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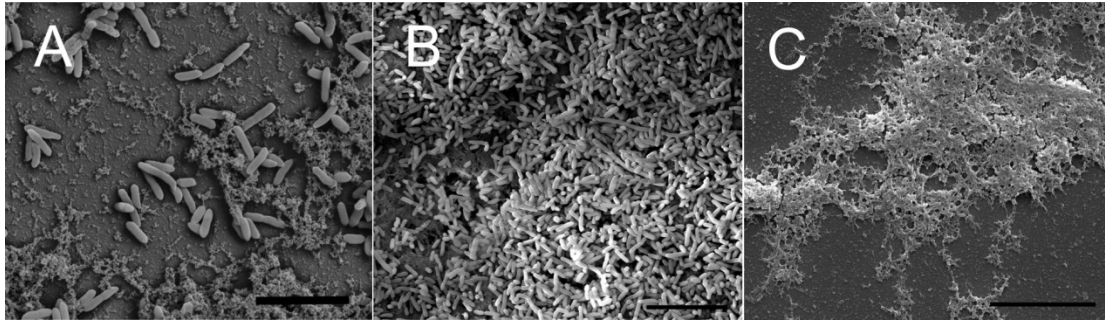
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**Additional file 3 (.pdf)**

**Controls used in the HR-SEM studies**

Panel A: *E. coli* cells grown in Shieh medium. Panel B: *E. coli* cells grown on a filter paper (on Shieh agar). Panel C: Sterile Shieh medium. No vesicles, vesicle chains or filaments were seen in the controls. The scale bar in Panel A was 5  $\mu\text{m}$  and was 10  $\mu\text{m}$  in Panels B and C.