C8orf46 has been implicated in cancer progression, but its function is unknown. Vxn is transiently expressed in differentiating progenitors in the developing central nervous system (CNS), and is required for neurogenesis in the neural plate and retina. Its function is conserved, since overexpression of either Xenopus or mouse vxn expands primary neurogenesis and promotes early retinal cell differentiation in cooperation with neural bHLH factors. Vxn protein is localized to the cell membrane and the nucleus, but functions in the nucleus to promote neural differentiation. Vxn inhibits cell proliferation, and works with the cyclin-dependent kinase inhibitor p27Xic1 (cdkn1b) to enhance neurogenesis and increase levels of the proneural protein Neurog2. We propose that vxn provides a key link between neural bHLH activity and execution of the neurogenic program ¹⁾.

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