

# EHEC Secreted Protein FU (EspFU), a diagnostic tool and therapeutic target for pathogenic enteric bacterium

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## Technology description

Enteropathogenic Escherichia coli (EPEC) and enterohemorrhagic

E. coli (EHEC) are closely related human pathogens that generate attaching and effacing (AE) lesions to colonize the intestine, damage the epithelium, and promote diarrheal illnesses.

The present invention is based on the identification of EspFu (EspF-like polypeptide encoded by a gene of the cryptic prophage CP-933U of enterohemorrhagic Escherichia coli) as a secreted protein that promotes actin pedestal formation by enteric organisms.

An effector required for efficient actin pedestal formation in certain enteric organisms, EspFu can be used as a diagnostics marker and a therapeutic target in various screens and assays. EspFu can also be used to induce pedestal formation in less dangerous model systems of highly pathogenic enteric organisms, e.g., enterohemorrhagic E. coli (EHEC).

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