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Title: Validation of the 3D Skin Comet assay using full thickness skin models: transferability and reproducibility

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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

Validation of the 3D Skin Comet assay using full thickness skin models: transferability and reproducibility.

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Highlights

- The 3D Skin Comet assay is a new in vitro genotoxicity assay for the dermal exposure route.
- Data of an ongoing validation exercise are presented.
- A high predictivity was obtained, i.e. 100% in 4 laboratories, 70% in the fifth.
- In parallel, a good intra- and inter- laboratory reproducibility was observed.
- The assay is intended to follow up on positive findings from standard in vitro assays.

Abstract

Recently revised OECD Testing Guidelines highlight the importance of considering the first site-ofcontact when investigating genotoxic hazard. Thus far, only in vivo approaches are available to address the dermal route of exposure. The 3D Skin Comet and Reconstructed Skin Micronucleus (RSMN) assays intend to close this gap in the *in vitro* genotoxicity toolbox by investigating DNA damage after topical application. This represents the most relevant route of exposure for a variety of compounds found in household products, cosmetics, and industrial chemicals.

The comet assay methodology is able to detect both chromosomal damage and DNA lesions that may give rise to gene mutations, thereby complementing the RSMN which detects only chromosomal

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