#### **Supplementary Information for:** 1

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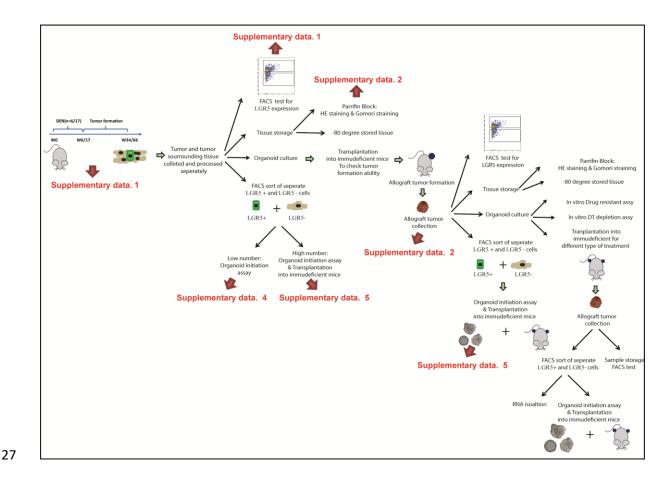
# LGR5 marks targetable tumor-initiating

## cells in mouse liver cancer

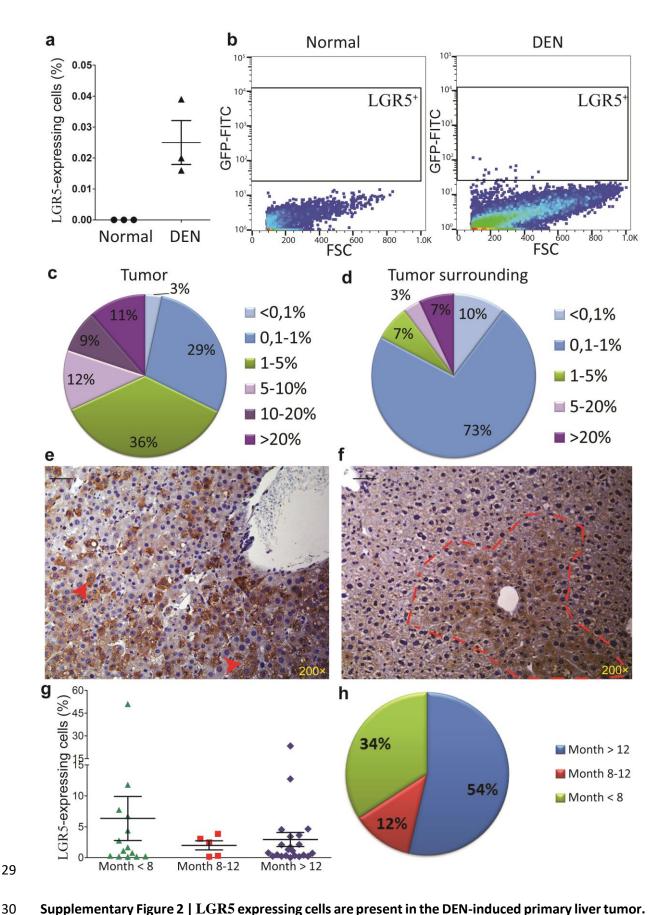
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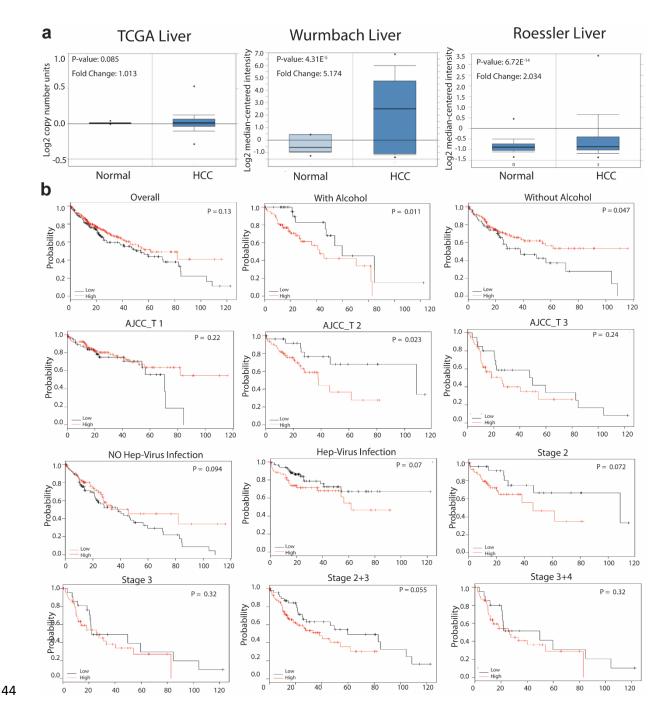
28 Supplementary Figure 1 | General flowchart of the experimental design.



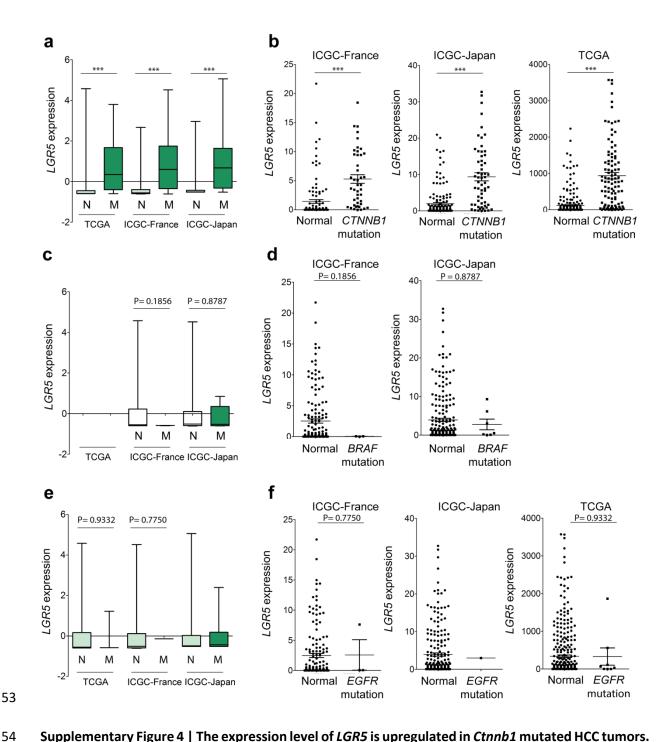
Supplementary Figure 2 | LGR5 expressing cells are present in the DEN-induced primary liver tumor.

a, LGR5+ cells are present in the liver upon DEN administration (Post DEN induction day 7). b,

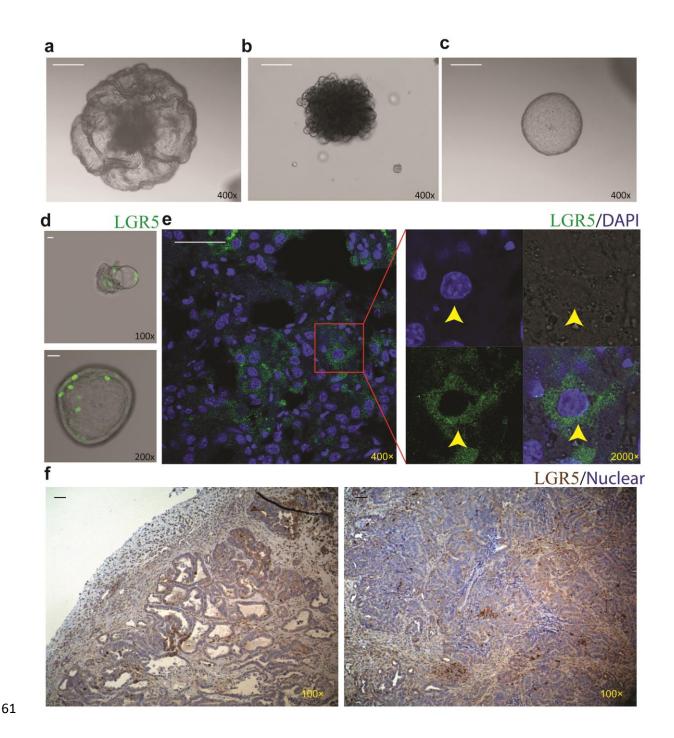
Representative FACS plots showing that  $LGR5^+$  cells are present in the liver following DEN administration (Post DEN induction day 7). **c**, Relative  $LGR5^+$  fraction in DEN-induced liver tumors. **d**, Relative  $LGR5^+$  fraction in tissue bordering the DEN-induced liver tumors (denominated as surrounding). **e-f**, Representative immunohistochemistry pictures showing the microscopic aspect of the  $LGR5^+$  cells in liver cancer. Two types of  $LGR5^+$  cell distribution patterns are apparent, scattered  $LGR5^+$  cell distribution (**e**) and  $LGR5^+$  island-like clusters (**f**). The pictures show an anti-GFP immunohistochemistry staining in which  $LGR5^+$  cells are brown and nuclei are blue. Scale bar =  $50\mu m$ . **g**, The percentage of  $LGR5^-$  expressing cells within each tissue, grouped by tumor collection month (the month is counted since the first administration of DEN). Mean  $\pm$  SEM. (**h**) Relative mice number fraction in all DEN-induced mice, grouped by tumor collection month. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.



Supplementary Figure 3 | *LGR5* expression in HCC tissues and relation to patient outcome. a, The upregulated expression of *LGR5* in HCC tissues compared with normal tissues from TCGA Liver cohort (Normal vs. HCC: n = 115 vs. n = 97, P = 0.085, Fold change: 1.013), Wurmbach liver cohort (Normal vs. HCC: n = 10 vs. n = 35,  $P = 4.31E^{-5}$ , Fold change: 5.174) and Roessler liver cohort (Normal vs. HCC: n = 200 vs. n = 225, P = 6.72E-14, Fold change: 2.034). b, Kaplan-Meier curve for HCC of patients based on different etiology/tumor stage of HCC from TCGA Liver cohort. AJCC\_T: American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC) tumor staging system; Stage: Barcelona Clinic Liver Cancer (BCLC) tumor staging system. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.

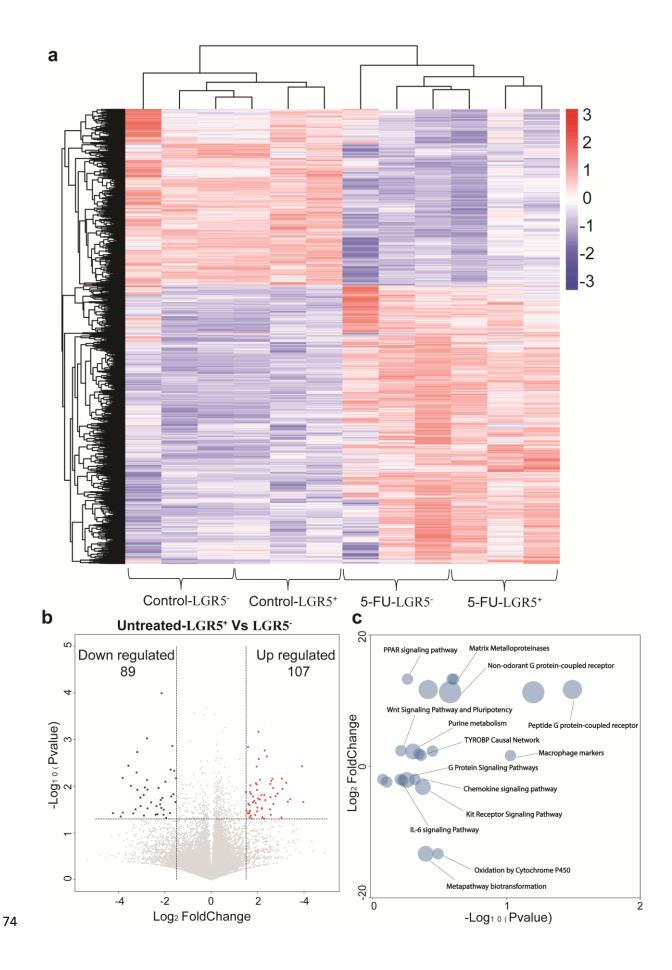


**Supplementary Figure 4** | The expression level of *LGR5* is upregulated in *Ctnnb1* mutated HCC tumors. **a-b,** Upregulation of *LGR5* expression in *Ctnnb1* mutated compared to non-*Ctnnb1* mutated patient HCC tumors, in ICGC-France, ICGC-Japan and TCGA cohort. **c-d,** No significant difference of *LGR5* expression in *Braf* mutated compared to non-*Braf* mutated HCC tumors, in ICGC-France and ICGC-Japan cohort. **e-f,** No significant difference of *LGR5* expression in *Egfr* mutated compared to non-*Egfr* mutated HCC tumors, in ICGC-France, ICGC-Japan and TCGA cohort. Mean ± SEM. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.



Supplementary Figure 5 | Allograft liver tumors maintain an LGR5<sup>+</sup> compartment. a-c, 3-7 days after initiation of allograft tumor-derived cultures, small organoids were observed and subsequently passage was performed every 4-7 days, employing splitting ratios ranging from 1:4 to 1:10 as appropriate. Representative pictures show the different morphologies of the tumor organoids obtained, which include but also flower-like, irregular sheet-like structures (a), and grape-like, condensed phenotypes (b), and. relative normal hollow sphere-like aspects (c). d, Representative confocal pictures showing the maintenance of an LGR5<sup>+</sup> compartment in tumor organoids (LGR5-driven GFP: green). e, Representative immunofluorescent pictures showing an LGR5<sup>+</sup> compartment

- 70 in allograft tumors (*LGR5*-driven GFP: green; DAPI: blue). **f**, Representative immunohistochemistry
- 71 pictures showing expression of *LGR5* promotor-driven GFP in allograft tumors (anti-GFP
- 72 immunohistochemistry: brown; nuclei: blue). Scale bar = 50μm.



Supplementary Figure 6 | Genome-wide transcriptomic analysis of LGR5+ and LGR5- cells by RNA-**Seq. a**, Hierarchical clustering showed a separation of all four different groups (Untreated LGR5<sup>+</sup> cells, Untreated LGR5<sup>-</sup> cells, 5-FU-treated LGR5<sup>+</sup> cells, 5-FU-treated LGR5<sup>-</sup> cells). **b**, A Volcano plot showing the most significantly differentially expressed genes between untreated LGR5+ and LGR5- cells. c, 79 GSEA with the library of Wiki2019 was performed to reveal the alteration of signaling pathways between untreated LGR5<sup>+</sup> and LGR5<sup>-</sup> cells. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.

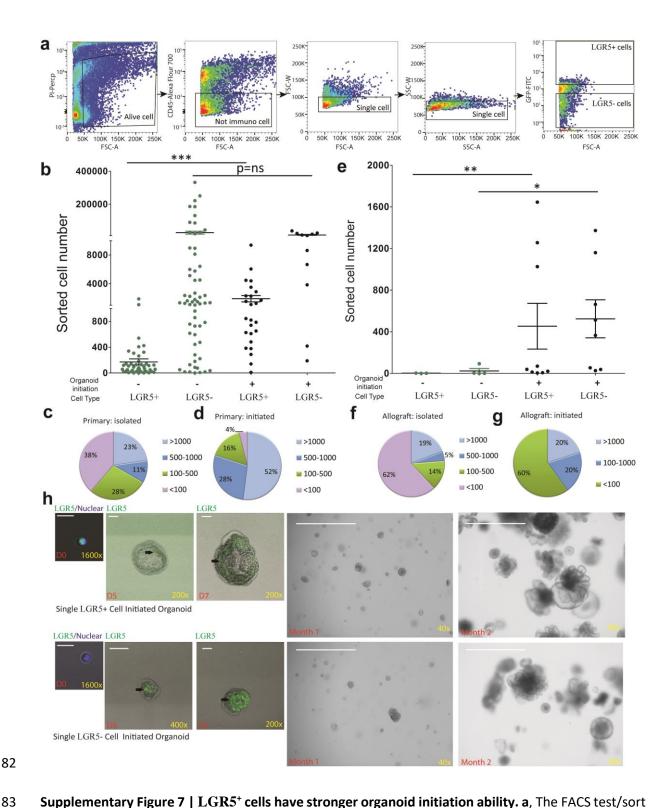
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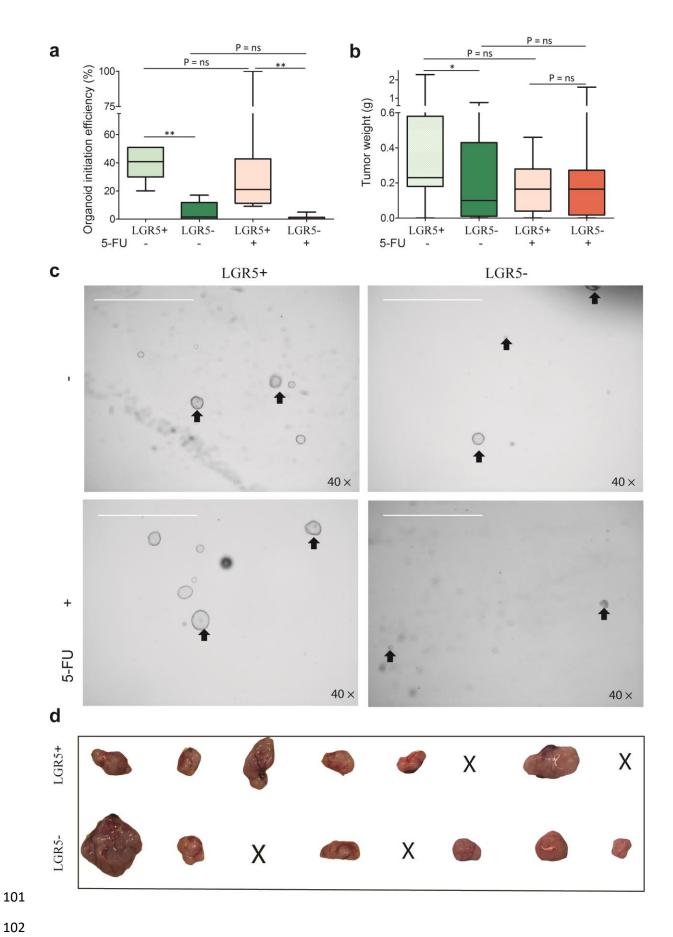
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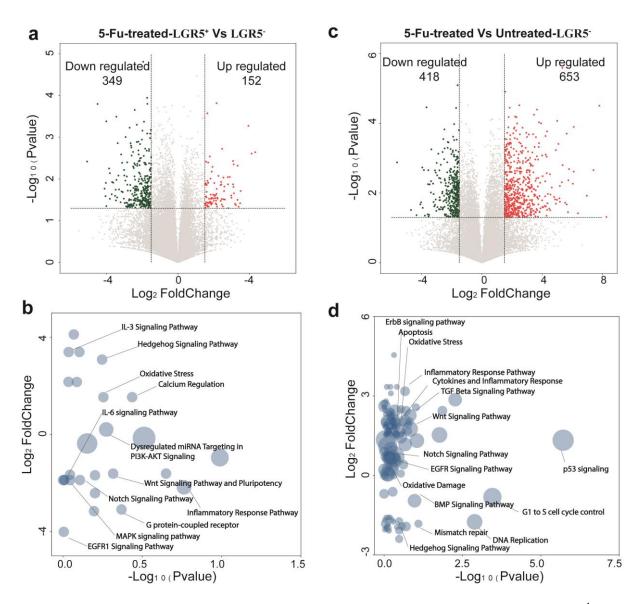


Supplementary Figure 7 | LGR5<sup>+</sup> cells have stronger organoid initiation ability. a, The FACS test/sort strategy for isolating LGR5-GFP<sup>+</sup> and LGR5-GFP<sup>-</sup> cells obtained from liver/allograft tumors/organoids. b, The numbers of sorted LGR5-GFP<sup>+</sup> and LGR5-GFP<sup>-</sup> cells yielding successful (black dots) or failure of organoid initiation (green dots), employing material obtained from DEN-induced murine livers (LGR5<sup>+</sup>-non-initiation vs. LGR5<sup>-</sup>-non-initiation vs. LGR5<sup>-</sup>-initiation: 171.4  $\pm$  47.1, n = 46 vs. 28350  $\pm$  8914, n = 60 vs. 1906  $\pm$  441.6, n = 25 vs. 13860  $\pm$  3654, n = 11, Mean  $\pm$  SEM). c, The

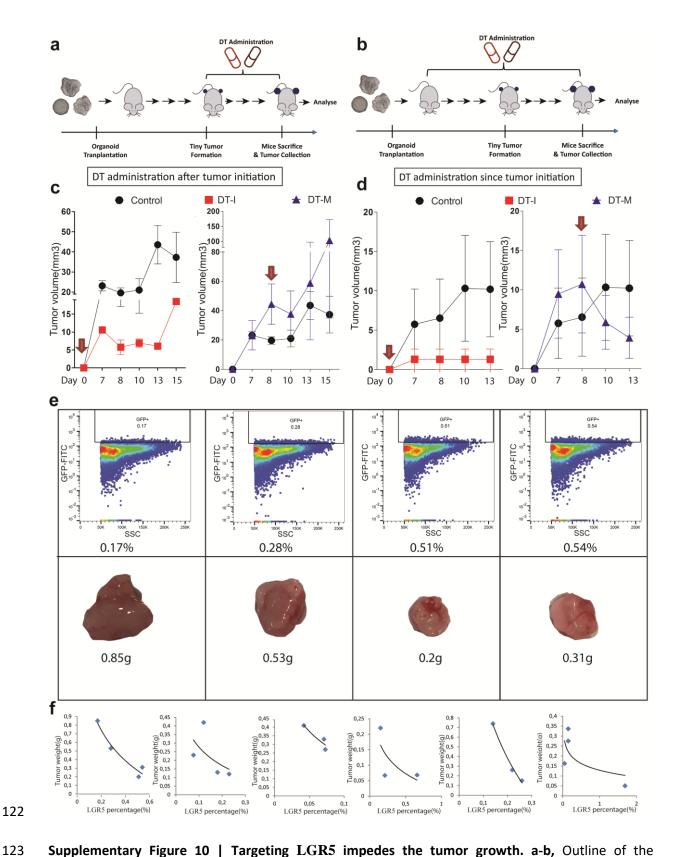
distribution showing the percentage of the number of  $LGR5^+$  cells which were isolated from primary liver tumors. d, The cell number distribution for the sorted  $LGR5^+$  cells which can initiate organoid, from primary tumors. e, The exact sorted numbers for  $LGR5^+$  cells and  $LGR5^-$  cells , for organoid initiated (black dots) and non-organoid initiated (green dots), from allograft tumors ( $LGR5^+$ -non-initiated vs.  $LGR5^-$ -initiated vs.  $LGR5^-$ -initiated:  $2.0 \pm 0.6$ , n = 3 vs.  $24.3 \pm 22.9$ , n = 4 vs.  $453.7 \pm 220.3$ , n = 9 vs.  $524.3 \pm 182.9$ , n = 8). f, Frequency distribution of the relative number of  $LGR5^+$  cells obtained from allograft liver tumors. g, Frequency distribution of the number of  $LGR5^+$  cells that display successful organoid initiation from material obtained from allograft tumors. h, Representative pictures tracing organoids initiation and growth from  $LGR5^+$  or  $LGR5^-$  cells. Black arrow: LGR5 expressing cells. Day0/5/7: Scale bar =  $50\mu m$ ; Month1/2: Scale bar =  $1000\mu m$ . Source data are provided as a Source Data file.



Supplementary Figure 8 | LGR5<sup>+</sup> cells from 5-FU treated tumors can initiate organoid and tumor. a, The organoid initiation ability of untreated LGR5<sup>+</sup> cells (39.5  $\pm$  4.8 %, n = 6, Mean  $\pm$  SEM), untreated LGR5<sup>-</sup> cells (5.0  $\pm$  2.9 %, n = 6), 5-FU-treated LGR5<sup>+</sup> cells (31.2  $\pm$  14.0 %, n = 6) and 5-FU-treated LGR5<sup>-</sup> cells (0.8  $\pm$  0.8 %, n = 6). **b**, The tumor initiation ability of untreated LGR5<sup>+</sup> cells (0.50  $\pm$  0.15 g, n = 15), untreated LGR5<sup>-</sup> cells (0.21  $\pm$  0.06 g, n = 15), 5-FU-treated LGR5<sup>+</sup> cells (0.18  $\pm$  0.05 g, n = 8) and 5-FU-treated LGR5<sup>-</sup> cells (0.31  $\pm$  0.19 g, n = 8). **c**, Representative picture showing the organoid initiation ability of above four groups. Black arrow: initiated organoids. Scale bar = 1000 $\mu$ m. **d**, Pictures showing 5-FU-treated LGR5<sup>+</sup> cells and 5-FU-treated LGR5<sup>-</sup> cells initiated tumors. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.

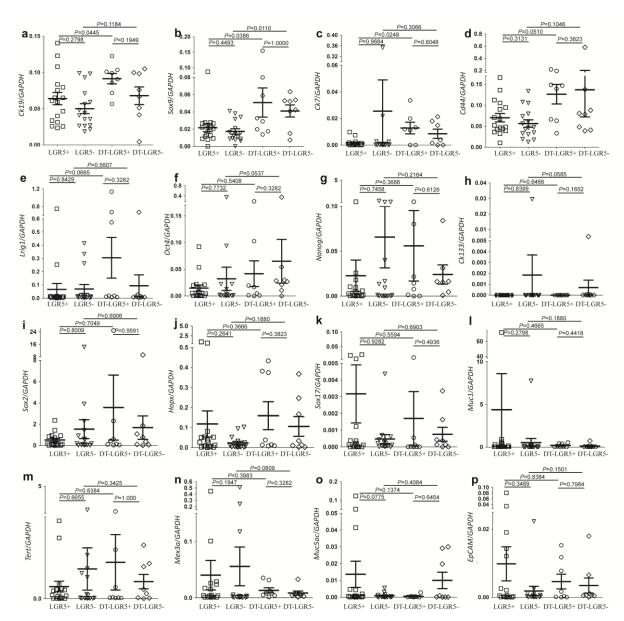


**Supplementary Figure 9 | Genome-wide transcriptomic analysis of 5-FU treatment on LGR5**<sup>+/-</sup> **cells. a**, A Volcano plot showing the most significantly differentially expressed genes between 5-FU treated LGR5<sup>+</sup> cell/LGR5<sup>-</sup> cells. **b**, Gene enrichment analysis (Wiki2019) of the differentially expressed genes between 5-FU treated LGR5<sup>+</sup> cell/LGR5<sup>-</sup> cells. **c**, A Volcano plot showing the most significantly differentially expressed genes between 5-FU treated/untreated LGR5<sup>-</sup> cells. **d**, Gene enrichment analysis (Wiki2019) of the differentially expressed genes between 5-FU treated/untreated LGR5<sup>-</sup> cells. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.

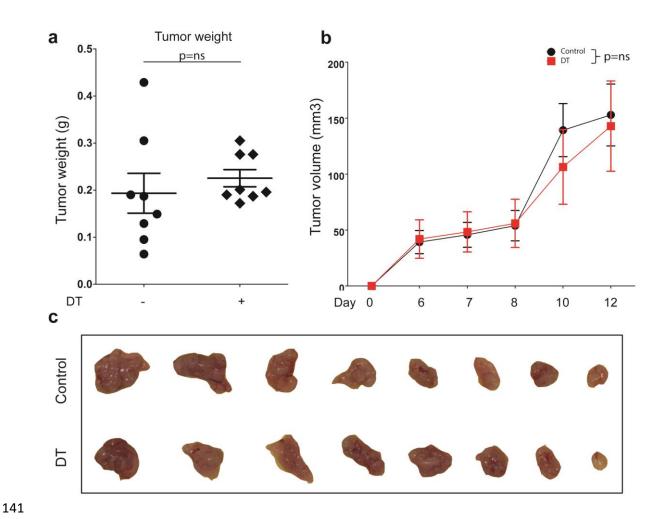


**Supplementary Figure 10 | Targeting LGR5 impedes the tumor growth.** a-b, Outline of the experimental strategies used to test the effect of DT administration during tumor growth (a) and at tumor initiation (b). c-d, Growth curves showing the effects of DT administration during the entire experimental period (Left, DT-I) and following DT intervention during tumor growth (Right, DT-M) for organoid strain 1 (c) and strain 2 (d). Mean ± SEM. Red arrow: onset of DT administration (n = 4 for

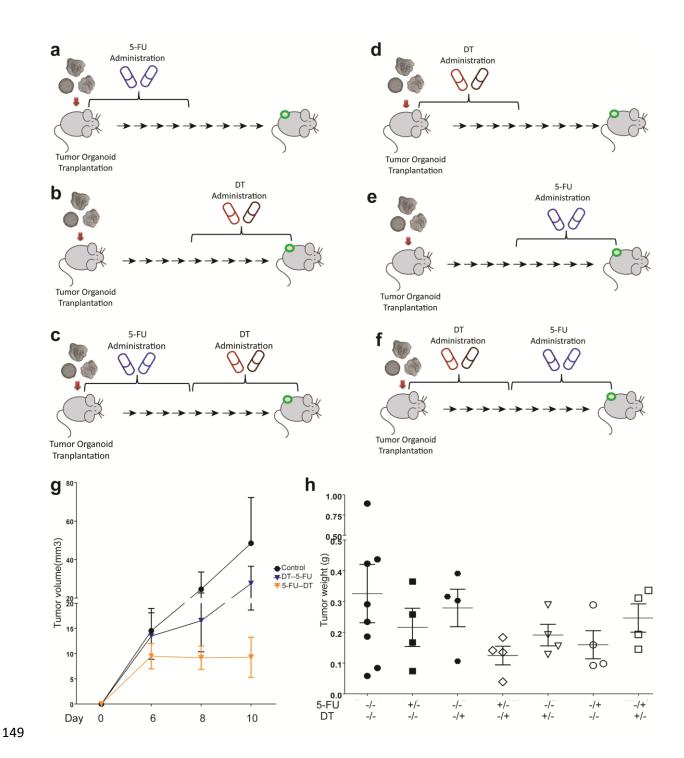
each time point). **e**, Representative FACS pictures (upper channel, with LGR5-GFP<sup>+</sup> expression) and tumor pictures (lower channel, with tumor weights) showing that the same tumor strains, collected from a single mouse, shows variable LGR5 expression. **f**, tumors collected from six individual mice (transplanted with same strain and same amount of organoid; collected on the same day, non-treated tumors) showing that smaller tumors have relatively higher LGR5 expression. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.



Supplementary Figure 11 | The expression profile of untreated/DT-treated LGR5 $^+$  and LGR5 $^-$  cells. a-p, The expression of stem cell/tumor stem cell markers in LGR5 $^+$ /LGR5 $^-$  and DT treated tumor isolated LGR5 $^+$ /LGR5 $^-$  cells was analyzed using qRT-PCR and related to a reference gene. Mean  $\pm$  SEM. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.



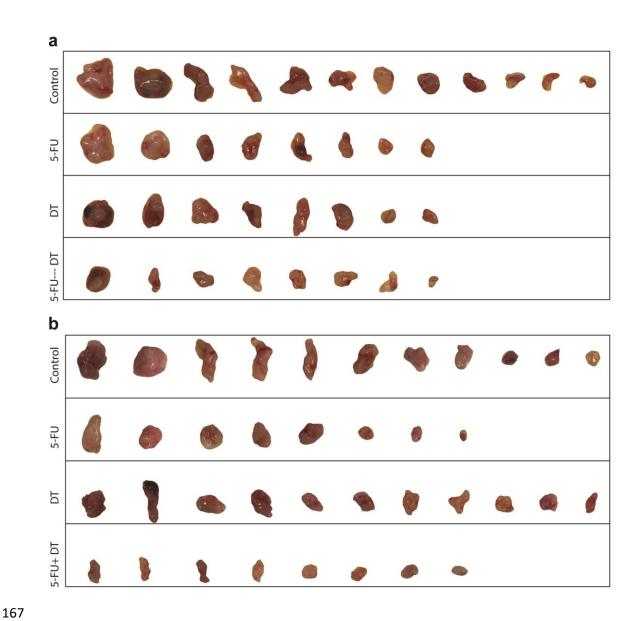
Supplementary Figure 12 | Wide type tumor organoids do not respond to DT administration. a, The weight of tumors initiated by wild type organoids from control, the DT-treated group following sacrifice of the animals involved (Control vs. DT:  $0.19 \pm 0.042$  g vs.  $0.23 \pm 0.018$  g, n = 8, P = ns, Mean  $\pm$  SEM). b, Representative growth curve showing tumor volume in the control group and the DT-treated group (n = 4). c, Representative pictures showing the tumors from the control group and DT administrated group. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.



Supplementary Figure 13 | Effects of combining DT treatment with conventional anti-cancer therapy.

**a,** 5-FU control: 5-FU was administrated during the first half of the experiment period and tumor volume was assessed continuously. **b,** DT control: animals were treated with DT during the second half of the experiment period and tumor volume was assessed continuously. **c,** Combination strategy 1: 5-FU was administrated during the first half and DT was treated during the second half of the experiment period. Tumor volume was assessed continuously. (**a** and **b** are the relevant control groups for **c**). **d,** DT control: DT was administrated during the first half of the experiment period and tumor volume was assessed continuously. **e,** 5-FU control: 5-FU was administrated during the second half of the

experiment period the and tumor volume was assessed continuously. **f**, Combination strategy 2: First DT was applied (first half of the experiment) followed by 5-FU treatment (second half of the experiment) (**d** and **e** are the relevant control groups for **f**). **g**, Representative growth curve showing tumor volumes of the control, Combination strategy 1 (5-FU--DT) and Combination strategy 2 (DT--5-FU) group (n = 4). **h**, Weight of tumors from the different groups described above at the end of the experiment. +/-: Treatment was administrated for the first half of the experiment; -/+: Treatment was administrated for the second half of the experiment; -/-: No treatment. Mean  $\pm$  SEM. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.



Supplementary Figure 14  $\mid$  Combination of LGR5 lineage ablation with conventional therapy. a-b, Pictures showing the tumors from the different groups.

## 171 Supplementary Table 1 | Allograft tumor

Allograft Tumor								
Initiated Tumor Code	Isolated Cell Popualtion	Original Strain	Injected Cell Number	Initiated Tumor Weight(g)	Tumor Formation Time	Immunodeficient mice type		
1	LGR5+	SAL1	72	0.58	23	Nude mice		
	LGR5-		72	0.27	23	Nude mice		
2	LGR5+	SAL1	57	0.44	23	Nude mice		
	LGR5-		57	0.01	23	Nude mice		
3	LGR5+	SAL1	90	0.14	23	Nude mice		
	LGR5-		90	0.11	23	Nude mice		
4	LGR5+	SAL1	167	0.22	23	Nude mice		
	LGR5-		167	0.08	23	Nude mice		
5	LGR5+	AL43	66	2.28	38	Nude mice		
	LGR5-		66	0.45	38	Nude mice		
6	LGR5+	AL43	53	1.11	38	NSG		
	LGR5-		53	0.43	38	NSG		
7	LGR5+	AL43	57	0.51	38	NSG		
	LGR5-		57	0.77	38	NSG		
8	LGR5+	SAL2	237	0.8	26	Nude mice		
	LGR5-		237	0.05	26	Nude mice		
9	LGR5+	SAL2	699	0.23	26	Nude mice		
	LGR5-		699	0.1	26	Nude mice		
10	LGR5+	SAL1	182	0.53	26	Nude mice		
	LGR5-		182	0.09	26	Nude mice		
11	LGR5+	SAL1	127	0.18	26	Nude mice		
	LGR5-		127	0.61	26	Nude mice		

## Supplementary Table 2 | Clinical-pathological data of Erasmus cohort

Table. Patient characteristics	
Characteristic	HCC patients (n=74)
Age at surgery (years)	
Mean ± SD	60 ± 15,9
Median (range)	63 (11-82)
Sex – no. (%)	
Male	45 (60,8)
Female	29 (39,2)
Race – no. (%)	
White	61 (82,4)
African	6 (8,1)
Asian	6 (8,1)
Not reported	1 (1,4)
Etiology – no. (%)	· · ·
No known liver disease	21 (28,4)
Alcohol	16 (21,6)
Hepatitis B	9 (12,2)
NASH	8 (10,8)
Hepatitis C + Alcohol	6 (8,1)
Hepatitis B + Alc/HepC/NASH	5 (6,8)
Hepatitis C	5 (6,8)
Fibrolamellar HCC	3 (4,1)
Hemochromatosis + NASH	1 (1,4)
Hepatitis status – no. (%)	
Hepatitis B or C positive	25 (33,8)
Chronic Hepatitis B	14 (18,9)
Chronic Hepatitis C	12 (16,2)
Cirrhosis – no. (%)	
Yes	21 (28,4)
No	53 (71,6)
Tumor differentiation – no. (%)	
Good	8 (10,8)
Moderate	40 (54,1)
Poor	14 (18,9)
Unknown	12 (16,2)
Vascular invasion – no. (%)	
Yes	29 (39,2)
No	38 (51,4)
Unknown	7 (9,5)
Number of lesions – no. (%)	· ·
1	40 (54,1)
>1	34 (45,9)
Size of largest lesion (cm)	
Mean ± SD	7,7 ± 5,6
Median (range)	6,1 (1-24)
AFP level before resection (ug/l)	
Mean ± SD	6661,1 ± 407289,4
Median (range)	8 (1-3118700)

## 176 Supplementary Table 3 | Antibody

Antibody	Antibody clone/ reference	Raised	Origin
CD45	56-0451-82	Mouse	eBioscience
AFP	SAB3500533- 100UG	Goat	Sigma
HNF4a	ab41898	Mouse	Abcam
EpCAM	ab71916	Rabbit	Abcam
Cytokeratin 19	ab52625	Rabbit	Abcam
GFP	A-11122	Rabbit	Invitrogen/Life Technologies
Alexa Fluor® 488 AffiniPure Donkey Anti- Goat IgG (H+L)	705-545-147	Donkey	Bio-Connect
Donkey anti-Rabbit IgG (H+L) Secondary Antibody, Alexa Fluor® 594 conjugate	R37119	Donkey	Thermo fisher
Donkey anti-mouse IgG (H+L) Secondary Antibody, Alexa Fluor® 594 conjugate	R37115	Donkey	Thermo fisher

## Supplementary Table 4 | Primer

Gene name	Gene Symbo	Sequence	
Leucine-rich repeat-containing G-	Mouse- <i>Lgr</i> 5	Fw	CTG ACT TTG AAT GGT GCC TCG
protein coupled receptor 5		Re	ATG TCC ACT ACC GCG ATT AC
Cytokeratin-19	Mouse-Krt19	Fw	GTG AAG ATC CGC GAC TGG T
		Re	AGG CGA GCA TTG TC AAT CTG
Transcription factor SOX-9	Mouse-Sox9	Fw	CGA CTA CGC TGA CCA TCA GA
		Re	GAC TGG TTG TTC CCA GTG CT
CD133	Mouse-Prom1	Fw	TCT GTT CAG CAT TTC CTC AC
		Re	TCA GTA TCG AGA CGG GTC
CD44	Mouse-CD44	Fw	CGT CCA ACA CCT CCC ACT AT
		Re	AGC CGC TGC TGA CAT CGT
Keratin, type II cytoskeletal 7	Mouse-Ck7	Fw	ATC CGC GAG ATC ACC ATC
, ,		Re	ATG TGT CTG AGA TCT GCG ACT
Leucine-rich repeats and	Mouse- <i>Lrig1</i>	Fw	AAGGGAACTCAACTTGGCGAG
immunoglobulin-like domains protein 1		Re	ACGTGAGGCCTTCAATCAGC
Octamer-binding transcription	Mouse-Oct4	Fw	CTGTAGGGAGGGCTTCGGGCACTT
factor 4		Re	CTGAGGGCCAGGCAGGAGCACGAG
Homeobox protein NANOG	Mouse-Nanog	Fw	AGGGTCTGCTACTGAGATGCTCTG
·		Re	CAACCACTGGTTTTTCTGCCACCG
SRY (sex determining region Y)-	Mouse-Sox2	Fw	GGCAGCTACAGCATGATGCAGGAGC
box 2		Re	CTGGTCATGGAGTTGTACTGCAGG
Homeodomain-only protein	Mouse-Hopx	Fw	CATCCTTAGTCAGACGCGCA
		Re	AGGCAAGCCTTCTGACCGC
Telomerase reverse transcriptase	Mouse-Tert	Fw	GCAGGTGAACAGCCTCCAGACAG
•		Re	TCCTAACACGCTGGTCAAAGGGAAGC
RNA-binding protein MEX3A	Mouse-Mex3a	Fw	ACACCACGGAGTGCGTTC
		Re	GTTGGTTTTGGCCCTCAGA
Mucin 5AC	Mouse-Muc5ac	Fw	GGACCAAGTGGTTTGACACTGAC
		Re	CCTCATAGTTGAGGCACATCCCAG
Epithelial cell adhesion molecule	Mouse-Epcam	Fw	CGCAGCTCAGGAAGAATGTG
		Re	TGAAGTACACTGGCATTGACG
SRY-box 17	Mouse-Sox17	Fw	GGCGCAGCAGAATCCAGA
		Re	CCACGACTTGCCCAGCAT
Cell surface associated or	Mouse-Muc1	Fw	CCCCAGTTGTCTGTTGGGGTC
polymorphic epithelial mucin		Re	GGATTCTACCACCACGGAGCC
Glyceraldehyde 3-phosphate	Mouse-Gapdh	Fw	TCACCACCATGGAGAAGGC
dehydrogenase	,	Re	GCTAAGCAGTTGGTGGTGCA
Beta-glucuronidases	Human-GUSB	Fw	CAGGTGATGGAAGAAGTGG
		Re	GTTGCTCACAAGGTCACAG
Hypoxanthine	Human-HPRT1	Fw	GCTATAAATTCTTTGCTGACCTGCTG
phosphoribosyltransferase 1		Re	AATTACTTTTATGTCCCCTGTTGACTGG
Phosphomannomutase 1	Human-PMM1	Fw	CGAGTTCTCCGAACTGGAC
•		Re	CTGTTTTCAGGGCTTCCAC
Leucine-rich repeat-containing G-	Human- <i>LGR5</i>	Fw	TCAGTCAGCTGCTCCCGAAT
protein coupled receptor 5		Re	CGTTTCCCGCAAGACGTAAC

#### Supplementary Note:

were proven to be liver tumor.

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#### **Description for Supplementary Data** 182 [1] Supplementary Data 1 183 **Content:** 184 The detailed information for Lar5-DTRGFP mice which used to induce liver cancer, 185 including: 186 1)The mice code 187 2)The mice background 188 3)Primary Code: The corresponding code of initiated primary organoid strain. 189 Black mark: the tissue did not initiate an organoid strain or the strain was already 190 lost due to infection in the following culture. 191 4)Post Den Time (Month): The sacrifice time after the induction of DEN. 192 5)DEN Administration (Week): Time passed between administration of DEN and 193 sacrifice. 194 6)Tissue Type: S: tumor surrounding tissue; T: tumor tissue. S—T: initially marked 195 with tumor surrounding tissue and then characterized as tumor. 196 7)Percentage of LGR5-expressing cells (%): The percentage of LGR5-expressing 197 cells within each tissue. 198 8)Allograft Strains: The strain code which initiated allograft tumor in the 199 immunodeficient mice. 200 201 Remarks: In total, 41 mice were monitored. 10 (mice code: 8,12,17,18,21,22,29,31,35,41) out of 41 mice liver did not show obvious tumor 202 formation. After the following characterization, 2 (mice code: 8, 22) out of 10 203

### 206 [2] Supplementary Data 2

### 207 Content:

- The H&E/Gomori/EpCAM/AFP/CK19/GFP staining of primary/allograft tissues
- 209 for all the allograft strains.

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### 211 [3] Supplementary Data 3

#### 212 Content:

- 213 Gene enrichment analysis of the differentially expressed genes between
- 214 Untreated LGR5+ Vs. LGR5-, 5-FU-treated LGR5+ Vs. LGR5-, 5-FU-treated Vs.
- 215 Untreated LGR5+ and 5-FU-treated Vs. Untreated LGR5- cells.

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### [4] Supplementary Data 4

#### 218 Content:

- 219 Gene: The differentially expressed genes between untreated LGR5+ cells and
- 220 LGR5- cells.
- 221 Gene description: The gene description.
- 222 Survival Analyses: Online database (The Human Protein Atlas,
- 223 <a href="http://www.proteinatlas.org/">http://www.proteinatlas.org/</a>).
- 224 P value for Survival Analyses: Online database (The Human Protein Atlas,
- 225 <a href="http://www.proteinatlas.org/">http://www.proteinatlas.org/</a>).

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### [5] Supplementary Data 5

#### Content:

- The detailed information for single cells isolated from DEN induced murine livers
- and allograft tumors, then used for organoid initiation, including:

- 1)Code: The corresponding tissues of DEN induced murine livers or allograft
- tumors. Green mark: the groups did initiate organoids after sorting.
- 233 2) Initiated organoid number for each group.
- 3) Organoid initiated efficiency (%) for each group.
- 235 Remarks: In total 89 tissues were collected. Among them, 71 tissues were sorted for
- following single cell initiation; 18 tissues were failed for the sort due to FACS machine
- issue or other technical reasons.

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### [6] Supplementary Data 6

#### Content:

- The detailed information for single cells isolated from DEN induced murine livers,
- then injected directly into immunodeficient mice for tumor formation, including:
- 1)Code: The corresponding tissues of DEN induced murine livers and initiated
- allograft tumors. Green mark: the groups did initiate tumors after sorting.
- 245 2) Injected cell number for each group.
- 246 3) Pictures of primary tumors and corresponding allograft tumors.