

Wild-type male BALB/c mice (6 to 8 weeks old) were obtained from the Shanghai Laboratory Animal Company (Shanghai, China), maintained on a 12-h light/dark cycle at 25 °C, and were provided free access to commercial rodent food and tap water before the experiments. To induce chronic liver injury, mice were administered CCl<sub>4</sub>, by gavage, biweekly for up to 4 weeks. CCl<sub>4</sub> was diluted in mineral oil as described previously. The first dose of CCl<sub>4</sub> was 100 μL/kg body weight, and subsequent doses were adjusted, based on weight changes 48 h after the most recent dose. Control animals received mineral oil only. These experiments were conducted in accordance with the Shanghai Jiao Tong University Guidelines for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

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