

1 **Lobular carcinomas *in situ* display intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity and clonal evolution in the**  
2 **progression to invasive lobular carcinoma**

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22  
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25

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33

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35 **ABSTRACT (Word count: 248)**

36 **Purpose:** Lobular carcinoma *in situ* (LCIS) is a pre-invasive lesion of the breast. We sought to define  
37 its genomic landscape, whether intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity is present in LCIS, and the clonal  
38 relatedness between LCIS and invasive breast cancers.

39 **Experimental Design:** We reanalyzed whole-exome sequencing (WES) data and performed a targeted  
40 amplicon sequencing validation of mutations identified in 43 LCIS and 27 synchronous more clinically-  
41 advanced lesions from 24 patients (nine ductal carcinomas *in situ* (DCIS), 13 invasive lobular  
42 carcinomas (ILCs) and five invasive ductal carcinomas (IDCs)). Somatic genetic alterations, mutational  
43 signatures, clonal composition and phylogenetic trees were defined using validated computational  
44 methods.

45 **Results:** WES of 43 LCIS lesions revealed a genomic profile similar to that previously reported for  
46 ILCs, with *CDH1* mutations present in 81% of the lesions. Forty-two percent (18/43) of LCIS were found  
47 to be clonally-related to synchronous DCIS and/or ILCs, with clonal evolutionary patterns indicative of  
48 clonal selection and/or parallel/branched progression. Intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity was higher  
49 among LCIS clonally-related to DCIS/ILC than in those non-clonally related to DCIS/ILC. A shift from  
50 aging to APOBEC-related mutational processes was observed in the progression from LCIS to DCIS  
51 and/or ILC in a subset of cases.

52 **Conclusions:** Our findings support the contention that LCIS has a repertoire of somatic genetic  
53 alterations similar to that of ILCs, and likely constitutes a non-obligate precursor of breast cancer. Intra-  
54 lesion genetic heterogeneity is observed in LCIS and should be considered in studies aiming to develop  
55 biomarkers of progression from LCIS to more advanced lesions.

56 **TRANSLATIONAL RELEVANCE (Word count: 127)**

57 We investigated the somatic genetic alterations affecting all protein coding genes in lobular carcinoma  
58 *in situ* (LCIS) and synchronously diagnosed ductal carcinomas *in situ* (DCIS) and invasive lobular (ILC)  
59 or ductal carcinomas (IDC). Our analyses revealed that LCIS is a genetically advanced lesion, often  
60 displaying intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity, with minor subclones of LCIS becoming the dominant  
61 clone in ILCs. An APOBEC-related mutational signature coupled with overexpression of *APOBEC3B*  
62 was found to be present in LCIS subclones progressing to more advanced lesions. Our findings support  
63 the notion that LCIS is a non-obligate precursor of ILC, and suggest that the development of robust  
64 molecular predictors of the risk of LCIS progression/evolution into more aggressive forms of breast  
65 cancer may benefit from the assessment of intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity in LCIS.

## 66 INTRODUCTION

67 Lobular carcinoma *in situ* (LCIS) is a pre-invasive lesion of the breast, which is often multifocal and  
68 bilateral (1). Over the last three decades, LCIS has been clinically perceived as a risk indicator and  
69 managed accordingly (1). There is, however, burgeoning phenotypic and genetic evidence to suggest  
70 that LCIS is a non-obligate precursor of invasive breast cancer, akin to ductal carcinoma *in situ* (DCIS)  
71 (2).

72

73 LCIS and invasive lobular carcinomas (ILCs) are phenotypically and genetically similar. Both lesions  
74 are preferentially of the luminal A molecular subtype (i.e. estrogen receptor (ER)-positive, HER2-  
75 negative, low-grade and low-proliferation), and harbor recurrent gains of 1q and losses of 16q,  
76 encompassing the *CDH1* gene locus, as well as recurrent *CDH1* somatic mutations (1,3-7). In fact, loss  
77 of E-cadherin, the protein product of the *CDH1* gene, is a hallmark feature of these lesions (3,6) and  
78 has been shown to result in the development of ILCs in conditional mouse models (8). Analyses of the  
79 genomic features of ILCs by The Cancer Genome Atlas consortium (TCGA) (6) and individual  
80 investigators (9) have revealed the genes most commonly mutated in this subtype of breast cancer,  
81 and identified molecular differences between invasive ductal carcinomas (IDCs) of no special type and  
82 ILCs, including a higher rate of *FOXA1* mutations and a lower rate of *GATA3* mutations in those with  
83 lobular histology. Additional whole-exome (WES) (7) and targeted (10) sequencing analyses focused  
84 on paired LCIS and ILCs demonstrated comparable rates of mutations affecting *CDH1*, *PIK3CA* and  
85 *CBFB*, among other genes.

86

87 Previous studies have demonstrated that synchronous LCIS and invasive breast cancers may be  
88 clonally related and share a common ancestral lesion (4,7,10). In most studies, however, clonal  
89 relatedness was inferred using limited genomic information derived from copy number (4) or targeted  
90 sequencing analyses (10). By combining copy number and WES data, Begg *et al.* provided evidence of  
91 clonal relatedness between LCIS and associated lesions (7). These studies, however, did not

92 investigate the basis of the clonal relatedness between LCIS and ILC, and whether the progression  
93 from LCIS to ILC would involve the selection of specific subclones or happen through multiclonal  
94 invasion (11,12). Given that not only invasive breast cancers (13) but also pre-invasive lesions (11)  
95 may be genetically heterogeneous at diagnosis, and that tumor progression/stromal invasion may stem  
96 from clonal selection (11,13), it is plausible that LCIS may display intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity  
97 and that the progression from LCIS to more clinically advanced lesions, such as DCIS or invasive  
98 breast cancer, may result from the selection of pre-existing subclones.

99

100 Here, we performed a re-analysis of WES data generated from a unique series of frozen LCIS samples  
101 from prospectively accrued, consecutive patients subjected to prophylactic or therapeutic mastectomy,  
102 previously published by Begg *et al.* (7). We performed a high-depth targeted capture sequencing  
103 validation of the mutations identified by WES in that study, using the same DNA samples and employed  
104 state-of-the-art bioinformatics algorithms with a Bayesian clustering model (PyClone) to infer subclone  
105 structure and with construction of clone based phylogeny, seeking to define the clonal composition and  
106 mutational processes in LCIS synchronously diagnosed with ILC, DCIS and/or IDC, and to ascertain  
107 whether changes in the clonal composition are observed in the progression from LCIS to DCIS or ILC.

108

## 109 **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

### 110 **Subjects and samples**

111 This study is based on the 24 cases with available WES out of the 30 cases previously subjected to  
112 microarray-based comparative genomic hybridization and/or WES by Begg *et al.* (7). Eight out of the 24  
113 cases included in this study were also included in the targeted sequencing analysis previously reported  
114 by Sakr *et al.* (10). The cases subjected to WES include 43 LCIS and 27 synchronous more clinically-  
115 advanced lesions (**Table 1**) (Supplementary Methods).

116

### 117 **Immunohistochemistry**

118 Immunohistochemistry for ER, progesterone receptor (PR) and HER2 was performed essentially as  
119 previously described (11) (Supplementary Methods), and analyzed according to the American Society  
120 of Clinical Oncology (ASCO)/ College of American Pathologists (CAP) guidelines (14,15).

121

## 122 **Whole-exome sequencing data analysis**

123 Previously-generated (7) WES data from tumor-normal DNA samples were retrieved and re-analyzed.  
124 Neoplastic samples were sequenced to a median depth of 192x (range 95x-369x) and matched normal  
125 samples were sequenced to a median depth of 154x (range 105x-238x; **Supplementary Table S1**).

126

127 WES data analysis was performed as described in *Ng et al.* (16) and detailed in the Supplementary  
128 Methods. In brief, after aligning the reads to the reference human genome GRCh37, somatic genetic  
129 alterations were detected using state-of the-art bioinformatics algorithms and filters were subsequently  
130 applied. In addition to the identification of single nucleotide variants (SNVs) and insertions and  
131 deletions (indels), for samples from a given patient, mutations that were identified in at least one  
132 sample were subsequently interrogated in all related samples (Supplementary Methods). Given that  
133 *CDH1* germline mutations have been shown to be causative of familial gastric and breast cancer  
134 syndrome (17), the germline DNA samples from each patient were evaluated for the presence of  
135 pathogenic *CDH1* germline mutations (Supplementary Methods). The potential functional effect of each  
136 somatic mutation was defined using a combination of mutation function predictors shown to have high  
137 negative predictive value (18), as previously described (19), and genes were annotated according to  
138 their presence in three cancer gene datasets, *Kandoth et al.* (20), the Cancer Gene Census (21) and  
139 *Lawrence et al.* (22). Allele-specific copy number alterations (CNAs) and loss of heterozygosity (LOH)  
140 for specific genes were defined using FACETS (23), as previously described (16), and purity and ploidy  
141 estimations were calculated using ABSOLUTE (24) (Supplementary Methods).

142

## 143 **Targeted amplicon re-sequencing validation of somatic mutations**

144 A validation of the mutations found with WES was performed for cases with sufficient DNA material  
145 (n=11), using a custom designed AmpliSeq panel on an Ion Torrent Personal Genome Machine. This  
146 validation was not included in *Begg et al.* (7). Out of 4,061 somatic mutations identified by WES, 1,796  
147 were investigated in five LCIS, five DCIS, eight ILCs, and two IDCs from cases 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12,  
148 13, 14 and 15. 1,492 (83%) mutations were successfully validated. Mutations that had sufficient  
149 coverage in the validation experiment (minimum of 50 reads) but were not validated (allele frequency  
150 <1%) were excluded from the list of mutations used in the downstream analyses.

151

### 152 **Clonality analysis**

153 To infer the clonal relatedness between synchronous lesions, we defined the “clonality index” (CI) as  
154 the probability of two lesions sharing mutations not expected to have co-occurred by chance based on  
155 a previously validated method (25) (Supplementary Methods).

156

### 157 **Clonal frequencies**

158 To estimate the clonal architecture and composition of the lesions from each patient, mutant allelic  
159 fractions from all somatic mutations were adjusted for tumor cell content, ploidy, local copy number and  
160 sequencing errors using PyClone, as previously described (26) (Supplementary Methods).

161

### 162 **Truncal and branch mutations**

163 For each patient displaying at least one LCIS sample clonally-related to other lesions (LCIS, DCIS or  
164 ILC), we categorized the mutations into truncal and branch using PyClone (26) (Supplementary  
165 Methods). Truncal mutations were defined as those concurrently present in the modal populations of all  
166 LCIS and their clonally-related other lesions from a given patient. Branch mutations were defined as  
167 those comprising all non-truncal mutations.

168

### 169 **Measure of diversity**

170 To quantitate the intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity of each sample analyzed, we used the Shannon  
171 diversity index (27) and Gini-Simpson index (28) (Supplementary Methods).

172

### 173 **Phylogenetic tree construction**

174 Maximum parsimony trees were built using binary presence/absence matrices built from the somatic  
175 genetic alterations, including synonymous and non-synonymous SNVs, indels and CNAs, within the  
176 clonally-related lesions from each patient, essentially as described by *Murugaesu et al.* (16,29)  
177 (Supplementary Methods). We have also employed Treeomics as an alternative approach for the  
178 reconstruction of phylogenetic trees (30). Treeomics reconstructs phylogenies using a Bayesian  
179 inference model and determines the probability that a variant is either present or absent in a given  
180 sample.

181

### 182 **Reverse transcription quantitative PCR (RT-qPCR)**

183 Total RNA was extracted using TRIZOL and reverse transcribed using SuperScript VILO Master Mix  
184 (Life Technologies, Thermo Fisher Scientific) according to the manufacturer's instructions from cases  
185 for which sufficient frozen tissue samples were available. RT-qPCR was performed to analyze the  
186 expression levels of *APOBEC3B*, *APOBEC3H* and *REV1* genes using TaqMan Assay-on-Demand  
187 (Supplementary Methods).

188

### 189 **Mutational frequencies of TCGA ILCs and luminal-A cancers**

190 TCGA luminal-A invasive breast cancers (31) and ILCs (6) and their mutations were retrieved from the  
191 "Final Full BRCA Sample Summary" and "Mutations - Publicly accessible MAF archives" at [https://tcga-](https://tcga-data.nci.nih.gov/docs/publications/brca_2012/)  
192 [data.nci.nih.gov/docs/publications/brca\\_2012/](https://tcga-data.nci.nih.gov/docs/publications/brca_2012/) and [https://tcga-](https://tcga-data.nci.nih.gov/docs/publications/brca_2015/)  
193 [data.nci.nih.gov/docs/publications/brca\\_2015/](https://tcga-data.nci.nih.gov/docs/publications/brca_2015/), including all non-silent, non-RNA mutations for 209  
194 luminal-A primary invasive breast cancers and 127 ILCs. Previous studies have demonstrated the

195 equivalence between the TCGA pipeline and the pipeline employed in this study for mutation detection  
196 (19,32).

197

### 198 **Mutational signatures**

199 To define the mutational signatures involved in the development of LCIS, DCIS and ILCs, we employed  
200 deconstructSigs (33) based on the set of mutational signatures “signature.cosmic” (34).

201

### 202 **Statistical analysis**

203 Analyses were performed using R. For comparisons between categorical variables, the Fisher’s exact  
204 test was employed, whereas for continuous variables, the Student’s t-test and Mann–Whitney U test  
205 were employed as appropriate. A hypergeometric test was performed to estimate the statistical  
206 significance of the enrichment for cancer genes (genes present in at least one of the cancer gene lists  
207 by *Lawrence et al. (Cancer 5000-S) (22)*, *Kandoth et al. (20)* and/or Cancer Gene Census (21); n=745)  
208 in the genes with truncal mutations (n=559) and branch mutations (n=2,452). For the hypergeometric  
209 test, the total number of genes in the genome used was 18,986, as defined as the number of protein-  
210 coding genes by the HUGO Gene Nomenclature Committee. The representation (enrichment) factors  
211 and the *P*-values of the hypergeometric tests were provided for the analyses performed. All tests were  
212 two-sided and *P*-values<0.05 were considered statistically significant, adjusted for multiple  
213 comparisons where specified.

214

## 215 **RESULTS**

### 216 **LCIS displays a repertoire of somatic genetic alterations consistent with those of ILCs and** 217 **luminal A-like breast cancers**

218 This study consists of a re-analysis of previously described WES data (7), followed by a previously  
219 unpublished targeted amplicon sequencing validation of approximately 1,800 selected mutations, from  
220 43 LCIS and synchronous DCIS (n=9), ILCs (n=13) or IDCs (n=5) from 24 patients (**Table 1**). Three

221 patients underwent bilateral mastectomy, one was therapeutic for bilateral breast cancer and two  
222 patients underwent contralateral prophylactic mastectomy; these three patients were found to have  
223 bilateral LCIS (**Table 1**). All LCIS lesions were of classic type and all DCIS were of intermediate nuclear  
224 grade. For those patients with invasive lesions, tumor size and ER, PR and HER2 status in invasive  
225 tumor cells are described in **Table 1**. Notably, all invasive carcinomas were ER-positive/HER2-  
226 negative.

227

228 Somatic mutation analysis of the 43 LCIS lesions revealed a median of 20 non-synonymous somatic  
229 mutations/lesion (range 5-333) and a mutation rate of 0.39 mutations/Mb (**Figs. 1A and 2A-D**),  
230 comparable to the number of non-synonymous somatic mutations and the mutation rates of 209  
231 luminal-A invasive breast cancers (31) and 127 ILCs (6) from TCGA (i.e. 27 somatic mutations/lesion  
232 (range 7-203) and 0.52 mutations/Mb in luminal-A and 29 somatic mutations/lesion (range 1-1,080) and  
233 0.56 mutations/Mb in ILCs; Mann–Whitney U test,  $P>0.1$ ). Consistent with the notion that *CDH1*  
234 inactivation is a driver of lesions with lobular histologic features (1), we observed pathogenic mutations  
235 affecting the *CDH1* gene in 35 of 43 (81%) LCIS, of which all but three were somatic; patient 13, who  
236 had three distinct foci of LCIS, was found to harbor a *CDH1* germline mutation. All but two *CDH1*  
237 mutations were coupled with loss of heterozygosity (LOH) of the wild-type allele (77% (33/43) of all  
238 LCIS analyzed, **Fig. 1A**). Moreover, all LCIS cases lacked E-cadherin expression by  
239 immunohistochemical analysis. LCIS lacking *CDH1* mutations did not harbor mutations or deletions  
240 affecting genes coding for additional proteins that comprise the cadherin-catenin complex, such as  
241 *CTNNB1* ( $\beta$ -catenin), *CTNNA1* ( $\alpha$ -catenin) or *CTNND1* (p120-catenin), nor somatic or germline genetic  
242 alterations in *RHOA* (**Supplementary Data File 1**), a gene that has been implicated in the biology of  
243 gastric cancer (35), and whose alterations result in neoplastic cells displaying discohesiveness akin to  
244 that caused by *CDH1* loss of function.

245

246 Additional genes identified by TCGA to be significantly mutated in ILCs (6), such as *PIK3CA*, *TBX3*,  
247 *FOXA1* and *MAP3K1*, were also found to be recurrently somatically mutated in LCIS (**Figs. 1A and**  
248 **2E**); however, *TP53* somatic mutations, and *PTEN* somatic mutations and homozygous deletions,  
249 present in 8%, 7%, and 6% of ILCs analyzed by TCGA (6), were not found in any of the LCIS analyzed  
250 here. Notably, *TP53* mutations were significantly more frequently found in luminal A invasive breast  
251 cancers from TCGA than in the LCIS analyzed here (12% (25/209) vs 0% (0/43), Fisher's exact test,  
252  $P=0.019$ , **Fig. 2E**). Moreover, genes identified by TCGA to be significantly mutated in luminal A  
253 invasive breast cancers, including *CBFB*, *GATA3*, *NCOR1* and *MED23* were also found be recurrently  
254 mutated in LCIS. Interestingly, however, *CBFB* was found to be mutated in 19% (8/43) of LCIS, a rate  
255 significantly higher than that in 2% (2/127) of ILCs and 2% (5/209) of luminal-A breast cancers from  
256 TCGA (Fisher's exact tests,  $P<0.01$ , **Fig. 2E**). Gene CNA analysis revealed recurrent losses of 16q and  
257 gains of 1q (**Fig. 1B**), a pattern also observed in ILCs (4,6) and luminal-A invasive breast cancers (31).  
258 Taken together, our findings demonstrate that LCIS synchronously diagnosed with more advanced  
259 lesions in this study is a genetically-advanced, neoplastic lesion often driven by E-cadherin loss of  
260 function, with a spectrum of somatic genetic alterations affecting genes commonly altered in ILCs and  
261 luminal-A invasive breast cancers.

262

### 263 **LCIS is often clonally-related to DCIS and ILCs**

264 WES of nine DCIS (a non-invasive precursor lesion perceived clinically to be more advanced than LCIS  
265 (36,37)), 13 ILCs, and five IDCs collected synchronously with the LCIS analyzed above demonstrated  
266 that overall these lesions displayed similar number of mutations/case, mutation rates, repertoires of  
267 CNAs and non-synonymous somatic mutations to those of the LCIS analyzed in this study (**Fig. 1, 2A-**  
268 **D**), with exception of *CDH1* somatic mutations that were exclusively found in LCIS and ILCs.

269

270 We reasoned that the somatic mutations and CNAs found in anatomically distinct foci of LCIS, ILC,  
271 DCIS and IDC could provide a basis for defining their clonal relatedness. Consistent with the analysis

272 reported by *Begg et al.* (7), but based on distinct bioinformatics and biostatistical approaches  
273 (Supplementary Methods), here we demonstrate that all multifocal LCIS originating in the same breast  
274 quadrant (8/8 samples, four patients; cases 4, 7, 9, 23) were clonally-related, harboring several  
275 identical somatic mutations and CNAs (**Fig. 3A, Supplementary Figs. S1-S3**). Sixty-seven percent  
276 (16/24) of multifocal LCIS affecting distinct quadrants of the breast were also clonally-related (**Fig. 3A**).  
277 Further, 10/13 (77%) ILCs and 5/9 (56%) DCIS samples were found to be clonally-related to at least  
278 one synchronous LCIS analyzed (**Fig. 3A**). Interestingly, none of the five IDCs studied were found to be  
279 clonally-related to a LCIS (**Fig. 3A**), however, in all three cases where synchronous DCIS and IDC  
280 samples were analyzed, the DCIS and IDC were found to be clonally-related (**Fig. 3A, Supplementary**  
281 **Figs. S1-S2**). As expected, no clonal relatedness was observed between lesions arising in distinct  
282 breasts (bilateral cases; **Fig. 3A, Supplementary Figs. S1-S2**). In addition, the clonal relatedness  
283 reported by *Sakr et al.* for the 8 pairs of LCIS and ILC were confirmed in this study (**Supplementary**  
284 **Table S2**).

285

286 Taken together, our findings indicate that the majority of multifocal LCIS lesions are clonally-related,  
287 and that the presence of these lesions in distinct quadrants of the breast does not predict their clonal  
288 relatedness. LCIS and synchronous DCIS and/or ILC are often clonally-related, corroborating the notion  
289 (4,7,38,39) that LCIS is a non-obligate precursor of more clinically-advanced lesions, in particular ILCs.  
290 Furthermore, no evidence of clonality between LCIS and IDC was observed here, suggesting that direct  
291 progression from *CDH1*-mutant LCIS to IDC is an uncommon biological phenomenon.

292

### 293 **LCIS foci displaying intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity are more likely to progress to ILCs**

294 Recent studies have demonstrated that intra-tumor genetic heterogeneity may be present in non-  
295 invasive lesions including DCIS (11,40) and pre-invasive lesions arising in other organs (e.g. of the  
296 esophagus)(41). In such cases, all neoplastic cells harbor the founder genetic events (i.e. truncal  
297 mutations) and subclonal populations of cancer cells display additional genetic alterations (i.e. branch

298 mutations)(42). We posited that LCIS would harbor intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity and that LCIS  
299 lesions when clonally-related to DCIS or ILC would be associated with a higher level of intra-lesion  
300 genetic heterogeneity than LCIS not clonally-related to more advanced lesions.

301

302 To test this hypothesis, we resolved the clonal composition of LCIS, DCIS and/or ILC samples by  
303 applying a Bayesian clustering model (PyClone (26)) to mutant allele fractions, incorporating tumor  
304 cellularity, ploidy and local copy number obtained from ABSOLUTE (24) and/or FACETS (23)  
305 (Supplementary Methods). This analysis revealed that all but two (89%; 16/18) LCIS clonally-related to  
306 DCIS/ILC but only 40% (10/25) of LCIS not clonally-related to DCIS/ILC displayed intra-lesion genetic  
307 heterogeneity at the sequencing depth analyzed (Fisher's exact test,  $P=0.0016$ , **Supplementary Figs.**  
308 **S4A-B**). These findings were further corroborated by an analysis of the Shannon and Gini-Simpson  
309 diversity indices (27,28,43), which demonstrated that as a group LCIS clonally-related to DCIS and/or  
310 ILC ( $n=18$ ) displayed significantly higher intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity than LCIS not clonally-  
311 related to more advanced lesions ( $n=25$ ) (Mann-Whitney U test,  $P=0.005$ , **Fig. 3B-C, Supplementary**  
312 **Figs. S4C-D**). Interestingly, in case 4, composed of two LCIS and one ILC, all sharing a common  
313 ancestor, the LCIS lesion displaying heterogeneity was found to be the likeliest direct precursor of the  
314 ILC (**Fig. 4A**).

315

316 Given the intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity observed in LCIS, in particular in those related to more  
317 advanced lesions, we sought to define whether the branch mutations found in these lesions would  
318 affect 'passenger' genes or genes significantly mutated in cancer (20-22). Contrary to the notion that  
319 heterogeneity would primarily affect passenger genetic events, both truncal and branch non-  
320 synonymous somatic mutations detected in LCIS clonally-related to the other lesions were found to  
321 target genes significantly enriched for known cancer drivers (20-22) (hypergeometric test,  
322 representation factor=2.09,  $P<0.01$ , and hypergeometric test, representation factor=1.5,  $P<0.01$ ,  
323 respectively; **Supplementary Figs. S4E-F**). Importantly, however, in agreement with previous multi-

324 region analyses that suggested that most of the driver genetic alterations are early truncal events  
325 (13,16,44), the enrichment for cancer genes was higher in the constellation of truncal than in branch  
326 mutations. Truncal mutations included genes found to be significantly mutated in ILCs and/or luminal-A  
327 invasive breast cancers, including *CDH1*, *PIK3CA*, *MAP3K1*, *CBFB*, *SF3B1*, *RUNX1* and *FOXA1*  
328 (**Supplementary Data File 1**), whereas branch mutations included *GATA3*, *PIK3CA*, *ERBB2* and  
329 *KMT2C*.

330

331 Given the clonal relatedness of LCIS with DCIS and ILC, we posited that progression from LCIS to  
332 DCIS/ILC could result in the selection of specific subclones harboring private genetic alterations  
333 (11,12,40). In 29% (4/14) of cases where LCIS was clonally-related to DCIS or ILC, we observed that a  
334 selected population from the LCIS became dominant in the respective DCIS or ILC (**Fig. 4**,  
335 **Supplementary Fig. S1**), whereas in the remaining 10 cases our findings suggested parallel  
336 progression between LCIS, DCIS and/or ILC. In two cases (cases 4 and 10), a minor subclone from a  
337 LCIS was the likeliest substrate for the development of the DCIS or the ILC (**Fig. 4**). In cases 1, 11 and  
338 16, the biological chronology of the LCIS and DCIS could not be resolved on the basis of the  
339 sequencing data available (**Supplementary Fig. S1**). Analysis of the genes affected by branch somatic  
340 mutations restricted to, or enriched in, the DCIS/ILC samples clonally-related to LCIS revealed that in  
341 the progression from LCIS to DCIS or ILC, known cancer driver genes were affected by somatic  
342 mutations (e.g. *MAP3K1* (2 cases), *RUNX1*, *NCOR1*, *ARID1A* and *TBX3* (2 cases)) or LOH of the wild-  
343 type allele (**Figs. 1 and Supplementary Fig. S4F, Supplementary Data File 1**).

344

345 Taken together, our results demonstrate that LCIS clonally-related to DCIS/ILC more frequently  
346 displays intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity than LCIS not clonally-related to more advanced lesions,  
347 that both truncal and branch mutations are enriched for known cancer drivers, and that known cancer  
348 genes are likely targeted by somatic genetic events in the progression from LCIS to more clinically  
349 advanced lesions.

350

**351 Shifts in mutational processes are linked to progression from LCIS to DCIS and ILCs**

352 There is evidence to suggest that the mutational processes that shape the mutational spectra of tumors  
353 may change during evolution (16,45). Hence, we sought to define whether changes in mutational  
354 spectra were observed in the transition from LCIS to DCIS/ILC. Given that truncal mutations are likely  
355 reflective of biological phenomena that took place prior to or during the development of LCIS, and that  
356 branch mutations in DCIS/ILC likely stem from mutational processes involved in tumor maintenance  
357 and progression, we compared the mutational spectrum of truncal and branch mutations in cases  
358 where LCIS was clonally-related to DCIS/ILC. Both truncal and branch mutations were found to be  
359 enriched for C>T transitions in the NpCpG context, consistent with a signature ascribed to aging (46),  
360 and C>G transversions and C>T transitions in the TpCpW context, suggestive of the mutational  
361 processes caused by APOBEC DNA cytosine deaminase activity (47); the latter being predominately  
362 found in the branch mutations of case 4 (**Fig. 5A**) and emerging in the DCIS of case 1 and ILC of case  
363 18 (**Fig. 5B-C**). Akin to the variations in mutational processes observed in the progression of other  
364 cancer types (29,45), in-depth analysis of cases 1, 4 and 18 revealed that a mutational process  
365 consistent with the APOBEC signature was active in the progression from LCIS to DCIS or ILC (**Fig. 5**).  
366 Moreover, the mRNA levels of *APOBEC3B*, a DNA cytosine deaminase that has been causally  
367 implicated in the development of APOBEC signature mutations in cancer (47,48), were significantly  
368 higher in samples displaying an APOBEC mutational process than in those displaying an aging  
369 signature (**Fig. 5D**). These observations combined to indicate that, at least in a subset of cases, the  
370 APOBEC mutational process is likely to be contributing to the development of more advanced lesions.

371

**372 DISCUSSION**

373 Here we provide direct evidence of the neoplastic and non-obligate precursor nature of at least a  
374 subset of LCIS. By performing a clonal decomposition and clonal relatedness analysis of LCIS and  
375 synchronously diagnosed DCIS, ILCs and/or DCIS, we have observed that LCIS can display intra-

376 lesion genetic heterogeneity and be clonally-related to DCIS and ILCs, whereas progression from LCIS  
377 to IDC is likely a rare event. Notably, LCIS clonally related to ILCs and/or DCIS were found to display  
378 higher levels of intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity than LCIS that were not clonally related to a more  
379 advanced lesion, and evidence of clonal selection in the progression from LCIS to ILCs and/or DCIS  
380 was documented in a subset of patients. In these patients, the APOBEC mutational process, which has  
381 been implicated in genetic instability and intra-tumor genetic heterogeneity, appears to be present later  
382 in the evolution of LCIS and may be involved in its progression to more advanced lesions. Interestingly,  
383 the samples enriched for APOBEC mutation process displayed higher expression levels of  
384 *APOBEC3B*, whose activity has been shown to be mutagenic (47). Therefore, one hypothesize that in a  
385 subset of LCIS, upregulation of *APOBEC3B* results in increased mutagenesis and intra-tumor genetic  
386 heterogeneity, ultimately promoting subclonal expansions and progression to ILC.

387

388 LCIS has been historically considered a less advanced lesion as compared to DCIS, and is usually  
389 managed conservatively, not mandating surgical excision (1). Accordingly, in the latest version of the  
390 TNM staging system, LCIS is no longer staged as an *in situ* carcinoma (pTis) as DCIS is (49). It should  
391 be noted that although we detected clonal relatedness between LCIS and DCIS, and the LCIS as the  
392 potential substrate for the development of the DCIS (i.e. case 10), the directionality of the evolution was  
393 not clear in three cases (i.e. cases 1, 11 and 16). Hence, we cannot rule out the possibility that in a  
394 subset of cases, LCIS may have arisen from a preexistent DCIS or a common precursor (e.g. flat  
395 epithelial atypia). In fact, due to the molecular similarities between low-grade LCIS and DCIS (2),  
396 inactivation of *CDH1* in a DCIS subclone would be the likeliest explanation for such a phenotypic shift.  
397 Bi-directional progression between lesions of lobular (atypical lobular hyperplasia and LCIS) and ductal  
398 phenotype (atypical ductal hyperplasia and DCIS) is entirely consistent with the proposed concept of a  
399 low nuclear grade breast neoplasia family (2), which encompasses a group of low-grade, ER-positive  
400 neoplasms of the breast that not uncommonly affect the same segment of the breast, if not the same  
401 terminal ductal-lobular unit, and share a remarkably similar genomic landscape, having concurrent 1q

402 gains and 16q losses, and *PIK3CA* mutations, as their genetic signature (2). Alternatively, both LCIS  
403 and DCIS might arise from a common precursor (i.e. case 1), such as flat epithelial atypia (2). Taken  
404 together, these findings support the notion that the progression of LCIS and DCIS might be  
405 bidirectional, or that these lesions may evolve in parallel from a common ancestor.

406

407 Our findings demonstrate that LCIS displays a genomic landscape comparable to that of invasive  
408 breast cancers of luminal A subtype (31) and/or of lobular histology (6), lesions unequivocally more  
409 advanced and that mandate therapeutic intervention. Akin to ILCs (6), LCIS harbors recurrent bi-allelic  
410 inactivation of *CDH1* (77%), and recurrent mutations affecting genes commonly mutated in breast  
411 cancer, including *PIK3CA*, *FOXA1* and *TBX3*, among other genes. It should be noted, however, that  
412 genetic alterations affecting *TP53* and *PTEN*, previously found as recurrent events in ILCs (6), were not  
413 identified in the LCIS samples analyzed in this study. These differences might be related to the fact that  
414 our cohort included only classic LCIS, but given that progression may occur via clonal selection, and  
415 that not only truncal, but also branch mutations are enriched for known cancer genes, it is plausible that  
416 acquisition of genetic alterations, including those resulting in inactivation of these two *bona fide* tumor  
417 suppressor genes, may play a role in the progression to ILC. Indeed, we (7,11) and others (13) have  
418 demonstrated previously that loss of *PTEN* may be associated in the progression from DCIS to IDC.

419

420 The finding that LCIS is unlikely clonally-related to IDCs is in contrast with previous publications,  
421 including that from *Begg et al.* (7), who reported two LCIS lesions clonally-related to IDCs based on a  
422 limited number of shared mutations (one and three mutations in Patients 9 and 14, respectively), which  
423 is substantially lower than the number of shared mutations observed in clonally-related LCIS-ILC or  
424 LCIS-DCIS lesions in this study (median 12, range 2-171). The mutations described by *Begg et al.* (7)  
425 found to be shared between LCIS and IDC samples may have constituted sequencing artifacts,  
426 germline mutations or common single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) (**Supplementary Table S2,**  
427 **Supplementary Data File 1**), as they were filtered out in our more conservative somatic mutation

428 analysis. Although we did not detect direct clonal relatedness between LCIS and IDC in this study, we  
429 cannot rule out the possibility that a subset of synchronous IDC and LCIS may share a common early  
430 precursor or that ductal lesions and LCIS may arise from a common earlier precursor lesion and  
431 undergo parallel evolution. In addition, it is also plausible that a subset of LCIS may stem from DCIS  
432 harboring 16q losses, but the *CDH1* inactivation takes place later in the evolution of the lesion.

433

434 Although our findings define LCIS as a non-obligate precursor of ILC, they do not imply that changes in  
435 the clinical management of patients presenting with LCIS are necessary, as the rate of subsequent  
436 breast cancer development in a large cohort of patients with a diagnosis of LCIS as reported by the  
437 SEER database demonstrates a risk of approximately 1% per year (50). Nonetheless, our study might  
438 provide a framework for the identification of markers to define LCIS cases that have a greater likelihood  
439 to progress. Although some of the pathologic characteristics of LCIS, such as volume of disease, are  
440 associated with a greater likelihood of progression to DCIS/ILC, there has yet to be a validated  
441 biomarker to predict the behavior of classic LCIS. Based on our results, one could posit that assessing  
442 the levels of intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity and/or *APOBEC3B* activity in LCIS may help select  
443 patients that should be counseled more proactively towards surgical excision and/or hormonal  
444 chemoprevention, akin to the current management of low- to intermediate-grade DCIS. Increasingly,  
445 treatment of early ER-positive breast cancer relies on pathologic features, tumor burden and genomic  
446 profiles; our findings suggest that with continued investigation a combination of clinical features,  
447 histologic classification, assessment of volume of disease and intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity may  
448 allow a more personalized risk assessment for patients with LCIS.

449

450 Our study has important limitations. The prospective accrual of frozen samples of LCIS adequate for  
451 detailed molecular studies is remarkably challenging; hence the sample size of the present study is  
452 small. In addition, our study may not be representative of incidental cases of LCIS, given that the  
453 patients included in this study were accrued in a prospective protocol for the multiregional sampling of

454 prophylactic and/or therapeutic mastectomies from patients with a previous diagnosis of LCIS.  
455 Moreover, we only performed WES analysis, hence we cannot rule out that non-coding alterations  
456 and/or epigenetic changes may play a role in the development and progression of LCIS. More  
457 comprehensive analyses may also be required to define the alternative drivers of *CDH1* wild-type LCIS.  
458 Finally, we used tumor bulk sequencing and state-of-the-art computational approaches to infer the  
459 clones present in each sample/case and their phylogeny. Single-cell sequencing analyses of LCIS and  
460 synchronous lesions are warranted to confirm our findings and provide direct evidence of the clonal  
461 composition of LCIS and of clonal selection in the evolution to more advanced lesions.

462

463 Despite these limitations, this proof-of-principle study demonstrates that LCIS is a neoplastic non-  
464 obligate precursor of DCIS and ILC, with a repertoire of somatic genetic alterations similar to that of  
465 ILCs and luminal-A invasive breast cancers, but lacking *TP53* and *PTEN* mutations. LCIS at diagnosis  
466 often displays intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity, and, in a subset of cases, the progression from LCIS  
467 to DCIS and ILC may involve the selection of clones, which may harbor distinct active mutational  
468 processes such as APOBEC. Our findings suggest that early documentation of intra-lesion genetic  
469 heterogeneity may be central to developing robust molecular predictors of the risk of LCIS  
470 progression/evolution into more aggressive forms of breast cancer.

471

#### 472 **DATA AVAILABILITY**

473 WES data have been deposited in the database of Genotypes and Phenotypes (dbGaP) under the  
474 accession phs001006.v1.p1.

475

#### 476 **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS**

477 DBS, BW, JSR-F and TAK conceived the study and supervised the work. RAS and TAK provided  
478 samples. DDG and JVSC reviewed the cases. Sample processing was performed by RAS, ADP, JVSC  
479 and RT. Massively parallel sequencing was carried out by AV. Bioinformatics analysis was performed

480 by JYL, MS, PS, RSL and CKYN. CKYN and JSR-F coordinated the bioinformatics analyses. JYL, MS,  
481 FCG, SP, CKYN, RAS and RSH performed data analysis and data interpretation. SP performed  
482 statistical analyses. JYL, FCG, BW and JSR-F wrote the first draft of the manuscript, which was initially  
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484

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**TABLE 1:** Clinico-pathologic characteristics of the 24 patients included in the study.

Case ID	Breast laterality	Frozen tissue blocks analyzed (n)	Type				Tumor size (invasive, mm)	Lymph node status	ER	PR	HER2	Sakr et al.	Begg et al.
			LCIS *	DCIS **	ILC	IDC							
1	Left	16	✓	✓			N/A	N/A	+	+	+	N	Y
2	Right	81	✓		✓		21	+	+	+	-	Y	Y
3	Left	52	✓	✓		✓	18	-	+	+	-	N	Y
4	Right	28	✓		✓		28	-	+	-	-	Y	Y
5	Left	27	✓		✓		23	-	+	+	-	N	Y
6	Left	28	✓		✓		16	+	+	+	-	N	Y
7	Left	27	✓	✓	✓	✓	15	-	+	+	-	N	Y
8	Left	26	✓		✓		60	+	+	+	-	Y	Y
9	Right	54	✓			✓	37	+	+	+	-	Y	Y
10	Left	24	✓	✓			N/A	N/A	+	+	-	N	Y
11	Right	97	✓	✓	✓		14	+	+	+	-	N	Y
12	Right	52	✓		✓		30	+	+	+	-	N	Y
13	Left	50	✓				N/A	N/A	+	+	-	N	Y
	Right		✓		✓		17	-	+	+	-	N	Y
14	Left	50	✓				N/A	N/A	+	+	-	N	Y
	Right		✓			✓	7.5	-	+	+	-	N	Y
15	Left	50	✓	✓		✓	18	+	+	+	-	N	Y
	Right		✓		✓		35	+	+	+	-	N	Y
16	Left	N/A	✓	✓			N/A	N/A	+	+	-	N	Y
17	Left	N/A	✓				N/A	N/A	+	+	-	N	Y
18	Left	N/A	✓		✓		16	N/A	+	+	-	Y	Y
19	Left	N/A	✓	✓			N/A	N/A	+	+	-	N	Y
20	Left	N/A	✓				N/A	N/A	+	+	-	N	Y
21	Left	N/A	✓				N/A	N/A	+	+	-	N	Y
22	Right	N/A	✓		✓		21	N/A	+	+	-	Y	Y
23	Right	N/A	✓				N/A	N/A	+	+	-	Y	Y
24	Right	N/A	✓		✓		13	N/A	+	+	-	Y	Y

DCIS, ductal carcinoma *in situ*; IDC, invasive ductal carcinoma of no special type; ILC, invasive lobular carcinoma; LCIS, lobular carcinoma *in situ*; ER, estrogen receptor; PR, progesterone receptor; HER2, epidermal growth factor receptor 2; +, positive; -, negative; N/A, not available; \*all LCIS are of classic type; \*\*all DCIS are of grade 2; Y, the case was analyzed in the previous study; N, the case was not analyzed in the previous study.

## FIGURE LEGENDS

**Fig. 1: Landscape of somatic genetic alterations of lobular carcinoma *in situ* (LCIS) and associated lesions.**

**A)** Heatmap illustrating the recurrent ( $n \geq 2$ ) somatic mutations and selected gene amplifications in LCIS ( $n=43$ ), invasive lobular carcinomas (ILCs,  $n=13$ ), ductal carcinoma *in situ* (DCIS,  $n=9$ ) and invasive ductal carcinomas (IDC,  $n=5$ ), subjected to whole-exome sequencing. Cases are shown in columns, grouped according to histologic category color-coded according to the legend, and genes in rows. Somatic mutations affecting cancer genes listed in Kandath *et al.* (20), the Cancer Gene Census (21) and/or Lawrence *et al.* (22) are ordered from top to bottom in decreasing order of frequency, followed by selected gene amplifications. Genes highlighted in bold and/or red represent significantly mutated genes in ILCs and/or luminal-A invasive breast cancers from The Cancer Genome Atlas breast cancer studies (6,31). **B)** Heatmap illustrating the copy number alterations found in LCIS ( $n=43$ ), ILC ( $n=13$ ), DCIS ( $n=9$ ) and IDC ( $n=5$ ). For A and B, mutation type, copy number states, and/or type of lesion are indicated according to the color keys on the right of the figure. Indel, insertion and deletion; SNV, single nucleotide variant.

**Fig. 2: Comparison of mutation rate and frequency of mutations at gene level affecting lobular carcinoma *in situ* (LCIS) and invasive lobular carcinomas (ILCs) and Luminal A breast cancers from The Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA) breast cancer study.**

**A and B)** Boxplots showing the mutation burden and **C and D)** mutation rate (Mutation/Mb) in LCIS samples ( $n=43$ ) and ILC ( $n=13$ ), DCIS ( $n=9$ ) and IDC ( $n=5$ ) from this study and ILC ( $n=127$ ) and Lumina A tumors ( $n=209$ ) from TCGA (31). NS: not significant \* $p$ -value $>0.05$ , \*\* $p$ -value $>0.1$  (Mann–Whitney U test). **E)** Heatmap depicting the most recurrently mutated genes affecting cancer genes identified in LCIS samples from this study and ILCs (6) and luminal A invasive breast cancers (31) from TCGA. Cases are shown in columns, genes in rows. Fisher's exact test comparisons of mutational frequencies of the mutated genes were performed between LCIS from this study ( $n=43$ ) and 127 ILCs

(6) and 209 Luminal A breast cancers (31) from TCGA. The significantly different mutation frequencies between LCIS and TCGA ILCs and/or luminal A breast cancers (TCGA) are highlighted with an asterisk, where \*\*p-value < 0.01 and \*p-value < 0.05 (Fisher's exact test).

**Fig. 3: Clonal relatedness and intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity in lobular carcinoma *in situ* (LCIS), invasive lobular carcinoma (ILC), ductal carcinoma *in situ* (DCIS).**

**A)** Schematic representation of the anatomical locations (breast quadrants) of all sequenced samples in each patient and their clonal relatedness. Clonally-related lesions are connected by orange or green lines, while those in black represent lesions without a clonal relationship with any other lesion from the respective patient. In cases of unilateral LCIS, only the left or right breast was represented, and in cases of bilateral LCIS, both breasts were schematically depicted. Boxplot illustrating the distribution of **B)** the Shannon diversity index and **C)** the Gini-Simpson diversity index in LCIS not clonally-related to DCIS/ILC (n=25) and in LCIS clonally-related to DCIS and/or ILC (n=18). The colored dots indicate the cases. *P*-values of unpaired t-test with Welch's correction are indicated at the top of each figure. NS: not significant, p-value >0.05.

**Fig. 4: Clonal composition of clonally-related lobular carcinoma *in situ* (LCIS) and ductal carcinoma *in situ* (DCIS) or invasive lobular carcinoma (ILC) and potential clonal selection during progression.**

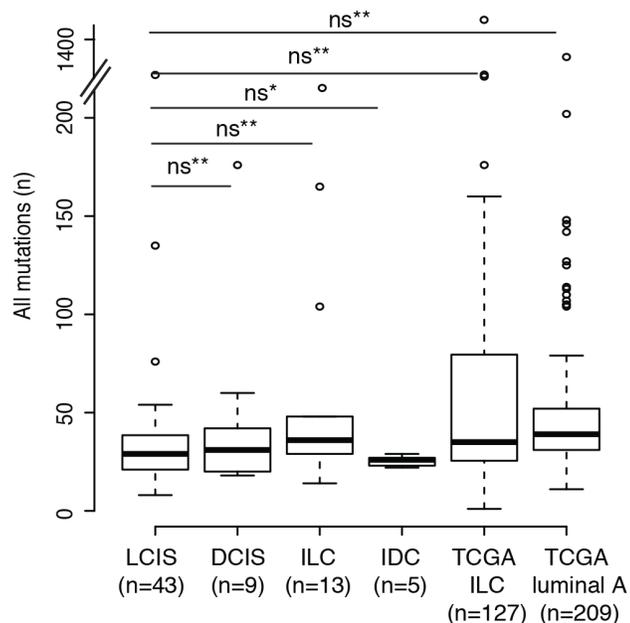
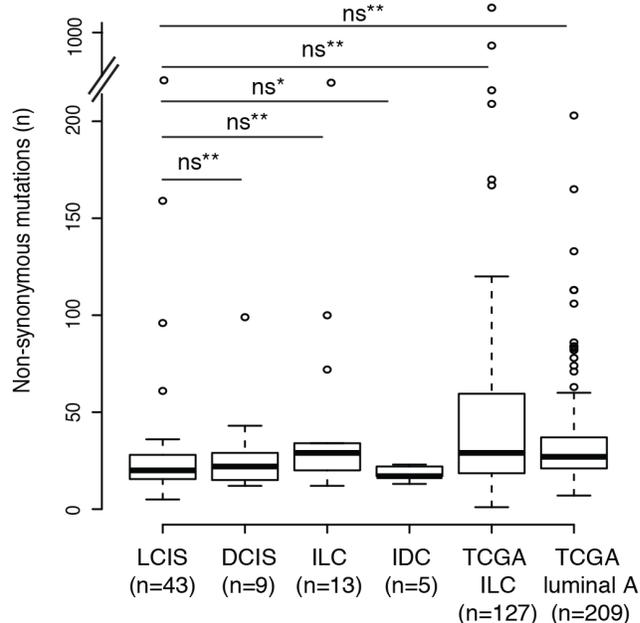
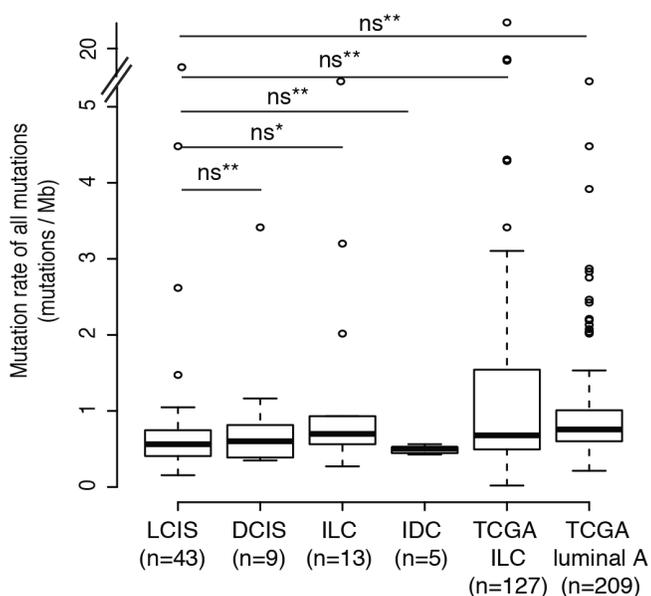
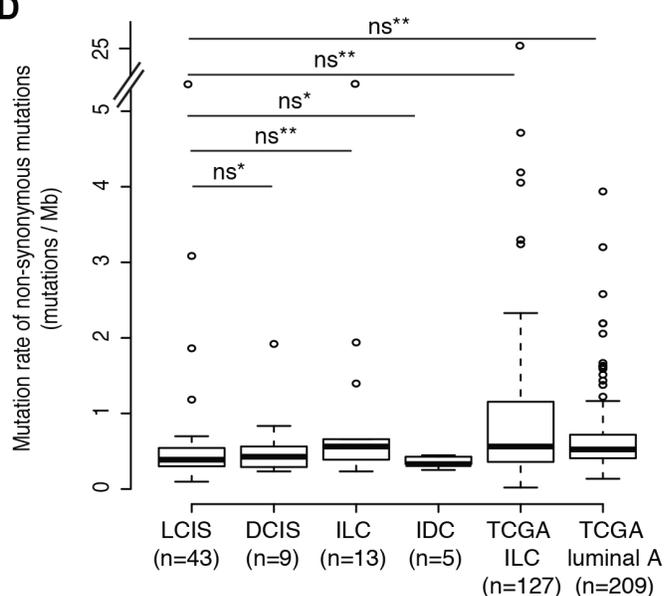
**A and B)** Decomposition of genetically distinct clones and clonal evolution in lesions from **A)** case 4 and **B)** case 10 using the results from PyClone (26). On the top left, a schematic representation of the quadrants from which each sequenced lesion was sampled is shown, and on the top right, the clonal frequency heatmap of mutations within the lesions of each case, grouped by their inferred clonal/subclonal structure (clusters). Non-synonymous somatic mutations are shown. The clusters inferred by PyClone are shown below the clonal frequency heatmap, and the Shannon index measuring intra-lesion genetic heterogeneity for each lesion is specified within parentheses after the sample names in

the heatmap. On the bottom left, the parallel coordinates plot generated by PyClone and, in the middle right, a cluster-based phylogenetic tree based on the clusters identified by PyClone are shown. The color of the trunk and branches matches the color of their respective clusters shown in the parallel coordinates plot. On the bottom right, a histologic lesion-based phylogenetic tree constructed using Treeomics (30) is depicted. The mutations affecting cancer genes (colored in orange) and the hotspot mutations (colored in red) that define a given clone are illustrated alongside the branches. The length of the branches is proportional to the number of mutations that distinguish a given clone from its ancestor. The numbers alongside the branches represent the total number of somatic mutations.

**Fig. 5: Mutational signatures of trunk and branch mutations in lobular carcinoma *in situ* (LCIS) clonally-related ductal carcinoma *in situ* (DCIS) or invasive lobular carcinoma (ILC).**

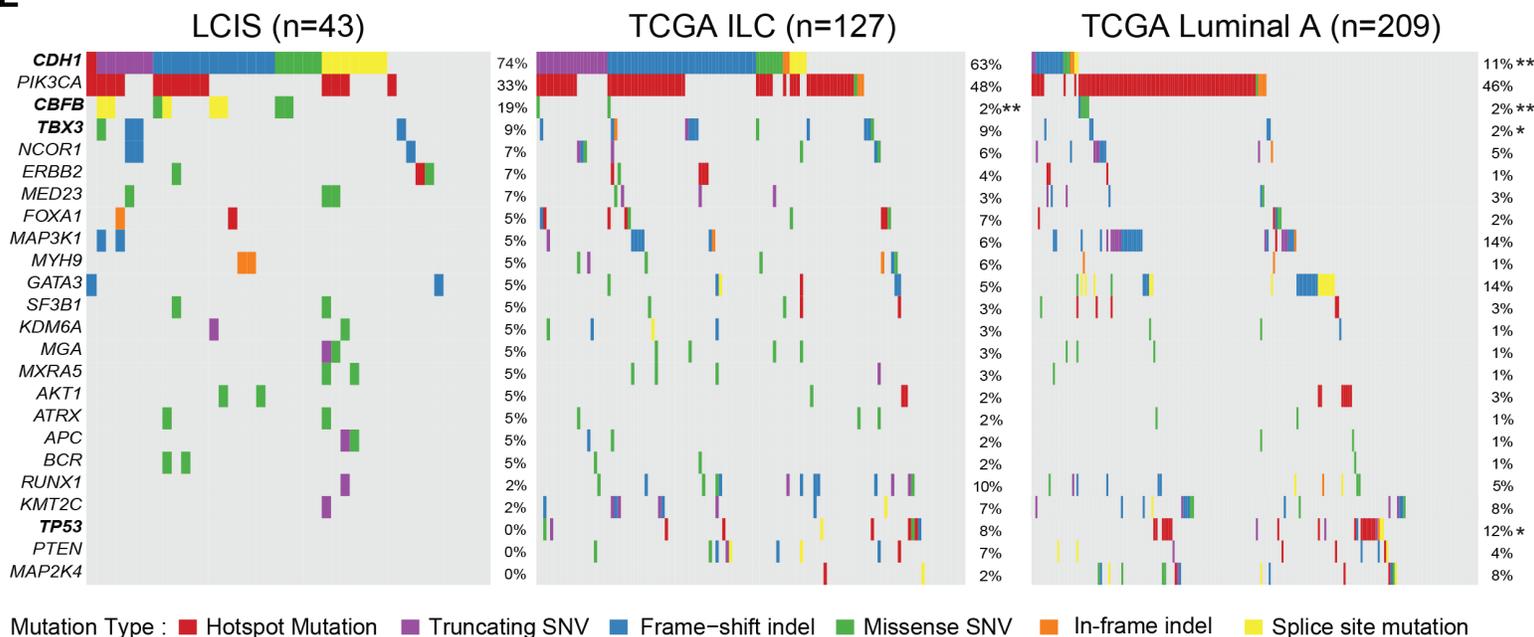
Evolution of the mutational processes with a schematic representation of the subclone structure in **A)** case 4, **B)** case 1 and **C)** case 18. Each black line represents the acquisition of somatic genetic alterations that define a given clone and each arrow depicts the divergence of a cell population from one lesion to another along with the acquisition of a set of somatic genetic alterations. The mutational signature representative of newly acquired mutations by a given subclone is depicted adjacent to each circle. The pie chart depicts the proportion of mutational signatures detected and signature 1 (aging, blue), signature 2 (APOBEC, violet) and signature 13 (APOBEC, green) are shown, with the remaining mutational signatures merged as 'Others' (dark gray). The number alongside the branches is the total number of somatic mutations. **D)** Reverse transcription quantitative PCR (RT-qPCR) of *APOBEC3B* (left), *APOBEC3H* (middle) and *REV1* (right) genes in samples displaying the APOBEC-related and aging-related signatures, where tissue samples were available for RNA extraction. The error bars represent the standard deviation of mean of RT-qPCR data (n=3).



**Figure 2****A****B****C****D**

\* non significant (ns) p-value &gt; 0.05

\*\* non significant (ns) p-value &gt; 0.1

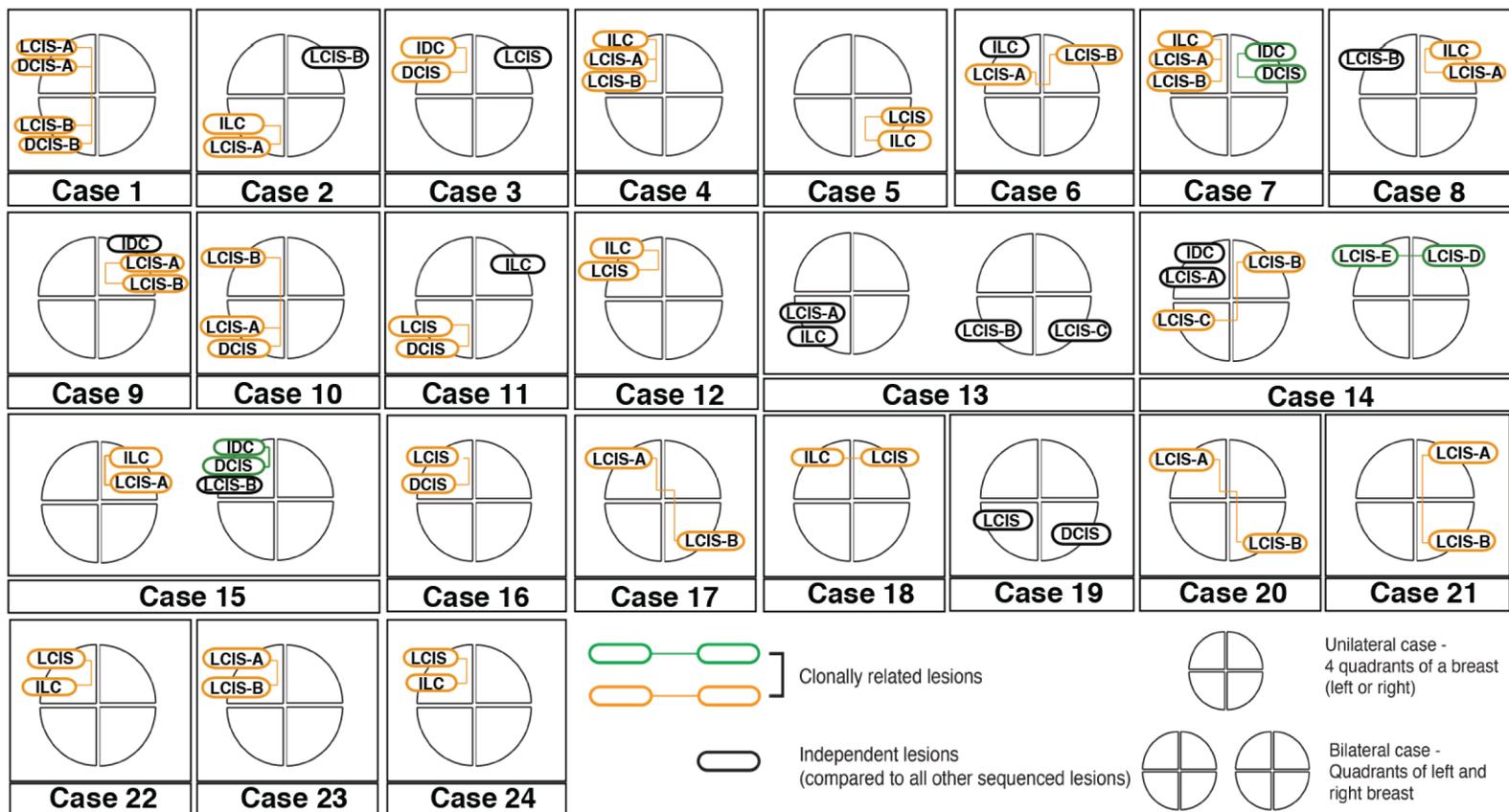
**E**

\* p-value &lt; 0.05

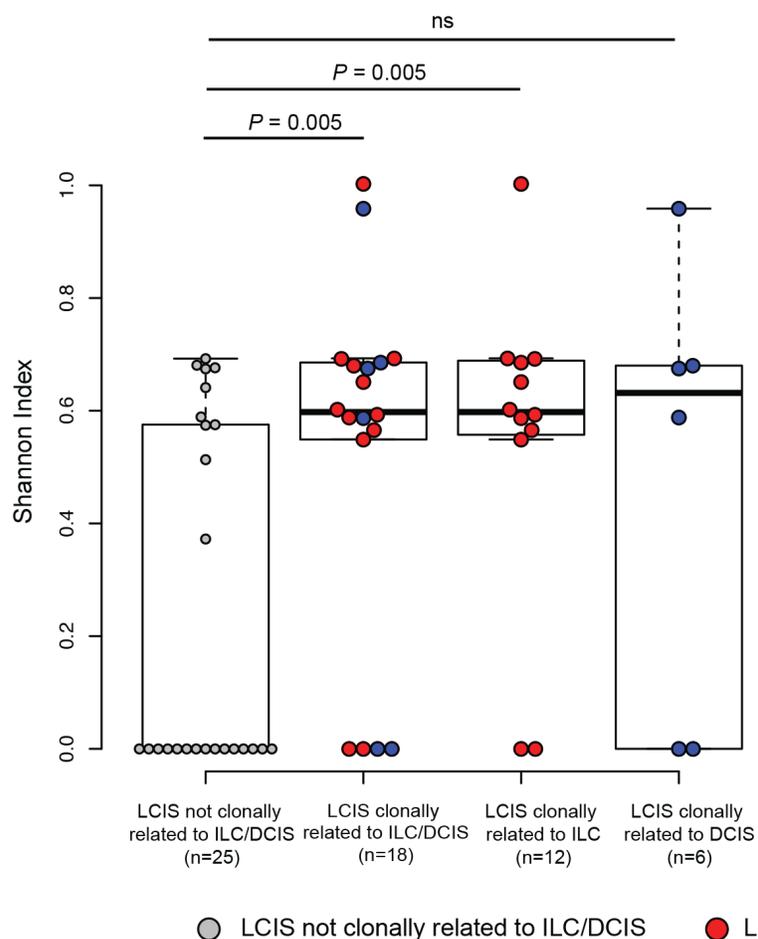
\*\* p-value &lt; 0.01

**Figure 3**

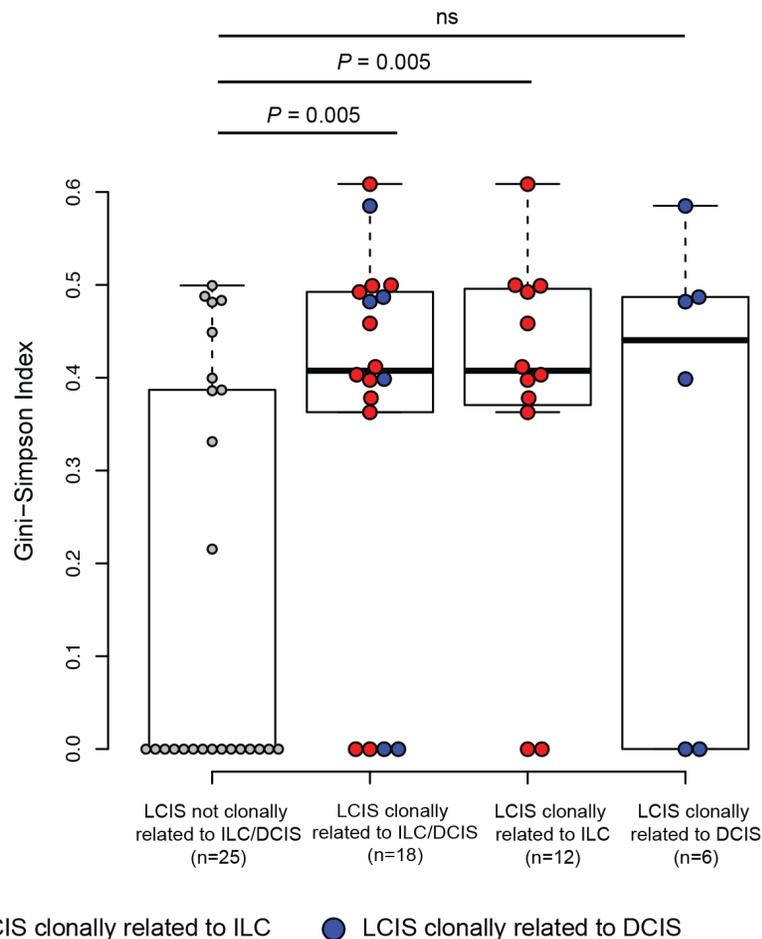
**A**



**B**



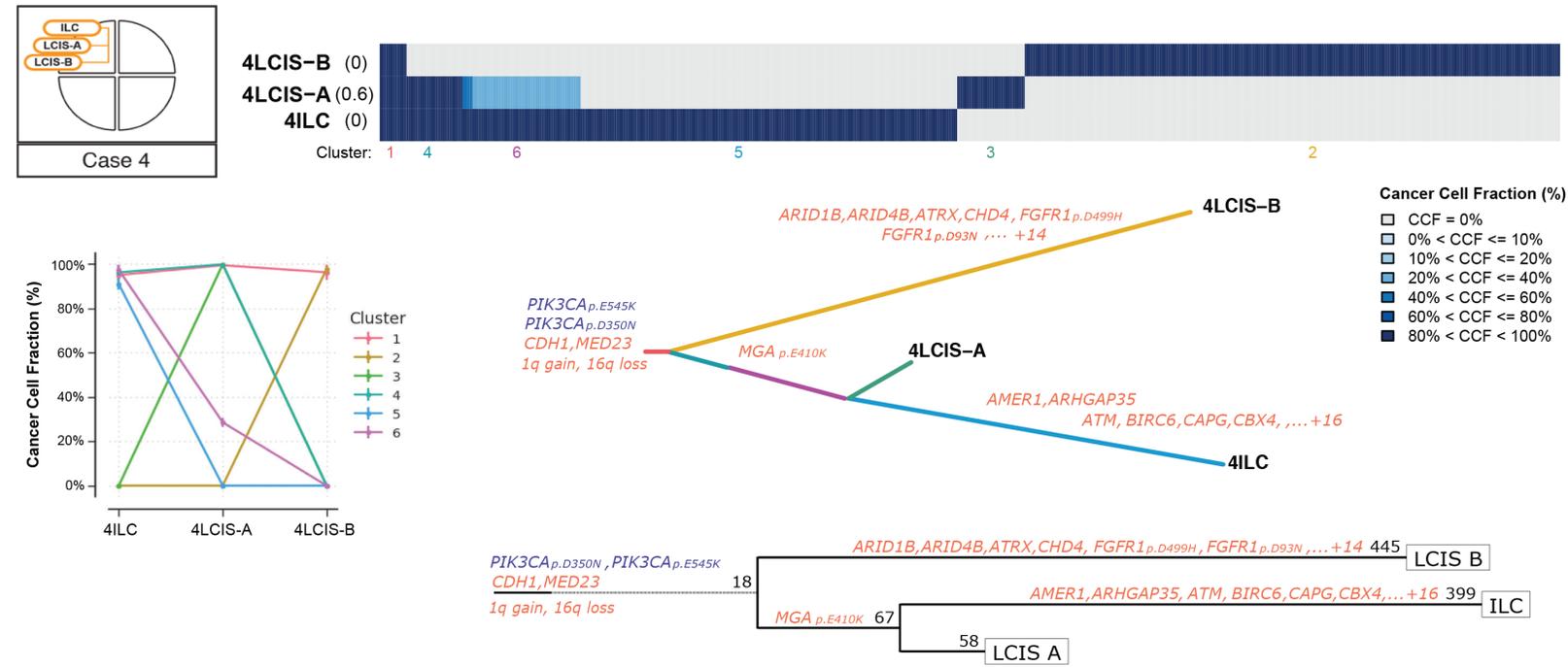
**C**



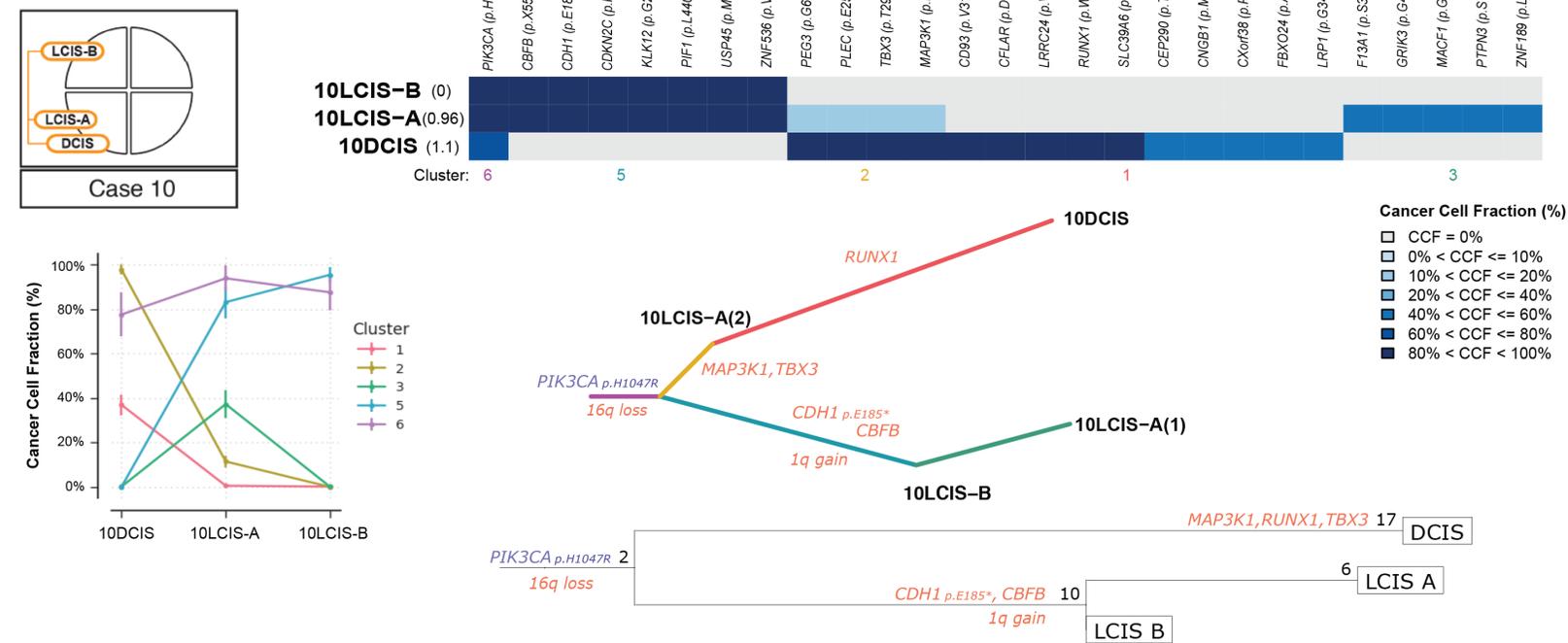
non significant (ns) p-value > 0.05

# Figure 4

## A

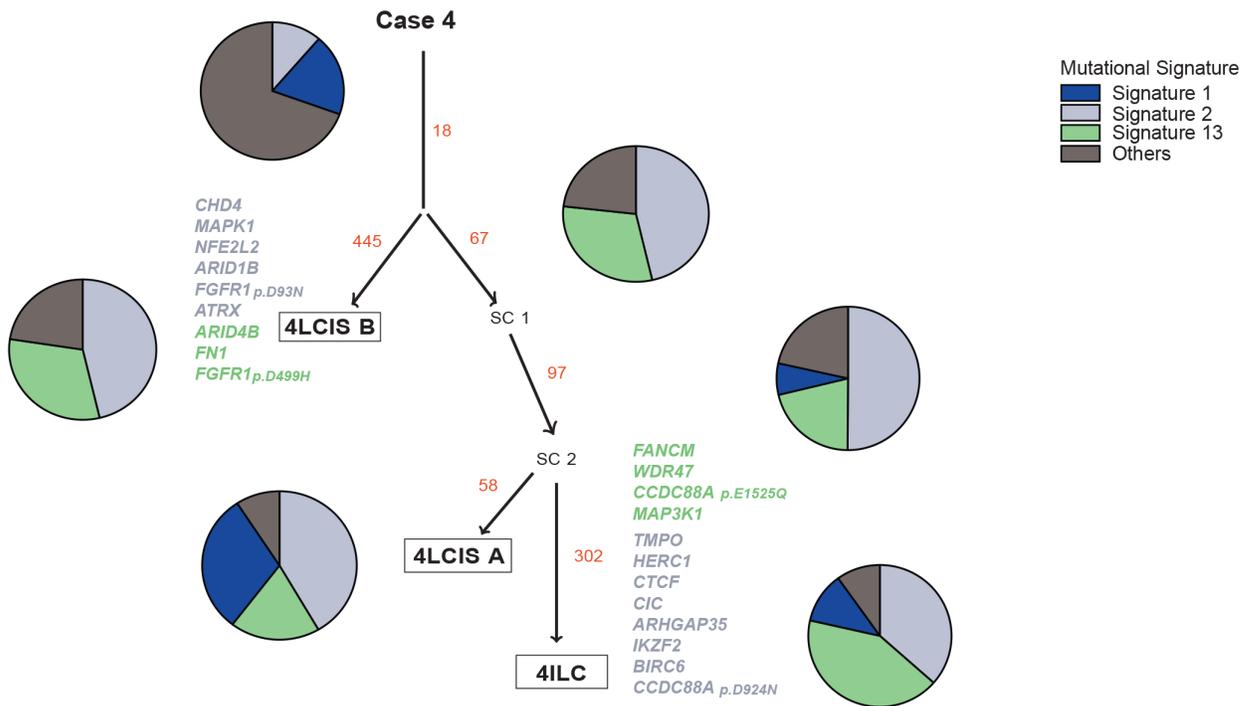


## B

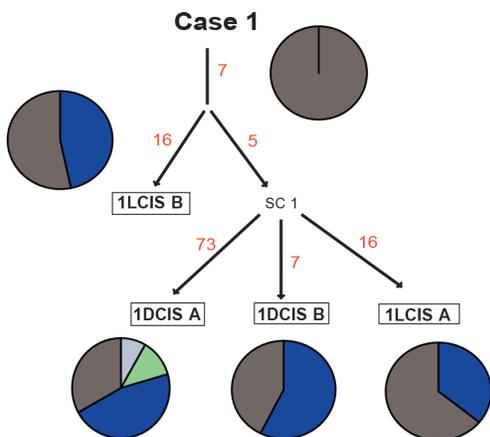


**Figure 5**

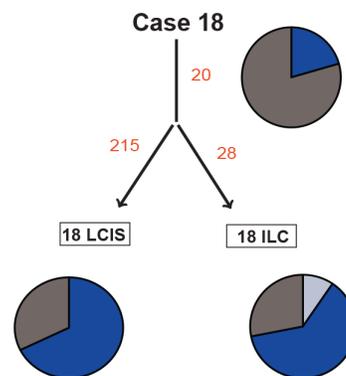
**A**



**B**



**C**



**D**

