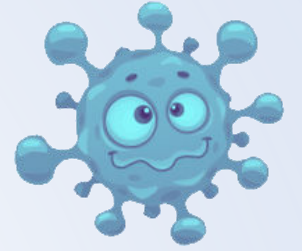


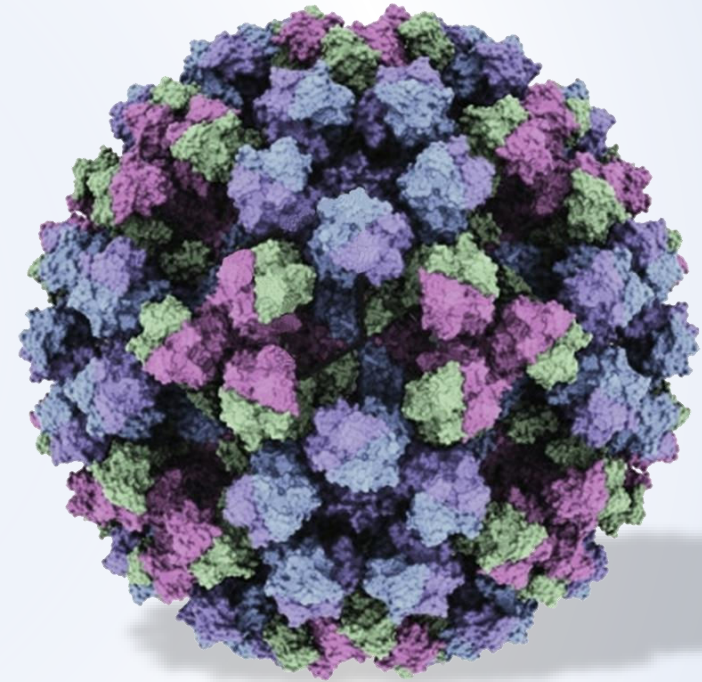


3è Journée Scientifique du Réseau Virus et Greffes
Cité Universitaire Internationale, Paris – January 13, 2025



Norovirus

***a persistent acute infection
– treatment challenges***



Prof. Alexis de ROUGEMONT, MD PhD MSc
National Reference Centre for gastroenteritis viruses
University Hospital Dijon Bourgogne, France
www.cnr-ve.org





Société Française
de Microbiologie

3^e Journée Scientifique du Réseau Virus et Greffes

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The speaker declares no conflict of interest



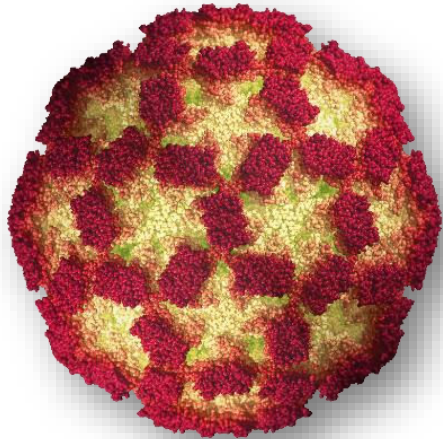
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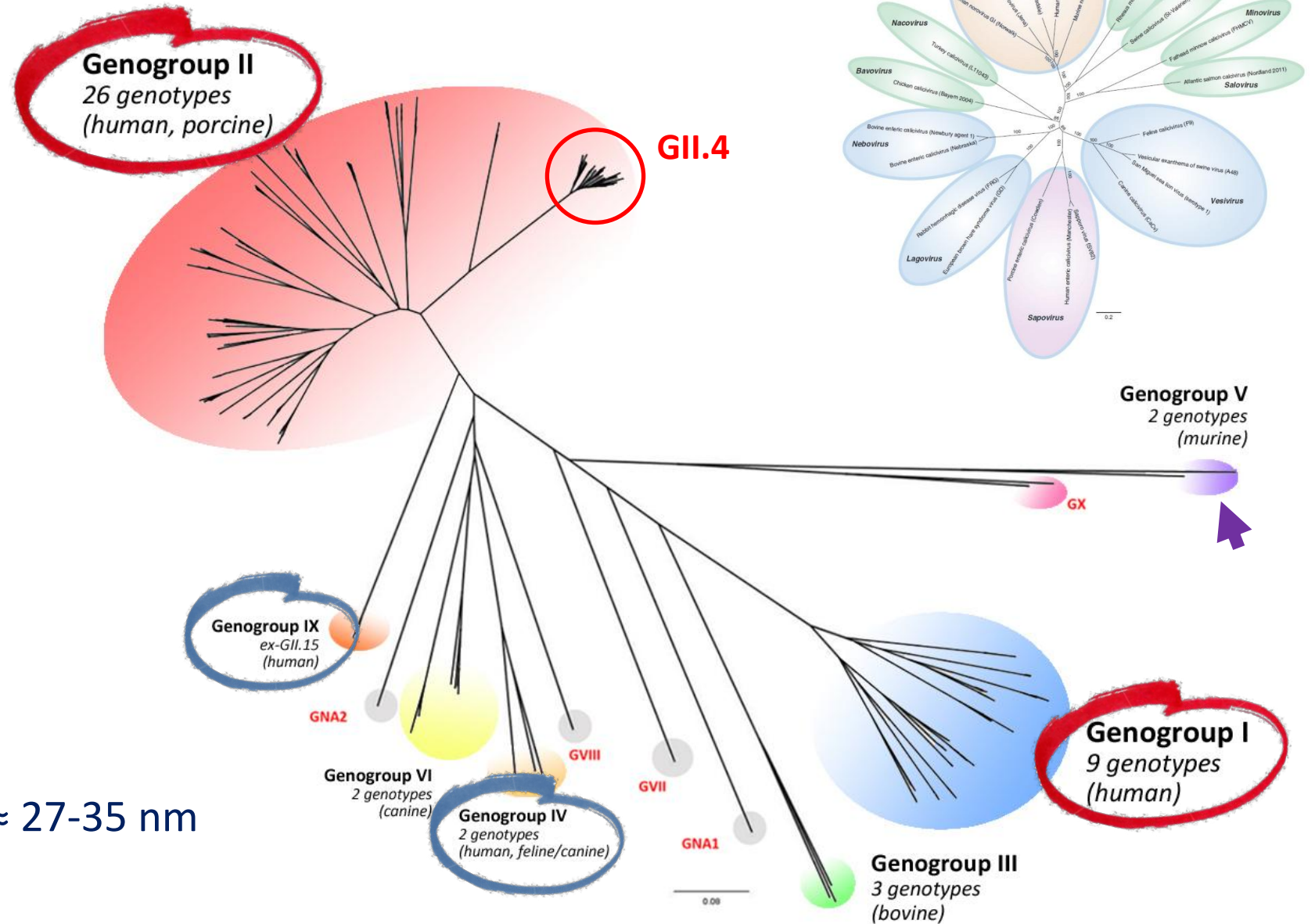
Norovirus

Classification

- *Caliciviridae* family
- *Norovirus* genera
- 10+ genogroups
- human NoVs
= **GI + GII** (+ GIV.1, GIX)



- small nonenveloped virus $\approx 27\text{-}35\text{ nm}$
- ssRNA(+) $\approx 7.5\text{ kb}$ (3 ORFs)
- VP1 capsid proteins = antigens



Epidemiology of norovirus infections

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1st cause of epidemic diarrhea in all age groups / **2nd leading cause of traveler's diarrhea**

- 85-90% of viral diarrheas (after ETEC, aka "turista")
- 31-87% of nosocomial diarrheas
- 10% community cases seen in general practice

2nd cause of sporadic non-bacterial diarrhea in children <5-yo

- 6-30% of outpatient children → **1st cause if rotavirus vaccination policy**
- 8-15% of hospitalized children for AGE

Disease burden

- **number of NoV GE:** **699 million /yr** [489M–1,086B] ← 82% in LMIC
- **number of deaths:** **219,000 /yr** [171K–277K] ← 97% in LMIC
- direct health system cost: \$4.2 billion /yr
- societal cost: \$60.3 billion /yr → children <5-yo account for 2/3
- productivity losses: \$56.2 billion /yr

Characteristics of norovirus outbreaks

Attack rates

– primary:

- grouped case outbreaks: **60%** [23-93%]
- person-to-person: **39%** [31-42%]

– secondary: **4% to 32%**

Median duration of an outbreak

= **7 days** (1 day to 3 months)

Number of infected subjects

= **2 à 2,000 patients**

Norovirus involved in 26% of collective food-borne illnesses (CFBI)

- number of CFBI: 125 million /yr [70M – 251M]
- number of deaths: 35,000 [16-80,000] décès par an
- 59% of clinical CFBI (among all transmitted pathogens)
- 27% of CFBI are due to non-GII.4 NoVs
- 37% of CFBI are due to a mixte infections including GII.4



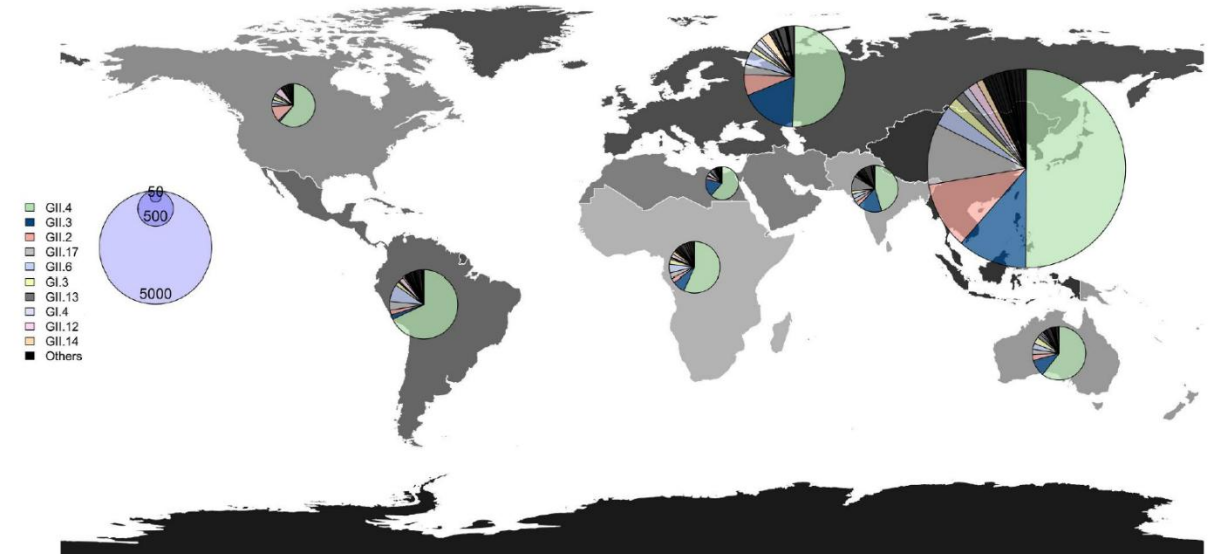
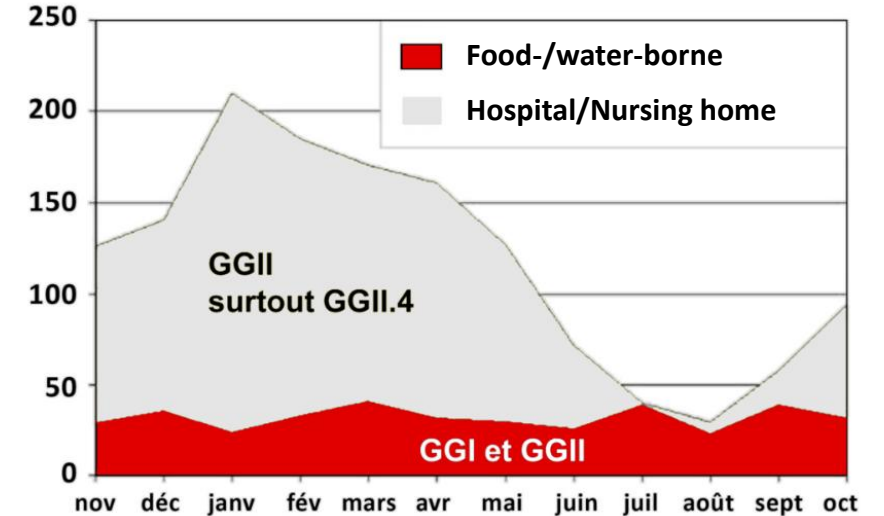
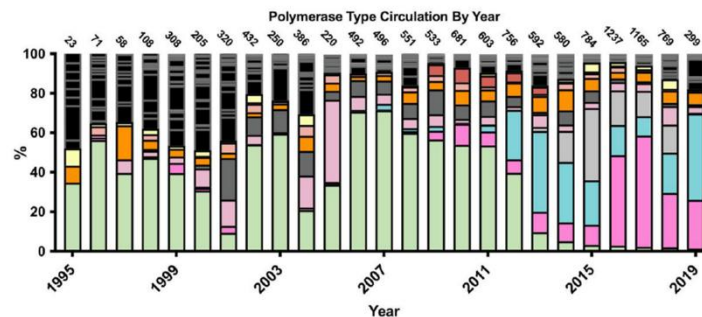
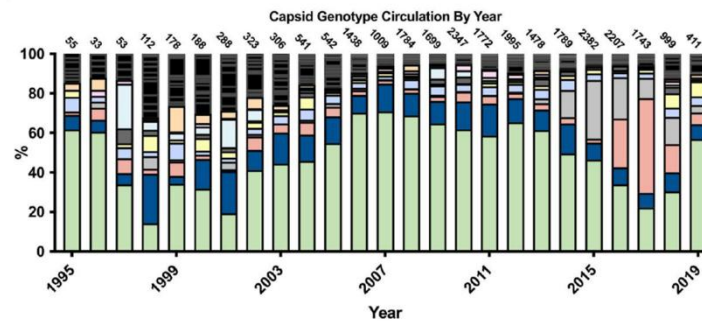
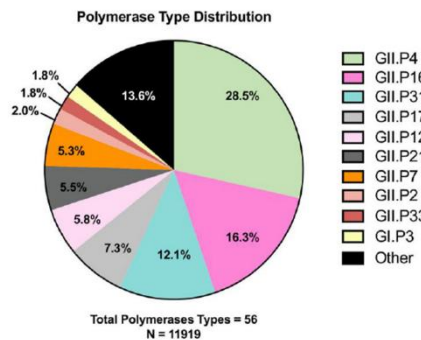
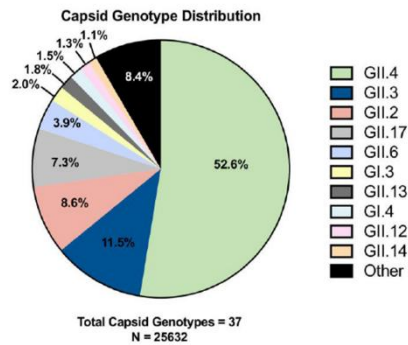
➡ **Codex alimentarius**

Norovirus genotype epidemiology and seasonality

6

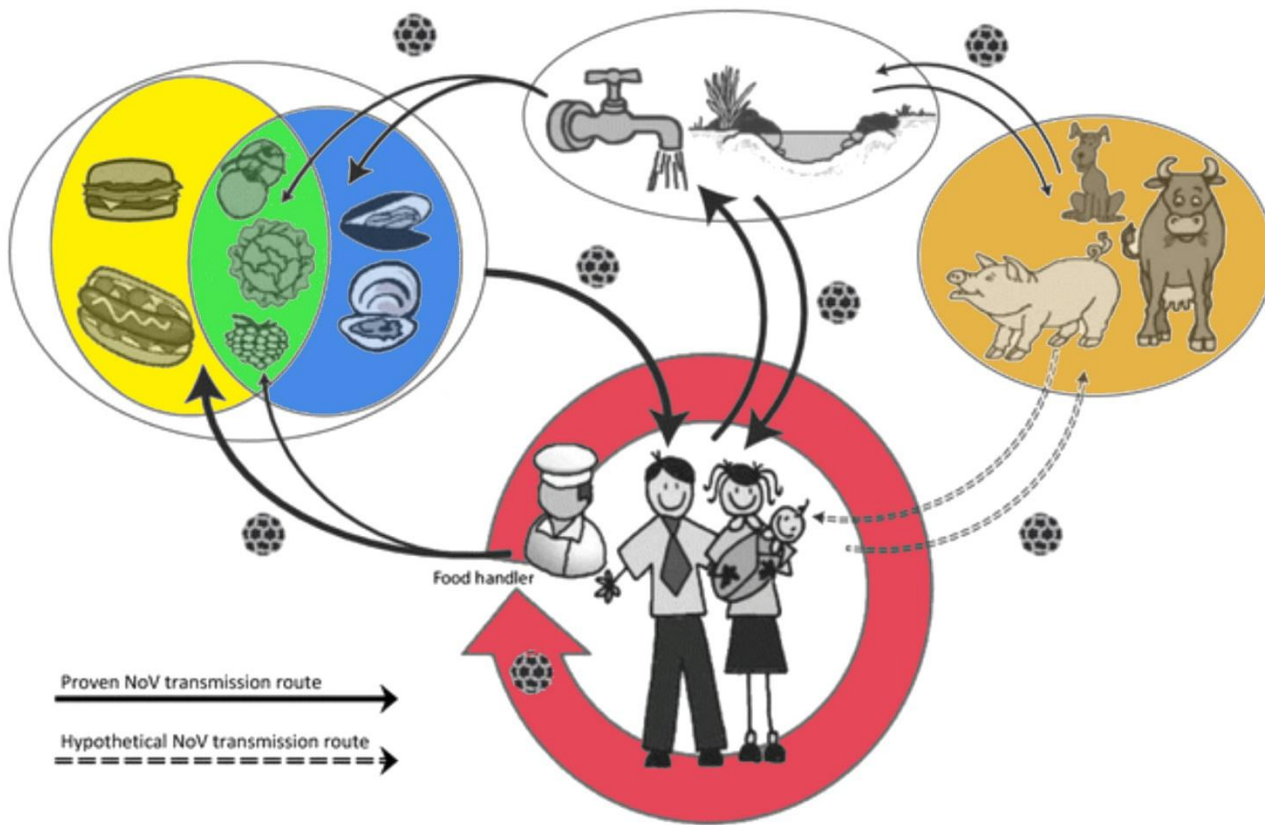
Norovirus infections

- sporadic (human-to-human) $\approx 90\%$
 - winter peak: **norovirus GII.4 +++** = 80-90% of cases
 - prevalence = 12-28% in population
- food-and waterborne outbreaks $\approx 10\%$
 - all year round: GI + GII, all génotypes
 - involved in **26% of all CFB** (59% of clinical CFB)



Transmission by fecal oral route

7

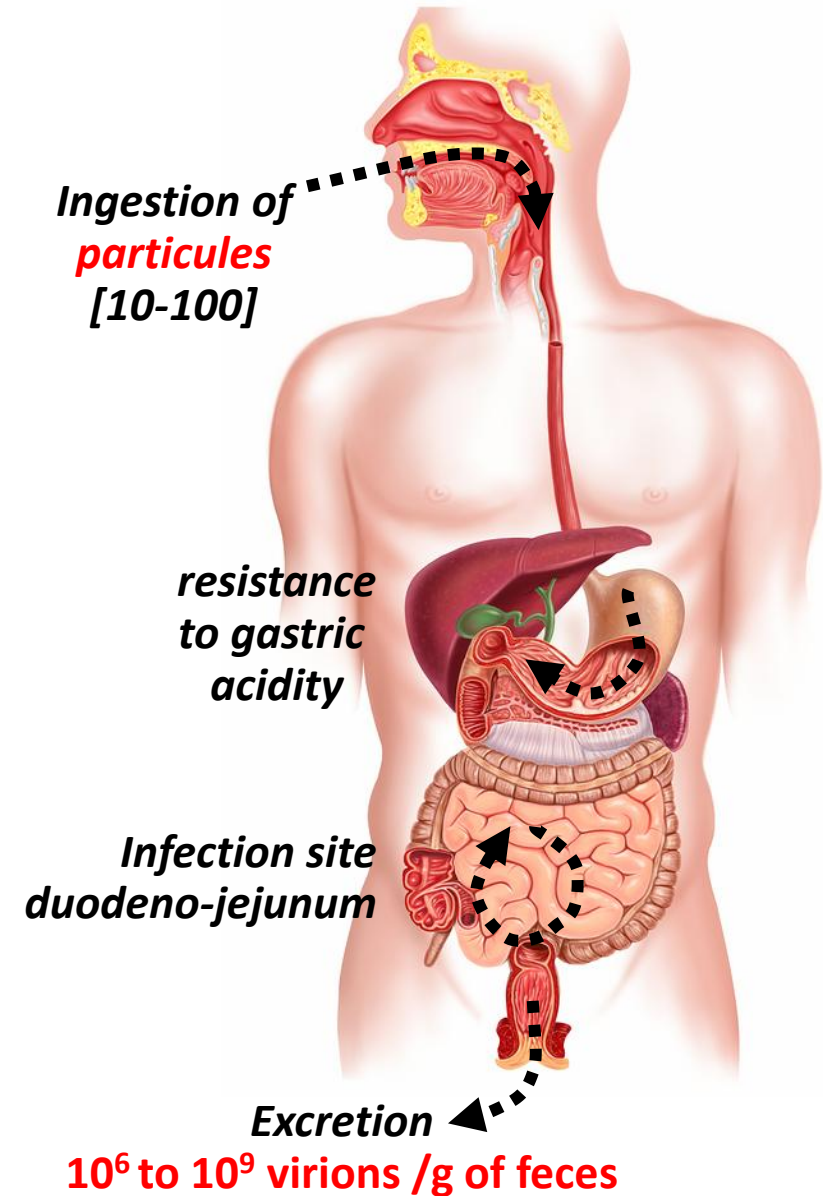


Indirect

environment
food-borne ++
water-borne +

Direct human-to-human

hand-borne +++
contaminated surfaces
airborne (vomit)



Cellular tropism and physiopathology

8

Viral replication sites

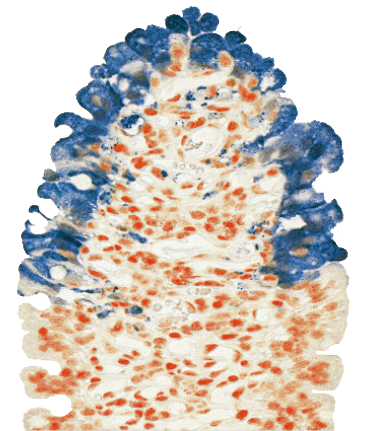
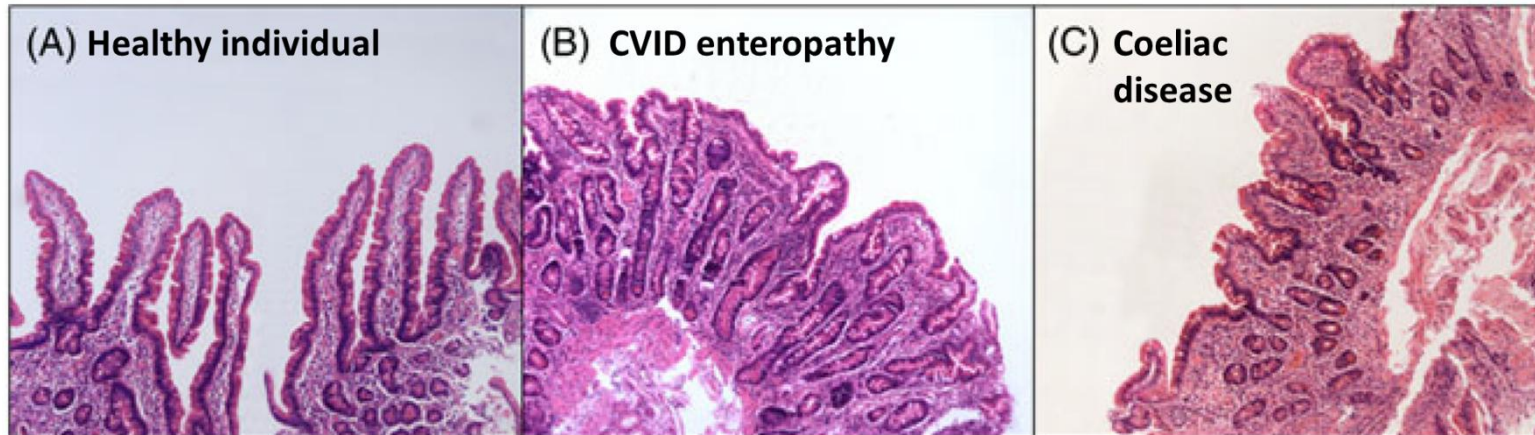
- enterocytes? → organoids
- **Tuft cells** = role in chronicity?

Attachment

- **receptor**: unknown (← lipid raft?)
- **ligands**: **HBGA** ABO / Lewis = saliva and gut
→ genetic resistances: FUT2 = 20% / FUT3 = 5-30%

Dual mechanism diarrhea = *secretory disorders + epithelial barrier dysfunction*

- brush border alteration: ↗ Cl⁻ excretion, disturbed enzymatic activity, malabsorption
- disorganization of tight junctions: increased enterocyte apoptosis, water leakage into lumen



Infected villosity

Virological diagnosis

INDIRECT DIAGNOSIS

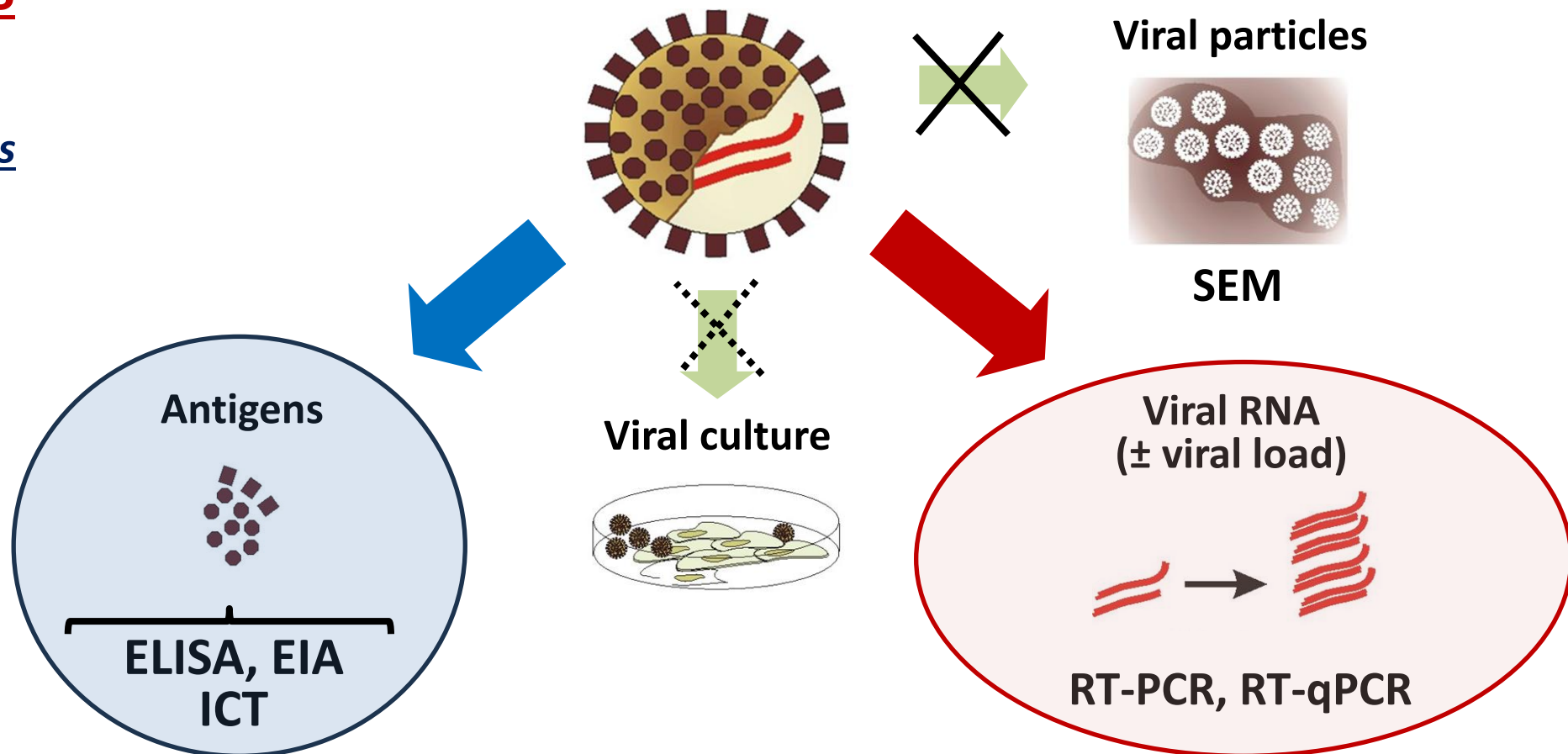
= serology: antibody detection



DIRECT DIAGNOSIS

= detection of

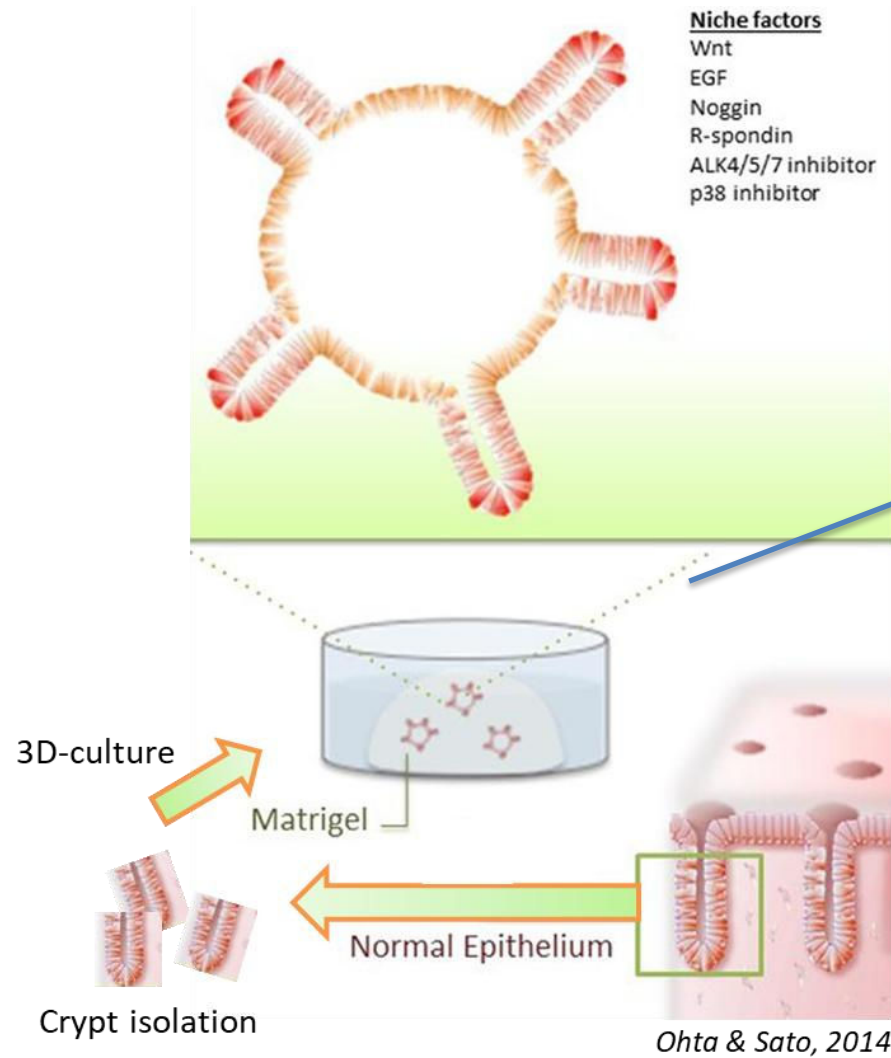
- whole virions
- virus components
- virus genome



Organoids: human intestinal enteroids (HIE)

3D- and 2D-cultures

10

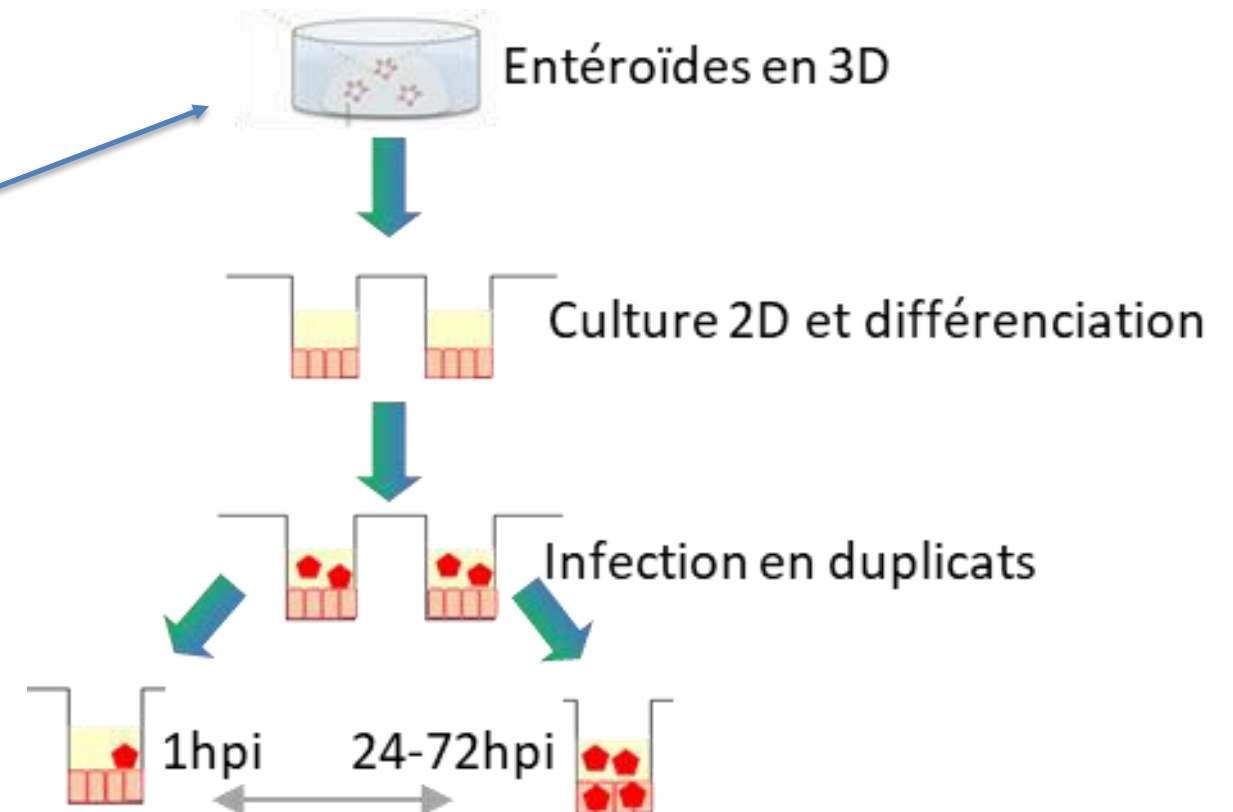


Science

RESEARCH ARTICLES

Replication of human noroviruses in stem cell-derived human enteroids

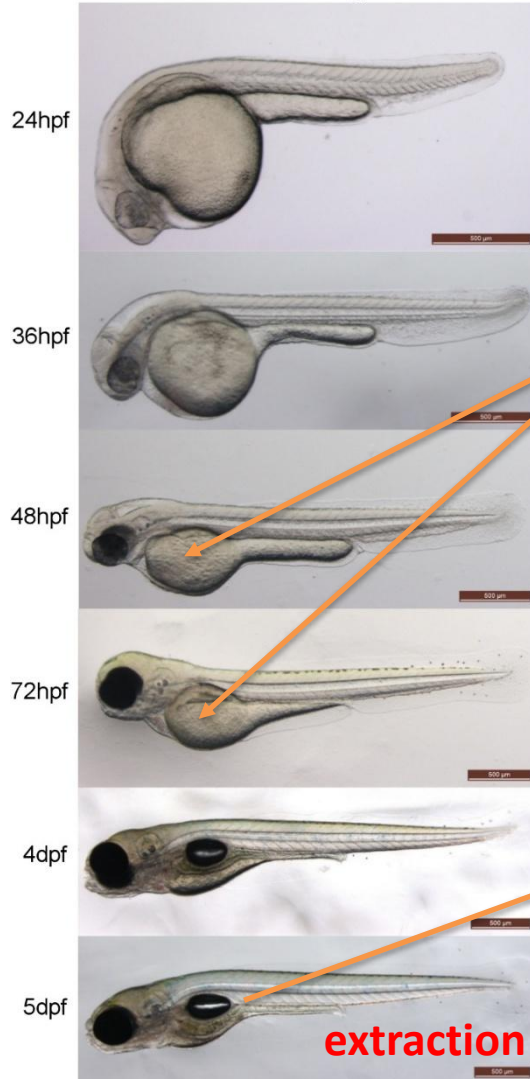
Khalil Ettayebi,^{1*} Sue E. Crawford,^{1*} Kosuke Murakami,^{1*} James R. Broughman,¹ Umesh Karandikar,¹ Victoria R. Tenge,¹ Frederick H. Neill,¹ Sarah E. Blutt,¹ Xi-Lei Zeng,¹ Lin Qu,¹ Baijun Kou,¹ Antone R. Opekun,^{2,3,4} Douglas Burrin,^{3,4} David Y. Graham,^{1,2,5} Sasirekha Ramani,¹ Robert L. Atmar,^{1,2} Mary K. Estes^{1,2†}



Norovirus culture in Zebra fish larvae

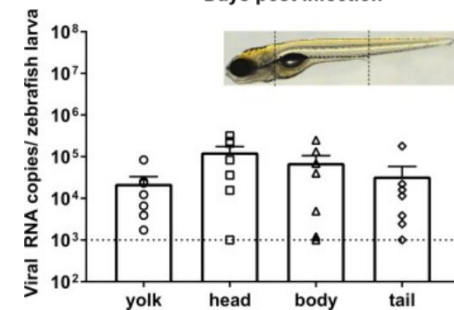
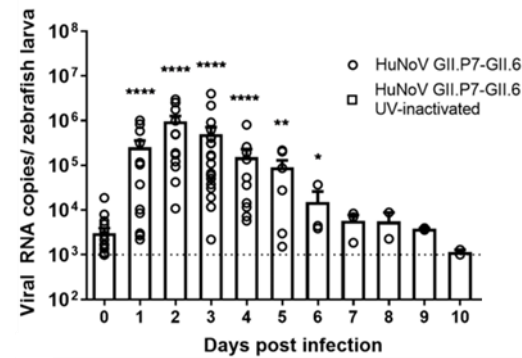
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Nacre wild type



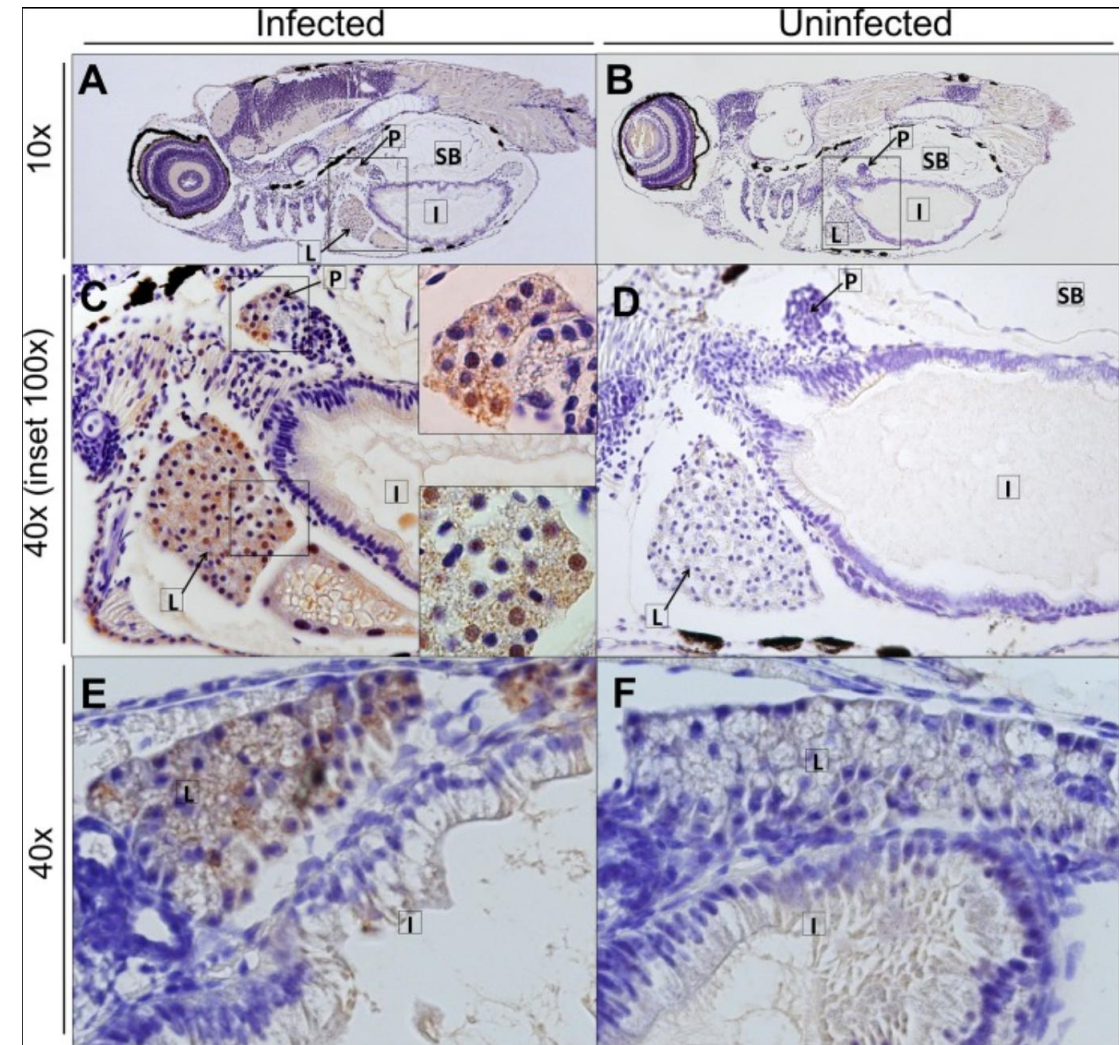
injection

extraction



A robust human norovirus replication model in zebrafish larvae

Jana Van Dycke¹, Anneli Ny², Nádia Conceição-Neto^{3*}, Jan Maes², Myra Hosmillo⁴, Arno Cuvry¹, Ian Goodfellow⁴, Tatiane C. Nogueira¹, Erik Verbeken⁵, Jelle Matthijnsens³, Peter de Witte^{2*}, Johan Neyts^{1,6*}, Joana Rocha-Pereira^{1*}



Clinical features

Mild acute gastroenteritis

- many pauci- or **asymptomatic cases (30%)**
- tends to be more severe at the extremes of life
= potentially severe **dehydration**

Typical symptoms

nausea	79%
vomiting	69%
diarrhea	66%
fever	37%
chills	32%
abdominal cramps	30%
myalgia	26%
headaches	22%
sore throats	18%



- ➔ **incubation time = 1-2 days**
- symptom duration = 1-3 days**
- excretion duration = 3-4 weeks**

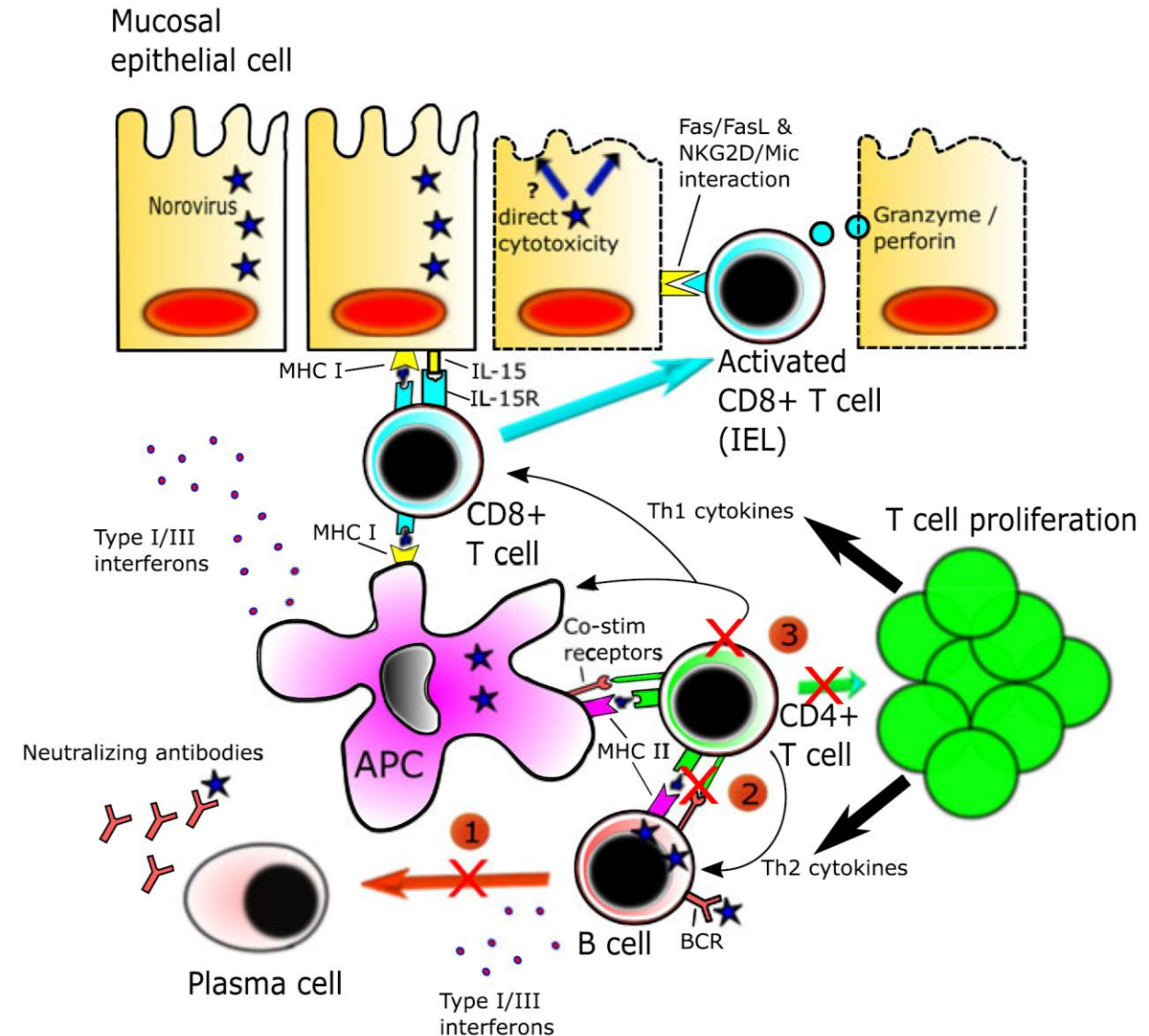


Putative model of the immune response to norovirus

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Immune response in immunocompetent

- **NoV infects APC, B cells or epithelial cells**
→ direct cytotoxicity + INF types I/III release
- **NoV Ag presentation**
→ MHC-I to CD8+ T cells / MHC-II to CD4+ T cells
- epithelial IL-15 may activate further T cells
- **CD8+ T cells + NK induce apoptosis**
→ granzyme and perforin + Fas/Fas ligand binding
- **CD4+ T cells proliferate and release cytokines**
→ ↑ APC activity, CD8+ T cell cytotoxicity, and B cells/plasmacytes Ab production



Host defense

Adaptive immune response

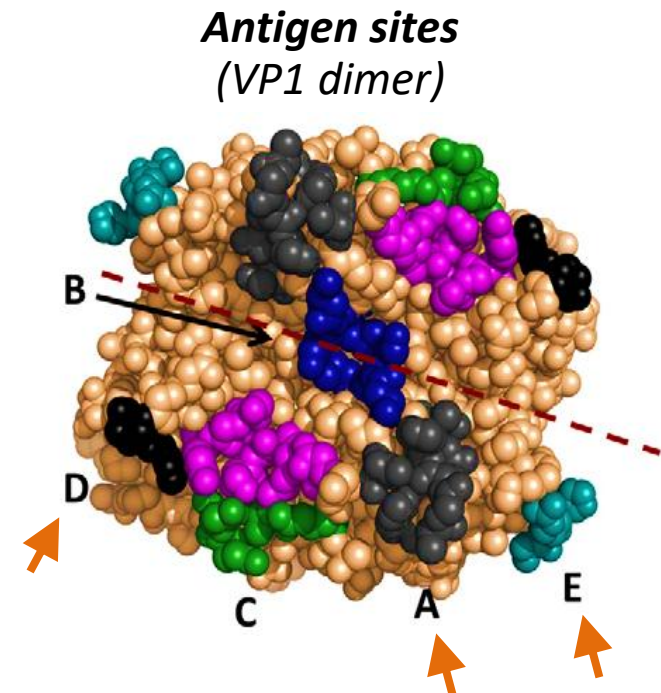
- **short-term**: from a few months to a few years (same strain)
homotypic response
 - serum IgG levels not correlated with resistance to infection
 - **local and long-term**: 3 to 9 years
related to previous infections
- } = expose to new infections
- } = rapid and early response
→ secretory IgA

Cellular immune response

- Th1 type mainly = \nearrow IFN- γ , \nearrow IL-2
- homologous et heterologous
- **CD4⁺ et CD8⁺ T cells required for virus clearance**

Innate immune response

- role of TLR, IFN- α ...



Chronic norovirus infections in the immunocompromised

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Clinical context

- **primary** immunodepression: CVID, SCID, agammaglobulinemia...
- **secondary** immunodepression: solid transplants, hematopoietic transplants (HSCT), chemotherapy, HIV...

Dysfunction in immune deficiency

- B cell differentiation / plasmocyte Ab production
- T and B cell interactions
- CD4+ T cell cytokine release and proliferation
- **NoV clearance failure + epithelial damage by CD8+ cytotoxic T cells**

Chronic diarrhea

- virus detection: **feces ± blood**
- long duration: **few months to up to 3 years** (likely intermittent)

Infection outcomes

- graft loss, intestinal pneumatosis, dehydration
- degraded quality of life
- **death**

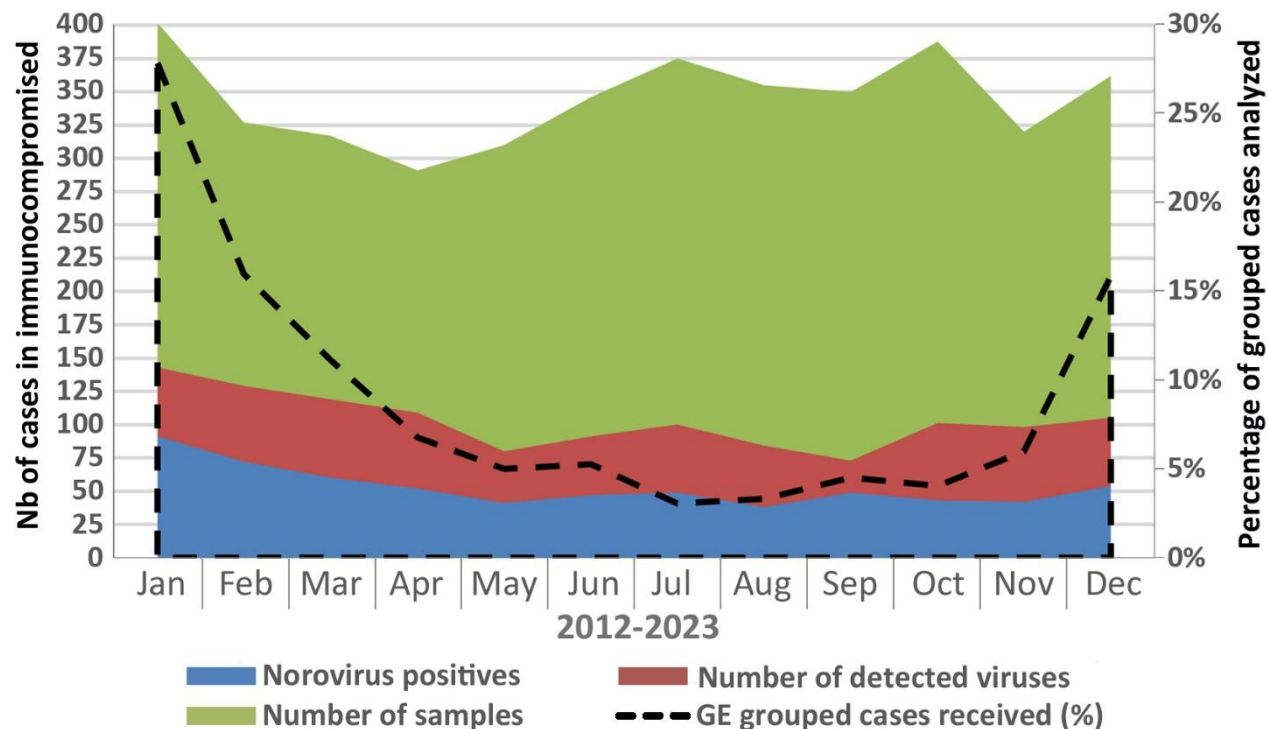


Sporadic cases in immunocompromised patients

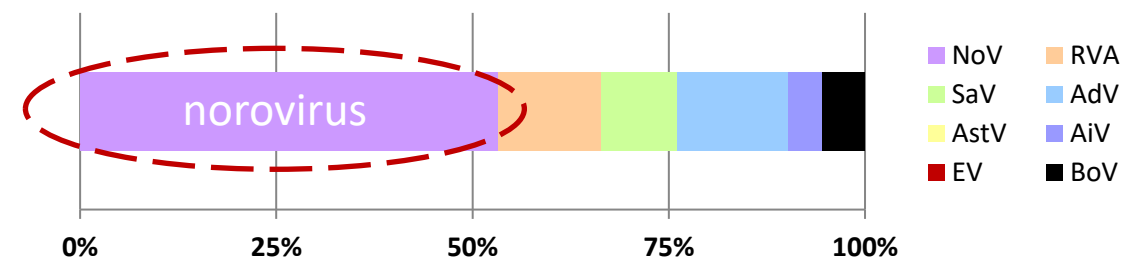
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*From 2012 to 2023
4143 samples analyzed*



>50% of positive cases are caused by norovirus (95% of GIs)



1232 (29.7%) positives for 1 virus
638 (51.8%) positives for norovirus

History of attempts to treat chronic norovirus infections Brown et al., 2017¹⁷

Lactose-free diet	no effect (<i>HIV</i>)	Wingfield (2010)
Gluten-free diet	no effect (<i>CVID enteropathy</i>)	Woodward (2015)
Breast milk	no effect (<i>heart transplants, CVID</i>)	Nilsson (2003); Van de Ven (2011)
Enteral immunoglobulins	no effect (<i>heart transplants, CVID</i>) decrease in stool frequency (<i>kidney/pancreas/intestine transplants, CVID, agammaglobulinemia</i>) successful clearance (<i>lung transplants, CVID</i>)	Nilsson (2003); Van de Ven (2011); Echenique (2016); Frange (2012) Florescu (2008, 2011); Ebdrup (2011) Chagla (2013); Gairard-Dory (2014); Duraisingham (2015)
IV immunoglobulins	no effect / few decrease in stool frequency (<i>heart/pancreas transpl., HIV, CVID, inherited immunodeficiency</i>)	Nilsson (2003); Wingfield (2010); Van de Ven (2011) Duraisingham (2015); Echenique (2016)
Interleukin-2 (IL-2)	no effect (<i>HIV</i>)	Wingfield (2010)
Nitazoxanide	no effect (<i>pancreas transplant, CVID, post-HSCT</i>) successful clearance (<i>pre- and post-HSCT</i>)	Duraisingham(2015); Echenique (2016) Siddiq (2011); Morris (2015)
Ribavirin ±IFNα	no effect (<i>CVID</i>) successful clearance (<i>CVID enteropathy</i>)	Van de Ven (2011); Duraisingham (2015); Woodward (2015) Woodward (2015)
Immunosuppressive drugs	no effect (<i>allogenic HSCT, CVID enteropathy, CVID</i>) (<i>steroids, anti-TNFα, azathioprine</i>) successful clearance (<i>heart/lung transplants, post-HCST</i>) (<i>sirolimus, everolimus</i>)	Roddie (2009); Van de Ven (2011); Woodward (2015) Boillat Blanco (2011); Engelen (2011)
Antibiotics	no effect (<i>renal transplant, CVID</i>)	Roos-Weil (2011); Duraisingham (2015)

Effective drugs on norovirus replication?

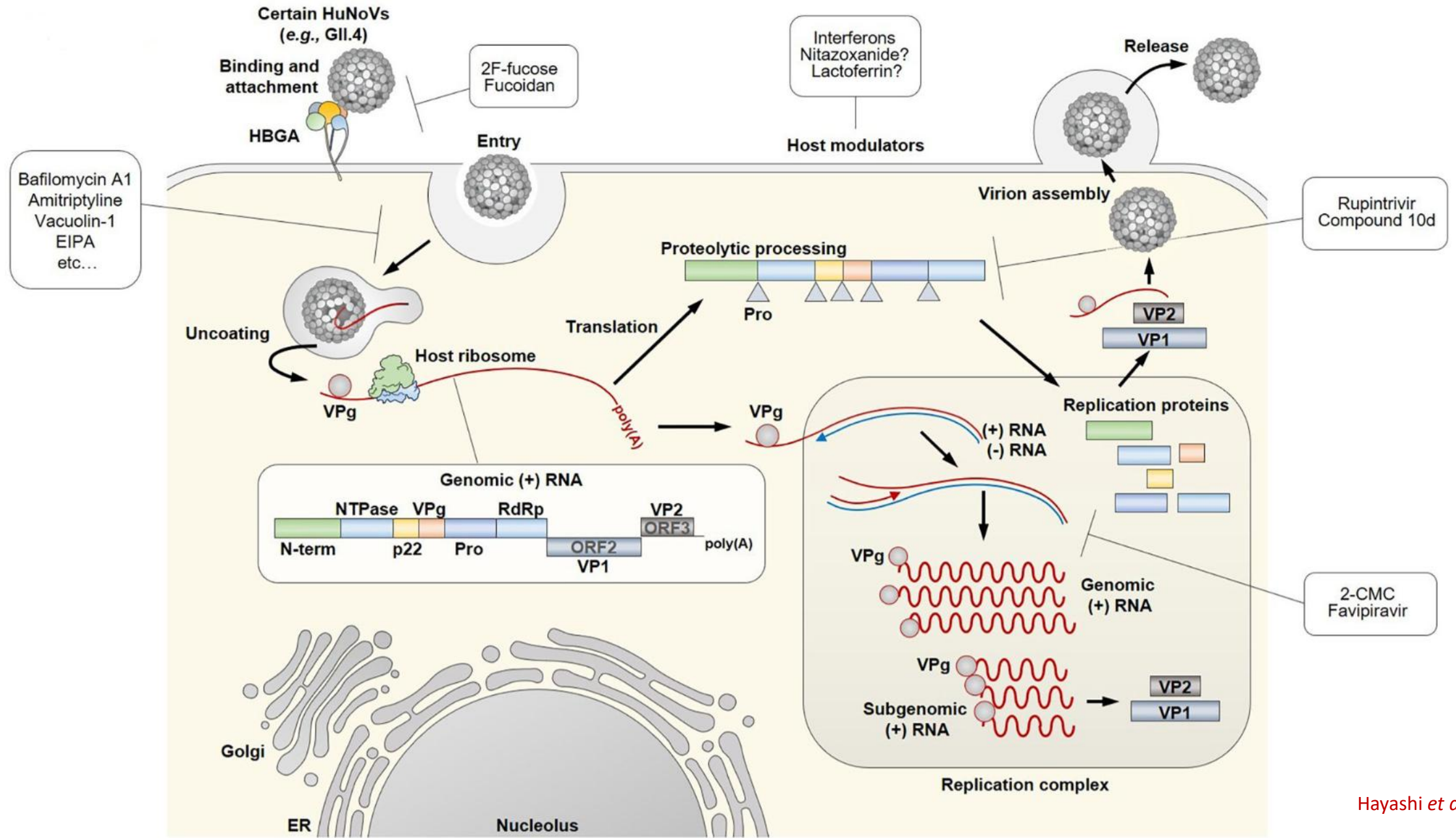
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Antiviral Compound	Class of Inhibitor	Stage of Viral Life Cycle	Molecular Target	Mechanism of Action
Citrate	Carbohydrate analogue	Viral entry	Viral capsid	Blocks binding of P domain of viral capsid to HBGAs
Rupintrivir (Lufotrelvir)	Peptidomimetic inhibitor	Translation	Viral protease	Inhibition of NoV 3CLpro blocking the cleavage of NS polyprotein, essential for production of viral progeny
CMX521	Purine nucleoside	Genome replication	RdRp	Direct inhibition of viral RdRp acting as final chain terminator
2CMC	Nucleoside analogue (cytidine)			
7DMA	Nucleoside analogue (adenosine)			
NITD008	Nucleoside analogue (adenosine)			
Favipiravir	Nucleoside analogue (pyrazine)			Direct inhibition of viral RdRp by competition with ATP and GTP at the initiation and elongation steps; Lethal mutagenesis
Ribavirin	Nucleoside analogue (guanosine)	Host factor	TLR7 TLR4 Hsp90	Inhibition of viral RdRp by depletion of intracellular GTP pools
NAF2	Non-nucleoside analogue			Allosteric inhibition of RdRp
Suramin				
PPDS				
NF023				
Resiquimod	TLR agonist	Host factor	TLR7 TLR4	Stimulation of IFN production by TLR7 agonism
γ-PGA				
17-DMAG	-			Hsp90
Nitazoxanide	Thiazolide	Other	Not known	Not known

2CMC—2'-C-methylcytidine; 7DMA—7-deaza-2'-C-methyladenosine; γ -PGA—Poly- γ -glutamic acid; 17-DMAG—17-dimethylaminoethylamino-17-demethoxygeldanamycin; RdRp—RNA dependent-RNA polymerase; TLR—Toll-like receptor; Hsp90—Heat shock protein 90; HBGBAs—Histo-blood group antigens; IFN—Interferon.

Norovirus drug targets

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Nitazoxanide: an effective drug?

Thiazolide: a broad-spectrum antimicrobial

- treatment of parasite-induced gastroenteritis
- rare clinical successes in treating chronic norovirus infection
- **mechanism on noroviruses is unknown** but in:
 - astrovirus: possible induction of IFN response by activation of protein kinase R
 - rotavirus: inhibition of VP7 maturation, hampering viroplasm formation; interference in morphogenesis

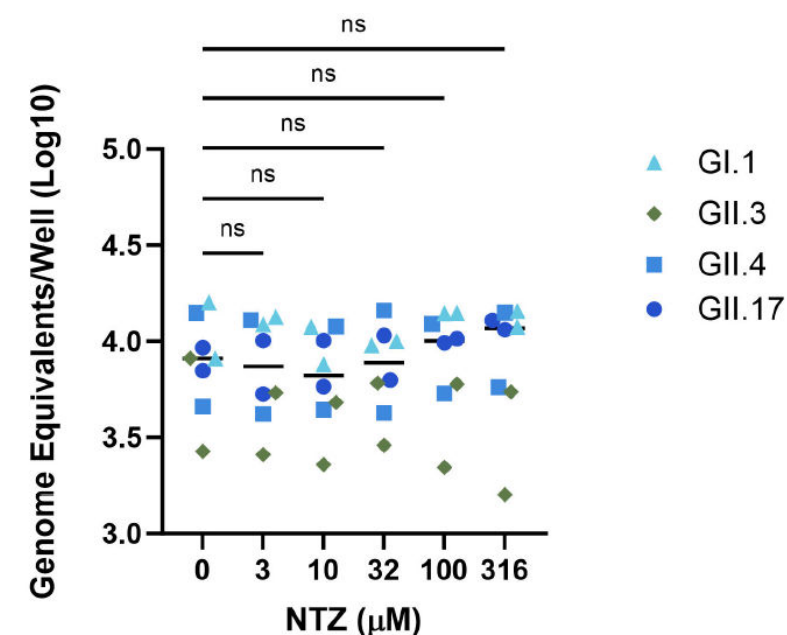
Synergetic effects of NTZ in association with ribavirin

on NoV replicon systems → triggers interferon stimulated genes

BUT no to weak inhibition of replication in jejunal HIEs
at non-cytotoxic concentrations

+ no influence on innate immunity for antiviral activity

May help to reduce diarrheal symptoms in CNI
but NTZ fails to clear norovirus replication...



Ribavirin: a universal viral treatment?

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Ribavirin-resistant chronic norovirus infection-associated enteropathy in common variable immunodeficiency. Case report and review of the literature

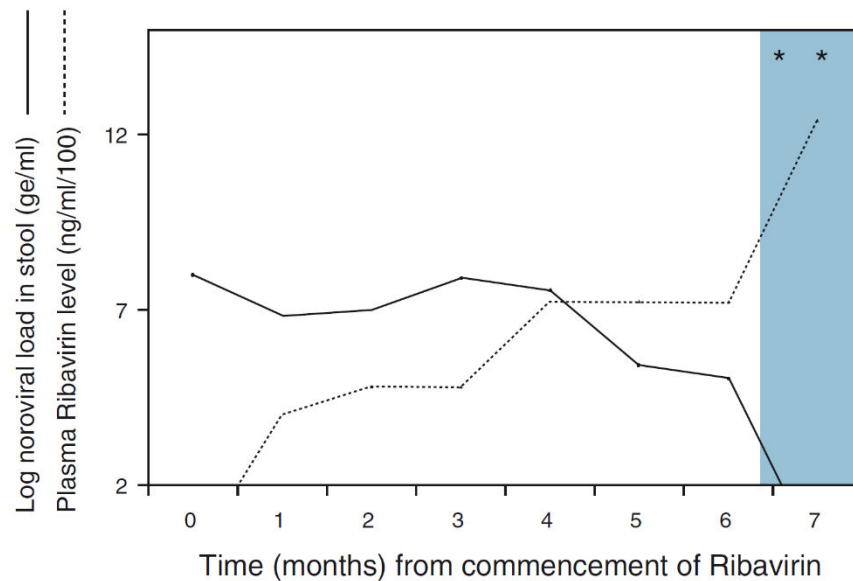
Gonzalo González-Morcillo^{a,*}, Beatriz Calderón-Hernanz^a, Joaquín Serrano-López de las Hazas^a, Ana Isabel de Hita-Santabaya^b, Joan Riera-Oliver^c

Antiviral drug with a large spectrum

- nucleotide analogue of guanosine
- active on various RNA/DNA viruses: HCV, HEV, HSV, RSV, PIV, IV, HIV, CMV, AdV, PXV...
- CNI: used alone or in association with other drugs: Igs, NTZ, immunosuppressants...

Few evidence of effectiveness on chronic norovirus infections

- few cases with clinical improvement and virus clearance
- viral clearance (if obtained): several months



Woodward *et al.*, 2015; Gonzalez-Morcillo *et al.*, 2022

Table 1 Summary of clinical reports of patients with chronic norovirus infection and CVID-associated enteropathy treated with ribavirin.									
Author	Sex	Age at CVID diagnosis / Age at enteropathy onset	Enteropathy presentation	Intestinal histology	Treatment received against norovirus	Total months of Norovirus infection	Ribavirin dosage	Ribavirin plasma levels	Clinical improvement Virus clearance Muscle tissue restructuring
Van de Ven et al (11)	Male	5/14	Chronic diarrhea Nausea Abdominal pain Weight loss	Duodenal villous atrophy. Lymphocytic infiltration of esophagus, antrum, duodenum, ileum	IVIG Breast milk RBV	24	10-day course	No	No
Duraisham et al (12)	Female	14/36	Diarrhea Nausea Anorexia Weight loss	Villous distortion in the terminal ileum with neutrophilic infiltration	IVIG OIG PN RBV	16	400 mg/day 2 weeks	Yes	No
Woodward et al (8)	Male	15/25	Diarrhea Weight loss	Partial villous atrophy	PN IFN RBV	40	800 mg/day 21 months	Yes	No
	Female	29/43	Diarrhea Nausea Weight loss	Sub-total villous atrophy	PN RBV	25	800 mg/day 12 months	Yes 1500 ng/mL	Yes
	Male	30/65	Diarrhea Nausea Weight loss	Sub-total villous atrophy	PN RBV	34	800 mg/day 9 months	Yes	Not evaluable (Patient died – lung adenocarcinoma)
	Male	33/44	Diarrhea Nausea Weight loss	Sub-total villous atrophy	EN PN RBV	36	200 mg three times per week/ renal function-adverse 12 months	Yes	Yes
	Male	42/48	Diarrhea Weight loss	Partial villous atrophy	IFN RBV	46	800 mg/day 21 months	Yes	No

PN, parenteral nutrition; IFN, alfa interferon; EN, enteral nutrition; IVIG, intravenous immunoglobulin; OIG, oral immunoglobulin; RBV, ribavirin.

Favipiravir: clinical improvement but no viral clearance

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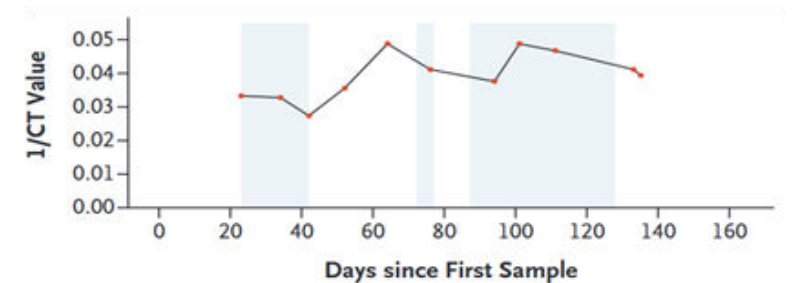
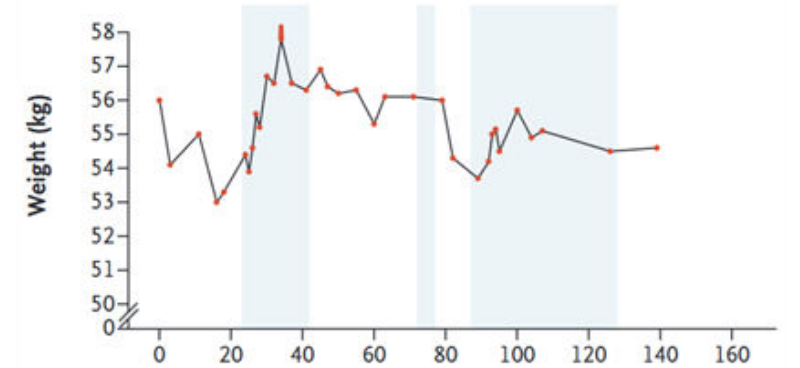
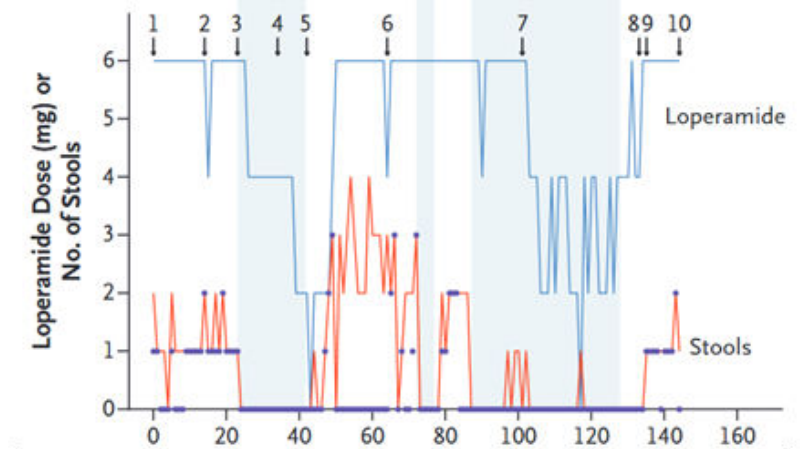
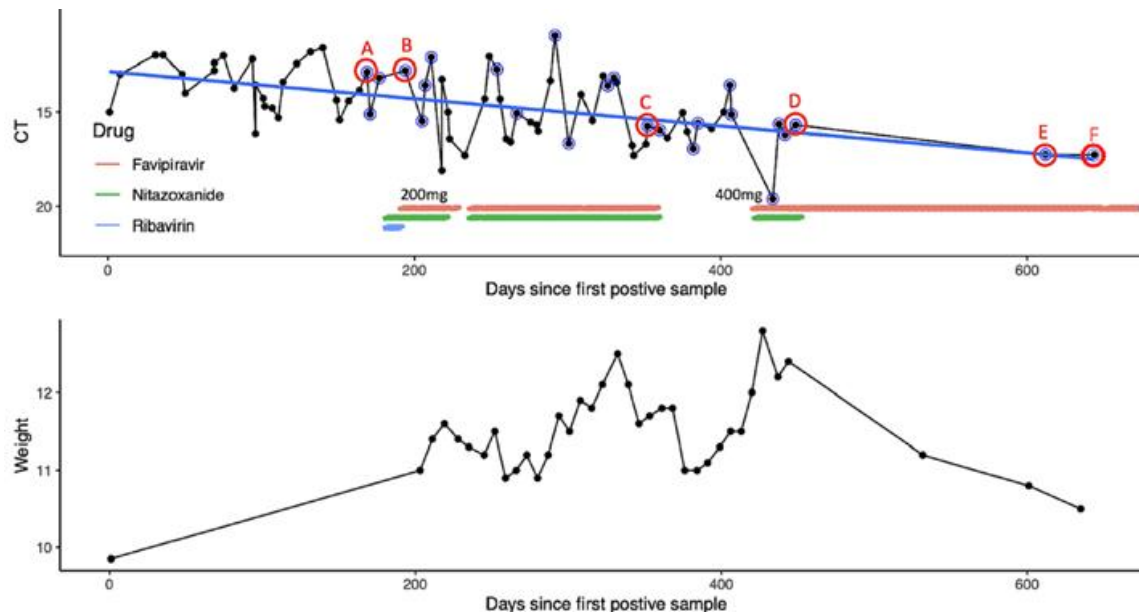
AVIGAN (favipiravir)

Pyrazine: nucleoside analogue

- direct inhibition of viral RdRp
- used in treatment for flu (Japan), phlebovirus (SFTS)
- liver toxicity

Treatment outcomes

- weight gain + reduced diarrhea
- but **no resolution of the chronic norovirus infection**



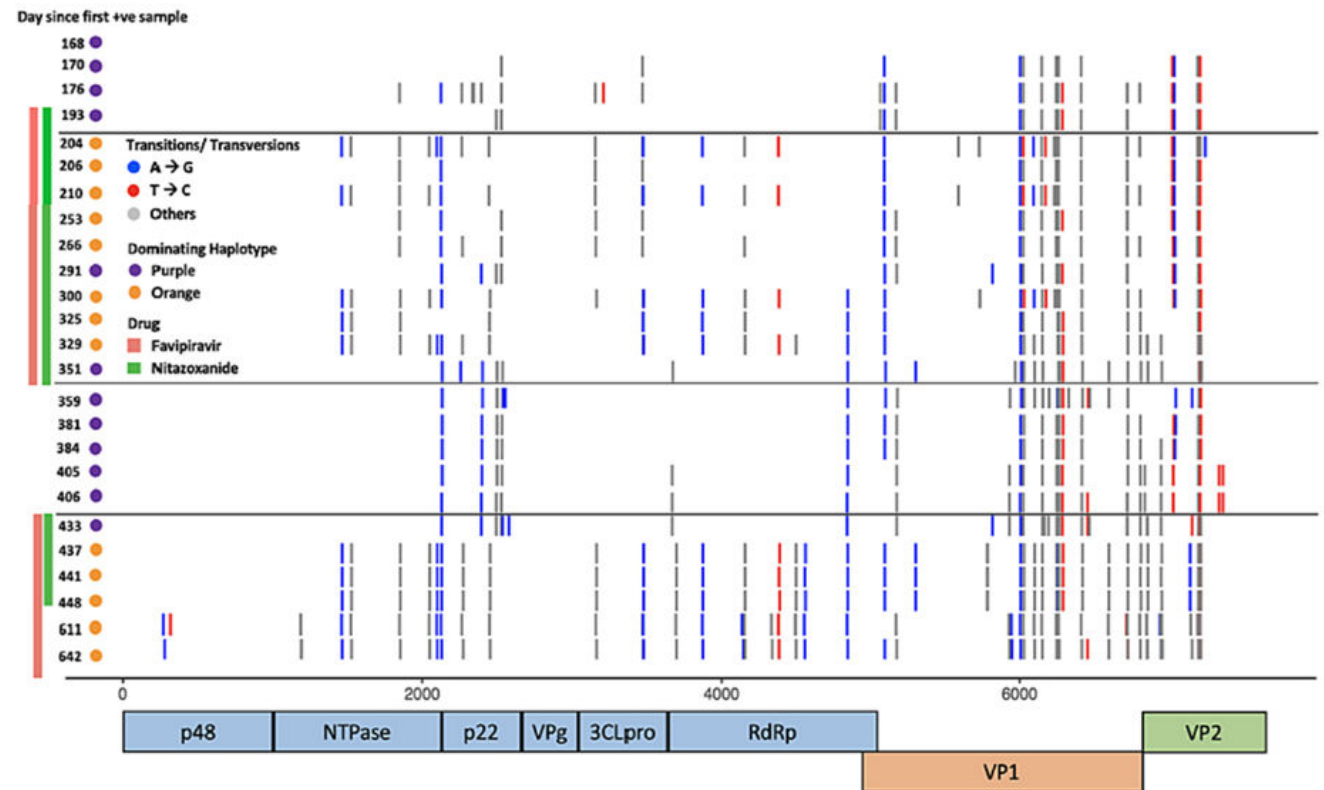
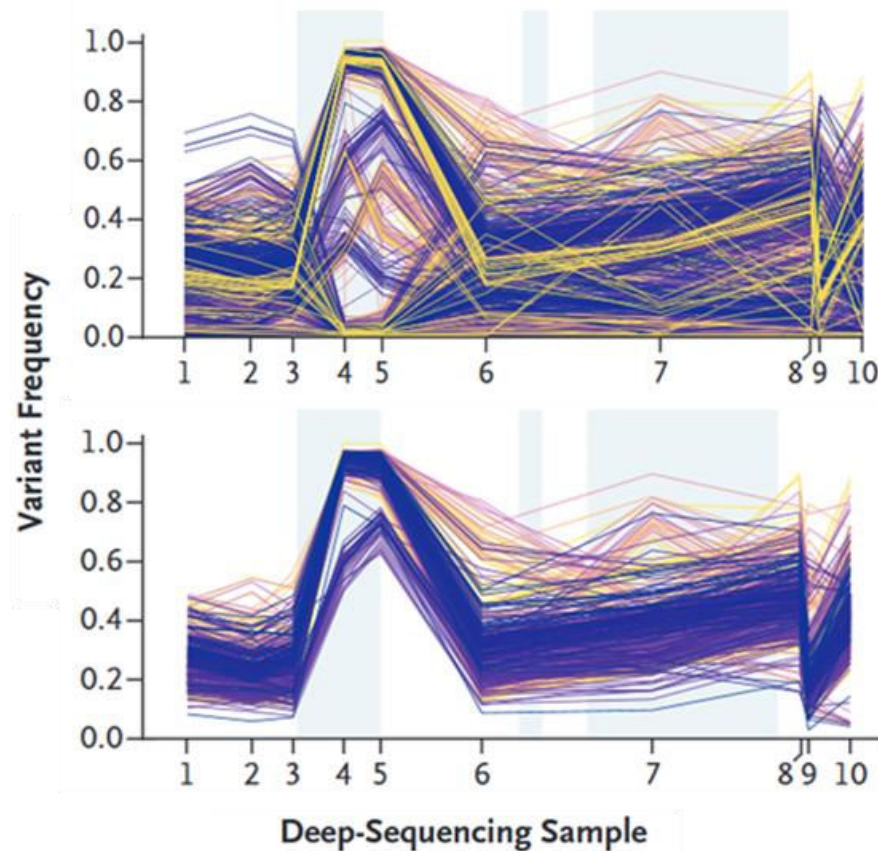
Favipiravir: viral mutagenesis and infectivity loss

23

AVIGAN (favipiravir)

Induction of multiple point mutations → quasispecies

- accumulation of mutations induces **loss of viral infectivity and fitness** (in Zf experiments)
- **occurrence of RdRp variants** potentially causing favipiravir resistance (in Zf experiments)



Molnupiravir: inhibition of replication in 3D-HIE

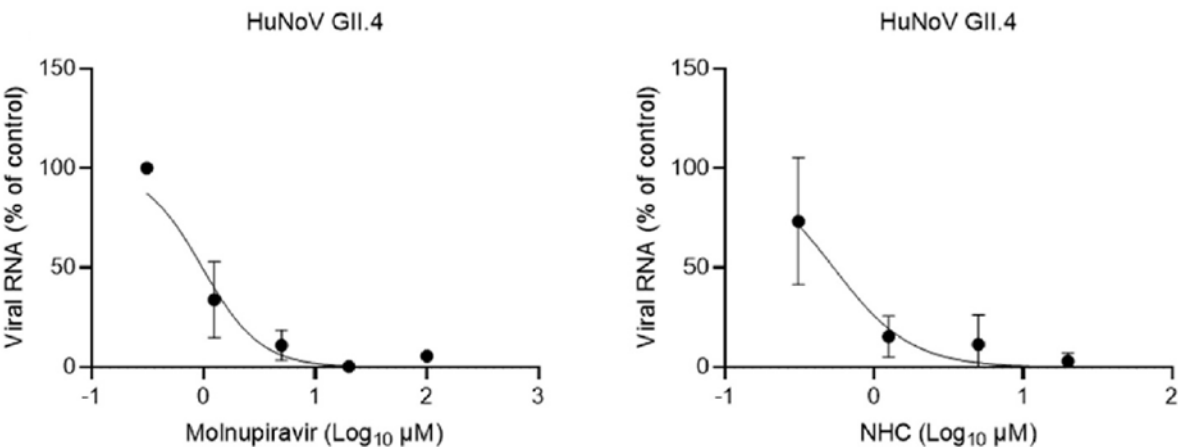
Cytidine nucleoside analogue

- N4-hydroxycytidine (NHC)
- broad-spectrum antiviral against RNA viruses (SARS-CoV-1/2, MERS, Flu, RSV, HCV, VEEV, Ebola)

Active on NoV replication in HIEs

More studies needed

Compassionate treatment for CNI patients?



Molnupiravir inhibits human norovirus and rotavirus replication in 3D human intestinal enteroids

Nanci Santos-Ferreira^a, Jana Van Dycke^a, Winston Chiu^a, Johan Neyts^a, Jelle Matthijnsens^b, Joana Rocha-Pereira^{a,*}

Antiviral activity of compounds against NoV GII.4

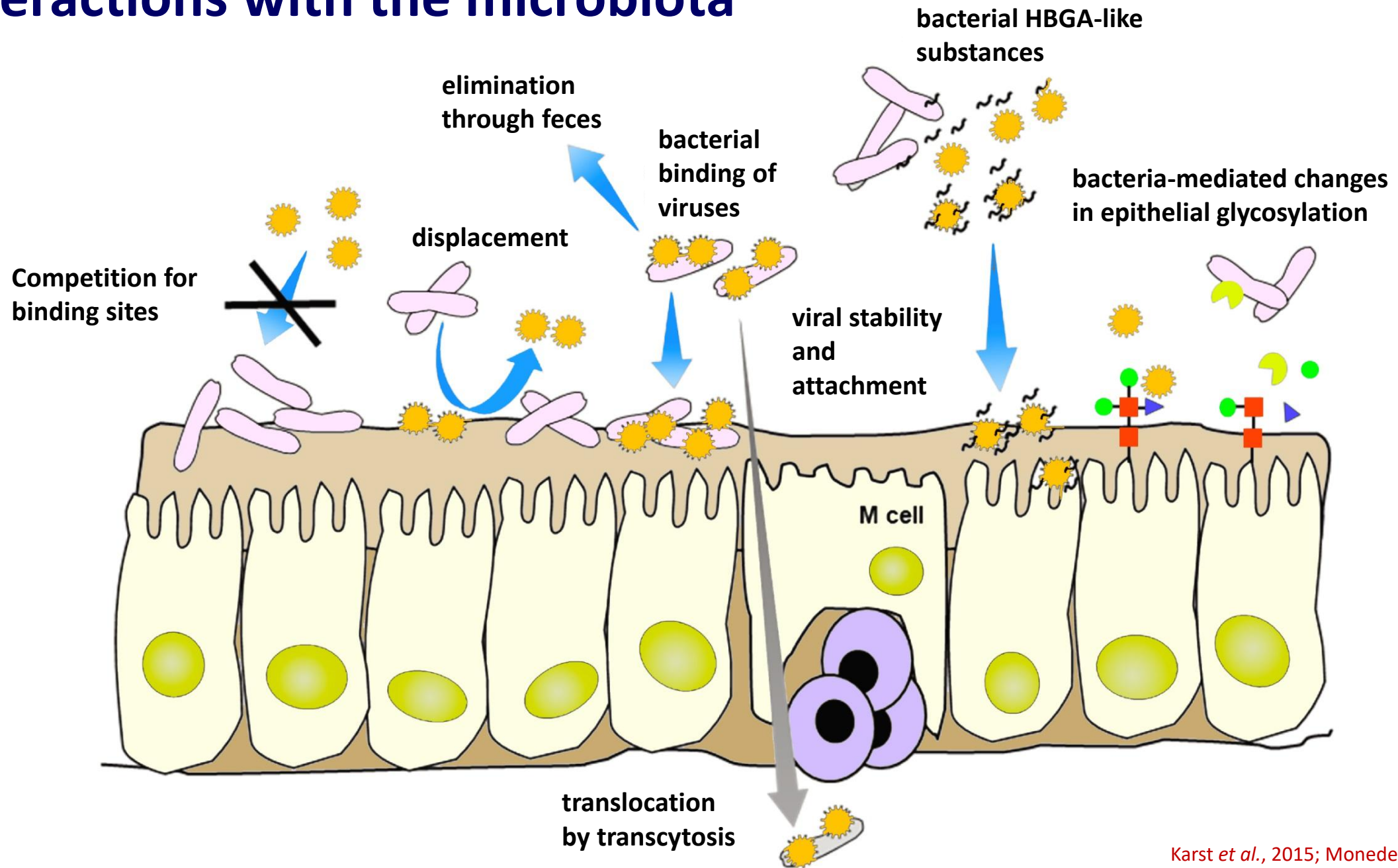
Compound	CC ₅₀ ^a (μM) – 95% CI ^b	HuNoV GII.4-GII.P4	
		EC ₅₀ ^c (μM) – 95% CI	SI ^d
Nitazoxanide	139.9 (105.2–202.8)	0.6 (3.4x10 ⁻⁶ – 1.7)	233
2CMC	>200	0.2 (0.1–0.3)	>1000
7DMA	>200	4.0 (1.3–8.7)	>50
Favipiravir	>1000	82.1 (53.3–120.7)	>12
Dasabuvir	45.5 (37.8–50)	3.8 (0.2–8.4)	12

Virus	HuNoV GII.4		
	CC ₅₀ ^a (μM)– 95% CI ^b	EC ₅₀ ^c (μM)– 95% CI	SI ^d
Molnupiravir	>200	1.0 (0.6–1.4)	>200
NHC	>200	0.5 (0.3–0.8)	>400

^a CC₅₀ half-maximal cytotoxic concentration.
^b CI confidence interval.
^c EC₅₀ half-maximal effective concentration.
^d SI selectivity index

Interactions with the microbiota

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Fecal microbiota transplantation: an alternative?

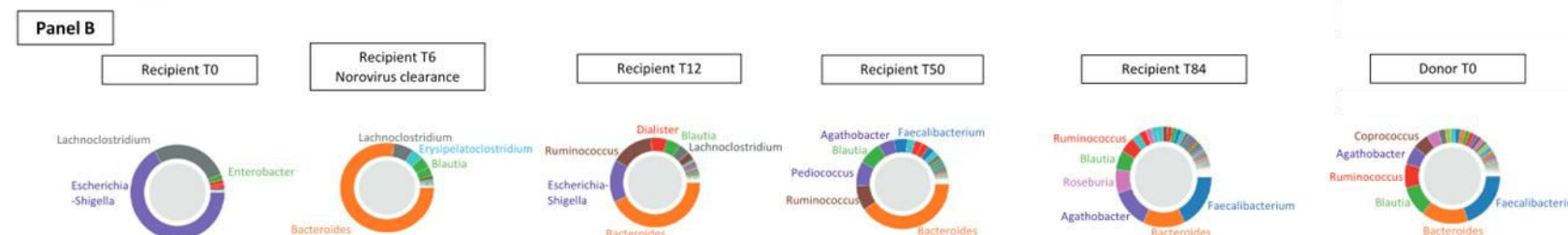
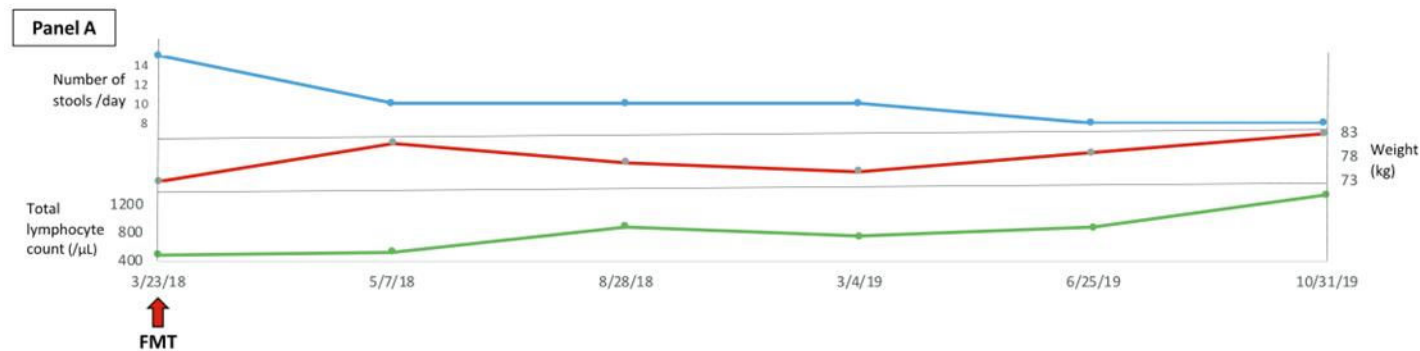
26

Gut microbiota interacts with norovirus

- antiviral or proviral effects of certain bacteria species
- enhancement of virus attachment facilitates infection

FMT benefits in refractory chronic NoV infection

- restoration of bacterial flora and **clinical improvement** of diarrhea
 - nonbacterial content supply: bacterial short-chain fatty acids, host immune effectors, other metabolites
- ➔ **immunoglobulins** in feces: potential effector of FMT therapeutic effects

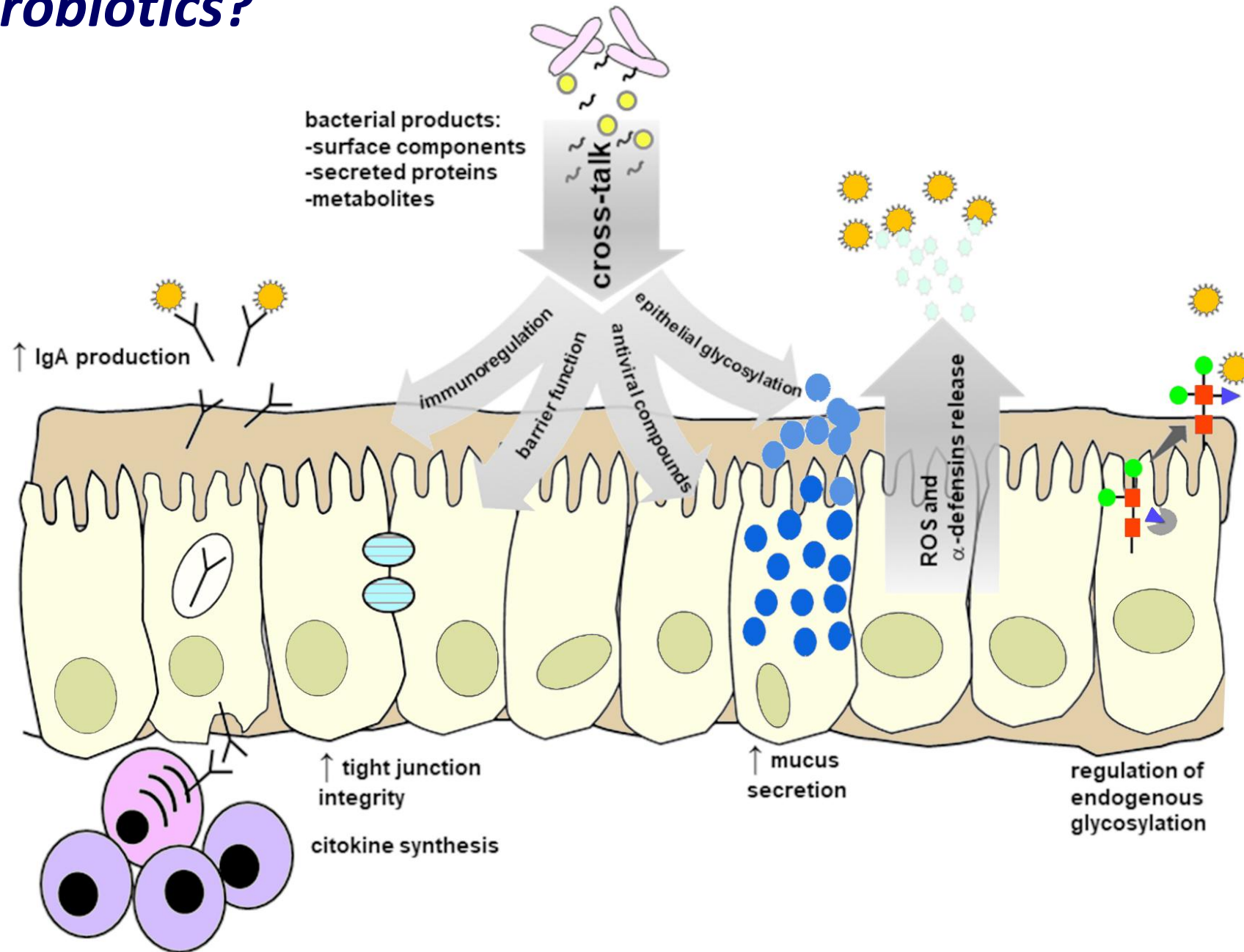


Clinical remission after faecal microbiota transplantation in transplanted recipients with refractory chronic Norovirus infections: a retrospective case series

Sarah Soueges^{1,*}, Valérie Cheynet², Thomas Briot^{3,4}, Claire Merveilleux du Vignaux⁵, Nicolas Benech^{4,6,7,8}, Florence Ader^{1,4,8,9}

Role of probiotics?

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Infection control and vaccination

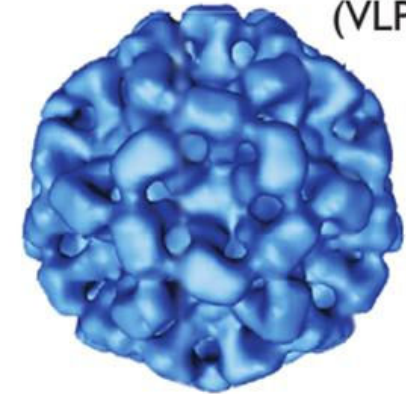
Universal precautions + cross-transmission barriers

- hand hygiene ++ = washing before and after care
 - + hydroalcoholic solution (70%) → *virucidal standard NFEN 14476 (adeno/polio) +++*
- protective gloves, mask, goggles, clothing
- disinfection/sterilization of medical devices
- appropriate environmental decontamination +
- patient isolation ++

Vaccine development

- based on **virus-like particles (VLPs) of GI + GII NoVs**
 - ➔ self-assembly of VP1 capsid proteins / lack of viral genome
- inoculation routes: intranasal, intramuscular, subcutaneous, oral
- elicit good levels of neutralizing antibodies and cell immunity
- currently 4 vaccines are under development

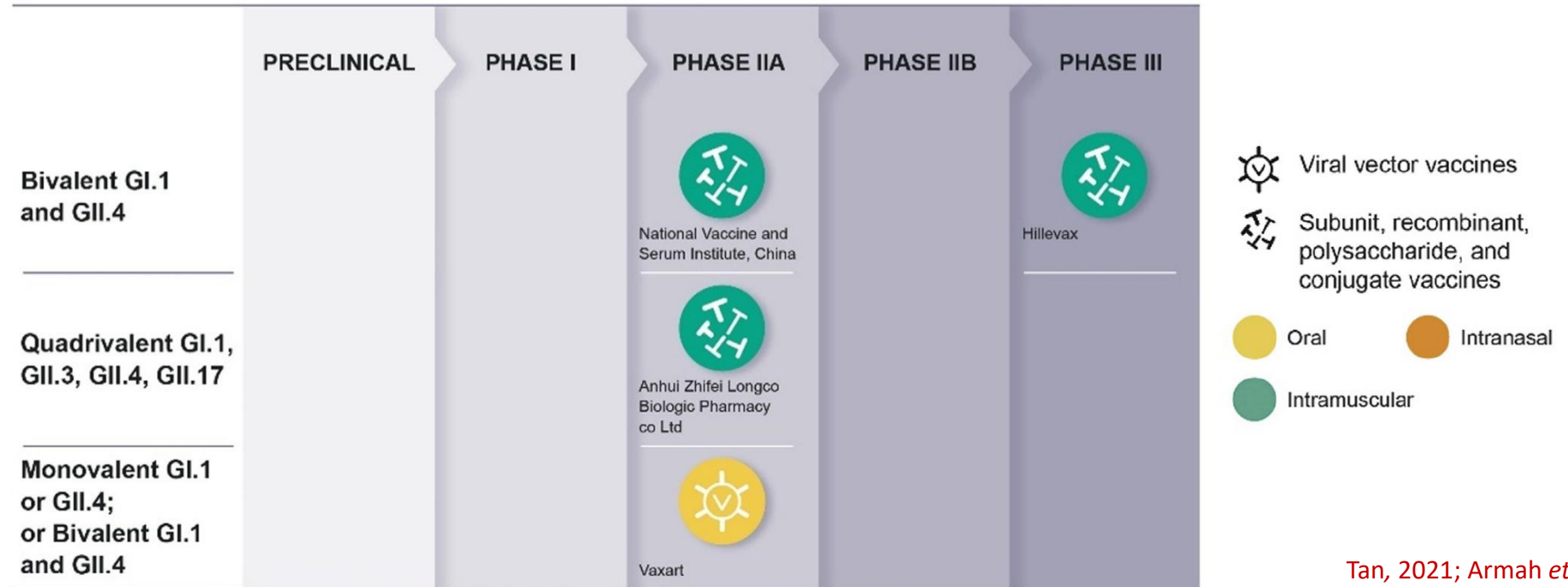
“Virus-like” particles
(VLP)



Current developments in norovirus vaccines

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Company	Vaccine Candidate	Adjuvant	Administration Route	Antigen Format	Antigen Genotype
Takeda	TAK-214	Chitosan/MPLA, aluminum salt	Intranasal, intramuscular	Noroviral VLP	GI.1/GII.4
Vaxart	VXA-NVV-104	Adenovirus expressing double-stranded RNAs	Oral	Adenovirus expressing noroviral VP1	GI.1/GII.4
NVSI	Hansenulapolyomorpha	Aluminum salt	Intramuscular	Noroviral VLP	GI.1/GII.4
IPS/Zhifei	Longkoma	Aluminum salt	Intramuscular	Noroviral VLP	GI.1/GII.3/GII.4/GII.17



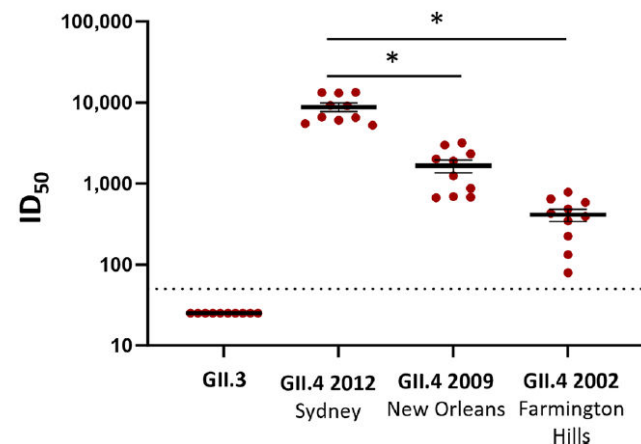
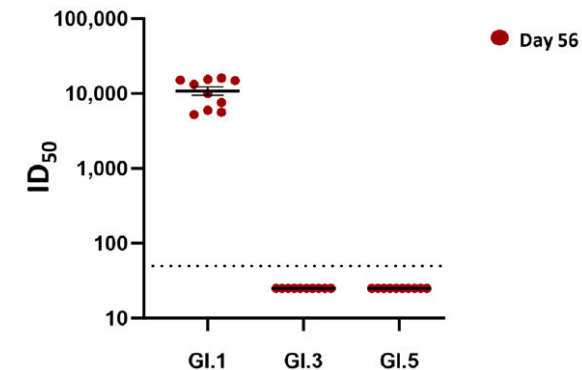
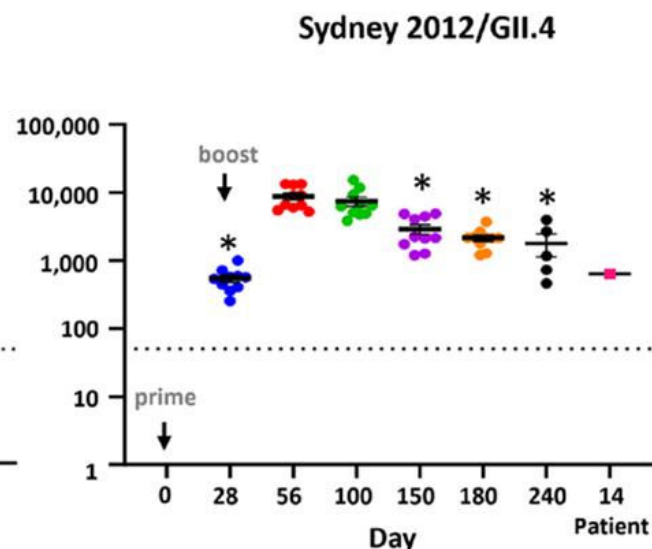
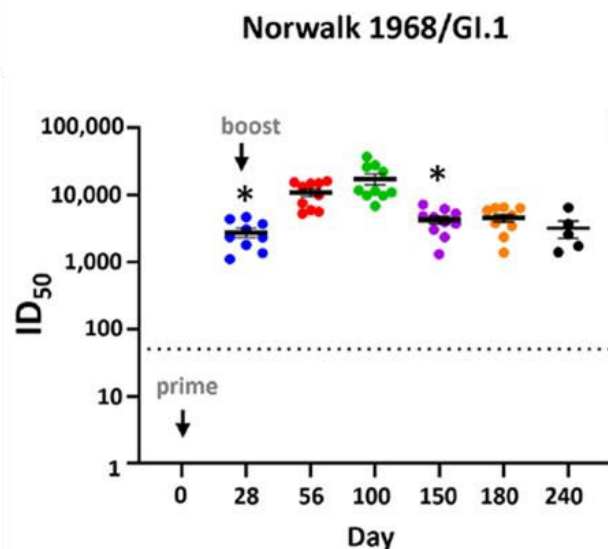
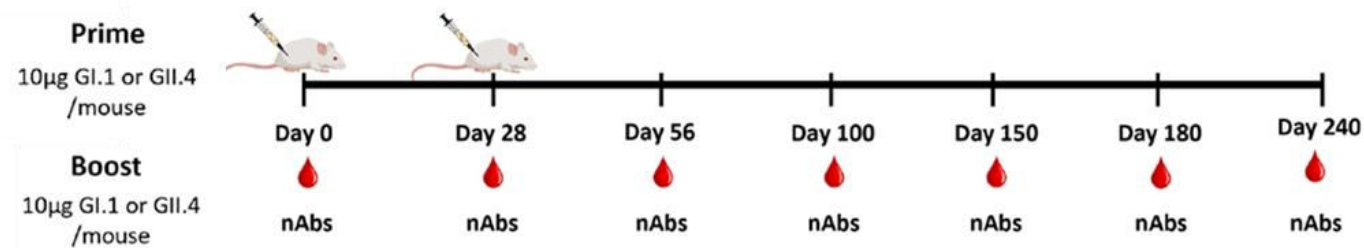
Tan, 2021; Armah *et al.*, 2023

Development of a bivalent mRNA vaccine

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mRNA-Lipid nanoparticle vaccine platform ← VP1 capsid protein of GI.1 and GII.4 NoVs

- high levels of neutralizing antibodies through strong genotype-specific responses
- robust cellular responses
- effective on protecting human enteroids from infection



Conclusion on chronic norovirus infections

Norovirus

- main agent of AGE (= fecal peril)
- CNI: particularly challenging infection in immunocompromised
- **therapeutics still under development**
 - **no real specific and effective drugs**
 - **compassionate treatment?**
- being aware of the rise of sapovirus or Aichi virus chronic infection cases

Future perspective and challenges

- **Urgent need to discover new effective drugs on chronic infections**
- **Extension of the use of HIE for drug testing**
 - better contribution to the development and evaluation of new drugs or compounds
 - **development of a personalized medicine approach** using patient's intestinal biopsy
 - but the use of organoid culture is limited: replication limitation, fastidious and expensive culture
 - ➔ future developments needed: organ-on-chip systems, culture media, other enhancement...
- **Better define the role of FMT in the therapeutic strategy**
 - ➔ **Needs for extensive collaborative clinical studies**





3^e Journée Scientifique du Réseau Virus et Greffes

Cité Universitaire Internationale, Paris – January 13, 2025

Merci

Gracias

شكرا لك

Thank you

Danke



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