



# GHAPP

Gastroenterology & Hepatology  
Advanced Practice Providers

**2020 Third Annual National Conference**

**November 19-21, 2020**

Red Rock Hotel – Las Vegas, NV



**GHAPP**

Gastroenterology & Hepatology  
Advanced Practice Providers

# New and Developmental Agents for NASH

# Disclosures

---

## **Christina Hanson, FNP-C**

- Speakers Bureau: Intercept Pharmaceuticals, Clinical Area-NASH, PBC
- Speakers Bureau: Salix, Clinical Area-IBS, HE

## **April G. Morris, FNP**

- Speakers Bureau: AbbVie, Clinical Area-HCV
- Speakers Bureau: Gilead Sciences, Clinical Area-HCV
- Speakers Bureau: Intercept Pharmaceuticals, Clinical Area-PBC

## **Ann Moore, FNP**

- Speakers Bureau: AbbVie, Clinical Area-HCV
- Speakers Bureau: Gilead Sciences, Clinical Area-HCV
- Speakers Bureau: Intercept Pharmaceuticals, Clinical Area-PBC

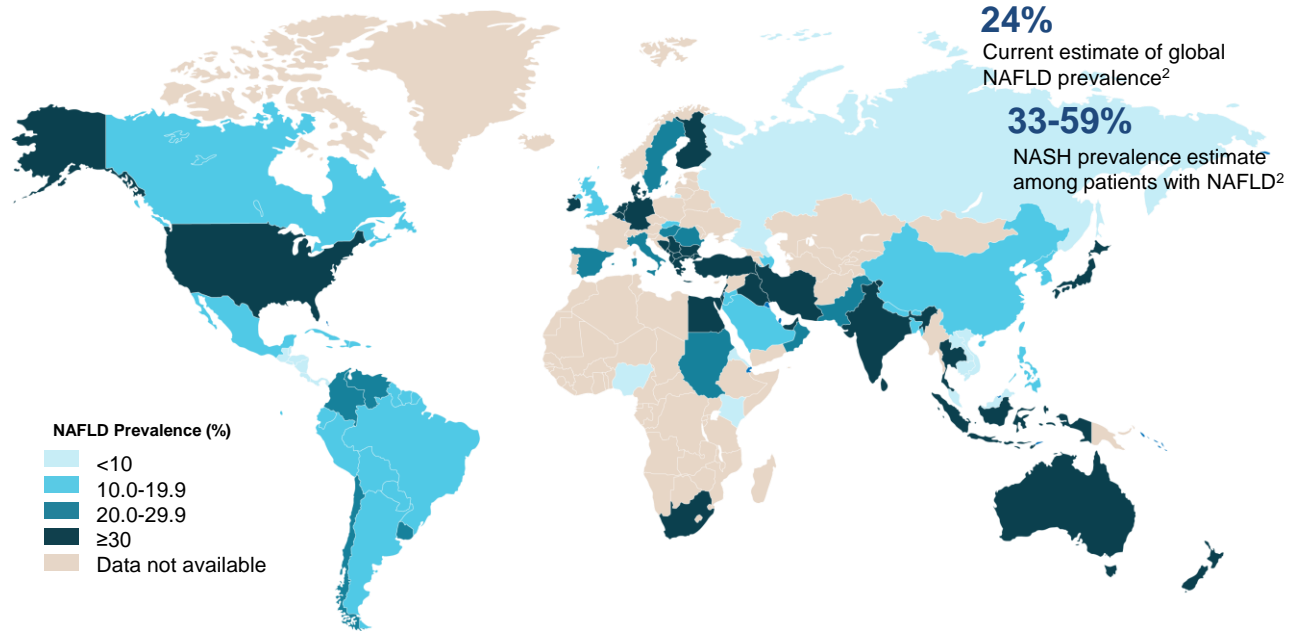


**GHAPP**

Gastroenterology & Hepatology  
Advanced Practice Providers

# Why Is Drug Development for NASH Important?

# NAFLD Is Among the Most Important Causes of Liver Disease Worldwide



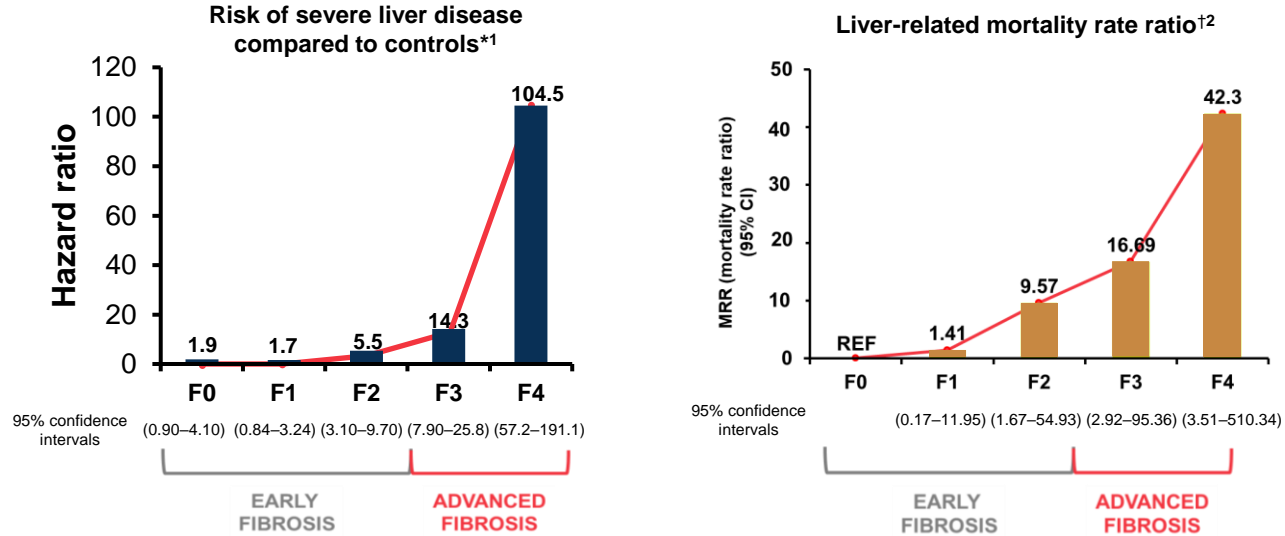
# Patients With NAFLD/NASH Have Increased Mortality

- Although both overall mortality and **liver-specific** mortality are increased in NAFLD, **cardiovascular (CV)** disease remains the most common cause of death ranging from **12.7%–38.3%**<sup>2-7</sup>

Author	N	FU (yr)	CVD Death	Findings
Angulo	619	12.6	38.3%	CVD most common COD Fibrosis predicts death
Söderberg	118	24	30%	↑Death in NASH, CVD most common COD
Ekstedt	129	13.7±1.3	16%	↑CVD death NASH CVD most common COD in NASH but no ss
Dam-Larsen	170	20.4	38%	No difference between SS and control
Rafiq	173	18.5	12.7%	CVD most common COD
Stepanova	289	12.5	27.8%	CVD most common COD

1. Targher G, et al. *Diabetes*. 2005;54(12):3541-3546;
2. Angulo, et al. *Gastroenterology*. 2015;149(2):389-397;
3. Söderberg, et al. *Hepatology*. 2010;51(2):595-602;
4. Ekstedt M, et al. *Hepatology*. 2006;44(4):865-873;
5. Dam-Larsen S, et al. *Scand J of Gastroenterol*. 2009;44(10):1236-1243;
6. Rafiq N, et al. *Clin Gastro Hep*. 2009;7(2): 234 -238;
7. Stepanova M, et al. *Digestive Diseases and Sciences*. October 2013, Volume 58, [Issue 10](#), pp 3017–3023.

# Advanced Fibrosis Exponentially Increases the Risk of Liver-Related Morbidity and Mortality



**Risk of liver-related morbidity and mortality increases exponentially with increasing fibrosis stage and patients with advanced fibrosis are at the greatest risk<sup>1,2</sup>**

1,\*From a retrospective cohort study of 646 biopsy-proven NAFLD patients, each matched to 10 controls;

2, †From a meta-analysis of 5 multinational cohorts (17,452 PYF).

CI, confidence interval; NASH, nonalcoholic steatohepatitis; NAFLD, nonalcoholic fatty liver disease; PYF, patient years of follow-up.

Adapted from Hagström H, et al. *J Hepatol.* 2017;67:1265–1273; Adapted from Dulai PS, et al. *Hepatology.* 2017;65(5):1557–1565;

1. Hagström H, et al. *J Hepatol.* 2017;67:1265–1273; 2. Dulai PS, et al. *Hepatology.* 2017;65(5):1557–1565.



**GHAPP**

Gastroenterology & Hepatology  
Advanced Practice Providers

# Clinical Trial Endpoints: What Are We Looking at?



# FDA Efficacy Endpoints for Phase 3 Trials: Liver Histologic Improvement

## **NASH Resolution**

- **Resolution of steatohepatitis on overall histopathologic reading**

**and**

- **No worsening of liver fibrosis**

## **Fibrosis Improvement**

- **Improvement  $\geq 1$  fibrosis stage**

**and**

- **No worsening of steatohepatitis**

# FDA Efficacy Endpoints for Early Phase 2 Trials

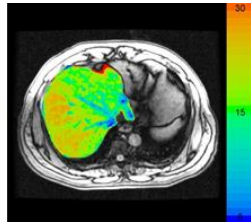
## Liver Fat Fraction (MRI-PDFF)

- $\geq 5\%$  absolute/  $\geq 30\%$  relative reduction associated with improvement in NAFLD

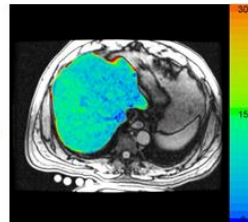
## ALT

- 10 U/L reduction in ALT associated with histologic improvement or resolution of NASH<sup>1</sup>

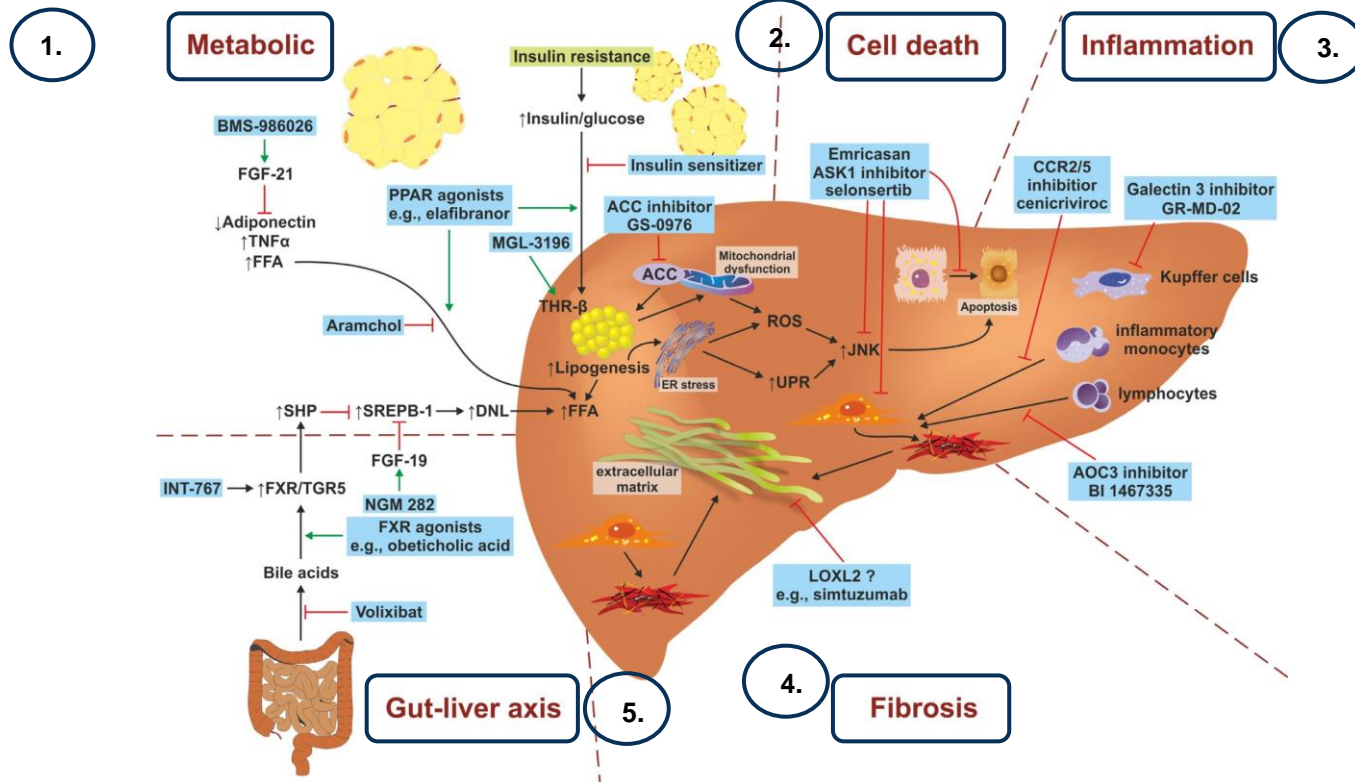
Baseline  
fat fraction  
18.8%



Week 16  
fat fraction  
8.3%



# Therapeutic Targets in NAFLD/NASH



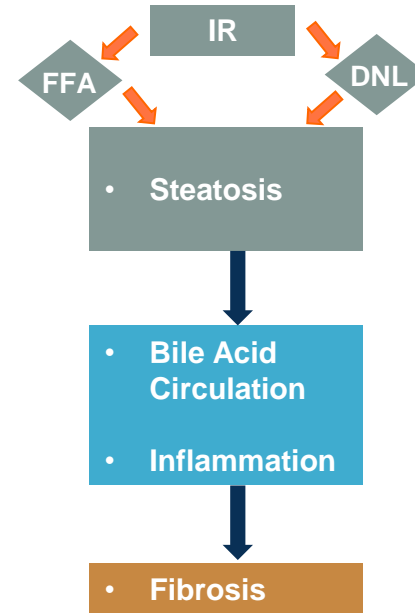
# NASH Agents in Phase 3 Clinical Development

Agent	Target (mechanism)	Trial, patients and primary endpoint(s)
<b>Cenicriviroc</b>	Inflammation/ immune activation (CCR2/5 antagonist)	<b>AURORA (n=2000*, fibrosis stage 2–3)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fibrosis improvement <math>\geq 1</math> stage without NASH worsening</li> <li>Composite of progression to cirrhosis, liver-related clinical outcomes and all-cause mortality</li> </ul>
<b>Elafibranor</b>	Lipotoxicity/ oxidative stress (PPAR $\alpha/\delta$ agonist)	<b>RESOLVE-IT (n=2000*, fibrosis stage 1–3)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NASH resolution without worsening of fibrosis</li> <li>Long-term composite of all-cause mortality, cirrhosis and liver-related events</li> </ul>
<b>Obeticholic acid</b>	Lipotoxicity/oxidative stress (FXR agonist)	<b>REGENERATE (n=2065*, fibrosis stage 1–3)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fibrosis improvement <math>\geq 1</math> stage without NASH worsening</li> <li>NASH resolution without fibrosis worsening</li> <li>All-cause mortality and liver-related events</li> </ul>
<b>Selonsertib</b>	Apoptosis/necrosis (ASK1 inhibitor)	<b>REVERSE (n=540*, compensated cirrhosis)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fibrosis improvement <math>\geq 1</math> stage without NASH worsening</li> </ul>
<b>Resmetirom (MGL-3196)</b>	Lipotoxicity (TR $\beta$ agonist)	<b>STELLAR-4 (n=883, compensated cirrhosis)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fibrosis improvement <math>\geq 1</math> stage without NASH worsening</li> <li>Event-free survival</li> </ul>
<b>Aramchol</b>	Lipotoxicity (FABAC)	<b>STELLAR-3 (n=808, fibrosis stage 3)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fibrosis improvement <math>\geq 1</math> stage without NASH worsening</li> <li>Event-free survival</li> </ul>
		<b>Phase 3 study (n=2000*, fibrosis stage 2–3)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NASH resolution and 2 point improvement in NAS without worsening of fibrosis</li> </ul>
		<b>Phase 3 study (n=2000*, fibrosis stage 2–3)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NASH resolution without worsening of fibrosis or fibrosis improvement without worsening of NASH</li> </ul>



# The Race to Cure NASH: Medications in Phase 3 Trials

- **Resmetirom: TRHb agonist**  
**(MAESTRO)**
- **Obeticholic acid (OCA): FXR**  
agonist **(REGENERATE)**
- **Cenicriviroc (CVC):**  
CCR2/CCR5  
inhibitor **(AURORA)**







**GHAPP**

Gastroenterology & Hepatology  
Advanced Practice Providers

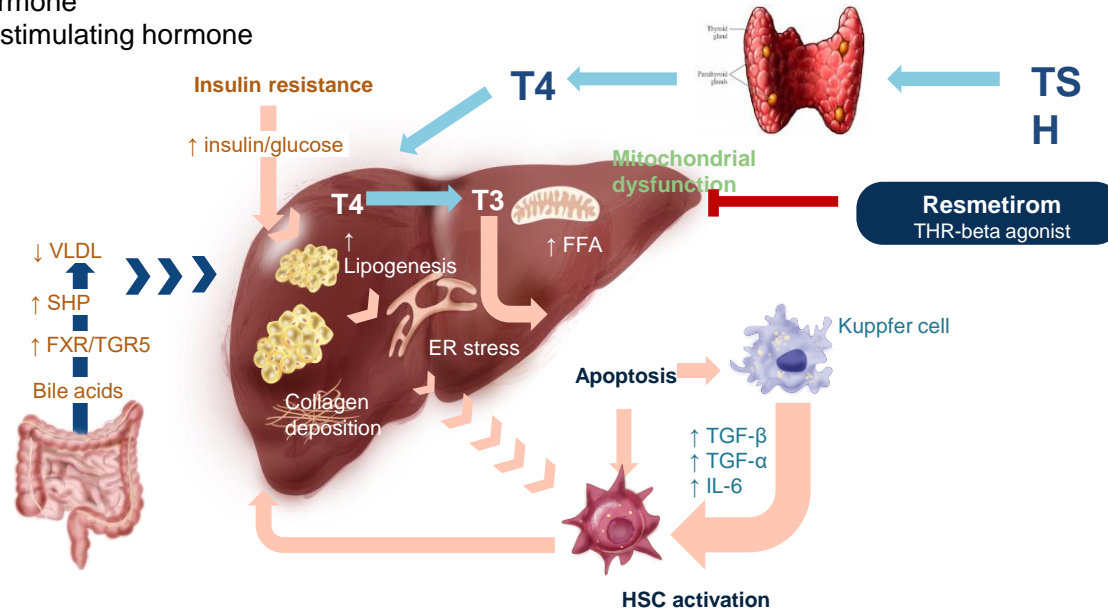
# Metabolic Targets: Resmetirom

# Phase 3 NASH Clinical Trials, Ongoing: MAESTRO-NASH and MAESTRO-NAFLD-1

Compound/ Indication	Clinical Trial	Pre-Clinical	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Description
<b>Resmetirom</b> (MGL-3196) <b>Thyroid Hormone Receptor-beta (THR-B) Agonist</b>	<b>Phase 2</b> MGL-3196-05	<b>Completed</b>				<input type="checkbox"/> MRI-PDFF, biopsy: positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36 week with 36 week open-label extension</li> </ul> <i>Harrison Lancet. 2019 Nov 30;394(10213):2012-2024. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(19)32517-6</i>
<b>Treatment of NASH</b>	<b>Phase 3</b> MAESTRO-NASH	<b>Recruiting</b> 				<input type="checkbox"/> Treatment of NASH with Fibrosis Stage 2-3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serial liver biopsy</li> <li>• 52 week phase 3;</li> <li>• 54 month Phase 4</li> </ul>
	<b>Phase 3</b> MAESTRO-NAFLD-1 (presumed NASH)	<b>Recruiting</b> 				<input type="checkbox"/> Treatment of NASH (recent inclusion of compensated cirrhotic/renal impairment) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 52 week</li> <li>• <i>Safety, Lipids and NASH biomarker and imaging study</i></li> </ul>

# Mechanisms of Late-Stage Investigational Agents for NASH: Resmetirom

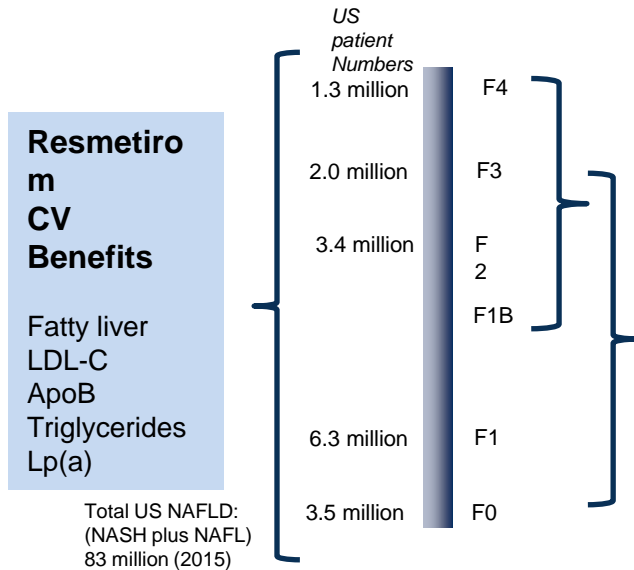
T4 prohormone  
T3, active hormone  
TSH, thyroid stimulating hormone



ASK1, apoptosis signal-regulating kinase; TRAF1, tumor necrosis factor receptor factor 1.  
Adapted from Konerman MA, et al. *J Hepatol.* 2018;68:362-365.



# Resmetirom Development Path Across the Spectrum of NAFLD/NASH



## NASH/NAFLD Spectrum

### Phase 3 MAESTRO-NASH study:

- F2/F3 NASH with Metabolic Syndrome
- NASH Resolution (primary), LDL-C, fibrosis (key secondary);
- **Phase 4 (post-approval):** cirrhosis and MACE

### Phase 3 MAESTRO-NAFLD-1 study:

- F1-F3 NASH with Metabolic Syndrome diagnosed non-invasively (no liver biopsy required)
- 100mg Open label arm
- Recent addition of compensated cirrhosis and renal impairment for safety analysis
- Endpoints: Safety, LDL-C, lipids, MRI-PDFF, PRO-C3

*Data show that NASH with fibrosis is associated with high CV risk.*

Estes, et al; *Hepatology*. Vol. 67, No. 1, 2018; Henson. *Aliment Pharmacol Ther*. 2020,51(7): 728-736;

Harrison, Stephen. Resmetirom for the Treatment of NASH.

<https://www.madrigalpharma.com/newsroom/nash-experts-webcasts/>

# Phase 2 NASH Study Design: Randomized, Double Blind, Placebo Controlled



- **Comparator/Arms**

- 2:1 Resmetirom to placebo
- 125 patients enrolled in USA, 18 sites
- Resmetirom or placebo, oral, once daily; dose 80mg (+/- 20mg dose adjustment possible at week 4)

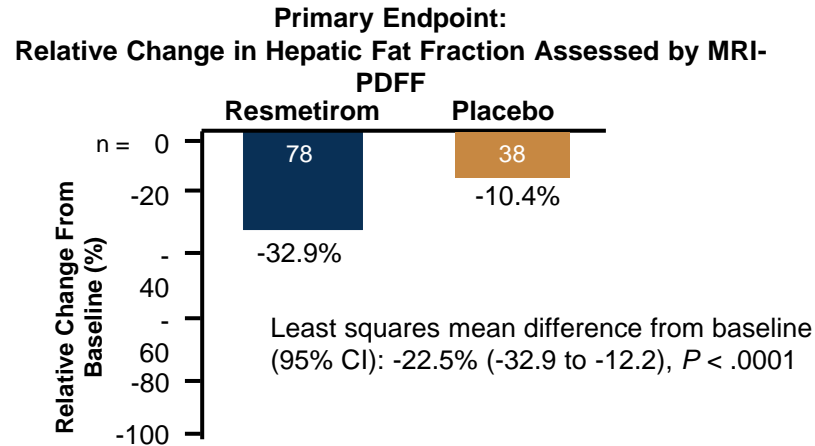
- **Inclusion/Exclusion**

- NASH on liver biopsy: NAS $\geq$ 4 with fibrosis stage 1-3
- $\geq$ 10% liver fat on MRI-PDFF
- Includes diabetics, statin therapy, representative NASH population

- **36 week extension study in 31 patients who completed the main 36 week study – all received 80 or 100mg of Resmetirom**

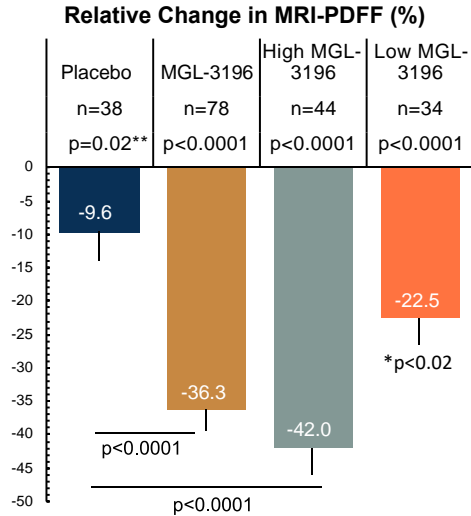
# Resmetirom: Wk 12 Efficacy for Treatment of NASH (ITT Population)

- Randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled phase II trial in patients with biopsy-confirmed NASH with hepatic fat fraction  $\geq 10\%$

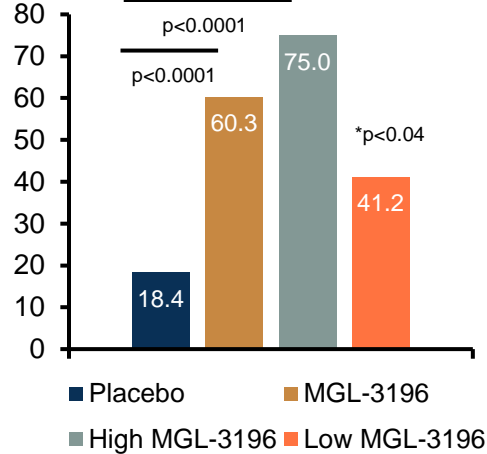


# Resmetirom Significantly Decreases Hepatic Fat in NASH Patients at Week 12 MRI-PDFF, and Was Associated With NASH Resolution at Week 36 Biopsy

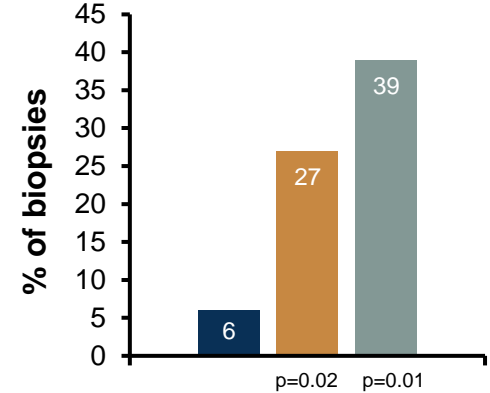
## Fat Reduction at week 12 MRI-PDFF



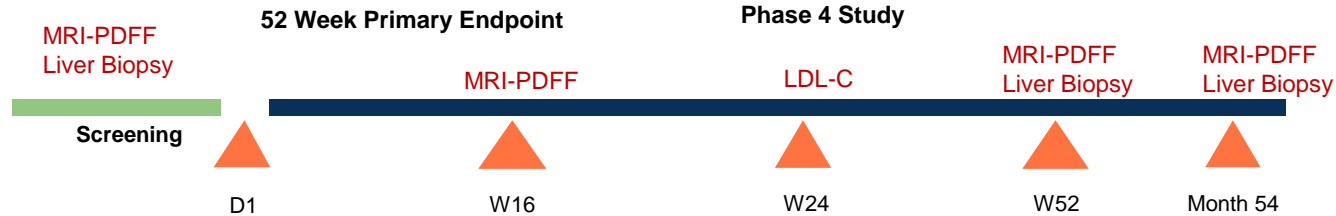
## ≥ 30% Fat Reduction (%)



## NASH Resolution at week 36 biopsy

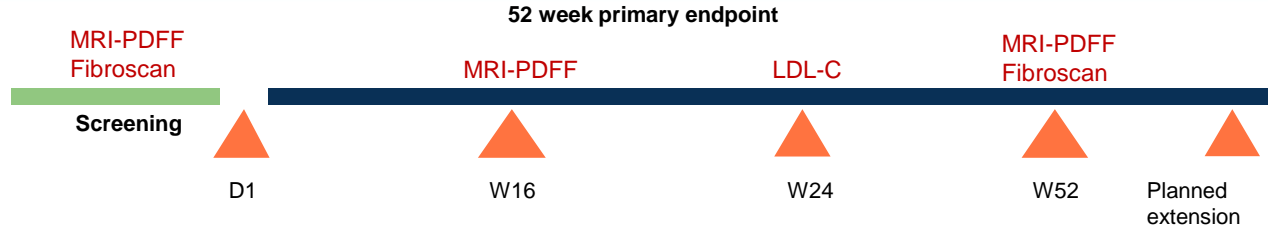


# Phase 3/4 MAESTRO-NASH Study Design: Randomized, Double Blind, Placebo Controlled: Serial Liver Biopsy Study



- **Comparator/Arms**
  - 1:1:1 MGL-3196 80, 100mg, placebo
  - 900 F2/F3 patients enrolled in USA, Europe for primary Week 52 analysis, 200 F1 patients
  - Up to 2000 patients total enrollment for Phase 4 including first 900
  - >150 centers, world-wide
- **Key inclusion/exclusion**
  - Requires 3 metabolic risk factors (Metabolic Syndrome); Fibroscan kPa consistent with F2-F3 CAP  $\geq 280$
  - NASH on liver biopsy; NAS  $\geq 4$  with fibrosis stage 1A (up to 3%) 1B, total F1 up to 15%; F3, at least 50%, and remainder F2
  - $\geq 8\%$  liver fat on MRI-PDFF
- **Primary Endpoints**
  - Resolution of NASH at week 52 with at least 2 point reduction in NAS with no worsening of fibrosis
  - Phase 4: reduction in liver related events or progression to cirrhosis
  - Key secondary endpoints: Additional NASH biopsy endpoints, imaging MRI-PDFF, Fibrosis biomarkers
  - Composite liver-related outcome at 54 months (histologic evidence of cirrhosis on biopsy, MELD  $\geq 15$ , hepatic decompensation, liver transplant, all cause mortality)

# Phase 3 MAESTRO-NAFLD-1 Trial (Presumed NASH) Study Design: Randomized, Double Blind, Placebo Controlled



- **Comparator/Arms**

- 1:1:1:1 MGL-3196 80, 100mg, placebo, open label arm: NASH patients on 100mg Resmetirom to assess non-invasive measures of safety and efficacy and will include special safety populations with compensated cirrhosis and renal impairment)
- 800 patients (Open label-100mg arm in up to 200 patients) excludes advanced patient F2/F3 NAS  $\geq 4$  who qualify for MAESTRO-NASH
- Up to 65 centers US

- **Key inclusion/exclusion**

- Requires 3 metabolic risk factors (Metabolic syndrome)
- Fibroscan kPa.  $\geq$  F1, CAP  $\geq$  280, except where eligible for MAESTRO-NASH
- MRI-PDFF ( $\geq 8\%$ )

- **Primary Endpoints**

- Evaluate the tolerability and safety of Resmetirom 80mg or 100mg versus placebo measured by incidence of AE's
- Key secondary endpoints: MRI-PDFF, Fibrosis biomarkers, LDL cholesterol, TG's, ApoB, PRO-C3

# Safety

- AE's, mostly mild, a few moderate balance between groups. Increase in Resmetirom treated relative to placebo in loose stools, typically a single episode, only at the beginning of therapy, GI AE's no increased over placebo in Phase 1 or NASH extension study
- No lab abnormalities or other AE's were increased in Resmetirom compared to placebo group
- No effects on thyroid axis hormones in the Main, Extension study or healthy volunteers; no change in thyroid status, symptoms or signs (total of 400 treated patients and subjects)
- 7 SAE's, distributed between placebo and drug treated, all single occurrences, non related

Harrison, S. Effects of Resmetirom (MGL3196 on Hepatic Fat, Lipids, Liver Enzymes and Markers of Liver Fibrosis in an Open Label 36 Week Extension Study in NASH Patients.

<https://www.madrigalpharma.com/newsroom/nash-experts-webcasts/>.



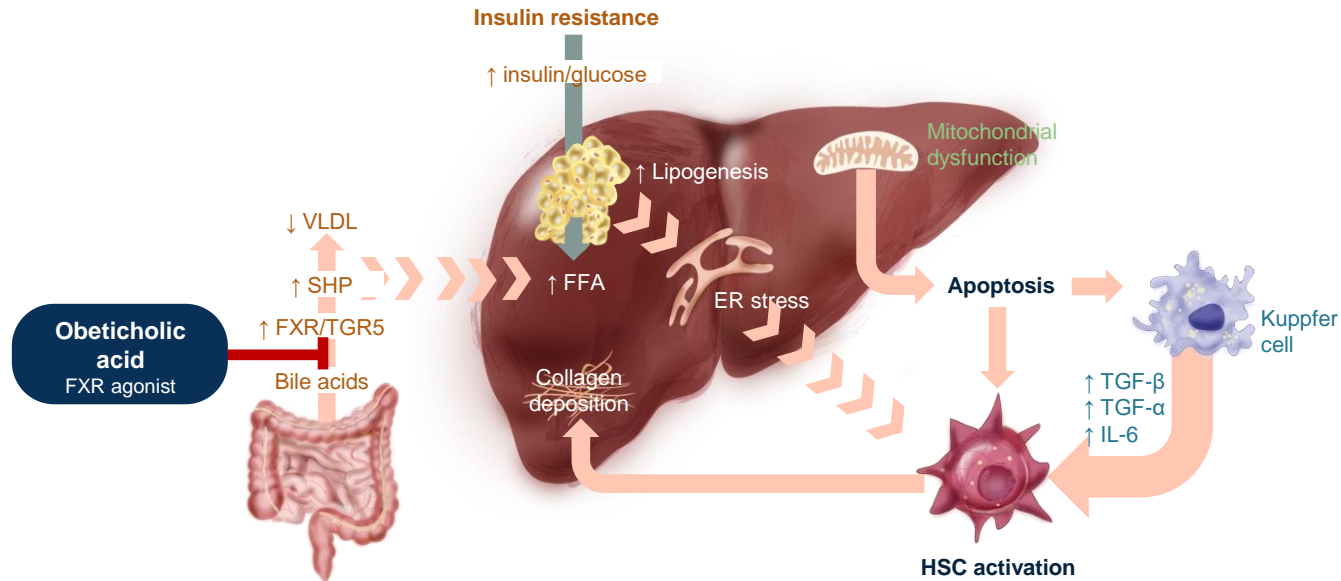
**GHAPP**

Gastroenterology & Hepatology  
Advanced Practice Providers

# Gut-Liver Axis/Bile Acids



# Mechanisms of Late-Stage Investigational Agents for NASH: Obeticholic Acid

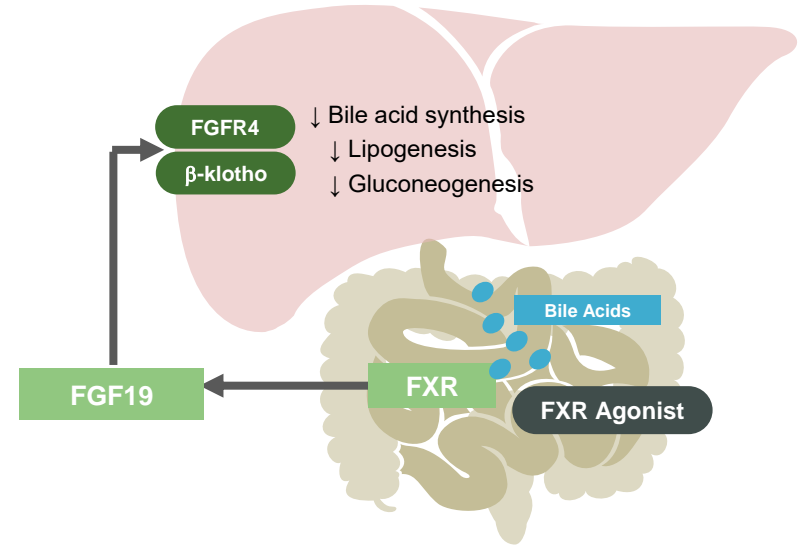


ASK1, apoptosis signal-regulating kinase; TRAF1, tumor necrosis factor receptor factor 1.  
Adapted from Konerman MA, et al. *J Hepatol.* 2018;68:362-365.

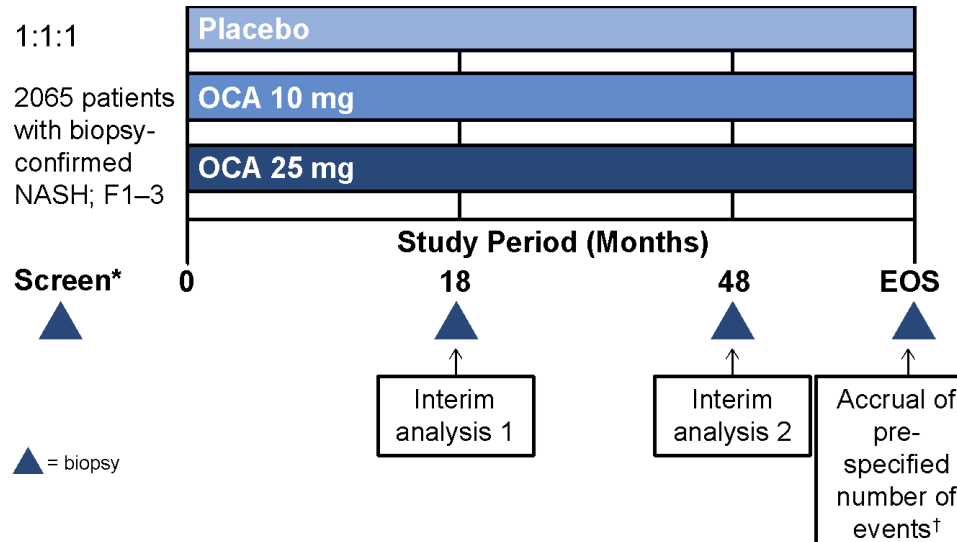
# FXR Agonists



- Bile acids (OCA) or non-bile acid (GS-9674)
- Highly selective for FXR
- Oral administration
- Induce FGF19
- OCA approved in PBC
- \*\*Completed Phase 3 in patients with NASH



# The REGENERATE Study



\*NASH confirmed by biopsy  $\leq 6$  months before Day 1. †Placebo and OCA 25-mg groups only.

Abbreviations: EOS, end of study; OCA, obeticholic acid.

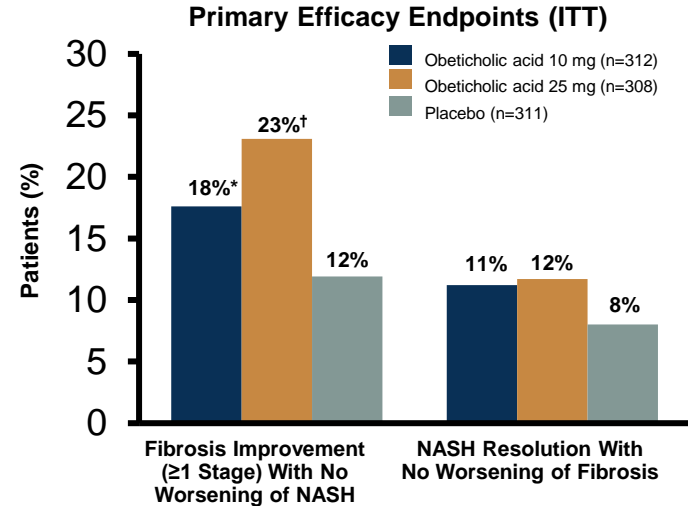
ClinicalTrials.gov. <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT02548351>.

Ratziu V, et al. Abstract THU-488. Presented at: EASL 2016; 13-17 April, 2016; Barcelona, Spain.

# REGENERATE Study: 18-Month Interim Efficacy Analysis

- **Fibrosis improvement** ( $\geq 1$  stage) and no worsening of NASH in patients (obeticholic acid versus placebo)
  - 10 mg: 18% versus 12% ( $P < 0.05$ )
  - 25 mg: 23% versus 12% ( $P = 0.0002$ ) versus placebo

- Pruritus: 50% in the OCA 25 mg arm
- Worsening lipid profile: Increase in LDL and decrease in HDL
- Cholecystitis



# FDA Review for Accelerated Approval of OCA

- June 2020
  - Denied accelerated approval
  - Why?
    - It was determined that histopathologic endpoint remains uncertain
    - Uncertain endpoint did not outweigh potential risks to support accelerated approval
  - FDA recommendation for Intercept:
    - Submit additional post-interim analysis efficacy and safety analysis data from REGENERATE study



**GHAPP**

Gastroenterology & Hepatology  
Advanced Practice Providers

# Inflammation/Fibrosis Targets

**DESTINY: Deuterium-stabilized R-pioglitazone  
(PXL065) Efficacy and Safety Trial In NASH**

---

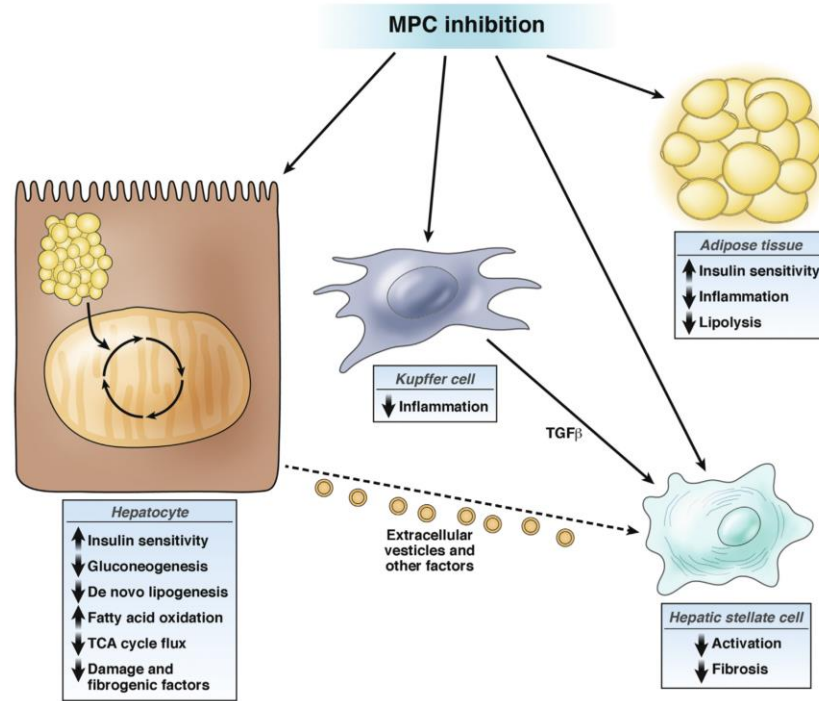
A Phase 2, **36-week**, randomized, double-blind, **placebo**-controlled, parallel group trial to assess the efficacy and safety of PXL065 versus placebo in **noncirrhotic**, biopsy-proven Nonalcoholic Steatohepatitis (NASH) patients

# Mechanism of Action (MOA)

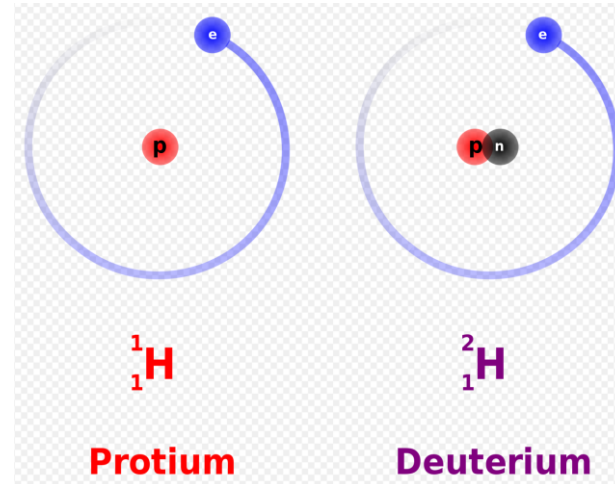
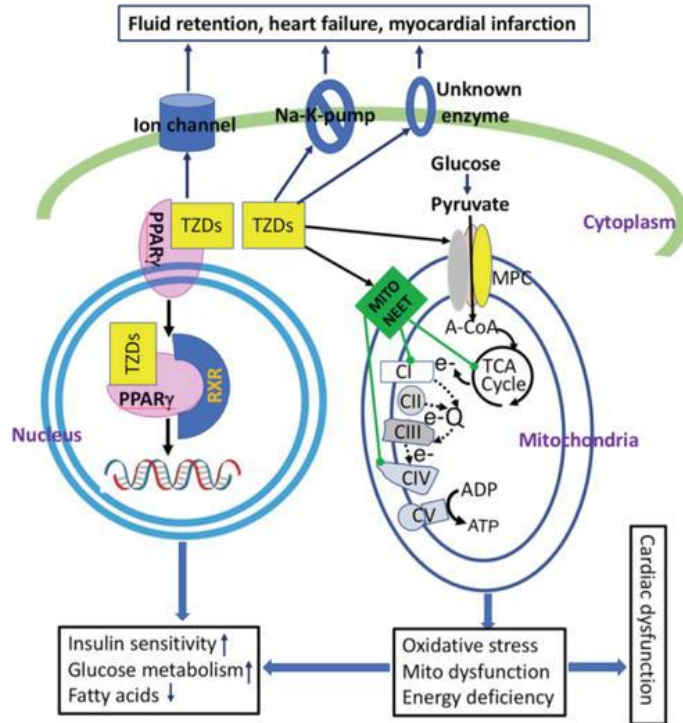
- There are three pathways for hepatic glucose production:
  1. Breakdown of glycogen (glycogenolysis)
  2. Gluconeogenesis from glycerol
  3. Gluconeogenesis from lactate/**pyruvate**/amino acids. (deranged in the diabetic liver)
- Pyruvate carboxylation to oxaloacetate is required for gluconeogenesis from pyruvate.
- Pyruvate carboxylase, is exclusively localized to the mitochondrial matrix → transport of pyruvate across the inner mitochondrial membrane through **MPC** is a prerequisite step in gluconeogenesis.



# Mechanism of Action (MOA)



# Pioglitazone: PPAR-Gamma Agonist

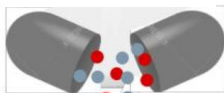


# What Is PXL-065?

Pio is mixture of 2 stereoisomers with dramatically different properties

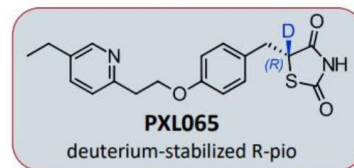
## **S-Pio** (stabilized)

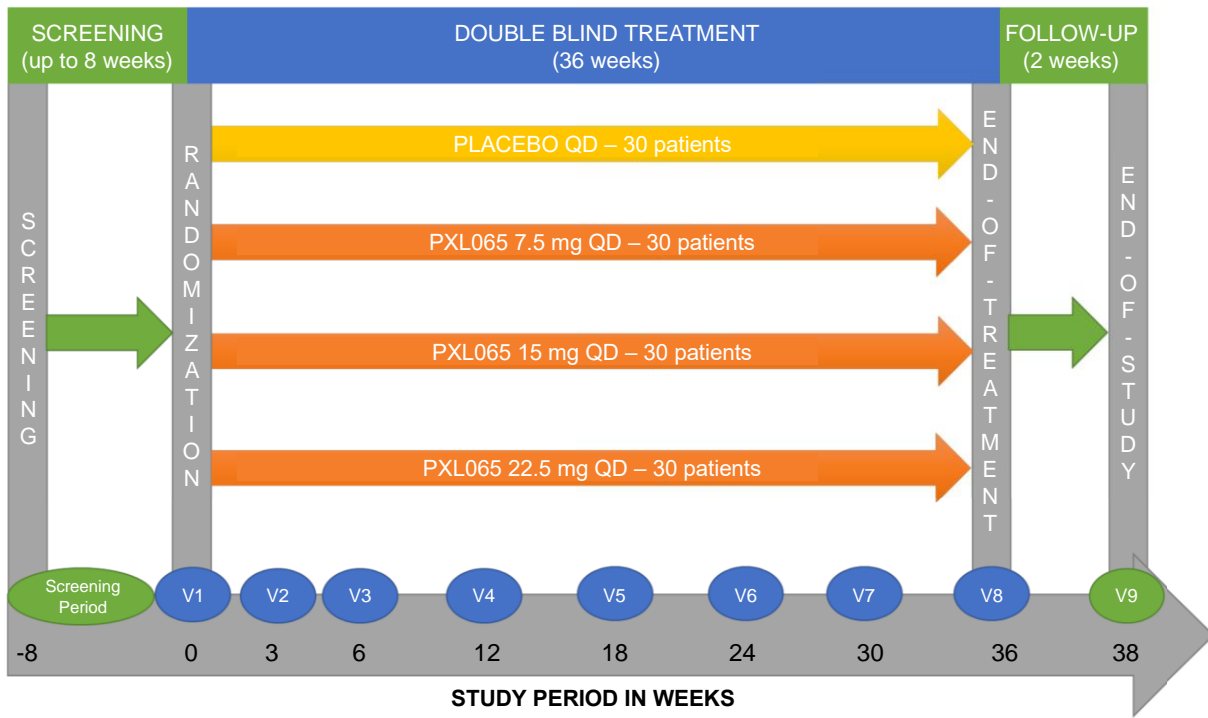
- MPC inhibitor
- PPAR $\gamma$  agonist
- **Undesired side effects:**
  - Weight gain
  - Fluid retention



## **PXL065** (stabilized R-Pio)

- MPC inhibitor
- Very weak PPAR $\gamma$  agonist
- **Anti-inflammatory**
- **NASH efficacy**





# Primary Endpoints

- Primary endpoint
  - **Relative** change in the percentage of LFC (assessed by MRI-PDFF) from baseline to Week 36 (V8-EoT)
- Secondary endpoints:
  - **Absolute** change in the percentage of LFC (assessed by MRI-PDFF) from baseline to Week 36 (V8-EoT)
  - Response defined as an **absolute reduction in LFC  $\geq 5\%$**  from baseline to Week 36 (V8-EoT)
  - Response defined as a **relative reduction in LFC  $\geq 30\%$**  from baseline to Week 36 (V8-EoT)
  - Response defined as a **relative reduction in LFC  $\geq 50\%$**  from baseline to Week 36 (V8-EoT)
  - Response defined as a **LFC value at Week 36 (V8-EoT) that is normalized, i.e.  $\leq 5\%$**

# Cenicriviroc: A CCR 2/5 Antagonist That Targets Inflammation

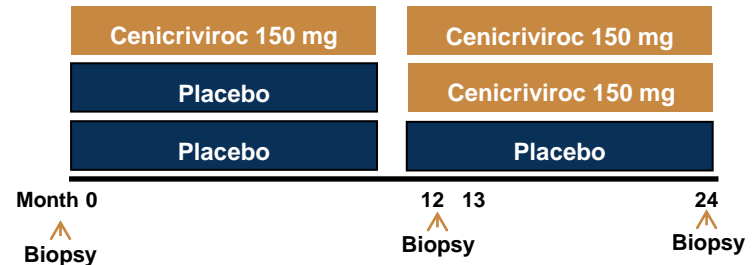
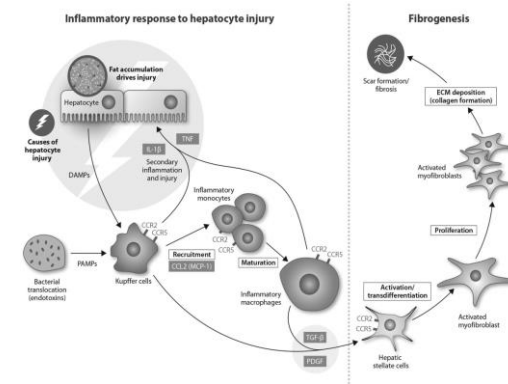
- Activation of CCR type 2/5 receptors
  - Promotes recruitment and migration of monocytes to the liver
    - Maturate into pro-inflammatory macrophages

## CENTARU: Phase 2b (n=289)

NASH (biopsy diagnosis)

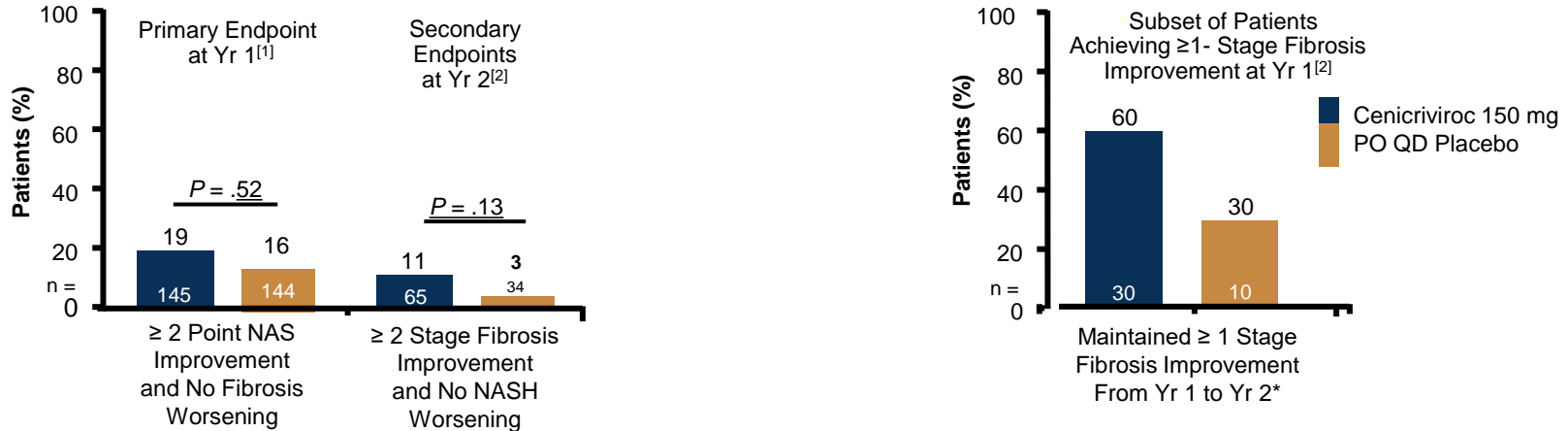
- Biopsy diagnosis, NAS  $\geq 4$ , fibrosis stage 1-3 (NASH-CRN)

3 serial biopsies collected over the 2-year study period



# CENTAUR: Cenicriviroc vs Placebo in Patients With NASH at Year 1 and 2

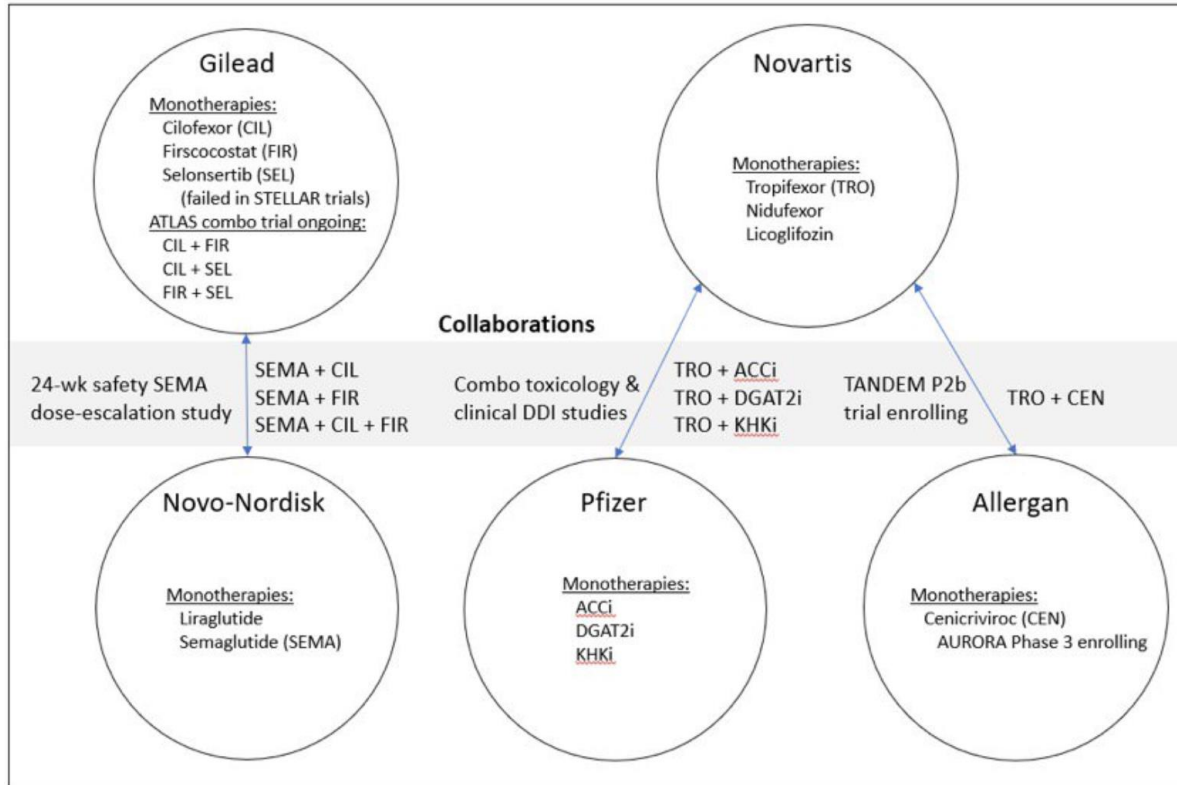
- International, randomized, double-blind, phase IIb study in patients with NASH, NAS  $\geq 4$  and F1-F3 fibrosis (N = 289)<sup>[1]</sup>



\*Subset achieving  $\geq 1$ -stage improvement in fibrosis at Yr 1.

1. Friedman. *Hepatology*. 2018;67:1754; 2. Ratziu. EASL 2018. Abstr GS-002.

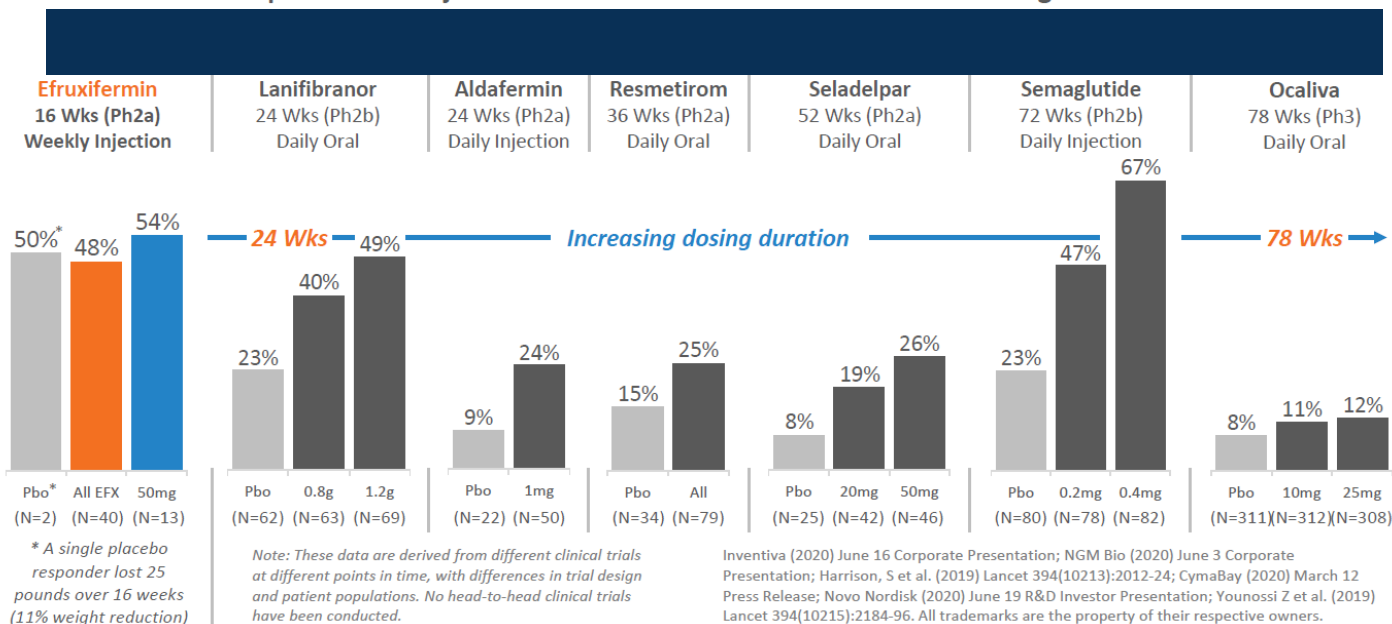
# NASH Alliances: Race for the Cure





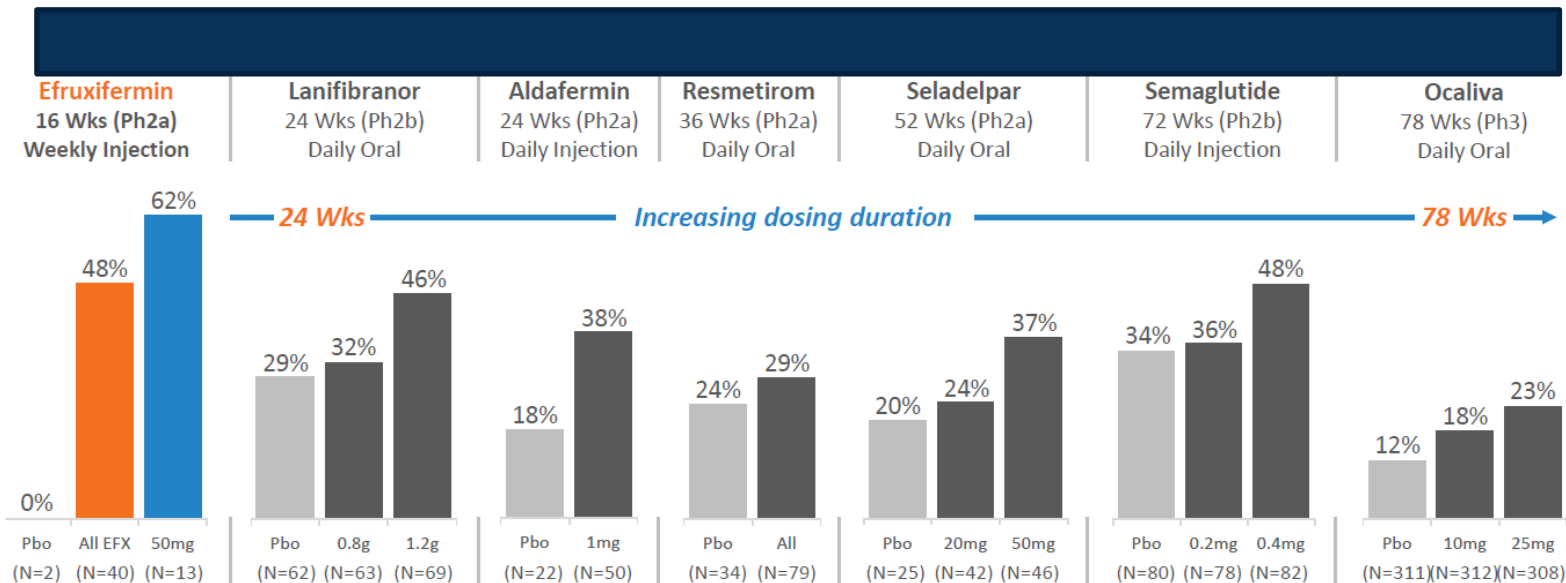
# NASH Resolution Landscape Monotherapies

Proportion of Subjects with Resolution of NASH without Worsening of Fibrosis<sup>1</sup>






# Fibrosis Improvement Landscape Monotherapies

Proportion of Subjects with  $\geq 1$  Stage Improvement in Fibrosis without Worsening of NAS<sup>1</sup>



# Phase 2 Combination Therapy Trials

 Agent	 Target (mechanism)	 Trial, patients and primary endpoint(s)
Semaglutide Firsocostat Cilofexor	GLP1 agonist ACC inhibitor FXR agonist	<b>POC study</b> (n=109, biopsy-proven NASH and fibrosis stage 2-3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safety and tolerability</li><li>• 24 weeks treatment</li></ul>
Tropifexor Cenicriviroc	FXR agonist CCR2/5 antagonist	<b>TANDEM</b> (n=200, NASH and fibrosis stage 2-3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safety and tolerability</li><li>• Fibrosis improvement <math>\geq 1</math> stage without NASH worsening or NASH resolution without fibrosis worsening</li><li>• 48 weeks treatment</li></ul>
Tropifexor Licogliflozin	FXR agonist SGLT1 and 2 inhibitor	<b>ELIVATE</b> (n=210, NASH and fibrosis stage 2-3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fibrosis improvement <math>\geq 1</math> stage without NASH worsening or NASH resolution without fibrosis worsening</li><li>• 48 weeks treatment</li></ul>
LYS006 Tropifexor	LTA4 hydrolase inhibitor FXR agonist	<b>NEXSCOT</b> (n=250, phenotypic NASH, ELF $\geq 8.5$ and PDFF $\geq 8\%$ ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safety and tolerability</li><li>• ELF, MRI-PDF, lipids</li><li>• 12 weeks treatment</li></ul>
Selonsetrib Firsocostat Cilofexor	ASK1 inhibitor ACC inhibitor FXR agonist	<b>ATLAS</b> (n=395, NASH and fibrosis stage 3-4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safety and tolerability</li><li>• Fibrosis improvement <math>\geq 1</math> stage without NASH worsening</li><li>• 48 weeks treatment</li></ul>

# Closing Thoughts

---

- All aspects of NAFLD development and progression can be targeted.
- Combination therapy should be considered in patients with aggressive disease.
- NASH-specific therapies are coming soon and should change the attitude toward screening and treatment.