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Genetic effects of variation at *ADH1B-ADH1C* locus on substance use disorders and physical health traits

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Introduction. Substance use disorders (SUDs), including drug (DD), alcohol (AD) and nicotine (ND) dependence, are global threats for physical and mental public health. In Ukraine, ~350,000 people inject drugs, and ~6% of adult population have alcohol abuse. We may expect an increase of this problem as a consequence of war and acute social problems. SUDs are highly co-morbid with each other and there is evidence for co-morbidity with other health-related traits. This suggests underlying shared genetic effects. **Aim.** We investigated association of a validated in other populations GWAS-identified AD risk locus *ADH1B-ADH1C* rs1789891 with a range of SUDs in Ukrainians and evaluated its potential effects on other traits in GWAS summary statistics from Biobanks. **Methods.** We genotyped rs1789891 at *ADH1B-ADH1C* in a multivariate dataset including 507 individuals with and without SUDs from Ukraine (mean age 32.6±9.6 years, among them 133 individuals without any SUDs) using PCR. We performed logistic regression for DD, AD, and ND, adjusting for sex and other SUDs phenotypes. We further conducted a phenome-wide association study of rs1789891 in summary statistics from UK Biobank (UKBB) and FinnGen.

Results. rs1789891 in Ukrainians was associated with AD ($p = 0.0087$) and DD ($p = 0.0321$), with the direction of effect corresponding to GWAS data, but not with ND, or alcohol consumption. rs1789891 showed an association in the UKBB with alcohol intake frequency ($p = 2.45 \times 10^{-24}$) and suggestive evidence for associations with F10 AD ($p = 3.27 \times 10^{-8}$), Waist/Hip circumference ratio ($p = 3.02 \times 10^{-6}$), and Non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus ($p = 3.03 \times 10^{-6}$). In FinnGen, rs1789891 was significantly associated with different definitions of Alcohol use disorder ($p = 1.8 \times 10^{-11}$ – 1.5×10^{-6}) and Substance abuse ($p = 5.7 \times 10^{-8}$), and there was a suggestive evidence for associations with Acute renal failure ($p = 1.2 \times 10^{-4}$), and death from Alcohol related diseases ($p = 1.7 \times 10^{-4}$). **Conclusion.** Variations at *ADH1B-ADH1C* may have pleiotropic effects on SUDs as well as some physical health traits. **Grants.** University of Surrey Faculty Research Support Fund, US-Ukraine Biotech Initiative Small Research Grant, Crowd.Science. **Keywords:** genetic association study, substance use disorders, Ukrainians, multi-phenotype study, *ADH1B-ADH1C*, pleiotropy.