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Discovery of bifunctional ERG degraders using a ML-driven stapled peptide platform

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# **Disclosures**

• I am a full-time employee of Parabilis Medicines



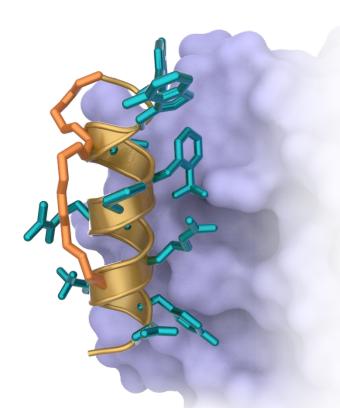
## **Presentation Overview**

- Parabilis Medicines (formerly Fog Pharma) has built a drug discovery engine that combines wet bench and computational methodologies (AI/ML) to discover and optimize  $\alpha$ -helically constrained peptide drugs (Helicons)
- Two key advantages of the Helicon modality are:
  - 1) ability to bind to protein target surfaces that are undruggable with traditional small molecule approaches (ie  $\beta$ -catenin, ERG)
  - 2) achieve intracellular exposures that allow modulation of intracellular targets where peptide drugs have historically failed
- The first drug derived from the platform is FOG-001, a direct binder and inhibitor of  $\beta$ -catenin
  - Preliminary safety, target engagement and efficacy of this drug have been observed in Phase 1 clinical trial;
     NCT05919264 first data released at ESMO, AACR-NCI-EORTC October 2025
- Bifunctional Helicon degraders of the ERG transcription factor have been discovered and optimized
  - with low nanomolar cell-based activity, in vivo validation studies using multiple xenograft models (CDX, PDX)



# Helicon Peptides Allow Targeting of Challenging Intracellular and **Extracellular Proteins**

#### Helicons are able to bind flat surfaces



Many important targets do not have pockets for small molecules

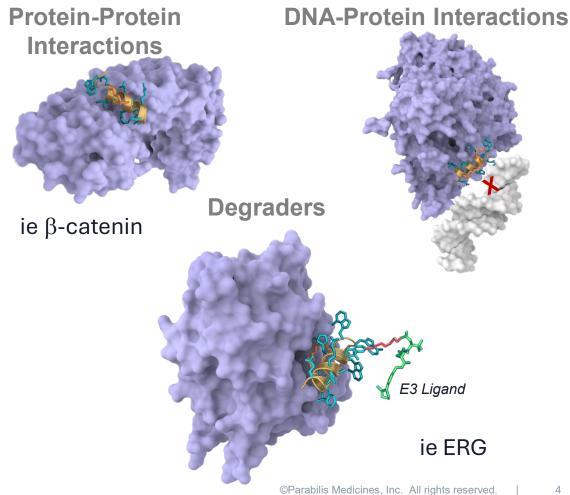
Helicons bind flat surfaces and can engage many proteins that small molecules cannot

Helicons can efficiently enter cells and achieve concentrations sufficient to inhibit abundant proteins

Utilize > 1000 synthetic amino acid building blocks

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## **Enabling Multiple Modes of Action**

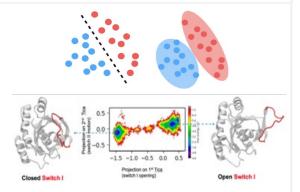


# Integration of Bench Experimentation and Computation Enables Rapid Helicon Discovery and Optimization

Target Evaluation

# **ML-Based Prediction of Helicon Binding Sites**

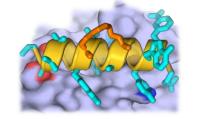
Accurate for both positive and negative predictions



Foundational ML & Simulation Capabilities

## **Hit Discovery**

Actual LogD



# Highly-Parallelized Helical Phage & mRNA Display

Library sizes:  $10^8 - 10^{12}$ Targets screened: ~140 Target hit rate: >60%

Predicted LogD

#### In Silico De Novo Helicon Design

>10<sup>45</sup>
14
>85%

Helicons tested: >300,000

Total data points: >106

**Multiplexed Mass Spec** 

**Library Screening** 

Library sizes: 10,000s

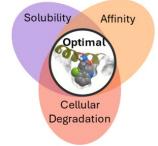
Hit-to-Lead

# Low Med High Predicted CE

#### **ML-Based Property Predictions to Inform Design**

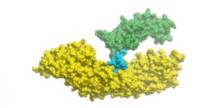
Built with in-house data collected across dozens of chemical series

## **Lead Optimization**



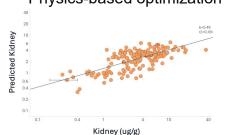
#### **Generative Design**

ML-driven multiparameter optimization



#### **Degrader Simulations**

Physics-based optimization



ADMET

ML and Helisite models

# FOG-001 is the First Clinically Validated Direct β-catenin Inhibitor

# And first proof of concept drug discovery program at Parabilis Medicines

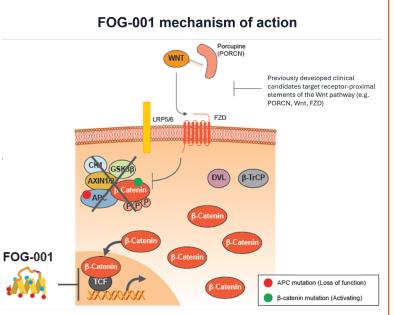
#### Decades of WNT pathway drug discovery effort has not yielded direct $\beta$ -catenin targeting agents

Early 1990's: APC identified as a key early mutation in CRC\*

**2010's**: Upstream Wnt/β-catenin inhibitors enter clinical trials: vantictumab ( $\alpha$ -Fzd Ab), ipafricept (Fzd8-Fc), WNT974, RXC004, ETC159 (Porcupine inhibitors); definition of bone tox and management approach

2023: FOG-001 entered Ph1/2 clinical trial in solid tumors with WPAM

**2025**: Confirmation of β-catenin:TCF inhibition and activity in patients

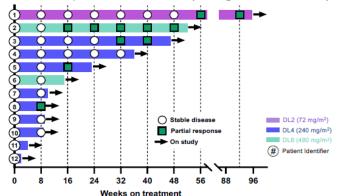


\*Powell et al. Nature 359:235 1992 Madan et al Bone Res 6:17, 2018 Madan et al JCI 128:12, 2018 Kaur et al EMBO Mol Med 13: e13349 2021

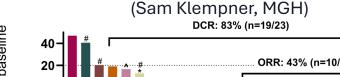
Broderick et al Prostate Can and Prostatic Dis 2025

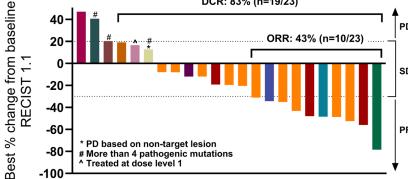
### Preliminary efficacy in patients with β-catenindriven tumors (NCT05919264)





Solid tumor (non-CRC) RECIST Responses

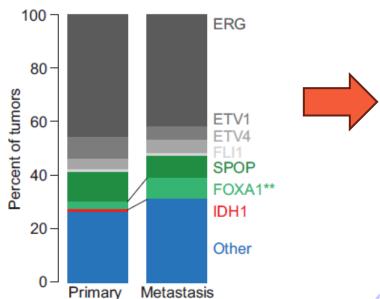




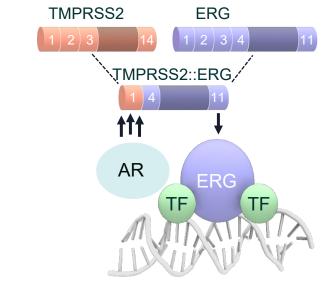
# **ERG** is an Oncogenic Driver of Prostate Cancer

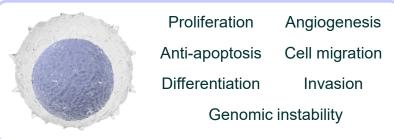






Tomlins et al, Sci 2005, 310:644 TCGA Network, Cell 2015, 163:1011 Carver et al, Nat Gen 2009, 41:619 Haffner et al, Nat Gen 2010, 42:668





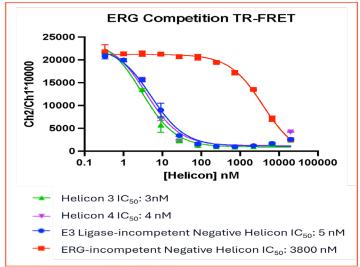
Goal: Develop a first-in-class ERG degrader with single agent and combination activity for treatment of prostate cancer



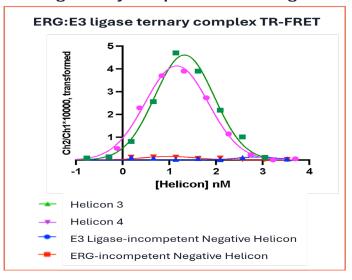
# ERG Bifunctional Degrader Helicons Have High Affinity for ERG and Form Ternary Complexes in Biochemical Context

- Multiple phage display screens led to two distinct Helicon series that bind to two distinct ERG domains
- In lead optimization phase, helicons are routinely screened using:
  - SPR (direct binding of Helicon to ERG)
  - Competition TR-FRET (for competition against probe binding to ERG)
  - Ternary complex formation with E3 ligase complex using TR-FRET
    - →both VHL and CRBN have been successfully employed
  - Co-crystal structures of ternary complex (ERG/E3 ligase/Helicon) are in hand





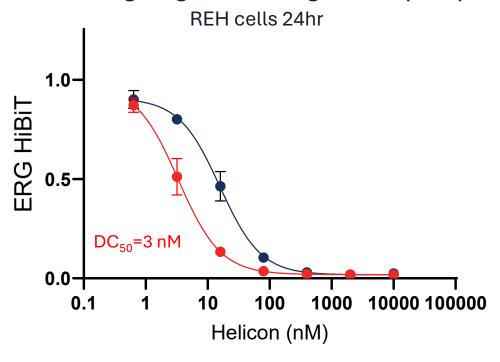
# Bifunctional ERG degrader Helicons form strong ternary complexes with E3 ligase





# Proteasome and E3 Ligase-Dependent Degradation of ERG in Cell-based Assays

#### Single digit nM ERG degradation (HiBit)



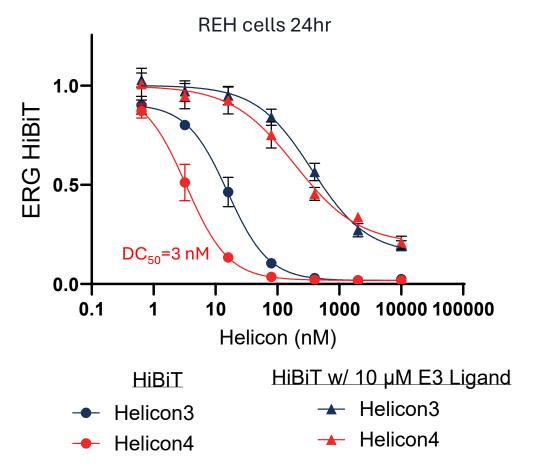
**HiBiT** 

- Helicon3
- Helicon4



# Potent Cell-Based Degradation of ERG: Proteasome and E3 Ligase Dependent

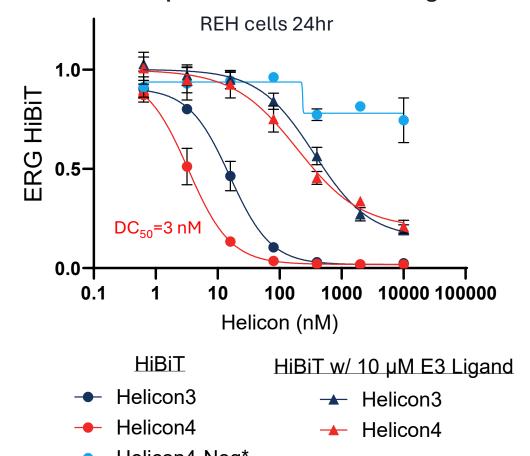
#### Soluble E3 ligand competes with degrader helicon for E3





## Potent Cell-Based Degradation of ERG: Proteasome and E3 Ligase Dependent

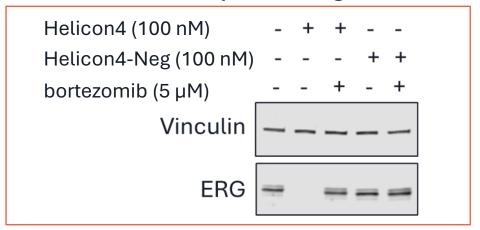
#### E3-incompetent Helicon does not degrade



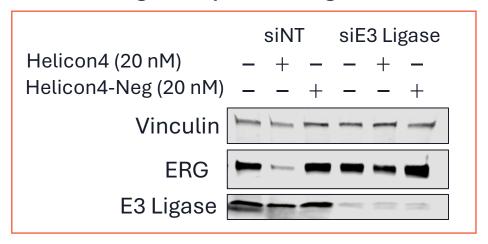
Helicon4-Neg\*

\*E3 ligase incompetent modification of Helicon4

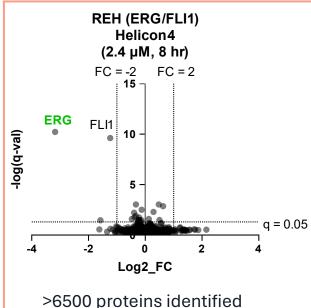
#### **Proteasome Dependent Degradation**



#### **E3 Ligase Dependent Degradation**

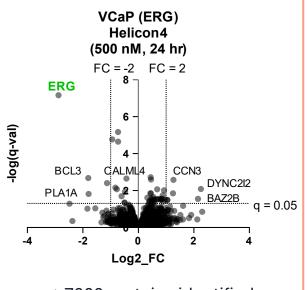


# Highly Selective ERG Degradation Versus Off-target and FLI1 Proteins



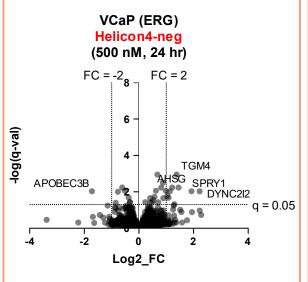
>6500 proteins identined

ERG is preferred substrate over FLI1 in REH cells, which contain both proteins.



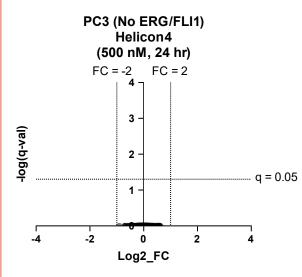
>7000 proteins identified

ERG and its target genes are the most highly downregulated proteins in VCaP at 24 hr treatment.



>7000 proteins identified

Null E3 matched negative control demonstrates minimal off-target protein changes in VCaP at 24 hr treatment.



>7000 proteins identified

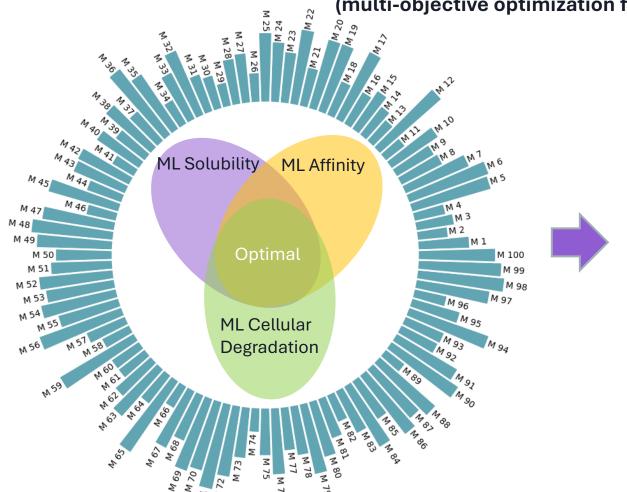
No proteins are significantly changed at 24 hr treatment in PC3, with Helicon2 or its null E3 matched negative control (not shown).

Helicon4 has ~50X selectivity for ERG versus FLI1 in HiBit assays



# Generative Al\* Aids in the Identification of Novel Degraders with Improved Solubility and Cell-based Activity

Generative AI applied to ID novel Helicons bounded by ML models for solubility, affinity and degradation (multi-objective optimization from millions of possibilities)



48/48 designs with solubility >10uM;

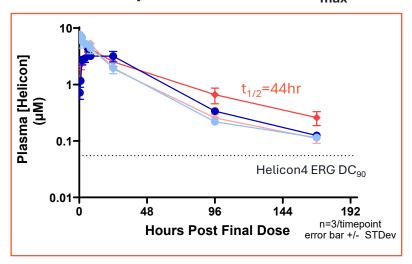
5/48 with equivalent or better cell-based activity

ID	Solubility (uM)	DC50 (nM)	#Mutation Sites
Parent	2	47	0
H76	50	29	2
H80	50	47	6
H64	50	49	5
H72	50	49	7
H66	50	50	6
H82	50	92	6
H74	50	139	6
H84	50	185	7
H62	50	194	6
H52	43	239	5
H58	16	192	5

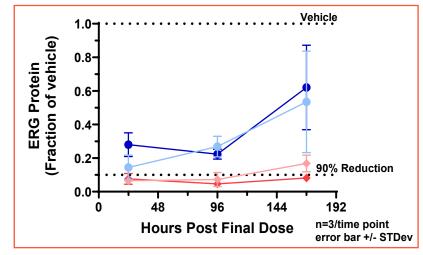
M: probabilities of monomer occurrence from internal data create novel Helicons evaluated for fitness with ML models

# Subcutaneous Dosing of Advanced Candidate Achieves Optimal PK and Prolonged Target Engagement

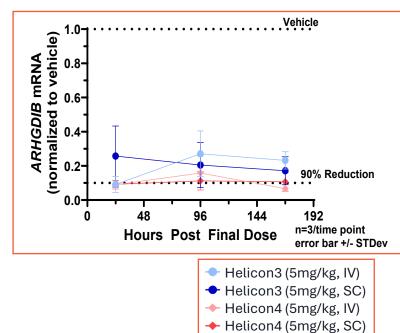
Subcutaneous Dosing of Lead Compound Minimizes C<sub>max</sub>



**Deep and Durable Degradation of ERG Protein 7 Days Post 2nd Dose** 



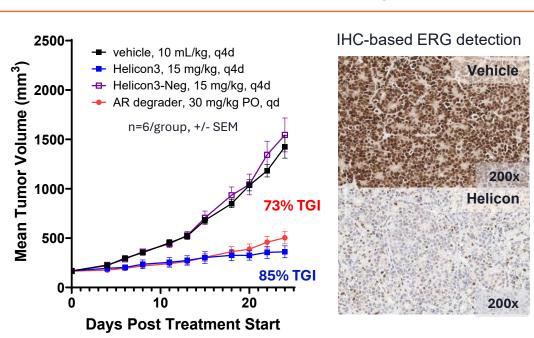
#### Deep and Prolonged Inhibition of ERG Transcription 7 Days Post 2nd Dose



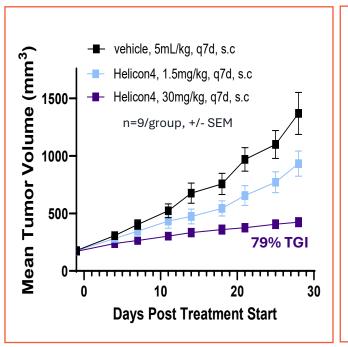


# In Vivo Proof of Concept Efficacy for ERG Bifunctional Helicon Degraders: ERG Dependency in both CDX and PDX Models

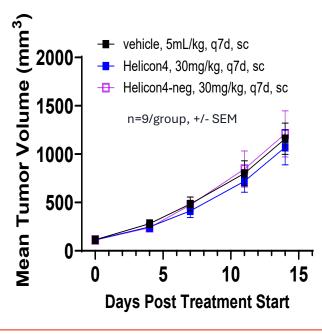
VCaP Xenograft Efficacy: ERG-fusion+, mCRPC AR amplified



Strong Anti-Tumor Activity in PDX#1 ERG-fusion+, mCRPC, AR amplified



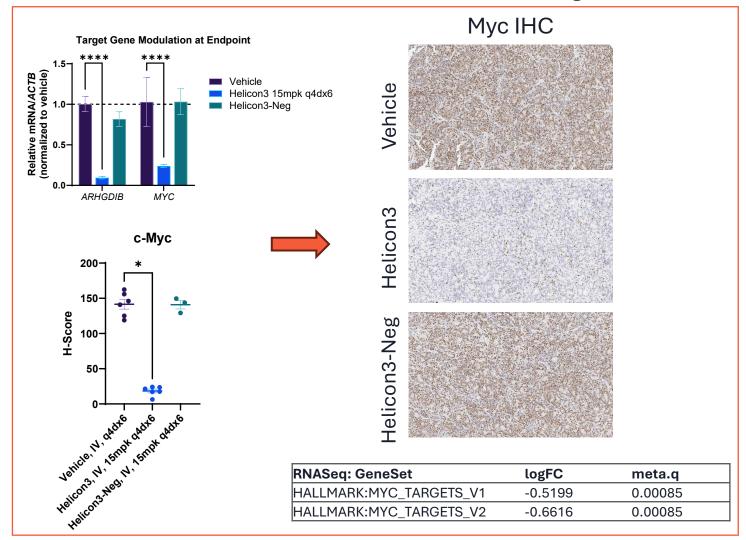
No activity in PDX#2 ERG-fusion+, ERG low, NE



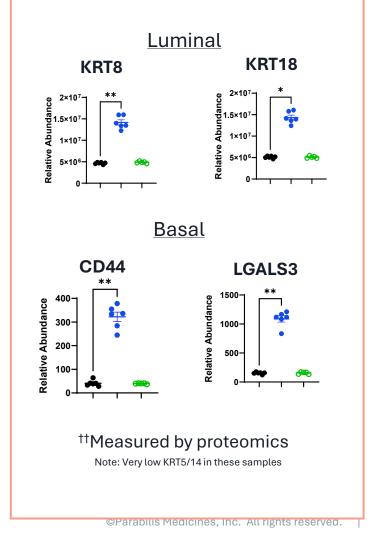


# ERG Degradation in VCaP Tumors Leads to Down-regulation of MYC and Upregulation of Differentiation Markers

C-MYC RNA, Protein Levels and Downstream Program are Inhibited in VCaP Tumors Treated with ERG Degrader



#### Differentiation Markers are Upregulated by ERG Degrader<sup>††</sup>





## **Summary**

- ML-driven Helicon peptide drug discovery platform has yielded potent bifunctional degraders of ERG transcription factor
  - Low nM binding affinity for ERG (SPR)
  - Low nM DC<sub>50</sub> for ERG in cell-based HiBit assay
- Long plasma  $t_{1/2}$  (~2 days) with subcutaneous dosing route in animal models
- Suppression of tumoral ERG protein levels  $\geq$  90% for 7 days post dose in animal models
- Anti-tumor activity in VCaP CDX and multiple PDX models of mCRPC correlated with degree of ERG degradation
- Ongoing work to define sub-populations of ERG-fusion+ patients for clinical inclusion/exclusion,
   PD biomarker definition (circulating, digital pathology, tumor biopsy), combination strategies



# **Acknowledgments**

**ERG Core Team:** 

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Amelia Luciano- biology lead

**Brian White- chemistry lead** 

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# **Thank You**



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