Deficiency of nucleotide excision repair explains mutational signature observed in cancer

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ABSTRACT

Nucleotide excision repair (NER) is one of the main DNA repair pathways that protect cells against genomic damage. Disruption of this pathway can contribute to the development of cancer and accelerate aging. Tumors deficient in NER are more sensitive to cisplatin treatment. Characterization of the mutational consequences of NER-deficiency may therefore provide important diagnostic opportunities. Here, we analyzed the somatic mutational profiles of adult stem cells (ASCs) from NER-deficient *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice, using whole-genome sequencing analysis of clonally derived organoid cultures. Our results indicate that NER-deficiency increases the base substitution load in liver, but not in small intestinal ASCs, which coincides with a tissue-specific aging-pathology observed in these mice. The mutational landscape changes as a result of NER-deficiency in ASCs of both tissues and shows an increased contribution of Signature 8 mutations, which is a pattern with unknown etiology that is recurrently observed in various cancer types. The scattered genomic distribution of the acquired base substitutions indicates that deficiency of global-genome NER (GG-NER) is responsible for the altered mutational landscape. In line with this, we observed increased Signature 8 mutations in a GG-NER-deficient human organoid culture in which *XPC* was deleted using CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing. Furthermore, genomes of NER-deficient breast tumors show an increased contribution of Signature 8 mutations compared with NER-proficient tumors. Elevated levels of Signature 8 mutations may therefore serve as a biomarker for NER-deficiency and could improve personalized cancer treatment strategies.

INTRODUCTION

The genome is continuously exposed to mutagenic processes, which can damage the DNA and can ultimately result in the accumulation of mutations. To counteract these processes, cells exploit multiple DNA repair pathways that each repair specific lesions. Deficiency of

57 these pathways can contribute to cancer initiation and progression. To increase insight into
58 the cellular processes that underlie mutation accumulation, such as deficiency of specific
59 DNA repair pathways, genome-wide mutational patterns of tumors can be characterized
60 (Alexandrov et al. 2013; Nik-Zainal et al. 2016). To date, systematic analyses of tumor
61 genomes have revealed 30 signatures of base substitutions and 6 rearrangement signatures
62 of mutational processes in cancer genomes (Alexandrov et al. 2013; Nik-Zainal et al. 2016).
63 These mutational signatures may have important diagnostic value. For example, several
64 signatures are associated with BRCA1/2 inactivity and can consequently be predictive for a
65 response to PARP inhibition or cisplatin treatment (Waddell et al. 2015; Davies et al. 2017).
66 Although for some signatures the underlying molecular process (Kim et al. 2016;
67 Alexandrov et al. 2013, 2016) or involved DNA repair pathway (Kim et al. 2016; Davies et al.
68 2017; Alexandrov et al. 2013) is known, in-depth mechanistic insight is still lacking for the
69 majority of the mutational signatures (Petljak and Alexandrov 2016). Efforts to link mutational
70 processes to specific signatures have mainly focused on associating mutation data from
71 tumors to mutagen exposure and DNA repair-deficiency. Yet, tumors are genomically highly
72 unstable and typically multiple processes have contributed to mutation accumulation
73 (Alexandrov et al. 2013; Nik-Zainal et al. 2016), which hampers the identification of the
74 processes that cause specific mutational signatures. We recently developed an approach for
75 measuring mutations in non-cancerous adult stem cells (ASCs), by combining organoid
76 culturing technology with whole-genome sequencing (WGS) (Jager et al. 2018; Drost et al.
77 2017). This method can be used to determine the mutations that have accumulated during
78 life and during culturing. Tissue-specific ASCs maintain a highly stable genome both *in vivo*
79 and *in vitro*, and therefore provide a stable system to study mutational processes in detail
80 (Blokzijl et al. 2016; Huch et al. 2015). Furthermore, ASCs constitute a relevant cell source
81 to study mutational patterns, as these cells are believed to be the cell-of-origin for specific
82 types of cancer (Barker et al. 2009; Zhu et al. 2016; Adams et al. 2015).
83 Using this technique, we set out to determine the mutational consequences of
84 deficiency of nucleotide excision repair (NER). NER is one of the main cellular DNA repair

85 pathways (Iyama and Wilson 2013), and consists of two subpathways: global-genome NER
86 (GG-NER), which repairs bulky helix-distorting lesions throughout the genome, and
87 transcription-coupled NER (TC-NER), which resolves RNA polymerase blocking lesions
88 during transcription (Iyama and Wilson 2013; Marteijn et al. 2014; Hoeijmakers 2009).
89 Somatic mutations in *ERCC2*, a key factor of NER, were previously associated with
90 Signature 5 in urothelial tumors (Kim et al. 2016). However, NER has been suggested to
91 underlie multiple mutational signatures, based on large-scale tumor mutation analyses
92 (Alexandrov et al. 2013), and not all NER-deficient tumors are characterized by a high
93 Signature 5 contribution (Kim et al. 2016). This observation suggests that NER-deficiency
94 might be associated with other mutational signatures as well.

95 To characterize the mutational consequences of NER-deficiency, we studied
96 mutagenesis in *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice and *XPC*-knockout (*XPC*^{KO}) organoids. ERCC1 plays a crucial
97 role in the core NER pathway involving both GG-NER and TC-NER (Kirschner and Melton
98 2010; Iyama and Wilson 2013; Sijbers et al. 1996a; Aboussekhra et al. 1995), in crosslink
99 repair (Rahn et al. 2010), and in single strand annealing (SSA) of double strand breaks (Al-
100 Minawi et al. 2008). *ERCC1* is mutated in ~4.5% of all human tumors, especially skin and
101 liver cancer (http://dcc.icgc.org), and single nucleotide polymorphisms in *ERCC1* have been
102 linked to an increased risk of developing colorectal cancer (Ni et al. 2014). *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice are
103 hemizygous for a single truncated *Ercc1* allele, which largely corrupts protein function (Dollé
104 et al. 2011; Weeda et al. 1997) and results in decreased NER-activity (Su et al. 2012).
105 *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice have a reduced lifespan as a result of progeroid-like symptoms and live five
106 times shorter than wild-type (WT) littermates (Dollé et al. 2011; Vermeij et al. 2016). The
107 livers of *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice display various aging-like characteristics and pathology (Dollé et al.
108 2011; Gregg et al. 2012; Niedernhofer et al. 2006; Weeda et al. 1997), whereas, other
109 organs, such as the small intestine, do not show an obvious pathological phenotype. Thus
110 the consequences of loss of ERCC1 differ considerably between tissues, although the
111 reason for this remains unclear. XPC is involved in the recognition of bulky DNA adducts in
112 the GG-NER pathway specifically (Puumalainen et al. 2015; Iyama and Wilson 2013).

113 Germline mutations in this gene cause Xeroderma Pigmentosum, a disorder characterized
114 by enhanced sensitivity to UV-light and development of various cancer types at an early age
115 (Sands et al. 1995; Melis et al. 2008; Dupuy and Sarasin 2015).

116 Here, we combined the organoid culture system with *in vivo* and *in vitro* knockout
117 models, providing the unique opportunity to characterize the genome-wide mutational
118 consequences of NER-deficiency in a stable genetic background. Furthermore, we
119 compared the genome-wide mutational patterns of NER-deficient and NER-proficient tumors
120 from a breast cancer cohort (Nik-Zainal et al. 2016). Both quantitative and qualitative
121 mutational differences that are associated with NER status were identified, creating novel
122 insight into the molecular processes underlying mutation accumulation, cancer, and aging.

123

124 **RESULTS**

125 **Loss of NER protein ERCC1 increases the number of base substitutions in liver, but**
126 **not in small intestinal mouse ASCs**

127 To characterize the mutational consequences of NER-deficiency, we generated clonal
128 organoid cultures from single liver and small intestinal ASCs of three female *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice
129 and three female WT littermates (Fig. 1A). The tissues were harvested at the age of 15
130 weeks, which is the time point at which *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice generally start to die as a consequence
131 of early aging pathologies (Vermeij et al. 2016). WGS analysis of DNA isolated from the
132 clonal organoid cultures allows for reliable determination of the somatic mutations that were
133 accumulated during life in the original ASCs (Blokzijl et al. 2016; Jager et al. 2018).
134 Subclonal mutations acquired after the single-cell-step will only be present in a
135 subpopulation of the cells and are filtered out based on a low allele frequency (Jager et al.
136 2018). We also sequenced the genomes of polyclonal control biopsies from the tail of each
137 mouse, which served as control samples to exclude germline variants.

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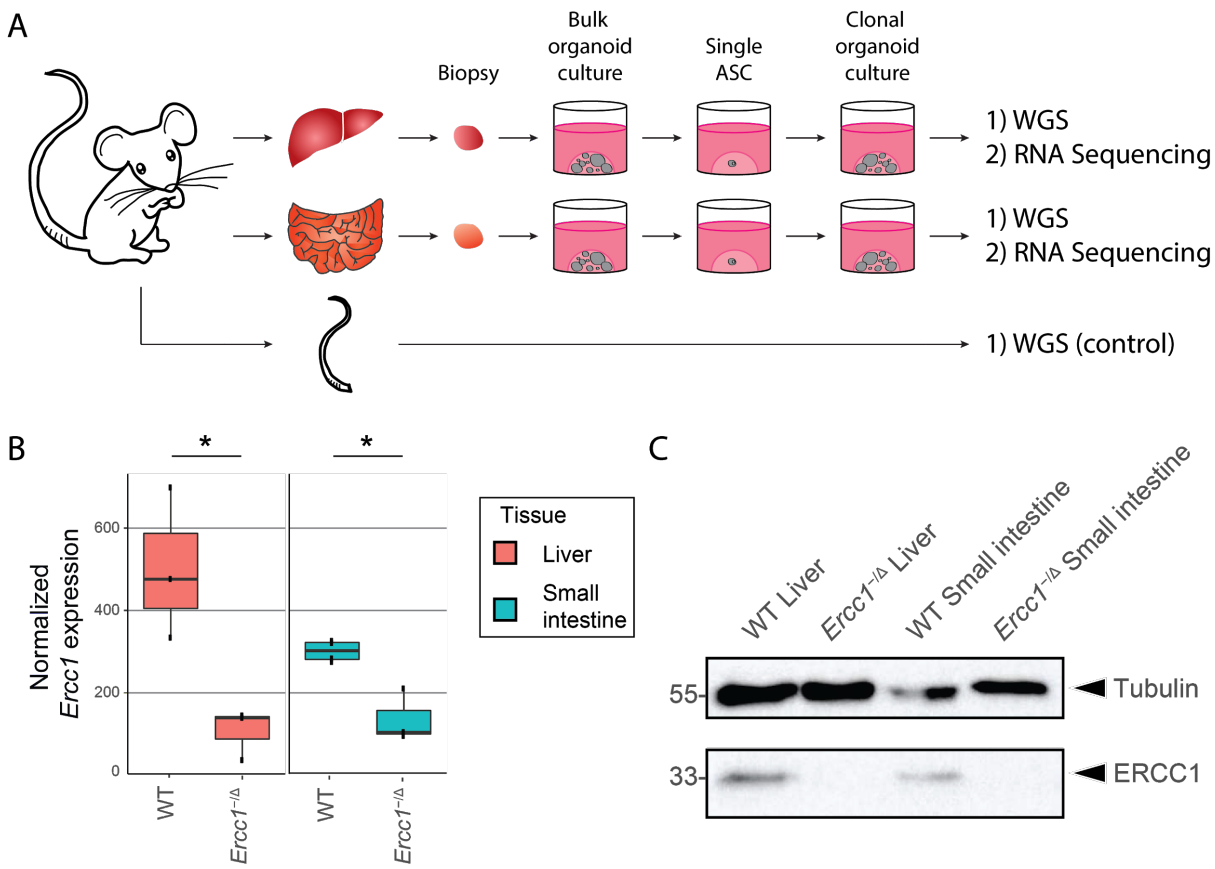

Figure 1. Experimental setup and tissue-specific expression of *Ercc1* in mouse ASCs. (A) Schematic overview of the experimental setup used to determine the mutational patterns in single ASCs from the liver and small intestine of mice. Biopsies from the liver and small intestine of six 15-week-old female mice (three *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice and three WT littermates) were cultured in bulk for ~1.5 week to enrich for ASCs. Subsequently, clonal organoids were derived from these bulk organoid cultures and expanded for approximately 1 month, until there were enough cells to perform both WGS and RNA sequencing. As a control sample for filtering germline variants, a biopsy of the tail of each mouse was also subjected to WGS. (B) Boxplots depicting normalized *Ercc1* expression in ASC organoid cultures from liver and small intestine of *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice (n = 3 and n = 3, respectively) and WT littermates (n = 3 and n = 4, respectively). Asterisks represent significant differences ($P < 0.05$, negative binomial test). (C) Western blot analysis of ERCC1 in *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT small intestinal and liver mouse organoids.

154 To determine transcriptome profiles, we performed RNA sequencing on one clonal
155 organoid culture from each tissue of each mouse. *Ercc1* is significantly differentially
156 expressed ($P < 0.05$, negative binomial test) between WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ in both liver and small
157 intestinal ASCs (Fig. 1B), confirming the anticipated effects of the *Ercc1* mutations at the
158 mRNA level. While there is some *Ercc1* expression in *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ ASCs, the C-terminal domain
159 of ERCC1 is essential in ERCC1-XPF complex formation and disruption of this interaction
160 reduces the stability of ERCC1 protein (Tripsianes et al. 2005; de Laat 1998; Sijbers et al.
161 1996b). Indeed, ERCC1 protein is not detectable by immunoblotting in *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ organoid
162 cultures of both tissues (Fig. 1C). No other DNA repair genes were differentially expressed
163 between WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ ASCs (Supplemental File S1). Notably, the expression of 8 out of
164 9 core NER genes, including *Ercc1*, is higher in WT liver ASCs than WT small intestinal
165 ASCs (Supplemental Fig. S1, Supplemental Table S1).

166 WGS analysis on the clonally-expanded organoid cultures revealed 4,238 somatic
167 base substitutions in the autosomal genome of 11 clonal ASC samples (Fig. 2A;
168 Supplemental Table S2). Targeted deep-sequencing validated ~97.5% of these base
169 substitutions (Supplemental File S2). Liver ASCs of WT mice acquired 19.5 ± 4.1 (mean ±
170 standard deviation) base substitutions per week. This rate is similar in ASCs of the small
171 intestine, at 16.1 ± 3.1 mutations per week, and is in line with the observation that human
172 liver and intestinal ASCs have similar mutation accumulation rates *in vivo* (Blokzijl et al.
173 2016). Loss of ERCC1 induced a twofold increase (45.5 ± 3.0 base substitutions per week)
174 in the number of base substitutions in ASCs of the liver (Fig. 2A, Supplemental Fig. S2A).
175 However, we did not observe a different mutation rate in small intestinal ASCs of *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$
176 mice (21.0 ± 4.9 base substitutions per week) compared with WT small intestinal ASCs (Fig.
177 2A, Supplemental Fig. S2A). We also observed a significant increase in the number of
178 double base substitutions in liver ASCs lacking ERCC1 ($q < 0.05$, *t*-test, FDR correction; Fig.
179 2B, Supplemental Fig. S2B, Supplemental Table S3). *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ liver ASCs acquire 0.49 ± 0.06
180 double base substitutions per week, while WT liver ASCs acquire only 0.05 ± 0.04 double
181 base substitutions per week. Again, we did not observe this difference between WT and

182 mutant ASCs of the small intestine (0.07 ± 0.10 and 0.07 ± 0.07 per week, respectively). The
183 increased number of double base substitutions in the liver ASCs remained significant after
184 normalizing for the total number of base substitutions ($q < 0.05$, *t*-test, FDR correction;
185 Supplemental Fig. S2C), indicating a liver-specific enrichment of double base substitutions in
186 *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ ASCs compared with WT.

187 In addition to the 4,238 base substitutions, we identified 2,116 small insertions and
188 deletions (indels) and 21 larger deletions (≥100 bp) in the autosomal genome of the 11
189 clonal ASC samples (Supplemental Table S2). As opposed to the base substitutions, we
190 observed similar indel numbers for WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ ASCs of both tissues (Fig. 2C,
191 Supplemental Fig. S2D). Of note, accurate identification of indels is more challenging than
192 base substitutions, and as a result, these calls may contain more false positives. ASCs in the
193 small intestine and liver of the mice acquire approximately 13.3 ± 3.4 indels per week,
194 independent of *Ercc1* mutation status. Likewise, loss of ERCC1 did not influence the number
195 or type of structural variations (SVs) in ASCs of the small intestine and the liver (Fig. 2D,
196 Supplemental Fig. S2E, Supplemental Table S2). Each mouse ASCs carried 0 - 6 deletions
197 (median length of 539 bp; Supplemental Table S4). Finally, a genome-wide copy-number
198 profile was generated to identify chromosomal gains and losses. These profiles indicated
199 that all WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ ASCs were karyotypically stable during life (Supplemental Fig. S3).
200 Nevertheless, some subclonal aneuploidies were detected in a WT as well as an *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$
201 liver organoid sample, which are most likely culturing artefacts that occurred *in vitro* after the
202 clonal step irrespective of *Ercc1* mutation status.
203

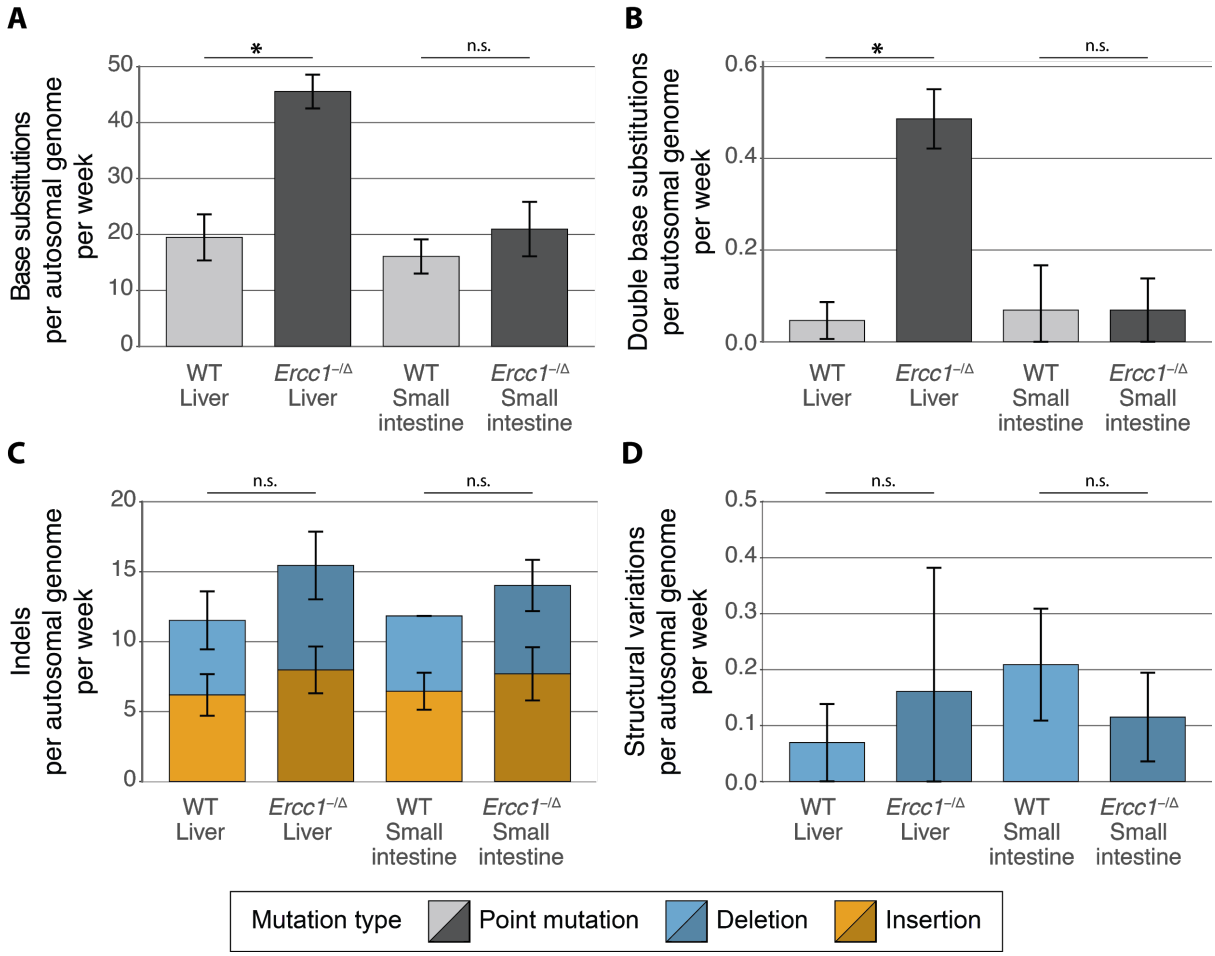

Figure 2. Somatic mutation rates in the genomes of ASCs from liver and small intestine of WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice. (A) Base substitutions, (B) double base substitutions, (C) indels, and (D) SVs acquired per autosomal genome per week in ASCs of WT liver (n = 3), *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ liver (n = 3), WT small intestine (n = 2), and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ small intestine (n = 3). Error bars represent standard deviations. Asterisks represent significant differences ($q < 0.05$, two-sided *t*-test, FDR correction). n.s. : non-significant ($q \geq 0.05$, two-sided *t*-test, FDR correction).

Loss of NER protein ERCC1 induces Signature 8 mutations in mouse ASCs

To further dissect the mutational consequences of NER-deficiency, we characterized the mutation spectra in the mouse ASCs. Regardless of tissue-type, the mutation spectra of all assessed ASCs are predominantly characterized by C:G > A:T mutations and C:G > T:A mutations (Fig. 3A). However, the mutation spectra of NER-proficient and NER-deficient

217 ASCs differed significantly for both tissues ($q < 0.05$, X^2-test, FDR correction). Indeed, there
218 are some notable differences, such as an increased contribution of T:A > A:T mutations in
219 *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ ASCs compared with WT ASCs (Fig. 3A).

220 To gain insight into these differences, we generated 96-channel mutational profiles of
221 all ASCs (Supplemental Fig. S4, Supplemental Fig. S5) and assessed the contribution of
222 each COSMIC mutational signature (http://cancer.sanger.ac.uk/cosmic/signatures) to the
223 average 96-channel mutational profile (centroid) per group (Supplemental Fig. S6B). We
224 could reconstruct the original centroids well with the 30 COSMIC signatures, as the
225 reconstructed centroids are highly similar to the original centroids for all four ASC groups
226 (average cosine similarity = 0.95, Supplemental Fig. S6A). The contribution of the COSMIC
227 signatures is significantly different between NER-proficient and NER-deficient ASC groups
228 for both liver and small intestine ($d > d_{WT_0.05}$ *and* $d > d_{MUT_0.05}$, bootstrap resampling method,
229 see Methods, Supplemental Fig. S6C-D).

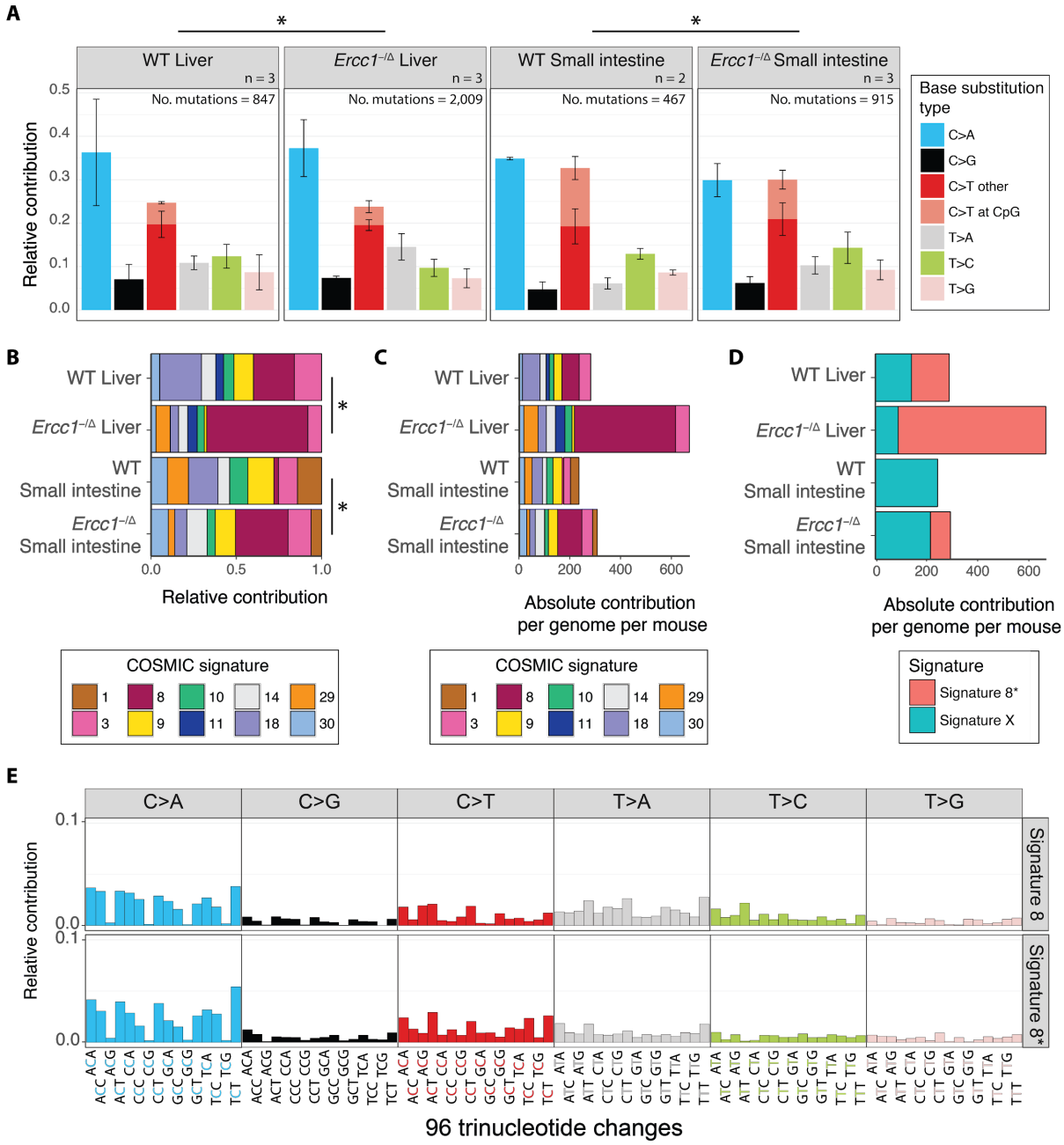

Figure 3. Mutational patterns of base substitutions acquired in the genomes of ASCs from liver and small intestine of WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice. (A) Mean relative contribution of the indicated mutation types to the mutation spectrum for each mouse ASC group. Error bars represent standard deviations. The total number of mutations, and total number of ASCs (n) per group is indicated. Asterisks indicate significant differences in mutation spectra (q < 0.05, X^2-test, FDR correction). (B) Relative contribution of the indicated COSMIC mutational signatures to the average 96-channel mutational profiles of each mouse ASC group. Asterisks indicate significantly different signature contributions, P values where obtained

239 using a bootstrap resampling approach (Methods, Supplemental Fig. S6E-F) (C) Absolute
240 contribution of the indicated COSMIC mutational signatures to the average 96-channel
241 mutational profiles of each mouse ASC group. (D) Absolute contribution of two mutational
242 signatures that were identified by non-negative matrix factorization (NMF) analysis of the
243 average 96-channel mutational profiles of each mouse ASC group. (E) Relative contribution
244 of each indicated context-dependent base substitution type to mutational Signature 8 and
245 Signature 8*.
246
247 We subsequently reconstructed the 96-channel mutational profiles using the top 10
248 contributing COSMIC mutational signatures (Fig. 3B-C). We could reconstruct the centroids
249 comparably well using this subset of 10 COSMIC signatures (average cosine similarity =
250 0.95, Supplemental Fig. S6A). The 96-channel mutational profiles of NER-deficient liver
251 ASCs not only closely resemble Signature 8 (cosine similarity of 0.92; Supplemental Fig.
252 S7), but Signature 8 can almost fully explain the increase in base substitutions in NER-
253 deficient liver ASCs (Fig. 3C). The number of Signature 8 mutations is also increased in all
254 small intestinal ASCs of *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice compared with WT small intestinal ASCs (Fig. 3C).
255 This finding shows that NER-deficiency can result in elevated numbers of Signature 8
256 mutations in ASCs, regardless of tissue-type.
257 In addition, we performed an unbiased signature analysis by extracting two
258 mutational signatures *de novo* from the mouse mutation catalogs using non-negative matrix
259 factorization (NMF) (Supplemental File S3, Supplemental Fig. S8). One of the identified
260 signatures, Signature X, contributes approximately 100 mutations to liver ASCs and 200
261 mutations to small intestinal ASCs, in both WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice (Fig. 3D), suggesting that
262 this signature represents a mutational process that is generally active in mouse ASCs. In line
263 with this, Signature X is highly similar to 96-channel mutational profiles of ASCs of the small
264 intestine of old mice (Behjati et al. 2014) (cosine similarity = 0.95, Supplemental Fig. S8B).
265 As expected, this mouse signature is not similar to any of the known COSMIC signatures
266 identified in human tumor sequencing data (Supplemental Fig. S8B). The other signature,

267 Signature 8*, is highly similar to COSMIC Signature 8 (cosine similarity = 0.91; Fig. 3E,
268 Supplemental Fig. S8B) and has an increased contribution in *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ liver ASCs compared
269 with WT (Fig. 3D; Supplemental Fig. S8C). Moreover, the contribution of Signature 8*
270 mutations is also increased in *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ small intestinal ASCs in comparison to WT small
271 intestinal ASCs (Fig. 3D; Supplemental Fig. S8C). These findings confirmed that NER-
272 deficiency results in base substitutions that show a 96-channel profile similar to COSMIC
273 Signature 8.

274 Mutations are distributed non-randomly throughout the genome in cancer cells and in
275 human ASCs (Schuster-Böckler and Lehner 2012; Blokzijl et al. 2016). NER is one of the
276 pathways that is suggested to underlie this non-random distribution of mutations (Perera et
277 al. 2016; Zheng et al. 2014). Firstly, NER-activity has been linked to a local enrichment of
278 mutations at gene promoters (Perera et al. 2016). However, we do not observe any
279 significant differences in the depletion of mutations in promoters, promoter-flanking, and
280 enhancer regions between NER-proficient and -deficient ASCs (Supplemental Fig. S9A).
281 Secondly, TC-NER results in a depletion of mutations in expressed genes, as this pathway
282 repairs lesions on the transcribed strand during transcription (Pleasance et al. 2010).
283 Mutations are indeed depleted in genic regions of NER-proficient WT mouse ASCs, but the
284 depletion is not significantly different in NER-deficient ASCs (n.s., Poisson test, FDR
285 correction; Supplemental Fig. S9A). Moreover, the average expression levels of genes in
286 which the somatic mutations are located do not differ between *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT ASCs (n.s.,
287 *t*-test, FDR correction; Supplemental Fig. S9B), suggesting that *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ ASCs do not
288 accumulate more mutations in expressed genes. Finally, there are no obvious changes in
289 transcriptional strand bias, although the mutation numbers are too low to be conclusive
290 (Supplemental Fig. S9C). NER-deficiency thus influences both the mutation load and
291 mutation type, but not the genomic distribution of the observed base substitutions in mouse
292 ASCs, suggesting that the contribution of TC-NER in the observed mutational consequences
293 is minimal in these cells.
294

295 **Loss of GG-NER protein XPC induces Signature 8 mutations in human ASCs**

296 To identify a potential causal relationship between NER-deficiency and Signature 8 in human
297 ASCs, we generated a human GG-NER deficient *XPC*^{KO} ASC using CRISPR-Cas9 gene-
298 editing in a human small intestinal organoid culture (Fig. 4A). After confirming absence of
299 XPC protein (Fig. 4B), we passaged the *XPC*^{KO} clone for approximately 2 months to allow
300 the accumulation of sufficient mutations for downstream analyses. Subsequently, we derived
301 subclonal cultures of single ASCs and expanded these until sufficient DNA could be isolated
302 for WGS. This approach allowed us to catalog the mutations that specifically accumulated
303 between the two clonal expansion steps in the absence of XPC (Supplemental Fig. S10A)
304 (Drost et al. 2017; Blokzijl et al. 2016; Jager et al. 2018). As a control, WGS data of three
305 previously-established *XPC*^{WT} organoid cultures of the same human donor was used
306 (Blokzijl et al. 2016).

307 Similar to the *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mouse ASCs, loss of XPC in human ASCs induced an
308 increase in the genome-wide number of base substitutions acquired per week. (Fig. 4C,
309 Supplemental Table S5). In addition, the number of double base substitutions acquired per
310 week was approximately 17 times higher (Fig. 4D, Supplemental Table S5, Supplemental
311 Table S6). We did not observe a marked change in the genomic distribution of acquired
312 mutations as a result of *XPC* deletion in human ASCs, nor a change in transcriptional strand
313 bias (Supplemental Fig. S10C-D). In total, approximately 39% of the increase in base
314 substitutions in the *XPC*^{KO} ASC can be explained by Signature 8 (Fig. 4E, Supplemental Fig.
315 S10B), confirming that NER-deficiency can cause an increase in the number of Signature 8
316 mutations, independent of tissue-type or species.

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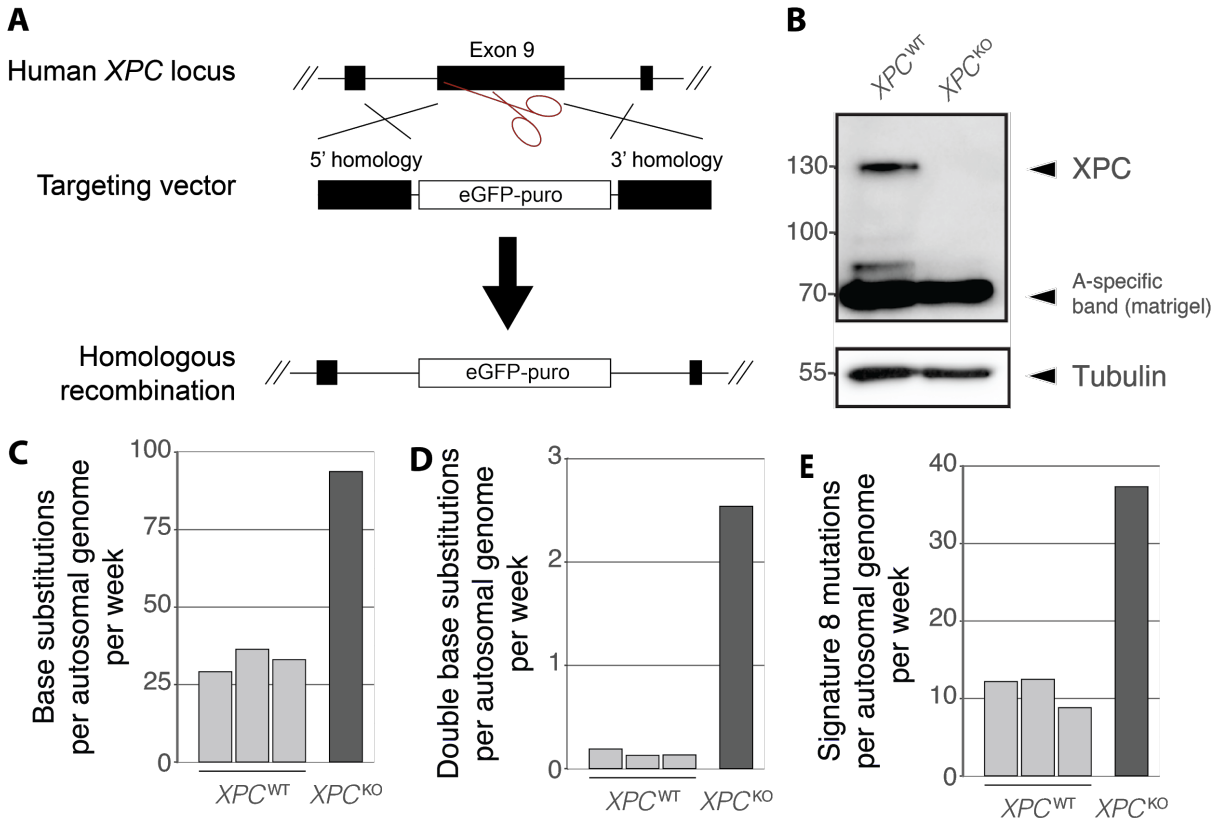

Figure 4. Mutational consequences of *XPC*^{KO} in human intestinal organoid cultures *in vitro*. (A) Targeting strategy for the generation of *XPC*^{KO} organoid cultures using CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing. (B) Western blot analysis of XPC in human *XPC*^{WT} and *XPC*^{KO} organoids. (C) Number of base substitutions, (D) double base substitutions, and (E) Signature 8 mutations acquired per autosomal genome per week in human *XPC*^{WT} ASCs (n = 3) and an *XPC*^{KO} ASC (n = 1) *in vitro*.

Detecting NER-deficiency in human breast cancers genomes

To identify whether NER-deficiency can be linked to an increase in Signature 8 mutations in human cancer as well, we looked into publicly available whole-genome sequencing data of 344 breast tumors (Nik-Zainal et al. 2016). Approximately 70% of these tumors have accumulated Signature 8 mutations (Nik-Zainal et al. 2016). NER-status was predicted by assessing the presence of protein-coding mutations and the copy number status of 66 NER-genes (Pearl et al. 2015). NER-deficient samples were defined as being hit by a biallelic loss-of-function mutation in at least one of the NER-genes. We excluded 274 samples with a

334 mutation in one copy of any NER-gene from our analysis, as it is not possible to reliably
335 predict the NER-status of these samples. By these definitions, we identified 27 NER-
336 deficient samples and 43 NER-proficient samples.

337 NER-proficient and NER-deficient breast cancers have accumulated a median of
338 3,399 base substitutions (mean 3,968, standard deviation 2,708) and 4,368 base
339 substitutions (mean 6,405, standard deviation 6,666) per sample, respectively
340 (Supplemental Fig. S11A). To characterize whether NER-status affects the accumulation of
341 Signature 8 mutations (http://cancer.sanger.ac.uk/cosmic/signatures), 96-channel mutational
342 profiles of the somatic mutations were generated for all 344 breast tumors (Fig. 5A) and the
343 contribution of each COSMIC mutational signature was assessed. 12 COSMIC mutational
344 signatures contributed to <10% of the mutational profiles of all 344 tumors and were
345 therefore excluded from subsequent analyses. The mutational profiles of the 70 breast
346 tumors with predicted NER-status (Fig. 5A) were reconstructed using the remaining 18
347 mutational signatures. In line with previous observations, NER-deficient tumors have
348 acquired 208 additional Signature 8 mutations in comparison to NER-proficient tumors (Fig.
349 5B; P = 0.02, Wilcoxon rank-sum test). Furthermore, Signature 8 has the largest effect size
350 of all 18 COSMIC mutational signatures (Supplemental Fig. S11B).

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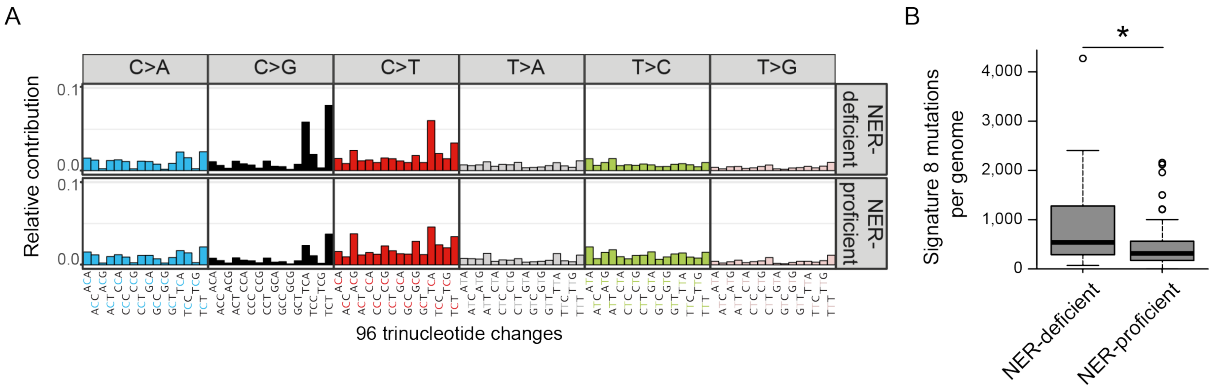

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353 **Figure 5.** Mutation accumulation in predicted NER-deficient and NER-proficient breast
354 cancer whole-genomes. (A) Relative contribution of each indicated context-dependent base
355 substitution type to the average 96-channel mutational profiles of NER-deficient and NER-

356 proficient breast cancer samples. (B) Number of Signature 8 mutations in NER-deficient and
357 NER-proficient breast cancer whole-genomes (n = 27 and n = 43, respectively). Asterisk
358 indicates significant difference ($P < 0.05$, Wilcoxon rank-sum test).
359
360 **DISCUSSION**
361 We exploited mouse knockouts, organoid culturing, CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing, WGS, and
362 mutational signature analyses to study the genome-wide mutational consequences of NER-
363 deficiency in individual ASCs of human and mice. Our results show that loss of ERCC1
364 induces a significant increase in the accumulation of base substitutions in liver ASCs, but not
365 in small intestinal ASCs. Interestingly, the mutational increase coincides with the tissue-
366 specific pathological aging phenotype observed in *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice (Dollé et al. 2011; Gregg et
367 al. 2012). A possible explanation for this difference between tissues is that liver ASCs might
368 be more dependent on DNA repair facilitated by ERCC1 compared with small intestinal
369 ASCs, e.g. as a result of tissue-specific mutagen exposure. In line with this, WT liver ASCs
370 show a higher basal expression of *Ercc1* and other NER genes compared with WT small
371 intestinal ASCs. However, the transcription levels of DNA repair components do not
372 necessarily reflect DNA repair-activity, due to post-transcriptional regulation (Naipal et al.
373 2015). Alternatively, liver and small intestinal ASCs might cope differently with unrepaired
374 DNA damage as a result of loss of ERCC1, such as the utilization of alternative DNA repair
375 mechanisms, like translesion synthesis (TLS) polymerases, to bypass polymerase-blocking
376 lesions, or differential induction of apoptosis or senescence.
377 ERCC1 is involved in multiple DNA repair pathways, including TC-NER, GG-NER,
378 SSA, and crosslink repair. Previously, it has been shown that SSA- and crosslink repair-
379 deficiencies result in increased number of indels and SVs in mice, whereas NER-deficiency
380 introduces base substitutions (Dollé et al. 2006). Since we only observe an increase in base
381 substitutions, NER-deficiency is likely responsible for the mutational consequences of loss of
382 ERCC1 in liver ASCs *in vivo*. If TC-NER-deficiency underlies the differential mutation
383 accumulation, this would be reflected by an increase in mutations in expressed genes in

384 *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice. However, WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ cells show a similar depletion of mutations in
385 genes, indicating that the observed mutational consequences of impaired ERCC1 is rather
386 an effect of defective GG-NER. In line with this, we show that GG-NER-deficiency can also
387 induce an increase in the number of base substitutions in a human small intestinal organoid
388 culture that is deleted for GG-NER component *XPC*. More specifically, the increased base
389 substitution load can be largely explained by an increased contribution of Signature 8 in both
390 systems. In line with our observations, a mutational signature similar to Signature 8 has
391 been shown to increase with age in the neurons of NER-deficient patients (Lodato et al.
392 2017).

393 Until now, the etiology of Signature 8 was unknown
394 (http://cancer.sanger.ac.uk/cosmic/signatures). As Signature 8 mutations are also detected
395 in healthy human and mouse ASCs (Fig. 3C, Fig. 4E), this signature most likely represents a
396 mutagenic process that is generally active in normal cells and not repaired 100% effective.
397 Signature 8 is characterized by C:G > A:T mutations and is associated with double base
398 substitutions (Alexandrov et al. 2013; Nik-Zainal et al. 2016). C:G > A:T mutations have
399 been linked to several processes, including oxidative stress (Kamiya et al. 1995; Degtyareva
400 et al. 2013). Consistently, organoid culturing causes mutations indicative of high oxidative
401 stress (Blokzijl et al. 2016). Interestingly, NER has been suggested to play a role in the
402 repair of tandem DNA lesions that result from oxidative stress (Bergeron et al. 2010; Cadet
403 et al. 2012). If left unrepaired, these lesions can block regular DNA polymerases, but can be
404 bypassed by error-prone TLS polymerases, resulting in increased incorporation of tandem
405 mutations (Cadet et al. 2012). Moreover, it has been shown that oxidative stress results in
406 increased induction of double base substitutions in NER-deficient human fibroblasts (Lee
407 2002). In line with this, we observe a significant increase in the double base substitution load
408 in mouse liver ASCs and a similar trend in the human ASC culture as a result of NER-
409 deficiency, yet the number of double base substitutions is much lower than single base
410 substitutions. Thus Signature 8 could reflect oxidative DNA damage bypassed by TLS.

411 Although NER-deficiency does not affect the base substitution load in the mouse
412 small intestine, it does result in an increased contribution of Signature 8 mutations. This is in
413 clear contrast to mouse liver ASCs, where NER-deficiency has both a qualitative and
414 quantitative consequence on the accumulation of base substitutions. More specifically, the
415 absolute contribution of Signature 8 mutations is similar in WT liver and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ small
416 intestinal ASCs. This clearly demonstrates that DNA-repair deficiency can have tissue-
417 specific consequences, but also indicates that the absolute contribution of Signature 8
418 mutations should be compared to the basal contribution in the same tissue in order to detect
419 NER-deficiency.

420 We did not observe a notable contribution of signatures that have been previously
421 observed in liver cancer in ASCs of *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ livers
422 (http://cancer.sanger.ac.uk/cosmic/signatures) (Supplemental Fig. S6B). This finding
423 suggests that the mutational processes that underlie these signatures are only active after
424 oncogenic transformation, or that mutagen exposure in liver cancer (progenitor) cells is
425 different from *in vivo* mouse ASCs and *in vitro* human ASCs. Liver cancer-specific Signature
426 24, for example, is associated with Aflatoxin intake (Huang et al. 2017), a substance to
427 which our mice and organoids were not exposed. In addition, Signature 1 and Signature 5,
428 which have been previously associated with age (Blokzijl et al. 2016; Alexandrov et al.
429 2015), did not have an increased contribution in the ASCs of progeroid *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice. Finally,
430 a high contribution of mutational Signature 5 has been linked to the presence of somatic
431 mutations in *ERCC2*, a key factor in both TC-NER and GG-NER, in human urothelial cancer
432 (Kim et al. 2016; Iyama and Wilson 2013). As mentioned however, we did not observe an
433 increase in Signature 5 contribution in the ASCs without ERCC1 or XPC. This discrepancy in
434 mutational consequences could reflect various differences between these systems, such as
435 different effects of the mutations on protein function, distinct roles of the proteins, or tumor-
436 and/or tissue-specific activity of mutagenic damage and/or DNA repair processes. In our
437 study, we deleted specific NER components in an otherwise normal genetic background,

438 providing us with the unique opportunity to directly characterize the mutational
439 consequences of NER-deficiency.

440 The challenge of coupling mutational signatures to mutational processes based on
441 genome sequencing data of tumors is illustrated by our analyses of the breast cancer
442 genomes. As the number of mutations attributed to a signature typically increases at a
443 higher mutational load and the mutational loads differ greatly between tumor types
444 (Alexandrov et al. 2013), it is important to compare signature contributions between samples
445 within a single tumor type. However, the majority of the breast cancer samples (~80%)
446 carried a single mutation in a NER-gene and since the other copy might be inactivated
447 through e.g. epigenetic silencing, these samples were excluded from the analysis. This
448 resulted in a low sample size. Nonetheless, genomes of NER-deficient breast cancer
449 patients show a higher number of Signature 8 mutations, which is in line with our
450 observations in the ASCs. Further optimization of mutational signature definitions may aid to
451 discriminate NER-deficient from NER-proficient tumors fully.

452 Determination of the NER-capacity of tumors can be important for precision
453 medicine, as it has been shown that tumors with mutations in NER genes (Stubbert et al.
454 2010; Van Allen et al. 2014; Amable 2016; Zhang et al. 2017), and tumors with low
455 expression of *ERCC1* (Olaussen et al. 2006; Li et al. 2000; Amable 2016) are sensitive to
456 cisplatin treatment. However, translation of these findings into the clinical setting has been
457 challenging, because connecting tumor biopsy mRNA levels and immunohistochemistry
458 measurements to NER-activity remains an unresolved issue (Bowden 2014), and
459 interpreting the effects of mutations in DNA repair genes on NER-capacity is challenging.
460 Rather than looking for the presence of causal events, mutational catalogs can be used as a
461 functional readout of NER-capacity in tumors. Here, we show that NER-deficiency can
462 induce an increase in Signature 8 mutations in both mouse and human ASCs. Signature 8 is
463 found in medulloblastoma, bladder cancer, bone cancer, lung squamous cell carcinoma,
464 ovarian cancer, pancreatic cancer and prostate cancer (Alexandrov et al. 2013, 2018).
465 Furthermore, Signature 8 contributes to the mutational profile of the majority of breast cancer

466 tumors (Nik-Zainal et al. 2016; Alexandrov et al. 2013). Our results show that, besides the
467 mutational status of NER genes, an increase in the number of Signature 8 mutations with
468 respect to the normal number of Signature 8 mutations in a cancer type might serve as a
469 novel biomarker for (GG-)NER-deficiency and has the potential to guide treatment decision.
470 Clinical studies will be required to demonstrate the added predictive value of Signature 8
471 mutations for NER-deficiency and/or treatment response.
472

473 **METHODS**

474 **Mouse tissue material**

475 *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice were generated and maintained as previously described (Vermeij et al., 2016).
476 Briefly, by crossing *Ercc1*$^{\Delta/+}$ (C57BL6J or FVB background) with *Ercc1*$^{+/-}$ mice (FVB or
477 C57BL6J background), *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice were generated in a uniform F1 C57BL6J/FVB hybrid
478 background. Wild type F1 littermates were used as controls. Animals were housed in
479 individually ventilated cages under specific pathogen-free conditions in a controlled
480 environment (20–22 °C, 12 h light : 12 h dark cycle). Experiments were performed in
481 accordance with the Principles of Laboratory Animal Care and with the guidelines approved
482 by the Dutch Ethical Committee in full accordance with European legislation.
483 We used three 15-week old female *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice and three female WT littermates for
484 our experiments. Tails were harvested and stored at -20°C. Livers and small intestines were
485 harvested and kept on ice in Adv+++ medium (Advanced DMEM/F-12 with 1% GlutaMAX,
486 HEPES 10 mM and 1% penicillin/streptomycin) for a few hours until further processing.
487

488 **Human tissue material**

489 Endoscopic biopsies were performed at the University Medical Center Utrecht and the
490 Wilhelmina Children's Hospital. The patients' informed consent was obtained and this study
491 was approved by the ethical committee of University Medical Center Utrecht.
492

493 **Generation of clonal *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT mouse organoid cultures**

494 Single liver ASCs were isolated from livers as described previously (Kuijk et al. 2016). Liver
495 organoid cultures were initiated by culturing the liver ASCs in BME overlaid with mouse liver
496 culture initiation medium (50% Adv+++ medium, 35% WNT3A conditioned medium
497 (produced in house), 5% NOGGIN conditioned medium (produced in house), 5% RSPOI
498 conditioned medium (produced in house), 1x B27 without retinoic acid, 1x N2, 1x Primocin,
499 10mM Nicotinamide, 0.625mM N-acetylcysteine, 100ng/ml FGF-10, 10μM ROCKi, 50 ng/ml
500 HGF, 10nM Gastrin, and 50ng/ml hEGF). 1.5 week after culture initiation, clonal organoid
501 liver cultures were generated and expanded according to protocol (Jager et al. 2018) in
502 mouse liver expansion medium (90% Adv+++ medium, 5% RSPOI conditioned medium
503 (produced in house), 1x B27 without retinoic acid, 1x N2, 1x Primocin, 10mM Nicotinamide,
504 0.625mM N-acetylcysteine, 100ng/ml FGF-10, 50 ng/ml HGF, 10nM Gastrin, and 50ng/ml
505 hEGF).

506 Crypts were isolated from small intestines as described previously (Sato et al. 2009).
507 Small intestinal organoid cultures were initiated by culturing the small intestinal ASCs in
508 matrigel overlaid with mouse small intestine medium (50% WNT3A conditioned medium
509 (produced in house), 30% Adv+++ medium, 10% NOGGIN conditioned medium (produced in
510 house), 10% RSPOI conditioned medium (produced in house), 1x B27, 1x hES Cell Cloning
511 & Recovery Supplement, 1x Primocin, 10μM ROCKi, 1.25mM N-acetylcysteine, and 50ng/ml
512 hEGF). Clonal small intestinal organoid cultures were generated by picking single organoids
513 manually and clonally expanding these organoid cultures according to protocol in mouse
514 small intestine medium (Jager et al. 2018). Culture expansion failed for the small intestine of
515 mouse WT1.

516

517 **Generation of a clonal and subclonal *XPC*^{KO} organoid culture**

518 Clonal *XPC*^{KO} organoid cultures were generated from a small intestinal bulk organoid culture
519 derived previously (Blokzijl et al. 2016) using the CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing technique as
520 described in (Drost et al. 2017). One clonal human *XPC*^{KO} organoid culture was obtained

521 and cultured for 72 days in human small intestinal organoid medium (50% WNT3A
522 conditioned medium (produced in house), 30% Adv+++ medium, 20% RSPOI conditioned
523 medium (produced in house), 1x B27, 1x Primocin, 1.25mM N-acetylcysteine, 0.5µM A83-
524 01, 10µM SB202190, 100ng/ml recombinant Noggin, and 50ng/ml hEGF). Subsequently, a
525 subclonal culture was derived according to protocol (Jager et al. 2018).
526
527 **Western blot**
528 Protein samples from mouse organoid cultures were collected in Laemmli buffer and
529 measured using the Qubit^{tm} 3.0 Fluorometer (Thermo Fisher Scientific) with the Qubit^{tm}
530 Protein Assay Kit (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Q33211). Protein samples from human organoid
531 cultures were collected in Laemmli buffer and measured using a Lowry protein assay. 30µg
532 of protein per sample was run on a 10% SDS page gel. Subsequently, the proteins were
533 transferred to a nitrocellulose membrane. After transfer, the membrane was blocked for 1
534 hour using 5% ELK (Campina) at room temperature and subsequently incubated overnight
535 with the primary antibody (ERCC1: Abcam, ab129267; XPC: Cell Signaling Technology;
536 #12701). Secondary antibody was incubated 1 hour at room temperature, and subsequently
537 proteins were visualized using the Amersham ECL Western blotting analysis system (GE
538 Healthcare, RPN2109) and the Amersham Imager 600 system (GE Healthcare).
539
540 **RNA sequencing and differential expression analysis of *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT mouse**
541 **organoid cultures**
542 For each mouse (three *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mice and three WT littermates), we performed RNA
543 sequencing on one clonal organoid culture from the liver and the small intestine. An
544 additional small intestinal organoid clone was sequenced of mice WT2 and WT3 to increase
545 the amount of replicates for differential expression analysis, as culture expansion failed for
546 the small intestine of WT1. Total RNA was collected in TRIzol and purified from all organoid
547 cultures using the Qiasymphony (Qiagen). RNA libraries for Illumina sequencing were
548 generated from 50 ng of poly-A selected mRNA using the Neoprep (Illumina) and sequenced

549 2 x 75 bp paired-end to approximately 3300 Million base pairs per sample with the Illumina
550 NextSeq 500 at the Utrecht Sequencing Facility.
551 RNA sequencing reads were mapped with STAR v.2.4.2a to the mouse reference
552 genome GRCm38. The BAM files were sorted with Sambamba v0.5.8 and reads were
553 counted with HTSeq-count version 0.6.1p1 (default settings) to exons as defined in
554 GRCm38v70.gtf (Ensembl). Non-uniquely mapped reads were not counted. Subsequently,
555 DESeq v1.28.0 was used to normalize counts. DESeq nbinomTest was used to test for
556 differential expression (1) of *Ercc1* between *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT liver ASCs, (2) of *Ercc1*
557 between *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT small intestinal ASCs, (3) of 83 other DNA repair genes (Casorelli
558 et al. 2006) between *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT liver ASCs, and (4) between *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT small
559 intestinal ASCs, and (5) of 9 NER genes between the WT liver and WT small intestinal
560 ASCs. Differentially expressed genes with $q < 0.05$ (Benjamini-Hochberg FDR multiple-
561 testing correction) were considered significant.
562
563 **WGS and read alignment**
564 DNA was isolated from mouse liver organoid cultures and mouse control (tail) samples using
565 the genomic tip 20-G kit (Qiagen) and from mouse small intestinal organoid samples and the
566 human *XPC*^{KO} sample using the Qiasymphony (Qiagen). DNA libraries for Illumina
567 sequencing were generated from 200 ng genomic DNA using standard protocols (Illumina)
568 and sequenced 2 x 100 bp paired-end to 30X base coverage with the Illumina HiSeq Xten at
569 the Hartwig Medical Foundation. The sequence reads of *XPC*^{KO} were mapped to the
570 GRCh37 human reference genome using using the Burrows–Wheeler Aligner (BWA) v0.7.5a
571 (Li and Durbin 2009), with settings '-t 4 -c 100 -M'. The mapped data of clonal *XPC*^{WT}
572 organoids was previously generated in the study ('donor_id' 6) (Blokzijl et al. 2016). The
573 sequence reads of the mouse ASCs were mapped to the GRCm38 mouse reference
574 genome using using the Burrows–Wheeler Aligner (BWA) v0.7.5a (Li and Durbin 2009), with
575 settings '-t 4 -c 100 -M'. The WGS data of the tails confirmed that the *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$mice have

576 compound heterozygous mutations in *Ercc1* and the WT littermates do not (Supplemental
577 Fig. S12).
578
579 **Callable genome**
580 The callable genome was defined for all sequenced samples using the GATK CallableLoci
581 tool v3.4.46 (Van der Auwera et al. 2013) with default settings and additional optional
582 parameters 'minBaseQuality 10', 'minMappingQuality 10',
583 'maxFractionOfReadsWithLowMAPQ 20', and 'minDepth 20'. 'CALLABLE' regions were
584 extracted from every output file. Subsequently, genomic regions that were callable (1) in the
585 mouse organoid clone and the control (tail) sample, and (2) in the human organoid clone,
586 subclone, and control (blood) were intersected to define a genomic region that is surveyed in
587 all samples that were compared. Approximately 90 ± 1% of the autosomal genome was
588 surveyed in every mouse clone (Supplemental Table S2), and 73 - 88% of the autosomal
589 genome was surveyed in each human subclone (Supplemental Table S5).
590
591 **Base substitution and indel calling**
592 For both human and mouse samples, base substitutions and indels were multi-sample called
593 with GATK HaplotypeCaller v3.4.46 with default settings and additional options '-
594 stand_call_conf 30 -stand_emit_conf 15' and GATK Queue v3.4.46. For mouse samples the
595 quality of the calls was assessed using GATK VariantFiltration v3.4.46 with options 'QD <
596 2.0, MQ < 40.0, FS > 60.0, HaplotypeScore > 13.0, MQRankSum < -12.5,
597 ReadPosRankSum < -8.0' for base substitutions and 'QD < 2.0, FS > 200.0,
598 ReadPosRankSum < -20.0' for indels, with additional options 'clusterSize 3' and
599 'clusterWindowSize 35'. For human samples the quality of the calls was assessed using
600 GATK VariantFiltration v3.4.46 with options 'QD < 2.0, MQ < 40.0, FS > 60.0,
601 HaplotypeScore > 13.0, MQRankSum < -12.5, ReadPosRankSum < -8.0, MQ0 >= 4 &&
602 ((MQ0 / (1.0 * DP)) > 0.1), DP < 5, QUAL < 30, QUAL >= 30.0 && QUAL < 50.0, SOR > 4.0'
603 for base substitutions and 'QD < 2.0, FS > 200.0, ReadPosRankSum < -20.0, MQ0 >= 4 &&

604 ((MQ0 / (1.0 * DP)) > 0.1), DP < 5, QUAL < 30.0, QUAL >= 30.0 && QUAL < 50.0, SOR >
605 10.0' for indels, with additional options 'clusterSize 3' and 'clusterWindowSize 10.
606
607 **Base substitution filtering**
608 To obtain high-quality catalogs of somatic base substitutions, we applied a comprehensive
609 filtering procedure. For the mouse samples, we only considered positions on the autosomal
610 genome that were callable (see "Callable genome") in both the organoid and control (tail)
611 sample. We excluded positions at which indels were called, as these positions likely
612 represent false-positive base substitution calls. Furthermore, we only included positions with
613 a 'PASS' flag by GATK VariantFiltration, a GATK phred-scaled quality score ≥ 100, a
614 sample-level genotype quality of 99 in the organoid culture and ≥ 10 in the control (tail)
615 sample, and a coverage of ≥ 20X in the organoid and the tail sample. We subsequently
616 excluded variants with any evidence in another organoid sample or control (tail) sample of
617 the same mouse to remove germline variants. To exclude potentially missed germline
618 events, we also removed positions that have any evidence in the organoid and/or control
619 samples of the other mice. Finally, we excluded positions with a variant allele frequency
620 (VAF) < 0.3 in the organoid sample to exclude mutations that were induced after the clonal
621 step.
622 For the human samples, we only considered positions on the autosomal genome that
623 were callable (see "Callable genome") in the control (blood) sample, clonal organoid and
624 subclonal organoid culture. We considered mutations with a 'PASS' flag by GATK
625 VariantFiltration and a GATK phred-scaled quality score ≥ 100. For both the clonal and
626 subclonal organoid cultures, all variants with evidence in the control (blood) sample were
627 excluded, to remove germline variants. To exclude potentially missed germline events, we
628 removed positions that are in the Single Nucleotide Polymorphism Database v137.b3730, or
629 in a blacklist with positions that are recurrent in unmatched individuals (BED-file available
630 upon request). Subsequently, for both the clonal and subclonal cultures, all variants with a
631 VAF < 0.3 were excluded. Finally, the resulting somatic base substitution catalogs of the

632 clonal and subclonal cultures were compared and all events unique to the subclonal
633 organoid were considered to be accumulated after the XPC deletion, that is: between the
634 two sequential clonal expansion steps.
635
636 **Validation of base substitutions in *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT mouse organoid cultures**
637 To independently validate all base substitution positions, new sequencing libraries were
638 generated from DNA samples of all 11 mouse organoid cultures and of the tail of WT1 (DNA
639 samples were isolated in 'WGS and read alignment') using the Twist Human Core Exome
640 v1.3 Complete Kit. The libraries were pooled and size-selected twice using 0.55X and 0.8X
641 AMPure XP beads. For all base substitutions, an enrichment probe of 120 bp was designed
642 for both the reference and variant allele with a minimum number of repeats and with the
643 base substitution position at least 10 bp from the end. The probes were produced by Twist
644 Bioscience. Subsequently, the pooled libraries were enriched with the enrichment probes in
645 two enrichment reactions using the Twist Human Core Exome v1.3 Complete Kit and
646 sequenced 2 x 150 bp paired-end with the Illumina NextSeq 500 at the Utrecht Sequencing
647 Facility. Base substitutions were called as described in 'Base substitution and indel calling'.
648 Variants were considered true if they were called with a filter 'PASS' in 1 out of 12 samples.
649 The remaining 220 variants were checked manually in IGV and considered true if they were
650 found in 1 out of 12 samples at an allele frequency of > 10%. In total, 4,130/4,238 variants
651 (97.5%) were confirmed using this approach (Supplemental file S2).
652
653 **Clonality of organoid cultures**
654 We validated whether the organoid samples were clonal based on the VAF of somatic base
655 substitutions, before the final filter step (VAF < 0.3). Each cell acquires its own set of somatic
656 mutations and the reads supporting a mutation will be diluted in the WGS data of non-clonal
657 samples, resulting in a low VAF. After extensive filtering of somatic base substitutions, liver
658 organoid samples from WT1, WT2, and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$2 showed a shift in the VAF-peak away from
659 0.5 and therefore these samples were excluded from further analyses (Supplemental Fig.

660 S13). An additional liver organoid culture from these mice was sequenced and these
661 samples were confirmed to be clonal (Supplemental Fig. S13).
662
663 **Double base substitutions**
664 We selected base substitutions from the filtered variant call format (VCF) files that were
665 called on consecutive bases in the mouse or human reference genome. The double base
666 substitutions were subsequently manually checked in the Integrative Genomics Viewer (IGV)
667 to exclude double base substitutions present in the control sample, and/or with many base
668 substitutions or indels in the region, as these are (likely) false positives.
669
670 **Indel filtration of *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT mouse organoid cultures**
671 We only considered positions on the autosomal genome that were callable (see "Callable
672 genome") and had a sequencing depth of ≥ 20X in both the organoid sample and the control
673 (tail) sample. We excluded positions that overlap with a base substitution. Furthermore, we
674 only considered positions with a filter 'PASS' from VariantFiltration, a GATK phred-scaled
675 quality score > 250 and a sample-level genotype quality of 99 in both the organoid sample
676 and the control (tail) sample. We subsequently excluded Indels that are located within 50
677 base pairs of an indel called in another organoid sample and indels with any evidence in
678 another organoid sample or a control (tail) sample. Finally, we excluded positions with a VAF
679 < 0.3 in the organoid sample.
680
681 **SV calling and filtration of *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT mouse organoid cultures**
682 SVs were called with DELLY v0.7.2 with settings 'type DEL DUP INV TRA INS', 'map-qual
683 1', 'mad-cutoff 9', 'min-flank 13', and 'geno-qual 5' (Rausch et al. 2012). We only considered
684 SVs of at least 100 bp on the autosomal chromosomes that were called with a filter 'PASS',
685 and a sample-specific genotype quality of at least 90 in the organoid culture and the control
686 sample. We subsequently excluded positions with any evidence in the control (tail) sample.
687 The filtered SVs were finally checked manually in IGV to reduce false-positives and we

688 excluded SVs present in the tail sample, with no visible change in the read-depth (for
689 duplications and deletions), and/or with many base substitutions in the region.
690
691 **Genome-wide copy number profiles of *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT mouse organoid cultures**
692 To generate a virtual karyotype, genome-wide copy number states were determined using
693 FreeC v7.2 with settings 'ploidy 2', 'window 1000' and 'telocentromeric 50000' (Boeva et al.
694 2012). Subsequently, the average copy number across bins of 500,000 bp was calculated
695 and plotted to assess genome stability.
696
697 **Base substitution types**
698 We retrieved the base substitution types from all the filtered VCF files, converted them to the
699 6 types of base substitutions that are distinguished by convention, and generated a mutation
700 spectrum (the C>T changes at NpCpG sites are considered separately from C>T changes at
701 other sites) for the four ASC groups (*Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ liver, *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ small intestine, WT liver, and WT
702 small intestine), as well as *XPC*^{KO}, *XPC*^{WT}1, *XPC*^{WT}2, and *XPC*^{WT}3 ASCs. X^2-tests were
703 performed to determine whether the mutation spectra differ significantly between (1) mouse
704 WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ liver ASCs, and (2) mouse WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ small intestinal ASCs. *P* values
705 were corrected for multiple testing using Benjamini-Hochberg FDR correction, and
706 differences in mutation rates between *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT mouse ASCs with $q < 0.05$ were
707 considered significant.
708 We retrieved the sequence context for all base substitutions to generate the 96-
709 channel mutational profiles for each assessed ASC. Subsequently, the centroid of the 96-
710 channel mutational profiles was calculated per mouse ASC group. Pairwise cosine
711 similarities of all 96-channel mutational profiles and of all centroids were computed. We also
712 calculated the cosine similarities of the 96-channel mutational profiles and centroids with all
713 30 COSMIC mutational signatures (http://cancer.sanger.ac.uk/cosmic/signatures)
714 (Supplemental Fig. S7). These analyses were performed with the R package
715 MutationalPatterns (Blokzijl et al. 2018).

716

717 ***De novo* mutational signature extraction**

718 We extracted two signatures using non-negative matrix factorization (NMF) from the 96-
719 channel mutational profiles of the mouse ASCs. Although the number of base substitutions is
720 low for this dimension reduction approach, it does provide an unbiased method to
721 characterize the mutational processes that have been active in the ASCs. Subsequently, we
722 computed the absolute contribution of these *de novo* extracted signatures to the centroids of
723 the mouse ASC groups. We also calculated the cosine similarity of these two mutational
724 signatures to the 30 COSMIC mutational signatures
725 (http://cancer.sanger.ac.uk/cosmic/signatures) and to the 96-channel centroid of six small
726 intestinal ASCs from two old mice that was published previously (Behjati et al. 2014). These
727 analyses were performed with MutationalPatterns (Blokzijl et al. 2018).

728

729 **Quantification of the contribution of COSMIC mutational signatures to the 96-channel**
730 **mutational profiles**

731 We estimated the contribution of the 30 COSMIC mutational signatures
732 (http://cancer.sanger.ac.uk/cosmic/signatures) to the centroids of each mouse ASC group
733 and to the 96-channel mutational profiles of the human organoids using MutationalPatterns
734 (Blokzijl et al. 2018) (Supplemental Fig. S6B, Supplemental Fig. S10B). We ranked the
735 COSMIC signatures based on the total contribution of these signatures to the centroids of
736 the mouse samples. Next, we iteratively reconstructed the centroids of the ASC groups, first
737 using the top 2 COSMIC signatures, and in each iteration the next COSMIC signature was
738 included until all 30 signatures were used. The cosine similarity was calculated between the
739 original and the reconstructed centroid for each mouse ASC group (Supplemental Fig. S6A).
740 As expected, the addition of more signatures increases the similarity of the reconstructed
741 centroids with the original centroids, but after 10 COSMIC signatures the cosine similarities
742 plateau (Supplemental Fig. S6A). Therefore, we used the signature contribution with this
743 subset of 10 COSMIC signatures to the centroids of the four ASC groups (Fig. 3B-C).

744

745 **Determination of the statistical significance of differences in signature contributions**

746 A bootstrap resampling - similar to that performed in (Zou et al. 2018) - was applied to
747 generate 7,000 replicas of the 96-channel mutational profile of each WT liver ASC (n = 3),
748 which yielded 21,000 WT liver replicas in total. Subsequently, 3 replicas were randomly
749 selected and the relative contribution of 30 COSMIC signatures was determined for their
750 centroid. Euclidean distance d_{WT} was calculated between the relative signature contributions
751 of the replicas centroid and that of the original centroid. This was repeated 10,000 times to
752 construct a distribution of d_{WT} (Supplemental Figure 6C). Next, the threshold distance with *P*
753 value = 0.05, $d_{WT_0.05}$, was identified. The same approach was taken to generate 7,000
754 replicas of each *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ (MUT) liver ASC (n = 3) and construct a distribution of d_{MUT}
755 (Supplemental Figure 6C). The Euclidean distance *d* between the relative signature
756 contributions of the original WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ liver centroids were considered to be
757 significantly different when $d > d_{MUT}$ and $d > d_{WT}$. Similarly, bootstrap distributions were
758 generated for WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ (MUT) small intestine (Supplemental Figure 6D), with the
759 exception that for the generation of the d_{MUT} distribution only 2 replicas were randomly
760 selected in each permutation, as there are only 2 WT small intestinal ASC samples in the
761 original set. Finally, we repeated the same analyses for the relative contributions of the
762 subset of 10 COSMIC signatures for both liver (Supplemental Figure 6E) and small intestine
763 (Supplemental Figure 6F).

764

765 **Enrichment or depletion of base substitutions in genomic regions**

766 To test whether the base substitutions appear more or less frequently than expected in
767 genes, promoters, promoter-flanking, and enhancer regions, we loaded the UCSC Known
768 Genes tables as TxDb objects for Mm10 (Team BC and Maintainer 2016) and Hg19
769 (Carlson and Maintainer 2015), and the regulatory features for Mm10 and Hg19 from
770 Ensembl using biomaRt (Durinck et al. 2005, 2009). We tested for enrichment or depletion of
771 base substitutions in the genomic regions per ASC group (*Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ liver, *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ small

772 intestine, WT liver, WT small intestine, *XPC*^{KO} and *XPC*^{WT}) using a one-sided Binomial test
773 with MutationalPatterns (Blokzijl et al. 2018), which corrects for the surveyed genomic areas
774 (Supplemental Fig. S9A, Supplemental Fig. S10C). Two-sided Poisson tests were performed
775 to test for significant differences in the ratio of base substitutions within a genomic region
776 divided by the total number of base substitutions between (1) mouse WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ liver
777 ASCs and (2) mouse WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ small intestinal ASCs (Supplemental Fig. S9A).
778 Differences in mutation rates with $q < 0.05$ (Benjamini-Hochberg FDR multiple-testing
779 correction) were considered significant.

780 To test whether base substitutions occur more frequently in more highly expressed
781 genes in the NER-deficient mouse ASCs, we first selected base substitutions that occurred
782 within genes in the mouse ASCs. Per ASC group, we next determined the average Reads
783 Per Kilobase per Million mapped reads (RPKM) of these genes. Two-sided *t*-tests were
784 performed to test for significant difference in the average expression of genes that carry a
785 somatic mutation between (1) mouse WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ liver ASCs, and (2) mouse WT and
786 *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ small intestinal ASCs (Supplemental Fig. S9B). Differences in gene expression
787 distributions with $q < 0.05$ (Benjamini-Hochberg FDR multiple-testing correction) were
788 considered significant.

789

790 **Transcriptional strand bias of base substitutions**

791 For the base substitutions within genes we determined whether the mutations are located on
792 the transcribed or the non-transcribed strand. To this end, we determined whether the
793 mutated “C” or “T” base is on the same strand as the gene definition, which is untranscribed,
794 or the opposite strand, which is transcribed. We generated a 192-channel mutational profile
795 per ASC group with the relative contribution of each mutation type with separate bars for the
796 mutations on the transcribed and untranscribed strand, and calculated the significance of the
797 strand bias using a two-sided Poisson test with MutationalPatterns (Supplemental Fig. S9C,
798 Supplemental Fig. S10D) (Blokzijl et al. 2018). Furthermore, we performed two-sided
799 Poisson tests to test whether there is a significant difference in strand bias per mutation type

800 between (1) mouse WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ liver ASCs and (2) mouse WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ small
801 intestinal ASCs (Supplemental Fig. S9C). Differences in strand bias with an adjusted P-value
802 $q < 0.05$ (Benjamini-Hochberg FDR multiple-testing correction) were considered significant.
803
804 **Calculation and comparison of mutation rates**
805 To calculate the mutation rates per genome per week, we quantified the number of somatic
806 base substitutions, double nucleotide mutations, indels, and SVs for each mouse ASC.
807 Moreover, we quantified the number of base substitutions, double base substitutions and
808 Signature 8 mutations for the human ASCs. All event counts were extrapolated to the entire
809 autosomal genome using the callable genome length (see" Callable genome") for both
810 mouse and human ASCs to correct for differences in the surveyed genome. Subsequently,
811 the mutation rates were calculated by dividing the extrapolated number of mutations by the
812 number of weeks in which the mutations were accumulated (WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ mouse
813 organoids: 16 weeks (15 weeks during life and 1 week *in vitro*); *XPC*^{WT} human organoids:
814 20.6 weeks; *XPC*^{KO} human organoids 10.3 weeks). To determine the proportion of
815 additionally accumulated mutations in the *XPC*^{KO} culture that can be attributed to Signature 8
816 in human ASCs, we first calculated the increase in base substitutions and the increase in
817 Signature 8 mutations of *XPC*^{KO} compared to *XPC*^{WT}1, *XPC*^{WT}2, and *XPC*^{WT}3 separately. We
818 then divided the increase in Signature 8 mutations by the total increase in base substitutions.
819 Two-tailed *t*-tests were performed to determine whether the mutation rates differ
820 significantly between (1) mouse WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ liver ASCs, and (2) mouse WT and *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$
821 small intestinal ASCs. Of note, these tests assume that the data is normally distributed.
822 Differences in mutation rates between *Ercc1*$^{-/\Delta}$ and WT mouse ASCs with $q < 0.05$
823 (Benjamini-Hochberg FDR multiple-testing correction) were considered significant.
824
825 **Analysis of mutational patterns and signatures in breast cancer whole-genome**
826 **sequences**

827 344 breast cancer samples with publicly available SNV, indels, and CNV calls obtained from
828 tumor-normal samples were included in the analysis (Nik-Zainal et al, 2016). Samples with a
829 biallelic inactivation (biallelic deletion, biallelic nonsense, splice site, nonsynonymous
830 mutation or frameshift indel, or two or more independent mutations of these types) of at least
831 one NER-related gene (66 genes, (Pearl et al. 2015); GTF2H5 was excluded because of
832 missing CNV calls) are considered as NER-deficient. Samples with no copy number
833 depletions and no variants other than intronic SNVs and indels in any of the 66 NER-related
834 genes are considered as NER-proficient. The remaining 274 samples are considered as
835 having unknown NER-ability.

836 The number of base substitutions was extracted from each VCF file and a Wilcoxon
837 rank-sum test was performed to determine whether the number of base substitutions is
838 different between NER-proficient and NER-deficient samples. The 96-channel mutational
839 profile of each sample was generated as described in the section “Base substitution types”.
840 Subsequently, the 96-channel mutational profile of each sample was reconstructed using the
841 30 mutational signatures from COSMIC, as described in the section “Quantification of the
842 contribution of COSMIC mutational signatures to the 96-channel mutational profiles”.
843 Signatures with a contribution of < 10% in all 344 samples were excluded (signatures 4, 7,
844 10, 11, 14, 15, 22-25, 27, 28), and the 96-channel mutational profiles were finally
845 reconstructed using the remaining 18 signatures. The cosine similarity between the
846 observed 96-channel mutational profile and the reconstructed profile was above 0.95 for all
847 samples, which indicates a very good fit of the signatures.

848 Based on this, the number of mutations per signature was estimated for each
849 sample. Then, for each signature, the number of mutations was compared between the
850 NER-deficient and NER-proficient samples using the median difference (the median of all
851 pairwise differences between NER-deficient and NER-proficient samples). A Wilcoxon rank-
852 sum test was performed to determine whether the number of Signature 8 mutations differs
853 significantly between NER-deficient and NER-proficient breast tumors. Signature 20 is

excluded from the analysis, because none of the NER-deficient or NER-proficient samples have a contribution of Signature 20.

DATA ACCESS

The sequencing data of the mouse samples have been deposited at the European Nucleotide Archive under accession number ERP021379. The sequencing data of the human samples have been deposited at the European Genome-Phenome archive under accession numbers EGAS00001001682 and EGAS00001002681. Filtered VCF files are freely available at https://wgs11.op.umcutrecht.nl/NERdeficiency/

CODE AVAILABILITY

All analysis scripts are available at https://github.com/UMCUGenetics/NER-deficiency.git or https://github.com/johannabertl/BRCA_DNA_repair.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

M.J., E.K., M.V., N.B., and R.B. performed organoid culturing. N.B. and R.B. generated western blots and sequenced the organoid cultures. M.J., F.B., J.B., R.J., S.B., J.L., and R.B. performed bioinformatic analyses. M.J., F.B., E.K., J.S.P., J.H., J.P., R.B., and E.C. were involved in the conceptual design of this study. M.J., F.B., R.B., and E.C. wrote the manuscript.

882 **DISCLOSURE DECLARATION**

883 The authors have nothing to disclose.

884

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