

## Session 2: Acute Inflammation – Part 2

Characterizing and Targeting Acute  
Inflammation Following SARS-CoV-2 Infection

**Mirko Paiardini, PhD**

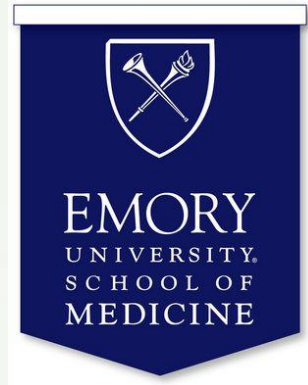
Emory University School of Medicine, United States



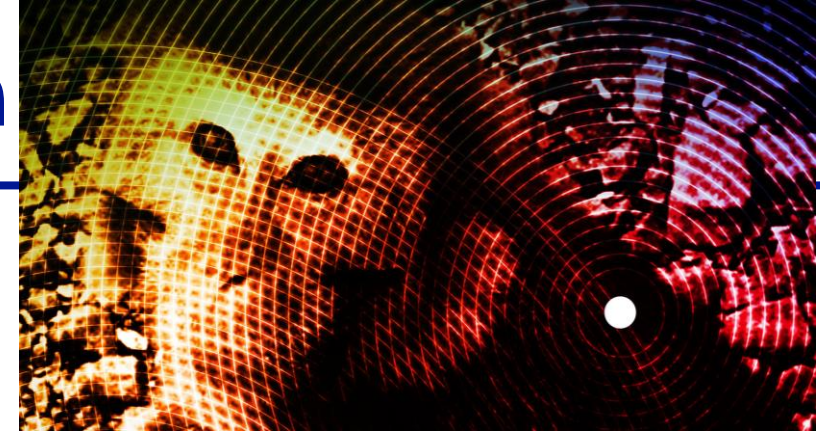
# Characterizing and targeting acute inflammation following SARS-CoV-2 infection

**Mirko Paiardini, PhD**

Professor, Emory University School of Medicine, Emory Primate Research Center  
Director, Next Generation Therapeutics Scientific Working Group, Emory Center for AIDS Research



# NHP models for SARS-CoV-2 infection



- Most early events are missed in patients with hospitalization
- Difficulty in studying lower airway during early clinical infections
- Discordance in time of sampling relative to exposure and exposure dose in human
- Ability to test therapies and vaccines rapidly before clinical trials
- The NHP model supports high levels of viral replication in the upper and lower airway; shares tissue distribution of ACE2 with humans; recapitulates mild (largely) to moderate COVID-19 that typically resolve by 10 days post infection
- **Can the NHP model recapitulate hallmarks of severe COVID-19?**
- **Can the NHP model provide utility as a benchmark for therapies?**

# SARS-CoV-2 induces rapid Type I IFN responses in RMs



## Baricitinib treatment resolves lower-airway macrophage inflammation and neutrophil recruitment in SARS-CoV-2-infected rhesus macaques

Timothy N. Hoang,<sup>1,13</sup> Maria Pino,<sup>1,13</sup> Arun K. Boddapati,<sup>2,13</sup> Elise G. Viox,<sup>1</sup> Carly E. Starke,<sup>3</sup> Amit A. Upadhyay,<sup>2</sup> Sanjeev Gumber,<sup>4,5</sup> Michael Nekorchuk,<sup>3</sup> Kathleen Busman-Sahay,<sup>3</sup> Zachary Strongin,<sup>1</sup> Justin L. Harper,<sup>1</sup> Gregory K. Tharp,<sup>2</sup> Kathryn L. Pellegrini,<sup>2</sup> Shannon Kirejczyk,<sup>5</sup> Keivan Zandi,<sup>6</sup> Sijia Tao,<sup>6</sup> Tristan R. Horton,<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth N. Beagle,<sup>2</sup> Ernestine A. Mahar,<sup>1</sup> Michelle Y.H. Lee,<sup>1</sup> Joyce Cohen,<sup>7</sup> Sherrie M. Jean,<sup>7</sup> Jennifer S. Wood,<sup>7</sup> Fawn Connor-Stroud,<sup>7</sup> Rachelle L. Stammen,<sup>7</sup> Olivia M. Delmas,<sup>1</sup> Shelly Wang,<sup>1</sup> Kimberly A. Cooney,<sup>8</sup> Michael N. Sayegh,<sup>8</sup> Lanfang Wang,<sup>8</sup> Peter D. Filev,<sup>9</sup> Daniela Weiskopf,<sup>10</sup> Guido Silvestri,<sup>1,4</sup> Jesse Waggoner,<sup>8</sup> Anne Piantadosi,<sup>4,8</sup> Sudhir P. Kasturi,<sup>1</sup> Hilmi Al-Shakhshir,<sup>11</sup> Susan P. Ribeiro,<sup>11,14</sup> Rafick P. Sekaly,<sup>11,14</sup> Rebecca D. Levit,<sup>8</sup> Jacob D. Estes,<sup>3,12</sup> Thomas H. Vanderford,<sup>1</sup> Raymond F. Schinazi,<sup>6,14,\*</sup> Steven E. Bosinger,<sup>1,2,4,\*</sup> and Mirko Paiardini<sup>1,4,15,\*</sup>

CellPress

Cell

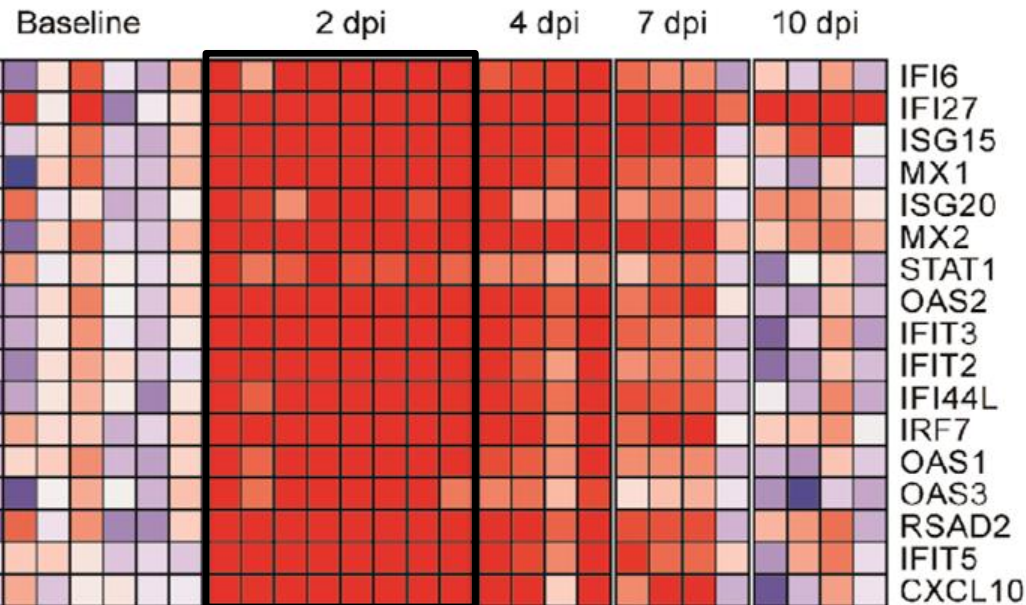
Article

## Vascular Disease and Thrombosis in SARS-CoV-2-Infected Rhesus Macaques

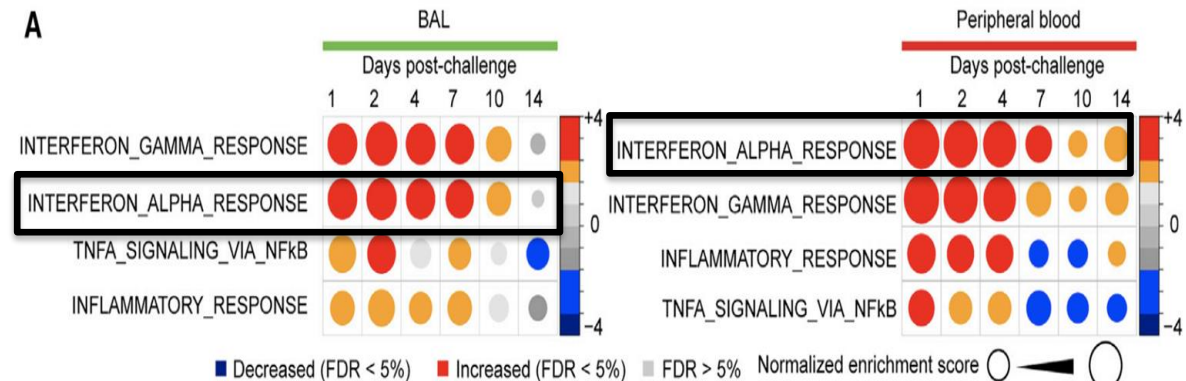
Malika Aid,<sup>1</sup> Kathleen Busman-Sahay,<sup>2</sup> Samuel J. Vidal,<sup>1</sup> Zoltan Maliga,<sup>3</sup> Stephen Bondoc,<sup>2</sup> Carly Starke,<sup>2</sup> Margaret Terry,<sup>2</sup> Connor A. Jacobson,<sup>3</sup> Linda Wrijil,<sup>4</sup> Sarah Ducat,<sup>4</sup> Olga R. Brook,<sup>5</sup> Andrew D. Miller,<sup>6</sup> Maciel Porto,<sup>10</sup> Kathryn L. Pellegrini,<sup>8</sup> Maria Pino,<sup>7</sup> Timothy N. Hoang,<sup>7</sup> Abishek Chandrashekar,<sup>1</sup> Shivani Patel,<sup>1</sup> Kathryn Stephenson,<sup>1</sup> Steven E. Bosinger,<sup>7,8,9</sup> Hanne Andersen,<sup>10</sup> Mark G. Lewis,<sup>10</sup> Jonathan L. Hecht,<sup>11</sup> Peter K. Sorger,<sup>3</sup> Amanda J. Martinot,<sup>1,4</sup> Jacob D. Estes,<sup>2</sup> and Dan H. Barouch<sup>1,12,13,\*</sup>

B

BAL: Interferon Stimulated Genes



A



Singh DK et al; Coleman C et al; etc.

# The role of type I IFN in COVID-19

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- **Protective**

- Individuals with severe COVID-19 were demonstrated to be more likely to have deficiencies to IFN-I responses:
  - Auto-antibodies against IFN-I (Bastard et al., 2020; Lopez et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2021)
  - Rare inborn errors of IFN-I immunity (Zhang et al., 2020; Pairo-Castineira et al., 2021)
  - Lack of production of IFN-I (Hadjadj et al., 2020; Combes et al., 2021; Ziegler et al., 2021)

# The role of type I IFN in COVID-19

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- **Protective**

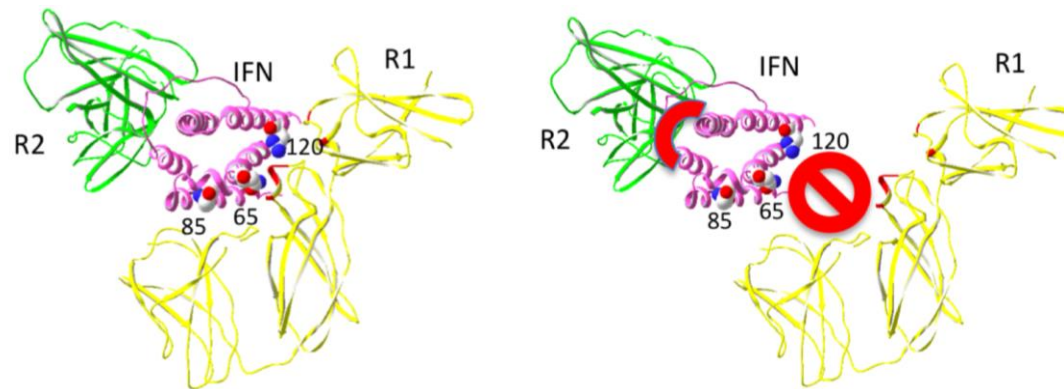
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  - Rare inborn errors of IFN-I immunity (Zhang et al., 2020; Pairo-Castineira et al., 2021)
  - Lack of production of IFN-I (Hadjadj et al., 2020; Combes et al., 2021; Ziegler et al., 2021)

- **Deleterious**

- High and/or sustained IFN-I expression associated with increased disease severity, susceptibility to bacterial infections, impaired lung epithelia repair (Blanco-Melo et al., 2020; Broggi et al., 2020; Major et al., 2020).
- Association of IFITM 1-3, Siglec-1, and cGAS-STING signaling with increased SARS-CoV-2 infection (Prelli Bozzo et al., 2021; Lempp et al., 2021; Domizio et al., 2022)

# Manipulating the IFN-I system to dissect the role of IFN-I in COVID-19

- IFNmod (previously referred to as IFN-1ant):
  - Mutated IFN $\alpha$ 2 that binds with high affinity to IFNAR2, but markedly lower affinity to IFNAR1
  - Reduces the binding and signaling of all forms of endogenous IFN-I
  - Induces low-level stimulation of antiviral genes without induction of inflammatory genes when used *in vitro* in cancer cells (Levin *et al.*, 2014; Urin *et al.*, 2015)
  - blockade of the IFN-I receptor with the mutated IFN $\alpha$ 2 caused accelerated CD4 T-cell depletion and progression to AIDS in SIV-infected RMs (Sandler *et al.*, 2014)

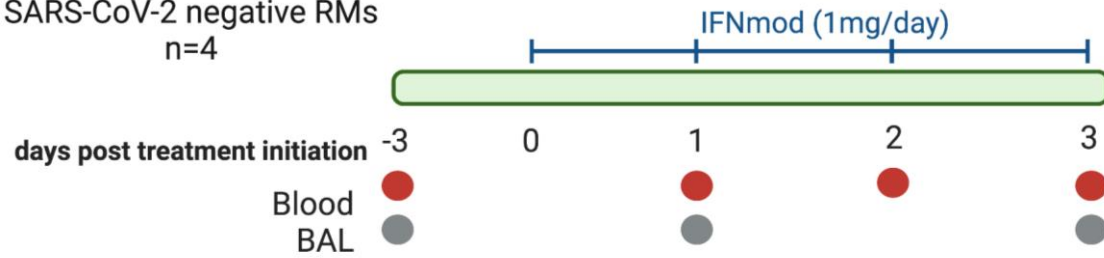


Mutated Arg 120 to Glu and adding the alpha8 tail, reducing its affinity for R1 to below detection level while increasing affinity for R2

# IFNmod treatment in uninfected RMs results in modest and specific upregulation of antiviral ISGs

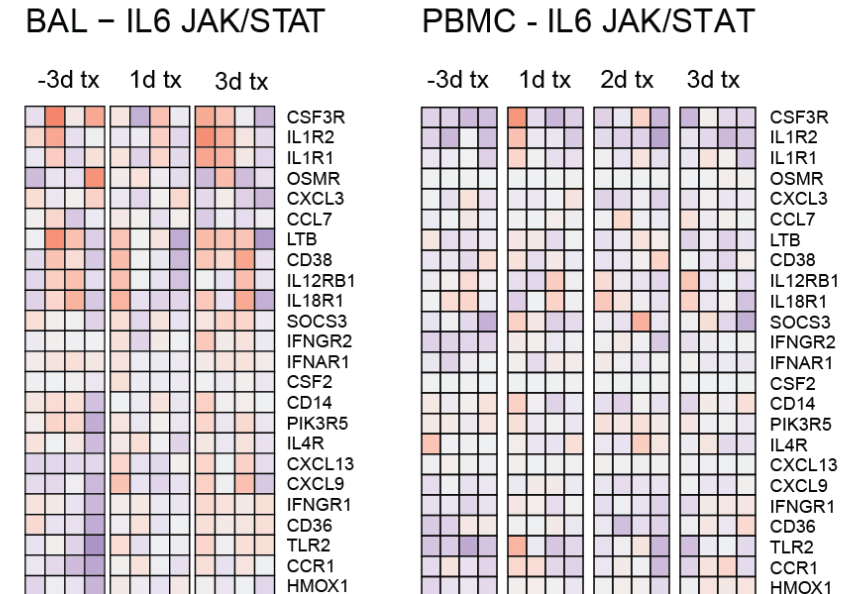
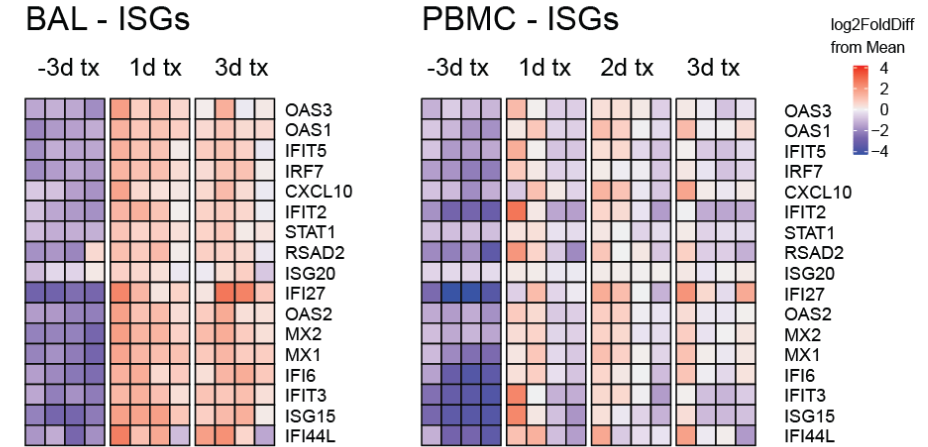
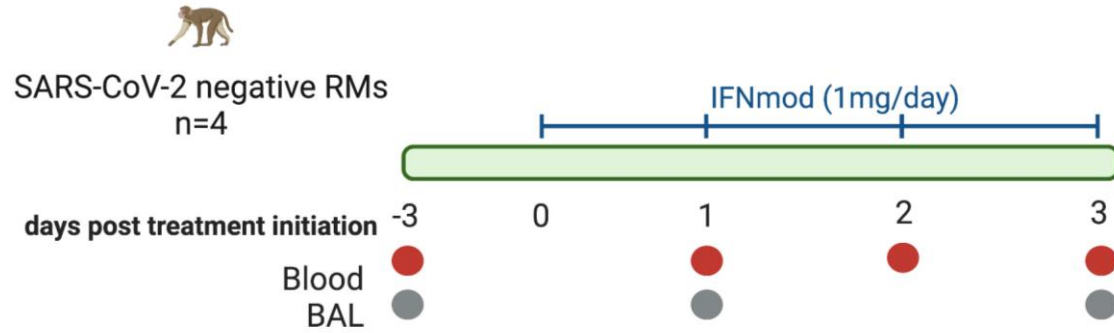


SARS-CoV-2 negative RMs  
n=4





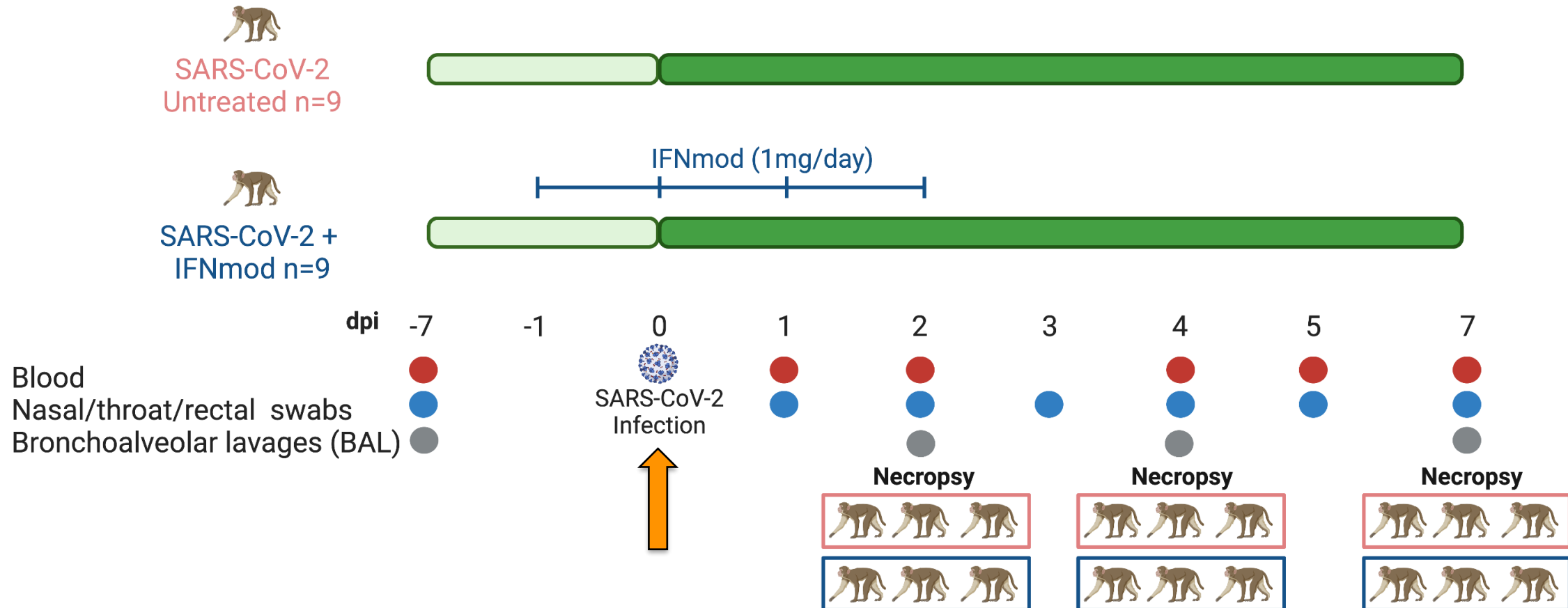
# IFNmod treatment in uninfected RMs results in modest and specific upregulation of antiviral ISGs



- **Multifaceted role: modest upregulation of ISGs, without changes in pro-inflammatory genes**
- **These results suggest that this compound could be ideal in the context of SARS-CoV-2 infection**

# Determining how IFNmod affects COVID-19: Study Design

- SARS-CoV-2 isolate 2019-nCoV/USA-WA1/2020
- Intratracheal (I.T.) and Intranasal (I.N.) – dual route challenge
- $1.1 \times 10^6$  PFU (1 mL I.T. and 1 mL I.N.)



# Lower viral loads in IFNmod treated RMs during dosing phase

○ Untreated

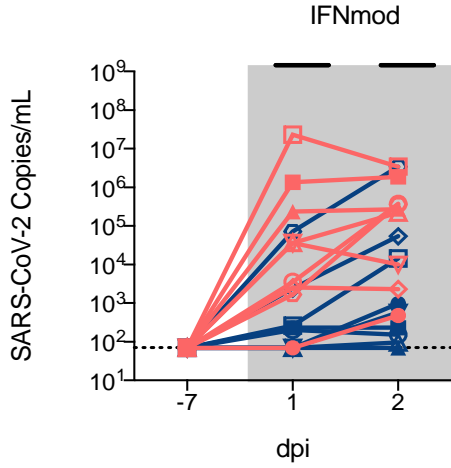
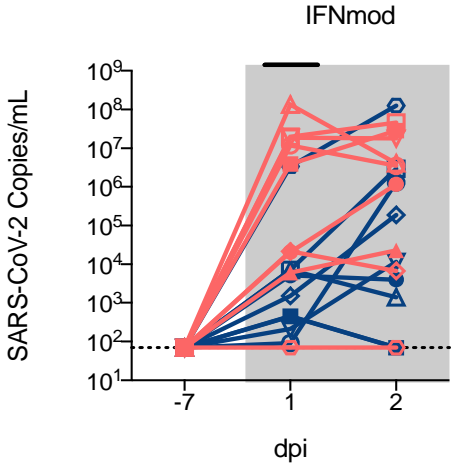
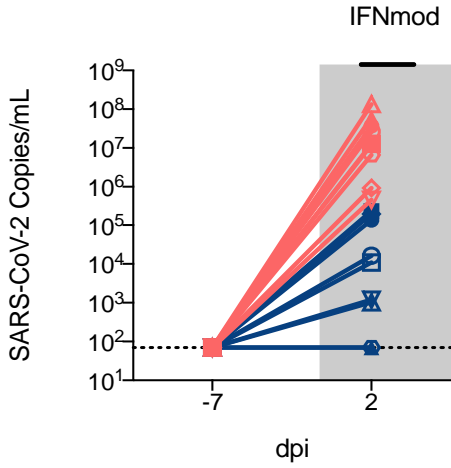
○ IFNmod

gRNA

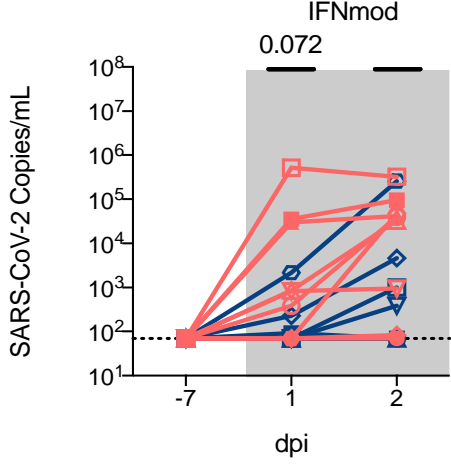
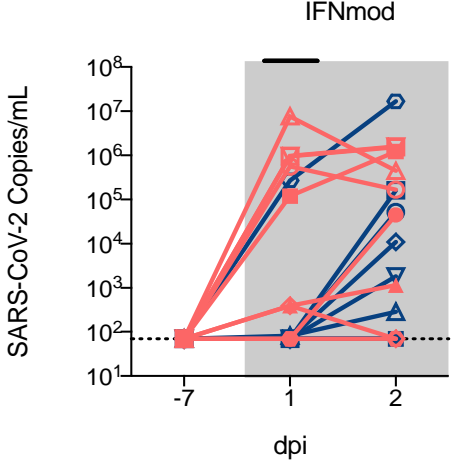
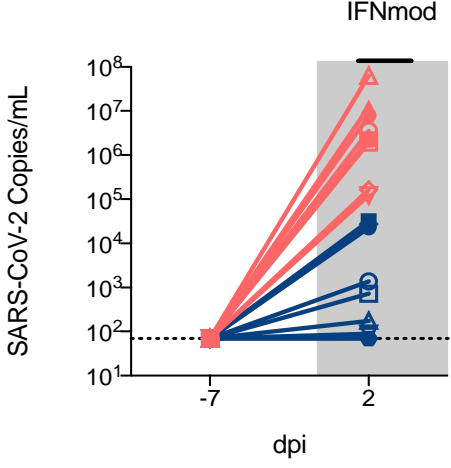
BAL

Nasal

Throat



sgRNA



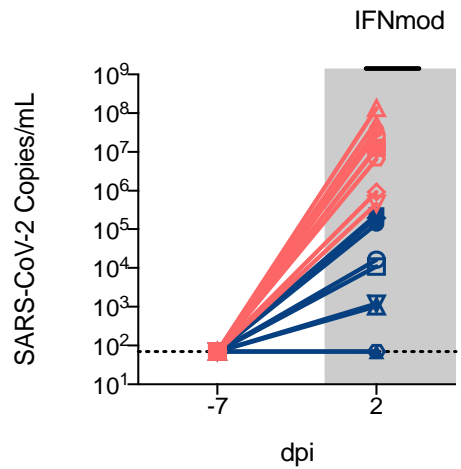
Lines depicted represent median

# Lower viral loads in IFNmod treated RMs during dosing phase

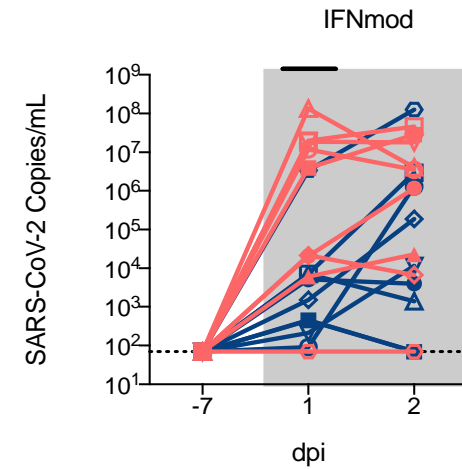
- Untreated
- IFNmod

sgRNA

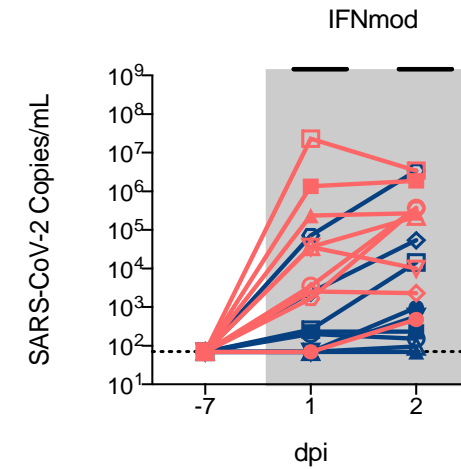
BAL



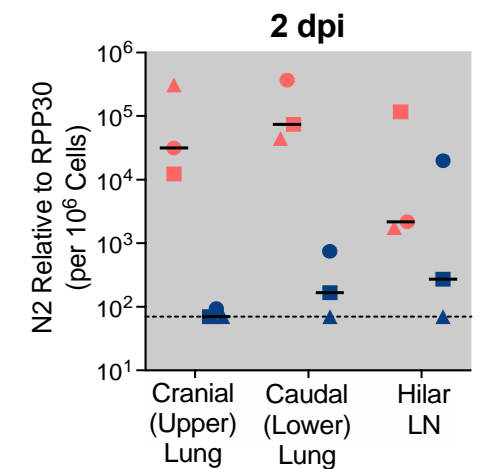
Nasal



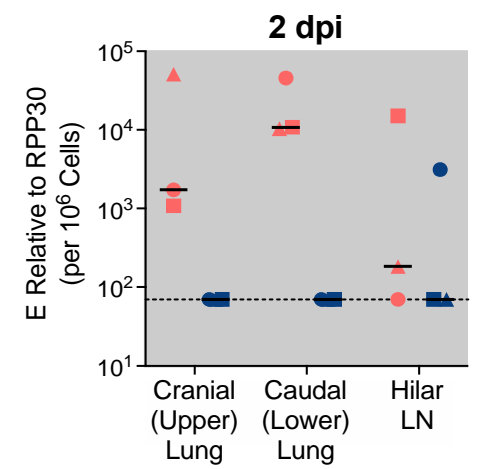
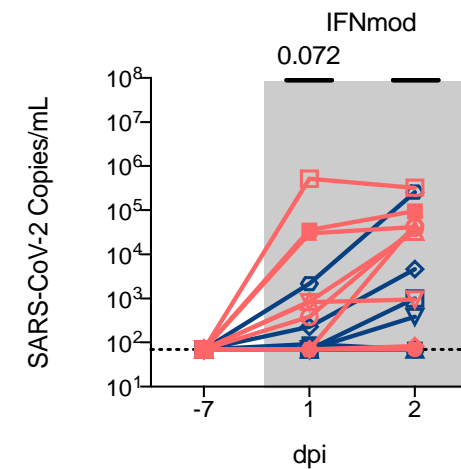
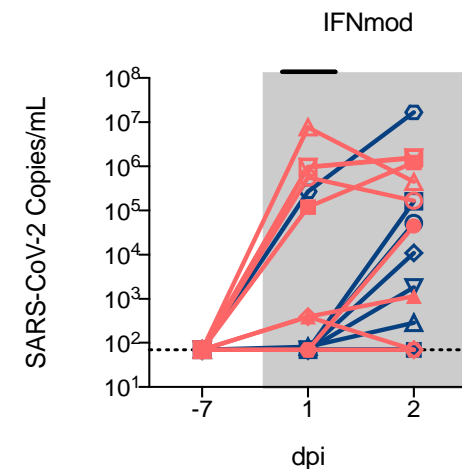
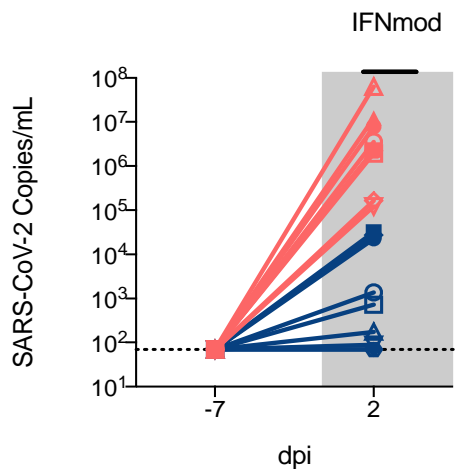
Throat



Tissue



sgRNA

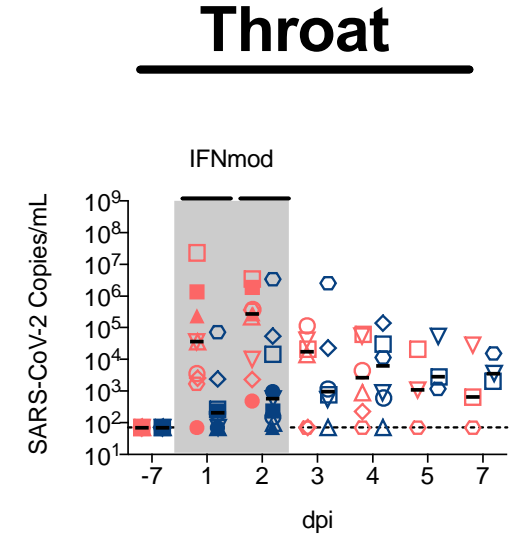
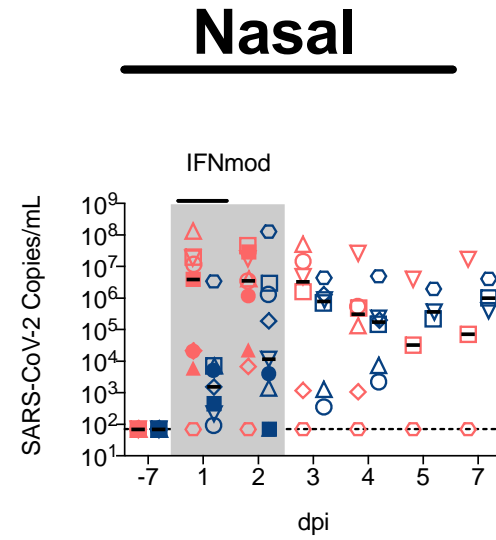
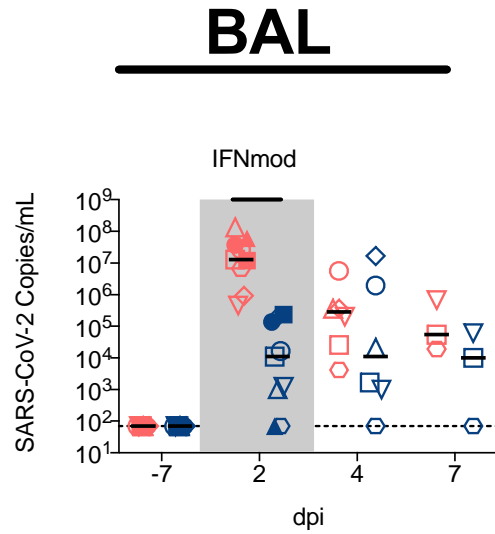


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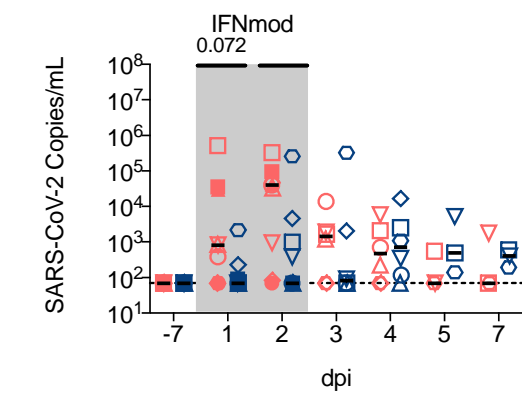
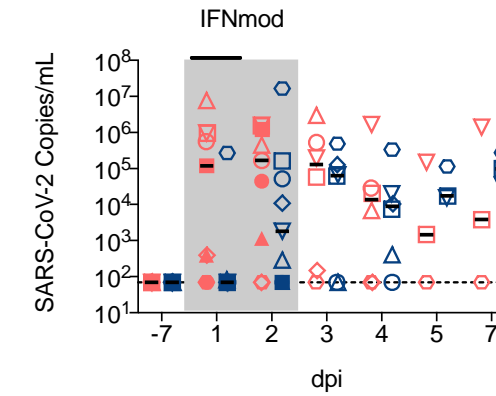
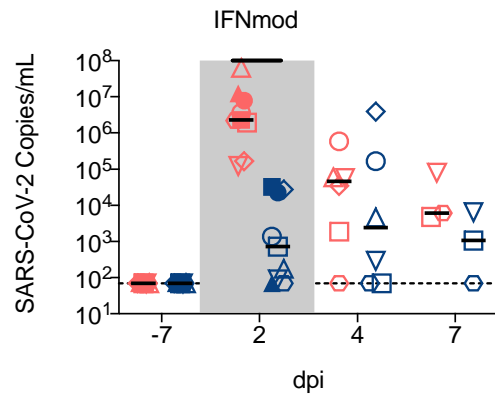
# Viral loads remained stable in IFNmod treated RMs after treatment phase

- Untreated
- IFNmod

gRNA

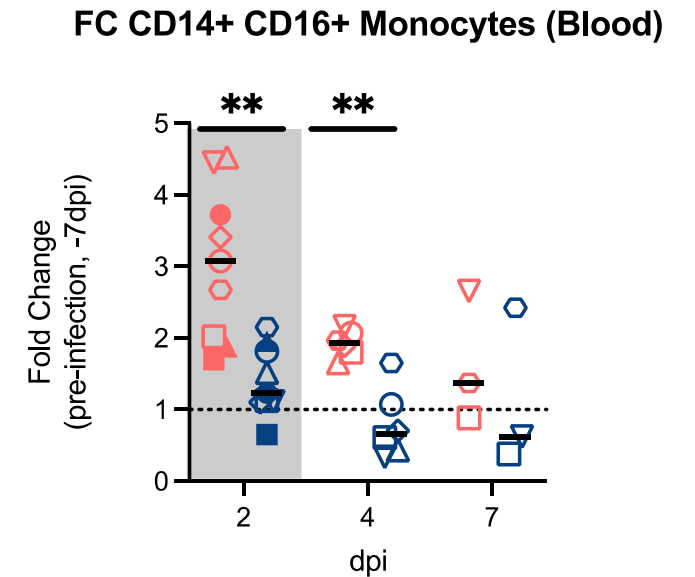
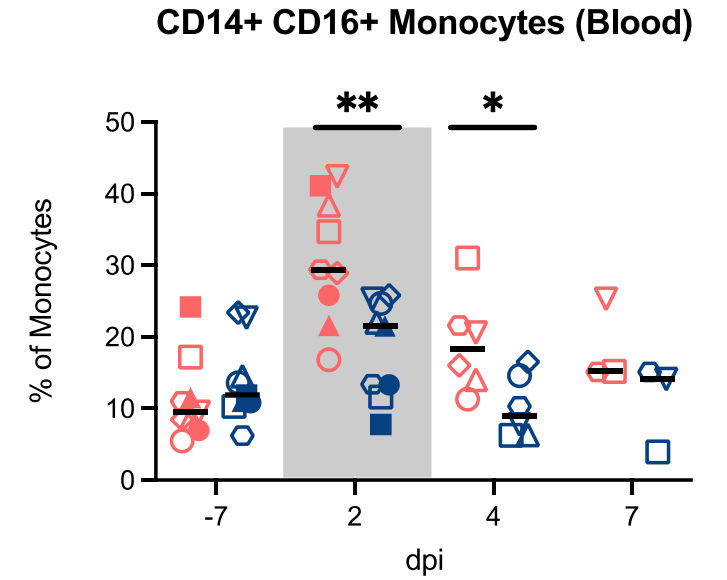
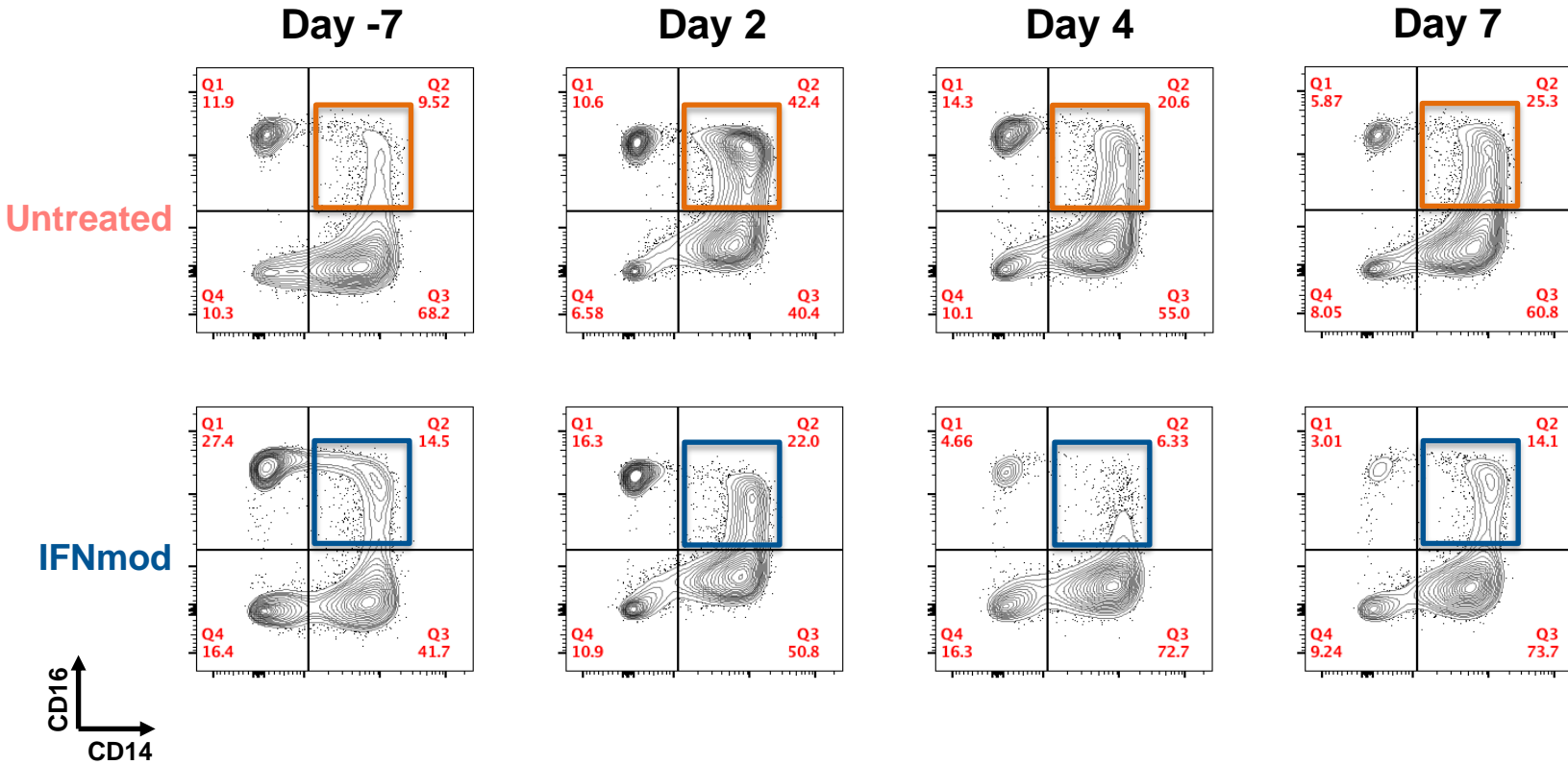


sgRNA



# IFNmod treated RMs had lower expansion of inflammatory monocytes

- Untreated
- IFNmod



# Siglec-1 expression enhances SARS-CoV-2 infection and is associated with disease severity

nature

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-021-03925-1>

## Lectins enhance SARS-CoV-2 infection and influence neutralizing antibodies

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Florian A. Lempp<sup>1</sup>, Leah B. Soriaga<sup>1</sup>, Martin Montiel-Ruiz<sup>1</sup>, Fabio Benigni<sup>2</sup>, Julia Noack<sup>1</sup>, Young-Jun Park<sup>3</sup>, Siro Bianchi<sup>2</sup>, Alexandra C. Walls<sup>3</sup>, John E. Bowen<sup>3</sup>, Jiayi Zhou<sup>1</sup>, Hannah Kaiser<sup>1</sup>, Anshu Joshi<sup>3</sup>, Maria Agostini<sup>1</sup>, Marcel Meury<sup>1</sup>, Exequiel Dellota Jr<sup>1</sup>, Stefano Jaconi<sup>2</sup>, Elisabetta Cameroni<sup>2</sup>, Javier Martinez-Picado<sup>4,5,6</sup>, Júlia Vergara-Alert<sup>7</sup>, Nuria Izquierdo-Useros<sup>4,8</sup>, Herbert W. Virgin<sup>1,9,10</sup>, Antonio Lanzavecchia<sup>2</sup>, David Veleser<sup>3</sup>, Lisa A. Purcell<sup>11</sup>, Amalio Telenti<sup>1,12</sup> & Davide Corti<sup>2,12</sup>

## Monocyte CD169 Expression as a Biomarker in the Early Diagnosis of Coronavirus Disease 2019

Anne-Sophie Bedin<sup>1,10</sup>, Alain Makinson<sup>2,3</sup>, Marie-Christine Picot<sup>4,5</sup>, Frank Mennechet<sup>1</sup>, Fabrice Malergue<sup>6</sup>, Amandine Pisoni<sup>1,7</sup>, Esperance Nyiramigisha<sup>7</sup>, Lise Montagnier<sup>7</sup>, Karine Bollore<sup>1</sup>, Ségolène Debiesse<sup>1</sup>, David Morquin<sup>3</sup>, Pénélope Bourgoin<sup>6</sup>, Nicolas Veyrenche<sup>7</sup>, Constance Renault<sup>1</sup>, Vincent Foulongne<sup>1,7</sup>, Caroline Bret<sup>8</sup>, Arnaud Bourdin<sup>9,10</sup>, Vincent Le Moing<sup>2,3</sup>, Philippe Van de Perre<sup>1,7</sup>, Edouard Tuillon<sup>1,7</sup>

## CD169/SIGLEC1 is expressed on circulating monocytes in COVID-19 and expression levels are associated with disease severity

Jan-Moritz Doehn<sup>1</sup> · Christoph Tabeling<sup>1,2,3</sup> · Robert Biesen<sup>4</sup> · Jacopo Saccomanno<sup>1</sup> · Elena Madlung<sup>1</sup> · Eva Pappe<sup>1</sup> · Frieder Gabriel<sup>1</sup> · Florian Kurth<sup>1,5</sup> · Christian Meisel<sup>6,7</sup> · Victor M. Corman<sup>8,9</sup> · Leif G. Hanitsch<sup>6</sup> · Sascha Treskatsch<sup>10</sup> · Kathrin Heim<sup>1</sup> · Miriam S. Stegemann<sup>1</sup> · Christoph Ruwwe-Glösenkamp<sup>1</sup> · Holger C. Müller-Redetzky<sup>1</sup> · Alexander Uhrig<sup>1</sup> · Rajan Somasundaram<sup>11</sup> · Claudia Spies<sup>12</sup> · Horst von Bernuth<sup>13</sup> · Jörg Hofmann<sup>7,8,9</sup> · Christian Drosten<sup>8,9</sup> · Norbert Suttrop<sup>1,14</sup> · Martin Witzenthat<sup>1,2,14</sup> · Leif E. Sander<sup>1,14</sup> · Ralf-Harto Hübner<sup>1</sup>

- Siglec-1, an IFN-I responsive protein, functions as an attachment receptor for SARS-CoV-2 and enhances SARS-CoV-2 infection (Lempp *et al.*, 2021; Perez-Zsolt *et al.*, 2021).
- Siglec-1 expression on circulating monocytes is associated with disease severity (Doehn *et al.*, 2021; Bedin *et al.*, 2021)

# IFNmod treated RMs had lower expression of Siglec-1+ CD14+ monocytes

○ Untreated

○ IFNmod

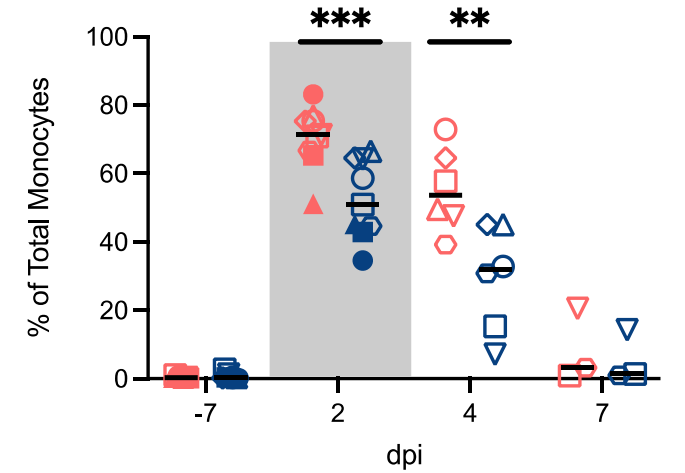
Day -7

Day 2

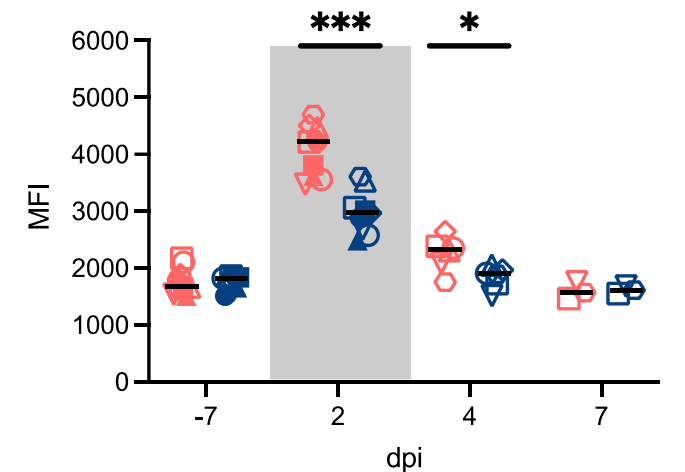
Day 4

Day 7

CD14+ Siglec-1+ Monocytes (Blood)



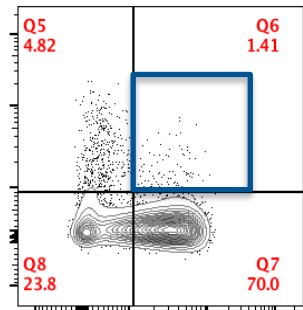
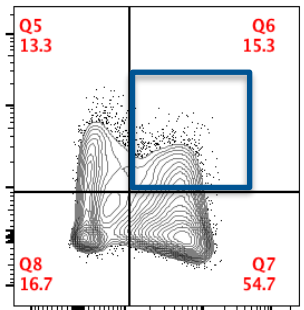
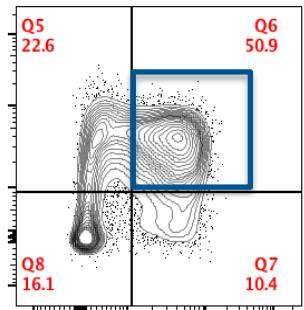
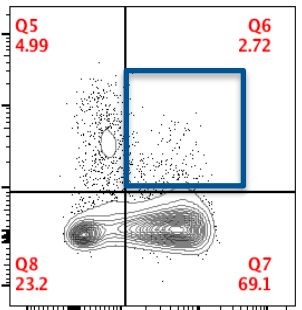
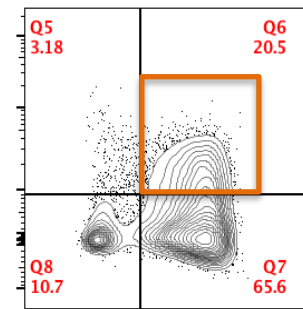
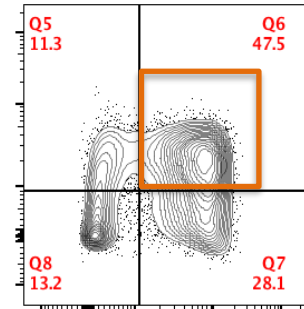
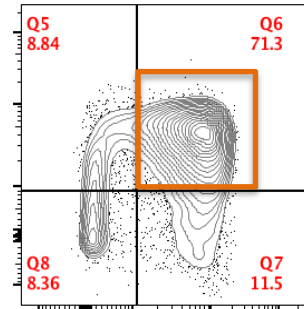
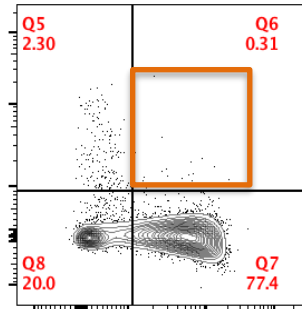
Siglec-1+ MFI on CD14+ Monocytes (Blood)



Untreated

IFNmod

CD169/  
Siglec-1  
↑  
CD14 →

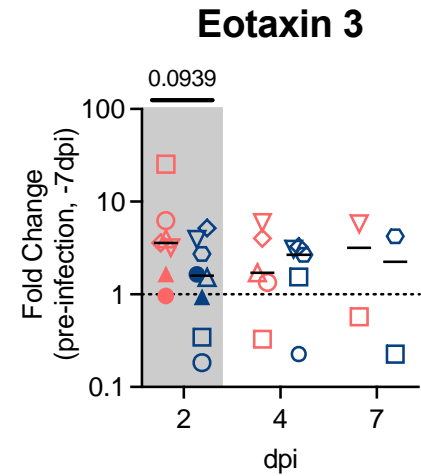
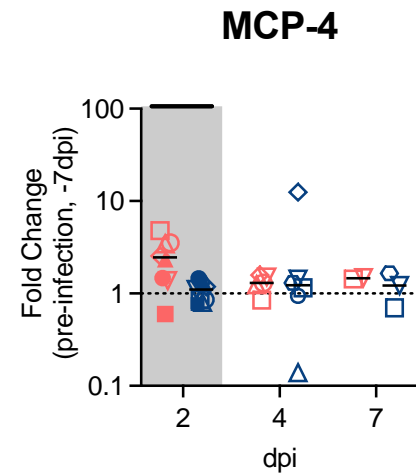
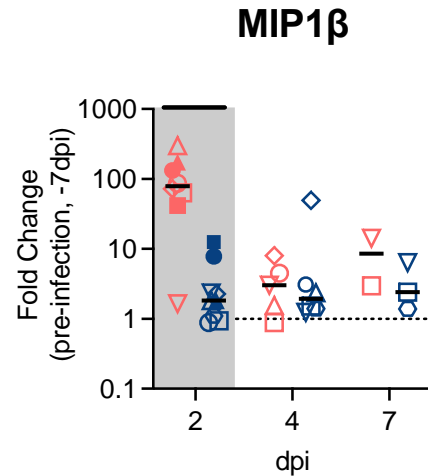
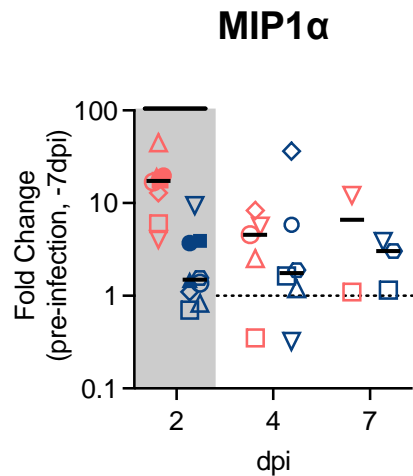
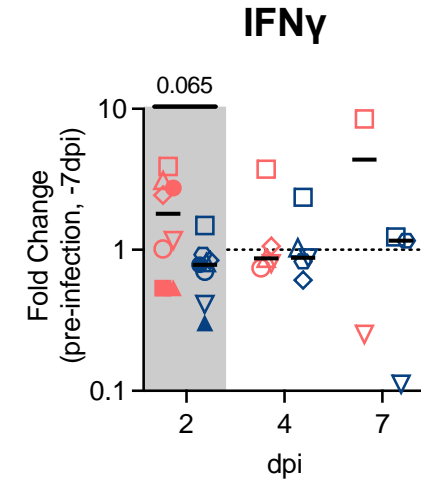
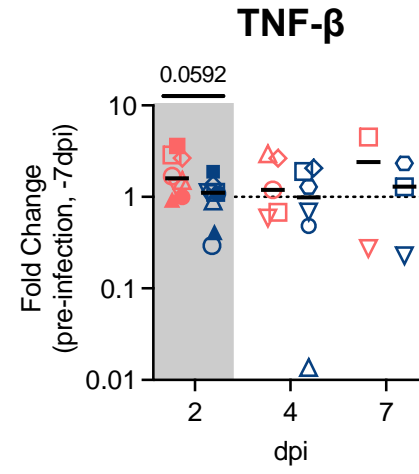
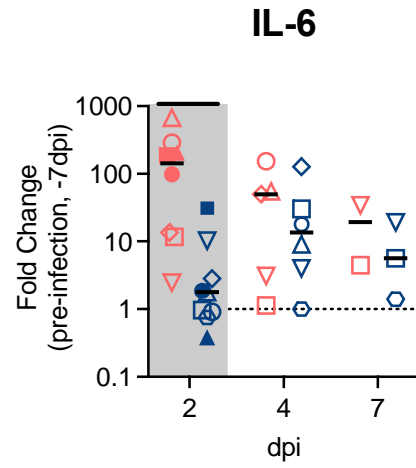
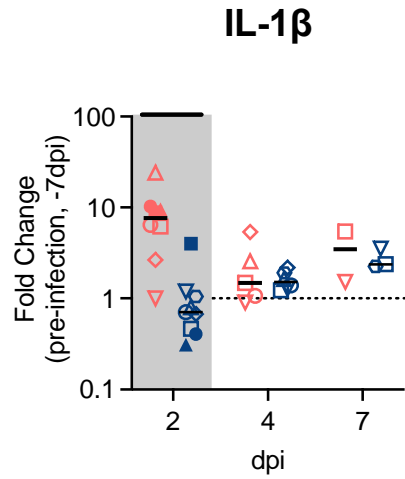


Lines depicted represent median

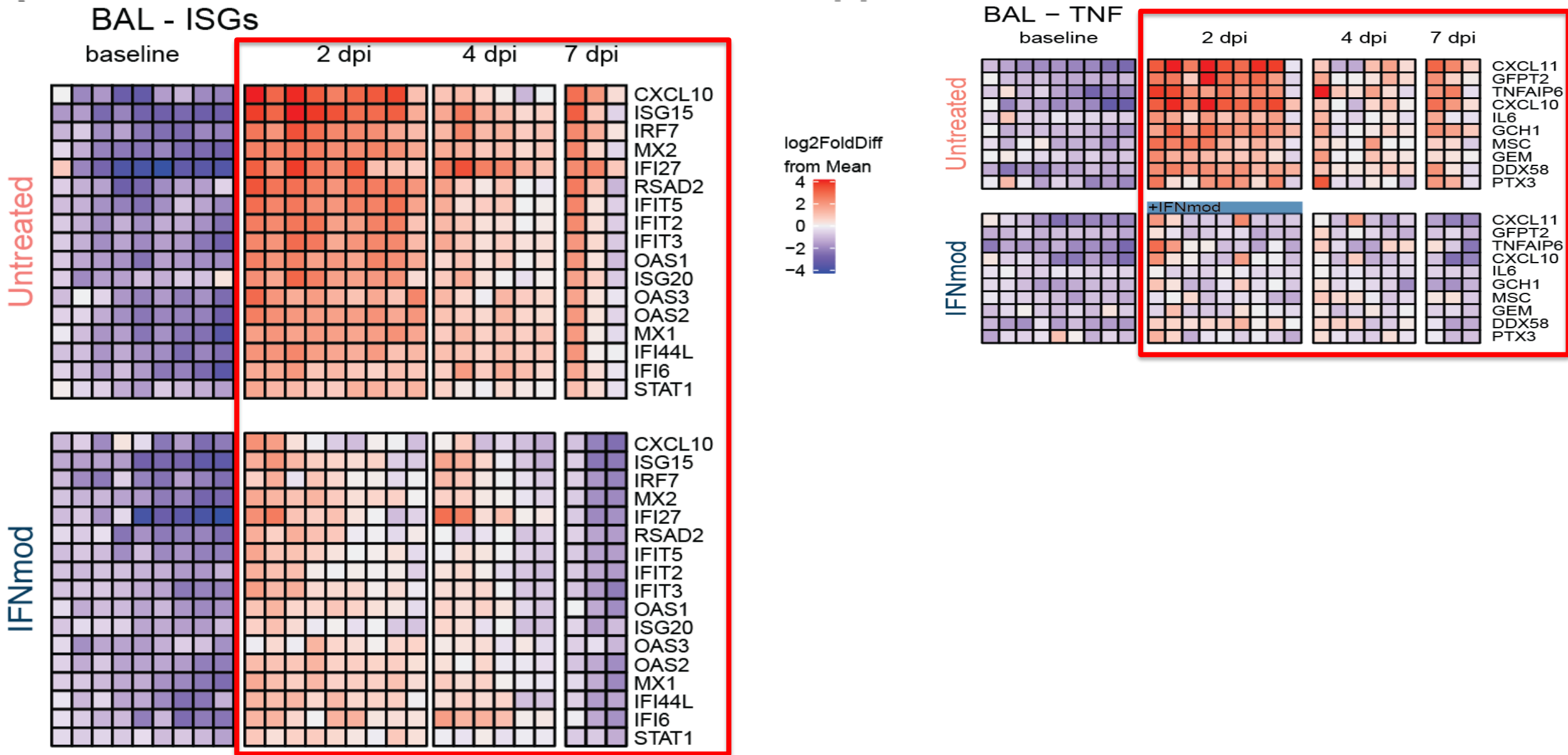


# IFNmod treated RMs had lower level of inflammatory molecules in BAL

○ Untreated  
○ IFNmod



# IFNmod inhibits the ISG response and pro-inflammatory signaling in the BAL of SARS-CoV-2 infected RMs



# COVID-19 and the Inflammasome

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## Inflammasome activation in infected macrophages drives COVID-19 pathology

[Esen Sefik](#), [Rihao Qu](#), [Caroline Junqueira](#), [Eleanna Kaffe](#), [Haris Mirza](#), [Jun Zhao](#), [J. Richard Brewer](#), [Ailin Han](#), [Holly R. Steach](#), [Benjamin Israelow](#), [Holly N. Blackburn](#), [Sofia E. Velazquez](#), [Y. Grace Chen](#), [Stephanie Halene](#), [Akiko Iwasaki](#), [Eric Meffre](#), [Michel Nussenzweig](#), [Judy Lieberman](#), [Craig B. Wilen](#), [Yuval Kluger](#) & [Richard A. Flavell](#) 

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## FcγR-mediated SARS-CoV-2 infection of monocytes activates inflammation

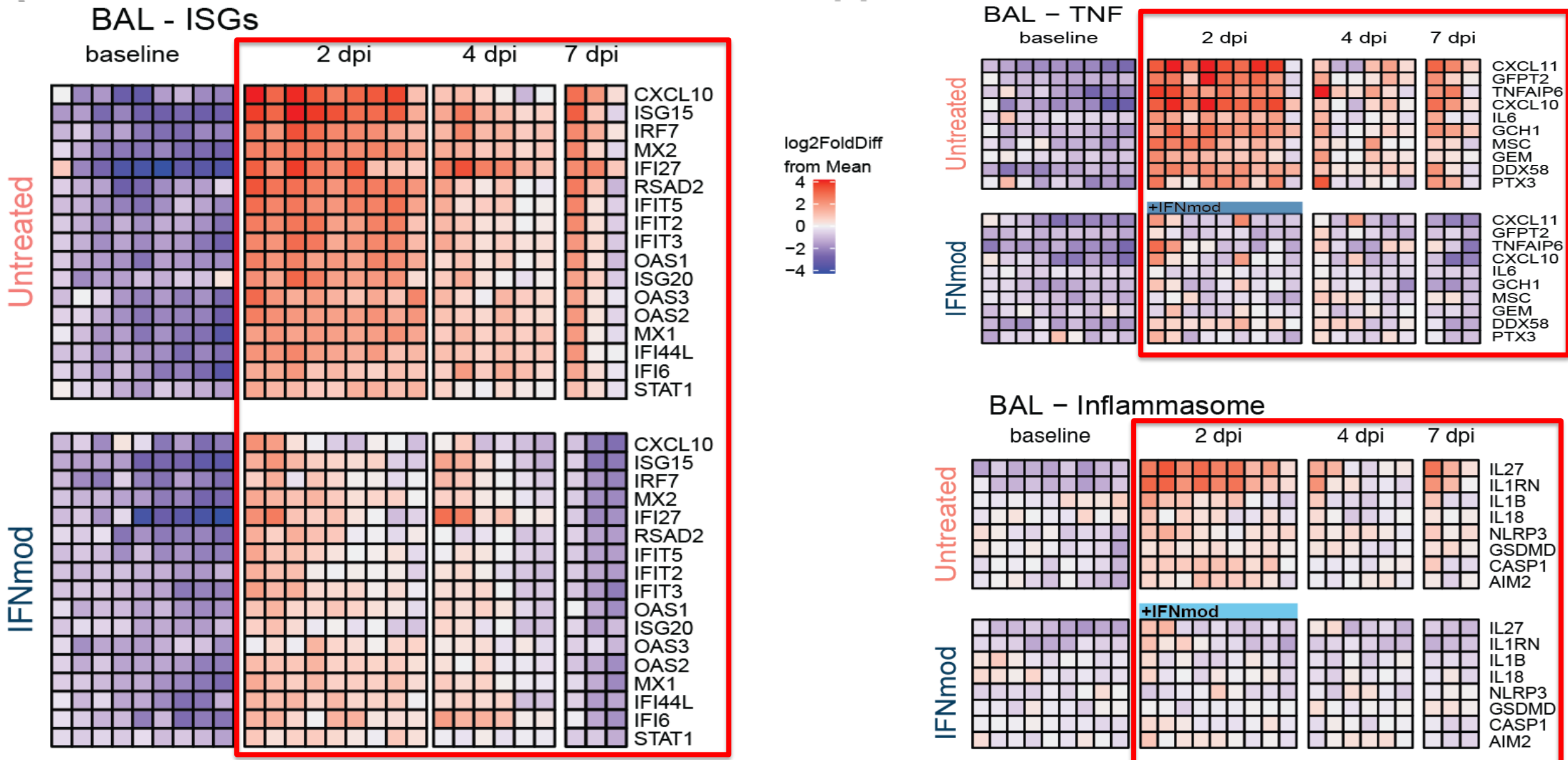
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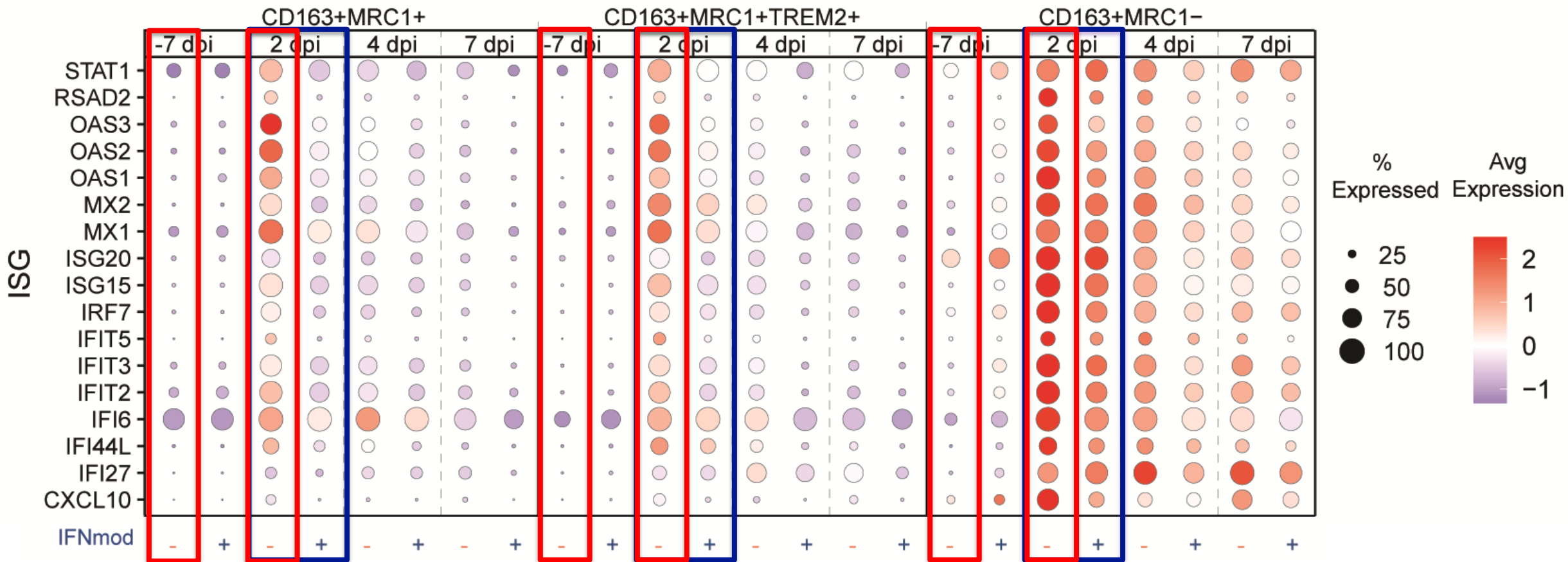
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A series of studies linked lower airway inflammation during SARS-CoV-2 infection to inflammasome activation specifically within infiltrating monocytes and resident macrophages

# IFNmod inhibits the ISG response and pro-inflammatory signaling in the BAL of SARS-CoV-2 infected RMs

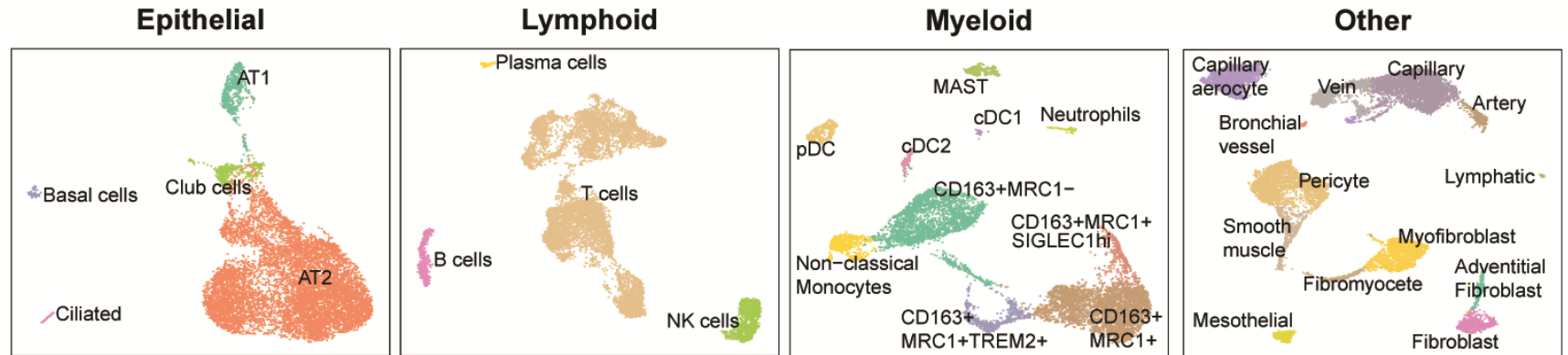
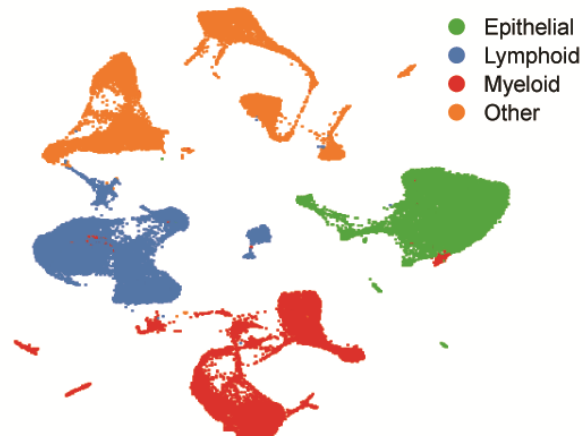


# IFNmod treatment reduces ISG expression in macrophage subsets in the lower airway

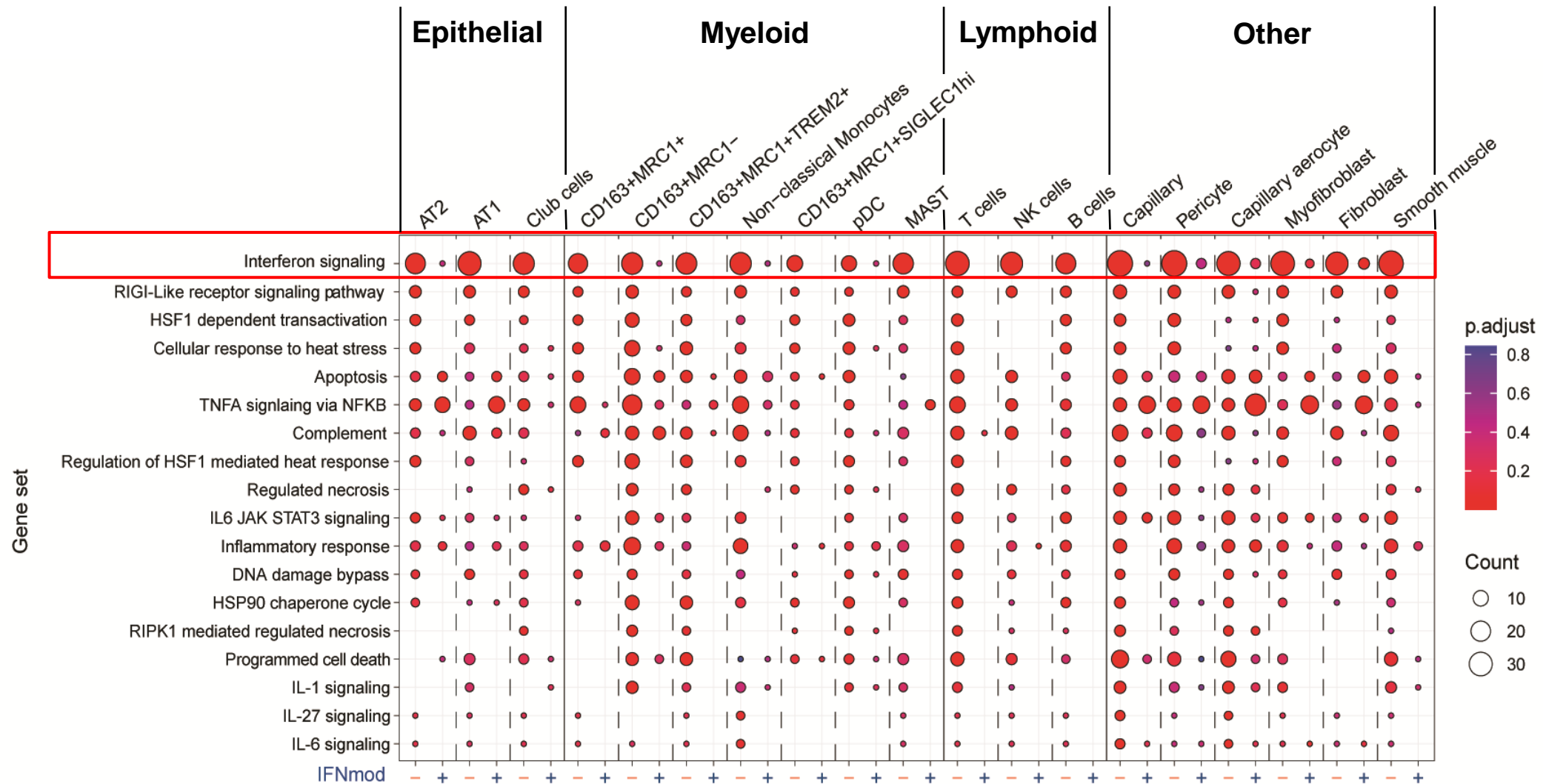


- IFNmod inhibits the accumulation of CD163+MRC1<sup>-</sup> inflammatory macrophages in the lower airway

# sc-RNA-seq of the lower lung

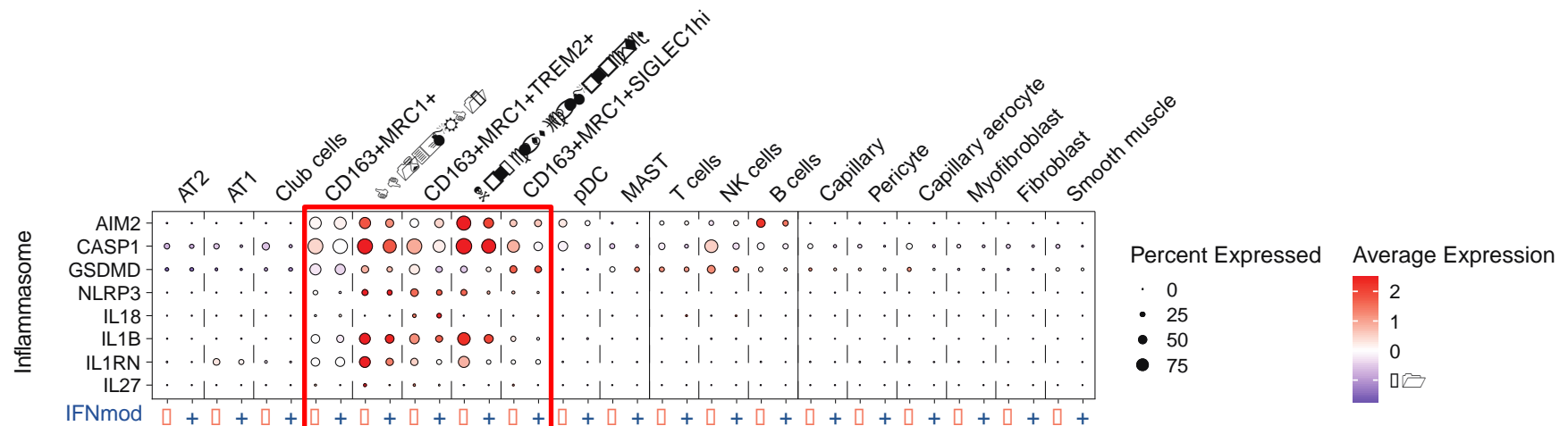
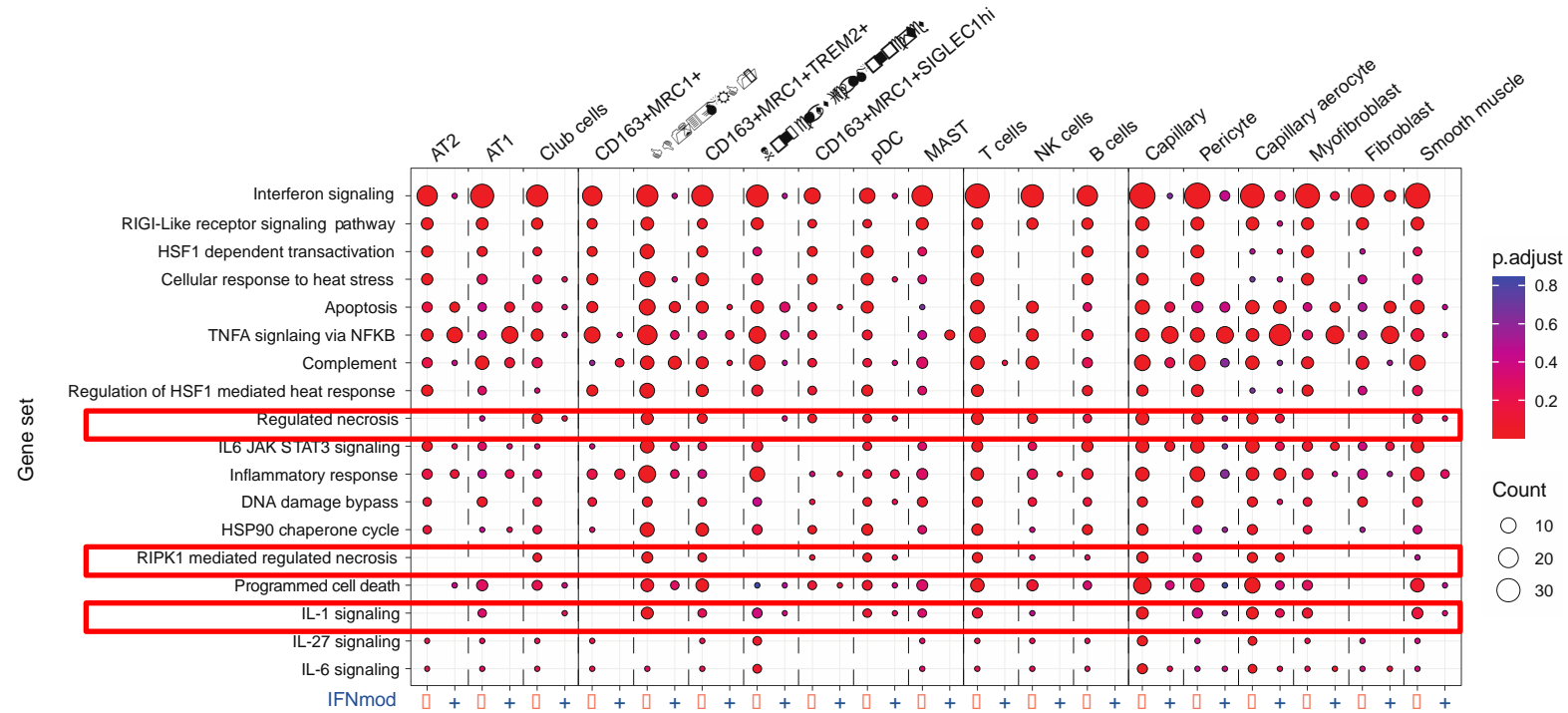


# IFNmod treatment reduces IFN-I signaling in all cell subsets in the lung at 2 dpi



- 12-17 ISGs out of the panel of 17 ISGs were significantly lower ( $p_{adj} < 0.05$ ) in IFNmod-treated RMs as compared to untreated RMs at 2dpi

# Inflammasome activation largely restricted to monocyte/macrophages in the lung during SARS-CoV-2 infection and IFNmod treatment attenuates this inflammasome activation





# Conclusions

## Type I IFN pathway plays a key role in SARS-CoV-2 infection

- **IFNmod** treated RMs had :
  - ~3 log reduction to viral loads during treatment, particularly in BAL and lung
  - Less expansion of inflammatory and Siglec-1<sup>+</sup> myeloid cells
  - Decreased mediators of inflammatory cell trafficking to the lung
  - Reduced accumulation of CD163<sup>+</sup>MRC1<sup>-</sup> macrophages
  - Attenuated antiviral and inflammatory ISGs in PBMCs, whole blood, BAL, and lung

## Implications:

- Uncontrolled IFN signaling has detrimental impact on airway pathology and COVID-19 severity
- IFNmod treatment may provide sufficient levels of Type I IFN signaling that inhibits viral replication without inducing hyperinflammation.
- Future studies will help to determine the effects of IFNmod (i) when started post-infection, (ii) with different variants of concern and the effects of (iii) complete blockade of the type I IFN signaling

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Jenny Wood

Chelsea Wallace

Fawn Connor-Stroud

Rachelle Stammen

Racquel Sampson

Shannon Kirejczyk



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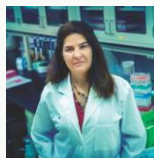


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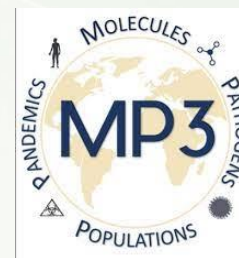
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Recruiting postdocs  
([mirko.paiardini@emory.edu](mailto:mirko.paiardini@emory.edu))



# Timothy Nguyen Hoang

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