

Isolation and Characterization of the Gene Encoding Glyceraldehyde-3-Phosphate Dehydrogenase

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A 1.2-kb full-length cDNA sequence of a glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GPD) gene was isolated from the mushroom, Pleurotus sajor-caju. The full-length cDNA of the GPD gene consists of 1248 nucleotides, predicted to encode a 36-kDa polypeptide consisting of 335 amino acid residues. Sequence analysis revealed that the GPD gene has more than 72-78% amino acid sequence homology with those of other Basidiomycetes. Expression of the GPD gene increased when P. sajor-caju was treated with various abiotic stresses, such as salt, cold, heat, and drought. There was an eightfold induction by drought treatment. Salt and cold stress induced four- and twofold induction of GPD gene expression, respectively. There was also a fivefold induction by heat stress. The GPD gene exhibits different expression patterns under different stress conditions. It reached its maximum expression level within two hours under cold or heat treatment. The mRNA levels of this gene increased proportionally to increasing treatment time under salt or dry conditions. Because the expression of GPD was significantly increased, we tested whether GPD could confer abiotic stress resistance when it was introduced into yeast cells. For this, a transgenic yeast harboring P. sajor-caju GPD was generated under the control of a constitutively expressed GAL promoter. The results from biofunctional analyses with GPD yeast transformants showed that GPD yeast transformants had significantly higher resistance to cold, salt, heat, and drought stresses. © 2000 Academic Press

Key Words: osmotic stress; GPD gene; transgenic yeast.

Cytosolic glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GPD, EC 1.2.1.12) is an essential enzyme in glycolysis and gluconeogenesis. GPD functions as a tetramer of identical subunits, and converts the NAD⁺-dependent oxidative phosphorylation product of glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate to 1,3-bisphosphate glyceric acid. This is one of the most important metabolic reactions in the glycolytic pathway [1–3]. The enzyme also catalyzes the reverse reaction. In Saccharomyces cerevisiae and Aspergillus nidulans, the GPD protein constitutes up to 5% of the total soluble cellular proteins [1, 3]. In maize, four GPD genes, gpc1, gpc2, gpc3, and gpc4 have been isolated and characterized [4]. A single GPD-encoding gene has been cloned from A. nidulans [5] and three structural genes from yeast [6], but multiple copies of GPD genes have been reported in higher eukaryotes [7, 8]. The gpd genes from Boletus edulis, Amanita muscaria, and Lactarius deterrimus have been cloned and sequenced [9].

Living cells display rapid changes in the pattern of gene expression when they are exposed to adverse environment stresses, such as heat shock, osmotic shock, oxidative damage, and nutrient depletion. The mechanisms responsible for stress responses and adaptation to heat-shock have been intensively investigated in many organisms, including mammals. Heat shock is known to increase accumulation of the mRNAs of some glycolytic genes in yeast, *Xenopus*, and maize [10–12], and mammalian cells also show increased glycolytic gene expression under anaerobiosis [13]. In addition, it has been shown that the Gpc 3 and GapC genes of maize [12, 14, 15] and the GapC gene of Arabidopsis thaliana [16] are anaerobically regulated. As in plants, activation of the gpd gene occurs in response to oxidative stress in the rabbit aorta [17] and to heat stress and anaerobic stress in halophyte Atriplex mummularia [2]. Redkar et al. [3] reported that, in A. nidulans, transcriptional levels of GPD expression increased in cultures that were gradually adapted to NaCl. In the facultative halophyte Mesembryaemum crystallinum, the Gap1 gene is transcriptionally up-regulated during salt stress [18, 19].

Pleurotus sajor-caju is one of the most important edible mushrooms. Despite their economical importance, little study has been carried out regarding the mechanisms for mediating environmental stress responses in this fungus. In this paper, we report the



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isolation of a *GPD* gene from *P. sajor-caju* and analyses of the gene's expressions under various environmental stress conditions, such as salt, cold, heat and drought. This study also showed that yeast cells overexpressing *P. sajor-caju GPD* gene had higher resistance to abiotic stress tolerance.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Strain and culture conditions. Pleurotus sajor-caju (ASI 2070) was taken from the National Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology, Korea. It was maintained in the mushroom complete medium (MCM; 0.5 g MgSO $_4$ · 7H $_2$ O; 0.46 g KH $_2$ PO $_4$; 1.0 g K $_4$ HPO $_4$; 2.0 g Peptone; 2.0 g yeast extract; 20 g glucose per liter) at 28°C. Escherichia coli strain DH5 $_{\alpha}$ was used for transformation and plasmid propagation. E. coli were grown in Luria Bertani (LB) medium at 37°C for plasmid manipulation.

Purification of genomic DNA and RNA from P. sajor-caju. Mycelia of P. sajor-caju were harvested by filtration through Whatman #1 filter paper and washed with deionized water. Washed mycelia were frozen in liquid nitrogen and powdered in a mortar. Genomic DNA was isolated from the mycelia using a rapid extraction procedure described by Graham [20]. Total RNA was purified from abiotic-stressed mycelia by a LiCl precipitation protocol adapted from the procedure of Sambrook et al. [21].

Construction of cDNA library and phage DNA isolation. Poly(A) RNA was isolated from total RNA using the poly(A) Quik mRNA isolation kit (Stratagene, La Jolla, CA). Synthesis of cDNA was performed using the ZapII cDNA synthesis kit (Stratagene, La Jolla, CA), and a cDNA library was constructed using the ZapII cDNA GigapackII cloning kit (Stratagene, La Jolla, CA). Lambda phage DNA was isolated from the cDNA library by the method described by Sambrook *et al.* [21].

PCR isolation of GPD gene and DNA sequencing. To isolate the GPD gene from P. sajor-caju, PCR was performed using lambda DNA isolated from a P. sajor-caju cDNA library as a template. Sense (GPD-S1; 5'-TGTCAGACTGGTGATTGTGGTGG-3') and antisense (GPD-AS1; 5'-CTCGATGGAGCCCTTGAAGCG-3') primers, derived from a conserved region among the GPD genes of Basidiomycetes, were synthesized. Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) amplification was performed using a Peltier thermal cycler (PTC 200, MJ Research, USA) for 35 cycles. Each cycle consisted of 30 s at 94°C, 30 s at 48°C and 1 min at 72°C. The amplified fragments were subcloned into the pBluescript KSII+ (pBS; Stratagene) and sequenced. To obtain full length GPD cDNA, end-to-end reverse transcription PCR (RT-PCR) was performed. For this RT-PCR, the sense primer (5'-TACGACTCGGTCCACGGCCG-3') that resides on the 5' end of the GPD gene and a T7 primer were used. The 1.25-kb RT-PCR product was cloned into pBS for DNA sequence determination. The DNA sequences were determined with a T7 sequencing kit (Pharmacia LKB), and analyzed with DNASIS/PROSIS software package (HITACHI), Swiss-prot and Genbank database (NIH).

Abiotic stresses. The mycelia of P. sajor-caju that had been grown on MCM medium for two weeks were harvested by filtration. Cold stress was applied by exposing the mycelia to a temperature of 4° C; salt stress by soaking the mycelia in 4 M NaCl solution; heat stress by exposure to a temperature of 45° C; drought by vacuum drying for 10 min followed by placing on a clean bench for 5 h. Abiotic stress condition was continued for 4 h unless indicated. Abiotic stress treated mycelia were collected and immediately frozen in liquid nitrogen for RNA isolation.

RT-PCR and RT-PCR Southern blot analysis. Reverse transcription was carried out in 80 μ l aliquots of reaction mixture containing 5× buffer (Promega, Madison, WI), 0.25 mM each of the four deoxynucleotides (dNTPs), 2 μ g of synthetic poly-dT primer (5′-

TTTTTTTTTTTTTT-3'), 200 units of Moloney Murine Leukemia Virus (M-MLV) reverse transcriptase (Promega, Madison, WI) and 8 μl DNAse-treated RNA, which had been preheated at 72°C for 2 min. The reactions were performed at 37°C for 1 h. The 15 μl sample of first strand cDNA products was then employed as template DNA for the amplification of GPD cDNA. RT-PCR product was separated on 0.8% agarose gel and transferred onto Hybond N $^+$ nylon membrane (Amersham, USA) by the capillary transfer method (21). GPD cDNA was used as a probe. Hybridization was carried out for 16 h at 42°C. Filters were washed twice with 2× SSC buffer containing 6 M ureat 42°C, and they were washed again twice with 2× SSC buffer for 5 min at room temperature. For detection of GPD signal, the ECL detection system was used (Amersham, USA).

Construction of yeast expression vector and transformation. The yeast expression vector, pYES2, and the yeast strain INVSC2 (MAT α his3∆1 leu2 trp1-289 ura3-52) were purchased from Invitrogen, Inc. (San Diego, CA). An expression vector containing GPD cDNA (pYES2/PsGPD) was constructed by inserting 1.2-kb full-length GPD cDNA into SacI/EcoRI sites, under the control of a GAL promoter. Transformation of yeast cells with pYES2/PsGPD was performed by the lithium acetate/carrier DNA methods described by Schiestl and Gietz [22]. Briefly, the late log growth-phase yeast cells were harvested, diluted to 2×10^6 cells ml⁻¹ in YPD medium, then grown to a concentration of 1×10^7 cells ml⁻¹. After centrifugation, the cells were resuspended in 0.5 ml of 10 mM Tris-HCl/1 mM EDTA/10 mM LiAC (pH 7.5). Yeast cell suspension (100 μ l) was transferred to a microfuge tube followed by addition of 1 µl of pYES2/PsGPD vector DNA; 100 μ l of single stranded salmon sperm carrier DNA, 600 μ l of 40% PEG 4,000 solution (40% PEG 4,000 in 10 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.5/1 mM EDTA/10 mM LiAC, pH 7.5) were then added. After incubation for 30 min at 30°C with shaking, the cells were heat shocked at 42°C for 15 min. The cells were immediately cooled on ice, and then spun down for 30 s at 12,000 rpm. The cell pellet was resuspended in 0.5 ml of TE, and spread on SC-ura plates [23].

RESULTS

Isolation of GPD Gene from P. sajor-caju

PCR using a GPD gene-specific antisense (GPD-AS1):T3 primer set and the GPD sense (GPD-S1):T7 primer set, using lambda DNA isolated from a P. sajorcaju cDNA library as template, generated 0.8-kb and 1.4-kb PCR products, respectively. These fragments, presumably 3' and 5' regions of GPD cDNA, were purified and ligated into pBS for nucleotide sequencing analysis. DNA sequences of these fragments showed high homology to other *GPD* genes of Basidiomycetous fungi. To isolate full-length GPD cDNA, end-to-end PCR with GPD-specific sense primer that resides at the 5' end of the GPD cDNA and T7 primer was performed using DNA isolated from P. sajor-caju cDNA library as template. The sequence analysis revealed that the resulting 1.2 kb PCR product was full-length GPD cDNA of P. sajor-caju. Genomic Southern blot analysis revealed that there is a single copy of the GPD gene in *P. sajor-caju* (data not shown).

Sequence Analysis of P. sajor-caju GPD Gene

The *GPD* cDNA consists of a 1248-bp sequence of nucleotides, including 21-bp of the 5' untranslated region (UTR), an ATG translation initiation codon, a

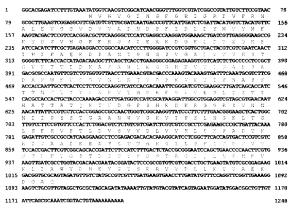


FIG. 1. Nucleotide and deduced amino acid sequences of GPD cDNA of *P. sajor-caju* (GenBank Accession No. AF087676).

TGA translation termination codon and a poly(A) tail. This suggests that the cDNA contains the full-length coding sequence (Fig. 1). The full-length cDNA of *GPD* gene contains an uninterrupted open reading frame of 1005 nucleotides, which we predicted encode a 36-kDa polypeptide consisting of 335 amino acid residues.

Homology analysis showed that this cDNA has high sequence homology (72–78%) with known *GPD* genes from Basidiomycetes at amino acid levels (Table 1). It shows about 70% sequence homology with those of Ascomycetes. *GPD*s of *S. cerevisiae* and *Schizosaccharomyces pombe* share 62.7 and 70.9% homology with *P. sajor-caju GPD* cDNA at the amino acid level (Table 1).

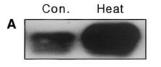
Expression Pattern of the GPD Gene under Various Abiotic Stress Conditions

To investigate whether or not the *GPD* gene becomes activated by environmental stresses, such as salt, cold,

TABLE 1

Analysis of Sequence Homology of the *P. sajor-caju GPD*Gene with Those of Other Microorganisms

| Organisms | Identity (%) | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| | Nucleotide | Amino acid |
| Basidiomycetes | | |
| Schizophyllum commune | 75.4 | 78.4 |
| Agaricus bisporus | 74.0 | 75.1 |
| Lentinus edodes | 70.0 | 78.1 |
| Xanthophyllomyces dendrorhous | 55.6 | 73.7 |
| Lactarius deterrimus | 53.6 | 78.2 |
| Boletus edulis | 53.4 | 76.3 |
| Amanita phalloides | 53.1 | 72.5 |
| Ustilago maydis | 67.8 | 74.6 |
| Ascomycetes | | |
| Aspergillus nidulans | 59.8 | 69.8 |
| Aspergillus niger | 61.1 | 68.7 |
| Yeasts | | |
| Saccharomyces cerevisiae | 59.3 | 62.7 |
| Schizosaccharomyces pombe | 66.0 | 70.9 |



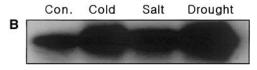


FIG. 2. RT-PCR Southern analysis for the expression pattern of GPD gene in the mycelia of P. sajor-caju upon various abiotic stresses. (A) Heat shock induced expression of GPD gene. The mycelia of P. sajor-caju were exposed at 45° C for 4 h. (B) GPD gene expression pattern upon salt, cold and drought stresses. For salt and cold stresses the cells were incubated in 4 M NaCl and at 4° C for 4 h, respectively. For drought stress, the cells were vacuum dried for 10 min.

heat shock and drought, *P. sajor-caju* mycelia that had been cultured in MCM broth for three days at 28°C were transferred to NaCl solution (2 M), low (4°C) and high temperature (45°C) and an evaporator (Bioneer, Chungwon, Korea) for 10 min to dry. The change of expression of *GPD* gene was detected by RT-PCR Southern blot analysis, using RNA isolated from various stress-treated *P. sajor-caju* mycelia. All four stress treatments increased the expression of *GPD* (Fig. 2). The drought treatment (10 min vacuum drying) increased induction of *GPD* gene expression eight-fold. Salt (4 M NaCl for 4 h) and cold (4°C for 4 h) stress induced four- and twofold induction, respectively (Fig. 2B). There was also a fivefold induction by heat stress (45°C for 4 h) (Fig. 2A).

Time-Course of Gene Expression

Since each of the various abiotic stresses significantly increased expression of *GPD* gene, the time-course pattern of gene expression was then tested (Fig. 3). At different time points, mycelia were collected and frozen in liquid nitrogen. RT-PCR Southern blot analysis showed that *GPD* gene expression significantly increased due to environmental stresses. The gene had different expression patterns under different stress

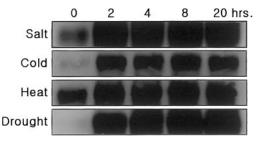


FIG. 3. Time course expression pattern of *GPD* gene in mycelia of *P. sajor-caju* upon various abiotic stresses.

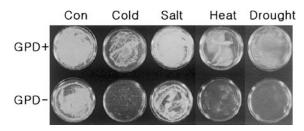


FIG. 4. Biofunctional analysis of yeast cell overexpressing *P. sajor-caju GPD* gene upon various abiotic stresses. Salt, 4 M NaCl treated for 4 h. Cold, incubated at 4°C for 4 h. Heat, treated at 45°C for 4 h. Drought, cells were vacuum dried for 10 min. GPD+ is the transgenic cell transformed with *P. sajor-caju* GPD gene. GPD- is the transgenic cell transformed with pYES2 yeast expression vector only.

conditions. It reached its maximum expression level within 2 h under cold or heat. The mRNA level of this gene increased proportionally with increasing treatment times under either salt or dry conditions.

Biofunctional Assay of GPD Gene in Transgenic Yeast Cell Overexpressing P. sajor-caju GPD

To test whether the *GPD* gene confers various stress resistance to the transgenic yeast cells, GPD transformant yeast cells were cultured in SC-ura medium [23] containing 4% raffinose at 30°C. The cells were harvested by centrifugation for 5 min at 12,000 rpm, and then resuspended in SC-ura medium containing 2% galactose. They were then grown for an additional 16 h for overexpression of *GPD* gene. Cells were collected by centrifugation and washed with 10 mM MgSO₄ solution. The resulting cells were used in biofunctional assay. For this experiment, transgenic yeast cells were exposed to cold, salt, heat, and drought stresses. Cold stress was conducted by exposing the cells to 4°C for 5 h. High-salt stress was carried out by resuspending the cells in 4 M NaCl solution and incubated for 5 h at 30°C. For heat stress, cells were incubated in a 55°C water bath for 5 h. Drought stress by vacuum drying the transgenic cells for 10 min. After samples were taken, they were diluted appropriately and then plated on the YPD medium. Colonies were examined after two days of incubation (Fig. 4).

DISCUSSION

Most organisms are inevitably confronted during their life cycle with numerous environmental stresses that can affect their survival. Many genes that mediate response to drought, high salt levels, and high or low temperature have been cloned [24–26]. The proteins encoded by these genes are thought to function in protecting cells from these stresses [27]. Heat-shock and anaerobic stress are known to alter expression of glycolytic genes, suggesting that primary carbon metabolism is one of the pathways that respond to changing

environmental condition [2, 16, 28]. Among them is the glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (*GPD*) gene, coding for an enzyme in the glycolytic pathway [1-3, 16, 28]. The GPD gene from all kinds of organisms, including plants, microbes, and animal is known to be responsive to heat and anaerobic stress [2, 4, 16, 17]. The activation of the *GPD* gene under heat and anaerobic stress condition maybe an adaptive response to heat-stress-related mitochondrial damage, or anaerobic stress-induced inhibition of oxidative phosphorylation. A. nidulans accumulates glycerol as a compatible osmolyte and exhibits induced GPD expression in salt-adapted culture [3]. Analysis of the maize *gpc* gene family (gpc1, gpc2, and gpc3) for the anoxic response, showed that *gpc1* and *gpc2* transcripts either remained at the aerobic level or decreased with prolonged anoxia. However, the transcript levels of gpc3 increased and reached 15-fold above the aerobic levels after six hours of anoxia [12]. Transcript levels for Arabidopsis gpc not only increased under anaerobiosis, but also during heat shock or increased sucrose supply conditions [16]. This is in addition to an increased transcript accumulation in response to light [29].

In this study, GPD cDNA clone was isolated from *P.* sajor-caju and the expression pattern under various environmental conditions such as cold, salt, heat, and dehydration stresses was analyzed (Fig. 2). The results of the *P. sajor-caju GPD* mRNA expression analysis are interesting, because the expression of this gene is highly induced not only by heat, salt, and dehydration stresses but also by cold stress. The mRNA induction level was higher in salt- or dry-treated mycelia than that in heat- or cold-treated ones. It has also been observed that potato *GapC* mRNA level is regulated by biological stress conditions and elicitor treatments [28]. Thus, it is suggested that this enzyme may function as a mediator of the stress-induced metabolic responses and other integrated metabolic changes during biotic stress. In addition to biotic and abiotic stresses, Abscisic acid (ABA) also increased mRNA levels and enzymatic activity of GPD in the resurrection of plants [30]. Under stress conditions, cellular adjustment requires additional energy for growth, and expression is known of several genes involved in mitochondrial ATP formation. The increased GPD activity mobilizes carbon away from glycerol and into the pathway leading to glycolysis and ATP formation.

The *GPD* gene has a different expression pattern under different stress conditions. It reached its maximum expression level within 2 h under cold or heat, while mRNA levels increased proportionally with increasing treatment time under salt or dry conditions (Fig. 3). These results indicate that the *GPD* gene might use different pathways in different stress situations. This study demonstrated the role of *GPD* in abiotic stress resistance such as heat, salt, dehydration and cold using *GPD* transgenic yeast. A remarkable

increase of survival rate of the *GPD* transgenic yeast can be seen against salt, cold, heat, and dehydration stresses compared with the yeast that was transformed only by the pYES2 vector (Fig. 4). These observations suggest that the *GPD* gene plays an important role in tolerance to various biotic and abiotic stresses. The result with the GPD transgenic yeast experiment is very significant in that it maybe possible to use this gene to make transgenic crop plants having high abiotic stress resistance.

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