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3D organotypic HepaRG cultures as in vitro models for acute and repeated dose toxicity studies

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#### 2 **3D** organotypic HepaRG cultures as in vitro models for acute and repeated

- 3 dose toxicity studies
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#### 9 Abstract

10 Predictive in vitro models alternative to in vivo animal will have a significant impact 11 in toxicology. Conventional 2D models do not reflect the complexity of a 3D organ 12 resulting in discrepancies between experimental in vitro data and in vivo. Using 3D 13 HepaRG organotypic cultures we tested four drugs (aflatoxin B1, amiodarone, 14 valproic acid and chlorpromazine) for toxic effects and compared the results with 15 HepaRG 2D cultures and HepG2 cells. We show that 3D HepaRG cultures are more sensitive than the other tested cultures to aflatoxin B1 which is only toxic upon 16 metabolic activation in the liver. We show that CYP3A4 activity is higher in the 3D 17 18 HepaRG cultures compared to the 2D HepaRG cultures. Furthermore, we 19 investigated repeated dose toxicity of chlorpromazine and assessed its effects on 20 glucose and lactate metabolism. Sub-toxic concentrations of chlorpromazine 21 induced significant metabolic changes in both 2D and 3D HepaRG cultures upon 22 acute and repeated dose (3 doses) exposure. In summary, our data support the 23 hypothesis that 3D cell culture models better mimic the in vivo tissue and improve 24 cellular functionality. The HepaRG 3D organotypic cultures represent a high 25 throughput system for drug toxicity screening. This system is therefore a promising 26 tool in preclinical testing of human relevance which can allow reducing and/or 27 replacing animal testing for drug adverse effects.

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