

Mechanical stimulation of PIEZO1 channels using high throughput automated patch clamp

Nicoletta Murciano^{1,2}, Maria Giustina Rotordam¹, Markus Rapedius¹, Nadine Becker¹, Melanie J. Ludlow³, Gregory Parsonage³, Alison Obergrossberger¹, Andrea Brüggemann¹, David J. Beech³

¹Nanon Technologies, Munich, Germany; ²Theoretical Medicine and Biosciences, Saarland University, Homburg, Germany; ³University of Leeds, Leeds, UK
Contact: ali@nanon.de

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1 Introduction

PIEZO1 channels are mechanosensitive ion channels that play a pivotal role in sensing mechanical forces in various cell types. Their dysfunction has been associated with numerous pathophysiological states including generalized lymphatic dysplasia, varicose vein disease, dehydrated hereditary stomatocytosis, and malarial resistance. Given its high physiological relevance, investigating PIEZO1 is crucial for the pharmaceutical industry that requires scalable techniques to allow for drug discovery. In this regard, several studies have shown the use of high throughput automated patch clamp (APC) to explore the function and properties of PIEZO1 channels in heterologous expression system as well as primary cells (Rotordam et al., 2018, Parsonage et al., 2022; Karamatic Crew et al., 2023) mainly based on usage of Yoda1, a specific gating modifier of PIEZO1 channels (Syeda et al., 2015). However, to our knowledge, a combination of solely mechanical stimulation and high throughput APC has not yet been available for the study of PIEZO1 channels. Here we show PIEZO1-mediated currents activated by mechanical stimulation (M-Stim) on the SyncroPatch 384.

2 Mechanical stimulation (M-Stim) on the SyncroPatch 384

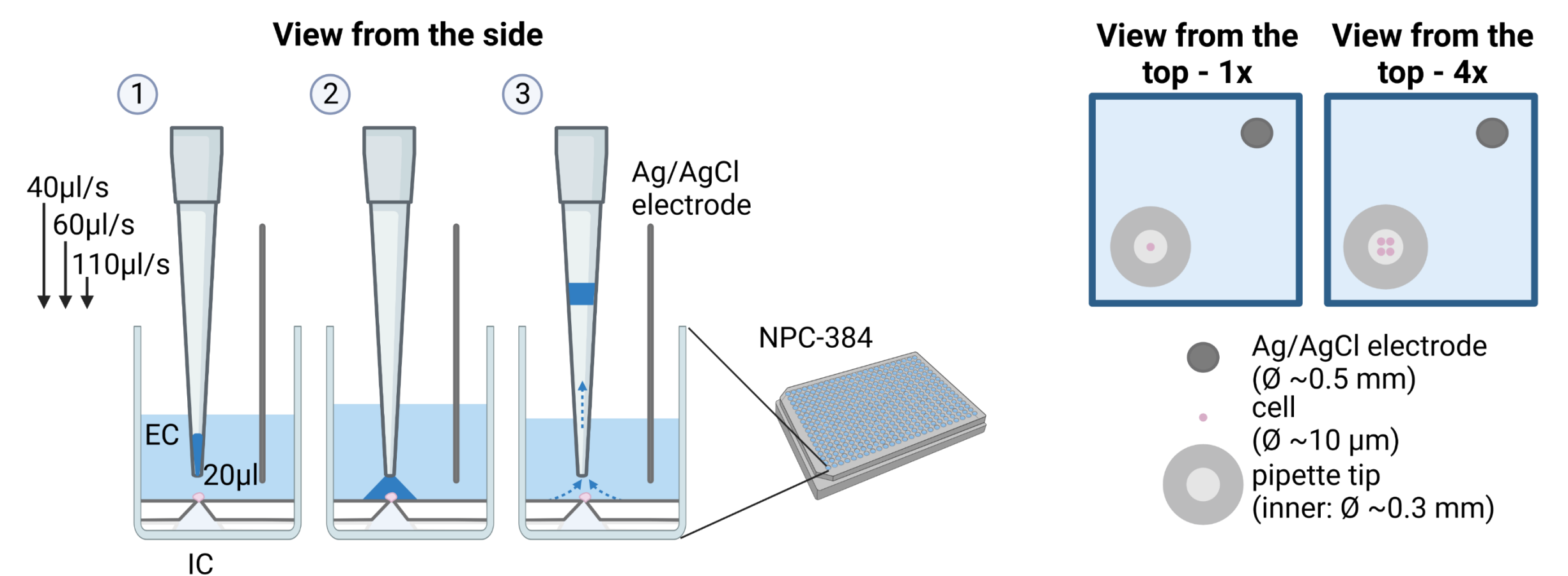


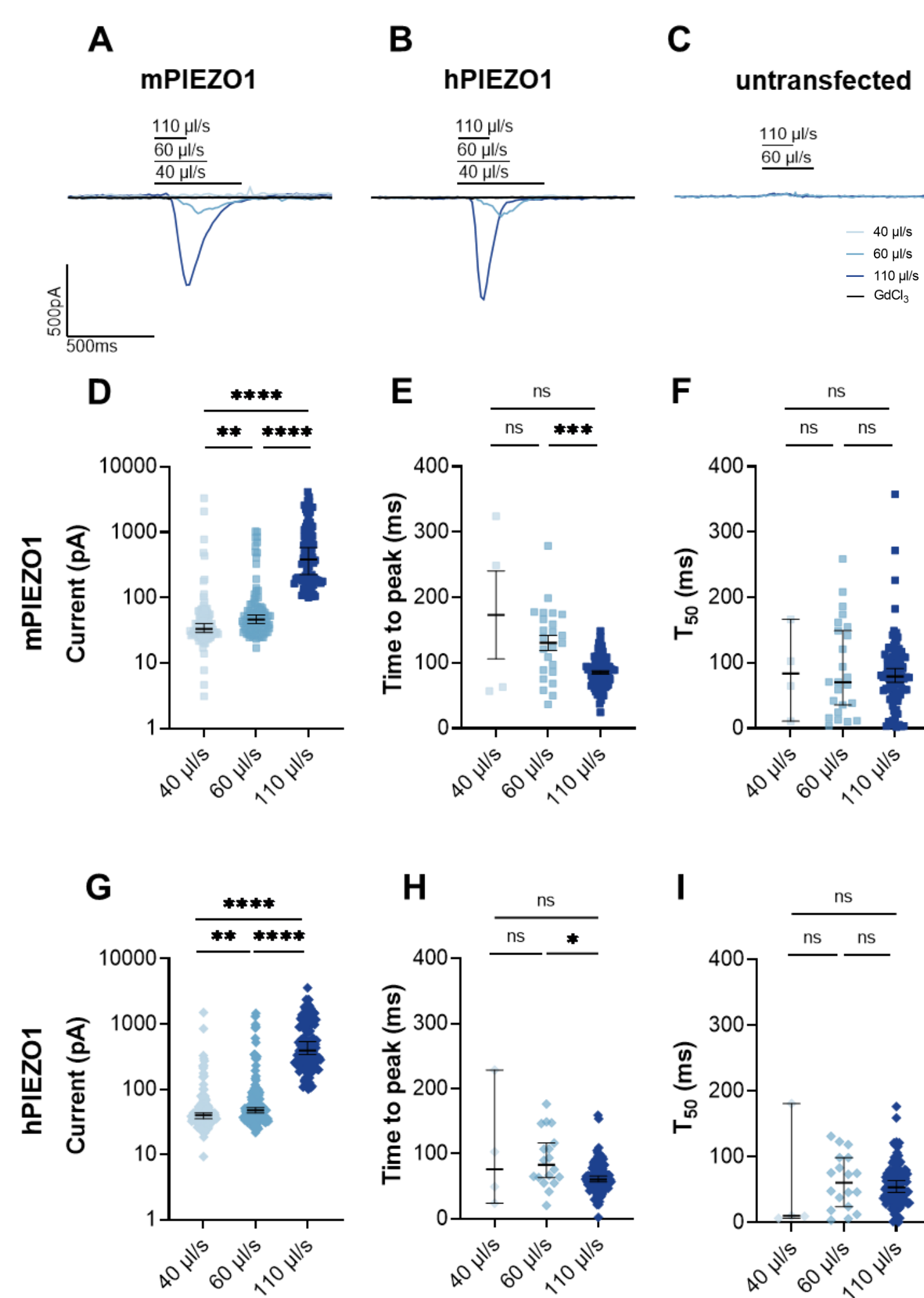
Figure 1: (Left) Schematic illustration of a cross section of one well of an NPC-384 chip. M-Stim delivers a small volume of solution locally to the cell (1 and 2) and uses an aspiration step (3, dashed arrows) to recover the dispensed volume. (Right) Schematic illustration of the top view of one well of an NPC-384 chip with 1 patch hole (1x) and 4 patch holes (4x). Illustrations were created with BioRender.com.

Abbreviations:

n = number of cells for a given experimental condition out of total amount of valid cells
N = number of independent NPC-384 chips
 T_{50} = decay time from peak to 50% of the remaining signal

3 Effect of pipetting flow on PIEZO1 responses

Figure 2: Representative PIEZO1 raw traces of single cells elicited by M-Stim at 40 $\mu\text{l/s}$ (light blue trace), 60 $\mu\text{l/s}$ (blue trace) and 110 $\mu\text{l/s}$ (dark blue trace) and blocked by GdCl_3 (black trace) for mPIEZO1 (A), hPIEZO1 (B) and untransfected cells (C). Absolute peak current amplitudes of mPIEZO1 (D) and hPIEZO1 cells (G) plotted against pipetting flow (mPIEZO1: n=123/1440; N=9; **P=0.0073, ****P<0.0001); hPIEZO1: n=123/1471; N=9; **P=0.022, ****P<0.0001). Time to peak and T_{50} values of mPIEZO1 (E-F) and hPIEZO1 cells (H-I) plotted against pipetting flow (mPIEZO1: 40 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=4/1467; 60 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=24/1488; 110 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=88/1440; N=9; hPIEZO1: 40 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=4/1494; 60 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=18/1483; 110 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=103/1471; N=9; ns P>0.05, *P=0.0201, ***P=0.0006). All data are shown as values of individual cells with median, and 95% CI indicated in black, tested for statistical significance using a Friedman test (D/G) and Kruskal-Wallis test (E-F/H-I) with Dunn's post-hoc test.



4 Increased current readout using multi-hole chips

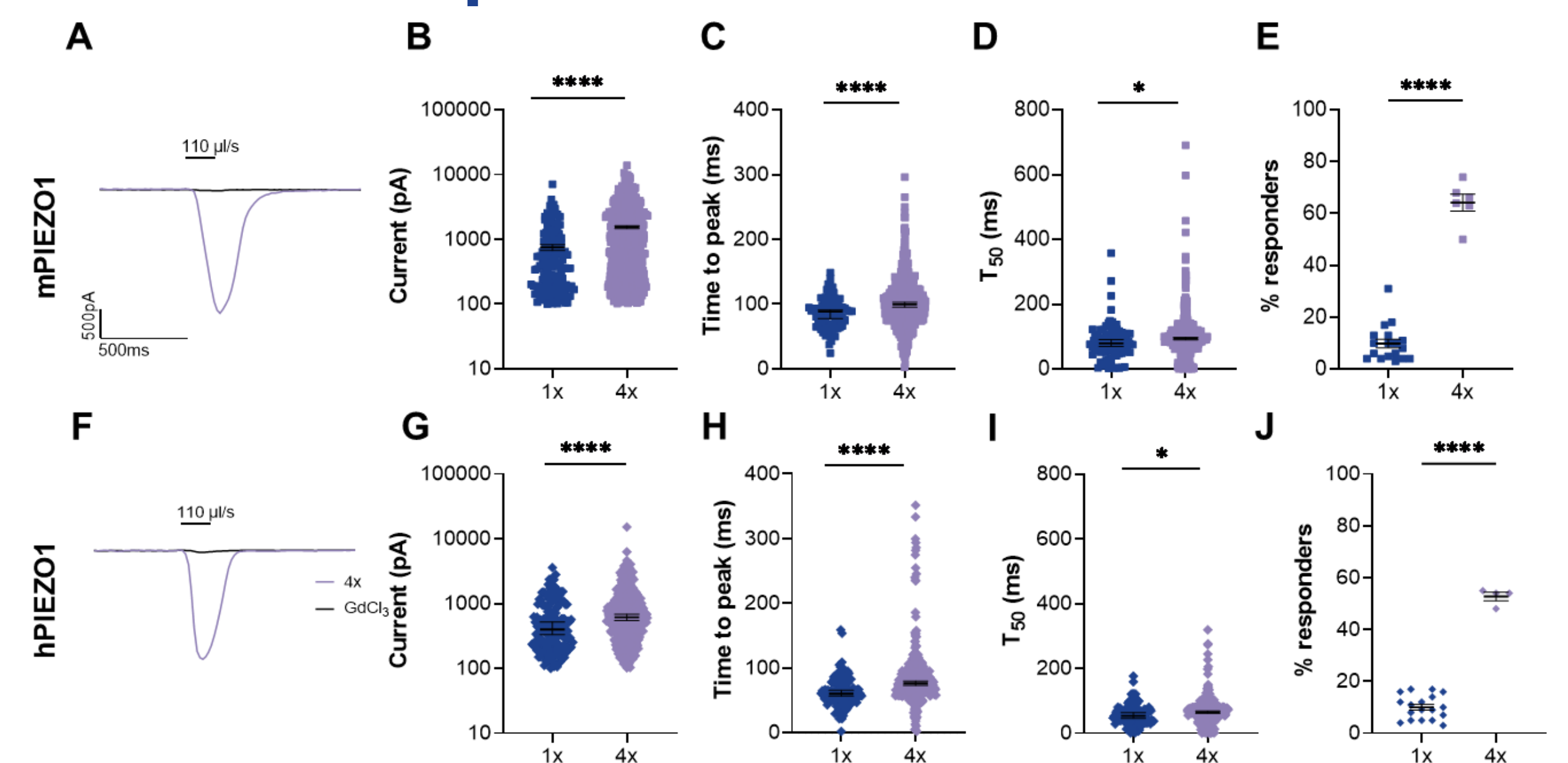


Figure 3: Representative mPIEZO1 (A) and hPIEZO1 (F) raw traces recorded from a 4-hole chip elicited by M-Stim at 110 $\mu\text{l/s}$. Absolute current values of mPIEZO1 (B) and hPIEZO1 cells (G) recorded from single-hole (1x, dark blue) and 4-hole (4x, purple) chips (mPIEZO1: 1x, n=148/1910; N=18; 4x, n=579/941; N=6; hPIEZO1: 1x, n=174/1919; N=18; 4x, n=346/667; N=4; ****P<0.0001). Time to peak and T_{50} values of mPIEZO1 (C-D) and hPIEZO1 cells (H-I) recorded from 1x (dark blue) and 4x (purple) chips (mPIEZO1: 1x, n=88/1440; N=9; 4x, n=506/843; N=5; *P=0.0211, ****P<0.0001; hPIEZO1: 1x, n=103/1471; N=9; 4x, n=324/667; N=4; *P=0.0375, ****P<0.0001). Percentage of mPIEZO1 (E) and hPIEZO1 (J) cells responding to activation by M-Stim at 110 $\mu\text{l/s}$ pipetting flow using 1x (dark blue) and 4x (purple) chips (mPIEZO1: 1x, N=18; 4x, N=6; hPIEZO1: 1x, N=18; 4x, N=4; ****P<0.0001). Data are shown as values of individual cells with median, and 95% CI (B, C, D/G, H, I), or as mean \pm SEM (E/J), indicated in black, tested for statistical significance Mann Whitney test and unpaired t-test.

5 Effect of M-Stim combined with Yoda1

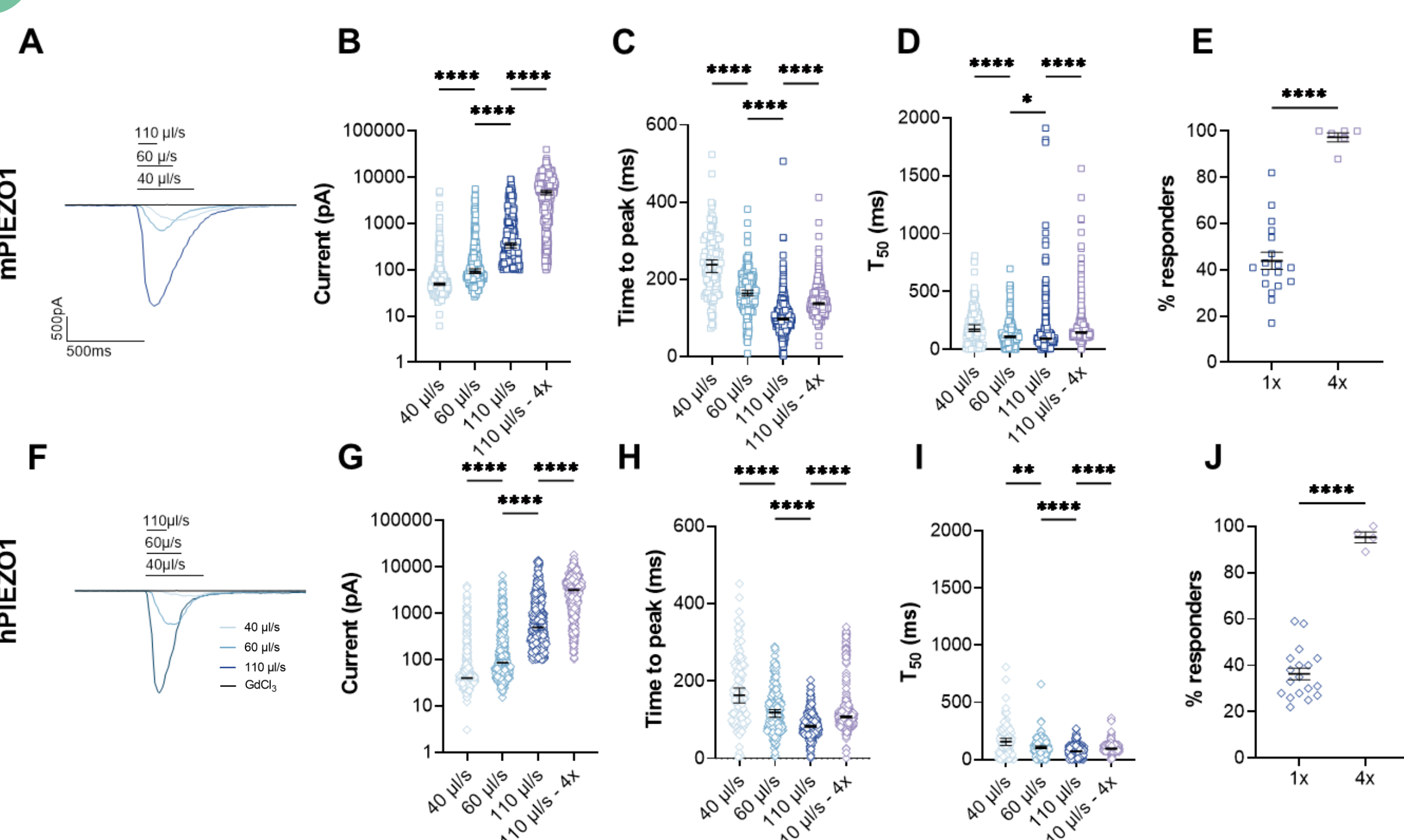


Figure 4: Representative mPIEZO1 (A) and hPIEZO1 (F) raw traces of single cells elicited by M-Stim + 10 μM Yoda1 at 40 $\mu\text{l/s}$ (light blue trace), 60 $\mu\text{l/s}$ (blue trace) and 110 $\mu\text{l/s}$ (dark blue trace) and blocked by GdCl_3 (black trace). Absolute peak current amplitudes of mPIEZO1 (E) and hPIEZO1 cells (I) plotted against pipetting flow (mPIEZO1: 1x, n=465/1353; N=9; 4x, n=685/722; N=6; hPIEZO1: 1x, n=456/1390; N=9; 4x, n=577/604; N=4; ****P<0.0001). Time to peak and T_{50} values of mPIEZO1 (C-D) and hPIEZO1 cells (H-I) plotted against pipetting flow (mPIEZO1: 1x, 40 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=142/1420; 60 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=242/1388; 110 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=465/1353; N=9; 4x, 110 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=662/697; N=5; *P=0.0178, ****P<0.0001; hPIEZO1: 1x, 40 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=104/1425; 60 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=227/1412; 110 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=460/1390; N=9; 4x, 110 $\mu\text{l/s}$ n=566/604; *P=0.0094, ****P<0.0001). Percentage of mPIEZO1 (E) and hPIEZO1 (J) cells responding to M-Stim + Yoda1 at 110 $\mu\text{l/s}$ pipetting flow recorded from 1x (dark blue) and 4x (purple) chips (mPIEZO1: 1x, N=18; 4x, N=6; hPIEZO1: 1x, N=18; 4x, N=4; ****P<0.0001). Data are shown as values of individual cells with median, and 95% CI (B, C, D/G, H, I), or as mean \pm SEM (E/J), indicated in black, tested for statistical significance using Kruskal-Wallis test with Dunn's post-hoc test and unpaired t-test.

6 Summary

- Fast pipetting flow (110 $\mu\text{l/s}$) is a key factor for the mechanical stimulation (M-Stim) of PIEZO1 channels on the SyncroPatch 384
- Activation of hPIEZO1 by M-Stim results in faster signal onset and faster signal decay compared to mPIEZO1
- Using M-Stim with multi-hole (4x) chips increases signal amplitude and number of responding wells, and represents a valid tool for the study of PIEZO1 channels on the SyncroPatch384
- M-Stim can be combined with chemical stimulation by e.g. Yoda1 to maximize the success rate (i.e., number of responding cells)
- M-Stim provides a highly parallelized, objectified approach to allow for mechanically induced PIEZO1 activation, enabling mutants' investigations and compound screening, with the ultimate goal of accelerating the development of new medical strategies.

References

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