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## Understanding the Role of Fatty Acid Metabolism in Hematological Malignancies Through the Lens of the Acyl-COA Synthetase Long Chain Isozyme Family

Connor Murphy University of Maine, connor.s.murphy@maine.edu

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# **UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF FATTY ACID METABOLISM IN HEMATOLOGICAL MALIGNANCIES THROUGH THE LENS OF THE ACYL-COA SYNTHETASE LONG CHAIN**

#### **ISOZYME FAMILY**

By Connor Spencer Murphy B.S. Brandeis University, 2014

A DISSERTATION Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (in Biomedical Science)

> The Graduate School The University of Maine May 2024

Advisory Committee:

Michaela R. Reagan, Advisor, Faculty Scientist II, MaineHealth Institute for Research Chair: Calvin P. H. Vary, Faculty Scientist III, MaineHealth Institute for Research Thomas Gridley, Faculty Scientist III, MaineHealth Institute for Research Benjamin King, Associate Professor, University of Maine Orono Robert Koza, Faculty Scientist II, MaineHealth Institute for Research Lucy Liaw, Faculty Scientist III, MaineHealth Institute for Research

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# **UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF FATTY ACID METABOLISM IN HEMATOLOGICAL MALIGNANCIES THROUGH THE LENS OF THE ACYL-COA SYNTHETASE LONG CHAIN**

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By Connor Spencer Murphy

Dissertation Advisor: Dr. Michaela Reagan

An Abstract of the Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (in Biomedical Science) May 2024

Multiple myeloma (MM) is an incurable cancer of plasma cells with a 5-year survival rate of 60%. Obesity correlates with increased incidence of MM and high body mass index correlates with a poor treatment response. Studies of obesity and myeloma are mainly at the epidemiological level and have not extensively explored the molecular mechanisms of this relationship. Therefore, there is a critical need to understand how obesity contributes to support cancers such as MM. The intersection of obesity and MM and the largely understudied role of fatty acid (FA) metabolism in MM cells motivated the immediate goals of this work: to identify the molecular components of FA metabolism that contribute to MM cell survival and proliferation and understand the mechanisms of how those components contribute MM cell fitness. To help combat MM cell drug resistance, the ultimate goal of this research is to identify novel therapeutic targets in MM cells and possibly other hematological malignancies.

To achieve our goals, we used bioinformatic approaches to first identify candidate FA metabolism genes and molecular phenotyping and unbiased

transcriptomic and proteomic approaches to understand the mechanisms of the phenotypes that were observed. An *in vitro* system of human cell lines of both MM and acute myeloid leukemia and of human bone marrow adipocytes differentiated from human mesenchymal stem cells was used.

This body of work provides evidence that the acyl-CoA synthetase long chain family members (ACSLs) support MM cell mitochondrial function, survival, and proliferation. The ACSL family convert free long-chain fatty acids into fatty acyl-CoA esters and play key roles in catabolic and anabolic fatty acid metabolism. Here, we show that inhibition of ACSLs in human myeloma cell lines using the pharmacological inhibitor Triascin C (TriC) causes apoptosis and decreases proliferation in a dose- and time-dependent manner, induces a transcriptome associated with the integrated stress response and cell death, a proteomic and functional profile associated with mitochondrial dysfunction. This work demonstrates that targeting the ACSL family in MM cells holds promise as a novel therapeutic target and warrants additional mechanistic studies to understand how the ACSL family MM cells respond to terminal stressors.

### **DEDICATION**

To all those who are fighting cancer, their families, and healthcare providers. For all those lost and found.

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#### **1. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

#### <span id="page-15-1"></span><span id="page-15-0"></span>**1.1.Multiple Myeloma (MM)**

Multiple myeloma (**MM**) is an incurable hematological malignancy that is characterized by the clonal expansion of plasma cells with a 60% 5-year survival rate<sup>1</sup>. MM is the second most common hematological malignancy with an estimated number of 35,780 newly diagnosed cases in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>. The cause of MM is unknown, however, risk factors include: dioxin (Agent Orange) exposure<sup>2</sup>, career as a firefighter<sup>3</sup>, being of the male sex $^4$ , age $^4$  and obesity $^{5-7}$ . In the U.S., Black individuals are more at risk of developing MM than other populations $8$ .

MM cells secrete monoclonal free light chains of immunoglobulin (**FLC**, most commonly kappa (κ) or (γ) gamma sub-types) into the serum, deemed M protein<sup>9</sup>. The measurement of M protein (commonly the ratio of κ FLC / γ FLC or *vice versa*) is a key diagnostic and prognostic factor positively correlated with MM progression<sup>9,10</sup>. One subtype is produced monoclonally and this is deemed the "involved" FLC and can be determined by the FLC ratio. There is strong evidence that MM is always preceded by a non-symptomatic premalignant condition, monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (**MGUS**) <sup>11</sup>. Clinically, MGUS is characterized by the serum M protein < 3 g per dL, urinary monoclonal protein, < 500 mg per 24 hours, < 10% bone marrow (**BM**) plasma cells, and without "clinical manifestations or other laboratory abnormalities attributable to monoclonal gammopathy" <sup>12</sup> (See **Table 1** for comparisons of the clinical parameters of the stages of MM). MGUS is present in 3% of people over 50 years old and its frequency increases with  $age^{13}$ . The risk of developing MM for MGUS patients

increases between  $0.5-3%$  annually<sup>14,15</sup>, therefore patients must be closely monitored for evidence for progression to the next stage of MM.

The next stage in MM progression, smoldering multiple myeloma (**SMM**), is defined by serum levels of M protein ≥ 3 g per dL, ≥ 500 mg per 24 hours, ≥10% bone marrow plasma cells and without "clinical manifestations or other laboratory abnormalities attributable to monoclonal gammopathy" <sup>12</sup>. Patients with SMM have a risk of progression to MM of 10% per year in the first 5 years of diagnosis, with the time to progression to MM ranging from 2-19 years (median time to progression = 4.7 years)14,16. SMM patients with the highest risk of progression have three key clinical characteristics: > 20 serum FLC ratio, serum M protein levels > 2 g per dL and > 20% bone marrow PCs<sup>17,18</sup>. Treatment of high-risk SMM patients has been shown to increase the time to progression to MM, the 3-year survival rate and partial response to treatment or better in 79% of patients<sup>19–21</sup>. Despite improvements in our understanding and clinical management of SMM, 50% patients with high-risk SMM develop MM within 2 years<sup>14,16</sup>.

MM is diagnosed if patients have ≥ 10% bone marrow plasma cells and at least one end-organ damage event attributable to plasma cell neoplasm (hypercalcemia, renal dysfunction, anemia or bone lesions, **CRAB**) or myeloma-defining event (clonal BM plasma cells ≥60%, ratio of involved to uninvolved FLC ≥100 and involved FLC of ≥ 0.001 g per dL, or >1 focal lesion on magnetic resonance imaging (**MRI**) ≥5 mm (**Table 1**) 12,22. Focal lesions are areas in which plasma cells accumulate and are detectable via MRI or <sup>18</sup> fluoro-deoxyglucose positron emission tomography computed tomography

(**FDG PET-CT**) <sup>23</sup>. Although MM remains incurable, modern therapies improved the 5 year survival rate by nearly two-fold between 2000 and 2016 from 35.6% to 60.6% $8$ .

Treatment of MM primarily aims to prolong survival and mitigate disease and treatment-related complications to improve the quality of life of the patient. Reducing the number of malignant plasma cells in the BM has been shown to improve treatment outcomes of MM<sup>24</sup> and therefore is the primary goal of most MM treatments. To treat MM, clinicians utilize a combination of glucocorticoids<sup>25–28</sup> (*i.e.* dexamethasone<sup>25</sup>), proteasome inhibitors (*i.e.* bortezomib<sup>29,30</sup>, ixazomib<sup>31,32</sup>, and carfilzomib<sup>33–36</sup>), immunomodulatory agents (**IMID**s, *i.e.* thalidomide, lenalidomide, and pomalidomide), monoclonal antibodies against MM/PC-specific antigens *(i.e. daratumumab*<sup>37-41</sup>) , isatuximab and iotuzumab42,43), selective inhibitors of nuclear export (**SINE**s, selinexor<sup>44</sup>), alkylating agents (*i.e.* melphalan and cyclophophamide<sup>45</sup>), autologous stem cell transplant (ASCT), antibody-drug conjugates (*i.e.* belantamab mafodotin<sup>46</sup>) and chimeric antigen receptor T cell (CAR-T, *i.e.* idecabtagene vicleucel<sup>47,48</sup>) therapy. See **Table 2** for more information about the mechanism of action of each treatment. Despite the myriad of treatments available, all MM patients develop drug resistance.

Treatment resistant MM is commonly referred to as relapsed and/or refractory multiple myeloma (**RRMM**). Refractory myeloma occurs when patients are not responsive to therapy within the last 60 days of the last line of therapy $49$ . Relapsed myeloma is defined as a patient whose MM cells are non-responsive to the current therapy and require a new therapeutic regime $49$ . MM patients are closely monitored for drug responsiveness so treatments can be personalized. More granular details of defining responsiveness to treatment are reviewed here<sup>49–51</sup>. Genetic heterogeneity of

MM cells and the BM microenvironment are some of the most significant contributors to drug resistance in MM.

Individuals with a family member with MM have a 2-4-fold increased risk of developing MM<sup>52</sup> . Indeed, genome-wide association studies (**GWAS**) of >4,600 MM patients and 10,990 healthy individuals identified seven loci that are associated with a moderate increase the risk of developing MM<sup>53,54</sup>. Together these mutated loci accounted for close to 13% of the familial risk of MM and interestingly were associated with increased risk of developing MGUS $^{53-55}$ . The genetic burden in MM is progressive and dynamic; there are primary mutations and throughout disease progression there are treatment-dependent and independent mutations<sup>56</sup>. The primary events that occur that most commonly translocations of oncogenic driver genes (cyclin D1; *CCND1*57,58 *,* fibroblast growth factor receptor 3/multiple myeloma suppressor of variegation, Enhancer of zeste, and Trithorax; *FGFR3 /MMSET*59,60 *,* cyclin D3; *CCND3*<sup>61</sup> *,* musculoaponeurotic fibrosarcoma bZIP transcription factor; *MAF*62,63 *and MAFB*<sup>58</sup>) fusing to the enhancers of IgH, IgL, or IgK or copy-number variations that involve trisomy of chromosomes 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 15, 19 or 21<sup>64,65</sup>. Secondary mutational events include chromosome gains of oncogenes, chromosome losses of tumor suppressors, translocations affecting MYC proto-oncogene, bHLH transcription factor (*MYC)* and somatic mutations<sup>66</sup>. Many of the mutations in MM affect genes in a diverse array of pathways such as: the rat sarcoma proto-oncogene family- mitogen-activated protein kinase (**RAS-MAPK**) pathway, nuclear factor kappa-light-chain-enhancer of activated B cells (**NFKB**) pathway, MYC pathway, cell cycle and DNA damage checkpoints, RNA processing machinery, epigenetic modifiers, B cell development<sup>56,66</sup>. Adding to the

complex genetic composition of MM, most myeloma patients have multiple malignant clones simultaneously and/or over the course of their treatment<sup>66,67</sup>. Strikingly, in one study whole exome sequencing of 203 MM patients showed among the top 14 most frequently mutated genes, ~86% have been them were subclonal<sup>68</sup>. Genetic markers in MM have been shown to have prognostic value<sup>69</sup>, therefore, it would improve patient outcomes if it was standard clinical practice to longitudinally monitor the mutational landscape of MM patients to make treatments more personalized.

Through dynamic juxtracrine, paracrine and autocrine signaling, the BM microenvironment plays a significant role to support MM cell growth, survival, migration, and drug resistance. Indeed, MM cells enhance NFKB -dependent transcription and secrete IL-6 upon adhesion to stromal cells, endothelial cells, and extra cellular proteins (laminin and fibronectin), resulting in increased growth, survival and drug resistance<sup>70–</sup>  $72$ . In turn, MM adhesion triggers the BM stroma to secrete tumor supportive cytokines and growth factors like interleukin-6 (**IL-6**), insulin growth factor 1 (**IGF1**), tumor necrosis factor alpha (**TNFA**), stromal cell-derived factor 1 (**SDF-1α**), transforming growth factor beta (**TGFB**), pro-angiogenic factors like vascular endothelial growth factor (**VEGF**) and basic fibroblast growth factor (**bFGF**). A similar positive feedback loop, known as "the vicious cycle" exists between MM cells and the cells responsible for bone turnover.

A MM diagnosis is associated with a 40-50% risk of developing fractures or bone pain<sup>73</sup> and 90% of MM patients experience bone lesions through the course of disease progression<sup>74</sup>. MM bone-related disease is because of the "vicious cycle", a positive feedback loop between MM cells and the cells involved in bone homeostasis that can

cause bone lesions. Briefly, secreted factors from MM cells like macrophage inflammatory protein-1 alpha (**MIP-1A**; Chemokine ligand 3, CCL3) human growth factor (**HGF**) and interleukin-34 (**IL-34**) cause mesenchymal stem cells and osteoblasts in the bone marrow to produce receptor activator of nuclear factor-κB ligand (**RANKL**) which binds to its receptor, RANK which promotes bone resorption by increasing osteoclastogenesis and osteoclast activity. There is a concurrent repression of the decoy receptor for RANKL, osteoprotegerin (**OPG**), further enhancing the effects of RANK/RANKL signaling<sup>75</sup>. MM-associated osteoclasts secrete proteins supportive of MM cell growth and survival like a proliferation inducing ligand (**APRIL**) and B cell activating factor (**BAFF**) 76 . Bone formation is suppressed in the MM BM microenvironment by the secretion of inhibitors of wingless (**WNT**) signaling, a key pathway that regulates bone formation by osteoblasts<sup>77–80</sup>. Both bone anabolic agents and treatments targeting MM cells directly improve MM-associated bone disease<sup>81</sup>. In Chapter 3, the relationship between bone marrow adipocytes (**BMAd**s) and MM cells will be briefly touched upon<sup>82</sup>. The MM-bone marrow microenvironment presents a dynamic niche that supports MM cell survival, proliferation, and resistance to therapies. Drug response in MM and other hematological malignancies has been linked to MM cell metabolism<sup>83</sup>, making it critical to understand the metabolic state of MM cells to inform clinical practice.

#### <span id="page-21-0"></span>**Table 1. Diagnostic Criteria for Monoclonal Gammopathy of Undetermined Significance (MGUS), Smoldering Multiple Myeloma (SMM), and Multiple Myeloma (MM) from the International Myeloma Working Group 12<sup>84</sup>**





## <span id="page-22-0"></span>**Table 2. Drugs Approved for Treatment of Multiple Myeloma and their Mechanisms as of 2022 <sup>84</sup>**



#### <span id="page-23-0"></span>**1.2. Acute Myeloid Leukemia**

The major focus of this dissertation is MM, however, an acute myeloid leukemia (**AML**) cell line was used for a portion of this work because a cell line that we received from a collaborator was misidentified. Understanding basic AML biology will assist in comparing the phenotypes observed between MM and AML. Similar to MM, AML is a hematological malignancy derived from hematopoetic stem cells (**HSC**s) but undergo myeloid differentiation where leukemia stem cells (**LSC**s) emerge from granulocyte macrophage progenitors (**GMP**) that gain self-renewable potential after a series of driver mutations $^{106-108}$ . AML is age-associated with a median age diagnosis of 67 years old and has a 23.4% 5-year survival rate $^{109-111}$ . The bone marrow microenvironment also supports AML proliferation, survival and drug resistance, though it is extremely rare that AML patients have the bone lesions associated with MM<sup>112,113</sup>. The AML cell line used (HL-60) has a mutations that allow uncontrolled proliferation including a *TP53* deletion, with a cyclin dependent kinase inhibitor 2A (*CDKN2A*; (p16/INK4A) p.R80Ter mutation

causing a truncated and inactive protein and a neuroblastoma RAS Proto-Oncogene (NRAS) p. Gln61 Leu mutation which are all relatively uncommon in AML<sup>111</sup>.

#### <span id="page-24-0"></span>**1.3. Basics of Cell Metabolism**

Mitochondrion is an organelle at the intersection of key metazoan cellular processes including metabolism, bioenergetics, redox homeostasis, apoptosis, cell signaling, macromolecule biosynthesis and calcium and iron homeostasis<sup>114</sup>. This section will cover mitochondrial structure, oxidative phosphorylation, reactive oxygen species as byproducts of mitochondrial processes, the tricarboxylic acid cycle, the role of glycolysis in cancer and mitochondrial regulation of cell survival.

The double-membrane of mitochondria form functionally distinct compartments. The mitochondrial outer membrane (**MOM**) is permeable to ions and small molecules, acting as a bridge from the cytoplasm to the mitochondria (**Figure 1**). In contrast, the inner mitochondrial membrane (**IMM**) is impermeable to most small molecules and ions, including hydrogen (H<sup>+</sup>), and is the location of the electron transport chain and membrane-bound transporters for specific cargo. The compartment that the IMM encloses is called the mitochondrial matrix and is the site of the tricarboxylic acid cycle (**TCA**), fatty acid oxidation (**FAO**), the pyruvate dehydrogenases (**PDH**s pyruvate→actyl-CoA), mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) and mitochondrial ribosomes<sup>115,116</sup>.



#### <span id="page-25-0"></span>**Figure 1. The Electron Transport Chain. Made with Biorender.com**

Oxidative phosphorylation (**OXPHOS**) is a major source of cellular energy generation in the form of adenosine triphosphate (**ATP**) synthesis in aerobic metazoans. In order to produce ATP, electrons are transported through a chain of five enzyme complexes (the ETC) facilitated by the electron donors; nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (**NADH**) for Complex I and flavin adenine dinucleotide (**FADH2**) or succinate for Complex II<sup>116</sup>. The electrons from Complex I and II are transported to Complex III and IV by other electron carriers, ubiquinol (**QH2**), coenzyme Q10 and cytochrome c (**Cyt c**). Cyt c and Complex IV facilitate the reduction of O<sup>2</sup> to H2O. The electron flow is coupled to H<sup>+</sup> transport from the mitochondrial matrix to the intermembrane space and creates an electrochemical gradient and the basis of mitochondrial membrane potential (**ΔΨm**) <sup>116</sup>. The high ΔΨm allows adenosine

triphosphate (ATP) synthase (Complex V) to transport H<sup>+</sup> from the intermembrane space to the mitochondrial matrix to phosphorylate adenosine diphosphate (**ADP**) to ATP<sup>116</sup>. ATP can then be used as a source of energy for key biochemical reactions; however, it is important to consider byproducts of OXPHOS and the metabolites that fuel it.

Reactive oxygen species (**ROS**) are a byproduct of a transfer of electrons from  $\textdegree Q$  (an intermediate from the electron transfer between Complex I to QH<sub>2</sub> or QH<sub>2</sub> to Complex III) to  $O_2$  to form superoxide ( $O_2$ ). Superoxide is highly reactive and can damage proteins, lipids and nucleic acids and induce programmed cell death or apoptosis<sup>117,118</sup>. ROS is detoxified by both superoxide dismutases in the cytoplasm (**SOD1**) and mitochondria (**SOD2**) by forming hydrogen peroxide (**H2O2**). Additionally, the glutathione (**GSH**) and thioredoxin (**TXN**) systems act as major anti-oxidant systems. Cytoplasmic  $H_2O_2$  is further detoxified to  $H_2O$  by a coordination of GSH, glutathione s-transferases (**GST**) and glutathione peroxidases (**GPX**s)116,119. TXN and thioredoxin reductases (**TXNRD**) and NADH both can reduce disulfide bonds and quench ROS<sup>120</sup>. ROS are key signaling molecules and they activate key pathways involved in cell growth and proliferation like phosphatidyl inositol 3 kinase (**PI3K**), mitogen activated-protein kinase (**MAPK**/extracellular-regulated kinase 1/2 (**ERK1/2**) 117,118 . Chapter 4 will delve deeper into particular anti-oxidant signal mechanisms pertinent to the phenotypes observed in this study in MM cell lines.

Within the mitochondrial matrix, the TCA cycle is critical for the regeneration NADH and FADH2. In the TCA cycle, citrate synthase combines acetyl-CoA (produced from glycolysis, FAO or the deamination of amino acids) with oxaloacetate to form

citrate, a metabolite key to anabolic fatty acid metabolism<sup>121</sup>. The subsequent seven biochemical reactions in the TCA cycle generate metabolic intermediates critical cell growth and proliferation for the biosynthesis of purines, pyrimidines, amino acids, and fatty acids<sup>114,121</sup>. In addition to acetyl-CoA, TCA cycle intermediates are replenished by glutamine being broken down to alpha-ketoglutarate (**α-KG**). Glutamine has been to shown to be supportive of MM growth and proliferation and glutamine transporters are promising targets in similarly "glutamine addicted" cancers<sup>122</sup>. Glutamine's role in MM mitochondrial function will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

Glycolysis is the process of glucose being broken down into pyruvate. Under aerobic conditions, most non-transformed cells primarily shuttle pyruvate to the mitochondria to be oxidized into acetyl-CoA to support energy production in the TCA cycle; while in anaerobic conditions, glycolysis is favored to fuel lactic acid fermentation by the action of lactate dehydrogenase A and B (**LDHA** and **LDHB**). Otto Warburg first observed the phenomenon, "aerobic glycolysis" (later named the Warburg Effect), in which cancer cells favor the fermentation of glucose into lactate for energy generation even in the presence of oxygen $123-125$ . Most cancer cells upregulate glucose transporters like glucose transporters 1 and 4 (**GLUT1**, **GLUT4**) (upregulated in MM<sup>126</sup>) to partially compensate for the near 18-fold defect of ATP production that glycolysis has compared to OXPHOS<sup>125,127–129</sup>. Common mutations in MM and other cancers in oncogenes like *KRAS, NRAS, MYC* and tumor suppressors like *TP53* are associated with rewired metabolism favoring glycolysis<sup>68,114,125,127,128,130–132</sup>. The hypoxic environment that MM cells and other cancers often reside in upregulates glycolysis by the activation of hypoxia inducible factors (**HIF1α**, **HIF2α**). Although OXPHOS is

repressed in most cancers, it has been shown that upon knockdown of LDHA in mouse mammary tumors, OXPHOS activity is increased<sup>133</sup>. These data highlight the metabolic flexibility that cancer cells exhibit and the merit of studying cancer metabolism to identify novel vulnerabilities.



#### <span id="page-28-0"></span>**Figure 2. Mitochondria Play a Central Role in Intrinsic Apoptosis Made with Biorender.com**

In addition to regulating key metabolic processes, mitochondria are critical in the

intrinsic apoptosis pathway **(Figure 2)**. Intrinsic stressors like increases in cytosolic

 $Ca<sup>2+</sup>$ , growth factor deprivation, ROS, DNA damage and hypoxia induce the intrinsic

apoptotic response<sup>134</sup>. The B-cell lymphoma 2 (**BCL-2**) family are critical mitochondrial pro- and anti-apoptotic proteins. Pro-apoptotic proteins in the BCL-2 family contain a single BH3 domain and include BCL-2 interacting mediator of cell death (**BIM**), Bcl-2 binding component 3 (**BBC3** / p53 upregulated modulator of apoptosis **PUMA**), and truncated BH3 interacting domain death agonist (tBID) 114,135. Upon exposure to a stress signal, BH3-only containing proteins release from the anti-apoptotic multi BH3 containing protein family members (BCL-2, **BCL-xL**, myeloid cell leukemia 1 (**MCL-1**), **BCL-w** and **A1**). BH3-only proteins then associate with the pro-apoptotic effectors BCL-2 associated X protein (**BAX**) and BCL-2 antagonist/killer (**BAK**) so that they can form pores in the MOM to trigger the release of Cyt c and second mitochondria-derived activator of caspase (**SMAC**). Cyt c binds to apoptotic protease activating factor-1 (**APAF1**) to activate the caspase-9 proteolytic signal cascade, while SMAC binds to inhibitor of X-linked inhibitor of apoptosis protein (**XIAP**), an inhibitor of caspase 9114,135 .

#### <span id="page-29-0"></span>**1.4. Obesity and Metabolic Disease are Risk Factors of Cancer**

Much like the waistlines of the world's population, the literature regarding the distinct types of adipose tissue has been expanding over the years. The growth in literature is partially due to the discovery of 5 distinct adipose tissue types: white adipose tissue (**WAT**), brown adipose tissue (**BAT**), beige/brite adipose tissue, bone marrow adipose tissue (**BMAT**), and perivascular adipose tissue (**PVAT**). Given the rich literature on the subject and the limited scope of this review, we will only highlight a few major features of each depot here. A more detailed account of each depot can be found in these comprehensive reviews $^{136-140}$ .

Adipocytes are the primary cellular component of adipose tissue, but adipose tissue is also composed of nervous and connective tissue and vasculature. Adipocytes found in WAT possess the morphology commonly associated with a fat cell, a cell with one large lipid droplet (**LD**), which occupies most of the cellular space, forcing the nucleus and cytoplasm to the periphery of the cell. The two main WAT depots, visceral (**VAT**) and subcutaneous (**SAT**), are functionally different. VAT is essential for the protection of inner organs and a major contributor to obesity<sup>141,142</sup>. Conversely, SAT is primarily responsible for insulation and has been associated with improving insulin sensitivity<sup>143</sup>. Although VAT and SAT appear to have opposing functions, they both regulate energy homeostasis. For energy homeostasis, exogenous energy sources such as glucose are stored as glycogen and subsequently converted into triacylglycerols (**TGs**), the major component of the energy storing organelle, the lipid droplet, in adipocytes<sup>144</sup>. As the cellular need for energy increases, lipases release TGs causing lipid droplets to degrade, in a process known as lipolysis. TGs are subsequently broken down into glycerol and fatty acids, which eventually produce ATP through glycolysis or β-oxidation, respectively<sup>145</sup>.

The connection between adipocytes and insulin make adipocytes one of the most significant cell types to regulate systemic insulin levels<sup>146</sup>. Insulin bears much of the responsibility for promoting the cellular uptake of glucose through upregulating the GLUT4 glucose transporter<sup>147</sup>. To promote energy storage, insulin also inhibits lipolysis through the inhibition of protein kinase A (**PKA**) <sup>148</sup>, and it is thus integral for adipocyte maintenance and function<sup>149</sup>. Adipose vascularization and innervation also reflect the crosstalk that occurs between adipose and distant tissues. For decades, adipocytes

were assumed to simply function as cells that store and release energy and provide mechanical and thermal insulation. However, the complexity of adipocytes was revealed when substances specifically secreted by adipocytes, known as adipokines, were identified in the 1980's and 90's $^{150-152}.$ 

The adipokine leptin was found to regulate feeding, fatty acid utilization, and energy balance by serving as a feedback mechanism between adipose and other tissues throughout the body<sup>153–155</sup>. Leptin activates 5' adenosine monophosphateactivated protein kinase (**AMPK**), leading to an increase in fatty acid oxidation and inhibition of the rate-limiting step to lipogenesis, acetyl-CoA carboxylase (**ACACA**) action <sup>156</sup>. Leptin also serves to protect against lipotoxicity by shuttling fatty acids away from non-adipose tissue<sup>157</sup>. Another key adipokine, adiponectin (**ADIPOQ**), is expressed exclusively by mature adipocytes but decreased in the context of obesity, supports insulin sensitivity, and has a protective effect against cardiac hypertrophy and atherosclerosis158–160. Indeed, adiponectin receptors 1 and 2 (**ADIPOR1** and **ADIPOR2**) have anti-diabetic effects<sup>161</sup>. The broad effects of ADIPOQ on metabolism and cardiac health can be attributed to its formation of trimers, hexamers and even higher molecular weight forms of the protein<sup>162</sup>. Interestingly, each ADIPOQ complex can act on different pathways; for example, while the trimeric form activates AMPK, the higher molecular weight form activates NFKB<sup>163,164</sup>.

Brown adipose tissue, an adipose depot unique to mammals, is found at distinct locations: the major depots of BAT in adult mice and rats can be found in the scapulae and thoracic regions, where they serve as the major source of non-shivering thermogenesis<sup>165</sup>. Similarly, adult human BAT is primarily located in the cervical-

supraclavicular depot and is identified by the uptake of  $^{18}F$ -fluorodeoxyglucose via PET-CT due to the propensity of BAT to consume more glucose than other healthy tissues<sup>166,167</sup>. Unlike WAT, BAT is multilocular and takes advantage of the mitochondrial membrane protein, uncoupling protein 1 (**UCP-1**), to produce heat instead of ATP during the process of fatty acid oxidation<sup>168,169</sup>. UCP-1 functions by increasing membrane permeability of the mitochondrial membrane to disrupt the proton motive force at the heart of ATP synthesis. BAT is characterized by the high expression of PR domain containing 16 (**PRDM16**), Peroxisome proliferator-activated receptor gamma coactivator 1-alpha (**PPARGC1A**), type 2 deiodinase (**DIO2**) and UCP-1 170,171. Brown and white fat also differ in their progenitors, with the lineage of BAT being traced to a myogenic precursor which is Paired box protein 7 positive/ myogenic factor 5 positive (**Pax7**+/**Myf5**+), while the WAT progenitor is Pax7-/Myf5- 170,172 .

Beige fat or inducible brown fat is a prime example of the dynamism that adipocytes exhibit. Upon prolonged cold exposure or adrenergic signaling, a subset of white adipocytes upregulate UCP-1 and adopt a more BAT-like phenotype, a process termed "browning"138,173. Browning initiates a switch from a unilocular white adipocyte to a beige adipocyte that is multilocular and thermogenic and has an increased number of mitochondria. Both browning and BAT may be protective from obesity based on observations that browning in obese strains of mice is decreased compared to strains resistant to obesity, while the thermogenic capacity of BAT remains the same<sup>174,175</sup>. Additional evidence for the protective effects of beige and brown fat suggests they play a major role in decreasing circulating TG and glucose levels<sup>176</sup>. Deeper investigations into brown and beige fat biology will likely help combat metabolic syndromes like obesity

and type 2 diabetes mellitus (**T2DM**) that are reaching epidemic levels in many countries.

Peering into the bone marrow within the long bones of an adult human or mouse, one would observe that 50-70% of the bone marrow has distinct yellow hue<sup>177</sup>. This hue is due to the presence of bone marrow adipose tissue (BMAT). BMAT is induced by common medical practices such as the administration thiazolidinediones (such as the anti-diabetic drug rosiglitazone), radiation and chemotherapy<sup>178–181</sup>. Studies suggest that BMAT may have a complicated role in global metabolism since BMAT is increased both in obesity and paradoxically, in patients suffering from anorexia nervosa or starvation <sup>182,183</sup>. BMAT appears to have a distinct lineage from other adipose depots; bone marrow MSCs that are CD45<sup>-</sup>/CD31<sup>-</sup>/PdgfRa<sup>+</sup>/Sca1<sup>+</sup> differentiate into adipocytes<sup>184</sup>. Additionally, BM adipocytes originate from osterix<sup>+</sup> cells while other adipocytes do not<sup>185</sup>. The role of BMAT with respect to global metabolism and the effects of BMAT on the local bone marrow microenvironment remain important questions to address in the field.

Perivascular adipose tissue, the fat depot adjacent to the adventitia of most arteries, is an integral signaling component of the vascular microenvironment. Expansion of PVAT is associated with obesity and cardiovascular disease in humans, with pathological changes described in patients with localized vasospasm, abdominal aortic aneurysm, and coronary artery disease<sup>186–189</sup>. In addition to its basal ability to store and release fatty acids, PVAT alters vascular tone, smooth muscle cell proliferation and migration, inflammatory programs, and oxidative stress pathways. PVAT exerts its influence on the surrounding tissues through the secretion of adipokines

and cytokines such as leptin, adiponectin, TNF-α and IL-6<sup>190–193</sup>. Although healthy PVAT is considered vasoprotective, obesity and hyperlipidemia induce changes that can promote vascular disease progression. In a genetic mouse model of atherosclerosis, the PVAT from a apolipoprotein E-null (ApoE<sup>−/−</sup>) mouse promoted atherosclerotic plaques in a region where it does not usually form in ApoE<sup>−/−</sup> mice<sup>194,195</sup>. The phenotype of mouse and human PVAT depends on its location. While PVAT near the carotid artery adopts a BAT-like morphology it more closely resembles WAT in the mesenteric arteries. Indeed, the thermogenic properties and BAT-like expression pattern of thoracic aorta-associated PVAT proved to attenuate atherosclerosis<sup>196</sup>, suggesting PVAT as an important source of paracrine regulation in vascular disease. There is some question about how well mouse models of PVAT expansion and pathology can mimic these processes in humans, since aortic PVAT derived from adult humans is morphologically more similar to WAT than BAT. However, human aortic PVAT, even from patients with cardiovascular disease, express thermogenic markers including UCP-1, which is absent in human WAT. Within the thoracic aorta, PVAT adopts a more BAT-like phenotype<sup>196,197</sup>. Studies of human PVAT have shown that PVAT-derived adipocyte progenitor cell differentiation is dependent on Rab27a, a GTPase important for secretory vesicle trafficking<sup>198</sup>. One could imagine that the bi-directional communication between PVAT and the blood vessel relies on Rab27a-dependent trafficking and secretion of signaling molecules. These interesting results highlight that the full potential of targeting PVAT with respect to cardiovascular disease and obesity has yet to be realized and requires further study.

As researchers delved deeper into adipocyte biology, they have come to appreciate that adipocytes are highly sensitive to metabolites, cytokines and hormones,

and can also regulate processes like angiogenesis, inflammation, immunity, reproduction and cardiac homeostasis  $152,199-206$ . Given that adipose tissue is intimately intertwined in a diverse number of biological processes, it is imperative to understand the intricacies of this tissue.

#### <span id="page-35-0"></span>**1.5. Intersection of Obesity, Type II Diabetes and Cancer**

Obesity is a worldwide health concern that affects roughly a third of the population and costs an estimated \$209.7 billion dollars a year in the United States alone<sup>207,208</sup>. Obesity is defined as having a BMI of >30 kg/m<sup>2</sup>, is characterized by excess accumulation of adipose, and is a major risk factor for various health issues including T2DM, cardiovascular disease and many cancers<sup>209–211</sup>. Obesity correlates with increased incidence of  $MM^{6,7}$  and high BMI correlates with a poor treatment response $^{212-216}$ . Obesity is a major risk factor for many cancers $^{217}$ , however, given the complexity of obesity, there are an array of mechanisms by which obesity may support tumor cells. Hypoxic-driven expansion of fat mass in obesity triggers adipocytes to convert to a dysfunctional state, defined by increased proinflammatory cytokine secretion, apoptosis and free fatty acid release<sup>218,219</sup>. Studies of obesity and myeloma are mainly at the epidemiological level and have not extensively explored the mechanism of this relationship $6,7$ . For a summary of specific factors linked to obesity that support MM see Figure 3 and these reviews<sup>220,221</sup>. Obesity has been difficult to study because the regulation of adipocytes is influenced by environmental, genetic and epigenetic factors, but the development of tissue-engineered models could aid in providing insight into this complicated disease<sup>222-224</sup>.


#### **Figure 3. Contributions of Obesity to Multiple Myeloma**

**A) Bone marrow adiposity is increased in obesity and bone marrow adipocytes support MM survival, migration and drug resistance225–229 . B) Acetyl-CoA Synthetase 2 (ACSS2) <sup>230</sup> is positively correlated with a higher body mass index (BMI) and it was shown to stabilize interferon regulatory factor 4 (IRF4) and support MM proliferation<sup>230</sup>. C) Leptin increases MM Interleukin-6 (IL-6) production, angiogenesis, protein kinase B/signal transducer and activator of transcription 3 (AKT/STAT3) signaling and increases resistance to apoptosis231–233. D) Adiponectin, an antimyeloma adipokine is decreased in obesity. Decreased levels of adiponectin are associated with increased pro-myeloma cytokines IL-6, tumor necrosis factor-α (TNF-α), nuclear transcription factor kappa B (NF-kB) signaling, nerve growth factor (NGF) levels, and the maturation of osteoclasts by increasing mammalian target of rapamycin (mTOR), eukaryotic translation Initiation factor 4E-binding protein (4EBP1) signaling226,234–236 . E) Obesity creates a proinflammatory environment that increases local and systemic levels of proinflammatory cytokines like IL-6, TNF-σ and c-reactive protein (CRP) 237–239 . F) There is increased IGF1 in obese patients and IGF signaling has been shown to be supportive of MM proliferation and survial240–242 . G) MM patient-derived differentiated bone marrow adipocytes increase MM cell proliferation. MM cells induce lipolysis of bone marrow adipocytes causing free fatty acids to be imported to MM cells by fatty acid transport proteins (FATPs)<sup>243</sup>. Transfer of mitochondria from bone marrow mesenchymal stem cells to MM cells increases MM cell OXPHOS<sup>244</sup> . This figure is adapted from Marques-Mourlet** *et al.* **2023 <sup>220</sup> .**

To increase the capacity of energy storage during caloric excess, adipocytes increase in size, in a phenomenon called hypertrophy. Although increases and decreases in adipocyte size based on the nutrition state of the organism is normal, excessive and prolonged adipocyte hypertrophy is often a sign for adipocyte dysfunction and leads to system-wide changes due to an altered adipocyte secretome. Although hypertrophic adipocytes have an increased capacity to store lipids, it is insufficient to contend with the extracellular excess of free fatty acids (**FFA**s). The excess of FFAs induces local lipotoxicity from increases in oxidative and endoplasmic reticulum (**ER**) stress and can have system effects as well $245,246$ . The increase in size of adipocytes prevents oxygen from diffusing across the adipose tissue, resulting in a hypoxic microenvironment<sup>247–249</sup>. Together, adipocyte hypertrophy, hypoxia, oxidative and ER stress contribute to the increase in the secretion of adipokines and cytokines as well as the differentiation of new adipocytes $250,251$ . An increase in local pro-inflammatory cytokines resulting from adipocyte secretion, necrosis and lysis leads to immune cell recruitment and chronic inflammation, perpetuating adipocyte dysfunction<sup>252,253</sup>. When compared to healthy patients, obese individuals also have increased leptin, fasting glucose, TGs, inflammatory markers and insulin concentrations, and decreased highdensity lipoproteins (**HDL**s) in their serum and higher oxidized low-density lipoproteins (**LDL**) 219 . Together, these factors can lead to additional morbidities including T2DM and cardiovascular disease. Interestingly, there is a subpopulation of obese patients that have an increase in fat mass but lack the risk of metabolic dysfunctions and cardiovascular disease, known as metabolically healthy obese patients<sup>219</sup>. For the

purposes of this dissertation, obesity will refer to the metabolically dysfunctional population.

Impaired insulin signaling is at the heart of why T2DM patients fail to regulate their blood sugar and is intimately linked with obesity<sup>209</sup>. Insulin signaling activates two major pathways through phosphorylation of insulin receptor substrates (**IRS**s) on tyrosine residues: (1) the PI3K-AKT and (2) MAPK pathways<sup>254</sup>. While the PI3K-AKT pathway regulates glucose uptake and suppresses gluconeogenesis, the MAPK pathway interacts with PI3K-AKT to regulate cell growth and differentiation. Insulin signaling is negatively regulated by phosphorylation of serine residues on IRS1 by kinases such as I kappa B kinase beta (**IKKB**) and C-jun-N-terminal kinase (**JNK1**) 254 . Interestingly, ER stressors from FFA signal through endoplasmic reticulum to nucleus signaling 1 (**ERN1**) to activate both IKK and JNK pathways, contributing to insulin resistance. Additionally, blood glucose remains higher in obese individuals due to GLUT4 expression in adipocytes being downregulated by the induction of ER stress<sup>255</sup>. The negative effects of inflammation are further perpetuated by the recruitment of adipose tissue macrophages (**ATM**s).

Activated stress pathways found in obesity drive the expression of chemokines like C-C motif chemokine ligands 2, 8 and 5 (**Ccl2**, **Ccl8**, **Ccl5**), and chemokine receptors (e.g. **Ccr2** and **Ccr5**), which help recruit macrophages to the dysfunctional tissue<sup>252,256</sup>. ATMs form crown-like structures around the stressed adipocytes in order to clear debris and excess FFAs<sup>252</sup>. The recruited ATMs secrete both anti-inflammatory (interleukin-10 (**IL-10**) and IL-1) and pro-inflammatory and pro-MM, TNFA, IL-6 and IL-1B cytokines, suggesting they can serve both a protective and harmful role in obesity<sup>237</sup>.

However, the inflammation caused by ATMs causes further adipocyte dysfunction and impaired insulin signaling, leading to the manifestation of chronic low-grade inflammation.

Given the intersection between fatty acids (**Figure 4**) in MM with respect to obesity and MM cell interactions with BMAds, there is a promising potential in researching how fatty acid metabolism (**Figure 5**) contributes to MM cell proliferation, survival, and drug resistance.

**1.6. Acyl-CoA Synthetase Long Chain (ACSL) Isozyme Family in Cancer**



**Figure 4 Fatty Acids have Diverse Cellular Functions**

**Fatty acids are important for cellular energy generation, membrane localization, secretion and maturation, cell membrane structure and are key signaling molecules that support cell proliferation and survival. G-protein coupled receptors (GPCRs), membrane type serine protease 1 (MT-SP1), Urokinase-type plasminogen activator-receptor (uPAR). Adapted from Zhang** *et al.*  **2012<sup>257</sup> .**



#### **Figure 5 General Fatty Acid Metabolism**

**Fatty acids (FAs) can enter through the cell through fatty acid binding proteins (FABPs), fatty acid transport proteins (FATPs) and cluster of differentiation 36 (CD36). Long-chain fatty acids (8-20 carbons long) are activated by the acyl-CoA synthetase long-chain family (ACSLs) so they can be metabolized catabolically or anabolically. The activity of the ACSLs can be inhibited by a small molecule competitive inhibitor, Triacsin C. FA acyl-CoAs are converted to acylcarnitines in the mitochondria through carnitine palmitoyl transferase 1/2 where they undergo β-oxidation (fatty acid oxidation) to support energy generation and the tricarboxylic acid cycle. As a byproduct of OXPHOS and β-oxidation, reactive oxygen species (ROS) are generated and can react with lipid and form lipid peroxides. Alternatively, FA acyl-CoAs can be processed into the long-term FA storage molecule, triacylglycerols (TAGs) by the action of diacylglycerol acyltransferases ligating diacylglycerols (DAGs) with the FA acyl-CoAs. Perilipin (PLINs) proteins form the structural basis to for lipid droplets, the organelle that stores TAGs. TAGs are mobilized back into FA acyl-CoAs by hormone sensitive lipase (HSL) and adipose triglyceride lipase (ATGL). Serine palmitoyltransferase 1 (SPT1) and ceramide synthase 5 (CERS5) coordinate with other enzymes to produce ceramides, key signaling and structural lipids. Ceramides can be catabolized into sphingomyelins (SMs) or sphingosine-1-phosphate (S1P), important for phospholipid and cell signaling, respectively. Calcium-independent phospholipases (iPLAs) hydrolyze phospholipids (PLs) to lysophospholipids and eicosanoids (derived from FAs), which are key signaling molecules. FAs can be synthesized from the conversion of tricarboxylic acid (TCA) cycle-derived citrate to acetyl-CoA by ATP citrate lyase (ACYL). Acetyl-CoA is further processed by acetyl-CoA carboxylase (ACACA) to form malonyl-CoA, the substrate fatty acid synthase (FASN) uses to form palmitoyl-CoA<sup>116</sup> . This figure was made with Biorender.com**

Recent work on other cancers shows promise for targeting members of the acylcoenzyme A long chain synthetase (ACSL) family of proteins (**Figure 6; Table 3**), which activates long-chain fatty acids (saturated and unsaturated FAs with chain lengths of 8– 22 carbons) into fatty acyl-CoA esters, which can then be used for catabolic or anabolic metabolism<sup>258</sup>. Although there is not a crystal structure of The catalytic activity of rat ACSL1 can be completely inhibited by mutation or acetylation of Lys676 in the Cterminus of the protein<sup>259</sup>. System-level analyses of ACSLs across cancer types have revealed that ACSL expression and their role as oncogenes or tumor suppressors are heterogeneous and cancer-type dependent <sup>260</sup>. While ACSL1 has been shown to support the proliferation of both colorectal cancer (**CRC**) and breast cancer (**BC**) cell lines, evidence supports ACSL1 as a tumor suppressor in non-squamous cell lung carcinoma (**NSCLC**) cells<sup>260,261</sup>. Additionally, ACSL1 and ACSL4 support invasion of CRC, prostate cancer, and quadruple-negative BC cells 262–265. In estrogen receptorpositive BC, ACSL4 has been shown to modulate drug efflux pumps to support chemotherapy resistance<sup>263</sup>. ACSLs also regulate metabolism in a cancer type-specific manner. In CRC, overexpression of *ACSL1* and *ACSL4* resulted in enhanced glycolysis<sup>261</sup>, while ACSL3 regulates FAO in BC and NSCLC in opposite directions, while supporting proliferation in both cancers<sup>266,267</sup>. Therefore, it is critical to study the role of ACSLs in a cancer specific manner.



**Figure 6 Human ACSL Isozyme Family Protein Homology**

**Clustal Omega protein alignments of the human ACSL family isozymes with their associated UniProt accession numbers**<sup>268</sup>**. Darker colors represent greater primary amino acid homology. ACSL4 and 3 share 65.7% homology while ACSL6 and 1 are 66.86% homologous. This figure was made through <https://www.uniprot.org/align> through Clustal Omega.**

**Table 3. ACSL Isozyme Family Function and Regulation**<sup>258</sup>

<b>Protein</b> <b>Name</b>	<b>Tissue</b> Expression*	<b>Subcellular</b> Localization**	<b>Substrate</b> <b>Preference</b>	<b>Cellular</b> <b>Functions</b>	<b>Transcriptional</b> <b>Regulators</b>
ACSL1	Liver Heart Adipose <b>Tissue</b> Muscle	ER Mitochondria	16-18 Carbon <b>Saturated FAs</b> 16-20 Carbon Unsat. FAs	<b>FAO</b> <b>TAG</b> Synthesis Ferroptosis Cardiolipin Synthesis	SREBP (+) $NF-KB (+)$ PKC-SIRT6 (+) BRD4-PPARα $(+)$ HBXIP-SP1(+)
ACSL3	<b>Brain</b> Prostate	ER Mitochondria <b>Lipid Droplets</b>	16:0 (Palmitic Acid)	<b>FAO</b> <b>TAG</b> Synthesis Oxidative <b>Stress</b>	$FGF19 (+)$ $LxR (+)$ $PPARγ, δ (+)$ CREBP-1C (+) $OCT1-AR (+)$
ACSL4	Adrenal Gland Ovary <b>Testis</b> <b>Brain</b>	ER Mitochondria Peroxisomes	20-carbon PUFAs (eg, Arachidonic Acid, EPA)	Ferroptosis Glycolysis <b>FAO</b>	<b>STAT3(-)</b> $AR$ (-) YAP $(+)$ $SHP2 (+)$ $SP1 (+)$ $CREB (+)$
ACSL5	Intestines Liver Skeletal Muscle	ER Mitochondria <b>Lipid Droplets</b>	16-18 Carbon FAs (16:0, 18:0, 18:2)	<b>FAO</b> <b>WNT</b> Signaling Apoptosis Ceramide Synthesis	Estrogen Receptor $(+)$ HNF4 $(+)$ SREBP1-c (+) $PPARα, γ (+)$ $ERK-OM (+)$
ACSL6	<b>Brain</b> <b>Bone</b> Marrow Muscle	ER Mitochondria Peroxisomes	22:6 (Docosahexaenoic Acid)	<b>FA</b> Synthesis <b>OXPHOS</b> Glycolysis	$PPARY (+)$ $SREBP1-c(+)$

#### **Table 3 ACSL Isozyme Family Function and Regulation**

\*Tissues in which is the gene in question is highly enriched \*\*It has been shown that ACSL subcellular localization and function is tissue- and cell type-dependent<sup>269</sup>. (+)/(-) is representative of positive or negative regulation (respectively) of the ACSL isozyme by the protein listed. ACSLs play important roles in the development of lymphoid hematological

malignancies. In a retrospective study of leukemia patients, *ACSL6* expression was positively correlated with overall survival, suggesting that ACSL6 may be a tumor suppressor in leukemia<sup>260</sup>. In that analysis, of all ACSLs, only *ACSL4* was shown to be overexpressed in myeloma cells relative to control tissues<sup>260</sup>. Zhang *et al.* also reported that *ACSL4* was overexpressed in primary MM cells and supported MM cell proliferation, possibly involving the c-Myc/sterol regulatory element binding protein (SREBP) axis<sup>270</sup>. These investigators also showed that *ACSL4* expression in MM cells was positively correlated with their sensitivity to ferroptosis, an iron-dependent form of cell death<sup>270</sup>. Despite these studies, the contribution of the ACSL family to MM cell fitness remains largely unaddressed.

### **1.7. Triacsin C and Cancer**

Triascin C (TriC) is an alkenyl-N-hydroxytriazene bacterial metabolite and a competitive inhibitor of the FA-binding domain of ACSLs<sup>271</sup>. Biochemical inhibition of ACSLs from rat liver homogenates found the concentrations of TriC required for 50% inhibition to be 8.7  $\mu$ M<sup>272</sup>. Similarly, in enzymatic activity studies using rat recombinant ACSL1 and ACSL4, the  $IC_{50}$  values for TriC were found to be  $~4–6~\mu\text{M}^{273}$  while importantly, rat ACSL5 activity was found to be insensitive to  $TriC<sup>273</sup>$ . TriC's effectiveness may be species specific, as TriC inhibited the growth of human BC cells and human intestinal cells, where *ACSL5* is highly expressed<sup>274,275</sup>. TriC also has been shown to inhibit viability of acute myeloid leukemia (AML) cell lines and primary cells (in

part by inducing apoptosis), synergized with other anti-AML therapies, and showed no toxicity to healthy donor CD34+ cord blood cells in the dose range tested (up to 16 µM, 48 hours)<sup>276</sup>. TriC has been shown to effectively inhibit the growth of human breast cancer cells<sup>275</sup>, while in acute myeloid leukemia (AML), TriC treatment inhibits cellular viability and synergizes with other anti-AML therapies<sup>276</sup>. In endometrial cancer, TriC decreases survival, an effect that is enhanced by the addition of omega-3 FA docosahexaenoic acid (DHA)<sup>277</sup>. TriC also induces apoptosis in glioma cells and synergizes with the apoptosis inducer etoposide, causing substantial cytotoxicity in glioma cells both *in vitro* and *in vivo*<sup>275</sup> *.* 

If readers are interested in 3D models of adipose tissue models of disease, please find what I have written on the topic here<sup>278</sup>.

#### **2. CHAPTER 2: MATERIALS AND METHODS**

#### **2.1.Cancer Dependency Map Analysis**

The gene essentiality scores (Chronos scores)  $279$  for a modified list of the Hallmark Fatty Acid Metabolism genes (GSEA M5935 [https://www.gseamsigdb.org,](https://www.gseamsigdb.org/) (**Table 14**) in 21 human MM cell lines from the Cancer Dependency Map (DepMap) dataset (https://depmap.org /portal/download/) were reported. Modifications were made to Hallmark Fatty Acid Metabolism Gene List via addition of other genes within the same family. For example, ACSL1, ACSL4 and ACSL5 are in the original data set but ACSL3 and ACSL6 are not. Therefore, ACSL3 and ACSL6 were added to provide a more comprehensive list of genes associated with fatty acid metabolism. Chronos scores are calculated from a high-throughput clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats (**CRISPR**)/CRISPR-associated protein 9 (**Cas9**) genetic screen in cancer cell lines. Cell lines of interest stably expressing Cas9 were transduced with lentiviruses containing four short guide RNAs (sgRNAs) against each gene. Chronos scores are an integration of sgRNA cutting efficiency, proliferation rate, and correcting for copy number that are assessed over multiple timepoints as the cell lines of interest proliferate $^{279}$ . Essential genes are designated with a value of -1 and the Chronos score of a query gene is relative to -1<sup>279</sup>. Human MM cell line gene and protein expression data were downloaded from the Cancer Dependency Map/Cancer Cell Line Encyclopedia (Expression 22Q2\_Public)<sup>280</sup>.

### **2.2.Cell Lines and Culture Conditions**

MM.1S (ATCC), RPMI-8226 (ATCC), and OPM-2 (DSMZ) cells, as well as green fluorescent protein (GFP) and luciferase-expressing MM.1S (MM.1S<sup>gfp+/luc+</sup>), MM.1R  $(MM.1R<sup>gfp+/luc</sup>)$  and HL-60<sup>mCherry+/luc+</sup> (an AML cell line, referred in the rest of the text as HL-60) cell lines (Table 4) were obtained and cultured as previously described<sup>281</sup> in RPMI-1640 basal media supplemented with 10% (15% for U266B1 cells) fetal bovine serum (FBS, VWR) with 1% PSA (Penicillin, Streptomycin and Amphotericin B, ThermoFisher Scientific, Cat # 15240112) at a cell density of 4.1x10<sup>5</sup> cells/mL in tissue culture-treated T-75 flasks (VWR)<sup>281</sup>. Cells were cultured at 37  $\degree$ C at 5% CO<sub>2</sub>, unless otherwise stated. MM.1S<sup>gfp+/luc+</sup> cells were used for experiments involving MM.1S cells unless otherwise stated. Human myeloma cell lines were authenticated by subjecting genomic DNA isolated with the QIAamp DNA Mini Kit (Qiagen), and short tandem repeat (STR) analysis was performed with the CLA IdentiFiler™ Plus PCR Amplification Kit (ThermoFisher Scientific) and sequenced on an ABI SeqStudio Genetic Analyzer (ThermoFisher Scientific) according to the manufacturer's protocol through the Vermont Integrative Genomics Resource at the University of Vermont. STR profiles (**Table 5**) were compared between the experimental results and the reference using the Cellosaurus STR Similarity Search tool with the Tanabe algorithm, scoring only nonempty markers and excluding amelogenin (CLASTR v1.4.4, Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics).



#### **Table 4. Human MM and AML Cell Lines Used**

ATCC = American Type Culture Collection, DSMZ= German Collection of Micoorganisms and Cell Cultures

# **2.3. Assessment of Single Nucleotide Variants (SNVs) via Sanger sequencing**

Primers were designed with ExonPrimer accessed via the UCSC Genome

Browser to target the genomic regions encoding SNVs relevant to cell line

authentication including exons 1 and 2 of *CDKN2A*, exon 3 of *NRAS*, and the sequence

encoding Arginine 175 in *TP53* (**Table 13**). For PCR amplification of genomic regions to

target cell line-specific variants, cells were thawed and allowed to equilibrate in culture

for 1 week, prior to counting. For each sample tested,  $1 \times 10^6$  cells were collected in a

pellet prior to genomic DNA isolation with Qiagen DNeasy Blood and Tissue Kit

(Qiagen, Cat. No. 69504) per the manufacturer's instructions. Amplicon size was

confirmed by gel electrophoresis prior to isolation of DNA by QIAquick PCR Purification Kit (Qiagen, Cat. No 28104). 10ng of DNA was combined with the forward primer from each PCR pair and submitted for Sanger sequencing at the Vermont Integrative Genomics Resource. This method was written and performed by Heather Fairfield Campbell.

## **2.4. Assessment of predicted deletion on chromosome 17 by gel electrophoresis**

Two primer sets were designed to target the region of chromosome 17 predicted to be deleted in HL-60 cells (Table 13). The predicted deletion on chromosome 17 was estimated using the CNV & Expression data for HL-60 from the Catalogue Of Somatic Mutations in Cancer (COSMIC) database. The UCSC Genome Browser was used to obtain genomic sequences in these regions and Primer3 was used to design primer sets on both the proximal and distal end of the predicted deletion. This method was written and performed by Heather Fairfield Campbell.

### **2.5. Primary Human Bone Marrow Mesenchymal Stem Cell Isolation**

Deidentified and Institutional Review Board (**IRB**)-approved bone marrow biopsies from iliac crests of non-MM patients were physically dissociated with a serological pipette. Dulbecco's Modified Eagle Medium (**DMEM,** Corning, Cat. No. 10- 101-CV) + 10% FBS +1% PSA was added to resuspend and the suspension was applied to a 0.7 μM filter (Corning Inc, Cat. No. 352350) to remove debris. The eluate containing human BM mesenchymal stem cells (hMSCs) and other cell types in the BM, was seeded onto tissue culture-treated T-180 flasks (VWR, Cat. No. 10062-864 and

cultured at 37 ̊C at 5% CO2, allowed to adhere for one week and for to any residual red blood cells to lyse. Media was changed once per week. Upon reaching 90% confluence, cells were washed with phosphate buffered saline (**PBS**, Invitrogen Cat. No. 14040), incubated with 0.25% trypsin (Invitrogen, Cat. No. 25200) at 37 ̊C for 5-10 minutes. The trypsin was neutralized with DMEM +10% FBS and 1% antibiotic and antimycotic and cells were centrifuged for 5 minutes at 200 x g. The supernatant was removed and cells were resuspended in fresh DMEM +10% FBS and 1% antibiotic and antimycotic and plated into new tissue culture treated flasks at a density of 9,000 cells per cm<sup>2</sup>.





OsA=Osteoarthritis, CI=Confidence Interval, BMI=Body Mass Index

### **2.6. Human Bone Marrow Adipocyte Differentiation**

This protocol is adapted from Mauney *et al.* 2005 *Biomaterials* and Sekiya *et al.* 2004 *Journal of Bone Mineral Research*288,289 . 1x10<sup>5</sup> hMSCs were plated per well in 6 well dishes in DMEM +10% FBS + 1% antibiotic and antimycotic and allowed to adhere for seven days. Media was gently removed by aspiration and washed with PBS and replaced with adipogenic differentiation media: DMEM/F12 (Invitrogen, Cat. No.10565) +10% FBS + 1% antibiotic and antimycotic with 1 μM insulin (Millipore-Sigma, I9278) 500 μM 3-Isobutyl-1-methylxanthine (**IBMX**, Millipore-Sigma, Cat. No. I7018), 50 μM indomethacin (Millipore-Sigma, Cat. No. I7378), 1 μM dexamethasone (Millipore-Sigma, Cat. No. D8893). Adipogenic media was changed every seven days for a total of twentyone days. Upon differentiation, adipocytes were maintained in DMEM/F12 + 10% FBS and 1% antibiotic and antimycotic.

# **2.7. Fluorescent Fatty Acid Transfer Assay Between hBMAds and HL-60 Cells in Transwells**

1.5x10<sup>4</sup> hMSCs were differentiated into BMAds as above in 24-well tissue culturetreated plates and were gently washed three times with 0.2% fatty acid-free bovine serum albumin (BSA, ThermoFisher, Cat. No. AAJ6494422) dissolved in PBS to remove exogenous fatty acids. BMAds were then incubated with a fluorescent fatty acid, 10 μM BODIPYTM 500/510 C1,C<sup>12</sup> (ThermoFisher Scientific,Cat. No. D3823) for 4 hours in serum-free DMEM + 1% antibiotic and antimycotic at 37  $\degree$  with 5% CO<sub>2</sub>. Labeled BMAds were then washed with 0.2% fatty acid-free BSA/PBS to remove excess extracellular label and were then cocultured with (5.0\*10 $^{\rm 4}$ ) HL-60 in 6.5 mm transwell

inserts with a 0.4 μm pore (Corning, Cat. No. 3470) for a 24-well plate for 6 days in RPMI-1640 basal media supplemented with 10% FBS and 1% antibiotic-antimycotic, this media was present in both compartments of the transwell. After 6 days of co-culture HL-60 cells were lifted from the transwells by pipetting up and down and seeded onto poly-D-lysine-coated glass bottom dishes, centrifuged for 5 minutes at 200 x g. The media was carefully removed and cells were incubated with 10% neutral buffered formalin (VWR, Cat. No. 89370-094) for 20 minutes at room temperature. Fixed HL-60 cells were then washed 3 times with PBS and counterstained with 0.3 μg/mL of 4',6 diamidino-2-phenylindole (**DAPI,** 365 nm excitation/465 nm emission) and visualized using a 40x objective on a Leica DMI 6000b. This experiment was done once and with one human donor.

#### **2.8. Bone Marrow Adipocyte and HL-60 Transwell Co-culture**

1.5x10<sup>4</sup> hMSCs were either differentiated into BMAds as above in 24-well tissue culture- treated plates or seeded in parallel and cultured in DMEM + 10% FBS and 1% PSA. 5x10<sup>4</sup> HL-60 cells were seeded into the apical portion of a 6.5 mm transwell insert with a 0.4 μm pore size in RPMI-1640 +10% FBS + PSA. The media in the basolateral portion of the chamber was removed and replaced with RPMI-1640 +10% FBS + 1% PSA and the co-culture was incubated for either 3 or 7 days at 37 ̊C at 5% CO2. For the 7-day timepoint, 3 days post-seeding the HL-60 cells, spent media on the bottom chamber was removed and replaced with fresh RPMI-1640 +10% FBS + 1% PSA. Fresh media equal to 50% to the total volume in the apical portion of the transwell was added (this equated to 500 μL) and co-culture was continued till the 7-day timepoint.

HL-60 cells were collected at each timepoint and processed for RNA extraction (see protocol below).

# **2.9. Magnetic Activated Cell Sorting of CD138 (Syndecan-1)-Positive Cells from Primary Multiple Myeloma Patients**

Deidentified IRB-approved BM aspirates of MM patients were transferred to a 5 mL round-bottom tube (Corning Cat. No. 352058) and centrifuged for 5 mins at 200 x g. The EasySepTM Human PE Positive Selection (Stem Cell Technologies, Cat. No. 18551) was used for this protocol. The supernatant was removed and the pellet was resuspended in 500 μL of FACS buffer (PBS + 2% FBS + 1 mM ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (**EDTA**)). FcR blocker was added to a final concentration of 50 μg per mL and an anti-CD138-PE conjugated antibody (Biolegend, Cat. No. 356504) in a 1:300 dilution and samples were incubated on ice for 3 hours (usually 15 minutes) under light protected conditions. Samples were washed 3 times with FACS buffer and PE selection solution (Stem Cell Technologies, Cat. No. 18151) was added 1:100 and incubated for 15 minutes at room temperature. Samples were mixed by pipetting up and down and EasySep™ Magnetic Nanoparticles (Stem Cell Technologies, Cat. No. 18150) were added 1:200 and incubated for 10 minutes at room temperature. FACS buffer was added 4 volumes of FACS buffer:1 volume of sample and each sample was subject to a 5 minute incubation at room temperature using the EasySepTM magnet (Stem Cell Technologies, Cat. No. 18000). The pellet (CD138 positive fraction) and supernatant were retained for measuring cellular redox potential with RealTime Glo as described below with both the CD138 positive and negative fractions were plated for experiments.

## **2.10. Miltenyi Magnetic Activated Cell Sorting of CD138 (Syndecan-1)- Positive Cells from Primary Multiple Myeloma Patients**

Deidentified IRB-approved BM aspirates of MM patients were transferred to a 50 mL centrifuge tube (Avantor, Cat. No. 525-1075) through a 70 µm cell strainer (VWR, Cat. No. 76327-100) and centrifuged for 5 mins at 200 x g. The MACSprepTM Multiple Myeloma CD138 MicroBeads protocol was used for the following positive selection (Miltenyi Biotec, Cat. No. 130-111-744). The supernatant was removed and to lyse red blood cells, the pellet was resuspended in an equal volume of ACK lysis buffer (Lonza, Cat. No. 10-548E). After 10 minutes of incubation at room temperature, RPMI-1640 +10% FBS + 1% PSA was added 3 volumes of media: 1 volume of sample to halt the lysis. The cells were pelleted by centrifugation and resuspended in 50 µL MACSprep Multiple Myeloma CD138 MicroBeads for every 1 mL of pelleted cells. The cells and MicroBeads were thoroughly mixed and then incubated for 15 minutes at room temperature. Two 20 µL aliquots were removed to serve as the no-stain and pre-stain standards. The multi stand magnetic column (Miltenyi Biotec, Cat. No. 009039) was assembled and MACS Buffer (BSA, EDTA, and 0.09% azide, Miltenyi Biotec, Cat. No. 130-091-221) was eluted through the column into a waste beaker as preparation. The cells were passed through a 30 µm filter (Miltenyi Biotec, Cat. No. 130-041-407) and the eluate was saved as the negative fraction. The column was rinsed twice with 2 mL MACSQuant Buffer to ensure all CD138(-) cells passed through the column. The column was removed from the separator and flushed with 4 mL MACSQuant Buffer to collect the CD138(+) cell fraction. Flow Cytometry with an APC-anti-human CD138 Syndecan-1 antibody (BioLegend, Cat. No. 352308) was used to confirm viability and selection of the cells. Patients R24-0125 and R24-0553 were subjected to this protocol.

Note that R24-0124 had two additional 10-minute incubations with Red Blood Cell Lysing Buffer Hybri-Max (Sigma-Millipore, Cat. No. R7757) which led to a decrease in viability and compromised the results of the experiment. Also, for the the R24-0124 sample 3.2x10<sup>5</sup> cells were plated for the RealTime-Glo experiments due to a mathematical error, instead of the standard,  $1.6x10<sup>5</sup>$  cells per well. For the R12-0124 sample, 2x10<sup>5</sup> cells per well (in a tissue culture-treated 24 well plate) from the CD138(+) and CD138(-) fractions were treated with TriC or vehicle for 24 h. Cells were scrapped and transferred to 1.5 mL tubes and centrifuged for 5 minutes at 200 x g at 4 ̊C. The supernatant was removed and samples were washed with 500 μL cold PBS twice. Samples were resuspended in 200 μL RLT Plus Lysis buffer (Qiagen Cat. No. 1053393) and flash frozen with liquid nitrogen and stored at -80 ̊C. These samples have not been processed further for RNA isolation.

### **2.11. Triacsin C Treatment**

Triacsin C (TriC) was purchased from Cayman Chemical (Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA). MM.1S<sup>gfp+/luc+</sup>, MM.1R<sup>gfp+/luc+</sup>, OPM-2, RPMI-8226, U266B1 and HL-60 cells were seeded into either tissue culture-treated white bottom 96 well plate (4.3x10<sup>4</sup> cells per well), tissue culture treated 24 well plates  $(1x10<sup>5</sup>$  cells per well), tissue culture-treated 6well dishes  $(4.81x10^5$  cells per well), or tissue culture-treated T-25 flasks  $(2x10^6)$  cells per flask; Avantor/VWR, Cat. No. 10861-568) under the growth conditions described above. MM cells were treated with TriC or dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO, vehicle). Samples were collected at 24-hour intervals and subjected to functional analyses below.

### **2.12. Myeloma Cell Quantification, Viability and Apoptosis**

For quantification and viability testing, MM cells were collected and resuspended in RPMI-1640 +10% FBS + 1% PSA, and diluted 1:2 in 0.4% Trypan Blue. Viable and non-viable cells were counted using a hemocytometer. To characterize apoptosis, MM cells were collected, washed 3 times with Cell Staining Buffer (BioLegend, Cat. No. 420201) and stained with APC-Annexin V (1:20, BioLegend Cat. no. 640920), DAPI (0.004 μg/ mL, ThermoFisher Scientific, Cat. No. D1306) in Annexin V Binding Buffer (BioLegend, Cat. no. 422201) for 15 min at room temperature). For all flow cytometric TriC analyses, a minimum of 1x10<sup>4</sup> events were collected per sample on a MACSQuant Analyzer (Miltenyi Biotec) and analyzed using FlowJo v.10 (Becton, Dickinson & Company, Ashland, OR).

### **2.13. Bioluminescent Assays Measuring Cell Viability**

CellTiter-Glo (Promega, Cat. No. G7570) relies on the oxidation of luciferin, an ATP-dependent reaction as a proxy for cell viability and is a terminal assay because it requires cell lysis.  $1.6x10<sup>3</sup>$  cells of either human or MM or AML cell lines of interest were plated in tissue culture-treated white flat bottom 96 well plates and subject to the experimental conditions of interest. At the timepoint of interest, CellTiter Glo reagent was added in equal volume to the total volume in the 96 well of interest, mixed well and incubated for 10 minutes at room temperature. Samples were read on a GLOMAX plate reader (Promega). Alternatively, at the timepoints of interest 357 μg /mL of D-luciferin (Invitrogen, Cat. No. L2912) was added to wells, mixed well then incubated for 10 minutes and read with a GLOMAX plate reader. This method was only utilized with cell lines expressing luciferase (MM.1S<sup>gfp/luc</sup> or HL-60<sup>mCherry/luc)</sup>. The integration time for all luminescent readings was 0.5 seconds.

# **2.14. RealTime-Glo™ MT Cell Viability Assay to Measure Cellular Redox Potential**

The RealTime-Glo MT Cell Viability assay (Promega, Cat. No. G9711) relies on the luciferin-based substrate to be reduced intracellularly before binding to NanoLuc® luciferase as a proxy for cellular redox potential. NanoLuc® and MT Cell Viability Substrate were added to the wells 1:1000, simultaneously with pharmacological inhibitors or vehicle controls, immediately after cells of interest were seeded for an experiment in tissue culture-treated white flat bottom 96 well plates as described previously, unless otherwise noted. Samples are incubated for 10 minutes at room temperature under light-protected conditions and luminescence was read on a GLOMAX plate reader (Promega). Samples were incubated at 37 ̊C at 5% CO<sup>2</sup> and luminescence was read longitudinally at designated time points up to 96 hours. Media alone was used for background subtraction.

### **2.15. Intracellular Characterization of BAX Protein**

MM.1S cells were washed three times with Cell Staining Buffer (BioLegend) and then fixed in 1x Fixation Buffer (4% paraformaldehyde, BioLegend). Cells were washed 3 times with Cell Staining Buffer and stained with either Alexa Fluor (AF) 488 mouse anti-human BAX antibody (0.5 μg/mL, BioLegend, Cat. No. 633603) or AF488 Mouse IgG1 κ isotype control (5 μg/mL, BioLegend, Cat. No. 400129) in 1x Intracellular Staining Permeabilization Wash Buffer (Perm/Wash, BioLegend, Cat. No. 421002) for 15 min at room temperature. Cells were washed 2 times in 1x Perm/Wash buffer and resuspended in Cell Staining Buffer (BioLegend) prior to flow cytometry analysis. A total of 2x104 events were collected using a MACSQuant (Miltenyi Biotec) and analyzed

using FlowJo v10.6.1. Data are presented as the mean fluorescence intensity (MFI) of the FITC-H channel within the FSC-A and SSC-A gates.

### **2.16. Myeloma Cell Cycle and Ki-67 Staining**

MM cells were washed three times with Cell Staining Buffer (BioLegend) and fixed in 1x Fixation Buffer (4% paraformaldehyde, BioLegend). Cells were washed three times with Cell Staining Buffer and stained with Alexa Fluor 647 anti-human Ki-67 antibody (1:100) and DAPI (0.5 µg/mL) respectively in 1x Intracellular Staining Permeabilization Wash Buffer (BioLegend). The cells were resuspended in cell staining buffer (BioLegend, Cat. No. 420201) prior to flow cytometry using a MACSQuant Analyzer (Miltenyi Biotec).

# **2.17. Flow Cytometric Characterization of Mitochondrial Number/Mass, Mitochondrial Membrane Potential, and Mitochondrial Superoxide Levels**

MM cells were washed three times with Cell Staining Buffer (BioLegend) and resuspended in their respective cell culture media with 100 nM MitoTracker Green (Invitrogen, Cat. No. M7514), and incubated for 30 min at 37 °C. Cells were washed three times with cell staining buffer and resuspended in Cell Staining Buffer (BioLegend) prior to flow cytometry using a MACSQuant Analyzer (Miltenyi Biotec). To characterize mitochondrial membrane potential, MM cells were washed three times with Cell Staining Buffer (BioLegend) and resuspended in tetramethylrhodamine ethyl ester (TMRE) buffer (Cayman Chemicals) containing 100 nM TMRE (Cayman Chemicals, Cat. no. 701310) and incubated for 30 min at 37 °C. Cells were pelleted and resuspended in TMRE buffer and subjected to flow cytometry on a MACSQuant Analyzer (Miltenyi Biotec). For mitochondrial superoxide measurements, ATCC MM.1S cells were washed three times

with cell staining buffer (BioLegend) and stained with 5 μM MitoSOX<sup>TM</sup> Red (Invitrogen, Cat. No. M36008) in Hank's balanced salt solution with calcium and magnesium (HBSS/Ca2+/Mg2+, Giboco, 14025-092) for 10 min at 37 C. Cells were washed three times with warm HBSS/Ca<sup>2+</sup>/Mg<sup>2+</sup> and resuspended in HBSS/Ca<sup>2+</sup>/Mg<sup>2+</sup> before analysis by flow cytometry.

#### **2.18. Cellular Metabolic Analysis**

5x10<sup>6</sup> MM.1Sgfp+/luc+ cells were treated with DMSO or 1.00 μM TriC for 24hours in T-25 flasks (Avantor/VWR; Cat. no. 10861-568). Cells were then harvested, centrifuged, and resuspended in XF DEM media (pH 7.4; Agilent, Cat # 103575-100) containing 1mM sodium pyruvate, 10mM glucose and 2mM glutamine prior to plating on Seahorse XF 96 PDL-coated plates (Agilent, Cat # 103730-100) at a density of 75,000 cells/well per the manufacturer's instructions. Mitochondrial function was determined using a Mitochondrial Stress Test on the Seahorse XFe96 analyzer (Agilent Technologies), as previously described <sup>281</sup>. Cells were also analyzed for total, mitochondrial, and glycolytic ATP production rates using a Seahorse XF ATP Production Rate Assay according to the manufacturer's instructions. The data presented here are representative of at least three independent experiments with ≥24 wells per treatment.

### **2.19. Acyl-CoA Synthetase Long-chain Activity Assay**

This protocol (**Figure 7**) was adapted from Nchoutmboube *et al.* (2013) and Castillo *et al.* 2020<sup>290,291</sup>. MM.1S cells were plated in 6 well dishes (4.81x10<sup>5</sup> cells/well) in RPMI+0.5% Fatty Acid (FA) Free BSA + 1% PSA and incubated with 0.5 μM BODIPY FL C<sup>16</sup> (4,4-Difluoro-5,7-Dimethyl-4-Bora-3a,4a-Diaza-s-Indacene-3-Hexadecanoic Acid, ThermoFisher, D3821) at 37 C for 2 hours. The cells were incubated with TriC or DMSO

for 2 hours, collected and washed 3x with 0.2% FA-free BSA/PBS (ThermoFisher Scientific, Cat. No. AAJ6494422) to remove excess label. Cells were resuspended in 8.5% Sucrose + 0.5 μM EDTA + 10 mM Tris Buffer (pH 8.0) + 0.1% Triton X-100 and incubated at room temperature for 25 min. Lysates were centrifuged for 10 min at 14,000  $\times$  g, and the supernatant was transferred to fresh tubes. Heptane was added to the supernatant (1 volume of supernatant: 6 volumes of n-heptane), shaken at 1,300 rpm for 10 min, and centrifuged for 5 min at  $12,000 \times g$ . n-Heptane was removed using a pipette, and the aqueous layer was subsequently extracted with n-heptane three more times. The aqueous layer was read on a black 96-well plate (Corning, Cat No. 3603, 475 nm /500-525 nm, excitation/emission). n-Heptane (Cat. no. 34873) was purchased from Millipore Sigma (Burlington, MA, USA).



**Figure 7. General Live Cell ACSL Activity Assay- BODIPY FL C16 (4,4-Difluoro-5,7-Dimethyl-4- Bora-3a,4a-Diaza-s-Indacene-3-Hexadecanoic Acid) Roswell Park Memorial Institute Medium** 

**(RPMI), Fatty Acid (FA), Bovine Serum Albumin (BSA) Antibiotic/Antimycotic (Anti/Anti), Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA)**

# **2.20. Total mRNA extraction and quantitative real-time polymerase chain reaction (qRT-PCR)**

Total RNA was harvested in QIAZOL and prepared using the Qiagen miRNEASY Kit with DNase On-column digestion (Qiagen, Hilden, Germany), according to the manufacturer's protocol. mRNA was quantified and tested for quality and contamination using a Nanodrop 2000 (ThermoFisher Scientific) and subjected to quality control minimum standards of 260/230>2.0 and 260/280>1.8 before downstream applications. For qPCR, cDNA was synthesized using MultiScribe reverse transcriptase (High-Capacity cDNA, Applied Biosciences, ThermoFisher Scientific) according to the manufacturer's instructions using 500 ng of total RNA. Relative transcript expression was determined using SYBR Master Mix (Bio-Rad, Hercules, CA) and thermocycling reactions on a CFX-96 or Opus system (Bio-Rad) using 500 ng of cDNA. Target transcripts (**Supplementary Tables 1, 2**) were normalized to *TATA-box binding protein* (*TBP)* using the 2-ΔΔct method. Data were analyzed using Bio-Rad CFX Manager 3.1.

### **2.21. RNA Sequencing Sample Preparation and Analysis**

A total of  $5 \times 10^6$  MM.1S<sup>gfp+/luc+</sup> cells were seeded in T-25 flasks (Avantor/VWR, Cat. No. 10861-568) and treated with the vehicle (DMSO) or 1.00 μM TriC for 24 h. Replicates were defined as MM.1S $\frac{gfp/luc}{r}$  cells of the same passage grown in parallel. After 24 hours, RNA was isolated using a Qiagen RNeasy Plus Mini Kit (Qiagen, Hilden, Germany) Cat. no. 74136), according to the manufacturer's protocol. Samples were evaluated on Bioanalyzer BA210O RNA pico chips and quantified using the Qubit HS DNA reagent. Sequence libraries were prepared with the Takara Pico V2 library prep using 6 ng of total RNA and sequenced with an Illumina HiSeq 1500/2500. RNA

sequence data was analyzed using the nf-core/rnaseq pipeline v3.9<sup>292,293</sup> using the Nextflow workflow manager  $v22.10.2^{294}$ . Raw reads were subjected to quality checking and reporting (FastQC v0.11.9/ MultiQC v1.13<sup>295</sup>; and low quality sequence (Phred score  $\langle 20 \rangle$  using Trim Galore v 0.6.7<sup>296</sup> were removed. Reads were aligned to the *Homo sapiens* hg38 reference genome using STAR v2.7.10a<sup>297</sup> and SAMtools v1.15.1<sup>298</sup>. Read counts were quantified using SALMON v1.5.2<sup>299</sup>, and DESeq2 v1.28.0<sup>300</sup> was used to identify differentially expressed genes using a cut-off value of  $(log2(FC) > 11$ , q-value < 0.05) using the Wald test and adjusted for multiple testing using the Benjamini and Hochberg method. Gene ontology enrichment analysis was performed using the Enrichr package and STRINGv11, with a high confidence score cutoff of 0.70.

# **2.22. Sample Preparation for Mass Spectrometry Proteomics of TriC treated MM.1S cells**

MM.1S<sup>gfp+/luc+</sup> cells treated with vehicle (DMSO) or 1.00 or 2.00 μM triacsin C for 48 hours. Cells were collected and washed 3x with cold PBS and flash frozen. Cells were solubilized in ice-cold RIPA buffer and DNA sheared using a probe-tip sonicator (Branson Ultrasonifier 250, Branson Ultrasonic Corporation, Danbury, CT, 3 × 10 seconds). Each sample was then centrifuged (14,000  $\times$  g) at 4°C and the supernatant collected. 100 µg of protein was taken from each sample and reduced using 5 mM TCEP (tris(2-carboxyethyl)phosphine hydrochloride; Strem Chemicals, Newburyport, MA). The reaction was allowed to proceed for 20 minutes at 56°C and alkylated for 30 minutes in the dark with 10 mM iodoacetamide at room temperature (G-Biosciences, St. Louis, MO). Protein was precipitated at -20°C with ethanol and pellets were washed twice with ice-cold ethanol and each sample was incubated overnight at 37°C in 100

mM ABC containing 1 mM CaCl<sub>2</sub> and trypsin (Sequencing grade, modified, Promega Co, Madison, WI). Digested proteins were evaporated and each sample freed from salts and buffers by solid-phase extraction on C18 resin using cartridges prepared in-house. Briefly, for each sample a C18 StageTip was prepared according to the procedure originally-reported<sup>301</sup>. 4 mg octadecyl-derivatized silica (SiliaSphere PC, C18 monomeric, 25 µm particles, 90 Å pore size, SiliCycle Inc., Québec City, Canada) suspended in LC-MS-grade isopropanol (Honeywell, Morris Plains, NJ) was added to each tip. Each cartridge was then equilibrated and samples purified according to the StageTip protocol referenced above. Purified peptides were eluted directly into autosampler vials to be used on the LC-MS instrumentation using 100 µL elution buffer and solvent was removed by vacuum centrifugation. Each sample was then resuspended in a volume of sample load solvent [5% formic acid (Optima grade, Thermo Fisher Scientific) and 4% acetonitrile (both water and acetonitrile were LC-MSgrade, Honeywell)] to yield an approximate concentration of 1 µg/µL peptides.

### **2.23. Mass Spectrometry Proteomics of TriC-treated MM.1S Cells**

Chromatography, mass spectrometry, and data analysis were performed as previously described<sup>302</sup>. See supplementary methods for more details. Briefly, sample separations performed in tandem with mass spectrometric analysis were performed on an Eksigent NanoLC 425 nano-UPLC System (Sciex, Framingham, MA) in directinjection mode with a 5 µL sample loop made in-house. Fractionation was performed on a reverse-phase nano HPLC column (Acclaim PepMap 100 C18, 75 µm × 150 mm, 3 µm particle, 120 Å pore). Analysis was performed in positive ion mode on a TripleTOF 5600 quadrupole time-of-flight (QTOF) mass spectrometer (Sciex, Framingham, MA).

Protein identification was performed using Protein Pilot software (Sciex, Version 5.0.2) running the Paragon algorithm. Data was searched against a human proteome database from the Uniprot website (UP000005640) with cysteines modified (iodoacetamide). A target false-discovery rate of 0.05 was the threshold for downstream analysis with a minimum of 95% confidence was used as a threshold for peptide identification as calculated by Protein Pilot. Relative quantification was performed using the SWATH processing microApp in the Sciex PeakView software and t-tests and principal component analyses were completed for treatment datasets using Sciex MarkerView software; significantly different proteins were determined via t-test (p < 0.05). Ingenuity pathway analysis (QIAGEN) was used to identify if proteins of interest had an association with a pathway of interest using a right-tailed Fisher's Exact Test between 1 μM TriC-treated MM.1S<sup>gfp/luc</sup> relative to vehicle and between 2 μM TriCtreated MM.1S<sup>gfp/luc</sup> relative to vehicle. A Z-score statistic was used to make a prediction on the activation status of pathways of interest. Briefly, the expression ((Log2(Fold-Change)) of significantly differentially expressed proteins is compared to the canonical activated state of a pathway and if a molecule in that pathway is in agreement with the canonical activation status it receives a score of +1, if has the opposite expression what is expected it receives a score of -1. The scores of all molecules involved in the pathway are summed and divided by the square root of the total number of molecules in the pathway. If the score is positive then the pathway is predicted to be activated and a negative number is associated with a deactivated prediction.

# **2.24. Lipofectamine-based Transfection of Short-Interfering RNAs (siRNAs) Against** *DGAT1*

Desiccated SMART pool ON-TARGET siRNAs against *Homo sapiens DGAT1* or a Non-Targeting Control (Dharmacon, See Table 6 for sequence and ordering information) were resuspended in 60 mM KCl (Millipore-Sigma, Cat. No. P5405), 6 mM HEPES-pH 7.5 (4-(2-hydroxyethyl)-1-piperazineethanesulfonic acid, Millipore-Sigma, Cat. No. H9897) and 0.2 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub> (Millipore-Sigma, Cat. No. M2393) in RNase-free water to a concentration of 100 μM. 5x10<sup>5</sup> HL-60<sup>mCherry/luc</sup> cells were plated in tissue culture-treated 6-well plates in RPMI-1640 +10% FBS +1% PSA. Lipofectamine™ RNAiMAX (ThermoFisher Scientific, Cat. No. 13778075) and Opti-MEM™ (ThermoFisher Scientific, Cat. No. 31985062) and were added together in a 1:10 volume to volume ratio with siRNAs at a final concentration of 0.025 μM and allowed to incubate at room temperature for 5 minutes. siRNA-Lipofectamine complexes were then added dropwise to their respective wells. Opti-MEM™ and Lipofectamine™ RNAiMAX alone was also added to control for lipofectamine-related toxicity. Cells were incubated at 37 ̊C at 5% CO<sup>2</sup> for 24 and 72 hours, upon which cells were collected for downstream analyses.

**Table 6. Human DGAT1 Short-Interfering RNA Sequences**

Gene Target & Organism	<b>Target Sequence</b> $5' - 3'$	<b>Dharmacon</b> <b>Catalog Number</b>	<b>Dharmacon</b> Reference <b>Number</b>
DGAT1 Homo sapiens	5'-CUU GAG CAA <b>UGC CCG GUU A-3'</b>	J-003922-05	SO-2812174G
DGAT1 Homo sapiens	5'-CAA UAG CCG UCC UCA UGU A-3'	J-003922-06	SO-2812174G
DGAT1 Homo sapiens	5'-UCA AGG ACA <b>UGG ACU ACU C-3'</b>	J-003922-07	SO-2812174G
DGAT1 Homo sapiens	5'-GCU GUG GUC <b>UUA CUG GUU G-3'</b>	J-003922-08	SO-2812174G
<b>PPIB</b> Homo sapiens	5'-ACA GCA AAU UCC AUC GUG U-3'	D-001820-01-20	SO-2821851G
Non- Targeting Pool	1. 5'-UGG UUU <b>ACA UGU CGA</b> CUAA-3' 2. 5'-UGG UUU <b>ACA UGU UGU</b> GUG A-3' 3. 5'-UGG UUU <b>ACA UGU UUU</b> CUG A-3' 4. 5'-UGG UUU <b>ACA UGU UUU</b> CCU A-3'	D-001810-10-20	SO-2812174G

## **2.25. Dicer-Substrate Short Interfering RNA-Mediated Knockdown of ACSL3**

Double-stranded Dicer-substrate short interfering RNAs (DsiRNAs) targeted against *Homo sapiens ACSL3* were ordered from Integrated DNA Technologies as part of their TriFECTa® Kit. FBS and RPMI-1640 basal media were warmed to 37 ̊C prior to processing samples. 3x10<sup>6</sup> HL-60<sup>mCherry/luc</sup> cells were washed twice in warm RPMI-1640 basal media to remove excess FBS. Samples were resuspended in 150 μL of RPMI-1640 basal media and activated recombinant streptolysin O (SLO, Abcam, Cat. No. ab63978) was added (to a final 10 U per mL), and DsiRNAs against *ACSL3* or a nontargeting sequence was added to the cells. Samples were incubated for 5 minutes at 37  $\degree$  with 5% CO<sub>2</sub>, mixed by vortexing gently and incubated for an additional 5 minutes at 37 ̊C with 5% CO2. 1.5 volumes of FBS was added to the samples and incubated for 30 minutes at 37 ̊C at 5% CO<sup>2</sup> to inactivate the SLO. Cells were then seeded into a tissue culture-treated 24 well plate in RPMI-1640 and 10% FBS at 37  $\degree$ C at 5% CO<sub>2</sub> for 48 hours. Cells were then processed for RNA extraction as described above. See Table 7 for more information.

**Table 7. Human ACSL3 Double-Stranded Dicer-Substrate RNA Sequences**





# **2.26. Addition of Exogenous Oleic Acid to HL-60 Cells**

This protocol was adapted from Than *et al.* 2003<sup>303</sup>. 1x10<sup>5</sup> HL-60 cells were plated in tissue culture-treated 24 well plates in RPMI-1640 + 2% fatty acid-free BSA and 1% PSA and incubated at 37 ̊C at 5% CO<sup>2</sup> for 6 hours. Oleic acid (**OA**, Millipore Sigma, O1008-5G, originally resuspended in 100% ethanol at a concentration of 400 mM) was diluted 1:10 in RPMI-1640 + 2% fatty acid-free BSA to a concentration of 40 mM. To conjugate OA to BSA, samples were emulsified by sonicating for 25 seconds on power level 2. OA-BSA samples were incubated at 55 ̊C and shaken at 600 RPM in an Eppendorf Thermomixer R for 20 minutes (or until the solution in translucent). OA-BSA was filter sterilized using a Leur-locked 0.2 μm filter on a 5 mL syringe. Conjugating the OA to the BSA takes ~1 hour, allowing buffer time for the cells to be sufficiently serumstarved to facilitate uptake of the OA-BSA. Either OA-BSA or the vehicle (RPMI-1640 +2% fatty acid-free BSA +1% PSA + equal volumes of ethanol found in the OA-BSA) was added to the cells in the 24 well dishes and incubated at 37  $\degree$  C at 5% CO<sub>2</sub> till the designated timepoints upon which downstream analyses were performed.

### **2.27. Triacsin C and Oleic Acid Co-treatment**

1x10<sup>5</sup> HL-60 cells were plated in tissue culture-treated 24 well plates in RPMI-1640 + 2% fatty acid-free BSA and 1% PSA and incubated at 37 ̊C at 5% CO<sup>2</sup> for 2 hours. Cells were then incubated with 300 μM of OA-BSA (as described above) for 18 hours in RPMI-1640 +1% FBS + 1% PSA. Cells were then treated with 1.0 μM TriC or vehicle (DMSO) for 24 hours in RPMI-1640 + 1% FBS + 1% PSA and subjected to downstream analyses.

### **2.28. Measuring Intracellular Neutral Lipids with Flow Cytometry**

Cells of interest were collected and washed 3 times with 4% fatty acid-free BSA/PBS and fixed with 10% NBF for 30 minutes at room temperature. Samples were washed 3 times with PBS and cells were resuspended in 2 μM BODIPY 493/503 (4,4- Difluoro-1,3,5,7,8-Pentamethyl-4-Bora-3a,4a-Diaza-s-Indacene, ThermoFisher, Cat. No. D3922) and incubated for 45 minutes at 37 ̊C at 5% CO2. Samples were washed 2 times with PBS and run on a MACSQuant (Miltenyi) for flow cytometric analysis in PBS.

### **2.29. Diacylglycerol Acyltransferase Inhibitor Treatment**

1.6x10<sup>3</sup>HL-60, ATCC MM.1S or RPMI-8226 cells were plated in tissue culturetreated white flat bottom 96 well plates and treated with inhibitors against DGAT1 (DG1i, A-922500, Cayman Chemical, Cat. No. 10012708), DGAT2 (DG2i, PF-06424439, Cayman Chemical, Cat. No. 17680), a combination of the two DGAT inhibitors, or vehicle (DMSO) for 48 h. At the timepoint of interest, CellTiter-Glo reagent was added in equal volume to the total volume in the 96 well of interest, mixed well and incubated for 10 minutes at room temperature. Samples were read on a GLOMAX plate reader (Promega). The integration time for the luminescent readings was 0.5 seconds.

#### **2.30. Data Availability Statement**

Raw and normalized RNA-Seq data are available from the Gene Expression Omnibus database (GSE252929). Mass spectrometry data are available in the PRIDE database, PXD049304.

#### **2.31. Statement Regarding the Use of Human Samples**

This work uses human mesenchymal stem cells from healthy human donors in order to differentiate into bone marrow adipocytes. Additionally, primary MM patient samples are used. Through an approved Institutional Review Board protocol, the Reagan lab receives deidentified samples from the Maine Medical Center Biobank, that only contain information about the patient's sex, body mass index and age. The Maine Medical Center Biobank is accredited by the College of American Pathologists (CAP) and follows the National Cancer Institute Best Practices for Biorepositories and the International Society of Biological and Environmental Repositories. Given that these samples are *ex vivo*, the identity of these patients remains unknown and we are not testing clinical outcomes of the patients; the use of human mesenchymal stem cells from these donors does not qualify as human subjects research. We are grateful for the generosity of all the patients who offered their informed consent and part of themselves through the hard work of the Maine Medical Center Biobank to help push our research forward.

#### **2.32. Statistical Analysis**

All graphs were created using GraphPad Prism (v9 or above); statistical significance was determined using One-way or Two-way ANOVA with Tukey's, Šídák's, or Dunnett's multiple comparisons tests, Student's t-test, or Welch's test unless
otherwise stated. Data represent the mean  $\pm$  standard deviation, unless otherwise noted. Significance is indicated as: \*, p<0.05; \*\*, p<0.01; \*\*\*, p<0.001; \*\*\*\* p<0.0001.

#### **3. CHAPTER 3: RESULTS**

# **3.1. Identity of Presumed OPM-2 mCherry/Luc Line as HL-60mCherry/Luc Cells**

Until April 2022, it was assumed by our lab that the cell line labeled OPM-2<sup>mCherry/luc</sup> was the OPM-2 myeloma cell line. However, cell authentication by shorttandem repeat profiling was done and suggested up to 97.67% homology to the acute myeloid leukemia cell line HL-60 (**Table 8**). To further investigate the identity of the cell line deemed "Mislabeled OPM-2 cells", Sanger sequencing and PCR was used to assess SNVs characteristic of wild type OPM-2 cells which include mutations in *CDKN2A*, *NRAS*, and *TP53*. The Sanger sequencing and PCR to confirm the mislabeled cells were done by Heather Fairfield Campbell and the figures and results related to these data with exception of 3.1B-C were the product of her hard work. These data are being included to provide more context to this occurrence.

Accession	Name	<b>N°</b>	$\frac{9}{6}$  Markers Similarity Amel CSF1PO D2S1338 D3S1358 D5S818 D7S820 D8S1179 D13S317 D16S539 D18S51 D19S433 D21S11													<b>FGA</b>	<b>Penta Penta</b> D	Е		TH01 TPOX	vWA
<b>NA</b>	Query	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	X	13,14	17	16	12	11,12	12,13	8,11		15	14	29,30	22			7,8	8,11	16
<b>CVCL A79</b>	<b>HL-60(TB)</b>	14	97.67%	$\boldsymbol{\mathsf{x}}$	13.14	17	16	12	11.12	12.13	8,11	11	14.15	14	29,30	22			7,8	8.11	16
<b>CVCL 0002</b> <b>Best</b>	$HL-60$	14	95.45%	$\boldsymbol{\mathsf{x}}$	13.14	17	16	12	11.12	12,13	8.11	11	14,15	14	29,30	22,24	$10.12$ 13		7,8	8.11	16
<b>CVCL 0002</b> <b>Worst</b>	$HL-60$	14	85.00%	$\mathsf{x}$	13.14	17	16 <sup>2</sup>	12	$11.12$ 13		8.11	11	14	14	30	22,24	10,12 13,14		8	8.11	16
<b>CVCL WZ17</b>	<b>HL-60</b> DeltaF508- CF	12	95.00%	$\boldsymbol{\mathsf{x}}$	13,14		16 <sup>°</sup>	12	11.12	12,13	8,11	11	14,15		29,30	22,24	10,12 13,14		7.8	8.11	16
<b>CVCL 2945</b>	HL60RG	11	86.49%	$\boldsymbol{\mathsf{x}}$	13.14			12	11.12	12,13	8,11	11	14,15		30	21,22,24			8	8,11	16
<b>CVCL 9921</b>	ch-2879	11	71.43%	X		17	16	12		12		8,9	12	14	30,32.2 22				8	10,11	16
	<b>CVCL UN03 ICCSICi006-</b> Α	8	68.97%	X.Y	10.12			11.12	11.12		8.11	9,13			30,31.2				7,9.3 8,11		16
CVCL F328	<b>IST-MELA</b> 16	8	68.97%	X.Y	12.13			12.13	11.12		11.12	10.13.14			29,30				6.7	8	16,18
	<b>CVCL UN08 ICCSICi002-</b> Α	8	66.67%	X	12			12	9.12		8.11	11			29,30				$9.9.3$ $8.11$		16
	<b>CVCL UC20 LM-MEL-5a</b>		66.67%	$\mathsf{I}$ X.Y	11			12	10,11		10,11	9,13			29,30					8,11	14.16

**Table 8. Short-Tandem Repeat Profiling Results of HL-60mCherry/luc Cell Line**

**Every column proceeding the % similarity column are designations of short-tandem repeats. Blue squares are the query ("mislabeled OPM-2" matches to HL-60 cells.** 

## **3.2. Mutations present in mislabeled cells in the CDKN2A gene are largely consistent with HL-60 cells**

The Cellosaurus database suggests HL-60 has a termination codon at amino acid position 80 (R80\*). Primers were designed to examine the SNVs in *CDKN2A* with PCR and Sanger Sequencing*.* In the mislabeled "OPM-2" cells, Sanger sequencing confirmed the presence of the single nucleotide change of C to T in *CDKN2A*, resulting in the introduction of a premature termination codon at position 80, consistent with predictions in HL-60 cells (Figure 1B, orange box and arrows). DSMZ OPM-2 cells contained the reference variant (C) at this locus, while ATCC HL-60 cells also contained the predicted SNV (T). We identified a variant (R29\*) in mislabeled "OPM-2" that was detected in our Sanger sequencing data as well. This variant was not present in either control cell line, and likely represents a spontaneous mutation arising over time in this cell line. We also amplified and sequenced the region of *CDKN2A* with a predicted SNV in OPM-2 cells and confirmed the presence of the predicted C to T change in DSMZ OPM-2 cells as a heterozygous variant, with the reference allele C present in both ATCC HL-60 and our cells of interest (**Figure 8A**, green box and star). In summary, the cells in question (mislabeled "OPM-2") contain a homozygous mutation in *CDKN2A* consistent with HL-60 cells and do not contain the mutation predicted in OPM-2 cells. They also contain a new heterozygous variant in *CDKN2A* which is not present in either control cell line.

#### **3.3. Mutations present in mislabeled cells in the NRAS gene are consistent with HL-60 cells**

Sanger sequencing also confirmed the predicted A to T SNV in HL-60 cells in NRAS was present in both our mislabeled cells and the HL-60 cells sampled, while the DSMZ OPM-2 cells were unchanged at this locus (**Figure 8B**).



**Figure 8. Confirmation of OPM-2 and HL60 Cell Identity**

**A-B) Sanger Sequencing results for control cell lines (DSMZ OPM2, ATCC HL-60) and mislabeled cells (Mislabeled "OPM2") in reference to the University of California**  **Santa Cruz (UCSC) database (left panels) with the amino acids/nucleotides in question highlighted with orange squares and arrows for HL-60 predicted variants and green squares/green star for OPM-2 predicted variants. Chromatograms for Sanger sequencing data represented (right panels). Variants in A)** *CDKN2A* **and B)** *NRAS*

#### **3.4. Mutations present in mislabeled cells in the TP53 gene are consistent with HL-60 cells**

Both HL-60 and OPM-2 cell lines contain mutations in *TP53*: HL-60 cells have a deletion encompassing the entirety of the gene while OPM-2 cells are predicted to have an SNV resulting in a missense mutation that should not affect the expression of the transcript. The *TP53* missense mutation predicted to be present in OPM-2 cells was not present in Sanger sequencing for additional samples (**Figure 9A**). The predicted G to A change was only present in DSMZ OPM-2 cells, and not in ATCC HL-60 or our mislabeled "OPM2" cells.

In an attempt to investigate a potential deletion on Chromosome 17 in mislabeled cells that would be consistent with HL-60 cells, we used two primer pairs to amplify regions of the genome predicted to be adjacent to the structural variant characteristic of HL-60 cells (**Figure 9B-C).** In DSMZ OPM-2 cells, we observed amplification of a product of the correct predicted size (176 bp) in intact chromosome 17 near the predicted proximal end of the deletion in HL-60 cells. However, in the Mislabeled OPM2 and HL-60 cells, no product was produced suggesting that at least one primer was unable to anneal in the absence of this genomic sequence, consistent with a deletion. Similarly, the predicted product (185 bp) for the distal end of the deletion was amplified in DSMZ OPM-2 cells, but not in HL-60 or our mislabeled cells (**Figure 9D**). Combined,

these data suggest that a genomic deletion encompassing *TP53* is present in our cells of interest, consistent with genomic aberrations in HL-60 AML cells.



**Figure 9. OPM-2 and HL-60 Related Genotyping Regarding TP53**

**A) Sanger Sequencing results for control cell lines (DSMZ OPM2, ATCC HL-60) and mislabeled cells (Mislabeled "OPM2") in reference to the UCSC database (left panels)**  **with the amino acids/nucleotides in question highlighted with orange squares and arrows for HL-60 predicted variants and green squares/green star for OPM-2 predicted variants. Chromatograms for Sanger sequencing data represented (right panels) for variants in** *TP53* **were examined. B-C) Graphical representation of the PCR design to assess the large structural predicted in HL-60 cells was examined with PCR and gel electrophoresis. Primers directed to the proximal (blue arrows) and distal (orange arrows) ends of the predicted deletion on chromosome 17 (Chr17) with the associated sizes of their amplicons in B) DSMZ OPM-2 and C) ATCC HL-60 cells. Arrows are in the 5'-3' orientation with the arrowhead being the 3' end of the primer. Mb = mega bases D) In multiple samples for all three cell lines, the predicted deletion in HL-60 cells in Chromosome 17 was examined with PCR and gel electrophoresis. NTC: No template control lane; the darkest band in the ladder represents a 500 bp product, the bottom band is 100 bp.**

#### **3.5. Conclusions**

In summary, cells we previously identified as "OPM-2<sup>mCherry/luc</sup>" were almost certainly HL-60 cells. The data presented here demonstrate high scores for STR agreement between the mislabeled cells and HL-60 cell lines. We specifically examined variants in *CDKN2A, NRAS*, and *TP53* reported in the Cellosaurus database and present additional evidence that the cells in question are in fact HL-60 cells. The cells in question also do not express *TP53*, and likely contain a large deletion on chromosome 17 deleting this gene, consistent with the HL-60 genotype. Our PCR and gel electrophoresis data demonstrate proper amplification of both the proximal and distal regions of this chromosomal segment in DSMZ OPM-2 cells, no amplification in ATCC HL-60 and similar lack of amplification in the mislabeled cells. Interestingly, primers targeting the genomic region encoding arginine 175 in *TP53*, which is predicted to be changed to histidine in OPM-2 cells, were able to amplify in all samples tested which may confirm the presence of a complex rearrangement in HL-60 cells.

## **3.6. Inhibition of the Acyl-CoA Synthetase Family with Triacsin C in Multiple Myeloma and Acute Myeloid Leukemia Cell Lines**

## **3.6.1. Pharmacological Inhibition of the Long-Chain Acyl-CoA Synthetase (ACSL) Family Decreases Multiple Myeloma Cell Proliferation and Survival**

To test the hypothesis that fatty acid metabolism supports MM proliferation and survival, we investigated the fitness of genes within the Hallmark Fatty Acid Metabolism gene set (Molecular Signature Database: M5935) <sup>304</sup> in a CRISPR/Cas9 genome-wide screen in a diverse set of human myeloma cell lines within the Cancer Dependency Map (DepMap)<sup>279</sup>. We observed that 4 of the 5 human **a**cyl-**C**oA **s**ynthetase **l**ong chain family members (ACSL) had negative Chronos scores, with *ACSL3* and *ACSL4* being among the top 25% most essential fatty acid metabolism genes in MM cells (**Figure 9A**). These data suggest that *ACSL1, ACSL3, ACSL4* and *ACSL5* are supportive of human myeloma cell proliferation. To understand the landscape of the ACSL gene and protein expression in MM cell lines, we again consulted the DepMap. We found that the average gene expression of *ACSL1*, *3*, *4* and *5* ranged from 3.78-5.19 transcripts per million (TPM) +1, with *ACSL3* having the highest average expression in the family and *ACSL6* having the lowest (0.05 TPM+1) (**Figure 11A**). DepMap ACSL protein expression data of 6 human myeloma cell lines showed varied expression of each ACSL family member between each cell line (**Figure 15B**).

Triacsin C (TriC), a small molecule inhibitor against ACSL1,3,4 and 5<sup>272</sup>, was used to test the hypothesis that the ACSL family supports MM cell fitness. To determine the  $IC_{50}$ of TriC and a rational dose range for subsequent experiments, we measured total cellular ACSL activity using a novel fluorescent live cell assay adapted from protocols in the literature<sup>290,291</sup>. To determine the optimal length of FA to assess ACSL activity, we incubated HL-60 cells with either a fluorescent 12-carbon (BODIPY FL  $C_{12}$ ) or 16carbon (BODIPY FL  $C_{16}$ ) fatty acid analog for 2 hours at 37  $\degree$ C then extracted with n-

heptane, to separate the product (BODIPY FL  $C_{16}$ ) and the substrate (BODIPY FL  $C_{16}$ -CoA). We observed the BODIPY FL C<sup>16</sup> yielded nearly 3-fold higher fluorescent values in the aqueous fraction relative to the BODIPY FL C12 carbon alternative, and therefore the 16-carbon fatty acid substrate was used (**Figure 10A**). To determine the rate of BODIPY FL C<sub>16</sub> uptake, ATCC MM.1S cells were incubated with BODIPY FL C<sub>16</sub> at 37 °C and flow cytometry was used to measure the mean fluorescent intensity after 0.5, 1.5 and 3.0 hours of incubation as a proxy for BODIPY FL  $C_{16}$  cellular uptake. We found a positive correlation between incubation time and fluorescent signal with a maximum signal after 3.0 hours of incubation with a rate of 98.18 fluorescent units per hour (**Figure 10B**). 2 hours of initial incubation was chosen because the additional 2 hours of TriC would be sufficient to allow enough substrate to enter the cell. To measure the  $IC_{50}$ of TriC, ATCC MM.1S were incubated with a BODIPY FL C<sup>16</sup> for 2 hours, challenged with various doses of triacsin C for 2 hours and subjected to n-heptane extraction to separate the product (BODIPY FL  $C_{16}$ ) and the substrate (BODIPY FL  $C_{16}$ -CoA). HL-60 cells were subject to a similar protocol but with an incubation time for the substrate and TriC for 3 h. We found the  $IC_{50}$  of TriC was 3.66  $\mu$ M [0.02, 10.1  $\mu$ M 95% confidence intervals] in ATCC MM.1S cells and 2.66 μM [ 0.0,9.3 μM 95% confidence intervals] in HL-60 cells (**Figure 11C, 10C**). To test the hypothesis that ACSL family inhibition by TriC would decrease MM cell proliferation and survival, human MM cell lines (MM.1S, MM.1R, RPMI-8226, OPM-2 and U266B1) were treated with doses of TriC (0.0366-6.00 μM) for up to 72 hours and subjected to trypan blue staining to assess cell viability. Significant differences in MM cell viability were first observed after 48 hours of TriC treatment with most human MM cells responding with a dose-dependent decrease in

viability (average EC50: 1.88 μM), except for U266B1 cells (EC50: 8.56 μM) (**Figure 11C**). To determine if there would be compensatory changes in ACSL expression by TriC, we assessed the gene expression of the *ACSL* family after treating MM.1S cells with 1 and 2 μM TriC for 48 hours by qRT-PCR. We observed significant increases in transcript levels of *ACSL1* and *ACSL3* in response to TriC treatment in MM.1S cells and variable expression (**Figure 15D**). We used RealTime Glo (RT-Glo) to measure the redox potential of HL-60 cells treated with TriC. HL-60 cells treated with TriC had a dose-dependent decrease in luminescence (**Figure 16A**).



**Figure 10. Optimization of Live Cell Activity Assay with HL-60 and ATCC MM.1S Cells-A) HL-60 cells were seeded in 6 well dishes and incubated with either 1.0 μM BODIPY FL C<sup>12</sup> or C<sup>16</sup> for 2 hours at 37 ̊C. Cells were washed with fatty acid(FA)-free BSA and resuspended in STE Buffer +0.1% Triton-x100 and subject to an n-heptane extraction, the organic fraction was the read to quantify the amount of BODIPY FL-CoA product was produced. n=3 B) ATCC MM.1S cells were seeded in 6 well dishes and incubated with 1.0 μM BODIPY FL C<sup>16</sup> for 0.5, 1.5 and 3.0 hours at 37 ̊C. At each timepoint cells** 

**were washed with FA-Free BSA and total fluorescence was read via flow cytometry. n=3 C) HL-60 cells were seeded in 6 well dishes and incubated with either 1.0 μM BODIPY FL C<sup>12</sup> or C<sup>16</sup> for 3 hours at 37 ̊C then challenged with multiple doses of TriC for 3 hours. Cells were then washed with FA-Free BSA and resuspended in STE Buffer +0.1% Triton-x100 and subject to an n-heptane extraction, the organic fraction was the read to quantify the amount of BODIPY FL-CoA product was produced. EC<sup>50</sup> values were calculated using Non-linear regression (four parameter, variable slope) n=3.**

The cell counting data revealed a decrease in viability upon TriC treatment. To determine if the effects of TriC were cytostatic or cytotoxic, we measured MM cell proliferation via Ki-67 staining, cell cycle (DAPI; **Figure 11E, 12**), and apoptosis by Annexin V/DAPI staining, and by measuring BAX protein levels for 72 hours at 24-hour intervals. At 48 hours, 3 μM TriC decreased Ki-67 positivity in MM.1S, U226B1, OPM-2 and RPMI-8226 cells compared to vehicle (**Figure 11F, 15E-F**). We observed batchdependent effects of TriC in these experiments due to unknown differences between batches (**Figure 14**). Interestingly, treatment with 1 and 3 μM TriC for 48 hours significantly decreased the percentage of cells in  $G_1$  and  $G_2/M$  phases and increased the population of sub-G<sub>1</sub> MM.1S, OPM-2, and RPMI-8226 cells. As sub-G<sub>1</sub> cells are associated with DNA degradation, these data suggest that TriC induces DNA fragmentation but not cell cycle arrest (**Figure 11E, 13A-B 15G-H**). We observed a similar decrease in the percentage of  $G_1$ , S and  $G_2/M$  and increase in Sub- $G_1$  in HL-60 cells treated with TriC for 24 hours and 48 hours (**Figure 16E-F**). Consistent with the MM cell data, apoptotic cells [Annexin  $V(+)$ , DAPI $(+)$ ] increased (7-12% total apoptosis) in a dose-dependent manner at both 48 and 72 hours post-TriC treatment in MM.1S and OPM-2 cells (**Figure 9F**). Moreover, we observed a dose-dependent increase in the key apoptotic protein BAX in MM.1S cells treated with TriC for 48 and 72 hours (**Figure 11G; Figure 13B**). Taken together, these data demonstrate that TriC treatment

decreases the viability and proliferation of human MM cell lines after 48 hours of treatment and is characterized by an increase in the percentage of  $sub-G_1$  cells, increases in Annexin V/DAPI-positive cells, and the apoptosis-related protein BAX. HL-60 cells show a similar response to TriC as the human MM cell lines with increases in the percentage of sub-G1, and an induction of apoptosis.



**Figure 11. Targeting the ACSLs using Triacsin C Inhibits Myeloma Cell Proliferation and Survival-A) Hallmark Fatty Acid Metabolism genes from Gene Set Enrichment Analysis (M5935) displayed as the average gene fitness (Chronos Score) data from the Cancer Dependency Map of of 21 human myeloma cell lines. Blue bars represent targets of** 

**interest with average Chronos scores < 0.0 (myeloma cell growth fitness defect upon CRISPR knockout), while red bars are Chronos scores >0.0. Schematic was made with Biorender.com and adapted from Tang** *et al.* **2018,** *Oncology Letters*<sup>305</sup>**; ACSL family members are highlighted in yellow. B) ACSL activity relative to vehicle treated cells of ATTC MM.1S cells treated with various doses of triacsin C (TriC) for 2 hours C) MM.1S, MM.1R, RPMI-8226, OPM2 and U266B1 cells were incubated with various doses of TriC for 48 hrs and stained with Trypan Blue to quantify viable cells/mL. EC<sup>50</sup> values were calculated using Non-linear regression (four parameter, variable slope) in GraphPad Prism v9.4.1. n=3 D) Proliferation of human MM cell lines MM.1S, OPM-2, RPMI-8226 and U226B1 cells treated with various doses of TriC for 48 hrs and stained with AF647 anti-human Ki67 (% positive); n=2-6. E) Cell cycle distribution of MM.1S cells treated with various doses of TriC for 48 hrs and stained with DAPI; n=3. F) Apoptosis assay using Annexin V/DAPI staining of MM.1S, U266B1 and OPM2 cells treated with various doses of TriC for 48 hrs; n=3. G) Intracellular BAX (AF488 mouse anti-human BAX antibody) levels in MM.1S cells treated with various doses of TriC for 48 hrs; data displayed as FITC-H MFI; n=3 . Statistics Significance determined via two-way ANOVA with: Tukey's multiple comparison test (E-F), Dunnett's multiple comparison test (D) or Šídák's multiple comparisons test (G) All data are mean ± StDev, \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.**



**Figure 12. Gating Strategies for Ki-67 and Cell Cycle Distribution**

**A) Representative Ki-67 and cell cycle distribution flow cytometry plots depicting the gating strategies in MM.1S cells treated with various concentrations of TriC for 48 hours. An initial gate was made in the FSC-A vs. SSC-A and doublets were excluded comparing the FSC-A vs. FSC-H. In the same sample, both DAPI and Ki-67-AF647 was analyzed, positive populations were identified by comparing stained and unstained samples. Representative histograms of Ki-67 (top) and DAPI staining (bottom) depicting fluorescent intensities vs. normalized counts (to the mode) for various concentrations of TriC. A minimum of 10,000 events were collected.**





**Figure 13. Gating Strategies for Apoptosis and BAX Staining A) Representative Apoptosis assay (Annexin V/DAPI) flow cytometry plots depicting the gating strategies in MM.1S cells treated with various concentrations of TriC for 48 hours. An initial gate was made in the FSC-A vs. SSC-A and doublets were excluded comparing the FSC-A vs. FSC-H. Within the single cell gate, positive populations were identified by comparing stained and unstained samples. Representative flow plots depicting fluorescent intensities of Annexin V vs. DAPI for various concentrations of TriC. A minimum of 10,000 events were collected. B) Representative BAX protein flow cytometry plots gated with a similar strategy as above, however positive signal was identified by comparing AF488 anti-BAX stained samples to AF488 Isotype control stained samples. A minimum of 10,000 events were collected.**



**Figure 14. Triacsin C has Batch-Dependent Effects on Ki-67 Levels-A&B) Proliferation of human MM cell lines MM.1S cells treated with various doses of TriC for 48 hrs and stained with AF647 anti-human Ki67 (% positive) from two different batches, denoted by the specific batch numbers see above their respective graphs. n=3 Significance determined via One-way ANOVA with Statistics: Dunnet's multiple comparison test. Data are the mean ± StDev, \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.**



**Figure 15. ACSL Gene and Protein Expression, Early and Late Apoptosis and Cell Cycle Distribution of OPM-2 and RPMI-8226 Cells Treated with TriC-A) ACSL family member gene expression (transcripts per million+1 (TPM+1) in 30 human myeloma cell lines from the Cancer Dependency Map/Cancer Cell Line** 

**Encyclopedia. Cell lines used in this study are highlighted in color with all other cell lines are in black. B) Relative protein expression of the ACSL family and the house keeping proteins Tata-box binding protein (TBP) and glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GAPDH) of 6 human myeloma cell lines from the Cancer Dependency Map/Cancer Cell Line Encyclopedia. C) Expression of the ACSL family members in MM.1S cells treated with vehicle, 1, or 2 μM triacin C for 48 hours; assessed by qRT-PCR; n=3. D-E) Apoptosis (Annexin V-APC/DAPI) data for MM.1S, U266B1 and OPM2 treated with various doses of TriC for 48 hrs; n=3. Statistics: Panels C, E-H, Two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test. D) One-way ANOVA with Dunnet's multiple comparisons test. Data are mean ± StDev, \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.**



**Figure 16. Triacsin C Decreases HL-60 Redox Potential, Survival and Lipid Droplets-A) RealTime-Glo measurement of cellular redox potential of HL-60 cells treated with TriC over 72 hours B-D) Apoptosis (Annexin V-APC/DAPI) data for HL 60 cells treated with various doses of TriC for 16, 24, or 48 h; n=3. E-F) Cell cycle distribution of HL-60 cells treated with various doses of TriC for 24 and 48 hours (respectively), and stained with DAPI; n=3. G-H) HL-60 or H) MM.1S cells were treated with various doses of TriC for 72 hours and stained with BODIPY FL or BODIPY 581/591 C11, respectively and mean fluorescence intensity (MFI) was measured by** 

**flow cytometry. One-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test. Data are mean ± StDev, \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.**

#### **3.6.2. Triacsin C Induces Transcriptional Changes in MM.1S Cells Associated with Cell Death and the Integrated Stress Response**

To investigate the mechanism underlying TriC toxicity in MM cells, MM.1S cells were treated *in vitro* with vehicle or 1 μM TriC for 24 hours and subjected to RNA-seq analysis. Transcripts for each sample were aligned to the *Homo sapiens* GRCh38 genome, which included 12,772 protein-coding genes, all of which passed the read mapping and quality parameters (**Figure 19A-D**). Principal component analysis and comparison of Euclidean distances between samples showed that the transcriptomes of vehicle- and TriC-treated cells were distinct (**Figure 17A and Figure 19A**). Between TriC and vehicle-treated MM.1S cells, DESeq2 analysis revealed 208 differentially expressed genes (DEGs;  $log2(FC)$  >  $|1|$ , padj < 0.05)<sup>300</sup> which included 167 upregulated and 41 downregulated genes (**Figure 17B**). Enrichr was used to identify significantly enriched pathways within the 208 DEGs. Significant pathways of interest in both the Reactome<sup>306</sup> and KEGG<sup>307</sup> pathways of upregulated DEGs included: Cellular Response to Stress, ATF4 Activation in Response to Endoplasmic Reticulum Stress, Ferroptosis, and Apoptosis (**Figure 15C-D, Tables 17-18**). Search Tool for the Retrieval of Interacting Genes/Proteins (STRING v.12) was used to facilitate an understanding of the general interaction between the DEGs. 3 nodes were calculated using k-means clustering and the labels "Integrated Stress Response and Cell Death" (red), "Fatty acid and One-Carbon Metabolism" (yellow) and "Amino Acid and Arachidonic Acid Metabolism" (blue) were used to reflect generalized GO terms within each cluster (**Figure 18**). Reactome and KEGG pathways enriched among the significantly downregulated genes in TriC-treated cells were Aryl Hydrocarbon Receptor Signaling

and POU5F1 (OCT4), SOX2, and NANOG activated genes related to proliferation (**Figure 19E-F, Tables 25-26**).

Gene overrepresentation analysis suggests that TriC activates EIF2AK3-EIF2S1- ATF4 signaling and cell death pathways and negatively regulates proliferation. Indeed, we observed significantly increased gene expression of *EIF2AK3* (3.2-fold) and *ATF4 (*4.2-fold) and a trend of increased expression in a number of its downstream targets, such as *PPP1R15A* (5.6-fold)*, TRIB3* (6.7-fold) and the pro-apoptotic *DDIT3* (13.7-fold) in MM.1S cells treated with 1 μM TriC relative to vehicle-treated cells. Furthermore, there was a significant increase in a key gene in another arm of the ER stress pathway, *ERN1* after 24 hours of treatment with 1 μM TriC in MM.1S cells. There were no significant changes in gene expression of other kinases that activate EIF2S1, *EIF2AK1*  or *EIF2AK4* (**Figure 17E**). In addition to EIF2AK3-EIF2S1-ATF4 activation, a gene associated with mitigating ferroptosis, *SLC3A2,* (4.0-fold) was significantly increased, with a trending increase in gene expression of the related *SLC7A11*. Additionally, the pro-ferroptotic genes, *HMOX1* (1.8-fold) had significantly increased expression and *CHAC1 (*13.9-fold) had an increasing trend in gene expression upon TriC treatment (**Figure 17F**). Moreover, the key tumor suppressor *CDKN1A* (2.9-fold) was significantly increased in TriC-treated MM.1S cells, with *TP53* levels remaining unchanged (**Figure 17G**). There was a significant (p<0.05) increase in genes involved in fatty acid metabolism, such as *ACACA* (2.3-fold)*, SCD1* (5.0-fold), and the cholesterol transporter *ABCG1* (14.2-fold) with a trending increase in the rate-limiting enzyme for cholesterol biosynthesis, *HMGCS1* (**Figure 17H**). Interestingly, there was a decrease in the gene expression of metastasis-associated, RAC1 (*PAK6,* 0.5-fold), and oncogenic RAS

pathways (*RASA4B,* 0.2-fold*)* (**Figure 19F**). Thus, these data show that MM.1S cells treated with TriC for 24 hours have a transcriptional profile associated with ATF4 activation, apoptosis, ferroptosis, and negative regulation of cell cycle progression.



**Figure 17. Triacsin C Treatment of MM.1S Cells Induces Transcriptional Changes Associated with Cell Death and the Integrated Stress Response**

**A) Transcriptional profiles of MM.1S cells treated with vehicle (DMSO) or 1 μM TriC for 24 hours as assessed by PCA of RNA-Seq data. B) Differentially expressed** 

**transcripts derived from RNA-seq of MM.1S cells treated with vehicle (DMSO) or 1 μM TriC for 24 hours. C-D) Reactome and KEGG pathways (respectively) enriched in the significantly upregulated transcripts in 1 μM TriC treated MM.1S as determined via Enrichr. E-H) Expression of genes related to** *ATF4* **signaling (E), ferroptosis (F)** *TP53*  **signaling (G) and fatty acid metabolism (H) relative to** *TBP* **in MM.1S cells treated with vehicle or 1 μM TriC for 24hrs; n=3. Statistics: Significance was tested in panels 2E-H with an unpaired Student's t-test or Welch's t-test. All data are mean ± StDev, \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.**



**Figure 18. Significantly Upregulated Transcripts in MM.1S Cells Treated with TriC for 24 hours Search Tool for the Retrieval of Interacting Genes/Proteins (STRING v 12.0) diagram of the significantly upregulated, differentially expressed genes identified by RNA-Seq in MM.1S cells treated with 1 μM TriC. The STRING parameters used were a stringency of 0.7 (high confidence) and k-means clustering with 3 nodes.**



**Figure 19. Quality Control Parameters for RNA-Sequencing of TriC-Treated MM.1S Cells and Downregulated Pathways**

**A) RNA-Seq sample-to-sample similarity as displayed via Euclidean distances of the transcriptional profiles of MM.1S cells treated either with vehicle (DMSO, MV) or 1 μM triacsin C (TriC; MT) were calculated with DESeq2. Numbers associated with conditions designate different replicates. B) The number of reads mapped for MM.1S cells treated either with vehicle (DMSO) or 1 μM TriC after 24hrs. Reads were aligned to the** *Homo sapiens* **hg38 reference genome using STAR v2.7.10a and SAMtools v1.15.1, read counts were quantified using SALMON v1.5.250. C) The mean sequence quality (Phred Score) for each sample and their associated read counts are displayed for MM.1S cells treated either with vehicle (DMSO) or 1 μM triacsin for 24 hrs. Raw reads were subjected to quality checking and reporting (FastQC v0.11.9/ MultiQC v1.13<sup>46</sup>; and low quality sequence (Phred score <20) using Trim Galore v 0.6.7<sup>47</sup> were removed. D-E) Reactome and KEGG Pathways (respectively) associated with the significantly downregulated transcripts in 1 μM triacsin C treated MM.1S cells as assessed with Enrichr. F) Gene expression of significantly downregulated genes in the RNA-seq in MM.1S cells treated with vehicle or 1.00 μM triacsin C for 24hrs by qRT-PCR. Values are relative to** *TBP***, n=3. Statistics: Unpaired Student's ttest or Welch's t-test. All data are mean ± StDev, \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001**

## **3.6.3. Triacsin C Treatment Induces Proteomic Changes Associated with Mitochondrial Dysfunction and Reactive Oxygen Species Detoxification in MM.1S Cells**

To identify global protein changes induced by TriC treatment, we treated MM.1S

cells with 1 μM TriC, 2 μM TriC, or vehicle for 48 hours and subjected them to sequential window acquisition of all theoretical fragment ion spectra (SWATH)309 mass spectrometry. The proteome of each treatment group was well-defined and functionally distinct from that of the other treatments, as assessed by PCA (Figure 3.13A). Of the approximately 1,580 total proteins detected in TriC-treated MM.1S cells, 167 and 614 differentially expressed proteins were detected in the 1 and 2 μM TriC-treated cells, respectively. The majority of differentially expressed proteins in both TriC treatments decreased (81.4% and 61.7%, 1 μM, and 2 μM, respectively) relative to vehicle-treated control cells (Figure 20B-C, Supp. Table 8 ). The canonical pathway features in the Ingenuity Pathway Analysis310 revealed six shared pathways among MM.1S cells treated for 48 hours with both TriC doses, including: phagosome maturation, protein

ubiquitination, FAT10 signaling, mitochondrial dysfunction, oxidative phosphorylation, and EIF2 signaling (Figure 18D, E). Interestingly, mitochondrial function and EIF2 signaling were predicted to be activated, while oxidative phosphorylation was likely inactivated (Z score  $\geq$  |2|) based on the differential protein expression of both the 1  $\mu$ M and 2 μM TriC conditions compared to the vehicle (Figure 20D-E). Within the six shared dysregulated pathways, 39 differentially expressed proteins were common to both TriC doses tested in MM.1S (Figure 20F, Supp. Table 8), and these were significantly enriched for Biological Processes (identified using Enrichr) in two major categories: reactive oxygen species metabolism (SOD1, PRDX1, 2, 5, and 6) and mitochondrial electron transport (COX6B1, COX5A and COX7A2) (Figure 20G). Indeed, qRT-PCR gene expression of COX5A, a subunit of Complex IV, was significantly decreased in MM.1S cells treated with TriC for 48 hours, with similar but non-significant trends for decreased expression of COX6B1 and ATP5ME (Figure 20H). Taken together, these data show that 48 hours of TriC treatment induces proteomic changes associated with decreases in mitochondrial dysfunction, oxidative stress, protein ubiquitination EIF2 signaling, with increases in proteins associated with fatty acid oxidation like CPT1A and ribosomal subunits.



**Figure 20. Triacsin C Treatment of MM.1S Cells Induces Proteomic Changes Associated with Mitochondrial Dysfunction and Reactive Oxygen Species**

**A) Proteomic profiles of MM.1S cells treated with Vehicle (DMSO, blue filled circles), 1 μM (red diamonds) or 2 μM (open black circles) TriC as assessed by principal component analysis. B-C) Aberrantly expressed proteins in MM.1S cells treated for 48hrs w/ either 1 or 2 μM TriC D-E) Top 20 enriched pathways in MM.1S cells treated with 1 and 2 μM TriC, respectively, identified using Ingenuity Pathway Analysis with their associated -log(p-value). F) DeepVenn depiction of the number of significantly changed proteins among the shared significantly changed pathways identified by IPA between 1 μM TriC (red, 16 unique proteins) and 2 μM TriC (blue, 165 unique proteins) with a total of 39 shared proteins (purple). The log2(fold change) is depicted for the 39 shared proteins among MM.1Sgfp+/luc+ treated for 48 hrs with 1 or 2 μM TriC. G) Gene ontology (GO) enrichment for GO Biological Process of the 39 shared dysregulated proteins between MM.1S cells treated with 1 μM and 2 μM TriC treated for 48 hrs as assessed by Enrichr. A selection of proteins with common aberrant expression in the presence of both TriC doses are depicted here with red boxes indicating association between the protein and the GO term; gray boxes indicate no association. H) Expression of genes related to oxidative phosphorylation in MM.1S cells treated with vehicle or 1 µM TriC for 24hrs, as assessed by qRT-PCR; n=3. Statistics: Student's t-test to identify differentially expressed proteins (B-C) and a right-tailed Fisher's exact test was used to identify significantly associated proteins in a given pathway in Ingenuity pathway analysis (D-E) Two-way ANOVA with Šídák's multiple comparisons test (H) and). All data are mean ± StDev, \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.**

## **3.6.4. Triacsin C Treatment Negatively Impacts Multiple Myeloma Cell Metabolism and Mitochondrial Function in MM.1S and HL-60 Cells**

Given that TriC-treated MM.1S cells exhibited changes in mitochondria-related

pathways (oxidative phosphorylation and mitochondrial dysfunction), we aimed to test the hypothesis that TriC impairs MM cellular metabolism and mitochondrial function. To assess the effect of TriC on MM cellular metabolism, we treated MM.1S cells with 1 μM

TriC (MM.1S-TriC) for 24 hours and then subjected the cells to mitochondrial stress

measurements (**Figure 20A**)**.** MM.1S-TriC cells had significantly reduced basal,

maximal, and ATP-dependent mitochondrial respiration and proton leakage (**Figures** 

**20A-B**)**.** Interestingly, in parallel samples, we observed a significant 21.27% decrease in

total ATP production rates attributable to a 57.3% decrease in mitochondrial ATP

production rates, with no significant compensatory increase in glycolytic ATP production

rates in MM.1S-TriC compared to MM.1S-Veh (**Figure 20C**). To understand the contribution of fatty acid oxidation to MM cell respiration, ATCC MM.1S cells were subjected to the same mitochondrial stress test mentioned above with or without TriC but were treated with etomoxir, (Eto) a CPT1 inhibitor 30 minutes prior to the first reading (**Supp. Figure 6.1)**. MM.1S-Eto cells had significantly reduced basal, maximal and ATP-linked respiration. MM.1S-TriC + Eto cells had significantly reduced basal and ATP-linked respiration relative to vehicle and TriC-treated cells alone. Intriguingly, MM.1S-TriC and MM.1S-TriC +Eto treated cells had significantly increased spare respiratory capacity. Taken together, these data demonstrate that TriC has profound effects on mitochondrial ATP production rates that reduce cellular respiration in MM.

To test whether TriC alters mitochondrial biogenesis, total mitochondria were quantified by flow cytometry using MitoTracker Green staining **(Figure 19D).** TriCtreated MM.1S cells exhibited a dose-dependent decrease in the relative mean fluorescence intensity (MFI) of total mitochondria in MM.1S-TriC vs. MM.1S-Veh cells after 24 hours, but not at 48 or 72 hours of treatment. MM.1S cells treated with either 1 μM or 2 μM TriC after 48 hours showed significant increases in gene expression of the key mitochondrial biogenesis gene *PPARGC1B* relative to vehicle-treated cells, as assessed by qRT-PCR **(Figure 19E).** These data suggest that there is a decrease in total mitochondrial number after 24 hours of treatment with triacsin C in MM.1S cells, but that this decrease was recovered over time. We next tested the mitochondrial membrane potential of MM.1S cells treated with TriC at 24-hour intervals for a total of 72 hours using tetramethylrhodamine ethyl ester (TMRE). Consistent with the proteomic enrichment of mitochondrial dysfunction, we observed a dose-dependent decrease in

the relative MFI of TMRE in MM.1S-TriC vs. MM.1S-Veh after 24 and 48 hours of treatment. These data suggest that TriC induces mitochondrial dysfunction through the loss of mitochondrial membrane potential **(Figure 19F)**.

Mitochondrial dysfunction is often associated with an increase in oxidative stress. Coupled with our observation that the reactive oxygen species metabolism was an enriched biological process in the shared proteins among 1 and 2 μM TriC-treated MM.1S cells, we predicted that TriC-treated MM cells would exhibit increased ROS. Interestingly, MM.1S cells treated with TriC showed an initial decrease in mitochondrial superoxide by MitoSOX Deep Red staining MFI after 24 hours of TriC treatment. However, treatment for 48 and 72 hours resulted in a dose-dependent increase in the mitochondrial superoxide levels (**Figure 21G**). Taken together, TriC-treated MM cells showed compromised oxygen consumption, mitochondria-derived ATP production rates, decreased mitochondrial mass and mitochondrial membrane potential, and increased production of superoxide.



**Figure 21. Triacsin C Induces Mitochondrial Dysfunction in MM Cells A-B) Cellular respiration (oxygen consumption rate, OCR) in MM.1S cells treated with 1 μM triacin C (TriC) for 24 hours and subjected to a Mitochondrial Stress test.** 

**Values are normalized to the number of nuclei. Data are representative of 3 independent experiments. Oligo=oligomycin (Complex V inhibitor), FCCP (carbonyl cyanide p-trifluoro methoxyphenylhydrazone, proton gradient uncoupler), Rot/Anti A=Rotentone/antimycin A (Complex I and III inhibitors, respectively. C) Total, Glycolytic, and Mitochondrial ATP Production Rates in MM.1S cells treated with 1 μM TriC. D) Number/Mitochondrial Mass assessed with MitoTracker Green in MM.1S cells treated with TriC for 24, 48 and 72 hrs; n=3. E) Expression of genes related to mitochondrial biogenesis MM.1S cells treated with vehicle, 1.00 or 2.00 μM triacsin C for 48 hours; n=3. Statistics: Assessment of mitochondrial integrity in MM.1S cells were treated with TriC for 24, 48 and 72 hrs with TMRE staining; n=3. F) Mitochondrial superoxide quantification (MitoSox Deep Red) in MM.1S cells treated with TriC for 24, 48 and 72 hrs; n=3. Statistics: Two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparison test used throughout except for 4E, where a One-way ANOVA with Dunnett's multiple comparisons test was used. Data are mean ± StDev \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.**

#### **3.7. Exploration of the Role of Lipid Droplets in Human Multiple Myeloma and Acute Myeloid Leukemia Cell Lines**

This section will aim to provide data to investigate the following: 1) the kinetics of lipid droplets under nutrient-rich conditions *in vitro,* 2) methods of negatively and positively modulating lipid droplets, 3) how modulation of lipid droplets alters the response of HL-60 cells to TriC treatment, and 4) the contributions of the rate-limiting enzymes to lipid droplet formation (DGAT1 and 2) to the viability of MM and AML cell lines.

# **3.7.1. Defining and Modulating the Lipid Droplet Landscape in MM and AML Cell Lines**

Triacsin C has been shown to modulate lipid droplets and we were motivated to explore the contributions of lipid droplets in TriC-induced toxicity in MM and AML cell lines. To understand the dynamics of lipid droplets as HL-60 cells grow *in vitro*, HL-60 cells were sampled at 5, 24, 48 and 72 hours in culture with nutrient-rich media, stained with the fluorescent neutral lipid dye, BODIPY 493/503 and measured by flow cytometry. We observed a significant change in BODIPY 493/503 MFI between 5 and 48 hours in culture. Interestingly, we observed a significant decrease in BODIPY signal between 48

and 72 hours. (**Figure 22A-B**). These data suggest that either lipid droplet number or size increases after 48 hours in culture and sharply decline thereafter in HL-60 cells.



**Figure 22. Total Intracellular Neutral Lipids are Dynamic in HL-60 Cells and Can be Decreased by Triacsin C Treatment**

**A) Representative histograms of HL-60s stained with the fluorescence neutral lipid dye BODIPY 493/503 with B) the mean fluorescence intensity of the BODIPY signal quantified using flow cytometry C&D) HL-60 or MM.1S cells, respectively, were treated with TriC for 72 hours and stained with BODIPY 493/503 to quantify total intracellular neutral lipids by flow cytometry. n=3 Statistics: A One-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparison test was used. Data are mean ± StDev \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.**

To test if TriC would decrease the total amount of neutral lipids, HL-60 and ATCC

MM.1S cells were treated with various doses of TriC for 72 hours, collected and stained

with BODIPY 493/503. We found that 3.0 μM TriC significantly decreased BODIPY

493/503 MFI in both HL-60 and MM.1S cells, with a significant decrease with 1.5 μM
TriC only occurring in MM.1S cells (**Figure 22C-D**). These data demonstrate that TriC reduces lipid droplets in both HL-60 and MM.1S cell lines.



**Figure 23. Exogenous Oleic Acid Increases Lipid Droplets and Decreases HL-60 Cell Viability A) Experimental schematic of the addition of exogenous oleic acid to HL-60 cells. B) Representative micrographs of HL-60 cells stained with DAPI (blue, nuclei) and 2 μM** 

**BODIPY 493/503 (green, neutral lipids) incubated with various doses of oleic acid (OA) after 19 hours and imaged using a 40x objective on a Leica DMI 6000b. Scale bar =20.1 μm. C,D) Parallel HL-60 samples were stained with 2 μM BODIPY 493/503 and MFI was measured using flow cytometry (MACSQUANT, Miltenyi) after 19, 48 and 72 hours of incubation with OA. E) Luciferin was added to parallel HL-60 samples and luminescence was read on a GLOMAX plate reader (Promega) as a proxy for cell viability after incubation of OA for 19, 48 and 72. Note, the HL-60 cells constitutively express luciferase. n=3 Statistics: A Two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparison test was used. Data are mean ± StDev \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.**

To attempt to increase the amount of lipid droplets in HL-60 cells, oleic acid (OA,18:1) was added to serum starved HL-60 cells and total lipid droplet content and cell viability was measured after 19, 48 and 72 hours of incubation *in vitro* by fluorescence microcopy, flow cytometry and using the ATP-dependent oxidation of luciferin as a proxy for cell viability (**Figure 23A**). Both qualitatively and quantitatively, we observed a dose-dependent increase in lipid droplets by fluorescence microscopy and measuring BODIPY 493/503 MFI by flow cytometry (**Figure 23B-D)**. The kinetics of the flow cytometry data revealed significant time-dependent increases in BODIPY 493/503 MFI between 48 and 72 hours in both the 300 and 900 μM doses of OA. (**Figure 23C-D**). The luminescence data showed that HL-60 cells were able to proliferate with the addition of OA but there was a significant decrease in luminescence with concentrations of OA ≥300 μM relative to vehicle-treated cells (**Figure 23E**). These data suggest that OA may exerts a negative, concentration-dependent effect on HL-60 cell number, ATP production, or proliferation. Additionally, these experiments provided a rationale to use 300 μM OA for future experiments because it significantly increased the total neutral lipids and was less detrimental to cell viability at later timepoints.



**Figure 24. Exogenous Oleic Acid May Confer Minor Protection Against TriC-Induced Changes in HL-60 Cell Viability**

**A) Schematic of the experimental design of HL-60 cells incubated with 300 μM oleic acid (OA) then subsequently treated with 1.00 μM Triacsin C for 24 hours. B,C) HL-60 cells were collected after preexposure to OA and 24 hour treatment with either** 

**vehicle or TriC and total neutral lipids were measured by staining with 2 μM BODIPY 493/503 and measuring the MFI by flow cytometry (MACSQUANT, Miltenyi) and in parallel D) luciferin was added to the HL-60 cells and luminescence was measured at the 24 hour-post TriC timepoint on a GLOMAX plate reader (Promega) as a proxy for cell viability. n=3 Statistics: A two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparison test was used. Data are mean ± StDev \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.** If mobilized, triacylglycerols within lipid droplets can be processed either

catabolically or anabolically. Therefore, it was hypothesized that the presence of lipid droplets could rescue the effects of ACSL family inhibition by TriC by providing the substrates necessary for fatty acid metabolism. To test this hypothesis, total neutral lipids and cell viability was assessed in serum-starved HL-60 cells incubated with 300 μM OA for 18 hours and then challenged with 1.00 μM TriC for 24 hours (**Figure 24A**). Consistent with similar experiments performed in this work, OA alone significantly increased BODIPY 493/503 MFI and TriC decreased BODIPY 493/503 MFI (**Figure 24B-C**). Although there was an increasing trend of BODIPY 493/503 MFI in HL-60 cells treated with OA and TriC compared to TriC alone, there was not a significant difference between those groups (**Figure 24B-C**). Under these conditions, a decrease in luminescence as a proxy for cell viability was not observed in HL-60 cells incubated with OA alone (**Figure 24D**). Furthermore, HL-60 cells pretreated with OA then challenged with TriC had significantly increased luminescence compared to cells treated with TriC alone, but lower than that of cells treated with OA alone (**Figure 24D**). These data suggest that in the presence of TriC, lipid droplets either do not continue to form after the 18 hour incubation period or that lipid droplets are utilized upon TriC treatmenteither method could contribute to the decreases in BODIPY 493/503 detected. They also suggest that exogenous OA or increased lipid droplets have the potential to protect from TriC-induced decreases in ATP or cell viability.



**Figure 25. Pharmacological Inhibition of DGAT1/2 for 48 Hours Does Not Change HL-60, MM.1S and RPMI-8226 Cell Viability**

**A) Experimental schematic showing HL-60, ATTC MM.1S and RPMI-8226 cells treated with vehicle, inhibitors against DGAT1 (DG1i, A-922500, Cayman Chemical), DGAT2 (DG2i, PF-06424439, Cayman Chemical) or a combination of the two DGAT inhibitors (DG1i + 2i). B-D) CellTiter-Glo was added to HL-60 (B), ATCC MM.1S (C) and RPMI-8226 (D) cells were treated with various doses of DGAT1, DGAT2 or a combination of**  **the two inhibitors (concentrations of both inhibitors were equal to the value displayed (***e.g.* **3.0 μM DG1i +2i = 3.0 μM A-922500 + 3.0 μM PF-06424439). n=3 Statistics: A two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparison test was used. Data are mean ± StDev**

To test the hypothesis that lipid droplet formation supports the viability of hematological malignancies, we used pharmacological inhibitors against the ratelimiting enzymes) for lipid droplet formation (diacylglycerol acyltransferases, DGATs) in an attempt to specifically deplete lipid droplets in HL-60, ATCC MM.1S and RPMI-8226 cells (**Figure 25A**). No significant changes in ATP/viability (as measured by CellTiter-Glo) were detected in HL-60, ATCC MM.1S and RPMI-1640 cells treated with inhibitors against DGAT1 (DG1i), DGAT2 (DG2i) or a combination of the two DGAT inhibitors (DG1i + 2i) for 48 hours (**Figure 25B-D**). These data suggest that lipid droplets may not support viability of HL-60, MM.1S or RPMI-8226 cells under basal media conditions *in vitro.*

## **3.7.2. Efforts to Knockdown ACSL3 and DGAT1 Expression Levels by RNA Interference**

To characterize the individual contributions of the ACSL family with respect to the toxicity we observed in both human MM and AML cell line(s) treated with TriC, HL-60 cells were treated with double-stranded RNA duplexes targeting human *ACSL3* or a non-targeting control. Streptolysin O was used to permeabilize the plasma membrane to allow the RNA duplexes to enter the cells and proceed to be processed by the RNAinduced silencing complex (RISC) to eventually bind to target mRNAs and degrade them<sup>308</sup> . *ACSL3* was chosen as an initial target for preliminary knockdown as it was predicted to be an essential ACSL isozyme in MM cells through our initial DepMap screen (**Figure 15A**) and it is more highly expressed than *ACSL4*. We did not observe

any knockdown of *ACSL3* or any upregulation in *ACSL1* or *ACSL4* upon transfection of RNA duplexes against *ACSL3* (**Figure 26A**).

Transfection of si*DGAT1* by lipid nanoparticles showed a 75% knockdown of *DGAT1* after 24 hours (**Figure 24B**). The magnitude of knockdown was transient, as there was a significant 25% reduction in *DGAT1* levels and no significant decrease after 72 hours (**Figure 26B**). Although preliminary, these data show promise that *DGAT1* levels can be effectively knocked down by siRNAs, albeit only within the first 24 hours.



**Figure 26. Delivery of siRNAs Targeting ACSL3 and DGAT1 in HL-60 Cells A) HL-60 cells were transfected with an RNA duplex directed against** *ACSL3* **or a nontargeting (NT) sequence mediated by transient pore-formation by streptolysin O and the gene expression of** *ACSL1,3 and 4* **was assessed by qRT-PCR and normalized to**  *RPLPO***. Values are relative to NT controls. n=3 B)** *DGAT1* **gene expression from qRT-PCR of HL-60 cells were transfected with either a non-targeting siRNA or siRNAs against** *DGAT1* **using a lipid nanoparticle-based approach with Lipofectamine** 

**RNAiMax (ThermoFisher) for 24, 48 and 72 h. n=2-3 Statistics: A two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparison test was used. Data are mean ± StDev .**

**Fatty Acid Metabolism in HL-60 and MM.1S Cells** 

**3.8.Characterizing Bone Marrow Adipocyte-Dependent Modulation of** 

**3.8.1. Development of Fatty Acid Transfer Assay Between Bone Marrow Adipocytes and HL-60 Cells** A **Wash .2% Wash .2% FA-Free BSA FA-Free BSA** Incubate with 10 µM BODIPYC<sub>1</sub>C<sub>12</sub> For 4 hours in serum-free media **BODIPY C<sub>1</sub>C<sub>12</sub> 500/510** B **BODIPY Phase Merge** hMSCs **DAMBr Jnstained** 

**Figure 27. Human Bone Marrow Adipocytes Take Up a 12-Carbon Fluorescent Fatty Acid A) Experimental schematic where human bone marrow adipocytes (hBMAds) or human mesenchymal stem cells (hMSCs) were first washed with fatty acid-free bovine serum albumin (FA-free BSA) then incubated with 10 μM BODIPY C<sup>1</sup> C<sup>12</sup> for four hours, washed again in FA-free BSA and imaged. B) Representative of** 

**micrographs of hMSCs, hBMAds or unstained hBMAds in phase, in the green channel (525 nm/50 nm) and a merge of phase and the green channel on a Leica DMI 6000b. The scale bars for the hMSCs and the unstained conditions are 100 μm while the hBMAds are 50 μm. n=1 donor (R18-0075)**

Having established that modulation of fatty acid metabolism via TriC treatment has a negative effect on malignant hematological cells, we next investigated the relationship between MM cells and one of the key sources of FAs in the bone marrow microenvironment: the bone marrow adipocyte (BMAd). Studies have shown that BMAds are in close contact with MM cells and support MM proliferation, survival and drug resistance231,309,310. Experiments running concurrently with those described in this thesis, the results which have since been published<sup>229</sup>, suggest that MM causes BMAd to shrink through an unknown mechanism. Therefore, we hypothesized that hematological cancer cells were inducing lipolysis in BMAd and those previously stored fatty acids were transferred to malignant cells. To test this, we developed a fluorescentbased fatty acid transfer assay where a 12-carbon fatty acid with a BODIPY tag (BODIPY C<sup>1</sup> C12) was incubated in hBMAds or hMSCs (**Figure 27A**). As expected, we observed a qualitative increase in fluorescent fatty acid uptake by hBMAd compared to hMSCs (**Figure 27B**). These data demonstrate that BODIPY C<sub>1</sub> C<sub>12</sub> is readily transported into hBMAds in a four-hour time frame.

To test if fluorescent fatty acids in BMAd could transfer to HL-60 cells, HL-60s were cultured in transwell membranes alone or co-cultured with BMAds labeled with BODIPY C<sup>1</sup> C<sup>12</sup> for 6 days (**Figure 3.21A**). We observed that 30% of the HL-60 cells had fluorescent BODIPY  $C_1 C_{12}$  label after 6 days in transwell co-culture as opposed to no observable label in the HL-60 cells alone (**Figure 28B-D**) These data demonstrate that

fluorescent fatty acids are able to transfer from hBMAds to HL-60 cells in a contactindependent manner.



 $\mathbf{A}$ 

 $\overline{B}$ 

HL-60 + hBMAd

 **Figure 28. Fluorescent Fatty Acids Transfer from Human Bone Marrow Adipocytes to HL-60 Cells in a Contact-Independent Manner**

**Experimental schematic of 7-day transwell cultures of HL-60 cells alone or cocultured with BMAds incubated with 10 μM BODIPY C<sup>1</sup> C<sup>12</sup> . B,C) Representative micrographs of merges of the blue (450 nm/ 40 nm, DAPI, nuclei) and green (525 nm/50 nm, BODIPY C1 C12) channels imaged on a Leica DMI 6000b with a 40x objective. Scale bars are 25 μm. N= 1 donor (R18-0075) D) Quantification of percentage of cells with lipid droplets per field of view (FV). Statistics: Student's ttest \*p<0.05.**

### **3.8.2. Characterization of hBMAd and hMSC-dependent Changes in Lipid Droplets in HL-60 Cells**

Since we previously observed that HL-60 and MM.1S cells have a basal amount

of lipid droplets in culture (**Figure 20**), we aimed to test whether hBMAds and hMSCs altered the amount of lipid droplets in HL-60 cells in a contact-independent manner. To test this hypothesis, HL-60 cells were cultured alone or in transwells with hBMAds or hMSCs for 7 days and stained with BODIPY 493/503 to measure lipid droplets (**Figure 29A**). Interestingly, relative to HL-60 cells alone, HL-60 cells co-cultured with either BMAds or hMSCs had a significantly decreased percentage of HL-60 cells with lipid droplets (**Figure 29B-E**). Given that we observed changes in the number of lipid droplets in HL-60 cells co-cultured with hBMAds and hMSCs, we quantified the gene expression of the rate-limiting enzymes to lipid droplet formation, *DGAT1* and *DGAT2* after 3 and 7 days of transwell co-culture. We detected a trending increase in *DGAT1* at both timepoints and a trending increase in *DGAT2* levels after 3 days of co-culture and a trending decrease after 7 days (**Figure 30A-D**), although these results did not reach significance. Lipid droplets have been shown to negatively regulate ER stress<sup>311–313</sup>, therefore we measured levels of *ATF4, a major transcriptional regulator of cellular stress and normal ER function,* and one gene it regulates, *DDIT3,* which is associated with terminal ER stress (**Figure 30E-F**). We found that HL-60 cells co-cultured with hBMAds for 7 days had significantly decreased *ATF4* expression, with a trending decrease in

*DDIT3* (**Figure 30E-F**). We did not see any significant changes in *ATF4* or *DDIT3* expression levels in HL-60 cells co-cultured with hMSCs after 7 days (**Figure 28D-E**).

 $\boldsymbol{\mathsf{A}}$ 



# **HL-60 Alone**





**Figure 29. The Percentage of HL-60 Cells with Lipid Droplets Decreases in Co-Culture with either hBMAds or hMSCs**

**A) Experimental schematic of 7-day transwell cultures of HL-60 cells alone or cocultured with BMAds or hMSCs. B-D) Representative micrographs of merges of the blue (450 nm/ 40 nm, DAPI, nuclei) and green (525 nm/50 nm, BODIPY 493/503 channels imaged on a Leica DMI 6000b with a 40x objective. Scale bars are 20.5 μm. n=1 donors D) Quantification of percentage of cells with lipid droplets, individual values depicted are technical replicates of 2 different human donors . Statistics: A one-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparison test was used. Data are mean ± StDev \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.**

3 Days of Transwell Co-Culture  $\overline{\mathbf{B}}$ A DGAT1 Gene Expression<br>(2<sup>-AJGT</sup>, Relative to GAPDH)<br>
C C C C C C C C C C<br>
C C C C C C C C  $2.0$  $1.5 1.0\,$ HL SD & Inflances Hillson Indects 0.0 - All 1 Hitles in the Art Hives rives 0.0 - All 1000 7 Days of Transwell Co-Culture  $\mathbf c$ D DGAT2 Gene Expression<br>الاطلاع المعالم المسابع<br>بالمعالم المعالم المعالم المعالم<br>بالمعالم المعالم المعا<br>أن المعالم المعالم المعالم المع  $\begin{array}{ccc} \textit{DGATI} \textit{ Gene Expression} \\ \textit{(2<sup>AGC</sup>)} \textit{Relative OAPDHI} \\ \textit{S} & \textit{S} & \textit{S} \\ \textit{S} & \textit{S} & \textit{S} \\ \textit{S} & \textit{S} & \textit{S} \end{array}$  $2.0 1.5$ HILLED & HAMSCS Hi-SD & Halfbeck HLVSD & Inflances HIL SO & Y MESCS 0.0 - All 1018 0.0 - All 0.0 E F (2<sup>-44Ct</sup>, Relative to GAPDH) 2<sup>-AAC</sup>, Relative to GAPDH)  $1.5$ DDIT3 Gene Expression ATF4 Gene Expression  $1.0$  $1.0$  $\overline{\blacktriangle}$ π.  $0.5$  $0.5$ HL-SD & Halfords Hives rives ca  $0.0$ **1.0 Algorithment**  $0.0$ HILLED & HARDES HIV.50 & TANSCS Hives Algone

**Figure 30. hBMAd and hMSCs Do Not Alter HL-60 Cell Gene Expression of DGAT1 or DGAT2 A)** *DGAT1* **and B)** *DGAT2* **gene expression (qRT-PCR, normalized to** *GAPDH***) of HL-60 cells alone, co-cultured in transwells with either hBMAds or hMSCs for 3 days. n= 1 donor (R18-0075). C) DGAT1, D) DGAT2, E)** *ATF4***, and F)** *DDIT3* **gene expression (qRT-PCR, normalized to GAPDH) of HL-60 cells alone, co-cultured in transwells with either hBMAds or hMSCs for 7 days. n=1 donor (R18-0075). Statistics: One-way** 

**ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparison test was used. Data are mean ± StDev \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.**





**Figure 31. MM.1S Cells Pre-exposed to hBMAds Are Sensitive to TriC Treatment A) Experimental schematic of measuring the viability (by Cell-Titer-Glo) in HL-60 cells cultured alone or co-cultured with BMAds for 90 hours then challenged with various doses of TriC for 24 hours. B) Relative luminescence values to each** 

**respective condition's vehicle. n=3 donors (R16-0403, R17-0040,R19-2370). and C) Relative luminescence values to match doses in the MM.1S alone condition. n=3 donors. Statistics: Two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparison test was used. Data are mean ± StDev \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.**  Having observed an ability for malignant hematological cells to uptake lipids from BMAds, and a negative impact of inhibition of fatty acid metabolism via TriC treatment, we next asked whether BMAds alter the response of ATCC MM.1S cells to TriC. ATCC MM.1S cells were cultured alone or co-cultured with BMAds in transwell membranes for 90 hours (3.75 days), then challenged with various doses of TriC for 24 hours at which point MM.1S viability was assessed by CellTiter-Glo (**Figure 31A**). We observed a significant dose-dependent decrease in luminescence in TriC treated cells in both MM.1S cells grown alone and pre-exposed to BMAds in transwells relative to each condition's respective vehicle (**Figure 31B**). Upon comparing doses across conditions (MM.1S alone versus pre-exposure to BMAds) we observed an increasing trend in luminescence in MM.1S cells pre-exposed to BMAds (**Figure 31C**). These data suggest that paracrine signaling between BMAds and MM.1S cells for 90 hours increases MM cell number (consistent with prior reports) but does not confer any protection against TriC.

#### **4. CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION**



**Figure 32. Summary of Phenotypes of Triacsin C Treatment Triacsin C inhibition of the acyl-CoA synthetase long chain (ACSL) family decreases multiple myeloma cell survival, proliferation and reduces mitochondrial respiration and membrane potential.**

#### **4.1. Major Findings of Triacsin C Phenotypes in MM and AML Cell Lines**

There has been accumulating evidence for the potential for targeting the longchain fatty acyl-CoA synthetase family in cancer<sup>258</sup>, however, studies in MM have been limited to ACSL4<sup>270</sup>. In this study, we found within the Cancer Dependency Map's genome-wide CRISPR/Cas9 screen, that the majority of long-chain acyl-CoA synthetase family members are supportive of human MM cell fitness. Congruent with the hypothesis that the ACSL family is supportive of MM cell proliferation and survival, we showed that pharmacological inhibition of the ACSL family with TriC in human MM cell lines decreased MM cell viability, proliferation, and induced apoptosis starting after 48 hours of treatment. These results are consistent with reports of TriC treatment decreasing viability in human breast cancer<sup>314</sup>, Burkit's lymphoma<sup>315</sup> and endometrial<sup>316</sup> cell lines and initiating apoptosis in human TP53-mutant lung, colon and brain cancer cell lines<sup>317</sup>. Interestingly, while most of the MM cell lines tested were TP53 mutants, MM.1S (TP53WT) cells were sensitive to TriC treatment, suggesting that either TriC toxicity in MM cells is independent of TP53 status or the toxicity occurs via multiple mechanisms (**Figure 32**).

We initially found that human myeloma cells exhibit basal expression of *ACSL1*, *ASCL3*, *ACSL4*, and *ACSL5*, with minimal expression of *ASCL6*, suggesting that broad targeting by pharmaceutical methods could be successful. Future studies with TriC in MM could test the EC<sub>50</sub> in non-malignant plasma cells to provide evidence that toxicity of targeting the ACSL family is specific to MM cells (see Chapter 5 for more details). In our studies, we found that the human MM cells tested were similarly sensitive to TriC, with EC<sub>50</sub> values ranging from 1.44  $\mu$ M (MM.1R) to 8.56  $\mu$ M (U266B1). Importantly, cells treated with 1 µM TriC exhibited significantly higher levels of apoptosis and a shift from active cell cycle phases into sub-G1 compared to vehicle-treated cells, suggesting that inhibition of the ACSLs in myeloma may be a plausible therapeutic target.

## **4.2. Possible Explanations of Why U226B1 Cell Viability is Unchanged after 48 h of TriC Treatment**

Given the higher EC<sub>50</sub> in U266B1 cells treated with TriC, it is possible that there could be a molecular sub-type of MM cells that are intrinsically resistant to the effects of ACSL family inhibition. Compared to the other cell lines used in this study, U226B1 cells have the highest gene expression of *ACSL1, ACSL3 and ACSL4* and it is possible that the doses that were tested were not sufficient to inhibit ACSL activity. Although U266B1 cells did not have a defect in viability after 48 hours of TriC treatment like the other cell lines tested, U266B1 cells treated with TriC after 48 hours had a significant decrease in

Ki-67 (+) cells at 0.33 μM TriC. Additional experiments for the higher doses of TriC must be done to determine statistical significance. This suggests that U266B1 respond similarly to TriC when compared to the other cell lines used in this study. Furthermore, U266B1 cells have a longer average doubling time (an average of the doubling times in the literature and the from the biorepositories ATCC and DSMZ) of 90.5 hours compared to an average doubling time of the other MM cell lines of 61.8 hours. Therefore, the metabolic demands for either catabolic or anabolic fatty acid metabolism may be staggered relative to the faster proliferating cell lines that were tested. These observations warrant further investigation of how TriC affects U266B1 viability after 72 h. U266B1 cells are cultured in 15% FBS and therefore the increased activation of key survival pathways could help ameliorate the effects of TriC. Also, the increased amount of BSA could bind the lipophilic TriC, lowering the effective concentration of TriC. However, there is no direct evidence that TriC binds to BSA. Measuring the viability of MM cell lines treated with TriC in different concentrations of FBS could help address this unanswered question.

#### **Table 9. Double Times of Cell Lines Used in this Work**





\*This was an average of the reported range in the literature of 108-144 hours

### **4.3. The Mutational Landscape of U266B1 Cells Does Not Provide a Clear Explanation of the Lack of a Viability Response to TriC**

A mutation in the DNA mismatch repair protein, mutS homolog 6 (MSH6,

p.Gly141Asp), is the only mutated gene that is unique to U266B1 cells compared to the cell lines tested. The mutation is in the proline-tryptophan-tryptophan-proline (**PWWP**) domain, a domain that binds to histone 3 on trimethylated Lys-36 (**H3K36me3**) to direct MSH6 to chromatin<sup>321</sup>. The functional implications of this mutation are unclear but based on the amino acid changes, it is possible that these residues are phosphorylated and subject to changes in function.

We also observed a compensatory increase in *ACSL1* and *ACSL3* gene expression (and ACSL3 protein expression by mass spectrometry) in response to TriC. Therefore, the inhibition of ACSL activity by TriC is decreased by the increase *ACSL1* and *ACSL3* expression. The upregulation of *ACSL1* and *ACSL3* in response to TriC

suggests that they are functionally important, which is corroborates the DepMap data that identified them as MM-supportive. To exclude the possibility of TriC-dependent offtarget effects and address concerns of compensation from ACSL isozymes after TriC treatment, we propose that future studies use genetic approaches to knockdown or knockout all ACSL isozymes, as well as each ACSL isozyme individually in MM cells; see Chapter 5 for more details. It should be noted that the proteomics only detected ACSL3 and ACSL4. Given that the ACSL family are transmembrane proteins, it is possible that the other ACSL family members are more resistant to the solubilization techniques used to isolate total protein. While all the ACSLs are localized on the mitochondria and therefore rules out membrane composition influencing solubilization, the abundance of the ACSLs on different organelles in MM cells is unknown. Additionally, the individual ACSLs may physically interact with unique proteins that could affect their solubilization and sites available for proteolytic cleavage.

To start to understand why MM cells upregulate *ACSL1* and *ACSL3*, it is important to understand how they are regulated. Both *ACSL1* and *ACSL3* gene expression are regulated by the PPAR family, with *ACSL1* being regulated by both PPARA and PPARG and *ACSL3* regulated by PPARD and PPARG258,322–324 . *ACSL1* is also regulated by sterol regulatory element binding protein (**SREBP**), NFKB, protein kinase C (PKC), hepatitis B interaction protein (**HBXIP**) and bromodomain-containing protein (**BRD4**) 258 . *ACSL3* has been shown to be regulated by carbohydrate-responseelement-binding protein (**CREBP**)-1C, octamer transcription factor 1, and liver x receptors (LxR also known as nuclear receptor subfamily 1 group H member 2, NR1H) and fibroblast growth factor 19 (**FGF19**) 258,325,326. In MM.1S cells treated with 1.0 μM

TriC, we observed significant increases in gene expression of *ABCG1, ACACA, FASN*  and *SCD1* that were found under the GO enrichment of pathways such as "Activation of Gene Expression by SREBF", "NR1H2 And NR1H3-mediated Signaling" and "Metabolism of Lipids". Taken together, these data suggest that there is activation of the PPAR family, SREBP and CREBP-related signaling with TriC treatment. Interestingly, *FASN, SCD1* and *ACACA* are activated by ATF4 and X-box binding protein 1 spliced (XBP1s)<sup>327</sup>. EIF2AK3/EIFS1 signaling activates SREBP transcription, while another arm of the unfolded protein response, ERN1, activates both CEBPB, CEPBD and PPARG<sup>327</sup>. The ISR-induced, DDIT3, also induces the expression of CEBPA and CEBPB<sup>327</sup>. It has also been shown in hepatocytes that induction of ER stress by tunicamycin specifically induced the expression of ACSL3<sup>328</sup>. Taken together, these data suggest that the upregulation of fatty acid metabolism genes, including *ACSL1* and *ACSL3*, in TriC-treated cells could be induced by ER stress / the ISR.



#### **Figure 33. The Integrated Stress Response Signaling**

**The integrated stress response (**ISR**) is adaptive cellular mechanism to respond to endoplasmic reticulum (**ER**), stress, nutrient deprivation, oxidative stress and hypoxia and mitochondrial stress**329–331**. The ISR is activated by the phosphorylation of eukaryotic translation initiation factor 2 subunit alpha (EIF2S1 or eIF2α) at serine 51 and suppresses global translation and cell survival and upon chronic or severe activation initiates apoptosis**332,333**. Phosphorylation status of EIF2S1 is dependent on four kinases that respond to distinct stressors: 1) eukaryotic translation initiation factor 2 alpha kinase 1, also known as Heme Regulated Initiation Factor 2α (**EIF2AK1 **or** HRI**) is activated by low cytoplasmic levels of heme, 2) EIF2AK2, also known as Protein Kinase R (**PKR**) is activated by double stranded RNA (usually associated with viruses) 3) EIF2AK3, also known as Protein Kinase RNA-Like ER Kinase (**PERK**) binds to misfolded proteins in its dimerized form and 4) EIF2AK4 also known as General Control Nonderepressible 2 (**GCN2**) is activated by non-acylated tRNAs**329,332 **. Although phosphorylated EIF2S1 inhibits global translation, a key transcription factor, Activating Transcription Factor 4 (**ATF4**) is regulates a cohort of genes that are ultimately selectively translated in response to the stressor** <sup>329</sup>**. The integrated stress response is a compelling a target in cancers, including MM**88,332,334 **.** 

A variety of different mechanisms of action have been shown or suggested for TriC's effects in other cells, including reducing key survival pathways (p38/MAPK<sup>335</sup>, NFKB<sup>335</sup>), PPARy<sup>336</sup> and increasing Bax-induced caspase activation<sup>275</sup>. In MM.1S cells treated with 1 µM TriC, we observed a dose-dependent increase in BAX intracellular protein levels at 48 hours, with sustained levels at 72 hours of treatment. After 24 hours of TriC treatment, MM.1S cells had a robust transcriptional and metabolic response consistent with the decreased viability, proliferation and apoptosis observed at later timepoints. Indeed, many pro-apoptotic genes downstream of the ATF4-eIF2S1 pathway<sup>337</sup> such as *DDIT3* and *TRIB3,* were significantly upregulated upon TriC treatment (**Figures 33 and 34**) Two upstream activators of ATF4- eIF2S1(also known as eIFA2A) pathway; PERK/EIF2AK2 and HRI/EIF2AK1 signaling were enriched with TriC treatment. Interestingly, activation of ATF4 via PERK/EIF2AK2 or HRI/EIF2AK1 has been shown to induce apoptosis in AML<sup>338</sup> and MM<sup>339,340</sup>. Depending on the magnitude and duration of the stressor, the ISR can support both cell survival to mitigate stress or induced apoptosis<sup>332</sup>. The transcriptional profile of TriC-treated MM.1S cells showed both pro-survival and pro-apoptotic after 24 hours. However, examination of the proteomics of MM.1S cells treated with 1 μM TriC for 48 hours showed a significant decrease in proteins that promote protein folding: prefoldin subunit 2 and 6 (**PFDN**2,6), DnaJ homolog subfamily C member 9 (DNAJC9), chaperonin containing T cell complex protein 1 subunit 3,4,8 (CCT3, 4 and 8). Additionally, components of the proteasome including: proteasome activator complex subunit 1 (**PSME**1) and 26S proteasome regulatory subunit 6B (**PSMC4**) were significantly decreased. These data suggest at least two possibilities: 1) proteins are sufficiently

folded and these protein folding chaperones are no longer required, or 2) due to the loss of these proteins, there is an abundance of misfolded proteins and therefore, further activation of the ISR leading to a pro-apoptotic pathway. Myeloma cells have an abundance of misfolded proteins due to their increased secretory capacity and rely on the proteasome and protein folding chaperones to function<sup>88,341</sup>. In conjunction with our data showing decreased viability, proliferation, and induction of apoptosis after 48 hours of TriC treatment, the latter is most likely occurring. As discussed in Chapter 5, it is important to test the activation status of the ISR and state of misfolded proteins in TriCtreated MM cells.

TriC treatment for 24 hours also significantly reduced MM.1S cell basal, maximal, and total ATP production rate due to a reduction in mitochondrially-derived ATP. We observed a decrease in mitochondrial number and mitochondrial membrane potential after 24 hours, therefore it is unclear if the reduction of MM.1S cellular respiration and ATP production rate is definitively due to reduced mitochondria and/or compromised mitochondrial function. Our observation of suppressed superoxide at 24 hours is consistent with an antioxidant transcriptional response with *NFE2L1* and *HMOX1* being significantly increased after TriC treatment.



#### **Figure 34. ATF4-Regulated Transcripts Support Both Cell Survival and Apoptosis Adapted from Tian et al. 2021, Frontiers in Pharmacology**<sup>332</sup> As loss of mitochondrial function is associated with the production of superoxide,

the subsequent increase in mitochondrial superoxide after 48 hours of TriC treatment aligns with the proteomics data at the same timepoint that showed proteins in the electron transport chain such as NDUFV2, COX5A, COX6B1, and ATP5ME were significantly downregulated in TriC treated MM.1S cells. However, only *COX5A* gene expression was significantly down, suggesting that a post-translational-dependent mechanism may regulate these critical proteins. Taken together, these data suggest that TriC induces mitochondrial dysfunction and the integrated stress response.

The kinetics of the response of MM cell lines to TriC are important to understanding TriC-induced toxicity. MM.1S cells treated with TriC exhibited

mitochondrial dysfunction and a transcriptional profile aligned with the integrated stress response, ferroptosis, and apoptosis at the 24-hour timepoint. By 48 hours, significant decreases in viability and induction of apoptosis were detected in these cells as assessed by functional assays and mass spectrometry proteomics, demonstrating the signaling events triggered by TriC treatment occur within the first 24 hours, with maximum effects on cell viability occurring thereafter. A common denominator among these cellular pathways is the mitochondrion. Although the ACSL isozyme family are localized in various organelles, mitochondrion is shared amongst them all (See **Table 3**).

## **4.4. Mitochondrial-Derived Signals that Activate the Integrated Stress Response**

Having detected an enrichment in HRI/EIF2AK1 molecules combined with dysfunctional mitochondria in MM.1S cells treated with TriC, it is likely that mitochondrial-derived signals are activating the integrated stress response (**ISR**). Interestingly, it has been shown by two independent groups that the mitochondrial protease, overlapping proteolytic activity with m-AAA protease 1 (**OMA1**), cleaves the mitochondrial protein DAP3 binding cell death enhancer (**DELE1**) 342,343. Cleaved DELE1 accumulates in the cytoplasm and activates HRI/EIFA2K1 and in turn, activates the  $ISR^{342,343}$ .

There is evidence that other signals from mitochondria can activate the ISR and specific ETC defects have distinct metabolites that activate different kinases upstream of EIF2S1<sup>344</sup>. Inhibition of the ETC in myoblasts increased cytosolic NADH/NAD<sup>+</sup> ratios which inhibited aspartate synthesis, and therefore, asparagine levels, ultimately activating GCN2/EIF2AK2 because of amino acid starvation<sup>344</sup>. We observed an

upregulation in a number of genes involved in amino acid metabolism in MM.1S cells treated with TriC for 24 h that are critical for nucleotide synthesis, like serine, glycine and aspartate. This included genes involved in serine biosynthesis: phosphoserine aminotransferase (*PSPH)*, phosphoserine aminotransferase (*PSAT1*). Serine can be processed by serine hydroxymethyltransferase 1 (**SHMT1**) to form glycine, which then can be used for purine synthesis<sup>345</sup>. Additionally, asparagine synthase (*ASNS*), which catalyzes the formation of asparagine from aspartate, was upregulated in MM.1S cells treated with TriC for 24 hours. It is possible that the TriC-induced mitochondrial dysfunction we observed inhibited the TCA cycle, and therefore critical biosynthetic precursors for amino acids like alpha-ketoglutarate and oxalacetate are depleted. Given that TriC has deleterious effects on OXPHOS, measuring NADH/NAD<sup>+</sup> ratios, aspartate levels and measuring GCN2/EIF2AK2 phosphorylation upon ACSL inhibition may provide evidence for activation of the GCN2/EIF2AK2 arm of the ISR.

The upregulation of genes and proteins related to catabolic FA metabolism may also suggest that there is a dire need to produce essential acetyl-CoA for critical anabolic and catabolic cellular processes. We observed that inhibition of the ratelimiting enzyme in FAO, CPT1A for 30 minutes in MM.1S cells decreased basal, maximal and ATP-linked respiration, suggesting that MM cells use FAs as an energy source. There were significant increases in CPT1A and the very long-chain specific acyl-CoA dehydrogenase (**ACADVL**), an enzyme that catalyzes the first step of beta oxidation by converting an acyl-CoA to a trans- $\Delta^2$ -enoyl-CoA<sup>116</sup> in the proteomics of MM.1S cells treated with TriC for 48 hours. Given TriC decreases mitochondrial ATP production rate, the upregulation of genes involved in FAO may be a compensatory

mechanism to account for a depletion of ATP and TCA intermediates. Studies using isotope-labeled glucose, fatty acids and glutamine in MM cells treated with TriC would provide invaluable insight into substrate utilization preferences and deficiencies that may be exploited to induce MM cell death or defects in proliferation. Additionally, given that CPT1 is an AMPK-regulated gene and we observed decreased ATP production rates, the activation of AMPK should be investigated.



**Figure 35. Triacsin C Upregulates Transcripts Associated with Ferroptosis Adapted from template made with Biorender.com by Gaia Lugano. Transferrin (Tf),Ferric iron (Fe3+) Ferrous Iron (Fe2+), Six transmembrane epithelial antigen of the prostate (STEAP) family members: STEAP 1, STEAP3, STEAP4, Divalent metal reporter 1 (DMT1), Cysteine (Cys), Glutamic acid (Glu), Glycine (Gly), Solute carrier family 3 member 2 (SLC3A2), Solute carrier family 7 member 11 (SLC7A11),** 

**Glutamate-cysteine ligase (GCL), Glutathione sythetase (GSS), ChaC glutathione specific gamma-glutamylcyclotransferase 1 (CHAC1), Glutathione (GSH), glutathione peroxidase 4 (GPX4), Polyunsaturated fatty acid (PUFA), PUFA-coenzyme A (PUFA-CoA), PUFA-phosphatidylcholine (PUFA-PC), PUFA-phosphatidylethanolamine (PUFA-PE), PUFA hydroperoxides (PUFA-OOH), PUFA-alcohol (PUFA-OH), lysophosphatidylcholine acyltransferase 3 (LP3CAT), Hydrogen peroxide (H2O2), hydroxy radicals (OH● )** 

#### **4.5. The ACSL Family, Triacsin C and Ferroptosis**

In our data, "Ferroptosis and Lipid/atherosclerosis" were among the top upregulated KEGG pathways in MM cells treated with 1 µM TriC, as assessed by RNA-Seq. Additionally, metabolism of lipids was enriched in the upregulated genes, suggesting that pathways modulating or responding to lipid species within TriC-treated MM cells are activated. While we did observe modest increases in apoptosis in response to 1 µM TriC treatment, it is possible that other mechanisms of cell death, like ferroptosis, are playing a role in the decreased cell viability we observed.

Ferroptosis is a unique form of regulated necrosis that is triggered by the peroxidation of lipids by sources of ROS from lipoxygenases like NADPH oxidase activator 1 (**NOXA1**), the ETC, or from hydroxy radicals (**OH**● ) or hydroperoxyls (**HOO**● ) derived from Fenton reactions<sup>346</sup> (**Figure 35**). Cells are protected from ferroptosis by the protein glutathione peroxidase 4 (**GPX4**), which utilizes the antioxidant glutathione (**GSH**) to reduce phospholipid and cholesterol hydroperoxides (e.g. **PUFA-OOH**) <sup>346</sup> and inhibition of GPX4 by the small inhibitor, RSL3, induces ferroptosis $347$ . The action of GPX4 is supported by the glutamate-cystine antiporter, system X<sub>c</sub> (Sxc-). Sxc- is composed of solute carrier family 3 member 2 (**SLC3A2**) and solute carrier family 7 member 11 (**SLC7A11**). Sxc- imports cystine, an important precursor to glutathione biosynthesis<sup>348</sup>. Inhibition of Sxc- by the small molecule erastin induces ferroptosis<sup>347</sup>. The gene expression of both components of the Sxc- complex were upregulated in

TriC-treated MM.1S cells by RNA-Seq, and upregulation of *SLC3A2* was confirmed by qRT-PCR. However, pro-ferroptotic *CHAC1*, which degrades glutathione, and lysophosphatidylcholine acyltransferase 3 (*LPCAT3*), were significantly upregulated in MM.1S cell treated with TriC for 24 hours, relative to vehicle cells. Combined, these findings provide mixed evidence that TriC treatment induces ferroptosis in MM.1S cells, but the modulated expression of all these components suggests the response to lipid peroxidation is likely a factor in TriC-mediated cellular phenotypes.

Indeed, members of the ACSL family have previously been connected to ferroptosis in a variety of cell types. ACSL4 is a major contributor to promoting ferroptosis because it preferentially processes PUFAs such as arachidonic acid which are sensitive to oxidation by ROS<sup>349</sup>. Recently, ACSL4 expression was shown to be positively correlated with sensitivity to ferroptosis in  $MM^{270}$ , and ACSL4 levels were positively regulated by mitogen activated kinase (**MAPK**)-Extracellular signal-regulated kinase (**ERK**) kinase (**MEK**) / ERK1/2. They also correlated ACSL4 levels to c-Myc and SREBP protein levels<sup>270</sup>, suggesting a role for MAPK regulation of ACSL4, a connection that may be related to findings in our data. This will be discussed in later sections.

The composition of intracellular fatty acids can modulate pro-survival or cell death pathways. A variety of linolenic acids (18:2), especially α-eleostearic acid (α-ESA), have been shown to have tumor suppressive properties in multiple cancer cell lines from lung carcinoma (A549) colonic adenocarcinoma (DLD-1), hepatic carcinoma (HepG2) to AML (HL-60)<sup>350,351</sup>. Recently, in triple negative breast cancer cell lines, ACSL1 was implicated in promoting ferroptosis after the addition of  $\alpha$ -ESA by incorporating it into the acyl-chains of TAGs of lipid droplets<sup>352</sup>. Given that ACSL1 preferentially binds linolenic

acid and that linolenic acid is preferentially incorporated into CLs, α-ESA also incorporates into CLs and cause increased ROS.

In clear cell renal cell carcinoma, knockdown of ACSL3 decreased proliferation and lipid droplet formation but increased resistance to ferroptosis induction, showing that ACSL3 contributes to ferroptosis, and is supportive of clear cell renal cell carcinoma<sup>353</sup>. Taken together, the literature suggests that ACSL1, ACSL3 and ACSL4 confer sensitivity to ferroptosis and understanding their expression and mechanism of action could inform clinical practice, as treatment with small molecule ferroptosis-inducers or certain fatty acids like α-ESA may be effective. Our data suggest that ferroptosis is occurring on a transcriptional level, but more functional studies are required to support that hypothesis. It is possible that the increase in ROS caused by TriC oxidizes the presumed increased pool of free fatty acid in the cytosol due to their inability to be conjugated with CoA.

In myeloma, Panaroni *et al* showed that high doses of arachidonic acid (25 μM or greater *in vitro*, or 0.5 μg/kg in a severe combined immunodeficiency disease (**SCID**)- MM.1S xenograft mouse model) decreased MM cell number and proliferation. The toxicity of arachidonic acid was ablated *in vivo* by ferrostatin, a ferroptosis inhibitor that scavenges alkoxyl radicals, and to a lesser degree by antioxidants like ibuprofen (an inhibitor of the cyclooxygenases, that convert arachidonic acid to prostaglandins) $^{243}$ . Interestingly, lower doses of arachidonic acid *in vitro* were shown to be tumor supportive. Addition of linoleic acid *in vitro* only significantly increased mouse MM cell viability at 0.5 and 6.5 μM. When we treated HL-60 cells with OA (18:1), we saw a

decrease in viability, which may suggest that ferroptosis was occurring and that the toxicity of FAs is dependent on chain length and saturation status.

During the course of this work, a study was published showing that MM cells induce lipolysis of healthy and MM patient BMAds, and BMAd-derived FAs are transferred to MM cells mediated by the fatty acid transport protein (**FATP**) family<sup>243</sup>. These data support our observation of BMAd-derived FA transfer to HL-60 cells in transwell coculture. Interestingly, Morris *et al*. showed that lipid droplets formed in the presence of conditioned media from BMAds had no effect on MM cell line viability<sup>226</sup>. Of note, the formation of lipid droplets was either cell line or species-dependent (the human JJN-3 were lipid droplet positive while the mouse 5TGM1 lacked lipid droplets) suggesting heterogeneity in FA metabolism or lipid droplet accumulation among MM cell lines. There may be intra-cell line heterogeneity of fatty acid metabolism as well, given that 50% of the JJN-3 cells they used and 60% of the HL-60 cells we used had lipid droplets. The fatty acid composition of BMAds may not be toxic or immediately afford an increase in ATP production (viability), therefore it may be low in arachidonic acid.

Characterization of the fatty acid composition of BMAds using <sup>14</sup>C-tagged fatty acids and how those are metabolized by MM or AML cells would inform how they are being utilized and how BMAds alter MM/AML FA metabolism.

### **4.6. Triacsin C, ROS Detoxification and Connections with TriC-Associated Transcriptome**

We observed a significant decrease of mitochondrial superoxide upon TriC treatment after 24 hours. This could be due to a few mechanisms that are not mutually exclusive: (1) decreased mitochondrial number by defects in biogenesis, (2) mitophagy of damaged mitochondria, (3) decreased ETC activity, and (4) active detoxification of

ROS. We did observe a decrease in mitochondrial number after 24 hours but that needs to be further confirmed by isolating mitochondria, counting them, and observing their morphology, which is directly related to their function. We did observe a significant decrease in the positive regulator of mitochondrial biogenesis, *PPARGC1B* but not *PPARGC1A* or their upstream regulator *TFAM*. *PINK1*, an indicator of mitophagy, was significantly increased by TriC-treatment after 48 hours. Investigation of these genes and proteins at the 24 hour timepoint would help test the hypothesis that mitophagy may be responsible for the decrease in ROS and/or mitochondrial number at 24 hours.

ROS detoxification in the mitochondrion is performed mainly by SOD2, while SOD1 also regulates ROS, but is more widely dispersed throughout the cell. Intriguingly, *SOD2* expression is significantly decreased in MM patients compared to normal BM plasma cells, and is inversely correlated with the rate of myeloma cell proliferation<sup>354</sup>. This suggests that mitochondrial superoxide and perhaps ROS are myeloma supportive. *SOD2* levels were not significantly changed in the RNA-Seq data of MM.1S-TriC treated cells for 24 hours, but it is possible that basal *SOD2* expression is sufficient to reduce the levels of mitochondrial superoxide produced after 24 hours of TriC treatment. Monitoring *SOD2* levels and activity of the enzyme throughout the course of TriC treatment would help elucidate the superoxide dynamics. The increase of mitochondrial superoxide after 48 and 72 hours of TriC treatment with decreases in SOD1 protein levels (by mass spectrometry) in MM.1S cells suggests that ROS detoxification is insufficient at those time points. *SOD1* is regulated by NFKB, activator protein 1 complexes 1 and 2 (AP-1, AP-2), specificity protein 1 (**Sp1**), and CCAATenhancer-binding protein (C/EBP)<sup>355,356</sup>. In other disease models, SOD1 has been tied
to regulation of the pro-myeloma NFKB pathway<sup>357,358</sup>. Proteomics of TriC-treated MM.1S cells showed SOD1 was amongst the most downregulated proteins in TriCtreated cells. Our RNA-Seq data showed gene expression of an inhibitor of NFKB signaling, NFKB inhibitor zeta (*NFKBIZ*) was significantly upregulated. These data show a possible connection between TriC-induced ROS and inactivation of NFKB signaling that may lead to decreased proliferation. However, further assessment of NFKB signaling and SOD1 on a protein level must be done to test this hypothesis, as ROS can both activate and inhibit NFKB signaling<sup>359</sup>. The mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK) pathway is another important signaling pathway that is regulated by ROS.

## **4.7. TriC and Mitogen-Activated Protein Kinase Signaling**

"MAPK Signaling" was a significantly enriched KEGG pathway in our RNA-Seq data and had both activators (*JUN*, *FOS,* and ribosomal protein S6 kinase A2 (*RPS6KA2*) and inhibitors (dual specificity phosphatase (*DUSP1, DUSP10 and DUSP16).* The components of the AP-1 complex, *JUN* and *FOS*, were upregulated in our RNA-Seq data of TriC-treated MM.1S cells. AP-1 (also known as JNK) signaling is a downstream arm of the mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK) pathway<sup>360</sup>. Upon stimulation by receptor tyrosine kinases (RTKs) and/or ROS, an activating phosphorylation cascade of RAS, Raf oncogene (**RAF**), and MAPK-Extracellular signalregulated kinase (ERK) kinase (MEK) occurs. MEK then activates AP-1, ERK1/2 and mitogen-activated protein kinase 14 (p38/MAPK14)<sup>360</sup>. Activated ERK1/2 can activate cAMP response element-binding protein (CREB) to induce *FOS* transcription, and activate tumor supportive transcription factors such as NFKB and transcriptional regulator Myc-like (c-Myc)<sup>360</sup>. *CREB5* was the most upregulated (5.88-fold) transcript in

TriC-treated MM.1S cells relative to vehicle treated cells in our RNA-Seq data. These data suggest that MAPK signaling is activated. However, the expression of the *DUSP*s also shows that MAPK signaling may be decreased. *DUSP10* dephosphorylates p38/MAPK14<sup>360</sup>. p38/MAPK14 can activate the tumor suppressor tumor protein p53 (**TP53**), which negatively regulates cell cycle progression. Although we did not observe changes in *TP53* expression, its downstream effector *CDKN1A* was significantly increased. These data suggest that TriC-induces a transcriptional program that promotes both proliferation and cell cycle arrest. Consistent with negative regulation of MAPK signaling, it has been previously shown that macrophages treated with TriC had decreased p38/MAPK14 and JNK signaling<sup>361</sup>. The role of TriC-induced ROS in the regulation of MAPK, NFKB and AP-1 signaling requires further investigation due to the various ways these pathways can be activated.

# **4.8. The Potential Implications of Triacsin C Use and Approved Therapies for Multiple Myeloma and Acute Myeloid Leukemia**

Combination therapies in MM is standard practice due to the development of drug resistance, and it is critical to identify new therapeutic combinations. TriC has been shown to synergize with other drugs such as etoposides $^{275}$ , and a combination of antimetabolites and alkylating agents<sup>362</sup> in glioma and colorectal cancer. TriC has been shown to reduce lipid droplets<sup>363</sup>, and lipid droplets have been identified in colorectal cancer as a mechanism of drug resistance<sup>362</sup>. Therefore, TriC treatment in combination with other standard myeloma treatments such as dexamethasone or proteosome inhibitors may show promise. Additionally, MM cell Complex I and II activity is positively correlated to the sensitivity of the BCL2 inhibitor, venenoclax $364$ . Hence, MM.1S cells treated with TriC may be sensitive to venetoclax treatment because we observed

decreased mitochondrial ATP production and decreased expression of subunits of Complex I and IV. In AML, it has been shown that AMPK-PERK-ATF4 activation also confers sensitivity to venetoclax treatment by repressing oxidative phosphorylation<sup>338</sup>, therefore future studies could test if a similar mechanism is occurring in MM. Interestingly, low levels of ATF4 and ATF3 are positively correlated with poorer outcomes in myeloma patients treated with bortezomib and dexamethasone<sup>365</sup>. Combined with the fact that bortezomib induces a terminal unfolded protein response $^{88}$ , the induction of ATF4 and ATF3 gene expression by TriC may push MM cells closer to the apoptotic threshold<sup>366</sup>. Elucidating the mechanisms of how the ACSL family is tied to mitochondrial function and the ISR response could identify novel treatments for MM. Taken together, targeting the ACSL family in combination with existing clinical therapeutics could reveal promising synergies.

#### **4.9. Experimental Limitations**

#### **4.9.1. ACSL Homology to Luciferase**

A consideration with respect to any assay that used luciferase, is the homology of the ACSL family to click beetle luciferase<sup>367,368</sup>. Due to this homology, it is possible that TriC also binds and inhibits luciferase. A dose curve of TriC and luciferase and luciferin could elucidate if this is true. This was a one reason why Trypan Blue staining was used to assess viability. There are other higher-throughput ways to assess viability like propidium iodide staining.

## **4.9.2.** *In vitro* **Culture Conditions**

Nutrients under cell culture conditions *in vitro* are in excess and under normoxia. The bone marrow microenvironment is dynamic and the lower concentrations of oxygen

have major implications in cellular metabolism<sup>312,369</sup>. Experiments assessing FA metabolism of MM within the bone marrow microenvironment, would better inform the outcome of possible therapeutic interventions.

## **4.9.3. Triacsin C is a Pan-ACSL Small Molecule Inhibitor**

As mentioned before, we cannot elucidate the individual contributions of the ACSL family with this inhibitor. Due to their different preferences of FA abd cellular localizations, it is possible that TriC has a bias with respect to which ACSL isozyme family member it targets. Genetic approaches targeting the individual ACSL members will be discussed in the future directions. Additionally, we observed batch-dependent effects of TriC, which could account for the variability we saw. Most experiments (besides the Ki-67 and BAX protein at 48 hours) were done with the same lot between biological replicates. Determining the half-life of TriC in culture through mass spectrometry or nuclear magnetic resonance (**NMR**) would inform our kinetics experiments. Despite using doses close to the IC<sub>50</sub>, it is also unclear if TriC has offtarget effects. Additionally, we cannot make clear assessment on whether the addition of OA was protective of TriC-induced toxicity in HL-60 cells because the OA was in culture simultaneously with TriC. TriC is a competitive inhibitor of the ACSLs, and the OA may have outcompeted TriC. Although the data presented here point to exciting avenues of future research, the mechanism of TriC-induced toxicity is still unknown and true mechanistic studies are required.

## **4.9.4. Limited Number of Donors**

Experiments with hMSCs or BMAds were mainly with 1 donor. Human samples have a high amount of heterogeneity due to genetic and environmental factors, therefore, more donors must be used to make conclusive claims.

#### **4.9.5. RNA Interference Experimental Design**

The experiment regarding dsRNA-mediated knockdown of *ACSL3* was flawed in both execution and design. The NT dsRNA is conjugated to AlexaFluor(AF)-647, meaning it can act as a proxy for transfection efficiency. However, AF-647 fluorescence was not assessed in this experiment and therefore it is unclear if the lack of knockdown is due to a poor efficiency by the dsRNA construct or poor transfection efficiency. In the future, both the NT and the targeted interfering RNA constructed should be fluorescently tagged so they have the same lipophilic properties to be directly compared. Transfection efficiency can be measured with either flow cytometry, fluorescence microscopy or a fluorometer.

## **4.10. Summary of Conclusions and Significance**

We identified the ACSL family of proteins (excluding ACSL6) as supportive of a MM.1S, MM.1R, OPM-2, RPMI-8226 cells. U266B1 appeared to be resistant to TriC treatment. Treating MM cell lines with TriC, a small molecule inhibitor against ACSL1, 3, 4 and 5 caused decreases in proliferation and viability, increases in cell death (apoptosis), and induction of mitochondrial superoxide at longer times of incubation (48 hours or more). Proliferation, viability, and survival did not change after 24 hours of TriC treatment but MM.1S cells exhibited compromised cellular respiration, decreased mitochondrial membrane potential, and decreased number of mitochondria at this time. Transcriptional assessment by RNA-Seq suggested that there was activation of the integrated stress response, the cell death pathways apoptosis and ferroptosis, and

factors that both negatively and positively regulate the MAPK pathway. GO overrepresentation analysis of the proteomics of MM.1S cells treated with TriC for 48 hours showed a proteome that had increased mitochondrial dysfunction, significant changes in proteins related to ubiquitination and the proteome. The terms within the mitochondrial dysfunction were components of the ETC from complexes I, III, IV and V; however, gene expression of parallel samples only showed a significant change in *COX5A*, a complex III subunit. We observed that TriC also modestly induces apoptosis and negatively impacts cell viability in the AML cell line, HL-60. More studies must be done to test the hypothesis that the ACSL family may be a target in both MM and AML.

Further studies of the role of the ACSL family may reveal unique metabolic vulnerabilities in MM, and novel biological phenomenon such as the role of fatty acid metabolism in communication between the mitochondrion, the endoplasmic reticulum and the nucleus regarding bioenergetic status and cellular stress. These insights may translate to new therapies in the field of hematological oncology and have the potential to improve the survival rate and quality of life of MM patients.

# **5. CHAPTER 5: UNANSWERED QUESTIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

# **5.1. Genetic Targeting of the ACSL Family**

The transfection of MM cells with traditional lipid nanoparticles is very inefficient and transient. For a more efficient system that is stable and affords temporal flexibility, shRNAs targeted against *ACSL1, 3* and 4 have been ordered from Horizon Discovery (Dharmacon). The shRNAs are in the pTRIPZ vector, a second-generation lentiviral vector with the shRNA and turboRFP (red fluorescent protein (**tRFP**) under a tetracycline responsive element (**TRE**) regulating a minimal Cytomegalovirus (**CMV**) promoter. Therefore, the expression of both the shRNA and tRFP can be induced by tetracycline or its analogs (*i.e.* doxycycline). Other notable features are a puromycin resistance cassette so that puromycin can be used a means of selecting transduced cells. The pMD2.G and psPAX will be used as the envelope and packaging plasmids. Upon knockdown, viability, proliferation, survival and ACSL activity should be assessed (**Figure 36**) After these are made, they should be the primary tool to study the role of the ACSL family in MM cells *in vitro* and *in vivo*. See Table 10 for more information about the target sequence.



**Figure 36. Lentiviral Vector Schematic**

**pTRIPZ vector Map and B) The overview of the experimental procedure on lentiviral transduction** 

## **5.2. Confirmation of Activation of the Integrated Stress Response**

There is strong transcriptional evidence that TriC treatment activates the p-EIFS1-ATF4 pathway in MM cells, however evidence on the protein level must be gathered to test the hypothesis the ISR is activated. First, ATF4 nuclear localization should be determined in the presence and absence of TriC. If there is ATF4 nuclear localization, it is indicative of ATF4 activation. The next experimental step would be assessing protein levels of ATF4 and EIFS1(EIF2A) and phosphorylated EIFS1 (p-EIFS1 or p-EIF2A) in the presence and absence of TriC. Tunicamycin can be used as a positive control for p-EIF2337. These data may be sufficient for reviewer comments but

the protein levels and their phosphorylation statuses of all the kinases that can activate the ISR should be determined in the presence of TriC. They are EIF2AK1-4.

The composition of phospholipid membranes influences the state of cellular ISR. Indeed, PUFAs have been shown to induce activate EIF2AK3/PERK and  $ERM1/IRE1 $\alpha^{370,371}$ . Therefore, understanding the lipid profile upon ACSL family$ inhibition would provide insight into whether the transcriptional profile consistent with the ISR. One family of lipids are the mitochondrial specific cardiolipins (CLs), that have a compelling connections with oxidative stress, mitochondrial function and the ISR, all of which are key pathways associated with TriC treatment.

There is evidence in the literature that ACSLs alter mitochondrial function. Additionally, mitochondria from mouse cardiac tissue from global *Acsl1* knockouts showed decreased responsiveness to ADP stimulation and decreased ATP production<sup>372</sup> . Furthermore, isolated mouse cardiac mitochondria from *Acsl1* knockouts had decreased expression of *taffazin,* (*Taz*) a phospholipid-lysophospholipid transacylase responsible for maturation of cardiolipins (**CL**s), a phospholipid species predominantly found in the mitochondrial inner membrane<sup>372</sup>. A brief overview of the details of cardiolipin biosynthesis remodeling and cellular functions will be provided below. CLs are critical for mitochondrial bioenergetics, intrinsic apoptotic signaling, and mitophagy<sup>373</sup>. The following section will attempt to rationally interweave the data in this work and in the literature to build a speculative model that postulates that TriC changes the composition of CL species in mitochondria and induces ETC dysfunction, causing a loss of ATP production and generation of ROS. The mitochondrial stress signal is

transduced to activate the ISR, chronic activation leads to slower cell cycle progression and cell death by both apoptosis and ferroptosis.

Lipids are a widely diverse group of biomolecules that could all be altered by the inhibition of the ACSL family. Indeed, even in the mitochondrion there are various classes of phospholipid besides cardiolipins (**CL**) including: phosphatidylcholine (**PC)**, phosphatidylethanolamine (**PE**), phosphatidylinositol (**PI**), phosphatidylserines (**PS**) and phosphatidic acid (**PA**). However, CLs have a clear functional connection between the phenotypes we observed upon TriC treatment in MM and AML cell lines. To understand the proposed model above, background of CL biosynthesis and remodeling, CL regulation of bioenergetics, as well as the relationship between CLs, ROS, and activation of apoptosis, ferroptosis, and the ISR, is required.



#### **Figure 37. Cardiolipin Biosynthesis and Remodeling**

**This figure is adapted from Ahmadpour** *et al.* **2020** *Int. J. of Mol. Sciences***<sup>373</sup> . CL biosynthesis is initiated by phosphatidic acid (PA) entering the IMM and being processed to cytidine diphosphate(CDP)-diacylglycerol (CDP-DG) by the CDP-DG synthase, TAMM41374. CDP-DG is then**  **converted to phosphatidylglycerol phosphate (PGP) by the phosphatidylglycero-phosphate synthase, PGS1, by transferring a phosphatidyl group to a molecule of glycerol-3-phosphate (G3P)<sup>375</sup>.A phosphate on PGP is cleaved by phosphatidylglycerophosphate phosphatase 1(PTPMT1) to form phosphatidylglycerol (PG). CL biosynthesis concludes with PG being converted to immature CL by cardiolipin synthase 1 (CRLS1)<sup>376</sup>. Immature CLs are characterized by variably sized saturated acyl chains and asymmetry with respect to the glycerol head group<sup>377</sup> . Immature CLs require remodeling to be functional. CL maturation involves cleaving of the fatty acyl chains on immature CLs by phospholipase A2 (PLA2) to form monolysocardiolipin (MLCL) and then a series of acyl-CoA transferases in the IMM by monolysocardiolipin acyltransferase 1 (MLCLAT1) and TAZ378,379 that have preferences for linoleic acid (18:2)<sup>380</sup>. TAZ transfers an acyl group from a PE or PC in the membrane to form mature cardiolipin378,379. The acyl-CoA:lysocardiolipin acyltransferase (ALCAT1) located on endoplasmic reticulum-mitochondria associated membranes (ER MAMs), remodels cardiolipins upon oxidative stress381,382 . Made with Biorender.com**

#### **5.3. Cardiolipin Biosynthesis and Remodeling**

Enriched in the IMM where it is synthesized, CLs are type of phospholipid consisting

of two phosphatidyl moieties bound to a glycerol head group (**Figure 37**). Each phosphatidyl group is bound to two esterified fatty acyl chains bridged by a glycerol group, these symmetrical halves help form a cone-like shape<sup>383</sup>. While we hypothesize that cardiolipin accumulation is involved in TriC toxicity, expression of genes and proteins involved in CL biosynthesis or remodeling were not significantly changed in either the RNA-Seq or proteomics data of MM.1S cells. However, it is possible that TriC treatment modulates CL composition, as one of the most important functions that mature CLs perform is regulating bioenergetics, and this was found to be aberrant in TriC-treated MM cells.

## **5.4. Regulation of Bioenergetics by Cardiolipins**

CLs physically interact with key components of the ETC such as Complex I Complex III, IV and ADP/ATP carrier (**AAC**) 384–386. CLs are required for the formation of supercomplexes or respirasomes between the ETC complexes by physically bringing individual ETC complexes in closer proximity, ultimately increasing the efficiency of electron transfer387–389. Given our data showing that MM.1S cells treated with TriC for 24 hours had decreased respiratory parameters, it is possible that a depletion or change in CL composition could disrupt the formation of respirasomes. Interestingly in neurons, knockdown of a critical component of complex I, NDUFS1 caused a decrease of complex I to form respirasomes and led to decreased oxygen consumption and increased mitochondrial ROS<sup>390</sup>, however the mechanism of how ROS is produced due to a lack of respirasome formation is unknown. We observed a significant increase in mitochondrial superoxide in TriC-treated MM.1S cells after 48 hours and 72 hours relative to vehicle treated cells. The effect of ROS on CL and downstream will be discussed in the context of apoptosis, ferroptosis and activation of the ISR.

# **5.5. Oxidized Cardiolipins Are a Signal of Mitochondrial Stress and Activate Apoptosis and the ISR**

Cytochrome C is a key component in the ETC and serves multiple cellular functions including regulating oxidative stress and apoptosis<sup>391</sup>. Cytochrome c (Cyt C) has peroxidase activity and is able to scavenge electrons from superoxide to regenerate oxygen, thus acting as an antioxidant<sup>392</sup>, a process that is promoted through interactions with CLs through two distinct mechanisms<sup>393</sup>. Cyt c interacts with the phosphate head group of CL, which promotes the electron transfer and peroxidase activity of Cyt cand when CLs migrate from the IMM to the OMM during apoptosis, the unsaturated acyl chain interacts with Cyt c to promote peroxidase activity394,395. Oxidation of CLs in the proximity of Cyt c peroxidase activity causes the release of Cyt c from the IMM to the cytosol, promoting apoptosis<sup>396</sup>. Oxidation of CL can be driven by ROS species, generating reactive aldehydes like 4-hydroxy-trans-2-nonenal (**4-HNE**), a signaling molecule that has been shown to upregulate HMOX1 and activate the PERK-EIFS1- ATF4 and the ATF6 pathways of the unfolded protein response 397. Addition of 4-HNE on PC12, a neuron-like cell line, caused activation of ERK, JNK and p38/MAPK14 and

the downstream NFE2L2, a key protein in the response to oxidative stress<sup>397</sup>. Inhibition of p38/MAPK with SB203580 upon 4-HNE treatment reduced HMOX1 upregulation and induced the pro-apoptotic ISR-induced transcripts: *DDIT3, BBC3,* and *TRB3*<sup>397</sup> . Consistent with these results, TriC-treated MM.1S cells also had significantly upregulated *HMOX1*, *DDIT3*, *BBC3* and *TRIB3* and induced apoptosis, making a compelling connection between 4-HNE and TriC-induced ACSL inhibition in MM cells. CL may have a possible connection with regulating the activation of HRI/EIFA2K1 arm of the ISR. In neurons, it has been shown OMA1 binds CL in complex with the prohibitin (PHB) complex<sup>398</sup>. They show that the PHB complex promotes OMA1 turnover but do not directly test that that CL are necessary for the PHB regulation of OMA1 levels in the mitochondrion and would be a novel experimental pursuit to investigate. These data would show a direct role of CL in the OMA1-DELE-HRI/EIF2AK1 arm of the ISR.

## **5.6. Triacsin C Drug Synergy Studies**

Proteosome inhibitors like bortezomib and the BCL-2 antagonist venetoclax have anti-MM effects. To test how TriC treatment alters the response to these therapeutic agents, dose curves of each drug alone and in combination will be done in a highthroughput manner by assessing changes in viability by propidium iodide staining and assessing redox potential with RealTime-Glo. These data will add more clinical relevance to the existing data. If the ISR is indeed activated by TriC, ISR-related factors should be examined in this context as well (**Figure 38).**



**Figure 38. Potential Combination Treatments to Test in Myeloma TriC:Triacsin C Bort:Bortezomib, Ven:Venetoclax, TBV: TriC + Bortezomib+Venetoclax.**

# **5.7. Treatment of MM Mouse Models with Triacsin C**

To further develop the promise of targeting the ACSL family in MM cells, Triacsin C should be used to treat myeloma murine models. Triacsin C has been shown to be efficacious in combination with etoposide, a topoisomerase inhibitor, in a subcutaneous mouse model of glioma using the U251 cells<sup>275</sup>. Additionally, at a dose of 10 mg/kg via oral gavage, TriC showed decreases in the percentage of aortic lesions and the area of those lesions in a LDLR $\cdot$  C57BL/6 mouse<sup>399</sup>; they did not report any deleterious sideeffects in these mice due to TriC treatment. Finally, TriC was delivered intraperitoneally (**IP**) in a colorectal cancer mouse model using CT26 cells in BALB/c mice to reduce lipid droplets prior to fluorouracil and oxaliplatin treatment<sup>362</sup>. These studies suggest that TriC is safe and could be efficacious to reduce tumor burden in MM mouse models.

Given our *in vitro* data, we hypothesize that TriC will reduce tumor burden relative to vehicle treated cells. There are multiple routes of delivery of TriC reported in the literature, therefore we will test oral gavage and IP routes of delivery. Briefly, MM.1S<sup>gfp/luc</sup> cells will be injected intravenously into SCID-Beige mice (Charles River). 24 hours later mice will begin treatments either daily by oral gavage or IP 3 times per week. On average it takes 14 days for MM.1S cells to be detectable by bioluminescent imaging (BLI). BLI is the reading of bioluminescence from the luciferase expressing MM.1S cells after injections of luciferin (luciferase substrate). Tumor burden will be quantified 1-2times per week and mice will be sacrificed upon meeting the body conditioning score threshold (**BCS** ≤2) or when there is evidence of hindlimb paralysis as assessed by early paralysis detection (**EPD**) monitoring.

## A



#### В



**Figure 39. Triacsin C in MM Mouse Models Made with elements from Biorender.com**

# **5.8. Treating Primary MM Cells with Triacsin C**

Understanding if TriC has a similar phenotype in primary human MM cells is critical to establishing the efficacy of targeting the ACSL family or ACSL-related pathways in MM. Given that processing MM cells from patient samples is a very rare occurrence (~2 per year), only preliminary results have been collected over the course of this thesis which are summarized below; further exploration and analyses are required.

Primary deidentified patient samples were provided by the MaineHealth Biobank and processed in the Reagan Laboratory. We had the privilege to isolate primary MM cells from patients (R20-9000, R24-0125 and R24-0553 using MACS to sort CD138 expressing (CD138(+)) cells; CD138 is a plasma cell-specific marker (Figure 40 and Table 10)<sup>400,401</sup>. RealTime-Glo was then used to measure the redox potential of the isolated cells, per the manufacturer's instructions.





**CI=Confidence Interval**



**Figure 40. Magnetic Activated Cell Sorting (MACS) of Primary MM Cells**

**Bone marrow aspirates from primary MM patients are subjected to red blood cell lysis then are incubated with magnetic-conjugated antibodies against CD138. The cell mixture is the applied to the MACS column in the presence of a magnetic field to retain the CD138(+) fraction in the column while the CD138(-) fraction is the flowthrough. A new collection tube is placed under the MACS column, the magnetic field is removed and the column is washed to elute the purified CD138(+) fraction.** 





**A) ATCC MM.1S cells were treated with various doses of Triacsin C (TriC) for 24 hours and redox potential was quantified with RealTime-Glo (RTG; Promega). B) Bone marrow aspirates from a multiple myeloma patient (R were processed and subjected to magnetic activated cell sorting (Stem Cell Technologies), selecting for CD138 (+) cells. Each fraction was plated with RealTime-Glo and TriC to monitor redox potential after 24 hours. n= 3 technical replicates. C) similar to panel B but** 

**with a separate donor (R24-0553), additional treatment times (0, 24, 48 and 72 hours) and using the Miltenyi MACS system n =4 technical replicates. Statistics: Data are mean +/- standard deviations One-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test. \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001.** 

The three primary MM samples yielded a median 3.49x10<sup>6</sup> total cells [95% CI: 0, 9.04x10<sup>6</sup>] (Table 10). Bone marrow aspirates are typically around 3 mL, however the R20-9000 sample was a total of 12 mL and had a higher concentration of CD138(+) cells compared to the other samples (**Table 10**) The median CD138(+) cells across the three primary MM samples was 3.71x10<sup>5</sup> [95% CI: 0, 7.68x10<sup>5</sup>] (**Table 10**). Given that R20-9000's volume and CD138(+) yield appear to be an outlier, it may be safer to expect  $\sim$ 5x10<sup>5</sup> CD138(+) cells given the median yield between R24-0125 and R24-0553 is  $4.78x10<sup>5</sup>$  CD138(+) cells. Mariah Farrell and Heather Fairfield Campbell collected, processed, and plated the experiment for R20-9000 in March of 2020. Their dedication to their craft, colleagues and myeloma patients is appreciated, especially in backdrop of a time of extreme uncertainty. Michelle Karam and Heather Campbell isolated and executed the experiment for R24-0553. Edward Jachimowicz assisted with the MACS sorting for R24-0125 and R24-0553. The processing of the primary MM sample, R24- 0125 produced a CD138+ fraction with reduced viability (as assessed by size and granularity with flow cytometry). This is likely due to excessive repetition of the red blood cell lysis step and future studies using patient samples should strictly follow the parameters this process as primary cells are sensitive to prolonged exposure to the lysis buffer. For these reasons, the RTG data for this patient sample has not been included.

When treated with TriC for 24 hours, ATCC MM.1S cells have significantly decreased redox potential as measured by RealTime-Glo at 0.33, 1.0 and 3.0 μM TriC

(**Figure 41A**). We did not observe significant changes in RealTime-Glo luminescence from R20-9000 CD138 (-) or CD138 (+) cells treated with TriC for 24 h (**Figure 41B)**. However, there was a trending decrease in the 3.0 μM. In another patient sample, R24- 0553, CD138(+) cells treated with 2.0 and 3.0 μM TriC for 24 hours had significantly lower RealTime-Glo luminescence relative to vehicle-treated cells (**Figure 41C**). Also, CD138(+) cells treated with 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 μM after both 48 and 72 h had significantly decreased RealTime-Glo luminescence compared to vehicle-treated cells (**Figure 41C**). RealTime-Glo expression was stable between 24 and 48 h in vehicle-treated cells but significantly decreased from 48 to 72 h, suggesting a decrease in redox potential after longer times in culture (**Figure 41C**). The short culture time *ex vivo* is common among many primary human cells, especially with MM because they lack essential growth factors provided by the microenvironment. It should be noted that the TriC used in the experiment with R24-0553 was from Millipore-Sigma (Cat. No. T4540), which is different from the rest of the experiments presented in this work.

 The limited amount of CD138(+) cells consistently collected should also be considered in future studies, as well as characterizing the purity of the MACS sort with CD138 fluorescent labeling and flow cytometry. To further explore the efficacy of TriC treatment in patient samples, additional RealTime-Glo experiments should be conducted with more donors to establish an overall effect. Apoptosis assays should also be conducted as well as investigating genes of interest which appear to be modulated with TriC treatment and have been highlighted in the findings of this thesis (members of the ETC, and components of the ISR).

The data from R24-0553, combined with a trending negative response in R20- 9000 suggest that TriC has a modest negative impact on the redox potential of CD138(+) cells derived from a MM patient. It is promising to see a similar response of primary MM cells from a donor and the MM.1S cell line, however these studies require samples from additional donors to make conclusions, especially given the varied response between R20-9000 and R24-0553. Whether this effect is observed in samples from additional patients, and whether this reduction in redox potential is directly linked to cell death in these cells should be one of the critical next steps of this work.

## **5.9. ACSLs, SREBP Signaling and MYC**

Reports in hepatocellular carcinoma and MM related suggests that there is crosstalk between ACSL4 and ERK to stabilize MYC and activate the SREBP pathway270,402. Given that we observed significant decreases in proteins related to ubiquitination like ubiquitin conjugating enzyme E2 V1 (**UBE2V1**) in TriC-treated MM.1S cells for 48 h in our proteomics data, observed increased *SREBPF* gene expression after 24 h of TriC treatment in MM.1S cells and have evidence of MAPK-related transcription, it would be interesting to test if TriC treatment alters MYC protein levels. Work in our lab has shown that the FABP family decreases MYC protein levels, so there may be a shared mechanism of fatty acid metabolism-related genes modulating the stability of this critical oncogene<sup>281</sup>.

## **5.10 The ACSL-Adenylate Kinase Connection**

One of the most significantly downregulated proteins in MM.1S cells treated with TriC for 48 h was adenylate kinase 2 (**AK2**). AK2 is a mitochondrial protein responsible for high energy phosphate transfer of mitochondrial ADP to form ATP. In many cancers,

it has been shown that this mitochondrial-derived ATP drives the conversion of glucose to lactate and therefore drives unregulated cellular energy usage $403$  and is usually accompanied by overexpression of hexokinase 2, and pyruvate kinase M2 the first and last enzymes in glycolysis<sup>403</sup>. Consequently, ADP is not converted to AMP, and the depleted AMP pool represses AMPK signaling. Repression of AMPK results in increased cell cycle progression and AMPK-regulated anabolic metabolism<sup>403</sup>. It has been shown that MM cells with the t(4;14) translocation (associated with a poorer prognosis) are dependent on AK2 due to overexpression of the histone methyltransferase, nuclear receptor binding SET domain protein 2 (**NSD2**) disruptions in the parallel ATP-generating creatine kinase pathway by driving S‐adenosylmethionine away from creatine kinase<sup>404</sup>. Knockdown of AK2 in  $t(4;14)$  MM cell lines resulted in increased apoptotic-related proteins caspase 3 and BIM and impeded protein folding<sup>404</sup>. Paradoxically, knockdown of AK2 in in t(4;14) MM cells concurrent decreased protein levels of ATF4, DDIT3, XBP1s, suggesting that AK2 has a role in regulating the ER stress/ISR<sup>404</sup> that may be independent from inducing cell death. There is not direct evidence but it is postulated that AK2-derived ATP can be utilized by proteins that aid in protein folding<sup>404</sup>. Additionally, they showed that AK2 knockdown in in  $t(4,14)$  MM cells had decreased NADP/H levels which ultimately led to replicative stress by the depletion of deoxyribonucleic acids. A suppression of AK2 in TriC-treated MM.1S cells would drive ADP to AMP formation to activate AMPK leading to repression of the cell cycle and anabolic processes. Our observations of decreased proliferation may be consistent with AMPK activation, but we also observed increases in key anabolic fatty acid metabolism genes like *FASN* and *ACACA,* suggesting that these genes may have been

upregulated in an AMPK-independent manner. Given the unknown status of AMPK activation upon TriC treatment in MM cells, it is critical to assess AMPK activation via phosphorylation of ACACA at Ser79. MM.1S cells treated with TriC may be attempting to compensate for the loss of mitochondrial-derived ATP by redirecting energy generation to other pathways like glycolysis. Paradoxically, MM.1S cells treated with TriC for 48 hours had increased HK2 but decreased PKM and triosephosphate isomerase (**TPI1**) which is responsible for the interconversion of glycerol-3-phosphate (**G3-P**) and dihydroxyacetone phosphate (**DHAP**). This suggests that glucose utilization is being directed to G3P and DHAP, which are important precursors for fatty acid metabolism and nucleotide synthesis. Taken together, our data suggests a strong rationale to further investigate the connection between the ACSL family and AK2.

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#### **7. APPENDIX**





**A)** Cellular respiration (oxygen consumption rate, OCR) in ATCC MM.1S cells treated with 1 μM triacin C (TriC) for 24 hours and subjected to a Mitochondrial Stress test with 5 μM etomoxir, a CPT1 (rate-limiting enzyme for fatty acid oxidation) inhibitor. Values are normalized to the number of nuclei. Individual points represent technical replicates for each condition. n=1 **Statistics**: A two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparison test was used. Data are mean ± StDev \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*\*\*p<0.0001

# **qRT-PCR Primer Information**

### **Table 11. qRT-PCR Forward Primers**



**Table 12. qRT-PCR Reverse Primer Information**



**Table 13 Primers For Determining OPM-2 and HL-60 Identity**



**Table 14. Average Chronos Scores of Modified Hallmark Fatty Acid Metabolism Genes in 21 Human Myeloma Cell Lines from the Cancer Dependency Map**













# **RNA-Seq-Related Data of MM.1Sgfp/luc Cells Treated with 1.00 μM Triacsin C**

## **R Code for Identification of Differentially Expressed Genes RNA-Sequencing**

```
title: "DE analysis for CM"
author: "Princess Rodriguez"
date: "12/9/2022"
output: html_document
---
```{r setup, include=FALSE}
knitr::opts_chunk$set(echo = TRUE)
library(DESeq2)
library(dplyr)
library(ggplot2)
library(pheatmap)
library(magrittr)
library(knitr)
library(kableExtra)
library(hypeR)
library(msigdbr)
\ddot{\phantom{0}}## Load data 
```{r}
countdata <- read.csv("CM.salmon.merged.gene_counts.csv", header=TRUE, 
row.names=1)
colnames(countdata) <- colnames(countdata)
countdata <- as.matrix(countdata)
head(countdata)
\ddot{\phantom{0}}## Load annotation data 
```{r}
# filter low read counts
keep <- rowSums(countdata) > 10
countdata <- countdata[keep,]
dim(countdata)
# assign condition
annotation \leq- read.table("anno.txt", header = T, row.names = 1)
replicate <- factor(annotation$replicate) 
treatment <- factor(annotation$treatment)
```

```
coldata <- data.frame(row.names=colnames(countdata), treatment, replicate)
head(coldata)
\ddot{\phantom{0}}# Setup DESeq2 design 
```{r}
dds <- DESeqDataSetFromMatrix(countData = round(countdata),
          colData = coldata,
          design= ~treatment)
dds <- DESeq(dds)
\ddot{\phantom{0}}# Principal components analysis
```{r}
#pdf("PCAplot.pdf")
vstcounts <- vst(dds, blind=TRUE)
plotPCA(vstcounts, intgroup=c("treatment"))
#dev.off()
\ddot{\phantom{0}}```{r}
# Sample correlation analysis
vst <- varianceStabilizingTransformation(dds, blind=TRUE)
vst mat \leq assay(vst)
vst cor \leq cor(vst \text{mat})annotation_heatmap <- data.frame(row.names=colnames(vst_mat), treatment)
pheatmap(vst_cor,
   annotation col = annotation heatmap, main = "sample correlation", show rownames
= F, show_colnames = F)
\ddot{\phantom{0}}# Run DESeq2 
```{r}
dds <- DESeq(dds)
res drug <- results(dds, contrast=c('treatment','drug', 'control'))
###
res_drug <- res_drug[order(res_drug$padj), ]
res_drug_data <- merge(as.data.frame(res_drug), as.data.frame(counts(dds,
normalized=TRUE)), by="row.names", sort=FALSE)
names(res_drug_data)[1] <- "Gene"
#Get DEG up/down lists
res_drug_DEGs <- as.data.frame(res_drug) %>% dplyr::filter(abs(log2FoldChange) > 1
& padj < 0.05) %>% tibble::rownames to column("Gene")
```

```
194
```
write.csv(res\_drug\_DEGs, "DEG\_drugvscontrol.csv", row.names = TRUE)  $\ddot{\phantom{0}}$ 

```
# Pathway analysis 
```{r}
# using the biomart.outputs create the genelist.csv 
gene_lists<- read.csv("gene_list.csv")
gene_lists<- as.data.frame(gene_lists)
gene lists <- mutate all(gene lists, .funs=toupper)
#load geneset
```
KEGG  $\leq$ - msigdb gsets(species = "Homo sapiens", category = "C2", subcategory = "CP:KEGG") #https://www.gsea-msigdb.org/gsea/msigdb/human/genesets.jsp?collection=C2

#load gene list - this gene list is ALL DE genes - not separated by UP or DOWN x<- gene\_lists[which(gene\_lists\$gene !=""),1]

#KEGG #pdf("KEGG-pathway.pdf") hyp  $1 \leq -$  hypeR(x, KEGG, test = "hypergeometric", background = 50000, fdr = 0.05, plotting = TRUE) print(hyp\_1) hyp\_dots(hyp\_1, title = "KEGG - drug vs control", abrv = 30, val = "fdr") #dev.off()

### **Modified R Code for Identification of Differentially Expressed Genes RNA-Sequencing for P-values for All Detect Transcripts**

This code was modified by Christian Potts and the data derived from this code in was used to make the volcano plot seen in Figure 17B

```
---
title: "DE analysis for CM_v2_CMP"
author: "Princess Rodriguez and Christian M. Potts"
date: "12/9/2022 and 04/23/24"
output: csv document
---
```{r setup, include=FALSE}
knitr::opts_chunk$set(echo = TRUE)
library(DESeq2)
library(dplyr)
library(ggplot2)
library(pheatmap)
```

```
library(magrittr)
library(knitr)
library(kableExtra)
library(hypeR)
library(msigdbr)
\ddot{\phantom{0}}## Load data 
```{r}
#CMP heavily edited here to convert data into a named numeric matrix per 
requirements for rowSums function. 
countdata.orig <- read.table("salmon.merged.gene_counts.tsv", header=TRUE, 
row.names=1)
# What is this line accomplishing?
#colnames(countdata) <- colnames(countdata)
countdata.orig <- as.matrix(countdata.orig)
countdata <- countdata.orig[,2:7]
countdata \leq- matrix(as.numeric(countdata),ncol = 6)
rownames(countdata) <- countdata.orig[,1]
colnames(countdata) <- colnames(countdata.orig)[2:7]
head(countdata)
summary(countdata)
\ddot{\phantom{0}}## Load annotation data 
```{r}
# filter low read counts
# CMP added subset so the gene name column was not being included in the
rowSums
keep <- rowSums(countdata) > 10
countdata <- countdata[keep,]
dim(countdata)
# assign condition
annotation \leq read.table("anno.txt", header = T, row.names = 1)
replicate <- factor(annotation$replicate) 
treatment <- factor(annotation$treatment) 
coldata <- data.frame(row.names=colnames(countdata), treatment, replicate)
head(coldata)
\ddot{\phantom{0}}# Setup DESeq2 design 
```{r}
```

```
dds <- DESeqDataSetFromMatrix(countData = round(countdata),
```

```
 colData = coldata,
                    design= ~treatment)
dds <- DESeq(dds)
\ddot{\phantom{0}}# Principal components analysis
```{r}
#pdf("PCAplot.pdf")
vstcounts <- vst(dds, blind=TRUE)
plotPCA(vstcounts, intgroup=c("treatment"))
#dev.off()
\ddot{\phantom{0}}```{r}
# Sample correlation analysis
vst <- varianceStabilizingTransformation(dds, blind=TRUE)
vst mat \leq assay(vst)
vst cor <- cor(vst mat)
annotation heatmap <- data.frame(row.names=colnames(vst_mat), treatment)
pheatmap(vst_cor,
     annotation col = annotation heatmap, main = "sample correlation",
show rownames = F, show colnames = F)
\ddot{\phantom{0}}# Run DESeq2 
```{r}
dds <- DESeq(dds)
res drug <- results(dds, contrast=c('treatment','drug', 'control'))
###
res_drug <- res_drug[order(res_drug$padj), ]
res drug data <- merge(as.data.frame(res drug), as.data.frame(counts(dds,
normalized=TRUE)), by="row.names", sort=FALSE)
names(res_drug_data)[1] <- "Gene"
#Get DEG up/down lists
res_drug_DEGs <- as.data.frame(res_drug) %>% dplyr::filter(abs(log2FoldChange) > 1
& padj < 0.05) %>% tibble::rownames_to_column("Gene")
#CMP adjustment based on what Connor asked for
res drug all <- as.data.frame(res drug) %>% tibble::rownames to column("Gene")
write.csv(res_drug_all, "all_drugvscontrol.csv", row.names = TRUE)
#CMP did not proceed further beyond this point
\ddot{\phantom{0}}
```
**Table 15 Significantly Differentially Expressed Upregulated Genes in TriC-Treated MM.1Sgfp/luc Cells for 24 hours**

	Gene		
<b>Ensembl ID</b>	Symbol	Log2(FC)	p-value
ENSG00000146592.16	CREB5	5.89	6.15E-09
ENSG00000165029.15	ABCA1	5.62	1.67E-144
ENSG00000139269.2	<b>INHBE</b>	4.82	2.35E-12
ENSG00000275302.1	CCL4	4.26	4.90E-14
ENSG00000276070.4	CCL4L2	3.82	1.32E-13
ENSG00000160179.18	ABCG1	3.51	1.06E-113
ENSG00000140044.12	JDP2	3.47	1.56E-08
ENSG00000175197.12	DDIT3	3.43	1.03E-13
ENSG00000162772.16	ATF3	3.29	6.41E-14
ENSG00000060982.14	BCAT1	3.06	2.41E-08
ENSG00000128965.12	CHAC1	3.05	2.79E-25
ENSG00000151012.13	SLC7A11	3.00	9.20E-70
ENSG00000235823.2	OLMALINC	2.97	4.88E-34
ENSG00000120738.7	EGR1	2.71	1.90E-06
ENSG00000196517.11	SLC6A9	2.64	8.65E-23
ENSG00000128165.8	ADM2	2.60	1.92E-12
ENSG00000150051.13	MKX	2.49	1.08E-06
ENSG00000164647.8	STEAP1	2.48	6.67E-08
ENSG00000099194.5	SCD	2.40	8.32E-154
ENSG00000153714.5	LURAP1L	2.38	1.29E-08
ENSG00000226380.9	<b>LINC-PINT</b>	2.36	2.83E-15
ENSG00000172164.14	SNTB1	2.35	5.35E-07
ENSG00000271204.1	AC016831.4	2.30	8.31E-09
ENSG00000072310.16	SREBF1	2.24	2.26E-136
ENSG00000101255.10	TRIB3	2.22	7.37E-08
ENSG00000157514.16	TSC22D3	2.18	3.50E-37
ENSG00000130766.4	SESN <sub>2</sub>	2.16	4.22E-12
ENSG00000244405.7	ETV <sub>5</sub>	2.12	5.70E-33
ENSG00000168209.4	DDIT4	2.11	8.22E-38
ENSG00000100889.11	PCK <sub>2</sub>	2.08	9.04E-11
ENSG00000130707.17	ASS1	2.04	2.22E-09
ENSG00000087074.7	PPP1R15A	2.00	2.32E-08
ENSG00000173930.8	SLCO4C1	1.99	1.80E-14
ENSG00000172216.5	CEBPB	1.96	5.64E-06
ENSG00000119138.4	KLF9	1.95	2.86E-10
ENSG00000187678.9	SPRY4	1.94	2.36E-06
ENSG00000146859.6	TMEM140	1.91	3.40E-13
ENSG00000135069.13	PSAT1	1.89	4.87E-15






<b>Table 15 Continued</b>			
ENSG00000144481.16	TRPM8	1.01	4.77E-04
ENSG00000211459.2	MT-RNR1	1.01	5.87E-09
ENSG00000089041.16	P <sub>2RX7</sub>	1.01	1.00E-09
ENSG00000172183.14	ISG <sub>20</sub>	1.01	4.06E-10
ENSG00000185650.9	ZFP36L1	1.00	4.16E-07
ENSG00000151135.9	TMEM263	1.00	9.81E-06

**Table 16 Significantly Differentially Expressed Downregulated Genes in TriC-Treated MM.1Sgfp/luc Cells for 24 hours**





**Table 17 Top 10 Significantly Upregulated Reactome Pathways in MM.1S Cells Treated with Triacsin C for 24 hours**





## **Table 18. Top 10 Significantly Upregulated KEGG Pathways in MM.1S Cells Treated with Triacsin C for 24 hours**



**Proteomics Hits in MM.1Sgfp/luc Cells Treated with 1 or 2 μM Triacsin for 48 Hours**

<b>UniProt ID</b>	Protein Symbol Log2(FC)		p-value
Q9HCU5	<b>PREB</b>	1.62	0.02603
P50416	CPT1A	1.02	0.02552
Q9HA77	CARS2	0.72	0.014
P08133	ANXA6	0.64	0.0405
O95573	ACSL3	0.61	0.04346
P26440	IVD	0.58	0.03686
O75131	CPNE3	0.53	0.00624
Q9GZR7	DDX24	0.50	0.04785
P35580	MYH10	0.49	0.02639
P61201	COPS2	0.46	0.00812
P49770	EIF2B2	0.43	0.00981
P61026	RAB <sub>10</sub>	0.42	0.03875
Q969N2	<b>PIGT</b>	0.41	0.04862
P35606	COPB2	0.40	0.03181
P51665	PSMD7	0.38	0.02548
Q9UBU9	NXF1	0.34	0.04457
P52789	HK <sub>2</sub>	0.32	0.03924
P49748	<b>ACADVL</b>	0.31	0.04167
Q9NVP1	DDX18	0.308682	0.04786
Q96HV5	TMEM41A	0.272561	0.03795
Q8NEV1	CSNK2A3	0.248528	0.02013
Q5JTH9	RRP12	0.218496	0.01967
P42765	ACAA2	0.199683	0.02503

**Table 19 Significantly Upregulated Proteins of MM.1Sgfp/luc Cells Treated with 1.0 μM Triacsin for 48 hours**

Table 19 Continued			
P62750	RPL23A	0.189744	0.00994
O15084	ANKRD28	0.174864	0.01279
P46459	<b>NSF</b>	0.162472	0.03706
Q13428	TCOF1	0.158698	0.01182
P53999	SUB <sub>1</sub>	0.13977	0.04665
P05388	RPLP0	0.130633	0.04985
Q92621	<b>NUP205</b>	0.130517	0.01514
P18124	RPL7	0.100304	0.04337

**Table 20 Significantly Downregulated Proteins of MM.1Sgfp/luc Cells Treated with 1.0 μM Triacsin for 48 hours**













**UniProt ID Protein Symbol Log2(FC) p-value** Q6FI13 H2AC19 2.29 0.00059 P12259 F5 2.26 0.03708 Q9HA77 CARS2 1.51 0.00215 O14662 STX16 1.43 0.01726 Q9Y5M8 SRPRB 1.29 0.01658 P35610 SOAT1 1.27 0.02952 Q8WVX9 FAR1 | 1.12 | 0.04806 P50416 **CPT1A** 1.05 0.00218 Q9UJS0 SLC25A13 1.02 0.00209 Q7Z4W1 DCXR 0.97 0.00915 O75460 ERN1 0.96 0.00761 P03905 MT-ND4 0.94 0.00221 P26440 |IVD | 0.90 | 0.0087 Q86YN1 DOLPP1 0.88 0.00647 P30536 TSPO | 0.87 | 0.00809 Q7KZN9 COX15 0.86 0.01161 Q9UJZ1 STOML2 0.81 0.00312 P43307 SSR1 0.79 0.00035 Q13405 MRPL49 0.79 0.01717 Q5XKP0 MICOS13 0.79 0.03481 Q9C0D9 SELENOI 0.78 0.00509 Q9UBV2 SEL1L 0.78 0.00156 P03891 MT-ND2 0.78 0.00998 Q9NR50 EIF2B3 0.77 0.01477 Q96S52 PIGS | 0.77 | 0.01462

**Table 21 Significantly Upregulated Proteins of MM.1Sgfp/luc Cells Treated with 2.0 μM Triacsin for 48 hours**

















<b>Table 21 Continued</b>			
P22033	<b>MMUT</b>	0.10	0.02619
Q16186	ADRM1	0.08	0.00338
<b>P42126</b>	ECI1	$-0.06$	0.03335

**Table 22 Significantly Downregulated Proteins of MM.1Sgfp/luc Cells Treated with 2.0 μM Triacsin for 48 hours**





















## **Table 23 Proteomics Hits in MM.1Sgfp/luc Cells Treated with 1 μM Triacsin for 48 Hours Compared to Vehicle Treated Cells**







**Table 24. Proteomics Hits in MM.1Sgfp/luc Cells Treated with 2 μM Triacsin for 48 Hours Compared to Vehicle Treated Cells**

		% Total	
<b>Ingenuity</b> <b>Canonical</b>	-log (p-value)	<b>Terms</b> in	<b>Significantly Associated Proteins</b>
<b>Pathways</b>		Pathway	
Mitochondrial Dysfunction	14	11.3	AIFM1, ATP5F1D, ATP5ME, ATP5MF, BAX, CALM1 (includes others), CASP3, COX15, COX4I1, COX5A, COX6B1, COX7A2, CYB5R3, CYCS, DLAT, FIS1, FUS, GSR, GSTP1, MGST3, MT-ATP6, MT-CO2, MT-ND2, MT-ND4. NDUFA13, NDUFA6, NDUFS3, NDUFS7, NDUFS8, NDUFV2, PARK7, PDHA1, PRDX6, SAMM50, SOD1, TFAM, TOMM20, TOMM22, VDAC3
<b>BAG2 Signaling Pathway</b>	12.5	22.6	CASP3, HSPA1A/HSPA1B, HSPA4, HSPA8, PSMA2, PSMA3, PSMA4, PSMA5, PSMA6, PSMA7, PSMB2, PSMB3, PSMB6, PSMC6, PSMD14, PSMD6, PSME1, PSME2, PSME3
EIF2 Signaling	11.9	12.8	EIF1, EIF2B1, EIF2B2, EIF2B3, EIF3I, PABPC1, PPP1CA, PPP1CB, PTBP1, RALA, RPL13A, RPL23, RPL38, RPL5, RPL7, RPL7A, RPLP2, RPS11, RPS12, RPS14, RPS15, RPS20, RPS21, RPS25, RPS27, RPS27A, RPS28, RPS3A, RPSA
FAT10 Signaling Pathway	11.1	26.8	PSMA2, PSMA3, PSMA4, PSMA5, PSMA6, PSMA7, PSMB2, PSMB3, PSMB6, PSMC6, PSMD14, PSMD6, PSME1, PSME2, PSME3
Inhibition of ARE-Mediated mRNA Degradation Pathway	10.5	14.2	CNOT1, EDC4, EXOSC9, PPP2CA, PSMA2, PSMA3, PSMA4, PSMA5, PSMA6, PSMA7, PSMB2, PSMB3, PSMB6, PSMC6, PSMD14, PSMD6, PSME1, PSME2, PSME3, TIA1, YWHAB, YWHAE, YWHAZ
Oxidative Phosphorylation	10.2	17.1	ATP5F1D, ATP5ME, ATP5MF, COX15, COX4I1, COX5A, COX6B1, COX7A2, CYCS, MT-ATP6, MT-CO2, MT-ND2, MT-ND4, NDUFA13, NDUFA6, NDUFS3, NDUFS7, NDUFS8, NDUFV2
Huntington's Disease Signaling	10.2	10.6	ATP5F1D, BAX, CASP3, CLTA, CYCS, DNAJB1, HDAC2, HSPA1A/HSPA1B, HSPA4, HSPA8, NSF, POLR2A, PSMA2, PSMA3, PSMA4, PSMA5, PSMA6, PSMA7, PSMB2, PSMB3, PSMB6, PSMC6, PSMD14, PSMD6, PSME1, PSME2, PSME3, RPS27A, SIN3A, STX16
Protein Ubiquitination Pathway	9.87	10.6	DNAJB1, DNAJB11, DNAJC10, DNAJC9, ELOB, HSPA13, HSPA1A/HSPA1B, HSPA4, HSPA4L, HSPA8, PSMA2, PSMA3, PSMA4, PSMA5, PSMA6, PSMA7, PSMB2, PSMB3, PSMB6, PSMC6, PSMD14,












## **Table 25. Top 10 Significantly Downregulated Reactome Pathways in MM.1S Cells Treated with Triacsin C for 24 hours**



**Table 26. Top 10 Significantly Downregulated KEGG Pathways in MM.1S Cells Treated with Triacsin C for 24 hours** 



## **8. BIOGRAPHY OF AUTHOR**

Connor S. Murphy was born in Hull, Massachusetts and received his B.S. in Biology in 2014. Connor is a candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree from the University of Maine in May 2024.