

# Angiogenic factor secretion by melanocytes associated with pigmentation level

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The decreased vision loss that accompanies age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is associated with abnormal blood vessel growth in the eye. Frequencies of AMD development are different among racial backgrounds, with occurrence of AMD highest among individuals of mixed European descent. Furthermore, other diseases associated with dysfunctional neovascularization occur at different frequencies depending on racial background, suggesting a connection between pigmentation and susceptibility to angiogenic disease.

In this issue of the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, Irit Adini and colleagues at the Harvard Medical School determined that melanocytes from light-skinned humans and albino mice secrete high levels of fibromodulin and that fibromodulin promotes angiogenesis.

In a companion commentary, Christopher Kontos of Duke University discusses the potential for fibromodulin to be both a useful biomarker and a therapeutic target for diseases associated with increased vascularization.

**More information:** Melanocyte-secreted fibromodulin promotes an angiogenic microenvironment, *J Clin Invest*. [DOI: 10.1172/JCI69404](https://doi.org/10.1172/JCI69404)  
More than skin deep: connecting melanocyte pigmentation and angiogenic diseases, *J Clin Invest*. 2014;124(1):76–79. [DOI: 10.1172/JCI73559](https://doi.org/10.1172/JCI73559)

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