

Glucose-galactose malabsorption is an inherited metabolic disorder characterized by the small intestine's inability to transport and absorb glucose and galactose (simple sugars or monosaccharides). Glucose and galactose have very similar chemical structures, and normally the same transport enzyme provides them with entry into specialized cells in the small intestine where they are absorbed and transferred to other cells. As a result of a mutation on chromosome 22, the transport enzyme does not function properly and the result is glucose-galactose malabsorption. Glucose-galactose malabsorption is an extremely rare disorder. It's been estimated that there are approximately 200 cases worldwide. Two-thirds of those affected are females. One report suggests that about half of the cases of severe GGM reported have occurred among families that have experienced intermarriage (consanguinity). The diagnosis is usually made upon review of the presenting signs especially the pervasive, watery diarrhea. A simple test, known as the "glucose breath hydrogen test" is often used to confirm the physical diagnosis.