Turbulence orchestrates actin–mitochondria dynamics to preserve GPIbα and support

iPSC-derived platelet biogenesis

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ABSTRACT

In vitro manufacturing of functional platelets remains limited by low yield and poor quality,

impeding clinical application. To address this, we developed a turbulence-assisted system using

defined physical stimulation to enhance platelet production from immortalized megakaryocyte

cell lines (imMKCLs). This approach significantly increases the yield of glycoprotein Ibα

(GPIbα)$^+$ induced pluripotent stem cell-derived platelets (iPSC-platelets). However, the

underlying mechanisms have remained unclear. Here, we show that GPIbα$^+$ iPSC-platelets

retain high mitochondrial membrane potential, low phosphatidylserine (PS) exposure, and

active ATP-dependent flippases, preserving mitochondrial integrity and platelet functionality. In

contrast, GPIbα$^-$ platelets exhibit PS exposure, ADAM17 activation, and selective GPIbα

shedding. Notably, turbulent flow induces late-stage actin depolymerization, promoting even

mitochondrial distribution within maturing imMKCLs and enhancing mitochondrial inheritance.

These findings uncover a key role of turbulence in regulating actin dynamics and mitochondrial

allocation during platelet biogenesis, providing a mechanistic foundation for improving in vitro

platelet production for therapeutic use.

INTRODUCTION:

Amid the scarcity of safe and effective therapies for patients with thrombocytopenia or acute bleeding, donor-derived platelet products remain the cornerstone of transfusion medicine. However, these products face significant limitations, including a short shelf life of approximately 4–5 days (Brixner et al., 2024) due to the lack of long-term storage methods that preserve platelet function and morphology, as well as an inconsistent supply that is entirely dependent on donors. A major clinical challenge is platelet transfusion refractoriness (allo-PTR), which arises from alloimmunization due to repeated transfusions or pregnancy (Panch et al., 2023). This condition is primarily driven by sensitization to platelet allo-antigens, such as human leukocyte antigen class I (HLA-I) and human platelet antigen (HPA). Currently, no effective treatments exist when matched donor products for HLA or HPA are unavailable. In this context, we conducted the first-in-human clinical trial using autologous induced pluripotent stem cell-derived platelets (iPSC-platelets) to treat an allo-PTR patient with anti-HPA-1a antibodies, resulting from an HPA-1b/1b genotype and pregnancy (Sugimoto et al., 2022a). This trial was made possible by the development of immortalized megakaryocyte progenitor cell lines (imMKCLs) capable of generating iPSC-platelets (Nakamura et al., 2014). Following an established protocol for imMKCL generation, we successfully created a master cell bank of imMKCLs, enabling the on-demand production of platelets (Sugimoto et al., 2022b).

Another key breakthrough in platelet biomanufacturing was the development of an efficient, large-scale production system. A pivotal innovation in this field involved identifying a novel mechanobiological concept: turbulent flow synergizes with shear stress to promote megakaryocyte maturation and functional platelet biogenesis. This was inspired by *in vivo* observations where physical stress—generated by blood flow—enhanced platelet formation, a phenomenon that was subsequently recapitulated *in vitro*.

In vivo, multiple mechanisms of thrombopoiesis have been proposed, including proplatelet

extension, cytoplasmic rupture, fragmentation, and membrane budding at the bone marrow

sinusoid interface (Nishimura et al., 2015; Tilburg et al., 2022; Potts et al., 2020). Moreover,

recent discoveries have identified the lung vasculature, especially at vessel bifurcations, as a

significant site of platelet generation (Lefrançais et al., 2017; Zhao et al., 2023). These

bifurcations induce turbulent flow, which can be mimicked in vitro using platforms like the

VerMES reactor or even in simple flask cultures. Under such conditions, the number of GPIbα$^+$

platelets markedly increases (Ito et al., 2018; Okamoto et al., 2024). However, the precise

molecular mechanisms by which turbulence enhances GPIbα$^+$ platelet production remain poorly

understood, limiting efforts to fully optimize *in vitro* systems.

Mitochondria are essential for platelet function, primarily by generating ATP to support platelet

activation and aggregation (Melchinger et al., 2019). They also regulate reactive oxygen species

(ROS) levels and calcium homeostasis—both of which are critical for platelet activity (Chen et

al., 2013; Kholmukhamedov et al., 2018; Ajanel et al., 2023). Mitochondrial dysfunction

impairs platelet responses (Richman et al., 2023; Ding et al., 2023) and has been associated with

various pathological conditions, including Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, and type 2

diabetes (Shi et al., 2008; Avila et al., 2012; Zharikov and Shiva, 2013; Antony et al., 2015;

Wang et al., 2017; Twomey et al., 2018; Melchinger et al., 2019). These findings underscore the

critical role of mitochondria in maintaining normal platelet function. However, our

understanding of mitochondrial dynamics during platelet production remains limited. In

particular, how mitochondria are evenly distributed within platelets during their biogenesis has

not been investigated.

In this study, we identified that functional platelet production was significantly increased under

turbulent stress. Specifically, GPIbα$^+$ iPSC-platelets generated under turbulent conditions show

elevated mitochondrial membrane potential and reduced phosphatidylserine (PS) exposure,

indicating preserved mitochondrial function. In contrast, GPIbα⁻ iPSC-platelets, lacking

sufficient ATP to fuel flippases, display increased PS exposure and undergo ADAM17-

dependent GPIbα shedding. Furthermore, turbulence promotes balanced F-actin dynamics in

megakaryocytes, supporting even mitochondrial distribution and facilitating efficient platelet

biogenesis. These findings underscore the critical role of turbulence in orchestrating

intracellular cytoskeletal remodeling and mitochondrial integrity, offering key insights into

improving both the quality and yield of *in vitro* platelet production systems.

RESULTS:

Turbulence increases high-quality iPSC-platelet production indicated by increased GPIbα

expression and mitochondria membrane potential.

To determine whether varying levels of turbulent energy and shear stress influence GPIbα

positivity, we compared iPSC-platelet production from Clone 17 imMKCLs in different

conditions: static culture (dish), orbital shaking flask (sub-optimal shear and turbulence), and

the VerMES™ bioreactor (optimal shear and turbulence) (Ito et al., 2018) (Fig. 1 A; Fig. S1 A).

By analyzing surface markers such as integrin alpha 2b (CD41) and GPIbα, we found that

turbulence not only increases the functional iPSC-platelets yield but also improves the

proportion of functional iPSC-platelets (Fig. 1, B–D). Only GPIbα$^+$ iPSC-platelets were

activated by ADP/Trap6, or PMA stimulation (Fig. S1 B), and they were fluorescent upon

Calcein-AM incubation (Fig. 1 E). Interestingly, GPIbα$^+$ iPSC-platelets showed higher

mitochondria membrane potential (MMP), as revealed by MitoTracker Deep Red staining,

compared to GPIbα$^-$ iPSC-platelets (Fig. 1 F). Additionally, a culture swap experiment (dish to

flask, flask to dish on day 4) revealed that turbulence from day 4 onward, corresponding to the

stage of platelet release (Fig. S1, E and F), is essential for improved iPSC-platelets yield,

aligned with the onset of iPSC-platelets production (Fig. 1, G and H), suggesting a positive

relationship between mitochondria inclusion and GPIbα expression that is promoted by

turbulence after day 4.

Mitochondria activity regulates GPIbα expression.

Next, we investigated whether mitochondria play a positive regulatory role in GPIbα

expression. We compared MMP, reactive oxygen species (ROS) levels, and ATP levels in

GPIbα$^+$ versus GPIbα$^-$ iPSC-platelets and found that GPIbα$^+$ iPSC-platelets exhibited higher

levels across all three parameters (Fig. 2 A). Furthermore, MMP was inversely correlated with

phosphatidylserine (PS) exposure, measured by Annexin V binding, a marker of apoptosis (Fig.

2 B). These findings were consistent in the produced iPSC-platelets from imMKCLs transfected

with CoralHue® mito-mAG vector, which allowed visualization of the reduced presence of

intact mitochondria in static iPSC-platelets compared to those cultured in flasks (Fig. 2 C; Fig.

S2 A).

To further investigate the role of mitochondria in GPIbα expression, we inhibited mitochondrial

activity using FCCP (carbonyl cyanide-p-trifluoromethoxyphenylhydrazone), a well-known

uncoupler of proton-mediated ATP production in mitochondria. This treatment led to a decrease

in GPIbα expression, which was reversed when iPSC-platelets were pre-treated with ADAM17

inhibitors such as KP457 (Hirata et al., 2017), high concentration of GI254023X (Metz et al.,

2012), TAPI-1 (Nishikii et al., 2008), and GM6001 (Bergmeier et al., 2004) (Fig. 2 D). These

results were also observed in donor-derived human platelets (Fig. S2 F).

Additionally, in order to confirm whether the MMP levels is dependent on the GPIb-X-IX

complex, we used GPIX- knockout (KO) imMKCLs, which predominantly produce GPIbα⁻

iPSC-platelets. However, no significant difference in MMP was observed between these and

control cells (Fig. 2, E and F), confirming that mitochondria is a positive upstream regulator of

GPIbα.

Mitochondria supply flippases with ATP to maintain GPIbα expression.

It has been previously reported that flippases mediate PS exposure, which in turn activates

ADAM17 (Sommer et al., 2016), and that scramblases, such as TMEM16F (Fujii et al., 2015),

become active during platelet functional decline. To determine whether mitochondrial

regulation of GPIbα expression involves these factors, we examined PS and

phosphatidylcholine (PC) dynamics in iPSC-platelets. We used fluorescent PS (NBD-PS) and

PC (NBD-PC), which are internalized by recipient platelets if flippases or scramblases are

active, respectively (Fig. 3 A). Consistent with our earlier findings in Annexin V binding assay

(Fig. S1 C), NBD-PS was internalized by GPIbα$^+$ but not GPIbα$^-$ iPSC-platelets (Fig. 3 B; Fig.

S3 A). When ionomycin was added, a significant increase in calcium levels and a subsequent

decrease in ATP levels were observed, leading to reduced GPIbα expression and diminished

NBD-PS internalization (Fig. 3 C and D; Fig. S3 A). These results indicate that mitochondrial

ATP production fuels flippases, internalizing PS and maintaining inactive conformation of

ADAM17, preventing GPIba shedding in iPSC-platelets.

Turbulence imMKCLs exhibit uniform mitochondria distribution

Next, we investigated intracellular differences between maturing dish and flask imMKCLs, as

mouse and human platelets inherit their mitochondria from megakaryocytes (Richardson et al.,

2005; Jacob et al., 2024). After staining of mitochondria by MitoTracker Deep Red and of F-

actin by SPY555-FastAct, a F-actin-stabilizing jasplakinolide derivative, respectively, confocal

imaging revealed uniform distribution of mitochondria and F-actin in flask imMKCLs, while

dish imMKCLs displayed distinct megakaryocyte polarization. However, no differences were

observed in the surface expression of CD41/GPIbα or mitochondrial membrane potential

(MMP) over the 6-day culture period (Fig. 4, A and B; Fig. S4, A and B). When mitochondrial

distribution was disrupted using Mdivi-1, there was a dose-dependent shift toward the

production of primarily GPIbα$^-$ iPSC-platelets (Fig. 4 C). No significant differences were

observed in the oxygen consumption rate between day 4 dish or flask imMKCLs, and MMP

differences were only seen in iPSC-platelets (Fig. 4, D and E) These results suggest that

turbulence promotes uniform mitochondria distribution in megakaryocytes leading to efficient

mitochondria inclusion by platelets.

Turbulence regulates actin dynamics to produce high-quality platelets.

The actin cytoskeleton is known to play a crucial role in mitochondrial distribution during cell division (Moore et al., 2021). To determine whether actin contributes to the uniform distribution of mitochondria in imMKCLs, we examined cytoskeletal dynamics under different culture conditions. Interestingly, there were no significant differences in the expression of cytoskeleton-related genes (Fig. 5, A–C) or total actin protein levels (Fig. 5, D and E) between dish and flask cultures. However, from day 4 onwards, we observed a marked, turbulence-dependent reduction in F-actin-specific signals in turbulent cultures compared to static dish cultures (Fig. 5 F).

To explore how reduced F-actin levels by the SPY555-FastAct staining —at least as experimentally detectable—might facilitate mitochondrial delivery, we first investigated the effects of Latrunculin A, a monomeric actin-binding molecule that prevents actin polymerization. Treatment with Latrunculin A resulted in a dose-dependent decrease in both GPIbα expression and mitochondrial membrane potential (MMP), accompanied by increased Annexin V binding as well as decreased F-actin levels in imMKCLs (Fig. 5, G and K). Conversely, treatment with Cytochalasin D, which protects actin filament barbed ends, but not pointed ends, from actin polymerization, significantly enhanced F-actin levels as indicated in imMKCLs but still led to diminished GPIbα expression in iPSC-platelets (Fig. 5, H and L). These results suggest that an intermediate, dynamically relaxed actin structure—characterized by moderate F-actin levels (Fig. 5 F)—may be optimal for functional platelet production.

To further assess whether actin polymerization-depolymerization dynamics influence GPIbα expression in iPSC-platelets, we evaluated the roles of cofilin, a key mediator of actin depolymerization, and the Arp2/3 complex, a regulator of actin branching (reference). Inhibition of cofilin using SZ-3, or the Arp2/3 complex using CK-666, also resulted in reduced GPIbα

expression (Fig. 5, I and J) , further supporting the importance of actin dynamics in the platelet

formation.

Collectively, these findings highlight the pivotal role of turbulence in modulating actin

dynamics and mitochondrial distribution, both of which are essential for the generation of

functional iPSC-derived platelets. We therefore propose that the dynamic turnover of actin

filaments—through a process of balanced polymerization and depolymerization, known as

treadmilling—represents a critical mechanism for enabling complete mitochondrial delivery and

efficient iPSC-platelet production (Fig. 5 K).

DISCUSSION:

In this study, we sought to elucidate the underlying mechanisms by which turbulent flow

facilitates the generation of GPIbα$^+$ iPSC-derived platelets (iPSC-platelets) from imMKCLs, as

previously described (Ito et al., 2018). To this end, we conducted comparative analyses under

turbulent flow and static culture conditions (Fig. 1 A; Fig. S1 A). These experiments revealed

that both the proportion and absolute number of GPIbα$^+$ iPSC-platelets were significantly

increased under turbulent conditions (Fig. 1, B–D). Further characterization confirmed the high

quality of these platelets, as demonstrated by assays assessing GPIIb/IIIa activation and P-

selectin (CD62P) exposure (Fig. S1 B), Annexin V binding (Fig. S1 C), Calcein-AM retention

(Fig. 1 F) (Moreau et al., 2016; Zhao et al., 2023), and uptake of fluorescently labeled Factor V

(Fig. S1, J–L) (Sim et al., 2017). Expression levels of GPIbα were correlated with other

activation-related markers, such as PAR1 and GPVI (Fig. S1 D). These markers are also known

to undergo ADAM-mediated shedding, similar to GPIbα, suggesting that GPIbα$^-$ platelets may

be more prone to shedding under whole-cell conditions (Ludeman et al., 2004; Gardiner et al.,

2007).

Notably, GPIbα⁺ iPSC-platelets retained functional mitochondria, as evidenced by preserved

mitochondrial signals, maintained membrane potential, and robust ROS and ATP production

(Fig. 1 E, Fig. 2, A and C). Using peripheral blood-derived human platelets, we confirmed that

prolonged storage at 22°C or 37°C led to a decline in mitochondrial membrane potential,

accompanied by reduced GPIbα expression and increased phosphatidylserine (PS) exposure

(Fig. S2, D and E).

These findings suggest that turbulent flow conditions enhance the efficient incorporation of

mitochondria into platelet particles. A culture-switch experiment further demonstrated that

introducing turbulence from day 4 onward—corresponding to the late maturation stage of

imMKCLs—is critical for increasing GPIbα⁺ iPSC-platelet yields (Fig. 1, G and H). This

indicates that mitochondrial allocation into platelets is regulated during late-stage

megakaryocyte maturation and subsequent platelet release (Fig. S1 F). Concomitantly, we

observed a turbulence-specific reduction in F-actin levels from day 4, prompting the hypothesis

that turbulence modulates F-actin dynamics to facilitate mitochondrial distribution, a point we

explore further below.

Previous reports have shown that GPIbα is subject to ectodomain shedding via ADAM17,

reducing its surface expression on both iPSC- and primary-derived platelets (Bergmeier et al.,

2004; Nishikii et al., 2008). However, the upstream regulatory mechanisms have remained

elusive. In this study, we demonstrate that GPIbα⁺ iPSC-platelets maintain ATP-dependent

flippase activity, which actively suppresses PS externalization. In contrast, impaired

mitochondrial function leads to PS exposure and subsequent ADAM17-mediated GPIbα

shedding. Importantly, scramblase activity was not elevated in GPIbα⁻ iPSC-platelets,

suggesting that PS exposure in this population arises solely from diminished flippase activity—

a departure from earlier findings implicating Ca^{2+}-dependent scramblase TMEM16F in PS

externalization (Fujii et al., 2015). Ionomycin stimulation failed to elicit Ca^{2+} influx in GPIbα⁻

iPSC-platelets (Fig. 3 D), indicating a deficiency in the calcium influx system, in contrast to

intact peripheral platelets. Supporting this, peripheral blood platelets subjected to long-term

storage at 22°C exhibited increased scramblase and decreased flippase activity (Fig. S3 B).

While our previous work demonstrated that the ADAM17 inhibitor KP457 enhances the

production of GPIbα⁺ iPSC-platelets (Hirata et al., 2017), the current findings suggest that

mitochondrial dysfunction is an upstream event that leads to GPIbα shedding. Importantly,

GPIbα expression itself did not affect mitochondrial function, as shown in GPIX knockout (KO)

imMKCLs (Fig. 2, E and F). Furthermore, comparative experiments in the presence or absence

of KP457 revealed no differences in the number or function of the resulting platelets (Fig. S1,

G–I). Despite prior use of KP457 in culture, our data underscore its necessity for future iPSC-

platelet manufacturing protocols.

In cells, including platelets, intracellular ATP production is supported not only by mitochondrial

oxidative phosphorylation but also by glycolysis. While earlier studies reported that glycolysis

is the predominant source of ATP in platelets (Akkerman and Holmsen, 1981), recent advances

in analytical techniques have shown that mitochondrial ATP production may actually be

dominant, accounting for approximately 75% of total ATP generation via oxidative

phosphorylation (Jedlička et al., 2021). These findings suggest that mitochondrial dysfunction

can cause intracellular ATP depletion to an extent sufficient to impair flippase activity and

ultimately trigger GPIbα shedding, as demonstrated by treatment with the depolarizing agent

ionomycin (Fig. 3 E).

Mechanistically, turbulence was found to optimize F-actin dynamics by finely tuning the

balance between polymerization and depolymerization, thereby ensuring uniform mitochondrial

distribution within maturing megakaryocytes and promoting efficient platelet biogenesis. The

reduction in F-actin levels under turbulent conditions during the late maturation stage (as noted

earlier) highlights this critical window for enhanced GPIbα⁺ iPSC-platelet generation. To

validate this, we treated cultures with compounds targeting F-actin (Latrunculin A, Cytochalasin

D), cofilin (SZ-3), the Arp2/3 complex (CK-666), and Drp1 (Mdivi-1). Each of these

interventions led to a dose-dependent decline in GPIbα⁺ iPSC-platelet output, although

mitochondrial membrane potential (MMP) levels remained relatively unchanged.

Interestingly, previous work has implicated actin polymerization in promoting GPIbα shedding

(Zhou et al., 2022). While Cytochalasin D treatment paradoxically increased F-actin levels,

Latrunculin A reduced both F-actin content and GPIbα expression. Actin filaments were

visualized using a fluorescent derivative of the cell-permeable F-actin–stabilizing compound

jasplakinolide (Milroy et al., 2012; Merino et al., 2020). As jasplakinolide stabilizes actin

filaments, increases in F-actin signal should be interpreted with caution (Pospich et al., 2020;

Merino et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the data support a critical role for actin filament dynamics in

mitochondrial distribution and GPIbα expression. These findings suggest that GPIbα shedding

is not simply dictated by polymerized actin quantity but rather by the dynamic equilibrium of

actin turnover. Consistent with this, imaging analyses revealed uniform mitochondrial

distribution in imMKCLs exposed to turbulent flow. Given that actin treadmilling is crucial for

organelle distribution from mother to daughter cells (Moore et al., 2021), and that neuronal

mitochondrial transport relies predominantly on microtubules, our results instead emphasize an

actin-centric mechanism in megakaryocytes. Together, these data support a model in which

actin treadmilling—characterized by continuous polymerization and depolymerization—

governs the even allocation of mitochondria and is fundamental to the production of functional

platelets.

While this study underscores the pivotal role of turbulence in regulating F-actin dynamics and

mitochondrial distribution, the precise mechanotransductive link between turbulent forces and

cytoskeletal modulation in megakaryocytes remains to be further defined. Future work utilizing

confocal and super-resolution microscopy, in conjunction with analysis of specific actin-binding

proteins, will be critical for dissecting actin dynamics in ex vivo megakaryocyte cultures.

Further clarification of the roles of cofilin and the Arp2/3 complex in this context is also

warranted. Finally, identifying the extracellular cues that influence intracellular actin

organization will provide valuable insights for refining iPSC-platelet manufacturing strategies.

In summary, our findings reveal that turbulent flow is a key regulator of actin-dependent

mitochondrial positioning, a process central to the generation of high-quality iPSC-platelets.

These insights not only advance our understanding of platelet biogenesis but also offer practical

avenues for improving the scalability and quality of iPSC-platelet manufacturing.

Material and method:

Cell

The Clone 17 imMKCL, originally established by the Eto group at Kyoto University, was used

in all experiments except those related to GPIX knockout (GPIX-KO). The GPIX-KO cells

were generated by the Freson group at the KULeuven from clone 7 imMKCL, using the

CRISPR-Cas9 system to introduce a frameshift variant in the GP9 gene creating a homozygous

GPIX deletion. Immunoblot analysis confirmed absent expression of GPIX and GPIbα in the

GPIX-KO cells (De Wispelaere et al., in revision, *HemaSphere*).

Culture medium

The basal medium consisted of IMDM (Sigma-Aldrich, #I3390) supplemented with 2 mM L-

glutamine (Thermo Fisher Scientific, #25030-081), insulin-transferrin-selenium (Thermo Fisher

Scientific, #41400-045), 50 µg/mL ascorbic acid (Sigma-Aldrich, #A4544), and 450 µM 1-

thioglycerol (Sigma-Aldrich, #M6145). For the Dox-ON culture, the basal medium was further

supplemented with 15% fetal bovine serum (FBS; Sigma-Aldrich, #172012), 50 ng/mL animal

component-free recombinant human stem cell factor (SCF; Wako, #193-15513), 200 ng/mL

TA-316 (Nissan Chemical), and 5 µg/mL doxycycline (Clontech, #631311). For the Dox-OFF

culture, the basal medium was supplemented with human plasma (Japan Blood Products

Organization), 1 IU/mL enoxaparin sodium (Kaken Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.), 50 IU/mL

Cleactor Intravenous Infusion (Eisai Co., Ltd., #3959407D2034), 50 ng/mL SCF, 200 ng/mL

TA-316, 0.75 µM SR-1 (Calbiochem) or 0.5 µM GNF-351 (Calbiochem), and 10 µM Y-27632

(Wako) or 0.5 µM Y-39983 (MedChemExpress).

Cell culture

Dox-ON proliferation culture

The expansion culture (Dox-ON stage) was performed as previously described (Ito et al., 2018).

Briefly, cells were passaged twice a week, maintaining cell densities between 1×10^5 and $2 \times$

10^6 cells/mL throughout the culture period. For all experiments except those using the VerMES

bioreactor, the Dox-ON culture was conducted in 10-cm culture dishes (Thermo Scientific,

#150466). For larger-scale experiments using the VerMES bioreactor, cell expansion was

achieved through sequential upsizing: starting with 10-cm static dishes, followed by 125 mL

and 500 mL Corning® Erlenmeyer cell culture flasks (Sigma-Aldrich, #431143 and #431145)

under shaking conditions using a Lab-Therm shaker (Kuhner), and finally scaled up to a 10 L

CELLBAG™ operated with the ReadyToProcess WAVE™ 25 system (Cytiva, #CB0010L10-

03) under rocking motion.

Dox-OFF differentiation culture

For platelet production following imMKCL maturation (Dox-OFF stage), approximately $1 - 3 \times$

10^5 cells/mL were cultured for 6 days under one of the following conditions: in 10-cm culture

dishes (Thermo Scientific, #150466), in 125 mL Corning® Erlenmeyer cell culture flasks

(Sigma-Aldrich, #431143) under shaking conditions using a Lab-Therm shaker (Kuhner), or in

a VerMES bioreactor (SATAKE Co., Ltd., Saitama, Japan). The VerMES bioreactor was

equipped with vertically oscillating two-stage mixing blades, and the optimal operating

conditions for the 8 L VerMES were a stroke of 40 mm and a speed of 150 mm/s.

Human platelets

Donor-derived human platelets were provided from the Japanese Red Cross Society. Human

platelets and plasma were used in compliance with the Guidelines on the use of Donated blood

in R&D, etc. from Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan.

Flow cytometry analysis

Flow cytometric analysis was performed using a FACSLyric™ cytometer (BD Biosciences) for

the experiments described below (Platelet count, Annexin V binding assay, Activation of

platelets, Flippase and scramblase activity, Ca assay, Factor V assay, Calcein AM assay,

Evaluation of mitochondria related parameters, and Detection of F-actin). The following

antibodies and reagents were used: anti-human CD41-APC (BioLegend, #303710), anti-human

CD41-PE (BioLegend, #303706), anti-human CD42b-PE (BioLegend, #303906), anti-human

CD42b-PerCP (BioLegend, #303910), anti-human CD42a-FITC (eBioscience, #11-0428-42),

anti-human GPVI-Brilliant Violet 421 (BD Biosciences, #743941), anti-human CD62P-Brilliant

Violet 421 (BioLegend, #304926), PAC-1-FITC (BD Biosciences, #340507), and Annexin V-

FITC (BD Biosciences, #556419). All flow cytometry data were analyzed using FlowJo v10

(BD Biosciences).

Platelet count

The number of platelet particles per imMKCL cell was defined as the total count of $CD41^+$

iPSC-derived platelets (iPSC-platelets) or $CD41^+CD42b^+$ iPSC-platelets on the indicated day,

divided by the number of imMKCL cells on day 0 of the Dox-OFF culture. Platelet counts were

determined using Trucount™ Tubes (BD Biosciences, #340334).

Annexin V binding assay

Staining with FITC-conjugated Annexin V, together with anti-CD41 and anti-CD42b

antibodies, was performed in Annexin V binding buffer (BD Biosciences, #556454)

supplemented with 1 µM $CaCl_2$. For positive and negative controls, 20 µM ionomycin (Wako,

#091-05833) or EDTA (Nacalai Tesque, #06894-14) were added to each sample, respectively,

prior to staining.

Activation of platelets

Platelet activation was evaluated by measuring PAC-1 binding and P-selectin (CD62P)

expression, following the protocol described in our previous study (Sone et al., 2021). Briefly,

culture suspensions of iPSC-platelets were stimulated with or without 0.2 µM phorbol 12-

myristate 13-acetate (PMA) or a combination of 100 µM adenosine diphosphate (ADP) and

40 µM thrombin receptor-activating peptide 6 (TRAP6). The cells were then incubated with

anti-CD62P, anti-human CD41a, and PAC-1 antibodies for 30 minutes at room temperature.

After incubation, the samples were diluted in HEPES-Tyrode buffer (10 mM HEPES, 15 mM

$NaHCO_3$, 138 mM NaCl, 5.5 mM glucose, 2.6 mM KCl, 1 mM $MgCl_2$, and 2 mM $CaCl_2$) and

analyzed by flow cytometry.

Flippase and scramblase activity

Evaluations of flippase and scramblase activity were performed as previously described (Miyata

and Segawa, 2022). Briefly, iPSC-derived platelets were stained with 0.5 µM 18:1-06:0 NBD-

PS (Merck, #810194P) for 20 minutes or 0.5 µM 16:0-06:0 NBD-PC (Merck, #810130P) for 60

minutes, together with anti-CD41 and anti-CD42b antibodies. After staining, 2% BSA (prepared

by diluting a 10% stock solution; Merck, #A1595) was added to remove non-specific binding.

To confirm staining specificity, 60 µM ionomycin was added during NBD-PC or NBD-PS

staining.

Ca assay

iPSC-derived platelets were stained with 3 µL Fluo-4 AM (Dojindo Molecular Technologies,

Inc., #F312) together with anti-CD41 and anti-CD42b antibodies for 20 minutes. To assess

calcium influx in response to stimulation, 2 µM ionomycin was added immediately prior to flow

cytometric analysis.

Factor V assay

Human Factor V (Haematologic Technologies Inc., #HCV-0100) was fluorescently labeled

using the Fluorescent Protein Labeling Kit (Thermo Fisher Scientific, #A10235) prior to its

addition to imMKCL cultures on Day 3 of the Dox-OFF stage. The incorporation of Factor V

into the produced platelets was evaluated on Day 6.

Calcein AM assay

The uptake of Calcein-AM (FUJIFILM Wako Pure Chemical Corporation, #341-07901) by

iPSC-derived platelets was assessed on Day 6 of the Dox-OFF culture. Platelets were stained

with 2 µM Calcein-AM together with anti-CD41 and anti-CD42b antibodies for 30 minutes.

Evaluation of mitochondria related parameters

The reagents and their concentrations used in these experiments were as follows: 100 µM

BioTracker ATP-Red Live Cell Dye (Merck, #SCT045) for ATP content; 1 µM CellROX Deep

Red Flow Cytometry Assay Kit (Thermo Fisher Scientific, #C10491) for reactive oxygen

species (ROS) production; 100 nM MitoTracker Deep Red (Thermo Fisher Scientific,

#M22426) or the MT-1 MitoMP Detection Kit (Dojindo Molecular Technologies, Inc., #MT13)

for mitochondrial membrane potential; 1:10,000 dilution of PicoGreen (Thermo Fisher

Scientific, #P11495) for mitochondrial DNA detection; and 50 nM MitoTracker Green (Dojindo

Molecular Technologies, Inc., #MT10) for mitochondrial presence. Platelets or imMKCLs were

stained with each reagent together with anti-CD41 and anti-CD42b antibodies for 30 minutes.

Detection of F-actin

For F-actin specific detection, platelets or imMKCLs were stained with SPY555-FastAct

(Cytoskeleton, Inc., #CY-SC205) together with anti-CD41 antibody for 2 hours.

Metabolic flux analysis

imMKCL cells were seeded into each well of an XF96 microplate pre-coated with 0.1%

poly-L-lysine and used to measure the oxygen consumption rate (OCR) using an Agilent

Seahorse XF Pro analyzer. The assay was performed with the Seahorse XF Cell Mito Stress

Test Kit (Agilent Technologies, #103015-100) and XF RPMI Medium, pH 7.4 (Agilent

Technologies, #103576-100). After seeding, the plate was centrifuged at $1,500 \times g$ for 1 minutes

to form a monolayer, then equilibrated for 10 minutes at 37 °C in a non-CO_2 incubator before

starting the assay. The Cell Mito Stress Test protocol included sequential injections of

oligomycin (1 µM), FCCP (2 µM), and a mixture of rotenone and antimycin A (1 µM each). For

each injection, four measurement cycles were performed, consisting of 3 minutes of mixing

followed by 3 minutes of measurement. OCR data were analyzed using Wave 2.6 software

(Agilent Technologies), and key mitochondrial parameters were calculated using the Agilent

Seahorse Analytics online tool.

Protein Quantification Using Wes™

Protein expression levels were analyzed using the Wes™ automated capillary electrophoresis–

based immunoassay system (ProteinSimple). Cells were lysed in RIPA buffer supplemented

with protease and phosphatase inhibitors, and protein concentrations were measured using the

BCA Protein Assay Kit (Thermo Fisher Scientific). The following antibodies were used: anti–β-

actin (Cell Signaling Technology, #4970), anti-TOM20 (Abcam, #ab186735), and Anti-Rabbit

Detection Module Chemiluminescence (ProteinSimple, #DM-001). Equal amounts of total

protein, blocking reagent, primary and secondary antibodies, and chemiluminescent substrate

were loaded into the Wes™ assay plate according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Chemiluminescent signals were acquired and quantified using Compass for Simple Western

software (ProteinSimple). Protein levels of β-actin were normalized to TOM20.

Electron Microscopy

Platelet pellets were fixed with a mixture of 0.5% glutaraldehyde and 2% paraformaldehyde in

0.1 M phosphate buffer (pH 7.4) for 60 minutes at 4 °C. After washing with phosphate buffer,

the samples were post-fixed with 1% osmium tetroxide in phosphate buffer for 60 minutes on

ice. Following dehydration, pellets were infiltrated with and embedded in epoxy resin. Ultrathin

sections (60–80 nm thick) were cut, stained with 2% uranyl acetate in 70% methanol and

Reynolds' lead citrate, and examined using a transmission electron microscope operating at 80

kV (HT-7700; Hitachi, Tokyo, Japan).

Live cell imaging

For live-cell imaging using confocal microscopy, u-Dish 35 mm Quad ibiTreat sterilized dishes

(Nippon Genetics, #ib80416), pre-coated with 0.1% poly-L-lysine, were used. Imaging was

performed using a ZEISS LSM 900 confocal microscope equipped with Airyscan 2 and a

63×/1.40 numerical aperture oil-immersion objective. The following reagents were used for

staining imMKCLs or platelets: APC-conjugated anti-human CD41 antibody, PerCP-conjugated

anti-human CD41 antibody, MitoTracker Green, SPY555-FastAct, Plasmem Bright Green

(Dojindo Laboratories, #P504), and Hoechst 33342 (Thermo Fisher Scientific, #62249).

Confocal images were acquired using the same system.

Evaluations of small compounds

Mdivi-1 (Sigma-Aldrich, #M0199-5MG) was added on Day 0 of the Dox-OFF culture to inhibit

mitochondrial fission. Latrunculin A (FUJIFILM Wako Pure Chemical Corporation, #125-

04363), Cytochalasin D (Cayman Chemical, #11330), SZ-3 (MedKoo Biosciences, #208333),

and CK-666 (Selleck, S7690) were added on Day 3 of the Dox-OFF culture. Various ADAM

inhibitors were used as follows: 15 µM KP-457 (Kaken Pharmaceutical), 10 µM GI254023X

(Selleck, #S8660), 100 µM TAPI-1 (Selleck, #S7434), and 10 µM GM6001 (Ilomastat; Selleck,

#S7157). For all experiments, dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) was added to control wells and was

also used as the solvent for compound dilution.

Mitochondrial mAG overexpression

The CoralHue™ mitochondria-targeted monomeric Azami-Green (pMT-mAG1) plasmid was

provided by the RIKEN BRC through the National BioResource Project of MEXT, Japan (Cat.

#RDB18311). A PiggyBac transposon vector system was used to establish stable mitochondrial

labeling in imMKCLs. The gene of interest (GOI), encoding CoralHue mitochondria-targeted

monomeric Azami-Green, was amplified from pMT-mAG1 (Karasawa et al., 2003) via PCR.

The amplified GOI was inserted into the backbone vector using the In-Fusion® HD Cloning Kit

(Clontech, #639649).

Bulk RNA-sequencing analysis

Total RNA was extracted from cultured imMKCLs at Dox-OFF Day 4 using the RNeasy® Plus

Micro Kit (Qiagen, #74034). For each sample, up to 10 ng of total RNA was processed using

the SMART-Seq v4 Ultra Low Input RNA Kit for Sequencing (Clontech, #634890).

Complementary DNA (cDNA) was fragmented using an S220 Focused-ultrasonicator (Covaris),

and the cDNA library was prepared and amplified with the NEBNext® Ultra™ DNA Library

Prep Kit for Illumina (New England Biolabs, #E7370L). Library size distribution was evaluated

using a Bioanalyzer with the Agilent High Sensitivity DNA Kit. Sequencing was performed on

an Illumina NextSeq 500. FASTQ files were generated using *bcl2fastq* v2.20. Adapter

sequences and low-quality bases were trimmed from raw sequencing reads using *cutadapt* v4.1

(Kechin et al., 2017). Trimmed reads were aligned to the human reference genome (hg38) using

STAR v2.7.10a (Dobin et al., 2013) with the GENCODE annotation file (release 32,

GRCh38.p13) (Frankish et al., 2019). Uniquely mapped reads were quantified at the gene level

using *htseq-count* v2.0.2 (Anders et al., 2015) with the same GENCODE GTF file. Gene

expression levels were calculated and expressed as transcripts per million (TPM).

Statistical analysis

Statistical analysis was performed using GraphPad Prism 10 (GraphPad Software, La Jolla,

CA). Data are expressed as the mean ± standard error of the mean (SEM). To determine

statistical significance, an unpaired two-tailed Student's t-test was used. Details of the sample

size used, statistics, and statistical significance are indicated in each figure legend.

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Author contributions

536   E.N. and Y.H. conducted most experiments and analyzed data. K.Freson., K.D.W., and C.T.

537   generated GPIX-KO clone 7 imMKCLs. A.S. conducted the platelet transmission electron

538   microscopy and analyzed data. K. Fujio. constructed the vector system and analyzed related

539   results. S.N. and S.S supervised experimental design. E.N., Y.H., K.E wrote the manuscript.

540   K.E. edited manuscript.

Declarations of competing interests

K.E. is a founder of Megakaryon Co. Ltd. and currently has no stock. K.E. previously received

the collaborating research budget from Megakaryon Co. Ltd. and Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co.

Ltd. The interests of K.E. have been reviewed and are managed by Kyoto University in

accordance with its conflict-of-interest policies.

Other authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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Figure Legends

Figure 1. Turbulence enhances high-quality iPSC-PLT production, as indicated by increased GPIbα expression and mitochondrial membrane potential.

(A) Schematic illustration of three culture systems: dish (static), flask (suboptimal turbulence), and VerMES (optimal turbulence).

(B–D) Analysis of integrin αIIb (CD41) and GPIbα expression on day 6 platelets derived from each culture condition. Platelets were defined as $CD41^+$ particles.

(B) Representative flow cytometry plots of platelets generated under dish (left), flask (middle), and VerMES (right) conditions.

(C) Quantification of the number of $GPIb\alpha^+$ (orange) and $GPIb\alpha^-$ (blue) platelets produced per megakaryocyte.

(D) Proportion of $GPIb\alpha^+$ (orange) and $GPIb\alpha^-$ (blue) platelets. Data are presented as mean ± SEM (n = 3). Statistical significance was determined using an unpaired two-tailed t-test (***$p <$ 0.001).

(E) Representative flow cytometry plots showing Calcein-AM fluorescence (left) and surface expression of GPIbα and CD41 (right) in day 6 platelets cultured in a dish (top) or flask (bottom).

(F) Representative flow cytometry plots showing mitochondrial membrane potential (MitoTracker Deep Red) and GPIbα expression in day 6 platelets cultured in a dish (left), flask (middle), or VerMES (right).

(G, H) Platelet production per megakaryocyte in a day 4 culture swap experiment.

(G) Schematic diagram of the experimental design for culture condition swapping.

(H) Quantification of platelets produced per megakaryocyte under the following conditions: dish–dish, flask–dish, dish–flask, and flask–flask. Data are presented as mean ± SEM (n = 3).

Statistical analysis was performed using an unpaired two-tailed t-test (ns, not significant; *p <

0.05).

Figure 2. Mitochondrial activity regulates GPIbα expression.

(A) Representative flow cytometry plots and histogram overlays showing staining for

mitochondrial DNA (PicoGreen), mitochondrial content (MitoTracker Green), mitochondrial

membrane potential (MT-1), reactive oxygen species (ROS; CellROX), and adenosine

triphosphate (ATP; BioTracker ATP Red) in GPIbα$^+$ (red) and GPIbα$^-$ (blue) day 6 platelets

cultured under static conditions. Unstained controls are shown in gray.

(B) Representative flow cytometry plots showing mitochondrial membrane potential

(MitoTracker Deep Red) and phosphatidylserine exposure (Annexin V) in day 6 platelets

cultured in a dish (left) or flask (right).

(C) Representative flow cytometry plots showing GPIbα staining and mitochondria-specific

mAzami Green fluorescence in day 6 platelets derived from dish (left) or flask (right) cultures.

(D) Representative histograms showing GPIbα expression (far left, middle right) and

mitochondrial membrane potential (MitoTracker Deep Red; middle left, far right) in control

(blue) and after treatment with DMSO (red), KP457 (orange), GI254023X (green), TAPI-1

(dark green), or GM6001 (purple) in day 6 platelets prior to FCCP treatment, from dish (left) or

flask (right) cultures.

(E, F) Comparison of platelet production and mitochondrial membrane potential between wild-

type and GPIX-knockout (KO) imMKCLs.

(E) Quantification of the percentage of CD41$^+$/GPIbα$^+$ platelets produced by wild-type (green)

or GPIX-KO (orange) imMKCLs. Data are presented as mean ± SEM (n = 3). Statistical

significance was determined using an unpaired two-tailed t-test (***p < 0.001).

(F) Representative histograms showing mitochondrial membrane potential in platelets derived

from wild-type (green, middle) or GPIX-KO (orange, bottom) imMKCLs. Unstained control is

shown in gray (top).

Figure 3. Mitochondrial ATP production supports flippase-mediated membrane

asymmetry.

(A) Schematic illustration of the assay used to evaluate flippase and scramblase activity.

(B, C) Representative flow cytometry plots showing surface GPIbα expression and NBD-

labeled phospholipid incorporation in day 6 platelets cultured in a dish (left) or flask (right). (B)

NBD–phosphatidylserine (NBD-PS); (C) NBD–phosphatidylcholine (NBD-PC).

(D, E) Flow cytometry analysis of GPIbα expression, intracellular calcium levels, and ATP

content in day 6 platelets derived from dish and flask cultures.

(D) Representative plots and histograms showing surface GPIbα expression and intracellular

calcium levels (Fluo-4) in platelets from dish (left) and flask (right) conditions.

(E) Representative flow cytometry plots showing surface GPIbα expression and intracellular

ATP levels (BioTracker ATP Red) in platelets cultured in a dish (left) or flask (right).

(F) Schematic model illustrating differences in GPIbα expression between high-quality (left)

and low-quality (right) iPSC-derived platelets.

Figure 4. Turbulent culture conditions promote uniform mitochondrial distribution in

imMKCLs.

(A, B) Confocal imaging and fluorescence intensity analysis of day 4 maturing imMKCLs

cultured under static (dish) or turbulent (flask) conditions.

(A) Representative confocal images of day 4 maturing imMKCLs. Top panels show original

images (scale bars, 10 µm); bottom panels show magnified views (scale bars, 5 µm) of cells

cultured in a dish (left) or flask (right). Mitochondria were stained with MitoTracker Green

(green), F-actin with SPY555-FastAct (red), and nuclei with Hoechst 33342 (blue).

(B) Fluorescence intensity profiles of F-actin (red) and mitochondria (blue) along the central

axis (yellow line in A, magnified images).

(C) Quantification of the percentage of GPIbα$^+$ (red) and GPIbα$^-$ (blue) platelets on day 6

following Mdivi-1 treatment. Data are shown as mean ± SEM (n = 3). Statistical significance

was determined using an unpaired two-tailed t-test (*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$).

(D) Oxygen consumption rate (OCR) of day 4 maturing imMKCLs cultured in a dish (red) or

flask (blue), measured using the Seahorse Flux Analyzer.

(E) Representative histograms showing mitochondrial membrane potential (MitoTracker Deep

Red) in day 6 imMKCLs (left) and iPSC-derived platelets (right) cultured in a dish (top, pink)

or flask (bottom, blue).

Figure 5. Turbulence regulates actin dynamics to promote high-quality platelet

production.

(A–C) Transcript levels of cytoskeletal genes related to actin (A), tubulin (B), and myosin (C) in

day 4 maturing imMKCLs cultured in a dish or flask. Gene expression is shown as transcripts

per million (TPM). Data are presented as mean ± SEM (n = 3). Statistical analysis was

performed using an unpaired two-tailed t-test (ns, not significant).

(D, E) Protein levels of β-actin normalized to TOM20 in day 5 maturing imMKCLs cultured in

a dish (orange) or flask (purple).

(D) Representative Simple Western (Wes) images.

(E) Quantification of β-actin expression. Data are presented as mean ± SEM (n = 3). Statistical

analysis was performed using an unpaired two-tailed t-test (ns, not significant).

(F) Fold change in F-actin levels (SPY555-FastAct signal) from day 1 to day 6 in maturing

imMKCLs cultured in a dish (orange), flask (purple), or VerMES (green). Data are presented as

mean ± SEM (n = 3). Statistical comparisons were performed independently on day 5 and day 6

between dish and flask, and between dish and VerMES, using an unpaired two-tailed t-test.

(G) Representative histograms showing surface GPIbα expression (left), phosphatidylserine

exposure (Annexin V binding, middle), and mitochondrial membrane potential (MitoTracker

Deep Red, right) in day 6 iPSC-derived platelets (iPSC-PLTs) cultured with Latrunculin A at 0.1

μM (dark green), 0.3 μM (lime green), 1 μM (orange), 3 μM (blue), or 10 μM (red). EDTA-

treated (purple) and untreated control (mauve) samples are shown at the top.

(H–J) Percentage of GPIbα$^+$ (red) and GPIbα$^-$ (blue) iPSC-derived platelets on day 6 following

treatment with: (H) 100 nM or 1 μM Cytochalasin D, (I) 10 μM or 20 μM SZ-3, or (J) 50 μM,

100 μM, or 200 μM CK-666. Data are presented as mean ± SEM (n = 3). Statistical analysis

was performed using an unpaired two-tailed t-test (ns, not significant; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$;

****$p < 0.0001$). (K, L) Quantification of F-actin levels in day 5 imMKCLs using SPY555-

FastAct following actin-targeting compound treatment. Geometric mean fluorescence intensity

is shown for cells treated on day 3 with (K) 1, 5, and 10 μM Latrunculin A, or (L) 100 nM and 1

μM Cytochalasin D. (M) Schematic model illustrating the relationship between F-actin levels,

the polymerization/depolymerization state of intracellular actin, and their effects on platelet

production in maturing imMKCLs.

Figure 6. Graphical summary.

(A) Turbulence reduces actin (red) polymerization during imMKCL maturation, facilitating

efficient incorporation of mitochondria (green) into the resulting iPSC-derived platelets. This

process is disrupted by actin polymerization inhibitors (CK-666, SZ-3), leading to the

production of low-quality platelets similar to those generated under static culture conditions.

Figure 1

Figure 1

G

H

Figure 2

A

B

C

D

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 3

E

High-quality iPSC-PLTs

Low-quality iPSC-PLTs

Active Flippase

Internalized PS

ATP

Inactive ADAM17

High MMP

Intact GPIbα

Inactive Flippase

PS exposure

No ATP

Active ADAM17

Low MMP/no mitochondria

GPIbα shedding

Figure 4

A

B

Figure 4

C

D

E

Figure 5

Figure 5

G

H

PLT ratio (%)

I

PLT ratio (%)

J

PLT ratio (%)

GPIbα−
GPIbα+

K

L

M

Figure 6

A **Graphical Summary**

Immortalized megakaryocyte
progenitor cell line (imMKCL)

CK666
SZ-3

Turbulence +

High-quality iPSC-PLTs

Turbulence -

Low-quality iPSC-PLTs