### Additional Files

Additional file 1 — Additional Results

### Methods

#### Human Adult Stem Cells (ASCs) from Normal Colon

In order to analyze these data jointly with the whole exome data from the cancers, we selected the subset of mutations in exonic regions using the target regions of the nextera exome kit bed file and combined the samples from the same donor to give us six ASC samples in total. The filtering of somatic mutations and pooling across samples from the same donor had negligible effect on the mutational signatures estimated from an analysis of the ASC samples.

# TCGA Colon Adenocarcinoma (COAD-US)

Since TCGA used MuTect to identify somatic mutations, we applied the filtering criteria recommended for MuTect to reduce the number of false-positive calls (minimum read depth of 14 in the cancer and allele fraction of 0.10) [1]. We also required three or more variant alleles, an additional filter to reduce false-positives used by Williams et al. [3].

### Colorectal Adenocarcinoma in China (COCA-CN)

For the purpose of data visualization, we predicted Pol  $\epsilon$  mutation and microsatellite instability for the unannotated cancers from the somatic mutation data. Pol  $\epsilon$  mutation was predicted from the estimated mutational signatures. We estimated the mutational signatures in the COCA-CN samples using the model determined to fit the Normal ASC and COAD-US data best. We classified the tumor as a Pol  $\epsilon$  mutation carrier if >50% of the signature fractions were attributed to the two Pol  $\epsilon$  signatures (Figure 1, orange and yellow signatures). The remaining tumors were classified as MSI-H or MSI-L/MSS based on the total number of somatic mutations. We created a barplot of the number of somatic mutations, ordering the tumors from largest to smallest, left to right. We then computed the difference in number of somatic mutations between adjacent samples (step height), and classified all tumors to the left of the largest step as MSI-H and all to the right as MSI-L/MSS. These inferred labels were used for plotting the data in Figure S3.

### Results

Table S1 lists the average of the estimated mutational signature exposures according to sample type (normal ASC, MSI-H, Pol  $\epsilon$ , MSI-L, MSS). The normal ASCs and MMR proficient cancers are dominated by the red and purple signatures - the red signature representing the C>T substitution occurring primarily at CpG sites and the purple signature capturing the substitutions that do not favor any particular flanking bases. MSI-H tumors are dominated by four signatures (red, cyan, blue, purple), and Pol  $\epsilon$  by three signatures (orange, yellow, blue) with only modest fractional contributions from the red and purple signatures. However, if we consider the numbers of mutations in the red signature, the signature likely due to aging, we find an average of 328 in MSI-H, 214 in Pol  $\epsilon$ , 20 in MSI-L and 19 in MSS, showing that the numbers of mutations from the red signature are higher, on average, in Pol  $\epsilon$  tumors than in both the MSI-L and MSS cancers. The normal ASC samples had an average of 23 mutations attributed to the red signature, which resembles the numbers in both MSI-L and MSS cancers. Whereas the orange and yellow signatures are essentially unique to the Pol  $\epsilon$  cancers, appearing hardly at all (mean percentage < 1-4%) in the other subtypes, the cyan signature (CC>CA), is essentially unique to MSI-H tumors. The blue signature appears to be a general signature of MMR deficiency, contributing to both MSI-H and Pol  $\epsilon$  mutational burdens (average percentages 29% and 17%, respectively).









Signature	Summary	Normal	MSI-H	Pol $\epsilon$	MSI-L	MSS
Red	1st Qu.	51.82	34.37	4.49	17.16	18.25
	Mean	55.31	39.27	4.83	27.02	27.19
	3rd Qu.	60.44	43.91	5.96	33.17	33.86
Orange	1st Qu.	0.00	0.00	48.86	0.00	0.00
	Mean	0.10	0.48	54.92	3.31	3.08
	3rd Qu.	0.00	0.80	58.66	5.53	4.77
Yellow	1st Qu.	0.60	0.17	10.40	0.00	0.00
	Mean	2.68	1.07	15.05	2.52	2.91
	3rd Qu.	4.61	1.34	17.72	3.65	4.46
Cyan	1st Qu.	0.00	14.16	0.21	0.00	0.00
	Mean	0.53	16.63	1.67	4.35	3.98
	3rd Qu.	0.29	19.21	2.44	6.80	5.68
Blue	1st Qu.	4.74	26.33	11.58	4.34	3.01
	Mean	6.38	29.43	16.83	8.88	8.23
	3rd Qu.	8.08	32.49	21.34	12.58	12.48
Purple	1st Qu.	27.26	9.03	4.78	41.11	45.89
	Mean	34.99	13.11	6.71	53.91	54.61
	3rd Qu.	39.47	15.20	6.88	69.76	64.93

Table S1 Summary of mutational burden percentages in 6 Normal ASCs and 431 COAD-US tumors (72 MSI-H, 80 MSI-L and 279 MSS samples).

Table S2 The signature-specific estimates of the difference in mean mutational exposures between the trunk and branch mutations,  $\Delta_{Trunk-Branch}$  in Figure 2.

Subtype	Signature	Mean	Median	95% Credible interval	
MSI-H	Red	0.019	0.020	[-0.036, 0.073]	
	Cyan	-0.005	-0.005	[-0.046, 0.037]	
	Blue	-0.013	-0.013	[-0.063, 0.037]	
	Purple	-0.002	-0.002	[-0.037, 0.033]	
nonMSI-H	Red	0.096	0.096	[0.047, 0.144]	
	Cyan	0.004	0.003	[-0.015, 0.025]	
	Blue	-0.002	-0.002	[-0.033, 0.030]	
	Purple	-0.098	-0.098	[-0.152, -0.042]	

# Author details

References

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