



# Cholesterol transporters as new therapeutic targets

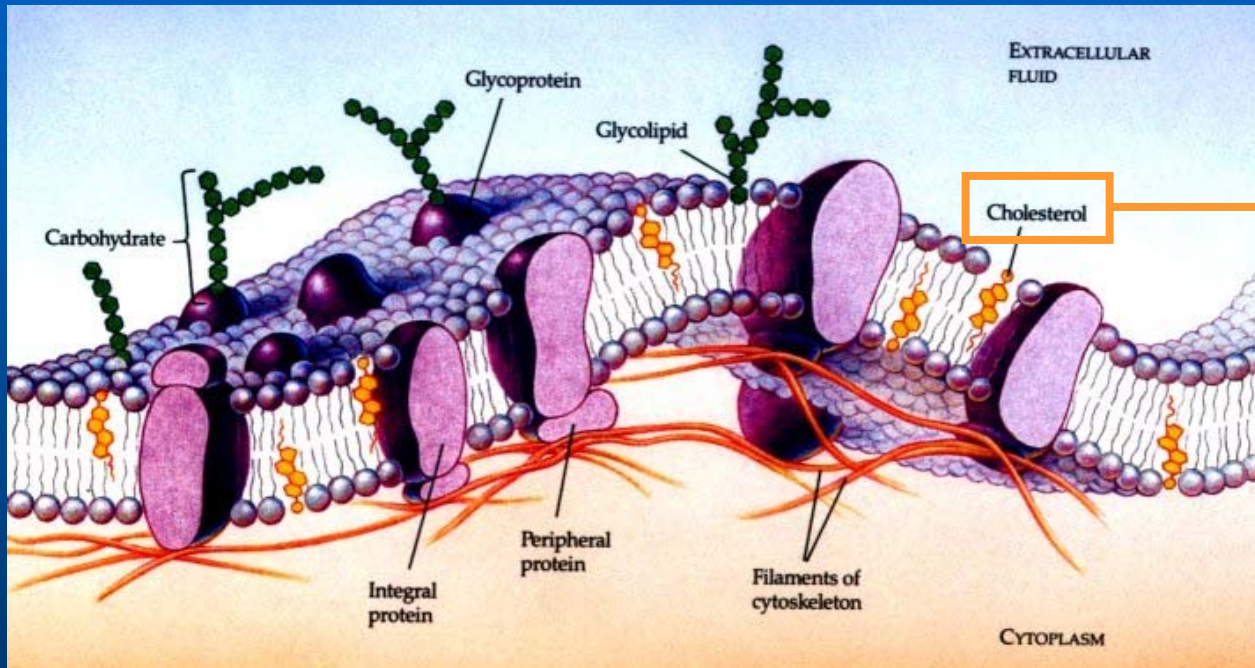


Unité de Pharmacologie  
cellulaire et moléculaire

F. Van Bambeke

# Physiological roles of cholesterol

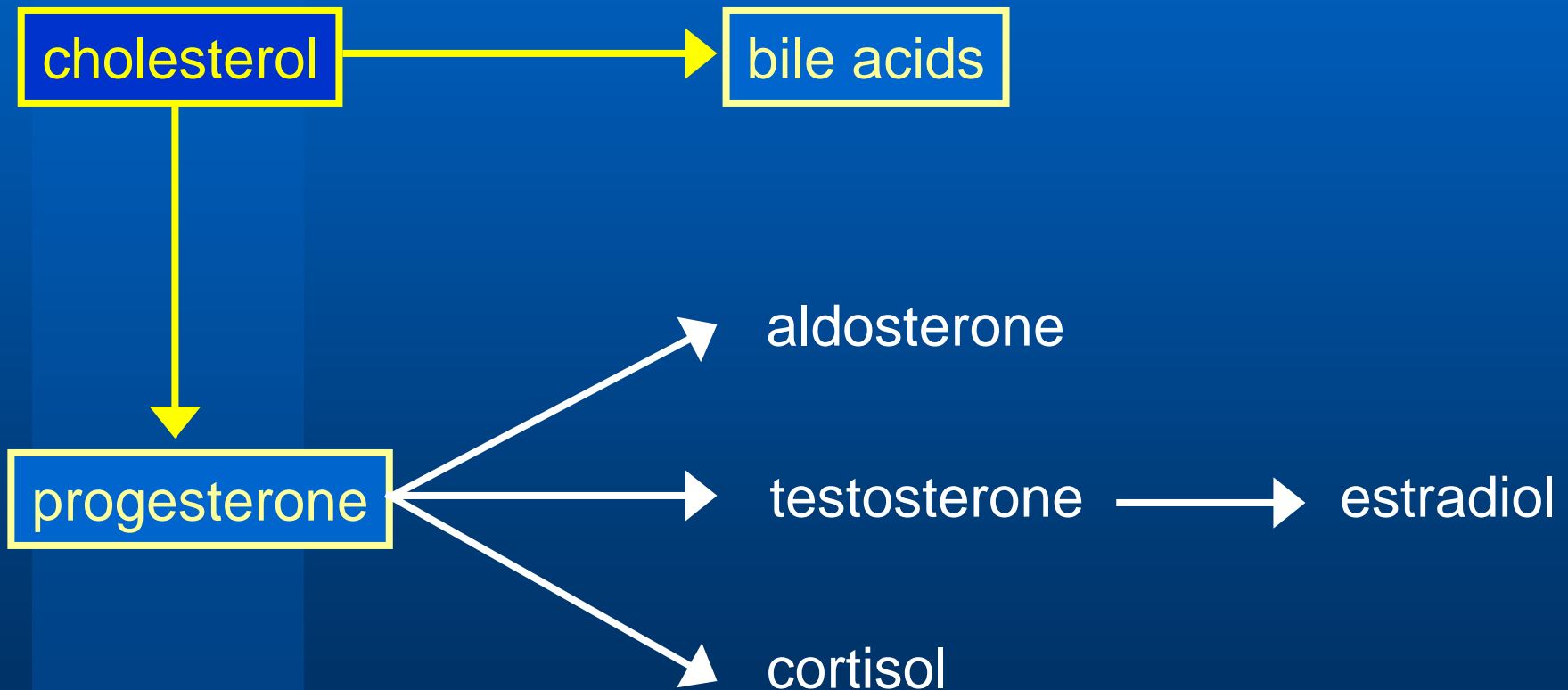
## Physical role: structure and functions of membranes



- fluidity
- domains (rafts)
- protein function (pumps)

# Physiological roles of cholesterol

Biochemical role:  
precursor of steroid hormones and bile acids



# Pathological roles of cholesterol

---

- increase in storage
- alteration of cellular fate
- HDL/LDL dysbalance
- increase in absorption
- alteration of excretion

- obesity, dyslipidemia
- Niemann-Pick disease
- atheromatosis, Tangier dis.
- sitosterolemia
- stones

## current therapeutic options... and their limitations

- lipid adsorbants    adsorption of liposoluble vitamins
  - statins             risk of side effects
  - fibrates             useful if high triglycerides
-

# Pathological roles of cholesterol transporters

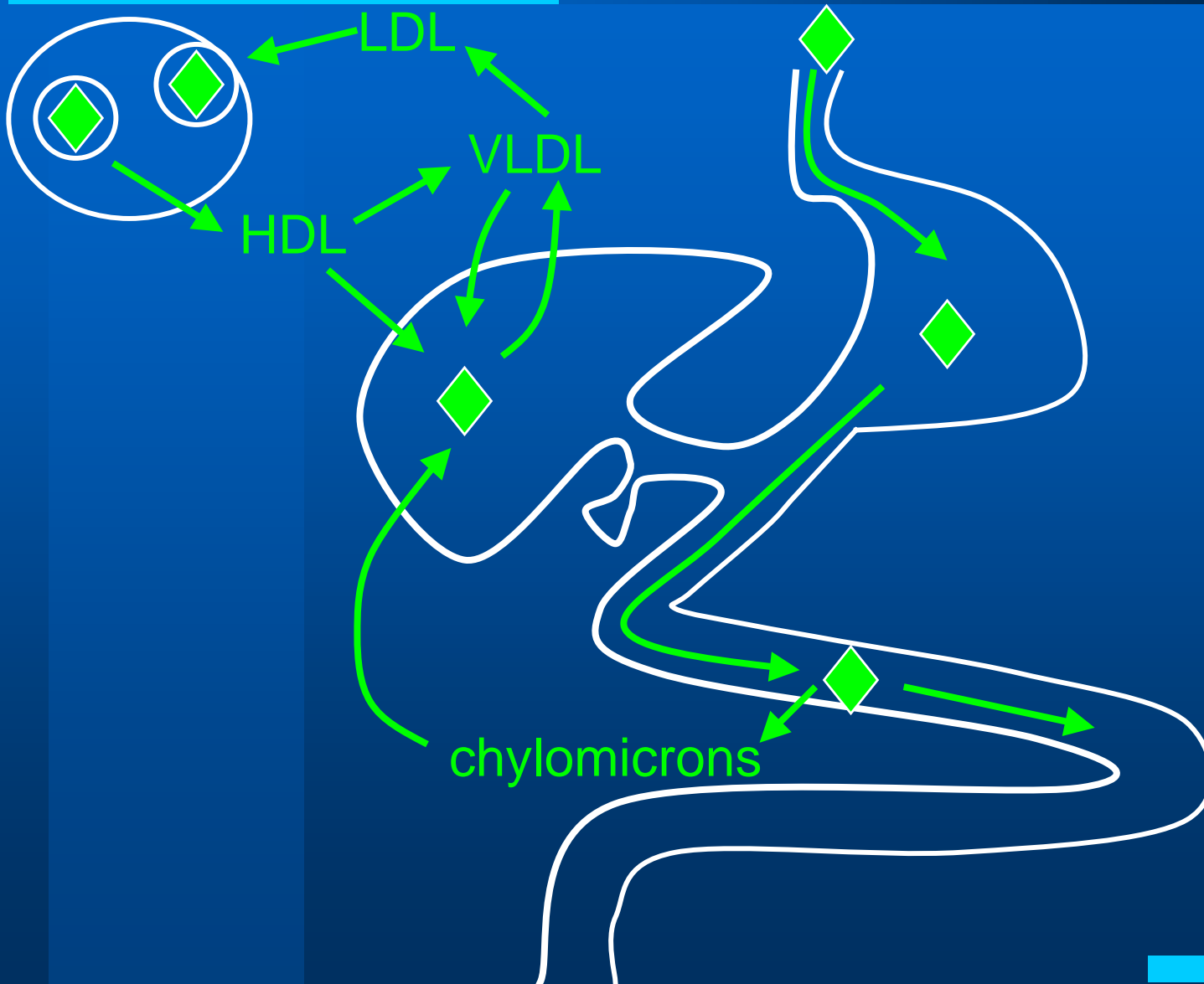
- NPC1L1
- NPC1-NPC2
- ABCA1
- ABCG5-ABCG8
- ABCG8

- obesity, dyslipidemia
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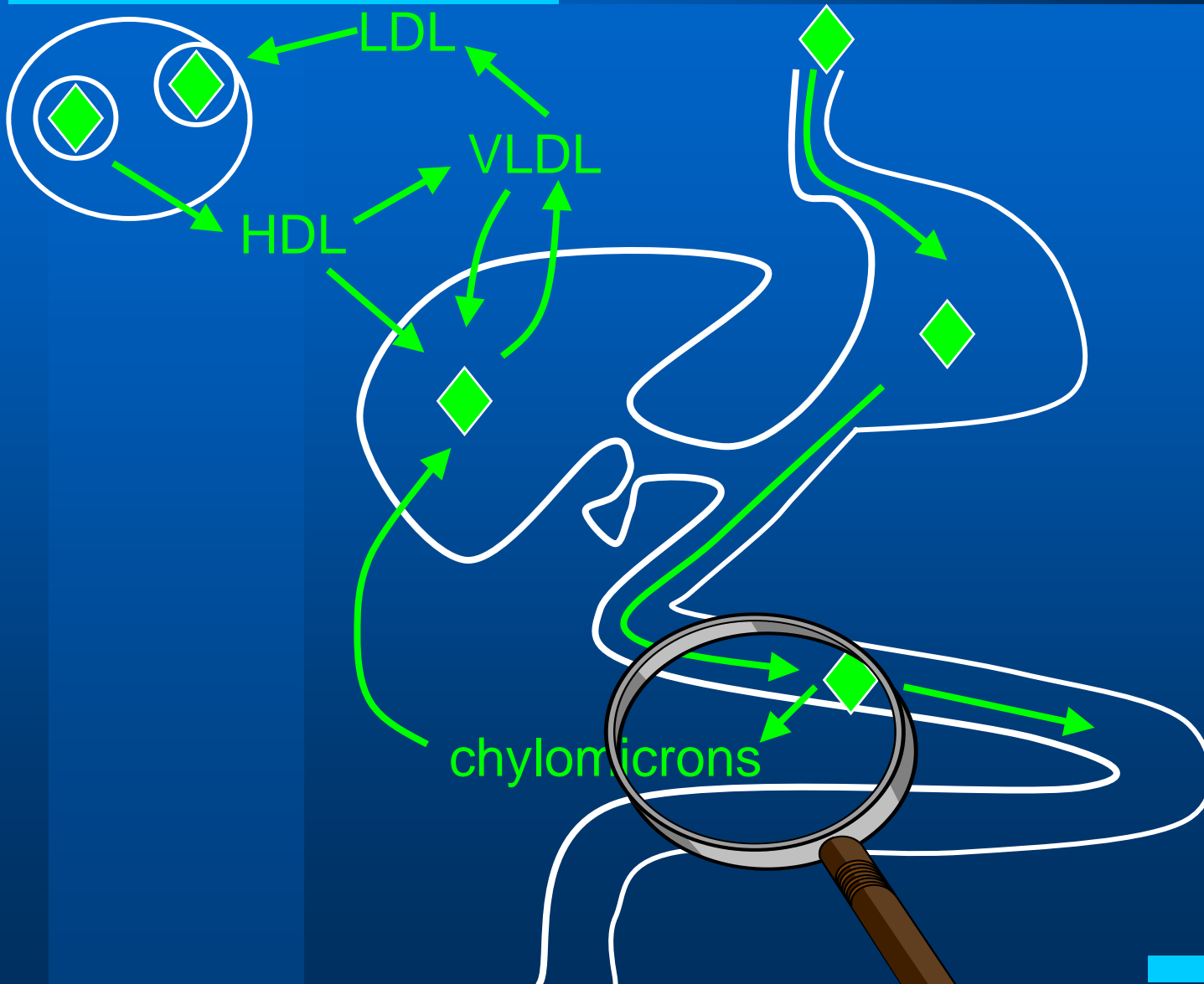


Cholesterol transporters as new drug targets ?

# Sterol fate in the body



# Sterol fate in the body



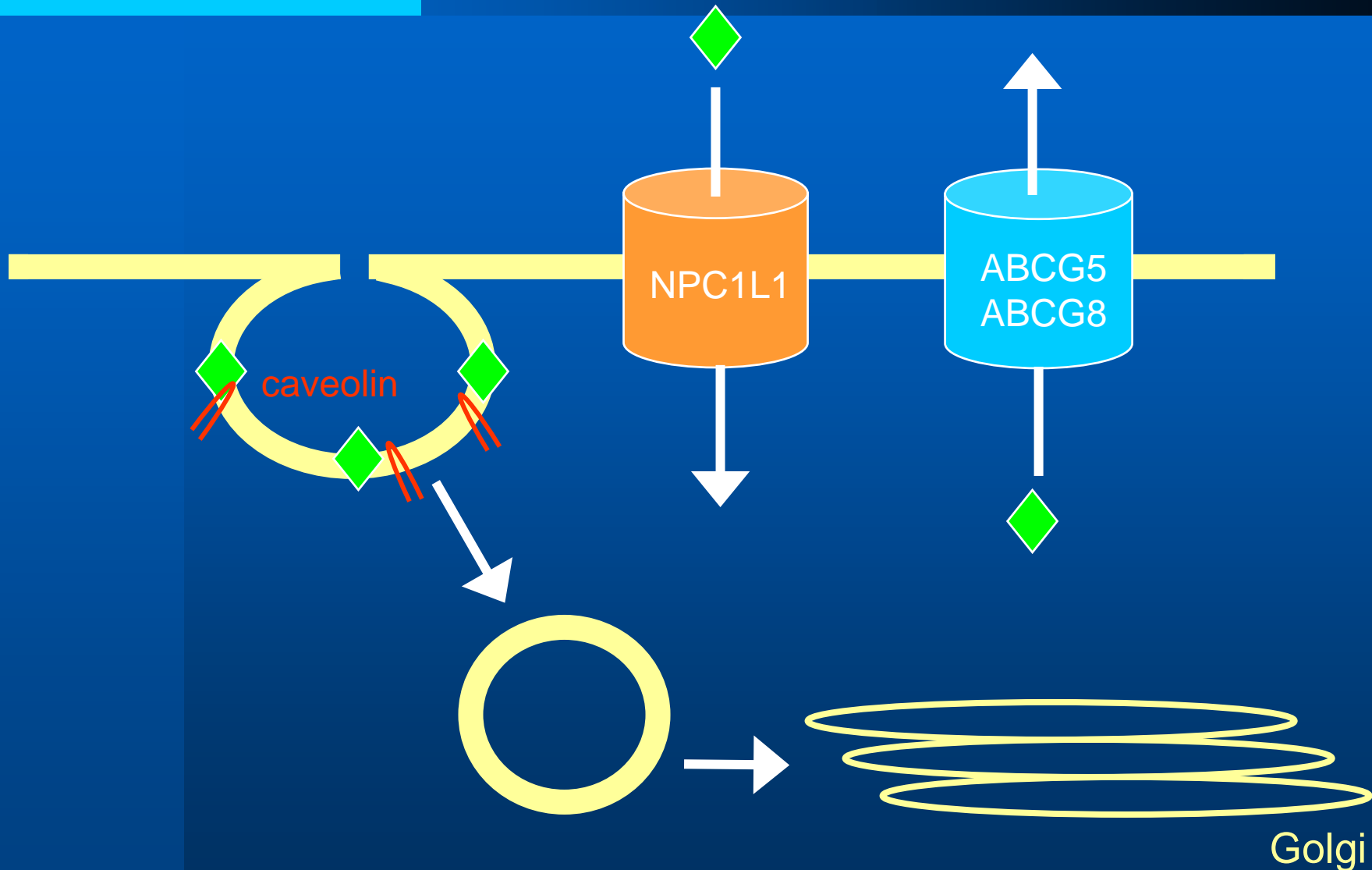
inhibition of unfavorable transport



cholesterol absorption



# Transport of sterols in intestinal cells



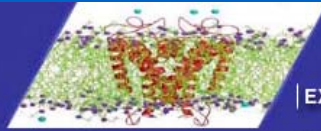


# NPC1L1, a RND sterol transporter

<http://www-biology.ucsd.edu/~msaier/transport/>

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Search:

Search

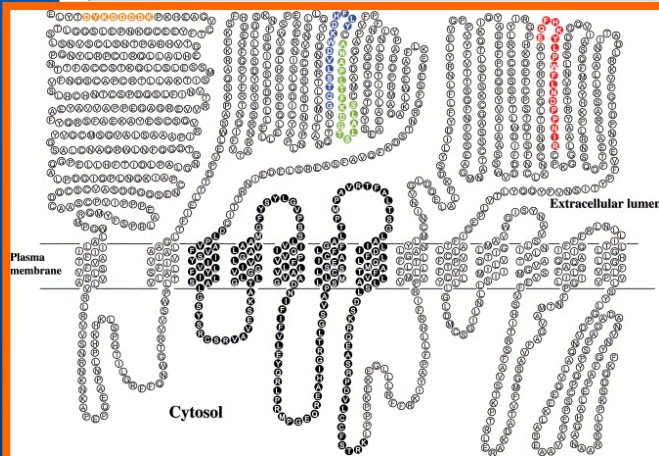
TC#:

Lookup

## 2.A.6. The Resistance-Nodulation-Cell Division (RND) Superfamily

[View Proteins](#)

[Read Description](#)



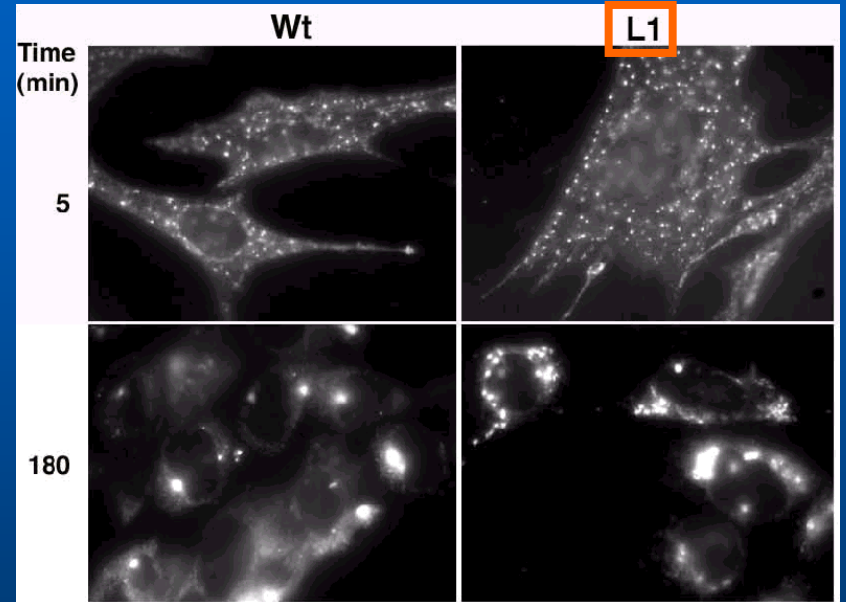
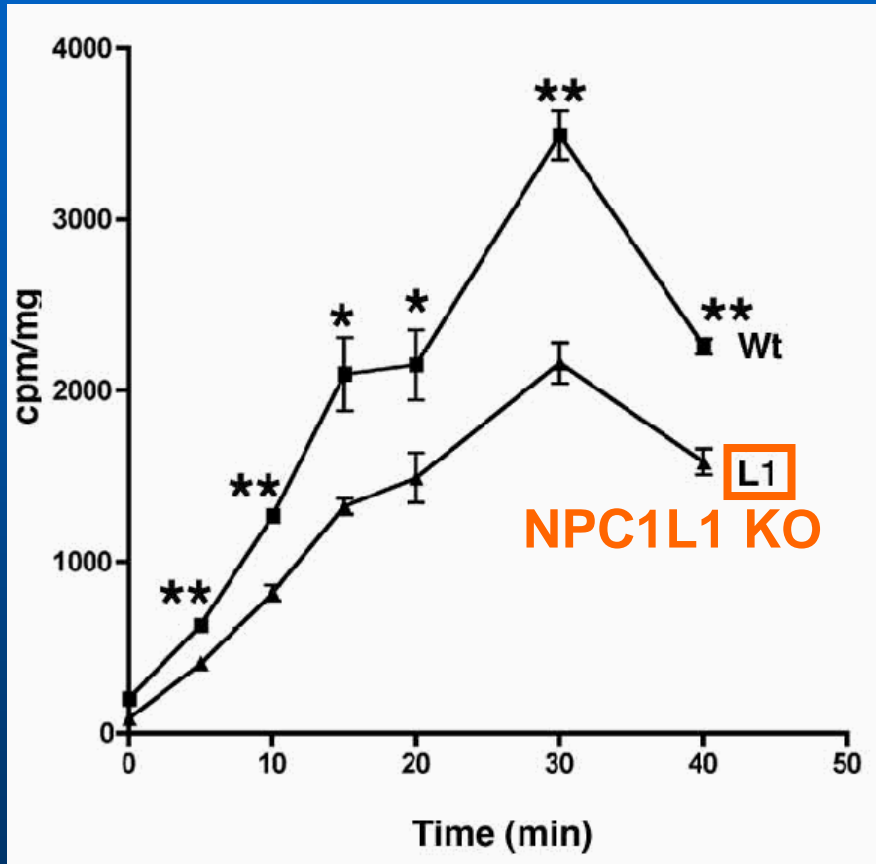
### 2.A.6.6. The Eukaryotic (Putative) Sterol Transporter (EST) Family

<a href="#">2.A.6.6.1</a>	Niemann-Pick C1 AND C2 disease proteins (together to form a possible lipid/cholesterol exporter from lysosomes to other cellular sites) (Sleat et al., 2004).	Animals	NPC1 and NPC2 of <i>Homo sapiens</i> NPC1 (AAH63302) NPC2 (AAH02532)
<a href="#">2.A.6.6.2</a>	Patched (Ptc) segmentation polarity protein	Animals	"Patched" of <i>Drosophila melanogaster</i>
<a href="#">2.A.6.6.3</a>	Yeast membrane protein YPL006w	Protein, yeast	YPL006w of <i>Saccharomyces cerevisiae</i>
<a href="#">2.A.6.6.4</a>	SREBP cleavage-activating protein, SCAP	Animals	SCAP of <i>Cricetulus griseus</i>
<a href="#">2.A.6.6.5</a>	3-hydroxy-3-methylglutaryl (HMG)-CoA reductase	Animals	HMG-CoA reductase of <i>Homo sapiens</i>
<a href="#">2.A.6.6.6</a>	Intestinal enterocyte brush border Niemann-Pick C1 like 1 (NPC1L1) protein; probably responsible for ezetimibe-sensitive absorption of luminal cholesterol (Altmann et al., 2004).	Animals	NPC1L1 of <i>Homo sapiens</i> (NP_037521)

# NPC1L1 mediates sterol absorption

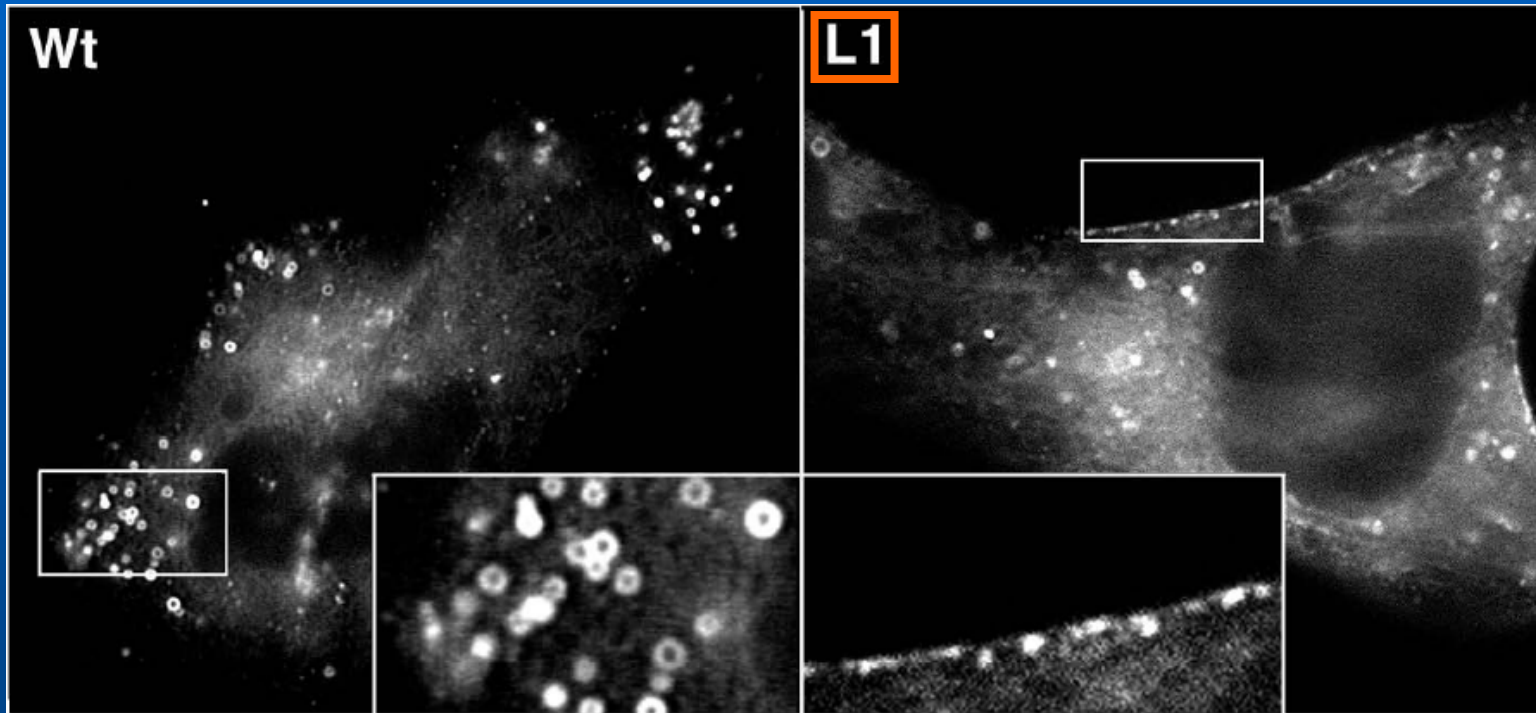
NPC1L1 reduces cholesterol uptake

and processing to the Golgi



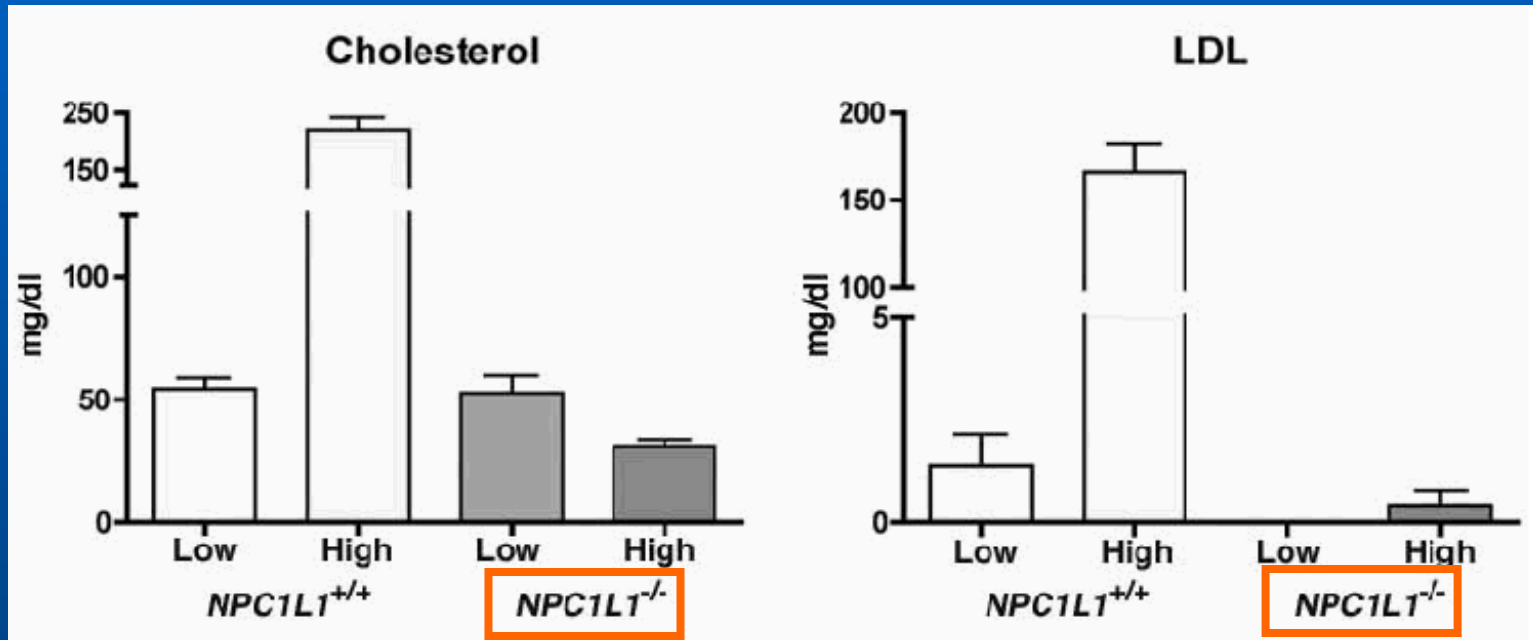
# NPC1L1 controls lipid endocytosis

## NPC1L1 controls caveolin localization

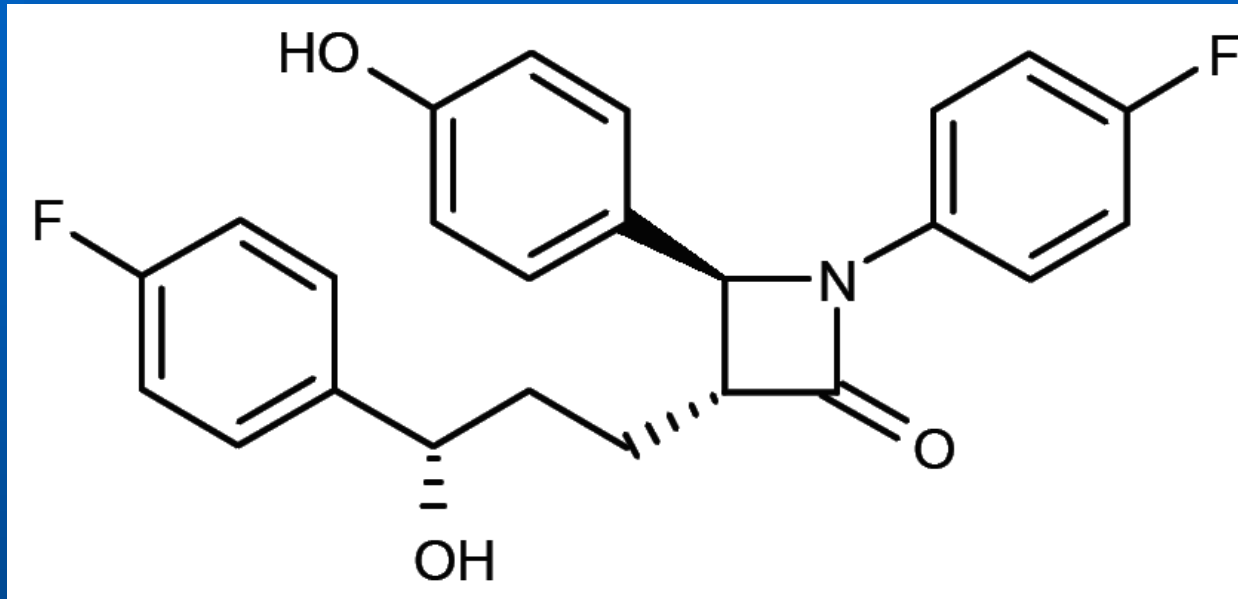


# NPC1L1 as a target for treating obesity ?

NPC1L1 KO mice are protected from hypercholesterolemia induced by a high fat diet



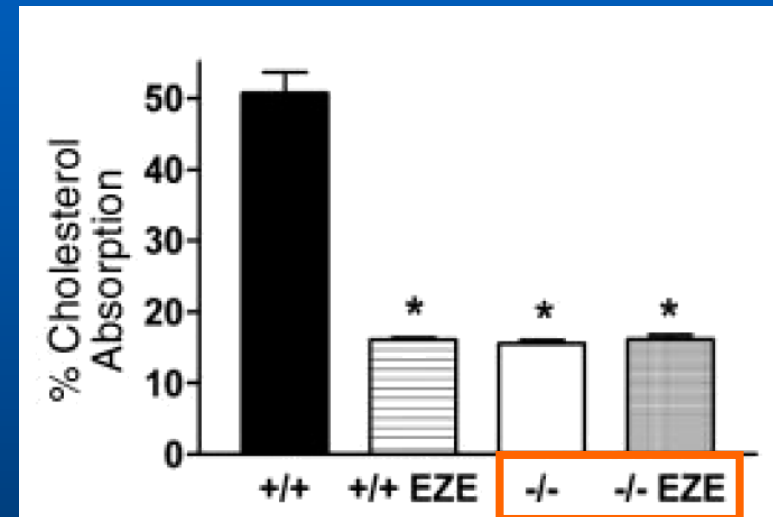
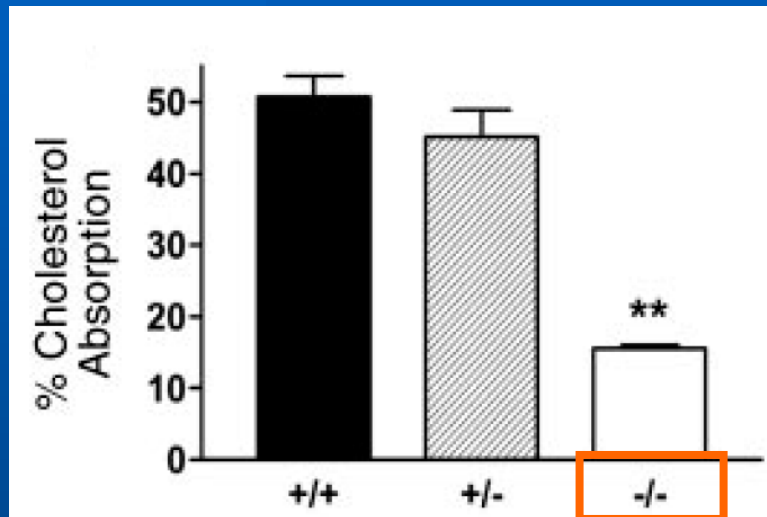
# Ezetimibe as inhibitor of sterol absorption



# Ezetimibe, a dual target inhibitor:

>< NPC1L1

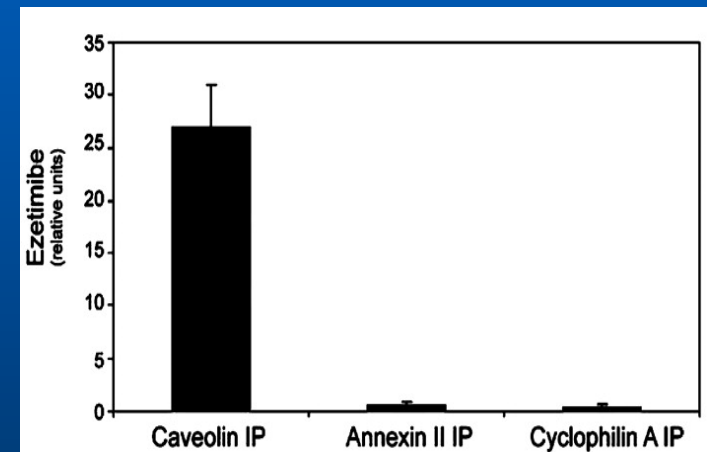
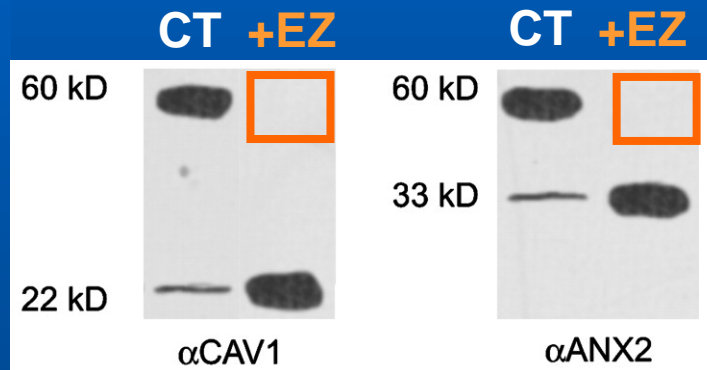
Ezetimibe is not efficient in NPC1L1 KO mice



# Ezetimibe, a dual target inhibitor:

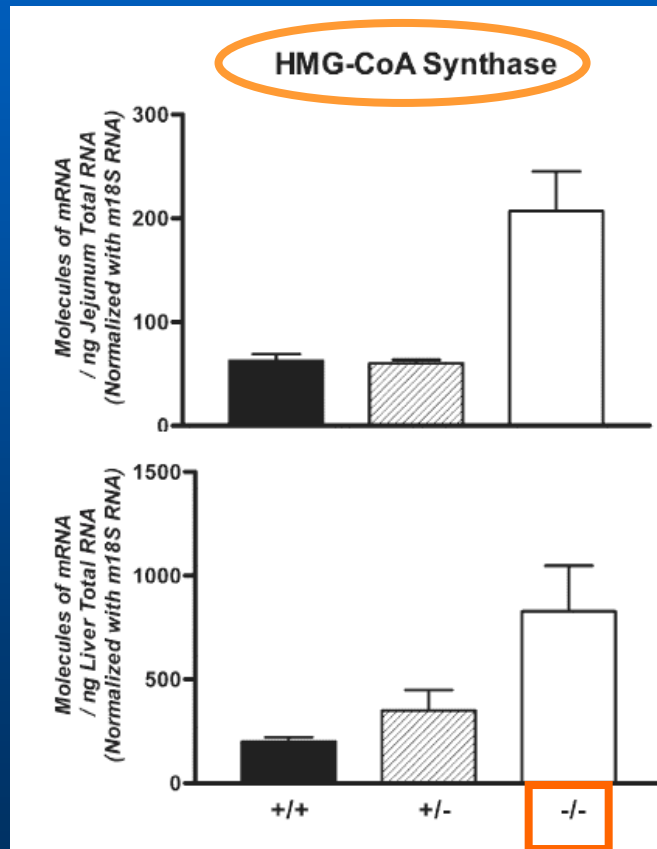
>< caveolin

Ezetimibe inhibits the formation of the annexin 2 – caveolin 1 complex by binding to caveolin



# Ezetimibe in combination with statins

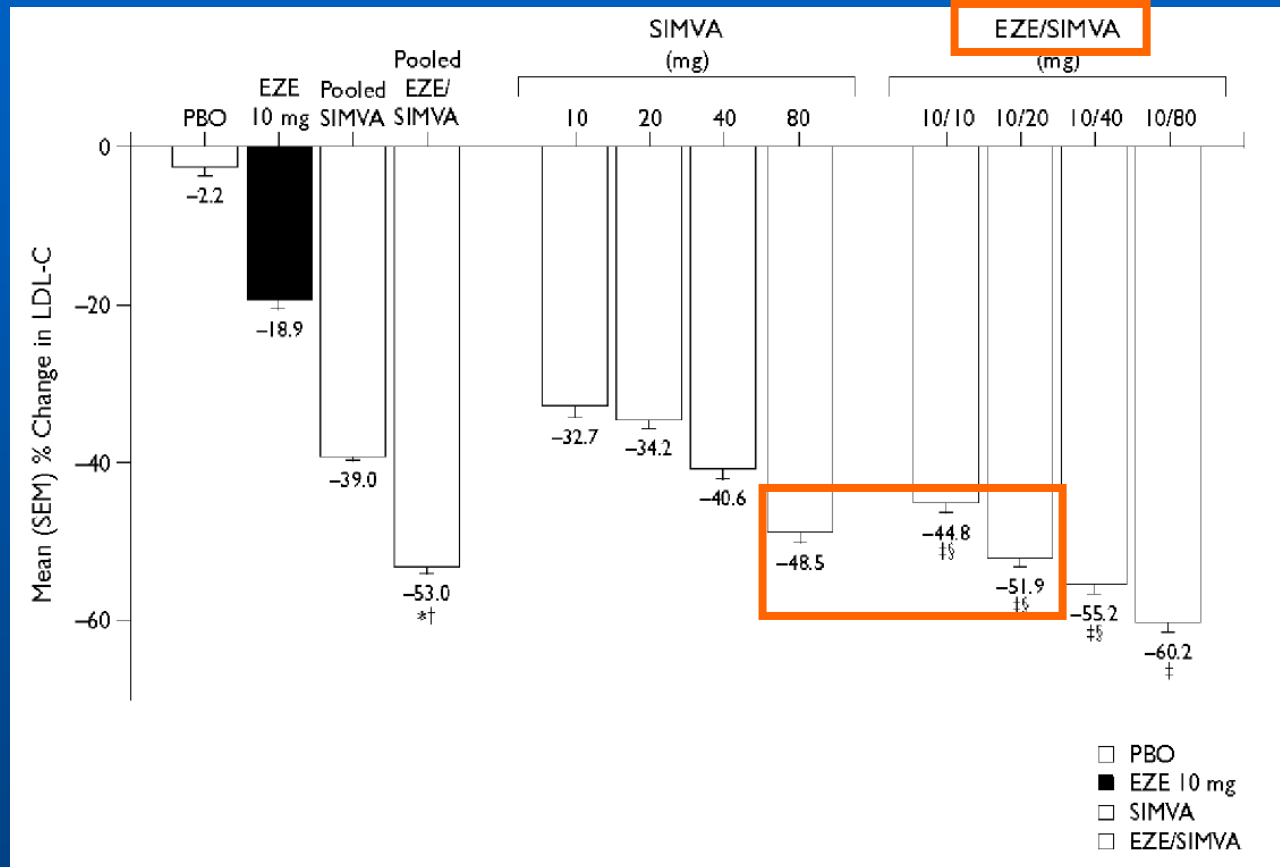
Reduction of cholesterol absorption stimulates endogenous synthesis



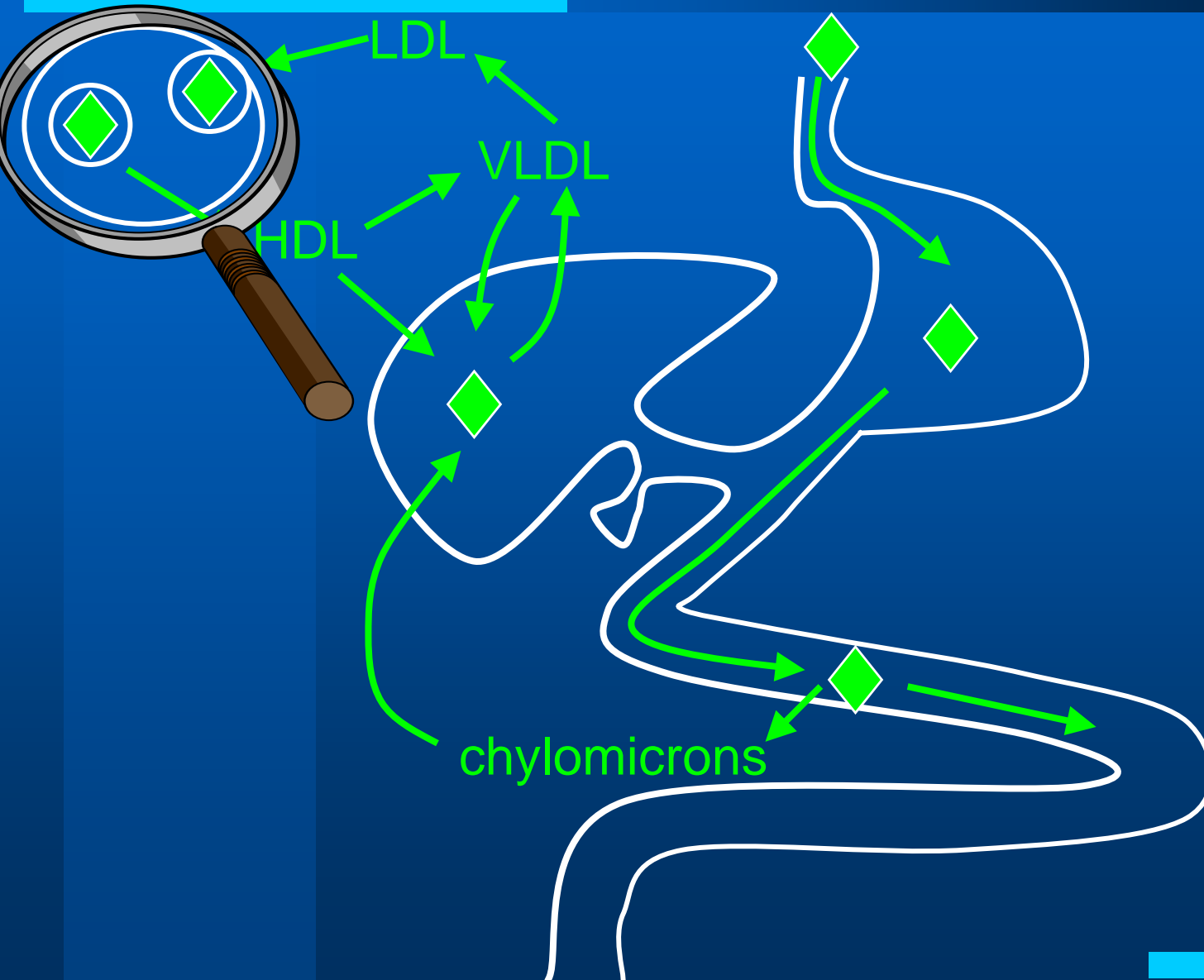


# Ezetimibe approved in Europe and in USA

10 mg EZ + 10-20 mg simvastatin = 80 mg simvastatin



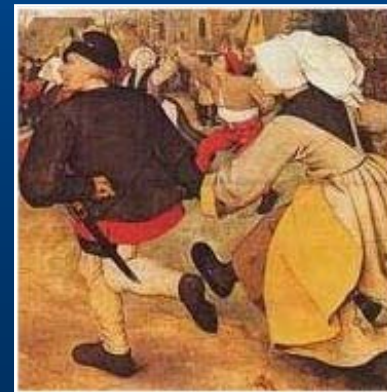
# Sterol fate in the body



restoration of  
impaired  
transport



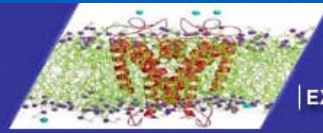
cholesterol  
traffic



# NPC1/2, two other RND sterol transporters

<http://www-biology.ucsd.edu/~msaier/transport/>

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Transport Classification Database

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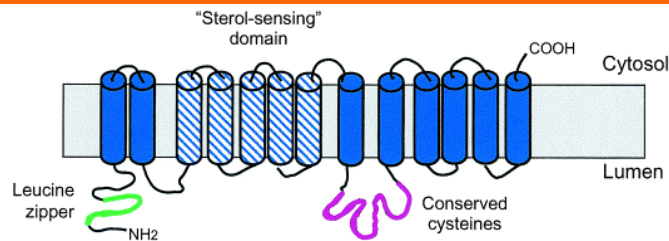
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## 2.A.6. The Resistance-Nodulation-Cell Division (RND) Superfamily

[View Proteins](#) [Read Description](#)

### 2.A.6.6. The Eukaryotic (Putative) Sterol Transporter (EST) Family

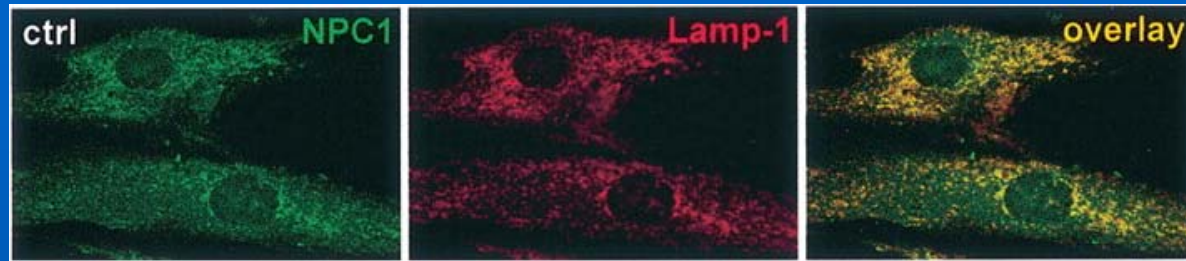
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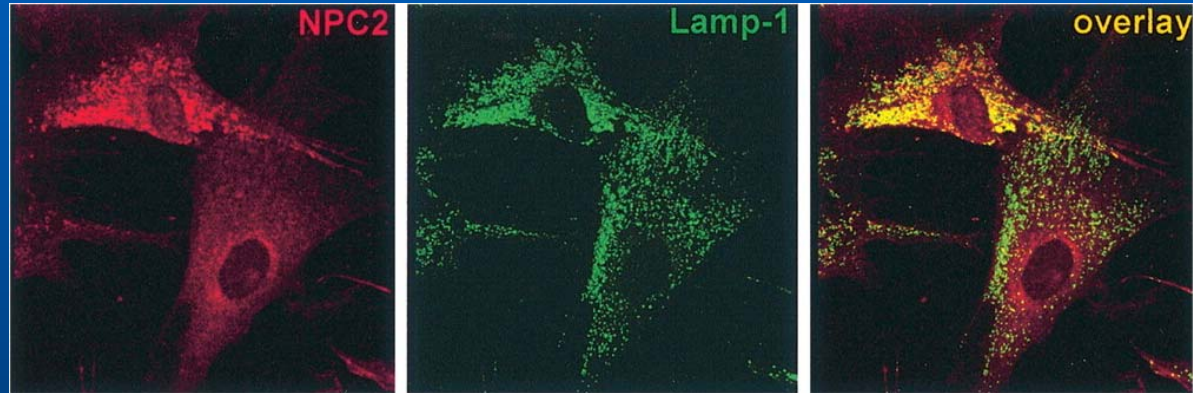
# Subcellular localization of NPC1 and NPC2



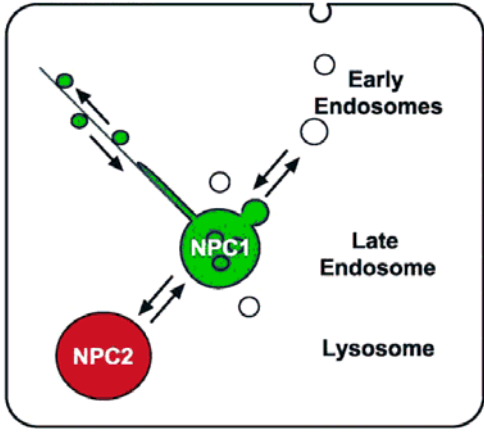
**NPC1**  
**'frequent flyer'**



**NPC2**  
**late endosomes/lysosomes**  
**resident**

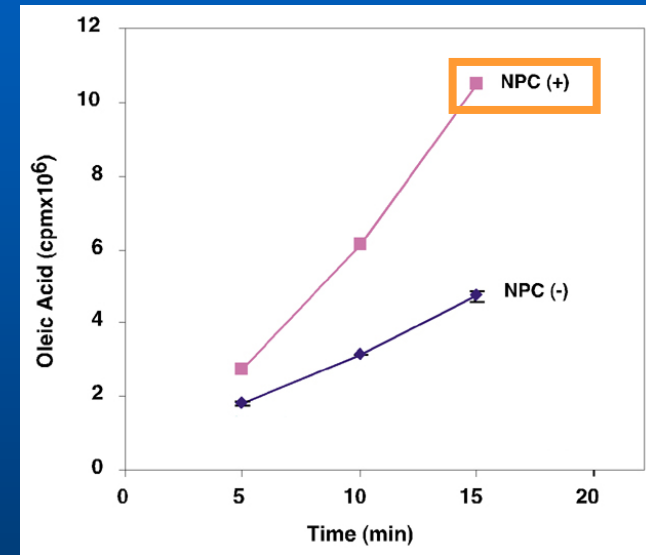
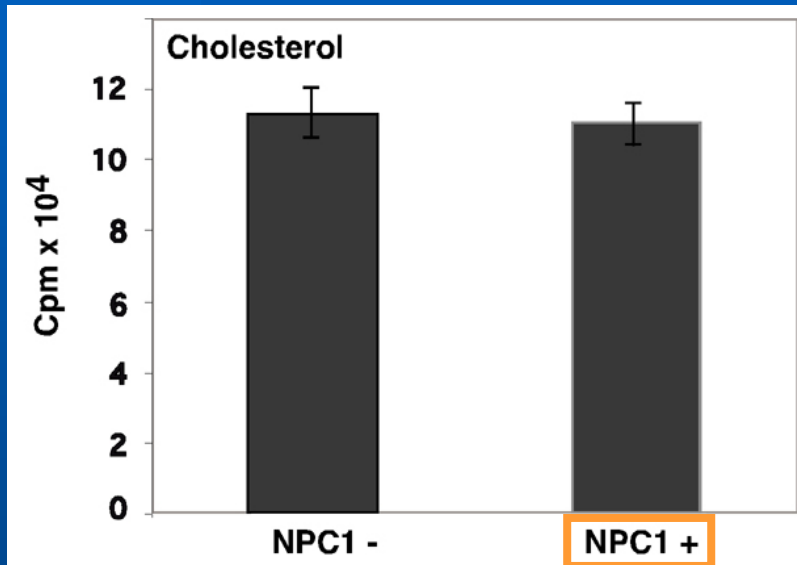


Normal cells



# NPC1 and NPC2 as lipid transporters

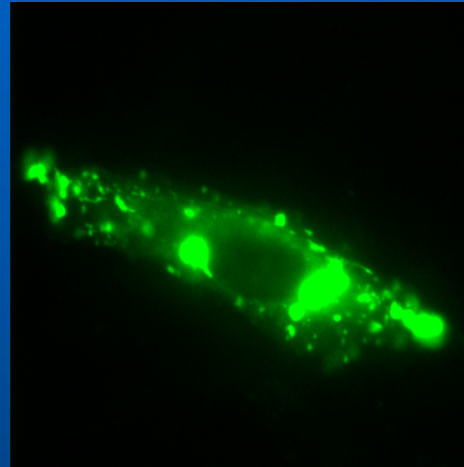
NPC1 expressed in *E. coli* transports oleic acid and other lipids but NOT cholesterol !



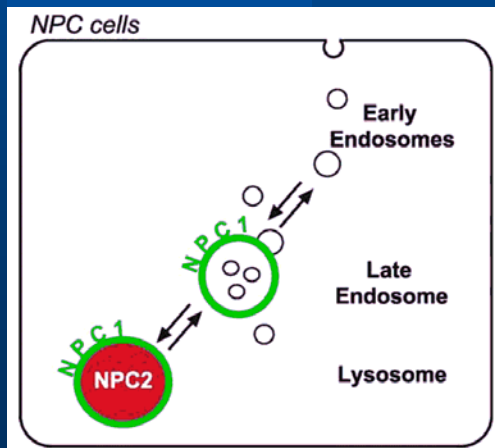
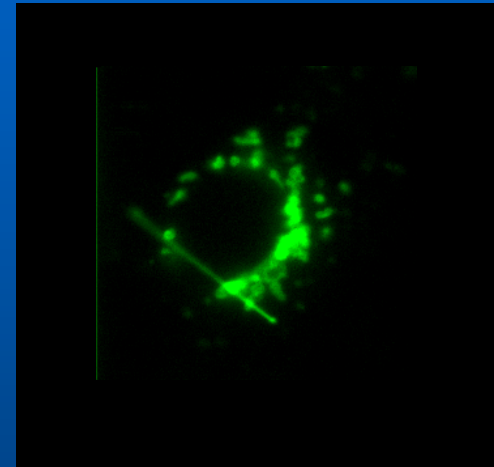
# Shuttle role of NPC1 is impaired in Niemann-Pick disease

NPC1 trafficking

normal



pathologic

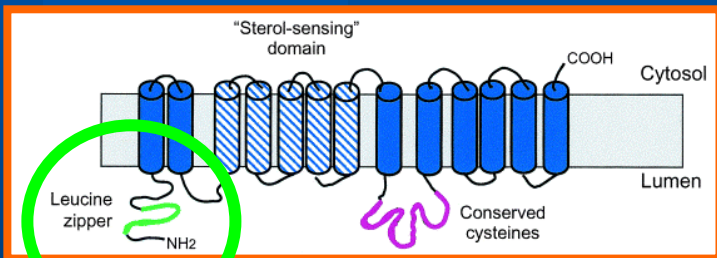
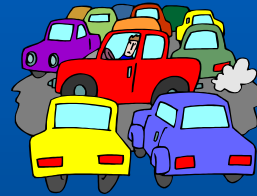


# Niemann – Pick disease

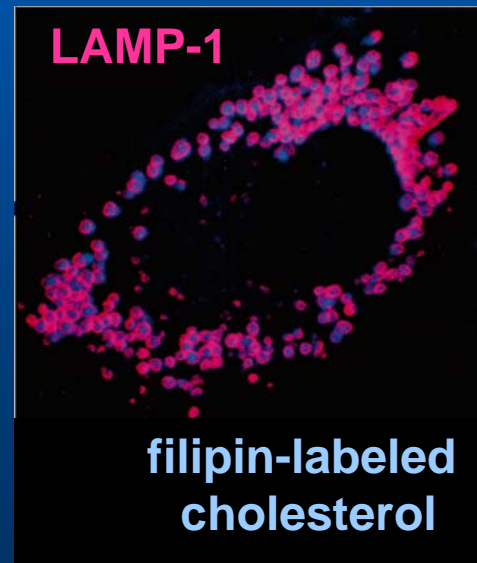
Mutations in NPC cause mislocalization of NPC1



...inducing a lipid 'traffic jam'

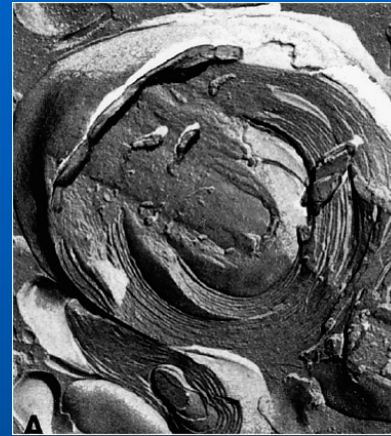


mutations  
in the lysosomal  
targeting signal



# Niemann – Pick disease

accumulation of cholesterol and polar lipids in lysosomes



Cells		Age at diagnosis (years)	Total lipids ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{mg}$ cell protein)	Cholesterol ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{mg}$ cell protein)	Gb3 <sup>a</sup> ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{mg}$ cell protein)	Cholesterol (% of total lipids)
Normal controls ( $n=10$ )	Range	1–63	340–450	37–54	<1.6–10.9	9–12
	Mean $\pm$ S.D.	11.2 $\pm$ 19.6	368 $\pm$ 50.2	40.5 $\pm$ 7.81	6.18 $\pm$ 4.12	11.1 $\pm$ 1.07
Niemann-Pick type C	No. 1	0.25	775	155	6	20
	No. 2	0.5	850	193	10	23
	No. 3	2.8	660	140	12	21
	No. 4	2.9	801	157	15	20
	No. 5	3.8	1117	199	14.5	18

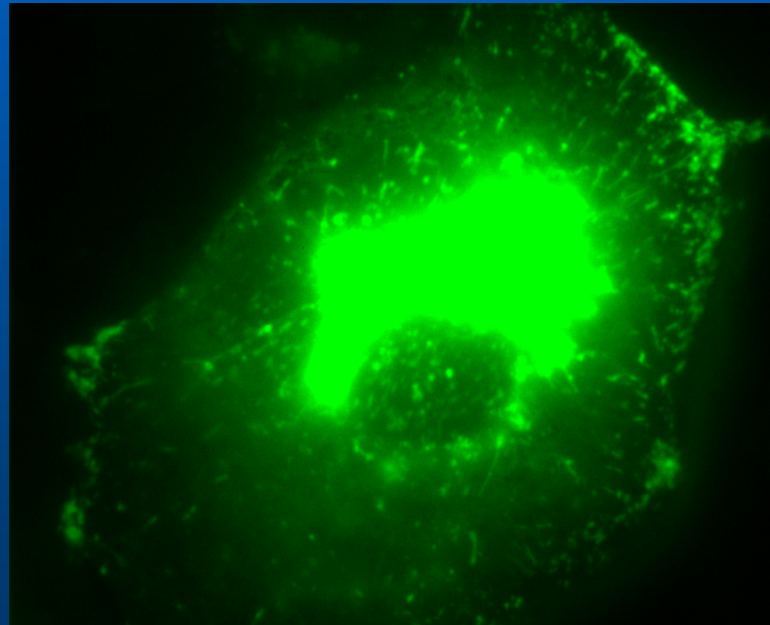


# Niemann – Pick disease:

## therapeutic strategies

### gene therapy - NPC:

- restoration of normal traffic in *in vitro* models of Niemann-Pick disease



- no efficient vector for gene delivery to the brain

# Niemann – Pick disease:

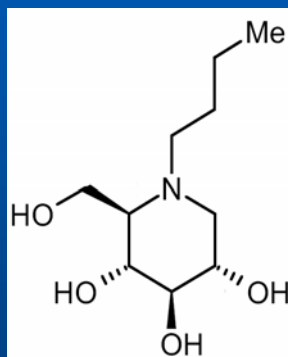
## therapeutic strategies

accumulation of cholesterol and polar lipids in lysosomes

### statins:

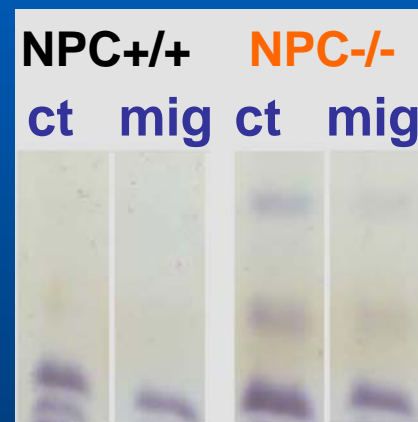
- ↓ cholesterol
- BUT no clinical benefit !

### miglustat



inhibitor of  
glucosyl-  
ceramide  
synthase

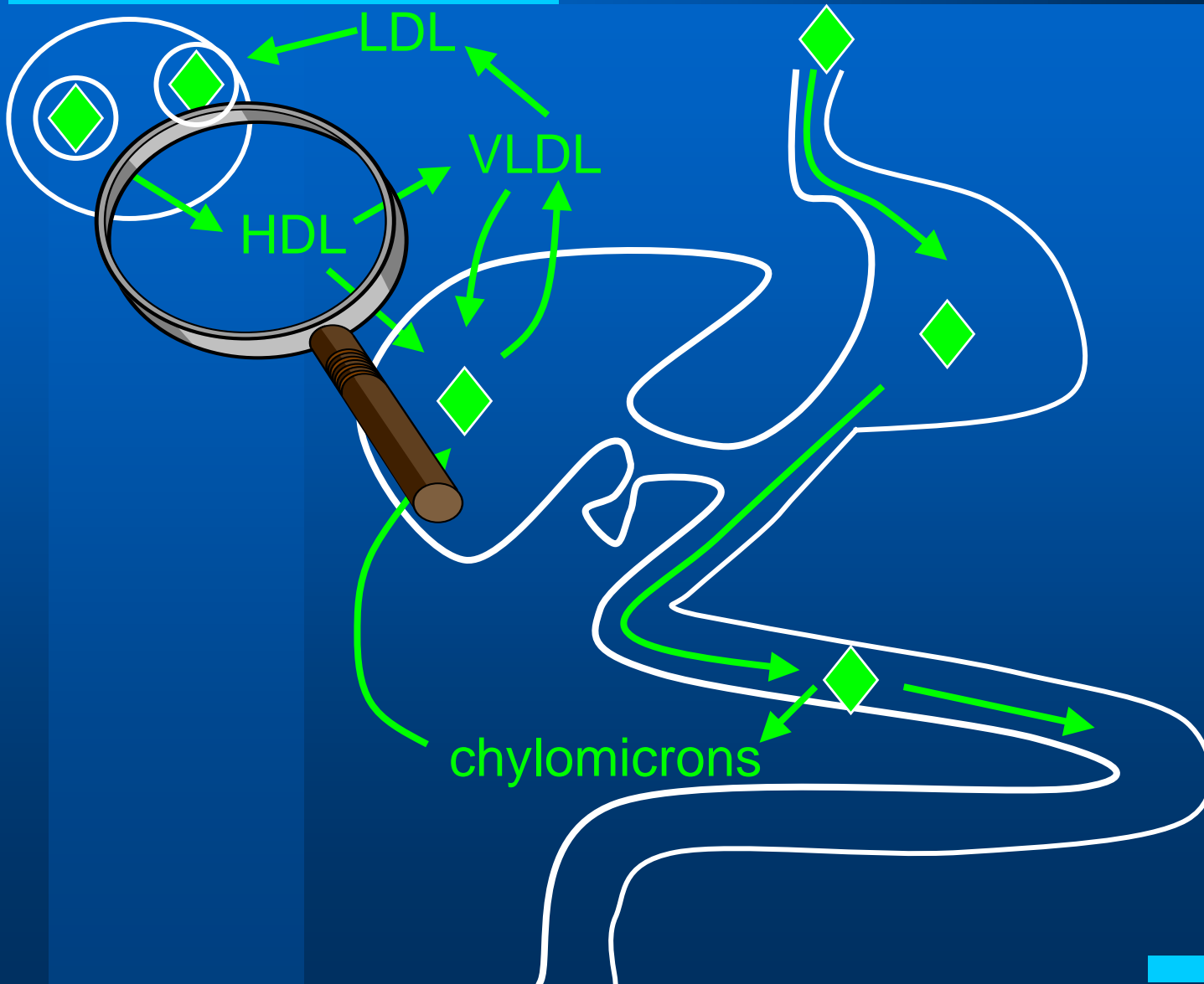
↓ gangliosides



FDA and EMEA approved for Gaucher disease;  
tested for Niemann-Pick disease



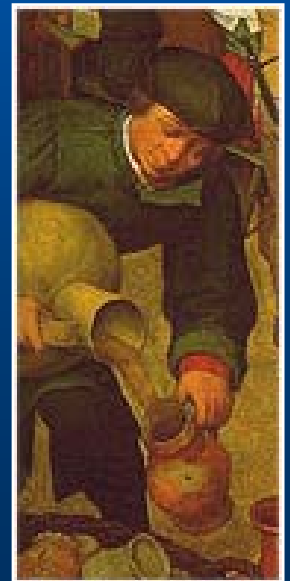
# Sterol fate in the body



stimulation of favorable transport



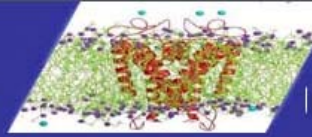
cholesterol efflux



# ABCA1, a ABC sterol transporter

<http://www-biology.ucsd.edu/~msaier/transport/>

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## 3.A.1. The ATP-binding Cassette (ABC) Superfamily

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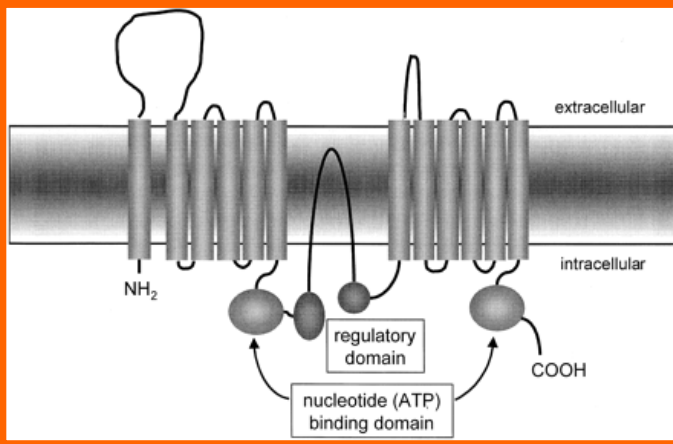
### 3.A.1.211. The Cholesterol/Phospholipid/Retinal (CPR) Flippase Family (ABCA)

[3.A.1.211.1](#) The cholesterol/phospholipid flippase, ABC1 (called **ABCA1** in humans; Tangier disease proteins; 2261 aas; sp: O95477) Animals and plants ABC1 of *Mus musculus*

[3.A.1.211.2](#) The retinal-specific ABC transporter (RIM protein, ABCR or ABCA4) (Stargardt's disease protein) in the rod outer segment. May flip retinal in the membrane bilayer. Animals RIM protein (ABCR) of *Homo sapiens*

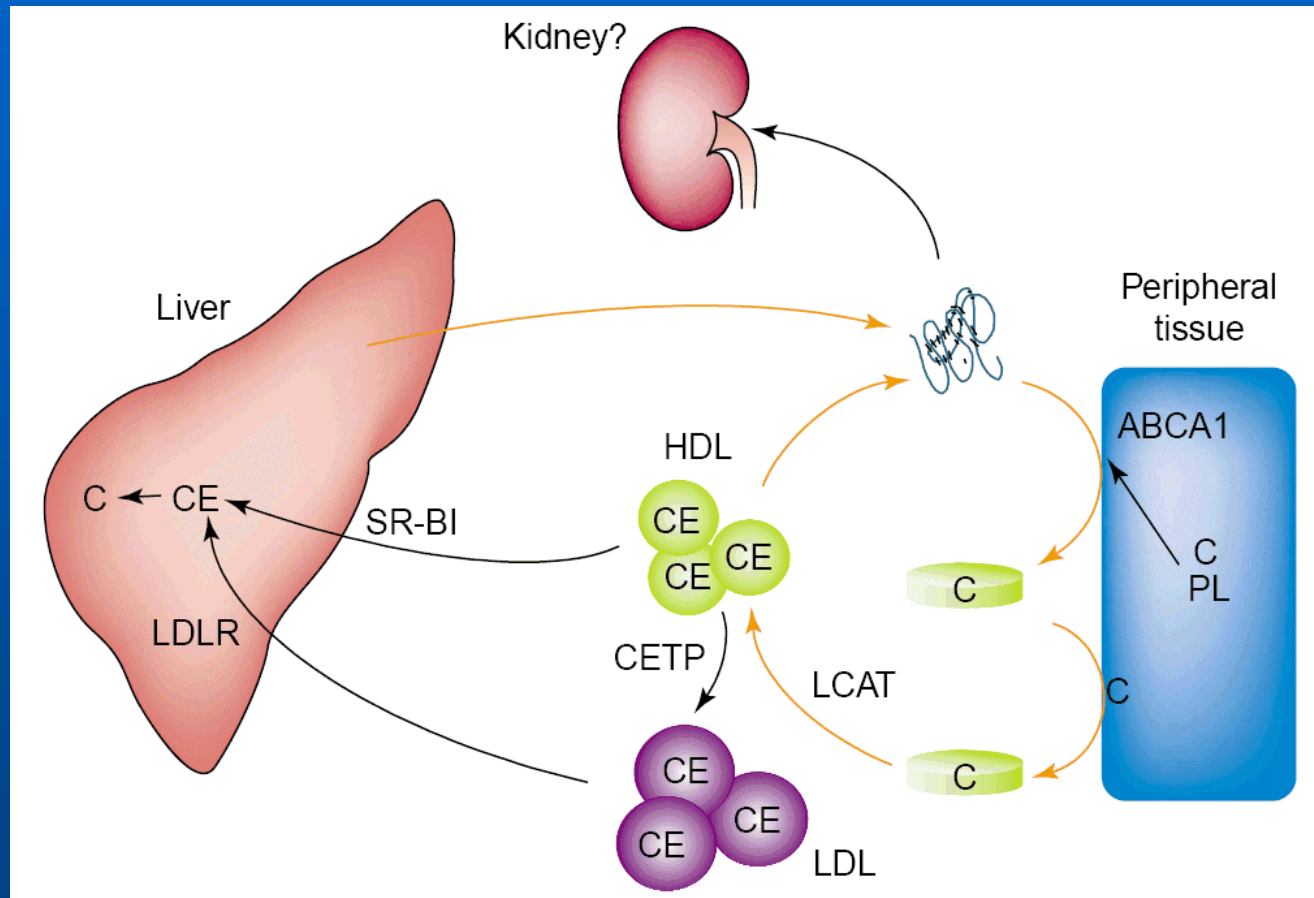
[3.A.1.211.3](#) Multidrug resistance pump, ABCA2 (ABC2) Animals ABCA2 of *Homo sapiens*

[3.A.1.211.4](#) The *aced* cell death 7 (*ced-7*) protein (translocates molecules that mediate adhesion between dying and engulfing embryonic cells during programmed death). Animals Ced-7 of *Caenorhabditis elegans* (P34358)





# ABCA1 involved in reverse cholesterol transport

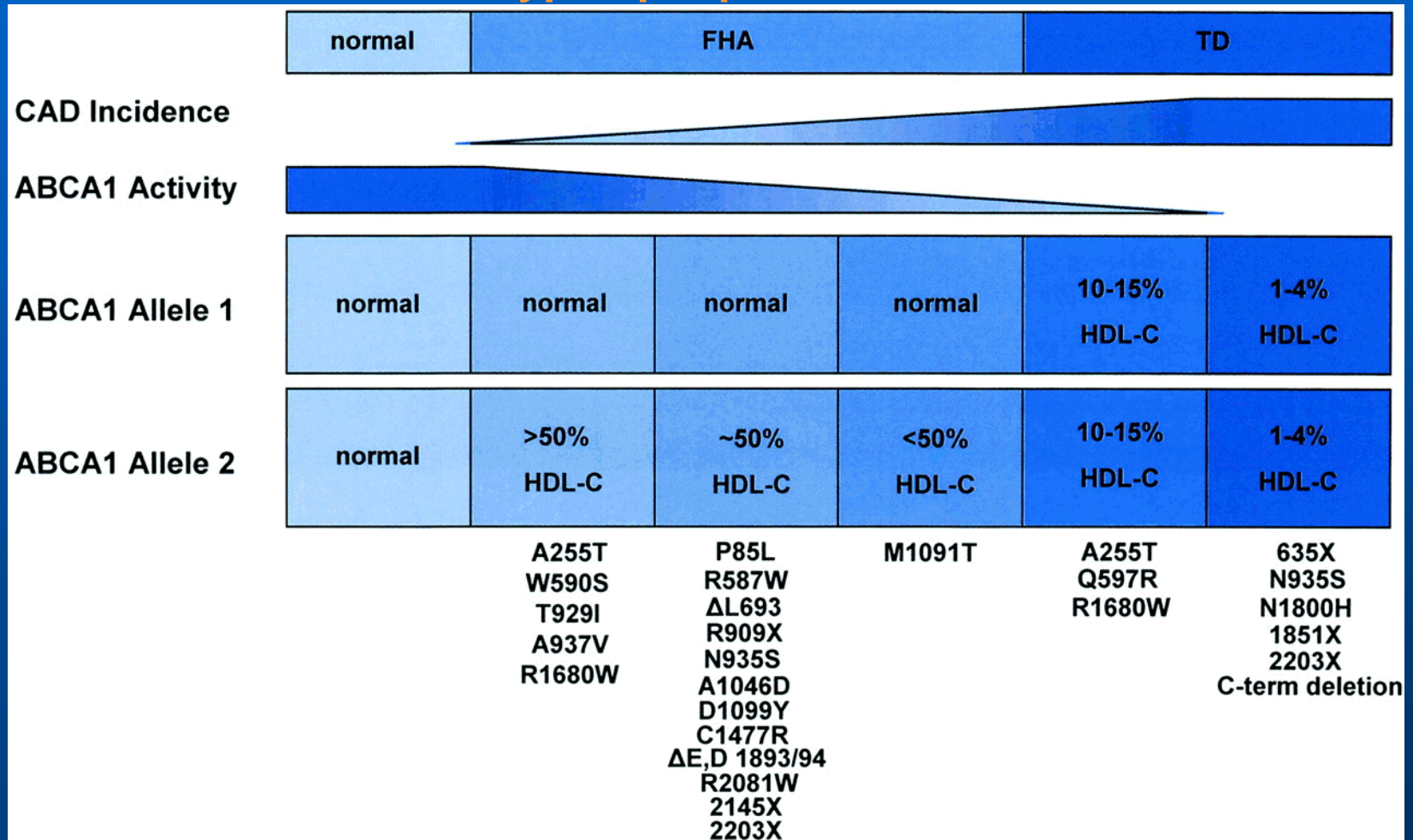


# ABCA1 activity protects

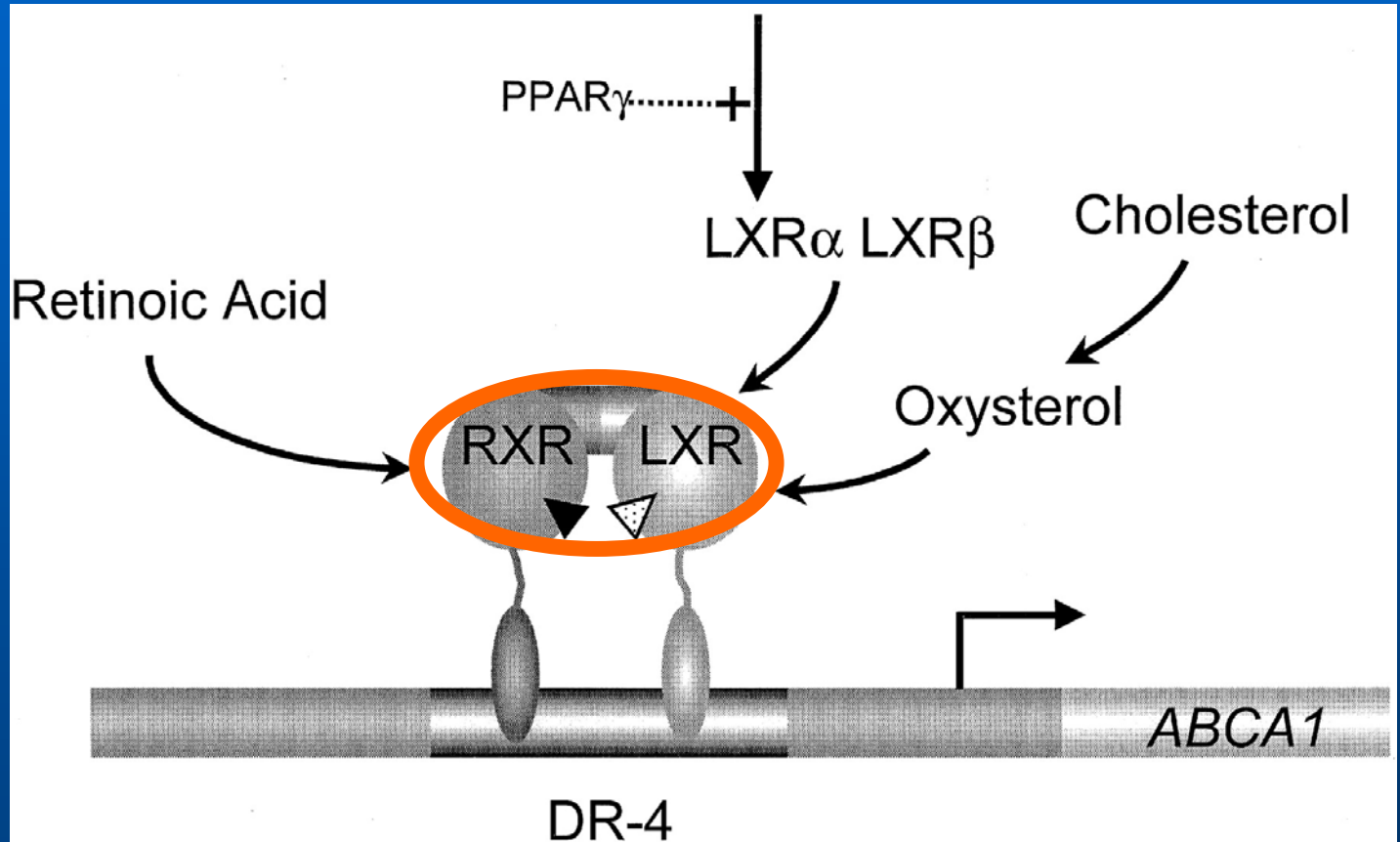
# against atheromatosis

familial  
hypoalphaproteinemia

Tangier disease



# Regulation of ABCA1 expression

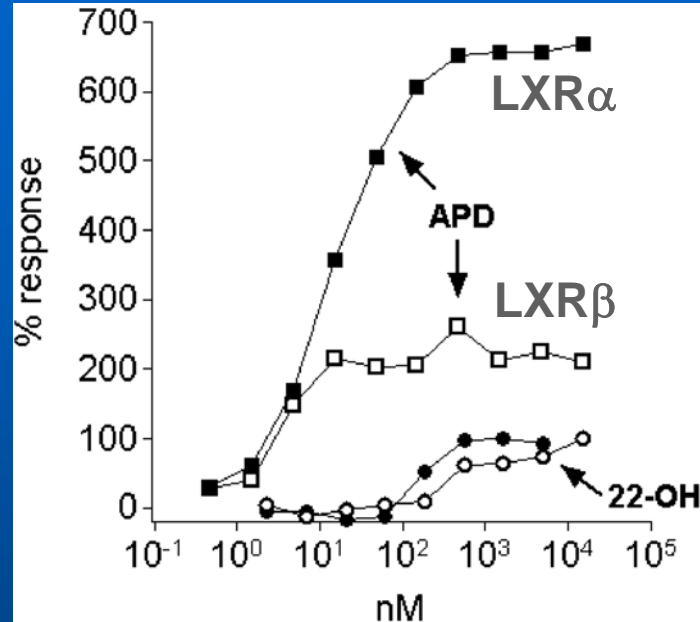
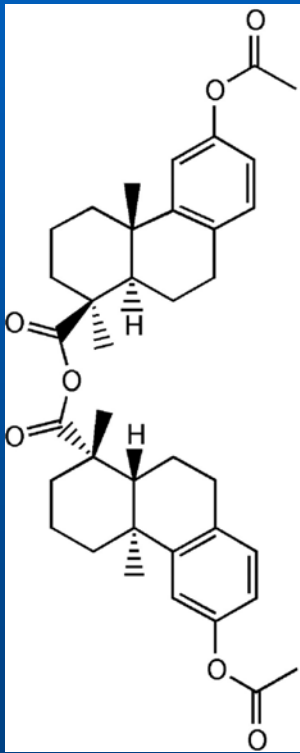


*Retinoid X receptor; Liver X receptor*



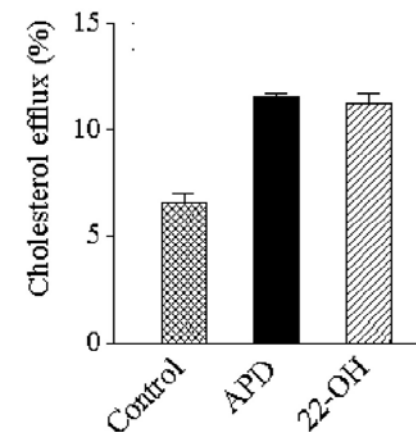
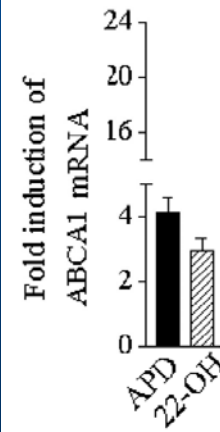
# LXR agonists more potent than oxysterols

**APD**  
acetyl-podocarpic  
dimer

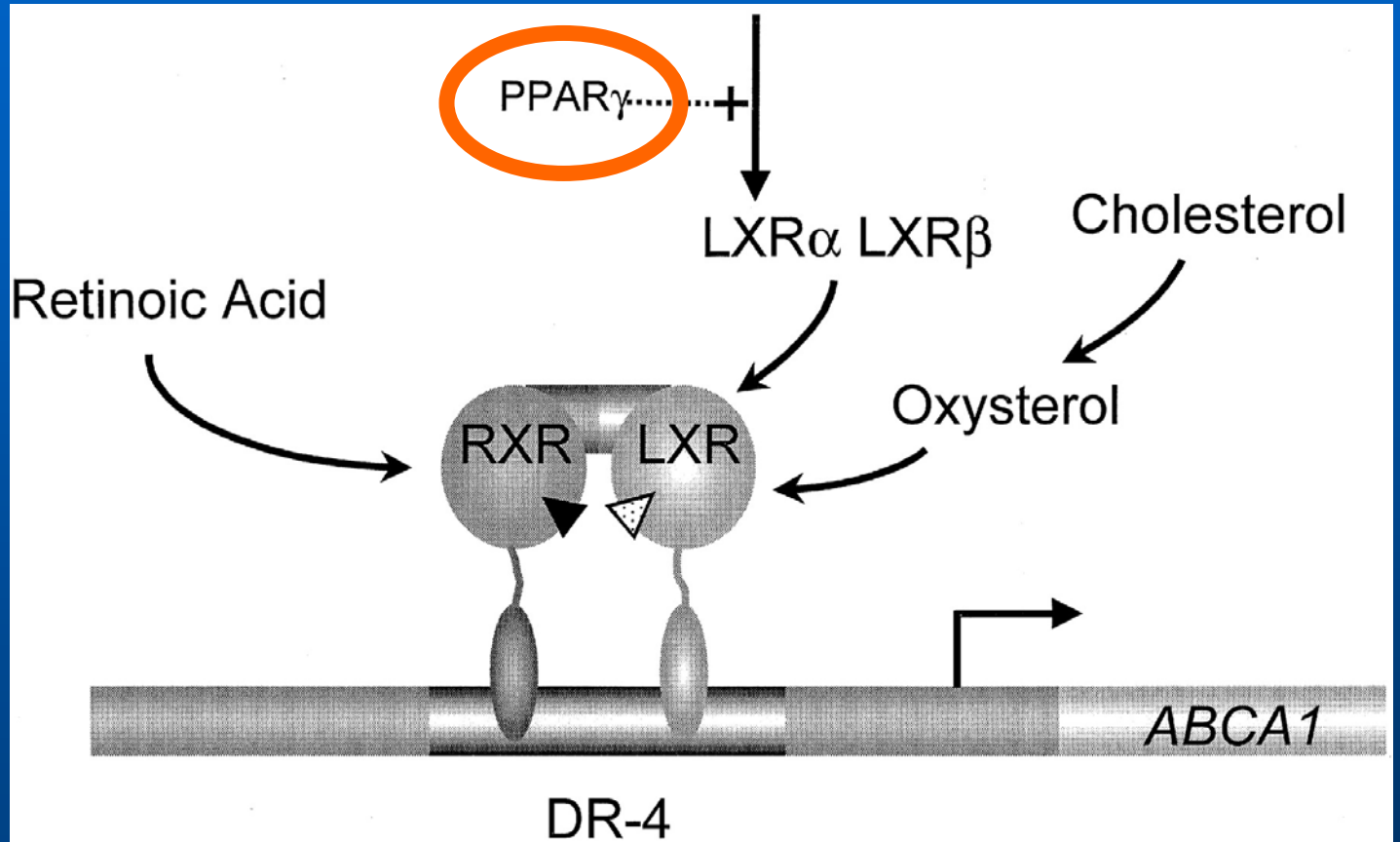


activation of  
LXRα (and β)

induction of ABCA1  
and ↑ cholesterol efflux



# Regulation of ABCA1 expression

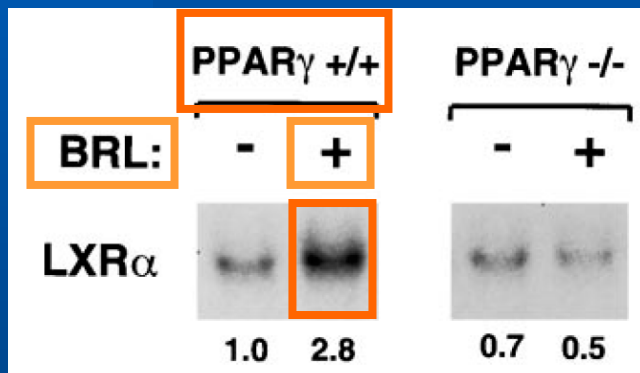


*peroxisome proliferator activated receptor*

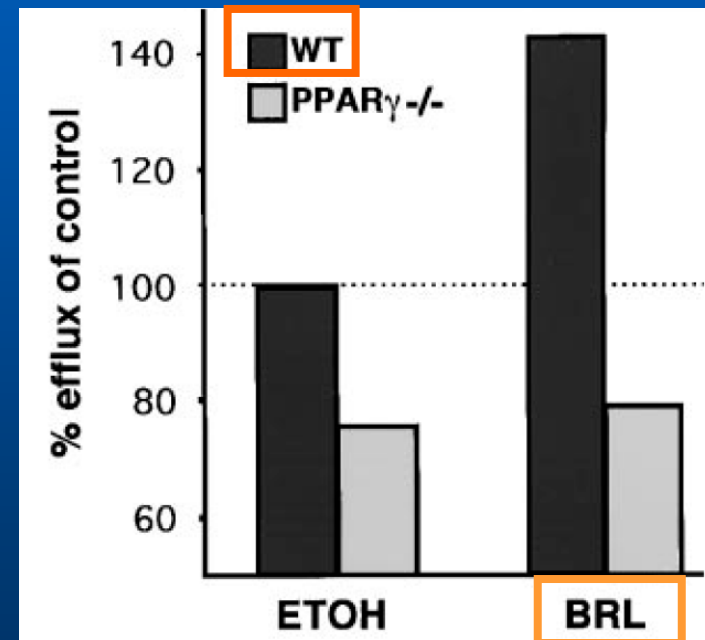
# PPAR $\gamma$ agonists: new target for thiazolidinediones ?

## BRL (rosiglitazone)

induction of LXR $\alpha$  mRNA  
expression mediated by PPAR $\gamma$



increase in cholesterol efflux  
mediated by PPAR $\gamma$



# Questions for future research

- **inhibition of cholesterol absorption**

- **Deleterious consequences of inhibiting the formation of the caveolin-annexin complex ?**

(Cohen *et al.* (2004) *Physiol Rev.* 84:1341-79; Kim *et al.* (2002) *Front Biosci.* 7:d341-8)

- Development of inhibitors targeting exclusively NPC1L1 ?

- **restoration of NPC trafficking**

- **Appropriate vectors for gene delivery in the brain?**

- Viral vectors (Yenari & Sapolsky (2005) *Methods Mol Med.* 104:75-88)

- **increase in ABCA1 expression**

- **Other genes under the control of LXR ?**

- Lipid metabolism, carbohydrate metabolism, energy homeostasis, inflammatory response

(Steffensen & Gustafsson (2004) *Diabetes* 53 S1:S36-42)

