



SARS-CoV-2 Vaccine

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Johnson & Johnson



Inside Johnson & Johnson's Nonstop Hunt for a Coronavirus Vaccine

In Boston and in the Netherlands, scientists are racing to build a vaccine against the virus strangling the world.

Noe Mercado, a scientist at the Center for Virology and Vaccine Research in Boston, which is developing a coronavirus vaccine with Johnson & Johnson. Tony Luong for The New York Times

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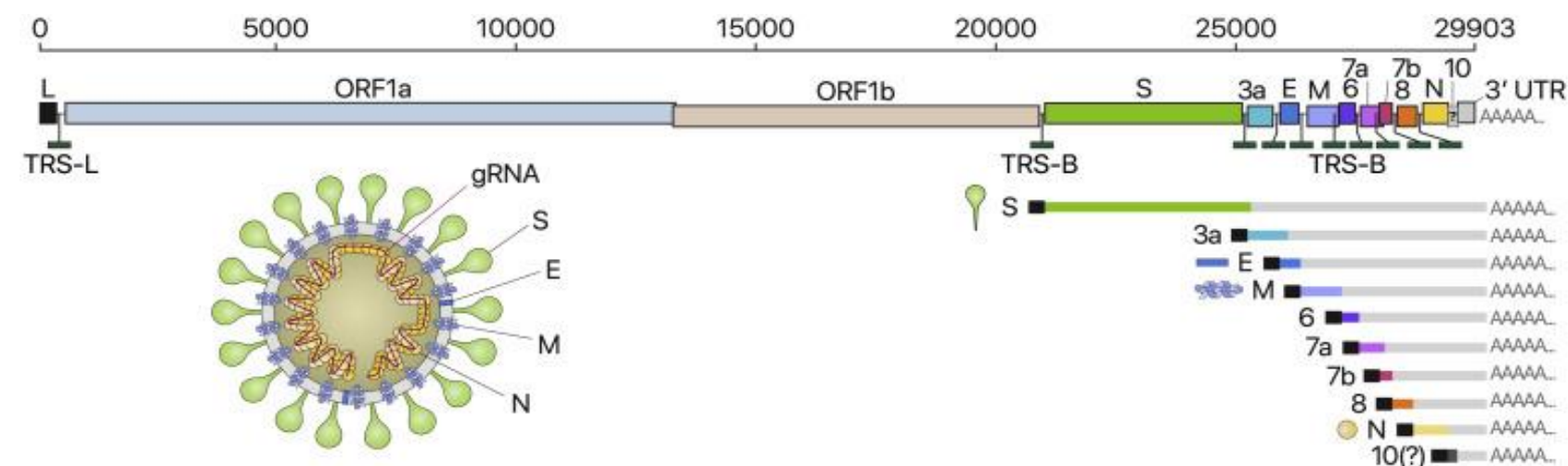
- Mosaic HIV-1 Vaccine in large scale phase 2b trial in Africa and Phase 3 efficacy trial in the Americas and Europe
- (Ad26.ZIKV.001) Zika virus vaccine completed phase 1 clinical trial
- SARS-CoV-2 vaccine FDA approved



Journal of Virology

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome 2 (SARS-CoV-2)

- Positive sense single stranded RNA virus with a single linear RNA segment
- Genome size ~30kb
- Main focus for vaccination strategies is spike protein
- SARS-CoV-2 utilizes ACE2 receptors distributed predominantly in epithelial cells of lung and small intestines



How Viral Vector COVID-19 Vaccines Work

Understanding the virus that causes COVID-19.

Coronaviruses, like the one that causes COVID-19, are named for the crown-like spikes on their surface, called **spike proteins**. These **spike proteins** are ideal targets for vaccines.

What is a viral vector vaccine?

A viral vector vaccine uses a harmless version of a different virus, called a "vector," to deliver information to the body that helps it protect you.

How does the vaccine work?

The vaccine teaches your body how to make copies of the **spike proteins**. If you are exposed to the real virus later, your body will recognize it and know how to fight it off.

The vaccine **DOES NOT** contain the virus that causes COVID-19 and cannot give you COVID-19. It also cannot make you sick from the virus that is used as the vector. It cannot change your DNA in any way.

When your body responds to the vaccine, it can sometimes cause tiredness, headache, muscle pain, nausea, or mild fever. These are normal signs the vaccine is working.

Antibody

GETTING VACCINATED?

For information about COVID-19 vaccine, visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines)



- Vector based vaccines have been used since the 1970s
- Replication-incompetent, safe and immunogenic
- Vector technology has been applied to develop vaccine candidates against ZIKA, HIV, Flu, and Ebola

SHARE**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

SARS-CoV-2 infection protects against rechallenge in rhesus macaques

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**Science**

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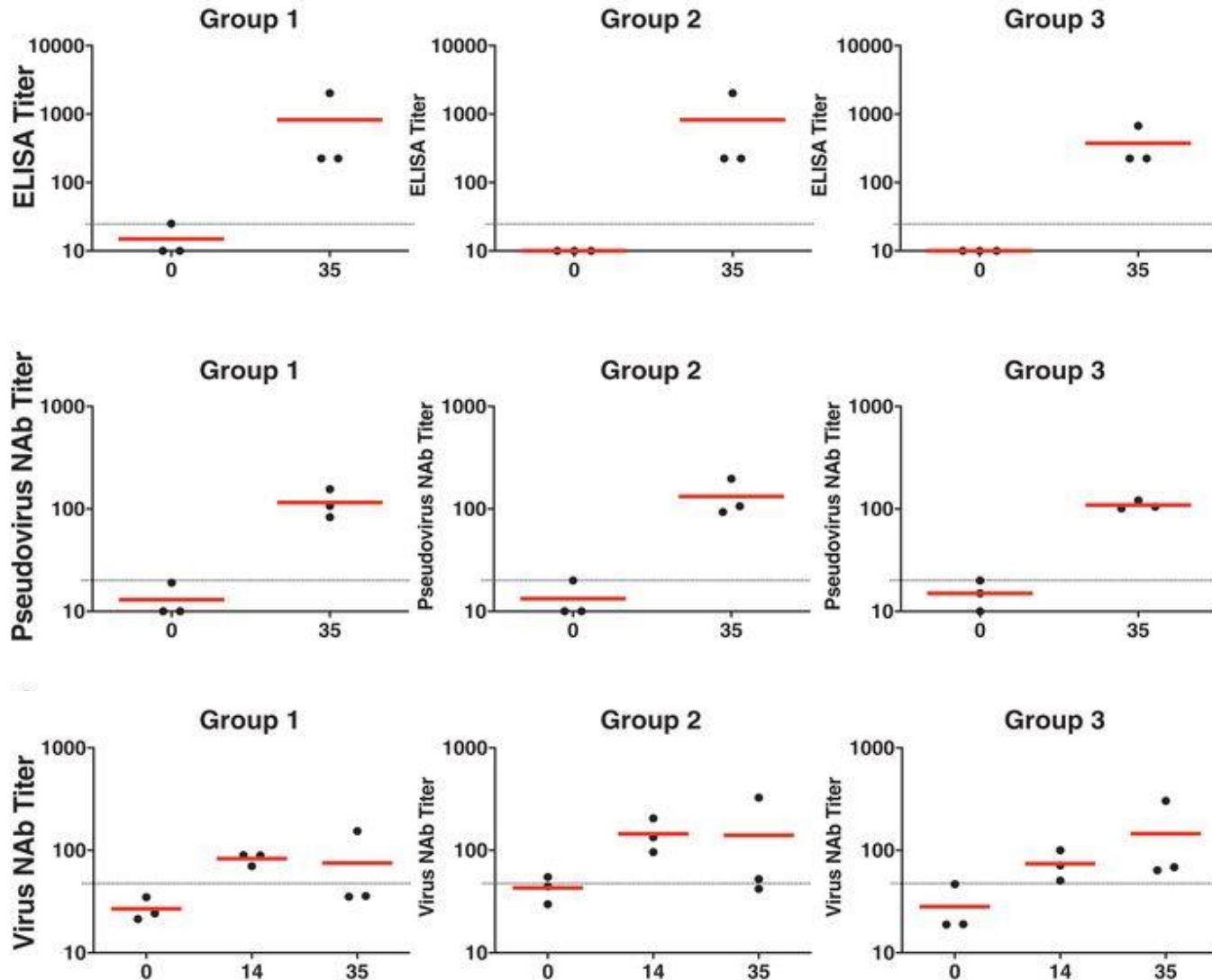
Rhesus macaques were inoculated by the IN and IT routes

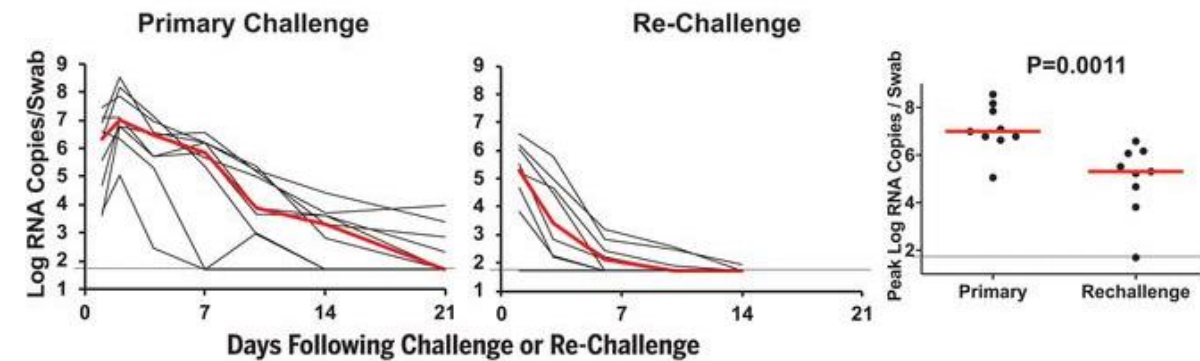
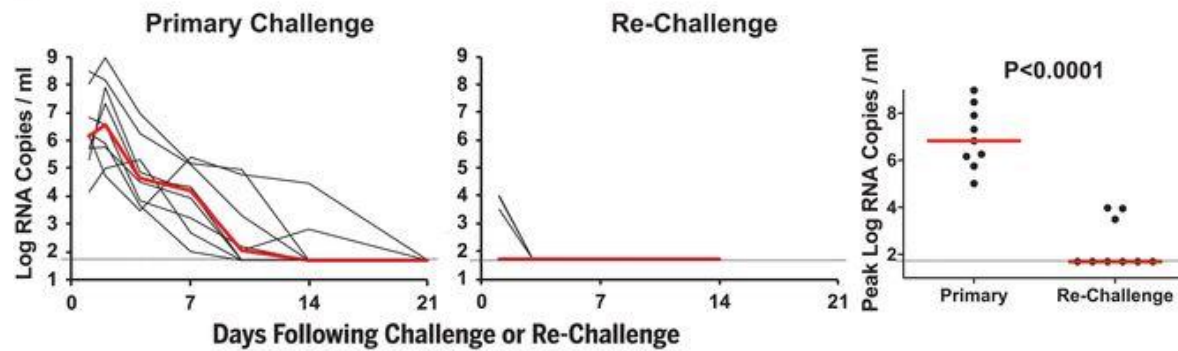
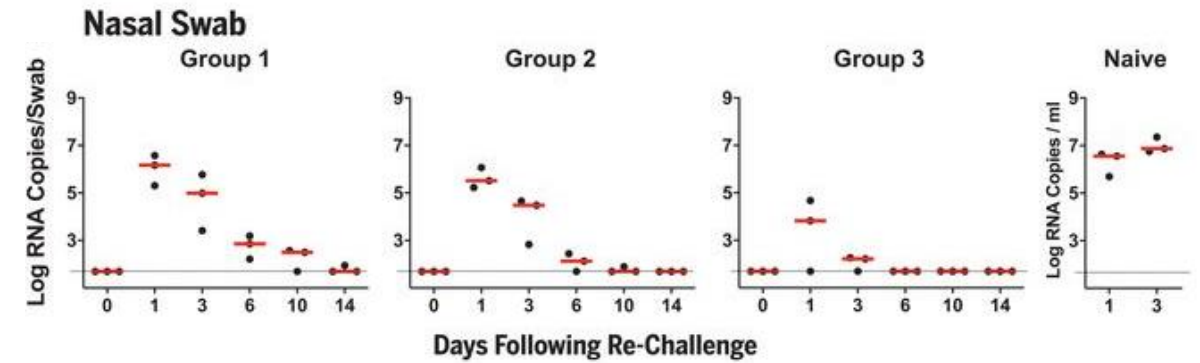
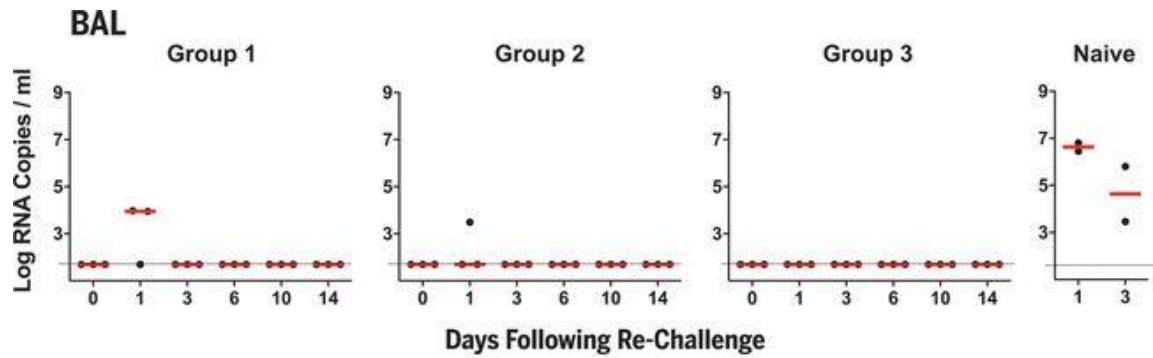
1.1×10^6 PFU (Group 1; N = 3)

1.1×10^5 PFU (Group 2; N = 3)

1.1×10^4 PFU (Group 3; N = 3)

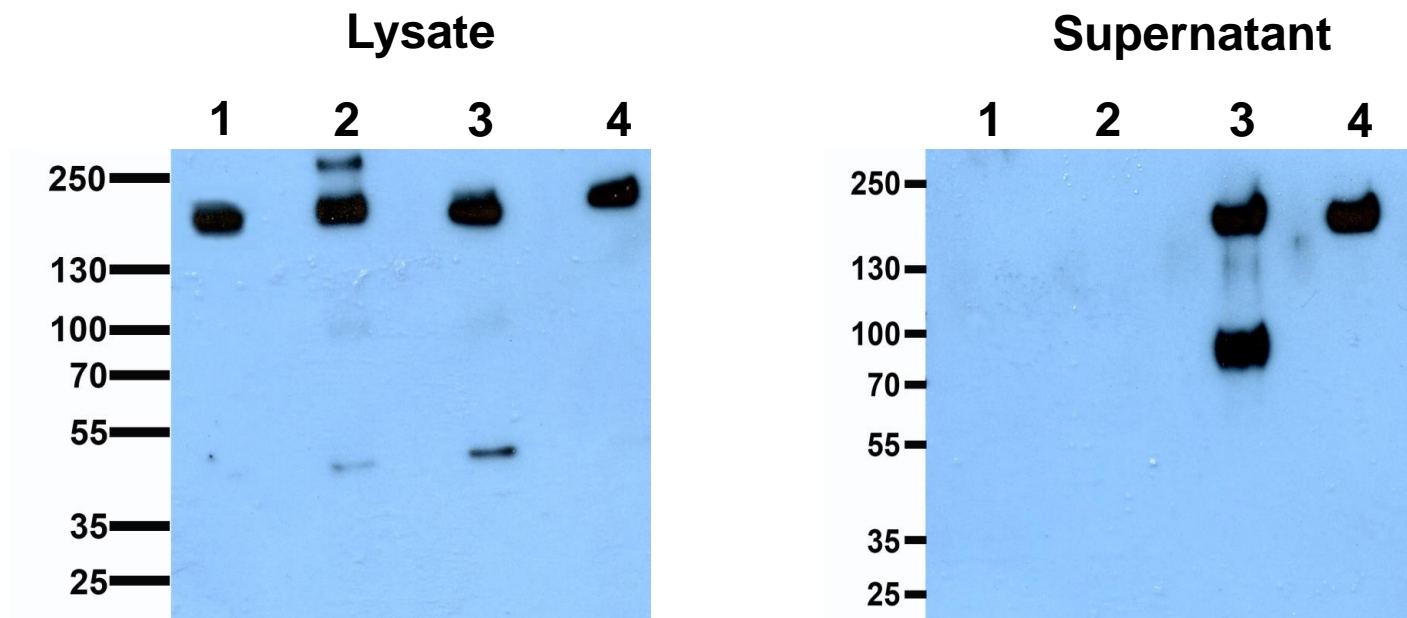
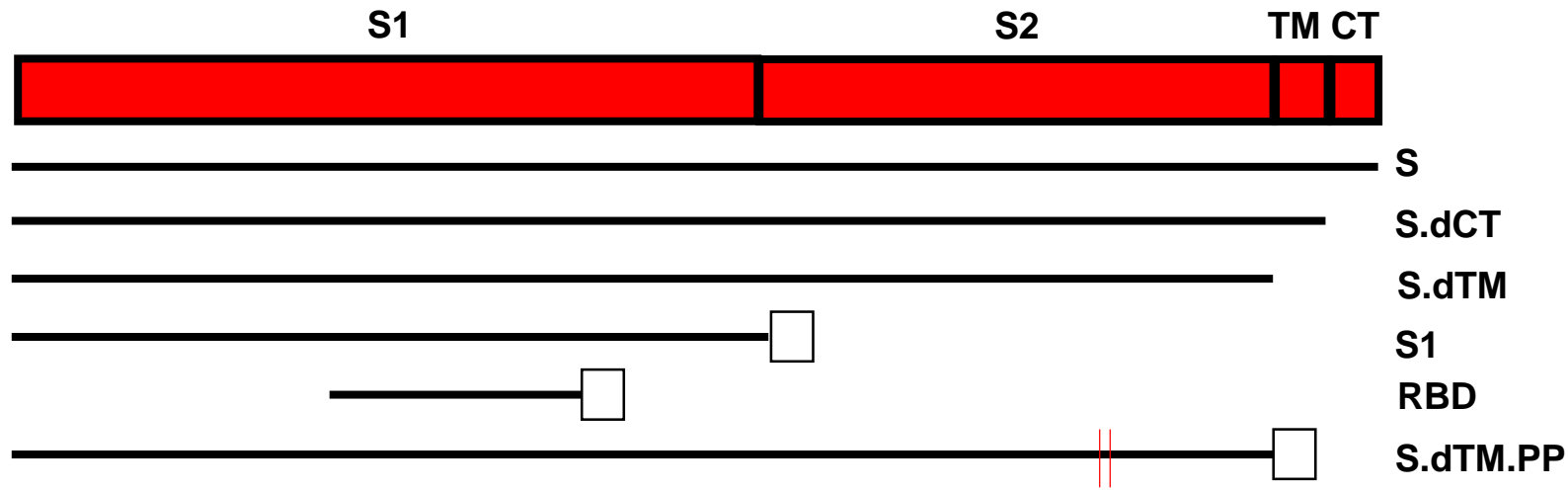
- High antibody titers are elicited post initial challenge

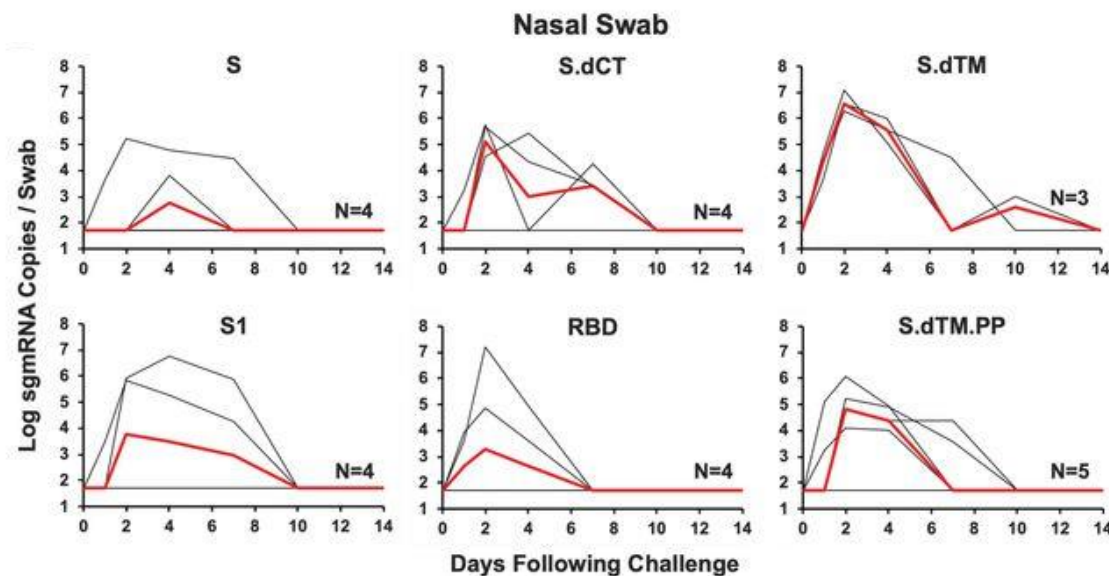
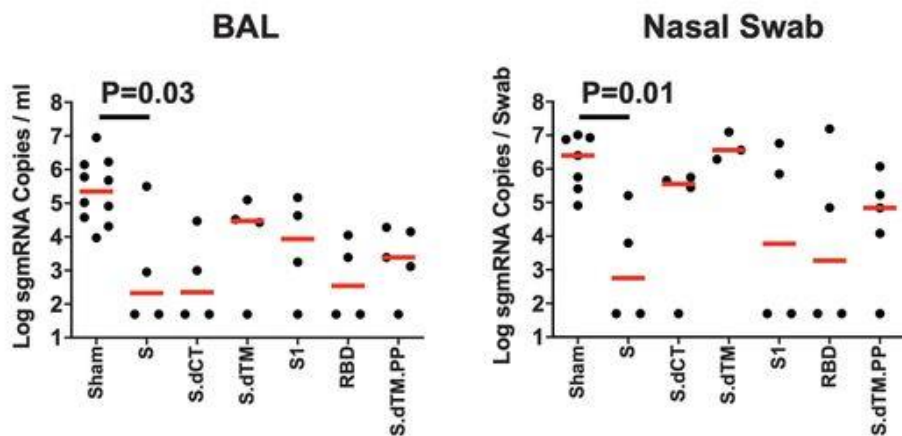
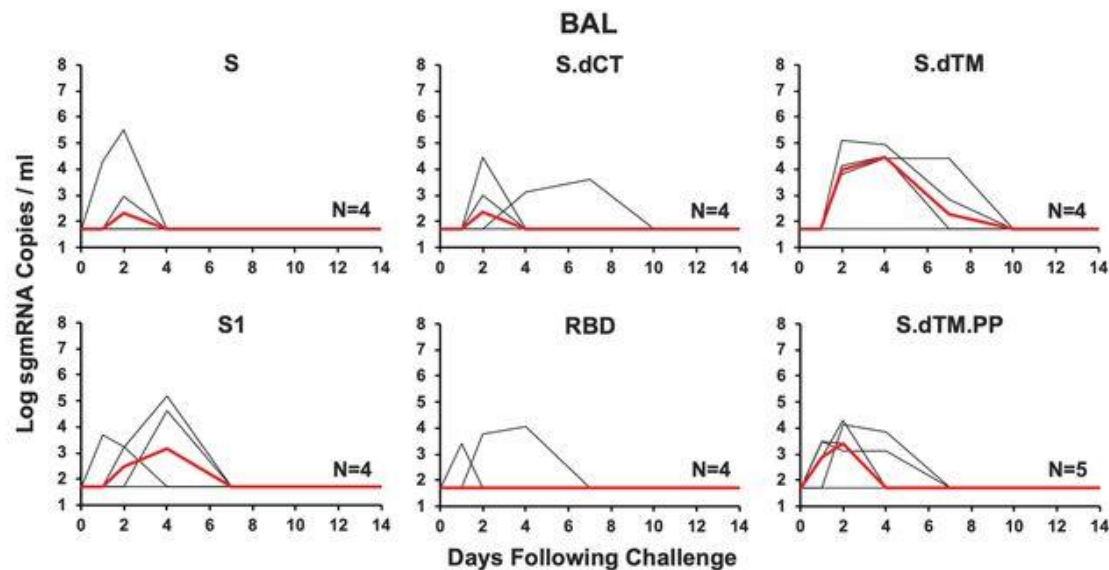
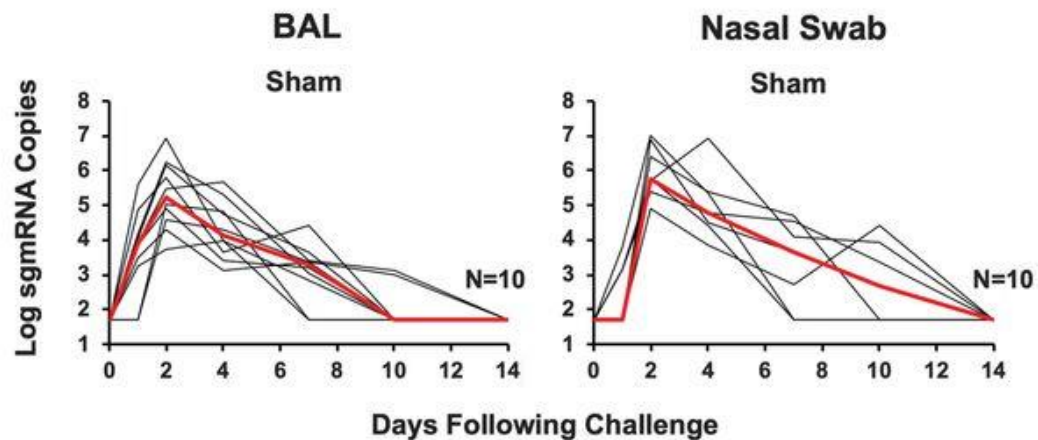




- Immunity acquired through initial infection protects against future challenge in rhesus macaques

- Generate DNA vaccines expressing different versions of spike protein





- Vaccine Dose: 5mg IM
- Challenge dose: 1.1×10^4 PFU

Article

Single-shot Ad26 vaccine protects against SARS-CoV-2 in rhesus macaques

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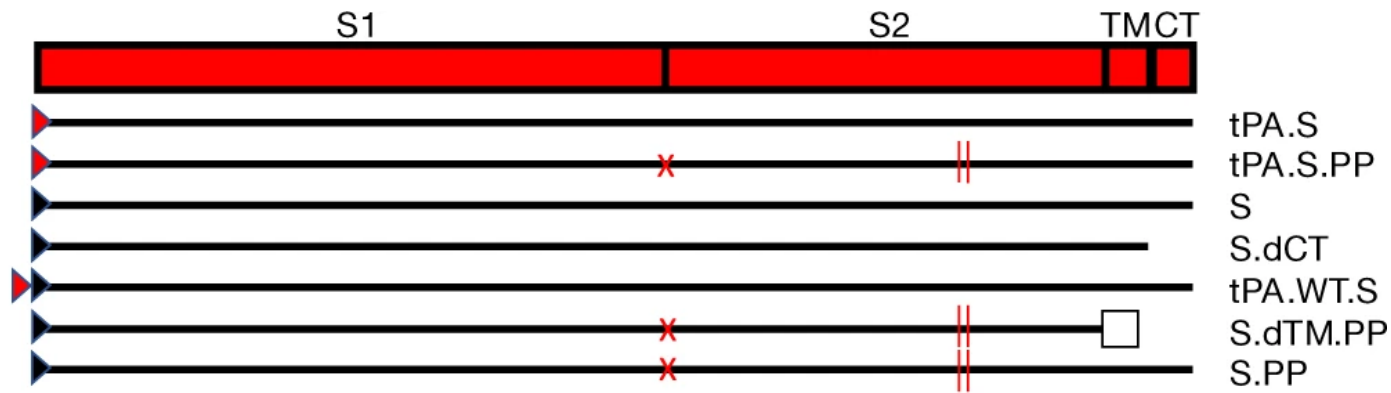


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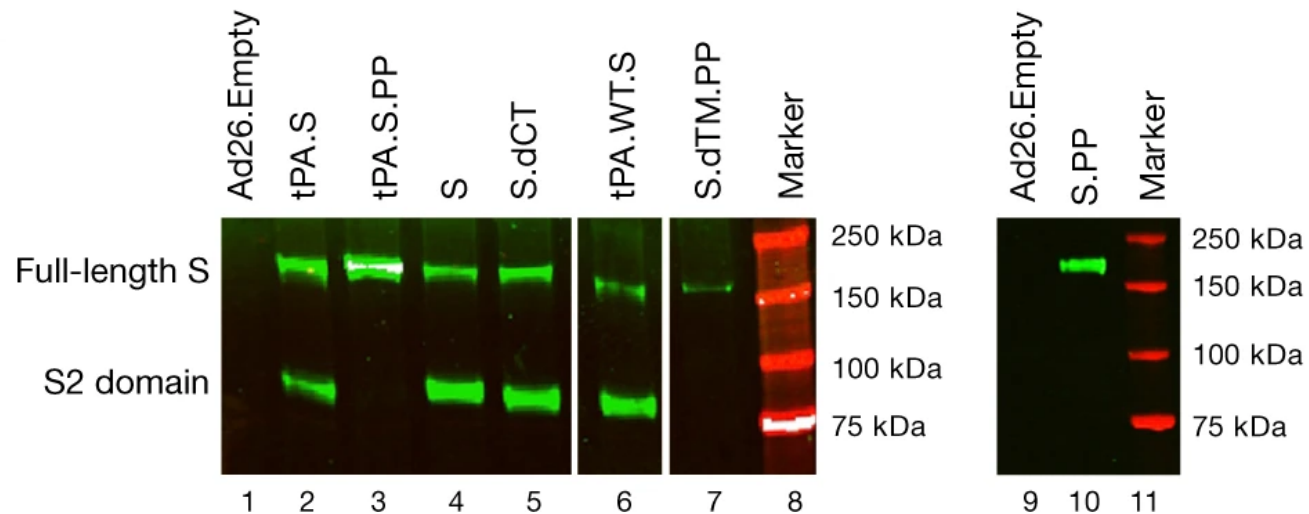
Noe B. Mercado^{1,10}, Roland Zahn^{2,10}, Frank Wegmann^{2,10}, Carolin Loos^{3,4,10}, Abishek Chandrashekar^{1,10}, Jingyou Yu^{1,10}, Jinyan Liu^{1,10}, Lauren Peter^{1,10}, Katherine McMahan^{1,10}, Lisa H. Tostanoski^{1,10}, Xuan He^{1,10}, David R. Martinez^{5,10}, Lucy Rutten², Rinke Bos², Danielle van Manen², Jort Vellinga², Jerome Custers², Johannes P. Langedijk², Ted Kwaks², Mark J. G. Bakkers², David Zuijdgeest², Sietske K. Rosendahl Huber², Caroline Atyeo^{3,6}, Stephanie Fischinger^{3,6}, John S. Burke³, Jared Feldman^{3,6}, Blake M. Hauser^{3,6}, Timothy M. Caradonna^{3,6}, Esther A. Bondzie¹, Gabriel Dagotto^{1,6}, Makda S. Gebre^{1,6}, Emily Hoffman¹, Catherine Jacob-Dolan^{1,6}, Marinela Kirilova¹, Zhenfeng Li¹, Zijin Lin¹, Shant H. Mahrokhian¹, Lori F. Maxfield¹, Felix Nampanya¹, Ramya Nityanandam¹, Joseph P. Nkolola¹, Shivani Patel¹, John D. Ventura¹, Kaylee Verrington¹, Huahua Wan¹, Laurent Pessaint⁷, Alex Van Ry⁷, Kelvin Blade⁷, Amanda Strasbaugh⁷, Mehtap Cabus⁷, Renita Brown⁷, Anthony Cook⁷, Serge Zouantchangadou⁷, Elyse Teow⁷, Hanne Andersen⁷, Mark G. Lewis⁷, Yongfei Cai⁸, Bing Chen^{8,9}, Aaron G. Schmidt^{3,6,9}, R. Keith Reeves¹, Ralph S. Baric⁵, Douglas A. Lauffenburger⁴, Galit Alter^{3,9}, Paul Stoffels², Mathai Mammen², Johan Van Hoof², Hanneke Schuitemaker^{2,11} & Dan H. Barouch^{1,3,6,9,11}✉

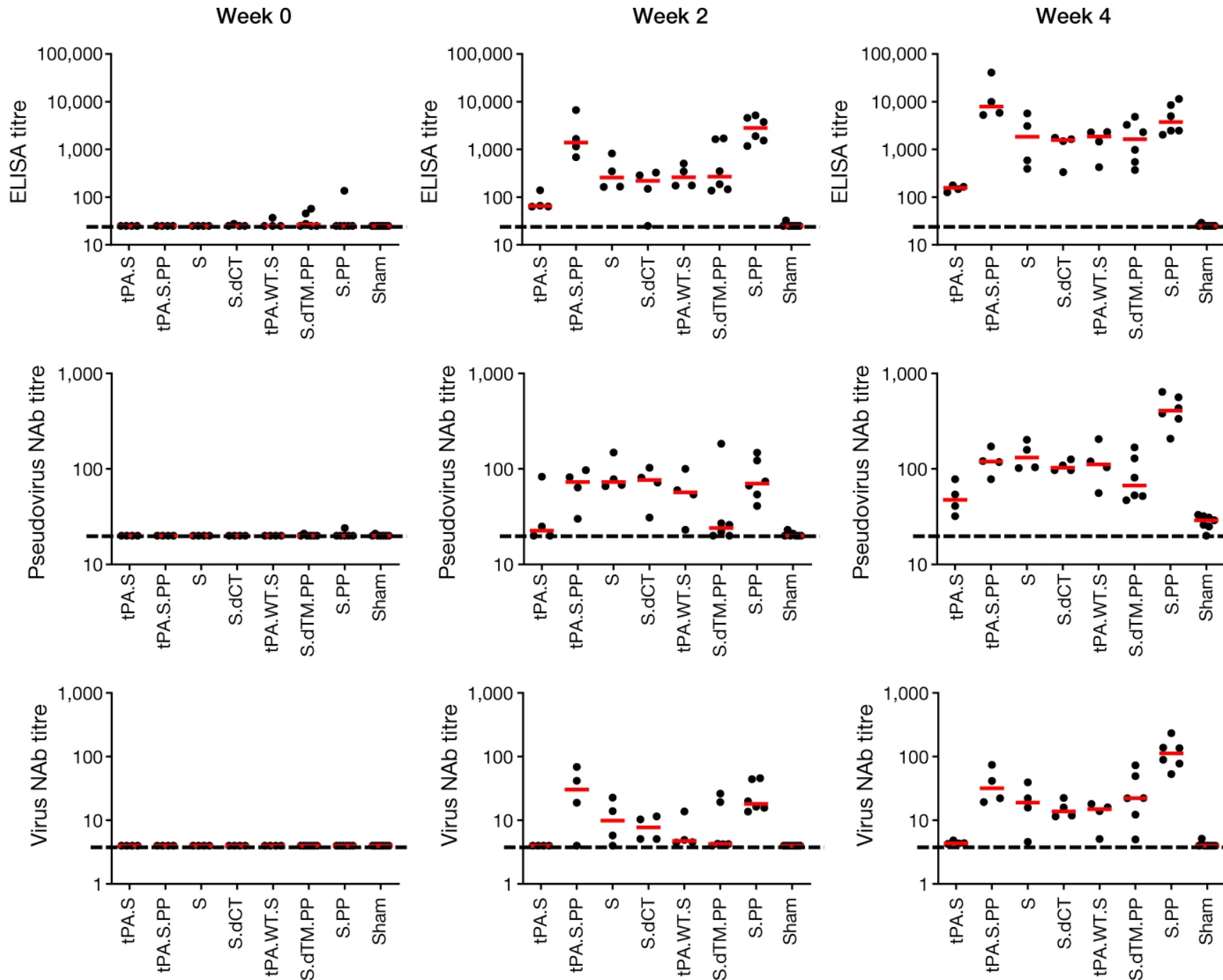


Adenovirus vector based SARS-CoV-2 Vaccine



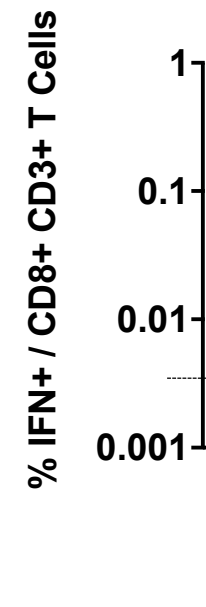
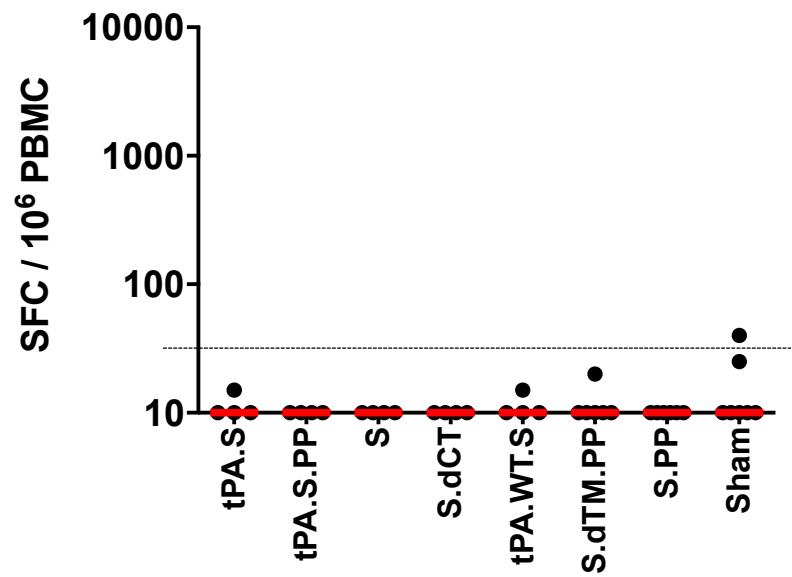
- Seven vaccines were designed in collaboration with Janssen (Johnson & Johnson)
- Recombinant Adenovirus Serotype 26 as delivery platform
- Immunized rhesus monkeys, then challenge with SARS-CoV-2



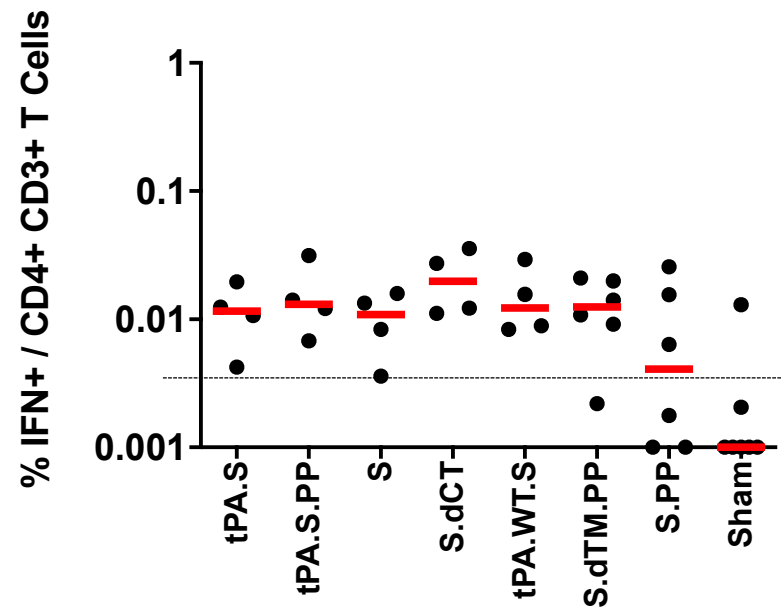
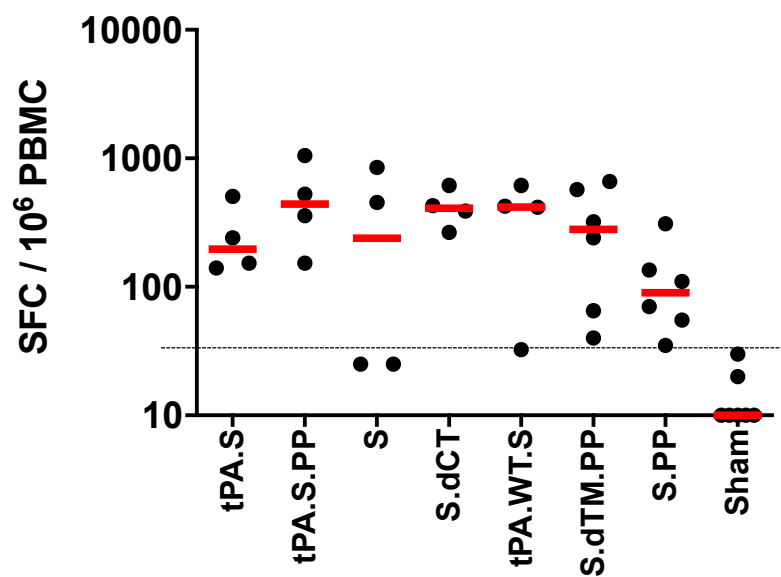


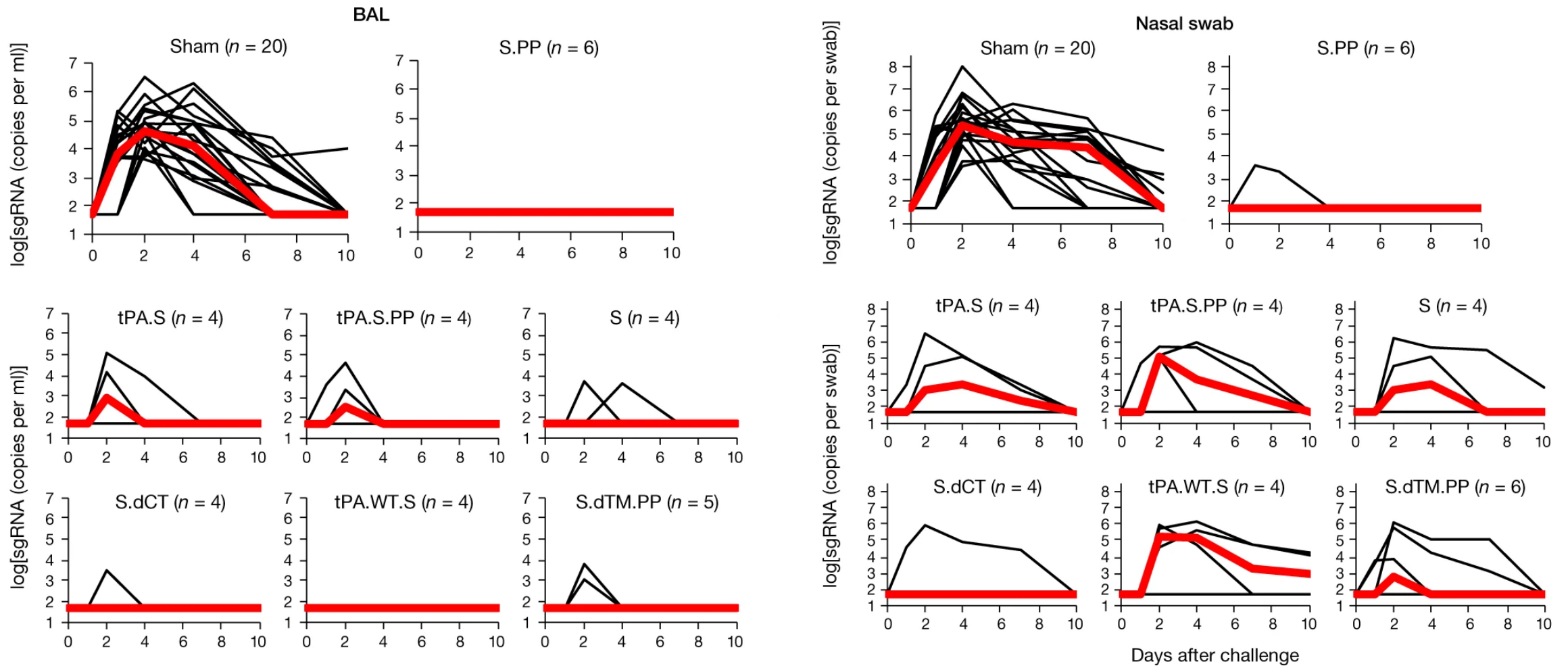
- Vaccine candidates elicited high levels of binding and neutralizing antibody titers

Week 0



Week 4





- Full protection in the lower respiratory tract and near full protection in the upper respiratory tract



Comparison of Subgenomic and Total RNA in SARS-CoV-2 Challenged Rhesus Macaques

Gabriel Dagotto, Noe B. Mercado, David R. Martinez, Yixuan J. Hou, Joseph P. Nkolola, Robert H. Camahan, James E. Crowe Jr, Ralph S. Baric, Dan H. Barouch

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Article Info & Metrics PDF

ABSTRACT

Respiratory virus challenge studies involve administration of the challenge virus and sampling to assess for protection from the same anatomical locations. It can therefore be difficult to differentiate actively replicating virus from input challenge virus. For SARS-CoV-2, specific monitoring of actively replicating virus is critical to investigate the protective and therapeutic efficacy of vaccines, monoclonal antibodies, and antiviral drugs. We developed a SARS-CoV-2 subgenomic RNA (sgRNA) RT-PCR assay to differentiate productive infection from inactivated or neutralized virus. Subgenomic RNAs are generated after cell entry and are poorly incorporate into mature virions, and thus may provide a marker for actively replicating virus. We show envelope (E) sgRNA was degraded by RNase in infected cell lysates, while genomic RNA (gRNA) was protected, presumably due to packaging into virions. To investigate the capacity of the sgRNA assay to distinguish input challenge virus from actively replicating virus *in vivo*, we compared the E sgRNA assay to a standard nucleoprotein (N) or E total RNA assay in convalescent rhesus macaques and in antibody-treated rhesus macaques after experimental

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Correlates of protection against SARS-CoV-2 in rhesus macaques

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Recent studies have reported the protective efficacy of both natural¹ and vaccine-induced^{2–7} immunity against challenge with severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in rhesus macaques. However, the importance of humoral and cellular immunity for protection against infection with SARS-CoV-2 remains to be determined. Here we show that the adoptive transfer of purified IgG from convalescent rhesus macaques (*Macaca mulatta*) protects naive recipient macaques against challenge with SARS-CoV-2 in a dose-dependent fashion. Depletion of CD8⁺ T cells in convalescent macaques partially abrogated the protective efficacy of natural immunity against rechallenge with SARS-CoV-2, which suggests a role for cellular immunity in the context of waning or subprotective antibody titres. These data demonstrate that relatively low antibody titres are sufficient for protection against SARS-CoV-2 in rhesus macaques, and that cellular immune responses may contribute to protection if antibody responses are suboptimal. We also show that higher antibody titres are required for treatment of SARS-CoV-2 infection in macaques. These findings have implications for the development of SARS-CoV-2 vaccines and immune-based therapeutic agents.

Abstract

Objectives To determine the feasibility and safety of ultrasound-guided minimally invasive autopsy in COVID-19 patients. **Methods** 60 patients who expired between 04/22/2020–05/06/2020 due to COVID-19 were considered for inclusion in the study, based on availability of study staff. Minimally invasive ultrasound-guided autopsy was performed with 14G core biopsies through a 13G coaxial needle. The protocol required 20 cores of the liver, 30 of lung, 12 of spleen, 20 of heart, 20 of kidney, 4 of breast, 4 of testis, 2 of skeletal muscle, and 4 of fat with total of 112 cores per patient. Quality of the samples was evaluated by number, size, histology, immunohistochemistry, and *in situ* hybridization for COVID-19 and PCR-measured viral loads for SARS-CoV-2. **Results** Five (5/60, 8%) patients were included. All approached families gave their consent for the minimally invasive autopsy. All organs for biopsy were successfully targeted with ultrasound guidance obtaining all required samples, apart from 2 patients where renal samples were not obtained due to atrophic kidneys. The number, size, and weight of the tissue cores met expectation of the research group and tissue histology quality was excellent. Pathology findings were concordant with previously reported autopsy findings for COVID-19. Highest SARS-CoV-2 viral load was detected in the lung. Liver

Article

Potently neutralizing and protective human antibodies against SARS-CoV-2

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The ongoing pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), which is caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), is a major threat to global health¹ and the medical countermeasures available so far are limited^{2,3}. Moreover, we currently lack a thorough understanding of the mechanisms of humoral immunity to SARS-CoV-2⁴. Here we analyse a large panel of human monoclonal antibodies that target the spike (S) glycoprotein⁵, and identify several that exhibit potent neutralizing activity and fully block the receptor-binding domain of the S protein (S_{mbd}) from interacting with human angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2). Using competition-binding, structural and functional studies, we show that the monoclonal antibodies can be clustered into classes that recognize distinct epitopes on the S_{mbd}, as well as distinct conformational states of the S trimer. Two potently neutralizing monoclonal antibodies, COV2-2196 and COV2-2130, which recognize non-overlapping sites, bound simultaneously to the S protein and neutralized wild-type SARS-CoV-2 virus in a synergistic manner. In two mouse models of SARS-CoV-2 infection, passive transfer of COV2-2196, COV2-2130 or a combination of both of these antibodies protected mice from weight loss and reduced the viral burden and levels of inflammation in the lungs. In addition, passive transfer of either of two of the most potent ACE2-blocking monoclonal antibodies (COV2-2196 or COV2-2381) as monotherapy protected rhesus macaques from SARS-CoV-2 infection. These results identify protective epitopes on the S_{mbd} and provide a structure-based framework for rational vaccine design and the selection of robust immunotherapeutic agents.

LETTERS

https://doi.org/10.1038/s41591-020-1070-6

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OPEN

Ad26 vaccine protects against SARS-CoV-2 severe clinical disease in hamsters

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navirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in humans is often a ally mild illness, but some individuals develop severe sepsia, respiratory failure and death^{1–4}. Studies of severe respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in hamsters^{5–7} and nonhuman primates^{8–10} have rally reported mild clinical disease, and preclinical i-CoV-2 vaccine studies have demonstrated reduction of replication in the upper and lower respiratory tracts in human primates^{10–13}. Here we show that high-dose intranasal SARS-CoV-2 infection in hamsters results in severe clinical sepsia, including high levels of virus replication in tissues, severe pneumonia, weight loss and mortality in a subset of animals. A single immunization with an adenovirus serotype 26 (Ad26)-based vaccine expressing a stabilized SARS-CoV-2 receptor-binding and neutralizing antibody protected against SARS-CoV-2-induced weight loss, pneumonia and mortality. These data demonstrate a vaccine protection against SARS-CoV-2 clinical disease. This model should prove useful for preclinical studies of SARS-CoV-2 vaccines, therapeutics and pathogenesis.

SARS-CoV-2 can infect nonhuman primates^{8–10}, hamsters^{5–7}, ferrets¹⁴, hACE2 transgenic mice^{15–18} and other species¹⁶, but clinical disease in these models has generally been mild. A severe noninfectious model would be useful for preclinical evaluation of SARS-CoV-2 vaccines and other countermeasures, because SARS-CoV-2 infection in humans can lead to severe clinical disease, respiratory failure and mortality^{1–4}. We assessed the clinical and virologic characteristics of high-dose SARS-CoV-2 infection in hamsters and evaluate the protective efficacy of an adenovirus serotype 26 (Ad26)

vector-based vaccine¹⁹ encoding a stabilized SARS-CoV-2 spike (S) in this stringent model.

We inoculated 20 Syrian golden hamsters (10–12 weeks old) with 5 × 10⁶ 50% tissue culture infective dose (TCID₅₀) (n = 4; low-dose) or 5 × 10⁷ TCID₅₀ (n = 16; high-dose) SARS-CoV-2 by the intranasal route. In the high-dose group, four animals were necropsied on day 2, four animals were necropsied on day 4 for tissue viral loads and histopathology and the remaining eight animals were followed longitudinally. All remaining animals were necropsied on day 14. In the low-dose group, hamsters lost a median of 14.7% of body weight by day 6 but fully recovered by day 14 (Fig. 1a,b), consistent with previous studies^{20–22}. In the high-dose group, hamsters lost a median of 19.9% of body weight by day 6. Of the eight animals in this group that were followed longitudinally, four met Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee humane euthanasia criteria of more than 20% weight loss and respiratory distress on day 6, and two additional animals met these criteria on day 7. The remaining two animals recovered by day 14. These data demonstrate that high-dose SARS-CoV-2 infection in hamsters led to severe weight loss and partial mortality.

Tissue viral loads were assessed in the four animals that received high-dose SARS-CoV-2 and were necropsied on day 2, the four animals that were necropsied on day 4 and five of six of the animals that met euthanasia criteria on days 6–7 (Fig. 1c). High median tissue viral loads on day 2 of 10^{7.2} RNA copies per gram in lung tissue and 10^{6.5}–10⁸ RNA copies per gram in nares and trachea were observed, with a median of 10^{5.5}–10⁸ RNA copies per gram in heart, gastrointestinal tract, brain, spleen, liver and kidney, indicative of disseminated infection. By days 6–7, tissue viral loads were approximately 2 logs lower, despite continued weight loss.

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Interim Results of a Phase 1–2a Trial of Ad26.COV2.S Covid-19 Vaccine

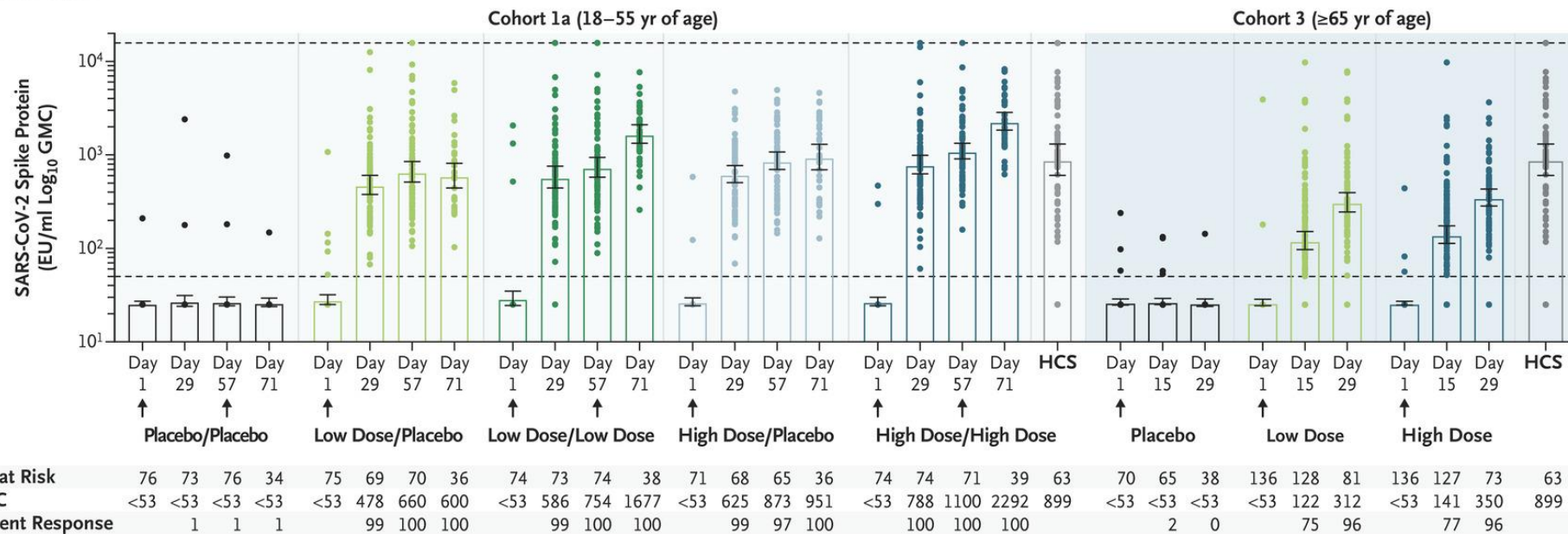
J. Sadoff, M. Le Gars, G. Shukarev, D. Heerwegh, C. Truyers, A.M. de Groot, J. Stoop, S. Tete, W. Van Damme, I. Leroux-Roels, P.-J. Berghmans, M. Kimmel, P. Van Damme, J. de Hoon, W. Smith, K.E. Stephenson, S.C. De Rosa, K.W. Cohen, M.J. McElrath, E. Cormier, G. Scheper, D.H. Barouch, J. Hendriks, F. Struyf, M. Douoguih, J. Van Hoof, and H. Schuitemaker

Table 1. Characteristics of the Participants at Baseline.*

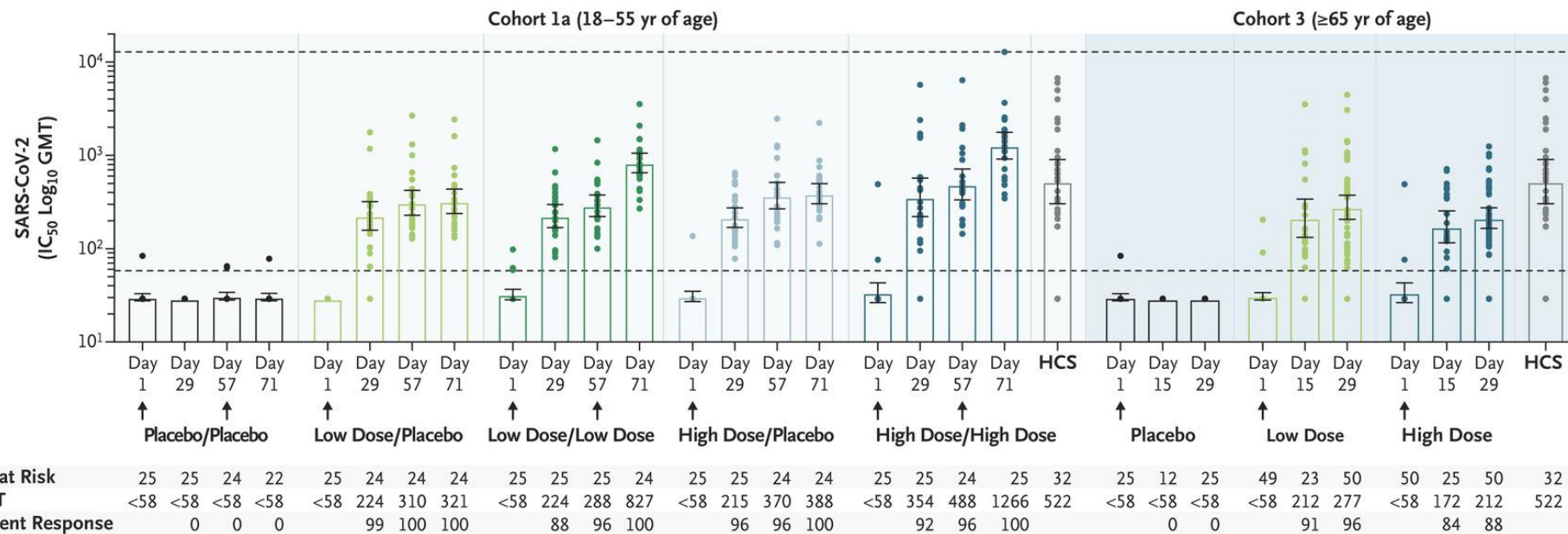
Characteristic	Low-Dose Vaccine Group	High-Dose Vaccine Group	Placebo Group	All Participants
Cohort 1 (ages 18–55 yr)†				
No. of participants	162	158	82	402
Sex — no. (%)				
Male	78 (48)	72 (46)	40 (49)	190 (47)
Female	84 (52)	85 (54)	42 (51)	211 (52)
Nonbinary	0	1 (1)	0	1 (<1)
Age — yr				
Mean	36.1±10.1	34.8±10.3	35.4±10.0	35.4±10.2
Range	18–55	19–55	19–55	18–55
Race or ethnic group — no. (%)‡				
White	149 (92)	145 (92)	70 (85)	364 (91)
Black	4 (2)	7 (4)	9 (11)	20 (5)
Asian	5 (3)	5 (3)	0	10 (2)
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1 (1)	0	0	1 (<1)
American Indian or Alaska Native	3 (2)	0	0	3 (1)
Hispanic or Latino	8 (5)	5 (3)	4 (5)	17 (4)
Multiple	0	1 (1)	0	1 (<1)
Unknown	0	0	3 (4)	3 (1)
Body-mass index§	24.5±3.3	24.6±3.1	24.5±3.0	24.6±3.2
SARS-CoV-2 seropositive — no. (%)¶	3 (2)	2 (1)	2 (2)	7 (2)
Cohort 3 (age ≥65 yr)				
No. of participants	161	161	81	403
Sex — no. (%)				
Male	84 (52)	79 (49)	38 (47)	201 (50)
Female	77 (48)	82 (51)	43 (53)	202 (50)
Age — yr				
Mean	69.6±4.0	70.0±4.2	69.9±3.7	69.8±4.0
Range	65–83	65–88	65–79	65–88
Race or ethnic group — no. (%)				
White	158 (98)	158 (98)	81 (100)	397 (99)
Black	1 (1)	2 (1)	0	3 (1)
American Indian or Alaska Native	1 (1)	0	0	1 (<1)
Hispanic or Latino	1 (1)	2 (1)	3 (4)	6 (1)
Unknown	1 (1)	0	0	1 (<1)
Not reported	0	1 (1)	0	1 (<1)
Body-mass index§	25.3±2.8	25.5±2.7	25.2±3.1	25.4±2.8
SARS-CoV-2 seropositive — no. (%)	1 (1)	2 (1)	1 (1)	4 (1)

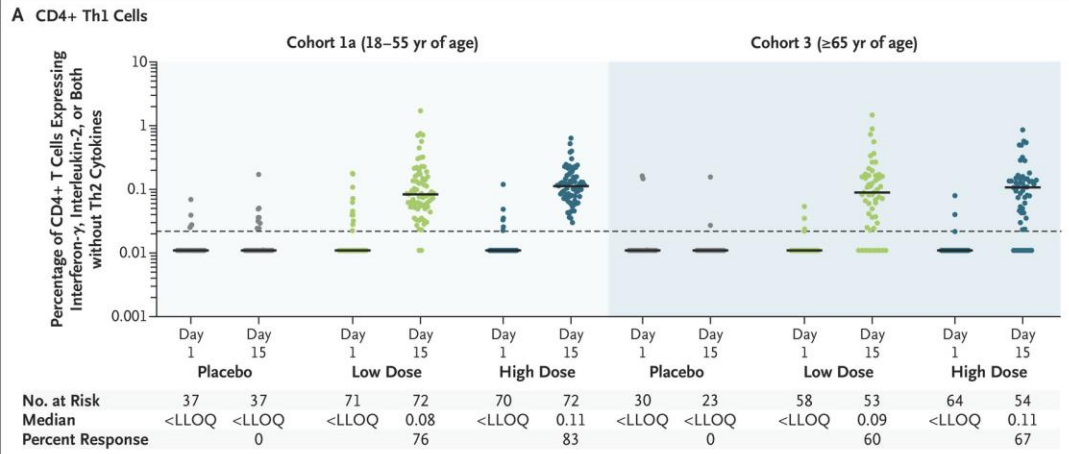
- Low dose= 5×10^{10} viral particles
- High dose= 1×10^{11} viral particles
- Most frequent solicited adverse events were fatigue, headache, myalgia, and injection-site pain
- Systemic adverse event: fever

A ELISA Analysis



B Virus Neutralization Assay





- 83% of participants had detectable CD4+ T cell responses on day 15
- 67% in cohort 3
- CD8+ T cell responses were robust overall but slightly lower in cohort 3

