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# Biofabrication using recombinant spider silk proteins as a biomaterial

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# Biofabrication using recombinant spider silk proteins as a biomaterial

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Germany



UNIVERSITÄT  
BAYREUTH



# Why spider silk?



Image: E. Doblhofer

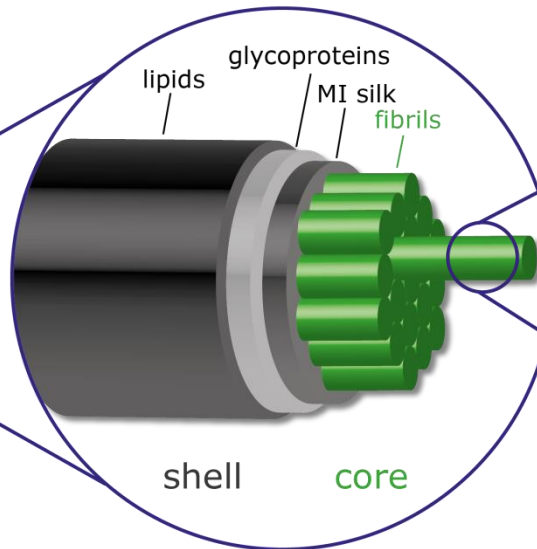
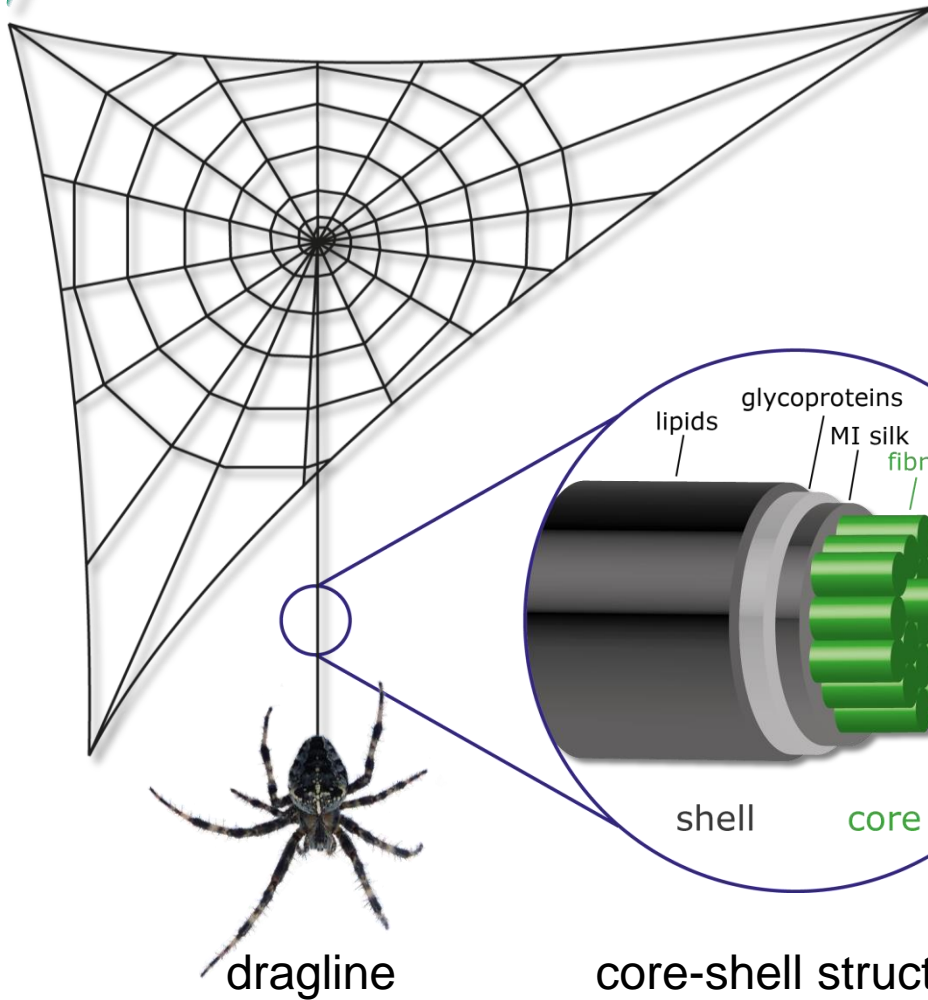
- no toxicity
- no immuno-reactivity
- slow biodegradation
- good mechanical properties

→ interesting material for biomedical applications

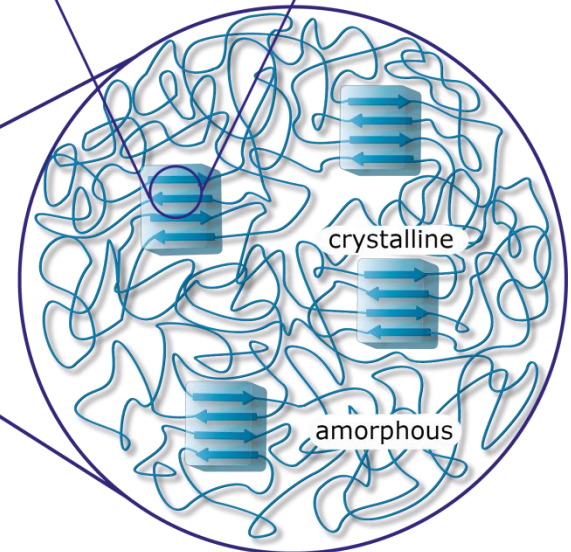
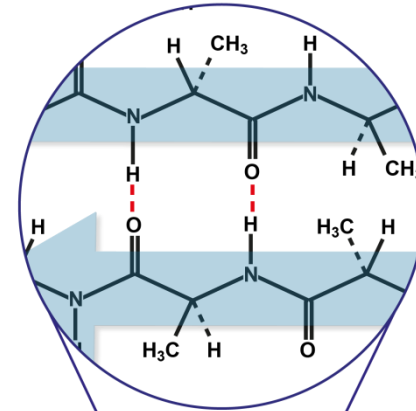
Material	Stiffness (GPa)	Strength (GPa)	Extensibility (%)	Toughness (MJm <sup>-3</sup> )
<i>Araneus diadematus</i> dragline silk	6	0.7	30	150
<i>Bombyx mori</i> cocoon silk	7	0.6	18	70
Nylon fiber	5	0.95	18	80
Kevlar 49 fiber	130	3.6	2.7	50
High-tensile steel	200	1.5	0.8	6

# Spider silk architecture...

*A. diadematus*

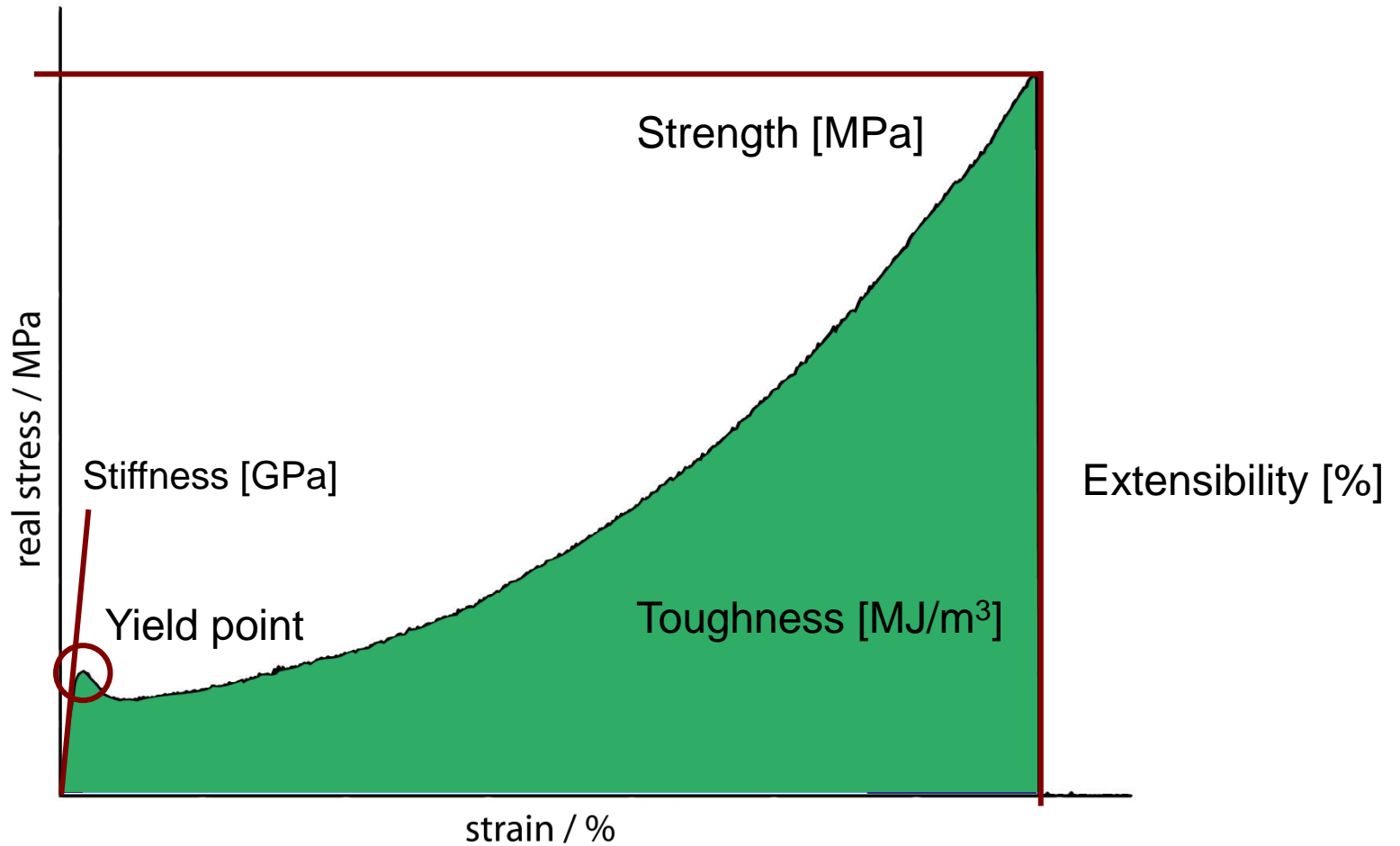


core-shell structure



crystalline regions in amorphous matrix

# ...allowing outstanding toughness



- spiders are cannibals
- silk quality depends on nutrition
- male spiders are hard to raise

→ **farming of spiders is NOT feasible!**



→ **use a biotechnological approach for silk production**

# Engineered spider silk origin



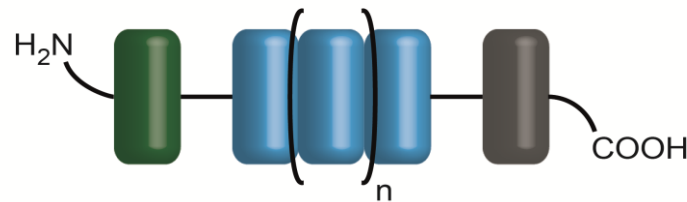
major ampullate silk



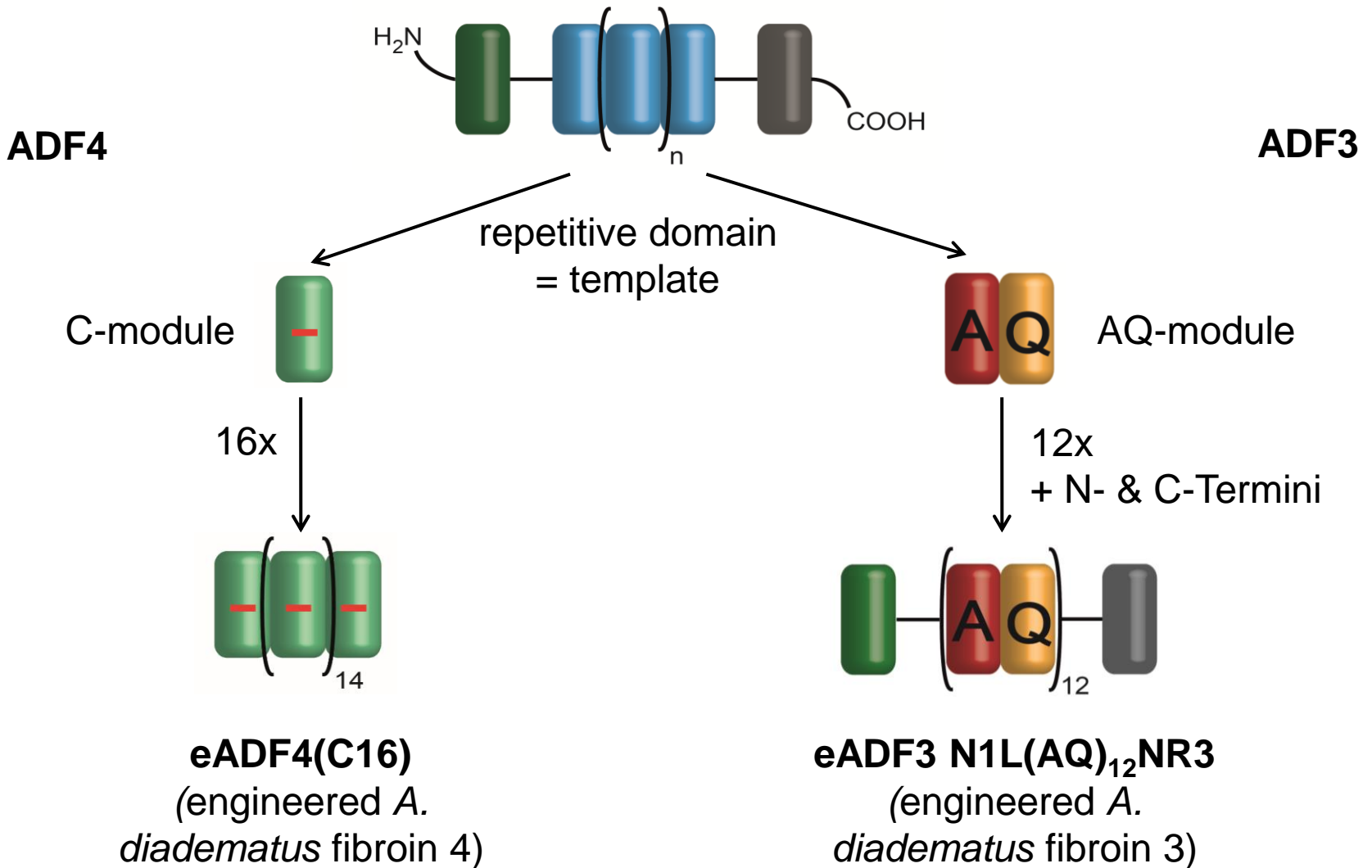
*Araneus diadematus*

main components

*A. diadematus* fibroins: ADF3 & ADF4

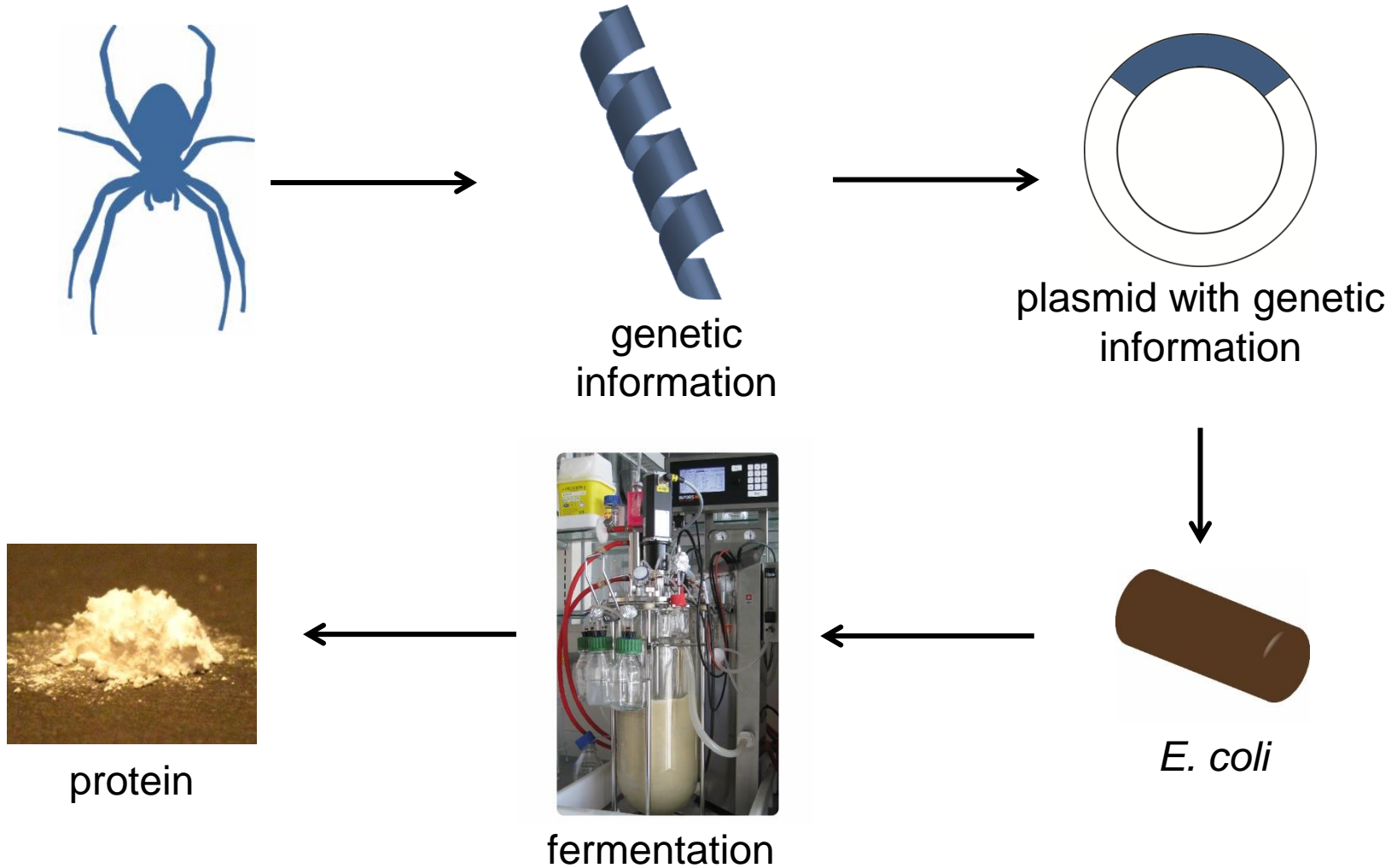


# Engineered spider silk





# Biotechnological silk production



# Engineered spider silk morphologies



Image by: K.Schacht

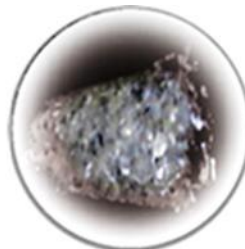
processing  
steps



Fiber



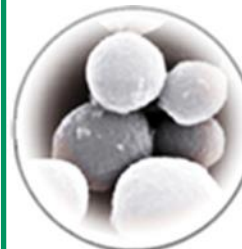
Film



Foam



Hydrogel



Particles



Non-Wovens



Capsules

# Spider silk fibers

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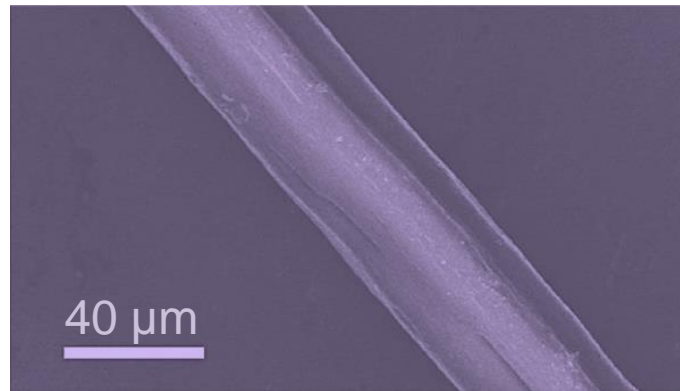
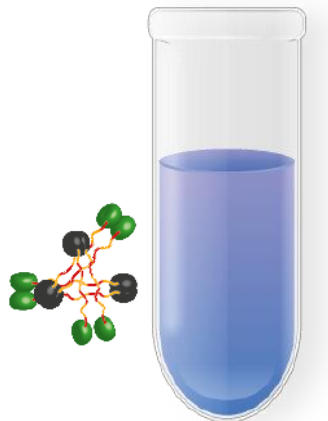


Image by: A. Heidebrecht

# Preparation of spinning dope

“classical”  
spinning dope

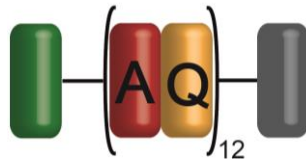


no phase  
separation

fiber spinning

dialysis:  
← PEG

protein solution



dialysis:  
→ phosphate  
buffer

“biomimetic”  
spinning dope



phase  
separation

fiber spinning

# Wet-spun silk fibers

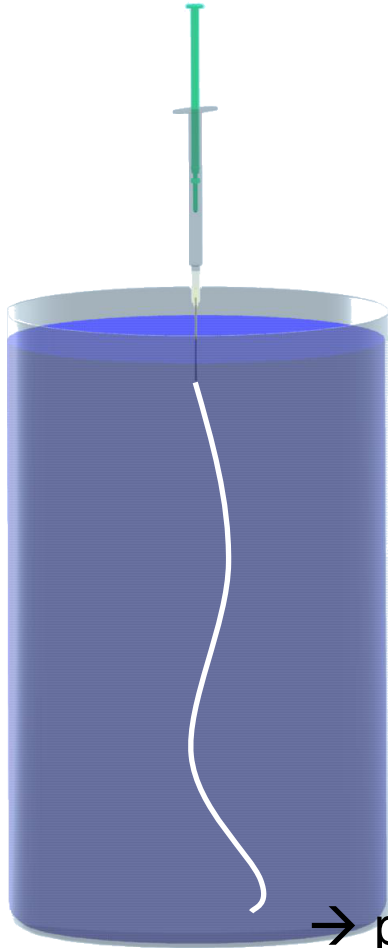
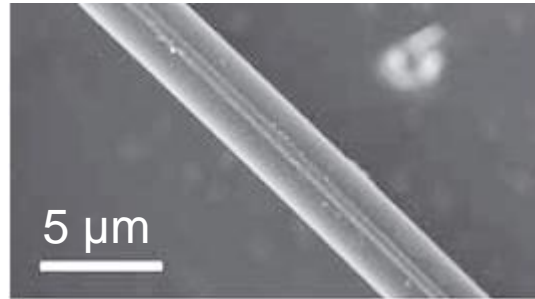
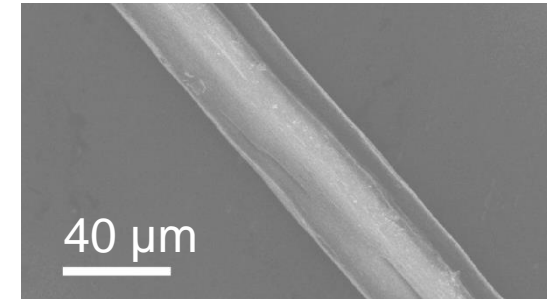


Image by: G. Lang

natural fiber

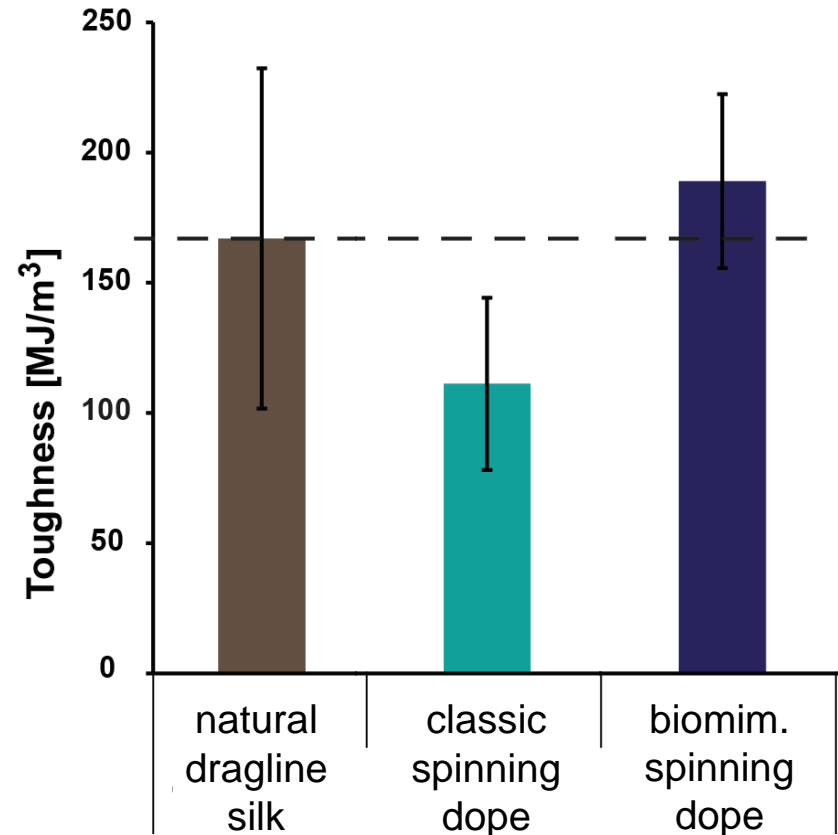
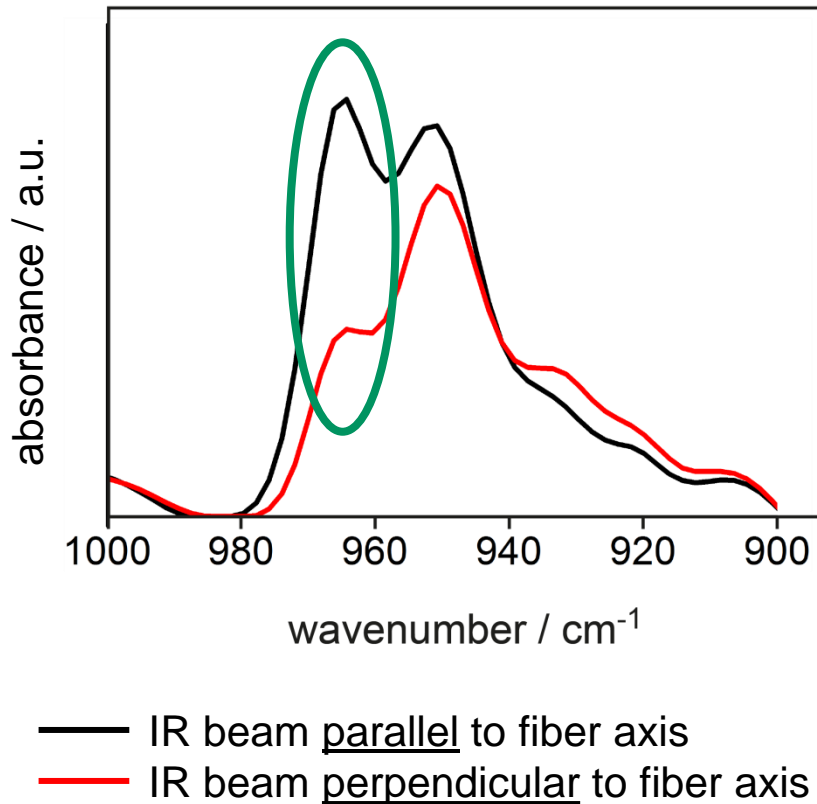


synthetic fiber



	natural fiber	synthetic fiber
filament	double	single
surface	smooth	smooth
diameter	4-8 μm	15-60 μm

# Polarized FTIR and tensile testing



→ poly-Ala stretches in recombinant fibers are aligned along fiber axis

→ toughness of biomimetic spider silk competes with that of natural ones

# Spider silk non-wovens

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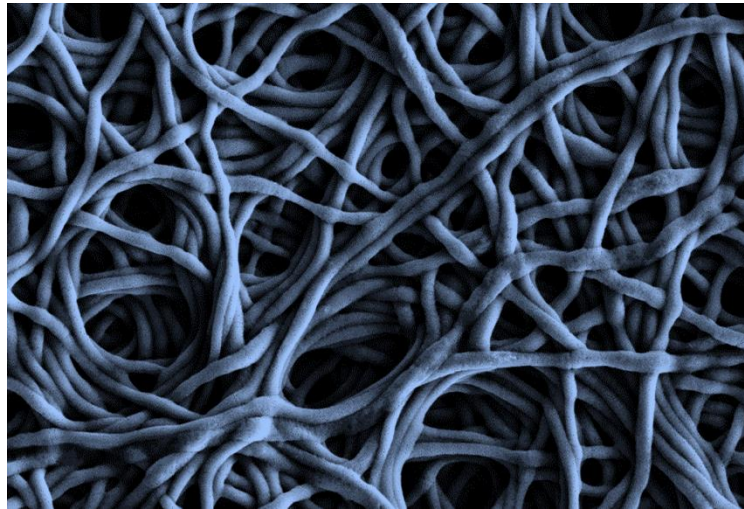


Image by: E. DeSimone



# Preparation of non-wovens – e-spinning

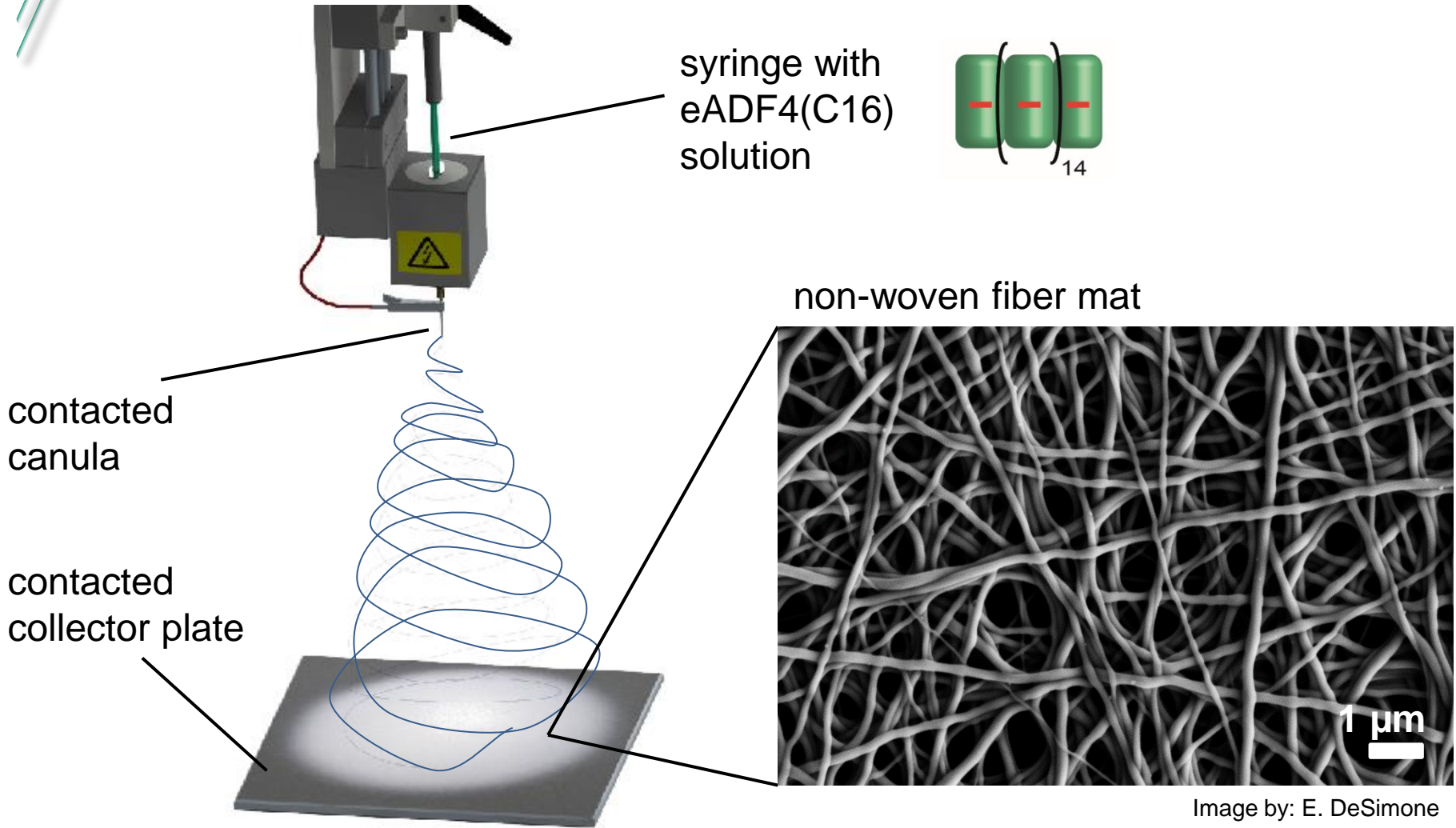


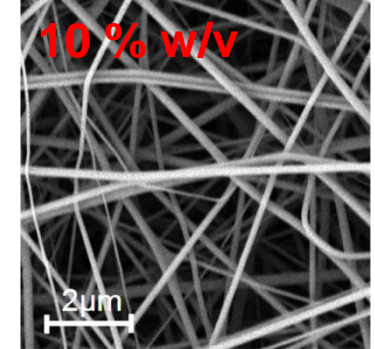
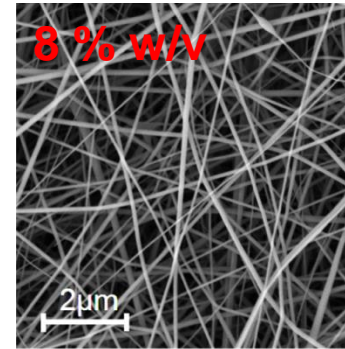
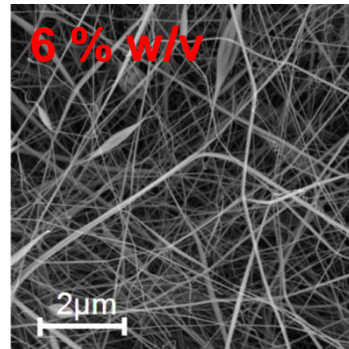
Image by: G. Lang

Image by: E. DeSimone



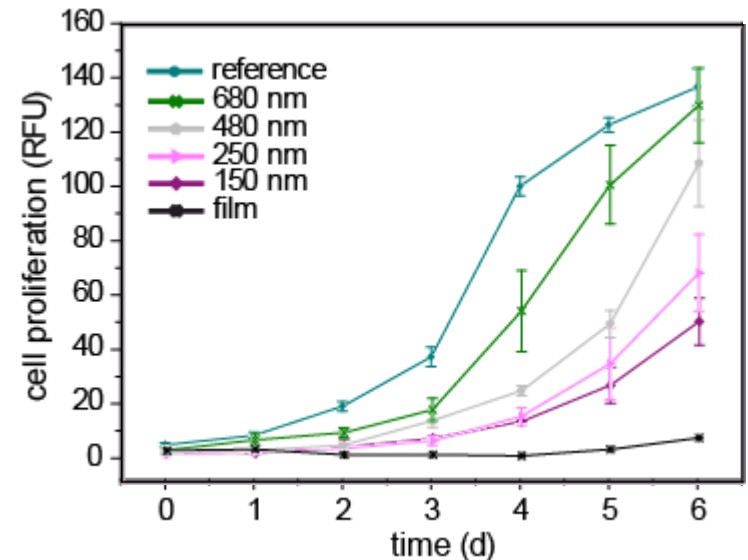
Parameters:

- concentration
- applied voltage
- spinning distance
- needle diameter
- humidity
- temperature

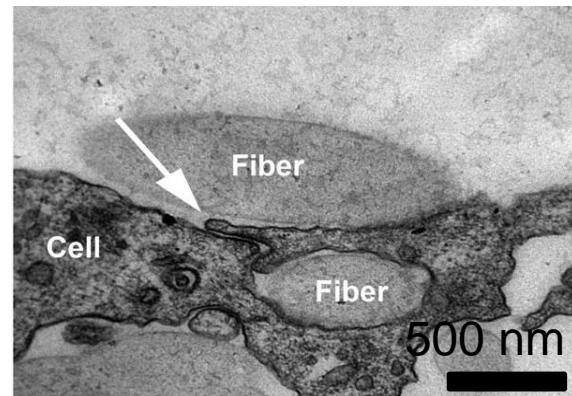
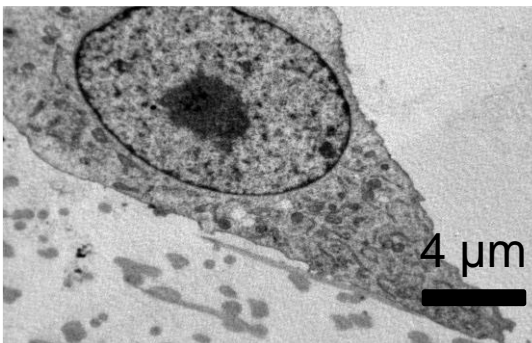
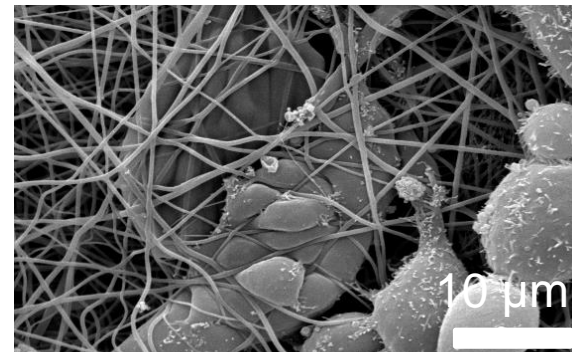
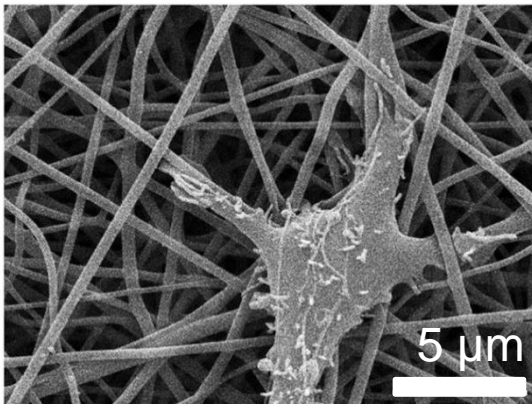


- **Increasing protein concentration increases fiber diameter**
- **larger fiber diameter promote cell proliferation**

Balb/3T3 fibroblasts



## SEM & TEM: Balb/3T3 fibroblasts



→ fibroblasts spread on and migrate into non-woven meshes

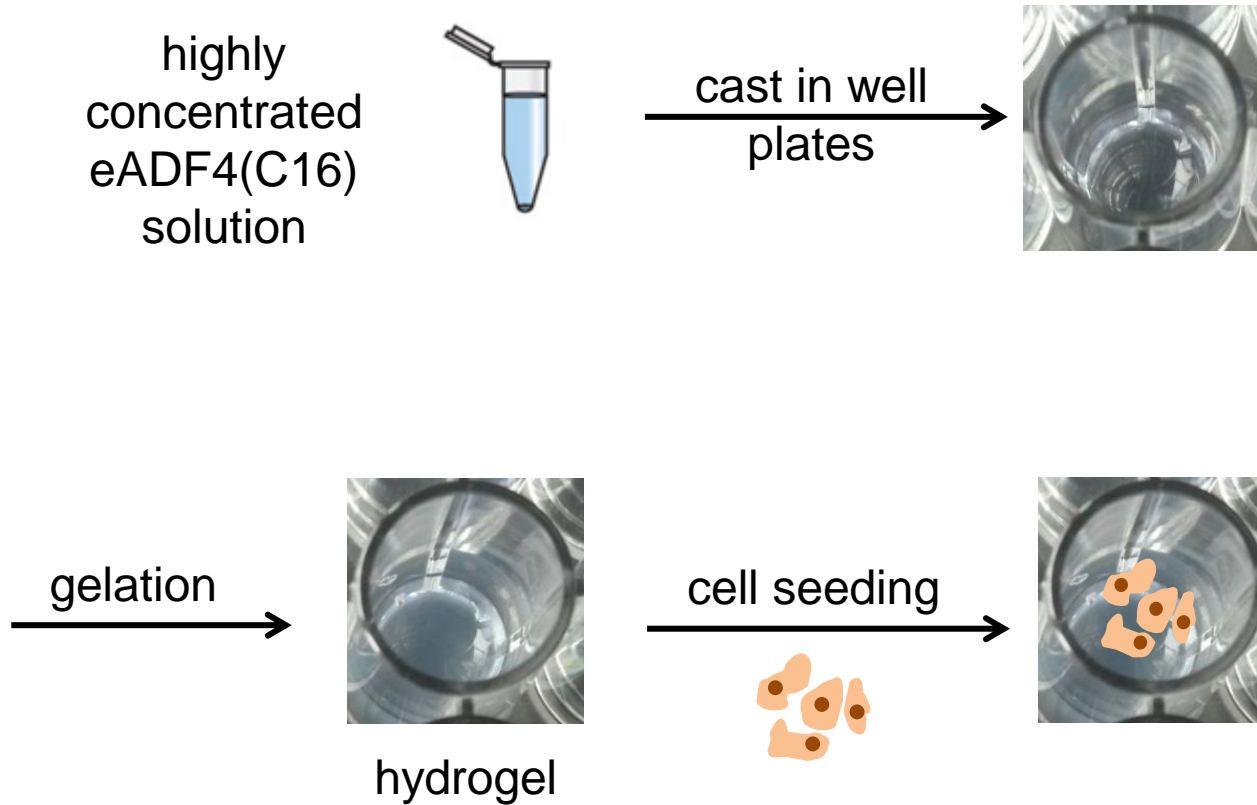
# Spider silk hydrogels

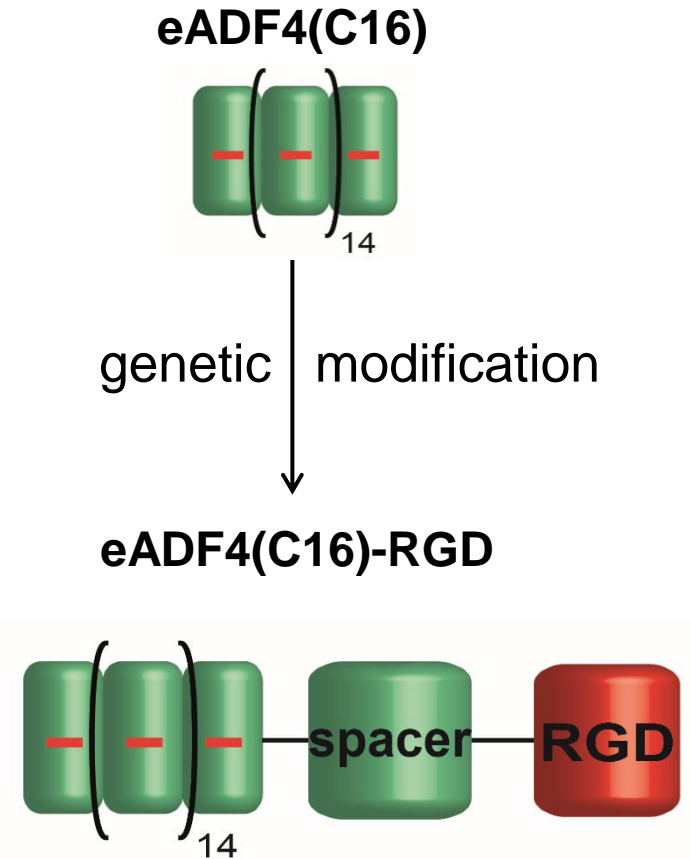
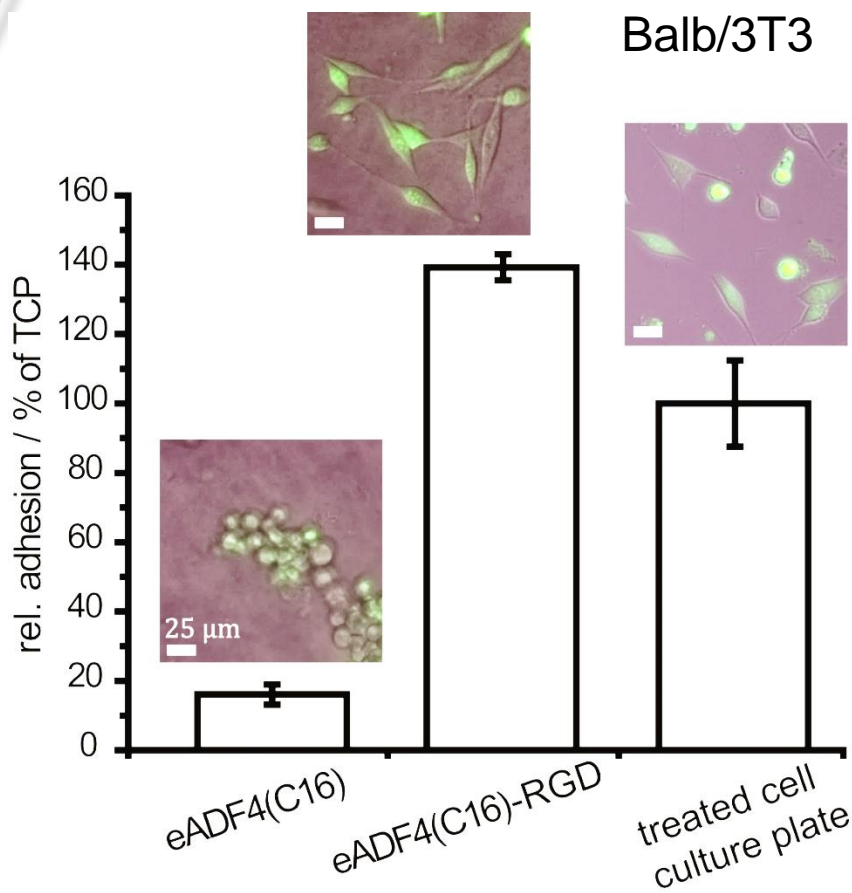
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Image by: K. Schacht/T. Jüngst

# Hydrogel preparation

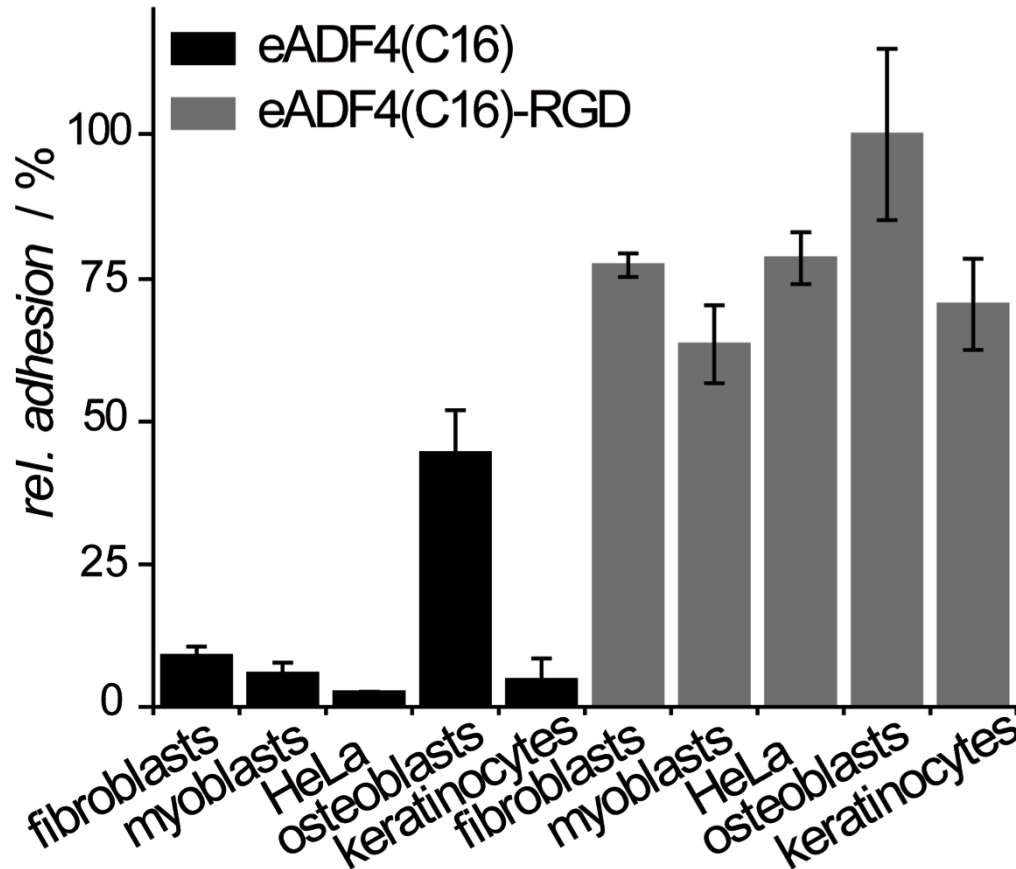




→ weak cell adhesion on eADF4(C16) hydrogels

→ introduction of adhesion motif RGD leads to enhanced cell adhesion

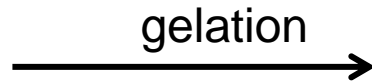
# Different cell lines on spider silk hydrogels



→ cell adhesion on eADF4(C16)-RGD hydrogels was significantly improved also on other cell types



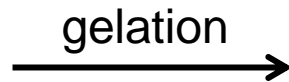
highly concentrated eADF4(C16) solution



- gelation kinetics
- secondary protein structure
- rheology



+ cell culture medium

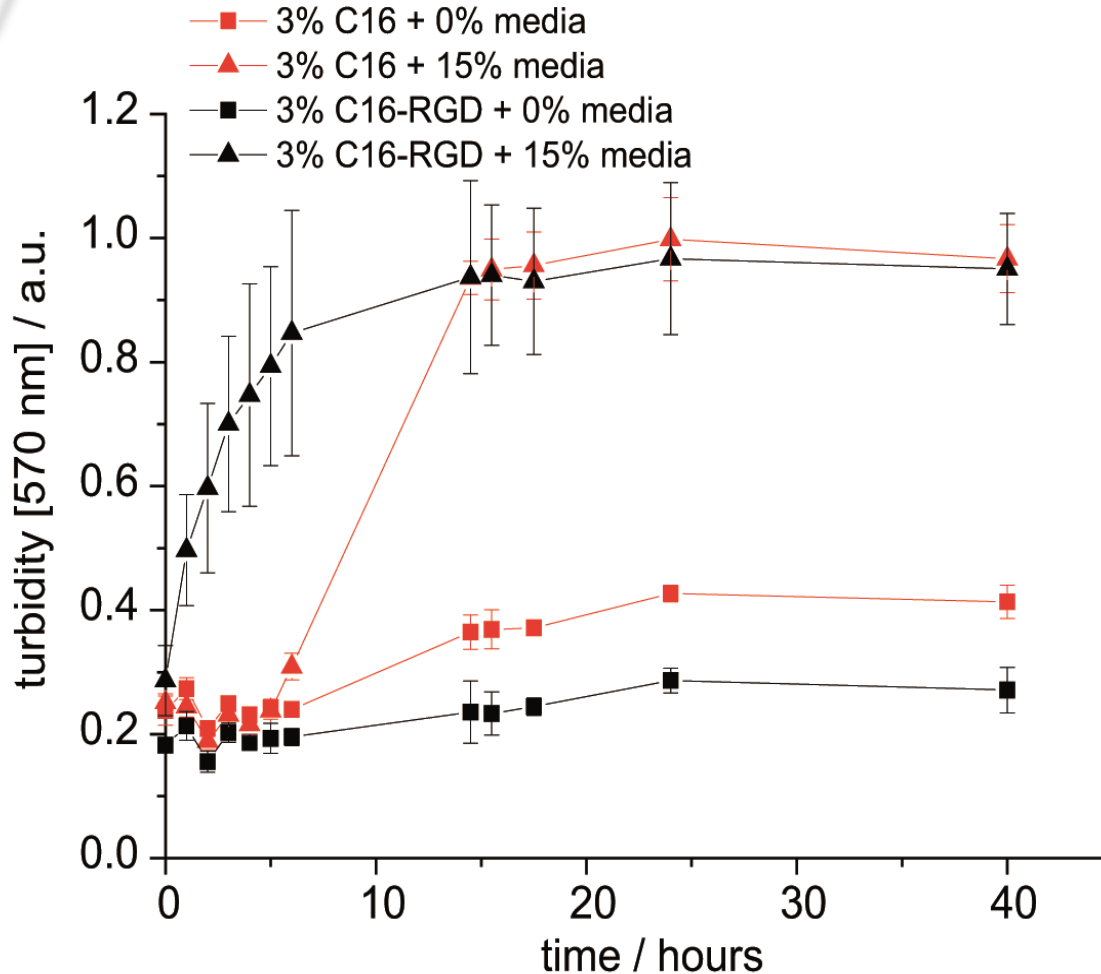


hydrogel + cell culture medium

- stress-strain
- viscosity



# Gelation kinetics and secondary structure

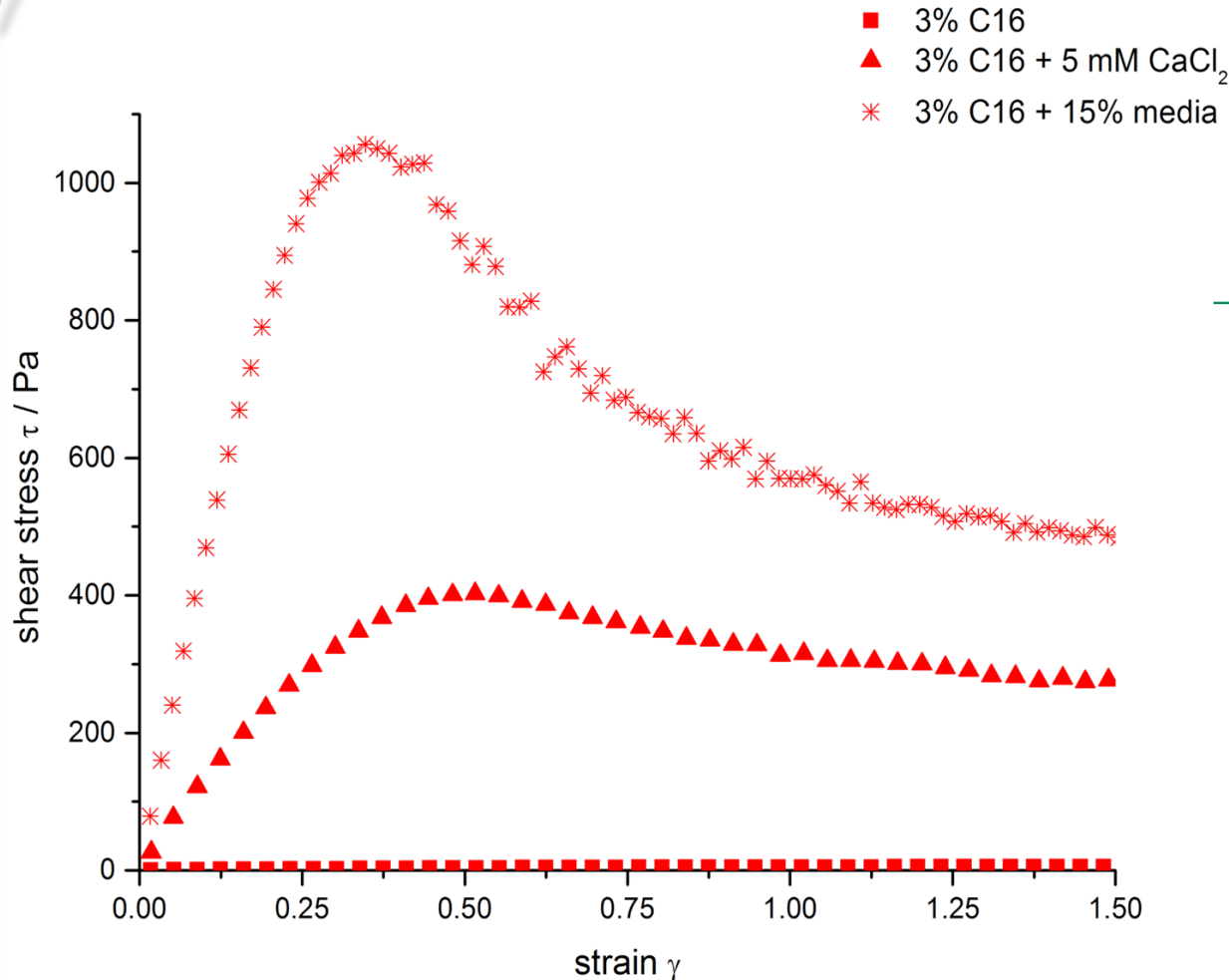


→ Increase in the speed of nucleation and growth phase

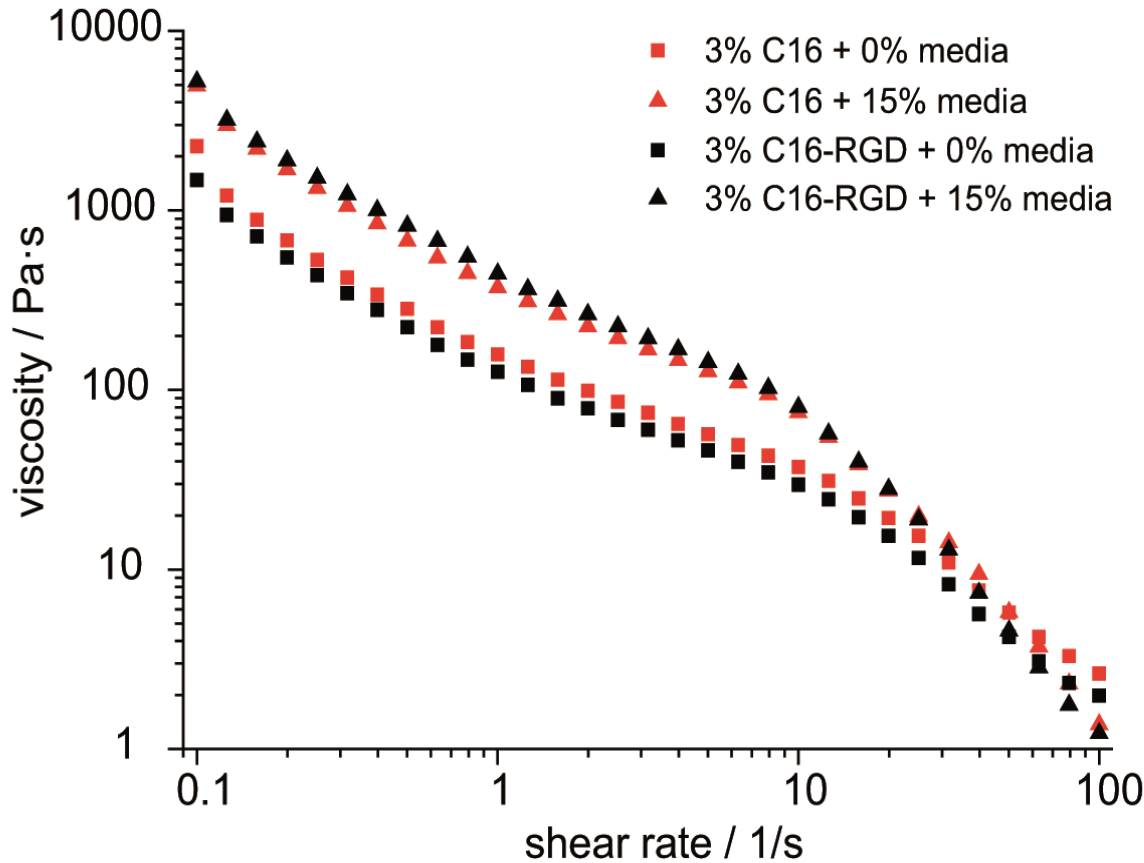
→ Increase in the speed of crosslinking

→ FTIR measurements revealed no effects of the media on secondary structure content





→ **Bivalent cations can reduce the electrostatic repulsion between protein chains leading to an increase in stiffness**

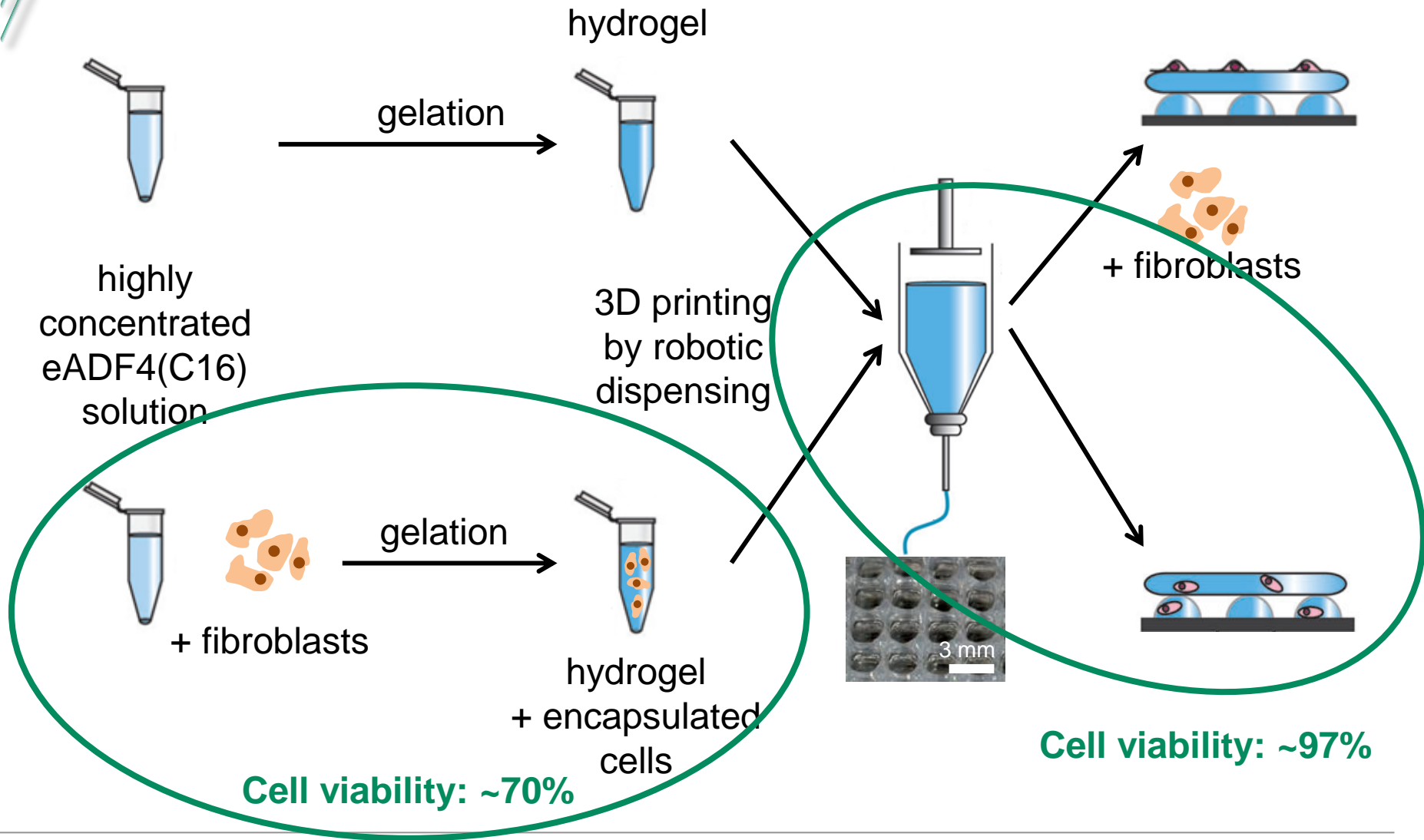


→ High shear rates disrupt ionic binding

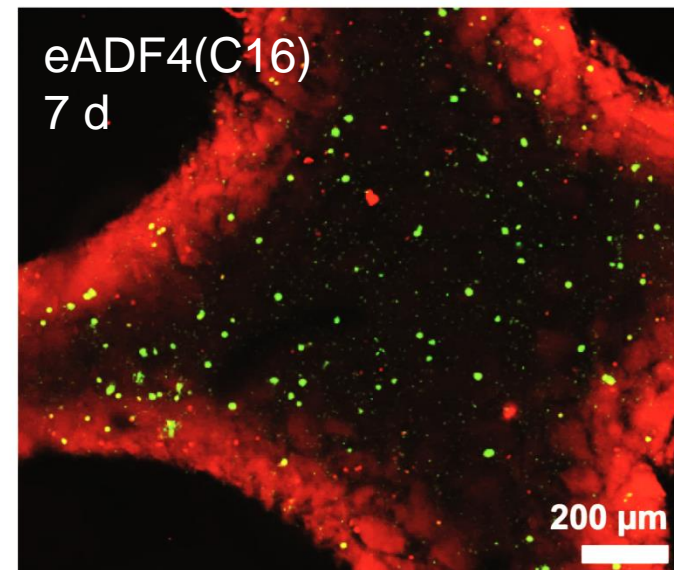
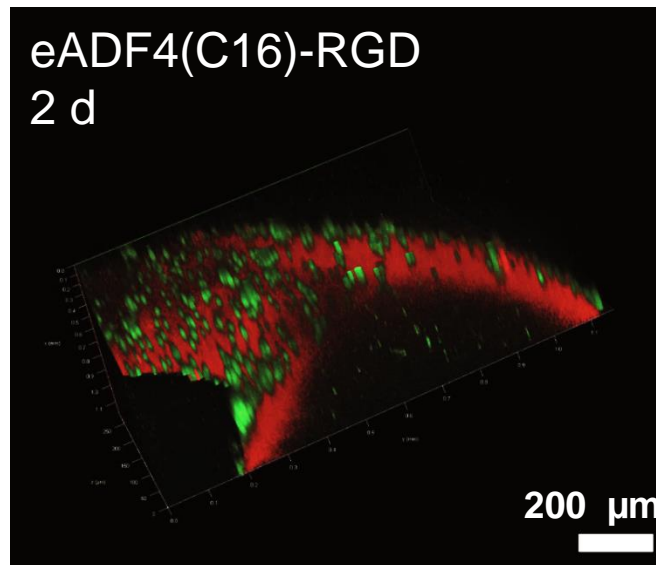
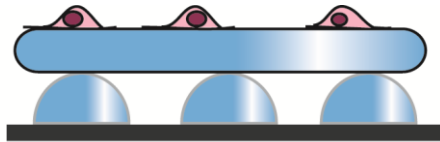
→ Shear thinning behaviour is observed

→ Shear thinning properties protect cells from shear forces

# Hydrogel preparation + printing



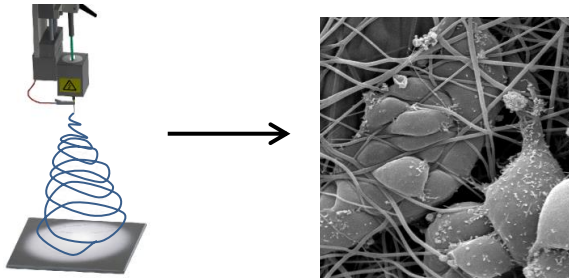
human fibroblasts – live/dead staining



- fibroblasts adhere well on printed eADF4(C16)-RGD hydrogels → robotic dispensing doesn't disturb cell-material interaction
- fibroblasts encapsulated in eADF4(C16) hydrogels survive 7 d *in situ*

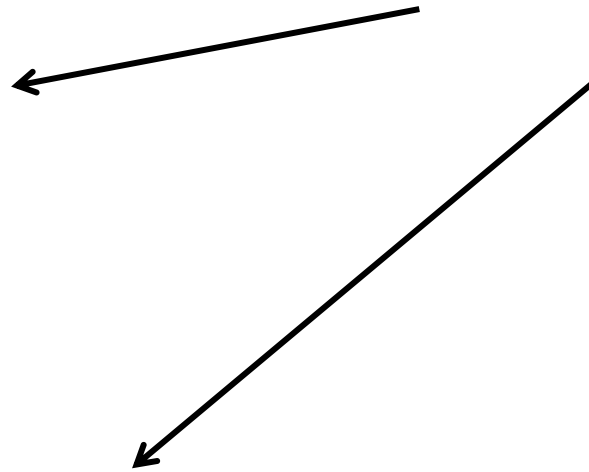
# Summary

non-wovens

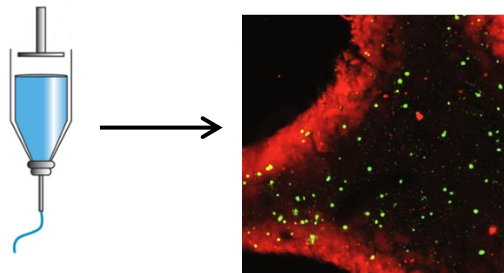


- tissue engineering
- wound dressing

engineered spider  
silk protein

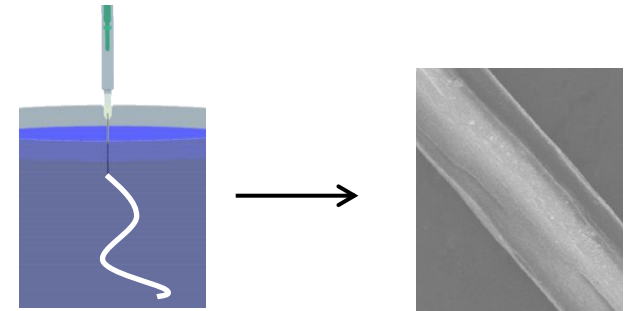


hydrogels



- tissue engineering

fibers



- suture material



# Thank you for your attention



SCHE 603/4-4



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Umwelt und Gesundheit

U8793-2012/6-2