

1 **A novel dominant-negative *FGFR1* variant causes Hartsfield syndrome by**
2 **deregulating RAS/ERK1/2 pathway**

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36 **Abstract**

37 Hartsfield syndrome (HS) is an ultrarare developmental disorder mainly featuring
38 holoprosencephaly and ectrodactyly. It is caused by heterozygous or biallelic variants in
39 *FGFR1*. Recently, a dominant-negative effect was suggested for *FGFR1* variants
40 associated with HS. Here, exome sequencing analysis in a 12-year-old boy with HS
41 disclosed a novel *de novo* heterozygous variant c.1934C>T in *FGFR1* predicted to
42 cause the p.(Ala645Val) amino acid substitution. In order to evaluate whether the
43 variant, changing a highly conserved residue of the kinase domain, affects FGFR1
44 function biochemical studies were employed. We measured the FGFR1 receptor activity
45 in FGF2 treated-cell lines exogenously expressing wild type or Ala645Val FGFR1 by
46 monitoring the activation status of FGF2/FGFR1 downstream pathways. Our analysis
47 highlighted that RAS/ERK1/2 signaling was significantly perturbed in cells expressing
48 mutated FGFR1, in comparison with control cells. We also provided preliminary
49 evidence showing a modulation of the autophagic process in cells expressing mutated
50 FGFR1. This study expands the *FGFR1* mutational spectrum associated to HS,
51 provides functional evidence further supporting a dominant-negative effect of this
52 category of *FGFR1* variants and offers initial insights on dysregulation of autophagy in
53 HS.

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56 **Keywords:** autophagy, dominant-negative, *FGFR1*, Hartsfield syndrome, RAS/ERK1/2

57

58 **Introduction**

59 Hartsfield syndrome (HS; MIM#615465) is an ultrarare developmental disorder mainly
60 characterized by (various degrees of) holoprosencephaly and ectrodactyly. Ancillary
61 findings include intellectual disability, cerebellar vermis hypoplasia, spasticity, seizures,
62 hypothalamic dysfunction, central diabetes insipidus and hypogonadotropic
63 hypogonadism (1). HS is caused by heterozygous or, more rarely, biallelic variants in
64 *FGFR1* (2; 3). The FGFR family comprises four receptor tyrosine kinases that
65 cooperate with extracellular fibroblast growth factors (FGFs) in the transduction of
66 signals through the plasma membrane (4). FGFRs consist of an extracellular region of
67 three immunoglobulin-like (Ig-like) domains (namely, D1, D2 and D3), a single
68 hydrophobic transmembrane domain, and a cytoplasmic tyrosine kinase domain. The
69 extracellular portion interacts with FGFs and triggers a cascade of downstream signals
70 influencing organogenesis, angiogenesis, metabolism and tissue repair (5).

71 *FGFR1* abnormalities recur in multiple developmental and acquired diseases. Germline
72 variants have been identified in five pleiotropic disorders, including HS, Kallmann
73 syndrome (6), nonsyndromic hypogonadotropic hypogonadism (7; 8; 9), Pfeiffer
74 syndrome (10), and osteoglophonic dysplasia (11). Somatic mosaicism for
75 developmental post-zygotic variants cause encephalocraniocutaneous lipomatosis (12).
76 Somatic variants in *FGFR1* can also occur postnatally and associate with cancer (13).

77 Limited genotype-phenotype correlations predict the clinical outcome among *FGFR1*-
78 related developmental disorders. Gain-of-function effects are hypothesized in conditions
79 with craniosynostosis, while loss-of-function variants typically occur in disorders with
80 hypogonadotropic hypogonadism (2). More recently, a single study attributed a
81 dominant-negative effect to variants causing HS by zebrafish overexpression assays (3).
82 However, the molecular pathogenesis of HS remains incompletely defined.

83 We describe a HS patient carrying a novel c.1934C>T, p.(Ala645Val) *FGFR1*
84 heterozygous variant, identified by exome sequencing. We also provide functional
85 evidence supporting a dominant-negative effect of this novel *FGFR1* variant and offer
86 preliminary insights on deregulation of autophagy in HS.

87 **Material and Methods**

88 *Molecular study*

89 A clinical diagnosis of HS was established on the proband (see Clinical Report).
90 Proband's parents gave their informed consent for genetic testing and processing of
91 personal data according to the Italian bioethics laws. The molecular testing (clinical
92 exome, see below) carried out in this patient for diagnostic purposes is based on routine
93 clinical care. Therefore, IRB approval was not requested. Genomic DNA was extracted
94 from patients' and parents' peripheral blood by using Bio Robot EZ1 (Qiagen). The
95 DNA was quantified with Nanodrop 2000 C spectrophotometer (Thermo Fisher
96 Scientific). Proband's DNA was analyzed by whole exome sequencing (WES) by using
97 SureSelect Human Clinical Research Exome (Agilent Technologies) and following
98 manufacturer instructions. This is a combined shearing free transposase-based library
99 prep and target enrichment solution, which enables comprehensive coverage of the
100 entire exome. This system enables a specific mapping of reads to targets for deep
101 coverage of target protein coding regions from RefSeq, GENCODE, CCDS, and UCSC
102 known Genes, with excellent overall exonic coverage and increased coverage of
103 HGMD, OMIM, ClinVar, and ACMG targets. Sequencing was performed on a NextSeq
104 500 system (Illumina Inc.) by using the High Output flow cells (300 cycles), with a
105 minimum expected coverage depth of 70x. The average coverage obtained was 147x.

106 All variants obtained from WES were annotated based on frequency, impact on the
107 encoded protein, conservation, and expression using distinct tools, as appropriate
108 (ANNOVAR, dbSNP, 1000 Genomes, EVS, ExAC, ESP and KAVIAR). The
109 deleteriousness of variants was checked by querying PolyPhen-2, SIFT,
110 MutationAssessor, FATHMM, LRT and CADD. Given the clinical diagnosis of HS,
111 filtered variants were also prioritized for genes associated with holoprosencephaly, in
112 particular: *CDON* (OMIM 608707), *DISP1* (OMIM 607502), *DLL1* (OMIM 606582),
113 *FGF8* (OMIM 600483), *FGFR1* (OMIM 136350), *FOXH1* (OMIM 603621), *GAS1*
114 (OMIM 139185), *GLI2* (OMIM 610829), *NODAL* (OMIM 601265), *PTCH1* (OMIM
115 601309), *SHH* (OMIM 600725), *SIX3* (OMIM 603714), *TDGF1* (OMIM 187395),
116 *TGFII* (OMIM 602603) and *ZIC2* (OMIM 603073). The candidate variant was
117 confirmed by Sanger sequencing in the proband's and parents' DNA. PCR products
118 (oligos indicated in **Table S1**) were sequenced by using BigDye Terminator v1.1
119 sequencing kit (Applied Biosystems) and ABI Prism 3100 Genetic Analyzer (Thermo
120 Fisher Scientific). The novel variant has been submitted to LOVD (Leiden Open
121 Variation Database, <https://www.lovd.nl/3.0/home>, patient ID 00174403).

122 *Plasmids*

123 The plasmid encoding FGFR1 wild type was kindly provided by Soo-Hyun Kim
124 (University of London, UK). The Ala645Val variant was generated using the
125 QuickChange II site-directed mutagenesis kit (Stratagene) according to the
126 manufacturer's instructions. The construct was confirmed by Sanger sequencing. Primer
127 pairs used are listed in the **Table S1**.

128 *ERK1/2 activation analysis*

129 HEK293 cells were transfected with wild type or Ala645Val FGFR1-expressing
130 plasmids or both by using lipofectamine (Thermo Fisher Scientific) according to the
131 manufacturer's instruction. At 24 h after transfection, cells were grown in serum-free
132 medium for 24 h, and then incubated in the absence or presence of 1nM FGF2
133 (Peprotech) for 15 min, as previously reported in ref. no. 14. Cells were then lysed in a
134 buffer containing phospho STOP and proteinase inhibitor cocktail (Roche). Proteins
135 were separated on 10% SDS-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis, transferred onto
136 nitrocellulose membrane and subjected to immunoblotting with ERK1/2 and
137 phosphorylated ERK1/2 antibodies (Cell Signalling Technology), anti-myc (Sigma),
138 anti-actin (Santa Cruz). To analyze the reactive ERK1/2 phosphorylation level, bands
139 intensity of phosphorylated ERK1/2 and total ERK1/2 was quantified using Image J
140 software, and the ratio of pERK1/2 to total ERK1/2 was calculated.

141 *Effect of FGF-2 on c-Fos induction and RNA extraction*

142 HEK293 cells were transfected with wild type or Ala645Val FGFR1-expressing
143 plasmids or both by using lipofectamine (Thermo Fisher Scientific) according to the
144 manufacturer's instruction. At 24 h after transfection, cells were cultured for 18 h in low
145 serum medium and then incubated in the absence or presence of 0.5 nM FGF2 for 1 h,
146 as previously reported in ref. no. 15. Total RNA was extracted using mini RNase kit
147 reagent (Qiagen), treated with DNase-RNase free (Qiagen) and reverse-transcribed
148 using Quantitect Transcription kit (Qiagen) according to the manufacturer's
149 instructions.

150 *Quantitative Real Time PCR*

151 Oligos for qPCR were designed using the Primer express program (16) with default
152 parameters. *GAPDH* and *ACTIN* were used as reference genes. Primer pairs used are
153 listed in the **Table S1**. Reactions were run in triplicate in 10 ul of final volume with 10
154 ng of sample cDNA, 0.3 mM of each primer, and 1XPower SYBR Green PCR Master
155 Mix (Termo Fisher Scientific-Applied Biosystems). Reactions were set up in a 384-
156 wells plate format with a Biomeck 2000 (Beckmann Coulter) and run in an ABI
157 Prism7900HT (Termo Fisher Scientific-Applied Biosystems) with default amplification
158 conditions. Raw Ct values were obtained using SDS 2.3 (Applied Biosystems).
159 Calculations were carried out by the comparative Ct method as reported in (17).
160 Significance was determined by a two-tailed unpaired t test for means.

161 *Autophagy assay*

162 HEK293 cells were transfected with wild type or Ala645Val FGFR1-expressing
163 plasmids by using lipofectamine (Thermo Fisher Scientific) according to the
164 manufacturer's instruction. At 24 h after transfection, cells were cultured in the absence
165 or presence of 25ng/ml FGF-2 for 2 h, as previously reported in (18). Cells were then
166 lysed in a buffer containing proteinase inhibitor cocktail (Roche). Autophagy was
167 analyzed by detecting the LC3-II and Beclin protein markers. GAPDH was used as
168 reference protein. 12% of SDS-PAGE gels were used to clearly separate the LC3-I and
169 LC3-II bands.

170 **Results**

171 *Clinical report*

172 The patient was a 12-year-old boy from healthy and unrelated parents. He was born at
173 term from an uneventful pregnancy. Birth parameters were unknown. Neonatal period

174 was unremarkable, but the mother reported that some minor foot deformities were noted
175 at birth. He said first words at 12 months, but language development was delayed. For
176 this, he requested speech therapy and psychomotricity since the 2 years of age, and
177 started to say simple sentences at 8 years. At the time of examination, he still showed
178 poor language and dysarthria. Autonomous walking appeared at 15 months. The patient
179 suffered of moderate intellectual disability. Recurrent episodes of unexplained laughing
180 were registered by the parents and were also appreciated at examination. Sleep
181 problems were never reported. Primary dentition was normal, but only five permanent
182 teeth were erupted at 12 years. Absence of multiple (>6) tooth gems was evident at
183 orthopantomographic X-rays (oligodontia of the permanent dentition). Diabetes insipidus was
184 first suspected at 4 months, but a final diagnosis of hypodipsia-hypernatremia syndrome
185 was established at 10 years. Full endocrinological assessment excluded any other
186 disorder of the hypothalamic-hypophyseal axis at 12 years. Febrile convulsions and
187 infections of the upper airways recurred several times during infancy. At 10 years, the
188 patient underwent bilateral orchidopexis.

189 At examination, height was 138.6 cm (3rd-10th centile), weight 41 kg (25-50^o centile)
190 and head circumference 52 cm (10th centile). Facial gestalt was unremarkable. Oral
191 cavity exploration showed retention of multiple primary teeth and amelogenesis
192 imperfecta. Hard and soft palate was intact. Both hands had five rays. Fingers were
193 short with broad tips and small nails (Fig. 1A). The left foot had four apparently well-
194 formed, but slightly shortened toes, and partial cutaneous syndactyly of the second and
195 third toes (Fig. 1B). Central toes of the right foot appeared rudimentary and partially
196 fused (Fig. 1C). Testes and penis were small. Gait was ataxic with a broad base. Plain
197 radiographs of hands and feet showed brachydactyly of hands with short and broad

198 metacarpals, shortened middle phalanx of the fifth fingers, bifid appearance of the distal
199 phalanx of the left third finger, four rays on the left foot, inverted “Y” synostosis of the
200 third and fourth metatarsals and rudimentary bones of the third toe of the right foot (Fig.
201 1D-F). Brain MRI demonstrated agenesis of the anterior part of the corpus callosum and
202 partial fusion of the frontal lobes, compatible with lobar holoprosencephaly (Fig. 1G-I).
203 The suspicion of HS was put forward.

204 *Identification of a novel missense FGFR1 variant*

205 WES detected a novel heterozygous missense variant in exon 14 of *FGFR1* (*FGFR1*:
206 NM_023110.2: c.1934C>T), predicted to cause the p.(Ala645Val) amino acid
207 substitution (Fig. 1J, K). This result was confirmed by Sanger sequencing of proband’s
208 and parents’ DNA. The variant originated *de novo* as it was not detected in both parents.
209 The c.1934C>T variant is not reported in major databases, including EcAC and
210 gnomAD and this suggests that the identified variant is a rare event. Variants identified
211 in other genes associated with holoprosencephaly were filtered and excluded according
212 to American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics guidelines (**Table S2**).
213 Affected residue is evolutionarily conserved (GERP++_RS score = 5.9;
214 phyloP100way_vertebrate score = 10.003; phyloP100way_mammalian score = 0.902;
215 phastCons100way_vertebrate score = 1,000; SiPhy_29way_logOdds = 20.270) and is
216 located in the FGFR1 intracellular kinase domain (Fig. 1K, L) (2).

217 *Ala645Val FGFR1 has dominant-negative effect*

218 Under normal conditions, FGFR1 signaling is triggered by growth factors, such as
219 fibroblast growth factor 2 (FGF2), leading to receptor dimerization and
220 transphosphorylation of FGFR1. Activated FGFR1 induces several downstream

221 pathways including the RAS/ERK1/2 signaling, a serine/threonine-selective protein
222 kinase involved in the regulation of fundamental biological processes such as
223 proliferation, survival, and differentiation. In order to evaluate whether the Ala645Val
224 variant affects the function of FGFR1, we measured the receptor activity in HEK293
225 cell lines exogenously expressing wild type or Ala645Val FGFR1 by monitoring the
226 phosphorylation level of endogenous ERK1/2. As expected, the phosphorylation of
227 ERK1/2 induced by FGF2 in cells transfected with wild type FGFR1-expressing vector
228 (Fig. 2A, lane 6; Fig. 2B) was higher than in cells transfected with an empty vector and
229 in non-treated cells (Fig. 2A, lane 2 and 5, respectively; Fig. 2B). Interestingly, the
230 FGF2-induced ERK1/2 phosphorylation in cells transfected with Ala645Val FGFR1-
231 expressing plasmid (Fig. 2A, lane 8; Fig. 2B) was lower than in cells transfected with
232 wild type FGFR1 (Fig. 2A, lane 6; Fig. 2B). Indeed, the phosphorylation of ERK1/2
233 elicited by FGF2 was significantly reduced when Ala645Val FGFR1 was co-expressed
234 with the wild type FGFR1 (Fig. 2A, lane 10; Fig. 2B), compared to cells transfected
235 with wild type FGFR1 (Fig. 2A, lane 6; Fig. 2B). These data suggested that Ala645Val
236 FGFR1 expression resulted in a receptor activity deregulation, probably acting in a
237 dominant-negative manner. To better address whether Ala645Val FGFR1 variant
238 affects the activity of the receptor, we profiled the endogenous expression level of *c-*
239 *Fos*, a direct known transcriptional target of FGF2/FGFR1 axis (19), in HEK293 cell
240 lines expressing wild type or Ala645Val FGFR1 or wild type plus Ala645Val FGFR1.
241 We found that in response to FGF2 treatment, *c-Fos* expression in mutated FGFR1
242 expressing cells was significantly lower than in cells transfected with wild type FGFR1
243 (Fig. 2C). A significant reduction of *c-Fos* transcriptional level was also detected in
244 cells co-transfected with both wild type and mutated FGFR1. Altogether, our data

245 suggested that Ala645Val FGFR1 might interfere with the function of wild type
246 receptor in inducing ERK1/2 phosphorylation.

247 *Ala645Val FGFR1 role in autophagy process*

248 Recent findings provide a novel direct role of FGF2/FGFR1 signaling in the regulation
249 of autophagy flux in cancer. In particular, FGF2/FGFR1 inhibition contributes to the
250 induction of autophagy by Beclin-1 upregulation, which is mediated, at least in part,
251 through inhibiting ERK1/2 pathway (18). In this regard, to better explore the biological
252 impact of the novel variant, we investigated whether Ala645Val FGFR1 affects
253 autophagy flux by exploring its effect on the levels of the autophagosome-associated
254 lipidated form of LC3 and Beclin-1, which are the major autophagy-related proteins, in
255 FGF2-treated HEK293 cells. In our model, FGF2 stimulation resulted in an increase of
256 LC3-II lipidated form (50%) and a slight enhancement of Beclin-1 (20%) in cells
257 expressing Ala645Val FGFR1 in comparison with cells containing exogenous wild type
258 FGFR1 (Fig. 2D, E, S1). According to Yuan et al. (18), our preliminary finding
259 suggests a functional implication of FGFR1 in the autophagic process.

260 **Discussion**

261 We report a further case of HS caused by a novel *FGFR1* variant falling within the
262 cytoplasmic tyrosine kinase domain. Compared to previously published patients, our
263 case shows the typical features pathognomonic of HS (1).

264 To date, 20 HS individuals (including ours) from 17 families with variants in *FGFR1*
265 have been described (2-3; 20-25) (**Table S3**). Biallelic variants compatible with
266 autosomal recessive inheritance were demonstrated in two cases (2), while
267 heterozygosity for a single variant is observed in the remaining. *De novo*/sporadic origin

268 was registered in 13 of the 15 dominant families, while germinal mosaicism explained
269 recurrence in one pedigree (20; 22). The heterozygous c.1460G>A (p.(Gly487Asp))
270 variant inherited from an unaffected parent is described in two further sibs, in whom
271 synergy (digenic inheritance?) with a concurrent *FGF8* 15 bp deletion transmitted by
272 the other unaffected parent is proposed (3). Fifteen *FGFR1* variants were novel, while a
273 single variant recurred in two families (3; 20). The residues Gly487, Asp623 and
274 Asn628 might be mutational hot-spots, as they were involved twice by different amino
275 acid changes. Twelve (75%) variants, including ours, affect the tyrosine kinase domain
276 and 4 (25%) the Ig-like domains; among the latter, two fell in the Ig-like domain D2,
277 one in the domain D3 and the remaining close to domain D3 (Fig. 1K). Available data
278 do not allow any genotype-phenotype correlations. In particular, no significant
279 difference is appreciated among individuals carrying variants within the cytoplasmic
280 tyrosine kinase domain compared to those with variants in the extracellular Ig domains
281 (Fig. 1K; **Table S3**). However, the two individuals with recessive variants were more
282 severely affected and died at the age of 4-5 years (1). It will be interesting to see if this
283 clustering within the *FGFR1* structure and the lack of genotype-phenotype correlation
284 will persist in publications of other HS cases.

285 Our functional studies support a dominant-negative effect for Ala645Val *FGFR1*
286 variant. In fact, they highlighted that the phosphorylation status of ERK1/2 and the
287 expression profile of *c-Fos* were significantly perturbed in FGF2-treated cells
288 expressing Ala645Val *FGFR1* or co-expressing Ala645Val *FGFR1* with the wild type
289 one, in comparison with control cells. This suggests that an altered Ala645Val *FGFR1*
290 receptor activity is the possible molecular mechanism underlying HS in our case. Our
291 findings are perfectly in line with an elegant study showing that the HS-specific *FGFR1*

292 variants, which cluster in the kinase domain, exhibit a dominant-negative function when
293 modeled in zebrafish; a fact which well explains the craniofacial, brain and limb
294 anomalies typical of HS (3).

295 In our study, we also suggested, for the first time, that deregulation of autophagy might
296 underlie a developmental disorder linked to *FGFR1*. Autophagy is a catabolic process
297 that plays a fundamental part in tissue homeostasis (26). Therefore, its involvement in
298 the pathogenesis of different birth defects is probable. Accordingly, several studies have
299 shown that FGF/FGFR-signaling axis regulates autophagy and, in this way, plays a
300 crucial role in cell differentiation, heart development, bone growth, and musculoskeletal
301 system (27-30).

302 In a recent study on cancer, Yuan and co-authors showed that autophagy is induced in
303 FGFR1-amplified non-small cell lung cancer cells after pharmacological or genetic
304 inhibition of FGFR1 (18). This effect is dependent on Beclin-1 through suppressing
305 ERK/MAPK pathway. In line with these results, our preliminary functional studies in
306 mammalian cell lines demonstrated that mutated Ala645Val FGFR1 overexpression
307 resulted in an increase of Beclin-1 levels and autophagosome-associated lipidated form
308 of LC3, when compared to wild type FGFR1. These data allow us to hypothesize that
309 key amino acid changes in the tyrosine kinase domain of FGFR1 might deregulate
310 autophagy and, thus, contribute to generate the developmental anomalies characterizing
311 HS.

312 In conclusion, we identified a further HS case caused by a novel *de novo* variant, which
313 expands the *FGFR1* mutational spectrum and associates with a dominant-negative
314 effect by *in vitro* studies. This is also the first report providing initial insights on
315 autophagy as a molecular mechanism possibly underlying HS. If confirmed by further

316 studies with different experimental approaches and patient cell lines, these data could
317 open the path to novel research projects exploring tailored therapeutic approaches for
318 HS.

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329 **Author contributions**

330 P.P., L.M. and M.Cas. designed the study and wrote the manuscript. P.P, M.Car. and
331 T.B. performed exome sequencing and bioinformatic analysis. L.M. and G.N. carried
332 out the functional assays. L.M., R.M., M.Cas., and E.D.S. interpreted functional data.
333 M.Cas., A.P., and M.C.S. provided clinical evaluation of the patient. All authors
334 contributed to the writing and reviewing and approved the main manuscript text.

335

336 **Conflict of interest**

337 All authors declare that there is no conflict of interest concerning this work.

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339 Supplementary information is available at EJHG's website
340

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446 **Title and legends to Figures**

447 **Figure 1.** Clinical features and molecular findings. (A) Brachydactyly with broad
448 fingertips and short nails. (B) Left foot with four toes, brachydactyly II-IV and partial
449 cutaneous syndactyly II-III. (C) Right foot presenting cutaneous syndactyly and severe
450 brachydactyly II-IV. (D) Radiograph of the left hand showing short metacarpals,
451 shortened middle phalanx of the fifth finger, and bifid distal phalanx of the third finger.
452 (E) Radiograph of the left foot with four rays, malformed metatarsal of the second toe,
453 absence of the middle phalanx of the fifth toe, and partial synostosis of the middle and
454 distal phalanges of the second toe. (F) Radiograph of the right foot with inverted “Y”
455 synostosis of the third and fourth metatarsal, rudimentary bones of the third toe, and
456 absence of the middle phalanx of the fifth toe. Brain MRI with absence of the anterior
457 part of the corpus callosum on the sagittal scan (G; asterisk indicates the absence of the
458 genu and rostrum of the corpus callosum), and partial fusion of the frontal lobes on
459 axial (H) and coronal scans (I; arrows indicate midline fusion of the frontal lobes in
460 both scans). (J) Sanger sequencing showing the c.1934C>T nucleotide change in
461 *FGFR1*. (K) Diagram showing the structure of *FGFR1* and the secondary structure of
462 the protein. Coding regions are in black, UTR sequences are in gray, introns are not to
463 scale. Previously identified and the novel variants associated with Hartsfield syndrome
464 are located on the protein structure. The amino acid change identified in this work is in
465 red. CT, C-terminal-tail; IgI-III, immunoglobulin-like domains; JM, juxtamembrane
466 domain; TD, transmembrane domain, TK, tyrosine kinase domain. (L) Conservation of
467 the involved amino acid (Ala645) among species.

468 **Figure 2.** Ala645Val FGFR1 impairs ERK1/2 signaling pathway and autophagy flux.

469 (A) HEK293 cells were transfected with empty vector (lanes 1,2), wild type FGFR1

470 (lanes 3-6) and Ala645Val FGFR1-expressing plasmids (lanes 7,8) or wild type plus
471 Ala645Val FGFR1 plasmids (lanes 9,10). At 24 h after transfection, cells were grown in
472 serum-free medium for 24 h, and then incubated in the absence (lanes 1,3,5,7,9) or
473 presence of 1nM FGF2 (lanes 2,4,6,8,10) for 15 min. After incubation with FGF2, the
474 phosphorylated ERK1/2 was analyzed by SDS-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis using
475 indicated antibodies. Actin was used as loading control. (B) Quantitative analysis of
476 ERK1/2 phosphorylation in cells transfected with indicated vectors. Protein levels were
477 quantified by densitometry. The relative ERK1/2 phosphorylation level in cells
478 transfected with the vector expressing wild type FGFR1 was set as 1. Bar represents the
479 average of three independent experiments and scale bars represent standard errors.
480 * $P < 0.05$. (C) qPCR was performed to measure the *c-Fos* endogenous expression in
481 HEK293 cells transfected with indicated plasmids and cultured in the absence or
482 presence of 0.5 nM FGF2 for 1 h. The relative *c-Fos* expression in cells transfected with
483 the empty vector was set as 1. Scale bars represent standard errors. *** $P < 0.01$. (D)
484 Whole protein lysates of HEK293 cells transfected with empty vector, wild type or
485 Ala645Val FGFR1-expressing plasmids and cultured in the absence or presence of 25
486 ng/ml FGF2 for 2 h, were separated on 12% SDS- gel and subjected to immunoblotting
487 with LC3 and Beclin-1 antibodies (low and high exposure). The autophagy flux was
488 monitored by the conversion of LC3-I to its lipidated form, LC3-II. GAPDH was used
489 as loading control. The same lysates were separated on 7.5% SDS- gel for
490 immunoblotting with anti-Myc. (E) Quantification of LC3-II levels. Graph shows
491 averages calculated on two different experiments and scale bars represent standard
492 errors. * $P < 0.05$.

493 **Figure S1.** Quantification of Beclin-1 levels. Graph shows averages calculated on two
494 different experiments and scale bars represent standard errors. $P=0.06$.

Figure 1

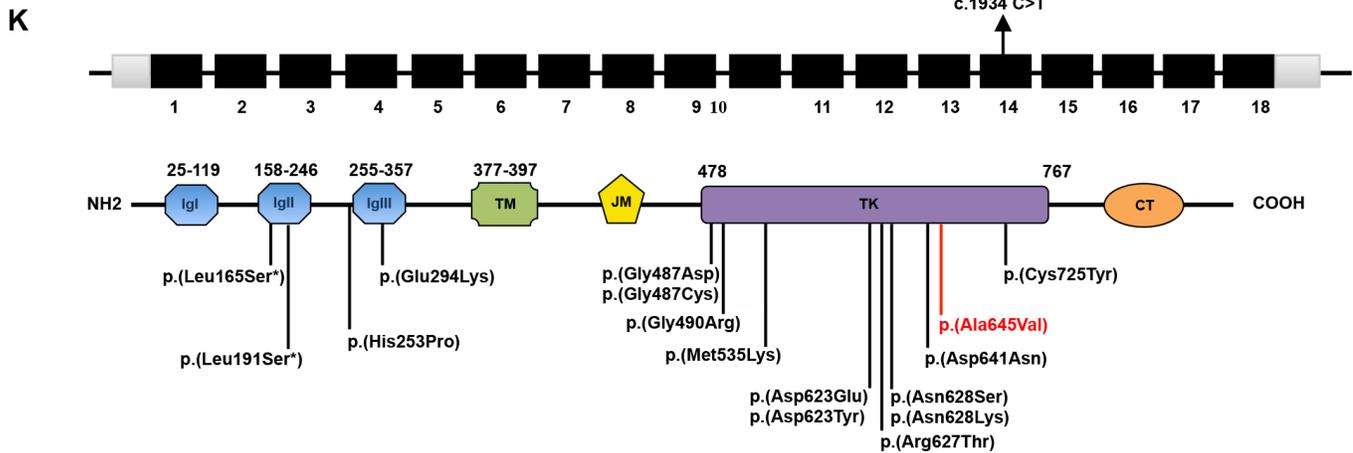
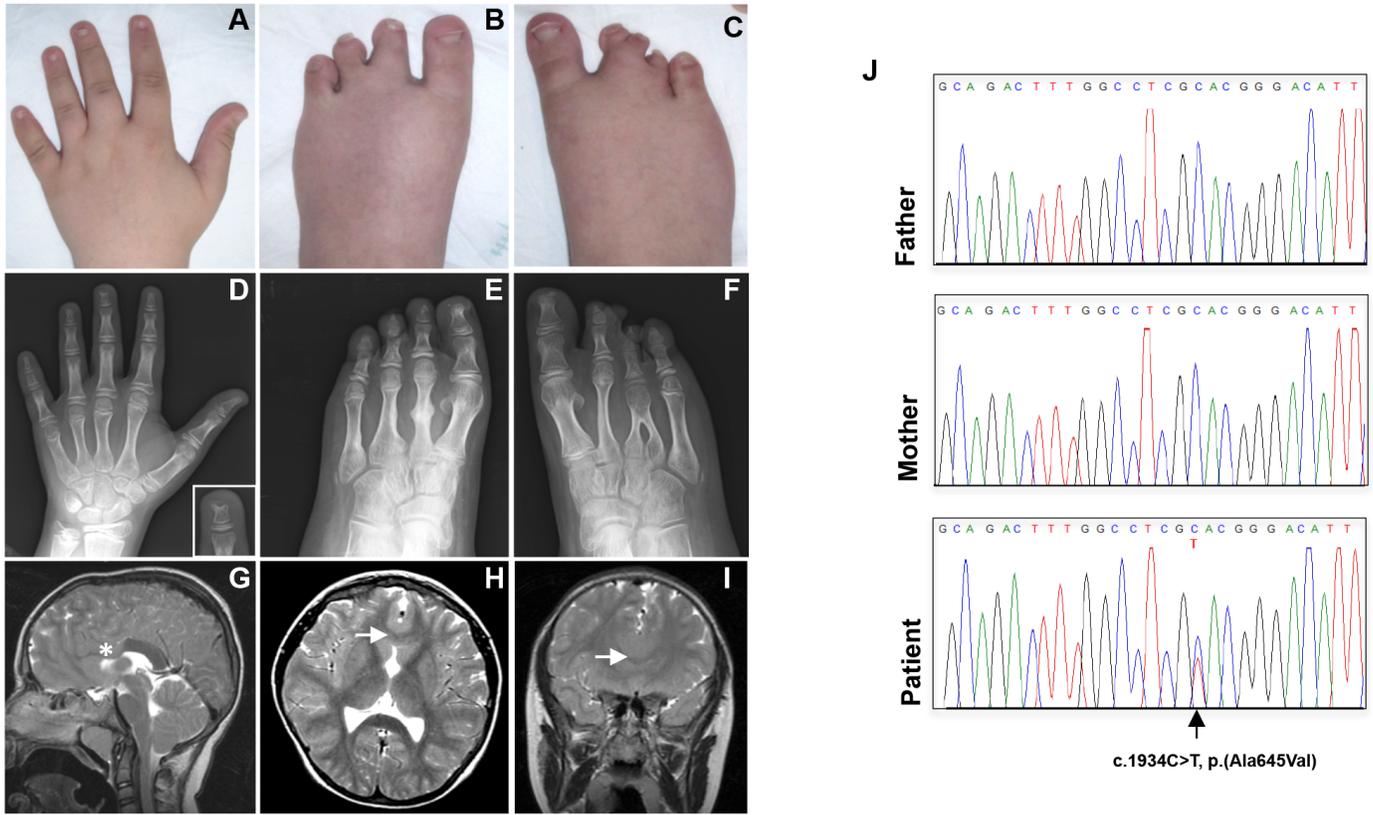


Figure 1L shows a sequence alignment of the protein across different species. The alignment is as follows:

Species	Sequence
<i>Homo sapiens</i>	VSCAYQVARGMEYLASKKCIHRDLAARNVLVTEDEVMIADFG LRDIHHIDYYKKT NGRLPVKWMPEALFDRIYTHQSDVWSFGVLLWEIF
<i>Gorilla gorilla</i>	VSCAYQVARGMEYLASKKCIHRDLAARNVLVTEDEVMIADFG LRDIHHIDYYKKT NGRLPVKWMPEALFDRIYTHQSDVWSFGVLLWEIF
<i>Mus musculus</i>	VSCAYQVARGMEYLASKKCIHRDLAARNVLVTEDEVMIADFG LRDIHHIDYYKKT NGRLPVKWMPEALFDRIYTHQSDVWSFGVLLWEIF
<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>	VSCAYQVARGMEYLASKKCIHRDLAARNVLVTEDEVMIADFG LRDIHHIDYYKKT NGRLPVKWMPEALFDRIYTHQSDVWSFGVLLWEIF
<i>Zebrafish</i>	VSCAYQVARGMEYLASKKCIHRDLAARNVLVTEDEVMIADFG LRDIHHIDYYKKT NGRLPVKWMPEALFDRIYTHQSDVWSFGVLLWEIF
<i>Drosophila melanogaster</i>	KKFAHQIARGMDYLASRRCIHRDLAARNVLVSDDYVLKIADFG LRDIQSTDYRKNT NGRLPIKWMAPESLQEKFYDSKSDVWSYGILLWEIM

Figure 2

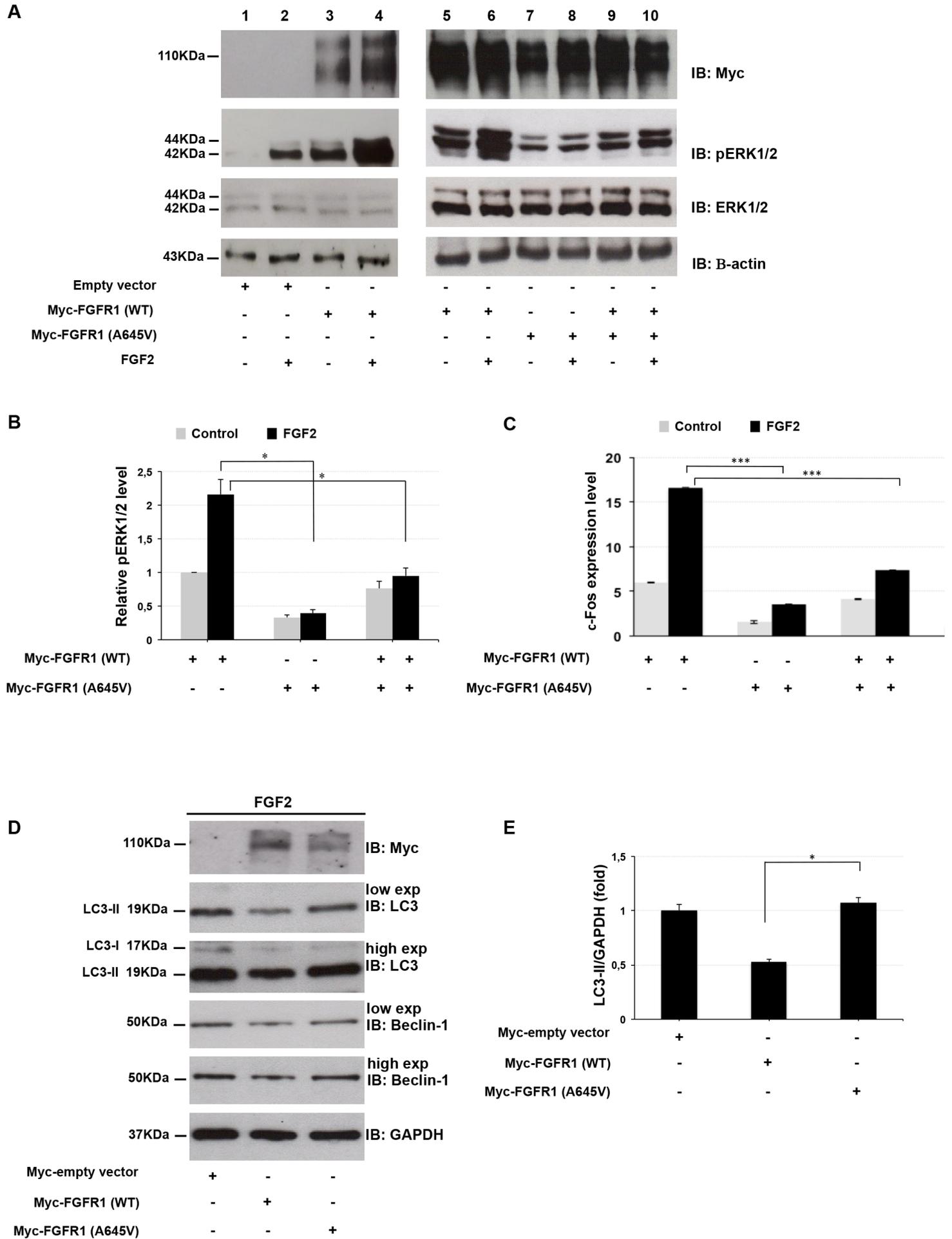


Figure S1

