p. 41
- Figure 11:** Electropherogram of *obR* ex4 Vall94Met variant p. 41
- Figure 12:** Electropherogram of intronic *obR* ex4 Asn103AsnN variant p. 41
- Figure 13:** Agarose gel depicting REA products of the *obR* Asn103Asn variant p. 43

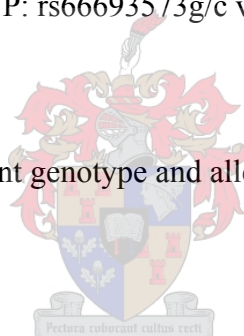
<b>Figure 14:</b> <i>ObR</i> ex4 variant 326a/g:	<b>a)</b> Multiphor SSCP/HD conformations	
	<b>b)</b> Electropherogram (heterozygote status)	p. 44
<b>Figure 15:</b> Agarose gel depicting REA products of the <i>obR</i> ex6 668a/g variant		p. 45
<b>Figure 16:</b> <i>ObR</i> ex9 1029c/t variant:	<b>a)</b> Multiphor SSCP/HD conformations	
	<b>b)</b> Electropherogram (heterozygote status)	p. 47
<b>Figure 17:</b> Agarose gel depicting REA products of the <i>obR</i> ex11 1475g/c variant		p. 48
<b>Figure 18:</b> Five conformational variants of <i>obR</i> ex14 on Multiphor SSCP/HD gels		p. 49
<b>Figure 19:</b> Electropherograms of <i>obR</i> ex14 1986c/g and novel +34a/g variants		p. 49
<b>Figure 20:</b> <i>ObR</i> ex17 dbSNP: rs66693573g/c:	<b>a)</b> Multiphor SSCP/HD conformations	
	<b>b)</b> Electropherogram (heterozygote status)	p. 50
<b>Figure 21:</b> Agarose gel depicting REA products of the <i>obR</i> ex18 dbSNP: rs66693573g/c		p. 51
<b>Figure 22:</b> Agarose gel depicting REA products of the <i>obR</i> ex20	<b>a)</b> 2927a/c variant	
	<b>b)</b> 3057a/g variant	p. 52

## List of Tables

<b>Table 1:</b>	Incidence of pre-eclampsia in different populations	p. 5
<b>Table 2:</b>	Summary of previously investigated candidate genes	p. 10
<b>Table 3:</b>	Summary of reported leptin levels in pregnant, non-pregnant and pre-eclamptic individuals	p. 19
<b>Table 4:</b>	Selection of previously reported <i>ob</i> and <i>obR</i> variants	p. 20
<b>Table 5:</b>	<i>Ob</i> gene primer sequences	p. 27
<b>Table 6:</b>	<i>ObR</i> gene primer sequences	p. 28
<b>Table 7:</b>	<i>Ob</i> gene PCR reaction profiles	p. 29
<b>Table 8:</b>	<i>ObR</i> gene PCR reaction profiles	p. 29
<b>Table 9:</b>	Summary of restriction enzymes utilized in the study	p. 32
<b>Table 10:</b>	Demographic and clinical data of pre-eclamptic study cohort	p. 33
<b>Table 11:</b>	Composite table of results	p. 34
<b>Table 12:</b>	<i>Ob</i> promoter -188c/a variant genotype and allele frequencies	p. 36
<b>Table 13:</b>	<i>Ob</i> ex1 dbSNP: rs2167270g/a variant genotype and allele frequencies	p. 38
<b>Table 14:</b>	<i>Ob</i> ex2 novel 107a/g variant genotype and allele frequencies	p. 40



<b>Table 15:</b>	<i>Ob</i> ex3 dbSNP: rs17151914c/t and Val94Met variants genotype and allele frequencies	p. 42
<b>Table 16:</b>	<i>Ob</i> ex3 309c/t variant genotype and allele frequencies	p. 43
<b>Table 17:</b>	<i>ObR</i> ex4 326a/g variant genotype and allele frequencies	p. 45
<b>Table 18:</b>	<i>ObR</i> ex6 668a/g variant genotype and allele frequencies	p. 46
<b>Table 19:</b>	<i>ObR</i> ex9 silent 1029c/t variant genotype and allele frequencies	p. 47
<b>Table 20:</b>	<i>ObR</i> ex14 1986c/g variant genotype and allele frequencies	p. 49
<b>Table 21:</b>	<i>ObR</i> ex18 intronic dbSNP: rs66693573g/c variant genotype and allele frequencies	p. 51
<b>Table 22:</b>	<i>ObR</i> ex20 3057a/g variant genotype and allele frequencies	p. 52





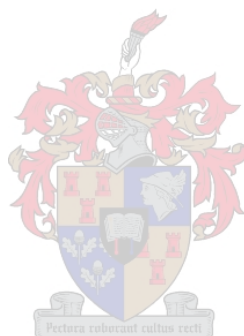
## List of Appendices

<b>Appendix 1:</b> NCBI <i>ob</i> gene sequence annotation	p. 79
<b>Appendix 2:</b> NCBI <i>obR</i> gene sequence annotation	p. 83
<b>Appendix 3:</b> Study cohort ethical approval: C99/025	p. 91
<b>Appendix 4:</b> Patient consent form template	p. 92
<b>Appendix 5:</b> Patient questionnaire template	p. 95
<b>Appendix 6:</b> Control cohort ethical approval: C050/2001	p. 99
<b>Appendix 7:</b> DNA Extraction protocol	p. 100
<b>Appendix 8:</b> Rapid DNA Extraction protocol (Kit)	p. 102
<b>Appendix 9:</b> Multiphor SSCP/HD gel electrophoresis protocol	p. 103
<b>Appendix 10:</b> DNA purification protocols	p. 105
<b>Appendix 11:</b> Polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis protocol	p. 106
<b>Appendix 12:</b> Fetal growth chart	p. 107



## List of Abbreviations

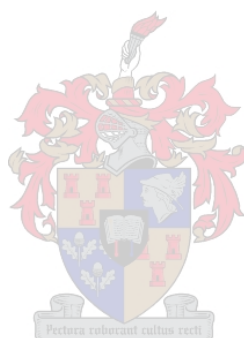
~	approximately
%	percentage
°C	degrees Celsius
3'	3'prime
5'	5'prime
μl	microlitre
μmol/l	micromole per litre
@	at
A	adenosine
<i>AGT</i>	angiotensinogen gene
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
Ala	alanine
APS	ammonium persulphate
Arg	arginine
Asn	asparagine
Asp	aspartic acid
AV	anchoring villi
BLAST	Basic Local Alignment of Sequences Tool
BMD	bone mineral densitometry
BMI	body mass index
bp	base-pair
BSA	bovine serum albumin
C	cytosine
cAMP	3', 5' cyclic AMP
CAMs	cell adhesion molecules
<i>CBS</i>	cystathionine β- synthetase gene
<i>C/EBPα</i>	CCAAT/enhancer-binding protein alpha
dbSNP: rs	database single nucleotide polymorphism: reference sequence
ddH <sub>2</sub> O	double distilled water
dH <sub>2</sub> O	distilled water



dHPLC	denaturing High Performance Liquid Chromatography
DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
dNTPs	2'-deoxy-nucleotide-5'-triphosphates
ECM	extracellular matrix
EDTA	ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid
EGF	epidermal growth factor
ET-1	endothelin-1
ex	exon
F	forward primer
<i>F2</i>	prothrombin gene
FV	floating villi
<i>FVL</i>	Factor V Leiden variant
g	gram
G	guanosine
G-CSF	granulocyte-colony stimulating factor
g/dl	grams per decilitre
GH	growth hormone
Gln	glutamine
Glu	glutamic acid
Gly	glycine
<i>GP-M</i>	glycogen phosphorylase muscle isoform
<i>GST</i>	glutathionine -S- transferase gene
h	hour
hCG	human chorionic gonadotrophin
HD	heteroduplex analysis
HDL	high density lipoprotein
HELLP	<u>h</u> aemolysis, <u>e</u> levated <u>l</u> iver enzymes and <u>l</u> ow platelets syndrome
<i>HLA-G</i>	human leukocyte antigen-g
IDT	Integrated DNA Technologies
ILs	interleukins
ISSHP	International Society for the Study of Hypertension in Pregnancy
IUGR	intrauterine growth restriction
JAK-STAT	janus kinase protein-signal transducer and activator of transcription protein



l	litre
LDL	low density lipoprotein
Leu	leucine
<i>LPL</i>	lipoprotein lipase gene
Lys	lysine
kb	kilobases
kDA	kilodalton
M	moles
Met	methionine
MFMN	maternal fetal medicine network
mg	milligram
mg/ml	milligram per millilitre
min	minutes
ml	millilitre
mm	millimetre
mM	milli-molar
mmHg	millimetre of mercury
mmol/l	milli-moles per litre
MMPs	metalloproteinases
MOUs	Midwife Obstetric Units
mRNA	messenger ribonucleic acid
<i>MTHFR</i>	methylenetetrahydrofolate reductase
n/a	not applicable
NCBI	National Centre for Biotechnology Information
ng	nanogram
NICU	Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
NIDDM	non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus
N <sup>o</sup>	number
<i>NOS3</i>	nitric oxide synthase
NPY	neuropeptide Y
<i>ob</i>	leptin gene
<i>obR</i>	leptin receptor gene
p	short arm of chromosome



PAs	plasminogen activators
PAGE	polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis system
PAIs	plasminogen activator inhibitors
PBS	phosphate buffered saline
PCOS	polycystic ovary syndrome
PCR	polymerase chain reaction
PDA	piperazine diacrylamide
PE	pre-eclampsia
pH	potential of hydrogen
Phe	phenylalanine
PIH	pregnancy-induced hypertension
Pro	proline
q	long arm of chromosome
R	reverse primer
RBC	red blood cells
RE	restriction enzymes
REA	restriction enzyme analysis
rpm	revolutions per minute
s	seconds
Ser	serine
SNPs	single nucleotide polymorphisms
<i>SOCS-3</i>	suppressor of cytokine signalling-3
SSCP	single strand conformation polymorphism
T	thymine
T <sub>a</sub>	annealing temperature
<i>Taq</i>	<i>Thermus aquaticus</i>
TBE	tris-borate/EDTA
TDT	transmission disequilibrium test
TE	tris/EDTA
TEMED	N, N, N' N', -tetramethylethylenediamine
<i>THBD</i>	thrombomodulin
Thr	threonine
TIMPs	tissue inhibitors of metalloproteinases



T <sub>m</sub>	melting temperature
TM	transmembrane domain
TNF	tumour necrosis factor
TPR	total peripheral resistance
Trp	tryptophan
U	units
UTR	untranslated region
UV	ultraviolet
V	volts
Val	valine
WCC	white cell count

