

## **Novel orally available and selective CDK8 inhibitors**



Madrid, 15 de noviembre de 2016

## Content

1. The Institution
2. The Product
  - a) Target Indications
  - b) Innovative mechanisms of action
  - c) Differential features facing the market
  - d) Current status of development
  - e) IPR protection
  - f) Pitfalls & Risks to be considered
3. Partnering Opportunities

*The CNIO is a Comprehensive Center for Cancer Research with emphasis in translational approaches...*



## Experimental Therapeutics

### ETP-Biology



*C. Blanco, Ph.D.*



*J. Pastor, Ph.D.*

### ETP-Medicinal Chemistry



*S. Martínez, Ph.D.*

#### Staff (7)

A. Cebriá, Ph.D.  
E. Gómez-Casero, Ph.D.  
J. Klett, Ph.D.  
M.I. Albarrán, U.D.  
M.C. R. de Miguel, Ph.D.  
O. Renner, Ph.D.  
E. Hernández, Ph.D.

#### “Plan Empleo Juvenil” (2)

A. Amezquita, V.E.T.  
J. García, V.E.T

*Key members with experience in  
Pharma industry (+ 10 years) and academic DD (+ 8 years)*

#### Graduate Students (1)

*F.J. García*

*Unit shared with SBBP: Crystallography and Protein  
Engineering (I. Muñoz / J.L. Martínez)*

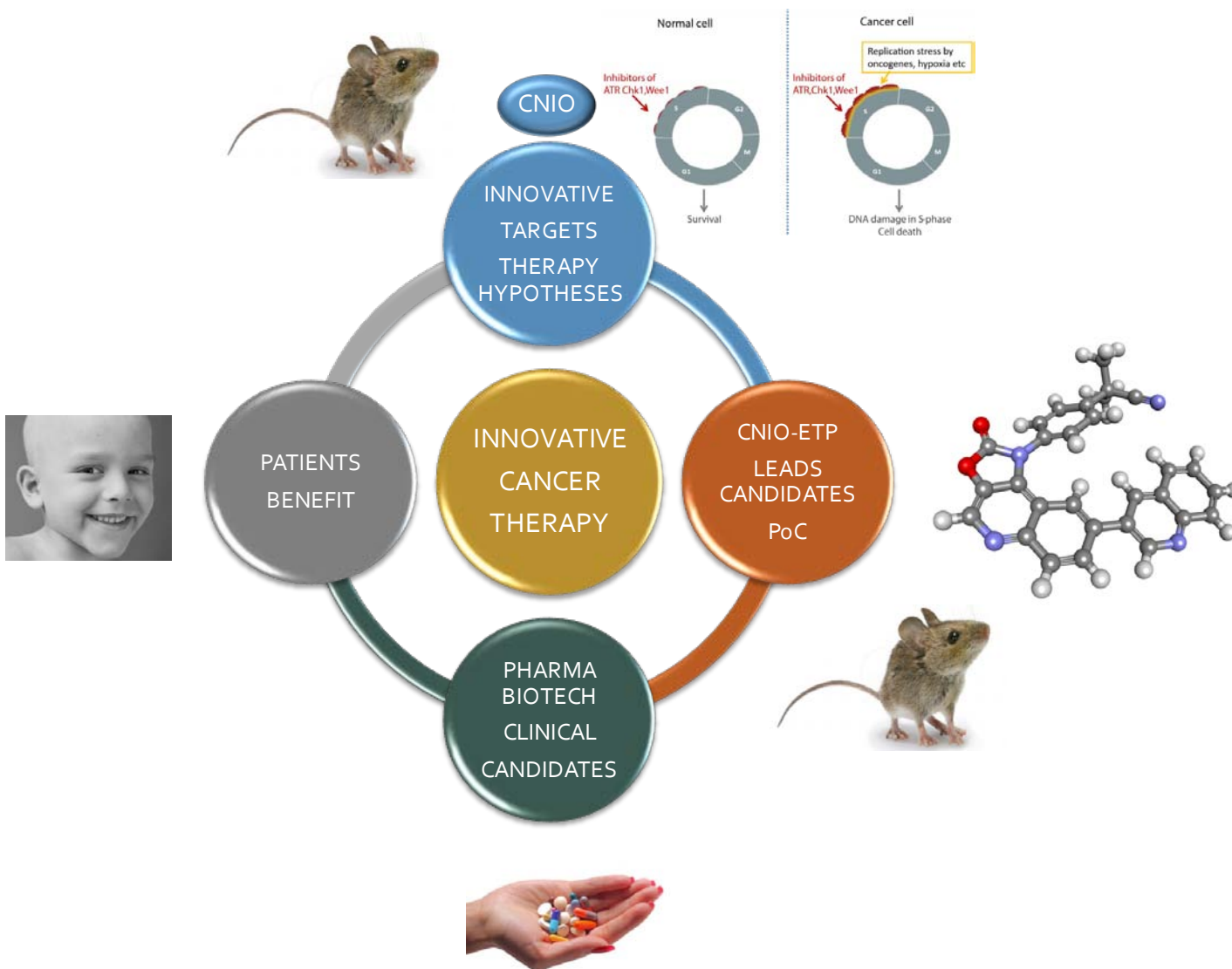
#### Staff (7)

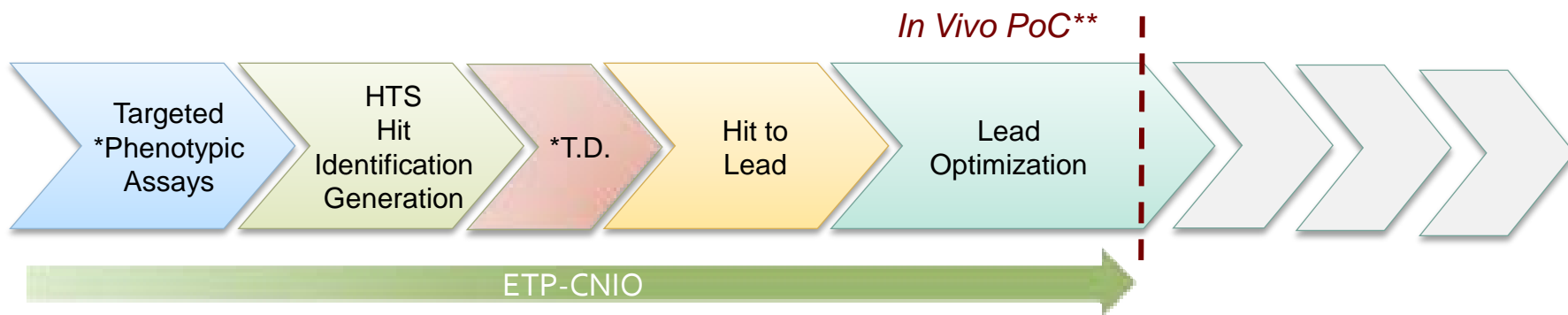
A.B. García, Ph.D.  
A.I. Hernández, Ph.D.  
C.A. de la Oliva, Ph.D.  
S. Rodríguez, Ph.D.  
E. González, Ph.D.  
M.R. Rico, Ph.D.  
C. Varela, Ph.D.

#### “Plan de Empleo Juvenil” (3)

C. Fernández, U.D.  
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S. Sanz, V.E.T.

# ETP-CNIO: “Bridging the Valley of Death in DD”





*“Early” Drug Discovery Phases / In vivo PoC\*\**

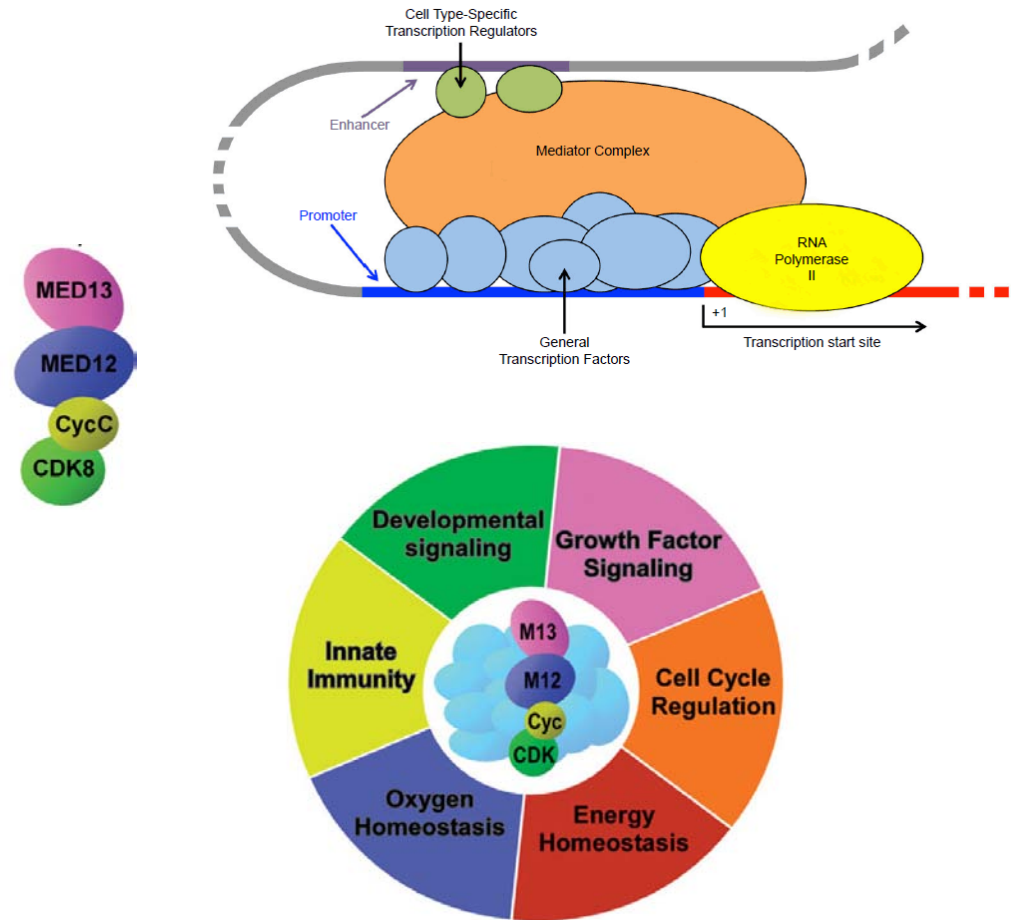
*\* T.D. Target Deconvolution*

*\*\* PoC is achieved when an advanced lead compound is able to produce target associated biomarker modulation (PK-PD) and antitumoral efficacy in in vivo models of disease, after a preferred PO route of administration.*



- Cyclin-dependent kinase 8 (CDK8) is a serine–threonine protein kinase localized to the nucleus. CDK8 /Cyclin C are components of multi-protein Mediator complex that regulates gene expression by interacting directly with the transcriptional machinery and regulating RNA-Pol II activity.
- The CDK19 paralog shows high homology to CDK8 and is considered an isoform of CDK8 that it is also coupled with Cyclin C and is an alternative component of the Mediator complex.
- CDK8 is ubiquitously expressed, CDK19 is only expressed in prostate, salivary gland, thymus and testis.
- CDK8 does not play a “direct role” in cell cycle progression in contrast to some other members of the CDK family (for example CDK1, CDK2 and CDK4/6),

## Functions of Mediator Kinase Complex



From Clark et al. Crit. Rev. Biochem. Mol.Biol. 2015; 50 (5): 393-426



## Mediator Oncogenic

Colorectal Cancer  
Gastric Carcinoma  
Melanoma  
Prostate Cancer  
Pancreatic Cancer  
Ovarian Cancer  
Breast Cancer  
AML (leukemia)

**Poor Survival  
outcome**

High CDK8 expression/activity

Low CDK8 expression/activity

## Mediator (Tumor Suppressor)

Osteosarcoma  
T-ALL (leukemia)  
Endometrial Cancer  
Uterine Leiomyoma

Adapted from Clark et al.

Crit. Rev. Biochem. Mol.Biol. 2015; 50 (5): 393-426

## Mediator Kinase Complex as an oncogenic unit.

Known Mediator Kinase substrates / Oncogenic Mechanisms  
(therapeutic setting reported)

p-E2F1 → (+) Wnt/β-catenin signaling  
*Colorectal cancer*

CCT251545, a CDK8/CKD19 inhibitor alters Wnt-β-catenin pathway regulated gene expression and has in vivo activity in WNT-dependent tumors (Colo-205 and SW620).  
Nat Chem Biol. 2015. 12:973.  
Other related compounds produce similar effects in same models.

Super-Enhancers associated gene transcription  
(-) tumor suppressors genes  
*AML cell context dependent*

Cortistatin A, a CDK8 inhibitor, upregulates SE-associated genes with tumor suppressor and lineage-controlling functions.  
This effect is cell context dependent.  
CA showed efficacy against AML xenografts after IP injection.  
Nature 2015.526: 273-6.

*CDK19 is overexpressed in the progression of prostate cancer (PCa) and was associated aggressiveness and decreased survival.*

Senexin A, a CDK19/CDK8 inhibitor led to significantly decreased migration and invasion of PCa cells *in vitro*.  
J. Clin. Cancer Res. 2016 Sep 27.





## Mediator Oncogenic

Colorectal Cancer  
Gastric Carcinoma  
Melanoma  
Prostate Cancer  
Pancreatic Cancer  
Ovarian Cancer  
Breast Cancer  
AML (leukemia)

**Poor Survival  
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High CDK8 expression/activity

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## Mediator (Tumor Suppressor)

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T-ALL (leukemia)  
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Uterine Leiomyoma

Adapted from Clark et al.

Crit. Rev. Biochem. Mol.Biol. 2015; 50 (5): 393-426

## Mediator Kinase Complex as an oncogenic unit.

Known Mediator Kinase substrates / Oncogenic Mechanisms  
(with therapeutic setting reported)

p-p27 -> (+) G2/M progression (proliferation).  
*Breast cancer with Skp2 and CDK8 expression.*

(not reported)

(+) Tumor de-differentiation and ES pluripotency. *Colon tumors.*

Acute CDK8 loss in vivo strongly inhibited tumor growth and promoted differentiation. CDK8 depletion caused embryonic stem cells to differentiate.  
Cancer Res. 2012 Apr 15;72(8):2129-39.

(+) Cooperation with oncogenic K-Ras. *Pancreatic cancer.*

Knockdown of either CDK8 or mutated K-ras contributed to attenuated pancreatic cancer growth in BALB/c nude mice.  
Cancer Letters 356 (2015) 613–627.

p-STAT1S727 -> NK cells inactivation

CDK8 depletion or mutation of a single phosphorylation site (STAT1-S727A) enhances NK cell cytotoxicity against a range of target tumor cells. STAT1-S727A mice display significantly delayed disease onset in NK cell-surveilled tumor models including melanoma, leukemia, and metastasizing breast cancer.  
Cell Rep. 2013 Aug 15;4(3):437-44.

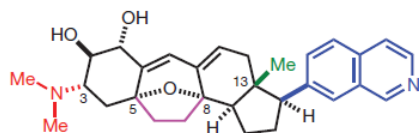
# CDK8 inhibitors (publications): Type I binding.

Corstitatin A, a CDK8 inhibitor has anti-leukemic activity in vitro and in vivo through the inhibition of CKD8 and CDK19.

Cortistatin A upregulates SE-associated genes with tumor suppressor and lineage-controlling functions. This effect is cell context dependent.

CA showed efficacy against AML xenografts after IP injection.

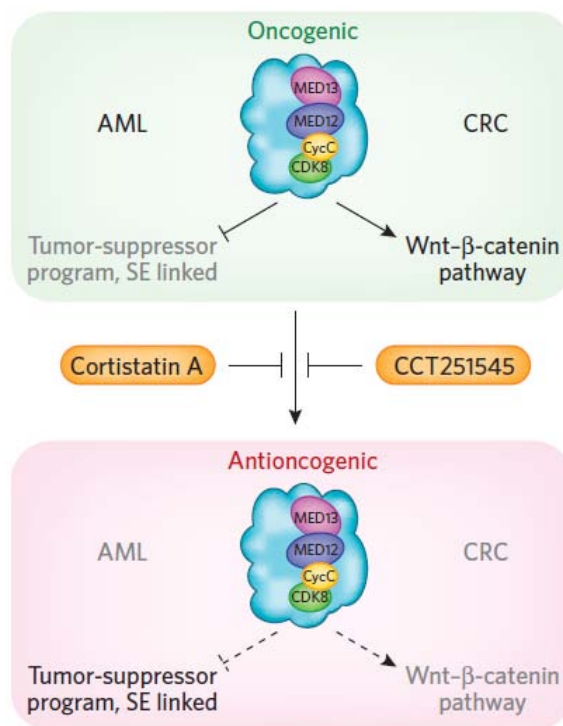
Pelish HE et al. Nature 2015.526: 273-6.



Preclinical  
Cortistatin A

Harvard

## In vivo PoC studies with CDK8 inhibitors



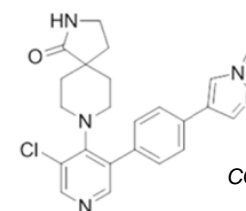
From T.G Boyer. Nat. Chemical biology 2016.

CCT251545 is a CDK8/CKD19 inhibitor that alters Wnt-β-catenin pathway regulated gene expression and other on target effects, including expression of genes regulated by STAT1.

CCT251545 has in vivo activity in WNT-dependent tumors (Colo-205 and SW620).

Dale T et al. Nat Chem Biol. 2015. 12:973.

CCT251545 Wnt activity SAR and SPR. In vivo PK-PD and efficacy in Colo-205 xenograft. Mallinger et al. J. Med. Chem. 2015, 58, 1717.



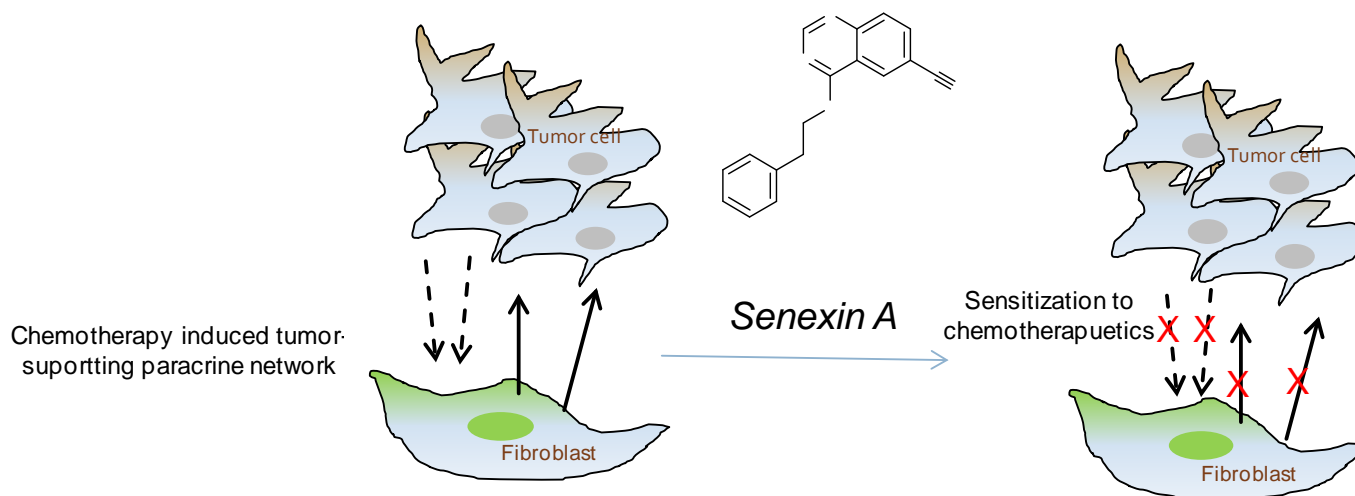
CCT251545

CRUK / Merck Serono

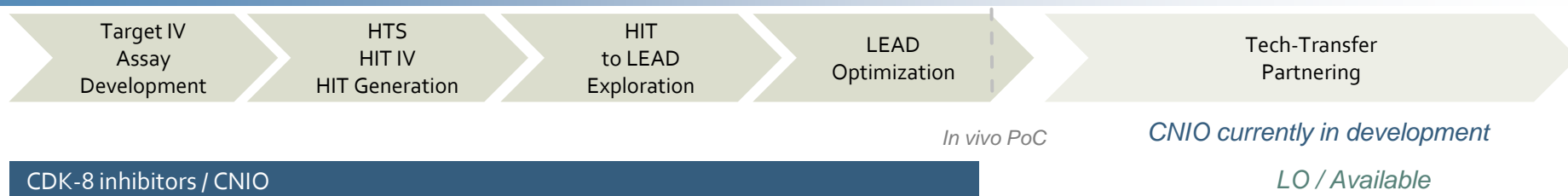
# CDK8 inhibitors (publications): Type I binding.

- Chemotherapeutics (Dox) induce tumor-promoting paracrine activities between tumor cells and normal fibroblasts. It has been proven that CDK8 inhibitor, Senexin A, suppresses them.
- Senexin A reverses the increase in tumor engraftment of A549 cells in tumor free mice pretreated with Doxorubicin.
- The inhibitor also increases the efficacy of chemotherapy (Dox) against xenografts formed by tumor cell/fibroblast mixtures.

Porter CD et al. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A. 2012. 109(34):13799-804.



# ETP-CNIO CDK8 inhibitors Summary.

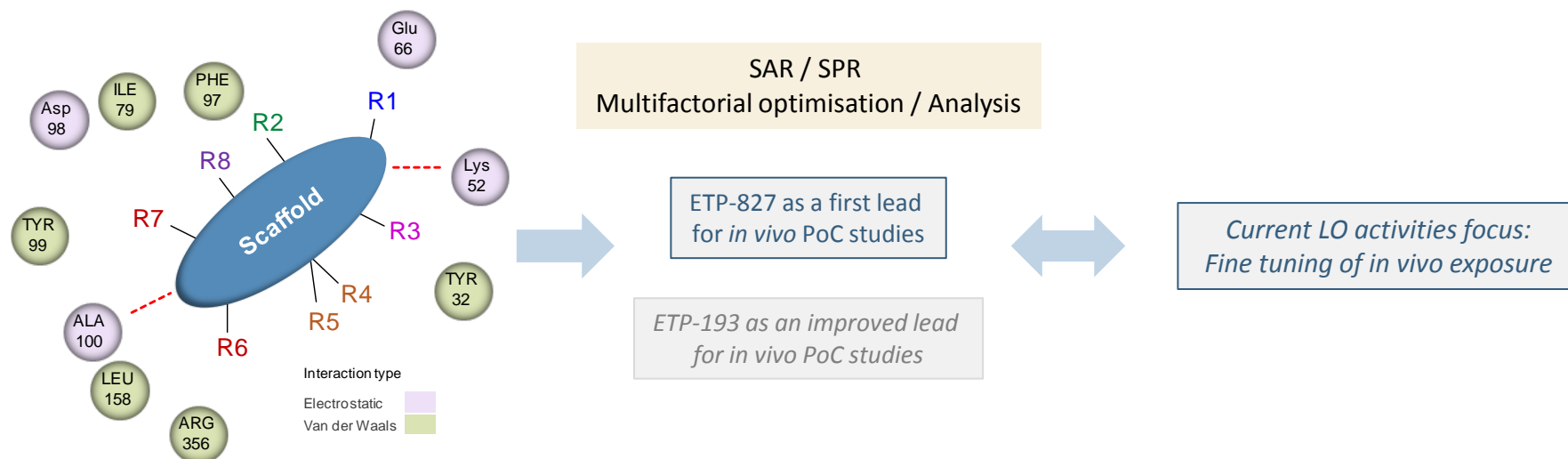


- A CDK8 inhibitor will be a **“First in Class” therapy** to treat cancer **including immunotherapeutic potential**.
- Screening platform up and running. Biochemical and functional cell based assays.
- Low-nM / picomolar highly selective CDK8-is (specific and combined with Target X inhibition).
- ETP-CDK8-is are cell active in the nM range in functional assays.
- Chemical series with SAR/SPR (ca. 100 analogues). X-ray information -> Type I binding mode.
- Anti-proliferative data in +40 cell lines: Identification of sensitivity achieved.
- ETP-CDK8-is show inhibition in “colony formation assays”.
- Combination studies with selected ETP-CDK8-is. Synergistic anti-tumoral agents identified.
- ETP-CDK8-is are orally bioavailable.
- PK-PD study with our first lead CDK8-i ETP-827 shows preliminary positive results.
- ETP-827 *In vivo* Efficacy short term study in MOLM-13 xenografts with signs of efficacy.
- Chemical series protected with a patent application (PCT/GB2016).

## Current and future activities

- Full characterization of already identified (potential) improved leads . LO fine tuning of in vivo exposure.

- ETP-CDK8-is series bears a novel scaffold with 8 derivatizable positions for SAR/SPR exploration.
- Co-crystallisation of ETP-CDK8 inhibitors with CDK8/Cyc-C shows a Type I Binding Mode for these inhibitors with interactions with Ala-100 and Lys-52. (Type II inhibitors are poorly active in cells)
- Excellent Lead / Drug-likeness of ETP-CDK8-is chemical series. (MW / LogD / PSA / LEI / RoF).
- Selected examples of ETP-CDK8-is with  $IC_{50}$  (Biochemical) < 5.0 nM:
- $EC_{50}$  p-STAT1: < 30 nM. // Soluble and permeable (> 100  $\mu$ M / >  $10^{-6}$  cm<sup>2</sup>·sec<sup>-1</sup>). // Microsomal stability. variable SPR. h-ERG binding > 30  $\mu$ M. // No significant CYP-450 inhibition.



ETP-Number	CDK8_IC50 (nM)	CDK19_IC50 (nM)	STAT1- P(SER727) SW620 cell line EC50 (nM)	CDK1_IC50 (nM)	CDK2_IC50 (nM)	CDK4_IC50 (nM)	CDK5_IC50 (nM)	CDK6_IC50 (nM)	CDK7_IC50 (nM)	CDK9_IC50 (nM)
ETP-827	0,49	0,7	0,3	936	1020	10000	721	3690	3280	45.10

Selectivity ratio CDKs / CDK8: CDK1: 1912; CDK2: 2081; CDK4: 20408; CDK5: 1471; CDK6: 7530; CDK7: 6693; \*CDK9: 92

\* CDK9 cell activity (P-RNAPol-II) EC<sub>50</sub>=2.37µM . Selectivity ratio cell activity CDK9/CDK8: 7900

Solubility Buffer_pH 7,4 (µM)	PAMPA_Papp (10 <sup>-6</sup> cm/seg)	h-LM_30 min. % Remaining	m-LM_30 min. % Remaining	r-LM_30 min. % Remaining	P450- 1A2_% Inhibition @ 5,0 µM	P450- 2C19_% Inhibition @ 5,0 µM	P450- 2C9_% Inhibition @ 5,0 µM	P450- 2D6_% Inhibition @ 5,0 µM	P450- 3A4_% Inhibition @ 5,0 µM	HERG_Bind ing IC50 (µM)
> 100	13,26	100	29	83	< 5,0	< 5,0	24,1	< 5,0	34,2	> 30

## KinomeScan™

468 Kinases tested @ 1.0 µM  
Highly selective  
S(35)= 0.06 y S(10)= 0.01

## In Vivo PK (BALB-C Mice)

IV Clearance < 30% Hepatic Blood Flow  
T 1/2 : 0.3 h (IV) / 0.4 h (PO)  
Vd: 0.72 L/Kg  
F > 90%

Plasma Protein Binding (% bound):  
Mouse 57.8 / Human 89.9

*Main off-target (potential duality).  
It seems a positive differentiating  
factor vs. competitors  
Opportunity*

ETP-Number	Target X_IC50 (nM)	Target X activity SW620 cell line EC50 (nM)
ETP-827	20,60	9,86

*Side by side comparison in  
antiproliferation and colony formation  
assays demonstrated superiority for  
ETP-827*

*vs. Senexin B and CCT251545  
(no Target X inhibitors / Internal data)*



# ETP-CNIO CDK8-is Leads: ETP-193

ETP-Number	CDK8 Biochemical IC50 (nM)	CDK19_IC50 (nM)	STAT1-P(SER727) SW620 cell line EC50 (nM)	CDK1_IC50 (nM)	CDK2_IC50 (nM)	CDK4_IC50 (nM)	CDK5 _IC50 (nM)	CDK6_IC50 (nM)	CDK7 _IC50 (nM)	CDK9_IC50 (nM)
ETP-193	< 3,0	< 3,0	0,4	567	1500	N/T	> 200	10000	4020	> 100

Selectivity ratio CDKs / CDK8: CDK1: 259; CDK2: 685; CDK4: N/T; CDK5: 102; CDK6: 4566; CDK7: 1835; \*CDK9: >50

\* CDK9 cell activity (P-RNAPol-II) EC<sub>50</sub> expected to be > 2.37µM . Selectivity ratio cell activity CDK9/CDK8: > 5000

Solubility Buffer_pH 7,4 (µM)	PAMPA_Papp (10 <sup>-6</sup> cm/seg)	h-LM_30 min. % Remaining	m-LM_30 min. % Remaining	r-LM_30 min. % Remaining	P450- 1A2_% Inhibition @ 5,0 µM	P450- 2C19_% Inhibition @ 5,0 µM	P450- 2C9_% Inhibition @ 5,0 µM	P450- 2D6_% Inhibition @ 5,0 µM	P450- 3A4_% Inhibition @ 5,0 µM	HERG_Bind ing IC50 (µM)
N/T	N/T	100	95	90	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	> 30

## In Vivo PK (BALB-C Mice)

### Improved PK vs ETP-827

IV Clearance < 20% Hepatic Blood Flow  
T 1/2 : 0.6 h (IV) / 0.9 h (PO)  
Vd: 0.78 L/Kg  
F > 90%

**KinomeScan™**  
N/T

Plasma Protein Binding (% bound)  
N/T

*Main off-target (potential duality).  
It seems a positive differentiating  
factor vs. competitors  
Opportunity*

ETP-Number	Target X_IC50 (nM)	Target X activity SW620 cell line EC50 (nM)
ETP-193	23,70	4,10

*Side by side comparison in  
antiproliferation and colony formation  
assays demonstrated superiority for  
ETP-827  
vs. **Senexin B** and **CCT251545**  
(no Target X inhibitors / Internal data)*

*Currently ETP-193 is being profiled as a potential advanced lead vs. ETP-827. Additional ETP-CDK8-is selected for full characterization.*

## *Internally generated data*

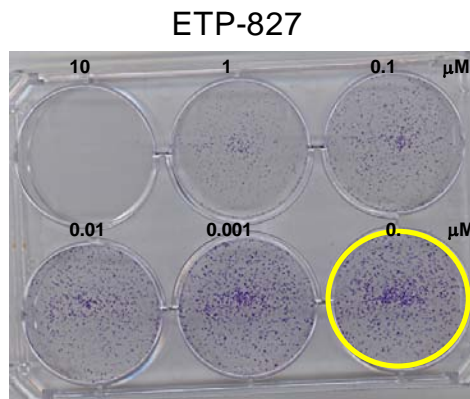
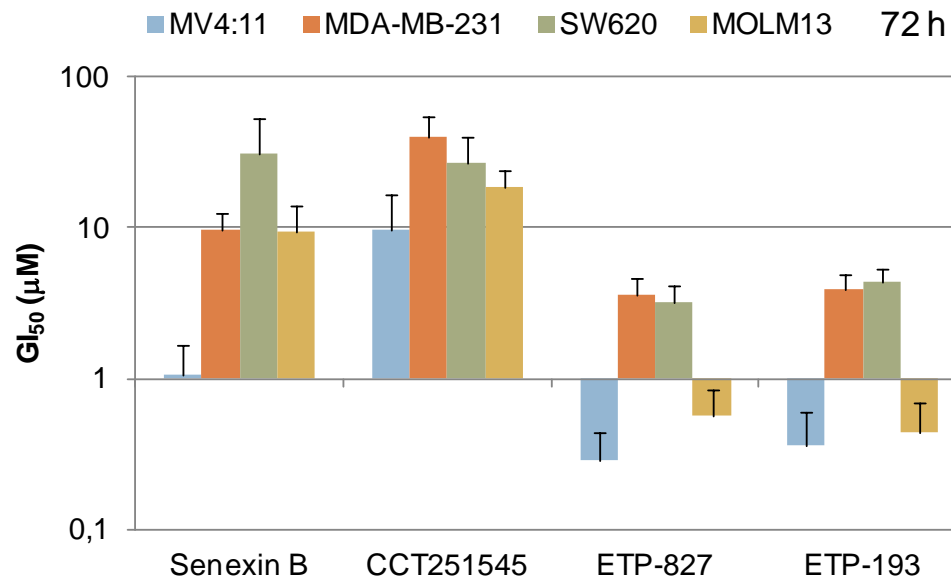
ETP-Number	CDK8 _IC50 (nM)	CDK19 _IC50 (nM)	STAT1-P(SER727) SW620 cell line EC50 (nM)	Target X_IC50 (nM)	Target X activity SW620 cell line EC50 (nM)
ETP-827	0,49	0,7	0,2 / < 0,064 *	20,60	9,86
ETP-193	< 3,0	< 3,0	0,4 / N/T *	23,70	4,10
Senexin B	19,30	41,6	27,4 / 83 *	> 10000	N/A
CCT251545	1,60	1,4	4,9 / < 0,24 *	> 10000	N/A

*Assay under IFN  $\gamma$  stimulus. ETP-827 activity under these conditions < 0,064 nM.  
N/A: not active at maximum concentration tested (10  $\mu$ M). N/T: not tested.*

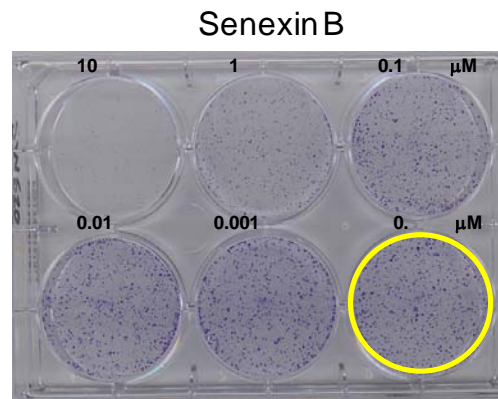
*ETP-827 and ETP-193 are more potent CDK8-is in cells than Senexin B and CCT251545.  
Senexin B and CCT251545 are not Target X-is.*

- Anti-proliferative data in +40 cell lines with ETP-827: most sensitive cell lines are AML.
- ETP-827 and ETP-193 are between 3x and 20x more potent than Senexin B and CCT251545 in proliferation assays for selected cell lines such as MV4:11, MOLM13, MDAMB231 and SW620.
- ETP-827 Inhibition in colony formation assays is 8x more potent than Senexin B and CCT251545.

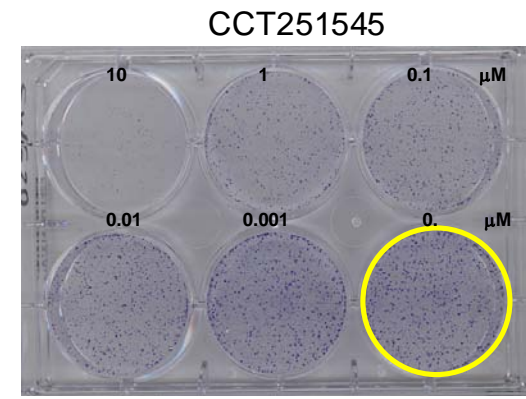
# Antiproliferation and Colony Formation profiles.



$EC_{50} = 130 \text{ nM}$



$EC_{50} = 940 \text{ nM}$



$EC_{50} = 1050 \text{ nM}$

## *Experimental combination of CDK8 and Target X inhibitors*

ETP-Number	CDK8_IC50 (nM)	STAT1- P(SER727) SW620 cell line EC50 (nM)	Target X_IC50 (nM)	Target X activity SW620 cell line EC50 (nM)	CHEMICAL PROBE
ETP-827	0,49	0,2 / < 0,064 *	20,60	9,86	DUAL
CCT251545	1,60	4,9 / < 0,24 *	> 10000	N/A	CDK8-i
ETP-914	412,00	2100,00	57,10	290,00	Target X-i

\* Assay under IFN  $\gamma$  stimulus. ETP-827 activity under these conditions < 0,064 nM. N/A: not active at 10  $\mu$ M.

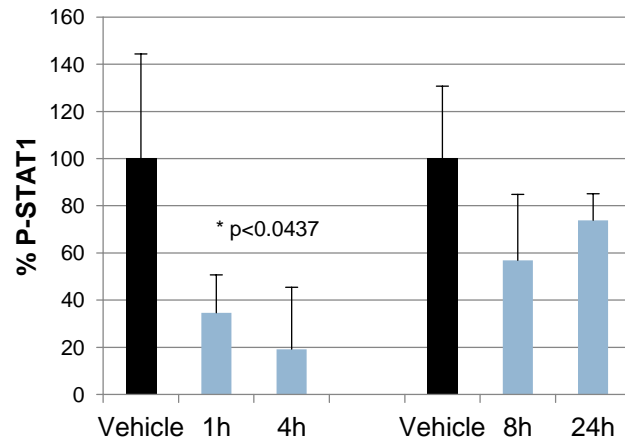
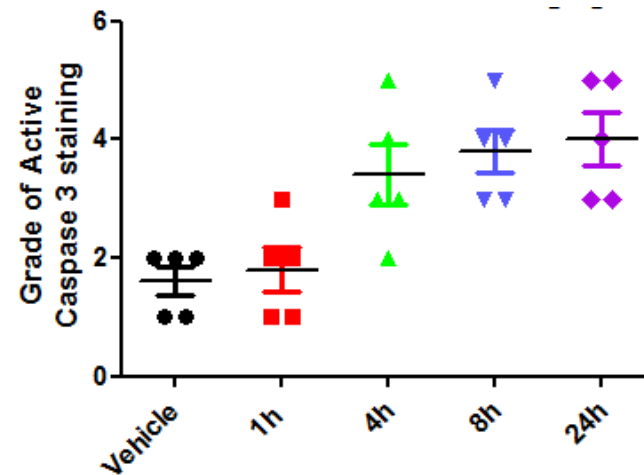
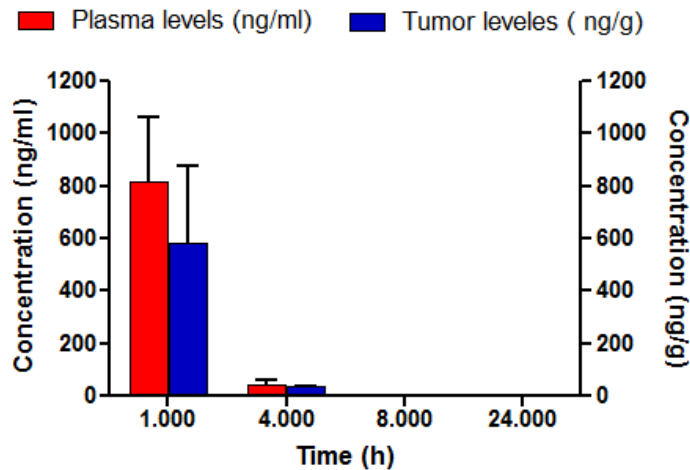


Combination of CCT251545 + ETP-914  
Antiproliferation and colony formation assays.

*CDK8 and Target X inhibitions are synergistic  
and produce a comparable outcome to dual ETP-827 profile.*

# First Lead ETP-827: PK-PD vs p-STAT1.

*PK/PD study with ETP-827 @ 5mg/kg in SW620 xenograft*



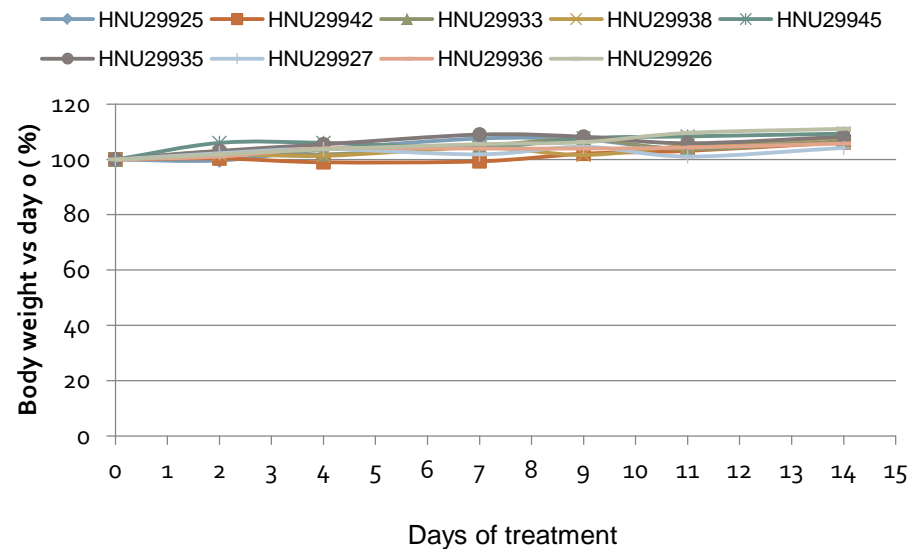
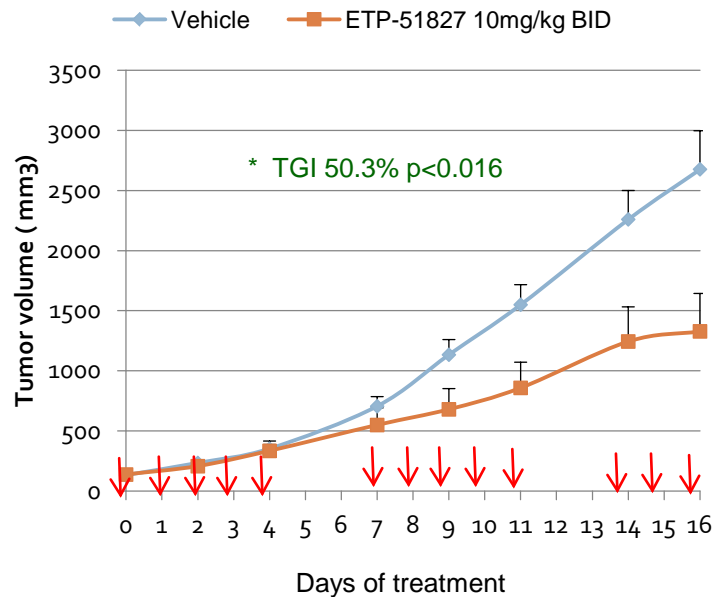
ETP-827 distributed well between plasma and tumor with a short half life (as expected from PK data).

It modulates p-STAT-1 up to 4h.

*It is expected that ETP-193 with longer T<sub>1/2</sub> and higher V<sub>d</sub> will improved this results.*

*ETP-827 produced a sustained apoptotic effect for 24 h, at time points where compound is not detected in tumor.*

## Treatment with ETP-827 @ 10 mg/kg BID in MOLM-13 xenograft



Treatment showed efficacy in a short term study. Treatment is well tolerated with no body weight losses.

*Immuno-deficient mice*



- CDK8 has been identified as a major kinase for STAT1-S727 phosphorylation in response to IFN signaling.  
[Bancerek et al. Immunity. 2013 Feb 21;38\(2\):250-62.](#)
- STAT1-S727 phosphorylation has an inhibitory role for NK cell cytotoxicity. Mutation of a single phosphorylation site (STAT1-S727A) enhances NK cell cytotoxicity against a range of target tumor cells.
- STAT1-S727A mice display significantly delayed disease onset into lungs after IV injection of melanoma B16F10 cells and orthotopic transplants of 4T1 breast cancer cells (metastasizing breast cancer).

[Putz et al. Cell Rep. 2013 Aug 15;4\(3\):437-44.](#)

Oncolimmunology 3:9, e955441; October 1, 2014; © 2014 Taylor & Francis Group, LLC

AUTHOR'S VIEW

## STAT1-S727 - the license to kill

Eva M. Putz, Dagmar Gotthardt, and Veronika Sexl\*

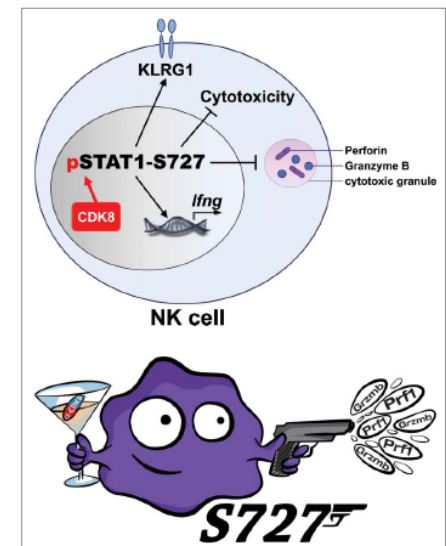
Institute of Pharmacology and Toxicology; University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna; Vienna, Austria

**Keywords:** CDK8, immunotherapy, NK cells, STAT1, tumor immune surveillance

There is a great demand for pharmaceuticals that can effect both tumor cell destruction and immune cell activation.

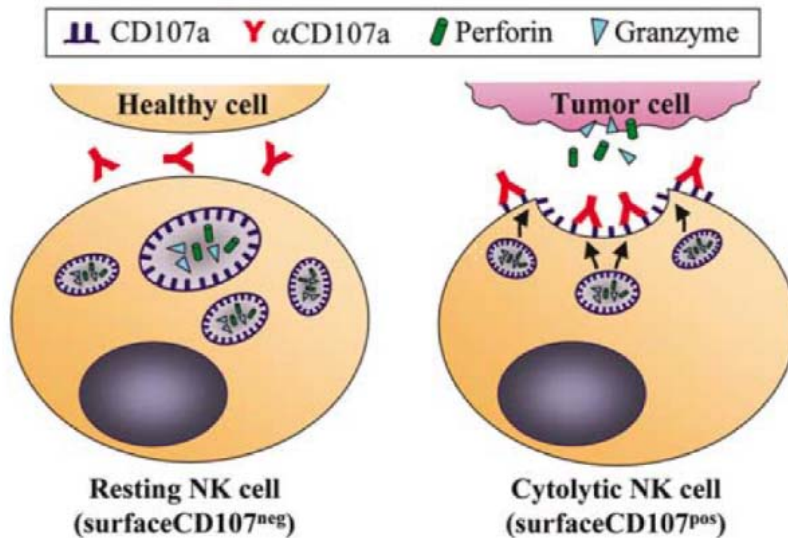
Taken together, CDK8 inhibitors may effectively kill 2 birds with one stone, attenuating bulk tumor cells while licensing NK cells to target cancer (stem) cells.

In leukemia, there is evidence that NK cells are able to eradicate leukemic stem cells and control minimal residual disease.

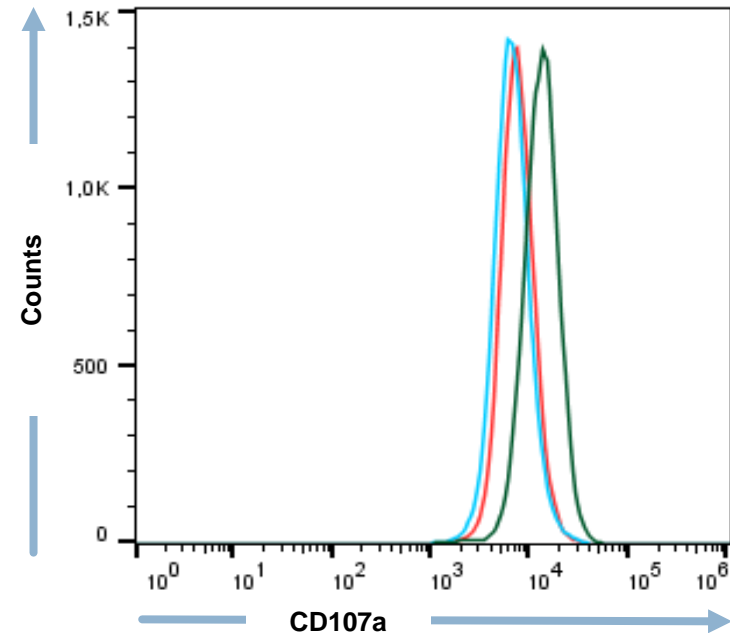


# ETP-827 increases cytotoxicity of NK cells?

*ETP-827 enhances NK-cells degranulation*



Expression of CD107a as read-out for degranulating NK cells



Buffer only / +DMSO / + ETP-827 dissolved in DMSO

Treatment of NK-cells for 18h with ETP-827 @10 $\mu$ M induces expression of CD107a in the membrane.

*In collaboration with H12O-CNIO Haematological Malignancies Clinical Research Unit*

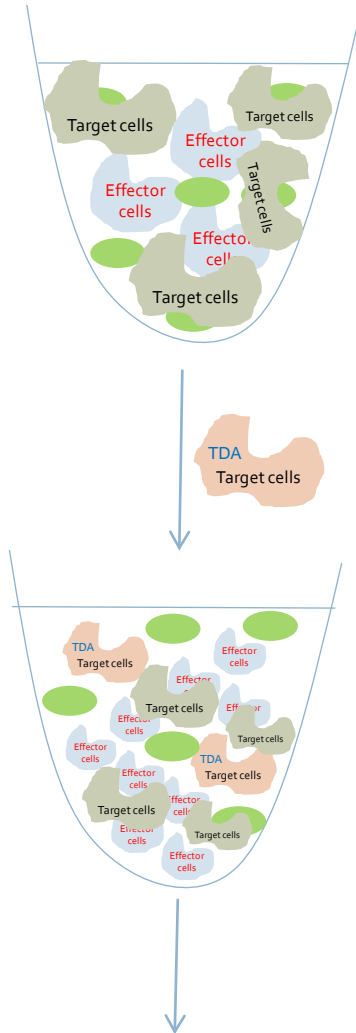
# ETP-827 increases cytotoxicity of NK cells ?

## NK cytotoxicity assay

- I. 18h Treatment of co-cultured NK-92MI and K562 (10:1) with DMSO or ETP-827 @10 $\mu$ M

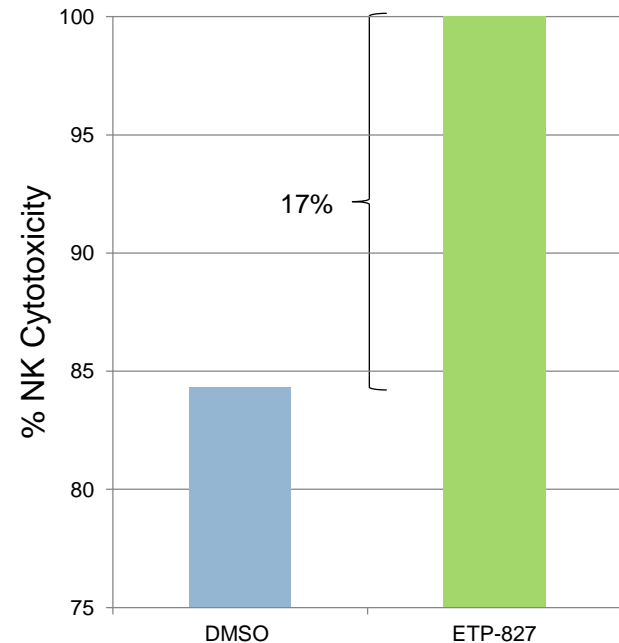
ETP-827

- II. Addition of Labeled target cells (K562) in a ratio E:T = 20:1



- III. Measurement of NK mediated cytotoxicity after 4h by the detection of TDA in the medium

## Preliminary Results



*Treatment of co-cultured NK / Target cells with ETP-827 for 18h significantly increases NK cells cytotoxicity against TDA-K562 target cells.*

*In collaboration with H12O-CNIO Haematological Malignancies Clinical Research Unit*

## CDK8-inhibition in healthy non-targeted tissues?

- There are tumors where decrease expression/activity of the Mediator has been established, therefore suggesting a tumor suppressor role for it (CDK8) and conversely a potential tumor promoter role for CDK8-inhibitors in such tissues / compartments (i.e. T-ALL).
- It is not likely that CDK8 inhibition in those “healthy” tissues will be sufficient to induce tumorigenesis in the absence of other oncogenic events.

Example:

- The loss of mediator activity (haploinsufficiency of Cyc-C) collaborates with pre-established elevated levels of ICN1 to accelerate the development of T-ALL in mice.
- Cyc-C loss is able to increase ICN1 levels. However these levels on their own are not sufficient to spontaneously develop T-ALL. Other oncogenic alterations (i.e. LMO1) are needed to accelerate tumorigenesis.

## Predictive biomarker for clinical response.

- P-STAT1 (S727) can be used to measure cellular inhibition of CDK8 activity, but there is no correlation with sensitivity to *in vitro* proliferation inhibition. (i.e. Cortistatin A study).
- Best to check expression of CDK8 and other mediator components and interactive genes.

We offer to you:

- A series of highly potent ETP-CDK8-is with highly desirable Lead-Drug-like properties.
- I.P. protected series with high potential to deliver a clinical candidate after fine optimization.
- Specific CDK8 and dual activity CDK8- Target X profiles (as a positive differentiating factor).
- First lead ETP-827 has served to achieve preliminary in vivo PoC studies.
- Improved PK lead ETP-193 identified which could be a candidate for development.
- Other potential leads already in the pipeline.
- Project platform up and running and experience in the field of CDK8 inhibition.
- Structural information generated for CDK8 and Target X.
- Back-up series identified.

*“CDK8-is can serve to treat “bulk tumor cells” + activate immunotherapy response + treat metastasis + make chemotherapeutics drugs more efficient + eliminate the tumor initiating capacity of cancer stem cells + cooperate with targeted drugs against prominent oncogenes in highly deadly cancers (i.e. Kras)”...*

We are willing to partner our project under several scenarios:  
Licensing / Project Co-development ...

## Experimental Therapeutics Programme. Current and past members.

### Molecular Oncology Programme

Tumour Suppression (M. Serrano)  
Telomeres and Telomerase (M.A. Blasco)  
Cell Division and Cancer (M. Malumbres)  
Genomic Instability (O. Fernández-Capetillo)  
Brain Metastasis (M. Valiente)  
Experimental Oncology (M. Barbacid)

### Clinical Research Programme

Gastrointestinal Cancer Clinical Research Unit  
H12O-CNIO Haematological Malignancies CRU

### Structural Biology and Biocomputing Programme

Cell Signalling and Adhesion (D. Lietha)

Spectroscopy and Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Unit  
(R. Campos)

### Biotechnology Programme Units

Technology Transfer and Valorisation Office  
Communication Office

### Crystallography and Protein Engineering Unit

(I. Muñoz / J.L. Martínez)

