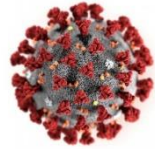


Université

de Strasbourg



# Virologist view of the pandemic

**Pr. Samira FAFI-KREMER**

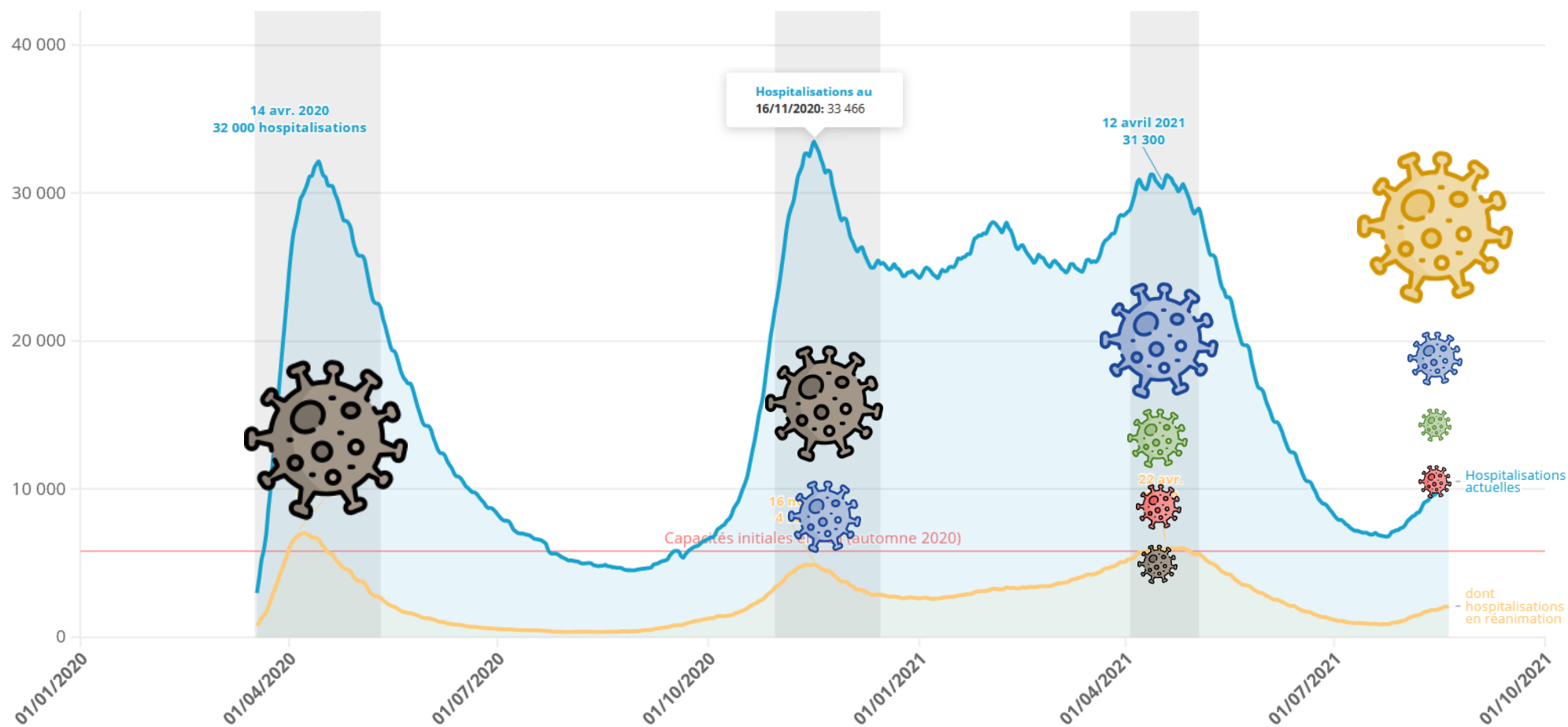
**INSTITUT DE VIROLOGIE**






**INSERM UMR S\_1109, UNIVERSITÉ DE STRASBOURG,**

**CHU DE STRASBOURG**

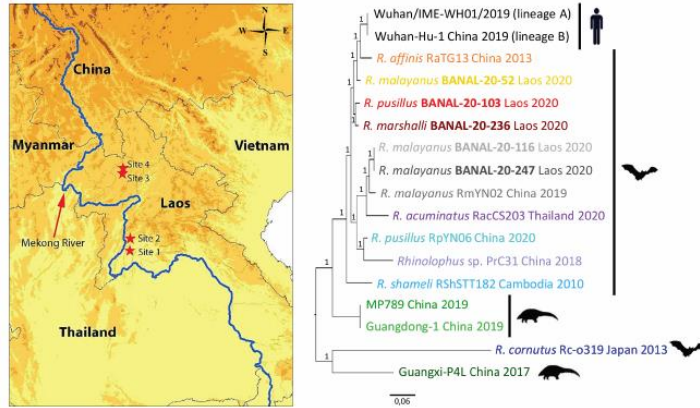
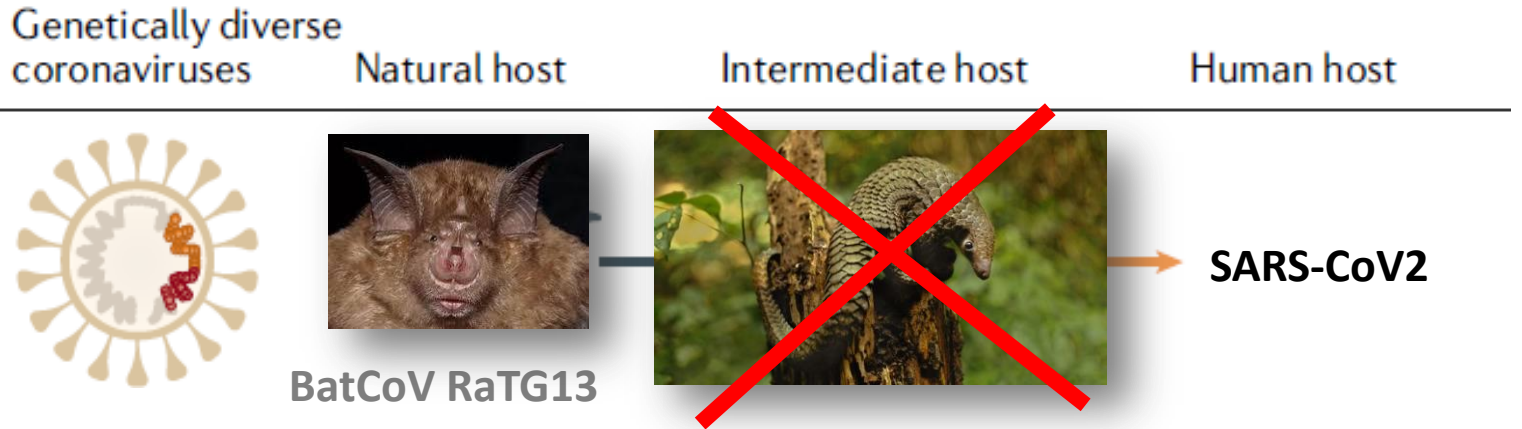
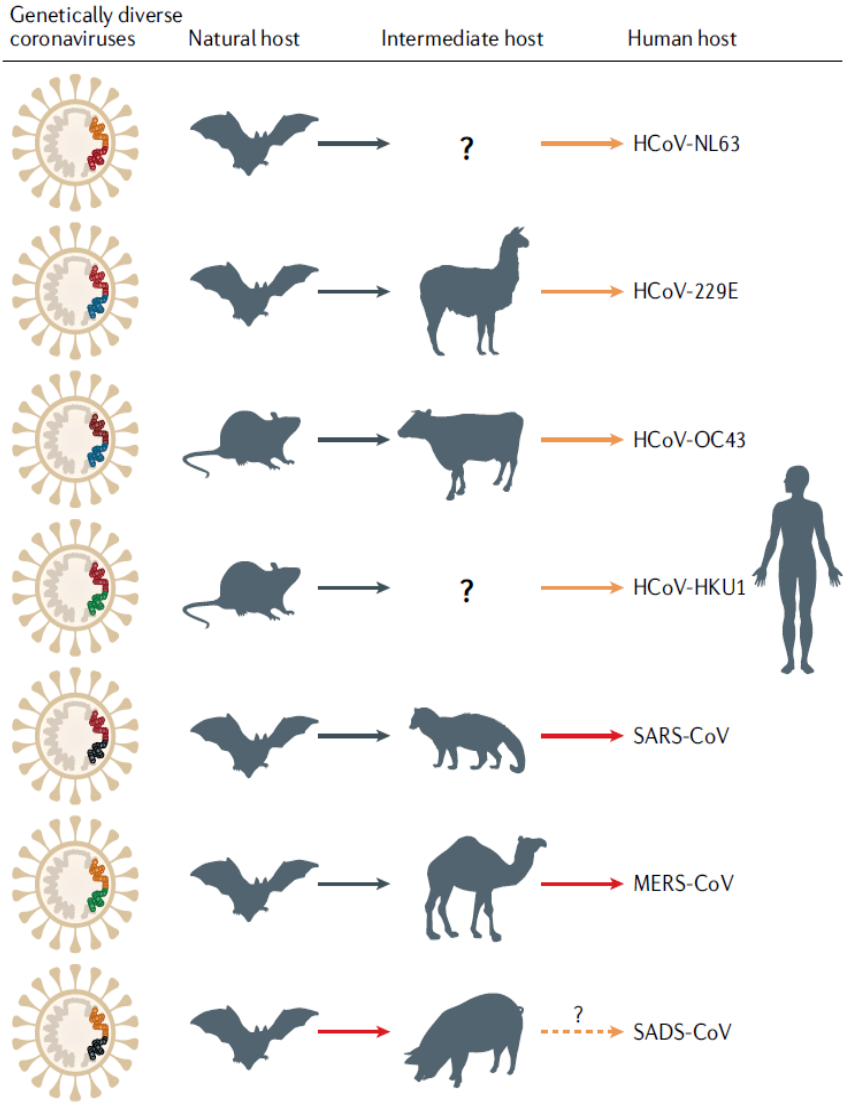
# COVID-19 pandemic

Hospitalisations  
en France



-  Souche D614G
-  Variant  $\alpha$
-  Variant  $\beta$
-  Variant  $\gamma$
-  Variant  $\delta$

# A pneumonia outbreak associated with a new coronavirus of probable bat origin



Presence of new bat sarbecoviruses that seem to have the same potential for infecting humans as early strains of SARS-CoV-2.

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES - ARTICLE

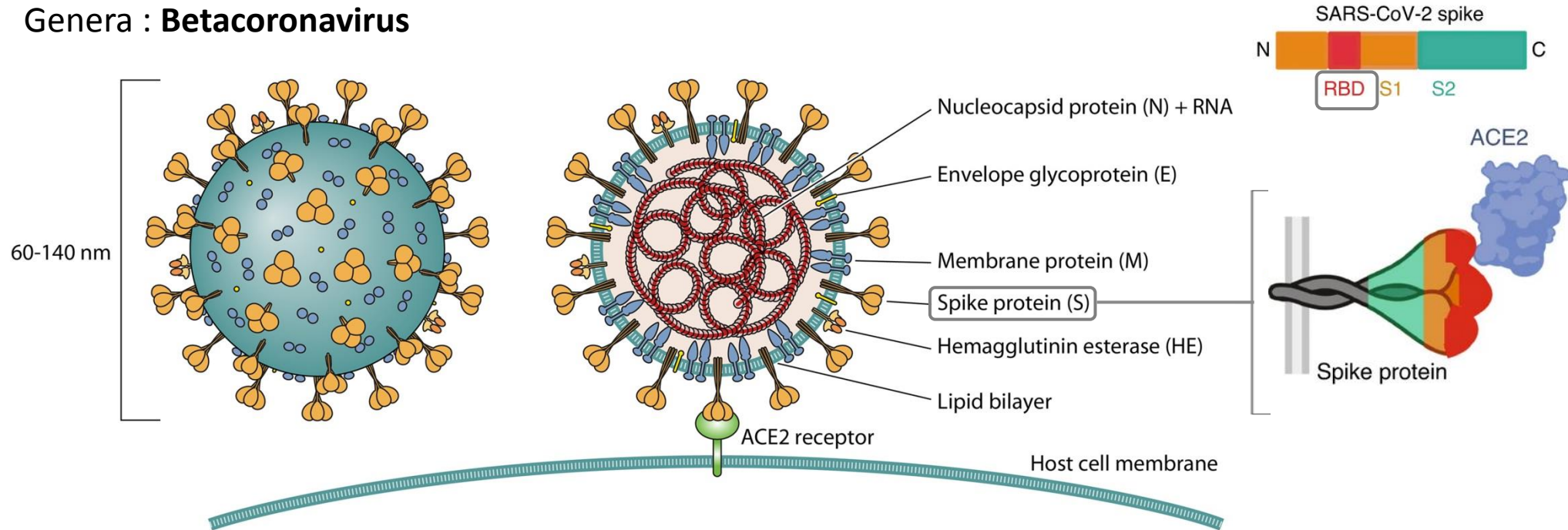
Coronaviruses with a SARS-CoV-2-like receptor-binding domain allowing ACE2-mediated entry into human cells isolated from bats of Indochinese peninsula

# SARS-CoV-2

Enveloped virus

Family : **Coronaviridae**

Genera : **Betacoronavirus**

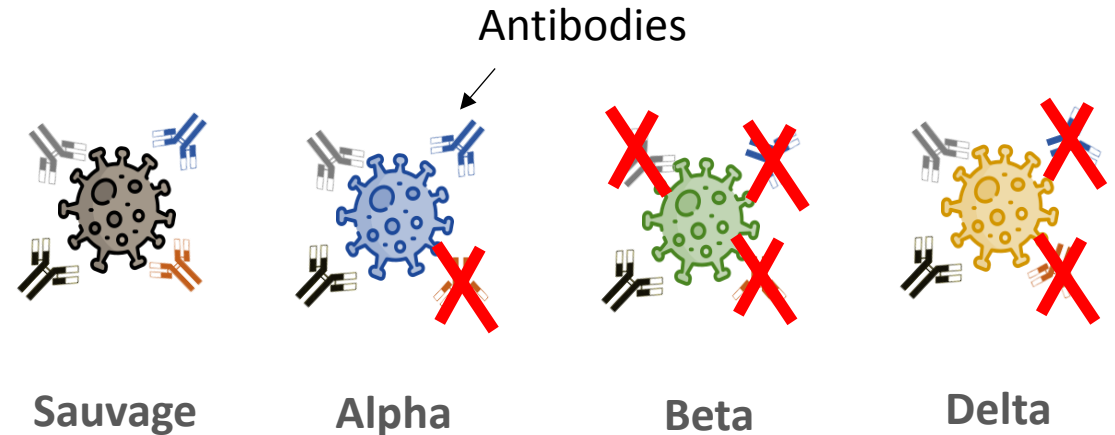
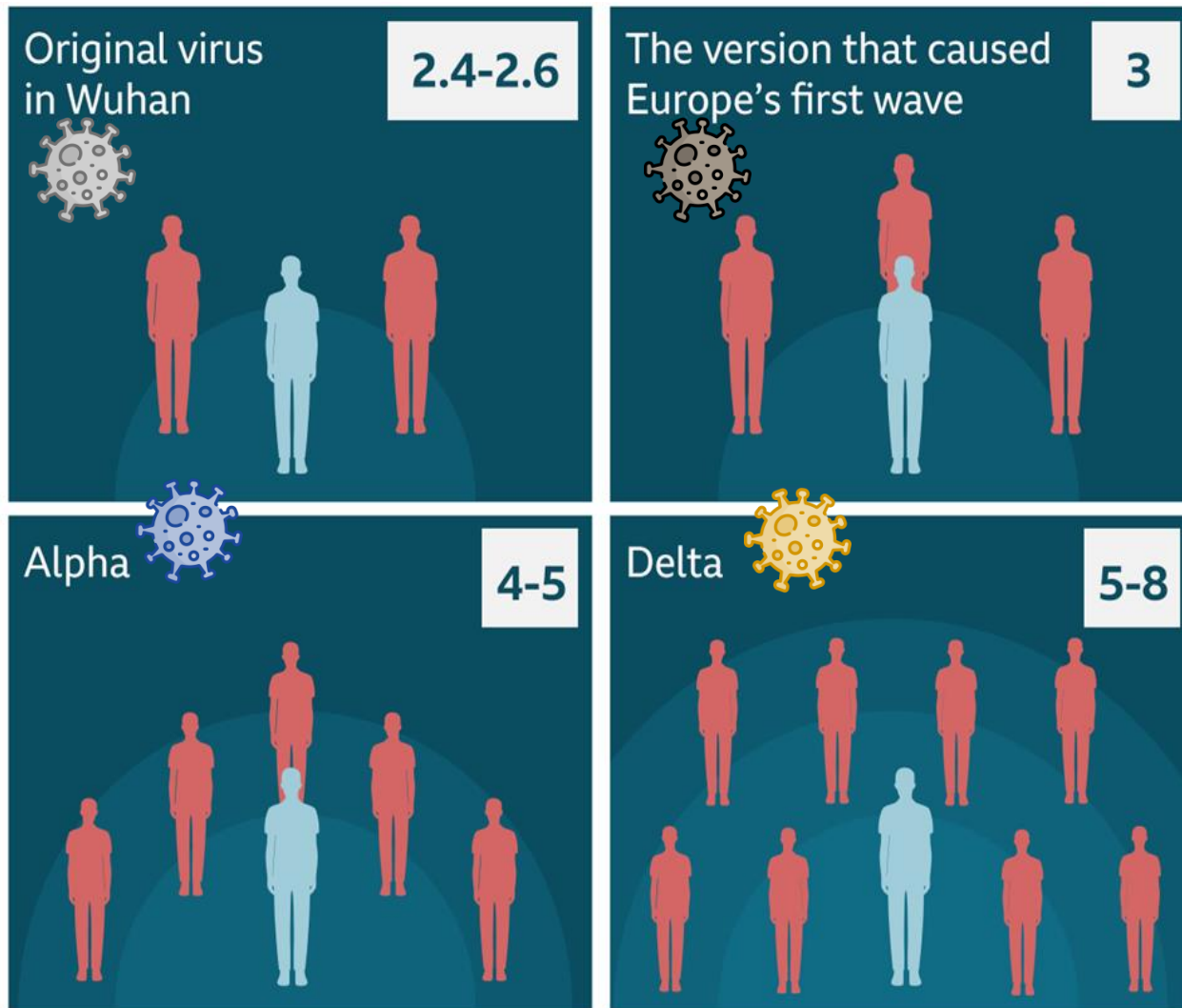


Key role in viral entry



Main target of immune response

# Emergence of SARS-CoV-2 variants



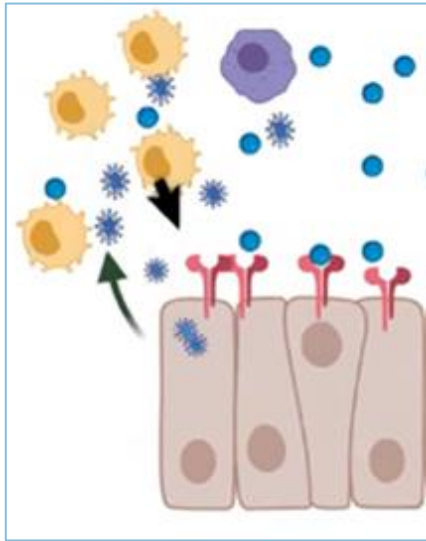
- Long term spread of SARS-CoV-2
    - Emergence of variants
      - Improved replication capacity
      - Increased immunological escape
- Beta >> delta > alpha

# Key questions

- Comment évolue la réponse immunitaire après l'infection?
- Comment évolue la réponse immunitaire après le vaccin?

# Innate and adaptive immune response

## Innate response



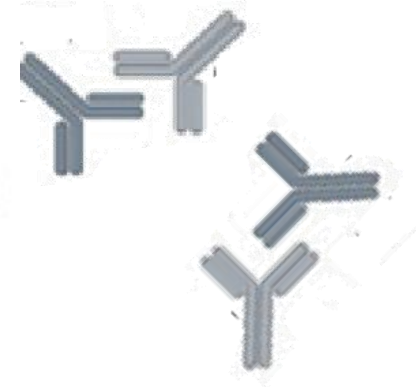
**Hours**  
0 6 12  
Infection

## Adaptive response

### T cell response



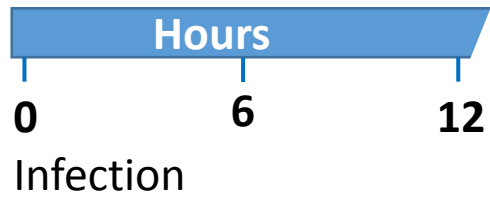
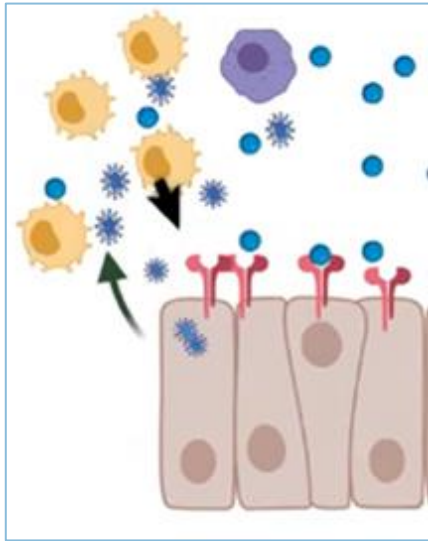
### Humoral response (antibodies)



**Days**  
1 3 6

# Innate and adaptive immune response

## Innate response



## Adaptive response

### T cell response

### Humoral response (antibodies)

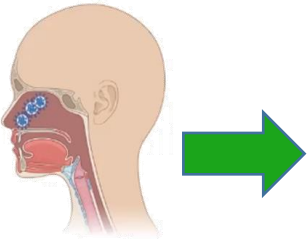




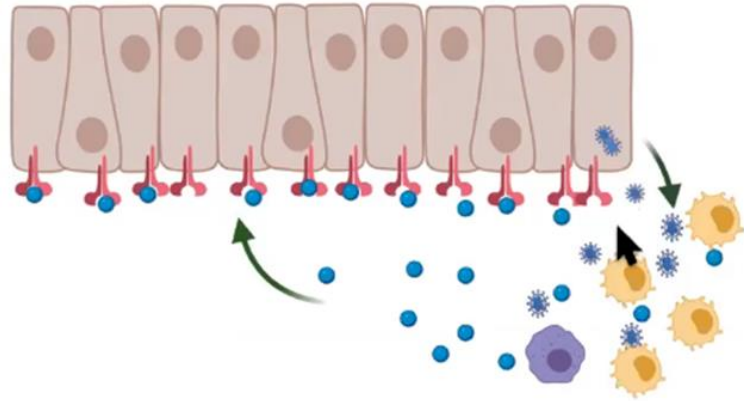
# Mild COVID-19 = effective innate immune response

Antiviral state protects neighboring cells

Innate immune response

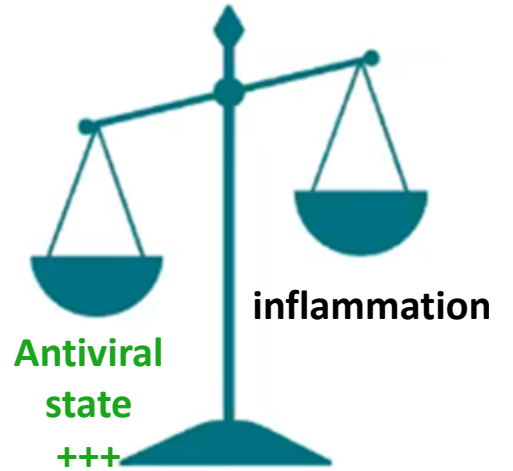
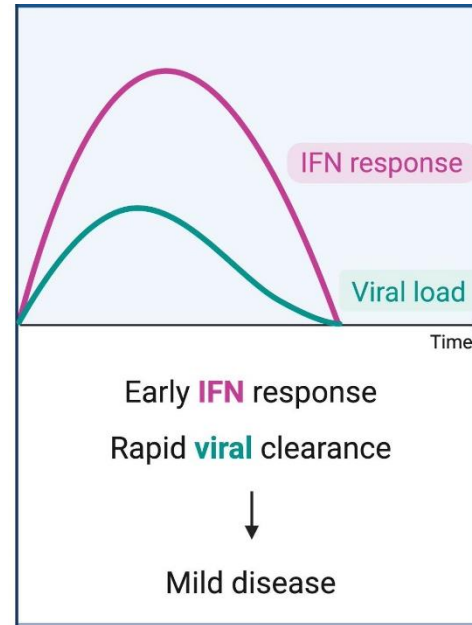


Small viral inoculum



Viral RNA triggers plasmacytoid dendritic cells (pDc) to secrete Type I IFN

Early stimulation of type 1 IFN

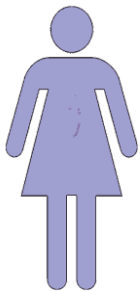


Rapid viral clearance

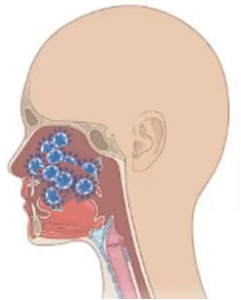
Asymptomatic or mild disease



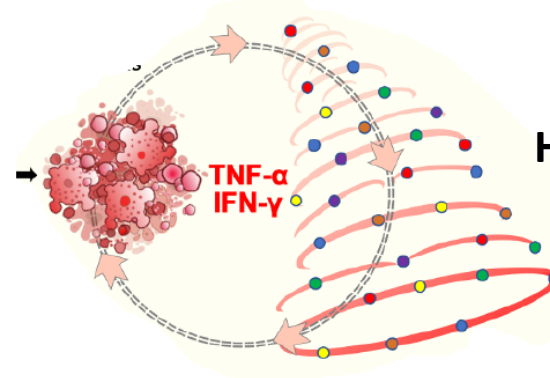
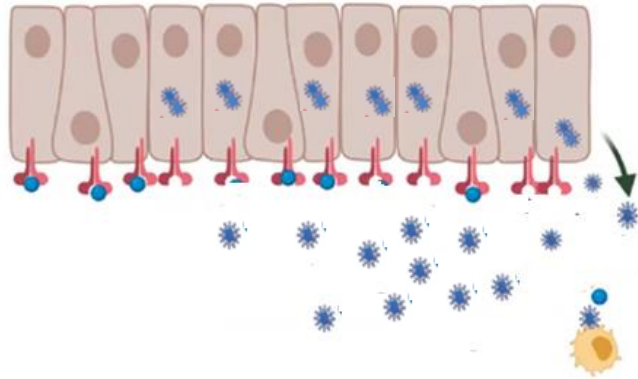
Young people and women



# Severe COVID: unbalance between antiviral state and inflammation



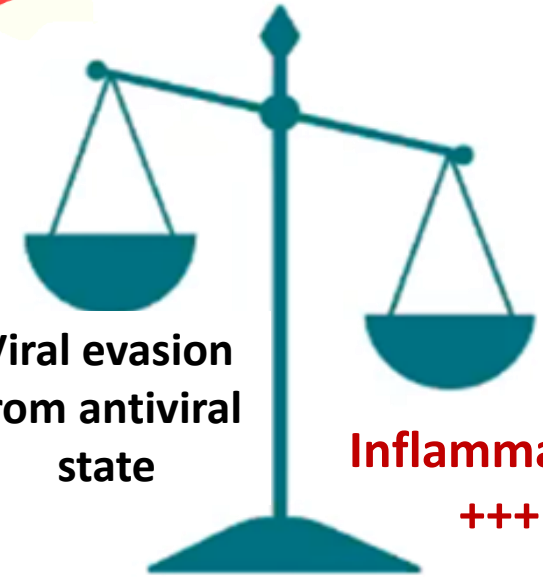
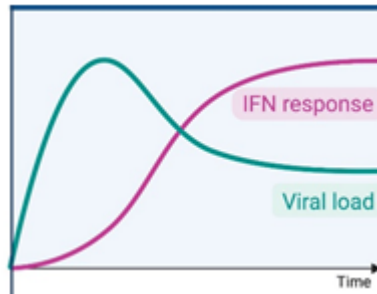
High viral inoculum



High production of inflammatory chemokines and cytokines



Production **retardée** ou **absente** de l'IFN type 1

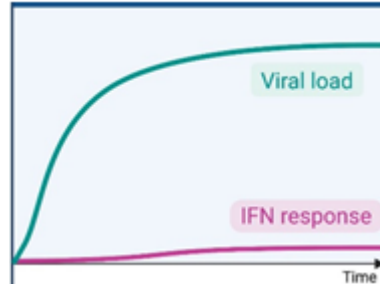
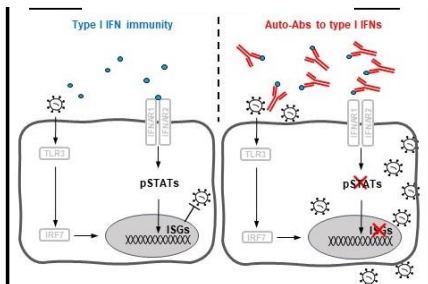
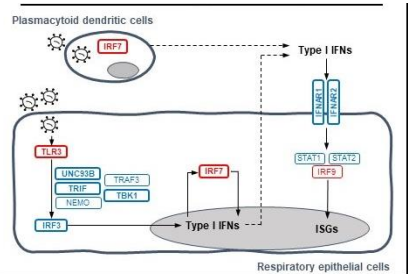


Viral evasion from antiviral state

**Inflammation**  
+++

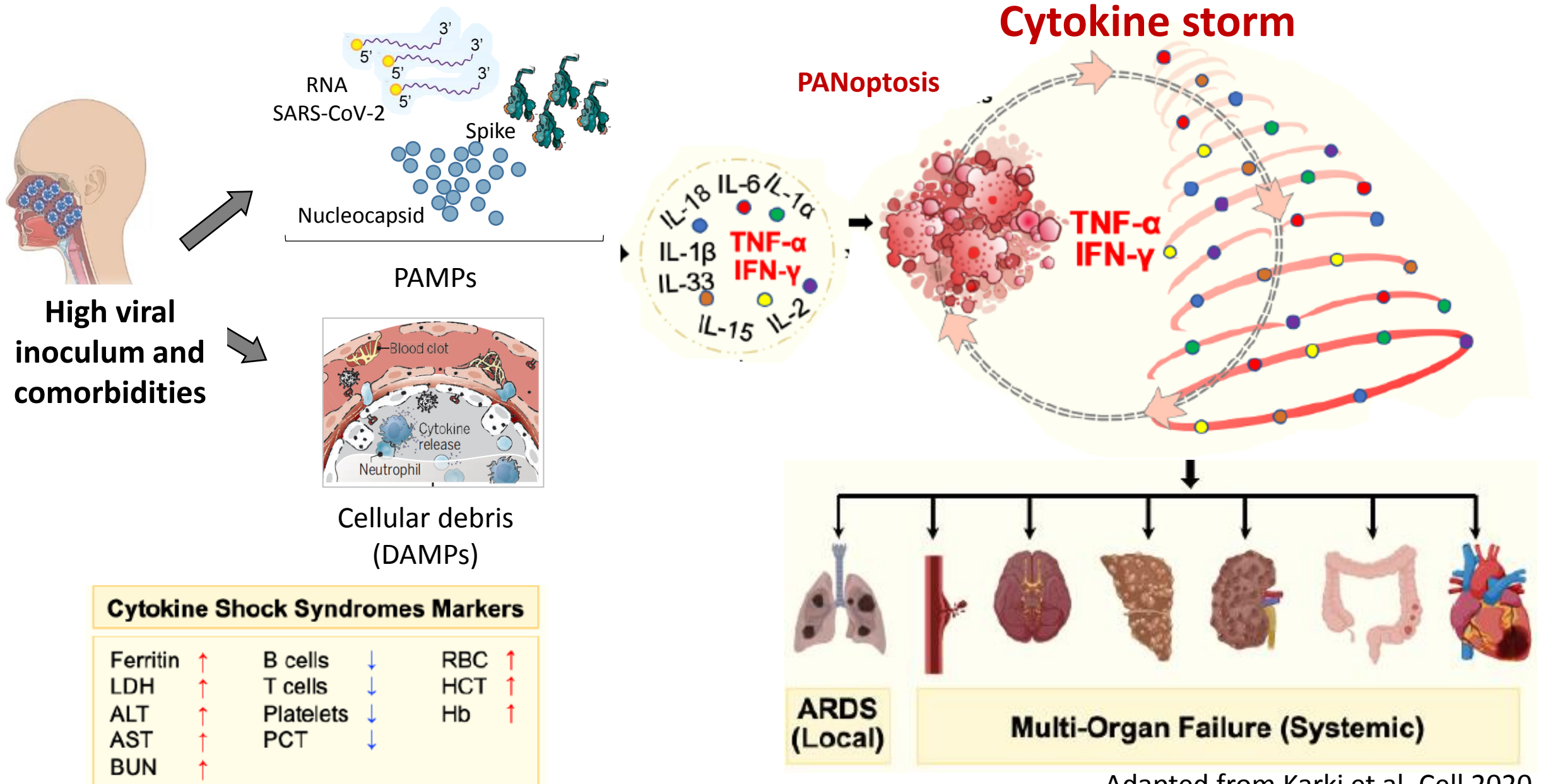
Mutations génétiques

Auto-anticorps



**hyper-inflammation=**  
**Severe COVID**

# Severe COVID: unbalance between antiviral state and inflammation



# Innate and adaptive immune response

## Innate response



Hours

0 6 12

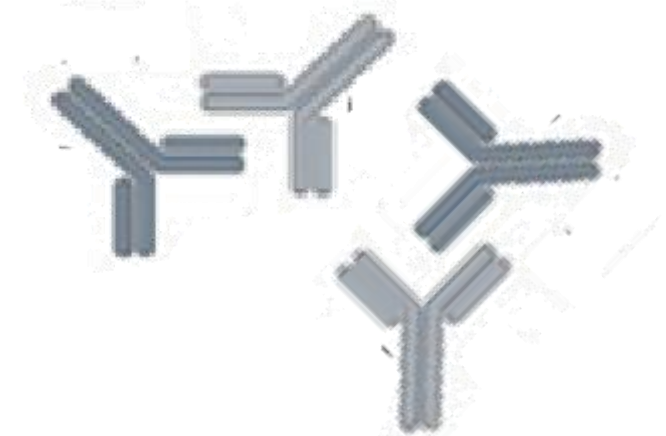
Infection

## Adaptive response

### T cell response



### Humoral response (antibodies)



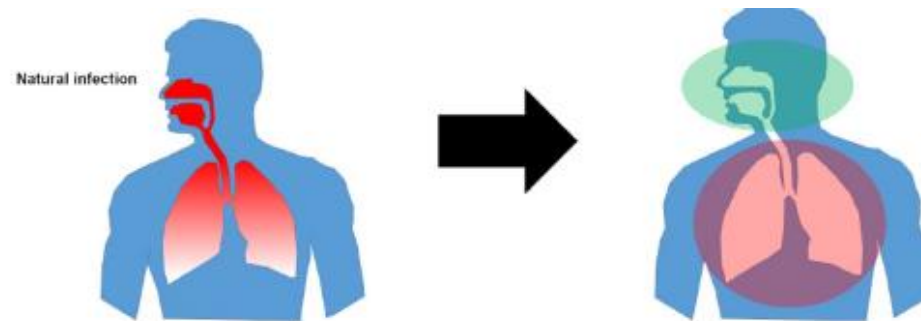
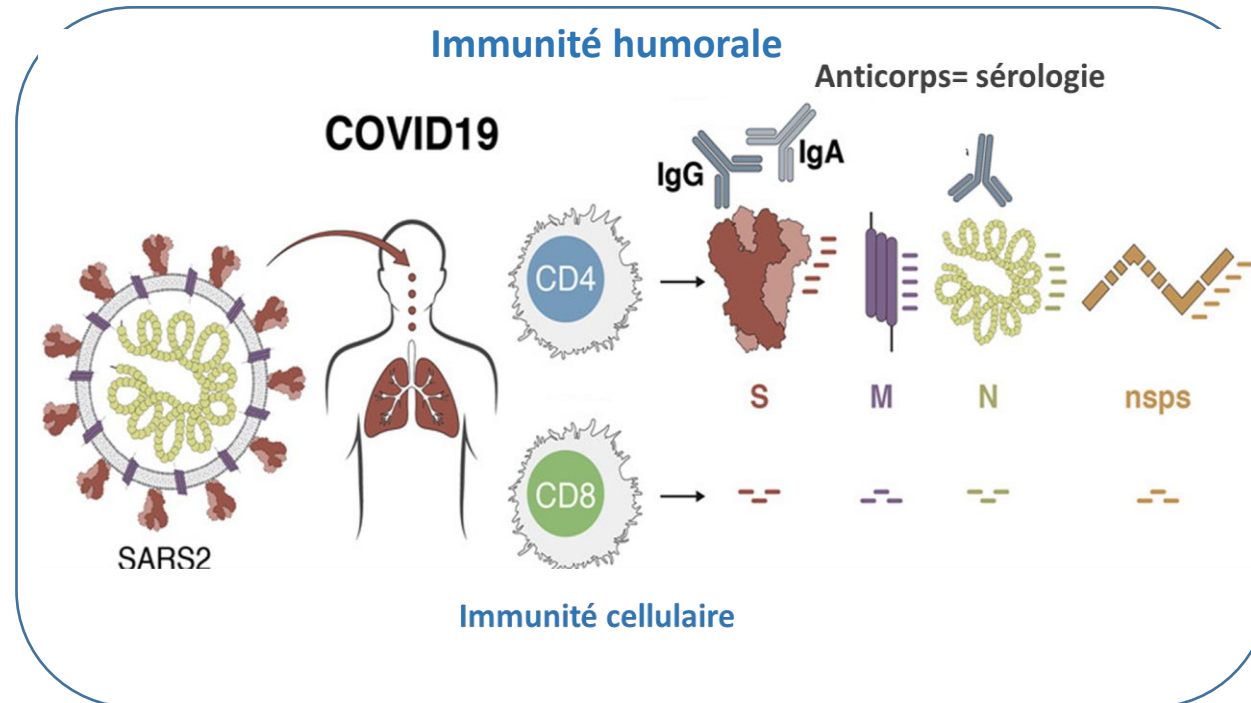
Days

1

3

6

# Immune response after SARS-CoV-2 infection



Adapté de Grifoni et al, Cell 2020; Krammer F, Nature 2020

# Antibody response to SARS-COV-2: SeroCoVHUS study

Prospective, longitudinal, monocentric study:  
**1,496 workers recruited in Strasbourg University Hospital (SHU), France**

## Inclusions

March 2020:  
1<sup>st</sup> wave start

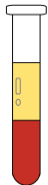
6<sup>th</sup> April –  
7<sup>th</sup> May 2020

June –  
August 2020

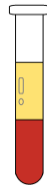
September –  
December 2020

February –  
May 2021

**M1**



**M3-6**



**M7-9**



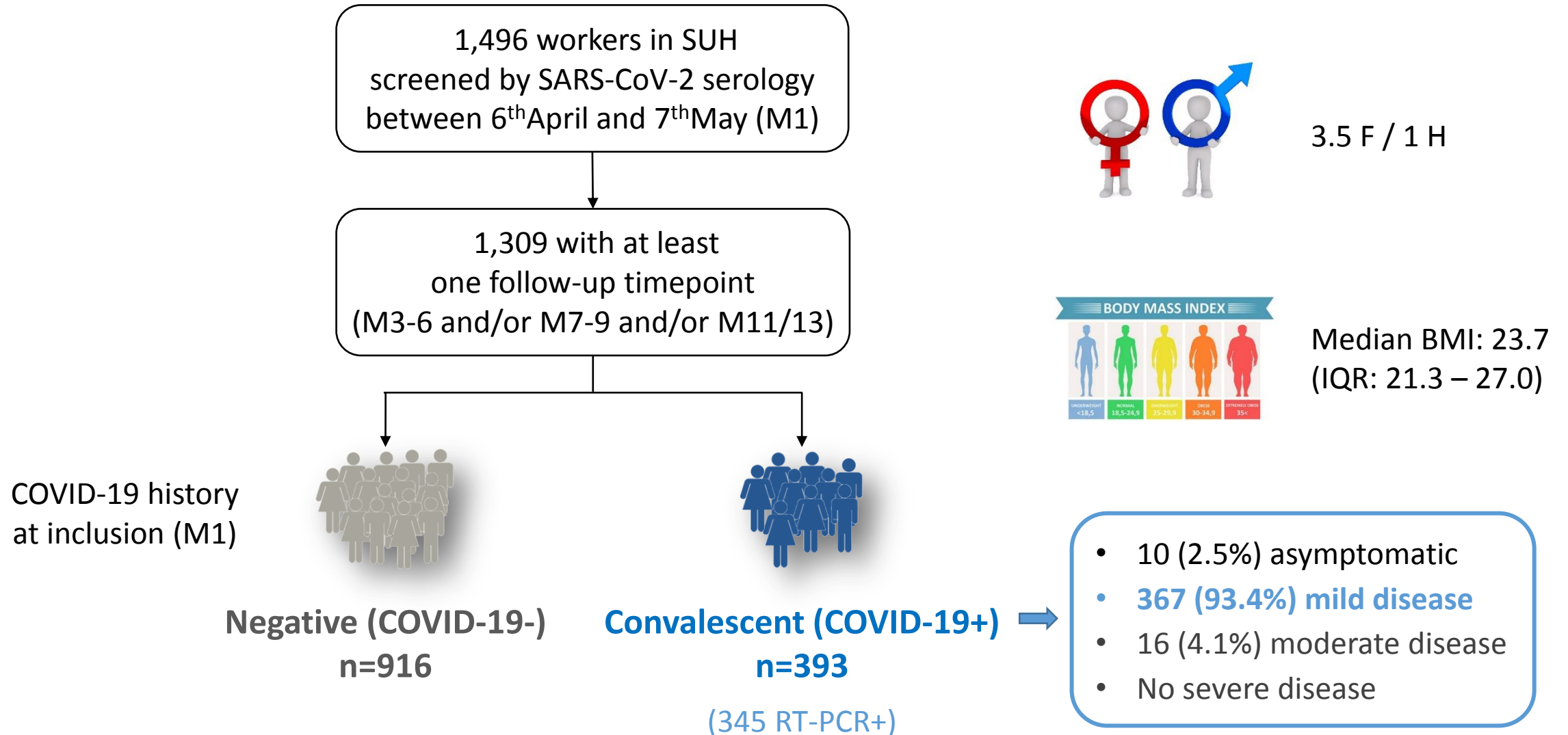
**M11-13**



SARS-CoV-2 serology

Demographic, clinical,  
and biological data

# Antibody response to SARS-COV-2: SeroCoVHUS study



# Serology after COVID-19

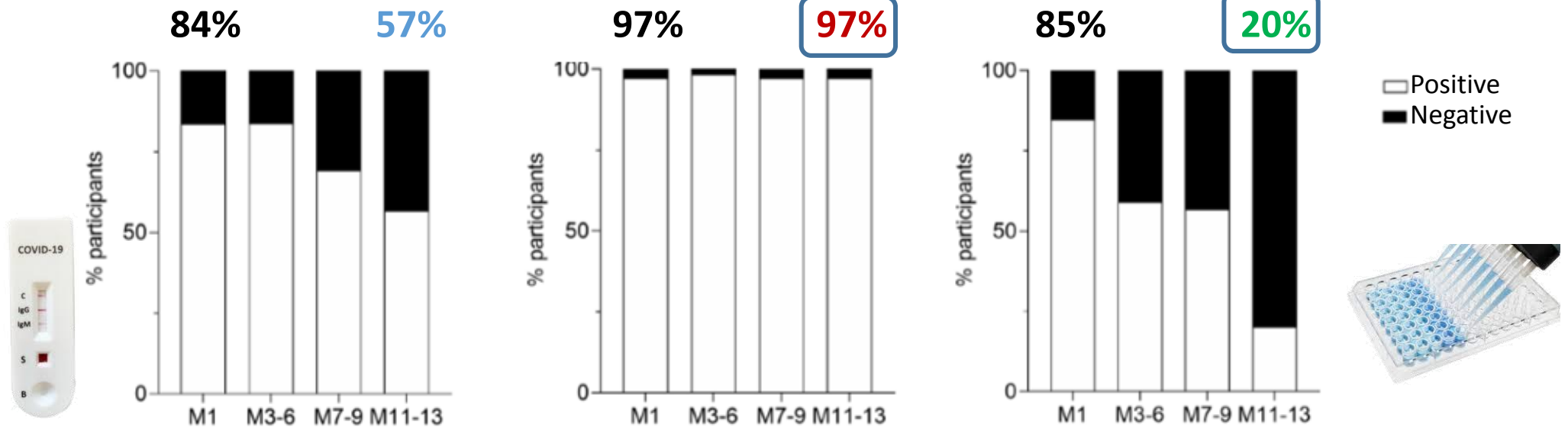
COVID-19+ cohort (n = 393)



Lateral flow assay  
anti-RBD IgG

CMIA  
anti-RBD IgG

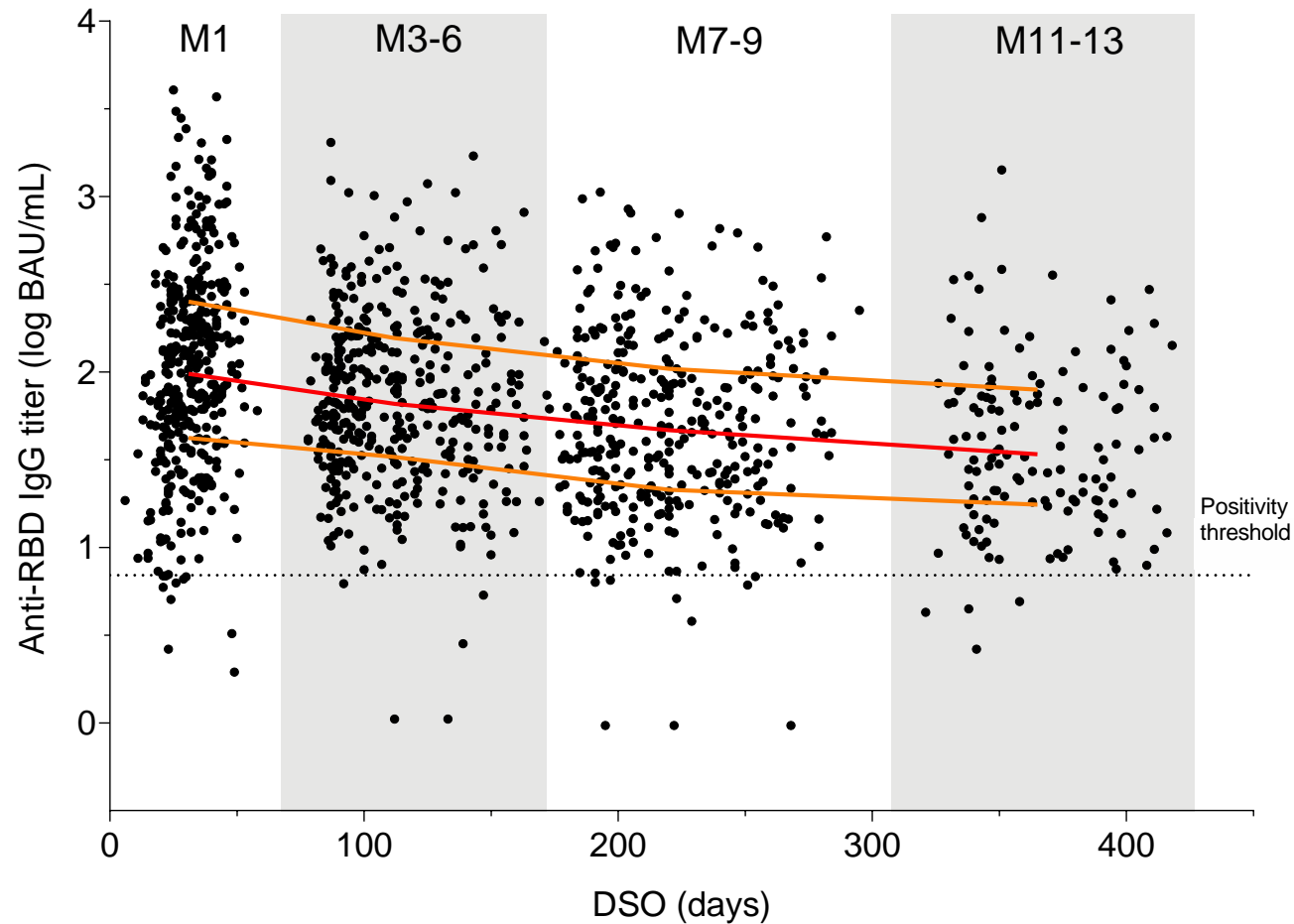
ELISA  
anti-N IgG



Seropositivity rate strongly **depends** on the serological assay used



# Antibody persistence after COVID-19

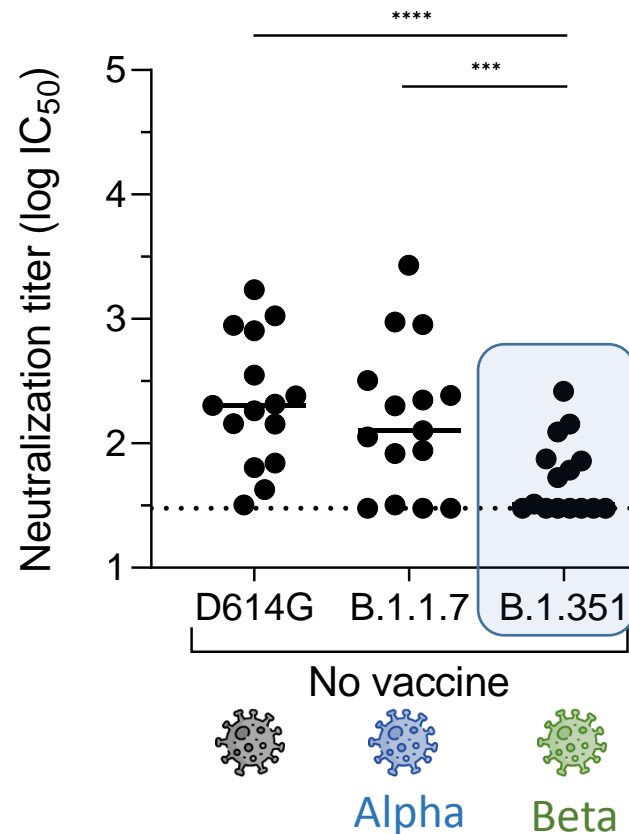


## Evolution of anti-RBD IgG

- Decrease up to 6 months
- Stabilization one year after infection
  - Median: 35 BAU/mL
  - $t_{1/2}$ : 725 days

**Anti-SARS-CoV-2 antibodies persist more than one year after infection**

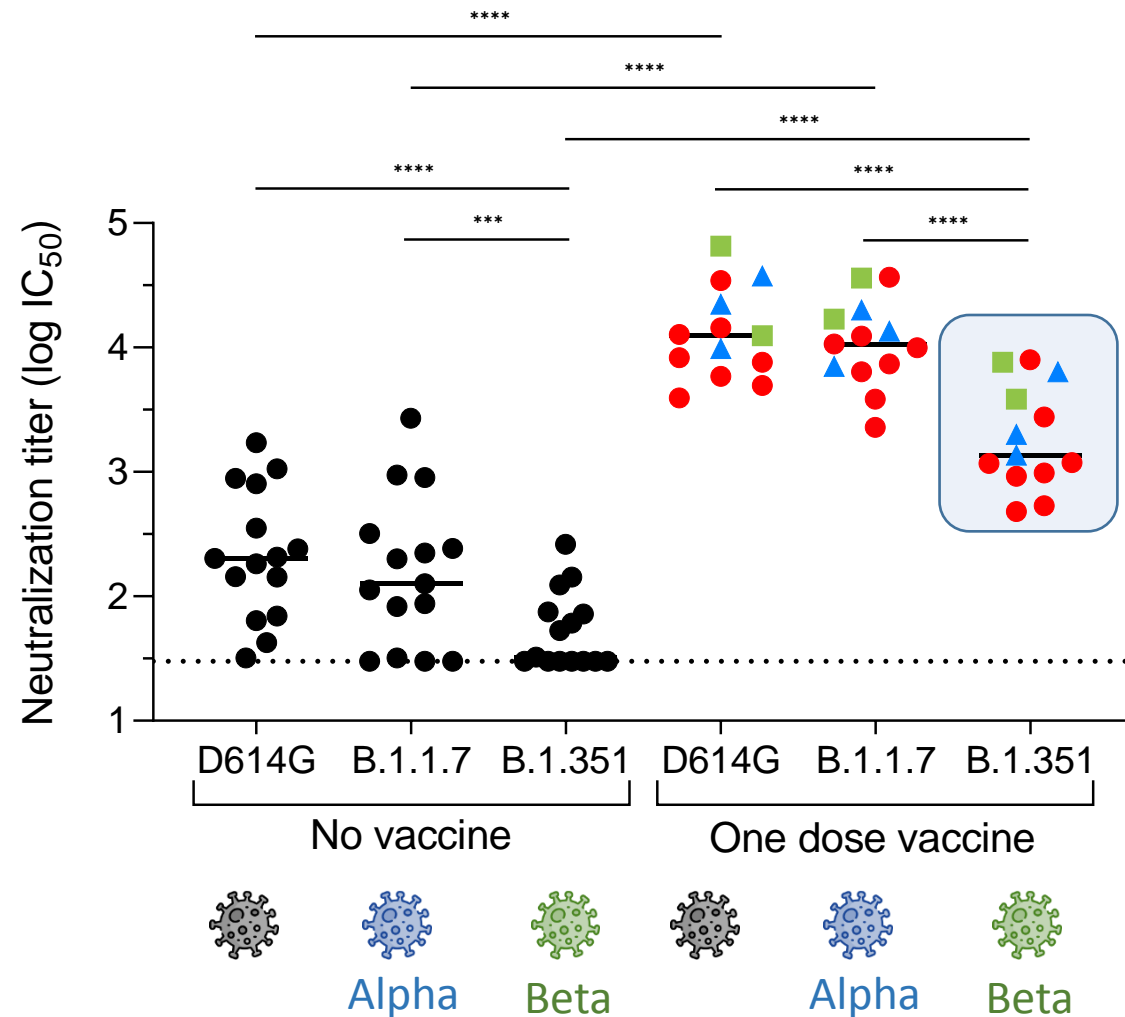
# SARS-CoV-2 neutralizing antibody titers



15 COVID-19+ unvaccinated participants

The  $\beta$  variant is poorly sensitive to seric antibodies one year after infection

# SARS-CoV-2 neutralizing antibody titers

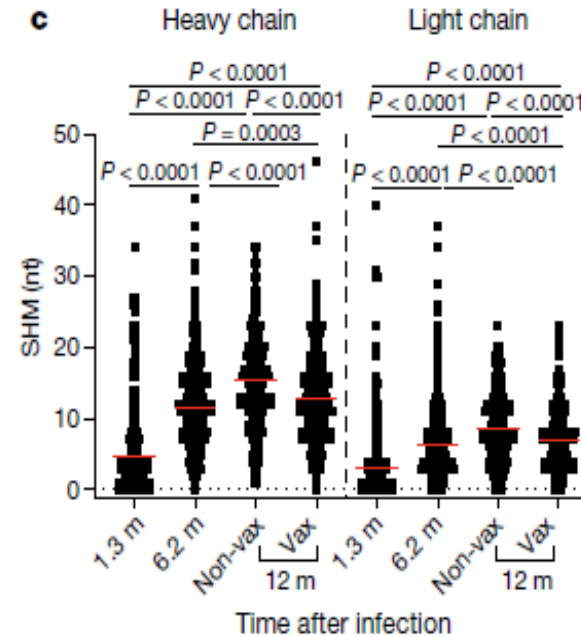
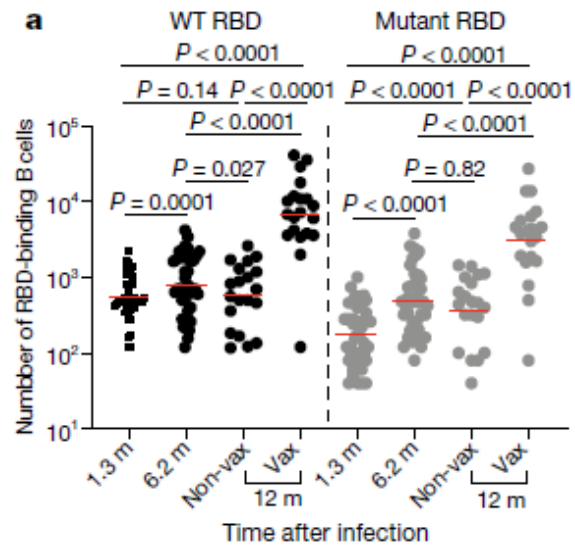


13 COVID-19+ vaccinated participants

Strong neutralization of  $\beta$  variant  
after vaccination

# Expansion of SARS-CoV-2 specific memory B cells

N=63 COVID-19 convalescents followed-up during 12 months



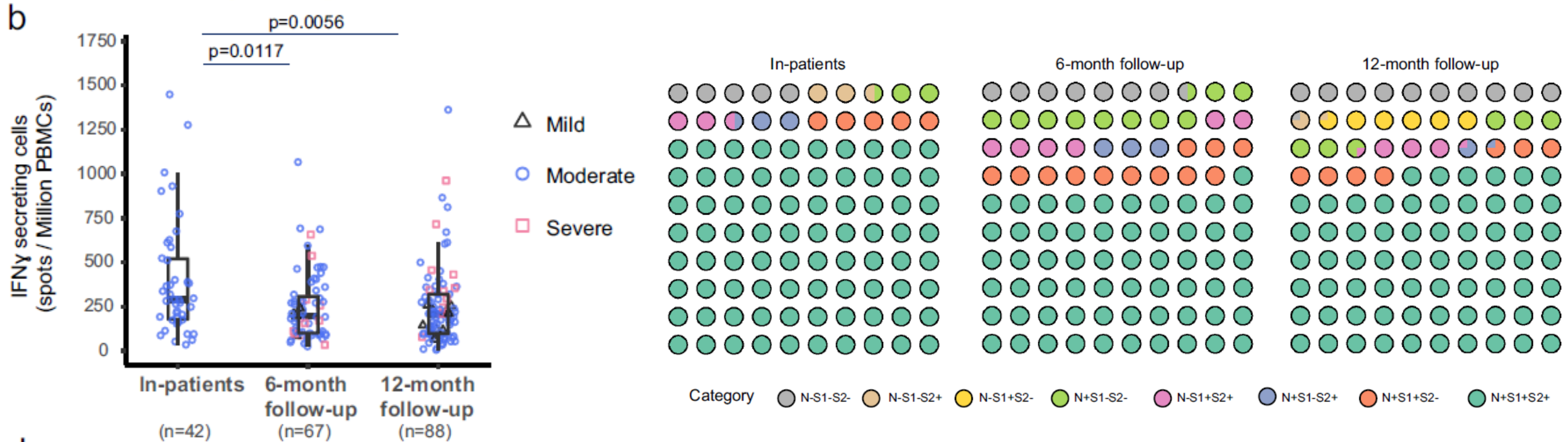
- Persistence of RBD antigen binding memory B cells up to 12 months post-infection
- Increase of the number after vaccination

- Somatic hypermutation (SHM) of antibody genes continued between 6 and 12 months post-infection

Long-term persistence of germinal centers after infection

# SARS-CoV-2 specific T cell response

- N=204 COVID-19 (Guangzhou, China)
  - severe (14%), moderate (79%), mild (6%)



After COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2 specific T cell response **lasts up to 12 months**

# Risk of new SARS-CoV-2 infection



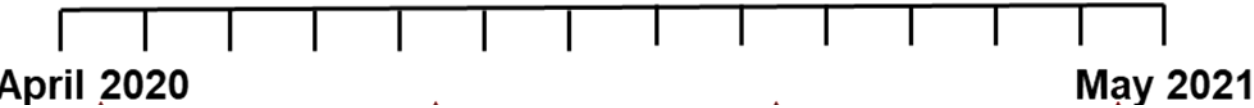
COVID-19 positive  
N=393



Reinfection

N=1

SARS-CoV-2 antibody and COVID-19 symptom monitoring



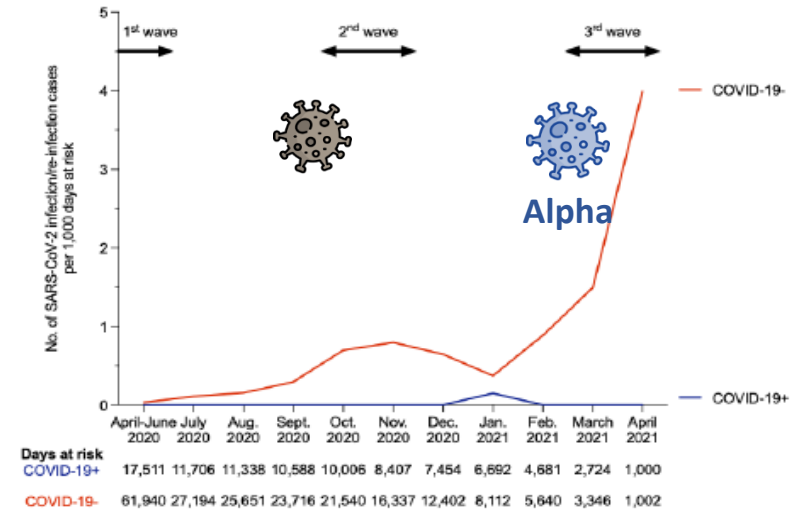
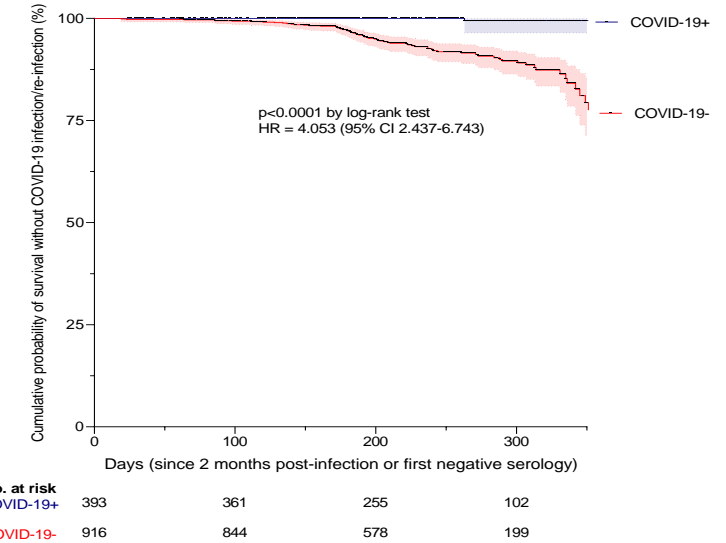
COVID-19 negative  
N=916



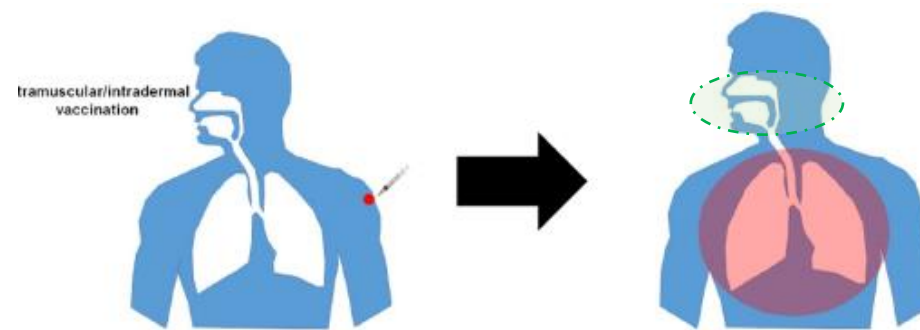
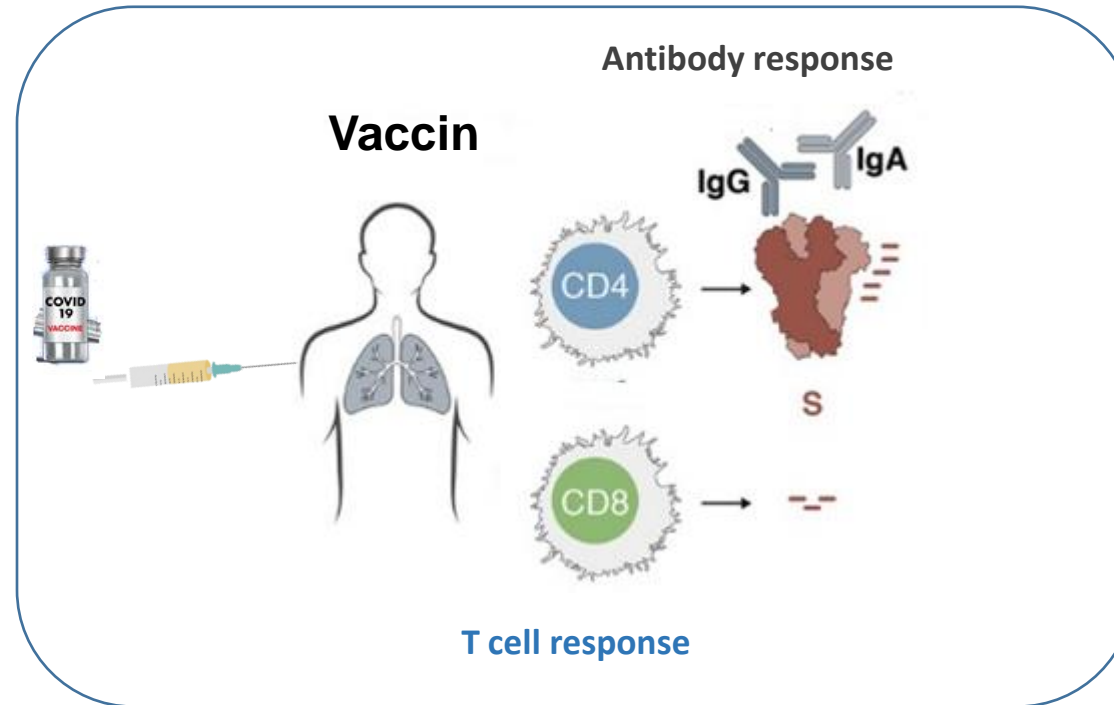
New infections

N=69

**COVID-19+ : Relative reduction of new infection incidence of 96.7% during the first year**

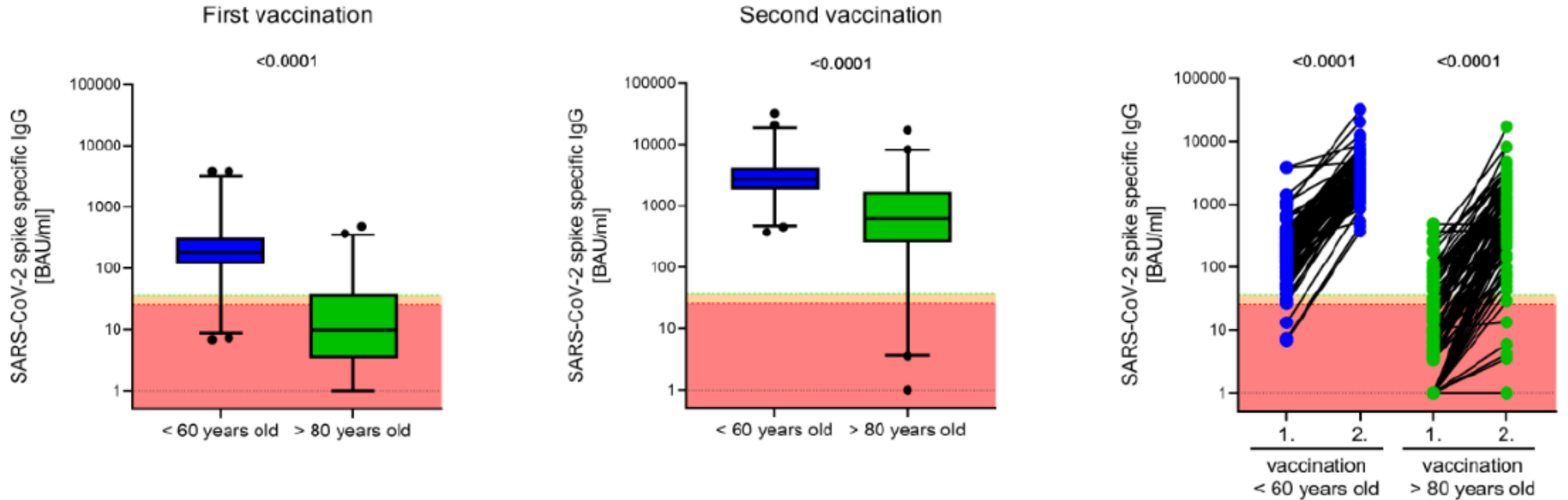


# Immune response after COVID-19 vaccine



*Adapté de Grifoni et al, Cell 2020; Krammer F, Nature 2020*

# Vaccine response\_ according to age



## Vaccine response:

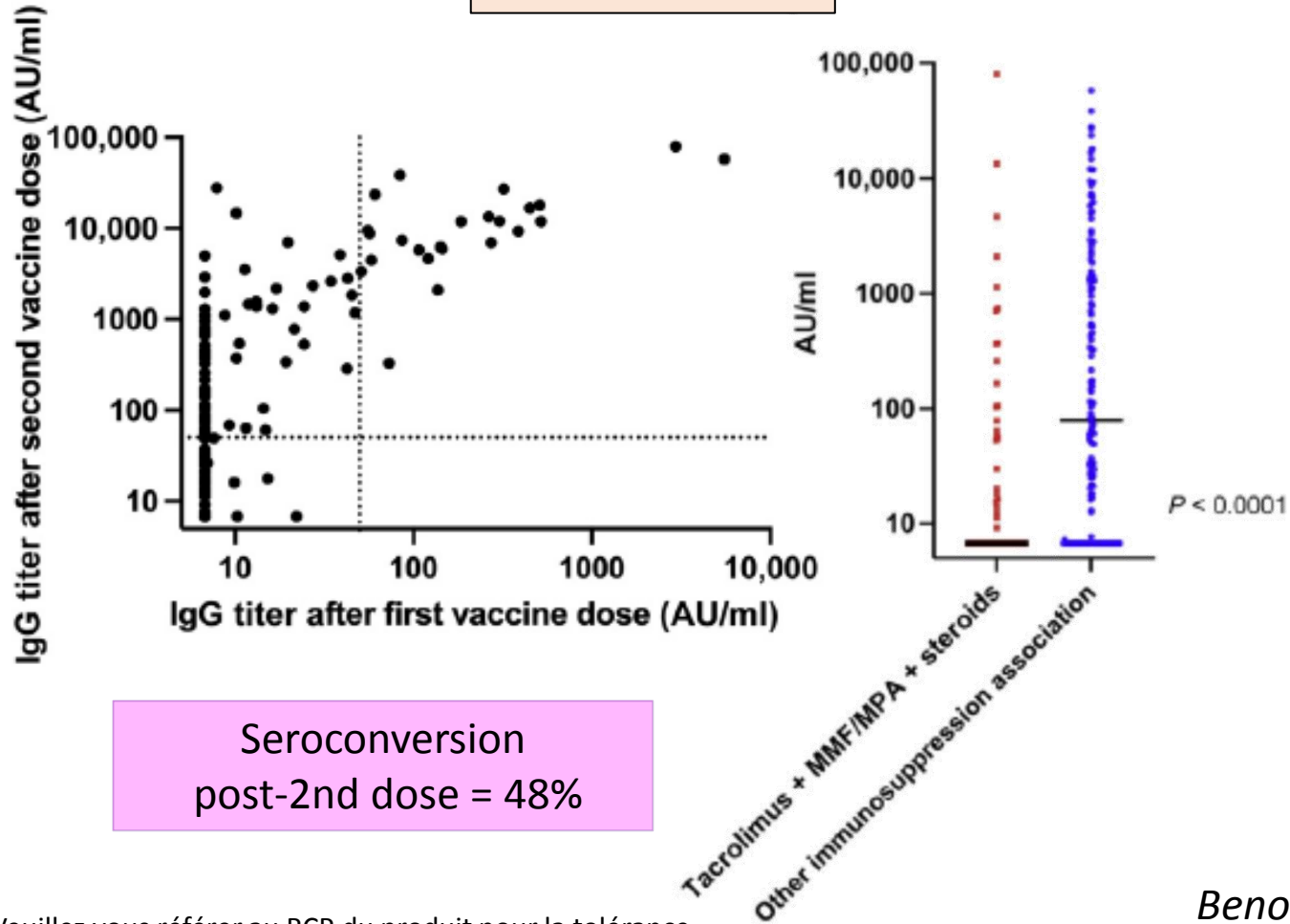
- Individuals <60 ans: 98%
- Individuals > 80 ans : 69%



# Vaccine response and immunosuppression

A cohort of kidney transplant recipients (Strasbourg University Hospital) (n= 204)

2 doses Moderna

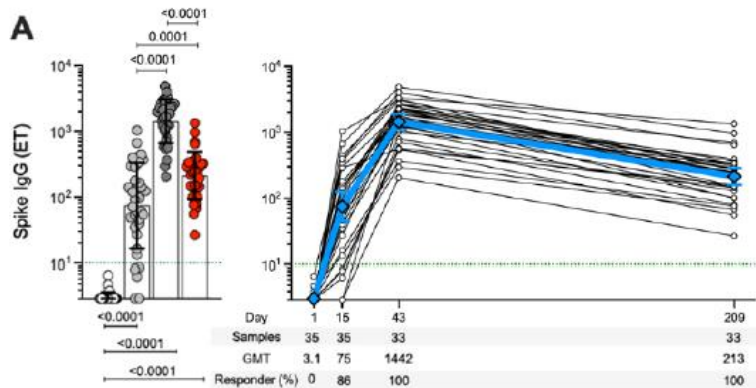


Seroconversion  
post-2nd dose = 48%

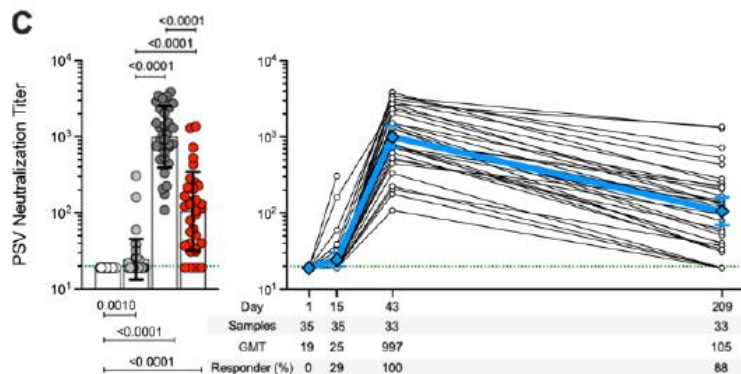
# Humoral response after Low-dose mRNA-1273 COVID-19 vaccine

- Open-label, age de-escalation phase 1 trial (mRNA-1273 vaccine 25- $\mu$ g), follow-up 209 days

## Anti-Spike antibodies



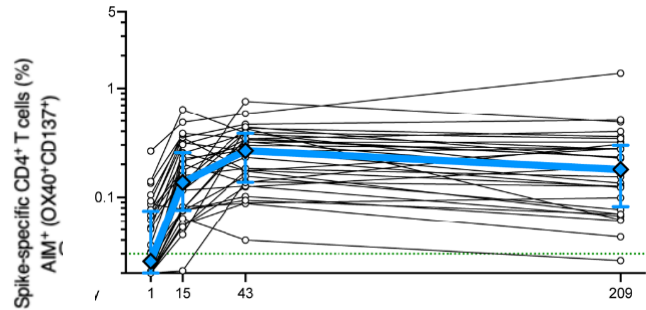
## Neutraliz antibodies



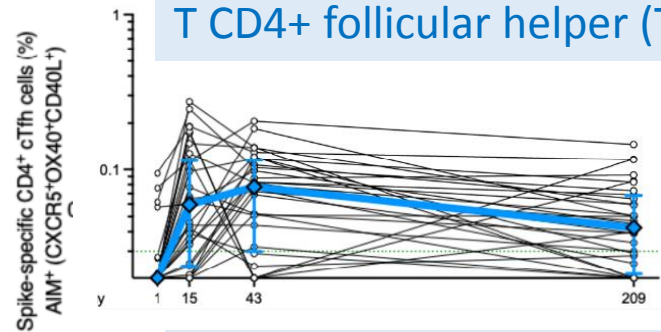
- Anti-spike and -RBD IgG **maintained** for at least **7 months** after the first vaccination, for 100% (33/33) of subjects
- SARS-CoV-2 PSV **neutralizing titers** were detected:
  - in **29%** (10/35) of subjects after **one vaccination**,
  - 100%** after **two** vaccinations (33/33)
  - 88%** (29/33) maintained detectable neutralizing antibodies for at least **6 months** after the second vaccination

# Low-dose mRNA-1273 COVID-19 vaccine generates durable and robust memory T cell response

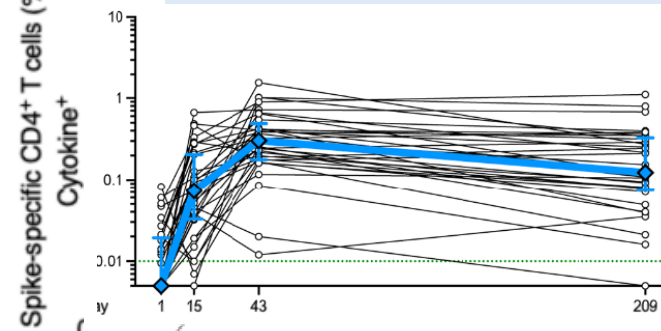
## Memory T CD4+ cells



## T CD4+ follicular helper (Tfh)

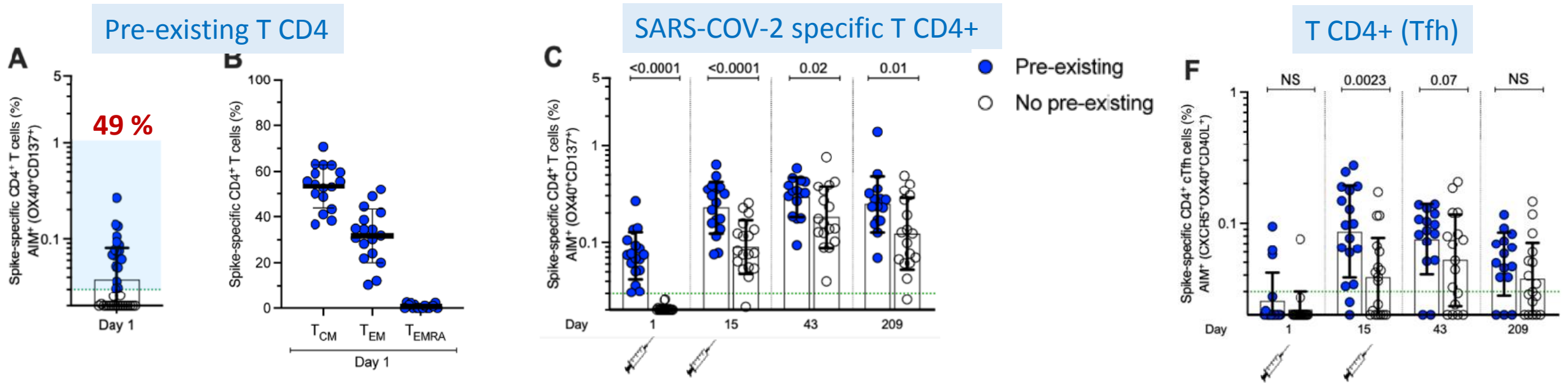


## T CD4+ polyfonctionnels

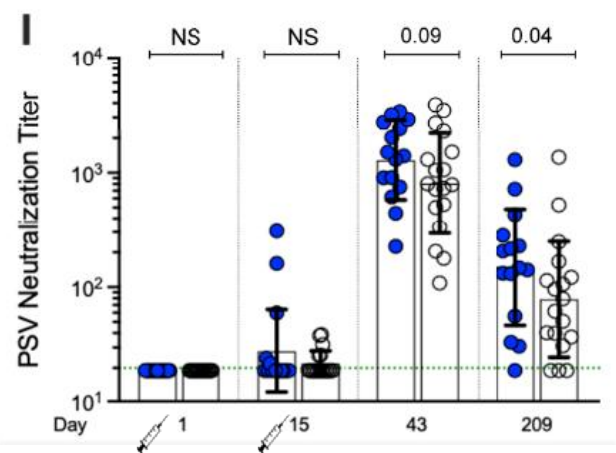


- The Spike-specific CD4+ T cell response rate increased to **100%** (32/32) after the second vaccination and was maintained for **at least 6 more months**.
- Spike-specific **memory CD4+ T cell frequencies** at 7 months were **similar** to those observed for COVID-19 cases
- Spike-specific **cTFH** cells were detectable in **94%** of subjects
- were **still detected** in 63% of vaccinees **6 months** after the second vaccination
- Spike-specific CD4+ T cells exhibited **multifunctionality** comparable to that of CMV-specific cells

# ... and enhanced by cross-reactive cells



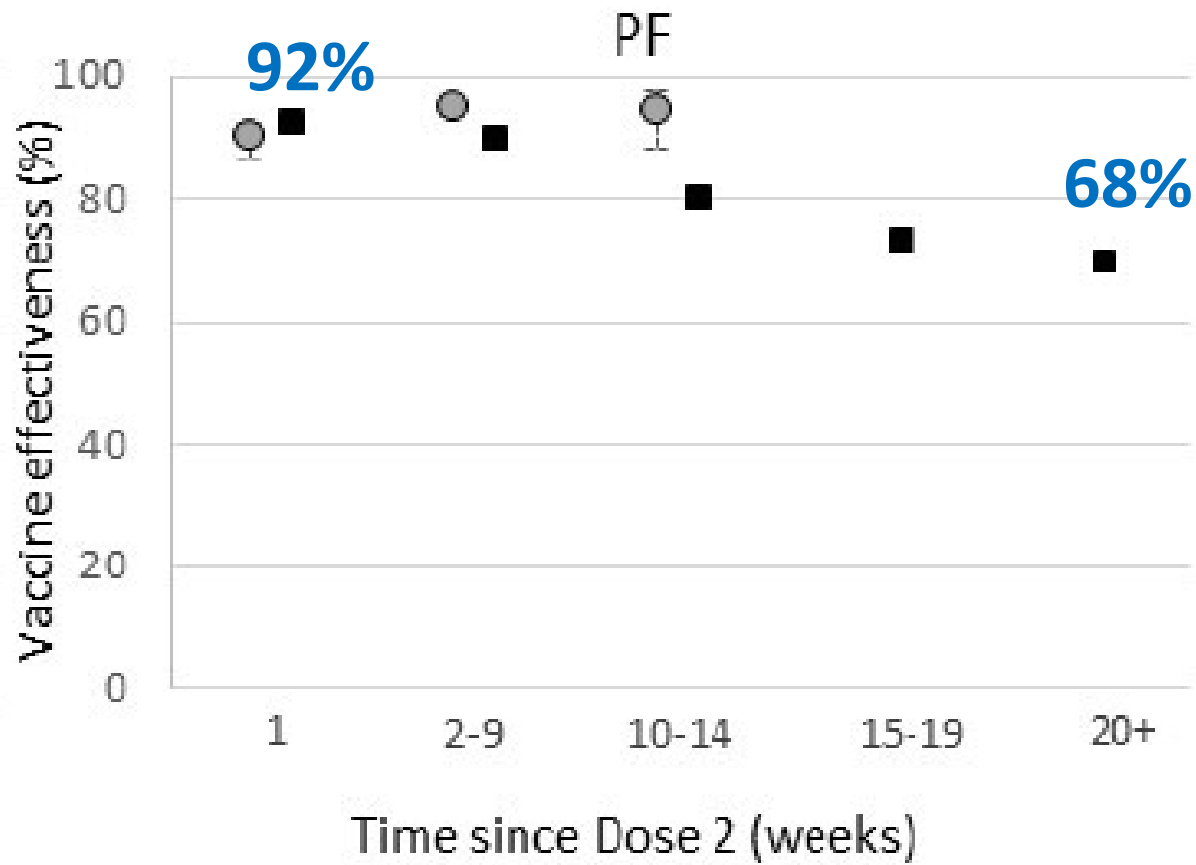
## Neutralizing antibodies



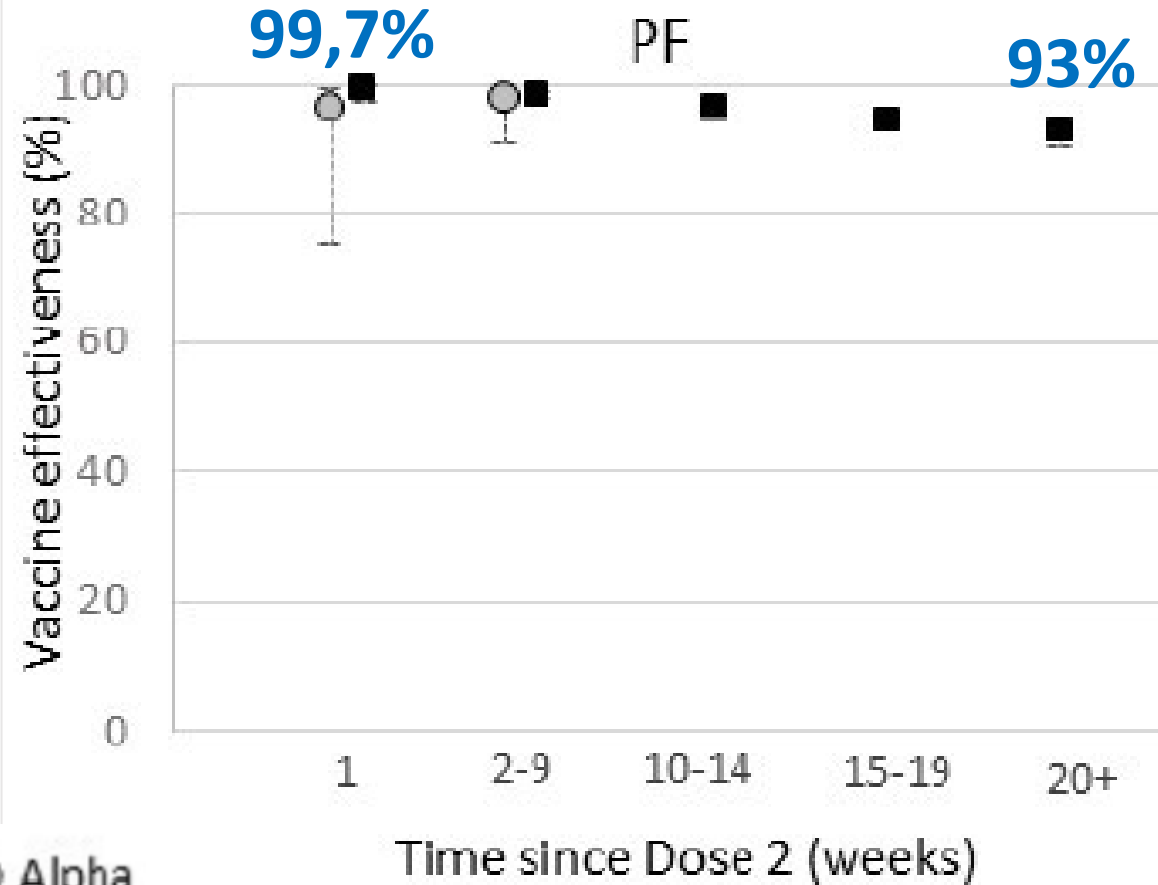
- Subjects with **pre-existing cross-reactive CD4+ T cell memory** had **increased CD4+ T cell** and **antibody** responses to the vaccine.
- Cross-reactive memory TFH cells may both accelerate B cell priming and antibody responses to a new antigen, and also increase robustness of long-term humoral immunity.

# Vaccine efficacy\_PHE (n ≈ 3,7 millions)

## Symptomatic infection



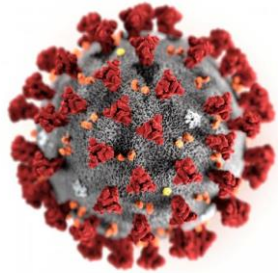
## Hospitalization



○ Alpha  
■ Delta

# Key questions

- Comment évolue la réponse immunitaire après l'infection?
  - Réponse B et T robuste qui dure jusqu'à 13 mois
  - Une seule dose de vaccin suffit pour acquérir une protection contre tous les variants
- Comment évolue la réponse immunitaire après le vaccin?
  - La réponse au vaccin est influencé par l'âge et l'immunosuppression
  - Réponse B et T robuste qui dure jusqu'à 7 mois
  - La cinétique des anti-S est similaire à celle après infection



**Merci pour votre  
attention**