

Mitochondrial acetyl-CoA reversibly regulates locus-specific histone acetylation and gene expression

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Abstract

The impact of mitochondria in epigenetics is emerging but our understanding of this relationship and its impact on gene expression remain incomplete. We previously showed that acute mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) loss leads to histone hypoacetylation. It remains to be defined if these changes are maintained when mitochondrial dysfunction is chronic and, importantly, if they are sufficient to alter gene expression. To fill these gaps, we here studied both a progressive and a chronic model of mtDNA depletion using biochemical, pharmacological, genomics and genetic assays. We show that histones are hypoacetylated in both models. We link these effects to decreased histone acetyltransferase (HAT) activity independent of changes in ATP citrate lyase function, which can be reversibly modulated by altering specifically the mitochondrial pool of acetyl-CoA. Also, we determined that these changes regulate locus-specific gene expression and physiological outcomes, including the production of prostaglandins. These results may be relevant to the pathophysiology of mtDNA depletion syndromes and to understanding the effects of environmental agents, such as AZT or antibiotics, that lead to physical or functional mtDNA loss.

Running Title: Mitochondrial regulation of epigenetics

1 **Introduction**

2 The role of mitochondria in cell biology and organismal health has expanded dramatically in
3 the last decade. From a focus originally on bioenergetics, it is now recognized that mitochondria
4 broadly affect cell physiology in diverse ways. For instance, mitochondria interact with other
5 organelles, such as the endoplasmic reticulum, by close contacts or through the generation of small
6 vesicular carriers, which allows the transport and exchange of lipids, proteins and other small
7 molecules like calcium [1,2]. Mitochondria are also important players in signaling via reactive
8 oxygen species (ROS) and other metabolites that impart post-translational modifications to many
9 proteins, including transcription factors [3]. Most recently, we and others have shown that
10 mitochondria influence the epigenome [4-8], yet full mechanistic insights and outcomes of this
11 relationship are still lacking.

12 The relevance of better understanding the impact of mitochondrial function in epigenetics
13 cannot be understated given the many ways mitochondrial output has been documented to
14 influence gene expression [9-11]. Novel links between mitochondrial function and epigenetics
15 continue to be unveiled and mechanistic understanding of this relationship is emerging.
16 Tricarboxylic acid (TCA) cycle intermediates such as acetyl-CoA and α -ketoglutarate (α -KG) are
17 substrates or co-factors for enzymes that alter the epigenome, such as the histone acetyltransferases
18 (HATs) and the demethylases [7,12-19]. Thus, mitochondrial dysfunction could, for example, alter
19 the nuclear epigenome through reduced TCA flux. In fact, we first reported that progressive loss
20 of mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) and the associated changes in TCA output, by ectopically
21 expressing a dominant-negative mitochondrial DNA polymerase (DN-POLG), led to histone
22 hypoacetylation in the nucleus [6]. Using this same cell system, we also demonstrated a direct link
23 between loss of mtDNA and DNA hypermethylation, which we showed was driven by modulation

24 of methionine salvage and polyamine synthesis, both sensitive to changes in TCA cycle flux. We
25 showed that DNA methylation changes occurred predominantly at the promoters of genes that
26 responded to mitochondrial dysfunction, increased progressively over the course of mtDNA
27 depletion, and could be reversed by maintaining NADH oxidation in the mitochondria, even in the
28 context of complete mtDNA loss [8].

29 While our initial work using the DN-POLG system revealed hypoacetylation of histones in
30 the nucleus as a function of progressive mtDNA loss [6], mechanistic details associated with these
31 effects were not interrogated. Importantly, it remains unknown whether those histone changes are
32 sufficient to alter gene expression and impact functional outcomes. In this work, we used the DN-
33 POLG cells together with a model of chronic mtDNA depletion to establish cause-effect
34 relationships. Using several biochemical, transcriptomics, epigenomics, genetics and
35 pharmacological approaches, we found that histone acetylation loss or gain occurred
36 predominantly on the promoters of differentially expressed genes (DEGs), that even chronic
37 transcriptomic changes were amenable to inducible epigenetic manipulation by supplementation
38 with a TCA intermediate, and that altered histone acetylation status largely preceded gene
39 expression remodeling.

40 **Results**

41 **Loss of H3K9ac marks by progressive mtDNA depletion occurs early in the course of mtDNA**
42 **loss and predominantly in the promoters of differentially expressed genes.** Using Western
43 blots and quantitative mass spectrometry, we previously determined that progressive mtDNA
44 depletion in the DN-POLG cells led to histone acetylation changes at specific lysine residues on
45 H3, H2B and H4; H3 acetylation changes were more frequent and pronounced [6]. In addition, we
46 also unexpectedly found that lysine acetylation increased in some histones [6]. Most recently, we

47 described that loss of mtDNA in this cell model was accompanied by progressive transcriptional
48 remodeling [8], providing an excellent platform to interrogate the extent to which the histone
49 acetylation changes were involved in regulating the expression of those genes. To address this
50 question, we performed ChIP-seq in the DN-POLG cells at days 0, 3, 6 and 9. We studied H3K9ac
51 enrichments for several reasons, including the fact that this is primarily a promoter mark and that
52 it was decreased about ~50% at day 9 in the DN-POLG cells [6].

53 We started by examining the relative *de novo* H3K9ac peak enrichment around the
54 transcriptional start site (TSS) of genes at days 0, 3, 6 or 9 as recommended elsewhere [20]. For
55 quantitative comparisons, tag densities of H3K9ac peaks detected at each timepoint and in each
56 independent biological replicate were normalized against tag densities in matching input DNA
57 control libraries sequenced in parallel (Fig. 1A black lines; see Materials and Methods for details).
58 In all cases, we confirmed consistency across individual sample libraries for genome-wide read
59 count distributions before further study [20]. Libraries included in the analysis were also scored
60 for compliance with proposed quality metrics per the ENCODE Project; these were implemented
61 via the ChiLin quality control pipeline [21], and included fraction of reads in peaks (FRiP), cross-
62 correlation profiles (CCPs) between replicates for signal to noise ratio measurements and peak
63 coincidence cross-replicates among others. Reproducible peaks used in the analysis were extracted
64 via bivariate ranking of narrow-peak enrichment significance with a 1% Irreducible Discovery
65 Rate (IDR) cutoff [22]. Using this approach, we found progressive loss of average genome-wide
66 H3K9ac peak densities over time. Notably, the changes in H3K9ac enrichment were significant
67 already at day 3 (Fig. 1A, blue lines), which was unexpected given that neither Western blots or
68 mass spectrometry had shown significant changes at this time [6]. However, these data underscore
69 the sensitivity of ChIP-seq compared to these other approaches for analysis of histone modification

70 abundance. Based on the total number of reproducible peaks and visual inspection of the genomic
71 tracks at each time point, it became clear that peaks were either lost or significantly decreased in
72 the DN-POLG samples over time (Fig. S1A).

73 We next identified the peaks that showed statistical differences at days 3, 6 or 9 relative to day
74 0, and performed hierarchical clustering to define how they behaved over time. We found that
75 most peaks decreased as mtDNA was depleted (Fig. 1B, cluster A) while a few increased between
76 days 3 and 6 with levels at day 9 resembling those of day 0 (Fig. 1B, cluster B). Detailed analysis
77 of the peaks following the behavior of cluster B indicated that, in all cases, the peak at the canonical
78 annotated TSS decreased. However, a new peak close to the TSS, but in a non-annotated region of
79 the gene, emerged and was the one increased (see example on Fig. S1B); the relevance and origin
80 of these novel peaks remain unclear. We then cross-referenced the coordinates of the significantly
81 changed peaks with those of the promoters of the 2,854 DEGs identified on the DN-POLG based
82 on RNA-seq [8]. We found that ~73% of DEGs in the DN-POLG cells harbored a change in their
83 promoter H3K9ac peak levels (Table S1). The promoters of 1,995 followed the pattern shown in
84 cluster A, whereas 65 DEGs followed the pattern of cluster B (Table S1). Although we found that
85 modulation in histone peak intensities were detected in ~10,000 genes (Fig. S1C, and Table S2),
86 including those transcribed but not differentially expressed, statistical analysis revealed that the
87 odds ratio of a gene being differentially expressed and having a change in its H3K9ac level was
88 OR=2.41; $p<5\times10^{-90}$ (Fig. S1C). These data indicate that modulation of H3K9ac was more
89 prevalent in the promoters of DEGs than of other transcribed genes. The pathways enriched by
90 genes harboring altered H3K9ac levels is shown in Table S1, and revealed that they were involved
91 in key functions affected in our model system. For example, we had previously shown that
92 cholesterol biosynthesis, putrescine metabolism and the TCA cycle, among other pathways, were

93 inhibited by progressive mtDNA depletion [8]. Concomitant to the decreased expression of genes
94 in those pathways was the loss of their H3K9ac promoter mark (Table S1). Taken together, these
95 data suggest that the mitochondrial-driven histone acetylation changes strongly correlate with the
96 differential expression of genes that respond to mtDNA depletion.

97 **Maintenance of site-specific H3K9ac levels coincide with loss of differential expression of
98 genes and reversal of functional outcomes caused by progressive mtDNA depletion.**

99 Resuming NADH oxidation in the mitochondria of the DN-POLG cells through the ectopic
100 expression of NADH dehydrogenase like I (NDI1) and alternative oxidase (AOX) maintained
101 histone acetylation levels even when mtDNA was completely lost [6]. Concomitantly, only 23
102 genes were shown to be differentially expressed in these cells between days 0 and day 9 by
103 microarrays, while approximately 1,000 genes were identified in the DN-POLG at this same time
104 using this tool [8]. Thus, if histone acetylation changes were required for the differential gene
105 expression, then the promoter H3K9ac levels in the coordinates of the 1,000 genes identified in
106 the DN-POLG at day 9 should be changed. Conversely, H3K9ac enrichment in those same loci
107 should be maintained across time in cells expressing NDI1/AOX. To test this hypothesis, we
108 performed ChIP-seq in the NDI1/AOX-expressing cells following the same procedures employed
109 for the DN-POLG. We found that the average genome-wide H3K9ac peak densities were not
110 changed when cells expressed NDI1/AOX, even when mtDNA was completely lost at day 9 (Fig.
111 2A). Focusing solely on the promoter coordinates of the ~1,000 DEGs, we found that average
112 H3K9ac levels were significantly increased in the NDI1/AOX cells, irrespective of whether peaks
113 followed the pattern of cluster A or B compared to the levels found in the DN-POLG cells (Fig.
114 2B). Analysis of individual promoters further confirmed that H3K9ac enrichments in the same
115 genomic coordinates were increased in the NDI1/AOX cells compared to the densities identified

116 in the DN-POLG counterparts (representative data on Fig. 2C). It is noteworthy that the average
117 fold-change in the expression of genes in those coordinates in the NDI1/AOX-expressing cells at
118 day 9 were minor and not statistically significant, following the H3K9ac peak densities (Fig. 2D).
119 Thus, we conclude that there is a strong correlation between modulation of the H3K9ac promoter
120 levels and differential gene expression (or lack thereof) in response to mitochondrial dysfunction.

121 The existence of metabolomics data for the DN-POLG and NDI1/AOX cells [8] provided us
122 with an unique opportunity to determine whether the gene expression changes associated with
123 H3K9ac peak densities had functional outcomes. Many TCA cycle genes had decreased H3K9ac
124 levels, showed inhibited gene expression and decreased metabolite levels in the DN-POLG cells,
125 all of which were rescued in the NDI1/AOX-expressing cells (Table S1 and [8]). We found that,
126 likewise, genes associated with pathways not directly impacted by resumption of mitochondrial
127 NADH oxidation, such as cholesterol biosynthesis, also showed decreased H3K9ac levels (Table
128 S1). All of the genes associated with cholesterol biosynthesis captured in our RNA-seq analyses
129 were downregulated in the DN-POLG cells (Fig. 2E). Only one metabolite directly reflecting
130 cholesterol biosynthesis, lathosterol, was found in our metabolomics analysis [8], but its levels
131 were decreased in the DN-POLG cells and were completely rescued in the NDI1/AOX cells (Fig.
132 2F). Similarly, other metabolites associated with pathways that could impact cholesterol synthesis
133 were completely rescued in the NDI1/AOX-expressing cells (Fig. 2G). Collectively, these results
134 support the conclusion that the effects of mtDNA depletion on histone acetylation led to functional
135 outcomes, including both at the levels of gene expression and with respect to the metabolic
136 products of the genes/pathways affected.

137 **Histones are hypoacetylated under chronic mitochondrial dysfunction and are associated**
138 **with decreased histone acetyltransferase activity.** While the genetic manipulation performed in

139 the DN-POLG and NDI1/AOX cells provided unequivocal inferences about the role of
140 mitochondria in epigenetically-driven gene expression regulation, a drawback of these models is
141 that the histone and transcriptome rescues were performed in isogenic but independent cell lines.
142 Ideally, the rescue of the histone mark and downstream effects should be demonstrated in the same
143 cellular background. Hence, we next performed a series of experiments in an unrelated cell line
144 (143B) whose mtDNA had been depleted by exposure to low doses of ethidium bromide (EtBr)
145 [[23](#)]; herein these cells are referred to as rho0 and the mtDNA-repleted control counterpart as rho+.
146 Experiments included biochemical evaluation of parameters associated with mitochondrial
147 function (Fig. S2A-D) and the demonstration that 143B rho0 cells have H3K9ac and H3K27ac
148 marks chronically depleted when compared to rho+ controls (Fig. 3A). Overall, these results
149 recapitulate the findings on the DN-POLG model. Also, they suggest the lack of an active
150 compensatory mechanism to maintain histone acetylation when mtDNA is depleted - whether
151 short- or long-term.

152 In order to rescue the histone marks in the 143B rho0, it was first necessary to gain insights
153 into the mechanisms associated with their hypoacetylation phenotype. We started out by
154 monitoring global histone deacetylase (HDAC) and acetyl-transferase activities given these are
155 opposing functions that could affect the steady-state level of histone acetylation in cells. While no
156 differences were observed in HDAC activity between rho+ and rho0 cells (Fig. 3B), which ruled
157 out a role for increased deacetylation of histones, HAT activity was ~ 50% reduced in rho0 cells
158 (Fig. 3C). The influence of decreased mtDNA content on HAT enzymatic function was further
159 confirmed in 143B cells freshly depleted of mtDNA by EtBr exposure (Fig. S3A-C) and in mouse
160 embryonic fibroblasts from the TFAM (transcription factor A mitochondria) heterozygote mouse
161 (Fig. S3D), which shows 50% reduction in the amount of mtDNA (Fig. S3E and [[24](#)]).

162 Next, we estimated levels of cellular acetyl-CoA this metabolite is not only the substrate for HAT
163 function and it is primarily generated from mitochondrial-derived citrate by cytosolic ATP citrate
164 lyase (ACL) in mammalian cells. Estimation of total levels of acetyl-CoA using a fluorescent-
165 based assay confirmed significantly decreased levels of acetyl-CoA in rho0 cells compared to rho+
166 cells (Fig.3D). Given inhibition of ACL was previously shown to decrease acetyl-CoA pools
167 leading to histone hypoacetylation in the nucleus [25], decreased ACL function could mediate the
168 effects of mtDNA depletion on HAT activity and histone acetylation. However, neither ACL
169 protein content or enzymatic activity, as judged by phosphorylation at serine 455 [26], was
170 different between rho+ and rho0 cells (Fig. 3E). Thus, we conclude that depletion of mtDNA
171 negatively influences HAT activity through chronic decreases in total levels of acetyl-CoA but not
172 through impaired ACL function.

173 Because the 143B rho0 cells were generated by chronic low dose exposure to EtBr, a mutagen,
174 it was formally possible that this treatment mutated HAT genes that impaired their function.
175 Therefore, we compared deep sequenced nuclear DNA from the rho+ or rho0 cells to the reference
176 genome and showed similar changes in both cells (Fig. S4A), ruling out that an increased mutation
177 burden impaired HAT function in rho0 cells. Likewise, no significant decreases in the transcription
178 of HAT or acetyltransferase genes were identified in the rho0 compared to the rho+ by microarrays
179 (Table S3). Protein amounts identified for two main HATs, GCN5 and EP300 (Fig. S4B), which
180 acetylate K9 and 27 residues in histone 3 tails [27,28], were also not different between rho+ and
181 rho0.

182 If mtDNA depletion influences HAT function by limiting the overall cellular content of acetyl-
183 CoA, as the data above suggests, then modulation of the mitochondrial pool of acetyl-CoA should
184 correspondingly affect HAT activity. Thus, we next set out to test this by exposing rho+ and rho0

185 cells to different pharmacological agents that modulate mitochondrial acetyl-CoA as previously
186 described [29]. In parallel evaluated HAT activity. We supplemented the medium of rho+ and rho0
187 cells with dimethyl- α -ketoglutarate (DM- α -KG), a cell permeable form of α -KG that enters the
188 mitochondria feeding the TCA cycle, for 4h as previously described [29]. DM- α -KG increased
189 total cellular acetyl-CoA in rho0 but had no effects on rho+ (Fig. 4A), and restored HAT activity
190 in rho0 cells to levels similar to those in the rho+ counterparts (Fig. 4B). Similarly, exposure of
191 cells to dichloroacetate (DCA), an inhibitor of the mitochondrial pyruvate dehydrogenase kinases
192 (PDKs), also restored HAT activity in rho0 but had no effects on rho+ (Fig. 4C). Conversely,
193 diminishing the mitochondrial acetyl-CoA pool in rho+ cells by exposure to 1,2,3-
194 benzenetricarboxylate (BTC) or perhexiline (PHX), inhibitors of the mitochondrial citrate carrier
195 and carnitine transporter, respectively [29], reduced HAT activity (Fig. 4D). BTC decreased total
196 levels of acetyl-CoA in rho+ (Fig. S5A). Interestingly, pharmacological inhibition of ACL with
197 hydroxycitrate (HC), while diminishing acetyl-CoA and HAT activity in rho+ as also shown by
198 others, had no effects in rho0 (Fig. 4E). These data confirm that the amount of cellular acetyl-CoA,
199 whether decreased in the mitochondria or cytoplasm, influences HAT activity. They also support
200 the notion that the levels of acetyl-CoA in rho0 are already limiting for ACL function.

201 **Reversal in locus-specific histone acetylation marks occurs in the promoters of genes whose
202 expression is affected by DM- α -KG supplementation.** In addition to modulating HAT activity,
203 the above pharmacological interventions correspondingly altered histone acetylation (Fig. S5B and
204 C) providing the framework to interrogate cause-effects relationships between histone
205 hypoacetylation caused by mtDNA depletion and gene expression regulation in the same cellular
206 context. To address this question, we started by determining the genes differentially expressed
207 between rho0 and rho+ cells by microarrays, which revealed about 3,300 DEGs (Table S3);

208 validation of randomly genes by quantitative real time PCR (qRT-PCR) is shown in Fig. S6A.
209 Then, we supplemented the rho0 cells with DM- α -KG to perform microarrays; DM- α -KG was
210 chosen because it needs to be metabolized in the mitochondria to generate acetyl-CoA [29]. Also,
211 under our experimental conditions it increased acetyl-CoA and HAT activity in rho0 cells but had
212 no effects on rho+ cells (Figs. 4A and B). We found that 596 out of 3,295 DEGs in rho0 cells had
213 their expression changed by the DM- α -KG treatment (Table S4). DM- α -KG partially or fully
214 rescued the directionality of the change for ~70% of the 596 affected genes (Fig. 5A and Table
215 S4), which was noteworthy given the chronic state of transcriptome remodeling in the rho0 cells.

216 Pathway enrichment using Ingenuity Pathway Analysis (IPA) revealed that the 596 DM- α -
217 KG-sensitive genes in rho0 cells were broadly involved in metabolic or signaling pathways; a
218 schematic representation of a few enriched pathways is shown in Fig. 5B and the full list can be
219 found in Fig. S6B and C. The transcriptional response of some genes involved in cellular
220 metabolism was not surprising given that many can be affected by changes in acetyl-CoA levels.
221 For instance, SAT1 is an enzyme involved in the catabolism of spermidine and spermine, a reaction
222 that consumes cytosolic acetyl-CoA. SAT1 is known to be regulated transcriptionally and to be
223 dependent on the levels of putrescine, the catabolic byproduct of spermidine/spermine [30]. SAT1
224 was downregulated in rho0 relative to rho+ cells, consistent with decreased acetyl-CoA
225 availability, but less so upon DM- α -KG exposure (Table S4). Conversely, the sensitivity of genes
226 associated with the immune response and inflammation, which were mostly upregulated in the
227 rho0 cells after DM- α -KG, was unexpected given that there is no reported direct link between these
228 pathways and acetyl-CoA levels or DM- α -KG metabolism. However, connections between these
229 phenotypes and mitochondrial dysfunction do exist.

230 Interestingly, prediction of upstream regulators of these 596 DM- α -KG-sensitive genes using
231 ChIP-seq data from the ENCODE consortium through Enrichr [31,32] identified the histone
232 acetyltransferase EP300 as the top hit (Fig. S6D). This is consistent with the idea that modulation
233 of mitochondrial acetyl-CoA can influence HAT function, and with the hypothesis that histone
234 acetylation changes regulate gene expression in the context of mitochondrial dysfunction. To
235 directly test whether changes in promoter histone acetylation regulated the expression of those 596
236 genes, we performed ChIP-seq in rho0 cells prior to and after supplementation with DM- α -KG.
237 We used antibodies against H3K9ac and H3K27ac since both of these marks are associated with
238 promoter regions; H3K27ac marks also maps to enhancer regions [33]. For this analysis, we
239 followed the same rigorous protocol as used for the DN-POLG, first determining the number of
240 peaks identified relative to input DNA. We found a total of 25,340 H3K9ac and 40,885 H3K27ac
241 peaks in rho0 cells and slightly lower numbers after treatment with DM- α -KG: 24,117 for H3K9ac
242 and 30,548 for H3K27ac (Fig. 6A). No effects of DM- α -KG over input DNA were identified (Fig.
243 S7A), which rules out the possibility that the decrease in peak numbers simply reflected changes
244 in normalization parameters. While the changes in the H3K9ac peak numbers were most prominent
245 in gene bodies, those for H3K27ac were also found in intergenic regions. The number of peaks in
246 promoter regions was similar for both marks, irrespective of treatment with DM- α -KG (Fig. 6A).

247 We started by evaluating H3K9ac or H3K27ac peak status prior to and after DM- α -KG
248 exposure in all 596 genes, independent of whether they were up or down-regulated (Table S4).
249 The behavior of H3K9ac and H3K27ac peaks was similar when evaluating average enrichment
250 across the promoter coordinates of the 596 genes (Fig. 6B and Sig. S7A), although enrichment of
251 H3K27ac was more predictive of changes in gene expression (Fig. S7A). The mean enrichment
252 levels of promoter peaks for the subset of 291 genes upregulated in rho0 cells, but rescued by DM-

253 α -KG, were significantly decreased on their TSSs; similar effects were observed for the 101 genes
254 that were further downregulated in rho0 cells after the treatment with DM- α -KG (Fig. 6B, left
255 panels). These results were consistent with the fact that histone hypoacetylation is associated with
256 decreased chromatin accessibility to transcription factors [34]. Conversely, H3K27ac peak
257 enrichment increased for the 86 genes upregulated in rho0 cells (Fig. 6B, lower right panels). In
258 addition to this average peak intensity, we further analyzed H3K9ac and H3K27ac peaks on
259 specific genes, with representative examples depicted in Fig. 6C. Taken together, these data show
260 that the 596 genes whose expression in rho0 cells that were sensitive to DM- α -KG showed
261 concomitant reversal of their promoter H3K9ac and/or H3K27ac status. These results, in
262 combination with the data on the DN-POLG cells, strongly support a model in which the histone
263 acetylation changes driven by mitochondrial dysfunction regulate gene expression.

264 We next asked if the locus-specific H3Kac and gene expression changes driven by DM- α -KG
265 supplementation would lead to measurable functional outcomes. To exemplify this relationship,
266 we chose prostaglandin G/H synthase 2, also known as cyclooxygenase-2 (PTGS2 or Cox2), as
267 this gene was decreased in rho0 versus rho+ cells, although its expression was completely
268 recovered in rho0 relative to rho+ cells after DM- α -KG treatment (Table S4). PTGS2 converts
269 arachidonate to prostaglandin E2 (PGE2), which can be measured in the tissue culture supernatant.
270 Concomitant to the increased gene expression in rho0 cells after DM- α -KG treatment was the
271 significant increase in promoter abundance of the H3K9ac and H3K27ac marks (Fig. 6D).
272 Changes in PTGS2 mRNA in rho0 cells led to a parallel increase in protein (Fig. 6E and Fig. S7B),
273 which resulted in significant increases in the levels of secreted PGE2 after exposure to DM- α -KG
274 (Fig. 6F). No significant changes in protein or PGE2 levels were observed in rho+ exposed to DM-

275 α -KG (Fig. S7C and D). Therefore, these data strongly link mitochondria-driven changes in histone
276 acetylation and gene expression to functional outcomes.

277 From an epigenetic perspective, DM- α -KG could affect the methylation status of the
278 epigenome since α -KG is a co-factor of enzymes that drive demethylation reactions, e.g. the Ten
279 Eleven Translocation (TET) enzymes [35]. Interestingly, we recently showed that the DNA of
280 these rho0 cells is primarily hypermethylated, affecting 621 DEGs compared to the rho+ cells [8].
281 Even though we showed that DNA methyltransferase activity was increased in the rho0 cells [8],
282 it was formally possible that DM- α -KG treatment could decrease DNA methylation by promoting
283 TET activity in turn affecting gene expression in our experiments. To gain insights into this
284 possibility, we cross-referenced the coordinates of the 596 genes that were affected by DM- α -KG
285 with the 621 differentially methylated genes in rho0 cells. We reasoned that if DM- α -KG affected
286 DNA demethylation in a way that would reverse gene expression, then the loci associated with
287 those genes should start out by being hypermethylated in rho0 cells. Out of the 596 DM- α -KG-
288 sensitive genes, 101 were differentially methylated in rho0 relative to rho+ cells (Table S5), but
289 only 40 of these started out as being hypermethylated. Thus, if differential DNA methylation also
290 played a role in effects associated with DM- α -KG treatment, only a small portion of genes that
291 reversed expression (~10%) may have had their transcription influenced by this epigenetic
292 modification.

293 **Discussion**

294 Mitochondrial function is key to organismal health, and it is now accepted that mitochondria
295 affect cellular physiology through mechanisms beyond bioenergetics and ROS. However, the
296 means through which modulation of mitochondrial metabolism can effectively change biological
297 outcomes is still under investigation. Because various mitochondrial TCA metabolites are either

298 substrates or co-factors of enzymes that impact the epigenome, presumably mitochondrial
299 dysfunction or mitochondrial metabolic rewiring can impact epigenetic regulation of gene
300 expression. Despite these assumptions, no report has demonstrated the requirement of
301 mitochondrial function for long-term maintenance of chromatin acetylation. Moreover, to our
302 knowledge there is no previous available evidence showing that changes in histone acetylation can
303 be influenced by the modulation of the mitochondrial output of acetyl-CoA in way that can affect
304 HAT function and the expression of genes within the nucleus.

305 Here we report that under mtDNA depletion, steady state levels of acetyl-CoA and histone
306 acetylation were decreased, which was observed both when mtDNA was progressively lost (DN-
307 POLG cells) or chronically depleted (143B rho0). We also showed that these effects were
308 associated with the mitochondrial output of acetyl-CoA, which in turn influenced HAT activity in
309 a reversible way, overall contributing to the regulation of gene expression in the nucleus. Several
310 of these findings were unexpected. Firstly, the maintenance of hypoacetylated histones under
311 chronic mitochondrial dysfunction suggest that, unlike the response to loss of ACL function [36],
312 loss of acetyl-CoA associated with mtDNA depletion is not compensated for. At least in terms of
313 gene expression, we identified no obvious means to increase acetyl-CoA production, including
314 through acetate or lipid metabolism or enhanced ALC transcription, (Table S3). Alternatively,
315 some level of compensation may exist, but perhaps maintenance of histone acetylation may be
316 secondary to other non-histone proteins, particularly in the context of mitochondrial dysfunction.
317 This is a compelling possibility considering that acetylation is the second most abundant post-
318 translational modification of proteins in cells, with ~90% of metabolic enzymes estimated to be
319 regulated by it [37], including 20% of the mitochondrial proteome [38]. Along those lines, others
320 have proposed a role for histones as reservoir of acetate that can be used for metabolic processes

321 under specific conditions, depending on the needs of the cell [39]. It is possible that maintenance
322 of cellular or even mitochondrial function itself rely on a steady state level of acetylation reactions
323 above a minimal functional threshold.

324 Secondly, the findings that HAT activity was influenced by the mitochondrial output of acetyl-
325 CoA has not been previously reported. HATs can be regulated by substrate/co-factor availability,
326 protein-protein interactions and post-translational modifications, including acetylation [40]. While
327 it is known that some HATs have kinetic properties that would allow them to respond to
328 fluctuations in the levels of acetyl-CoA [41,42], our *in vitro* HAT assays were done in the presence
329 of excess acetyl-CoA, making it unlikely that substrate availability was limiting. Nevertheless, in
330 the cellular context this could still be formally possible. It is likely that the decreased levels of
331 acetyl-CoA under our experimental conditions may have changed the post-translational state of
332 some HATs or other proteins with which they interact within the chromatin context. Irrespective
333 of the means, the effects of pharmacological manipulation of the mitochondrial pool of acetyl-
334 CoA both in the rho0 and in the rho+ cells on HAT function unveiled a novel mechanistic link
335 between mitochondrial metabolism and histone acetylation. It is interesting that we found here and
336 in our previous work [6] that changes in abundance of lysine acetylation only occurred in some
337 residues on H3, H2B or H4 when mtDNA was depleted. This is contrary to previous work that
338 showed that glucose deprivation led to global histone deacetylation in H3, H2B and H4 [43]. It is
339 not clear why an overall cellular decrease in acetyl-CoA provided by mitochondrial dysfunction
340 would affect some lysine residues and not all. Interestingly, fluctuations in acetyl-CoA were shown
341 not only to affect global levels of histone acetylation but also the pattern of acetylated residues, by
342 altering lysine acetylation preference by some HATs [44]. It is possible that cellular metabolism
343 is impacted in fundamentally different ways when mitochondria are dysfunctional compared to

344 glucose withdrawal, overall affecting HATs (through post-translational modifications and/or
345 protein-protein interactions) in distinct ways.

346 Thirdly, the genetic rescue of the TCA cycle in the HEK293 DN-POLG cells, together with our
347 DM- α -KG supplementation experiments in the 143B rho0 cells, provide the most compelling data
348 to connect mitochondrial function with changes in histone acetylation, gene expression and
349 physiological outcomes with cause-effect relationships. This is supported by recent work from
350 another group that showed that metabolism of acetate, pyruvate and fatty acid, specifically through
351 the mitochondria, influence H3K27ac levels and promote cell adhesion [45]. Under our
352 experimental conditions, the fact that expression of 20% of the DEGs was rescued by a short 4-
353 hour exposure to DM- α -KG was remarkable given that these cells were in a state of chronic
354 mitochondrial dysfunction with a well-established pattern of gene expression. The modest changes
355 observed in the levels of histone acetylation after treatment with DM- α -KG may explain why only
356 a fraction of the genes were affected. It is possible that longer treatments with DM- α -KG would
357 have more pronounced effects. Alternatively, perhaps only some genes would be responsive to
358 such intervention. Although our data suggest a role for histone acetylation for the regulation of
359 gene expression, DM- α -KG supplementation or restoration of TCA flux (as in the NDI1/AOX
360 cells) by increasing cellular levels of acetyl-CoA could also impact generalized protein acetylation,
361 including that of transcription factors. Likewise, the overall metabolic rescue provided by these
362 interventions could play a direct role in turning off the signals for differential transcription.
363 Considering that we found that both metabolic and other categories of genes were differentially
364 expressed, we do not favor this possibility.

365 About 70% of DEGs had an altered H3K9ac mark in the 9-day course of mtDNA depletion in
366 the DN-POLG system, which was remarkably apparent already at day 3. Since the genomic

367 changes at day 3 precede signs of measurable mitochondrial impairments [6], these data suggest
368 that histone acetylation is highly sensitive to changes in mitochondrial metabolism and may prove
369 eventually to be a biomarker of mitochondrial dysfunction. In addition, because broad range
370 transcriptional changes were not identified at day 3, these data suggest that remodeling of the
371 histone acetylation landscape may be required for the full-fledge change to the transcriptional
372 program in response to mtDNA loss. Notably, not all DEGs had changes in their promoter H3K9ac
373 marks. Likewise, many genes that were transcribed but were not differentially expressed did show
374 changes in H3K9ac abundance, which was also the case when we monitored modulation of DNA
375 methylation [8]. Although we found that a gene was statistically more likely to be differentially
376 expressed if it had a change in its measured epigenetic status, what these data highlight is that the
377 epigenetic changes by themselves are not sufficient for the differential expression of genes. Rather
378 it is possible that the effects of mitochondria on the epigenome may serve to poise the genome to
379 respond to additional stimuli. The recruitment of transcription factors, epigenetic writers, readers
380 and erasers may ultimately lead to the transcriptional response.

381 In summary, our studies uncovered a significant and yet unappreciated means through which
382 mitochondrial function can impact the cell. Additional experiments to try to identify which HATs
383 and dissect the exact means through which they are affected by mitochondrial dysfunction will be
384 fundamental in defining more in depth the mechanistic link between mitochondrial metabolism
385 and histone acetylation. However, our findings provide a new foundation to address phenotypic
386 heterogeneity and tissue-specific pathology associated with mitochondrial dysfunction, including
387 that which is caused by mitochondrial genetic diseases. These results may not only be relevant to
388 the pathophysiology of mtDNA depletion syndromes but also to the effects of environmental
389 agents that lead to mtDNA loss, such as nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs) that

390 are used to treat, for instance, HIV infections. They may also be pertinent to the effects of many
391 antibiotics that, by inhibiting mitochondrial protein synthesis, lead to functional effects
392 comparable to mtDNA loss. Our finding that supplementation with DM- α -KG can rescue histone
393 acetylation and the differential expression of many genes associated with chronic mitochondrial
394 dysfunction could provide the underlying mechanism for the improvement in muscle strength in a
395 mouse model of mitochondrial myopathy by a 5-month supplementation with 5 mM α -KG recently
396 reported [46]. Assuming that such a mechanism is broadly applicable *in vivo*, this could eventually
397 prove to be a novel and intriguing approach for therapeutic purposes. While the concentration of
398 DM- α -KG utilized in our and other studies [46] is well beyond physiological levels, these proof-
399 of-concept experiments open challenges and opportunities regarding metabolic modulation of
400 mitochondrial function to impact health and disease.

401 **Experimental Procedures**

402 **Cells, cell cultures and experimental conditions.** The DN-POLG and NDI1/AOX cells were
403 described recently and maintained according to the previous published work [6]. The osteosarcoma
404 cell line 143B and the rho0 derivative were graciously obtained from Dr. Eric Schon at Columbia
405 University. To generate freshly mtDNA depleted cells, 143B were exposed to EtBr (50 ng/mL) for
406 2 weeks and subcultured for at least one week without this agent prior to utilization. TFAM MEFs
407 were a kind gift from Dr. Gerald Shadel (Yale School of Medicine). All cells were routinely grown
408 in DMEM high glucose (4.5 g/L) supplemented with 10 mM pyruvate, 50 μ g/mL of uridine, 10%
409 FBS and 1% penicillin/streptomycin under 37°C and 5% CO₂. TFAM MEFs media did not contain
410 uridine. All experiments were done with confluent cell cultures. Acetyl-CoA manipulations using
411 HC, PHX, DCA, and BTC were performed as previously described [29] with DM- α KG

412 concentrations between 5-20 mM; the pH of final drug concentrations was adjusted to 7.0 using
413 NaOH.

414 **ATP, acetyl-CoA, NAD⁺/NADH ratio and H₂O₂ measurements.** Cells were pelleted and
415 resuspended in 3.5% of perchloric acid. Lysates were then sonicated on ice for 30s, flash frozen in
416 liquid nitrogen, thawed on ice and then span at 5000xg at 4°C for 10 min. Supernatants were then
417 collected, neutralized to pH ~7.2 with 1M KOH and 50 µL used for the ATP and acetyl-CoA
418 assays (BioVision) following the manufacturer's instructions. Levels of these metabolites were
419 estimated based on standard curves; data were normalized to protein content obtained from parallel
420 cell cultures. The NAD⁺/NADH ratio was determined using an equal number of cells (10,000) per
421 cell type with a kit from Promega. Amplex Red (Invitrogen) was used to detect the levels of H₂O₂
422 released in medium as previously described [47].

423 **Histone Preparations and Western Blots.** Histones were purified from nuclear lysates using
424 trichloroacetic acid and acetone as described by others [48]. Relative amounts of modified histones
425 were assayed by SDS-PAGE immunoblotting in multiple independent biological replicates (N≥3
426 per cell derivative). Total histone protein content per sample was estimated from parallel
427 immunoblots to detect total H3 signal using a pan-specific primary antibody as loading control.
428 All histone antibodies were obtained from Active Motif (Millipore) or LiCor (secondary
429 antibodies). For PTGS2, antibodies were purchased from Santa Cruz Biotechnology; primary
430 antibodies raised against total or phosphorylated ACL protein were obtained from Cell Signaling.
431 **HAT and HDAC activities.** Cells were lysed and the nuclear fraction enriched using differential
432 centrifugation. HAT activity was gauged using 1 µg of nuclear lysates and a fluorometric assay
433 (Biovision) following manufacturer instructions. HDAC activity was assayed using 1 µg of nuclear

434 lysates and a fluorometric kit available from Enzo Life Sciences following manufacturer's
435 instructions. Data were normalized to protein content.

436 **PGE2 content.** Levels of secreted PGE2 were estimated using an ELISA kit following the
437 manufacturer's instructions (Cayman Chemical). Data reflect 3 independent biological replicates
438 and were normalized to total protein content.

439 **ChIP-seq and data processing.** Chromatin immunoprecipitations were performed with
440 modifications as recommended elsewhere [49,50]. Briefly, cells grown in adherent monolayers
441 (20-30 million per individual replicate, N=2) for each of the 143B rho+ and rho0 derivatives, or
442 the DN-POLG and NDI1/AOX derivatives, were crosslinked by addition of paraformaldehyde at
443 a 1% (v/v) final concentration directly to culture media followed by 8-min incubation at room
444 temperature; chemical cross-linking was quenched by further supplementation with glycine at 125
445 mM. Cross-linked cells were scraped off the plates, washed in PBS, pelleted by centrifugation at
446 4,000×g and 4°C for 10 min, homogenized in 2 mL of lysis buffer containing protease inhibitors
447 (Halt [Thermo-Fisher Scientific]), and sheared with a temperature-controlled BioRuptor
448 instrument with high-power settings at 4°C for 20-25 1-min pulses (50%-duty cycle) of ultrasonic
449 shearing. Sheared cell homogenates from 2 biological replicates containing 1-10 µg DNA each
450 were used to extract control (10% input DNA) and ChIP DNA templates with antibodies against
451 H3K9ac or H3K27ac (ActiveMotif). Each template was ligated and amplified into sequencing
452 libraries using different single-indexed adapters (TruSeq RNA v2, Set A [Illumina]). Each
453 individual library was PCR-amplified in 2 technical replicates for no more than 10 cycles (screened
454 per sample by RT-PCR as the number of cycles to reach the inflection point in log-scale
455 amplification curves); afterwards, duplicate PCR reaction volumes per sample were collected for
456 DNA purification with size-selection by double-sided 0.6X-0.8X SPRI (expected fragment size:

457 250-450 bp inclusive of sequencing adapters) using AMPureXP magnetic beads (Beckman-
458 Coulter). Upon surveying library quality control, which was performed in 4-plexity runs of 20-30
459 million 2×35nt paired-end reads in a MiSeq system [Illumina], samples were sequenced in 8-
460 plexity runs using a NextSeq 500 system with high-output flow cells [Illumina] following the
461 manufacturer's protocols. Adapter 3' sequences were removed from raw ChIP-seq reads after
462 filter for quality phred scores>20, followed by 5' trimming of bases 1-10 of each read. The
463 resulting paired-end 2×25nt reads were aligned to the hg19 human reference genome [Genome
464 Reference Consortium GRCh37 from February 2009] [51] with Bowtie2 –sensitive-local settings
465 and 1,000-bp maximum fragment length (–D 15 –R 2 –N 0 –L 20 –i S,1,0.75 –X 1000) [52].
466 Within-sample consistency between replicative sequencing runs from individual ChIP templates
467 was confirmed based on Pearson pairwise correlation scores of log-transformed uniquely mapped
468 and de-duplicated aggregate RPKM values across ~18,000 non-overlapping 10-Kb genomic
469 regions centered around gene TSS. To assess levels of between-replicate concordance of H3K9ac
470 or H3K27ac peak enrichment in each experimental group, we implemented ChiLin [21] with
471 paired-end mapping (Bowtie 2) [52] and narrow peak-calling modes (MACS2, FDR q<0.01 v.
472 input DNA) [53]. Peak calling was followed by estimation of reproducible peak numbers via
473 bivariate ranking of narrow-peak enrichment significance at the 1% Irreproducible Discovery Rate
474 (IDR) level [22]; when detected across samples, overlapping peaks were merged into consensus
475 genomic tags of differential H39ac or H3K27ac occupancy. Lists containing all consensus
476 genomic loci detected across experimental groups, with differential H3K9ac or H3K27ac peak
477 enrichment, and passing the IDR<1% threshold, were assembled into a conglomerate set of
478 reference genomic tags for further data analysis using SeqMonk, version 37.1 (Andrews, S.
479 SeqMonk, 2007: <http://www.bioinformatics.babraham.ac.uk>).

480 **Lysine acetyltransferase gene mutation analysis.** To find SNPs in rho0, we used DNA reads
481 sequenced with a MiSeq system [Illumina] and aligned to the hg19 human reference genome
482 [Genome Reference Consortium GRCh37 from February 2009] [51]. The human genome
483 sequences were downloaded from ENSEMBL ftp site [54]. Alignments were performed using
484 Bowtie2 [52]. We then parsed alignment results from the coordinates of the 17 genes from Lysine
485 Acetyltransferase family, each SAM/BAM extension file into pileup data using samtools [55]. The
486 coordinates of each gene on hg19 were taken from NCBI's Gene database [56]. A SNP was called
487 if over 80% of reads containing a change from original nucleotide aligned at call position. A Perl
488 script was developed to perform the parsing CIGAR field of the mpileup file into Variant Call
489 Format (VCF), to extract all SNPs and INDELS. No INDELS were found. The final comparison of
490 sets of SNP positions between the samples was done using BedTools [57] and Linux terminal
491 commands (bash).

492 **Gene expression experiments by microarray technology and data analyses.** For microarrays
493 analysis of gene expression, the Affymetrix Human Genome U133 Plus 2.0 GeneChip arrays were
494 used. Samples were prepared as per manufacturer's instructions using total RNA. Arrays were
495 scanned in an Affymetrix Scanner 3000 and data was obtained using the GeneChip Command
496 Console and Expression Console Software (AGCC; Version 3.2 and Expression Console; Version
497 1.2) using the MAS5 algorithm to generate CHP-extension files. Analysis of variance (ANOVA)
498 was used to identify statistical differences between means of groups at $\alpha < 0.05$ level among HG-
499 U133 Plus 2.0 probe sets unambiguously mapped to UCSC known gene transcripts. Gene
500 expression patterns were determined empirically from \log_2 -transformed expression fold-changes
501 by unsupervised hierarchical clustering (Ward's distance metric) using JMP software (Version
502 11).

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508 **Author Contributions**

509 OAL performed and analyzed genomics, prostaglandin and qRT-PCR experiments, DG
510 maintained cell cultures, performed HAT and Western blot assays, MS helped set up HAT assays
511 and performed HDAC analysis, TW helped with bioinformatics, TCW performed metabolite
512 analysis in 143B cells, DGS performed the Seahorse experiments, GR performed the mutation
513 analysis of the lysine acetyltransferase genes, NC was involved in the conceptualization of the
514 HEK293 experiments, RPW participated in writing of the manuscript, JHS conceptualized the
515 experiments, helped interpreted the data (with OAL) and wrote the manuscript.

516 **Competing Interests**

517 The authors declare no competing interests.

518 **Data accessibility**

519 Genomics data for this publication have been deposited in the NCBI's Gene Expression
520 Omnibus and are accessible through GEO Series accession number GSE100134.

Figure Legends

Figure 1. Changes in histone acetylation caused by progressive mtDNA depletion occur in specific loci and are robust already at day 3. (A) Average genome-wide enrichment level of H3K9ac peaks DNA centered around the transcription start site (TSS) of genes. N=2 per time point. Blue line shows data for H3K9ac and black lines for input DNA. (B) Time-dependent patterns of average significantly different enriched H3K9ac peaks relative to day 9 in the DN-POLG cells following hierarchical clustering. Error bars represent standard error of the mean.

Figure 2. Genetic maintenance of histone acetylation prevents gene expression changes in the promoters of genes responding to acute mtDNA depletion. (A) Average genome-wide enrichment level of H3K9ac peaks (green lines) centered around the transcription start site (TSS) of genes. Black lines show input DNA, which was used for normalization purposes. Red arrow indicates levels of average peak intensity at day 9. N=2 per time point. (B) Log-fold enrichment levels of significantly changed H3K9ac peak tags at day 9 v. day 0 DN-POLG (blue) and NDI1/AOX (red) cells for genes falling on peaks within clusters A or B (as per Fig. 1B). Student's t-test $p<0.01$ is depicted by single asterisk (*) between statistical groups; equivalence testing between statistical groups was performed by the two-one-sided tests (TOST) procedure. (C) Graphical representation of the H3K9ac peak densities at the TSS of 4 distinct DEGs identified in the DN-POLG cells (blues); the peaks corresponding to the same genomic loci in the NDI1/AOX counterparts are depicted in green. MTHFD1 (methylenetetrahydrofolate dehydrogenase 1), PSAT1 (phosphoserine aminotransferase 1), CBS (cystathione beta synthase) and MLYCD (malonyl-CoA decarboxylase). Black bar indicates the gene and the vertical bars within depict the exons. (D) Genes within the genomic coordinates depicted in (C) were differentially expressed in the DN-POLG as previously reported [8]; their expression levels as gauged by average fold-

changes through microarrays in the NDI1/AOX-expressing cells at day 9 relative to day 0 is depicted. (E) Average fold-changes at day 9 relative to day 0 of genes associated with cholesterol biosynthesis (as per IPA analysis, Table S1) were calculated based on RNA-seq experiments performed in the DN-POLG cells [8]. N=3, statistical significance was gauged adjusting for multiple comparisons (FDR=0.05). (F) Levels of lathosterol identified based on reanalysis of metabolomics data of DN-POLG and NDI1/AOX cells [8]. Log2-fold change was calculated based on N=4 for each cell line comparing levels at day 9 to their respective day 0 counterparts. (G) Heatmap of significantly represented canonical metabolic pathways per Ingenuity Pathway Analysis based on differentially enriched metabolites in DN-POLG and NDI1/AOX cells at day 9 of dox-inducible mtDNA depletion. Color intensity of heatmap blocks corresponds to strength of enrichment [$-\log(p) > 1.3$]; red and green hues are representative of pathway enrichment based on predominance of upregulated or downregulated metabolites in the pathway, respectively.

Figure 3. Histones acetylation is decreased in H3K9 and H3K27 in chronically mtDNA-depleted cells due to decreased histone acetyltransferase activity. (A) Representative Western blots of different histone H3 acetylation marks in rho+ and rho0 cells; graph represents average data from N=3 independent experiments. (B) HDAC activity was gauged based on a fluorometric assay using nuclear extracts. N=4. (C) HAT activity was estimated using a fluorescent assay and a standard curve. N=5. (D) Total levels of acetyl-CoA were estimated using deproteinized samples in a fluorescent-based assay and a standard acetyl-CoA curve. N=3 biological replicates. (E) Representative Western blots probing phosphorylated and total ACL levels in 3 independent biological replicates of rho+ and rho0 cells. Graph depicts normalization of the data to actin for each antibody in each of the cell types.

Figure 4. Histone acetyl transferase activity can be modulated by altering the mitochondrial pool of acetyl-CoA. (A) Total levels of acetyl-CoA were estimated prior to or after exposure of rho+ or rho0 cells to dimethyl α -ketoglutarate (DM- α -KG) using deproteinized samples in a fluorescent-based assay and a standard acetyl-CoA curve. N=3 biological replicates. (B) HAT activity was estimated in samples from (A) using an *in vitro* assay. (C) Rho+ and rho0 cells were exposed to the mitochondrial pyruvate kinase inhibitor dichloroacetate (DCA) for 4h prior to HAT activity estimation using a fluorescent-based assay; N=3. (D) Rho+ cells were treated with the mitochondrial citrate carrier inhibitor 1,2,3-benzenetricarboxylate (BTC) or an inhibitor of the mitochondrial carnitine transporter, perhexiline (PHX), and HAT assays performed as in (C). (D) Rho+ or rho0 cells were exposed to hydroxycitrate (HC), an inhibitor of the cytosolic ATP citrate lyase (ACL), for 4h. Total acetyl-CoA levels were then estimated using deproteinized samples in a fluorescent-based assay and a standard acetyl-CoA curve. N=3 biological replicates. (E) HAT activity was gauged in the samples from (D).

Figure 5. Treatment with DM- α -KG rescues gene expression in the context of chronic mtDNA depletion. (A) Microarrays were performed using RNA from rho+, rho0 or rho0 pre-treated with DM- α -KG; N=3 per sample. Data are representative of the 596 genes that were impacted by the treatment. (B) Schematic representation of the main transcriptional responses reversed in the rho0 cells by DM- α -KG exposure; green and red arrows indicate downregulated and upregulated signaling pathways, respectively, after treatment.

Figure 6. Exposure to DM- α -KG reverses locus-specific H3Kac marks in 143B rho0 cells on the genes affected by the same treatment. (A) Stacked bar plots of genomic localization for H3K9ac (top) and H3K27ac (top) detected reproducible peaks ($q<0.01$, IDR<1%) by ChIP-seq with respect to gene coordinates in 143B rho0 cells with or without 4h supplementation with 20

mM DM- α -KG in culture. (B) Average enrichment level of H3K9ac and H3K27ac peaks over input DNA centered around the transcription start site (TSS) of 143B rho0 DEGs sensitive to 4h supplementation with 20 mM DM- α -KG in culture. (C) Graphical representation of the H3K9ac and H3K27ac RPM values in two genes differentially expressed in rho0 cells (relative to rho+) with (red) and without (blue) DM- α -KG supplementation; black bar indicates the gene and the vertical bars within depict the exons. Numbers reflect the fold-change relative to rho+ in non-treated or DM- α -KG-exposed rho0 cells. Tracks for SLC38A2 (solute carrier family 38 member 2) and SKP2 (S-phase kinase-associated protein 2) are representative. (D) Same as (C) but for the PTGS2 gene. (E) Representative Western blots of PTGS2 in rho0 cells prior to and after 4h exposure to DM- α -KG; graph shows mean of 3 independent biological replicates. (F) Levels of PGE2 were estimated using ELISA in the supernatant of cells used for (E); N=3. Data were normalized to total protein content.

Hyperlinks to Supplemental Tables

[“\[https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S1-H3K9ac_DEGs_and_IPA_in_DN-POLG.xlsx\]\(https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S1-H3K9ac_DEGs_and_IPA_in_DN-POLG.xlsx\)”](https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S1-H3K9ac_DEGs_and_IPA_in_DN-POLG.xlsx)

[“\[https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S2_H3K9ac_at_9541_Expressed_Genes.xlsx\]\(https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S2_H3K9ac_at_9541_Expressed_Genes.xlsx\)”](https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S2_H3K9ac_at_9541_Expressed_Genes.xlsx)

[“\[https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S3 - differentially_expressed_genes_in_rho0.xlsx\]\(https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S3 - differentially_expressed_genes_in_rho0.xlsx\)”](https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S3 - differentially_expressed_genes_in_rho0.xlsx)

[“\[https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S4 - genes_affected_by_aKG_in_rho0.xlsx\]\(https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S4 - genes_affected_by_aKG_in_rho0.xlsx\)”](https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S4 - genes_affected_by_aKG_in_rho0.xlsx)

[“\[https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S5 - DMEGs_affected_by_aKG_in_rho0.xlsx\]\(https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S5 - DMEGs_affected_by_aKG_in_rho0.xlsx\)”](https://orio.niehs.nih.gov/ucscview/Santos/Table_S5 - DMEGs_affected_by_aKG_in_rho0.xlsx)

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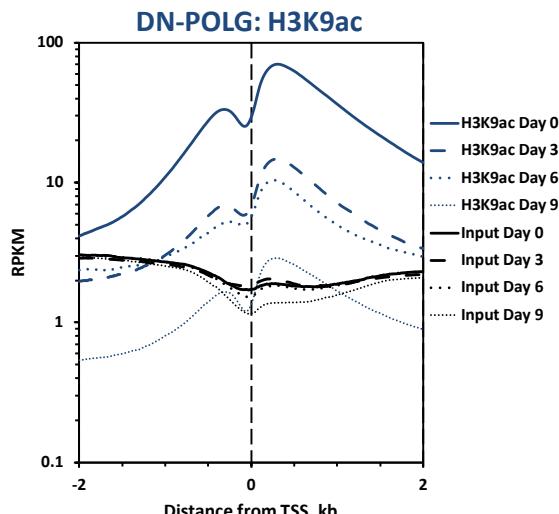
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Fig. 1

A



B

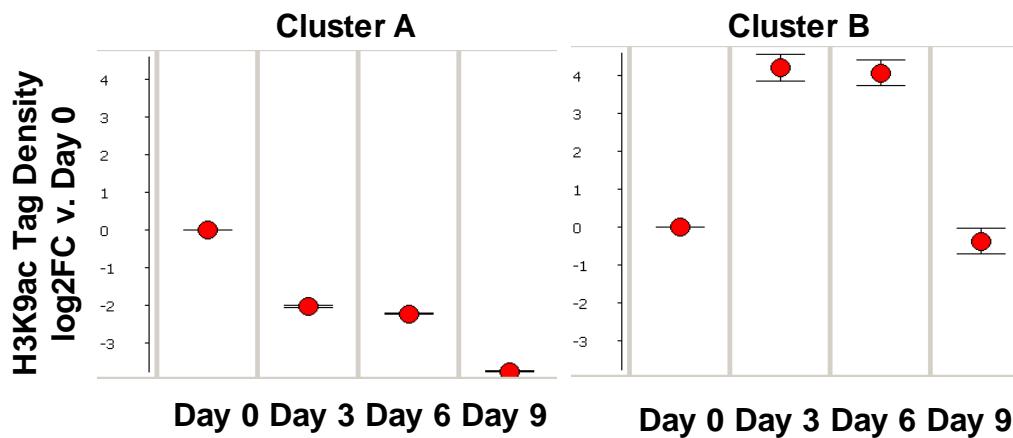
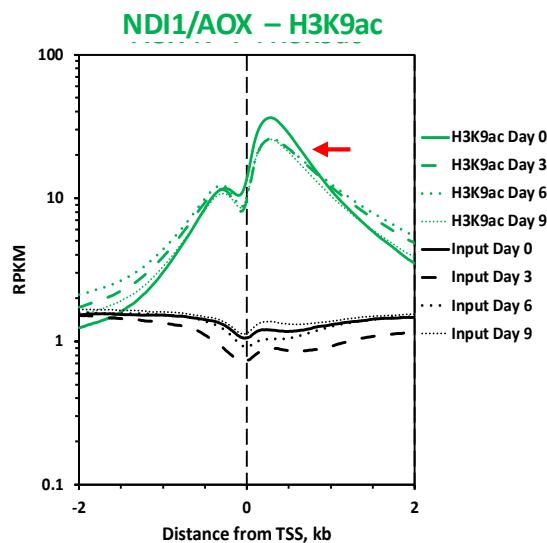
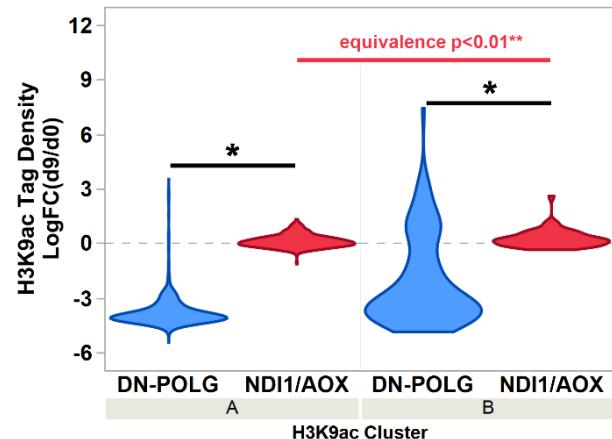


Fig. 2

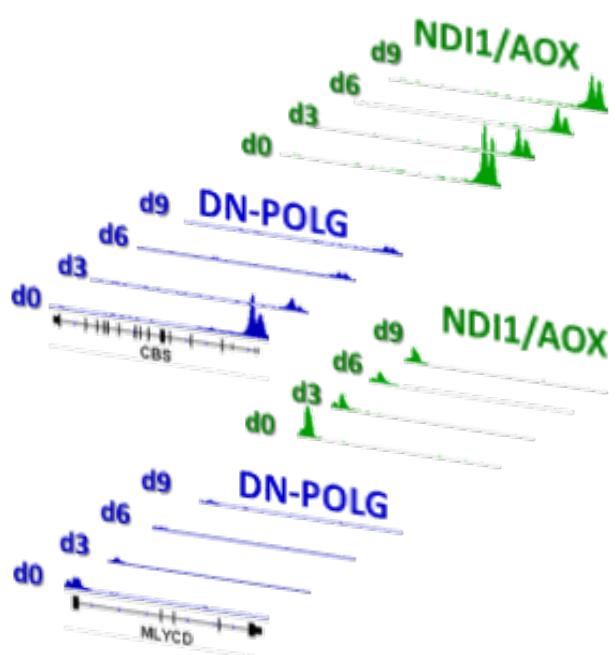
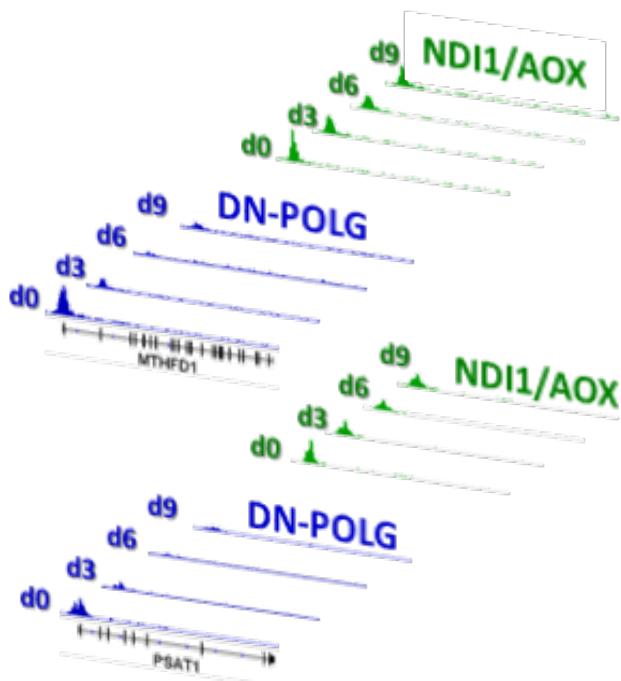
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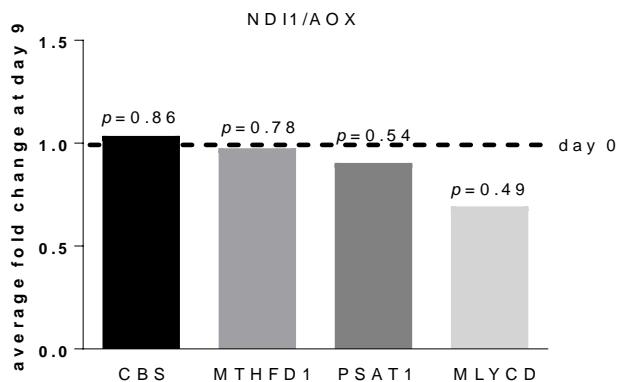
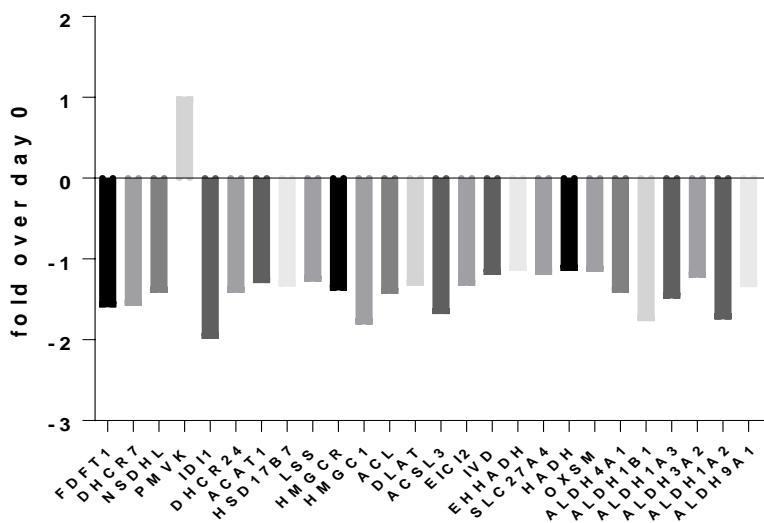
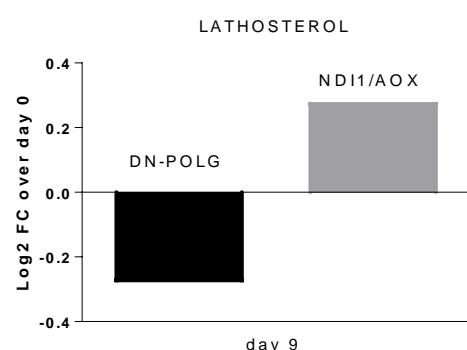


Fig. 2

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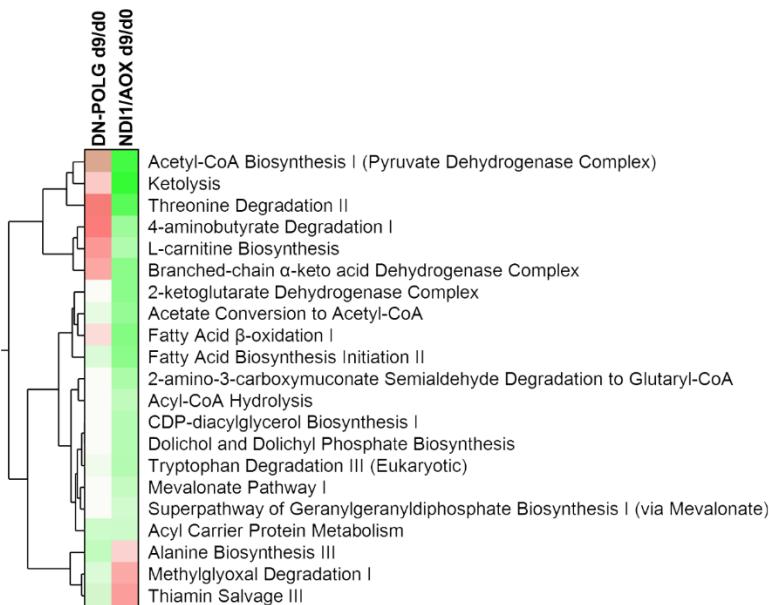
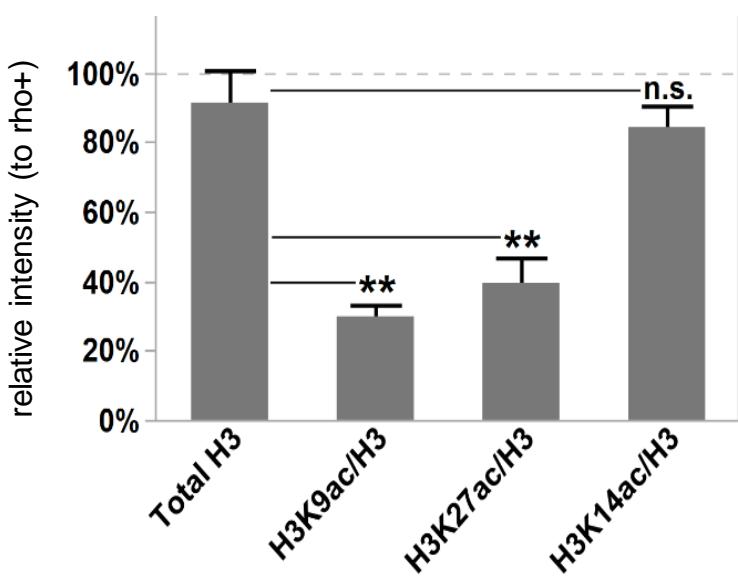
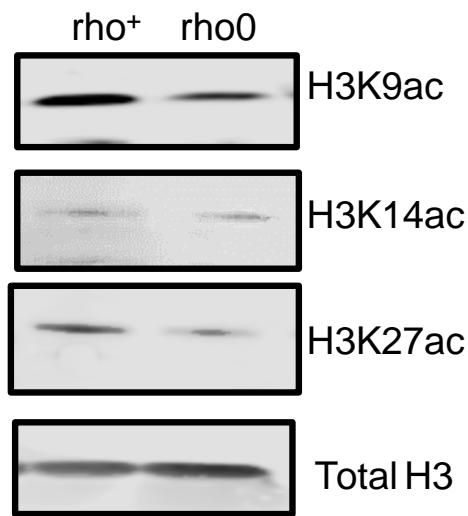
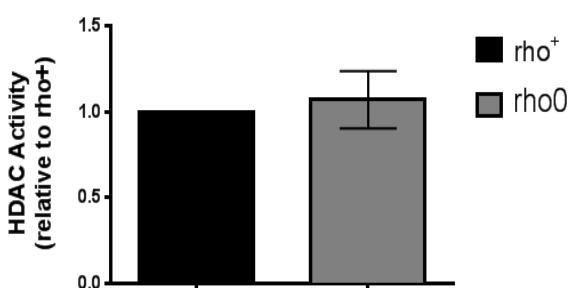


Fig. 3

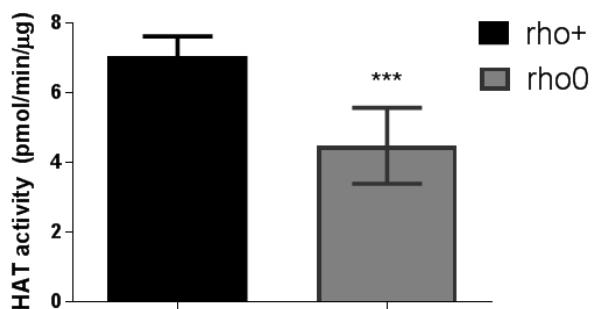
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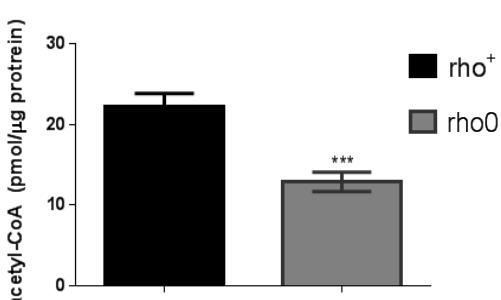
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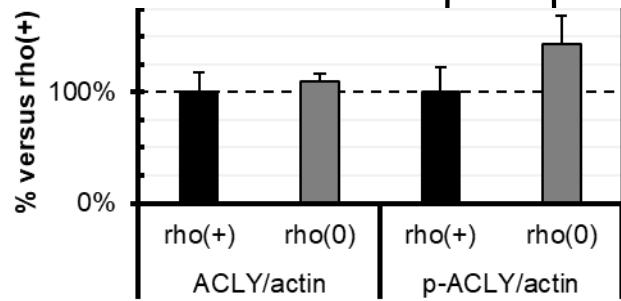
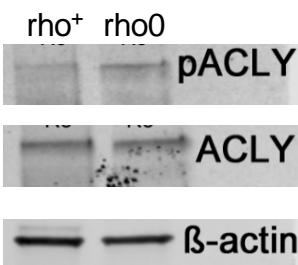
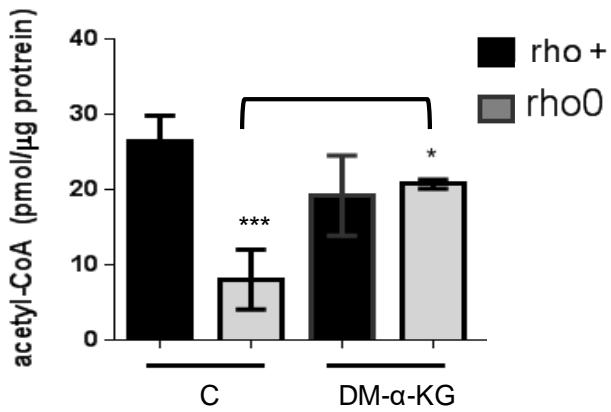
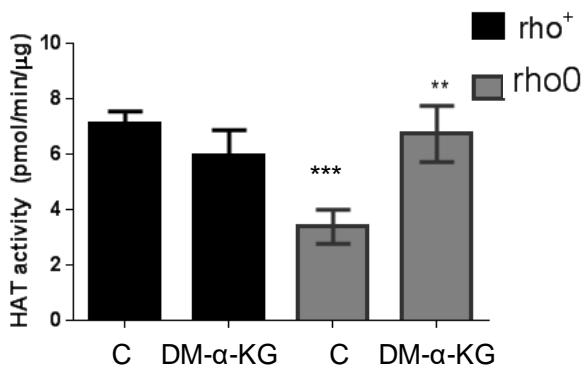


Fig. 4

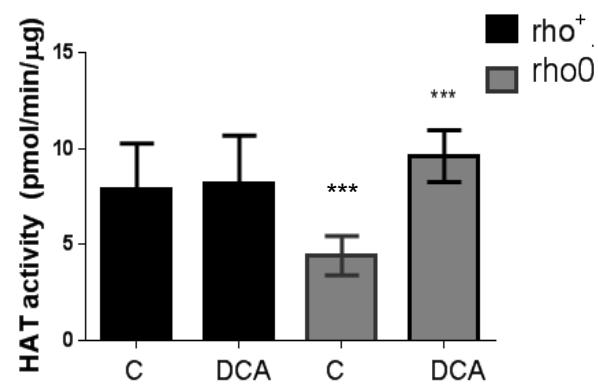
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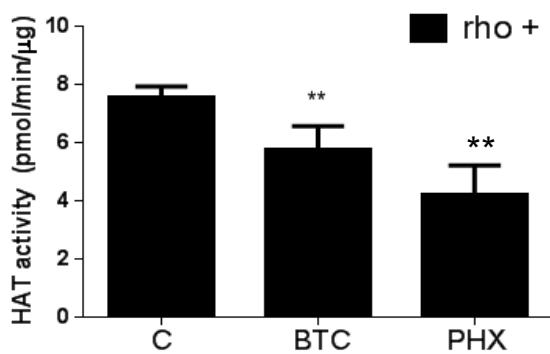
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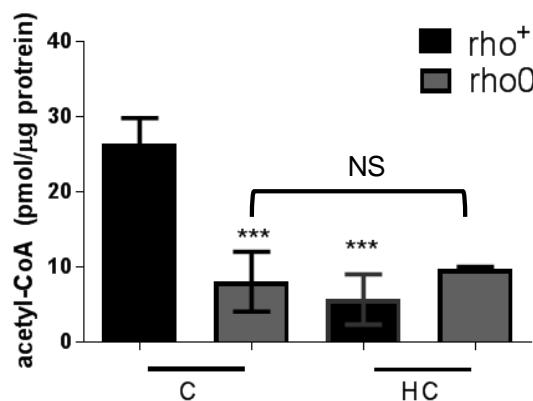
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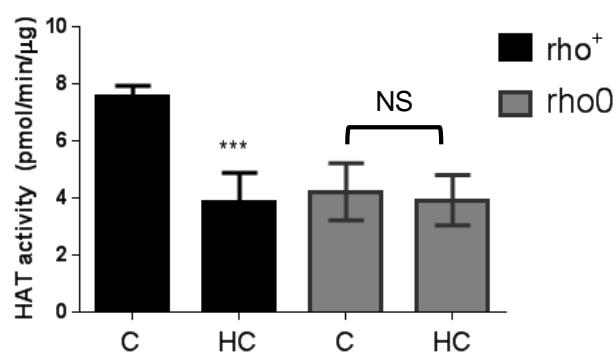
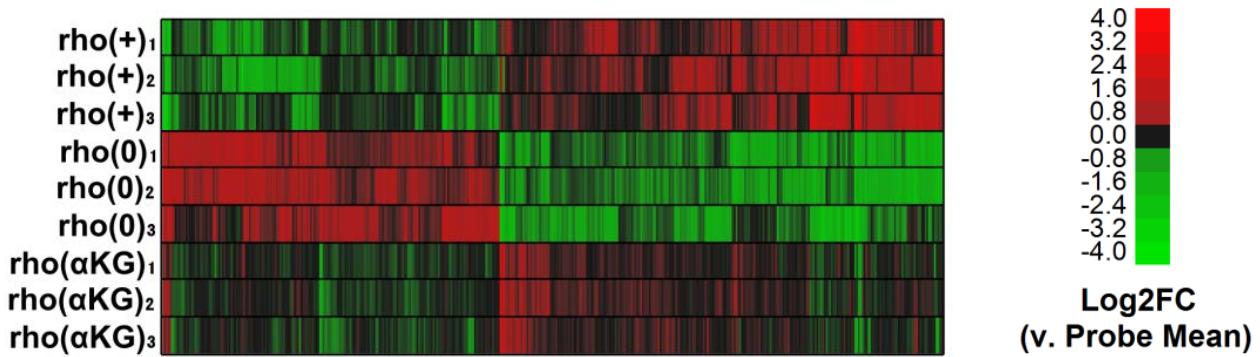


Fig. 5

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B

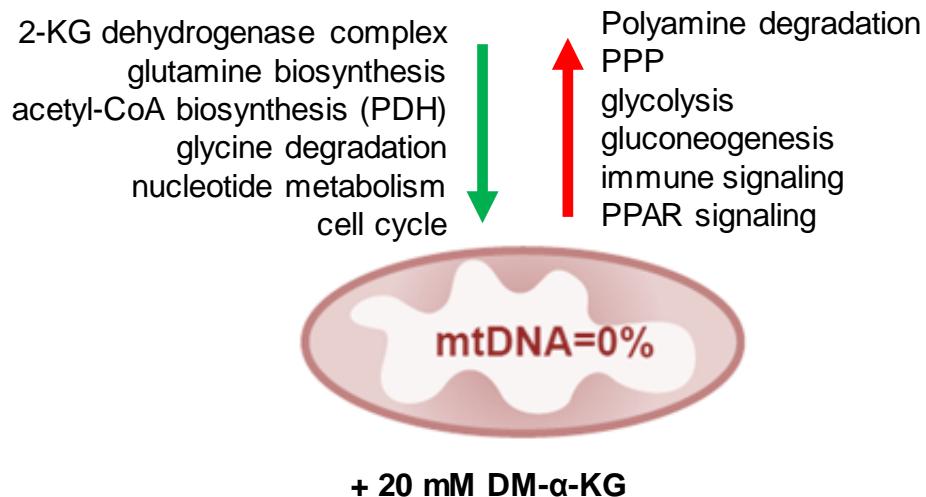
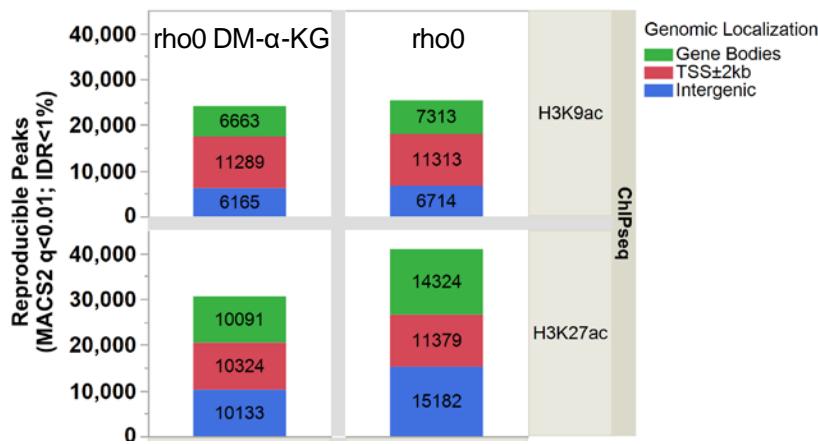
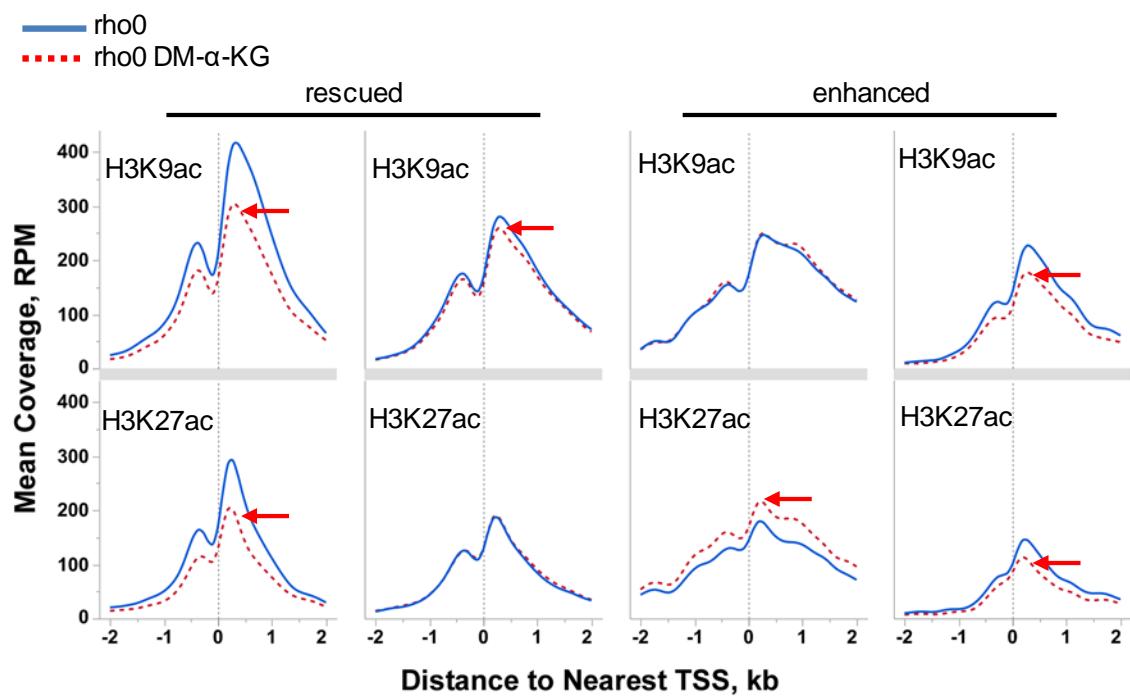


Fig. 6

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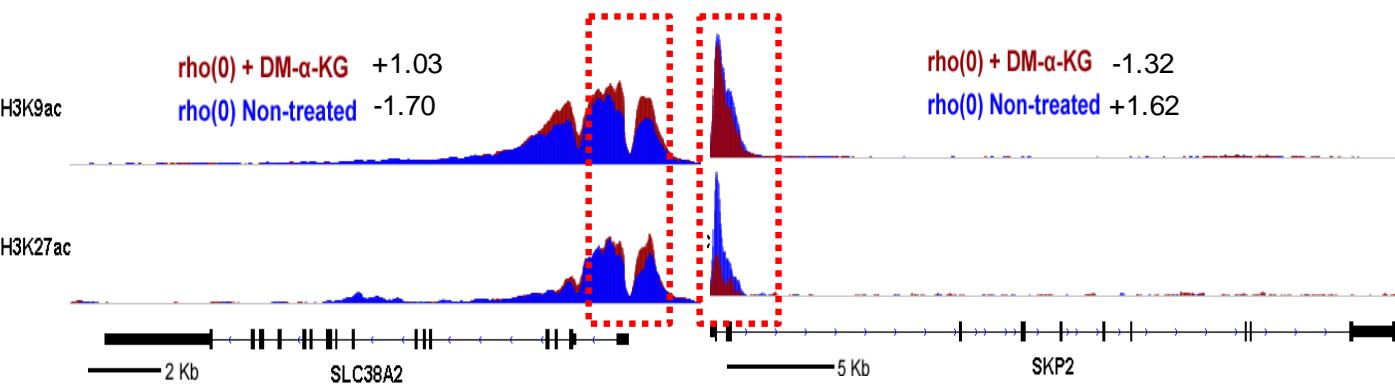
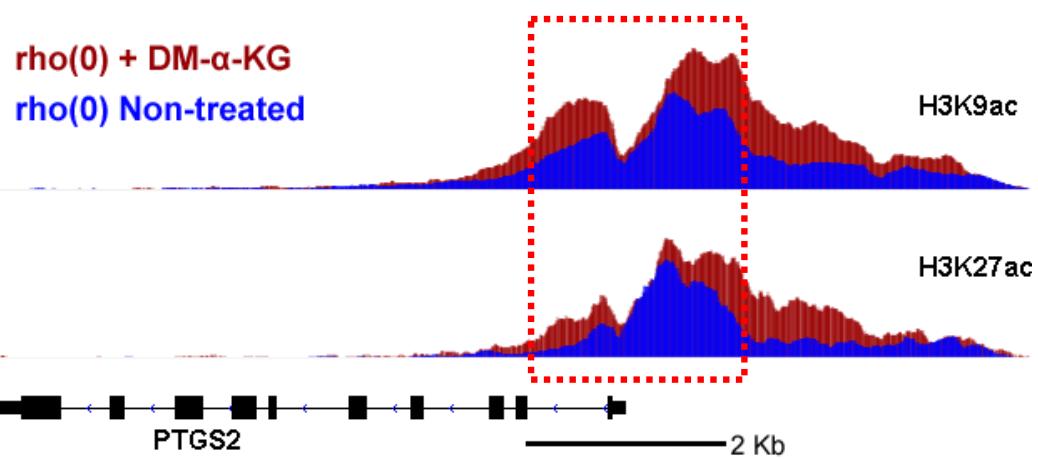
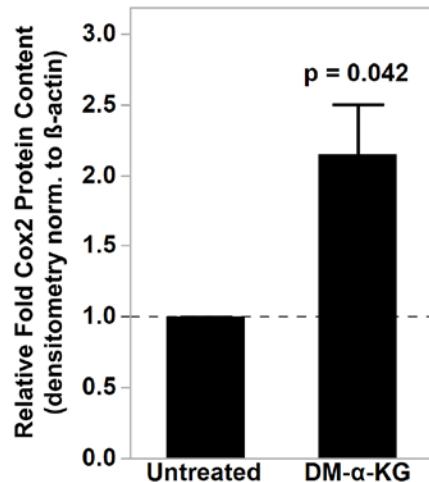
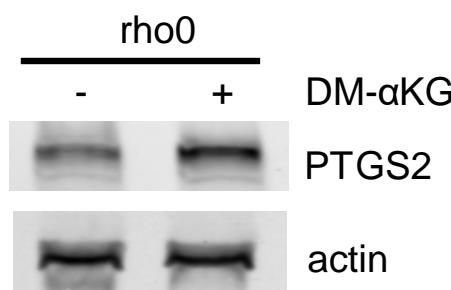


Fig. 6

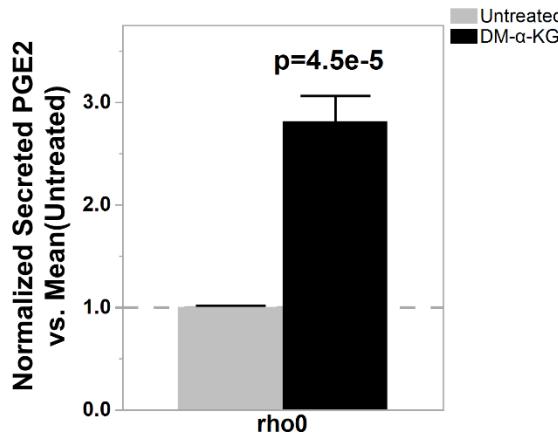
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Supplemental data - Figure Legends

Fig. S1. Detection of H3K9ac enrichment peaks during the 9-day timeframe of dox-induced mitDNA depletion by ChIPseq. (A) Number of reproducible H3K9ac enrichment peaks v. input DNA genome-wide at days 3, 6 or 9 v. day 0 (MACS2, $q < 0.01$, 1% IDR); left panel shows DN-POLG and right panel depicts data for the NDI1/AOX (N=2 each cell type). (B) Screen shot of a gene exemplifying DEGs that follow the pattern of cluster B in DN-POLG cells (see Fig. 1B). Top represents gene structure, the peak on the left falls on the annotated promoter; peak on the right is on the gene body in a non-annotated area. (C) Depiction of the percentage of peaks identified in the DN-POLG cells based on genomic locations. The odds ratio of a differentially expressed gene (DEG) having a change in H3K9ac occupancy was calculated based on the expected vs observed instances in which it occurred in DEGs and in non-DEGS.

Fig. S2. Biochemical parameters of 143B cells. (A) Relative mtDNA content was estimated using quantitative PCR; N=3; error bars depict SEM. (B) Levels of H_2O_2 were determined using Amplex red and a standard H_2O_2 curve. Data were normalized to cell number; N=3. (C) ATP levels were estimated using a fluorescent kit and deproteinized cellular lysates. N=3; data were normalized to cell number. (D) NAD^+/NADH ratios were estimated using a commercially available kit in which the NAD^+ or NADH-containing pool is measured separately. The ratio between the two is depicted in the graph. N=3.

Fig. S3. Decreased levels of mtDNA do not support full HAT activity. (A) PCR products from a 221bp fragment of the mtDNA in rho⁺ before and after treatment with EtBr for 1 week was ran on a 2% agarose gel. Reactions included the same amount of starting genomic DNA (15 ng) for 20 cycles. (B) Bioenergetics parameters of the cells was determined by extracellular flux analysis using the SeaHorse. Individual traces for oxygen consumption rate, OCR, are depicted upon

addition of the various ETC inhibitors, including oligomycin, rotenone, antimycin and the uncoupler CCCP. Data were normalized to protein concentration; each sample was present in quadruplicates. Samples included: control (rho+) grown under glucose or galactose supplementation, rho+ freshly treated with ethidium bromide for 7 days and rho0. (C) HAT activity was performed in rho+ cells treated with EtBr for 2 weeks (N=3) and (D) using TFAM wild type or heterozygote MEFs (N=3 per cell type). (E) Relative mtDNA content in the same samples was estimated as in A relative to TFAM +/.

Fig. S4. Changes in mutation rate or protein abundance are not observed in HATs when comparing rho+ to rho0 cells. (A) The sequence of the listed genes obtained based on deep-sequencing of two independent samples of input DNA was queried against the reference HG19 genome. The number of base changes (single nucleotide polymorphisms, SNPs) identified relative to the sequence contained in the reference HG19 genome is shown for each sample. The number of SNPs identified in the rho0 samples that were not identified in the rho+ control is also shown. For those, the genomic location and the exact base change is depicted (last column). (B) Western blots probing levels of the two main HATs that acetylate H3K9 and/or H3K27 was performed in whole cell lysates of rho+ or rho0 cells. RNA pol II was used as loading control.

Fig. S5. Changes in acetyl-CoA levels and in histone acetylation are detected after manipulation of the mitochondrial pool of acetyl-CoA in 143B cells. (A) 143B rho+ cells were exposed for 4h to BTC, a mitochondrial citrate carrier inhibitor. Total levels of acetyl-CoA were then estimated using deproteinized samples with a fluorescence-based assay and an acetyl-CoA standard curve; N=3. (B). Histones were extracted and Western blots probing different histone acetylation marks performed after treatment of rho0 cells for 4h with DM- α -KG or DCA; Westerns

are representative. (C) Representative Western blots probing different acetylated histone residues upon treatment of rho+ or rho0 cells with HC, an inhibitor of the cytosolic ATP citrate lyase.

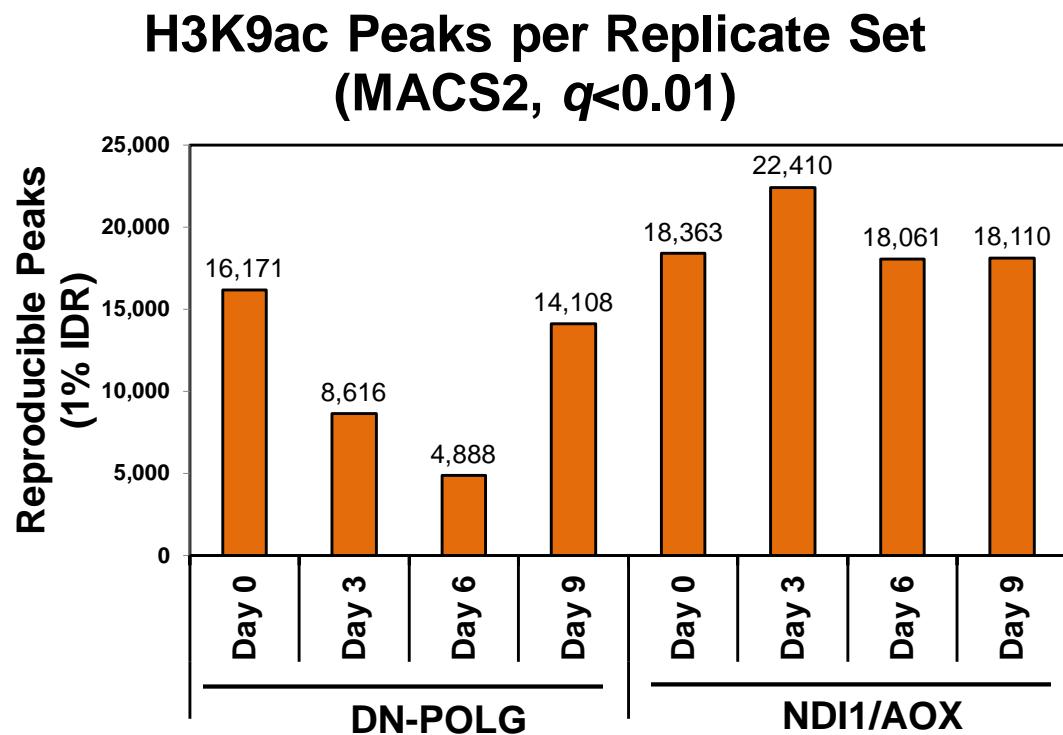
Fig. S6. Validation and pathway enrichment analysis of genes rescued by DM- α -KG treatment of rho0 cells based on microarray experiments. (A) qPCR validation of genes detected in 143B cells by microarrays. Left upper panel depicts concordance of relative expression estimates in 143B rho0 v. rho+ cells normalized to house-keeping glyceraldehyde 3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GAPDH) between microarray (HG-U133 Plus 2.0, Affymetrix) and qPCR experiments (Human Amino Acid Metabolism Tier I PrimePCR panel, Biorad) for 65 nuclear-encoded genes; qPCR was performed from cDNA templates derived using the same total RNA extracts for both techniques (N=3 per cell derivative), and were performed in technical triplicates. Right upper and bottom panels show graphs of relative expression estimates in 143B rho0 v. rho+ cells normalized to β -actin (ACTB) between RNA-seq and qPCR experiments (Custom PrimePCR panel, Biorad) for 3 mtDNA-encoded genes (right upper panel) and 9 nuclear DNA-encoded genes (bottom panel); qPCR was performed from cDNA templates derived using the same total RNA extracts for both techniques (N=3 per cell derivative), and were performed in technical triplicates. The genes identified by microarrays in the rho0 cells relative to rho+ whose expression were affected by treatment with DM- α -KG were used to define enriched pathways based on IPA analysis. (B) canonical pathways (C) only metabolic pathways. (D) The list of genes whose expression was reversed by DM- α -KG supplementation was used to retrieve ENCODE-based ChIP-seq information. The table indicate the proteins against which the ChIP-seq experiments were performed, followed by cell type and reference genome (Hg19, human, mm9, mouse).

Fig. S7. Effects of DM- α -KG treatment on histone marks and prostaglandin levels. (A)

Concordance between gene expression directionality (x-axis) and relative enrichment levels (y-axis) of H3K9ac (blue), H3K27ac (red) and input DNA (green) ChIPseq read densities within 2 Kb around the transcription start site (TSS) of genes responsive to supplementation with 20 mM DM- α -KG in 143B rho0 before [rho(0)] and after [rho(aKG)] 4-hr treatment. Each dot represents a gene; PTGS2 is highlighted as a reference. (B) Western blots for PTGS2 in 3 independent biological replicates of rho0 cells treated with DM- α -KG (including from Fig. 4E). (C) Same as (B) but when rho+ cells and rho0 were exposed to DM- α -KG for 4h in parallel experiments. (D) Levels of PGE2 were estimated by ELISA in the supernatant of the rho+ cells used in (C) prior to and after 4h exposure to DM- α -KG; N=3. Data was normalized to total protein content.

Fig. S1

A



B

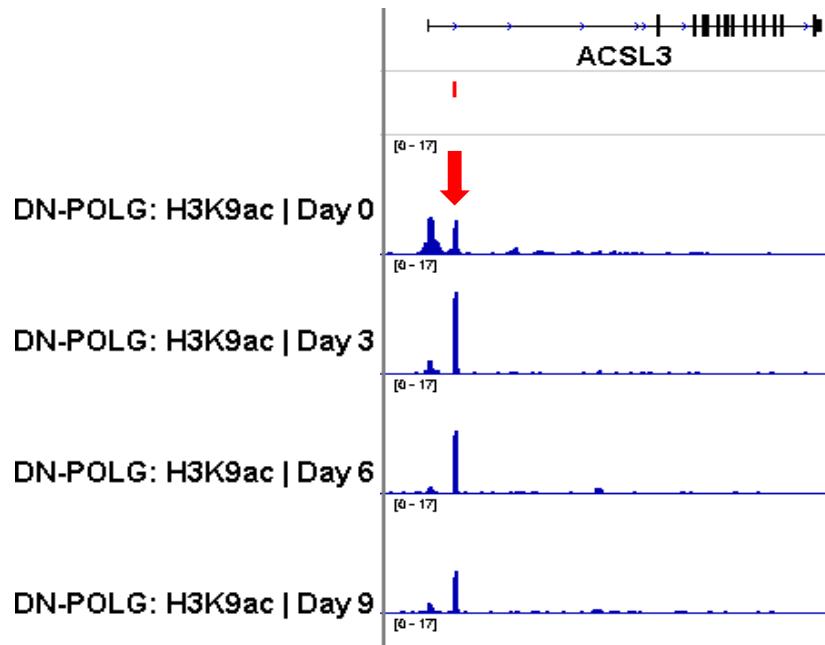
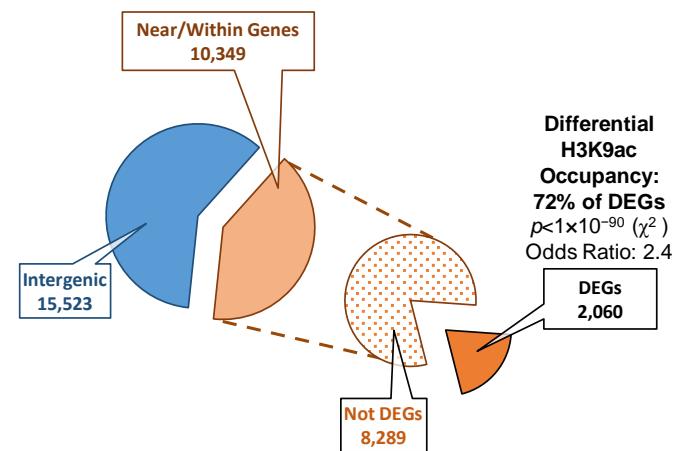


Fig. S1

C



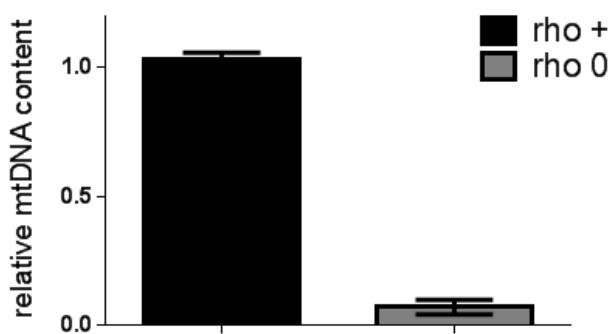
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Odds Ratio (O/E) 2.42

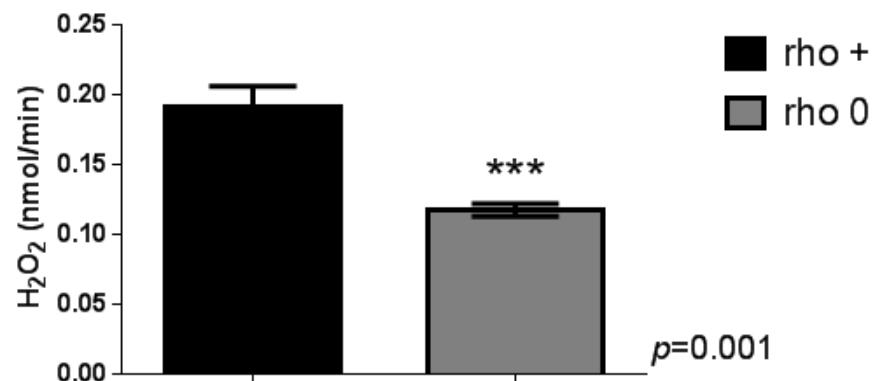
DEG	Observed		Expected		Rate
	H3K9ac	Not H3K9ac	H3K9ac	Not H3K9ac	
DEG	2,060	790	1,565.0	1,285.0	72.28%
Not DEG	8,289	7,707	8,784.0	7,212.0	51.82%

Fig. S2

A



B



C

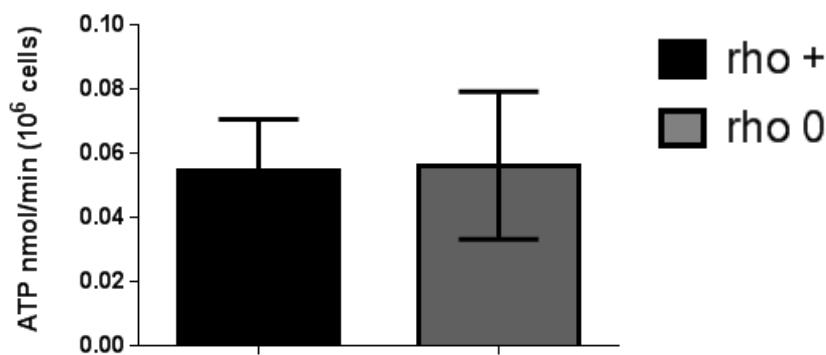


Fig. S2 - continued

D

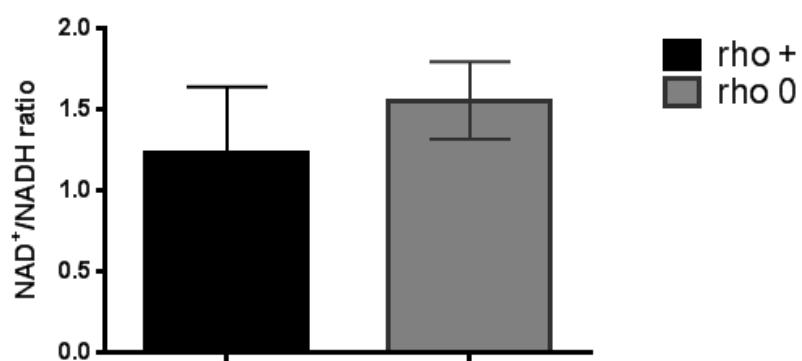
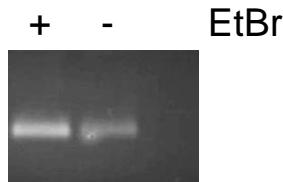
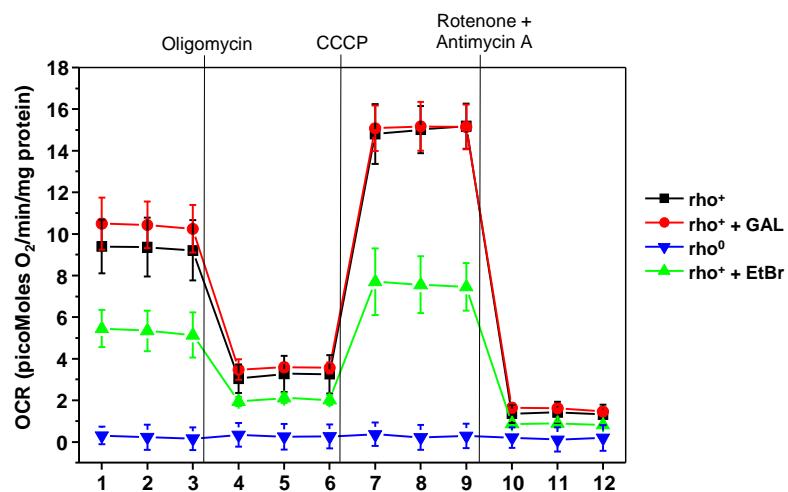


Fig. S3

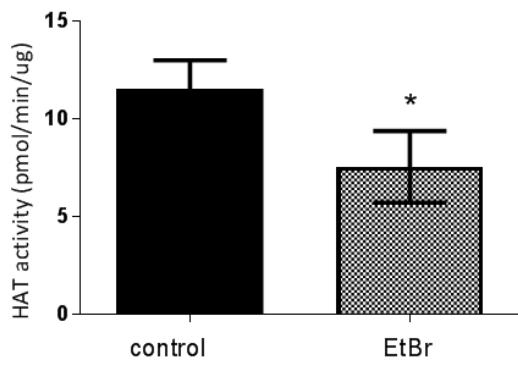
A



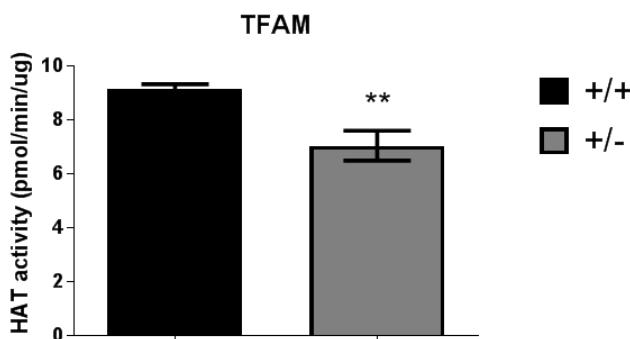
B



C



D



E

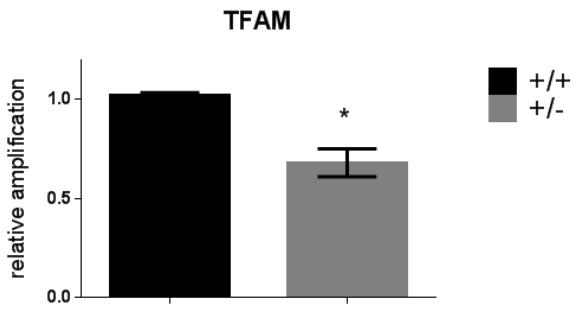


Fig. S4

A

Gene Name*	number of SNPs in rho0		number of SNPs in rho+		number of SNPs in rho0 but not in rho+	SNP Description chromosome:(position,original,alternative)
	sample 1	sample 2	sample 1	sample 2		
CLOCK	1	2	186	140	0	-
CREBBP	0	0	151	66	0	-
ELP3	3	3	126	41	2	chr8:(28007622,t,C);(28005310,t,A)
EP300	2	0	140	76	1	chr22:(41565827,A,G)
GTF3C4	0	0	10	23	0	-
HAT1	0	1	135	53	0	-
KAT2A	0	0	0	14	0	-
KAT2B	1	0	172	130	1	chr3:(20174426,T,C)
KAT5	0	0	0	2	0	-
KAT6A	2	5	144	64	3	chr8:(41802188,G,A);(41808096,A,G);(41877317,G,A)
KAT6B	0	1	211	175	0	-
KAT7	0	0	42	64	0	-
KAT8	0	0	5	11	0	-
NCOA1	1	3	427	222	3	chr2:(24871871,C,G);(24922359,C,A);(24922385,C,T)
NCOA2	5	5	292	257	2	chr8:(71200109,C,T);(71233273,a,G)
NCOA3	1	3	327	234	2	chr20:(46207465,C,T);(46141139,a,C)
TAF1	0	0	105	58	0	-
Total	16	23	2473	1630	14	

* : Genes from Lysine Acetyltransferase family

B

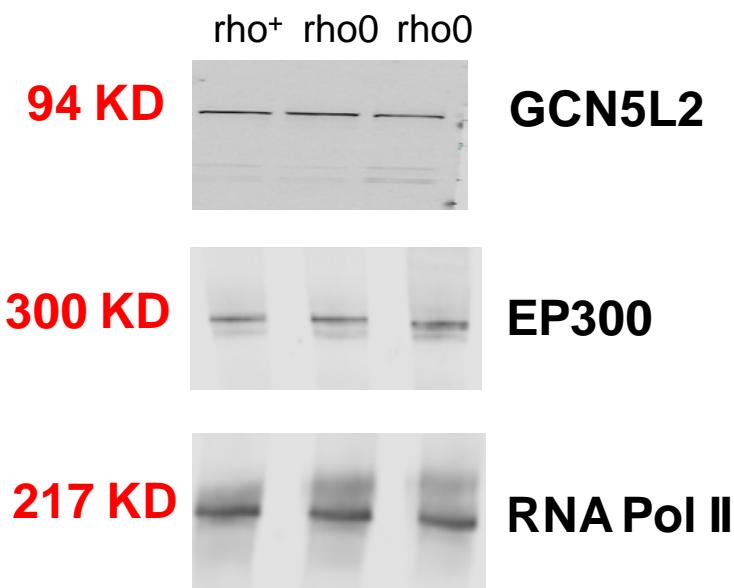
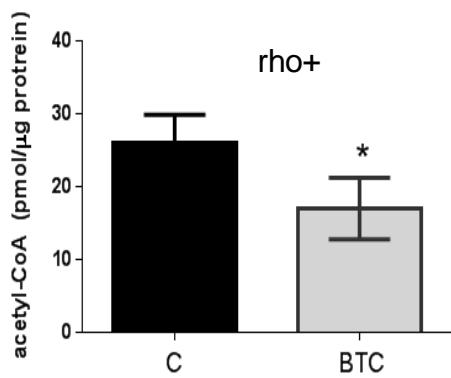
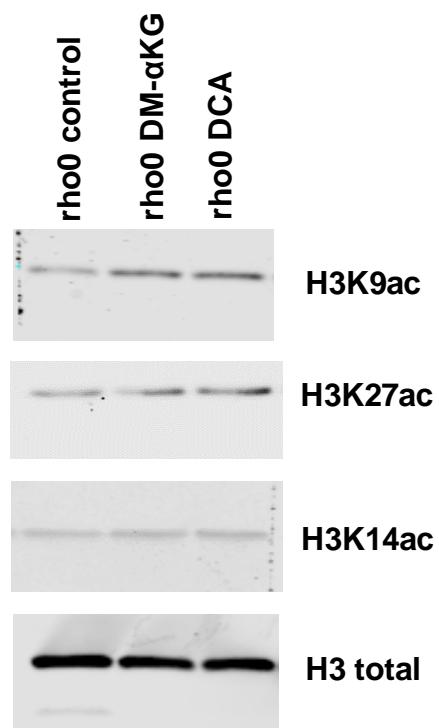


Fig. S5

A



B



C

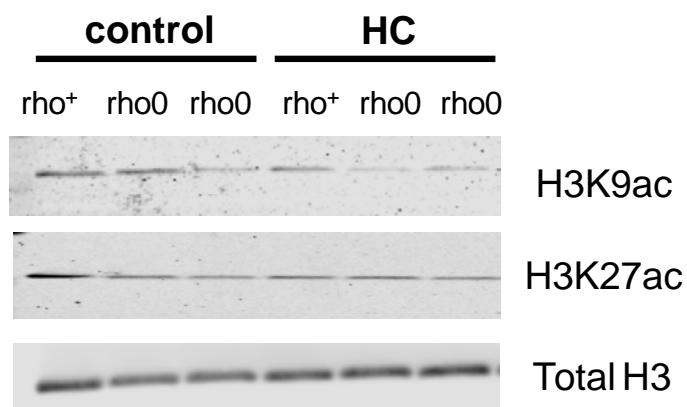


Fig. S6

A

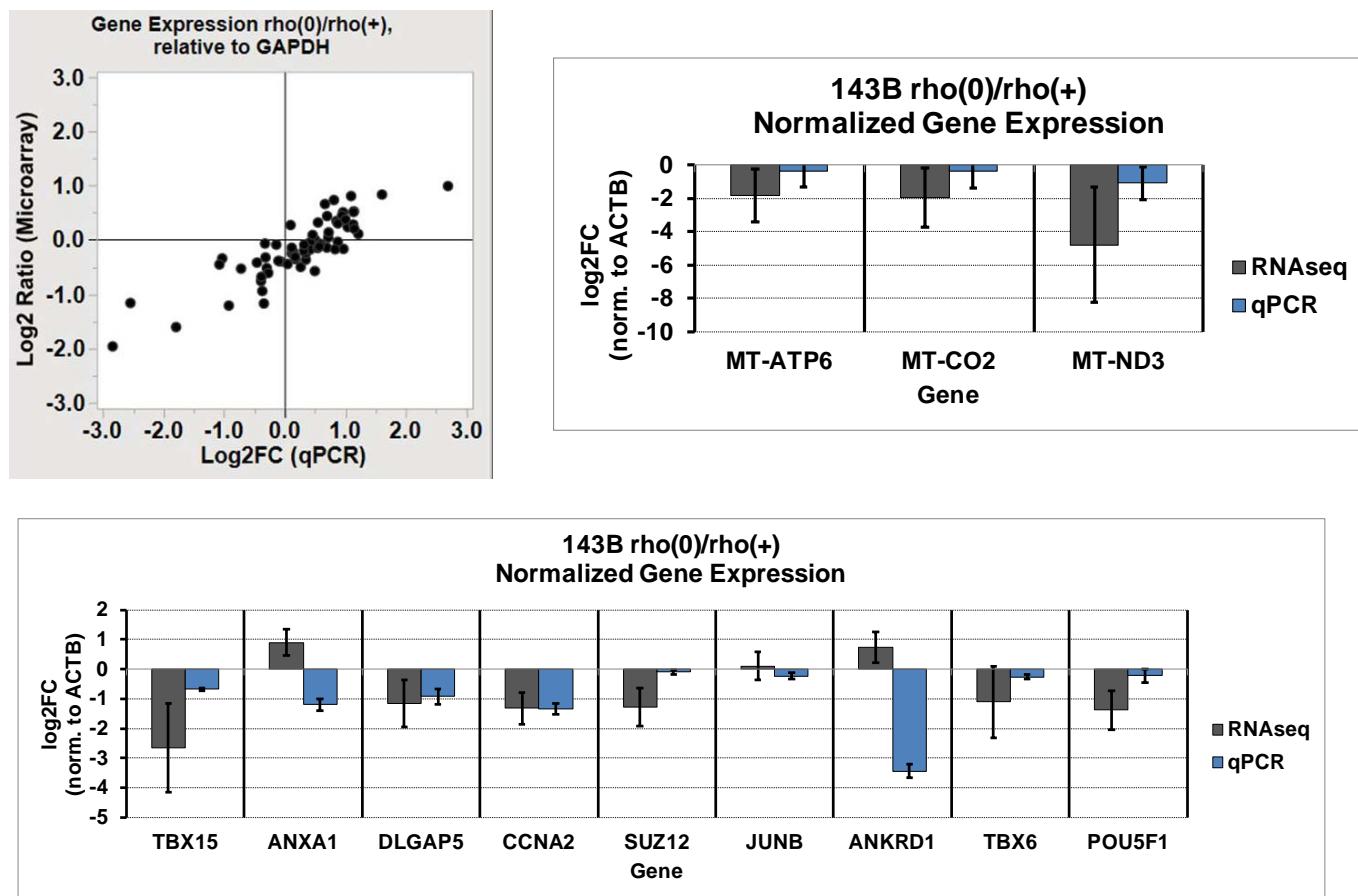


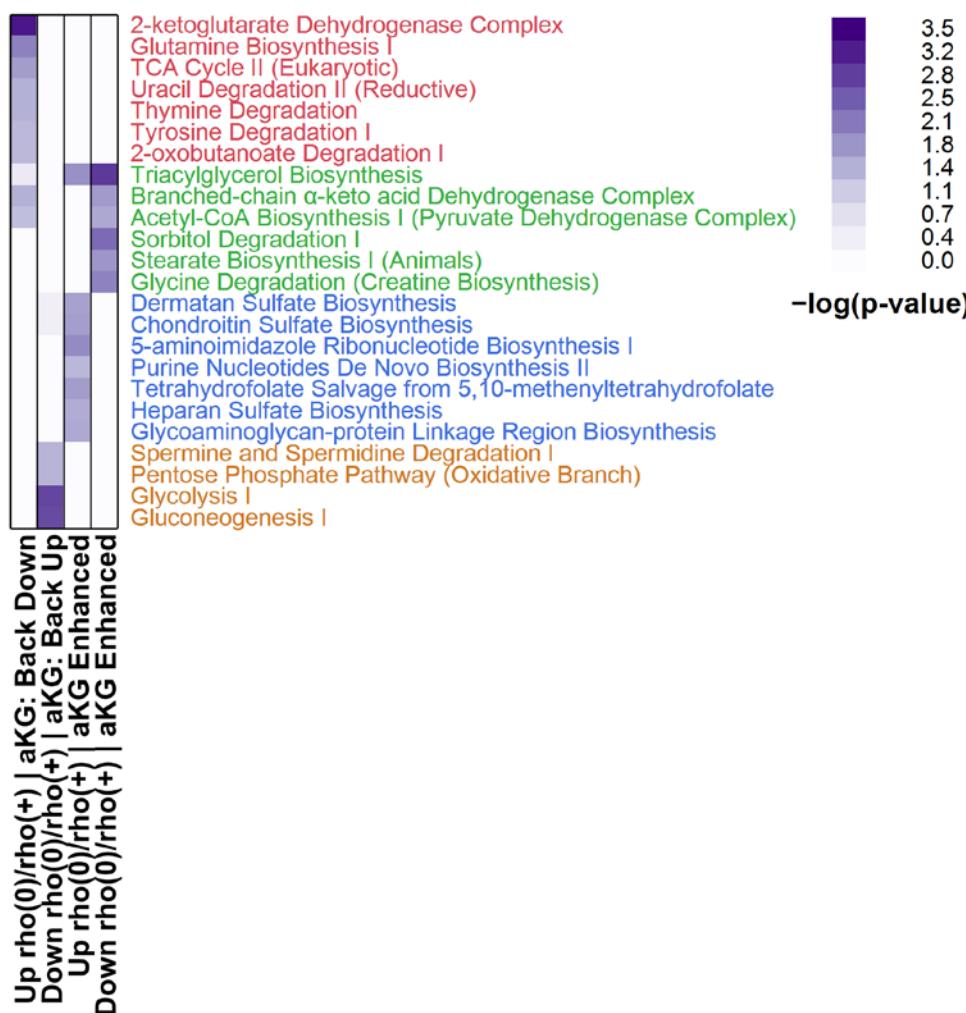
Fig. S6

B



Fig. S6

C



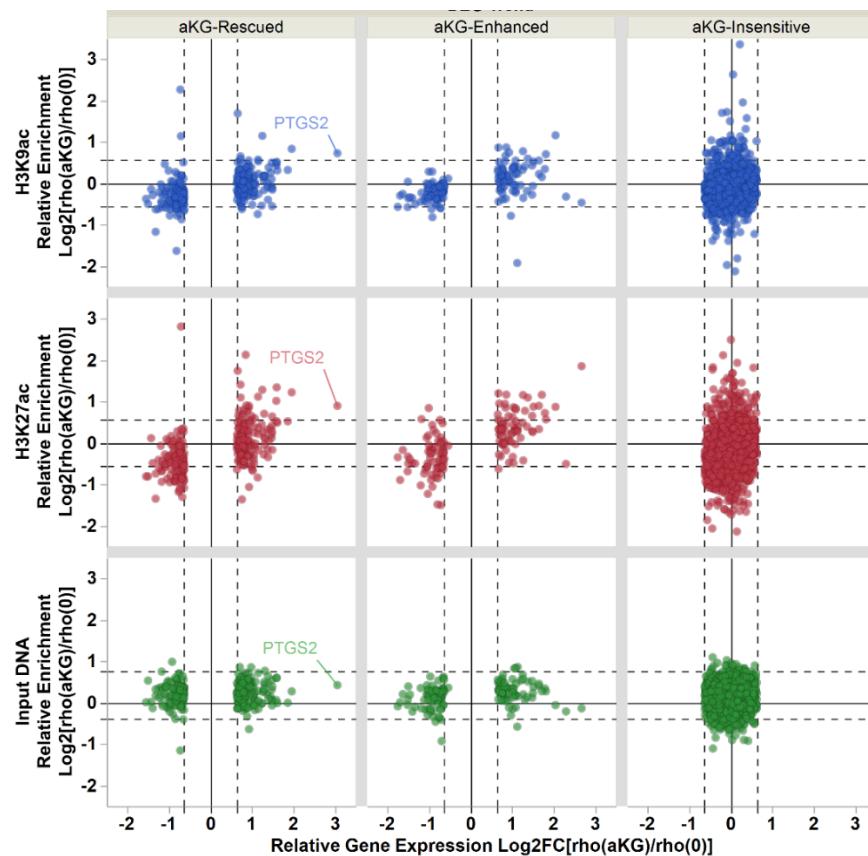
D

ENCODE TF ChIP-seq 2015

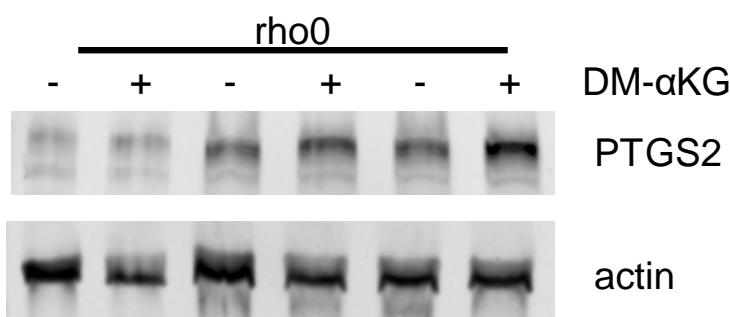
Index	Name	P-value	Adjusted p-value	Z-score	Combined score
1	EP300_SK-N-SH_hg19	0.00005173	0.04221	-1.70	16.74
2	CEPB_myocyte_mm9	0.0004406	0.1023	-1.91	14.75
3	FOS_K562_hg19	0.0001990	0.08120	-1.67	14.25
4	CEPB_ECC-1_hg19	0.0005013	0.1023	-1.72	13.10
5	CEPB_IMR-90_hg19	0.001184	0.1242	-1.69	11.41
6	RNF2_K562_hg19	0.001184	0.1242	-1.67	11.23
7	KAT2A_HeLa-S3_hg19	0.001504	0.1242	-1.71	11.08
8	CEPB_C2C12_mm9	0.001827	0.1242	-1.71	10.80
9	IRF3_GM12878_hg19	0.001184	0.1242	-1.58	10.68
10	NFYB_HeLa-S3_hg19	0.001789	0.1242	-1.63	10.34

Fig. S7

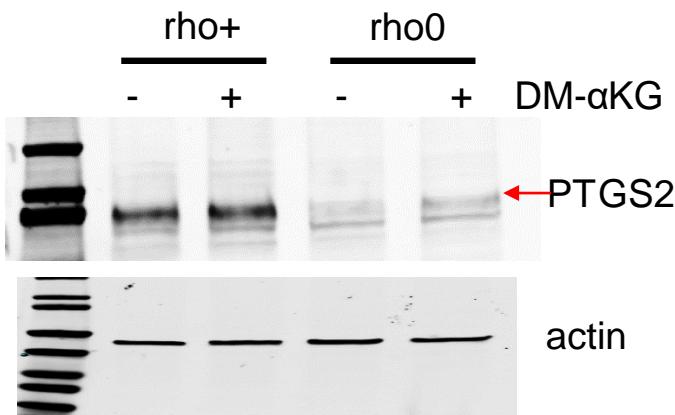
A



B



C



D

