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### ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

#### Eckerle et al.

Progesterone controls microtubule growth

# Progesterone modulates microtubule dynamics and epiboly progression during zebrafish gastrulation

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#### ABSTRACT

Control of microtubule dynamics is crucial for cell migration. We analyzed regulation of microtubule network dynamics in the zebrafish yolk cell during epiboly, the earliest coordinated gastrulation movement. We labeled microtubules with EMTB-3GFP and EB3-mCherry to visualize and measure microtubule dynamics by TIRF microscopy live imaging. Yolk cell microtubules dynamics is temporally modulated during epiboly progression. We used maternal zygotic Pou5f3 mutant (MZ*spg*) embryos, which develop strong distortions of microtubule network organization and epiboly retardation, to investigate genetic control of microtubule dynamics. In MZ*spg* embryos, microtubule plus-end growth tracks move slower and are less straight compared to wild-type. MZ*spg* embryos have altered steroidogenic enzyme expression, resulting in increased pregnenolone and reduced progesterone levels. We show that progesterone positively affects microtubule plus-end growth and track straightness. Progesterone may thus act as a non-cell-autonomous regulator of microtubule dynamics across the large yolk cell, and may adjust differing demands on microtubule dynamics and stability during initiation and progression phases of epiboly. *Abbreviations* 

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