

# 1 **Centrosome heterogeneity in stem cells regulates cell diversity**

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11

## 12 **Abstract**

13 Stem cells are at the source of creating cellular diversity. Multiple mechanisms, including basic cell  
14 biological processes, regulate their fate. The centrosome is at the core of many stem cell functions and  
15 recent work highlights the association of distinct proteins at the centrosome in stem cell  
16 differentiation. As showcased by a novel centrosome protein regulating neural stem cell  
17 differentiation, it is timely to review the heterogeneity of the centrosome at protein and RNA levels  
18 and how this impacts their function in stem and progenitor cells. Together with evidence for  
19 heterogeneity of other organelles so far considered as similar between cells, we call for exploring the  
20 cell type-specific composition of organelles as a way to expand protein function in development with  
21 relevance to regenerative medicine.

22

## 23 **Timeliness to review centrosome heterogeneity in stem cell function**

24 Stem cells generate all organs in our body and, typically, their progeny, the transit-amplifying pro-  
25 genitors (TAPs), both amplify and diversify the cell types in a given tissue. Stem cells can generate this  
26 diversity indirectly by generating distinct TAPs that produce different progeny and allow their  
27 amplification, such as in the hematopoietic system. Stem cells also generate cell diversity directly (e.g.,  
28 by asymmetric cell division) in a temporal order giving rise to different cell types in a sequential manner  
29 [e.g., neural stem cells (NSCs)] generating different types of neurons first and then glia [1]. However,  
30 also in the nervous system, TAPs became more frequent and diverse in phylogeny (see Glossary),  
31 culminating in the large zone of basal progenitors (BPs) [the outer subventricular zone (SVZ)] in the  
32 human cerebral cortex (Box 1) [2]. Thus, the regulation of stem cell behaviors and the mechanisms  
33 governing the production of distinct progeny and diverse TAPs bring about organ size and cellular  
34 diversity.

35 Centrosomes have been considered a homogeneous organelle and mainly contextualized with cell  
36 division, migration, and polarization. Recent work showed that centrosomes contain different  
37 components that impact stem cell behavior. One such example is the protein AKNA, which is only in  
38 the differentiating subset of NSCs that leave the stem cell niche [3]. This is the case in interphase, that  
39 is, without effects on the mode of cell division, but with profound effects on the generation of TAPs,  
40 as will be discussed later. These new findings and new technology, such as single-cell approaches and  
41 more refined proteomics techniques allowing deeper insights into cellular and organellar  
42 heterogeneity, call for a short review on organellar heterogeneity in governing cell function. Here, we

43 will discuss how centrosome heterogeneity regulates stem cell behaviors, focusing largely on the  
44 nervous system because these processes are particularly well examined and understood in  
45 neurogenesis. This will bring us to elaborate on differences in protein composition at centrosomes  
46 affecting microtubule organizing center (MTOC) activity and stem cell differentiation before discussing  
47 centrosomal RNAs (cenRNAs) as a possible source of centrosome heterogeneity that could impact stem  
48 cells behaviors. As an outlook, we close by linking centrosome heterogeneity to disease etiology and  
49 call for consideration of organellar heterogeneity as a general principle to amplify and diversify protein  
50 function, highlighting the need for more comprehensive organellar proteomics in a cell type-specific  
51 manner.

52

### 53 **Centrosome differences in vertebrate (stem) cells**

54 The centrosome is made of a linked pair of centrioles surrounded by pericentriolar material (PCM) (Box  
55 2). Centrosomes nucleate and organize microtubules (MTs) in most not- terminally differentiated cells  
56 alone or with other organelles like the Golgi apparatus [4] and also act as the basal body of primary  
57 and motile cilia. The centriole's substructures require a specific set of proteins to fulfill their duties  
58 (Table 1) with both centrioles exhibiting structural and functional differences (discussed in [101]),  
59 which causes a first level of heterogeneity when cells divide.

60 Centrosomes are affected by mitotic kinases prior to and during cell division [5] and the path- ways are  
61 conserved in evolution. These commonalities may have led us to oversee potential cell and context-  
62 dependent differences and think of it as an organelle with homogeneous composition. When a cell  
63 initiates cell division, the PCM grows and increases MT nucleation, while centriole cohesion factors are  
64 disassembled to separate sister centrosomes. 'Mobile' distal appendage (DA) components regulating  
65 centriole docking to the cell membrane are also released before cell division to facilitate cilia  
66 disassembly [6]. As for DAs, subdistal appendage (SDA) 'mobile' factors are also disassembled during  
67 mitosis, as shown by the disappearance of proteins required for MT anchoring, such as AKNA, NINEIN,  
68 and CEP170, among others [3,7]. It is not clear why this is the case, but it may be to avoid having mitotic  
69 spindles with asymmetric MT organization. Of notice, mobile appendage components are farthest to  
70 the centriolar wall. DA and SDA 'core components' (e.g., CEP83 and ODF2, respectively) are detectable  
71 at mitotic centrosomes [6], are nearest to the centriole wall, and have scaffolding functions. Thus,  
72 fractions, but not the whole appendage structure, are removed from centrioles in mitosis. This plays a  
73 key role in rebuilding DAs and reforming a primary cilium soon after division in the cell inheriting the  
74 older centrosome [6,8]. In murine NSCs, the mother centrosome is kept more often by the future NSC,  
75 while the differentiating progeny inherits the daughter centriole [9]. Intriguingly, the future NSC forms  
76 a primary cilium sooner than its differentiating sister [8], eventually resulting in asymmetric ciliary  
77 signaling. Not completely removing SDAs in mitosis suggests that the cell inheriting the older  
78 centrosomes could organize centrosomal MTs sooner than its counterpart does, with implications in  
79 downstream cellular processes associated with MT organization and cell fate specification, like  
80 polarization, delamination, and migration. Asymmetrically dividing *Drosophila* neuroblasts get the  
81 daughter centriole-containing centrosome, which has intrinsically stronger MTOC activity [10]. The  
82 daughter centriole-containing centrosome is attached early to the neuroblasts' apical cell cortex,  
83 which could regulate asymmetric segregation of fate determinants and niche allocation (reviewed in  
84 [11]). It remains to be directly demonstrated if the asymmetric inheritance of centrosomes also leads  
85 to asymmetric MTOC activity. However, spindle size asymmetry is a key component of asymmetric cell  
86 division in mammalian NSCs, with the daughter cell originating from the larger spindle giving rise to a  
87 neuron, while the cell with smaller spindle will generate a progenitor [12]. Thus, asymmetry in mother  
88 and daughter centriole inheritance and spindle size are a first layer of centrosome heterogeneity in a  
89 cell's life, regulating its behavior and fate. However, recent work also unraveled differences between

90 self-renewing and differentiating NSCs in centrosome composition in interphase [3], underlining the  
91 fact that different (yet related) cells have different needs for this organelle. Notably, interphase  
92 centrosome composition can differ in proteins that mediate its MTOC activity, thereby influencing  
93 movement [3,13,14]. This essential function will be discussed in the following section.

94

### 95 **Centrosome MTOC activity affects stem cell differentiation**

96 Centrosomes participate in MT dynamics and organization in mammalian progenitor cells and are the  
97 main MTOCs in most stem cells [3,15–18]. Importantly, centrosomes also incorporate specific proteins  
98 to regulate their MT nucleating capacity according to cell type and cell cycle phase [3]. Changes in  
99 centrosome MTOC activity in different cells are well known (reviewed in [19,20]), including the  
100 decrease in the ability of the centrosome to organize and nucleate MTs during differentiation [3,15–  
101 18,21,22]. This is the case for gut and muscle progenitors as well as skin stem cells [16,18,22]. Notably,  
102 some epithelial-type stem cells, such as NSCs, first upregulate centrosomal MTOC activity to promote  
103 delamination and differentiation and only subsequently reduce it as they further mature [3]. However,  
104 the direct role of centrosomal MTOC activity per se in fate determination and the underlying  
105 mechanisms is just starting to be elucidated [3,14,16,17].

106 Inactivation of centrosomal MTOC activity is achieved mainly in three ways: (i) by downregulating the  
107 expression of centrosomal MT organizers (in the PCM or at SDAs) [3,16,23]; (ii) by relocalization of MT  
108 organizers and nucleators to alternative noncentrosomal MT organizing centers [14,17,18,24]; and (iii)  
109 by completely removing centrosomes as in oocytes [25]. Removing whole centrosomes is an extreme  
110 case, as most differentiated cells conserve them. Therefore, centrosomes must serve other functions  
111 besides organizing MTs, such as cilia formation. As reducing MTOC activity is a prominent functional  
112 change of centrosomes during differentiation, the question arises if this is solely an accompanying  
113 process or if it directly modulates stem cell fate. Cellular processes essential for stem and progenitor  
114 cell homeostasis such as motility, adhesion, division, and cell signaling (many essential signaling  
115 molecules bind MTs) are MT-dependent. Altering centrosomal MTOC activity could thus directly  
116 regulate stem cell fate and behaviors, but in most cases it is not clear how. We next review recent key  
117 discoveries in mammalian NSCs and encourage readers to consult these studies [15–17,26,27] for  
118 other stem and progenitor cell systems.

119 During embryonic neurogenesis, centrosomal MTOC activity controls NSC delamination and  
120 differentiation, BP polarity, and neuronal migration. Centrosomes of the epithelial-like NSCs are  
121 located in the apical process and nucleate MTs in apical and basal directions [3,28]. Apical MTs form a  
122 ring around the junctions of the cell soma or process to stabilize them [29,30]. Similar to other  
123 epithelial cells [24,31], some of these MTs may be re-anchored to adherens junction by CAMSAP-family  
124 of proteins [32] and their interactors. Perturbation of SDA and DA proteins affects the organization of  
125 apical MTs, leading to ectopic delamination and abnormal differentiation [3,9,14,30]. Thus,  
126 centrosomal MTOC activity is essential to maintain NSCs physically in their niche (the ventricular zone)  
127 and control cell fate. Impairment of centrosomal MTOC activity stiffens the apical membrane, thereby  
128 activating the YAP pathway, which induces cell proliferation and a higher number of BPs [30]. RHOA  
129 signaling is another candidate that is likely affected by MTOC activity by altering the activation status  
130 of MT-bound effectors such as GEF-H1 [33,34]. Indeed, similar to NINEIN loss-of-function, RHOA loss  
131 disrupt cell junctions and leads to NSC delamination [35,36]. Thus, centrosomal MTOC activity is  
132 present in NSCs and also maintains their NSC identity by retaining them in the niche and regulating  
133 specific signaling pathways, directly or indirectly.

134

135 MTs are organized in varicosities of the basal process of NSCs by the minus-end MT stabilizing proteins  
136 CAMSAP [32]. That means NSC centrosomes are not the only organizing center in these cells. However,  
137 this changes once NSCs decide to differentiate, as they increase centrosomal MTOC activity [29]. NSCs  
138 do so by upregulating the expression of AKNA, a new centrosomal protein, which strongly organizes  
139 MTs at SDAs [3]. Similar to other canonical MT anchoring factors, such as NINEIN and CEP170, AKNA  
140 also localizes at the proximal ends (PEs), where it could contribute to MT nucleation. Indeed, AKNA  
141 overexpression increases MT nucleation in vitro and in vivo by recruiting the nucleation machinery [3].  
142 The increase in AKNA protein levels leading to more potent centrosomal MTOC activity and MT  
143 nucleation induces cell junction weakening (e.g., by recruiting CAMSAP proteins to the centrosome),  
144 retraction of the apical processes, and delamination [3,29]. This shows that, besides maintaining NSC  
145 integrity, changes in centrosomal MTOC activity and MT nucleation also regulate early (possibly the  
146 first) steps of NSC differentiation. AKNA levels are highest in BPs, indicating that BPs have intense  
147 centrosomal MTOC activity and MT nucleation. This needs to be down-regulated for cells to repolarize  
148 and move to the cortical plate (CP), thereby regulating the duration that BPs spend in the SVZ [3]. As  
149 mentioned earlier, neurons inactivate centrosomes as they mature and reorganize MTs in  
150 noncentrosomal locations [21,23]. This seems to happen gradually, concomitantly to the  
151 downregulation of AKNA, as centrosomal MTOC is still required to a certain extent in migrating neurons  
152 to couple the nucleus to the centrosomes and allow nuclear translocation during migration (reviewed  
153 in [37,38]). Blocking centrosomal MTOC inactivation in neurons by keeping AKNA expression blocks  
154 BPs from leaving their niche [3]. Thus, as in NSCs, the rate of centrosomal MTOC activity controls BP  
155 and neuronal differentiation and behavior.

156

### 157 **Centrosome protein heterogeneity regulates MTOC activity in stem cells**

158 Not all centrosomes are equal, in particular regarding the protein composition. Initial proteomics  
159 studies of purified centrosomes established a defined set of core centrosomal proteins [39,40]. This  
160 pool of proteins expanded since researchers analyzed other types of cells and it seems clear that  
161 different cells can: (i) express different centrosome factors, or (ii) localize them to noncentrosomal  
162 locations, often to fulfill other roles. AKNA is one of many good examples [41–43], as it is highly  
163 expressed in lymphoid cells and neural progenitors, but not in fibroblasts (our own observation) or  
164 very lowly in epithelial cells [3]. Hence, it is paramount to investigate centrosomal proteins in the  
165 correct biological context to understand their cellular and molecular functions correctly.

166 In embryonic NSCs, the protein composition of SDAs can differ if they self-renew or differentiate. Self-  
167 renewing or proliferating NSCs decorate SDAs with NINEIN, and loss-of-function experiments indicate  
168 that MT anchoring at SDAs by NINEIN is necessary for stem cell maintenance [9,13,44]. In contrast,  
169 differentiating NSCs decorate SDAs with AKNA, and perturbation indicates that intense MT  
170 organization at SDAs drives stem cell delamination and differentiation [3]. Intense centrosomal MTOC  
171 activity is required to retract the apical process and reposition the centrosome towards nonapical  
172 locations [3]. Therefore, centrosomes with SDAs containing different proteins differ in their cellular  
173 function. NINEIN changes localization from centrosomes to MTs upon NSC differentiation via  
174 alternative splicing [14]. DCTN1/p150Glued is another SDA-associated protein that is alternatively  
175 spliced [14], which could also change its MT anchoring properties. These data suggest a model in which  
176 AKNA may take over the role of NINEIN in MT anchoring at SDAs in differentiating NSCs and BPs, while  
177 NINEIN coordinates the initial steps in gradually reorganizing MTs to noncentrosomal places in  
178 neurons.

179

180 Notably, the delamination mechanisms from an epithelial layer are not nervous system-specific, but  
181 also apply to other epithelial cells undergoing epithelial–mesenchymal transition (EMT). In these cells,  
182 AKNA localizes to the centrosome and recruits CAMSAP3 from cell junctions to the centrosome,  
183 thereby weakening the junctional complexes while promoting centrosomal MT nucleation and  
184 anchoring [3]. Reducing AKNA levels during EMT retains CAMSAP3 at junctional complexes and retains  
185 epithelial junctions. Thus, the cell type-specific composition of SDAs, with or without AKNA, potently  
186 influences centrosome functions and stem cell behavior. Notably, skin stem cells also delaminate, in  
187 this case from the basement membrane, to move towards suprabasal layers where they further  
188 differentiate [22,45]. However, the centrosome-related molecular mechanisms and regulators of this  
189 are just starting to be identified. Gut and muscle progenitor cells switch from centrosomal to  
190 noncentrosomal MT organization as they differentiate or mature [15,19]. However, these cells do not  
191 undergo a delamination process and the molecular regulators for this switch are also largely unknown.  
192 Therefore, changes in centrosomal MTOC activity happen in cell differentiation, even if delamination  
193 is not involved.

194 The expression of NINEIN and AKNA in NSCs is regulated by the transcription factors PAX6 [13,46] and  
195 SOX4 [47] (and our own observations), respectively. In PAX6 mutant NSCs, NINEIN expression is  
196 downregulated, while AKNA levels are elevated, and cells show precocious delamination due, in part,  
197 to aberrant cell adhesion at the apical surface. SOX4 promotes NSC differentiation to BPs [48]; knock-  
198 down of SOX4 reduces AKNA levels while overexpression increases them. Thus, stem cell- specific  
199 centrosomal proteins controlling MTOC activity are regulated at the expression level by context-  
200 dependent genetic programs and are not a passive differentiation effect.

201 The examples mentioned earlier in NSCs and other cells, such as epidermal, epithelial, and muscle  
202 stem/progenitor cells [15,16,18], highlight the key theme of the review, namely that the changes in  
203 centrosome protein composition occurring during differentiation are an active coordinated process  
204 required for controlling stem cell fates and behavior. Beyond protein specificity, there may be another  
205 layer of regulation and diversity at the RNA level, which we discuss next.

206

## 207 **RNA contribution to centrosomal functions and differences**

208 The presence of mRNA at or near centrosomes was observed in the mid-1960s [49,50]. First examples  
209 of specific mRNAs and mRNA-binding proteins were detected two to three decades ago [51–53] and  
210 since then have been validated in several model organisms, including immortalized mammalian cell  
211 lines. However, in primary stem cells this phenomenon has just started to be explored [54].  
212 Nevertheless, high-throughput identification of cenRNAs and their partners, as well as the  
213 characterization of their dynamics in living cells at a quantitative level, remained a challenge. This has  
214 been overcome, at least for individual RNAs, thanks to single-molecule fluorescent in situ hy-  
215 bridization, transgenesis, live imaging, and machine learning for automatic quantification of cellular  
216 features [55,56], and has allowed investigation of the role of specific RNAs in more detail. Recent work  
217 showed that centrosomal mRNAs are moved to the centrosome by active polysome transport

218 [57] and may be translated at centrosomes or while moving towards them. Notably, distribution anal-  
219 yses of RNAs have revealed that centrosomes contain highly specific RNAs (e.g., amongst 602 genes  
220 encoding for centrosomal proteins screened only six had mRNAs concentrated at the centrosome in  
221 HeLa cells) and in low copy numbers [56–58]. This high degree of specificity [57] implies precise  
222 functional roles and argues against a purely structural role contributing to the formation of the  
223 membraneless centrosome compartment aided by RNA concentration [56,59].

224

225 Indeed, despite their low quantities, they are essential for the proper function of the organelle, as  
226 demonstrated by RNA digestion, RNA interference, or translation inhibition [54,60]. The mRNAs so far  
227 detected at centrosomes mostly encode centrosome- and MT-associated proteins with scaffolding  
228 roles (e.g., Plp/Pcnt) [56,61], MT organizing activity (e.g., Ninein, Cep350) [54,57], or MT nucleating  
229 and polymerizing functions (e.g., Aspm, Cyclin-b, Cen/CDR2/CDR2L) [54–56,61,62]. Importantly, the  
230 centrosome localization of Cen RNA has been shown to be functionally relevant, as mitotic aberrations  
231 occur in its absence [56]. Also, ribosomal RNAs have been observed at centrosomes and may help  
232 maintain spindle integrity and MT nucleation in coordination with RNA-binding proteins like RAE1,  
233 MASKIN, FUBP2, and FMRP [56,60,63]. Importantly, RNAs are found in interphase centrosomes or  
234 mitotic spindles, indicating specific roles during the cell cycle. For example, Pcnt mRNA accumulates  
235 and is translated in early mitotic spindles to enhance centrosome maturation [61], while Ninein mRNA  
236 is found at centrosomes in interphase, when SDAs are built to anchor MTs [54]. It has been observed  
237 that RNAs are loaded on polysomes or kept inactive in P-bodies, exon-junction protein complexes, and  
238 RNA export-factors until they reach the organelle and are translated there [54,60,64]. Yet, since there is  
239 no comprehensive RNA-seq data from the interphase centrosome, we do not yet know how diverse the  
240 RNA at the centrosome may be in different cell types and which other RNAs beyond those encoding for  
241 centrosomal proteins may be at the centrosome.

242 Could RNA contribute to specializing or diversifying centrosomes? One possibility could be enriching  
243 transcripts around one centriole or part of this to set it apart from the other centriole. This has been  
244 observed by Ryder and colleagues in fruit fly embryos [56] for Centrocortin, the *Drosophila*  
245 melanogaster homolog of mammalian CDR2 and CDR2L proteins [65], which is biased to the mother  
246 centrosome. Notably, the mother centrosome is richer in PCM and MT-nucleators PCNT/PLP and  
247 CDK5RAP2/Cnn [66,67]. This suggests that the mother centriole could nucleate more MTs during or  
248 after mitosis in these cells and, as in neuroblasts, could segregate molecules asymmetrically to the  
249 daughter cells. Another possibility would be delivering RNAs with specific modifications in the  
250 polyadenylation format or the splice pattern [51,54,57,62]. First, this could help mark and sort proteins  
251 from a bigger pool to be delivered precisely to the centrosome, such as cycling proteins or kinases.  
252 Second, differentially spliced transcripts could promote loading centrosomes with variations of a  
253 protein once translated there to regulate its activity. This could be the case for NINEIN, DCNT1, AKAP9,  
254 DYNC1I2, KIF2A in NSCs and neurons [14] and the brain-specific MT-associated protein kinase SAD-A  
255 (see 'Note added in proof' section). The centrosomes containing one or the other splice variant may  
256 thus behave differently. Finally, proteins translated at centrosomes may not be subject to the same  
257 post-transcriptional modification as in the endoplasmic reticulum and Golgi. As with splice variants, a  
258 different post-translational modification could also affect protein function and, in turn, centrosomal  
259 behavior in different cell types.

260 Sequencing cenRNAs in different (stem) cell types will substantially help understand the exciting and  
261 emerging field of RNA localization and function at the centrosomes. Hassine and colleagues have taken  
262 the first steps by performing transcriptomic analysis of purified mitotic spindles in one cell line,  
263 showing that thousands of RNAs of different classes are enriched there and STAUFEN1 regulates the  
264 localization of many of them [68]. It is worth noting that using crude preparations of purified  
265 centrosomes requires a large number of cells and can be contaminated with noncentrosomal proteins  
266 and nucleic acids, making it difficult to adapt this approach for stem cells, in particular those with low  
267 cell numbers, which calls for other methods. These could be APEX-mediated biotinylation, which allows  
268 the monitoring of RNAs at many organellar sites [69], or pulling down RNA-binding proteins in cellular  
269 fractions to at least minimize contaminations from other sites. Possibly, a combination of  
270 ultrastructural sections combined with sequencing approaches may also be a promising approach [70].

271

## 272 **Concluding remarks**

273 Here, we discussed centrosome heterogeneity as a regulator of stem cell function during mitosis and  
274 in interphase. This is particularly relevant as these processes affect cellular and functional diversity in  
275 ontogeny and phylogeny. Protein and RNA composition of centrosomes can differ between cell cycle  
276 stages without major changes in cell identity, as in amplifying NSCs early in development and in  
277 commonly used cell lines. However, currently, we lack information in any primary stem and progenitor  
278 cells (with the exception of [16]). The aforementioned considerations should motivate comprehensive  
279 studies of the centrosome proteome and transcriptome in primary (stem) cells, as we now learn about  
280 the key roles of differentially regulated centrosomal factors, to then combine with functional assays  
281 using cell type-specific fluorescent reporters [17].

282 Learning about organelle heterogeneity is important to answer relevant questions in developmental  
283 biology and to comprehend diseases better. Metastasis formation is one of the greatest challenges in  
284 treating cancer and the centrosome and cytoskeleton play key roles (see Outstanding questions). Their  
285 distinct composition in different cancers may shed some light on their metastasis mechanisms.  
286 Furthermore, localization of a ubiquitous protein in a specific organelle in one tissue or cell type may  
287 help prioritize gene variants found in patients with a specific disease phenotype. Some ubiquitous  
288 splicing proteins are found specifically at the centrosome [71] in NSCs (A. O'Neill et al.), allowing  
289 prioritization of mutations in patients with neuronal ectopias, that derive from cells failing to  
290 delaminate and/or migrate towards their correct positions. Given the insights into delamination  
291 mechanisms and specific types of migration in the developing cortex, one may envision manipulating  
292 MT and centrosome dynamics to counteract those defects. It is encouraging that at least in one  
293 pioneering example, ectopic neurons could be instructed to resume migration by doublecortin  
294 overexpression [72]. Excitingly, such approaches could now also be tested in human models of  
295 heterotopia [73], possibly using small molecules already used in therapies in humans (e.g., taxanes,  
296 eribulin, and vinca alkaloids), which, at specific doses, can fine tune MT dynamics. Thus, exploring and  
297 understanding centrosome heterogeneity allows targeted manipulation towards novel, highly specific,  
298 therapeutic approaches.

299 Beyond the centrosome, could organellar heterogeneity be a general principle to multiply and specify  
300 functions of proteins to generate large cellular diversity in ontogeny and phylogeny?

301 The mitochondria of glia and neurons differ by about a fifth of their proteome in vivo and in vitro  
302 [74,75] and this accounts for differences in fatty acid metabolism, calcium buffering, and protection  
303 against damage by reactive oxygen species directly affecting cell fate (e.g., in glia-to-neuron  
304 reprogramming [75] and neurogenesis [76,77]). Recent work showed that self-renewing NSCs have  
305 high levels of the nuclear factor Trnp1 [78] that regulates the size and function of nucleoli, another  
306 organelle with functions in most cells. This promotes proliferation, self-renewal, and protein synthesis  
307 in self-renewing NSCs [79] as opposed to differentiating NSCs that lose Trnp1 [78], and ultimately  
308 affects brain size and folding [78,80]. Also the cytoskeleton shows enormous protein diversity. MTs,  
309 for exam- ple, are made of alpha and beta tubulin dimers, for which there are up to nine isoforms each  
310 in humans. The combination of isoforms, which is highly cell type-specific, together with different post-  
311 translational modifications, potently regulates MT dynamics [81], which in turn influences  
312 differentiation, migration, and delamination of stem and progenitor cells [3,17,26,82–84]. These  
313 considerations call for unbiased proteome analysis of organelles in a cell type-specific manner, for  
314 example, using fractionation of the proteome, enriching different organelles in distinct fractions [85].  
315 This is now possible due to much- increased sensitivity in mass spectrometry and the unprecedented  
316 access to the entire diversity of human cell types from induced pluripotent stem cells. Thus, the future  
317 looks bright for cell biology to unravel the cell type-specific functions of organelles beyond their typical  
318 roles.

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- 520

521 **Highlights**

522 Near ubiquitous organelles such as centrosomes differ structurally and functionally in mammalian  
523 stem cells and their progeny, expanding the concept of universal cellular functions.

524

525 Cell type-specific spatiotemporal localization of proteins and RNAs control heterogeneity of  
526 centrosomes and other organelles.

527

528 Differential centrosomal microtubule organizing center (MTOC) activity controls stem cell behavior,  
529 adding a layer of regulation to diversify cell types during ontogeny and phylogeny.

530

531 Understanding cell type-specific composition and function of organelles (e.g., the centrosome) opens  
532 new approaches to target specific cells in disease, such as metastasis or neurodevelopmental  
533 disorders.

534

535 **Glossary**

536 Cerebral cortex: the dorsal region of the telencephalon that expanded particularly in mammalian  
537 phylogeny. It can be smooth (e.g., in mice) or folded/ gyrified (e.g., in ferrets and human).

538

539 Microtubules (MTs): protein polymers of alpha- and beta-tubulin that serve as a platform over which  
540 many complexes move within the cell. MTs also separate chromosomes during cell division. MT  
541 dynamics refers, broadly speaking, to the growing and shrinking behavior of MTs.

542

543 Neuronal ectopia: foci of misplaced neurons within the cerebral cortex. The ectopia arise during brain  
544 development and are partly caused by mutations in genes controlling cell delamination and migration.

545

546 Nucleoli: the largest substructure of the nucleus, where, among other processes, ribosomal RNA  
547 synthesis takes place.

548

549 Ontogeny: the developmental history of an organism.

550

551 Organelles: specialized subunits within a cell. They can be spatially segregated by membranes or by  
552 different liquid phases. Examples are the mitochondria, the Golgi apparatus, the endoplasmic  
553 reticulum, centrosomes, phagosomes, etc.

554

555 Phylogeny: the evolutionary history of an organism and the relationship among or within species.

556

557 Polysome: a group of ribosomes bound to a molecule of mRNA, which then can cotranslate  
558 polypeptides out of the same molecule in tandem.

559

560 Proteome: the entire set of proteins present in a cell or tissue. The proteome of an organelle indicates  
561 correspondingly all proteins in that organelle.

562

563 Radial glia cells: the neural stem cells of the developing brain and spinal cord. They are a specialized  
564 type of epithelial cells.

565

566 Subventricular zone (SVZ): the region in the developing brain directly above the ventricular zone  
567 (where RGCs reside) and below the intermediate zone and cortical plate (where neurons are located).  
568 The SVZ is the niche of basal progenitors.

569

570 Taxanes, eribulin, and vinca alkaloids: antimitotic drugs usually used in chemotherapeutic approaches  
571 to eliminate cancer cells. Taxanes like paclitaxel/Taxol and docetaxel/Taxotere prevent MT  
572 depolymerization by stabilizing GDP-bound tubulin in MTs. Eribulin/Halaven blocks MT polymerization  
573 by binding sites at the plus ends of existing microtubules. Vinca alkaloids, such as vincristine und  
574 vinblastine, prevent MT polymerization by binding and blocking tubulin heterodimers.

575

576 **Box 1. Neural progenitors define the architecture of the forebrain.**

577 The basic principles governing the formation of the mammalian forebrain, particularly the cerebral  
578 cortex, are conserved in phylogeny [2]. Radial glial cells (RGCs), the neural stem cells, line the  
579 ventricular zone (VZ) and directly contact the ventricle through their apical process containing the  
580 primary cilium and the centrosome. RGCs are bound to each other via cell junctions at apical processes,  
581 thereby forming a polarized epithelium. RGCs divide in the VZ to self-renew or give rise to  
582 differentiating progeny during the neurogenic period. This progeny can be a neuron that will  
583 immediately move out of the VZ to the cortical plate (CP) where they mature, using the basal process  
584 of the RGC as a guide and support. Alternatively, RGCs give rise to intermediate transient-amplifying  
585 basal progenitors (BPs), which will sit directly above the VZ to make one or more rounds of division,  
586 thereby forming a new layer termed the subventricular zone (SVZ). The multipolar BPs then transform  
587 into bipolar neurons that leave the SVZ and head towards the CP to differentiate further and mature.  
588 The repolarization process is essential to control the time that BPs spend within the SVZ [3,92], which  
589 supports cell expansion and, ultimately, neuronal output. At the peak of cortical neurogenesis, most  
590 neurons are produced via BPs. In species with folded brains, such as primates, these become even  
591 more frequent and diverse, culminating in additional and larger SVZs (inner and outer SVZ).

592 Moreover, in this period, at least in rodents, nine in ten RGC divisions are symmetric (i.e., giving rise to  
593 two RGCs). Hours later, one or both daughter cells (now called differentiating RGCs) delaminate  
594 towards the SVZ and transform into BPs [93]. Daughter cells that do not differentiate but divide are  
595 known as proliferating RGCs. Proliferating and differentiating RGCs can be identified by the expression  
596 of BTG2/TIS21 [94] and, as more recently shown, by the expression of centrosomal proteins and the  
597 dynamics of microtubules [3].

598 **Box 2. Can SDAs contribute to MT nucleation and growth?**

599 SDAs look like conical-shaped stems ending in a rounded head in electron microscopy photographs,  
600 which some scientists think may contain MT nucleators. Gamma-tubulin has been shown convincingly  
601 at SDAs at least by five studies [88,95–98]. Schweizer and colleagues show MTs emanating from the  
602 distal part of centrioles in MT regrowth assays (see Figure 1B arrowheads in [95]). Furthermore, SLAIN2  
603 interacts with core SDA components NINEIN, ODF2, CEP170, CEP128, CNTRL, and EB1/MAPRE1 [99].  
604 EB1 is an SDA protein but also a MT plus-end tracking (+TIP) factor like SLAIN2 involved in MT growth  
605 and stabilization via interactions with the MT polymerase ch-TOG/CKAP5, cytoplasmic linker proteins  
606 (CLIPs), and CLIP-associated proteins (CLASPs). Thus, SDAs could potentially attract MT nucleation and  
607 growth machineries.

608

609 **Table 1. Centrosome associated proteins discussed in this review.**

610 Abbreviations: DA, distal appendages; DC, daughter centriole; MC, mother centriole; MTs,  
 611 microtubules; PCM, pericentriolar material; SDA, subdistal appendages.

| Protein       | Localization   | Functions   |
|---------------|----------------|---|
| CDK5RAP2      | PCM            | PCM scaffold protein, centrosomal $\gamma$ -tubulin localization, MT nucleation         |
| CEP152        | PCM            | PCM scaffold protein  |
| CEP192        | PCM            | PCM scaffold protein  |
| NEDD1         | PCM            | MT organization/anchoring and nucleation, centrosomal $\gamma$ -tubulin localization    |
| PCNT          | PCM            | PCM scaffold protein  |
| TUBG          | PCM            | MT nucleation, MT minus-end capping   |
| CEP135        | PE             | Centriole-centriole cohesion  |
| C-NAP1        | PE             | Centriole-centriole cohesion  |
| CEP68         | Linker fibers  | Centriole-centriole cohesion  |
| CEP250        | Linker fibers  | Centriole-centriole cohesion  |
| ROOTLETIN     | Linker fibers  | Centriole-centriole cohesion  |
| CEP83         | DA             | Dock MC to cell membrane, role in primary cilia formation                               |
| CEP89         | DA             | Role in primary cilia formation   |
| CEP164        | DA             | Dock MC to cell membrane, role in primary cilia formation                               |
| LRRC45        | DA + PE        | Role in primary cilia formation, centriole-centriole cohesion                           |
| SCLT1         | DA             | Role in primary cilia formation   |
| AKNA          | SDA + PE + MTs | MT organization/anchoring, nucleation, polymerization                                   |
| CCDC68        | SDA+ PE        | MT organization/anchoring   |
| CCDC120       | SDA + PE       | MT organization/anchoring   |
| CEP128        | SDA            | MT organization/anchoring   |
| CEP170        | SDA, MTs       | MT organization/anchoring   |
| CEP350/CAP350 | SDA and DC     | MT organization/anchoring   |
| CNTRL         | SDA            | MT organization/anchoring   |
| DCTN1         | SDA + PE + MTs | MT organization/anchoring   |
| NINEIN        | SDA + PE + MTs | MT organization/anchoring and nucleation  |
| ODF2          | SDA            | MT organization/anchoring and nucleation and role in primary cilia formation            |
| EB1           | SDA + MTs      | MT organization/anchoring, role in primary cilia formation, MT growth and stabilization |
| CEP120        | DC + PCM       | Regulation of PCM assembly  |
| CTROB         | DC             | Regulation of centriole duplication   |
| CAMSAP        | MTs + PCM      | MT minus-end capping, MT organization/anchoring and nucleation                          |

612

613

614 **Outstanding questions**

615 Can we modify the composition of organelles to control their behavior and thereby instruct (stem) cells  
616 to produce a desired cell type for use e.g., in regenerative therapies?

617

618 Which factors (e.g., proteins, RNAs) regulate organellar heterogeneity, in which quantities, and at what  
619 time points?

620

621 Are there other yet-uncovered processes related to or coordinated by RNAs taking place at  
622 centrosomes, such as RNA metabolism, RNA inhibition, assembly of ribonucleoproteins, or even  
623 splicing itself?

624

625 How large is centrosome diversity in cancer and metastasis?

626

627 **Note added in proof**

628 While this review was in proof stage, A. O'Neill et al. (Science, in press) showed a high degree of  
629 centrosome proteome differences between cell types and during neural stem cell to neuron  
630 differentiation with a striking abundance of distinct RNA-binding proteins with relevance to  
631 neurodevelopmental disease.

632

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637

638 **Declaration of interests**

639 The authors declare no competing interests.