



Nome News Issue 32

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NEW Hot Topic

This month we are launching a new hot topic for discussion. The research community is increasingly becoming aware of genes that were previously believed to be single copy, but can be present in variable copy numbers in different individuals. The nomenclature of these 'complex' loci has previously been dealt with on a case-by-case basis; however, as more such genes are identified, the HGNC would like to determine if a standard approach would be of benefit to the scientific community.

Read about the problem on our hot topic page and email hgnc@genenames.org with your views.

Hot Topic Update

The [IUPAC-IUBMB Joint Commission on Biochemical Nomenclature](#) (JCBN) and the [MEROPS](#) database advocate the use of the word 'peptidase' to describe enzymes that hydrolyze peptide bonds. We have historically used a combination of 'protease' (153 records), 'proteinase' (104 records) and 'peptidase' (78 records) in approved gene names. We had asked for your opinion as to whether we should:

- 1) Change 'protease' and 'proteinase' in all approved gene names to 'peptidase', with the previous names included as synonyms
- 2) Exclusive use of 'peptidase' for new gene names, leaving previously approved gene names as they are
- 3) Continue to use 'protease', 'proteinase' and 'peptidase'

Following the majority vote for option 1, we have now updated most uses of the terms "proteinase" and "protease" in gene names with "peptidase". The few remaining gene names containing "proteinase" and "protease" are being reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Nomenclature of the HGNC database

Many of you may already be aware of this change, but we would like to announce formally that the term "Genew" should no longer be used to refer to our database, and that it should always be called the "HGNC database". Any links to our website should be labelled using the acronym "HGNC", and never "Genew" or "HUGO".

If you would like to be added to our Nome News mailing list or if you have questions or comments on any human gene nomenclature issue, please email us at: hgnc@genenames.org

HGNC DAS Server

We are pleased to report that we now run a DAS (Distributed Annotation System) server that allows users to display up-to-date approved gene symbols and names in the Ensembl Gene Browser. We have written some instructions on how to configure your browser to display this data, these can be found [here](#).

Meetings attended

Michael and Tina attended the Yet Another Perl Conference (YAPC) 2005 in Braga, Portugal (31 August - 2 September). We would like to congratulate the organizers and thank the speakers and sponsors for a truly excellent meeting. Videos of the talks can be downloaded from [here](#).

Varsha attended the 2005 Gene Ontology (GO) Users Meeting held in Bergen, Norway (14-15 September), where she presented a poster entitled 'Gene Nomenclature & Gene Ontology *The perfect partnership?*'. The meeting proved to be a good opportunity to promote the use of HGNC approved nomenclature amongst the GO community.

Ruth attended the KIR polymorphism workshop in Cambridge (15-17 September) and gave a presentation on KIR nomenclature and naming variable copy number genes.

Publication

Nusbaum C, ... Wain HM, et al . DNA sequence and analysis of human chromosome 18. *Nature* 2005; **437**(7058):551-5 ([PMID: 16177791](#)).

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