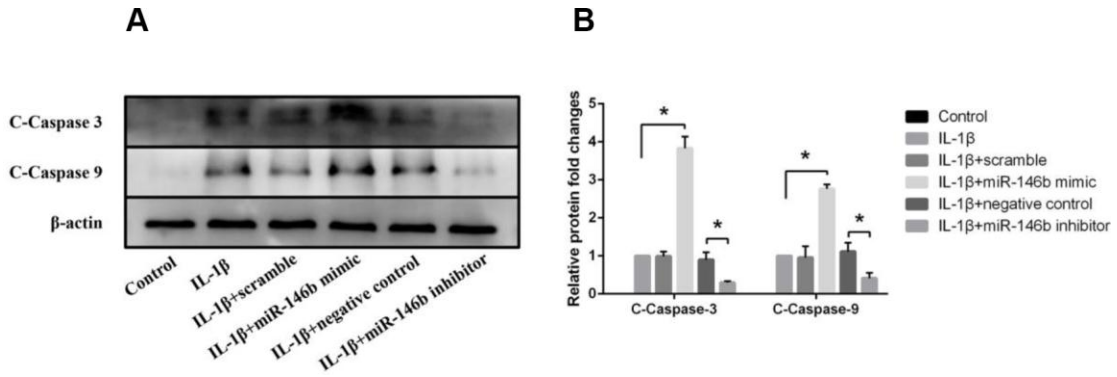
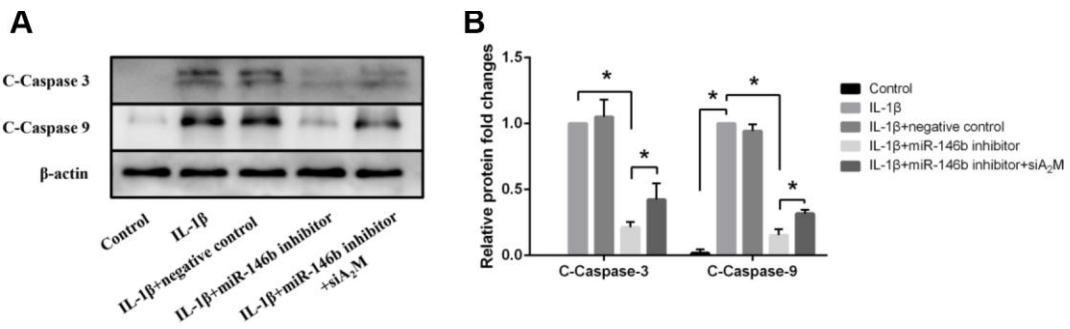


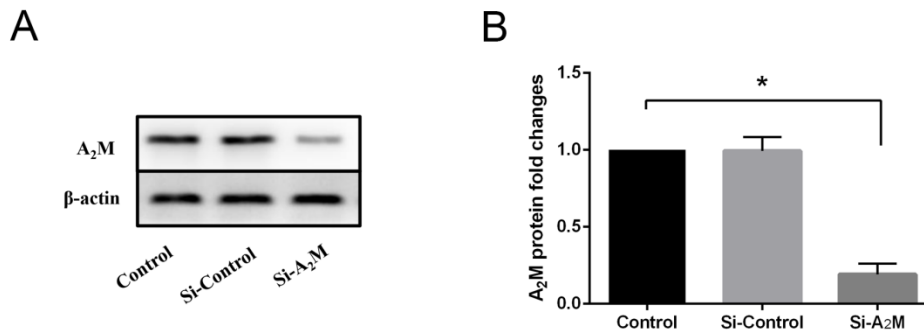
**SUPPLEMENTARY FIGURES**



**Supplementary Figure 1. miR-146b promotes IL-1β-induced apoptosis in chondrocytes.** Chondrocytes were transfected with miR-146b-mimic or miR-146b inhibitor and their negative control. (A, B) Representative western blots and quantification data of Cleaved Caspase 3 and Cleaved Caspase 9 in each group. \**P*<0.05.



**Supplementary Figure 2. Suppression of miR-146b inhibits IL-1β-induced apoptosis in chondrocytes by upregulating A<sub>2</sub>M expression.** Chondrocytes were transfected with miR-146b inhibitor or co-transfected with miR-146b inhibitor and siA<sub>2</sub>M. (A, B) Representative western blots and quantification data of Cleaved Caspase 3 and Cleaved Caspase 9 in each group. \**P*<0.05.



**Supplementary Figure 3. Determination of A<sub>2</sub>M protein expression by Western blotting in chondrocytes.** Chondrocytes were transfected with siA<sub>2</sub>M and the negative control. (A, B) Representative western blots and quantification data of A<sub>2</sub>M in each group. \**P*<0.05.