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Sommario/riassunto	<p>Plasticity is the hallmark of stem cells. At the same time, stem cells, like any other cell type, are influenced by their microenvironment and respond to it accordingly. A specific microenvironment is defined by a variety of factors, including biological and chemical factors, cell-cell interactions, but also metabolic and mechanical cues. Such dynamic and specialized microenvironment where the stem cells reside is considered a stem cell niche. Tissue injury as well as malignant tissue alterations lead to changes in the niche influencing the plasticity and biology of residing stem cells. Similarly, the niche changes upon tissue damage, which eventually induces differentiation of stem cells and ultimately regeneration of the tissue.</p>