Title:

Ether Lipid Biosynthesis Promotes Lifespan Extension and Enables Diverse Prolongevity Paradigms in *Caenorhabditis elegans*

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Author Contributions: Conceptualization, LC, AAS; Methodology, LC, SL, JW, MJ, NS, SPC, AAS; Validation: LC, SL, LM, FA, AAS; Formal Analysis: LC, JW, MJ, ZL, SD, AAS, NP, RPW; Investigation: LC, SL, FMA, NS, LM, SE, AA, KD, JW, MJ, NP, RPW, SPC, AAS; Writing – Original Draft: LC, AAS; Writing – Review & Editing: LC, SL, FA, NS, LM, SE, AA, KD, JW, MJ, ZL, SD, NP, RPW, SPC, AAS; Visualization: LC, FA, ZL, NS, SD, SPC, AAS; Supervision: AAS; Funding Acquisition: AAS.

Competing Interest Statement: The authors declare that no competing interests exist.

Keywords: metformin; aging; ether lipids; *C. elegans*; metabolism

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Main Text

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Abstract

Biguanides, including the world's most commonly prescribed drug for type 2 diabetes, metformin, not only lower blood sugar, but also promote longevity in preclinical models. Epidemiologic studies in humans parallel these findings, indicating favorable effects of metformin on longevity and on reducing the incidence and morbidity associated with aging-related diseases. In spite of this promise, the full spectrum of molecular effectors responsible for these health benefits remains elusive. Through unbiased screening in *C. elegans*, we uncovered a role for genes necessary for ether lipid biosynthesis in the favorable effects of biguanides. We demonstrate that biguanides prompt lifespan extension by stimulating ether lipid biogenesis. Loss of the ether lipid biosynthetic machinery also mitigates lifespan extension attributable to dietary restriction, target of rapamycin (TOR) inhibition, and mitochondrial electron transport chain inhibition. A possible mechanistic explanation for this finding is that ether lipids are required for activation of longevity-promoting, metabolic stress defenses downstream of the conserved transcription factor Nrf2/*skn-1*. In alignment with these findings, overexpression of a single, key, ether lipid biosynthetic enzyme, *fard-1*/FAR1, is sufficient to promote lifespan extension. These findings illuminate the ether lipid biosynthetic machinery as a novel therapeutic target to promote healthy aging.

Introduction

Metformin is first line therapy for type 2 diabetes and the most frequently prescribed oral hypoglycemic medication worldwide (Inzucchi et al., 2012). Human epidemiologic studies note an association between metformin use and decreased incidence of cancer (Evans et al., 2005; Yuan et al., 2013). In addition, metformin extends lifespan in invertebrate and vertebrate models (Cabreiro et al., 2013; Martin-Montalvo et al., 2013; Onken and Driscoll, 2010), and therefore may reduce aging-related diseases in humans (Barzilai et al., 2016). Nonetheless, our understanding of the molecular pathways governing the health-promoting effects of metformin is only just beginning to emerge. Our previous work identified a conserved signaling axis connecting mitochondria, the nuclear pore complex, and mTORC1 inhibition that is required for metformin-mediated extension of lifespan in *C. elegans* and inhibition of growth in worms and human cancer cells (Wu et al., 2016). The energy sensor AMP-activated protein kinase (AMPK) is not necessary for metformin-induced growth inhibition in *C. elegans* but is required for the drug's prolongevity effects (Cabreiro et al., 2013; Chen et al., 2017; Onken and Driscoll, 2010). Consistently, mechanistic studies indicate that the longevity-promoting transcription factor Nrf2/*skn-1* is required for biguanide-mediated lifespan extension (Cabreiro et al., 2013; Onken and Driscoll, 2010). The relationship of these metformin longevity response elements to each other and their hierarchy in the biguanide response other remains unknown. Thus, the mechanisms by which

86 metformin exacts its beneficial effects on health are likely to be branching and
87 complex.

88 The importance of ether lipids, a major structural component of cell
89 membranes, to aging and longevity is not fully established. Ether lipids are involved
90 in the maintenance of general membrane fluidity and in the formation of lipid rafts
91 within microdomains, which are important for promotion of membrane fusion and
92 cellular signaling (Glaser and Gross, 1994; Komljenovic et al., 2009; Marrink and
93 Mark, 2004). Ether lipids have broad roles in the regulation of cell differentiation
94 (Davies et al., 2001; Facciotti et al., 2012; Rodemer et al., 2003; Teigler et al.,
95 2009), cellular signaling (Albert et al., 2003; Thukkani et al., 2002), and reduction
96 of oxidative stress through their action as antioxidants (Maeba et al., 2002; Morand
97 et al., 1988; Reiss et al., 1997; Zoeller et al., 1988). Humans deficient in ether lipid
98 biogenesis suffer from rhizomelic chondrodysplasia punctata (RCDP), a rare
99 genetic disorder, which results in skeletal and facial abnormalities, psychomotor
100 retardation, and is uniformly fatal typically before patients reach their teenage
101 years (White et al., 2003). Thus, evidence linking alterations in ether lipid levels to
102 aging and longevity in humans is strictly correlative (Gonzalez-Covarrubias et al.,
103 2013; Pradas et al., 2019).

104 Ether lipids, which are structurally distinct from canonical phospholipids,
105 have a unique biosynthetic pathway through which a fatty alcohol is conjugated to
106 the glycerol backbone at the *sn-1* position via an ether linkage. Ether lipid
107 precursors are first synthesized by enzymes associated with the membranes of
108 peroxisomes (Ghosh and Hajra, 1986; Hardeman and Van den Bosch, 1989; Singh
109 et al., 1993). The main enzymes involved in ether lipid biosynthesis within the
110 peroxisomal matrix are glyceronephosphate O-acyltransferase (GNPAT) and
111 alkylglycerone phosphate synthase (AGPS). Fatty acyl-CoA reductase 1 (FAR1)
112 supplies most of the fatty alcohols used to generate the ether linkage in the
113 precursor, 1-O-alkyl-glycerol-3-phosphate. This precursor is then trafficked to the
114 endoplasmic reticulum (ER) for acyl chain remodeling to produce various ether
115 lipid products (Hua et al., 2017). In *C. elegans,* loss-of-function mutations of any
116 of the three main enzymes involved in human ether lipid biosynthesis, *acl-*
117 *7*/GNPAT, *ads-1*/AGPS, and *fard-1*/FAR1, results in an inability to produce ether
118 linked lipids, as in humans, and has been reported to shorten lifespan (Drechsler
119 et al., 2016; Shi et al., 2016). Worms and human cells deficient in ether lipids
120 exhibit compensatory changes in phospholipid species, including increases in
121 phosphatidylethanolamines and phosphatidylcholines containing saturated fatty
122 acids (Benjamin et al., 2013; Rodemer et al., 2003). However, in contrast to
123 humans, ether lipid deficient nematodes develop to adulthood at a normal rate,
124 providing an opportunity to determine the biological roles of ether lipids in aging
125 and longevity without pleiotropies associated with developmental rate.

126 Here, we show that the ether lipid biosynthetic machinery is necessary for
127 lifespan extension stimulated by metformin or the related biguanide phenformin in
128 *C. elegans*. Metabolomic analysis indicates that phenformin treatment drives
129 increases in multiple phosphatidylethanolamine-containing ether lipids.

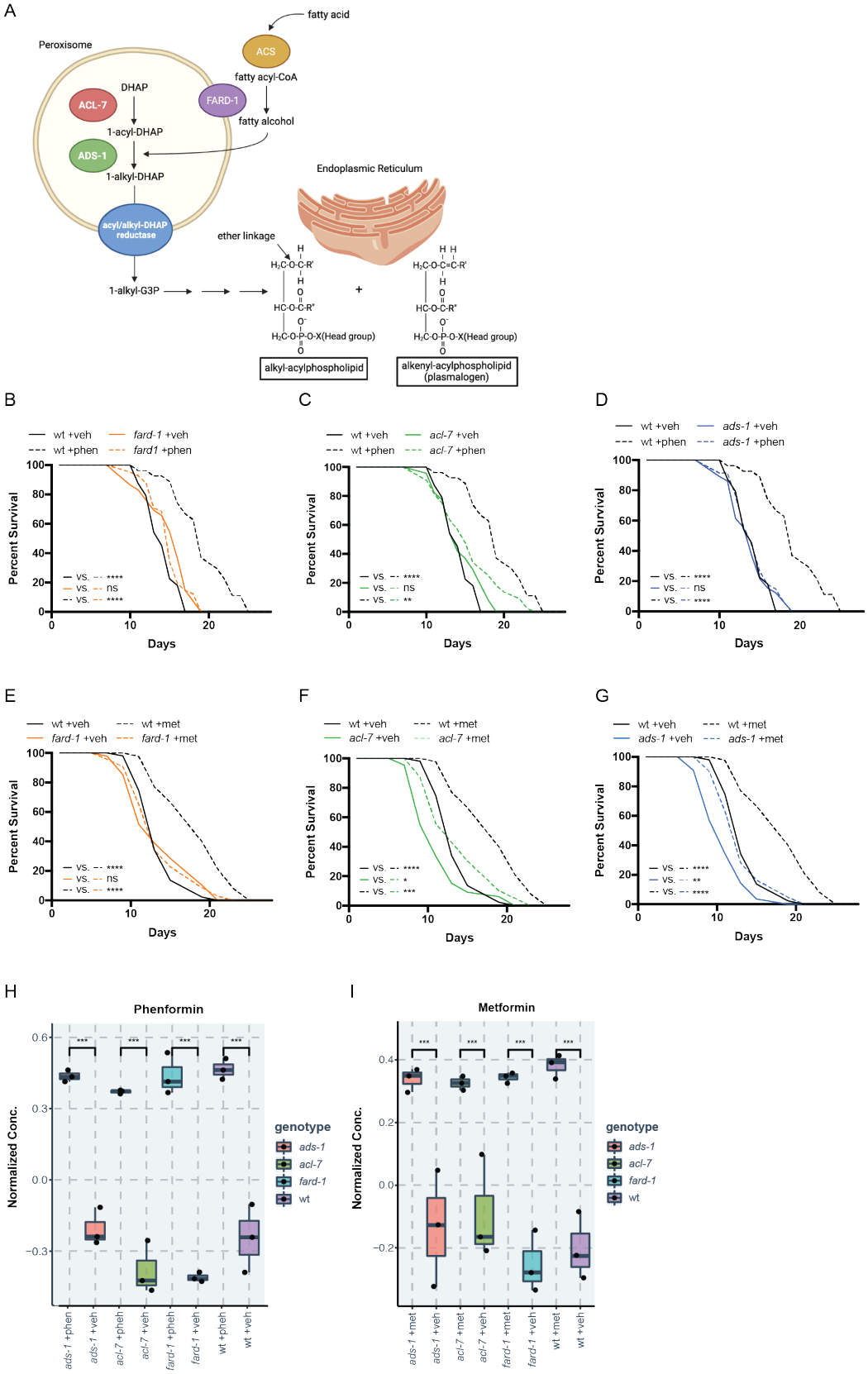
Interestingly, requirement for the ether lipid biosynthetic genes extends to multiple genetic longevity paradigms including defective mitochondrial electron transport function (*isp-1*), defective pharyngeal pumping/ caloric restriction (*eat-2*), and compromises in mTOR complex 1 activation (*raga-1*). We show that overexpressing *fard-1*, the enzyme that supplies all the fatty alcohols for ether lipid biogenesis in *C. elegans*, extends lifespan, supportive of the idea that alterations in the ether lipid landscape alone is sufficient to promote healthy aging. Mechanistically, ether lipids promote longevity downstream of biguanide action through activation of metabolic stress defenses through the transcription factor *skn-1*/*Nrf2*. These data suggest that a heretofore unappreciated role for ether lipids is to promote organismal-level, longevity-promoting stress defenses.

Results

Genes responsible for ether lipid biosynthesis are necessary for biguanide-induced lifespan extension

A screen of ~1000 metabolic genes for RNA interference (RNAi) knockdowns that interfere with the growth-inhibitory properties of metformin in *C. elegans* (Wu et al., 2016), yielded *fard-1* and *acl-7*, which are required for ether lipid biosynthesis. Ether lipids are distinguished from canonical phospholipids as the latter contain exclusively fatty acids conjugated to glycerol, whereas ether lipids contain a fatty alcohol conjugated to the glycerol backbone at the *sn-1* position via an ether linkage (Figure 1A). Confirming our screen results, quantitative analysis following RNAi knockdown of *fard-1* and *acl-7* results in significant resistance to biguanide-induced growth inhibition (Figure 1—figure supplement 1A). Our lab has previously demonstrated that biguanide effects on growth in *C. elegans* share significant overlap mechanistically with the machinery by which metformin extends lifespan in the worm (Wu et al., 2016). Indeed, loss-of-function mutations in any of three genes encoding enzymes required for ether lipid biosynthesis, *fard-1*, *acl-7* or *ads-1*, completely abrogates lifespan extension induced by both metformin and the related biguanide phenformin (Figure 1B—G, and throughout manuscript see Supplementary file 1 for all tabular survival statistics and biological replicates). Confirming that these mutations confer resistance to metformin by compromising ether lipid synthetic capacity, RNAi knockdowns of *fard-1* and *acl-7* also partially impair lifespan extension promoted by phenformin (Figure 1—figure supplement 1B—C). Studies from this point forward are presented predominantly with phenformin because phenformin is more readily absorbed without need for a specific transporter, unlike metformin (Segal et al., 2011; Sogame et al., 2009; Wu et al., 2016), and our experience indicates more consistent lifespan extension with phenformin in *C. elegans*.

170 **Figure 1**


A
fatty acid
Peroxisome
ACS
fatty acyl-CoA
DHAP
ACL-7
FARD-1
fatty alcohol
1-acyl-DHAP
ADS-1
1-alkyl-DHAP
Endoplasmic Reticulum
acyl/alkyl-DHAP reductase
ether linkage
1-alkyl-G3P
alkyl-acylphospholipid
alkenyl-acylphospholipid (plasmalogen)
B
C
D
E
F
G
Percent Survival
Days
wt +veh
wt +phen
fard-1 +veh
fard1 +phen
acl-7 +veh
acl-7 +phen
ads-1 +veh
ads-1 +phen
wt +met
fard-1 +met
acl-7 +met
ads-1 +met
H
Phenformin
I
Metformin
Normalized Conc.
genotype
ads-1
acl-7
fard-1
wt

171 **Figure 1. Genes responsible for ether lipid biosynthesis are necessary for**
172 **biguanide-induced lifespan extension.** (A) *C. elegans* ether lipid synthesis is catalyzed
173 by three enzymes: fatty acyl reductase FARD-1, acyltransferase ACL-7 and alkylglycerone
174 phosphate synthase ADS-1 (adapted from (Dean and Lodhi, 2018; Shi et al., 2016)). The
175 latter two are localized to the peroxisomal lumen. (B-D) Missense, loss of function
176 mutations in *fard-1* (B), acl-7 (C), and *ads-1* (D) in *C. elegans* suppress phenformin-
177 induced lifespan extension. (E-G) A deficiency of ether lipid synthesis in *fard-1* (E), *acl-7*
178 (F), and *ads-1* (G) worm mutants blunts metformin-induced lifespan extension. Results
179 are representative of 3 biological replicates. *, $P < 0.05$; **, $P < 0.01$; ***, $P < 0.001$; ****,
180 $P < 0.0001$ by log-rank analysis. See also Figure 1-figure supplement 1 and refer to
181 Supplementary file 1 for tabular survival data and biological replicates. (H-I) Normalized
182 concentrations of phenformin (H) and metformin (I) in vehicle, 4.5mM phenformin, or 50
183 mM metformin treated wild type (wt) *C. elegans* versus *fard-1*, *acl-7*, and *ads-1* mutants.
184 n = 3 biological replicates; ***, $P < 0.004$ by two-tailed students *t*-test with Bonferroni
185 correction for multiple hypothesis testing. Box represents $75^{th}/25^{th}$ percentiles, while
186 whisker represents higher/lower hinge +/- [1.5 * interquartile range (IQR)].

187 Because ether lipids are a major structural component of cell membranes,
188 one possibility is that deficiencies in ether lipid synthesis compromises drug
189 action by reducing biguanide bioavailability in the worm. To test this, we
190 compared the relative levels of biguanides present in vehicle- and biguanide-
191 treated wild type to the three ether lipid synthesis mutants by liquid
192 chromatography—tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS). A comparison of
193 normalized concentrations of phenformin across all four strains shows that
194 phenformin abundance is quantitatively similar across wild type and the three,
195 ether lipid mutant strains (Figure 1H and Figure 1—figure supplement 1D).
196 Similar results were obtained when comparing levels of metformin wild type and
197 ether lipid mutant animals (Figure 1I and Figure 1—figure supplement 1E). Thus,
198 a deficiency in ether lipid synthesis does not significantly impact levels of
199 biguanides in *C. elegans.*
200
201 **Phenformin induces changes in ether lipid levels**
202 We reasoned that if biguanides require ether lipid biosynthesis to promote lifespan
203 extension that phenformin may promote synthesis of one or more ether lipids. To
204 investigate the impact of biguanides on ether lipids at a high level, we first utilized
205 gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS) analysis. We first recapitulated
206 the observation that *fard-1* mutants show absence of 18-carbon containing fatty
207 acid derivatives (dimethylacetals, or DMAs, which indicate alkenyl ether lipid or
208 plasmalogen levels) and an accumulation of stearate (18:0) relative to wild type
209 controls by GC-MS (Figure 2A—B) (Shi et al., 2016). We then asked if phenformin
210 impacts the levels of 18-carbon alkenyl ether lipids in wild type animals and if those
211 corresponding changes are absent in *fard-1* mutants. Strikingly, phenformin-
212 treated wild type worms display a significant increase in 18:0 DMA versus vehicle,
213 whereas no such increase is evident in drug treated *fard-1* worms (Figure 2C). In
214 addition, relative proportions of stearic acid (18:0) levels within the total fatty acid
215 pool are significantly increased in *fard-1* mutants treated with phenformin versus
216 vehicle treated *fard-1* controls (Figure 2D). In comparison, the relative proportion
217 of stearic acid does not rise in phenformin treated wild type animals, suggesting
218 that stearate is being utilized for ether lipid production. Analysis of the total fatty
219 acid pool by GC-MS (Figure 2—figure supplement 1) indicates that aside from
220 several fatty acids (e.g. 18:2), the most pronounced differences were in the
221 plasmalogen pool. In alignment, an assessment of levels of additional alkenyl fatty
222 alcohols in phenformin-treated, wild type animals indicates a parallel, significant
223 increase in the less abundant 16:0 DMA and 18:1 DMA species (Figure 2E). We
224 conclude that phenformin treatment leads to an overall increase of alkenyl ether
225 lipid levels in *C. elegans*.
226 To investigate relative changes in individual ether lipid abundance in
227 response to phenformin at high resolution, we utilized LC-MS analysis. Using this
228 method, we detected 20 alkyl and alkenyl phosphatidylethanolamine-based ether
229 lipids previously noted to be the most abundant ether lipids in *C. elegans*
230 (Drechsler et al., 2016; Shi et al., 2016) (Figure 2F—G and Supplementary file 2).
231 This analysis indicates that phenformin treatment results in a significant increase

232 **Figure 2**

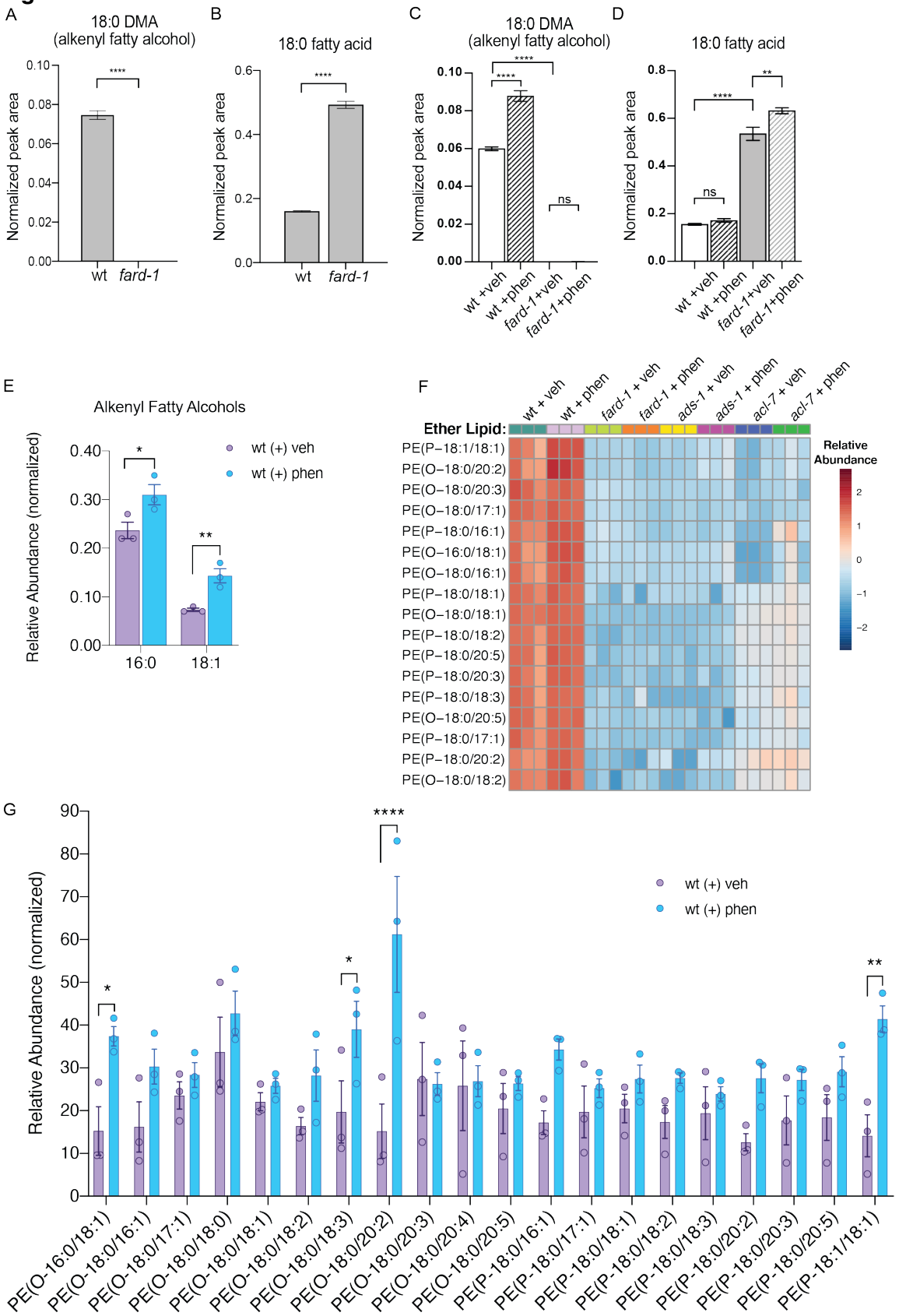
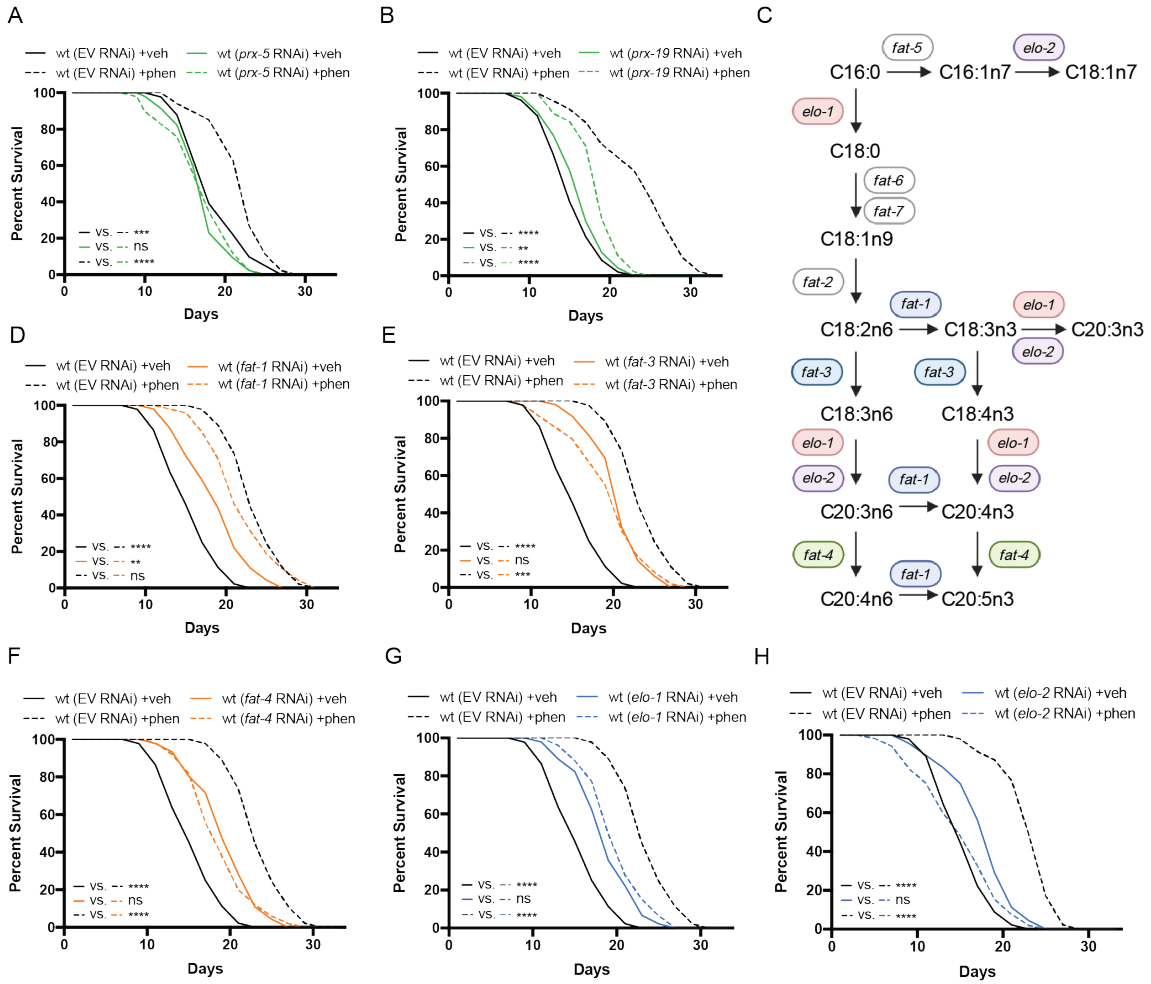

A
18:0 DMA
(alkenyl fatty alcohol)
Normalized peak area
wt
fard-1
B
18:0 fatty acid
C
18:0 DMA
(alkenyl fatty alcohol)
wt +veh
wt +phen
fard-1+veh
fard-1+phen
ns
D
18:0 fatty acid
E
Alkenyl Fatty Alcohols
Relative Abundance (normalized)
wt (+) veh
wt (+) phen
16:0
18:1
F
wt + veh
wt + phen
fard-1 + veh
fard-1 + phen
ads-1 + veh
ads-1 + phen
acl-7 + veh
acl-7 + phen
Ether Lipid:
Relative Abundance
PE(P−18:1/18:1)
PE(O−18:0/20:2)
PE(O−18:0/20:3)
PE(O−18:0/17:1)
PE(P−18:0/16:1)
PE(O−16:0/18:1)
PE(O−18:0/16:1)
PE(P−18:0/18:1)
PE(O−18:0/18:1)
PE(P−18:0/18:2)
PE(P−18:0/20:5)
PE(P−18:0/20:3)
PE(P−18:0/18:3)
PE(O−18:0/20:5)
PE(P−18:0/17:1)
PE(P−18:0/20:2)
PE(O−18:0/18:2)
G
Relative Abundance (normalized)
wt (+) veh
wt (+) phen
PE(O-16:0/18:1)
PE(O-18:0/16:1)
PE(O-18:0/17:1)
PE(O-18:0/18:0)
PE(O-18:0/18:1)
PE(O-18:0/18:2)
PE(O-18:0/18:3)
PE(O-18:0/20:2)
PE(O-18:0/20:3)
PE(O-18:0/20:4)
PE(O-18:0/20:5)
PE(P-18:0/16:1)
PE(P-18:0/17:1)
PE(P-18:0/18:1)
PE(P-18:0/18:2)
PE(P-18:0/18:3)
PE(P-18:0/20:2)
PE(P-18:0/20:3)
PE(P-18:0/20:5)
PE(P-18:1/18:1)

Figure 2. Phenformin treatment of *C. elegans* leads to increased abundance of multiple alkyl and alkenyl ether lipids. (A-B) Loss-of-function *fard-1* mutants have significant reduction in 18:0 fatty alcohols derivatized from 18-carbon containing alkenyl ether lipids (dimethylacetal, DMA) by GC/MS (A) and accumulation of the saturated fatty acid stearate (18:0, B). (C) Wild type worms treated with 4.5 mM phenformin display a significant increase in 18:0 DMA relative to vehicle control, indicative of higher levels of alkenyl ether lipids, with levels remaining essentially undetectable in *fard-1* mutants on vehicle or drug. (D) 4.5mM phenformin treatment does not impact stearate levels in wild type worms, however it does result in a greater accumulation of stearate in *fard-1* mutants. For A-D, **, $P < 0.01$; ****, $P < 0.0001$, by t-test (A-B) or two-way ANOVA (C-D), n = 3 biological replicates. (E) 4.5mM phenformin treatment results in a significant increase in 16:0 DMA and 18:1 DMA in wild type worms, relative to vehicle-treated controls (*, $P < 0.05$; **, $P < 0.01$, by ANOVA with two-stage linear step-up procedure of Benjamini, Krieger and Yekutieli. n = 3 biological replicates. (F) Heat map of normalized ether lipid abundance following phenformin treatment in wild type *C. elegans* indicates an overall increase in ether lipids relative to vehicle treated controls, and this shift is absent in ether lipid deficient mutants. All metabolites shown have an FDR adjusted $P < 0.05$ by one-way ANOVA followed by Fisher's LSD post-hoc testing for WT versus *fard-1*, *ads-1,* and *acl-7* mutants. (G) LC-MS analysis shows that phosphatidylethanolamine-containing ether lipids detected exhibited a general trend towards increased abundance in wild type worms treated with 4.5mM phenformin. Four of these ether lipids reached statistical significance: PE(O-16:0/18:1), PE(O-18:0/18:3), PE(O-18:0/20:2), and PE(P-18:1/18:1). Eleven of the ether lipids detected are of the alkyl-type (indicated by "O" in their name prior to fatty alcohol designation) whereas 9 are of the alkenyl-type (plasmalogen, indicated by "P" in their name prior to the fatty alcohol designation) ether lipids. For *G*, *, $P < 0.05$; **, $P < 0.01$; ****, $P < 0.0001$, by multiple t-tests, with multiple hypothesis testing correction by two-stage step-up method of Benjamini, Krieger, and Yekutieli, n = 3 biological replicates. See Supplementary file 2 for raw and normalized mass spectrometry data.

261 in normalized abundance of four ether lipids, PE(O-16:0/18:1), PE(O-18:0/18:3),
262 PE(O-18:0/20:2), and PE(P-18:1/18:1), even when corrected for multiple
263 hypothesis testing. The vast majority of ether lipids measured display mean levels
264 that increase with phenformin treatment, though most are either nominally
265 significant or exhibit a nonsignificant trend because of the strict threshold required
266 to reach significance when correcting for multiple hypotheses. Finally,
267 phosphatidylethanolamine ether lipid abundances were extremely low in *fard-1,*
268 *acl-7* and *ads-1* mutants and unchanged by phenformin treatment, unlike in wild
269 type animals (Figure 2F and Supplementary file 2). In aggregate, these data
270 indicate that phenformin treatment leads to increased abundance of multiple ether
271 lipid species in *C. elegans*.
272
273 **Peroxisomal ether lipid synthesis is essential to phenformin effects**
274 In order to begin to understand the governance of ether lipid biosynthesis by
275 biguanides, we examined expression of a *C. elegans* FARD-1::RFP translational
276 reporter, under the control of its own promoter (Figure 2—figure supplement 2A).
277 Exogenously expressed FARD-1 *(fard-1 oe1)* is expressed in intestine and
278 localizes near structures resembling lipid droplets by Nomarski microscopy (Figure
279 2—figure supplement 2B). Given that ether lipid biogenesis occurs between
280 peroxisomes and the endoplasmic reticulum (ER) (Ghosh and Hajra, 1986;
281 Hardeman and Van den Bosch, 1989; Hua et al., 2017; Singh et al., 1993), we
282 crossed this FARD-1::RFP reporter to an animal bearing a GFP reporter that
283 illuminates peroxisomes in intestine (GFP fused to a C-terminal peroxisomal
284 targeting sequence 1 (PTS1)) to determine if localization of FARD-1 is regulated
285 by biguanides. FARD-1 does not possess a predicted C-terminal PTS1 as do ACL-
286 7 and ADS-1. At baseline, FARD-1::RFP fluorescence partially overlaps with
287 peroxisomally-targeted GFP (Figure 2—figure supplement 2C). Colocalization
288 analysis indicates that treatment with phenformin does not change the amount of
289 overlap between FARD-1::RFP and GFP::PTS1 relative to vehicle treated controls
290 (Figure 2—figure supplement 2D). To confirm our earlier observation that suggests
291 FARD-1 colocalization with lipid droplets, we used confocal imaging to assess the
292 spatial distribution of an integrated FARD-1::RFP reporter *(fard-1 oe3)* in *C.*
293 *elegans* fed C1-BODIPY-C12 to label lipid droplets (and treated with *glo-4* RNAi to
294 remove BODIPY-positive lysosome-related organelles) (Hermann et al., 2005;
295 Zhang et al., 2010a; Zhang et al., 2010b) We found that FARD-1::RFP
296 fluorescence directly surrounds some, but not all, BODIPY-positive lipid droplets
297 in the worm intestine (Figure 2—figure supplement 2E). However, as with
298 peroxisomes, phenformin does not alter the number of lipid droplets that are
299 surrounded by FARD-1 or its distribution around lipid droplets (data not shown.)
300 Finally, FARD-1::RFP localizes into web-like structures in the *fard-1(oe3)* reporter
301 that may represent endoplasmic reticulum versus another cellular tubular vesicular
302 network (Figure 2—figure supplement 2F), and this localization is also not altered
303 by biguanide treatment. Thus, the regulation of ether lipid biosynthesis does not
304 appear to be via differential localization of FARD-1.

305 Expression of mRNAs encoding FARD-1, ACL-7, and ADS-1 are all
306 decreased or unchanged in abundance upon treatment with biguanide via
307 quantitative RT-PCR (Figure 2—figure supplement 2G—L), suggesting that ether
308 lipids are not increased in phenformin treatment through a transcriptional
309 mechanism. A parallel decrease in overall levels of FARD-1::RFP protein of *fard-*
310 *1(oe1)* transgenics was seen with phenformin treatment (Figure 2—figure
311 supplement 2M). These seemingly paradoxical data are likely consistent with post-
312 translational negative feedback of ether lipids on the ether lipid biosynthetic
313 pathway, as has been previously reported.
314 To affirm that the peroxisome is an essential site of ether lipid production in
315 biguanide action, we disrupted peroxisomal protein targeting and examined
316 phenformin-stimulated lifespan extension. Indeed, either *prx-5* or *prx-19* RNAi
317 impair lifespan extension prompted by phenformin fully or partially, respectively
318 (Figure 3A—B). PRX-5 is involved in protein import into the peroxisomal matrix
319 and PRX-19 is involved in proper sorting of proteins for peroxisomal biogenesis.
320 Thus, either disruption of ether lipid biosynthetic machinery or of a principal site of
321 ether lipid biosynthesis impairs phenformin's prolongevity benefit.
322
323 **Fatty acid elongases and desaturases are positive effectors of biguanide-**
324 **mediated lifespan extension**
325 Most mature ether lipid species contain a fatty acid in the *sn-2* position linked by
326 an ester bond (Dean and Lodhi, 2018). The majority of fatty acids conjugated in
327 ether lipids are largely synthesized endogenously in *C. elegans* by fatty acid
328 desaturases and fatty acid elongases (Perez and Van Gilst, 2008; Perez and
329 Watts, 2021) (Figure 3C). Thus, we hypothesized that some of these desaturases
330 and elongases may also contribute mechanistically to biguanide-mediated lifespan
331 extension. Indeed, RNAi knockdown of three fatty acid desaturases and two fatty
332 acid elongases in phenformin-treated *C. elegans* blunted phenformin-stimulated
333 lifespan extension relative to empty vector controls (Figure 3D—H). Notably, these
334 five genes all contribute to the production of fatty acids 18-20 carbons in length
335 with three or more double bonds. Although knockdown of fatty acid desaturases
336 and elongases in *C. elegans* results in inherent lifespan extension on vehicle
337 relative to wild type controls on empty vector RNAi as has been previously reported
338 (Horikawa et al., 2008; Shmookler Reis et al., 2011), these RNAi knockdown either
339 largely (as in the case of *fat-1,* Figure 3D) or completely mitigate phenformin-driven
340 lifespan extension (as in the case of *fat-3, fat-4, elo-1* and *elo-2,* Figure 3E—H).
341 These results suggest the tantalizing possibility that fatty acid desaturases and
342 elongases promote biguanide-mediated lifespan extension through contribution of
343 long and polyunsaturated fatty acids to the synthesis of ether lipids, though a
344 mechanistically distinct role is also possible.

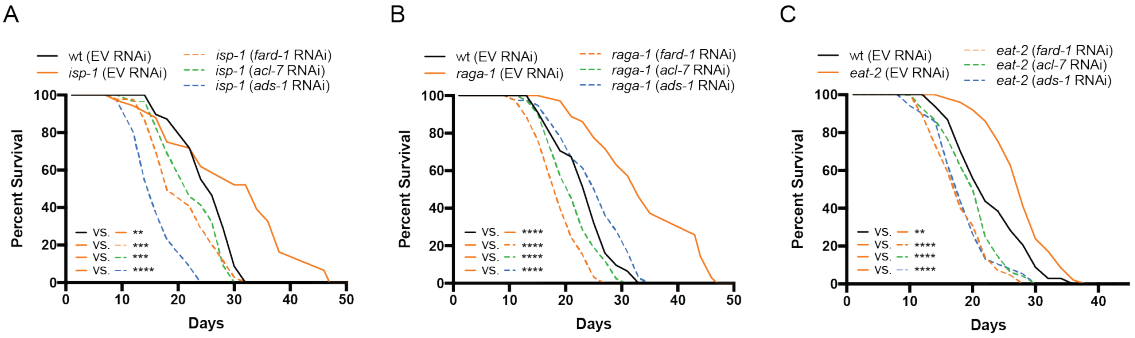
345 **Figure 3**



346 **Figure 3. Peroxisomal protein import, fatty acid elongases, and fatty acid**
347 **desaturases are required for the prolongevity effects of biguanides.** (A-B)
348 Knockdown of *prx-5* (A) and *prx-19* (B) by RNAi eliminates or significantly suppresses
349 phenformin-mediated lifespan extension. (C) Schematic representation of the mono-
350 (MUFA) and poly-unsaturated fatty acid (PUFA) synthesis pathway in *C. elegans* (adapted
351 from (Watts, 2016)). (D-H) RNAi of three fatty acid desaturases (D-F) and two fatty acid
352 elongases (G and H) involved in the synthesis of 18- and 20-carbon polyunsaturated fatty
353 acids blunt phenformin-mediated lifespan extension in wild type worms. Colored symbols
354 for *elo* and *fat* genes (vs. those in black and white) in Figure 3C indicates those that inhibit
355 phenformin lifespan extension when knocked down by RNAi. For A, B and D-H, results
356 are representative of 2-3 biological replicates. **, $P < 0.01$; ***, $P < 0.001$; ****, $P < 0.0001$
357 by log-rank analysis; see also Supplementary file 1 for tabular survival data and biological
358 replicates.

359 **Genes involved in ether lipid biosynthesis are required in multiple longevity**
360 **paradigms**
361 Given the critical role of ether lipids in the response to biguanides, we
362 hypothesized that these molecules may also play a broader role in diverse
363 longevity paradigms involving metabolic or nutrient-sensing pathways. *C. elegans*
364 mutant strains that exhibit 1) reduced mitochondrial function (*isp-1*), 2) disrupted
365 mTORC1 signaling (*raga-1*), 3) abnormal pharyngeal pumping (*eat-2*), or 4)
366 inhibition of insulin/insulin-like growth factor-1 signaling (*daf-2*), all result in
367 extension of lifespan (Apfeld et al., 2004; Curtis et al., 2006; Schreiber et al., 2010;
368 Senchuk et al., 2018). To determine whether requirement for the ether lipid
369 biosynthetic machinery in aging generalizes to these other lifespan extension
370 paradigms, we knocked down all three ether lipid biosynthetic enzymes by RNAi
371 in wild type *C. elegans* and four long-lived genetic mutants: *raga-1*, *isp-1*, *eat-2*,
372 and *daf-2*. Knockdown of *fard-1*, *acl-7*, and *ads-1* by RNAi results in suppression
373 of lifespan extension in *isp-1*, *raga-1*, and *eat-2* mutants (Figure 4A—C). However,
374 knockdown of ether lipid synthesis genes by RNAi did not impact lifespan
375 extension in *daf-2* mutants (Figure 4—figure supplement 1A). Thus, the ether lipid
376 biosynthetic machinery plays a broad role in lifespan extension, and, importantly,
377 does not non-selectively shorten lifespan by making animals generally unfit.

378 **Figure 4**



379 **Figure 4. Genes involved in ether lipid biosynthesis are required for lifespan**
380 **extension in multiple longevity paradigms.** (A-C) *isp-1*, *raga-1*, and *eat-2* mutants
381 display extended lifespan relative to wild type animals that is suppressed by RNAi
382 knockdown of any of the three members of the ether lipid biosynthetic pathway. Results
383 are representative of 3 biological replicates. **, $P < 0.01$; ***, $P < 0.001$; ****, $P < 0.0001$
384 by log-rank analysis. See also Figure 4—figure supplement 1 and Supplementary file 1
385 for tabular survival data and biological replicates.

386 **Overexpression of *fard-1* is sufficient to promote lifespan extension**
387 To determine whether stimulation of ether lipid biosynthesis is sufficient to prompt
388 lifespan extension, we tested the effect of overexpression (*oe*) of the sole *C.*
389 *elegans* fatty acid reductase that synthesizes fatty alcohols for ether lipid
390 biogenesis, *fard-1,* on lifespan. Strikingly, *fard-1(oe1)* alone significantly extends
391 lifespan (Figure 5A). This result is similar in a second, independent *fard-1(oe2)*
392 transgenic line (Figure 5B). To confirm that *fard-1(oe)* lifespan extension is
393 dependent upon ether lipid biosynthesis, we knocked down *fard-1*, *acl-7*, and *ads-*
394 *1* by RNAi in the *fard-1(oe1)* transgenic. As predicted, knockdown of three ether
395 lipid biosynthetic enzymes leads to significant suppression of *fard-1(oe1)* lifespan
396 extension (Figure 5C and (Figure 4—figure supplement 1B—C).
397 To determine whether lifespan extension attributable to *fard-1(oe)* shares
398 genetic dependencies with biguanide-mediated longevity, we independently
399 knocked down *skn-1*/*Nrf2*, *aak-2/*AMPK and *daf-16*/*FoxO* by RNAi in a *fard-1(oe)*
400 background. While *skn-1*/*Nrf2* and *aak-2/*AMPK have previously been
401 demonstrated to be necessary for metformin-stimulated lifespan extension, *daf-*
402 *16/FoxO* has not (Kenyon et al., 1993; Onken and Driscoll, 2010). Lifespan
403 extension attributable to *fard-1(oe1)* is suppressed by these three gene
404 knockdowns (Figure 5D—F), indicating that it is mechanistically similar, but not
405 identical, to biguanide-mediated lifespan extension (Cabreiro et al., 2013; Onken
406 and Driscoll, 2010). In aggregate, these results support the notion that ether lipids
407 are an important requirement in multiple, diverse longevity paradigms, and further
408 that *fard-1(oe)* promotes mechanistically-distinct lifespan extension in *C. elegans.*
409 In order to characterize shifts in ether lipids related to prolongevity effects,
410 we performed comparative GC-MS-based fatty acid profiling of our integrated
411 *fard-1(oe)* animals. Levels of 16:0 and 18:1 alkenyl ether lipids (indicated by
412 DMAs on GC-MS analysis), are significantly increased in *fard-1(oe3)* transgenic
413 animals versus wild type worms (Figure 5G). By comparison, 18:0 ether lipids
414 were not increased, indicating that the ether lipid pool has both similarities and
415 differences between *fard-1* overexpression and phenformin treatment**.** Echoing
416 the analysis seen with phenformin treatment, few differences were found in a
417 comparison of the relative abundance of fatty acids within the total lipid pool for
418 *fard-1(oe3)* and wild type worms (Figure 5H). Those exhibiting increases in *fard-*
419 *1(oe)* include the polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) 20:4 arachidonate and 20:5
420 eicosapentaenoate (EPA). This suggests either that PUFAs play a mechanistic
421 role in lifespan extension in *fard-1(oe)* or that they are increased as a
422 consequence of longevity-promoting activity of ether-lipids.

423 **Figure 5**

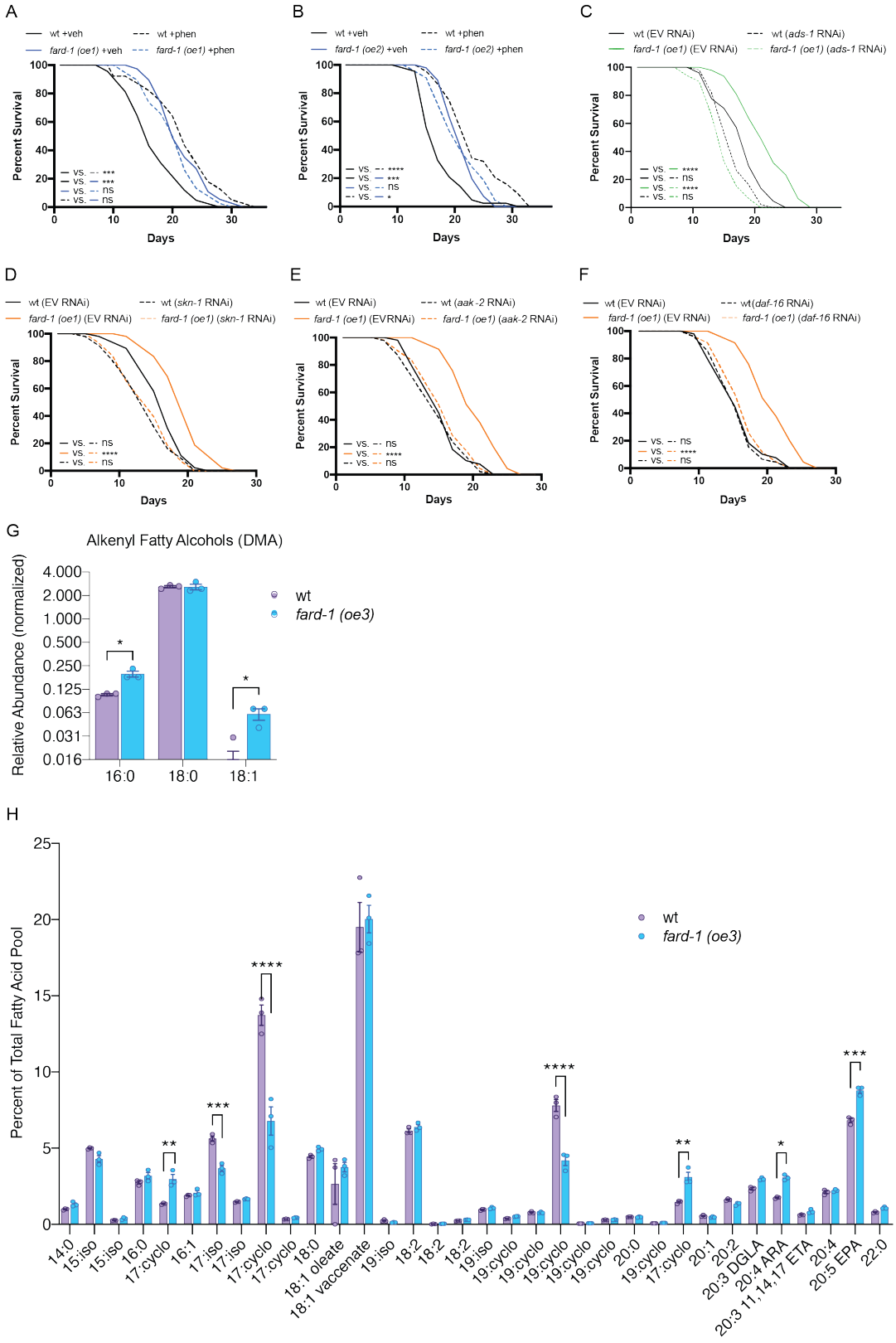
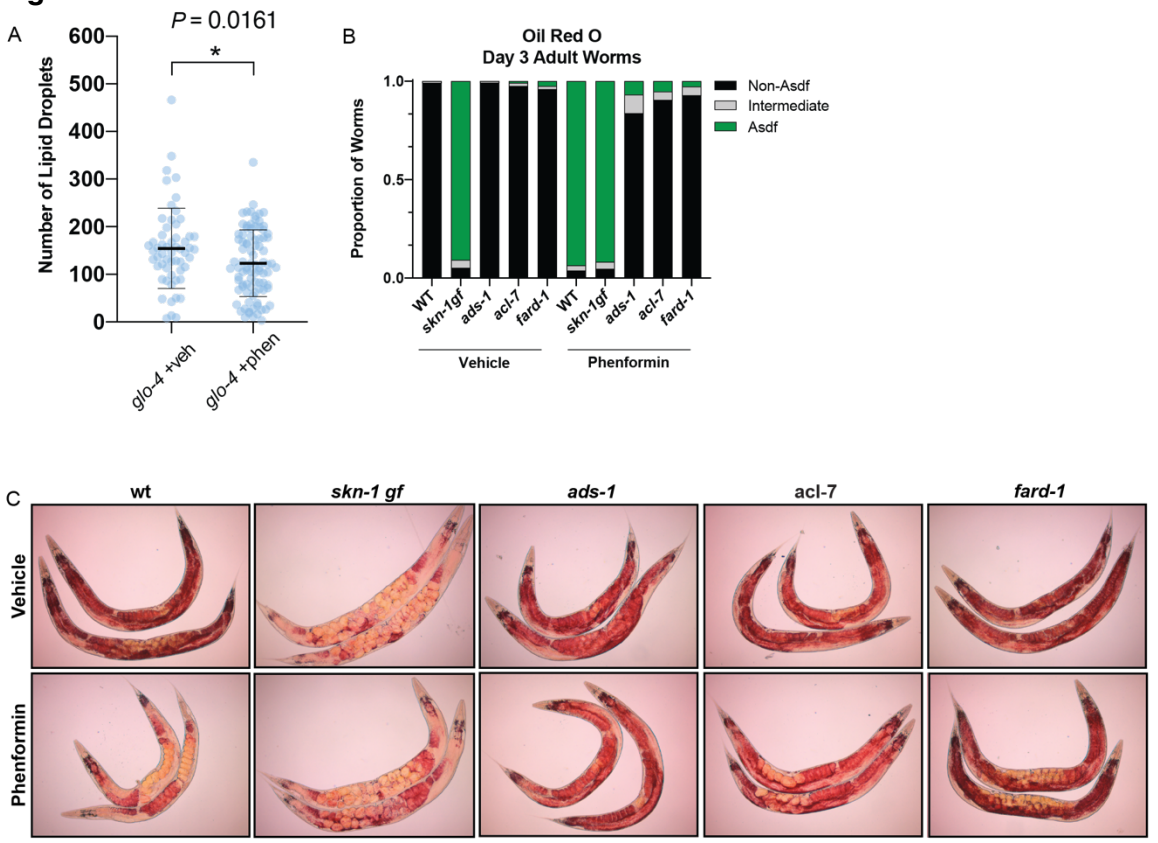

A
wt +veh
wt +phen
fard-1 (oe1) +veh
fard-1 (oe1) +phen
Percent Survival
Days
B
wt +veh
wt +phen
fard-1 (oe2) +veh
fard-1 (oe2) +phen
C
wt (EV RNAi)
wt (ads-1 RNAi)
fard-1 (oe1) (EV RNAi)
fard-1 (oe1) (ads-1 RNAi)
D
wt (EV RNAi)
wt (skn-1 RNAi)
fard-1 (oe1) (EV RNAi)
fard-1 (oe1) (skn-1 RNAi)
E
wt (EV RNAi)
wt (aak-2 RNAi)
fard-1 (oe1) (EVRNAi)
fard-1 (oe1) (aak-2 RNAi)
F
wt (EV RNAi)
wt(daf-16 RNAi)
fard-1 (oe1) (EV RNAi)
fard-1 (oe1) (daf-16 RNAi)
G
Alkenyl Fatty Alcohols (DMA)
Relative Abundance (normalized)
wt
fard-1 (oe3)
16:0
18:0
18:1
H
Percent of Total Fatty Acid Pool
wt
fard-1 (oe3)
14:0
15:iso
15:iso
16:0
17:cyclo
16:1
17:iso
17:iso
17:cyclo
17:cyclo
18:0
18:1 oleate
18:1 vaccenate
19:iso
18:2
18:2
18:2
19:iso
19:cyclo
19:cyclo
19:cyclo
19:cyclo
19:cyclo
20:0
19:cyclo
17:cyclo
20:1
20:2
20:3 DGLA
20:4 ARA
20:3 11,14,17 ETA
20:4
20:5 EPA
22:0

Figure 5. FARD-1 overexpression is sufficient to extend lifespan by modulating ether lipid synthesis. (A-B) Two, independently-generated *fard-1* overexpression *(fard-1 oe1 and fard-1 oe2)* transgenic strains exhibit lifespan extension that is not further extended by concomitant phenformin treatment. (C) RNAi knockdown of *ads-1* fully suppresses *fard-1(oe1)* lifespan extension, indicating that the *fard-1(oe)*-mediated lifespan extension is dependent upon ether lipid synthesis. (D-F) RNAi of *skn-1* (D), *aak-2* (E), and *daf-16* (F) suppress *fard-1(oe1)*-mediated lifespan extension. For *A-F*, results are representative of 2-3 biological replicates. *, $P < 0.05$; ***, $P < 0.001$; ****, $P < 0.0001$ by log-rank analysis. See also Figure 4—figure supplement 1 and Supplementary file 1 for tabular survival data and biological replicates. (G) Worms overexpressing integrated FARD-1 *(fard-1 oe3)* display a significant increase in 16:0 and 18:1 but not 18:0 alkenyl ether lipids by GC/MS. (H) Comparison of the total fatty acid pool indicates that the polyunsaturated fatty acids 20:4 arachidonic acid (ARA) and 20:5 eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) are significantly increased in *fard-1* overexpressing *(fard-1 oe3)* worms vs. wild type animal, while several isomethyl (iso) and cyclopropyl (cyclo) fatty acids change in opposing directions. For *G-H*, n = 3 biological replicates. *, $P < 0.05$; **, $P < 0.01$; ***, $P < 0.001$; ****, $P < 0.0001$ by multiple t-tests (with multiple hypothesis correction by two-stage step-up method of Benjamini, Krieger, and Yekutieli).

442 **Ether lipids do not promote lifespan extension by modulating ferroptosis**
443 Ether lipids have been reported to be protective against ferroptosis, an iron-
444 dependent form of programmed cell death characterized by the accumulation of
445 lipid peroxides (Perez et al., 2020; Zou et al., 2020). In order to determine whether
446 ether lipids promote longevity downstream of biguanide action by modulating
447 ferroptosis, we knocked down members of the glutathione peroxidase (GPX) family
448 in animals overexpressing integrated *fard-1 (fard-1 oe3* and *fard-1 oe4)*, as has
449 been previously reported to genetically facilitate lipid peroxidation and ferroptosis
450 (Perez et al., 2020; Sakamoto et al., 2014) (Figure 5—figure supplement 1A—C).
451 This analysis indicates that *gpx-1* (ortholog of human GPX4) RNAi leads to
452 variable lifespan extension relative to wild type controls and exhibits non-additive
453 lifespan extension with *fard-1(oe)* (Figure 5—figure supplement 1A). Neither *gpx-*
454 *6* nor *gpx-7* knockdown impacts lifespan extension in *fard-1(oe)* animals (Figure
455 5—figure supplement 1B—C). Further, GPX family RNAi do not negatively impact
456 lifespan extension reproducibly downstream of phenformin (Figure 5—figure
457 supplement 1D—F). We conclude that genetic triggers that induce ferroptosis do
458 not impact phenformin-prompted or *fard-1(oe)* lifespan extension, and thus it is
459 unlikely that either extend lifespan by suppressing ferroptosis.
460
461 **The ether lipid biosynthetic machinery operates upstream of the stress**
462 **responsive factor, *skn-1/Nrf2,* to enable lifespan extension in response to**
463 **biguanides**
464 We noted when analyzing FARD-1 protein localization that somatic lipid droplets
465 are generally less numerous in BODIPY-stained, phenformin-treated animals vs.
466 vehicle. Indeed, quantitative analysis indicates that intestinal lipid droplets are
467 significantly less numerous following phenformin treatment (in *glo-4* RNAi-treated
468 FARD-1::RFP transgenics *(fard-1 oe3)* fed C1-BODIPY-C12 to label lipid droplets,
469 Figure 6A). We previously reported that gain-of-function mutations in the nutrient-
470 and stress-responsive transcription factor *skn-1/Nrf2* prompt age-dependent,
471 somatic depletion of fat (Asdf) (Lynn et al., 2015; Nhan et al., 2019). This, together
472 with early adult decreases in lipid droplet numbers, suggested to us that
473 phenformin may prompt longevity by activating metabolic stress defenses in a *skn-*
474 *1*-dependent manner. Strikingly, we found that phenformin treatment produces
475 Asdf at day three of adulthood, quantitatively analogous to and non-additive with
476 *skn-1* gain-of-function mutants (Figure 6B—C). Compellingly, loss of function
477 mutations in any of the three ether lipid biosynthetic genes completely prevent the
478 phenformin-mediated Asdf phenotype (Figure 6B—C). Together with the
479 observation that promotion of lifespan extension by both phenformin and *fard-1(oe)*
480 require *skn-1,* these data suggest that biguanides activate an ether lipid-*skn-1*
481 signaling relay to drive longevity-associated metabolic shifts.

482 **Figure 6**



483 **Figure 6. Phenformin modulates systemic lipid metabolism through an ether lipid-**
484 ***skn-1* signaling relay.** (A) The number of intestinal, C1-BODIPY-C12 labeled lipid
485 droplets are significantly lower in phenformin treated animals versus vehicle (FARD-
486 1::RFP reporter transgenic *(fard-1 oe3)* worms are also treated with *glo-4* RNAi to remove
487 BODIPY-positive lysosome-related organelles). (B-C) Oil-red-O staining of day 3 adult
488 phenformin treated wild type animals indicates that drug treatment leads to age-dependent
489 somatic depletion of fat (Asdf), as previously reported for *skn-1* gain of function mutants
490 (*skn-1 gf)*, suggesting that phenformin activates Asdf downstream of *skn-1*. Quantification
491 (B) indicates that the proportion of Asdf animals is non additively increased by phenformin
492 treatment in a *skn-1gf* mutant, and that phenformin is no longer able to activate Asdf in 3,
493 independent ether lipid deficient mutants in *ads-1*, *acl-7*, and *fard-1*.

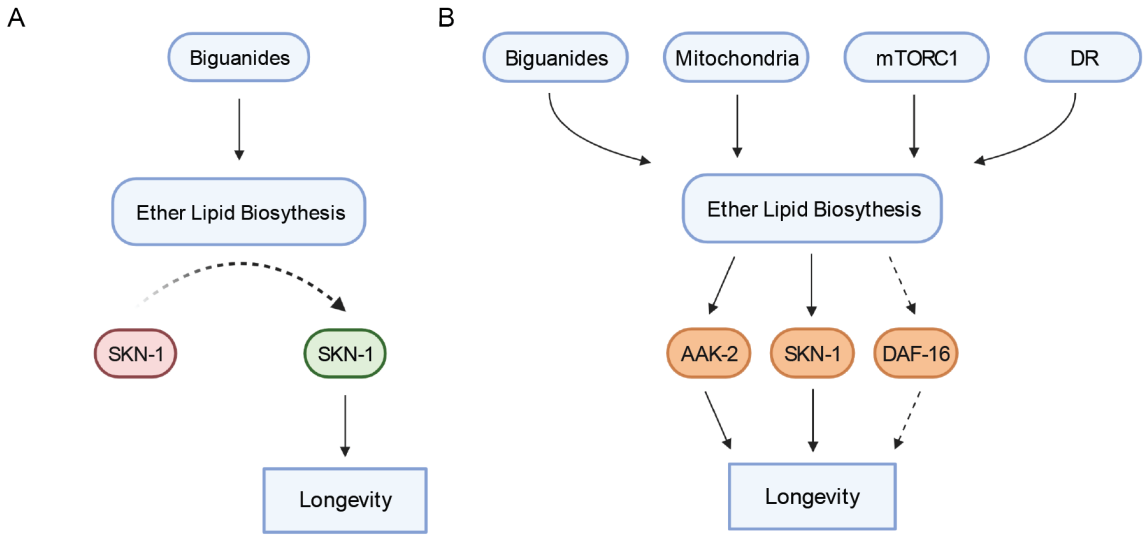
494 **Discussion**
495
496 In an unbiased RNAi screen of ~1000 metabolic genes, we identified ether lipid
497 biosynthesis as critical to the longevity-promoting effects of metformin in *C.*
498 *elegans*. Our results show that the biguanides metformin and phenformin promote
499 lifespan extension by stimulating biogenesis of ether lipids, prompting longevity-
500 promoting, metabolic stress defenses mediated by *skn-1*. The broad importance
501 of ether lipids is demonstrated by their requirement in multiple, diverse paradigms
502 of lifespan extension. Our findings also indicate that ether lipid modulation through
503 overexpression of *fard-1* is also sufficient to promote longevity. Thus, ether lipids
504 form a heretofore unappreciated lynchpin of lifespan modulation, and are sufficient
505 to support healthy aging through multiple, central longevity effectors, including *skn-*
506 *1*.
507 Differences in ether lipid abundance and composition are correlated with
508 diseases of aging. The uniform lethality associated with human genetic ether lipid
509 deficiency, as in the case of patients diagnosed with RCDP and Zellweger
510 syndrome, has made it difficult to study the role of ether lipids in aging and aging-
511 associated diseases (Braverman et al., 1997; Itzkovitz et al., 2012; Motley et al.,
512 1997; Purdue et al., 1997). Nonetheless, observational studies demonstrate
513 decreases in certain plasmalogen species in Alzheimer's Disease, suggesting a
514 probable link between ether lipids and aging-related pathologies (Goodenowe et
515 al., 2007; Grimm et al., 2011; Han et al., 2001). Ether lipids have conflicting roles
516 in cancer; while loss of the ether lipid biosynthetic machinery profits cancer cell
517 survival by enhancing resistance to ferroptosis (Zou et al., 2020), in other contexts,
518 ether lipid deficiency results in impaired pathogenicity in various human cancer
519 cells (Benjamin et al., 2013; Perez et al., 2020). Cancer cells generally have higher
520 levels of ether lipids compared to normal cells, leading others to suggest that ether
521 lipids confer pro-survival benefit (Albert and Anderson, 1977; Benjamin et al.,
522 2013; Snyder and Wood, 1969). However, certain ether lipid species have also
523 been reported to have anti-tumor properties (Arthur and Bittman, 2014; Jaffrès et
524 al., 2016). Thus, in line with the results we present here, it is critical to understand
525 ether lipids in context. Future work will need to focus on the impact of specific ether
526 lipid species rather than the whole class *en masse* to understand which may play
527 a beneficial versus detrimental role in health.
528 Studies in long-lived animal models suggest there is an association
529 between ether lipid content and animal longevity, such as in the naked mole-rat
530 (*Heterocephalus glaber*) (Mitchell et al., 2007) and the mud clam *Arctica islandica*
531 (Munro and Blier, 2012). Higher plasmalogen levels in naked mole-rat tissues
532 versus mice are speculated to contribute to protection of cellular membranes via a
533 reduction of oxidative stress (Mitchell et al., 2007). Similarly, exceptionally long-
534 lived humans harbor higher levels of phosphatidylcholine-derived, short chained
535 alkyl ether lipids and a lower levels of phosphatidylethanolamine-derived longer
536 chained plasmalogens (Pradas et al., 2019), but these associations are of unclear
537 functional significance. Although it is clear that ether lipid deficiency in *C. elegans*

538 prevents longevity downstream of mitochondrial electron transport chain
539 dysfunction, mTOR deficiency, caloric restriction, and biguanides alike, the precise
540 lipid(s) conferring this activity remains unknown. Each of these longevity
541 paradigms have features of nutrient deficiency, energy stress, or nutrient sensing,
542 so it is possible that ether lipids are at least part of the common effector arm
543 conferring benefit in aging to various forms of metabolic stress.
544 Our results suggest that unsaturated fatty acids and
545 phosphatidylethanolamine ether lipids are essential to the health promoting effects
546 of biguanides. Although we see major shifts in abundance of alkenyl ether lipids,
547 genetic evidence of necessity of ether lipids, and requirement for the synthesis of
548 mono- and poly-unsaturated fatty acids in biguanide-induced longevity,
549 determination of the specific lipids necessary for promoting healthy aging awaits
550 the ability to modulate the level of specific ether lipids. Additionally, disruption of
551 ether lipid biosynthesis has been shown to increase the proportion of stearate
552 (18:0) and other saturated fatty acids (Shi et al., 2016). Thus, at this time, we
553 cannot rule out the possibility that biguanide-stimulated alterations in ether lipid
554 biosynthesis serves to divert accumulation of lipid species that are detrimental to
555 lifespan, for instance, saturated fatty acids. Nonetheless, in light of our finding that
556 ether lipids prompt metabolic stress defenses, this alternative mechanism is less
557 likely. Definitive proof will require a deeper understanding of the regulation of
558 specific steps dictating the synthesis and modification of ether lipids of different
559 fatty alcohol and fatty acid composition.
560 Based upon our findings, ether lipid synthesis is likely to be regulated post-
561 translationally by biguanide treatment. The demonstrated increase in
562 plasmalogens and specific ether lipids are both consistent with increases in activity
563 of the ether lipid biosynthetic machinery. While we do not understand the
564 mechanism for the increased activity of ether lipid synthesizing enzymes, the
565 decreases in mRNAs for *acl-7*, *ads-1*, and *fard-1* and protein for FARD-1 invokes
566 negative feedback consistent with previous work showing that higher levels of
567 ether lipids promotes proteasomal degradation of peroxisomal Far1 protein
568 (Honsho et al., 2010). Co-localization of the fatty alcohol reductase, FARD-1, with
569 both peroxisomes and lipid droplets is similarly not impacted by biguanides.
570 Further investigation into the precise molecular interactions between FARD-1
571 protein and other organelles will be required to further understand how FARD-1
572 and the other ether lipid biosynthetic enzymes are regulated by biguanides and in
573 aging.
574 Strikingly, our data demonstrate for the first time that ether lipids are
575 required for phenformin to activate metabolic defenses downstream of the stress-
576 and metabolism-responsive transcription factor *skn-1*/NRF2. Phenformin drives
577 age-dependent somatic depletion of fat (Asdf), a phenotype we previously reported
578 upon genetic activation of *skn-1* (Lynn et al., 2015; Nhan et al., 2019). Based upon
579 the work of others and our own unpublished work, biguanides do not potentially
580 stimulate canonical *skn-1* antioxidant defenses such as *gst-4* expression (Cabreiro
581 et al., 2013; Onken and Driscoll, 2010). We suggest that *skn-1* is uniquely required

582 for metabolic stress defenses downstream of metformin such as Asdf rather than
583 canonical oxidative or proteostatic defenses. The requirement for ether lipids in
584 Asdf activation by phenformin confirm that this class of lipids plays a heretofore
585 unappreciated role in a distinct form of *skn-1* activation mimicked by genetic forms
586 of *skn-1* activation we have previously reported (Lynn et al., 2015; Nhan et al.,
587 2019).

588 In aggregate, data presented here indicate that ether lipid biosynthesis
589 plays a broader role in aging than previously described. The necessity of the ether
590 lipid machinery in metformin- and phenformin-stimulated lifespan extension and in
591 multiple longevity paradigms indicates that ether lipids serve as a lynchpin through
592 which lifespan is modulated (Figure 7A—B). Our demonstration that
593 overexpression of FARD-1 alone results in lifespan extension provides an exciting
594 opportunity to identify ether lipids that promote health and the effector mechanisms
595 through which they act. Finally, these results support the exciting possibility that
596 modulation of ether lipids pharmacologically or even dietarily may provide a new
597 potential therapeutic target in aging and aging-related diseases.

598 **Figure 7**



599 **Figure 7. Schematic representation for the role of the ether lipid biosynthetic**
600 **machinery in multiple prolongevity paradigms.** (A) Model of ether lipid action in
601 biguanide-prompted lifespan extension. Activation of ether lipid biosynthesis leads to
602 longevity-promoting activity of metabolic stress defenses downstream of the transcription
603 factor *skn-1*. (B) Model portraying a broader than previously appreciated role of ether lipids
604 in longevity downstream of biguanides, mitochondrial electron transport inhibition,
605 mTORC1 inhibition, and dietary restriction (DR).

606 **Materials and Methods**
607
608 ***C. elegans* genetics.** Strains were maintained at 20°C. The following strains
609 were used in this study: N2 (wild type strain), BX275 *fard-1(wa28)*, BX259 *acl-*
610 *7(wa20)*, BX10 *ads-1(wa3)*, CB1370 *daf-2(e1370)*, MQ989 *isp-1(qm150)*, VC533
611 *raga-1(ok701)*, DA465 *eat-2(da465)*, MGH48 *mgIs43*[*ges-1p*::GFP::PTS1], *skn-*
612 *1(lax188) (skn-1gf)*. For *fard-1* overexpression, the following strains were
613 generated: MGH471 *alxEx122*[*fard-1p*::FARD-1::mRFP::HA unc-54 3'UTR *myo-*
614 *2p*::GFP] *(fard-1 oe1)*, MGH472 *alxEx135*[*fard-1p*::FARD-1::mRFP::HA unc-54
615 3'UTR *myo-2p*::GFP] *(fard-1 oe2)*, MGH605 *alxIs45*[*fard-1p*::FARD-
616 1::mRFP::HA::unc-54 3'UTR *myo-2p*::GFP] *(fard-1 oe3)*, and MGH606
617 *alxIs46*[*fard-1p*::FARD-1::mRFP::HA::unc-54 3'UTR *myo-2p*::GFP] *(fard-1 oe4).*
618 All strains for *fard-1* overexpression were backcrossed 8x to N2 Bristol. For
619 colocalization analysis with peroxisomally targeted GFP, we crossed MGH48 and
620 MGH471 to generate the strain: MGH607 *mgIs43*[*ges-1p*::GFP::PTS1];
621 *alxEx122*[*fard-1p*::FARD-1::mRFP::HA::unc-54 3'UTR *myo-2p*::GFP] (noted in
622 text as GFP::PTS1; FARD-1::RFP).
623
624 **Statistical analysis of metabolomics data.** All visualization and significance
625 testing of metabolomics was conducted using the MetaboAnalyst 5.0 package
626 (Pang et al., 2021). Mass integration values for 9,192 compounds were extracted
627 from full-scan LC-MS/MS measurements of L4 to young adult (YA) transition wild
628 type (N2 Bristol), *ads-1(wa3)*, *acl-7(wa20)*, and *fard-1(wa28)* animals treated
629 from L1 hatch with vehicle, 4.5 mM phenformin, or 50mM metformin. Missing and
630 zero values in the data matrix were imputed via replacement with 1/5th of the
631 minimum positive value for each variable. Abundance values were subsequently
632 filtered based on interquartile range (reducing the compound list to the 2500
633 most variable compounds), and $\log_{10}$ transformed. Quantile normalization was
634 then performed, followed with division by the standard deviation of each variable
635 (auto-scaling). Normalized abundance values for were then extracted based
636 upon MS/MS signatures for phosphatidylethanolamine ether lipids and assessed
637 for statistical significance via one-way ANOVA followed by false discovery rate
638 (FDR) control using the Benjamini-Hochberg (BH) method (Benjamini and
639 Hochberg, 1995). Post-hoc testing was then performed using Fisher's LSD to
640 evaluate pairwise comparison significance. Metabolites were considered
641 differentially abundant in any one condition with an FDR controlled P value <
642 0.05. The top 25 metabolites across treatment (ranked by ANOVA f statistic and
643 FDR value) were visualized using a heatmap of Euclidean distance
644 measurements, with Ward clustering of samples and normalized compound
645 abundances included. All mass integration values for identified
646 phosphatidylethanolamine containing ether lipids, normalized abundance values,
647 and log-transformed, normalized abundance values, are included in this
648 manuscript as Supplementary file 2.

649 **Generation of *fard-1 C. elegans* transgenic lines.** For FARD-1 expression, the
650 entire genomic sequence of the *fard-1* locus (3659 bp), including introns and
651 exons, plus 4910 bp of promoter were amplified and cloned into a modified Fire
652 vector driving *fard-1* fused to mRFP and a HA epitope tag at the C-terminus. The
653 following cloning primers were used:
654
655 F: 5'-TGCATGCCTGCAGGTCGACTTTGACAAAAGTTCTGTTGCCG-3' and
656 R:
657 5'-TTTGGGTCCTTTGGCCAATCGCTTTTTTGAAGATACCGAGAATAATCC-3'.
658
659 The FARD-1 overexpression construct was injected at 10 ng/µL (*alxEx122*) and
660 18 ng/µL (*alxEx135*) into the gonad of wild type adult animals with salmon sperm
661 DNA as a carrier and 1.5 ng/µL *myo-2p*::GFP as a co-injection marker. *alxEx122*
662 was subsequently integrated by UV irradiation and 8x backcrossed to N2 Bristol to
663 obtain MGH605 and MGH606.
664
665 **RNA interference (RNAi) assays.** RNAi clones were isolated from a genome-
666 wide *E. coli* RNAi library, sequence verified, and fed to animals as described
667 (Kamath and Ahringer, 2003). RNAi feeding plates (6 cm) were prepared using a
668 standard NGM recipe with 5 mM isopropyl-B–D-thiogalactopyranoside and 200
669 µg/ml carbenicillin. RNAi clones were grown for 15 hours in Luria Broth (LB)
670 containing 100 µg/ml carbenicillin with shaking at 37°C. The stationary phase
671 culture was then collected, concentrated through centrifugation, the supernatant
672 was discarded, and the pellet was resuspended in LB to 20% of the original culture
673 volume; 250 µl of each RNAi clone concentrate was added to RNAi plates and
674 allowed to dry at least 24 hours prior to adding biguanide. Drug treatment was
675 added to seeded RNAi plates and allowed to dry at least 3 hours before adding
676 worms.
677
678 **Longevity assays.** Lifespan analysis was conducted at 20°C, as previously
679 described (Soukas et al., 2009). Briefly, synchronized L1 animals were seeded
680 onto NGM (for mutant treatment) or RNAi plates (for RNAi) and allowed to grow
681 until the L4 to YA transition stage. On day 0 of adulthood as indexed in the figure
682 legend, ~50-60 L4/YA worms per plate (unless otherwise noted) were transferred
683 onto fresh NGM or RNAi plates. These NGM and RNAi plates were supplemented
684 with 30 µM and 100 µM 5-fluorodeoxyuridine (FUdR) to suppress progeny
685 production, respectively. For biguanide treatment, about ~55-60 synchronized L1
686 animals (unless otherwise noted) were seeded onto plates containing 50 mM
687 metformin or 4.5 mM phenformin. At the L4/YA stage, these worms were
688 transferred to plates containing biguanide treatment and FUdR for the remainder
689 of their life. Dead worms were counted every other day. Statistical analysis was
690 performed with online OASIS2 resources (Han et al., 2016).

691 **Body Size Determination of *C. elegans*.** We measured worm body size in
692 response to biguanide treatment by imaging as previously described (Wu et al.,
693 2016). Egg prep synchronized wild type worms were treated with empty vector
694 (L4440) or ether lipid biosynthesis machinery RNAi and treated with vehicle
695 (ddH_2O) or 160mM metformin. After ~65-70 hours, worms were transferred into a
696 96 well plate, washed 3x with M9, and paralyzed in M9 buffer with 1 mg/ml
697 levamisole (L9756-10G, Sigma-Aldrich). Once immobilized, brightfield imaging
698 was performed at 5X magnification on a Leica DM6000 microscope within 5
699 minutes of transferring to a 96 well Teflon imaging slide. We determined the
700 maximal, longitudinal cross-sectional area of the imaged worms by using
701 MetaMorph software for a minimum of ~80 animals per condition in each
702 experiment. Results of a single experiment is shown. Each experiment was
703 performed at least twice, and results were consistent between experiments.
704
705 **GC/MS lipidomics.** Lipid extraction and GC/MS of extracted, acid-methanol-
706 derivatized lipids was performed as described previously (Pino and Soukas, 2020;
707 Pino et al., 2013). Briefly, 5000 synchronous mid-L4 animals were sonicated with
708 a probe sonicator on high intensity in a microfuge tube in 100-250 microliters total
709 volume. Following sonication, lipids were extracted in 3:1 methanol: methylene
710 chloride following the addition of acetyl chloride in sealed borosilicate glass tubes,
711 which were then incubated in a 75°C water bath for 1 hour. Derivatized fatty acids
712 and fatty alcohols were neutralized with 7% potassium carbonate, extracted with
713 hexane, and washed with acetonitrile prior to evaporation under nitrogen. Lipids
714 were resuspended in 200 microliters of hexane and analyzed on an Agilent GC/MS
715 equipped with a Supelcowax-10 column as previously described (Pino and
716 Soukas, 2020). Fatty acids and alcohols are indicated as the normalized peak area
717 of the total of derivatized fatty acids and alcohols detected in the sample.
718
719 **LC/MS-MS lipidomics.** Wild type, *fard-1*, *acl-7*, and *ads-1* worm mutants were
720 collected using conditions that enabled our reported longevity phenotypes. Briefly,
721 collection for LC/MS-MS processing comprised of 3 replicates of these 4 strains
722 that were independently treated with vehicle (ddH_2O), 50mM metformin, and
723 4.5mM phenformin on 10cm NGM plates. A set of untreated worms were included
724 for optimization of LC-MS/MS processing, for a total of 39 samples. A total of
725 ~6,000 animals (2 x 10cmM plates, 3,000 worms per plate) were utilized per
726 sample. These worms were washed with M9 (4x), concentrated into 200 µL of M9,
727 and then flash frozen with liquid nitrogen in 1.5mL Eppendorf microcentrifuge
728 tubes. Worm pellets were transferred to 2 mL impact resistant homogenization
729 tubes containing 300 mg of 1 mm zirconium beads and 1 mL of 90:10
730 ethanol:water. Using a Precellys 24 tissue homogenizer, samples were
731 homogenized in three 10 second cycles at 6400 Hz followed by 2 minutes of
732 sonication. Samples were then placed at -20 °C for one hour to facilitate protein
733 precipitation. Samples were transferred to 1.5 mL microfuge tubes and centrifuged
734 at 14,000 g for 10 minutes at 4 °C. After centrifugation, 120 µL of supernatant was

735 dried *in vacuo* and resuspended in 120 μL of 80:20 methanol:water containing
736 internal standards 1 ng/μL CUDA and 1 ng/μL MAPCHO-12-d38. Lipidomic data
737 was acquired by injecting 20 μL of sample onto a Phenomenex Kinetex F5 2.6 μm
738 (2.1 x 100 mm) column at 40 °C and flowing at 0.35 mL/min. Metabolites were
739 eluted using (A) water containing 0.1% formic acid and (B) acetonitrile:isopropanol
740 (50:50) containing 0.1% formic acid using the following gradient: 0% B from 0-1
741 min, 0-50% B from 1-6 mins, 50-100% B from 6 to 17 minutes and 100% B hold
742 from 17- 20 mins. Compounds were detected using a Thermo Scientific QExactive
743 Orbitrap mass spectrometer equipped with a heated electrospray ionization (HESI)
744 source operating in positive and negative ion mode with the following source
745 parameters: sheath gas flow of 40 units, aux gas flow of 15 units, sweep gas flow
746 of 2 units, spray voltage of +/-3.5 kV, capillary temperature of 265°C, aux gas temp
747 of 350°C, S-lens RF at 45. Data was collected using an MS1 scan event followed
748 by 4 DDA scan events using an isolation window of 1.0 m/z and a normalized
749 collision energy of 30 arbitrary units. For MS1 scan events, scan range of m/z 100-
750 1500, mass resolution of 17.5k, AGC of $1e^6$ and inject time of 50 ms was used. For
751 tandem MS acquisition, mass resolution of 17.5 k, AGC $5e^5$ and inject time of 80
752 ms was used. Data was collected using Thermo Xcalibur software (version
753 4.1.31.9) and analyzed using Thermo QualBrowser (version 4.1.31.9) as well as
754 MZmine 2.36.
755
756 **Quantitative RT-PCR.** To assess changes in mRNA levels of *fard-1*, *acl-7*, and
757 *ads-1* in response to biguanide treatment, we used quantitative RT-PCR as
758 previously described (Wu et al., 2016). Briefly, synchronized wild type (N2) L1
759 animals were seeded onto OP50, NGM plates containing vehicle (ddH_2O), 50 mM
760 metformin, or 4.5 mM phenformin. ~1600 worms were collected from 4 6cm plates
761 per replicate, per condition (with no more than 400 worms seeded per plate to
762 prevent overcrowding). n = 3 biological replicates. Worms were collected at the L4
763 to YA transition using M9 buffer and washed an additional 3X, allowing worms to
764 settle by gravity between washes. Total RNA was extracted using TRIzol. Reverse
765 transcription was performed with the Quantitect reverse transcription kit (Qiagen).
766 qRT-PCR was conducted in triplicate using Quantitect SYBR Green PCR reagent
767 (Qiagen) following manufacturer instructions on a Bio-Rad CFX96 Real-Time PCR
768 system (Bio-Rad). If not processed immediately, worms were flash frozen in liquid
769 nitrogen and kept in –80 °C until RNA preparation. The sequences for primer sets
770 used in *C. elegans* are:
771
772 *act-1*:
773 F: 5'-TGCTGATCGTATGCAGAAGG-3' and
774 R: 5'-TAGATCCTCCGATCCAGACG-3'
775
776 *fard-1*:
777 F: 5'-ACAAGTCACCAATGGCTCCAC-3' and
778 R: 5'-GCTTTGGTCAGAGTGTAGGTG-3'

779 *acl-7*:
780 F: 5'-GTTTATGGCTGGCGTGTTG-3' and
781 R: 5'-CGGAGAAGACAGCCCAGTAG-3'
782
783 *ads-1*:
784 F: 5'-GCGATTAACAAGGACGGACA-3' and
785 R: 5'-CGATGCCCAAGTAGTTCTCG-3'.
786
787 Expression levels of tested genes were presented as normalized fold changes to
788 the mRNA abundance of *act-1* for *C. elegans* by the ΔΔCt method.
789
790 **FARD-1 overexpression reporter fluorescence intensity analysis.** To assess
791 changes in levels of fluorescent FARD-1 protein in response to biguanide
792 treatment, we used the strain MGH471 *alxEx122*[*fard-1p*::FARD-1::mRFP::HA
793 unc-54 3'UTR *myo-2p*::GFP] *(fard-1 oe1)* and measured RFP intensity as
794 previously described in (Wu et al., 2016). In brief, egg prep synchronized L1 FARD-
795 1::RFP transgenic worms were treated with vehicle (ddH_2O) or 4.5 mM
796 phenformin, paralyzed with 1 mg/ml of levamisole, and then imaged in 96-well
797 format with a Leica DM6000 microscope outfitted with a mCherry filter set and
798 MMAF software. All RFP intensity tests were carried out in biological triplicate with
799 ~10 animals imaged per replicate.
800
801 **Colocalization analysis of FARD-1::RFP and peroxisomally targeted GFP**
802 Colocalization of GFP and RFP expression in vehicle or phenformin treated
803 MGH607 was performed by Coloc2 (Fiji) on images taken on a Leica Thunder
804 microscopy system. Since FARD-1::RFP in MGH607 is exogenously expressed,
805 we performed 3 hour egg lays with ~30 gravid hermaphrodites expressing both
806 GFP::PTS1 and FARD-1::RFP to synchronize L1s. The eggs were treated with
807 vehicle (ddH_2O) or 4.5mM phenformin immediately after gravid hermaphrodites
808 were removed, dried in a laminar flow hood, and allowed to incubate at 20°C until
809 the worms were young adult/early day 1 adults. To prepare for imaging, only
810 worms expressing both GFP::PTS1 and FARD-1::RFP were picked onto slides
811 containing dried 2% agar pads, immobilized in ~5 µL of 2.5mM levamisole solution
812 and covered with a cover slip. Images of the upper, mid, and lower intestine were
813 taken for 30 individual worms per condition (15 worms per replicate for 2 biological
814 replicates). We generated Pearson's r values to assess the extent to which
815 intestinal RFP and GFP overlap in each region of all samples. All Pearson's r
816 values were combined to generate 4 individual averages (1 per condition) to
817 perform an unpaired t-test.
818
819 **Lipid droplet analysis.** The strain MGH605 *alxIs45*[*fard-1p*::FARD-1::mRFP
820 ::HA::unc-54 3'UTR *myo-2p*::GFP] *(fard-1 oe3)* was used for this analysis.
821 Preparation of worms for imaging was similar to our longevity assays but modified
822 to incorporate staining of lipid droplets. Briefly, 6cm RNAi plates were seeded with

823 250µL bacteria expressing *glo-4* RNAi [5X] and allowed to incubate for 24 hours
824 at 20°C. 1µM of green C1-BODIPY-C12 (D-3823, Invitrogen) diluted in 100µL 1X
825 phosphate buffer saline (PBS, pH 7.2) was then added to the RNAi bacteria lawn
826 as in (Soukas et al., 2009).The plates were immediately dried in a dark laminar
827 flow hood, wrapped in aluminum foil to prevent photobleaching, and allowed to
828 incubate at 20°C for 24-48 hours. These plates were treated with vehicle (ddH_2O)
829 or 4.5mM phenformin as mentioned previously (while kept away from light.) Egg
830 prep synchronized worms were dropped onto plates and grown to day 1 adult
831 stage. To prepare for confocal imaging, animals were rapidly picked onto slides
832 containing dried 2% agar pads, immobilized in ~5 µL of 2.5mM levamisole solution
833 and covered with a cover slip. Lipid droplets were imaged by Zeiss LSM 800
834 Airyscan within 5 minutes of slide placement. Z-stacked images were obtained for
835 the intestine near the tail end of 14 *glo-4,* vehicle treated and 19 *glo-4*, phenformin
836 treated worms (2 biological replicates per condition). 5 planes were extracted
837 (planes 1,2,4,5, and 9) using ImageJ for all samples. For lipid droplet counting,
838 quantification was performed using Cell Profiler 4.2.1 (Stirling et al., 2021) where
839 lipid droplets were identified as primary objects. The min/max range for typical
840 object diameters was 3-67 pixels, and those objects outside of the diameter range
841 were discarded. Planes were excluded entirely if the pipeline did not accurately
842 capture individual lipid droplets for the vast majority of objects.
843
844 **Oil Red O Staining.** Oil red O (ORO) fat staining was conducted as outlined in
845 (Stuhr et al., 2022), In brief, worms were egg prepped and allowed to hatch
846 overnight for a synchronous L1 population. The next day, worms were dropped
847 onto plates seeded with bacteria with or without phenformin and raised to 120
848 hours (day 3 adult stage). Worms were washed off plates with PBST, then rocked
849 for 3 min in 40% isopropyl alcohol before being pelleted and treated with ORO in
850 diH2O for 2 hours. Worms were pelleted after 2 hours and washed in PBST for 30
851 min before being imaged at 5x magnification with the DIC filter on the Zeiss Axio
852 Imager Erc color camera.
853
854 **Asdf Quantification.** ORO-stained worms were placed on glass slides and a
855 coverslip was placed over the sample. Worms were scored, as previously
856 described (Stuhr et al., 2022). Worms were scored and images were taken with
857 the Zeiss Axio Imager Erc color camera at 5x magnification. Fat levels of worms
858 were placed into three categories: non-Asdf, intermediate, and Asdf. Non-Asdf
859 worms display no loss of fat and are stained dark red throughout most of the body
860 (somatic and germ cells). Intermediate worms display significant fat loss from the
861 somatic tissues, with portions of the intestine being clear, but ORO-stained fat
862 deposits are still visible (somatic < germ cells). Asdf worms had most, if not all,
863 observable somatic fat deposits depleted (germ cells only).
864
865 **Quantification and statistical analysis.** Unless otherwise indicated, the
866 statistical differences between control and experimental groups were determined

867 by two-tailed students *t*-test (two groups), one-way ANOVA (more than two
868 groups), or two-way ANOVA (two independent experimental variables), with
869 corrected *P* values < 0.05 considered significant. Analyses conducting more than
870 two comparisons were always corrected for multiple hypothesis testing. The log
871 rank test was used to determine significance in lifespan analyses using online
872 OASIS2.
873
874 **Acknowledgments**
875
876 We thank Talia Hart, Dr. Gary Ruvkun, Dr. Eric Greer, and Dr. Keith Blackwell for
877 discussions and constructive criticisms. This work was funded by NIH/NIA Grants
878 R01AG058259 and R01AG69677 (to A.A.S.) and R01AG058610 (to S.P.C.), by
879 the Weissman Family MGH Research Scholar Award (to A.A.S.), by a NSF
880 GRFP Award 1000253984 (to L.C.), and by NIH/NIAID R01AI130289 (to
881 R.P.W.), and by IRACDA NIH Grant K12GM106996 (to L.C.). Thanks to the
882 University of Southern California and Buck Institute Nathan Shock Center
883 (P30AG068345) for providing core services and support. Thanks to the
884 NIH/NIDDK-funded NORC of Harvard (P30DK040561) and the NIH/NIDDK-
885 funded Boston-Area DERC (P30DK057521) for core services. Some strains were
886 provided by the CGC, funded by the NIH Office of Research Infrastructure
887 Programs (P40OD010440), and the *C. elegans* Knockout Consortium. Figures
888 1A, 3C, and 7A were created with BioRender.com.
889
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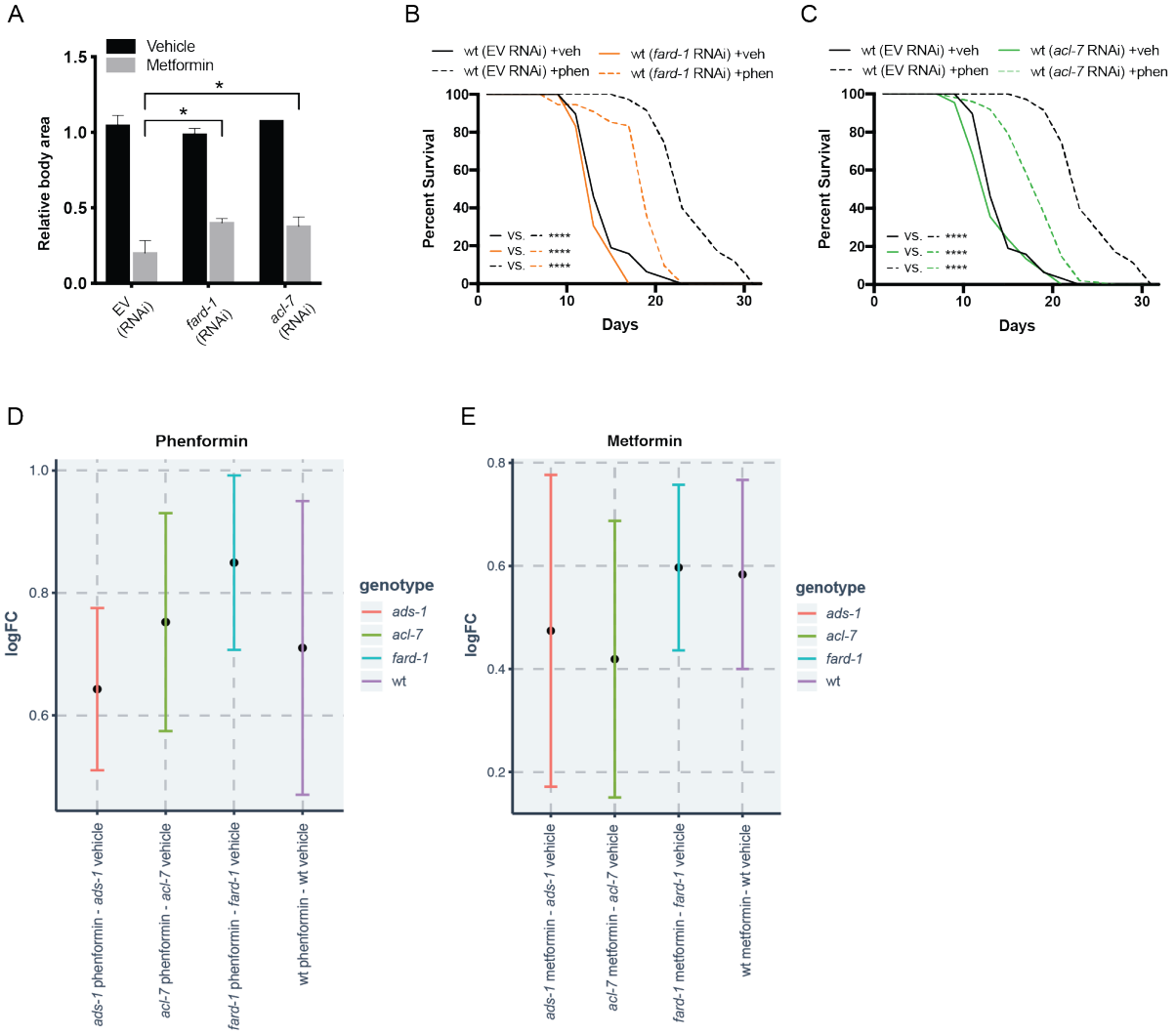
Supplementary material for this manuscript includes 5 figures and 2 supplementary files.

Supplementary file descriptions:

Supplementary file 1 (separate file). Tabular and survival data including 3 biological replicates (unless otherwise noted) are shown for lifespan experiments related to Figures 1, 3, 4, 5, Figure 1- figure supplement 1, Figure 4- figure supplement 1, and Figure 5- figure supplement 1. Data present a summary of the conditions tested which, if applicable, include: (1) drug treatment with vehicle control and 4.5 mM phenformin or 50 mM metformin and/or (2) RNAi treatment to knockdown expression of the specific denoted gene. The *C. elegans* strain, number of subjects, restricted mean (days), standard error, 95% confidence interval (C.I.), 95% median C.I., and *P*-values for relevant comparisons are noted amongst all conditions. ns, not significant; *, $P < 0.05$; **, $P < 0.01$; ***, $P < 0.001$; ****, $P < 0.0001$ by log-rank analysis.

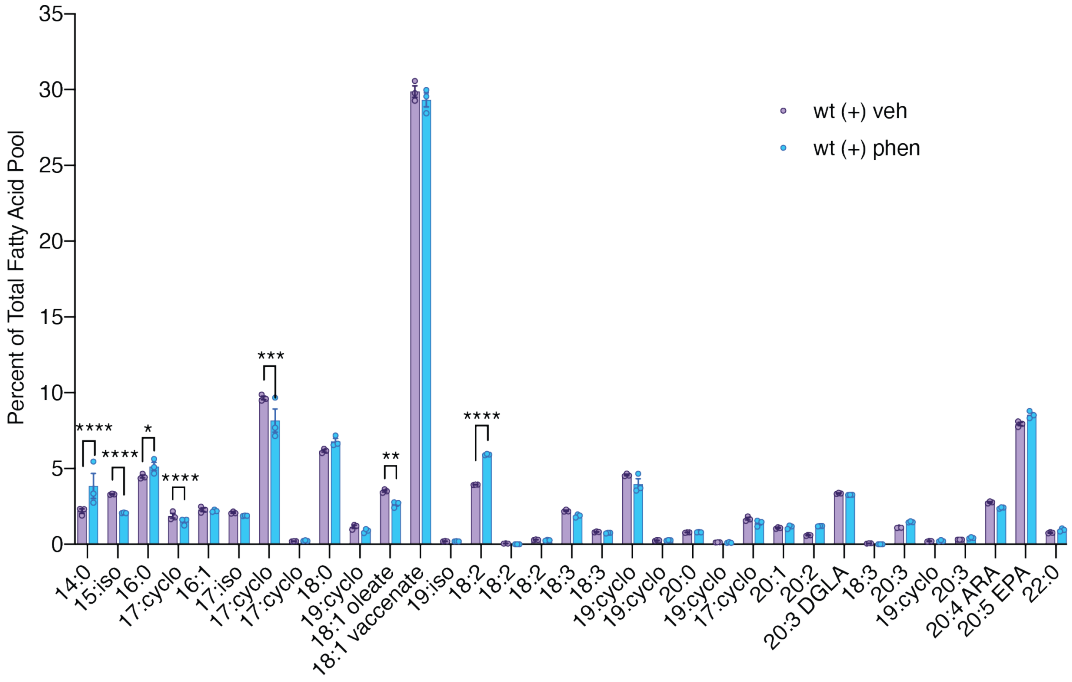
Supplementary file 2 (separate file). Excel file containing raw, normalized, and normalized and $\log_{10}$ transformed mass spectrometry data for phosphatidylethanolamine containing ether lipids detected by LC-MS/MS. Data from **3** biological replicates are shown for molecules indicated for vehicle or 4.5 mM phenformin treatment, for 4 different genetic backgrounds: wild type animals (N2), BX10 (*ads-1* mutant), BX259 (*acl-7* mutant) and BX275 (*fard-1* mutant). Compound identity for each detected lipid as well as raw, normalized or transformed mass counts on each of three tabs. Note**,** several of the lipids were not uniformly detected or of low abundance, and thus were filtered by the MetaboAnalyst parameters used and not represented on the “Normalized” and “Normalized-Log10 Transformed” tabs.

1195 **Figure 1—figure supplement 1**



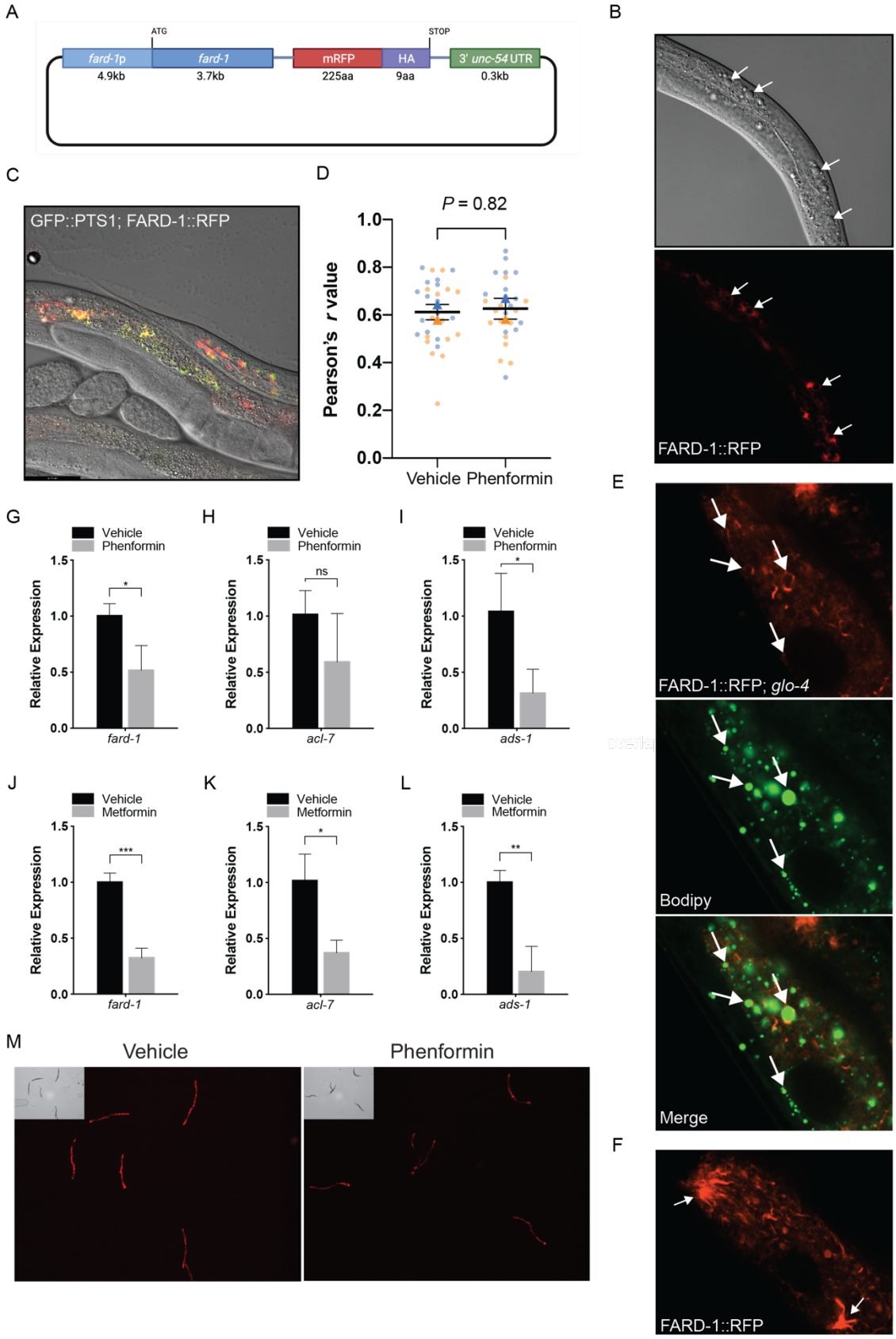
1196 **Figure 1—figure supplement 1. Reduced function of genes responsible for ether**
1197 **lipid biosynthesis partially suppresses biguanide effects of growth and lifespan**
1198 **without affecting biguanide levels.** (A) RNAi to *fard-1* and *acl-7* induce *C. elegans*
1199 resistance to growth inhibition by 160 mM metformin treatment. *, $P < 0.05$, by two-way
1200 ANOVA, **n =** 2 biological replicates. (B-C) RNAi knockdown of *fard-1* (*B*) and *acl-7* (*C*) in
1201 *C. elegans* partially suppresses phenformin's effect on lifespan extension. For *B* and *C,*
1202 results are representative of 3 biological replicates. ****, $P < 0.0001$ by log-rank analysis;
1203 for tabular survival data and biological replicates see also Supplementary file 1. (D) Log
1204 fold change (LogFC) of phenformin abundance in samples treated with 4.5 mM
1205 phenformin versus vehicle reveals that the increase in phenformin levels in wild type and
1206 **three** ether lipid deficient mutants is similar. (E) LogFC of metformin abundance in
1207 samples treated with 50 mM metformin versus vehicle show that metformin increases are
1208 similar across all 4 strains (*E*). Bars represent mean and 95% confidence intervals.

1209 **Figure 2—figure supplement 1**



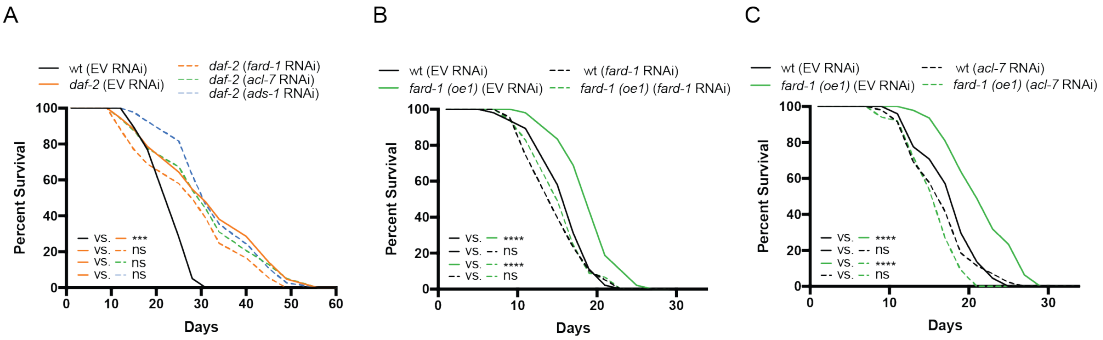
1210 **Figure 2—figure supplement 1. Biguanide treatment modulates abundance of fatty**
1211 **acids in *C. elegans.*** A comparison of the percent of the total fatty acid pool for 33 fatty
1212 acids shows that 7 fatty acids are significantly altered in phenformin treated wild type
1213 worms. n = 3 biological replicates. *, $P < 0.05$; **, $P < 0.01$; ***, $P < 0.001$; ****, $P < 0.0001$
1214 by multiple t-tests (corrected for multiple hypothesis testing with two-stage step-up method
1215 of Benjamini, Krieger, and Yekutieli).

1216 **Figure 2—figure supplement 2**



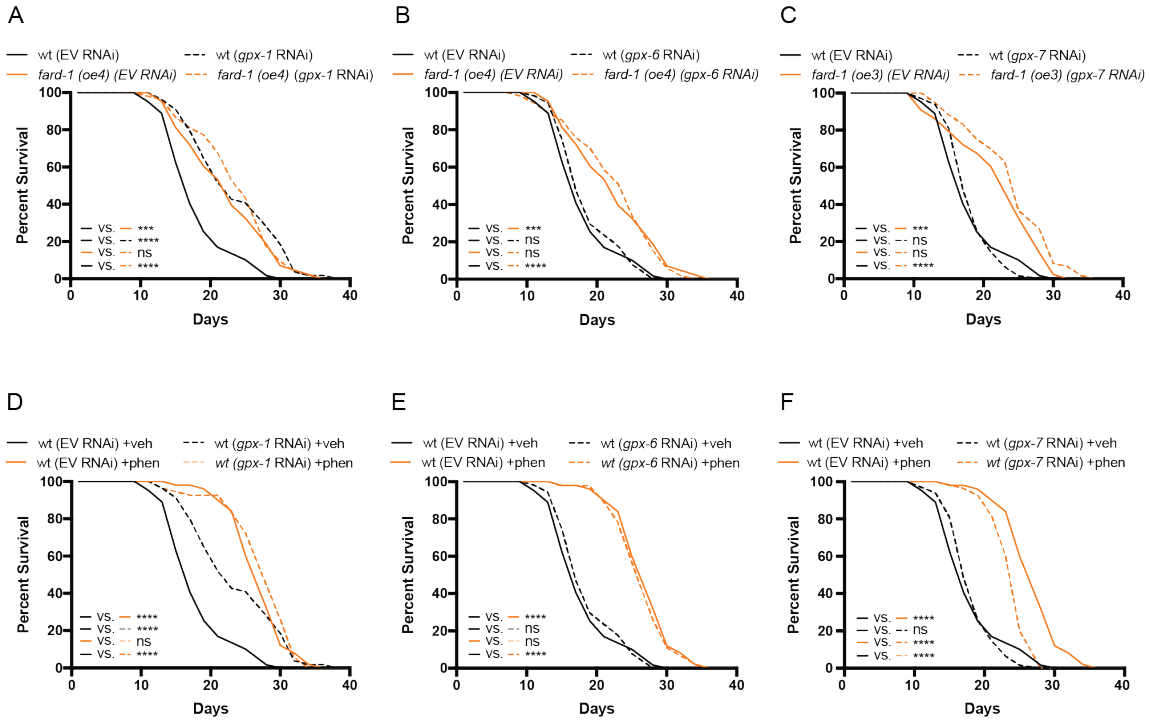
1217 **Figure 2—figure supplement 2. FARD-1::RFP localizes to intestinal lipid droplets**
1218 **and peroxisomes and is not positively regulated at the RNA or protein level by**
1219 **phenformin.** (A) Diagram of the *C. elegans* FARD-1::RFP overexpression reporter. (B)
1220 FARD-1::RFP *(fard-1 oe1)* exhibits intestinal expression in *C. elegans*. FARD-1 displays
1221 a cytoplasmic distribution and an association with structures resembling lipid droplets (B,
1222 *arrows*). (C) Co-expression of FARD-1::RFP and peroxisomally targeted GFP::PTS1 in
1223 transgenic animals indicates partial colocalization of FARD-1 with peroxisomes in
1224 intestine. (D) Superplot displays colocalization of RFP and GFP in vehicle or phenformin
1225 treated GFP::PTS1; FARD-1::RFP transgenics (n = 15 worms (dots) per replicate; blue
1226 = replicate 1, orange = replicate 2). Correlation coefficients were separately calculated for
1227 each biological replicate and the mean is represented for each pool (blue or orange
1228 triangle). These two means were then used to calculate the average (horizontal bar),
1229 standard error of the mean (error bars), and P value. Analysis of the average Pearson's r
1230 values demonstrates no significant difference between colocalization of FARD-1::RFP and
1231 GFP::PTS1 in vehicle or phenformin-treated worms. n = 2 biological replicates. (E)
1232 Confocal imaging of an integrated FARD-1::RFP reporter *(fard-1 oe3)* in *C. elegans*
1233 stained with C1-BODIPY-C12 (treated with *glo-4* RNAi to remove BODIPY positive
1234 lysosome related organelles) demonstrates localization of FARD-1 protein to the surface
1235 of lipid droplets in the worm intestine. (F) In *fard-1(oe3)* transgenics, confocal imaging
1236 indicates FARD-1::RFP organization into web-like structures and bright punctae that
1237 represent the intersection of these "webs". These structures may represent smooth
1238 endoplasmic reticulum. (G-I) Levels of *fard-1*, *acl-7*, and *ads-1* mRNA decrease in wild
1239 type *C. elegans* treated with 4.5 mM phenformin versus vehicle. n = 3 biological replicates;
1240 ns, not significant; *, $P < 0.05$ by unpaired *t*-test. (J-L) Levels of *fard-1*, *acl-7,* and *ads-1*
1241 mRNA decrease in wild type *C. elegans* treated with 50 mM metformin versus vehicle. n
1242 = 3 biological replicates; *, $P < 0.05$; **, $P < 0.01$; ***, $P < 0.001$ by unpaired *t*-test. (M)
1243 Phenformin (4.5 mM) results in decreased expression of the FARD-1::RFP translational
1244 reporter (*fard-1 oe1*). n = 3 biological replicates; total assessed: N = 30 worms per
1245 condition (10 worms per replicate).

1246 **Figure 4—figure supplement 1**



1247 **Figure 4—figure supplement 1. Ether lipid biosynthetic genes are not necessary for**
1248 ***daf-2*-dependent lifespan extension, and *fard-1* overexpression extends lifespan in**
1249 **a manner dependent upon ether lipid biosynthesis.** (A) *daf-2* mutants display extended
1250 lifespan relative to wild type animals. RNAi knockdown of *fard-1*, *acl-7*, and *ads-1* does
1251 not impact lifespan extension in these mutants. (B-C) RNAi knockdown of *fard-1* (*B*) and
1252 *acl-7* (*C*) suppresses *fard-1* overexpression*(oe1)*-associated lifespan extension. For A-C,
1253 results are representative of 2-3 biological replicates. ns, not significant; ***, $P < 0.001$;
1254 ****; $P < 0.0001$ by log-rank analysis. For tabular survival data and biological replicates
1255 see also Supplementary file 1.

1256 **Figure 5—figure supplement 1**



1257 **Figure 5—figure supplement 1. Genetic induction of ferroptosis does not impact**
1258 ***fard-1* overexpression nor biguanide-mediated lifespan extension.** (A-C)
1259 Independent knockdown of glutathione peroxidases, *gpx-1* (A), *gpx-6* (B), or *gpx-7* (C) by
1260 RNAi does not mitigate lifespan extension by integrated *fard-1* overexpression *(fard-1 oe3*
1261 and *fard-1 oe4)*, as would be expected if fard-1 overexpression extended lifespan by
1262 lowering ferroptosis. *gpx-1* unexpectedly extends lifespan in a non-additive manner with
1263 *fard-1(oe)*. (D-F) Similarly, knockdown of *gpx-1* (D), *gpx-6* (E), or *gpx-7* (F) by RNAi do
1264 not suppress phenformin-mediated lifespan extension. For *A-F,* results are representative
1265 of 2-3 biological replicates. ***, $P < 0.001$; ****, $P < 0.0001$ by log-rank analysis. For
1266 tabular survival data and biological replicates see also Supplementary file 1.