

that the HLD binds single-stranded (ss) DNA in such a way so as to promote the dissociation of ssDNA stabilizing proteins and the recognition and annealing of complementary

(DSB) is regarded as the most lethal and most significant type of damage to cells[1-3]. DNA damage, such as DSB, due to increased ionizing radiation during space expeditions beyond low Earth orbit has been identified as *most significant risk* to astronaut health[4], potentially manifested as radiation sickness, central nervous system defects, and degenerative diseases[5]. Most DSB events are

Aim 2. We designed and purified constructs of the HLD and its close relative, Hel308, in which we swapped the larger separation wedge of Hel308 with the equivalent, stunted wedge of the HLD. We then performed a molecular beacon-based helicase assay (see graphic below) to assess the strand separation activity of the HLD, Hel308, and the two chimeric proteins consisting of the HLD with the Hel308 wedge (“HLD(308)”) and Hel308 with the HLD wedge (“308(HLD)”). We observed that 308(HLD) had reduced activity compared to Hel308. Amazingly, HLD(308)

References

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2. Shibata, A. and P. Jeggo, *A historical reflection on our understanding of radiation-induced DNA double strand break repair in somatic mammalian cells; interfacing the past with the present*. International Journal of Radiation Biology, 2019. **95**(7): p. 945-956.
3. Mahaney, B.L., K. Meek, and S.P. LA.