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4 **Discovery of a Novel Polymer Enabling Defined Human Pluripotent Stem Cell**
5 **Expansion and Multi-Lineage Differentiation**

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50 Human pluripotent stem cells (hPSCs) have been proposed for various regenerative medicine,
51 tissue engineering and drug discovery applications due to their ability to self-renew and be
52 differentiated into numerous lineages representative of the three embryonic germ layers^[1-4].
53 However, for the potential of hPSCs to be realized, bioprocessing-scale culture systems are
54 required that can manufacture clinically relevant numbers of cells in an economical and
55 reproducible manner. For example, to replace damaged tissue after a heart attack, it has been
56 estimated that more than 1 billion cells would be needed for each patient^[5]. To facilitate the
57 transition from research to industrial scale production of adherent cell types, the ideal culture
58 system should comprise of both defined medium and substrate that can be readily-used with
59 existing cultureware from which a *stem cell factory* can be constructed¹². To meet this need,
60 defined media formulations are available commercially for the expansion of hPSCs, including
61 the widely-used StemPro^[6] and mTeSR1^[7]. These have improved reproducibility in hPSC
62 culture by avoiding mouse embryonic fibroblast-conditioned medium (MEF-CM), the use of
63 which remains commonplace and exhibits high batch variability^[6-8]. Xenogenic components
64 in the culture system create a barrier to clinical translation as they face greater regulatory
65 hurdles. Nonetheless, there is still widespread use of the poorly-defined mouse sarcoma
66 preparation, Matrigel™, as a cell attachment surface^[9]. Therefore, the challenge is to find
67 new materials from which to produce defined growth substrates for hPSCs that function with
68 commercial defined media.

69 Polymeric materials show considerable promise as culture substrates due to their ease of
70 manufacture from inexpensive, readily-available monomers and their industrial scalability^[10].
71 High throughput screening methods have been used to accelerate the search for new polymers
72 for hPSC culture since unbiased screening can be carried out with current knowledge of
73 hPSC-substrate interactions^[11-14]. Synthetic substrates identified using polymer microarrays
74 have been shown to support the clonal growth of hESCs^[15]. However, these materials require
75 a preconditioning step with vitronectin, and scale up from the 300µm diameter micro array
76 spots was not achieved. Despite these efforts, until now an effective polymeric growth
77 substrate on which both hPSC expansion and subsequent differentiation can be induced has
78 yet to be developed^[10].

79 In this report, we have achieved hPSC expansion on a xeno-free polymer substrate in defined,
80 commercially available culture media (StemPro and mTeSR1) and multi lineage
81 differentiation on the same polymer. A range of candidate polymers were identified using a
82 high throughput screening microarray methodology developed to sample an unprecedented
83 chemical space (141 monomers, polymerized alone and mixed to form 909 unique polymers,
84 tested in 4356 individual assays). This allowed us to identify a novel copolymer substrate that
85 achieves pluripotent hPSC expansion without the need for protein preconditioning. A simple
86 procedure has been developed to coat standard cultureware, exemplified for the commonly
87 used 6-well plate format. The same polymer was shown to support hPSC differentiation into
88 representatives of the three germ layers, namely cardiomyocytes, hepatocyte-like cells and
89 neural progenitors.

90

91 A multi-generation high throughput polymer microarray screening methodology
92 incorporating high throughput surface characterization (HT-SC)^[16] was used to identify

93 materials that can support HUES7 (hESC) cell attachment and pluripotency in the widely
94 used commercial defined, serum- and feeder-free medium, StemPro. The first-generation
95 array, consisting of 141 monomers of wide chemical diversity, was printed using metal pins
96 to transfer the liquid monomers onto poly(2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate) (polyHEMA) coated
97 glass slides containing 6 replicates of each homopolymer (**Figure 1a** - monomer structures
98 presented in Figure S1 and Table S1).^[17] Polymer microarray spots of diameters ranging from
99 250-400 μm were formed by UV photopolymerization using a modification of methods
100 described previously ^[18,19] Arrays were preconditioned for 1 hour in StemPro medium prior
101 to seeding with 1×10^6 HUES7 hESCs and culturing for 24 hours. Samples were fixed, stained
102 for OCT4 expression (an indicator of pluripotency) and images acquired using an automated
103 fluorescence microscope. Images were automatically processed to quantify cell response to
104 each polymer spot (using CellProfiler software). This initial screen was used to identify 24
105 'hit' materials on the basis of their ability to support high HUES7 hESC attachment across
106 six replicates, whilst maintaining OCT4 expression (>90%) (Figure 1b and Figure 1c - 'hit'
107 monomer structures presented in Figure S3).

108 To explore the effect of copolymerization the 24 hit monomers were mixed pairwise in a
109 combinatorial manner (70/30 v/v mixtures) to form a second-generation array design
110 comprising 576 unique materials in triplicate (Figure 1d). Quantifying OCT4 positive HUES7
111 cell attachment after 24 hours on the second-generation array in the same way as before
112 identified a refined list of nine monomers that displayed high hPSC attachment as
113 homopolymers and copolymers across the array (up to 100 cells/per spot) (Figure 1e - 'hit'
114 monomer structures presented in Figure S3). Synergistic combinations of monomer were
115 noted providing greater hPSC attachment than their homopolymer constituents. A third-
116 generation array was used to explore these hit monomers as copolymers at varied
117 composition ratios to determine whether substrates could be improved further for HUES7 cell

118 attachment and maintenance of OCT4 expression during the first 24 hours of culture. The 9
119 lead monomers were mixed combinatorially, utilizing additional ratios (10, 20, 30 and 40%
120 v/v) to produce a third-generation array of 297 materials (Figure 1f). To make the assay more
121 stringent in order to identify the most robust candidate polymers, the cell seeding density was
122 reduced. This led to a significant reduction in cell attachment across the array, with only 90
123 copolymers showing significant cell adhesion.

124 The best performing polymers in the third-generation array all contained monomer 5 (N-(4-
125 Hydroxyphenyl)methacrylamide) (HPMA), which was able to support HUES7 adhesion both
126 as a homopolymer and as a copolymer (up to 56 ± 7 cells/per spot) (Figure 1g). Inclusion of
127 HPMA as a minor component (10 – 40% v/v) with monomers that performed poorly as
128 homopolymers dramatically increased the performance of the resulting copolymers. For
129 example, monomer 26 (Lauryl methacrylate – M26) supported no attachment of hPSCs
130 across the array as a homopolymer. However, inclusion of HPMA as a minor (10% v/v) or
131 major (90% v/v) component with M26 increased hPSC attachment (Figure 1g). This “hit”,
132 monomer supported the highest HUES7 cell attachment as a homopolymer within the third-
133 generation array. The increase in cell attachment by addition of other monomers was
134 determined to be too small to justify taking forward any of the copolymer formulations and
135 polyHPMA was defined as the lead candidate to be taken forward for hPSC expansion
136 studies.

137 High throughput surface characterization (HT-SC) was performed to determine the actual
138 chemistry of the surface rather than assuming it to be the same as the bulk monomer
139 composition. This has previously been shown to be important when copolymers are formed
140 on slide, since surface segregation may result in unexpected surface chemistries and printing
141 errors might lead to misidentification of hit materials^[20,21]. Surface chemical analyses
142 including time-of-flight secondary-ion mass spectrometry (ToF-SIMS), X-ray photoelectron

143 spectroscopy (XPS) and water contact angle (WCA) measurements were acquired from all
144 polymers. No correlation between cell attachment and surface chemical analysis could be
145 found for the first- or second-generation arrays (Figure S4 and Figure S5). This is consistent
146 with previous observations for stem cell-polymer interactions^[15,21-23].

147 To investigate the excellent cell attachment performance of HPMA-containing copolymers in
148 the third-generation array, the intensity of the ToF-SIMS ions characteristic to HPMA
149 ($C_7H_4NO_2^-$) and M26 ($C_9H_{11}O_2^+$) were compared in the spectra of the homopolymers and
150 copolymers (Figure S6). The intensity of the characteristic $C_7H_4NO_2^-$ secondary ion is highest
151 in the polyHPMA homopolymer and decreased dramatically upon inclusion of M26. This can
152 be explained by surface enrichment of M26, possibly in the monomer mixture prior to UV
153 photopolymerization. The intensity of $C_9H_{11}O_2^+$ secondary ion characteristic of M26 is
154 consistent with this explanation. To quantify the amount of HPMA at the surface these
155 materials, XPS analysis was employed using the elemental composition using nitrogen as a
156 marker for polyHPMA (Figure 1h). The relative amount of nitrogen in polyHPMA
157 homopolymer ([N]=4at%) is reduced by half upon inclusion of 10% M26 (1.9%). The
158 amount of nitrogen in the XPS spectra follows a similar trend to the $C_7H_4NO_2^-$ ion in the ToF-
159 SIMS spectra for these materials confirming that M26 is enriched at the surface. Thus,
160 despite there only being relatively low levels of polyHPMA at the surface of all copolymers
161 than the uniform distribution expected of statistical copolymers, such small amounts are all
162 that is required to encourage cell attachment, illustrated schematically for poly(HPMA-co-
163 P26) (90:10% v/v) in the third-generation microarray (Figure 1i).

164 Focussing on the lead monomer, HPMA, scaled up materials of polyHPMA in 6-well plates
165 were manufactured (see methods) and analyzed by ToF-SIMS to determine if the surface
166 chemistry was consistent with polyHPMA in microarray spots. ToF-SIMS peaks
167 characteristic of HPMA were observed at $m/z = 108$ and 109 ($C_6H_6NO^+$ and $C_6H_7O^+$

168 respectively) from both microarray spots and from coatings scaled up to coat 6-well plates
169 (Figure 1j). In the third-generation polymer microarray, we observed additional peaks at m/z
170 = 45 and 113 ($C_2H_5O^+$ and $C_6H_9O_2^+$ respectively), which are characteristic of polyHEMA
171 (Figure 2c). This indicated that the underlying polyHEMA support material had intermixed
172 with the deposited monomers to be present at the surface of these spots of this array. Given
173 the high level of hPSC attachment on the polyHPMA spots in the third-generation polymer
174 microarray (Figure 1g), we reasoned that polyHEMA might be a beneficial additive and
175 explored this as a co-monomer in scale up.

176 For wide applicability, a synthetic culture substrate needs to be optically transparent, cost-
177 effective, compatible with common TCPS cultureware and be scaled up to coat cultureware
178 that could support the expansion of cells at an industrial scale. Previously, promising
179 materials for hPSC culture identified on polymer microarrays have been restricted to use as
180 arrayed spots or small growth areas such as coated coverslips or slides incompatible with
181 scalable cell manufacture^[12,13,15]. To demonstrate scale up from the microarray spots we
182 developed a method to coat commonly used polystyrene cultureware with HPMA.

183 Scale up to well plates of polyHPMA using *in situ* UV polymerization methods were
184 unsuccessful because of difficulty removing unpolymerised residual monomer (as detected by
185 ToF-SIMS) from the thick polymer coatings, which caused cell death (Figure S7 and
186 Supplementary Methods). We therefore employed a prepolymerization approach where
187 solution of polyHPMA was presynthesized and subsequently coated onto plasma etched
188 tissue culture polystyrene (PE-TCPS) cultureware (see methods and Figure S8). Using a
189 prepolymerized solution to coat cultureware is convenient as large quantities of polymer can
190 be synthesized in one batch that can be applied in a simple coating procedure, which can be
191 performed routinely by hand or by industrial automation using existing TCPS manufacturing
192 procedures that involves plasma activation^[24]. The substrate formed after evaporation of an

193 ethanolic polyHPMA solution was transparent, however cracking was observed after solvent
194 evaporation that developed on storage in cell culture incubators (Figure S9). Given that low
195 levels of HEMA were detected in the polyHPMA micro arrays (Figure 1k) we chose this
196 monomer to copolymerize with HPMA to prevent cracking.

197 The poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) copolymer was synthesized and characterized in the same
198 manner as polyHPMA (Figure S10 and Supplementary methods). Coatings consisting of
199 poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) gave transparent wells which did not exhibit cracks after extended
200 immersion in culture media (1 month) (Figure S11). ToF-SIMS analysis confirmed that
201 HPMA and HEMA moieties were present at the surface of these materials (Figure 2d). To
202 provide a quantitative elemental and functional characterization of the surface chemistry,
203 XPS analysis was performed (Figure 2e and Figure S12). XPS analysis of polyHPMA from
204 the array format revealed a lower elemental nitrogen content ($[N] = 4.0 \text{ at\%}$) compared to
205 scaled up polyHPMA and poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) (8.7% and 7.7% respectively). These
206 measurements indicate the presence of the polyHEMA from the underlying substrate
207 diffusing to the surface of the arrayed material during the printing process and supports the
208 ToF-SIMS analysis that discovered increased HEMA moieties and decreased HPMA
209 moieties compared to the spectra of polyHPMA and poly(HPMA-co-HEMA). The
210 prepolymerized material can also be seen to have approximately 10 mol% HEMA at the
211 surface. The high quality transparent coatings and presence of HPMA and HEMA chemical
212 moieties at the surface meant that poly(HPMA-co-HEMA)-coated cultureware provided a
213 suitable substrate to evaluate hPSC expansion.

214 Adopting the conditions identified above to fabricate poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) coated 6-well
215 plates permitted attachment of hPSCs and their proliferation to confluence. We next sought to
216 evaluate maintenance of pluripotency to determine whether hPSCs could conform to accepted
217 criteria, including serial propagation for at least 5 passages whilst retaining karyotype

218 stability and expression of pluripotency markers, as well as differentiation to representatives
219 of the three embryonic germ layers (mesoderm, endoderm and ectoderm). We evaluated
220 whether substrate preconditioning with culture medium or ECM proteins was a necessary
221 step. Comparison of hPSCs seeded with or without preconditioning showed similar levels of
222 attachment and distribution after 24 hours in StemPro. Similarly, medium exchanges led to
223 expansion to confluency by 72 hours in both conditions (**Figure 2a**). Therefore,
224 preconditioning was omitted during subsequent passages.

225 Propagation through 5 serial passages with accutase on the poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) substrate
226 showed a consistent population doubling index of 81.3 +/- 8.5 hours (Figure 2b), retention of
227 46X,Y karyotype by G-banding of 30 cells (Figure S13) and expression of OCT4, TRA181
228 and SSEA4 in >93% cells, as measured by quantitative immunofluorescence using an
229 automated plate reader (Operetta®) and high-content image analysis software (CellProfiler)
230 (Figure 2c, Figure 2d and Figure 2e).

231 We sought to test whether the poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) substrate could support pluripotent
232 expansion of hESC and hiPSC lines in different commercial culture media. Thus, cultures of
233 the HUES7 hESC line and BT1 hiPSC line were initiated in StemPro and another commonly-
234 used defined medium, mTeSR1^[7]. In each case, consistent population doubling times were
235 observed through 5 serial passages in the absence of any preconditioning step (Figure 2b).
236 There was also retention of stable karyotype (46,XY for HUES7; 46,XX for BT1) (Figure
237 S13), and pluripotent markers of OCT4, TRA181 and SSEA4 by immunofluorescence (all
238 >88%) (Figure 2c and Figure 2d). Poly(HPMA-co-HEMA)-coated cultureware can be stored
239 for at least 6 months at ambient conditions and can be used off-the-shelf in the same way as
240 general TCPS cultureware (Figure S14).

241 Since coupling hPSC expansion with differentiation would increase the utility of an
242 expansion substrate, we sought to evaluate whether the formation of representatives of each
243 of the three germ layers during human development could be induced by directing
244 differentiation on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA).

245 We directed formation of cardiomyocytes (mesoderm) by culturing two-dimensional
246 monolayers of hPSCs on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) with modulators of TGF- β superfamily
247 (activin A and BMP4)^[25] and WNT (KY02111^[26] and XAV393^[27]) pathways. In the same
248 time course as hPSCs differentiated on Matrigel (12 days), beating clusters of
249 cardiomyocytes formed (see Supplementary Video 1), which were shown by immunostaining
250 to be positive for α -actinin and cardiac troponin-T staining (**Figure 3a** and **Figure 3b**).
251 Functional analysis of the differentiated cells by patch clamp showed they had
252 electrophysiological characteristics similar to those previously published for hPSC-
253 cardiomyocytes^[28], including a mean action potential duration (APD) of 417+102 ms (**Figure**
254 **4c**). Based on 90% / 50% repolarization values (APD90/APD50), these cultures contained
255 ventricular (APD90/APD50 of ≤ 1.3), atrial (≥ 1.8) and pacemaker (1.4-1.7) cardiomyocyte
256 subtypes^[29] (**Figure 3d**).

257 Directed hepatocyte differentiation (endoderm) was achieved via an 18 day protocol^[30] using
258 activin-A, Wnt3a, FGF, HGF and oncostatin-M to modulate signaling cascades.
259 Differentiated cell cultures on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA)-coated substrate expressed albumin,
260 AFP, HNF4A and A1AT and secreted AFP with comparable efficiency to Matrigel-coated
261 controls (**Figure 3e**, **Figure 3f** and **Figure 3g**).

262 Finally, we induced hPSC differentiation to neural progenitors, which arise from the
263 ectoderm germ layer. Dual SMAD-inhibition^[31,32] with dorsomorphin and SB431542 for
264 seven days induced the formation of neural rosette-like colonies on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA)

265 substrates (Figure 3h, Figure 3i and Figure 3j). Neural progenitors produced on Matrigel and
266 poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) displayed similar levels of PAX6 and SOX1 markers (PAX6: 78% ±
267 4% and 74% ± 8%; SOX1: 68% ± 11% and 69% ± 18% respectively).

268 In order to determine a mechanism for the hPSC adhesion to poly(HPMA-co-HEMA),
269 antibody blocking assays were performed for key hPSC integrins. Blocking of the integrins
270 β_1 and $\alpha_v\beta_5$ resulted in a significant reduction (>30%) in hPSC attachment to poly(HPMA-
271 co-HEMA) when cultured in StemPro media (**Figure 4a**, Figure 4b and Figure 4c). Although
272 hPSCs have been shown to express numerous integrins, including those of the α_1 , α_2 , α_3 , α_5 ,
273 α_6 , α_7 , α_v and α_{11} , and β_1 , β_2 , β_3 and β_5 families^[9,33-36], only α_2 , α_5 , α_6 , α_v and β_1 integrins
274 have been shown to play a significant role in hPSCs adhesion to Matrigel coated culture
275 surfaces^[37,38], and only α_v integrins in hPSC adhesion to polymer culture surfaces without
276 matrix coatings^[15]. This is therefore the first report demonstrating a role for β_1 as well as α_v
277 integrins in hPSCs adhesion to polymer culture surfaces without matrix coatings. Although
278 individually $\alpha_v\beta_5$ binds vitronectin sites and β_1 binds fibronectin and laminin sites^[37], it is
279 likely that these two integrins interact in a complex manner to promote hPSC adhesion to
280 sites present in the poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) chemistry or to proteins (most likely albumin)
281 adsorbed from the medium (Figure 4d).

282 In summary, we have used a high throughput combinatorial approach to identify and develop
283 a defined, synthetic polymeric substrate that supports hPSC pluripotency and expansion
284 through serial passage in commercial defined media without the need for protein pre-
285 adsorption. This was achieved for both hESCs and hiPSCs. Additionally, directed
286 differentiation was achieved on the hit polymer, poly(HPMA-co-HEMA), to representatives
287 of each of the three germ layers, including cardiomyocytes (mesoderm), hepatocyte-like cells
288 (endoderm) and neuro-ectoderm (ectoderm). Thus, poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) fulfills all the
289 current culture requirements for the clinical use of stem cells within regenerative medicine

290 and can be scaled up by coating onto cultureware to be used *off-the-shelf*, providing a cost-
291 effective alternative to commercially available hPSC expansion substrates. The expansion of
292 hPSCs and production of terminally differentiated cell types without the influence of
293 undefined and xenogenic matrix protein coatings provides a robust platform for the industrial
294 scale production of hPSCs for regenerative medicine applications and therapies.

295

296 **Experimental**

297 *Preparation of polymers:* polyHPMA and poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) were prepared via a
298 thermally initiated free radical polymerization in an ethanolic solution with the addition of
299 2,2'-azobis(2-methylpropionitrile) (AIBN – 1% w/w to HPMA). The isolated and dried
300 polymers were dissolved in ethanol (5% w/v) and added into TCPS 6-well to cover the base
301 of each well plate directly after oxygen plasma activation. The solvent was allowed to
302 evaporate under ambient conditions for 24 hours prior to hPSC culture. Complete detailed
303 methodology of polymer synthesis, characterization and all cell culture protocols can be
304 found in the supporting information.

305

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420 **Figure 1.** Multi-generation microarray screening strategy and high throughput surface
421 characterization. (a) A first-generation array of wide chemically diversity consisting of 141
422 monomers was used to screen for hPSC attachment. (b) Materials were ranked by hPSC
423 attachment (six replicates) after 24 hours in culture whereupon cells were quantified by DAPI
424 and OCT-4 staining. (c) Phase (left) and fluorescence (right) images of an example ‘hit’
425 material from the first-generation. Scale bar = 250 μm . Fluorescence image is a combined
426 image of both DAPI (ex = 410 nm, em = 470 nm) and OCT4 (ex = 530 nm, em = 630 nm).
427 (d) 24 ‘hit’ materials were mixed pairwise in a combinatorial manner to produce a second-
428 generation of 576 unique materials. (e) These materials were assessed and ranked in a similar
429 way to the first-generation array. (f) A third-generation array was printed from 9 common
430 monomers that formed the hit copolymers in the second-generation array but were mixed in
431 further ratios to form an array of 297 materials. (g) Materials were ranked to identify lead
432 compositions for scale up. (h) XPS analysis of polyHPMA, P26 and copolymers thereof to
433 determine the actual surface chemistry. Line is drawn to guide the eye. (i) Proposed surface
434 chemistry of poly(HPMA-co-P26) (90:10% v/v) identified from ToF-SIMS and XPS analysis
435 of third-generation microarray. (j) ToF-SIMS and (k) XPS analysis of polyHPMA in the

436 third-generation array revealed polyHEMA at the surface which was incorporated as a co-
437 monomer for scaled up polymers to assess hPSC expansion.

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440 **Figure 2.** hPSC expansion through serial passage. (a) Phase images showing that hESCs and
441 hiPSCs were able to attach to poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) substrates at 24h in and expand to
442 confluence and compaction at 72h. (b) Growth curves for hESCs and hiPSCs showing
443 consistent cell population doubling (CPD) times on (□) poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) versus (○)
444 Matrigel controls for 5 passages for varied media conditions. (c) Positive
445 immunofluorescence for pluripotent markers OCT4, TRA181 and SSEA4 following serial
446 passaging of hPSCs on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA). Scale bar = 250 μm. (d) hPSCs on
447 poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) maintain comparable pluripotent marker expression levels versus
448 Matrigel controls, with OCT4, TRA181 and SSEA4 expression >88% (e) Example of
449 automated high content image analysis displaying DAPI (white line) and OCT4 (yellow line)
450 positive HUES7 cells on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) in mTeSR1 medium. Scale bars = 100 μm
451 (left image) and 10 μm (right image).

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454 **Figure 3.** Three germ layer directed differentiation of hPSCs on polymeric substrate. (a)
455 Mesoderm differentiation on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) induced positive α -actinin and cardiac
456 troponin-T expression. Scale bar = 50 μ m (b) Quantification of positive cardiac marker
457 expression on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) and matrigel displayed similar levels. (c)
458 Electrophysiology of the spontaneously beating cardiomyocytes on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA)
459 showed ventricular (APD90/APD50 of ≤ 1.3), atrial (≥ 1.8) and pacemaker (1.4 - 1.7)
460 subtypes of cardiomyocytes, (d) with a mean action potential duration (APD) of 417 ± 102
461 ms (e) Endoderm differentiation on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) induced hepatic marker
462 expression (Scale bar = 100 μ m) (f) in hepatocyte-like cells with active AFP secretion (g)
463 Quantification of positive hepatocyte marker expression on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) and
464 matrigel displayed similar levels. (h) Ectoderm differentiation on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA)
465 induced neurogenesis marker expression (Scale bar = 100 μ m) (i) Quantification of positive
466 neuroectoderm marker expression on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) and Matrigel displayed similar
467 levels. (j) PAX6 positive neural rosette formation on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) following
468 ectoderm differentiation (Scale bar = 1 mm).

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473 **Figure 4.** Integrin blocking of hESCs on poly(HPMA-co-HEMA). hESCs adhered to
474 poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) actively express the integrins (a) β_1 and (b) $\alpha_v\beta_5$. Scale bar = 50 μm
475 (c) Following the blocking of the integrins β_1 and $\alpha_v\beta_5$ there is a significant reduction in
476 hPSC adhesion to poly(HPMA-co-HEMA) in StemPro media. (d) Schematic of proposed
477 hPSC adhesion mechanism through integrin binding to adsorbed media proteins on
478 poly(HPMA-co-HEMA).

The table of contents entry should be 50–60 words long, and the first phrase should be bold. The entry should be written in the present tense and impersonal style.

A scalable and cost-effective synthetic polymer substrate that supports robust expansion and subsequent multi-lineage differentiation of hPSCs with defined commercial media is presented. This substrate can be applied to common cultureware and used *off-the-shelf* after long-term storage under ambient conditions. β_1 and $\alpha_v\beta_1$ integrin interactions with proteins adsorbed from media to the surface is critical in achieving cell attachment to this polymer.

Keyword

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Discovery of a Novel Polymer Enabling Defined Human Pluripotent Stem Cell Expansion and Multi-Lineage Differentiation

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