

1 **Vimentin filaments interact with the mitotic cortex allowing**

2 **normal cell division**

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25 The vimentin network displays remarkable plasticity to support basic cellular functions. Here,
26 we show that in several cell types vimentin filaments redistribute to the cell periphery during
27 mitosis, forming a robust scaffold interwoven with cortical actin and affecting the mitotic
28 cortex properties. Importantly, the intrinsically disordered tail domain of vimentin is essential
29 for this redistribution, which allows normal mitotic progression. A tailless vimentin mutant
30 forms curly bundles, which remain entangled with dividing chromosomes leading to mitotic
31 catastrophes or asymmetric partitions. Serial deletions of the tail domain induce increasing
32 impairments of cortical association and mitosis progression. Disruption of actin, but not of
33 microtubules, mimics the impact of tail deletion. Pathophysiological stimuli, including HIV-
34 protease and lipoxidation, induce similar alterations. Interestingly, filament integrity is
35 dispensable for cortical association, which also occurs in vimentin particles. These results
36 unveil novel implications of vimentin dynamics in cell division by means of its interplay with
37 the mitotic cortex.

38

39 Introduction

40 The vimentin filament network provides architectural support for cells and contributes to the
41 positioning and function of cellular organelles¹⁻³. Vimentin plays multiple roles in cell
42 regulation by interacting with signaling proteins, adhesion molecules^{4,5}, chaperones^{6,7} and
43 other cytoskeletal elements^{8,9}. The vimentin monomer consists of 466 residues organized in a
44 central rod of predominantly α -helical structure flanked by intrinsically disordered N- and C-
45 terminal domains (Fig. 1A). Vimentin polymerization is believed to progress from parallel
46 dimers to antiparallel tetramers, eight of which associate laterally in “unit length filaments”
47 that engage head to tail to form filaments. The vimentin network is highly dynamic and rapidly
48 responds to heat-shock, oxidative and electrophilic stresses, ATP and divalent cation
49 availability¹⁰⁻¹², playing a key role in cell adaptation.

50 Posttranslational modifications are critical for fast and versatile network remodeling¹³.
51 Phosphorylation of specific residues regulates vimentin assembly and involvement in migration
52 and invasion^{14,15}. In mitosis, vimentin phosphorylation is regulated in a spatio-temporal
53 manner, leading to filament disassembly in certain cell types^{16,17}. Besides, oxidative and
54 electrophilic modifications of vimentin’s single cysteine drastically alter network organization,
55 highlighting its crucial role for filament architecture^{12,18}.

56 Vimentin is also the substrate for several proteases, the resulting fragments performing
57 additional cellular roles. Calpains cleave vimentin N-terminus impairing polymerization¹⁹, and
58 calpain-truncated soluble vimentin associates with phosphorylated-ERK playing a role in axonal
59 regeneration²⁰. Conversely, caspase-generated amino-terminal fragments exert pro-apoptotic
60 effects²¹. Vimentin C-terminus also contains sites for viral protease cleavage. Moloney mouse
61 sarcoma virus infection produces fragments lacking all or part of the C-terminal tail²², whereas
62 the HIV-type 1 protease reportedly cleaves vimentin after L423²³. Curiously, chemicals like

63 gambogic acid promote vimentin cleavage in cells by yet unidentified proteases, rendering
64 products missing sequences before S51 and/or after R424 ²⁴.

65 The role of the tail domain in vimentin organization is still incompletely understood. Purified
66 tailless vimentin (vimentin(1-411)) polymerizes in vitro into normal filaments ²⁵⁻²⁷, presenting
67 oligomerization and sedimentation behaviors highly similar to those of full-length vimentin ²⁸,
68 although higher heterogeneity and wider average diameter ²⁹ have also been noted. In turn,
69 the vimentin tail has been suggested to undergo conformational changes during filament
70 elongation and assembly in vitro ³⁰, and to modulate interactions with divalent cations ^{25,31}.

71 In cells, vimentin(1-411) mutants form either normal extended arrays or filaments with a
72 tendency to collapse, depending on the experimental system ^{26,27}. Additionally, the tail domain
73 has been proposed to act as a cytoplasmic retention signal ³² and contribute to filament
74 stability ²⁶. However, the mechanism(s) by which C-terminally truncated vimentin forms induce
75 cellular perturbations has not been fully elucidated.

76 Vimentin is an exquisite sensor for oxidative and electrophilic stresses ¹², and presents sites for
77 modification by electrophilic lipids (lipoxidation) across the whole monomer ³³. While exploring
78 these modifications, we have observed that C-terminal truncated mutants, particularly
79 vimentin(1-411) and the reported product of HIV-protease cleavage ²³, vimentin(1-423), exert
80 deleterious cellular effects, with formation of juxtannuclear bundles and aberrant mitosis. A
81 deeper analysis showed that, if not disassembled, full-length vimentin redistributed to the cell
82 periphery in mitosis, in close interplay with the mitotic cortex, leaving ample space for dividing
83 chromosomes. Strikingly, vimentin(1-411) did not reach the cell periphery and snared the
84 mitotic apparatus. These observations identify vimentin as a novel element of the mitotic
85 cortex in a tail domain-dependent manner.

86

87 **Results**

88 **1. Vimentin tail is necessary for appropriate network distribution in resting and mitotic cells.**

89 To elucidate the roles of the vimentin tail domain in filament assembly and stress responses,
90 we employed several strategies to express wild type (wt) or vimentin(1-411) in vimentin-
91 positive or -deficient cells (Fig. 1B). Vimentin-deficient adrenocarcinoma SW13/cl.2 or breast
92 carcinoma MCF7 cells were co-transfected with RFP//vimentin bicistronic plasmids plus GFP-
93 vimentin vectors for network visualization in live cells. Whereas vimentin wt formed an
94 extended network, the organization of vimentin(1-411) was drastically altered, forming curly
95 juxtannuclear filament bundles (Fig. 1C). Importantly, transfecting vimentin(1-411) in excess
96 over wt, impaired network extension and induced its condensation in coiled bundles (Fig. 1D).
97 Moreover, in cells expressing endogenous vimentin, overexpression of vimentin(1-411) but not
98 vimentin wt, markedly disrupted network distribution, causing filament retraction from the
99 cell periphery and perinuclear condensation (quantitated in Fig. 1E). Therefore, although
100 vimentin(1-411) polymerization is not impeded, its cellular organization is severely altered.
101 Moreover, vimentin(1-411) exerts deleterious effects on the organization of full-length
102 vimentin, which depend on the proportion of both forms.

103 Detailed observation of nuclear structures showed that while vimentin wt filaments extended
104 outwards from the nuclear periphery, vimentin(1-411) thick bundles displayed extensions into
105 the area covered by DAPI staining (Fig. 1F), appearing in deep invaginations of the nuclear
106 envelope or distributing between nuclear lobules (Fig. 1G and Supplementary Fig. 1). This
107 drove us to assess vimentin(1-411) behavior in mitotic cells. In SW13/cl.2 cells vimentin wt did
108 not disassemble in mitosis but remained as robust filaments with a marked peripheral
109 distribution (Fig. 1H). In sharp contrast, vimentin(1-411) remained tightly packed in coiled
110 bundles, frequently in close proximity of condensed chromosomes or forming loops encircling
111 them (Fig. 1H and Supplementary Fig. 1).

112 **2. Expression of tailless vimentin leads to aberrant mitosis**

113 The striking pattern of vimentin(1-411) prompted us to monitor mitotic progression. Time-
114 lapse experiments showed that cells expressing vimentin wt divided regularly, with an interval
115 between cell rounding and daughter cell separation of 1-2 h (Fig. 2A and Supplementary videos
116 1 and 2), generally yielding homogeneous vimentin distribution. Conversely, cells harboring
117 vimentin(1-411) bundles suffered diverse perturbations. Some cells attempted to divide for
118 several hours and died during or shortly after mitosis, undergoing extensive membrane
119 blebbing, typical of mitotic catastrophe (Fig. 2A, middle panels, and Supplementary video 3).
120 Alternatively, some cells successfully completed division through the asymmetric partitioning
121 of vimentin, implying retention of vimentin(1-411) in one daughter cell and “rejuvenation” of
122 the other by initial elimination of vimentin coils (Fig. 2A, lower panels, and Supplementary
123 video 4). Thus, the tail domain is necessary for normal vimentin dynamics during mitosis
124 (schematized in Fig. 2B).

125 **3. Full-length vimentin but not vimentin(1-411) localizes to the mitotic cortex in an actin-** 126 **dependent manner.**

127 Vimentin filaments maintain a close crosstalk with microtubules and microfilaments, which
128 influence vimentin distribution. The interplay of vimentin wt or (1-411) with tubulin and actin
129 was analyzed by disruption of these structures with various agents (Fig. 3A). Vimentin wt
130 partially co-localized with tubulin in interphase, whereas in mitosis, vimentin underwent
131 peripheral redistribution and tubulin concentrated at the mitotic spindle (Fig. 3B). Vimentin(1-
132 411) bundles were largely unconnected to microtubules in resting cells, but remained adjacent
133 to the mitotic spindle during cell division, frequently interfering with the position of
134 chromosomes or microtubules (Fig. 3B). Acute microtubule disruption with nocodazole
135 completely blocked the formation of the mitotic spindle and caused misorientation of

136 chromosomes, without altering the peripheral distribution of vimentin wt in mitosis or the
137 presence of vimentin(1-411) bundles (Fig. 3B).

138 Vimentin wt shows little coincidence with filamentous actin (f-actin) in interphase (Fig. 3C). In
139 mitosis, f-actin accumulates at the cell periphery forming the actomyosin cortex, a stiff
140 structure that allows spindle formation and orientation and maintains the cells spherical shape
141 ^{34,35}. Interestingly, peripherally distributed vimentin appeared to line the internal surface of the
142 actomyosin cortex, partially overlapping with actin (Fig. 3C, fluorescence intensity profiles).
143 Conversely, vimentin(1-411) did not follow the actin pattern under any condition (Fig. 3C).
144 Importantly, vimentin cortical association was not a mere consequence of cell rounding, since
145 newly-plated round cells showed vimentin perinuclear distribution, clearly unrelated to actin
146 (Supplementary Fig. 2).

147 Although vimentin and actin show a reciprocal regulation at several cellular structures in
148 resting cells ^{36,37}, their interplay in mitosis has not been explored. Disruption of actin
149 polymerization with cytochalasin B (Fig. 3C) B elicited a patchy f-actin distribution without
150 severely affecting vimentin wt in resting cells. In mitotic cells, vimentin appeared in bundles
151 entangled with dividing chromosomes, resembling vimentin(1-411), which was not further
152 altered by cytochalasin B. Latrunculin A markedly decreased f-actin, leading to scattered
153 aggregates (Fig. 3E). Loss of f-actin in mitosis correlated with vimentin bundling and
154 intertwining with chromosomes. Interestingly, treatment with C3 toxin to inhibit Rho proteins,
155 which are important for actomyosin cortex assembly^{38,39}, resulted in a less homogeneous
156 mitotic cortex and compromised vimentin peripheral distribution. Lastly, jaspalkinolide ⁴⁰
157 elicited actin aggregates co-localizing with vimentin filaments in resting cells, and partially
158 disrupted cortical association of vimentin in mitosis (Fig. 3E). In non-dividing cells, the myosin II
159 ATPase inhibitor blebbistatin ^{41,42} induced a spikier actin pattern and intense shrinking of cell
160 margins, where vimentin was condensed. In mitotic cells, the actin cortex was more irregular

161 and vimentin was partially dislodged from the cell periphery (Fig. 3E). These results support an
162 important role of f-actin and mitotic cortex integrity in the tail-dependent mitotic
163 redistribution of vimentin.

164 **4. Cortical localization of vimentin occurs in several cell types and is altered under** 165 **pathophysiological conditions**

166 Next, we explored the association of vimentin with the mitotic cortex in several cell types. In
167 MCF7 cells, transfected vimentin showed signs of disassembly in mitosis and limited cortical
168 association (Fig. 4A). In contrast, in astrocytoma and primary endothelial cells filamentous
169 structures of endogenous vimentin adopted a peripheral distribution, close to the actin cortex
170 (Fig. 4A). Primary human fibroblasts showed a rim of cortical vimentin together with loose
171 vimentin bundles that did not interfere with chromosomes (Fig. 4A and Supplementary Fig. 3).
172 Therefore, cortical distribution of vimentin in mitosis is cell-type dependent.

173 Importantly, filaments of glial fibrillary acidic protein (GFAP), another type III intermediate
174 filament protein, also adopted a peripheral distribution in mitotic astrocytoma cells, whereas
175 desmin showed a predominantly diffuse cytoplasmic staining in mitotic C2C12 myoblasts (Fig.
176 4B).

177 We then assessed the distribution of vimentin filaments in the presence of pathophysiological
178 agents known to cause vimentin “collapse”. The inflammatory lipid mediators 4-
179 hydroxynonenal and prostaglandin A₁ induced vimentin juxtannuclear condensation in
180 interphase cells, as previously observed¹². Moreover, they significantly dislodged vimentin
181 from the mitotic actomyosin cortex (Fig. 4C), according to the central/total vimentin
182 fluorescence ratio (Fig. 4C). Additionally, expression of a HIV-protease construct (GFP-PR) was
183 associated with collapse of vimentin filaments into curly juxtannuclear bundles (Fig. 4D),
184 reminiscent of the vimentin(1-411) distribution. Ritonavir, a reversible HIV-protease inhibitor,
185 blocked vimentin collapse, whereas its withdrawal allowed fast vimentin condensation,

186 indicating a role for protease activity (Fig. 4D). HIV-protease-induced vimentin accumulations
187 remained in mitosis and concentrated close to the dividing chromosomes (Fig. 4E). These
188 results show that various pathophysiological agents cause anomalous vimentin distribution in
189 mitosis, hampering cortical localization.

190 **5. Vimentin is intimately intertwined with actin at the mitotic cortex.**

191 Analysis of the interaction of vimentin with the actomyosin cortex by superresolution
192 microscopy (STED) showed vimentin filaments next to the cortex, intermingling with actin at
193 some points (Fig. 5A, upper two rows) or running between two actin layers (Fig. 5A, lower two
194 rows). Single section analysis of actin-vimentin co-localization showed a closer connection at
195 certain locations along the mitotic cortex, suggesting the existence of docking or penetration
196 sites of vimentin in this structure. Three-dimensional reconstructions revealed a robust basket-
197 shaped framework of vimentin filaments of diverse orientations (Fig. 5B). Actin formed a
198 hollow sphere constituted by elongated patches or bundles mostly oriented perpendicularly to
199 the support surface, as illustrated in the 3D-reconstruction of the cell bottom half (Fig. 5C and
200 Supplementary video 5). Interestingly, this reconstruction evidences points of vimentin
201 filament protrusion through the actin cortex (Fig. 5C).

202 **6. Vimentin-actin interplay in mitotic cells**

203 Deeper insight into the vimentin-actin interaction at the mitotic cortex was obtained by the
204 analyses schematized in Figure 6A. First, we obtained 3D-reconstructions of the cortex of
205 vimentin-positive and -negative cells, which confirmed that some cells displayed ample
206 segments of vimentin at the external surface of the cortex, interwoven with actin structures
207 (Fig. 6B and Supplementary videos 6 and 7). Next, 2D-map projections from the image stacks
208 were prepared for global visualization and quantitation of the cortex⁴³ (Fig. 6B). Fluorescence
209 intensity profiles of these projections illustrated the alternate distribution of actin and
210 vimentin signals at some points. 2D-maps from vimentin-negative cells presented higher

211 standard deviation of f-actin pixel brightness, indicating wider variations in f-actin distribution
212 (Fig. 6B). Additionally, we analyzed orthogonal projections of vimentin-positive and -negative
213 mitotic cells (Fig. 6C). Notably, vimentin filaments could be detected both at the top and
214 bottom of vimentin-positive cells (Fig. 6C, arrowheads), with a particular enrichment of robust
215 lattices at the basal layer, next to the substrate. These structures were obviously absent from
216 non-transfected cells, but also from cells expressing vimentin(1-411), which was frequently
217 retained close to the inner actin “ring-like” structure (Fig. 6C, inset), clearly detectable in some
218 cells, which has been involved in spindle positioning⁴⁴. Additionally, the basal vimentin lattice
219 was associated with a decreased f-actin signal and lower standard deviation of pixel brightness
220 at this location, suggestive of less polymerized actin structures (Fig. 6C, graph). Altogether,
221 these results indicate that vimentin may be an important player at the mitotic cortex, exerting
222 a measurable impact on its characteristics that could influence cell division dynamics.

223 **7. Impact of serial C-terminal deletions on vimentin organization and mitotic peripheral** 224 **distribution.**

225 Structural determinants allowing vimentin to reach the cell periphery in mitosis were explored
226 by analyzing the distribution of mutants bearing several C-terminal deletions (Fig. 7A).
227 Vimentin(1-423), mimicking the reported HIV-protease cleavage product^{23,45,46}, formed curly
228 bundles in the nuclear vicinity (Fig. 7B), similar to vimentin(1-411). Vimentin(1-423) coiled
229 bundles mainly remained near the condensed chromosomes in mitosis, either interfering with
230 the mitotic spindle or located at one of the poles (Fig. 7C). Often, multi-nucleated cells
231 containing coiled vimentin(1-423), and in some cases DNA, in the space between nuclei were
232 found (Supplementary Fig. 1), suggesting cytokinetic defects. Time-lapse monitoring of cells
233 expressing vimentin(1-423) confirmed marked mitotic alterations, including vimentin
234 asymmetric partitioning, delayed mitosis and cell death (Fig. 7D and Supplementary videos 8

235 and 9). Moreover, vimentin(1-423), was often retained at the cytoplasmic f-actin ring and did
236 not reach cortical actin (Fig. 7E).

237 Vimentin(1-448) (Fig. 7A), yielded a heterogeneous pattern with both extended filaments and
238 robust bundles or accumulations (Fig. 7F). These persisted in mitotic cells, sometimes
239 appearing at basal planes or at the cell periphery (Fig. 7G). Mitotic cells suffered two main
240 fates: approximately 40% exhibited delayed separation ending in cell death, indicative of
241 cytokinetic failure, whereas 60% completed mitosis through vimentin asymmetric partition
242 (Fig. 7H and supplementary videos 10 and 11). Nevertheless, some peripheral filamentous
243 vimentin could be detected, lying adjacent to the actomyosin cortex (Fig 7I).

244 Finally, a construct with a shorter C-terminal deletion, vimentin(1-459), formed filaments
245 similar in morphology and extension to those of vimentin wt, although ~18% of the cells also
246 showed small bundles or curls (Fig. 7J). In mitosis, vimentin(1-459) adopted a mainly peripheral
247 distribution, although some cells presented filaments intertwined with chromosomes (Fig. 7K).
248 In time-lapse monitoring (Fig. 7L and supplementary videos 12 and 13), cells lacking vimentin
249 bundles underwent basically normal mitosis with even vimentin distribution between daughter
250 cells. Conversely, cells harboring vimentin bundles showed a partial asymmetric distribution,
251 with one daughter cell receiving most of vimentin(1-459) (Fig. 7L). Vimentin(1-459) coincided
252 with some segments of the actomyosin cortex, whereas some filaments persisted in the
253 central area (Fig. 7M). Thus, deletion of the last seven amino acids induces a mild perturbation
254 of vimentin distribution in mitosis.

255 Taken together, these results reveal that step-wise deletion of the tail gradually impairs
256 normal vimentin assembly and redistribution in mitosis, with abolishment of mitotic peripheral
257 localization being observed upon vimentin truncation at L423 or I411.

258

259 **8. Vimentin cortical association in mitosis does not require network formation or full**
260 **filament assembly.**

261 To discard that lack of cortical association could be due to intense bundling, we used GFP-
262 vimentin fusion constructs, which do not form full filaments in SW13/cl.2 cells¹². First, the
263 organization of GFP-vimentin wt and all the truncated variants was studied (Fig. 8A). GFP-
264 vimentin wt formed a uniform lattice of squiggles or short filaments¹² (Fig 8A). Conversely,
265 GFP-vimentin(1-411) could not reach the squiggle stage and formed only bright dots. GFP-
266 vimentin(1-423) exhibited a mixed pattern consisting of dots, small swirls and occasional short
267 filaments. Longer constructs, namely, GFP-vimentin(1-448) and GFP-vimentin(1-459) often
268 presented short filaments or squiggles (Fig. 8A). Thus, GFP-fusion constructs displayed a
269 gradual sequence-dependent impairment of particle elongation in vimentin-deficient cells,
270 stressing that even small truncations of the tail domain have a detectable impact (quantitated
271 in Fig. 8, graph).

272 Most constructs showed little overlap with actin structures in resting cells, with GFP-vimentin
273 wt, C328S and GFP-vimentin(1-459) displaying more points of contact (Fig. 8B). In cells
274 arrested in mitosis by mild nocodazole treatment, GFP-vimentin constructs frequently showed
275 a diffuse background, suggestive of a higher extent of disassembly than untagged vimentin.
276 Nevertheless, GFP-vimentin wt structures were clearly detected at the mitotic cell cortex co-
277 localizing with actin (Fig. 8B). In sharp contrast, GFP-vimentin(1-411) dots appeared scattered
278 throughout the cell. This lack of cortical association cannot be solely attributed to defective
279 elongation, since dots formed by full-length GFP-vimentin C328S, which is also elongation-
280 incompetent¹², relocated to the periphery of mitotic cells (Fig 8B). GFP-vimentin(1-423)
281 accumulations also failed to associate with the actin cortex, frequently appearing near the
282 cytoplasmic f-actin ring, whereas > 60% of GFP-vimentin(1-448) dots redistributed to the cell
283 periphery and cortical localization of GFP-vimentin(1-459) mixed structures was preserved (Fig.

284 8C, graph). Thus, serial tail truncations exert a graded impact on mitotic cortical association,
285 denoting the importance of the segment 424-448 for this redistribution (Fig. 8D). Moreover,
286 full filament elongation is not necessary for cortical association since particles formed by
287 constructs retaining all or most of the tail domain, effectively relocate to the cell periphery.
288 Nevertheless, a certain degree of assembly seems necessary since neither GFP-vim(412-466)
289 (completely diffuse) nor the assembly-incompetent vimentin Δ 3-74 mutant were able to
290 redistribute to the mitotic cortex (Supplementary Fig. 4).

291 Thus, the tail domain is essential, but not sufficient, for vimentin cortical association in mitosis,
292 and other structural or conformational factors appear necessary.

293

294 **Discussion**

295 Vimentin plays critical functions in cell mechanics⁴⁷. Nevertheless, its role in mitosis is not fully
296 understood. Here we unveil the robust scaffold formed by vimentin filaments in mitosis in
297 several cell types. This framework intimately interacts with the actomyosin cortex, intertwining
298 with actin, and affecting its properties. Several functions can be envisaged for this
299 arrangement: to yield space for mitotic spindle organization, and, potentially, to modulate the
300 robustness or stiffness of the mitotic cortex. Therefore, these results warrant the pertinence to
301 study vimentin, and other intermediate filaments, as players in mitotic cortex dynamics.

302 Vimentin organization in mitosis is cell-type dependent and responds to two main patterns:
303 formation of a filament “cage” surrounding the mitotic spindle, or disassembly induced by
304 phosphorylation of N-terminus residues in combination with protein-protein interactions,
305 reportedly, copolymerization with nestin^{48,49,50}. We observed vimentin rearrangements
306 potentially related to nestin levels, with SW13/cl.2 cells (nestin-negative) retaining filaments,
307 MCF7 cells (nestin-positive)⁵¹, showing vimentin disassembly, and mixed patterns in the other

308 cell types which express variable nestin:vimentin proportions⁵². It can be hypothesized that, if
309 not disassembled, vimentin filaments should undergo mitotic cortical translocation or
310 anchorage to facilitate mitosis progression. This is substantiated by the striking behavior of
311 vimentin(1-411), which does not reach the actomyosin cortex and interferes with the mitotic
312 apparatus causing aberrant mitosis. This raises potential cytotoxic implications of vimentin
313 cortical dislodgement in pathophysiological settings, as observed upon lipoxidation or C-
314 terminal cleavage, although damage or cleavage of macromolecules different than vimentin
315 could contribute to these effects.

316 The intrinsically disordered C-terminal vimentin domain has been proposed to undergo
317 conformational rearrangements during filament assembly and to participate in protein-protein
318 interactions, including actin^{53,54}. Our results indicate that in mitosis, filamentous vimentin
319 interacts with the actomyosin cortex showing points of co-localization with actin. However,
320 this interaction could take place through other proteins, including the scaffold protein plectin,
321 chaperones or actin-associated proteins⁵⁵. Additionally, vimentin protrudes through the
322 actomyosin cortex at some points, for which sites of attachment at the plasma membrane
323 involving protein receptors or lipid domains, cannot be excluded.

324 A complex interplay between actin and vimentin at several organization levels exists in resting
325 cells³⁶. Actin limits transport of vimentin ULF along microtubules⁵⁶, and actomyosin arcs
326 interact with vimentin filaments through plectin and drive their retrograde movement, thus
327 promoting vimentin perinuclear localization³⁷. In turn, vimentin restricts retrograde
328 movement of the arcs and restrains actin polymerization and stress fiber assembly⁵⁷.
329 Nevertheless, the actin-vimentin interaction in mitosis has not been addressed to our
330 knowledge. The mitotic cortex provides tension, which together with osmotic pressure
331 controls cell rounding. Actin organization is a key factor in contractile tension generation⁵⁸.
332 Importantly, our results clearly show that integrity of the actomyosin cortex is necessary for

333 vimentin cortical association, but also suggest an impact of vimentin on cortical actin
334 organization. The lower dispersion of f-actin signal in global cortex 2D-projections and the
335 lower intensity at basal planes in vimentin-positive cells suggests a negative feedback on the
336 formation of highly polymerized actin structures, which in mitotic SW13/cl.2 cells appear
337 mainly as elongated actin bundles perpendicular to the substrate. Thus, our studies open the
338 way for dissecting the consequences of vimentin-actin interplay on actomyosin contractility or
339 stiffness in mitosis⁵⁹.

340 Vimentin tail integrity is determinant for cortical association. On one hand, both untagged and
341 GFP-fusion constructs show a graded impairment of cortical association upon serial tail
342 truncations, the strongest impact occurring after deletion of the 43 distal residues. Therefore,
343 the sequence comprised between residues 424-448, appears to contain important
344 determinants for mitotic redistribution. This segment approximately coincides with a putative
345 loop proposed to protrude from filaments and participate in protein-protein interactions^{60,61}.
346 Although this contention still needs conclusive experimental evidence, our results raise the
347 interest of investigating posttranslational modifications affecting the vimentin tail, which could
348 modulate cortical association. On the other hand, although vimentin polymerization into full
349 filaments is not necessary for cortical localization, a certain level of organization appears
350 necessary since soluble vimentin forms do not undergo cortical association, for which integrity
351 of the N-terminus could also play a role.

352 Thus, our results, summarized in Supplementary Figure 8, show that vimentin filaments
353 redistribute to the cell periphery in mitosis in a tail domain-dependent manner. This
354 reorganization implies a close interplay with the actomyosin cortex, which sets forth novel
355 functions of intermediate filament dynamics during the cell cycle and opens the way for the
356 search of strategies modulating these interactions.

357

358

359 **Materials and methods**

360 Reagents. Restriction enzymes and buffers were from Promega. Anti-vimentin antibodies
361 were: mouse monoclonal V9 clone (sc-6260) and its Alexa-488 conjugate from Santa Cruz
362 Biotechnology, and mouse anti-vimentin monoclonal antibody (V5255) from Sigma. Anti-actin
363 (A2066) was from Sigma and anti- α -tubulin (ab52866) and anti-desmin (ab15200-1) from
364 Abcam. Anti-GFAP (Z0334) was from Dako. C3 transferase toxin was from Cytoskeleton.
365 Latrunculin A and jasplakinolide were from Santa Cruz Biotechnology. 4-hydroxynonenal (HNE)
366 and prostaglandin A₁ (PGA₁) were from Cayman Chemical. 4,6-diamidino-2-phenylindole
367 (DAPI), blebbistatin and ritonavir were from Sigma.

368 Cell culture and treatments. SW13/cl.2 human adrenocarcinoma vimentin-deficient cells were
369 the generous gift of Dr. A. Sarriá (University of Zaragoza, Spain)⁶². MCF7 human breast
370 carcinoma cells, U-373 MG human glioblastoma astrocytoma cells and C2C12 murine
371 myoblasts were from ATCC. They were cultured in DMEM with 10% (v/v) fetal bovine serum
372 (FBS) and antibiotics (100 U/ml penicillin and 100 μ g/ml streptomycin). Bovine aortic
373 endothelial cells (BAEC) were from Clonetics and were cultured in RPMI1640 supplemented
374 with 10% (v/v) newborn calf serum (Gibco) and antibiotics. Primary human dermal fibroblasts
375 from an adult donor (ref. AG10803) were obtained from the NIA Aging Cell Repository at the
376 Coriell Institute for Medical Research (Camden, NJ). Unless otherwise stated, treatments were
377 carried out in serum-free medium. For acute microtubule disruption, cells were treated with 5
378 μ M nocodazole for 30 min. For mitotic arrest, cells were cultured in the presence of 0.4 μ M
379 nocodazole for 20 h in complete medium. This treatment was employed, when indicated, to
380 increase the proportion of mitotic cells in conditions under which neither actin, nor vimentin
381 organization were altered with respect to untreated cells (Supplementary Fig. 5). Disruption of
382 f-actin was achieved by treatment with 10 μ M cytochalasin B or 2.5 μ M latrunculin A for 30

383 min, or 2 $\mu\text{g}/\text{ml}$ C3 toxin for 3.5 h. Jasplakinolide was employed at 50 nM for 30 min.

384 Blebbistatin was used at 20 μM for 1 h. For treatment with electrophilic lipids, cells were

385 incubated in the presence of 10 μM HNE for 4 h or 20 μM PGA_1 for 20 h. Inhibition of

386 transfected HIV protease was achieved by incubating the cells in the presence of 10 μM

387 ritonavir in serum-containing medium, immediately after transfection. For removal of the

388 inhibitor cells were washed three times with fresh medium with serum, without antibiotics.

389 Plasmids and transfections. The bicistronic plasmid RFP//vimentin wt, coding for the red

390 fluorescent protein DsRed Express2, abbreviated as RFP, and wt human vimentin as separate

391 products, and the GFP fusion constructs, GFP-vimentin wt and GFP-vimentin C328S have been

392 previously described^{12,63}. mCherry-vimentin was from Genecopoeia. The various tail truncated

393 mutants, vimentin(1-411), (1-423), (1-448) and (1-459) were generated introducing stop

394 codons at positions 412, 424, 449 and 460, respectively, by site directed mutagenesis of the

395 parent vectors using the Quikchange XL mutagenesis kit from Stratagene and the primers

396 specified in Supplementary Table 1, following the instructions of the manufacturer. Truncated

397 vimentin constructs showed the expected mobility in SDS-PAGE gels as well as

398 immunoreactivity (Supplementary Fig. 6A). Thus, all constructs used were recognized by an

399 antibody raised against full-length vimentin, which recognizes the N-terminus of the protein

400 (anti-vim N-term), whereas an antibody against the beginning of the tail (clone V9) recognized

401 all constructs except tailless vimentin(1-411). The GFP-vimentin(412-466) construct, encoding

402 the vimentin tail domain fused with GFP, was constructed in two steps; first, an additional

403 EcoRI site was introduced in the GFP-vimentin wt plasmid (containing the vimentin sequence

404 cloned between the EcoRI and BamHI sites) at a position equivalent to 1692 of the vimentin

405 mRNA sequence (accession number NM_03380.4); then, the plasmid was digested with EcoRI

406 and re-ligated, using the Ligafast system from Promega, thus eliminating the sequence

407 corresponding to vimentin residues 1 to 411. The assembly-incompetent construct

408 RFP//vimentin Δ 3-74 was generated by introducing a SmaI site at a position equivalent to 471

409 of the vimentin mRNA sequence in the RFP//vimentin wt plasmid through site-directed
410 mutagenesis. The resulting mutant plasmid was digested with *Sma*I and re-ligated resulting in
411 the removal of nucleotides 472 through 687, thus eliminating residues 3 to 74. The CFP-lamin
412 A plasmid was the gift of Dr. Vicente Andrés⁶⁴. The vector encoding GFP-tagged HIV type I
413 protease (pcDNA3/GFP-PR) described in⁶⁵ was a gift from Nico Dantuma (Addgene plasmid
414 #20253). Cells were transfected using Lipofectamine 2000 (Thermo Scientific), as previously
415 described^{12,66}. Typically, 1 µg of DNA and 3 µl of Lipofectamine 2000 were used per p35 dish.
416 For overexpression of RFP//vimentin wt or (1-411) in U-373 MG astrocytoma cells, 2 µg of DNA
417 plus 4.5 µl of Lipofectamine 2000 were used. For expression of different proportions of
418 vimentin wt and tailless (1-411), the following plasmid amounts were used: 10:0, 0.8 µg
419 RFP//vim wt + 0.2 µg GFP-vim wt; 8:2, 0.8 µg RFP//vim wt + 0.2 µg GFP-vim(1-411); 4:6, 0.4 µg
420 RFP//vim wt + 0.4 µg RFP//vim(1-411) + 0.2 µg GFP-vim(1-411); 2:8, 0.2 µg RFP//vim wt + 0.6
421 µg RFP//vim(1-411) + 0.2 µg GFP-vim(1-411). Routinely, cells were visualized 48 h after
422 transient transfection. When indicated, cells were cultured in the presence of 500 µg/ml G-418
423 for generation of stably transfected cells.

424 Fluorescence microscopy and image analysis. Cells transfected with the various constructs
425 were visualized live by confocal microscopy on Leica SP2 or SP5 microscopes. Images were
426 acquired every 0.5 µm and single sections or overall projections are shown, as indicated. All
427 scale bars are 20 µm. For immunofluorescence, cells were fixed with 4% (w/v)
428 paraformaldehyde for 25 min at r.t., permeabilized with 0.1% (v/v) Triton-X100 in PBS and
429 blocked with 1% (w/v) BSA in PBS. Antibodies were used at 1:200 dilution in blocking solution.
430 For experiments involving detection of vimentin(1-411), the monoclonal antibody recognizing
431 the vimentin N-terminus was used for all conditions. For experiments involving selective
432 detection of full-length vimentin or not requiring a comparison with vimentin(1-411), the V9
433 antibody was employed (Supplementary Fig. 6B). F-actin was stained with Phalloidin-Alexa568

434 or Phalloidin-Alexa488 (Molecular Probes), following the manufacturer instructions. Nuclei
435 were counterstained with DAPI (3 µg/ml). Direct visualization on glass-bottom culture dishes
436 was found optimal for imaging mitotic cells, since mounting on glass slides compromised their
437 spherical shape. For superresolution microscopy through stimulated emission depletion
438 (STED), vimentin was detected with Alexa488-conjugated anti-vimentin V9 and f-actin was
439 stained with Phalloidin-Tetramethylrhodamine B isothiocyanate from Sigma (0.25 µg/ml).
440 Images were acquired with a confocal multispectral Leica TCS SP8 system equipped with a 3X
441 STED module. Co-localization was analyzed with Leica software. Time-lapse microscopy was
442 carried out in a multidimensional microscopy system Leica AF6000 LX in a humidified 5% CO₂
443 atmosphere at 37°C. Typically, green fluorescence and differential interference contrast (DIC)
444 images were recorded. 3D-reconstructions were obtained with Image J (FIJI), Imaris or Leica
445 software. Fluorescence intensity profiles and measurements of mean fluorescence intensity
446 and standard deviation of pixel brightness values, to illustrate the dispersion of f-actin
447 intensity, were obtained with ImageJ. Orthogonal projections were obtained with Leica
448 software. 2D maps from image stacks were obtained by FIJI and the free Map3-2D software
449 developed by Sendra et al.,⁴³
450 (http://www.zmbh.uniheidelberg.de//Central_Services/Imaging_Facility/Map3-2D.html),
451 which unfolds surface information onto a single structurally connected map, using a “sphere”
452 adjustment. For quantitation of vimentin reorganization induced by electrophilic lipids, the
453 proportion of vimentin fluorescence present in the central area of mitotic cells (central circle
454 of a diameter of 60% the total cell diameter in a single section at mid-cell height), with respect
455 to the total area was measured as an indication of the impairment of peripheral distribution.

456 SDS-PAGE and western blot. Cells transfected with the various constructs were lysed in 20 mM
457 Tris-HCl pH 7.5, 0.1 mM EDTA, 0.1 mM EGTA, 0.1 mM β-mercaptoethanol, containing 0.5%
458 (w/v) SDS, 0.1 mM sodium orthovanadate and protease inhibitors (2 µg/ml each of leupeptin,
459 aprotinin and trypsin inhibitor, and 1.3 mM Pefablock), and processed essentially as described

460 ⁶⁷. Briefly, protein concentration in lysates was determined by the bicinchoninic acid assay.
461 Aliquots of lysates containing 30 µg of total protein were denatured in Laemmli buffer for 5
462 min at 95°C and separated in 10 or 15% SDS-polyacrylamide gels. Gels were transferred to
463 Immobilon-P membranes (Millipore) using a Tris-glycine methanol three-buffer system, as
464 recommended by the manufacturer, on a semi-dry transfer unit (Transblot) from Bio-Rad.
465 Membranes were blocked with 2% (w/v) low-fat powdered milk in T-TBS (Tris-HCl pH 7.5, 500
466 mM NaCl, 0.05% (v/v) Tween-20). Subsequently, membranes were incubated with primary
467 antibodies at 1:500 dilution and horseradish peroxidase-conjugated secondary antibodies
468 (Dako) at 1:2000 dilution. Proteins of interest were detected with the ECL system from GE
469 Healthcare.

470 Statistical analysis. All experiments were repeated at least three times with similar results. All
471 results are presented as average values ± SEM. Statistical analysis was performed with
472 GraphPad Prism. Statistical differences were evaluated by the unpaired Student's *t*-test and
473 were considered significant when $P < 0.05$, which is denoted in graphs by an asterisk. The
474 significance levels for every experiment are given in the figure legends.

475

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488

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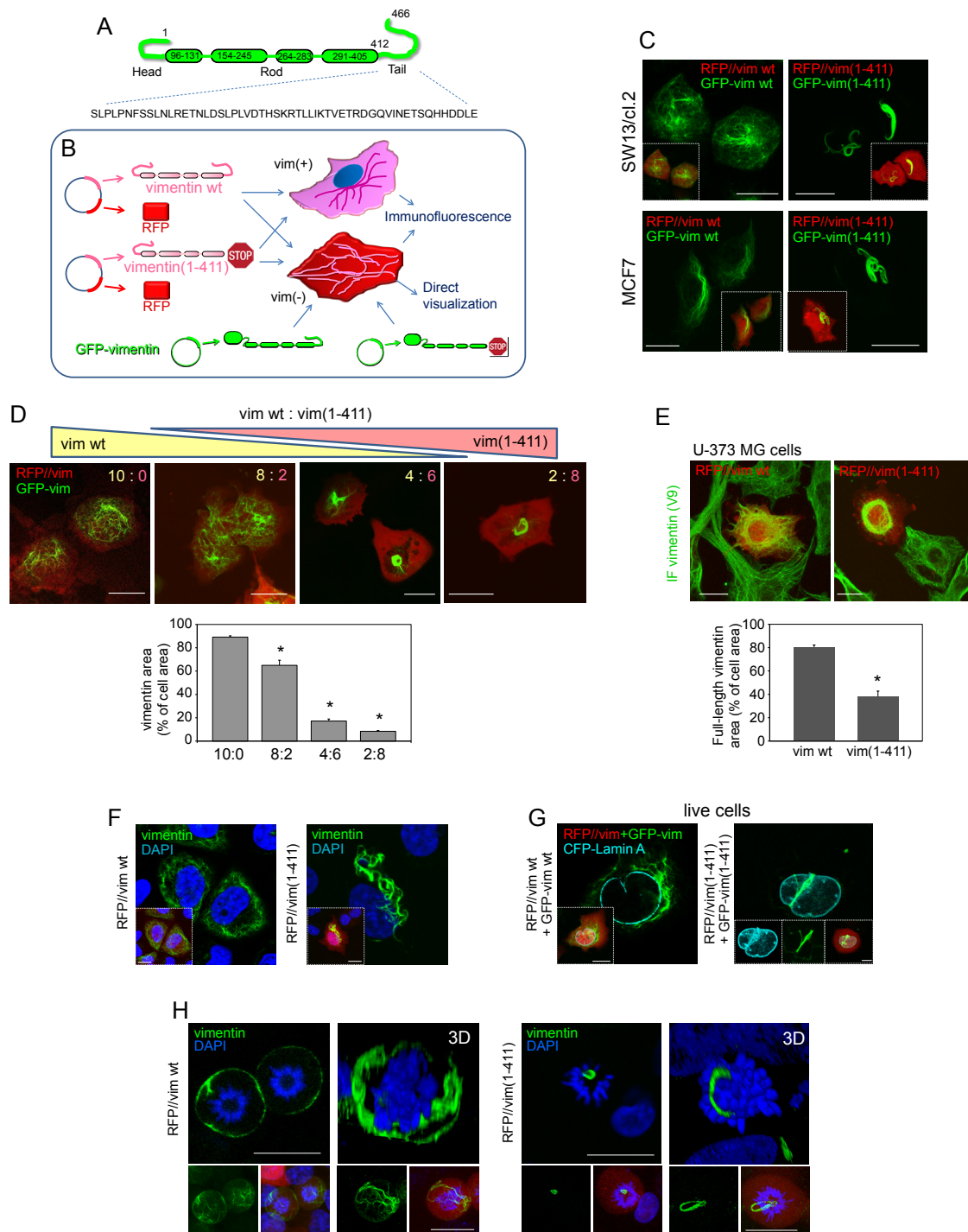
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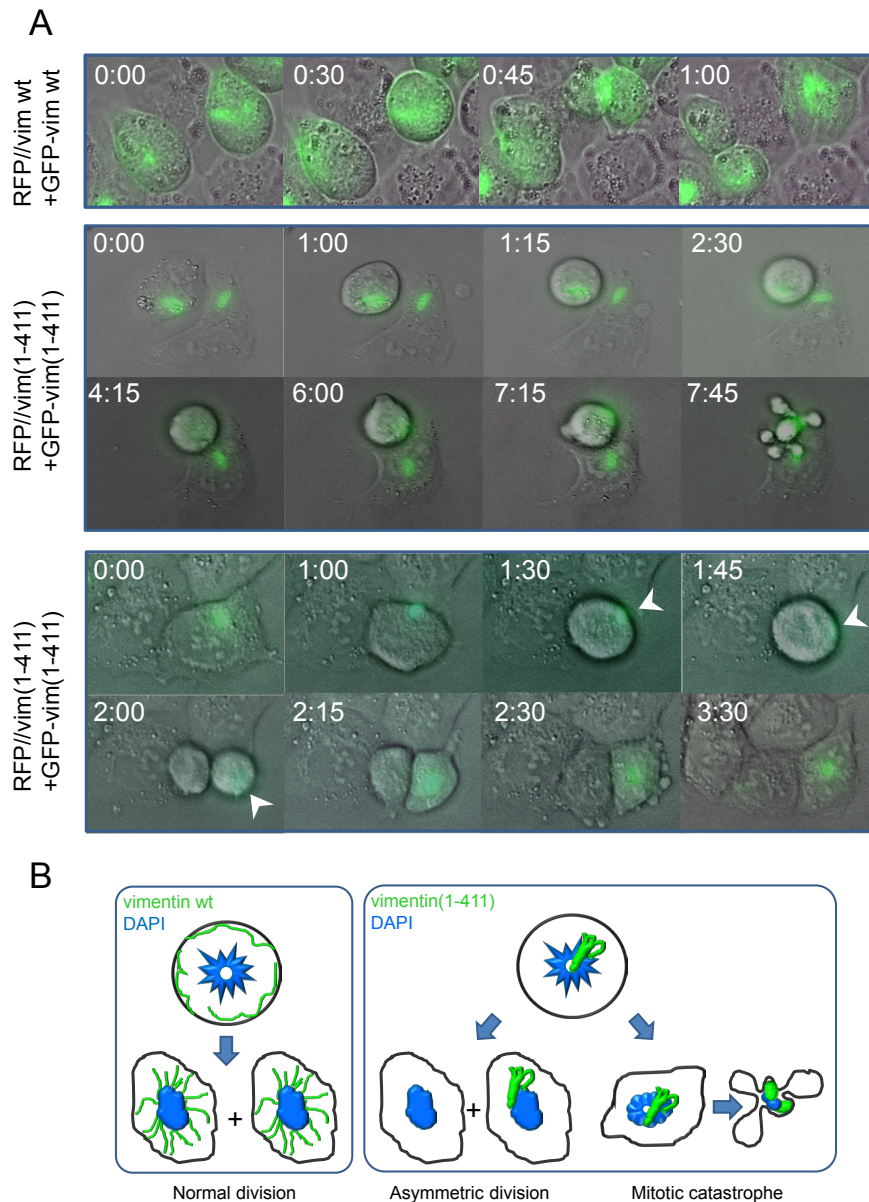


683

684 Fig. 1. Tailless vimentin(1-411) disrupts wt vimentin distribution and interferes with
 685 chromosomes in mitosis. (A) Schematic view of vimentin domains. Residues are numbered.
 686 The tail domain sequence is displayed in full. (B) Scheme showing the experimental strategies:
 687 bicistronic plasmids coding for DsRed2 fluorescent protein (RFP) and vimentin wt (RFP//vim
 688 wt) or tailless (residues 1-411) (RFP//vim(1-411)) were transfected into vimentin expressing

689 cells (vim +) or vimentin-deficient cells (vim -), alone, for detection by immunofluorescence, or
690 together with a small amount of the corresponding GFP-vimentin construct (GFP-vim) for
691 direct visualization. (C) SW13/cl.2 human adrenocarcinoma or MCF7 breast carcinoma cells
692 transfected with the indicated constructs were observed live 48 h later. (D) SW13/cl.2 cells
693 were transfected with different proportions of constructs coding for vimentin wild type (wt,
694 yellow) or tailless (1-411, pink), as detailed in Materials and Methods. Vimentin condensation
695 was measured as the area occupied by vimentin (green fluorescence) with respect to the total
696 cellular area (red background). The histogram shows average values \pm SEM of twenty
697 determinations. $*P < 0.05$ by Student's *t*-test. (E) U-373 MG astrocytoma cells were transfected
698 with RFP//vimentin wt or RFP//vimentin(1-411). Full-length vimentin condensation was
699 assessed by immunofluorescence with V9 anti-vimentin antibody, which recognizes the tail
700 domain (green), and estimated as the ratio between the green signal area and the total cell
701 area (red). The histogram shows average values \pm SEM of twenty determinations. $*P < 0.001$ by
702 Student's *t*-test. (F) SW13/cl.2 cells were transfected with RFP//vimentin wt or (1-411) and
703 vimentin distribution was assessed by immunofluorescence. Nuclei were counterstained with
704 DAPI and single overlay sections are shown. (G) Cells were visualized live after transfection
705 with GFP-vimentin wt or GFP-vimentin(1-411) plus CFP-lamin A to delimit the nuclear
706 envelope. Insets in (F) and (G) display overall projections of merged images or individual
707 channels. (H) Cells were transfected with RFP//vimentin wt or (1-411) and vimentin
708 distribution in mitosis was observed by immunofluorescence. Single sections taken at mid-cell
709 height (left images) and 3D-projections (right images) are shown. Small panels below each
710 image depict overall projections for vimentin alone (left) or for the three channels (vimentin,
711 RFP and DAPI). Scale bars, 20 μ m.

712



713

714 **Fig. 2. Live cell monitoring of cells expressing vimentin wt or vimentin(1-411) during mitosis.**

715 (A) SW13/cl.2 cells were transfected with RFP//vimentin plus GFP-vimentin wt or (1-411), or

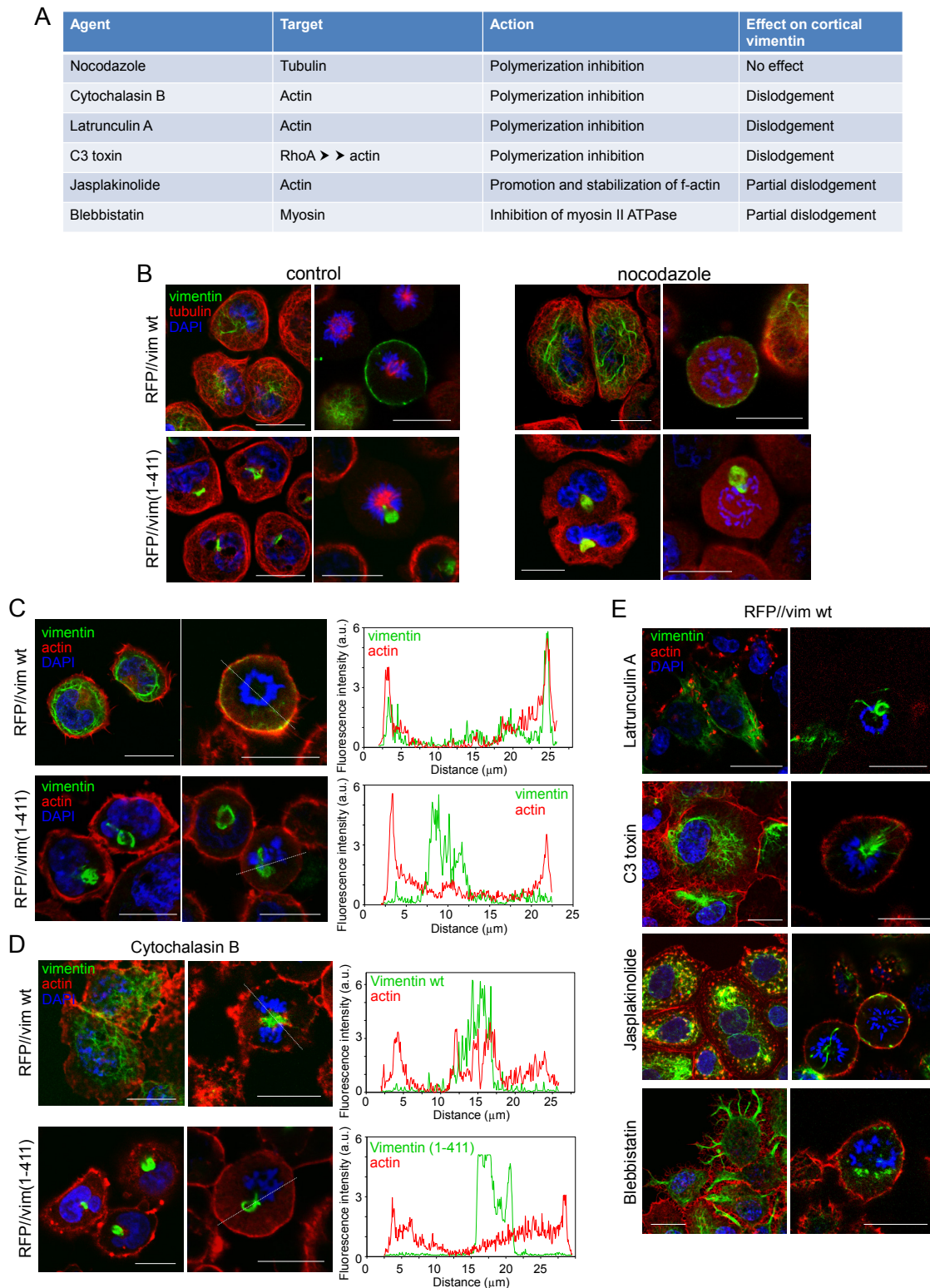
716 the equivalent constructs for vimentin(1-411), as indicated, for live cell monitoring by time-

717 lapse microscopy. Several fields were randomly selected and images were acquired every 15

718 min. Representative images of the overlays of DIC and green fluorescence at the indicated

719 time points are shown. (B) Schematic representation of the main fates observed for cells

720 transfected with each construct.



721

722 **Fig. 3. Effect of disrupting microtubules or actin filaments on the distribution of vimentin wt**

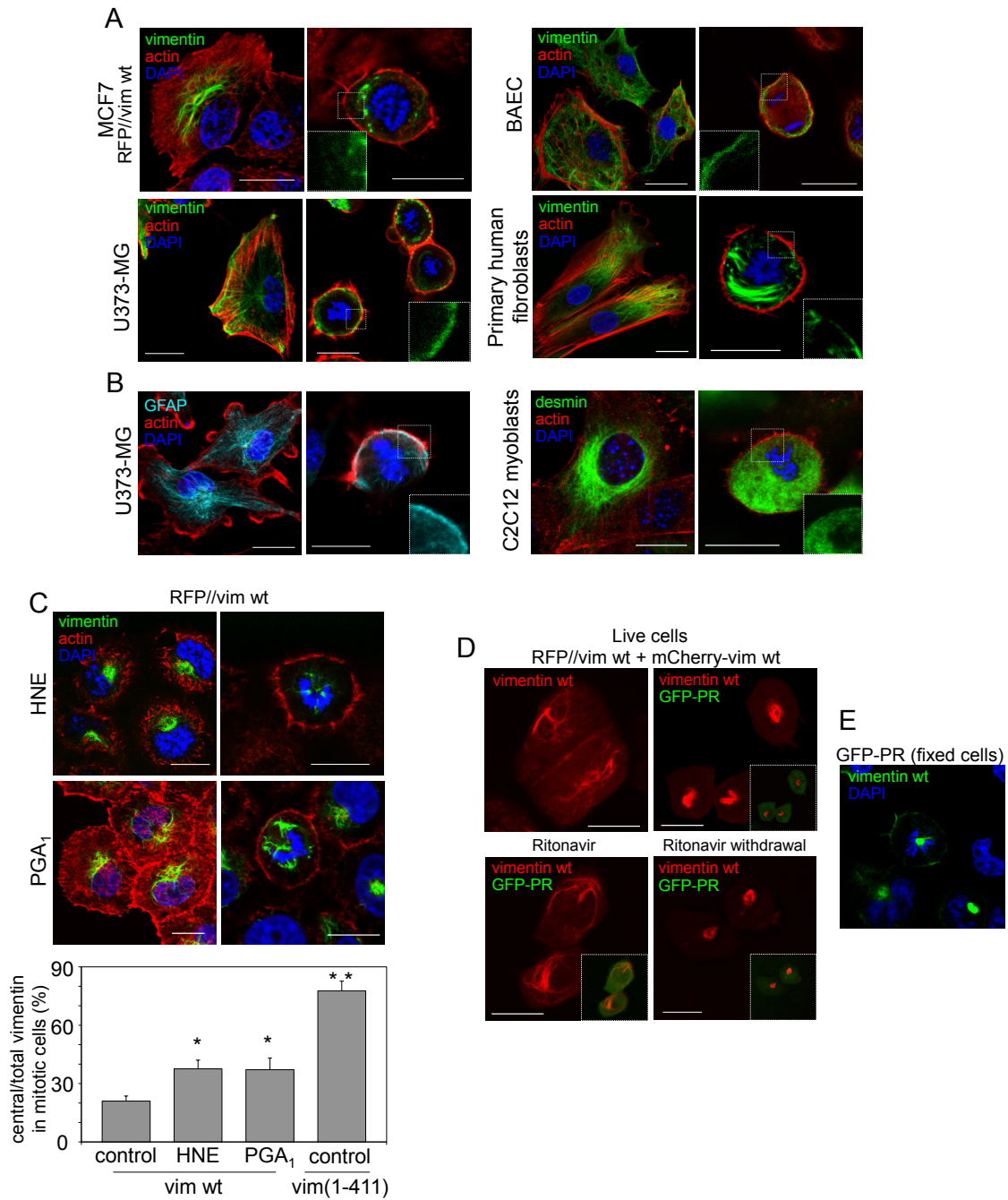
723 **and vimentin(1-411).** (A) Agents used to disrupt cytoskeletal structures. (B-E) The distribution

724 of vimentin and tubulin or actin was assessed in interphase (left images for all experimental

725 conditions) and mitotic cells (right images). (B) SW13/cl.2 cells transfected with RFP//vimentin

726 wt or (1-411) were treated in the absence or presence of 5 μ M nocodazole for 30 min in
727 serum-free medium. Vimentin (green) and tubulin (red) were visualized by
728 immunofluorescence. (C) SW13/cl.2 cells were transfected as above and fixed. F-actin was
729 stained with Phalloidin (red). Fluorescence intensity profiles of vimentin and actin along the
730 dotted lines are shown in the right panels. (D) SW13/cl.2 cells transfected with RFP//vimentin
731 wt or (1-411) were cultured in the absence or presence of 10 μ g/ml cytochalasin B for 30 min
732 in serum-free medium. Vimentin and f-actin were detected as above and their fluorescence
733 intensity profiles along the dotted lines are shown in the right panels. (E) Cells transfected with
734 RFP//vimentin wt were treated in serum-free medium with 2.5 μ M latrunculin A for 30 min, 2
735 μ g/ml C3 toxin for 3 h, 50 nM jasplakinolide for 30 min, or 20 μ M blebbistatin for 1 h, as
736 indicated, and processed by immunofluorescence. Images of single sections taken at mid-
737 height of resting and dividing cells are shown.

738



739

740 Fig. 4. Association of type-III intermediate filaments with the mitotic cortex in several cell

741 types and pathophysiological conditions. (A) The distribution of f-actin and vimentin in

742 interphase and mitotic cells was assessed in several cell types expressing endogenous

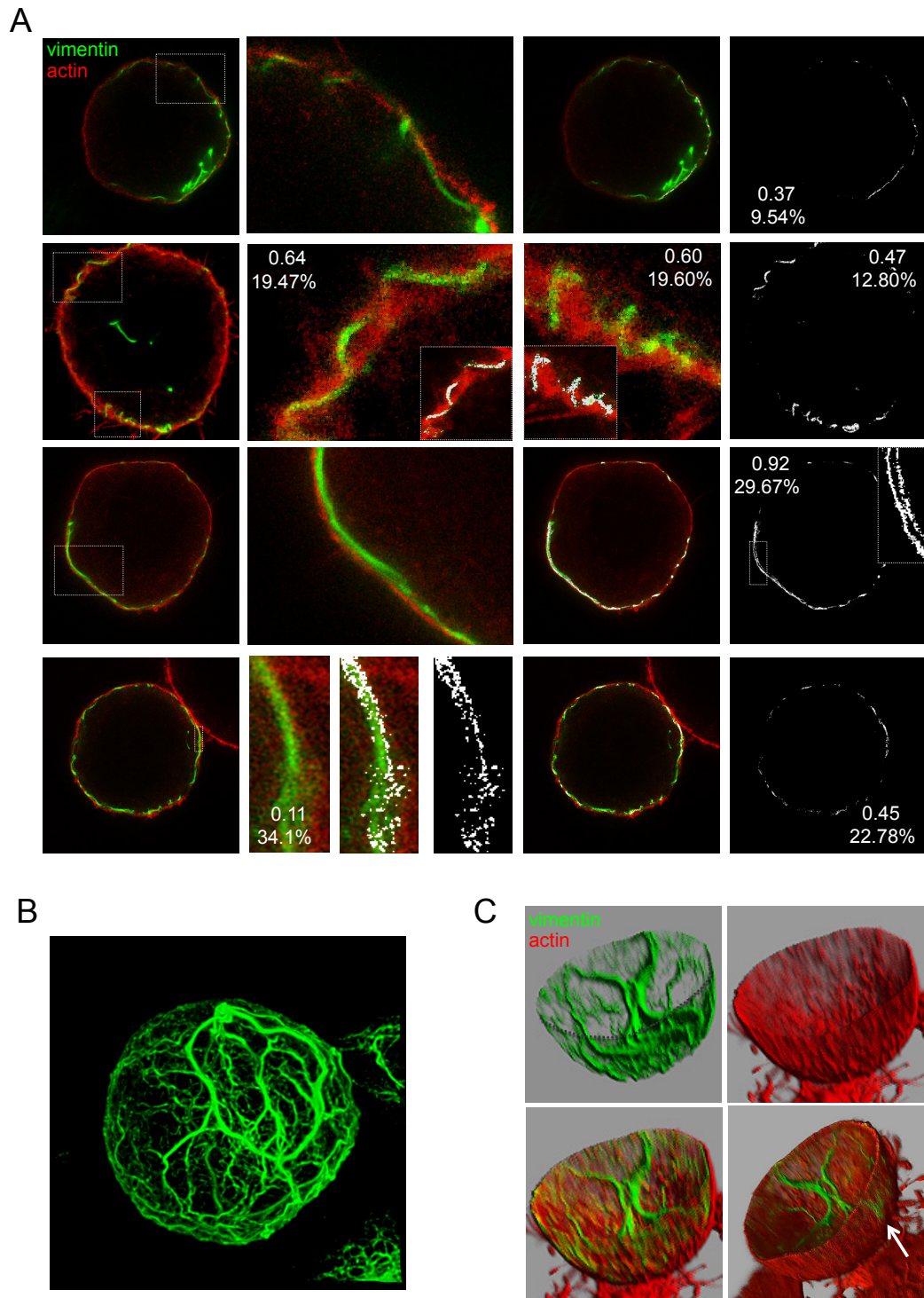
743 (astrocytoma U-373 MG cells, bovine aortic endothelial cells (BAEC), human dermal

744 fibroblasts) or transfected (breast carcinoma MCF7 cells) vimentin. Inserts depict enlarged

745 areas of the cell periphery showing vimentin distribution. Nuclei were counterstained with

746 DAPI. Single sections at mid-cell height are shown in all panels. Single channel images, as well
747 as fluorescence intensity profiles for actin and vimentin, are shown in Supplementary Fig. 3. (B)
748 The distribution of GFAP and desmin was assessed by immunofluorescence in mitotic human
749 astrocytoma U-373 MG cells and murine C2C12 myoblasts, respectively. (C) SW13/cl.2 cells
750 expressing RFP//vimentin wt were treated with electrophilic lipids, 10 μ M 4-hydroxynonenal
751 (HNE) for 4 h or 20 μ M prostaglandin A₁ (PGA₁) for 20 h, and processed as above. The
752 histogram shows average values \pm SEM from 15 determinations of the central versus total
753 vimentin cellular fluorescence ratio, as an index of the impairment of peripheral localization.
754 The values corresponding to vimentin(1-411) are included here for comparison. * P <0.05;
755 ** P <0.001 by Student's *t*-test. (D) SW13/cl.2 cells were transfected with a combination of
756 RFP//vimentin wt (80%) plus a tracer amount of mCherry-vimentin wt (20%), to monitor
757 vimentin filaments (red) in live cells. In addition, cells were transfected with GFP-PR, coding
758 the HIV-type I protease, and the corresponding green fluorescence is depicted in insets. In
759 upper panels, cells were imaged 24 h after transfection. In the lower panels, the HIV inhibitor
760 ritonavir was added immediately after transfection and cells were imaged 24 h later (left
761 panel). Note the more intense GFP fluorescence indicative of the inhibition of GFP-PR
762 autolysis. Subsequently, ritonavir was removed and cells were imaged 5 h later (right panel).
763 (E) At the end of the experiment, cells were fixed and stained with DAPI to identify mitotic
764 cells. Vimentin is artificially colored in green.

765



766

767 Fig. 5. Analysis of the relative positions of vimentin and actin in mitosis by STED

768 superresolution microscopy. SW13/cl.2 cells stably transfected with RFP//vimentin wt were

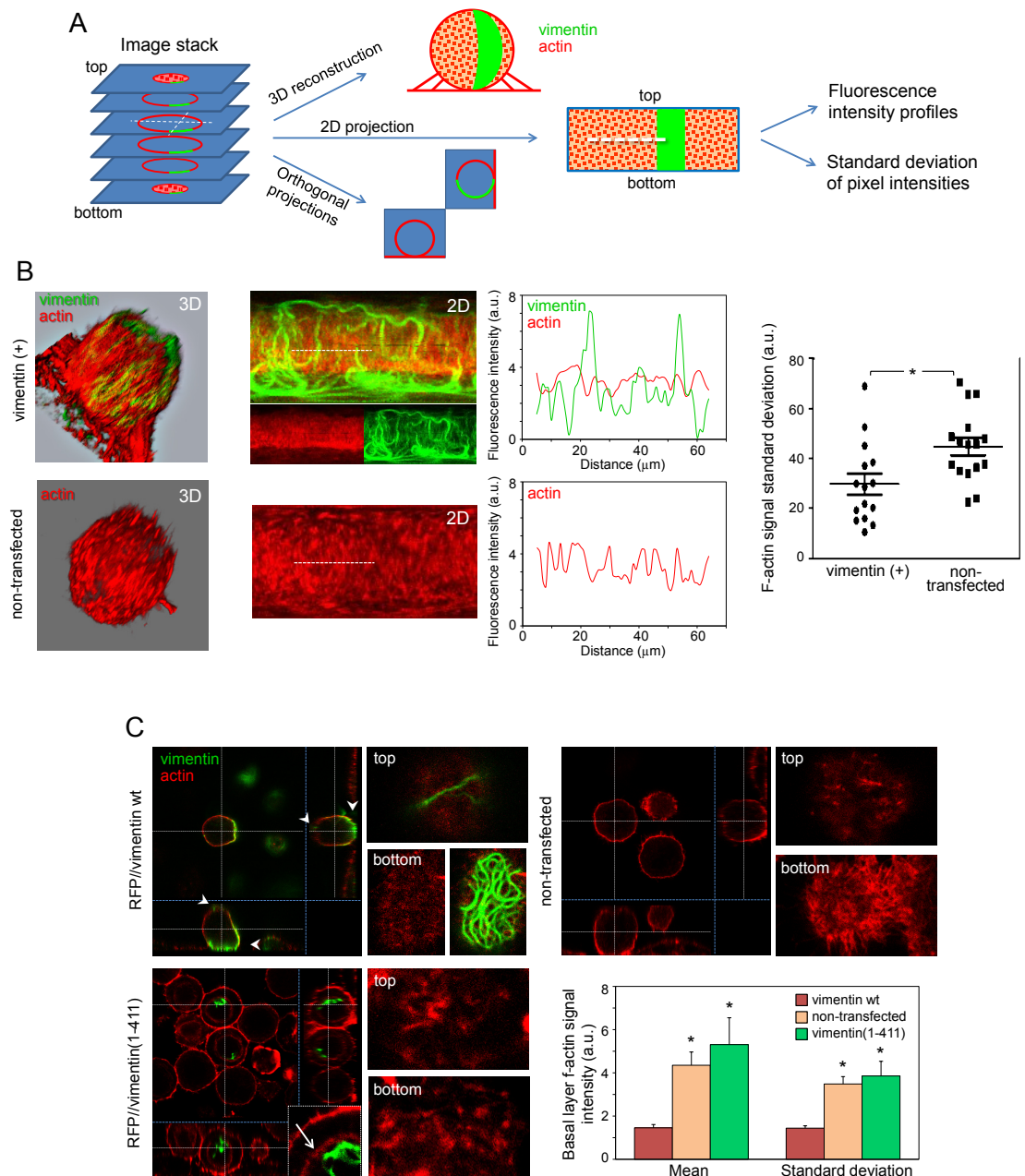
769 treated with 0.4 μ M nocodazole overnight, to increase the proportion of cells in mitosis, as

770 described in the experimental section. Vimentin was detected by immunofluorescence with

771 Alexa488-conjugated V9 antibody and actin was stained with TRITC-Phalloidin. (A) STED images

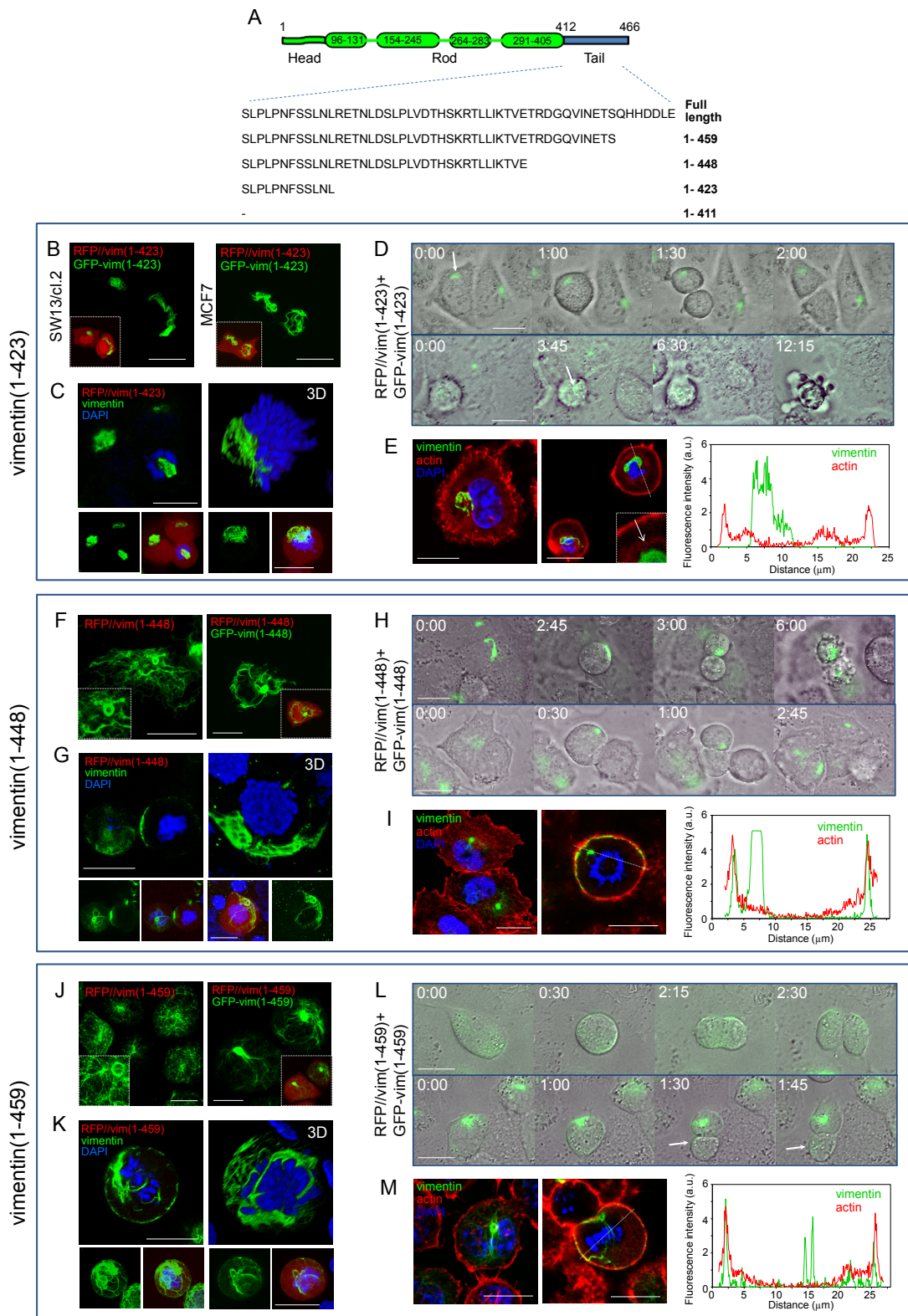
772 of several cells are shown. Co-localization analysis was performed with Leica software.
773 Numbers in insets represent the Pearson's coefficient and the percentage of co-localization,
774 respectively, for the whole cell or for the regions enlarged, as indicated. (B) 3D-reconstruction
775 of vimentin organization, after deconvolution of the green channel using Imaris software, for
776 one representative cell. (C) 3D-reconstruction using the basal half of the sections from the
777 same cell in order to show the "inside" and the "outside" of the sphere. Single channels (upper
778 panels) and merged images (lower panels) are shown. The semi-sphere edge is marked in the
779 green channel (dotted line). The bottom-right image is a snapshot of Supplementary video 5. A
780 point where vimentin protrudes through the actin cortex is indicated by an arrow.

781



790 2D-maps from 16 cells per experimental condition; * $P < 0.05$ by unpaired t -test. (C) SW13/cl.2
791 cells were transfected with RFP//vimentin wt (stable transfection), RFP//vimentin(1-411)
792 (transient transfection) or non-transfected. Orthogonal projections illustrate the positions of
793 the vimentin constructs. Arrowheads mark the appearance of vimentin wt at the top and at
794 the bottom of the cell. The inset shows an enlarged image illustrating the localization of
795 vimentin(1-411) with respect to the cytoplasmic actin ring (marked by an arrow). Right panels
796 show the top and bottom sections for every construct. The histogram depicts the mean and
797 standard deviation of f-actin signal intensity at the bottom section. Values are average \pm SEM
798 from at least 10 determinations. * $P < 0.05$ vs vimentin wt.

799



800

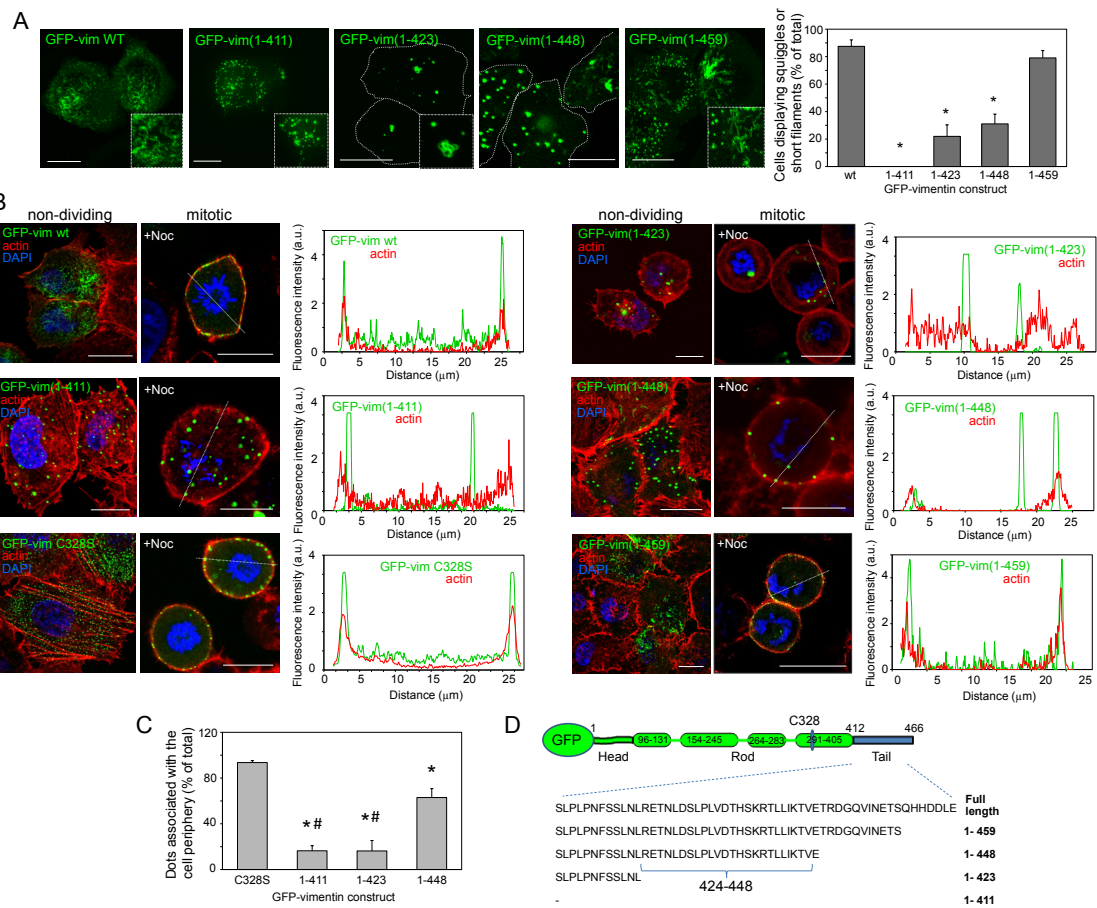
801 Fig. 7. Organization and mitotic distribution of several C-terminal truncated vimentin

802 mutants. (A) Scheme of the various vimentin truncated mutants generated. (B) Overall

803 projections of live SW13/cl.2 or MCF7 cells transfected with RFP//vimentin(1-423) plus GFP-

804 vimentin(1-423). Insets depict the overlay with the RFP background fluorescence delimiting the
805 cell contour. (C) SW13/cl.2 cells were transfected with RFP//vimentin(1-423) and the
806 distribution of truncated vimentin in mitosis was assessed by immunofluorescence. Nuclei
807 were counterstained with DAPI. A representative single section at mid-cell height (left) and a
808 3D-projection (right) are shown. Lower panels depict overall projections of vimentin alone
809 (green channel) or the overlay of vimentin, DAPI and the red background fluorescence. (D) Live
810 cells transfected with RFP//vimentin(1-423) plus GFP-vimentin(1-423) were monitored by
811 time-lapse microscopy. Representative cases of vimentin asymmetric partition (upper panels)
812 and mitotic catastrophe (lower panels) are shown. (E) Cells were transfected as in (C) and the
813 distribution of vimentin and f-actin was monitored in interphase (left) and mitosis (right).
814 Images are single sections at mid-cell height. The arrow marks the position of the cytoplasmic
815 actin ring. The right panel shows fluorescence intensity profiles of vimentin and actin signals
816 along the dotted line drawn on a mitotic cell. (F and J) Cells were transfected with
817 RFP//vimentin(1-448) in (F), or RFP//vimentin(1-459) in (J), alone or in combination with the
818 corresponding GFP fusion construct, as indicated, and vimentin distribution was monitored by
819 immunofluorescence (left panels) or live cell direct visualization (right panels). (G and K) Cells
820 transfected with RFP//vimentin(1-448) in (G), or RFP//vimentin(1-459) in (K) were analyzed as
821 in (C). (H) Representative sequence from time-lapse monitoring of live cells transfected with
822 RFP//vimentin(1-448) showing an incomplete division ending in cell death (upper panel) and
823 an asymmetric division (lower panel). (L) Sequence from live-cell monitoring after transfection
824 with RFP//vimentin(1-459) showing a normal division (upper panel) and an asymmetric
825 division (lower panel). (I and M) The distribution of vimentin and f-actin in cells transfected
826 with RFP//vimentin(1-448) (I) or RFP//vimentin(1-459) (M) was monitored in resting and
827 mitotic cells, as described for panel (E).

828



829

830 Fig. 8. Assembly and distribution of GFP fusion constructs of truncated forms of vimentin. (A)

831 Live confocal microscopy assessment of the morphology of vimentin assemblies 48 h after

832 transfection of SW13/cl.2 cells with the constructs shown in panel (D). Overall projections are

833 shown. Insets show enlarged areas of interest. The histogram (right) depicts the percentage of

834 cells with squiggles or short filaments for every construct. Results are average values \pm SEM of

835 at least 15 fields from several experiments totaling at least 100 cells per experimental

836 condition. * $P < 0.05$ by Student's t -test. (B) Cells were transfected with the indicated constructs,

837 fixed, and the distribution of vimentin and f-actin analyzed as above. Both interphase (left

838 images) and mitotic cells (right images) are shown. Where indicated, cells were treated

839 overnight with 0.4 μM nocodazole (+Noc) in complete medium to increase the proportion of

840 mitotic cells. Nuclei were counterstained with DAPI. Single sections taken at mid-cell height are

841 shown in all cases. The fluorescence intensity profiles for vimentin and f-actin along the dotted

842 lines are shown on the right for every condition. (C) The histogram shows the proportion of
843 dots associated with the cell periphery for every construct. In this case, GFP-vimentin C328S,
844 which contains the tail domain but assembles in dots, is used as a control. GFP-vimentin(1-459)
845 is excluded from this graph due to its organization mainly in squiggles or short filaments.
846 Results are average values of at least 10 fields from at least three experiments per condition.
847 * $P < 0.01$ vs GFP-vimentin C328S; # $P < 0.001$ vs GFP-vimentin(1-448). (D) Scheme illustrating the
848 sequence of the various GFP-vimentin truncated constructs. The approximate position of C328
849 is indicated.

850