

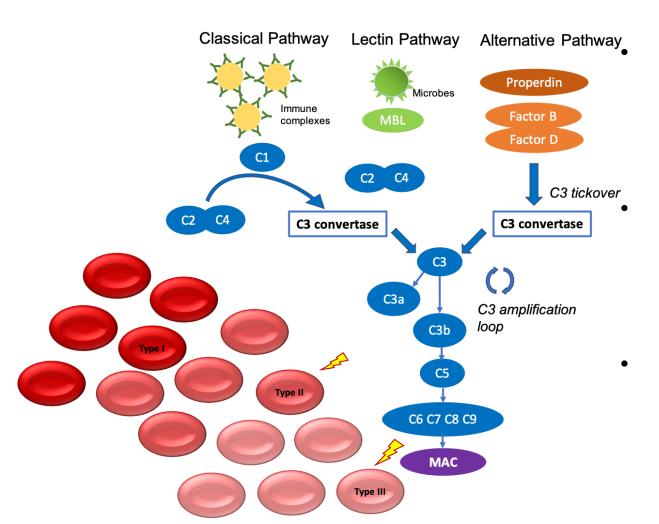
## Paroxysmal Nocturnal hemoglobinuria



## Bruno Fattizzo

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## Paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria: bone marrow failure and hemolysis

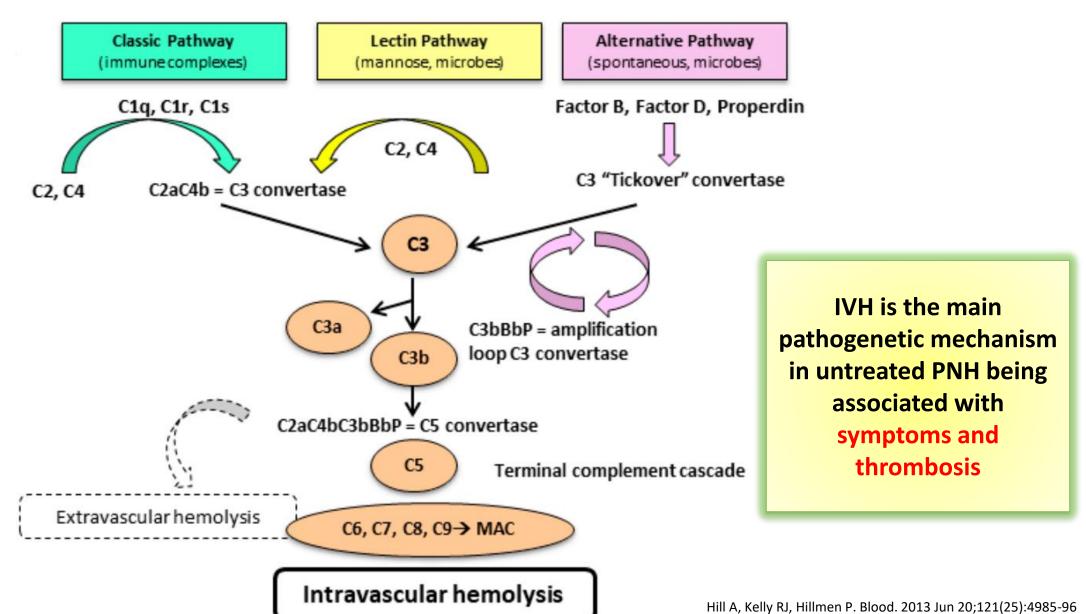


Paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH) is characterized by the acquisition of the somatic mutation of *PIGA* gene encoding for GPI-anchor.

GPI-anchored molecules include the complement inhibitors CD55 and CD59 that will be therefore deficient on GPI-negative cells.

GPI-neg erythrocytes are sensitive to complement mediated lysis.

## How does hemolysis occur?



# Which is the main cause of morbidity and mortality in untreated PNH?

- 1. Hemolysis
- 2. Anemia
- 3. Thrombosis
- 4. Leukemic evolution
- 5. infections



## **Clinical consequences**

#### **ANEMIA**

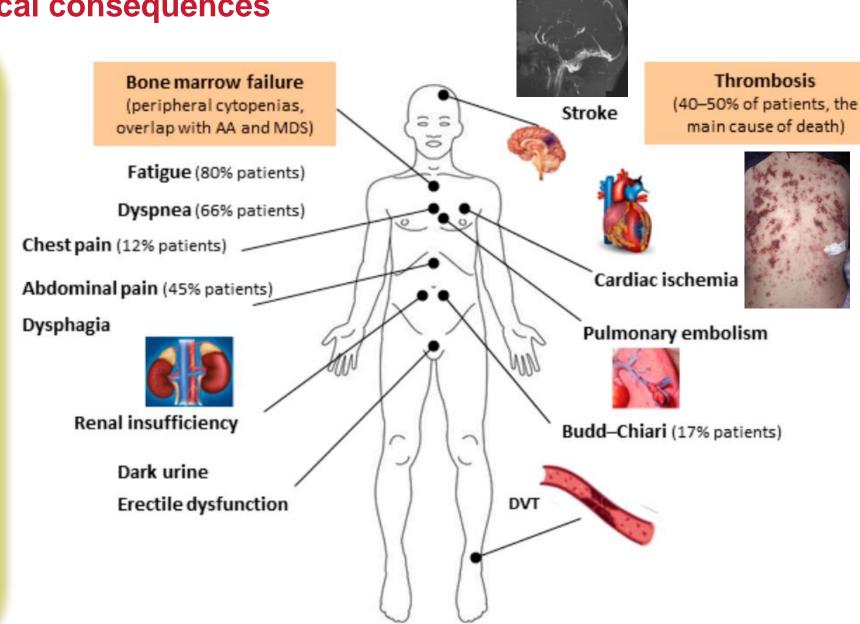
Asthenia, fatigue, palor, jaundice, malaise

#### CHRONIC HEMOLYSIS

microthrombi and vasospasms: Dark urine and abdominal pain, dysphagia, erectile dysfunction, pulmonary hypertension

**BMF** Infections, bleeding

**THROMBOSIS** 



## How do you measure disease activity?

- 1. bilirubin
- 2. Hb
- 3. LDH
- 4. thrombosis
- 5. PNH related symptoms
- 6. Need of transfusion



## Heterogeneity of clinical presentation in untreated PNH: The International PNH Registry

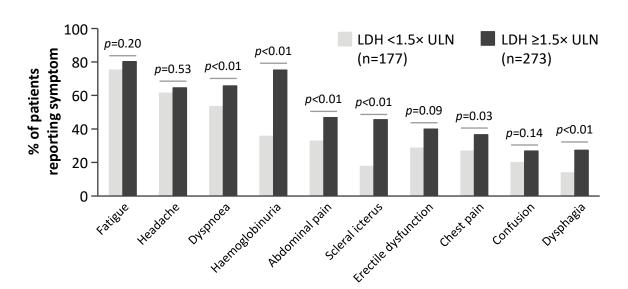
PNH patients, particularly those with large PNH clone size, may present PNH-related symptom burden is with high disease activity (HDA) highest in patients with large clone size, the majority of whom have HDA... Patients with HDA (%) ...but any PNH symptom may also 90 84.3% occur in a substantial proportion 80 LDH ≥1.5× ULN, a of patients with smaller clones marker of intravascular 70 haemolysis<sup>2</sup> 60 50 42.3% 40 30 History of Impaired QoL and fatigue affect a majority of patients, independent of clone size ≥1 PNH 20 9.1% symptom 10 (n=71) (n=175) (n=790)0 <10% ≥10% - <50% ≥50% (n=781)(n=414)(n=937)

GPI, glycosylphosphatidylinositol; HDA, high disease activity; LDH, lactate dehydrogenase; PNH, paroxysmal nocturnal haemoglobinuria; QoL, quality of life; ULN, upper limit of normal. **1.** Schrezenmeier et al. *Ann Hematol* 2020 **2.** Kulasekararaj et al. *Blood Rev* 2023.

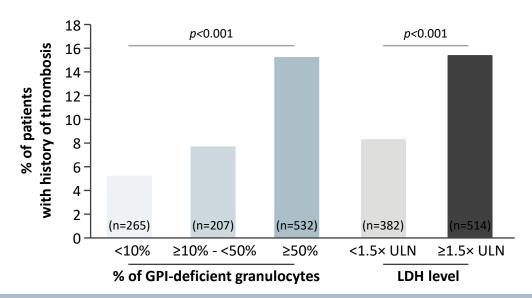
% GPI-deficient granulocytes at baseline

## Elevated LDH, an indicator of high disease activity and IVH, is associated with symptom burden and thrombosis risk

Elevated LDH is associated with increased prevalence of many PNH symptoms in untreated patients<sup>1</sup>



Elevated LDH is associated with a history of thrombosis, the leading cause of death in PNH<sup>1</sup>



Supported by retrospective analysis of untreated patients in the Korean PNH Registry:

The presence of IVH at diagnosis is associated with life-threatening thrombosis, poor quality of life, and early mortality<sup>2,3</sup>

## **Current therapy with complement inhibitors**

- Terminal complement inhibition (C5) with eculizumab and ravulizumab.
- Patients need to receive infusions every 2 weeks or every 8 weeks
- High medicalization, vaccines required
- Not all patients respond due to various causes including
  - inadequate bone marrow compensation,
  - ❖ residual C5 activation →BTH,
  - ❖C5 polymorphisms,
  - persistent extravascolar hemolysis due to C3 deposition.
- Proximal complement inhibition (C3) with pegcetacoplan for suboptimal responders (residual anemia after >3 months on C5i) in Europe vs for all in USA
- Several novel inhibitors are under investigation in clinical trials in the last 5-7 years.

## Clinical vignette—F 41 years

2006 2010 2022

Diagnosis of classic PNH

Tx+ Iron + vitamins LMWH

Renal thrombosis

Accepted ECU > Hb 8.8 g/dL

Doctor, will I keep on with this IV drug every 14 days?

- The patient went from transfusion dependence before ECU
- To moderate anemia under ECU and frequent BTH (PK? PD?)

Doctor, I feel better but I'm always at the day care facility!

I keep seeing dark urine before every eculizumab dosing!



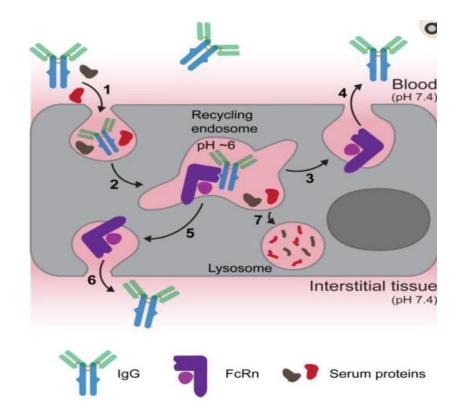
### Ravulizumab

#### Modification of eculizumab for increased half-life

Histidine substitution at two positions within the first and second heavy chain complementarity-determining regions of eculizumab generates a novel mAb

This extends its PK and PD in the presence of human C5 in a mouse model

Additional modifications were made to the Fc region from eculizumab to further increase the half-life by increasing its affinity for FcRn



- The neonatal Fc Receptor (Fc-Rn ) was firstly described about 50 years ago, and is responsible for the salvage of IgG from catabolism
- FcRn is structurally homologous to the MHC Class I heterodimeric receptor family, and is expressed by several cells including macrophages, monocytes, B cells, and dendritic cells
- Ab recycling by FcRn engineering protect Ab from degradation
- Conversely, blocking Fc-Rn may increase IgG clearance (including pathogenic autoantibodies), resulting in reduced IgG

Ravulizumab has a half-life ~4x longer than eculizumab Administration every 8 weeks!

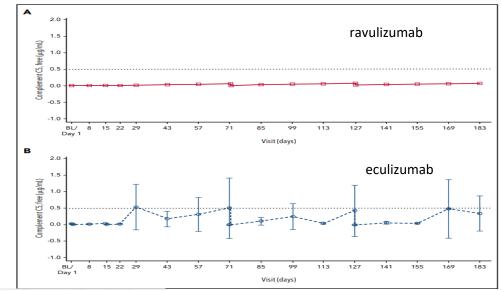
#### Ravulizumab vs eculizumab

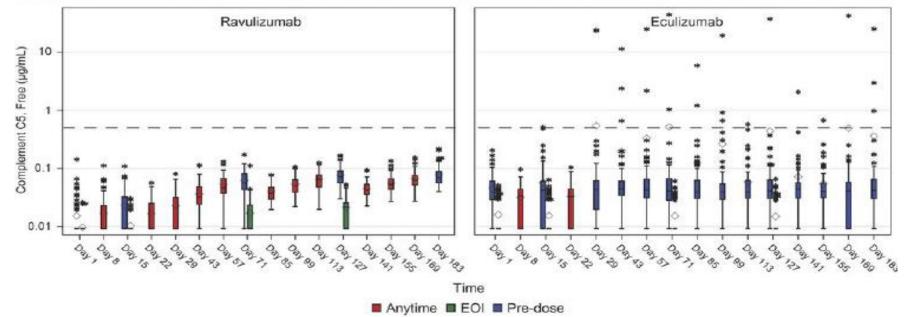
Ravulizumab (ALXN1210) vs eculizumab in C5-inhibitor-experienced adult patients with PNH: the 302 study

Austin G. Kulasekararaj, <sup>1</sup> Anita Hill, <sup>2</sup> Scott T. Rottinghaus, <sup>3</sup> Saskia Langemeijer, <sup>4</sup> Richard Wells, <sup>5</sup> F. Ataulfo Gonzalez-Fernandez, <sup>6</sup> Anna Gaya, <sup>7</sup> Jong Wook Lee, <sup>8</sup> Emilio Ojeda Gutierrez, <sup>9</sup> Caroline I. Piatek, <sup>10</sup> Jeff Szer, <sup>11</sup> Antonio Risitano, <sup>12</sup> Shinji Nakao, <sup>13</sup> Eric Bachman, <sup>3</sup> Lori Shafner, <sup>3</sup> Andrew I. Damokosh, <sup>3</sup> Stephan Ortiz, <sup>3</sup> Alexander Röth, <sup>14</sup> and Regis Peffault de Latour <sup>15-17</sup>

Mean serum free C5 concentrations were suppressed to <0.5  $\mu$ g/mL by the end of the first infusion and at all subsequent visits for all patients receiving ravulizumab

This threshold was not consistently met in the eculizumab group





#### Safety

The most frequently reported AE was headache (26.8% and 17.3% in ravulizumab and eculizumab)

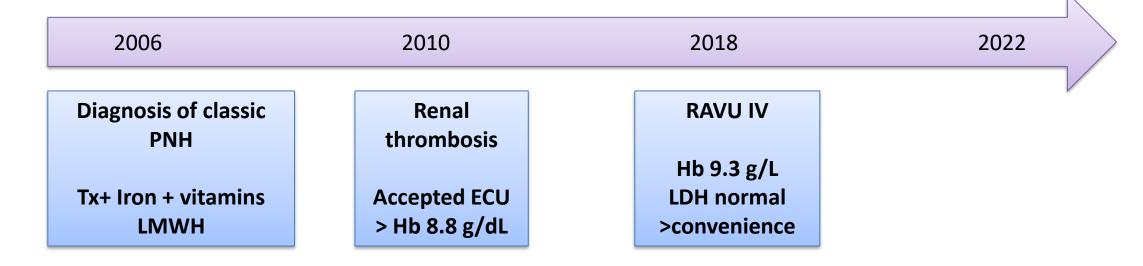
SAEs obseved in 4 ravulizumab and 8 eculizumab

No cases of meningococcal infections observed.

No treatment-emergent antidrug antibodies in patients treated with ravulizumab

Versino F and Fattizzo B, Int J Lab Hematol. 2024

## Clinical vignette – F 41 years



- The patient went from transfusion dependence before ECU
- To moderate anemia under ECU and frequent BTH (PK? PD?)
- To moderate anemia with no BTH under RAVU IV

### Shall we consider proximal inhibitor?

## Would you give a proximal complement inhibitor?

- 1. No, the patient is well with herself
- 2. Yes, Hb is still below 10 g/dl
- Only in case of recurrent BTH
- 4. Only in case of transfusion and increased unconjugated bilirubin
- 5. Only if direct antiglobulin test is positive for complement









**Anti-complement Treatment for Paroxysmal Nocturnal** Hemoglobinuria: Time for Proximal **Complement Inhibition? A Position** Paper From the SAAWP of the EBMT

**OPEN ACCESS** University of Pennsylvania,

John D. Lambris,

Antonio M. Risitano 1,2\*, Serena Marotta 1,2, Patrizia Ricci 1, Luana Marano 1, Camilla Frieri 1 Fabiana Cacace<sup>1</sup>, Michela Sica<sup>3</sup>, Austin Kulasekararaj<sup>3,4</sup>, Rodrigo T. Calado<sup>5</sup>, Phillip Scheinberg<sup>6</sup>, Rosario Notaro<sup>3†</sup> and Regis Peffault de Latour<sup>2,7†</sup> on behalf of the Severe Aplastic Anemia Working Party of the European group for Bone Marrow

## How can we assess response to therapy?

### At what time? 6 months versus 3 months

**TABLE 1** Tentative classification of hematological response to anti-complement agents in PNH.

Response category	Red blood cell transfusions	Hemoglobin level	LDH level* <sup>‡</sup>	ARC*
Complete response	None	≥12 g/dL	≤1.5x ULN	<b>and</b> ≤150,000/μL <sup>§</sup>
Major response	None	≥12 g/dL	>1.5x ULN	$or > 150,000/\mu L^{\S}$
Good response	None	≥10 and <12 g/dL	A. ≤1.5x ULN B. >1.5x ULN	Rule out bone marrow failure°
Partial response	None or occasional (≤2 every 6 months)	≥8 and <10 g/dL	A. ≤1.5x ULN B. >1.5x ULN	Rule out bone marrow failure°
Minor response <sup>#</sup>	None or occasional (≤2 every 6 months) Regular (3–6 every 6 months) Reduction by ≥50%^	<8 g/dL <10 g/dL <10 g/dL	A. ≤1.5x ULN B. >1.5x ULN	Rule out bone marrow failure°
No response <sup>#</sup>	Regular (>6 every 6 months)	<10 g/dL	A. ≤1.5x ULN B. >1.5x ULN	Rule out bone marrow failure°

→ Anemia >moderate → Transfusions from little to regular

> LDH, lactate dehydrogenase; ULN, upper limit of the normal; ARC: absolute reticulocyte count. \*Response categories are mostly based on red blood cell transfusion and hemoglobin level, but LDH and ARC serve as ancillary indicators to discriminate between complete and major response, as well as within suboptimal response categories. ‡A. and B. indicate subcategories without or with residual significant intravascular hemolysis, respectively. §To rule out increased erythropoietic response to compensate ongoing hemolysis; the value of 150,000/μL is a tentative index based on 1.5x ULN (which in most laboratories is set at 100,000/μL). °To assess the relative contribution of the degree of bone marrow failure to any response less than complete: a value of ARC below 60,000/µl could be a tentative index to establish such a contribution; bone marrow investigation may be appropriate. ^For patients with previous transfusion history (with a pre-treatment follow up of at least 6 months). #For patients who do not accept red blood cell transfusions, minor response can be defined based on hemoglobin level ≥6 and <8 g/dL, and no response based on hemoglobin <6 g/dL. All hemoglobin, LDH and ARC values should be assessed based on the median value over a period of 6 months. Risitano AM, et al, Front Immunol 2019

## Several causes of "suboptimal response" to be considered

One of the main unmet needs of PNH: «suboptimal responders»

Doctor, why my Hb is still low?

Reasons

Remedies



- Persistent intravascular hemolysis
- Significant extravascular hemolysis
  - CR1 polymorphism
  - Underlying bone marrow failure
    - Hypersplenism
    - Relative EPO deficiency
      - C5 polymorphism
    - Hematinic deficiency
      - Iron overload
    - Unknown mechanism

Higher dose of Eculizumab or change to Ravulizumab or another complement inhibitor

ESAs or C3i or C5i +C3i combination

Unresolved issue

IST or HSCT together with C5 inhibitor

Selective plenic embolization/irradiation

**ESAs supplementation** 

Second generation C5i

Replace vitamin (Folate and B12)

**Effective chelation** 

Open issue

## Crovalimab: C5 inhibitor active on C5 polymorphisms and very convenient



#### **CLINICAL TRIALS AND OBSERVATIONS**

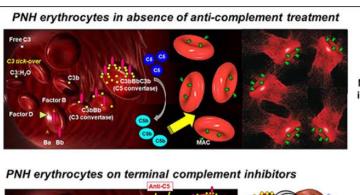
The complement C5 inhibitor crovalimab in paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria

Alexander Röth, 1 Jun-ichi Nishimura, 2 Zsolt Nagy, 3 Julia Gaàl-Weisinger, 3 Jens Panse, 4 Sung-Soo Yoon, 5 Miklos Egyed, 6 Satoshi Ichikawa, 7

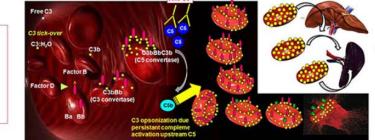
- → Crovalimab is unique: its properties allow for subcutaneous (SC) injections once every 4 weeks
- → can be self-administered
- → binds to C5 mutational variants.
- → Efficacy and safety confirmed in the Phase I/II COMPOSER trial (NCT03157635; Röth et al, Blood. 2020) conducted in patients with PNH, with or without prior anti–C5 treatment.
- → During the OLE LDH maintained at ≤1.5× ULN, transfusion avoidance 83%-92% of patients and haemoglobin stabilisation was reached in 79%-88% of patients across each 24-week interval.
- → Five BTH events occurred with none leading to withdrawal
- → The Phase 3 single-arm COMMODORE 3 study → complement inhibitor-naive patients
- → 78% achieved hemolysis control → 1 BTH

Roth et al, Blood 2020 Roth et al, Eur J Hematol 2023 Liu et al, AJH 2023

## latrogenic Extravascular hemolysis → Proximal complement inhibitors



MAC-mediated massive intravascular hemolysis



C3-mediated extravascular hemolysis

Residual MAC-mediated intravascular hemolysis (i.e., PK or PD brekthrough)

### PNH erythrocytes on proximal complement inhibitors (+/- terminal inhibitors?)



Anti-C5 agents:

**REGN3918** 

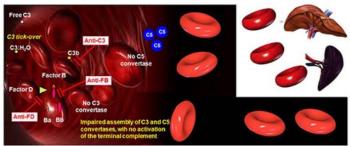
RA101495

· Coversin

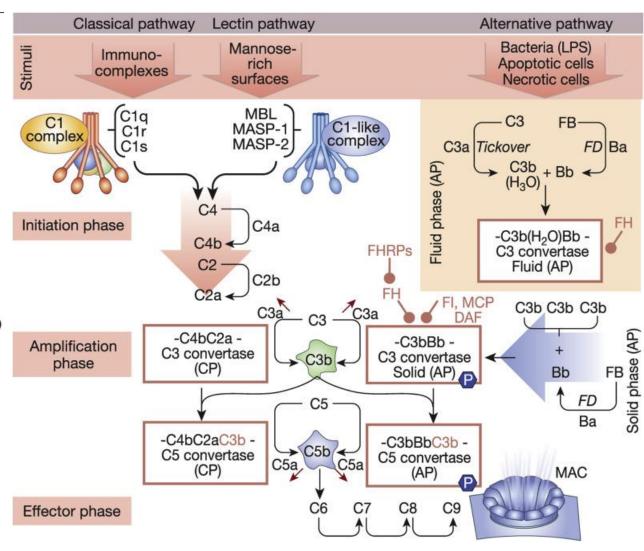
· ALNCC5

mAbs: eculizumab,

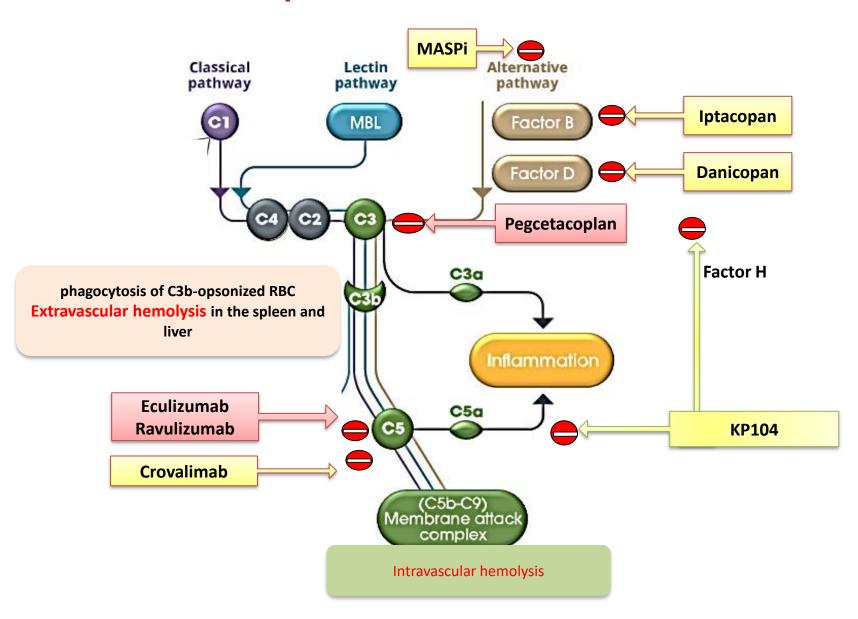
ravulizumab, SKY59, LFG316, ABP959,



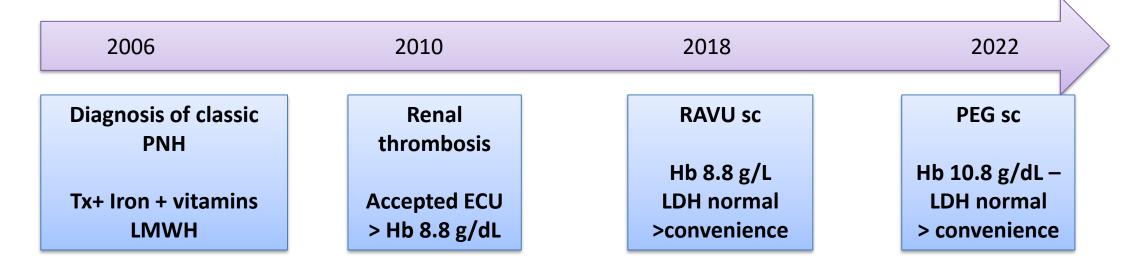
Normal life-span of PNH erythrocytes



## The panorama of PNH therapy involves terminal ad proximal inhibitors



## Clinical vignette – F 41 years



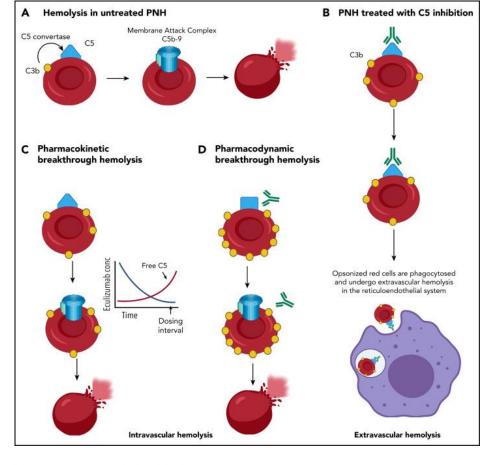
- The patient went from transfusion dependence before ECU
- To moderate anemia under ECU and frequent BTH (PK? PD?)
- To moderate anemia and no BTH under RAVU IV
- To mild anemia and markedly improved QoL since switching to PEG but ...

Doctor, I fee generally better, but why dark urine are round the corner again?

# Precipitating conditions & breakthrough hemolysis

Any complement amplifying condition (infections, traumas, surgery, pregnancy, vaccines, etc.) may result in increased hemolytic rate with:

- Worseninf of dark urine and PNH symptoms
- Worsening of anemia and possible transfusion need
- Increased free Hb release and risk of thrombosis
- If the patient is on Ci hemolytic flares are called BTH



	Timing	Frequency	Concomitant conditions	Free C5	Eculizumab plasma level		Intervention
Pharmacokinetic breakthrough	>7-10 days from previous dosing	Recurrent	Usually none*	Always >0.5-1 μg/mL	Inadequate	Residual free C5 available for steady-state (normal) C5 convertase activity	Decrease interval of dosing (10-12 days) or increase dose of eculizumab (1,200 mg)
Pharmacodynamic breakthrough	Any time	Sporadic	Infectious events (both bacterial and viral, such as common seasonal viruses) or any event leading to inflammation (i.e., surgery, possible comorbidities)			Massive complement activation leading to excess C5 convertase activity, which might displace C5 from eculizumab	None (treat the underlying cause triggering complement activation)  Risitano AM,





- 1. Yes, monotherapy to improve convenience
- 2. Yes, as add on to anti-C5 to prevent BTH and improve Hb
- 3. No
- 4. Only in case of transfusion need
- 5. Only in case of persistent extravascular hemolysis

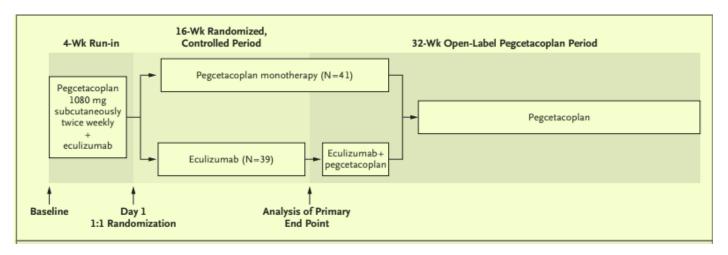
ORIGINAL ARTICLE

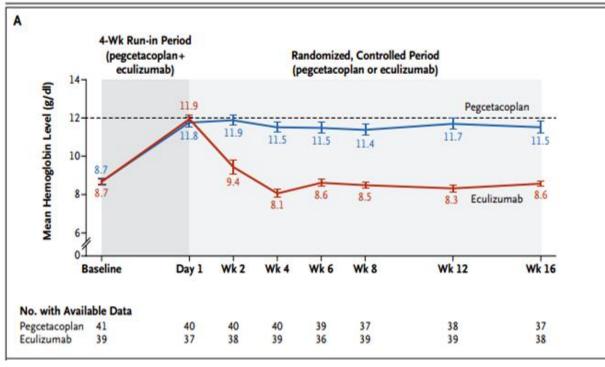
2021

#### Pegcetacoplan versus Eculizumab in Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria

Peter Hillmen, M.B., Ch.B., Ph.D., Jeff Szer, M.B., B.S., Ilene Weitz, M.D.,
Alexander Röth, M.D., Britta Höchsmann, M.D., Jens Panse, M.D.,
Kensuke Usuki, M.D., Ph.D., Morag Griffin, B.M.Sc., M.B., Ch.B.,
Jean-Jacques Kiladjian, M.D., Ph.D., Carlos de Castro, M.D.,
Hisakazu Nishimori, M.D., Ph.D., Lisa Tan, R.N., Mohamed Hamdani, M.S.,
Pascal Deschatelets, Ph.D., Cedric Francois, M.D., Ph.D.,
Federico Grossi, M.D., Ph.D., Temitayo Ajayi, M.D., Antonio Risitano, M.D., Ph.D.,
and Régis Peffault de la Tour, M.D., Ph.D.

## Pegcetacoplan (anti-C3 – sc x2/week)



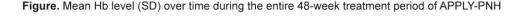


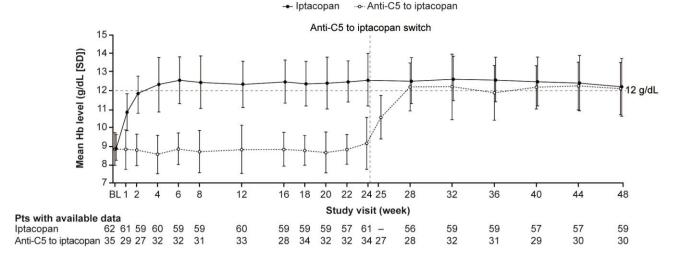
- Pegcetacoplan, a pegylated peptide targeting proximal complement protein C3, was superior to eculizumab in:
- Change in Hb level from baseline to week 16, with an adjusted mean difference of 3.84 g per deciliter (P<0.001); 35 patients
- 85% receiving pegcetacoplan no longer required transfusions
   vs 15% in eculizumab.
- breakthrough hemolysis (BTH) was observed in 10% (pegcetacoplan) vs 23% (eculizumab)
- FACIT –Fatigue scores improved from baseline in the pegcetacoplan group.
- The most common adverse events in the pegcetacoplan and eculizumab groups were injection site reactions (37% vs. 3%), diarrhea (22% vs. 3%), headache (7% vs. 23%), and fatigue (5% vs. 15%).
- There were no cases of meningitis in either group.

Hillmen P, et al, NEJM 2021

## Iptacopan (factor B inhibitor – oral BID)

Factor B Inhibition with Oral Iptacopan Monotherapy Demonstrates Sustained Long-Term Efficacy and Safety in Anti-C5-Treated Patients (pts) with Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria (PNH) and Persistent Anemia: Final 48-Week Results from the Multicenter, Phase III APPLY-PNH Trial





**Table.** Summary of efficacy parameters after the entire 48-week treatment period of APPLY-PNH, including comparison of data at Week 48 vs Week 24

Parameter	Arm					
	Iptacopan N=62 Anti-C5 to iptacopan N=35	Adjusted mean change from baseline (95% Cl) at Week 48	Adjusted mean difference in change from baseline (95% CI): Week 48 vs Week 24			
Change from baseline* in Hb level (g/dL) <sup>†</sup>	Iptacopan	+3.35 (3.03, 3.66)	<b>-0.41</b> (-0.80, -0.01)			
	Anti-C5 to iptacopan	+3.36 (2.93, 3.79)	<b>+3.02</b> (2.48, 3.56)			
Change from baseline <sup>‡</sup> in FACIT-F score	Iptacopan	<b>+9.80</b> (8.04, 11.56)	+0.73 (-1.14, 2.60)			
	Anti-C5 to iptacopan	<b>+10.96</b> (8.58, 13.34)	<b>+10.79</b> (8.12, 13.47)			

- Mean Hb levels at Wk 48 were 12.2 and 12.1 g/dL in the iptacopan and anti-C5-toiptacopan arms
- Transfusion avoidance 93.5 and 94,1%
- 6/62 pts on iptacopan arm had BTH
- 3 pts had major adverse vascular events:2
   TIAs and 1 portal vein thrombosis
- Most frequent TEAEs were COVID-19 (29.0% of pts), headache (19.4%), diarrhea (16.1%) and nasopharyngitis (14.5%).
- No deaths, nor infectious TEAEs

American Society of Hematology 2023 – Risitano A

## Doctor, no more dark urine and jaundice with novel drugs?

## RAVU reduced PK BTH but PD BTH may still occur even with novel drugs



#### Letters to Blood

#### TO THE EDITOR:

COVID-19 vaccines induce severe hemolysis in paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria

Gloria F. Gerber, <sup>1</sup> Xuan Yuan, <sup>1</sup> Jia Yu, <sup>1</sup> Benjamin A. Y. Cher, <sup>2</sup> Evan M. Braunstein, <sup>1</sup> Shruti Chaturvedi, <sup>1</sup> and Robert A. Brodsky

**Breakthrough Hemolysis Associated With COVID-**19 Vaccination and Active COVID-19 Infection in a Patient With Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria Maintained on Pegcetacoplan: A **Case Report** 

Mitchell C. Boshkos 1, Kaila R. Fives 2, Davong D. Phrathep 3, Kevin D. Healey 2, Miten Patel 4

- $\rightarrow$  PEGCETACOPLAN  $\rightarrow$  10% in phase 3, 30% after 3 year
- $\rightarrow$ IPTACOPAN  $\rightarrow$  0% in phase 1-2, 10% in phase 3 after 48 w
- $\rightarrow$  DANICOPAN  $\rightarrow$  17% in phase 2

## With proximal inhibitors

> % PNH-RBCs are spared

If blockade is incomplete activation is exponential -> possible severe BTH

How to manage? Combination therapy?

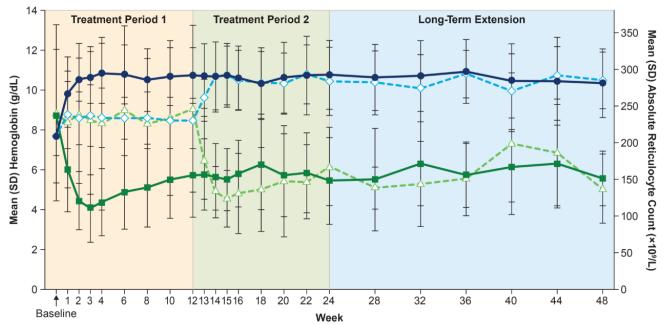
Boshkos et al, Cureus, 2023 Hillmen et al, NEJM 2021 Risitano et al, Lancet Hem 2022 Jang et al, Blood Adv 2022 Kulasekararaj et al, Blood 2022

Notaro & Luzzatto NEJM 2022

## Danicopan (factor D inhibitor – oral TID + anti-C5)

Danicopan As Add-on Therapy to Ravulizumab or Eculizumab Versus Placebo in Patients with Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria and Clinically Significant Extravascular Hemolysis: Phase 3 Long-Term Data

- first-in-class oral factor D inhibitor danicopan as add-on treatment to Rav or Ecu
- Phase 3 in PNH with EVH (Hb <9.5 g/dL and Ret 120x10^9/L) NCT04469465</li>
- 12-wk data (double-blind): superiority of Dan vs Pbo in Hb increase and transfusion avoidance.
- Open-label 24-wk (TP2) and ongoing long-term extension (LTE) data are presented.
- Primary endpoint was change from baseline (CFB) at wk 12 in Hgb.
- Secondary endpoints: Hgb ≥2 g/dL and transfusion avoidance through wk 24
- 86 pts were randomized; 60 completed TP2 (Dan n=40; Pbo n=20).



-◇- P-D Hgb - D-D ARC -△- P-D ARC

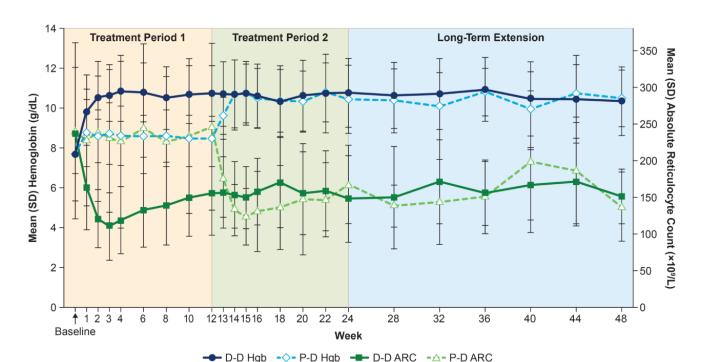
- Hgb ≥2 g/dL was 46% in Dan-Dan and 35% in the Pbo-Dan
- Transfusion avoidance was 78% in Dan-Dan and 90% in Pbo-Dan.
- compliance was 98.8%
- No deaths, meningococcal infections
- 4 BTH, only 1 with LDH >2×ULN related to COVID-19.

American Society of Hematology 2023 - Kulasekararaj

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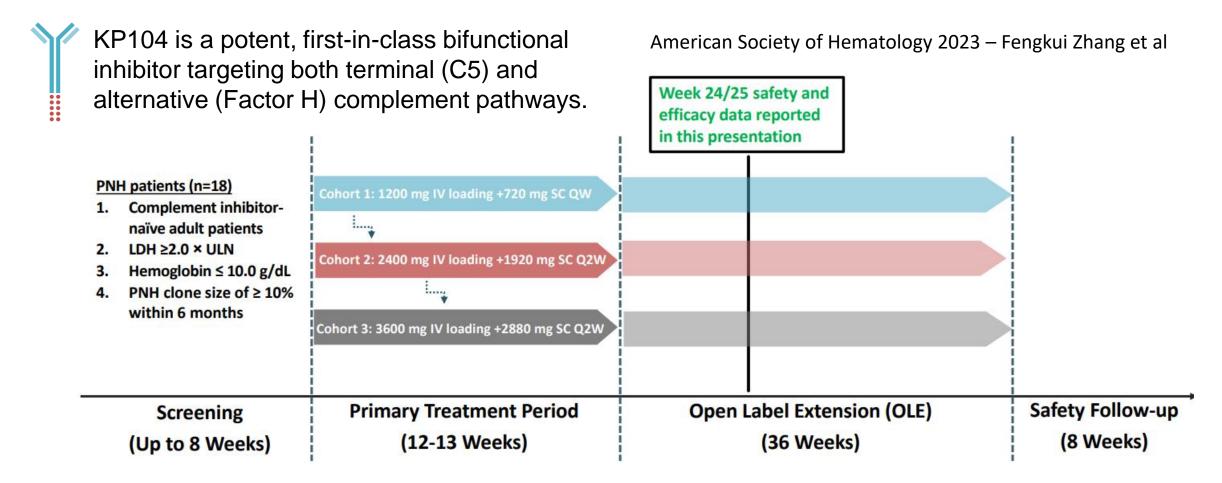
FDi > efficacy ECU on EVH but >BTH
Oral x 3/day + ECU/RAVU

### **ASH highlights**

- → Efficacy/safety at 48w
- → Same benefit in switch arm

American Society of Hematology 2023 - Kulasekararaj

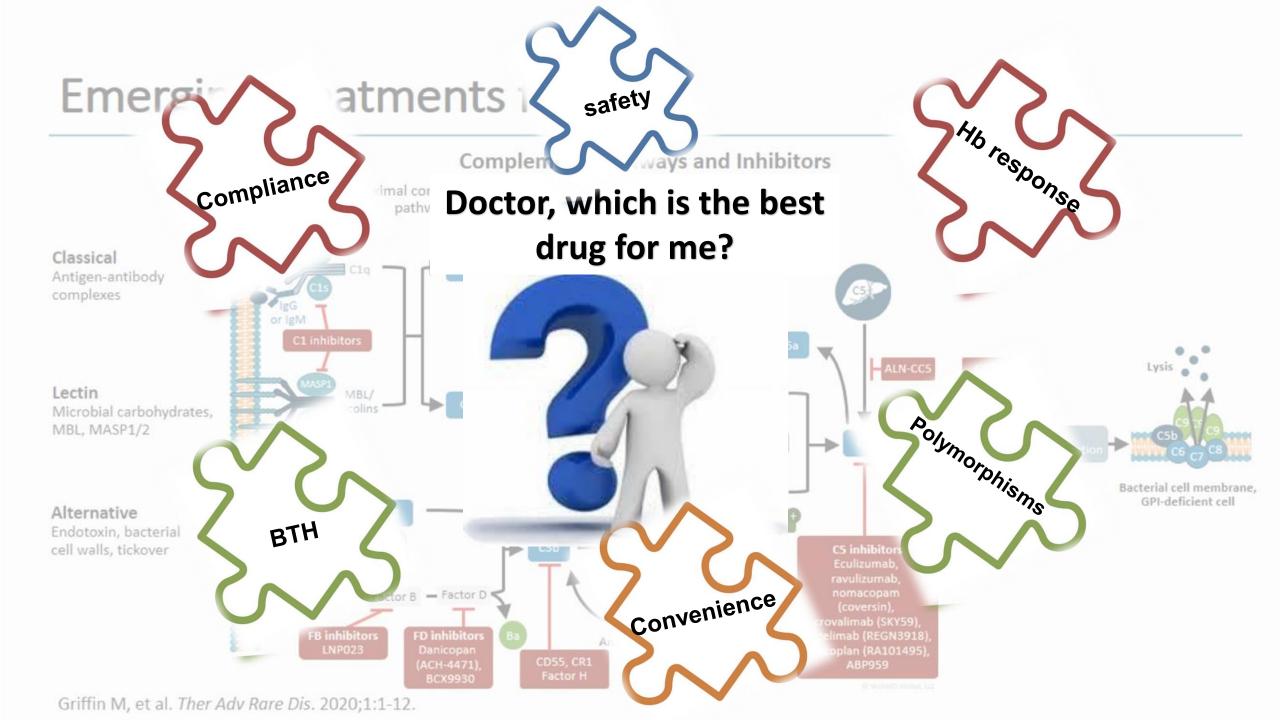
# KP104, A Bifunctional C5 Antibody/Factor H Fusion Protein, Effectively Controls Both Intravascular and Extravascular Hemolysis: 24/25-Week Results From An Ongoing Phase 2 Study In Complement Inhibitor-naïve Patients with PNH



- Primary Endpoints: safety, tolerability, and efficacy (% subjects achieving ≥ 2 g/dL increase in hemoglobin (Hgb) level from baseline in the absence of RBC transfusion through the treatment period)
- Secondary Endpoints: change from baseline in LDH and Hgb levels, transfusion avoidance, and FACIT-Fatigue score

### **Conclusions**

- PNH is characterized by complement mediated intravascular hemolysis
- The alternative pathway is the main responsible as it is homeostatically active and induces chronic hemolysis
- Thrombosis may occur in 40-60% of untreated subjects
- Precipitating factors may induce overactivation of complement and hemolytic flares (including BTH)
- Complement inhibitors anti-C5 improve hemolysis and anemia, reduce thrombotic risk and reconduct survival to that of the general population
- Knowing the physiopathology of residual anemia aids to overcome this unmet need (i.e. extravascular hemolysis and proximal complement inhibitors)
- EVH may be targeted with proximal inhibitors including novel agents such as pegcetacoplan, iptacopan and danicopan



## Thank you!

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