



Role of AI in Unlocking Gene Expression Patterns

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Understanding gene expression data



Gene expression data is a biological representation of various transcriptions and other chemicals found inside a cell at a given time.

Questions it will answer ?

- ✓ Which genes are active and to what extent in a particular biological sample?
- How do genes contribute to various traits, diseases, and physiological conditions?

Gene expression data types

- ✓ Microarray data
- ✓ RNA-seq data
- ✓ Single cell RNA-seq data

- Each gene expression data type has its advantages and limitations.
- The choice of method depends on the research question, the number of genes to be analyzed, the available sample material, and the desired level of accuracy and throughput.

Comparison of Microarray and RNA-Seq technologies

S.No.	Basis		RNA-Seq
1.	Technology	 scRNA-seq offers a high- resolution view of gene expression at the single- cell level, enabling the study of cellular heterogeneity and rare cell populations. Steps include: Data preprocessing, Dimensionality reduction, Cell clustering, Marker gene identification, Cell trajectory analysis, Functional enrichment analysis, visualization, downstream analysis. 	High-throughput sequencing
2.	Dynamic Range		Broader
3.	Probe Design		Does not rely on predefined probes
4.	Data Format		Raw sequencing reads
5.	Quantification Accuracy		Higher accuracy
6.	Detection of Low-Abundance Transcripts		Detect low-abundance transcripts more effectively
7.	Cost and Throughput		Higher cost & provides a comprehensive view of the transcriptome
8.	Data Analysis Complexity		Complex analysis
9.	Experimental Flexibility		Data can be reanalyzed for various purposes

Key applications of AI/ML in gene expression data analysis





Case study: AI application in tumor grade classification





Article

Histological Grade of Endometrioid Endometrial Cancer and Relapse Risk Can Be Predicted with Machine Learning from Gene Expression Data

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Article download link: <u>https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8430924/</u> Code link: https://github.com/gargyapeter/ucec_ml_grade2021.git

Introduction

- Endometrial carcinoma represents the fourth most frequent type of malignancy among women in developed countries.
- The tumor grade serves as an independent marker of survival and may have an impact on therapy in line.
- Three groups are there:



Rationale of the study

To develop a method to separate the G1 and G3 patients and further divide G2 patients into high-risk and low-risk subgroups based on their global gene expression profiles

Sample filtering



Fig. 1. (a) Workflow of the sample filtering and pre-processing.

Pre-processing details

✓ TCGAbiolink 2.12.6 package, downloaded the level three RNA-sequencing data altogether totaling 588 samples.

✓ The clinical data of the 546 patients of the samples were downloaded from www.cbioportal.org (accessed on 28 October 2020).

✓ Of the remaining 406 people, the G2 patients were separated and the G1 and G3 patients were managed together.

✓ From the total transcript (60,488), the low read counts were removed, and then with the left transcripts (24,349) normalized the gene expression matrix of the merged G1 and G3 groups with the help of the varianceStabilizingTransformation() function.

✓ Normalized the G2 group the same way based on the parameters received for the previous group.

R code for pre-processing

```
Library(TCGAbiolinks)
Library(dplyr)
query <- GDCquery(project = "TCGA-UCEC",</pre>
                      legacy = FALSE,
                      data.category = "Transcriptome Profiling",
                      data.type = "Gene Expression Quantification",
                      workflow.type = "HTSeq - Counts")
GDCdownload(query)
data <- GDCprepare(query, summarizedExperiment = FALSE)</pre>
write.table(data, file='tcgaBiolinks uterus rnaseq raw.txt', sep='\t', row.names=FALSE, col.names=TRUE, quote=FALSE)
coldata=data.frame(grade=original$Neoplasm.Histologic.Grade, row.names = colnames(rnaseq))
cts=as.matrix(rnaseq)
library("DESeq2")
library("BiocParallel")
ddsTrain <- DESeqDataSetFromMatrix(countData = cts, colData = coldata, design = ~grade)
keep <- rowMeans(counts(ddsTrain)) > 4
ddsTrain <- ddsTrain[keep,]
dim(ddsTrain)
ddsTrain <- estimateSizeFactors(ddsTrain)</pre>
ddsTrain <- estimateDispersions(ddsTrain)</pre>
vst <- varianceStabilizingTransformation(ddsTrain, blind = FALSE)</pre>
array=as.data.frame(t(assay(vst)))
all(rownames(coldata)==rownames(assay))
array$label=coldata$grade
write.table(array, file='uterus_rnaseq_VST.txt', sep='\t', row.names=TRUE, col.names=TRUE, quote=FALSE)
```

Model development



Fig. 1. (b) Flowchart of data modelling.

Results



Fig. 2. Principal component analysis of G1 (blue dots) and G3 (red triangles) groups



(c)

Fig. 3. ROC curves of the cross-validation rounds (a) and the test data (b). The blue line represents the mean AUC value and the grey area represents the standard deviation. (c) Confusion matrix of the test data.

Grade 📥 low-risk G2 📥 high-risk G2



Fig. 4. Kaplan–Meier curves of relapse-free survival between groups predicted by machine learning model. Blue: low-risk G2, red: high-risk G2. Cox-Mantel test p-value 0.037.



True Grade



(c)



(d)

Elastic-net coefficients (top 12)

Fig. 5. (a) Iterative retraining during the search for the minimum number of eligible genes. (b) ROC curves of the test data. (c) Confusion matrix of the test data (d) Panel showing the top 12 most relevant genes' ID and their elastic-net coefficient respectively. (e) Kaplan–Meier curves of relapse-free survival between groups predicted by our simplified machine learning model. Cox-Mantel test p-value = 0.0147.



Fig. 6. Kaplan–Meier curves of overall survival between groups with high gene expression and low gene expression of selected genes.

Kaplan–Meier curves for selected genes



- ✓ High expression of FOXB1, HABP2, EDN3, B3GAT1- DT, and DKK4 was associated with low-risk phenotype.
- ✓ High expression of RPL41P1, MAL, UCHL1, CRABP1, PEG10, RPS28P7, and MLF1 was responsible for more clinically aggressive behavior

Key findings

- ✓ RNA-sequencing data from the TCGA project and machine learning to develop a model which can correctly classify grade 1 and grade 3 samples. They used the trained model on grade 2 patients to subdivide them into low-risk and high-risk groups.
- ✓ With iterative retraining, they selected the most relevant 12 transcripts to build a simplified model without losing accuracy. Both models had a high AUC of 0.93.

Significance

- \checkmark The approach overcomes the subjective components of the histological evaluation.
- The developed method can be automated to perform a prescreening of the samples before a final decision is made by pathologists.
- ✓ A translational approach based on machine learning methods could allow for better therapeutic planning for grade 2 endometrial cancer patients.

