FGFR1 is critical for *Rbl2* loss-driven tumor development and requires

PLCG1 activation for continued growth of small cell lung cancer

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Running Title: Oncogenic role of FGFR1 in SCLC

Abstract

Small cell lung cancer (SCLC) remains a recalcitrant disease; limited therapeutic options have not improved overall survival and approved targeted therapies are lacking. Amplification of the tyrosine kinase receptor FGFR1 (fibroblast growth factor receptor 1) is one of the few actionable alterations found in SCLC genome. However, efforts to develop targeted therapies for *FGFR1*-amplified SCLC are hindered by critical gaps in knowledge around the molecular origins and mediator of FGFR1-driven signalling and the physiological impact of targeting FGFR1. Here we demonstrate the oncogenic impact of increased FGFR1 on the malignant progression of precancerous cells and the necessity of nonamplified *FGFR1* for SCLC development and homeostasis. Unexpected dependency of *Rbl2* loss-driven tumor development on FGFR1 in autochthonous mouse models reveals a novel function of p130 (encoded by *Rbl2*), a member of the RB family of tumor suppressors, as a regulator of FGFR1 expression. Additionally, FGFR1-dependent SCLC cells require activation of PLCG1 for continued growth. Together, this study uncovers mechanisms of FGFR1-driven SCLC that involves p130 upstream and PLCG1 downstream and provides potential biomarkers for anti-FGFR1 therapeutic strategy.

Key Words: SCLC, FGFR1, RBL2, PLCG1, mouse model

Introduction

SCLC accounts for approximately 13% of all lung cancer and remains a recalcitrant disease. The standard chemotherapy of cisplatin and etoposide has not significantly improved overall survival in SCLC patients and the development of targeted therapies has been challenging due to the paucity of clinically viable targets (1). SCLC is mostly driven by loss of tumor suppressors, including near universal inactivation of RB and p53 and frequent loss of other tumor suppressors such as the RB family members p107 and p130 (coded by the *RBL1* and *RBL2*, respectively) (2, 3). Unfortunately, these loss-of-function alterations are not directly actionable. Although oncogenic alterations are less frequent in SCLC, gene amplifications of *FGFR1* are detected in approximately 6% of SCLC tumors and high FGFR1 expression is also detected in a subset of tumors without the gene amplification (2-6). Importantly, an FGFR-selective tyrosine kinase inhibitor (TKI) can inhibit the growth of SCLC cell lines with high FGFR1 expression (7-9). However, *FGFR1* amplification and high FGFR1 levels alone do not guarantee sensitivity to FGFR inhibitors (7-9). Intracellular mediators of FGFR1 signaling as well as other genetic alterations may modulate sensitivity to treatment, but these mechanisms remain poorly defined. For example, while the MEK-ERK pathway mediates oncogenic FGFR1 signaling in some SCLC cell lines, a hyperactive RAF-MEK-ERK pathway is tumor suppressive in others (10, 11). In addition, while AKT, STAT, and PLCG1 act as transducers downstream of FGFR1 during organ development, little is known of their roles in SCLC (12). Importantly, physiological

significance of FGFR1, either amplified or nonamplified, in SCLC has not formally

been determined using autochthonous model. The oncogenic role has also

recently been challenged by a study in which a constitutively active form of FGFR1

suppressed SCLC development in *Rb1/Trp53*-mutant genetically engineered

mouse model (*Rb1/Trp53*-GEMM) (13). Thus, there are critical gaps in knowledge

that need to be addressed not only to target FGFR1 in SCLC, but also to identify

SCLC patients in ongoing clinical trials who would benefit from anti-FGFR1

therapies.

Here, we characterize FGFR1 in SCLC using *Rb1/Trp53*-GEMM and its variants

in which adenoviral Cre (Ad-Cre)-mediated deletion of *Rb1* and *Trp53* results in

lung tumors recapitulating major histopathological features of human SCLC

(14,15). We also introduced genetic and chemical perturbations in primary tumor

cells (mSCLC) as well as precancerous neuroendocrine cells (preSC) derived from

the *Rb1/Trp53*-GEMM and that can transform into SCLC upon activation of

oncogenic drivers (16). Our data show that FGFR1 is required for the development

and growth of *Rbl2* loss-driven SCLC, and that this dependency is due to the

induction of FGFR1 expression. Furthermore, FGFR1 promotes tumor

development and growth via activation of PLCG1 and alteration in neural

differentiation. Taken together, our findings provide insight into the mechanism of

SCLC progression and potential biomarkers for identifying patients appropriate for

anti-FGFR1 therapies.

Materials and Methods

Plasmids and chemicals

All plasmids used in this study are listed in Supplementary Table 1. The sequences of shRNAs and gRNAs are listed in Supplementary Table 2 and 3. *Fgfr1* cDNA was cloned using total RNAs from murine SCLC cells and verified by Sanger sequencing. U73122 and U73343 were obtained from Cayman and PD173074 from Sigma.

Cell culture

Murine SCLC cells (mSCLC) and precancerous cells (preSC) were derived from lung tumors and early-stage neuroendocrine lesions, respectively, developed in the *Rb1/Trp53*-GEMM (16). Human SCLC cell lines (NCI-H82, NCI-H209, NCI-H524, also designated simply as H82, H209, H524) were obtained from ATCC. 293T cells were cultured in DMEM media and human and mouse cells were cultured in RPMI1640 media, both supplemented with 10% bovine growth serum (GE Healthcare) and 1% penicillin-streptomycin (Invitrogen). Puromycin (Thermo Fisher) was used to select stably transduced cells following lentiviral infection. For lentivirus production we transfected lentiviral plasmids with packaging plasmids in 293T cells using polyethylenimine (Sigma), harvested supernatants containing viral particles 48 and 72 hours later, filtered through 0.45μm PVDF filter before adding to culture of target cells in the presence of 5μg/ml polybrene (Sigma). To induce FGFR1 expression in *Fgfr1-preSC*, cells were treated with doxycycline

(0.2ug/mL). CRISPR-mediated knockout of *Rbl2* was achieved by transient

transfection of Cas9 and gRNA in a single vector using Lipofectamine 2000

(Invitrogen). Forty-eight hours later, transfected cells were enriched by FACS

sorting for red fluorescent protein expressed from the same vector. Sanger

sequencing verified mutation in the target sequence in *Rbl2* gene and immunoblot

validated loss of p130 coded by *Rbl2*. MTT assay was performed to measure cell

viability using thiazolyl blue tetrazolium bromide (Sigma). Cells were seeded at 1

$\times 10^4$ per well in 96-well plates at day 0, and MTT reagents were added on day 4.

O.D values were determined at a wavelength of 590 nm using an ELISA reader

(Thermo Scientific) The percentage survival was determined as the ratio of treated

cells versus vehicle control after background subtraction. Soft-agar assay was

performed by seeding 1×10^4 cells per well in 12-well plates as previously described

(16). Images of wells are acquired using Olympus MVX10 scope, and colonies

from the whole field of image were counted using the imaging software NIS-

Elements Basic Research (Nikon). All of the cell culture experiments were

performed in triplicates and repeated for a minimum of two biological replicates.

Tumor induction and allograft

Rb1^{lox/lox}; Trp53^{lox/lox} (*Rb1/Trp53*-GEMM) and *Rb1^{lox/lox}; Trp53^{lox/lox}; Rbl2^{lox/lox}*

(*Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2*-GEMM) have been previously described (14, 16). Mouse strains

with *Fgfr1^{lox}* and *Fgfr2^{lox}* alleles have been previously described (17, 18). For tumor

induction, lungs of 10-week-old mice were infected with adenoviral Cre via

intratracheal instillation as previously described and mice were aged 6 months

(19). For allograft experiment, we inject 5.0×10^5 control or *Fgfr1*-preSC in the flanks

of nude mice (*Foxn1^{nu/nu}*; Envigo) and 1.0×10^6 *Fgfr1^{lox/lox} Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2* murine

cells infected with Ad-Cre in the flanks of B6/129S F1 hybrid mice (Jackson

Laboratory). To induce FGFR1 expression in *Fgfr1*-preSC following implantation,

mice were fed doxycycline diet (625mg/kg, Envigo). Mice were maintained

according to guidelines from the National Institutes of Health. Animal procedures

were approved by the Animal Care and Use Committee at the University of

Virginia.

Histology, immunohistochemistry, and immunoblot

Mouse tissues were fixed in 4% paraformaldehyde in phosphate-buffered saline

before paraffin embedding. Five micrometer-thick tissue sections were stained

with hematoxylin and eosin staining and immunostaining as previously described

(16). For quantification of pHH3-positive cells, tumors of similar size and area were

included. For immunoblot analysis, protein was extracted from mouse tumor

tissues and human and murine cell lines in RIPA buffer. All primary and secondary

antibodies used are listed in Supplementary Table 4. Macroscopic images of lung

sections were acquired using Olympus MVX10. Images of H&E and

immunostained tissues were acquired using Nikon Eclipse Ni-U microscope.

Image analysis and automated quantification were performed using NIS-Elements

Basic Research (Nikon)

RNA sequencing and analysis

Sequencing libraries were generated by the Genome Analysis and Technology

Core at University of Virginia using oligo dT-purified mRNA from 500ng of total

RNA and the NEB Next Ultra RNA library preparation kit (New England Biolabs),

and 50-bp single-end sequencing was performed on Illumina NextSeq 500

platform (Illumina). The sequencing data have been deposited to the SRA

Database (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sra, identifier: PRJNA564798). Reads

were mapped to the Mus musculus genome assembly GRCm38 (mm10) using

TopHat and counts of reads map to each gene were obtained using HTSeq (20,

21). Differentially expressed genes regulated by FGFR1 were identified using

DESeq2 package (22). A regularized log-transformation was applied to the read

count data of all sequenced samples and resultant data were used for gene

ontology (GO) term analysis at DAVID Bioinformatics Resources

(https://david.ncifcrf.gov/home.jsp).

Statistical analysis

Using GraphPad Prism, the results were presented as the mean ± standard

deviation. and evaluated using an unpaired two-tailed Student's t-test. $p < 0.05$ was

considered statistically significant.

Results

Ectopic FGFR1 promotes progression of precancerous cells to SCLC

The lung tumors in *Rb1/Trp53*-GEMM, unlike a subset of human SCLC tumors,

have not shown *Fgfr1* amplification (3, 23). Instead, cell derivatives of these lung

tumors (murine SCLC, mSCLC) showed markedly higher levels of *Fgfr1* mRNA

and FGFR1 protein than precancerous cells (preSC) (Fig. 1A). To begin

determining the functional impact of these alterations on tumor development, we

expressed FGFR1 in preSC using a lentiviral vector and tested the transduced

cells for tumorigenic potential. Compared with control preSC infected with empty

vector, *Fgfr1*-preSC gave rise to more colonies in soft agar and more rapid

development of subcutaneous tumors in immunocompromised nude mice (Fig. 1B,

C). These subcutaneous tumors displayed histological features of SCLC including

distinct small-cell morphology with scanty cytoplasm and positive staining for the

neuroendocrine marker calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) (Fig. 1D). These

data suggest that FGFR1 overexpression is sufficient to promote tumorigenic

transformation of precancerous precursors.

Deletion of FGFR1 suppresses Rbl2-deficient SCLC

The physiological significance of FGFR1 in SCLC has not been formally validated

in autochthonous model. To begin testing whether FGFR1 is required for SCLC

development *in vivo*, we deleted *Fgfr1* in *Rb1/Trp53*-GEMM carrying *Fgfr1$^{lox/lox}$*

alleles using intratracheal instillation of Ad-Cre. We found that there was no

significant difference in tumor burden (tumor area/lung area) between $Fgfr1^{\Delta/\Delta}$ and

$Fgfr1^{+/+}$ Rb1/Trp53 controls (Fig. 2A). This indicates that in Rb1/Trp53-mutant

mSCLC, FGFR1 is likely dispensable for tumor development even though its

overexpression was sufficient for tumorigenic progression of Rb1/Trp53-mutant

preSC (Fig. 1). To validate this finding, we performed a similar experiment using

Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2-GEMM in which tumor development is initiated by the loss of Rbl2

(encoding p130, an RB family member) in addition to Rb1 and Trp53 (24). This

model represents a subset of human SCLC with loss of all three genes and

develops more than a dozen tumors with latency of 6 months as opposed to 1-2

tumors with latency of 9-12 months in Rb1/Trp53-GEMM, thus providing a robust

experimental system for measuring the effects of genetic or pharmacological

manipulation (25, 26). Intriguingly, $Fgfr1^{\Delta/\Delta}$ Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2 mice had significantly

less tumor burden than $Fgfr1^{+/+}$ Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2 mice (Fig. 2B). Further, lung

tumors in the in the $Fgfr1^{\Delta/\Delta}$ Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2 mice showed significantly less

staining for phosphorylated histone H3 (pHH3), a marker for mitotic cell, than

tumors in $Fgfr1^{+/+}$ Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2 mice (Fig. 2C). These findings suggest that loss

of FGFR1 suppresses tumor development through reduced proliferation.

To determine whether the decrease in tumor burden is truly due to loss of FGFR1,

we validated the recombination of all floxed alleles using genotyping PCR and

immunoblot of primary tumor cells from $Fgfr1^{\Delta/\Delta}$ Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2 mice. Primary

cells from one of four randomly selected $Fgfr1^{\Delta/\Delta}$ tumors expressed FGFR1 at a

level comparable to $Fgfr1^{+/+}$ tumor cells (Fig. 3A; Supplementary Fig. S1),

indicating incomplete recombination and retention of one $Fgfr1^{lox}$ allele.

Subsequently, these $Fgfr1^{\Delta/lox}$ cells were infected with Ad-Cre in culture,

completely lost FGFR1, and gave rise to fewer colonies in soft agar than uninfected

$Fgfr1^{\Delta/lox}$ cells or Ad-Cre-infected $Fgfr1^{+/+}$ cells (Fig. 3A). Immunoblot showed that

levels of cleaved Caspase 3 and PARP1 indicative for apoptosis markedly

increased in Ad-Cre-infected $Fgfr1^{\Delta/lox}$ cells relative to uninfected $Fgfr1^{\Delta/lox}$ cells

and Ad-Cre-infected $Fgfr1^{+/+}$ cells (Fig. 3B). Ad-Cre-infected $Fgfr1^{\Delta/lox}$ cells smaller

subcutaneous tumors than uninfected $Fgfr1^{\Delta/lox}$ cells (Fig. 3C). Similar to the

primary tumors with the same genotypes, allograft tumors derived from Ad-Cre-

infected $Fgfr1^{\Delta/lox}$ cells had significantly less pHH3-positive cells per tumor area

than those from uninfected cells (Fig. 3D; Supplementary Fig. S2). These findings

suggest that acute deletion of FGFR1 in tumor cells suppressed continued growth

of tumor cells through increased cell death and decreased proliferation.

Additionally, to determine whether this impact is driven specifically by FGFR1, we

used similar methods to examine the impact of deleting *Fgfr2* in the

Rb1/*Trp53*/*Rbl2*-GEMM. FGFR2 is expressed in the lung epithelium, and the

growth and survival of numerous tumor types appear to depend on *FGFR2*

amplification or deregulation (27-29). However, loss of *Fgfr2* did not result in

decreased tumor burden (Fig. 2C). Taken together, these findings suggest that

Rbl2 loss-driven tumor development depends specifically on FGFR1 signaling.

Loss of p130 induces FGFR1 and the receptor dependency in SCLC

To our knowledge, functional relationships between p130 and FGFR1 have never

been documented in cancer. However, p130 was found to repress *Fgfr1*

expression during muscle cell differentiation by co-binding with E2F4 at the *Fgfr1*

promoter (30). We thus surmised that *Rbl2* loss may amplify FGFR1 dependency

in SCLC by increasing FGFR1 expression levels. We first determined whether

p130 loss induces FGFR1 expression in preSC. We found that *Rbl2-KO* preSC

generated using CRIPSR showed a near-complete loss of p130 but did not induce

FGFR1 expression (Fig. 4A). Notably, however, subcutaneous tumors derived

from *Rbl2-KO* preSC showed a significant induction of FGFR1 compared to those

derived from *Rbl2-WT* preSC (Fig. 4B).

To determine whether this inverse correlation between p130 and FGFR1 levels

exists across molecular subtypes of SCLC cells, we examined the subcutaneous

tumors derived from variants of mutant preSC in which *Crebbp*, *Ep300*, or *Col22a1*

was mutated using CRISPR. Loss-of-function mutations in these genes are among

the most frequent alterations found in the SCLC genome and have been shown to

promote malignant progression of preSC (3, 31). Similar to *Rbl2-KO* tumors,

Crebbp-KO or *Ep300-KO* tumors expressed FGFR1 but lacked p130, whereas

Col22a1-KO tumor showed the opposite expression patterns (Fig. 4B).

Additionally, a survey of multiple primary tumors developed in *Rb1/Trp53*-GEMM

and *Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2*-GEMM showed a similar inverse correlation between p130

and FGFR1 expression (Fig. 4B).

We also tested whether p130 regulates FGFR1 expression in malignant SCLC

cells. CRISPR-mediated knockout of *Rbl2* increased *Fgfr1* mRNA and FGFR1

protein levels in mSCLC (Fig. 4C). Notably, subsequent shRNA-mediated

knockdown of *Fgfr1* in *Rbl2*-KO mSCLC cells resulted in these cells giving rise to

fewer colonies in soft agar than *Rbl2*-KO cells treated with a scrambled shRNA

control, whereas *Fgfr1* knockdown in *Rbl2-WT* cells did not impact colony-forming

ability (Fig. 4D). Taken together, these findings suggest that loss of p130 induces

FGFR1 expression and results in the dependency of tumor development on

FGFR1 signaling.

FGFR1-dependent SCLC cells require activation of PLCG1

To begin to identify intracellular mediators of FGFR1-driven SCLC development,

we examined the phosphorylation status of ERK1/2, AKT1, STAT1, and PLCG1,

major transducers downstream of FGFR1 during organ development (12).

Phosphorylation of AKT1 and PLCG1 increased in *Fgfr1*-preSC relative to control

preSC while that of ERK1/2 and STAT did not change, suggesting lack of activation

of ERK1/2 and STAT by FGFR1 (Fig. 5A). This finding was intriguing as FGFR1

signaling in SCLC has so far been linked to MEK-ERK pathway (32, 33). We

performed similar analysis on human SCLC lines with varying levels of FGFR1,

including H82, H209, and H524. Lentiviral shRNA-mediated knockdown of FGFR1

significantly reduced growth of H82 and H209 cells in soft agar and reduced

phosphorylation of PLCG1, but did not impact the growth of H524 colonies and

PLCG1 phosphorylation despite comparable levels of knockdown (Fig. 5B, C). In

all cell lines, phosphorylation levels of ERK1/2, AKT1, and STAT1 did not change

regardless of FGFR1 expression, further demonstrating a specific functional

relationship between FGFR1 and PLCG1 in SCLC (Fig. 5C).

To determine the significance of PLCG1 activation in SCLC cells, we tested effects

of U73122, a chemical inhibitor of PLCG1, and its structural analog U73344 as an

innocuous control (34). Compared with control, U73122 reduced viability of H82

and H209 cells in a dose-dependent manner (Fig. 5D) and suppressed their ability

to give rise to colonies in soft agar (Fig. 5D). However, these effects of U73122

were not seen for H524 (Fig. 5D), consistent with the observation that this cell line

does not respond to FGFR1 for growth. Importantly, treatment of a pan-FGFR

inhibitor PD173074 did not affect viability in the tested SCLC lines (Fig. 5D). Taken

together, these data suggest that PLCG1 mediates FGFR1 signaling to promote

tumorigenic progression of preSC and continued growth of SCLC cells

independently of ERK1/2, AKT1, and STAT1.

To further explore the mechanism by which FGFR1 drives tumor growth, we

performed RNA sequencing and analyzed a total of 1823 genes that were

differentially expressed (DE) in *Fgfr1*-preSC (Fig. 6A; Supplementary Data 1).

Gene ontology (GO) analysis of DE genes indicated enrichment of GO terms for

cell cycle/mitosis and neuron differentiation and development (Fig. 6B;

Supplementary Data 2). The GO terms related to neuron differentiation were

further enriched in top 228 DE genes (with 1.5-fold or higher changes in

expression) (Fig. 6C; Supplementary Data 3). Enrichment of these GO terms

reflected the upregulation of *Rhoa*, *Gli3*, *Etv4*, *Arx*, and *Lif* and downregulation of

Nefl, *Chl1*, *Dcx* , *Dcc*, *Slitrk3*, *Nr2e1*, and *Bdnf* (Fig. 6A). These results suggest

that, in addition to promoting cell cycle, FGFR1 signaling regulates neural

differentiation in cells progressing from precancerous neuroendocrine cells to

neuroendocrine tumor. This observation is consistent with established roles of

FGFR1 in proliferation of neural progenitor cells and neural development (35), and

with recent studies showing that dysregulation in neural differentiation is a major

event associated with SCLC progression (36, 37).

Discussion

Here we report for the first time a direct role for nonamplified FGFR1 in SCLC development. *Fgfr1* knockout significantly inhibited tumor growth in various SCLC models, notably in human SCLC lines that have previously shown little sensitivity to existing pharmacological inhibitors (8). While previous studies utilizing FGFR1 inhibition in human cell lines have focused on *FGFR1* amplification as a biomarker for drug sensitivity, our findings suggest that FGFR1 expression may confer sensitivity as well, including in subtypes that lack *FGFR1* amplification.

Little is known about regulators of FGFR1 expression in cancer, and further study of these regulators would provide insight into the heterogeneity in FGFR1 dependency among SCLC patient tumors. Our study shows that p130 loss, found in a subset of SCLC patient tumors, induces FGFR1 expression and is sufficient to render p130-deficient mouse tumor dependent on the receptor. The role of p130 loss in FGFR1 induction is permissive as it appears to require additional unknown factor present in transforming or malignant cells, which may not be present in preSC. During myogenesis, *Fgfr1* expression is induced in myoblast by complexes containing the Sp1 transcription factor, RB family member p107, and E2F4, and is inhibited in myogenic cells by p130-E2F4 complexes (30). While Sp1, RB family member p107, and E2F4 are variably expressed in SCLC (11, 38, 39), their involvement in the regulation of FGFR1 is not known, and it will be interesting to assess whether these factors also impact FGFR1 dependency.

Despite the importance of FGFR1 as a prognostic and therapeutic biomarker, the intracellular pathways downstream of FGFR1 have been poorly defined. Our findings indicate that PLCG1 is a critical mediator of FGFR1 signaling in SCLC whereas other pathways, including the ERK pathway, do not appear consistently engaged. PLCG1 is a member of the phospholipase C (PLC) family of enzymes. When activated by growth factor receptors, PLCG1 hydrolyzes phosphatidylinositol 4,5-bisphsphate (PIP_2) to generate inositol 1,4,5-triphosphate (IP_3) and diacylglycerol (DAG). IP_3 then trigger Ca^{2+} release and signaling while DAG activates protein kinase C (PKC), giving rise to various intracellular signaling cascades that control proliferation, differentiation, morphology, and migration in multiple cell types (40). The functional impact of the interaction between FGFR1 and PLCG1 has remained poorly understood. Almost two decades ago, the first reports establishing their interaction suggested that it is not critical for mitogenesis (41, 42). More recently, PLCG1 has been shown to mediate FGFR1 signaling in maintaining the differentiation capacity of adult neural stem cells (43). Our data show that PLCG1 activation cooccurs with transcriptomic change related to neural differentiation during FGFR1-driven tumorigenesis, and thus suggest a role for PLCG1 in regulating neuroendocrine differentiation in SCLC. Our findings help add SCLC to the growing list of malignancies in which the activity of PLCG1 is implicated and indicate PLCG1 as a potential therapeutic target in SCLC (44-48).

Our findings are in line with those of previous studies in which the activation of

ERK1/2 and AKT varied among SCLC primary tumors and did not strongly

correlate with disease-free or overall survival (49, 50). The role of the ERK pathway

in FGFR signaling in SCLC remains unclear. A hyperactive RAF-MEK-ERK

pathway has been shown to be tumor-suppressive in SCLC cell lines, in contrast

to the oncogenic role of this pathway in non-small cell lung cancer cells (10, 11).

Further, in a recent study in *Rb1/Trp53-GEMM*, constitutive FGFR1 activation

suppressed the development of SCLC originating from CGRP-positive

neuroendocrine cells while promoting the tumor development from keratin 14

(K14)-positive airway epithelial cells (13). These studies suggest that whether

FGFR1 and the ERK pathway are oncogenic in SCLC may depend on cell of origin.

Importantly, our findings demonstrate an oncogenic role for FGFR1 in SCLC

tumors with neuroendocrine origin. We surmised that differences in FGFR1

dependency may be due to on the extent of signaling from constitutively active

versus wild-type of FGFR1 and the interactions between FGFR1 and its signal

transducers.

Taken together, our identification of two novel players in in FGFR1 signaling,

PLCG1 and p130, shed light on the mechanism of FGFR1-driven SCLC

development and homeostasis, and may facilitate the development of biomarkers

for SCLC subtypes appropriate for FGFR1-targeted therapies, as well as targeted

therapeutic strategies for SCLC.

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 Figure Legends

Fig. 1. Increased FGFR1 promotes SCLC development

(A) RT-qPCR and immunoblot for *Fgfr1* mRNA normalized to *ARBPP0* and

FGFR1 protein in preSC and mSCLC (n=3 replicates per cell type). GAPDH blot

verifies equal loading of total proteins. **(B)** Left, expression of FGFR1 in preSC

infected with empty vector (control preSC) or an FGFR1 expression construct

(*Fgfr1*-preSC); ACTB blot verifies equal loading of total proteins. Middle,

representative images of soft agar colonies formed by control and *Fgfr1*-preSC.

Right, quantification of colonies >0.2mm in diameter (unpaired t-test n=3 replicates

per cell type). **(C)** Left, representative image of subcutaneous tumors (arrow) in

athymic nude mice (n=5 mice per cell type). Right, quantification of tumor

development of subcutaneous tumors >1.5cm in diameter (unpaired t-test n=5

mice per cell type); Relative tumor growth represents tumor weight (g) divided by

latency (days after allograft). **(D)** Representative image of hematoxylin-eosin

(H&E) stained section of *Fgfr1*-preSC-derived subcutaneous tumors and, right, of

immunostaining for calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP, green). DAPI stains for

nuclei (blue). Asterisk indicates non-tumor area. Statistical tests performed using

unpaired t-test (ns: not significant). Scale bars: B, 5mm; D, 100μm. Error bars

represent standard deviation.

Fig. 2. Deletion of *Fgfr1* suppresses SCLC development in vivo

Left, representative images of H&E stained or immunostained sections of the lungs

from different SCLC GEMMs and right, quantification of tumor burden (tumor

area/lung area) or phosphorylated histone H3 (pHH3)-positive cells per tumor area

in **(A)** *Fgfr1$^{+/+}$ vs. Fgfr1$^{\Delta/\Delta}$ Rb1/Trp53* (n=6 and n=6, respectively), **(B, C)** *Fgfr1$^{+/+}$*

vs. Fgfr1$^{\Delta/\Delta}$ Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2 (n=10 and n=10, respectively); in panel **C**, pHH3 stain

in green and DAPI in blue. Arrows indicate pHH3-positive nuclei, **(D)** *Fgfr2$^{+/+}$ vs.*

Fgfr2$^{\Delta/\Delta}$ Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2 n=7 and n=5, respectively). Statistical tests performed

using unpaired t-test (ns: not significant). Error bars represent standard deviation.

Scale bars: A, B, D, 5mm; C, 50μm.

Fig. 3. FGFR1 is critical for continued growth of tumor cells

(A) Left, immunoblot for FGFR1 in primary cells derived from the lung tumors in

Fgfr1$^{+/+}$ and *Fgfr1$^{lox/lox}$ Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2*-GEMM infected with Ad-Cre. The cells

from one of the   *Fgfr1$^{lox/lox}$* mice show little reduction of FGFR1, indicating

incomplete recombination of floxed *Fgfr1* alleles (*Fgfr1$^{\Delta/lox}$*). Following Ad-Cre

infection, these cells completely lose FGFR1 expression. Middle, representative

images of soft agar colonies formed by *Fgfr1$^{+/+}$* and *Fgfr1$^{\Delta/lox}$ Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2* cells

in soft agar 3 weeks following Ad-Cre infection. Right, quantification of colonies

>0.2mm in diameter (n=3 replicates per cell type). **(B)** Immunoblot for cleaved and

total Caspase 3 and PARP1 in *Fgfr1$^{+/+}$* and *Fgfr1$^{\Delta/lox}$ Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2* cells with or

without Ad-Cre infection. Cleaved proteins are a marker for apoptosis and FGFR1

blot verifies loss of FGFR1 expression in Ad-Cre infected *Fgfr1$^{\Delta/lox}$* cells. GADPH

blot verifies equal loading of total proteins. **(C)** Top, volumes of tumors (n=6)

generated from subcutaneous injection of *Fgfr1$^{\Delta/lox}$ Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2* cells with or

without Ad-Cre infection. Bottom, quantification of tumor development of

subcutaneous tumors >1.5cm in diameter; relative tumor growth represent tumor

weight (g) divided by latency (days after allograft). **(D)** Quantification of pHH3

staining in allograft tumors derived from *Fgfr1$^{\Delta/lox}$ Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2* cells with or

without Ad-Cre infection. Statistical tests performed using unpaired t-test. Error

bars represent standard deviation.

Fig. 4. p130 loss induces FGFR1 expression and dependency

(A) Immunoblots for FGFR1 and p130 in control and *Rbl2-KO* preSC (left) and in

preSC-derived subcutaneous tumors (right). **(B)** Immunoblots for FGFR1 and p130

in the subcutaneous tumors generated from control and various targeted preSC

(top) and in primary lung tumors developed in *Rb1/Trp53*-mutant and

Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2-mutant GEMMs (bottom). Asterisk indicates a non-specific band.

(**C**) Left, RT-qPCR for *Fgfr1* mRNA normalized to *ARBPP0*. Right, immunoblots

for FGFR1 and p130 in control and *Rbl2-KO* preSC. (**D**) Left, immunoblots for

FGFR1 in control and *Rbl2-KO* preSC after shRNA-mediated knockdown of *Fgfr1*.

Middle, representative images of soft agar colonies formed by control and *Fgfr1*-

knockdown cells. Right, quantification of colonies >0.2mm in diameter (n=3 per cell

type). ACTB blot verifies equal loading of total proteins. Statistical tests performed

using unpaired t-test (ns: not significant). Error bar represents standard deviation.

Scale bar: 5mm.

Fig. 5. FGFR1-dependent SCLC cells require activation of PLCG1

(A) Immunoblot for phosphorylated forms and respective total protein in control and *Fgfr1*-preSC. ACTB blot verifies equal loading of total proteins. **(B)** Representative images of soft agar colonies formed from human SCLC lines with FGFR1 knockdown (top) and quantification of colonies >0.2mm in diameter (bottom) (n=3 replicates per cell type). **(C)** Immunoblot for phosphorylated and respective total protein in human SCLC lines with FGFR1 knockdown. **(D)** Left, viability of human SCLC lines treated with U73122 (PLCG1 inhibitor) and U73343 (innocuous analog of U73122) once for 4 days, as measured by MTT assay. Middle, representative images of soft agar culture of human SCLC lines treated with 1µM U73122 and U73343 every three days for 14 days (H82 and H524) or 21 days (H209) and quantification of colonies (>0.2mm) in diameter (n=3 replicates per cell line). Right, viability of human SCLC lines treated with PD173074 (pan-FGFR inhibitor) once for 4 days, as measured by MTT assay. Statistical tests performed using unpaired t-test (ns: not significant). Error bar represents standard deviation. Scale bars: 5mm.

Fig. 6. FGFR1 induces transcriptome-wide change in the expression of genes involved in proliferation and differentiation

(A) Volcano plot showing differential gene expression between control and *Fgfr1*-preSC; changes in gene expression are significant above the red horizontal line, with an FDR-adjusted *p*-value < 0.05, and red and blue dots indicate genes with a an 1.5-fold or higher increase or decrease in expression. FDR: false discovery rate.

488 **(B),** Gene ontology (GO) terms enriched in genes differentially expressed (DE) in

489 *Fgfr1*-preSC relative to control preSC (FDR-adjusted *p*-value < 0.05). Bottom**,**

490 summary of GO terms enriched in top DE genes with an 1.5-fold or higher increase

491 or decrease in expression.

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Fig. 1

A

Relative levels of *Fgfr1* mRNA
preSC, mSCLC

preSC mSCLCs
FGFR1
GAPDH

B

control preSC *Fgfr1* preSC
FGFR1
ACTB

control preSC *Fgfr1*-preSC

% colony number
p<0.01
control preSC *Fgfr1* preSC

C

control preSC
Fgfr1-preSC

Relative tumor growth
p<0.05
control preSC *Fgfr1* preSC

D

H&E CGRP DAPI

Fig. 2

A

Rb1/Trp53-mutant

Fgfr1+/+   *Fgfr1Δ/Δ*

ns

Relative tumor burden

Fgfr1+/+   *Fgfr1Δ/Δ*

B

Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2-mutant

Fgfr1+/+   *Fgfr1Δ/Δ*

p< 0.01

Relative tumor burden

Fgfr1+/+   *Fgfr1Δ/Δ*

C

Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2-mutant

Fgfr1+/+   *Fgfr1Δ/Δ*

p< 0.01

Relative number of pHH3-positive cells per tumor area

Fgfr1+/+   *Fgfr1Δ/Δ*

D

Rb1/Trp53/Rbl2-mutant

Fgfr2+/+   *Fgfr2Δ/Δ*

ns

Relative tumor burden

Fgfr2+/+   *Fgfr2Δ/Δ*

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Fig. 6

A

B

GO terms enriched in total DEs	# terms
Neural differentiation, morphogenesis, axonogenesis	15
Cell morphogenesis, differentiation, development	9
Cell cycle, cell division, proliferation	6
Kinase activity, phosphorylation, regulation of kinase	6
Adhesion	2
Cell motion, migration	2
Translation	1
Regulation of transferase activity	1
Regulation of cellular compartment size	1

GO terms enriched in top DEs	# terms
Neural differentiation, morphogenesis, axonogenesis	6
Cell morphogenesis, differentiation, development	4