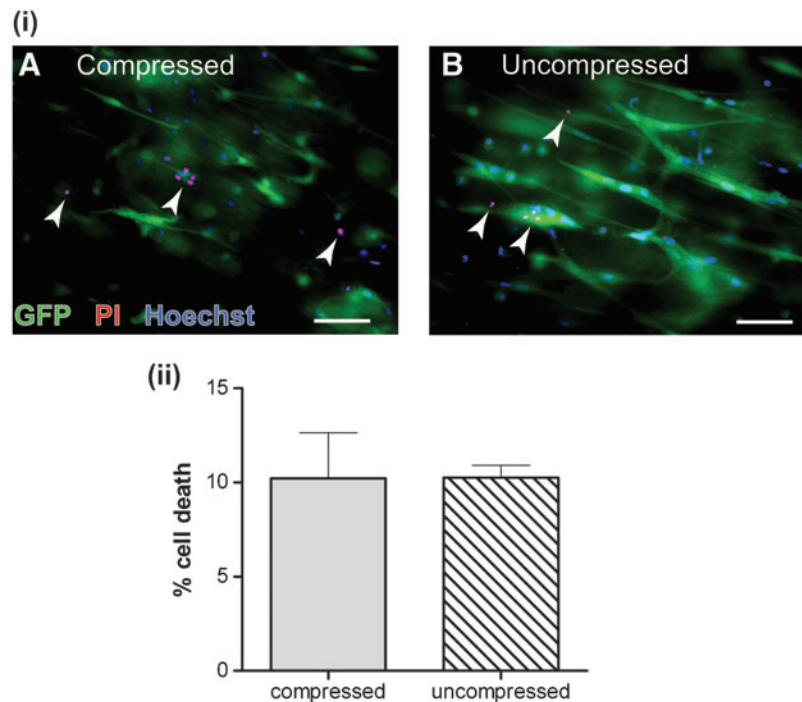


SUPPLEMENTAL FIG. S1. Decreased number of neurites per neuron in the absence of astrocytes. The number of neurites was counted per neuronal cell body in the different regions of gels with and without astrocytes. Number of neurites per neuronal cell body did not change between gel regions. However, there was a significant increase in neurite number in gels with astrocytes, in all regions of the gels. $n = 6$ independent gels, $**p < 0.01$.



SUPPLEMENTAL FIG. S2. Plastic compression does not affect astrocyte viability. (i) Cell death was analyzed (A) 1 h after compression and (B) in uncompressed astrocyte gels using PI and Hoechst. Dead cells appear as small PI and Hoechst positive nuclei (indicated by arrowheads). (ii) There was no significant increase in cell death of astrocytes after plastic compression of collagen gels. Scale bars in (A) and (B) = 50 μm , $n = 3$ independent gels. PI, propidium iodide.