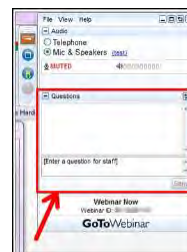
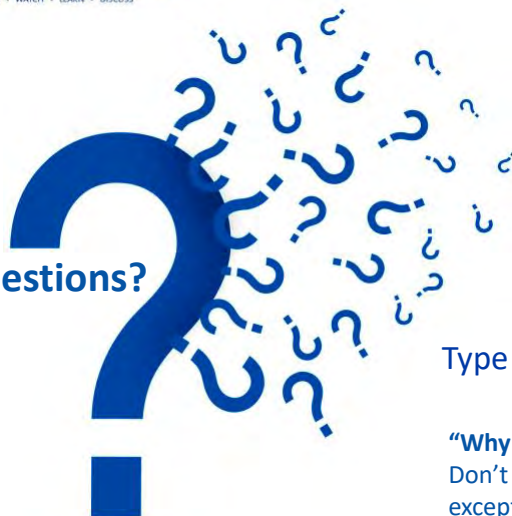




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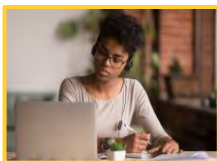
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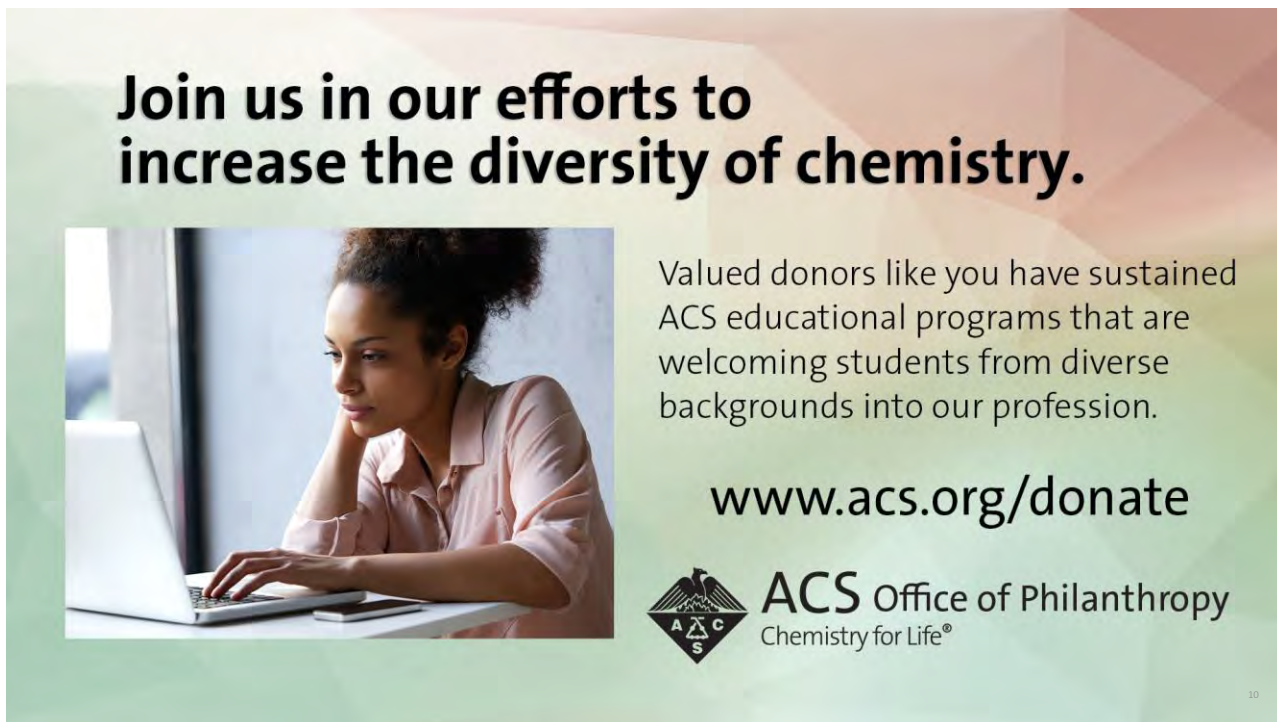
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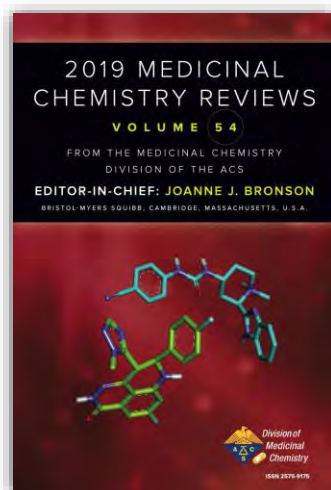
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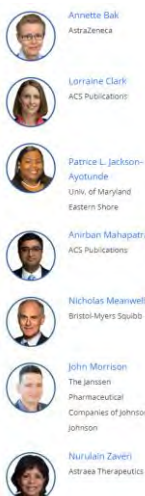
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# Targeted Delivery of RNA-targeted Therapeutics

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## Targeted Delivery of RNA-targeted Therapeutics



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**Delivery of RNA-targeted therapeutics**

**Punit P. Seth, Ph.D.**  
**VP, Medicinal Chemistry**

July 29<sup>th</sup> 2021

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## Nucleic acid drugs can work through multiple mechanisms

- Nucleic acid therapeutics which bind RNA by Watson-Crick base pairing *and*
  - Promote degradation of RNA
    - RNase H – single stranded (ss) DNAASOs
    - siRNA – double stranded (ds) and ssRNAASOs
  - Do not promote degradation of RNA
    - Splice modulation – ssASOs with variable chemistry
    - miRNA antagonists – ssASOs with variable chemistry
    - mRNA editing – ssASOs with variable chemistry
    - Translational arrest – ssASOs with variable chemistry
- Nucleic acid therapeutics which bind to DNA by Watson-Crick base pairing
  - CRISPR/CAS9 for gene editing
- mRNA that are translated to therapeutic proteins
  - Vaccines, protein replacement, gene editing
- Aptamers and immuno-modulatory oligonucleotides that bind to protein targets

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## Nucleic acid drugs approved by regulatory agencies – *many targets considered undruggable by traditional drug discovery platforms*

Name	Disease	Target	Mechanism	Chemistry	Sponsor	Approved
Vitravene™	CMV retinitis	Viral RNA	RNaseH1	PS DNA	Ionis/Novartis	1998
Macugen™	AMD	VEGF	Aptamer	F/OMe	Eyetech/Pfizer	2004
Kynamro™	High cholesterol	ApoB100	RNaseH1	PS MOE/DNA	Ionis/Genzyme	2013
Spinraza™	SMA	SMN2	RNA splicing	PS MOE	Ionis/Biogen	2016
Exondys™	DMD	Dystrophin	RNA splicing	PMO	Sarepta	2016
Tegsedi™	TTR amyloidosis	Transthyretin	RNaseH1	PS MOE/DNA	Ionis/Akcea	2018
Onpattro™	TTR amyloidosis	Transthyretin	siRNA	RNA/OMe/LNP	Alnylam	2018
Waylivra™	High triglycerides	ApoCIII	RNaseH1	PS MOE/DNA	Ionis/Akcea	2019
Givosiran™	Hepatic porphyria	ALAS1	siRNA	F/OMe/GalNAc	Alnylam	2019
Vyondys™	DMD	Dystrophin	RNA splicing	PMO	Sarepta	2019
Viltepso™	DMD	Dystrophin	RNA splicing	PMO	NS Pharma	2020
Oxlumo™	Hyperoxaluria	Glycolate oxidase	siRNA	F/OMe/GalNAc	Alnylam	2020
Leqvio™	High cholesterol	PCSK9	siRNA	F/OMe/GalNAc	Alnylam	2020
Vaccine	COVID	Virus antigen	mRNA	RNA/LNP	Moderna	2020
Vaccine	COVID	Virus antigen	mRNA	RNA/LNP	BioNTech/Pfizer	2020

*>100 nucleic acid-based drugs currently in clinical development*

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## Representative oligonucleotide designs used in the clinic

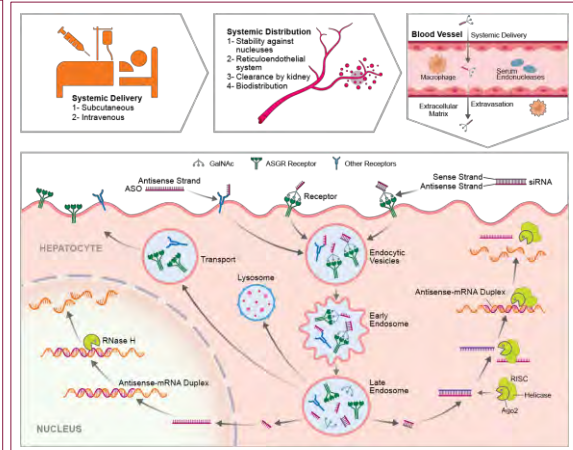
Design	Compound	Design	Mechanism
	Spinraza	Full PS MOE	RNA splicing
	Exondys	Full PMO	RNA splicing
	Tegsedi	PS MOE gapmer	RNaseH1
	Gen 2.5	PS cEt gapmer	RNaseH1
	Onpatro	siRNA/LNP	Ago2
	Givlarri	siRNA/GalNAc	Ago2

Gokirmak et al, *Trends Pharmacol. Sci.* 2021

23

## Tissue and cellular barriers to effective delivery of nucleic acid therapeutics

- Nuclease-mediated degradation in plasma and tissue
- Kidney filtration
- Scavenging by RES
- Passage across the capillary endothelium
- Entry into cells
- Escape from endo-lysosomal compartments
- Bind to targeted RNA and recruit effector mechanism

Gokirmak et al, *Trends Pharmacol. Sci.* 2021, 588Seth et al, *J Clin Invest.* 2019, 129, 915-925

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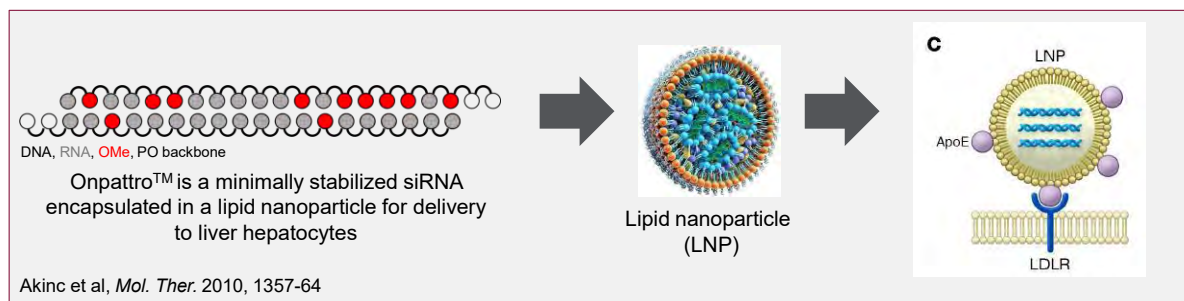
## Strategies for effective delivery of nucleic acid therapeutics

- Delivery using lipid nanoparticles (LNPs)
  - Minimally modified siRNA and mRNA
- Delivery of chemically modified nucleic acids therapeutics
  - Passive delivery by enhancing association with plasma and cell-surface proteins
    - Delivery to the CNS following injection into the CSF
    - Delivery to the lung using aerosols
  - Active delivery by targeting specific cell-types
    - ASGR-mediated delivery to hepatocytes
    - GLP1R-mediated delivery to pancreatic beta cells
    - TfR1-mediated delivery to skeletal muscle and heart

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## Delivery of minimally modified siRNA and mRNA using LNPs



- LNPs used to deliver mRNA vaccines for COVID
- LNPs also used to deliver chemically modified sgRNA and Cas9 mRNA for gene editing in the liver

Schoenmaker et al, *Int. J. Pharmaceutics*, 2021, 120586  
 Yin et al, *Nat. Biotechnol.* 2017, 1179

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## Quiz

---

- Which modifications are used to enhance the drug-like properties of therapeutic siRNA
  - 2'-O-Methyl
  - 2'-F
  - PS
- Correct answer – all of the above

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## Delivery of chemically modified nucleic acid therapeutics

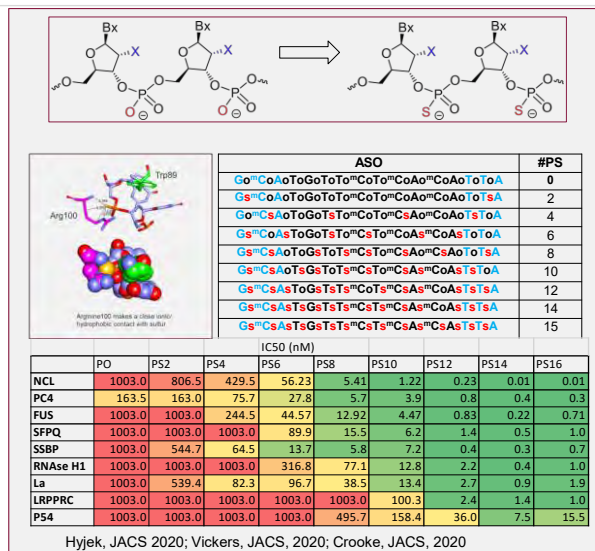
1. Passive delivery by enhancing association with plasma and cell-surface proteins
2. Active delivery by targeting specific cell-types

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## The phosphorothioate (PS) modification – essential component of nucleic acid therapeutics

- Phosphorothioate (PS) backbone
  - Improves metabolic stability for all classes of nucleic acid therapeutics
  - Supports RNaseH1 activity
  - Enhances binding to proteins
    - Plasma, cell surface and intra-cellular
- Proteins interact with anionic sulfur in PS by electrostatic and hydrophobic interactions
  - Often times with the same amino acid
- Protein binding is directly proportional to PS content
  - Suggests an avidity model where each PS contributes a small percentage to overall binding affinity



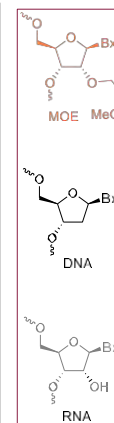
29

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## PS ASOs bind to plasma proteins which facilitates distribution in animals

ASO Design and Sequence	K <sub>d</sub> (μM)					
	Albumin	Transferrin	IgG	Fibrinogen	A2M	HRG
CTGCTAGCCTCTGGATTGA	3.8	2.3	0.9	0.4	0.015	0.002
<u>CTGCTAGCCTCTGGATTGA</u>	10.4	7.3	0.9	0.3	0.044	0.009
<u>CTGCTAGCCTCTGGATTGA</u>	26.9	11.6	3.6	1.8	0.051	0.10
<u>CTGCTAGCCTCTGGATTGA</u>	81.6	34.2	5.9	4.2	0.072	0.014
TTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTT	0.94	2.6	1	0.26	0.019	0.017
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA	204.5	277.6	74.2	13.4	3.0	0.041
<u>CTGCTAGCCTCTGGATTGA</u> <u>GACGAUCGGAGACCUGAAACU</u>	762.9	460	>500	> 75	> 1	> 1
<u>CTGCTAGCCTCTGGATTGA</u> <u>GACGAUCGGAGACCUGAAACU</u>	130.2	34.4	1.8	0.7	> 1	0.045

MOE, DNA, RNA, All ASOs have PS backbone except underlined letters which are PO

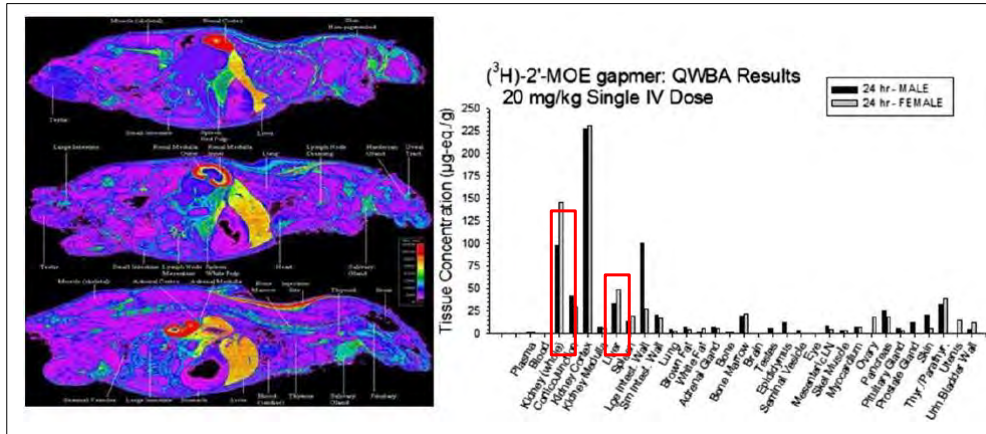


Gaus, et al (2018) *Nucleic Acids Res.*, **47**, 1110-1122.

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PS ASOs distribute broadly after systemic injection (but accumulate preferentially in the liver and the kidney)



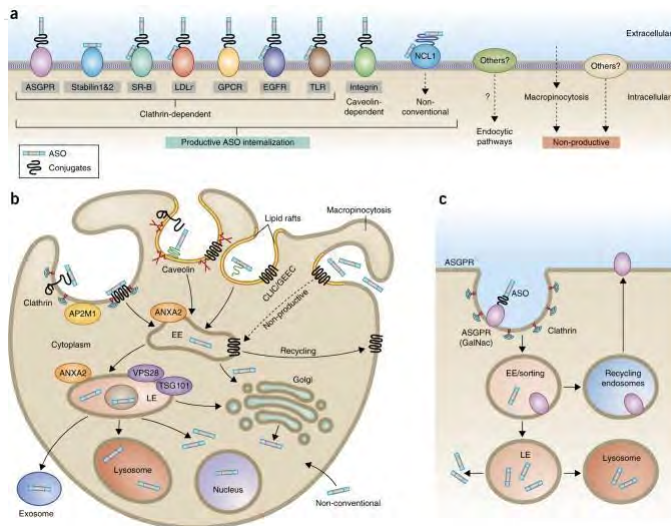
Geary et al *Adv. Drug Delivery Rev.* 2015, 87, 46.

PS ASOs bind to plasma and cell-surface proteins which facilitates their distribution into tissues in animals

31

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PS ASOs interact with several classes of cell-surface proteins which can facilitate cellular uptake



Crooke, (2017) Cellular uptake and trafficking of antisense oligonucleotides. *Nat Biotech*, 35, 230-237.

32

**Overcoming cellular barriers for RNA therapeutics**

Steven F Dowdy

6518-6548 *Nucleic Acids Research*, 2016, Vol. 44, No. 14  
doi: 10.1093/nar/gkw236

**SURVEY AND SUMMARY**

**The delivery of therapeutic oligonucleotides**

Rudolph L. Juliano

NUCLEIC ACID THERAPEUTICS  
Volume 26, Number 3, 2018

**Receptor-Mediated Uptake of Phosphorothioate Antisense Oligonucleotides in Different Cell Types of the Liver**

J. Clin. Invest.

© The American Society for Clinical Investigation, Inc.  
0021-9738/95/04/1814/10 \$2.00  
Volume 95, April 1995, 1814-1823

**Binding, Uptake, and Intracellular Trafficking of Phosphorothioate-modified Oligodeoxynucleotides**

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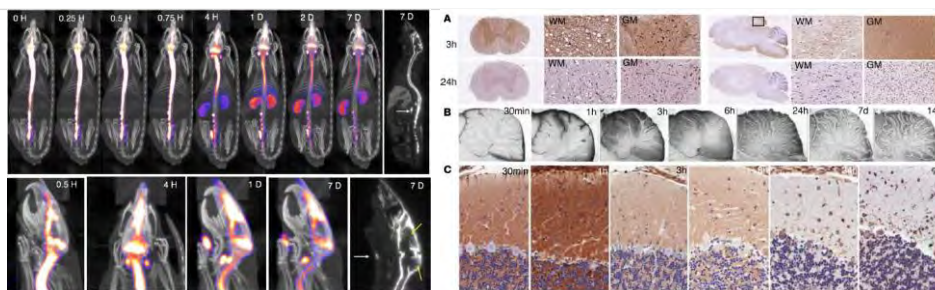
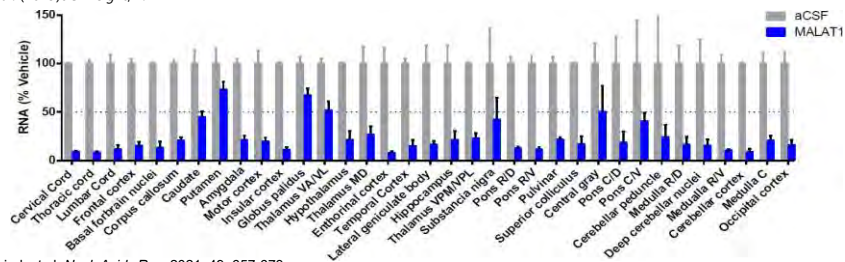
## Passive delivery by enhancing association with plasma and cell-surface proteins

1. Delivery of Gen 2 ASO to CNS following injection into the CSF
2. Delivery of Gen 2.5 ASOs to lung following aerosol delivery

33

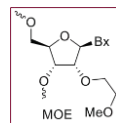
33

## Protein binding properties of PS ASOs facilitate ASO distribution and uptake into the CNS following delivery into the CSF

Mazur, et al. (2019) *JCI Insight*, 4.Jafar-nejad, et al. *Nucl. Acids Res.* 2021, 49, 657-673.

34

34



## Quiz

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- What are the key determinants for interaction of PS oligonucleotides with proteins
  - Number of PS
  - Flexibility
  - Lack of bulky 2'-modifications
  
- Correct answer is all of the above

35

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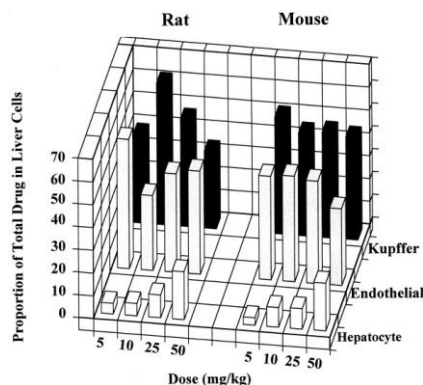
## Active delivery by targeting specific cell-types

1. ASGR-mediated delivery to hepatocytes
2. GLP1R-mediated delivery to pancreatic beta cells
3. TfR1-mediated delivery to skeletal muscle and heart

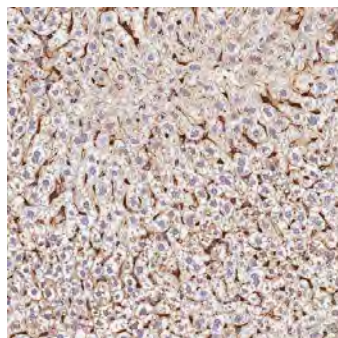
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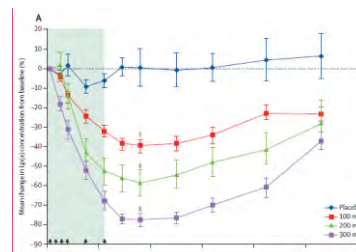
## PS ASOs distribute to all cell-types in the liver but accumulate preferentially in non-parenchymal cells



Graham et al *Biochem. Pharmacol.* 2001, 62, 297  
Butler et al *Lab. Invest.* 1997, 77, 379.  
Bijsterbosch et al *Nucleic Acids Res.* 1997, 25, 3290.  
Donner et al *Nucleic Acid Ther.*, 2017, 27, 209-220.



NPC's constitute <10% of liver mass  
Hepatocytes account for 80% of liver mass



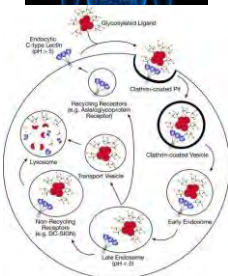
Dose-dependent reduction of hepatocyte expressed targets

PS ASOs are internalized into different cell types in the liver via receptors such as Stabilins, EGFR and ASGR

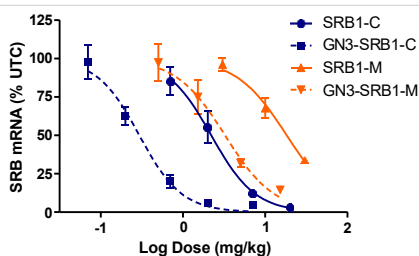
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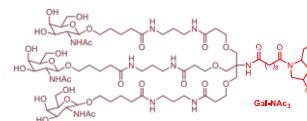
## ASGR mediated delivery into hepatocytes enhances ASO potency 10-60 fold for gene targets expressed in hepatocytes



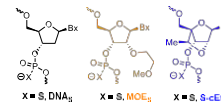
Cummings et al *Essentials of Glycobiology*. 2nd Ed. Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press; 2009. Chapter 31.



ASO (5'-3')	ED <sub>50</sub> (mg/kg)
GCTTCAGTCATGACTTCCTT	18.3
GCTTCAGTCATGACTTCCTT-Tri-GalNAc	3.3
TCAGTCATGACTTC	2.2
TCAGTCATGACTTC-Tri-GalNAc	0.3



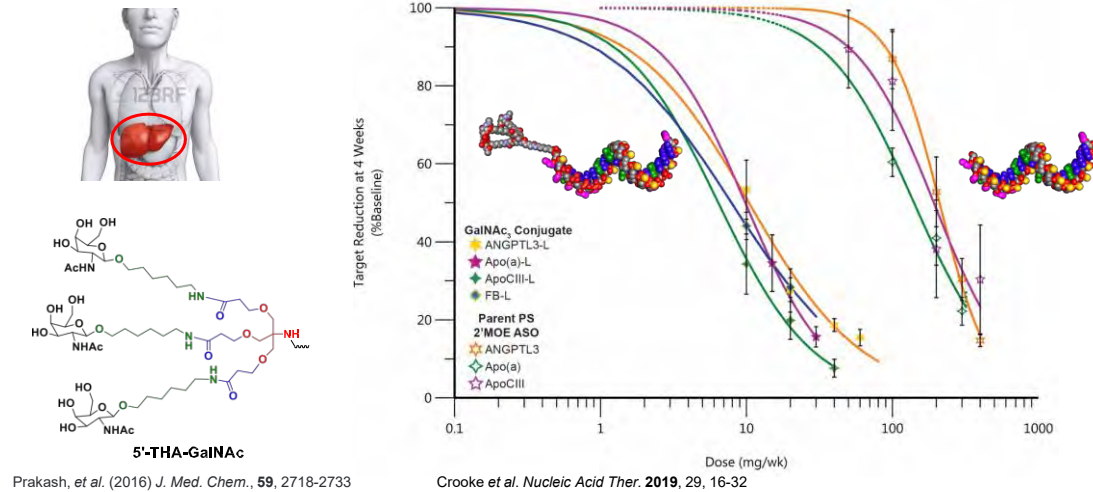
Rensen et al. *J. Biol. Chem.* 2001, 276, 37577  
Nair et al. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* 2014, 136, 16958



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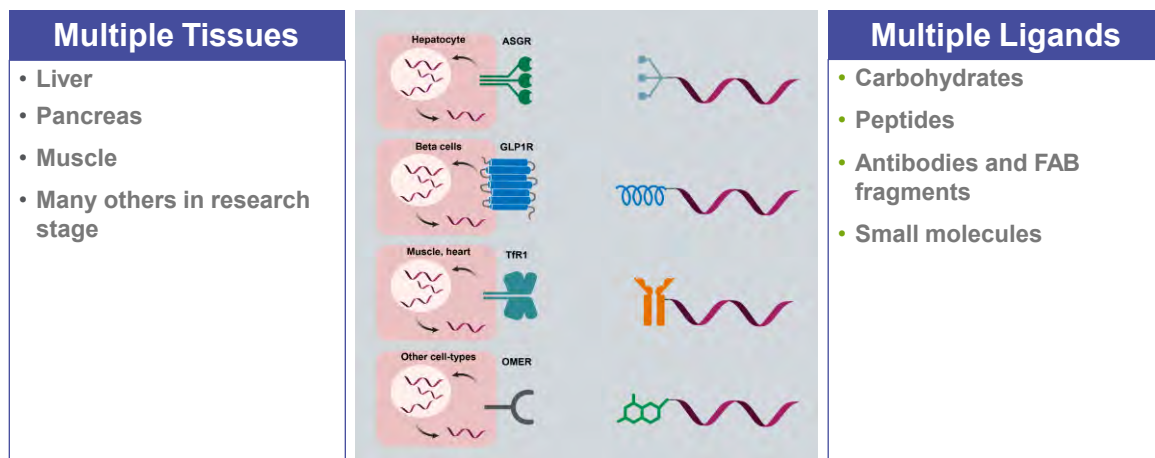
## ASGR mediated delivery enhances ASO potency up to 30-fold in man for gene targets expressed in hepatocytes



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## Ionis LICA Platform Continues to Expand



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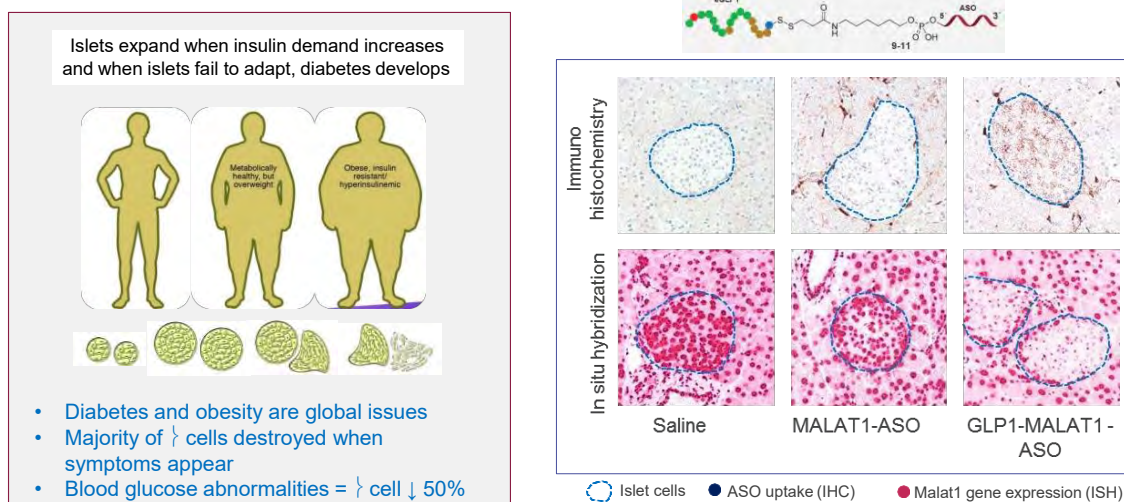
## Quiz

- What classes of receptors can be used for transport of oligonucleotides into cells
  - Lectins
  - GPCR
  - Nutrient
  - Scavenger
- Correct answer is all of the above

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## Targeted delivery of PS ASOs to pancreatic beta cells accomplished by targeting the GLP-1 receptor

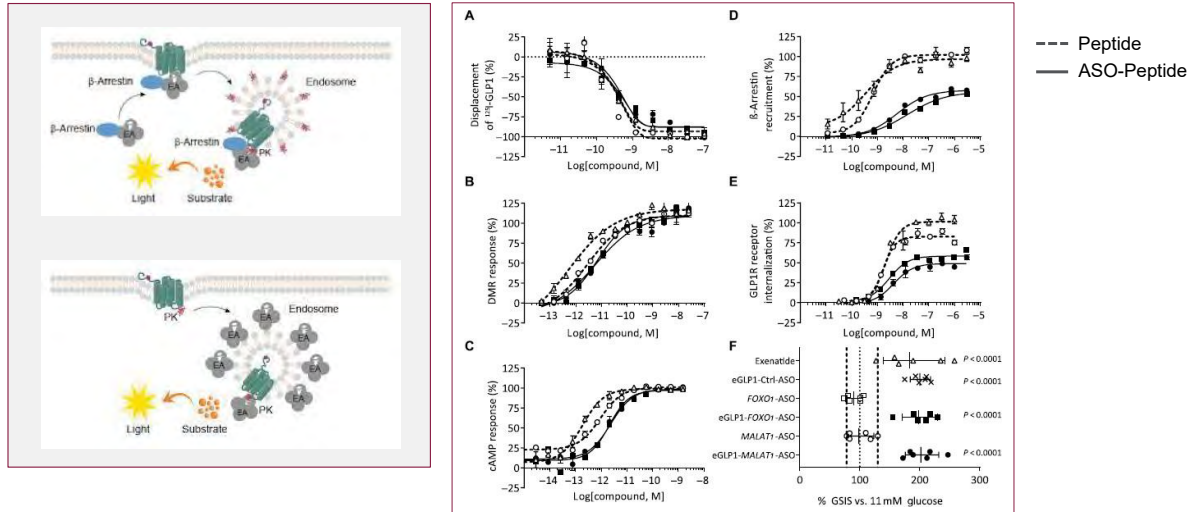


Ammala, *et al.* (2018) Targeted delivery of antisense oligonucleotides to pancreatic beta-cells. *Sci Adv*, 4, eaat3386.

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## GLP1-peptide ASO conjugates behave as partial agonist of GLP1R

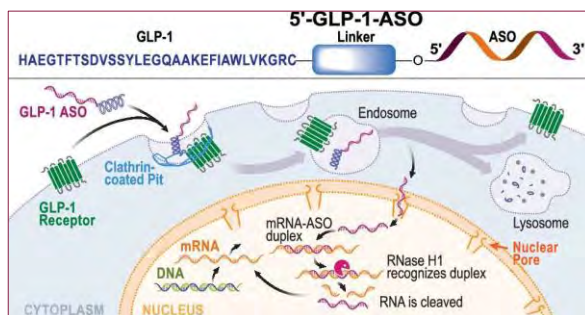


Ammala, *et al.* (2018) Targeted delivery of antisense oligonucleotides to pancreatic beta-cells. *Sci Adv.* **4**, eaat3386.

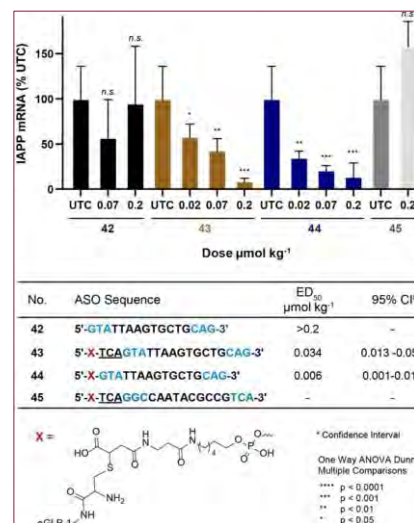
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## ASOs conjugated to GLP1 peptides show excellent potency for down regulating Islet Amyloid Polypeptide mRNA in pancreatic beta cells



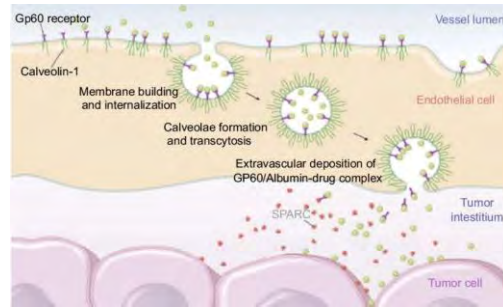
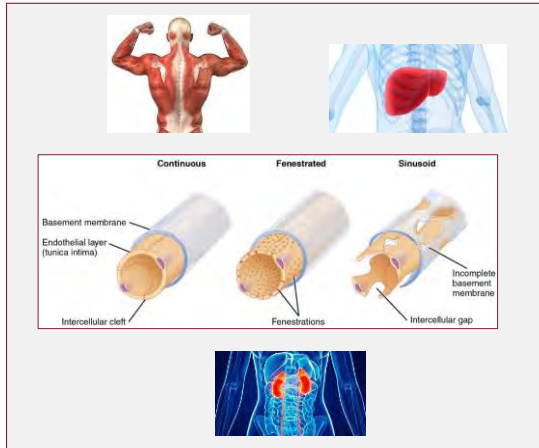
Knerr *et al.*, *JACS*, 2020, 3416



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## Enhancing delivery to skeletal muscle tissues – traversing the capillary endothelium

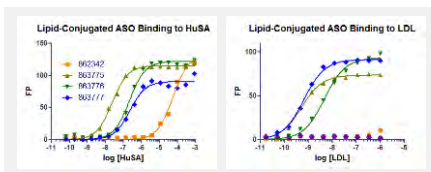


- Albumin and lipoproteins are efficiently transported across the capillary endothelium and 60% of total albumin is extra-vascular
- Albumin and lipoproteins bind lipids
- Hypothesis – Can lipid conjugation enhance ASO association with albumin and lipoproteins and improve ASO potency in muscle tissues?

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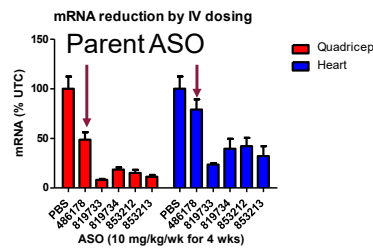
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## Lipid-conjugation enhances ASO activity in skeletal muscle and heart by facilitating ASO transport across the capillary endothelium

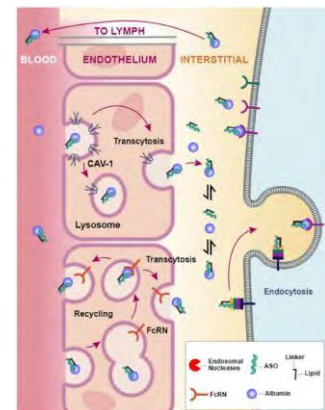


ION #	ASO (5' to 3')	HuSA Kd [nM]	LDL Kd [nM]
862342	GCATTCTAATAGCAGC	51,700	No binding
863775	Tocopherol-GCATTCTAATAGCAGC	23.8	0.5
863776	Palmitoyl-GCATTCTAATAGCAGC	217.9	4.6
863777	Cholesterol-GCATTCTAATAGCAGC	227.1	0.6

Ostergaard, et al. (2019) *Nucleic Acids Res.*, 47, 6045-6058.  
Prakash, et al. (2019) *Nucleic Acids Res.*, 47, 6029-6044.



ION No	Lipid
486178	none
819733	5'-TEG-Cholesterol
819734	5'-TEG-Tocopherol
853212	5'-TEG-C16
853213	5'-hexylamino-C16



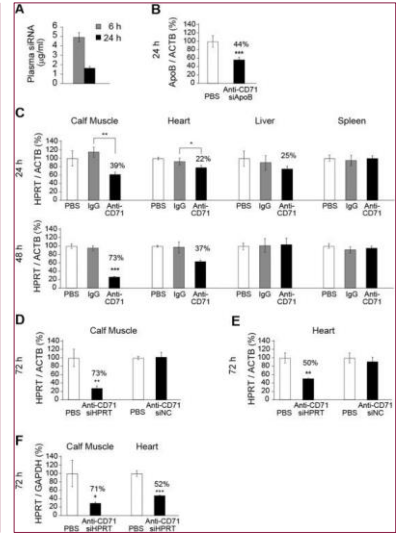
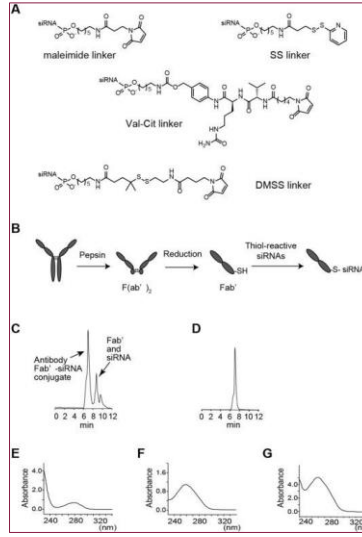
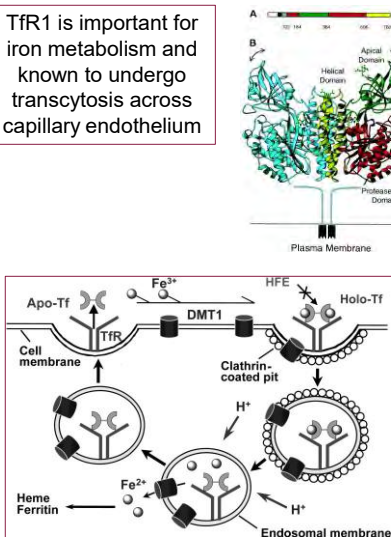
Chappell et al (2020) *Nucleic Acids Res.*, 48, 4382

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# Targeting Transferrin receptor 1 for enhancing potency in skeletal muscle and heart tissues

TfR1 is important for iron metabolism and known to undergo transcytosis across capillary endothelium



Sugo et al, *J. Controlled Rel.* 2016, 1-13

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# Nucleic acid therapeutics need to traverse the capillary endothelium before uptake into parenchymal cells

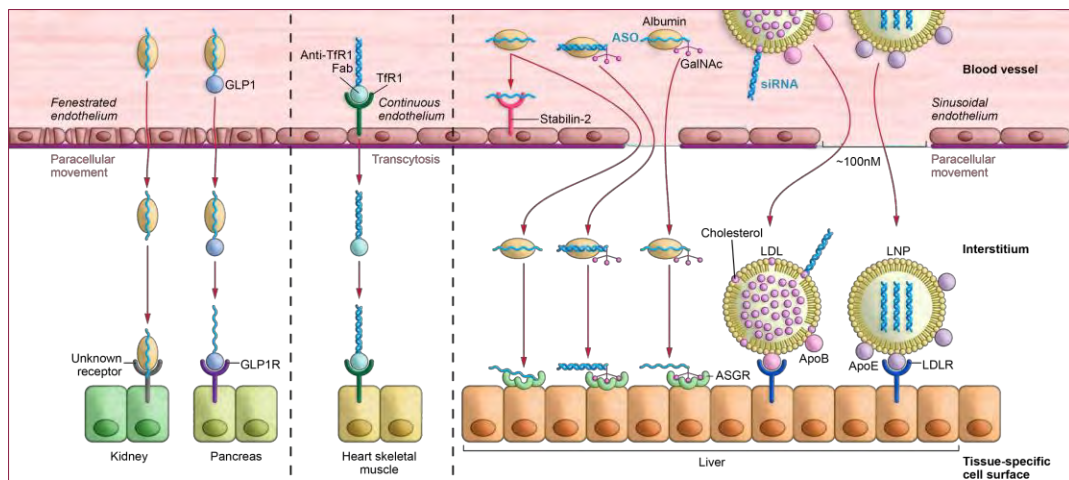


Figure adapted from *J Clin Invest.* 2019, 129, 915-925.

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## Summary

- PS ASOs can be delivered to specific tissues and cell types by passive or active targeting strategies
- Protein binding properties of PS ASOs facilitates distribution and cellular uptake in animals
  - Plasma proteins that bind PS ASOs have been characterized
  - Several cell-surface proteins that internalize PS ASOs have been identified
- Targeted delivery to specific cell-types can be achieved using targeting ligands
  - GalNAc/ASGR; GLP1/GLP1R; antibodies/TfR1
  - Several additional receptors investigated for delivery of oligonucleotide cargo with promising initial results
- Actively advancing GLP1- and TfR1-targeting platforms into preclinical and late-stage drug discovery at Ionis

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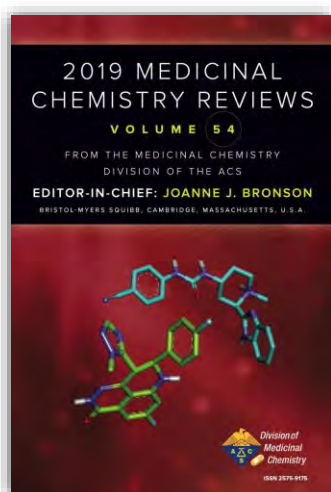
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## Targeted Delivery of RNA-targeted Therapeutics



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