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Dynamic association of the replication initiator and transcription factor DnaA with  
the *Bacillus subtilis* chromosome during replication stress

Adam M. Breier and Alan D. Grossman\*

Department of Biology

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Cambridge, MA 02139

running title: Dynamics of *B. subtilis* DnaA binding to DNA in vivo

Key words: *Bacillus subtilis*; DnaA; replication stress; transcription

\*Corresponding author:  
Department of Biology  
Building 68-530  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
phone: 617-253-1515  
fax: 617-253-2643  
E-mail: [adg@mit.edu](mailto:adg@mit.edu)

26 **Abstract**

27 DnaA functions as both a transcription factor and the replication initiator in bacteria. We  
28 characterized the DNA binding dynamics of DnaA on a genomic level. Based on crosslinking  
29 and immunoprecipitation (ChIP) data, DnaA binds at least 17 loci, 15 of which are regulated  
30 transcriptionally in response to inhibition of replication (replication stress). Six loci, each of  
31 which has a cluster of at least 9 potential DnaA binding sites, had significant increases in binding  
32 by DnaA when replication was inhibited, indicating that the association of DnaA with at least  
33 some of its target sites is altered after replication stress. When replication resumed from *oriC*  
34 after inhibition of replication initiation, these high levels of binding decreased rapidly at origin-  
35 proximal and origin-distal regions, well before a replication fork could pass through each of the  
36 regulated regions. These findings indicate that there is rapid signaling to decrease activation of  
37 DnaA during replication and that interaction between DnaA bound at each site and the  
38 replication machinery is not required for regulation of DnaA activity in response to replication  
39 stress.

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## 41        **Introduction**

42        Cells use multiple mechanisms to detect and respond to perturbations in replication. In  
43        bacteria, the well-characterized RecA-dependent SOS response affects expression of many genes  
44        after disruptions in replication elongation and DNA damage (13). Additionally, there are *recA*-  
45        independent mechanisms that affect gene expression in response to alterations in replication. A  
46        significant part of the *recA*-independent response to perturbations in replication (replication  
47        stress) appears to be mediated directly by DnaA (15).

48        DnaA is widely conserved in bacteria and is best known as the replication initiator {reviewed  
49        in (23, 33, 40)}. It binds to a 9 bp site that appears multiple times in the origin of replication in  
50        bacterial chromosomes. Binding sites are also found upstream of many genes and throughout the  
51        chromosome. At replication origins, DnaA mediates melting of DNA (open complex formation)  
52        and helps to recruit proteins required for replication. DnaA is a member of the AAA+ family of  
53        ATPases and the ATP-bound form (DnaA-ATP) is required for replication initiation (36).  
54        Newly synthesized DnaA is predominantly in the ATP-bound form and nucleotide hydrolysis  
55        converts DnaA-ATP to the inactive DnaA-ADP after replication initiation. In *E. coli*, the levels  
56        of DnaA-ATP and DnaA-ADP are linked to replication status and there can be high levels of  
57        DnaA-ATP in cells that are unable to replicate (27).

58        DnaA is also a transcription factor. DnaA activates or represses transcription of various  
59        genes, including its own (1, 3, 26, 34, 39). It is thought that, as is the case for replication  
60        initiation, DnaA-ATP is the active form for transcriptional regulation {reviewed in (23, 37, 40)},  
61        and its ability to function as a transcription factor appears to increase when replication initiation  
62        or elongation is inhibited (14, 15). Thus, accumulation of DnaA-ATP during replication stress

63 may result in activation of the transcriptional regulatory activity of DnaA as well as its initiator  
64 activity.

65 In *Bacillus subtilis*, DnaA appears to control expression of >50 genes in ~20 operons in  
66 response to perturbations in replication (15). Transcription of these operons changes in response  
67 to inhibition of either replication elongation or replication initiation, independently of the well-  
68 characterized RecA-mediated SOS response. Furthermore, these operons contain putative DnaA  
69 binding sites in their regulatory regions and DnaA appears to associate with at least six of these  
70 in vivo based on results from chromatin immunoprecipitation (ChIP) or affinity purification  
71 (ChAP-chip) experiments (15, 20). Alterations in DnaA levels during exponential growth also  
72 affect expression of several genes and a genome-wide analysis of DnaA binding to chromosomal  
73 DNA demonstrated strong binding to eight intergenic regions, five of which appear to regulate  
74 gene expression (20).

75 In this study, we used ChIP-chip and ChIP-PCR to monitor binding of *B. subtilis* DnaA to  
76 DNA in vivo during exponential growth and after inhibition of replication. We detected  
77 association of DnaA with at least 17 chromosomal regions, 15 of which correspond to operons  
78 whose expression responds to perturbations in DNA replication. Following inhibition of  
79 replication elongation or initiation, DnaA binding increased significantly at 6 chromosomal  
80 regions each of which contains at least 9 potential DnaA binding sites. We found that passage of  
81 a replication fork through a regulatory region was not required for release of bound DnaA from  
82 that region following the resumption of replication. Our results support the notion that DnaA  
83 regulates a global response to perturbations in replication and indicate that alterations in DnaA  
84 binding to target promoters contributes to the changes in gene expression following inhibition of  
85 replication.

## 86 **Materials and Methods**

### 87 **Media and growth conditions**

88 For all experiments, cells were grown in *S*<sub>750</sub> defined minimal medium (18, 21) with 0.1%  
89 glutamate and supplemented with required amino acids (typically *trp* and *phe*). Glucose (1%)  
90 was the carbon source except for strains bearing *P*<sub>xyl</sub>-*dnaN*, for which arabinose (1%, together  
91 with xylose at 0.1% as an inducer) was used. Cells were typically grown at 32°C and shifted to  
92 47°C for temperature sensitive mutants.

### 93 **Strains and alleles**

94 Strains used in this study were the lab wild type, AG174 (*trp*, *phe*; a.k.a., JH642); KPL69  
95 {*dnaB134ts-zhb83::Tn917*, *trp*, *phe* (29, 30, 38)}; KPL73 {*dnaD23ts chr::Tn917*ΩHU151(*mls*),  
96 *trp*, *phe* (29)}; and AIG200 {Δ(*dnaA-oriC-dnaN*)::*spc*, *amyE*::(*P*<sub>xyl</sub>A-*dnaN*, *cat*), *spoIIIJ*::(*oriN*,  
97 *repN*, *kan*), *phe*, *trp*<sup>+</sup> (15)}.

98 *dnaD23ts* and *dnaB134ts* are temperature sensitive mutations that prevent initiation of  
99 replication at nonpermissive temperature (7, 8, 10, 24, 30).

100 *dnaA* is normally essential, but it can be deleted in strains capable of initiating chromosomal  
101 replication from a heterologous origin (2, 19, 22, 32). Therefore, in strain AIG200, the plasmid  
102 origin of replication, *oriN*, along with the plasmid initiator gene *repN*, was integrated into the  
103 chromosome at *spoIIIJ*, near *oriC*. This strain also contains a deletion-insertion that removes  
104 *oriC* and the *dnaA-dnaN* operon, and inserts *spc*. *dnaN*, the essential gene encoding the β-  
105 processivity clamp of DNA polymerase that is normally in an operon with *dnaA*, is expressed at  
106 a heterologous locus from the xylose-inducible promoter *P*<sub>xyl</sub> (*P*<sub>xyl</sub>-*dnaN*) (2, 15).

## 107 **Chromatin immunoprecipitation**

108 Chromatin immunoprecipitation of DNA bound to DnaA was done essentially as described  
109 (15), with minor modifications. Briefly, protein and DNA were crosslinked with formaldehyde,  
110 lysed and sheared with 1 mg/ml lysozyme and sonication, and immunoprecipitated with chicken  
111 anti-DnaA primary antibodies, donkey anti-chicken secondary antibodies, and protein A-  
112 sepharose beads. Samples were washed and crosslinks reversed and DNA eluted followed by  
113 further washing of the beads with 50 mM Tris pH 8, 10 mM EDTA, 0.8% SDS for 5 min at  
114 37°C. The eluate and wash were combined, treated with proteinase K (0.1 mg/ml, 30 minutes,  
115 37°C), extracted with phenol-chloroform, precipitated with ethanol, and resuspended in 15  $\mu$ l  
116 ddH<sub>2</sub>O. Samples of total DNA were taken prior to incubation with primary antibodies and  
117 treated with proteinase K (0.1 mg/ml, 30 minutes, 37°C) in the presence of 0.8% SDS, then  
118 subjected to crosslink reversal, phenol-chloroform extraction and ethanol precipitation in parallel  
119 with the immunoprecipitates. There were at least 3 biological replicates for each experiment.

## 120 *ChIP-PCR*

121 For ChIP-PCR, samples were diluted (typically between 1:10 and 1:150) to give an  
122 appropriate level of signal. PCRs were done for 28 cycles and products were run on 1.5%  
123 agarose gels containing ethidium-bromide and analyzed and quantified with AlphaEaseFC  
124 software v4.0 (Alpha Innotech). The locus *yabM* was used as a negative control site for  
125 background reference. Enrichment at this locus was at background levels in ChIP-chip data (Fig.  
126 1) and it behaved similarly in ChIP-PCR experiments to other loci where DnaA was not expected  
127 to bind (not shown). Despite not having specific binding by DnaA, there was a background  
128 signal and this signal was used for normalization. Enrichment was calculated as a ratio of ratios  
129 in order to normalize to the background level, as represented by *yabM*:  $(IP_i/Total_i) /$

130  $(IP_{yabM}/Total_{yabM})$  where  $IP_i$  and  $Total_i$  represent the dilution-adjusted band intensities at the locus  
131 of interest.

### 132 *ChIP-chip*

133 To generate sufficient signal in ChIP-chip experiments, we typically took samples of 100 ml  
134 of mid-exponential phase culture (grown in  $S7_{50}$  defined minimal medium). DNA samples were  
135 prepared for microarray analysis by labeling samples of the resuspended immunoprecipitated  
136 DNA or total DNA with aminoallyl-dUTP using 13 U Sequenase (USB Corp.) and 5  $\mu$ g random  
137 nonamer as primers. There was not an amplification step. The labeled samples were purified  
138 and conjugated to Cy3 or Cy5. We used DNA microarrays containing PCR products  
139 representing >95% of the open reading frames in the *B. subtilis* genome and nearly all of the 295  
140 intergenic regions that are >364 bp in length, as described (4, 5, 16). Microarray hybridization  
141 and data acquisition were performed as described (4).

142 Enrichment of DnaA at each genomic locus represented on the microarrays was calculated as  
143 the relative amount of DNA in the immunoprecipitate divided by the amount of total DNA for  
144 that locus without immunoprecipitation. This value was normalized to the background signal  
145 calculated as the median value for all chromosomal loci of the amount of DNA in the  
146 immunoprecipitate divided by the amount of total DNA. Where presented, enrichment data are  
147 plotted according to chromosome position.

148

## 149 **Results**

### 150 **Binding of DnaA to several chromosomal regions increases following replication stress**

151 Previously, using ChIP-PCR, we found that DnaA is associated with several putative target  
152 operons whose mRNA levels change in response to perturbations in replication and that contain



153 potential DnaA binding sites (15). Since blocking replication elongation or preventing  
154 replication initiation (while allowing ongoing replication to finish) elicits transcriptional  
155 responses controlled by DnaA (15), we postulated that binding of DnaA to some targets might  
156 increase when replication is inhibited. To test this hypothesis, we monitored DnaA binding at  
157 three regulatory targets, *dnaA*, *sda*, and *ywlC*, using ChIP-PCR during replication and after  
158 inhibition of replication. Binding was quantified by measuring the enrichment of a given DNA  
159 region in the crosslinked and precipitated material relative to that of other chromosomal regions  
160 (see Experimental Procedures). We inhibited replication elongation by treating cells with  
161 HPUra, a DNA Polymerase III inhibitor (6). We inhibited replication initiation by shifting the  
162 temperature sensitive replication initiation mutants *dnaBts* and *dnaDts* to non-permissive  
163 temperature and allowing ongoing rounds of replication to finish.

164 During replication in wild type and the temperature sensitive mutants at permissive  
165 temperature, there was low but detectable enrichment for each of the three regions (*dnaA*, *sda*,  
166 and *ywlC*) in the DnaA immunoprecipitates, relative to other chromosomal regions (Table 1).  
167 Sixty minutes after treatment with HPUra to block replication elongation, there was a significant  
168 increase in enrichment of each of these three regions, indicating that association of DnaA with  
169 these regions was increased (Table 1). There was also a significant increase in enrichment of  
170 these regions 90 min after shifting the *dnaBts* and *dnaDts* mutants to nonpermissive (47°)  
171 temperature (Table 1) and the *dnaDts* typically gave higher enrichment levels than the *dnaBts* or  
172 treatment with HPUra. There was no increase in enrichment of these regions in wild-type cells  
173 incubated at 47°C (Table 1), indicating that the increased binding by DnaA to DNA in the  
174 *dnaBts* and *dnaDts* mutants at non-permissive temperature (47°C) was not due to the temperature  
175 shift per se.

## 176 **Analysis of genome-wide DnaA binding**

177 We used ChIP-chip to identify additional chromosomal regions bound by DnaA in vivo.  
178 Based on the increase in association of DnaA with *dnaA*, *sda*, and *ywlC* after replication stress,  
179 we analyzed DnaA binding by ChIP-chip under these conditions as well as during exponential  
180 growth. We detected high levels of DnaA binding (~10-70-fold enrichment) at 6 chromosomal  
181 regions following arrest of either replication elongation or initiation (Figs. 1, 2). The regions  
182 include *dnaA*, *sda*, *ywlC*, *yydA*, and the intergenic regions between the 3' ends of *gcp* and *ydiF*,  
183 and the 5' ends of *ywcI* and *vpr*. All six of these regions contained at least nine instances of the  
184 DnaA box sequence (allowing one mismatch) clustered within a 500 bp region (Fig. 3), and we  
185 refer to these as "clustered" sites. Four of the regions with high binding (*dnaA*, *sda*, *ywlC*, *yydA*)  
186 are associated with operons whose transcription changes in response to perturbations in  
187 replication {Fig. 3 and (15)}. We postulate that the increased binding of DnaA following  
188 inhibition of replication could directly affect transcription of these target operons.

189 DnaA was also bound at the six clustered sites in exponentially growing wild-type cells  
190 (Figs. 1C, 2), and in *dnaBts* and *dnaDts* cells at permissive temperature (not shown). However,  
191 the enrichment values of ~2-8-fold over background indicated that DnaA binding was  
192 significantly lower than that following replication inhibition (~10-70-fold). As above, binding  
193 did not increase in wild-type cells incubated at 47°C (not shown).

194 The increase in DnaA binding at clustered sites after replication was blocked was not due to  
195 an increase in the intracellular concentration of DnaA. The increase in binding occurred despite  
196 transcriptional auto-repression of *dnaA* (15, 34), which should decrease DnaA levels in response  
197 to replication inhibition. As expected, we found that levels of DnaA, as a fraction of total  
198 protein, had decreased by approximately 35-50% 60 min after inhibition of replication

199 elongation with HPURa (data not shown). Thus, the increase in DNA binding by DnaA is not  
200 due to increased levels of DnaA, but rather is likely due to increased activity of DnaA in  
201 response to replication inhibition.

202 To verify that the signal in the ChIP-chip experiments was specific to DnaA, we did similar  
203 experiments in the presence and absence of HPURa in a *dnaA* null mutant, in which DnaA has  
204 been rendered nonessential by the substitution of *oriC* with the plasmid replication origin *oriN*  
205 (2, 15, 19, 22, 32). There was no detectable enrichment of the six clustered loci in the absence of  
206 DnaA (Figs. 1E, 2). There was enrichment detected from *yutF* in both *dnaA*<sup>+</sup> and *dnaA* null cells  
207 (Fig. 1E), indicating that this signal is not due to specific immunoprecipitation of DnaA and is  
208 perhaps due to a cross-reacting protein. The enrichment value appeared higher in *dnaA* null  
209 cells, probably due to the reduced background signal throughout the chromosome caused by the  
210 absence of DnaA and the subsequent lack of non-specific binding throughout the genome. We  
211 have excluded *yutF* from further analyses and discussion.

212 In addition to the six strong DnaA binding regions identified above, the ChIP-chip data  
213 indicated that there were other regions that were weakly and/or inconsistently enriched.  
214 Comparison of ChIP-chip data from three conditions, exponentially growing cells, after  
215 inhibition of replication initiation, and after inhibition of replication elongation, indicated that  
216 only two additional regions had enrichment levels >2-fold (relative to both the genomic  
217 background and the ChIP-chip data from the *dnaA* null mutant) under at least two of the three  
218 conditions. One region, near *yrhC*, is in the middle of an operon and its transcription does not  
219 appear to change in response to replication stress and is not analyzed further. The other, near  
220 *spo0J*, does respond transcriptionally to replication stress (15) and is discussed further below. An  
221 independent genome-wide analysis of DnaA binding in untreated cells also identified the six

222 clustered sites plus *dnaN* and *thdF* (20). We have included *dnaN* in the analysis of *dnaA* as the  
223 two genes constitute an operon and the sites are also part of *oriC*. *thdF* did not qualify as  
224 significantly enriched in our analysis due to variability, although it was 2.05-fold enriched in  
225 arrested *dnaBts* cells. It is possible that our microarray probe for *thdF* was poorly placed to  
226 detect bound DnaA.

### 227 **Analysis of DnaA binding to regions affected by inhibition of replication by ChIP-PCR**

228 Several chromosomal regions previously found to be enriched in DnaA immunoprecipitates  
229 in ChIP-PCR experiments (15) were not identified in our ChIP-chip experiments nor in  
230 chromatin affinity precipitation (ChAP-chip) experiments (20). This discrepancy indicates that  
231 the ChIP-PCR experiments are probably more sensitive than the ChIP-chip or ChAP-chip  
232 experiments. Previously we had observed a difference in sensitivity between ChIP-PCR and  
233 ChIP-chip for the DNA binding protein Spo0J (4). If the difference in sensitivity between ChIP-  
234 chip and ChIP-PCR exists for DnaA, as we expect, then there are likely to be chromosomal  
235 regions bound by DnaA that were not detected by the ChIP-chip and ChAP-chip approaches.

236 Using ChIP-PCR, we tested for DnaA binding at almost all of the operons previously  
237 postulated to be regulated by DnaA in response to inhibition of replication (15) for which ChIP-  
238 chip results were negative. mRNA levels from these operons change in response to inhibition of  
239 replication in a RecA-independent manner, and the regulatory regions have at least two matches  
240 to the DnaA box consensus (allowing for one mismatch per box) within 500 bp of the start codon  
241 of the first gene (15). We found that nine of the 14 loci tested had statistically significant  
242 enrichment in the DnaA immunoprecipitates during replication and/or after inhibition of  
243 replication elongation (Table 2). These regions include: *citZ*, *lysC*, *yurY*, *yclN*, *dnaB*, *ypvA*,  
244 *kdgR*, and *ykuN* (Table 2). Additionally, *spo0J*, which responds to perturbation of replication

245 stress but has only one DnaA box within 500 bp of the beginning of its operon (15), was found to  
246 bind DnaA in the ChIP-chip experiments (Table 2 and see above). The coding sequence of the  
247 *spo0J* operon contains three DnaA boxes.

248 DnaA binding changed notably at only three of these nine regions following inhibition of  
249 replication elongation. The *lysC* region was reproducibly increased in enrichment after  
250 inhibition of replication elongation (Table 2). In contrast, the enrichment in the *dnaB* and *yurY*  
251 regions significantly decreased after inhibition of replication elongation and was quite high  
252 during ongoing replication. This decrease might indicate modulation of DnaA by factors that do  
253 not affect binding at other regions. Alternatively, it might indicate different binding specificities  
254 for the two different nucleotide bound forms of DnaA, DnaA-ATP and DnaA-ADP.

255 In contrast to the chromosomal regions with clustered DnaA boxes that had significant  
256 increases in DnaA binding after inhibition of replication, most of these regions (Table 2) did not  
257 consistently show significant changes in levels of DnaA binding following treatment with  
258 HPUra. However, given the uncertainty in the data, we cannot distinguish whether DnaA  
259 binding is relatively constant regardless of replication status, or whether increases occur that are  
260 not detectable with this approach.

261 The ChIP-PCR results for the *dnaB* and *yurY* regions differed from the ChIP-chip results.  
262 Enrichment levels for these regions were approximately 20-fold in exponentially growing cells in  
263 the ChIP-PCR experiments, but neither was found to be significantly enriched in the ChIP-chip  
264 experiments; DnaA enrichment at *dnaB* was generally ~2-fold, but it was not statistically  
265 significant due to variability, and no enrichment was detected at *yurY*. It is possible that these  
266 loci had unusually large differences in sensitivity between the two techniques for reasons such as  
267 the location of the probes relative to DnaA binding sites, as the ChIP-PCR primers targeted the

268 upstream region containing binding sites, and the array probes corresponded to ORFs. The  
269 hybridization intensity for the *dnaB* spot on the microarrays was also below average and not of  
270 high quality, perhaps contributing to the unreliability of the data.

271 Five of the 14 loci tested gave inconclusive results. They had enrichment levels at least 1.6-  
272 fold above background, but the levels were not statistically significant (Table 2).

### 273 **Rapid changes in DnaA binding upon resumption of replication**

274 In *E. coli*, Hda is required for the regulatory inactivation of DnaA (RIDA) during replication  
275 elongation {(23, 27) and references therein}. It is not known if RIDA activity is completely  
276 distributive or requires passage of a replication fork through chromosomal regions bound by  
277 DnaA-ATP. We suspected that the increases in DnaA binding and activity that occur when  
278 replication is blocked in *B. subtilis* were likely to be reversible. We directly tested binding of  
279 DnaA after resumption of replication and found that DnaA was released from DNA and that  
280 release occurred in a distributive manner at all the regions tested before passage of a replication  
281 fork through each region.

282 We monitored binding of DnaA to five regions with clusters of binding sites—*dnaA*, *yydA*,  
283 *ywlC*, *ywclI*, and *sda*—using ChIP and quantitative PCR while replication was blocked and when  
284 replication resumed. Samples were taken: 1) during exponential growth, 2) after inhibition of  
285 replication initiation, and 3) at various times following release of the replication block during a  
286 synchronized round of replication. If replication forks must interact with DnaA bound at the  
287 various regions to facilitate release of DnaA, then DnaA binding should decrease at regions  
288 closer to the replication origin before decreasing at distal regions. Alternatively, if DnaA bound  
289 at these regions is able to exchange rapidly in response to the presence of active replication

290 forks, then DnaA binding should decline similarly at all regions, before the replication fork  
291 reaches each region.

292 To block replication, we shifted exponentially growing *dnaDts* cells to the restrictive  
293 temperature and waited for 60 minutes to allow most ongoing rounds of replication to finish. As  
294 expected, enrichment of the five tested regions in the DnaA immunoprecipitates increased 60  
295 min after inhibition of replication initiation (Fig. 4). Replication was allowed to re-initiate from  
296 *oriC* by shifting the *dnaDts* cells back to permissive temperature (32°C). By five minutes after  
297 the temperature shift-down, binding of DnaA to the chromosomal regions had already decreased  
298 by about 50% or more. After 15 min at permissive temperature, binding of DnaA at each region  
299 was near its original level (Fig. 4). The positions of replication forks were estimated based on  
300 previous work with synchronized *B. subtilis* cultures (38). The rate of replication elongation is  
301 ~0.5 kb/s or ~2.6°/min. A fully synchronous round of bidirectional replication initiating at *oriC*  
302 (0°/360°) would result in fork positions at approximately 13° and 347° at 5 minutes, 39° and  
303 321° at 15 minutes, and 104° and 256° at 40 minutes after replication initiation (Fig. 4, inset).  
304 However, cells do not actually initiate in a fully synchronous manner. Rather, initiation occurs  
305 over a period of 5-10 min after release. Thus, in the cell population, replication forks are spread  
306 over the approximately 15°-20° trailing the positions given above.

307 The similar behavior of these five sites irrespective of chromosomal location indicates that  
308 direct interaction between the replication machinery and the DnaA-DNA nucleoprotein complex  
309 at each site along the chromosome is not required to control the level of DnaA binding to DNA  
310 at each region. Rather, it seems likely that DnaA can exchange rapidly *in vivo* and respond  
311 globally to the presence of an active replication fork.

312

**313 Discussion**

314 We found that DnaA associates with multiple regions of chromosomal DNA in vivo and that  
315 association at the regions that have clustered DnaA boxes increases in response to inhibition of  
316 replication. We readily detected binding at the clustered regions, and most were detected  
317 previously using ChIP-PCR (15) and ChAP-chip (20). DnaA association with other regions was  
318 more difficult to detect with the genomic approaches (ChIP-chip and ChAP-chip) but was  
319 detected using ChIP-PCR. We did not detect significant changes in the level of DnaA  
320 association with most of these regions in response to perturbations in replication. Clearly, the  
321 current techniques are limited in their ability to detect many of the DnaA binding sites in vivo.  
322 Nonetheless, there is useful information from analysis of the available data from in vivo  
323 experiments.

**324 DnaA binding sites**

325 A combination of in vivo and in vitro analyses demonstrated that the DnaA binding site is a  
326 somewhat degenerate 9 bp sequence, TT<sup>A</sup>/<sub>T</sub>TNCACA (23, 31), found in multiple copies in  
327 bacterial origins of chromosomal replication. Allowing for one mismatch in any of the 9  
328 positions, there are ~12,000 potential binding sites throughout the *B. subtilis* genome.  
329 Comparative DNA sequence analyses have been used to estimate the conservation, and hence  
330 significance, of some of these sequences (9, 15, 20). In addition, studies of physical association  
331 of DnaA with chromosomal DNA revealed binding to several regions that contain multiple  
332 potential binding sites (15, 20). The set of DnaA-bound sites that we observed by ChIP-chip and  
333 ChIP-PCR very clearly fell into two groups, distinguished on both a functional and sequence  
334 level (Fig. 3).



335 *Clustered DnaA binding sites*

336 Clustered DnaA binding sites, which had greater than 9 potential DnaA binding sites with at  
337 most 1 mismatch, behaved differently with respect to DnaA binding than regions with only a few  
338 potential DnaA binding sites. Enrichment of the regions with clustered DnaA binding sites  
339 increased dramatically in response to inhibition of replication. Increased enrichment of these  
340 regions with clusters of sites indicates that either the number of bound DnaA molecules  
341 increased, or that the crosslinking efficiency of individual molecules increased, perhaps due to a  
342 conformational change. These possibilities are not mutually exclusive. DnaA appears to form a  
343 polymeric nucleoprotein filament (12), and it is quite possible that this type of structure allows  
344 for more efficient binding and/or crosslinking to DNA. Such filamentation was originally  
345 proposed for DnaA at *oriC*, but it is reasonable to extend this notion to other chromosomal  
346 regions with clusters of DnaA binding sites, analogous to the number of sites in *oriC*. (Other  
347 than *oriC*, the regions with clustered sites do not function as replication origins). Both increased  
348 binding and a conformational change could be affected by the nucleotide-bound state of DnaA  
349 (see below), and changes in binding and conformation are not mutually exclusive; we suspect  
350 that both occur.

351 *Non-clustered DnaA binding sites*

352 The other targets of DnaA that we analyzed have fewer potential binding sites, less than nine  
353 in a 500-bp region (Fig. 3). We focused on those regions upstream of genes whose expression  
354 changes in response to replication stress (15). In most of these regions, there was little or no  
355 detectable change in DnaA binding following inhibition of replication. Because the levels of  
356 DnaA binding at these regions were generally low relative to the detection limit of the technique,  
357 we cannot conclude that the level of DnaA binding did not change. A change of around 50% or

358 less would be very difficult to detect by ChIP because of the variability between replicates, but  
359 potentially could cause a significant change in gene expression. If the amount of binding does  
360 not actually change at these regions, then another mechanism must be involved in controlling the  
361 genes downstream from these regulatory regions. For example, the nucleotide-bound state of  
362 DnaA could change and affect gene expression perhaps via interactions with the transcriptional  
363 machinery or alterations in the DNA. Alternatively, there could be other regulatory proteins  
364 involved in expression of some of the target operons.

365 The 9-bp DnaA binding site consensus sequence is quite common when one mismatch is  
366 allowed (11,983 occurrences in the genome), and thus there are many potential binding sites  
367 throughout the *B. subtilis* genome. A 500 bp region has a 5.5% chance (Poisson statistics) of  
368 containing at least four matches. In contrast, the chance of a cluster of sites with 9 or more  
369 boxes in a 500 bp region is 0.0018%. Thus, throughout the genome, there are many collections  
370 of potential binding sites that are similar in sequence and number to those in the lower part of  
371 Figure 3. Given the limited sensitivity of the ChAP-chip (20) and ChIP-chip data, it is likely that  
372 some (perhaps many) of these sites are bound by DnaA in vivo. For many transcription factors,  
373 degenerate binding sequences are more common than demonstrable regulatory activity (see, e.g.,  
374 (11, 17, 28)), and DnaA is no different. If these sites are in fact bound by DnaA and serve any  
375 function, then it is possible that regulation of expression of nearby genes occurs under specific  
376 conditions that have not been tested. Alternatively, these sites may play a more general role in  
377 some aspect of DnaA function such as titrating the levels of DnaA available to bind sites in  
378 regulatory regions that directly influence gene expression or replication.

379 **Nucleotide binding and regulation of DnaA**

380 DnaA is a member of the AAA+ family of ATPases (25) and, based on work with *E. coli*  
381 DnaA, changes in the nucleotide binding state of DnaA serve as a regulatory switch; the ATP  
382 bound form is fully active, and the ADP bound form is not, although it binds DNA (23, 37, 40).  
383 Applying this model to transcriptional regulatory sites leads to the notion that inhibition of  
384 replication causes the accumulation of DnaA in its active, ATP bound form, thereby causing an  
385 increase in binding and/or a conformational change resulting in changes in transcription of target  
386 operons.

387 When replication resumes, association of DnaA with chromosomal regions with clusters of  
388 sites rapidly returns to normal levels, well before a replication fork has had time to traverse each  
389 of the clustered binding regions. These findings indicate that either there is a diffusible signal  
390 that controls the activity of DnaA in response to ongoing replication, and/or that DnaA rapidly  
391 associates with and dissociates from DNA in vivo. The off rate of DnaA dissociation from its  
392 binding site in vitro is a few minutes (35), consistent with the possibility of this type of  
393 regulation. For example, if the nucleotide bound state of DnaA is affected by passage of a  
394 replication fork through sites to which DnaA is bound, then there would be local conversion of  
395 DnaA-ATP to DnaA-ADP. Rapid association and dissociation in vivo could allow for such local  
396 changes in DnaA to quickly equilibrate with the pool of DnaA throughout the cell and affect sites  
397 far from the replication fork. We are not aware of any measurements of the in vivo exchange of  
398 DnaA on and off DNA.

399 Whereas much is known in *E. coli* about regulation of the activity of DnaA at *oriC* and the  
400 regulatory factors involved {(23, 40) and references therein}, many of these factors are not  
401 present in *B. subtilis* and other Gram-positives, nor in many Gram-negatives (40). Our findings

402 indicate that the association of DnaA with some of its target sites significantly changes in  
 403 response to replication stress in *B. subtilis*. One of the present challenges is to determine how  
 404 the activity of DnaA is modulated in response to replication stress.

405

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412

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- 518  
519  
520

520 **Table 1.** DnaA binding during exponential growth and replication stress.

locus	Enrichment value $\pm$ standard error (fold-change) <sup>1</sup>							
	<i>dnaBts</i>		<i>dnaDts</i>		HPUra		wt	
	32°	47°	32°	47°	-	+	32°	47°
<i>dnaA</i>	2.2 $\pm$ 2.3	42.2 $\pm$ 9.5 (18.8)	8.8 $\pm$ 2.4	180 $\pm$ 130 (20.4)	4.8 $\pm$ 0.9	61.4 $\pm$ 1.9 (12.7)	6.4 $\pm$ 4.0	6.3 $\pm$ 3.4 (1.0)
<i>sda</i>	1.7 $\pm$ 0.4	6.8 $\pm$ 1.0 (4.0)	2.2 $\pm$ 0.5	15.7 $\pm$ 4.2 (7.1)	2.0 $\pm$ 0.5	4.4 $\pm$ 0.1 (2.2)	1.3 $\pm$ 0.04	1.5 $\pm$ 0.4 (1.2)
<i>ywlC</i>	2.3 $\pm$ 0.3	9.7 $\pm$ 0.8 (4.3)	3.4 $\pm$ 1.2	70.0 $\pm$ 3.1 (20.7)	2.8 $\pm$ 0.4	14.4 $\pm$ 5.9 (5.1)	1.7 $\pm$ 0.38	1.6 $\pm$ 0.1 (0.9)

521  
522 <sup>1</sup> Values presented are the mean (from three independent biological replicates) enrichments of  
523 the indicated DNA regions (*dnaA*, *sda*, *ywlC*) measured by ChIP-PCR analysis  $\pm$  the standard  
524 error. Data are normalized to the *yabM* locus, which does not bind DnaA specifically (Fig.1 and  
525 data not shown). Values in parentheses are the fold-changes for the indicated pair. Strains used  
526 were KPL69 (*dnaBts*), KPL73 (*dnaDts*), and AG174 (wt;  $\pm$ HPUra). Cells were grown at 32°C  
527 and treated with HPUra for 60 min. Temperature shifts were to 47° and samples were taken after  
528 90 min at that temperature.

529

530

530 **Table 2.** ChIP-PCR analysis of DnaA binding at putative regulatory targets<sup>1</sup>

locus <sup>2</sup>	- HPUra		+ HPUra		+/-HPUra
	enrichment $\pm$ SE	<i>p</i> -value	enrichment $\pm$ SE	<i>p</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
<i>citZ</i>	1.3 $\pm$ 0.8	(0.72)	2.5 $\pm$ 0.4	(0.03)	0.40
<i>dnaB</i>	26.4 $\pm$ 9.2	(0.01)	0.9 $\pm$ 0.4	(0.72)	0.002
<i>flgB</i>	2.0 $\pm$ 1.1	(0.32)	1.0 $\pm$ 0.3	(0.97)	0.31
<i>kdgR</i>	1.8 $\pm$ 0.1	(0.01)	3.3 $\pm$ 1.6	(0.17)	0.34
<i>lysC</i>	1.7 $\pm$ 0.4	(0.16)	4.7 $\pm$ 1.1	(0.02)	0.05
<i>nrdI</i> ( <i>nrdEF ymaB</i> )	1.8 $\pm$ 0.3	(0.07)	2.2 $\pm$ 1.1	(0.18)	0.69
<i>pyrP</i>	2.6 $\pm$ 0.6	(0.04)	3.5 $\pm$ 2.4	(0.13)	0.63
<i>spo0J</i> <sup>3</sup> ( <i>soj</i> )	3.9 $\pm$ 0.4	(0.001)	6.3 $\pm$ 1.7	(0.02)	0.62
<i>sunA</i> ( <i>sunT</i> )	4.4 $\pm$ 1.7	(0.06)	8.6 $\pm$ 4.8	(0.08)	0.42
<i>yclN</i> ( <i>yclOPQ</i> )	5.4 $\pm$ 1.6	(0.03)	6.8 $\pm$ 2.1	(0.03)	0.62
<i>ykuN</i> ( <i>ykuOP</i> )	5.4 $\pm$ 1.2	(0.02)	4.8 $\pm$ 3.3	(0.10)	0.85
<i>yllB</i> ( <i>ylxA ftsL pbpB</i> )	1.8 $\pm$ 0.5	(0.18)	1.7 $\pm$ 0.9	(0.35)	0.91
<i>ypvA</i>	3.1 $\pm$ 0.7	(0.05)	2.7 $\pm$ 0.3	(0.02)	0.65
<i>yurY</i> ( <i>yurX csd yurVU</i> )	21.7 $\pm$ 5.2	(0.01)	5.2 $\pm$ 1.1	(0.02)	0.01
<i>ywzC</i> ( <i>ywfO ywgA</i> )	4.2 $\pm$ 1.7	(0.05)	3.2 $\pm$ 1.6	(0.12)	0.62

531

532 <sup>1</sup> Wild-type cells (AG174) untreated (-HPUra) and treated with HPUra (+HPUra) for 60 min  
533 were harvested and analyzed by ChIP-PCR for DnaA binding at the indicated loci. Values  
534 presented are the mean enrichments  $\pm$  standard error from at least three independent biological  
535 replicates, normalized to the *yabM* locus, which is not specifically bound by DnaA. *p*-values are  
536 in parentheses (*t*-test). *p*-values comparing the results with (+) and without (-) HPUra are  
537 indicated in the last column.

538 <sup>2</sup> Operons that respond transcriptionally to replication stress and have at least 2 potential  
539 DnaA binding sites were chosen for analysis. Loci are sorted alphabetically by the first gene.  
540 Additional genes in a given operon that are also affected by replication stress are indicated in  
541 parentheses.

542 <sup>3</sup> Data for *spo0J* are taken from the ChIP-chip results (Fig. 1).

543

544



544 **Figure Legends**545 **Figure 1. Genome-wide DnaA ChIP-chip profiles in arrested, replicating, and *dnaA* null**

546 **cells.** The enrichment of each chromosomal region in the DnaA ChIP relative to total DNA is  
547 plotted versus chromosomal position relative to *oriC* at 0°, in the center of the graphs. For each  
548 data set, at least three biological replicates were collected, and the median for each locus on the  
549 arrays is shown.

550 A. Wild-type cells (AG174) in exponential growth were treated with HPUra for 60 min at  
551 32°C, crosslinked, and harvested for ChIP-chip.

552 B. *dnaDts* (KPL73) cells in exponential growth at 32°C were shifted to the restrictive  
553 temperature (47°C) for 90 minutes, crosslinked, and harvested for ChIP-chip.

554 C. *dnaBts* (KPL69) cells in exponential growth at 32°C were shifted to the restrictive  
555 temperature (47°C) for 90 minutes, crosslinked, and harvested for ChIP-chip.

556 D. Wild-type cells (AG174) in exponential growth at 32°C were crosslinked and harvested  
557 for ChIP-chip.

558 E. *dnaA* null mutant cells (AIG200) in exponential growth at 32°C were crosslinked and  
559 harvested for ChIP-chip. The signal at 283° (-77° in the figure) is *yutF*; there appears to be a  
560 protein bound here that interacts nonspecifically with the anti-DnaA antibody (see text).

561

562

562 **Figure 2. DnaA binding at loci with clustered DnaA boxes.** Data are shown for specific  
563 regions from Fig. 1, plotted for ~8 kb regions centered around clustered DnaA boxes where  
564 DnaA binding increased substantially upon inhibition of replication. Chromosomal positions are  
565 listed as distance (in degrees) from *oriC* and enrichment is as described in Fig. 1. DnaA box  
566 locations are indicated by diamonds below the data traces; filled and open diamonds represent  
567 perfect and single-mismatch boxes, respectively. Gene locations and orientations are indicated  
568 with arrows. Expression of genes with asterisks is altered after inhibition of replication (15).  
569 Expression of all of the genes indicated here with asterisks decreases after replication inhibition,  
570 except for that of *sda*, which increases. Data are shown in the vicinities of *dnaA* (A), *ywlC* (B),  
571 *ywlI* (C), *yydA* (D), *gcp* (E), and *sda* (F), respectively. Filled squares with solid lines represent  
572 wild type cells (AG174) 60 min after treatment with HPUra; filled circles with dotted lines  
573 represent untreated wild type cells (AG174); gray open circles and lines represent *dnaA* null  
574 mutant cells (AIG200); and filled triangles with solid lines represent *dnaDts* cells (KPL73) after  
575 90 min at 47°C.  
576  
577

577 **Figure 3. Distribution of DnaA boxes at sites bound by DnaA.** Shown are locations of  
 578 perfect (solid circles) and single mismatch (triangles) DnaA boxes occurring from 750 bp  
 579 upstream to 375 bp downstream of the start codon of genes where DnaA binding was detected,  
 580 either in ChIP-chip or ChIP-PCR experiments. The first six regions indicated (above the thick  
 581 line) all have at least 9 potential DnaA binding sites with  $\leq 1$  mismatch from consensus and have  
 582 increased enrichment after inhibition of replication (Table 1; Figs. 1, 2). Regions indicated  
 583 below the thick line are those with fewer than 9 potential DnaA binding sites. Enrichment at  
 584 these regions did not consistently increase when replication was inhibited, and DnaA enrichment  
 585 at *flgB*, *nrdI*, *sunA*, and *yllB* was greater than at the background locus *yabM* but not statistically  
 586 significant (Table 2). At right are the transcriptional changes in each of these genes due to  
 587 inhibition of elongation with HPUra and inhibition of initiation by high-temperature incubation  
 588 of *dnaDts* cells. Listed in parentheses are genes in the same operon that also responded  
 589 transcriptionally. Data are from (15). Bracketed values are not statistically significant.

590 Functions of the genes potentially regulated by DnaA have been summarized previously (15,  
 591 20) and include genes involved in: DNA replication (*dnaA*, *dnaN*, *dnaB*, and perhaps *ypvA*), cell  
 592 division (*ftsL*, *pbpB*), nucleotide metabolism (*nrdI*, *nrdE*, *F*), pyrimidine biosynthesis (*pyrP*),  
 593 lantibiotic biosynthesis (*sunA*, *T*), sporulation (*sda*, *spo0J*), and several unknowns (“y” genes).

594 †*sda* and the *yqeGH-aroD-yqeIJK* operon are divergently transcribed and both respond to  
 595 inhibition of replication; the *yqeG* operon decreases ~2-3 fold.

596 \*The region shown for *gcp* is downstream of its 3' end.

597 \*\*Gene expression values are listed for *ywfO*; *ywzC* did not respond to replication inhibition.

598

599

599 **Figure 4. Release of DnaA binding after resumption of replication.** *dnaDts* cells  
600 (KPL73) in exponential growth were shifted to restrictive temperature for 60 minutes and then  
601 shifted back to permissive temperature in order to generate a synchronous round of replication  
602 initiation. Samples were taken for ChIP-PCR analysis immediately before and at the end of the  
603 incubation at restrictive temperature, and 2, 5, 10, 15, and 40 minutes after the shift back to  
604 permissive temperature. DnaA binding was analyzed at *oriC/dnaA* (solid diamonds, black lines);  
605 *yydA* (gray asterisks, gray dashed lines); *ywcI* (solid triangles, black lines); *ywlC* (black X  
606 characters, black dashed lines); and *sda* (filled gray squares, solid gray lines). Data were  
607 normalized according to the basal and maximal level of signal detected to facilitate comparison  
608 of binding kinetics at sites with different levels of DnaA binding (see, for example, levels at  
609 *dnaA/oriC* and *sda* in Fig. 2). The inset shows the positions of each analyzed site on the  
610 chromosome and the approximate extent of replication at 5, 15, and 40 minutes after release.  
611

Fig. 1

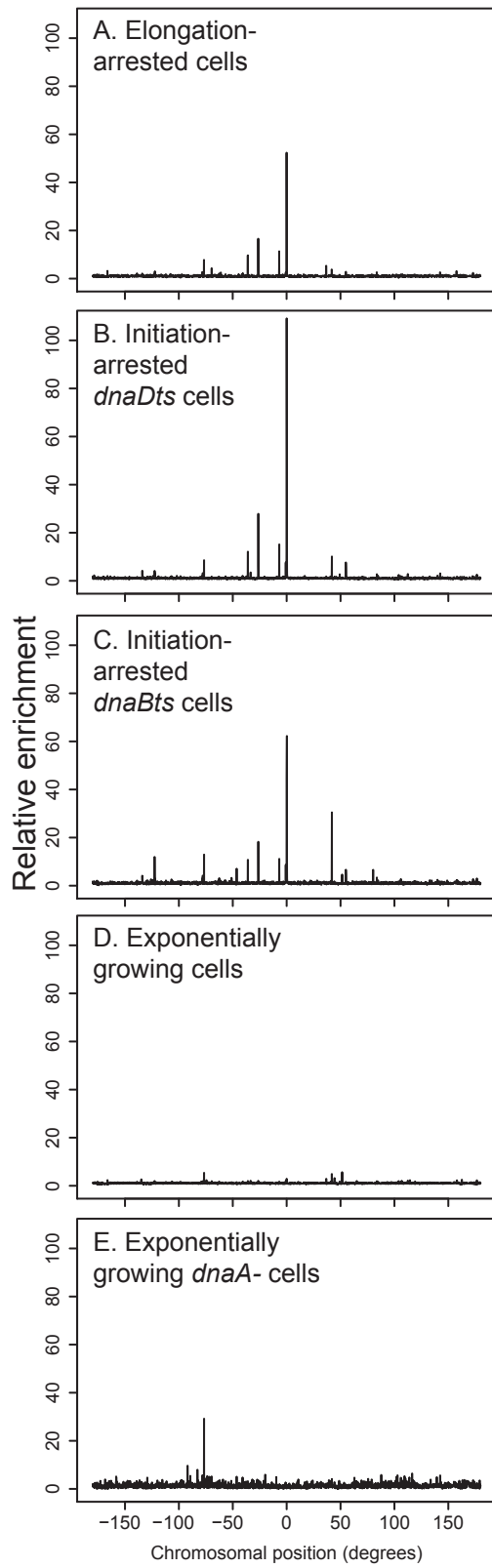


Fig.2

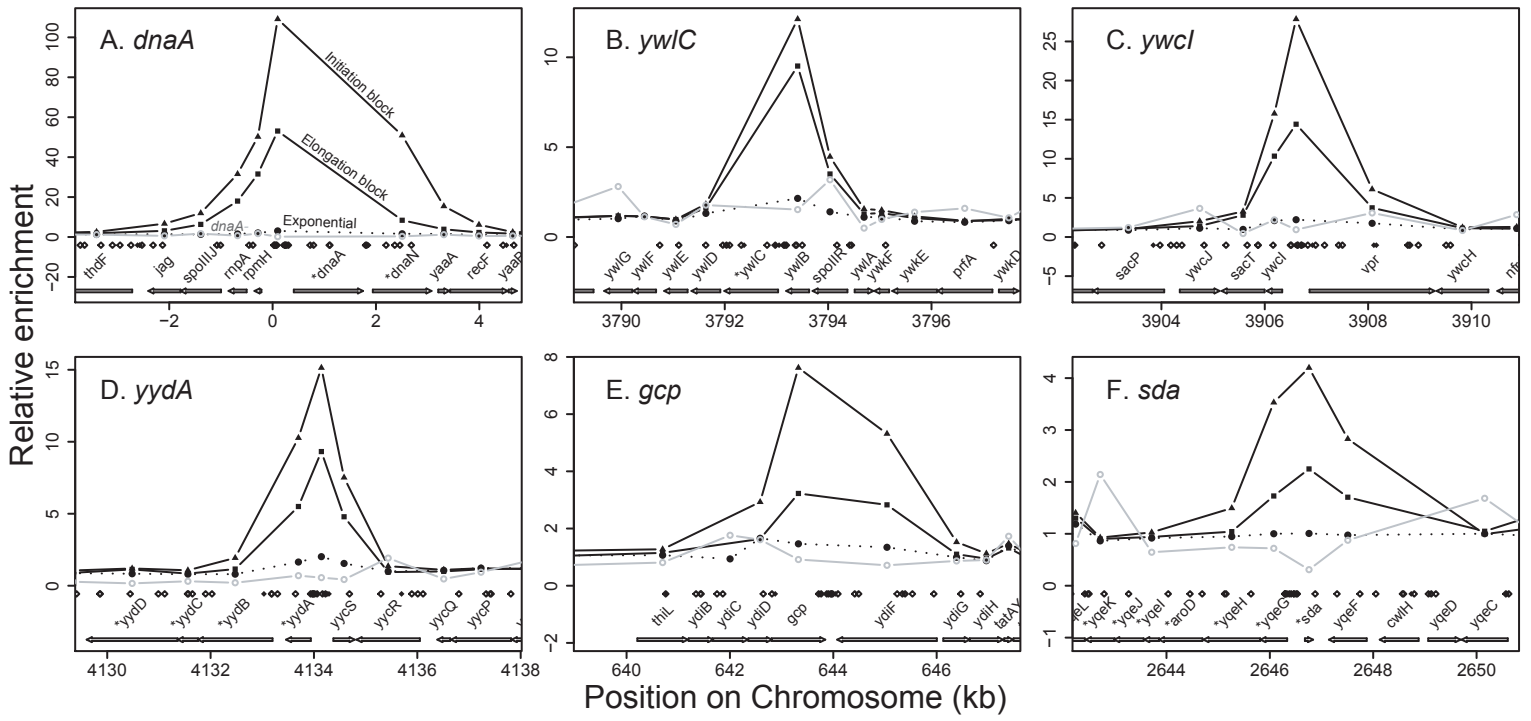


Fig. 3

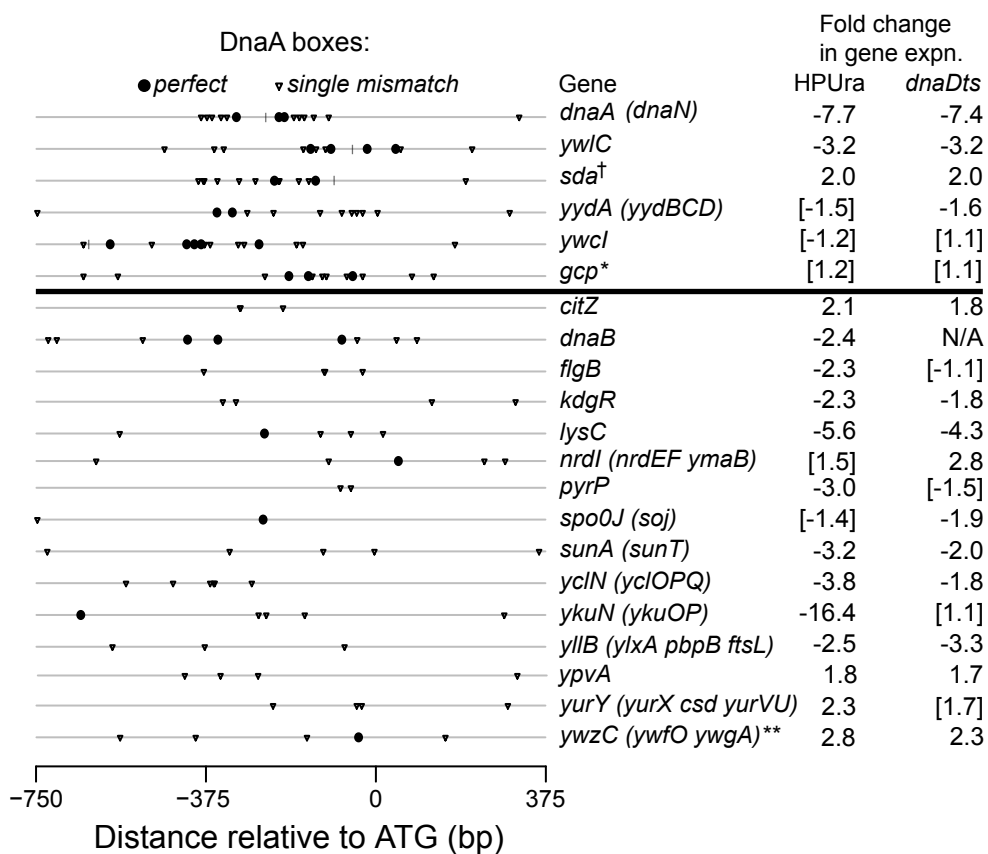


Fig.4

