

β -Subunits of the human liver G_s/G_i signal-transducing proteins and those of bovine retinal rod cell transducin are identical

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The complete cDNA encoding the β -subunit of the human liver signal transducing proteins G_s/G_i (β_G) has been cloned from a λ gt11 library using an oligonucleotide as a screening agent. The cDNA has 3088 nucleotides and an 11 nucleotide poly(A) tail, of which 280 nucleotides constitute the 5'-untranslated region, 1023 form the open reading frame (ORF) and its stop codon, and 1785 are the 3'-untranslated region with two AATAAA cleavage and polyadenylation signals separated by 1467 nucleotides. The ORF codes for a 340 amino acid polypeptide that is identical to that encoded by bovine retinal rod cell cDNA of the β -subunit of transducin. Yet, it does so by using 87 different codons. Curiously, the 280 nucleotide 5' leader sequence obtained starts with an ATG that is part of another ORF encoding a putative peptide X of 75 amino acids (nucleotide 280 to 55). This work proves for the first time that the β -subunits of all signal-transducing G-proteins, including transducin, are the same.

G-protein β -Subunit Signal transduction Adenylyl cyclase Photoreceptor Hormone receptor

1. INTRODUCTION

G-proteins (also N-proteins) are a family of membrane GTPases responsible for the transduction of hormone or neurotransmitter receptor occupancy, which occurs on the outer surface of cells, into altered activity of an effector system, the active site of which is located on the inner surface of the plasma membrane of cells (reviews [1-3]). Of the seven or eight such G-proteins that currently can be defined, four have been purified to better than 90% purity: G_s , the stimulatory regulatory component of adenylyl cyclase [4-6]; G_i , the inhibitory regulatory component of adenylyl cyclase [7,8]; G_t (also T or transducin), the mediator between photoactivation of rhodopsin and stimulation of cGMP-specific phosphodiesterase in outer segments of retinal rod cells [9-11]; and the so-called G_o , a pertussis toxin substrate of neural origin able to interact with brain muscarinic recep-

tors, but having an as yet undefined effector [12,13]. All these proteins share a common subunit organization, being formed of α -, β - and γ -subunits [4,6,14] and react to the presence of Mg^{2+} and a non-hydrolyzable GTP analog (such as GTP γ S or GMP-P(NH)P) by binding the nucleotide to their α -subunits and undergoing a subunit dissociation reaction, with products α^G and the complex of $\beta\gamma$ [15-17]. Although functional, as well as structural, characterizations of the different G-proteins mentioned above reveal that each protein differs from the other by the type of α -subunit they have (e.g. α_{s1} , α_{s2} , α_i , α_t , α_o) the situation is not as clear when their $\beta\gamma$ complexes are considered. Thus, functional assays involving stimulation of GTPase activity of α_t by rhodopsin [18] and inhibition of reconstituted G_sC complexes in phospholipid vesicles [19,20] show apparent complete interchangeability between $\beta\gamma$ of G_t vs G_s vs G_i or G_o , and suggest these complexes to be very

similar if not identical. Yet, $\beta\gamma$ complexes from retinal rod outer segments, where they comprise close to 1% of the protein mass, are water-soluble [9,21,22], while those derived from any other tissue, in which they exist in 10–100-fold lower abundance, are not [17,23] and require detergents to remain in solution. This difference in behavior may be due to differences in either one or both of the two subunits that constitute the $\beta\gamma$ complex.

Recently, Sugimoto et al. [24] and Hurley et al. [25] determined by molecular cloning the complete amino acid sequence of the β -subunit of bovine transducin (β_T). This subunit, which migrates on SDS-PAGE as a polypeptide with apparent M_r 35000–36000, has 340 amino acids and a calculated M_r of 37375. Northern analyses of poly(A)⁺ RNA from retina, brain and liver using β_T cDNA fragments as hybridization probes revealed the existence of both retina- and liver/brain-specific RNA species [24,25]. Thus two bands of hybridization-positive RNA were detected in each tissue, but they differed between retina and brain/liver in size as well as composition in their 5' leader sequences.

The present work was initiated to determine the primary amino acid composition of liver β_G -subunit, and what the difference, if any, might be between it and β_T . Molecular cloning and sequencing of a full length cDNA clone of 3099 nucleotides revealed it to be quite different from the cDNA encoding β_T in both its 5' leader sequence and in its 3'-untranslated region. Yet the deduced amino acid sequence encoded by the open reading frame of the human liver cDNA is identical to that encoded by the bovine β_T cDNA. This proves that β -subunits of all G-proteins are the same and functional differences of $\beta\gamma$ complexes must reside in the structure of differing α -subunits.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cDNA library, constructed as in [26,27] in the cloning vector λ gt11, was made using poly(A)RNA [28,29] from a human liver [30]. 100000 recombinant phages of this library were screened at a density of 20000–25000 phages per 150 mm petri dish, using a replicate plaque amplification technique [31], for the presence of nucleotide sequences complementary to the synthetic 27-meric

oligodeoxynucleotide (kindly prepared for us by Vega, Tucson, AZ):

5'-AGAGCTGGTAACAATCTGATTGTCATC-3'

(oligonucleotide V)

which is part of the antisense strand of the coding sequence of bovine β_T (amino acids 153–161) [24]. To this end filters were prehybridized in $6 \times$ SSC, $5 \times$ Denhardt's solution, 300 mM sodium phosphate, pH 6.8, 0.1% SDS and 0.1 mg/ml sheared herring sperm DNA [32], for 3 h at 32°C, and then hybridized overnight at 32°C with the same solution plus 0.1×10^6 cpm/ml of oligonucleotide V phosphorylated with T₄ polynucleotide kinase using [α -³²P]ATP of 4500 Ci/mmol. The filters were then washed extensively at 32°C with $6 \times$ SSC, dried and subjected to autoradiography for 17 h at -70°C in the presence of two Dupont Cronex Lighting Plus enhancing screens using Kodak X-Omat AR X-ray films.

Phages giving duplicate signals in the replicate screening procedure were plaque purified [32]. Their inserts were excised with *EcoRI*, isolated by electrophoresis in 1% low melting point agarose and subcloned into M13 mp18 for sequencing as in [33] using the buffer system of [34]. Southern blots [35], using oligonucleotide V, as well as two other oligonucleotides, as probes, were done onto nitrocellulose sheets prehybridizing for 4 h at 37°C and hybridizing overnight at 37°C as in [36]. Prior to autoradiography, the sheets were extensively washed with $6 \times$ SSC [36] at 4°C.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Primary screening of the λ gt11 human liver cDNA library with oligonucleotide V led to the identification of 63 possible candidates. Of these, one gave a significantly stronger signal on secondary screening and was plaque purified. It contained an insert of approx. 3000 nucleotides (λ b1) which could be excised with *EcoRI* from the recombinant phage as a single fragment. Insert λ b1 was transferred onto nitrocellulose and tested for hybridization to three probes. One was the screening probe, i.e. ³²P-labeled oligonucleotide V (probe A). The second, probe B, tested for the

presence of sequences coding for a portion closer to the carboxy-terminus of a putative β_G polypeptide and the third, probe C, tested for the presence of sequences coding for the amino end of a putative β_G polypeptide. Specifically, probe B was the 17-mer 5'-ATG GGA GTA GGT CAT GA-3' which is complementary to nucleotides 792-808 (spanning amino acids 261-266) of the sense strand of the same cDNA. Probe C was the 17-mer 5'-TA ACT GGT CAA GTT CAC T-3' which is complementary to nucleotides 3-19 (spanning amino acids 1-7) of the sense strand of bovine β_T cDNA. As shown in fig.1, the single insert $\lambda b1$ was hybridization-positive with all three nucleotides, strongly suggesting that a full-length cDNA had been isolated. $\lambda b1$ was subcloned into M13 mp18

and sequenced. Fig.2 presents the complete nucleotide sequence of $\lambda b1$ and the deduced amino acid sequence of the long open reading frame (ORF) spanning from what is numbered as nucleotide 1 to 1020. The amino acid composition of the polypeptide encoded by this open reading frame corresponds exactly to that of the cDNA published for β_T [24,25].

The first nucleotides (-280 to -278) of the 5'-untranslated leader sequence present in this cDNA are ATG and a potential translation initiation codon. As shown in fig.3, this ATG is part of another ORF (ORF of peptide X) extending from -280 to -54, followed by codon TGA. This is then followed by two additional TGAs in the same reading frame. The ORF of this putative peptide X

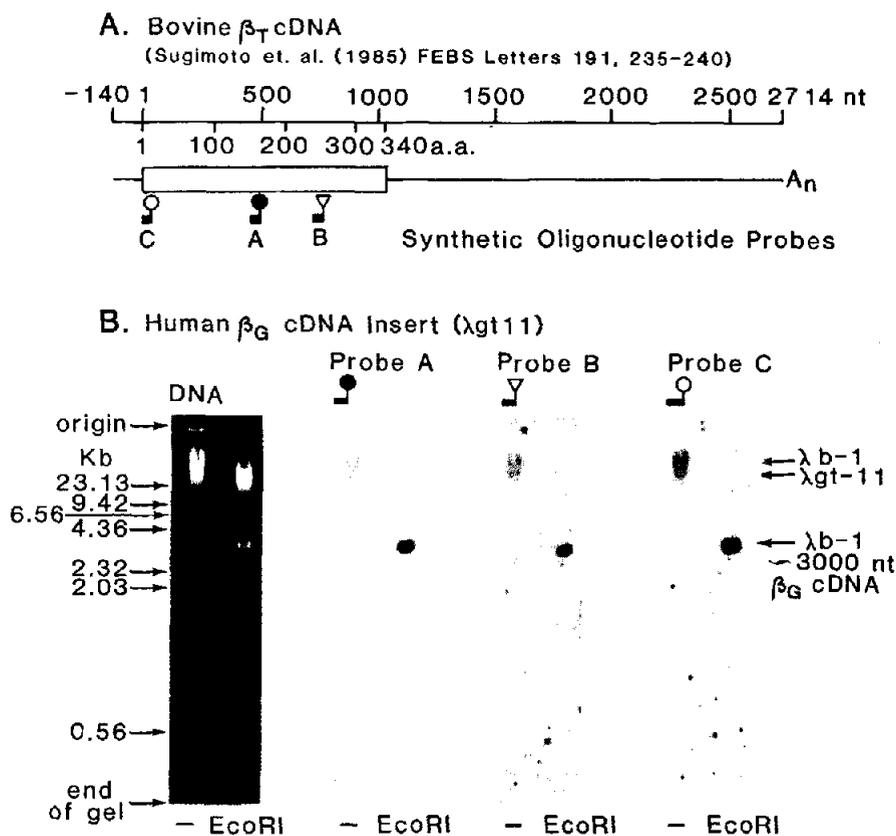


Fig.1. (A) Scheme of β_T cDNA cloned by Sugimoto et al. [25] and location of nucleotide sequences on the basis of which synthetic oligonucleotide probes were made for screening (probe A) and confirmation (probes B,C) of identity of a putative cDNA for human liver β_G . (B) Ethidium bromide stain of DNA of plaque purified recombinant lambda with putative insert ($\lambda b1$) coding for β_G without and after digestion with *EcoRI*, and Southern blots [35] of the digests after transfer onto nitrocellulose hybridized sequentially with ^{32}P -labeled probe A, B and C.

-280
5'-----ATGGGCGGGGAGTGGGAGCGGGCCGGGAGTGGAGCAGCCGCGCGGGGACTGGACCGAGCCCGCGGGCGGCGACT

-200 GCCCGCAGCGCCCGCGGACGCGCAGCGCGGCCGAGCGGACGACCTTCGAGCGGGCGCGCGAGCGCGGCTGTGGCGCGTCAGCGCGGACGAGGGCG

-100 CTGAGACAAATTTACATGTATGGAGACCAAGACCAGAAGCCCTTCTGAATTAAGATCTCAATTCCTGAAGGTGGCATTGAAGAGCAGCTAAGATCGGGAAG -1

1	ATG	AGT	GAG	CTT	GAC	CAG	TTA	CGG	CAG	GAG	GCC	GAG	CAA	CTT	AAG	AAC	CAG	ATI	CGA	GAC	GCC	AGG	AAA	GCA	TGT	GCA	GAT	GCA	ACT	CTC	90
	MET	SER	GLU	LEU	ASP	GLN	LEU	ARG	GLN	GLU	ALA	GLU	GLN	LEU	LYS	ASN	GLN	ILE	ARG	ASP	ALA	ARG	LYS	ALA	CYS	ALA	ASP	ALA	THR	LEU	
	TCT	CAG	ATC	ACA	AAC	AAC	ATC	GAC	CCA	GTG	GGA	AGA	ATC	CAA	ATG	CGC	ACG	AGG	AGG	ACA	CTG	CGG	GGG	CAC	CTG	GCC	AAG	ATC	IAC	GCC	180
	SER	GLN	ILE	THR	ASN	ASN	ILE	ASP	PRO	VAL	GLY	ARG	ILE	GLN	MET	ARG	THR	ARG	ARG	THR	LEU	ARG	GLY	HIS	LEU	ALA	LYS	ILE	TYR	ALA	
	ATG	CAC	TGG	GGC	ACA	GAC	TCC	AGG	CTT	CTC	GTC	AGT	GCC	TCG	CAG	GAT	GGT	AAA	CTT	ATC	ATC	TGG	GAC	AGC	TAC	ACC	ACC	AAC	AAG	GTG	270
	MET	HIS	TRP	GLY	THR	ASP	SER	ARG	LEU	LEU	VAL	SER	ALA	SER	GLN	ASP	GLY	LYS	LEU	ILE	ILE	TRP	ASP	SER	TYR	THR	THR	ASN	LYS	VAL	
	CAC	GCC	ATC	CCT	CTG	CGC	TCC	TCC	TGG	GTG	ATG	ACC	TGI	GCA	TAT	GCC	CCT	TCT	GGG	AAC	TAI	GTG	GCC	TGC	GGI	GGC	CTG	GAT	AAC	ATI	360
	HIS	ALA	ILE	PRO	LEU	ARG	SER	SER	TRP	VAL	MET	THR	CYS	ALA	TYR	ALA	PRO	SER	GLY	ASN	TYR	VAL	ALA	CYS	GLY	LEU	ASP	ASN	ILE		
	TGC	TCC	ATT	IAC	AAT	CTG	AAA	ACT	CGT	GAG	GGG	AAC	GTG	CGC	GTG	AGT	CGT	GAG	CTG	GCA	GGG	CAC	ACA	GGT	TAC	CTG	TCC	TGC	TGC	CGA	450
	CYS	SER	ILE	TYR	ASN	LEU	LYS	THR	ARG	GLU	GLY	ASN	VAL	ARG	VAL	SER	ARG	GLN	LEU	ALA	GLY	HIS	THR	GLY	TYR	LEU	SER	CYS	CYS	ARG	
	TTT	CTG	GAT	GAC	AAT	CAG	ATC	GTG	ACC	ATC	TCT	GGA	GAC	ACC	ACG	TGT	GCC	CTG	TGG	GAC	ATC	GAG	ACC	GGC	CAG	CAG	ACG	ACC	ACG	TTI	540
	PHE	LEU	ASP	ASP	ASN	GLN	ILE	VAL	THR	ARG	SER	GLY	ASP	THR	THR	CYS	ALA	LEU	TRP	ASP	ILE	GLN	THR	GLY	GLN	GLN	THR	THR	THR	PHE	
	ACC	GGA	CAC	ACI	GGA	GAT	GTC	ATG	AGC	CTI	TCT	CTT	GCT	CCT	GAC	ACC	AGA	CTG	TTG	GTG	TCT	GGT	GCT	TGT	GAI	GCT	TCA	GCC	AAA	CTC	630
	THR	GLY	HIS	THR	GLY	ASP	VAL	MET	SER	LEU	SER	LEU	ALA	PRO	ASP	THR	ARG	LEU	PHE	VAL	SER	GLY	ALA	CYS	ASP	ALA	SER	ALA	LYS	LEU	
	TGG	GAI	GTG	CGA	GAA	GGC	ATG	TGC	CGG	CAG	ACC	TTG	ACI	GGC	CAC	GAG	TGI	GAC	ATC	AAT	GCC	ATA	TGC	TTG	TTI	CCA	AAT	GGC	AAT	GCA	720
	TRP	ASP	VAL	ARG	GLU	GLY	MET	CYS	ARG	GLN	THR	PHE	THR	GLY	HIS	GLU	SER	ASP	ILE	ASN	ALA	ILE	CYS	PHE	PHE	PRO	ASN	GLY	ASN	ALA	
	TTT	GCC	ACT	GGC	TCA	GAC	GAC	GCC	ACC	TGC	AGG	CTG	TTI	GAC	CFI	CGT	GCI	GAC	CAG	GAG	CTC	ATG	ACI	TAC	TCC	CAT	GAC	AAC	ATC	ATC	810
	PHE	ALA	THR	GLY	SER	ASP	ASP	ALA	THR	CYS	ARG	LEU	PHE	ASP	LEU	ARG	ALA	ASP	GLN	GLU	LEU	MET	THR	TYR	SER	HIS	ASP	ASN	ILE	ILE	
	TGC	GGG	ATC	ACC	TCT	GTG	TCC	TTG	TCC	AAG	AGC	GGG	CGC	CTC	CTC	CTI	GCI	GGG	TAC	GAC	GAC	TTG	AAC	TGC	AAC	GTC	TGG	GAI	GCA	CTC	900
	CYS	GLY	ILE	THR	SER	VAL	SER	PHE	SER	LYS	SER	GLY	ARG	LEU	LEU	LEU	ALA	GLY	TYR	ASP	ASP	PHE	ASN	CYS	ASN	VAL	TRP	ASP	ALA	LEU	
	AAA	GCC	GAC	CGG	GCA	GGI	GTC	TTG	GCI	GGG	CAT	GAC	AAC	CGC	GTC	AGC	TGC	CTG	GGC	GTG	ACT	GAC	GAI	GGC	ATG	GCI	GTG	GGC	ACA	GGG	990
	LYS	ALA	ASP	ARG	ALA	GLY	VAL	LEU	ALA	GLY	HIS	ASP	ASN	ARG	VAL	SER	CYS	LEU	GLY	VAL	THR	ASP	ASP	GLY	MET	ALA	VAL	ALA	THR	GLY	
	TCC	TGG	GAI	AGC	TTG	CTC	AAG	ATC	TGG	AAC	TAA	CGCCAGTAGCATGTGGATGCCATGGAGACTGGAAGACCATTCCAACCTGGACCGGTTACCATGAGAG	1090																		
	SER	TRP	ASP	SER	PHE	LEU	LYS	ILE	TRP	ASN	STOP																				

CCAACGTACTAACGTGACAAACCCACACCCTCCCTCAGAACTTCAAAAAGGCAAGATCTTTTTCCTTCACTTATTGCTCATATCCATGAAACCAAGG 1190

GCACAATCCATTGAGAGAAAGATCTGTGCTGTAACATAAAACAAATGTGCATTCCTCCGGGGCCATGCTCTTTGTTTCTTTTGTCTTGAAT 1290

GAATTTAAAGGAAATAATATAAATAATGTTAACCAAGAGTAAACTTGTAGTGAATTTGTCAGACAGACACTTTTCCACCAGTGTATTTGAATTT 1390

AGACCAGTGACCCTGTTTGTGGCATTCAAGCAAAACATGCTGAGGGCTTTGTTTCATCTGGTTCATCTGTGTCACAAATTCAGTCAATGTTGTAGCAAGATT 1490

TTGGAAGCAITCATATTCTCTTTTAAAAATGTATTCTTTGTGTTCAACAGTTAATCAAACCAGAGAGTCTAGGGCAGCCCTCTCTGATGTTGCAATGA 1590

TGTAATTCAGTCCCTGGTTTAAATTTCTGTCTGATGTCACAGATCATTTGTTGCACAAACGTGGCATAAGAAAGAACATGTTCAAGAACCATGGGG 1690

CCAAGCACAATGCCGGGACGGTCTCAAAATGCGTGTACAGAGAATCTTCACTTATGCTGAAAAGTGAAGTCCAGATCCACCCTCAAAATGTTCCCTGAC 1790

CCATCTCTGTATCTTCTCAGTTGAGTTTAAATCTCACTTTGGGTTCTTGTGAGTGTGGAGGAGTATAAATAGCTAACACTACCCACCCCGCA 1890

ACTAGGAGGAACTCTGTTTCAAGAGAGATGCCGTGCTGTGCTTGGATAGTCAAGTCAATTAATTTGTGATGAAACAAATGTACAAATCAATGTTTGA 1990

AATAATGATCTCAGACTTTCTAAGTTAAAGTTTAAAAATTTGATTGTTTGCATATTGGGTGGGTTTACTTTAGAAATCGCATGCTGTAGAAAATGCT 2090

CAAAAGTGCATA TGGGACTCAGTCCCTAGGTTGCTTTTTCTTTTAAAGAAATAACCTCTTACAGTTGTAACCATTCGGGCTCTGTCCACITCTCGTGTCT 2190

GCTCTGTGGCAGATATCGGAAGCAGTACAGCGCGCGCTCTACACGCTTGGTAGCGGATAAGTCACTGTTTCTTTAATTTCTTTAAAAAATAAAAG 2290

TTCTGTTGCAACGACTGCTGTTGGATCTGTAGGGTGGGGAGGGAGAGAGAGGGGAGGAGAGAGGAGTGAAGAGCCCTGCCCTCTTATAGTGGATTCTCAC 2390

GGGCCCTCCACATCTGAGGTGGCTCATTCCTCACACACAGATTGCTTGGTGTTCATTTCAAGGCCAGTTGTCAGCAACAGCGTTTGGAAAGCAGGTT 2490

CTGTGGGACCCCGCCCGCCCGCCCGCACCTCTCTCATAGCAGCAGTAGTGGCTTCTCCATCTGTTTTCTGCAACATTTCTATACAAAATGCTGCTGTGA 2590

CCTTGGGTAGGCGTGGATCTGGCAAGAGAAATACAAATGAAACCCCTTCTTTCTCTTTCCGTCACAACTCTGTGAGACTCTCTGCACCTTACCCCT 2690

TTCACCTTTTGTATTAAATTTAAAGTCAGTGTACTGCAAGGAAGCTGATGCAAGATAGATACATATAAATTAACGTGACTGTTATTAAAGATGTAATA 2790

ACCAGTTGACATGAGGG-Å11
2808

Fig.2. Nucleotide sequence and deduced amino acid composition of human liver β -subunit of G_s/G_i (β_G). The CG content of the 5' leader sequence, the long open reading frame and the 3'-untranslated region is 58, 56 and 42%, respectively. Two AATAA cleavage and polyadenylation signals [37] are highlighted. The 87 bases in β_G that differ from those of the retinal rod cell β_T cDNA are underscored.

and that of β_G are not in frame, and the β_G ORF is preceded in frame by two TAA stop codons 9 and 48 nucleotides upstream of the ATG β_G initiation codon. In a recent survey of 211 5' leader sequences of eukaryotic messages [37], only 10 were found to have one or more upstream ATGs, only 7 were longer than 200 nucleotides and only 1 was both longer than 200 nucleotides and had one or more upstream ATGs. 75% of the leader sequences were between 20 and 80 nucleotides long. Upstream ORFs ranged from 3 (ATG followed by a stop codon) to a maximum of 75 nucleotides, encoding for a possible polypeptide of 25 amino acids. In this context, the leader sequence of the human liver β_G mRNA is rather out of the common both in nucleotide length (280 nucleotides) and in the length of the upstream open reading frame it presents (encoding for 75 amino acids). To our knowledge, there are no reports of polycistronic messages in higher eukaryotes. Yet,

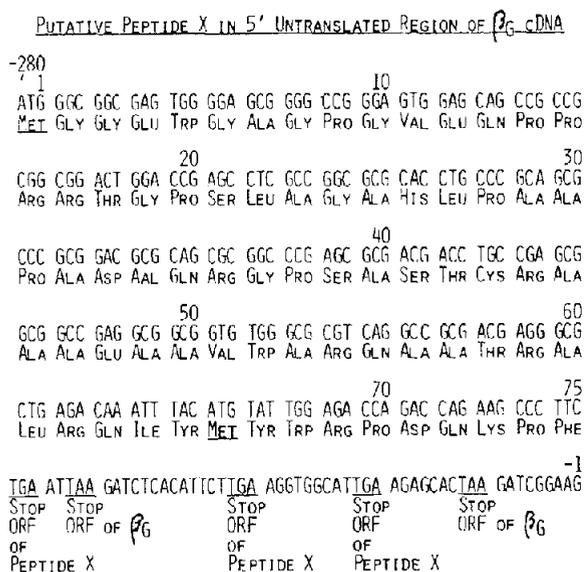


Fig.3. Deduced amino acid sequence of the putative peptide X that is coded for by sequences -280 to -55 of fig.2, and location of all stop codons present in the -280 to -1 leader sequence of β_G . ORF, open reading frame.

the relatively long ORF present in the -280 long leader sequence of β_G opens the possibility that it may be translated. We are now raising antibodies to fragments of the putative peptide X to test this hypothesis. We are also attempting to determine the total length of the mRNA species that gave rise to the cDNA reported here.

Structural aspects of β -subunits of different G-proteins have been compared previously by various indirect means, including total amino acid composition, mono- and two-dimensional peptide mapping and immunoreactivity. All these studies suggested them to be very similar, if not identical, and that functional interchangeability among β -complexes of different G-proteins is a reflection of the similarity between their β -subunits. The present work supports this concept by proving that G_s and G_i have β -subunits that are identical to that of transducin.

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