Association of 10 VEGF Family Genes with Alzheimer's Disease Pathology at Single Cell

Resolution

Yiyang Wu[1], Julia B Libby[1], Logan Dumitrescu[1,2], Philip L. De Jager[3,4], Vilas Menon[3], Julie A. Schneider[5], David A. Bennett[5], Timothy J Hohman[1,2]

[1]Vanderbilt Memory and Alzheimer's Center, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, TN

[2]Vanderbilt Genetics Institute, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, TN

[3]Center for Translational & Computational Neuroimmunology, Department of Neurology, Columbia University Irving Medical Center, New York, NY

[4]Taub Institute for Research on Alzheimer's Disease and Aging Brain, Columbia University Irving Medical Center, New York, NY

[5]Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center, Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, IL

Abstract

Background

The role of the vascular endothelial growth factors (VEGFs) in the pathogenesis of Alzheimer's

disease (AD) has been recently described, including notable changes along the VEGFB/FLT1

signaling pathway. However, cell-type specific alterations are yet to be characterized in depth.

In this study, we utilized a large single-nucleus RNA sequencing dataset (N = 424) to investigate

the effect of 10 VEGF genes' expression (*VEGFA*, *VEGFB*, *VEGFC*, *VEGFD*, *PGF*, *FLT1*, *FLT4*, *KDR*,

NRP1, and *NRP2*) on cognitive performance and AD pathology, as well as on the associated

VEGF signaling pathways in 8 cell types from postmortem human brains.

Methods

The single-nucleus transcriptomes, derived from Dorsolateral Prefrontal Cortex (DLFPC) tissues

of 424 unique donors from the Religious Orders Study and Memory and Aging Project

(ROS/MAP; AD Knowledge Portal syn2580853), were collected by the Rush Alzheimer's Disease

Center and processed at Columbia University Medical Center. Mean age of death of the cohort

was 89 years, among which 68% were females, and 52% were clinical AD cases. Negative

binomial mixed models implemented in Nebula R package were used for differential expression

analysis between autopsy confirmed AD dementia and normal cognition groups, and for

association analysis with amyloid burden, tangle burden, and both cross-sectional and

longitudinal global cognitive function. Intercellular VEGF-associated communication pattern

among cell types was also profiled using CellChat.

Results

Higher microglia expressed *FLT1*, endothelial *FLT4*, astrocyte *VEGFD*, and oligodendrocyte

precursor cell (opc) *NRP1* expression associated with greater β-amyloid burden. Higher

oligodendrocyte *VEGFB* expression associated with greater β-amyloid burden and worse

cognitive trajectories, whereas higher *VEGFB* expression in inhibitory neurons was associated

with lower β-amyloid burden. Higher astrocyte *NRP1* was associated with lower tangle burden.

Higher expression of microglia and endothelial *FLT1* associated with worse cognitive

trajectories and lower cognition scores at the last clinic visit before death. As for association

with diagnosis, prefrontal cortical *FLT1* expression was upregulated in clinical AD patients

compared to cognitively normal controls in both endothelial and microglial cells. For VEGF-

associated intercellular communication, VEGFA-mediated signals contributed the most to the

communication in both AD and normal cognition groups. Interestingly, although FLT1

expression was significantly elevated in AD endothelial cells, these cells still showed

comparable VEGFA-FLT1 communication strength to the cognitively normal controls.

Conclusions

Consistent with our previously reported results from bulk omics data, prefrontal cortical

expression of *FLT1* and *FLT4* were associated with cross-sectional global cognitive function,

longitudinal cognitive trajectories, and AD neuropathology, and our study showed these

associations appear to be driven by endothelial and microglial cells. In contrast, *VEGFB*

expression seems to have opposing effects on amyloid burden depending on the cell types,

suggesting its more dynamic role in AD pathology.

Key Words: VEGF, vascular endothelial growth factor, Alzheimer's disease, Dementia,

snRNAseq, Single cell transcriptome, association analysis, signaling pathway.

Background

Neurovascular unit dysfunction is a hallmark of progression of AD. The vascular

endothelial growth factor (VEGF) family of signaling proteins are responsible for the growth and

maintenance of cells involved in vascularization and neuralization [1]. The members of the

VEGF family include five ligand genes (*VEGFA*, *VEGFB*, *VEGFC*, *VEGFD*, and *PGF*), three receptor

genes (*FLT1*, *KDR*, and *FLT4*), and two co-receptor genes (*NRP1* and *NRP2*; Figure 1a). These

genes play a role in brain injury [2], stroke [3, 4], and the progression of neurodegenerative

disease [5], particularly Alzheimer's disease (AD). Within AD, disruptions in vascularization and

circulation of the brain have been shown to contribute to neurodegeneration and the

development of neuropathology [6–13]. As a result, VEGFs have become exciting targets for

research to better understand vascular contributions to AD.

The role of VEGFs in AD appears to vary depending on the gene family member. Some

family members have protective effects [9, 14, 15], while others contribute to the progression

of neurodegeneration [16–18]. Earlier work from our group observed that cerebrospinal fluid

levels of VEGFA displayed a protective effect [15]. When we expanded our analyses to brain

tissues we observed that *VEGFB*, *FLT1*, *PGF*, and *FLT4* all appear to contribute to the

progression of AD pathology and cognitive decline [16]. Within the prefrontal cortex, higher

expression of these four genes (*VEGFB*, *FLT1*, *PGF*, and *FLT4*) was associated with more rapid

cognitive decline and higher pathology burden [16]. Similar associations are observed when

measuring the protein abundance of these VEGF family members in brain tissue and extend to

other brain regions including the posterior cingulate gyrus [18].

To better understand VEGF associations in the human brain within their cellular context,

we previously investigated single nucleus expression from 48 post-mortem DLPFC samples,

evaluating their expression in astrocytes, microglia, oligodendrocytes, oligodendrocyte

progenitor cells (OPCs), pericytes, endothelial cells, excitatory and inhibitory neurons [18].

Fascinatingly, we found that the robust *FLT1* and *VEGFB* signals that we had observed in bulk

tissue were driven by expression in microglia for both genes, along with endothelial cells,

oligodendrocytes, and OPCs for *VEGFB.* While results were encouraging, the small sample size

and few endothelial and microglial cells in this initial dataset made interpretation challenging.

The goal of this study is to further disentangle the cell-type specific VEGF expression

changes in relation to AD endophenotypes by analyzing a much larger AD snRNA cohort

(N=424). Specifically, we investigated 10 VEGF (*VEGFA*, *VEGFB*, *VEGFC*, *VEGFD*, *PGF*, *FLT1*, *FLT4*,

KDR, *NRP1*, and *NRP2*) family members' expression within eight brain cell types to test for

differential expression between cognitively normal participants and those with AD, along with

expression associations with global cognition (cross-sectional and longitudinal trajectories) and

AD pathology (β-amyloid and tau neurofibrillary tangle burden; Figure 1b). In addition, we

evaluated cell-type specific changes in the VEGF-associated signaling pathway during AD by

conducting an intercellular communication analysis for these 10 VEGF family members.

Methods

Participants

The participants included in this study were from two longitudinal clinical-pathological

cohort studies including the Religious Orders Study and the Memory and Aging Project

(ROS/MAP). Each study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Rush University

Medical Center. At enrollment, all participants were free of dementia and agreed to annual

clinical evaluation and the donation of their brain at the time of their death [19–21]. Secondary

analyses of this extant data were approved by the Vanderbilt University Medical Center IRB.

ROS/MAP data can be accessed online at the Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center Resource Sharing

Hub (https://www.radc.rush.edu/), as well as on the Accelerating Medicines Partnership-

Alzheimer's Disease (AMP-AD) Knowledge Portal (syn3219045).

Single nucleus RNA sequencing

Specimens were collected on availability of frozen pathologic materials from the dorsal

lateral prefrontal cortex (DLPFC). The tissue specimens were received from the Rush

Alzheimer's Disease center. Participants with a post-mortem interval < 41 hours and whole

genome sequence data were selected to go through a series of rigorous quality control steps

[22–24], which resulting in 424 participants. The participants had a median of 3,824 sequenced

nuclei. In the final data, there were 8 major cell types, including astrocytes, endothelial cells,

inhibitory neurons, microglia, oligodendrocytes, oligodendrocyte precursor cells (OPCs), and

CUX2- and CUX2+ excitatory neurons. snRNAseq data can be downloaded from AD Knowledge

Portal (Accession Number: syn31512863). Additional filters applied before analyses included

removing genes with expression in less than 10% of all cells, removing cells with less than 200

or more than 20,000 total RNA UMIs or had more than 5% mitochondrial mapped reads.

Measurements of Cognitive Function

The measurement of global cognition was derived from 17 different neuropsychological

tests across five domains of cognition (semantic, episodic, and working memory, perceptual

speed, and perceptual orientation). The z-scores of all the available tests were averaged to

create a global cognition composite. Further details on the development of this composite have

been previously described [25]. For cross-sectional cognition function related analysis, global

cognitive score at last visit before death was used from 369 participants. Longitudinal cognitive

trajectory was derived from a linear mixed effects model with global cognition as the outcome

and the intercept and interval (years from last visit) entered as fixed and random effects. The

derived "cognition slope" was calculated as the sum of the random and fixed effects for each

participant. 423 participants are included in this analysis.

Measurements of AD pathology

Measures of pathology were previously characterized in ROS/MAP [19, 20]. Measured

by immunohistochemistry at autopsy, β-amyloid and tau tangle burden were quantified as the

average percent area occupied by β-amyloid (using antibodies specific to Aβ_{42}) or tau (using

antibodies specific to AT8 epitope of abnormally phosphorylated tau) across 8 brain regions at

autopsy: hippocampus, angular gyrus, and entorhinal, midfrontal, inferior temporal, calcarine,

anterior cingulate, and superior frontal cortices. Then, values were transformed to approximate

a normal distribution. 421 participants are included in amyloid and tau burden analysis.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analyses were completed using RStudio (R version 4.3.1) and code is available

upon request from the corresponding author. Significance was set to a priori to a=0.05.

Additionally, p-values were corrected for all *VEGF* predictors across AD-associated outcomes

(290 models) using the false discovery rate (FDR) procedure.

Negative binomial mixed models implemented by the Nebula R package[26]; v1.4.2)

were used to analyze the association between each *VEGF* gene within each of the eight cell

types and AD diagnosis, global cognition longitudinally and at last visit before death, and β-

amyloid and tau burden at death. For analysis of diagnosis, 299 individuals were included: 142

normal cognition controls (cogdx = 1) and 157 AD dementia patients (cogdx = 4 or 5). All models

covaried for age at death, sex, post-mortem interval (PMI), and the interval between last

cognitive visit and death in years (for cognition). One participant didn't have PMI data, hence,

was removed from association analysis. The gene count matrix input of the models was the

UMI count data from the RNA assay normalized and scaled by the "sctransform" R package

(https://github.com/satijalab/sctransform).

VEGF-mediated Intercellular Communication Profiling

Intercellular communication pattern involving these 10 VEGF genes among cell types

was analyzed using the 'CellChat' R package [27](v2.0). Due to lack of some of the evident

ligand-receptor pairs involving these 10 VEGF genes from the default CellChat database

(CellChatDB), we manually updated CellChatDB by incorporating those curated additionally

from the CellTalk DB (v1.0, https://github.com/ZJUFanLab/CellTalkDB/tree/master/database).

Otherwise, we performed the analysis according to the default setting, skipping projecting gene

expression data onto human protein-protein interaction network.

Results

Participant Characteristics

The snRNAseq data used for our analysis consisted of 424 non-Hispanic White

participants (**Table 1**) with an average PMI of 7.7 hours (SD = 5.1 hours), 68% of whom are

females, 52% are clinical AD dementia patients (cogdx = 4 or 5), and 27% carried at least one

APOE4 allele. The cohort has a mean age at death at 89 years old with an average of 13 years of

education.

VEGFs **Associations with Cognition**

Higher expression of *FLT1* in endothelial cells and microglia was associated with worse

cognitive performance at last visit before death (endothelial cells (logFC= -0.09, FDR= 0.009)

and microglia (logFC= -0.18, FDR= 0.009)) and cognitive trajectories (endothelial-*FLT1* (logFC= -

0.77, FDR= 0.04) and microglia-*FLT1* (logFC= -1.96, p= 0.009)). Additionally, higher expression of

VEGFB in oligodendrocytes (logFC= -0.56, FDR= 0.02) was also associated with a worse cognitive

trajectory. **Table 2** listed all statistically significant associations between 10 VEGF gene

expression and various AD outcomes tested (the complete result can be found in **Supplemental**

Table 1).

VEGFs **Associations with AD Pathology**

Multiple cell types and *VEGF* genes were associated with β-amyloid burden (**Table 2**).

Higher microglia-*FLT1* (logFC= 0.05, FDR= 0.0008), oligodendrocyte-*VEGFB* (logFC= 0.01, FDR=

0.009), endothelial-*FLT4* (logFC= 0.03, FDR= 0.01), astrocyte-*VEGFD* (logFC= 0.02, FDR= 0.03),

and oligodendrocyte precursor cell-*NRP1* (logFC= 0.02, FDR= 0.05) were all associated with

higher β-amyloid burden. On the contrary, within inhibitory neurons, higher expression of

VEGFB was associated with lower β-amyloid burden (logFC= -0.01, FDR= 0.02).

Differential Expression of *VEGFs in AD*

We also tested for differences in *VEGF* expression between neuropathologically

confirmed AD dementia cases and cognitively normal controls. We observed that AD patients

had higher expression levels of *FLT1* within microglia (logFC= -0.45, FDR= 0.009) and endothelial

cells (**Table 2**, logFC= -0.20, FDR= 0.01).

VEGF-associated Intercellular Communication Profile

Both incoming and outgoing interaction strength (calculated by in-degree and out-

degree network centrality scores respectively) associated with these 10 VEGFs among cell types

was reduced in AD comparing to cognitive normal controls, especially signals from astrocytes to

neurons and endothelial cells, but the differences are not statistically significant (**Figure 2c**).

VEGFA was the most abundantly expressed VEGF ligand investigated, primarily in astrocytes,

and for that reason the cell-cell communication profile of these cells was predominantly VEGFA

driven; sending from astrocytes to themselves and to other cell types, among which excitatory

neurons were the top receiver of the signal for the cognitively normal group, and endothelial

cells were the primary receiver for AD group (**Figure 2a-b**). Top Ligand-Receptor pair

contributors to VEGFA-induced signaling in this DLPFC dataset are "VEGFA-GRIN2B" (39.5%),

"VEGFA-SIRPA" (10.7%), "VEGFA-EGFR" (9.5%), and "VEGFA-FLT1" (9.5%) among cognitively

normal participants, while "VEGFA-GRIN2B" (37.8%), "VEGFA-FLT1" (13.8%), "VEGFA-EGFR"

(10.2%), and "VEGFA-SIRPA" (10.2%) contributed among the AD participants. Although the

VEGFA-FLT1 signal, from astrocytes to endothelial cells exclusively, showed a comparable

communication probability between cells in AD and cognitive normally participants (0.073 vs

0.076) (**Supplemental Table 2**), the relative contribution to their overall VEGFA-induced

signaling did increase in AD group comparing to normal (13.8% vs 9.5%).

Discussion

In this study we have provided the most comprehensive exploration into cell-specific

effects of the VEGF family in the context of AD. Our results build on previous evidence from

bulk tissue at the protein and transcriptomic level that *VEGFB, FLT1, FLT4,* and *NRP1* relate to

the clinical progression and neuropathology of AD [16, 18]. The single cell resolution here builds

on our early single nucleus data (18) to provide the clearest picture of the important and

distinct roles the VEGF family members play in various brain cell types. Our results particularly

highlight the diverse associations for VEGF family members across endothelial cells, microglial

cells, astrocytes, oligodendrocytes, and neurons. While *FLT1* showed strong upregulation in the

AD brain in endothelial cells as might be expected, we also observed strong upregulation of

FLT1 in microglial cells. Yet, regardless of the upregulation of *FLT1*, our intercellular

communication analyses suggest that FLT1-associated canonical VEGF signaling pathways

themselves are in fact comparable in the AD brain to normal brain. In contrast to the consistent

effects observed for *FLT1*, we observed opposing direction of effect on β-amyloid burden for

VEGFB expression in oligodendrocytes vs inhibitory neurons, whereby higher levels of

oligodendrocyte *VEGFB* related to higher pathology, while higher levels of neuronal *VEGFB*

related to lower pathology. Together, these results suggest that in addition to the classic

vascular signaling pathway underlying the associations between VEGF family members and AD,

there may also be immune (e.g., microglial *FLT1*) and neuronal (e.g., neuronal *VEGFB*) signaling

cascades that contribute to AD pathogenesis.

The central role of VEGF signaling is angiogenesis under both health and disease

conditions [28, 29]. Pathological angiogenesis is a hallmark of AD, which is believed to both

drive and respond to multiple AD pathologies driving hypoxia, oxidative stress, inflammation,

and Aβ accumulation [30]. Indeed, previous work has identified a marked upregulation of

angiogenic factors and mediators in the AD brain [31, 32]. In the present results, the

upregulation of *FLT1* in endothelial cells among AD patients could reflect a repair response. The

increase in vascularization and blood flow could be a response to AD neuropathology similar to

the response that has been indicated in other neurodegenerative and neuropsychiatric diseases

such as ALS [33] and schizophrenia [34]. On the other hand, the elevated endothelial *FLT1* could

drive AD neuropathology. For example, it has been shown that VEGF-induced pathological

angiogenesis can facilitate Aβ generation [35]. VEGF-induced pathological angiogenesis can also

worsen AD pathology by disrupting permeability of the blood-brain barrier (BBB) [36, 37]. BBB

is formed by physical interaction of multiple brain cell types, with a common structure

consisting of blood capillaries formed by endothelial cells (ECs), pericytes, and the astrocytic

end feet [38]. As a natural protective barrier of the central nervous system (CNS), BBB

homeostasis is strictly regulated, disruption of which can lead to many neurological conditions

including AD [39, 40]. Our intercellular communication profile showed that signals

communicated among these 10 VEGF genes were predominantly from astrocytes to ECs, hinting

at the canonical angiogenesis pathway at the blood brain barrier as a primary driver here. In

fact, evidence is already emerging that demonstrates CNS angiogenesis can be regulated

through VEGF-dependent signaling at the BBB [41]. Characterizing the interplay between VEGF

family genes and BBB integrity in the context of AD may provide more insight into the

mechanistic pathways underlying the associations observed here.

Our results also suggest roles of some of the VEGF family genes in regulating the

immune response, including the upregulation of microglial *FLT1* in AD group. Increased

microglia function in AD has been observed by many [42–46] in the presence of β-amyloid

peptides and facilitates an inflammatory response [47]. FLT1 was believed to be one of the 20

or so proteins that has been found to be enriched in Aβ plaques [48], and has recently been

showed to interact with VCAM1 and plays a role in VCAM1-dependent chemotaxis of microglia,

which enhances microglia clearance of Aβ [49]. Studies have also shown the critical role that

FLT1 plays in microglial proliferation and monocyte-macrophage migration [50, 51]. With all

these under consideration, elevation of microglial *FLT1* in AD should not be a surprise. The

primary ligand for *FLT1* is *VEGFB*, so it is possible that the *VEGFB* association in

oligodendrocytes may reflect upregulation of this same pathway. It is well known that

oligodendrocytes and microglia work together during regulation of myelination, and this is

particularly noticeable during neurodegenerative conditions [52]. Future work confirming these

cell-specific transcriptomic effects at the protein level is necessary.

One fascinating discovery in the present results is that higher expression of *VEGFB*

within inhibitory neurons was associated with lower amyloid burden, which was the only

protective effect of any VEGF we tested in this dataset. This result is consistent with the

previously reported evidence of the benefits of *VEGFB* expression on neuronal survival and

nerve regeneration [53–56]. Perhaps in the early stage of AD when β-amyloid burden is low,

inhibitory neurons manage to inhibit apoptosis and promote neurogenesis through

upregulating VEGFB. Upregulation of VEGFB could be one of the molecular mechanisms that

enables inhibitory neurons to be more resistant to AD neuropathology comparing to excitatory

neurons [57]. Interestingly, a study of APP/PS1 amyloidopathy mice did show an increase of

inhibitory synapses in hippocampus before pathology develops and then decreased at 12

months of age when robust AD pathology was present [58]. Hence, the protective effect of

VEGFB from inhibitory neurons to the development of AD pathology could function in a time-

sensitive matter. One also cannot rule out the possibility that increased *VEGFB* expression

within inhibitory neurons could help with the clearance of β-amyloid.

We also observed higher expression of *FLT4* within endothelial cells related to higher

amyloid burden. The primary ligand for *FLT4* is *VEGFD* and we also observed an association

between elevated *VEGFD* in oligodendrocytes and amyloid burden. In contrast to the other

VEGF receptors, the FLT4/VEGFD signaling axis is primarily involved in lymphangiogenesis.

Certainly meningeal lymphatics has been implicated in amyloid clearance through a complex

interplay with the immune system [59], so it is quite possible that lymphatics underly the

observed *VEGFD* and *FLT4* associations with β-amyloid. In previous work, we identified an

associated between higher expression of *FLT4* in the dorsal lateral prefrontal cortex and worse

neuropathology[16], but also identified higher expression of *FLT4* in the caudate nucleus

associated with lower amyloid levels and tau levels [18]. Others have also observed these flips

in direction with associations depending on the brain region [60]. Combined, these results

suggest that tissue and cell-type are important considerations when looking at the role of *FLT4*

in the brain within the context of AD.

Finally, we observed a cell-type specific effect of NRP1. Higher expression of *NRP1* in

astrocytes was associated with lower levels of neurofibrillary tangles, but higher expression of

NRP1 within oligodendrocyte precursor cells was associated with higher amyloid burden. Other

work from our group has also observed differing roles of *NRP1* when pertaining to AD

neuropathology [18]. However, this is the first time we have observed statistically significant

associations within specific cell-types. All above results further highlight the complexity of the

VEGF family and their role within neurodegeneration. To fully understand the clinical potential

of *VEGF* as a biomarker and therapeutic target, in-depth understanding of each of the tissue

and cell-type is necessary.

This study has many strengths. ROS/MAP is a well-characterized cohort with longitudinal

cognitive data, comprehensive neuropathology data with multiple cell-type measures of *VEGF*

expression. Additionally, this study reports novel discoveries and replication of the effects of

VEGF family members on AD phenotypes including pathology and cognition at the

transcriptomic level within a large sample size. Because of the larges sample size and cell-type

specific expression measurements, we were able to provide more comprehensive data and

hypotheses about cellular context.

Despite these strengths, this study also has limitations. ROS/MAP is enriched for non-

Hispanic white, highly educated individuals which limits the generalizability to more

representative populations. Further, while being able to examine cell-type specific effects in a

large sample size, we are limited to the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex tissue.

To conclude, this study provides an extensive characterization within a large sample size

of the *VEGF* signaling family members in the context of cognitive aging and AD. Our results

provide evidence that further supports the role of *VEGFB*, *VEGFD*, *FLT1*, *FLT4* and *NRP1* play

inside and outside of classic VEGF signaling axis in AD, with support for both an endothelial and

microglial signaling cascade that could underly these well-established associations. For the first

time, we provide evidence that *VEGFB* expression in inhibitory neurons may relate to a

protective effect against AD neuropathology as has been hypothesized previously and observed

in models of Parkinson's disease. These results provide compelling evidence that VEGFB and

FLT1 may have potential as therapeutic targets in AD, but there remains a need to confirm

these single nucleus transcriptomic results at the protein level, and establish causality through

experimental approaches.

References

1. de Almodovar CR, Lambrechts D, Mazzone M, Carmeliet P. Role and therapeutic potential of VEGF in the nervous system. Physiol Rev. 2009;89:607–648.
2. Linton AE. Pathologic sequelae of vascular cognitive impairment and dementia sheds light on potential targets for intervention. Cereb Circ-Cogn Behav. 2021;2:100030.
3. Greenberg DA. Vascular Endothelial Growth Factors (VEGFs) and Stroke. Cell Mol Life Sci. 2013;70:1753–1761.
4. Ng TKS, Ho CSH, Tam WWS, Kua EH, Ho RC-M. Decreased Serum Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor (BDNF) Levels in Patients with Alzheimer's Disease (AD): A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. Int J Mol Sci. 2019;20:257.
5. Melincovici CS. Vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) – key factor in normal and pathological angiogenesis. Rom J Morphol Embryol. 2018;59:455–467.
6. Silva T. Circulating levels of vascular endothelial growth factor in patients with Alzheimer's disease: A case-control study. Behav Brain Res. 2023;437.
7. Ali M. VEGF Paradoxically Reduces Cerebral Blood Flow in Alzheimer's Disease Mice. Neurosci Insights. 2022;17.
8. Guo L-H, Alexopoulos P, Perneczky R. Heart-type fatty acid binding protein and vascular endothelial growth factor: cerebrospinal fluid biomarker candidates for Alzheimer's disease. Eur Arch Psychiatry Clin Neurosci. 2013;263:553–560.
9. Huang L, Jia J, Liu R. Decreased serum levels of the angiogenic factors VEGF and TGF-β1 in Alzheimer's disease and amnestic mild cognitive impairment. Neurosci Lett. 2013;550:60–63.
10. Harris R, Miners JS, Allen S, Love S. VEGFR1 and VEGFR2 in Alzheimer's Disease. J Alzheimers Dis. 2018:1–12.
11. Provias J, Jeynes B. Reduction in Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Expression in the Superior Temporal, Hippocampal, and Brainstem Regions in Alzheimer's Disease. Curr Neurovasc Res. 2014:1–14.
12. Tang H, Mao X, Xie L, Greenberg DA, Jin K. Expression level of vascular endothelial growth factor in hippocampus is associated with cognitive impairment in patients with Alzheimer's disease. Neurobiol Aging. 2013;34:1412–1415.
13. Thomas T, Miners S, Love S. Post-mortem assessment of hypoperfusion of cerebral cortex in Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia. Brain. 2015;138:1059–1069.
14. Garcia KO, Ornellas FLM, Martin PKM, Patti CL, Mello LE, Frussa-Filho R, et al. Therapeutic effects of the transplantation of VEGF overexpressing bone marrow mesenchymal stem cells in the hippocampus of murine model of Alzheimer's disease. Front Aging Neurosci. 2014;6:6–30.
15. Hohman TJ, Bell SP, Jefferson AL. The Role of Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor in Neurodegeneration and Cognitive Decline: Exploring Interactions With Biomarkers of Alzheimer Disease. JAMA Neurol. 2015;72:520–529.
16. Mahoney ER, Dumitrescu L, Moore AM, Cambronero FE, De Jager PL, Koran MEI, et al. Brain expression of the vascular endothelial growth factor gene family in cognitive aging and Alzheimer's disease. Mol Psychiatry. 2019. 22 July 2019. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41380-019-0458-5.

17. Libby JB, Seto M, Khan OA, Liu D, Petyuk VA, Oliver N, et al. Whole blood transcript and
protein abundance of the vascular endothelial growth factor family relate to cognitive
performance. Neurobiol Aging. 2023;124:11–17.
18. Seto M, Dumitrescu L, Mahoney ER, Sclafani AM, De Jager PL, Menon V, et al. Multi-omic
characterization of brain changes in the vascular endothelial growth factor family during
aging and Alzheimer's disease. Neurobiol Aging. 2023;126:25–33.
19. Bennett DA, Schneider JA, Arvanitakis Z, Wilson RS. Overview and findings from the
religious orders study. Curr Alzheimer Res. 2012;9:628.
20. Bennett DA, Schneider JA, Buchman AS, Barnes LL, Boyle PA, Wilson RS. Overview and
findings from the Rush Memory and Aging Project. Curr Alzheimer Res. 2012;9:646.
21. Bennett DA, Buchman AS, Boyle PA, Barnes LL, Wilson RS, Schneider JA. Religious Orders
Study and Rush Memory and Aging Project. J Alzheimers Dis. 2018;64:S161–S189.
22. Fujita M, Gao Z, Zeng L, McCabe C, White CC, Ng B, et al. Cell-subtype specific effects of
genetic variation in the aging and Alzheimer cortex. 2022.
23. Cain A, Taga M, McCabe C, Green GS, Hekselman I, White CC. Multicellular communities
are perturbed in the aging human brain and Alzheimer's disease. Nat Neurosci.
2023;26:1267–1280.
24. Habib N, Avraham-Davidi I, Basu A, Burks T, Shekhar K, Hofree M, et al. Massively parallel
single-nucleus RNA-seq with DroNc-seq. Nat Methods. 2017;14:955–958.
25. Wilson RS, Boyle PA, Yu L, Barnes LL, Sytsma J, Buchman AS, et al. Temporal course and
pathologic basis of unawareness of memory loss in dementia. Neurology. 2015;85:984–
991.
26. He L, Davila-Velderrain J, Sumida TS, Hafler DA, Kellis M, Kulminski AM. NEBULA is a fast
negative binomial mixed model for differential or co-expression analysis of large-scale
multi-subject single-cell data. Commun Biol. 2021;4:629.
27. Jin S, Guerrero-Juarez CF, Zhang L, Chang I, Ramos R, Kuan C-H, et al. Inference and
analysis of cell-cell communication using CellChat. Nat Commun. 2021;12:1088.
28. Hicklin DJ, Ellis LM. Role of the Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Pathway in Tumor
Growth and Angiogenesis. J Clin Oncol. 2005;23:1011–1027.
29. Shibuya M. Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor (VEGF) and Its Receptor (VEGFR) Signaling
in Angiogenesis. Genes Cancer. 2011;2:1097–1105.
30. Jefferies WA, Price KA, Biron KE, Fenninger F, Pfeifer CG, Dickstein DL. Adjusting the
compass: new insights into the role of angiogenesis in Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimers Res
Ther. 2013;5:64.
31. Lau S-F, Cao H, Fu AKY, Ip NY. Single-nucleus transcriptome analysis reveals dysregulation
of angiogenic endothelial cells and neuroprotective glia in Alzheimer's disease. Proc Natl
Acad Sci. 2020;117:25800.
32. Tsartsalis S, Sleven H, Fancy N, Wessely F, Smith AM, Willumsen N, et al. A single nuclear
transcriptomic characterisation of mechanisms responsible for impaired angiogenesis and
blood-brain barrier function in Alzheimer's disease. Nat Commun. 2024;15:2243.
33. Hunter M, Spiller KJ, Dominique MA, Xu H, Hunter FW, Fang TC, et al. Microglial
transcriptome analysis in the rNLS8 mouse model of TDP-43 proteinopathy reveals
discrete expression profiles associated with neurodegenerative progression and recovery.
Acta Neuropathol Commun. 2021;9:140.

34.   Stankovic I, Notaras M, Wolujewicz P, Lu T, Lis R, Ross ME, et al. Schizophrenia endothelial
cells exhibit higher permeability and altered angiogenesis patterns in patient-derived
organoids. Transl Psychiatry. 2024;14:1–15.

35.   Desai BS, Schneider JA, Li J-L, Carvey PM, Hendey B. Evidence of angiogenic vessels in
Alzheimer's disease. J Neural Transm Vienna Austria 1996. 2009;116:587–597.

36.   Vogel C, Bauer A, Wiesnet M, Preissner KT, Schaper W, Marti HH, et al. Flt-1, but not Flk-1
mediates hyperpermeability through activation of the PI3-K/Akt pathway. J Cell Physiol.
2007;212:236–243.

37.   Gao L, Pan X, Zhang JH, Xia Y. Glial cells: an important switch for the vascular function of
the central nervous system. Front Cell Neurosci. 2023;17.

38.   Sun Q, Xu X, Wang T, Xu Z, Lu X, Li X, et al. Neurovascular Units and Neural-Glia Networks
in Intracerebral Hemorrhage: from Mechanisms to Translation. Transl Stroke Res.
2021;12:447–460.

39.   Daneman R, Prat A. The Blood–Brain Barrier. Cold Spring Harb Perspect Biol.
2015;7:a020412.

40.   Wu D, Chen Q, Chen X, Han F, Chen Z, Wang Y. The blood–brain barrier: structure,
regulation, and drug delivery. Signal Transduct Target Ther. 2023;8:1–27.

41.   Zhang S, Kim B, Zhu X, Gui X, Wang Y, Lan Z, et al. Glial type specific regulation of CNS
angiogenesis by HIFα-activated different signaling pathways. Nat Commun. 2020;11:2027.

42.   Egensperger R, Kosel S, von Eitzen U, Graeber MB. Microglial activation in Alzheimer
disease: Association with APOE genotype. Brain Pathol. 1998;8:439–447.

43.   Maezawa I, Zimin PI, Wulff H, Jin LW. Amyloid-beta protein oligomer at low nanomolar
concentrations activates microglia and induces microglial neurotoxicity. J Biol
Chem;286:3693–3706.

44.   Malik M, Parikh I, Vasquez JB, Smith C, Tai L, Bu G, et al. Genetics ignite focus on microglial
inflammation in Alzheimer's disease. Mol Neurodegener. 2015;10:52.

45.   Nordengen K, Kirsebom BE, Henjum K, Selnes P, Gisladottir B, Wettergreen M, et al. Glial
activation and inflammation along the Alzheimer's disease continuum. J
Neuroinflammation. 2019;16:46.

46.   Rogers J, Strohmeyer R, Kovelowski CJ, Li R. Microglia and inflammatory mechanisms in
the clearance of amyloid-beta peptide. Glia. 2002;40:260–269.

47.   Ryu JK, Cho T, Choi HB, Wang YT, McLarnon JG. Microglial VEGF receptor response is an
integral chemotactic component in Alzheimer's disease pathology. J Neurosci. 2009;29:3–
13.

48.   Xiong F, Ge W, Ma C. Quantitative proteomics reveals distinct composition of amyloid
plaques in Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimers Dement. 2019;15:429–440.

49.   Lau S-F, Wu W, Wong HY, Ouyang L, Qiao Y, Xu J, et al. The VCAM1–ApoE pathway directs
microglial chemotaxis and alleviates Alzheimer's disease pathology. Nat Aging. 2023:1–18.

50.   Sawano A, Iwai S, Sakurai Y, Ito M, Shitara K, Nakahata T, et al. Flt-1, vascular endothelial
growth factor receptor 1, is a novel cell surface marker for the lineage of monocyte-
macrophages in humans. Blood. 2001;97:785–791.

51.   Hiratsuka S, Minowa O, Kuno J, Noda T, Shibuya M. Flt-1 lacking the tyrosine kinase
domain is sufficient for normal development and angiogenesis in mice. Proc Natl Acad Sci.
1998;95:9349–9354.

52. Kalafatakis I, Karagogeos D. Oligodendrocytes and Microglia: Key Players in Myelin
Development, Damage and Repair. Biomolecules. 2021;11:1058.
53. Li Y, Zhang F, Nagai N, Tang Z, Zhang S, Scotney P, et al. VEGF-B inhibits apoptosis via
VEGFR-1–mediated suppression of the expression of BH3-only protein genes in mice and
rats. J Clin Invest. 2008;118:913.
54. Falk T, Yue X, Zhang S, McCourt AD, Yee BJ, Gonzalez RT, et al. Vascular endothelial growth
factor-B is neuroprotective in an in vivo rat model of Parkinson's disease. Neurosci Lett.
2011;496:43–47.
55. Caballero B, Sherman SJ, Falk T. Insights into the Mechanisms Involved in Protective
Effects of VEGF-B in Dopaminergic Neurons. Park Dis. 2017;2017:4263795.
56. Guaiquil VH, Pan Z, Karagianni N, Fukuoka S, Alegre G, Rosenblatt MI. VEGF-B selectively
regenerates injured peripheral neurons and restores sensory and trophic functions. Proc
Natl Acad Sci U S A. 2014;111:17272–17277.
57. Fu H, Possenti A, Freer R, Nakano Y, Hernandez Villegas NC, Tang M, et al. A tau
homeostasis signature is linked with the cellular and regional vulnerability of excitatory
neurons to tau pathology. Nat Neurosci. 2019;22:47–56.
58. Kiss E, Gorgas K, Schlicksupp A, Groß D, Kins S, Kirsch J, et al. Biphasic Alteration of the
Inhibitory Synapse Scaffold Protein Gephyrin in Early and Late Stages of an Alzheimer
Disease Model. Am J Pathol. 2016;186:2279–2291.
59. Da Mesquita S, Papadopoulos Z, Dykstra T, Brase L, Farias FG, Wall M, et al. Meningeal
lymphatics affect microglia responses and anti-Aβ immunotherapy. Nature. 2021;593:255–
260.
60. Weijts BGMW. Atypical E2fs Control Lymphangiogenesis through Transcriptional
Regulation of Ccbe1 and Flt4. PloS One. 2013;8:e73693.
484

487
488

489   **Table 1. Characteristics of Study Participants**

	Cognitive Normal Controls (N=143)	Alzheimer's Disease Patients (N=157)	Total Cohort (N=424)	P value (comparison between Cognitive Normal and AD)
Age at death (years)	87.20 ± 7.26	91.15 ± 6.56	89.19 ± 6.82	<0.001
Education (years)	16.28 ± 3.45	16.55 ± 3.22	16.31 ± 3.47	0.48
Post-mortem interval (hours)	7.80 ± 4.99	7.25 ± 4.32	7.71 ± 5.11	0.31
Global cognition slope	-0.04 ± 0.04	-0.19 ± 0.09	-0.11 ± 0.09	<0.001
β-amyloid burden	3.12 ± 3.77	5.93 ± 4.46	4.46 ± 4.50	<0.001
Tau burden	2.97 ± 3.36	9.36 ± 9.15	5.98 ± 7.15	<0.001
Male, no. (%)	49 (34)	42 (27)	136 (32)	0.16
APOE4 Carrier, no. (%)	27 (19)	60 (38)	109 (27)	<0.001

490   Values are presented as mean ± standard deviation unless otherwise indicated. P values were

491   derived from Welch Two Sample t-test for continuous variables, and Pearson's Chi-squared test

492   for categorical variables.

502 **Table 2. FDR Significant Cell Type Specific VEGF Associations with Cognition and AD Pathology**

Gene	Outcome	Cell Type	logFC	SE	P Value	P-FDR
FLT1	Last Cognition before Death	Endothelial Cells	-0.089	0.024	1.768E-04	0.009
FLT1	Last Cognition before Death	Microglia	-0.176	0.046	1.492E-04	0.009
FLT1	Cognition Trajectory	Endothelial Cells	-0.771	0.248	0.002	0.041
FLT1	Cognition Trajectory	Microglia	-1.964	0.504	9.716E-05	0.009
VEGFB	Cognition Trajectory	Oligodendrocytes	-0.561	0.166	7.232E-04	0.019
FLT1	Diagnosis	Endothelial Cells	0.195*	0.055	4.232E-04	0.014
FLT1	Diagnosis	Microglia	0.452*	0.113	6.378E-05	0.009
FLT1	β-amyloid Burden	Microglia	0.053	0.011	2.700E-06	7.830E-04
VEGFB	β-amyloid Burden	Oligodendrocytes	0.014	0.004	1.428E-04	0.009
VEGFB	β-amyloid Burden	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.012	0.004	6.529E-04	0.019
FLT4	β-amyloid Burden	Endothelial Cells	0.027	0.008	3.579E-04	0.013
VEGFD	β-amyloid Burden	Astrocytes	0.016	0.005	0.001	0.029
NRP1	β-amyloid Burden	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.018	0.006	0.002	0.046
NRP1	Tau Burden	Astrocytes	-0.014	0.004	2.229E-04	0.009

503 *logFC values for diagnosis is gene expression change in AD over normal cognition controls

Figure 1. 10 VEGFs and Their Cell-Type Specific Effect On AD Endophenotype

1a. 10 VEGF ligand-receptor system 1b. Association of VEGF and AD endophenotype in DLPFC brain cells. Cell type abbreviations are as follows, Endo, Endothelial Cells; Micro, Microglia; OPC, Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells; Inhib, Inhibitory Neurons; Ast, Astrocytes; Oligo, Oligodendrocytes; CUX2+ Excit, CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons; CUX2-Excit, all Excitatory Neurons that don't express CUX2-.

Figure 2. 10 VEGF Genes Associated Signaling Pathway Profile in AD vs Normal Cognition Groups

2a. Circle plot of overall VEGF signaling in each diagnosis group 2b. Heatmap of overall VEGF signaling in each diagnosis group 2c. Overall incoming and outgoing VEGF signaling pattern. Cell type abbreviations are as follows, Endo, Endothelial Cells; Micro, Microglia; OPC, Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells; Inhib, Inhibitory Neurons; Ast, Astrocytes; Oligo, Oligodendrocytes; CUX2+ Excit, CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons; CUX2- Excit, all Excitatory Neurons that don't express CUX2-.

Supplemental Table 1. Association of 10 VEGF Gene Expression and Various AD Outcomes

Outcome	Gene	Cell Type	logFC*	SE	P	P_FDR
Diagnosis	FLT1	Astrocytes	-0.022	0.081	0.783	0.926
Diagnosis	FLT1	Endothelial Cells	0.195	0.055	0	0.014
Diagnosis	FLT1	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.015	0.083	0.86	0.944
Diagnosis	FLT1	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.011	0.087	0.896	0.963
Diagnosis	FLT1	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.080	0.038	0.035	0.183
Diagnosis	FLT1	Microglia	0.452	0.113	0	0.009
Diagnosis	FLT1	Oligodendrocytes	-0.054	0.085	0.528	0.773
Diagnosis	FLT1	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.001	0.119	0.994	0.994
Diagnosis	FLT4	Endothelial Cells	0.165	0.088	0.06	0.246
Diagnosis	KDR	Endothelial Cells	0.094	0.08	0.24	0.552
Diagnosis	KDR	Inhibitory Neurons	0.165	0.072	0.022	0.161
Diagnosis	KDR	Oligodendrocytes	-0.009	0.059	0.882	0.958
Diagnosis	NRP1	Astrocytes	-0.118	0.064	0.067	0.272
Diagnosis	NRP1	Endothelial Cells	0.075	0.065	0.247	0.552
Diagnosis	NRP1	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.071	0.055	0.195	0.523
Diagnosis	NRP1	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.059	0.034	0.084	0.316
Diagnosis	NRP1	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.007	0.033	0.833	0.937
Diagnosis	NRP1	Microglia	0.084	0.05	0.092	0.329
Diagnosis	NRP1	Oligodendrocytes	-0.041	0.063	0.518	0.773
Diagnosis	NRP1	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	-0.014	0.066	0.827	0.937
Diagnosis	NRP2	Astrocytes	-0.115	0.095	0.228	0.55
Diagnosis	NRP2	Endothelial Cells	0.020	0.043	0.634	0.832
Diagnosis	NRP2	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.042	0.034	0.218	0.55
Diagnosis	NRP2	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.025	0.041	0.533	0.773
Diagnosis	NRP2	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.069	0.032	0.034	0.181
Diagnosis	NRP2	Microglia	-0.101	0.038	0.007	0.086
Diagnosis	NRP2	Oligodendrocytes	-0.073	0.056	0.187	0.522
Diagnosis	NRP2	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	-0.087	0.075	0.247	0.552
Diagnosis	PGF	Astrocytes	-0.090	0.105	0.388	0.647
Diagnosis	PGF	Endothelial Cells	0.086	0.079	0.279	0.594
Diagnosis	VEGFA	Astrocytes	0.046	0.079	0.561	0.782
Diagnosis	VEGFA	Endothelial Cells	0.207	0.096	0.032	0.181
Diagnosis	VEGFA	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.047	0.055	0.391	0.647
Diagnosis	VEGFA	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.057	0.059	0.331	0.634
Diagnosis	VEGFA	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.031	0.041	0.447	0.713

Diagnosis	VEGFA	Microglia	0.002	0.085	0.984	0.994
Diagnosis	VEGFA	Oligodendrocytes	0.079	0.082	0.334	0.634
Diagnosis	VEGFA	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	-0.024	0.098	0.805	0.926
Diagnosis	VEGFB	Astrocytes	-0.004	0.032	0.908	0.963
Diagnosis	VEGFB	Endothelial Cells	0.091	0.064	0.156	0.467
Diagnosis	VEGFB	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.048	0.046	0.29	0.604
Diagnosis	VEGFB	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.013	0.051	0.801	0.926
Diagnosis	VEGFB	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.068	0.038	0.074	0.292
Diagnosis	VEGFB	Microglia	-0.071	0.041	0.086	0.316
Diagnosis	VEGFB	Oligodendrocytes	0.082	0.039	0.039	0.192
Diagnosis	VEGFB	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.003	0.033	0.925	0.975
Diagnosis	VEGFC	Astrocytes	0.072	0.055	0.193	0.522
Diagnosis	VEGFC	Endothelial Cells	0.048	0.095	0.61	0.819
Diagnosis	VEGFC	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.180	0.066	0.007	0.086
Diagnosis	VEGFC	Inhibitory Neurons	0.017	0.061	0.777	0.926
Diagnosis	VEGFD	Astrocytes	-0.041	0.054	0.447	0.713
Diagnosis	VEGFD	Endothelial Cells	-0.197	0.127	0.12	0.4
Diagnosis	VEGFD	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.027	0.022	0.224	0.55
Diagnosis	VEGFD	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.061	0.028	0.029	0.181
Diagnosis	VEGFD	Inhibitory Neurons	0.031	0.027	0.256	0.562
Diagnosis	VEGFD	Microglia	-0.019	0.109	0.862	0.944
Diagnosis	VEGFD	Oligodendrocytes	0.031	0.048	0.527	0.773
Diagnosis	VEGFD	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.095	0.082	0.247	0.552
β-amyloid Burden	FLT1	Astrocytes	0.016	0.007	0.023	0.161
β-amyloid Burden	FLT1	Endothelial Cells	0.009	0.005	0.087	0.316
β-amyloid Burden	FLT1	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.008	0.007	0.3	0.605
β-amyloid Burden	FLT1	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.021	0.008	0.013	0.123
β-amyloid Burden	FLT1	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.001	0.004	0.799	0.926
β-amyloid Burden	FLT1	Microglia	0.053	0.011	0	0.001
β-amyloid Burden	FLT1	Oligodendrocytes	0.017	0.008	0.048	0.212
β-amyloid Burden	FLT1	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.027	0.011	0.015	0.131
β-amyloid Burden	FLT4	Endothelial Cells	0.027	0.008	0	0.013
β-amyloid Burden	KDR	Endothelial Cells	-0.009	0.007	0.253	0.559
β-amyloid Burden	KDR	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.004	0.007	0.523	0.773
β-amyloid Burden	KDR	Oligodendrocytes	0.003	0.005	0.597	0.81
β-amyloid Burden	NRP1	Astrocytes	-0.012	0.006	0.056	0.238
β-amyloid Burden	NRP1	Endothelial Cells	0.013	0.006	0.026	0.177
β-amyloid Burden	NRP1	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.011	0.005	0.023	0.161
β-amyloid Burden	NRP1	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.006	0.003	0.045	0.202

β-amyloid Burden	NRP1	Inhibitory Neurons	0.004	0.003	0.233	0.55
β-amyloid Burden	NRP1	Microglia	0.008	0.005	0.075	0.292
β-amyloid Burden	NRP1	Oligodendrocytes	0.014	0.007	0.029	0.181
β-amyloid Burden	NRP1	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.018	0.006	0.002	0.046
β-amyloid Burden	NRP2	Astrocytes	0	0.01	0.967	0.988
β-amyloid Burden	NRP2	Endothelial Cells	0.008	0.004	0.051	0.224
β-amyloid Burden	NRP2	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0	0.003	0.897	0.963
β-amyloid Burden	NRP2	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.005	0.004	0.188	0.522
β-amyloid Burden	NRP2	Inhibitory Neurons	0	0.003	0.88	0.958
β-amyloid Burden	NRP2	Microglia	0.007	0.004	0.035	0.183
β-amyloid Burden	NRP2	Oligodendrocytes	0.005	0.005	0.379	0.647
β-amyloid Burden	NRP2	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.006	0.007	0.383	0.647
β-amyloid Burden	PGF	Astrocytes	0.007	0.01	0.5	0.768
β-amyloid Burden	PGF	Endothelial Cells	0.018	0.007	0.015	0.131
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFA	Astrocytes	-0.003	0.007	0.687	0.882
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFA	Endothelial Cells	-0.001	0.009	0.908	0.963
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFA	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.01	0.005	0.056	0.238
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFA	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.006	0.006	0.289	0.604
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFA	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.012	0.004	0.003	0.056
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFA	Microglia	0.006	0.008	0.503	0.768
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFA	Oligodendrocytes	-0.001	0.008	0.935	0.977
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFA	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	-0.019	0.009	0.04	0.192
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFB	Astrocytes	0.005	0.003	0.144	0.443
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFB	Endothelial Cells	0.002	0.006	0.772	0.925
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFB	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.005	0.004	0.217	0.55
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFB	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0	0.005	0.936	0.977
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFB	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.012	0.004	0.001	0.019
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFB	Microglia	0.009	0.004	0.026	0.177
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFB	Oligodendrocytes	0.014	0.004	0	0.009
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFB	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.007	0.003	0.029	0.181
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFC	Astrocytes	0.013	0.005	0.008	0.091
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFC	Endothelial Cells	-0.001	0.009	0.946	0.98
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFC	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.004	0.006	0.571	0.789
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFC	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.01	0.006	0.101	0.352
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFD	Astrocytes	0.016	0.005	0.001	0.029
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFD	Endothelial Cells	0.015	0.011	0.181	0.522
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFD	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.001	0.002	0.674	0.872
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFD	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.005	0.002	0.031	0.181
β-amyloid Burden	VEGFD	Inhibitory Neurons	0.002	0.003	0.387	0.647

β-amyloid Burden	*VEGFD*	Microglia	0.015	0.01	0.114	0.384
β-amyloid Burden	*VEGFD*	Oligodendrocytes	0.01	0.004	0.033	0.181
β-amyloid Burden	*VEGFD*	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.015	0.008	0.057	0.238
Cognition Trajectory	*FLT1*	Astrocytes	0.455	0.343	0.184	0.522
Cognition Trajectory	*FLT1*	Endothelial Cells	-0.771	0.248	0.002	0.041
Cognition Trajectory	*FLT1*	Inhibitory Neurons	0.44	0.164	0.007	0.086
Cognition Trajectory	*FLT1*	Microglia	-1.964	0.504	0	0.009
Cognition Trajectory	*FLT1*	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.666	0.527	0.207	0.539
Cognition Trajectory	*FLT1*	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.167	0.343	0.626	0.829
Cognition Trajectory	*FLT1*	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.022	0.401	0.957	0.987
Cognition Trajectory	*FLT1*	Oligodendrocytes	0.449	0.388	0.247	0.552
Cognition Trajectory	*FLT4*	Endothelial Cells	-1.089	0.373	0.004	0.056
Cognition Trajectory	*KDR*	Endothelial Cells	0.093	0.346	0.787	0.926
Cognition Trajectory	*KDR*	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.381	0.316	0.228	0.55
Cognition Trajectory	*KDR*	Oligodendrocytes	0.044	0.256	0.862	0.944
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP1*	Astrocytes	0.825	0.286	0.004	0.06
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP1*	Endothelial Cells	-0.29	0.287	0.311	0.606
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP1*	Inhibitory Neurons	0.1	0.146	0.493	0.768
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP1*	Microglia	-0.269	0.213	0.208	0.539
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP1*	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.209	0.284	0.462	0.732
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP1*	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.495	0.232	0.033	0.181
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP1*	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.15	0.146	0.306	0.606
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP1*	Oligodendrocytes	0.004	0.304	0.99	0.994
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP2*	Astrocytes	0.747	0.437	0.087	0.316
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP2*	Endothelial Cells	-0.169	0.195	0.384	0.647
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP2*	Inhibitory Neurons	0.289	0.143	0.043	0.202
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP2*	Microglia	0.484	0.165	0.003	0.056
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP2*	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.347	0.33	0.294	0.605
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP2*	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.095	0.156	0.545	0.775
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP2*	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.391	0.166	0.019	0.146
Cognition Trajectory	*NRP2*	Oligodendrocytes	0.217	0.246	0.378	0.647
Cognition Trajectory	*PGF*	Astrocytes	0.853	0.499	0.087	0.316
Cognition Trajectory	*PGF*	Endothelial Cells	-0.327	0.35	0.35	0.639
Cognition Trajectory	*VEGFA*	Astrocytes	-0.223	0.337	0.508	0.772
Cognition Trajectory	*VEGFA*	Endothelial Cells	-0.934	0.396	0.018	0.146
Cognition Trajectory	*VEGFA*	Inhibitory Neurons	0.175	0.183	0.339	0.637
Cognition Trajectory	*VEGFA*	Microglia	0.256	0.391	0.512	0.773
Cognition Trajectory	*VEGFA*	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.623	0.413	0.131	0.423
Cognition Trajectory	*VEGFA*	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.315	0.241	0.192	0.522

Cognition Trajectory	VEGFA	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.102	0.266	0.702	0.893
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFA	Oligodendrocytes	-0.531	0.387	0.17	0.498
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFB	Astrocytes	-0.163	0.146	0.266	0.579
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFB	Endothelial Cells	-0.244	0.28	0.384	0.647
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFB	Inhibitory Neurons	0.266	0.174	0.126	0.411
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFB	Microglia	-0.046	0.187	0.804	0.926
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFB	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	-0.098	0.155	0.527	0.773
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFB	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.065	0.206	0.754	0.912
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFB	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.361	0.235	0.123	0.407
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFB	Oligodendrocytes	-0.561	0.166	0.001	0.019
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFC	Astrocytes	-0.169	0.234	0.469	0.74
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFC	Endothelial Cells	0.61	0.417	0.143	0.443
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFC	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.185	0.273	0.499	0.768
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFC	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.754	0.291	0.01	0.099
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFD	Astrocytes	0.241	0.227	0.288	0.604
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFD	Endothelial Cells	0.619	0.57	0.277	0.594
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFD	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.076	0.119	0.523	0.773
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFD	Microglia	0.108	0.472	0.819	0.935
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFD	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	-0.192	0.361	0.595	0.81
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFD	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.08	0.099	0.42	0.684
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFD	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.125	0.12	0.296	0.605
Cognition Trajectory	VEGFD	Oligodendrocytes	-0.041	0.208	0.844	0.941
Last Cognition before Death	FLT1	Astrocytes	-0.004	0.033	0.91	0.963
Last Cognition before Death	FLT1	Endothelial Cells	-0.089	0.024	0	0.009
Last Cognition before Death	FLT1	Inhibitory Neurons	0.034	0.016	0.031	0.181
Last Cognition before Death	FLT1	Microglia	-0.176	0.046	0	0.009
Last Cognition before Death	FLT1	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.073	0.052	0.158	0.468
Last Cognition before Death	FLT1	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.001	0.033	0.964	0.988
Last Cognition before Death	FLT1	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.013	0.038	0.731	0.901
Last Cognition before Death	FLT1	Oligodendrocytes	0.004	0.038	0.906	0.963
Last Cognition before Death	FLT4	Endothelial Cells	-0.102	0.035	0.003	0.056
Last Cognition before Death	KDR	Endothelial Cells	-0.032	0.032	0.31	0.606
Last Cognition before Death	KDR	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.058	0.031	0.058	0.242
Last Cognition before Death	KDR	Oligodendrocytes	0.008	0.024	0.746	0.909

Last Cognition before Death	NRP1	Astrocytes	0.01	0.027	0.716	0.901
Last Cognition before Death	NRP1	Endothelial Cells	-0.025	0.028	0.357	0.645
Last Cognition before Death	NRP1	Inhibitory Neurons	0.005	0.014	0.729	0.901
Last Cognition before Death	NRP1	Microglia	-0.018	0.021	0.381	0.647
Last Cognition before Death	NRP1	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.001	0.027	0.979	0.993
Last Cognition before Death	NRP1	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.045	0.022	0.045	0.202
Last Cognition before Death	NRP1	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.009	0.014	0.532	0.773
Last Cognition before Death	NRP1	Oligodendrocytes	-0.018	0.03	0.553	0.78
Last Cognition before Death	NRP2	Astrocytes	-0.002	0.04	0.967	0.988
Last Cognition before Death	NRP2	Endothelial Cells	-0.024	0.019	0.19	0.522
Last Cognition before Death	NRP2	Inhibitory Neurons	0.016	0.013	0.222	0.55
Last Cognition before Death	NRP2	Microglia	0.042	0.016	0.008	0.09
Last Cognition before Death	NRP2	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.019	0.032	0.544	0.775
Last Cognition before Death	NRP2	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.001	0.015	0.943	0.98
Last Cognition before Death	NRP2	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.035	0.016	0.028	0.181
Last Cognition before Death	NRP2	Oligodendrocytes	-0.03	0.023	0.188	0.522
Last Cognition before Death	PGF	Astrocytes	0.027	0.045	0.545	0.775
Last Cognition before Death	PGF	Endothelial Cells	-0.03	0.034	0.377	0.647
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFA	Astrocytes	-0.035	0.03	0.246	0.552
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFA	Endothelial Cells	-0.105	0.038	0.005	0.073
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFA	Inhibitory Neurons	0.007	0.017	0.691	0.883
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFA	Microglia	-0.035	0.037	0.343	0.637
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFA	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.022	0.036	0.542	0.775
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFA	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.004	0.022	0.859	0.944
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFA	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.031	0.024	0.201	0.535
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFA	Oligodendrocytes	-0.076	0.037	0.04	0.192
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFB	Astrocytes	-0.01	0.014	0.484	0.759
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFB	Endothelial Cells	-0.044	0.027	0.107	0.365

Last Cognition before Death	VEGFB	Inhibitory Neurons	0.02	0.016	0.228	0.55
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFB	Microglia	-0.009	0.018	0.605	0.816
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFB	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	-0.009	0.015	0.554	0.78
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFB	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.007	0.02	0.738	0.904
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFB	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.027	0.023	0.231	0.55
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFB	Oligodendrocytes	-0.038	0.016	0.017	0.139
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFC	Astrocytes	-0.027	0.023	0.241	0.552
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFC	Endothelial Cells	0.008	0.038	0.832	0.937
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFC	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.023	0.026	0.368	0.647
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFC	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.074	0.028	0.007	0.086
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFD	Astrocytes	0.024	0.022	0.292	0.605
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFD	Endothelial Cells	0.097	0.057	0.085	0.316
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFD	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.009	0.011	0.447	0.713
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFD	Microglia	0.019	0.045	0.67	0.872
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFD	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	-0.033	0.034	0.325	0.629
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFD	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.01	0.01	0.307	0.606
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFD	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	-0.01	0.011	0.393	0.647
Last Cognition before Death	VEGFD	Oligodendrocytes	-0.006	0.019	0.763	0.918
Tau Burden	FLT1	Astrocytes	0	0.005	0.979	0.993
Tau Burden	FLT1	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.004	0.004	0.347	0.637
Tau Burden	FLT1	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.008	0.005	0.153	0.463
Tau Burden	FLT1	Endothelial Cells	0.003	0.003	0.384	0.647
Tau Burden	FLT1	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.003	0.002	0.233	0.55
Tau Burden	FLT1	Microglia	0.02	0.007	0.006	0.077
Tau Burden	FLT1	Oligodendrocytes	0.001	0.005	0.797	0.926
Tau Burden	FLT1	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.002	0.007	0.725	0.901
Tau Burden	FLT4	Endothelial Cells	0.011	0.005	0.016	0.134
Tau Burden	KDR	Endothelial Cells	-0.001	0.005	0.818	0.935
Tau Burden	KDR	Inhibitory Neurons	0.003	0.004	0.496	0.768
Tau Burden	KDR	Oligodendrocytes	0	0.003	0.935	0.977
Tau Burden	NRP1	Astrocytes	-0.014	0.004	0	0.009
Tau Burden	NRP1	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.003	0.003	0.358	0.645

Tau Burden	NRP1	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.001	0.002	0.733	0.901
Tau Burden	NRP1	Endothelial Cells	0.004	0.004	0.345	0.637
Tau Burden	NRP1	Inhibitory Neurons	0.001	0.002	0.568	0.788
Tau Burden	NRP1	Microglia	0.002	0.003	0.561	0.782
Tau Burden	NRP1	Oligodendrocytes	0.001	0.004	0.837	0.937
Tau Burden	NRP1	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	-0.001	0.004	0.847	0.942
Tau Burden	NRP2	Astrocytes	-0.006	0.006	0.27	0.583
Tau Burden	NRP2	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.001	0.002	0.797	0.926
Tau Burden	NRP2	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.005	0.002	0.039	0.192
Tau Burden	NRP2	Endothelial Cells	0.001	0.003	0.79	0.926
Tau Burden	NRP2	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.004	0.002	0.019	0.147
Tau Burden	NRP2	Microglia	-0.004	0.002	0.105	0.362
Tau Burden	NRP2	Oligodendrocytes	-0.002	0.003	0.647	0.845
Tau Burden	NRP2	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	-0.002	0.004	0.729	0.901
Tau Burden	PGF	Astrocytes	-0.015	0.007	0.04	0.192
Tau Burden	PGF	Endothelial Cells	0.007	0.005	0.137	0.435
Tau Burden	VEGFA	Astrocytes	-0.001	0.005	0.894	0.963
Tau Burden	VEGFA	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.002	0.003	0.623	0.829
Tau Burden	VEGFA	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.002	0.004	0.576	0.792
Tau Burden	VEGFA	Endothelial Cells	0.008	0.006	0.147	0.448
Tau Burden	VEGFA	Inhibitory Neurons	0.001	0.002	0.732	0.901
Tau Burden	VEGFA	Microglia	0.003	0.005	0.591	0.808
Tau Burden	VEGFA	Oligodendrocytes	0.005	0.005	0.306	0.606
Tau Burden	VEGFA	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.003	0.006	0.617	0.825
Tau Burden	VEGFB	Astrocytes	-0.001	0.002	0.755	0.912
Tau Burden	VEGFB	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	-0.001	0.003	0.837	0.937
Tau Burden	VEGFB	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.005	0.003	0.095	0.337
Tau Burden	VEGFB	Endothelial Cells	0.004	0.004	0.334	0.634
Tau Burden	VEGFB	Inhibitory Neurons	-0.003	0.002	0.142	0.443
Tau Burden	VEGFB	Microglia	0	0.003	0.992	0.994
Tau Burden	VEGFB	Oligodendrocytes	0.006	0.002	0.013	0.123
Tau Burden	VEGFB	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	-0.001	0.002	0.629	0.829
Tau Burden	VEGFC	Astrocytes	0.004	0.003	0.204	0.538
Tau Burden	VEGFC	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0.009	0.004	0.013	0.123
Tau Burden	VEGFC	Endothelial Cells	-0.012	0.006	0.034	0.181
Tau Burden	VEGFC	Inhibitory Neurons	0.001	0.004	0.687	0.882
Tau Burden	VEGFD	Astrocytes	0.003	0.003	0.382	0.647
Tau Burden	VEGFD	CUX2- Excitatory Neurons	0	0.001	0.71	0.9
Tau Burden	VEGFD	CUX2+ Excitatory Neurons	0.001	0.002	0.342	0.637

Tau Burden	*VEGFD*	Endothelial Cells	-0.006	0.008	0.432	0.7
Tau Burden	*VEGFD*	Inhibitory Neurons	0.001	0.002	0.368	0.647
Tau Burden	*VEGFD*	Microglia	-0.005	0.006	0.413	0.677
Tau Burden	*VEGFD*	Oligodendrocytes	0.003	0.003	0.231	0.55
Tau Burden	*VEGFD*	Oligodendrocyte Precursor Cells	0.005	0.005	0.3	0.605

*logFC values for diagnosis is gene expression change in AD over normal cognition controls

Supplemental Table 2. Communication Strength Comparison of Enriched VEGFA-Receptor Pair within 10 VEGFs Between AD and Cognition Normal Groups

Receptor	Original Probability	Adjusted Probability*	Source -> Target	Group	P Value
FLT1	1.888854e-06	0.07587518	Astrocytes -> Endothelial Cells	Normal Cognition	<= 0.01
FLT1	1.138895e-06	0.07307029	Astrocytes -> Endothelial Cells	AD	<= 0.01
NRP1	1.180536e-07	0.06268756	Astrocytes -> Endothelial Cells	Normal Cognition	<= 0.01
NRP1	1.180536e-07	0.06268756	Astrocytes -> Excitatory Neurons	Normal Cognition	<= 0.01
NRP1	1.180536e-07	0.06268756	Astrocytes -> Microglia	Normal Cognition	<= 0.01
NRP1	4.745401e-08	0.05929965	Astrocytes -> Endothelial Cells	AD	<= 0.01
NRP1	4.745401e-08	0.05929965	Astrocytes -> Excitatory Neurons	AD	<= 0.01
NRP1	4.745401e-08	0.05929965	Astrocytes -> Microglia	AD	<= 0.01
NRP2	1.180536e-07	0.06268756	Astrocytes -> Endothelial Cells	Normal Cognition	<= 0.01
NRP2	4.745401e-08	0.05929965	Astrocytes -> Endothelial Cells	AD	<= 0.01

*Adjusted Probability = -1/log(Original Probability)