

## FGF21 Maintains Glucose Homeostasis by Mediating the Cross Talk Between Liver and Brain During Prolonged Fasting

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Fig. 1 Tissue-specific effects of fibroblast growth factor 21 (FGF21). In addition to adipose tissue and liver, FGF21 can target other organs, such as the pancreas where it protects against stress, acute inflammation, islet hyperplasia and general dysfunction [55, 112, 160–162], and heart [163–166], skeletal muscle [167, 168], kidney [169, 170], gut [171], brain [95, 147, 172, 173] and possibly bone [135], where it induces multiple biochemical signals and functional responses [60]. WAT, white adipose tissue; BAT, brown adipose tissue; FFA, free fatty acid.



- A therapeutic dose of FGF21 decreased blood glucose in diabetic animals without causing hypoglycemia (4).
- FGF21 has also been shown to act as a key downstream effector of PPARa, mediating several metabolic adaptation responses to starvation, including hepatic fatty acid oxidation, ketogenesis, and growth hormone resistance (1,2,7).







 In addition, FGF21 is implicated in hepatic gluconeogenesis, although it remains controversial whether hepatocytes are a direct action site of FGF21 (8,9)



## FGF-21 action in brain

#### Continuous intracerebroventricular injection of FGF-21



Sarruf et al., 2010 DIABETES



- FGF21 has been shown to act on the central nervous system to increase systemic glucocorticoid levels, suppress physical activity, and alter circadian behavior.
- FGF21 acts on the hypothalamus to suppress the vasopressin-kisspeptin signaling cascade, thereby mediating starvation induced infertility of female mice.
- However, the physiological roles of FGF21 and its central actions in regulating glucose metabolism during adaptive starvation responses remain unknown.





#### **Glucose Homeostasis**



#### PPARa knockout (KO) mice in C57BL/6N

FGFR1



intra-PVN injection

CRH antagonist

FGF21 KO mice in C57BL/6J



WT

endotoxin-free central administration recombinant mouse FGF21

Bilateral or sham adrenalectomy was conducted under isoflurane anesthesia 1 week before various fasting experiments.



- Immunoassays:
- Serum levels of insulin and FGF21
- Serum levels of corticosterone (Enzo Life Sciences) and glucagon (Millipore) and plasma levels of adrenocorticotropic hormone (ACTH; MD Bioproducts) and CRH (Phoenix Pharmaceuticals)
- For analysis of adrenaline and noradrenaline in the liver, frozen tissue was extracted with 0.1 N HCl and analyses performed according to the supplier's instructions



### FGF21 KO Mice Exhibit Hypoglycemia During Prolonged Fasting





FGF21 Deficiency Impairs Fasting-Induced Activation of the Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal Axis and Release of Corticosterone in Mice



adrenalectomy 肾上腺切除



# FGF21 Acts in the Brain to Induce Corticosterone

**Production and Hepatic Gluconeogenesis** 





Central Effects of FGF21 on Activation of the HPA Axis and Hepatic Gluconeogenesis Are Mediated by Hypothalamic FGFR1









FGF21 Mediates PPARa-Induced Corticosterone Production and Hepatic Gluconeogenesis in Mice via Central Nervous System











Figure 8—A working model by which FGF21 maintains glucose homeostasis during fasting via mediating the cross talk between brain and liver. FFA, free fatty acids; HSL, hormone-sensitive lipase; TG, triglycerides.



# **THANKS!**