THE 1000 GENOMES TOXICITY SCREENING PROJECT: UTILIZING THE POWER of HUMAN GENOME VARIATION FOR POPULATION-SCALE IN VITRO TESTING

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ABSTRACT

Nour Abdo: The 1000 Genomes Toxicity Screening Project: Utilizing the power of human genome variation for population-scale in vitro testing
(Under the direction of Ivan Rusyn, M.D., Ph.D.)

Incorporation of novel toxicity screening approaches is a crucial tool for tackling the complex contemporary challenges in evaluating the human health hazards of exposure to chemicals. Current in vitro testing paradigms still have major gaps that need addressing, such as population-based in vitro approaches to qHTS screening. This study evaluated the hypothesis that comparative population genomics with efficient in vitro experimental design can be used for the evaluation of the potential hazard, mode of action, and the extent of population variability in response to chemicals. In **Aim 1**, we evaluated and assessed the validity of in vitro genetically–anchored population human model system in assessing chemical toxicity and identifying candidate genetic susceptibility. We screened 81 human lymphoblast cell lines with 240 chemicals at 12 different concentrations and assessed the toxic response using different endpoints (cell death and caspase production). We evaluated the toxic responses to a panel of chemicals observed in lymphoblast cell lines, and compared them to other toxic responses seen with different cell lines that originate from different sources. In **Aim 2**, we expanded our model to include more than one population. The goals were to (1) quantitatively assess population-based toxicological hazard to environmental contaminants, (2) determine the extent of human inter-individual variability in chemical toxicity, identify susceptible sub-populations or races, (3) understand the genetic determinants of the inter-individual variability, (4) generate testable hypotheses about toxicity pathways by leveraging genetic and genomic data from 1000 Genomes
and HapMap Projects, and (5) use the data obtained from this research to build predictive in silico models. **In Aim 3,** we addressed some of the remaining challenges in our model, such as the ability to screen chemical mixtures. We explored the potential and efficiency of our model in assessing new challenges such as the evaluation of environmental chemical mixtures in a population in vitro screening, and the extrapolation of the in vitro hazard to an oral equivalent dose. In summary, this research not only will use novel tools to investigate population genetically anchored variability, but it will also offer exceptional methodology for incorporating scientifically-based estimates of uncertainty in risk assessment.
DEDICATION

To my family, Ivanka, Rami, Danny and Rani
I couldn’t have done all this work without you continuous support and guidance. I appreciate all the prayers, sacrifices, and advice you have given me along the way. I also want to thank my sister Ruja for all her positive encouragement.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATP          adenosine triphosphate
CEPH         Centre d’Etude du Polymorphisme Humain
FBS          fetal bovine serum
FDR          False Discovery Rate
GWAS         Genome Wide Association Study
qHTS         Quantitative high-throughput screening
MAGWAS       Multivariate ANCOVA Genome-Wide Association Software
SNP          single nucleotide polymorphisms
PK           Pharmacokinetics
FWER         Family-wise error rate
CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

A. THE OVERARCHING NECESSITY TO REGULATE THOUSANDS OF CHEMICALS.

Several federal agencies in the United States have been bestowed the responsibility to regulate a diverse variety of environmental compounds. For example, the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), which was passed in 1976, granted authority to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to oversee the safety of chemical products in commerce to both the public and the environment, and to ensure continuous reviewing and regulation of chemicals in commerce (EPA 2012). Consequently, those federal agencies are responsible for implementing regulations that sets the maximum permissible thresholds for environmental compounds in drinking water, establish acceptable limits of exposure in occupational settings, and to determine tolerances for pesticides residues in food, among other tasks (National Research Council 2006).

Previously, the US EPA has relied primarily on information obtained from in vivo animal models. Traditional toxicity testing is carried out in laboratory animals to assess the hazards and risks associated with exposure to environmental agents. Animal models have afforded valuable information on the possible harmful effects of exposure to a chemical and the associated dose at which effects may be observed. With limited confounding, controlled experimental design, and whole intact body system, in vivo animal models were deemed an invaluable resource for understanding toxicity risk.
With traditional animal models, each chemical requires multiple tests, can use up to 5000 animals (or even 12,000 for some pesticides), costs millions of dollars, and take up to 5 years of testing or more. These disadvantages are in addition to ethical concerns that have been raised about animal welfare (Abbot 2005). There are more than 10,000 chemicals in commercial use in the United States, with hundreds being introduced each year (Anastas et al. 2010). However, only a small fraction of these chemical have been adequately evaluated for their potential risk to human health (Anastas et al. 2010; Judson et al. 2008). Accordingly, there has been a growing concern from governmental agencies about the need to adequately and accurately assess thousands of chemicals in a rapid and efficient manner. New paradigms are inevitably needed for the fast and accurate evaluation of the potential human health hazard of environmental chemicals (Collins et al. 2008).

The emerging massive demand for to identify data sources for regulating chemicals is not limited to the United States. There is a global awareness of the challenges associated with toxicology testing. The European Union's Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation, and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) legislation is one of the international agencies that have set out to better understand and manage risks to human health and the environment that arise from the manufacture and use of chemicals (Anastas et al. 2010).

Incorporation of novel toxicity screening approaches is a crucial tool for tackling the complex contemporary challenges in evaluating the human health hazards of exposure to chemicals. A shift in toxicity testing from in vivo to in vitro methods may efficiently prioritize compounds, reveal new mechanisms, and enable predictive modeling. The emergence of new toxicity methods and strategies might address several risk assessment needs, as well as bring about new challenges. The following sections discuss current toxicity approaches and major
remaining challenges to meet risk assessment demands for chemicals with variable modes of action.

1. **The shortcomings of traditional toxicological methods to inform risk assessment.**

   Using animal models to evaluate toxicological response depends primarily on observing an adverse health outcome with high doses of a chemical. Uncertainties associated with animal data are usually handled by the use of a 10-fold interspecies uncertainty factor when extrapolating from laboratory animals to humans (EPA, 2004). However, the 10-fold interspecies uncertainty factor does not account for the additional uncertainty in extrapolating from high doses in animal experiments to environmental exposure levels that are orders of magnitude lower (Andersen and Krewski 2009). Although studies using animal models have improved dramatically in recent years in term of dosing, existing challenges and limitations remain. These include the high cost and labor required to handle animals, the extensive amount of time needed to conduct, assess and fully evaluate the health outcomes seen in animals, the challenges in translating human relevance in toxicological outcomes that are species dependent, the limited capability of assessing multiple compounds simultaneously, the inability to assess mixtures or several compounds at once, and most importantly the limited ability to provide timely relevant information to support informed regulation of environmental compounds. Due to the above reasons, growing concern and frustration has been expressed by health protection and regulatory agencies, leading to the request for improved alternative models that are faster and more efficient in tackling the
hundreds of thousands of commercial chemicals that require proper assessment and evaluation (Andersen and Krewski 2009).

2. What alternatives to animal models exist to meet the high demand of regulating thousands of chemicals? Toxicity Testing in the 21st Century.

The growing concern from regulatory agencies, such as the Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) in Europe and the Toxic Substances Control Act reform in the US, to meet the high demand of regulation of thousands of chemicals that are being released to the environment has resulted in a shift in toxicity assessment from 
in vivo to 
in vitro and 
in silico methods (Plunkett et al. 2010). The proposed shift should be carried out by the development of rapid screening methods based on the mechanistic understanding of biological processes (Plunkett et al. 2010; Judson et al. 2010). It is necessary to merge high-information content biology and modeling with mechanistic research to build a predictive framework of an intact biological system (Chiu et al. 2011).

Several recent governmental initiatives have been established in the US to meet the requirements and needs of exploration of new methodologies in toxicology to be incorporated into current and future risk assessments. For example, the Tox21 program (Collins et al. 2008), a partnership between four governmental agencies (EPA, NTP: National Toxicology Program, NCGC: NIH Chemical Genomics Center, and FDA: Food and Drug Administration), is currently screening thousands of chemicals for their potential to disturb biological pathways that may result in human disease, with a broad spectrum of in vitro assays utilizing quantitative high throughput screening (qHTS) format (Xia et al. 2008a). Such data from toxicologically relevant
in vitro endpoints can be utilized as toxicity-based triggers to assist in decision-making (Reif et al. 2010), act as predictive surrogates for in vivo toxicity (Zhu et al. 2008; Martin et al. 2010), or to generate testable hypotheses on the mechanisms of toxicity (Xia et al. 2008a). Another governmental initiative is The NexGen program, a collaborative effort between EPA, NTP, ATSDR, NCGC and CalEPA (US EPA, 2011), which is developing new approaches and methods to better utilize novel molecular toxicology data to understand the risks posed by environmental exposures. The NexGen program provides the opportunity to address challenges and opportunities of converting data generated through Tox21 into knowledge and ultimately into the scientific basis for NexGen risk assessments (US EPA 2011).

Nevertheless, a major gap that is not being currently addressed in either Tox21 or NexGen, but is the focus of the research detailed herein, is the population-based in vitro approach to qHTS screening. The availability of genetically diverse defined renewable sources of human cells, such as transformed lymphoblasts, will allow for the investigation of the hazard and degree of inter-individual biological variability in the human population, as well as to understand and comprehensively characterize the role of human genome sequence variation in observed inherited variation in toxicity phenotypes.
3. **Current in vitro paradigms do not measure population variability and rely on rigid unproven assumptions.**

Risk assessments need to be regularly reviewed and modified to meet the demands of new discoveries and evolving technologies. With the recent shift from *in vivo* to in vitro in toxicity testing, the Committee on Toxicity Testing and Assessment of Environmental Agents of the National Research Council (National Research Council 2007) has recommended certain visionary guidelines for assessing in vitro testing as depicted in Figure 1 (fully reproduced from (Crump et al. 2010). The suggested paradigm proposes a similar modified approach to deal with in vitro data to the previous current *in vivo* paradigm. The future model includes different components to make it a successful and valuable tool. Two of those important components and suggestions are: (i) to test cell lines from many human donors that are representative of diverse populations and (ii)
to incorporate certain safety and host susceptibility factors that require a large degree of scientific judgment to derive a meaningful human reference dose (Crump et al. 2010). While the Tox21 program is currently screening thousands of environmental chemicals for their potential to affect biological pathways that may result in human disease (Xia et al. 2008a), the current screening paradigms do not contain enough human cell lines to assess the degree of inter-individual biological variability in the human population. Such variability is of particular importance in assessing potential human health hazard (National Research Council 2007). Instead, the current default assumption for inter-individual variability, which is not based on any biological assessment, is a 3-fold difference in toxicodynamic studies and a 3-fold difference in toxicokinetics studies (International Programme for Chemical Safety 2001).

B. GAUGING POPULATION VARIABILITY

Exposure to environmental chemicals may result in a variety of health outcomes that are different in type or magnitude among individuals and/or populations. Those differences in response are due to underlying human variability and should be addressed for a valuable human health risk assessment of chemicals (Guyton et al. 2009; Hattis 1997; National Research Council 2009). The variety of health outcomes from exposure to chemicals can be a result of intrinsic factors (genetic variability), extrinsic factors (life style, environment, etc), or the interaction of both intrinsic and external factors (Zeise et al. 2013). Human variability is currently assessed by applying “uncertainty” or “adjustment” factors (U.S. EPA, 2011). A factor of 1, 3, or 10 has been used to account for inter-individual variability in human population. In some cases, the factor is
Characterizing genetic variability can enhance our understanding of population variability in response to chemicals. The finding of genetic loci associated with susceptibility can potentially inform us of important cellular proteins that affect health outcome and can uncover novel toxicity pathways. Endeavors to map human variability have been focused on discovering genetic variations (Schadt and Bjorkegren 2012), or other -omics variations including epigenomics, transcriptomics, proteomics, and metabolomics (Chen et al. 2008; Emilsson et al. 2008; Illig et al. 2010; Manolio 2010; Cornelis et al. 2010; Schadt 2009). Genetic polymorphisms may act together or separately to alter susceptibility to adverse effects of exposure to environmental agent. Thus, understanding genetic susceptibility has the potential for predicting toxicity pathways (National Research Council 2009). For instance, adverse health outcome to occupational exposure to welding fumes has been associated with genetic polymorphisms in DNA repair and detoxifying genes. Consequently, sensitive individuals have evidence of higher chromosomal and DNA damage (Iarmarcovai et al. 2005).

Modern approaches to genetic epidemiology include valuable approaches to integrate toxicity exposure in population-based setting to potentially associated genetic loci. Several studies have been able to utilize genetic epidemiology to determine the relationship between specific genes in the population and adverse health outcomes from environmental chemical exposure. For example, human epidemiological studies have provided information on DNA damage in arsenic-exposed populations (Andrew et al. 2006). Further in vitro studies were able to elucidate the specific DNA-repair pathways affected by arsenic (Andrew et al. 2006). While genetic epidemiology holds a great value in population risk assessment, several factors might hinder its
ability to overcome new challenges in toxicology. First, it is difficult to estimate and accurately measure environmental exposure amounts. Furthermore, it is challenging to link the exposure with the outcome. The level of exposure (by amount in air, or water) does not necessarily reflect the actual dose that enters the body. While certain biomarkers could reflect internal ingested/inhaled exposure, they are seldom measured. Biomarkers might be invasive, expensive to measure, or/and not characterized or known for certain chemicals. Genetic epidemiology depends on actual real human exposures. This means we can only evaluate chemicals that individuals are exposed to and cannot make assessments on new chemicals. Second, genetic epidemiology can be enormously expensive and requires large sample sizes (Burton et al. 2009). Except for a few diseases, health outcomes are complex and the contribution of individual genetic loci is modest at best (Manolio et al. 2009). In order to have enough power to detect potentially associated loci, thousands of individuals need to be exposed and genotyped for a meaningful study. With humans, confounding factors are a major issue, where individuals are exposed to other potential chemicals and have predisposed internal and external factors that could confound the outcome or increase variability of outcomes. While large sample sizes and careful epidemiological designs can potentially decrease confounding, it is difficult to achieve pure design principles with the reality of real human exposures. Third and most importantly, the overarching challenge of evaluating thousands of chemicals and mixtures in a short amount of time in epidemiological studies is not tenable.

Other potential ways to investigate population variability is either through in vivo or in vitro toxicity testing paradigms. Several in vivo studies with genetically defined mouse models were designed to discover the genetic determinants of susceptibility and population variability (Rusyn et al. 2010). However, the extrapolation of population variability from animal models to human
population, in addition to the human relevance of the detected susceptibility loci in mice has yet to be fully determined (Rusyn et al. 2010). Moreover, animal model studies are labor intensive, not amenable to high-throughput screening, and can only effectively evaluate one chemical at a time.

*In vitro* population based testing paradigms have been deemed useful in identifying adverse health outcomes that were not detected in preclinical and clinical testing for pharmaceutical products (IOM 2007), and in tailoring chemotherapy treatment based on patient’s genetics (Phillips and Mallal 2010) or tumor type (La Thangue and Kerr 2011). With the expense of developing new drugs, pharmacogenomics studies have been aimed to maximize effective therapy response and to minimize adverse reactions by prescribing treatment based on a patient’s genetic profile (Wheeler and Dolan 2012).

C. LYMPHOBLASTOID CELL LINES IN PHARMACOGENOMIC DISCOVERY AND CLINICAL TRANSLATION.

1. *Establishment of lymphoblastoid cell lines (LCLs).*

I. The 1000 Genomes Project

The 1000 Genomes Project is an international consortium with multiple centers, platforms, and funders to construct a foundational data set for human genetics (Kuehn 2008; Clarke 2012). The main purpose of the project is set to discover virtually all common human variations by investigating many genomes at the base pair level (Kuehn 2008; Clarke 2012). It aims to
discover population level human genetic variations of all types (95% of variation > 1% frequency), define haplotype structure in the human genome, and develop sequence analysis methods, tools, and other reagents that can be transferred to other sequencing projects (Kuehn 2008; Clarke 2012).

The consortium recruited healthy adult volunteers from different continents, representing wide variation in genetic ancestries. From blood samples, the consortium isolated B-Lymphocytes to be later transformed to lymphoblastoid cell lines (LCLs) and genotyped via standard array technologies, and eventually these individuals will be sequenced to high coverage (Clarke 2012). The consortium also included cell lines developed as part of the HapMap project, including early CEPH populations (Clarke 2012). Figure 2 illustrate the up-to-date populations that were included in the 1000 Genomes Project.

Figure 1.2: The 1000 Genomes Project Populations. Obtained from http://www.1000genomes.org/cell-lines-and-dna-coriell
II. Transformation of B-Lymphocytes to LCLs

Immortalization is the process of transforming normal primary B-Lymphocytes to LCLs and giving them the ability to indefinitely proliferate. Consequently, having an unlimited life span with no other additional changes (Miller 1982). Normal cells are mortal, in part because their telomeres shorten with each cell division (Higaki et al. 2004). Telomeres are repetitive nucleotides at the end of chromosomes that act as a buffer layer to protect chromosomes from fusing together and genes from being lost during cell division. With cell division and replication, the DNA duplicates and the telomere sequences become shorter (Qian et al. 2014). Replenishing telomeres is dependent upon the enzyme telomerase reverse transcriptase (Qian et al. 2014). LCLs are immortalized by developing strong telomerase activity and other cellular changes upon Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) integration (Miller et al. 1982). *In vitro* infection with EBV of B-Lymphocytes aids in their transformation to LCLs (Miller et al. 1982). EBV, which is a human herpes virus, is a common virus in humans and has been associated with mononucleosis (Weiss and O'Malley 2013), autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis, dermatomyositis, systemic lupus erythematosus, rheumatoid arthritis (Toussirot and Roudier 2008; Dreyfus et al. 2011; Pender et al. 2012; Ascherio and Munger 2010), various forms of cancer such as Hodgkin's lymphoma, Burkitt's lymphoma, nasopharyngeal carcinoma (Niedobitek et al. 2001; Epstein 2001), and conditions associated with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) such as hairy leukoplakia and central nervous system lymphomas (Kawa 2000; Maeda et al. 2009).

It was discovered in 1968 that EBV infects resting primary human B cells, activates them, and establishes a latent infection in them (Henle and Henle 1980). After *in vitro* infection with EBV, the B-lymphocytes continue proliferating and give rise to stable LCLs with genomic virion DNA that is approximately 170 Kbp (Kalla and Hammerschmidt 2012; Amon et al. 2004). The
virion DNA exists as independent complete multicopy circular extrachromosomal plasmid-like DNA, and is not integrated into the cell’s chromosomes (Miller 1982). Moreover, the virion DNA replicates as the cellular DNA in the nucleus replicates in latency, infected proliferating B cells (Kalla and Hammerschmidt 2012) and mostly does not express its genetic information except for some viral products (Miller 1982).

2. Utility of LCLs in pharmacogenomics discovery

The utilization of lymphoblastoid cell lines (LCLs) as a human model has emerged as a promising tool in the study of the genetics of drug response. Many studies have used LCLs for pharmacogenomics discoveries by observing response to chemotherapeutics (Wheeler and Dolan 2012), radiation (Smirnov et al. 2009; Niu et al. 2010), statins (Simon et al. 2006; Mangravite et al. 2008; Wilke et al. 2008; Medina et al. 2008), selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (Morag et al. 2011), immunosuppressants (Wheeler and Dolan 2012), pain relievers and β-blockers (Wheeler and Dolan 2012).

Pharmacogenomics studies using LCLs have not only proven to yield suggestive associations between genetic variants and drugs, but these associations have been supported in real clinical data. For example, LCL-based GWAS led to the discovery of an association between cytarabine arabinoside cytotoxicity and FKBP5 gene expression (Li et al. 2008). In a follow up clinical targeted gene study, both event-free and overall survival for acute myeloid leukemia patients treated with cytarabine arabinoside were associated with SNPs located in the FKBP5 gene (Mitra et al. 2011). Successful clinical translation of LCL pharmacogenomics discoveries is not limited to the previous example. Several other studies have found value in performing GWAS and/or eQTL when compared to a cohort of cancer patients (Wheeler and Dolan 2012).
The following table (Table 1.1) illustrates the biggest GWA pharmacogenomics studies, showing the number of cell lines and the drugs that were utilized in each study.

**Table 1.1. Largest pharmacogenomics studies that utilized LCLs for GWAS analysis.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author (Year)</th>
<th>Journal</th>
<th># of Cell Lines</th>
<th># of Compounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Wheeler et al. 2013)</td>
<td>Pharmacogenomics J.</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Brown et al., 2014)</td>
<td>Pharmacogenomics J.</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Innocenti et al. 2009)</td>
<td>Cancer Chemother Pharmacol.</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Gamazon et al. 2010)</td>
<td>PNAS</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Stark et al. 2010)</td>
<td>Pharmacogenomics J</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Aksoy et al. 2009)</td>
<td>Pharmacogenet Genomics</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(O'Donnell et al. 2010)</td>
<td>Pharmacogenet Genomics.</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Li et al. 2009)</td>
<td>Cancer Res</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Li et al. 2010)</td>
<td>Drug Metab Dispos.</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Huang et al. 2007a)</td>
<td>Molec. Therap.</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Huang et al. 2007b)</td>
<td>PNAS</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Fridley et al. 2011)</td>
<td>Pharmacogenet Genomics.</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Li et al. 2009)</td>
<td>PLoS One</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Peters et al. 2011)</td>
<td>Pharmacogenomics.</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Huang et al. 2011)</td>
<td>RNA biol.</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Wheeler et al. 2011)</td>
<td>PLoS One.</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Kulkarni et al. 2012)</td>
<td>BMC Med Genomics.</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Brown et al. 2012)*</td>
<td>Pharmacogenet Genomics</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table is sorted by the number of LCLs in each study. Studies with more the 50 LCLs and more than one drug were included. *This study represents the biggest study that evaluated one drug and included the largest number of LCLs.
D. UTILIZING LYMPHOBLASTOID CELL LINES IN TOXICOGENOMIC POPULATION-BASED IN VITRO TOXICITY SCREENING.

Pharmacogenomics studies were among the first to recognize the utility of LCLs as a model in testing pharmaceutical drugs. They mainly employed LCLs to discover genetic loci that are associated with either drug toxicity and/or survival prognosis. With the realization of the full potential of LCLs in addressing major gaps in current risk assessment, the present work aimed to extend their utility to (i) quantitatively assess and address population based toxicological effects or hazard of environmental contaminants, (ii) determine the extent of human inter-individual variability in chemical toxicity, (iii) identify susceptible sub-populations or races, (iv) understand the genetic determinants of the inter-individual variability, (v) generate testable hypotheses about toxicity pathways by leveraging genetic and genomic data from 1000 Genomes and HapMap Projects and (vi) use the data obtained from this research to build predictive in silico models.

1. Advantages and Limitations of Utilizing LCLs in Toxicogenomic Discovery

Our novel central hypothesis is that human lymphoblast cells derived from various human populations can be efficiently utilized to better understand the hazard and magnitude of human inter-individual variability in response to different environmental chemicals. LCLs are derived from various human populations representing diverse genetic ancestries and are publicly available for researchers from the 1000 Genomes Project (1000 Genomes Project Consortium et al. 2012). Because they are immortalized, LCLs represent a renewable source for repeated cultures. Thus, they provide a relatively cost-effective testing system with controlled
experimental manipulation. Unlike human epidemiological studies or in vivo animal experiments, the same cell lines could be treated with different concentrations of multiple compounds at the same time. Therefore, LCLs are amenable for high throughput screening and lack the confounders that are often present in in vivo studies. Genome-wide genotype (The SNP Consortium; International HapMap Project; The 1000 Genomes Project; Human Variation Panel dbGaP Access) and gene expression data (Gene Expression Omnibus; Gene Expression Omnibus b; CEU RNA-Seq Data), including next-generation sequencing (DNA and RNA-Seq) data, is publicly available for hundreds of established LCLs.

Like any toxicological model system, in vitro assessment using LCLs presents a number of technical challenges for extrapolation to humans, including lack of metabolism, and the inability to establish cell-cell interactions or evaluate chronic toxicity. The liver is the major site of xenobiotic metabolism and plays a central role in preventing accumulation of a wide range of compounds by converting them into a form suitable for elimination (Lerapetritou et al. 2009). Human lymphoblast cell lines are not hepatocytes and their main role is not meant to metabolize chemicals. Although lymphocytes do not have the metabolic capacity of the liver, or even that of freshly isolated hepatocytes, they do express a number of nuclear receptors, as well as most genes of phase I and II metabolism, and transporters (Siest et al. 2008). A comparison of the population-wide (250+ individuals of various races, ages and gender) variability in mRNA levels for several dozen liver-specific thyroid hormone-related genes between human liver (Schadt et al. 2008) and lymphoblast cell lines (Stranger et al. 2007) showed that most of the nuclear receptors and metabolism genes are expressed in lymphoblasts, albeit at a 10- to 100-times lower quantity than hepatocytes (unpublished data).
Potential confounders that affect the utility of LCLs include baseline growth rates, EBV copy numbers and ATP levels (Choy et al. 2008). While growth rate of LCLs was associated with chemotherapeutic-induced cytotoxicity in one study (Stark et al. 2010), it was not, in aggregate, associated with the cytotoxicity of 100+ chemicals in Lock et al. (2012). Altered apoptosis has been observed as a result of EBV transformation in LCLs with cancer drugs (Liu et al. 2004).

The immortalization process or EBV transformation has been observed to affect gene-expression and promoter-methylation profiles of majority of genes compared to primary B cells (Caliskan et al. 2011). However, the difference in expression levels between the primary and immortalized cells was small in magnitude (<1.5 fold). Moreover, the inter-individual variability in gene expression was the same between primary B cells and LCLs (Caliskan et al. 2011). Furthermore, many expression quantitative trait loci eQTLs observed in LCLs were observed in primary tissues like the liver, lung, and skin (Schadt et al. 2008; Bullaughey et al. 2009; Ding et al. 2010).

2. **Toxicity Phenotype**

With the recent shift in toxicology from *in vivo* to *in vitro*, hundreds of toxicity assays were developed to assess different cellular or biological endpoints. While those assays vary widely in their phenotypes and qualities, a good assay should be sensitive, robust, and able to quantitatively measure toxicity endpoint in a high throughput manner.

Generally, toxicity phenotypes can be classified to include general hazard, carcinogenicity, genotoxicity, developmental toxicity, reproductive toxicity, and chronic toxicity (Judson et al. 2009). With the Tox21 initiative, thousands of chemicals have been screened for
their potential hazard (Knudsen et al. 2013). More than 650 in vitro assays including biochemical assays, human cells and cell lines, and alternative models such as mouse embryonic stem cells and zebrafish embryo development have been developed and utilized for these chemicals, to understand their mechanisms and potential hazards (Knudsen et al. 2013).

The definition of “hazard” in chemical evaluation is broad and includes multiple potential definitions. A “hazardous” chemical evaluation could be derived from an acute and subchronic rodent study, or from material safety data sheets (Judson et al. 2009). To evaluate the in vitro potential hazard for a wide range of compounds, two essential things need to be properly selected: an appropriate end-point phenotype that represents general toxicity and is sensitive and broadly applicable to a variety of compounds, and a human relevant concentration range to determine the concentration for which the chemical will elicit toxicity. Determining the concentration at which chemical might elicit an endpoint is not enough, by itself, to quantify hazard. Because the in vitro assay endpoint does not incorporate metabolic clearance and plasma protein binding, ranking the chemicals by nominal assay concentrations might result in over- or under- estimation of the steady-state of a chemical (Rotroff et al 2010). However, incorporation of reverse dosimetry and exposure estimates when exploring concentration-response relationships for individual chemicals can aid tremendously in assessing human hazard and has been assessed by EPA and others (Rotroff et al. 2010; Judson et al. 2011) as a proposed approach.

The “CellTiter-Glo™ Luminescent Cell Viability Assay” is a commonly used assay in toxicity screening for cytotoxicity evaluation. It is a homogeneous “add-mix-measure” method to determine the number of viable cells in culture based on quantification of Adenosine Triphosphate (ATP) content (Promega). The quantity of ATP contents is a direct measurement of
the number of viable metabolically active cells (Promega). The assay results in cell lysis and a luciferase reaction. It is well-known that luciferase from fireflies or bacteria can be used to measure ATP (Fan and Wood 2007). A highly stabilized form of luciferase created by optimized strategies (Hall et al., 1998) is utilized in the CellTitelGlo assay, reacting with ATP to produce luciferyl adenylate, which is oxidized to produce a glow-like luminescent signal, among other products. The final signal has been shown to be proportional to the amount of ATP (Fraga et al. 2006). The luminescent signal, produced by the modified luciferase reaction, has a prolonged half-life (>5 hrs), making it resistant to a broad spectrum of detergents and suitable for batch-mode processing of multiple plates (Riss et al., 2006; Fan et al., 2005).

In a normal living cell, the generation of ATP requires harmonized interactions of many enzymes (Fan and Wood 2007). ATP concentrations are sustained upon equilibrium between consumption and demand enzyme pathways (Fan and Wood 2007). Upon cell death, the enzymes that generate ATP cease to function while the enzymes that consume ATP keep working, resulting in ATP consumption. Therefore, the concentration of intracellular ATP drops instantaneously upon cell death with a corresponding loss of luminescence when assayed using luciferase (Fan and Wood 2007).

CellTiter-Glo™ Luminescent Cell Viability Assay has many advantages that make it a great choice for quantitative high throughput screening. First, the unique homogeneous format reduces pipetting errors that may be introduced during the multiple steps required by other ATP measurement methods, thus decreasing experimental inconstancies. Second, the assay is extremely sensitive in the measurement of number of cells below the detection limits of standard colorimetric and fluorometric assays, reducing the number of cells required per assay. Third, the assay is fast (10 minutes) and flexible for different detection techniques, including automated
high-throughput protocols. Fourth, among all cytotoxicity assays, bioluminescent ATP assays have been the most widely used in high-throughput applications (Riss et al. 2006; Melnick et al. 2006). Finally, the assay is very robust with extremely stable luminescent and a long half-life (>5 hrs). The homogeneous assay procedure involves the addition of a single reagent (CellTiter-Glo™ Reagent) directly to cells cultured in serum-supplemented medium. Cell washing, removal of medium or multiple pipetting steps are not required (Promega).

Moreover, the CellTiter-Glo™ Luminescent Cell Viability Assay has been utilized and extensively evaluated for in vitro screening of cytotoxicity in high-throughput settings with proper evaluation of time points at the National Institutes of Health Chemical Genomics Center (NCGC) (Xia et al. 2008a). It was used to screen the NTP 1,408-compound library for cytotoxicity in 13 cell types (9 human, 2 rat, 2 mouse) (Xia et al. 2008b). The cell types originated from different tissues and included cell lines, cell strains, and primary cell populations (Tice et al. 2013). While some compounds were cytotoxic to all cell types, others were only toxic in some cell lines but not others. The results indicated that no single cell type would be universally informative for cytotoxicity or other endpoints, such as apoptosis (Xia et al. 2008a; Tice et al. 2013; Huang et al. 2008).

3. How can in vitro data inform systematic risk assessment?

Thousands of chemicals are being currently screened with hundreds of in vitro assays in the Tox21 and Toxcast projects. The predominant question is how to move forward from an in vitro endpoint to an overall comprehensive risk assessment? One way, as illustrated in Figure 1,
is to apply the findings of an \textit{in vitro} study to a more traditional \textit{in vivo} risk assessment. First, the hazard is established from a concentration-response \textit{in vitro} assay. It is recommended that the \textit{in vitro} testing be established from cell lines representing populations with sensitive individuals. Second, PK modeling is applied to derive the dose that results in the hazardous outcome. Third, uncertainty factors are applied to establish a human reference dose (Crump et al. 2010).

Another approach is to find the biological pathway altering dose (BPAD) for high-throughput risk assessment (HTRA). With this framework, a biological pathway is defined that is linked to adverse effects. Then, the \textit{in vitro} concentration that perturbs the specified biological pathway is measured. Furthermore, PK modeling is applied to estimate the \textit{in vivo} dose that could result in the hazardous concentration. From there, uncertainty and population variability estimates are incorporated to identify the protective exposure limit (Judson et al. 2011).

A third approach for toxicity assessment of \textit{in vitro} assays is the tiered step-wise decision tree (Thomas et al. 2013). In this approach, chemicals are ranked based on their relative selectivity and the point of departure (POD) is established from the \textit{in vitro} assays. Reverse toxicokinetic modeling (Rotroff et al. 2010; Wetmore et al. 2013; Wetmore et al. 2012) can then be applied to estimate the corresponding dose for the \textit{in vitro} POD. The calculated external dose can then be computed to human exposure estimates to establish the margin of exposure (MOE). In the second tier, after selecting chemicals from tier I, \textit{in vivo} animal testing is carried out with a focus on refining dose-response, PK evaluations, and other estimates. The third tier is characterized by traditional animal studies that are currently used to assess chemicals.

Regardless of the paradigm implemented to assess potential adverse health outcomes that are associated with chemical exposures from \textit{in vitro} assays, one thing is standard and consistent among all: assessing human variability and identifying sensitive subpopulations is of key
importance. Testing human cell lines that represent various populations and identify sensitive subpopulations can substantially improve any risk assessment paradigm where decision making will be relied on actual estimated rather than mere statistical assumptions that may or may not be satisfied.

E. SPECIFIC AIMS

Quantitative assessment of the degree of inter-individual biological variability in the human population is a major aspect for properly evaluating potential human health hazards. A comprehensive characterization of human genome sequence variation is important for understanding inherited sources of variation in toxicity phenotypes. Genetic polymorphisms can have a profound influence on disease risk after drug or toxicant exposure. However, such characterization and assessment is difficult to quantitatively evaluate using current in vivo animal test systems or in vitro methods with established cell lines. The availability of genetically- and geographically-representative diverse and genetically-defined renewable sources of human cells, such as lymphoblasts from the International HapMap and 1000 Genomes projects, enables in vitro testing at the population level. As the focus of risk assessment processes shifts toward in vitro data, the quantitative assessment of inter-individual variability in response to chemicals, and an understanding of the underlying genetic causes are necessary for regulatory decisions to be based on scientific data rather than on default assumptions.

Previous pilot work showed that utilizing those lymphoblasts for in vitro toxicity assessment was very successful in assessing inter-individual variability and the molecular underpinnings of such variability. These novel findings form a solid foundation for this
proposal’s central hypothesis that genetic variability and chemical toxicity can be assessed using a lymphoblast cell line-based in vitro model that serves as a model for the human population. To accomplish the objective of this application, this hypothesis was tested by pursuing the following specific aims:

**Aim 1: To evaluate and assess the validity of an in vitro, genetically–anchored human population model system in assessing chemical toxicity and identifying candidate genetic susceptibility.**

In this Aim, we hypothesized that genetic variability and chemical toxicity can be assessed using an in vitro model of lymphoblast cell lines that represent a human population. To demonstrate the feasibility of an in vitro model system to assess inter-individual and population-wide variability of chemical-induced toxicity phenotypes, cells from over 80 Centre d’Etude du Polymorphisme Humain (CEPH) cell lines were exposed to 12 concentrations of 240 environmental chemicals. The induction of caspase-3/7, indicative of apoptosis, was then assessed and intracellular levels of adenosine triphosphate (ATP) as a surrogate for cell number, was measured to evaluate cytotoxicity. We utilized the available dense genetic data to perform a Genome Wide Association Study (GWAS). We also assessed the validity of the in vitro genetics–anchored human model system by comparing it to similar human models and non-human models.
Aim 2: To quantitatively evaluate inter-individual variability for diverse environmental chemicals using high throughput large scale in-vitro model across genetically-defined genetically-diverse populations.

In this aim, we developed an *in-vitro* screening model that had sufficient power to quantitatively assess the potential human health hazards and inter-individual variability in chemical toxicity, identify susceptible sub-populations, understand the genetic determinants of the inter-individual variability, generate testable hypotheses about toxicity pathways by leveraging genetic and genomic data from 1000 Genomes and HapMap Projects, and use the data obtained from this research to build predictive *in silico* models. We screened 1104 lymphoblast cell lines from 9 ancestrally and geographically diverse populations representing 5 continents. Those cell lines were chosen based on availability of dense genetic information and were exposed to 180 diverse environmental chemicals at 8 different concentrations. We assessed cytotoxicity based on measuring intracellular levels of ATP.

Aim 3: To investigate remaining challenges of *in vitro* genetically–anchored population human model, such as the potential to screen complex mixtures.

This specific aim addressed remaining challenges that require further assessment to increase the utility of the information obtained from this model, including limited metabolic capacity of lymphoblasts and the potential to screen complex mixtures. We selected lymphoblast cell lines from 4 ancestrally and geographically diverse populations based on availability of genome sequence and basal RNA-seq information. The cell lines were exposed to 2 pesticide chemical mixtures, at 8 different concentrations. This design enabled us to investigate the utility of our model in assessing chemical mixtures.
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CHAPTER 2: QUANTITATIVE HIGH-THROUGHOUT SCREENING FOR CHEMICAL TOXICITY IN A POPULATION-BASED IN VITRO MODEL

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http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3307611/
A. ABSTRACT

A shift in toxicity testing from in vivo to in vitro may efficiently prioritize compounds, reveal new mechanisms, and enable predictive modeling. Quantitative high-throughput screening (qHTS) is a major source of data for computational toxicology, and our goal in this study was to aid in the development of predictive in vitro models of chemical-induced toxicity, anchored on inter-individual genetic variability. Eighty-one human lymphoblast cell lines from 27 Centre d’Etude du Polymorphisme Humain (CEPH) trios were exposed to 240 chemical substances (12 concentrations, 0.26 nM-46.0 uM) and evaluated for cytotoxicity and apoptosis. qHTS screening in the genetically-defined population produced robust and reproducible results, which allowed for cross-compound, -assay and -individual comparisons. Some compounds were cytotoxic to all cell types at similar concentrations, whereas others exhibited inter-individual differences in cytotoxicity. Specifically, the quantitative high-throughput screening in a population-based human in vitro model system has several unique aspects that are of utility for toxicity testing, chemical prioritization, and high-throughput risk assessment. First, standardized and high-quality concentration-response profiling, with reproducibility confirmed by comparison with previous experiments, enables prioritization of chemicals for variability in inter-individual range in cytotoxicity. Second, genome-wide association analysis of cytotoxicity phenotypes allows exploration of the potential genetic determinants of inter-individual variability in toxicity. Furthermore, highly significant associations identified through the analysis of population-level correlations between basal gene expression variability and chemical-induced toxicity suggest plausible mode of action hypotheses for follow up analyses. We conclude that as the improved resolution of genetic profiling can now be matched with high-quality in vitro screening data, the evaluation of the toxicity pathways and the effects of genetic diversity are now feasible through the use of human lymphoblast cell lines.
B. INTRODUCTION

The “Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals” (REACH) regulations in Europe and Toxic Substances Control Act reform activities in the US are creating substantial pressure to develop improved methods for evaluating potential chemical hazards (Plunkett et al., 2010). Current chemical safety evaluation (National Research Council, 2007) relies on in vivo animal testing. In Europe alone, it is expected that 100,000+ chemicals will require new safety data, yet the worldwide capacity to evaluate chemicals for the most animal-intensive in vivo tests is 200–300 chemicals each year (Hartung and Rovida, 2009).

In the US, the Tox21 program (Collins et al., 2008) is a collaborative initiative of four government agencies. This effort leads the field in its use of a broad spectrum of in vitro assays, many in quantitative High Throughput Screening (qHTS) format (Inglese et al., 2006), to screen thousands of environmental chemicals for their potential to affect biological pathways that may result in human disease (Xia et al., 2008). Such data on toxicologically relevant in vitro endpoints can assist in decision-making (Reif et al., 2010), serve as predictive surrogates for in vivo toxicity (Martin et al., 2010; Zhu et al., 2008), and generate testable hypotheses on the mechanisms (Xia et al., 2009).

Another important consideration in assessing the potential human health hazard is the degree of inter-individual biological variability in the human population (National Research Council, 2008). A comprehensive characterization of human genome sequence variation is important for understanding observed inherited variation in toxicity phenotypes. Indeed, genetic polymorphisms can have a profound influence on disease risk after drug or toxicant exposure (Harrill et al., 2009), yet these factors are difficult to quantitatively evaluate using current in vivo animal test systems or established cell lines (Rusyn et al., 2010). The availability of genetically-
diverse, genetically-defined renewable sources of human cells, such as lymphoblasts from the
International HapMap (International HapMap Consortium, 2005) and 1000 Genomes (Durbin et
al., 2010) projects, enables in vitro testing at the population scale. As the risk assessment process
shifts towards in vitro data, the quantitative assessment of inter-individual variability in
responses to chemicals, as well as an understanding of the underlying genetic causes, are needed
so that regulatory decisions can be based on data rather than default assumptions.

To demonstrate the feasibility of an in vitro model system to assess inter-individual and
population-wide variability of chemical-induced toxicity phenotypes, we exposed cells from over
80 CEPH cell lines (O'Shea et al., 2011) to 3 concentrations of 14 environmental chemicals, and
assessed induction of caspase-3/7, indicative of apoptosis, and cytotoxicity, based on measuring
intracellular levels of adenosine triphosphate (ATP) as a surrogate for cell number. This study
showed that an in vitro genetics-anchored human model system can be utilized in a population-
level screen for chemical toxicity, with the potential to identify candidate genetic susceptibility
factors for further study. As a next step, we report here on a larger-scale population-based qHTS
screening using hundreds of compounds and covering a more comprehensive range of
concentrations. The quantitative assessment of inter-individual variability in response at this
scale demonstrates the potential of this methodology for toxicity screening, hazard evaluation
and exploration of genetic determinants of susceptibility.
C. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Experimental Design

Chemicals. A sub-set (240 compounds) of the National Toxicology Program’s 1,408 chemical library (Xia et al., 2008) was used in these experiments. See Table 2.1 for a complete list of chemicals used in these experiments. Chemicals were dissolved with dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) into 12 different stock concentrations ranging from 56.5nM to 10 mM and were aliquoted to 1536-well plate format via pin tool (Kalypsys, San Diego, CA, USA). The final concentration ranges from 0.26 nM to 46.08 uM in the assay plates. The negative control was DMSO at 0.5% v/v; the positive control was staurosporine at the tested concentration range.

Cell lines. A set of 81 immortalized lymphoblastoid cell lines was acquired from Coriell Cell Repositories (Camden, NJ, USA). The 81 cell lines were from HapMap Consortium’s Centre d’Etude du Polymorphisme Humain (CEPH) panel and consisted of 27 trios (father, mother and a child). Screening was conducted in 3 batches and cell lines were randomly divided into batches without regard to family structure. Cells were cultured at 37°C with 5% CO2 in suspension in flasks with upright position in RPMI 1640 media (Gibco, Carlsbad, CA, USA) supplemented with 15% fetal bovine serum (HyClone, South Logan, UT, USA) and 0.1% penicillin-streptomycin (Gibco). Media was changed every 3 days. Cell counts and viability were assessed prior to chemical treatment using Cellometer Auto T4 Plus (Nexcelem Bioscience, Lawrence, MA, USA). Cells were grown to a concentration up to 10^6 cells/mL, volume of at least 100 mL, and viability of >85% before treatment. After centrifugation, the cells were re-suspended in fresh media. The cell suspension was filtered through a 40 um nylon cell strainer (BD Biosciences, Durham, NC, USA). Cell stock was diluted with fresh media to final concentrations of 3-4x10^5 cells/mL, and plated into a tissue-culture treated 1,536-well white/solid
bottom assay plates (Grenier Bio-One North America, Monroe, NC, USA) at 2000 cells/5µL/well using a flying reagent dispenser (Aurora Discovery, Carlsbad, CA, USA). To increase the robustness of the data and evaluate reproducibility, each cell line was seeded on multiple plates (6 plates except for 2 cell lines where 5 plates were seeded) so that each compound was screened in each cell line on 2-3 plates (chemicals were randomly divided in half to enable screening of 120 compound x 12 concentrations on each plate).

Cytotoxicity and Caspase-3/7 assays. Two assays were chosen to evaluate cytotoxicity according to the manufacturer’s protocols. Cell-Titer-Glo® Luminescent Cell Viability (Promega Corporation, Madison, WI, USA) assay was used to assess intra-cellular ATP concentration, a marker for cytotoxicity, 40 hours post treatment. Caspase-Glo® 3/7 (Promega) was used to assess activity of caspase-3/7, a marker of apoptosis, 16 hours post treatment. These assays were selected based on their utility for in vitro screening of cytotoxicity in cell type- (Xia et al., 2008) and individual-independent (Choy et al., 2008) manner. Time points were selected based on previous experiments at NCGC (Xia et al., 2008). A ViewLux plate reader (PerkinElmer, Shelton, CT, USA) was used to detect luminescent intensity in each well for both assays. Data is publicly available from PubChem (AIDs: 588812 and 588813).

Data Processing

Response Normalization & Curve Fitting. Data was normalized relative to the positive/negative controls and corrected as detailed elsewhere (Xia et al., 2008). Concentration-response titration points were fitted to a Hill equation for each chemical. Chemicals were classified into 3 categories based on their concentration-response curves: active, non-active, and inconclusive (Huang et al., 2008; Xia et al., 2008). Specifically, in data from cytotoxicity assay
the curve classes -1.1, -1.2, -2.1 were classified as “active,” any positive curve class as “non-active,” and others as “inconclusive.” For data from caspase-3/7 assay, curve classes 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 were classified as “active,” any negative curve class as “non-active,” and others as “inconclusive.”

**CurveP.** To evaluate the cytotoxic potency of each compound, we calculated a “curve P” value for each compound-cell line pair. Curve P is defined as the lowest concentration which showed a consistent deviation from the baseline response and derived as detailed in (Sedykh et al., 2011). It can be regarded as a close approximation for the point of departure. Curve P was derived for all compounds even if little or no toxicity was observed. For the latter compounds, to enable the follow-up statistical analyses, the curve P was assigned to a concentration of 50 uM. Batch effects were adjusted using the ComBat method (Johnson et al., 2007).

**Data Analysis**

**Assessing variability across individual, chemical, and assay.** The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) between pairs of replicate plates was used to assess experimental reproducibility. For this analysis, two replicate plates were randomly selected for each chemical and cell line pair (240 chemicals x 81 cell lines = 19,440 total replicate pairs sampled).

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA (Kruskal and Wallis, 1952) was used to assess the significance of a cell line effect (versus experimental effect) in curve P for each chemical. The Benjamini-Hochberg FDR (Johnson et al., 2007) was used to correct for multiple comparisons. To measure potential confounding with basal metabolic rate, the Spearman rank correlation coefficient between curve P and the average ATP level in DMSO-treated cells was computed for each chemical. The Spearman (rank) correlation between the average curve P value for the
cytotoxicity assay and the average curve P value for the apoptosis assay for each chemical was computed to measure an overall relationship between the two assays. Furthermore, within each chemical, the correlation between the two assays across cell lines (averaged over replications) was computed separately. For both assays, chemical-by-chemical correlation heatmaps were used to identify clusters of chemicals with similar response across cell lines. The order of the chemicals in these heatmaps was determined by complete-linkage distance clustering.

All computations, graphs and heatmaps used the R programming environment for statistical computing and graphics (2.10.0, R Development Core Team, Vienna, Austria).

Dose-response for populations and individuals. For the ATP assay data for progesterone, a four-parameter logistic model was fit to the assay vs. vs. dose data for each cell line, using maximum likelihood and the optim routine in R. The model can be written

\[
\text{assay} = f(dose) + \varepsilon, \quad \text{where}
\]

\[
f(dose) = \min + (\max - \min)\left(\frac{\exp(\beta_0 + \beta_1dose)}{1 + \exp(\beta_0 + \beta_1dose)}\right), \quad \varepsilon \sim N(0, \sigma^2), \quad \text{and} \{\min, \max, \beta_0, \beta_1, \sigma^2\} \text{ are cell line-specific parameter vectors.}
\]

For a negative dose-response relationship, EC_{10} is the dose for which

\[
\exp(\beta_0 + \beta_1dose)/(1 + \exp(\beta_0 + \beta_1dose)) = 0.9.
\]

The variation in the EC_{10} estimates was used as illustrative of population variation in true EC_{10} values, although additional sampling variation underlies each EC_{10} estimate. An overall logistic dose-response curve was fit to the aggregated data across all individuals.

Assessing heritability and genetic associations. Heritability calculations were used to determine overall familial effects among the 27 CEPH trios for each chemical, on both assays. Calculations were motivated by the mid-parent regression model \( y = \beta_0 + \beta_1(a_p + a_m) + \varepsilon, \)
where $y$ is the child’s response, $a_p$ is the father’s response, $a_m$ is the mother’s response and $\varepsilon$ is an error term. A likelihood ratio significance test is then based on the heritability $h^2$: the variability in response due to shared genetics as a proportion of total variability in response. For this analysis, curve P values for each chemical were quantile-normalized to the standard Gaussian distribution.

To measure genotype-toxicity relationships, genome-wide association studies (GWAS) were performed in R using the GenABEL package (Aulchenko et al., 2007). Phase III genotype data, on approximately $1.4 \times 10^6$ single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs), was obtained for each cell line from the International HapMap Project (International HapMap Consortium, 2005). GWAS was performed for each chemical on both assays, with quantile normalized curve P values as the response phenotype. The significance of an association between a given SNP and the response was measured using a likelihood-based score test (Schaid et al., 2002) (qtscore in genABEL). For our initial screen, the familial trio relationships were not used for the analysis, due to the low evidence for overall heritability, on the grounds that methods such as transmission disequilibrium testing would reduce power, and with the intent to follow any significant findings with further testing. LocusZoom (Pruim et al., 2010) was used to visualize the genomic context for suggestive loci determined by GWAS.

RNA-Seq expression vs. toxicity assays. The 42 cell lines in common between Montgomery et al. (Montgomery et al., 2010) and the present study were matched with HapMap IDs, using RNA-Seq tag counts mapped to the genome as previously described for 20,000 genes (Zhou et al., 2011). For computational efficiency, simple read proportions consisting of number of tag counts per gene divided by the mapped library size (Zhou et al., 2011) were used in linear regression as predictors for the cytotoxicity assays. FDR q-values were then obtained for the
entire set of genes and chemicals, using p.adjust in R. For the caspase assay, ~5,000 genes were
determined to have at least one chemical with q<0.01, and these genes were retained for
clustering. Hierarchical clustering with average linkage was performed directly on the FDR q-
values using the heatmap function in R.
D. RESULTS

**qHTS screening in a population of human lymphoblasts yields robust and reproducible data**

Screening was conducted in a 1,536-well plate format using a robotic system. The 81 cell lines were randomly sub-divided into 3 batches and each line was screened against 240 chemical substances (see Table 2.1 for a complete list) at 12 concentrations (0.26 nM-46.0 uM). Each 1,536-well plate contained one cell line exposed to 120 chemicals accompanied by concurrent vehicle (DMSO) and positive controls. To increase the robustness of the data, duplicates or triplicates of each plate were run. Assays for intracellular ATP content and caspase-3/7 activity were used based on their utility for in vitro screening of cytotoxicity and apoptosis, respectively, in cell type- and individual-independent manner (Choy et al., 2008; Xia et al., 2008). A combination of the two assays allows for the role of apoptosis in the cytotoxicity response to be evaluated (Shi et al., 2010).

Several metrics were used to evaluate the reproducibility of the toxicity phenotypes. First, the concentration-response curve class (Parham et al., 2009) was identical across replicate plates 95.2% of the time for cytotoxicity and 94.1% for apoptosis. Second, the pair-wise Pearson correlation among replicate plate pairs using log(AC \(_{50}\)) values for the compounds with active curve classes for the cytotoxicity and apoptosis assays was \(r=0.99\) and \(r=0.98\), respectively. Third, to evaluate the effects correlation for all compounds, we calculated a “curve P” value, the lowest concentration which showed a consistent deviation from the baseline response (Sedykh et al., 2011), which can be regarded as a close approximation for the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level. For chemicals exhibiting no effect across the concentrations tested, the curve P was assigned to 50 uM to enable straightforward statistical analyses. The pair-wise correlation among
replicate plates of the log(curve P) values was equally high ($r_{\text{cytotoxicity}}=0.91$, $r_{\text{apoptosis}}=0.95$) when all compounds were included (Fig. 2.1.a, 2.1.b). Finally, there were 8 duplicates among the compounds screened. High concordance in median and range of responses for these was observed (Fig. 2.1.c,2.1.d).

**Range in cytotoxicity across the chemicals**

The chemicals selected for screening were a subset of 1,408 compounds previously tested in one or more traditional toxicological assays, and had been profiled for cytotoxicity and caspase-3/7 induction by NTP and NCGC using qHTS (Xia et al., 2008) in (i) 13 human and rodent cells derived from liver, blood, kidney, nerve, lung, skin; and (ii) 26 human lymphoblast cells (data available from PubChem AID: 963-989). Of these, 240 compounds that were clearly active in those experiments were selected for the current study (iii).

Comparison of the cytotoxicity average log(curve P) from the current study showed high concordance with that in panels (i) and (ii), see above. Pair-wise correlation analysis for the 240 chemicals across three data sets was highly significant ($p<0.0001$). High correlation ($r=0.87$; rank correlation=0.83) was observed between lymphoblast panels (ii) and (iii), while the correlations with the diverse panel (i) were moderately high ($r=0.74$ or 0.75; rank correlation=0.72 or 0.75 with (ii) and (iii), respectively). Together, the results indicate high external reproducibility for this measurement of cytotoxicity and, importantly, the potential utility of lymphoblast cell lines as a toll for population-based toxicity screening.
**Inter-individual variability in response across cell lines**

In contrast to the highly invariant reproducible results found within individual cell lines, the chemicals induced a wide range of responses among the lymphoblast lines. The percentage of compounds classified as active in the cytotoxicity assay varied from 28% to 56% (Fig. 2.2a); an equally broad range of activity (i.e., 24 to 45%) was seen in the caspase-3/7 assay (Fig. 2.2b). Among actives, a wide range of potency, assessed from the curve P, was observed for each cell line in both assays (Fig. 2.2c,d).

Some chemicals were classified as active for cytotoxicity and caspase-3/7 induction in all of the lymphoblast lines, while others were not active for either endpoint (Fig. 2.3a,b). In both assays, most chemicals were active in some cell lines while not active in others, indicative of inter-individual (cell line) variability in response. The significant correlation (rank correlation=0.77; p=2.2E-16; all compounds tested) between the chemical’s average curveP for cytotoxicity and caspase-3/7 (Fig. 2.3c) indicates the primary cause of cell death for these compounds is most likely via apoptosis. A heatmap shows correlations between average log(curveP) for all chemicals in both assays (Fig. 2.3d). Clusters of chemicals with highly concordant responses across cell lines were evident for cytotoxicity, apoptosis, or both phenotypes. A significant (FDR<5%) correlation between responses in cytotoxicity and apoptosis assays was observed for most of the compounds screened.

Inter-individual variability in cytotoxicity was visualized using box plots of log(curveP) for each chemical (Fig. 2.4a,b). Although median cytotoxicity differed between chemicals tested, inter-individual variability was observed even for the most active chemicals. Variance-components heritability testing for each chemical/assay showed that none of the derived h2
statistics was significant after adjusting for multiple comparisons, an observation which was confirmed using mid-parent assays’ values compared to those of the offspring (data not shown).

Inter-individual (between cell lines) vs. experimental (between replicates) variability for each chemical was evaluated using Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA (Kruskal and Wallis, 1952). Most chemicals show a significant (FDR<5%) cell line effect (Fig. 2.4c,d). It has been suggested that differences in chemical’s toxicity among lymphoblast lines could be partly attributed to differences in baseline growth rate and metabolic status (Choy et al., 2008). Correcting for these measurements reduces effect correlation that would otherwise make responses across chemicals appear more similar. We therefore normalized for control levels of intracellular ATP (e.g., metabolic activity) and basal activity of caspase-3/7, as well as for the response of the positive control cytotoxicant. In addition, we directly assessed for each chemical whether the basal metabolic rate, an endpoint which correlates closely with the growth rate (Choy et al., 2008), significantly correlated with cytotoxicity. Approximately 80% and 90% of chemicals (Fig. 2.4c,d; black dots) exhibited no correlation (FDR>0.05) between basal metabolic rate (ATP level in vehicle-treated cells) and cytotoxicity or apoptosis, respectively, across the cell panel.

Assessing relationships between cytotoxicity and genotype

With variability among cells from different individuals demonstrated, we then asked if we could identify genetic loci responsible, utilizing toxicity phenotypes as quantitative traits and publicly available genotypes (International HapMap Consortium, 2005) (Fig. 2.5). The top two plots in Figure 5 show p-values for the most significant SNP associated with cytotoxicity (Fig. 2.5a) or induction of caspase-3/7 (Fig. 2.5b) for each chemical. The inset shows a plot of -log10(p-values) for SNP-endpoint associations for the selected chemicals. Progesterone had the
lowest p-value SNPs on chromosome 9, while Guggulsterones Z (4,17(20)-pregnadiene-3,16-
dione, z-isoform) exhibited many suggestive associations on chromosome 6p. Fig. 2.5c,d provide
a zoomed-in view of the genomic context for these suggestive regions.

Progesterone was not highly cytotoxic, yet showed an appreciable degree of inter-
individual variability in curve P values (Fig. 2.5c inset). A characteristic pattern of SNPs with
low p-values in linkage disequilibrium is evident in a ~300 kb region containing two genes,
structural maintenance of chromosomes protein 5 (SMC5) and MAM domain containing 2
(MAMDC2). Guggulsterone Z, a bioactive constituent of resinous sap from Commiphora mukul,
is a farnesoid X receptor antagonist and is used widely as a nutraceutical. It is known to suppress
expression of anti-apoptotic genes, promote apoptosis, and inhibit NF-κB (Shishodia and
Aggarwal, 2004). In our study, it was moderately active in inducing caspase-3/7 (Fig. 2.5d inset)
and exhibited inter-individual variability. A narrow 100 Kb region on chromosome 6p,
containing the gene human immunodeficiency virus type I enhancer binding protein 1 (HIVEP1),
shows association with the apoptosis phenotype.

**Dose-response for populations and individuals**

The availability of cytotoxicity screens on 80+ individuals, with the assays performed
under controlled conditions, enables sensitive investigation of variation in individual dose-
response profiles (National Research Council, 2008). This concept is illustrated in Fig. 2.6a, in
which the progesterone ATP assay values are shown in grey for each concentration for all
individuals. Separate logistic curve fits were performed, providing for each individual cell line
an “effective concentration 10%” (EC\textsubscript{10}), the estimated concentration at which the response
deviates by at least 10% from the control baseline, and these are shown as a histogram. The
mean of these EC10 values offers a population-wide summary of the activity (e.g., cytotoxicity, caspase-3/7) of a chemical, and is very similar to the EC10 produced when the data are first pooled for all individuals and then fit using a single dose-response curve (red dashed curve in Fig. 2.6a). However, aggregation across the population ignores the variability in toxic susceptibility, and the EC$_{10}$ estimated 5th percentile may be used to illustrate the concept of a “vulnerable” sub-population.

**Defining mode-of-action chemical-perturbed pathways**

Gene expression data forms another rich source of publicly available data, which can be matched with cytotoxicity profiles to provide further evidence of toxicity pathway activity. Many of the HapMap cell lines have been profiled for expression in a number of studies, including highly sensitive RNA-Seq profiling (Montgomery et al., 2010). For the 42 cell lines for which RNA-Seq data are publicly available, expression values for each of ~20,000 genes were compared to the caspase-3/7 and cytotoxicity assay results, with a number of highly-significant associations. A heatmap of clustering performed on FDR q-values (Fig. 2.6b) shows striking patterns of gene-chemical relationships, with much of the structure resolving into distinct sets of genes associated with sets of chemicals. The results for progesterone are shown as a highly specific subgroup, with lymphoblast cytotoxicity for several chemicals being significantly associated with background RNA levels for 6 transcripts and several microRNAs.
Comparing cytotoxicity of LCLs across different cell lines

We wanted to test the hypothesis that if a chemical causes toxicity, it will have a similar toxic effect on different cell lines from different tissues or species. To test this hypothesis we compared the cytotoxicity results obtained from specific aim 1 to another two experiments done by other researchers that utilized the same chemicals with the same assay in different cell lines. The first experiment, labeled twins study (NCGC-U Penn), was a study that exposed lymphoblast cell lines from pairs of twins to the same set of chemicals (unpublished data). The other experiment was collaboration between NCGC and NTP, and exposed 13 human and rodent cell types derived from six common targets of xenobiotic toxicity (liver, blood, kidney, nerve, lung, skin) to the same set of chemicals (Xia et al. 2008a).

A pairwise correlation between the cytotoxic response (curve P) of common screened chemicals across our 81 cell lines in our experiment, paired twin lymphoblast cell lines in U Penn study, and the 13 cell lines in the NTP study showed significant correlation (Spearman rank correlation of 0.83 and 0.75 respectively) (Fig 2.7).

We picked the 30 most toxic chemicals in our panel and plotted the range of toxicity expressed by Curve P across cell lines for each study in a box and whisker plot shown in (Fig 2.8). While the median of cytotoxicity was similar in all the three studies, the range across tested cell lines was largest among the 13 cell type study coming from rodents and humans. Both LCL studies had similar range of cytotoxicity (Fig 2.8).
E. DISCUSSION

New paradigms for the rapid and accurate evaluation of the potential health hazard from environmental chemicals are needed, given the large number of environmental chemicals to be evaluated, and the high cost and low throughput of traditional toxicity testing approaches (Collins et al., 2008). Development of in vitro toxicity tests that can be utilized in a tiered framework is necessary, feasible and consistent with the needs of scientifically-rigorous high-throughput risk assessment (Kavlock et al., 2009). A particular challenge in developing such next-generation toxicity testing schemata is the assessment of differential susceptibility among individuals. The results presented here provide proof of principle of such a testing system, demonstrating the feasibility and utility of screening a panel of cells from genetically diverse individuals, whereby both population-wide and individual responses can be evaluated.

The in vitro toxicity screening paradigm detailed here has focused on a population-based cell culture model, an approach that affords several key benefits compared to collections of unrelated cell lines from different species and tissues (Xia et al., 2008). Our results show that many chemicals exhibit inter-individual variation in induction of toxicity and this information is crucial for chemical testing prioritization. This screening paradigm also provides quantitative data on population-wide variability in toxicity which may be used to establish data-driven uncertainty estimates when extrapolating from in vitro data to potential in vivo toxicity (Judson et al., 2011). Even though the data collected herein is on a limited population (81 individuals), it is immediately interpretable for ranking and prioritizing chemicals. For example, a population-based view of dose-response is an important concept that directly addresses the issue of sub-populations (National Research Council, 2008); however, actual experimental data-driven implementation has been limited. We reason that the population-based concentration-response in
vitro qHTS data allows for the development of models to estimate in vitro point-of-departure and safety/uncertainty factors (Crump et al., 2010), because variation between genetically-defined/diverse cell lines may be treated as reflective of that among individuals. The recognition of underlying genetic causes may further enhance extrapolation and understanding of the shape of the dose-response relationships. In addition, the data may be used to explore potential differences/similarities in modes of action between chemicals on the population-wide level.

By combining toxicity data with publicly available genetic information, such as that provided by the HapMap (International HapMap Consortium, 2005), 1000 Genomes (Durbin et al., 2010), and public RNA sequencing projects (Montgomery et al., 2011), it is possible to probe the contribution of genomics to toxicity phenotypes. Such an approach represents a substantial savings of cost and time, capitalizing on the extensive prior characterization of these samples. Accordingly, we have begun to explore variation in toxicity susceptibility as a function of genotype, as well as the relationship between toxic response and basal expression profiles.

Genotype-phenotype relationships are likely to reflect causal action of underlying physiological variation, and are thus of great interest to epidemiologists for understanding the ultimate sources of population variation. However, the effect sizes are typically small, as has been the source of considerable discussion in the genomics community (Manolio et al., 2009). Variation in basal mRNA expression, in contrast, may reflect cascades of responses controlled by the underlying genotype, and typically involves a smaller multiple testing penalty. Thus, we likely have more power to detect association of expression with toxicity response phenotypes, even though the underlying causality relationships may remain elusive. The highly significant associations identified through the analysis of population-level correlations between basal gene expression variability and chemical-induced toxicity have revealed several reasonable mode of
action hypotheses. For example, the in vitro toxicity of 1,3-indandione-containing rodenticides has been shown to occur through the inhibition of the pyrimidine synthetic pathway (Hall et al., 1994), and thioredoxin reductase (e.g., TXNRD3IT1) is required for dNTP pool maintenance during S phase (Koc et al., 2006). Expression of somatostatin receptor (SSTR)4 correlates with progesterone receptor levels in human breast tumors (Kumar et al., 2005). Thioredoxin reductase affects expression of progesterone receptor-controlled genes in MCF-7 cells (Rao et al., 2009).

Similarly, the quantitative assessment of inter-individual genetic variability in responses to environmental agents in vitro demonstrates the potential of this approach to explore the genetic basis for susceptibility through genome-wide association analysis. The genes SMC5 and MAMDC2 implicated in this study as associated with progesterone-induced toxicity are highly plausible and belong to pathways critical for development. The same locus was reported as associated with developmental abnormalities cleft palate and Kabuki syndrome (Kuniba et al., 2009; Marazita et al., 2004), and exposure to progesterone during gestation is known to cause cleft palate in rabbits (Andrew and Staples, 1977). Likewise, the association between Guggulsterone Z and polymorphisms in HIVEP1 is highly credible, given the known effects of Guggulsterone Z on apoptosis through NF-κB-related signaling (Shishodia and Aggarwal, 2004). HIVEP1 belongs to a family of large zinc finger-containing transcription factors that bind specifically to the NF-κB motif and related sequences (Yu et al., 2009). The alternative splice variant of HIVEP1, the GAAP-1 protein, can regulate p53 and IRF-1 dependent cell proliferation and apoptosis (Lallemand et al., 2002).

Important limitations to in vitro toxicity profiling using lymphoblasts, as compared to primary cells that may be obtained from other tissues of interest, include inability to assess target organ adverse effects, or a potential role of other environmental factors such as lifestyle, diet, or
co-exposures. In addition, the challenge of assessing the potential toxicity of chemical’s metabolites, or the potential lack of the receptor-mediated signaling that may be critical for the downstream adverse molecular events, in lymphoblast cell lines also should be taken into consideration when interpreting the data. Still, whereas lymphocytes do not have the metabolic capacity of the liver, or even that of freshly isolated hepatocytes, they do express a number of nuclear receptors, as well as most genes of the phase I and II metabolism, and transporters (Siest et al., 2008). A comparison of the population-wide (250+ individuals of various races, ages and gender) variability in mRNA levels for several dozen liver-specific thyroid hormone-related genes between human liver (Schadt et al., 2008) and lymphoblast cell lines (Stranger et al., 2007) shows that most of the nuclear receptors and metabolism genes are expressed in lymphoblasts, albeit at 10- to 100-times lower quantity. Importantly, the between-subject variability in expression of these genes in either human liver or lymphoblasts is also of appreciable magnitude (4- to 10-fold). To overcome these limitations, both higher concentrations and known metabolites can be tested in vitro because of high throughput. Correcting for the cell growth rate and baseline metabolic rate also reduces effect correlation that may make responses across chemicals appear more similar (Choy et al., 2008).

Based on these results, we reason that a full and sensitive analysis of genomic predictors of toxicity response will be feasible through the joint use of toxicity phenotypes, genotype and expression information, though considerably larger sample sizes – likely on the order of several hundred or 1000s of individual cell lines – will be necessary. Such a population-based in vitro survey would greatly advance our understanding of the genetic underpinnings of susceptibility-related regulatory networks, and is ongoing in our laboratories.
**Figure 2.1. Experimental Reproducibility.** Intra-experimental reproducibility for cytotoxicity (panels a and c) and caspase-3/7 (panels b and d) assays. Panels a and b show log(curve P) values for randomly selected pairs of replicate plates within each chemical and cell line (240 chemicals x 81 cell lines = 19,440 replicate pairs displayed). Panels c and d show side-by-side boxplots for eight duplicate compounds that were tested in 2 independent wells on each plate.
Figure 2.2. Cytotoxicity Distributions across Chemicals. Distribution of cytotoxicity across chemicals for cytotoxicity (panels a and c) and caspase-3/7 (panels b and d) assays. Panels a and b give the percentage of chemicals classified as ‘active’, ‘non-active’, or ‘inconclusive’ for each cell line. Panels c and d give the range of potency (curve P) for active chemicals in each cell line.
Figure 2.3. **Cytotoxicity Distributions across Cell Lines.** The percent of cell lines exhibiting activity for each chemical for cytotoxicity (panel a) and caspase-3/7 (panel b) assays. Panel c displays the rank of the mean ATP curve P value versus the mean caspase curve P value for each chemical. Panel d shows a heatmap of the correlations between log(curve P) values for all chemical-assay combinations.
Figure 2.4. Inter-individual Variability Range for the 240 Chemicals. Boxplots of curve P values for each of the 240 chemicals (arranged by mean activity) across the 81 cell lines are shown for cytotoxicity (panel a) and caspase-3/7 (panel b) assays. For cytotoxicity (panel c) and caspase-3/7 (panel d) assays, $-\log(p$-values, Kruskal-Wallis test) were plotted against mean
curveP (µM). The blue line gives a False Discovery Rate-adjusted significance threshold (FDR=0.05). Chemicals colored in red had a significant correlation between activity and basal metabolic rate (ATP level in vehicle-treated cells) across the panel of cell lines (Spearman rank correlation; FDR<0.05).
Figure 2.5. Toxicity-Genotype Associations. Toxicity-genotype relationships were assessed using GWAS analysis for the 240 chemicals on both cytotoxicity (panels a and c) and caspase-3/7 (panels b and d) assays. Panels a and b give p-values for the most significant SNP associated with toxicity for each chemical. The inset in the diagram gives –log(p-values) for SNP-toxicity associations across the entire genome, for progesterone (cytotoxicity assay, inset in panel a) and Guggulsterones Z (caspase-3/7 assay, inset in panel b). Panels c and d provide a zoomed-in look at the locus with the most significant p-value for each of the two compounds, respectively. Correlation between SNPs is identified with colors. SNP and gene tracks are also shown. Inset: box & whiskers plots for each compound’s curve P.
Figure 2.6. Toxicity-RNA expression Associations. Panel a, a population concentration-response was modeled using in vitro qHTS data using progesterone data (cytotoxicity assay) as an example. Logistic dose-response modeling was performed for each individual to the values shown in grey, providing individual 10% effect effective dose values (EC10). The EC10 obtained by performing the modeling on average assay values for each dose (see frequency distribution) are shown in the inset. Panel b, a heatmap of clustered false discovery rates (q-values, see color bar) for association of the data from caspase-3/7 assay with publicly-available
RNA-Seq expression data on a subset of cell lines. A sample subcluster containing progesterone is also shown.
Figure 2.7. Comparison of Cytotoxicity across Different Studies. Cytotoxicity across different cells from different organs and species. A scatter plot of pairwise correlation between the cytotoxic response (curve P: the lowest concentration, which showed a consistent deviation from the baseline response and derived as detailed in Sedykh et al. (Sedykh et al. 2011) of common screened chemicals across our 81 cell lines in our experiment, paired twin lymphoblast cell lines in U Penn study, and the 13 cell lines in the NTP study.
Figure 2.8. Comparison of Cytotoxicity Range across Different Studies. Boxplot of 30 most toxic chemicals in our experiments across cell lines in each study. White represents UNC-NCGC-NTP study, blue represents U-Penn-NCGC twins study, and red represents NCGC-NTP 13 cell lines study. We picked the 30 most toxic chemicals in our panel and plotted the range of toxicity expressed by CurveP across cell lines for each study in a box and whisker plot shown. This is the blue color coded box, and is cited as the first experiment (see comment above). The first experiment, labeled twins study (NCGC-U Penn), was a study that exposed lymphoblast cell lines from pairs of twins to the same set of chemicals (unpublished data). The other experiment was collaboration between NCGC and NTP, and exposed 13 cell lines coming from humans and rodents to the same set of chemicals (Xia et al. 2008a).
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F. REFERENCES


CHAPTER 3: POPULATION-BASED IN VITRO HAZARD AND CONCENTRATION-RESPONSE ASSESSMENT OF CHEMICALS:
THE 1000 GENOMES HIGH THROUGHPUT SCREENING STUDY

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Running title: The 1000 Genomes High Throughput Screening Study.

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A. ABSTRACT

**Background:** Important gaps exist in our understanding of human variation in response to toxic environmental chemicals. **Objectives:** To address this critical need in next generation risk assessment, we tested a hypothesis that population-wide in vitro cytotoxicity screening has the potential to assess both the magnitude of and molecular causes for inter-individual genetic variability in toxicity of chemicals. **Methods:** We used 1086 lymphoblastoid cell lines, representing 9 populations from 5 continents, drawn from the 1000 Genomes Project to assess variation in cytotoxic responses to 179 chemicals used as phenotypes. The analysis included ranking of chemicals by average response and assessments of population variation and heritability, information that is immediately applicable to human health assessment of chemical toxicity. Genome-wide association mapping was also performed, with attention to phenotypic relevance to human exposures. **Results:** The extent of inter-individual variability in cytotoxicity was <10-fold for about 2/3 of the compounds; however, some compounds exhibited >100-fold range in variability. Genetic mapping suggested important roles for variation in membrane and trans-membrane genes with a number of chemicals showing association with rs13120371 in the solute carrier SLC7A11, which has been implicated in chemoresistance. Analysis of public RNA-sequencing profiles on the same cell lines provided evidence of association between basal transcription and cytotoxic response, with enrichment for genes with membrane localization. **Conclusions:** This experimental approach fills critical gaps of most recent large-scale toxicity testing programs by providing quantitative experimentally-based confidence intervals for estimating chemical hazard and variability, as well as generating testable hypotheses about potential mechanisms of toxicity.
B. INTRODUCTION

During the last decade, considerable progress has been made in high-throughput approaches for toxicity testing to address the challenges posed by (i) the expense and ethical constraints in animal testing; (ii) uncertainties in applicability of animal models to human susceptibility, and (iii) a large and increasing number of chemicals, many of which have never been subjected to adequate toxicity testing, and to which humans are exposed. Reports by the National Research Council (National Research Council 2007) and other prospective statements (Collins et al. 2008) have articulated a vision for the use of biochemical- and cell-based assays in a high throughput screening format to screen chemicals, providing an improved understanding of toxicity response and modes of action. The in vitro testing of human cell lines meets human relevance standards (Collins et al. 2008) while serving as a bridge to targeted in vivo assessment.

Beyond characterizing an “average” response to chemicals, another goal of next-generation toxicity testing is to provide an improved understanding of population variability in susceptibility, to identify vulnerable subpopulations, and to refine uncertainty factors used in regulatory risk assessment (Zeise et al. 2013).

The Tox21 initiative (Tice et al. 2013) is conducting automated systematic screening of thousands of chemicals against hundreds of molecular and cellular toxicity phenotypes. Cell-based assays for cell viability are an established approach to prioritize chemicals for further evaluation or to classify into hypothesized modes of action (Huang et al. 2008). However, for environmental chemicals the number of cell lines used in these assays has typically been limited to several dozen (Lock et al. 2012; O'Shea et al. 2011), sometimes representing multiple species (Xia et al. 2008). Thus, an understanding of human population variability and, in particular, the role of constitutional genetic variation remains elusive. Epidemiological approaches to these
questions have also been limited to a relatively few chemicals with high occupational or other exposure (Zeise et al. 2013), and have mainly quantified the effects of drug metabolizing enzymes (Ginsberg et al. 2009). Furthermore, an epidemiological approach provides little basis to compare directly across chemicals, including new chemicals with little to no exposure or potential toxicity information.

Screening of lymphoblastoid cell lines (LCLs) is an established approach to identify genetic variants influencing cytotoxic response to pharmaceuticals, especially chemotherapeutic agents (Wheeler and Dolan 2012). Choy et al. (Choy et al. 2008) had challenged the value of these approaches, primarily due to potential confounding influences, including growth rates and batch effects. However, enrichment of human blood eQTLs has been established among weakly significant chemotherapeutic drug susceptibility loci (Gamazon et al. 2010). With the advent of statistical methods purpose-built for cytotoxicity profiling (Brown et al. 2012a), several robust associations were identified (Brown et al. 2014).

For environmental chemicals, quantifying the extent of population variation in cytotoxicity is of great interest, potentially providing data to inform uncertainty factors in risk assessment (Zeise et al. 2013). Direct connections to human risk assessment must consider genetic variation in cytotoxic response at relatively low concentrations relevant to human exposure (Baynes 2012). This goal may conflict somewhat with maximization of power to identify specific genotype-susceptibility associations, as the effects of genetic variation may be apparent only at concentrations higher than human-relevant exposure. Furthermore, for both these goals, the number of cell lines used in past studies of environmental chemical cytotoxicity has often been inadequate to establish population variation, or to assess genetic association for these complex traits with small effect.
Here, we describe profiling 1086 LCLs for cytotoxic response to 179 chemicals, each assayed over a range of 8 concentrations spanning six orders of magnitude. The compounds were primarily chemicals of environmental concern, cover a wide range of \textit{in vivo} toxicity hazards, and were drawn from a larger set of 1408 compounds used for high-throughput screening (Lock et al. 2012; O'Shea et al. 2011; Xia et al. 2008). The LCLs were selected from the 1000 Genomes Project (1000 Genomes Project Consortium et al. 2012) spanning a variety of ancestral populations. Cytotoxic response was assessed using an effective concentration 10\% (EC$_{10}$) and genome-wide association mapping was performed using both EC$_{10}$ and with an omnibus test using the entire 8-concentration profile as a multivariate vector.
C. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Chemicals and cytotoxicity profiling. Chemicals were chosen as a subset of the National Toxicology Program’s 1408 chemical library. Chemicals were dissolved with dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) into 8 stock concentrations and were transferred into 1536-well plate format via a pin tool station (Kalypsys, San Diego, CA). The final concentrations ranged from 0.33 nM to 92 µM. The negative control was DMSO at 0.46% vol/vol; the positive control was tetra-octyl-ammonium bromide (46 µM). The CellTiter-Glo Luminescent Cell Viability (Promega, Madison, WI) assay was used to assess intracellular ATP concentration, a marker for viability/cytotoxicity, 40 h post treatment. A ViewLux plate reader (PerkinElmer, Shelton, CT) was used to detect luminescent intensity in each well of the assay plates.

Cell lines. A set of 1104 immortalized lymphoblastoid cell lines established by the HapMap Consortium and the 1000 Genomes Project (1000 Genomes Project Consortium et al. 2012) was acquired from Coriell (Camden, NJ). Out of the 1104, 401 cell lines were related individuals of trios (both parents and child). Cell lines were randomly divided into screening batches with equal distribution of populations and gender in each batch and without regard to family structure. Cells were cultured at 37°C with 5% CO₂ in RPMI 1640 media (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA) supplemented with 15% fetal bovine serum (HyClone, South Logan, UT) and 100U/ml penicillin/100mg/ml streptomycin (Invitrogen). Media was replaced every 3 days. Cells were grown to a concentration of up to 10⁶ cells/ml and viability of >85% before treatment. Cells were plated into a tissue culture–treated 1536-well white/solid bottom assay plates (Greiner Bio-One North America, Monroe, NC) at 2000 cells/5 µl/well using a flying reagent dispenser (BioRAPTR FRD dispenser, Beckman Coulter, Carlsbad, CA). Each cell line was seeded on
multiple plates (1-2 plates per batch and/or between batches) so that each compound was screened in each cell line on 1-2 plates (all chemicals were fit to a single plate).

**Genotypes.** The primary source of genotypes was the Illumina HumanOmni2.5 platform for 1000 Genomes ([http://www.1000genomes.org](http://www.1000genomes.org) and [ftp://ftp.1000genomes.ebi.ac.uk/vol1/ftp/technical/working/20120131_omni_genotypes_and_intensities](ftp://ftp.1000genomes.ebi.ac.uk/vol1/ftp/technical/working/20120131_omni_genotypes_and_intensities)), available for >90% of the samples. SNPs with a call rate below 95%, minor allele frequency (MAF)<0.01, or HWE p-value<1x10^-6 were excluded. From the original 1086 samples, a maximal subset of 884 was chosen so as to remove first-degree relatives (‘unrelated’ set) using a combination of genotypes and sample annotation. Of the 884 samples, genotyped SNPs from the Illumina HumanOmni2.5 platform were available for 761 samples. The remaining 123 samples had been genotyped as part of the HapMap project ([http://hapmap.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/downloads/genotypes/hapmap3_r3/plink_format](http://hapmap.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/downloads/genotypes/hapmap3_r3/plink_format), and were imputed for the set of filtered Illumina SNPs using the MACH software. A subset from a larger 1000 Genomes set (totaling 875 samples, not restricted to these cell lines) were used as a reference for this genotype imputation. The final set of 1.3m SNPs were used for primary analysis. A further subset of 690 unrelated individuals represented Phase I individuals from 1000 Genomes ([1000 Genomes Project Consortium et al. 2012](http://1000genomes.org)), with more complete sequencing data available. After applying the quality filters, a total of 12m SNPs remained.

**Cytotoxicity EC\(_{10}\) estimation and outlier detection.** Cytotoxicity data were normalized relative to positive/negative controls as described. Although the primary method for association mapping was based on a multivariate treatment of the cytotoxicity response values across the entire set of dose concentrations for each chemical, it is convenient for other analyses to provide a single
cytotoxicity dose summary per chemical and cell line. We devised an effective concentration
10\textsuperscript{th} percentile (EC\textsubscript{10}), using the logistic model

\[ \log \left( \frac{y - \theta_{min}}{\theta_{max} - \theta_{min}} \right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 d + \epsilon, \]

with \( \epsilon \sim N(0, \sigma^2) \), where \( y \) is the observed normalized signal representing proportion of surviving
cells (which we term the “cytotoxicity value”), \( d \) is the log(concentration) for each chemical, and
\( \theta_{max} \) is the mean cytotoxicity value on the logit scale for the zero concentration. \( \theta_{min} \) was set to
zero, to avoid difficulties in estimating the minimum cytotoxicity value for chemicals with low
cytotoxicity. An exception was made for chemicals in which the cytotoxicity value at the highest
concentration was higher than 0.4, as a very few number of plates/chemicals did not reliably
reach maximum cytotoxicity. In those instances the cytotoxicity value was set at the observed
cytotoxicity at the maximum concentration. Inspection of these data revealed good fits in such
instances according the maximum likelihood estimation. Although in principle \( \theta_{max} \) should
have been 1.0, a number of plates exhibited a drift from this value, and thus the parameter was
estimated from the data.

Fitting for the parameters \([\beta_0, \beta_1, \sigma^2, \theta_{max}]\) proceeded by maximum likelihood using
numerical optimization in \( R \) v2.15. An automatic outlier detection algorithm was devised by
considering the impact of dropping each concentration value in succession, and removing those
values for which the maximum likelihood improved by a factor of 10 or more (example in
\textbf{Figure 3.1} and refitting the model using the non-outlying observations.

\textbf{Multivariate Association Analysis.} The MAGWAS multivariate analysis of covariance model
(Brown et al. 2012a) was used for primary association mapping. The approach allows for use of
the full concentration-response profile, as opposed to a univariate summary (such as EC\textsubscript{10}) as a single response, with the advantage of robustness and power under a wide variety of association patterns. The model used for association for the \(j\)th individual and genotype \(i\) for the chemical/SNP is

\[
Y_{ij} = X_{ij}\beta + \mu_i + e_{ij}
\]

\[
e_{ij} \sim N(0, \Sigma),
\]

where \(Y_{ij}\) is the vector of responses (across the eight concentrations) for the \(j^{th}\) individual having genotype \(i\), \(X_{ij}\) is the design matrix of covariates, including sex, indicator variables for laboratory batch, and the first ten genotype principal components, and \(\mu_i\) is the eight concentration-vector of parameters modeling the effects of genotype \(i\) on the response. The model assumes that the error terms are multivariate normally distributed, with mean vector \(\mathbf{0}\) and variance-covariance matrix \(\Sigma\), allowing for dependencies in the observations. \(P\)-values were obtained using Pillai’s trace (Pillai 1955). Because this method makes use of asymptotic theory, markers with fewer than 20 individuals representing any genotype were removed, leaving 692,013 SNPs for analysis.

**Heritability.** Estimation of the proportion of chemical response variation due to genetic variation (heritability) was first calculated for each compound using the mean of the batch adjusted EC\textsubscript{10} value across the 401 related individuals belonging to the related individuals (trios). The Multipoint Engine for Rapid Likelihood Inference (MERLIN) (Abecasis et al. 2002) software package was used to estimate heritability with and without additional covariates including subpopulation by ethnicity (CEU, MXL and YRI) and population stratification (top three principal components). The covariates did not have a substantial effect on the heritability
estimates (results not shown). Additionally, variance component analysis and hypothesis testing were performed with Sequential Oligogenic Linkage Analysis Routines (Almasy and Blangero 1998), in order to evaluate the significance and standard error for each heritability estimates per compound. A false discovery threshold of 0.05 was used to ascribe significance and control for multiple testing.

Using the set of 884 unrelated individuals, we also ran the GCTA package (Yang et al. 2011) to estimate heritability, with default settings and using the 1.3m SNPs. To assess whether the degree of concordance between MERLIN and GCTA was at the level expected, we used the 179-vector of MERLIN heritability estimates as a hypothetical true set of heritabilities. These “true” values and associated standard errors from both MERLIN and GCTA were used to simulate independent normal errors to create 10,000 paired vectors of MERLIN and GCTA estimates, which were then compared for concordance.

**RNA-Seq data.** For dataset E-GEUV-1, mapped reads were downloaded (BAM format) from ArrayExpress ([http://www.ebi.ac.uk/arrayexpress](http://www.ebi.ac.uk/arrayexpress)). IsoDOT ([http://www.bios.unc.edu/~weisun/software/isoform.htm](http://www.bios.unc.edu/~weisun/software/isoform.htm)) was used to count reads for each non-overlapping exon, which have been preprocessed in IsoDOT library files ([http://www.bios.unc.edu/~weisun/software/isoform_files/](http://www.bios.unc.edu/~weisun/software/isoform_files/)). Read counts for each gene were obtained by summing the read count of the corresponding exons.

**Prediction of EC_{10} using RNA-Seq.** The RNA-Seq read count data were normalized by the library size for each sample, and principal components were computed from these data to use as predictors in LASSO-based regression using the R package *lars* v1.2, with each chemical’s EC_{10} values used in succession as a response. Default cross-validation prediction error estimation was
performed within the package for each chemical. Following theoretical work on avoiding bias in principal component estimation (Lee et al. 2010), the entire set of principal components was computed once and used in the cross-validations.

**Attenuated variability estimates to account for sampling variation.** To account for the inflationary effect of sampling variance on expected ranges of $EC_{10}$ values, we considered the simple model: $EC_{10} = \mu + \varepsilon$, where $\mu$ is the underlying true (unknown) $EC_{10}$ and $\varepsilon$ reflects sampling variation in the estimate. We suppose that each chemical has an underlying true sampling variability $\sigma^2_s$ per observation, while observed $EC_{10}$ values were, in many instances, averaged across multiple observations. If an individual is measured $n'$ times, $\text{var}(\varepsilon) = \sigma^2_s/n'$. To conservatively estimate $\sigma^2_s$, we identified all paired replicate instances for the chemical across different batched, computed the sample variance within each pair, and average across these pairs to obtain $\hat{\sigma}^2_s$. Then we computed a variance inflation factor

$$VIF = \frac{\text{var}(EC_{10})}{\sigma^2_s/\text{mean}(n')}$$

where $\text{mean}(n')$ is the average number of replicates per individual. Finally, we consider individual measurements to have been inflated by $\sqrt{VIF}$ so that, for example, the deflated inter-susceptibility range is $(\log(q_{95}) - \log(q_{05}))/\sqrt{VIF}$.
D. RESULTS

Cell lines and genotypes

An initial set of 1104 LCLs (1000 Genomes Project Consortium et al. 2012) was representative of 9 geographically- and ancestry-diverse populations: Utah residents with Northern & Western European ancestry (CEU); Han Chinese in Beijing, China (CHB); Japanese in Tokyo, Japan (JPT); Luhya in Webuye, Kenya (LWK); Mexican ancestry in Los Angeles, CA (MXL); Tuscans in Italy (TSI); Yoruban in Ibadan, Nigeria (YRI); British from England and Scotland (GBR); and Colombian in Medellin, Colombia (CLM). Genotypes were obtained from the 1000 Genomes web site. A few cell lines (18; 1.6%) were not viable or grew very slowly, or had insufficiently available genotypes, and the final data analysis set consisted of 1086 cell lines.

Due to sample size limitations in comparison with modern disease genome-wide association studies, and to reduce multiple comparisons, we initially focused on ~2.5 million markers further filtered by minor allele frequency (MAF). 172 of the individuals had not been genotyped on the platform, and so MaCH (Li et al. 2010) dosage imputation to these markers was performed using the appropriate 1000G reference population. Analyses were performed separately on 400 individuals belonging to parent-child trios (not all complete) in the CEU (164), MXL (83), and YRI (153) populations, and on a maximal set of 884 individuals in the remaining populations with no first-degree relationships (unrelateds). Association analyses were performed using both the Omni 2.5 set with MAF$\geq$0.05 (~1.3m) and a larger set (~12m) of typed SNPs available from the sequencing data, as described below.

Figure 3.2a shows the distribution of populations and continental ancestry. LCLs were randomly divided into screening batches with equal distribution of populations and sex in each
batch, without regard to family structure. The major HapMap/1000G continental ancestry populations were represented, as well as admixed populations from the Americas (Figure 3.2b).

**Cytotoxicity profiling**

**Figure 3.3** shows a flow chart of cytotoxicity profiling across 8 concentrations ranging from 0.33 nM to 92 µM. Logistic curve fitting with outlier detection (Figure 3.1) was used to obtain EC$_{10}$ values, which were batch-corrected and averaged across replicates for each cell line.

To place the current study in context with other cell line cytotoxicity genetic mapping studies, we reviewed comparable studies, identifying 18 reports (Lock et al. 2012; O'Shea et al. 2011; Gamazon et al. 2010; Wheeler et al. 2013; Innocenti et al. 2009; Stark et al. 2010; Aksoy et al. 2009; O'Donnell et al. 2010; Li et al. 2009; Peters et al. 2011; Huang et al. 2011; Wheeler et al. 2011; Kulkarni et al. 2012; Brown et al. 2012b). These studies had (i) more than one chemical (except (Brown et al. 2012b)), and (ii) at least 50 cell lines. **Figure 3.4a** depicts a heatmap of our cytotoxicity measurements across cell lines and chemicals. The figure also depicts, to scale, the size of the other 18 studies in terms of cell lines X chemicals/drugs. In these terms, the size of the study reported here is an order of magnitude greater than any single previous study, and several times larger than the other reports combined.

For the ∼700 cell lines for which there was at least one replicate plate, **Figure 3.4b** depicts the EC$_{10}$ values for replicates ($r$=0.90). Nine of the chemicals were assayed in duplicate on the each plate, and duplicate chemicals showed similar median EC$_{10}$ and range of variability across cell lines (**Figure 3.4c**). The entire range of EC$_{10}$ values across all chemicals exhibited remarkable variation in cytotoxicity (**Figure 3.4d**). Only one other report has been of similar scale in chemicals represented (240 chemicals investigated in (Lock et al. 2012)). However, our
comparisons across chemicals are much more definitive in the ability to rank and prioritize compounds by cytotoxic activity, due to the large number of cell lines profiled \((n=1086\text{ in the current report, vs. } n=81 \text{ in} \text{ (Lock et al. 2012)})\).

*Figure 3.5a* shows the results of \(EC_{10}\) estimation for all cell lines for an illustrative chemical, as well as the results from the logistic fit applied to the pooled data (similar to (Lock et al. 2012)). The histogram depicts the individual \(EC_{10}\) estimates, showing variation of more than an order of magnitude. To quantify “susceptible” subgroups in the population, we recorded the 5\(^{th}\) and 95\(^{th}\) percentiles of \(EC_{10}\) values for each chemical, and the quantile difference \(q_{95}-q_{05}\) on the log scale represents a *fold-range* of population variability. *Figure 3.5b* shows the fold-range across the 179 chemicals, as a histogram and as a function of mean \(EC_{10}\) values (inset). The fold-range is low for the chemicals at the high and low extremes due to measurement constraints at the extremes. Overall, the measured fold-ranges are expected to be inflated due to technical sampling variation, and the figure also shows an estimate of the true underlying distribution after removing this source of variation. The majority (166; 92.7\%) of the chemicals show a shrunken fold-range less than 10. For a few chemicals, the estimated fold-range in cytotoxicity is much greater than 10, and may be as great as 100 or more (*Table 3.1*).

For each population, we produced a profile of \(EC_{10}\) values across the 179 chemicals by averaging for each chemical across the individuals within the population. Hierarchical clustering of the averaged profiles (*Figure 3.5c*) showed general assortment by continental ancestry, although variation within populations was generally greater than across populations. While a large number of chemicals showed significant \(EC_{10}\) variation across populations or by sex (false discovery rate \(q<0.05\), *Table 3.2*), this variation tended to be modest (two examples in *Figure 3.5d*).
Heritability and mapping

Trio-based analysis provided significant evidence of additive heritability for 22 chemicals ($q<0.05$), with significant $h^2$ ranging from $\sim0.25$ to $\sim0.5$ (Figure 3.5e). This analysis was augmented by essentially independent heritability estimation using GCTA (Yang et al. 2011) performed using the maximal set of 884 unrelated individuals. GCTA-based $h^2$ ranged from $\sim0.4$ to 0.8 for 34 significant chemicals (Figures 3.5a-b).

Estimation of the EC$_{10}$ as a phenotype was motivated by relevance to human health assessment practices (Baynes 2012); however, elucidation of the underlying genetic mechanisms may be more powerful without assumptions about the point-of-departure. Moreover, the EC$_{10}$ is not sensitive to genetic influences that are apparent only at high concentrations. We thus adopted a three-stage approach to mapping, using ten genotype principal components and sex as covariates. For the primary analysis, using the set of unrelated individuals, we applied the multivariate MAGWAS approach (Brown et al. 2012a), which is sensitive to any pattern of variation of cytotoxicity measurements due to genotype. Second, for the same individuals, we used EC$_{10}$ values as a quantitative phenotype in regression analysis for an additive model of SNP allele effects, using the larger set of 1.3m SNPs (chr1-X). At the level of individual SNPs, this analysis was used to identify significant associations that might have been missed by MAGWAS and to investigate pathway-based associations (Schaid et al. 2012). Finally, in order to capture a larger number of SNPs and variants with lower MAF (Gamazon et al. 2012), we applied the EC$_{10}$ regression approach to 690 of the unrelated individuals who were part of 1000 Genomes Phase I (1000 Genomes Project Consortium et al. 2012), and used $\sim12.4$m variants with MAF$\geq0.01$. 
Preliminary examination of the last analysis indicated phenotype outlier effects causing spurious significant findings due to the lower MAF threshold, and so after applying an initial filter of association $P<5\times10^{-8}$, the (chemical)×(SNP) analyses were recomputed after applying an inverse quantile normalization to the EC$_{10}$ values.

For the primary analyses, each chemical is deemed worthy of separate investigation. Thus, we reasoned that a balanced approach to multiple comparisons was to apply per-chemical false discovery control, following proposals that SNPs with FDR $q<0.10$ be declared significant (van den Oord and Sullivan 2003). Table 3.3 shows these 48 chemical-SNP associations, after removing redundant regional findings within $\pm$1Mb. The nearest gene is reported, along with partial $R^2$, the portion of variance explained in the MAGWAS model across the entire 8 concentrations after considering covariates. The most significant MAGWAS findings tend to have larger partial $R^2$, but the relationship to $P$-values is complex (Figure 3.6).

Table 3.3 is presented for each chemical, but a re-ranking by $P$-values reveals that the top 10 significant associations includes three solute carriers ($SLC7A11$ for 2-amino-4-methylphenol, $SLC39A14$ for 1,3-dicyclohexylcarbodiimide, and $SLCO3A1$ for titanocene dichloride), the transmembrane protein $TMEM196$ for N-isopropyl-N'-phenyl-p-phenylen, and $NFAT5$ for o-aminophenol, a gene which activates several solute carriers in response to osmotic stress (Halterman et al. 2012). These findings suggest a major role for membrane proteins and solute carrier transporters in mediating cytotoxicity, as has been reported for the chemotherapeutic agent paclitaxel (Njiaju et al. 2012).

The most significant MAGWAS association ($P=8.4\times10^{-10}$) was for 2-amino-4-methylphenol at rs13120371 in the 3’ UTR of $SLC7A11$, a cystine and glutamate transporter also
known as xCT. The result was highly significant on a per-chemical basis \((q=0.0006)\), and at the significance threshold for multiple comparison correction for the entire set of SNPs X chemicals combined \((q=0.10)\). \textit{Figure 3.7a} shows the corresponding MAGWAS Manhattan plot, with a regional plot (\textit{Figure 3.7b}). The same SNP also appeared with \(q<0.10\) for methyl mercuric chloride and N-methyl-p-aminophenol sulfate (\textit{Table 3.3}). Comparative curves for 2-amino-4-methylphenol and the three genotypes show that the difference in cytotoxic response appears mainly at the highest concentration (\textit{Figure 3.7c}). The plot illustrates the contrast between EC_{10}, which does not differ significantly by genotype, and the multivariate MAGWAS finding, which is sensitive to concentration-response variation.

For the secondary analysis using regression of EC_{10} on SNP genotype, we computed the genomic control value \(\lambda\) (Devlin and Roeder 1999). The mean \(\lambda\) (±s.d.) across chemicals was 0.988±0.017 suggesting that population stratification was well-controlled. \textit{Table 3.4} shows results from the EC_{10} regression analyses, with all significant findings (per-chemical \(q<0.10\)) shown after removing redundant regional findings (63 unique chemicals, 260 unique nearest gene assignments). For many chemicals, the effects of genotype are observable both for EC_{10} and across the multivariate response, and the two approaches provide similar evidence (\textit{Figure 3.8}). At the false discovery rate (Storey and Tibshirani 2003) of <0.1 only ~18 unique chemicals would be expected to appear in the table. SNPs in four genes appear in the table for three or more chemicals: \textit{GRIP1} (Glutamate receptor interacting protein 1), which directs localization of transmembrane proteins (Setou et al. 2002); \textit{FMN2}, a component of p21-based cell cycle arrest (Yamada et al. 2013); \textit{DNER}, a transmembrane protein associated with glioblastoma propagation (Sun et al. 2009); and the cell membrane cadherin \textit{CDH13}, which acts as an epithelial tumor suppressor (Chan et al. 2008). As with the MAGWAS results, membrane localized proteins
appear to play an important role. Because EC\textsubscript{10} were available for 179 chemicals, we could also illustrate that GCTA-based heritability estimates are largely reflected in a tendency toward small association \( P \)-values, a phenomenon that is difficult to discern for single-trait GWAS studies (Figure 3.9c). Table 3.5 shows the significant associations for the analysis of the larger number (12.4m) of sequenced SNPs.

With regards to rs13120371 in \textit{SLC7A11}, we hypothesized that it may modify resistance to a larger number of chemicals. We examined the EC\textsubscript{10} \( P \)-values for rs13120371 across all 179 chemicals, observing a clear excess of small \( P \)-values (Figure 3.7d). Using a standard false-discovery computation (Storey and Tibshirani 2003), we estimated the proportion of true discoveries for the SNP across the chemicals as 0.25, a significant trend that remained even after removal of the three top MAGWAS-identified chemicals. The estimated number of true discoveries, corresponding to an estimated 44 chemicals showing true cytotoxicity association with rs13120371, is subject to considerable sampling variation. Nonetheless, the data indicate that \textit{SLC7A11} may be a cytotoxicity mediator, and a role for \textit{SLC7A11} has been proposed in glutathione-mediated chemotherapeutic resistance (Huang et al. 2005).

“Pathway” association analysis of gene sets/ontologies was performed for EC\textsubscript{10} phenotypes and the 1.3m Omni 2.5 SNPs using gene set scan (Schaid et al. 2012) which computes significance of SNPs, genes, and ontologies (KEGG and Gene Ontologies). Eleven chemicals had significant pathways, and several chemicals showed significant associations with immune-response pathways and ontologies (Table 3.6) at family-wise error rate (FWER) \(<0.05.\)
RNA-Seq analysis

For 344 cell lines in the study, RNA-Seq expression data on 36,142 genes was available (Lappalainen et al. 2013). We performed association analyses of normalized expression vs. EC\textsubscript{10} values for each of the 179 chemicals, with per-chemical false discovery \( q<0.1 \). A total of 260 genes met the threshold for at least one of 52 chemicals (Figure 3.10a).

Analysis of these genes by DAVID/EASE (Dennis et al. 2003) suggested enrichment for ribosomal proteins and those involved with actin binding and nucleotide binding. However, the use of such “gene-list” methods has been shown to greatly increase false-positive rates due to gene-gene correlations (Gatti et al. 2010). Accordingly, we performed analysis of Gene Ontology Cellular Components terms using the safeExpress, which accounts for correlation structures in gene expression (Zhou et al. 2013). Figure 3.10b shows the results for 22 chemicals and 33 terms, with at least one significant per-chemical finding at \( q<0.1 \). Several chemicals exhibit enrichment of genes with protein localization to the cell membrane, in addition to other localizations.

The RNA-Seq findings support the underlying theme that genes with cell membrane localization are important to cytotoxic susceptibility, with transcription acting as a mediator to genetic variation. However, the ability to jointly model the effects of transcriptomic and genetic variation is hampered by sample size limitations, and the overall association of EC\textsubscript{10} with expression is relatively modest. Using the entire expression dataset to predict EC\textsubscript{10} for each chemical using a penalized prediction procedure, only three chemicals exhibited more than 5% explained variation (Table 3.7). The explained variation among these few chemicals may be
exaggerated due to winner’s curse inflation, and the average explained variation across the chemicals was less than 1%.
E. DISCUSSION

Our study, with a large number of environmental chemicals interrogated on a much larger sample than previous datasets, demonstrates the feasibility of addressing the challenge of assessing the individual variability in next-generation risk assessments (Zeise et al. 2013). Despite concerns over the ability to map meaningful drug response traits in cell lines (Choy et al. 2008), our results suggest that large sample sizes, on the order necessary for mapping human complex traits (Goldstein 2009), can overcome the challenges. Importantly, these data are also a useful resource for future investigation. Our results generated dozens of associations about the mechanism of toxicity for hundreds of chemicals that can be used to generate testable hypotheses.

Although we present results as a survey across the 179 chemicals, the results for population variation and association for each chemical will be useful for future targeted investigations. Moreover, the use of a common protocol and automated system enabled comparisons across chemicals in a manner that is difficult to perform across separate studies of individual chemicals. Cytotoxicity in LCLs is just one among multiple criteria that may be used in prioritization and to refine uncertainty factors (Zeise et al. 2013), but fills a great need for additional data on population variation (Collins et al. 2008).

Beyond the immediate utility of such data for context-specific decisions in human health assessment of chemicals, we were able to discover important biological associations. We have observed that genes with protein localization to cell membranes, including solute carriers, are enriched in a subset of chemicals, both in genetic association and RNA-Seq association analyses. Solute carrier transporters have been investigated as potential mediators of cytotoxicity for chemotherapeutic agents (DeGorter et al. 2012), with specific genes investigated for paclitaxel
(Njiaju et al. 2012), oxaliplatin (Zhang et al. 2006), gemcitabine (Marce et al. 2006). These genes control cellular influx and efflux of drugs and toxicants, and thus are a plausible source of genetically-induced variation in susceptibility. Moreover, several families of solute carriers are important mediators of toxicity in liver and kidney (DeGorter et al. 2012), which are the primary relevant organs for a large number of the chemical studies. To our knowledge, our study is the first to highlight membrane transporters as potentially important in a wider range of chemical compounds, beyond the cancer chemotherapeutic agents that have been the subject of most LCL mapping studies.

The significant association results for rs13120371 in SLC7A11 were interesting, and supported by a growing literature on the direct and indirect importance of SLC7A11 in chemoresistance (Lo et al. 2008). Small interfering SLC7A11 RNA, including x(c)(-)- inhibitors, have been shown to increase sensitivity to various agents in various cancer cell lines (Pham et al. 2010). Expression of SLC7A11 is altered in drug-resistant ovarian cancer cell lines (Januchowski et al. 2013), is downregulated in response to thymoquinone in breast cancer cells (Motaghed et al. 2014), and is clinically predictive of poor survival in hepatocellular carcinoma and glioblastoma (Kinoshita et al. 2013). Also, SLC7A11 was shown to be inversely correlated with clinical outcome in bladder cancer, and to be negatively regulated by the micro RNA miRNA-27a for cisplatin-resistant cell lines (Drayton et al. 2014).

**Conclusions:** This study provides an example of how a large-scale systems biology experiment (toxicity phenotyping, genetic mapping, and correlation with basal gene expression data) can aid in translation to public health protection. Testing human cell lines that represent various
populations and identify sensitive subpopulations can substantially improve any risk assessment paradigm where decision making will be relied on actual estimated variability rather than mere statistical assumptions that may or may not be satisfied. Traditional GWAS studies are concerned with uncovering genetic modifiers that may underpin a person’s susceptibility to a particular disease. At the same time, little information on how much inter-individual variability may exist in the population for a particular chemical-associated adverse health outcome, even though current risk assessment practices favor data-driven estimation. The use of genetically-defined/diverse models in chemical safety/toxicity testing is uncommon primarily because of the complexity of such studies. Although the risk assessment process is shifting toward greater reliance on in vitro data, none of the in vitro assays in Tox21, ToxCast, or other large-scale screening programs is designed to address individual variability (Rusyn and Daston 2010). The availability of the genetically-diverse, genetically-defined renewable source of human cells, such as LCLs from the HapMap and 1000 Genomes, opens an opportunity for in vitro toxicity testing at the population scale. Our heritability estimates show that genetic variation may have a profound effect on differences between individual cell lines, and that such variability can be quantified and used to generate testable hypotheses about the mechanisms of toxicity.
**FIGURES**

![Graphs showing ATP percentage decrease vs. concentration](image)

**Figure 3.1. Illustrative Fits for Cytotoxicity Estimation.** The fits and EC10 point estimate (vertical lines) shown in grey. The top and bottom rows show instances of cytotoxic compounds. The middle panels show compounds that are non-cytotoxic for the range of concentrations, and EC10 was fixed at the maximum concentration. Points marked in red were excluded on the basis of the likelihood ratio criterion described in Online Methods, providing new fits and EC10 values shown in green.
Figure 3.2. Distributions of the LCLS among the 9 Populations  (a) Distribution of the LCLs among the 9 populations used in this study. Abbreviations follow the 1000 Genomes nomenclature (see text). Outer boundaries show continental/ancestral origin. (b) Scatter plot for the 1st and 2nd principal components for genotypes across all cell lines, colored by population.
Figure 3.3 Flow Chart of Data Processing to Obtain Cytotoxicity Response Values and EC10.
Figure 3.4 Comparison of the Current Study to Other Comparable LCL cell line/screening studies and Reproducibility (a) Comparison of the current study to other comparable LCL cell line/screening studies, in terms of the number of cell lines and chemicals screened. EC_{10} values are shown in the heatmap, while the area of each depicted report is in proportion to the current...
study. Published studies with at least 2 compounds (except for the largest single drug study, Ref. 28), and with at least 50 cell lines, are used for comparison. (b) Intra-experimental reproducibility of EC_{10} values for randomly selected pairs of within-batch replicate plates for all chemicals and cell lines. (c) Side-by-side boxplots show 9 compounds that were assayed in two independent sets of wells on each plate. (d) Boxplots of cytotoxicity EC_{10} values for the 179 chemicals (arranged by mean activity) across the 1086 cell lines.
Figure 3.5. Magnitude of Inter-Individual Variability Across Chemicals and Populations

(a) Modeling *in vitro* quantitative high-throughput screening data, using β-nitrostyrene as an
example chemical. Logistic dose-response modeling was performed for each individual (plate) to the values shown in gray, providing individual 10% effect concentration estimates ($EC_{10}$, histogram). The fit of the logistic model to the pooled data is also shown as a dashed curve, and $EC_{10}$ estimation based on this curve is similar to the average of the individual $EC_{10}$ values). (b) A histogram (blue bars) of $EC_{10}$ fold-range ($q_{95}-q_{05}$) for 179 compounds across 1086 cell lines. The red curve shows the same distribution when values are shrunken to account for technical variability. The inset shows the relationship between fold-range and mean estimated $EC_{10}$ for each chemical. (c) Hierarchical clustering for the 179-length profiles of mean $EC_{10}$, computed within each population. The upper bar’s color depicts continental ancestral origin of each population. (d) Boxplot of $EC_{10}$ values by population for 2 example chemicals with different potency levels, which showed significant population differences by ANOVA (cycloheximide, $P=6.0 \times 10^{-6}$ and triamterene, $P=3.6 \times 10^{-4}$). (e) Trio-based heritability estimates ($h^2$) for compounds with significant additive heritability ($q<0.05$, 22 out of 179 compounds tested).
Figure 3.6 *P*-values vs. partial R². A plot of the most significant genetic variant for each chemical, with black dots depicting the \(-\log_{10} p\)-values for the association, and red dots showing the maximum partial R-squared across all 8 concentrations.
Figure 3.7. Genotype-Cytotoxicity Associations  (a) Manhattan plot of MAGWAS $-\log_{10}(P)$ vs. genomic position, for association of genotype and cytotoxicity to 2-amino-4-methylphenol. The line of suggestive association (expected once per genome scan) is in green, and Bonferroni-corrected significance for a single chemical in black. (b) LocusZoom plot of the most significant region. SNP rs13120371 was the most significant ($P=8.4\times10^{-10}$), while the nearby rs7674870 was used for comparison of linkage disequilibrium patterns in the region. (c) Average concentration-response profiles of cytotoxicity of 2-amino-4-methylphenol plotted separately for each rs13120371 genotype. Genotype effects appear only for the highest concentrations. (d) Histogram of EC10-based P-values for all 179 chemicals for rs13120371 shows an excess of small P-values.
Figure 3.8 MAGWAS vs. PLINK for an example chemical/region. LocusZoom plots of the most significant SNP (rs504504, chr1p22) associated with cytotoxicity of dieldrin from (a) MAGWAS (a) and (b) PLINK regression analyses, using EC10 as a quantitative phenotype.
Figure 3.9. Heritability of EC₁₀ (a) Histogram of GCTA heritability (h²) estimates for EC10.
(b) Heritability estimates for each chemical vs. GCTA -log₁₀(P-values). For GCTA heritability, 34 chemicals with false discovery rate q<0.05 are shown in green. (c) The estimated proportion of true discoveries (among 1.3M SNPs) vs. GCTA heritability estimates for EC10 (r=0.96).
Figure 3.10 Heatmaps of Gene- and Pathway-Chemical Associations (a) Heatmap of $-\log_{10}(q)$ for 260 genes and 52 chemicals, in which $q<0.1$ for at least one gene-chemical combination. (b) Heatmap of $-\log_{10}(q)$ for 33 Gene Ontology Cellular Component pathways and 22 chemicals, in which $q<0.1$ for at least one pathway-chemical combination.
Table 3.1. Average EC10 Cytotoxicity Values and Fold-Ranges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug Name</th>
<th>CAS#</th>
<th>Mean±</th>
<th>Median±</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>q05</th>
<th>q95</th>
<th>Fold Range</th>
<th>Shrunken Fold Range Estimate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daunomycin HCL</td>
<td>23541-50-6</td>
<td>-2.467</td>
<td>-2.562</td>
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<td>-3.116</td>
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<td>Colchicine</td>
<td>64-86-8</td>
<td>-2.232</td>
<td>-2.215</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>-2.699</td>
<td>-1.531</td>
<td>14.726</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colchicine</td>
<td>64-86-8</td>
<td>-2.228</td>
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<td>-2.651</td>
<td>-1.668</td>
<td>9.603</td>
<td>2.679</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malachite green oxide</td>
<td>2437-29-8</td>
<td>-1.492</td>
<td>-1.473</td>
<td>0.242</td>
<td>-2.114</td>
<td>-0.795</td>
<td>20.842</td>
<td>3.718</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tetramethylthiouram disulfide</td>
<td>137-26-8</td>
<td>-1.347</td>
<td>-1.362</td>
<td>0.403</td>
<td>-1.991</td>
<td>-0.635</td>
<td>22.655</td>
<td>7.521</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cycloheximide</td>
<td>66-81-9</td>
<td>-1.357</td>
<td>-1.357</td>
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<td>-1.909</td>
<td>-0.870</td>
<td>10.944</td>
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<td>Digoxin</td>
<td>20830-75-5</td>
<td>-1.303</td>
<td>-1.302</td>
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<td>-1.839</td>
<td>-0.691</td>
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<td>Ziram</td>
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<td>0.081</td>
<td>199.014</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-1.208</td>
<td>-1.204</td>
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<td>-0.606</td>
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<td>Phenylmercuric acetate</td>
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<td>-1.195</td>
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<td>Zinc pyrithione</td>
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<td>-1.140</td>
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<td>Mercuric chloride</td>
<td>7487-94-7</td>
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<td>0.678</td>
<td>-2.053</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-Thioguanine (6-TG)</td>
<td>154-42-7</td>
<td>-0.803</td>
<td>-0.863</td>
<td>0.786</td>
<td>-2.233</td>
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<td>91.906</td>
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<td>Hexamethyl-p-rosaniline chloride</td>
<td>548-62-9</td>
<td>-0.774</td>
<td>-0.746</td>
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<td>Methyl mercuric (II) chloride</td>
<td>115-09-3</td>
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<td>-0.544</td>
<td>0.373</td>
<td>-1.398</td>
<td>0.140</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-Mercaptopurine monohydrate</td>
<td>6112-76-1</td>
<td>-0.348</td>
<td>-0.524</td>
<td>0.973</td>
<td>-1.674</td>
<td>1.701</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-Fluorouracil</td>
<td>51-21-8</td>
<td>-0.152</td>
<td>-0.188</td>
<td>0.613</td>
<td>-1.141</td>
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<tr>
<td>Azathioprine</td>
<td>446-86-6</td>
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<td>-0.187</td>
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<td>-1.177</td>
<td>1.333</td>
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<td>75.384</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chloranil</td>
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<td>-0.145</td>
<td>0.442</td>
<td>-0.908</td>
<td>0.844</td>
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<td>tetra-N-Octylammonium bromide</td>
<td>14866-33-2</td>
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<td>-0.109</td>
<td>0.291</td>
<td>-0.636</td>
<td>0.537</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethidium bromide</td>
<td>1239-45-8</td>
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<td>-0.006</td>
<td>0.322</td>
<td>-0.657</td>
<td>0.747</td>
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<tr>
<td>p-Nitrosodiphenylamine</td>
<td>156-10-5</td>
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<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.341</td>
<td>-0.500</td>
<td>0.597</td>
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<tr>
<td>N,N-Dimethyl-p-nitrosoaniline</td>
<td>138-89-6</td>
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<td>0.062</td>
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<td>-0.634</td>
<td>0.511</td>
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<td>Cetylpyridinium bromide</td>
<td>140-72-7</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.332</td>
<td>-0.470</td>
<td>0.708</td>
<td>15.086</td>
<td>7.573</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sodium dichromate dihydrate (VI)</td>
<td>7789-12-0</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>0.348</td>
<td>-0.467</td>
<td>0.729</td>
<td>15.685</td>
<td>5.277</td>
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<td>Nitrogen mustard hydrochloride</td>
<td>55-86-7</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>0.507</td>
<td>-0.643</td>
<td>0.990</td>
<td>42.993</td>
<td>16.172</td>
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<td>Pentaerythritol triacrylate</td>
<td>3524-68-3</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>0.152</td>
<td>0.297</td>
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<td>0.538</td>
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<td>58-14-0</td>
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<td>0.173</td>
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<td>103.396</td>
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<td>7789-12-0</td>
<td>0.181</td>
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<td>2-Octyl-3-isothiazolone</td>
<td>26530-20-1</td>
<td>0.200</td>
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<td>0.673</td>
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<td>305-03-3</td>
<td>0.267</td>
<td>0.277</td>
<td>0.276</td>
<td>-0.213</td>
<td>0.763</td>
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<td>3.480</td>
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<td>Diglycidyl resorcinol ether (DGRE)</td>
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<td>0.304</td>
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<td>-0.381</td>
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<td>Compound</td>
<td>CAS</td>
<td>EC 50</td>
<td>LC 50</td>
<td>LD 50</td>
<td>EC 90</td>
<td>LC 90</td>
<td>LD 90</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------</td>
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<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9-Aminoacridine, monohydrochloride, monohydrate</td>
<td>52417-22-8</td>
<td>0.326</td>
<td>0.330</td>
<td>0.249</td>
<td>-0.166</td>
<td>0.735</td>
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<td>4.079</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,3,5-Triglycidyl isocyanurate</td>
<td>2451-62-9</td>
<td>0.319</td>
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<td>0.329</td>
<td>-0.360</td>
<td>1.044</td>
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<td>Fumaronitrile</td>
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<td>0.371</td>
<td>0.330</td>
<td>-0.063</td>
<td>0.972</td>
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<tr>
<td>o-Phenanthroline</td>
<td>66-71-7</td>
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<td>0.198</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.752</td>
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<td>N,N'-Di-sec-butyl-p-phenyldiamine</td>
<td>101-96-2</td>
<td>0.384</td>
<td>0.394</td>
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<td>0.003</td>
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<td>Hexachlorophene</td>
<td>70-30-4</td>
<td>0.387</td>
<td>0.399</td>
<td>0.295</td>
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<td>Chlorhexidine</td>
<td>55-56-1</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>0.425</td>
<td>0.353</td>
<td>-0.549</td>
<td>1.085</td>
<td>43.071</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tetraethylene glycol diacrylate</td>
<td>17831-71-9</td>
<td>0.438</td>
<td>0.447</td>
<td>0.275</td>
<td>-0.039</td>
<td>0.878</td>
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<tr>
<td>Methylene bis(thiocyanate)</td>
<td>6317-18-6</td>
<td>0.487</td>
<td>0.472</td>
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<td>0.942</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catechol</td>
<td>120-80-9</td>
<td>0.477</td>
<td>0.486</td>
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<td>-0.101</td>
<td>0.978</td>
<td>11.997</td>
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<td>beta-Nitrotyrene</td>
<td>5153-67-3</td>
<td>0.539</td>
<td>0.509</td>
<td>0.270</td>
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<td>7.954</td>
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<td>121-54-0</td>
<td>0.554</td>
<td>0.542</td>
<td>0.168</td>
<td>0.276</td>
<td>0.877</td>
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<td>N-Methyl-p-aminophenol sulfate</td>
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<td>0.593</td>
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<td>7.600</td>
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<td>Ergotamine tartrate</td>
<td>379-79-3</td>
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<td>0.623</td>
<td>0.361</td>
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<td>1.214</td>
<td>20.464</td>
<td>3.631</td>
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<td>Domiphen bromide</td>
<td>538-71-6</td>
<td>0.614</td>
<td>0.633</td>
<td>0.239</td>
<td>0.229</td>
<td>0.967</td>
<td>5.466</td>
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<td>1,1,1,2-Tetabromoethane</td>
<td>630-16-0</td>
<td>0.612</td>
<td>0.647</td>
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<td>0.705</td>
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<td>0.706</td>
<td>0.236</td>
<td>0.245</td>
<td>1.157</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.680</td>
<td>-0.514</td>
<td>1.915</td>
<td>268.741</td>
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<td>Iodochlorhydroxyquinoline</td>
<td>130-26-7</td>
<td>0.739</td>
<td>0.755</td>
<td>0.253</td>
<td>0.134</td>
<td>1.178</td>
<td>11.082</td>
<td>3.679</td>
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<td>Diethylene glycol diacrylate</td>
<td>4074-88-8</td>
<td>0.735</td>
<td>0.770</td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>1.195</td>
<td>12.700</td>
<td>6.164</td>
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<td>2-Amino-4-chlorophenol</td>
<td>95-85-2</td>
<td>0.749</td>
<td>0.776</td>
<td>0.526</td>
<td>-0.357</td>
<td>1.579</td>
<td>86.417</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turmeric (&gt;98% curcumin)</td>
<td>458-37-7</td>
<td>0.790</td>
<td>0.805</td>
<td>0.208</td>
<td>0.370</td>
<td>1.163</td>
<td>6.198</td>
<td>2.313</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-Methyl-3-nitro-1-nitrosoguanidine</td>
<td>70-25-7</td>
<td>0.857</td>
<td>0.826</td>
<td>0.320</td>
<td>0.174</td>
<td>1.396</td>
<td>16.668</td>
<td>7.219</td>
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<td>0.825</td>
<td>0.829</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>0.345</td>
<td>1.292</td>
<td>8.861</td>
<td>3.413</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dibromonitromethane (water disinfection byproducts)</td>
<td>598-91-4</td>
<td>0.865</td>
<td>0.869</td>
<td>0.235</td>
<td>0.319</td>
<td>1.290</td>
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<td>81-55-0</td>
<td>0.834</td>
<td>0.871</td>
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<td>Cadmium acetatedihydride</td>
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<td>2-Biphenylamine</td>
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<td>2-Chloroacetophenone (CN)</td>
<td>532-27-4</td>
<td>C8H7CNCl</td>
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<td>2-Pivalyl-1,3-indandione</td>
<td>83-26-1</td>
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<td>8-Hydroxyquinoline</td>
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<td>2,4-Hexadienal</td>
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<td>Rhein (1,8-dihydroxy-3-carboxyl anthraquinone)</td>
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<td>1.690</td>
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<td>0.735</td>
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<td>Verapamil HCl</td>
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<td>1.142</td>
<td>2.000</td>
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<td>1.813</td>
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<td>0.224</td>
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<td>1.862</td>
<td>0.203</td>
<td>1.422</td>
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<td>1.308</td>
<td>2.000</td>
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<td>1.554</td>
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<td>1-(2,6,6-trimethyl-2-cyclohexene-1-yl)-1-penten-3-one</td>
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<td>1.954</td>
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<td>1.585</td>
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<td>1.573</td>
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<td>1.972</td>
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<td>1.737</td>
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<td>1.832</td>
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<td>1.972</td>
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<td>1.993</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>1.894</td>
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<td>1.277</td>
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<td>permethrin</td>
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<td>1.995</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>1.864</td>
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<td>4-Chloro-3,5-dinitro-a,a,a-trifluorotoluene</td>
<td>393-75-9</td>
<td>1.957</td>
<td>1.998</td>
<td>0.196</td>
<td>1.744</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>1.803</td>
<td>1.259</td>
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<td>3,4-Dichlorophenyl isocyanate</td>
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<td>1.978</td>
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<td>1.855</td>
<td>2.000</td>
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<td>Styrene</td>
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<td>0.053</td>
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<td>2.000</td>
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<td>0.143</td>
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<td>1.602</td>
<td>1.168</td>
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<td>Hexachloro-1,3-butadiene</td>
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<td>1.990</td>
<td>2.001</td>
<td>0.079</td>
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<td>1.986</td>
<td>2.001</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>1.947</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>1.131</td>
<td>1.163</td>
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<td>Methacyronitrile</td>
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<td>1.981</td>
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<td>1.990</td>
<td>2.000</td>
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<td>1.009</td>
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<td>1,2-Epoxy-3-chloropropane (Epichlorohydin)</td>
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<td>0.095</td>
<td>1.995</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>1.012</td>
<td>1.018</td>
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</table>

| **a**Values are $\log_{10}$ (molar concentration).  | **b**Table entries are sorted by the median.  | **c**5th percentile.  | **d**See Online Methods for the shrinkage procedure, which estimates the fold-range after removing the effect of technical sampling variation.
Table 3.2. Chemicals showing significant EC10 variation across populations or by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug Name</th>
<th>CAS#</th>
<th>P population differences</th>
<th>q population differences</th>
<th>P sex differences</th>
<th>q sex differences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Azathioprine</td>
<td>446-86-6</td>
<td>3.8E-13</td>
<td>6.8E-11</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.506</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-Fluorouracil</td>
<td>51-21-8</td>
<td>9.3E-13</td>
<td>8.3E-11</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.078</td>
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<td>1,3,5-Triglycidyl isocyanurate</td>
<td>2451-62-9</td>
<td>7.4E-10</td>
<td>4.4E-08</td>
<td>0.223</td>
<td>0.504</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diglycidyl resorcinol ether (DGRE)</td>
<td>101-90-6</td>
<td>1.6E-09</td>
<td>7.0E-08</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>0.217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-Thioguanine (6-TG)</td>
<td>154-42-7</td>
<td>2.4E-09</td>
<td>8.4E-08</td>
<td>0.804</td>
<td>0.882</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-Mercaptopurine monohydrate</td>
<td>6112-76-1</td>
<td>8.1E-09</td>
<td>2.4E-07</td>
<td>0.898</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turmeric (&gt;98% curcumin)</td>
<td>458-37-7</td>
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<td>Cycloheximide</td>
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<td>6.0E-06</td>
<td>1.1E-04</td>
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<td>1.6E-04</td>
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<td>Cadmium acetatedihydrate</td>
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<td>1.4E-05</td>
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<td>0.882</td>
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<td>Sodium dichromate dihydrate (VI)</td>
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<td>1.6E-05</td>
<td>1.9E-04</td>
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<td>beta-Nitrostyrene</td>
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<td>Malachite green oxalate</td>
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<td>Simpson</td>
<td>Randji</td>
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<td>Retinal</td>
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<td>2.0E-04</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.077</td>
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<tr>
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P-values were obtained by running analyses of variance on log_{10}(EC_{10}) with subpopulation or sex as a categorical variable. q-values were obtained after Benjamini-Hochberg false discovery rate correction per chemical.
Table 3.3. MAGWAS Multivariate Association Results.

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<th>$P$</th>
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The first three entries highlight that rs13120371 in SLC7A11 was observed with FDR $q<0.10$ for three chemicals. Remaining entries are sorted first by chemical, and then $P$-value. $\text{b}$NCBI build 37. $\text{c}$MAGWAS $P$-value. $\text{d}$FDR $q$-value obtained per chemical, using ~700K SNPs analyzed by MAGWAS. $\text{e}$Partial $R^2$ attributable to variation in genotype.
### Table 3.4 Significant EC10 –SNP associations among set of 1.3m SNPs

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^a bp: base pair position relative to the start of the gene
^b P-value: significance level of the SNP association
^c q-value: corrected P-value for multiple testing
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\textsuperscript{a}NCBI build 37. \textsuperscript{b}P-value. \textsuperscript{c}FDR q-value obtained per chemical.
Table 3.5. Significant EC10—SNP associations among larger set of 12m SNPs

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<td>0.004</td>
<td>78073324</td>
<td>63616070</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FOXD3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,8-Dihydroxy-4,5-dinitroanthraquinone</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>113434813</td>
<td>143835690</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>SPANXN1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitazoxanide</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>112997343</td>
<td>74356986</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>SPHK1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ergotamine tartrate</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>4263901</td>
<td>50758525</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>BMP15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.6. SNP set pathway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chemical</th>
<th>CAS #</th>
<th>Set</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>No. Genes</th>
<th>Zscore&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>FWER-controlled P&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,1,1,2-Tetrabromoethane</td>
<td>630-16-0</td>
<td>KEGG</td>
<td>Allograft rejection</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>KEGG Graft-versus-host disease</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>KEGG Asthma</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,2',4'-Trichloroacetophenone</td>
<td>4252-78-2</td>
<td>KEGG</td>
<td>Autoimmune thyroid disease</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HC blue 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>KEGG</td>
<td>Butirosin and neomycin biosynthesis</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>0.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-cis-Retinal</td>
<td>472-86-6</td>
<td>KEGG</td>
<td>Butirosin and neomycin biosynthesis</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N-(1,3-Dimethylbutyl)-N'-phenyl-p-phenylenediamine</td>
<td>793-24-8</td>
<td>KEGG</td>
<td>Asthma</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azathioprine</td>
<td>446-86-6</td>
<td>GO.MF</td>
<td>transforming growth factor beta receptor,</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>0.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pathway-specific cytoplasmic mediator activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,3,4,5-Tetrachlorophenol</td>
<td>4901-51-3</td>
<td>KEGG</td>
<td>Natural killer cell mediated cytotoxicity</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ziram</td>
<td>137-30-4</td>
<td>GO.BP</td>
<td>Regulation of chronic inflammatory response</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>0.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-Hydroxyquinoline</td>
<td>148-24-3</td>
<td>KEGG</td>
<td>Mismatch repair</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>0.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>KEGG Steroid hormone biosynthesis</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>KEGG Porphin and chlorophyll metabolism</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlordane (technical grade)</td>
<td>12789-03-6</td>
<td>GO.CC</td>
<td>Central element</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>0.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permethrin</td>
<td>52645-53-1</td>
<td>GO.BP</td>
<td>Regulation of interleukin-2 production</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>0.037</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Z-score computed by the gene_set_scan software.  
<sup>b</sup>Family-wise error controlled by resampling per chemical for each pathway type investigated.
Table 3.7. LASSO prediction accuracy of expression vs. EC10 for chemicals with proportion of variance explained $R^2 > 0.01$. Prediction accuracy of expression vs. EC$_{10}$.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug_Name</th>
<th>CAS #</th>
<th>R2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iodochlorohydroxyquinoline</td>
<td>130-26-7</td>
<td>0.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dieldrin</td>
<td>60-57-1</td>
<td>0.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triamterene</td>
<td>396-01-0</td>
<td>0.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,3,5-Trichlorophenol</td>
<td>933-78-8</td>
<td>0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m-Nitrobenzyl chloride</td>
<td>619-23-8</td>
<td>0.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azathioprine</td>
<td>446-86-6</td>
<td>0.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dexamethazone</td>
<td>50-02-2</td>
<td>0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadmium acetatedihydrate</td>
<td>4-4-5743</td>
<td>0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diethylene glycol diacrylate</td>
<td>4074-88-8</td>
<td>0.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlordecone (kepone)</td>
<td>143-50-0</td>
<td>0.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potassium dichromate</td>
<td>7778-50-9</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dichlorvos (Vapona)</td>
<td>62-73-7</td>
<td>0.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethidium bromide</td>
<td>1239-45-8</td>
<td>0.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daunomycin HCL</td>
<td>23541-50-6</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diisobutyl phthalate</td>
<td>84-69-5</td>
<td>0.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercuric chloride</td>
<td>7487-94-7</td>
<td>0.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HC blue 2</td>
<td>33229-34-4</td>
<td>0.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium dichromate dihydrate (VI)</td>
<td>7789-12-0</td>
<td>0.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N,N-Dimethyl-p-nitrosoaniline</td>
<td>138-89-6</td>
<td>0.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methylene bis(thiocyanate)</td>
<td>6317-18-6</td>
<td>0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexachlorophene</td>
<td>70-30-4</td>
<td>0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate</td>
<td>117-81-7</td>
<td>0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systhane</td>
<td>88671-89-0</td>
<td>0.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,4-Diaminotoluene</td>
<td>496-72-0</td>
<td>0.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N-(1,3-Dimethylbutyl)-N'-phenyl-</td>
<td>793-24-8</td>
<td>0.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colchicine</td>
<td>64-86-8</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethacrynic acid</td>
<td>58-54-8</td>
<td>0.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azobenzene</td>
<td>103-33-3</td>
<td>0.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t-Butylhydroquinone</td>
<td>1948-33-0</td>
<td>0.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-Mercaptopurine monohydrate</td>
<td>6112-76-1</td>
<td>0.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamoxifen citrate</td>
<td>54965-24-1</td>
<td>0.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,4-Thiobis(6-tert-butyl-m-creso)</td>
<td>96-69-5</td>
<td>0.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zinc pyrithione</td>
<td>13463-41-7</td>
<td>0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methacrylonitrile</td>
<td>126-98-7</td>
<td>0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domiphen bromide</td>
<td>538-71-6</td>
<td>0.010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
F. REFERENCES


CHAPTER 4: IN VITRO SCREENING FOR INTER-INDIVIDUAL AND POPULATION VARIABILITY IN TOXICITY OF PESTICIDE MIXTURES

A. ABSTRACT

Population-based human in vitro models offer exceptional opportunities for evaluating the potential hazard and mode of action of chemicals, as well as variability in response. Challenges remain that require further assessment to increase the utility of the information obtained from in vitro models. This study was designed to address the potential challenges of screening and assessing the cytotoxicity of complex mixtures. We selected 146 lymphoblast cell lines from 4 ancestrally and geographically diverse populations based on the availability of genome sequence and basal RNA-seq data. Cells were exposed to two pesticide mixtures (an organochlorine pesticide environmental mixture extracted from a passive surface water sampling device, and a mixture of 36 currently used pesticides) at 8 concentrations and were then evaluated for cytotoxicity. qHTS screening in the genetically-defined populations produced robust and reproducible results. On average, the two mixtures exhibited a similar range of in vitro cytotoxicity and showed considerable inter-individual variability across the screened cell lines. However, in vitro-to-in vivo extrapolation (IVIVE), which was performed by reverse pharmacokinetics, suggested a significantly lower oral equivalent dose for the chlorinated pesticide mixture compared to the current-use pesticide mixture. Multivariate genome-wide association mapping revealed an association between the current use-pesticide mixture and a
polymorphism in rs1947825 in C17orf54. Moreover, genetic pathway analysis showed a significant association between metabolism pathways and the cytotoxicity of the chlorinated pesticide mixture. We concluded that, together with IVIVE, an efficient *in vitro* experimental design that incorporates population variability and comparative population genomics can effectively enable the quantification of human health hazard in the most sensitive individuals to environmental mixtures. Additionally, such approaches can lead to generation of testable hypotheses regarding potential toxicity mechanisms.
B. INTRODUCTION

Pesticides are compounds that are used to kill, repel, or control certain forms of plant or animal life that are considered to be pests (Krieger 2011). Adverse health effects of pesticides can range from mild skin and mucous membrane irritation to more severe outcomes such as neurotoxicity and cancer (Rother 2014; Bassil et al. 2007; Sanborn et al. 2007). Moreover, sensitivity to exposure is higher among relatively vulnerable populations, including women, children, the elderly, the immune-compromised and the malnourished (Perry et al. 2014; Jurewicz and Hanke 2008). There are several challenges in the evaluation of the human health hazard of pesticides. First, pesticides have variable Modes of Action (MOA) dependent on use and activity, and are meant to be harmful and toxic to pests, but not humans. Second, because they are widely used in agricultural and household settings, people are frequently exposed to pesticide residues. Third, pesticides can be dispersed as mixtures, creating complexity in hazard evaluation (Manikkam et al. 2012).

While safety testing of the individual pesticides is conducted according to established regulatory guidelines, evaluation of the toxicity of mixtures is less structured (OPP, 2002). The cumulative risk assessment approach is conducted for individual chemicals with common mechanisms of toxicity, even though the data is usually available only for individual chemicals (OPP 2002). Indeed, current toxicity testing paradigms have been questioned for their failure to consider commonly occurring co-exposures to environmental agents and the magnitude of human population variability in response to chemicals (National Research Council 2009).

Whole animal testing is difficult to employ for testing chemical mixtures. In contrast, in vitro testing could allow grouping of chemicals according to their effects on key biologic pathways or their real human co-exposures over a broad range of concentrations in a rapid and
inexpensive manner (Andersen and Krewski 2009). The resulting data could enable an informed and focused approach to the problem of assessing risk in human populations exposed to mixtures. Furthermore, with an experimental in vitro design that represents a human population, we are allowed to not only explore the hazard, but also the intrinsic variability that is associated with it across different dose ranges (Lock et al. 2012; O'Shea et al. 2010). Such information would be valuable to inform regulatory decisions that could more fully protect public health and sensitive subpopulations (National Research Council 2009).

In the present study, we addressed the hypothesis that comparative population genomics with efficient in vitro experimental design can be used for evaluation of the potential for hazard, mode of action, and the extent of population variability in responses to chemical mixtures. We screened 146 lymphoblast cell lines (LCLs) from four ancestrally and geographically diverse populations with publicly available genotypes and sequencing data from the 1000 Genomes Project (1000 Genomes Project Consortium 2010). Cells were exposed to two pesticide mixtures (organochlorine pesticide environmental mixture extracted from a passive surface water sampling device, and a mixture of 36 currently used pesticides) at 8 concentrations. Cell viability was evaluated with CellTiter-Glo® (Promega) assay which evaluates ATP production in a 96-well plate format. Cytotoxic response was assessed using an effective concentration threshold of 10% (EC_{10}) (Abdo et al., in preparation), designed to be relevant to the dose-response evaluation commonly used in quantitative risk assessment practice and to meaningfully capture ranges of variation in response across chemicals. Genome-wide association mapping, gene set scan, and pathway analyses were performed to evaluate the genetic determinants of susceptibility. Furthermore, in vitro-to-in vivo extrapolation by reverse pharmacokinetics and real cumulative exposures were utilized to predict xenobiotic steady state pharmacokinetics.
C. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Experimental Design

Cell lines. A set of 146 immortalized LCLs was acquired from Coriell Cell Repositories (Camden, NJ). The 146 cell lines represent 4 ancestrally and geographically diverse populations: Utah residents with Northern & European ancestry (CEU); Tuscan in Italy (TSI); Yoruban in Ibadan, Nigeria (YRI); and British from England & Scotland (GBR) (see table 4.1 for number and percent of each population and gender). The cell lines were chosen based on the availability of dense genotyping information and RNA-Seq expression data. Screening was conducted in two batches, and cell lines were randomly divided into the batches without regard to family structure but with equal representation of population and gender in each batch. Cells were suspended in flasks in an upright position in RPMI 1640 media (Gibco, Carlsbad, CA) supplemented with 15% fetal bovine serum (HyClone, South Logan, UT) and 1% penicillin-streptomycin (Gibco) and cultured at 37°C with 5% CO₂. Media was changed every 3 days. Cell count and viability were assessed once a day for five days for all cell lines using Cellometer Auto T4 Plus (Nexcelem Bioscience, Lawrence, MA). Cells were grown to a concentration up to 10⁶ cells/ml, volume of at least 100 ml, and viability of > 85% before treatment. After centrifugation, the cells were resuspended in fresh media. Cells (100 μl containing 10⁴ cells) were aliquoted to each well in a 96-well treatment plate (following the addition of the chemicals) and mixed using the Biomek 3000 robot. Plates were incubated for 24 h after treatment at 37°C and 0.5% CO₂. To increase the robustness of the data and to evaluate reproducibility, each cell line was seeded in at least two plates so that each compound would be screened in each cell line on 2 or more plates.

Chemical Mixtures. Cells were exposed to two extracts of environmental chemical mixtures: the first mixture, Chlorinated Pesticide Mixture (CPM), a real environmental sample obtained from a
universal passive sampling device deployed for 30 days in surface water next to a chlorinated pesticide storage facility (10 pesticides were present in detectable quantities in the post-collection laboratory analysis) (see table 4.2 for complete list of pesticide chemicals identified by mass spectrometry); and the second mixture, Current-Use Pesticide Mixture (CUPM), being a mixture of 36 currently used pesticides that mimics real exposure amounts of eastern North Carolina (see table 4.2 for complete list of pesticide chemicals). Chemicals were dissolved with dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) into 8 different stock concentrations. Final concentrations ranged from 0.032 to 370.4 µM for current-use pesticide mixture and from 0.022 to 65.7 µM for chlorinated pesticide mixture. The mixtures were aliquoted to 96-well plate format using the Biomek 3000 robot. The negative control was DMSO at 0.5% vol/vol; the positive control was tetra-octyl ammonium bromide at 46 µM.

**Cytotoxicity profiling.** The CellTiter-Glo Luminescent Cell Viability (Promega Corporation, Madison, WI) assay was used to assess intracellular ATP concentration, a marker for cytotoxicity, 40 h post treatment. Time points were selected based on previous experiments at the National Institutes of Health Chemical Genomics Center (Xia et al. 2008). A ViewLux plate reader (PerkinElmer, Shelton, CT) was used to detect luminescent intensity in each well of the assay plates.

**Data Processing**

**Cytotoxicity EC_{10} estimation and outlier detection.** Cytotoxicity data were normalized relative to positive/negative controls as described elsewhere (Xia et al. 2008). We derived and effective concentration 10^{th} percentile (EC_{10}) to provide a single cytotoxicity dose summary per chemical and cell line. The derivation of EC_{10} was based on the logistic model:
\[ \log \left( \frac{y - \theta_{\text{min}}}{\theta_{\text{max}} - \theta_{\text{min}}} \right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 d + \varepsilon, \]

with \( \varepsilon \sim N(0, \sigma^2) \), where \( y \) is the observed normalized signal representing proportion of surviving cells (which we term the “cytotoxicity value”), \( d \) is the log(concentration) for each chemical, and \( \theta_{\text{max}} \) is the mean cytotoxicity value on the logit scale for the zero concentration. \( \theta_{\text{min}} \) was set to zero, to avoid difficulties in estimating the minimum cytotoxicity value for chemicals with low cytotoxicity. An exception was made for chemicals in which the cytotoxicity value at the highest concentration was higher than 0.4, as a very few number of plates/chemicals did not reliably reach maximum cytotoxicity. In those instances the cytotoxicity value was set at the observed cytotoxicity at the maximum concentration. Inspection of these data revealed good fits in such instances. Although in principle \( \theta_{\text{max}} \) should have been 1.0, a number of plates exhibited a drift from this value, and thus the parameter was estimated from the data.

Fitting for the parameters \([\beta_0, \beta_1, \sigma^2, \theta_{\text{max}}]\) proceeded by maximum likelihood using numerical optimization in R v2.15. An automatic outlier detection algorithm was devised by considering the impact of dropping each concentration value in succession, and removing those values for which the maximum likelihood improved by a factor of 10 or more and refitting the model using the non-outlying observations.

**Normalizing batch effects.** Batch effects were evaluated by running principal component analysis. EC\(_{10}\) values were adjusted for batch effect using the ComBat method (Johnson et al. 2007).

**Concentration response for populations and individuals.** For each pesticide mixture, the three-parametric logistic regression described above in EC\(_{10}\) estimation was fit to concentration-response data for each cell line. The variation in the EC\(_{10}\) estimates was used as illustrative of population variation in true EC\(_{10}\) values, although additional sampling variation underlies each
EC$\textsubscript{10}$ estimate. An overall logistic concentration-response curve was fit to the aggregated data across all individuals. See Figure 4.1

**Reproducibility and correlation between mixtures.** Pearson and Spearman correlation coefficients (r) between pairs of replicate plates were used to assess experimental reproducibility and the correlation between the two mixtures. For this analysis, the two replicate plates were selected for each mixture and cell line pair. See Figure 4.1

**Chemical/Mixture Specific Adjustment Factor (CSAF).** Variability in response for each mixture across the 146 cell lines was obtained by obtaining the ratio of the 50$^{\text{th}}$ percentile to the 5$^{\text{th}}$ percentile. The WHO CSAF guideline for toxicokinetics study is to obtain the ratio of the 95$^{\text{th}}$ to the 50$^{\text{th}}$ percentile as the uncertainty factor for human variability in toxicokinetics. Both of our mixtures were skewed to the left. To be on the conservative side, we obtained the uncertainty factor for human variability in toxicodynamics as 50$^{\text{th}}$ percentile/5$^{\text{th}}$ percentile or the bigger tail (WHO 2005).

**Chemical descriptors.** Chemical descriptors were calculated using Dragon version 5.5. Constant and near constant descriptors as well as highly correlated descriptors were excluded and descriptor values were normalized on a scale from 0 to 1.

**Differences in cytotoxicity across different populations.** Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed to assess population differences in cytotoxicity between the four screened populations for each mixture. See Figure 4.2.

**Genotypes.** The primary source of genotypes was obtained as described in Abdo et al., 2014. SNPs with a call rate below 99%, minor allele frequency (MAF)<0.05, or HWE p-value<$1\times10^{-3}$ were excluded.
**Multivariate Association Analysis (MAGWAS).** The MAGWAS multivariate analysis of covariance model (Brown et al. 2012) was used for primary association mapping (http://www4.stat.ncsu.edu/~motsinger/Lab_Website/Software.html). The approach allows for use of the full concentration-response profile, as opposed to a univariate summary (such as EC\(_{10}\)) as a single response, with the advantage of robustness and power under a wide variety of association patterns (Pillai, 1955). The model used for association for the \(j\)th individual and genotype \(i\) for the chemical/SNP was

\[
Y_{ij} = X_{ij}\beta + \mu_i + e_{ij}
\]

\[
e_{ij} \sim N(0, \Sigma),
\]

where \(Y_{ij}\) is the vector of responses (across the eight concentrations) for the \(j\)th individual having genotype \(i\), \(X_{ij}\) is the design matrix of covariates, including sex, indicator variables for laboratory batch, and the first ten genotype principal components, and \(\mu_i\) is the eight-vector of parameters modeling the effects of genotype \(i\) on the response. The model assumes that the error terms are multivariate normally distributed, with mean vector \(\mathbf{0}\) and variance-covariance matrix \(\Sigma\), allowing for dependencies in the observations. \(P\)-values were obtained using Pillai’s trace (Pillai 1955). Because this method makes use of asymptotic theory, markers with fewer than 20 individuals representing any genotype were removed, leaving 692,013 SNPs for analysis.

**In vitro to in vivo extrapolation.** In vitro Pharmacokinetic Assays were applied to chemicals as described previously (Wetmore et al. 2012). Plasma protein binding was determined for each chemical using the rapid equilibrium dialysis (RED) method (Wetmore et al. 2012). The rate of hepatic metabolism of the parent compound was determined using the substrate depletion
Estimation of $C_{ss}$ using In Vitro-to-In Vivo Extrapolation (IVIVE) and Monte Carlo Simulation.

The chemical steady-state blood concentrations ($C_{ss}$) were estimated as previously described (Wetmore et al. 2012) with modification. The base equation used to calculate static $C_{ss}$ is based on constant uptake of a daily oral dose and factors in hepatic clearance and non-metabolic renal clearance:

$$
C_{ss} = \frac{ko}{\left(\frac{Q_H \times F_{ub} \times Cl_{intH}}{Q_H + F_{ub} \times Cl_{intH}}\right) + \left(GFR \times F_{ub}\right)}
$$

where $ko =$ chemical exposure rate set to 0.042 μg/kg/hr (i.e., 1 μg/kg/day); $Q_H =$ hepatic blood flow (90 L/hr; Davies and Morris, 1993), $F_{ub} =$ unbound fraction of parent compound in the blood; $Cl_{intH} =$ hepatic intrinsic metabolic clearance; and $GFR =$ glomerular filtration rate. The $F_{ub}$ was calculated based on the experimentally measured $F_u_{plasma}$ divided by the blood:plasma ratio (B:P). The right side of the denominator considers non-metabolic renal clearance ($GFR \times F_{ub}$), with GFR (6.7 L/hr) back calculated based on the serum creatinine Cockcroft-Gault equation (Cockcroft and Gault 1976). The $Cl_{int}$ values were derived using the following equation, which scales $Cl_{u_{in\,vitro}}$ (μL/min/million cells) experimentally measured in hepatocytes to represent whole organ clearance with units of L/hr:

$$
Cl_{int} = Cl_{u_{in\,vitro}} \times HPGL \times V_L \times \frac{L}{10^6 \mu l} \times \frac{60 \, min}{1 \, hr}
$$

Where $HPGL =$ hepatocytes per gram liver 110 million cells per g liver; (Barter et al. 2007) (HPGL) and $V_L =$ liver volume (1596 g; (Johnson et al. 2005)).
A correlated Monte Carlo approach was employed (Jamei et al. 2009) using Simcyp (Simcyp V. 13; Certara, Sheffield, UK) to simulate variability across a population of 10,000 individuals equally comprised of both genders, 20-50 years of age. A coefficient of variation of 30% was used for intrinsic and renal clearance. The median, upper and lower fifth percentiles for the $C_{ss}$ were obtained as output.

**Calculation of oral equivalent dose values.** In conventional use, pharmacokinetic models are used to relate exposure concentrations to a blood or tissue concentration. This is typically referred to as “forward dosimetry.” In contrast, the models can also be reversed to relate blood or tissue concentrations to an exposure concentration, which is referred to as “reverse dosimetry” (Tan et al. 2007). Based on the principal of reverse dosimetry, the median, upper and lower 5th percentiles for the $C_{ss}$ were used as conversion factors to generate oral equivalent doses according to the following formula:

$$\text{Oral equivalent} \left( \frac{\mu g}{kg} \right) = \left[ EC_{10} \right] \left( (1 \text{ mg/kg/day}) / (C_{ss}(nM)) \right)$$

In the equation above, the oral equivalent dose value is linearly related to the *in vitro* $EC_{10}$ and inversely related to $C_{ss}$. This equation is valid only for first-order metabolism that is expected at ambient exposure levels. An oral equivalent value was generated for each chemical-cell line combination and summed to provide a cumulative oral equivalent value for each cell line.
**Predicted exposure limits.** Pesticide specific predicted exposure limits were obtained as previously detailed in (Wambaugh et al. 2013). The pesticide specific exposure limit was available for 35 out of the 36 pesticides in the current-use pesticide mixture and for 6 out of 10 pesticides in the chlorinated pesticide mixture. Missing values were replaced by the highest exposure within each mixture. Then, a cumulative exposure was computed for each mixture from the upper 95\textsuperscript{th} percentile. See flow chart in Figure 4.3.
D. RESULTS

Cytotoxicity of pesticide mixtures in vitro.

Screening was conducted in a 96-well plate format using a robotic system. The 146 cell lines were randomly assigned to two batches with gender and population blocking. Each cell line was dispensed by the robot to two separate plates where both pesticide mixtures where dispensed at 8 different concentrations ranging from (0.032 to 370.4 µM) for current-use pesticide mixture and from (0.022 to 65.7 µM) for chlorinated pesticide mixture. Positive and negative controls were aliquoted to the same plate. Normalization to the control for each plate was performed as described in the Materials and Methods section for each cell line separately. EC$_{10}$s were derived on log$_{10}$ scale as described in materials and methods, batch-corrected and averaged across replicated for each cell line.

The availability of cytotoxicity screening on 146 individuals, with the assay performed under controlled conditions, enables sensitive investigation of variation in individual dose-response profiles (National Research Council 2009). To visualize “individual” vs. “population” response to each pesticide mixtures, we fitted our 3-parametric logistic regression, described in the materials and methods, to each cell line’s concentration-response illustrated in Figure 4.1a and 1b corresponding to chlorinated- and current-used- pesticide mixtures respectively. For each concentration-response EC$_{10}$ was estimated and shown as the inset red histogram to show the populations variability in response to each mixture. The mean of these EC$_{10}$ values offers a population-wide summary of the cytotoxicity, of a mixture and is very similar to the EC$_{10}$ produced when the data are first pooled for all individuals and then fit using a single concentration-response curve (red-dashed curve in Figure 4.1a and 1b). Both mixtures demonstrated considerable inter-individual variability in cytotoxicity response (Figure 4.1). However, aggregation across the population ignores the variability in toxic susceptibility and the
variability across replicates, and the EC_{10} estimated fifth percentile may be used to illustrate the concept of a “vulnerable” subpopulation.

To increase the robustness of the cytotoxicity measurement, duplicate plates were run. To evaluate the reproducibility of our EC_{10} estimates, pair-wise Pearson and Spearman correlations among replicate plate pairs using log_{10}(EC_{10}) values for each mixture were calculated. Highly significant correlations were seen in each pesticide mixture (p<0.0001). For current pesticides mixtures r[Pearson’s] =0.62 and r[Spearman]=0.55 (See Figure 4.1). For chlorinated pesticides mixture, r[Pearson’s] =0.65 and r[Spearman]=0.56 (see Figure 4.1). Overall reproducibility for both mixtures was also significant (p<0.0001) with r[Pearson’s] =0.62 and r[Spearman]=0.54. Overall, Duplicate measures revealed excellent experimental reproducibility (See Figure 4.1).

**Comparative analysis of cytotoxicity of pesticide mixtures using population-based model.**

Both the mean and the median cytotoxicity (EC_{10}) for current use pesticide mixture were slightly lower than chlorinated pesticide mixture (see Figure 4.4a and 4.4b and table 4.4 for summary statistics) indicating slightly more potency for current-used pesticide mixture. The median EC_{10} for current-use pesticide mixture was almost 12 µM and 13 µM for chlorinated pesticide mixture. However, there was no significant difference in their mean cytotoxicity between the two mixtures. Interestingly, the current pesticide mixture demonstrated a slightly wider distribution across the population than chlorinated pesticide mixture (see Figure 4.4a and 4.4b). The toxicodynamic uncertainty factor (UFd) for human variability was around 3 fold for each mixture (see table 4.4).

In order to translate our cytotoxicity measures into a meaningful potential health risk hazard, we computed oral equivalent doses for both mixtures using reverse toxicokinetics
approach (Wetmore et al. 2012; Rotroff et al. 2010). In vitro pharmacokinetic data (see complete list at: http://comptox.unc.edu/Toxcast_I_II_RTK_List.pdf) were available for 31 of the 36 chemicals present in the current use pesticides laboratory mixture, and for 4 of the 10 chemicals in the chlorinated pesticide environmental mixture. Review of the \( C_{ss} \) values predicted for the 31 current use pesticides revealed a similar distribution as observed across the 180 ToxCast Phase II chemicals similarly assessed for in vitro PK: a median \( C_{ss} \) < 1 \( \mu M \); 95th percentile \( \approx 200 \) \( \mu M \).

Two of the chemicals assessed had very high \( C_{ss} \) values: ethalfluralin (350 \( \mu M \)) and flumetralin (277 \( \mu M \)); the rest were below 8 \( \mu M \). The distribution of data for 4 chlorinated pesticides was different from the laboratory mixture: the max \( C_{ss} \) value estimated = 58.46 \( \mu M \). Since there are no standard PK approach for dealing with mixtures, we assumed for this analysis that there is not interaction or potentiation between chemicals in terms of toxicity and pharmacokinetics (PK) modeling. For the purposes of this work, for the PK modeling, we assumed that the PK of each chemical will not be significantly impacted by the presence of other chemicals present at these low levels anticipated in the environment. Given this, we expect that the in vitro PK that was derived using clearance and plasma protein binding data measured for individual chemicals will provide an adequate estimate of PK behavior for this assessment. Our data involved only one assay measured across 146 individuals, and so a separate oral equivalent was calculated for each individual based on the percentage of chemical in the mixture. To be conservative, missing in vitro pharmacokinetic data were assigned a value based on the most conservative simulation assuming no hepatic clearance, high blood binding and only renal clearance, which we defined as the “worst case scenario” (See Figure 4.4C).

The oral equivalent (OE) dose was computed based on four different scenarios in which we substituted the missing \( C_{ss} \) with either the median \( C_{ss} \) of known chemicals or worst-case-
scenario value, where OE was calculated with and without weighting of the EC_{10} by the percentage of chemical in the mixture (Figure 4.5) for an illustrative flowchart of OE calculations). Supplemental Figure 4.6 shows OE doses for each scenario for each pesticide mixture across the 146 cell lines.

The simulations were run using Simcyp software (Simcyp Ltd, 2001), which incorporates Monte Carlo Simulation to capture population variability in PK. The Css values were derived using a population of healthy volunteers (Northern European, 20-50 years of age, equally mixed gender). The simulation was run using 10 trials, 1000 volunteers per trial. The upper 95th percentile values were used to determine the oral equivalents (Figure 4.4C), as this approach results in a reasonably conservative value. Across the four different scenarios, these in vitro-to-in vivo extrapolation data show that a significantly (p<0.001) lower dose of chlorinated pesticide would lead to the internal concentrations that are equal to the EC_{10} values that elicited cytotoxicity (See Figure 4.4C and Figure 4.6). Oral Equivalent doses for both mixtures were not substantially altered (<0.5 fold difference) when the median Css value was used instead of the worst case scenario. However, oral equivalent dose was remarkably shifted for both mixtures (>1.2 fold change) with non-weighted EC_{10} vs. EC_{10} weighted by the percentage of chemicals used in each mixture (See Figure 4.6). However, the relation between the two mixtures were maintained in all scenarios, in which the chlorinated pesticide mixture was more toxic the current use pesticide mixture.

To better evaluate the human health risk of exposure to such mixtures, we examined the relationship of our calculated oral-dose-equivalent with actual real-human-exposures to such mixtures. We computed a cumulative exposure value for each mixture based on individual exposure estimates for each chemical obtained from ExpoCast (Wambaugh et al. 2013). The
ExpoCast framework has created an estimated human exposure potential for 1936 chemicals (Wambaugh et al. 2013), which incorporated both biomonitoring data and uncertainty factors in their predictions. Predicted estimates were available for 35 of the 36 chemicals present in the current use pesticides laboratory mixture, and 6 of the 10 chemicals in the chlorinated pesticide environmental mixture. We presumed the highest predicted exposure for chemicals with no predicted exposure value and calculated the cumulative exposure for each mixture from the upper 95th percentile to be conservative. The actual real human exposure estimates were lower than our calculated oral dose equivalent indicating no real human hazard (See Figure 4.4c). Our oral equivalent dose was ~1-fold higher for current-use pesticide mixture and ~6 fold higher for chlorinated pesticide mixture than their corresponding real human exposure estimate (See Table 4.6 and Table 4.7). This indicates a wider margin of safety for the chlorinated pesticide mixture than the current-use pesticide mixture.

**Similarities between pesticide mixtures.**

We wanted to assess the similarity of cytotoxic response for the pesticide mixtures across different cell lines. A significant correlation (Spearman $r=0.25$ $p<0.01$) was observed between the two mixtures, illustrating concordance in individual cell line’s responses to both tested mixtures (see Figure 4.7a). These findings are interesting, considering that none of the individual chemicals appear in both mixtures. Furthermore, the results might suggest potential shared mechanisms of susceptibility to toxicity. There were no suggestive patterns of population clustering in the correlation between the two mixtures. To make sure that the significant correlation was not substantially influenced by outlying points, we removed the three most
outlying points and redrew the correlation. The correlation still remained significant (p<0.05, spearman r= 0.2).

None of the individual chemicals within each mixture overlapped with the other mixture, but there was a significant correlation between cytotoxic responses to the mixtures, we investigated similarities in their chemical structure. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) (Hotelling 1933) showed great similarities between single chemical compounds in both mixtures in their chemical descriptor space (see Figure 4.7b). This observation may partially explain the significant correlation between the two mixtures and the lack of significant difference in their mean cytotoxicity. We explored the potential of chemical descriptors in clustering the chemicals within each mixture by their pesticid mode of action (See Table 4.2 and 4.3 for a complete list of pesticidMOA (Wood 2014). We did not find any meaningful clusters. Only 4 of 5 chemical that acted as nematicides clustered together in the 1st principal component (see Figure 4.7b).

We were further interested in assessing the strength of the correlation between the two mixtures when compared to any other correlation between two random chemicals. Previously, we had screened 1086 LCLs with 179 diverse chemicals (Abdo et al, in preparation). The Spearman correlation between the two pesticide mixtures (r=0.25) was slightly above the median correlation of a randomly picked correlation chosen from 15931 possible correlations in the previous cytotoxicity experiment (see Figure 4.7c).

**Differences in cytotoxicity across ancestral populations.**

The regulation of pesticided is a high priority in many countries due to their widespread use. Therefore, investigating susceptible sub-populations is of great interest. The current use pesticide mixture exhibited marginally significant differences among the populations tested (p =
0.058), while chlorinated pesticide mixture did not show any significant differences (see Figure 4.2). Interestingly, GBR (British from England & Scotland) population was the most sensitive population, while YRI (Yoruban in Ibadan, Nigeria) population appeared to be the least sensitive in both mixtures. Moreover, within-population variability was larger within the current use pesticide mixture compared to the chlorinated pesticide mixture, especially when comparing the range of the upper quartile to the lower quartile within each population (see Figure 4.2).

**Susceptibility loci, genes, and pathways.**

The availability of densely genotyped data from the 1000 Genomes Project for the LCLs used in this study allows for exploration of possible genetic determinants of cytotoxicity. Despite being relatively underpowered, with a sample size of 146, in comparison with modern disease genome-wide association studies, we attempted to identify possible loci, genes, or pathways associated with cytotoxicity. After careful frequency and genetic pruning and quality control (SNPs with a call rate below 99%, minor allele frequency (MAF) < 0.05, or HWE p-value < 1 X 10^-3 were excluded), 1,015,304 SNPs were included in the analysis. Concentration-responses were subjected to quality control as described in (Abdo et al., in preparation), in which outliers were removed and subjected to fitted smoothing as described in (Abdo et al., in preparation). Sex, experimental batch and date, population, and the first ten genotype principal components were included as covariates for running Multivariate ANCOVA Genome-Wide Association Software (MAGWAS) on the curated concentration-responses. MAGWAS is a sensitive method in identifying any pattern of variation of cytotoxicity measurements due to genotype (Brown et al. 2012). Even though in this study we used a relatively small population of 146 cell lines, we were able to observe a finding of genome-wide suggestive significance. The cytotoxicity
measurement of current used pesticide was associated \( (p<6.5e^{-08}) \) with a locus on Chr17 (Figure 4.8a and 4.8b), which is near the commonly used GWAS threshold of \( 5 \times 10^{-8} \) (Dudbrige and Gusnanto 2008). Figure 4.8a shows the corresponding MAGWAS Manhattan plot, with a regional LocusZoom plot (Figure 4.8b) (Pruim et al. 2010). The associated SNP (rs1947825), is located in an open reading frame C17orf54 (See Figure 4.8b). We examined the cytotoxicity patterns for each genotype in Figure 4.5c. Interestingly, while the measured cytotoxicity of the heterozygous genotype (AT) consistently was in the middle between the measurements of the homozygous genotypes across all concentrations, the homozygous genotypes elicited an interesting pattern: AA was higher than TT at lowest concentration, but dropped dramatically faster than TT at higher concentrations (See Figure 4.8c).

“Pathway” association analysis of gene sets/ontologies was performed for EC\(_{10}\) phenotypes and the 1.0 million SNPs using gene set scan (Schaid et al. 2012), which performs resampling to compute significance of SNPs, genes, and ontologies (KEGG and Gene Ontologies) in a hierarchical manner. For each mixture and ontology, we applied family-wise error rate (FWER) control using 10,000 resamples, and report in Table 4.7 all of the ontology findings with FWER<0.3. Several metabolism pathways were significantly associated with current-use pesticide mixture (Table 4.7). The top contributing eight genes within each of those pathways were mainly from the uridine diphosphate (UDP) glucuronosyltransferases (UGT) family. The UGT genes regulate of the UGT enzymes responsible for glucuronidation which is generally accountable for transforming compounds into water-soluble glucuronides for excretion in bile and urine (Burchell 2003).
E. DISCUSSION

With the recent shift in the focus of many toxicology studies from *in vivo* to *in vitro* methods, substantial advancements in high-throughput approaches to characterize in vitro biological activity have been implemented (Dix et al. 2007; Bucher et al, 2008). Nonetheless, several challenges remain in establishing meaningful human health risk assessments from in vitro endpoints. Additionally, a lack in comprehensive understanding of population variability in susceptibility to chemicals remains. Regulatory risk assessment incorporates multiple uncertainty factors that are based on assumptions. Furthermore, no clear framework has been set to determine the toxicity of chemical mixtures. Regulatory authorities have raised some concern about the risks posed by complex chemical mixtures in the environment (Kepner, 2004). Few environmental chemical mixtures have been evaluated, especially at environmentally relevant concentrations (Carvalho et al., 2014), with regulatory decisions primarily based on a single compound evaluation. However, potentiation and synergistic interactions of chemicals in mixtures is of great concern (Cedergreen, 2014). It has been shown that exposure to chemical mixtures, including pesticides, often occurs with each chemicals in the mixture present at respective safety limit concentrations (Carvalho et al., 2014). Moreover, evaluation of chemical mixtures with similar modes of action, without consideration of realistic exposure in the environment, might underestimate the toxicological risk associated with their exposure (Hadrup, 2014).

In response to these needs, we aimed to provide a quantitative experimental measurement for population-based in vitro toxicity that could be applied to regulatory risk assessments of environmentally-relevant concentrations of pesticide mixtures. This screening paradigm provides quantitative data on population-wide variability in toxicity, which may be used to establish data-
driven uncertainty estimates when extrapolating in vitro data to potential *in vivo* toxicity (Judson et al. 2011). Our results show that both of the pesticide mixtures we tested exhibited a similar, considerable inter-individual variation in the induction of toxicity. The toxicodynamic uncertainty factor (UFd) for population variability was approximately 3-fold from the median to largest tail for both mixtures. Interestingly, this finding is consistent with the assumed uncertainty factor of 3.2 (100.5) that is used for toxicodynamic studies in risk assessment (WHO 2005). The calculated UFd can be used to obtain a chemical-specific adjustment factor by adding the toxickinetics uncertainty factor (UFk) (WHO 2005). To our knowledge, this is the first study to examine inter-individual variability in response to chemical mixtures. Investigation of population variability to more than 100 individual chemicals has been previously investigated (Abdo et al., in preparation). Interestingly, the toxicodynamic uncertainty factor in our present study for pesticide mixtures was similar to the median inter-individual variability for the 179 individual chemicals previously tested.

On average, there was no significant difference between the in vitro cytotoxicity of the current-used pesticide mixture and the chlorinated pesticide mixture. However, the *in vitro-to-in vivo* extrapolation data showed that a significantly lower dose of chlorinated pesticides would lead to the internal concentration equal to the cytotoxicity-eliciting EC$_{10}$. This observation confirms that relying on the quantitative in vitro potencies alone for ranking chemical mixtures might not accurately reflect the potential risk associated with these chemicals, due to differences in bioavailability, clearance, and *in vivo* exposure (Blaauboer, 2010). Incorporation of human dosimetry and predicted human exposure will contribute tremendously to the “presumed hazard” calculated by in vitro high throughput screening alone, and provides improved estimates for informed regulatory decisions (Blaauboer, 2010; Cohen Hubal et al., 2010).
It is not surprising that the cumulative human predicted exposure limit is much higher for the current-use pesticide mixture compared to the chlorinated pesticide mixture, which mostly consisted of banned-used pesticides. The current-use pesticide mixture included 36 currently used pesticides and mimicked real exposure levels in Eastern North Carolina, with Atrazine (ATZ) pesticides being the most abundant. ATZ is the most highly applied pesticide (64-80 million pounds annually in the United States), and the second most widely used agricultural pesticide in the United States (Donaldson et al. 2002; Kiely et al. 2004; Barr et al., 2007). Therefore, the predicted exposure limit for the current-use pesticide mixture was expected to be high, and in our case it was very close to our calculated oral equivalent dose.

With the availability of genetic information for our screened cell lines from the 1000 Genomes Project (Durbin et al., 2010), we were able to establish genotype-phenotype associations. Recognizing the genetic underpinning of cytotoxicity may offer exceptional insight as to the underlying casual physiological variation and biologically associated pathways. One of the major challenges in the interpretation of GWAS results is posed by SNPs located in non-coding regions. While hundreds of loci have been identified from many GWAS studies for diverse diseases and quantitative phenotypes (Hindorff et al., 2012), more than 90% of them were in non-coding regions (Jones et al. 2012; Fraser 2013). However, while some of those locations were discovered to have a role in transcriptional regulatory mechanisms, including modulation of promoter and enhancer elements (Cookson et al., 2009; Pomerantz et al., 2009; Musunuru et al., 2010; Harismendy et al., 2011), and enrichment within expression quantitative trait loci (eQTL) (Cookson et al., 2009; Nicole et al., 2010; Denger et al., 2012), the roles of others have yet to be determined. While we see a suggestive association between cytotoxicity
and the rs1947825 polymorphisms, we do not yet know how this open reading frame affects the cytotoxicity phenotype.

Through pathway analyses we found that the chlorinated pesticide mixture is significantly associated with UGT metabolism enzymes. UGTs can reduce the toxic effects of pesticides and other drugs by facilitating their excretion in bile and urine through transforming them to less-toxic water-soluble glucuronides (Burchell, 2003; Ahmad & Forgash, 1976; Meech et al., 2012). Although glucuronidation typically produces less toxic compounds, it may activate xenobiotics to produce reactive acylglucuronides that can cause cytotoxicity (Wieland et al., 2000; Bailey & Dickinson, 2003; Stingl et al., 2014). This is particularly important because UGT enzymes are genetically polymorphic with more than 200 alleles (Stingl et al., 2014). Polymorphisms in UGT1 and UGT2 families can alter enzymatic role, cellular processes, or gene expression (Stingl et al., 2014), thereby possibly affecting individual’s cytotoxic response. The majority of compounds are metabolized mainly by 1A1, 1A3, 1A4, 1A9 and 2B7 (Stingl et al., 2014), which were the top ten significant genes associated with the cytotoxicity of the chlorinated pesticide mixture (see Table 4.7). This finding suggests that variation in the genes coding for these enzymes may be particularly relevant in metabolizing chlorinated pesticide mixtures.

Like any toxicological model system, in vitro toxicity profiling using LCLs has a number of limitations for the extrapolation to intact humans, including a lack of metabolism, as well as the inability to establish cell-cell interactions, assess target organ adverse effects, investigate potential role of other environmental factors such as lifestyle, diet, or co-exposures, or evaluate chronic toxicity. Furthermore, a great deal of debate exists regarding how chemicals may interact with one another in mixtures, both in terms of PK and in terms of toxicity. Establishing a safety
assessment of mixtures may be somewhat constrained by the assumptions we have made. There remains a pressing need to screen individual pesticides, in addition to mixtures, in order to test these assumptions. In addition, our work highlights the need for a more complete assessment of oral equivalent and real human exposures for pesticides and other chemicals.
Figure 4.1. **Inter-individuals and Population Variability and Reproducibility of the Mixtures.** *Left panel*, a population concentration response was modeled using *in vitro* qHTS data using chlorinated pesticide mixture (panel a) and current-use pesticide mixture (panel b) data. Logistic concentration-response modeling was performed for each individual to the values shown in gray, providing individual 10% effect concentration values (EC$_{10}$). The red dashed line represents the logistic concentration-response for the population’s mean (the data are first pooled for all individuals and then fit using a single concentration-response curve). The EC$_{10}$
obtained by performing the modeling on average assay values for each concentration (see frequency distribution) are shown in the inset.

*Right panel,* experimental reproducibility for cytotoxicity of chlorinated pesticide mixture (panel a) and current-use pesticide mixture (panel b). EC$_{10}$ cytotoxicity values for replicate pairs were plotted and Spearman and Pearson’s correlations are shown.
Figure 4.2. Boxplots of Population Differences for Each Mixture. Boxplots* of EC₁₀ values by population for chlorinated pesticide mixture (a) and chlorinated pesticide mixture (b), which showed marginally significant population differences by ANOVA for current-use pesticide mixture (p=0.058).

*The bottom, band inside the box, and top of the box are the first, second (the median) and third quartiles, The whiskers represent 1.5 the lowest and highest datum within 1.5 Inter Quantile Range (IQR). Small circles are outliers with >1.5 IQR above minimum or maximum datum.
Figure 4.3 Illustrative Flow Chart of Predicted Exposure Limits Calculations. Chemical specific predicted exposure was obtained as previously described in Wambaugh et al., 2013.
Figure 4.4 Distribution of EC$_{10}$s and Oral Equivalent Dose Across 146 cell lines for each mixture. Panel a, represents a density plot for the distribution and mean of EC$_{10}$ of each pesticide mixture$^\phi$ across 146 cell lines. Panel b, boxplots* of EC$_{10}$ values for each of pesticide mixtures$^\phi$ across 146 cell lines. Panel c, boxplots* of the cumulative oral doses in mg/kg/day for each of pesticide mixtures$^\phi$ across the 146 cell lines. The triangles represent the computed predicted exposure limit for each pesticide mixture$^\phi$. 
*The bottom, band inside the box, and top of the box are the first, second (the median) and third quartiles, The whiskers represent 1.5 the lowest and highest datum within 1.5 Inter Quantile Range (IQR). Small circles are outliers with >1.5 IQR above minimum or maximum datum.

ϕ blue: Current Pesticide Mixture; red: Chlorinated Pesticide Mixture
Figure 4.5. Illustrative Flow chart of Oral Equivalent Dose Calculations. Chemical specific steady-state values were obtained as previously described in Wetmore et al. 2012.
Figure 4.6 Oral Equivalent Doses with the Four Different Scenarios. Boxplots* of the cumulative oral doses in log10(µg/kg/day) for each of pesticide mixtures (red: chlorinated pesticide mixture, and blue: current pesticide mixture) across the 146 cell lines in four different scenarios: weighted by chemical percentage in mixture or not, and assuming worst case scenario (WCS) vs median for missing values.

*The bottom, band inside the box, and top of the box are the first, second (the median) and third quartiles, The whiskers represent 1.5 the lowest and highest datum within 1.5 Inter Quantile Range (IQR). Small circles are outliers with >1.5 IQR above minimum or maximum datum.
Figure 4.7. Inter-individual and Population Variability and Reproducibility of the Mixtures. *Panel a*, a scatter plot comparison of EC$_{10}$ values for each pesticide mixture. Each symbol represents one of the four populations. Pearson and Spearman correlations are shown at the top left side. *Panel b*, a scatter plot of 1$^{st}$ and 3$^{rd}$ principal components of individual pesticide
chemical structures within both mixtures colored blue for current-use pesticide mixture and red for chlorinated pesticide mixture. Five pesticides were Nematicides and were marked by an outer black circle. Panel c, represents a frequency histogram of 15931 spearman correlations produced pairwise correlations of 179 random chemicals. The green dashed line represents the median r value for all correlations, and the red dashed line represents the pairwise correlation of pesticide mixtures in comparison to all chemicals. Blue shading represents non-significant correlations with FDR correction.
Figure 4.8 MAGWAS Results for Current-Use Pesticide Mixture. *Upper panel.* Manhattan plot of MAGWAS -log10(P) vs. genomic position, for association of genotype and cytotoxicity.
to current-use pesticide mixture. The line of suggestive association (expected once per genome scan) is in dashed blue. *Middle panel*, a LocusZoom plot of the most significant region, SNP rs1947825 was the most significant (*P*=6.5×10⁻⁸). *Lower panel*, Average concentration-response profiles of cytotoxicity of current-use pesticide mixture plotted for each rs1947825 genotype.
Table 4.1. The Screened Population’s Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th># of Cell lines Screened</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>N males</th>
<th>N females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEU: Utah residents with Northern &amp; Western European ancestry</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YRI: Yoruban in Ibadan, Nigeria</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSI: Tuscan in Italy</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBR: British from England &amp; Scotland</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2. Individual Pesticides in Chlorinated Pesticide Mixture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organochlorine pesticides</th>
<th>PSD extract from waste site</th>
<th>MW</th>
<th>CAS #</th>
<th>µg in 1 mL</th>
<th>µmoles in 1 mL</th>
<th>% in 1mL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>alpha-BHC</td>
<td>290.8</td>
<td>319-84-6</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>0.368</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beta-BHC</td>
<td>290.8</td>
<td>319-85-7</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.189</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gamma-BHC (lindane)</td>
<td>290.8</td>
<td>58-899/59963-79-6</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>0.519</td>
<td>7.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delta-BHC</td>
<td>290.8</td>
<td>319-86-8</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cis-chlordane</td>
<td>409.8</td>
<td>5103-71-9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trans-chlordane</td>
<td>409.8</td>
<td>5103-74-2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,4'-DDD</td>
<td>320.1</td>
<td>72-54-8</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>0.915</td>
<td>13.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,4'-DDE</td>
<td>318.0</td>
<td>72-55-9</td>
<td>1193</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>57.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,4'-DDT</td>
<td>354.5</td>
<td>50-29-3</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>0.496</td>
<td>7.56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dieldrin</td>
<td>380.9</td>
<td>60-57-1</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative Concentration</td>
<td>2090</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3. Individual Pesticides Current-use Pesticide Mixture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current-Use Pesticide Mixture</th>
<th>MW</th>
<th>CAS #</th>
<th>μg in 1 mL</th>
<th>pmoles in 1 mL</th>
<th>% in 1mL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,6-Diethylaniline</td>
<td>149.2</td>
<td>579-66-8</td>
<td>1259</td>
<td>8.44</td>
<td>19.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aldicarb</td>
<td>190.3</td>
<td>116-06-3</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>0.484</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benfluralin</td>
<td>335.3</td>
<td>1861-40-1</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butylate</td>
<td>217.4</td>
<td>2008-41-5</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>0.888</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbaryl</td>
<td>201.2</td>
<td>63-25-2</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>0.527</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbofuran</td>
<td>221.3</td>
<td>1563-66-2</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>0.384</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desethyl atrazine</td>
<td>187.6</td>
<td>6190-65-4</td>
<td>1352</td>
<td>7.21</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atrazine-desisopropyl</td>
<td>173.6</td>
<td>1007-28-9</td>
<td>1271</td>
<td>7.32</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethalfuralin</td>
<td>333.3</td>
<td>55283-68-6</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>0.246</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flumetralin</td>
<td>421.7</td>
<td>62924-70-3</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>0.192</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metribuzin</td>
<td>214.3</td>
<td>21087-64-9</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>0.457</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Napropamide</td>
<td>271.4</td>
<td>15299-99-7</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pebulate (Tilliam)</td>
<td>203.4</td>
<td>1114-71-2</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.275</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pendimethalin</td>
<td>281.3</td>
<td>40487-42-1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0.117</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tebuthiuron</td>
<td>228.3</td>
<td>34014-18-1</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.285</td>
<td>14.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trifluralin</td>
<td>335.5</td>
<td>1582-09-8/75635-23-3</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>0.232</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alachlor</td>
<td>269.8</td>
<td>15972-60-8</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atrazine</td>
<td>215.7</td>
<td>1912-24-9</td>
<td>1178</td>
<td>5.46</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorothalonil</td>
<td>265.9</td>
<td>1897-45-6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorpyrifos (Dursban)</td>
<td>350.6</td>
<td>2921-88-2</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>0.202</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyanazine</td>
<td>240.7</td>
<td>21725-46-2/11096-88-1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daclath</td>
<td>332.0</td>
<td>65862-98-8/1861-32-1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribufos (DEF 6)</td>
<td>314.5</td>
<td>78-48-8</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.130</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diazinon</td>
<td>304.4</td>
<td>333-41-5</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>0.292</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disulfoton</td>
<td>274.4</td>
<td>298-04-4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fonofos (Dyfonate)</td>
<td>246.3</td>
<td>944-22-9</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.130</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethoprop</td>
<td>242.3</td>
<td>13194-48-4</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0.186</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fenamiphos</td>
<td>303.4</td>
<td>22224-92-6</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>0.178</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methyl parathion</td>
<td>263.2</td>
<td>298-00-0</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metolachlor</td>
<td>283.8</td>
<td>94449-58-8/51218-45-2</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>0.405</td>
<td>22.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molinate</td>
<td>187.3</td>
<td>2212-67-1</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>0.742</td>
<td>19.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permethrin</td>
<td>391.3</td>
<td>52645-53-1</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.100</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promethon</td>
<td>225.3</td>
<td>1610-18-0</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>0.328</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prometryne</td>
<td>241.4</td>
<td>7287-19-6/83653-07-0</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.174</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simazine</td>
<td>201.7</td>
<td>122-34-9</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>0.501</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terbufos</td>
<td>288.4</td>
<td>13071-79-9</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.146</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cumulative Concentration</strong></td>
<td>261.3</td>
<td>7200</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4. Summary Statistics of EC$_{10}$ for each mixture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pesticide Mixture</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>STD$^*$</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Q05$^*$</th>
<th>Q95$^*$</th>
<th>Ufd$^\lambda$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chlorinated Pesticide Mixture</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>(0.180-40.6)</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Pesticide Mixture</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>(0.649-39.9)</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>3.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^*$ The standard deviation of EC$_{10}$
$^*$ The value corresponding the 5$^{th}$ percentile of EC$_{10}$ across 146 averaged values for each individual
$^\text{p}$ The value corresponding the 5$^{th}$ percentile of EC$_{10}$ across 146 averaged values for each individual
$^\lambda$ The population toxicodynamic uncertainty factor corresponding to each pesticide.
Table 4.5. Margin of Exposure for Current-Use Pesticide Mixture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Margin of Exposure*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted by chemical %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worst Case Scenario</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equally Weighted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worst Case Scenario</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Margin of exposure is measure by obtaining the fold difference for each of the 4 scenarios of oral equivalent dose and the predicted exposure limits (minimum, 5th percentile, and median)
Table 4.6. Margin of Exposure for Chlorinated Pesticide Mixture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Margin of Exposure</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; percentile</td>
<td>Median</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted by chemical %</td>
<td>Worst Case Scenario</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Median</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equally Weighted</td>
<td>Worst Case Scenario</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Median</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Margin of exposure is measure by obtaining the fold difference for each of the 4 scenarios of oral equivalent dose and the predicted exposure limits (minimum, 5<sup>th</sup> percentile, and median)*
Table 4.7: Top Results from Pathway Analysis of Pesticide Mixtures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound</th>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>N genes</th>
<th>pval.fwer</th>
<th>Top 7 Genes for each pathway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chlorinated Pesticides</td>
<td>KE</td>
<td>Ascorbate and aldarate metabolism</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>UGT2B11 UGT2B7 UGT1A3 UGT1A7 UGT1A4 UGT1A5 UGT1A6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorinated Pesticides</td>
<td>KE</td>
<td>Starch and sucrose metabolism</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>UGT2B11 UGT2B7 UGT1A3 UGT1A7 UGT1A4 UGT1A5 UGT1A6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorinated Pesticides</td>
<td>KE</td>
<td>Porphyrin and chlorophyll metabolism</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>EARS2 UGT2B11 UGT2B7 BLVRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorinated Pesticides</td>
<td>KE</td>
<td>Pentose and glucuronate interconversions</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>UGT2B11 UGT2B7 UGT1A3 UGT1A7 UGT1A4 UGT1A5 UGT1A6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorinated Pesticides</td>
<td>KE</td>
<td>Nitrogen metabolism</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>CA6 GLUL CA2 CA4 HALCTh CA5A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorinated Pesticides</td>
<td>KE</td>
<td>p53 signaling pathway</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>0.185</td>
<td>DDB2 CCNE2 CHEK1 TP73 CD82 SFN SERPINE1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorinated Pesticides</td>
<td>KE</td>
<td>Other types of O-glycan biosynthesis</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.201</td>
<td>UGT2B11 UGT2B7CHST10 UGT1A3 UGT1A7 UGT1A4 UGT1A5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorinated Pesticides</td>
<td>KE</td>
<td>Prion diseases</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0.204</td>
<td>IL1B C8A PRKACA C8B IL1A IL6 C8G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorinated Pesticides</td>
<td>KE</td>
<td>Vitamin digestion and absorption</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0.246</td>
<td>BTD MMACHC SLC19A2 APOA4 PLB1 SLC19A1 APOA1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorinated Pesticides</td>
<td>KE</td>
<td>Drug metabolism - other enzymes</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>0.288</td>
<td>UGT2B11 UGT2B7 IMPDH2 UGT1A3 UGT1A7 UGT1A4 UGT1A5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current-use Pesticides</td>
<td>KE</td>
<td>Sulfur relay system</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.218</td>
<td>MOC52 TRMU MPST CTU2 CTU1 TST MOC53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current-use Pesticides</td>
<td>KE</td>
<td>Other types of O-glycan biosynthesis</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.299</td>
<td>RFNG CHST10 UGT1A10 UGT1A8 UGT1A7 UGT1A9 UGT1A6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorinated Pesticides</td>
<td>GO</td>
<td>regulation of triglyceride biosynthetic process</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.286</td>
<td>NR1H3 NR1H2 FITM2 GPAM ACSL5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorinated Pesticides</td>
<td>GO</td>
<td>regulation of lipoprotein lipase activity</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>NR1H3 NR1H2 SORT1 APOA4 APOC1 APOC3 APOH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
F. REFERENCES


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Nicolae DL, Gamazon E, Zhang W, Duan S, Dolan ME, Cox NJ. 2010. Trait-associated SNPs are more likely to be eQTLs: annotation to enhance discovery from GWAS. PLoS Genet. 6:e1000888.


CHAPTER 5: GENERAL DISCUSSION

A. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.

Quantitative assessment of both the hazard and the degree of inter-individual biological variability in the human population is critical for proper evaluation of chemicals for potential adverse human health outcomes (Zeise et al. 2013). A comprehensive characterization of human genome sequence variation is important for understanding observed inherited variation in toxicity phenotypes. Genetic polymorphisms can have a profound influence on risk and should be considered for human risk assessment (Baynes 2012). However, such characterization and assessment is difficult to quantitatively evaluate using current in vivo animal test systems or in vitro methods with established cell lines.

The availability of genetically-defined, genetically-diverse renewable sources of human cells, such as lymphoblasts from the International HapMap and 1000 Genomes projects, enables in vitro testing at the population level. As the focus of risk assessment processes shifts toward in vitro data, the quantitative assessment of inter-individual variability in response to chemicals, and an understanding of the underlying genetic causes are necessary for regulatory decisions to be based on scientific data rather than on default assumptions. Our population-based quantitative high-throughput model is a valuable tool in evaluating both the hazard and the degree of inter-individual variability in response to chemicals.
1. QUANTITATIVE HIGH-THROUGHOUT SCREENING FOR CHEMICAL TOXICITY IN A POPULATION-BASED IN VITRO MODEL

With the recent shift in toxicity testing from *in vivo* to *in vitro*, several quantitative high-throughput screening (qHTS) approaches for computational toxicology were developed to prioritize compounds, reveal new mechanisms, and enable predictive modeling. We strived in this study to design predictive *in vitro* models of chemical-induced toxicity with a focus on inter-individual genetic variability. We exposed 81 LCLs from 27 Centre d’Etude du Polymorphisme Humain (CEPH) trios to 240 chemical substances at 12 concentrations and evaluated for cytotoxicity and apoptosis. We demonstrated the feasibility of LCLs in creating an *in vitro* model system to evaluate inter-individual and population-wide variability of chemical-induced toxicity phenotypes. Indeed, the *in vitro* genetics–anchored human model system used in the study has not only been fruitful in measuring toxicity in a population-level, but also it carried the potential to recognize candidate genetic susceptibility for individual variability. Our *in vitro* population model has proven to produce robust reproducible toxicity values for a wide variety of chemicals across the different cell lines.

Regardless of toxicity phenotype used (cytotoxicity or apoptosis); variability across individual cell lines varied from one chemical to another in magnitude but was consistent for each chemical. Through combining our toxicity data with publicly available genetic information for LCLs, we were able to generate plausible hypotheses for the associations identified by either the genotypes or the RNA-expression levels. We recognize that our sample size combined with the likely small genomic effect size will probably hinder our ability for detecting meaningful biological associations. However, we consider this study as a successful proof of concept and as
a motivation to carry out a larger scale population based screening to better understand human and genetic variability.

2. GENETIC MAPPING OF IN VITRO SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CYTOTOXIC COMPOUNDS-THE 1000 GENOMES HIGH THROUGHPUT SCREENING STUDY

There is a significant lack of understanding of human variation in response to toxic environmental chemicals. We strived in this study to address this critical gap in next generation risk assessment. We used 1086, representing 9 populations from 5 continents, drawn from the 1000 Genomes Project to assess variation in cytotoxic response to 179 chemicals. We ranked chemicals by average response and assessed population variation and heritability. Genome-wide association mapping was also performed, with attention to phenotypic relevance to human exposures. This study provides an example of how a large-scale systems biology experiment that integrates toxicity phenotyping with genetic mapping can aid in translation to public health protection. For example, our data did not only provided quantitative assessments of hazard for hundreds of chemicals, but most importantly, the hazard was identified in the most sensitive individuals. The next few paragraphs will illustrate some of the conclusions drawn from the second aim.

Some, but not all chemicals elicit inter-individual variation in cytotoxicity responses. The degree of inter-individual variability varies from one chemical to another. The degree of inter-individual variability varies from one chemical to another and was less than 10 fold for about 2/3 of the compounds. However, some compounds exhibited more than 100-fold range in variability. Overall, the median inter-individual variability across all chemicals is similar to the default assumption for toxicodynamic study, even in chemical mixtures. However, assuming a 3-fold
uncertainty factor for toxicodynamic assessment might be overestimating or underestimating the actual inter-individual variation for some chemicals. The degree of inter-individual variability, in addition to the degree of cytotoxicity, may aid in prioritization of utilized compounds for further testing using additional \textit{in vitro} or \textit{in vivo} approaches.

Inter-individual variability in cytotoxicity could be within and/or between the populations tested in these experiments. While certain populations were more sensitive than others to certain chemicals, the variation tended to be modest. Furthermore, the variation within populations was generally greater than across populations. The pattern for variation across population was unique for each chemical. Consequently, no population was sensitive to all or most of the chemicals. There was some evidence of hierarchical clustering by continental ancestry, indicating that on average certain populations might exhibit similar sensitivity to the same chemicals.

Combining toxicity data and publicly available genotyping and RNA-Seq information enabled the possibility to probe and select candidate susceptibility genes and pathways/networks. Genetic mapping suggested important roles for variation in membrane and trans-membrane genes with a number of chemicals showing association with rs13120371 in the solute carrier SLC7A11, which has been implicated in chemo-resistance. Analysis of public RNA-sequencing profiles on the same cell lines provided evidence of association between basal transcription and cytotoxic response, with enrichment for genes with membrane localization.
3. IN VITRO SCREENING FOR INTER-INDIVIDUAL AND POPULATION VARIABILITY IN TOXICITY OF PESTICIDE MIXTURES

Population-based human in vitro models offer exceptional opportunities for evaluating the potential hazard and mode of action of chemicals, as well as variability in response as shown in the previous two studies. Potential challenges of screening and assessing the cytotoxicity of complex mixtures requires further assessment to increase the utility of the information obtained from in vitro models. We strived in this study to explore the potential of a population-based in vitro model in evaluating chemical mixtures and the possibility of integrating real human exposures in assessing in vitro data. We used 146 lymphoblast cell lines from 4 ancestrally and geographically diverse populations that were densely genotyped and with publically available basal RNA-seq data. Cells were exposed to two pesticide mixtures (an organochlorine pesticide environmental mixture extracted from a passive surface water sampling device and a mixture of 36 currently used pesticides) at 8 concentrations and were evaluated for cytotoxicity. Cytotoxicity measures for replicates produced robust and reproducible results. On average, the two mixtures exhibited a similar range of in vitro cytotoxicity and showed considerable inter-individual variability across the screened cell lines. However, in vitro-to-in vivo extrapolation (IVIVE), which was performed by reverse pharmacokinetics, suggested a significantly lower oral equivalent dose for the chlorinated pesticide mixture compared to the current-use pesticide mixture. Multivariate genome-wide association mapping revealed an association between the current use-pesticide mixture and a polymorphism in rs1947825 in C17orf54. Moreover, genetic pathway analysis showed a significant association between metabolism pathways and the
cytotoxicity of the chlorinated pesticide mixture. Our model was not only valuable in quantitatively estimating hazard and understanding inter-individual variability for individual chemicals, but was also amenable to rapidly and efficiently test mixtures of chemicals as well. Moreover, through integration of our cytotoxicity data with proper dose estimation through PK modeling and real human exposure limits, we were able to advance our assessment of pesticide mixtures and understand the actual human health hazard associated with them.

**Overall Conclusions**

Our population-based toxicity screening that is based on genetically-defined and genetically diverse human *in vitro* model system is a more powerful approach than traditional *in vitro* approaches. First, it allowed for efficient quantitative assessment of both hazard and inter-individual variability in toxicodynamics for individual chemical and chemical-mixtures. From the concentration-response *in vitro*, we have been able to establish a quantitative toxicity phenotype (EC10) that is similar to the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL). This toxicity phenotype can serve as an *in vitro* point of departure where chemical exposures could be identified without major biological perturbations, which in our case is a meaningful depletion in ATP or cell death. Because testing was conducted from many cell lines from many human donors from representative populations, we were able to gauge population and inter-individual variability associated with the hazard for each chemical. Identifying both the hazard and inter-individual variability was useful in establishing meaningful prioritization of chemicals and exploring potential differences/similarities in modes of action between chemical substances.
Second, the availability of cell lines from many human donors representing several ancestral populations afforded identification of susceptible sub-populations. Third, combining toxicity data and publicly available genetic information for LCLs from 1000 Genomes and HapMap Projects offered the possibility to probe and select candidate susceptibility genes and pathways/networks. Consequently, we were able to understand of the genetic determinants of the inter-individual variability, the contribution of genetics to adverse toxicity phenotype, and generate testable hypotheses about toxicity pathways by leveraging genetic and genomic data. Furthermore, while most of the variability between different cell lines that is can be attributed to genetics is modest and similar to complex chronic diseases, the genetic variation identified may have a profound effect on differences between individual cell lines. Consequently, such variability can be quantified and used to generate testable hypotheses about the mechanisms of toxicity.

Finally, incorporation of reverse dosimetry and exposure estimates when exploring concentration-response relationships for individual chemicals aided tremendously in assessing human hazard. Because the in vitro assay endpoint does not incorporate metabolic clearance and plasma protein binding, ranking the chemical mixtures by nominal assay concentrations might result in over- or under-estimation of the steady-state of a chemical mixture.

In conclusion, our population-based high throughput model enabled us to capture a population-wide measure of uncertainty, where we are able to quantitatively estimate chemical-specific or mixture-specific range in individual variability and to understand contributing genetic variation associated with it.
B. SIGNIFICANCE, INNOVATION, AND IMPACT OF THIS STUDY

We have utilized a human lymphoblast cells representing diverse populations to understand the hazard and magnitude of inter-individual variability to different environmental chemicals and/or chemical mixtures. There are several advantages to make use of LCLs for toxicity screening, as opposed to other current in vitro approaches, that make our study innovative. First, LCLs are derived from healthy adult individuals as opposed to tumor driven cell lines that are being utilized by Tox21 and other current human in vitro screening paradigms. Consequently, LCLs provide a better understanding of toxicological effects and improved translation to a real human population when compared to cancer cell lines. Second, LCLs represent geographically diverse populations from different continents and ancestral backgrounds which facilitate the assessment of variability within and between populations. Third, the public availability of the genome-wide genotype and gene-expression data allows for investigating the molecular-genetic mechanistic underpinnings of chemical toxicity for no additional cost. This availability of data also presents the opportunity for Genome Wide Association Studies (GWAS) and identification of SNPs, genes, and/or pathways that are primarily associated with toxicity of chemicals. Such findings permit the generation of novel hypotheses of how chemicals cause toxicity, and/or validate our understanding of what is known about the mechanism of chemical toxicity. Fourth, the immortalization of LCLs grants a renewable source for repeated experiments with easy manipulation at no additional cost. In conclusion, all those qualities of LCLs provide the possibility for effective and innovative in vitro population-based screening of chemicals without in vivo confounders and surpasses other in vitro testing paradigms.

With the first aim, we were able to test hundreds of chemicals with LCLs at different concentrations, allowing for the identification of a concentration-specific toxicity in addition to
recognizing population variability. The study was first of its kind and proved the remarkable value of our model in achieving several gains. It served as a proof of principle that population in vitro screening with LCLs and careful experimental design can be used to assess both hazard and population variability, cluster chemicals for further prioritization, and help uncover potential genetic underpinnings.

With the second aim, we were able to conduct the largest scale study, in terms of number of cell lines and chemicals used, to address major gaps in current risk assessment. This study was innovative in its hypotheses, the approach and model system to be utilized, the combination of methodologies and analyses to be performed, the organizational structure, and the outstanding translational potential to human populations. We were able to quantitatively assess and address population based toxicological effects or hazard of environmental contaminants, determine the extent of human inter-individual variability in chemical toxicity, identify susceptible sub-populations or races, understand the genetic determinants of the inter-individual variability, generate testable hypotheses about toxicity pathways by leveraging genetic and genomic data from 1000 Genomes and HapMap Projects, use the data obtained from this research to build predictive in silico models, capture a population-wide measure of uncertainty in dose-response, and explore potential differences/similarities in modes of action between chemicals.

Furthermore, the second aim provided data for improved prioritization and clustering of chemicals according to a number of differing criteria. Clustering of chemicals can be done according to toxicity, variability between individuals, genetic mode of action, and similarity in toxicological pattern.

Finally, the high-throughput information derived from our 1000 Genomes Toxicity Screening Project was utilized to build models that can predict cytotoxicity based on either chemicals
structure or genomic profiles without the need of additional experiments. With the collaboration between Sage Bionetworks and DREAM, University of North Carolina (UNC), the National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), and the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS), the NIEHS-NCATS-UNC DREAM Toxicogenetics Challenge was launched in 2013. This challenge represents an innovative new track for toxicity testing and is intended to help comprehend how genetic variation affects individual response to exposure to environmental chemicals. The Toxicogenetics Challenge approached researchers to utilize the data obtained from the 1000 Genomes Toxicity Project in order to elucidate the extent to which adverse effects (e.g. cytotoxicity) of compounds can be inferred from genomic and/or chemical structure data. Participants are tasked with solving two related sub-challenges: (1) develop predictive models of cytotoxicity using genetic and genomic data to predict individual responses to compound exposure and (2) use chemical attributes to predict population-based cytotoxicity characteristics (median, variance) for a set of compounds. The challenge engaged 232 registered participants with 99 submissions from 34 teams for first sub-challenge and 91 submissions from 24 teams for the second sub-challenge. Successful models/participants were selected for each sub-challenge. The computational models built for each sub-challenge could be considered in certain decision-making contexts to inform government agencies as to which environmental chemicals and drugs are of the greatest potential concern to human health. Moreover, Nature Biotechnology will consider an overview paper describing the results and insights of successful models.

In the third aim, we wanted to expand our model to address remaining challenges in risk assessment of chemical mixtures. While high-throughput in vitro toxicity screening provides an efficient way to identify hazard for environmental and industrial chemicals while conserving
limited testing resources. It is hard to interpret cytotoxicity values without proper understanding of *in vivo* dose. Differences in clearance, protein binding, and other pharmacokinetic factors have tremendous consequence on the bioactivity of a chemical. With this particular study, we were able to quantify hazard and population variability in with respect to two pesticides mixtures *in vitro*, extrapolate the *in vitro* concentration to an *in vivo* associated dose, and compare its relevance to real human exposure amounts for a full assessment of the pesticide mixtures.
C. LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

There are several disadvantages associated with utilizing LCLs for \textit{in vitro} population-based screening that are related to all three studies/aims. While high-throughput \textit{in vitro} testing offers many potential benefits, there are potential challenges in extrapolating a particular perturbing concentration in one cell type to a dose of a chemical that results in an observable change in the health or normal functioning of the whole human. First, \textit{in vitro} testing does not necessarily cover the full biological pathway or all critical changes that be consequent to exposure to a chemical. Despite our ability to identify potential genetic pathways associated with exposure to a specific chemical, other factors such as epigenetics and cell-cell interactions might mitigate or enhance the observed a toxic response in LCLs, leading to underestimation or overestimation of the actual risk from chemical exposure. Second, while we are trying to account for human population diversity in response to chemicals by using LCLs that represent different populations, we still cannot account for other sources of population variability such as epigenomics, age, pre-existing health conditions, lifestyle, and co-exposures. Third, while frequency, duration, and route of exposure to a chemical are key elements that need to be considered in toxicity assessment, those factors cannot be accounted in \textit{in vitro} screening. Consequently, caution and thoughtful deliberation is required in translating of \textit{in vitro} data to an intact organism to avoid over-interpretation or erroneous conclusions (Rothman, 2002).

The biggest shortcoming of \textit{in vitro} toxicity testing is the lack of metabolism. When it comes to binning compounds to dichotomized categories (toxic vs non-toxic), false-positives or false-negatives might arise as consequence of absence of metabolism. LCLs are derived from B-lymphocytes whose main function is humoral adaptive immunity. Unlike hepatocytes, human lymphoblasts do not function to metabolize chemicals and therefore do not have the metabolic
capacity of the liver, or even that of freshly isolated hepatocytes. However, there is evidence that LCLs express a number of nuclear receptors, as well as most genes of the phase I and II metabolism, and transporters (Siest et al. 2008). Nevertheless, the expression of metabolism genes and nuclear receptor in lymphoblasts (Stranger et al. 2007) is about 10 to 100 times lower when compared to hepatocytes (Schadt et al. 2008a). While using high concentrations in experimental design could potentially overcome the low metabolism in LCLs, we still lack a clear understanding of metabolism in LCLs. Nonetheless, screening parent compounds with their major metabolites may offer an improved measure of true toxicity.

While LCLs have been a promising model for pharmacogenomic discoveries, their utility has been questioned because of concern with changes in cell biochemistry stemming from the immortalization process. Potential confounders that affect the utility of LCLs include baseline growth rates, EBV copy numbers and ATP levels (Choy et al. 2008). While growth rate of LCLs was associated with chemotherapeutic-induced cytotoxicity in one study (Stark et al. 2010), it was not associated with cytotoxicity of 100+ chemicals (Lock et al. 2012). Altered apoptosis responses have been observed as a result of EBV transformation in LCLs with cancer drugs (Liu et al. 2004).

The immortalization process or EBV transformation has been observed to affect gene-expression and promoter-methylation profiles of majority of genes compared to primary B cells (Caliskan et al. 2011). However, the difference in expression levels between the primary and immortalized cells was small in magnitude (<1.5 fold). Moreover, the inter-individual variability in gene expression was the same between primary B cells and LCLs (Caliskan et al. 2011). Furthermore, many expression quantitative trait loci eQTLs observed in LCLs were observed in
primary tissues like the liver, lung, and skin (Bullaughey et al. 2009; Ding et al. 2010; Schadt et al. 2008b).

In the first specific aim, we acknowledge that our sample size combined with the likely small genomic effect size will probably hinder our ability to detect meaningful associations. Moreover, in both first and second aims, further evaluation is needed to better understand the in vitro cytotoxicity values obtained from our model. In vitro-to-in vivo extrapolation might tremendously help get better comprehension of hazards associated with screened chemicals. However, such analysis is depended on availability of PK specific values for screened chemicals.

Other limitations inherent to the third aim are the strong assumptions we made in evaluating toxicity of mixtures. With mixtures, there is a great deal of debate in the toxicology community about how chemicals may interact with one another, both in terms of PK modeling and in terms of toxicity. While we assumed that the chemicals do not potentiate or inhibit the cytotoxicity of each other, we have no way of knowing if that assumption was entirely true. Furthermore, we assumed that the chemicals in each mixture are equipotent. However, we tried to extract cytotoxicity data for the chemicals component for each mixture from the ToxCast data. Furthermore, we had missing data in both human exposure estimates and PK modeling data for some the chemicals within each mixtures. While we tried to be conservative by considering different scenarios for substituted missing values and picking the worst case ones, we do not know if we are overestimating the actual exposure or oral equivalent dose. This is especially true, since some of the chemicals were contributing more heavily than others to oral equivalent dose and we do not know how the missing chemicals might be influencing our estimates. We need better estimates for oral equivalent dose and real human exposures for some of our pesticides that have missing data for an improved risk assessment.
D. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

There are several directions in which this research could proceed. First, we can functionally validate the discoveries made with GWAS and other analyses like RNA-Seq and pathway analyses. The confirmation of the potential association between a certain SNP or gene and the cytotoxicity in LCLs could be performed in several ways. One way is to knock down the gene of interest by SiRNA in LCLs and compare cytotoxicity across broad range of concentrations in “wild type” LCLs vs knocked down LCLs. Another potential way is to pick cell lines representing each genotype of the associated SNP and test them across a broad range of concentrations. Then statistically test the difference in cytotoxicity (either EC₁₀ or whole concentration response) between the three different genotypes.

Second, we could elucidate modes and mechanisms of toxicities of our cell lines by quantitatively assessing gene expression variation for chemicals across different concentrations. The evolving of the new technology that can quantify mRNA responses in thousands of genes, called RASL-Seq, has been rapidly growing to accommodate the high-throughput screening of many compounds screened in many cell lines across multiple concentrations at different endpoints. The gene expression in RASL-Seq technology is characterized by excellent reproducibility, high accuracy, excellent gene specificity, amenability for high-throughput multiplex economical approach (Fu et al., 2012). This technology can enable us assess quantitatively mRNA expression for our screened pesticide mixtures, drug-metabolites, and cadmium chloride at different concentrations. The gene expression profiles can illuminate our understanding of the mechanism of cytotoxicity.

Third, we can explore the potential differences/and similarities in modes of action between chemicals either on a population-wide compared to individual effects. Through our screenings,
we were able to cluster chemicals by their similarities in toxic response across different cell lines. We concluded that those similarities exist due to shared mechanism of action (MOA).

Thousands of chemicals have been screened in Tox21 and ToxCast through multiple assays in indifferent cell lines. We can leverage the data produced by ToxCast and Tox21 and try to see if shared MOA for certain chemicals across different assays was a factor in chemical’s profiles across cell lines.

Finally, we can further understand cytotoxicity of mixtures by screening both the individual components and the mixtures. This approach will help us test and validate some of the assumptions we made with the mixtures study. By comparing the cytotoxicity of each chemical and comparing it to the cumulative cytotoxicity of the whole mixture, we can assess whether chemicals potentiate or inhibit the activity of other chemicals within a mixture, and we can evaluate the assumption of equal potency for chemical within each mixture.
E. REFERENCES


