Reduced TBX5 dosage undermines developmental control of atrial cardiomyocyte identity

in a model of human atrial disease

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Abstract

While atrial septal defects (ASDs) and atrial fibrillation (AF) present differently, there is

evidence that they share some genetic basis. Here, we used directed differentiation of human

induced pluripotent stem cells into atrial or ventricular cardiomyocytes (CMs) to delineate gene

regulatory networks (GRNs) that define each identity. We uncovered accessible chromatin

regions, transcription factor motifs and key regulatory nodes specific to, or shared by, both CM

types, including the transcription factor *TBX5*, which is linked to genetic susceptibility of ASDs

and AF in humans. Complete *TBX5* loss resulted in a near absence of atrial CMs with a

concomitant increase in the abundance of other cell types. Reduced dosage of TBX5 in human

atrial CMs caused cellular, electrophysiologic and molecular phenotypes consistent with features

of atrial CM dysfunction. This included dose-dependent aberrant accessibility of many chromatin

regions and perturbation of gene regulatory networks of atrial CM identity. These results suggest

that, in addition to stemming from ion channel or extracellular matrix dysfunction, atrial diseases

such as ASDs or AF may result from disruptions of atrial CM identity.

Introduction.

Thin-walled atria are distinct from thick-walled ventricles in their developmental origin and

function. Atria serve to collect blood in the heart, initiate and propagate an electrical signal for

coordinated cardiac contraction, and respond to physiologic changes such as heart failure by

secreting hormones. These functions reflect the distinct phenotypes of atrial cells. For example,

atrial fibroblasts display a greater response to pathologic stimuli than ventricular fibroblasts

(Burstein et al., 2008), and atrial cardiomyocytes (CMs) display distinct electrophysiologic

characteristics, calcium-handling and contractile proteins, cell-cell coupling and energy

metabolism, which are reflected in human atrial gene expression *in vivo* (Dobrev et al., 2019).

Atrial disease is common and increases cardiovascular and cerebrovascular risk.

Developmental defects of the atria include cor triatriatum, atrial aneurysms, patent foramen ovale

(PFO) and atrial septal defects (ASDs). ASDs are one of the most common forms of congenital

heart defects (CHDs), affecting 25% of the CHD population (Hoffman and Kaplan, 2002). Some

large ASDs can lead to heart failure and require surgical repair. With aging, atrial tissue can

manifest chaotic electrical activity known as atrial fibrillation (AF). AF is the most common

arrhythmia and a leading cause of heart failure, stroke and sudden cardiac death (Kornej et al.,

2020). Moreover, there is an increasing prevalence of AF in adults with CHDs, and AF risk is

higher in patients with ASDs than in the non-CHD population (Miguel and Ávila, 2021). However,

the molecular basis of ASDs and AF remains poorly understood, and new insights are needed to

develop new diagnostic and therapeutic approaches.

There is ample evidence that atrial diseases share a genetic basis. ASDs are caused by

inherited dominant mutations in genes encoding sarcomere proteins (Ching et al., 2005; Matsson

et al., 2008; Postma et al., 2011), chromatin modifying enzymes (Boniel et al., 2021) and

transcription factors (Basson et al., 1997; Garg et al., 2003; Kirk et al., 2007; Li et al., 1997; Posch

et al., 2010; Schott et al., 1998; Yuan et al., 2013). Atrial fibrillation is associated with inherited

mutations or variants in genes encoding potassium channels (Chen et al., 2003; Hong et al., 2005;

Olson et al., 2006; Xia et al., 2005; Yang et al., 2004), but also sarcomere proteins (Choi et al.,

2018; Gudbjartsson et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2018), and transcription factors (Guo et al., 2016; Ma

et al., 2016; Roselli et al., 2018; Xie et al., 2013). Thus, some genes associated with ASDs and

AF may have overlapping functions, though the mechanisms underlying or linking the two atrial

diseases are unclear.

Heterozygous mutations of the transcription factor *TBX5* cause Holt-Oram syndrome, a

developmental disorder that often includes ASDs in humans (Basson 1997,Li 1997) and in mice

(Bruneau et al., 2001). Conditional loss of *Tbx5* in the endocardium (Nadeau et al., 2010) or dorsal

mesenchymal protrusion (Xie et al., 2012) leads to ASDs, suggesting an essential role for TBX5

in atrial septal development. Post-natal deletion of *Tbx5* in atrial CMs leads to AF via a calcium

transport mechanism (Dai et al., 2019; Nadadur et al., 2016), and *Tbx5* was shown to be essential

for the maintenance of an atrial gene expression program (Sweat et al., 2023). Some inherited

TBX5 mutations cause both ASDs and AF in the same individuals (Bever et al., 1996; Postma et

al., 2008). As TBX5 is broadly associated with atrial gene regulation, ASDs and AF, understanding

TBX5 function presents an opportunity to decipher the rules of gene regulation in atrial

development and disease.

To model human atrial disease *in vitro*, multiple groups have developed methods that

promote atrial CM differentiation of human pluripotent stem cells, garnering important insights into

the pathways involved (Cyganek et al., 2018; Devalla et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2017; Yang et al.,

2022a; Zhang et al., 2019). These protocols have been used on wild-type cells for cell type-

specific drug screening (Devalla et al., 2015), and for inducing AF by electrical stimulation

(Goldfracht et al., 2019) or with drugs that increase the risk of AF (Shafaattalab et al., 2019).

However, human cellular models of genetic susceptibility to atrial disease have not yet been

reported.

Here, we deployed a recently developed induced pluripotent stem cell (iPSC) model of

Holt-Oram Syndrome (Kathiriya et al., 2021) to study genetic susceptibility to human atrial

diseases. We observed disease-relevant cellular, electrophysiologic and molecular deficits of

atrial CMs. The deficits in cell physiology and developmental gene expression were more

profound than those previously observed in ventricular CMs lacking one or two copies of *TBX5*

(Kathiriya et al., 2021). Notably, atrial CM specification failed in the complete absence of *TBX5*

and atrial CM identity was hindered by heterozygous loss of *TBX5*. Furthermore, we discovered

gene regulatory networks (GRNs) for atrial CM identity that were sensitive to TBX5 dosage, and

observed disruptions to key nodes, including ASD- and AF-risk genes, in atrial disease-relevant

networks.

Results.

<u>Modeling atrial CM identity from human iPSCs delineates chamber-specific cellular attributes.</u>

As an initial step to model atrial differentiation and disease, we differentiated wildtype (WT)

iPSCs (WTC11 parental line) (Miyaoka et al., 2014) into either atrial or ventricular CMs and

validated atrial-specific vs. ventricular-specific CM characteristics. Immunostaining showed ANP,

a well-known atrial marker, to be enriched in atrial CMs (Fig. 1A-G). By contrast, MLC2V, a

ventricular marker, was nearly absent among atrial CMs compared to ventricular CMs (Fig. 1H-

N). Multielectrode array (MEA) assays revealed a faster beat rate among atrial CMs and shorter

rate-adjusted local extracellular action potentials (LEAP), consistent with atrial CM

electrophysiology (Fig. 1O, P)(Nerbonne and Kass, 2005) and with iPSC-derived atrial CMs

derived by another protocol (Cyganek et al., 2018).

We then performed single-cell RNA sequencing (scRNA-seq) on atrial differentiation at

day 20 and merged it with previously generated scRNA-seq data of ventricular differentiation at

day 23 (Fig. S1A-C) (Kathiriya et al., 2021). Differential expression analysis confirmed that atrial

CMs were enriched for atrial genes (e.g. *TBX5*, *NR2F2, HEY1, MYH6*), the right atrial CM gene

HAMP (Litviňuková et al., 2020; Mir et al., 2023), the left atrial CM gene *PITX2* (Campione et al.,

2001; Kitamura et al., 1999; Liu et al., 2002; Schweickert et al., 2000) and the atrial appendage

CM gene *NPPA*, but did not express ventricular-specific genes (*MYL2*, *IRX4, HEY2, HAND1,*

MYH7) (Fig. 1Q, S1D-E, Table S1).

<u>Human iPSC-derived atrial CMs display distinct epigenomic features.</u>

We next compared accessible chromatin regions between differentiations to ventricular

and atrial CMs using single-nucleus ATAC sequencing (snATAC-seq) (Fig. S2A,B, Table S2). We

annotated cell type clusters by gene score using ArchR (Granja et al., 2020). Among *TNNT2*-

gene score$^+$ cells, representing presumptive CMs (Fig. S2B'), *MYL2*-gene score$^+$ clusters

overlapped with cells from ventricular CM differentiations and *MYH6*-gene score$^+$ clusters with

cells from atrial CM differentiations (Fig. S2C), as expected. Within a subset of *TNNT2*-gene

score$^+$ CMs (Fig. S2D,E), we found that accessible chromatin regions were distributed across

promoters, introns, exons and distal regions to a similar degree among clusters of ventricular or

atrial CMs (Fig. S2F).

By genomic coordinates, about one-quarter of accessible regions (42,108 regions)

overlapped between ventricular and atrial CMs at the stages assessed, out of 56,301 ventricular

CM-specific and 63,173 atrial CM-specific regions identified (Fig. 1R). Based on fold change

differences, we also identified 465 differentially accessible regions (DARs) among ventricular or

atrial CMs (Fig. S2G). Thus, although several accessible regions may be common to ventricular

and atrial CMs, the degree of accessibility may be different among ventricular or atrial CMs.

Among DARs, transcription factor (TF) motifs enriched among ventricular CMs included

MADS-box/MEF2 (Desjardins and Naya, 2016; Medrano and Naya, 2017; Naya et al., 2002),

TEAD (Gise et al., 2012; Lin et al., 2016) and NFAT (Bushdid et al., 2003) motifs (Fig. 1S). Atrial

CMs were enriched for NKX, NR2F, GATA and TBX or MEIS (Luna-Zurita et al., 2016) motifs

(Fig. 1S). Notably, TF motifs of TGIF, a TALE homeodomain protein associated with

holoprosencephaly that inhibits retinoic acid signaling (Bartholin et al., 2006) and represses Smad

signaling (Nakashima et al., 2018) were observed. However, any potential role for TGIF or TGIF-

like factors in atrial development would require experimental evaluation.

Gene regulatory networks uncover TF nodes of atrial CM identity.

Gene regulatory networks (GRNs) reveal a web of "nodes", TFs that are important for

establishment and maintenance of transcriptional programs, and "edges", which are gene targets

connected to their regulatory nodes, thus yielding more information than just changes to gene

expression. To uncover GRNs of human ventricular or atrial CM identity, we applied CellOracle,

a machine learning-based approach that builds cell type-specific GRNs using both gene

expression and chromatin accessibility data (Table S3) (Kamimoto et al., 2023). For each node,

we calculated "betweenness centrality", which measures information flow through each node, and

"degree out centrality", which measures the number of outgoing direct connections to edges for

any given node. By these measures, canonical chamber-specific TFs such as *HEY2* and *HAND1*

acted as predominant nodes in ventricular CMs, and *NR2F2* and *HEY1* in atrial CMs (Fig. 1T,U,

Fig. S3A-F). Notably, *HEY2*, *HES4* and *HEY1* are involved in Notch signaling, suggesting that the

Notch pathway is a regulator of both atrial and ventral CM identities. We also identified TFs that

are lesser known in the developing heart as nodes, including *E2F1* in ventricular CMs and *NR2F1*

and *PLAGL1* in atrial CMs.

Some TFs (e.g. *HEY2*, *HEY1*, *TBX5*) displayed connections in both ventricular and atrial

CM GRNs, although the nature of their connections changed depending on ventricular or atrial

CM context (Fig. 1T,U, Fig. S3A-F). For example, ventricular-enriched *HEY2* displayed both

higher betweenness and higher degree-out centrality in ventricular CMs (Fig. S3E,F), confirming

the importance of *HEY2* in a ventricular CM network. In turn, *HEY2* displayed connections with a

positive correlation (i.e. directly proportional between the TF node and a target edge), suggesting

that *HEY2* positively regulates some ventricular CM genes (Fig. S3G). By contrast, some *HEY2*

connections to atrial CM-specific targets reflected negative correlations (i.e. inversely proportional

between the TF node and a target edge), suggesting that *HEY2* inhibits some atrial CM genes
(Fig. S3H). Like *HEY2* in ventricular CMs, atrial-enriched *HEY1* also displayed both higher
betweenness and higher degree-out centrality in atrial CMs (Fig. S3E,F). Interestingly, most *HEY1*
connections reflected positive correlations in ventricular CMs (Fig. S3I, while many connections
in atrial CMs reflected negative correlations (Fig. S3J), suggesting that *HEY1*'s role is likely more
complex than *HEY2's* in the atrial CM network. *TBX5* showed connections with positive
correlations in both atrial and ventricular CMs, some of which were overlapping, implying some
shared roles in both ventricular and atrial CM networks (Fig. 1V, W). Although there were more
direct connections to target edges in ventricular than atrial CMs, betweenness centrality for *TBX5*
was higher in atrial CMs (Fig. S3E), implying a more important role in atrial CMs.

As variants in *TBX5* are associated with ASDs and AF, we hypothesized that *TBX5* plays
a central regulatory role in human atrial CMs. To test this hypothesis, we used CellOracle
(Kamimoto et al., 2023) to perform *in silico* perturbation of *TBX5* in atrial CM differentiation. In the
normal condition, WTC11 cells generated mostly $MYH6^+$ atrial CMs, some $MYH7^+$ ventricular-like
CMs and $TNNT2^+$ $COL3A1^+$ CMs, which express extracellular matrix genes (CMEs) (Fig. 1X).
CellOracle analysis predicted that complete loss of *TBX5* during atrial CM differentiation would
hinder specification of atrial CM identity and instead lead toward other CM subtypes, such as
CMEs (Fig. 1Y).

<u>Reduction of TBX5 dosage impairs cellular features of atrial CMs.</u>

To confirm the CellOracle prediction, we leveraged a human disease model of *TBX5*
haploinsufficiency (Kathiriya et al., 2021). To this end, we differentiated to atrial CMs iPSCs
carrying a heterozygous ($TBX5^{in/+}$) or homozygous ($TBX5^{in/del}$) *TBX5* loss of function (LOF)
mutation, or their wildtype parental line (WTC11) (Kathiriya et al., 2021). Western blot confirmed
reduced levels of TBX5 in $TBX5^{in/+}$ cells and absence of TBX5 in $TBX5^{in/del}$ cells at day 20 of atrial
CM differentiation (Fig. S4A, B). While $TBX5^{in/+}$ cells differentiated to beating atrial CMs, $TBX5^{in/del}$
cells often had compromised CM differentiation efficiency and rarely produced beating CMs (Fig.
2A). Further, $TBX5^{in/del}$ atrial CMs could not be recovered beyond day 20, indicating a more severe
phenotype in atrial than ventricular CMs (Kathiriya et al., 2021).

Furthermore, loss of *TBX5* function led to dosage-sensitive sarcomere disarray and
increased cell size at day 20 of differentiation (Fig. 2B-F, Fig. S4C-E), indicating atrial CM
dysfunction. Notably, increased cell size in $TBX5^{in/+}$ atrial CMs was not observed previously in
$TBX5^{in/+}$ ventricular CMs (Kathiriya et al., 2021), again suggesting that atrial CMs are more
susceptible than ventricular CMs to reduced TBX5 dosage. Upon replating $TBX5^{in/+}$ cells for

micro-electrode array (MEA), we observed prolonged local extracellular action potentials (LEAPs)

with a broad plateau phase (Fig. 2G-J), reminiscent of ventricular-like CM action potentials. This

prolonged action potential was consistent with observations from mouse $Tbx5^{-/-}$ atrial CMs (Yang

et al., 2017) and human $TBX5$ heterozygous mutant ventricular CMs (Bersell et al., 2023;

Kathiriya et al., 2021), albeit using different methods.

<u>Complete loss of $TBX5$ prevents the specification of atrial CMs.</u>

To determine the gene expression changes that underlie the phenotypes of $TBX5$-

deficient atrial CMs, we performed scRNA-seq on these cells at day 20 of atrial CM differentiation

(Fig. 1K, Fig. S4F). A high-level annotation of cell type clusters identified $TNNT2^+$ CMs (WT 60.6%

$TNNT2$, $TBX5^{in/+}$ 59% and $TBX5^{in/del}$ 0.4%), $DLK1^+$ or DCN^+ fibroblast-like cells, $EPCAM^+$

epithelial-like cells, $SERPINA1^+$ or TTR^+ endodermal population, $TOP2A^+$ dividing cells and

$NEFM^+$ neural-like cells (Fig. 2L,M). Using a generalized linear mixed effects model, we tested

genotype-specific differences in cluster memberships. Indeed, $TBX5^{in/del}$ cells were significantly

enriched in non-CM clusters of fibroblasts and epithelial-like cells, with a concomitant loss of CMs

(Fig. 2N, S4G). As cluster assignments can change with UMAP resolution, we also employed

Milo, a program that tests differential abundance by assigning cells to partially overlapping

neighborhoods on a k-nearest neighbor graph (Dann et al., 2022). This method also showed a

statistically significant change in the abundance of CMs, fibroblasts, epithelial and neural-like cells

for $TBX5^{in/del}$ (Fig. 2O, P). In contrast, cell type abundance was generally similar among $TBX5^{in/+}$

cells and WT cells at this resolution.

<u>Reduced TBX5 dosage perturbs the molecular identity of several atrial CM subtypes.</u>

Next, we evaluated $TNNT2^+$ clusters and defined CM subtypes (Fig. 3A-C). In WT CMs,

we identified CM subtypes that were enriched for $MYH6^+$ expression, such as $PITX2^+$ left atrial

(LA)-like CMs, $HAMP^+$ right atrial (RA)-like CMs, $NPPA^+$ atrial appendage-like CMs, $RSPO3^+$

atrioventricular (AV) CMs and a cluster lacking expression of LA- or RA-like markers, which we

inferred as atrial precursor-like CMs by pseudotime analysis with Monocle 3 (Cao et al., 2019)

(Fig. 3D). Other clusters that had relatively lower $MYH6^+$ expression included $MYH7^+$ ventricular-

like CMs expressing ventricular-enriched genes (e.g. $IRX4$, $HEY2$), $COL3A1^+$ clusters expressing

fibroblast genes (e.g. $COL1A1$, FN, $SOX4$, $TGFB2$), resembling CMs expressing extracellular

matrix genes (CMEs) in developing mouse hearts (DeLaughter et al., 2016). We also observed a

small HBD^+ hematopoietic-like cluster.

While similar numbers of total $TNNT2^+$ CMs were observed for WTC11 (9823 cells) and
$TBX5^{in/+}$ (9311 cells), only 59 $TNNT2^+$ CMs were observed from complete loss of $TBX5$, indicating
severely impaired atrial CM differentiation, including of most atrial CM subtypes (Fig. 3E, Fig.
S5A). $TBX5^{in/del}$ CMs were devoid of $NPPA^+$ appendage-like CMs and RA-like CMs but were
observed in CME and AV CM clusters. Further, only two atrial precursor-like CMs were observed
in $TBX5^{in/del}$, indicating an absence of proper atrial CM specification, consistent with *in silico*
predictions (Fig. 1X,Y).
Although heterozygous loss of $TBX5$ cells were found among RA-like, LA-like and $NPPA^+$
atrial appendage-like CM clusters, $TBX5^{in/+}$ cells were reduced in numbers, implicating a
deficiency of proper atrial CM identity (Fig. 3E, Fig. S5A). Concomitantly, $TBX5^{in/+}$ cells were
enriched for CMEs and AV CMs, consistent with dosage-sensitive expansion of some atrial CM
subtypes with loss of others.
In addition, a spectrum of phenotypes from $TBX5$ heterozygous mutant cells were
observed, with some remaining similar to WT cells, while others were found in a $TBX5$
heterozygous-predominant cluster (e.g. CME-1) (Fig. 3A,C,E). Such variability in cellular
phenotypes may be of clinical relevance, as many affected members of multi-generational families
of Holt-Oram Syndrome, and genetically-determined CHDs in general, express variations in
cardiac phenotypes (Basson et al., 1994; Benson et al., 1998; Benson et al., 2003; Garg et al.,
2003; Garg et al., 2005).
252
<u>ASD- and AF-risk genes are vulnerable to reduced TBX5 dosage.</u>
Complete loss of $TBX5$ in atrial CMs led to reduced expression of 243 genes and
increased expression of 340 genes (Fig. 3F,H, Table S4). Heterozygous loss of $TBX5$ resulted in
reduced expression of 283 genes and increased expression of 279 genes (Fig. 3G,H, Table S4).
Differentially expressed genes were significantly enriched for known AF-, ASD-, or CHD-risk or
causative genes (Fig. 3I-K, Table S5). For instance, in $TBX5$ heterozygous mutant cells,
susceptible genes included 8 ASD (e.g. *TBX20, FGFR2, GLI3, KAT6B, PBX1*), 80 AF (e.g. *DES,*
CAMK2D, ID1, VCAM1) and 4 ASD and AF- (e.g. *PITX2, ACTC1, MYH7*) risk genes (Fig. 3L).
Further, dose-dependent genes dysregulated in both $TBX5$ mutant genotypes (Fig. 3M) included
atrial-specific genes (e.g. *NR2F2, HEY1*), the right atrial CM gene *HAMP*, sarcomere genes (e.g.
TNNC1, TNNT2), ECM genes (e.g. *COL3A1, FN1*) and AV canal markers (e.g. *RSPO3, BMP2*).
Many genes could be further categorized as risk genes for ASDs (e.g. *NR2F2, JAG1*) (Ching et
al., 2005; McElhinney et al., 2002; Turki et al., 2014), AF (e.g. *NPPA, TECRL, TTN)* (Choi et al.,
2018; Devalla et al., 2016; Hodgson-Zingman et al., 2008; Lee et al., 2018), or both ASDs and

AF (e.g. *MYH6*) (Ching et al., 2005; Lee et al., 2018; Postma et al., 2008; Postma et al., 2011;
Roselli et al., 2018; Vad et al., 2020; Yuan et al., 2013).

As expected, many previously characterized TBX5 targets (e.g. *NPPA, MYH6, PITX2,*
DES) (Bruneau et al., 2001; Garg et al., 2003; Kathiriya et al., 2021; Ouwerkerk et al., 2021)
displayed TBX5 dose-dependent dysregulation. We also discovered new putative TBX5
downstream genes, genes such as *ANGPT1, NR2F1* and *MEG3* (Fig. 3F-H). Notably, *ANGPT1*,
with known roles in cardiac jelly homeostasis during atrial chamber morphogenesis (Kim et al.,
2018), was downregulated in *TBX5* mutant CMs, whereas *MEG3*, a positive regulator of cardiac
fibrosis (Piccoli et al., 2017) was downregulated in *TBX5^{in/+}* and upregulated in *TBX5^{in/del}* CMs. We
confirmed altered mRNA expression of *NR2F1, DES*, *ANGPT1* and *MEG3* in *TBX5* mutant atrial
CMs by fluorescent *in situ* hybridization (Fig. 4A-M).

To determine if disturbances from reduced TBX5 are exacerbated later in atrial CM
differentiation, we performed scRNA-seq at day 45 in *TBX5^{in/+}* atrial cells. Both high-level cell type
annotations as well as CM subtypes were similar to those observed at day 20, with the addition
of *SHOX2^+* pacemaker-like cells (Fig. S6A-G). Fewer *TNNT2^+* CMs and more *POSTN^+* fibroblasts
were observed among *TBX5^{in/+}* at day 45 (Fig. S6D). Among CM subtypes at day 45, *HAMP^+* RA-
like, and *PITX2^+* LA-like CMs were reduced, while CME-2s and *MYH7^+* ventricular-like CMs were
enriched (Fig. S4E-H). These results indicated that *TBX5^{in/+}* cells persisted in their failure to
differentiate to some atrial CM subtypes, with deviation towards other atrial CM subtypes.
Moreover, by day 45, a population of non-atrial CMs, mainly fibroblasts and ventricular-like CMs,
expanded. Thus, at day 45, heterozygous loss of *TBX5* appeared analogous, albeit to a lesser
degree, to complete loss of *TBX5* at day 20.

Disease genes were also enriched among the 244 upregulated and 154 downregulated
genes in *TBX5^{in/+}* CMs at day 45 (Fig. S6I). These included 6 ASD- , 72 AF-, and 5 ASD- and AF-
risk genes (Fig. S6J-M). A merged analysis of day 20 and day 45 CMs (Fig. S7A,B) revealed
genes dysregulated at both timepoints, including 3 ASD- (e.g. *NR2F2, GPC3, MEIS2*), 17 AF-
(e.g. *ANGPT1, NPPA, TNNT2, TNNI3*) and 2 ASD and AF- (e.g. *MYH7, ACTC1*) risk genes (Fig.
S7C).

<u>Atrial-enriched TF motifs are sensitive in TBX5-dependent chromatin accessibility.</u>

To evaluate whether altered chromatin accessibility might explain disturbances to gene
expression by reduced TBX5 dosage in atrial CMs, we performed snATAC-seq analysis of WT
and *TBX5* mutant cells at day 20 of atrial CM differentiation (Fig. 5A,B, Fig. S8A). Among *TNNT2*
gene score^+ clusters, cluster C5 was enriched for *TBX5^{in/del}* cells, which showed reduced gene

scores for *MYH6*, *PITX2, HAMP* and *NPPA,* and increased gene scores for *COL3A1*, indicating

disrupted chromatin accessibility of CMs from complete *TBX5* loss. In contrast, cluster C6 was

enriched for *TBX5^{in/+}* cells and displayed reduced gene scores for *PITX2*, *HAMP* and *NPPA*,

consistent with disturbed chromatin accessibility of atrial CMs from heterozygous loss of *TBX5*

(Fig. 5C, D, Fig. S8B).

We analyzed DARs from reduced TBX5 dosage for TF motif loss or enrichment. We found

a loss of atrial-enriched NKX, TBX or MEIS and TFIG motifs between WT-enriched and *TBX5^{in/del}*-

enriched clusters, and similar loss of NKX, TBX or MEIS, GATA, NR2F and TGIF motifs between

WT-enriched and *TBX5^{in/+}*-enriched clusters (Fig. 5E,F, S8C-E, Table S6). These TF motifs

suggested a broadly disturbed deployment of cardiac TFs determining atrial CM identity in *TBX5*

mutants. In contrast, TF motifs gained included non-heart associated NFI, ventricular and outflow

tract-associated HAND, and BMP-responsive SMAD motifs in *TBX5^{in/del}* atrial CM and motifs for

the epicardial-associated WT1 in *TBX5^{in/+}* atrial CMs (Fig. 5E,F). These changes suggested non-

atrial CM TFs had gained accessibility to CM chromatin, consistent with ectopic expression of

non-atrial CM genes (Fig 3H).

As TBX and MEIS motifs share sequence similarity (Luna-Zurita et al., 2016), we

evaluated DARs with predicted TBX or MEIS motifs. We observed that approximately 40-60% of

regions less accessible in *TBX5* mutant CMs contained TBX or MEIS motifs compared to about

20% of regions more accessible in *TBX5* mutant CMs (Fig. 5G), implying that TBX5 may be

necessary for open chromatin. Further, to assess if changes in chromatin accessibility could be a

direct effect of reduced TBX5 dosage, we overlaid TBX5 occupancy from TBX5 ChIP-seq in WT

cells (Grant et al., 2025) on changes to chromatin accessibility in *TBX5* mutants. We found that

50-60% of the regions less accessible in *TBX5* mutants overlapped with normal TBX5-binding

regions, whereas less than 5% of the more accessible regions did (Fig. 5G'). This observation

suggests that reductions in chromatin accessibility are likely a direct effect of reduced TBX5

binding to its target sites. Evaluation of chromatin accessibility near differentially expressed genes

showed correlations between gene expression and chromatin accessibility (Fig S8F-K). Some

examples of DARs across genotype-enriched clusters included the proximal promoter of the AF-

linked gene *NPPA* (Horsthuis et al., 2008), the nearby *NPPA-NPPB* super enhancer (Man et al.,

2021) (Fig. 5H), as well as the promoter of the novel TBX5 atrial CM target *NR2F1* (Fig. 5I).

<u>Loss of one *TBX5* copy abolishes TBX5 centrality and rewires atrial GRNs.</u>

We used CellOracle (Kamimoto et al., 2023) to infer GRNs of atrial CMs by *TBX5* genotype

and to understand how reduced TBX5 dosage perturbs network connections for human atrial CM

identity (Table S7). Decreasing TBX5 dosage reduced the total number of nodes from 1106 in

WT to 1028 in $TBX5^{in/}$ and 941 in $TBX5^{in/del}$ (Fig. S9A), with a concomitant increase in genotype-

specific edges from 900 in WT to 1436 in $TBX5^{in/+}$ and 1625 in $TBX5^{in/del}$ (Fig. S9B). Many network

connections displayed shifts from positive correlations to negative correlations (e.g. *NR2F1*,

NKX2-5, *HEY1, TCF21*) (Fig. 6A-C, Fig. S9C-F). Furthermore, a network comprised of upstream

TFs connected to TBX5 or CHD-, ASD- and AF-risk TFs susceptible to reduced TBX5 dosage

showed fewer unique edges (61 in WT, 47 in $TBX5^{in/+}$, 36 in $TBX5^{in/del}$) and total nodes (27 in WT,

25 in $TBX5^{in/+}$, 19 in $TBX5^{in/del}$) (e.g. ASD-risk *SMC3* lost in $TBX5^{in/+}$ and $TBX5^{in/del}$, *MEF2A* lost in

$TBX5^{in/+}$) (Fig. 6D-F). These results indicated that these networks are less complex when TBX5

dosage is reduced, implying a loss to a TBX5-dependent atrial CM program.

Several TFs showed dosage-sensitive reduction in centrality by betweenness or degree

out (Fig. 6G,H). *NR2F1* maintained many of its degree-out connections in $TBX5^{in/+}$ cells, but the

strength of correlations, if not their direction, was altered (e.g. AF-risk *ANGPT1*, *MYL7, ASD-risk*

NR2F2, SELENOP) (Fig. 6I). Other *NR2F1* connections were lost (e.g. *NDUFB9*, *NDUFS7,*

ETFA, ARHGAP5, CDC42EP3) or gained (e.g. *NES*, *PPP1R12B, KDELR, APOA1, CNN3*),

consistent with a reconfiguration of *NR2F1* connections in response to reduced TBX5.

Correspondingly, the degree-out centrality of *TCF21,* which was low in WTC11 CMs, dramatically

increased in $TBX5^{in/+}$ and $TBX5^{in/del}$ CMs (Fig. S9E), suggesting an ectopic fibroblast-like network

in *TBX5* mutants, potentially in conjunction with an increase in connections of the fibroblast-

associated *TCF12* (Fig. S9F).

Moreover, *TBX5* lost both its betweenness and degree-out centrality in $TBX5^{in/+}$ GRNs

(Fig. 6G, H). This included loss of all 25 connections, including with the highest correlated gene

PGAM1, along with *BMP5,* AF-risk *NPPA*, and ASD- and AF-risk *MYH7* (Fig. 6J), consistent with

profound disturbances to *TBX5* connections from heterozygous loss of *TBX5* in atrial CMs.

Notably, some TBX5 dosage-sensitive edge genes that lost direct connections to TBX5 appeared

to form new connections with other transcription factors, including both positive and negative

regulators (Fig. 6K, Fig. S10A-C). For example, the TBX5-dependent edge gene *PNISR* gained

positive connections to the ASD- and AF-risk TF *NKX2-5* and the cardiopulmonary disease-linked

TF *TBX4* (Prapa et al., 2022) in $TBX5^{in/del}$ CMs (Fig. S10B). Concurrently, *PNISR* showed

reduced strength of a negative connection to the disease-risk TF *TBX2* (Liu et al., 2018) in

$TBX5^{in/+}$, while gaining a positive connection to *TBX2* in $TBX5^{in/del}$ CMs (Fig. S10B). This

suggested some degree of buffering or compensation, albeit incomplete, by other TFs in the

setting of reduced TBX5 dosage. In sum, we found that reduced TBX5 dosage results in a

reconfiguration of atrial CM networks, including disruptions to connections of ASD- and AF-risk

genes.

DISCUSSION.

This study describes a human cellular model of TBX5-associated atrial disease and

reveals dosage-sensitive disruptions to atrial CM GRNs. Our findings uncover vulnerabilities in

atrial CM identity and provide further evidence that ASDs and AF share a molecular basis. These

insights advance our understanding of genetic susceptibility to atrial diseases and provide new

potential avenues for therapeutic development.

Using human differentiation systems to CMs, we discern epigenetic differences between

closely related cell types, ventricular and atrial CMs. These results provide further support that

these approaches may be useful to model *in vitro* cardiac diseases that affect one cell type versus

the other. For example, iPSC-derived ventricular CMs have been valuable to model susceptibility

to ventricular-specific diseases, such as hypertrophic or dilated cardiomyopathy, ventricular

arrhythmias, or congenital heart defect networks (Briganti et al., 2020; Friedman et al., 2024;

Hinson et al., 2015; Hnatiuk et al., 2021; Kathiriya et al., 2021; Knollmann, 2013; Lan et al., 2013;

Seeger et al., 2019; Sinnecker et al., 2013; Smith et al., 2018; Sun et al., 2012). Similarly, human

iPSC-derived atrial CMs can be leveraged for modeling AF, ASDs or other atrial diseases, and to

uncover atrial-relevant disturbances to GRNs and cellular physiology. In turn, human cellular

models of atrial disease could be used to screen drugs for therapeutic potential, teratogenicity,

and atrial arrhythmia risk, and to decipher non-coding variants or oligogenic inheritance of human

atrial diseases.

From our data, modeling GRNs of atrial or ventricular CM identity predicted key nodes

that could be critical for disrupting atrial GRNs. One of these key nodes is *TBX5*, which we and

others have studied (Bersell et al., 2023; Karakikes et al., 2017; Kathiriya et al., 2021). Here, we

have modeled reduced dosage, including absolute deficiency of *TBX5 in silico* and *in vitro*, in

human atrial cells. Based on changes in gene expression and chromatin accessibility, we have

inferred exquisitely sensitive GRNs that are important for atrial function and identity. It is

particularly striking that direct connections of multiple key nodes, such as *NR2F1* and ASD-risk

NR2F2, are affected within these dosage-vulnerable networks even from partial loss of *TBX5*,

leading to a cascading effect on susceptible downstream genes related to atrial CM identity.

Conversely, the gain of connections of fibroblast-associated *TCF21* and *TCF12* may reflect a

change in CM cell identity to CMEs, which express some fibroblast-like genes. In the setting of

genetic susceptibility to AF, for example, this perturbation of cell identity may contribute to an

atrial fibrosis-like state associated with AF (Platonov, 2017). For some Holt-Oram syndrome
patients, we speculate that in atrial tissue, the number of fibroblasts could be increased, while
CMEs could be expanded at the expense of other atrial CM subtypes.

Some nodes in the GRNs that define atrial CM identity are associated genetically with AF
and/or ASDs, suggesting a common disease network that may underly their pathologies. These
disrupted networks point to new TBX5-sensitive candidate genes, such as *NR2F1*, *ANGPT1* and
MEG3, and their biological processes as possible leads for therapeutic potential. Moreover,
reverting dosage-sensitive perturbations to more "normal" GRNs may offer therapeutic
opportunities to restore proper atrial identity in patients with genetic or acquired atrial conditions,
as demonstrated in another cardiovascular disease context (Theodoris et al., 2020). By combining
computational modeling with analysis of this cellular disease model, predictions to enhance TBX5
activity or improve disturbed atrial GRNs could be tested to mitigate atrial disease susceptibility
by small molecules or gene editing.

In conclusion, our discovery of a broad disruption to the GRNs underlying atrial identity in
the context of genetic susceptibility to atrial disease suggests that some atrial diseases, such as
ASDs or AF, may not only arise from disturbances of certain functional proteins, such as ion
channels or extracellular matrix components. Rather, some atrial diseases may be caused by a
fundamental disruption of atrial CM identity. More generally, we propose that perturbations to cell
identity may serve as a basis for genetic susceptibility underlying some human diseases.

STUDY LIMITATIONS. Several limitations of this study should be considered. Although this
human cellular model mimics certain disease phenotypes, ASDs and AF manifest in a 3-
dimensional tissue and cannot be fully recapitulated in a 2-dimensional model system. Moreover,
certain *in vivo* cell types may be missing or represented poorly *in vitro*. Likewise, contributions
from the spatial organization of cells *in vitro* or in heart tissue *in vivo* are not captured. Given that
there are several sub-categories of ASDs (e.g. primum ASD, secundum ASD, sinus venosus
ASD, or coronary sinus ASD) or AF (e.g. persistent AF, paroxysmal AF, or post-operative AF), it
remains to be determined how well this cellular disease model may reflect these conditions.
Further, by using scRNA-seq and snATAC-seq separately, we uncovered correlations between
gene expression and chromatin accessibility, rather than directly linking gene expression to
chromatin accessibility in the same cells. Finally, scRNA-seq data is currently available from LV
tissue from a Holt-Oram Syndrome patient (Steimle et al., 2024) but not from atrial tissue. As a
result, we cannot determine how many of our findings in our iPSC-derived atrial CM model of
Holt-Oram Syndrome will be valid in atrial tissue from some Holt-Oram syndrome patients.

METHODS.

iPSC culture and atrial cardiomyocyte differentiation. In accordance with the Human Gamete, Embryo and Stem Cell Research (GESCR) Committee, which serves as the Stem Cell Research Oversight Committee at UCSF, human iPSCs (WTC11, $TBX5^{in/+}$ and $TBX5^{in/del}$) (Kathiriya et al., 2021) were maintained in mTESR Plus medium (Stemcell Technologies, 100-0276). For directed differentiations, iPSCs were passaged on to GFR Matrigel-coated 6-well plates until 70% confluency and then differentiated according to manufacturer's instructions using the Stemdiff Atrial Cardiomyocyte Differentiation Kit (StemCell Technologies, 100-0215). iPSCs were authenticated by genotyping for *TBX5* after each thaw of cells and tested for mycoplasma contamination quarterly.

Immunostaining. Differentiated cells at day 20 from WTC11, $TBX5^{in/+}$ and $TBX5^{in/del}$ iPSCs were dissociated using 0.25% trypsin and quenched with cardiomyocyte maintenance medium containing 10% FBS. Cells were resuspended in cardiomyocyte maintenance medium with 10μM ROCK inhibitor (StemCell Technologies, Y-27632), counted and plated onto growth factor-reduced basement membrane matrix (GFR) Matrigel (Corning, 356231) coated-chambered slides (Ibidi, 80381). Medium was replaced after 24 hours with fresh cardiomyocyte maintenance medium. On the following day, cells were fixed in 4% formaldehyde for 15 minutes and washed with PBS. Cells were then incubated in blocking buffer containing 5% goat serum and 0.1% Triton X-100 in PBS for 1 hour at room temperature. Primary antibodies (alpha actinin, Sigma-Aldrich Cat# A7811, RRID:AB_476766, 1:250 (King et al., 2011); MLC2V, Abcam Cat# ab79935, RRID:AB_1952220, 1:200 (Yang et al., 2022a); ANP, GeneTex, GTX109255, 1:250 (Nandi et al., 2021); cTNT, Thermo, Cat#MS-295-P, RRID:AB_61808, 1:500 (Kathiriya et al., 2021)) in blocking buffer were incubated with cells for 2 hours at room temperature. Following washes in blocking buffer, cells were incubated in secondary antibodies at 1:200 dilution (goat anti mouse Alexa Fluor 488, ThermoFisher, A11029, goat anti mouse Alexa Fluor 594, ThermoFisher, A11005). Cells were then washed with blocking buffer and stained with DAPI at a 1:1000 dilution for 2 minutes. Images were acquired using an Olympus FV3000RS and processed with ImageJ. Evaluations of sarcomere disarray or cell size was performed as described previously (Kathiriya et al., 2021) at day 20.

Replating for multi-electrode array (MEA). iPSC-cardiomyocytes were harvested as described above. An 8uL droplet of GFR Matrigel in KO DMEM was placed in the center of each well of a

BioCircuit MEA Plate (Axion Biosystems, M384-BIO-24) and incubated for 2 hrs at 37C. GFR was

gently removed and approximately 50,000 cells in 8-10ul droplets was placed in the center of

each well and incubated for 1 hr at 37C. After incubation, additional StemDiff maintenance media

with ROCKi was added to each well and incubated for 24 hrs at 37C. Subsequent media changes

were performed every other day with StemDiff maintenance media. MEA recordings were

acquired after at least 7 days of maintenance.

MEA Electrophysiology. Electrophysiological data was recorded on the Maestro Edge Micro

Electrode Array device (Axion Biosystems). Live recordings of iPSC-cardiomyocyte field

potentials and local extracellular action potentials (LEAPs) were acquired using the Cardiac

module in the AxIS Navigator Tool. Representative field potential and LEAP tracings from

recordings were acquired using the Axion Biosystems Cardiac Analysis Tool. Data collection and

analysis was performed using the MEA software (Axion Biosystems) according to manufacturer

instructions.

Fluorescent *in-situ* hybridization. iPSC-derived cardiomyocytes were harvested as described

above. Approximately 100,000 cells were then plated on to 3-well chambered slides with

removable silicone (Ibidi 80381). Cells were then fixed with 10% neutral buffered formalin for 30

minutes at room temperature, followed by washes with 1X PBS. Serial dehydration with 50%,

70% and 100% ethanol was performed, and slides were stored in 100% ethanol at -20C. On the

day of staining, cells were serially rehydrated and pretreated with hydrogen peroxide for 10

minutes and protease III for 10 minutes at a 1:5 dilution ratio. RNAscope Multiplex Fluorescent

Reagent Kit v2 (Advanced Cell Diagnostics, 323100) was used to detect *TNNT2* (518991),

ANGPT1 (482901-C2), *DES* (403041-C2), *MEG3* (400821) and *NR2F1* (583751). Finally, silicone

chambers were removed from slides, and a coverslip was mounted using Prolong Gold anti-fade

mountant. Slides were imaged at 40X magnification on an Olympus FV3000RS confocal

microscope and analyzed using FIJI.

Harvesting cells for single-cell RNA and ATAC sequencing. Human iPSCs from WTC11,

TBX5$^{in/+}$ and *TBX5$^{in/del}$* were differentiated using the Stemdiff Atrial Cardiomyocyte Differentiation

Kit (Stemcell Technologies 100-0215) or the Stemdiff Ventricular Cardiomyocyte Differentiation

Kit (Stemcell Technologies 05010). For atrial differentiations, two biological replicates of cells

were harvested from all three genotypes at day 20 for scRNA-seq (20,000 cells) or snATAC-seq

(10,000 cells), or from WTC11 and *TBX5$^{in/+}$* at day 45 for scRNA-seq (20,000 cells), in separate

batches according to manufacturer instructions (10X Genomics). For ventricular differentiations,
two biological replicates of 10,000 cells were harvested at day 23 for snATAC-sequencing. Cells
were dissociated using 0.25% trypsin, quenched with cardiomyocyte maintenance medium
containing 10% FBS and then counted. Cell suspensions were processed for single-cell RNA
sequencing using Chromium Next GEM Single Cell 3' GEM, Library & Gel Bead Kit v3.1 (10X
Genomics). For single nuclei ATAC-sequencing, nuclei were harvested and processed according
to manufacturer's instructions using the Chromium Next GEM Single Cell ATAC Library & Gel
Bead Kit v1.1 (10X Genomics). Libraries were sequenced on an Illumina Novaseq6000 S4 or
Novaseq X.

Analysis of single-cell RNA sequencing data. Fastq files were processed using Cellranger
count (v6.1.1). Counts from samples from a single timepoint were aggregated using Cellranger
aggr without read-depth normalization. Seurat (v4.4) (Hao et al., 2021) was used to analyze the
data. Cells with low UMI count plus a high percentage of mitochondrial reads were considered
dying and removed. Potential doublets with aberrantly high gene counts were also removed. In
the day 20 dataset, cells with UMI counts between 4000-100,000 and gene counts between 500-
10,000 were retained. In the day 45 dataset, cells with UMI counts between 4000-50,000 and
gene counts between 500-8,000 were retained. Normalization was performed using SCTransform
and batch effects were corrected using the SeuratWrapper function RunHarmony. After
annotating major cell types, $TNNT2^+$ clusters were subset and further analyzed. Differentially
expressed genes with an adjusted p<0.05 from Wilcoxon rank-sum test were reported.

Metrics for cell quality control. After excluding cells that did not pass these quality control metrics,
we found that one cluster, at both days 20 and 45, was marked by CM genes (*TTN, TECRL,*
MYH7B), as well as by many mitochondrial genes (*SLC25A37, MT-ND1, MT-ND4, MT-ND2, MT-*
ATP6, MT-ND3, MT-CYB, MT-ND6, MT-ND5, MT-CO2, MT-CO3, MT-CO1, MT-ND4L). As this
could be an indicator of CMs undergoing apoptosis, we excluded this cluster from downstream
analysis.

In Figure 1, single cell RNA sequencing data from WT atrial differentiation was merged
and analyzed with previously generated data from WT ventricular differentiation (Kathiriya et al.,
2021). Differentially expressed genes were obtained by comparing atrial CM clusters with
ventricular CM clusters. In Figure 3, WT cells from clusters highly enriched for *MYH6* were

compared to *TBX5^{in/+}* or *TBX5^{in/del}* cells from other clusters with *MYH6*, similar to the Monocle
partitions in Figure 3D.

Volcano plots were generated using the EnhancedVolcano package. Differential genes
were intersected with curated lists containing CHD-associated genes, atrial fibrillation-risk genes
and genes associated with atrial septal defects. CHD-associated gene list includes our previously
curated list from Kathiriya et al., 2021, and genes from the CHDgene database
(http://chdgene.victorchang.edu.au/) (Yang et al., 2022b). Atrial fibrillation-risk genes were
gathered from the Harmonizome database (https://maayanlab.cloud/Harmonizome/), and
(Ouwerkerk et al., 2019; Ouwerkerk et al., 2020; Roselli et al., 2018) (Table S5). The MiloR
package (v2.0.0) (Dann et al., 2022) was used for differential cell type abundance testing. The
precomputed KNN graph from Seurat was imported using the buildFromAdjacency function. The
number of nearest neighbors k was set to 40. Differential abundance results were visualized by
setting alpha = 0.05. Monocle 3 (v1.3.7) (Cao et al., 2019) was used for pseudotime analysis. A
separate Monocle 3 object was made for WTC11 or *TBX5^{in/+}* cells, and a pseudotime trajectory
was generated for cells in partition 2. Cells in the atrial precursor-like clusters were chosen as
root cells for each Monocle 3 partition using the "order_cells" function. Pseudotime was visualized
on the UMAP using the "plot_cells" function.

Cell abundance testing. A Generalized Linear Mixed Effects Model (GLMM) was implemented
in the lme4 (version 1.1-37) R package (Bates et al., 2015) and was used to estimate the
associations between cell type-annotations and *Tbx5* genotype (WT, Het or Hom). These models
were run separately for each cluster of cells identified within the full data or within subtypes of
CMs. The family argument was set to the binomial probability distribution for the GLMM model fit.
Cluster membership of cells by sample was modeled as a response variable by a two-dimensional
vector representing the number of cells from the given sample belonging to and not belonging to
the cluster under consideration. The corresponding sample ID from which the cell was derived
was the random effect variable, and the genotype was included as the fixed variable. The resulting
P values for the significance estimated log odds ratios were adjusted for multiple testing using the
Benjamini–Hochberg method (Benjamini and Hochberg, 1995).

Analysis of single-cell ATAC sequencing data. Fastq files were processed using Cellranger
ATAC count (v2.0). Data was analyzed by following the tutorial for ArchR (v1.0.2) (Granja et al.,
2021). Cells with TSS enrichment >= 6 and nFrags >= 1500 were retained. Pseudobulk replicates
for each genotype in each cluster were generated with a minimum of 500 and maximum of 1000

cells for each replicate in a sample-aware manner. Peaks were called with MACS2 by setting

reproducibility to 2. Volcano plots show differential peaks with FDR < 0.1 and log2FC >0.25. Motif

annotations were added from CIS-BP repository using the addMotifAnnotations function and motif

enrichment in differential peaks was performed using the peakAnnoEnrichment function with FDR

<0.1 and log2FC >0.25. Overlapping ATAC (this manuscript) and TBX5 ChIP peaks (Grant et al.,

2025) were attained using findOverlaps from the Genomic ranges package. Browser tracks were

generated using IGV Desktop application. In Figure 1, differentially accessible regions were

reported between atrial CM clusters and ventricular CM clusters. In Figure 5, differentially

accessible regions were reported between WT cells in WT-enriched (C2+C3) clusters and

$TBX5^{in/+}$ cells in $TBX5^{in/+}$-enriched (C6) clusters or $TBX5^{in/del}$ cells in $TBX5^{in/del}$ -enriched (C5)

clusters.

Gene regulatory network analysis. Gene regulatory network analysis was performed using the

CellOracle (v0.18.0) package (Kamimoto et al., 2023). Default parameters were used according

to the documentation, unless specified otherwise. For wildtype atrial CM- and ventricular CM-

specific GRNs, base GRNs were constructed using scATAC-seq data at day 20 from WTC11

atrial CM and ventricular CM subsets, respectively (Table S3). Cell type-specific GRNs were then

constructed by setting alpha = 1000. For *TBX5* genotype-specific GRNs, base GRNs were

constructed using scATAC-seq data at day 20 from WTC11 cells (Table S7). The apparent

upregulation of *TBX5* mRNA presumably from non-mutated exons (Kathiriya 2021) in *TBX5*

heterozygous mutants was manually corrected by halving the raw counts in $Tbx5^{in/+}$ and setting

the raw counts to zero in $Tbx5^{in/del}$ cells, consistent with Western blot data (Fig S1A, B). Cell type-

specific GRNs were then constructed by setting alpha = 1000.

Inferred GRNs were filtered to include only the 12,000 edges with largest absolute

coefficient values. Centrality calculations for the 12,000 edge networks were calculated using

CellOracle's links.get_network_score() function. PyVis (Perrone et al., 2020) was used to

visualize subnetworks. The large nodes in these networks were manually selected TFs and small

nodes are the direct targets in the 12,000-edge networks. The edge color was selected to indicate

whether a TF activated (grey) or inhibited (red) a target, and edge thickness was scaled based

on absolute coefficient magnitude. For networks in (Fig 1T, U), we chose canonical atrial or

ventricular TFs, along with some novel TFs - *TBX5, NR2F2*, *MEF2C*, *NKX2-5*, *MEIS2*, *GATA4*,

HAND1, *IRX4*, *HEY2*, *PLAGL1*, *NR2F1*, *HES4*, *E2F1*, and *HEY1*. For networks in Fig 6A-C, the

manually selected TFs included *TBX5, NR2F2, MEF2C, NKX2-5, MEIS2, GATA4, HAND1, IRX4,*

HEY2, PLAGL1, NR2F1, HES4, E2F1, HEY1, TCF21, TEAD1, and *TCF12.* For Fig 6D-F, we

identified TFs that had source or target connections to TBX5 (Table S7) and prioritized ones that displayed dose-dependent change in centrality by *TBX5* genotype and are CHD- or AF- risk genes. These networks exclude the TFs and only show direct connections between prioritized genes. Wheel diagrams that display direct interactions between TFs and their targets were developed using Python's NetworkX package (Hagberg et al., 2008), with a circular layout and edge widths scaled by coefficient values.

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DATA AND RESOURCE AVAILABILITY. Cell lines are available under a material transfer agreement. All relevant data is available on NCBI GEO (Accession GSE285168 and GSE285169) and details of the code are available at GitHub (apclarkva/kathiriya-rao-2025).

Fig. 1. Features of gene expression and chromatin accessibility for regulatory networks of
human iPSC-derived atrial cardiomyocytes (CMs) predict TBX5-sensitive atrial CM identity.
Directed differentiations of human induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) to ventricular or atrial
cells were assessed by immunostaining of (A-G) ANP or (H-N) MLC2V (****p<0.0001 by two-
sided Fisher's exact test). Scale bars denote 20 microns (A-F) and 50 microns (H-M). Cells from
two experiments of ventricular or atrial differentiations were analyzed; N depicts number of
ACTN2$^+$ or cTNT$^+$ cells analyzed per group. (O,P) Normalized local extracellular action potential
(LEAP) by cell type. Representative traces are shown, based on LEAPs from 6 ventricular or 6
atrial cells from two biological replicates of ventricular or atrial differentiations. (Q) Violin plot of
ventricular- or atrial-enriched CM genes. scRNA-seq from two biological replicates of ventricular
or atrial differentiations were analyzed. (R) Overlapping chromatin accessible regions. Bar plot
shows number of common accessible regions by less than 90% overlap or greater than or equal
to 90% overlap. (S) Motifs enriched in differentially accessible regions (DARs) (FDR<0.1).
snATAC-seq from two biological replicates of ventricular or atrial differentiations were analyzed
in (R, S). Gene regulatory networks (GRNs) of (T) ventricular or (U) atrial CMs. Wheel diagrams
for *TBX5* show a shift in significant direct connections between (V) ventricular and (W) atrial CMs.
GRNs were derived from two experiments of scRNA-seq or snATAC-seq during ventricular or
atrial differentiations. Based on input from the UMAP of atrial CM cell types in (X) wildtype, *in*
silico prediction by CellOracle infers the states of individual cells from atrial cardiomyotyces (CMs)
to CMs expressing extracellular matrix genes (CMEs) from (Y) complete *TBX5* loss (*TBX5*=0).

Fig. S1. Gene expression analyses in human iPSC-derived ventricular or atrial CMs. UMAPs
of scRNA-seq annotated by (A) cell types, (B) differentiation to ventricular or atrial cells, or (C)
experimental batch. (D,E) UMAP of CM subset by Louvain cell clustering for subtypes defined by
their marker genes. scRNA-seq from two biological replicates of ventricular or atrial
differentiations were analyzed.

Fig. S2. Chromatin accessibility analyses of human iPSC-derived ventricular or atrial CMs.
(A) UMAP of snATAC-seq by inferred cell type from gene score, or by (B) differentiation. UMAPs
of gene scores from snATAC-seq for (B') *TNNT2*, (C) *MYL2* (ventricular CM-enriched) or *MYH6*
(atrial CM-enriched). UMAP of snATAC-seq subset of *TNNT2*$^+$-gene score$^+$ cells inferred as CMs
(D) by ventricular or atrial differentiation or (E) by Louvain cell clustering. (F) Bar plot of snATAC-
seq peak distribution in the genome by cell cluster. (G) Volcano plot of differential accessible

regions enriched in ventricular or atrial CMs (FDR<0.1). snATAC-seq of two biological replicates

from ventricular or atrial differentiations were analyzed.

Fig. S3. Gene regulatory network (GRN) analyses of human iPSC-derived ventricular or

atrial CMs. GRNs display connections of top 10 TFs in (A) ventricular or (B) atrial CMs. Bar plots

show top 30 TFs ranked by betweenness centrality scores in (C) ventricular CMs or (D) atrial

CMs. Bar plots of selected TFs with known roles in ventricular or atrial CMs show (E) betweenness

or (F) degree out centrality. Wheel diagrams of *HEY2* (G, H) or *HEY1* (I, J) display direct

connections in ventricular or atrial CMs. GRNs were derived from scRNA-seq or snATAC-seq of

two biological replicates during ventricular or atrial differentiations.

Fig. S4. Analysis of a human cellular model of atrial disease. (A) Western blot and (B)

quantification of TBX5 by *TBX5* genotype (*p<0.05 by two-sided Welch's T-test). Representative

Western blot is based on three experiments. (C-E) Example images of atrial CMs by sarcomere

disarray scores. (F) UMAP of scRNA-seq at day 20 of atrial differentiation by experimental batch.

(G) Bar plot shows cell types at day 20 by *TBX5* genotypes. scRNA-seq of two biological

replicates by *TBX5* genotype were analyzed.

Fig. 2. Modeling genetic susceptibility to reduced TBX5 in human iPSC-derived atrial cells

reveals atrial CM dysfunction. (A) Differentiation efficiency by flow cytometry of cTNT (**p<0.01,

***p<0.001 by two-sided Student's T-test). (B-E) cTNT immunostaining shows sarcomeric

disarray in *TBX5* mutant atrial CMs (*p<0.05, ****p<0.0001 by two-sided Fisher's exact test). (F)

Average cell area is significantly increased in *TBX5* mutant atrial CMs (*p<0.05, ****p<0.0001 by

two-sided Student's T-test). Cells from two biological replicates were analyzed in (E,F). (G, H)

Representative action potential traces by MEA, based on cells from two experiments (N=6 in

controls, 20 in *TBX5$^{in/+}$*). (I-J) Field potential and normalized local extracellular action potential

durations at 90% (APD$_{90}$) are increased in *TBX5* heterozygous mutant atrial CMs (****p<0.0001

by two-sided Welch's T-test). (K) UMAP displays scRNA-seq data at day 20 by (K) *TBX5* genotype

or (L) cell type labels. (M) Dot plot of genes used to define cell types. (N) Distribution of cell types

by *TBX5* genotypes shows reduced CMs and increased fibroblasts and epithelial-like cells in

TBX5$^{in/del}$ (***adj. p<0.001 by linear regression). *TBX5$^{in/+}$* remains largely similar to WT. (O,P) Milo

analysis showed a statistically significant difference in the abundance of CMs, fibroblasts,

epithelial and neural-like cells for *TBX5$^{in/del}$* (FDR<0.05). scRNA-seq of two biological replicates

by *TBX5* genotype were analyzed.

Fig. 3. Atrial CM identity by gene expression is vulnerable to reduced TBX5 dosage. UMAP
of *TNNT2+* cells colored by (A) genotype, (B) cell type markers or (C) cell type labels. (D)
Monocole 3 analysis shows the predominant pseuodtime paths (i.e., in pseudocolor, represented
by the arrows) in two partitions affected in *TBX5$^{in/del}$*. Specifically, in partition 2, fewer *TBX5$^{in/del}$*
cells reach the end of the pseudotime path to *NPPA$^+$* CMs. (E) Cell numbers of many atrial CM
cell types are significantly reduced in *TBX5* mutants. (*adj. $p<0.05$ **adj. $p<0.01$, ***adj. $p<0.001$
by linear regression). (F,G) Volcano plots show differentially expressed genes in *TBX5* mutants
(adj. p-value by Wilcoxan rank sum). (H) Categories of down- and up-regulated genes in *TBX5$^{in/+}$*
or *TBX5$^{in/del}$* (adj. $p<0.05$ by Wilcoxan rank sum). (I-K) AF-, ASD- and CHD-risk genes are
enriched among differentially expressed TBX5-sensitive genes (non-adjusted p-value by
hypergeometric test). Dot plots of differentially-expressed CHD, ASD (in green) and AF genes in
(L) *TBX5$^{in/+}$* or (M) in both *TBX5$^{in/+}$* and *TBX5$^{in/del}$* (adj. $p<0.05$ by Wilcoxan rank sum). scRNA-seq
of two biological replicates by *TBX5* genotype were analyzed.

Fig. S5. Analysis of CMs in a human cellular model of atrial disease. (A) Bar plot shows CM
subtypes at day 20 by *TBX5* genotypes. scRNA-seq of two biological replicates by *TBX5* genotype
were analyzed.

Fig. 4. TBX5-dependent genes are dysregulated in human iPSC-derived atrial cells by
fluorescent *in situ* hybridization. Gene expression in WT or *TBX5* mutants of *TNNT2* and
NR2F1 (A-C), *DES* (D-F), fibrosis modulator *ANGPT1* (G-I), and cardiac fibrobast-enriched *MEG3*
(J-M) (***$p<0.001$ by two-sided Fisher's exact test). All scale bars denote 50 microns. Two
experiments by *TBX5* genotype were analyzed.

Fig. S6. Dysregulated gene expression in human iPSC-derived atrial cells of *TBX5*
heterozygous mutants at day 45 by scRNA-seq. UMAP by (A) genotype or (B) cell type label
at day 45. (C) Feature plots of marker genes for cell type labels. (D) Bar plot shows distribution
of cell types in WT or *TBX5$^{in/+}$*, including a reduction in CMs in *TBX5* mutants (*adj. $p<0.05$, ***adj.
$p<0.001$ by linear regression). UMAP of CM subtypes by (E) genotype or (F) CM subtype labels.
(G) Feature plot of marker genes for CM subtype labels. (H) Bar plot shows distribution of CM
subtypes in WT or *TBX5$^{in/+}$*, including alterations to several CM subtypes (**adj. $p<0.01$, ***adj.
$p<0.001$ by linear regression). (I) Volcano plot shows diferentially expressed genes (adj. p-value

by Wilcoxan rank sum). (J-L) CHD-, ASD- and AF-risk genes are enriched among differentially

expressed TBX5-sensitive genes at day 45 (non-adjusted p-value by hypergeometric test). Dot

plots display differentially-expressed CHD, ASD (in green) and AF genes in (M) *TBX5^in/+* (adj.

p<0.05 by Wilcoxan rank sum). scRNA-seq of two biological replicates by *TBX5* genotype were

analyzed.

Fig. S7. Comparison of differential gene expression in human iPSC-derived atrial cells of

***TBX5* heterozygous mutants at day 20 and day 45**. UMAP of CM subtypes in merged data of

day 20 and day 45 by (A) *TBX5* genotype and (B) CM subtype labels. (C) Dot plots of differentially-

expressed CHD, ASD (highlighted in green) and AF genes in *TBX5^in/+* in merged data of day 20

and day 45 (adj. p-value<0.05 by Wilcoxan rank sum). scRNA-seq of two biological replicates by

TBX5 genotype at day 20 or day 45 were analyzed.

Fig. 5. TBX5-sensitive chromatin regions in human iPSC-derived atrial cells show reduced

accessibility at sites normally bound by TBX5. UMAP of all atrial cells colored by (A) *TBX5*

genotype or (B) *TNNT2^+*-gene score. UMAP of *TNNT2^+*-gene score cells colored by (C) *TBX5*

genotype or (D) cluster. (E-F) Motifs enriched in differentially accessible regions (DARs) in (E)

TBX5^in/del or (F) *TBX5^in/+* (FDR<0.1). DARs with (G) predicted TBX or MEIS motifs or (G') TBX5

occupancy by TBX5 ChIP-seq. Browser track shows scATAC peaks near (H) *NPPA-NPPB* or (I)

NR2F1. Gray shading indicates DARs. TBX5 occupancy in WT cells by TBX5 ChIP-seq (Grant et

al. 2024). snATAC-seq of two biological replicates by *TBX5* genotype were analyzed.

Fig. S8. Analysis of chromatin accessibility in human iPSC-derived atrial cells of *TBX5*

mutants. (A) Feature plots of gene scores identify putative cell types from chromatin accessibility.

(B) Feature plots of gene scores identify putative CM subtypes from chromatin accessibility. (C)

Genomic distribution of peaks by cluster. Differentially accessible peaks in (D) *TBX5^in/+* or (E)

TBX5^in/del. (F-I) Overlap of genes near DARs and differential gene expression in *TBX5* mutants.

(J, K) Overlap of DARs in *TBX5^in/+* and *TBX5^in/del*. Two biological replicates of snATAC-seq by

TBX5 genotype were analyzed.

Fig. 6. Proper TBX5 dosage controls disease-linked atrial CM gene regulatory networks

(GRNs). (A-C) GRNs of atrial CMs with selected TFs by *TBX5* genotype. Grey lines indicate

positive correlations. Red lines depict negative correlations. Genes that are edges are unlabeled
for simplicity of the diagram. (D-F) Priority networks of atrial CMs shows TF sources to TBX5 or
CHD- , ASD- (in green) or AF-risk genes in *TBX5* mutants. (G) Betweenness or (H) degree out
centrality of selected TFs in GRNs. Wheel diagrams of (I) *NR2F1* or (J) *TBX5*. Strength of black
arrows depicts strength of positive correlation, while strength of red arrows depicts strength of
negative correlations. (K) Inverse wheel diagram of *NPPA* shows connections to other TFs that
are gained or lost from reduced TBX5 dosage. Two samples of scRNA-seq or snATAC-seq by
TBX5 genotype were analyzed.

Fig. S9. Network analysis of *TBX5* mutants in human iPSC-derived atrial CMs. Venn
diagrams show overlap of (A) nodes or (B) edges in the same direction in *TBX5* mutants. Wheel
diagrams of (E) ASD- and AF-risk *NKX2-5*, (F) ASD-risk *NR2F2*, (G) fibroblast-associated *TCF21*,
and (H) fibroblast-associated *TCF12*. Strength of black arrows depicts strength of positive
correlation, while strength of red arrows depicts strength of negative correlations. GRNs were
derived from scRNA-seq or snATAC-seq of two biological replicates by *TBX5* genotype.

Fig. S10. Altered connections to TBX5-dependent target edges in human iPSC-derived
atrial CMs of *TBX5* mutants. Inverse wheel diagrams show connections of (A) *BMP5*, (B) *PNISR*
and (C) *PGAM1* to other TFs that are gained or lost from reduced TBX5 dosage. GRNs were
derived from scRNA-seq or snATAC-seq of two biological replicates by *TBX5* genotype.

Table S1. Table of differentially expressed genes between an *MYH6*[+]-enriched cluster of atrial
CMs and an *MYL2*[+]-enriched cluster of ventricular CMs.

Table S2. Table of differentially accessible regions between *MYH6*-gene score[+] atrial CM and
MYL2-gene score[+] ventricular CM clusters.

Table S3. Table of sources and targets in networks for atrial CM or ventricular CM clusters.

Table S4. Table of differentially expressed genes among *TNNT2*[+] clusters by TBX5 genotype.

Table S5. Lists of disease-risk genes for CHDs, ASDs, AF, and ASDs and AF.

Table S6. Table of differentially accessible regions of *TNNT2*-gene score[+] CM clusters by *TBX5*
genotype.

Table S7. Table of sources and targets in networks for CM clusters from atrial CM differentiation
by *TBX5* genotype.

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1166

1167

Figure 1

Fig. S1

Fig. S2

Fig. S3

Fig S4

A

TBX5

PCNA

— 70 kDa

— 50 kDa

— 38 kDa
— 30 kDa

B

C **D** **E**

F **G**

Figure 2

Figure 3

Fig S5

A

Percent cells

WT
TBX5[in/+]
TBX5[in/del]

RA-like, LA-like, Appendage CMs, Atrial precursor-like, Vent-like CMs, AVCMs, CMEs-1, CMEs-2, CMEs-3, Dividing CMs, *HBD*⁺, Undetermined

Figure 4

Fig. S6

Fig. S7

Figure 5

A Day 20
38,420 cells
WT
TBX5^in/+
TBX5^in/del
UMAP2
UMAP1

B *TNNT2*^+

C CM subset
23,686 cells
WT
TBX5^in/+
TBX5^in/del

D 5 6 1 2 3 4

E Motifs in DARs in C5 *TBX5*^in/del
Log10 Adjusted P-Value
NFI
NFI
NFI
NKX
MEIS
NKX
TGIF
TBX
NKX
PKNOX
TGIF
TGIF
PKNOX
MGA
TBX
SNAI
NKX
TGIF
SMAD
GATA
GATA
GATA
GATA
TEAD
DNMT
HAND
HAND
NR2F
Rank Sorted TFs Enriched
-500   500

F Motifs in DARs in C6 *TBX5*^in/+
Log10 Adjusted P-Value
TGIF
SNAI
TGIF
TBX
TBX
TBX
EOMES
MAF
PKNOX
PKNOX
TGIF
TGIF
MEIS
GATA
GATA
WT
ZFX
KLF
SP   ZBTB
KLF
ZNF
KLF
EGR
SP
HOX
NR2F
Rank Sorted TFs Enriched
-500   500

G
TBX5^in/+ Down Up
TBX5^in/del Down Up
0 20 40 60 80 100
DARs with predicted TBX/MEIS motifs
DARs without predicted TBX/MEIS motifs

G'
TBX5^in/+ Down Up
TBX5^in/del Down Up
0 20 40 60 80 100
DARs with TBX5 occupancy
DARs without TBX5 occupancy

H
Coverage (0–0.50)
C2 WT
C3 WT
C6 *TBX5*^in/+
C5 *TBX5*^in/del
TBX5 ChIP peak
NPPA *NPPB*

I
Coverage (0–0.50)
C2 WT
C3 WT
C6 *TBX5*^in/+
C5 *TBX5*^in/del
TBX5 ChIP peak
NR2F1

Fig. S8

A Day 20 - 38,420 cells

TNNT2 COL1A1 EPCAM NEFM SERPINA1

UMAP2 / UMAP1

B CM subset - 23,686 cells

MYH6 PITX2 HAMP NPPA COL3A1

C

Number of Peaks (x 10^3)

Legend: Distal, Exonic, Intronic, Promoter

C1_x_Het(n = 247), C1_x_WT(n = 576), C2_x_Het(n = 1701), C2_x_WT(n = 3797), C3_x_Het(n = 2209), C3_x_WT(n = 4812), C4_x_Het(n = 47), C4_x_Hom(n = 3828), C5_x_Het(n = 239), C5_x_Hom(n = 2312), C5_x_WT(n = 139), C6_x_Het(n = 2858), C6_x_Hom(n = 135), C6_x_WT(n = 750), UnionPeaks

D *TBX5^{in/+}* in C6 vs. WT in C2+C3

Up in C6 *TBX5^{in/+}*   Down in C6 *TBX5^{in/+}*

−Log10 FDR / Log2 Fold Change

E *TBX5^{in/del}* in C5 vs WT in C2+C3

Up in C5 *TBX5^{in/del}*   Down in C5 *TBX5^{in/del}*

−Log10 FDR / Log2 Fold Change

F genes near reduced accessibility in C6 *TBX5^{in/+}*

1449 92 191

reduced gene expression in C6 *TBX5^{in/+}*

G genes near increased accessibility in C6 *TBX5^{in/+}*

884 37 242

increased gene expression in C6 *TBX5^{in/+}*

H genes near downregulated peaks in C5 *TBX5^{in/del}*

4591 122 77

reduced gene expression in C5 *TBX5^{in/del}*

I genes near upregulated peaks in C5 *TBX5^{in/del}*

18633 186 74

increased gene expression in C5 *TBX5^{in/del}*

J reduced accessibility in C6 *TBX5^{in/+}*

3864 849 215

reduced accessibility in C5 *TBX5^{in/del}*

K increased accessibility in C6 *TBX5^{in/+}*

18468 351 180

increased accessibility in C5 *TBX5^{in/del}*

Figure 6

Fig. S9

Fig. S10