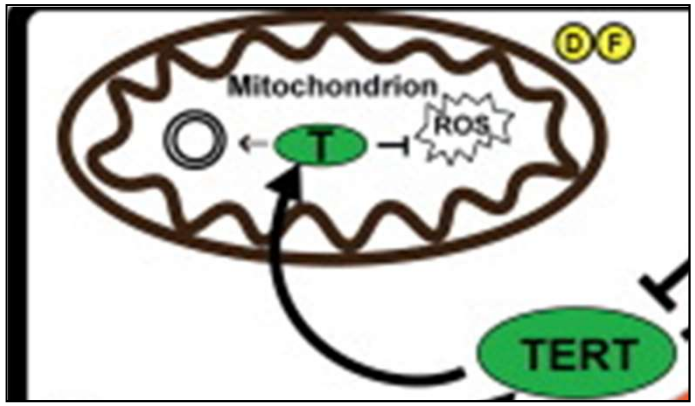
Extratelomeric functions of TERT

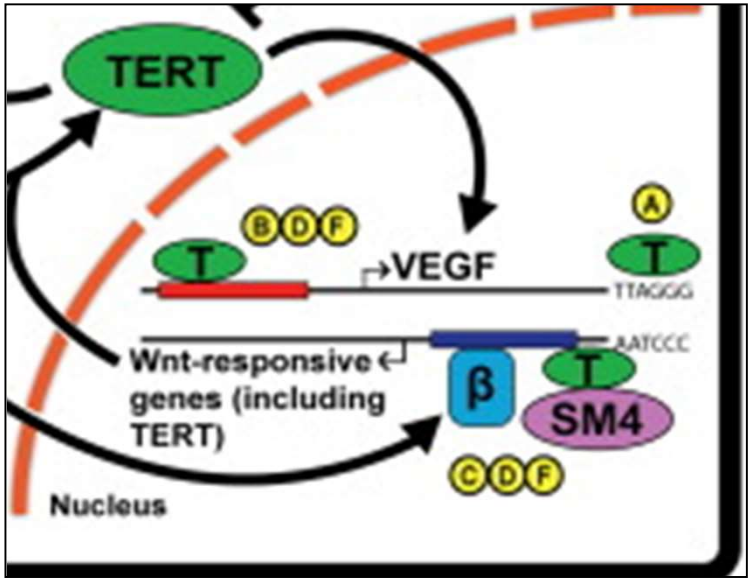
coupled to cancer cell dissemination and tumor formation.

Means to the ends: The role of telomeres and telomere processing machinery in metastasis
Biochimica et Biophysica Acta (BBA) - Reviews on Cancer, 2016,

TERT also controls gene expression by acting as a transcription factor



Under conditions of oxidative stress, TERT may translocate to mitochondria and regulate the expression of mitochondrial genes



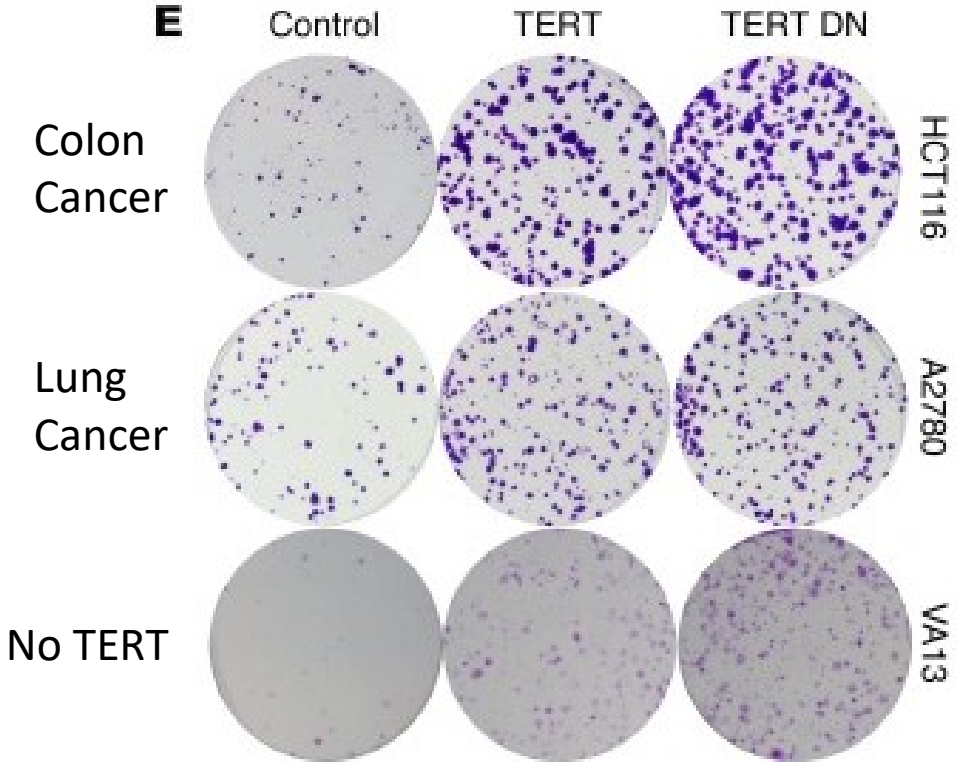
TERT targets the expression of vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) in association with chromatin remodeler SMARCA4 (SM4).

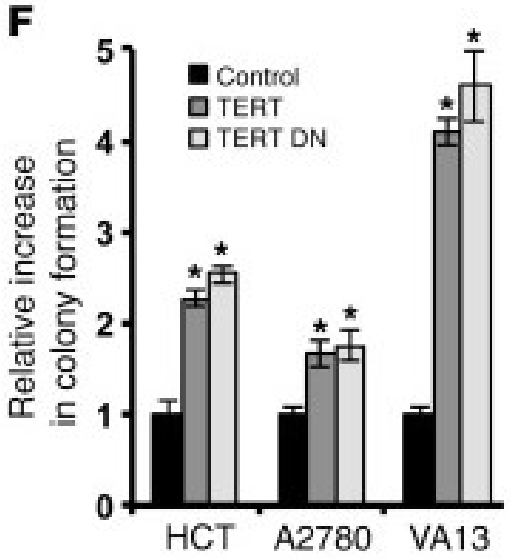
TERT also controls gene expression by acting as a transcription factor

Extratelomeric functions of TERT.

TERT activates RNA pol III–driven promoters by directly interacting with RPC32

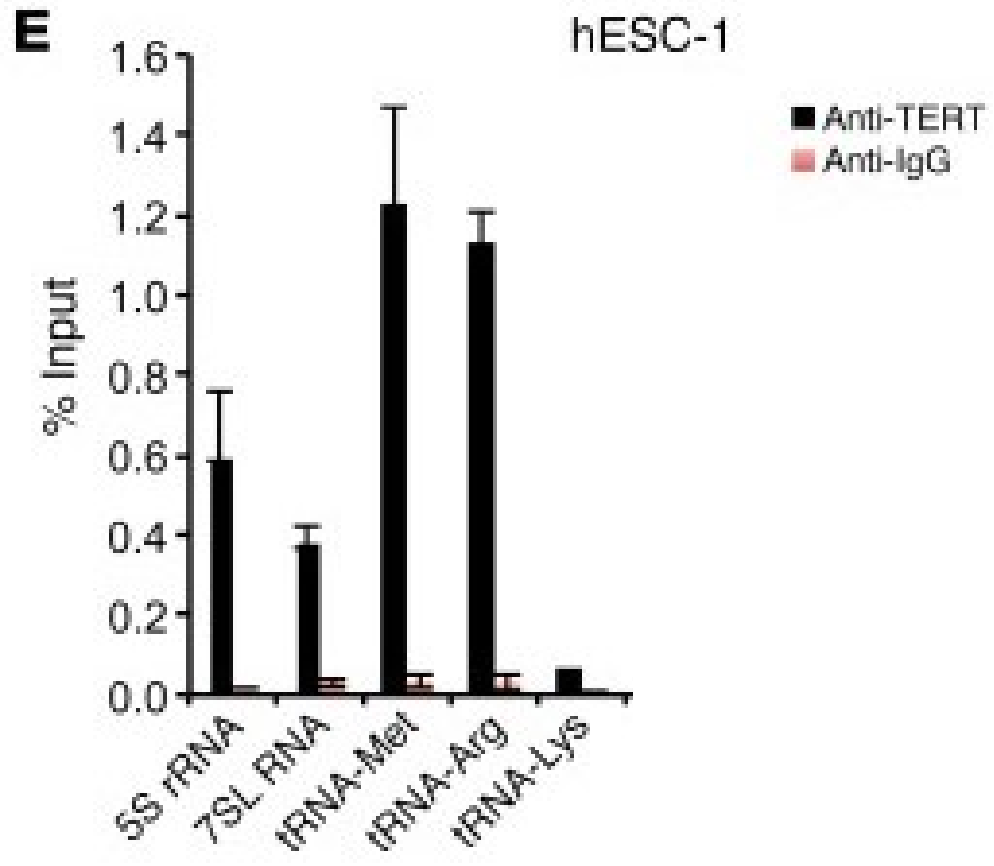
Colony formation assay in HCT116 cells expressing TERT and TERT DN





catalytically inactive TERT (TERT DN)

Genome-wide binding of endogenous TERT reveals its association with RNA polymerase III target genes

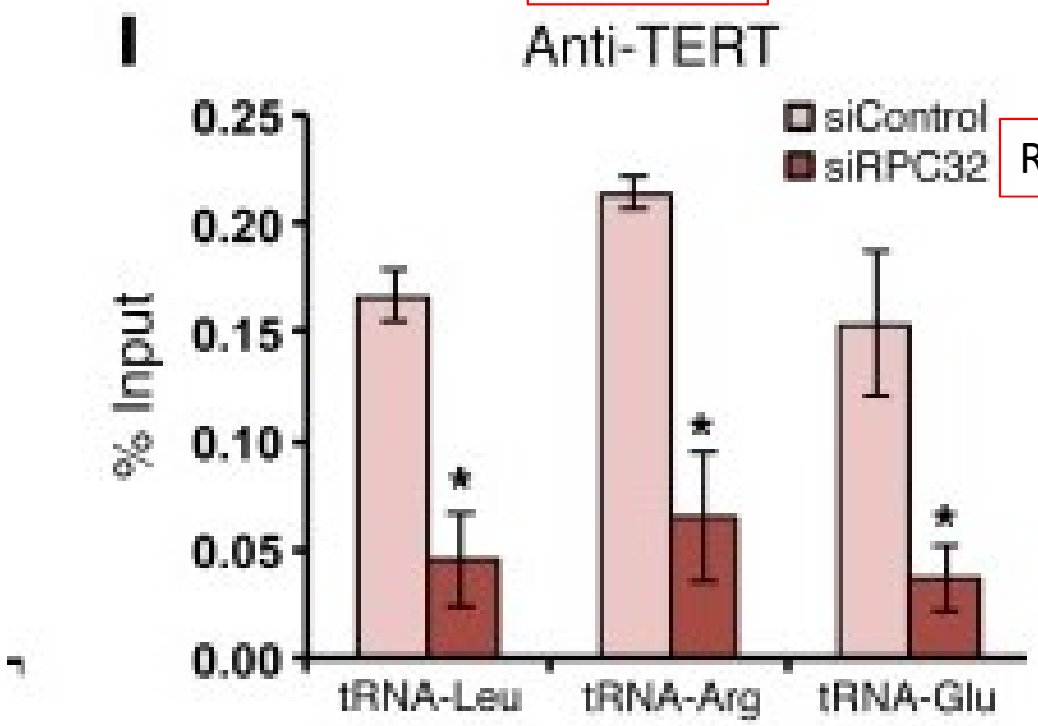


1 ChIP using TERT Ab and IgG Ab (control)

2 qPCR with primers specific for the indicated target regions

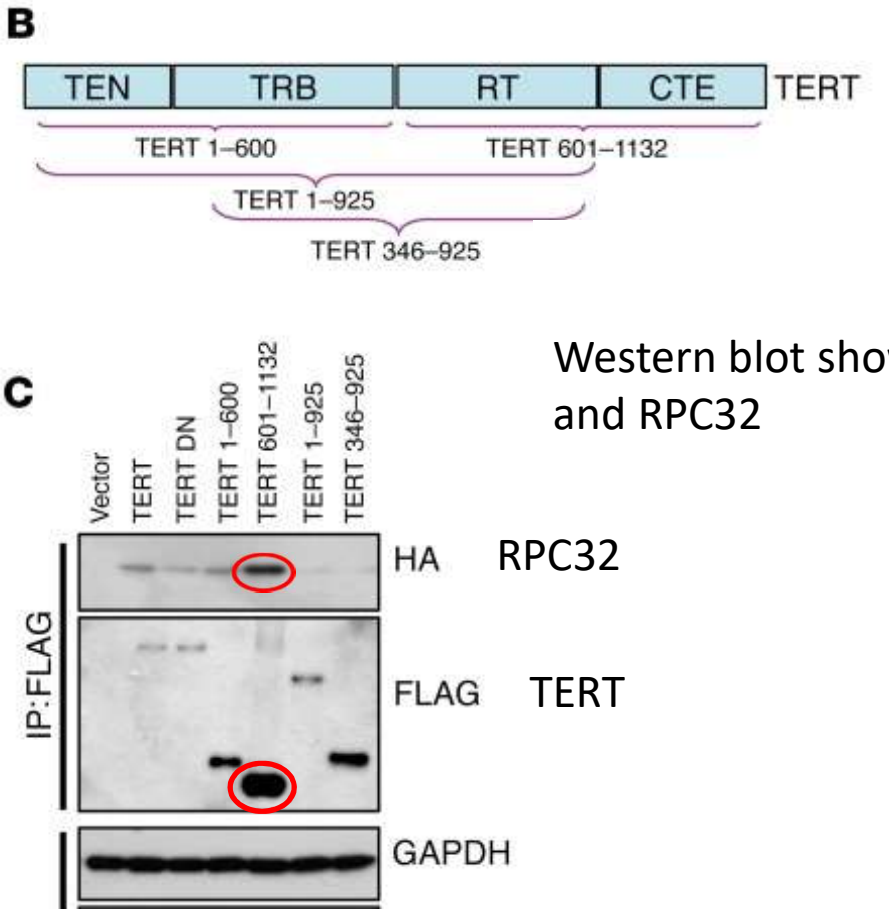
RPC32 is essential for activation of RNA pol III–driven promoters by TERT

ChIP



RNA pol III subunit RPC32

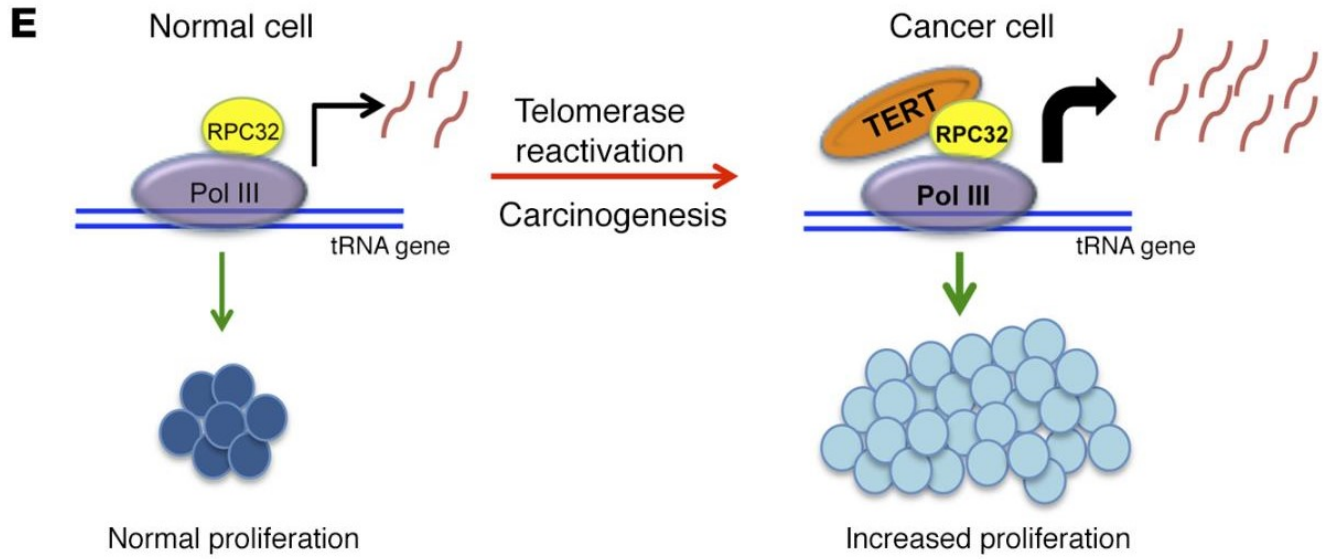
TERT activates RNA pol III–driven promoters by directly interacting with RPC32



Western blot shows co-IP between TERT and RPC32

293T cells were transfected with Flag-tagged TERT, TERT DN and its deletion constructs, along with HA-tagged RPC32

TERT associates with the RPC32 subunit of RNA pol III and augments tRNA expression in breast cancer



J Clin Invest. 2016;126(10):4045-4060

Schematic representation of the metastatic cascade,
A) primary tumor formation,
B) endothelial cell (EC) recruitment and Angiogenesis
C) cancer cell migration and invasion into surrounding tissue,
D) cancer cell intravasation and survival within the system circulation,
E) extravasation and colonization of distant organs either as single cells/micrometastases or
F) overt metastatic lesions

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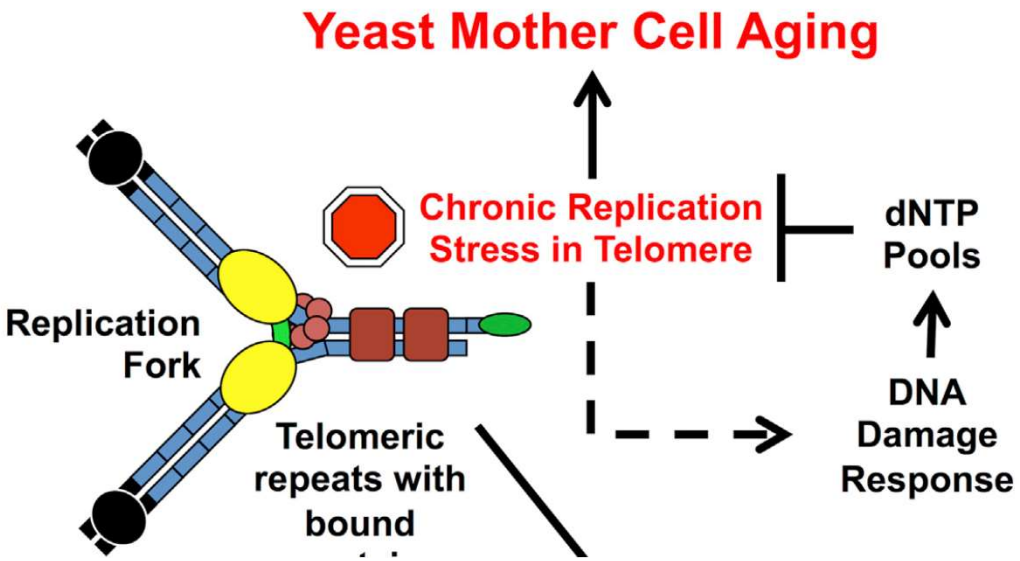
Means to the ends: The role of telomeres and telomere processing machinery in metastasis Nathaniel J. Robinson, William P. Schiemann Biochimica et Biophysica Acta (BBA) - Reviews on Cancer, 2016 Available online 18 October 2016

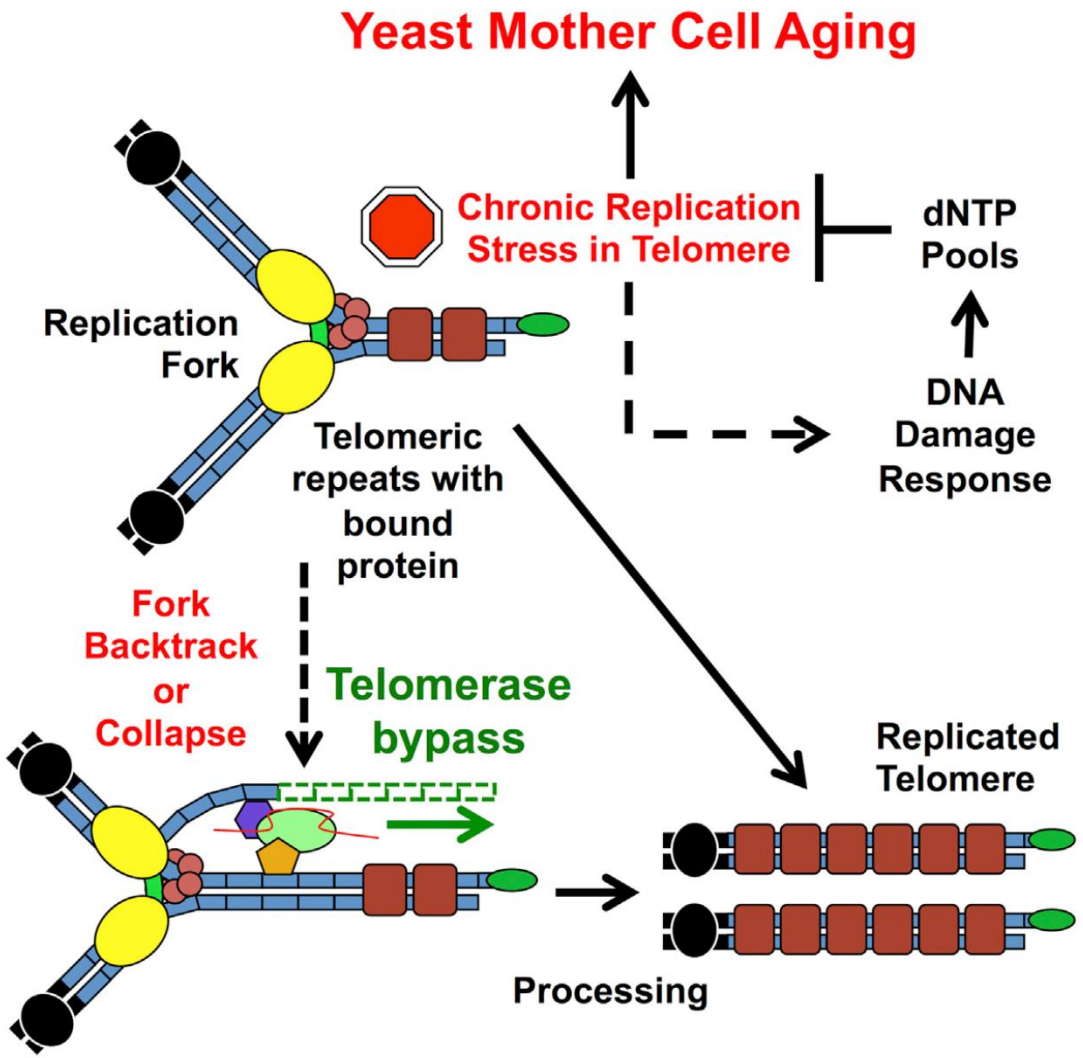
Extratelomeric functions of TERT.

Early after telomerase inactivation yeast mother cells show DNA damage response (DDR)

Before critical telomere shortening, telomerase is continuously required to respond to transient DNA replication stress in mother cells



even early after early telomerase inactivation yeast mother cells show transient DNA damage response (DDR)
before critical telomere shortening, telomerase is continuously required to respond to transient DNA replication stress in mother cells and that a lack of telomerase accelerates otherwise normal aging.



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TERRA

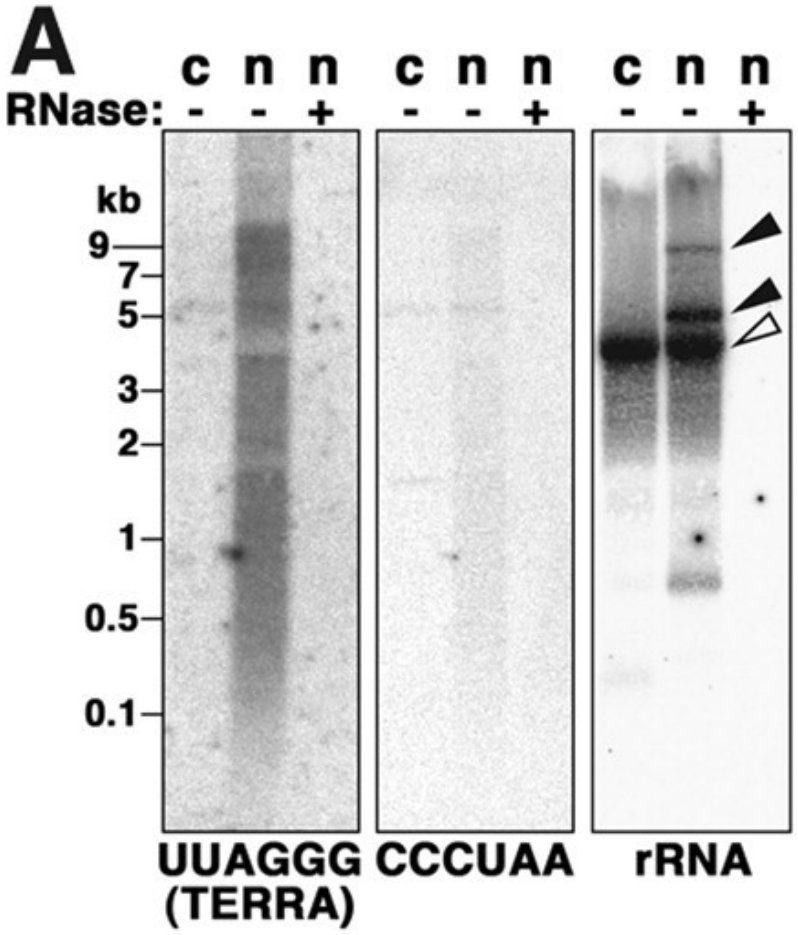
transcription of telomeric transcripts
TERRA (telomeric repeat-containing RNA)

TERRA transcripts are nuclear long non-coding RNAs that are transcribed from the subtelomere towards the telomere.

They are transcribed by RNA polymerase II, giving rise to transcripts that contain UUAGGG-repeats.

They are heterogeneous in size (0.2–10 kb in humans and mice) as indicated by the smear detected in TERRA northern blots.

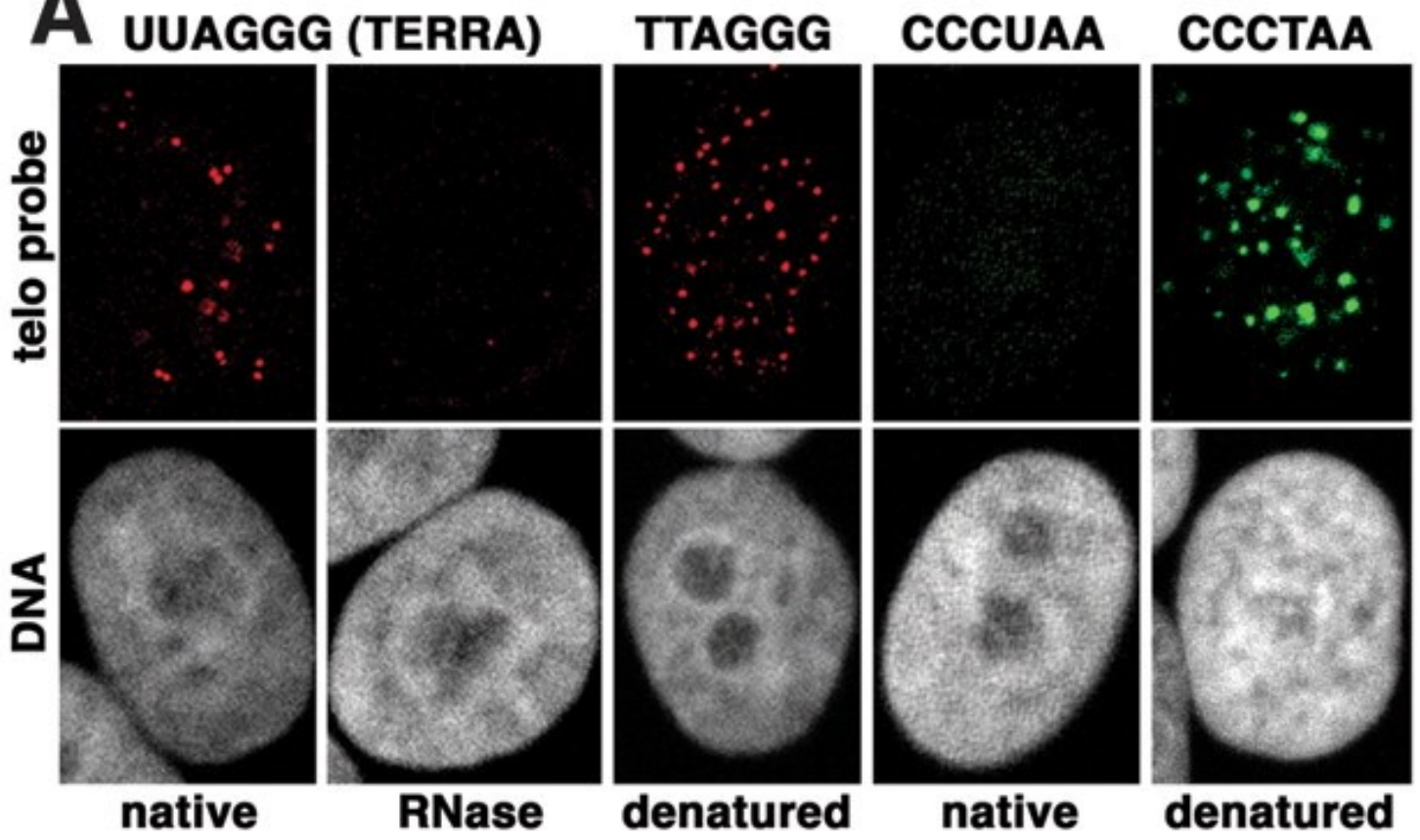
Fig. 1. Identification of TERRA. (A) Northern blot analysis of HeLa cytoplasmic (c) and nuclear (n) RNA with strand-specific telomeric and 28S ribosomal RNA (rRNA) probes.



Claus M. Azzalin et al. Science 2007;318:798-801

Fig. 2. Telomeric localization of TERRA. (A) RNA-FISH experiments with strand-specific telomeric DNA probes on HeLa cells.

Red and green signals correspond to the probes detecting CCCTAA-CCCUAA repeats or TTAGGG-UUAGGG repeats



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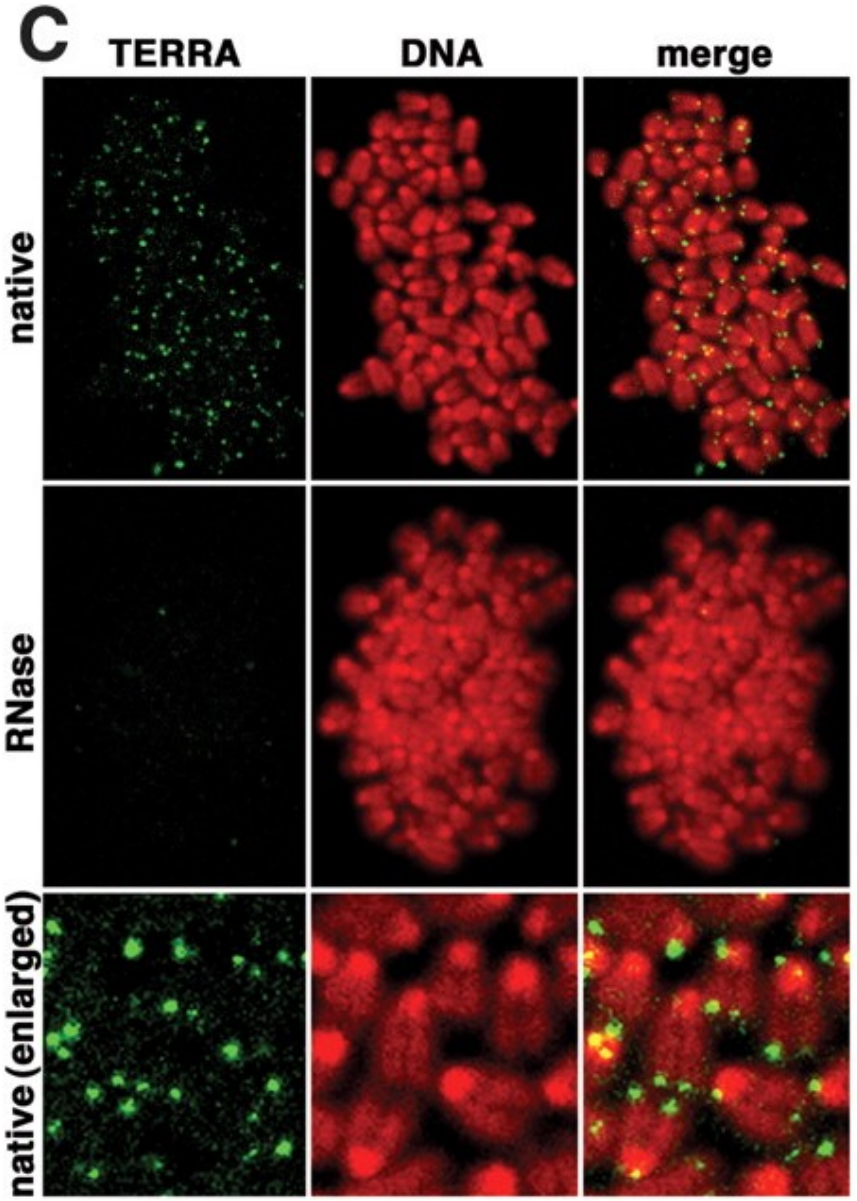

20 to 40 foci

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ARTICLE

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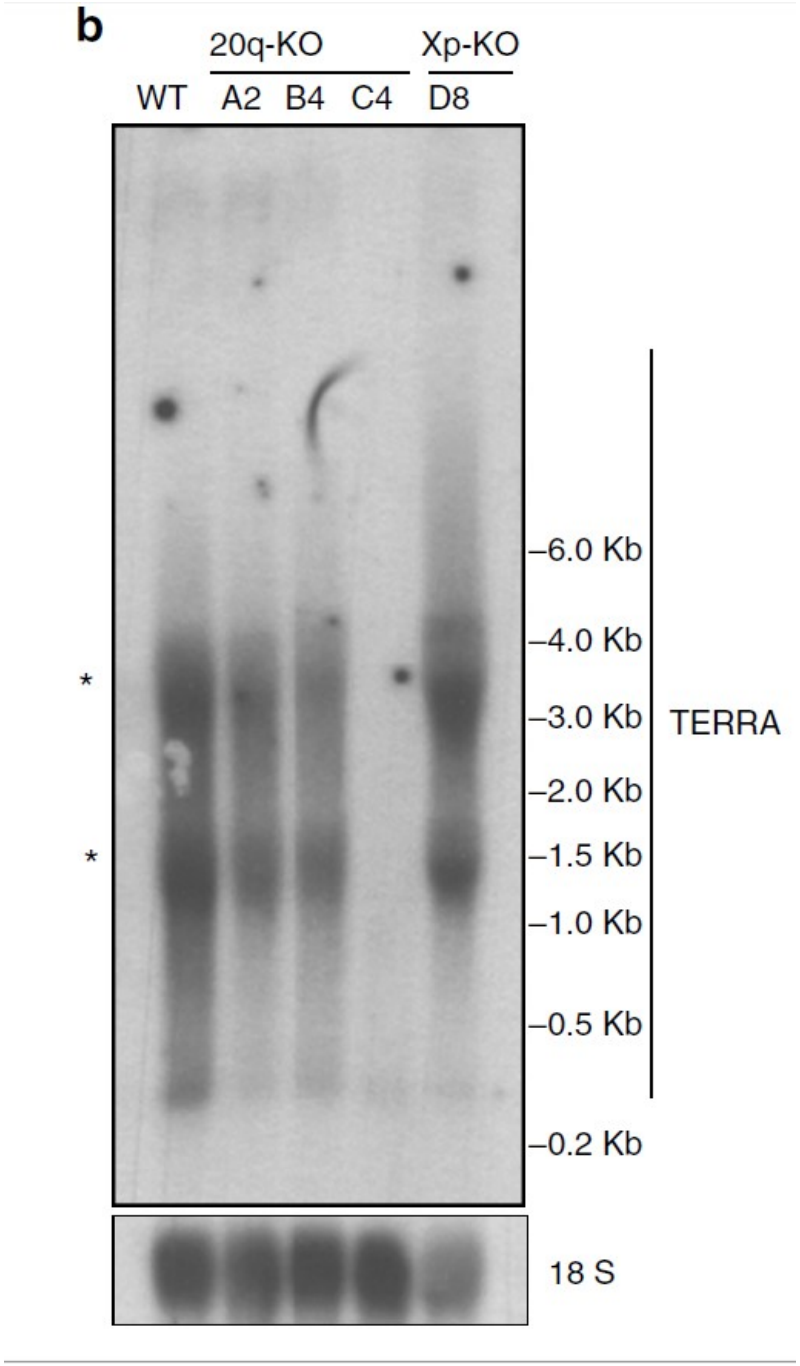
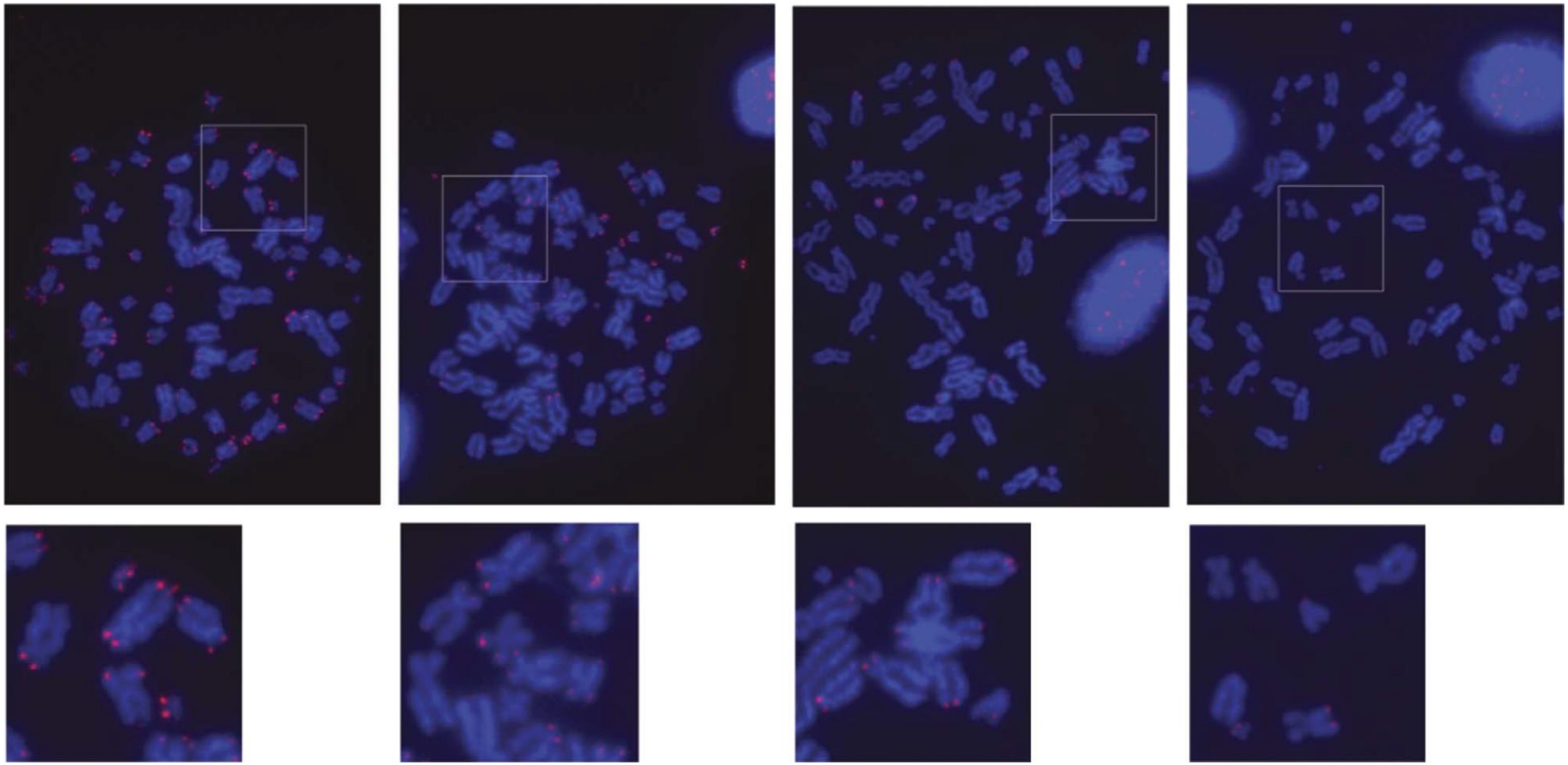
Telomeric RNAs are essential to maintain telomeres

Juan José Montero[1,*], Isabel López de Silanes[1,*], Osvaldo Graña[2] & Maria A. Blasco[1]

Telomeres are transcribed generating long non-coding RNAs known as TERRA. Deciphering the role of TERRA has been one of the unsolved issues of telomere biology in the past decade. This has been, in part, due to lack of knowledge on the TERRA loci, thus preventing functional genetic studies. Here, we describe that long non-coding RNAs with TERRA features are transcribed from the human 20q and Xp subtelomeres. Deletion of the 20q locus by using the CRISPR-Cas9 technology causes a dramatic decrease in TERRA levels, while deletion of the Xp locus does not result in decreased TERRA levels. Strikingly, 20q-TERRA ablation leads to dramatic loss of telomere sequences and the induction of a massive DNA damage response. These findings identify chromosome 20q as a main TERRA locus in human cells and represent the first demonstration in any organism of the essential role of TERRA in the maintenance of telomeres.


b
20q-KO
Xp-KO
WT
A2
B4
C4
D8
–6.0 Kb
–4.0 Kb
–3.0 Kb
–2.0 Kb
–1.5 Kb
–1.0 Kb
–0.5 Kb
–0.2 Kb
TERRA
*
*
18 S

WT KO for the Chr20q-TERRA locus



Q-FISH images

Deletion of the 20q-TERRA locus decreases telomere length