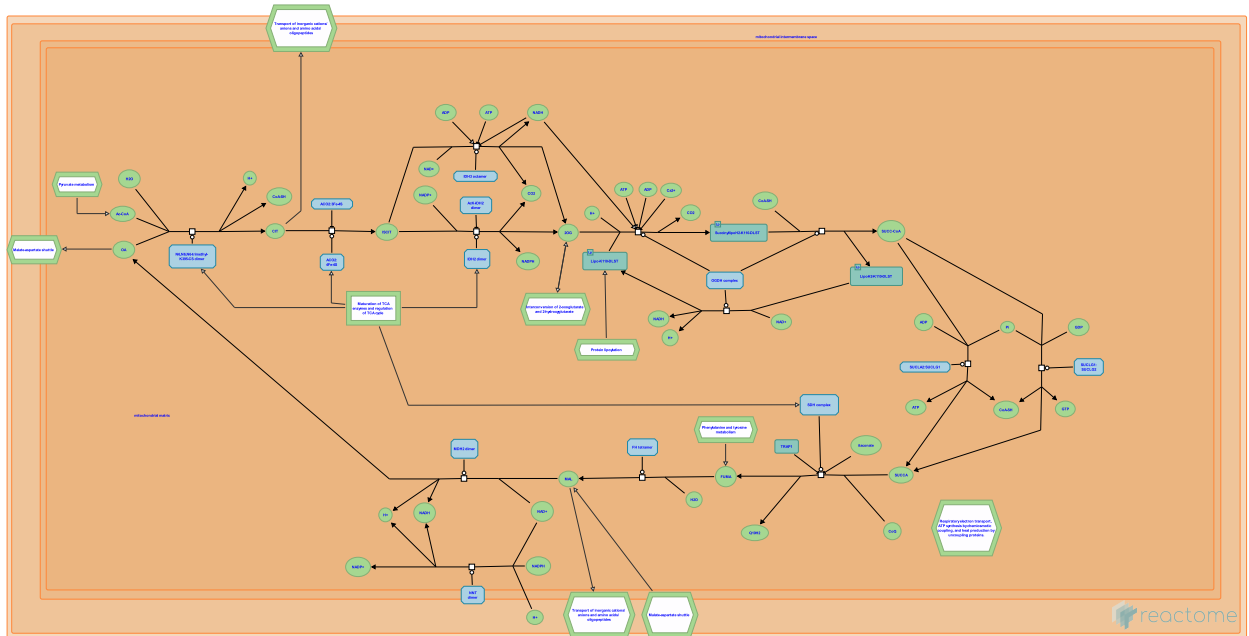


# Citric acid cycle (TCA cycle)



Birney, E., D'Eustachio, P., Hill, DP., Stephan, R.

European Bioinformatics Institute, New York University Langone Medical Center, Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, Oregon Health and Science University.

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This is just an excerpt of a full-length report for this pathway. To access the complete report, please download it at the [Reactome Textbook](https://reactome.org/textbook).

26/04/2024

## Introduction

Reactome is open-source, open access, manually curated and peer-reviewed pathway database. Pathway annotations are authored by expert biologists, in collaboration with Reactome editorial staff and cross-referenced to many bioinformatics databases. A system of evidence tracking ensures that all assertions are backed up by the primary literature. Reactome is used by clinicians, geneticists, genomics researchers, and molecular biologists to interpret the results of high-throughput experimental studies, by bioinformaticians seeking to develop novel algorithms for mining knowledge from genomic studies, and by systems biologists building predictive models of normal and disease variant pathways.

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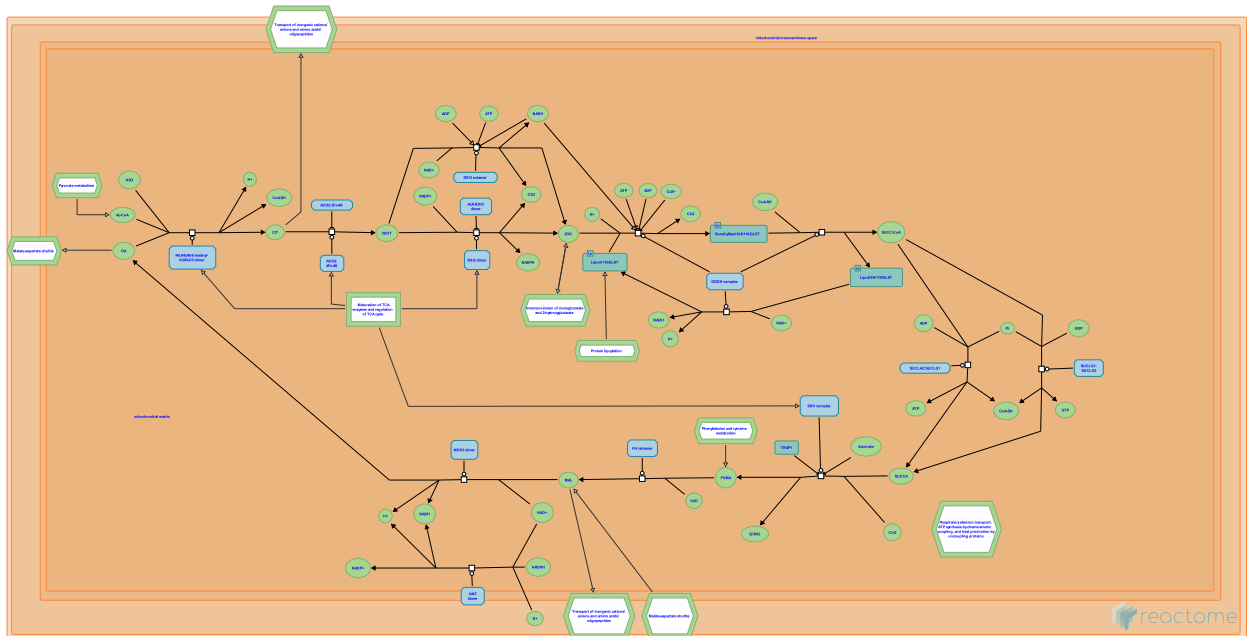
Reactome database release: 88

This document contains 3 pathways and 10 reactions ([see Table of Contents](#))

## Citric acid cycle (TCA cycle) ↗

**Stable identifier:** R-HSA-71403

**Compartments:** mitochondrion



In the citric acid or tricarboxylic acid (TCA) cycle, the acetyl group of acetyl CoA (derived primarily from oxidative decarboxylation of pyruvate, beta-oxidation of long-chain fatty acids, and catabolism of ketone bodies and several amino acids) can be completely oxidized to CO<sub>2</sub> in reactions that also yield one high-energy phosphate bond (as GTP or ATP) and four reducing equivalents (three NADH + H<sup>+</sup>, and one FADH<sub>2</sub>). Then, the electron transport chain oxidizes NADH and FADH<sub>2</sub> to yield nine more high-energy phosphate bonds (as ATP). All reactions of the citric acid cycle take place in the mitochondrion.

Eight canonical reactions mediate the synthesis of citrate from acetyl-CoA and oxaloacetate and the metabolism of citrate to re-form oxaloacetate. Three reactions are reversible: the interconversions of citrate and isocitrate, of fumarate and malate, and of malate and oxaloacetate. The reverse reactions are irrelevant under normal physiological conditions but appear to have a role in glucose- and glutamine-stimulated insulin secretion (Zhang et al., 2020) and cancer metabolism (e.g., Jiang et al., 2016). Succinate synthesis from succinyl-CoA can be coupled to the phosphorylation of either GDP (the canonical reaction) or ADP; we annotate both reactions. Two mitochondrial isocitrate dehydrogenase isozymes catalyze the oxidative decarboxylation of isocitrate to form alpha-ketoglutarate (2-oxoglutarate): IDH3 catalyzes the canonical reaction coupled to the reduction of NAD<sup>+</sup>, while IDH2 catalyzes the same reaction coupled to the reduction of NADP<sup>+</sup>, a reaction whose normal physiological function is unclear. Both reactions are annotated.

The cyclical nature of the reactions responsible for the oxidation of acetate was first suggested by Hans Krebs from biochemical studies of pigeon breast muscle (Krebs et al., 1938; Krebs and Eggleston, 1940). Ochoa and colleagues studied many molecular details of individual reactions, mainly by studying enzymes purified from pig hearts (Ochoa, 1980). While the human homologs of these enzymes have all been identified, their biochemical characterization has, in general, been limited, and many molecular details of the human reactions are inferred from those worked out in studies of the model systems. Studies examining the impact of elevated citric acid cycle intermediates such as succinate and fumarate led to the recognition of the role of metabolites in driving cancer progression ('oncometabolites') (Pollard et al., 2005; reviewed in Hayashi et al., 2018). The role of TCA enzymes in disease was reviewed by Kang et al., 2021.

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## Editions

2003-01-28	Authored	Birney, E.
2009-12-26	Revised	D'Eustachio, P.
2024-02-15	Reviewed	Hill, DP.
2024-03-06	Edited	D'Eustachio, P.

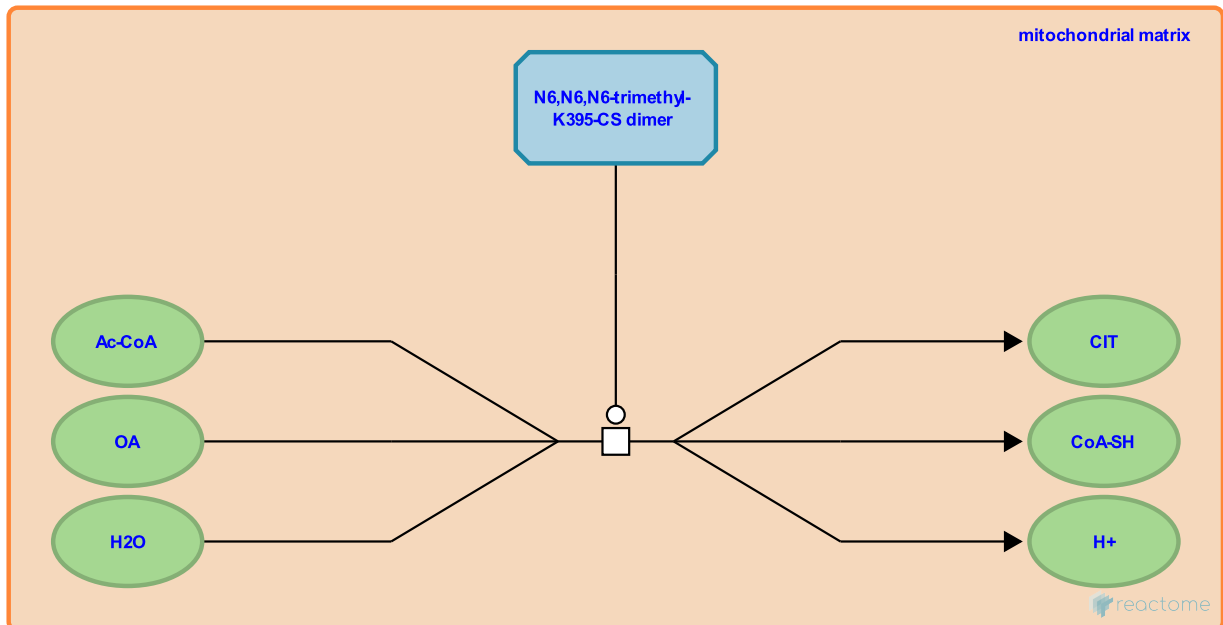
## CS acetylates OA to citrate ↗

**Location:** Citric acid cycle (TCA cycle)

**Stable identifier:** R-HSA-70975

**Type:** transition

**Compartments:** mitochondrial matrix



Mitochondrial citrate synthase (CS) dimer catalyzes the irreversible reaction of acetyl-CoA, water, and oxaloacetate to form citrate and coenzyme A. This reaction is the entry point of two-carbon units into the citric acid cycle. The reaction is subject to allosteric regulation. Most of the time, CS is trimethylated on Lys-395 which attenuates its enzymatic activity (Malecki et al. 2017). The gene encoding the human enzyme has been cloned (Goldenthal et al. 1998), but the enzyme has not been characterized in detail. Its properties are inferred from those of the well-studied homologous pig enzyme (e.g., Morgunov and Srere 1998).

CS dimer, malate dehydrogenase MDH2, and aconitase ACO2 form a multienzyme complex ("metabolon") that optimally channels the substrate flow between them (Fahien & Kmietek, 1983; Wu & Minter, 2014; Omini et al., 2021).

**Preceded by:** MDH2 dimer dehydrogenates MAL

**Followed by:** ACO2 isomerizes citrate

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2009-12-26	Revised	D'Eustachio, P.
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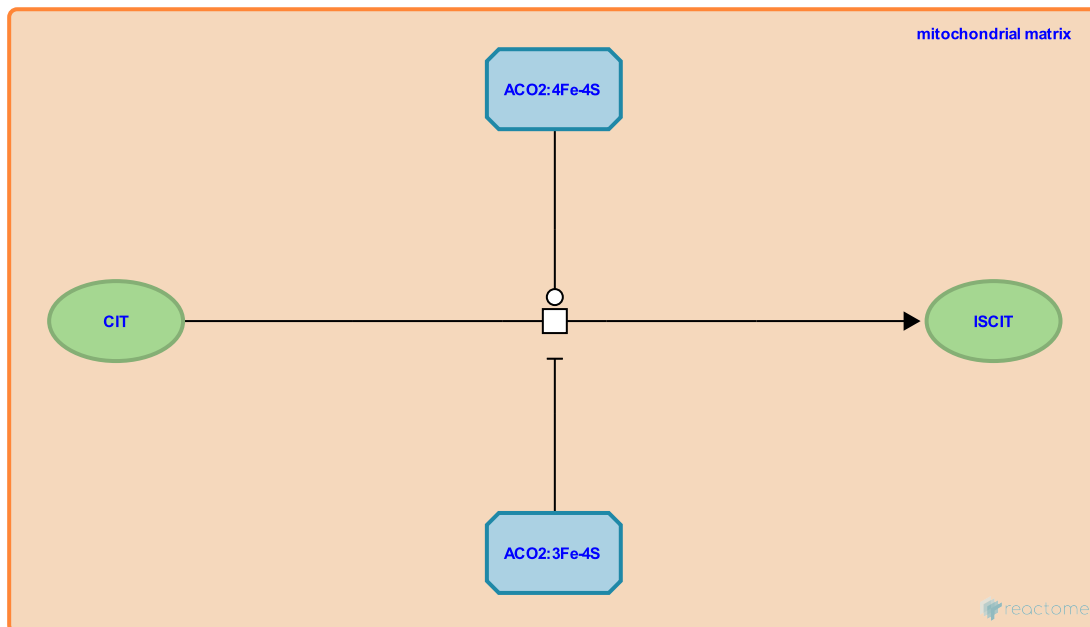
## ACO2 isomerizes citrate ↗

**Location:** Citric acid cycle (TCA cycle)

**Stable identifier:** R-HSA-70971

**Type:** transition

**Compartments:** mitochondrial matrix



Mitochondrial aconitase (ACO2) reversibly converts citrate to isocitrate via a cis-aconitate intermediate. Mitochondrial aconitase activity has been demonstrated in diverse human tissue extracts (Slaughter et al., 1975), and a protein homologous to the well-characterized porcine enzyme has been purified from human tissues (Baldwin et al., 1991). Mutations in the ACO2 gene can lead to an infantile neurodegenerative disease (ICRD; MIM:614559) and optic atrophy (OPA9; MIM:616289) (see Guehlouz et al., 2021).

**Preceded by:** CS acetylates OA to citrate

**Followed by:** IDH2 dimer decarboxylates isocitrate, IDH3 complex decarboxylates isocitrate

### Literature references

Desquiret-Dumas, V., Milea, D., Procaccio, V., den Dunnen, JT., Bris, C., Reynier, P. et al. (2021). ACO2 clinicobiological dataset with extensive phenotype ontology annotation. *Sci Data*, 8, 205. ↗

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2009-12-26	Revised	D'Eustachio, P.
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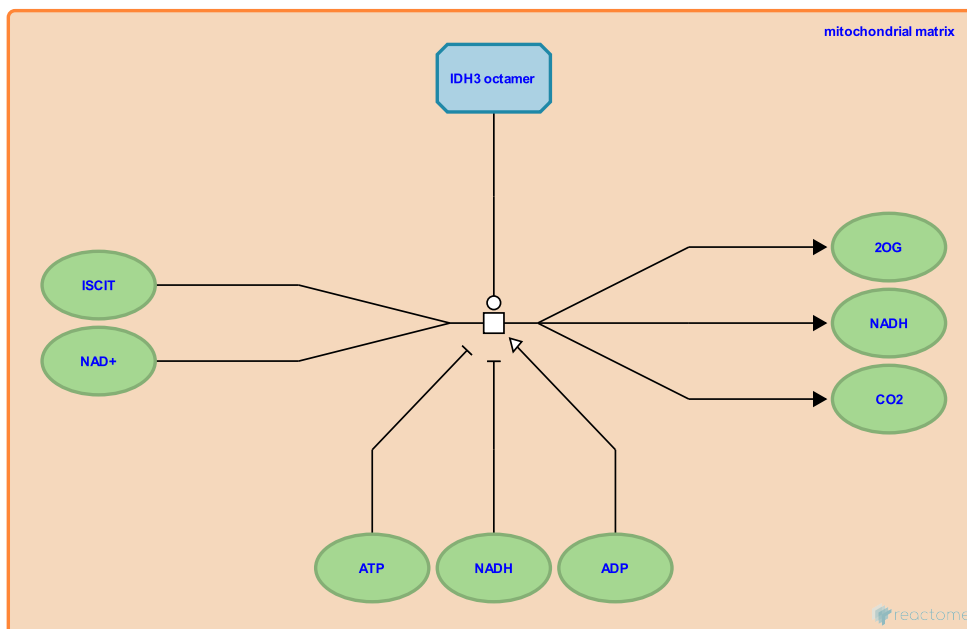
## IDH3 complex decarboxylates isocitrate ↗

**Location:** Citric acid cycle (TCA cycle)

**Stable identifier:** R-HSA-70967

**Type:** transition

**Compartments:** mitochondrial matrix



Mitochondrial isocitrate dehydrogenase IDH3 catalyzes the irreversible reaction of isocitrate and NAD<sup>+</sup> to form alpha-ketoglutarate, CO<sub>2</sub>, and NADH. The enzyme is a heterooctamer containing two copies of a heterotetramer of two IDH3A, one IDH3B, one IDH3G, and two Mn<sup>++</sup> (PDB 7CE3; Sun et al., 2020; Dange and Colman, 2010). It is activated by ADP (Soundar et al., 2003, 2006; Bzymek and Colman, 2007) and inhibited by NADH and high concentrations of ATP (Cohen & Colman, 1972; Sun et al., 2020). This is the first of four oxidation reactions in the citric acid cycle and the first decarboxylation.

Mutations in the IDH3A, IDH3B gene can cause retinitis pigmentosa (RP46; MIM:612572; RP90; MIM:619007) (Hartong et al., 2008).

**Preceded by:** ACO2 isomerizes citrate

### Literature references

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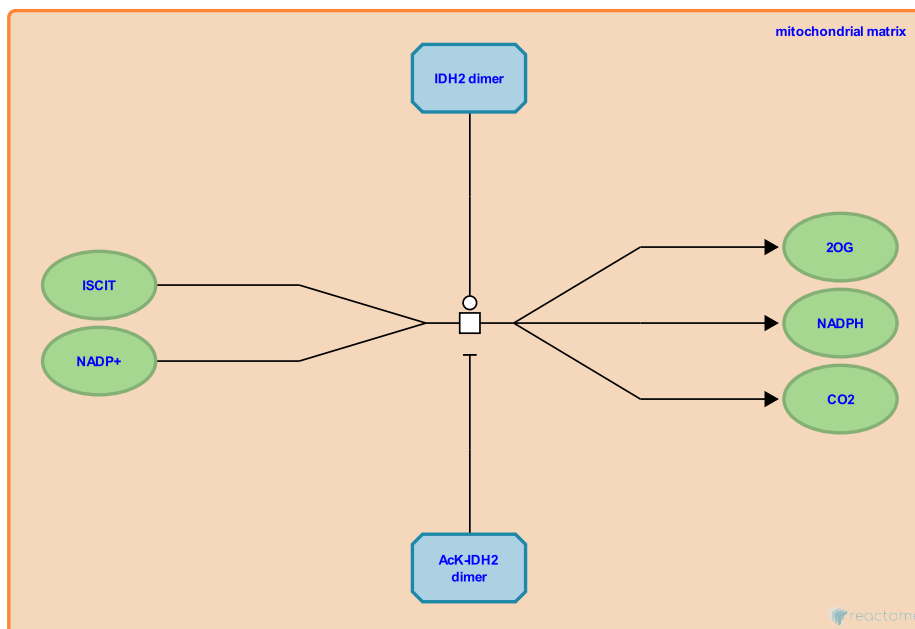
## IDH2 dimer decarboxylates isocitrate ↗

**Location:** Citric acid cycle (TCA cycle)

**Stable identifier:** R-HSA-450984

**Type:** transition

**Compartments:** mitochondrial matrix



Mitochondrial isocitrate dehydrogenase IDH2 catalyzes the irreversible reaction of isocitrate and NADP<sup>+</sup> to form alpha-oxoglutarate ( $\alpha$ OG,  $\alpha$ KG), CO<sub>2</sub>, and NADPH (Hartong et al. 2008). The structure of the active human enzyme has not been determined experimentally but is inferred to be a homodimer with one Mn<sup>++</sup> bound to each subunit based on detailed studies of the homologous pig enzyme (Ceccarelli et al. 2002). NADP-specific IDH2 was the first isocitrate dehydrogenase isoenzyme to be characterized in biochemical studies of the mammalian TCA cycle (Ochoa 1948). Later work with yeast revealed the existence of both NADP-specific (IDH2-homologous) and NAD-specific (IDH3-homologous) enzymes and demonstrated the ADP-dependence of the latter (Kornberg and Pricer 1951), consistent with the now widely accepted view that IDH3 mediates the conversion of isocitrate to alpha-ketoglutarate in the TCA cycle. The recent observation that individuals homozygous for IDH3 mutations that sharply reduce its activity do not show symptoms of deficient energy metabolism in most tissues raises the possibility that the IDH2 reaction may play an accessory role in the TCA cycle (Hartong et al. 2008). Also, IDH2 is a major NADPH producer in the mitochondria and thus plays a crucial role in cellular defense against oxidative stress-induced damage (Jo et al., 2001).

Specific mutations in the IDH2, and also the IDH1 gene, lead to dysfunction of its normal catalytic activity, but also to a new ('neomorphic') function where  $\alpha$ OG is reduced to D-2-hydroxyglutarate (D2HG). D2HG is an oncometabolite, accumulating considerably in tumors with mutant IDH. While gliomas with mutant IDH1/2 have a better outcome than those with wild-type IDH, mutant IDH can also lead to the rare metabolic disorder D-2-hydroxyglutaric aciduria 2 (D2HGA2; MIM:613657; Kranendijk et al., 2010; reviewed in Alzial et al., 2021).

**Preceded by:** ACO2 isomerizes citrate

**Followed by:** NNT dimer transfers proton from NADPH to NAD<sup>+</sup>

### Literature references

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## Editions

2009-12-26	Authored	D'Eustachio, P.
2024-02-15	Reviewed	Hill, DP.

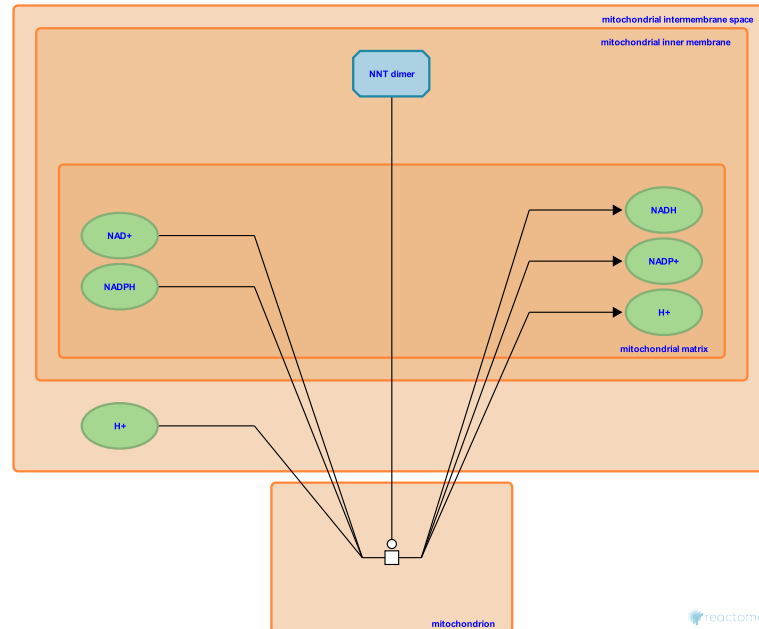
## NNT dimer transfers proton from NADPH to NAD+ ↗

**Location:** Citric acid cycle (TCA cycle)

**Stable identifier:** R-HSA-450971

**Type:** transition

**Compartments:** mitochondrion



NNT (nicotinamide nucleotide transhydrogenase) associated with the inner mitochondrial membrane catalyzes the reaction of mitochondrial NADPH and NAD<sup>+</sup> to form NADP<sup>+</sup> and NADH. The reaction is coupled to the translocation of a proton across the inner mitochondrial membrane into the mitochondrial matrix (Arkblad et al., 1996; White et al., 2000). The active form of NNT is inferred to be a homodimer based on the known structure of its bovine homolog (Yamaguchi & Hatefi, 1991) and the structure of the ovine homolog (Kampjut & Sazanow, 2019). Mutations in NNT can lead to glucocorticoid deficiency (GCCD4; MIM:614736; reviewed in Francisco et al., 2021).

**Preceded by:** [IDH2 dimer decarboxylates isocitrate](#)

### Literature references

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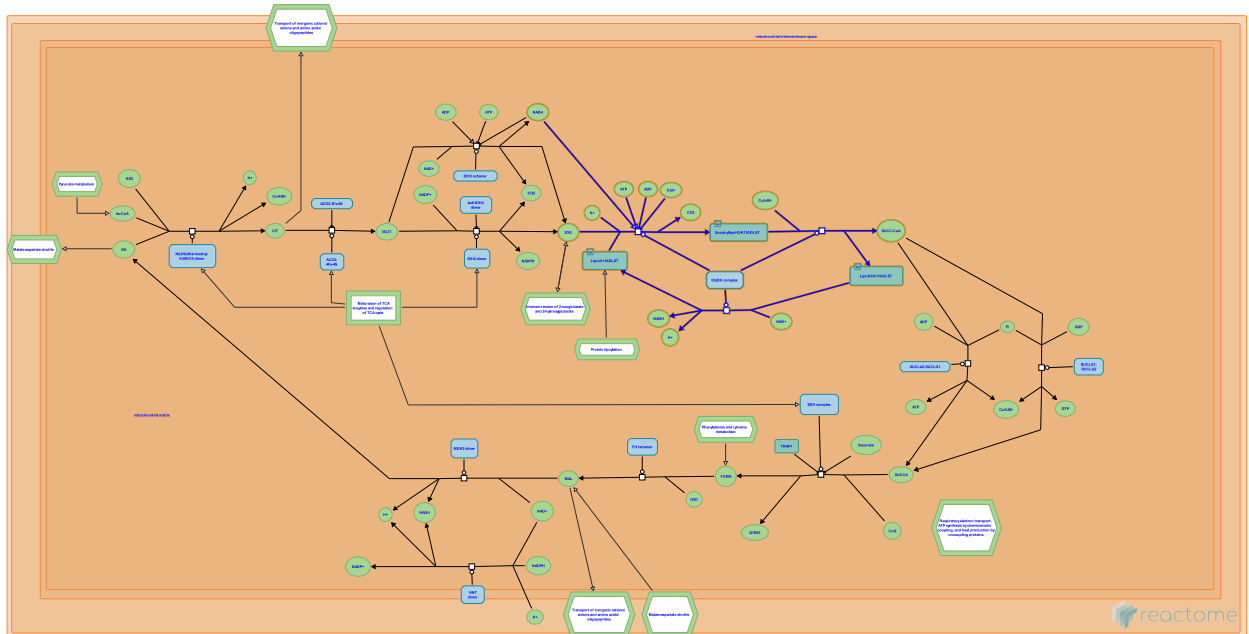
2009-12-26	Authored	D'Eustachio, P.
2024-02-15	Reviewed	Hill, DP.

## OGDH complex synthesizes succinyl-CoA from 2-OG ↗

**Location:** Citric acid cycle (TCA cycle)

**Stable identifier:** R-HSA-9853506

**Compartments:** mitochondrial matrix



The mitochondrial alpha-oxoglutarate dehydrogenase complex ( $\alpha$ OGDH,  $\alpha$ KGDH, OGDHC) catalyzes the reaction of 2-oxoglutarate (2OG), CoASH, and  $\text{NAD}^+$  to form succinyl-CoA,  $\text{CO}_2$ , and  $\text{NADH}$ . The enzyme complex ("metabolon") contains multiple copies of three different proteins, E1 (OGDH), E2 (DLST), and E3 (DLD), each with distinct catalytic activities (Reed and Hackert 1990; Zhou et al 2001). Specifically, it is composed of a core of 24 E2 subunits exhibiting octahedral symmetry. To these subunits are bound up to six E1 dimers and to each of these is bound an E3 dimer (Nagy et al., 2021; Skalidis et al., 2023) and to an adaptive MRPS36 unit (Hevler et al., 2023). The reaction starts with the oxidative decarboxylation of 2OG catalyzed by E1 $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  (alpha ketoglutarate dehydrogenase). Lipoamide cofactor associated with E2 is reduced at the same time. Next, the succinyl group derived from alpha ketoglutarate is transferred to coenzyme A in two steps catalyzed by E2 (dihydrolipoyl transacetylase). Finally, the oxidized form of lipoamide is regenerated and electrons are transferred to  $\text{NAD}^+$  in two steps catalyzed by E3 (dihydrolipoyl dehydrogenase). The biochemical details of this reaction have been worked out first with alpha ketoglutarate dehydrogenase complex and subunits purified from bovine tissue (McCartney et al. 1998).

Generation of reactive oxygen species by OGDHC is a major source of mitochondrial oxidative stress under certain pathological conditions.

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## Editions

2023-11-05	Authored	Stephan, R.
2024-01-22	Edited	Stephan, R.
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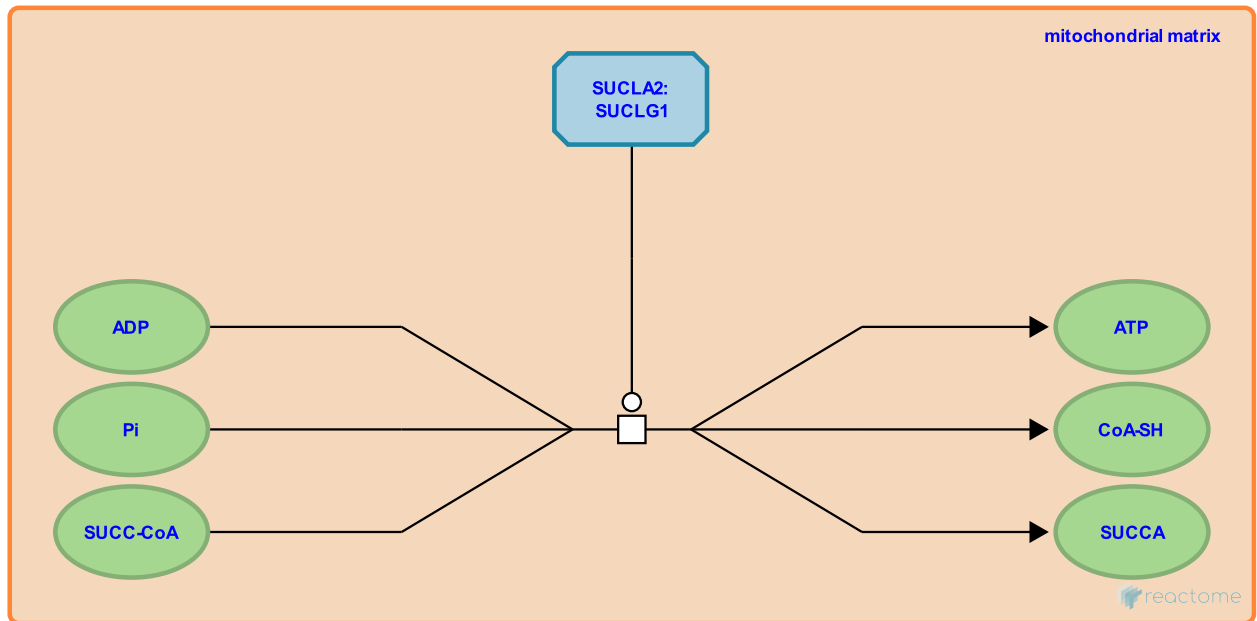
## SUCLG1/A2 cleaves succinyl-CoA ↗

**Location:** Citric acid cycle (TCA cycle)

**Stable identifier:** R-HSA-70997

**Type:** transition

**Compartments:** mitochondrial matrix



Mitochondrial succinate CoA ligase (ADP-forming) catalyzes the reversible conversion of succinyl CoA to succinate plus Coenzyme A, coupled to the conversion of ADP and orthophosphate to ATP.

The enzyme catalyzing the reaction in vertebrates is a heterodimer of SUCLG1 and SUCLA2 that occurs in two isoforms. The enzymes have been purified from pigeon and rat tissue and characterized in detail. Both isoforms, an alpha:betaA heterodimer and an alpha:betaG heterodimer, catalyze the reversible conversion of succinyl CoA to succinate plus Coenzyme A. The alpha:betaA heterodimer couples this conversion to the synthesis of ATP from ADP and orthophosphate, while the alpha:betaG heterodimer couples it to the synthesis of GTP from GDP and orthophosphate (Johnson et al. 1998a,b; Lambeth et al. 2004). Consistent with these results in model systems, patients homozygous for a mutant allele of the gene encoding the ADP enzyme beta subunit, SUCLA2, are deficient in succinyl CoA ligase activity (Elpeleg et al. 2005).

Both isoforms are found in vivo, and appear to be expressed at different levels in various tissues. Their relative contributions to the flux of carbon atoms through the TCA cycle are unknown. Genetic and biochemical data suggest that the alpha:betaA isoform may be required to catalyze the reverse reaction, conversion of succinate, Coenzyme A, and ATP to succinyl CoA, ADP, and orthophosphate for heme biosynthesis (Furuyama and Sassa 2000).

Mutations in SUCLG1 are the cause of the infantile metabolic disease named mitochondrial DNA depletion syndrome 9 (MTDPS9; MIM:245400; reviewed by Molaei Ramsheh et al., 2020).

**Followed by:** [SDH complex dehydrogenates succinate](#)

### Literature references

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Mehus, JG., Lambeth, DO., Milavetz, BI., Tews, KN., Johnson, JD. (1998). Genetic evidence for the expression of ATP- and GTP-specific succinyl-CoA synthetases in multicellular eucaryotes. *J Biol Chem*, 273, 27580-6. [↗](#)

Lambeth, DO., Frohlich, D., Milavetz, BI., Adkins, S., Tews, KN. (2004). Expression of two succinyl-CoA synthetases with different nucleotide specificities in mammalian tissues. *J Biol Chem*, 279, 36621-4. [↗](#)

## **Editions**

2009-12-26	Revised	D'Eustachio, P.
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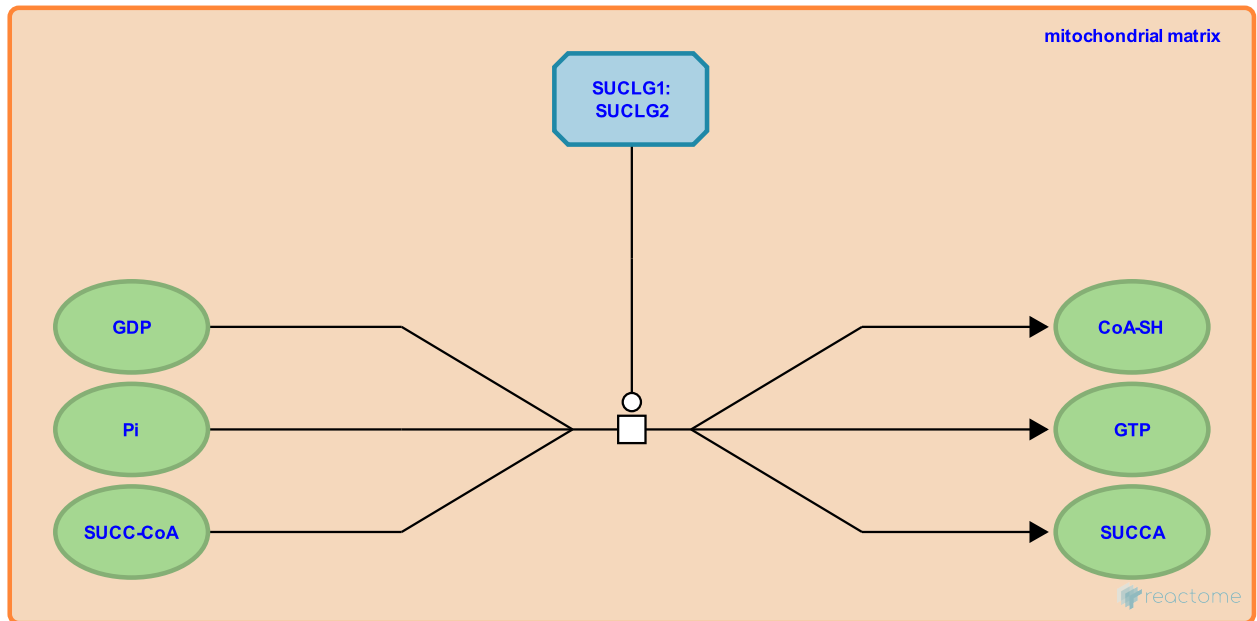
## SUCLG1/G2 cleaves succinyl-CoA ↗

**Location:** Citric acid cycle (TCA cycle)

**Stable identifier:** R-HSA-71775

**Type:** transition

**Compartments:** mitochondrial matrix



Mitochondrial succinate CoA ligase (GDP-forming) catalyzes the reversible conversion of succinyl CoA to succinate plus Coenzyme A, coupled to the conversion of GDP and orthophosphate to GTP. The enzyme is a heterodimer containing SUCLG1 and SUCLG2 monomers.

The enzyme catalyzing the reaction in vertebrates is a heterodimer that occurs in two isoforms. The enzymes have been purified from pigeon and rat tissue and characterized in detail. Both isoforms, an alpha:betaA heterodimer and an alpha:betaG heterodimer, catalyze the reversible conversion of succinyl CoA to succinate plus Coenzyme A. The alpha:betaA heterodimer couples this conversion to the synthesis of ATP from ADP and orthophosphate, while the alpha:betaG heterodimer couples it to the synthesis of GTP from GDP and orthophosphate (Johnson et al. 1998a,b; Lambeth et al. 2004). Consistent with these results in model systems, patients homozygous for a mutant allele of the gene encoding the ADP enzyme beta subunit, SUCLA2, are deficient in succinyl CoA ligase activity (Elpeleg et al. 2005).

Both isoforms are found in vivo, and appear to be expressed at different levels in various tissues. Their relative contributions to the flux of carbon atoms through the TCA cycle are unknown. Genetic and biochemical data suggest that the alpha:betaA isoform may be required to catalyze the reverse reaction, conversion of succinate, Coenzyme A, and ATP to succinyl CoA, ADP, and orthophosphate for heme biosynthesis (Furuyama and Sassa 2000).

Mutations in SUCLG1 are the cause of the infantile metabolic disease named mitochondrial DNA depletion syndrome 9 (MTDPS9; MIM:245400; reviewed by Molaei Ramsheh et al., 2020).

**Followed by:** [SDH complex dehydrogenates succinate](#)

### Literature references

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## Editions

2009-12-26	Revised	D'Eustachio, P.
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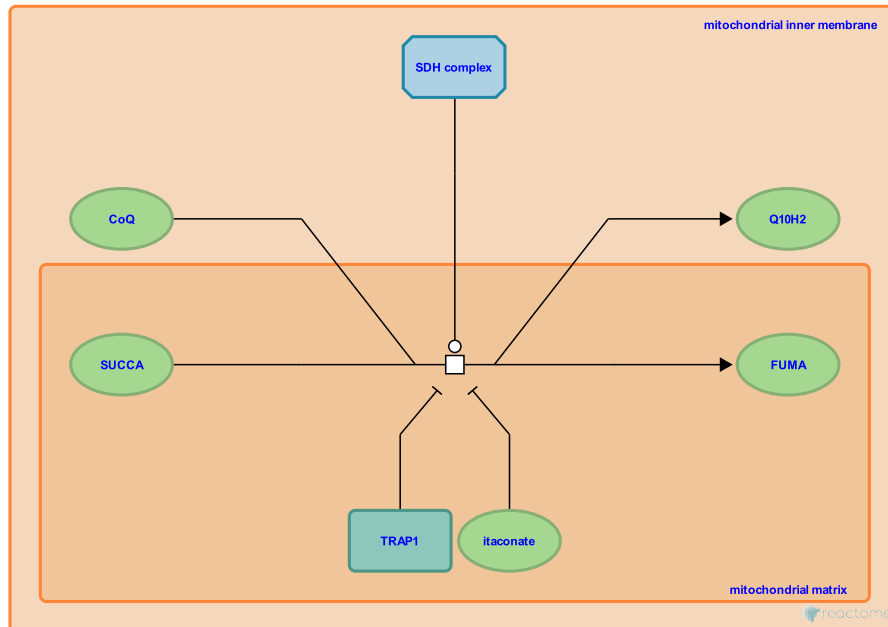
## SDH complex dehydrogenates succinate ↗

**Location:** Citric acid cycle (TCA cycle)

**Stable identifier:** R-HSA-70994

**Type:** transition

**Compartments:** mitochondrial matrix, mitochondrial inner membrane



The succinate dehydrogenase complex (SDH, complex II), associated with the inner mitochondrial membrane, catalyzes the dehydrogenation of succinate to fumarate, reducing ubiquinone (Q10) to ubiquinol (Q10H2) on the membrane part of the enzyme. FAD is covalently bound to His-99 of the SDHA subunit (PDB 6VAX; Sharma et al., 2020). The redox potential of Q10H2 is then used in the electron transfer chain to drive a proton motive force to generate ATP (Devertanian et al., 1964; Renkema et al., 2015)

The endogenous metabolite itaconate has been shown to bind and inhibit Complex II, leading to an accumulation of succinate. Elevated succinate levels modulate immune, hypoxic and metabolic reprogramming pathways, including during oncogenesis (Booth et al, 1952; Selak et al., 2005; Cordes et al., 2016; reviewed by Hayash et al., 2018; Peace & O'Neill, 2022). The mitochondrial heat shock protein 75 kDa (TRAP1) inhibits Complex II which elicits respiratory downregulation, leading to a pseudohypoxic state. This state is caused by succinate-dependent HIF1-alpha stabilisation which, in turn, can promote tumorigenesis (Sciacovelli et al. 2013, Yoshida et al. 2013, Guzzo et al. 2014).

Mutations in all four SDH subunits (SDHA, SDHB, SDHC, SDHD) have been reported, leading to distinct phenotypes of SDH deficiency and tumors (reviewed by Briere et al., 2005).

**Preceded by:** [SUCLG1/A2 cleaves succinyl-CoA](#), [SUCLG1/G2 cleaves succinyl-CoA](#)

**Followed by:** [FH tetramer hydrates fumarate to L-malate](#)

### Literature references

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Jones, RG., Sergushichev, A., Khader, S., Lampropoulou, V., Pearce, EJ., Cervantes-Barragan, L. et al. (2016). Itaconate Links Inhibition of Succinate Dehydrogenase with Macrophage Metabolic Remodeling and Regulation of Inflammation. *Cell Metab*, 24, 158-66. [↗](#)

## **Editions**

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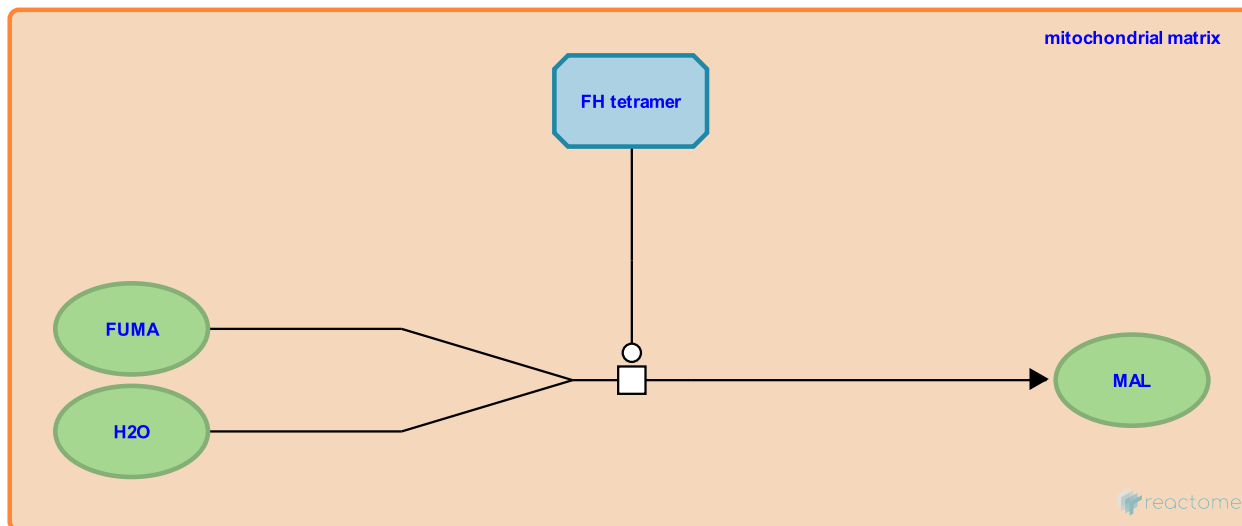
## FH tetramer hydrates fumarate to L-malate [↗](#)

**Location:** Citric acid cycle (TCA cycle)

**Stable identifier:** R-HSA-70982

**Type:** transition

**Compartments:** mitochondrial matrix



Mitochondrial fumarate hydratase (FH) tetramer catalyzes the reversible reaction of fumarate and water to form malate, the seventh step of the TCA cycle (Ajalla Aleixo et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2020). Mutations in the FH gene can lead to fumarate deficiency (FMRD, MIM:606812) or to leiomyomatosis and renal cell cancer (HLRCC, MIM:150800) (Bourgeron et al., 1994; reviewed by Giallongo et al., 2023).

**Preceded by:** SDH complex dehydrogenates succinate

**Followed by:** MDH2 dimer dehydrogenates MAL

### Literature references

Lehming, N., Lim, TK., Lin, Q., Ramamurthy, D., Tan, J., Yip, J. et al. (2020). Post-translational Modifications of Fumarate Regulate its Enzyme Activity and Function in Respiration and the DNA Damage Response. *J Mol Biol*, 432, 6108-6126. [↗](#)

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### Editions

2009-12-26	Revised	D'Eustachio, P.
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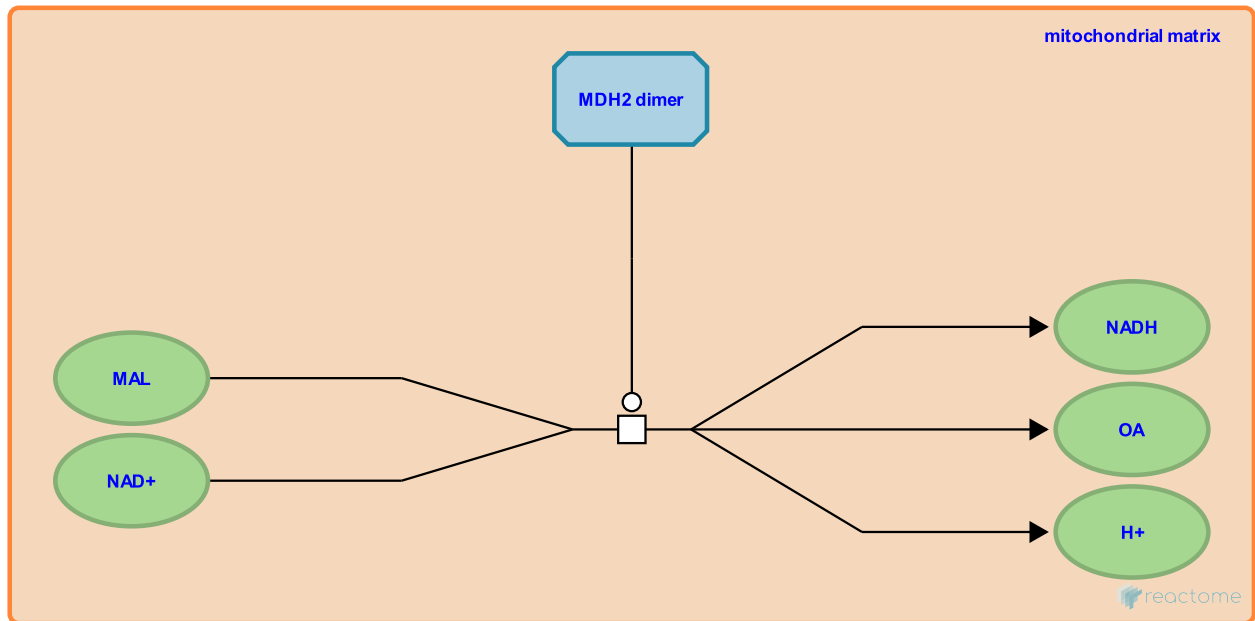
## MDH2 dimer dehydrogenates MAL [↗](#)

**Location:** [Citric acid cycle \(TCA cycle\)](#)

**Stable identifier:** R-HSA-70979

**Type:** transition

**Compartments:** mitochondrial matrix



Mitochondrial malate dehydrogenase (MDH2) dimer catalyzes the reversible reaction of malate and NAD<sup>+</sup> to form oxaloacetate (OA) and NADH + H<sup>+</sup> (Luo et al. 2006; Eo et al., 2022). This reaction is highly endergonic but is pulled in the direction annotated here when the TCA cycle is operating. The active enzyme is a palmitoylated homodimer (Sanchez et al. 1998; Pei et al., 2022). Mutations in MDH2 can cause infantile epileptic encephalopathy (DEE51, MIM:617339; see Priestley et al., 2022).

**Preceded by:** [FH tetramer hydrates fumarate to L-malate](#)

**Followed by:** [CS acetylates OA to citrate](#)

### Literature references

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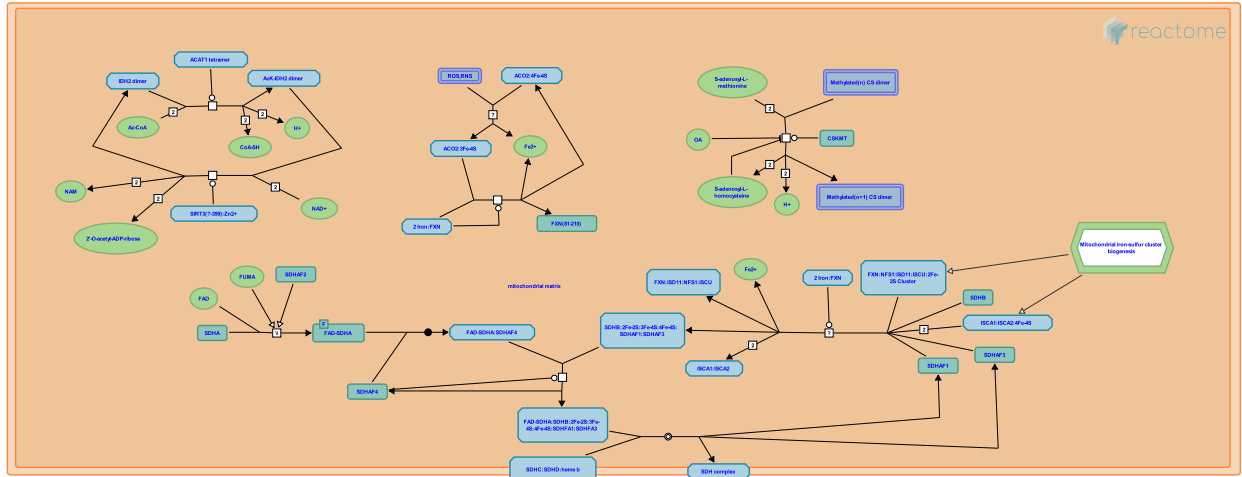
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# Maturation of TCA enzymes and regulation of TCA cycle ↗

**Location:** Citric acid cycle (TCA cycle)

**Stable identifier:** R-HSA-9854311

**Compartments:** mitochondrion



(Citrate-synthase)-lysyl-methyltransferase (CSKMT, METTL12) transfers three methyl groups from S-adenosylmethionine (SAM) to lysine-395 of citrate synthase (CS). The expression of CSKMT is low or absent in many normal organ tissues, but the trimethylated form is predominant in most cell lines tested. The modification is evolutionarily conserved, with contradicting reports on the activity of modified CS, while the effect on the whole CS/ACO2 metabolon was not investigated. Oxalacetate inhibits methyltransferase activity (Malecki et al., 2017; Rhein et al., 2017; reviewed in Qi et al., 2023).

## Literature references

Arnold, PK., Finley, LWS. (2023). Regulation and function of the mammalian tricarboxylic acid cycle. *J Biol Chem*, 299, 102838. ↗

## Editions

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