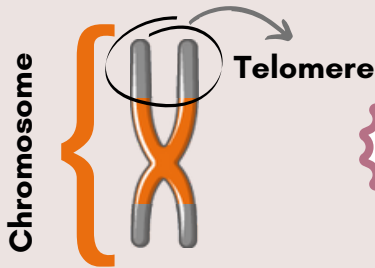


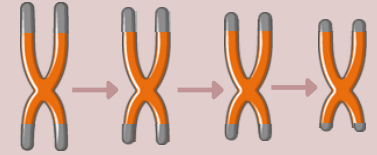
TELOMERES & AGING

with the  study



Telomeres (grey) are caps on the ends of chromosomes that keep our genetic information (orange) protected in our cells

What's unique about Telomeres?



Telomere length naturally gets shorter with age as our cells divide

Here's a little analogy:

You can think of **telomeres** like the plastic caps at the end of a shoelace



Over time, these little plastic caps become damaged and the shoelaces start to fray...

...similarly, as **telomeres** get too short, our cell DNA starts to get damaged

Shorter telomere = greater cell age

Having healthy cells is an important predictor of overall health and aging



Healthy vs. damaged DNA based on telomere length

Telomere length predicts life expectancy in people and is also a strong predictor of cardiovascular disease

So why are we interested in studying telomeres in **Women Living With HIV?**

WLWH have shorter **telomere** lengths than women who are not living with HIV, but it is not clear why this is happening

We want to examine the **telomere** length in the immune cells of **WLWH** treated with HIV medication (cART/ART/ARV)

We aim to identify biological and/or social factors that affect **telomere** length so that we can better support **WLWH** as they age