

# Application of CRISPR genome-editing tools in the evaluation of chemical hazards

Chris Vulpe

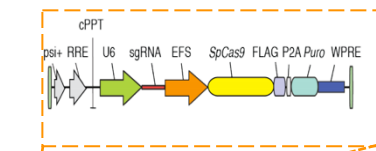
Center for Environmental and Human Toxicology

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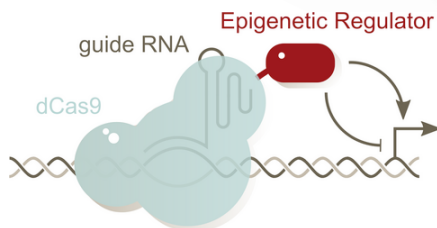
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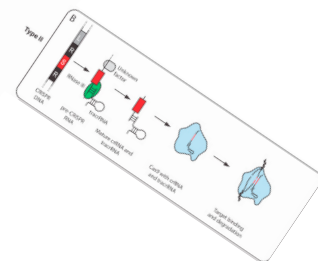
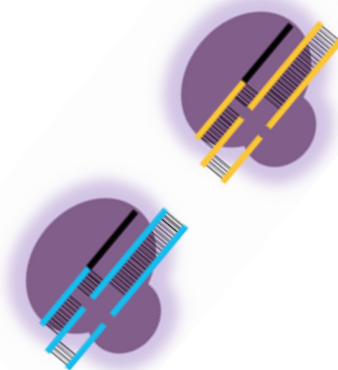
Host genome



cas genes

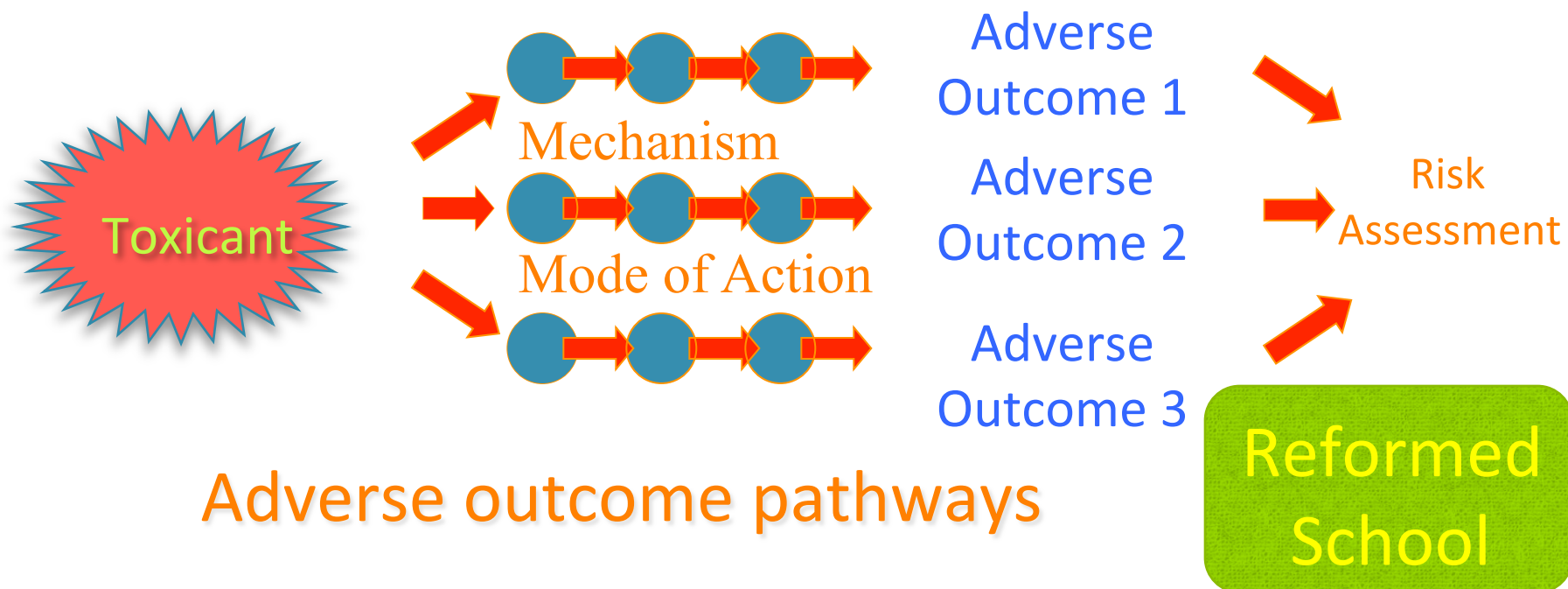


Invader genomes

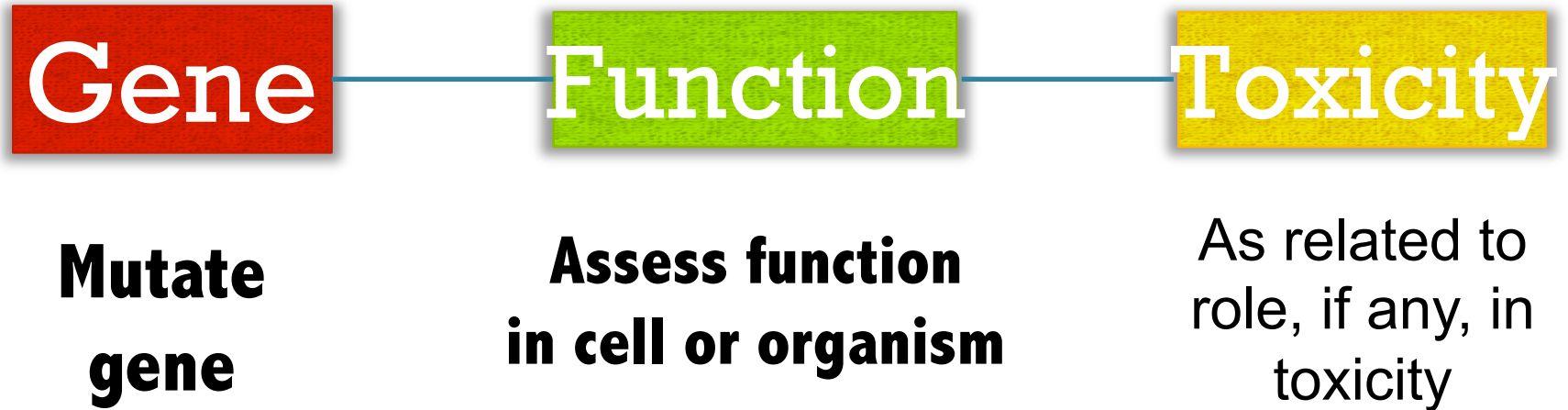


# Toxicity

Old School



# Functional Approaches in Toxicology



the study of the requirement for the biological activities of a gene and corresponding protein in the response to, and effect on, an organism by a toxicant

OR if you muck it up (the gene) & bad (or good) things happen, then it's probably important

# Functional Profiling in Toxicology

Systematically testing multiple (all) genes for their functional role, if any, in toxicity, by perturbing their function

Mutant Genes

mGene 1

mGene 2

mGene 3

mGene n



Toxicant

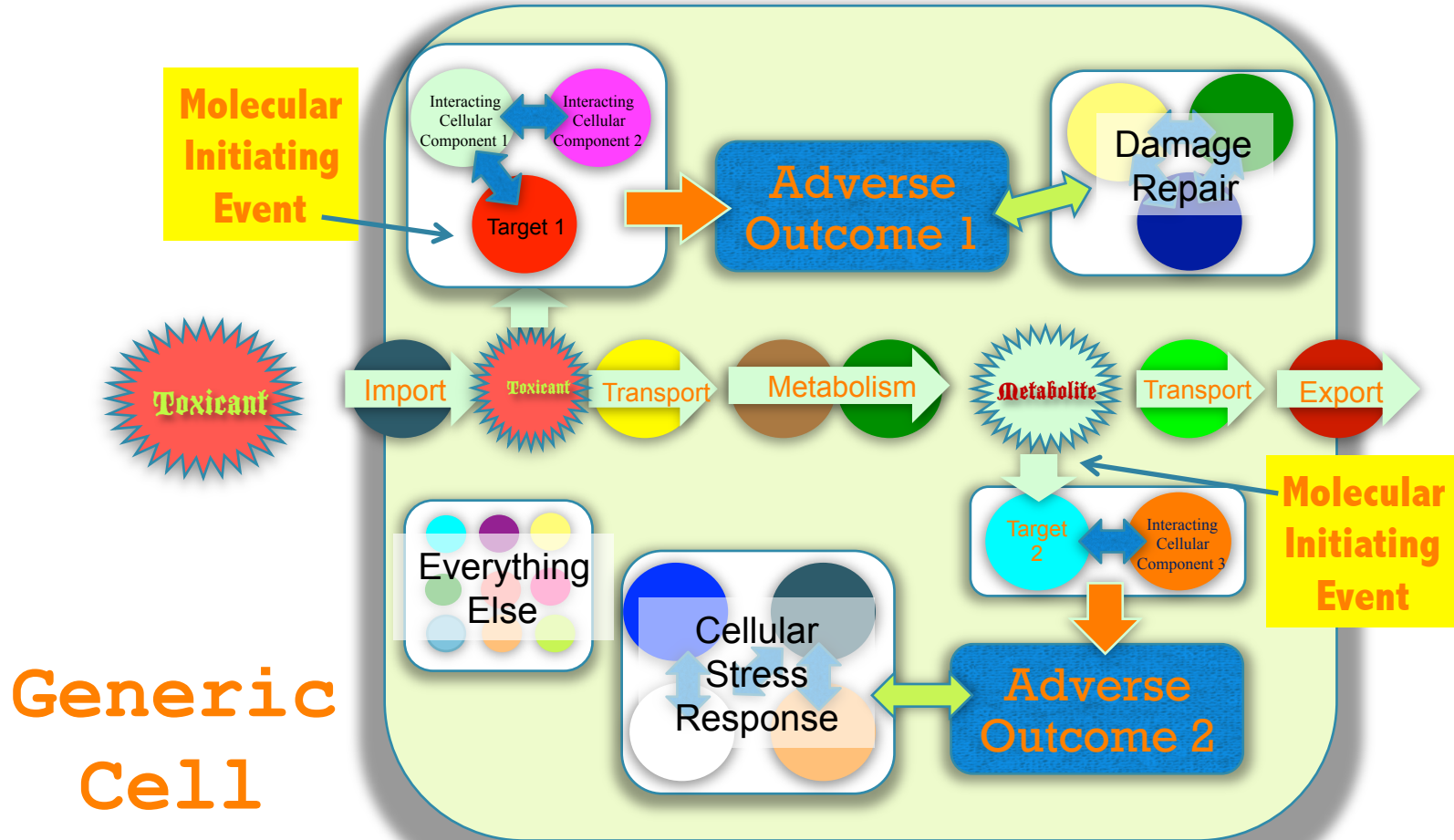
Toxicity



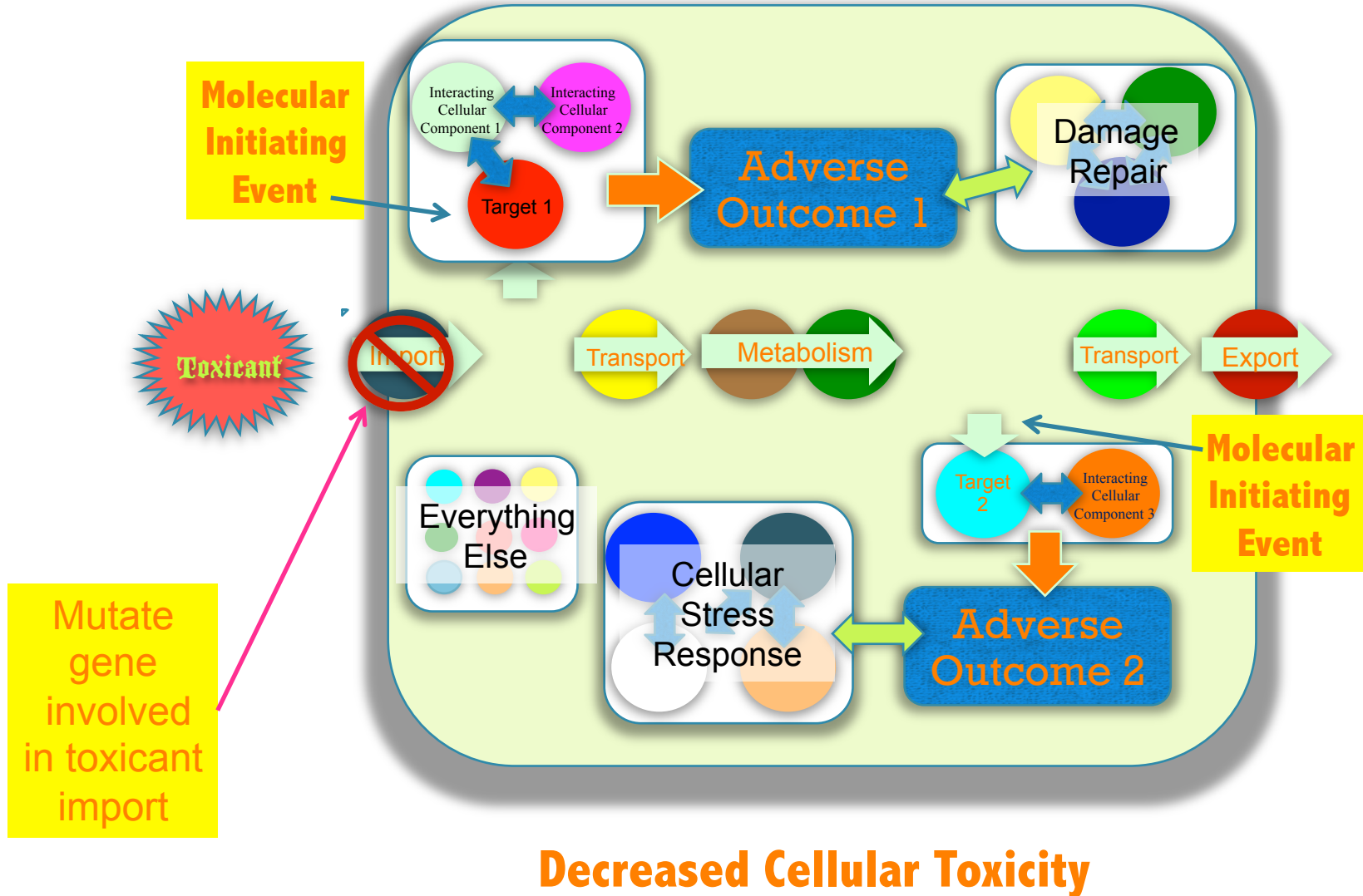
Identify functionally relevant biological processes and pathways involved in modulating toxicity



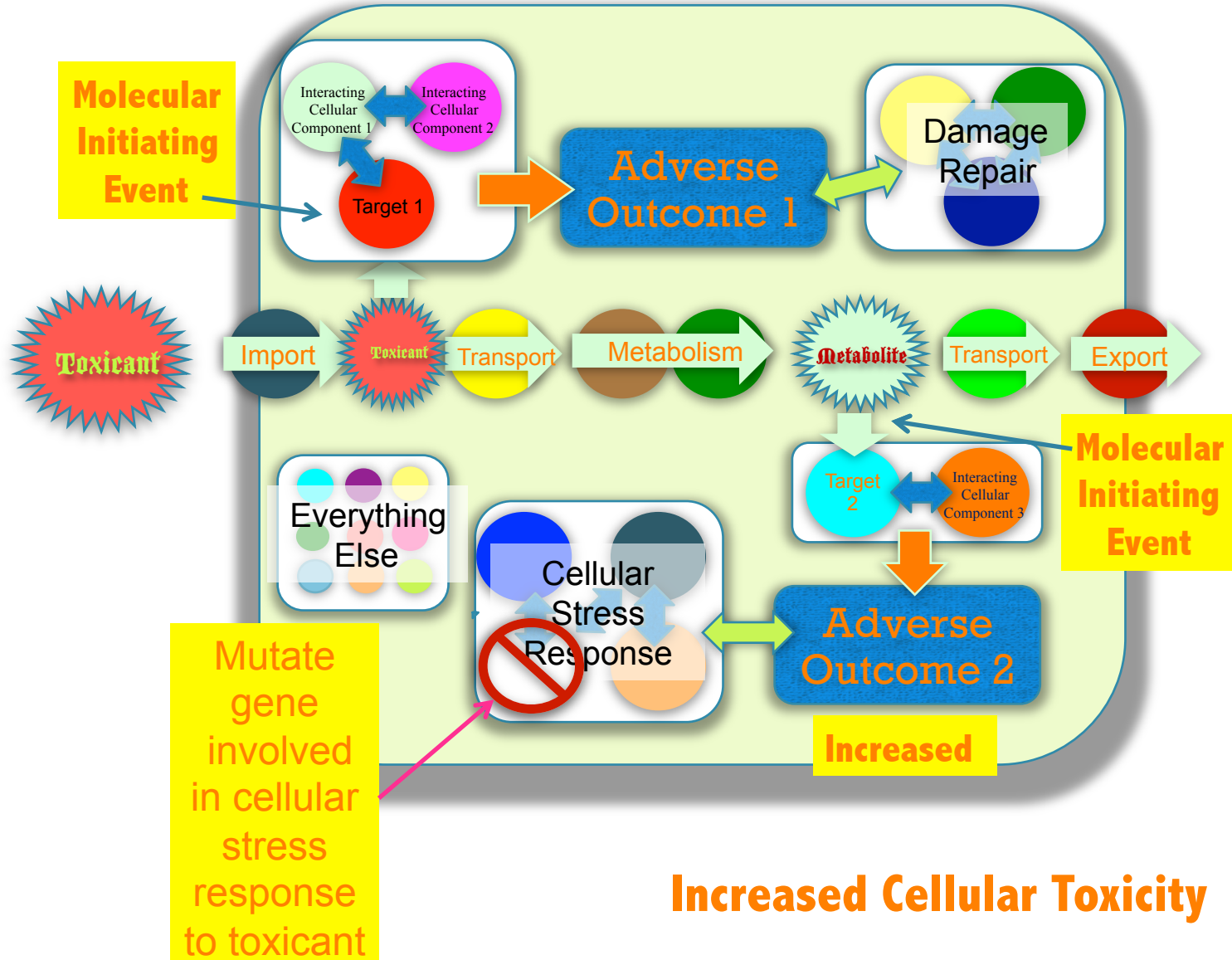
# Functional Toxicology to reveal Cellular Adverse Outcome Pathways



# Functional Toxicology to reveal Cellular Adverse Outcome Pathways



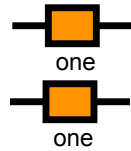
# Functional Toxicology to reveal Cellular Adverse Outcome Pathways



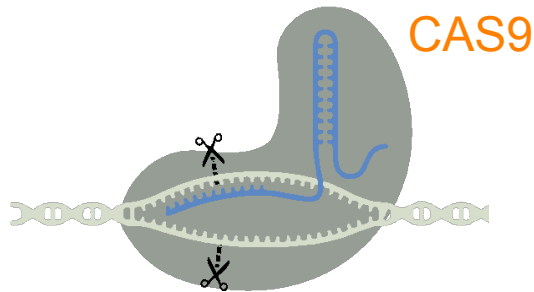
# CRISPR approaches to assess function of genes

## Targeted CRISPR vs Genome Wide CRISPR

Gene of Interest



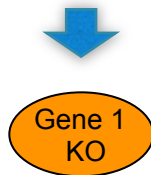
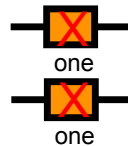
Targeting  
sgRNA to  
gene of  
interest



Introduce into  
cell/organism

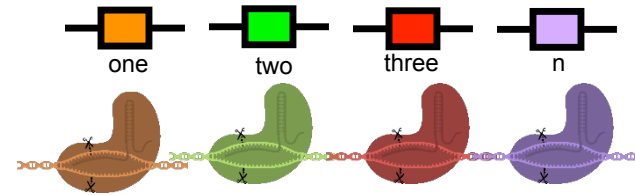
Screen for KO

Isolate KO  
cell/organism



Assess Function  
in  
cell/organism

Multiple genes of interest

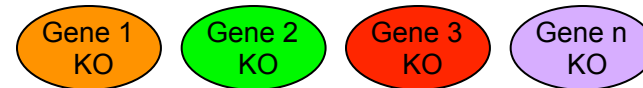
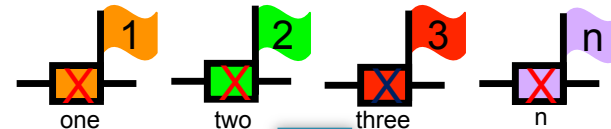


Targeting sgRNA to genes of interest

(CRISPR KO library)

Introduce into cell

One per cell



Generate pool of mutants

Screen for sensitivity to toxicant  
to identify and RANK the important genes

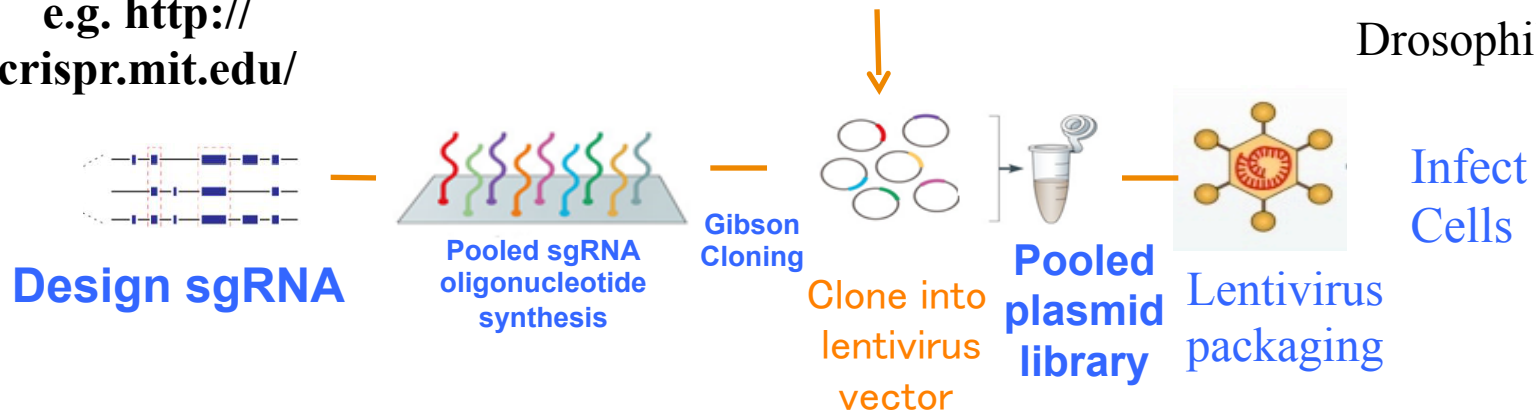
# How do you do Genome Wide CRISPR Screening actually?

Use webtools to  
design sgRNA and  
make your own  
library  
e.g. [http://  
crispr.mit.edu/](http://crispr.mit.edu/)

Or purchase and amplify premade  
library from Addgene

<https://www.addgene.org/crispr/>  
[https://www.addgene.org/pooled-  
library/](https://www.addgene.org/pooled-library/)

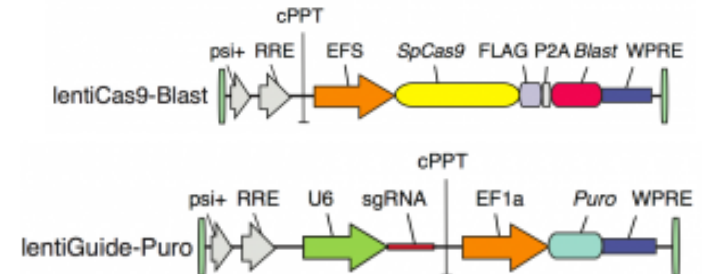
Wide Variety  
of Libraries  
available  
Human  
Mouse  
Drosophila



## One vector lentiviral GeCKO system

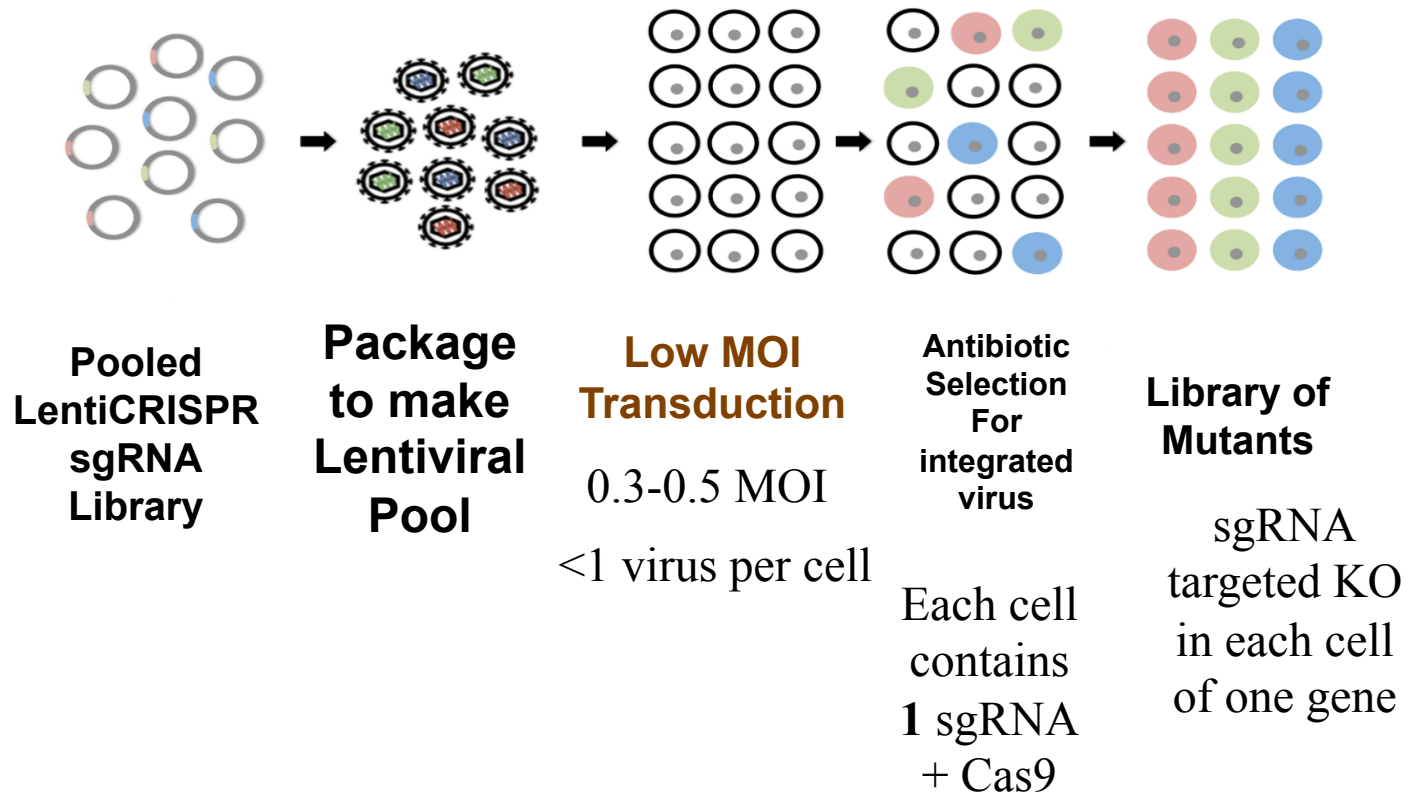


## Two vector lentiviral GeCKO system



[http://genome-engineering.org/gecko/?page\\_id=34](http://genome-engineering.org/gecko/?page_id=34)

# Now what? – Make a mutant KO library



Integrated sgRNA acts as Barcode for KO – uniquely identifies cell containing corresponding KO



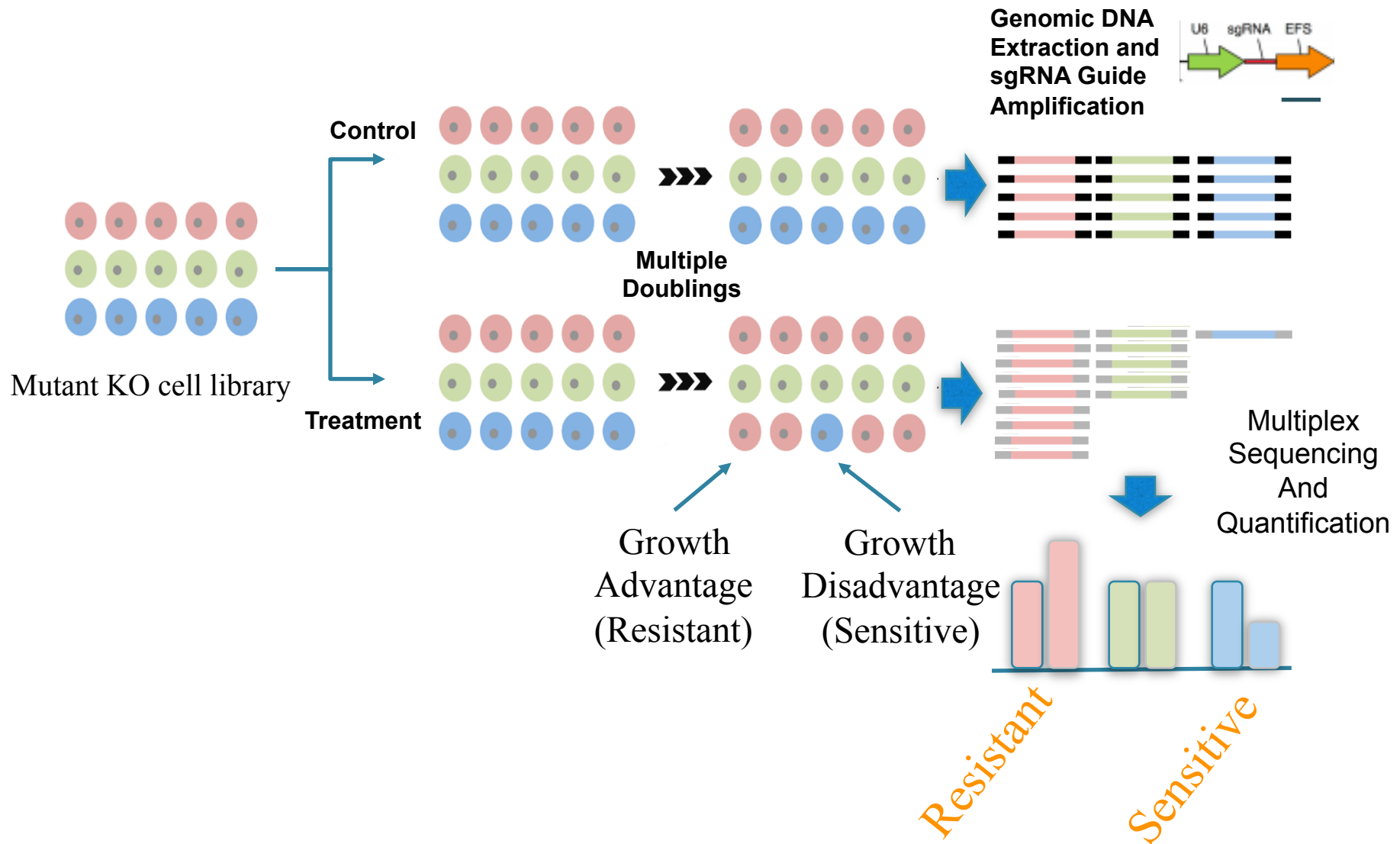
sgRNA Barcode

One vector lentiviral GeCKO system



# Proliferation/Survival Screen with CRISPR KO library

## Abuse of choice

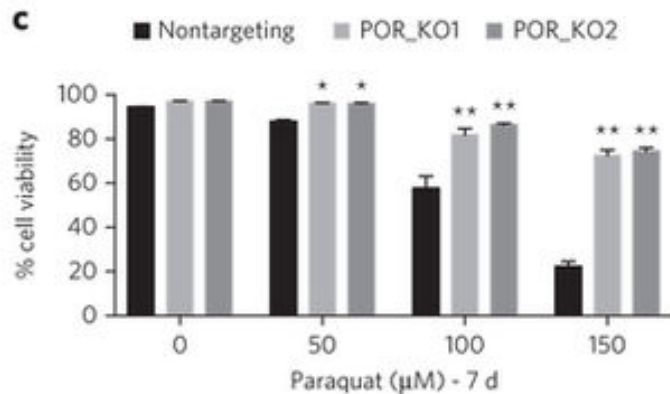
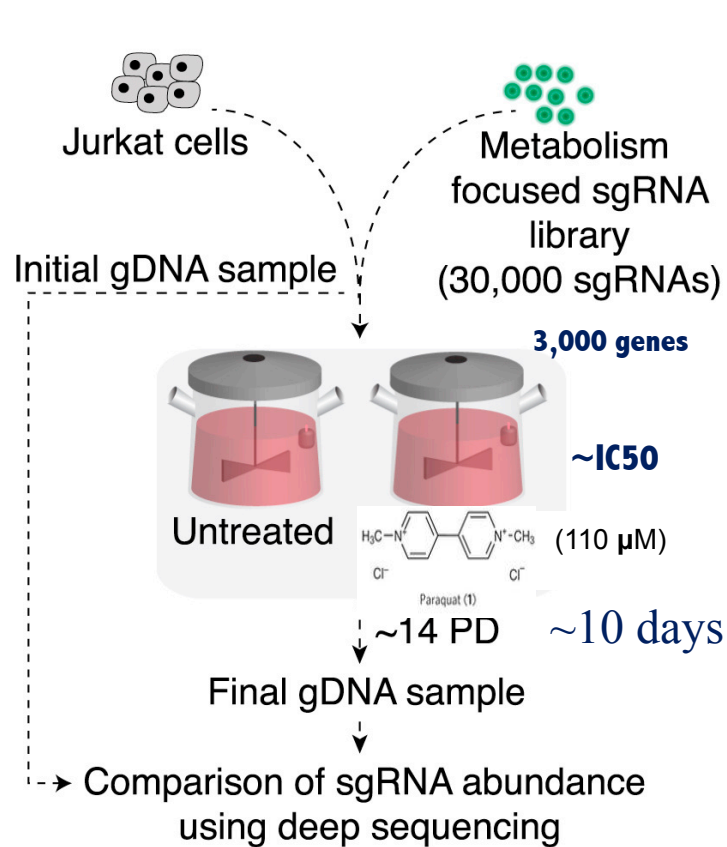




# A CRISPR screen identifies a pathway required for paraquat-induced cell death

Colleen R Reczek, Kivancü Birsoy, Hyewon Kong, Inmaculada Mart' nez-Reyes, Tim Wang, Peng Gao, David M Sabatini & Navdeep S Chandel\*

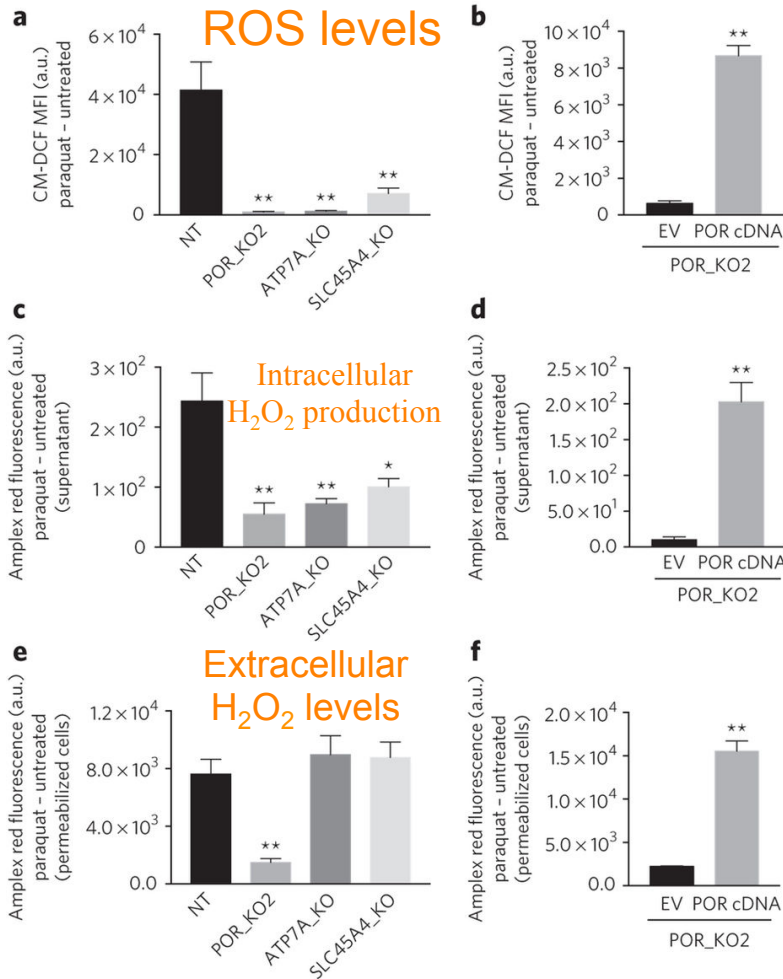
*Nature Chemical Biology* **13**, 1274–1279 (2017)



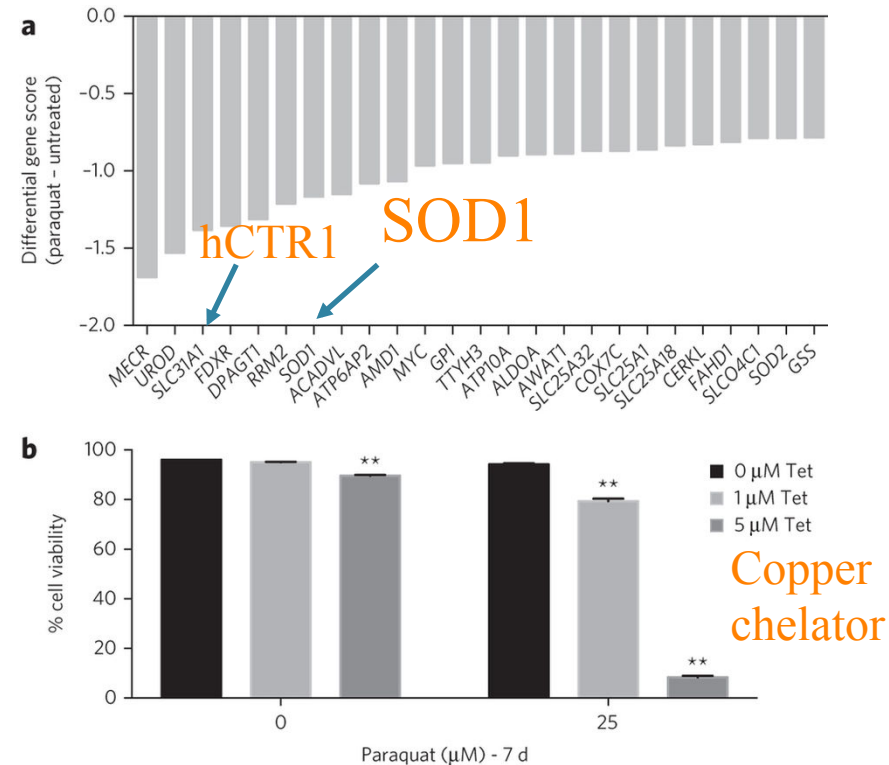
# Insight into mechanism of action of paraquat

## ROS production by paraquat requires POR

### Intracellular ROS levels



Separate CRISPR Screen  
Paraquat 25  $\mu$ M -10 days  
identify sensitive clones



Copper deficiency  
contributes to toxicity

# Arsenic Trioxide whole genome CRISPR screen

## Top 10 - Whole Genome Screen Candidates

Gene ID	Gene name	logFC	P Value	FDR
KEAP1	kelch-like ECH-associated protein 1	2.05	3.13E-59	6.87E-55
SEPHS2	selenophosphate synthetase 2	1.77	1.88E-23	2.06E-19
EEFSEC	eukaryotic elongation factor, selenocysteine-tRNA-specific	1.25	1.09E-17	7.97E-14
PSTK	phosphoseryl-tRNA kinase	1.49	3.23E-17	1.77E-13
KRT73	keratin 73	-2.5	2.88E-15	1.26E-11
ARID1B	AT rich interactive domain 1B (SWI1-like)	1.42	5.44E-13	1.99E-09
TXNDC17	thioredoxin domain containing 17	0.9	3.20E-10	1.00E-06
SLC6A12	solute carrier family 6 (neurotransmitter transporter), member 12	0.92	8.66E-10	2.37E-06
DCLRE1A	DNA cross-link repair 1A	-1.1	5.52E-09	1.34E-05
DLGAP5	discs, large (Drosophila) homolog-associated protein 5	-1.1	2.91E-08	6.38E-05

Log FC - relative abundance  
in treated vs control

FDR – False Discovery Rate

Secondary Screen

Customized  
CRISPR/Cas9  
library enriched  
for candidate  
genes

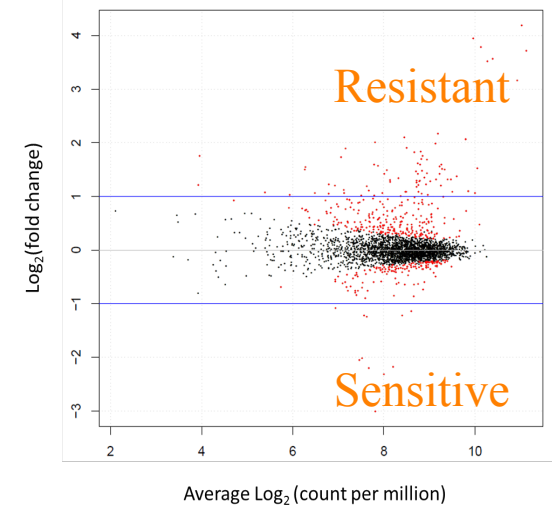
8 sgRNAs per  
gene

Multiple  
significant (FDR  
<0.001) sgRNAs  
per gene  
required for  
candidates  
selection

2° Screen  
(confirmatory)

20% sensitivity  
candidates

55% of resistance  
candidates



# Arsenic Trioxide confirmatory CRISPR screen

## Resistant

Gene	sgRNA	FDR	Log FC
KEAP1	8/8	0.000354	3.6
TXNDC17	8/8	0.000354	1.4
PSTK	7/7	0.000354	1.6
GFI1B	7/7	0.000354	1.1
SLC30A1	7/7	0.000354	1
FLCN	7/7	0.000354	1.3
EED	7/7	0.000354	0.7
RRAGC	8/8	0.000354	1
EEFSEC	6/7	0.000354	1.6
C15orf41	7/7	0.000354	0.6
SET	7/8	0.000354	0.8
SEPHS2	6/7	0.000354	1.4
SEPSECS	7/8	0.000354	0.7
DPH6	6/7	0.000354	0.8
NAA38	8/8	0.000928	0.7

## Sensitive

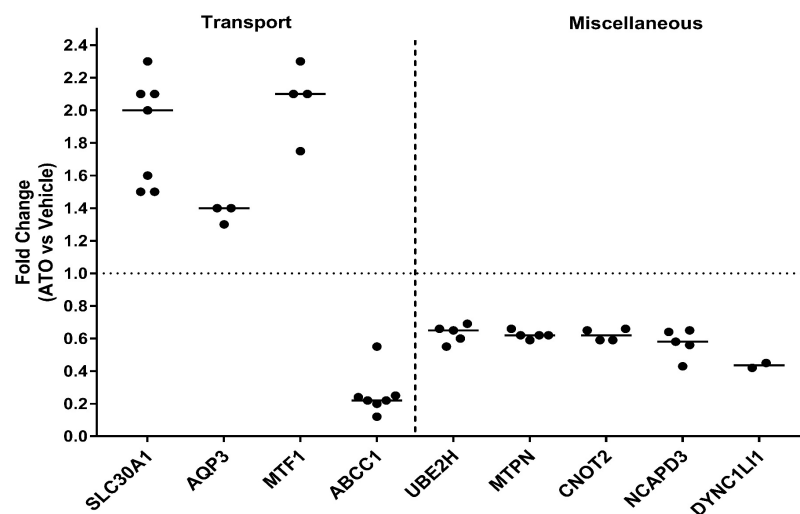
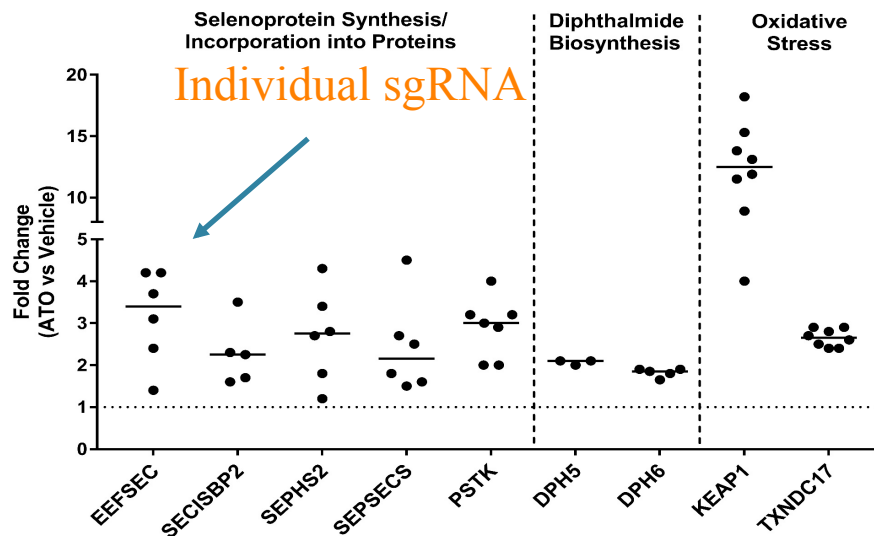
Gene	sgRNA	FDR	Log FC
ABCC1	8/8	0.000619	-2.1
MTPN	7/7	0.000619	-0.7
NCAPD3	6/7	0.000619	-0.7
DEPDC5	7/7	0.000619	-0.4
UBE2H	7/8	0.000619	-0.6
NPRL2	6/6	0.000619	-0.3
CNOT2	7/7	0.000619	-0.6
NDE1	7/8	0.000619	-0.7

sgRNA – the number of sgRNA for each gene

8/8 means 8 sgRNA out of 8 tested showed effect

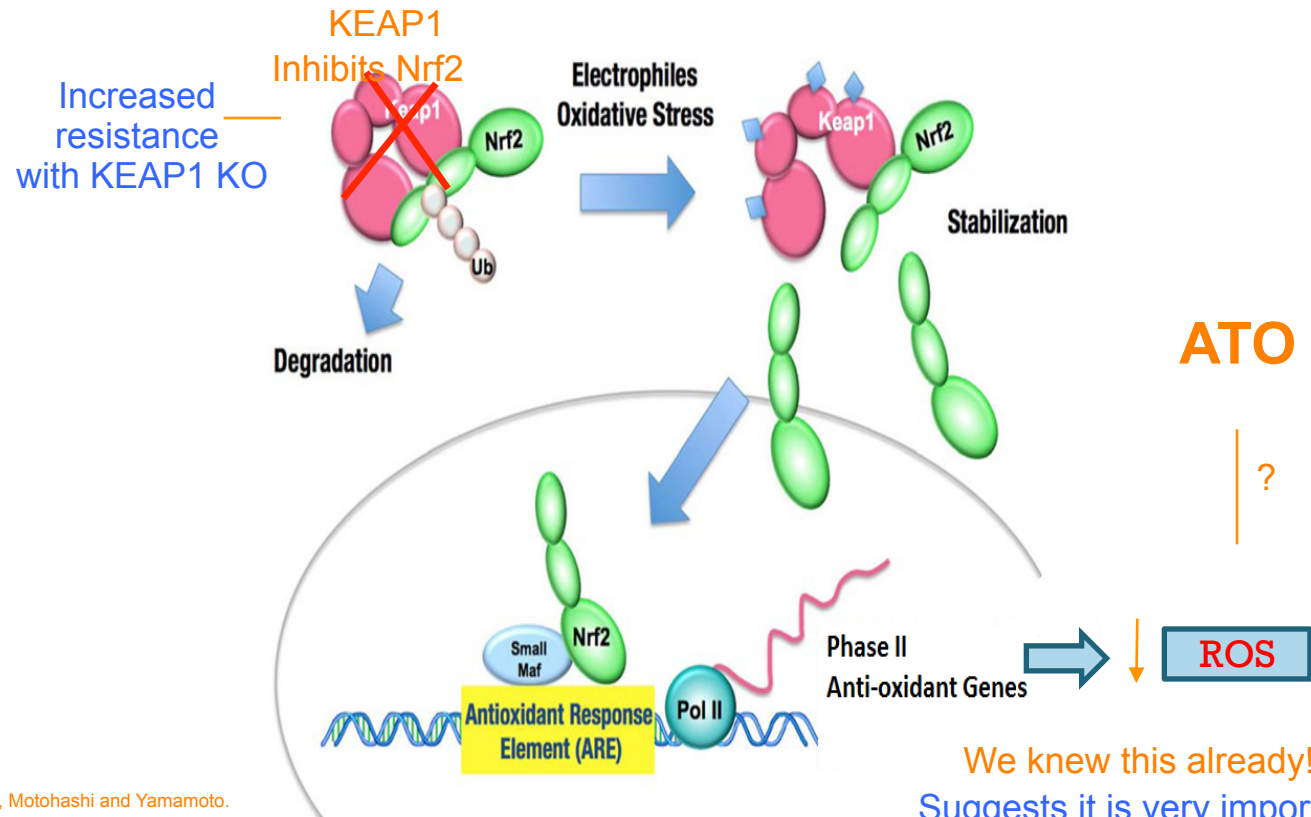
Log FC – average relative abundance in treated vs control

FDR – False Discovery Rate



# ATO Toxicity: Reactive Oxygen Species

Nrf2 primary anti-oxidant transcription factor – KEAP1 is REPRESSOR of NRF1

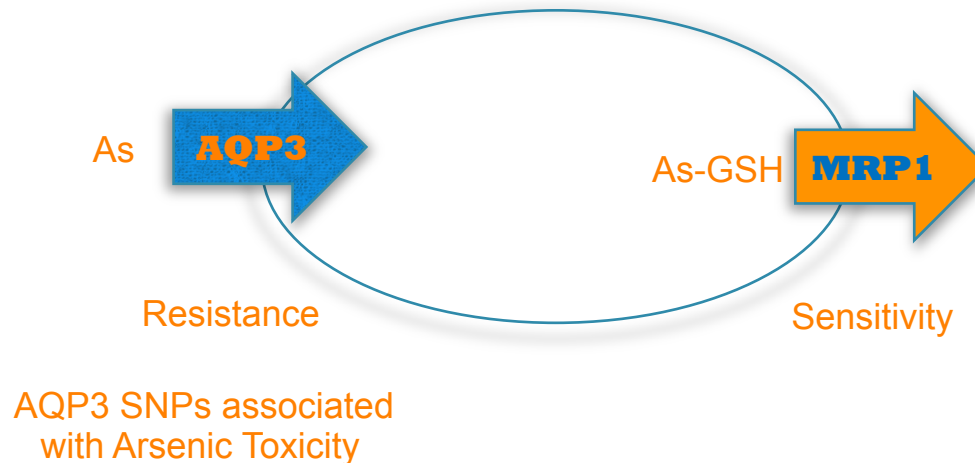


Copyright © Mitsuishi, Motohashi and Yamamoto.

Mitsuishi et al., *Front. Oncol.*, 2012

We knew this already!  
Suggests it is very important in  
ACUTE short term toxicity

# Arsenic Transport

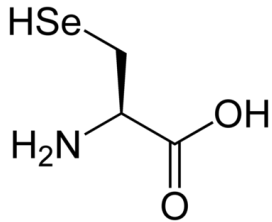


Córdova EJ, Martínez-Hernández A, Uribe-Figueroa L, Centeno F, Morales-Marín M, Koneru H, et al. (2014) The NRF2-KEAP1 Pathway Is an Early Responsive Gene Network in Arsenic Exposed Lymphoblastoid Cells. *PLoS ONE* 9(2): e88069.

Te-Chang Lee, I-Ching Ho, Wen-Jen Lu, and Jin-ding Huang. Enhanced Expression of Multidrug resistance-associated Protein 2 and Reduced Expression of Aquaglyceroporin 3 in an Arsenic-resistant Human Cell Line *J. Biol. Chem.* 2006 281: 18401-

Michael W. Carew, Elaine M. Leslie; Selenium-dependent and -independent transport of arsenic by the human multidrug resistance protein 2 (MRP2/ABCC2): implications for the mutual detoxification of arsenic and selenium, *Carcinogenesis*, Volume 31, Issue 8, Pages 1450–1455,

# Selenocysteine Incorporation into Proteins Increases Susceptibility to Arsenic Trioxide



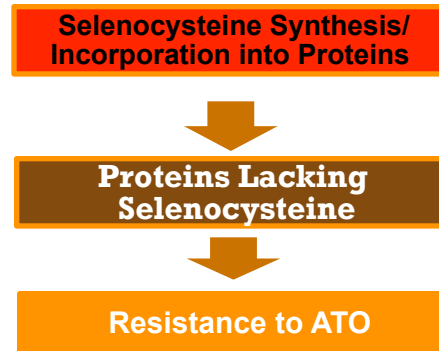
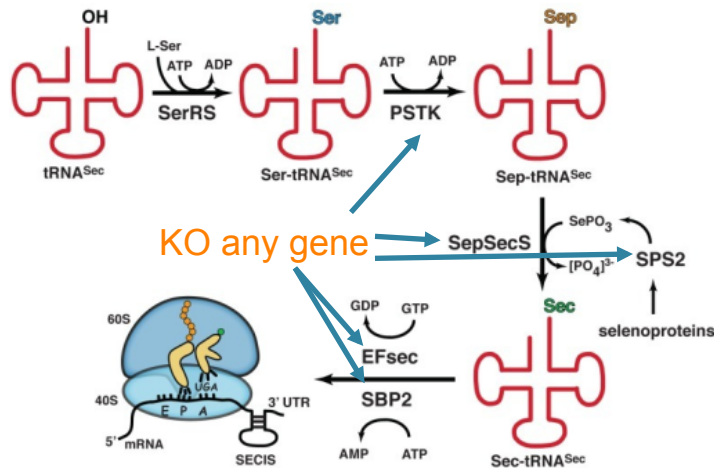
**Selenocysteine**  
The 21<sup>st</sup> amino acid

**Selenium**  
Previously known As binds Se

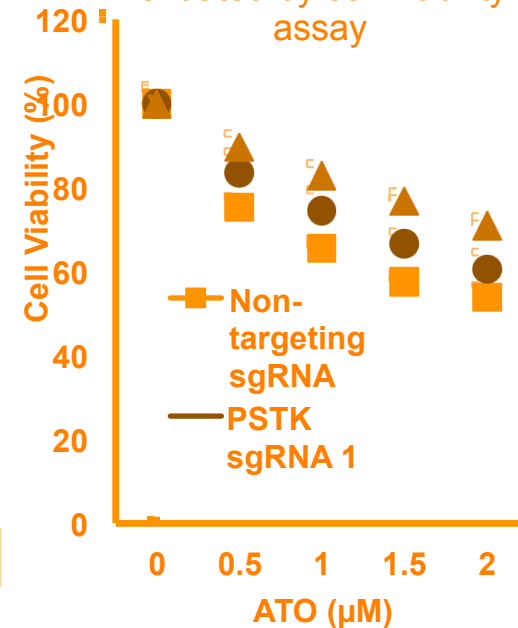
What did we find?

Loss of any gene needed for SeCys  
Incorporation in proteins leads to RESISTANCE

THIS IS NEW AND KINDA UNEXPECTED



Resistance of PSTK<sup>-/-</sup> K562 cells to ATO  
validated by cell viability assay



[Croat Med. J. 2012 Dec; 53\(6\): 535–550.](#)

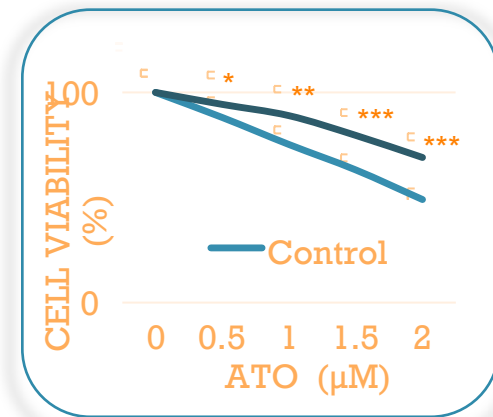
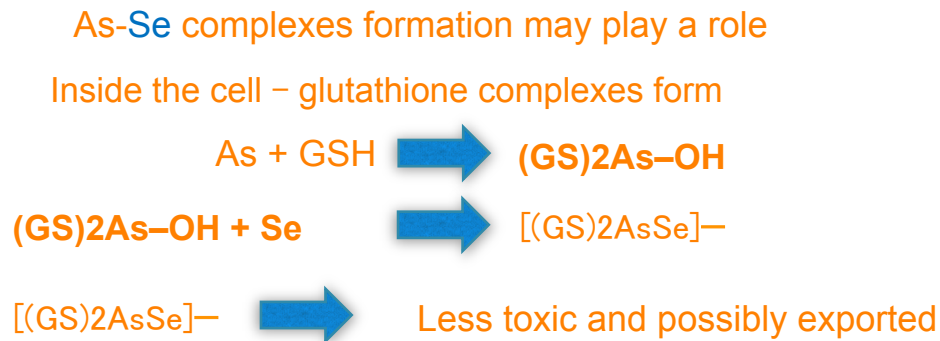
Many of these proteins involved in  
response to oxidative stress



# Se-As complex hypothesis

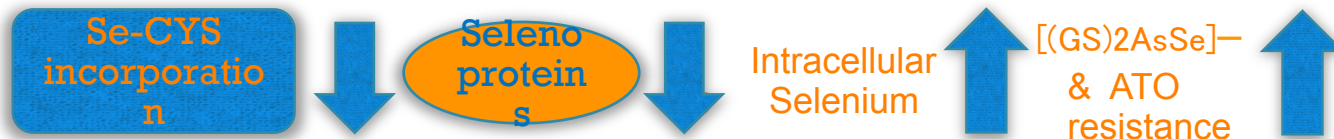
1938 – Moxon noted that Arsenic exposure can prevent Selenium poisoning  
(L.A. Moxon, Science, 88 (1938), p. 81)

Mutual antagonism (Se prevents As poisoning too) in multiple species including people (reviewed in Environment International 69 (2014) 148–158)

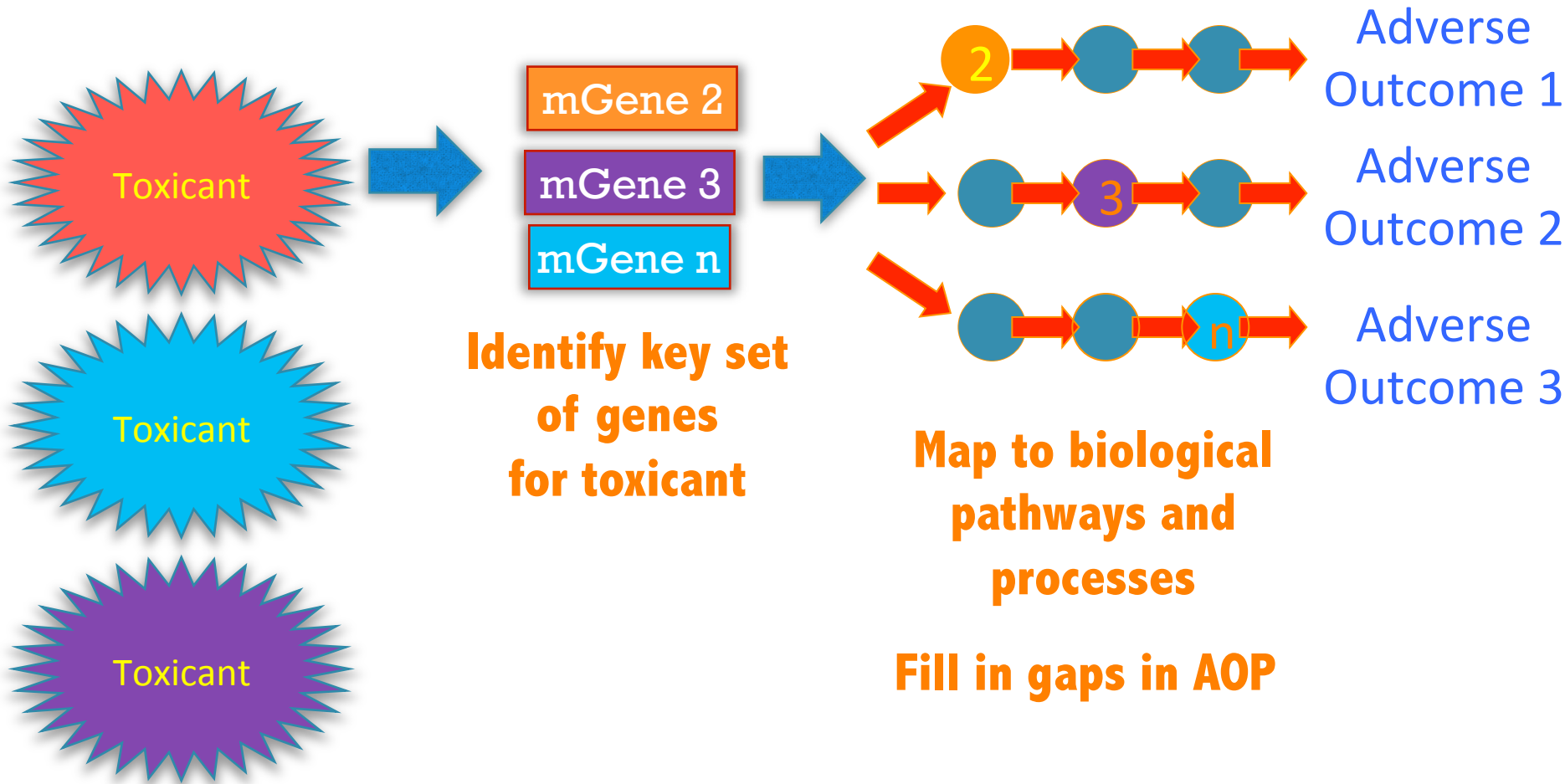


Protective effect of selenium ( $\text{Na}_2\text{SeO}_3$ ) pre-treatment on ATO cytotoxicity in K562 cells.

**The Seleno Bis(S-glutathionyl) Arsinium Ion Is Assembled in Erythrocyte Lysate**  
*Chemical Research in Toxicology* 2006 19 (4), 601-607



# Functional screening to identify toxicity mechanisms and adverse outcome pathways



# Infer mode of action by functional profiling



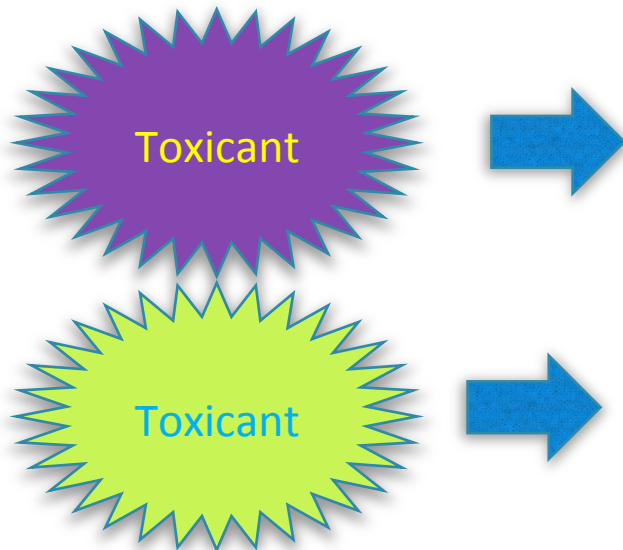
Shared key genes

Supports hypothesis of similar mode of action

Reference Toxicants  
with "known" MOA

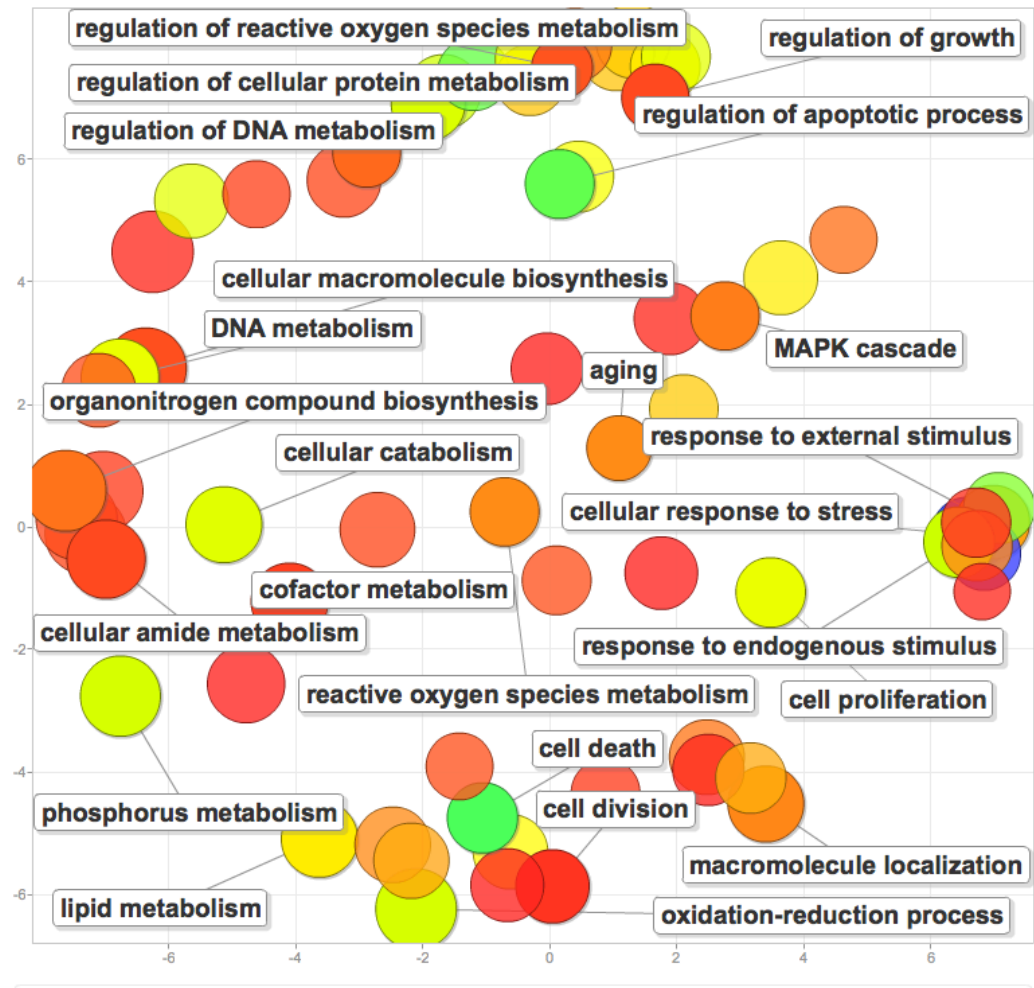
Functional  
Requirements

Unknown  
Toxicant



# ToxCRISPR – a focused CRISPR library for toxicology

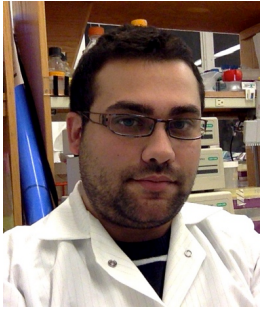
- Quan Lu, Luoping Zhang, Keith Houck
- 3675 Toxicology-related genes
  - 1500+ gene set prioritized by NIEHS/NTP/Tox21 program
  - 647 Environmental Genome Project (EGP) genes
  - Selected toxicant response-focused genes
- Subset CRISPR library for probing Mode of Action
  - Enable more rapid screening
  - Well annotated – understand function of most genes
  - Enable adverse outcome pathway determination



<http://revigo.irb.hr/revigo.jsp>

Revigo scatter plot of enriched GO terms

# Acknowledgments



**Amin Sobh**  
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**Smith**



**Quan Lu**  
**Harvard**



**Alessia**  
**Stornetta**

Univ. of Minnesota



**Silvia**  
**Balbo**



**Alex Loguinov**  
**Bioinformatics**



**Keith Houck**  
**EPA**



**Samuel Awuah**  
**Univ. of Kentucky**



# References

Start Here: <https://www.addgene.org/crispr/>

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8. Wang T, Wei JJ, Sabatini DM, Lander ES. Genetic screens in human cells using the CRISPR-Cas9 system. *Science*. 2014;343(6166):80-4. doi: 10.1126/science.1246981. PubMed PMID: 24336569; PMCID: 3972032.

# Abbreviations

- CRISPR -Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats
- ToxCRISPR – toxicology subset library
- AOP – Adverse outcome pathway
- **sgRNA- single guide RNA**
- **MOI – multiplicity of infection**
- **KO - knockout**