



# Discovery of a First-In-Class Topically Bioavailable Kit Inhibitor With Clinical Activity Using Computational Chemogenomics Technology

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# Introduction

- Standard Approach to Drug Discovery

**Pick a disease → Pick a Target → Screen for Compounds**

- nPharmakon: Indication-Agnostic Approach

**Safe Drug → Find New Target → New Disease**

- To Discover A Drug – Start with a Drug

# Repurposing vs. Retargeting

## ■ Repurposing

- Popular approach, efforts by many
- Take an approved drug with an established MOA and find a new indication for **the same MOA**

## ■ Retargeting

- Emerging approach
- Take a safe drug or drug candidate and find a **new MOA (target)** which will lead to a new indication

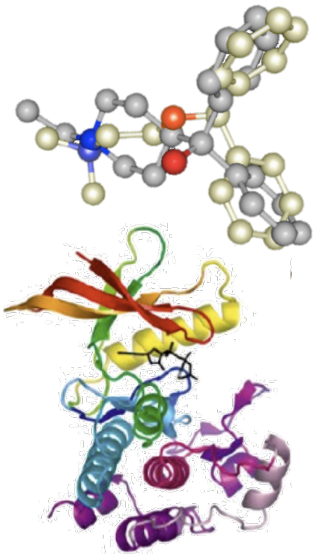
# nPharmakon

- Founded **2008**, privately funded
- Team: ex-pharmaceutical industry
- **Drug retargeting:**  
matching safe drugs with new indications

Proprietary computational technology

# nPharmakon Technology

Uncovering Previously Unrecognized  
Targets of Drugs



## Ligand analogy

Analyzing Small Molecules: Drugs, Tool Compounds

## Target analogy

Analyzing Proteins

Enterprise-grade computing,  
outsourced experiments

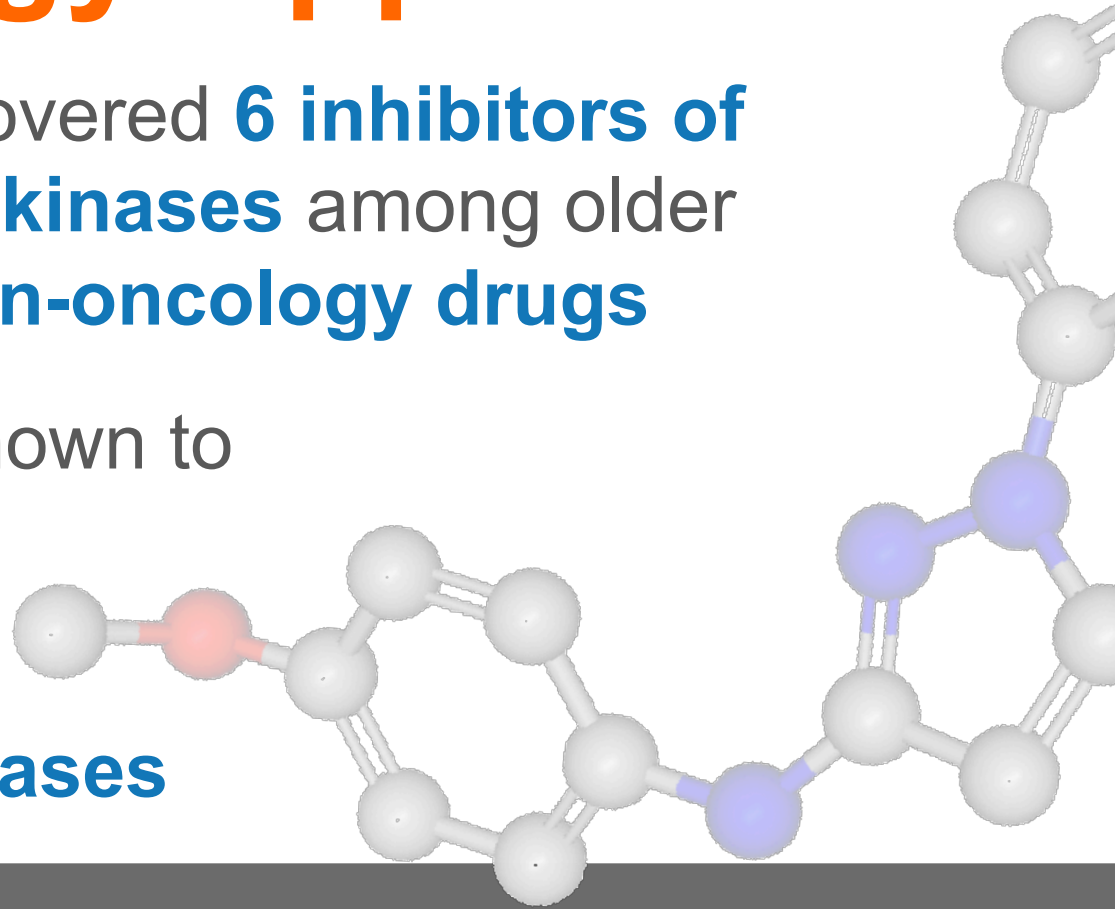
# nPharmakon Collection

Rich source of clinically safe leads,  
development candidates

- **7,000** small molecules past Phase I
- Many previously used in clinic **around the world** (Europe, Russia, Japan, etc.)
- MW < 500 Da only; no proteins, peptides, complex natural products, lipids, or inorganics

# Technology Application

- nPharmakon discovered **6 inhibitors of protein and lipid kinases** among older **clinically safe non-oncology drugs**
- Drugs were not known to inhibit **any** kinase
- Technology is **not limited to kinases**



Modulators of critical pathways  
found among out-of-patent drugs

# nPharmakon Pipeline

**NPH29**

skin pigmentation;  
clinical

**NPH12**

atopic dermatitis;  
preclinical



# Pipeline, Continued

**NPH09** fibrosis;  
exploratory

**NPH39** p53-negative  
cancer; exploratory

**NPH40** liver cancer;  
exploratory

# NPH29 (FPL-62064) is a Topical Anti-inflammatory with Previously Unknown Activity against c-Kit

% Inhibition of control values

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

cox1 (h)

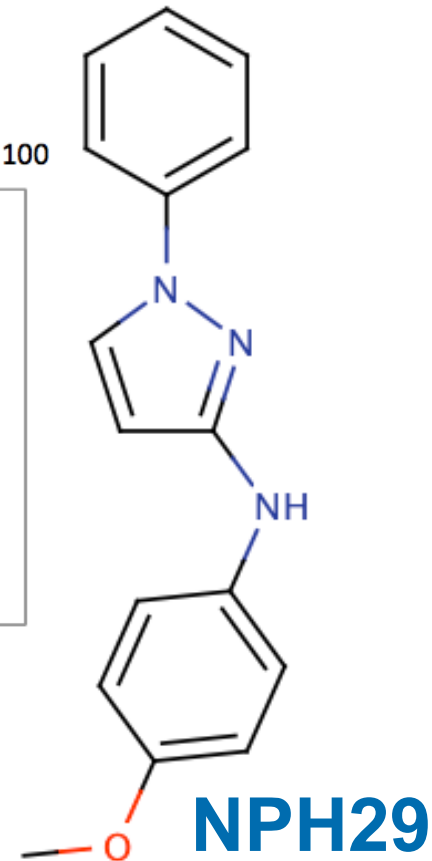
cox2 (h)

5-lipoxygenase (h)

c-Kit (h)



Test concentration: 10  $\mu$ M



# Kit Inhibition is a Highly Validated Therapeutic Strategy for Depigmentation

- **Kit receptor tyrosine kinase** is expressed in skin and hair follicle melanocytes; controls expression of enzymes that make skin pigment **melanin**; activated by **Kit ligand**
- **Up-Regulation** of Kit signaling (e.g., injection of Kit ligand, Kit ligand gain-of-function genetic mutation) increases pigmentation
- **Down-Regulation** of Kit signaling (e.g., Kit loss-of-function genetic mutation, injection of anti-Kit antibody) **reduces pigmentation**
- Kit and Kit ligand are overexpressed in **melasma**, a prevalent pigmentation disorder of the skin

# Kit Inhibitor Oncology Drugs Cause Skin Depigmentation



*Arch Dermatol* (2009) 145:1313

- Depigmentation is reported in **~70%** of cancer patients taking systemic Kit inhibitor drugs
- **No topical Kit inhibitor is currently available**

# Melasma:

US 7M, Japan 3M  
persons affected

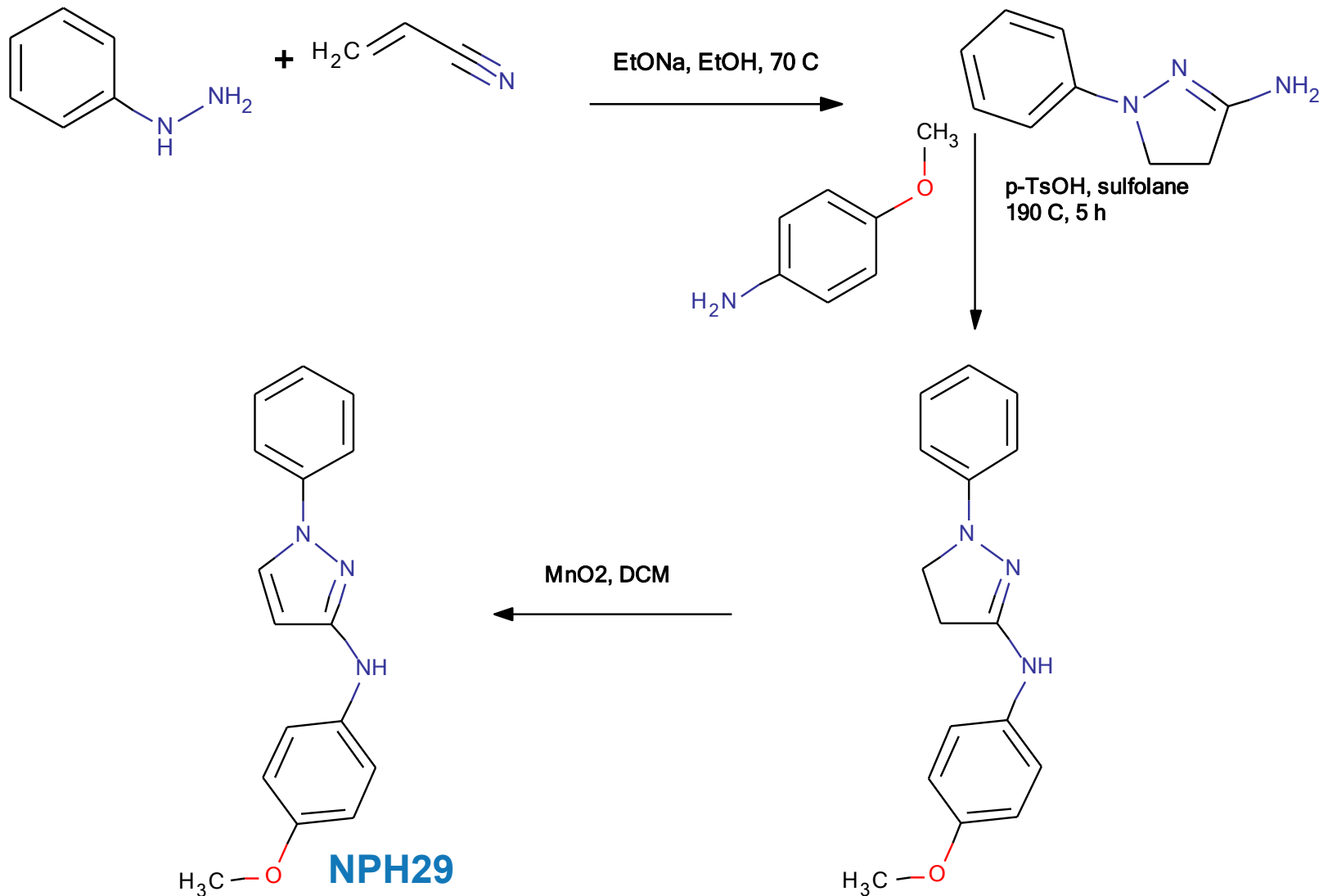
- Highly distressing, frequently life-altering condition
- Existing therapies are unsatisfactory



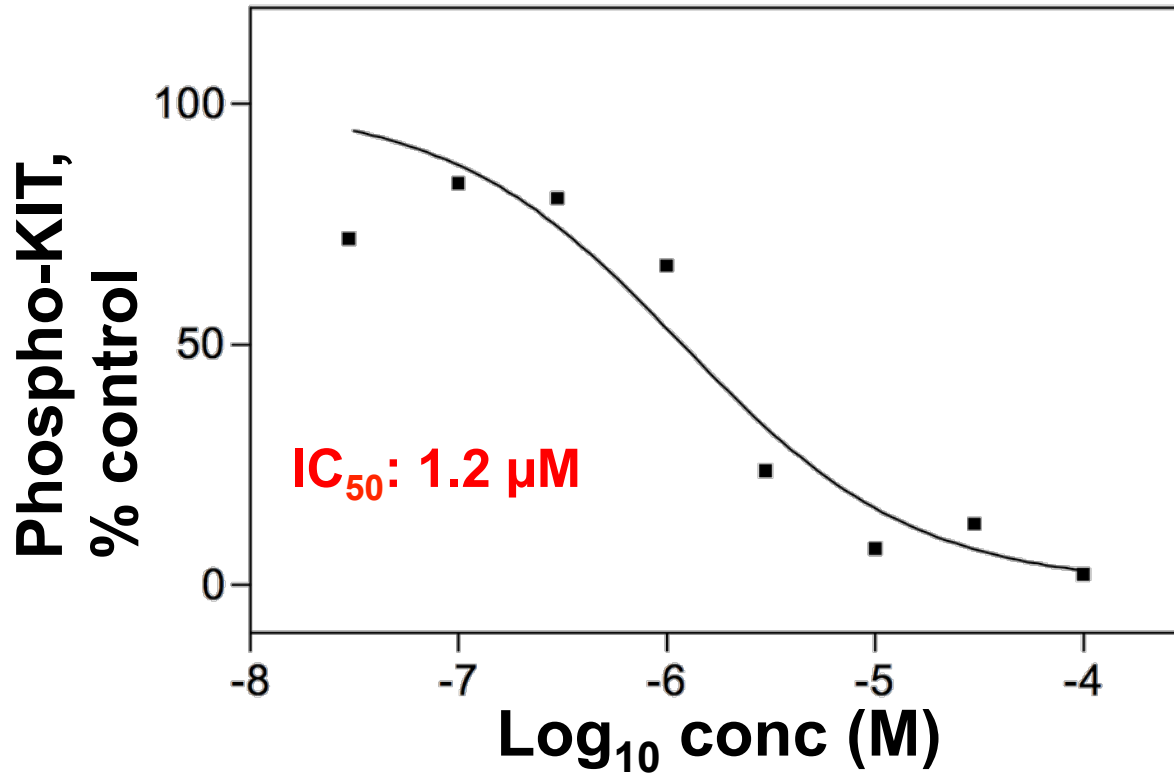
# NPH29: Summary of Historical Data

- **NPH29 (FPL-62064)** was developed by Fisons plc. (Loughborough, Leics.,UK), currently part of AstraZeneca; US patent issued in 1989
- **Anti-inflammatory agent:** Inhibits arachidonic acid metabolism via dual inhibition of 5-lipoxygenase and prostaglandin synthase (COX)
- **Active in animals:** Inhibits UV induced erythema and edema in guinea pig, mouse, rat, rabbit
- **Rapid systemic clearance:** Reported rapidly and extensively metabolized upon intravenous administration; inactive by the oral route at doses up to 200 mg/kg (in rat)
- **Topically bioavailable:** 2% topical formulation of FPL-62064 has been developed as a treatment for psoriasis
- **Safety in humans:** topical application of the drug reported safe and well tolerated in human patients; drug advanced to Phase III

# NPH29: Synthesis



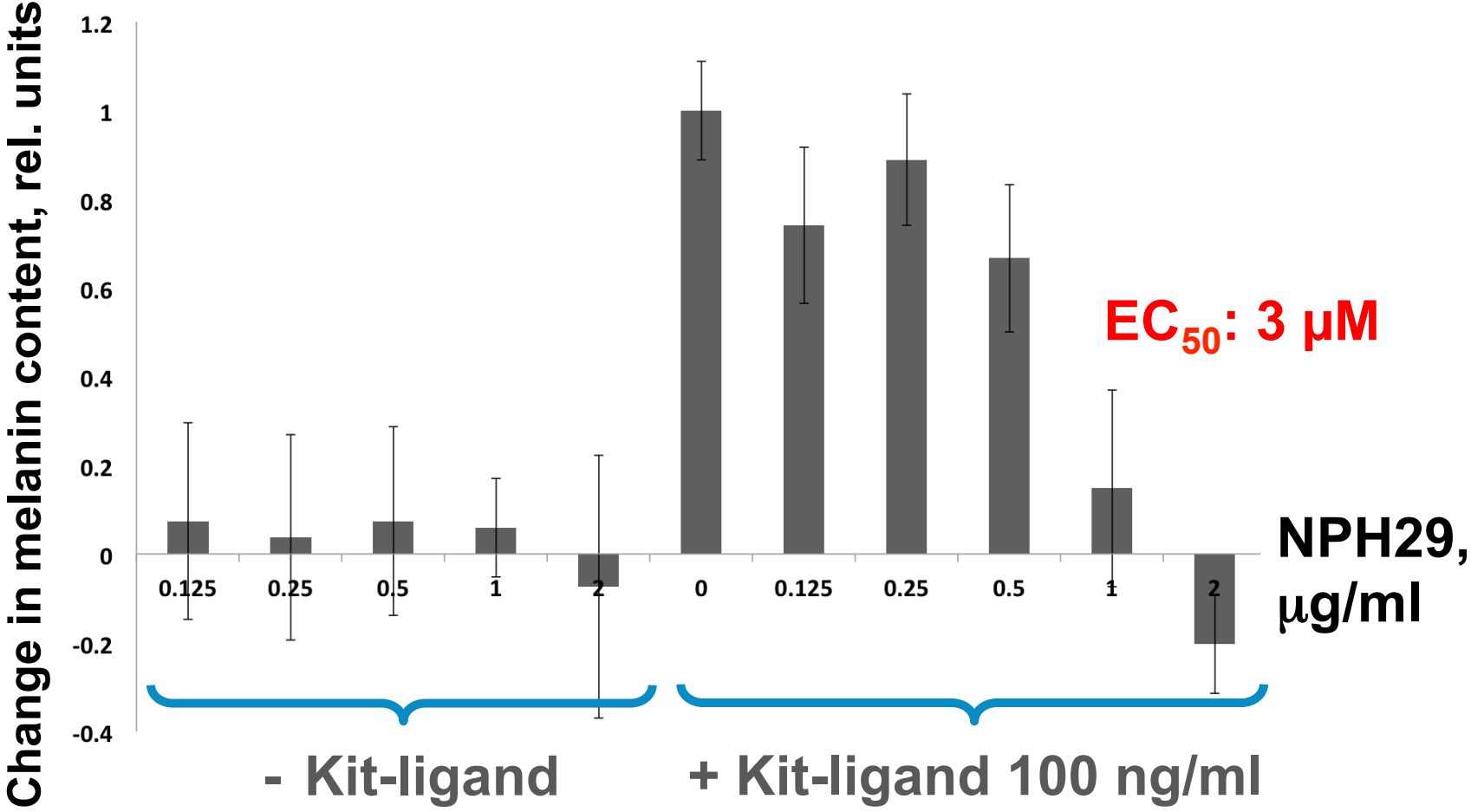
# NPH29 Inhibits Kit Kinase Activity in Cells



Inhibition of Kit kinase autophosphorylation in human leukemia cell line M07e after Kit-ligand stimulation, determined using substrate specific sandwich ELISA



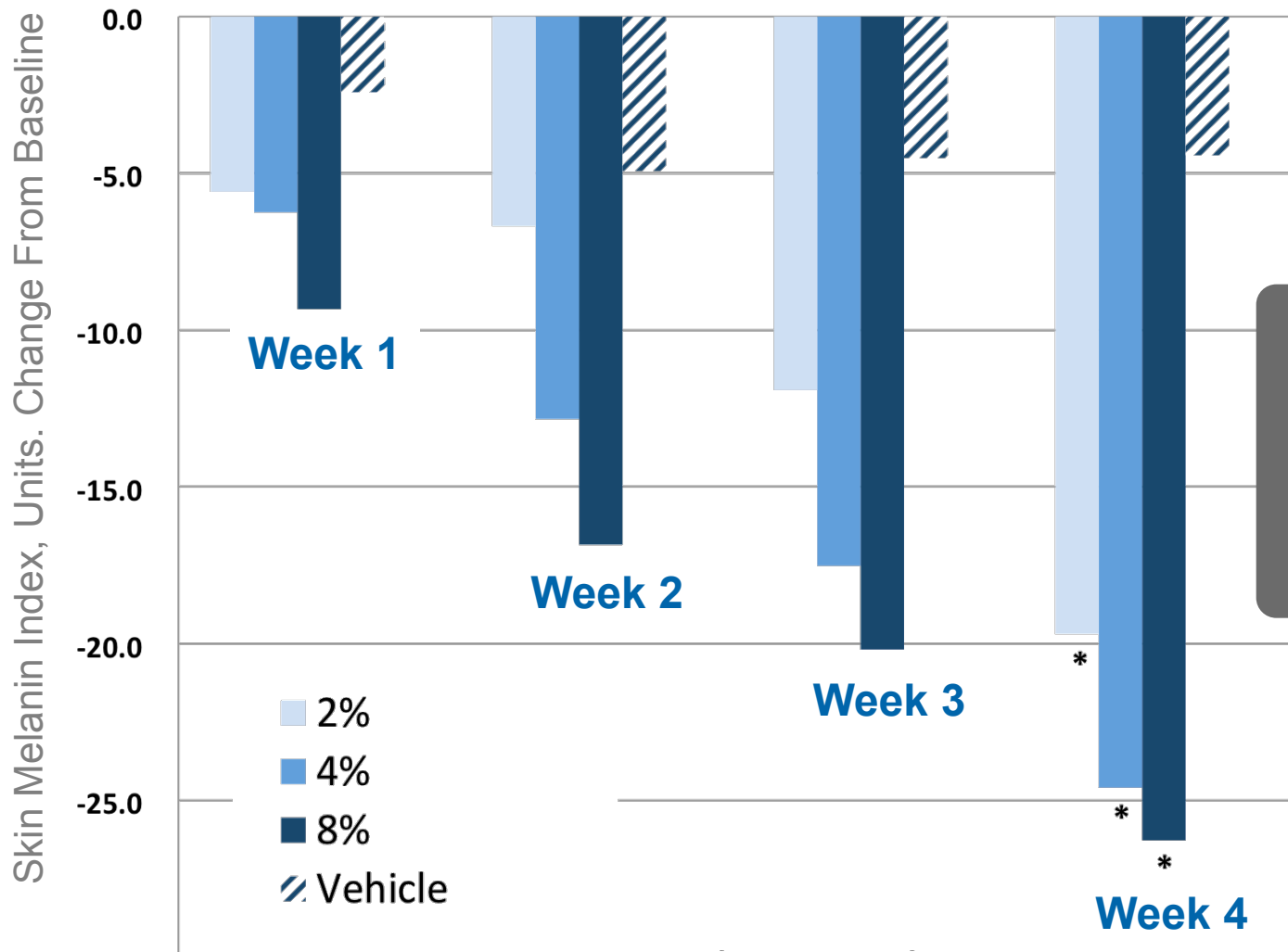
# NPH29 Suppresses Kit-ligand -induced Melanin Production In Vitro



Melan-a mouse melanocyte cells

# Clinical Proof-of-Concept

## NPH29 Topical Gel Reduces Skin Pigment



Statistical significance reached  
\*  $p < 0.05$

# Conclusions

- **Novel** safe topically bioavailable **Kit inhibitor** is identified
- Clinical proof of concept achieved in **18 months** from discovery
- Previously unknown molecular activity of NPH29 is shown to be **clinically relevant**

nPharmakon's systematic computational analysis reveals unknown yet therapeutically important targets of drugs, suggests new uses

# Executive Team

Combined drug discovery  
experience:

80  
years

**Dmitri Rebatchouk PhD**  
CEO

**Informatics.** Co-inventor of nPharmakon's technology. Fmr. Head, Informatics, Sanofi-Aventis

**Felix Sheinerman PhD**  
Chief Scientific Officer

**Drug design.** Co-inventor of nPharmakon's technology. Fmr. Head, Chemogenomics, Sanofi-Aventis.

**James Hendrix PhD**  
Pres., Technology

**Medicinal chemistry.** Fmr. CNS Chem. Site Head, Sanofi-Aventis

**Donald Picker PhD**  
VP Drug Development

**Drug development.** Fmr. EVP R&D, Genta. Led >30 drug development projects