Identification of pharmacological inducers of a reversible hypometabolic state for whole organ preservation

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ABSTRACT

Drugs that induce reversible slowing of metabolic and physiological processes would have great value for organ preservation, especially for organs with high susceptibility to hypoxia-reperfusion injury, such as the heart. Using whole-organism screening of metabolism, mobility, and development in *Xenopus*, we identified an existing drug, SNC80, that rapidly and reversibly slows biochemical and metabolic activities while preserving cell and tissue viability. Although SNC80 was developed as a delta opioid receptor activator, we discovered that its ability to slow metabolism is independent of its opioid modulating activity as a novel SNC80 analog (WB3) with almost 1,000 times less delta opioid receptor binding activity is equally active. Metabolic suppression was also achieved using SNC80 in microfluidic human organs-on-chips, as well as in explanted whole porcine hearts and limbs, demonstrating the cross-species relevance of this approach and potential clinical relevance for surgical transplantation. Pharmacological induction of physiological slowing in combination with organ perfusion transport systems may offer a new therapeutic approach for tissue and organ preservation for transplantation, trauma management, and enhancing patient survival in remote and low-resource locations.

Tissue and organ loss to trauma, disease, and physical injury account for a large proportion of human ailments and approximately $400 billion in annual medical burden.[1] The rapid and reversible slowing of metabolic and other physiological processes, here referred to as 'biostasis', can improve the survival of cells and organs for transplantation. This is currently accomplished clinically by lowering temperature and static cold storage is the standard of care for organ and tissue preservation; however, its long-term use can cause damage to the integrity of the graft.[1-3] Hypothermia also has been used to induce a state of biostasis clinically using *ex-vivo* machine perfusion technologies, for example, during cardiac transplant surgery. Combination of protective agents with perfusion and/or partial freezing approaches have extended preservation times in rat livers and whole pigs,[4,5] and neural modulation approaches

have been successful at demonstrating central control of body temperature and general

metabolic state.[6,7] However, both mechanical cooling and neural stimulation approaches are

challenging to implement in a trauma triage or resource-limited situations, which would be better

addressed by pharmaceutical interventions.

Several molecular strategies have been proposed to achieve metabolic suppression for

organ preservation, including modulating H_2S, AMPK, opioid receptors, microRNAs, HO-1, and

Nrf2.[8] H_2S exposure has been reported to induce a hypometabolic state (reduced metabolism

and body temperature) in a rodent model, although this was later found to be mediated in part

by a low baseline laboratory temperature.[9] The synthetic opioid peptide DADLE also can induce

hypometabolism and improve organ preservation via a delta opioid receptor (DOR) mechanism,

but with varied results.[10,11] Compounds that directly impact glycolysis and mitochondrial

respiration also have been considered for modulating organ metabolism, but many are acutely

toxic and not reversible, fail to protect tissues from ischemic injury, or lack drug-like properties.

Specifically, reduced functionality of the mitochondrial electron transport chain system without

the endogenous antioxidant and anti-inflammatory molecules released by hibernators can result

in the release of reactive oxygen species and cause tissue damage.[8]

Despite these efforts, there remains a large unmet need for improved tissue and organ

preservation approaches across multiple application areas. Thus, in the present study, we set

out to identify small molecules that could slow metabolism and mimic states normally induced

by hypothermia, hibernation, or torpor, which could be used for preservation of living cells,

tissues, and organs ex v*ivo*, and potentially *in vivo* as well. Specifically, we required this

biostasis approach to be rapidly inducible (< 1 hour) and safely reversible, with major tissue

functions returning to control levels within 24 hours.

Through survey of the literature, we identified drugs with unintended side effects, such

as lowering body temperature, which suggested they might have broad effects on metabolism.

Among these drugs was SNC80, a small molecule drug originally developed as a nonaddictive

pain reliever that acts independently of the mu-opioid pathway.[12] This drug caught our attention

because it has been shown to induce hypothermia and protect against the effects of spinal cord

ischemia in rodents.[12,13] To explore whether SNC80 had potential to broadly slow tissue

metabolism and physiology, we administered the drug to *Xenopus laevis* embryos and tadpoles,

which we and others have previously shown to be useful models for drug screening due to their

small size, extrauterine development, and skin permeability to small molecules.[14–17] The

Xenopus tadpoles were dosed at higher levels than dictated by SNC80's defined IC50 value,

with the goal of exploring the effects of SNC80 outside its known pain relief properties and

accentuating the drug's "off-target" effects, including hypometabolism.

Demonstration of physiological slowing in *Xenopus*

We first assessed SNC80's impacts on mobility, metabolism, and heart activity in

Xenopus. Behavioral assessment in mobile tadpoles showed that 100 μM SNC80 slows

movement relative to vehicle-treated counterparts, reducing activity by approximately 50%

within 1 hour, which is rapidly reversible when the drug is removed (**Figure 1a**). SNC80 also

suppressed the rate of oxygen consumption to one-third of baseline within 3 hours of treatment

(**Figure 1b**) and had extreme suppressive, but fully reversible, effects on heart rate after only 1

hour of exposure (**Figure 1c**)**.** Oxygen consumption was reduced in immobile *Xenopus* embryos

treated with SNC80 as well (**Figure S1a**), suggesting that its metabolism-suppressing effects

are independent of the slowed movement observed in mobile tadpoles.

Using *in situ* Matrix-Assisted-Laser Desorption/Ionization-Time of Flight Mass

Spectrometry Imaging (MALDI-ToF MSI), we assessed and visualized the biodistribution of

SNC80 in the *Xenopus* tadpole. SNC80 was detected within 1 hour of treatment and it appeared

in a punctate distribution in the gastrointestinal (GI) tract, gill region and skeletal muscle

(**Figures 2a,b**), suggesting full-body delivery of the drug. Past lipidomic studies of hibernating

mammals demonstrated the importance of lipid molecules for thermal adaptation during

hibernation with significant alterations of lipidomic profiles being observed in liver, plasma, brain,

skeletal muscle and cardiac muscle during torpor as compared to the animal's active state.[18,19]

Similarly, MALDI-ToF MSI analysis revealed significantly higher levels of acylcarnitine and

cholesterol ester in SNC80-treated groups in both skeletal muscle and brain (**Figure 2c**).

Increased levels of long chain acylcarnitine associated with enhanced mitochondrial fatty acid

oxidation are observed during fasting as well as in hibernating brown bears,[20,21] and cholesterol

ester levels increase in hibernating ground squirrels.[22] While the increased acylcarnitine and

cholesterol ester levels in brain suggest a shift towards beta oxidation of fatty acids, they also

have been implicated in other pathways including antioxidant activity and neurotransmission.[23,24]

Having confirmed that SNC80 induces slowing of multiple physiological parameters in

the whole *Xenopus* organism, we then set out to explore the molecular basis for these effects.

As SNC80 is a known DOR agonist,[12,13] we next evaluated whether its effects could be

mediated by delta opioids. However, when we tested the DOR antagonist, naltrindole (NTI), at

double the concentration (200 μM), it did not block the hypometabolic effects of SNC80 (**Figure**

2d), suggesting that SNC80 modulates metabolism independent of DOR activation.

Attenuating the delta opioid activity of SNC80

To further test if the physiological slowing effects of SNC80 are independent of DOR

activation, we used a medicinal chemistry approach to explore whether we could separate its

metabolism slowing and DOR activities. Toward this end, we designed molecular entities void of

the distal basic nitrogen (N-ally group within SNC80), which we hypothesized was a critical DOR

pharmacophore. This effort led to the development of a novel morpholino compound, WB3

(**Figure 3a** & **Supplemental Synthesis Description**), which was synthesized and subsequently

tested for DOR binding activity using a radioligand binding assay and non-linear fitting for

specific binding to calculate the Hill Slope and IC50 value. A specific binding curve could not be

fit for SNC80 due to its high affinity and therefore its IC50 is <4.6 nM, whereas WB3 exhibited

an IC50 of 3,470 nM (**Figure 3b**), suggesting almost 1,000 times less DOR binding activity for

WB3 compared to SNC80. Subsequently, we screened WB3 in the *Xenopus* swimming and

heart rate assays and found that the analog retains physiological slowing properties *in vivo*

despite lacking delta opioid activity (**Figure 3c,d**). In fact, we observed more potent and rapid

effects on swimming with exposure to WB3 compared to SNC80, suggesting that the non-opioid

properties of SNC80 may be primarily responsible for its observed physiological effects.

Enhanced preservation of whole pig hearts and limbs perfused *ex vivo*

Based on these intriguing findings with human Organ Chips and *Xenopus* tadpoles, we

set out to explore the potential clinical value of SNC80. Cardiac transplant is the gold standard

for treating end-stage heart failure; however, it is hindered by donor shortage, limited cardiac

graft preservation time, and lack of optimal organ preservation conditions. Currently, hearts are

allocated to patients located within 4 hours of organ removal from the donor. Thus, to explore

the potential utility of biostasis induction to lengthen the time between organ donation and

recipient surgery through pharmacological induction of a hypometabolic state, we perfused

surgically explanted whole porcine hearts with SNC80 using a portable, oxygenated perfusion

preservation device (VP.S ENCORE®) at subnormothermic temperatures (20-23°C). Prior work

has demonstrated that the VP.S ENCORE® enhances cardiac viability over standard of care-

static cold storage and hearts perfused in this device for 4 hours demonstrate similar cardiac

function to a healthy heart in both preclinical animal models and human deceased donor

hearts.[25,26]

We investigated the application of a biostasis inducer for preservation of the heart during

6 hours of perfusion in the VP.S ENCORE® device. Importantly, with SNC80 treatment, we

observed a rapid decline in the heart's oxygen consumption to < 50% of that observed in hearts

exposed to the vehicle control, which was sustained over the 6-hour preservation period (**Figure**

4a). After preservation, hearts were removed from the VP.S ENCORE® and placed in a

Langendorff system for reperfusion and evaluation of oxygen consumption and cardiac

contractility. This system assesses the left ventricular dP/dT without preload and afterload,

thereby allowing the evaluation of the intrinsic contractility of the left ventricle. After 30 minutes

of reperfusion and before defibrillation, SNC80-treated hearts had a lower oxygen consumption

level than vehicle treated hearts (2.39 ± 1.23 versus 4.28 ± 2.48 ml/min/100g, respectively, at

the 30-minute timepoint) (**Figure 4b)** that recovered to normal levels after defibrillation and with

increases in temperature (2.49 ± 0.53 and 2.35 ± 0.31 ml/min/100g, respectively, at 60 minutes

post-defibrillation) (**Figure 4c**). No evidence of substantial change in left ventricle (LV)

contractility or relaxation were detected in SNC80-exposed hearts, either before or after they

were defibrillated and exposed to epinephrine (**Figure 4d**).

Gene expression analysis of heart biopsy samples showed significant reduction of

markers of inflammation (IL-6, IL-8, TNFα), hypoxia (Hif1α), and cell death (TP53, BCL2) in

SNC80-treated hearts when compared to vehicle control hearts (**Figure 4e**), and no changes in

the mitochondrial ATP synthase marker, ATP5MC3, were observed. Histopathological

evaluation showed retention of normal muscle morphology (**Figure 4f**) without signs of tissue

edema immediately after perfusion in the VP.S ENCORE®. In some hearts treated with SNC80

greater waviness of muscle fibers was observed, possibly indicating a state of muscle

contraction.

Electrocardiogram (ECG) data revealed that both vehicle and SNC80-treated hearts

exhibited irregular beating after perfusion and prior to defibrillation. After defibrillation with

epinephrine, the P and QRS waveforms were visible in ECGs from 3 of 4 SNC80-treated hearts

(**Table S1**), suggesting that those hearts regain atrial and ventricular polarization. The pulse

rates of SNC80-treated hearts were at or near normal range for porcine hearts (70-120

beats/min) after defibrillation. Vehicle-treated hearts exhibited tachycardia following

defibrillation, with all exhibiting pulse rates above the normal range for porcine hearts.

We also tested organ preservation in porcine limbs, where prolonged ischemia after

amputation rapidly decreases the viability of skeletal muscle. Current preservation methods limit

the success of limb reimplantation due to complications from rhabdomyolysis, necrosis, and

reperfusion injury.[27] Again, we found that the relative metabolic rate measured during 3 hours of

SNC80 exposure was significantly lower compared to vehicle-treated limbs (**Figure S2a**).

Histopathological evaluation also showed retention of normal muscle morphology with no

apparent changes in muscle bundle area (**Figure S2b**) or glycogen content (**Figure S2c**)

suggesting that the tissue's potential for ATP synthesis was not compromised after SNC80

administration, although an increase in intercellular spacing was observed (**Figure S2d**). We did

not observe full recovery of O_2 uptake at the 3-hour time point analyzed in this study (**Figure**

S2c); however, the porcine limb contains a large amount of fat tissue that may be acting as a

depot for the highly lipophilic SNC80, thereby leading to extended stasis under these conditions.

Elucidating potential SNC80 targets and pathways

To gain insight into the molecular basis of SNC80's hypometabolic and other

physiological effects, we used thermal proteome profiling (TPP) to assess drug-protein binding

and thereby identify previously unknown molecular targets of SNC80 that might be critical for its

metabolism slowing activity. TPP of SNC80-treated *Xenopus* tissues revealed 19 direct and

indirect binding targets (**Table 1**), including proteins involved in transmembrane transport,

mitochondrion activity, and metabolic processes. Two potentially interesting binding targets of

SNC80 are the excitatory amino acid transporter 1 (EAAT1; also known as SLC1A3) and the

Na^+/Ca^{2+} exchanger 1 (NCX1; also known as SLC8A1), both of which have been identified in

cardiac tissue.[28,29] In addition to their individual functions, mitochondrial ATP production has

been previously reported to be stimulated through intermolecular interactions between EAATs

and NCXs in neurons.[30] If this complex is also present in cardiac tissue, inhibition of EAAT and

NCX1 could reduce cellular ATP levels,[31] and thereby play a role in slowing metabolism.

Specifically, the blockade of Na^+/Ca^{2+} exchange via interference with EAAT1-NCX1 interactions

could prevent the influx of calcium into the mitochondria that is necessary for calcium-sensitive

mitochondrial dehydrogenases that fuel ATP synthesis.[32] However, the mitochondrial variant of

NCX1 (NCLX) was not included in the *Xenopus* protein library used for TPP analysis so could

not be fully evaluated in this study. TPP also identified two additional SNC80-binding proteins

located within the mitochondrion: TOMM40 and COX6C. TOMM40 is a translocase located in

the outer membrane of the mitochondria that has been implicated in tissue protective effects

against late-onset Alzheimer disease[33] and COX6C is the terminal enzyme of the mitochondrial

respiratory chain, catalyzing the electron transfer from reduced cytochrome c to oxygen.

In addition to interaction with mitochondrial proteins, we detected binding between

SNC80 and enzymes involved in other metabolic processes, including alpha-L-fucosidase 2

(FUCA2), cysteine conjugate beta-lyase (CCBL1), retinoid isomerohydrolase (RPE65), and

acyl-CoA Oxidase 3 (ACOX3). SNC80 also binds to multiple membrane-spanning proteins,

including vacuole membrane protein 1 (VMP1) and ABCB1, an ATP-dependent translocase, in

addition to NCX1 and EAAT1. The drug also bound to two proteins of the immune system,

histocompatibility minor 13 (HM13) and pentraxin 3 (PTX3), as well as two cytoskeletal proteins,

calmodulin regulated spectrin associated protein family member 2 (CAMSAP2) and integrin

subunit alpha 7 (ITGA7). Interestingly, SNC80 also bound to four ribosomal proteins, RPL4,

RPL27A, RPS25, and RRP9, which are frequent targets of antibiotic and antiviral drugs.

Collectively, these data suggest that induction of physiological slowing by SNC80 may involve

simultaneous modulation of multiple pathways, with critical mechanisms involving mitochondria,

membrane-spanning transporters, and possibly other metabolic processes as well.

Metabolic suppression in human Organ Chips

To explore whether this drug also induces a state of biostasis in human cells and tissues, as

well as non-cardiac cells, we tested SNC80 in human organ-on-a-chip (Organ Chip) microfluidic

culture devices that reconstitute tissue-tissue interfaces and human organ-level physiology with

high fidelity in vitro.[34] The Organ Chip models reconstitute a tissue-tissue interface between

organ-specific epithelium and endothelium across a porous extracellular matrix-coated

membrane within a two-channel microfluidic device, and hence allow tissue-tissue cross talk

observed in vivo that is not normally present in studies with cultured cells, as previously

described.[35,36] In this study, we used a Gut Chip lined by Caco-2 intestinal epithelial cells

interfaced with HUVECs and a Liver Chip containing Huh7 liver epithelial cells interfaced with

LSECs, respectively. However, we modified the Organ Chip design by integrating sensors that

allow for live monitoring of oxygen (O_2) and transepithelial electrical resistance (TEER) (tissue

barrier function) (**Figure S3a**). Both Organ Chips were treated with SNC80 by flowing the drug

in medium for 2 days through the apical and basal channels of the chip, and then removing the

drug followed by 7 days of additional culture. We confirmed that the intestinal epithelial cells

underwent villus differentiation and accumulated mucus under these culture conditions (**Figure**

S3b), in addition to maintaining a low oxygen environment after 10-16 days of culture (**Figure**

S3c) as previously described.[35,36] The Liver Chips also produced albumin and urea at levels (5

and 135 µg/day/chip, respectively) (**Figure S3d,e**) that were similar to those measured in Organ

Chips lined by primary hepatocytes.[37,38]

These studies revealed that SNC80 treatment reduced the respiratory (oxygen

utilization) rate in the Gut Chip, resulting in an almost 6-fold increase in extracellular oxygen

levels after 48 hours, which then progressively returned to baseline levels during the 7-day

washout period (**Figure S4a**). Similar results were obtained with the more highly metabolic

Liver Chip with SNC80 inducing higher levels of extracellular oxygen compared to control chips

and this again reversed after drug washout (**Figure S4a**). Importantly, the tissues in both the

human Organ Chips remained healthy after 2 days treatment with SNC80 as there was no

significant change in barrier function (**Figures S5a,b**), cell growth (**Figure S3**), or cytotoxicity

(**Figures S5c,d**). Similar to the data observed in cell cultures, ATP/ADP ratio in Liver Chips was

significantly decreased after 24 and 48h of SNC80 treatment compared to the vehicle control

chips. However, ATP/ADP ratio measurements between SNC80 and vehicle control were not

significantly different after washout of the drug, indicating that Liver Chip tissues recover their

normal metabolic function up to 4 days after treatment (**Figure S4b**).

Collectively, these data suggest that treatment with SNC80 in these physiologically

relevant human cells and tissues cultured on-chip in an organ-relevant context resulted in a

drop in respiration, with no switch towards glycolysis or reductive carboxylation, since the levels

of lactate (**Figure S5e,f**) and glutamate remained unchanged in both chips (**Figure S5g,h**).

Thus, in this organ-like microenvironment, the tissues decrease their total ATP production in

presence of SNC80, which is accompanied by a global slowing of metabolism.

Discussion

Here we report the discovery that the small molecule drug, SNC80, and its analog WB3,

are capable of slowing of multiple physiological processes, and thereby inducing a

hypometabolic state without external cooling. Although there is extensive clinical experience

using hypothermia to cryopreserve organs during surgery (e.g., cardiac bypass) and for donor

transplants, comparatively little work has been done in the area of molecular induction of

biostasis without external cooling. We found that SNC80 reversibly suppressed metabolism

across multiple cell and tissue types, as well as different species and experimental models, at

their basal temperatures, suggesting that this approach could be appropriate for preservation of

a variety of cells, tissues, and organs. Critically, integrating this small molecule drug in a

commercial organ preservation system with whole explanted pig hearts demonstrated potential

for near-term translation and impact of this approach for applications relating to organ

preservation and surgical transplantation.

Initially developed as a nonaddictive pain reliever, SNC80 was previously shown to

induce hypothermia and protect against the effects of spinal cord ischemia in rodents,[12,13] but its

broad effects on metabolism were not known. In the present study, treatment with SNC80

slowed swimming movement and reduced oxygen consumption rates in a reversible manner in

Xenopus tadpoles, and it lowered the metabolic rate in non-mobile *Xenopus* embryos as well.

Importantly, SNC80 displayed similar metabolism suppressing activities that were reversible in

physiologically relevant human Organ Chip microfluidic devices that reconstitute organ-level

structures and functions in vitro. These data suggested that induction of a hypometabolic state

by this small molecular drug could potentially provide a new paradigm to prolong organ

preservation. Indeed, when we perfused explanted porcine hearts and limbs with SNC80, we

experimentally confirmed that this biostasis agent can slow metabolism in a whole complex

living organs, providing direct support for its potential integration into commercial organ

preservation devices that strive to extend the viability of human organs for surgical

transplantation.

SNC80 is defined as a highly selective non-peptide DOR agonist drug and other DOR

agonists, such as the enkephalin DADLE, have been shown to reduce metabolic demand and

protect against oxidative stress, thereby decreasing injury and apoptosis in perfused

organs.[8,10,11] Prior studies of DADLE found that the DOR pathway was required to alter

metabolism and provide protective effects, however, we found that SNC80 suppresses

metabolism via a mechanism that is independent of its DOR modulating activity. Instead, we

found that SNC80 interacts with multiple proteins involved in transmembrane transport,

mitochondrion activity, and metabolic processes. Interestingly, one of the identified targets,

NCX1, has been previously implicated in control of temperature compensation and autonomous

oscillation,[39] suggesting that it plays a key role in the regulation of biochemical reaction speed,

cell cycle, and other forms of biological timing, such as circadian rhythm. In addition to its

effects on tissues of the nervous system, multiple drugs that target Na^+/Ca^{2+} exchange by NCX,

such as the KBR family of drugs, were developed for the treatment of ischemia, reperfusion

injury, and heart arrhythmias.[40] In rats, pre-ischemic or post-ischemic treatments with KBR

compounds improved recovery of ventricular pump function and reduced reoxygenation-induced

injury as measured the reduced release of intracellular components (e.g., lactate

dehydrogenase).[40,41] Our results suggest that SNC80 could be acting on the NCX1

transmembrane protein and/or NCX1/EAAT1 pathway may result at least in part from induction

of a hypometabolic state.[45] Of the tissues impacted by SNC80, the observed effects were most

profound on *Xenopus* tadpole heart function and porcine hearts. SNC80 and other opioids have

been shown to decrease cardiac inotropy and contractility,[42,43] and prior work has demonstrated

that decreases in cardiac inotropy and contractility by opioid agonists may be mediated by

opioid receptor-*independent* actions of these drugs.[43] Substantial slowing of heart rate by WB3,

which exhibits approximately 1,000 times less delta opioid activity than SNC80, further supports

this claim. Similar to our findings by TPP, other investigators identified *non-opioid* receptor-

mediated actions of these compounds on ion channel function.[43] Changes in contractility were

not observed immediately after perfusion with SNC80 in porcine hearts tested here, likely

because the SNC80 was washed out of the tissue before contractility was measured; however,

future work should continue to monitor these parameters, especially at later time points.

Although bradycardia likely contributes to the hypometabolism observed in both systems, we

also see reduced metabolic rates in systems lacking cardiac cells, and thus the hypometabolic

activity of SNC80 we observed is not completely cardiac-specific.

The *Xenopus* and perfused porcine heart systems may be particularly amenable to

extreme slowing of cardiac output because these live tissues are surrounded by well-

oxygenated medium during treatment, potentially avoiding tissue injury sometimes associated

with hypometabolic states. However, the assumption that high oxygen content in the perfusate

completely precludes ischemia may not be valid. Assuming adequate flushing during recovery,

local vasospasm or a fat micro embolism occurring during perfusion could restrict perfusion flow

thereby inducing a localized hypoxic state and HIF1α expression in the tissue. SNC80 may be

acting in a vasodilatory capacity, thereby facilitating oxygen delivery and suppressing HIF1α

expression. In addition, although HIF1α is primarily known for its role in response to hypoxia, it

has some oxygen-independent functions and can be induced by factors other than oxygen

levels, such as growth factors and cytokines, which can activate its transcriptional activity even

under normoxic conditions. In these cases, HIF1α can regulate genes involved in cell

proliferation, metabolism, inflammation, and other cellular processes. Therefore, observation of

suppressed HIF1α, as well as the reduction of multiple inflammatory and cell death markers, in

the treated porcine cardiac tissue suggests a protective effect of SNC80.

Before considering broader applications of SNC80 or any of its analogs, such as whole-

body infusion during trauma or infection, it will be critical to consider impacts of this drug not

only on the heart but other organ systems as well. In particular, our *Xenopus* data suggest that

there could be substantial uptake of SNC80 in the brain, thus potentially impacting tissues of the

central nervous system. Therefore, future work should characterize cognitive recovery in

organisms receiving systemic delivery of stasis inducers. In addition, whole-body infusion

applications may require further pharmaceutical development, including chemical modifications

to SNC80 and development of targeted delivery methods to ensure clinical safety.

In summary, our findings demonstrate that the small molecule drugs SNC80 and WB3

can be used as a biostasis inducer to produce a hypometabolic state, which can provide

potential therapeutic value for clinical applications, such as enhanced preservation of organs.

The use of a biostatic compound in combination with a self-contained transport system could

potentially increase organ viability for sustained times *ex vivo*, thus helping to advance organ

and tissue preservation for surgical transplantation. The ability to induce a reversable

hypometabolic, suspended animation-type state rapidly through injection at the point-of-care

also could enable new therapeutic approaches to slow the detrimental effects of trauma and

acute infection, thereby increasing patient survival in military settings and space exploration, as

well as in civilian health emergency operations. It also may be possible to use this biostasis

approach to slow metabolic activities in the brain in cases of stroke or traumatic brain injury,

indications for which current treatments are severely limited.

Methods

***Xenopus* model.** *Xenopus* embryos were fertilized at Tufts University using procedures

reviewed and approved by the Tufts University Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

regulations and transferred to the Wyss Institute. *Xenopus* embryos and tadpoles were housed

at 18°C with a 12/12 h light/dark cycle in 0.1X Marc's Modified Ringer's (MMR) medium. All

animal experiments and procedures were reviewed and approved by the Harvard Medical

School (HMS) Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee regulations.

Drugs used in the *Xenopus* studies were dissolved in DMSO to a stock concentration of

10 mM and diluted to their final concentrations with a 1% DMSO concentration or less. Media

with dosed compound were made fresh and screening was performed in tadpoles at Stages 46-

50. The activity of free-swimming tadpoles during and after exposure to drugs were recorded in

60 mm dishes using a SONY Alpha a6100 camera with 16 mm objective (Sony Corporation,

Tokyo, Japan) against an illuminated background. Mobility was quantified in Matlab (Mathworks,

Natick, MA) by mapping differences between frames to a movement index (0 – 1), with 0

indicating no movement and 1 indicating maximal movement. Oxygen consumption was

measured during *Xenopus* exposure to drugs as a proxy for whole-organism metabolism using

the Firesting Optical Oxygen Meter and the Pyro Oxygen Logger software (version 3.317)

(Pyroscience GmbH, Aachen, Germany). Oxygen consumption for *Xenopus* embryos was

measured using the OxoPlate (PreSens Precision Sensing GmbH, Regensburg, Germany).

Oxygen consumption rate for each sample was measured using a linear fit to the oxygen

consumption curves in Prism (GraphPad, San Diego, CA). Heart rate was measured by

microscopy imaging in *Xenopus* following 1, 2, 4, or 8 hours of drug exposure. Vehicle and

drug-treated groups were briefly incubated in 0.01% tricaine (Syndel, Ferndale, WA) to minimize

tadpole movement during heart imaging. Videos of heart function were acquired using a ZEISS

Axio Zoom.V16 microscope and ZEN BLUE Microscopy software (version 3.1) (Carl Zeiss AG,

Oberkochen, Germany) at a rate of 1 frame/100 ms. Heart beats were counted automatically

using a custom code in Python. At the completion of experiments, *Xenopus* were euthanized by

immersion in 0.2% tricaine for 30 minutes, followed by fixation or bleaching and disposal.

MALDI-ToF. Tadpoles were embedded in gelatin (0.11 g/mL) and stored in -80C.

Embedded tadpoles were sectioned into 16 um-thick slices using a Leica CM1850 (Leica

Microsystems, Wetzlar, Germany) onto indium tin oxide (ITO)-coated glass slides (Bruker

Daltonics, Billerica, MA) and immediately placed in a vacuum desiccator before matrix

application (N=5 tadpoles per condition; N=3 sections/slide). Experiments were duplicated to

confirm the reproducibility. The matrix solution was composed of 2,4 Dihydroxybenzoic acid

(40mg/mL) in 0.1% formic acid, methanol/water (1:1 v/v) and was made fresh for each

application. The HTX-sprayer nebulizer (HTX Technologies, Carrboro, NC, USA) was used to

apply the matrix at 80°C at 24 passes over the sample, at a flow rate of 50μL/min, 10 psi

pressure and a track speed at 1,250 mm/min. Before imaging, SNC80 spotting with matrix and

Xenopus lysate was performed to determine the optimal matrix for the best S/N ratio and the

least ion suppression from *Xenopus* tissue and to identify which adducts were detectable for

each compound for imaging. *In situ* MALDI-ToF imaging was acquired using the rapifleX (Bruker

Daltonics, Billerica, MA), in positive ion mode at 1000 Hz in the mass range of 300-990 m/z. The

laser raster step spacing was set to 45 μm step size at 500 shots per pixel. External calibration

was performed using a red phosphorus slurry drop casted on a region of the ITO slide without

tissue. Preliminary processing of the data was performed using FlexAnalysis (Bruker Daltonics,

Billerica, MA). Images were normalized by the total ion count and baseline-corrected using Top

Hat algorithm with a _baseline width. After MALDI-ToF MSI acquisition, ITO slides were then

stained for H&E and imaged using the Cytation 5 (Agilent, Santa Clara, CA) and Epsilon

scanner at 3000 dpi to select regions of interest using the open-source program, Qupath.[44]

Mass selection windows and signal intensity analysis was conducted with SCiLS Lab (Bruker

Daltonics, Billerica, MA), where ions of interest, including SNC80, acylcarnitine and cholesterol

ester C18, were chosen with a width of ± 0.25 Da. Reference peaks of target analytes were

based on previous MALDI-ToF work in Xenopus tissues from previous findings,[45] and during

spotting of target analytes with MALDI-ToF MS/MS. The mean signal intensity of the defined

regions of interest were obtained with each ion of interest.

Radioligand binding assay. To assess binding of WB3 to the delta opioid receptor, we

tested WB3 and SNC80 at 8-concentrations with 3-fold serial dilutions starting at 10 μM

(Reaction Biology, Malvern, PA). Binding of the tracer [3H]-DADLE (10 nM) was assessed in the

presence of each concentration of WB3 and SNC80 and the [3]-DADLE signal was fit to a dose-

response curve to quantify the Hill Slope and IC50 values.

Thermal proteome profiling. To identify drug-bound targets based on altered thermal

stability, *Xenopus* tadpoles were treated with either SNC80 or vehicle for 2 hours. *Xenopus*

were euthanized in 20X tricaine and then transferred back to their respective drug solutions to

ensure drug effect is not lost during heat treatment. *Xenopus* samples were incubated at 9

temperature points (30C, 35C, 40C, 44C, 48C, 52C, 56C, 60C, 65C) using a PCR machine (3

minutes heat time per condition, 3 tadpoles per condition) for both drug treated and vehicle

treated groups. After transfer to room temperature, liquid was aspirated from samples and

samples were snap frozen in liquid nitrogen. Samples were lysed in 100 μl of PBS + 0.4 % NP-

40 with 4 cycles of freeze/thaw. 11μl of each of the 9 temperatures were pooled in one tube and

samples were centrifuged at 13,000 RPM for 75 minutes, at 4C. Proteins were reduced and

alkylated with 10 mM DTT and 15 mM IAA for 15 minutes at 65C and 30 minutes at room

temperature, respectively. Proteins were then precipitated with 8 volumes of ice-cold acetone

and 1 volume of ice-cold methanol overnight. Digestion was carried for 4 hours in 50 mM Tris ph

8 + 0.75 mM Urea + 1μg trypsin/LysC at 37 Celcius with agitation. Another 1 μg of trypsin/LysC

was added and digestion was continued overnight. Peptides were purified by reversed phase

SPE and analyzed by LC-MS/MS (PhenoSwitch Bioscience, Sherbrooke, QC, Canada). LC-

MS/MS acquisition was performed with a ABSciex TripleTOF 6600 (ABSciex, Foster City, CA,

USA) equipped with an electrospray interface with a 25 µm iD capillary and coupled to an

Eksigent µUHPLC (Eksigent, Redwood City, CA, USA). Analyst TF 1.8 software was used to

control the instrument and for data processing and acquisition. Samples were acquired twice in

SWATH acquisition mode using gas phase fractionation. The source voltage was set to 5.5 kV

and maintained at 325C, curtain gas was set at 45 psi, gas one at 25 psi and gas two at 25 psi.

Separation was performed on a reversed phase Kinetex XB column 0.3 µm i.d., 2.6 µm

particles, 150mm long (Phenomenex) which was maintained at 60C. Samples were injected by

loop overfilling into a 5µL loop. For the 60 minutes LC gradient, the mobile phase consisted of

the following solvent A (0.2% v/v formic acid and 3% DMSO v/v in water) and solvent B (0.2%

v/v formic acid and 3% DMSO in EtOH) at a flow rate of 3 µL/min. GPF files for both acquisitions

were analyzed on a previously generated 3D ion library. Each GPF file was analyzed using 10

peptides per protein, 4 MS/MS transition per peptide, 12.5-minute RT window and 25 ppm XIC

width in Peakview (Sciex). The reported quantification for a protein is the sum of all the correctly

integrated peptides (FDR<0.05) in both GPF files.

Human Cell Cultures: Caco2 intestinal epithelial cells were grown in high glucose

(4.5g/L) DMEM (Gibco), 10% FBS (Gibco) and 1% penicillin/ streptomycin (Gibco) and

subcultured every 2-3 days at 1:6 ratio. For all experiments, cells were used between passage

59 and 64. HUVE cells were maintained in EBM-2 (Lonza) media with EGM-2 BulletKit (Lonza),

2% FBS and 1% penicillin/streptomycin (Gibco) and subcultured every 2-3 days at 1:6 ratio. For

all experiments, cells were used between passage 3 and 7. HuH-7 liver epithelial cells were

maintained in DMEM with 4.5g/L glucose (HyClone), 10% FBS and 1% penicillin/ streptomycin

(Gibco). We also obtained wild-type Huh7 transduced with lentivirus particle pLV[Exp]-Puro-

CMV>{Perceval(ns)}:T2A:mCherry/3xNLS (Vector Builder) that were used for live imaging of

changes in ATP/ADP ratio within these cells, which directly correlates to cellular metabolic

activity.[46] LSEC cells were maintained in EBM-2 (Lonza) media with EGM-2 BulletKit (Lonza),

2% FBS and 1% penicillin/streptomycin (Gibco).

Metabolic assays: Effluents were collected at different timepoints (baseline, 24h, 48h

and 1-3 days recovery after washout) throughout the exposure to SNC80 or 1:1000 DMSO

vehicle. After treatment, the effluent was collected and analyzed for lactate and glutamate

production using the Lactate-Glo™ (Promega, #J5021) and Glutamate-Glo™ (Promega,

#J7021) assay kits respectively as per manufacturer protocols.

Cytotoxicity assay: Cytotoxicity measurements on the Organ Chip effluents were

performed using the LDH-Glo™ (Promega, #J2380) as per manufacturer protocols.

ATP/ADP ratio measurements: Huh7 cells were transfected with a reporter that

enables direct measurements of cellular ATP:ADP ratio. The basal excitation spectrum of the

reporter protein was similar to that of YFP (peak around 490 nm) but it had an additional peak at

CFP wavelength (405 nm). As ATP levels decreased, more ADP can bind to the site,

decreasing the YFP/CFP ratio value. BioTek Cytation 5 Cell Imager (Agilent) was used to take

RFP, YFP and CFP images of each well every 20min for 180 minutes upon exposure to 100uM

SNC80 or 1:100 DMSO vehicle. Post processing of the images was performed using the open

source CellProfiler program.[47] We implemented the following pipeline to obtain quantitative

ATP/ADP ratio values: (1) Identify nuclei with RFP marker, (2) Define a cell as 4pixels around

the edge of the nuclei, (3) Measure cells YFP and CFP intensity and YFP/CFP ratio, (4) Count

cells per Image, (5) Track cells YFP and CFP intensity over the time course (0-3h with 20min

intervals), (6) Measure YFP/CFP ratio average **over all cells** per image and normalize to cell

count (7).

For the qualitative images, raw images were processed with ImageJ by using the image

calculator to divide yfp/cfp intensity of respective images. "Rainbow RGB" lookup table was

used to show the intensity changes. Tones towards the red show more intensity, higher

ATP/ADP ratio and higher metabolism.

Organ Chips with Integrated Sensors: To allow for live oxygen and

transepithelial\endothelial resistance (TEER) monitoring, we used our in-house developed and

fabricated microfluidic chips with integrated TEER and oxygen sensors. To mimic the in vivo-like

cell-cell interface on the models, a dual-channel PDMS microfluidic chip was used where the

apical channel is separated from the basal channel with a porous PDMS membrane. A pair of

TEER sensing electrodes where integrated on the apical side of the top channel and the basal

side of the bottom channel to measure the electrical resistance across the epithelium-

endothelium tissue interface. The O_2 sensing nanoparticles (OXNANO, PyroScience) were

integrated at four different locations in the chip: two in the apical channel and two in similar

locations in the bottom channel. This is to allow a fair representation of the whole chip oxygen

tension levels.

After fabrication, the chips were sterilized by plasma treatment and desiccated for 30

minutes. The polymeric surfaces of the membrane were then chemically functionalized using

ER1/ER2 buffers following Emulate^{TM} Inc. protocol and coated with extracellular matrix (ECM)

for 1.5-2 hours at 37°C. Gut Chip apical and basal channels were coated with 30 µg/ml

Collagen I (Advanced BioMatrix, Cat. no. 5005) and 100 µg/ml Matrigel (BD Biosciences) in cold

PBS. Liver Chip apical channel was coated with 30 µg/mL fibronectin (Corning, Cat. no.

356008) and 400 µg/mL Collagen I (Advanced BioMatrix, Cat. no. 5005) in cold DPBS, while the

basal channel was coated with 100 µg/mL Matrigel (BD Biosciences) and 200 µg/mL type I

collagen in cold DPBS. To create Gut Chip, HUVECs (6-8x10^6 cells/ml (P5)) were first seeded

on the bottom side of the permeable membrane in the basal channel and incubated for 2-3

hours at 37°C before seeding the Caco-2 cells (2-3x10^6 cells/ml (P78)) on the membrane in the

apical channel. Liver Chip was similarly created by seeding the LSEC (4-5x10^6 cells/ml (P3-8))

the first in the basal channel followed by seeding he Huh7 hepatocytes (2.5-3.5x10^6 cells/ml

(P5-15)) on the membrane in the apical channel   The chips were then cultured under

continuous flow using the commercial culture module instrument (ZOË™ Culture Module,

Emulate Inc.,USA). The Gut Chips were maintained under continuous flow of 30µl/hr in the

apical and basal channels for 10 days before changing their respective media to differentiation-

promoting media (5% FBS in DMED apically and 0.5% FBS endothelial medium basally) for the

rest of the culture time. The Liver Chips were also maintained under continuous flow of growth

media at 30µl/hr in the apical and basal channels for 5-6 days before reducing the FBS content

to 5% in Huh7 media and 0.5% in LSEC media for inducing tissue differentiation.

Human Organ Chip studies: SNC80 was tested on the Gut Chip at day 16 of culture,

when the epithelium showed characteristics of matured, functional tissue and the Liver Chip was

tested after 7-10 days of culture. SNC80 [100µM] in the culture media was perfused through the

apical and basal channels of the chips at 30µl/hr, while the control chips were perfused with the

same culture media containing the compound's vehicle [0.5% DMSO] using the same flow

condition. The chips were treated with SNC80 for 48 hours before the drug was removed from

the media and the culture was continued for another 4 days. Both Liver and Gut Chips were

monitored at d-1, 0h, 3h, 24, 48h timepoints as well as day 1 and 3 after the drug washout for

oxygen consumption, TEER measurements, and effluent analysis. Fluorescence microscopy

was continuously performed from 0h throughout the treatment period and up to 3 days of

recovery. CellProfiler program was used to analyze ATP/ADP ratio as described above.

Oxygen and TEER measurements on-chip: Oxygen tension level measurements was

performed on-chip during the culture using FireSting®-O2 Optical Oxygen and Temperature

Meter (FSO2-C4, Pyroscience sensor technology, Germany) connected to Pryo Oxygen Logger

(V3.317©, Germany). TEER measurements were performed on-chip using our in-house

developed multiplexed TEER Tray and remotely measured from outside the incubator. A four-

point impedance measurement was taken on-chip periodically every 24 hours during the SNC80

treatment and recovery using the IviumSoft application (V4.97, Informer Technologies, Inc.). To

obtain the TEER of only the epithelial-endothelial tissue interface, the measured impedance at

100Hz was subtracted from the impedance at 100kHz and reported as the tissue impedance(Ω)

throughout the culture and in response to different stimuli as we reported previously.[48]

DNA damage and proliferation assays: The Click-IT^{TM} EdU cell proliferation kit

(Thermofisher, #C10337) was used to assess cell proliferation in the formaldehyde-fixed chips

and DNA damage was assessed by staining anti-H2AX antibody (Novus Bio NB100-2280).

Urea Assay: Urea nitrogen was measured using a colorimetric assay (urea nitrogen

test, Stanbio Laboratory), whereby undiluted liver chip effluents were added to a 96 well plate

and mixed with the kit's working reagents as per manufacturer protocol.

Albumin Assay: Liver albumin production was measured using an enzyme-linked

immunosorbent assay (Bethyl Laboratories). Liver Chip effluents were diluted 1:100 in buffer

before being plated in the kit's 96 well plate, aside from standard wells with dilution series of

known albumin concentration solution. We followed manufacturer protocol to perform the

sandwich ELISA assay and measure absorbance at 450nm.

Porcine heart ex vivo perfusion studies: After induction of anesthesia and preparation

for clean, non-survival surgery, a median sternotomy was performed followed by longitudinal

incision in the pericardium to expose the heart and the great vessels. Following blunt dissection

and exposure of the vena cava, aorta and the brachycephalic artery, the superior vena cava,

and azygos vein was ligated and divided. The brachycephalic artery was catheterized for

infusion of cardioplegia solution. The inferior vena cava was clamped and divided proximal to

the clamp. Two or three pulmonary arteries were incised for decompression of the left side of

the heart. The aorta was immediately clamped and 10-15 ml/kg of body weight of cold (2-4°C)

cardioplegia solution (del Nido without lidocaine, 3 L) was infused at a pressure of 70-80mmHg

to stop the heart. Cold 4°C saline and ice were poured over the heart and the accumulated

fluids from the thoracic cavity were removed by suction. Following cessation of myocardial

function, the heart was removed from the chest by further dissection and division of the

pulmonary vessels and aorta distal to the clamp. The heart was cooled in a surgical bowl with

cold saline for inspection and preparation for perfusion. All procedures were conducted under

the UT Health San Antonio approved Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)

protocol 20210080AR.

After the heart was removed and placed in a surgical bowl, the aorta and the coronary

sinus were cannulated using sterile zip ties. The heart was placed into the VP.S ENCORE®

perfusion device filled with 3 L of Krebs-Henseleit buffer supplemented with 20PEG and

hemoglobin-based oxygen carrier (HBOC; Hemoglobin Oxygen Therapeutics, LLC, Souderton,

PA). The heart was perfused with a pressure of approximately <20 mmHg resulting in a

coronary perfusate flow of 50-100 mL/min at a 20-23°C temperature. Hearts were immediately

treated with 3 mL of 3% lactic acid containing 135 mg of SNC80 (100 μM final concentration),

administered through the arterial line followed by the 3 mL of Krebs-Henseleit flush. Post drug

administration, the heart continued to be perfused for additional 6 hours.

Two oxygen probes (Pyro FireSting™) collected oxygen partial pressure (mmHg) data of

the solution before entering the coronary arteries (arterial) and after exiting the cannulated

pulmonary artery (venous), whereas flow was measured using the Sensirion flow meter. Oxygen

consumption was captured using the following formula, $((([O_2]a- [O_2]v)/100 * Q)/\text{heart weight}) *$

100. $[O_2]a$ and $[O_2]v$ are defined as oxygen content of arterial and venous perfusate

respectively. $[O_2]$ was calculated as $(1.34 * Hb* SO_2) + (K * pO_2)$; where 1.34 is mL O_2 / Hb

(g), Hb is the concentration of hemoglobin measured in g/dL, SO_2 is the oxygen saturation ratio

calculated using the equation developed by Severinghaus,[49] K is the oxygen solubility

coefficient adjusted for the perfusate temperature at every data point, pO_2 is the partial pressure

of oxygen in mmHg for the perfusate sample, and Q is coronary flow in mL/min.

After preservation, hearts were placed on a Langendorff system with a perfusate mixture

of 1:1 porcine blood and Krebs-Henseleit buffer. Myocardial oxygen consumption

(MVO$_2$ mLO$_2$ /min / 100g) was calculated during an initial 30 min of rewarming stage (before

defibrillation) and after defibrillation using two oxygen probes (Pyro FireSting™, placed in

arterial and venous effluent). Oxygen consumption was [53]calculated using the same approach

described for the VP.S ENCORE® perfusion stage. The left ventricular function was expressed

as dP/dT (mmHg/sec) measured by placing a pressure catheter (Millar, 5F) in the left ventricle.

Data was analyzed using PowerLab (LabChart 8.1.16) blood pressure analyzer. Data was

selected from the left ventricular pressure waveform as the average of 30 beats after

stabilization (approx. 30 minutes after defibrillation). Contractility after ionotropic support was

measured less than 5 minutes after administration of epinephrine (0.5mg injected arterial). End

diastolic pressure of the left ventricle was maintained 5.14 +/- 1.89 mmHg through administering

perfusate directly into the left ventricle through the pulmonary veins and venting to

atmosphere.

ECG data were obtained through the placement of leads on the apex (positive), right

atrial appendage (negative), and aortic root (ground). Data was collected through the PowerLab

system and 30-second time intervals were selected for all groups before the flush, before

defibrillation, at native contraction, and after epinephrine drug administration. The ECG

amplitude (mV) was analyzed using LabChart Pro (v8.1.19) peak analysis detection at

approximate time points 10min (before flush) and 30min (before defibrillation) to detect the

average amplitude of electrical activity without full contraction. LabChart Pro (v8.1.19) ECG

Analysis detection was used at time points 35min (Epinephrine) and 60min (Native) to detect

the average amplitude of the QRS complex with contraction. The native QRS Interval (s) and ST

Height (mV) was averaged over a 30-second time interval using LabChart Pro (v8.1.19) ECG

Analysis.

Total RNA from cardiac tissue biopsies (2.5 mm) were extracted following the RNeasy

Mini kit (Qiagen) according to the manufacturer's instructions. The concentration of total RNA

was evaluated and measured at 260/280nm by spectrophotometer (NanoVue Plus, GE

Healthcare). Synthesis of cDNA was performed from 0.5 µg of total RNA, which was reverse

transcribed using (iScript cDNA Synthesis Kit, Bio-Rad) according to the manufacturer's

instructions. Gene-specific pre-designed oligonucleotide primers were purchase from Sigma.

qRT-PCR was done using SsoAdvanced Universal SYBR Green Supermix and SFX96 Touch

real time PCR detection system (Bio-Rad, T100 Thermal Cycler). The cycling parameters were

as follows: initial denaturation 95°C, 2 min; denaturation 95°C, 5 s; annealing/extension 60°C,

30 s; number of cycles 40; melt curve 65°-95°C (0.5°C increments). The comparative CT (2-

ΔΔCT) method was used for all quantification. Values were normalized to the Gapdh

housekeeping gene.

Porcine limb ex vivo perfusion studies: Hindlimbs (N=8) were procured via protocol

tissue sharing at the Joint Base San Antonio Clinical Investigation and Research Support

(CIRS) building, following IV Pentobarbital euthanasia, 100 mg/kg from a host protocol. Host

protocol animals were treated with the same surgical manipulations and no chemicals or drugs

were introduced experimentally prior to euthanasia. Following euthanasia, a curvilinear incision

was made around the hindlimb circumferentially. Subsequently, the neurovascular pedicle in the

medial hindlimb was identified and carefully dissected out to preserve the vascular bundle. The

pedicle was then divided at the origin of the artery and vein to preserve maximal length of the

vessels. Hindlimb bone was separated using a Gigli Saw. Hindlimbs were cannulated through

the femoral artery and underwent immediate arterial flush with up to 200-400 mL heparinized-

saline solution (10,000 units of heparin per 1L of saline), until venous outflow was clear.

Additionally, the femoral vein was cannulated for measurement and collection of venous outflow

samples.

Limbs were divided into two groups, control (N=3) and experimental SNC80 (N=5). All

hindlimbs were connected to the ENCORE® head for perfusion via the cannulated femoral

artery. The femoral vein was cannulated for obtaining venous samples. Hindlimbs were

perfused with oxygenated Krebs-Henseleit (KH) at ambient temperature. Arterial and venous

pO2 were assessed hourly using a commercial blood gas analyzer (ALB1000 by Radiometer,

Brea, California USA). Oxygen consumption was calculated from A-V differences obtained from

arterial and venous blood gas readings. After 3 hours of perfusion (baseline), torpor inducing

compound SNC80 (44.96 µg/ml) was administered via the femoral artery to the experimental

group (SNC80) (N=5) and an equal volume of the sham vehicle to the control limbs (N=3)

followed by and additional 3 hours of perfusion (drug). The hind limbs were then removed from

the perfusor and flushed with fresh KH perfusate and replaced into the perfusor containing fresh

KH solution (flush). The perfusion then resumed for an additional 6 hours. The hindlimbs were

weighed pre and post perfusion. Biopsy tissue samples were taken at baseline (pre-ENCORE®),

and before and after the administration of the SNC80 compound for RNA-Seq analysis and

histological evaluation.

Biopsies for histopathology were obtained superficially from the rectus femoris muscle

bundle immediately after amputation and then 24 hours after the perfusion period. Biopsies

were stored in 10% formalin for 24 hours and then stored for 3 days in 70% ethanol and

embedded in paraffin. The samples were sectioned into 5µm slides and stained with

hematoxylin and eosin (H&E) to evaluate tissue morphology, intracellular distance, muscle

bundle area, and Periodic Acid-Schiff to evaluate glycogen content. Histological analysis was

performed by visualizing slides under a light microscope (AM Scope T670Q, Irvine, California)

and capturing images using a high-definition camera (AM Scope Model# MU2003B1, Irvine,

California). From each slide, 10 digital images from randomly selected fields were obtained at

10x magnification. The images were de-identified and evaluated for intracellular distance,

muscle bundle area and glycogen content by two independent reviewers using Image J

software (v.1.51.).

Statistical analysis. All graphing and statistical analyses were performed with Prism 9

(GraphPad Software Inc., La Jolla, CA, USA) with a (two-sided) significance level of 0.05.

Statistical tests and corrections for multiple comparisons are described in each figure panel.

Data availability statement

The proteomics data reported in this paper have been deposited in the Mass Spec Interactive

Virtual Environment, MassIVE, (accession no. MSV000091410). All other data are available

within the paper and its Supplementary Information files.

Software availability statement

A custom Python script was used to automatically count heart beat in *Xenopus* tadpoles. This

code can be accessed on GitHub: https://github.com/k-shcherb/heart_seg.

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Author Contributions

R.N., M.Su., and D.E.I. conceived of and directed the work. M.M.S., H.F., E.G., A.K., S.K.,

M.P.O., K.She., and T.L. performed *Xenopus* studies with guidance from R.N. and M.Lev. R.M.

developed and maintained engineered components for *Xenopus* assays. H.F., M.M.S., A.K.,

M.P.O., and T.T. analyzed *Xenopus* data. T.L. and M.Lew. performed MALDI-TOF experiments

and analyzed the data. B.C., K.P., and Z.I. performed in vitro and Organ Chip studies and

analyzed data with guidance from A.M.S. S.M. and K.Shc. designed, assembled, and

maintained custom microscopy equipment for Organ Chip imaging. K.Shc. analyzed imaging

data from tadpole and in vitro experiments. S.L. oversaw compound management and material

transfers. J.M. designed novel chemical entities. Porcine heart experiments were conceived and

directed by R.V. and L.B and experiments were designed and interpreted by R.V., L.B., and

K.A. Porcine heart data analysis was performed by R.V., L.B., K.A, E.C., R.L., I.C., Z.M., and

D.D.C. Porcine heart data was acquired by K.A, E.C., R.L., I.C., and Z.M. Porcine limb studies

were conceived and directed by R.V., L.B., E.W., and T.P. Porcine limb surgeries were

performed by J.Y., O.P., and J.S. Porcine limb sampling and data analysis were performed by

R.V., L.B., J.P., D.W., Z.H., C.H. and J.C.H. M.M.S., B.C., K.P., Z.I., T.L., K.A., R.N. and D.E.I.

drafted the manuscript and all authors reviewed and provided critical input for the manuscript.

Competing Interests

D.E.I. is a founder, board member and Scientific Advisory Board chair of, and holds equity in,

Emulate Inc. M.Le., R.N., M.M.S., E.G., T.T., and D.E.I are inventors on a relevant patent

application held by Harvard University (PCT/US2021/012626). R.N., E.G., M.Le., and D.E.I.

hold equity in Unravel Biosciences, Inc.; R.N. and D.E.I. are members of its board of directors;

M.Le. and D.E.I. are members of its scientific advisory board; and R.N. and E.G. are current

employees of the company. R.V., L.B., K.A, E.C., R.L., I.C., and Z.M are employees of Vascular

Perfusion Solutions. D.E.I. is a member of its scientific advisory board. The remaining authors

declare no competing interests.

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Figure Legends

Figure 1. SNC80 treatment in *Xenopus* tadpoles. a. Swimming activity of *Xenopus*

during 100µM SNC80 or vehicle treatment. Data represent the mean±SD of n=3 replicates, with

10 tadpoles per replicate. **b.** Oxygen consumption rate for *Xenopus* treated with SNC80 or

vehicle controls. N=5 medium only, n=7 vehicle and n=9 SNC80, with each data point

representing the cumulative oxygen consumption for 5 tadpoles. **c.** Heart rate in SNC80 and

vehicle-treated *Xenopus* (n=10 tadpoles/group). Statistical comparisons were performed using a

Brown-Forsythe and Welch ANOVA test with a Dunnett correction for multiple comparisons (**b**)

and a 2-way ANOVA (treatment x timepoint) with Tukey correction for multiple comparisons (**c**).

Bar plots show the mean±SD of each group.

Figure 2. SNC80 uptake and activity at the delta opioid receptor. a. Distribution of

SNC80 in *Xenopus* tadpoles after 1 and 2 hours of compound exposure. **b.** Uptake of SNC80 in

the tadpole skeletal muscle, GI tract, and gills at 1 and 2 hours of exposure. **c.** Levels of

acylcarnitine and cholesterol ester in the skeletal muscle and brain after 1 hour of SNC80

treatment. *In vivo* distributions of SNC80 and lipid levels measured from N=5 tadpoles per

condition; N=3 sections/slide. **d.** Oxygen consumption in *Xenopus* tadpoles treated with SNC80,

the delta opioid antagonist naltrindole, or a combination of SNC80 and naltrindole. N=3

replicates/group with each data point representing the cumulative oxygen consumption from 5

tadpoles. Statistical comparisons were performed using a two-way ANOVA (time x tissue

region) with Sidak's correction for multiple comparisons (**b**), multiple unpaired t-tests for each

tissue region with FDR correction (**c**), and a Welch ANOVA test with Dunnett correction for

multiple comparisons between vehicle and each treatment group (**d**). Bar plots show the

mean±SD of each group.

Figure 3. Design and *in vivo* screening of novel analog WB3. a. Molecular structures

for SNC80 and novel compound WB3. **b.** Percent specific binding of the delta opioid receptor

radioligand [3H]-DADLE in the presence of SNC80 and WB3. c. Swimming activity of *Xenopus*

during 100µM WB3, SNC80, or vehicle treatment. Data represent the mean±SD of n=2

replicates, with 10 tadpoles per replicate. **d.** Heart rate in WB3 and vehicle-treated *Xenopus*

(n=10 tadpoles/group). Statistical comparisons were performed using a two-way ANOVA (group

x timepoint) with Sidak correction for multiple comparisons (**d**). Bar plots show the mean±SD of

each group.

882   **Figure 4. Preservation of porcine cardiac grafts with SNC80 over 6 hours. a.**

Oxygen consumption for vehicle and SNC80-treated cardiac grafts perfused in the VP.S

ENCORE® device (n=3 hearts/group). **b.** Oxygen consumption during cardiac reperfusion on the

Langendorff system before defibrillation (n=3 vehicle and n=3 SNC80 hearts). **c.** Oxygen

consumption measured on the Langendorff system after defibrillation (n=3 vehicle and n=3

SNC80 hearts). **d.** Left ventricle (LV) contractility and relaxation before and after defibrillation

and tissue exposure to epinephrine (n=3 vehicle and n=2 SNC-treated hearts). **e.** Gene

expression analysis of heart biopsy samples for vehicle and SNC80-treated cardiac grafts (n=2

hearts/group; 3 technical replicates each). **f.** Light microscopic views of H&E-stained histological

sections of heart biopsies (20x magnification) after 6 hours of perfusion. Statistical comparisons

were performed using multiple unpaired t-tests between SNC80 and vehicle-treated cardiac

grafts (**a,b,c**), two-way ANOVA with Sidak correction for multiple comparisons between SNC80

and vehicle-treated cardiac grafts (**d**), and unpaired t-tests between SNC80 and vehicle for each

gene of interest (**e**). Data represent the mean±SD.

Tables

Table 1. SNC80 protein binding targets identified by thermal proteome profiling.

Supplemental Figure Legends

Figure S1. Metabolic measurements in SNC80-treated *Xenopus* embryos. Oxygen

consumption rate in *Xenopus* embryos treated with SNC80 (n=3-4 replicates/group). Statistical

comparisons were performed using a Brown-Forsythe and Welch ANOVA test with Dunnett

correction for multiple comparisons between untreated and each treatment group. Data

represent the mean±SD.

Figure S2. Preservation of whole porcine limbs with SNC80. a. The relative

metabolic rate at baseline is not statistically significantly different between control (n=3) and

SNC80 (n=5) injected limbs. Metabolic rate is reduced during the treatment and washout

phases for SNC80 relative to controls. **b.** Mean muscle bundle area between T0 before SNC80

administration and at T3 after SNC80 administration and histographs of limb biopsy (20x

magnification) at T0 before SNC80 administration and T3 after SNC80 administration. Muscle

bundle area is not affected by the administration of SNC80. **c.** Optical density between T0

before SNC80 administration and at T3 after SNC80 administration and histographs of limb

biopsy (20x magnification) at T0 before SNC80 administration and T3 after SNC80

administration. Optical density is not affected by the administration of SNC80. **d.** Mean

intracellular distance during T0 before SNC80 administration versus T3 after SNC80

administration and histographs of limb biopsy (10x magnification) at T0 before SNC80

administration and T3 after SNC80 administration. Red arrows indicate intracellular distance

measured. Intracellular distance increases after the administration of SNC80. Statistical

comparisons were performed using a mixed-effects analysis with a Sidak's test for multiple

comparisons (a) and Welch's t-test (b-d). Data represent the mean±SD.

Figure S3. Characterization of human Gut and Liver Chips with integrated sensing

technology. a. Illustration of the sensor-integrated OOC unit connected to reservoir pod for

automatic operation of fluid flow using pneumatic pressure (left). Inset shows a schematic of the

top and bottom views of the sensor-chip-PCB compartment showing locations of TEER

electrodes and O_2 sensors in the apical and basal channels. Four O_2 sensing spots were added

to the channels - two in the top and two in the bottom channels for across the chip

measurement. Electrode connectors are necessary for remote TEER sensing. **b.** Phase contrast

images of Caco-2 cells seeded on sensor-chip at day 1, and 10 of culture (top) and Huh7 cells

seeded on sensor-chip at day 1 and 10 (middle). Fluorescent images of liver chip at day 1 and

10 of the transduced nuclear marker (bottom) **c.** Percentage of O2 level (black) and TEER

impedance values (gray) on sensor Liver Chip during 10 days of culture. **d**. Average albumin

production of Liver Chips at day of experiment start (day 7-10 of culture). **e**. Average urea

production of Liver Chips at day of experiment start (day 7-10 of culture). **f.** Representative

immunofluorescence images of the sensor Gut Chip (left) and Liver Chip (right) epithelium

stained with DNA damage marker (H2AX) and nuclei (DAPI) for vehicle control and SNC80

treated tissues after 7 days recovery. **g.** Quantitative analysis of proliferation and DNA damage

stains on Gut and Liver Chips after 48h of treatment and 7-day recovery to 100µM SNC80 (2-3

biological replicates/group/marker). Statistical comparisons were performed using multiple

unpaired t-tests for each marker with FDR correction. Data represent the mean±SD.

941   **Figure S4. SNC80 treatment in human Organ Chips. a.** Monitoring changes in O_2

levels in human Gut (dotted lines; n=6 Chips/group) or Liver (straight lines; n=15-16

Chips/group) Chips throughout the treatment with 100 µM SNC80 (0-48h) and recovery (48-

120h) versus vehicle control Chip. **b.** Graph showing the quantitative drop in ATP/ADP ratio of

Liver Chip treated for 48h with 100µM SNC80 or Vehicle control as well as 2 days recovery after

drug washout (n=5 control and n=3 SNC80 Chips). Statistical comparisons were performed

using multiple unpaired t-tests for each timestamp with multiple comparison between control

and treated cells. Data represent the mean±SD.

949   **Figure S5. Metabolic measurements of Gut and Liver Chip systems treated with**

SNC80. a. Monitoring the percentage change in barrier function of Gut (n=6 Chips/group) or **b**.

Liver Chip (n=9 Chips/group) with time during treatment with 100µM SNC80 (0-48h) and

recovery (48-120h) versus vehicle control Chip. **c**. Cytotoxicity measured for the Gut and **d.**

Liver Chips during treatment and recovery. **e**. Graph depicting the amount of lactate measured

in effluents of Gut and **f**. Liver Chips post recovery (day 7 for Gut and day 5 for Liver) for

SNC80-treated (red) or vehicle control (black) Chips. **g**. Graph showing the glutamate measured

in effluents of Gut or **h**. Liver Chips during SNC80 (red) or vehicle (black) treatment and post

recovery (day 7). For each measurement, statistical comparisons were performed using multiple

unpaired t-tests at each timepoint and FDR correction for multiple comparisons. Data represent

the mean±SD.

Table S1. Clinical interpretation of ECG in SNC80 and vehicle treated hearts.

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

direct interaction	function	indirect interaction	function
CCBL1	• pyridoxal phosphate binding • cysteine-S-conjugate beta-lyase activity • L-glutamine aminotransferase activity • cellular modified amino acid metabolic process	ABCB1	• ABC-type bile acid transporter activity • regulation of fatty acid beta-oxidation • efflux transmembrane transporter activity
EAAT1	• L-glutamate transmembrane transporter activity	ACOX3	• fatty acid beta-oxidation using acyl-CoA oxidase • fatty acid binding
FUCA2	• alpha-L-fucosidase activity • glycoside catabolic process	CAMSAP2	• cytoplasmic microtubule organization • calmodulin binding
HM13	• peptidase activity • aspartic endopeptidase activity	COX6C	• mitochondrial electron transport, cytochrome c to oxygen • generation of precursor metabolites and energy
PTX3	• negative regulation of glycoprotein metabolic process • complement component C1q complex binding	ITGA7	• integrin-mediated signaling pathway • cell adhesion mediated by integrin
RPE65	• phosphatidylserine binding • retinoid metabolic process	NCX1	• calcium:sodium antiporter activity • calcium ion binding • regulation of the force of heart contraction
RPL27A	• structural constituent of ribosome cytoplasmic translation	ROBO1	• Roundabout signaling pathway • aorta development
RPL4	• structural constituent of ribosome cytoplasmic translation	RRP9	• RNA binding • rRNA processing
RPS25	• structural constituent of ribosome cytoplasmic translation		
TOMM40	• protein transmembrane transporter activity • protein targeting to mitochondrion • mitochondrial outer membrane translocase complex		
VMP1	• autophagosome membrane docking • plasma membrane phospholipid scrambling • lipoprotein transport		

Table 1

Supp. Figure S1

Supp. Figure S2

Supp. Figure S3

Supp. Figure S4

Supp. Figure S5

			Before recirculating			
		Pulse (bpm)	**Rate**	**Rhythm**	**P waves** **QRS waves**	**T waves**
SNC80	P014	n/a	normocardic	irregular	no	no	n/a
	P015	n/a	tachycardic	irregular	no	no	n/a
	P019	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	P023	12 bpm	bradycardic	irrregular	no	no	n/a
Vehicle	P016	n/a	tachycardic	irregular	no	no	n/a
	P020	n/a	tachycardic	irregular	no	no	n/a
	P024	n/a	tachycardia	irregular	no	no	n/a

			After defibrilation			
		Pulse (bpm)	**Rate**	**Rhythm**	**P waves** **QRS waves**	**T waves**
SNC80	P014	132 bpm	tachycardic	regular	yes	yes	T wave elevation
	P015	96bpm	normocardic	irregular	yes	yes	Normal T waves
	P019	54 bpm	bradycardic	irregular	some	yes	Inconsistent T wave depression
	P023	96 bpm	normocardic	regular	no	no	Unable to assess (supraventricular tachycardia)
Vehicle	P016	144 bpm	tachycardic	regular	yes	yes	Slightly abnormal ST segment depression
	P020	132 bpm	tachycardic	regular	no	yes	T wave depression
	P024	138 bpm	tachycardic	regular	some	yes	T wave abnormal (P and T wave overlap)

Supp. Table S1

Supplemental Synthesis Description

Step 1: Synthesis of intermediate _N,N_-diethyl-4-formylbenzamide

4-formylbenzoic acid (10 g, 66.61 mmol) and HATU (30.39 g, 79.93 mmol) were dissolved
in DMF (500 mL) at 15 °C under N_2. The mixture was then warmed to 30 °C and stirred for
1 h. At this juncture, the mixture was cooled to 15 °C and DIEA (34.43 g, 266.43 mmol,
46.41 mL) and diethylamine (7.31 g, 99.91 mmol, 10.29 mL) were added dropwise
together. The reaction was allowed to warm to rt and stirred for 12 h. The reaction mixture
was diluted with H_2O (2000 mL), and then extracted with ethyl acetate (5000 mL x 3). The combined
organic layers were washed with brine (1000 mL), dried over Na_2SO_4, filtered, and concentrated under
reduced pressure to give a residue. The residue was purified by column chromatography (SiO_2,
Petroleum ether/Ethyl acetate = 3/1 to 1/1) to give _N,N_-diethyl-4-formylbenzamide (57 g, 277.71 mmol,
83.38% yield) as a yellow solid. LC-MS m/z = 206.1 [M+H]$^+$.

Step 2: Synthesis of intermediate _N,N_-diethyl-4-[hydroxy(3-methoxyphenyl)methyl]benzamide

To a solution of _N,N_-diethyl-4-formylbenzamide (8 g, 38.98 mmol) in THF (320
mL) was dropwise added bromo-(3-methoxyphenyl)magnesium (1 M, 46.77
mL) at 0 °C under N_2. The reaction was stirred at 20 °C for 2 h, at which time it
was diluted with H_2O (1000 mL), and then extracted with
dichloromethane (500 mL x 3). The combined organic layers were washed
with brine (300 mL), dried over Na_2SO_4, filtered, and concentrated under reduced pressure to give a
residue. The residue was purified by column chromatography (SiO_2, Petroleum ether/Ethyl acetate
= 3/1 to 1/1) to give _N,N_-diethyl-4-[hydroxy-(3-methoxyphenyl)methyl]benzamide (6 g, 19.15 mmol, 6.14%
yield) as a white solid. LC-MS m/z = 314.1 [M+H]$^+$.

1009

Step 3: Synthesis of intermediate 4-(chloro(3-methoxyphenyl)methyl)-_N,N_-diethylbenzamide

To a solution of _N,N_-diethyl-4-[hydroxy-(3-methoxyphenyl)methyl]benzamide
(11.75 g, 37.49 mmol) in $CHCl_3$ (110 mL) was added dropwise HCl (12 M, 421.80
mL). The resulting mixture was stirred at 20 °C for 12 h, at which time it was
diluted with H_2O (50 mL), and then extracted with dichloromethane (30 mL x 3).
The combined organic layers were washed with brine (30 mL), dried
over Na_2SO_4, filtered, and concentrated under reduced pressure to give 4-[chloro-(3-
methoxyphenyl)methyl]-_N,N_-diethyl-benzamide (23 g, 69.31 mmol, 92.43% yield) as a yellow oil.

1018

1019 **Step 4: Synthesis of WB3**

To a mixture of 4-[chloro-(3-methoxyphenyl)methyl]-*N,N*-diethyl-benzamide (23 g, 69.31 mmol) and (*2R,5S*)-2,5-dimethylmorpholine (15.97 g, 138.62 mmol) in ACN (230 mL) was added K_2CO_3 (19.16 g, 138.62 mmol). The resulting mixture was stirred at 80 °C for 4 days. The reaction mixture was filtered, and the mother liquor was directly concentrated. The residue was purified by column chromatography (SiO$_2$, Petroleum ether/Ethyl acetate = 5/1 to 2/1). The residue was further purified by preparative-HPLC (column: UniSil 10-120 C18

70x250mm; mobile phase: [water(FA)-ACN]; gradient:20%-50% B over 20 min) and the appropriate

fractions were lyophilized. The residue was again further purified by preparative-HPLC (column:

Phenomenex luna C18 (250*70mm,10 um); mobile phase: [water (FA)-ACN]; gradient:10%-50% B over

35 min) and the appropriate fractions were lyophilized to give WB3 (3.3 g, 8.03 mmol, 11.59% yield) as a

white solid. LC-MS m/z = 296.1 [M+H]$^+$.

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl$_3$) δ = 7.47 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 2H), 7.34 - 7.27 (m, 3H), 6.88 (dd, *J* = 2.0, 8.3 Hz,

1H), 6.75 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 6.72 - 6.67 (m, 1H), 5.32 (s, 1H), 3.81 (s, 3H), 3.76 - 3.66 (m, 2H), 3.64 -

3.45 (m, 2H), 3.44 - 3.24 (m, 3H), 2.61 (dd, *J* = 2.0, 11.6 Hz, 1H), 2.57 - 2.48 (m, 1H), 1.82 (dd, *J* = 9.5,

11.6 Hz, 1H), 1.24 (br d, *J* = 0.8 Hz, 3H), 1.12 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 6H), 1.06 (d, *J* = 6.3 Hz, 3H).

1036