Table 2. Frequency of XMRV-Infected Prostatic Cells Determined by FISH

Patient	RNASEL Genotype*	Number of Cells Counted ^b	Number of FISH-Positive Cells (%)	XMRV FISH	XMRV gag RT-PCF
VP 88	QQ	408	5 (1.23)	++	+
VP 31	QQ	526	6 (1.14)	++	_
VP 42	QQ .	530	6 (1.13)	++	+
VP 62	QQ	904	10 (1.11)	++	+
VP 29	QQ	659	7 (1.06)	++	+
VP 79	QQ	464	2 (0.43)	+	+
VP 10	QQ	872	1 (0.12)	+/-	. <u>1</u> 4
VP 35	QQ	849	1 (0.12)	+/-	+
VP 90	QQ	843	1 (0.12)	+/	4
VP 45	RQ	987	0 (0)	-	
VP 46	RQ	794	0 (0)	· · · · · ·	-9
VP 30	RR	661	1 (0.15)	+/-	_
VP 50	RR	787	1 (0.13)	+/	
VP 51	RR	842	0 (0)	_	_

*RNASEL genotypes are as follows: QQ, homozygous R462Q variant; RQ, heterozygous; RR, homozygous wild-type *All types of prostatic cells are included.

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of humans with a xenotropic MuLV-like agent. Although our efforts to clone the sites of XMRV integration into the host genome have been limited by the small amounts of prostate tissue available for this purpose, our work to clone such sites is ongoing and will provide an important additional piece of evidence for XMRV infection in humans.

The XMRV sequence is not found in human genomic DNA, and none of the human endogenous retroviruses, including the only known gammaretrovirus-like human endogenous sequences (hERVs E and T) [70], bare any significant similarity to the XMRV genome. This indicates that XMRV must have been acquired exogenously by infection in positive subjects. From what reservoir and by what route such infections were acquired is unknown. It seems unlikely that direct contact with feral mice could explain the observed distribution of infection in our cohort, since there is no reason to believe that rodent exposure would vary according to RNASEL genotype. It is possible that infection is more widespread than indicated by the present studies, especially if, as seems likely, individuals with the wild-type RNase L clear infection more promptly than those with the OO genotype. But if so, a cross-species transfer model of XMRV infection would require improbably high levels of rodent exposure for a developed society like our own. Thus, although the viral sequence suggests that the ultimate reservoir of XMRV is probably the rodent, the proximate source of the infection seems unlikely to be mice or rats. Provisionally, we favor the notion that the XMRV infections we have documented were acquired from other humans, i.e., that XMRV may have been resident in the human population for some time. This speculation will, however, require direct epidemiologic validation. It also remains to be determined if RNase L R462Q homozygotes are more sensitive to the acquisition of infection, or are simply less likely to clear infection once acquired. This is an important issue, since if the latter model is correct, it would imply that in younger humans, XMRV prevalence may be higher than what is observed in our prostate cancer cohort (mean age 58.7 y). We are currently developing serologic assays for use in population-based studies that should shed light on these matters.

While presented work documents a clear link of XMRV infection to RNase L deficiency, we emphasize that the data we have accumulated does not mandate any etiological link to prostate cancer, Furthermore, our finding that XMRV infection is targeted to stromal cells and not to carcinoma cells and the fact that the XMRV genome harbors no hostderived oncogenes rule out two classical models for retroviral oncogenesis: direct introduction of a dominantly acting oncogene and insertional activation of such a gene. However, more indirect contributions of the virus to the tumor can certainly be envisioned. Recent work has shown that stromal cells have an active role in directly promoting tumorigenesis of adjacent epithelial cells by producing various cytokines and growth factors that serve as proliferative signals [71] or indirectly by modifying the tumor microenvironment by promotion of angiogenesis or recruitment of inflammatory mediators leading to oxidative stress [72]. In particular, cancer-associated fibroblasts stimulate growth of human prostatic epithelial cells and alter their histology in vivo [73]. It is conceivable that XMRV-infected prostatic stromal cells could produce and secrete growth factors, cytokines or other factors that stimulate cell proliferation or promote oxidative stress in surrounding epithelia. Such a paracrine mechanism could still function quite efficiently even with the relatively small number of XMRV-infected cells that characterize the lesion.

Finally, we note that the identification of an exogenous infection such as XMRV could help explain why not all genetic studies have consistently identified RNase L as a prostate cancer susceptibility factor. If such an infection were linked, however indirectly, to prostate cancer risk, and if the prevalence of infection is not uniform in different populations, populations with low XMRV prevalence might be expected to show no association of RNASEL lesions to prostate cancer.

Clearly, resolution of these issues will require much further investigation. We need to determine the prevalence of XMRV

Figure 9. Detection of XMRV Protein in Prostatic Tissues Using

Prostatic tumor tissue sections from QC cases VP62 (A and B) and VP88 (C and D), as well as an RR case VP51 (E) were stained, then visualized by immunofluorescence (left) or bright field (middle) using a monoclonal antibody to SFFV Gag protein. Nuclei are counterstained with hematoxylin. Enlarged images corresponding to the positive cells are shown on the right. Scale bars are 5 µm in (A), (B), and (E) and 10 µm in (C) and (D).

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infection in the general population, understand its routes of transmission and tissue tropism, explore its associations with pre-maligant and other prostatic conditions, and define the biochemical interactions of the virus with the 2-5A/RNase L system. The availability of molecular clones, infectious virus stocks, and susceptible cell culture systems should greatly

enhance our ability to probe these and other questions in the near future.

Materials and Methods

Genotyping of patients, and prostate tissue processing. All human samples used in this study were obtained according to protocols approved by the Cleveland Clinic's Institutional Review Board. Age, clinical parameters, and geographical locations of XMRV-positive prostate cancer cases are provided in Table SS. Men scheduled to undergo prostatectomies at the Cleveland Clinic were genotyped for the R462Q (1385G->A) RNASEL variant using a premade TAQMAN genotyping assay (Applied Biosystems, Foster City, California, United States; Assay c. 985391...1) on DNA isolated from peripheral blood mononuclear cells. Five nanograms of genomic DNA were assayed according to the manufacturer's instructions, and analyzed on an Applied Biosystems 7900HT Sequence Detection System instrument. nediately after prostatectomies, tissue cores were taken from both the transitional zone (the site of benign prostatic hyperplasia, BPH) and the peripheral zone (where cancer generally occurs), snap-frozen in liquid nitrogen, and then stored at -80 °C. Remaining prostate tissue was fixed in 10% neutral buffered formalin, processed, and embedded in paraffin for later histological analyses. Frozen tissue cores were transferred from dry ice immediately to TRIZOL reagent (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, California, United States), homogenized with a power homogenizer or manually using a scalpel followed by a syringe, and total RNA was isolated according to the manufacturer's instructions. The prostate tissue RNA was then subjected to RNasefree DNase I (Ambion, Austin, Texas, United States) digestion for 30 min at 37 °C. The sample was then extracted with phenol and the RNA was precipitated with isopropanol overnight at -20 °C followed by centrifugation at 12,000 g for 30 min at 4 °C. Poly-A RNA was isolated from the DNase digested total RNA using the Oligotex mRNA Midi Kit (Qiagen USA, Valencia, California, United States) as instructed by the manufacturer. The poly-A RNA concentration was measured using the RIBOgreen quantitation kit (Molecular Probes, Invitrogen), and the samples were stored at -80 °C

Microarray screening. Virochip microarrays used in this study were identical to those previously described [20-22]. Prostate tumor RNA samples were amplified and labeled using a modified Round AB random PCR method and hybridized to the Virochip microarrays as reported previously (Protocol S1 in [21]). Microarrays were scanned with an Axon 4000B scanner (Axon Instruments, Union City, California, United States) and gridded using the bundled Genelyk 3.0 software. Microarray data have been submitted to the NCBI GEO database (CSE3607). Hybridization patterns were interpreted using E-Predict as previously described [22] (Table S1). To make Figure 1, background-subtracted hybridization intensities of all retroviral oligonucleotides (205) were used to cluster samples and the oligonucleotides. Average linkage hierarchical clustering with Pearson correlation as the similarity metric was carried out using Cluster (version 2.0) [74]. Cluster images were generated using Java TreeView (version 1.0.8) 1751.

Genome cloning and sequencing. Amplified and labeled cDNA from the VP35 tumor sample was hybridized to a hand-spotted microarray containing several retroviral oligonucleotides, which had high hybridization intensity on the Virochip during the initial microarray screening. Nucleic acid hybridizing to two of the oligonucleotides (9628654_317_rc derived from MTCR: TTC GCT TTA TCT GAG TAC CAT CTG TTC TTG GCC CTG AGC CGG GGC CCA GGT GCT CGA CCA CAG ATA TCC T; and 9626955_16_rc derived from SFFV: TCG GAT GCA ATC AGC AAG AGG CTT TAT TGG GAA GAC GGG TAC CCG GGC GAC TCA GTC TGT CGG AGG ACT G) was then individually eluted off the surface of the spots and amplified by PCR with Round B primers. Preparation of the handspotted array, hybridization, probe recovery, and PCR amplification of the recovered material were carried out according to Protocol S1. The recovered amplified DNA samples were then cloned into pCR2.1-TOPO TA vector (Invitrogen), and the resulting libraries were screened by colony hybridization with the corresponding above oligonucleotides as probes. Hybridizations were carried out using Rapid-Hyb buffer (Amersham, Piscataway, New Jersey, United States) according to the manufacturer's protocol at 50 °C for 4 h. Eight positive clones were sequenced, of which two (one from each library; clones K1 and K2R1 in Figure 2A) were viral and had 94-95% nt

To sequence the remainder of the VP35 genome as well as the entire genome from the VP42 tumor, we amplified fragments of the genome by PCR using either amplified (Round B) or unamplified

(Round A) cDNA prepared for original Virochip screening. This was accomplished first using a combination of primers derived from the sequence of MTCR and earlier recovered clones of XMRV. The two overlapping fragments from VP62 were amplified by PCR from cDNA generated by priming poly-A RNA with random hexamers. All PCR primers are listed in Table S2. The amplified fragments were cloned into pCR2.1-TOPO TA vector (Invitrogen) and sequenced using M13 sequencing primers. Genome assembly was carried out using CONSED version 13.84 for Linux [76].

PCR. Screening of tumor samples by gag nested RT-PCR was carried out according to Protocol S2. PCR fragments in all positive cases were gel-purified using QIAEX II gel extraction kit (Qiagen), cloned into pCR2.1-TOPO TA vector (Invitrogen), and sequenced using M13 sequencing primers.

Pol PCR was carried out using amplified cDNA (Round B material) as the template.

Sequence of the primers used for amplification (2670F, 3870R, 3810F, and 5190R) is listed in Table S2. Amplified products were gel-purified using QIAEX II gel extraction kit (Qiagen), and purified products were directly used for sequencing.

Phylogenetic analyses. Xenotropic mERV Chromosome 1, xenotropic mERV Chromosome 4, and xenotropic mERV Chromosome 9 were chosen by BLAST querying the NCBI nr database with the complete XMRV genomes and selecting the most similar full-length proviral sequences, all of which happened to have xenotropic envelopes (Figure S2C). Polytropic mERV Chromosome 7 and polytropic mERV Chromosome 11 were chosen by selecting NCBI prototype polytropic clone MX27 [77]. Similarly, modified polytropic mERV Chromosome 7 and modified polytropic mERV Chromosome 7. 12 were selected on the basis of similarity to a prototype-modified polytropic clone MX33 [77]. US analysis was performed using previously described reference sequences: Mcvl8, Mcv3, Mxv2, Mcvl1, Mxv11, and HEMV18 [49]; CWM-T-15, CWM-T-15-4, T-25a, and CWM-T-25b [48].

To generate the neighbor-joining tree of complete genomic sequences (Figure 3), the sequences were first manually edited to make all genomes the same length, i.e., R to R. The edited sequences were then aligned with ClustalX version 1.82 for Linux [78,79] using default settings. The tree was generated based on positions without gaps only; Kimura correction for multiple base substitutions [80] and bootstrapping with n = 1000 were also used.

All other trees were generated as above, except sequences were first trimmed to the same length, gaps were included, and Kimura correction was not used, as using these parameters did not have any significant effect on the trees.

Antibodies. Monoclonal antibody to SFFV Gag protein was produced from R187 cells ([65]; ATCC: CRL-1912) grown in DMEM (Media Core, Cleveland Clinic Foundation, Cleveland, Ohio, United States) with 10% ultra-low IgG FBS (Invitrogen) until confluent. Conditioned media was collected every three days from confluent cultures. Five ml of conditioned media per preparation was centrifuged at 168 × g for 5 min at 4 °C. Supernatant was filtered through a 0.22-um syringe filter unit (Millipore, Billerica, Massachusetts, United States) and concentrated 16-fold in an Amicon ultrafiltration unit with a 100-kDa molecular weight cutoff membrane (Millipore). Sodium azide was added to a final concentration of 0.02%. Concomitant XMRV FISH/cytokeratin immunofluorescence was performed using a mouse anti-cytokeratin AEI/AE3 (20:1 mixture) monoclonal antibody (Chemicon International, Temecula, California, United States) capable of recognizing normal and

reoplastic cells of epithelial origin.

FISH. The XMRV-35 FISH probe cocktail was generated using both 2.15-kb and 1.84-kb segments of the viral genome obtained by PCR with forward primer-2345, 5' ACC CCT AAG TGA CAA GTC TG 3' with reverse primer-4495, 5' CTG GAC AGT GAA TTA TAC TA 3' and forward primer-4915, 5' AAA TTG GGG CAG GGG TGC GA 3' with reverse primer-6755, 5' TTG GAG TAA GTA CCT AGG AC 3'. both cloned into pGEM-T (Promega, Madison, Wisconsin, United States). The recombinant vectors were digested with EcoRI to release the viral cDNA fragments, which were purified after gel electro-phoresis (Qiagen). The purified viral cDNA inserts were used in nick translation reactions to produce SpectrumGreen dUTP fluorescently labeled probe according to manufacturer's instructions (Vysis Inc., Des Plaines, Illinois, United States). Freshly baked slides of prostatic tissues or tissue microarray arrays with ~4-um thick tissue sections were deparaffinized, rehydrated, and subjected to Target Retrieval (Dako, Glostrup, Denmark) for 40 min at 95 °C. Slides were cooled to room temperature and rinsed in H2O. Proteinase K (Dako) at 1:5000 in Tris-HCl (pH 7.4) was applied directly to slides for 10 min at room

temperature. Adjacent tissue sections were also probed with SpectrumGreen dUTP fluorescently labeled KSHV-8 DNA (nts 85820-92789) as a negative control or, as a positive control with SpectrumGreen and SpectrumOrange labeled TelVysion DNA Probe cocktail (Vysis), specific for subtelomeric regions of the P and O arms of human Chromosome 1 as a positive control to ensure the tissue was completely accessible to FISH. FISH slides were examined using a Leica DMR microscope (Leica Micro-Systems, Heidelberg, Germany), equipped with a Retiga EX CCD camera (Q-Imaging, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada). FISH images were captured using a Leica TCS SP2 laser scanning confocal with a 63× oil objective numerical aperature 1.4 (Leica Micro-Systems) microscope. XMRV nucleic acids were visualized using maximum intensity projections of optical slices acquired using a 488-nm argon-laser (emission at 500-550 nm). TelVysion DNA Probes were visualized using maximum intensity projections of optical slices acquired using a 488-nm argonlaser (emission at 500-550 nm) and 568-nm krypton-argon-laser (emission at 575-680 nm). DAPI was visualized using maximum intensity projections of optical slices acquired using a 364-nm UV-laser (emission at 400-500 nm). Slides were subsequently washed in 2× SSC (0.3 M sodium chloride and 0.03 M sodium citrate, [pH 7.0]) to remove coverslips, and H&E stained for morphological evaluation.

IHC. IHC on human tissues was performed on a Benchmark Ventana Autostainer (Ventana Medical Systems, Tucson, Arizona, United States). Unstained, formalin-fixed, paraffin-embedded prostate sections were placed on electrostatically charged slides and deparaffinized followed by a mild cell conditioning achieved through the use of Cell Conditioner #2 (Ventana Medical Systems). The concentrated R187 monoclonal antibody against SFFV p30 Gag was dispensed manually onto the sections at 10 µg per ml and allowed to incubate for 32 min at 37 °C. Endogenous biotin was blocked in sections using the Endogenous Biotin Blocking Kit (Ventana Medical Systems). Sections were washed, and biotinylated ImmunoPure Goat Anti-Rat IgG (Pierce Biotechnology, Rockford, Illinois, United States) was applied at a concentration of 4.8 µg per ml for 8 min. To detect Gag protein localization, the Ventana Enhanced Alkaline Phosphatase Red Detection Kit (Ventana Medical Systems) was used. Sections were briefly washed in distilled water and counterstained with Hematoxylin II (Ventana Medical Systems) for approximately 6 min. Sections were washed, dehydrated in graded alcohols, incubated in xylene for 5 min, and coverslips were added with Cytoseal (Microm International, Walldorf, Germany). Negative controls were performed as above except without the addition of the R187 monoclonal antibody.

Concomitant XMRV FISH/cytokeratin IHC was performed on slides of prostate tissue from patient VP62. First, sections were immunostained for cytokeratin AEI/AE3 using the Alexa Fluor 594 Tyramide Signal Amplification Kit (Molecular Probes, Invitrogen). Briefly, unstained, formalin-fixed, paraffin-embedded sections cut at ~4 µm were placed on electrostatically charged slides, baked at 65 °C for at least 4 h, deparaffinized in xylene, and rehydrated through decreasing alcohol concentrations. Slides were incubated in Protease II (Ventana Medical Systems) for 3 min at room temperature and washed in phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) in peroxidase quenching buffer (PBS + 3% H2O2) for 60 min at room temperature, then incubated with 1% blocking reagent (10 mg/ml BSA in PBS) for 60 min at room temperature. The slides were incubated with cytokeratin AEI/AE3 antibody diluted in 1% blocking reagent for 60 min at room temperature and rinsed 3× times in PBS. Goat anti-mouse IgGhorseradish peroxidase (Molecular Probes, Invitrogen) was added and incubated for 60 min at room temperature. The slides were rinsed 3× in PBS. The tyramide solution was added to the slides for 10 min at room temperature and the slides were rinsed 3× in PBS. Slides were then placed in Target Retrieval solution (Dako) for 40 min at 95 °C. FISH for XMRV was performed as described above except in the absence of proteinase K treatment. After FISH, the slides were mounted with Vectashield Mounting Medium plus DAPI (Vector Labs, Burlingame, California, United States) and examined using fluorescence microscopy. Immunofluorescence images were captured using a Texas red filter with a Leica DMR microscope (Leica Micro-Systems), equipped with a Retiga EX CCD camera (QImaging).

Supporting Information

Figure S1. Complete Nucleotide Sequence of XMRV VP35

Numbers to the left indicate nt coordinates relative to the first nt. Predicted open reading frames for Gag, Gag-Pro-Pol, and Env polyproteins are shown below the corresponding nt. Characteristic 24-nt deletion in the 5' gag leader is indicated with a triangle. Other genome features as well as primers used in the nested gag RT-PCR are

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Figure S2. Phylogenetic Analysis of XMRV Based on Predicted Gag, Pro-Pol, and Env Polyproteins

Predicted Gag (A), Pro-Pol (B), and Env (C) sequences of XMRV VP35, VP42, and VP62 (red) as well as the corresponding sequences from MTCR; MuLVs DG-75, MCF1233, Akv, Moloney, Friend, and Rauscher; feline leukemia virus (FLV); koala retrovirus (KoRV); gibbon ape leukemia virus (GALV), and a set of representative nonecotropic proviruses (mERVs) were aligned using ClustalX. The resulting alignments were used to generate unrooted neighbor-joining trees (see Materials and Methods). Sequences are labeled as xenotropic (X), polytropic (P), modified polytropic (Pm), or ecotropic

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Figure \$3. Comparison of XMRV U3 Region to Representative Non-Ecotropic Sequences

(A) Multiple sequence alignment of U3 sequences from XMRV VP35, VP42, and VP62; MuLVs NZB-9-1 and NFS-Th-1; and from representative non-ecotropic proviruses [37,48,49]. The sequences were aligned using ClustalX (see Materials and Methods). Only sequences most similar to XMRV are shown. Glucocorticoid response element (GRE), and TATA and CAT boxes are indicated by lines. Direct repeat regions (boxed) are numbered according to the existing convention [37,49]. Triangle indicates a 190 nt insertion in polytropic proviruses [37]. XMRV-specific AG dinucleotide insertion is shown in red. Dots denote nt identical to those from XMRV, and deleted nt appear as spaces.

(B) Phylogenetic tree based on U3 nt sequences. Multiple sequence alignment from (A) was used to generate an unrooted neighbor-joining tree (see Materials and Methods). Bootstrap values (n = 1000trials) are shown as percentages. US sequences from XMRV are shown

Found at DOI: 10.1871/journal.ppat.0020025.sg003 (188 KB EPS).

Protocol S1. Probe Recovery from Hand-Spotted Microarrays by "Scratching"

Found at DOI: 10.1371/journal.ppat.0020025.sd001 (83 KB PDF).

Protocol S2. XMRV gag Nested RT-PCR

Found at DOI: 10.1371/journal.ppat.0020025.sd002 (172 KB PDF).

Table S1. Computational Viral Species Predictions Using E-Predict for the Virochip Microarrays Shown in Figure 1

Found at DOI: 10.1371/journal.ppat.0020025.st001 (48 KB DOC).

Table S2. PCR Primers Used for Sequencing of XMRV Genomes Found at DOI: 10.1371/journal.ppat.0020025.st002 (45 KB DOC).

Table S3. Age, Clinical Parameters, and Geographical Locations of XMRV-Positive Prostate Cancer Cases

Found at DOI: 10.1371/journal.ppat.0020025.st003 (39 KB DOC).

Video S1. Confocal Optical Image Planes of a Representative XMRV FISH Positive Cell

Optical image planes (0.5 µm step-size) of the XMRV FISH positive

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cell from Figure 1A acquired using a Leica TCS SP2 laser scanning spectral confocal microscope (Leica, Heidelberg, Germany) were reconstructed into a 3D volume set using Volocity 3.5 (Improvision, Lexington, Massachusetts, United States). Using Volocity's movie sequence editor, each volume was rotated along horizontal and vertical axes, adjusting nuclei stained DAPI (blue) channel brightness to visualize underlying XMRV FISH (green) nucleic acid signal. The resulting image frames were exported as a movie sequence. Underlying grid represents glass slide to which tissue was placed for FISH analysis. Each square unit within grid represents 4 µm in height and

Found at DOI: 10.1371/journal.ppat,0020025.sv001 (237 KB WMV).

Accession Numbers

Accession numbers from Gen Bank (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/ Genbank) are: AKV MuLV (191988), feline leukemia virus (NC_001940), Friend MuLV (NC_001372), gibbon ape leukemia virus (NC_001885), koala retrovirus (AF151794), modified polytropic mERV Chromosome 7 (AC127565; nt 64,355-72,720), modified polytropic mERV Chromosome 12 (ACI55658; nt 85,452-93,817), Moloney MuLV (NC_001501), MTCR (NC_001702MuLV DG-75 (AF221065); MuLV MCF 1238 (U13766), MuLV NCI-417 (AAC97875), MuLV NZB-9-1 (K02730), polytropic mERV Chromosome 7 (AC167978, nt 57,485-65,805), polytropic mERV Chromosome 11 (168-229,176,580), prototype polytropic clone MX27 (M17327), Rauscher MuLV (NC_001819), xenotropic mERV Chromosome 1 (AC083892, nt 158,240-166,448), xenotropic mERV Chromosome 4 (AL627077; nt 146,400-154,635), xenotropic mERV Chromosome 9 (AC121813; nt 37,520-45,770), XMRV VP35 (DQ241301), XMRV VP42 (DQ241302), and XMRV VP 62 (DQ399707).

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Author contributions. AU, RJM, NF, DG, RHS, and ILD conceived and designed the experiments. AU, RJM, NF, SJP, KM, CMG, and RRT performed the experiments. AU, RJM, NF, SJP, GC, EAK, KM, CMG, RRT, DG, RHS, and JLD analyzed the data. AU, RJM, NF, SJP, GC, EAK, DG, RHS, and JLD contributed reagents/materials/analysis tools. AU, RJM, NF, DG, RHS, and JLD wrote the paper.

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