Short-term molecular consequences of chromosome mis-segregation for genome

stability

Lorenza Garribba[1,#], Giuseppina De Feudis[1,#], Valentino Martis[1], Martina Galli[2], Marie Dumont[3],

Yonatan Eliezer[4], René Wardenaar[5], Marica Rosaria Ippolito[1], Divya R Iyer[6], Andréa E Tijhuis[5],

Diana CJ Spierings[5], Michael Schubert[5], Silvia Taglietti[1], Chiara Soriani[1], Simon Gemble[3], Renata

Basto[3], Nick Rhind[6], Floris Foijer[5], Uri Ben-David[4], Daniele Fachinetti[3], Ylli Doksani[2] and Stefano

Santaguida[1,7,8,*]

1. Department of Experimental Oncology at IEO, European Institute of Oncology IRCCS, Via

Adamello 16, 20139 Milan, Italy

2. IFOM ETS - The AIRC Institute of Molecular Oncology, via Adamello 16, 20139, Milan, Italy

3. Institut Curie, PSL Research University, CNRS, UMR144, Paris, France

4. Department of Human Molecular Genetics and Biochemistry, Faculty of Medicine, Tel Aviv

University, Tel Aviv, Israel

5. European Research Institute for the Biology of Ageing, University of Groningen, University

Medical Center Groningen, 9713 AV, Groningen, the Netherlands

6. Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biotechnology, University of Massachusetts Chan

Medical School, 364 Plantation Street, Worcester, MA 01605, USA

7. Department of Oncology and Hemato-Oncology, University of Milan, Via Santa Sofia 9/1, 20122

Milan, Italy

8. Lead Contact

#These authors contributed equally

*Correspondence: stefano.santaguida@ieo.it (SS)

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Abstract

Chromosome instability (CIN) is the most common form of genome instability and is a hallmark of cancer. CIN invariably leads to aneuploidy, a state of karyotype imbalance. Here, we show that aneuploidy can also trigger CIN. We found that aneuploid cells experience DNA replication stress in their first S-phase and precipitate in a state of continuous CIN. This generates a repertoire of genetically diverse cells that can either continue proliferating or stop dividing. Cycling aneuploid cells display lower karyotype complexity compared to the arrested ones and increased expression of DNA repair signatures. Interestingly, the same signatures were upregulated in highly-proliferative cancer cells, which might enable them to proliferate despite the disadvantage conferred by aneuploidy-induced CIN. Altogether, our study reveals the short-term origins of CIN following aneuploidy and indicates the aneuploid state of cancer cells as a point mutation-independent source of genome instability, providing an explanation for aneuploidy occurrence in tumors.

Introduction

Chromosomal instability (CIN), a condition of continuous chromosome mis-segregation, is a pervasive feature of tumors[1,2]. CIN confers enhanced evolutionary capabilities on cancer cells by increasing intratumor heterogeneity and by enabling chemoresistance[3–6]. CIN leads invariably to aneuploidy, a state of karyotype imbalances, found in more than 90% of solid tumors and about 65% of blood cancers[1]. The presence of aneuploid karyotypes leads to several detrimental defects, including proteotoxic stress[7–9], metabolic alterations[10] and induction of DNA damage[7,11–14].

Importantly, karyotype aberrations strongly correlate with poor patient prognosis[2]. This might be due to the fact that specific aneuploidies could confer a proliferative advantage, thus fueling tumorigenesis[5,6] and promoting survival under sub-optimal conditions[3,4]. Such an advantage could be explained by the possibility that aneuploidy induces CIN (and, more broadly, genome instability), which might enable a continuous sculpting of the genome, eventually leading to cumulative haploinsufficiency and triplosensitivity[15,16] of genes crucial for sustained proliferation. In agreement with this idea, studies in yeast have demonstrated that gain of a single chromosome leads to defective DNA damage repair[12]. Further, aneuploid strains often divide in presence of unrepaired DNA, which triggers chromosomal translocations[17]. Similar observations were made in higher eukaryotes[18]. For example, a comparison between trisomic and diploid human cells has revealed that aneuploid cells are characterized by increased frequency of lagging chromosomes in anaphase. Thus, this evidence points at aneuploidy as an instigator of genome instability[16]. It is plausible that this instability is due to the strong impact of karyotype abnormalities on gene expression and protein homeostasis. In fact, aneuploid cells were found to display imbalances in factors critical for DNA replication (such as

MCM2-7), DNA repair and mitosis[13], processes that are all fundamental for the maintenance of genome integrity. In line with this possibility, previous studies have revealed that aneuploid cells exhibit an increased S-phase duration, display reduced DNA replication fork rate and increased fork stalling[13,14]. Due to the intrinsic genomic instability and other stresses typically associated with aneuploidy, cells with abnormal karyotypes often exhibit delayed cell cycle progression. In some cases, they even lose their proliferative capacity and stop dividing[1,14,19], resulting in their reduced sensitivity to chemotherapies[20,21].

Given the high prevalence of unbalanced karyotypes in tumors and its impact on the proliferation of cancer cells[3-6], elucidating the contribution of aneuploidy to genome instability, deciphering the molecular mechanisms by which it occurs and deconvolving its cellular consequences remain of paramount importance in cancer biology.

Here, by inducing controlled chromosome mis-segregation in otherwise pseudo-diploid human cells, we set out to identify the origins of genome instability in aneuploid cells and to understand whether protective mechanisms operate to preserve genome integrity. Our data indicate that in the first S-phase following chromosome mis-segregation, aneuploid cells fire dormant replication origins through a DDK-dependent mechanism and complete replication of genomic loci through mitotic DNA synthesis (MiDAS). Importantly, those pathways, acting both in interphase and mitosis, are crucial for aneuploid cells to protect them against further genome instability. We also show that the DNA damage associated with aneuploidy can be distributed asymmetrically between daughter cells during cell division and this, at least partially, can explain why some cells (*i.e.* those who have inherited most of the damage) stop dividing. By establishing a method for the separation of arrested and cycling aneuploid cells, we found that cycling aneuploid cells exhibit increased expression of DNA repair genes. Interestingly, the same transcriptional signature was upregulated in cancer cells characterized by high proliferative capacity. We speculate that elevated expression of DNA damage repair genes in highly proliferative cancers is able to help them counteracting the burden associated with genome instability, allowing them to benefit from a continuous reshuffling of the karyotype, which is crucial to sustain enhanced proliferation[3,4]. Finally, we speculate that interfering with those pathways, including DDK-mediated origin firing and MiDAS, is crucial for limiting DNA damage and might provide novel therapeutic interventions in cancer therapy. An example of this is given by ongoing clinical trials involving agents inhibiting DDK-mediated origin firing (*e.g.,* ClinicalTrials.gov Identifier: NCT03096054 and NCT05028218), and our work might help in the stratification of patients who could benefit from those treatments based on their proliferative capacity.

Results

Identification of mechanisms responsible for tolerance to aneuploidy-induced replication stress

Aneuploidy is associated with increasing genome instability[16], affecting the fidelity of both genome replication and segregation. To dissect the mechanisms through which aneuploid cells seek to limit this instability and thus keep proliferating, we quantified the direct effects of aneuploidy on genome integrity. For this, we analyzed chromosome aberrations immediately after the induction of mitotic errors (1st mitosis) and after one cell cycle (2nd mitosis). To this aim, we synchronized untransformed and genomically-stable, pseudo-diploid hTERT RPE-1 cells with thymidine at the G1/S border (Extended Data Fig. 1a,b) and, after release into the cell cycle, pulsed them with DMSO (vehicle control) or reversine, an Mps1 inhibitor widely-used to generate aneuploid cells as a consequence of chromosome segregation errors[22]. Cells were then either harvested for karyotype analysis of the 1st mitosis or, after DMSO or reversine wash-out, allowed to continue in the cell cycle, and then harvested for the same purpose in the 2nd mitosis (Fig. 1a). To rule out the possibility that the synchronization method and/or reversine treatment would impact on DNA damage thus affecting the results of our experiments, we evaluated the consequences of thymidine block and release in presence of reversine using γH2AX as a marker of DNA damage (Extended Data Fig. 1c-e). We found that, although thymidine block induced mild levels of DNA damage, this was fully repaired 12 hours after washout with a similar kinetics in cells exposed to Mps1 inhibitor or vehicle control (Extended Data Fig. 1c-e). We also treated cells with doxorubicin to induce DNA damage and observed no statistically significant differences in the DNA repair capacity of cells treated with the Mps1 inhibitor or vehicle control (Extended Data Fig. 1c,f,g). This shows that treatment with reversine does not affect cell capacity to repair the damage. Thus, by using this approach, analysis of 1st mitosis provided a measurement of the degree of chromosome aberrations directly caused by aneuploidy induction, whereas quantification of 2nd mitosis allowed for the estimation of genome alteration as a consequence of harboring aneuploid karyotypes. By using multi-color FISH (mFISH), we found abnormal events – including gains, losses and translocations – in both the 1st and 2nd mitoses (Fig. 1b,c and Extended Data Fig. 1h,i). Importantly, the percentage of cells harboring more than 10 abnormal events more than tripled from the 1st to the 2nd mitosis (Fig. 1b,c) indicating that the aneuploid state *per se* negatively impacts genome stability. However, we also note that Mps1i pulse in the 1st mitosis could affect chromosome stability in a long-term and aneuploidy-independent manner, through not-yet-identified mechanisms unrelated to chromosome mis-segregation.

Notably, numerical aneuploidies accounted for most of the measured aneuploidy events, both in the 1st and in the 2nd mitosis (Fig. 1d). Next, to decipher how aneuploidy affects genome integrity, we examined at high resolution the 1st S-phase of newly-generated aneuploid cells. For this, we synchronized cells at the G1/S border, released them in the presence of reversine or vehicle control,

blocked them in late G1 with mimosine and released them in S-phase (Fig. 1e and Extended Data Fig. 2a,b). Similar to thymidine, mimosine leads to accumulation of mild levels of DNA damage that is repaired over time no matter whether cells had received reversine or the vehicle control in the previous 24 hours (Extended Data Fig. 2c-e). For the study of the 1st S-phase of aneuploid cells obtained as above, we used three complementary approaches: 1) ultra-structural visualization of replication forks through electron microscopy (EM), 2) single-cell analysis of replication stress and DNA damage markers by immunofluorescence and 3) assessment of replication dynamics by DNA combing (Fig. 1e). These efforts led to three key observations. First, EM analysis of replication intermediates revealed an increase in reversed replication forks in aneuploid cells, compared to pseudo-diploid counterparts (Fig. 1f,g). Accumulation of these intermediates is associated with an increased frequency of replication fork stalling[23] and is consistent with previous observations of ongoing replication stress in aneuploid cells[13,14]. Further, aneuploid cells displayed increased levels of DNA replication stress and DNA damage markers such as FANCD2 (mean foci in control: 14,2 ± 1,9; aneuploid: 47,7 ± 4,6), RPA (mean foci in control: 8 ± 1,4; aneuploid 19,5 ± 2,7) and pChk1 (mean foci in control: 23 ± 1,8; aneuploid 33,3 ± 3,1) (Fig. 1h-m). Among them, the number of FANCD2 foci per S-phase cell was found to be even higher in aneuploid cells than in cells treated with the DNA replication inhibitor aphidicolin, used as a positive control (FANCD2 mean foci in aphidicolin-treated cells: 40,7 ± 3; RPA mean foci 49 ± 3,9; pChk1 mean foci 44,1 ± 2,6) (Fig. 1i,k,m and Extended Data Fig. 2f). Finally, we found that fork density and origin firing rate in aneuploid cells were higher than euploid counterparts (Fig. 1n-p), suggesting that dormant replication origins were fired in the 1st S-phase following chromosome mis-segregation events. In our previous study we reported that aneuploid cells have reduced fork rate and a higher number of stalled forks as compared to euploid cells[14]. Cells activate dormant origins in response to reduced fork rate and stalled forks to ensure that the genome gets fully replicated in time. Hence, we estimated origin firing rate and fork density, calculated as the total number of forks per Mb of DNA[24]. The total origin firing rate was 2-fold higher in aneuploid cells compared to euploid cells (p=1,5x10^{-34}). Consistent with the origin firing data, fork density was also 1,7-fold higher in aneuploid cells (p=7,46x10^{-13}). Analog-specific estimations for both the parameters also showed similar trends. Our data is also consistent with increased origin firing observed in aneuploid human pluripotent stem cells[25]. Overall, our data shows that aneuploid cells struggle to complete replication and therefore activate backup mechanisms such as dormant origin firing to ensure genome duplication and tolerance to replication stress.

Altogether, these data provide crucial insights into the effects of aneuploidy on genome integrity. We find that: 1) cells harboring aneuploid karyotypes tend to accumulate increasing levels of chromosome abnormalities, 2) those defects might be the consequence of DNA replication stress, and

3) are correlated with a higher incidence of replication fork reversal and increased DNA damage

markers. Finally, 4) at the same time, aneuploid cells also show an increased usage of dormant origins,

which we speculate might act as a mechanism to tolerate aneuploidy-induced replication stress.

Aneuploid cells rely on DDK to cope with replication stress

Dormant origin firing is a well-known rescue mechanism protecting cells during replication stress[26].

To test whether aneuploid cells would also rely on this salvage mechanism, we inhibited the activity

of DDK, a key player in origin firing[27–31]. For this, aneuploid cells or pseudo-diploid counterparts

(generated as in Fig. 1e) were arrested in late G1 (after the 1st mitosis) and then released in the

presence or absence of the DDK inhibitor XL413[32] (Fig. 2a). After 6 hours, cells were pulsed with

the thymidine analogue ethynyl deoxy-uridine (EdU) for 30 minutes to label S-phase cells and then

fixed and stained for FANCD2, RPA and pChk1. We found that inhibition of DDK led to significantly

increased levels of FANCD2 (mean foci in control: 40,9 ± 2,9; control + DDKi: 52,6 ± 2,9; aneuploid

72,2 ± 3,5; aneuploid + DDKi: 84,5 ± 4,9), RPA (mean foci in control: 56,3 ± 3,7; control + DDKi:

36,2 ± 2,9; aneuploid 83,5 ± 5,8; aneuploid + DDKi: 103,9 ± 6,4) and pChk1 (mean foci in control:

44,1 ± 2,6; control + DDKi: 44,9 ± 2,8; aneuploid 62,9 ± 4,2; aneuploid + DDKi: 74,7 ± 4,2) in

aneuploid cells, indicating that replication stress is exacerbated when interfering with dormant origin

firing through DDK inhibition (Fig. 2b-g). These findings were validated also by using alternative

approaches to interfere with the function of DDK and Mpsi, namely an analog-sensitive allele of

Cdc7[31] and the Mps1 inhibitor AZ3146[33], respectively (Extended Data Fig.3a). For this, we inhibited

Cdc7 using 20μM 1-NM-PP1 analog - a concentration previously shown[31] to fully inhibit Cdc7-

dependent phosphorylation of MCM2 (Extended Data Fig. 3b)- and induced aneuploidy using

AZ3146. We found that Cdc7 inhibition resulted in significantly increased levels of FANCD2, RPA

and pChk1 in aneuploid cells (Extended Data Fig. 3c-h), in agreement with experiments performed

with XL-413. We also observed a significant increase in the number of FANCD2 foci and a

significant decrease in that of RPA foci in control cells when Cdc7 was inhibited compared to

functional Cdc7 (Extended Data Fig. 3c,d), which highlights the importance of DDK activity during

replication stress and is in agreement with previous findings[31]. These results prompted us to test

whether DDK activity, and its involvement in dormant origin firing, would also be critical for

aneuploid cell proliferation. Interestingly, we found that aneuploid cells were more sensitive to DDK

inhibition compared to pseudo-diploid counterparts (Fig. 2h,i) - although showing a similar rate of

cell death under basal conditions (Extended Data Fig. 3i)-, indicating that they rely more than euploid

cells on the function of DDK to survive. Altogether, our data show that DDK-mediated origin firing

represents a protective mechanism that acts in S-phase of aneuploid cells to limit replication stress.

Importantly, inhibition of this mechanism exacerbates replication stress in aneuploid cells and
reduces their viability.
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Aneuploid cells undergo mitotic DNA synthesis to limit the consequences of replication stress
on genome stability

DNA replication stress - defined as any slowing or stalling of replication fork progression and/or
DNA synthesis[34]- impacts mitotic fidelity[35–37]. Thus, we thought to study how the events occurring
in the 1st S-phase of aneuploid cells affect the following cell division. To this aim, we performed live-
cell imaging experiments with hTERT RPE-1 cells stably expressing PCNA-GFP and H2b-RFP. This
allowed to monitor S-phase length through the measurement of time elapsed between appearance and
disappearance of PCNA foci (a well-known feature of this DNA clamping factor[38]) and mitotic timing
and quality by tracking chromosomes through H2b. Cells were synchronized with thymidine, then
pulsed with reversine while they were transiting through the 1st mitosis. Cells were then washed-out
and imaged every 10 minutes for 72 hours in order to evaluate the duration of the first S-phase after
chromosome mis-segregation and the quality of the 2nd mitosis (Fig. 3a,b). First, we found that
aneuploid cells displayed a longer S-phase compared to euploid controls (mean S-phase length in
control: 540,1 ± 17,82; aneuploid: 662,5 ± 29,89. Extended Data Fig. 4a), in agreement with the fact
that they experience ongoing DNA replication stress and in line with previous reports[13,14]. Next, we
decided to correlate S-phase length to the quality of the 2nd mitosis. Thus, we classified mitotic figures
in "normal mitoses", for those not displaying defects, and "abnormal mitoses", for those showing
mitotic errors, including chromatin bridges, lagging chromosomes or micronuclei in the following
G1. Interestingly, we found a positive correlation between S-phase length and frequency of abnormal
mitoses (mean S-phase length in control: 603,3 ± 55,4; aneuploid: 728,7 ± 46,2) (Fig. 3c). Further,
aneuploid cells that displayed mitotic errors spent more time in mitosis (Fig. 3d), which we could
fully attribute to spindle-assembly checkpoint activation, since SAC inhibition rescued this delay
(Extended Data Fig. 4b).
Based on the evidence that aneuploid cells suffer from replication stress in the 1st S-phase following
chromosome mis-segregation events, we wanted to investigate whether they would attempt to finish
DNA replication in the subsequent mitosis, as previously discovered in cancer cells as a consequence
of S-phase stress[39]. In order to evaluate the activation of the mitotic DNA synthesis (MiDAS)
pathway, aneuploid cells generated as in Fig. 1a were arrested at the G2/M boundary with the CDK1
inhibitor RO3306 (Extended Data Fig. 4c,d – a synchronization method that did not induce DNA
damage accumulation (Extended Data Fig. 4e-g)) and released in the presence of EdU and colcemid
to monitor sites of active DNA synthesis in prometaphase cells. By doing so, we observed that the

number of EdU foci per spread was significantly higher in aneuploid cells in comparison to the control (mean EdU foci in control: 0,1 ± 0,04; aneuploid: 0,9 ± 0,1; Fig. 3e,f). The DNA replication inhibitor aphidicolin was added in S-phase as replication stress inducer (mean EdU foci: 2,6 ± 0,3). Interestingly, we did not spot a tendency of MiDAS to occur at defined chromosomal locations such as telomeres, similarly to aphidicolin-induced MiDAS (Extended Data Fig. 4h,i). Next, to test the efficacy of MiDAS in fixing unfinished DNA replication, we inhibited the pathway and evaluated the consequences on genome stability in the following G1 (Fig. 3g). To this aim, we first tested if MiDAS could be inhibited by adding a high dose of aphidicolin in mitosis similarly as observed in cancer cells[39–41]. Our results showed that indeed this was the case, since the number of EdU foci per prometaphase cell was significantly reduced upon addition of aphidicolin in mitosis (mean EdU foci in control: 0,2 ± 0,1; control + MiDASi: 0,1 ± 0,03; aneuploid: 1,3 ± 0,2; aneuploid + MiDASi: 0,5 ± 0,1; Fig. 3h,i). As readouts of genome instability, we analyzed 53BP1 bodies and micronuclei in the G1 after the 2nd mitosis in which MiDAS had occurred. We found that both 53BP1 bodies per cell and the frequency of G1 cells with micronuclei were significantly increased in aneuploid cells in which MiDAS was inhibited in comparison with those in which MiDAS occurred properly (Fig. 3j-l). This correlation was also observed in aphidicolin-treated cells (mean EdU foci: 4,5 ± 0,6; + MiDASi: 0,7 ± 0,3), in agreement with previous studies[39]. These findings were further confirmed by depleting the non-catalytic subunit of DNA polymerase δ POLD3, which has been shown to be essential for the two MiDAS pathways described so far[39,41]. By using this approach and employing AZ3146 to induce aneuploidy (Extended Data Fig. 5a,b), we found that POLD3 depletion inhibited MiDAS (Extended Data Fig. 5c,d) and prevented the accumulation of 53BP1 bodies and micronuclei in aneuploid cells (Extended Data Fig. 5e-g). Altogether, our data demonstrate that MiDAS acts as a safeguard mechanism in the 2nd mitosis to prevent genome instability from further increasing.

Dormant origin firing and MiDAS protect aneuploid cells from further increase in genome instability

The results obtained from the characterization of the first S-phase after chromosome mis-segregation and the subsequent mitosis revealed two protective mechanisms operating in aneuploid cells with the role of limiting genome instability. To test if the combined action of these two pathways indeed serves to protect aneuploid cells, we simultaneously inhibited DDK in S-phase and MiDAS in the subsequent M phase and evaluated DNA damage and chromosomal aberrations in the following G1 phase (Fig. 4a). As DNA damage markers, we used FANCD2, a reliable replication stress/DNA damage marker in aneuploid cells (Fig. 1i and Extended Data Fig. 3c,d), and γH2AX, an early marker of DNA double-stranded breaks[42]. To specifically look at G1 cells, we used cytochalasin B to block

cytokinesis and analyze daughter cells[43]. We observed that the number of both FANCD2 and γH2AX

foci was significantly higher in aneuploid cells in which DDK and MiDAS were inhibited compared

to aneuploid cells in which only either DDK or MiDAS was hindered (Fig. 4b-d). Interestingly,

inhibition of both pathways led to an increase in FANCD2 and γH2AX foci also in euploid cells,

highlighting that their proper functioning is crucial for maintaining genome integrity. Then, to assess

the frequency of chromosomal aberrations upon DDK and MiDAS inhibition, G1 cells were treated

with the PP1/PP2A phosphatase inhibitor calyculin A to induce premature DNA condensation[44] and

obtain metaphase-like spreads. By mFISH analysis, we were able to observe an almost 2-fold increase

in the percentage of cells with translocations between aneuploid cells in which DDK and MiDAS

were or were not inhibited (mean percentage of cells with at least 1 translocation in aneuploid cells:

33,4; in aneuploid cells + DDKi + MiDASi: 63,2) (Fig. 4e-g). Taken together, these data indicate that

the presence of both pathways protects aneuploid cells from further increasing their genome

instability.

Interestingly, while scoring DNA damage in G1 cells we noticed that distribution of FANCD2 or

γH2AX foci in aneuploid cells was not always symmetric between daughter cells. Thus, we

specifically analyzed the pattern of DNA damage inheritance in the aneuploid sample and the euploid

control, along with aphidicolin-treated cells where it has been recently shown that DNA damage can

be distributed asymmetrically between daughters[45]. Our data indicated that FANCD2 and γH2AX

foci were asymmetrically distributed in about 20% and 10% of aneuploid daughter cells, respectively

(Fig. 4h-j). We then decided to follow the fate of aneuploid daughter cells via live cell imaging and

asked whether asymmetric DNA damage distribution would impinge on proliferative capacity. For

this, we used hTERT RPE-1 cells expressing H2b-GFP and RNF168-miRFP - as a marker of DNA

damage- and assessed DNA damage inheritance in aneuploid cells over a 5-day timeframe (Extended

Data Fig. 6a). First, in agreement with our findings obtained by monitoring FANCD2 and γH2AX in

fixed cells, we found RNF168 to be asymmetrically partitioned in more than 20% of daughter cells

(Extended Data Fig. 6b-d). Second, DNA damage transmission from mother to daughter cells was

more likely to happen in aneuploid cells eventually displaying impaired proliferative capacity

(defined as those cells that divided less than 4 times over a 5-day period (see Methods) - Extended

Data Fig. 6e), pointing at a correlation between DNA damage accumulation and reduced proliferative

capacity. Lastly, and most importantly, the incidence of cell divisions in which DNA damage was

asymmetrically distributed between daughter cells was higher in cells with low proliferative capacity

(Extended Data Fig. 6f), indicating that unequal partitioning of DNA damage may act as an

accelerator of cell cycle arrest in aneuploid cells. These data suggest that non-random distribution of

DNA damage between aneuploid daughter cells, alone or in combination with other aneuploidy-

associated features, such as micronucleation, proteotoxic stress, etc., could underlie the difference in proliferation observed among aneuploid cells[14,19].

A method to separate arrested and cycling aneuploid cells

The asymmetric inheritance of DNA damage and cell fate determinants have been hypothesized to underlie stem cell self-renewal[46]. Thus, based on asymmetric portioning of DNA damage markers in aneuploid cells (Fig. 4h-j and Extended Data Fig. 6), we reasoned that, like stem cells, they might segregate DNA damage asymmetrically, partially explaining why some aneuploid cells can keep cycling while others get arrested and enter senescence[14,19]. To test this hypothesis, we first needed to confirm that a proportion of aneuploid cells indeed gets arrested in the cell cycle and becomes senescent over time. Hence, we let aneuploid cells progress for about 3 cell cycles before harvesting them for β-galactosidase staining, a widely used marker of senescence[47]. As a positive control, we used cells treated with doxorubicin for 7 days, as DNA damage is an established senescence-inducer[14]. Our results indicated that, as expected[14], there was a sub-population of senescent cells in the aneuploid sample (Fig. 5a). Also, by conducting the same experiment at earlier time points (*i.e.*, 1, 2 or 3 cell cycles after aneuploidy induction), we found there was an accrual of senescent cells over time with a peak at 72 hours after chromosome mis-segregation, reflecting the increase in genome instability as an important trigger of senescence in aneuploid cells (Extended Data Fig. 7a). To characterize, in detail, the aneuploid cells that were still able to cycle and those that underwent senescence, we decided to establish a method for their isolation and separation. For this, we reasoned that the main (and, at the same time, potentially exploitable) difference between aneuploid cycling and arrested cells is that the latter are senescent. Thus, we adapted to aneuploid cells a FACS sorting-based assay employing the fluorescent substrate of the β-galactosidase enzyme (which is highly active in senescent cells) 9H-(1,3-dichloro-9,9-dimethylacridin-2-one-7-yl) β-d-galactopyranoside (DDAOG)[48]. We then exposed aneuploid cells to DDAOG and separated cells that were able to metabolize it (*i.e.*, senescent cells) from those that could not metabolize it (*i.e.*, cycling cells) (Fig. 5b,c and Extended Data Fig. 7b,c). First, we confirmed that sorted cells were indeed either arrested or cycling by β-galactosidase staining and found the former to be highly reactive to senescence-associated β-galactosidase staining (Fig. 5d). Further, we used hTERT FUCCI RPE-1 cells[49] (Extended Data Fig. 7d) to obtain the cell cycle profile of the two sorted aneuploid cell populations, together with the aneuploid sample before sorting and the euploid control. Our data confirmed that aneuploid cells positive for DDAOG were indeed arrested, since the vast majority of them (86 ± 14,1%) were stuck in G1, as expected for senescent cells. On the other hand, negative ones were able to proliferate (Extended Data Fig. 7e and Fig. 5e,f) and the percentage of G1 cells was 24% (± 8,5%)

334 (Extended Data Fig. 7e and Fig. 5e,f). Collectively, these data indicate that our method allows for the
335 successful separation and recovery of arrested and cycling aneuploid cells that could be used for
336 further analysis and characterization of the two populations.

DNA damage and karyotype complexity might be responsible, at least partially, for cell cycle
defects of aneuploid cells

We then evaluated DNA damage in cycling and arrested aneuploid cells, as well as in aneuploid cells
before sorting and the euploid control. Our data indicate that aneuploid arrested cells display
increased levels of FANCD2 and γH2AX foci compared to aneuploid cycling cells (mean FANCD2
foci in aneuploid arrested: 71,8 ± 3,9; in aneuploid cycling: 46,9 ± 2,2; mean γH2AX foci in aneuploid
arrested: 6,4 ± 1,1; in aneuploid cycling 2,5 ± 0,5) (Fig. 5g-i). Further, we also analyzed the karyotype
of cycling and arrested aneuploid cells by single-cell whole genome sequencing (scWGS) and
observed an increased frequency of cells with at least 3 aneuploid chromosomes in arrested aneuploid
cells (Fig. 5j,k) without showing any clear trend of specific gained/lost chromosomes (Extended Data
Fig. 7f,g). Altogether, these data show that both DNA damage and severe karyotype imbalances might
contribute, at least partially, to cell cycle arrest in aneuploid cells.

Cycling aneuploid cells display increased expression of DNA repair genes

In line with reduced DNA damage and karyotype abnormalities in the aneuploid cells that retained
their proliferation capacity, we found that the frequency of mitotic errors (such as anaphase bridges
and micronuclei) in aneuploid cycling cells was comparable to that of controls for at least 3
generations (Fig. 6a-c). This result suggests that the karyotype of these cells is likely to remain stable
over time, which is indicative of low levels of genome instability in aneuploid cycling cells. Having
established a tool to separate the two sub-populations of aneuploid cells, we turned our attention to
the identification of features distinguishing aneuploid cycling cells from those that arrested. To
address this question, we decided to analyze their transcriptional signatures via RNAseq. This
analysis revealed that the two samples are indeed quite different (Fig. 6d). In particular, aneuploid
arrested cells displayed overexpression of p53 and inflammation-related genes, in agreement with
previous findings[14]. Conversely, aneuploid cycling cells, as expected based on their retained ability
to divide, exhibited increased expression of cell cycle genes compared to aneuploid arrested cells.
Interestingly, we also noticed that DNA damage and repair genes were overexpressed in aneuploid
cycling cells (Fig. 6d and Extended Data Table 1). Consistently, pathways associated with DNA
damage repair were up-regulated in cycling *vs* arrested aneuploid cells (Fig. 6e). In line with this,
when exposed to ionizing radiation (IR), cycling aneuploid cells were able to repair DNA damage

more efficiently than the arrested ones (Fig. 6f,g and Extended Data Fig. 8a,b). Indeed, we measured
a faster decay kinetics of γH2AX and 53BP1 levels in the cycling population compared to the arrested
one (Fig. 6f,g and Extended Data Fig. 8a,b), that holds true for γH2AX also when compared to euploid
controls (Extended Data Fig. 8c,d). Non-sorted aneuploid cells were also included in the analysis,
and they turned out to have a lower efficiency compared to the euploid controls in fixing IR-induced
DNA damage (Extended Data Fig. 8a,b,e,f). Increased expression of DNA damage repair genes found
in aneuploid cycling cells could be due to their higher proliferative capacity compared to the arrested
ones or the presence of euploid cells in the population (which were ~1.8-fold more in cycling
aneuploid cells compared to the arrested ones (24% *vs.* 13%, respectively) - Fig. 5j,k). To determine
whether cycling aneuploid cells indeed upregulate DDR pathways, we compared their transcriptome
to that of (cycling) euploid counterparts. As expected, when compared to euploid, cycling aneuploid
cells downregulate pathways associated with cell proliferation and upregulate the p53 pathway
(Extended Data Fig. 8g). Nonetheless, we found DNA repair gene expression to be higher in
aneuploid cycling cells even when compared to euploid control cells (Extended Data Fig. 8h). As
cycling aneuploid cells upregulate the DDR both in comparison to euploid cells and to arrested
aneuploid cells, we conclude that this is not a consequence of higher proliferative capability and/or
driven by a small fraction of diploid cells present in the population. Importantly, the activation of
DNA damage repair pathways in aneuploid cells is consistent with our recent findings in cancer[20] and
untransformed cells[50]. We therefore hypothesized that higher expression of DNA damage repair
genes would confer a growth advantage to the cells. To confirm this, we turned to the CCLE (Cancer
Cell Line Encyclopedia) database[51,52] to analyze the association between doubling time and DNA
damage repair gene expression in more than 400 human cancer cell lines. We divided the cell lines
into top and bottom quartiles based on their doubling times, and then compared their gene expression
profiles. Cell lines with a low doubling time (<35 hours) exhibited increased expression of DNA
repair related gene signatures in comparison to cells with a high doubling time (>65 hours) (Fig. 6h-
j), linking high levels of DDR with increased proliferation capacity. These data suggest that elevated
expression of DDR genes might confer a proliferative advantage to aneuploid cells and make them
able to cycle despite the disadvantage conferred by the aneuploid status. Altogether, our data reveal
the existence of protective mechanisms in aneuploid cells, namely DDK-mediated origin firing in S-
phase and MiDAS in the subsequent mitosis, which operate to limit their genome instability (Fig. 7).
Also, increasing degrees of karyotype aberrations together with high levels of DNA damage could
contribute, at least partially, to cell cycle arrest of aneuploid cells. Lastly, an increased capacity to
repair DNA damage is associated with a proliferative advantage not only in untransformed but also
in cancer cells (Fig. 7).

Discussion

Genome instability is a hallmark of cancer[53]. Its most common form is CIN, shown to promote tumorigenesis and confer proliferative advantages to cancer cells[3-6]. CIN can directly cause aneuploidy and, in this study, we demonstrate that aneuploidy can also instigate CIN. By combining biochemical and live cell imaging experiments with single-molecule replication-mapping technologies and single-cell multi-omics analysis, we found that the acquisition of unbalanced karyotypes can directly contribute to short-term genome instability, which in turn yields a diverse array of karyotypic landscapes. This effect feeds a self-sustaining loop, in which aneuploidy leads to CIN, thus generating more aneuploid daughter cells able to propagate genome diversity through continuous errors during genome replication and segregation.

Previous reports have shown that aneuploid cells can experience replication stress[13,14]. Here, we show that a DDK-dependent dormant origin firing operates during the first S-phase following chromosome mis-segregation and acts as a protective mechanism to cope with replication stress. It is still unclear what are the actual sources of replication stress in aneuploid cells. DNA replication stress can be triggered by 1. collisions between the replication fork and the transcriptional machinery, 2. nucleotide pool imbalances, 3. difficulties in the template DNA (*e.g.*, repetitive sequences and/or secondary structures), 4. scarcity of replication factors to perform DNA synthesis[34]. Among them, insufficient amount of replication factors seems to be the most likely cause of replication stress in aneuploid cells, based on the fact that decreased levels of MCM2-7 proteins were reported in RPE-1 and HCT116 stable aneuploid clones with defined trisomies[13]. Also, a recent study has revealed that tetraploid cells encounter replication stress as a result of insufficiency of DNA replication factors[54], a mechanism that could also apply to aneuploid cells. Because in our system we observe dormant origin firing, we speculate that the limiting DNA replication factors are those downstream of origin firing, such as PCNA, RFC and DNA polymerases[55]. Future studies will be aimed at exploring this possibility, with the goal of elucidating the contributions of those factors in DNA replication of aneuploid cells. This line of study might also open novel therapeutic interventions through selective targeting of aneuploid cancer cells by targeting those limiting DNA replication factors.

Along this line, another important implication of our finding that DDK and MiDAS play a central role in helping cells coping with aneuploidy is that these mechanisms could well be targetable vulnerabilities of aneuploid cancers. Although it might be challenging to selectively target MiDAS - its key players SLX4-MUS81, RAD52 and POLD3[39,40] are also involved in other processes beyond MiDAS, such as homologous recombination (HR) repair and canonical S-phase DNA replication – things could be different for DDK. In particular, the DDK inhibitor TAK-931 was recently tested in

a phase 2 clinical trial for the treatment of advanced solid tumors[56]. Based on our study, we speculate

that this drug (and similar ones) could be combined with inhibitors of DNA repair, such as the

products of genes playing a role in HR repair, since they were the most differentially regulated in our

analysis (Extended Data Table 1). Thus, the combined inhibition of DDK and HR repair factors could

potentially be effective to treat aneuploid cancers. This approach would have the great advantage of

being highly selective against cancer aneuploid cells, lowering the side-effects of the DNA repair-

based cancer therapies and the frequent chemoresistance associated with them[57].

In summary, by providing a detailed characterization of the short-term effects of unbalanced

karyotypes in the acquisition of aggressive cancer-like features, we demonstrate that aneuploidy

provides a point mutation-independent source of genome instability. Although this might offer a

source of karyotypic variations capable of enabling proliferative capacity of cancer cells, it also leads

to extensive DNA damage. Thus, we speculate that aneuploidy-induced genome instability might be

a double-edged sword for cancer cells. On one hand, it is crucial for providing genome plasticity, on

the other it might be extremely deleterious because of continuous DNA damage and replication stress.

We propose that cancer cells solve this issue by limiting DNA damage - through upregulation of

DNA repair genes - to a level compatible with cell proliferation. At the same time, this allows them

to keep some degree of genomic instability and thus to continuously sample diverse karyotypic

landscapes. Our observations shed new light on the bidirectional association between aneuploidy and

genomic instability and propose new approaches for the selective eradication of aneuploid tumors.

Methods

Cell culture conditions

The following hTERT RPE-1 cells were all tested free of mycoplasma contamination using Myco

Alert (Lonza) according to manufacturer's instructions: hTERT RPE-1 cells, hTERT RPE-1 cells

expressing H2b-RFP and PCNA-GFP or H2b-GFP or LCK-GFP (all generated in house), hTERT

RPE-1 expressing PCNA-chromobodies and RNF168-miRFP (generated by Dr Simon Gemble and

subsequently infected with H2b-GFP), Fluorescent Ubiquitination-based Cell Cycle Indicator

(FUCCI) RPE-1 (kind gift of Professor Simona Polo, IFOM, Milan, Italy), hTERT RPE-1 expressing

wild-type (wt) or analog-sensitive (as) Cdc7 (kind gift of Professor Prasad V. Jallepalli, MSKCC,

New York, USA). All the cells were maintained in a humified environment at 37 degrees with 5%

CO_2 and cultured in Dulbecco's modified Eagle's medium (DMEM) or DMEM:F-12 (1:1 ratio)

supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum and 1% penicillin/streptomycin.

Cell synchronization and treatments

To harvest cells for FACS analysis, hTERT RPE-1 cells were incubated with thymidine (5mM, Merck

Millipore) for 24 hours or with mimosine (0,5mM, Merck Millipore)/aphidicolin (400nM, Merck

Millipore)/RO3306 (7,5μM Merck Millipore) for 18 hours, washed 3 times in 1XPBS and harvested

after 3,6, 12, 18 or 24 hours.

To harvest metaphase cells for mFISH analysis, hTERT RPE-1 cells were synchronized at the G1/S

boundary with thymidine, washed 3 times in 1XPBS (washout) and pulsed with the Mps1 inhibitor

reversine (500nM, Cayman Chemical) or the vehicle control (dimethyl sulfoxide, DMSO) for 24

hours and then harvested for karyotype analysis either immediately after the pulse ('1st mitosis') or

24 hours later ('2nd mitosis'). In both cases, colcemid (100ng/ml, Merck Millipore) was added 2 hours

before harvesting the cells in order to block cells in prometaphase. To perform ultra-structural

analysis of replication intermediates and analyze replication dynamics, cells were treated as above

and analyzed immediately after the 24-hour reversine/DMSO pulse.

To analyze DNA replication stress markers in S-phase, hTERT RPE-1 cells or hTERT RPE-1 cells

expressing wt or as Cdc7 were plated onto fibronectin (5μg/ml, Sigma-Aldrich) coated coverslips at

approximately 30% confluence and synchronized with thymidine for 24 hours. After washout, cells

were pulsed for 18 hours with reversine or AZ3146 (2μM, Tocris) or vehicle control (DMSO) and

released in the presence of mimosine for 18 hours. After washout, cells were incubated for 6 hours in

the presence or absence of aphidicolin or the DDK inhibitor XL413 (10μM, Aurogene) or the PP1

analog II 1-NM-PP1 (Cayman Chemical) prior to fixation for immunofluorescence. The thymidine

analog ethynyl deoxy-uridine (EdU) was added at a final concentration of 10μM during the last 30

minutes to label S-phase cells. To check levels of MCM2 phosphorylation in hTERT RPE-1 Cdc7 wt

or as cells, after 24h treatment with mimosine, cells were released and allowed to progress in S-phase

in the presence or absence of 1-NM-PP1. 6 hours later, they were harvested for Western blot analysis.

To assess viability in aneuploid and control cells, hTERT RPE-1 cells were synchronized with

thymidine for 24 hours, washed 3 times in 1XPBS and pulsed with reversine/DMSO for 24 hours.

Viability was assessed by FACS analysis 120 hours after the reversine/DMSO washout. Cells treated

with staurosporin (500nM, Aurogene) for 24 hours were used as a positive control for cell death.

To assess S-phase length and quality of the subsequent mitosis by time-lapse microscopy, after

plating onto a fibronectin-coated glass 12wellplate, hTERT RPE-1 H2b-RFP and PCNA-GFP cells

were blocked in G1/S with thymidine for 24 hours, then washed out, pulsed with reversine/DMSO

for 18 hours and filmed for 72 hours.

For MiDAS detection, hTERT RPE-1 cells were treated as above and, after reversine/DMSO

washout, released in RO3306 for 12 hours to arrest them in late G2 phase. Then, after 3 washes in

1XPBS, cells were released in mitosis in the presence of EdU 40μM and colcemid for 2 hours to

harvest prometaphase cells for MiDAS detection. Aphidicolin 400nM was added to a subpopulation of cells pulsed with DMSO just after DMSO washout in order to induce DNA replication stress (positive control). To investigate the consequences of MiDAS inhibition in G1 cells, cells were plated and treated as above. After RO3306 washout, cells were released in EdU 40μM in the presence or absence of aphidicolin (2μM, Merck Millipore) for 40 minutes (for prometaphase cells) or 3 hours (for G1 cells) prior to fixation of immunofluorescence. For POLD3 knock-down experiments, hTERT RPE-1 cells were first transfected with POLD3 or scramble siRNAs and then re-plated onto fibronectin-coated coverslips and treated as above. An aliquot of the samples was harvested for Western blot analysis to check the levels of POLD3.

In order to harvest daughter pseudo-G1 cells, after thymidine and reversine pulses, hTERT RPE-1 LCK-GFP cells were released in the presence or absence of XL413 10μM and arrested in late G2 phase with RO3306. After drug washout, cells were incubated in the presence or absence of aphidicolin 2μM for 3 hours together with cytochalasin B (3μg/ml, Merck Millipore) to block cytokinesis prior to fixation for immunofluorescence.

To obtain metaphase-like spreads from G1 cells, calyculin A (50ng/ml, Sigma-Aldrich) was added for 45 minutes to G1 cells treated as above to induce premature chromosome condensation, prior to harvest for mFISH analysis.

To evaluate β-galactosidase positivity in aneuploid cells, after reversine washout, hTERT RPE-1 cells were allowed to progress for about 60 hours before fixation. The same protocol was used to generate aneuploid cells for sorting, including hTERT FUCCI RPE-1 and hTERT RPE-1 H2b-GFP cells. After sorting, some cells were replated and fixed 16 hours later to perform β-galactosidase staining, while some others were replated for live cell imaging experiments or directly harvested as frozen pellets for RNA extraction. As a positive control for senescence, cells continuously treated with doxorubicin (200nM, Merck Millipore) for 7 days were used.

Fluorescence-activated cell sorting (FACS) analysis

hTERT RPE-1 cells were treated as above, harvested, centrifuged and washed once in 1% bovine serum albumin (BSA) in 1XPBS. Cells were fixed in 100% ethanol (added dropwise while vortexing) and stored at +4 degrees overnight. Cells were centrifuged again and stained with staining solution - propidium iodide (20μg/ml, Biotium), RNase A (1mg/ml, Roche) in 1XPBS- for 3 hours at room temperature (RT) prior to FACS analysis.

For assessing cell viability, hTERT RPE-1 cells were treated as above, harvested, centrifuged and resuspended in a Zombie Green™ Fixable Viability Kit (BioLegend) 1:100 in 1XPBS for at least 30 minutes at RT in the dark. Cells were centrifuged again and resuspended in 1XPBS.

In both cases, FACS was carried out on a FACS Celesta BD[TM] (laser 488, filter 695/40nm for

propidium iodide; laser 488, filter 530/30nm for Zombie Green). For each condition, at least 20,000

events were recorded, and data analysis was performed using the FlowJo software (v10.7.2). Cells

were gated for singlets (as shown in Extended Data Fig.1b) and then, for Zombie Green stained cells,

FITC intensity was used to distinguish live from dead cells (as shown in Extended Data Fig.3i), *i.e.*

the percentage of live cells was obtained subtracting debris and Zombie-positive cells (*i.e.* dead cells)

from the total.

Multicolor fluorescence in situ hybridization (mFISH)

After the treatments described above, hTERT RPE-1 cells blocked in prometaphase or G1 cells in

which premature condensation was induced were trypsinized and centrifuged to obtain cell pellets.

Cell pellets were resuspended in KCl 75mM and incubated for 10 min in a 37 degrees waterbath.

After centrifugation, cells were fixed in freshly-prepared Carnoy solution (methanol-acetic acid in a

3:1 ratio) while vortexing and then incubated for 30 minutes at RT. After a wash in freshly-prepared

Carnoy solution, minimum volume of fixative was left to resuspend the pellet and cells were dropped

onto glass slides. mFISH staining was performed following manufacturer's instructions

(MetaSystems). The Metafer imaging platform (MetaSystems) and the Isis software (MetaSystems,

version 5.5) were used for automated acquisition of the chromosome spread and mFISH image

analysis.

Ultra-structural analysis of replication intermediates

hTERT RPE-1 cells were treated as above and harvested. Immediately after, cells were psoralen-

crosslinked *in vivo* to stabilize replication intermediates as described in[58]. The cell suspension was

first incubated with 30 µg/ml 4, 5′, 8-trimethylpsoralen (2mg/ml, Sigma) for 5 min in the dark and

then exposed to 365 nm UV light for 8 min in a UV Stratalinker 1800, (Stratagene), with 365 nm UV

bulbs (model UVL-56, UVP) at 2–3 cm from the light source. The incubation and irradiation steps

were repeated three more times (4 cycles total). Genomic DNA (gDNA) was extracted with phenol-

chloroform as described in[58]. 50 µg of gDNA were digested with KpnI and passed through a QIAGEN

Genomic-tip 20/G column (QIAGEN) to enrich for replication intermediates, as described by

Zellweger and Lopes[59]. EM spreads and imaging was performed as described in[60].

Immunofluorescence analysis and EdU detection

At the end of the treatments described above, hTERT RPE-1, hTERT RPE-1 Cdc7 wt or as, or

hTERT RPE-1 LCK-GFP cells were washed once in 1XPBS and then fixed in 4% paraformaldehyde

(PFA) for 15 minutes at RT. After 3 washes in 1XPBS, cells were blocked in 3% BSA + 0.5% Triton-

X in 1XPBS for 30 minutes and incubated with the following primary antibodies diluted in the same

buffer for 90 minutes at RT: anti-FANCD2 (NB 100-182, Novus Biologicals) 1:200, anti-RPA

(ab2175, Abcam) 1:200, anti-pChk1 (#133D3, Cell Signaling Technology) 1:50, anti-53BP1

(ab175933, Abcam) 1:1000, anti-γH2AX (JBW301, Millipore) 1:400. After 3 washes in 1XPBS, cells

were incubated with secondary antibodies (ThermoFisher Scientific) diluted 1:400 in 3% BSA + 0.5%

Triton-X in 1XPBS for 45 minutes at RT in the dark. Coverslips were then mounted on glass slides

using Vectashield Antifade Mounting Medium with DAPI (Vectorlabs).

Where indicated, immunofluorescence was combined with EdU detection. Briefly, after the blocking,

EdU detection was performed using the Click-iT EdU Cell Proliferation kit for Imaging

(ThermoFisher Scientific) following the manufacturer's instructions. After the washes, incubation of

the cells in primary antibodies and the subsequent steps of immunofluorescence were performed as

above.

In all cases, images were acquired using Leica DM6B (Multi Fluo) or Leica SP5 microscope (63x

objective was used in both cases).

DNA fiber analysis

Cells were labeled sequentially with IdU (green [G]) and CldU (red [R]) and were harvested and

processed as described in[14]. Data was collected from 2 independent experiments. A total of 47 and

54 Mb of DNA and 33 and 38 Mb of DNA was collected from the control and the aneuploid cells,

respectively. Data analysis was performed as described in detail in[24]. Please note that the order of

labeling is reversed (CldU→IdU) in the experiments described in[24], therefore, the interpretation of

patterns is also reversed as compared to this article. Briefly, origin firing rate is the total number of

origins that fired during the first and the second analog in each fiber divided by the total length of

the un-replicated DNA in that fiber and the total length of the analog labeling pulses (120 minutes).

Origins that fire during the first analog will appear as Red-Green-Red [RGR] and origins that fire

during the second analog will appear as Red [R] events. However, origins that fire during the first

analog will appear as RGR only if both the forks progress into the second analog. The origins will

appear as RG or GR if either of the fork stalls or as G if both the forks stall. Thus, the total number

of origins in each fiber was estimated by accounting for the probability of forks stalling.

Fork density is the total number of forks in each fiber divided by the total length of the un-replicated

DNA of that fiber. Origins and termination events account for 2 forks each and unidirectional fork

events account for 1 fork each. However, some of the unidirectional forks could be an origin whose

left or rightward fork is stalled. Thus, the total number of forks on each fiber was estimated by

accounting for the probability of forks stalling. Please see[24] for calculation of fork stall rate and how

the probability of fork stalling was used to estimate the final origin firing rate and fork density for

each fiber.

Cell proliferation assay

After thymidine synchronization and 18h reversine/DMSO pulse as above, hTERT RPE-1 cells were

trypsinized, counted and plated into a 96wellplate in the presence of XL413 10μM or the vehicle

control (DMSO). Drugs were re-added fresh every 48-72 hours during the 120 hour -treatment. Then,

cell viability was assessed by using the CellTiter-Glo Luminescent cell viability assay (Promega)

following manufacturer's instructions.

Western blot analysis

hTERT RPE-1 Cdc7 wt or as cells or hTERT RPE-1 cells treated as above were harvested and lysed

using RIPA buffer (1x, Cell Signaling Technology) supplemented with protease inhibitor cocktail

(Roche) and phosphatase inhibitor cocktail (Merck Millipore) for 15 minutes on ice. After sonication,

whole cell lysates were quantified and aliquots of samples were resolved on a Criterion TGX Stain-

Free precast gel (Bio-Rad). The membrane was blocked in 1XPBS + 0,1% Tween (1XPBS-T) with

non-fat dry milk (5%, Merck Millipore) for 30 minutes at RT and then incubated for 3 hours at RT

with a primary antibody resuspended in 1XPBS-T with 5% milk. Following 3x10 minutes washes

using 1XPBS-T, the membrane was incubated for 45 minutes at RT with a HRP-conjugated

secondary antibody re-suspended in 1XPBS-T, followed by 3x10 minutes washes in PBS-T. Clarity

Western ECL Substrate (Bio-Rad) was used for signal detection, and images were captured on a

ChemiDoc XRS+ (Bio-rad). Primary antibodies used were: MCM2 (1:1000, A300-191A, Bethyl

Laboratories), phosphoS40MCM2 (1:1000, ab133243, Abcam), POLD3 (1:1000, ab182564,

Abcam), GAPDH (1:2000, #2118, Cell Signaling Technology) and vinculin (1:5000, V9131, Merck

Millipore).

Live cell imaging

To monitor S-phase length and M phase duration and quality, hTERT RPE-1 cells were treated as

above. After reversine/DMSO washout, fresh medium without phenol red was added to the cells.

Cells were imaged every 10 minutes for 72 hours using a 20x/0.75 NA objective with an inverted

Nikon Eclipse Ti microscope equipped with an incubator for live cell imaging. The same microscope

and acquisition settings were used to film hTERT RPE-1 H2b-GFP aneuploid cycling cells after

sorting for 72 hours to assess their genome stability and to film hTERT RPE-1 expressing PCNA-

RFP, RNF168-miRFP and H2b-GFP, with the only exception that in the latter case cells were imaged

for 110 hours (only miRFP and GFP channels were acquired).

MiDAS detection

To detect MiDAS on metaphase spreads, after incubation in EdU and colcemid as above, cells were

treated similarly to those for mFISH analysis. After cell dropping onto glass slides and complete

evaporation of the Carnoy solution, slides washed in 1XPBS in agitation. EdU detection was

performed with the Click-iT EdU Cell Proliferation kit for Imaging (ThermoFisher Scientific)

according to manufacturer's instructions with some minor modifications as described in[61]. Slides

were then mounted using Vectashield Antifade Mounting Medium with DAPI.

To detect MiDAS on prometaphase cells, at the end of the treatments described above, cells were

fixed in 4% PFA for 15 minutes at RT, then washed 3 times in 1XPBS. EdU detection was performed

as above[61] and coverslips were then mounted on glass slides using the same mounting medium as

above.

In both cases, images were acquired using Leica DM6B (Multi Fluo) or Leica SP5 microscope (63x

objective was used in both cases).

RNA interference

658   hTERT RPE-1 cells were transfected with POLD3 (Ambion) or non-targeting (Dharmacon)

659   smartPool siRNAs at a final concentration of 80nM by using Lipofectamine RNAiMax transfection

660   reagent (Thermo Fisher Scientific) according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Telomeric FISH

663   A Cy3-labeled, C-rich PNA telomere probe (Panagene) was used for telomeric FISH on metaphase

664   spreads according to manufacturer's instructions with minor modifications. At the end of the FISH

665   protocol, EdU detection was performed as indicated above. Slides were mounted as above and images

666   were acquired using Leica DM6B (Multi Fluo) microscope (63X objective).

Analysis of distribution of DNA damage in fixed-pseudo-G1 cells

First, the number of FANCD2 and γH2AX foci per daughter cell was counted. Based on the average

number of foci per cell, cells with less than 6 or 4 foci (for FANCD2 or γH2AX, respectively) were

excluded from the analysis. Then, the total number of foci between the two daughters (*e.g.* 13+10)

was calculated and divided by 2 to obtain the number of foci predicted to be inherited by each

daughter cell in case of symmetric distribution of DNA damage (*e.g.* 23 divided by 2 is equal to 11,5).

Subtraction or addition of this number to the total number of foci in the daughters was used to set a

threshold for asymmetric distribution of DNA damage, *e.g.* 23-11,5= 11,5, which is the lowest

threshold; 23+11,5= 34,5, which is the highest threshold; if a daughter cell has less than 11,5 or more

than 34,5 foci the distribution of DNA damage is considered as non-random (non-random

distribution, NDD).

Analysis of distribution of DNA damage in live G1 cells

Transmission of DNA damage and its distribution pattern at each cell division were assessed in

newly-born G1 hTERT RPE-1 cells expressing PCNA-chromobodies, RNF168-miRFP and H2b-

GFP. RNF168 foci were counted 12-24 frames after the end of cell division, *i.e.* when DNA started

to decondense, which correspond to 2-4 hours in the G1 phase. First, the frequency of cell divisions

with DNA damage transmission was calculated as the percentage of divisions in which daughter cells

inherit DNA damage over the total number of cell divisions, independently of its distribution pattern.

Second, the frequency of cell divisions in which DNA damage was asymmetrically partitioned was

calculated as the percentage of divisions in which daughter cells inherit an unequal number of

RNF168 foci (typically 1:0 or 2:1 split) over the total number of cell divisions. Because cells dividing

approximately every 24 hours would divide about 5 times during an almost 120 hour-timelapse

experiment and aneuploid cells are known to cycle at a slower rate, a cut-off at 4 cell divisions was

set in order to distinguish cells with different proliferative capacity: cells undergoing less than 4

mitoses would be classified as cells with 'low' proliferative capacity, while cells undergoing at least

4 mitoses would be named as cells with 'high' proliferative capacity.

β-galactosidase staining

DMSO- and reversine-pulsed cells allowed to progress for either 24, 48 or 72 hours after

DMSO/reversine washout, together with sorted cycling and arrested aneuploid cells (when indicated),

were plated into a 6 well plate at 1×10^6 cells/well and allowed to attach overnight. Then, cells were

stained using the Senescence β-Galactosidase Staining Kit (Cell Signaling Technology) following

manufacturer's instructions and images were acquired using the EVOS imaging system (Thermo

Fisher Scientific).

Sorting of aneuploid cells

Cells were plated into 150 mm plates (900.000 cells/plate) and treated as above. After

reversine/DMSO washout, cells were allowed to divide for about 60 hours. Then, they were incubated

with the fluorescent substrate of the β-galactosidase enzyme DDAO-Galactoside (DDAOG) 10mM

for 90 minutes. At the end of the incubation, cells were harvested for FACS sorting and acquired

using a FACSAria Fusion flow cytometer (BD). Cells were first gated for singlets and alive cells

(based on DAPI staining); then, FSC-A and Alexa-647 intensity were used to distinguish cycling

from arrested cells, *i.e.* cycling cells were gated using the same Alexa-647 Mean Fluorescence

Intensity of the control sample without DDAOG, while arrested cells were gated imposing 0,1% or

0,5% on Alexa-647 signal to the control sample without DDAOG. FlowJo was used to perform data

analysis and generate the plots in Fig. 5 and Extended Data Fig. 7.

716   Cell cycle profile analysis through the FUCCI system

hTERT FUCCI RPE-1 cells were used to generate euploid, aneuploid, cycling aneuploid and arrested

aneuploid cells as described above. After the sorting, cells were plated in a 12wellplate, allowed to

attach overnight and then filmed using an inverted Nikon Eclipse Ti microscope with a 20x/0.75 NA

objective equipped with an incubator for live cell imaging. Brightfield, green (GFP) and red

(mCherry) channels were used to acquire the movie. Images were taken every 30 minutes for 24

hours. Cell cycle stage was determined based on nuclear color: red nuclei were scored as G1 phase,

while yellow and green nuclei were scored as S/G2 phase; lastly, M phase was characterized by

uncolored nuclei of two dividing cells[49].

726   Sample processing for RNAseq

Aneuploid cycling and arrested cells post sorting were centrifuged and cell pellets were obtained.

RNA was extracted from them using a RNeasy kit (QIAGEN) and its quality was assessed with a

Bioanalyzer 2100 (Agilent). Then, for each sample, total RNA was depleted of ribosomal RNA and

the RNAseq libraries were prepared with the Illumina TruSeq Stranded Total RNA kit following the

manufacturer's protocol. Briefly, after the fragmentation of RNA using divalent cations at elevated

temperature, cDNA was synthesized, end-repaired and 3'-end-adenylated. Following adapter

ligation, libraries were amplified by PCR. Amplified libraries were checked on a Bioanalyzer 2100

(Agilent) and quantified with picogreen reagent. Libraries with distinct TruSeq adapter UDIndexes

were sequenced for 50 bases in the paired-end mode with 35 million reads in coverage on a Novaseq

6000 sequencer.

738   Data analysis of RNAseq

739   RNA reads were aligned to the GRCh38 primary assembly with Ensembl 104[62] gene annotations

740   using. STAR 2.7.9a[63]. Gene counts were quantified with subread 2.0.2[64]. Differentially expressed

741   genes were determined using DESeq2 1.30.0[65] with a Wald test, regressing out for the batch factor.

Subsequently, genes were filtered based on significance (p-value ≤0.05 and pADJ ≤0.25; for the aneuploid *vs.* control analysis results were filtered only based on p-value). Pre-ranked gene set enrichment analysis (PreRanked GSEA) was performed to identify enriched pathways[66]. Single cell gene set enrichment analysis (ssGSEA) was performed using GenePatterns[66,67], to compare the expression of specific DNA damage-related signatures across samples. Z-scores were calculated for each gene signature across and plotted as a heatmap. Plots were generated using the Python's 'seaborn' library (Van Rossum and Drake, 2009).

Kinetics of DNA repair upon exposure to IR

After cell sorting (as described above), aneuploid cycling and arrested cells, together with non-sorted aneuploid cells and euploid controls, were plated on coverslips and incubated overnight. The day after, cells were γ-irradiated (1.25Gy) with the Faxitron CP-160 (Faxitron x-ray Corporation) and fixed for immunofluorescence as indicated above at different timepoints. In order to exclude S-phase cells, cells were pulsed with EdU 10μM for 30 minutes before fixation. Non-irradiated cells were fixed together with the first timepoint. *i.e.* 0h post irradiation. For each sample, the number of γH2AX foci/53BP1 bodies per cell was counted, their average per cell was calculated and normalized to that at 0h post irradiation.

Association of DDR gene expression with doubling time

CCLE (Cancer cell line encyclopedia) gene expression data were obtained from DepMap (https://depmap.org/portal/) 22Q1 release[52] and cell line doubling times were obtained from[51]. Cell lines were divided to quartiles according to their doubling time, while ssGSEA scores were generated using the GenePattern platform (https://www.genepattern.org/)[66,67] and compared between the top and bottom quartiles. Statistical analysis (two-tailed Student' t-test) and plotting were performed using GraphPad PRISM v9.3.1.

Sample processing for single-cell whole genome sequencing (scWGS)

Cell pellets were resuspended in cell lysis buffer (100mM Tris-HCl pH 7.4, 154mM NaCl, 1mM CaCl₂, 500μM MgCl₂, 0,2% BSA, 0,1% NP-40, 10μg/ml Hoechst 33358, 2μg/ml propidium iodide in ultra-pure water) and incubated on ice in the dark for 15 minutes to ensure complete lysis. Resulting single nuclei of G1 phase (as determined by Hoechst and PI staining) were sorted into single wells of 96 wellplates on a MoFlo Astrios cell sorter (Beckman Coulter) and sorted at -80 degrees until further processing. Automated library preparation was performed (Bravo Automated Liquid Handling

Platform, Agilent Technologies) as previously described[68]. Resulting single-cell libraries were pooled

for subsequent sequencing.

Data analysis for scWGS

Sequencing was performed using a NextSeq 500 machine (Illumina; up to 77 or 68 cycles – single

end; excluding sample-specific barcodes). Reads were afterwards aligned to the human reference

genome (GRCh38/hg38) using Bowtie2 (version 2.2.4 or 2.3.4.1;[69]). Duplicate reads were marked

with BamUtil (version 1.0.3;[70]) or Samtools markdup (version 1.9;[71]. The aligned read data (bam

files) were analyzed with a copy number calling algorithm called AneuFinder

(https://github.com/ataudt/aneufinder;[72]). Following GC correction and blacklisting of artefact-prone

regions (extreme low or high coverage in control samples), libraries were analyzed using the dnacopy

and edivisive copy number calling algorithms with variable width bins (average bin size = 1 Mb; step

size = 500 kb). Results were afterwards curated by requiring a minimum concordance of 95% between

the results of the two algorithms. Libraries with on average less than 10 reads per bin (~ 55,000 reads

for a diploid genome) were discarded. A chromosome was classified as aneuploid when at least 95

% of the bins showed a deviation from euploid (deviation from 2-somy). Chromosomes 10 and 12

were excluded for the calculation of whole-genome scores.

Image analysis

After acquisition, microscopy images were analyzed with Fiji or Arivis software and processed with

Fiji or Huygens software. Details of image processing, where applicable, are annotated in figure

legends.

Quantification and statistical analysis

All statistical analyses were performed using GraphPad Prism software (9.2.0 version). Statistical

significance in each case was calculated using two-tailed Student's t-test, Chi-squared test or Fisher's

exact test. Where not indicated on the graphs, differences were not statistically significant. The details

of error bars, number of biological replicates and n for each experiment are annotated in figure

legends.

Data availability

RNAseq and scWGS data generated during this study have been deposited at the EMBL-EBI

repositories ENA and ArrayExpress with the following accession numbers E-MTAB-12537 and

PRJEB58407, respectively. The remaining data are available within the Article, Extended Data or
Source Data file. Source data are provided with this paper.

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1019

Author Contributions

LG and GDF performed the vast majority of the experiments, analyzed the data and

prepared the figures. VM performed the experiments presented in Fig. 5a-f and

contributed to the experiments presented in Extended Data Fig. 1a,b, 2a-f, 3b,i, 4c,d,

7b,e. MG and YD generated the EM data. MD and DF performed the mFISH analyses.

YE and UBD analyzed the RNAseq data and CCLE data. RW, AET, DCJS, MS and

FF performed the scWGS and RNAseq. MRI performed the viability assay in Fig. 2i.

DRI and NR performed the DNA fiber analysis. ST generated the data presented in

Extended Data Fig. 7a. CS assisted with live cell imaging experiments. SG and RB

provided the hTERT RPE-1 expressing PCNA-chromobodies and RNF168-miRFP.

SS conceptualized the study, coordinated the research and wrote the manuscript

together with LG and GDF and with input from all the authors.

1032

Competing Interests

1034 The authors declare no competing interests.

1035

Figure legends

Fig. 1: Aneuploid cells accumulate increasing genome instability and display higher levels of

DNA replication stress markers in S-phase. a, Experimental setup for the analysis of genome

1039 instability of cells obtained from the 1st and the 2nd mitosis. Karyotype aberrations were assessed by

1040 mFISH analysis. **b,c,** Representative mFISH images (b) of karyotypes obtained from the 1st (n=68)

1041 and the 2nd mitosis (n=98) in aneuploid cells and relative quantification (c). T(10,X) and +12 were

1042 excluded from the analysis as they are clonal in hTERT RPE-1 cells. **d,** Quantification of aneuploid

cells with either numerical (W-CIN) or structural (S-CIN) aneuploidy in aneuploid cells obtained from the 1st (n=68) and the 2nd mitosis (n=98). **e,** Schematic representation of the experimental approaches used for the study of the 1st S-phase after induction of chromosome missegregation. A short EdU pulse was performed before cell harvest in order to label S-phase cells to be analyzed by immunofluorescence. **f,g,** Representative images of normal and reversed replication forks (f) analyzed by electron microscopy and quantification (g) of the reversed ones in control (n=108) and aneuploid (n=95) cells. **h,i,** Representative images (h) and quantification (i) of FANCD2 foci per S-phase cell in control (n=181) and aneuploid (n=148) cells. **j,k,** Representative images (j) and quantification (k) of RPA foci per S-phase cell in control (n=133) and aneuploid (n=136) cells. **l,m,** Representative images (l) and quantification (m) of pChk1 foci per S-phase cell in control (n=129) and aneuploid (n=134) cells. Cells treated with aphidicolin (RS, replication stress) were used as a positive control (n=144 for panel i, n=137 for panel k and n=131 for panel m). **n,** Representative images of DNA fiber analysis in control and aneuploid cells. **o,p,** Quantification of fork density per Mb (o) and origin firing rate (p) per Mb in control (n= 411) and aneuploid (n=425) cells. Ctrl, control (DMSO pulsed). Aneu, aneuploid cells (Mps1 inhibitor pulsed). RS, replication stress (aphidicolin treated cells). W-CIN, numerical chromosomal instability. S-CIN, structural chromosomal instability. Scale bars, 5µm. LUT was inverted for FANCD2, RPA and pChk1 images. Blue borders in images are based on DAPI staining and define nuclei. Data are means of three biological replicates, except for the EM (one replicate) and the DNA fiber analysis (two replicates). Chi-squared test was performed for data in panel c. Two-tailed unpaired Student's t-test was performed for data in panels i, k, m, o, p. In graphs, average values for each biological replicate are shown by colored dots (each color corresponds to a different biological replicate). ** denotes p<0,01; **** denotes p <0,001. Source Data are provided as a Source Data file.

Fig. 2: DDK protects aneuploid cells from DNA damage accumulation and consequent cell death. a, Experimental workflow for the analysis of DNA replication stress markers in S-phase cells upon treatment with the DDK inhibitor XL-413. A short EdU pulse was performed before cell harvest in order to label S-phase cells. **b,c,** Representative images (b) and quantification (c) of FANCD2 foci per S-phase cell in control or aneuploid cells ± DDK inhibitor (n=123 for Ctrl, n=125 for Ctrl+DDKi, n=126 for Aneu, n=137 for Aneu+DDKi). **d,e,** Representative images (d) and quantification (e) of RPA foci per S-phase cell in control or aneuploid cells ± DDK inhibitor (n=136 for Ctrl, n=134 for Ctrl+DDKi, n=119 for Aneu, n=118 for Aneu+DDKi). **f,g,** Representative images (f) and quantification (g) of pChk1 foci per S-phase cell in control or aneuploid cells ± DDK inhibitor (n=127 for Ctrl, n=132 for Ctrl+DDKi; n=131 for Aneu; n=128 for Aneu+DDKi). **h,** Experimental workflow

for the assessment of cell viability upon exposure to the DDK inhibitor. **i,** Quantification of live cells upon DDK inhibitor treatment in control and aneuploid cells (for each sample, values were normalized to the untreated control). Ctrl, control (DMSO pulsed). Aneu, aneuploid cells (Mps1 inhibitor pulsed). DDKi, DDK inhibitor. Scale bars, 5μm. LUT was inverted for FANCD2, RPA and pChk1 images. Blue borders in images are based on DAPI staining and define nuclei. Data are means of at least three biological replicates. Error bars in panel i represent SEMs. Two-tailed unpaired Student's t-test was performed for data in panels c, e, g and i. In graphs, average values for each biological replicate are shown by colored dots (each color corresponds to a different biological replicate). * denotes p<0,05; *** denotes p< 0,005; **** denotes p<0,001. Source Data are provided as a Source Data file.

Fig. 3: MiDAS protects aneuploid cells from a further increase in their genome instability. a, Experimental workflow for the analysis of the 1st S-phase duration, 2nd M phase duration and quality by live-cell imaging in hTERT RPE-1 cells expressing H2b-RFP and PCNA-GFP. **b,** Representative images from the movies of mitosis duration and quality in control and aneuploid cells. For illustration purposes, images were deconvoluted by using the Huygens software using the deconvolution express function. **c,d,** Correlation between (c) S-phase duration and quality of the subsequent mitosis and (d) mitotic timing and mitotic quality in control (for panel c: n=98 for Ctrl Normal M, n=27 for Ctrl Abnormal M; for panel d: n=98 for Ctrl Normal M, n=34 for Ctrl Abnormal M) and aneuploid (for panel c: n=43 for Aneu Normal M, n=63 for Aneu Abnormal M; for panel d: n=43 for Aneu Normal M, n=62 for Aneu Abnormal M) cells. **e,f,** Representative images (e) and quantification (f) of EdU incorporation on metaphase spreads in control (n=129) and aneuploid (n=167) cells. Cells treated with aphidicolin (RS, replication stress) were used as a positive control (n=106). **g,** Experimental workflow for the assessment of genome instability in the following G1 phase upon MiDAS inhibition. **h,i,** Representative images (h) and quantification (i) of EdU incorporation in prometaphase cells upon MiDAS inhibition (n=130 for Ctrl, n=113 for Ctrl+MiDASi, n=156 for Aneu, n=116 for Aneu+MiDASi). Cells treated with aphidicolin (RS, replication stress) were used as a positive control (n=111 for RS, n=91 for RS+MiDASi). **j,k,l,** Representative images (j) and quantification of 53BP1 body (k) and micronucleus (l) accumulation in G1 cells following inhibition of MiDAS (for panel k: n=544 for Ctrl, n=518 for Ctrl + MiDASi, n=543 for Aneu, n=613 for Aneu + MiDASi, n=446 for RS, n=431 for RS + MiDASi. For panel l: n=556 for Ctrl, n=643 for Ctrl + MiDASi, n=543 for Aneu, n=641 for Aneu + MiDASi, n=397 for RS, n=416 for RS + MiDASi). Ctrl, control (DMSO pulsed). Aneu, aneuploid cells (Mps1 inhibitor pulsed). RS, replication stress (aphidicolin treated cells). MiDASi, MiDAS inhibitor. Normal M, normal mitosis. Abnormal M, abnormal mitosis. Scale bars,

5 or 10 µm. Data are means of at least three biological replicates. Error bars in panel l represent SEMs. Two-tailed unpaired Student's t-test was performed for data in panels c,d, f and i. Chi-squared test was performed for data in panels k and l. In graphs, average values for each biological replicate are shown by colored dots (each color corresponds to a different biological replicate). * denotes p<0,05; **denotes p<0,01; *** denotes p< 0,005; **** denotes p<0,001. Source Data are provided as a Source Data file.

Fig. 4: DDK and MiDAS act as surveillance mechanisms to limit genome instability accumulation in aneuploid cells. a, Experimental workflow for the analysis of DNA damage and chromosome aberrations in G1 cells following DDK and MiDAS inhibition in the cell cycle after chromosome missegregation induction. **b,c,d,** Representative images (b) and quantification of FANCD2 (c) and γH2AX (d) accumulation in cytokinesis-blocked pseudo-G1 cells expressing LCK-GFP (for FANCD2: n=90 for Ctrl, n=72 for Ctrl+DDKi; n=84 for Ctrl+MiDASi, n=81 for Ctrl+DDKi+MiDASi; n=87 for Aneu, n=88 for Aneu+DDKi, n=90 for Aneu+MiDASi, n=86 for Aneu+DDKi+MiDASi. For γH2AX: n=90 for Ctrl, n=72 for Ctrl+DDKi; n=84 for Ctrl+MiDASi, n=81 for Ctrl+DDKi+MiDASi; n=88 for Aneu, n=93 for Aneu+DDKi, n=95 for Aneu+MiDASi, n=90 for Aneu+DDKi+MiDASi.). **e,** Representative mFISH images of G1 cell-derived metaphase-like chromosomes from aneuploid cells upon DDK and MiDAS inhibition. **f,** Zoomed image of the chromosome highlighted in the dotted-line box in panel e (image on the right) from the aneuploid sample in which DDK and MiDAS were inhibited showing a translocation between chromosome 19 and chromosome 18. **g,** Quantification of the percentage of cells with more than 1 translocation in the two samples (n=18 for Aneu, n=19 for Aneu+DDKi+MiDASi). **h,i,j,** Representative images (h) and quantification of FANCD2 (i) and γH2AX (j) non-random distribution between the daughter pseudo-G1 cells (for FANCD2: n=86 for Ctrl, n=78 for Aneu. For γH2AX: n=90 for Ctrl, n=90 for Aneu). Cells treated with aphidicolin (RS, replication stress) were used as a positive control (n=46 for FANCD2 and n=81 for γH2AX). Ctrl, control (DMSO pulsed). Aneu, aneuploid cells (Mps1 inhibitor pulsed). RS, replication stress (aphidicolin treated cells). DDKi, DDK inhibitor. MiDASi, MiDAS inhibitor. NDD, non-random distribution. Scale bars, 5 or 10 µm. LUT was inverted for FANCD2 and γH2AX images. Blue borders in images are based on DAPI staining and define nuclei. Data are means of at least three biological replicates, except for data in panels e-g that were obtained from three biological replicates. Error bars in panels i and j represent SEMs. Two-tailed unpaired Student's t-test was performed for data in panels c and d. Fisher's test was performed for data in panels i and j. In graphs, average values for each biological replicate are shown by colored dots (each

color corresponds to a different biological replicate). * denotes p<0,05; ** denotes p<0,01; *** denotes p< 0,005; **** denotes p<0,001. Source Data are provided as a Source Data file.

Fig. 5: Aneuploid cells that retained their proliferative capacity exhibit reduced levels of DNA damage and genome instability. a, Senescence-associated β-galactosidase staining in control and aneuploid cells. Doxorubicin-treated cells were used as a positive control. **b**, Experimental workflow for a method to separate and recover both cycling and arrested aneuploid cells based on FACS-sorting and the usage of a fluorescent substrate of the b-galactosidase enzyme. **c**, FACS profiles showing the percentage of DDAOG-positive cells in aneuploid cells incubated or not with the DDAOG substrate. **d**, Senescence-associated β-galactosidase staining in cycling and arrested aneuploid cells obtained after sorting. **e**, Cell cycle profiles of control, aneuploid, aneuploid cycling and aneuploid arrested FUCCI-cells analyzed by live-cell imaging. **f**, Quantification of percentage of G1 cells in the four samples analyzed by live-cell imaging (n=100 for each sample). **g,h,i,** Representative images (g) and quantification of FANCD2 (h) and γH2AX (i) foci per cell in the different samples. Only EdU negative cells were analyzed in order to exclude the contribution of S-phase cells present in the non-arrested cell samples (n=123 for Ctrl, n=123 for Aneu, n=123 for Aneu cyc, n=89 for Aneu arr). **j**, scWGS of cycling and arrested aneuploid cells. Single cells are represented in rows and chromosomes are plotted as columns (n=50 for Aneu cyc, n=53 for Aneu arr). Copy-number states are indicated in colors (see legend at the bottom). hTERT RPE-1 cells have clonal gains of 10q and chromosome 12[73]. **k,** Quantification of cells with at least 3 aneuploid chromosomes in the two samples (n=50 for Aneu cyc, n=53 for Aneu arr). Gains of 10q and chromosome 12 were excluded from the analysis. Ctrl, control (DMSO pulsed). Aneu or An, aneuploid cells (Mps1 inhibitor pulsed). Aneu cycling or An cyc, aneuploid cycling cells. Aneu arrested or An arr, aneuploid arrested cells. Scale bars, 5μm. LUT was inverted for FANCD2 and γH2AX images. Blue borders in images are based on DAPI staining and define nuclei. Data are means of three biological replicates, except for panel f (one replicate) and k (two replicates). Error bars in panel e represent SDs. Two-tailed unpaired Student's t-test was performed for data in panels h and i. Fisher's test was performed for data in panel k. In graphs, average values for each biological replicate are shown by colored dots (each color corresponds to a different biological replicate). * denotes p<0,05; **** denotes p<0,001. Source Data are provided as a Source Data file.

Fig. 6: Cycling aneuploid cells display decreased karyotype aberrations and upregulate DNA repair genes in comparison with arrested aneuploid cells. a, Experimental workflow for the assessment of genome instability levels by live-cell imaging in aneuploid cycling cells expressing

H2b-GFP. **b**, Representative images of cell divisions in the different samples. For illustration

purposes, images were deconvoluted by using the Huygens software using the deconvolution express

function. **c**, Quantification of mitotic errors in 3 cell division rounds in control (n=187) and aneuploid

cycling (n=274) cells. Cells treated with the Mps1 inhibitor just before starting the time-lapse were

used as a positive control for mitotic errors (n=83). **d**, Volcano plot illustrating the differentially

expressed pathways between cycling and arrested aneuploid cells. Specific gene sets are highlighted

in color. **e,** Heat-map showing the z-scores of single-sample GSEA (ssGSEA) scores for DNA

damage-related gene sets. **f,g,** Quantification of γH2AX foci (f) and 53BP1 bodies (g) in cycling

(n=150) and arrested aneuploid (n=150) cells upon IR exposure. Only EdU negative cells were

analyzed in order to exclude the contribution of S-phase cells present in the non-arrested cell samples.

h,i,j, Association between ssGSEA score for GOBP DNA repair (h) or GOBP DNA synthesis

involved in DNA repair (i) or GOBP regulation of DNA repair (j) and proliferation capacity in top

vs. bottom quartiles of cancer cell lines from[51]. Ctrl, control (DMSO pulsed). Aneu cycling or cyc,

aneuploid cycling cells. Aneu arrested or arr, aneuploid arrested cells. M, mother division. D,

daughter division. GD, grand-daughter division. Mps1i, Mps1 inhibitor. In panel e, #1 and #2 refer

to biological replicates. Not irrad., not irradiated. Data are means of two biological replicates, except

for data in panels f and g (three replicates). Error bars represent SEMs. Shaded error bands in panels

f,g are shown above and below for arrested and cycling cells, respectively. Fisher's test was

performed for data in panel c. Two-tailed paired t-test was performed for data in panels f and g. Two-

tailed Mann-Whitney test was performed for data in panels h-j.In panel c, average values for each

biological replicate are shown by colored dots (each color corresponds to a different biological

replicate). **** denotes p<0,001. Source Data are provided as a Source Data file.

1200

1201   **Fig. 7: Final model.** A model for how aneuploidy induces genome instability and its consequences.

1202   See text for more details.

1203

Extended Data Fig. 1: Impact of thymidine block and reversine treatment on DNA damage

accumulation. a, Experimental setup for the FACS analysis of thymidine treated cells. **b**,

Representative flow cytometry profiles of propidium-iodide stained cells. Gating strategy is

illustrated on top. **c**, Experimental setup for the analysis of DNA damage upon thymidine block or

doxorubicin treatment. **d,e**, Representative images (d) and relative quantification (e) of γH2AX foci

per cell (n=150 for each sample). **f,g**, Representative images (f) and relative quantification (g) of

γH2AX foci per cell (n=150 for each sample). **h,i**, Representative mFISH images of karyotypes

obtained from the 1st (n=77) and the 2nd mitosis (n=101) in control cells (h) and relative quantification

of percentage of cells with chromosome gains, losses or translocations (i). T(10,X) and +12 were

excluded from the analysis as they are clonal in hTERT RPE-1 cells. Untr, untreated, Thy, thymidine.

Mps1i, Mps1 inhibitor. W/O, washout. Doxo, doxorubicin. Ctrl, control (DMSO pulsed). Scale bars,

5μm. LUT was inverted for γH2AX images. Blue borders in images are based on DAPI staining and

define nuclei. Data are means of three biological replicates. Two-tailed unpaired Student's t-test was

performed for data in panels e and g. In graphs, average values for each biological replicate are shown

by colored dots (each color corresponds to a different biological replicate). **** denotes p <0,001.

Source Data are provided as a Source Data file.

1220

Extended Data Fig. 2: Impact of mimosine treatment and Mps1 inhibition on cell cycle and

DNA damage. a, Experimental setup for the FACS analysis of mimosine treated cells. **b**,

Representative flow cytometry profiles of propidium-iodide stained cells. **c**, Experimental setup for

the analysis of DNA damage upon mimosine treatment. **d,e**, Representative images (d) and relative

quantification (e) of γH2AX foci per cell (n=150 for each sample). **f**, Representative flow cytometry

profiles of propidium-iodide stained cells treated with aphidicolin as in panel a. Untr, untreated.

Mps1i, Mps1i inhibition. Mimo, mimosine. W/O, washout. Scale bars, 5μm. LUT was inverted for

γH2AX images. Blue borders in images are based on DAPI staining and define nuclei. Data are means

of three biological replicates. Two-tailed unpaired Student's t-test was performed for data in panel e,

where average values for each biological replicate are shown by colored dots (each color corresponds

to a different biological replicate). *** denotes p<0,005.

Extended Data Fig. 3: DDK inhibition leads to exacerbation of replication stress particularly in

aneuploid cells. a, Experimental workflow for the analysis of DNA replication stress markers in S-

phase upon treatment with PP1 analog II, 1-NM-PP1, in hTERT RPE-1 cells expressing wild-type or

analog-sensitive Cdc7. A short EdU pulse was performed before cell harvest in order to label S-phase

cells. **b,** Western blot analysis of MCM2 and phoshoS40-MCM2 in cells expressing wt or as Cdc7.

GAPDH was used as loading control. **c,d,** Representative images (c) and quantification (d) of

FANCD2 foci per S-phase cell in control or aneuploid cells ± 1-NM-PP1 inhibitor in the two cell

lines (n=153 for each sample). **e,f,** Representative images (e) and quantification (f) of RPA foci per

S-phase cell in control or aneuploid cells ± 1-NM-PP1 inhibitor in the two cell lines (n=153 for each

sample). **g,h,** Representative images (g) and quantification (h) of pChk1 foci per S-phase cell in

control or aneuploid cells ± 1-NM-PP1 inhibitor in the two cell lines (n=156 for each sample). **i,**

FACS profiles showing the percentage of live cells in control and aneuploid cells. Gating strategy is

illustrated on the left. Cells treated with staurosporin for 24 hours were used as a positive control of

cell death. Ctrl, control (DMSO pulsed). Aneu, aneuploid cells (Mps1 inhibitor pulsed). wt, wild-

type. as, analog-sensitive. Scale bars, 5μm. LUT was inverted for FANCD2, RPA and pChk1 images.

Blue borders in images are based on DAPI staining and define nuclei. Data are means of three

biological replicates. Two-tailed unpaired Student's t-test was performed for data in panel e, where

average values for each biological replicate are shown by colored dots (each color corresponds to a

different biological replicate). * denotes p<0,05; *** denotes p< 0,005; **** denotes p<0,001. Source

Data are provided as a Source Data file.

1252

Extended Data Fig. 4: Effect of RO3306 treatment on cell cycle and DNA damage. a,

Quantification of S-phase duration by live-cell imaging in control (n=125) and aneuploid (n=106)

cells. The graph refers to the experiment in Figure 3, panels a-d. **b**, Quantification of mitotic division

timing upon SAC inhibition in control (n=54 for Ctrl Normal M, n=12 for Ctrl Normal M + Mps1i,

n=16 for Ctrl Abnormal M, n=48 for Ctrl Abnormal M + Mps1i) and aneuploid (n=35 for Aneu

Normal M, n=7 for Aneu Normal M + Mps1i, n=47 for Aneu Abnormal M, n=53 for Aneu Abnormal

M + Mps1i) cells that underwent normal or abnormal mitosis. **c**, Experimental setup for the FACS

analysis of RO3306 treated cells. **d**, Representative flow cytometry profiles of propidium-iodide

stained cells. **e**, Experimental setup for the analysis of DNA damage upon RO3306 treatment. **f,g**,

Representative images (f) and relative quantification (g) of γH2AX foci per cell (n=150 for each

sample). **h,i**, Representative images (h) and relative quantification (i) of telomeric EdU foci in control

(n=111) and aneuploid (n=180) cells. Aphidicolin treated cells were used as positive control of

replication stress (n=367). For illustration purposes, images were processed using Fiji. Briefly,

images were filtered with median filter and background was subtracted using the dedicated Fiji

function. Ctrl, control (DMSO pulsed). Aneu, aneuploid cells (Mps1 inhibitor pulsed). Mps1i, Mps1

inhibitor. W/O, washout. Scale bars, 5μm. LUT was inverted for γH2AX images. Blue borders in

images are based on DAPI staining and define nuclei. Data are means of at least three biological

replicates, except for data in panel b (two replicates). Two-tailed unpaired Student's t-test was

performed for data in panels a, b and g. Chi-squared test was performed for data in panel i. In graphs,

average values for each biological replicate are shown by colored dots (each color corresponds to a

different biological replicate). *** denotes p< 0,005; **** denotes p<0,001. Source Data are provided

as a Source Data file.

1275

1276 **Extended Data Fig. 5: POLD3 depletion and consequent MiDAS inhibition result in a further**

1277 **increase in aneuploid cell genome instability. a,** Experimental workflow for the assessment of

1278 MiDAS occurrence in prometaphase cells and genome instability in the following G1 phase upon

1279 siRNA-mediated POLD3 depletion in hTERT RPE-1 cells. **b,** Western blot analysis of POLD3 in

cells transfected with siRNA scramble or against POLD3. Vinculin was used as loading control. **c,d**, Representative images (c) and quantification (d) of EdU foci in prometaphase cells in control and aneuploid cells (n=150 for each sample). Cells treated with aphidicolin (RS, replication stress) were used as a positive control (n=150). **e-g,** Representative images (e) and quantification of 53BP1 body (f) and micronucleus (g) accumulation in control and aneuploid G1 cells upon POLD3 depletion (n=195 for each sample). Cells treated with aphidicolin (RS, replication stress) were used as a positive control (n=195). Ctrl, control (DMSO pulsed). Aneu, aneuploid cells (Mps1 inhibitor pulsed). RS, replication stress (aphidicolin treated cells). siScramble, transfected with non-targeting siRNA. siPOLD3, transfected with siRNA against POLD3. Scale bars, 5 µm. Data are means of three biological replicates. Error bars represent SEMs. Two-tailed unpaired Student's t-test was performed for data in panel d. Chi-squared or Fisher's test was performed for data in panels f and g. In graphs, average values for each biological replicate are shown by colored dots (each color corresponds to a different biological replicate). * denotes p<0,05; **denotes p<0,01; **** denotes p<0,001. Source Data are provided as a Source Data file.

Extended Data Fig. 6: RNF168 asymmetric partitioning between daughter cells occurs at higher frequency in cells with reduced proliferative capacity. a, Experimental workflow for the analysis of RNF168 distribution during cell division by live-cell imaging using hTERT RPE-1 cells expressing PCNA-chromobodies, RNF168-miRFP and H2b-GFP. **b,c**, Representative images of symmetric (b) and asymmetric (c) distribution of RNF168 between daughter cells. For presentation purposes, images were processed using Fiji. Briefly, images were filtered with gaussian blur, background was subtracted using the dedicated Fiji function and gamma transformation was applied to enhance the RNF168-miRFP signal. **d**, Quantification of RNF168 non-random distribution between daughter G1 cells in control (n=288) and aneuploid (n=459 for REV, n=250 for AZ3146) cells. **e**, Quantification of cell divisions with DNA damage transmission in aneuploid cells (treated with reversine) that had divided less than 4 times ('Low', n=103) or at least 4 times ('High', n=286) over the almost 120 hour-time lapse experiment. **f**, Quantification of cell divisions with asymmetric distribution of DNA damage in aneuploid cells (treated with reversine) that had divided less than 4 times ('Low', n=103) or at least 4 times ('High', n=286) over the almost 120 hour-time lapse experiment. Ctrl, control (DMSO pulsed). Aneu, aneuploid cells (Mps1 inhibitor pulsed). White borders in images are based on H2b-GFP signal and define nuclei. Data are means of three biological replicates. Error bars represent SEMs. Chi-squared or Fisher's test was performed for data in panel d. Two-tailed unpaired Student's t-test was performed for data in panels e and f. In graphs, average values for each biological

replicate are shown by colored dots (each color corresponds to a different biological replicate). **
denotes p<0,01; **** denotes p<0,001. Source Data are provided as a Source Data file.

Extended Data Fig. 7: Separation and characterization of aneuploid cycling and arrested cells.
a, Senescence-associated β-galactosidase staining in control and aneuploid cells at different time
points after the Mps1 inhibitor pulse (n=127 for Ctrl 24h, n=102 for Ctrl 48h, n=117 for Ctrl 72h,
n=160 for Aneu 24h, n=160 for Aneu 48h, n=116 for Aneu 72h). Doxorubicin-treated cells were used
as a positive control (n=250 for Ctrl, n=128 for Doxo). **b,c,** FACS profiles showing the percentage of
DDAOG positive cells in DMSO (b) and doxorubicin (c) treated cells, used as a positive control.
Gating strategy is illustrated on the left of panel c. **d,** Illustration depicting the change in nuclear color
in the FUCCI cells. **e**, Representative images showing the starting (0h) and end point (24h) of the
time-lapse in the four different samples (n=100 for each sample). **f,g** Histogram showing the
percentage of cycling (n=50) or arrested (n=53) aneuploid cells with a given gained or lost
chromosome. The graph refers to the experiment in Figure 5 j,k. Ctrl, control (DMSO pulsed). Aneu,
aneuploid cells (Mps1 inhibitor pulsed). Aneu cycling, aneuploid cycling cells. Aneu arrested,
aneuploid arrested cells. Doxo, doxorubicin. Scale bar, 20μm. In graphs, average values for each
biological replicate are shown by colored dots (each color corresponds to a different biological
replicate). Source Data are provided as a Source Data file.

Extended Data Fig. 8: Kinetics of DNA damage repair in aneuploid cells and respective controls
upon IR exposure. a-f Representative images (a,b) and quantification of γH2AX (c,e) and 53BP1
bodies (d,f) per cell (n=150 for each sample in all data sets). Only EdU negative cells were analyzed
in order to exclude the contribution of S-phase cells present in the non-arrested cell samples. **g,h**,
Gene set enrichment analysis (GSEA) plots showing enrichment of p53 and DNA damage repair
pathways in aneuploid cycling vs control cells. Ctrl, control (DMSO pulsed). Aneu, aneuploid cells
(Mps1 inhibitor pulsed). Aneu cycling, aneuploid cycling cells. Aneu arrested, aneuploid arrested
cells. Not irrad., not irradiated. LUT was inverted for γH2AX and 53BP1 images. Blue borders in
images are based on DAPI staining and define nuclei. Data are means of three biological replicates.
Shaded error bands in panels c-f represent SEMs. Source Data are provided as a Source Data file.

Extended Data Table 1: List of genes differentially expressed in arrested vs. cycling aneuploid
cells. Data were obtained by RNAseq (Fig. 6).

1347

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5

Figure 6

Aneuploidy-induced genome instability

MIDAS-dependent DNA replication

DDK-mediated origin firing

Initial Chromosome Segregation Error

Aneuploid Arrested

Complex Karyotypes

Cell cycle arrest/senescence

Up-regulation of pro-inflammatory pathways

High levels of DNA damage

Aneuploid Cycling

Simple Karyotypes

Genomically stable

Up-regulation of DNA damage repair pathways

Figure 7