INTRODUCTION

Despite the potentially severe reactions, some individuals with inactive ALDH2 go on to become alcoholics. We compared the characteristics of such alcoholics with those carrying active ALDH2, and attempted to identify risk factors for the development of alcohol use disorders (AUDs).

METHODS

The subjects were male alcoholics with inactive ALDH2, male alcoholics with active ALDH2, female alcoholics with both inactive and active ALDH2 and healthy males and females as the control groups. To identify the risk factors, we assessed the psychological characteristics, significant life-events and coping skills. In this study, we focused on coping skills and compared the results among five groups.

RESULTS

Male alcoholics with inactive ALDH2 and female alcoholics were recognized as possessing particularly poor coping skills. Comparing these five groups, it was revealed that in terms of exhibiting maladaptive coping skills, the five groups could be listed in the following descending order; female alcoholics, male alcoholics with inactive ALDH2, male alcoholics with active ALDH2, female controls, and male controls.

CONCLUSION

This study identified poor coping skills as one of the risk factors for the onset of AUDs and indicates gender differences in the risk factors for the development of alcohol dependence.